

BUSINESS VIEW

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 03 | MAR 2024

civil and municipal

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GLOBE, ARIZONA

GOLDEN GLOBE

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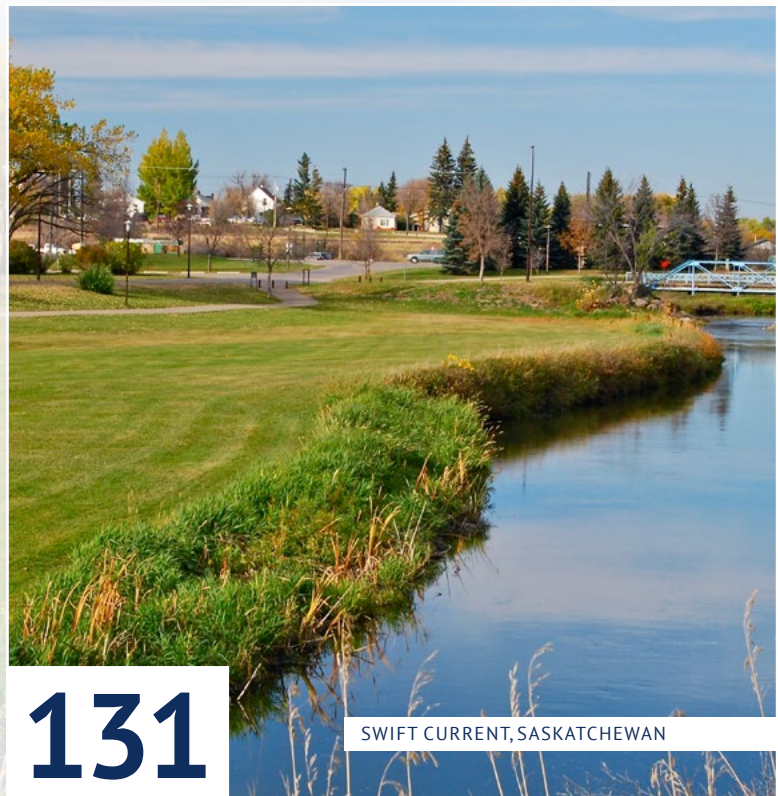
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Invest in Impact.

Pg. 165

Also in this issue BROWN DEER, WI • SWIFT CURRENT, SASKATCHEWAN • HOBOKEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- 141 WARMAN, SASKATCHEWAN**
Pioneering Growth and Community Well-being in Saskatchewan
- 151 ST. CLAIR TOWNSHIP, ONTARIO**
A Beacon of Economic Growth and Prosperity.
- 161 GLOBE, AZ**
GOLDEN GLOBE
- 175 OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA**
Growth and Connectivity in the Heart of Florida
- 185 SPRINGFIELD, OR**
A Thriving Community of Growth and Vitality
- 199 SWEET HOME, OR**
A Sweet Spot in an Already Beautiful State
- 209 THE DALLES**
A Delicate Balance of Growth, Culture, and Nature
- 219 WISCASSET, ME**
Rich in History and Beauty

