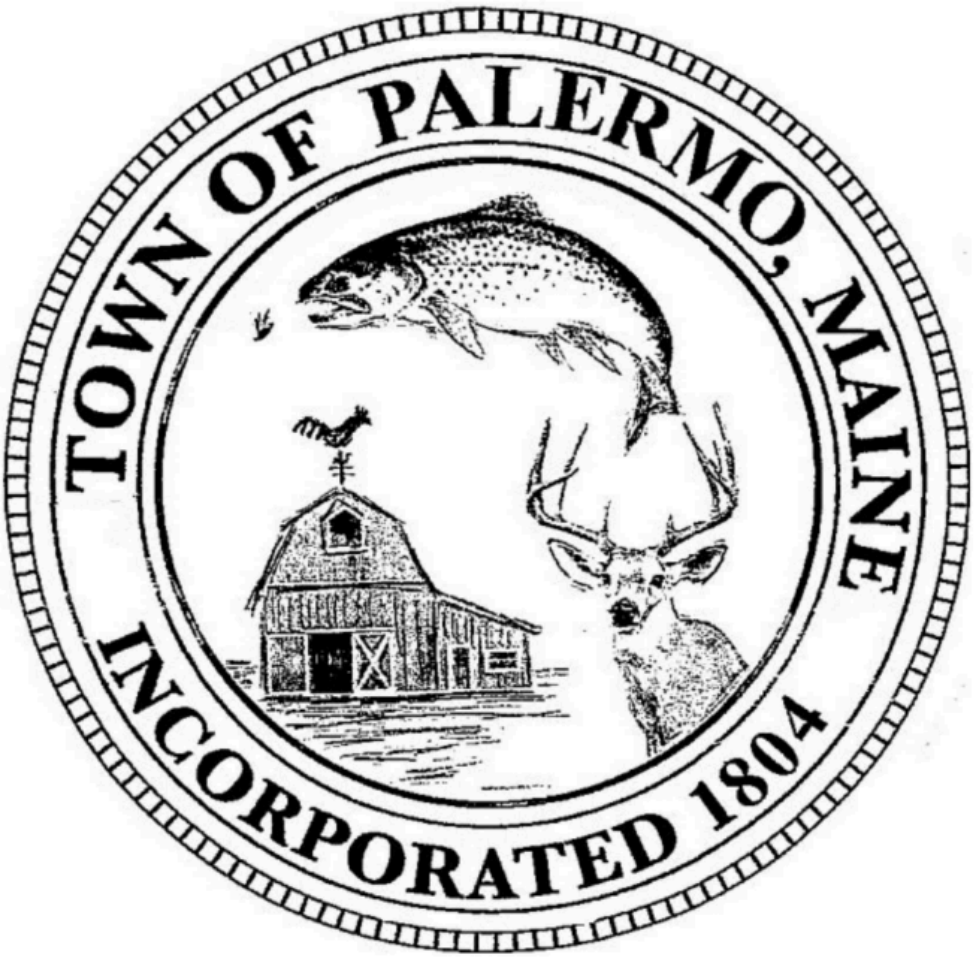
Palermo Comprehensive Plan



2025

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Introduction

In the late 80s the State of Maine adopted the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Act which included the Growth Management Program. Growth that had previously occurred in or near service centers had begun to sprawl. Rural towns were unprepared for this sudden growth, they lacked ordinances, facilities and resources to handle it. This led to rising taxes, loss of natural habitats and a shift in character for small towns. The Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Act was designed to prevent this sprawl by having towns direct the growth to areas more suitable for it. In the following 15 years, nearly half the towns in Maine had enacted comprehensive plans.

Having a comprehensive plan that is consistent with the state puts Palermo in a better position to secure certain grants and, crucially, gives the town the ability to adopt land use ordinances. According to Title 30-A MRSA Section 4352, subsection 2, “A zoning ordinance must be pursuant to and consistent with a comprehensive plan adopted by the municipal legislative body.” That means in order to enact a land use ordinance a town must have a consistent comprehensive plan. This is the reason the Town of Palermo needed to update their plan.

Almost a year ago, a small group of Palermo residents met at the town office to discuss the need for a new comprehensive plan. The previous plan was almost 30 years old and no longer, if ever, considered consistent with the state requirements. Many communities spend multiple years writing their plans and often at the cost of tens of thousands of dollars. Not wanting to spend the money to have the plan written by a consultant, this small group of residents decided to tackle the project themselves. Over the next year, meeting nearly every Tuesday, this plan was written.

The committee consisted of,
Cameron Maillet, Chair
Brook Delorme
Gordon Hunt
Cordelia Lane
Dale Mckenney, Planning Board
Ilene Mckenney, Selectboard
Pam Page
Daniel Pepice

We received help and advice from local experts and professionals including,
Pam Mckenney of The Sheepscot Lake Association
Greg Leclair from IF&W
Jesse Haskell of Haskell Farm LLC
Melissa Cote & Tim Libby from Mid-Coast Conservancy
Jaime Robichaud, Road Commissioner
Paul Hunter, Andy Pottle, Gary Dyer of the Palermo Historical Society

Vision Statement

The Town of Palermo is a small, rural community with a tiny village center. We call it “The Branch".

“The Branch” is the location of our town office, firehouse, post office, Grange Hall, and Historical Society. All are located within walking distance of Branch Pond.

The Historical Society has done a wonderful job recording and preserving Palermo's past and present history. The 19 cemeteries in town are also a well kept look at the past.

Our numerous water resources, farmland and forests are the heart of our community. From Palermo's founding to the present day, we take great pride in maintaining our rural character.

There are three major state roads which slice through Palermo and yet the town's 55 rural roads will show you how much residents of Palermo cherish their country lifestyle.

There are small businesses, many run from home, and some larger businesses in logging, mining, construction and fuel. We even have a meadery with a small restaurant.

A war memorial and American Legion Post honor the many veterans of Palermo who served and sacrificed through the various wars we have endured as a country.

We wish to protect our rural lifestyle, while acknowledging that change happens. It is up to the citizens of Palermo to develop a comprehensive plan to protect and preserve what makes Palermo special.

Based on the results of an extensive survey of Palermo taxpayers and face to face meetings with residents the following was their vision for the future of Palermo.

To preserve and protect Palermo’s rural character, its history and contributions to the State of Maine and The United States of America.

To promote the health, safety and welfare of Palermo’s residents to the best of our ability.

To work with landowners to protect the natural beauty, quality of life and character that makes this town special.

To keep the town financially solvent so that this vision can be our reality now and in the future.

Regional Coordination

Palermo shares numerous resources with neighboring towns. Branch Pond is shared with the Town of China and Turner Pond with Somerville. Colby Brook runs across the border with Liberty. Notable aquifers are shared with Liberty and Hibberts Gore. An area identified as a Great Blue Heron habitat is located on the borders with China and Liberty.

Currently, the town does not formally coordinate with other towns to protect these natural resources. More can be done to encourage coordinated efforts to protect these areas. This lack of coordination is a subject that will be addressed later in this plan. While the town doesn't coordinate with neighboring communities, there are no known conflicts with them either.

Beyond the natural resources that we share with neighboring communities, the town also has agreements to share facilities with neighbors. The town contracts with Liberty for ambulance services and has an agreement with China to use their transfer station.

Plan Implementation and Evaluation

Within each section you'll see subsections entitled *Policies*. These sections list the policies that should be enacted, who will be responsible for enacting them and the time frame for them to be enacted. These policies are dictated to us by the state. Given the desires of the residents within the town, these policies will require considerable time to be implemented in a way that doesn't conflict with the stated desires of the community.

In addition to the policies within, the Comprehensive Plan Committee has developed some additional steps that the town could consider in order to carry out the community's vision. In the previous plan, it was recommended that the municipal officials form a number of committees. These committees would serve a dual purpose. They would be able to educate residents and become a specialized source of knowledge and advice available to the community and its officers. The Comprehensive Plan Committee identified two committees that would be of benefit to the town.

By far the most important topic to the community, based on the results of the survey, Palermo's character is tied to rich natural resources and rural areas. Without a more dedicated group to identify risks, educate residents, and provide advice to decision makers these resources are at grave risk. The Conservation Committee would allow passionate residents the opportunity to protect the critical resources and character of the town. Throughout this planning process, we have seen an incredible passion from community members for conservation. One of the biggest dangers to our natural resources is a lack of awareness. The first step to rectifying the lack of awareness is to identify the resources and the things that endanger them.

Road maintenance takes up a significant chunk of the municipal budget as well as being a hotly debated topic within the community. The creation of a road committee would allow a more diverse range of opinions and expertise to influence the maintenance of our roads. Palermo currently elects a road commissioner for a one year term. While historically it may not have been an issue, this arrangement creates situations where a new road commissioner might invest a significant amount of time into getting up to speed only to leave office upon finally getting settled in. This also puts a great deal of responsibility on any new commissioner as well as on the selectboard who may not be experts in the finer points of road design and maintenance. By creating a committee to share the responsibility and ensure continuity, it would be possible to address issues with a more long term approach.

Beyond the creation of committees, it is crucial that the Town of Palermo continue to expand its cooperation with neighboring communities and state, federal and regional bodies. Extensive

resources are available to municipalities to help protect resources and tackle issues that arise across the state.

Responsibility for the implementation of this plan lies primarily with the Selectboard and the Planning Board. Ultimately though, it is the residents of the Town of Palermo that must ensure their vision is adhered to. Through membership on committees or their attendance at town meetings, the residents of Palermo must drive the future of this town. The establishment of the previously mentioned committee will allow for continuing evaluation of the town implementation of the policies set forth in this plan.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee will have served its purpose upon the adoption of this plan and therefore will no longer have reason to convene. In 10 short years this plan itself will have become obsolete. It is impossible to say how the town will have changed in this time and therefore it will be necessary to complete a new, updated plan. It is recommended that the Comprehensive Plan Committee be reconstituted in no more than 8 years from the adoption of this plan. This timeframe will allow the new committee ample time to assess the condition of the time and write a new plan.

Historical and Archaeological Resources

Analyses

Are historic patterns of settlement still evident in the community?

Numerous older buildings are still being lived in, with modernization. Many stonewalls exist, built by the original settlers and those that followed. These stonewalls mark property boundaries and surround fields.

Several gravel roads still exist from the earlier days of settlement.

Many of the cemeteries in town show the families and the time frame in which they owned and worked their land. It gives a picture of the expansion of Palermo over time.

What protective measures currently exist for historic and archaeological resources and are they effective?

Currently, there are no ordinances on the books that the Town of Palermo can use to protect historic and archaeological resources.

The Palermo Historical Society, based out of the historic Worthing House, are caretakers of vast amounts of Palermo's historical artifacts. The historical society holds regular meetings and fundraisers in the community.

The Maine Historic Preservation Committee aids towns by providing;

- Information on archaeological and architectural resources.
- Access to a network of other historic preservation organizations and municipalities.
- Review and comment on local legislation.
- Advice on how to draft legislation for historic preservation.
- Local historic and scenic preservation options
- Property tax reimbursement
    - Since 2000, communities have been authorized to offer property tax reimbursements for historic and scenic preservation.

Do local site plan and/or subdivision regulations require applicants proposing development in areas that may contain historic or archaeological resources to conduct a survey for such resources?

There are no regulations or requirements on a local level that require surveys for historic resources.

Have significant historic resources fallen into disrepair, and are there ways the community can provide incentives to preserve their value as an historical resource?

There is no official accounting of historic resources that have fallen into disrepair. If those resources are identified and deemed preservable, the community could have resources available through the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

Conditions and Trends

The community's Comprehensive Planning Historic Preservation Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Historic Preservation Commission, and the Office, or their designees.

The shores of Sheepscot Pond should have a professional archaeological survey.

SiteName	Sitenum	SiteType	Periods of Significance	NationalRegisterStatus	Town	Location
Mrs. R. Whittier Homestead	ME 335-001	homestead	Present on 1859 Waldo County Map and 1916 USGS topo.	undetermined	Palermo	Location Known

One prehistoric archaeological site (39.26) is located in the town, on the shores of Sheepscot Pond. But no professional archaeological surveys have been conducted

An outline of the community's history, including a brief description of historic settlement patterns and events contributing to the development and character of the community and its surroundings.

The previous Comprehensive Plan for Palermo included a history sketch written by Millard Howard, a local historian. His sketch is included with a sketch written by Gordon Hunt to fill in from where Millard leaves off up to the present where our plan begins;

HISTORY SKETCH

By Millard A. Howard, M.A.

In 1769, Palermo's first white settler, Stephen Belden, came up the Sheepscot River and staked out a farm near the Sheepscot Great Pond. From this beginning, a trickle of settlers in the 1770's became a flood after the close of the Revolutionary War. Unfortunately, the earliest settlers did not have clear title to the land. The Kennebec Proprietors held legal title to most of the land except for a small wedge in East Palermo claimed by the Waldo Patent. After several years and some violence, the issues were resolved and the building of the town continued in earnest.

From twenty-six (26) families in 1790, Palermo grew to a peak population of 1,659 in 1850. First the uplands with hardwood growth were cleared and then the more difficult lowlands until new land became too marginal and farms were divided into smaller parcels, largely through assignment to children and inheritance. And, even as population was burgeoning, in the early part of the century, outmigration to northern and eastern Maine and the U.S. middle west was increasing until, after 1850, the out migration greatly exceeded the natural growth in population.

Palermo, in common with neighboring towns, was made up of farmers who raised diversified crops , kept cows, sheep, poultry and swine and utilized horses and oxen in a largely self-contained and self-sufficient family enterprise. In addition, throughout the nineteenth century, substantial numbers conducted family businesses such as lumber and grist mills, general stores (at times one at nearly every intersection), blacksmithing, and the manufacturing of boots and shoes - almost entirely for local consumption.

The neighborhood was the primary social and political unit. As many as thirteen (13) school districts were simultaneously self-governing. Sections of town were defined where neighbors "worked off" their highway taxes. There were a total of four (4) post offices by mid-century.

Politically, Palermo was first known and organized as the Sheepscot Great Pond Settlement. In 1804, it became a town, borrowing its name from one of the great capitals of the European middle ages. With considerable dismay and resistance, it submitted to becoming a part of the new Waldo County in 1827 although it has looked socially and economically to Augusta and Waterville, far more than to Belfast, to this day.

Throughout the later nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, Palermo continued to be a primarily agricultural community. As larger surpluses of agricultural and wood products were produced, the establishment of the Wiscasset Waterville and Farmington “narrow gauge” railroad helped greatly to convey goods to market. The development of the telephone, rural free delivery, and then the automobile, radio and television completed breaking down the neighborhood organization. This is best symbolized by the opening of a single Palermo Consolidated School in 1954.

The agricultural economy reached its nadir at the time of World War II. By 1950 the population had hit bottom at 511. The town was dotted with abandoned houses on cleared land now returning to woodland. Several roads were discontinued. Two (2) new trends were emerging. Commuting to work in surrounding towns and cities had begun earlier with the improvement of roads making them passable year round to automobiles for the first time. After World War II this greatly accelerated. By the 1980’s there were almost no dairy farmers. Poultry farming, as represented by the broiler industry, had a substantial growth in the 1950’s and 60’s but then disappeared with the collapse of the processing plants.

The other trend was the growth of summer “cottages” and a few hunting lodges. While this also began prior to World War II, its substantial growth, especially along the shores of Sheepscot Great Pond, has occurred in the post-war period. Palermo as a recreational resource for non-residents dates almost entirely from this period.

Since 1960 the population has risen steadily again . The abandoned houses that had not disappeared were restored in the 60’s. With rare exceptions, the land was not reclaimed for farming. Many roads have been paved. A volunteer fire department was established in 1945 and has steadily strengthened since then. The two Granges that were very active earlier in the century were reduced to one with few active members. The Sheepscot Lake Fish and Game Association and the Senior Citizens became two of the more active social organizations. Environmental concerns began to have organized expression and were being dealt with by a more and more active Planning Board. In the mid-80’s Palermo built its first town office building since the nineteenth century town house was abandoned in 1908. At the end of the decade, election of municipal officers by written ballot, tried briefly once before nearly thirty years earlier, was re-established.

And now, we begin the 1990s, a comprehensive planning process, with maximum citizen involvement, is helping to identify and guide the next chapter in the history of Palermo.

Gordon Hunt continues;

With the new comprehensive planning process, which started in 2024, we have a lot of catching up to do.

In 1988 a new 911 and GPS System upgrade occurred all around the country. Palermo upgraded their road names as was necessary for the system, and uses the 911 and GPS system for police, fire and other first responders to better serve the community.

The early 1990's brought a major transition in mechanized logging and farming which made a significant difference in profitability for these industries. Mining operations expanded to crushing and allowed production of more usable materials. Major upgrades to Palermo road systems were undertaken, which resulted in major budget expenditures. The upgrades extended road life and reduced maintenance.

The Palermo Historical Society was established in 1994. With the passing of Freda Worthing Bradstreet in 2007, Freda's wish for the Worthing House to be Palermo's door to its past history became a reality. The Worthing house at 54 North Palermo Road contains a large selection of Palermo artifacts dating back to the early 1800's, preserving the history of Palermo.

The Ice storm of 1998 caused power outages in the entire northeast due to major tree damage. Palermo was not spared. Power was out for up to two weeks in areas of Palermo. The effects of the ice damage to trees can still be seen around Palermo today.

Around 2000, Palermo's fire alarm system was upgraded from phones to pagers. A new tower was installed on Dennis Hill to facilitate the operation of the pagers.

A new building for the Palermo Library at 2789 Route 3 was completed in 2002. The building has been upgraded over the years and is a well used resource for the town. It is used for various meetings and gatherings. Several fundraisers are held each year to keep the heat, air conditioning and lights on. The library is designated a Warming and Cooling Center as a temporary facility made available when extreme temperature conditions exist and people need relief. Free WiFi is also available inside and in the parking lot.

In 2008 Neal and Theresa Pottle started the annual BlueGrass Festival at 2060 North Palermo Road. The festival is a favorite of Palermo residents and the many fans that travel from in and out of state to attend.
In 2009 the Palermo Consolidated School located at 501 Route 3 was transitioned into RSU 12. RSU 12 includes the towns of Palermo, Somerville, Windsor, Whitefield, Alna, Chelsea, and West Port Island.

The Sheepscot Lake Association was founded in 2011. The association works with property owners, local and state officials to preserve water quality, conduct boat inspections, loon population counts, education and property evaluations.

The pristine water of Sheepscot Lake also feeds the necessary water flow for the Maine IF&W Fish Rearing Station on Gore Road.

The old Branch Mills mill was torn down in 2017 to make way for the new dam construction. The new dam was completed in 2024 and controls the water flow for the west branch of the Sheepscot River. A water tanker fill pipe was installed at the dam for fire department use. The east shore of Branch Pond is in Palermo.

2020 was the start of the Covid 19 pandemic, which brought many changes to Palermo. Many people left the cities seeking relief from the virus and the imposed restrictions. Palermo being a rural community was a magnet to those seeking relief. Houses and land were bought, increasing the population and real estate values. Along with new residents, many Palermo residents were forced to work remotely due to Covid restrictions. School students had to study remotely also. This became an issue for many because of inadequate internet service in our town. During this period there was Federal Grant money made available for upgrading internet service to underserved communities like Palermo. Committees were formed with the four neighboring towns of Liberty, Searsmont, Montville, and Freedom; and the work began to access the funds available to upgrade internet service to these 5 towns. By late 2024, construction of a new fiber optic system is expected to begin.

In 2020 Roger Komandt accepted the position of Fire Chief for the Palermo Volunteer Fire Department. Roger has made significant improvements in personnel and equipment. The radio repeaters, installed in the fire department vehicles, have helped with lifesaving communications.

In September 2021 the Select Board and the Emergency Management Director, Mike Sherman, worked up a list of vulnerable Palermo residents who may need assistance, should there be an evacuation or other emergency.

Farmland contamination from PFAS' became a major issue for farmers in the State of Maine in 2022. PFAS is the forever chemical found in sludge from sewage treatment plants. The sludge was used as fertilizer throughout the State of Maine. Some Palermo farmers used the sludge as fertilizer and have contamination issues with groundwater and crops. The State of Maine is still working on a solution to this problem.

In 2023 the State of Maine rebuilt the boat ramp and parking area off Route 3 to access the north end of Sheepscot Lake. The rebuild has made launching and parking safer and faster.

September 2023 Eagle Scout Kaleb Brown, of Troop 222, completed his Eagle Scout project building a LifeFlight helipad at the ball field on Turner Ridge Road, Palermo. The helipad is for emergency medical evacuations and is centrally located between Augusta, Waterville and Belfast. It is accessible to Palermo, Liberty, Somerville and China first responders. Brown completed the project with the help of volunteers, materials and funds with donations from local businesses. Well done, Kaleb.

Palermo voted in 2023 to not allow retail marijuana shops in the town. The State of Maine allows personal marijuana grows statewide.

Starting in the 1970's, Palermo Days has become a yearly celebration for Palermo. Palermo Days 2024 was another success with many well planned and attended activities. The community spirit of our small town was on full display. The planning and execution of the events takes a tremendous amount of work for all those who volunteer to make it happen. During Palermo Days 2024, Fire Chief Roger Komandt dedicated a plaque in honor of past Fire Chief Dean Willoughby. Dean gave 60 years of service to the Palermo Volunteer Fire Department. Dean was instrumental in building the fire house in 1978. Dean passed away September 24. 2022.

Lastly, we recognize the many veterans from Palermo who have served and are honored at their memorial at the ball field on Turner Ridge. Their memorial covers the major conflicts from the War of 1812 to Iraqi Freedom. 461 Palermo citizens answered the call to duty over that time frame. That is an amazing commitment to duty, honor and country for a small rural town.

An inventory of the location, condition, and use of any historical or archaeological resource that is of local importance.

The Palermo Historical Society has an inventory of important local artifacts in their possession. Currently there is no comprehensive inventory of locally important archaeological areas.

A brief description of threats to local historic resources and to those of state and national significance as identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

- Deterioration over time due to a lack of proper maintenance.
- Severe weather conditions (Ice storms, heavy snow, wind and rain)
- Uncontrolled development.
- Lack of knowledge
- Unwillingness on behalf of land owners.

Policies

Protect, to the greatest extent practicable, the significant historic and archaeological resources in the community.

Strategies

Strategies	Responsible Party	Time frame
For known historic archeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archeology, through local land use ordinances, require subdivision or non-residential 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.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long Term
Adopt or amend land use ordinances to require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission into their review process.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long Term
Work with the local or county historical society and/or the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for, and if necessary plan for, a comprehensive community survey of the community's historic and archaeological resources.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long Term

Water Resource

Analyses

Are there point sources (direct discharges) of pollution in the community?

The only point source of pollution in Palermo is at the MIFW fish rearing station. The IFW has a waste treatment facility to clean out the solid waste from the fish food and excrement. The water is clean when it is discharged back into the Sheepscot River. The solids are collected and given to local farms for fertilizer.

Are there non-point sources of pollution? If so, is the community taking steps to eliminate them?

There are no non-point sources of pollution identified by the DEP in the Comprehensive Plan Data at this time.

How are groundwater and surface water supplies and their recharge areas protected?

There are ordinances in the town of Palermo that could be applied to protect ground and surface water supplies. These ordinances include: Shoreland zoning, Floodplain Management, Holding Tank requirements, Subdivision Ordinance, Revised Building permit, and Electric Transmission Facilities and Corridors Ordinance. Many of the restrictions in these ordinances are the state minimum requirements.

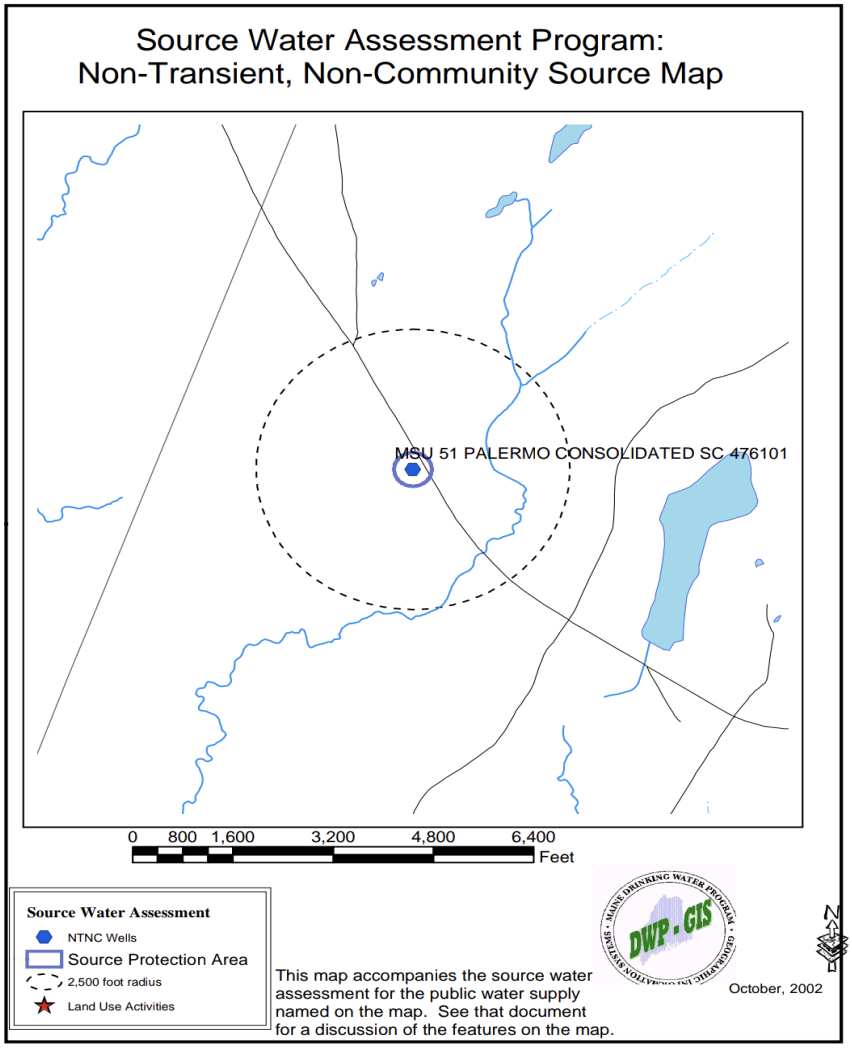
Do Public works crews and contractors use best management practices to protect water resources in their daily operations?

The town sand & salt shed is an enclosed building with a concrete floor and walls as the foundation and a metal roof over the stockpile of material. This keeps all sand and salt out of the weather so there is no run off. The town uses DOT specs when replacing culverts. There is no public works garage in Palermo. The road maintenance is contracted out and a budget for that is supplied by the town.

Are there opportunities to partner with local or regional advocacy groups that promote water resource protection?

Yes, the Maine DEP, Maine IFW, Maine Marine resources, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Atlantic Salmon Federation, Mid-Coast Conservancy and Sheepscot Lake Association.

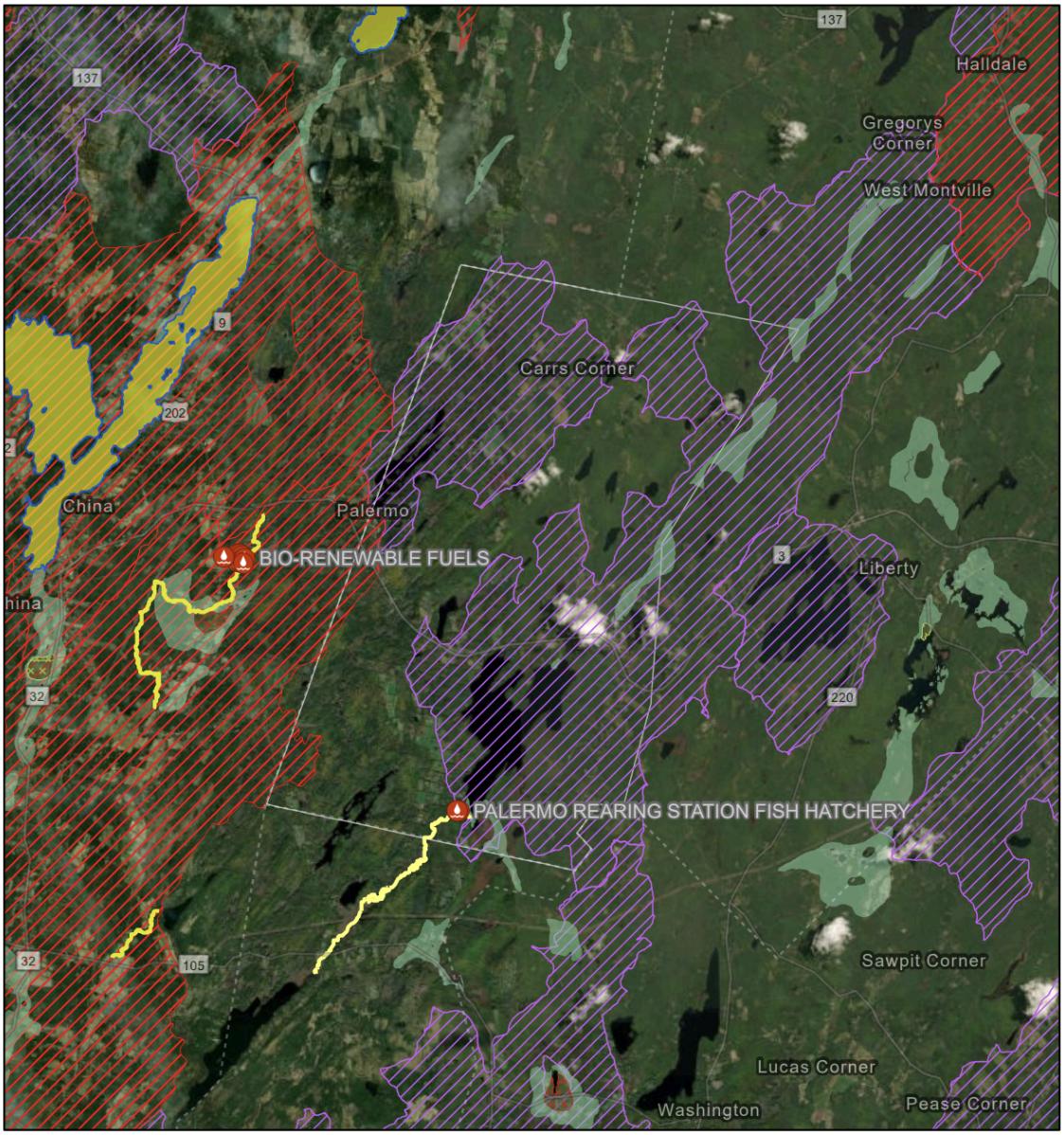
Conditions and Trends



PWSID#	PWS NAME	PWS TYPE	TOWN	COMMENTS	SOURCE ID#
PWS TYPE KEY: C=Community NC=Non Community NTNC=Non-Transient, Non-Community					
ME0000476	RSU 12 PALERMO CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL	NTNC	PALERMO		476101

Please note: information pulled is based on available infomation from Drinking Water Program files; please contact the Public Water System directly to confirm information.

Maine Water Resources Comprehensive Plan Data



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Wastewater Outfalls

Impaired Rivers and Streams

4-A: Impaired Use - TMDL Completed

4-B: Impaired Use - Pollution Controls in Place

Impaired Lakes

4-A: Impaired Use - TMDL Completed

Significant Aquifers

10-50 GPM

>50 GPM

Land Use Risk on High Yield Sand and Gravel Aquifers

Moderate Risk

High Risk

NPS Priority Impaired Watersheds

NPS Priority Threatened Watersheds

Town Boundaries

Earthstar Geographics, Maine DEP, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, USFWS

A Description of each great pond, river, surface drinking water supply, and other water bodies of local interest including:

Water body	Ecological value	Threats to water quality or quantity	Documented water quality and/or invasive species problems
Sheepscot Lake	Waterbody type E-NPS priority threatened watershed	stormwater runoff-development	Class AA
Turner Mill Pond	No information	No information	No information
Dead water slough-Hibberts Gore	Significant aquifer-10-50 GPM	Storm water runoff - mining	Class B
Colby Brook	Sheepscot watershed	Storm water runoff - development	Class B
Beech Pond	State access fishing	Storm water runoff	Class B
Mud Pond	Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B
Bear Pond	Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B
Hackmatack Pond	Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B
Dowe Pond	Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B
Saban Pond	Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B
Jump Pond	Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B
Belden Pond	Sheepscot watershed	Storm water runoff-development	Class B
Foster Pond	Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B
Bowler Pond	Sheepscot watershed	Storm water runoff-development	Class B
Nutter Pond	Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B
Chisholm Pond	Sheepscot watershed	Storm water runoff-development	Class B
Prescott Pond	West Branch Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B

Blake Pond	West Branch Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B
Jose Pond	West Branch Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B
Little Jose Pond	West Branch Sheepscot watershed	undetermined	Class B
Branch Pond- West Branch Sheepscot watershed	Water body type E-NPS priority threatened watershed	Stormwater runoff-development	Class AA
West Branch Sheepscot River	West Branch Sheepscot watershed	Stormwater runoff-development	Class AA
Sheepscot River-headwaters	Sheepscot Watershed-3-significant aquifers 10-50 GPM	Stormwater runoff-development	Class AA
Linscott Branch Stream	Sheepscot watershed	Stormwater runoff-development	Class B
Turner Branch Stream	Sheepscot watershed	Stormwater runoff-development	Class B

A summary of past and present activities to monitor, assess, and/or improve water quality, Mitigate sources of pollution, and control or prevent the spread of invasive species.

Palermo uses the Maine Shoreland Zoning requirements, to protect and govern use and development of land which may have an impact on water quality, pollution or threat of invasive species. The Sheepscot Lake Association, and its members, performs tests for dissolved oxygen levels, water clarity and phosphorous levels throughout the spring and summer. The SLA provides Lake Smart Inspections to property owners and has Courtesy Boat Inspections during boating season to control transfer of invasive species. Maine IFW Fish Rearing station controls water flow and invasive species at their dam and sluice way at the station. They maintain water quality of the discharge of the fish galleys with a water treatment plant.

A description of the location and nature of significant threats to aquifer drinking water supplies.

There are four Significant Aquifers within the Sheepscot Watershed;
Starting at the headwaters of the Sheepscot River, the northernmost aquifer starts south of Gregory's Corner and follows the Sheepscot River downstream along the Freedom and Montville border to the northeast corner of Palermo. Unknown threats at this time.

The next aquifer starts adjacent to Chisholm Pond in the town of Montville and flows south into Liberty, ending in Palermo, between Hostile Valley Rd. and the Sheepscot River. Unknown threats at this time.

The third aquifer starts just south of Belden Pond, and flows south along the border of Palermo and Liberty, between Hostile Valley Rd and Plummer Rd, and ending just north of state Rt.3. Proposed subdivision off Hostile Valley Rd. near Belden Pond.

The fourth aquifer encompasses a section in Hibberts Gore and extends along East Shore Rd. and ending at Loon Cove on Sheepscot Lake. There is a small section of aquifer on the west shore of Loon Cove also. There are mining operations in the vicinity of this aquifer.

A summary of existing lake, pond, river, stream, and drinking water protection and Preservation measures, including local ordinances

Local Ordinances:
Electric Transmission Facilities and Corridors Ordinance
Shoreland Zoning Ordinance
Wireless Telecommunications Ordinance
Revised Building Permit Ordinance
Floodplain Management Ordinance
Subdivision Ordinance
Holding Tank Ordinance
Local and state organizations:

Code Enforcement Officer, Planning Board, Select Board, Harbor Master
Sheepscot Lake Association
Mid Coast Conservancy
Atlantic Salmon Federation
Maine DEP
Maine IFW
Maine Dept. Marine Resources

Policies

To protect current and potential drinking water sources.

To protect significant surface water resources from pollution and improve water quality where needed.

To protect water resources in growth areas while promoting more intensive development in those areas.

To minimize pollution discharges through the upgrade of existing public sewer systems and
wastewater treatment facilities.

To cooperate with neighboring communities and regional/local advocacy groups to protect water resources.

Strategies

Strategies	Responsible Party	Time frame
Adopt or amend local land use ordinances as applicable to incorporate stormwater runoff performance standards consistent with: a. Maine Stormwater Management Law and Maine Stormwater regulations (Title 38 M.R.S.A. §420-D and 06-096 CMR 500 and 502). b. Maine Department of Environmental Protection's allocations for allowable levels of phosphorus in lake/pond watersheds. c. Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Program	Selectboard	Short - long term
Consider amending local land use ordinances, as applicable, to incorporate low impact development standards.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term
Where applicable, develop an urban impaired stream watershed management or mitigation plan that will	Selectboard, Conservation	Long term

promote continued development or redevelopment without further stream degradation.	Committee	
Maintain, enact or amend public wellhead and aquifer recharge area protection mechanisms, as necessary.	Selectboard	Long term
Encourage landowners to protect water quality. Provide local contact information at the municipal office for water quality best management practices from resources such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water Conservation District, Maine Forest Service, and/or Small Woodlot Association of Maine.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Adopt water quality protection practices and standards for construction and maintenance of public and private roads and public properties and require their implementation by contractors, owners, and community officials and employees.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Participate in local and regional efforts to monitor, protect and, where warranted, improve water quality.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Provide educational materials at appropriate locations regarding aquatic invasive species.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term

Natural Resources

Analyses

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

Environmentally, Palermo is a special and important place. We have a wealth of natural resources, including abundant forest, natural and rural lands, and lakes, ponds, streams and wetlands. These habitats support many native plant and animal species. Palermo lies within the watershed of the Sheepscot River and Sheepscot Pond, and encompasses the headwaters of the West Branch of the Sheepscot River. Both rivers have vital conservation value, and provide rare cold water habitat for fish species, including breeding populations of wild Brook Trout and the endangered Atlantic Salmon. Both Rivers have an AA classification which is the highest water quality classification in Maine. State biologists consider Sheepscot Pond a regional gem. Also having the highest AA water classification Sheepscot Pond contains deep, cold, well-oxygenated water that meets habitat requirements for a variety of native coldwater fisheries. (Refer to water resources map)

As indicated on the Habitat Blocks map, some sizable, relatively undeveloped habitat blocks remain in Palermo. Habitat blocks are essential for maintaining the healthy diversity of wildlife that Palermo residents currently enjoy through fishing, hunting, nature-watching and other outdoor activities. The Maine Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife has identified some special, rare species and habitats in Palermo. These are: Great Blue Heron (Species of Special Concern), rare wetland plants - Atlantic White Cedar (Species of Special Concern), and Fall Fimbry (Species of Special Concern), numerous deer
wintering areas, and two rare natural communities - Unpatterned Fen Ecosystem, and Atlantic White Cedar Bog (Endangered). (Refer to High Value Plant and Animal Habitat Map).

Results from the town survey sent out by the Comprehensive Plan Committee showed that Palermo residents list rural character, lakes, scenery and forests as the top 4 things they like best about living in Palermo. Yet Palermo's natural resources are at risk from and could be significantly affected by development practices that destroy, pollute and/or fragment habitat blocks and water resources. Palermo has the following ordinances related to land use: Electric Transmission and Facilities and Corridors Ordinance (2023), Shoreland Zoning (2016), Wireless Telecommunications (2016), Revised Building Permit (2016) Floodplain Management(2015), Subdivision Ordinance (2002), and Holding Tank (2001). The specifications in these ordinances use the state minimum restrictions and are inadequate to prevent sprawl and degradation of Palermo's natural resources.

Neighboring communities with more restrictive zoning and land use ordinances make Palermo more attractive to developers. Equidistant to the three population centers of Augusta,

Waterville and Belfast, Palermo's location is also attractive for potential homeowners. These circumstances add to the potential for increased development pressure on Palermo's natural resources. Like elsewhere in Maine, Palermo's natural resources are also threatened by climate change.

Are local shoreland zone standards consistent with state guidelines and with the standards placed on adjacent shorelands in neighboring communities?

Palermo's shoreland zone standards match the State of Maine's minimum standards and are consistent with the standards placed on shorelands of waters it shares with neighboring communities. These are the towns of China, which shares Branch Pond, Sommerville, which shares Turner Pond, Liberty, which shares Colby Pond and stream, Freedom, and Montville which shares frontage with Palermo on the upper Sheepscot River.

What regulatory and non-regulatory measures has the community taken or can the community take to protect critical natural resources and important natural resources?

Currently only the State of Maine minimum shoreland and other standards are implemented in Palermo. Palermo could increase the size of shoreline buffers as many biologists recommend to provide better protection of water quality. Palermo could consider additional measures to protect critical and important natural resources by incorporating development strategies that guide growth while also protecting the environment. Examples of such include the Grow Smart Maine Principles, and the Dept. of Inland Fish and Wildlife's Beginning with Habitat Program which assists communities to build natural resource protection and habitat conservation into their long-term growth. Strategies include designating growth areas, resource protection areas, agricultural areas, etc. within town limits, with different requirements for developments in each area. Identifying opportunities to create wildlife habitat corridors and installing stream-smart culverts are other measures that would make a big difference for Palermo's wildlife populations. Such strategies could allow Palermo to be a welcoming place for population growth while also protecting its natural beauty, rural character, open spaces and outdoor recreation traditions that we enjoy and value. Other recommended measures include forming a Conservation Committee to help increase community awareness and involvement and creating financial incentives in the form of tax reductions for conservation practices and habitat protection. (Both of these were also recommended in the previous Comprehensive Plan.) Furthermore, Palermo residents could take greater advantage of existing state land use tax programs – Open Space, Farmland, and Tree Growth.

Is there current regional cooperation or planning underway to protect shared critical natural resources? Are there opportunities to partner with local or regional groups?

There is no current regional cooperation or planning underway to protect shared critical natural resources with surrounding communities. Opportunities to partner with local regional groups can be explored. Kennebec Valley Council of Governments and Midcoast Conservancy are two such organizations that cover our region. Midcoast Conservancy has already protected some properties with critical habitats and natural resources in Palermo and has expressed interest in working with us. Regional Cooperation is especially important to create climate resilient communities. KVCOG has a Community Resilience Partnership program. Additionally, Palermo could take the lead in reaching out to neighboring communities and organizations.

Conditions and Trends

The community's Comprehensive Planning Natural Resources Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Department of Environmental Protection and the Office, or their designees.

