

February 21, 2024

To: Town Manager, Select Board, Director of Planning,  
Climate Action Committee, Interested Residents of Kennebunkport

RE: Kennebunkport Climate Action Plans

The proposed **Kennebunkport Climate Action Plan** is dated February 16, 2024. The plan was developed by the Climate Action Committee that was appointed by the Select Board. The committee was assisted by substantial community/citizen input gathered from many workshops held during the past year. Kennebunkport is participating with a number of local area towns that are developing similar plans in conjunction with the Southern Maine Regional Planning and Development Commission. **(Exhibit 1)**

The Plan will be presented to the Select Board for discussion and approval on March 28 by the Climate Action Committee. When approved, the plan will allow Kennebunkport to continue to apply for State and Federal grants. The Board will also discuss at the meeting the recommendation to create a Climate Committee to monitor and make recommendations to the Board on a periodic basis.

The origin of the Plan:

Early in 2019, the Select Board began a discussion of climate related actions that Kennebunkport might implement to help alleviate climate change now and in the future. This culminated in the Board adopting, on November 12, 2020, **“The Town of Kennebunkport Climate Change Goals”**—by unanimous Board vote. **(Exhibit 2)**

In 2019, community workshops were scheduled to explore potential additional climate action plans by working with the community and gathering input that was extremely important so that Kennebunkport could develop a concise and condensed climate plan that its citizens could support. The plan would be essential if Kennebunkport were to be allowed to apply for State and Federal grants for climate resilience related projects.. These workshops were held on November 19, 2019, June 1, 2021, and July 26, 2021.

The adoption of a **“Resolution To Join The Community Resilience Partnership”** was the result of those workshops and was unanimously approved by the Board of Selectmen on February 10, 2022. This was required by the State of Maine and gave the Town the opportunity to apply for State and Federal grants. **(Exhibit 3)**

As a result of this Resolution, Kennebunkport has received a number of grants. The most notable one is \$2,585,000 for the Pier Road Causeway project set to be completed this year. The Select Board has also authorized an application for a \$50,000 grant to pay for the engineering study for the Head of the Harbor project. A number of grant related projects are now in motion and we have participated in grants totaling \$4,441,675. **(Exhibit 4)**

Then in 2023, the citizens of Kennebunkport voted to approve the Comprehensive Plan. This Plan was developed by the Growth Planning Committee and was the result of many meetings with Town representatives and citizens. The climate strategies in the Plan include many of same items that were already adopted by the Select Board and the Growth Planning Committee with substantial citizen input, (Exhibit 5)

A number of our citizens have expressed concerns about some of the details in the plan and that a Climate Committee that may be formed as a result of adopting it will be writing ordinances that could impact property owner's rights or restrict citizen choices.

Any recommended change to an ordinance from any source in the Town of Kennebunkport must first be discussed at public hearing prior to a vote by the Select Board . If it is approved by the Board, then any proposed ordinance change must be included in the Town Warrant for all registered voters to approve or disapprove.

In summary, The proposed Kennebunkport Climate Action Plan mirrors all of the climate action recommendations that have been previously reviewed with the community, approved by the Select Board and the citizens of Kennebunkport via town vote.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Weston', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mike Weston  
Chairman  
Kennebunkport Select Board

