

²₀²₅ Baldwin Comprehensive Plan

Prepared by: Town of Baldwin Comprehensive Planning Committee and
Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission



Acknowledgements

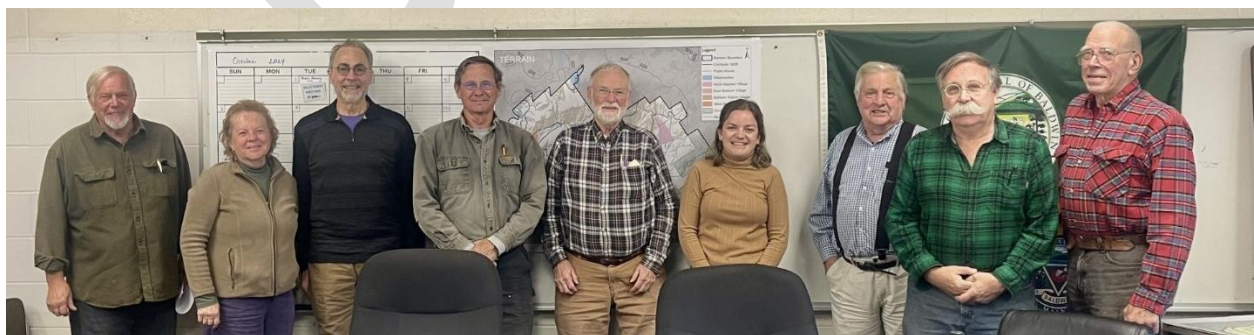
Baldwin organized a Comprehensive Plan Committee to lead the effort to create the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. This dedicated group of resident volunteers, pictured and listed below, worked on the Plan over a two-and-a-half-year period.

Pictured from left to right:

Paul Thomas, Kathy Pierce, Matt Fricker – Committee Chair, Bob Flint, Jo Pierce, Mikala Jordan – SMPDC, Don Sharp, Norman Blake, Wes Sunderland

Not pictured:

Allan Dolloff, Laurie Downey, Gordon Wentworth



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Note: Materials in the appendices are for reference only and not part of the working Comprehensive Plan.

Executive Summary

Above all, this updated Comprehensive Plan intends to preserve Baldwin's close-knit, small-town character and maintain private property rights. By providing data, analysis, and ideas for implementation, the Comprehensive Plan aims to be a useful *tool* for Baldwin residents, committees, boards, and staff in pursuing opportunities and making decisions for a prosperous future. Because Baldwin has been ably served by the Town Meeting form of government for over two centuries, all our Ordinances must first be accepted by a vote of the Townspeople at Town Meeting. Ultimately, it is the Townspeople's choice.

Existing Conditions

Baldwin sits just west of Sebago Lake, 30 miles northwest of Portland, and 13 miles east of the Maine-New Hampshire border. The general land use pattern of Baldwin reflects a typical Maine mixture of scattered rural villages at major road intersections, residential and commercial development along main travel routes (Routes 113 and 107/11), farmland, and undeveloped forestland.

About 1,500 people call Baldwin home today. They live in 719 units, 83 percent of which are single-family homes and 15 percent of which are mobile homes. While Baldwin has historically been significantly more affordable than Cumberland County as a whole, affordability has plummeted in the last five years, and housing affordability in the community reflects that of the County. The population is aging, with a median age of 50 years old, and about 57 percent of the population is employed.

Plan Background and Purpose

The previous Comprehensive Plan was written in 1991. Since the early 90s, Baldwin, Cumberland County, and the State of Maine have experienced significant changes. This update to the Comprehensive Plan is needed to reflect the changed conditions and provide an action plan relevant to the Baldwin of today.

To lead the update of the Comprehensive Plan, Baldwin created a Comprehensive Plan Committee, comprised of ten residents, including three Planning Board members and one Select Board member. The Comprehensive Plan Committee met approximately every month starting in August of 2022 through 2024, and meetings were open to the public. The Committee created and distributed a survey which garnered over 120 unique responses. They also hosted two public workshops, fall of 2023 and winter of 2025, to provide the community with opportunities to shape the Comprehensive Plan in greater detail.

Plan Outcomes

This Comprehensive Plan has several key outcomes. They are conveyed in 1) the Vision, which summarizes Baldwin's future desires (pages 7 and 65); 2) the Future Land Use Plan, which establishes the desired land uses in Baldwin and influences what zoning decisions

can be made (page 8 and 66 to 70); and 3) the Implementation Table, which outlines the strategies and tactics that the Town will use to implement its goals over the next five to ten years (pages 8 and 73 to 78).

The heart of the Comprehensive Plan are Vision and Goal statements. The Vision and Goals summarize what is most important to Baldwin and identify the community's hopes for Baldwin over the next ten to twenty years. Whenever the Select Board, Planning Board, and others implement this Plan, the work should reflect and promote the Vision and Goals.

Vision:

The people of Baldwin cherish their proximity to nature, sense of community, and self-sufficiency. As a close-knit community with pride in its historic and rural roots, Baldwin will balance small-town simplicity with the recognition of today's changing environment, especially emerging housing and service needs. Baldwin will retain its quiet, rural character by preserving large tracts of undeveloped land, supporting working woodlands and farmlands, continuing to allow areas for large residential lots, and promoting small, local businesses. Baldwin will foster a high quality of life for residents of all ages that will encourage future generations to continue to call Baldwin home.

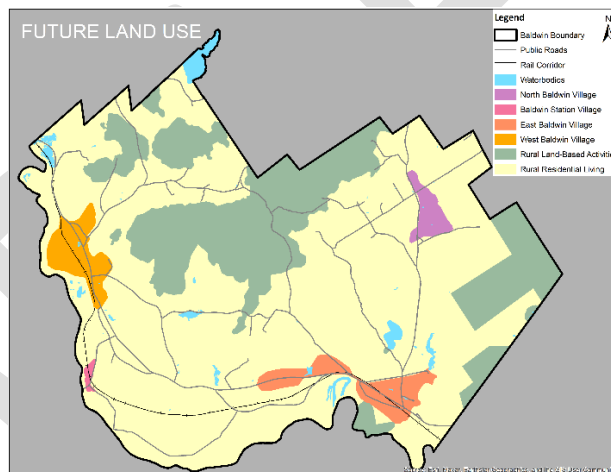
Goals:

1. Maintain the open, rural, and small-town character of Baldwin.
2. Make growth-related decisions based on infrastructure capacity, environmental conservation, and town finances.
3. Rights of property owners must be maintained. There should be a clear and compelling reason for the Town to limit property rights.
4. Promote a high quality of life for families and people of all ages, ethnicities, and incomes.
5. Keep Baldwin affordable and fiscally responsible.
6. Make Baldwin an environmental, natural-resource based business-friendly community.
7. Protect Baldwin's unique and important natural resources.
8. Conserve Baldwin's largely natural, undeveloped pattern of land uses. Increase access to and responsible use of open spaces.
9. Maintain a safe and effective roadway system for vehicles, bicyclists, and people walking.
10. Maintain Baldwin's historic development pattern.

11. Celebrate Baldwin's history as an agrarian and forest-based community.

Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan designates areas of the community that are most and least suited for future development in various forms, including residential, commercial, open space, or natural resource industries. This Future Land Use Plan strategically directs expected growth to areas where it will be best served by municipal facilities and services, minimizes areas that allow sprawl, and maximizes areas to preserve Baldwin's beautiful landscape and natural resources. It accomplishes this by identifying and defining three land use designations: Rural Residential Living, Rural Land-based Activities, and Villages. Compared to current zoning, the Future Land Use Map expands the East Baldwin Village area to include the Town offices, and it expands the West Baldwin Village westward. It includes the Highland District, Resource Protection Zone, and already conserved lands within the Rural Land-based Activities designation. The Future Land Use Map is shown below and full-size on page 70. Pages 67 and 68 explain the difference and interaction between the Future Land Use Map and the Zoning Ordinance.



Implementation Tables:

The Implementation Tables include 51 tactics, or specific actions, that the Town has identified as tangible ways to achieve the Vision and Goals. The list of 51 tactics can be found on pages 73 to 78. Among the 51 tactics are five priority tactics identified by the Comprehensive Plan Committee. These are:

- Explore hiring a grant writer.
- Use a public planning process to create an access management plan for public open spaces and recreation areas.
- Designate a town ambassador to businesses and/or a community and economic development director to target small businesses, especially nature and recreation-based ones.

- Review and improve zoning ordinances, including revising zoning standards to better support farming and forestry as well as conservation activities.
- Explore options for a bus service by partnering with neighboring municipalities.

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Population and Demographics

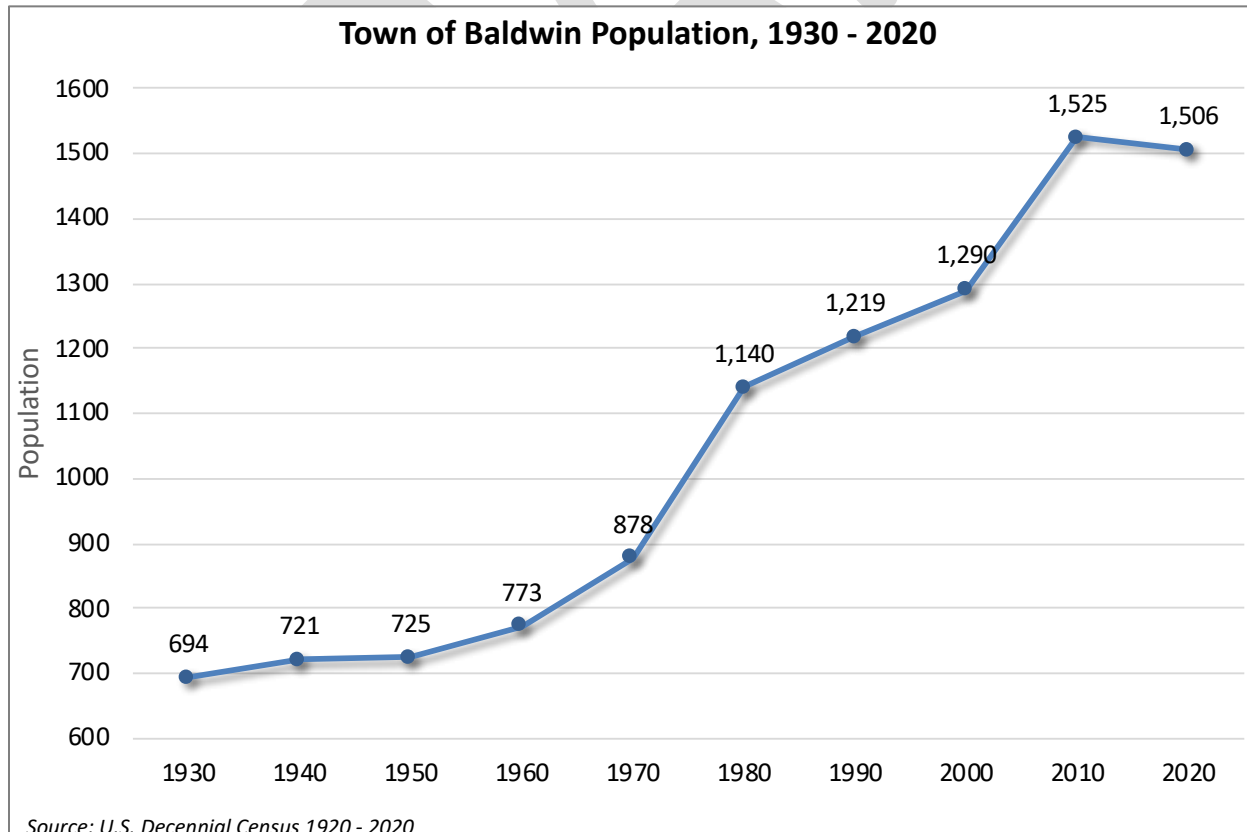
Purpose and Introduction

An understanding of the growth and change occurring within a population is essential to developing a realistic direction for the future. This chapter provides a summary of the demographic characteristics of Baldwin and the implications of these factors for the future of the Town.

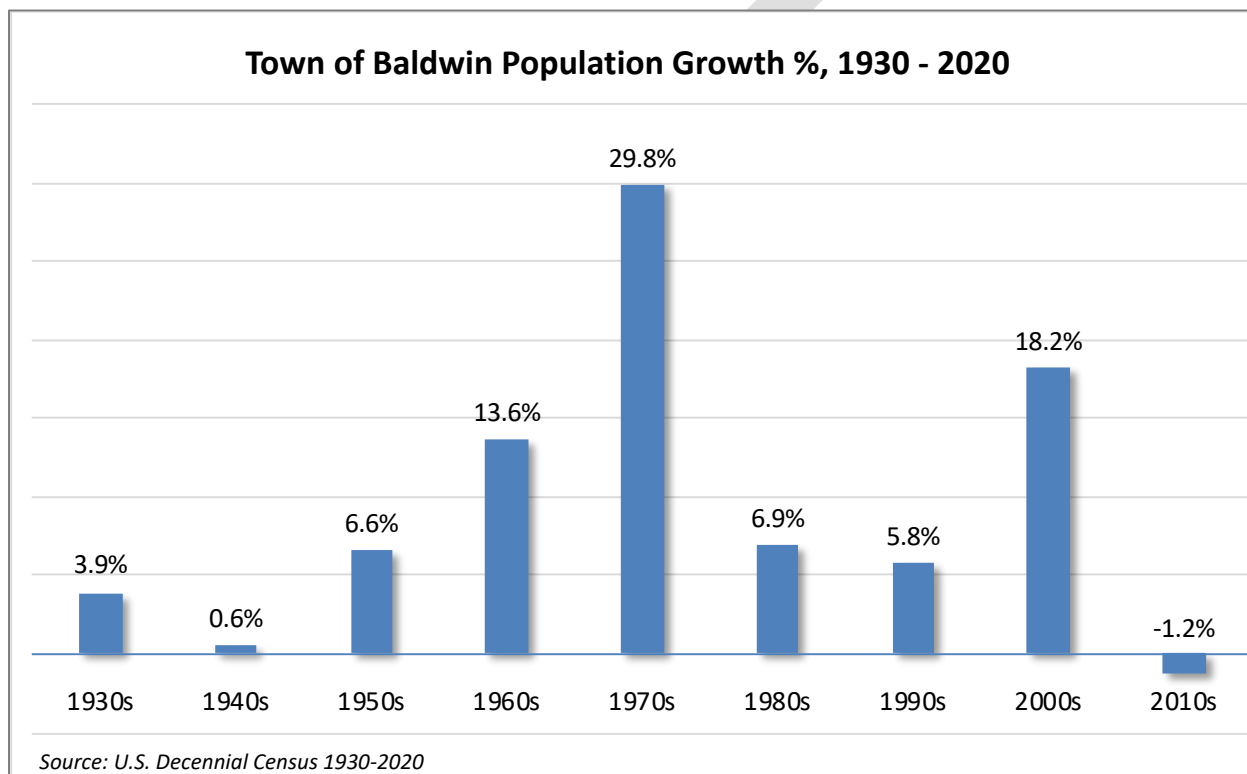
Population Trends

The Town of Baldwin experienced continuous growth from 1930 to 2020. During the early decades of the 20th century, Baldwin experienced a loss of year-round population due to a decline in farming and a national trend of migration towards manufacturing centers. The population grew modestly during the 1940's and 50's but accelerated in the 60's and 70's as the ease of commuting improved and the "back to the land" agricultural movement took hold. By 1980, Baldwin's population was 1,140. Since 1980, the population grew until the 2010's, when there was a slight decrease (about 1.2%) in the population.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the population of Baldwin has now reached 1,506 residents.

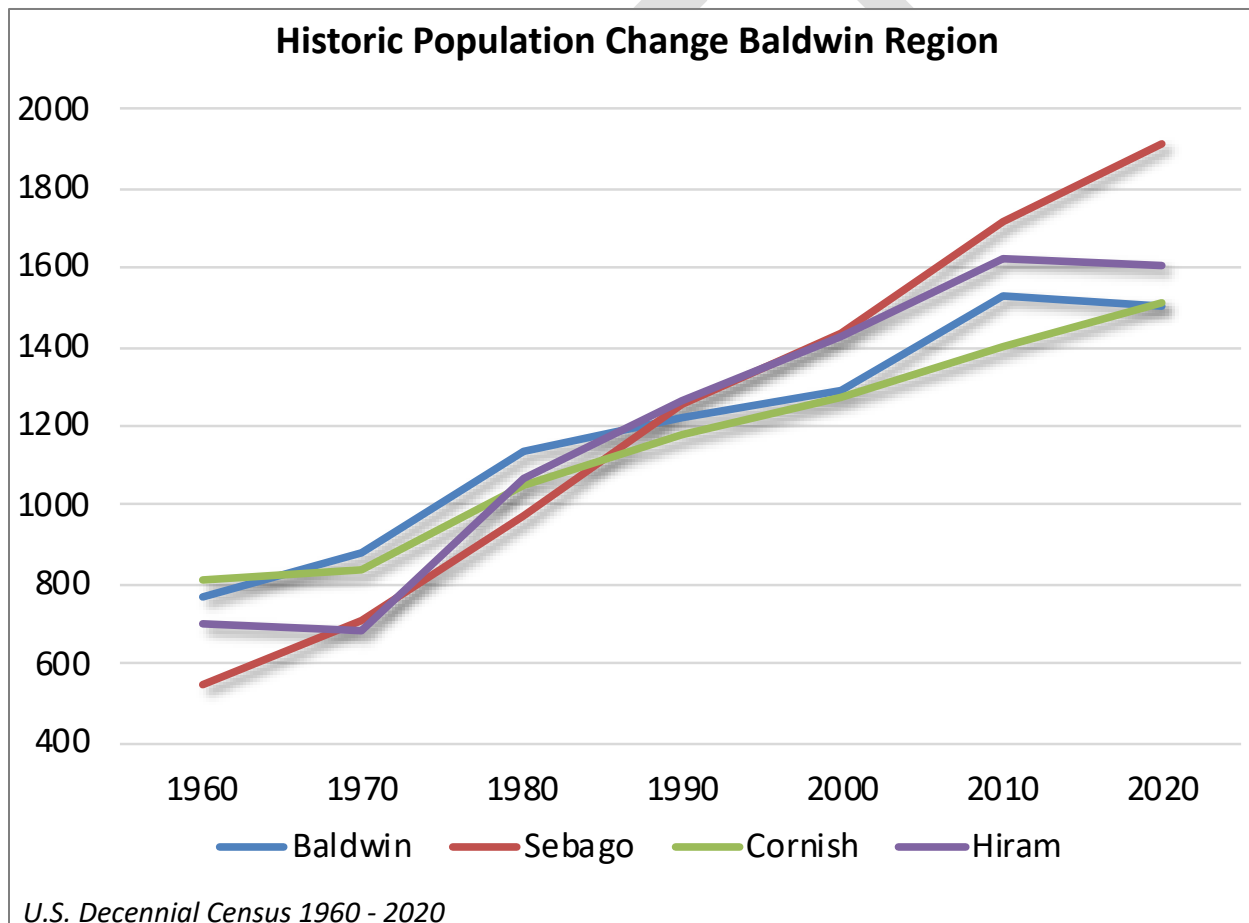


According to the Maine Division of Public Health Systems between 2011 and 2020 approximately 152 children were born in Baldwin while 155 residents died. The natural population change only decreased by 3 residents over 10 years. Therefore, almost all the Town's population growth is the result of net in-migration to Baldwin. Projection of future population growth in Baldwin, as in any community, is at best an educated guess about the future. However, according to the Maine State Economist's 2018 analysis, Baldwin's population is projected to increase by 7.3% (up to 1,614) from 2020-2028. After 2028, the population change is projected to plateau with a projected change of only -0.7% from 2028-2038, resulting in an estimate of 1,604 residents by 2038.



Baldwin's population has increased at a similar pace to similarly sized neighboring towns, such as Cornish and Hiram. All the communities in the Baldwin area grew much faster than the state and county overall from 1970-1980 and 2000-2010.

Ten-Year Growth Rate Comparisons, 1960-2020						
Year	Baldwin	Sebago	Cornish	Hiram	Cumberland County	Maine
1960s	14%	30%	3%	-2%	5%	3%
1970s	30%	38%	25%	56%	12%	13%
1980s	7%	29%	13%	18%	13%	9%
1990s	6%	14%	8%	13%	9%	4%
2000s	18%	20%	11%	14%	6%	4%
2010s	-1%	11%	7%	-1%	8%	3%
Average	12%	24%	11%	16%	9%	6%
Source: Decennial Census 1960 - 2020						



Demographic Trends

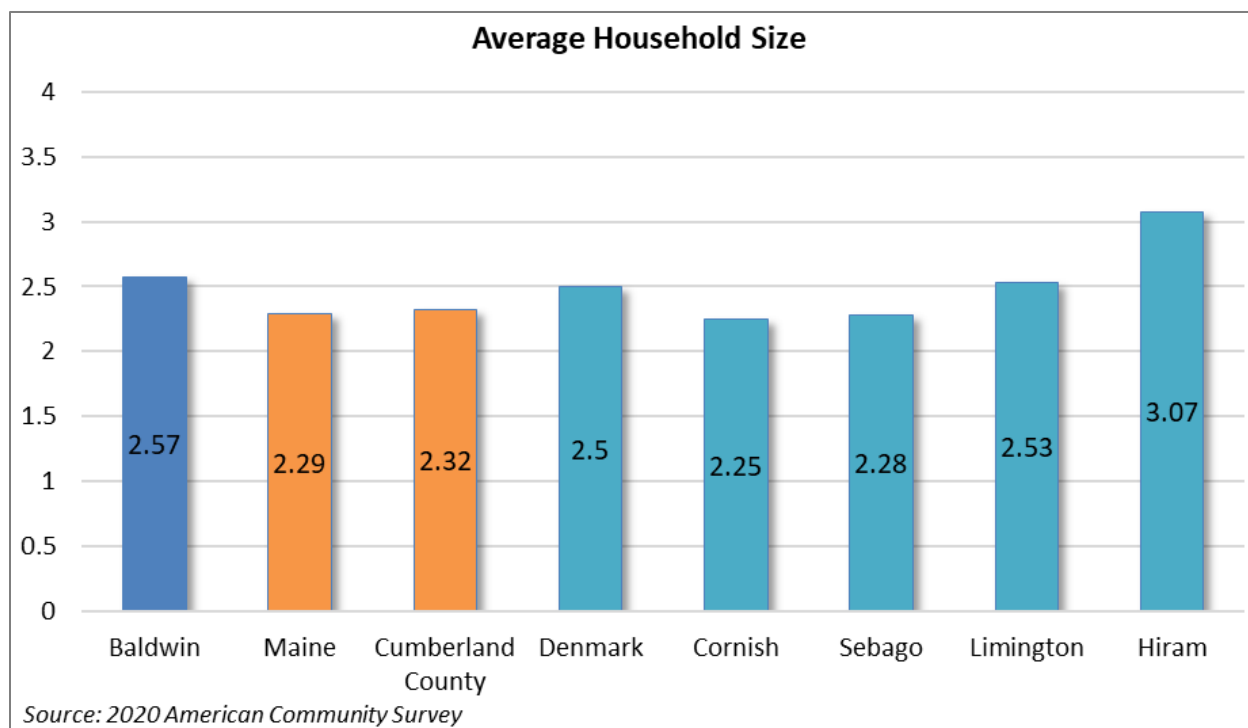
A Word on Demographic Information

Beginning in the 1700's and through to present day, the U.S. Decennial Census has been collected at the national level every 10 years. Even though that data is only available in 10-year increments, it is generally considered accurate because of the large sample size.