Heat Score: 9
Population: 1,462
Number of Seniors Age 65 or Older Living Alone: 46 (2.94% of Population)
Source: Maine Social Vulnerability Index 2016
Number of Children Age 5 or Younger: 70 (4.8% of Population)
Source: American Communities Survey 2013-2018
Population Density: 33.58 people per square mile
Source: American Communities Survey 2018

Percent of Individuals Employed in Fishing-Related Businesses: 0.61%
Percent of Individuals Employed in Forestry-Related Businesses: 0.31%
Percent of Individuals Employed in Agriculture-Related Businesses: 0.22%
Percent of Individuals Employed in All Tourism-Related Businesses: 7.56%

Percent of Individuals Employed in Winter Tourism-Related Businesses: 0.55%

Jobs within FEMA 100-Year Floodplain: 1
GDP within FEMA 100-Year Floodplain: $139,867

The US CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) is a measure of social vulnerability to hazardous events, calculated from an array of metrics on socioeconomic status, household composition & disability, minority status & language, and housing type & transportation. It ranges from 0 (lowest vulnerability) to 1 (highest vulnerability).
Palermo SVI: 0.17.

Overall Capacity Score: 2
In-house Planning Staff Score: 0
Regional Planning Organization Score: 1
Regional Planning Organization (if any): KVCOG/EMDC

Maine Community Resilience Partnership Members (January 2024)
Direct Partner Community
Service Provider Partner Community

A map or description of scenic areas and scenic views of local importance, and regional or statewide importance, if available.

No comprehensive, up to date inventory exists of scenic areas or views. Palermo does have numerous bodies of water and as the survey results show, these lakes and ponds are highly valued by residents. Other areas identified in the survey include Palermo's forests, farms and trails.

Policies

To conserve critical natural resources in the community.

To coordinate with neighboring communities and regional and state resource agencies to protect shared critical natural resources.

Strategies

Strategies	Responsible Party	Time frame
Ensure that land use ordinances are consistent with applicable state law regarding critical natural resources.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Designate critical natural resources as Critical Resource Areas in the Future Land Use Plan.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Through local land use ordinances, require subdivision or non-residential property developers to look for and identify critical natural resources that may be on site and 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.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Through local land use ordinances, require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to include as part of the review process, consideration of pertinent BwH maps and information regarding critical natural resources.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Initiate and/or participate in interlocal and/or regional planning, management, and/or regulatory efforts around shared critical and important natural resources.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Pursue public/private partnerships to protect critical and important natural resources such as through purchase of land or easements from willing sellers.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Distribute or make available information to those living in or near critical or important natural resources about current use tax programs and applicable local, state, or federal regulations.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term

Agricultural and Forest Resources

Analyses

How important is agriculture and/or forestry and are these activities growing, stable, or declining?

Palermo residents enjoy the town for its rural and agricultural character and, as shown in the responses to the survey, want to do what is necessary to protect these features.

Are these activities growing, stable, or declining?

Farmers feel that agriculture is declining as it has become less viable to make a living. Blueberry producers have been known to receive a bill – rather than a payment – after a harvest. A local farmer reports this may be because Canada subsidizes blueberry production which makes selling blueberries at a market rate in Maine impossible. In Maine, there are subsidies to improve fields, but this doesn't compete with the Canadian subsidies for production.

Similarly, subsidization and government programs have changed the market for dairy farms. Farmers must know how to work the system of grants and subsidies to stay in business, because the market has been so disrupted by these interventions.

Is the community currently taking regulatory and/or non-regulatory steps to protect productive farming and forestry lands? Are there local or regional land trusts actively working to protect farms or forest lands in the community?

Regulatory Steps: High Voltage Transmission Facility Ordinance

In 2023, Palermo was one of 40+ small towns identified as a potential "host" community for a high-voltage transmission line. Based on special town meeting attendance, this was roundly opposed by the residents of Palermo. In light of this, Palermo voted in a moratorium on development of high-voltage transmission lines, followed by an ordinance regulating their development.

The proposed transmission line was drawn across approximately 11 farms in Palermo, bisecting several areas considered **prime farmland** or **farmland of statewide importance.**

Regulatory Steps: Food Sovereignty Ordinance

In 2020, Palermo passed a Food Sovereignty ordinance, which is well aligned with the community sentiment to encourage farming. It affirms that direct producer to consumer relationships are permitted and thus facilitates the sale of farm goods in the municipality.

Local or Regional Land trusts

Farmers report instances where Maine Farmland Trust (MFT) bid against other farmers at auctions, and then offered to lease the land to the farmers whom they had just outbid. MFT does not allow timber harvest on the lands and has rules that some farmers find too restrictive. Thus, there is only one property in Palermo associated with MFT: a wild blueberry field.

Midcoast Conservancy is also active in the region and owns two parcels.

Are farm and forest land owners taking advantage of the state's current use tax laws?

A total of 5438 acres were in one of the three current use tax statuses: farmland, woodland, or open space. This is 21.5% of the town's total land area, up from 18.7% in 2014.

Has proximity of new homes or other incompatible uses affected the normal farming and logging operations?

There are limited reports of incompatible uses other than the proposed LS Power transmission line. Farmers report that they have often bought neighboring parcels at above market prices in order to forestall problems.

Are there large tracts of agricultural or industrial forest land that have been or may be sold for development in the foreseeable future? If so, what impact would this have on the community?

Again, see notes on the proposed transmission line. This would have bisected prime farmland parcels and added to the tax base, which has the net result of increasing property taxes for the average resident.

A large forest land owner and operator in town is Robbins Lumber. If they were to close or sell, that could have a significant impact.

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?

Palermo has a town forest, several farm stands, and community supported agriculture. The Town supports these endeavors by not excessively restricting their operations and promoting beneficial tax use programs.

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

The Palermo town forest is a 50 acre parcel on Turner Ridge. The forest is not currently under management.

Conditions and Trends

The community's Comprehensive Planning Agriculture and Forestry Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Department of Agriculture, the Maine Forest Service, and the Office, or their designees.

See appendix B for soil map.

2024-10-17

Summary of Timber Harvest Information for the town of: Palermo

Harvest Area By Town (Acres).

Year	Selection	Shelter wood	Land Use Change	Clearcut	Totals	# of Reports
1991-2001	4005	460	40	158	4663	168
2002-2011	3493	433	27	25	3978	125
2012-2016	2237	154	64	0	2455	79
2017-2021	1336	389	52	0	1777	66
Total	11071	1436	183	183	12873	438

Data compiled from Confidential Year End Landowner Reports to Maine Forest Service.

Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry - Maine Forest Service

We help you make informed decisions about Maine's forests

To protect confidential landowner information, data is reported only where three or more landowner reports reported harvesting in the town.

The Comprehensive Planning Dataset provided by the state includes:

State Valuation History for Palermo:
2023 $253,850,000
2022 $216,200,000
2021 $193,650,000
2020 $183,300,000
2019 $171,150,000

Municipal Records for Palermo:
Tax Records: Yes
Date of Maps: 4/1/76 (NOTE: Tax records are updated yearly)
Mapping Contractor: CU Archer
Number of Parcels: 1370
Taxable Acres: 25,290
Professional Revaluation: No

Miscellaneous Exemptions 2022:
Blind: $12,000
Animal Waste Storage: $287,650
Renewable Energy: $202,000
Benevolent and Charitable: $1,543,400
Literary and Scientific: $344,400
Veterans Organizations: $275,500
Churches Exempt Value: $1,441,900
State of Maine: $1,213,700
Municipal Corporations: $2,971,000
Total All Exemptions: $8,705,550

69 Veterans Exemptions

Open Space: 4 parcels, 363 acres, $154,700 total valuation

Working waterfront: 0

Farmland:
26 parcels
189 acres first classified
556 farmland acres
1661 woodland acres
Valuation farmland: $206,560
Valuation woodland: $590,248
Parcels withdrawn: 1
Acres withdrawn: 20
Penalties assessed: $3,678

Woodland:
32 Parcels
Softwood acres: 472
Mixed wood acres: 1385
Hardwood acres: 1016
Total Acres: 2873
Valuation: $935,877
Parcels withdrawn: 1
Acres withdrawn: 76
Penalties Assessed: $0

Misc:
Tif District: 0
Motor Vehicle Excise Tax: $363,073
Watercraft Excise Tax: $3,621
Distribution and Transmission: $2,795,400
Electrical generation: 0

Taxable Machinery & Equipment: $1,062,500
Taxable Business Equipment: $12,700
Other Taxable Personal Property: $61,900
Total Taxable Personal Property: $1,137,100

Total # Homestead Exemptions: 509
Total Value Homestead Exemptions: $12,718,600
Total # BETE Exemptions: 17
Total Value BETE Exemptions: $2,626,100
(Business Equipment Tax Exemption)

Certified Ratio, Commitment, Tax Rate, Land and Building Valuation
Certified Ratio: 100%
Commitment: $2,657,535
Tax Rate: 0.01040
Total Taxable Municipal Valuation: $255,532,200
Taxable Land Valuation: $81,491,900
Taxable Buildings Valuation: $172,903,200
Total Taxable Land & Buildings Valuation: $254,395,100

A map and/or description of the community's farms, farmland, and managed forest lands and a brief description of any that are under threat.

See appendix A.

Information on the number of parcels and acres of farmland, tree growth, and open space enrolled in the state's farm, tree growth, and open space law taxation programs, including changes in enrollment over the past 10 years.

As mentioned in the prior question - a total of 5438 acres were in one of the three current use tax statuses: farmland, woodland, or open space. This is 21.5% of the town's total land area, up from 18.7% in 2014.

	2014	2023	change
Farmland lots	16	26	10
Acres	1499	2216	717
Valuation	$ 1,033,900	$ 1,154,800	$ 120,900
Parcels withdrawn			
Woodland lots	34	31	-3
Softwood acres	649	473	-176
Mix wood acres	1289	1372	83
Hardwood acres	1135	1014	-121

Total acres	3073	2859	-214
Valuation	$ 1,283,500	$ 1,419,300	$ 135,800
Parcels Withdrawn			
Open Space Lots	3	4	1
Acres	157	363	206
Valuation	$ 147,600	$ 155,600	$ 8,000

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

During the summer months, Waldo County Bounty organizes a free food/produce share under the town gazebo.

Policies

To safeguard lands identified as prime farmland or capable of supporting commercial forestry.

To support farming and forestry and encourage their economic viability.

Strategies

Strategies	Responsible Party	Time frame
Consult with the Maine Forest Service district forester when developing any land use regulations pertaining to forest management practices as required by 12 M.R.S.A. §8869.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Consult with Soil and Water Conservation District staff when developing any land use regulations pertaining to agricultural management practices.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long Term

Amend land use ordinances to require commercial or subdivision developments in critical rural areas, if applicable, maintain areas with prime farmland soils as open space to the greatest extent practicable.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Limit non-residential development in critical rural areas (if the town designates critical rural areas) to natural resource-based businesses and services, nature tourism/outdoor recreation businesses, farmers' markets, and home occupations.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Encourage owners of productive farm and forest land to enroll in the current use taxation programs.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Permit land use activities that support productive agriculture and forestry operations, such as roadside stands, greenhouses, firewood operations, sawmills, log buying yards, and pick-your-own operations.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Include agriculture, commercial forestry operations, and land conservation that supports them in local or regional economic development plans.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term

Marine Resources

Palermo does not have any coastline and this section is not applicable.

Economy

Analyses

Is the economy experiencing significant change, and how does this, or might this, affect the local population, employment, and municipal tax base?

The local economy is experiencing some change due to changes to the political landscape in the country and state. The effect on the local population, employment and tax base of Palermo is undetermined at this point in time.

Does the community have defined priorities for economic development? Are these priorities reflected in regional economic development plans?

Palermo does not have defined priorities for economic development other than to promote good stewardship of the land, natural resources and rural character among residents.

Palermo's comprehensive plan defined our growth area within the town. This area defines expected residential growth, although residential growth can occur anywhere in town. Commercial growth has generally occurred along the Rt.3 corridor. These plans reflect the regional vision for economic development.

If there is a traditional downtown or village center(s) in the community? If so, are they deteriorating or thriving?

The traditional village of Palermo, we call the "Branch", is the location of the town offices, the fire department, the historical society, the grange hall, the post office, the christian church and other historical sites. This is a very active center for the town throughout the year, with many community programs available.

Is tourism an important part of the local economy? If so, what steps has the community taken to support this industry?

If you consider summer seasonal influx of population around our many lakes and ponds as tourism, then yes, tourism is an important part of Palermo's economy. Many tourists pass through Palermo on their way to other destinations. Residents of Palermo are aware of the importance of the quality of our resources and will do what is necessary to protect them. Various ordinances have been adopted to that end.

Do/should home occupations play a role in the community?

Many residents of Palermo are able to work from home. Widespread technological advances and changes in corporate culture have advanced this condition. Additionally, running a small business from home is increasingly common.

Are there appropriate areas within the community for industrial or commercial development? If so, are performance standards necessary to assure that industrial and commercial development is compatible with the surrounding land uses and landscape?

In general, the majority of commercial development in Palermo occurs on the state Rt.3 corridor. This is a natural fit to most types of commercial operations. At the present time, there is no specific commercial zone mandated in Palermo. There are various ordinances that govern commercial development and appropriate land use in these cases. New ordinances are also being drafted

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Are public facilities, including sewer, water, broadband access or three-phase power, needed to support the projected location, type, and amount of economic activity, and what are the issues involved in providing them?

At the present time, there are no public water or sewer systems in the town of Palermo. Residential and commercial requirements for these systems are private installations. These systems would be built to the required state specifications and local ordinances. Any new economic activity requiring those services would be private also. There is no three-phase power currently available in Palermo. Commercial operations requiring three-phase power would have to install a three-phase converter system to run needed equipment. Broadband access will be available to anyone in Palermo by late 2026. The Waldo Broadband Corporation was awarded a $10.8M grant to bring broadband to residents and businesses of Freedom, Montville, Liberty, Searsmont and Palermo. These facilities are what is available, at this time, in Palermo. Palermo is largely a rural community and any commercial development would have to fit within the parameters of what is available for services.

If there are local or regional economic development incentives such as TIF districting, do they encourage development in growth areas?

Palermo does not have TIF districting and such incentives are not practical strategies to attract individuals and businesses to Palermo. The Town of Palermo is attractive to those seeking a quiet, rural lifestyle with unfettered opportunities to work with the land and enjoy direct access to nature.

How can/does the community use its unique assets such as recreational opportunities, historic architecture, civic events, etc. for economic growth?

Residents of Palermo have been directly engaged with the natural world for generations. The practices of farming and gardening, forestry, hunting and fishing are enjoyed throughout the year. While these and many other activities are shared by residents and visitors alike. The unique assets which have been bestowed upon Palermo and its residents are those which lead more toward a full life spent in the outdoors and less towards economic growth.

Conditions and Trends

The community's Comprehensive Planning Economic Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Office or its designee.

Employer Information

*The State's data for employer information is inaccurate. Numerous businesses listed within either went out of business years ago or were never located in the Town of Palermo. The data is clearly dated and is apparently based on the mailing address of the business, not the physical location. In addition to the outdated or simply incorrect information, it does not account for the many businesses that have begun operations in the years since.

While we are required to include the information provided by the state, we felt it was necessary in this case to address the glaring inaccuracies.

Employer	Size
A Better Choice Counselling Service	1-4
A1 Chimney Cleaning	1-4
B & B septic Tank Srv	1-4
Et Transportation Svc Inc	1-4
Fox Run Boarding Kennels	1-4
Great Expectations For Early	1-4
Jackson's Lawn Svs Inc	1-4
KMT & Sons Construction	1-4
Little Bucket LLC	1-4
Maine Solar Engineering	1-4
Modern Woodmen of America	1-4
Nelson Family Farm	1-4
Out On A Limb Apple CSA	Unknown
Palermo Christian Church	1-4
Palermo Community Library	1-4

Palermo Consolidated School	20-49
Palermo Town Office	1-4
Palermo Volunteer Fire Dept	5-9
SKF Detailing	1-4
Tobey Kempton & Son	5-9
Tobey Kempton & Son Gen Contr	1-4
United States Postal Svc	1-4
Urethane Foam Insulation	1-4

The Comprehensive Plan Committee compiled a more accurate list of businesses in town.

Acer Confectionary
Aegir's Den Meadery
Avery Glidden Construction & Foundations
B&B Septic
Chickadee Property Management
Daryl Horak Logging
Dimensional Timber LLC
FA Peabody Insurance
Falla Farms Gardens
Falla & Sons Land Surveyors, INC
Farmers Daughter Bags
Fox Fire Farm
Fox Run Boarding Kennels
Glidden's Garage
Haskell & Daughter Beef
Haskell Equipment Sales & Rental LLC
Haskell & Sons INC
Hillary Rae Photography
Jacob McKenney Site Evaluator
Jason Fuller Construction
J & K FARMS
JP AUTOMOTIVE
Justin Leeman & Sons Trucking
KMT & Sons Construction
Landscape Revolution
Leeman Masonry & Hardscape
Liberty East Electrical
Lily Cove Farm
MA Haskell Farm LLC
MA Haskell Fuel Company
MA Haskell Trucking
Michael Ryan Construction LLC
Nelson Family Farm
New England Forest Products
Pagett Farm
Piece of Mind Elder Care
Potter’s Sawmill
Poundsweet Farm
Rosy Market Farm Stand
SD Childs & Sons INC
SKF Detailing
Spencer Logging
The Maine Variety
Tim Reilly Construction
Todd Nelson Trucking
Urethane Foam Insulation
Wild Miller Farm
Wet Cellar Farm
North Palermo Storage
Third Coast Equine

A brief historical perspective on how and why the current economy of the community and region developed.

Refer to the Historical section.

A list of local and regional economic development plans developed over the past five years, which include the community.

Waldo County broadband: to include Palermo, Liberty, Freedom, Montville and Searsmont. New dam and fish ladder at Branch Pond and the West Branch of the Sheepscot River. Fire truck water fill station at new Branch Pond Dam. Emergency Heli-Pad at the ball field on Turner Ridge Rd., Palermo. This pad was built through an Eagle Scout project and made available to emergency services from Palermo, Liberty, Somerville and China.

Where does the community's population work and where do employees in your community reside? A description of the major employers in the community and labor market area and their outlook for the future.

A large majority of the population commute out of town for work. Based on the survey results, many residents appear to work in Augusta. There are numerous small businesses in Palermo, most of which are run from home. Major employers include: saw mills and log yards, a fuel company, several construction companies, dairy, vegetable and blueberry farms. These employers draw workers from Palermo and neighboring towns. With the advent of broadband availability , certain businesses will be able to work remotely.

A description of any economic development incentive districts, such as tax increment financing districts, in the community.

The Town of Palermo does not have any economic incentive districts.

Policies

To support the type of economic development activity the community desires, reflecting the community's role in the region.

To make a financial commitment, if necessary, to support desired economic development, including needed public improvements.

To coordinate with regional development corporations and surrounding towns as necessary to support desired economic development.

Population & Demographics

Analyses

Is the rate of population change expected to continue as in the past, or to slow down or speed up? What are the implications of this change?

Palermo is expected to have a 9.2% population gain from 2020-2040.
In 2020 the population was 1,570. By 2040, the population is expected to be 1,714 - a gain of 144 people. The greatest gain is expected to be 2025-2030 with a 3.2% gain. Waldo County is expected to have the second highest county gain in population by 2040 with 7.0%.

What will be the likely demand for housing and municipal and school services to accommodate the change in population and demographics, both as a result of overall change and as a result of change among different age groups?

By 2040, with a possible increase of 144 people, there could be a need for about 70 houses. In 2020, there were a total of 944 housing units in Palermo, of which 658 were occupied and 286 were unoccupied.

Does your community have a significant seasonal population, is the nature of that population changing? What is the community's dependence on seasonal visitors?

Palermo does have a significant seasonal population, though it is somewhat changing as more people retire and move to their summer homes year-round. The property tax contribution from seasonal homes is over 50% at the present.

If your community is a service center or has a major employer, are additional efforts required to serve a daytime population that is larger than its resident population?

Palermo is neither a service center nor does it have a major employer.

Conditions and Trends

The community's Comprehensive Planning Population and Demographic Data Set (including relevant local, regional, and statewide data) prepared and provided to the community by the Office or its designee.

Census Data

April 1, 2010	1,535
2010	1,536
2011	1,541
2012	1,547
2013	1,551
2014	1,551
2015	1,550
2016	1,563
2017	1,572
2018	1,569
2019	1,566
April 1, 2020	1,571

Demographic Data

Population Observed	2010	1,536
	2015	1,556
	2020	1,570
Population Projected	2025	1,614
	2030	1,667
	2035	1,702
	2040	1,714
% Change	2010-2015	1.3%
	2015-2020	0.9%
	2020-2025	2.8%
	2025-2030	3.2%
	2030-2035	2.1%
	2035-2040	0.7%
Total % Change	2020-2040	9.2%

	Palermo	Waldo County	Maine
Population - Estimates, Annual, 2023	1,628	40,620	1,395,722
Population - Decennial Total, 2020	1,570	39,607	1,362,359
Population - Decennial Total, 2010	1,535	38,786	1,328,361
Population - Decennial Total, 2000	1,220	36,280	1,274,923
Population - Decennial Total, 1990	1,021	33,018	1,227,928
Population - Decennial Total, 1980	760	28,414	1,125,043
Population - by Age (Decennial), 2020			
Under 5 years	72	1,775	61,477
5 to 9 years	90	2,021	68,948
10 to 14 years	101	2,256	75,490
15 to 17 years	59	1,266	46,359

18 and 19 years	31	955	33,513
20 years	10	461	16,946
21 years	13	386	15,692
22 to 24 years	45	1,016	42,082
25 to 29 years	70	1,878	76,337
30 to 34 years	80	2,174	83,560
35 to 39 years	80	2,226	81,855
40 to 44 years	88	2,335	76,931
45 to 49 years	106	2,351	81,219
50 to 54 years	120	2,560	91,120
55 to 59 years	123	3,031	105,618
60 and 61 years	64	1,265	43,769
62 to 64 years	91	2,077	64,414
65 to 69 years	104	3,273	97,598
70 to 74 years	108	2,845	80,508
75 to 79 years	61	1,706	52,726
80 to 84 years	29	944	32,908
85 years and over	25	806	33,289
Population - by Age (Decennial), 2010			
Under 5 years	84	2,072	69,520
5 to 9 years	92	2,185	74,116
10 to 14 years	100	2,344	79,013
15 to 17 years	69	1,546	51,884
18 and 19 years	37	949	36,426
20 years	10	457	17,408
21 years	19	420	16,566
22 to 24 years	42	1,096	45,672
25 to 29 years	52	1,898	72,681

30 to 34 years	85	2,137	71,943
35 to 39 years	94	2,279	79,905
40 to 44 years	107	2,490	91,471
45 to 49 years	110	1,949	107,619
50 to 54 years	151	3,279	110,956
55 to 59 years	122	3,299	102,441
60 and 61 years	45	1,300	37,823
62 to 64 years	74	1,806	51,837
65 to 69 years	98	2,130	65,014
70 to 74 years	68	1,461	47,637
75 to 79 years	31	1,125	38,894
80 to 84 years	31	795	30,399
85 years and over	14	769	29,136
Educational Attainment, 2023			
Less than 9th grade	13	587	18224
Margin of Error, Less than 9th grade	11	183	943
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	14	1,299	37807
Margin of Error, 9th to 12th grade, no diploma	11	240	1392
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	360	9,472	310243
Margin of Error, High school graduate (includes equivalency)	60	643	4312
Some college, no degree	196	5,420	185439
Margin of Error, Some college, no degree	50	344	3335
Associate degree	121	2,749	105594
Margin of Error, Associate degree	35	337	1940
Bachelor's degree	217	5,987	223713
Margin of Error, Bachelor's degree	79	511	3614
Graduate or professional degree	135	4,444	135610

Margin of Error, Graduate or professional degree	41	377	2647
% High School Graduate or Higher	97.40	93.7	94.5
Margin of Error, % High School Graduate or Higher	1.7	1.1	.2
% Bachelor's Degree or Higher	33.3	34.8	35.3
Margin of Error, % Bachelor's Degree or Higher	6.1	2.1	.4
Population - Average Household Size, 2023			
Average Household Size	2.29	2.25	2.27
Margin of Error	.17	.04	.01
Income - Median Household, 2023			
Median Household Income	92,344	68,441	71,773
Margin of Error	13,426	4,439	660
Income - Families below poverty level, 2023			
All families - Total	418	11,010	357,418
All families - Total; Margin of Error	87	402	3,022
All families - Percent below poverty level	1.4	7.3	6.5
All families - Percent below poverty level; Margin of Error	1.5	1.4	.3
Employment - Occupation, 2023			
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	767	18,817	688,248
Margin of Error; Civilian employed population 16 years and over	124	561	3,558
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	324	7,960	287,611
Margin of Error; Management, business, science, and arts occupations	84	546	3,705
Service occupations	56	2,656	110,440
Margin of Error; Service occupations	22	277	2,291

Sales and office occupations	214	3,904	136,579
Margin of Error; Sales and office occupations	60	357	2,684
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	62	2,125	71,083
Margin of Error; Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	37	273	2,020
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	111	2,172	82,535
Margin of Error; Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	43	254	2,053
Transportation - Means of Travel To Work, 2023			
Total	734	18,401	674,654
Margin of Error	120	542	3,833
Car, truck, or van - drove alone	514	13,293	487,572
Margin of Error	83	548	4,195
Car, truck, or van - carpooled	87	1,358	55,335
Margin of Error	31	225	1,896
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	6	102	3,297
Margin of Error	7	67	365
Walked	15	666	23,573
Margin of Error	18	182	14,087
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, or other means	0	197	9,542
Margin of Error	11	88	811
Worked at home	112	2,785	95,335
Margin of Error	73	415	2,472
Transportation - Travel Time to Work, 2023			
Workers over 16 who did not work at home	622	15616	579319
Margin of Error	91	542	4025
Less than 5 minutes	54	1107	28897

Margin of Error	42	257	1534
5 to 9 minutes	22	1659	73664
Margin of Error	10	319	1927
10 to 14 minutes	32	1566	86210
Margin of Error	20	231	2093
15 to 19 minutes	22	2587	87084
Margin of Error	14	323	2198
20 to 24 minutes	22	1771	75705
Margin of Error	14	211	2095
25 to 29 minutes	81	1235	36995
Margin of Error	34	189	1602
30 to 34 minutes	172	1676	67003
Margin of Error	49	252	2007
35 to 39 minutes	54	575	19515
Margin of Error	27	154	933
40 to 44 minutes	43	748	21742
Margin of Error	30	136	1163
45 to 59 minutes	68	1518	42800
Margin of Error	30	177	1493
60 to 89 minutes	52	764	26101
Margin of Error	25	148	1545
90 or more minutes	0	410	13603
Margin of Error	11	118	733
Housing - Substandard, 2023			
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	16	179	1354
Margin of Error: kitchen facilities	18	55	395
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	16	271	5422
Margin of Error: plumbing facilities	18	90	665

No telephone service available	3	149	4667
Margin of Error: phone service	5	70	523

Sources:
US Census Population Estimates, Vintage 2023
Population - Decennial Total from:
US Census Bureau, Decennial Census
US Census Bureau, Decennial Census
Population - by Age (Decennial) from:
US Census Bureau, Decennial Census
Educational Attainment from:
American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Population - Average Household Size from:
American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Income - Median Household from:
American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Income - Families below poverty level from:
American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Employment - Occupation from:
American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Transportation - Means of Travel To Work from:
American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Transportation - Travel Time to Work from:
American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Housing - Substandard from: American Community Survey 5-year estimates

Housing

Analyses

How many additional housing units (if any), including rental units, will be necessary to accommodate projected population and demographic changes during the planning period?

According to the American Community Survey, US Census Bureau, as of 2022, there were 922 Single Family Homes in Palermo, making up 93.7% of housing, followed by 52, or 5.3% of homes reported as “other housing typologies.”

Approximately 70 new housing units may be required by 2040. There are no local hurdles to accomplishing that objective.

Is housing, including rental housing, affordable to those earning the median income in the region? Is housing affordable to those earning 80% of the median income? If not, review local and regional efforts to address the issue.

According to the American Community Survey, US Census Bureau, In 2022 median income for owner households was $95,636. No data on Renters was available. As of December, 2013 the typical home in Palermo was worth $165,000. As of December 2023, the typical home value had nearly doubled to $323,000 according to Zillow Research courtesy State of Maine Housing Data Portal.

Despite the meteoric rise in housing prices largely due to a state-wide supply shortage and unusual increase in demand coupled with an inflationary macro environment, housing in Palermo remains affordable. Based on a decades-old standard set by Congress and implemented in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs, housing is considered affordable when housing and utility costs combined are less than 30% of a household’s income.

Palermo relies on market forces to stimulate the availability of naturally occurring affordable homes for owners and renters alike.

Are seasonal homes being converted to year-round use or vice-versa? What impact does this have on the community?

Many seasonal homes, specifically those on Sheepscot Pond have been converted from Seasonal to four season homes over the last ten years This trend leads to additional private roads and an increased strain on emergency services.

Will additional low and moderate income family, senior, or assisted living housing be necessary to meet projected needs for the community? Will these needs be met locally or regionally?

Based on the documented demographic trends noted above, there is no anticipated requirement for additional low and moderate income family, senior, or assisted living housing in Palermo.

Are there other major housing issues in the community, such as substandard housing?

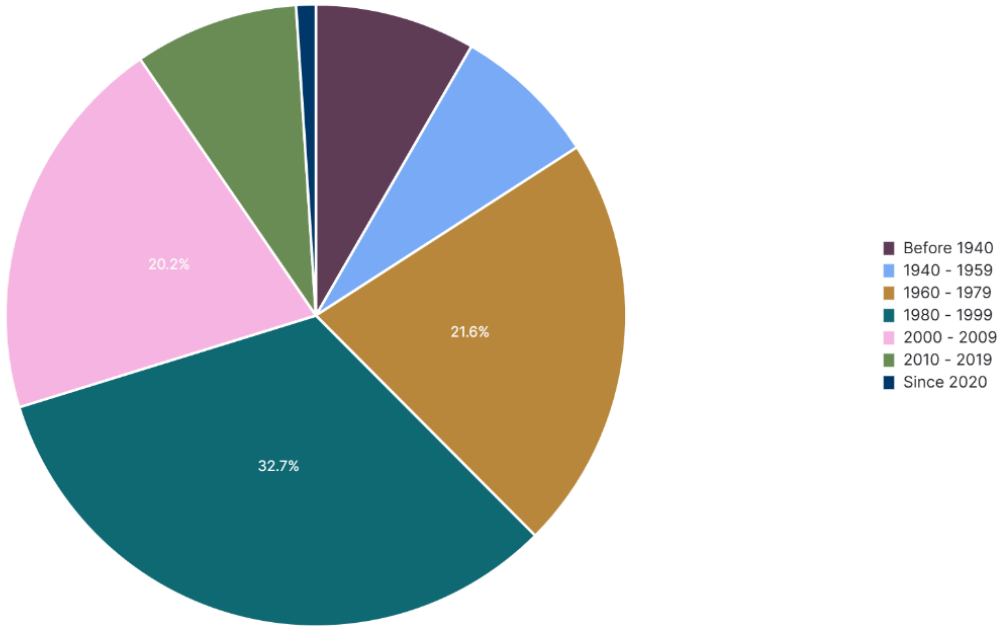
Generally speaking, there are no major housing issues in the town of Palermo.

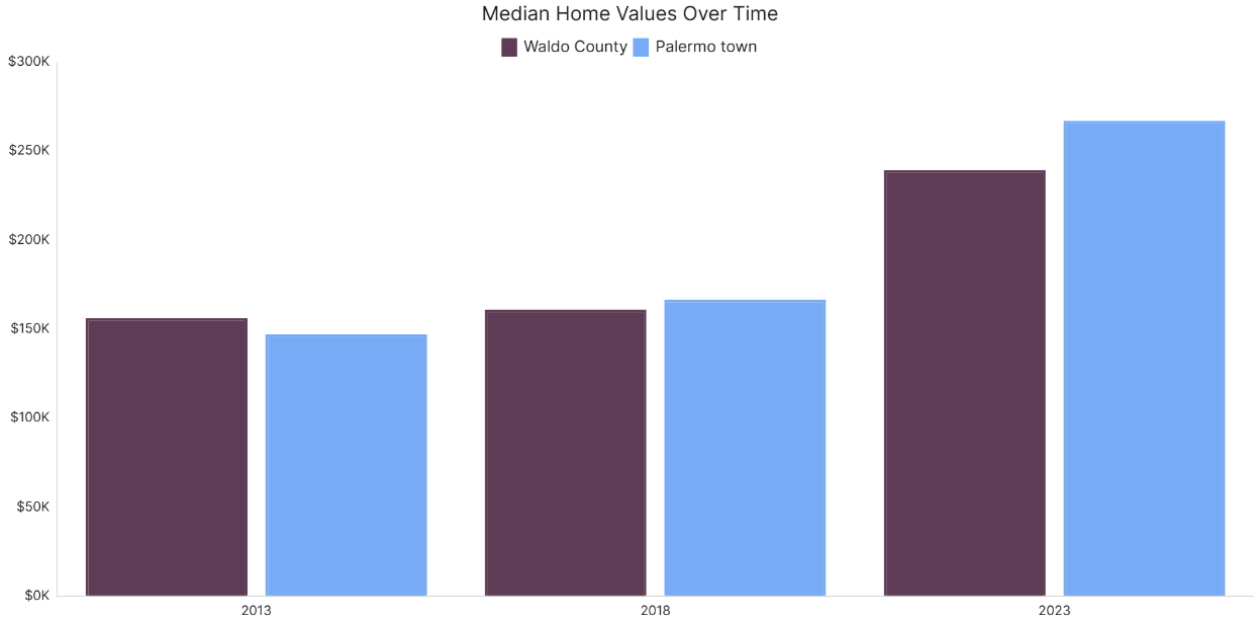
How do existing local regulations encourage or discourage the development of affordable/workforce housing?

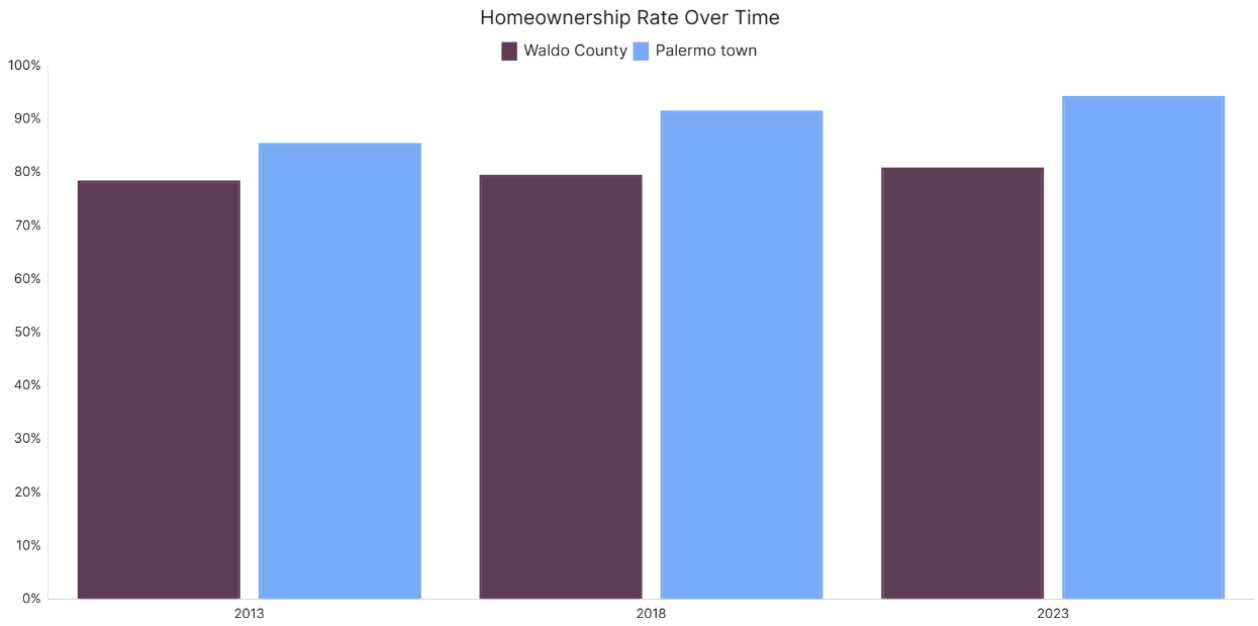
The Town of Palermo encourages development of market rate, affordable and workforce housing by keeping the administrative burden on builders to an absolute minimum. The town operates on state minimum requirements for building code and inspections and the costs for a building permit is calculated at $.05 per square foot, an unusually low rate.

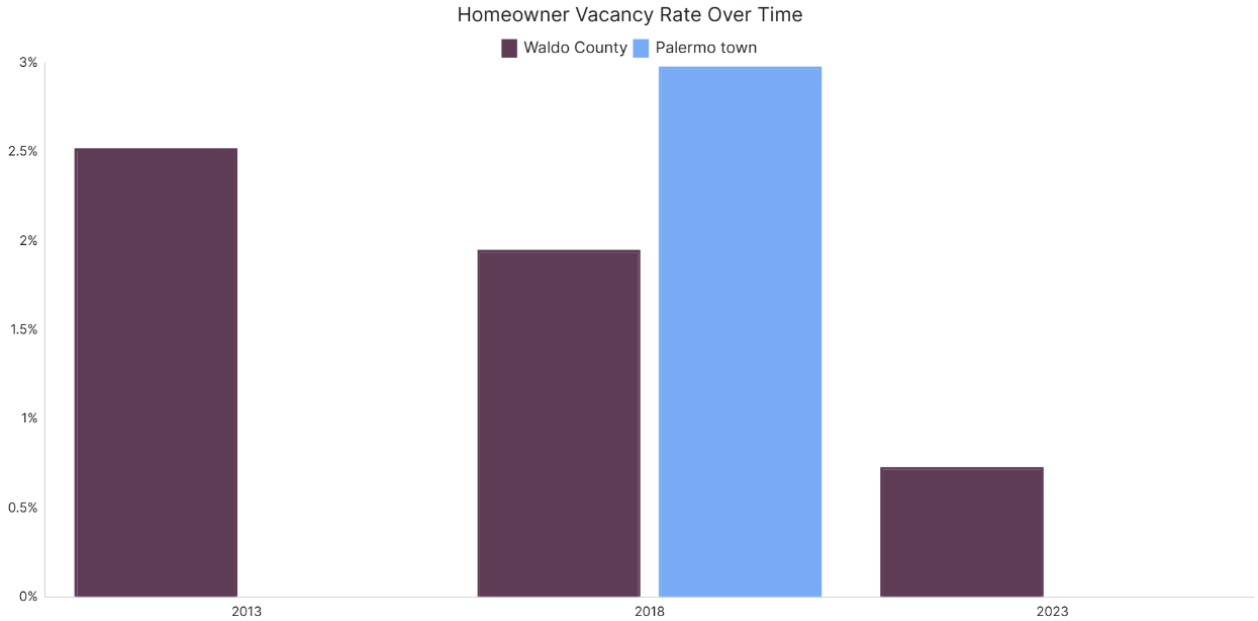
Conditions and Trends

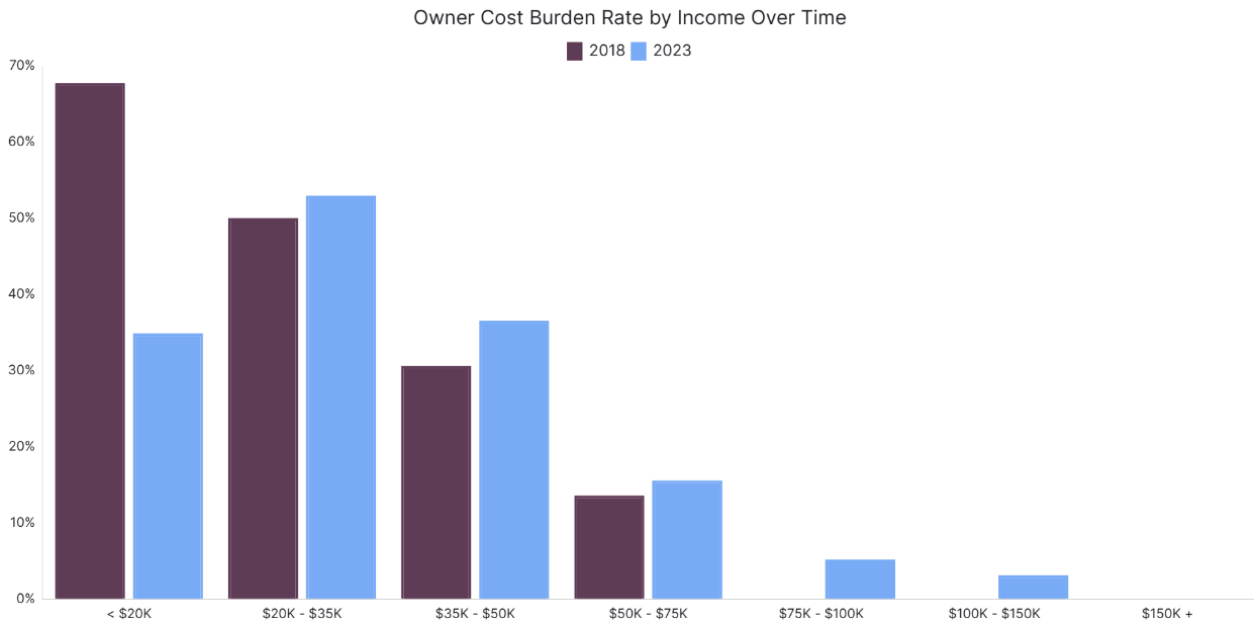
The community's Comprehensive Planning Housing Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Maine State Housing Authority, and the Office, or their designees.

