

LAND USE & NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Helping our environment respond to climate change.

1. Direct growth to areas with existing infrastructure and low flood risk



- Implement coastal flood hazard ordinance.
- Refine ordinance to allow increased density in areas with sewer, water, energy transmission, public transit, and other amenities.
- Identify long-term strategies to reclaim coastal land for resiliency and public access.

2. Advance use of Low Impact Development practices



Refine Low Impact Development (LID) ordinance to:

- Allow and promote reduction and/or alternatives to impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff to limit groundwater rise and erosion.
- Require limit on soil disturbance.
- Require preservation and maintenance of natural landscapes with native vegetation.
- Allow and promote nature-based stormwater solutions.



3. Preserve and protect natural areas and local farms/food producers



- Expand protection and preservation of critical ecosystems such as salt and freshwater marshes.
- Direct development away from flood-prone areas.
- Monitor shoreland buffer modifications and fine violators.
- Refine subdivision ordinance to require more open space in zones with no public utilities.
- Add seasonal farmstand definition to ordinance and remove regulatory barriers for establishing seasonal farmstands.

4. Limit use of fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides



- Advocate for statewide limits on residential use of fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides, particularly in shoreland areas.
- Amend ordinances to require more climate resilient landscaping.

5. Preserve and revitalize working waterfronts



- Adopt policies and ordinances that limit or remove barriers to access to coastal areas and working waterfront.
- Promote access to the fishing, landing, and processing of sustainable food sources from the waterfront, and encourage development of new/emerging fisheries and aquaculture.
- Support infrastructure at dock and marine facilities to enable electric fleets.
- Support the development of aquaculture.
- Permit only water-dependent uses along the shore.
- Require future coastal development/redevelopment to be climate/flood resilient and energy-efficient.



6. Maintain and increase tree cover and access to shade



- Develop a Town-wide tree program to encourage protection and planting of climate-resilient trees.
- Inventory heat islands, street trees, and shade areas, and develop a plan to plant more trees and install shade areas.



RESILIENCY



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EFFICIENCY

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELL-BEING

Increasing health, safety, & well-being as the climate changes.



7. Provide advisories on health impacts of climate and extreme weather events



- Develop and implement communication strategies for public health advisories about climate-related health risks.
- Develop a plan for "Resilience Hubs" that can provide critical services during a disruption or health event.

8. Enhance planning for disaster response and mitigation for current and emerging climate hazards



- Develop town-level plans for climate hazards including loss of electrical service, extreme precipitation and flooding, extreme temperatures, wildfires, and drought.
- Create a coordinated climate and health response team to address disasters and establish a network for pre- and post-event coordination.
- Enhance collaboration with York County Emergency Management Agency on hazard mitigation planning.

9. Assess potential impacts of groundwater rise on septic systems and wells



Advocate for a regional groundwater modeling effort to identify areas of risk for groundwater rise and saltwater intrusion.



10. Provide education on public health impacts of climate change



- Implement community and school-based programs to educate the community about public health impacts – including vector-borne diseases, low air-quality days, and heat-related illness.
- Ensure education includes additional information-sharing methods for contacting "harder-to-reach" audiences (e.g. vulnerable populations, seasonal workers).

11. Evaluate and update evacuation routes to reflect current and future flood risk areas



Review and update evacuation routes, along with the signage and maps that direct people away from flood hazard areas.



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BUILDING & ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Making our buildings and energy systems resilient to climate change.

12. Increase efficiency in public and private buildings



- Support weatherization outreach programs that provide resources and information on efficiency evaluation, Efficiency Maine incentives, contractors, and financing options.
- Create incentives to build energy efficient affordable housing within Town.
- Support the adoption of higher efficiency building codes at a regional level.
- Support monitoring of energy efficiency in municipal and school facilities – along with planning for additional efficiency measures.