Starting in 2005, the Census Bureau began an annual collection of a smaller sample of the national population called the American Community Survey (ACS). Datasets from this survey are combined into 1-, 3- or 5-year compilations to get a large enough sample of the population to publish data. For small communities, only the 5-year compilations are considered accurate enough to use. For Baldwin, most data points have a margin of error of less than 5%. In many cases the ACS is the only source of data for specific topics or demographics, and the data is estimated and available annually, as opposed to every 10 years. For planning purposes, the drawbacks of that margin of error are almost always outweighed by the ability to get data for any particular year and dataset.

Household Size

Average household size has decreased over time statewide, from an average of 2.9 in 2000 to an estimated 2.29 in 2020. This reflects various trends in smaller family size, and more people living alone. Baldwin has a slightly higher average household size compared to most of the surrounding communities in addition to the county and the state. Baldwin has also experienced a decline in average housing size, but at a much slower rate than the state as a whole. The average household size in Baldwin has decreased from 2.62 in 2000 to 2.57 in 2020.



Household Composition

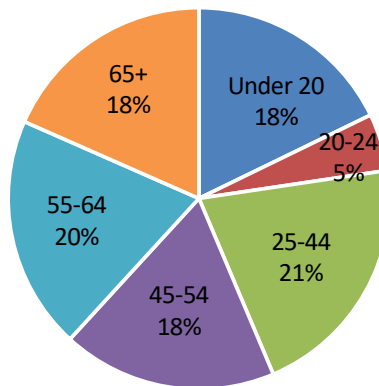
According to the ACS, in 2020, single person households represented 24.4% of occupied housing units in Baldwin while 39.6% of households had two members. Consequently, 64% of households in Baldwin have only one or two members, and only 36% of households in Baldwin have 3 or more members. Additionally, 67.8% of households in Baldwin are family households, and 87.2% of those family households are composed of married couple families.

Age

In the period between 2000 and 2020, all communities across the state have experienced aging populations. This is due to a multitude of factors, including decreasing birth rates, more non-traditional household types, and the larger Baby-Boomer generation reaching retirement age. This trend is especially relevant to Baldwin, which has an older population than surrounding communities, and the state overall.

According to the 2020 American Community Survey, the median age in Baldwin is estimated to be 50 years, compared to 42.1 for Cumberland County and 44.8 for all of Maine. The community has been steadily aging for the past several decades, with a median age of 42.4 in 2010 and 39 in 2000 according to the U.S. Decennial Census. The ACS estimates the largest age cohort in Baldwin in 2020 to be the 60-64 age bracket, whereas it is 55-59 for Cumberland County and the state overall.

Baldwin Age Groups, 2020



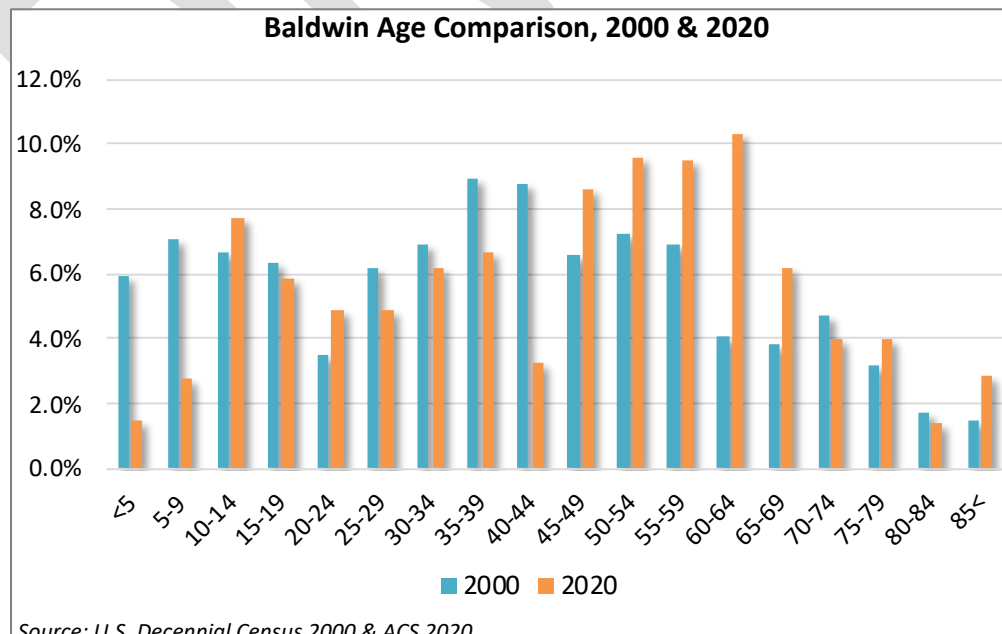
Source: 2020 American Community Survey

Age Distribution Comparison								
Age	Baldwin	Maine	Cumberland County	Denmark	Hiram	Cornish	Limington	Sebago
0 to 19	16.4%	21.1%	21.1%	20.3%	24.6%	17.5%	17.9%	18.7%
20 to 34	14.6%	17.6%	19.8%	13.9%	21.2%	9.6%	13.0%	21.3%
35 to 54	30.5%	24.9%	26.0%	21.9%	20.2%	33.7%	27.2%	27.9%
55 to 64	18.6%	15.7%	14.6%	23.8%	17.8%	18.4%	16.5%	11.5%
65 to 84	17.7%	18.1%	16.1%	16.1%	14.1%	18.9%	22.3%	20.1%
85 +	2.2%	2.6%	2.4%	4.0%	2.1%	1.9%	3.1%	0.6%
Median Age	50	44.8	42.1	51.6	38.2	45.3	48.8	41.2

Source: 2020 American Community Survey

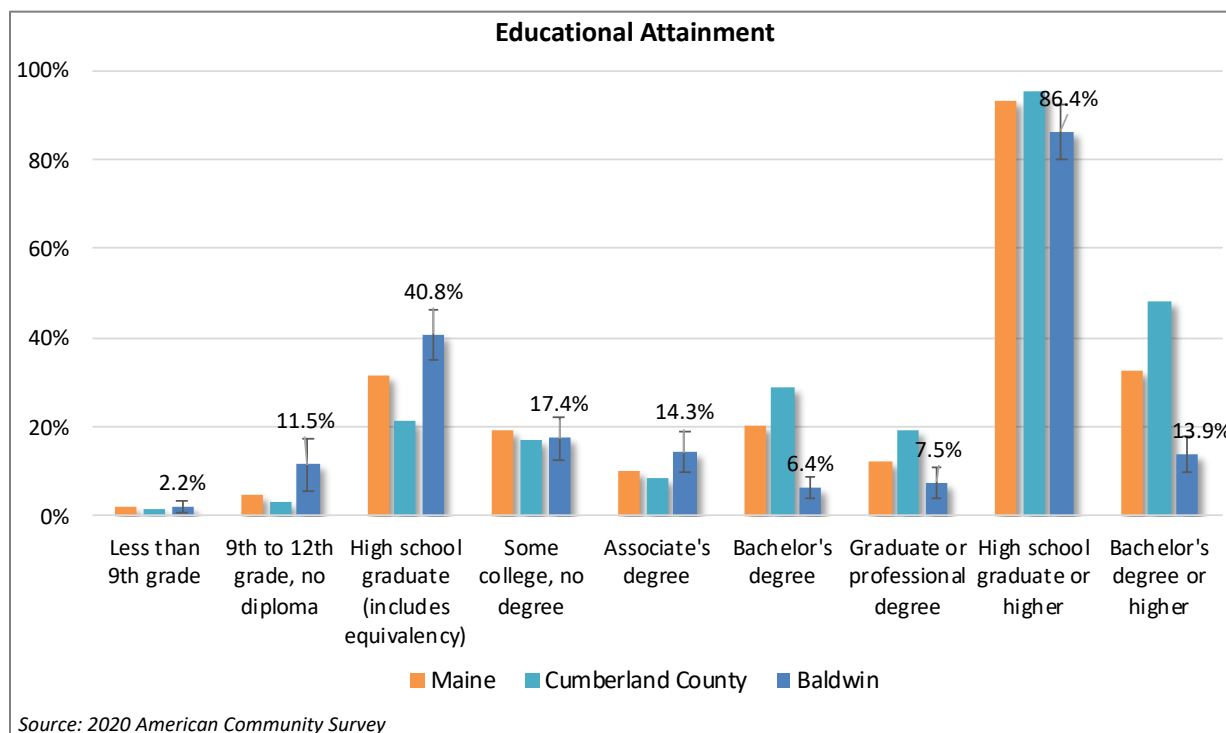
Note: The margin of error for age distribution in the ACS is often high for small towns like those described above.

Baldwin's population is continuing to grow older, so the town should plan for the needs of the 60+ cohort. Comparing the 2000 and 2020 ACS estimates shows a trend of increases in the oldest ages and decreases in the youngest brackets. Baldwin's aging population also indicates a decrease in the working age population.



Educational Attainment

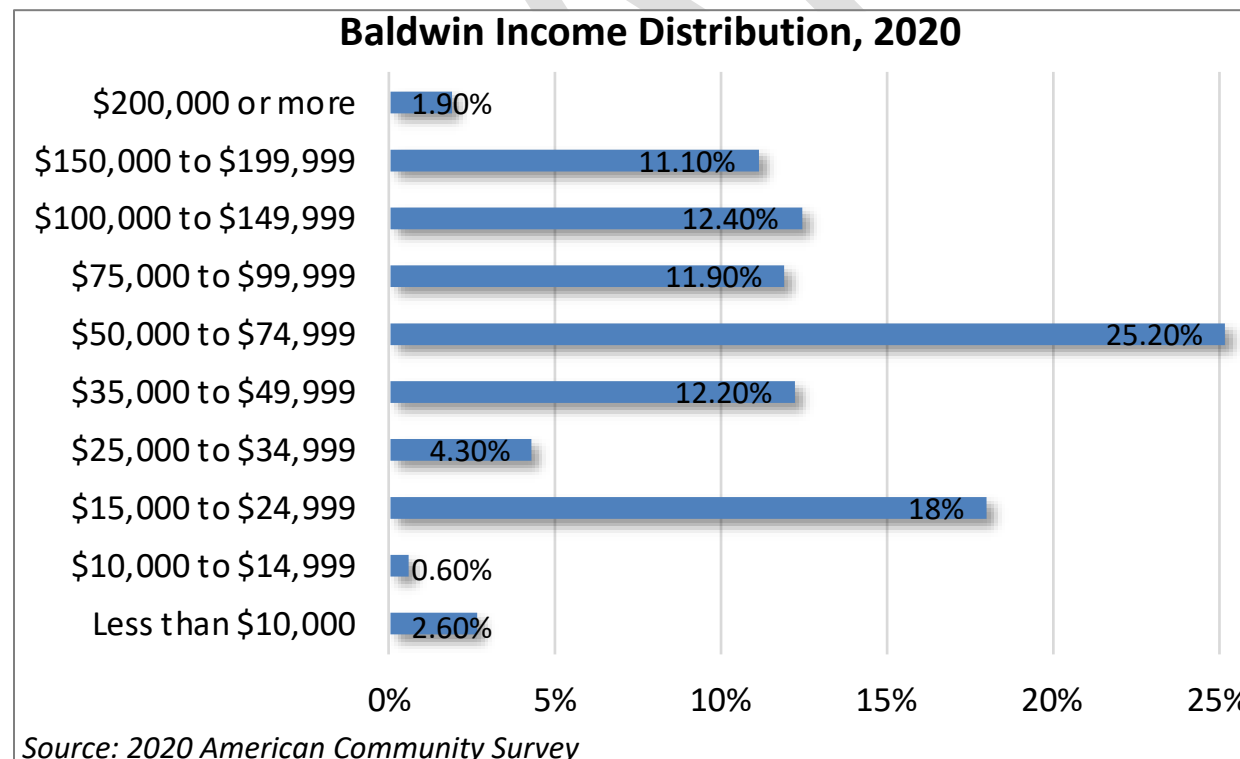
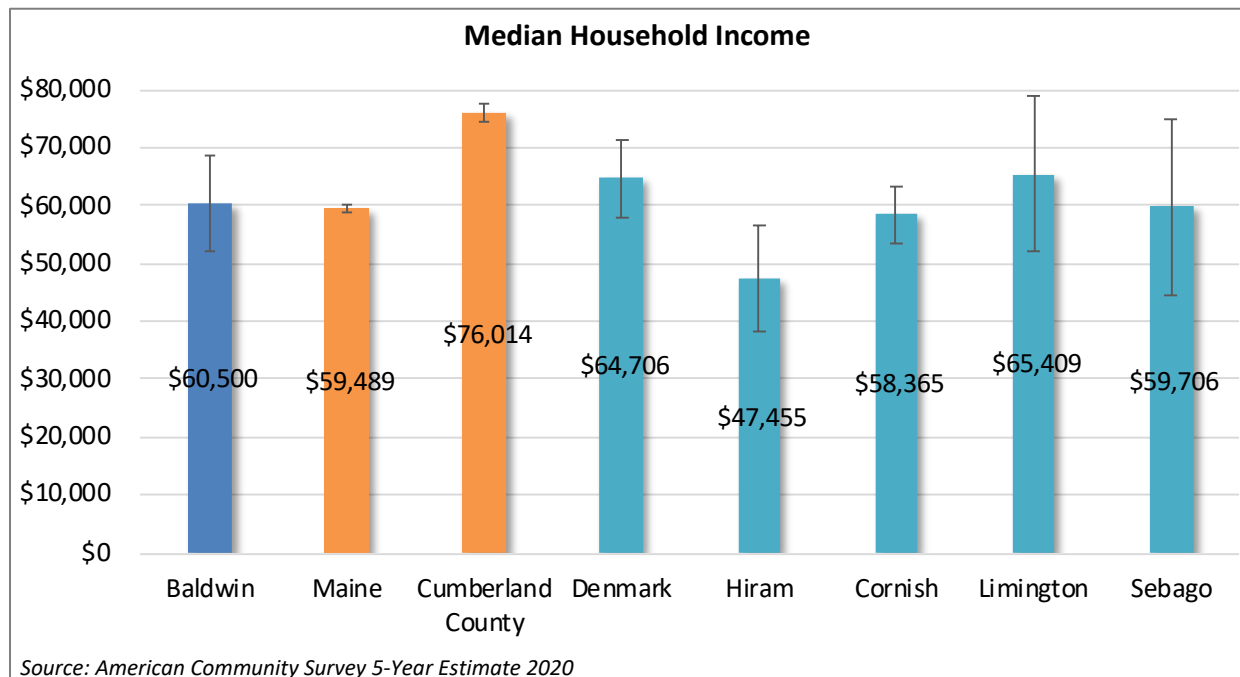
Compared to the state and county overall, Baldwin has a lower proportion of individuals who have received a bachelor's degree or Graduate degree. About 14% of Baldwin's population has received a bachelor's degree or higher. However, Baldwin has a higher proportion of individuals who have received associate degrees than in the county and the state as a whole. Baldwin also has a much higher proportion of individuals who attended high school but did not graduate than is average for the county and state.



Income

Median income represents the middle income of an area, where roughly half of the population earns more, and half the population earns less. According to the 2020 ACS, Baldwin's median household income is \$60,500. This value is similar to the state median but lower than the median for Cumberland County of \$76,014. However, the median is similar to that of neighboring towns Denmark, Cornish, Limington, and Sebago. In 2000, the U.S. Census reported a median household income in Baldwin of \$36,500 which is approximately \$54,858 in 2020 inflation adjusted dollars. This indicates general financial wellbeing has remained fairly stable in Baldwin. According to the 2020 ACS, 6.3% of families in Baldwin live below the poverty level compared to 4.3% in Cumberland County.

and 6.7% in the state of Maine, indicating that the poverty level is on par with state trends but is high for Cumberland County.



INVENTORY CHAPTER 2

Economy

Purpose and Introduction

An understanding of the local and regional economy assists in assessing a town's current and future needs. Changes in industry and demographics may have drastic impacts on a town's local economy.

Employment Trends

Employment and Unemployment

The civilian labor force consists of people over the age of 16 who are either employed or unemployed and actively seeking work. The size of the labor force can fluctuate which may have a slight impact on unemployment rates. According to 2020 American Community Survey, approximately 57.9% of Baldwin's eligible population was part of the labor force, which is lower than the county (69%) and the state overall (63%). Individuals are classified as unemployed if they do not have a job, have actively looked for work in the past 4 weeks, and are currently available to work. Baldwin's unemployment rate (0.6%) is lower than the average rates for Cumberland County and the State of Maine.

Employment Trends, 2020			
	Baldwin	Cumberland County	Maine
In Labor Force	57.9%	69.0%	63.0%
Employed	57.3%	66.6%	60.3%
Unemployed	0.6%	2.2%	2.5%
Source: 2020 American Community Survey			

Employment by Sector

The table on the next page displays employment by industry for Baldwin and Cumberland County, as reported by the 2020 American Community Survey. The industry sector refers to the type of industry the employer operates, not the actual jobs performed by employees. This table refers to all Baldwin residents who are employed, whether they work in Baldwin or commute elsewhere.

The largest percentage of Baldwin's labor force, 18.2%, is employed in Education, Health, and Social Services. This is also the largest industry in Cumberland County. The next largest employment sector is Retail Trade at 15.6%.

Employment by Industry Sector, 2020		
Category	Baldwin	Cumberland County
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	6.9%	1.0%
Construction	10.0%	5.7%
Manufacturing	8.4%	7.3%
Wholesale trade	3.9%	2.2%
Retail trade	15.5%	11.6%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities:	8.7%	3.4%
Information	0.0%	2.3%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing:	4.3%	9.7%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	11.0%	12.6%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance:	18.2%	28.0%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services:	5.5%	9.3%
Other services, except public administration	1.9%	4.2%
Public administration	5.6%	2.7%
<i>Source: 2020 American Community Survey</i>		

According to the American Community Survey, as of 2020, about 78.9% of Baldwin's working population was employed by the private sector, which is slightly less than Cumberland County where 82.1% was employed by the private sector. In addition, the proportion of Baldwin residents working for non-profit businesses (7.67%) is lower than the county (14.85%). In general, the classes of workers in Baldwin are consistent with county trends.

Class of Worker, Employed Persons 16 and over		
	Baldwin	Cumberland County
Private for-profit Wage & Salary	71.20%	67.21%
Private not-for-profit Wage & Salary	7.67%	14.85%
Fed/State/Local Govt.	13.75%	10.41%
Self Employed	7.38%	7.52%
<i>Source: 2020 American Community Survey</i>		

Baldwin's labor force has a significantly higher percentage of material moving, transportation, construction, farming/fishing/forestry occupations than both Maine and Cumberland County. Baldwin also has a much smaller proportion of individuals working in science/engineering, community service, arts/entertainment, and service than Maine and Cumberland County. This is most likely due to its location further from these types of jobs than others.

Occupations, 2020			
	Baldwin	Cumberland County	Maine
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	691	164,003	675,784
Management, business, and financial occupations	15.5%	19.0%	15.1%
Computer, engineering, and science occupations	2.7%	6.9%	4.9%
Community and social service occupations	0.4%	2.4%	2.3%
Legal occupations	0.9%	1.5%	0.9%
Educational instruction, and library occupations	5.2%	7.3%	7.0%
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations	0.4%	2.7%	1.9%
Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations	6.1%	7.9%	6.8%
Service occupations	9.4%	15.8%	17.4%
Sales and office occupations	16.8%	20.9%	21.0%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	4.1%	0.6%	1.5%
Construction and extraction occupations	9.3%	3.9%	5.9%
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	2.5%	2.2%	3.3%
Production occupations	4.3%	3.8%	5.3%
Transportation occupations	9.3%	2.7%	3.6%
Material moving occupations	13.2%	2.4%	3.1%
<i>Source: 2020 American Community Survey</i>			

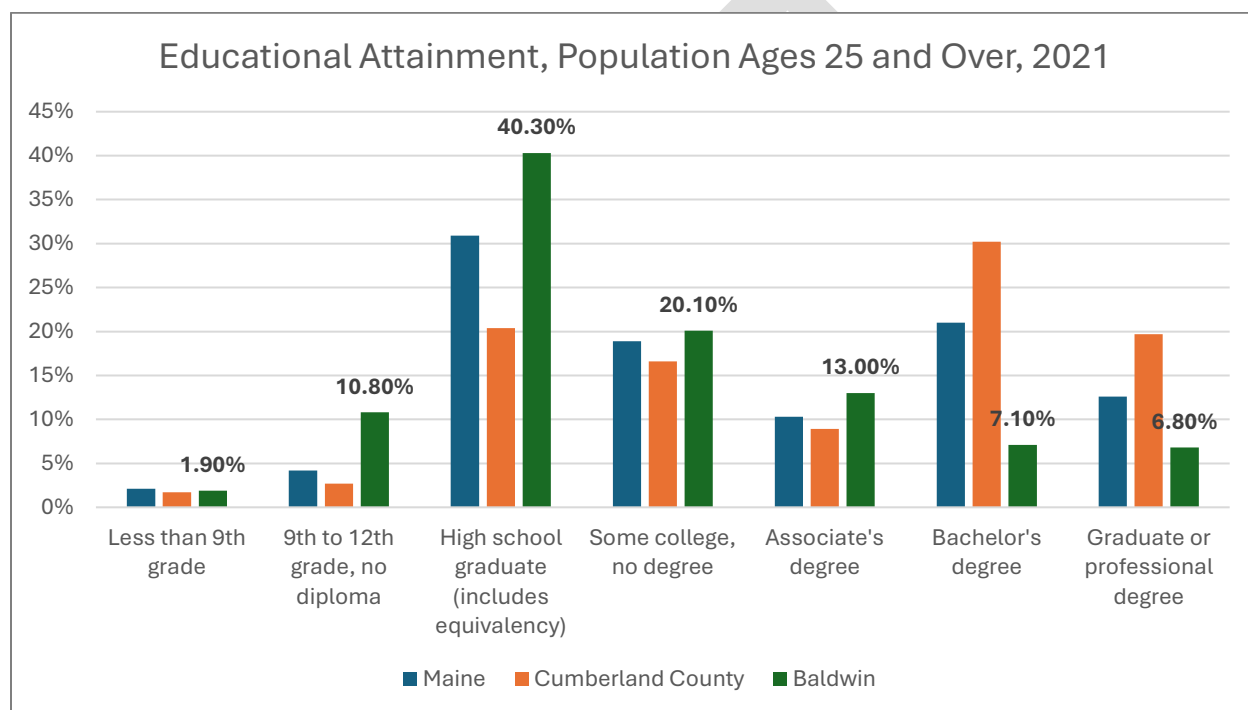
Employers

The majority of Baldwin residents in the labor force do not work in Baldwin. According to the 2020 American Community Survey, 86.9% of Baldwin workers commuted more than 15 minutes to work, with an average commuting time of 36 minutes. This is largely due to the lack of businesses in Baldwin. According to the Maine Department of Labor, in 2021 there were only 34 establishments in Baldwin which, all together, only employed about 185 people. The table below displays the Maine Department of Labor (MDOL) data on establishments in Baldwin. Not all industries are included because the MDOL cannot include data on industries with very few establishments. The average weekly wage for all Baldwin industries was \$902 in 2021.