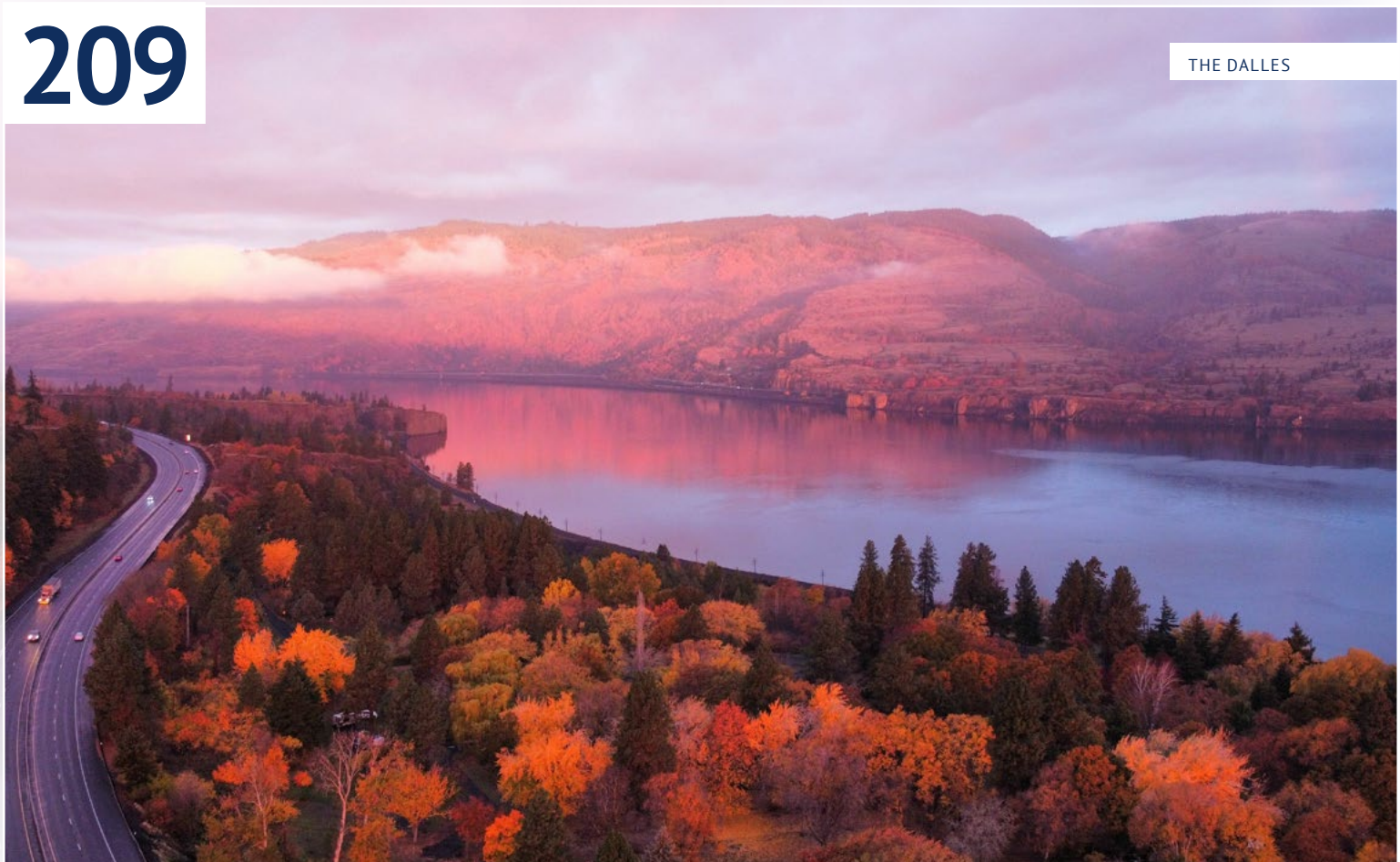


131

SWIFT CURRENT, SASKATCHEWAN

209

THE DALLES



WISCASSET, MAINE & WISCASSET MUNICIPAL

RICH IN HISTORY AND BEAUTY

Photo Credit: Phil Di Vece

AT A GLANCE

TOWN OF WISCASSET, MAINE & WISCASSET MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

WHAT: A historic shipbuilding community with its airport focused on rejuvenating infrastructure and unused spaces.

WHERE: The shire town of Lincoln County is located in Maine's mid-coast region.

WEBSITE: www.wiscasset.org

L AIRPORT

ORY



**THIS OLD SHIPBUILDING
COMMUNITY HAS A LITTLE
BIT OF EVERYTHING,
INCLUDING ITS AIRPORT**

Welcome to Wiscasset, the shire town for Lincoln County, located in the beautiful mid-coast region of Maine. When you visit Wiscasset, it is easy to see why the Welcome to Wiscasset sign says, “the Prettiest Little Village in Maine.” The historical port and shipbuilding community sits beside the Sheepscot River, and residents enjoy the allure of rolling hills and



The Town's highest priority is relocating Wiscasset's entire wastewater treatment plant. The plant is in a floodplain, and recent storms have helped clarify that it needs to move from its current location in the harbor. So, the town is being proactive to avoid potential future flooding.

