



## ***IV. The Health of our Built Environment***

### ***State Goals:***

- No State goal specifically addresses population. But all other goals depend on an understanding of population and demographic data for the municipality and its region.
- To encourage the orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community and region, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl.
- To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens.
- To plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

### ***Regional Goal:***

- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery through formal and informal means of inter-local cooperation and communication.
- To encourage a diversity of affordable housing throughout the region.

### ***Municipal Goals:***

- Manage the rate of residential and non-residential growth in a manner that maintains the Town's rural, small-town character and is consistent with the Town's ability to accommodate it.
- Provide opportunity for a variety of individuals to live in Wells.
- Continue to have a balanced pattern of land use that respects its diverse natural, cultural and historic resources.
- Encourage growth that is respectful of the Town's historic, rural and beach/waterfront areas.
- Minimize impact of new growth on environmental, open space and fiscal resources.
- Ensure growth does not exceed the capacity of municipal facilities and services.
- Ensure the identities of the Town neighborhoods are maintained and enhanced.
- Maintain the small town character, rural feeling created by both the physical and social environment.
- Retain open space and natural areas throughout the community.
- Ensure that new development is in character with traditional New England architecture and is of a scale and intensity that is compatible with the existing character of Wells.
- Promote those amenities which foster small town neighborliness such as local businesses, places for people to meet, sidewalks, tree-lined roads and security.

- Protect the scenic quality of the Town along the beaches, marshes, rivers, main roads, and in areas with outstanding scenic beauty.
- Enhance citizens' awareness of the land and its resources.
- Protect and enhance the Town's tourism and economic base.
- Attempt to close the Town's current affordability gap and work to ensure that at least 15% of its future housing is affordable for low and moderate-income households, including both families with children and the elderly.
- Ensure that the quality of the new residential development provides a good living environment for all residents.
- Promote the development of a range of housing to meet the needs of all residents.
- Continue to allow mobile homes in areas that are zoned for single-family housing and in parts that are consistent with state laws and requirements.
- Promote a safe and sustainable transportation system that is consistent with the character of the neighborhood through which it passes.
- Encourage and enhance alternative modes of travel including pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
- Improve and enhance the transportation network through the coordination of state, regional and local planning.
- Promote the management of the roadway network to better manage congested areas such as the Route 1 Corridor.
- Promote the Route 1 Corridor in the "Wells Corner" and "Moody" areas and the Route 109 Corridor in the "Town Hall" and "High Pine" areas as "Main Streets" within the Town of Wells.
- Encourage public/private cooperation in financing necessary improvements to the transportation system.
- Encourage the selective improvement of Route 1 to eliminate safety and operational problems while preserving its role as the spine of the community as opposed to a major regional traffic artery.

## Types of Development

Wells continues to become a much diversified community with a strong mix of commercial development along the Route 1 Corridor and residential development continues to expand at a very rapid pace throughout Town.

### **Land devoted to residential purposes generally falls into five broad areas:**

- Beach development
- Development in the Route 1 Corridor on public water and public sewer
- Rural subdivisions
- Centers with established development patterns
- Scattered rural residential uses' along existing roads.

There are two types of residential markets in Wells that needs to be looked at closer in this chapter. One is the year round homeowner and the second is the part time vacation home owner. Even with all of the development occurring, Wells maintains a significant amount of land dedicated to conservation or as open space. This is in part due to the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, Wells Conservation Commission, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District, and a large number of acres that exist in the Maine Tree Growth Program.

The pattern of residential development in Wells is quite similar to the pattern that was noted in the 1990 and the 2005 Comprehensive Plan updates. In those plans rural subdivisions and centers with established development patterns were considered as one category of residential and mixed development. Given the amount of rural subdivisions that have occurred in the last decade, it would seem appropriate to distinguish rural subdivisions from mixed use existing centers.

## Built Environment Policies & Strategies



Consider making revisions to the zoning districts and requirements for those districts identified and described in the Future Land Use Section for recommended changes.



Manage the “Gateways” or major roadway entrances into the Town of Wells to protect their historic community character and ensure that any new development is consistent with this historic character.



Strengthen requirements in the Land Use Code regarding proximity to and impacts on historic and archaeological resources.



Review the findings and conclusions of the Wells Bay Planning Committee to determine what recommendations should be included in the Town’s flood-plain management program and public education activities.



Identify residential and commercial properties in the Special Flood Hazard Area that would be appropriate candidates for structural improvements such as elevation and retrofitting to reduce the risk of flood damage.

**Commercial use of land in Wells occurs in three principal areas:**

- Wells Beach at Mile Road/Wells Harbor
- Route 1 Corridor
- Maine Turnpike Interchange location (Exit 19)
- Routes 9 and 109

In addition there are a small number of commercial uses scattered in other areas of the Town, a number of which are associated with the traditional service centers or arterial state roads such as Routes 9 and 109. Commercial/industrial use as a whole comprises 3,422 acres of Wells or approximately 10% of the Town's land area.

The Wells Beach commercial area consists of tourist-related uses including motels, restaurants, and shops, as well as small retail uses servicing the residents of the beach area. The intensity of use is high, but the overall area of commercial use is small and concentrated around Casino Square at the beach end of Mile Road.

The Wells Harbor area supports both marine- commercial and recreational uses. This area contains a marina and associated facilities, a restaurant, and public parking lots to support the uses.

**Industrial uses of land may be found in three locations:**

- Maine Turnpike Interchange Location (Exit 19)
- Pike Mining Operation, Route 9 near the North Berwick town line
- And along Route 9 near and on Willie Hill Road



Consider increasing the Shoreland Overlay District from 75' to 150' along all rivers or streams which currently have a 200' setback requirement.



Consider increasing the Floodplain Freeboard requirement from 1' above the base flood elevation to 3' above the base flood elevation in coastal areas.



Consider modifying the Residential Cluster Development standards to require clustering in certain instances of sensitive environmental areas and eliminate the ability to obtain density bonuses for locating open space in Shoreland Zones and Aquifer Protection Zones.



Continue to require all applications for major subdivisions to investigate and map the presence of any significant wildlife habitat and habitat for state rare or endangered species that may not have been previously mapped and require subdivisions to obtain a letter from Maine IF&W.



Create a plan to develop parcel connectivity between the Fenderson-Tilton and Tatnic Road region of the community.

The use of land for industrial establishments is limited to the land between Route 1 and the Burnt Mill Road east of the Maine Turnpike (Spencer Industrial Park). This site is also adjacent to the AMTRAK/ Boston & Maine Rail Road line which has a service spur into the Industrial Park for direct rail access near Depot Road. This area is also served by Unutil Corporation natural gas.

While this is a limited area in scope and size, the uses currently in the Industrial Park include:

- Wasco and Village Candle
- Shaw's Supermarket Warehouse facility
- UPS Distribution Center

These uses encompass approximately 600,000 square feet of building in one area of Town on approximately 50 acres of land.

There are contractors and similar industrial uses in other areas of Town which help in rounding out the Wells Industrial sector such as the Route 9 and Willie Hill Road Business Park which is zoned as Light Industrial.

There are several active gravel pits in Wells, mostly in the western portion of the Town. These facilities are a major source of sand and gravel for the York County area. A major facility for the processing and handling of earth materials (sand, gravel and quarry stone, and pavement production) currently is operated by Pike Industries and is located off Route 9 and Boyd Road near the North Berwick town line.