Baldwin Establishments, 2021				
	Establishments	Average Employment	Total Wages	Average Weekly Wage
Total, All Industries	34	185	\$8,658,383	\$902
Construction	4	17	\$743,625	\$854
Retail Trade	4	31	\$972,754	\$595
Professional and Technical Services	4	8	\$847,209	\$2,148
<i>Source: Maine DOL Center for Workplace Research and Information</i>				

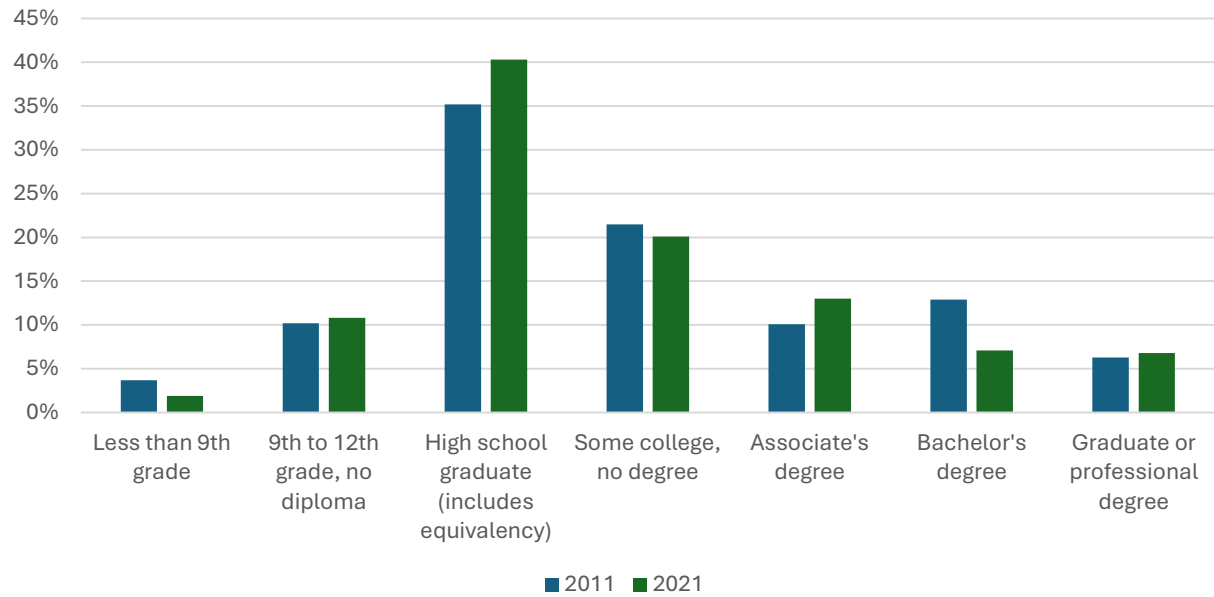
Education

When compared to Cumberland County and the state, Baldwin has the highest percentage of residents who are high school graduates (47.2%) (ACS 5-Year Estimates 2021). However, rates of residents who went on to complete postsecondary degree programs are lower than the state and the county, on average. As previously discussed, Baldwin has lower rates of residents with occupations including science and engineering, education, and business and finance than the rest of Cumberland County. These types of occupations are often held by those with higher degrees of education. While much of the reasoning behind the lesser presence of these occupations may be due to Baldwin's location further from economic centers, these differences are clearly indicated in education levels as well.



When analyzing trends of educational attainment over a 10-year period, there are three clear changes from 2011 to 2021 (ACS 5-Year Estimates 2011 and 2021). First, the rate of Baldwin residents (age 25 and older) who have not completed 9th grade decreased from 3.7% in 2011 to 1.9% in 2021. This trend is reflected in the increase in the number of residents who completed high school as their highest level of education, from 35.2% in 2011 to 40.3% in 2021. However, the rate of completed bachelor's degrees in Baldwin also decreased by a similar rate as the high school graduation rates increased, which was just over 5%. In 2011, 12.9% of Baldwin residents held a bachelor's degree, but the number dropped to 7.1% in 2021. The rate of high school graduates in Baldwin increased, the town saw decreases in not only residents who did not complete 9th grade, but also those who received bachelor's degrees.

Baldwin Educational Attainment, Population Ages 25 and Over 2011-2021



INVENTORY CHAPTER 3

Housing

Purpose and Introduction

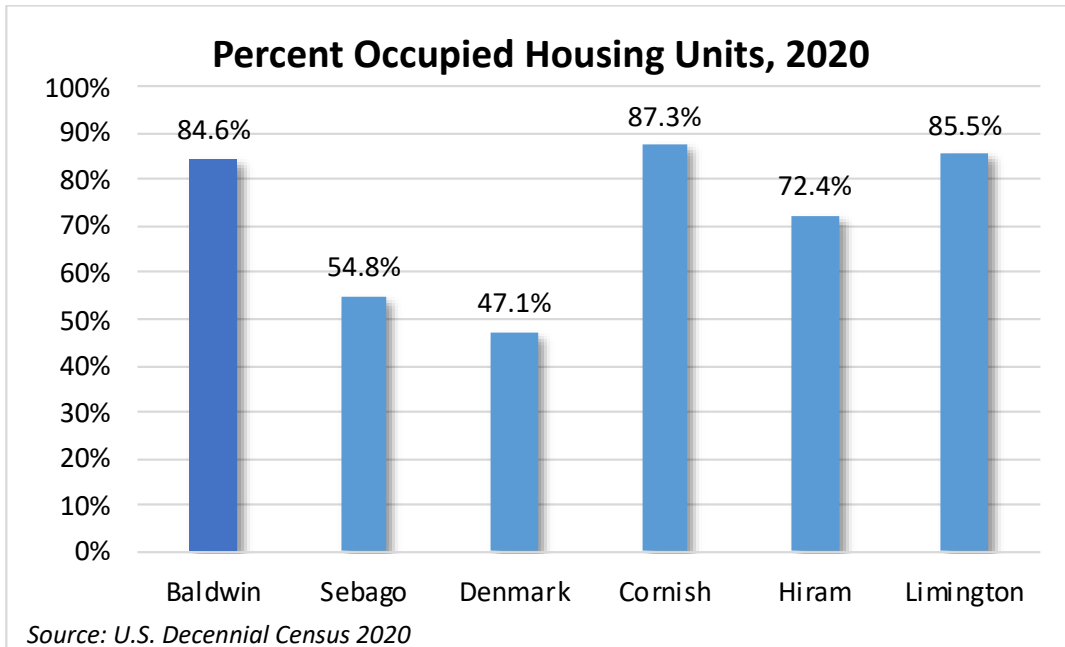
Baldwin has historically been described as a small, tightly knit rural Maine town with its economy dominated by agriculture and lumber. As these industries began to decline in the late 1800s, the town's population saw similar trends. Baldwin did not begin to see significant residential growth again until about the 1970s.

General development in Baldwin is clustered into three areas known as North Baldwin, West Baldwin, and East Baldwin. Residential development roughly follows these same parameters, but it remains scattered throughout town. 46% of survey respondents currently reside in West Baldwin, 34% reside in East Baldwin, and 14% reside in North Baldwin. Remaining respondents are non-resident taxpayers. Additional survey questions indicate that 72% of respondents prefer new residential growth to be scattered around town, with 23% preferring growth to fall within the parameters of the three villages of North, West and East Baldwin.

Housing Trends

Housing Units and Age

An analysis of a town's occupied housing units provides insight to the health of the housing stock. Vacant housing units are generally considered seasonal or second homes which are not occupied year-round. The chart below shows that Baldwin has a high percent (84.6%) of occupied housing units, indicating that Baldwin has a low quantity of seasonal homes and most of Baldwin's housing stock consists of permanent residences. This is mirrored in the community survey, where 87% of respondents reported that they are year-round residents. This number is on par with nearby towns of Cornish, Hiram, and Limington but higher than Sebago and Denmark which both have a high proportion of seasonal residences, likely due to their proximity to lakes and other bodies of water used for seasonal recreation.

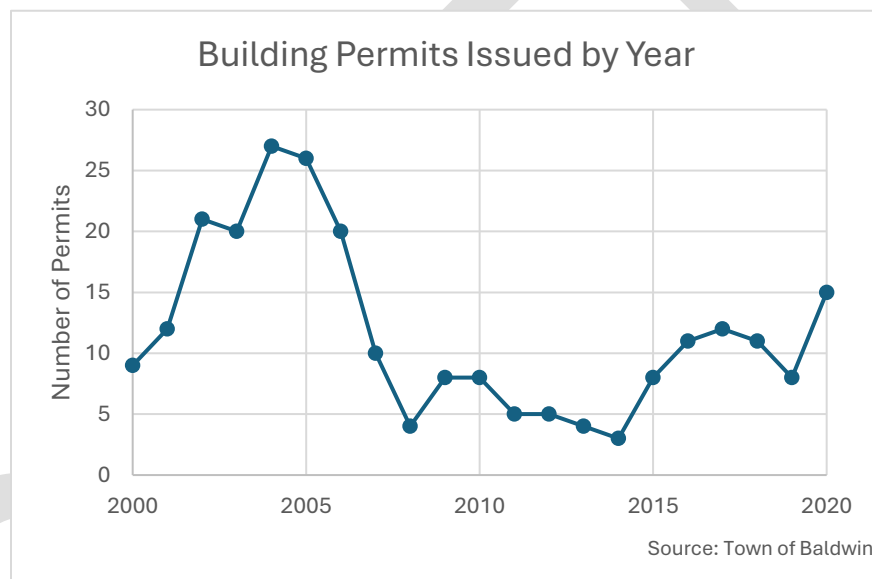


Housing Unit Comparison, 2010 - 2020					
	Total Housing Units	Occupied	% Occupied	Vacant	% Vacant
2010					
Baldwin	700	588	84.0%	112	16.0%
Sebago	1,464	724	49.5%	740	50.5%
Denmark	1,075	479	44.6%	596	55.4%
Hiram	905	652	72.0%	253	28.0%
Cornish	692	609	88.0%	83	12.0%
Limington	1,615	1,392	86.2%	223	13.8%
2020					
Baldwin	719	608	84.60%	111	15.40%
Sebago	1,538	843	54.80%	695	45.20%
Denmark	1,125	530	47.10%	595	52.90%
Hiram	906	656	72.40%	250	27.60%
Cornish	717	626	87.30%	91	12.70%
Limington	1,724	1,474	85.50%	250	14.50%
2010-2020 CHANGE					
Baldwin	19	20	0.60%	-1	-0.60%
Sebago	74	119	5.30%	-45	-5.30%
Denmark	50	51	2.50%	-1	-2.50%
Hiram	1	4	0.40%	-3	-0.40%
Cornish	25	17	-0.70%	8	0.70%
Limington	109	82	-0.70%	27	0.70%

Source: U.S. Decennial Census 2010 & 2020

The chart above displays changes in housing units, occupancy, and vacancies in Baldwin from 2010 to 2020. According to the Decennial Census, the total number of housing units in Baldwin increased by 19 from 2010 to 2020 while the total number of occupied units increased by 20, or 0.6%. Surrounding communities have experienced greater change, ranging from 25 – 109 new housing units. However, the Census data drastically differs from Town building permit reports.

Town Building Permit data shows a significant increase in new homes in Baldwin during the early 2000s, particularly between 2002 and 2006. From 2000 to 2010, 165 building permits were issued for new homes, 114 of which were between 2002 and 2006. Growth was much slower from 2010 to 2020, where only 82 building permits were issued. The town's Growth Ordinance limits new residential building permits to 15 per year. In each year since, the number of building permits has reached the limit.



The chart below breaks down the number of housing units in each town by the year they were built. 60.9% of Baldwin's housing unit stock was built between 1970 and 2009. Only 3.8% of Baldwin's housing stock was built after 2014. Generally, building trends are consistent with the neighboring towns of Sebago and Denmark.

Housing Units by Year Built, 2020											
	Total Housing Units	2014 or Later	2010-2013	2000-2009	1990-1999	1980-1989	1970-1979	1960-1960	1950-1959	1940-1949	1939 or earlier
Baldwin	712	3.8%	1.3%	21.8%	10.8%	11.1%	17.3%	7.2%	8.4%	2.1%	16.3%
Sebago	1,511	3.0%	1.3%	17.6%	11.4%	13.3%	10.5%	13.9%	10.1%	6.9%	12.0%
Denmark	1,034	2.2%	0.8%	12.8%	13.5%	13.5%	12.1%	18.5%	3.1%	1.2%	22.3%
Hiram	892	0.8%	2.0%	15.1%	8.2%	11.1%	23.8%	10.0%	2.5%	1.1%	25.4%
Cornish	738	0.7%	1.4%	15.3%	13.1%	8.7%	8.0%	7.2%	14.5%	3.3%	27.9%
Limington	1,794	0.0%	4.2%	18.6%	10.8%	19.6%	18.6%	10.6%	7.3%	0.6%	9.8%

Source: 2020 American Community Survey

The 1970s jumpstarted trends of accelerated growth in Baldwin. Within that decade, the population increased by 29%. The housing stock had to be increased to accommodate this growth. An additional surge in housing between 2000 and 2009, with 21.8% of Baldwin's housing built during that decade.

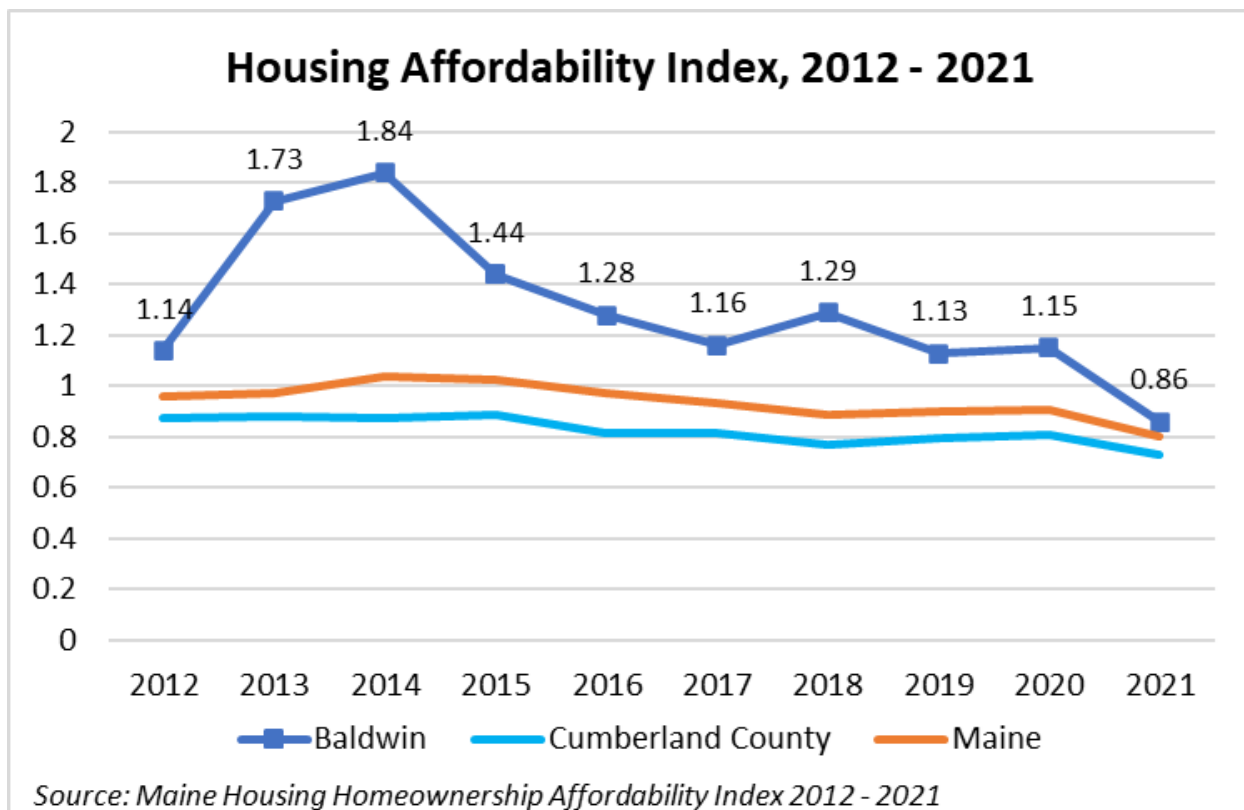
Housing Affordability

Homeownership Affordability, Baldwin and Surrounding Towns 2021					
Name	Affordability Index	Median Income	Median Home Price	Home Price Affordable to Median Income	Percent of Households Unable to Afford Median Home Price
Baldwin	0.86	\$59,645	\$259,900	\$223,800	59.7%
Cornish	0.59	\$48,986	\$317,000	\$187,491	65.8%
Denmark	0.69	\$57,563	\$329,900	\$227,391	71.1%
Hiram	0.77	\$47,715	\$232,000	\$179,532	61.1%
Limington	0.99	\$72,780	\$290,000	\$286,922	50.6%
Sebago	0.68	\$62,609	\$357,050	\$242,235	70.8%
Cumberland County	0.73	\$82,830	\$430,000	\$313,613	60.6%
Maine	0.8	\$63,427	\$295,000	\$236,243	61.60%
Source: Maine Housing Affordability Indices, 2021					

The Affordability Index is a MaineHousing statistic that is produced annually. It is the ratio of **Median Home Price** to **Home Price Affordable to the Median Income**. The affordable home price is one where a household making the median income could cover a 30-year mortgage, taxes, and insurance with no more than 28% of their gross income.

- An Index of 1 indicates that the home price is affordable to the median income.
- An Index Less than 1 indicates that the home price is generally unaffordable.
- An index of Greater than 1 indicates that the home price is generally affordable.

Baldwin has been more affordable than the state and county averages for a long time. The town was classified as affordable from 2012 – 2020. However, the affordability index dropped down to .83 in 2021, bringing Baldwin close to state and county averages, and classifying the town as unaffordable for the first time in the past 10 years. As of 2021, 59.7% of Baldwin residents cannot afford the median home price of \$259,900.

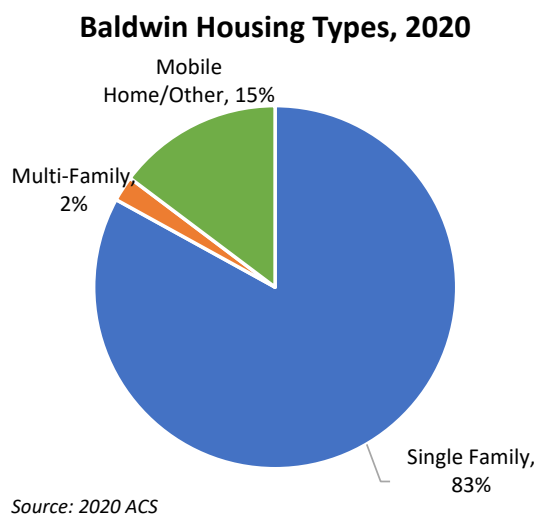


Housing and Ownership Type

83% of the housing in Baldwin consists of single-family homes, 15% consists of mobile or other types of homes, and only 2% consists of multi-family homes. Baldwin has the highest proportion of mobile homes compared to surrounding towns. In general, the distribution of housing types in Baldwin is on par with surrounding towns, with Denmark as an outlier.

