

Executive Summary

The Wiscasset Bath Road Master Plan (Plan) seeks to maximize development opportunities along Bath Road through the strategic coordination of traffic infrastructure improvements, land use policies and design standards while maintaining or improving the mobility and safety of U.S. Route 1. By planning for growth, Bath Road will increase safety, reduce congestion and enhance the visual character. Ultimately, this Master Plan is intended to help Wiscasset (the Town) shape a future for Bath Road and surrounding areas that reflects the needs and values of the community and preserves the Midcoast Region's most important arterial highway.

The Plan covers the areas adjacent to U.S. Route 1 (Bath Road) from the Woolwich-Wiscasset town line to the northerly intersection of Flood Avenue and Bath Road. Refer to **Figure ES-1** for a map of the Plan area.

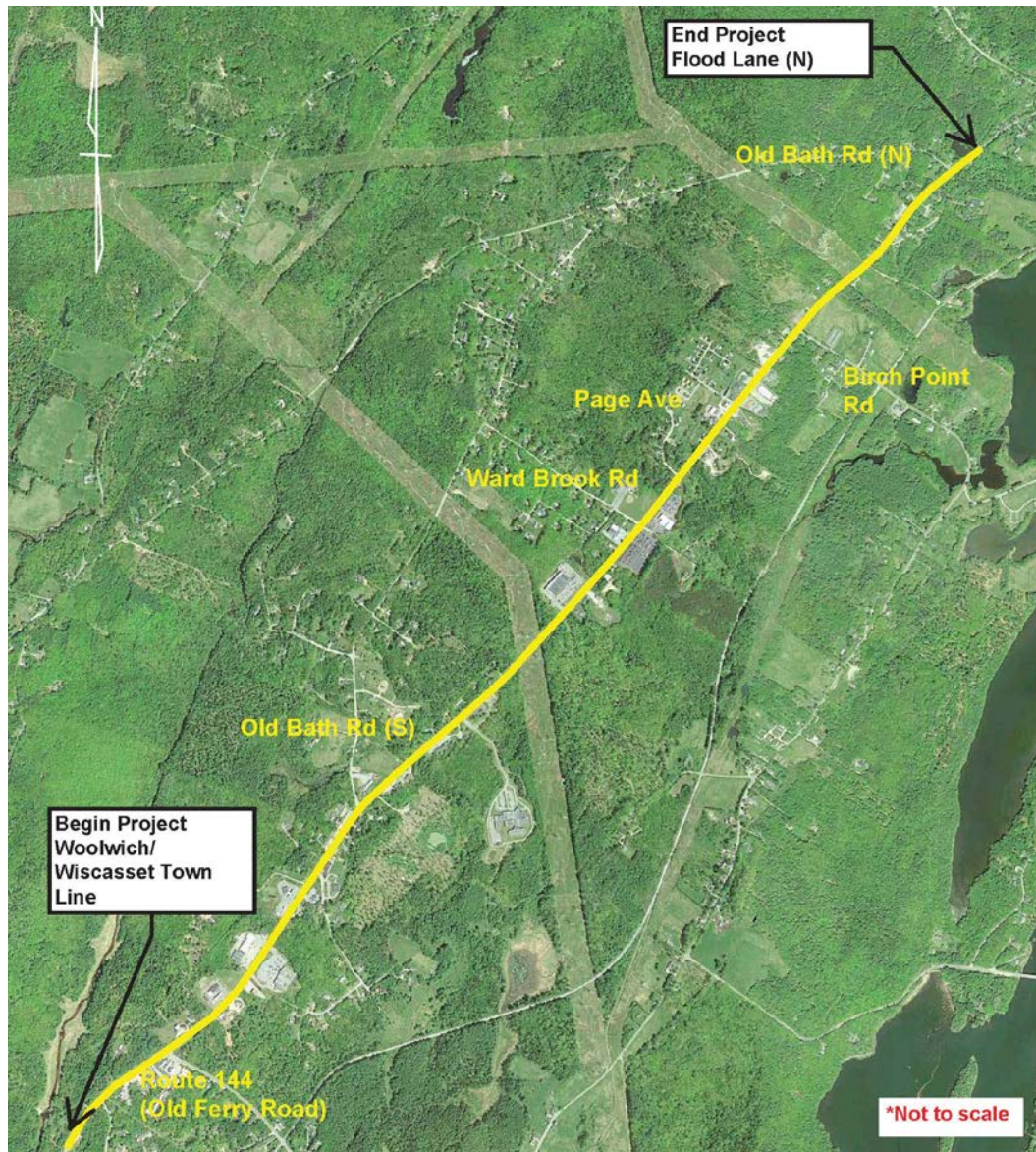
The goals of the Plan are to:

1. Identify traffic improvements within the highway and on adjacent, developed and developable properties to meet the needs of existing and future development, while maintaining or improving the highway's mobility, safety and capacity;
2. Provide concept plans and street networks demonstrating the potential for development adjacent to the corridor that improves local pedestrian and vehicular circulation;
3. Develop a responsible plan for coordinated highway infrastructure improvements and transportation enhancements as well as practical financing strategies needed to implement the plan;
4. Provide design standards for corridor preservation;
5. Identify transportation-related land use strategies incorporating best management practices to facilitate corridor preservation consistent with Wiscasset's Comprehensive Plan; and
6. Balance the needs of residents with those travelling through Wiscasset.

Town Staff, MaineDOT, the Lincoln County Planning Commission, the Bath Road Master Plan Steering Committee, area stakeholders and the community at large all have assisted in the development of this Plan.

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan identifies Bath Road for growth. However, development along Bath Road is occurring on a parcel-by-parcel basis with no overall community vision taking into account visual quality, the efficient use of adjacent lands, safety, and coordinated traffic improvements. As a result, the Town will likely experience haphazard development along Bath Road and lose opportunities to provide a more efficient traffic pattern and livable community.

It is a high priority of the 2008 Wiscasset Comprehensive Plan to create "different open space as well as business zones along Bath Road in order to leave some open space." The Comprehensive Plan further clarifies this by stating that planning policies and development standards should "not permit a continuous strip of development to emerge from the Woolwich line to the Village center. This would have negative effects on the Town's ability to grow as a tourist destination, as well as on the flow of traffic on U.S. Route One." Thus, a diversity of development options that are sensitive to the environment, safety and mobility are central to striking a good balance between growth and community character.

Figure ES-1 Study Area

The Plan is based on three guiding principles:

1. Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)

The Plan is based on the Context Sensitive Solutions planning process (CSS). CSS is a response to the frustration that communities often experience with transportation planning by using a collaborative approach involving all stake holders. In particular, this frustration is with the long-term impacts and types of place that result when the movement of vehicles is favored to the exclusion of other modes of travel (such as pedestrians and bicycles). In the case of Bath Road, diverse mobility options are not the focus of the Plan, but instead on how the transportation infrastructure is sensitive to the context. By integrating land use with mobility, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Synergies are established allowing for responsible growth patterns that maximize investments in the Bath Road infrastructure improvements. The CSS approach mobilizes a community partnership around a place and working with goals and an implementation strategy leads to an articulated and attainable future.

2. Complete Streets

Bath Road is a regional arterial highway primarily serving vehicles, but it is also the coastal route for cyclists and as identified in the planning process there are areas where increased pedestrian infrastructure could encourage economic development and help differentiate Bath Road into a series of places, even if these places are linear in nature or nodes along the corridor. Specifically, shoulders (for bicycle use) are recommended for both sides of Bath Road. Sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities are recommended between Page Avenue and Birch Point Road.

New neighborhoods and street networks accessing backlands will accommodate local traffic, dispersing traffic and providing connectivity for all modes of travel. Neighborhoods should also include trail networks to link open space areas.

3. Location Efficient Design

Location efficient design incorporates the integration of best management mobility practices with coordinated development. Location efficient design is applied to new developments and retrofits of existing development to create street networks that maximize connectivity, new development frontage on backlands and ultimately guide vehicular movement to controlled access points on Bath Road. In terms of the proposed zoning for Bath Road, location efficient design is most applicable to the proposed Bath Road Mixed-Use and Bath Road Village Districts where there is a depth of developable land to the east and west of Bath Road. The third proposed District, the Bath Road Commercial District, has limited growth opportunities to the east and west due to existing residential neighborhoods and environmental constraints, thus the focus in this district is on access management versus creating a network of streets dispersing local traffic.

