

Readfield - Vision

Readfield's residents envision a future where:

- The conservation and sound management of natural resources is promoted.
- The ecological integrity and diversity of natural communities and wildlife habitats are protected and maintained within town and across town boundaries.
- The town's rural character and scenic qualities are sustained.
- The community's outdoor recreational opportunities (such as trails, active sports/ballfields, water recreation, traditional hunting & fishing, etc.) are maintained and expanded.
- Historic sites and cultural landscapes are protected and maintained.
- Partnerships with neighboring communities are cultivated to foster regional conservation and recreation needs and opportunities.
- Other special areas in town, identified by the community, are protected.

Holden – Vision

Holden's residents envision a future where.

- **Community character and prosperity**(Quality of Place) is sustained through the preservation of open space resources.
- There is a growing **trail system**, providing recreational opportunities and local and regional pedestrian and bicycle connections (e.g. Brewer, Bucksport, Orrington, Eddington, Dedham).
- Holden's landscape is maintained with meaningful **blocks of undeveloped land**, including forest, field and wetland.
- **Wildlife habitat** is maintained (quantity and/or quality).
- **Water quality** is maintained & improved.
- **Scenic views** that are important to Holden's **rural character** are maintained.
- **Working landscapes (farm & forest)** that contribute to Holden's character, economy and open space are sustained.
- There is **easily-accessed open space** near residents' homes and neighborhoods, and open space that **connects between residential areas** creates important local and regional networks.
- There is a growing base of **permanently conserved land**, via conservation easements and acquisition.
- An increased number of **public recreation areas or parks**, and a diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities, are provided.
- Better **guidance for new development** helps maintain important open space priorities while allowing appropriate growth.
- More **landowners are empowered to be land stewards**, informed of opportunities such as natural resource programs and tax benefits.
- Open **communication and collaboration** between all local interest groups and stakeholders fosters better maintenance and protection of open space resources.
- The citizenry knows **the value of open space** and advocates for its protection.

Gray – Vision

Our Vision

The Open Space Committee formalized a vision statement to capture the sentiment identified in the Comprehensive Plan:

The Town of Gray will develop a system of parks, trails, and open space that contribute to Gray retaining its rural and natural resources by protecting natural habitats, outdoor recreational areas and trails, scenic landscapes, historic places, agricultural land, and clean air and water. Our slogan is “Protect and Connect!”

At the heart of this vision is the preservation of open space to protect habitat for animals, particularly endangered species, as well as for the ongoing enjoyment of current and future residents. Without a conscious effort to preserve access, the open space many of us enjoy today will surely disappear. Gray’s land area is about 46 square miles, about the same size as the Town of Windham. However, our population per square mile (~191 people per square mile) is significantly below Windham’s (~337 pp/sq mile), highlighting the rural character of Gray.

Since the 2010 census, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Gray has grown about 6.5 percent and there has been significant new housing construction, leading to the loss of open space and trails. With careful planning, and by working cooperatively with landowners, we can slow the ongoing erosion of open space and protect some to be available for generations to come. We do not seek to stop the development of new housing and infrastructure, but to ensure our growth is managed in a way that is consistent with the stated goals of our Comprehensive Plan – to protect Gray’s rural character and our natural resources.

Bridgeton– Vision

Bridgeton is a vibrant, rural community with abundant open space resources that are protected and stewarded to sustain residents, visitors and ecological health.

The Goals of this Plan enable the Vision by Protecting, Connecting, and Activating the Open Space System of Bridgeton.

Bar Harbor – Vision

*They have visions for each category of Open Space:

A VISION FOR NATURAL HABITATS

Our vision 20 years from now: The future of Bar Harbor will be marked by impressive landscapes filled with a diverse array of plants and animals. Large tracts of contiguous forests will be the source for clean watersheds that extend from mountains to sea and shellfish flats will remain an uncontaminated source of food for waterfowl and people. Improved connectivity of waterways will allow for the unimpeded movement of diadromous fish, otters and other riparian wildlife to flourish. Reduced impact of roads and development near wetlands will allow for continued health of the exemplary communities that support many flora and fauna that rely on pristine ecosystems. Invasive species will be managed at levels low enough so as not to degrade our native natural communities.

By creating systems and planning that allows for smart development, we can still protect essential habitat needed by plants and animals, protect wetlands, vernal pools, and valuable groundwater- all of which don't adhere to political boundaries.

A VISION FOR WATER RESOURCES

Our vision 20 years from now: Bar Harbor is defined by water. It is located on an island surrounded by the ocean. The town is graced with numerous lakes, ponds, streams, wetlands and vernal pools that provide drinking water to town residents and are home to a variety of wild plants and animals that enrich our everyday lives. It is our good fortune that Bar Harbor's primary drinking water source, Eagle Lake, situated in Acadia National Park, is protected on all sides from impacts of development that could lead to water quality declines.

For those residents who are not connected to town water, groundwater is an essential source of drinking water. Groundwater is intricately connected to surface waters; where ponds, streams, wetlands, and vernal pools are protected, so is our valuable groundwater. Our water resources will provide countless opportunities for recreation that benefit our citizens and millions of annual visitors; the sight of water thrills us and water features are an integral part of memorable and prized scenic vistas.

Bar Harbor residents share a vision of pristine marine and freshwater resources, which have long been the hallmark of Bar Harbor and will continue to be exemplary water quality.