Housing Type Percent Breakdown, 2020			
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Mobile Home/Other
Baldwin	83.0%	2.2%	14.7%
Sebago	85.3%	2.8%	11.8%
Denmark	94.7%	0.8%	4.5%
Hiram	83.3%	4.1%	12.6%
Cornish	80.2%	9.9%	9.9%
Limington	87.1%	0.7%	12.2%

Source: 2020 American Community Survey



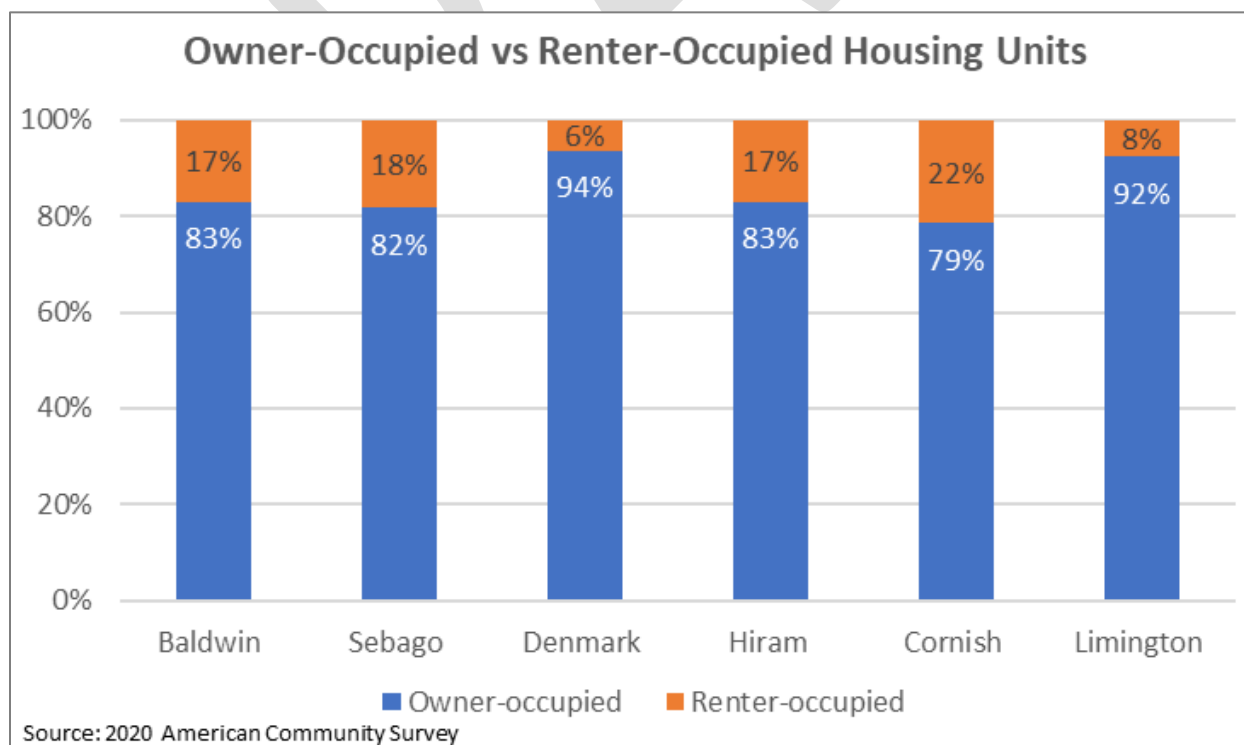
The chart below breaks down the different types of housing by the number of units in each town. The overwhelming majority of units in Baldwin are 1-unit detached, with the second most popular unit type being mobile homes. Baldwin is the only town in the area with Boat, RV, or Van housing units captured in the ACS.

Housing Types by Unit, 2020										
	Total Housing Units	1-unit Detached	1-unit attached	2 Units	3 or 4 Units	5 to 9 Units	10 to 19 Units	20 or more units	Mobile Home	Boat, RV, or Van
Baldwin	712	82.2%	0.8%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.8%	2.9%
Sebago	1,511	84.5%	0.8%	1.2%	0.7%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	11.8%	0.0%
Denmark	1,034	94.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%
Hiram	892	81.6%	1.7%	3.8%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	12.6%	0.0%
Cornish	738	78.9%	1.4%	3.1%	1.2%	0.0%	0.4%	5.1%	9.9%	0.0%
Limington	1,794	85.1%	2.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.2%	0.0%

Source: 2020 American Community Survey

Based on the Community Survey, single-family detached homes are the most desired housing type by Baldwin residents. Respondents found cluster subdivisions and multi-family housing (3 or more units) undesirable.

Based on the Community Survey, 98% of respondents own their homes in Baldwin. This number is higher than reported by the 2020 American Community Survey, but not drastically different given the sample size.



Compared to other towns in the region, Baldwin has similar characteristics of owner vs renter occupied housing units. As shown in previous sections, Denmark and Limington have higher percentages of single-family housing compared to multi-family than Baldwin, which may contribute to their higher rates of owner-occupied housing than Baldwin has.

Town Land Use Regulations for Housing – Issues and Implications

Until recently, Baldwin was an affordable place to live. As described previously, that is no longer the case. At present, nearly 60% of the current residents would not be able to afford a house in the town today. As a result, the desire to support Baldwin's traditional close-knit rural community through the established goals of promoting "quality of life for families and people of all ages, ethnicities and incomes" (#4) and "keeping Baldwin affordable..." (#5) are at risk. Today, many grown children of current residents cannot afford to buy a house in Baldwin. At the same time, other housing options are limited, as only 2.2% of the housing stock in Baldwin consists of multifamily units. This matters as smaller units and renter options are naturally more affordable than traditional home ownership. If housing prices continue to climb, even middle-income residents may struggle to afford housing. Baldwin then faces the prospect of becoming another suburban bedroom community of Portland.

Two provisions in Baldwin's current Land Use Ordinance address this affordability problem. One- and two-family housing is permitted, with appropriate provisions, in the Highland district, Rural district and Village Commercial district. Multi-family housing is also permitted in the Rural and Village Commercial districts; however, very few multi-family units have been constructed.

Baldwin does not face this issue alone; the housing crisis spans the state. In 2022, the State of Maine legislature attempted to address this problem by passing legislation aimed at increasing housing stock in Maine, primarily through zoning regulations. The most significant law is H.P. 1489 - L.D. 2003 "An Act to Increase Housing Affordability through Zoning and Land Use," which requires municipalities to allow additional housing density in various ways in specific areas of a community:

1. Additional density allowances are required in areas that are either 1) identified growth areas (applicable to Baldwin) or 2) equipped with public sewer and water infrastructure (not applicable to Baldwin). For Baldwin, this would mean its growth areas (Village Commercial districts) would allow up to 4 units per lot on vacant lots and up to 3 units per lot on a lot with an existing dwelling.
2. In non-growth areas (Resource Protection, Highland, and Rural Residential districts), anywhere housing is allowed, municipalities must allow at least 2 units per lot on vacant lots. On lots with an existing single-family dwelling, municipalities must allow the addition of up to 2 units.
3. On any lot with an existing single-family dwelling, municipalities must allow the addition of at least one accessory dwelling unit (ADU).

Here are two examples of how these new allowances could be applied in Baldwin: a) an older resident could build a small unit on her property to allow living space for a full time caregiver, and b) a family living in a single-family home on a 2-acre lot could build up to 2 additional smaller units for their adult children.

LD 2003 took effect in July 2023, meaning that all Maine landowners now have the legal right under state law to construct at least 1 ADU on their property. However, the Town has not yet made changes necessary to write these new provisions into Baldwin's ordinances. In a Special Town Meeting in January of 2025, a set of proposed amendments that would have done so were narrowly turned down by voters who saw this law as a violation of home rule. As a result, at present if a resident proposes to construct an ADU on their property as permitted by state law, they would be turned down under Baldwin's Land Use Ordinances and would have to sue the Town to obtain Conditional Use Approval and a Building Permit. This places a financial burden on landowners in the Town as well as exposing the Town to legal and financial risk and liability.

More work needs to be done regarding housing affordability, if the Town wishes to preserve its traditional close-knit rural community.

INVENTORY CHAPTER 4

Transportation

Purpose and Introduction

Transportation and land use are deeply connected, and both play a major role in establishing the Town's character. Informed and thoughtful planning of the transportation network will help guide future development to enhance and preserve valued features of the community, while supporting longer term community goals. A safe, accessible, and well-planned transportation network can help ensure the mobility of people and goods, enhance economic prosperity, and preserve the quality of life for the residents of Baldwin.

Development in Baldwin has historically concentrated around the east and west villages, along the Mountain Division Rail line, and along the major state routes, Route 113 (Pequawket Trail), and Route 107 (Bridgton Road).

This transportation chapter provides the information necessary to develop a plan of action for Baldwin's future transportation system. Sources include local knowledge and surveys, data provided by the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Southern Maine Regional Planning & Development Commission (SMRPDC), and the U.S. Census Bureau.

Roadway Network and Classifications

Baldwin's transportation network consists of approximately 56.8 miles of public roadways, including State Routes 5, 107, 113, and 117. The majority of Baldwin's roads are local roads, providing access to state highways and service roads for adjacent property owners that accommodate little or no through traffic.

This section provides detailed information on the Town's roadway network. It includes a description of the classification systems that determine maintenance and construction responsibilities, as well as funding eligibility.

State Classification

In the early 1980s, the Maine Legislature authorized and directed MaineDOT to classify all public roads throughout the State. The basis of this classification system was that primarily regional or statewide needs should be the State's responsibility and roads serving primarily local needs should be of local responsibility.

The State's classification system includes the following:

State Highways form a system of connected routes throughout the state that primarily serve intra- and interstate traffic. The State is responsible for all construction/reconstruction and maintenance on the 14.42 miles of arterial highways in Baldwin. Route 5 and Route 113 are State Highways.

State Aid Highways connect local roads to the State Highway System and generally serve intracounty rather than intrastate traffic movement. State aid roads are typically maintained by MaineDOT in the summer and by the municipalities in the winter pursuant to [State Law 23 MRSA 1003](#) . The State Aid Highway category generally corresponds with the federal ‘collector’ classification. State Aid Highways include Route 11 (Sebago Road), and Route 107 (Bridgton Road), and Convene Road, totaling 6.3 miles.

Town ways are all other highways not included in the State Highway or State Aid Highway classifications that are maintained by municipalities or counties. These roads are classified as federal ‘local’ roads. There are approximately 40.6 miles of local roads in Baldwin, which includes 6.3 miles of summer townways.

Federal Functional Classification

In addition to the State classification system, there is the Federal Functional Classification system. The federal system complements the State’s system and is based on the type of service that is intended to be provided by the roadway. The federal classifications relate to traffic capacity and volume attributed to the roads and are divided into rural and urban systems. While state classification designates maintenance jurisdiction, federal functional classification creates a hierarchy of roads and determines which roads are eligible for Federal highway funds.

There are three functional classes represented in Baldwin as described below:

Minor Arterials link and support the principal arterial system. Minor arterials are roads that place a greater emphasis on land access than the principal arterial and therefore offer a lower level of mobility. They serve as links between larger and smaller towns or as connections between collectors and the primary arterials.

Major Collectors differ from arterial roadways due to size and general service area. Collectors serve traffic in a specific area, whereas arterials generally serve traffic moving through an area. Thus, average trip lengths on collectors are shorter than trips on arterials. Furthermore, collectors gather traffic from local roads and streets and distribute them to the arterial.

Local Roads serve primarily to provide access to residential areas. They are designed for low-speed travel and to carry low volumes of traffic relatively short distances. Local roads are generally not eligible for federal aid funding for improvements or maintenance.

A road's functional classification is one factor in planning for possible growth into rural areas and for the future development of the town overall. Local streets are best suited for village/residential or very low-density rural development. While some commercial and

other non-residential development might be an appropriate land use along collectors, it is important that such development be designed so that it minimally disrupts traffic flow.

Design choices for highway projects also typically depend upon the roadway's functional classification. For example, arterials—which service primarily through traffic and often carry heavy vehicles – will typically have thicker pavement, wider lanes and shoulders, increased sight distance, minimal horizontal and vertical curves, and limited access points or curb cuts. Local roads tend to be narrower, windier, and more accessible from abutting property.

Infrastructure and Conditions

Bridges

Bridges are a key component of the highway system. Bridges are the most expensive sections of roads, and a lack of adequate bridges can create transportation bottlenecks. MaineDOT inspects all bridges and culverts with a clear span of greater than 10 feet on public ways, regardless of ownership, every two years. Inspection reports are available online and include detailed information on all aspects of the structure which can be used to plan for preservation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

Bridge condition can be measured based on the National Bridge Inventory Federal Sufficiency Rating (FSR). Each FSR has a numeric indicator of the overall value of the sufficiency of the bridge. A rating will be from 0-100 (0 indicates the worse and 100 indicates the best). FSR is computed with a federally supplied formula using an array of condition and inventory data. The formula is used to identify bridges eligible for federal funding. The FSR includes both structural deficiencies as well as functional obsolescence. This rating gives an overall value of the sufficiency of the bridge. Since functional obsolescence (i.e. too narrow, or low weight capacity) may account for a large portion of the rating, one should not assume that a low sufficiency rating means the bridge could fail.

MaineDOT also maintains an inventory of all cross culverts along State roadways. This includes a detailed inventory of large culverts defined as a pipe or structure with a total span width greater than 5 feet and less than 10 feet OR any multiple pipes, where the clear distance between openings is less than half of the smaller contiguous opening, and the total flow area is between 20 and 80 square feet. There is one large culvert along Route 113 in Baldwin over Pigeon Brook.

The following table shows the 19 bridges and culverts (spanning more than 10 feet) inspected by MaineDOT in the town of Baldwin, 6 of which are part of the Mountain Division Rail Line owned and maintained by the State. There are also six bridges owned and maintained by the Town of Baldwin.

Location	FSR	Owner	AADT	Year Built/Reconstructed
Weeman Rd over Breakneck Brook	90.3	Baldwin	69	2006
New Rd over Breakneck Brook	91.9	Baldwin	8	2021
Dearborn Rd over Breakneck Brook	91.9	Baldwin	30	2016
Crawford Rd over Breakneck Brook	87.9	Baldwin	49	1939
Pequawket Trl over Dug Brook	69.8	MaineDOT	4664	1939/1958
Pequawket Trl over Quaker Brook	39.5	MaineDOT	5469	1938
Douglas Hill Rd over Breakneck Brook	73.5	Baldwin	524	1927
Routes 5 & 117 over Saco River	80	MaineDOT	3483	1997
Bridgton Rd over Stover Brook	68.5	MaineDOT	755	1940
Sebago Rd over Quaker Brook	70.6	MaineDOT	1068	1939
Douglas Hill Rd over Breakneck Brook	86.2	Baldwin	306	1927
Bridgton Rd over Heath Brook	69.4	MaineDOT	1128	1929
Pequawket Trail over Breakneck Brook	49.6	MaineDOT	3912	1958
Mountain Branch over Quaker Brook	NA	MaineDOT	NA	1961
Mountain Branch over Pigeon Brook	NA	MaineDOT	NA	1860
Mountain Branch over Red Brook	NA	MaineDOT	NA	1890
Mountain Branch over Culvert Bridge	NA	MaineDOT	NA	1890
Mountain Branch over Break Brook	NA	MaineDOT	NA	1850
Mountain Branch over Dug Brook	NA	MaineDOT	NA	1966
Source: MaineDOT				

Traffic Volumes

Since the mid 1980's, Maine DOT has monitored over 40 short duration traffic count locations in Baldwin typically collected on a three-year rotating schedule. The data from the short duration counts is adjusted using axel corrections and seasonal factors to develop Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes. Looking at 9 rotating count locations across town, between 2010 and 2019, average traffic growth was just 9.6%, which equates to an average of just under 1.0% per year. Although some roads may have recorded unsubstantial traffic changes, other roads experienced more significant changes in traffic. Sections of State Route 113 (Pequawket Trail) observed the largest growth in traffic.

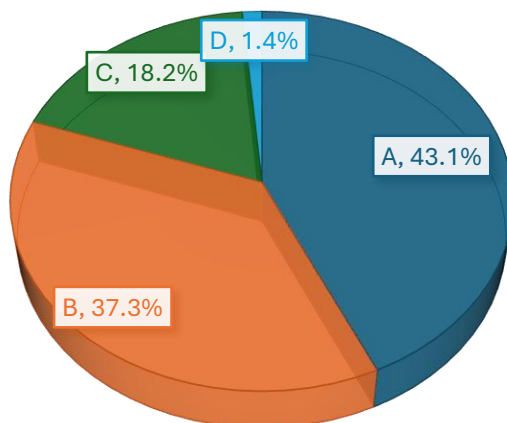
Location	2010	2013	2016	2019	Percent change 2010-2019
Freemont Ave west of Route 11/107 (Bridgton Rd)	610	480	620	500	-18.0%
Route 107(Bridgton Rd) north of Route 11 (Sebago Rd)	1120	960	1200	1130	0.9%
Route 11/107 (Bridgton Rd) north of Route 113	1510	1370	1540	1880	24.5%
Route 11/113 East of Route 11/107	4630	4120	4700	5480	18.4%
Route 113 (Pequawket Trl) west of Route 11/107	3650	3380	3300	4220	15.6%
Brown Rd north of Route 113 (Pequawket Trl)	190	150	150	190	0.0%
Route 5/117 at Cornish Townline	3270	3130	3530	3490	6.7%
Route 113 (Pequawket Trl) south of Route 5/117	3220	3190	3760	4080	26.7%
Route 5/113/117 (Pequawket Trl) north of Route 5/117	4260	3810	4800	4740	11.3%
Source: MaineDOT					

Road Surface Conditions

As part of MaineDOT's asset management methodology, pavement condition data is collected every two years on all State Highways and State Aid Highways. MaineDOT uses the Pavement Condition Rating (PCR), a 0-5 scale that is composed of International Roughness Index, rutting, and two basic types of cracking. The A-F scale (A being great condition) varies by Highway Corridor Priority.

As of 2019, just under 20% of Baldwin's State maintained roads fall into the C and D categories. Over 80% of state roads are in good and great condition (A or B) which is slightly above the statewide percentage. Although this data changes as sections of roads deteriorate and receive new pavement, it gives a general idea of the condition of state roads in Baldwin and provides a benchmark for customer service level. Maine Local Roads Center offers a Road Management Software (RSMS) that can be used to assess and prioritize local roads for improvements, including cost estimates used for developing a local road maintenance plan.

PAVEMENT CONDITION

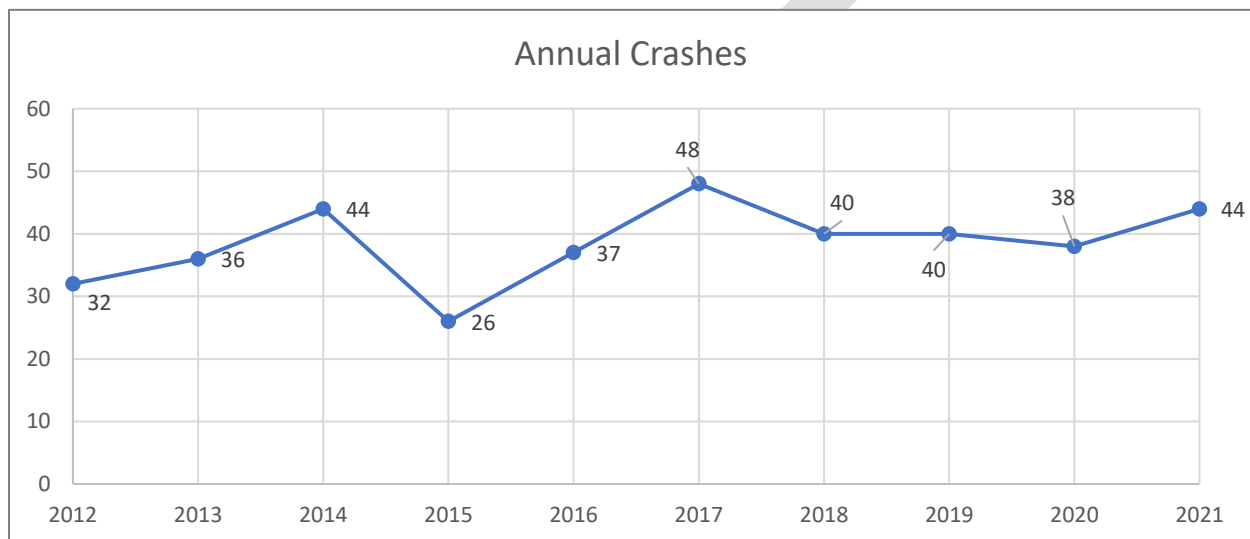


Source: 2019 MaineDOT

Safety

Maine Bureau of Highway Safety and MaineDOT obtain crash reports from state and local police to monitor crash statistics on Maine's public roadways. The data is used to help develop strategies and direct funds that are dedicated to safety improvements. Over the ten-year period between 2012 and 2021 there was a total of 385 crashes reported as seen in the graph below.

The majority of those crashes occurred between October and January. Most crashes reportedly occurred on dry roads in clear conditions. Almost 50% (179) crashes involved a vehicle off the road while the next highest crash type were crashes with deer at 23% (90 crashes). The overwhelming majority of crashes occurred in 50mph and 55mph zones while only 16% percent were reported to be driving too fast for the conditions. Only 43 crashes were reported at intersections with the worst intersections being along Route 113 at The Whistle Stop as well as the intersection with Routes 107 and 5. Of all the individuals involved in the 385 crashes, there were 6 reported fatalities and 18 people seriously injured.



Commuting and Modes

Commuting Patterns

American Community Survey (ACS) data from 2016-2020 indicates a mean travel time to work of 36 minutes for workers aged 16 and older from Baldwin. According to the ACS, 81.5% drove alone, 11.8% carpoolled, 3.4% walked, and 1.6% worked from home. The Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamic (LEHD) program which is part of the US Census Bureau also produces demographic data on employers and employees. LEHD data displayed in the table below shows where Baldwin residents work. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a nation-wide increase in the number of people working from home. This will likely have a large impact on commuting patterns in the 2020s.

Place of Work	Percentage of Workers
Portland	13.4%
South Portland	7.0%
Westbrook	6.1%
Gorham	5.8%
Windham	5.4%
Sebago	4.2%
Standish	3.1%
Baldwin	2.9%
Scarborough	2.8%
Bridgton	2.6%
Source: OnTheMap.census.gov	

Public Transportation

The Regional Transportation Program (RTP) provides a range of transportation services in Cumberland County including fixed route transit from Bridgeton to Portland. In Baldwin, residents must apply to become eligible for demand response services provided by RTP. The general public may be eligible if services are available while seniors, adults with disabilities, people with medical needs, low-income individuals, and MaineCare members are prioritized for transportation services.

Non-Motorized Transportation

Non-motorized transportation, including bicycling and walking, is a vital component to Baldwin's transportation system and to the health of the community. The infrastructure, the presence and behavior of motor vehicle traffic, and the surrounding land uses all contribute to how conducive an area is to walking or biking.