Master Plan Recommendations

The recommendations of this Plan are based on detailed review of existing traffic infrastructures, volumes and safety history, growth projections, the June, 2012 MaineDOT Bath Road Safety Audit, an analysis of existing land use patterns, a summary of the relevant goals, policies and standards of the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance as well as direct input from staff, the Steering Committee and the community.

The implementation of this plan through new traffic infrastructure improvements, ordinance amendments and development review will create a Bath Road that is a series of “places” rather than “zones” while improving the safety and capacity of Bath Road to support growth. Bath Road will always serve primarily as a major regional transportation corridor. Although it is a major transportation corridor, it does not need to evolve into “anywhere” USA. By responding to the specific needs of the community and addressing obstacles in a responsible manner, the corridor can reflect its context and, in turn, what is special about the Town of Wiscasset.

The Implementation of the Plan is divided into four basic categories:

1. Transportation;
2. Zoning and Land Use;
3. Design Standards; and
4. Finance

1. Transportation

Six types of transportation improvements are recommended:

1. Intersection Improvements along Bath Road;
2. Bath Road Widening where needed to accommodate 5-foot shoulders, turning lanes and medians;
3. New Connector Roads serving developable back lands and/or providing improved traffic circulation off Bath Road;
4. Inter-parcel connections where practicable to minimize unnecessary traffic turns onto Bath Road for vehicles patronizing abutting business;
5. Consolidating access points along Bath Road so as to improve safety and reduce through-traffic disruptions; and
6. Other Highway-Related Improvements.

Implementation of the recommended highway improvements is based upon the timing of the needs and their causative factors. The recommended actions and their relative time line are summarized in the following **Table ES-1**. The timelines and associated major funding sources are defined as follows:

- Existing Deficiency – the need exists now and is related to current mobility and safety needs of Bath Road. Costs would be borne in the usual MaineDOT-municipal cost share formulas, depending on the type of work being conducted.
- General Future Growth – the needs will occur over time and are primarily due to regional traffic growth, not by developing properties in the Town of Wiscasset. The fund shares would be the same as above.
- Future Local Development – the needs will arise over time as a result of land use changes in Wiscasset within the Plan area. The costs of the needed improvements would be borne primarily by the developers and/or the Town of Wiscasset.

Table ES-1 Proposed Highway Improvements, Estimated Costs, Timelines and Fund Sources 1

Location	Highway Improvement (Priority)	Estimated Cost 2		
		Existing Deficiency	General Future Growth	Future Local Development
Bath Road at Route 144 3	Construct Left Turn Lane on SB Bath Road Approach (<i>Mid-Term</i>)	\$35,000	n/a	n/a
	Provide Separate Left & Right Turn Lanes on Rte. 144 Approach (<i>Mid-Term</i>)	\$100,000	n/a	n/a
	Install Traffic Signal when Warranted (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$245,000
	Create 4th Leg of Intersection for Back Land Development Access (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	X
Bath Road at Old Bath Road (S)	Construct Left Turn Lane on NB Bath Road Approach (<i>Mid-Term</i>)	\$35,000	n/a	n/a
	Widen SB Bath Road <i>Shoulder</i> or Provide Right Turn Lane (<i>Mid-Term</i>)	\$110,000	n/a	n/a
	Construct Separate Left & Right Turn Lanes on Old Bath Road (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$120,000