# PROPOSED KENNEBUNKPORT CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

February 16, 2024

BUILD RESILIENCY	
1. Create Resilient Infrastructure to support key community services.	1. Continue to support critical infrastructure by maintaining key community resources: sewer, water, stormwater management, utilities, roads, culverts, and bridges. \$\$\$*
	2. Assess and manage impacts of saltwater intrusion and groundwater rise on sewers, septic systems and wells - REGIONAL STRATEGY. \$
	3. Plan for maintaining power at key facilities during power outages. \$\$
2. Create Energy Resiliency to safeguard critical services for residents.	1. Investigate cost-benefit of installing renewable energy generation to service municipal and school buildings. \$
	2. Work with CMP & MPUC to advocate for improved grid resilience – REGIONAL STRATEGY. \$
3. Ensure Community Resilience/Disaster Preparedness to protect residents during extreme weather events.	1. Assess existing Resilience Hub(s) to ensure they have the capacity to provide sufficient critical emergency services, including information, electricity, food, water, and shelter. \$
	2. Review/enhance emergency planning for hazard mitigation and disaster response – REGIONAL STRATEGY. \$
4. Increase Sustainability and Resilient Development - increase the resilience and safety of existing properties and encourage new development that is adapted to climate change.	1. Consider cost risks to the Town of exposure to climate hazards when approving location of new and redevelopment projects. \$
	2. Encourage and streamline processes for residents and businesses to reduce flood risks through the utilization of best practices. \$
	3. Assess cost-benefit to Town of managed relocation/retreat programs. \$
	4. Consider hazard disclosure for property transactions – REGIONAL STRATEGY. \$
5. Protect Natural Resources as a buffer for climate change and to maintain community character.	1. Promote and enable nature-based solutions, where appropriate, for shoreline protection and carbon sequestration. \$
	2. Promote conservation and restoration of natural areas that are vulnerable to climate hazards and those that provide climate and hazard mitigation such as flood mitigation, important habitat, and carbon sequestration. \$

REDUCE EMISSIONS	
6. <b>Build Energy Efficiency</b> to reduce energy costs and GHG emissions for municipality, citizens, and businesses.	1. Promote weatherization incentive programs for residential, commercial, municipal buildings - <u>REGIONAL STRATEGY</u> .
	\$
	2. Promote building electrification incentive programs - <u>REGIONAL STRATEGY</u> .
	\$
	3. Encourage transition from the use of gas-powered small engines.
	\$
7. <b>Support EVs and reduce VMT (vehicle miles traveled)</b>	1. Assess cost-benefit of transitioning public fleets to EVs - <u>Potential RSU 21 Partnership</u> .
	\$
	2. Encourage installation of commercial EV chargers, especially in public lots, hotels and other public venues.
	\$
	3. Increase bike-ability and walkability where appropriate to <u>reduce dependence on cars</u> .
	\$



ENABLE ACTION	
8. <b>Community Outreach:</b> Actively engage the community in local climate, sustainability and resilience issues.	1. Collaborate with RSU-21 schools to incorporate climate change, resilience, and sustainability into school curricula. <u>Potential RSU 21 Partnership</u> .
	\$
	2. <u>Promote climate education in the community at large.</u>
	\$
	3. Create a shared "Community Vision" around climate <u>resilience for Kennebunkport's future.</u>
	\$
	4. Create a "Climate Committee" to help implement community outreach projects and support town staff and boards.
	\$
9. <b>Enable Municipal Operations and Funding</b> to support the Climate Action Plan ensuring equal access to services and resources.	1. Incorporate climate resilience and GHG emissions criteria – along with equity considerations – into municipal <u>budgeting, policy and staffing decisions.</u>
	\$
	2. Investigate opportunities to diversify sources of revenue to decrease over-reliance on taxes from high-value residential coastal properties.
	\$
	3. Conduct a review of ordinances and policies to identify necessary changes to reduce emissions and runoff and build resiliency. Consider streamlining approval processes and <u>reducing barriers to allow community members to protect their properties while not negatively impacting their neighbors.</u>
	\$






\* Relative Cost Key:

\$

\$\$


\$\$\$

## Town of Kennebunkport Climate Change Goals

Climate and Resilience		
<b>1. Establish a GHG emissions inventory, target, and plan</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure &amp; Monitor GHG Emissions from Municipal Operations</li> </ul>	Conservation Commission / Town Staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure and Monitor GHG Emissions Community Wide</li> </ul>	Conservation Commission
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a local climate action plan</li> </ul>	Board of Selectmen
<b>2. Ensure community resilience to climate change impacts</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the Maine Flood resilience Checklist to assess coastal vulnerabilities</li> </ul>	Planning and Codes / Sustainability Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess all other non-coastal vulnerabilities to create a comprehensive picture of current and future climate change impacts</li> </ul>	Growth Planning Committee as part of Comprehensive Plan / Town Staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enact and enforce land use policies that protect valuable natural assets and support resiliency</li> </ul>	Growth Planning Committee / Planning and Codes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with other local governments to plan and achieve sustainability</li> </ul>	Board of Selectmen / Town Manager

