

Article X **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Warrant Article – Factsheet**

What is this warrant article?

This warrant article asks voters to authorize the Town of Bowdoinham to apply for a **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** grant to help complete a set of planned improvements at **Riverfront Park and Maily Waterfront Park**. A requirement of the grant application (due June 30) is to have voters approve the amount of funding available for the required 50% match. If the grant application was successful, this project would come before the Selectboard for a motion to accept or decline the grant and commit the matching funds at a future date. In other words, passing this warrant article just allows the Town to apply for the grant, a final decision to enter into an agreement with LWCF would be made by the Selectboard.

What is included in the Bowdoinham Waterfront & Recreation Improvements LWCF project?

- **Pavilion** 48-foot by 80-foot, three-season, open-air timber frame structure
- **Public restrooms** at the new park
- **Shared septic system** serving both park restrooms, reducing long-term operating costs
- **Natural play area** designed for creative, inclusive play
- **Temporary skating rink kit**, extends ice skating season & reduces maintenance
- **Technology infrastructure** (wi-fi, security cameras)
- **Parking and access improvements** at Maily Waterfront Park, improving safety and connectivity between the two parks

Together, these improvements create a more complete, usable, and enjoyable park system for all ages and abilities.

How the project is paid for

The match required comes from the Rideout Memorial Trust and the CMP Tax Increment Financing (TIF). For clarification the CMP TIF is not synonymous with the General Fund, it is a separate account which simply sets aside the property tax collected from CMP on their transmission line parcels. It acts as a tax shelter yielding the Town more school subsidies, reductions in our County tax due, and increases our revenue shares from the State. **No new property taxes would be levied for this project.**

Why This Matters

This project builds on years of careful planning, community input, and phased investment. By combining federal grant funding with existing TIF and private funds, Bowdoinham can complete key park amenities while protecting the tax base and enhancing public spaces that serve residents, families, and visitors year-round.

Background

In 2019 the Town approved a Master Plan designed by Richardson & Associates with Baker Design Consultants which called for a pavilion in the center of the new park. In 2024 the Town Meeting amended the CMP TIF investment program to include \$500,000 for the pavilion. In 2024 the Town transformed the conceptual drawings into engineered plans by Pine Tree Engineering.

One major element identified early in the planning process was the need for a permanent **pavilion**. Over the past two years, Town staff and volunteers have held stakeholder meetings with farmers market vendors, artisans, community groups, recreation staff, and residents to refine the pavilion's size, function, and design. This input emphasized versatility, accessibility, and affordability, leading to the current proposal.

How the Pavilion Will Be Used

The pavilion is intended to support a wide range of public and community uses, including:

- Farmers markets and craft fairs
- Community events, festivals, and performances
- Classes, workshops, and recreation programming
- Everyday park use, gatherings, and picnics
- Seasonal uses such as a winter skating rink located beneath the pavilion

Its flexible design allows it to serve many users without requiring permanent build-outs.

About the Use of TIF Funds and Taxes

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) allows the Town to reinvest a portion of new tax revenue generated by economic growth back into community projects such as infrastructure, parks, and public amenities. Using TIF funds helps strengthen the Town's long-term financial position by supporting projects that improve quality of life while protecting the General Fund. Importantly, improvements at Riverfront Park and Maily Waterfront Park — including construction, maintenance, and upkeep — have **not resulted in tax increases**, and Town taxes have remained flat for multiple years. This approach allows Bowdoinham to invest steadily in public spaces without shifting costs onto local taxpayers.