Table ES-1 Proposed Highway Improvements, Estimated Costs, Timelines and Fund Sources				
Bath Road at Birch Point Road 3	Construct Left Turn Lane on SB Bath Road Approach (<i>Mid-Term</i>)	\$50,000	n/a	n/a
	Construct Separate Left & Right Turn Lanes on Birch Point Road (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	\$50,000	n/a
	Install Traffic Signal when Warranted (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$245,000
	Create 4th Leg of Intersection for Back Land Development Access (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	X
Bath Road - Add 3rd Lane	South of Route 144 to Shady Lane (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$120,000
	Route 144 to Wood Road (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$30,000
	Ames True Value to Birch Point Road (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$260,000
Bath Road - Shoulder Widening (for Bicycle Access)⁴	NB and SB near Dunkin Donuts and Skillin Lane (<i>Mid-Term</i>)	\$50,000	n/a	n/a
	NB & SB Intermittently Old Bath Road to Wood Lane (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$250,000
	NB & SB Intermittently Ames True Value to Wood Lane (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$250,000
	NB & SB Intermittently Ward Brook Road to Page Avenue (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$100,000
Bath Road - Driveway Turn Lanes	SB Right Turn Lane at McDonald's Restaurant (<i>Mid-Term</i>)	\$185,000	n/a	n/a
	SB Right Turn Lane at Ames True Value (<i>Mid-Term</i>)	\$120,000	n/a	n/a
Connector Roads	Rte. 144 to Old Bath Road (east side of Bath Road) (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$3,000,000
	Extend Rte. 144 west and north to connect to Old Bath Road (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$3,500,000
	Rte. 144 to south, vicinity of Shady Lane (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$1,000,000
	Extend Birch Point Road west to Old Bath Road (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$1,500,000
	Birch Point Road to Page Avenue (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$1,000,000
	Close north intersection of Old Bath Road at Bath Road (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$1,500,000
Other Improvements	Upgrade Culvert at Ward Brook (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	\$65,000	n/a
	Upgrade Culvert north of Old Bath Road (S) (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	\$65,000	n/a
	Reconstruct Shoulders Where Used for Vehicle Travel (<i>Long-Term</i>)	*	n/a	n/a
	Sidewalks Between Page Avenue & Birch Point Road (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$744,000
	Crosswalk & Ped Warning Lights at Page Road (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$15,000

	Crosswalk at Birch Point Road when Signal is Installed (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	\$10,000
	Raised Islands Where No Impact to Traffic and Well-Lit and streetscape improvements(<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	\$150,000	n/a
	Inter-parcel Connections (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	X
	Access Management (<i>Long-Term</i>)	n/a	n/a	X
Totals		\$685,000	\$330,000	\$13,889,000

1 - Refer to Appendix B for visual presentations of proposed highway improvements

2 - Planning-level estimates excluding Right-of-Way and extraordinary environmental permitting and utility extension costs.

3 - Traffic Movement Permit escrow account funds are available to help fund improvements if they are expended prior to December 2014.

4 - While the provision of marked and signed bicycle lanes are not specifically part of the details of the Master Plan, consideration of formalized bicycle lanes should be considered in the future.