The Town of Wells owns several parcels of land dedicated to open space and recreational use, including the multipurpose fields on Route 9A (68 acres), the Fenderson Wildlife Commons along the Sanford town line and land near Ell Pond (over 600 acres), and the Wells Heath property (500 acres). In addition, the Town is a major landholder (245 acres). The Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve which includes the Rachel Carson Reserve lands (USA) encompasses approximately 2,250 acres in total. Also other lands held in conservation include: KK&WWD 1,050 acres, Natures Conservancy 562 acres, Great Works Land Trust 562 acres, York Land Trust 141 acres. Approximately 4,900 acres of conservation lands are protected in the Town (10% of total area).



Continue to allow housing for the senior population in growth and high to medium density areas and allow higher densities for this age group than other types of housing through a density bonus program where the facility can be served by public sewer and water.



Work with property owners within the floodplain to identify loan programs for flood proofing or other appropriate mitigation activities for structures located within the Special Flood Hazard Area.



Encourage the use of provisions in the Land Use Code to provide greater opportunities for the rehabilitation of low- and moderate- income properties.



Work with York County Community College and the development community to pursue a student housing development in the vicinity of the college and make available for summertime workforce housing to serve the growing seasonal businesses in the region.

## **Open space & Conservation Lands**

The state and federal governments are also major owners of open space in the Town of Wells. The state owns approximately 200 acres of land adjacent to Laudholm Farm. This land was acquired with the intention of developing a state park. It is now being used as part of the Wells Reserve, which offers beach access to the public.

The Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge also owns land within Wells. The refuge has acquired approximately 865 acres of coastal wetlands and adjacent upland in Wells and continues to acquire upland fringe areas adjacent to the wetland in an effort to protect wildlife habitat.

There are a number of other dedicated open space areas within Wells. There are more than 200 acres of open space land that qualify for the State's Farm and Open Space Tax Act under 36 MRSA Sec. 1101. These are public-private partnerships between the York Land Trust and the Great Works Regional Land Trust.

There are a number of natural resources in the Town of Wells that should also be considered when making Land Use decisions for future development areas. This discussion occurs in a more focused setting within the natural resources chapter entitled: "The Environmental Health of the Community."

## **Managed Forest Land**

In 2016, there were 4,193 acres of land (48 land owners of 69 parcels) included in the Maine Tree Growth (current use) taxation program. These lands are restricted from development while in the program and subject to a timber management plan. From the years of 1991 to 2015, an average of 453 acres per year were harvested.



Develop a market plan to encourage landowners to gift their landholdings to the Conservation Commission/Town or the Great Works Land Trust .



Identify a large land holding inside or outside the community that is environmentally secure and could be used as a debris storage facility in case of a catastrophic storm event causes widespread damage.



Promote a mitigation program to provide additional incentives for residential and commercial buildings located in the flood hazard area. For example, if a sufficient number of projects were generated in a localized area, a local contractor may be able to offer a discount to property owners who wish to elevate or retrofit their structures.



Work with public and private groups to establish a permanent heritage trail that would include a map and permanent markers for specific historic properties.



Establish a working group among existing committees to prepare a development plan for Bicycle Ways and Trails based on existing regional and local data and plans. The group to consider the existing data and plans and their relationship to existing sidewalks and other pedestrian ways and to review local or state roadway improvements and where possible connections to existing trails in Town. Improvements to eventually connect with the Eastern Trail. Said pedestrian /bicycle paths shall be for non - motorized vehicles, i.e., no ATV, 4 wheelers, mini-bikes, etc.

## Land Use & the Transportation Connection

Land uses occur based on the transportation network! After all, transportation networks were originally established due to trade routes. In modern times, transportation and land use work hand in hand due to an ever evolving demand by both categories. The link between transportation and land use is important to understand so that future land use decisions can be made based on the transportation issues that the community has.

For example, the evolution of the industrial park happens to be adjacent to both the rail line as well as the Maine Turnpike; this is by no coincidence. The commercial area in Wells is along the Route 1 Corridor, long cherished as the shore route traveled by many tourists visiting the region; hence most of the lodging, restaurants, and retail clustering that has occurred along Route 1. Route(s) 9 and 109 are major commuting routes from inland. Both routes are utilized for commuting as well as for those inland travelers seeking the recreational opportunities along the coast in Wells.

## Land Use & Sea Level Rise

Being a coastal community, Wells has a great deal of residential development located along the Wells coastline. The Town has been committed to addressing sea level rise and climate change issues in general. Wells is one on the fore front of addressing these matters. In March of 2104, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Science Impact Collaborative Consensus Building Institute and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve System completed a 2 year Risk Assessment on sea level rise and climate changes impacts for the Town of Wells. This document can be found in the Inventory.



The Town should consider working with the Kennebunk Kennebunkport & Wells Water District to put the same zoning scheme in place on the Wells side of Branch Brook that Kennebunk has for consistency purposes.



Continue to encourage the Conservation Commission to review and comment on public or private plans and make comments to other municipal review Boards and Committees involving open space areas identified via natural resource data, such as high value wildlife habitats.



In the event a proposed subdivision is in an area where high value natural resources exist, the Conservation Commission should make recommendations for the developed and open space locations.



Continue to support the identification and documentation of historic and archaeological resources for purposes of building a written and photographic record that can be used to maintain and protect these valuable community resources.

## Historic Places & Properties

The Town of Wells, settled in 1640/1 and incorporated in 1653, has a wealth of historic resources as a result of its longevity as the third oldest town in Maine. Only during this past century have many of these resources been recognized. For example, the Storer Garrison House was listed as significant in 1936 when it was noted by the National Park Service in its Historic American Building Survey and is noted in the National Archives.

It was not until 1978, when the Wells Historic Preservation Committee was formed by a vote of the town and an inventory of the significant old buildings was begun, did the actual nominations to the National Register of Historic Places begin. With the assistance of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission in January 1980, 15 cape-style homes were accepted in a thematic grouping known as the "Early Capes of Wells, Maine." These were scattered throughout the community and were significant for their early 18<sup>th</sup> century architecture. See Historic and Archaeological Resources section in the Inventory.

Since 1990, three additional properties have been added to the register, bringing the current total to 20. These properties were added when the Historical Society of Wells & Ogunquit added the Historic First Church-now the Meeting House Museum in 1992; the Laudholm Trust had the Wells Reserve Research Facility added, and the Wells Historic Preservation Commission was instrumental in the placement of the Division 9 Schoolhouse. The other two are the Libby Tea Room/Restaurant and a Paleo-Indian site on the Spiller Farm.

The National Register designation denotes a property as a significant resource. It does not provide protection unless State or federal funding is involved in a project, such as road widening. Any such project must recognize the historic significance of the National Register resource and be consistent with federal guidelines.



Continue to employ a land ranking classification system for existing and future Town owned lands for the purposes of conservation, recreation and facility needs.



Consider adopting a specific development plan for Parks and Recreation facilities addressing issues such as maintenance of current facilities and acquisition of new facilities to meet Town needs.



Wells and the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission should establish a regional standing committee to meet periodically with Sanford, Ogunquit, Kennebunk, North and South Berwick(s) to discuss common issues and how they may work together to achieve common ground on many issues.



Continue to monitor the CIP programs to assure that long range plans for funding capital needs include such items as fire, police, public works and the purchase of conservation lands and other properties.



Continue the program of installing dry hydrants and certification of existing fire ponds to benefit residential insurance rates.

## Floodplain Areas

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is responsible for documenting and tracking all flood related activities within each community. Since 2013 FEMA has been developing a new Mapping process to document flood prone areas of the community. The Town of Wells has been appealing the proposed mapping because of its concern with the accuracy of the information. If the information is inaccurate, it will affect a number of households when trying to obtain the proper Insurance for the home.

It is important to note that Sea Level Rise in relation to Flood Plain information do not currently impact each other for regulatory purposes, but may in the future.