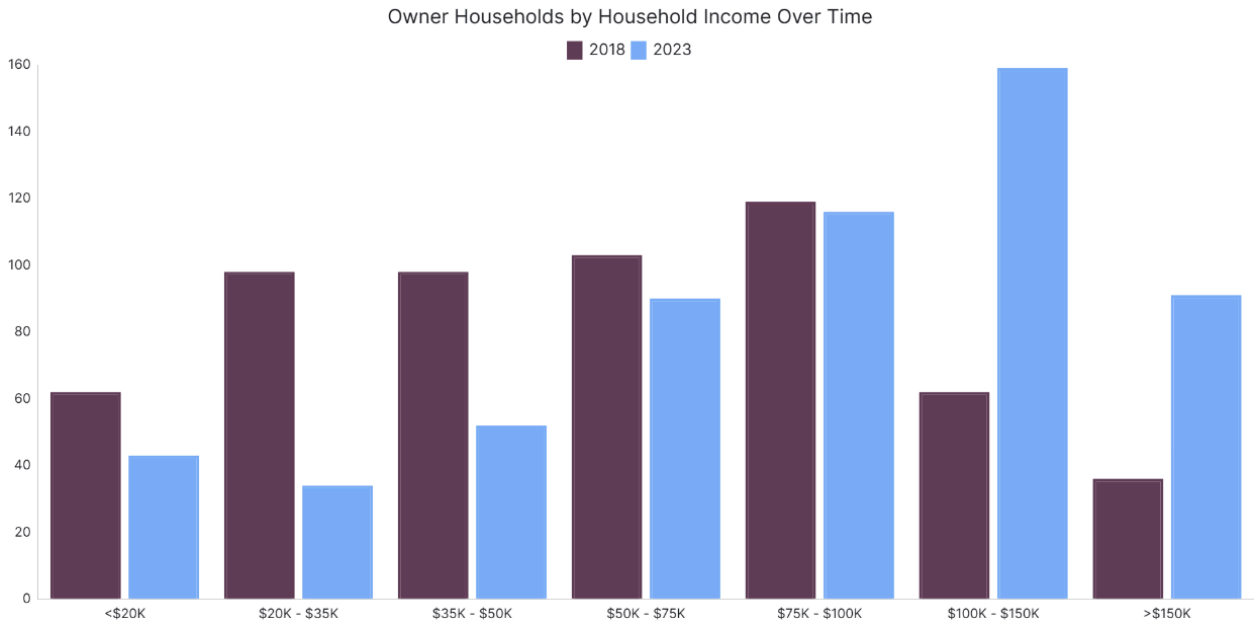


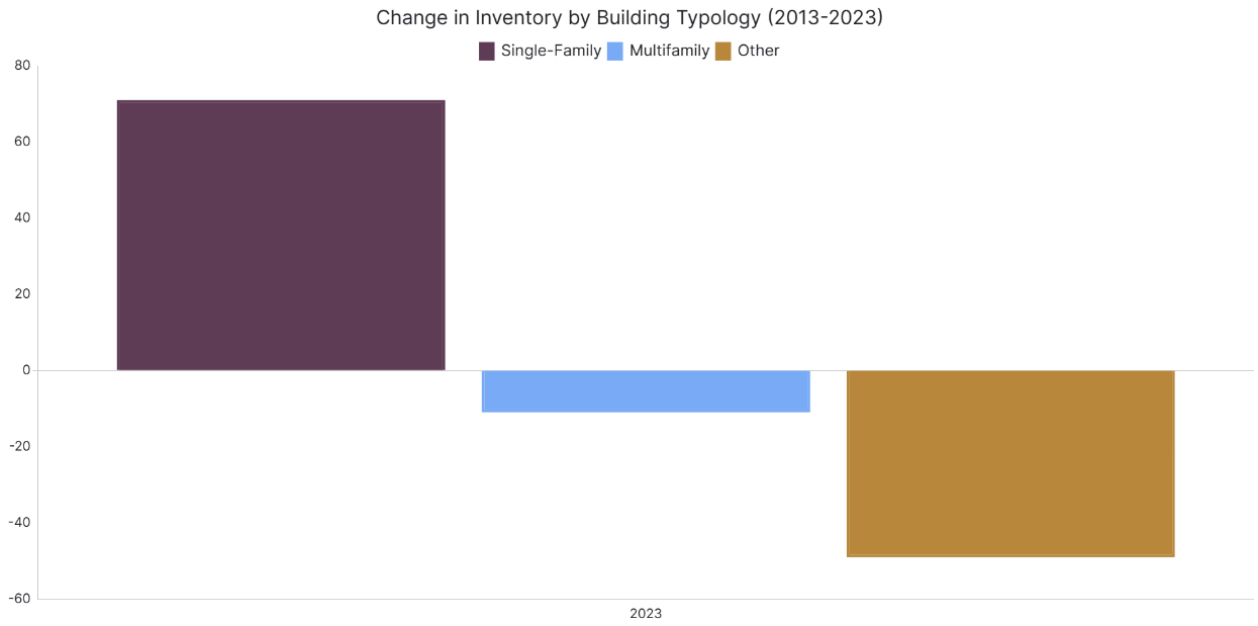


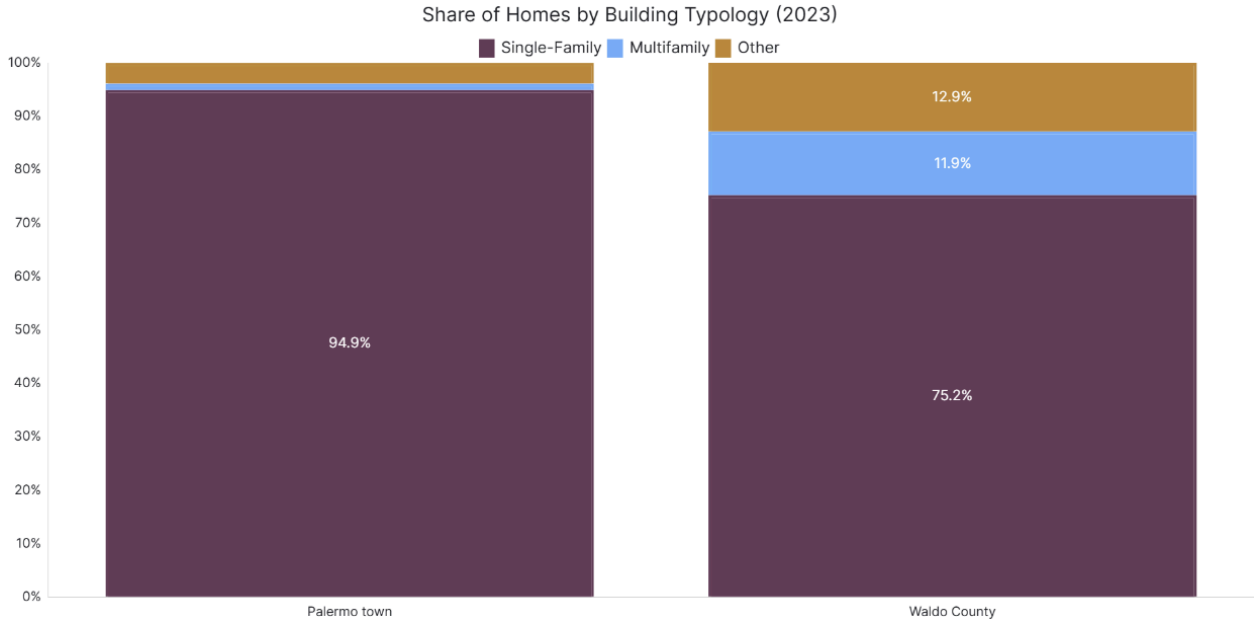

Homeownership Rate Over Time
Waldo County
Palermo town
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
2013
2018
2023

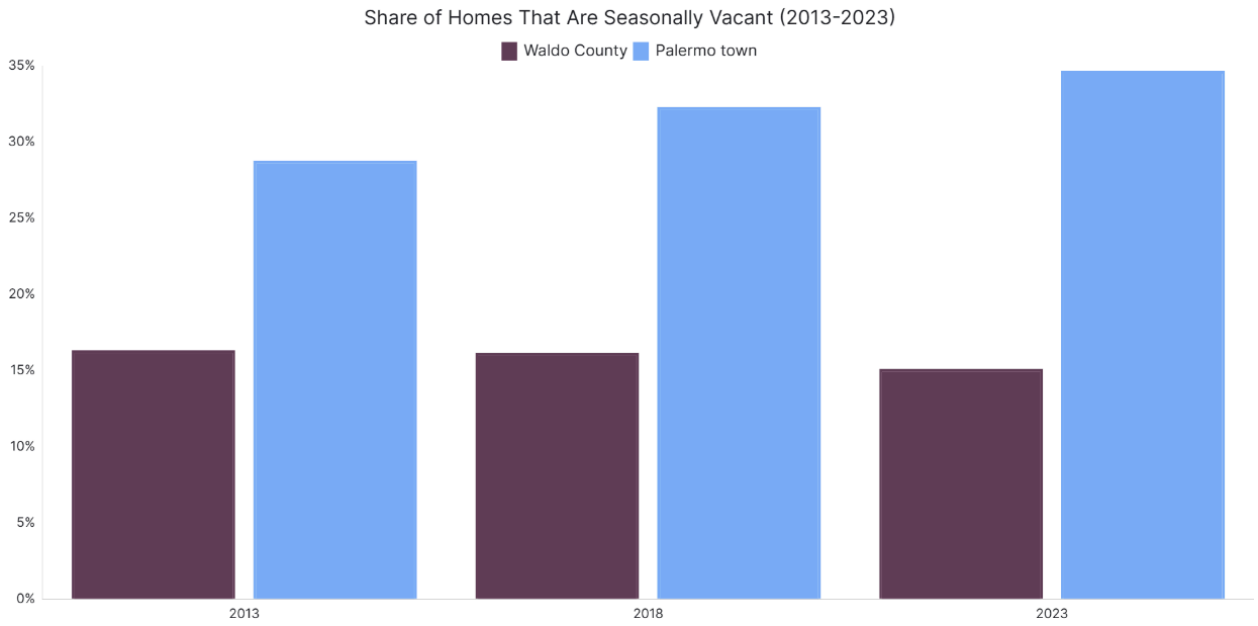

Homeowner Vacancy Rate Over Time
Waldo County
Palermo town
3%
2.5%
2%
1.5%
1%
0.5%
0%
2013
2018
2023

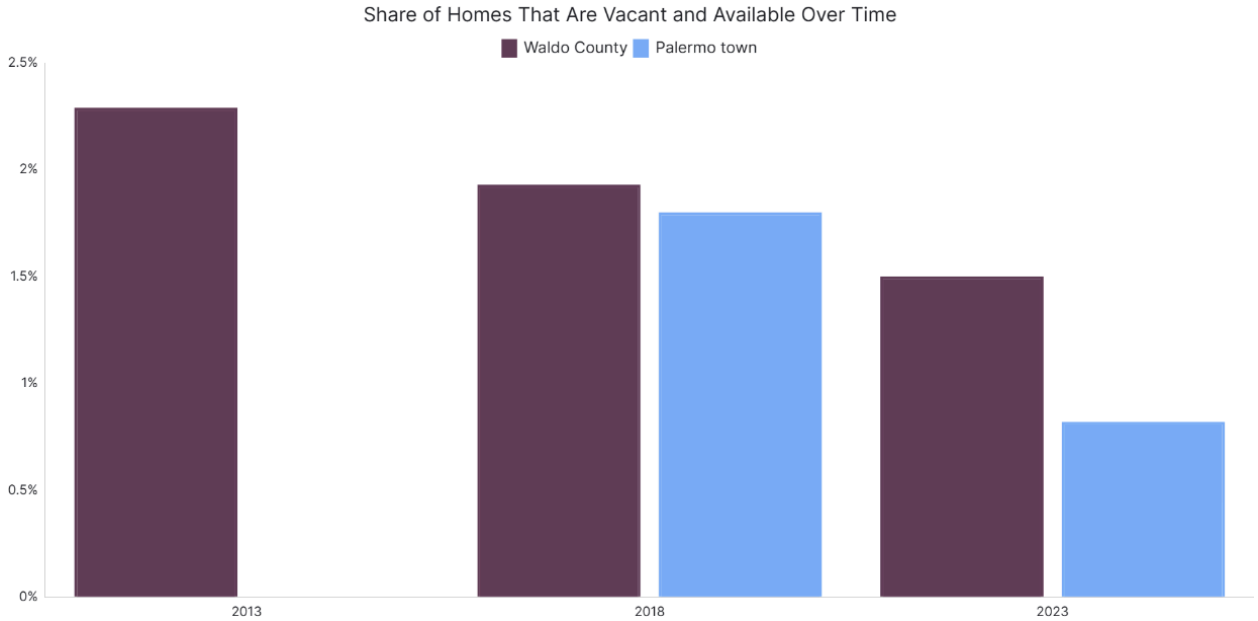

Owner Cost Burden Rate by Income Over Time
2018
2023
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
< $20K
$20K - $35K
$35K - $50K
$50K - $75K
$75K - $100K
$100K - $150K
$150K +

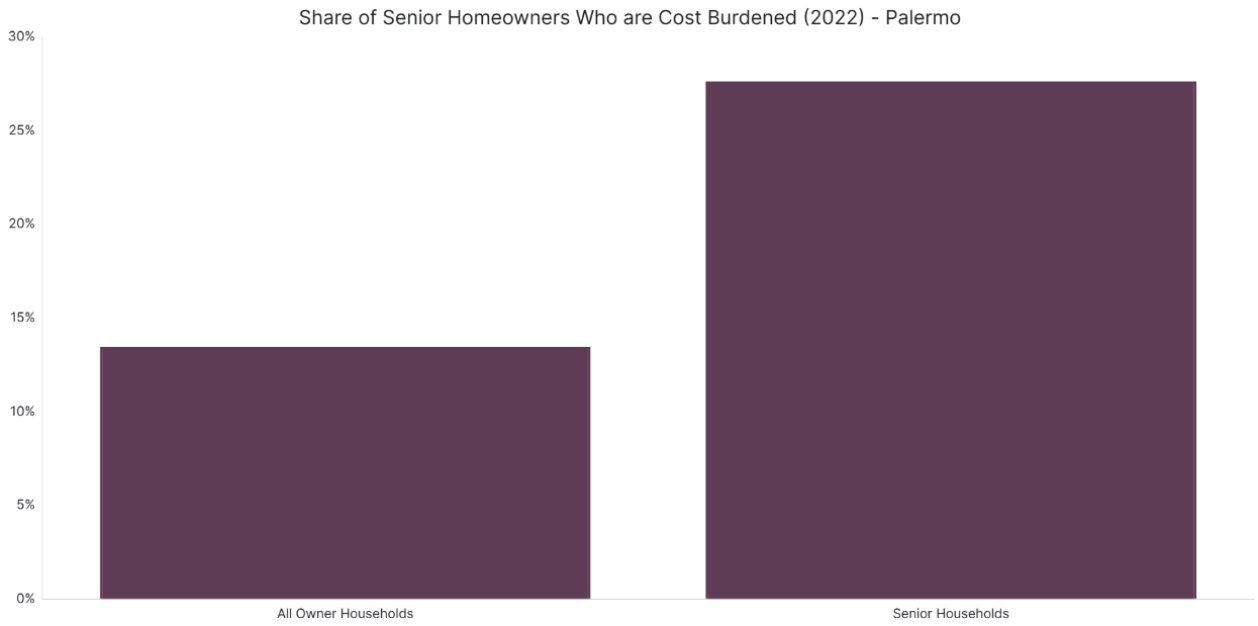

Owner Households by Household Income Over Time
2018
2023
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
<$20K
$20K - $35K
$35K - $50K
$50K - $75K
$75K - $100K
$100K - $150K
>$150K

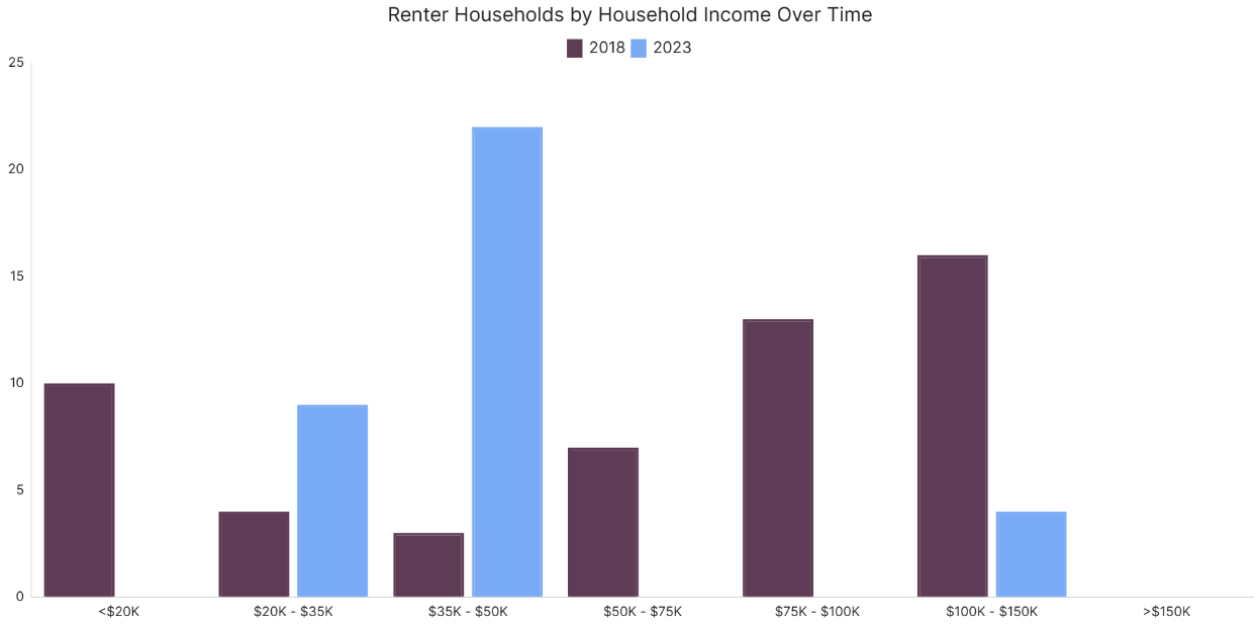

Change in Inventory by Building Typology (2013-2023)
Single-Family
Multifamily
Other
80
60
40
20
0
-20
-40
-60
2023

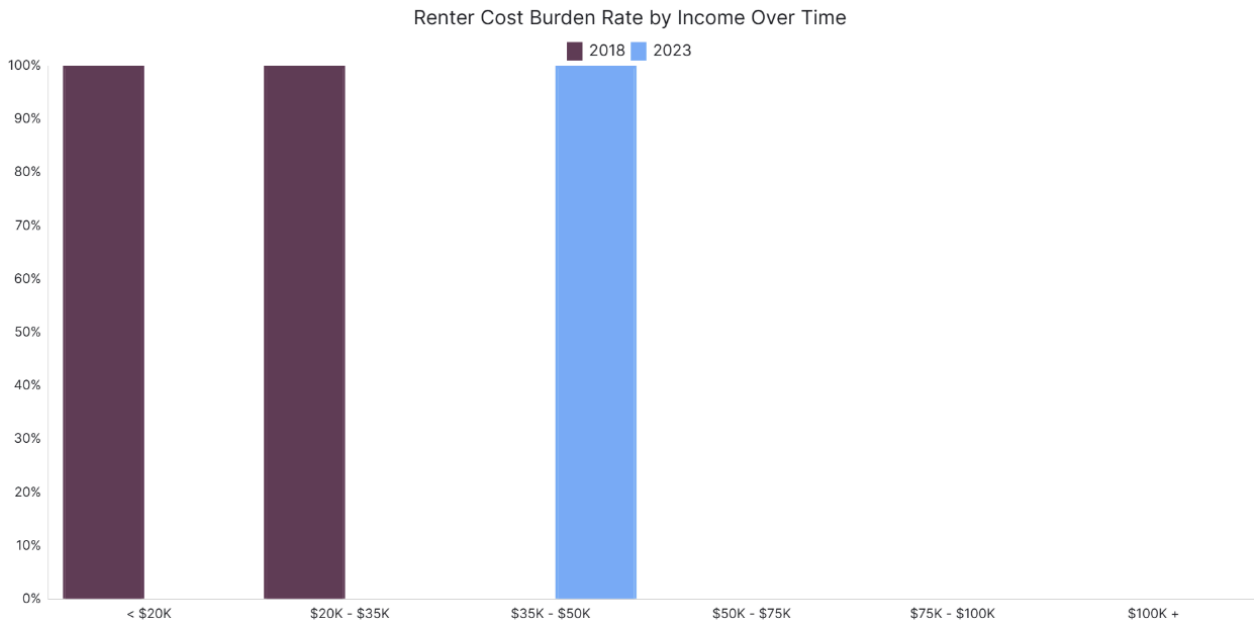

Share of Homes by Building Typology (2023)
Single-Family
Multifamily
Other
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
94.9%
12.9%
11.9%
75.2%
Palermo town
Waldo County

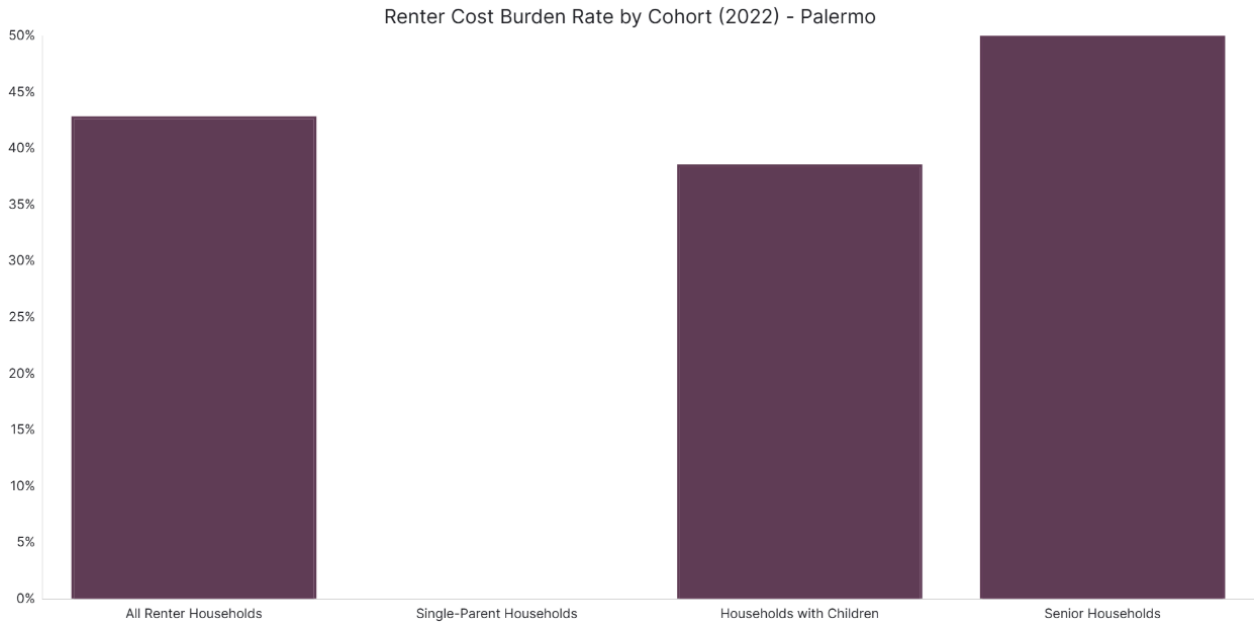

Share of Homes That Are Seasonally Vacant (2013-2023)
Waldo County
Palermo town
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
2013
2018
2023

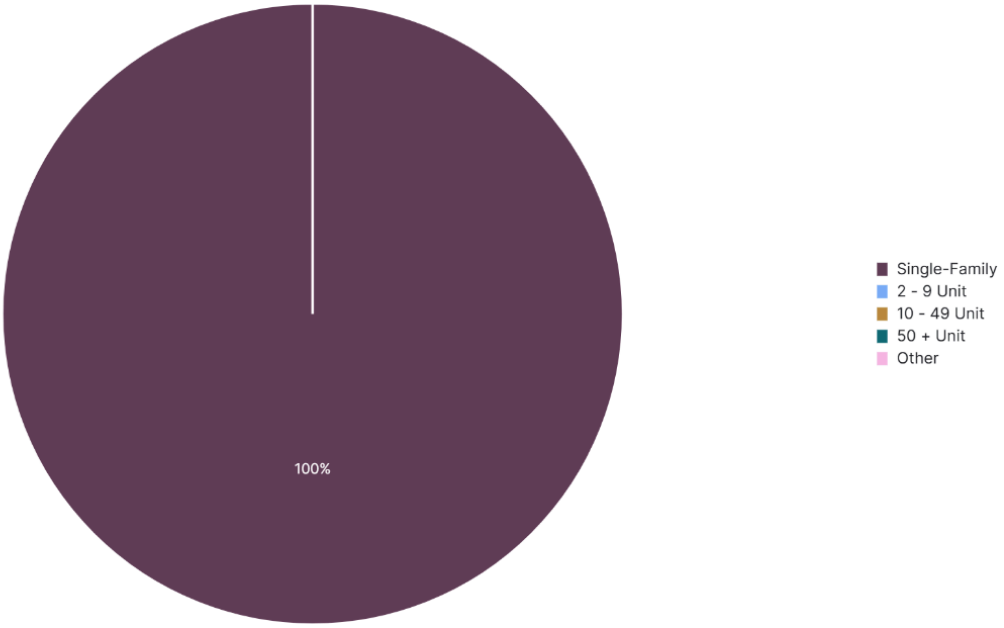

Share of Homes That Are Vacant and Available Over Time
Waldo County
Palermo town
2.5%
2%
1.5%
1%
0.5%
0%
2013
2018
2023

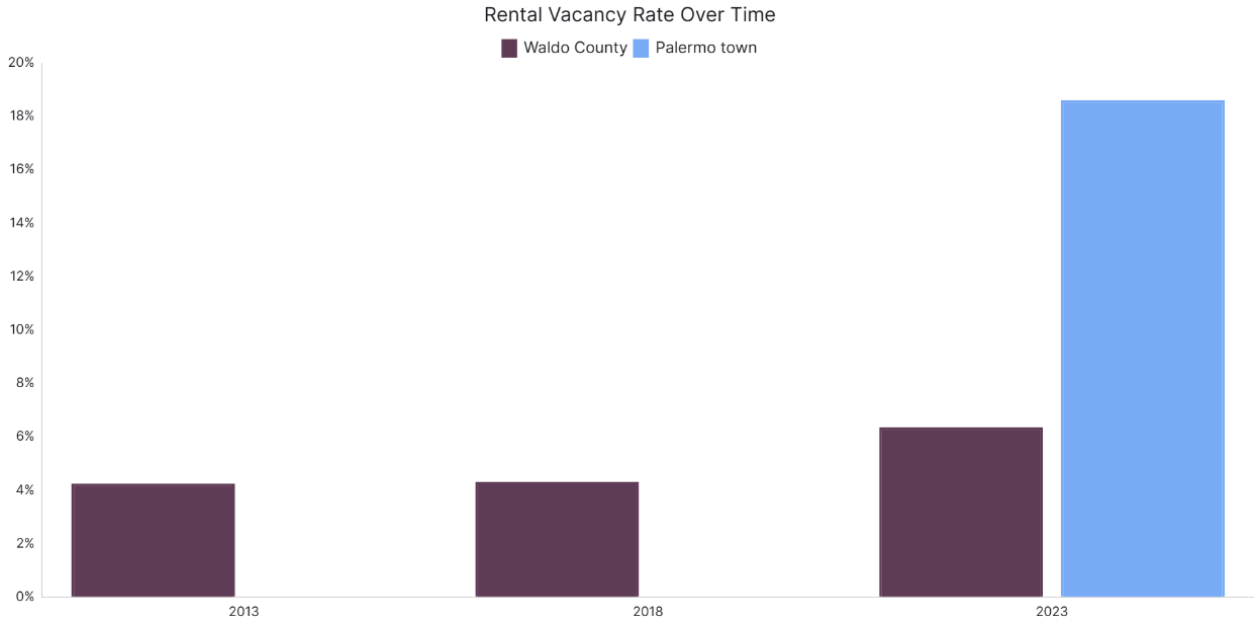

Share of Senior Homeowners Who are Cost Burdened (2022) - Palermo
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
All Owner Households
Senior Households

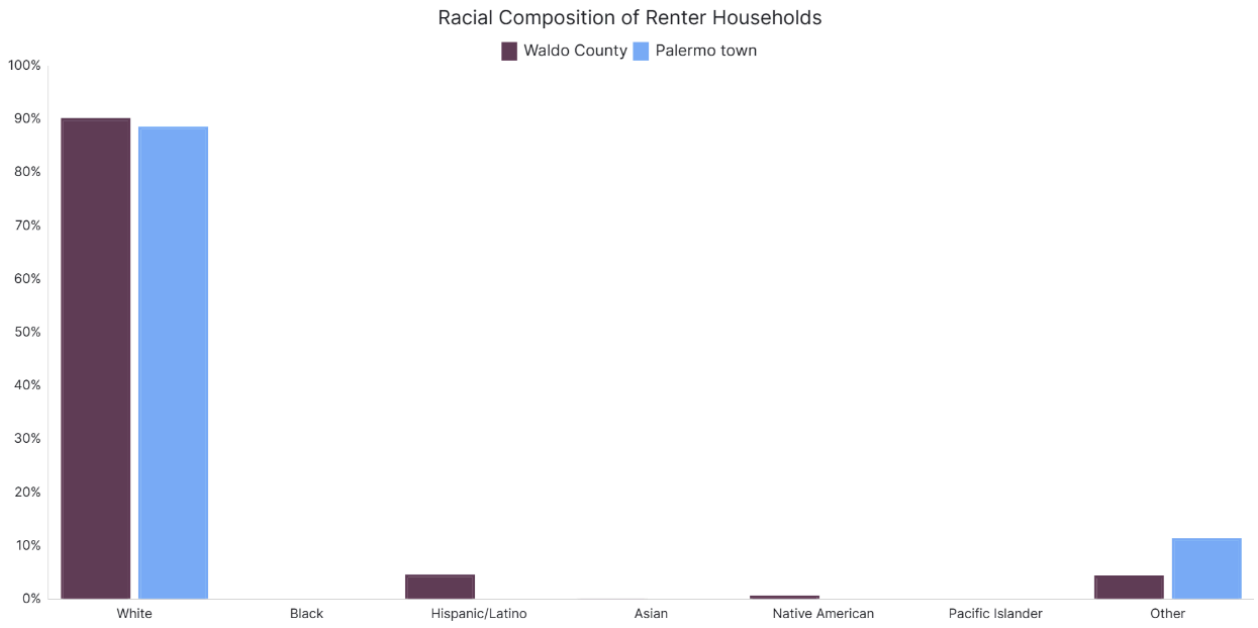

Renter Households by Household Income Over Time
2018
2023
25
20
15
10
5
0
<$20K
$20K - $35K
$35K - $50K
$50K - $75K
$75K - $100K
$100K - $150K
>$150K

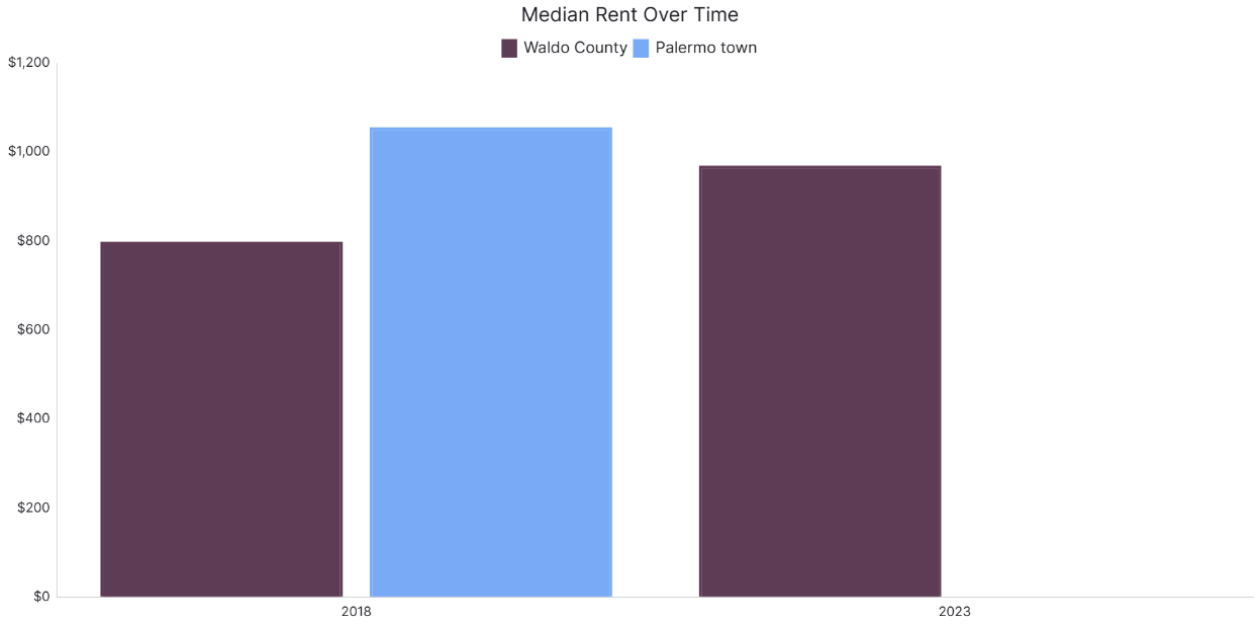

Renter Cost Burden Rate by Income Over Time
2018
2023
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
< $20K
$20K - $35K
$35K - $50K
$50K - $75K
$75K - $100K
$100K +

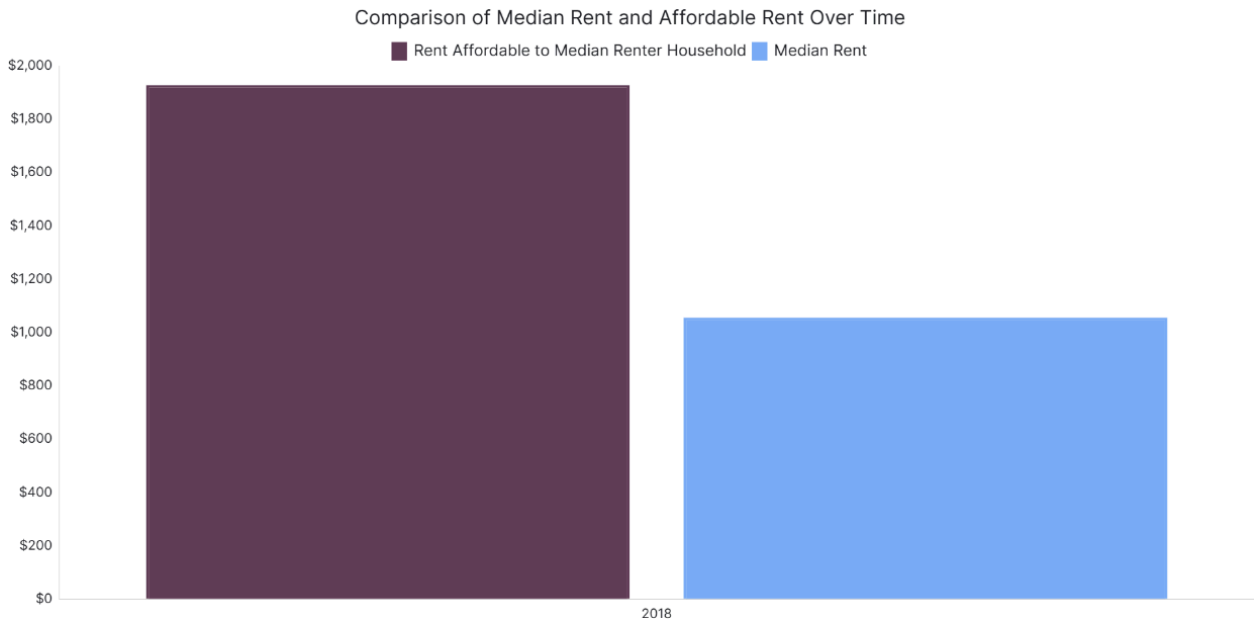

Renter Cost Burden Rate by Cohort (2022) - Palermo
50%
45%
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
All Renter Households
Single-Parent Households
Households with Children
Senior Households

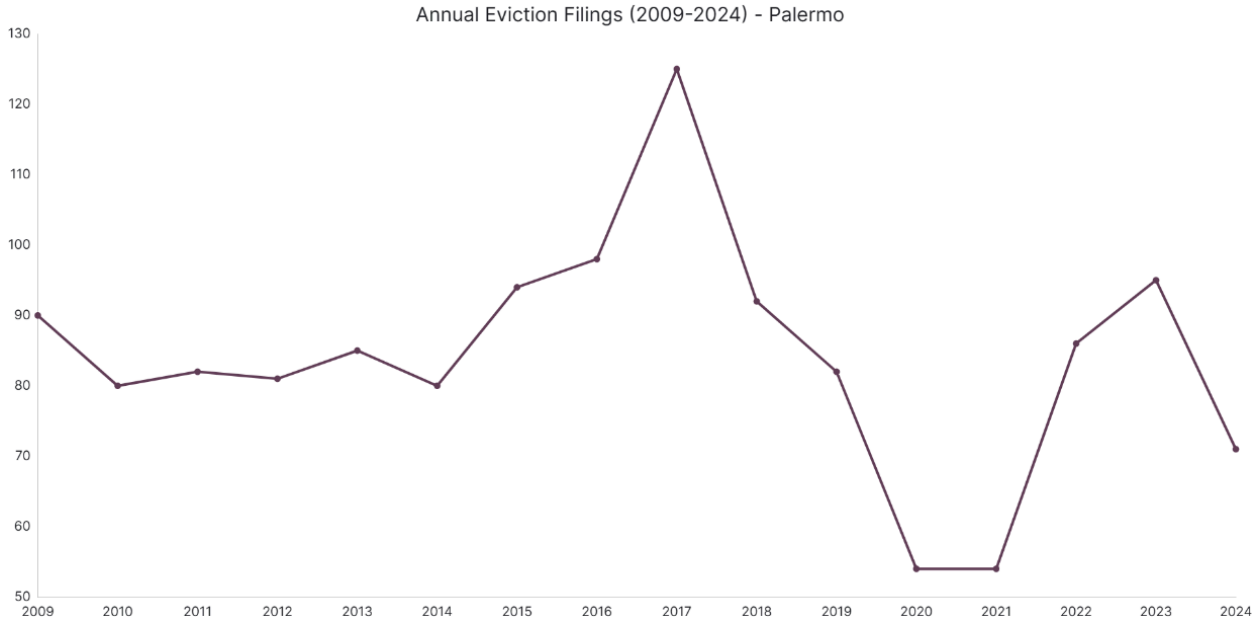

100%
Single-Family
2 - 9 Unit
10 - 49 Unit
50 + Unit
Other

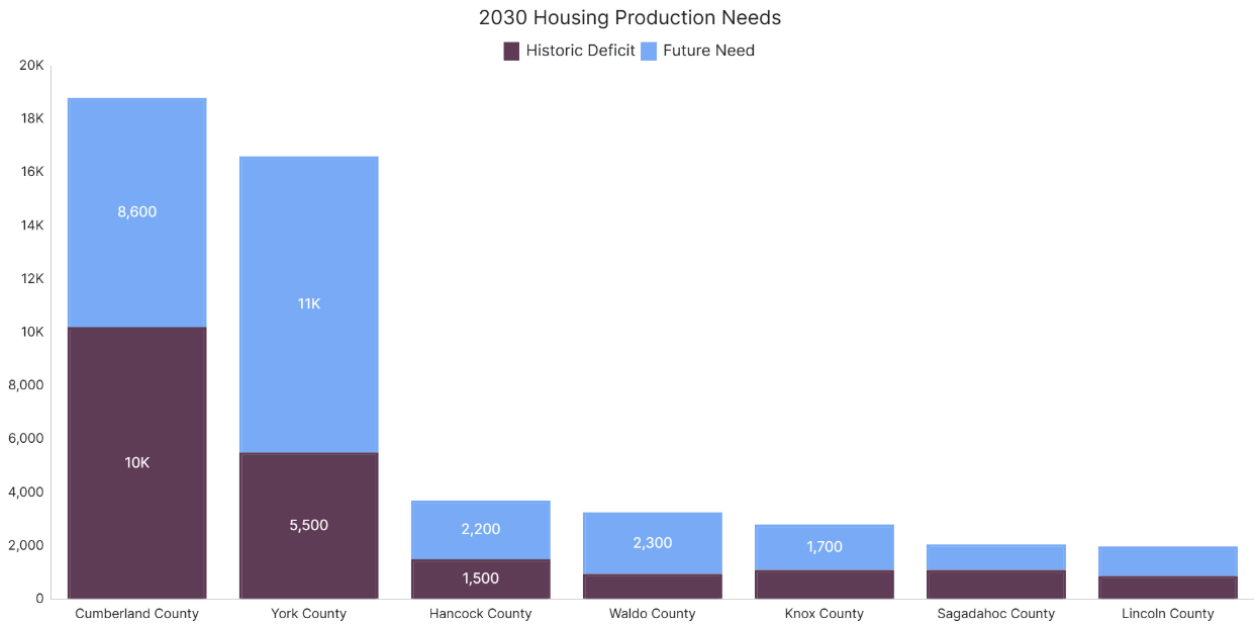

Rental Vacancy Rate Over Time
Waldo County
Palermo town
20%
18%
16%
14%
12%
10%
8%
6%
4%
2%
0%
2013
2018
2023


Racial Composition of Renter Households
Waldo County
Palermo town
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
White
Black
Hispanic/Latino
Asian
Native American
Pacific Islander
Other


Median Rent Over Time
Waldo County
Palermo town
$1,200
$1,000
$800
$600
$400
$200
$0
2018
2023


Comparison of Median Rent and Affordable Rent Over Time
Rent Affordable to Median Renter Household
Median Rent
$2,000
$1,800
$1,600
$1,400
$1,200
$1,000
$800
$600
$400
$200
$0
2018


Annual Eviction Filings (2009-2024) - Palermo
130
120
110
100
90
80
70
60
50
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024


2030 Housing Production Needs
Historic Deficit
Future Need
20K
18K
16K
14K
12K
10K
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
0
8,600
10K
11K
5,500
2,200
1,500
2,300
1,700
Cumberland County
York County
Hancock County
Waldo County
Knox County
Sagadahoc County
Lincoln County

Information on existing local and regional affordable/workforce housing coalitions or similar efforts.

