

Chapter 13 - Public Utilities Policies and Strategies

Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan's Public Utilities Policies and Strategies describe goals, policies, standards and implementation strategies related to the public utilities systems in Wells including water, sewer, telephone/data, cable, electricity and gas. In 2020, the Wells Sanitary District (WSD) completed a Climate Adaptation Plan to inform and guide the plans for infrastructure and operations changes. The Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District (KK&W) is also nearing completion of major upgrades to the metering system, and will soon be able to gather daily meter readings remotely. Continued communication and collaboration with WSD, KK&W, other public utilities, and adjacent communities is a priority to ensure informed management and investment in municipal facilities and services.

Goals

State Goal:

Plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public ~~facilities~~utilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth, ~~and~~ economic development, and resource protection as outlined in the Vision. (Growth Management Act)

Regional Goal:

~~Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery through formal and informal means of inter-local cooperation and communication.~~

No goal is available at the regional level.

Wells Goals:

1. Strictly protect the Wells portion of the Branch Brook Aquifer and Watershed.
2. Work cooperatively with the water and sewer districts to provide appropriate levels of service to meet current needs, as well as future needs, in the Town's growth areas.
3. Work cooperatively with the water and sewer districts to restrict and minimize extension of water and sewer service into those areas of Wells that are designated as low growth or rural areas.
4. Continue to communicate and coordinate with the management of both the Wells Sanitary District and the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District on planned infrastructure changes, resource protection efforts, and climate impacts to ensure consistency with land use planning and other municipal services.
3. —
5. Work cooperatively with providers of utilities such as telephone/data, cable, gas

and electricity to ensure the type, location, size, scope, quality and accessibility are consistent with the growth, land use, design, community character and other policies of this Plan to meet the needs of the community.

6. Work with all utilities in coastal portions of the community to ensure that infrastructure improvements address the realities of climate change and sea-level rise, and are coordinated with municipal infrastructure investments and the provision of services.

Policies

To implement these goals, it is the policy of the Town of Wells to:

1. Promote a pattern of growth and development that discourages sprawl, is consistent with the policies on land use and identified growth areas, and provides a cost effective and efficient delivery of services consistent with the needs of Wells. ~~Ensure that, to the~~ greatest extent possible, the water and sewer service area boundaries, both existing and projected, ~~should conform to be~~ coordinated with the Town's growth area boundaries as identified in this Plan.
2. Continue to support the use of impact fees by the water and sanitary districts to fund enlargement and expansion of their systems.
3. Retain, and where appropriate, reconfigure the Branch Brook Aquifer Protection District as a strategic means for protecting the ~~Water Company~~ Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District's public water supply.
4. Encourage regional solutions, when possible, through cooperative agreements with adjacent communities and regional organizations if reduced cost and improved services can be realized.
- 4.5. ~~Cooperate~~ actively collaborate with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk on the most appropriate methods for protection of the Branch Brook Watershed and aquifer.
- 5.6. Work cooperatively with the water, sewer, gas, electric, telephone, cable and other utility companies in the planning and development of facilities to ensure that residents are properly serviced and that they are aware of the growth area designations as well as other land use policies of this Plan.
- 6.7. Maintain a high level of quality of the Town's ground and surface waters, and protection of private property, -through the proper management of wastewater and stormwater from residential, commercial and community sources.

- 7.8. Continue to explore and implement methods to reduce, re-use and re-cycle Town waste.
- 8.9. Ensure that the location and installation of utilities are consistent with the Town's appearance and character goals and polices.

Standards

To achieve these policies, the following are Town of Wells' standards to guide development:

- 1. Land Use Regulations~~(To be developed in future update.)~~

Implementation Strategies

- 1. ~~Establish an ongoing dialogue~~Continue to communicate with the Wells Sanitary District and the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells Water District water and sewer utility districts to ensure that they are aware of the growth area designations and other land use policies of this Plan, and that land use planning in Wells is informed by the realities each organization is facing.
- 2. ~~Reconfigure the~~Continue to utilize the Branch Brook Aquifer Protection District and other initiatives to protect the Town's water supply.
- 3. Cooperate with the Towns of Sanford and Kennebunk to adopt policies and programs, including the securing of easements, to protect the Branch Brook watershed and aquifer.
- 4. Continue to review the Town's land use regulations to ensure the quality of the ground and surface waters are protected through the proper management of wastewater and stormwater from residential, commercial and community sources. This should include preparing a specific Development Plan for drainage.
- ~~4. Prepare a specific Development Plan for drainage.~~
- 5. Work with appropriate utility companies to ~~program~~proactively plan for public utility improvements based upon the Comprehensive Plan's policies and implementation programs, and an appropriate system of priorities.
- 6. Approve new developments that rely on public water only when the applicant can prove adequate water supply for fire protection is available.
- 7. Continue to explore and implement methods to reduce, re-use and re-cycle Town waste including the composting of organic materials.
- 8. Continue to work with wireless, cable and data utility system providers proactively to ensure state of the art facilities are available for residents and economic development.

9. Explore the feasibility of implementing a program to locate overhead utility wires along key roads, (e.g. Route 1, 9/109, 9 and 109) underground over time.