## Population

In 1900 the population of Wells was approximately 2,000. By 1950 it had reached 2,321. Over the next 20 years, Wells had almost doubled its population to 4,448. By 1990, the Census reported the population at 7,778 and the 2000 Census tabulated 9,400, representing about a 50% increase from 1980-2000. The 2010 Census tabulated a population of 9,589. See Year Round Population Trends section of the Inventory. Although the population increased by 51% from 1970 to 1980, it slowed to 16% in the 10-year period from 1980 to 1990. During the 1990s the rate of growth increased to 21% although this rate of growth was not as high as the surrounding towns of York, Kennebunk or Ogunquit. Wells' growth was faster than all of the other neighboring municipalities and in York County as a whole. Between 2000 and 2010 the rate of growth slowed and in some cases decreased due to an ailing economy. Wells grew by 2%, the smallest of those communities compared, see table in the Inventory. Neighboring Ogunquit saw the greatest rate of growth at 14% and the county grew at a rate of 5% as a whole during the 2000 to 2010 period.

The Wells' population, like the rest of York County, is a predominantly middle aged population. The population distribution has changed significantly since 2000. In 2000, 34% of the Wells population was between the ages of 35 and 54. However, compared to 2014, the town has a somewhat older population, with a distribution of 35-54 dropping to 26% and 55-74 increasing up to 33%.



Consider making revisions to the ordinances to prohibit the construction of septic systems within Shoreland Overlay Districts except in the case of lots of record.



Consider updating the Town Ordinances to reference the most current groundwater aquifer maps produced by the State of Maine.



Consider adopting an ordinance requiring a permit to blast bedrock for construction projects. The permit should include abutter notification, pre-blast surveys to be conducted and seismic monitoring reports.



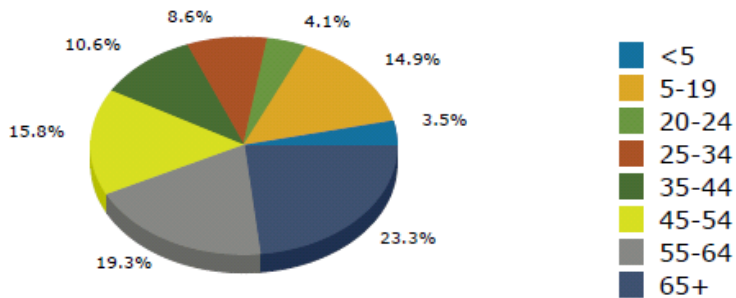
Consider making the groundwater aquifer maps available from the State Geo-Library, if available, as a GIS layer on the Town GIS Mapping website as an informational resource for the review of site plans, subdivisions and building permits.




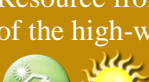
These population changes suggest a real increase in the retirement community settling into the Town of Wells. Information provided by the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that this trend will continue. This puts the Town in a position of gearing up for providing retirement housing alternatives.

**Estimated Population**

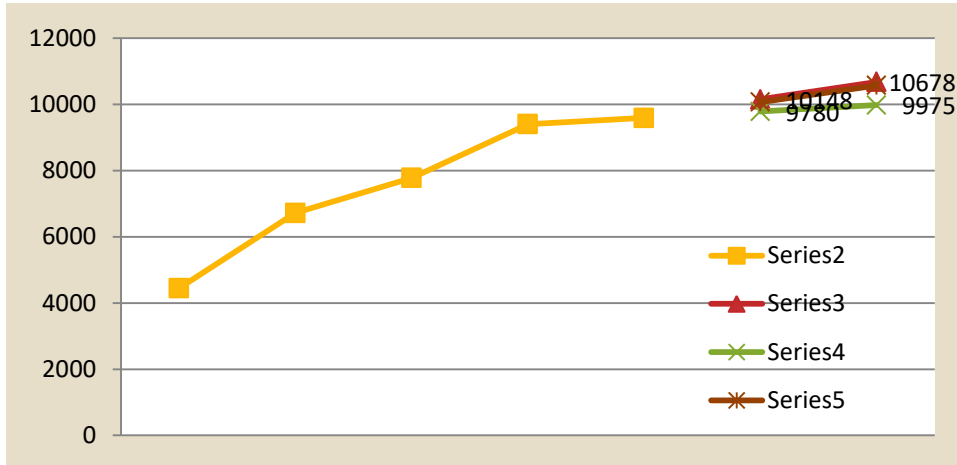
The Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (SMRPC) produced estimates of Wells population for the year 2004. The estimates were based on actual building permit activity and expected natural change in population from births and deaths. From 2000 to 2003, there were a total of 467 building permits in Wells, an average of 117 per year. SMRPC estimated that, at this level of development, the 2004 population of Wells would be 10,290. The State Planning Office projection for 2005 put Wells' population for that year at 10,298. Unfortunately, these numbers at the time, did not consider that many new units being constructed would be seasonal in nature and for the recreational population, not the year round population.

2014 Population by Age



- 
 Consider if Shoreland Overlay zones should be extended along perennial brooks (blue lines on USGS Maps).
- 
 Consider creating Shoreland Overlay zones along brooks that connect two Resource Protection zones.
- 
 Consider modifying Shoreland Overlay zoning restrictions to allow clearing vegetation for agricultural uses.
- 
 Consider defining the edge of the Protected Natural Resource from the top of an adjacent steep (>2 to 1) slope instead of the high-water line.
- 
 Consider allowing the Planning Board to adopt architectural design guidelines for commercial developments to encourage and promote construction that is in character and appearance with New England Colonial and Victorian styled wood homes, buildings or barns.

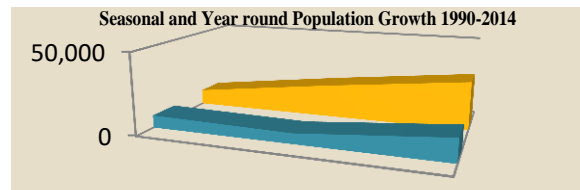
## Year Round Population



The year round population will grow at a very slow pace compared to that of the seasonal population, in fact, two of the projections show very little growth considering the current 2015 year round population is 9,589. All of the scenarios show a very small growth rate. However, based on the data, Series 3 (US Census) seems to make the most sense in that the Town's year round population will grow to about 10,678 by 2020. Because of Wells' coastal location and stock of seasonal housing units, the population of Wells during the summer increases significantly. According to the 1980 Census, the Town had approximately 1,750 seasonal units; 1,526 licensed lodging rooms in motels and hotels; and 1,977 licensed

campground sites. By 1990, there were over 1,840 seasonal units. The 2000 Census reported 3,461 seasonal units, but this number likely includes units that are technically reported by the Town of Wells as being lodging units. Since the 2000 Census reports that only 49% of the vacant units in Wells are single-family units, it appears that the overall number of seasonal units has not changed much since 1990. An estimated peak occupancy of 3.5 persons per seasonal unit would mean about 6,440 additional occupants in these units at the height of the summer season.

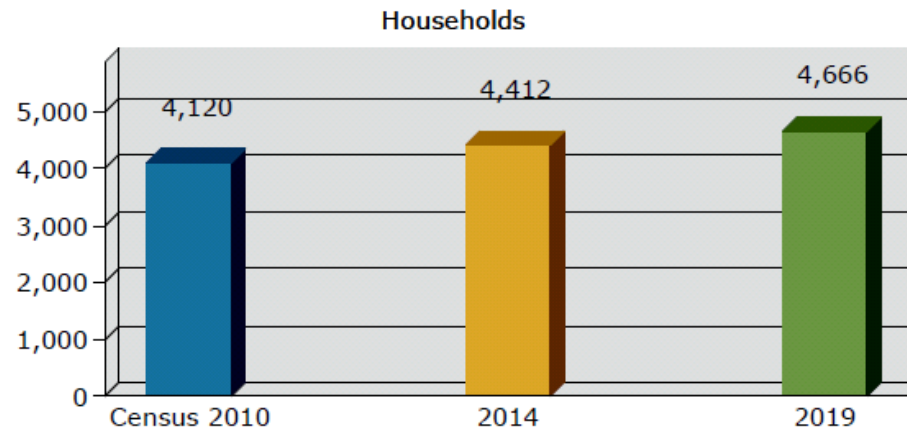
Based on the available data noted above, Wells currently accommodates an additional 20,335 ± population above and beyond the current year round stable population of 9,589. These figures rival the large cities of the state during the summer months. Back in 1990 those numbers were 6,440 seasonal and 7,778 year round for a total of 14,218 people.