Education and Outreach		
<b>1. Actively engage community members in local climate, sustainability, and resilience issues</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate community about steps they can do to reduce emissions and become more resilient</li> </ul>	Kennebunkport Climate Initiative and Conservation Commission
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate the community about clean energy options</li> </ul>	Kennebunkport Climate Initiative and Conservation Commission
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote native and sustainable landscaping initiatives community wide by connecting residents to plants and information</li> </ul>	Kennebunkport Climate Initiative and Conservation Commission
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate the community about the value of trees, native and sustainable landscaping</li> </ul>	Conservation Commission / Shade Tree Committee







## Town of Kennebunkport Climate Change Goals

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate city staff about forest, wetlands, and ecosystem best management practices</li> </ul>	Department Directors / Town Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate community about steps they can do to reduce emissions and become more resilient</li> </ul>	Kennebunkport Climate Initiative and Conservation Commission
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate the community about clean energy options</li> </ul>	Kennebunkport Climate Initiative and Conservation Commission

### Green Economy

<b>1. Create and promote a community brand featuring natural resources or cultural characteristics of community</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create and promote a community brand featuring natural resources or cultural characteristics of community</li> </ul>	Kennebunkport Business Association, Chamber of Commerce, Town



### Energy

<b>1. Reduce municipal fossil fuel consumption and implement municipal energy efficiency measures</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with utilities and other agencies to upgrade streetlight equipment</li> </ul>	Lighting Committee and Public Works
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize energy saving performance contracts (ESPC) to finance large energy efficiency projects</li> </ul>	Town Departments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget and plan for long-term energy efficiency equipment upgrades</li> </ul>	Town Departments/ BOS/ Budget Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install and operate renewable energy systems at municipal facilities or serving municipal facilities</li> </ul>	Town Departments/ BOS/ Budget Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procure locally produced, renewable energy for public facilities using bundled or unbundled RECs</li> </ul>	Town Manager / Board of Selectmen
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with other municipalities to install and operate renewable energy systems for municipal energy / community energy use</li> </ul>	Town Manager/ Board of Selectmen



## Town of Kennebunkport Climate Change Goals

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track and benchmark building energy consumption and seek ways to improve energy efficiency in all facilities</li> </ul>	Town Manager/ Department Directors
<b>2. Support development of and access to renewable energy</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt codes and permitting practices that support renewable energy systems in the community</li> </ul>	Planning and Codes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate the adoption of renewable energy technologies (i.e. solar, geothermal) by adapting building and zoning codes</li> </ul>	Planning and Codes






### Land Ecosystems

<b>1. Promote and practice environmentally-friendly and sustainable landscape approaches</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the quality and amount of sustainable landscaping in the community</li> </ul>	Conservation Commission / Town Manager / Department Directors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the amount of sustainable landscaping in the community through subdivision and development codes</li> </ul>	Planning and Codes / Growth Planning Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase native and sustainable landscaping on municipal properties</li> </ul>	Town Manager / Department Directors / Conservation Commission

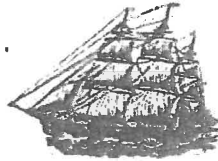
### Community forest management

<b>2. Practice sustainable community forest management to increase resilience</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plant trees in locations where they make a direct, positive impact on the community or act as a buffer to filter air and water, limit storm runoff, and stabilize soil</li> </ul>	Town Staff / Shade Tree Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversify the community forest for long term resilience</li> </ul>	Town Staff / Town Forrester
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optimize tree planting and protect existing trees for maximum carbon storage/sequestration and energy savings</li> </ul>	Shade Tree Committee