According to their website, the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition is described as, “a membership organization representing public, private and non-profit groups. MAHC commissions reports to inform the development and advocacy for safe, affordable housing in Maine.”

A summary of local regulations that affect the development of affordable/workforce housing.

As Palermo currently has minimal regulations on development of any kind, there are no restrictions on the development of affordable housing.

Policies

To encourage and promote adequate workforce housing to support the community’s and region’s economic development

To ensure that land use controls encourage the development of quality affordable housing, including rental housing.

To encourage and support the efforts of the regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workforce housing needs.

Strategies

Policy	Responsible Party	Time frame
Maintain, enact or amend growth area land use regulations to increase density, decrease lot size, setbacks and road widths, or provide incentives such as density bonuses, to encourage the development of affordable/workforce housing.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term
Maintain, enact or amend ordinances to allow the addition of at least one accessory apartment per dwelling unit in growth areas, subject to site suitability.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term
Create or continue to support a community affordable/workforce housing committee and/or regional affordable housing coalition.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term
Designate a location(s) in growth areas where mobile home parks are allowed pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4358(3)(M) and where manufactured housing is allowed pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4358(2).	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term
Support the efforts of local and regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workforce housing needs.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term
Seek to achieve a level of at least 10% of new residential development built or placed during the next decade be affordable.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term

Recreation

Analyses

Will existing recreational facilities and programs in the community and region accommodate projected growth or changes in age groups in your community?

Current recreational facilities and programs are more than capable of handling projected growth. Palermo Youth Activities (PYA) currently fields teams for youth sports. The ATV and Snowmobile Clubs are also active in the community.

Is there a need for certain types of services or facilities or to upgrade or enlarge present facilities to either add capacity or make them more usable?

Ample walking paths exist in town though some desire has been expressed for paths that are more accessible for people with mobility restrictions. Public water access for swimming has been a long running topic of debate around town as currently the boat launch is used despite the incompatibility of the location.

Are important tracts of open space commonly used for recreation publicly-owned or otherwise permanently conserved?

Open spaces that are publicly owned include the 50 acre town forest.

Two currently conserved open spaces owned and managed by the Mid-Coast Conservancy are Palermo Preserve and Lindell Preserve.

The Palermo Snowmobile Club maintains 58 miles of trails that connect Palermo to the towns of Albion, China, Freedom, Liberty, Montville and Washington. They also maintain 13 miles of trails from Liberty to Frye Mountain in Montville. Their trails are accessed by parking lots at three different locations. (palermosnowmobileclub.com)

The Friends and Neighbors ATV Club maintains 16 miles of trails that have a mixed level of difficulty and roughness. This is an active club that meets monthly and promotes responsible riding and respect for landowners' rights. (friendsandneighborsatvclub.com)

Does the community have a mechanism, such as an open space fund or partnership with a land trust, to acquire important open spaces and access sites, either outright or through conservation easements?

At the present time, there is no open space fund or partnership with a land trust to acquire sites.

Does the public have access to each of the community's significant water bodies?

There are public boat accesses to Sheepscot Lake and Beech Pond. There is also access by permission to Branch Pond behind the Grange Hall.

Are recreational trails in the community adequately maintained? Are there conflicts on these trails?

Palermo Preserve and Lindell Walking Trail are privately owned and maintained. As discussed previously, the ATV Club and Snowmobile Club maintain extensive trail networks.

Is traditional access to private lands being restricted?

There is some restriction to traditional access to private lands being experienced - mostly due to the occasional disrespectful behavior on the part of a few individuals.

Misunderstanding of the Landowner Liability Law (Title 14, M.R.S.A. Section159-A) could also be a contributing factor to the restrictions being placed on access to private lands.

Conditions and Trends

The community's Comprehensive Planning Recreation Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Department of Conservation, and the Office, or their designees.

Certified Ratio	Commitment	Tax Rate	Total Taxable Municipal Valuation	Taxable Land Valuation	Taxable Building Valuation	Total Taxable Land & Building Valuation
100%	$2,657,535	0.01040	$255,532,200	$81,491,900	$172,903,200	$254,395,100

A description of important public and private active recreation programs, land and water recreation areas (including hunting and fishing areas), and facilities in the community and region, including regional recreational opportunities as appropriate, and identification of unmet needs.

Palermo has active ATV & Snowmobile clubs with an extensive network of trails. Swimming lessons are provided in town every year and beyond the town's borders there is China Lake as well as Lake St. George and Unity Pond that are excellent for swimming and boating. Palermo Youth Activities, as previously mentioned, is active in the community as well.

Again, as previously discussed, public lake access and accessible trails are areas that could see improvement.

An inventory of any fresh or salt water bodies in the community determined locally to have inadequate public access.

The following water bodies currently do not have public access

- Branch
- Chisholm
- Bowler
- Bear
- Foster
- Belden
- Nutter
- Prescott
- Dow
- Turner

A description of local and regional trail systems, trail management organizations, and conservation organizations that provide trails for all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiling, skiing, mountain biking, or hiking.

The Palermo Snowmobile Club maintains 58 miles of trails that connect Palermo to the towns of Albion, China, Freedom, Liberty, Montville and Washington. They also maintain 13 miles of trails from Liberty to Frye Mountain in Montville. Their trails are accessed by parking lots at three different locations.

The Friends and Neighbors ATV Club maintains 16 miles of trails that have a mixed level of difficulty and roughness. This is an active club that meets monthly and promotes responsible riding and respect for landowners' rights.

A map or list of important publicly-used open spaces and their associated facilities, such as parking and toilet facilities.

The Sheepscot Lake boat launch is frequently used and has a portable toilet on site. There is also a parking area and boat launch on Beech Pond. Palermo Youth Activities maintains a ball field with portable toilets on Turner Ridge Road.

Policies

To maintain/upgrade existing recreational facilities as necessary to meet current and future needs.

To preserve open space for recreational use as appropriate.

To seek to achieve or continue to maintain at least one major point of public access to major water bodies for boating, fishing, and swimming, and work with nearby property owners to address concerns.

Strategies

Strategies	Party Responsible	Time frame
Create a list of recreation needs or develop a recreation plan to meet current and future needs. Assign a committee or community official to explore ways of addressing the identified needs and/or implementing the policies and strategies outlined in the plan.	Selectboard	Long term
Work with public and private partners to extend and maintain a network of trails for motorized and non-motorized uses. Connect with regional trail systems where possible.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Work with an existing local land trust or other conservation organizations to pursue opportunities to protect important open space or recreational land.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term
Provide educational materials regarding the benefits and protections for landowners allowing public recreational access on their property. At a minimum this will include information on Maine's landowner liability law regarding recreational or harvesting use, Title 14, M.R.S.A.	Selectboard, Conservation Committee	Long term

Transportation

Analyses

What are the transportation system concerns in the community and region? What, if any, plans exist to address these concerns?

Concerns include: speed, paved/unpaved roads, culvert failures. Current priorities are ditches and old, undersized, deteriorating culverts and ensuring that people aren't cut off from essential resources. Tree-trimming for visibility and safety has caused issues in the town. The town is applying for grants to help fund needed improvements.

Are conflicts caused by multiple road uses, such as a major state or U.S. route that passes through the community or its downtown and serves as a local service road as well?

Route 3, which cuts through Palermo, has highway-like travel and speed conflicts with local access roads and driveways. There are a high number of accidents each year on Rt. 3. There are many instances of resident dissatisfaction with maintenance and plowing of state-maintained roads. Palermo plows the state-owned roads within its boundaries, except for Rt. 3.

To what extent do sidewalks connect residential areas with schools, neighborhood shopping areas, and other daily destinations?

Palermo Consolidated School is located on a busy state road. Currently there is limited residential development in the area of the school. The town does not contain any significant shopping areas and the only recreational fields in town are, again, located on a state road.

How are walking and bicycling integrated into the community's transportation network (including access to schools, parks, and other community destinations)?

There is no integration of walking and bicycling into the community's transportation network. Route 3 is the primary route through town and not a safe road to walk or bicycle on. As previously mentioned, the school, ball fields and town office are located on state roads.

How do state and regional transportation plans relate to your community?

The building of the third bridge and Rt. 3 bypass in Augusta has significantly increased traffic on Rt. 3 through Palermo.

What is the community's current and approximate future budget for road maintenance and improvement?

Road maintenance/improvement for 2024 was budgeted at $200,000. Over the previous 4 years maintenance increased only $20,000. Using that trend, it could be assumed that road maintenance would continue to increase ~$50,000 over 10 years.

Are there parking issues in the community? If so, what are they?

Large events at the school overflow the parking lot, with many cars parking along Route 3. Accidents have happened during these times. The same thing happens with large events at the PYA fields on Turner Ridge Rd, Fish and Game events on Route 3 and elections at the Town Office on North Palermo Rd.

If there are parking standards, do they discourage development in village or downtown areas?

The Town of Palermo does not put restrictions on parking for any town maintained roads.

Do available transit services meet the current and foreseeable needs of community residents? If transit services are not adequate, how will the community address the needs?

With demographics projected to trend toward an older population, there may be an increased need for travel services for elderly residents in Palermo, especially with our distance to larger population centers and services.

Palermo is currently served by Waldo Community Action Partners (WCAP) (DOT Region 5), which provides both medical and public transit. Current rates are $1.50 per mile, and $0.75 per mile for seniors. There is a scheduled Belfast run on Thursdays that leaves around 7:30 a.m. with a return trip departing from Belfast at 11:30 a.m. This costs $3.00 each way. Appointments for this scheduled run must be scheduled 2 days in advance. Additional trips within Region 5 can be scheduled for any time Monday – Friday between 8:00 to 4:00 and cost $1.50 per mile ($0.75 for seniors). Reservations must be made at least 2 days in advance.

If the community hosts or abuts any public airports, what coordination has been undertaken to ensure that required airspace is protected now and in the future? How does the community coordinate with the owner(s) of private airports?

There are no public airports in or near town.

If you are a coastal community, are land-side or water-side transportation facilities needed? How will the community address these needs?

Not applicable.

Does the community have local access management or traffic permitting measures in place?

The town does not have local access management or traffic permitting measures in place.

Do the local road design standards support the community's desired land use pattern?

The town's only road design standards apply to subdivisions. The standards are consistent with the town's desired land use pattern.

Do the local road design standards support bicycle and pedestrian transportation?

Palermo is a rural town, often with considerable distance between homes and services or recreational opportunities. With three state roads cutting the town into quadrants it would be impossible to construct a safe network for bicycle or pedestrian transportation.

Do planned or recently built subdivision roads (residential or commercial) simply dead-end or do they allow for expansion to adjacent land and encourage the creation of a network of local streets? Where dead-ends are unavoidable, are mechanisms in place to encourage shorter dead-ends resulting in compact and efficient subdivision designs?

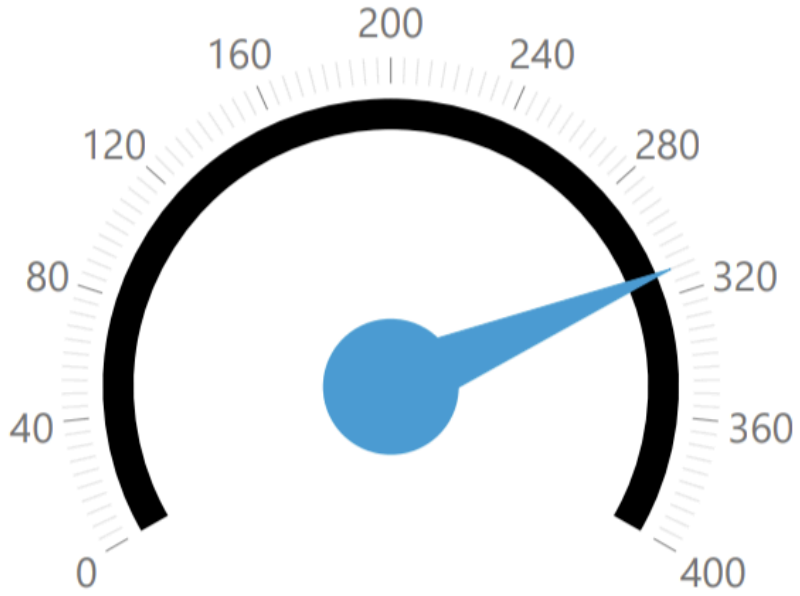
Currently the subdivision ordinance does not require roads to be built in a way that allows for expansion. Recent subdivisions could be expanded if need suddenly arose.

Conditions and Trends

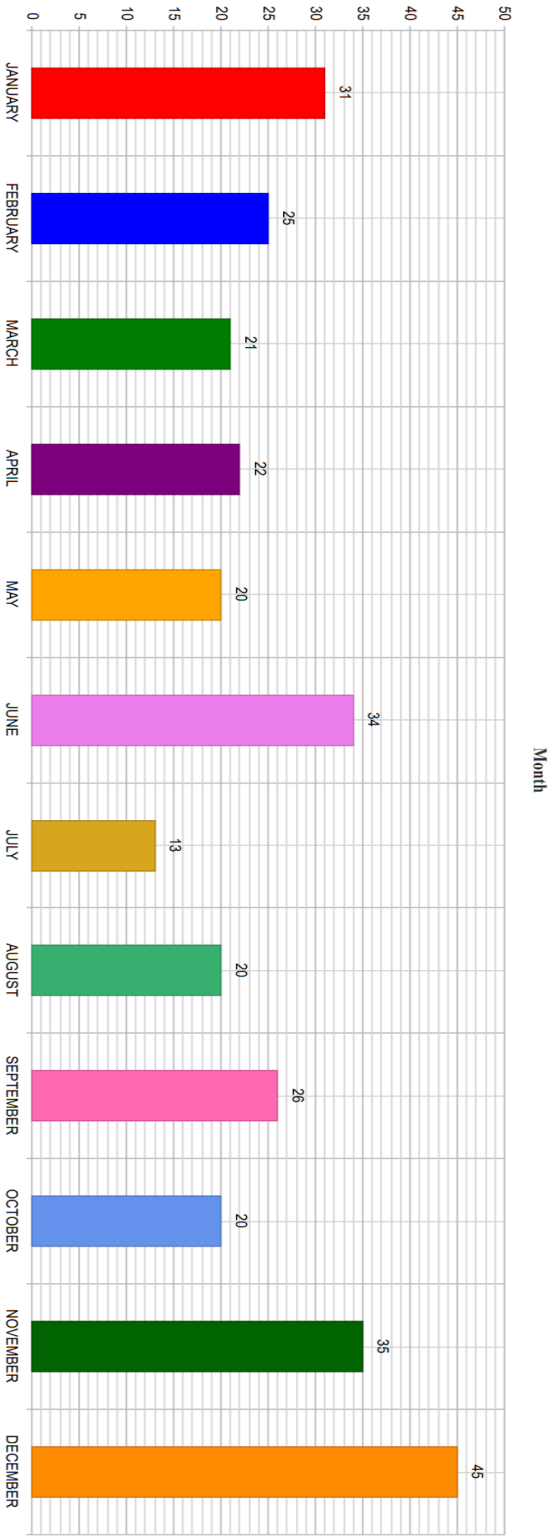
The community's Comprehensive Planning Transportation Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Department of Transportation, and the Office, or their designees.

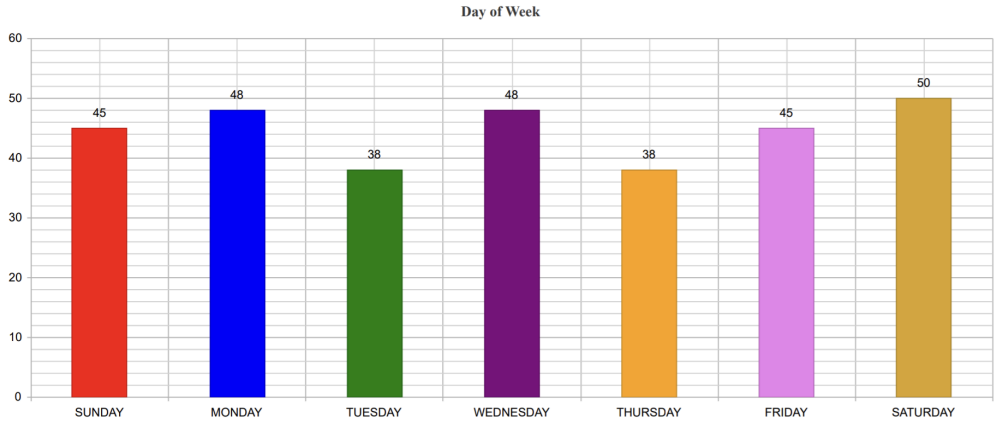
ID/Year	Municipality	Scope	Name	Description
027800.00	Palermo	Highway Paving Light Capital Paving	North Palermo Road	Beginning at Branch Mills Road and extending north 11.12 miles to Route 137
2025				
HCP 4				

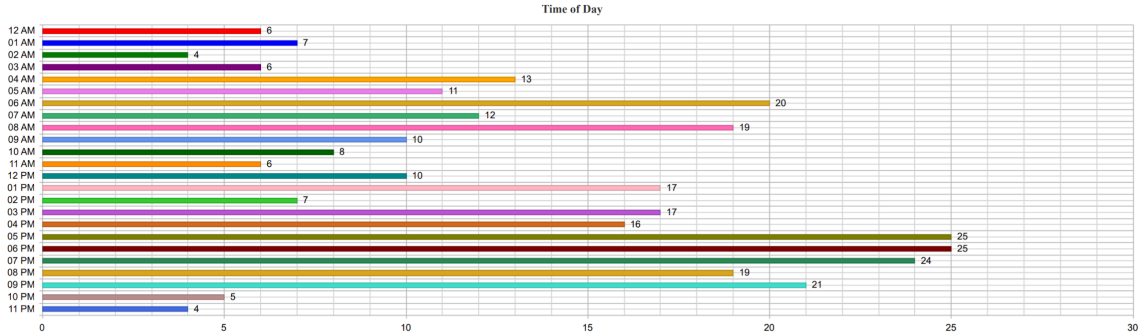
Overall Total

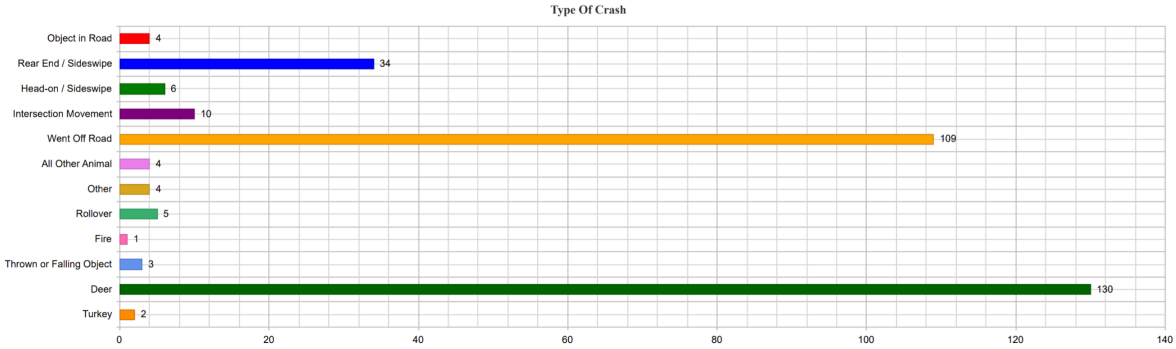


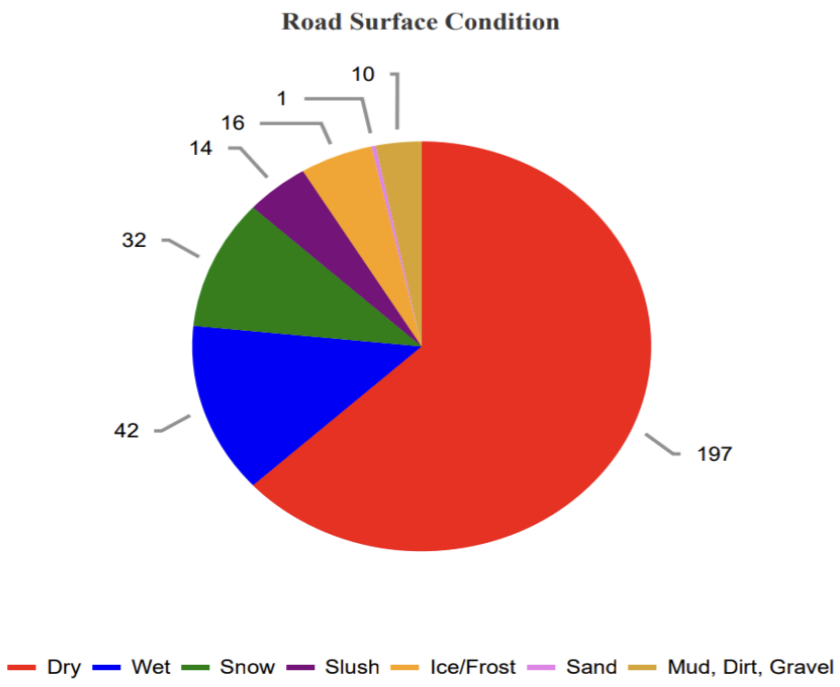
Total Crashes - 312

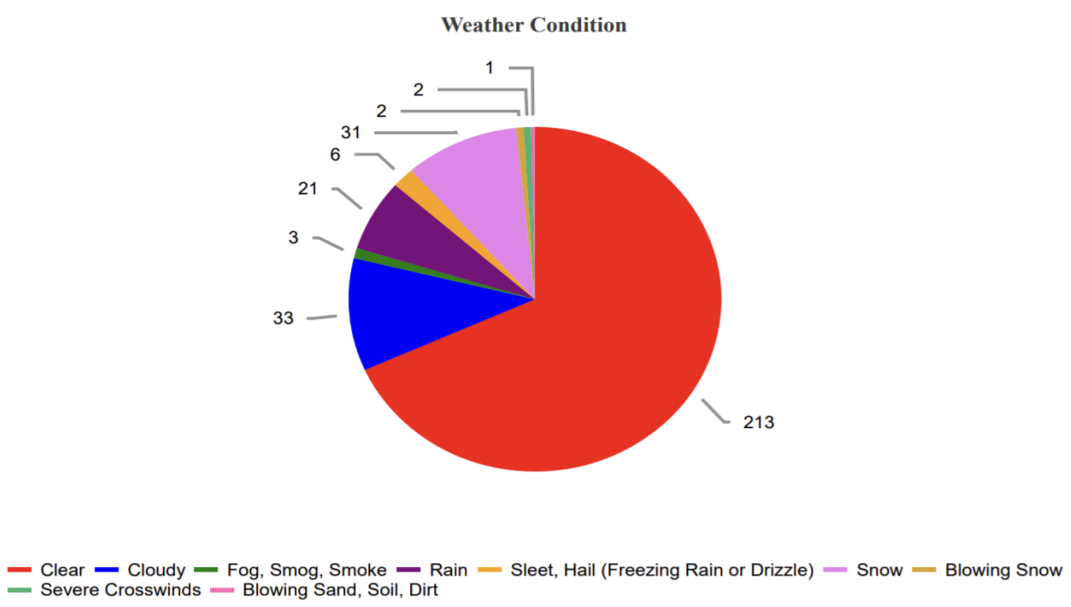

Month
50
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
31
25
21
22
20
34
13
20
26
20
35
45
JANUARY
FEBRUARY
MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
JULY
AUGUST
SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
NOVEMBER
DECEMBER

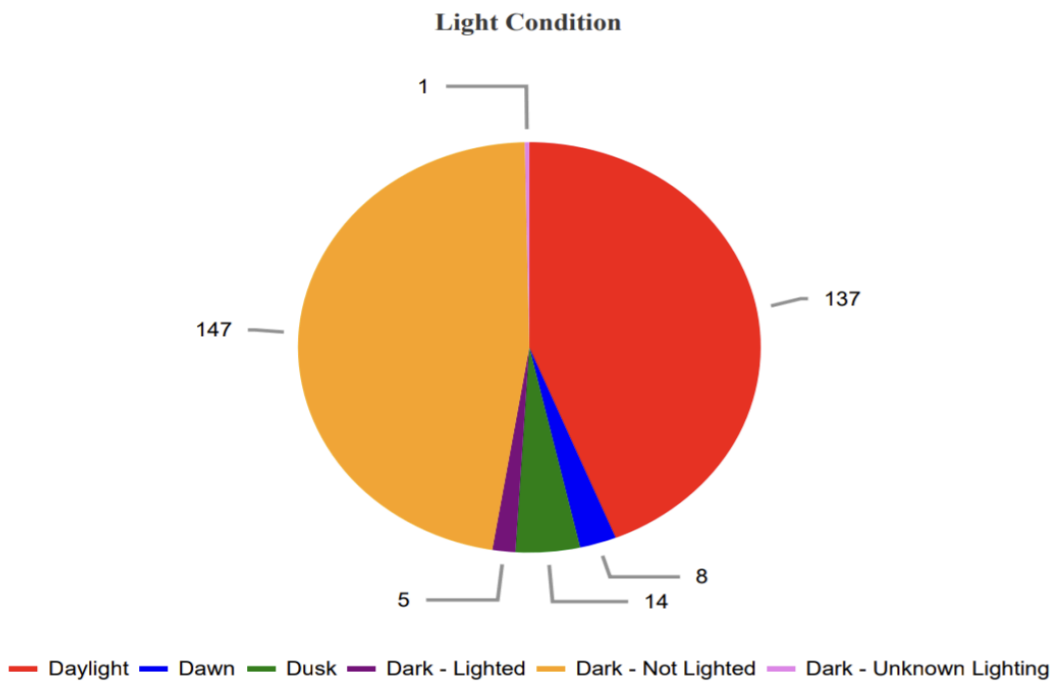

Day of Week
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
45
48
38
48
38
45
50
SUNDAY
MONDAY
TUESDAY
WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY
FRIDAY
SATURDAY

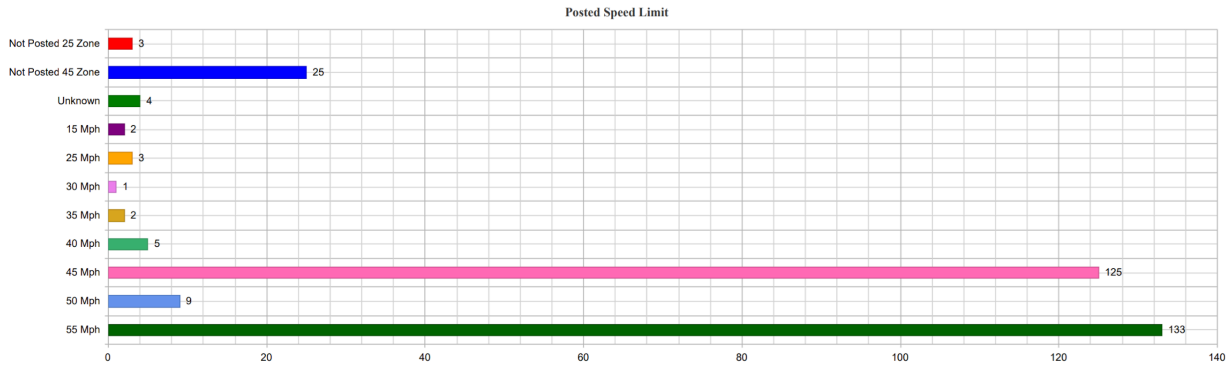

Time of Day
12 AM 6
01 AM 7
02 AM 4
03 AM 6
04 AM 13
05 AM 11
06 AM 20
07 AM 12
08 AM 19
09 AM 10
10 AM 8
11 AM 6
12 PM 10
01 PM 17
02 PM 7
03 PM 17
04 PM 16
05 PM 25
06 PM 25
07 PM 24
08 PM 19
09 PM 21
10 PM 5
11 PM 4
0
5
10
15
20
25
30


Type Of Crash
Object in Road 4
Rear End / Sideswipe 34
Head-on / Sideswipe 6
Intersection Movement 10
Went Off Road 109
All Other Animal 4
Other 4
Rollover 5
Fire 1
Thrown or Falling Object 3
Deer 130
Turkey 2
0
20
40
60
80
100
120
140

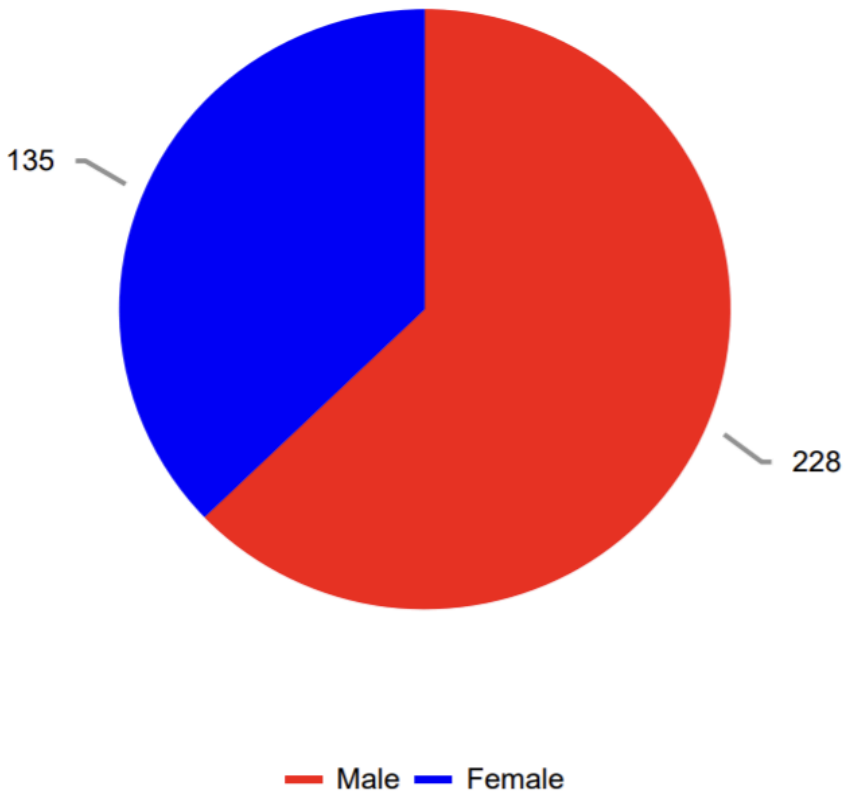

Road Surface Condition
10
1
16
14
32
42
197
Dry
Wet
Snow
Slush
Ice/Frost
Sand
Mud, Dirt, Gravel

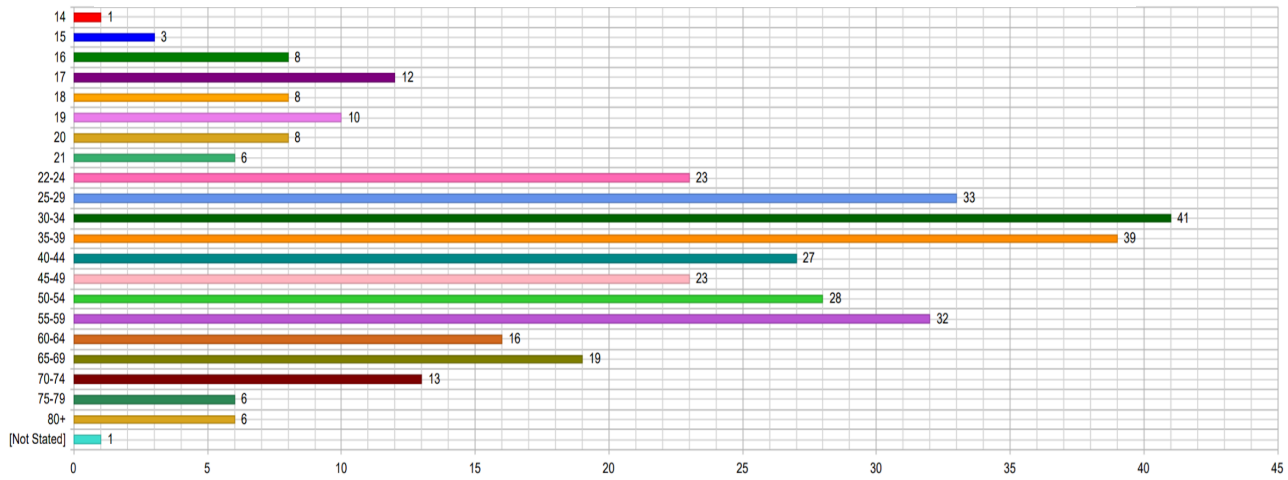

Weather Condition
1
2
2
31
6
21
3
33
213
Clear
Cloudy
Fog, Smog, Smoke
Rain
Sleet, Hail (Freezing Rain or Drizzle)
Snow
Blowing Snow
Severe Crosswinds
Blowing Sand, Soil, Dirt


Light Condition
1
137
147
8
5
14
Daylight
Dawn
Dusk
Dark - Lighted
Dark - Not Lighted
Dark - Unknown Lighting

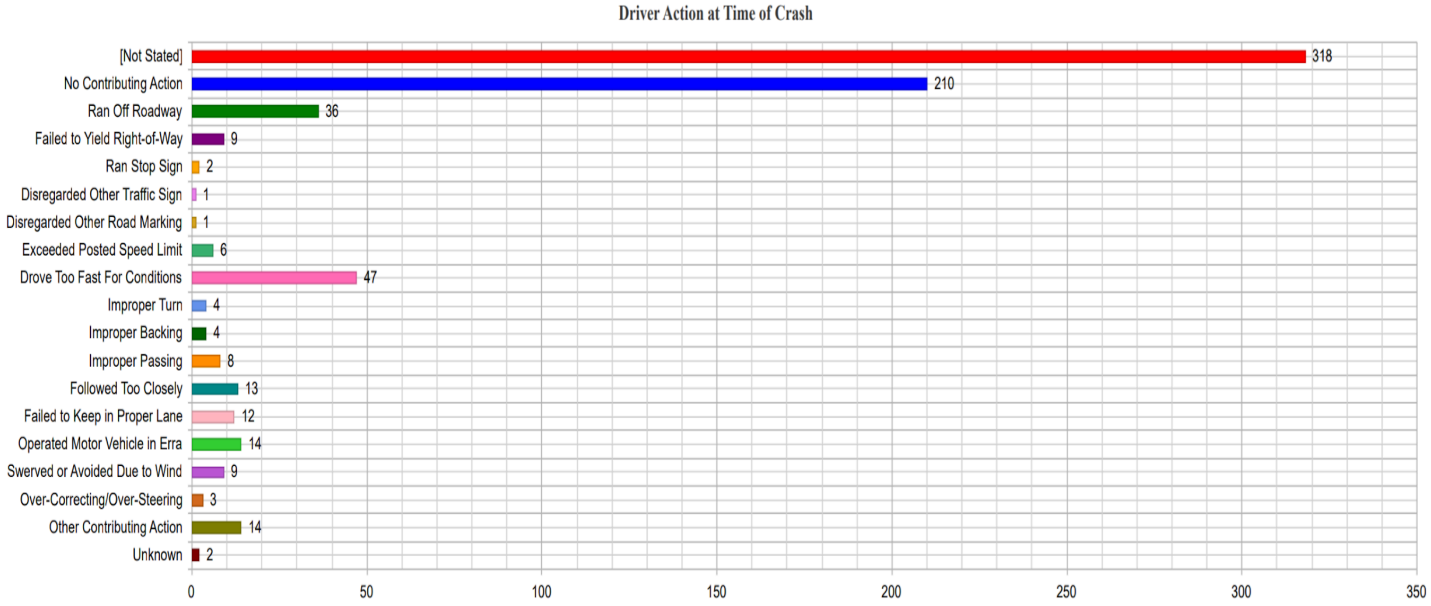

Posted Speed Limit
Not Posted 25 Zone
Not Posted 45 Zone
Unknown
15 Mph
25 Mph
30 Mph
35 Mph
40 Mph
45 Mph
50 Mph
55 Mph
3
25
4
2
3
1
2
5
125
9
133
0
20
40
60
80
100
120
140

Driver Sex

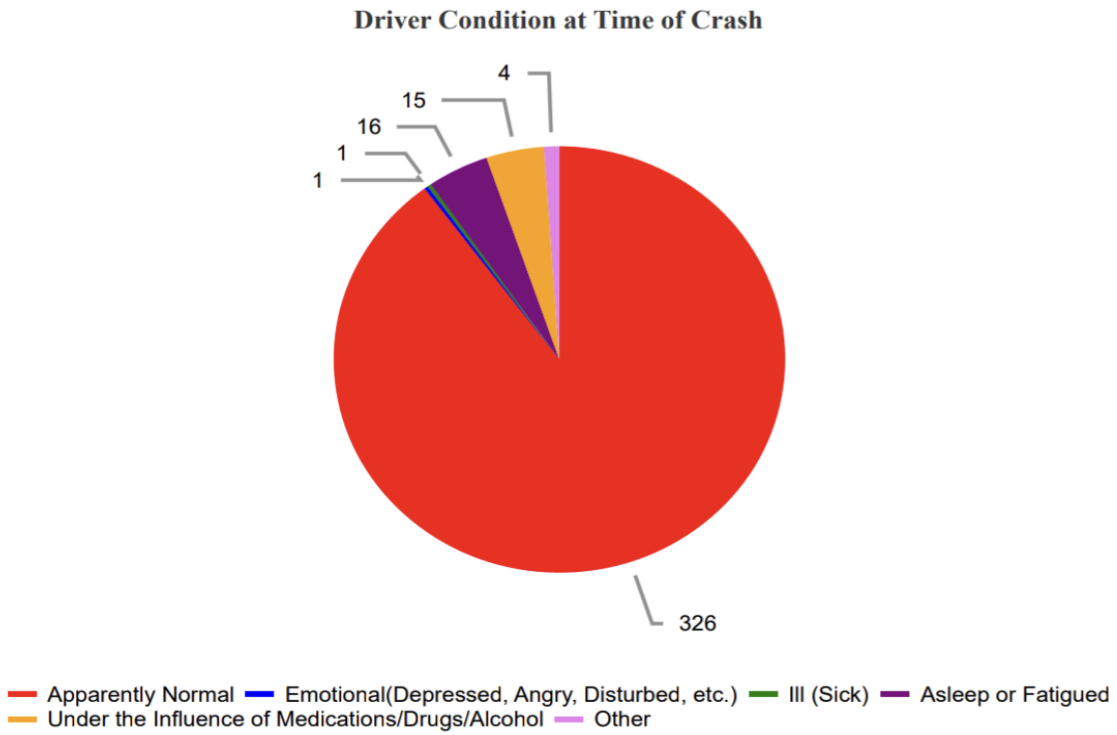


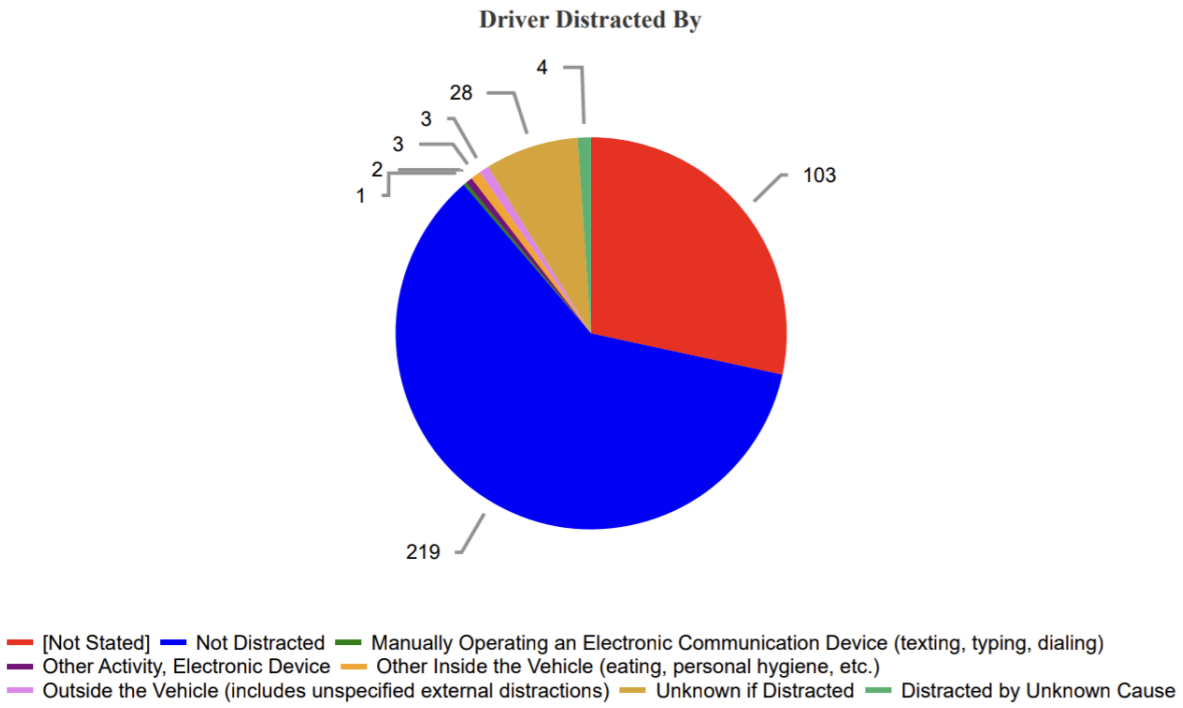


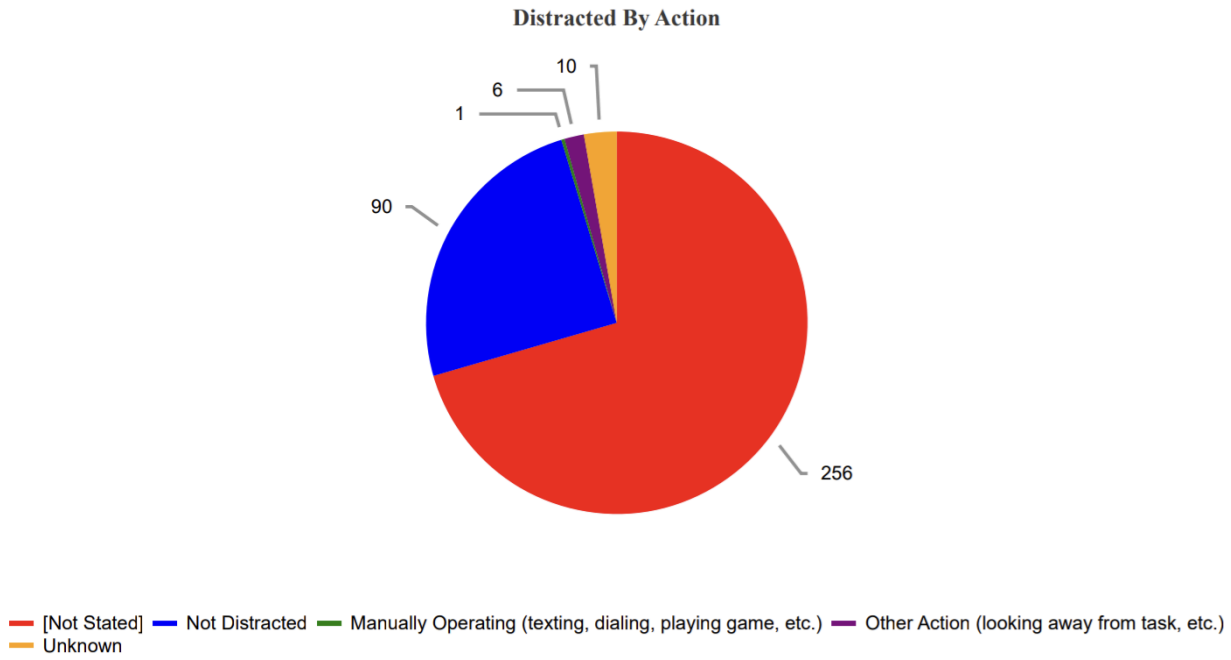
Note: Counts include all operators involved.