## Housing

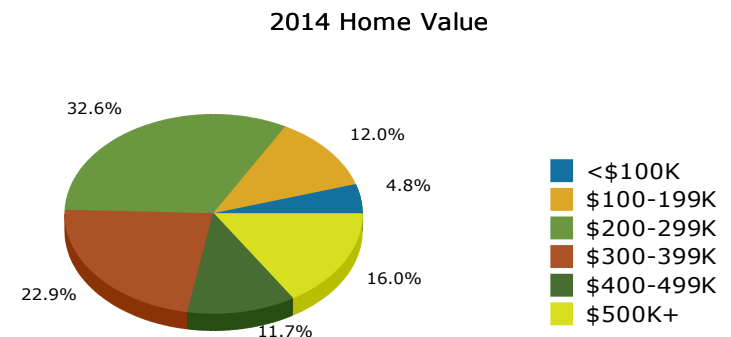
The rate of growth of Wells' households closely matched that of the Town's population. In 1980 there were 2,591 households in Wells. By

1990 there were over 3,056 households, an increase of 465 households during this 10-year period. From 1990 to 2000, household growth was even more rapid as Wells added 948 households for a 2000 total of 4,004, these figures are based on year round housing units occupied on a 12 month bases. Since 2000 year round housing has only jumped to 4412 units. Housing in Wells has taken a drastic change finding itself in the middle of a development boom to provide seasonal housing for part time residence desiring the opportunity to vacation and season in this region. The number of total housing units in Wells in 2014 numbered 8,011. Of that number of units, 3,599 of them were considered vacant at the time of the study, suggesting these units are seasonal in nature.



During the 1980s and 1990s, Wells continued to witness changes in the composition of households. Household size dropped at a rapid rate during the 1990s. According to the 2000 census it was just 2.35 persons per household compared to 2.55 in 1990, 2.59 in 1980, and 2.83 in 1970. York County as a whole also saw household size drop from 2.75 persons per household in 1980 to 2.63 in 1990 and to 2.54 in 2000. This decrease in household size is the result of lower birth rates, higher divorce rates, increased longevity among seniors and a greater number of younger and elderly individuals living independently in single households. Based upon regional and national trends, this figure is likely to continue to drop, and in fact have dropped to the most recent family size of 2.37 based on the year round housing figures of 2010.

Affordability in York County has been on the decline for several years. As of 2000, the county's overall Affordability Index stood at 0.97, but has fallen every year since then to its current level of 0.78, and now has dipped further to 0.74 as of 2013. The most recent report from the Maine State Housing Authority, 2013, has shown that the York LMA (Labor Market Area) Median home price has now jumped to \$300,000. In 2013 the median home price in Wells was \$245,000 with an affordability index of 0.93. The affordability index is the ratio of home price affordable at median income to median



home price.

The Maine Growth Management Law defines the affordability of homes and apartments as follows:

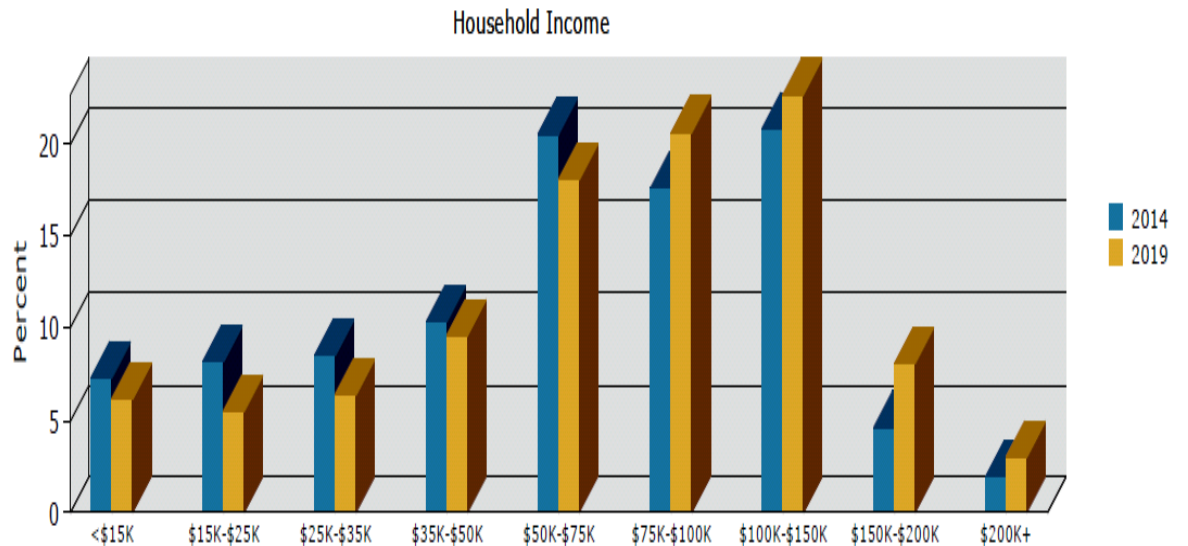
“A home is affordable to a household if that household can pay its mortgage, utilities, and property taxes for a cost that does not exceed 28-33% of the households’ gross annual income. An apartment is affordable to a household if that household can pay rent and utilities for a cost that does not exceed 30% of the households’ gross annual income.”

The law further requires that new housing stock be provided in the community that can be afforded by households that have incomes categorized as very low, low and moderate. Very low income is defined as income less than 50% of the county median. Low income is 50 to 80% of the county median and moderate income is 80 to 120% of the county median. As of 2012, the county median income level was estimated by the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) to be \$54,180. To more easily define Very Low, Low, and Moderate levels for the area, this figure has been rounded up slightly to \$54,000.

Therefore, the income levels are:

- .. Very Low: Under \$27,000
- .. Low: \$27,000 to \$43,000
- .. Moderate: \$43,000 to \$65,000

In 2012 and 2013, the Town of Wells went through a series of studies to look at the housing needs and how best to meet them. In 2012, the Greater Portland Council of Governments and the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission developed a study group under the name of Sustain Southern Maine. This group looked at a number of issues for the Cumberland and York County regions of the State. One of the initiatives analyzed was that of housing needs and how best to achieve the needs. The Town of Wells was considered a community that should



be looked at, due to the growth that had been occurring and the lack of a defined downtown village area. In the analysis, and with public input, it was determined that a village area, which not only served the community commercially, but residentially, should be located in the Route 1/ Route 109/Chapel Road area. This area made the most sense for the infill of mixed use development to support a village area. Since that time the SMPDC has developed draft Village District language for Wells to consider in the future, see copy in the Inventory.



Sustain Southern Maine Population and Housing Market Analysis 2013

## **General Government**

### **Town Hall**

The majority of the Town's administrative functions occur in the Town Hall building located at 208 Sanford Road between Route 1 and the Maine Turnpike. Town Hall provides offices for the following departments:

- Town Manager
- Town Clerk
- Assessing
- Planning and Development
- Code Enforcement
- Human Resources
- Finance & Tax Collection
- Information Technology



Wells Town Hall

**Fire Facilities**

The Town of Wells Fire Department has three stations located in the community:



Wells Fire Department

**The Corner Station**

The Corner Station is located on Route 1 / Post Road at the intersection of Route 109 / Sanford Road. This is the department's main headquarters and the location of the Fire Department's administrative offices. It is the only station in Town that is staffed 24 hours per day and 7 days per week by career firefighters.