# Town of Kennebunkport Climate Change Goals

Municipal Operations		
<b>1. Lead by demonstrating sustainable values and practices</b>		
	• Achieve LEED certification for public building projects	Town Manager / Board of Selectmen
	• Manage special events sustainably	Department Directors / Town Manager
	• Integrate sustainability into capital planning	Department Directors / Town Manager / Board of Selectmen
	• Enact policies to preserve dark skies	Lighting Committee / Board of Selectmen
<b>2. Operate a safe, clean, and efficient fleet</b>		
	• Update fleet purchasing to prioritize electric vehicles	Department Directors / Town Manager / Board of Selectmen
	• Enact and enforce anti-idling policies for public fleet vehicles	Department Directors / Town Manager / Board of Selectmen
<b>3. Engage the community in waste reduction and recycling</b>		
	• Educate the community on recycling and composting practices	Solid Waste Committee
	• Educate the community to reduce waste by consuming less and reusing	Solid Waste Committee
	• Establish and strive for a residential recycling goal	Solid Waste Committee





## TOWN OF KENNEBUNKPORT, MAINE

— INCORPORATED 1653 —

### Resolution To Join the Community Resilience Partnership

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Kennebunkport has completed the Community Resilience Partnership's Community Resilience Self-Assessment and List of Community Actions, held three community workshops on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019, June 1<sup>st</sup> 2021, and July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021, and adopted eleven Climate Change Goals which include the following actions from the Partnership's List of Community Actions:

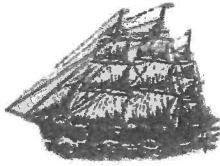
- C1: Conduct a baseline for energy usage by municipal/tribal government including electricity, heating and transportation fuels, and other energy sources.
- C2: Identify and track a simplified set of emissions indicators for community emissions reduction
- C3: Adopt a resolution setting targets and a plan for reducing emissions and advancing clean energy from municipal/tribal operations that align with the state's targets.
- F5: Complete the Maine Flood Resilience Checklist.
- G1: Conduct a vulnerability assessment for critical community infrastructure that includes: 1) the climate hazards to which infrastructure assets are exposed and how the intensity and likelihood will change over time; 2) the susceptibility to damage or failure given location, design, age, condition, and state of repair; and 3) the consequences that impairment or failure of the infrastructure will have on the community.

**WHEREAS**, planning for community and infrastructure resilience will protect people, preserve businesses and the local economy, and reduce the impact and costs of natural disasters;

**WHEREAS**, investing in energy efficiency and weatherization improvements is proven to lower municipal electricity expenses and make buildings more comfortable for employees and visitors;

**WHEREAS**, transitioning municipal fleet vehicles to electric vehicles lowers fuel and maintenance costs and reduces the uncertainty of variable fuel prices on municipal budgets;

**WHEREAS**, the Gulf of Maine is warming 99% faster than other oceans around the world, and ocean acidification and warming ocean temperatures pose a serious economic and cultural risk to Maine maritime industries, heritage, and tourism;



## TOWN OF KENNEBUNKPORT, MAINE

— INCORPORATED 1653 —

**BE IT RESOLVED**, the Town of Kennebunkport commits to participating in the Community Resilience Partnership, which supports community leadership in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing resiliency to extreme weather and climate change impacts;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Town of Kennebunkport designates the Community Planner to coordinate planning, implementation, and monitoring of energy and resilience projects and to be the primary point of contact to the Community Resilience Partnership.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sheila Matthews-Bull