X not estimated in this study

* accounted for in the 3 lane costs

Priority – *Mid-Term* 2 to 4 years; *Long-Term* 5 Years or Greater

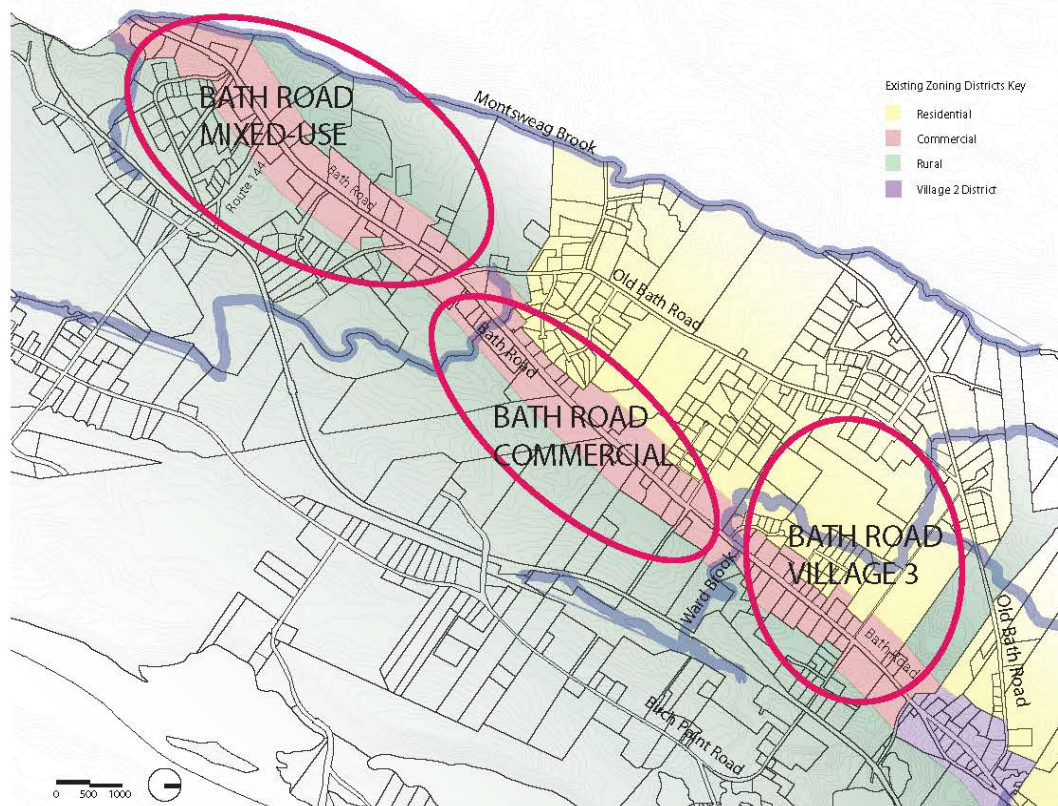
2. Zoning

The Bath Road Master Plan area is currently zoned commercial from the Woolwich town line to the Village 2 District. It is recommended that this approximate 4-mile stretch of road be rezoned into three Districts to accommodate different types of growth, and to better integrate infrastructure improvements with the context and ultimately different thematic character areas along Bath Road in order to avoid a continuous strip of development as cautioned by the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. The three proposed Districts include the Bath Road Mixed-Use District, the Bath Road Commercial District and the Bath Road Village District 3. The Districts are defined in the paragraphs following and are illustrated in **Figure ES-2**.

Proposed Bath Road Mixed-Use District

The Bath Road Mixed-Use District supports a range of residential, commercial and professional uses by utilizing an improved Route 144 intersection, new street networks accessing backlands and coordinated access management on Bath Road. Development to the west should at a minimum include the required buffer for Monstweag Brook, while development to the east should maintain the integrity of existing residential neighborhoods. Implementing the Bath Road highway infrastructure recommendations will improve the safety and viability of frontage development. By planning for traffic infrastructure and connectivity improvements, permitting could be expedited and cost sharing for area improvements should be more equitable than they are today.

Development fronting Bath Road must meet the MaineDOT and Town of Wiscasset standards for access management and Site Plan Review. Incentives should be considered by the Town to encourage property owners to meet higher standards for parking, landscaping, building placement, landscaping and connectivity. Creating new development frontage on new connector roads, providing a network for vehicular connectivity, and maximizing compatible uses are the primary goals for parcels to minimize direct access to Bath Road.

Figure ES-2 Proposed Zoning Districts

Proposed Bath Road Commercial District

The Bath Road Commercial District includes a range of economic development and redevelopment opportunities with a focus on professional and commercial uses. Transportation infrastructure improvements such as landscaped medians integrated with access management and site design standards will promote safe mobility, access and visual quality. By planning for transportation infrastructure improvements and access management, individual developments will be easier to permit and incremental parcel-by-parcel growth will not contribute to long-term congestion.

Of the three proposed Districts, the proposed Bath Road Commercial District is the most similar to the existing Commercial District. No land use changes or major infrastructure improvements are envisioned for this District, although it is recommended that a three lane cross-section should be provided on Bath Road the length of the proposed District. As with the proposed Mixed-Use District, direct access to Bath Road should be discouraged where other access opportunities exist, such as frontage or connector roads and shared access with abutting properties.

Proposed Bath Road Village 3 District

The Bath Road Village 3 District includes many small locally owned businesses. There is an opportunity to build on the history of the area and differentiate this District from the proposed Bath

Road Mixed-Use District and the Bath Road Commercial District through unique design standards and land uses. The District recommendations include a streetscape retrofit to Bath Road creating an area of local character that is pedestrian friendly by introducing sidewalks, crosswalks, streetscape elements, reduced or shared curb cuts and interconnected parcels. It should be noted that the construction of sidewalks/crosswalks is on an as needed basis and that these noted improvements will require a reduction in the regulatory speed limit as such may impact corridor mobility. It is anticipated that most pedestrians will cross Bath Road at the future Birch Point Road signal and this should minimize conflicts with vehicles and pedestrians. Existing buildings are already set closer to Bath Road than in the other proposed Bath Road Districts and redevelopment or infill buildings should be similarly located close to the streetscape in order to encourage pedestrian activity. Page Avenue and Birch Point Road intersections will guide traffic to common access points, providing connectivity to back lands and future street networks. Uses to the west and east of Bath Road should be compatible with existing residential uses and complement the commercial uses on Bath Road.