**Highpine Station**

The Highpine Station is located on Highpine Loop Road, just off Route 109 / Sanford Road and includes a meeting room and kitchen on the 2nd floor. The Town has committed to replacing this station with a new fire station that will also include a community meeting room.

**Branch Station**

The Branch Station is a former schoolhouse and is located on Route 9A / Branch Road at the intersection of Clark Road and Coles Hill Road. There is also a small meeting room upstairs and a kitchen downstairs.

**Hydrants**

The department works closely with the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells (KKW) Water District for installation of hydrants within the KKW district service area. Areas not served by public water are served by public and private dry hydrants.

**Vehicles and Equipment**

Vehicles and equipment used by the Fire Department need to be replaced on an ongoing basis and are typically planned for replacement within the Capital Improvements planning process.

**Personnel**

The Department has 11 fulltime employees including the Fire Chief, Administrative Assistant to the Fire Chief, 3 Captains and 6 fire fighters.

Incident Category	Count 2003	Count - 2012
Fire	72	65
Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (no fire)	5	2
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident	222	401
Hazardous Condition (no fire)	101	64
Service Call	113	117
Good Intent Call	74	74
False Alarm & False Call	78	128
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	0	1
Special Incident Type	14	1
Total	679	853

## **Wells Emergency Medical Service (WEMS)**

Wells Emergency Medical Services (WEMS) is a non-profit corporation, owned by the Town of Wells and operated by a Board of Directors who are appointed by the Wells Board of Selectmen. WEMS provides ambulance services to the Wells community and its guests 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. WEMS has three fully equipped ambulances with state of the art equipment and is staffed with 40 part-time EMS licensed professional employees and a full-time Director. WEMS operates three Type III ambulances and three 12- Lead EKG monitors purchased through CIP town funds.

WEMS responds to more than 1,500 ambulance calls annually (many of the calls involve more than one ambulance and/or more than one patient). The number of calls has steadily risen, increasing from 1,038 in 2000 to 1,534 in 2013. Of all calls to WEMS, 72% are medical related and 28% are trauma related. Most hospital transfers by WEMS (66%) are to York Hospital, with 25% going to Biddeford's Southern Maine Health Care Hospital, 7% going to Sanford's Southern Maine Health Care Hospital, and 2% to other hospitals.

During the period from Memorial Day to Labor Day there are four full time personnel on duty 24/7. The remainder of the year, there are three personnel on duty during the day and two on at night for 24/7 coverage. Additional assistance is received when needed from Wells Fire Department and the Wells Police Department.

## **Police Department**

The Wells Police Department is located on Route 1 / Post Road at the intersection of Route 109 / Sanford Road. The Department consists of a Patrol Division (which also includes one animal control officer and two K-9 units), a Criminal Investigation Division (CID), and a Communications Division (Dispatch). The Wells Police Department employs 23 sworn police officers, 5 dispatchers, and 1 animal control officer.

The Police Department is the primary provider of law enforcement and related community service throughout the Town. The Department responds to over 20,000 calls for service yearly and makes thousands of traffic stops. The Police Department makes over 200 criminal arrests a year, ranging from assault to armed robbery.

The Communications Division dispatches for Police, Fire, EMS, Lifeguard and Highway and handles approximately 60,000 incoming telephone calls yearly, which include both routine business calls and emergency (generally 9-1-1) calls.



Wells Police Officer and K-9 Unit

Vehicles and equipment used by the Police Department need to be replaced on an ongoing basis and are typically planned for within the Capital Improvements planning process.

## **Public Works**

The Public Works Department is located at 577 North Berwick Road in the recently constructed (2013) highway garage. The Public Works Department is made up of three divisions: Street Maintenance, Beach Services, and the Transfer Station.

### *Street Maintenance Division*

This division consists of 10 employees, including the Assistant Road Commissioner. They are responsible for maintaining over 200 miles of roads in Wells. The crew is supplemented in winter by independent contractors for snow plowing.

### *Beach Services Division*

This division operates from March to late October and includes a number of seasonal employees and volunteers for beach cleaning, parking lot attendants, piping plover monitoring, and restroom cleaning.

### *Transfer Station*

The Town operated transfer station and recycling facility is located at 386 Willie Hill Road off Route 9. In 2011, the town switched to a 'Pay As You Throw' (PAYT) program with bags that can be purchased at various locations throughout the town.

The transfer station charges a fee for the following items: electronics, lights and fixtures, metal, miscellaneous items, shingles, tires and rims, appliances, trees and brush, construction/demolition, and furniture and bulky items. There is no charge for cardboard, paper, bottles and cans, plastic, oil, grass and leaves, and good wood pallets. There are a number of items that are not accepted including, but not limited to gasoline, pesticides, animal waste, bio-hazard materials and expired prescription medications.

The facility suffered a fire in 2015 and has been reorganized and reconstructed.

## **Vehicles and Equipment**

Vehicles and equipment for the Street Maintenance Division, Beach Services Division and Transfer Station need to be replaced on an ongoing basis and are typically planned for within the Capital Improvements planning process.

## **The Wells Reserve**

The Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve encompasses 2,250 acres on the eastern edge of the Wells. It comprises wetlands (salt marsh, red maple swamp, shrub-swamp, and brackish marsh), sand beach, oak-pine forest, mixed second growth forest, shrubland, grassland, and mowed fields. Seven miles of trails, crossing all of these habitats, are open to the public throughout the year. The site is popularly known as the Wells Reserve at Laudholm, as its headquarters and research laboratory occupy the Laudholm Farm campus, which

is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. More than 25,000 people visit the Wells Reserve at Laudholm each year to walk, participate in programs, hear lectures and concerts and attend festivals.

The Carson Trail is located at the headquarters of The Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge on Route 9 in Wells. It is a one mile, fully handicap accessible, forested, trail which meanders along the upland edge of the Merriland River on one side, and around to where the Branch Brook River merges with the Merriland River to form The Little River. The trail offers close-up views of salt marshes and, weather permitting, a view to the sea. The self-guided trail features 11 look-out points with a corresponding identification guide. It is open from sunrise to sunset year round. Snowshoeing and jogging are allowed and leashed dogs are welcomed.

## **Parks and Recreation**

The Parks and Recreation Department is located at 412 Branch Road and offers a variety of recreational programs for community members of all ages.

### Facilities

The Recreation Park consists of 70 acres which includes nature trails, soccer fields, softball field, playground, tennis courts, picnic area, and horseshoe pits. Public bathrooms are open May through October. The tennis courts are also available for use May through October. Facilities and equipment need to be replaced on an ongoing basis and are typically planned for within the Capital Improvements planning process.

### Programs

Some of the more popular youth programs include:

- Summer Day Camp for grades K – 9
- Swim Lessons
- Soccer
- Basketball
- Tee Ball
- Lacrosse
- Gymnastics
- Archery
- Karate
- Track and Field
- Tennis

Other non-sport related classes include:

- Children's Theater
- Arts and Crafts
- Mad Science
- Preschool Players



Wells Harbor Playground

### Special Events

Special events and school vacation field trips are always well attended. The Department offers a Haunted Halloween Hayride, Visit Santa Night, Santa calling, and an Easter Egg Hunt. Dances and Socials are held for grades 4 to 8 throughout the year. In the winter the Department rents out skates, snowshoes and cross country skis.