13. Support efforts by Efficiency Maine to transition single family homes and other buildings to heat pumps



- Support usage of state and federal heat pump adoption programs for single family homes.
- Support current town plans to transition more municipal buildings to heat pumps. Encourage the school system to consider opportunities to transition to heat pumps.

14. Encourage distributed renewable energy



- Support community solarization programs that provide resources and information on solar evaluation, Efficiency Maine incentives, contractors, and financing options.
- Actively engage in discussions of off-shore wind and other renewable sources at the regional level.
- Continue to evaluate municipal and school property for renewable energy opportunities.

15. Support improved grid resilience



Support regional-level planning in cooperation with utilities to ensure a strong grid in the transition to greater electric dependency and for all potential crises.



16. Promote resilient building designs



- Encourage that building designs and modifications that consider both current and potential future hazards from climate change.
- Ensure critical facilities consider climate-related weather risks in both location and design and ensure they have plans for resiliency.
- Promote reuse or rehabilitation of buildings and homes.

17. Promote hazard disclosure for property transactions



Encourage the State to require flood risk disclosures for all property transactions.



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TRANSPORTATION, ROADS & UTILITIES

Making our transportation systems and infrastructure ready for climate change.

18. Expand access to and use of public transportation services



Mount a concerted regional effort towards expansion of public transportation throughout southern Maine.

19. Direct development to areas of town with public utilities, public transportation and essential services



- Modify land use codes to promote infill development.
- Redevelop brownfield sites to increase housing stock.

20. Improve bikeability and walkability



Improve and expand the walkability and bikeability of our roadways with safe, comfortable, and convenient paths, sidewalks, and bikeways.



21. Reduce paved areas in new development and redevelopment projects



- Review and amend parking ordinances to reduce minimum requirements and build in flexibility.
- Review and update minimum parking space dimensions and parking lot design, including compact car spaces where appropriate.



22. Expand electric vehicle charging on public and private land



- Expand public EV charging locations through public/private partnerships – including in existing publicly-accessible but privately-owned lots and on the waterfront and wharfs.
- Require EV chargers or EV-ready parking in new development and redevelopment projects.

23. Increase public and private use of electric vehicles



- Transition municipal, school, and public transit fleets to EVs.
- Ensure the public has user-friendly information and resources to encourage and assist with purchasing EVs.
- Continue to push for EV charging stations along state/interstate highways as well as locally.

24. Protect critical water-related infrastructure



Assess and protect critical assets such as drinking water, wastewater and stormwater management infrastructure that will be impacted by sea level rise, storm surge, flooding and extreme weather events associated with climate change.

25. Assess vulnerability and improve resilience of transportation infrastructure



- Assess impacts of heat, groundwater and sea level rise on local transportation infrastructure (roads, culverts and bridges) to understand vulnerabilities.
- Plan and conduct appropriate upgrades such as raising or relocation of transportation infrastructure.
- Amend road design standards to include climate resilience.
- Adopt a policy stating the Town will only consider adopting roads that meet updated standards.



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LEADERSHIP & CAPACITY

Fostering leadership and support to implement our Climate Action Plan.



26. Ensure municipal decision-making and funding strategies considers resilience and sustainability



- Adopt protocols to account for environmental conditions of today and tomorrow in municipal decision-making.
- Include funding for resilience and sustainability infrastructure investments in annual budgets and capital plans. Provide ongoing funding for staff to plan and implement projects.

27. Grow municipal capacity to support and implement climate adaptation strategies



Provide town departments with the resources, space, staff, and training needed to identify, evaluate, plan, and implement adaptation approaches.

28. Engage the community, schools, and local businesses in ongoing sustainability and resilience efforts



- Encourage more residents and local companies to take action in their own homes and businesses by providing support, education, and programs.
- Maximize composting of organic material, recycling and reuse, and reduce the use of single-use plastic in Town operations.



29. Advocate for resiliency and sustainability education at the state level



- Ensure incorporation of climate change and resiliency into core and project-based learning requirements.
- Provide opportunities for sharing information, successes, and lessons learned throughout the region and state.



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