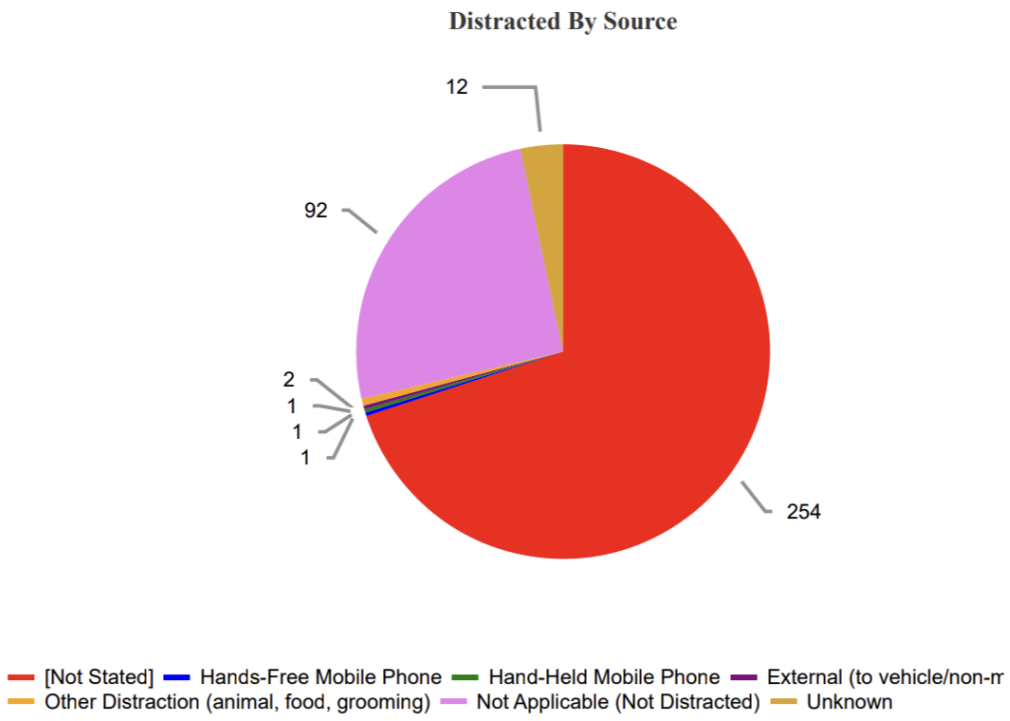


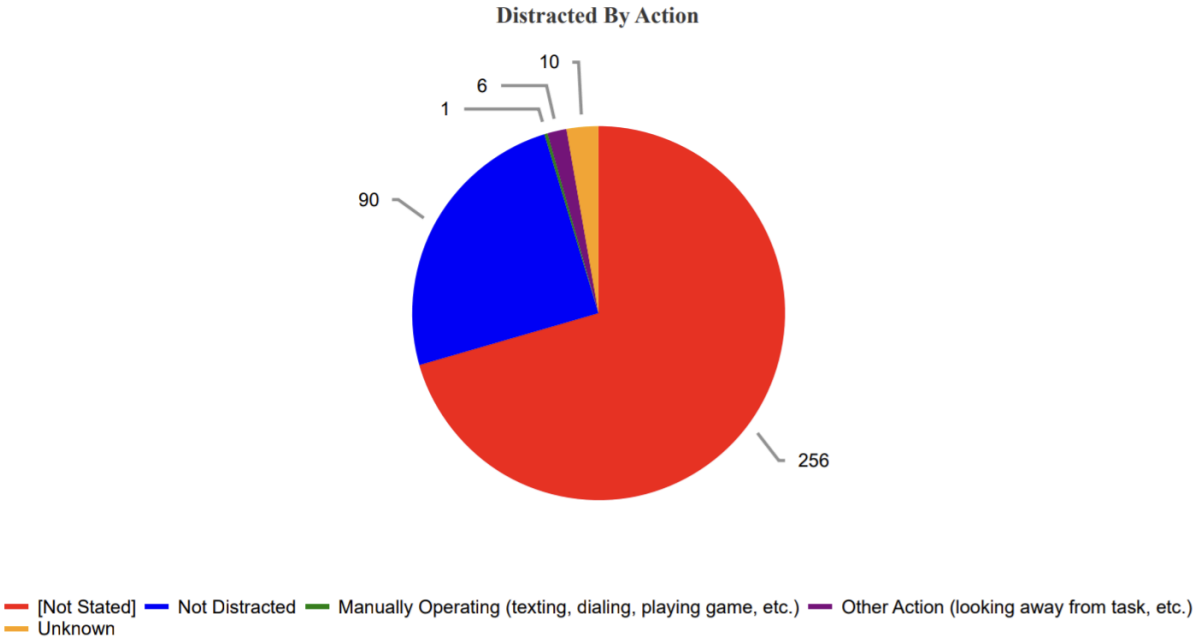
Note: Counts include all operators involved.

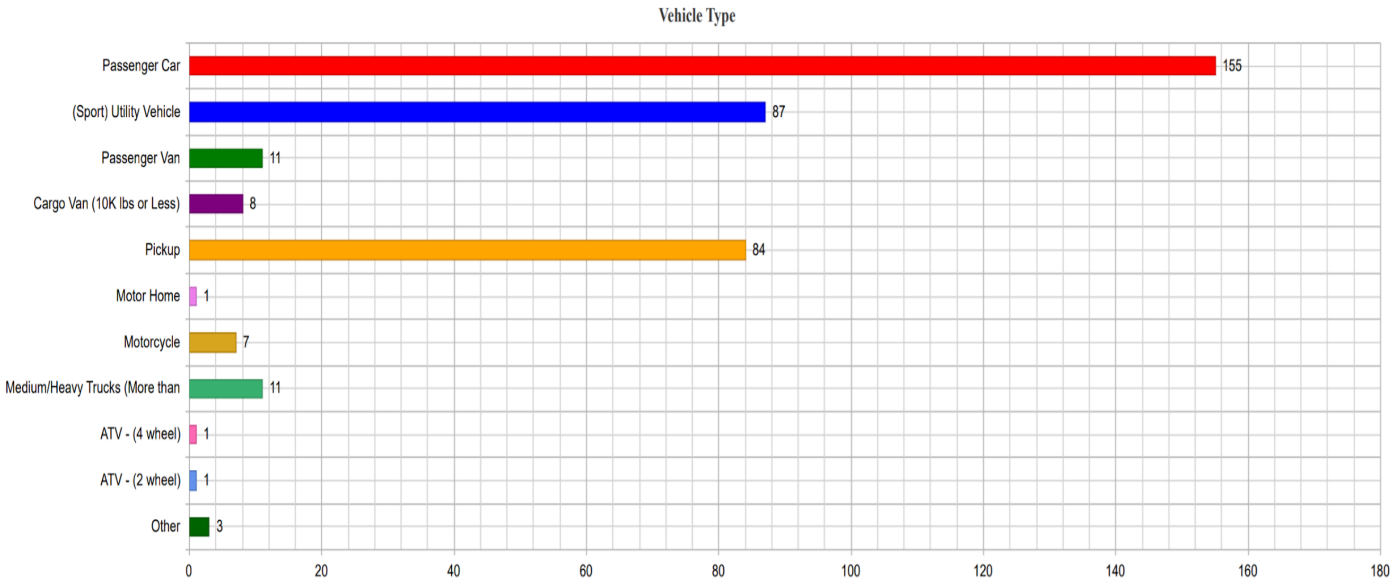

Driver Condition at Time of Crash
4
15
16
1
1
326
Apparently Normal
Emotional(Depressed, Angry, Disturbed, etc.)
Ill (Sick)
Asleep or Fatigued
Under the Influence of Medications/Drugs/Alcohol
Other

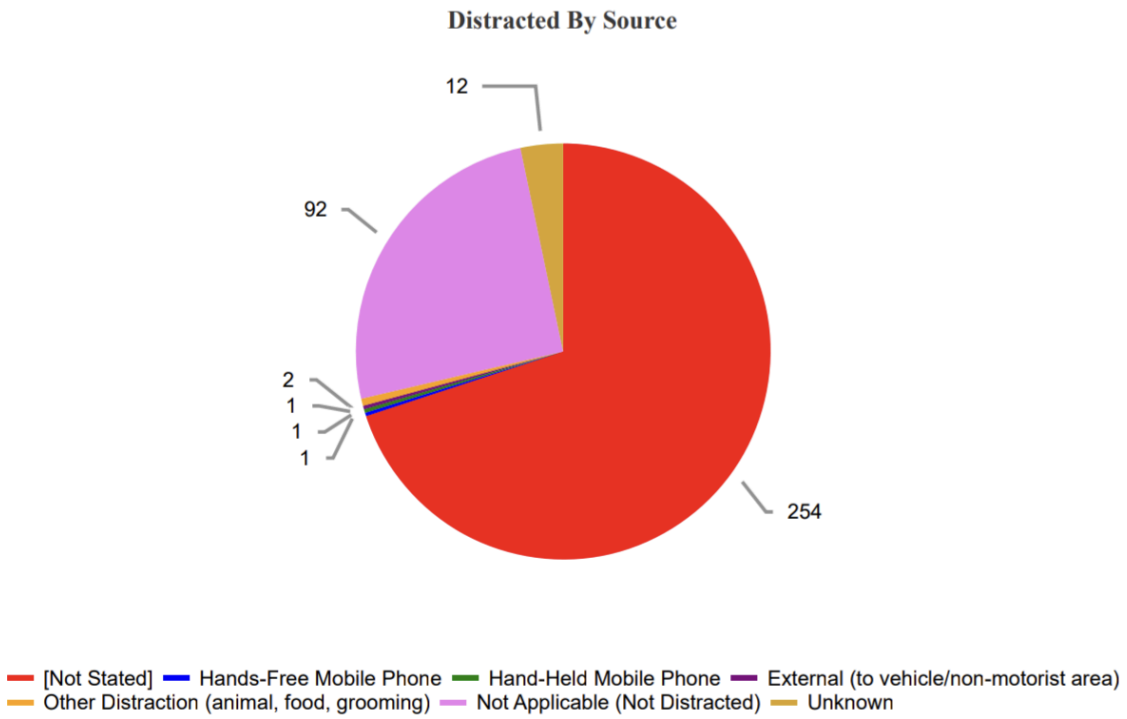

Driver Distracted By
4
28
3
3
2
1
103
219
[Not Stated]
Not Distracted
Manually Operating an Electronic Communication Device (texting, typing, dialing)
Other Activity, Electronic Device
Other Inside the Vehicle (eating, personal hygiene, etc.)
Outside the Vehicle (includes unspecified external distractions)
Unknown if Distracted
Distracted by Unknown Cause

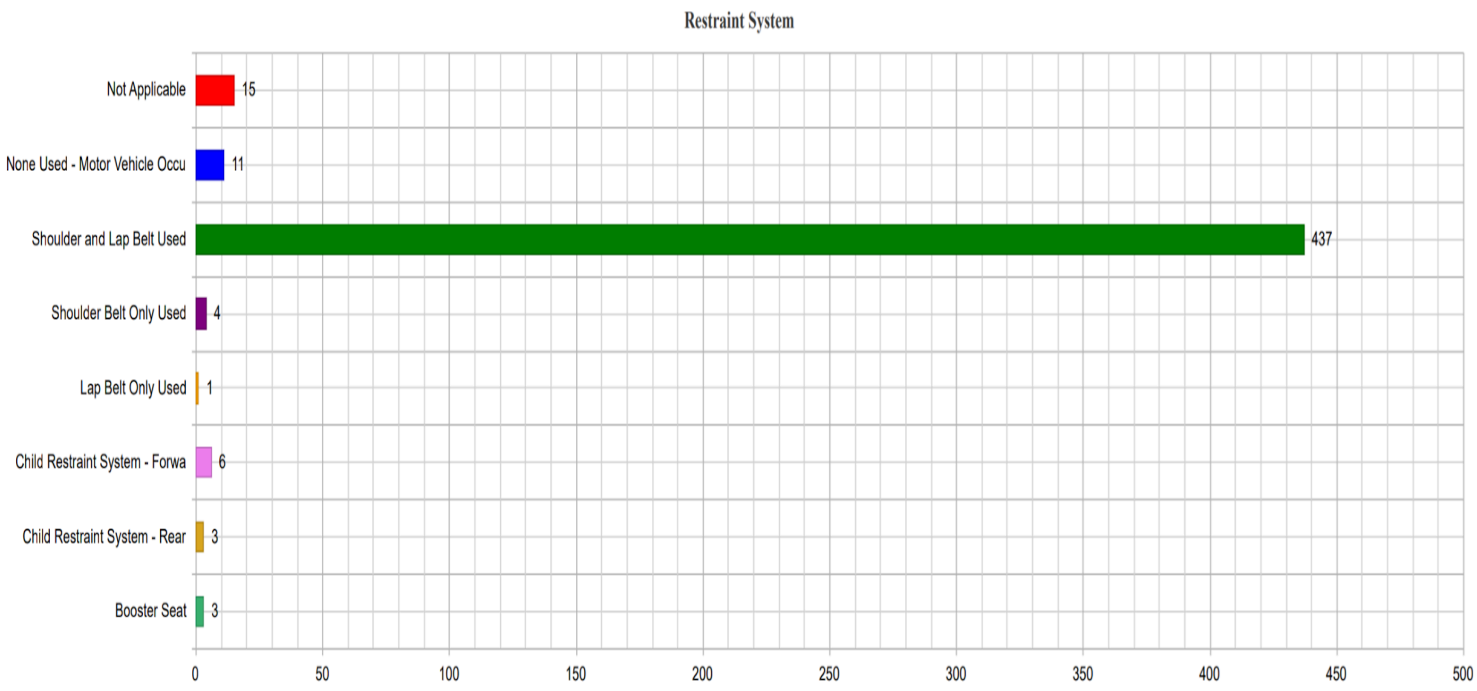

Distracted By Action
10
6
1
90
256
[Not Stated]
Not Distracted
Manually Operating (texting, dialing, playing game, etc.)
Other Action (looking away from task, etc.)
Unknown

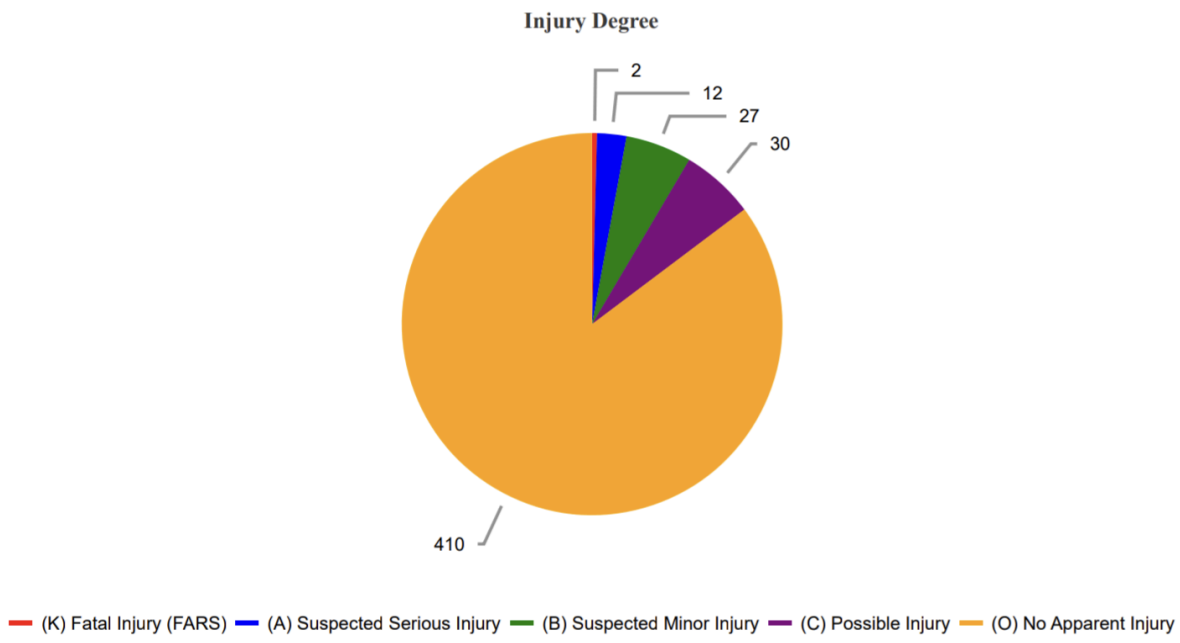

Distracted By Source
12
92
2
1
1
1
254
[Not Stated]
Hands-Free Mobile Phone
Hand-Held Mobile Phone
External (to vehicle/non-m
Other Distraction (animal, food, grooming)
Not Applicable (Not Distracted)
Unknown


Distracted By Action
10
6
1
90
256
[Not Stated]
Not Distracted
Manually Operating (texting, dialing, playing game, etc.)
Other Action (looking away from task, etc.)
Unknown


Vehicle Type
Passenger Car
(Sport) Utility Vehicle
Passenger Van
Cargo Van (10K lbs or Less)
Pickup
Motor Home
Motorcycle
Medium/Heavy Trucks (More than
ATV - (4 wheel)
ATV - (2 wheel)
Other
155
87
11
8
84
1
7
11
1
1
3
0
20
40
60
80
100
120
140
160
180


Distracted By Source
12
92
2
1
1
1
254
[Not Stated]
Hands-Free Mobile Phone
Hand-Held Mobile Phone
External (to vehicle/non-motorist area)
Other Distraction (animal, food, grooming)
Not Applicable (Not Distracted)
Unknown


Restraint System
Not Applicable
15
None Used - Motor Vehicle Occu
11
Shoulder and Lap Belt Used
437
Shoulder Belt Only Used
4
Lap Belt Only Used
1
Child Restraint System - Forwa
6
Child Restraint System - Rear
3
Booster Seat
3
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
350
400
450
500

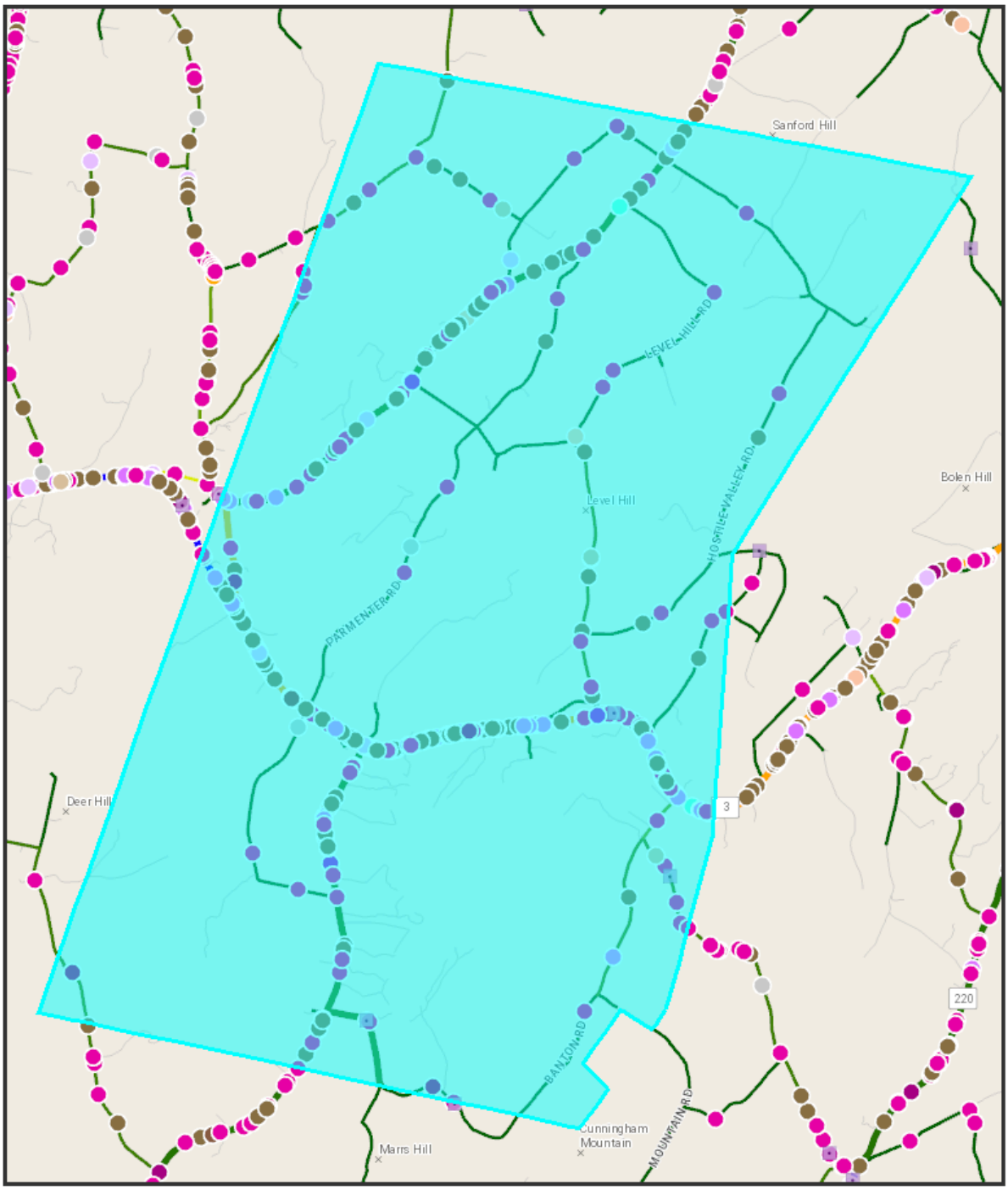

Injury Degree
2
12
27
30
410
(K) Fatal Injury (FARS)
(A) Suspected Serious Injury
(B) Suspected Minor Injury
(C) Possible Injury
(O) No Apparent Injury

Time	# of accidents
12 AM	6
1 AM	7
2 AM	4
3 AM	6
4 AM	13
5 AM	11
6 AM	20
7 AM	12
8 AM	19
9 AM	10
10 AM	8
11 AM	6
12 PM	10
1 PM	17
2 PM	7
3 PM	17
4 PM	16
5 PM	25
6 PM	25
7 PM	24
8 PM	19
9 PM	21
10 PM	5
11 PM	4

Yearly Traffic Counts 2023

Town	STA	Road	PN	Location	Group	AADT23
Palermo	30601	01239	4	IR 1239 (BRANCH MILLS RD) N/O SR 3	I	610
Palermo	55103	00391	4	IR 391(N PALERMO RD) E/O IR 1239 (PW)	I	1210
Palermo	38102	00391	4	IR 391(N PALERMO) NE/O IR 390(ARNOLD LN)	I	750
Palermo	38501	00395	6	IR 395 (LEVEL HILL RD) N/O SR 3	I	440
Palermo	38306	00397	4	IR 397 (TURNER RIDGE RD) SW/O SR 3	I	1200
Palermo	51503	00399	6	IR 399 (HOSTILE VALLEY RD) E/O IR 395	I	190
Palermo	49400	00426	6	IR 426 (GORE RD) @ BR #2732	I	130
Palermo	38602	00445	6	IR 445 (BANTON) NE/O IR 447 (S LIBERTY)	I	620
Palermo	38604	00447	6	IR 447 (S LIBERTY) SE/O IR 445 @BR# 2351	I	450
Palermo	53902	00461	6	IR 461 (PLUMMER RD) NE/O SR 3	I	190
Palermo	38503	0003X	1	SR 3 E/O IR 395 @ BR# 2758	II-III	5,410
Palermo	51304	0003X	1	SR 3 SE/O IR 1427 (PARMENTER RD)	II-III	5,380

DOT MAP



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1 Miles

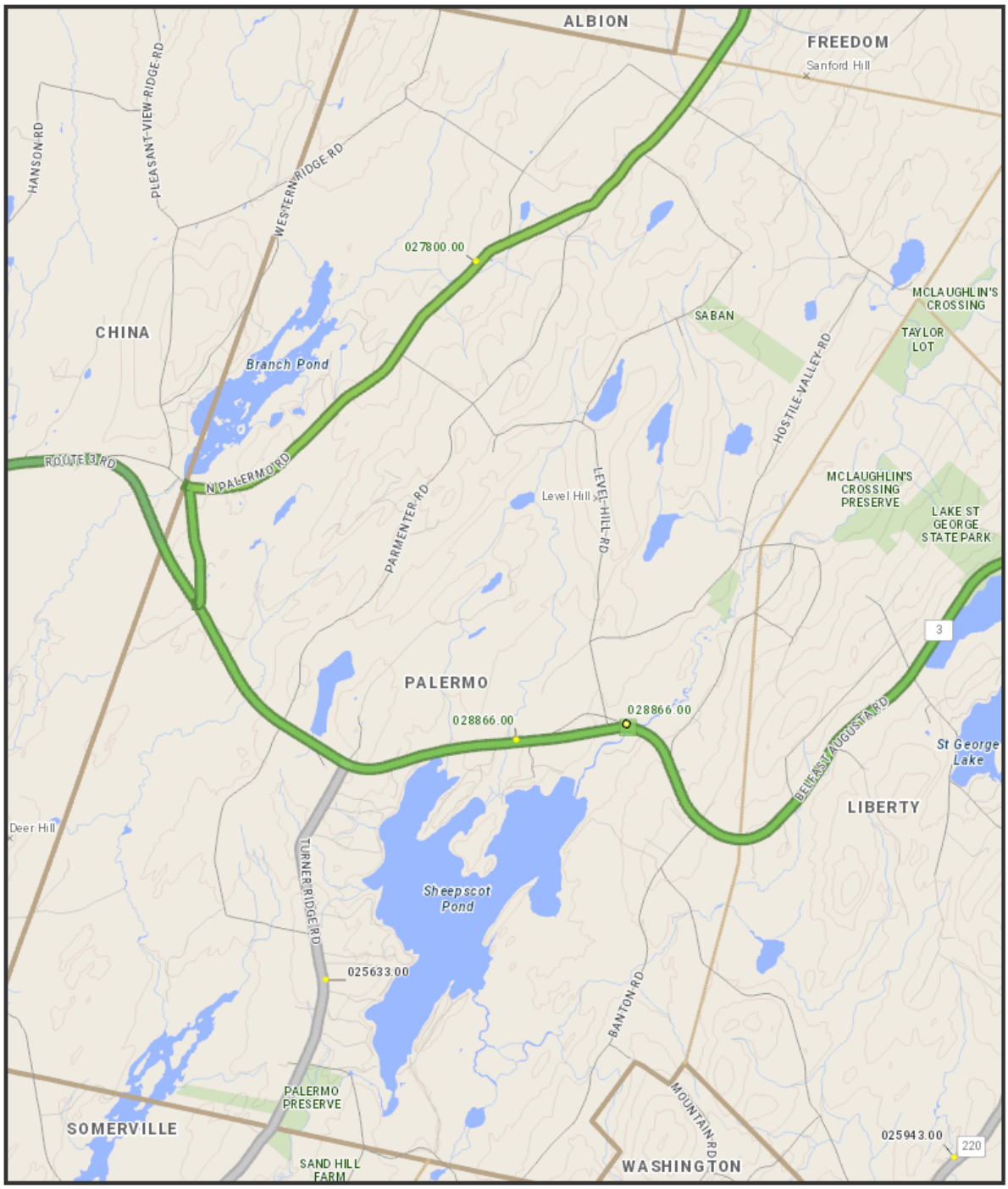
1 inch = 1.54 miles

Date: 1/5/2025
Time: 2:43:51 PM

Crashes - 10 Years

- <Null>
- All Other Animal
- Bear
- Bicycle
- Deer
- Fire
- Head-on / Sideswipe
- Intersection Movement
- Jackknife
- Moose
- Object in Road
- Other
- Pedestrians
- Rear End / Sideswipe
- Rollover
- Submersion
- Thrown or Falling Object
- Train
- Turkey
- Went Off Road

DOT MAP



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Location and overall condition of roads, bridges, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities, including any identified deficiencies or concerns.

The road commissioner is creating a road list for development of a long-range plan. As seen in the survey results later in the plan, respondents were generally pleased with the condition and maintenance of the roads.

See appendix C for road map.

Identify potential on and off-road connections that would provide bicycle and pedestrian connections to neighborhoods, schools, waterfronts and other activity centers.

Given the geography of Palermo and the location of the state roads in town, it is not possible for potential bicycle or pedestrian connections to be identified. These connections would interfere with traffic across Route 3 and span excessive distances in order to connect currently developed parts of Palermo with schools, waterfront areas or other developments.

Identify major traffic (including pedestrian) generators, such as schools, large businesses, public gathering areas/activities, etc. and related hours of their operations.

The school zone, located on Route 3, has a 15 mph speed limit during arrival and dismissal periods: 7:45 – 8:00 a.m. Arrival and 2:15-2:30 Dismissal
When there are large town events, or school events and programs there is inadequate parking, leading to overflow parking along Rt. 3.

Elections at the Town Office cause significantly increased traffic on North Palermo Road due to a lack of parking.

Identify policies and standards for the design, construction and maintenance of public and private roads.

The town has not adopted local standards for construction or maintenance of roads outside of subdivisions.

List and locate municipal parking areas including capacity, and usage.

The town office can accommodate roughly 17 cars. Parking at the recreational fields is significant, with overflow parking in a field.

Identify bus or van services.

WCAP Midcoast Public Transportation as addressed in #9 above. Phone number (855)-930-7900 (option2)

Identify existing and proposed marine and rail terminals within your community including potential expansions.

Not applicable.

Policies

To prioritize community and regional needs associated with safe, efficient, and optimal use of transportation systems.

To safely and efficiently preserve or improve the transportation system.

To promote public health, protect natural and cultural resources, and enhance livability by managing land use in ways that maximize the efficiency of the transportation system and minimize increases in vehicle miles traveled.

To meet the diverse transportation needs of residents (including children, the elderly and disabled) and through travelers by providing a safe, efficient, and adequate transportation network for all types of users (motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists).

To promote fiscal prudence by maximizing the efficiency of the state or state-aid highway network.

Strategies

Strategies	Party responsible	Time frame
Develop or continue to update a prioritized improvement, maintenance, and repair plan for the community's transportation network.	Selectboard	Long term
Initiate or actively participate in regional and state transportation efforts.	Selectboard	Long term
Maintain, enact or amend local ordinances as appropriate to address or avoid conflicts with: a. Policy objectives of the Sensible Transportation Policy Act (23 M.R.S.A. §73); b. State access management regulations pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. §704; and c. State traffic permitting regulations for large developments pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. §704-A.	Selectboard	Long term
Maintain, enact or amend ordinance standards for subdivisions and for public and private roads as appropriate to foster transportation-efficient growth patterns and provide for future street and transit connections.	Selectboard	Long term

Public Services & Facilities

Analyses

Are municipal services adequate to meet changes in population and demographics?

The Town of Palermo has a Town Meeting/Selectboard form of government. There are three members of the selectboard, elected at-large to serve staggered 3 year terms.

The Town clerk is an appointed position. Duties of the Town Clerk include the issuance of vital records and maintaining town records. In addition to the Town Clerk, the town employs a treasurer and deputy.

A single code enforcement officer is responsible for enforcing the town's land use ordinances and issuing building permits. A 3 person Board of Assessors is responsible for tax assessment and a five member Planning Board is elected yearly at the town meeting.

Barring a substantial and sudden increase in population, these services should be sufficient for the near future. It is worth noting, however, that the town currently relies on a limited group of people to fill a number of positions.

Has the community partnered with neighboring communities to share services, reduce costs and/or improve services? In what ways?

The Town of Palermo has reached agreements with the neighboring towns of Liberty and China for ambulance service and use of the transfer station respectively. The arrangement with Liberty for ambulance service has resulted in a greatly reduced response time for those services while the arrangement with China for the use of their transfer station has been, at times, difficult.

If the community has a public sewer system, what issues or concerns are there currently and/or anticipated in the future? Is the sanitary district extension policy consistent with the Future Land Use Plan as required by (38 M.R.S.A. §1163), or will it be?

Palermo does not have a public sewer system.

Are existing stormwater management facilities adequately maintained? What improvements are needed? How might future development affect the existing system?

There are no stormwater management facilities in town.

How do residents dispose of septic tank waste? Are there issues or concerns regarding septic tank waste?

Residents dispose of septic waste through private disposal systems. At this time there are no plans to develop any alternative to this arrangement.

Is school construction or expansion anticipated during the planning period? Are there opportunities to promote new residential development around existing and proposed schools?

Construction is not anticipated in the immediate future at the school. Palermo Consolidated School sits on Route 3 and is surrounded, primarily, by lots of at least 5 acres. Existing lots around the school could be subdivided in the future and developed, leading to a rapid increase in development.

Is the community's emergency response system adequate? Are improvements needed?

A great amount of improvement has been made in regard to Palermo's emergency response system. Improvements continue to be made and support from the town has generally been strong. Despite the incredible improvements that have been made, there is concern about the short and long term viability stemming from new proposed guidelines from the state.

Is the solid waste management system meeting current needs? Is the community reducing the reliance on waste disposal and increasing recycling opportunities? Are improvements needed to meet future demand?

Palermo has an agreement with the Town of China to allow residents to use their transfer station. The arrangement with China has been turbulent and in 2024 the agreement broke down, resulting in the Town of China moving to terminate their contract with the Town of Palermo. Both towns negotiated in an attempt to save the agreement and the results of those negotiations bore fruit in the form of a new contract.

Are improvements needed in the telecommunications and energy infrastructure?

Palermo has secured an agreement for high speed broadband and implementation is imminent. Residents have, at times, expressed frustration with the cell phone service available across town. Concerns have also been expressed about the prospect of large scale solar and wind developments as well as the potential utility corridor that was proposed to run through town.

Are local and regional health care facilities and public health and social service programs adequate to meet the needs of the community?

Health care and other facilities can be found within a reasonable distance in Augusta, Waterville, and Belfast. With increased access to affordable internet, residents will also have the option of telehealth services.

Will other public facilities, such as town offices, libraries, and cemeteries accommodate projected growth?

The town office recently underwent a partial remodeling and is well suited to accommodate the needs of the town for a number of years. Capacity in the town's cemeteries is far from being surpassed.

To what extent are investments in facility improvements directed to growth areas?

A growth area was established in the previous comprehensive plan 30 years ago. That plan designated the area along Route 3. At the time the previous plan was written, the idea was that nonresidential development would happen on Route 3 while the rest of the town would remain much the way it was at the time. In the 30 years since, relatively little nonresidential development occurred. Investments by the town had to be directed outside of the growth area to reflect this.

Does the community have a street tree program?

Palermo does not have a street tree program.

Conditions and Trends

Maine Solid Waste Generation and Disposal Capacity Report for Calendar Years 2020 & 2021
https://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/attach.php?id=10031902&an=1

Maine Materials Management Plan: State Solid Waste Management and Recycling Plan 2019 Update https://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/attach.php?id=1086792&an=1

MRSA Title 38 Chapter 13 §1305 states,

1. Disposal services. Each municipality shall provide solid waste disposal services for domestic and commercial solid waste generated within the municipality and may provide these services for industrial wastes and sewage treatment plant sludge.
[PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. E, §17 (RPR).]
2. Ordinances.
[PL 1983, c. 816, Pt. A, §43 (RP).]
3.
[PL 1983, c. 380, §3 (RP).]
4. Municipal status reports.
[PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. E, §18 (RP).]
5. Municipal permits. All permits issued pursuant to Title 30-A, chapter 183, subchapter I, shall, in addition to requirements imposed by those sections, be conditioned on compliance with rules adopted by the board concerning the operation of solid waste disposal facilities. Copies of permits issued by the municipality must be submitted to the commissioner within 30 days of issue.
[PL 1989, c. 6 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 9, §2 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 104, Pt. C, §§8, 10 (AMD); PL 1989, c. 890, Pt. A, §40 (AFF); PL 1989, c. 890, Pt. B, §231 (AMD).]
6. Municipal septage sites. Each municipality shall provide for the disposal of all refuse, effluent, sludge and any other materials from all septic tanks and cesspools located within the municipality. In addition, any person may provide a site for disposal of septage. In addition to making application to the Department of Environmental Protection for approval of any site, that person shall have written approval for the site location from the municipality in which it is located, unless the site is located in a Resource Protection District under the jurisdiction of the Maine Land Use Planning Commission. A municipality may determine whether approval of the site must be obtained first from the department or the municipality. The municipal officers shall approve, after hearing, any such private site if they find that the site complies with municipal ordinances and with local zoning and land use controls. In the absence of applicable municipal ordinances and local zoning and land use controls, the municipality shall base its approval of the site on compliance with the siting and design standards in the department's rules relating to septage management. For purposes of this subsection, "municipality" means a city, town or plantation.
[PL 1997, c. 40, §1 (AMD); PL 2011, c. 682, §38 (REV).]
7. On-site disposal of domestic septage; enforcement.
[PL 2021, c. 641, §3 (RP).]
8. Septage and sludge permits; municipal enforcement. Pursuant to Title 30-A, section 4452, subsection 6, a municipality, after notifying the department, may enforce the terms and conditions of a septage land disposal or storage site permit or a sludge land application or storage site permit issued by the department under this subchapter.
[PL 1997, c. 38, §2 (AMD).]
9. Coordination between municipality and department. Coordination between the department and a municipality concerning applications and modifications in the terms or conditions of a permit or license for a sludge land application site or storage facility is governed by this subsection.
A. Within 14 working days of its receipt of a complete application for a sludge land application site or storage facility, the department shall notify the municipal officers or their designees from the municipality in which the site or facility would be located of the application and the name and address of the applicant. The department shall provide the municipal officers with copies of all test results performed on the sludge material that is proposed to be spread in that municipality. Prior to approving an application for a sludge

land application site or storage facility, the department shall consult with the municipal officers or their designees in the municipality in which the site or facility is proposed and provide them with an opportunity to suggest conditions, including additional setbacks, to be imposed on a permit or license. If the department does not impose conditions on a permit or license that have been suggested in writing by the municipal officers, the department shall provide a written explanation to the municipal officers. [PL 1999, c. 393, §3 (NEW).]

B. The department shall consult with the municipal officers within 10 days of receiving a request by the sludge generator to change the terms or conditions of a permit or license. The municipality may petition the commissioner to review a generating facility's testing protocol for sludge. The commissioner shall respond to the municipality in writing within 10 days of the municipality's petition. The commissioner may order the applicant to conduct an additional test at the applicant's cost. A copy of the additional test results must be provided to the municipal officers. [PL 1999, c. 393, §3 (NEW).]

MRSA Title 38 Chapter 24 §2101 states,

1. Priorities. It is the policy of the State to plan for and implement an integrated approach to solid waste management for solid waste generated in this State and solid waste imported into this State, which must be based on the following order of priority:

A. Reduction of waste generated at the source, including both amount and toxicity of the waste; [PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. A, §7 (NEW).]

B. Reuse of waste; [PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. A, §7 (NEW).]

C. Recycling of waste; [PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. A, §7 (NEW).]

D. Composting of biodegradable waste; [PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. A, §7 (NEW).]

E. Waste processing that reduces the volume of waste needing land disposal, including incineration; and [PL 2007, c. 583, §7 (AMD).]

F. Land disposal of waste. [PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. A, §7 (NEW).]

It is the policy of the State to use the order of priority in this subsection as a guiding principle in making decisions related to solid waste management.

[PL 2007, c. 583, §7 (AMD).]

2. Waste reduction and diversion. It is the policy of the State to actively promote and encourage waste reduction measures from all sources and maximize waste diversion efforts by encouraging new and expanded uses of solid waste generated in this State as a resource.

[PL 2007, c. 192, §2 (NEW).]

The following information can be found on the State of Maine Department of Environmental Protection website.

Regarding product stewardship,

"Product stewardship is a public policy approach in which all participants involved in the life cycle of a product share responsibility for the impacts to human health and the natural environment that result from the production, use, and end-of-life management of the product. Generally, the greater the ability of a party to influence the life cycle impacts of a product, the greater the degree of that party's responsibility.

Maine law specifies product stewardship responsibilities for end-of-life management for the following products:

- Batteries, rechargeable and non-rechargeable
- Mercury auto switches
- Electronic waste
- Cell phones
- Mercury thermostats
- Mercury-added (fluorescent) lamps"
- Paint Stewardship Program
- Returnable Beverage Containers (Bottle Bill)
- Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging
- Post-Consumer Recycling

Regarding Reduce, Reuse, Recycle,

"Reducing the amount of materials we buy and use, reusing items, and recycling products and packaging, are all actions that significantly reduce our environmental impacts and help us achieve a "circular economy". By reducing, reusing, and recycling, we:

- decrease air and water pollution from waste disposal;
- conserve materials for continuous reuse in making new products;
- reduce demand for mining and extraction of virgin materials; and
- reduce the amount of energy used to make new products."