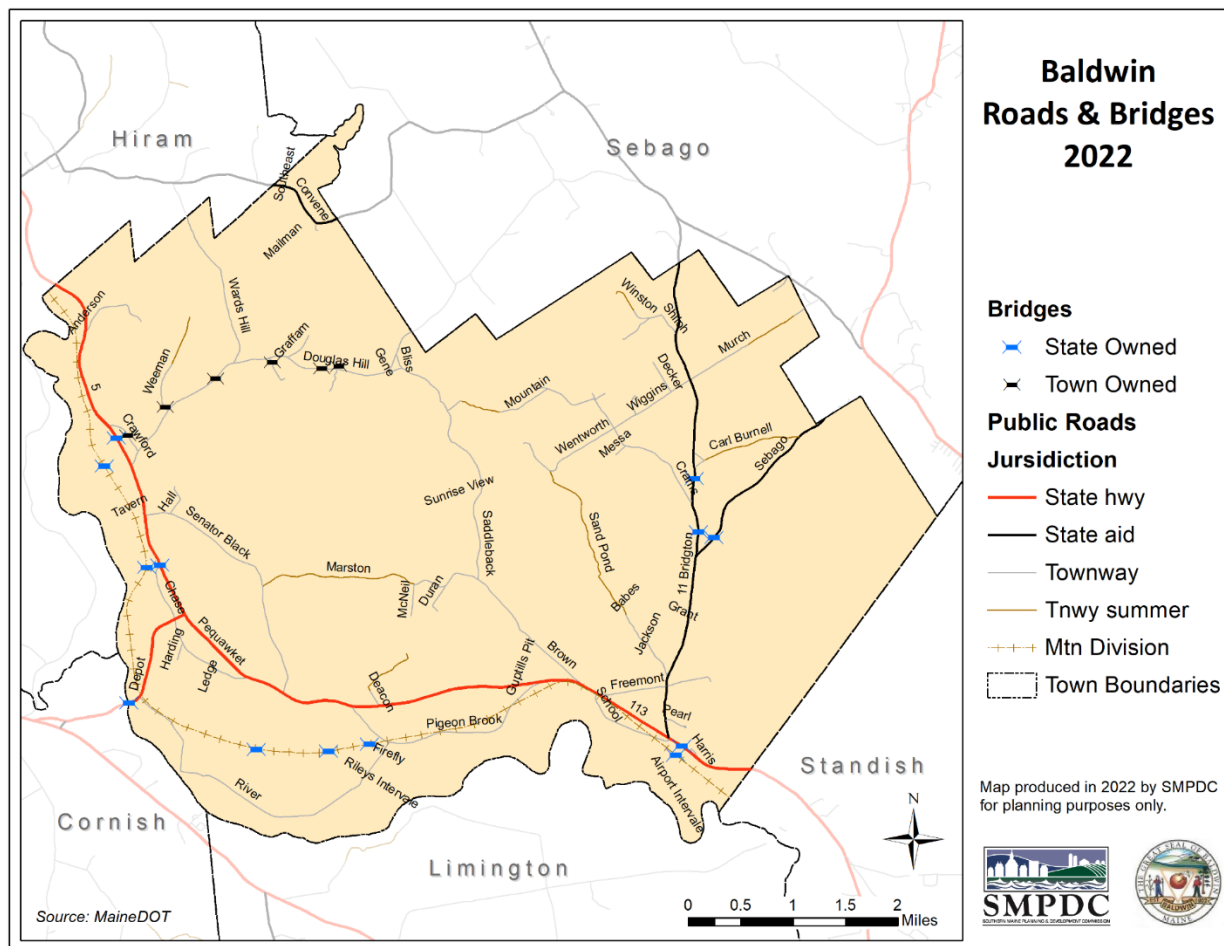
In many places throughout Baldwin sidewalks are not feasible, cost effective, or suitable for roads and neighborhoods. In those circumstances, asphalt and dirt shoulders are typically used by pedestrians. Bicycle infrastructure is limited in Baldwin and along most roads, bicycles share the road with vehicles. In some cases, shoulders are present and offer some separation from vehicular traffic.

The Mountain Division Trail

The Mountain Division Trail (MDT) follows the former Portland and Ogdensburg Railway (P&O). When Maine Central Railroad acquired the line, the name was changed to the

Mountain Division Rail Line. The line was originally built to connect the port of Portland with the St. Lawrence Seaway in Ogdensburg, N.Y. with a spur connecting to Montreal. By the time construction was finished, there were more competing rail lines, and it became difficult for the P&O to be profitable.

Many years after rail service was suspended along the line, the Mountain Division Alliance group was formed in an effort to preserve the corridor for a rail trail connecting Portland to Fryeburg. In 2021 the Mountain Division Rail Use Advisory Council was officially formed by MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note as a result of Resolve 21, Chapter 239. While some sections have already been converted to official rail trail, the final recommendation from the Advisory Council was to repurpose the entire corridor from rail use to trail use with potential for rail in the future. Approximately 10.4 miles of the envisioned 50 mile trail corridor are located within Baldwin.



Transportation Map 1: Baldwin Roads & Bridges

INVENTORY CHAPTER 5

Natural Resources

Purpose and Introduction

The natural resources of Baldwin provide important environmental and social value. Wildlife and fisheries habitat, clean drinking water, and recreational opportunities are just some of the many benefits. The open spaces and wild areas of Baldwin are key to the rural character of the community. Proper land management and development regulations can mitigate the impacts of development on sensitive areas, and ensure that these resources are protected into the future. The following section summarizes an inventory of information about the natural and physical systems that determine the form of the Town's landscape.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection runs the Beginning with Habitat program, which inventories several key natural resource indicators in publicly available data and maps. This program is the main source of natural resource information for most communities in the state, and this chapter features their data and resources prominently.

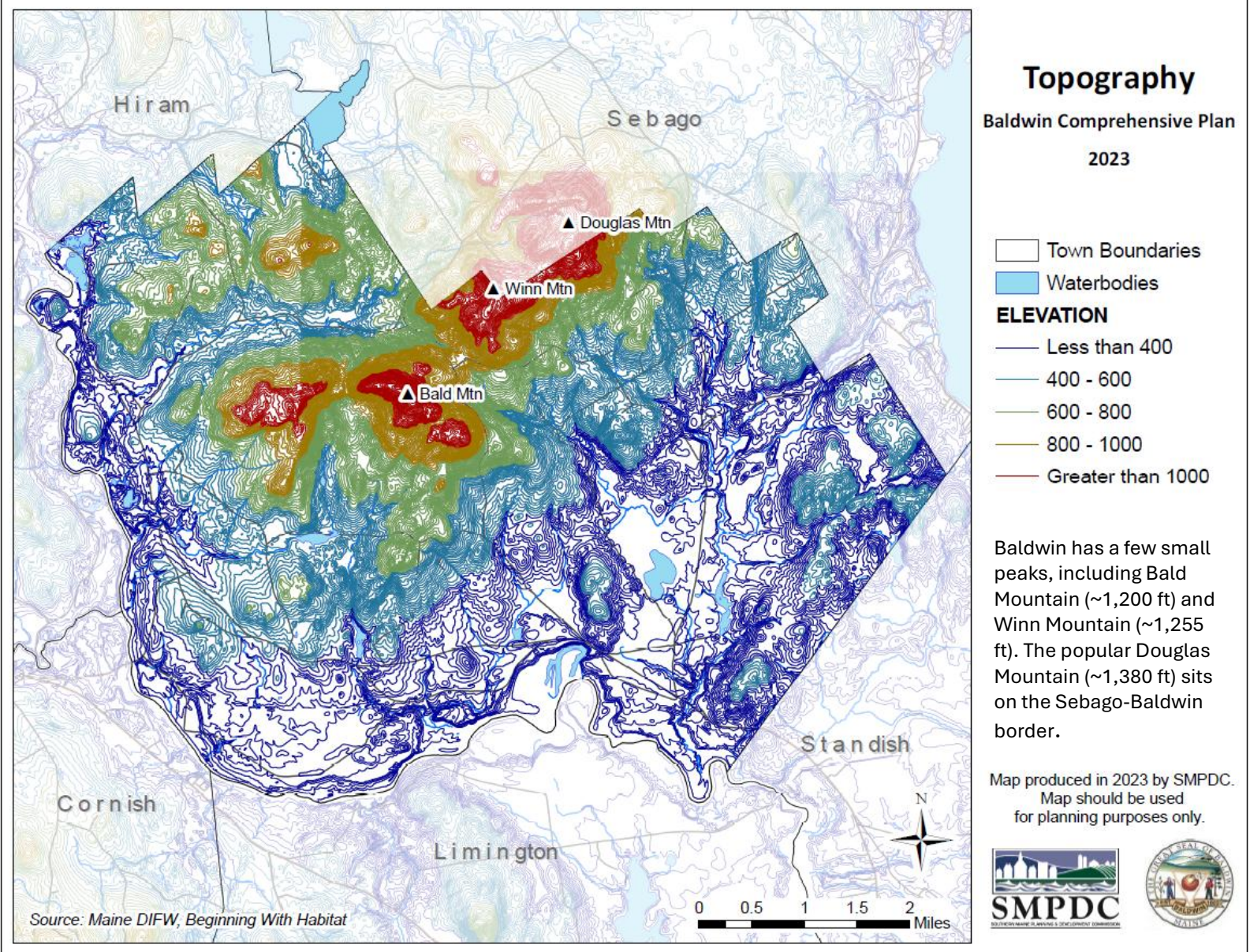
Natural Resources Trends

Topography

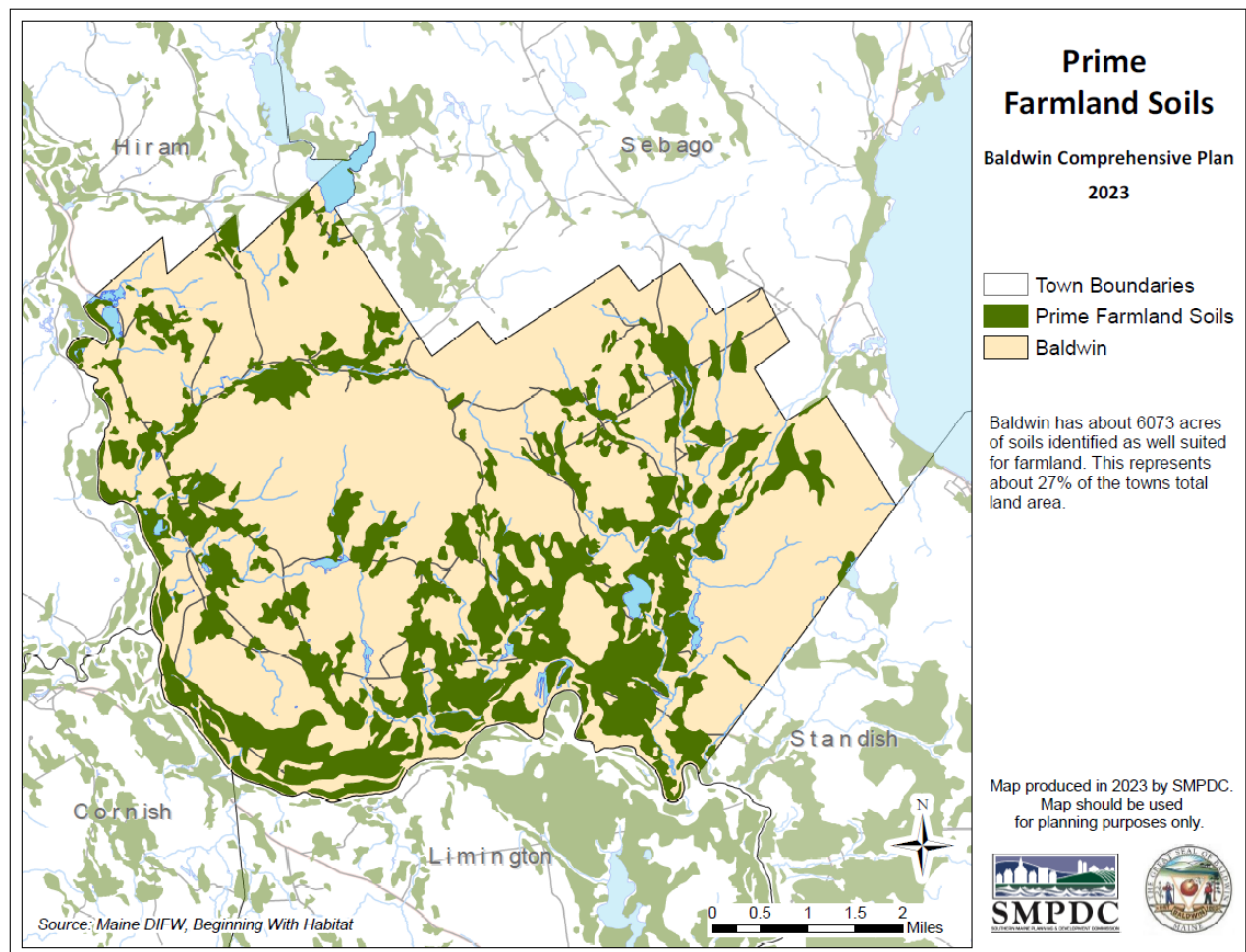
Topographical features have a strong influence on the way a town develops. Steep slopes affect the feasibility of development, water drainage, and scenic views. The southern and eastern sections of Baldwin are relatively flat with some rolling hills, reaching a maximum of 600 ft in elevation. Baldwin has a few small peaks that reflect the ridge line of the Saddleback Hills, including Bald Mountain (approx. 1200 ft) and Winn Mountain (approx. 1255 ft). Douglas Mountain (approx. 1380 ft) is located on the Sebago-Baldwin border. Each of these peaks are located in the northern section of town, with some steeper slopes in the western section of Baldwin as well. These taller features stand out in the landscape and create several scenic views. These topology patterns can be seen in **Map 1: Topography** on page 38.

Soils

Proper management of growth and development should take into consideration the suitability of soils present throughout the town. Construction of homes, septic systems and roads on unsuitable soils can create defective structures, increased construction and maintenance costs, public health and safety problems, and environmental disturbances.



Soils in the Baldwin area are dominated by loam and sand. These soils are generally well-draining and are favorable for development. Baldwin has about 6073 acres of soils identified as well suited for farmland. This represents about 27% of the town's total land area. These areas are commonly present along waterways. These patterns can be seen in **Map 2: Prime Farmland Soils**.



Map 2: Prime Farmland Soils

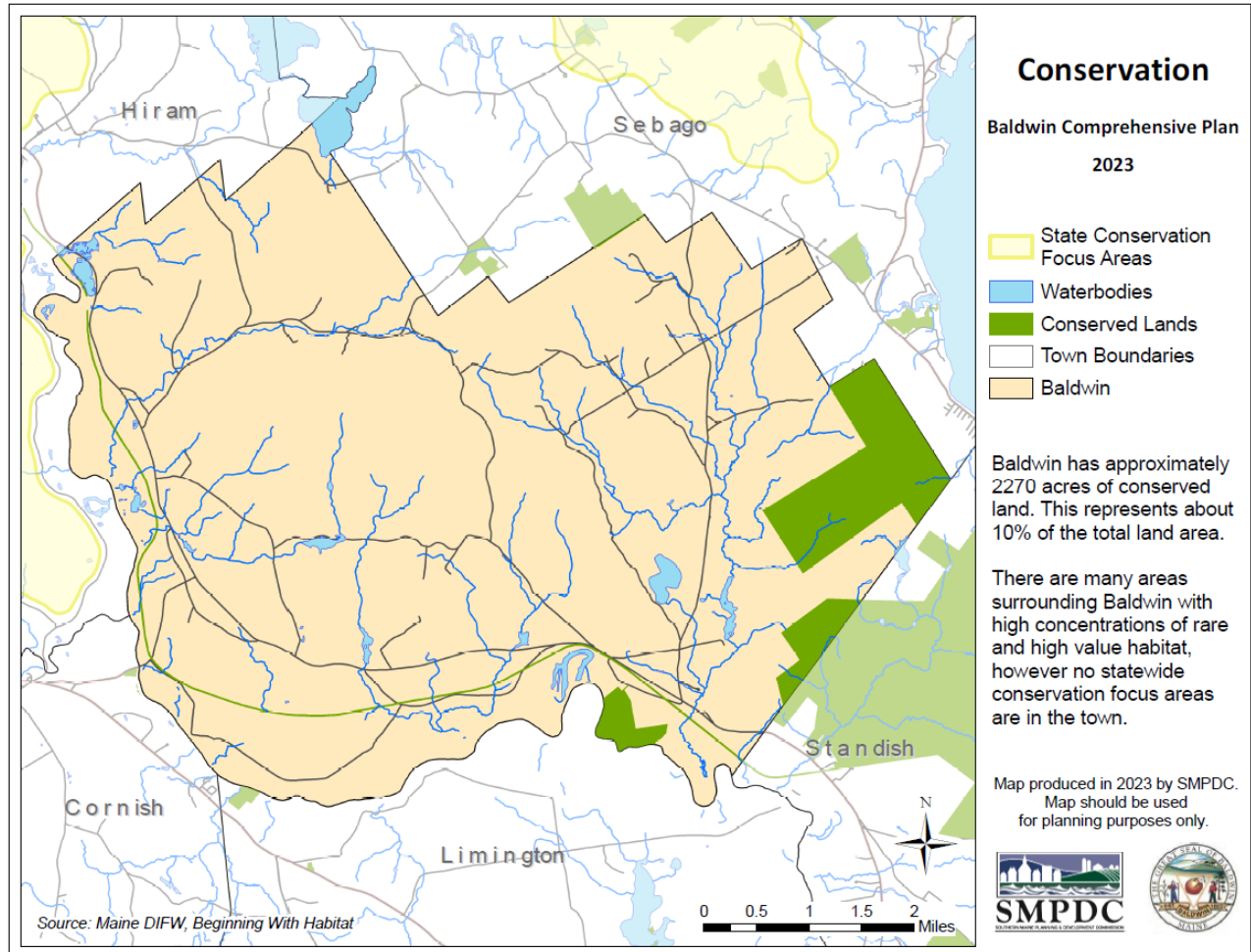
Beginning with Habitat produces maps showing the undeveloped blocks of land which serve as connected wildlife habitat areas and connectors. Despite the widespread development throughout the community, Baldwin has multiple areas of 1000+ contiguous undeveloped acres. The Steep Falls Wildlife Management Area, managed by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, is located partially in Baldwin, and protects about 4,900 acres of undeveloped land. These blocks of undeveloped land can be seen in **Map 3: Undeveloped Habitat Blocks & Connectors and Conserved Lands.**



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Conservation Lands

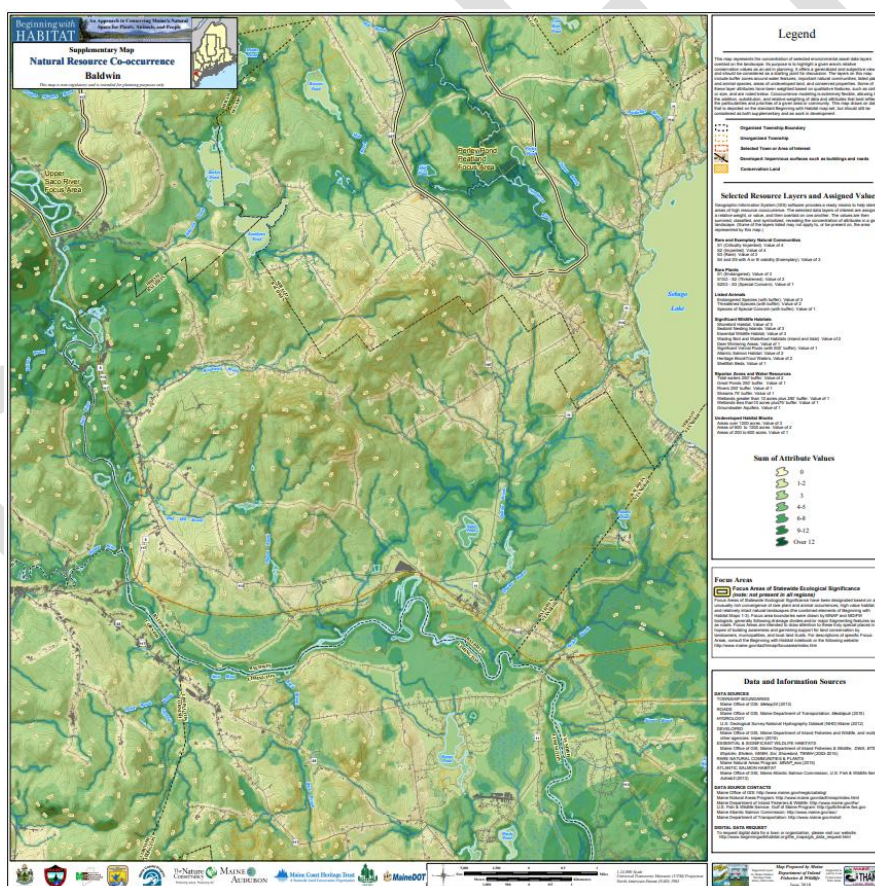
Baldwin has approximately 2270 acres of conserved land, which represents about 10% of the total land area. While there are many areas surrounding Baldwin with high concentrations of rare and high value habitat, there are no statewide conservation focus areas. **Map 4: Conservation** shows the blocks of conserved lands within Baldwin. Please note, this map does not include areas conserved by the Francis Small Heritage Trust, such as the Ingalls Pond Conservation Area, or town-owned land such as Sand Pond.



Map 4: Conservation

Natural Resource Co-occurrence

Baldwin's natural resources include natural habitats, larger undeveloped habitat blocks, forested areas, various types of wetlands and scenic views. **Map 5: Natural Resource Co-occurrence** depicts natural resources on a weighted scale, known as a co-occurrence map. The map scores an area 0-12+ based on the concentration of resources where the darker the green, the higher the score and the more resources are in the area. These attributes include rare exemplary natural communities, plants, animals, habitats, water resources and undeveloped blocks. The northwestern corner of Baldwin surrounding Ingalls Pond has a high co-occurrence value, indicating that there is a high concentration of important natural resources in this area. The southeastern corner of Baldwin also has a relatively high co-occurrence value, which is reflected in the State's protection of the Steep Falls Wildlife Management Area. Co-occurrence maps provide a starting point for an open space plan, including identifying priority areas to preserve through permanent easements and protect through policies.