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Edward W. Hutchins

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patrick A. Briggs

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
D. Michael Weston

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Allen A. Daggett

Amount	Source	Project(s)	Funding Timeframe
\$50,000	Kennebunkport contributions	Regional Program Pilot	Jan 2020 - Jun 2024
<b>Additional Grants Secured by SMPDC to Support Kennebunkport and Regional work</b>			
\$160,000	Economic Development Administration Disaster Grant	Economic Resilience Plan for Coastal York County	Jan 2020 - May 2022
\$130,000	Joint Land Use Implementation Grant	Southern Maine Climate Action Planning Cohort	July 2022 - Dec 2023
\$130,000	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Coastal Resilience Fund	Climate Ready Coast – Southern Maine	Apr 2021 - May 2023
\$10,000	Dept. of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry	Climate Ready Coast – Southern Maine	Jan 2022 - Jan 2023
\$51,250	Maine Coastal Communities Grant	Development of Model Coastal Resilience Ordinance Language and Guidance	Sept 2021 - Dec 2022
\$32,550	Maine Coastal Communities Grant	Erosion and Sediment Control Checklist and Model Ordinance	Sept 2020 - Sept 2021
\$56,770	Maine Coastal Communities Grant	Low Impact Development Model Ordinance	Sept 2021 - Dec 2022
\$100,000	Community Resilience Partnership Community Action Grant	Southern Maine Climate Action Planning Cohort	May 2022 - May 2023
\$108,000	Maine Silver Jackets Grant	Flood mitigation assessment for Dock Square and Lower Village	Jan 2022 - June 2023
\$199,494	Breachreach Fund	Nature-Based Solutions for a Climate Ready Southern Maine	February 2023 - January 2025
\$28,611	Breachreach Fund	Kennebunkport Dune Restoration	February 2023 - unknown end date
\$800,000	DOE Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant	Southern Maine Energy Navigator Pilot	April 2024 - March 2027
\$2,585,000	Maine Infrastructure Adaptation Fund	Pier Road Causeway Resilience Project	July 2022 - unknown end date
\$50,000	Maine Infrastructure Adaptation Fund 2024	Pier Road Head of Harbor Road Resilience Engineering/Design	TBD - grant submitted 2/2/24
<b>\$4,441,675</b>	<b>GRANTS TOTAL</b>		

natural resources and water resources and identify strategies to minimize impacts such as through alternative weed and pest controls and regulations, as needed.

- Support forestry and agricultural uses and activities such as agritourism, backyard chickens, farms, farm stands, and firewood sales.
- Create and implement an invasive species management policy, including public outreach and education, and prepare to manage invasive species on town property.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of the LUO and Subdivision Regulations to identify opportunities to strengthen provisions for water resource protection.
- Continue to assign priority status to commercial fishermen for mooring spaces.
- Develop the Village Parcel in a manner that is consistent with Kennebunkport's small town character.

## Resilient

- Work with the Silver Jackets and other experts to devise a plan to protect Dock Square buildings from sea level rise.
- Educate property owners about impacts of climate change, such as extreme heat, drought, flood vulnerability, and changes in precipitation on habitats and species.
- Investigate the vulnerability of public and private wells to sea level rise induced

groundwater rise and to drought. Initiate planning for the potential future need to expand the Town's drinking water infrastructure if private wells become unusable due to drought or salinity or other contamination.

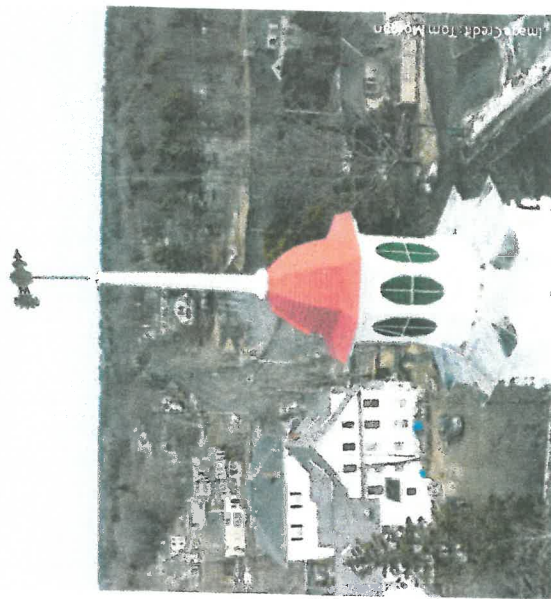
- Identify and monitor buried hazards that may be impacted by rising groundwater.
- Adhere to the Maine Climate Council's recommendation to locate new critical infrastructures, such as pump stations and other wastewater infrastructure, away from areas that are at-risk from sea level rise and flooding.
- Plan for the possibility that some town roads or segments of town roads may require elevation to avoid inundation due to sea level rise.
- Identify undeveloped land that is vulnerable to sea-level rise and make recommendations on acquisition to act as flooding buffer.