Regarding composting,

"It has been Maine's goal since 1989 to reach a recycling rate of 50% of our municipal solid waste generated. The most recent numbers (for 2016) show Maine's municipal solid waste recycling rate is at 36.79%. To help reach our statewide recycling goal, the Maine DEP provides technical and educational assistance to residents, municipalities, schools, and businesses to help increase the amount of resources that are recovered from the waste stream. DEP also collects, synthesizes, and reports data on solid waste management in Maine."

Regarding solid waste management,

“The State of Maine supports an integrated approach to waste management. This includes programs to: reduce the amount and toxicity of waste generated, promote reuse and recycling of waste, and compost and process waste to create safe and useful products. Disposal through incineration and landfilling is the least preferred option.
The DEP’s solid waste programs include: solid waste facilities management, sludge and residuals management, scrap tire management, electronic waste and mercury product management, and the non-hazardous waste transporter program. These programs offer education and technical assistance as well as performing regulatory activities including licensing, compliance and enforcement of the State’s Solid waste laws.”

Location of facilities and service areas (mapped as appropriate);

The Palermo Town Office is located directly next to the fire station on North Palermo Road. The town sand shed is also located on North Palermo Road near Nelson Lane.

General physical condition of facilities and equipment

Condition of town facilities is generally fair. As stated previously in this section the town office has been remodeled and is currently adequate.

The fire station is an aging building but improvements are being made to keep it up to the standards required.

Capacity and anticipated demand during the planning period

Capacity is adequate for the near future, demand is not likely to increase dramatically.

Identification of who owns/manages the systems;

The town owns the sand shed, and the recreation fields are owned and maintained by the Palermo Youth Association. The fire station is owned by the Palermo Volunteer Fire Department. RSU 12 owns the school building. Worthing House is owned by the Historical Society.

Estimated costs of needed capital improvements to public facilities

Given recent improvement to the facilities, minimal costs are anticipated beyond regular maintenance.

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the following information related to each of these public facilities and services:

a. Sewerage and/or Water Supply – The town does not provide these services.
b. Septage – The town of Palermo has a Holding Tank Ordinance that states the following;
"The owner of an improved property that utilizes a holding tank shall:
A. Maintain the holding tank in conformance with this or any other Ordinance of the Town of Palermo, the provisions of any applicable law, the rules and regulations of the Selectmen, and any administrative agency of the State of Maine; and
B. Permit only the Selectmen, or its agent, to collect, transport, and dispose of the contents therein."
c. Solid Waste – The total of the blue bags purchased by Palermo in 2023, divided by $2.80 (the cost of a large bag) and multiplied that by 27.5 lbs (an estimate of the capacity of the large blue bag). In 2023 Palermo bought approximately $36,000 bags. $36,000/$2.8 = 12,857 bags. 12,857 X 27.5 = 353,568 pounds of MSW. In 2024 Palermo purchased $35,656 bags which would yield 350,193 lbs of MSW using this formula. RFID tag reports that only about 26% of Palermo residents use the China Transfer Station. Based on this, 350,000 pounds of Palermo MSW represents 20% of the MSW actually generated, therefore, 1,750,000 pounds of MSW would be the extrapolated total.
d. Stormwater Management – Palermo does not have stormwater management systems.
e. Power and Communications – Direct Communications will be building a fiber network for access to broadband with an estimated completion date of 10/15/2026.
f. Emergency Response System –Average call response times for fire, police, and emergency/rescue is roughly 15 minutes.
g. Education – RSU 12. Include primary/secondary school system enrollment for the most recent year information is available and for the ten (10) years after the anticipated adoption of the plan. Needs to be filled in
h. Health Care - Palermo is served by Maine General in Augusta, Northern Light Inland Hospital in Waterville, and MaineHealth Waldo Hospital in Belfast.
i. Municipal Government Facilities and Services – Palermo has a Town Office staffed by 3 employees.
j. Street Tree Program - Palermo does not have a street tree program.

Policies

To encourage and promote adequate workforce housing to support the community's and region's economic development.

To ensure that land use controls encourage the development of quality affordable housing, including rental housing.

To encourage and support the efforts of the regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workforce housing needs.

Strategies

Strategies	Responsible Party	Time Frame
Maintain, enact or amend growth area land use regulations to increase density, decrease lot size, setbacks and road widths, or provide incentives such as density bonuses, to encourage the development of affordable/workforce housing.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term
Maintain, enact or amend ordinances to allow the addition of at least one accessory apartment per dwelling unit in growth areas, subject to site suitability.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term
Create or continue to support a community affordable/workforce housing committee and/or regional affordable housing coalition.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term
Designate a location(s) in growth areas where mobile home parks are allowed pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4358(3)(M) and where manufactured housing is allowed pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4358(2).	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term
Support the efforts of local and regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workforce housing needs.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term
Seek to achieve a level of at least 10% of new residential development built or placed during the next decade be affordable.	Selectboard, Planning Board	Long term

Fiscal Capacity

Analyses

How will future capital investments identified in the plan be funded?

Palermo has been able to fund capital projects by means of Capital Reserve Funds, money appropriated at the annual town meeting to be dedicated to a specific purpose. From 2019 to 2023, the town's balance increased from $30,155 to $33,051. There is currently $78,385 in the Grader Reserve Account, $80,000 in the Firetruck Reserve Account and $2,213 in ARPA funds. ARPA funds were used to renovate the town office and upgrade the computer/phone systems.

If the community plans to borrow to pay for capital investments, does the community have sufficient borrowing capacity to obtain the necessary funds?

Palermo has no plans to borrow money in the near future to fund capital projects, however, should an unexpected need arise, the town should have no problem securing a loan given the current financial standing of the town.

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?

Palermo has been active in exploring the possibility of sharing the cost of capital improvements with other towns. Palermo is part of the Waldo Broadband Corporation and contributed $11,000 to the initial feasibility costs. Palermo has also entered mutual aid pacts with neighboring fire departments and has an agreement with Liberty for ambulance services. Palermo has a contract with China for solid waste services.

Conditions and Trends

Identify community revenues and expenditures by category for the last five (5) years and explain trends.

Revenues and expenditures for the town from 2019-2023 are listed by category in Appendix D. The numbers suggest that revenues increased by $840,274, while expenditures rose by $635,235.

Describe means of funding capital items (reserve funds, bonding, etc.) and identify any outside funding sources.

In the recent past, the town has utilized ARPA funds for improvements as well as reserve funds for firetrucks and a grader. If the need arose to locate outside funding, the town is in good standing and would experience little trouble securing such funds.

Identify local and state valuations and local mil rates for the last five (5) years.

In regard to valuation in Palermo, there have been significant increases since 2019. The increased development and value of property are contributing factors. The Assessor's office completed a town revaluation that was required by the state in 2023.

Compared to neighboring towns, Palermo has the second highest valuation per capita. The two other neighboring towns with significant lake frontage, China and Liberty, are also quite high. The high valuation results in Palermo's lower tax rate, however, the assessment is a more relevant measure of the tax burden. On a per capita basis, Palermo ranks second, behind Liberty. This appears to be a relatively high position given the town's size. Freedom appears to be taxed far lower than other communities.

Certified Ratio	Commitment	Tax Rate	Total Taxable Municipal Valuation	Taxable Land Valuation	Taxable Building Valuation	Total Taxable Land & Building Valuation
100%	$2,657,535	0.01040	$255,532,200	$81,491,900	$172,903,200	$254,395,100

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.

Palermo's share of the RSU #12 debt stands at $1,838,336.00. Palermo has no other outstanding debt.

Policies

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.

Strategies

Strategies	Party Responsible	Time Frame
Explore opportunities to work with neighboring communities to plan for and finance shared or adjacent capital investments to increase cost savings and efficiencies.	Selectboard	Long Term

Capital Investment Plan

The comprehensive plan must include a capital investment plan that:

(1) Identifies and summarizes anticipated capital investment needs within the planning period in order to implement the comprehensive plan, including estimated costs and timing, and identifies which are municipal growth-related capital investments;

(2) Establishes general funding priorities among the community capital investments; and

(3) Identifies potential funding sources and funding mechanisms.

The Town of Palermo does not have a Capital Investment Plan.

Existing Land Use

Analyses

Is most of the recent development occurring: lot by lot; in subdivisions; or in planned developments? Is recent development consistent with the community's vision?

Most development in Palermo currently occurs lot by lot. In recent years there has been an increase in subdivisions, a trend that has generated some concern in town.

What regulatory and non-regulatory measures would help promote development of a character, and in locations that are consistent with the community's vision?

Historically, decision makers in town have taken an approach of minimal regulation. In the past this approach suited the desires of Palermo residents, but in order to achieve the goals expressed by residents through this planning process it could be necessary to alter this approach. Regulations to ensure development is consistent with the communities vision could include; more rigorous regulation of subdivisions, increased lot size or more strict environmental protections.

Is the community's administrative capacity adequate to manage its land use regulation program, including planning board and code enforcement officer?

The five member Planning Board is appointed for three year terms at the annual town meeting. They meet on an as needed basis. Enforcement is handled by a single part time code enforcement officer. Recent trends could indicate the need for a more proactive board. Code enforcement should be adequate going forward.

Are floodplains adequately identified and protected? Does the community participate in the National Flood Insurance Program? If not, should it? If so, is the floodplain management ordinance up to date and consistently enforced? Is the floodplain management ordinance consistent with state and federal standards?

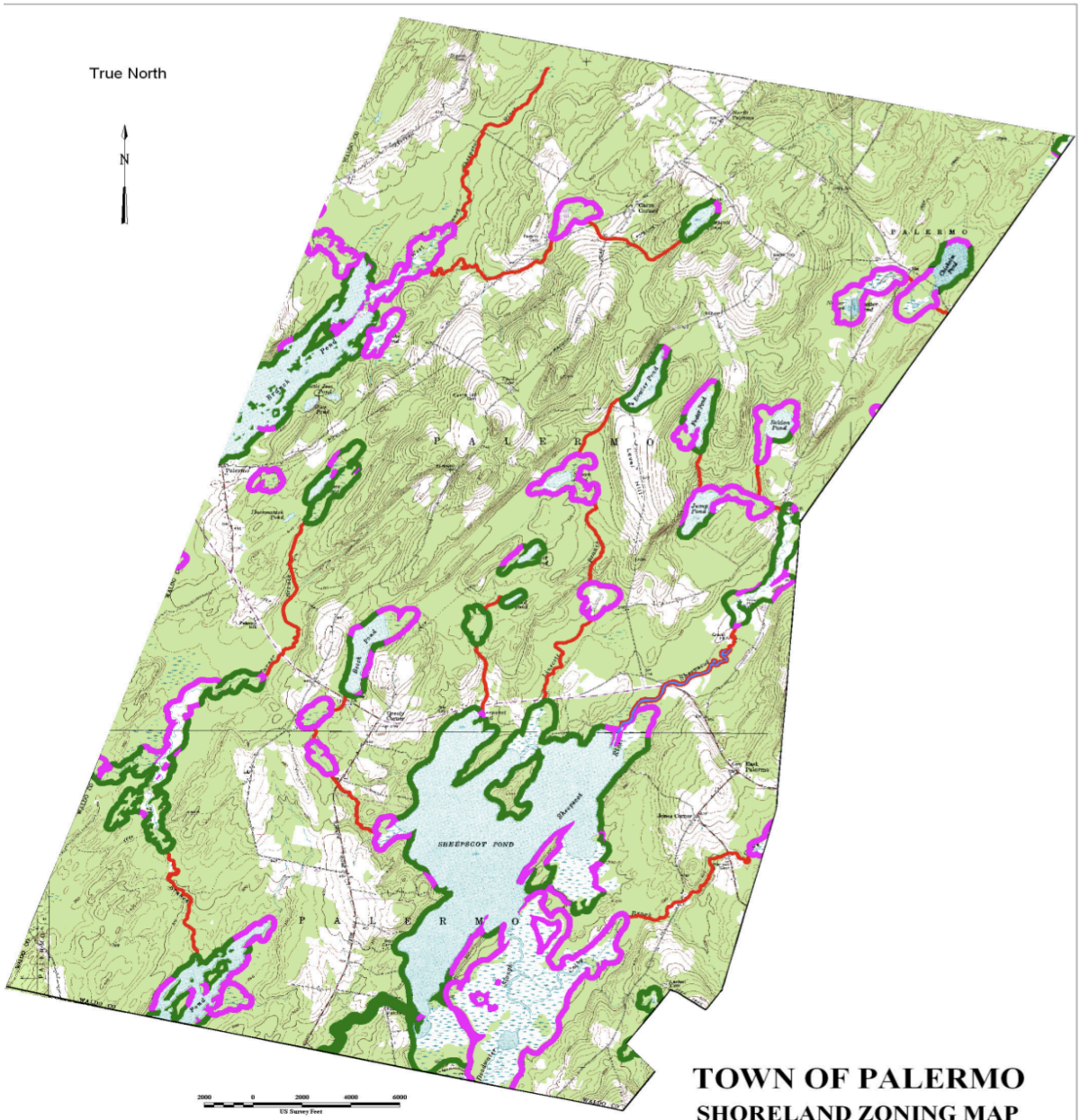
According to the FEMA Community Status Report, The Town of Palermo does participate in the National Flood Insurance Program with the current effective map dated 07/06/2015.

Conditions and Trends

An existing land use map, by land use classification (such as mixed-use, residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, agricultural, commercial forests, marine, park/recreational, conserved, and undeveloped land).

The Town of Palermo only has one land use ordinance, The Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. The map can be found on the following page.

TOWN OF PALERMO SHORELAND ZONING MAP



TOWN OF PALERMO
SHORELAND ZONING MAP

EFFECTIVE DATE: MARCH 13, 2010

TOWN CLERK: _____

KEY

RESOURCE PROTECTION DISTRICT ....

LIMITED RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT.....

STREAM PROTECTION DISTRICT .....

NOTES

1. Mapped Wetlands: This map shows non-forested areas, 10 acres or greater identified using the National Wetlands Inventory Maps, as prepared by the U.S. Department of Interior. Field verification of the location of the actual wetland boundaries should be undertaken prior to development.

2. Wetland areas contiguous with, and at the same elevation as the normal high water line of great ponds, rivers and streams are considered part of those waterbodies.

Copied from an undated map drafted by Susan S. Tolman, Readfield, Maine

A summary of current lot dimensional standards.

Palermo has a Building Permit Ordinance which sets the following standards;

- 40,000 square foot minimum lot size.
- 10 foot property line setback and 40 foot setback from the centerline of a public way.

A description or map identifying the location of lots and primary structures created within the last ten years. Include residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial development.

Structure	Date	Location
Home	4/1/16	130 Gordon's Lane
Mobile Home	5/8/16	100 Sheepscot Shore
Cape	6/2/16	145 Beaver Ridge
Cape	6/2/16	65 Beaver Ridge
Home	6/6/16	626 Route 3
Home	6/6/16	430 Parmenter Road
Mobile Home	6/17/16	459 Parmenter Road
Home	6/24/16	511 Jones Road
Home	10/12/16	64 Horak Lane
Home	5/5/17	25 Mary's Way
Home	6/2/17	Jones Road
Home	6/6/17	980 Turner Ridge Road
Mobile Home	6/16/17	321 Cain Hill
Home	2/22/19	576 Arnold Lane
Home	7/29/19	Turner Ridge Road

Home	8/27/19	Varney Shore
Home	9/20/19	80 Parmenter Road
Home	10/4/19	Back Cove
Home	5/12/20	90 Gordon Lane
Home	5/17/20	670 Arnold Lane
Mobile Home	8/4/20	81 Couillard Road
Home	8/13/20	Turner Ridge
Home	10/20/20	Lenfest Road
Home	1/21/21	809 Banton Road
Home	9/2/21	490 East Shore
Home	5/19/21	North Palermo Road
Home	5/19/21	95 Sidney Road
Mobile Home	6/29/21	330 Nelson Lane
Home	7/9/21	285 Pillsbury Shore
Home	8/4/21	125 Leeman Arm
Home	9/27/21	26 Bushey Shore
Home	10/1/21	20 Turner Ridge Road
Home	10/6/21	220 Cain Hill
Home	10/26/21	1481 Banton Road
Mobile Home	11/18/2021	160 Turner Ridge Road
Home	12/14/21	369 Parmenter Road
Double Wide	1/1/22	60 Tibbetts Way
Mobile Home	1/21/22	1320 Level Hill
Home	2/18/22	112 Branch Mills Road
Home	3/30/22	1240 North Palermo Road
Home	4/1/22	1204 Western Ridge Road
Mobile Home	4/15/22	82 Route 3

Mobile Home	4/15/2022	464 Arnold Lane
Home	4/27/22	25 Snowberry Lane
Apartment	5/7/22	142 Hostile Valley
Home	6/6/22	50 Snowberry Lane
Home	6/6/22	301 Bushey Shore
Home	7/21/22	821 Colby Road
Home	7/21/22	64 North Palermo Road
Home	9/2/22	65 Snowberry Lane
Home	10/6/22	1007 Hostile Valley
Home	11/4/22	251 Hostile Valley
Home	1/3/23	15 Lenfest Road
Home	3/31/23	249 Gore Road
Home	3/31/23	30 Tucker's Way
Home	5/4/23	120 Cain Hill
Mobile Home	5/12/23	2391 Level Hill
Modular	5/19/23	196 Turner Ridge
Mobile Home	6/15/23	2145 Route 3

This data is gathered from building permits issued from 2016-2023. Nonresidential structures were not included and conversions from seasonal to year round residences are not accounted for. Over this time 65 residences were built across 34 different roads in town with a drastic increase in new homes being built in 2022.

From 2014 to 2024 there have been 5 new subdivisions. 2 in 2020 totalling 6 new lots, 1 in 2021 and 2 in 2024 totalling 10 new lots.

Provide a brief description of existing land use regulations and other tools utilized to manage land use, including shoreland zoning, floodplain management, subdivision, site plan review, and zoning ordinances.

Ordinances including the Building Permit Ordinance, Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, Floodplain Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance can be found on the town's website or at the town office. All ordinances roughly follow the state's minimum standards.

Estimate the minimum amount of land needed to accommodate projected residential, institutional, commercial, or industrial development at least ten (10) years into the future.

Given current standards and projected housing needs over the planning period, roughly 70 acres is the minimum amount of land that would need to be developed in order to realize those projections.

Future Land Use

Analyses

Does the Future Land Use Plan align and/or conflict with the community's vision statement?

The future land use plan was developed using the feedback we received from the community. It takes into account the desire to maintain a rural character and protect Palermo's agricultural and natural resources.

Is the configuration of the growth area(s) shaped by natural opportunities and/or constraints (i.e. the physical suitability or unsuitability of land for development)? The location of public facilities? The transportation network?

After studying the geography of the town, including natural resources, shoreland zoning and current level of development it was decided that the best and only logical area to designate as a growth area was the area along the Branch Mills Road. This area is already more developed than large portions of the town, does not contain any lots in tax use programs and is absent any major natural constraints. Additionally, it is located near Route 3, the school, town office, and fire department.

How does the Future Land Use Plan relate to recent development trends?

Recent development has not followed a coherent trend in Palermo. Residential units have been dotted around the town and more recently subdivisions have been created in different areas.

Given current regulations, development trends, and population projections, estimate how many new residential units and how much commercial, institutional, and/or industrial development will likely occur in the planning period? Where is this development likely to go?

As stated in previous sections, we could expect to see in the region of 70 new homes being built over the next 10 years. This development would likely occur in the southern portion of town given the location of recreational opportunities and route 3 being the the primary artery in and out of town. Given the location of services a relatively short distance from town and a rather low population, minimal commercial or industrial development is expected. If new commercial or industrial development were to occur it would almost certainly be centered around Route 3.

How can critical natural resources and important natural resources be effectively protected from future development impacts?

Requiring developments to protect known resources through regulation and oversight would be the most effective method. Adopting regulations can be difficult in rural Maine communities but communication and education can be used to drastically improve the protection of vulnerable resources.

Policies

To coordinate the community's land use strategies with other local and regional land use planning efforts.

To support the locations, types, scales, and intensities of land uses the community desires as stated in its vision.

To support the level of financial commitment necessary to provide needed infrastructure in growth areas.

To establish efficient permitting procedures, especially in growth areas.

To protect critical rural and critical waterfront areas from the impacts of development.

Strategies

Strategies	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Assign responsibility for implementing the Future Land Use Plan to the appropriate committee, board or municipal official.	Selectboard	Long term
Using the descriptions provided in the Future Land Use Plan narrative, maintain, enact or amend local ordinances as appropriate to: a. Clearly define the desired scale, intensity, and location of future development; b. Establish or maintain fair and efficient permitting procedures, and explore streamlining permitting procedures in growth areas; and c. Clearly define protective measures for critical natural resources and, where applicable, important natural resources.	Planning Board	Long term

d. Clearly define protective measures for any proposed critical rural areas and/or critical waterfront areas, if proposed.		
Include in the Capital Investment Plan anticipated municipal capital investments needed to support proposed land uses.	Selectboard	Long term
Meet with neighboring communities to coordinate land use designations and regulatory and non-regulatory strategies.	Selectboard Planning Board	Long term
Provide the code enforcement officer with the tools, training, and support necessary to enforce land use regulations, and ensure that the Code Enforcement Officer is certified in accordance with 30-A M.R.S.A. §4451.	Selectboard	Long term
Track new development in the community by type and location.	Planning Board	
Direct a minimum of 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments into designated growth areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan.	Selectboard	
Periodically (at least every five years) evaluate implementation of the plan in accordance with Section 2.7.	Selectboard Planning Board Conservation Committee	

Components

The following maps will show our growth area and rural areas as well as the natural restraints that shaped our decision. First is a map of the entire town with our growth area roughly contained within the yellow highlighted area and the green highlight designating our rural areas. In the second map you will see a more precise mapping of our growth area. The following maps show high value plant and animal habitats, water resources and habitats, habitat connectivity, and finally Palermo's only existing zoning which is the shoreland zones.

The community expressed a desire to see the town maintain its rural character and protect its agricultural heritage. Given the expected growth over the next ten years, those objectives are easily achievable. As you can see from the sections above and the maps below, Palermo is dotted with natural habitats and farmland, open spaces, and tree growth as designated by their enrollment in tax use programs. In order to protect these areas we looked at all the relevant data individually and as a whole. What we found was that large portions of town were unsuitable for a growth area. The area south of Route 3 had numerous parcels that were either designated as farmland or tree growth. The area surrounding Sheepscot Lake was, for obvious reasons, not appropriate to be a designated growth area and the Banton/Gore Road side of the lake, while seeing rapid development, is mostly NWI wetlands and contains, according to the state, a high value Atlantic White Cedar Bog. The area in Northern Palermo was excluded because there are large parcels of designated farmland.

The Town of Palermo is expected to see some limited, mostly residential development over the next ten years. According to the state the purpose of the growth area is to designate an area where you would expect a majority of that growth to occur. The state also says that growth areas should include areas that are already more densely populated and areas that may not be able to accommodate additional growth but which may need additional investment to maintain or replace the existing development. The area known as "The Branch" is located near Route 3 and not far from Turner Ridge Road. Both of those roads were identified in our survey as highly travelled roads. Being near Route 3 allows for much quicker and easier travel to the major service areas of Augusta and Belfast. The growth area is also located near the fire station and not far from the school. The Branch area is also generally considered to be the "center" of town given the location of the town office as well the historical significance of the area. In the past many commercial ventures were centered around this area including a hotel, blacksmith, cobbler and the still standing general store.

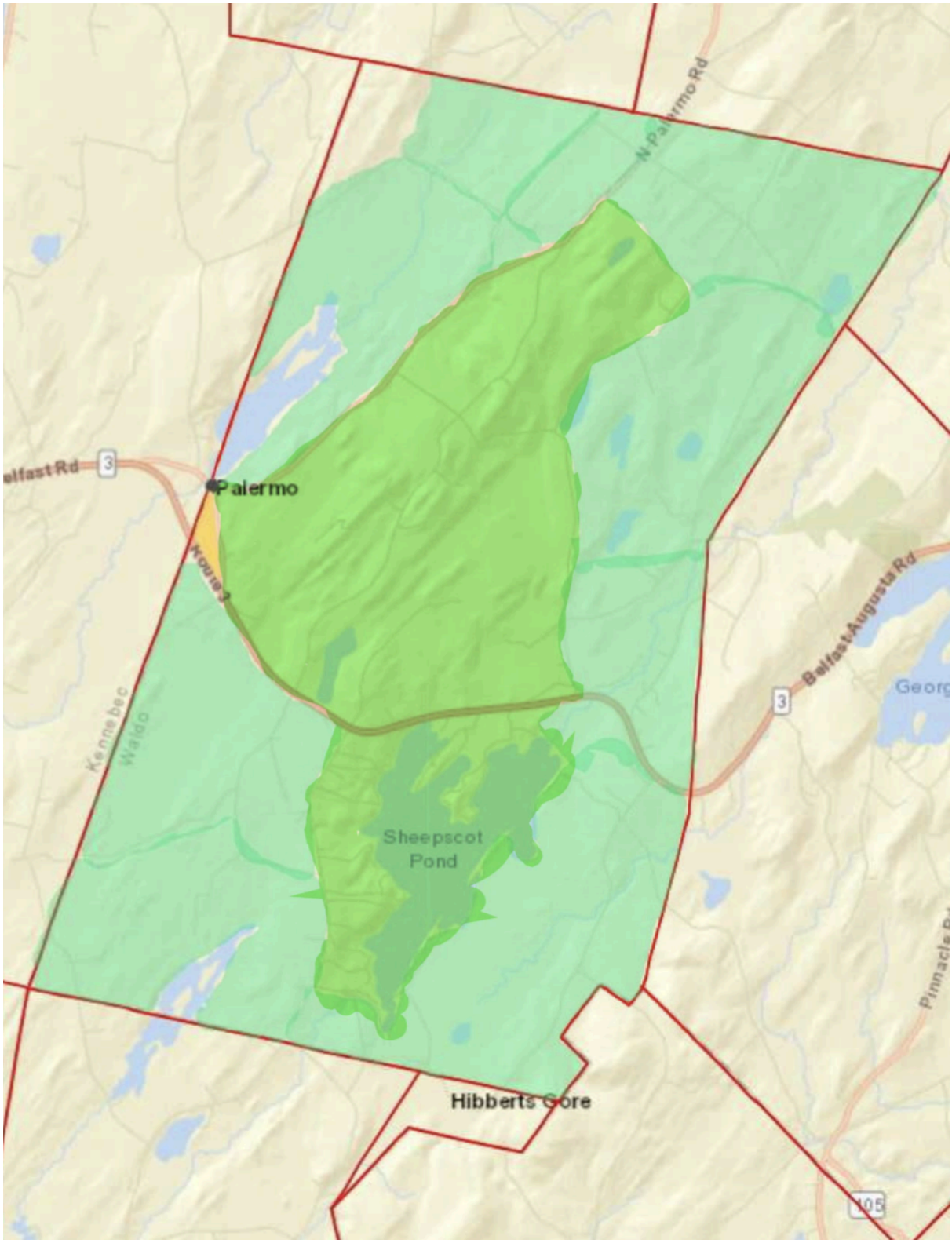
Proper planning and investment could see a revitalization of this area with lot sizes to either increase or decrease the density of development and potentially encourage the emergence of the small businesses that were identified in the survey as being important to residents.

Increased development in the area does have the potential to endanger some important areas such as the nearby pond and the high value Fall Fimbry habitat along North Palermo Road. Care would have to be given to ensure natural resources are protected. It's also possible, given the historical significance of the area, that as yet unknown or poorly documented historic resources could be endangered by rapid development. The Grange Hall and Dowe's General Store are important buildings that play a key role in the history of Palermo.

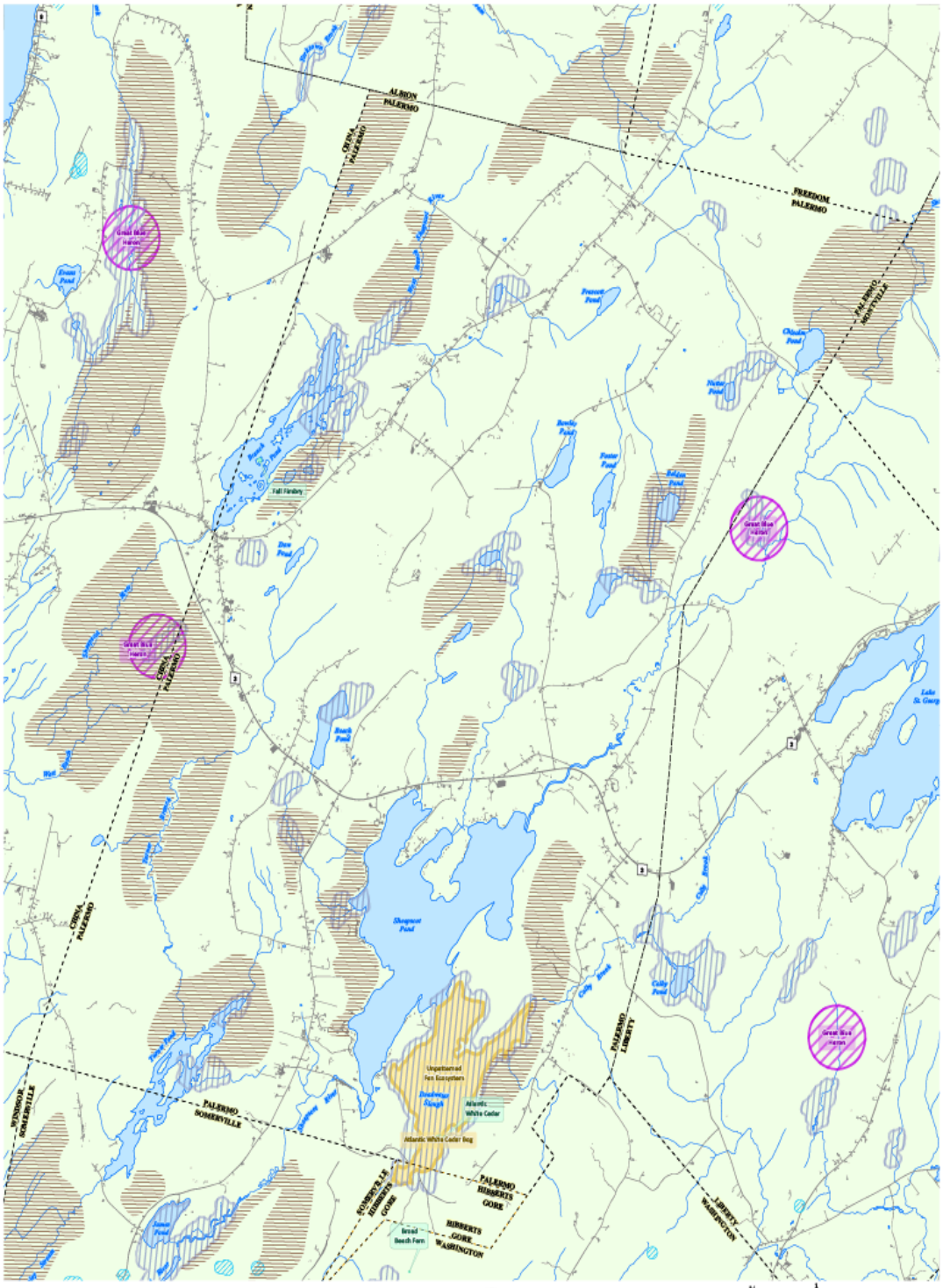
The area we have designated is already more developed than other parts of town and is strategically located near state roads and close to the fire department. Development has occurred here organically and would likely continue to do so. Given the relatively slow projected increase in population and therefore housing need, few additional investments are likely needed before additional development could occur. In the unlikely event of rapid development occurring in the area, increased oversight would likely be warranted to prevent damage to natural resources. Rapidly increased traffic on the roads would present a need for additional maintenance and repair.

The rural areas were designated to emphasize the need for careful consideration when developing inside those areas. These areas contain active farms, tree growth areas, open spaces and critical natural resources. While it is difficult to find any part of Palermo that doesn't include natural resources, farms and forests worth protecting, we felt these areas deserved special attention. The high density of natural habitats and parcels in tax use programs, combined with the otherwise natural suitability of these areas for development means they are at increased risk.

Green Highlighted areas designate rural areas.
Yellow highlighted area designates the growth area.


N Palermo Rd
elfast Rd
3
Palermo
Kouiez
Belfast-Augusta Rd
3
Georg
Kennebec
Waldo
Sheepscot
Pond
Pinnacle
Hibberts Gore
105

Water St
N Palermo Rd
Ryan's Ln
Kennebec
Waldo
Branch Mills Rd
Palermo
Belfast Rd
Rileys Way
3
Grace Ln
Branch Mills Rd



Beginning with Habitat (BwH) equips Maine communities, landowners, and conservation partners with tools to protect, restore, and connect important habitats and ecosystems in a changing climate.

www.beginningwithhabitat.org

High Value Plant & Animal Habitats

Palermo

This map is nonregulatory and is intended for planning purposes only

Organized Towns

Unorganized Towns

Rare, Threatened, Endangered Animals

Endangered, Threatened, Special Concern Species Habitats	Species occurrence and/or the associated habitats based on species sightings.

Rare or Exemplary Plants and Natural Communities

Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Plants	Symbol proportional to number of known occurrences based on field observations.
Rare and Exemplary Natural Communities	Mapped features are based on field surveys and aerial photo interpretation.

Essential Wildlife Habitat

Roseate Tern, Piping Plover & Least Tern	Nesting, feeding, brood & rearing sites. Areas are identified based on species observations and confirmed habitat use.

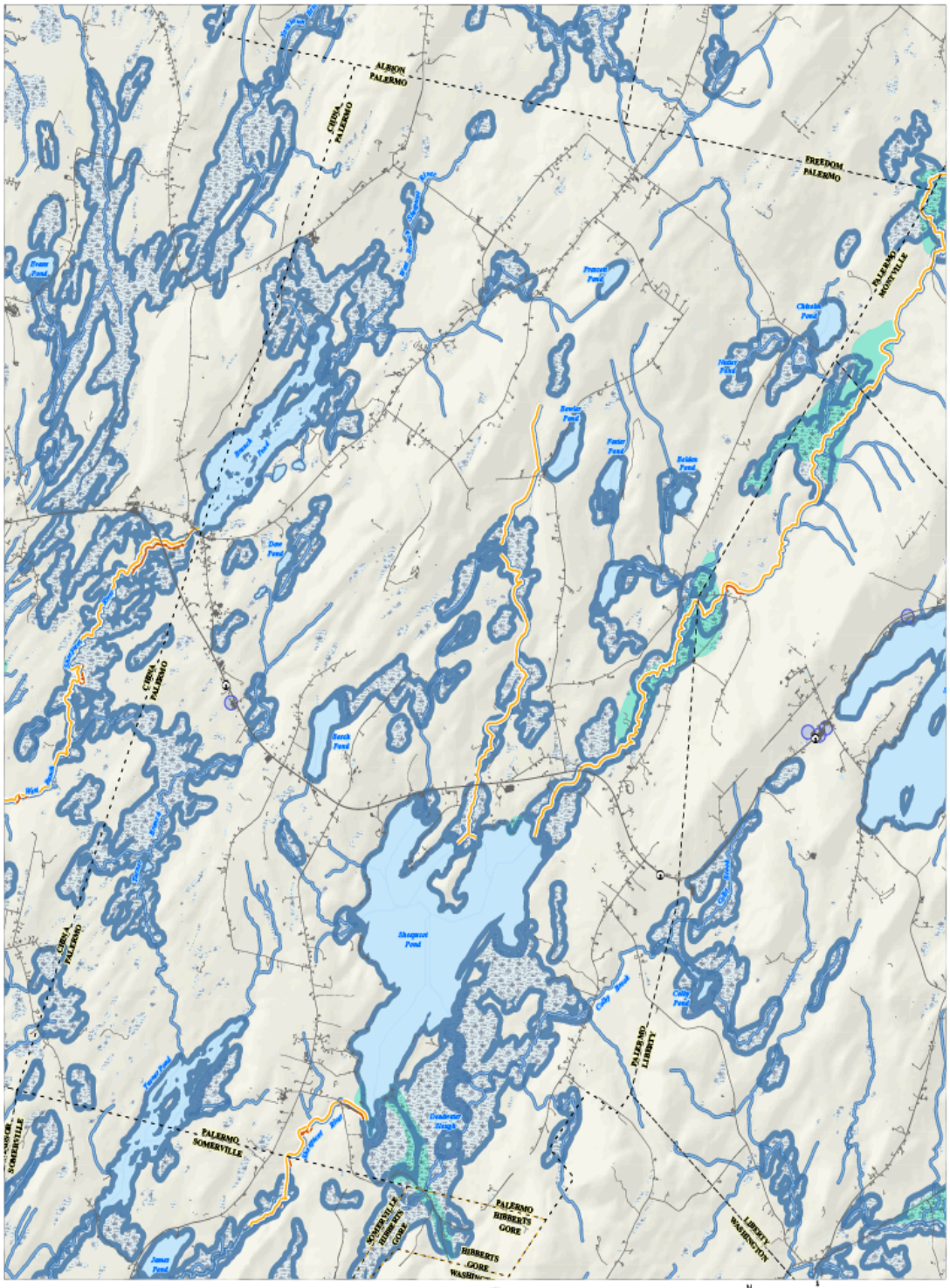
Significant Wildlife Habitat

Deer Wintering Area	Forested area possibly used by deer for shelter during periods of deep snow and cold temperatures.
Inland Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitats	Freshwater breeding, migration, feeding, and wintering for inland waterfowl and wading birds.
Shorebird Areas	Coastal staging areas that provide feeding habitat like tidal mud flats or roosting habitat like gravel bars or sand spits for migrating shorebirds
Seabird Nesting Island	An island, ledge, or portion thereof in tidal waters with documented, nesting seabirds or suitable nesting habitat for endangered seabirds.
Tidal Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitats	Breeding, migrating/staging, or wintering areas for coastal waterfowl or breeding, feeding, loafing, migrating, or roosting areas for coastal wading birds.
Significant Vernal Pools	Surveyed pool depressions used for breeding by amphibians and other indicator species and that portion of the critical terrestrial habitat within 250 ft of the spring or fall high water mark.

Data Sources

TOWN BOUNDARIES
Maine Office of GIS (2015)
HYDROLOGY
U.S. Geological Survey National Hydrography Dataset (2016)
DEM/ELEVATION
NOAA Coastal Change Analysis Program (C-CAP) (2022)
RARE, ESSENTIAL & SIGNIFICANT WILDLIFE HABITATS
ME Office of GIS, ME Dep. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife (2024)
RARE NATURAL COMMUNITIES & PLANTS
ME Natural Areas Program (2024)

Map Prepared by Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
October 2024



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www.beginningwithhabitat.org

Water Resources & Shoreland Habitats

Palermo

This map is nonregulatory and is intended for planning purposes only

Organized Towns

Unorganized Towns

Atlantic Salmon Habitat — Reflects surveys on selected Maine streams.

Wild Brook Trout Priority Conservation Areas — Reflects surveys on selected Maine streams.

Source Water Protection Areas — Buffers that represent source water protection areas for wells and surface water intakes that serve the public water supply. Their size is proportional to population served and/or by the type of water supply system. These buffers range from 300 to 2,500 feet in radius.

Aquifers — Flow of at least 10 gallons per minute.

NWI Wetlands — National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) uses aerial photographs to approximate wetland locations. NWI data is not comprehensive mapping of wetlands resources and typically under represents the presence of wetlands on the landscape.