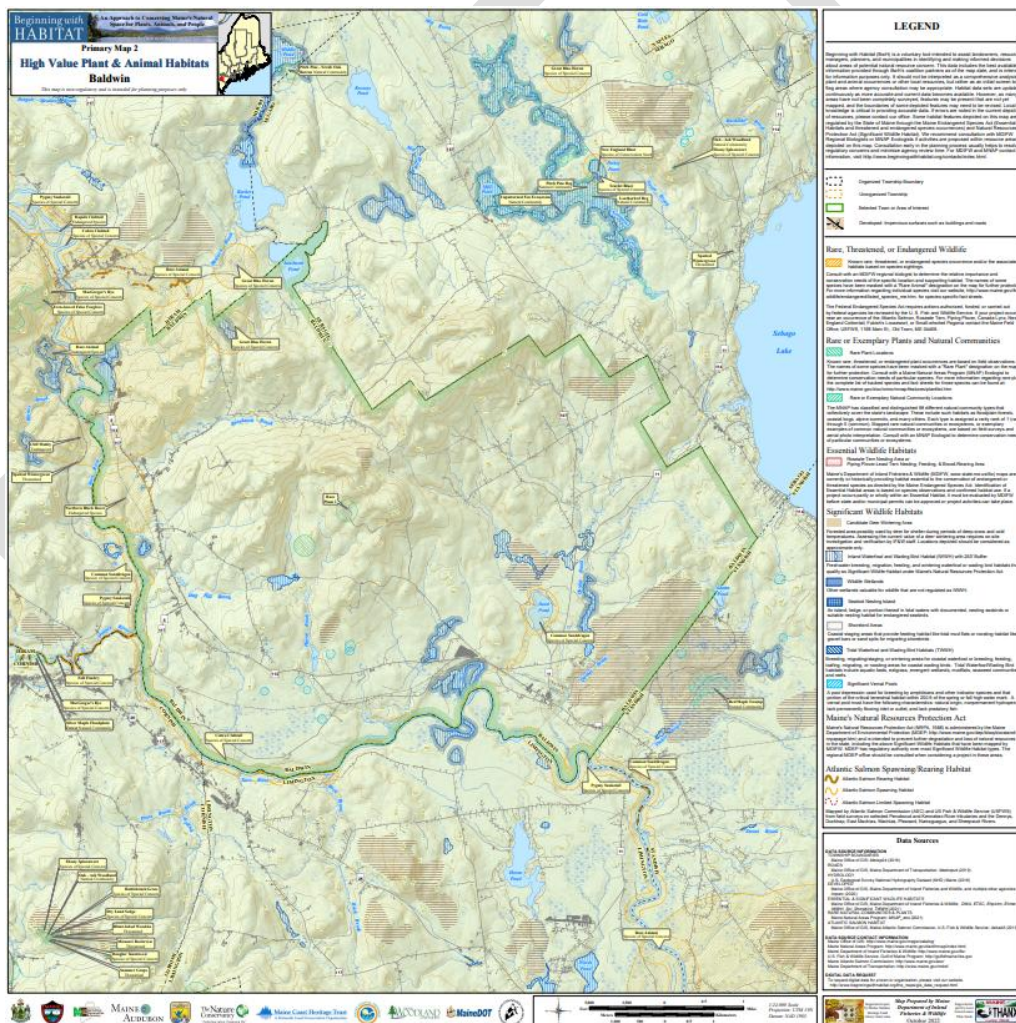
Map 5: Natural Resource Co-occurrence

Please visit online: [Maps: Beginning with Habitat: Wildlife: Fish & Wildlife: Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#) to view this map larger.

High Value Habitats

Baldwin is home to some areas of high value plant or animal habitat that are of statewide significance. There are known areas of Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Wildlife in the northwestern corner of Baldwin near Ingalls Pond. Some of the protected animal species present in these areas may include the Great Blue Heron, Northern Black Racer snake, and the Common Sanddragon, Cobra Clubtail or Pygmy Snaketail dragonflies.

The southeastern portion of Baldwin, largely covered by the Steep Falls Wildlife Management Area, is classified as a Candidate Deer Wintering Area. These are approximate areas considered to be favorable by deer seeking shelter in the winter due to their substantial forest cover. Smaller pockets of potential wintering areas are present in other parts of Baldwin as well. Please see **Map 6: High Value Plant & Animal Habitats** for more details.



Map 6: High Value Plant & Animal Habitats

Please visit online: [Maps: Beginning with Habitat: Wildlife: Fish & Wildlife: Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#) to view this map larger.

Baldwin has several aquifers, the largest following the Saco River. All aquifers maintain a 10-50 gallons per minute rate, which is typical statewide. The aquifers located in town are displayed in **Map 7: Water Resources & Riparian Habitats**.



Wetland and Watersheds

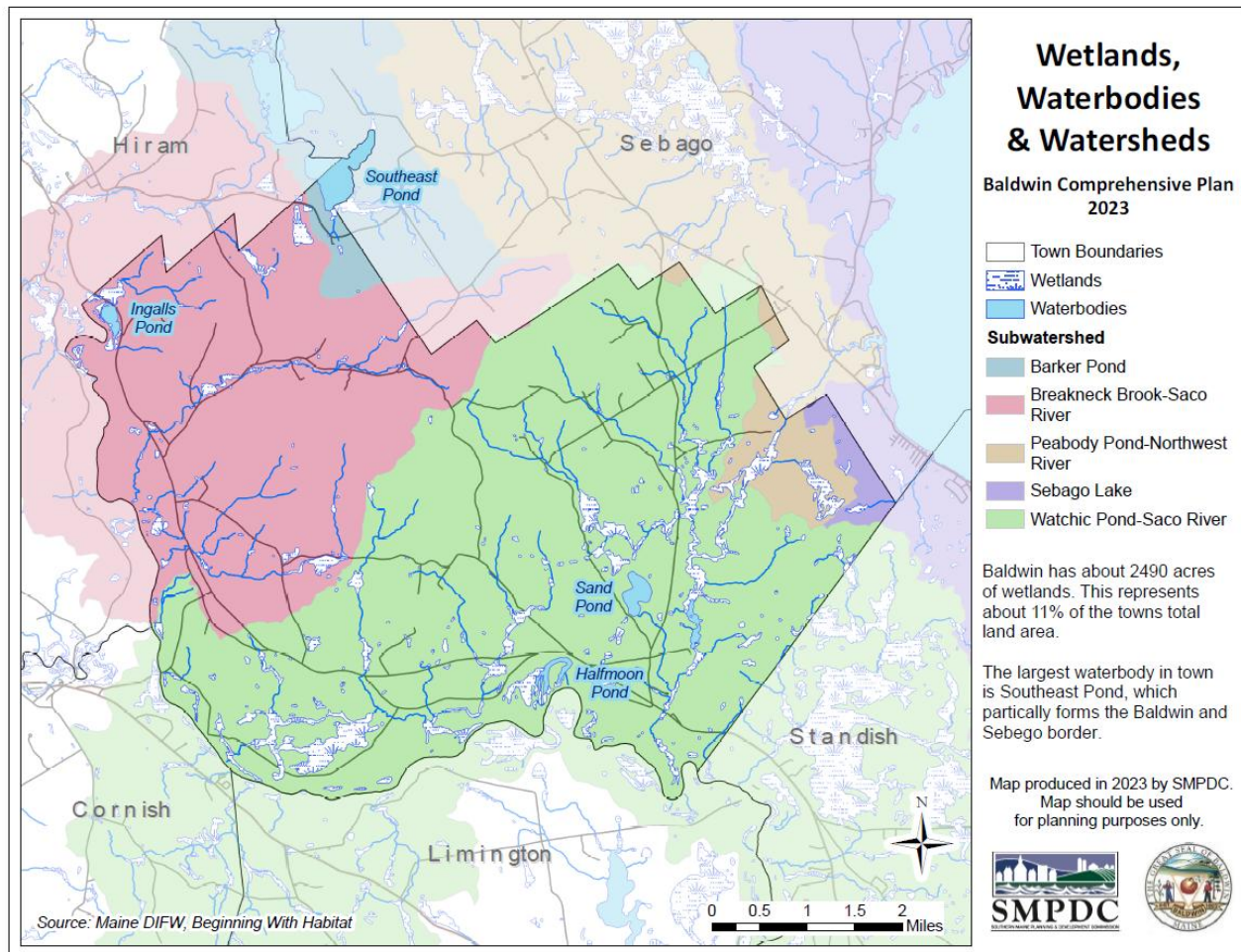
Wetlands are an important natural resource, often identified by non-permeable soils, water table at or near the surface, and the presence of certain vegetation. Wetlands are very difficult areas to develop, given the need for expensive infill and engineering. At the same time, it is important to keep these areas undisturbed due to their many important environmental functions.

Key Environmental Functions of Wetlands:

- 1) Act as groundwater recharge and cleansing areas
- 2) Provide habitats for rare and endangered plants and animals
- 3) Maintain lake and river quality by controlling runoff of nutrients
- 4) Store and slowly discharge high water, thus reducing the potential for floods
- 5) Sediment retention areas controlling agricultural runoff
- 6) Provide visual and open-space value

Several laws regulate the activities that take place in or around wetlands. On the national level, the Clean Water Act gives authority to the Army Corps of Engineers to regulate the dredging and filling of wetlands. Maine has two laws that provide protection for wetlands. The first is regulated by The Maine Department of Environmental Protection, and monitors the dredging, filling, draining, and construction in or over, or within 100 feet of any wetland. There is also a requirement under the Maine State Subdivision Law that states that all wetlands are to be shown on subdivision plans. Additionally, the Saco River Corridor Commission was established to protect the environment and public health and safety.

The location of wetlands is important to keep in mind when the town considers growth and future development. Zoning and appropriate uses should be considered in areas of high wetland density, or wetlands noted for significant importance. Baldwin has about 2,490 acres of wetlands. This represents about 11% of the town's total land area. The wetlands located within town can be seen on **Map 8: Wetlands, Waterbodies & Watersheds**.



Map 8: Wetlands, Waterbodies & Watersheds.

According to Beginning with Habitat (BWH), a watershed is a term used to describe land that drains to a common waterbody. The areas within the watershed are linked ecologically by the water, sediment, nutrients, and pollutants that flow through them. There are five watersheds that encompass the Town of Baldwin. The largest, the Watchic Pond-Saco River watershed, covers the majority of central and eastern Baldwin, while the Breakneck Brook-Saco River watershed covers the northwestern portion of town. The Barker Pond, Sebago Lake, and Peabody Pond-Northwest River watersheds cover much smaller land areas in Baldwin, and extend largely into neighboring towns.

INVENTORY CHAPTER 6

Recreation

Purpose and Introduction

Baldwin's rural character and natural recreational opportunities are strong drivers for new and longtime residents. Often, in rural communities, there is little provision of public recreation except that offered by the public schools. However, arts and recreation are still highly valued statewide. In Baldwin, natural open spaces and access to nearby lakes, ponds, and the Saco River allow for walking, hiking, fishing, snowmobiling, and swimming.

Public Recreational Resources

Sand Pond Beach

Sand Pond, located in East Baldwin off Route 107/11, offers swimming, a sandy beach area, and a boat launch for Baldwin residents. The area is open from 6am to 9pm, and parking is available for about 12 to 15 cars. Sand Pond is also frequented for fishing, which requires a State of Maine Fishing License. Swimming lessons are taught at Sand Pond during the summer months. Activities such as camping, campfires, and alcohol consumption are prohibited at the public Sand Pond areas. However, the town has experienced difficulties in policing this area.

Ingalls Pond Trails

Ingalls Pond Conservation Area, managed by the Francis Small Heritage Trust, is located in West Baldwin. The parking area can be accessed off of Pequawket Trail. A short trail network leads visitors past Ingalls Pond and along the Saco River, offering multiple scenic viewpoints along easy terrain. The Pond Cove trail is frequently used for fishing access to the Saco River and Ingalls Pond Cove. A portion of the Mountain Division Trail runs through this area, which can be accessed at the junction of the Old County Road trail and the old railroad tracks. Hunting, swimming, camping, and campfires are prohibited. The Francis Small Heritage Trust also owns conservation properties in the nearby towns of Limington, Cornish, Newfield, Limerick, and Porter.

The Mountain Division Trail

The Mountain Division Trail (MDT) follows the former Portland and Ogdensburg Railway (P&O). When Maine Central Railroad acquired the line, the name was changed to the Mountain Division Rail Line. The line was originally built to connect the port of Portland with the St. Lawrence Seaway in Ogdensburg, N.Y. with a spur connecting to Montreal. By the time construction was finished, there were more competing rail lines, and it became difficult for the P&O to be profitable.

Many years after rail service was suspended along the line, the Mountain Division Alliance group was formed in an effort to preserve the corridor for a rail trail connecting Portland to Fryeburg. In 2021 the Mountain Division Rail Use Advisory Council was officially formed by MaineDOT Commissioner Bruce Van Note as a result of Resolve 21, Chapter 239. While some sections have already been converted to official rail trail, the final recommendation from the Advisory Council was to repurpose the entire corridor from rail use to trail use with potential for rail in the future. Approximately 10.4 miles of the envisioned 50-mile trail corridor are located within Baldwin.

Other Recreation

Baldwin residents and visitors enjoy other recreational activities year-round such as hunting, fishing, and trapping. Much of this is done on private lands, by landowner permission. Other activities include canoeing and kayaking on the Saco River, hiking, cycling, and snowmobiling. The Town has received a grant from the Maine Community Foundation to create walking and hiking trails around the Baldwin Community Center.

Youth and Adult Organized Recreation Resources

Sacopee Valley Regional Council

The Sacopee Valley Regional Council (SVRC) is a regional recreation program that serves Baldwin, Cornish, Hiram, Parsonsfield, and Porter. SVRC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that operates on a very small budget yet does not fail to provide sports and other recreational activities year-round for all ages. In the fall, field hockey, karate, and soccer are offered. Basketball, cheerleading, karate, ice skating, and cross-country skiing are available in the winter. Softball, baseball, tee-ball, and karate run in the spring. Basketball and volleyball, along with numerous camp-style programs, are available in the summer.

Maine School Administrative District #55 Athletics

Baldwin is part of Maine SAD #55. Sacopee Valley High School and Middle School each have athletics programs that offer boys and girls sports during the fall, winter, and spring seasons. Teams compete against other middle and high school teams in Maine.

INVENTORY CHAPTER 7

History of Baldwin

Purpose and Introduction

Understanding the history of development of Baldwin can provide an appreciation of the forces that worked within the natural environment to shape the built environment of the community. A history traces the path of development of a Town to provide a sense of place or character and an assessment of why facilities, structures, and open spaces are located where they are. With an understanding of these factors, it may be easier for the community to make decisions about what to preserve and what to change in the Town.

Baldwin exists in its present form because of its natural resources, its geographic location, and because of historical forces which have affected its people and its economy, past and present.

Historic Overview

The actual history of what is now known as Baldwin commenced in 1774 with the granting of a substitute township to discharge an obligation incurred for services rendered by Capt. John Flint (1677-1746) of Concord, Massachusetts in lieu of a township granted in 1735 in territories under dispute between Massachusetts and New Hampshire located between the Merrimac and Connecticut Rivers. However, it wasn't until 1780 that the Massachusetts General Court confirmed a new grant of land to the proprietors of Flintstown Plantation which was renamed Baldwin upon incorporation in 1802. Baldwin, extended from Standish Corners on the Saco River, easterly along the Standish line to Sebago Pond, along the Sebago shore to Muddy River (Naples), and back to the Saco a little above the present Hiram line'. Of irregular shape, the boundaries of the Town have changed considerably since the Town's incorporation in 1802. Its mountainous and somewhat marshy terrain now stretches westward- from Sebago and Standish on Sebago Lake in the east to Hiram and Cornish in the west, a distance which measures about twice the length of the Township at its narrowest point from north to south. Originally almost twice its present size, Baldwin during its first fifty years suffered boundary changes which resulted in bringing the Town within its present limits.

Physical features which distinguish the Town are the Saddleback Hills rising to an elevation in some places of one thousand feet above sea level and the Saco River, which, flowing southward from the foothills of the White Mountains, bounds the Town on the west and south as it moves toward the Atlantic. In the early history of the Town, this river with its water power sites was of considerable importance in utilizing the valuable stands of timber which proved to be a principal source of Baldwin's wealth.

The boundaries of the Township changed constantly and in 1810 the proprietors of the land received from the General Court a restatement of their northern boundary. This was the beginning and not the end of Baldwin's boundary difficulties. Problems in bringing together a municipality from a territory the size of Baldwin were great, and the natural barriers added further problems. Dissension in the ranks of the townspeople over boundaries was officially manifested as early as 1820. Some attended the Town Meeting to request that their lands be set aside to another town, such as Hiram, because of the distance they had to travel to Town Meeting and the terrain they had to cover. The following year the petitioners for the land change were granted their request and "all land southwest of Hancock Brook and Pond" were set off to Hiram. Also in 1820 began the movement to divide the Town, which in 1826 ended in the division of Baldwin and the incorporation of Sebago.

The act to divide Baldwin and incorporate Sebago was approved on February 10, 1826. Roughly the line of division cut the Town of Baldwin from east to west leaving to the new Town of Sebago the northern half of the area formerly included in Baldwin. Baldwin was responsible for all the debts of the Town incurred prior to the act of division.

On four subsequent occasions, the area of Baldwin was further reduced by legislative enactment. In 1827, the lot owned by Samuel Murch was set off to Sebago; in 1837 and later in 1871, six more lots were annexed to Sebago; and in 1844 lots number one, two, three, four, and five in the northwest range, and lots number two in the fourth and fifth ranges were set off to Hiram. It may be interesting to note that, although strong opinions against this last boundary change were expressed, the areas and all the people residing on the land, including the "paupers or otherwise," became residents of Hiram. It was perhaps disheartening to those left in Baldwin that the undesirable land, the unprofitable mountainous sections, and the marsh land remained within the Town while more desirable lands were assigned to Hiram and Sebago. The Township of Baldwin today covers approximately thirty-six square miles.

The new Township, with Standish for its southern neighbor, had a county road in progress through the Township north across Flintstown to Bridgton, although for long stretches the road was nothing more than a trail. This route was used by the first settlers in Flintstown arriving from Falmouth. It was then possible to hit the famous Pigwacket Trail, which crossed the Township more or less diagonally heading northwest.

A census taken as early as 1790 showed thirty-seven families in Flintstown for a total of 190 people. Among the heads of families appearing on the census list were the Flints, the Fitches, Josiah Pierce, the Larrabees, Bartholomew Thorn whose son William was the first child born in the Township, the Burnells, and the Rows; names which appear frequently in the early records of Flintstown and Baldwin.

Flintstown was named for Capt. John Flint as earlier stated, but Baldwin was named for Colonel Loammi Baldwin, who was neither an original proprietor or landholder in the Township. Records state that Colonel Baldwin's land was acquired well after 1780 after he had served the proprietors in a legal capacity. In 1785, Baldwin and "his heirs and assigns" were granted one hundred acres "of common and undivided lands in Flintstown" for his mill to be erected at the Great Falls on the Saco River. The Baldwin apple was named after Colonel Baldwin.

Josiah Pierce's name appears on the record book in 1786. In that year he was living in Flintstown and with the permission of Cumberland County officials was given a permit to sell liquor in Town. The firm Pierce and Baldwin built the Pierce Place in 1785 and, after the death of his wife, Baldwin sold his share to Josiah Pierce in late 1802. Pierce also served as Town Clerk from 1806 to 1819.

Of the various services performed by the voters of Baldwin during the first years of incorporation, none could have met with more favor than the attempt to improve the roads. It had been customary for one or more settlers to go ahead and lay out a road and then go to the Town and collect payment for it. "To see if the Town will accept of any roads which may be laid out," frequently appeared on the record, and time after time in the first fifty years of Baldwin's history, the Town accepted a specific road built by an inhabitant from his property to one of the main thoroughfares of the Town. The inevitable result of this hit or miss road policy was the abandonment of short roads, a trend which no doubt was facilitated by a shifting of the rural settlers to the more populated parts of the Township as population became more stable and neighborhoods developed. The individuality of road building in Baldwin is typical of that found in other Maine towns. This individuality was in no way confined to the one function of road building. The laying out of school districts, the building of cemeteries, construction of a townhouse, church, etc., all were decided at Town Meeting. Building committees and Town planning boards have replaced this approach to planning the infrastructure of town government. It was a democratic government in the extreme and explains in no small way the attitude of Maine people toward public questions today.

The first bridge across the Saco was the Hemlock Bridge between Cornish and West Baldwin. In 1873, with a new county road through Baldwin and the disrepair of the bridge, a plan to build a new bridge was thoroughly discussed. The voters opted for repair of the old bridge. This decision was quickly outdated by the floods of that spring, and a new bridge was constructed between Baldwin and Cornish below the mouth of the Ossipee River and above the old Hemlock Bridge.

Religion, after being neglected for many years, became a permanent part of Baldwin's history when a Methodist Church was organized in 1807. A Congregational Church was organized in 1821. In 1826 the Methodists secured a lot, and a year or two after, a meeting

house was built. In 1850 a church and parsonage were started, but it was 1879 before the structures were completed as they stand today in West Baldwin. The original Congregationalist Church, located near Meadow Brook, was used until 1870 when Joshua Chadbourne, formerly of Baldwin, was persuaded to donate a lot. The church went up in East Baldwin and is still standing today. The Union Church of North Baldwin was erected in 1873 and is a member of the Western Maine Larger Parish, being supported by both the Baptists and the Methodist.

In 1802 school districts were established as required by law. The unit school administration was the district, although school policy was formulated by the voters at Town Meeting. Baldwin kept its school district until the individual town district system was abolished by state law. High school tuition was paid and raised by the voters as early as 1906. At the present time, Baldwin is a member of Maine School Administrative District (MSAD) 55, which also includes Hiram, Cornish, Parsonsfield, and Porter. The Town, despite its size, has kept abreast with the times and all phases of education are offered by MSAD 55.

After the incorporation of Baldwin, the question before the Town was the separation of Maine from Massachusetts. With Massachusetts failing to support the War of 1812, the opinion of the Town changed from disapproval to approval. Leadership from Portland was assuming a new movement bound to help the towns of Cumberland County near Portland. Baldwin sent a delegate to Portland to help frame the new state constitution, later accepted by the Town by a large margin. Military history in Baldwin followed the pattern of other Maine towns. During the Revolution and the War of 1812, the District of Maine had been attacked by the British. During the Civil War Baldwin recruits joined Maine's 25th, 30th, 9th, 32nd, 13th US Regulars, First and Seventh Regiments, the Fifth and Eighth Regiments, and the famous Regiment of Cavalry.

The economy of Baldwin began with a heavy concentration of mills in the area. Wherever a mill was begun, there would also be a blacksmith, a wheelwright or coppersmith, a store, and possibly a tavern, all comprising a neighborhood. Each neighborhood had its own graveyards, schools, and place and time of worship. Farming, together with lumbering and milling, gave employment to most of the people in Town. Apple orchards were cultivated, and at one time there was a factory in Town for the drying of apples. Early Town records speak of the Town Pound, sheep and cattle markets, and bounties offered for crows, all of which suggest an agricultural economy. In many respects Baldwin's economy during all her history was a self-sustaining one. Logging was an early occupation of the people, and lumber was sawed for shipment to Portland. About 1870 the transportation problem of Baldwin was solved in the construction of the Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad. The purpose of the incorporation of the railroad was to secure the commerce of the Great Lakes region to the Atlantic through Portland. The company failed during the construction of the line through the White Mountains. The railroad experienced several failures before it was taken over by the Maine Central Railroad in 1888.