There is a diversity of uses from Ward Brook Road to Birch Point Road that would typically be considered incompatible in a “Village” setting, however, this area is meant to complement the historic downtown and act as a transitional zone. The goal of the Bath Road Village 3 District is to encourage this diversity, but to limit the scale and intensity of uses in order to maintain the local character. This is a tight-knit area and parcels fronting on Bath Road should not include uses that require large parking lots.

The zoning and land use recommendations are summarized below in **Table ES-2**.

Table ES-2 Zoning and Land Use Policy Recommendations				
Recommendation	How	Responsible Party	Timeframe	Implementation
Incorporate Bath Road Master Plan into Comprehensive Plan	Revise Comp Plan	Board of Selectman Planning Board Staff	Short-term	Town
Revise Zoning Map	Revise ordinance	Board of Selectman Planning Board Ordinance Review Committee Staff	Short-term	Town
Revise Land Use Table	Revise ordinance	Board of Selectman Planning Board Ordinance Review Committee Staff	Short-term	Town
Revise Site Plan Review and Subdivision Standards to Improve Safety and Visual Issues	Revise ordinance	Board of Selectman Planning Board Ordinance Review Committee Staff	Short-term	Town

Revise residential density standards for proposed Bath Road Mixed-Use and Bath Road Village Districts	Revise ordinance	Board of Selectman Planning Board Ordinance Review Committee Staff	Short-term	Town
Revise and cross-reference Road Ordinance with Subdivision and Site Plan Ordinance to promote connectivity.	Revise ordinance	Board of Selectman Planning Board Ordinance Review Committee Staff	Short-term	Town
Examine adoption of a complete streets policy	Adopt Policy/Ordinance	Board of Selectman Planning Board Ordinance Review Committee Staff	Short-term	Town
Adopt “connectivity” ordinance”	Revise ordinance	Board of Selectman Planning Board Ordinance Review Committee Staff	Short-term	Town
Prepare and adopt Access Management Master Plan for proposed Bath Road Commercial District	Master planning process	Consultant Board of Selectman Planning Board Staff	Short-term	Town
Consistently apply connectivity standards to maximize development potential and investments in traffic infrastructure.	Monitor growth	Town State Staff	Ongoing	Town
Implement “connectivity” ordinance	Monitor growth	Town State Staff	Ongoing	As development occurs

3. Design Standards

The site and subdivision design standards work in conjunction with the zoning and traffic transportation recommendations to guide and encourage a range of economic development opportunities, leading to a Bath Road that is comprised of functionally and visually distinct thematic zones. The recommendations include, but are not limited to landscaping, building placement, connectivity, parking, stormwater management, signage and scale of development. The design standards recommendations, as with the zoning and transportation recommendations, are meant to encourage the highest and best use for a particular area. In many cases, the standards build on the inherent qualities of a location with the goal of fostering this character in relationship to sustainable economic growth.

4. Finance

The funding sources for the various types of transportation improvements are described in the following paragraphs.

Improvements to address current safety and/or capacity problems

The responsibility for funding the improvements necessary to address current safety and/or capacity problems rests primarily with the MaineDOT and the Town of Wiscasset. The cost sharing arrangement for various types of improvements between the state and the Town are set forth in MaineDOT's Local Cost Sharing Policy (the policy is available at www.maine.gov/mdot/docs/lcspolicy16nov2010.pdf).