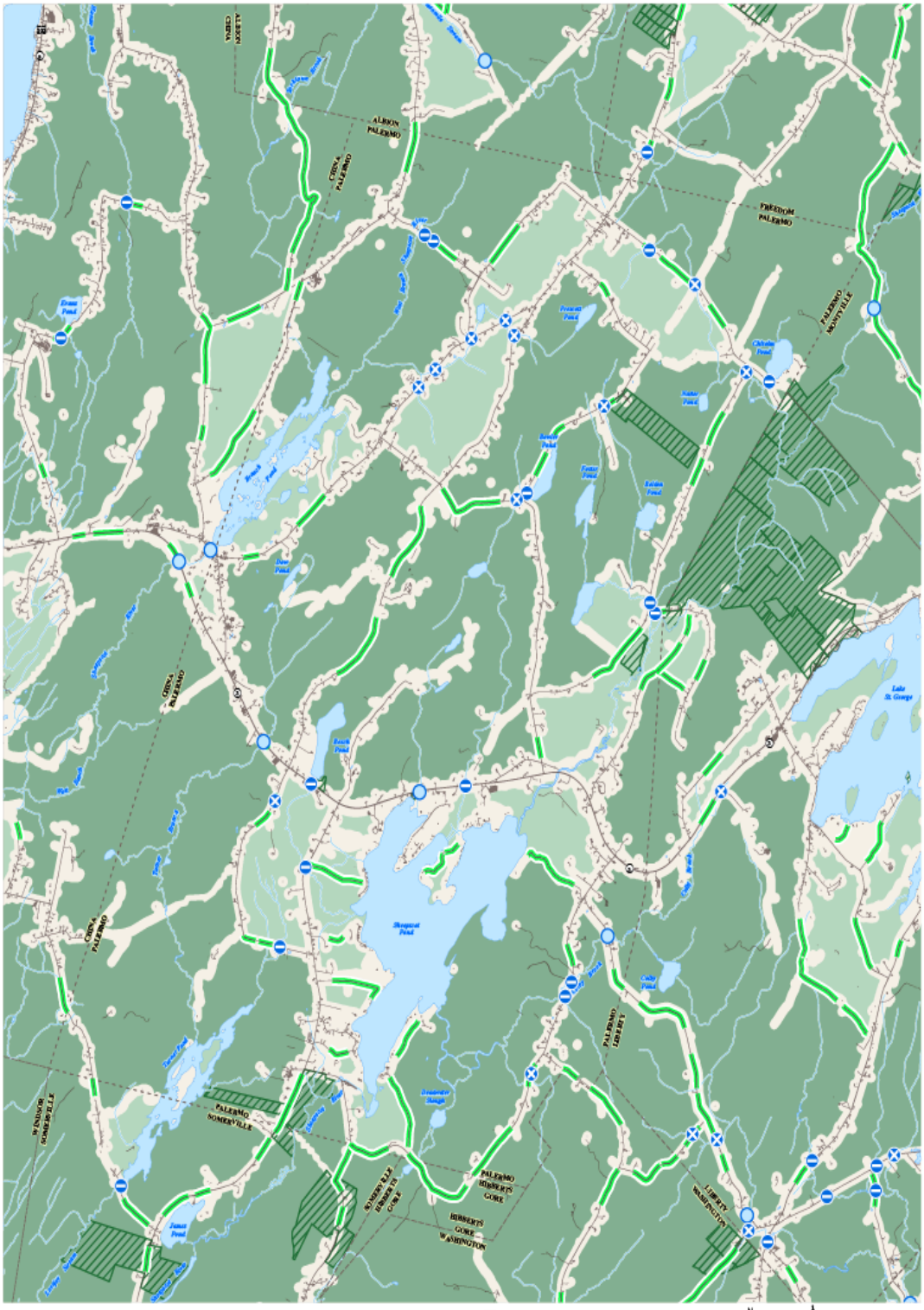
Shoreland Areas — Depicted using common regulatory zones including a 250-foot-wide strip around Great Ponds and wetlands (features of at least 10 acres), rivers, coastline, and 75-foot-wide strip around streams. For more information on Mandatory Shoreland Zoning - https://www.maine.gov/dep/land/slz/

Data Sources

TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES
Maine Office of GIS (2020)
ROADS
Maine Office of GIS, Maine Department of Transportation (2021)
HYDROLOGY
USGS National Hydrography Dataset (2018)
DEVELOPED
CDP NOAA impervious land cover (2022)
NATIONAL WETLANDS INVENTORY
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (2019)
SHORELAND AREAS
Maine Office of GIS,
Maine Natural Areas Program (2021)

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION AREAS and WELLS
Maine Office of GIS, Maine Department of Human Services Drinking Water Program (2020)
AQUIFERS
Maine Office of GIS, Maine Geological Survey (2022)
BROOK TROUT PRIORITY CONSERVATION AREAS
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife (2020)
MAINE HERITAGE FISH WATERS
ME Dep. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife (2022)
ATLANTIC SALMON HABITAT
ME Dep. of Marine Resources (2024)
SHELLFISH
Maine Department of Marine Resources (2024)

Map Prepared by Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
October 2024



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Habitat Connectivity

Conserved Lands, Undeveloped Habitat Blocks & Habitat Connectors

Palermo

This map is nonregulatory and is intended for planning purposes only

Organized Towns

Unorganized Towns

Habitat Connectors*

Likely Road Crossing Areas

Maine Stream Habitat Viewer Crossings

Barrier

Potential Barrier

No Barrier

Habitat Blocks

Acres

0-500 Acres

500 + Acres

Focus Areas

Focus Areas of Statewide Ecological Significance

Conserved Lands

Fee and Easement Conservation Land

**Represented habitat connections identified through computer modeling highlight locations where quality habitat is likely to occur on both sides of a given road between undeveloped habitat blocks greater than 100 acres and between higher value wetlands. These representations are approximate and have not been field verified.*

Data Sources

TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES
ME Office of GIS (2023)
IMPERVIOUS
CCAP NOAA (impervious land cover (2022)
HYDROLOGY
US Geological Survey (2024)
CONSERVED LANDS
ME Dept of Ag., Cons., and For.,
Land Use Planning Commis.,
ME Dep. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (2024)

UNDEVELOPED HABITAT BLOCKS
Beginning with Habitat (2020)
FOCUS AREAS & HABITAT CONNECTORS
Beginning with Habitat (2020)
MAINE STREAM HABITAT VIEWER CROSSINGS
ME Dep. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (2022)

Beginning with Habitat

Map Prepared by Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
October 2024

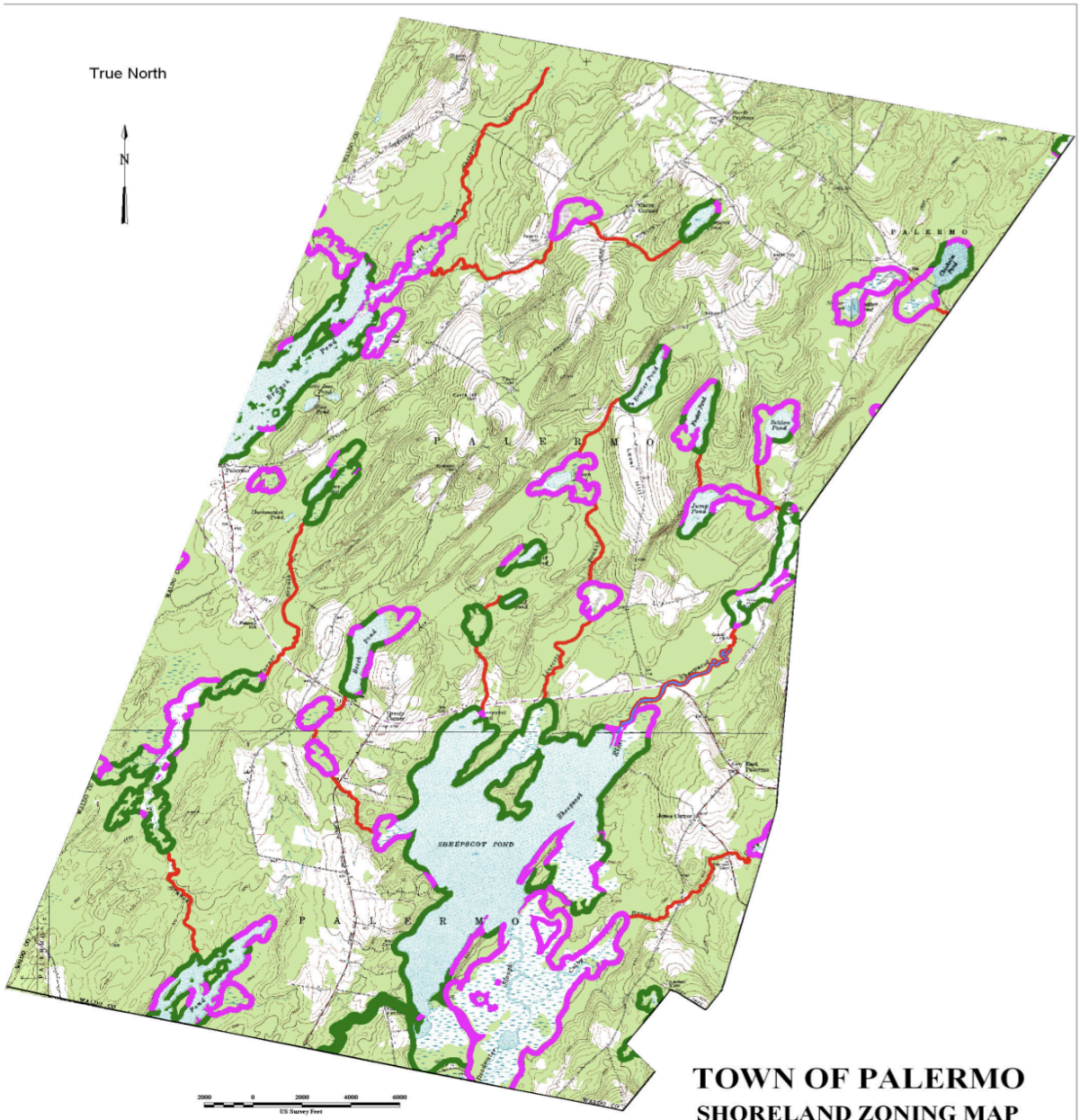
Supported by the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund through Maine Audubon

Supported by the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund through Maine Audubon

The Nature Conservancy | Maine Audubon | Be Woods Wise! | Maine Coast Heritage Trust | USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service | MaineDOT | Woodland

N
1 Mi
1 Km
Scale 1:12,000
Projection: UTM 19N
Datum: NAD 1983

TOWN OF PALERMO SHORELAND ZONING MAP



TOWN OF PALERMO
SHORELAND ZONING MAP

EFFECTIVE DATE: MARCH 13, 2010

TOWN CLERK: _____

KEY

RESOURCE PROTECTION DISTRICT ....

LIMITED RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT.....

STREAM PROTECTION DISTRICT .....

NOTES

1. Mapped Wetlands: This map shows non-forested areas, 10 acres or greater identified using the National Wetlands Inventory Maps, as prepared by the U.S. Department of Interior. Field verification of the location of the actual wetland boundaries should be undertaken prior to development.

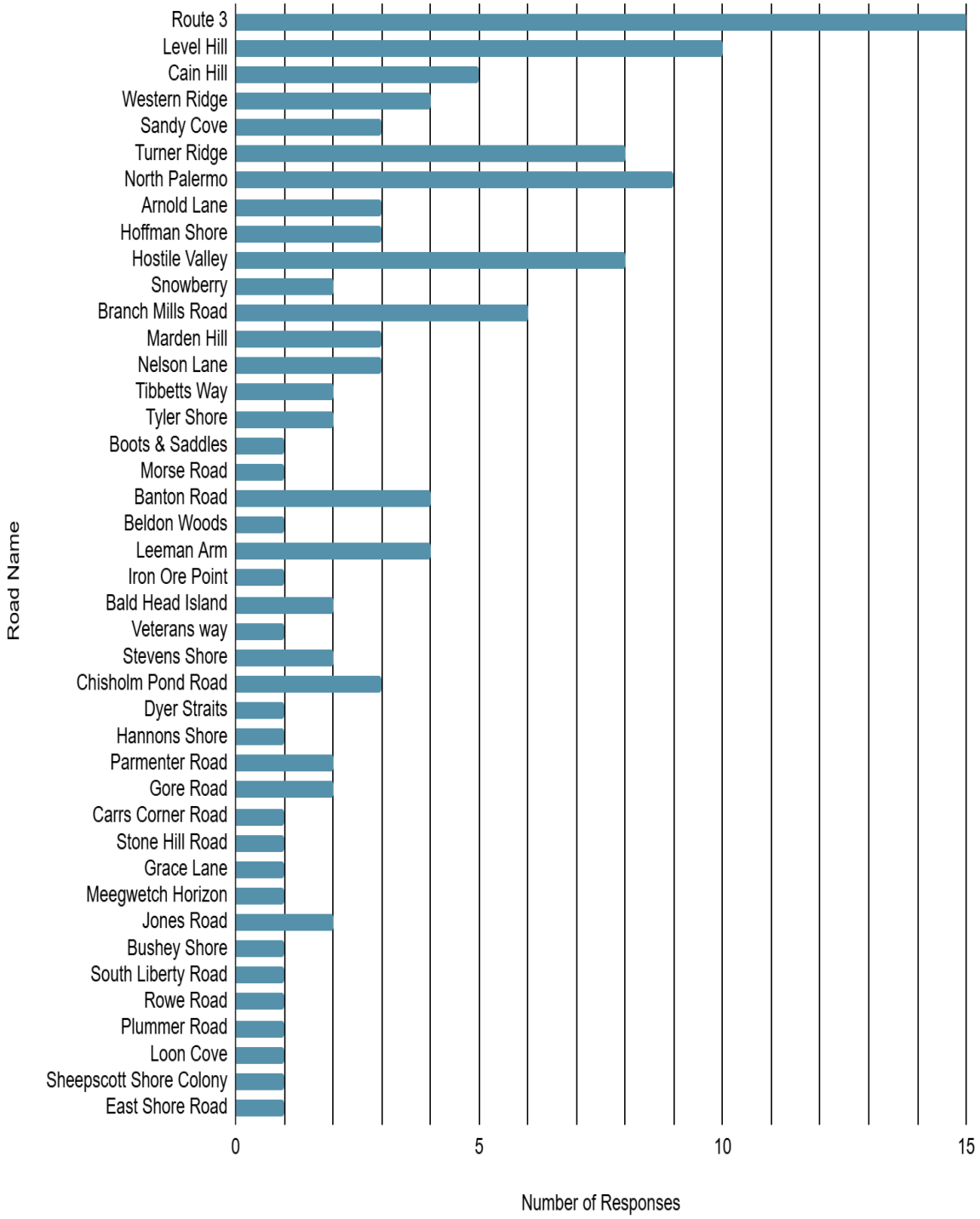
2. Wetland areas contiguous with, and at the same elevation as the normal high water line of great ponds, rivers and streams are considered part of those waterbodies.

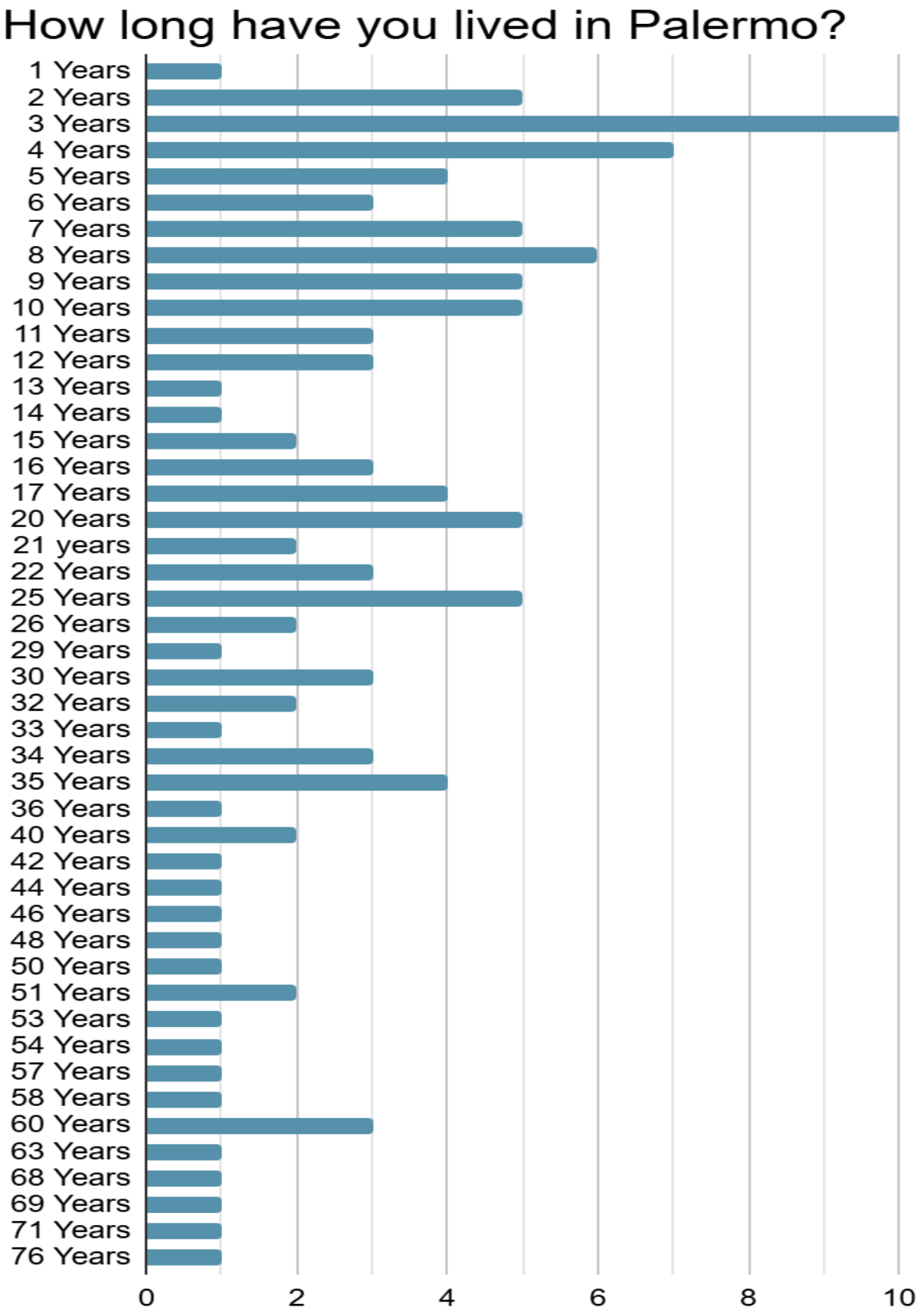
Copied from an undated map drafted by Susan S. Tolman, Readfield, Maine

Survey Results

The following pages contain the results of the survey that the committee conducted. Eight hundred ninety eight surveys were mailed to residents and the survey was available to be filled out online. Roughly two hundred responses were submitted. All taxpayers were able to respond to the survey.

What road do you live on?




How long have you lived in Palermo?
1 Years
2 Years
3 Years
4 Years
5 Years
6 Years
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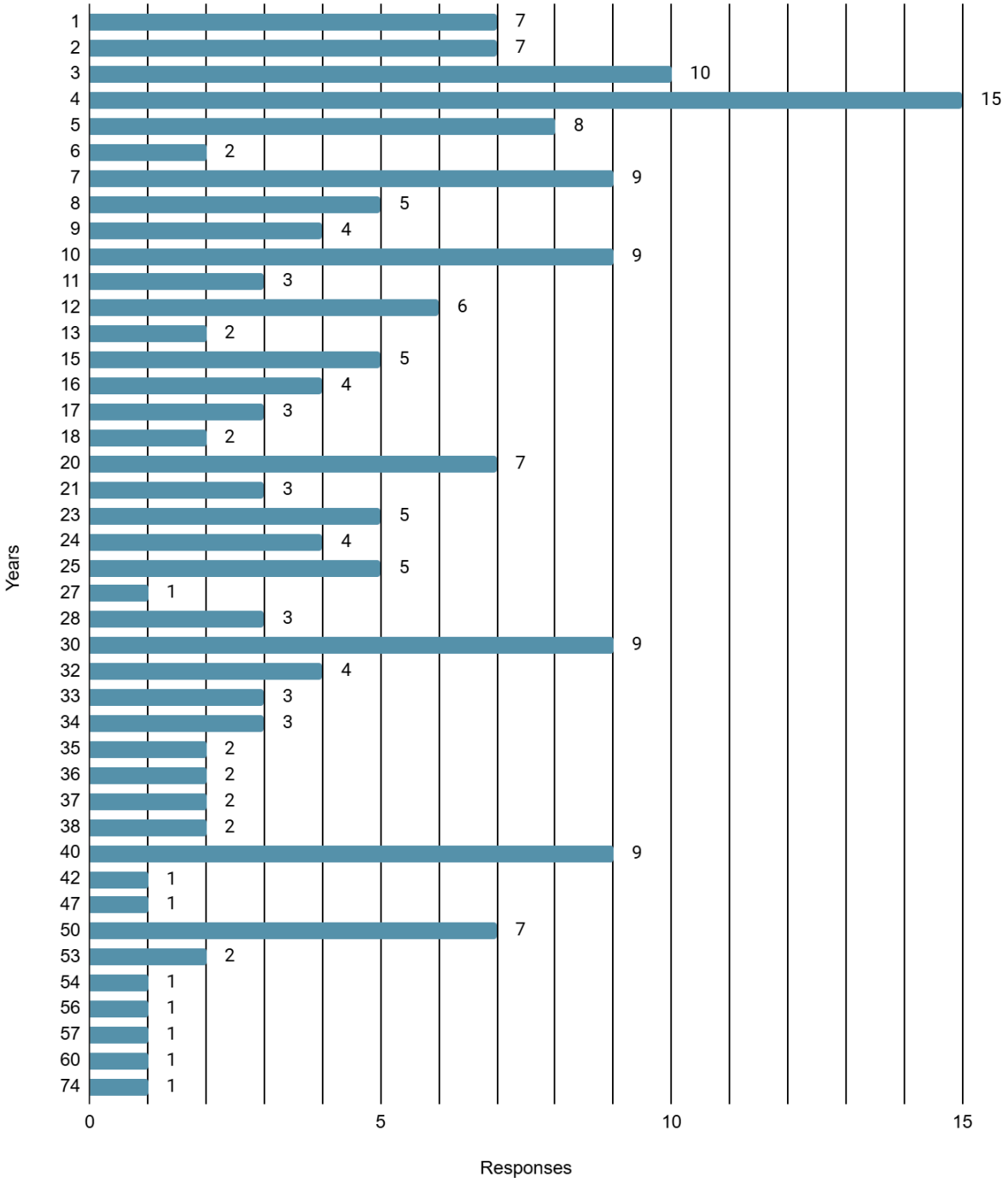
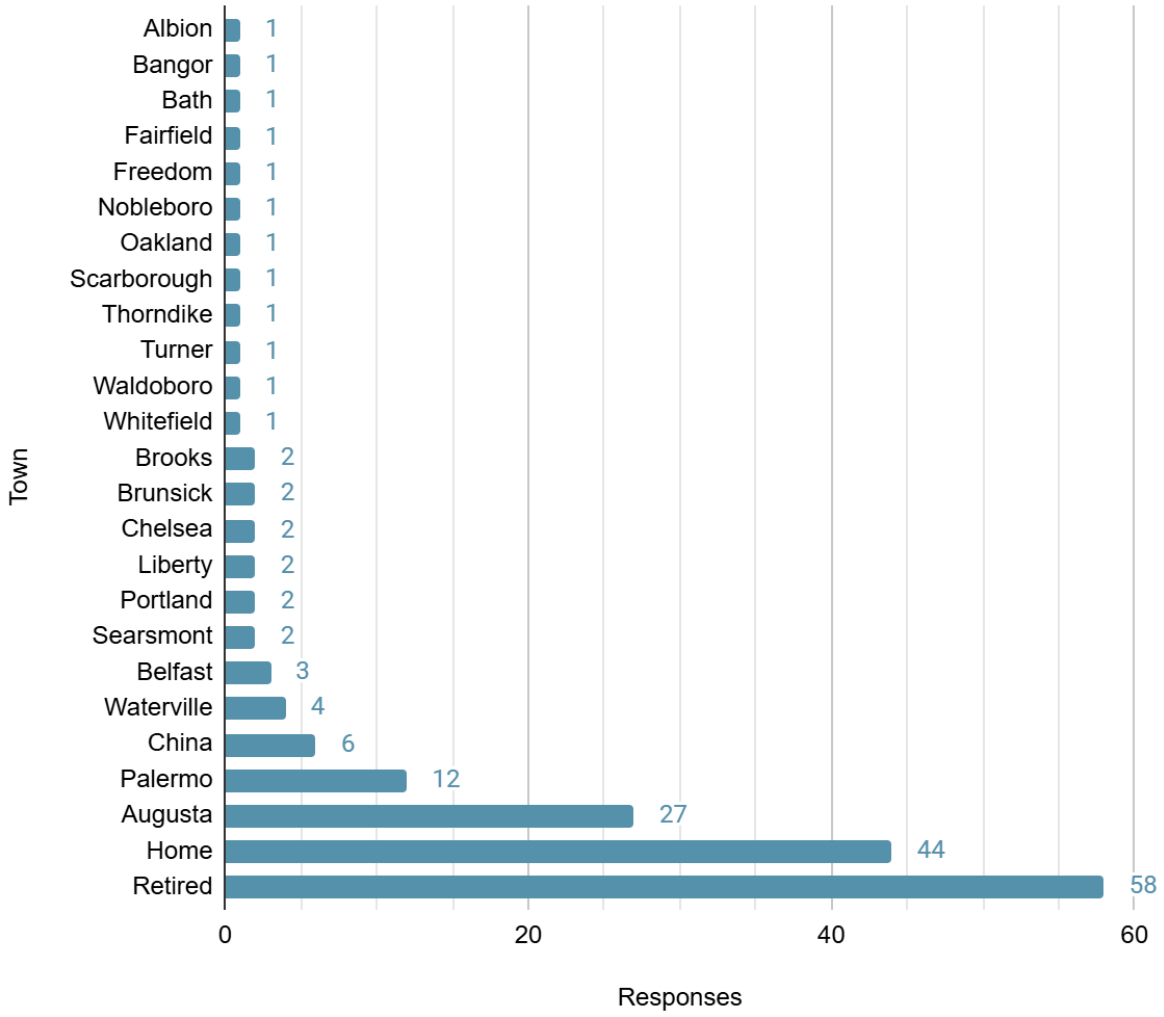
51 Years
53 Years
54 Years
57 Years
58 Years
60 Years
63 Years
68 Years
69 Years
71 Years
76 Years
0
2
4
6
8
10

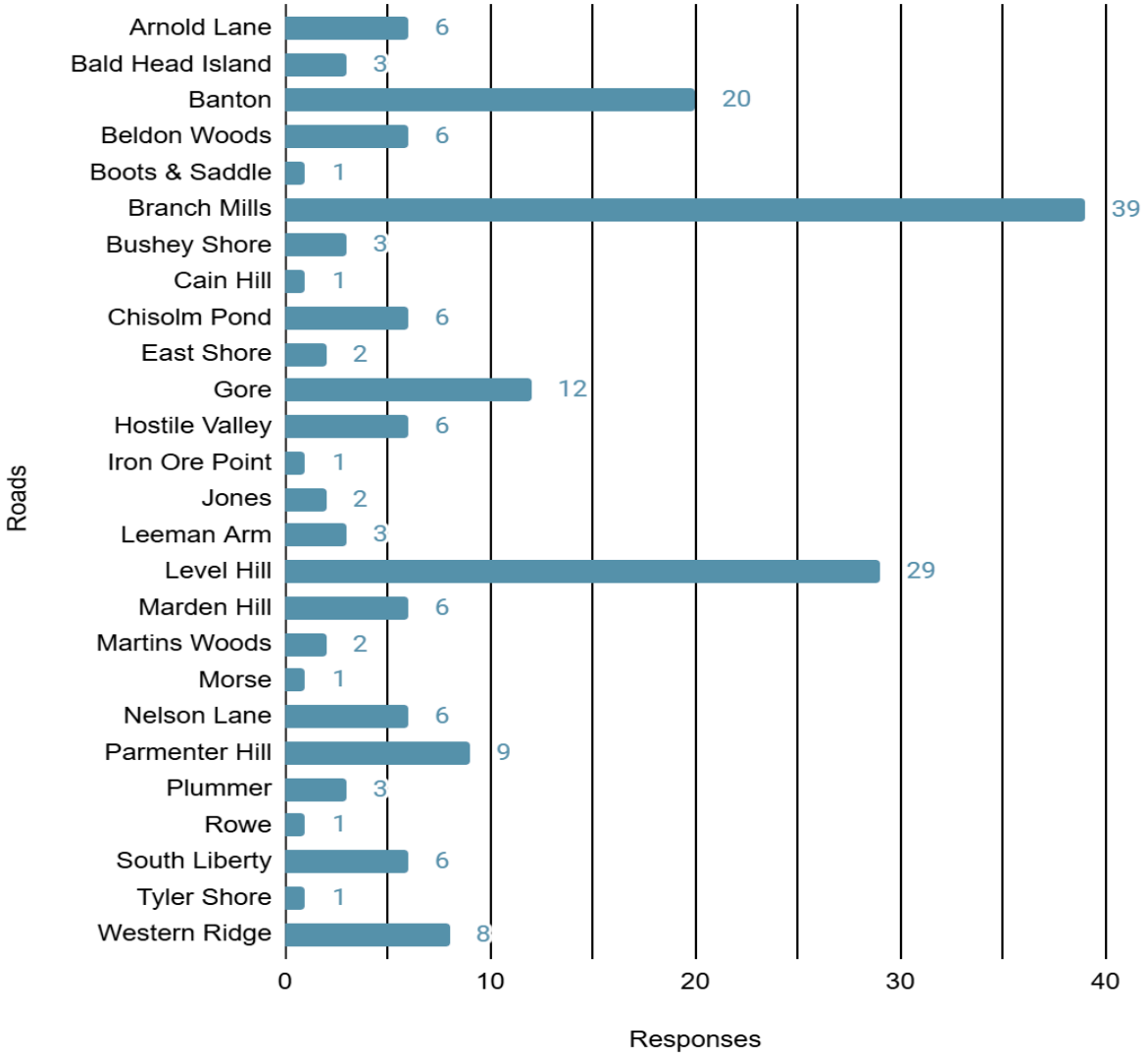
How long have you owned property in Palermo?



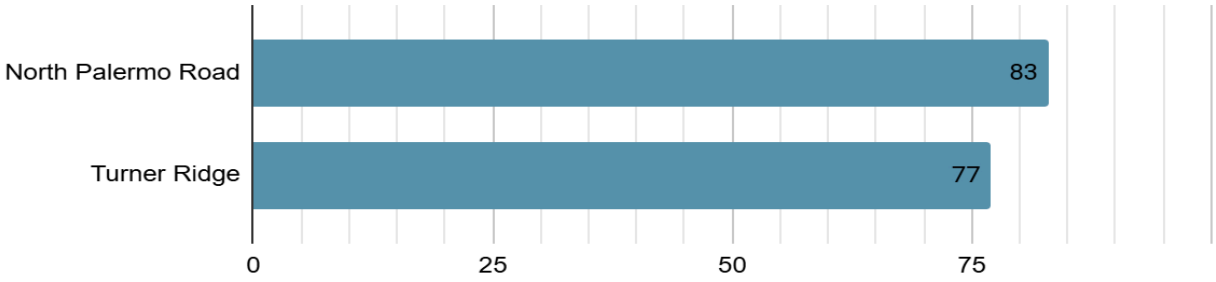
In what town are you employed?



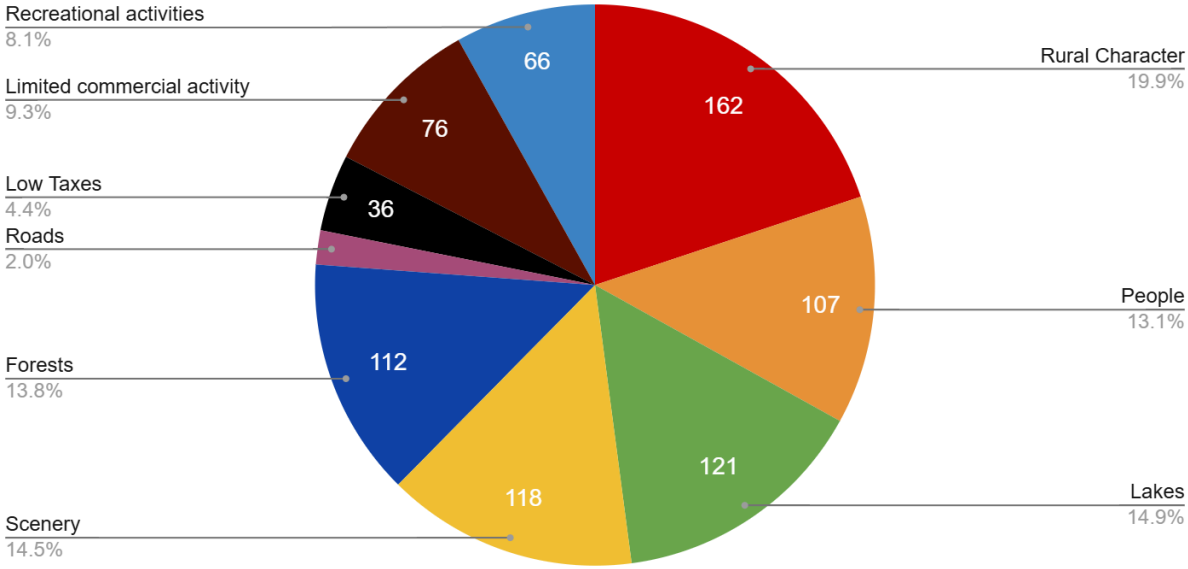
What roads do travel most?



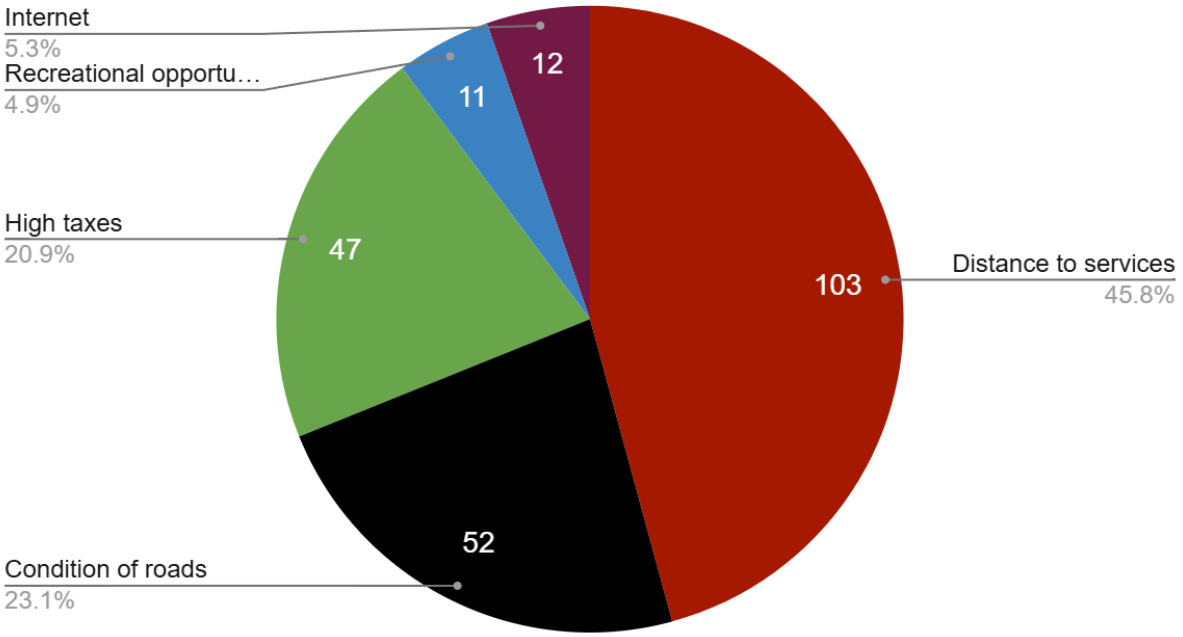
What roads do travel most?



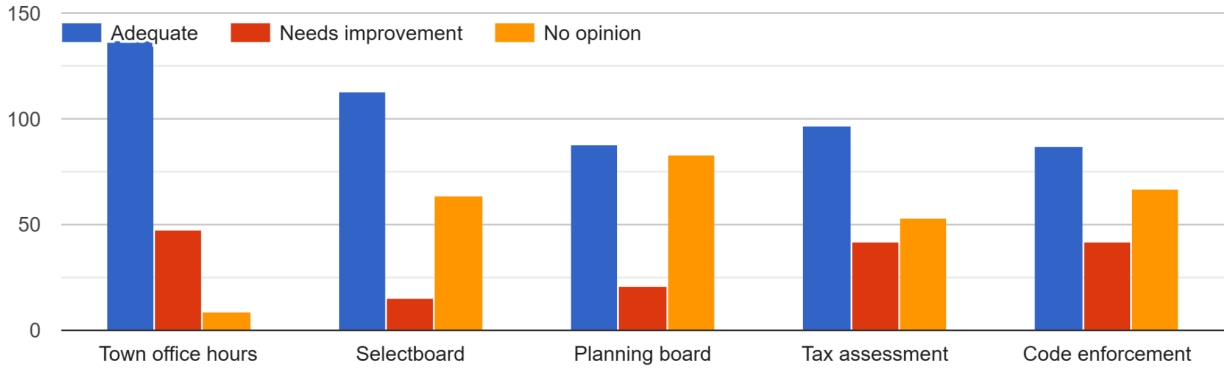
What do you like best about living in Palermo?



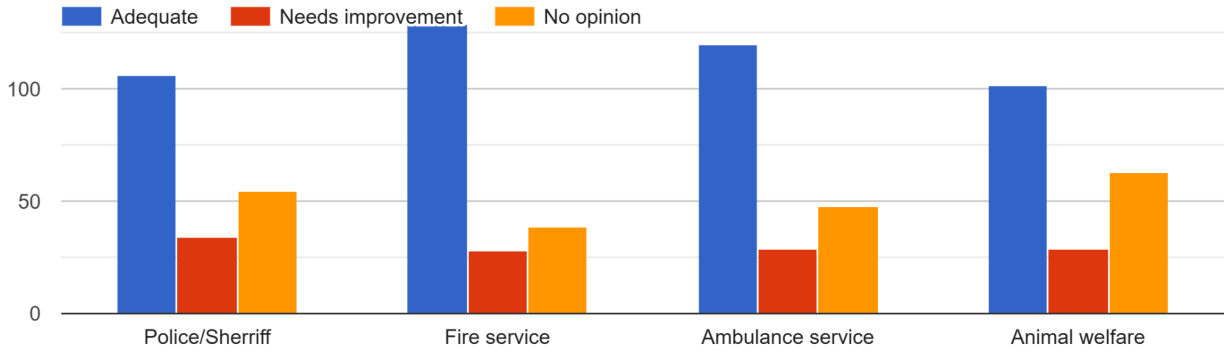
What are the major disadvantages to living in Palermo?



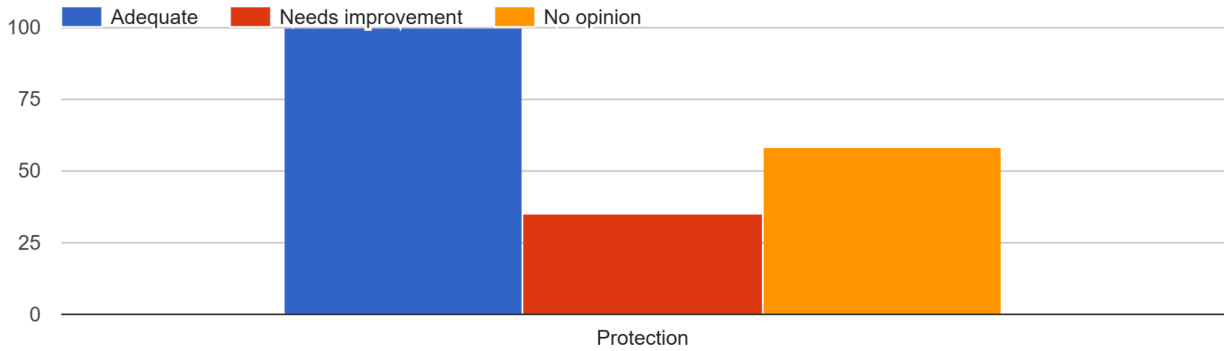
How do the following issues meet your expectations?



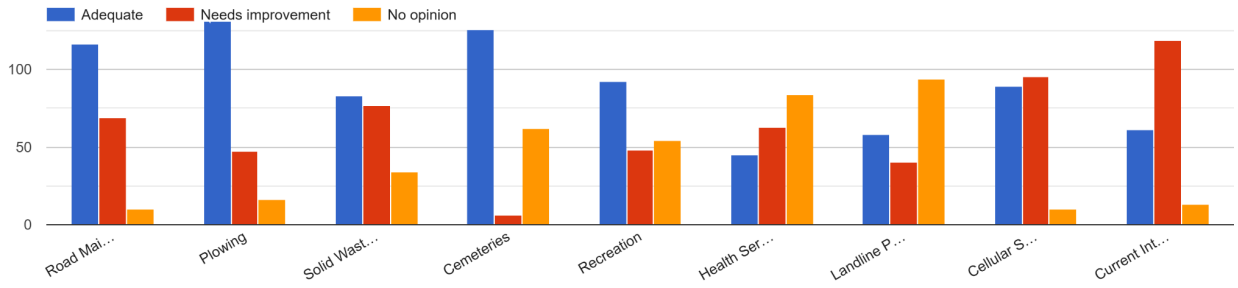
Public Safety



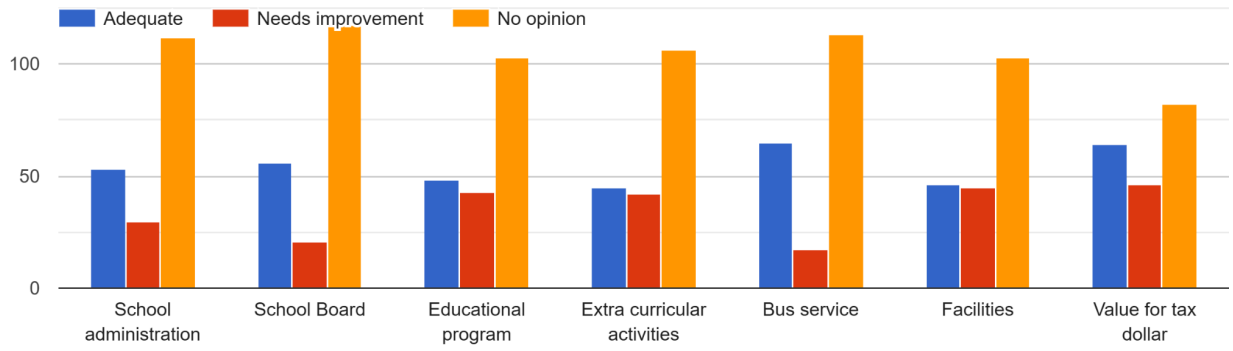
Sheepscott Watershed



Miscellaneous

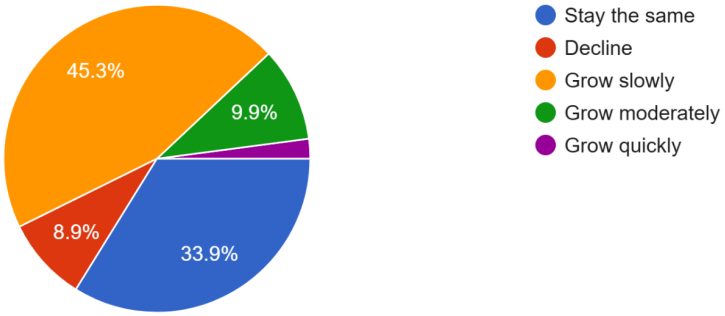


How do the following school issues meet your expectations?