### Library

The Wells Public Library is housed in a building on Route 1 that is adjacent to the school complex. The school is further described in the education section of this chapter.

The use of the library has grown steadily over the past seven years. The collection consists of over 53,000 materials, which include adult and children's books, reference resources, audio books, movies, magazines, eBooks, digital audio books, video games, and large print adult books. In 2014 the Library added a total of 2,378 items. Circulation in 2014 was 83,936, down slightly from 2013. The number of adults attending programs has risen significantly, up 30% between fiscal year 2012 and fiscal year 2014. We attribute this to a shift in the public's expectation of what services a library can and should provide.

In 2014 the Library Trustees completed a long-range Strategic Plan that provides a set of goals, objectives and tasks to be undertaken by the Library and Trustees through 2019. This plan prioritizes customer service and access for all including off-site programs.

At present, the Library is over capacity and the conditions are very crowded for programming and materials. Along with the need for additional office space, other possibilities include a community room, a maker-space, a designated teen room, quiet study rooms, a larger children's room, and a computer center. The Library coordinates with the School District for after school programs and reference resources.

The Wells Public Library Foundation is working on a capital campaign to raise part of the funds for an expansion and renovation, and will ask the community for a bond to support the difference.



### Health Care

In October 2000 the Wells Urgent Care Facility opened near the Town Hall at 112-114 Sanford Road (Route 1). This facility provides Emergency Care, Walk-in Care and other services including Breast Care, Cancer Care/Oncology, Cardiovascular Care, Surgery Associates of York Hospital, Laboratory Testing, Orthopedic Associates of York Hospital, Pediatric Associates of York Hospital, Physical Therapy, Ultrasound Services, Wound Healing and Hyperbaric Medicine, X-ray services, and York Hospital OB/GYN Surgical & Midwifery Associates. In addition to health care services, the facility has incorporated the Wells Emergency Medical Service facilities.

There are a number of physicians and other health care providers within the community, most of which are located in the Route 1 Corridor. Other hospitals are available in York, Sanford, and Biddeford.

Currently under construction is the Avita facility that will provide services to memory impaired individuals and related family services.

### **Senior Center**

The Wells Ogunquit Senior Center was constructed in 2004 and provides a place of gathering and events and programs for the local aging community.

### **Education**

Public education in Wells is provided by the Wells-Ogunquit Community School District which serves students residing in both Wells and Ogunquit. The District office is located at 1460 Post Road.

#### **Enrollment**

The District had a total enrollment of 1,330 students during the 2013/2014 school year and is projected to have approximately the same number in the 2014/2015 school year. This is down from a total of 1,507 Wells and Ogunquit students enrolled in 2013.

#### **Schools**



#### **Wells High School**

The Wells High School is located at 200 Sanford Road and provides education for grades 9-12. The High School is undergoing a major renovation that will be completed in 2017. The project includes modernizing the classrooms, adding a separate 18,000 square foot building for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) studies, a new cafeteria, new performing arts auditorium, a new practice gymnasium, new heating plant, and a walkway/ emergency access road from the High School to the Junior High School.

#### **Wells Junior High School**

The Wells Junior High School is located at 1470 Post Road and provides education for grades 5-8. A major renovation project occurred in 2005.

### Wells Elementary School

The Wells Elementary School is located at 276 Sanford Road and provides education for grades K-4. This facility was newly constructed in 2002.

### **Higher Education/Life Long Learning**

Wells is one of those fortunate communities where your child can go from pre-school to college in one community. Wells is the host to the York County Community College (YCCC), an institution that offers traditional and non-traditional students an opportunity to expand their horizons. YCCC is very active in the region working with such employers as Pratt & Whitney, the Portsmouth Naval Ship Yard, Goodwill, Workforce Solutions, as well as others, to provide specialized training programs in order to continue the growth of a strong workforce in Southern Maine. YCCC also reaches out to the region by offering programs in the communities of Sanford and Biddeford. Physically, the school is located within 1.6 miles of the Wells school system creating an educational cluster.

### **Cemeteries**

The Ocean View Cemetery Association owns and operates the Ocean View Cemetery on Route 1. This association is a private organization, although, the Town provides financial support for burial of paupers and the maintenance of veterans' graves. There are available gravesites and an undeveloped area within this cemetery. The Town has undertaken the task to map and register all cemeteries in the Town and has created a map depicting the locations and an index of information on each.



Ocean View Cemetery, Wells, Maine

### **Harbor Facilities**

See Marine Resources – Wells Harbor Management Plan. The Wells Harbor Management Plan provides a discussion of the Harbor Facilities and Infrastructure and is located in the Inventory section.

### **Wastewater Treatment System**

Public sewer service in Wells is provided by the Wells Sanitary District (WSD). The district is an independent entity with its own elected trustees.

WSD operates a sewer system with approximately 45 miles of sewers, including 10 pump stations. The sewage treatment plant can treat up to 2 million gallons of wastewater per day (mgd). The service area includes most of the beach areas, the Route 1 Corridor, and adjacent areas. There are some developed areas within the general service area not served by public sewer, primarily along the west side of Route 1. The WSD master plan proposes providing service in these areas.

During 2013, the District treated 261.4 million gallons of sewage with a peak summer flow of approximately 1.4 million gallons a day. In

that year, 1,169 cubic yards of bio-solids were generated, processed and disposed at a licensed facility in Plymouth, Maine. The Wells Sanitary District presently has enough reserve capacity to meet the Town's needs for many years.

Presently, WSD does not provide service beyond the Maine Turnpike. Over the past few years, the Town, developers and the WSD Trustees have discussed the possibility of extending service beyond the Maine Turnpike. To that end, in 2013, WSD purchased a parcel of land in the vicinity of the Maine Turnpike exit 19 entrance on Sanford Road. This purchase will provide a location for a pump station in the event sewer service is extended west of the Maine Turnpike.

### **Water Service**

Public water service in Wells is provided by the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District (KKWD) and was established in 1921. KKWWD is an independent, legislatively created public district that is governed by a four-member Board of Trustees.

KKWWD system services portions of Wells, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, Ogunquit, Arundel, Biddeford, and York. In Wells, the service area consists primarily of the beaches, the Route 1 Corridor and adjacent areas.

Until 1980, Branch Brook and the Branch Brook Aquifer had been the primary source to supply all of the KKWWD customers. The District's policy is to meet the needs of future growth and development. This would include both supply and distribution. The District presently passes the cost of system expansion on to new users either in the form of construction costs or system development charges.

In 2010, the District completed a 3,100-foot pipe replacement project along Route 1 in Wells and completed a Forest Management Plan for its nearly 2,000 acres of watershed land, which was an update to the original plan developed in 1982. The Forest Management Plan contains an inventory of tree types and maturity status, and outlines a schedule for timber harvests, tree plantings, and land management priorities. These efforts will help to ensure the continued high quality of Branch Brook as a drinking water supply source by maintaining diverse and healthy forests and minimizing the harmful effects from erosion throughout the watershed. A new fish ladder was opened on Branch Brook in May of 2013 to allow passage of fish like herring, alewife, elvers and trout. Also in 2013, the District saw both a 1.5% growth in customers and a 4.5% increase in water production over the previous year.

The KKWWD is one of 19 active Public Water Systems in the Town of Wells that rely on the provision of clean drinking water for their customers. Public Water System is defined as a publicly or privately-owned system of pipes or other constructed conveyances, structures, and facilities through which water is obtained for or sold, furnished or distributed to the public for human consumption, if such a system has at least 15 service connections or serves at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year or bottles water for sale.

