

Part 2 – Policies and Implementation Strategies

Chapter 1 The Vision for Wells

The Comprehensive Plan’s Vision for Wells describes the overall features of what the citizens of Wells want their Town to be like. The Vision defines the overall character of the Town in terms of its natural, social and built environment.

THE VISION FOR WELLS

Wells is a terrific community with great people and a great environment. The vision for Wells is to preserve and promote Wells’ small-town historic traditional rural New England seacoast community character, appearance and values for a better quality of life.

If quality is conformance to a standard, then continually improving quality means continually setting and achieving higher standards for excellence in planning, design, development, service and operations. Citizens drive standards: their aspirations, expectations, their goals and policies.

Setting standards will enable Wells to:

- Retain and improving the quality of life.
- Promote economic opportunity.
- Promote health and safety.
- Promote educational opportunity.
- Promote environmental protection.

Vision Benefits

There are several benefits from this vision for Wells including:

1. **Retaining Small Town Character and A Better Quality of Life.**

The first benefit is retaining and promoting a better environment for business and living. Wells’ economic base is tourism. Its attraction for tourist and residents alike is its historic and traditional New England seacoast and rural environment, character and appearance. This character and appearance is derived from Wells’ architecture and rural environment. The architecture reflects the New England Colonial and Victorian styled wood homes, buildings, barns or barn-like buildings painted in colonial colors that give Wells its unique character herein referred to as Traditional New England Style or the Wells Maine Style. This architectural Style also influences the design of signs, graphics, street lighting, paving and the other “built” features in the Town.

Similarly, the Traditional New England Style reflects the Town's unique setting on the seacoast/marine estuary and in the upland rural forested area. Tourists and residents alike are attracted to this town character and appearance. Thus, the vision is to preserve and enhance the traditional New England style small town character and appearance for everyone's benefit.

2. Improved Central Area

A second benefit is improving the central area of Wells in the vicinity of the Route 1/Route 109 intersection. This area forms the historic commercial heart of the Town and it will be enhanced with pedestrian and other transportation improvements that will protect its character and advance its livability.

3. Protecting Rural Areas and Neighborhoods

A third benefit is preserving and enhancing the rural areas (i.e. with agricultural, forestry and residential uses) and residential neighborhoods (i.e., with low, medium and higher density residential uses) of Wells. Neighborhoods will also be linked to other neighborhoods and to the central area by pedestrian and bicycle ways to promote off-road movement, open spaces, and scenic local and collector streets.

4. Beach Areas with Neighborhoods and Village Centers

A fourth benefit is protecting and enhancing the seacoast and adjacent marine estuary areas and residential areas with neighborhoods and neighborhood village centers. The areas will feature less vehicular traffic, public access and open spaces to protect natural ecologically critical areas. The village centers could include limited convenience services and public facilities such as a fire station or park. The neighborhoods will also be linked to other neighborhoods and the central area by pedestrian and bicycle ways to promote off-road movement, open spaces, and scenic local and collector streets.

5. Open Space and Natural Ecologically Critical Areas

A fifth benefit is preserving and protecting land for recreation, tree growth and natural wildlife habitat, and, where appropriate, linking it by streams, pedestrian and bicycle paths and other ways.

6. Transportation Center (Maine Turnpike Exit 19 Area)

A sixth benefit is continuing to develop a mixed-use business area aimed at serving the customers of the new Wells Transportation Center with Amtrak "Downeaster" train service and Maine Turnpike (Interstate 95) Exit 19 access. As described more fully in Chapters 6, 7, & 8 of this plan, land use and development policies and regulations will be prepared in order to promote the development/redevelopment of this area to serve travelers (tourists, residents, and others) at this transportation gateway to the Wells community. The Town will work with the Turnpike Authority and developers to effectively utilize the Transportation Center access road and the traffic signal at Route 109. Traditional New England style architecture will be promoted.