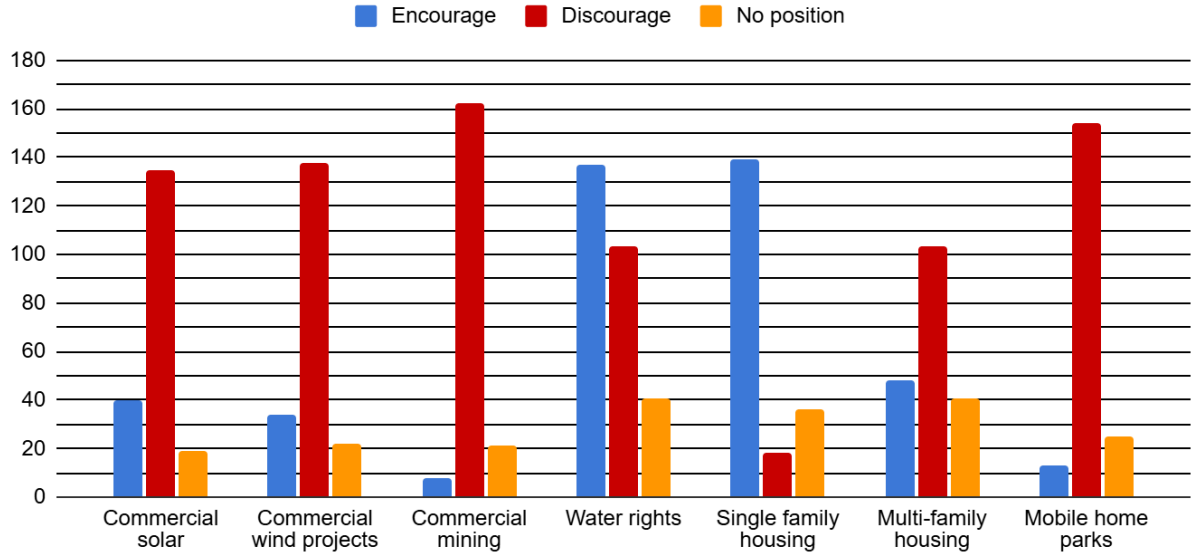


How would you like to see the population in Palermo change?

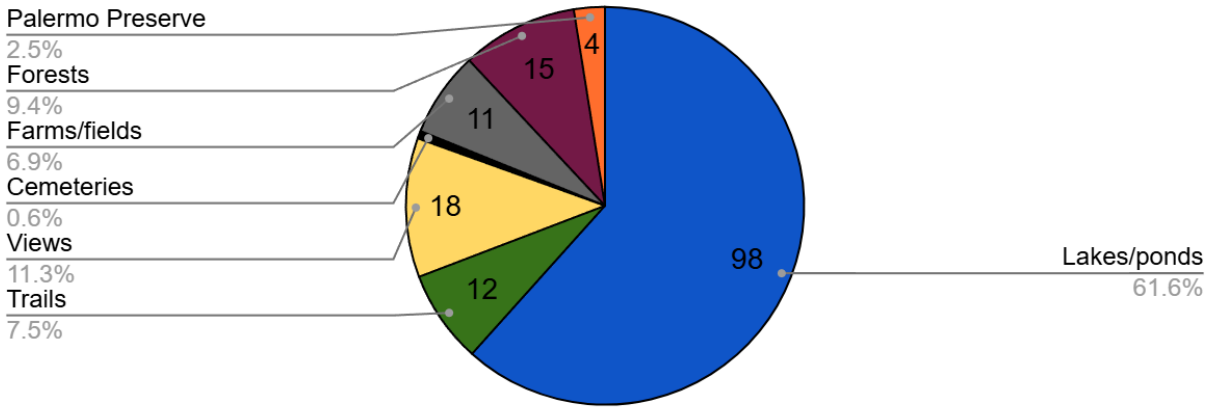
192 responses



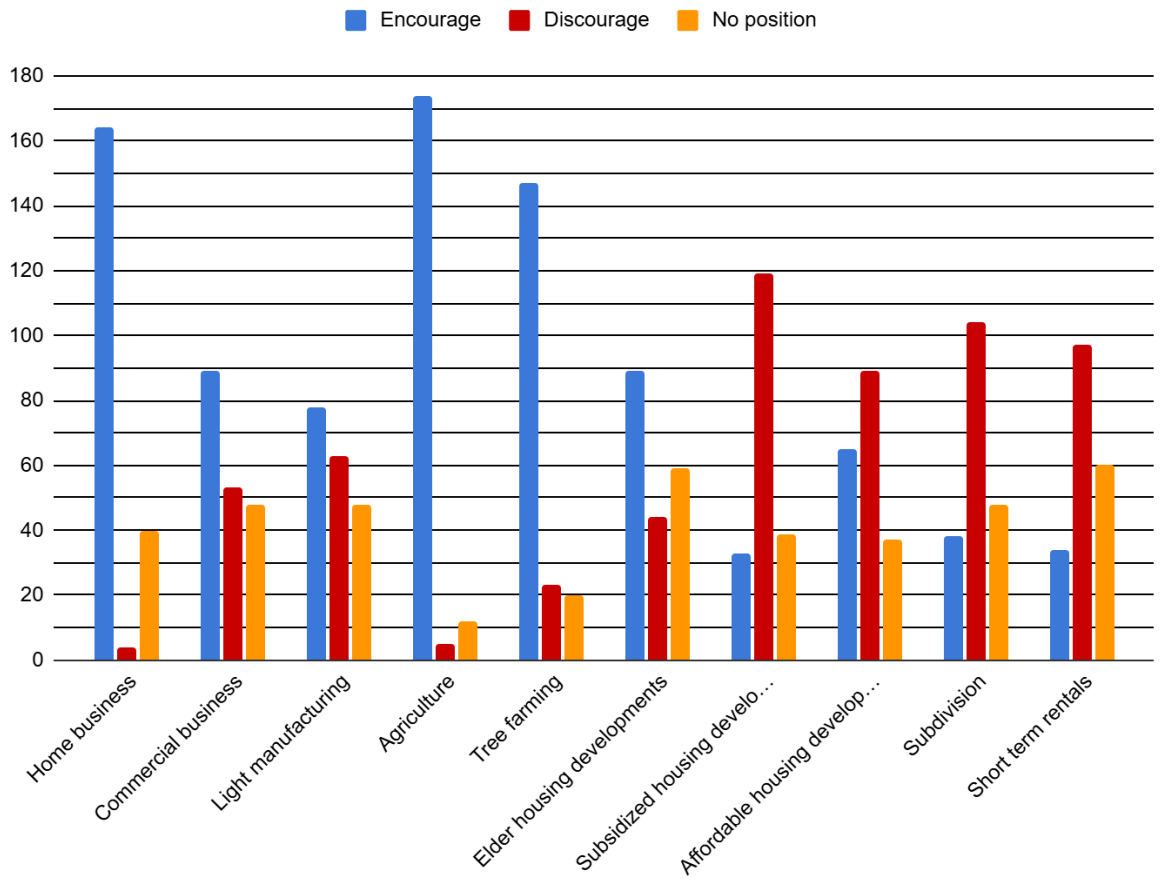
What action should the town take on the following issues?



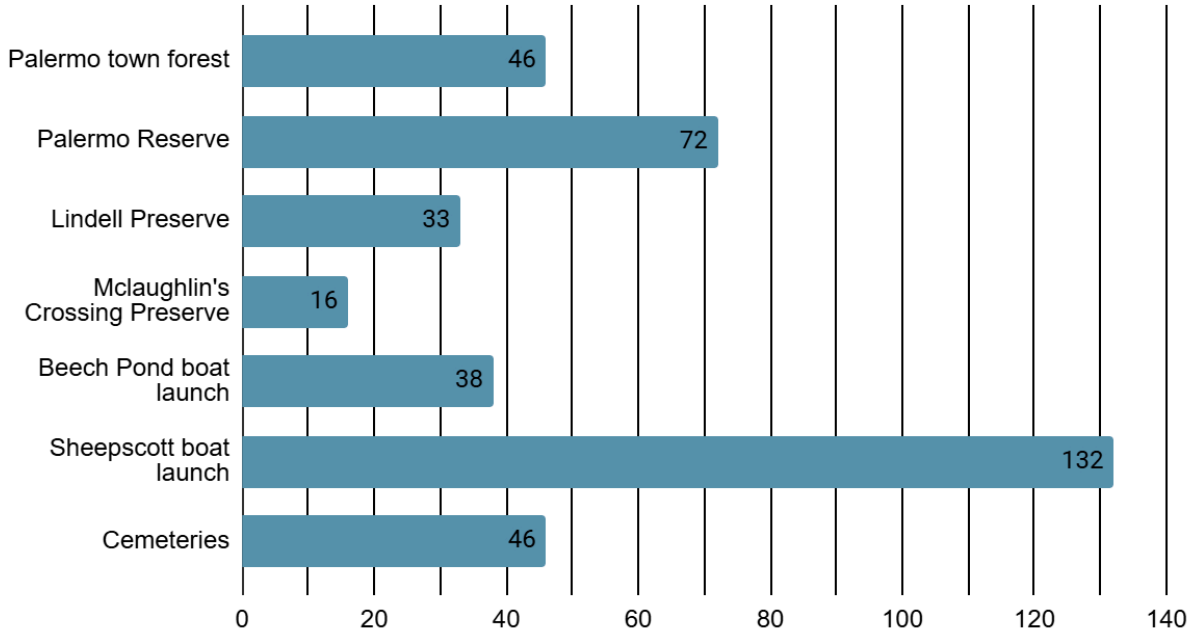
What unique scenic areas do you enjoy?



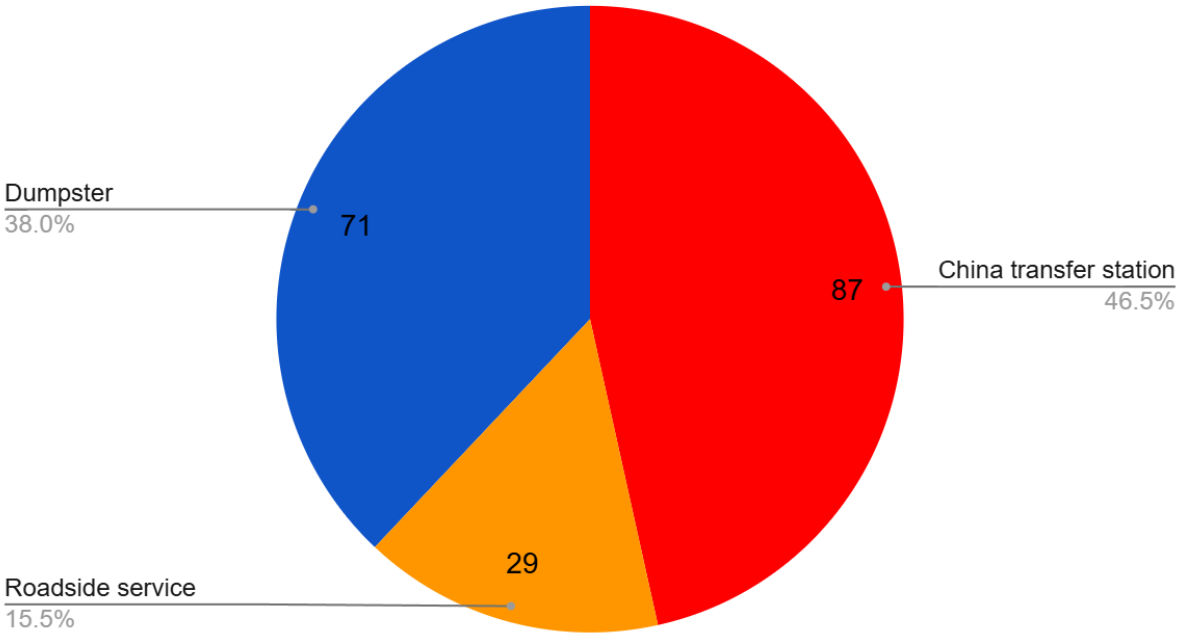
What action should the town take on the following issues?



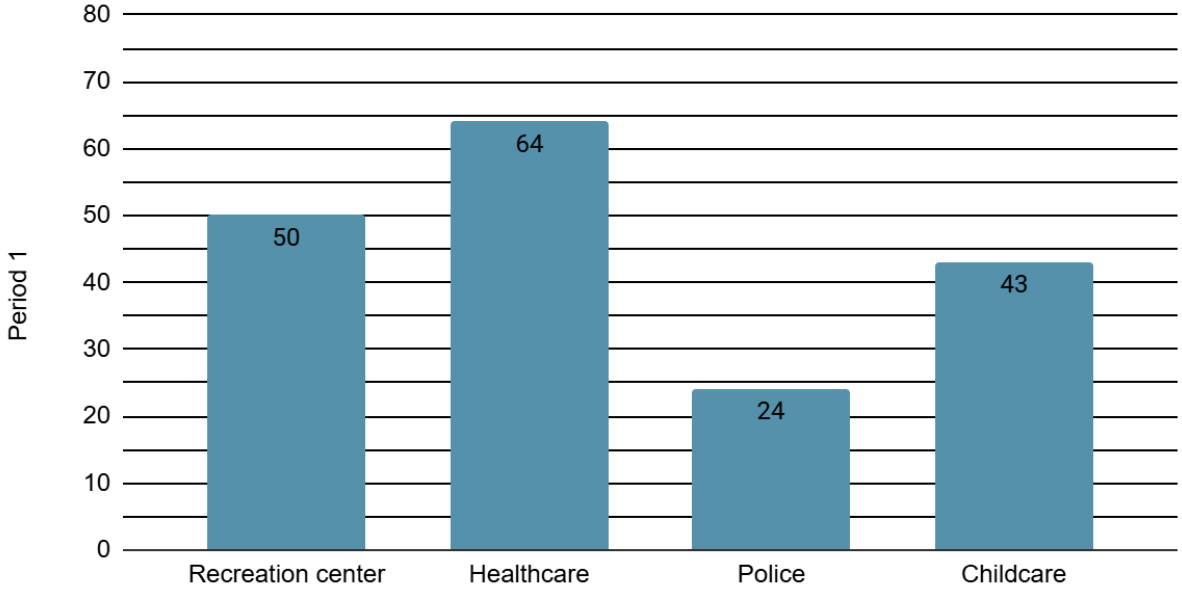
Which of the following public lands in Palermo do you visit?



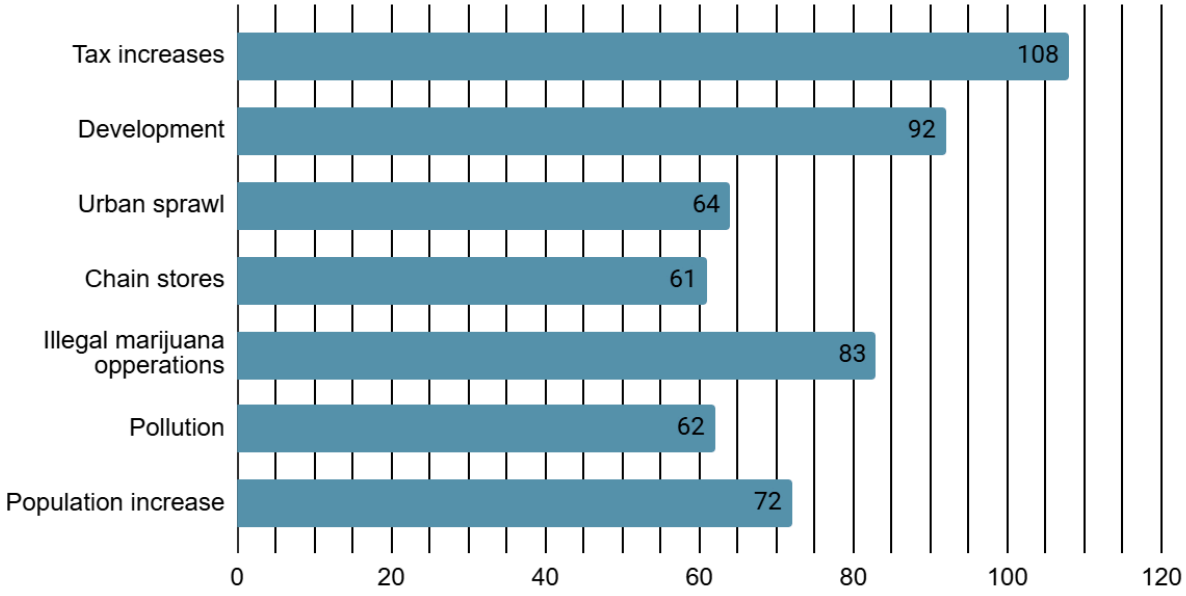
How do you dispose of your solid waste?



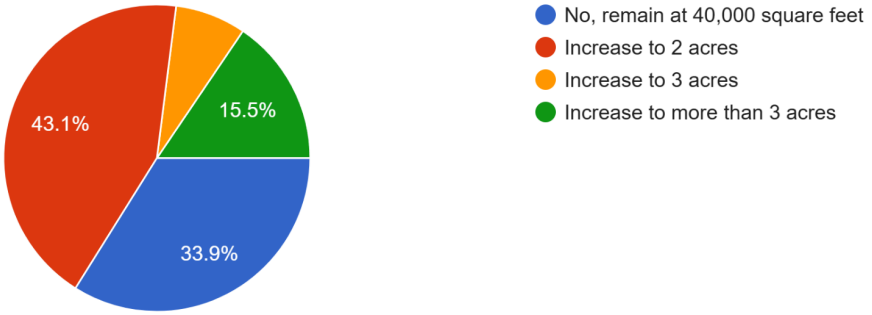
What services not currently available in Palermo do you feel are needed?



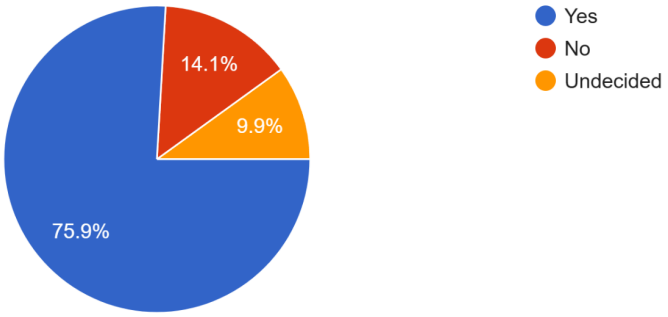
What major issues do you see Palermo acing in the next five years?



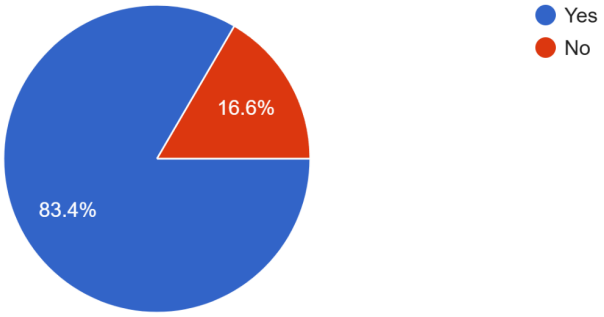
Should the minimum lot size for subdivisions be increased from the current 40,000 square feet?
174 responses



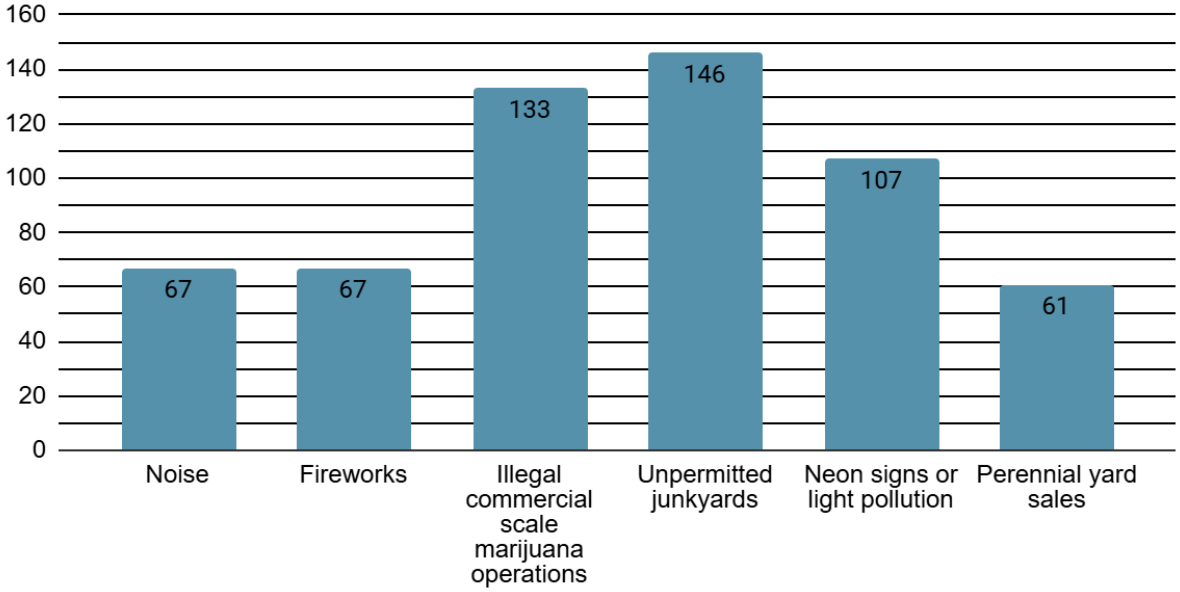
Do you think the town should put in place a moratorium that would allow the town time to consider an ordinance governing commercial solar or wind developments?
191 responses



Are you concerned about foreign-owned companies owning large properties in Palermo?
187 responses

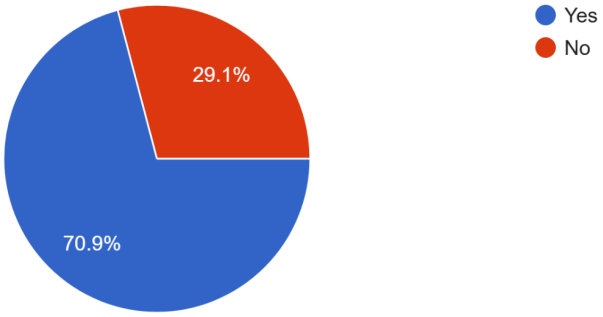


Should Palermo consider putting in place ordinances regulating the following?



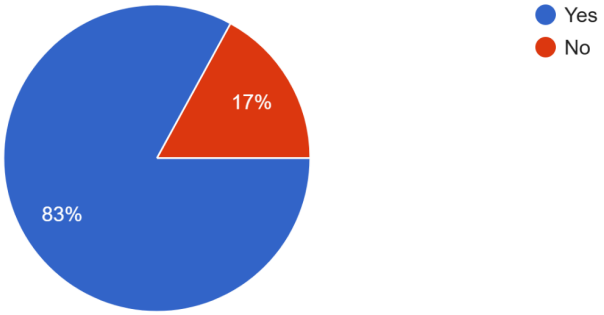
Are you concerned about US-owned companies owning large properties in Palermo?

182 responses



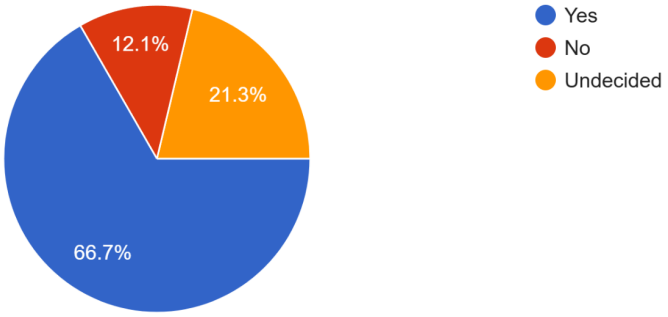
Are you likely to attend a Palermo Days event?

182 responses



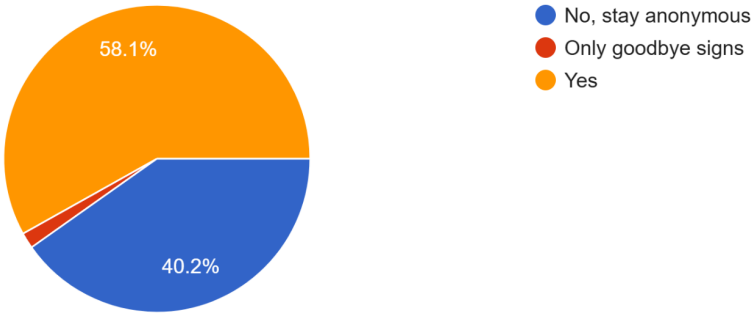
Should Palermo consider limiting commercial / industrial development with zoning?

174 responses

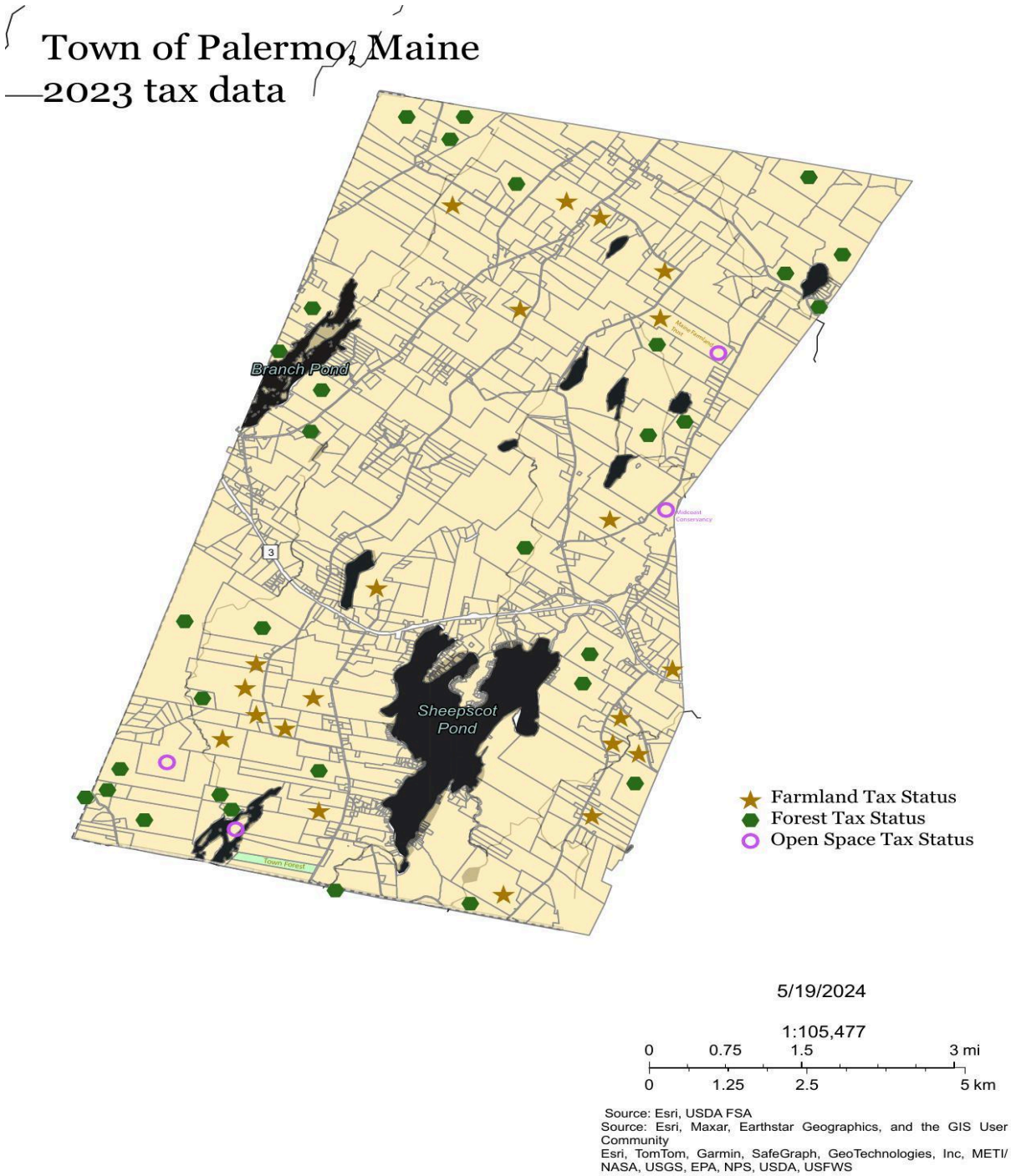


Should the Town of Palermo have a welcome sign?

179 responses



Appendix A: Natural Resources Maps



Appendix B: Web Soil Survey

Soil Map—Kennebec County, Maine, Knox and Lincoln Counties, Maine, and Waldo County, Maine
(Palermo)

MAP LEGEND

Area of Interest (AOI)
- Area of Interest (AOI)

Soils
- Soil Map Unit Polygons
- Soil Map Unit Lines
- Soil Map Unit Points

Special Point Features
- Blowout
- Borrow Pit
- Clay Spot
- Closed Depression
- Gravel Pit
- Gravelly Spot
- Landfill
- Lava Flow
- Marsh or swamp
- Mine or Quarry
- Miscellaneous Water
- Perennial Water
- Rock Outcrop
- Saline Spot
- Sandy Spot
- Severely Eroded Spot
- Sinkhole
- Slide or Slip
- Sodic Spot
- Spoil Area
- Stony Spot
- Very Stony Spot
- Wet Spot
- Other
- Special Line Features

Water Features
- Streams and Canals

Transportation
- Rails
- Interstate Highways
- US Routes
- Major Roads
- Local Roads

Background
- Aerial Photography

MAP INFORMATION

The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:20,000.

Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service
Web Soil Survey URL:
Coordinate System: Web Mercator (EPSG:3857)

Maps from the Web Soil Survey are based on the Web Mercator projection, which preserves direction and shape but distorts distance and area. A projection that preserves area, such as the Albers equal-area conic projection, should be used if more accurate calculations of distance or area are required.

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: Kennebec County, Maine
Survey Area Data: Version 22, Sep 5, 2023

Soil Survey Area: Knox and Lincoln Counties, Maine
Survey Area Data: Version 23, Sep 5, 2023

Soil Survey Area: Waldo County, Maine
Survey Area Data: Version 23, Sep 5, 2023

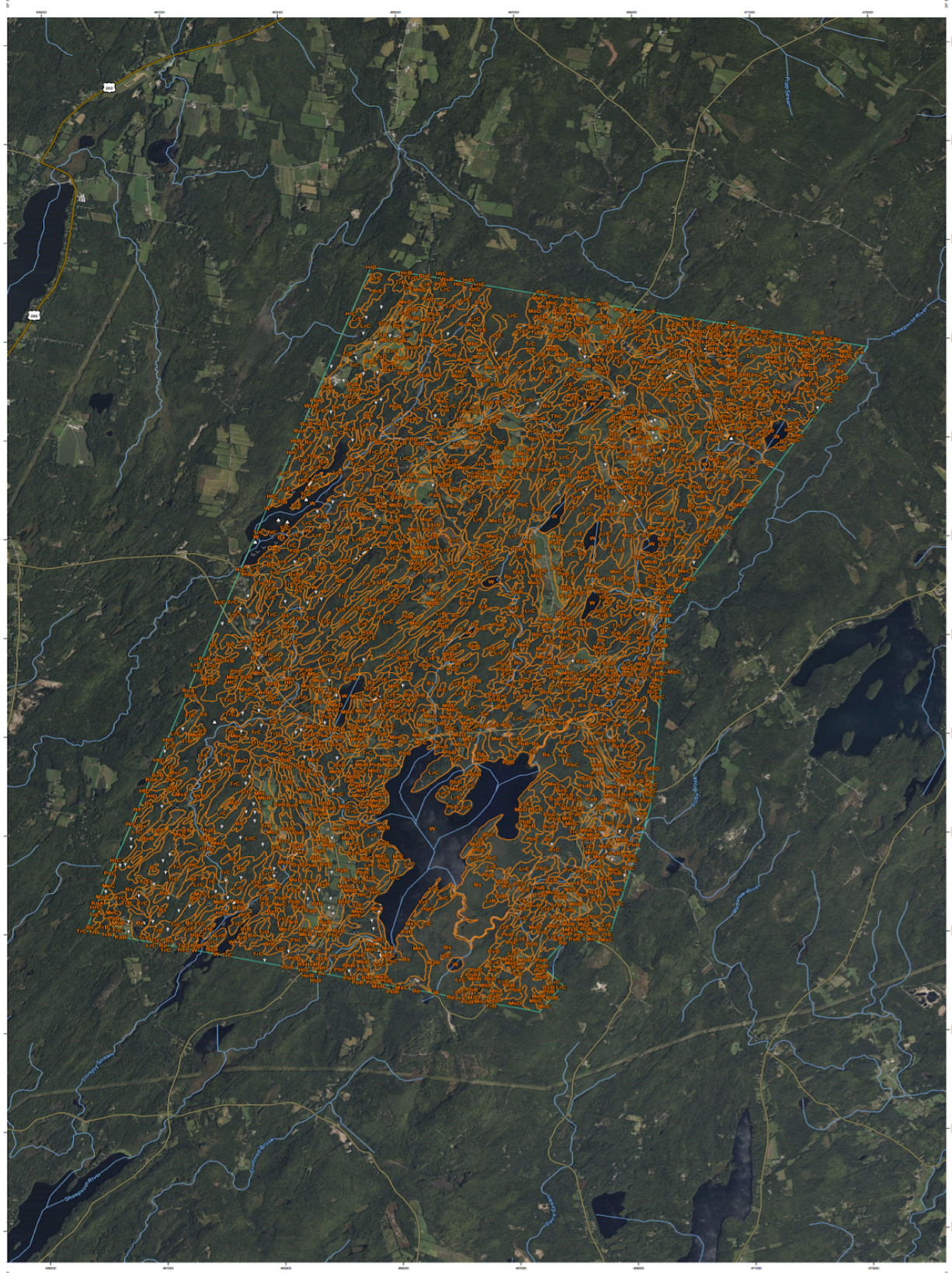
Your area of interest (AOI) includes more than one soil survey area. These survey areas may have been mapped at different scales, with a different land use in mind, at different times, or at different levels of detail. This may result in map unit symbols, soil properties, and interpretations that do not completely agree across soil survey area boundaries.

Soil map units are labeled (as space allows) for map scales 1:50,000 or larger.

Date(s) aerial images were photographed: Jul 11, 2021—Oct 29, 2021

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.

Soil Map—Kennebec County, Maine, Knox and Lincoln Counties, Maine, and Waldo County, Maine
(Palermo)



Map Scale: 1:32,000 if printed on C portrait (22" x 34") sheet.

Meters
0 400 800 1600 2400 3200

Feet
0 1000 2000 4000 6000 8000

Map projection - Web Mercator Corner coordinates: WGS84 Edge tics: UTM Zone 19N WGS84

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Web Soil Survey
National Cooperative Soil Survey

4/25/2024
Page 1 of 7

Map Unit Legend

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
HfD	Hartland very fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
HrB	Lyman-Tunbridge complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes, rocky	0.0	0.0%
HrC	Lyman-Tunbridge complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, rocky	0.2	0.0%
HrD	Lyman-Tunbridge complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, rocky	0.0	0.0%
HtB	Lyman-Abram-Rock outcrop complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
HtC	Lyman-Abram-Rock outcrop complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	0.3	0.0%
HtD	Lyman-Abram-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
PbC	Paxton fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
PeC	Paxton-Charlton very stony fine sandy loams, 8 to 15 percent slopes	0.1	0.0%
PeD	Paxton-Charlton very stony fine sandy loams, 15 to 30 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
RdA	Ridgebury very stony fine sandy loam	0.0	0.0%
RF	Rifle mucky peat	0.0	0.0%
W	Water bodies	0.1	0.0%
WrB	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
WsB	Woodbridge very stony fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
Subtotals for Soil Survey Area		**0.7**	**0.0%**
Totals for Area of Interest		**27,884.4**	**100.0%**

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
Bp	Borosaprists, ponded	0.0	0.0%
HeB	Hermon sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
HeC	Hermon sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
HtC	Hermon sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	0.0	0.0%
HtD	Hermon sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very stony	0.0	0.0%
HxC	Hermon sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely bouldery	0.0	0.0%
Le	Lovewell very fine sandy loam	0.0	0.0%
LrC	Lyman-Rock outcrop-Tunbridge complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
LrE	Lyman-Rock outcrop-Tunbridge complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
MrC	Marlow fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
MrD	Marlow fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
MsB	Marlow fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	0.0	0.0%
MsC	Marlow fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	0.1	0.0%
MsD	Marlow fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes, very stony	0.0	0.0%
MxC	Masardis gravelly fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
PaB	Peru fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
PbB	Peru fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	0.0	0.0%
PbC	Peru fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	0.0	0.0%
TrB	Tunbridge-Lyman complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes, rocky	0.0	0.0%
TrC	Tunbridge-Lyman complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, rocky	0.0	0.0%
W	Water bodies	0.0	0.0%
Subtotals for Soil Survey Area		**0.2**	**0.0%**
Totals for Area of Interest		**27,884.4**	**100.0%**

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
AdB	Adams loamy sand, 3 to 8 percent slopes	31.2	0.1%
AdC	Adams loamy sand, 8 to 15 percent slopes	21.6	0.1%

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
Bf	Biddeford mucky peat, 0 to 3 percent slopes	6.1	0.0%
BoB	Boothbay silt loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	53.3	0.2%
Bs	Borosaprists, ponded	2,942.0	10.6%
BtB	Brayton fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes	138.2	0.5%
BvB	Brayton fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	1,251.5	4.5%
BxB	Brayton extremely stony fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes	65.8	0.2%
HeB	Hermon sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	31.5	0.1%
HeC	Hermon sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	53.4	0.2%
HfC	Hermon sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	339.0	1.2%
HfD	Hermon sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very stony	173.2	0.6%
HgC	Hermon sandy loam, 3 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	64.2	0.2%
HgD	Hermon sandy loam, 15 to 35 percent slopes, extremely stony	30.5	0.1%
Le	Lovewell very fine sandy loam	33.9	0.1%
Lk	Limerick and Rumney soils	154.8	0.6%
LrB	Lyman-Rock outcrop complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes	279.5	1.0%
LrC	Lyman-Rock outcrop complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	4,303.5	15.4%
LrE	Lyman-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 80 percent slopes	1,729.9	6.2%
MaB	Madawaska fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	35.2	0.1%
MbB	Marlow fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	411.6	1.5%
MbC	Marlow fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	1,130.7	4.1%
MbD	Marlow fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes	328.7	1.2%
MeB	Marlow fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	91.4	0.3%
MeC	Marlow fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	969.0	3.5%

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
MeD	Marlow fine sandy loam, 15 to 25 percent slopes, very stony	1,000.0	3.6%
MeE	Marlow fine sandy loam, 25 to 45 percent slopes, very stony	36.1	0.1%
MfC	Marlow fine sandy loam, 3 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	21.6	0.1%
MfE	Marlow fine sandy loam, 15 to 45 percent slopes, extremely stony	8.4	0.0%
MkB	Masardis fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes	14.8	0.1%
MkC	Masardis fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	103.3	0.4%
MsC	Masardis variant-Rock outcrop complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	37.4	0.1%
MyB	Monarda-Telos complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	5.5	0.0%
PaB	Peru fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	1,588.7	5.7%
PaC	Peru fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	522.6	1.9%
PbB	Peru fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes, very stony	1,656.9	5.9%
PbC	Peru fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	1,202.2	4.3%
PcB	Peru fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	7.8	0.0%
PcC	Peru fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, extremely stony	93.2	0.3%
PcD	Peru fine sandy loam, 15 to 30 percent slopes, extremely stony	18.8	0.1%
Pg	Pits, gravel and sand	11.7	0.0%
Py	Podunk fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes, frequently flooded	13.3	0.0%
Sa	Saco very fine sandy loam	24.9	0.1%
Se	Searsport mucky peat	8.3	0.0%
Sw	Swanville silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	155.4	0.6%
ThB	Thorndike-Winnecook complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes, rocky	10.4	0.0%

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
ThC	Thorndike-Winnecook complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, rocky	52.5	0.2%
ThD	Thorndike-Winnecook complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very rocky	25.5	0.1%
TkC	Thorndike-Rock outcrop complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	24.5	0.1%
TkE	Thorndike-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes, very stony	14.0	0.1%
TrB	Tunbridge-Lyman complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes, rocky	543.1	1.9%
TrC	Tunbridge-Lyman complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes, rocky	3,011.5	10.8%
TrD	Tunbridge-Lyman complex, 15 to 25 percent slopes, rocky	973.0	3.5%
Ud	Udorthents-Urbanland complex	19.3	0.1%
W	Water bodies	2,009.1	7.2%
Subtotals for Soil Survey Area		**27,883.6**	**100.0%**
Totals for Area of Interest		**27,884.4**	**100.0%**

Appendix C: Road Map

Map created by Jake Weisberg for the Waldo County Emergency Management Agency.
Data sourced from the Maine office of GIS, DeLorme Maine Atlas and Gazetteer, and local knowledge.
This version published 8-14-2009

Appendix D: Revenue & Expenditure

REVENUES	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Property Taxes	$2,334,300	$2,412,115	$2,524,489	$2,565,711	$2,880,621
Excise Taxes	$326,000	$342,557	$368,688	$394,217	$399,665
Intergovernmental revenues	$220,189	$287,473	$353,235	$407,635	$355,994
Charges for services	$17,779	$23,384	$26,965	$25,997	$31,207
Miscellaneous	$42,076	$38,835	$30,842	$24,234	$35,414
Other Governmental Funds	$20,113	$20,782	$123,446	$110,730	$35,425
TOTALS	$2,960,460	$3,125,146	$3,427,655	$3,528,524	$3,738,326
EXPENDITURES					
RSU	$1,842,687	$1,904,468	$1,951,215	$2,008,873	$2,068,508
County Tax	$323,734	$348,014	$342,537	$381,048	$414,533
ROADS					
PAVING	$263,399	$197,576	$210,000	$205,999	$210,605
SNOW REMOVAL	$160,245	$170,882	$254,781	$291,639	$285,204
MAINTENANCE	$88,362	$87,382	$120,243	$109,280	$208,275*
IMPROVEMENTS	$52,453	$77,552	$79,978	$79,081	Combined
PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY					
FIRE DEPARTMENT	$9,887	$23,146	$48,190	$52,163	$52,100
TRUCK RESERVE					$40,000
VOLUNTEER WAGES					$8,277
LIBERTY AMBULANCE				$51,000	$72,500
CHINA TRANSFER	$18,000	$18,000	$18,000	$18,000	$18,000
GA	$2,670	$962	none	$1,445	$607
HUMANE SOCIETY	$2,441	$2,441	$2,748	$2,747	$2,748
TOWN OFFICE					
MUNICIPAL WAGES	$81,381	$103,262	$110,520	$125,404	$119,847
TOWN CHARGE	$37,979	$38,810	$43,676	$42,673	$44,718
OFFICE ACCOUNT	$32,561	$36,634	$38,690	$40,427	$46,156