- Develop standards for new development in areas that are vulnerable to sea level rise (SLR) and ground water rise that is induced by sea level rise.
- Identify opportunities to lead, participate, and build from regional climate adaption efforts.

- Identify locations for electric vehicle charging stations, according to Maine Clean Community recommendations, that would benefit the community.
- Measure and monitor greenhouse gas emissions from municipal operations, and

community wide.

- Develop a town-wide climate action plan.
- Educate community members about steps they can take to reduce emissions and become more resilient.
- Continue to budget and plan for long-term energy efficiency equipment upgrades.
- Review the potential to install and operate renewable energy systems at municipal facilities.
- Review LUO for hinderances to renewable energy systems and recommend amendments.
- Ensure that the maintenance of aging sewer infrastructure is a priority.
- Integrate sustainability criteria into capital planning.





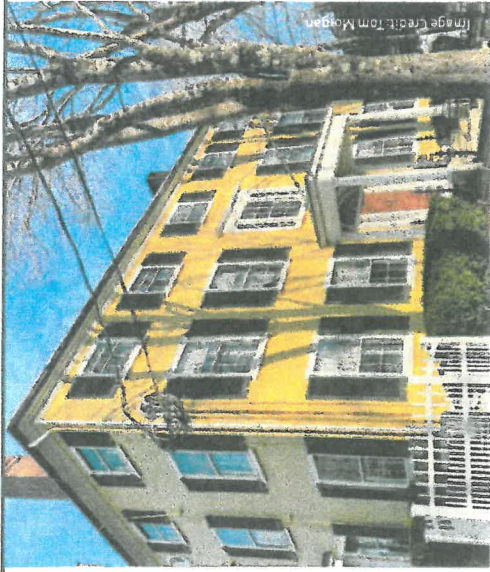


Image Credit: Tom Morgan

## Connected

- Prioritize carbon emissions reduction when purchasing new vehicles
- Develop a long-term vision for a network of bicycle routes to serve the community and link to routes and facilities in neighboring communities.
- Review complete street practices for relevant tools and ideas for Kennebunkport.
- Add criteria in subdivision regulations that promote shared driveways and require developers to show future connectivity to adjacent parcels including roads and trails.
- Encourage connecting streets, a pedestrian-friendly environment, and small-scale, neighborhood commercial services that are geared toward serving local residents.
- Consider a traffic study to identify opportunities to reduce congestion in Dock Square.

- Identify locations to enhance wildlife corridors to help create places for species to migrate and shift north as temperature increases.
- When possible, follow stream smart road crossing policy to reduce the impact of road crossings on fish and other aquatic species and habitat.
- Continue to update, prioritize, and fund the Town's plan for transportation improvements, maintenance, and repairs.
- Conduct a comprehensive transportation vulnerability assessment to identify vulnerable assets and loss of connectivity due to sea level rise.

## Collaborative

- Partner with regional entities and communities to enhance evacuation route planning and community education on evacuation routes.
- Adopt performance standards to protect vernal pools in the Biddeford/Kennebunkport Vernal Pool Complex.
- Collaborate with the City of Biddeford to ensure cross boundary protection of groundwater resources. Create an aquifer protection overlay district.
- Continue the partnership with Maine's Healthy Beaches Program and implement the recommendations in its "Summary Report of Enhanced Monitoring and Pollution Source Tracking Efforts in

- the Goose Rocks Beach Watershed, Kennebunkport" published in February 2021.
- Continue to participate in partnerships that support sustainability and resilience, multi-modal transportation, river management, aquifer protection, and other regional considerations.
- Collaborate with conservation partners to identify and make public a regional database of educational resources and information about critical habitat (including salt marshes), vulnerable species, and the impacts of development and human activity on natural resources.
- Collaborate with the Town of Kennebunk and the business communities in Dock Square and Kennebunk Lower Village to manage tourism to ensure the safety and enjoyment of residents and visitors.