The Maine Public Water Systems listing by County identifies that in 2017 the Town of Wells to have the following Public Water Systems:

Public Water System Name	ID	Water System Type	Source	Source Type
Highpine Mobile Home Park	ME0003907	C	2 dug wells & 2 collection til	WL
Richards Seafood Restaurant	ME0003939	NC	DR Well 486'	WL
Pheasant Hill MHP	ME0003990	C	300' BR Well #2 8-11-2011 @ 50 GPM 375' BR Wells #1	WL WL
Pinederosa Campground – East	ME0009600	NC	180' Bedrock Well 5-7-2004 @ 100 GPM	WL
Gregoires Campground	ME0010918	NC	Well 2 – 245' DR Well 125' (Old)	WL WL
Bears Den RV Park – West	ME0015049	NC	160' Bedrock Well 6-30-99	WL
Merriland Farm	ME0016575	NC	DR Wells 120'	WL
Sea-Vu South Campground	ME0019827	NC	DR Wekk 460' – 65 GPM New 4/97 Drilled Well 460'	WL WL
The Old Marsh Condominium	ME0092323	C	400' BR Well #2, 2-11-1997 @ 20 GPM 500' BR Well #1, 1-25-1997 @ 35 GPM	WL WL
Pinetree Village HOA	ME0092475	C	200' DR Well 10/1990 @ 50 GPM	WL
Cranton-Thomes Day School	ME0092500	NTNC	263' Well 7-9-1991 @ 5 GPM	WL
Adventures in Learning	ME0092553	NTNC	Well 1 – 400' 10/2004 @ 3 GPM	WL
Walter Marsh Recreation Area	ME0094667	NC	Bedrock Well, 400' – deep	WL
Blueberry Vista, LLC	ME0095658	C	180' DR Well #1 @ 12 GPM 250' DR Well #2 @ 12 GPM	WL WL
Pinederosa Campground #2	ME0109600	NC	180' Bedrock Wells	WL
Bears Den RV Park – East	ME0115049	NC	Bedrock Well 510' 200 GPM 7/24/2000	WL
Sea-Vu West Campground	ME0119827	NC	575' Bedrock Well 3-9-2005 @ 150 GPM 575' Bedrock Well 3-9-2005 @ 150 GPM	WL WL
Pinederosa Campground #3	ME0209600	NC	Drilled Well 400' @ 25 GPM	WL

Pinederosa Campground #4	ME0309600	NC	520' Drilled Well 10 GPM	WL
<i>NC = Transient NTNC = Non-Community, Non-Transient C= Community</i>				<i>WL = Well (groundwater)</i>

**Natural Gas**

Natural gas is provided through Unitol Corporation off the pipeline that runs through the Town of Wells on the old Boston & Maine Rail Road line. A lateral has been built from the pipeline in the Highpine area and runs along Route 109 to the Wells Industrial Park serving the Wells Transportation Center at the Maine Turnpike exit 19. In 2015 an extension of the lateral commenced to serve the Wells-Ogunquit Community School District campus, Town Hall, the Wells Public Library, and York Hospital. It is hoped that the lateral will then continue to Route 1 in the area of the shopping center.

**Utility Rights-of-Way**

Wells is crossed by four utility rights-of-way, all of which run in a north-south direction. Verizon (formerly New England Telephone) has two of these rights-of-way and Central Maine Power has the other two.

Verizon has a right-of-way (ROW) that runs through the marshes between Route 1 and the beaches. Bell Atlantic had removed the lines within this ROW and has no need for this ROW any longer. Some adjacent property owners have been able to obtain rights or ownership of portions of the right-of-way from the phone company. Verizon also has a ROW that runs along the Sanford-Wells town line.

Central Maine Power (CMP) has two rights-of-way through the Town. One lies between the Maine Turnpike and Route 1. This ROW has not yet been developed and is in reserve for future expansion of transmission capacity. Given the pressure for residential development in this area of Wells, the potential is great for future land use conflicts around this ROW corridor, as property buyers may not be aware of this area's status. The second ROW for CMP is in the western part of Wells running from the North Berwick town line near Route 9 to Branch Brook, west of Chicks Crossing Road. In addition to the existing transmission lines, there is now a natural gas transmission pipe located within this right of way.

The fourth right-of-way is the old 'Eastern Line,' the original right-of-way of the Boston and Maine Railroad. Rail Service was discontinued when the rail was relocated to the east. In the 1960s, the right-of-way was purchased is now used for an interstate natural gas transmission pipe. This ROW is under investigation for use as a non-motorized trail for the Eastern Trail System Alliance. See the discussion in the Transportation Section.

## The Three Ring Binder

One piece of infrastructure no one ever thinks of is that of internet access. In the world of high speed internet, access needs, Wells is one of the fortunate communities to have direct access to the Three Ring Binder. The Three Ring Binder is a trunk line for high speed internet data that runs along the I-95 Corridor through portions of south central Maine. Having such high speed internet capabilities is an incentive for High Tech companies and Hospitals to locate in these regions because they are able to move large volumes of data very quickly; providing the highest data speeds in the state. A plan currently underway by the Town of Sanford with Great Works internet (GWI) would extend high speed service along the Route 109 corridor through Wells to Sanford.

## Transportation

Roads, streets, and other means of transportation are often referred to as the Town's circulation system. This system is necessary to move people, goods, and services from one part of Town to another, bring them into and out of Town, and bring them through Town. Wells has 139.97 miles of public roads with 7.95 miles of interstate, 19.56 miles of state highway, 10.61 miles of state aid roads, and 101.85 miles of town/seasonal roads per MaineDOT data.

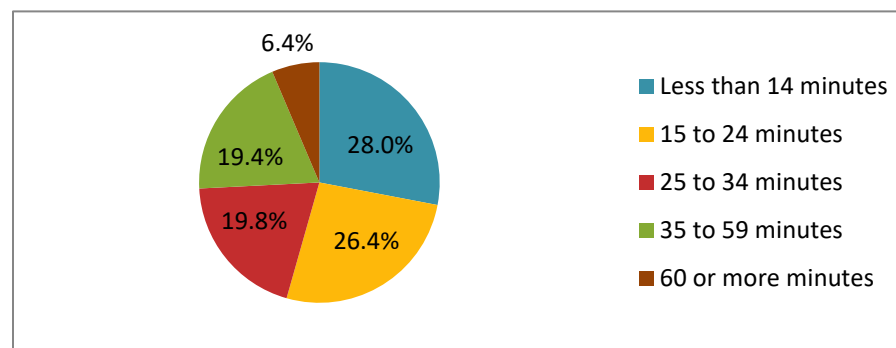
Many of the problems associated with highways in any Town are a result of one, or both of the basic flaws of today's roads and streets: (1) their inability to carry out all of their roles equally well, and (2) their inability to carry out their roles and provide a type of service for which they were designed or built.

Like most Maine communities, the automobile supersedes all other modes, as the predominant mode of transportation for Wells workers (nearly 76 percent of all workers). Of the automobile travelers about 7 percent of all Wells workers carpoled as shown in the 'Commuting to Work in Wells table below. While the automobile is dominant because of its convenience, it is notable that since there are alternatives in Wells, more people are choosing to use the options (see "Other Modes of Transportation' section).

Commuting to Work in Wells		
	Total	Percent
Car, Truck, or Van (Drive Alone)	3,092	75.8%
Car, Truck, or Van (Carpooled)	362	7.4%
Public Transportation (Buses, Trolleys, Train)	68	1.4%
Walked	137	2.8%
Bicycle	117	2.4%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	15	0.3%
Worked at Home	293	6.0%
Total Commuters	4,895	100%
<i>Source: 2012 American Community Survey Data</i>		

Data indicates that most adults living in Wells have access to a vehicle, while approximately 2 percent of the population is without access to a vehicle. More than half (53 percent) of all households have access to at least two vehicles and nearly 32 percent have access to at least three vehicles.