A VISION FOR SCENIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Our vision 20 years from now: Bar Harbor's scenic and cultural resources are appreciated and enjoyed by all. Our outstanding scenic views and small town atmosphere attract people to the area to live, work and play. The natural and cultural sounds and natural darkness of the area part of the special places we protect. We work in partnership with the national park and others to safeguard and maintain the value and character of soundscapes and star-filled skies. Smart development focuses on smaller, selected areas of the town which allows for open space and maintains scenic road corridors.

Well thought out protective measures preserve Bar Harbor's historic and picturesque character. Furthermore, they protect jobs and economic vitality that rely on heritage-based, ecology minded, and recreational tourism. Residents feel they can make a difference in the protection of these vital resources for future generations.

A VISION FOR RECREATING IN BAR HARBOR

Our vision 20 years from now: Bar Harbor is a recreational destination for residents and visitors alike. Town recreational areas address the needs of the residents including our children. There is improved public access to our more than 25 miles of coastline for boating, swimming and fishing. The town is renowned for pedestrian friendly roads and paths for biking, running and walking, and paths and lanes connect the many family-friendly recreation areas that are interspersed throughout town. Our villages (Salsbury Cove, Bar Harbor, Otter Creek, Hulls Cove and Town Hill) provide access to the diverse natural environments and public open space in our town.

Future generations have access to convenient outdoor recreation in pleasant surroundings. Conservation land in rural areas provides opportunities for traditional outdoor pursuits, while the quality of life in new and older neighborhoods is enhanced by street trees, nearby parks, quiet streets, and pedestrian and bicycle connections to other neighborhoods, parks, ball fields, schools, and nature preserves.

A VISION FOR WORKING LANDS

Working Farms

Our vision 20 years from now: The growing interest in food security and availability of healthy, locally grown food has led to a renaissance of farming in Bar Harbor and the region. Farms are specializing

and customizing to meet individual situations and markets. Local farms are creating jobs, providing local fare to residents and visitors, and helping retain a mosaic of landscape types that provide scenic open space and diverse habitats for native plants and animals. Protecting farmland in Bar Harbor has resulted in an increase in the number small-scale local farms that can supply specialty products to local niche markets, community supported agriculture, and "pick your own" operations.

Because local attitudes towards farming have changed, more land is actively farmed and more food staples for Bar Harbor residents are produced and processed locally. The sights, sounds and smells of farming are familiar around town. The farmers market is thriving, and local products are available at town grocery stores. Programs to help those lacking access to fresh, local foods are in place, and residents throughout town are more aware of the benefits of local food. Bar Harbor and MDI schools have incorporated farming and local food programs in to their curricula and food purchasing policies, and are even growing some of their own food. Town officials work in partnership with other organizations to protect important farmland from the pressures of development.

Working Forests

Bar Harbor's forests are healthy. Sustainable forest management is an option for landowners to help defray the cost of owning and managing undeveloped land and is a tool for maintaining the health and habitat values of our forest resource. Forestry operations are being conducted according to best management practices.

Bridgton – Open Space Definition

Open space is the constellation of natural, undeveloped, or lightly developed areas that intertwine with developed spaces to create an environment that keeps the community healthy and humming. These spaces support networks of resilient habitat, provide ecosystem services, and create recreational opportunities that support the lifestyles, livelihoods, and landscapes that make Bridgton unique.

Holden – Open Space Definition

For purposes of this Plan, open space is defined as **undeveloped land with special qualities worth conserving**. This can include:

- Forests
- Trail corridors
- Fields
- Ridge lines
- Wetlands & other valuable habitats
- Wildlife habitat
- Scenic vistas
- Parks, fields, playgrounds
- Farmland
- Riparian corridors/waterways
- Hunting & fishing areas

Gray – Open Space Definition

Open Space, Defined

The term “open space” can mean different things to different people. We have chosen to simply define open space as:

“Public and private lands that provide recreational, environmental, and social value to Gray.”

Open space would, for example, include the following types of areas:

- Publicly owned parks, playgrounds, and ballfields
- Land or water set aside for habitat protection
- Rivers, lakes and ponds, and the related public access thereto
- Agricultural land, working farmland, orchards and timberland
- Land not developed for residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional use
- Trails that connect areas of the town
- Land preserved for cultural and/or historic purposes

**Additional info/definitions that they included we might consider:*

The Future Land Use map below, taken from the 2020 Comprehensive Plan, provides an overview of where growth should be directed - or limited - in various parts of the town. This map will serve to guide future decisions with respect to the preservation of open space. Definitions from the Comprehensive Plan for the terms on the map are as follows: Goes on to include the following definitions from the Comp Plan: Growth areas, Rural Areas, Transition areas, etc.

Bar Harbor – Open Space Definition

The town of Bar Harbor defines open space as "Undeveloped or minimally developed land and water areas that have special value to the community, in one or more of the following categories:

- Natural Habitats
- Water Resources
- Scenic and Cultural Resources
- Recreational Resources
- Working Lands

Open space may be large or small, publicly or privately owned."

Readfield - Open Space Definition

Open space, sometimes called green space, is any undeveloped land, private or public. It is land free of residential or commercial development that can include forests, fields, wetlands and waterbodies. It can include farmland and working forests, which provide for important wildlife habitat as well as for people’s livelihoods.

Open space can be improved land such as a park or ballfield, or unimproved land such as a wildlife preserve or other natural area, or just an undeveloped parcel of land. In rural communities like Readfield, the bulk of the open space is privately-owned, unimproved, and unprotected.