After World War I and into the 1920's, things were much the same as they had been for years. By the end of the 1920's automobiles were becoming more common. There were 172 in Town according to the Town Report. The train was still an important part of life in Baldwin and continued to be so for several years to come. Freight, such as lumber and wood products, the mail, as well as passenger service, were important.

Most people were employed as farmers or in the lumber business. There were also storekeepers, and garages and gas pumps were becoming more common. The new road (Route 113), built in 1939-40, changed the face of East Baldwin. After the war, most of the small stores were on their way out as people headed to the bigger towns and cities of Westbrook and the like to do their shopping. After the forest fire of 1947, the three sections of the Town all established fire departments, and the firehouses built by them continue to serve the Town today.

The emergence of big business in other areas and improved methods of transportation, making possible the manufacture and distribution of standard products, completely disrupted the rural mill economy in Baldwin in the mid twentieth century. Only farming and some lumbering, as stated, now occupy the people. By 1947 Baldwin's population was back to where it was in 1810, having peaked in 1860 with 1,227 people residing in Town and falling to 694 by 1930. Today there are approximately 1560 residents of Baldwin, which marks a new high in the Town's population. In the 1950's rail passenger service was discontinued with freight service continuing on the line until the mid 1980's. The post office in North Baldwin was closed in 1955, but the grange seemed strong. The Town also built a new consolidated school. The poultry industry was strong and increased until the 1960's. Lumber mills, trucking companies, wood products manufacturing companies, the usual garages, and a small store or two kept things going during this time.

Now the Town is down to one store and one gas station. It is evident that many of the people of Baldwin work in other communities like Portland, Westbrook, Windham, and North Conway, New Hampshire. Development is generally in the housing area with several developments being built or proposed. People are now coming here to get away from the rush of city life and to be closer to nature and open space.

The Township seems to have come full circle from the year 1780.

Please note that the information in this report was obtained from "The History of Baldwin" compiled by Elizabeth Ring from 1939 through 1941, which is contained in the Baldwin Room of Brown Memorial Library, and from research done by the Baldwin Comprehensive Plan History Subcommittee as edited by Bob Flint in 2024.

Community Facilities and Services

Purpose and Introduction

Understanding what Baldwin offers residents in terms of community facilities and services is important for decision-making. As a small town, Baldwin must regularly evaluate trade-offs between offering desired facilities and services, and meeting the Town's goals around fiscal responsibility.

The Town of Baldwin has a small municipal government with jurisdiction over approximately 36 square miles. The Town provides some essential services but utilizes municipal and county partnerships to provide others. The major government expenditures are education and road maintenance.

Inventory

Government

Baldwin utilizes a Town Meeting and Selectboard form of government. Three selectboard members are elected at the annual Town Meeting to operate the government in alternating three-year terms. The Town Clerk, Road Commissioner, and School Board Director are also elected, while the Planning Board and Appeals Board each have five members and two alternates who are appointed volunteers. Baldwin employs a code enforcement officer, a deputy town clerk, and an administrative assistant.

Community Facilities and Properties

Major facilities include the combined Town Office and Community Center, the site of the Town's former elementary school. This site includes three ball fields and two playgrounds. It is also the start of a recreational trail system. The Town owns the New Cemetery and the West Baldwin Cemetery. The Town maintains both, plus the North Baldwin Cemetery and all private cemeteries in town except where the landowners request otherwise. The Town owns 42 acres of land surrounding the Town Office and Community Center in lot 5-013, which includes one woodlot, the Town Garage, gravel pit, and the New Cemetery. Baldwin owns another 56-acre woodlot, lot 10-24; it is a mountainous, landlocked piece from the original grant of land from the state of Massachusetts located behind Nature's Wilderness property. Baldwin owns the Town Farm (lot 5-015), which is 135 acres. The Town owns the Sand Pond Beach, with access limited to residents of Baldwin. The Town also owns an aggregate of approximately 25 acres in the Pantherville Pines area.

Several amenities throughout Baldwin are owned and operated by non-profits or private entities and are critical to the community. Brown Memorial Library in east Baldwin is a stand-alone 501(c)3 run by a board of directors. The Library provides essential services to folks, especially the several Baldwin households with no access to internet, phone, or printing. One group, the Grateful Undead, addresses aging-in-place needs, such as

coordinating rides to medical appointments for elderly folks. Additionally, a volunteer Auxiliary Group tries to help households in need when possible, all by word-of-mouth.

Health and Safety Services

Historically, Baldwin has not provided municipal public health and safety services. Police services are available from the Maine State Police or Cumberland County Sheriff's Department. Ambulance services are available through the Town of Standish. The closest hospital is Bridgton Hospital in Bridgton, while an outpatient facility--Sacopec Valley Health Center--is located in Porter and a medical clinic--Steep Falls Family Medicine--is located in Steep Falls. However, Baldwin established its own fire department in November of 2023. In founding the fire department, Baldwin's three volunteer departments, which operated independently in East, West, and North Baldwin, were united. The animal control officer is an employee of Standish who is paid for part-time service to Baldwin.

Residents access water through private wells. There is no public water system in Baldwin. Likewise, there is no public sewer or wastewater treatment system. Individual on-site septic systems are utilized. Baldwin is a member of the Tri-Town Waste Facility, a transfer station located in South Hiram. The Central Maine Power Company supplies electric power to Baldwin.

The Town belongs to SAD 55, but no public schools operate in the Town. Students attend Sacopec Valley elementary, middle, and high schools. Total enrollment at the three schools was 996 in 2024.

Summary

Baldwin's public facilities and services are limited but typical of a rural community, where the Town does not have a large population nor a central village area with significant residential and commercial development. While the Town does have a fire department and a combined Town Hall and community center, Baldwin is dependent on other sources for police protection, ambulance and emergency rescue services, health care, and schools.

INVENTORY CHAPTER 9

Existing Land Use

Purpose and Introduction

The general land use pattern of Baldwin reflects a typical Maine mixture of scattered rural villages at major road intersections, residential and commercial development along main travel routes (Routes 113 and 107/11), farmland, and undeveloped forestland. Traditionally an agricultural community, agricultural land use diminished during the early 1900s. Cleared agricultural land reverted to forestland. With the advent of the automobile, Route 113 became a major travel route. In more recent years, Baldwin has seen an increase in the number of new residents who commute to the Greater Portland or York County area for employment.

Baldwin adopted a zoning ordinance in 1974. Before then, development, although limited, happened organically, following historic patterns. When the zoning ordinance was created, village zones were also based on the historic pattern and existing development. As Baldwin plans for the future, the town should consider how the existing zoning ordinance has impacted development, and how it should evolve over the next 10-15 years.

General Land Use

Despite increasing development pressures in neighboring towns, Baldwin has remained a largely rural community. Development is dominated by residential and seasonal housing, with limited commercial and industrial uses throughout the community. Development is concentrated in three villages – North Baldwin, West Baldwin, and East Baldwin. The most commercial uses are found in East Baldwin. Several small neighborhoods are scattered throughout town at major intersections. Other residential development organically follows the road network along Routes 113 and 107. There have been very limited industrial uses in the town's history, including lumber and wood processing.

Although Baldwin has seen an increase in development over the past 5-10 years, the town is still mostly undeveloped. Large private land holdings and conserved lands contribute to this pattern. There are some other development constraints, such as elevations, steep slopes, and wetlands that make a large part of the community best suited to open space.

Current Zoning Districts

The current land use ordinance, last amended October 29, 2024, includes four zones, while the Shoreland Zoning, last amended March 10, 2018, includes two districts. The current zones are typical of a rural Maine community, and include a balance of allowed residential, commercial, and industrial uses as well as protections for open space and natural resources. The following section highlights the purpose of the district, taken directly from the ordinance, as well as some of the allowable uses and standards. This is meant to be a

summary of the existing zones and does not include all details and requirements included in the ordinance itself.

Village Commercial (VC) District

The purpose of the village commercial district is to provide for neighborhood and compatible commercial development in the vicinity of East Baldwin, West Baldwin and North Baldwin.

The village district allows many uses, but most require a conditional use permit, such as retail and office businesses and schools. Uses such as single and two family residential, emergency services, forestry, and agriculture are permitted without a conditional use permit. The minimum lot size in this zone is 2 acres.

Rural (R) District

The purpose of the rural district is to conserve the qualities of the open rural open space, including agricultural and forestry uses while encouraging low intensity development compatible with the physical capability of the land.

The Rural district is very similar to the Village Commercial district in its allowed uses. It allows the same residential uses as the village district but allows for more recreational uses such as campgrounds and other commercial recreation. All dimensional requirements, including minimum lot size, are the same as in the village commercial district.

Highland (H) District

The purpose of the highland district is to recognize the inherent limitations for development posed by the higher elevations and steep slopes in this district, while allowing very low intensity development compatible with physical capability of the land.

Excluding the resource protection zone, the highland district has the fewest allowed uses. Single and two-family residences are permitted, along with emergency services, forestry, and agriculture. The minimum lot size is 10 acres, which limits land disturbance from more intense development. Additional permitted uses primarily involve recreation, both primitive and commercial.

Natural Resource Protection (RP) District

The purpose of the natural resource protection district is to protect fragile ecological systems, which, if intensively developed or substantially altered, would damage water quality, wildlife and aquatic habitat and biotic systems, and ecological relationships. To accomplish this purpose, uses are permitted which avoid disruption of the natural environment, while allowing productive use to be made of the land.

The Natural Resource Protection district is the most restrictive of the base zones, with only a few allowed uses related to emergency services, forestry, and agriculture. This district is primarily located around important natural resources, such as Sand Pond.

Shoreland Zoning

Resource Protection

The Resource Protection District includes areas in which development would adversely affect water quality, productive habitat, biological ecosystems, or scenic and natural values.

The Resource Protection district is mandated by statewide shoreland zoning regulations. It covers several specific areas including 250ft buffers along freshwater wetlands and wetlands associated with great ponds and rivers, flood plains, and areas of contiguous steep slopes. Very limited residential and commercial uses are allowed in the resource protection zone, and they must follow performance standards specific to the shoreland zoning.

Stream Protection

The Stream Protection District includes all land areas within seventy-five (75) feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-water line of a stream, exclusive of those areas within two-hundred and fifty (250) feet, horizontal distance, of the normal highwater line of a great pond, or river, or within two hundred and fifty (250) feet, horizontal distance, of the upland edge of a freshwater or coastal wetland.

Similar to the Resource Protection district, the Stream Protection district serves as a development buffer for protected water resources. Very minimal development is permitted within this zone, and is primarily limited to minor residential, agriculture, and conservation/wildlife management.

Issues and Implications

One of the many ongoing challenges with zoning ordinances is the unpredicted popularity of specific uses. No zoning ordinance can predict every possible use that may come to the community, so ordinances usually include some clause for defining a use.

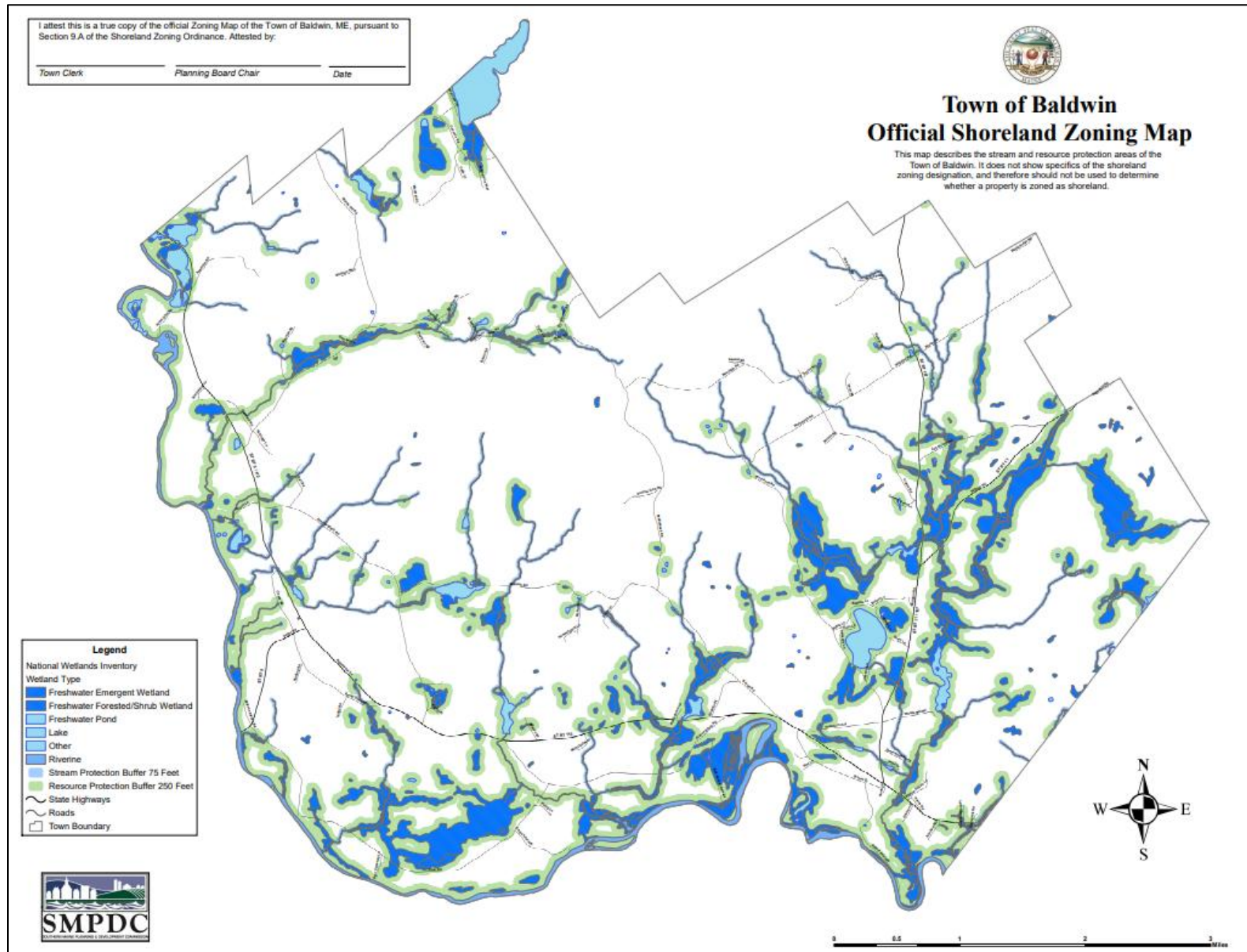
In recent years, towns and cities have dealt with new and emerging uses. For instance, large scale commercial solar arrays have become more popular and widespread across the state after the passage of legislation incentivizing renewable energy. This is a specific use which comes with several land use challenges, such as proper siting, buffers, decommissioning, and land maintenance. The town should consider whether this zoning ordinance includes all the necessary use categories as time goes on.

The Community Survey showed that 69% of respondents are satisfied with the current 2-acre minimum lot size for residential development in the Rural district. Similarly, 73% of

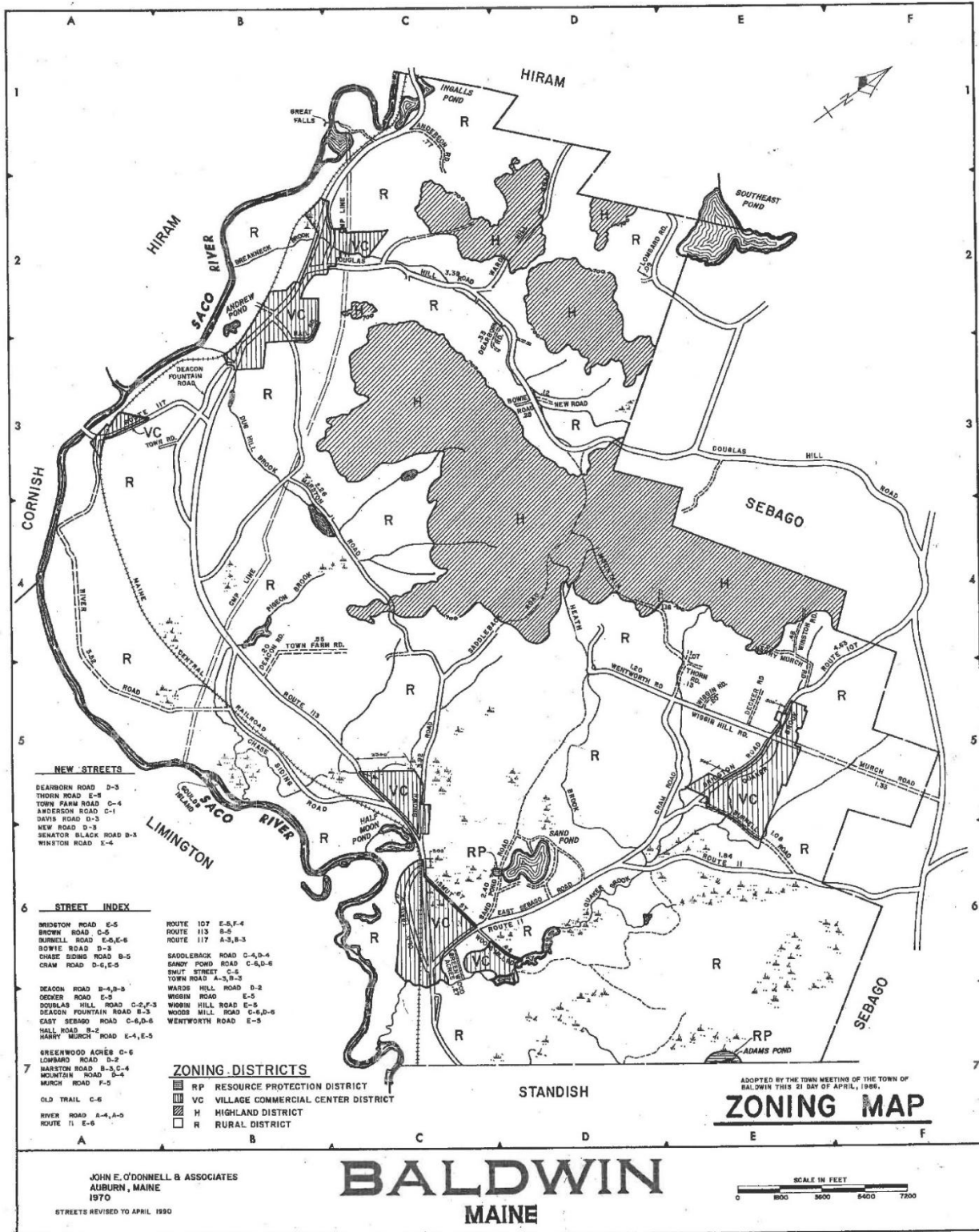
respondents are satisfied with the 2-acre minimum lot size in the Village Commercial district. Many comments agreed that 2-acre lots strike a good balance between rural character and developed land. Some comments suggested that the minimum lot size in the Village Commercial could be lessened to 1-acre. Residents believe that decreasing the minimum lot size may result in housing at an undesirable density. Comments from the 23% of respondents who would like to see a larger minimum lot size in Baldwin expressed concern for overcrowding and suburbanization, while suggesting that the zoning be amended to allow for smaller lots in more developed areas and larger lots in rural areas of town.

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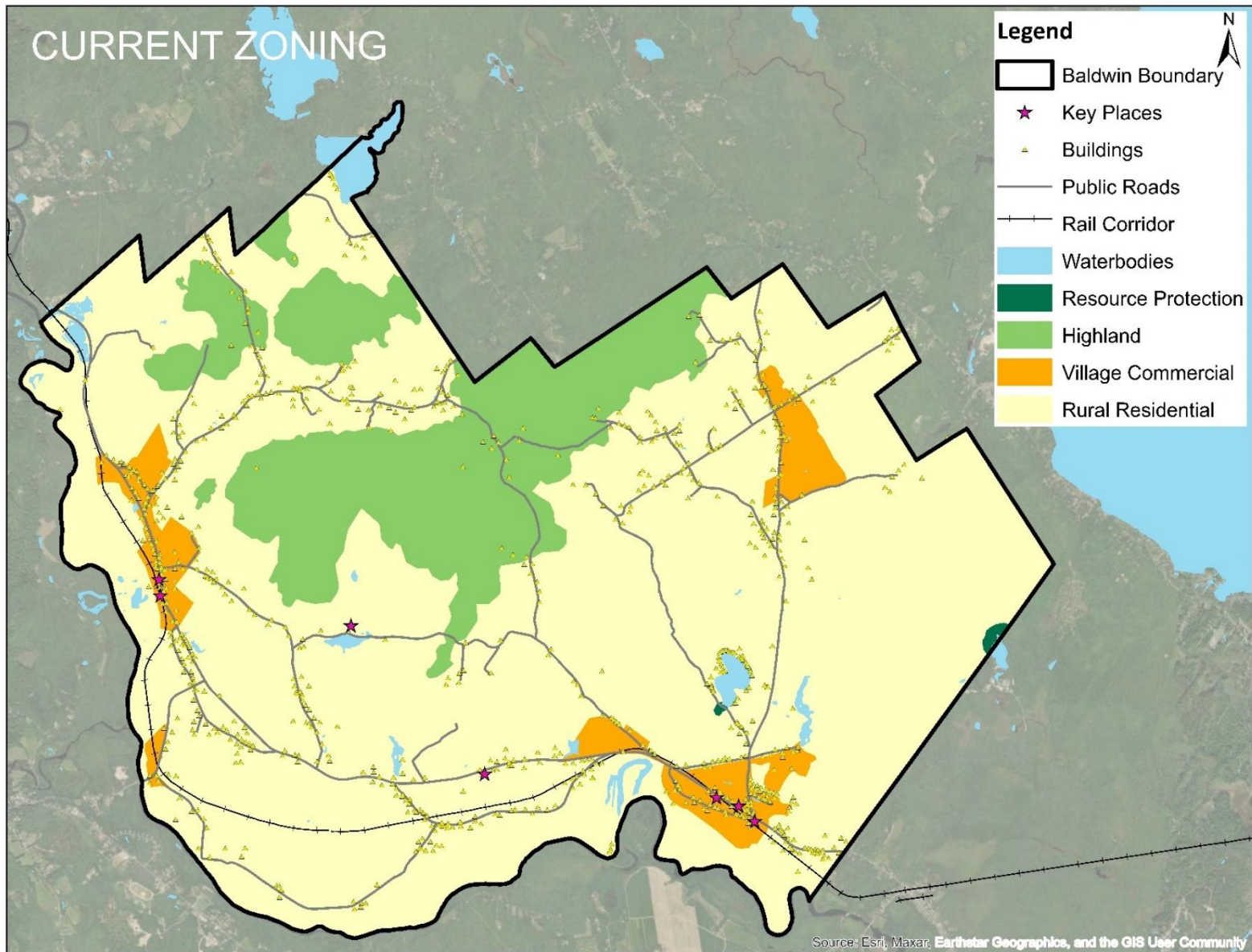
Land Use Map 1: Shoreland Zoning Map



Land Use Map 2: Official Current Zoning Map



Land Use Map 3: Unofficial Current Zoning Map (Digitized, in-color version of Map)



ACTION CHAPTER 1

Implementation

Purpose and Introduction

While the inventory chapters paint a picture of Baldwin today, the implementation chapter guides decision-making in Baldwin moving forward. Data analyzed in the inventory chapters, public feedback and community sentiment gained through the planning process, and planning best practices inform the outcomes of this chapter. The major outcomes are conveyed in 1) the Vision, which summarizes Baldwin's future desires, 2) the Future Land Use map, which establishes the desired land uses in Baldwin and influences what zoning decisions can be made, and 3) the Implementation Table, which outlines the strategies and tactics that the Town will use to implement its goals over the next five to ten years.