The MaineDOT should program these improvements into its long-term plans in accordance with statewide and local priorities. Realistically, the bulk of MaineDOT's highway and bridge capital funding is dedicated to maintaining the existing system via bridge investment, pavement preservation, and light capital paving. Even with the \$100 million transportation bond approved by the Maine Legislature in August 2013 for voter referendum, MaineDOT estimates an annual capital funding shortfall for bridge and highway needs of \$110 million. As a result, MaineDOT is encouraging increased municipal and private cost sharing. In the event that Wiscasset wants to accelerate funding for these capital projects, the Town could apply for a Municipal Partnership Initiative project. Under this initiative, state funding would be capped at \$500,000 and the state share of the project costs generally would be 50% or less.

Since the Town will be required to share in the cost of these improvements regardless of the state funding approach, the Town should consider establishing a "reserve account" to be funded on an annual basis to begin accumulating the Town's match for these projects.

Improvements to address future capacity and/or safety issues caused by growth in background or through traffic using the corridor

The Master Plan identifies the future need for the widening of the Birch Point Road approach to the Bath Road intersection to create separate left and right turn lanes. If significant development occurs in the Birch Point Road traffic-shed (including redevelopment of Mason Station) this could trigger the need for this improvement and will move the project to the "developer" funded category. However, if significant development in this area does not occur, this improvement will still be needed if there is a growth in background traffic on Bath Road. Because of the uncertainty of the timing and cause for the need for this improvement, this improvement should be periodically re-evaluated if development in and adjacent to the corridor does not trigger the need for a developer-funded improvement. Alternatively, if traffic movement permit fees have been collected, they could be used to at least partially fund the improvements.

Improvements to address future capacity and/or safety issues caused by increased traffic generated by development in or adjacent to the corridor

Funding for transportation improvements needed due to local development should be borne by the developer(s) and/or Town. The following strategy is suggested to allow the Town (in conjunction with MaineDOT) to accumulate the funding to undertake intersection improvements as the needs arise:

- The Town should create a Bath Road Traffic Improvement Account to enable it to hold and accumulate funding from a variety of sources.

- The Town should review and revise the traffic impact requirements in the Site Plan Review Ordinance to allow developments subject to that ordinance to mitigate traffic impacts through the payment of an in-lieu-of fee.
- The Town should also review and revise its subdivision requirements to include traffic impact requirements similar to the Site Plan Review ordinance including the payment of in-lieu-of fees.
- As part of the review and approval of development projects subject to either site plan or subdivision review, the Town should require the applicant to make needed traffic improvements if warranted by the volume or type of traffic generated by the development provided that the project is not subject to the MaineDOT Traffic Movement Permit (TMP) system.
- As part of the review and approval of development projects subject to either site plan or subdivision review, the Town should require the payment of an in-lieu-of intersection improvement fee for developments that are not subject to the MaineDOT TMP system and are not required as part of the local approval to make off-site traffic improvements. This requirement should apply to all projects that increase the volume of traffic on Bath Road.

The following strategy is suggested to fund corridor improvements as the needs arise in the future:

- If a large-scale development is proposed that will have a substantial impact on Bath Road traffic, the Town should consider creating a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District for that project and using a portion of the incremental property taxes from that development to fund overall Bath Road improvements in addition to improvements that may be required as part of a TMP.
- If the volume of traffic in the corridor begins to grow significantly in future years, the Town should explore the possibility of creating a regional impact fee in conjunction with MaineDOT and Lincoln County to pay for the local share of the future cost of these improvements. Under this system, all new development in the Route One corridor that results in additional traffic on Route One in Wiscasset would share in the cost of the necessary improvements to accommodate the increased traffic.

Improvements to create a Village environment between Page Avenue and Birch Point Road and improve the visual environment of the corridor

The Master Plan proposes some improvements intended to make the Bath Road corridor more visually appealing and to create more of a Village-like area in a portion of the corridor. Funding for the sidewalk and streetscape improvements could be done by the Town from the General Fund.

Other possible approaches are:

- Create a Tax Increment Financing District
- Create a Special Assessment or Business Improvement District
- Seek Outside Grants

Status of Existing Traffic Movement Permits

The Town of Wiscasset currently is holding \$100,000 in an escrow account, which is set to expire in December of 2014. The escrow was established to address Route 144 and Birch Point Road intersection needs. This money should therefore be directed to address the turning lane improvements noted previously in **Table ES-1**. No other TMP fees are available to the Town or MaineDOT at this time.