Another focal point regarding infrastructure is ensuring broadband coverage throughout the town. Although it already has great coverage for many parts of town, there's still room for expansion in certain underserved areas. Coverage across Wiscasset is decent enough, but they were unfortunately denied a grant from the state to expand. However, the town has a Broadband Committee that has been actively working on funding this expansion and upgrading the whole town to fiber for the past couple of years and continues to do so.

THE FABRIC OF WISCASSET

Local businesses make up the fabric of Wiscasset. Chrostowsky wants to clarify that they welcome new businesses with open arms and support existing businesses. We are a Certified Business Friendly Community, one of thirty-six communities given this recognition by the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development. Certified Business Friendly Communities provide exceptional service and streamlined regulatory processes for business owners and communities that can demonstrate a strong commitment to business development.

"We're open for business," he says. "And for existing businesses that we have already, the message is that we're here to support any way we can."

Chrostowsky acknowledges that for local businesses, it's a matter of peoples' dreams and livelihoods. "Every one of them has a story behind them. I'm learning those stories. It is my job to help keep these dreams alive."

These local businesses help to give Wiscasset's downtown the charming, historic feel that residents love. The downtown is located in the Wiscasset Historic District because of the number of buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. Wiscasset has a Museum in the Streets, Historic New England's Castle Tucker, and Nickels-Sortwell House. Also, the



Lincoln County Historical Association offers the Old Wiscasset Jail Museum.

Chrostowsky tells us that what was originally more of an art and the antique district is becoming more of a “foodie” destination. The village area is home to three restaurants, a coffee shop, a sandwich shop, an oyster bar, and a wine bar. A microbrew pub just received approval for a downtown location. The Town is home to the world-famous Red’s Eat, where you can find Maine’s #1 Lobster Roll.

“There’s a little bit of a change happening here, so it’s becoming more diverse,” he explains.

In recent years, downtown welcomed the relocation of Wiscasset Family Health Center to a new and improved facility. With the relocation, they could accommodate a new pharmacy, Genoa Healthcare & Pharmacy. Both help to provide residents with easy access to care and different healthcare options. LincolnHealth Partners Family Medicine is also located in Wiscasset. The Town is close to MaineHealth’s Midcoast Hospital in Brunswick

Let's make history **together.**



Visit Historic New England's Wiscasset homes:
Castle Tucker and **Nickels-Sortwell House**

HISTORIC
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HISTORIC NEW ENGLAND

Historic New England embraces and celebrates the full and complex history of the region we all know and call home. As the largest and most comprehensive independent preservation organization in the United States, we preserve and share the full authentic New England experience with hundreds of thousands of visitors each year at our thirty-eight exceptional museums, landscapes, and coastal farms.

With more than 125,000 decorative arts and objects and 1.5 million archival documents, we have the world's largest collection of New England artifacts. Dedicated scholars in our Recovering New England's Voices initiative are delving into our historic collections and properties to discover new stories that give a voice to marginalized and forgotten groups for a more authentic historical narrative.

Through our museums, collections, and preservation easement program, we are advocating for preservation, sustainability, and livability in the region's communities. Historic New England is saving the past to benefit the future.

GET INVOLVED:

Let's make history together!

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and LincolnHealth's Miles Campus Hospital in Damariscotta.

Sweetz & More, a New Hampshire-based candy store chain, has located a new store in Wiscasset within the last year. It's the largest candy store in New England.

Tucker Chevrolet of Waldoboro just bought the property and plans to relocate their car dealership to Wiscasset.

The Town most recently created the position of Economic Development Director to help build upon this momentum.

Wiscasset is also known for the Wiscasset Speedway, one of Maine's fastest-paved oval race tracks. Every weekend for about half the