Source: Maine DOT



A consistent traffic issue throughout Maine and the rest of the country is that traffic tends to build up during “commute hours,” or times when people go to and come back from work. Approximately 28 percent of people with jobs in Wells have less than a fourteen minute commute to work. Approximately 46 percent have commutes between 15 minutes and 34 minutes. 19 percent of all commuters travel between 35 and 59 minutes and the remainder of commuters (19 percent) have a commute greater than 60 minutes.

### Road Safety

The table below indicates that there were 2,613 crashes in Wells between 2008 and 2016. . 2016 had the most crashes with 319. 2010 had the least amount of crashes with 254.

Town	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL
Wells	307	301	254	290	268	246	316	312	319	2,613

<https://www1.maine.gov/online/mcrs/>

MaineDOT has a system that it uses to rate crash locations throughout the state called ‘High Crash Locations.’ High Crash Locations are given greater attention for funding by MaineDOT for safety programs. In order to qualify, High Crash Locations must be at locations that have had at least eight crashes in the same location for a three-year period. It also must exceed the Critical Rate Factor of crashes. A Critical Rate Factor is the average expected rate of crashes for a location (based on statewide data of similar crashes). In Wells, there were six high crash locations between 2011 and 2013. The number one high crash location in York County between 2011 to 2013 was located at the intersection of Chapel Road and Route 1 with 38 accidents (see High Crash Locations in Wells table below). This intersection was improved in 2016 by the MaineDOT with Chapel Road at the intersection of Route 1 to be reconstructed with a 90 degree approach. It should be also noted that a traffic light at the Chapel Road and Sanford Road (Route 109) intersection was installed in 2014 by MaineDOT which should also reduce the crash statistics.

	Total Accidents	Critical Rate Factor	Ranking County/ State
<b>High Crash Locations in Wells: 2011-2013</b>			
Intersection of Chapel Road and Route 1	38	5.76	1/19
Intersection of Garden Street, North Berwick Road, and Sanford Road	12	2.24	22/136
Intersection of Chapel Road and Sanford Road	10	1.68	33/178
Intersection of Branch Road, Crediford Road, and Sanford Road	16	3.99	6/50
Route 1 between Mile Road and Bayview Terrace	21	1.04	32/164
Intersection of Route 1 and Mile Road	13	1.15	24/153

Source: Maine DOT

### **Road Stream Crossings & Culverts**

Many municipal road maintenance and construction projects often inadvertently impede passage of wildlife and fish at stream crossings. Wells has various stream crossings and culverts and understands the importance of both aquatic and terrestrial wildlife passage using properly designed stream crossing structures such as Stream Smart techniques. Wells has a number of identified barriers and use of the Maine Stream Habitat Viewer created by the Maine Stream Connectivity Work Group, will provide the town with important information regarding wildlife conditions and fish passage at these structures. See Comprehensive Plan Inventory Section IV for Bridges located in Wells.

### **Pedestrian & Bicycle Infrastructure**

The Town of Wells has access to several options for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to encourage residents and visitors to walk and bike.

#### *Trails*

There are two significant organizations that have created on-road and off-road trails that travel through Wells. The Eastern Trail Alliance created the Eastern Trail network that connects Kittery to South Portland through a series of on-road and off-road trails. In Wells, the Eastern Trail is located on Route 1. The Eastern Trail is part of the larger East Coast Greenway Network that will eventually connect Maine to Florida through a trail system. Another initiative is U.S. Bicycle Route 1 which is a cross-country bicycle route.



Wells Maine Bike renters

Within the Town, the Conservation Commission has created and maintains through volunteers many nature trails throughout acquired conservation land and easements. Trail information and maps are

available at their website: wellsconservation.org

### *Pedestrian Network*

Pedestrians are a part of every roadway environment and attention should be paid to their presence. Sidewalks are the primary facility provided to meet pedestrians' needs and care must be taken when designing a pedestrian network to account for all users. Users include children, the elderly, parents with strollers, and pedestrians with physical disabilities and impairments that require the use of wheelchairs and other assistive devices. Future sidewalks are currently planned along Harbor Road and will be extended south along Route 1.

### **Other Modes of Transportation**

The Wells transportation system is in large part a reflection of the historical growth of the Town. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a light electrical rail service was in operation in Wells and other nearby coastal southern Maine communities. The rail service connected the coastal southern Maine communities with Sanford and Springvale. Long distance railroads with two stations in Wells also served the Town. Similar to the pattern that evolved throughout the United States during the early to middle part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the private automobile became the primary means of transportation in Wells.

While motorized vehicles including automobiles, heavy and light trucks, will continue to be the primary form of transportation in Wells, the Town has been effective in encouraging and planning for other forms of transportation. The most significant example of this planning is the addition of the Wells Transportation Center, which opened for business in December 2002. The Wells Transportation Center is located directly off of Exit 19 of the Maine Turnpike Authority on Route 109/9. It is an intermodal transportation facility serving Southern Maine by passenger rail service, bus service and commuter parking for 220 vehicles.

### **Public Transportation**

The York County Community Action Corporation (YCCAC) provides several forms of public transportation for the Town of Wells. YCCAC also provides transportation services for medical/non-emergency and shopping purposes for communities in York County. They provide a weekly service for Wells that connects to the hospital and shopping locations in Biddeford.

#### *The WAVE (Wheels to Access Vocation and Education)*

This service provides riders with the opportunity to travel to jobs and to bring their children to daycare. If space is available, the service is open to the general public. The blue and white vans and buses operate 7 days a week. Trips must be arranged in advance. The current service is for an area including Sanford -Springvale Wells, and parts of Lyman and Biddeford. The WAVE service is provided year round. In 2013, they YCCAC provided 34,182 one-way trips through the WAVE service.

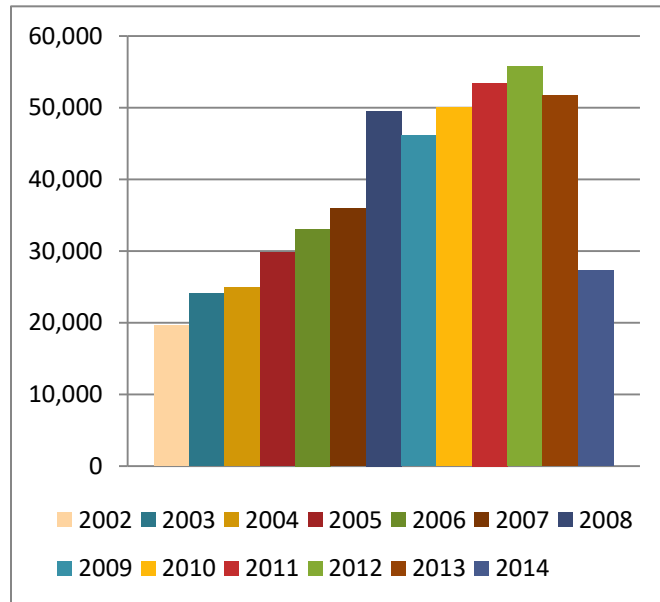
#### *The Shoreline Explorer*

The Shoreline Explorer provides seasonal trolley service to coastal communities in southern York County. There are four routes that provide seasonal transportation with two routes that provide services in the Town of Wells (The Blue



Line/Route 4 and the Orange Line/Route 5). The Blue Line/Route 4 serves Ogunquit, Wells, and Kennebunk. The Orange Line/Route 5 serves Wells and Sanford and provides full-year service.

**Rail Ridership by Year**



Source: Amtrak

Passenger Rail

Passenger Rail service is provided through the Amtrak Downeaster service at the Wells Transportation Center. With the exception of 2009 and 2013, ridership has increased each year since the service began in 2002. Note that 2014 only includes months from January to July 2014.