Vision

The vision is comprised of a vision statement and a list of goals. The vision statement communicates the overarching picture of what Baldwin aims to be moving forward. All goals, strategies, and tactics should support the vision statement, working to turn that vision into a reality. Baldwin's vision statement is as follows:

The people of Baldwin cherish their proximity to nature, sense of community, and self-sufficiency. As a close-knit community with pride in its historic and rural roots, Baldwin will balance small-town simplicity with the recognition of today's changing environment, especially emerging housing and service needs. Baldwin will retain its quiet, rural character by preserving large tracts of undeveloped land, supporting working woodlands and farmlands, continuing to allow areas for large residential lots, and promoting small, local businesses. Baldwin will foster a high quality of life for residents of all ages that will encourage future generations to continue to call Baldwin home.

The Comprehensive Plan Committee developed the following eleven goals based upon the vision statement, community outreach, the 1991 Comprehensive Plan, trends revealed through the Inventory chapters, and Committee discussions. Baldwin's goals for the lifespan of this Plan are:

1. Maintain the open, rural, and small-town character of Baldwin.
2. Make growth-related decisions based on infrastructure capacity, environmental conservation, and town finances.
3. Rights of property owners must be maintained. There should be a clear and compelling reason for the Town to limit property rights.

4. Promote a high quality of life for families and people of all ages, ethnicities, and incomes.
5. Keep Baldwin affordable and fiscally responsible.
6. Make Baldwin an environmental, natural-resource based business-friendly community.
7. Protect Baldwin's unique and important natural resources.
8. Conserve Baldwin's largely natural, undeveloped pattern of land uses. Increase access to and responsible use of open spaces.
9. Maintain a safe and effective roadway system for vehicles, bicyclists, and people walking.
10. Maintain Baldwin's historic development pattern.
11. Celebrate Baldwin's history as an agrarian and forest-based community.

Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan designates areas of the community that are most and least suited for future development in various forms, including residential, commercial, open space, or natural resource industries, and identifies strategies for Baldwin to use to develop and preserve land accordingly.

Baldwin residents are largely satisfied with the existing land use pattern of large lot residential areas, vast undeveloped landscapes, and core village areas. **Looking to the future, residents have expressed priorities of preventing sprawl and conserving undeveloped natural areas. However, the existing zoning regulations have produced (and will continue to produce) a gradually sprawling development pattern, a pattern which will exacerbate over time, and the existing zoning regulations offer minimal protections for natural resources and rural land-based lifestyles.**

The committee therefore aimed to create a Future Land Use Plan that **will actively support agricultural and forestry activities and private property rights while discouraging random, sprawled growth.** This Future Land Use Plan strategically directs expected growth to areas where it will be best served by municipal facilities and services (which is most cost-effective for the Town), minimizes areas that allow sprawl, and maximizes areas to preserve Baldwin's beautiful landscape and natural resources. **It accomplishes this by identifying and defining three land use designations: Rural Residential Living, Rural Land-based Activities, and Villages.**

Note: The Interplay of Future Land Use and the Zoning Ordinance

It is important to understand that land uses and zones are related but not the same thing. In the Future Land Use Plan, land uses are conceptual: these are places in Baldwin that are identified to be most suited for a certain type of use, such as residential, in the future. The most powerful strategy for implementing the Future Land Use Plan is the Zoning Ordinance.

Zoning is the set of specific regulations that guide development in an area and includes four major parts: allowed and prohibited uses of land, dimensional standards (setbacks, height, etc.), density (units per acre), and boundaries of zones. The Future Land Use Map can be implemented through adjustments to any one or all of these four parts of the zoning ordinance.

So, how do the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Ordinance interact in practice?

Interaction 1: The Planning Board proposes updates to the Zoning Ordinance to align with this Comprehensive Plan, through a public process that includes public meetings, at least one public hearing, and a Town Meeting. These scenarios are all possible:

- 1) The Planning Board, using the Comprehensive Plan and public feedback, could suggest that the existing Zoning Ordinance does in fact largely reflect the Future Land Use Plan, adopted by the public through the Comprehensive Plan, but just needs minor tweaks, such as:
 - a. **New Performance Standards for specific activities in specific zones.** For example, adding “Right to Engage in Forestry and Agricultural Activities” clauses for the Highland District could protect people engaged in rural land-based activities from nuisance claims from neighbors without changing allowed or prohibited uses. Or,
 - b. **A new Overlay Zone.** An overlay zone could perhaps match the Rural Land-Based Activities area in the Future Land Use Map and include extra protections for rural land-based activities within that overlay while maintaining the allowed uses of the underlying zones.
- 2) The Planning Board, using the Comprehensive Plan and public feedback, could suggest that the existing Zoning Ordinance does not properly reflect the Future Land Use Plan, adopted by the public through the Comprehensive Plan, and work to propose more significant changes to the ordinance, such as:
 - a. **One new zone per area in the Future Land Use Map:** a Village Zone, a Rural Land-Based Activities Zone, and a Rural Residential Living Zone. The Planning Board would have to work with the public to determine for all three new zones each of the four major parts of zoning (allowed and prohibited uses, dimensional standards, density, and boundaries). Or,

- b. **Multiple new zones per area in the Future Land Use Map**, such as distinct zones for each Village or different residential zones for different parts of the Rural Residential Living and Rural Land-Based Activities areas. The Planning Board would have to work with the public to determine for all zones each of the four major parts of zoning (allowed and prohibited uses, dimensional standards, density, and boundaries). Some zones could allow the same uses but differ in their density or dimensional standards, i.e. one allows 1 housing unit per 2 acres while another allows 1 housing unit per 5 acres. Or,
- c. **Boundary adjustments to existing Zones**. The Planning Board proposes boundary changes to existing zones but only small adjustments to allowed and prohibited uses, dimensional standards, or density. The Planning Board would have to work with the public to determine the new boundaries.

For any one of these scenarios to occur, a thorough public process is required. The public would help determine which of the strategies is most appropriate and most in line with the public's will. And, as Baldwin utilizes a Town Meeting form of government, the public has the final say when they vote at Town Meeting.

Interaction 2: Say that a property owner wants to open a flower shop on her land. Currently, her property is in a residential zone that prohibits all commercial activity. However, the town has not yet updated the Zoning Ordinance following the new Comprehensive Plan, and the Future Land Use Map identifies the area for residential **and** neighborhood commercial uses. This application would then spur the Town to approve a zoning change for her, updating the ordinance to reflect the community's desires as reflected in the Future Land Use Plan.

The Future Land Use designations within the Map are described in detail below and on the following pages:

Rural Residential Living

PURPOSE: This future land use designation is for **large-lot, residential living** and enables traditional, self-reliant, **country lifestyles** and **outdoor-oriented activities like agriculture and forest management**. There are few roads in this area and most residences are located along long roads rather than in neighborhoods or cul-de-sacs.

LOCATIONS: Unless in one of the four Village areas, most land near Baldwin's significant year-round roads makes up the area in this future land use designation.

CORRESPONDING ZONES: Baldwin's *Rural District zone* appropriately provides for this future land use designation.

Rural Land-based Activities

PURPOSE: This future land use designation **focuses on minimizing sprawled development, supporting rural living, and conserving large tracts of undeveloped lands.** Responsible forest management, rural residential, homesteading, agriculture, land preserves, conservation and open space areas, and similar land-based activities are appropriate land uses here. Environmentally destructive land uses like factories are not appropriate, nor is suburban sprawl.

LOCATIONS: Land currently zoned as Highland District (generally higher elevation areas), Resource Protection (Shoreland zoning areas), and already permanently conserved areas (such as the Steep Falls Wildlife Management Area) are included in this future land use designation.

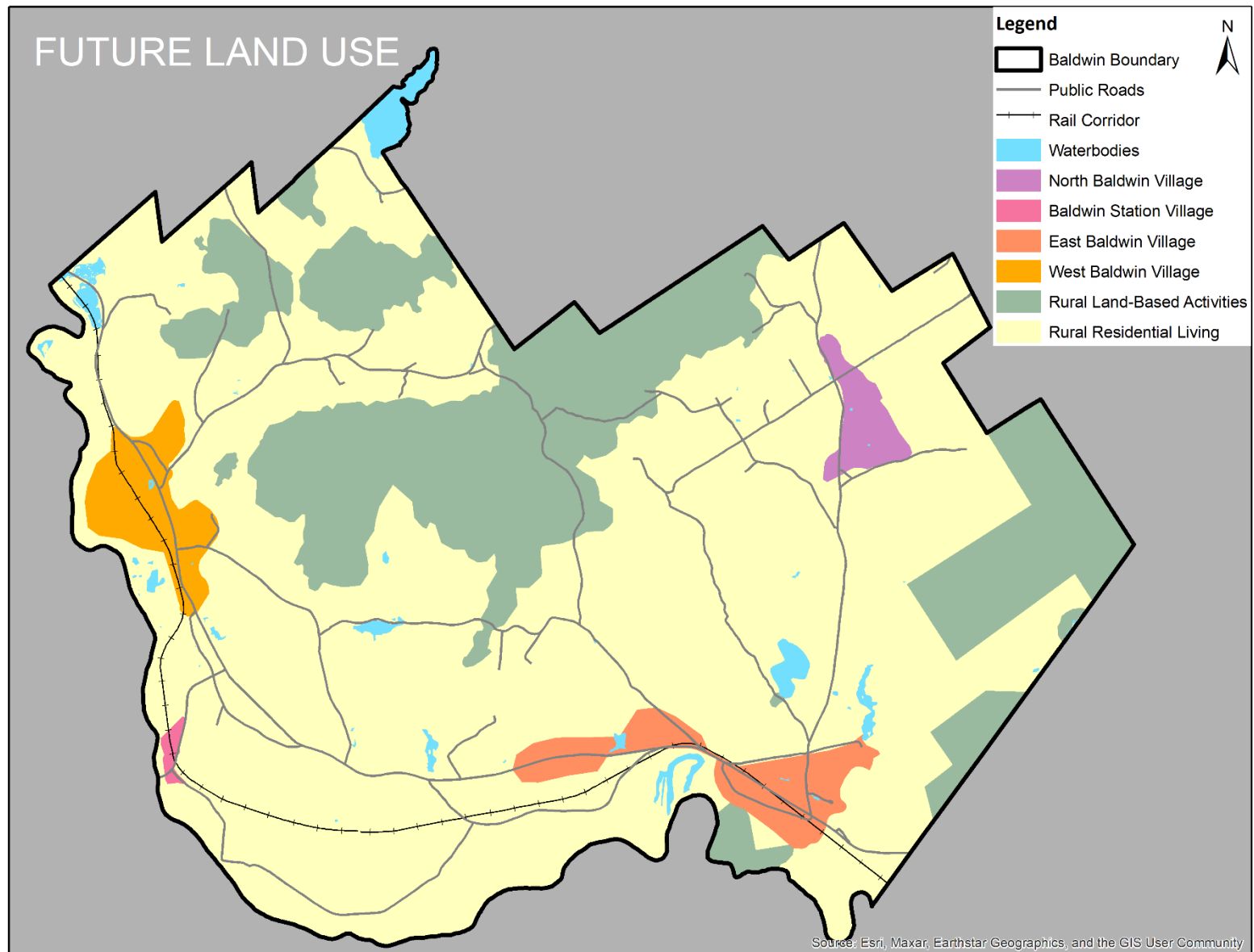
CORRESPONDING ZONES: Baldwin's *Highland District*, *Natural Resource Protection District*, and *Stream Protection District* zones provide for this future land use designation. However, refining the *Highland District* as well as creating a *Farming and Forestry District* and a *Conservation District* could better align desired future land uses and zoning. A future Farming and Forestry District could, for example, provide *extra* benefits and reduced barriers to those activities (while still allowing these activities in other zones too and while still allowing the same rural residential uses). Additionally, this Future Land Use Plan expands Rural Land-based Activities into already conserved areas that are currently zoned *Rural District*, to **reduce the potential for sprawled growth in areas that are not appropriate for larger residential developments.**

Villages

PURPOSE: This future land use designation is for residential, institutional, and commercial uses in a traditional New England Village style. It encompasses the areas in which residents interact with each other the most and acts as the hubs of the community. Directing future development to these already less rural areas is a critical strategy for maintaining the rural character of the rest of Baldwin.

LOCATIONS: There are four distinct Villages in Baldwin: North Baldwin Village, East Baldwin Village, West Baldwin Village, and Baldwin Station Village.

CORRESPONDING ZONES: Baldwin's *Village Commercial zone* appropriately provides for this future land use designation. This Future Land Use Plan recommends expanding the East Baldwin Village westward to include the Baldwin Town Hall/Community Center. It also recommends expanding the West Baldwin Village westward to the former railroad line and future Mountain Division Trail as well as toward the gravel pit area.



Implementation Plan

While the Comprehensive Plan Committee has stewarded this plan to completion, it will be the work of all town staff, committees, boards, and commissions to ensure implementation. The committee understands that many factors are at play in the community at any given time. To this end, the goals, strategies, and tactics have been written with the intent that the boards and committees who will be involved with each action have some flexibility and decision-making power in how tactics are implemented, based on the current conditions at the time. The primary implementation groups will be the Selectboard and the Planning Board. The Implementation Tables (Strategies and Tactics tables) in the following pages also list a variety of responsible parties that the implementing parties will need to consult and partner with to successfully accomplish many actions. There are a few recommendations which urge the town to consider the need for additional staff over time, or additional resources for existing staff, to increase their ability to dedicate time to recommended actions as well.

Amongst the list of 51 tactics, the Comprehensive Plan Committee identified the top five priority tactics. These are:

- Explore hiring a grant writer.
- Use a public planning process to create an access management plan for public open spaces and recreation areas.
- Designate a town ambassador to businesses and/or a community and economic development director to target small businesses, especially nature and recreation-based ones.
- Review and improve zoning ordinances, including revising zoning standards to better support farming and forestry as well as conservation activities.
- Explore options for a bus service by partnering with neighboring municipalities.

Annually, the Selectboard shall review the Goals, Strategies, and Tactics and identify 3-5 Selectboard focuses which should be prioritized for the following year. Capital needs for these strategies will be incorporated into that year's budget. The Selectboard may engage the Planning Board during the annual prioritization process.

Any actions not requiring Selectboard approval or capital investment may be undertaken anytime the responsible parties have available resources and capacity. Responsible parties should notify the Selectboard of any progress at least annually. The Planning Board, as the primary implementation party for all zoning and ordinance updates, shall take initiative to begin those actions as they see fit. The Selectboard will draft a report for the town's Annual Report.

Regional Coordination

Coordination with surrounding towns remains important, especially as it relates to shared services and facilities as well as to transportation and natural resources, which permeate town boundaries. Looking toward the future, this plan recommends several strategies for improving regional coordination and creating more regular engagement with neighboring communities. As the town works to address future challenges, regional solutions are considered. Working with the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission, the regional planning organization, and state agencies will also help the town engage with other communities, and ensure actions are consistent with the region when appropriate.

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Implementation Table 1: Land Use and Natural Resources, 1		
Strategies	Tactics	Responsible Party
Keep growth near existing services, facilities, and amenities. Direct growth toward the Village Commercial District and away from the Natural Resource Protection District and Highland District.	Continue to utilize clustered residential development to support a development pattern in keeping with the Town's historic development trends in all zones and to conserve open space.	PB
	Require all new multi-unit or subdivision developments in the rural and highland districts to dedicate land for open space.	PB with support
	Review within one year, and thereafter every two years, the dimensional and density requirements in the Town's Zoning Ordinance and recommend changes in keeping with the Comprehensive Plan.	PB
	Adopt a Highway Overlay that has design standards for non-residential buildings built along state routes.	PB with support
Encourage traditional forestry and agricultural industries, sound woodlot management practices, and minimal impacts of development on the natural resources around it.	Review and improve zoning ordinances, including revising zoning standards to better support farming and forestry as well as conservation activities.	PB with support
	Use a public planning process to create an access management plan for new public open spaces and recreation areas.	PB with support
	Apply for grant programs to support erosion control and water quality projects.	SB

Implementation Table Key:

SB = Select Board; PB = Planning Board; HS = Historical Society

Implementation Table 2: Land Use and Natural Resources, 2		
Strategies	Tactics	Responsible Party
Prioritize conserving large tracts of land.	Contact every property owner of at least 100 acres and learn their priorities and preferences when it comes to development and conservation.	PB
	Encourage 30% of Baldwin's land (about 7,000 acres) to be placed under a conservation easement, land trust, or public ownership.	PB with non-profit partners
Examine policies around unique and sensitive natural resources.	Review and improve site plan and subdivision standards for environmental conservation and natural resource protection best practices.	PB with support
	Create and/or preserve access to The Ledges and Town-owned land to celebrate viewsheds.	SB with support
Maintain the high quality of the Town's waterbodies and groundwater.	Track environmentally sensitive areas and their mitigation needs.	SB with DEP and Saco River Corridor Commission

Implementation Table Key:

SB = Select Board; PB = Planning Board; HS = Historical Society

Implementation Table 3: Economic Development and Town Finances		
Strategy	Tactics	Responsible Party
Encourage new, small commercial, service, and clean light industrial uses in designated areas. Encourage new small businesses, home-based occupations, and remote work.	Designate a town ambassador to businesses and/or a community and economic development director to target small businesses, especially but not limited to natural-resource and recreation-based ones.	SB
	Create an information packet for informing and attracting prospective small businesses.	Town staff with SB and PB input
	Appoint one or more business-oriented folks to the Planning Board to better support attracting and retaining desirable businesses.	SB
Promote local job opportunities.	Create a focus group of small business owners in Baldwin.	New Town ambassador to businesses
Keep the Town financially secure and transparent.	Keep an active and engaged budget committee.	SB
	Minimize tax increases on residents.	SB

Implementation Table Key:

SB = Select Board; PB = Planning Board; HS = Historical Society

Implementation Table 4: Quality of Life		
Strategy	Tactics	Responsible Party
Make age-friendly policies, ordinances, and services.	Facilitate and publicize a housing matching program to connect older homeowners with younger renters to improve affordable housing opportunities for both.	Town staff with SB and PB support
	Explore an ordinance on density bonuses for residential developments designed to be universally accessible and meet ADA standards, e.g. sufficiently wide door frames and curbless showers.	PB with support
	Explore ordinances, policies, and grant opportunities to support an assisted living facility.	PB with support
	Remove ordinance barriers to 55+ community housing developments.	PB with support
	Periodically provide information at town hall and during selectboard meetings about Maine Housing programs available to support low or moderate income, elderly or other disadvantaged housing in Baldwin.	SB
Support improvements to emergency services, health and wellness programs, and safety capabilities.	Reduce fire, ambulance, and police response times.	SB with EMS
	Set up a heating and cooling center at the community center.	SB with EMS
	Continue participating in regional emergency coordination efforts.	SB with EMS

Implementation Table Key:

SB = Select Board; PB = Planning Board; HS = Historical Society

Implementation Table 5: Transportation and Utilities

Strategy	Tactics	Responsible Party
Support walkability, recreation, and community interaction. Provide biking and walking options for residents to move around town.	Create a planned pedestrian and bicyclist network to connect key places in Town.	PB with support
	Support the completion of the Mountain Division Trail through Baldwin.	SB
	Create a trail to The Ledges and other viewpoints.	SB
Strategically support regular improvements to and maintenance of roads.	Establish a Town policy for retaining unpaved and/or discontinuing roads in those areas where growth is discouraged.	PB, SB
	Work with the DOT to audit signage to ensure it reflects and promotes the desired transportation behavior.	SB
	Adopt a permit system for the creation of new curb cuts onto public roads	PB
Support public transportation options.	Investigate the feasibility of small-scale public transportation, such as on-demand ride shares and vanpools.	SB
	Explore options for a bus service by partnering with neighboring municipalities.	SB with neighboring municipalities
Support the utilities and infrastructure necessary to maintain Baldwin's quality of life.	Continue regional cooperation for recycling and solid waste disposal.	SB
	Maintain the current practice of individual wells and septic systems.	PB
	Identify and set a schedule for necessary culvert updates.	SB
	Create a strategic investment plan for the Town to identify and prioritize long-term capital improvement needs.	SB

Implementation Table 6: Communications and Government

Strategy	Tactics	Responsible Party
Support the communication of community events and volunteer opportunities. Improve communication about available open space areas and recreation opportunities.	Hire a website designer to improve the town website as needed.	SB
	Update bulletin boards at trailheads with community events once per month.	Town staff
	Explore ways to share key recreational information with residents.	Town staff
	Create and distribute a 'Welcome to Baldwin' informational packet for new residents.	Town staff
Support transparent, effective, and responsive government practices.	Review the Comprehensive Plan and discuss progress, opportunities, and challenges at the April Planning Board meeting annually.	PB
	Explore hiring a grant writer.	SB
	Actively develop relationships with neighboring communities, state representatives, state agencies, and local non-profits.	SB, Town staff
	Coordinate with York County Community College, Southern Maine Community College, and University of Southern Maine to engage students in projects for Baldwin.	SB with PB input
Preserve and publicize Baldwin's historical assets.	Identify stone walls, cemeteries, and historic sites for preservation.	HS
	Notify new homeowners of historic buildings and connect them with historic preservation resources.	HS
	Reinstate Baldwin's Old Home Days.	SB with HS
	Explore partnering with Nature's Wilderness to give tours of the Deacon property.	HS
	Partner with willing property owners to create a self-led historic sites tour of Baldwin.	HS