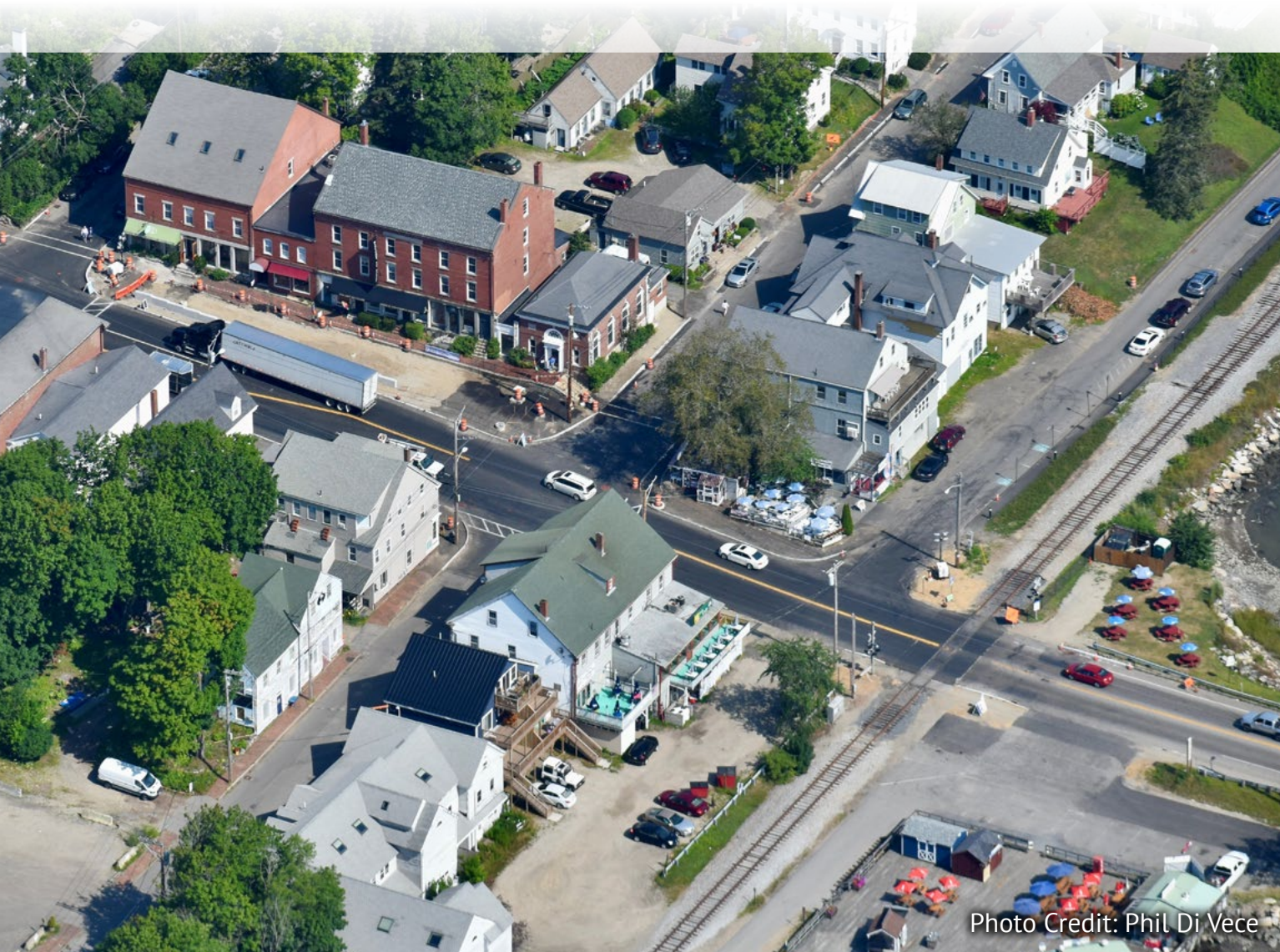


Photo Credit: Phil Di Vece

year, several thousand people from all over the state attend the races.

STOPPING FOR MORE THAN TRAFFIC

With its charming downtown, Wiscasset has no problem attracting tourists. It hopes to get them to stop in and stay a bit longer.

As Town Manager Dennis Simmons says playfully, “The tourists do stop, but unfortunately, they’re stopped in traffic.”

There is a bit of a bottleneck issue that the town is trying to improve, but mostly, they’re focused on bringing people out of their cars and into the stores. The downtown area was redesigned a couple of years ago, and a big change was removing on-street parking. This shift made a big difference in making

downtown more attractive and pedestrian-friendly. There’s a lot of potential here for people to park somewhere and explore the town.

Alongside these recent aesthetic and functional improvements, Chrostowsky’s big focus is to get local businesses in the downtown area to collaborate more as a team. The goal is to get them working together to market the community and better appeal to residents and tourists.

The Town supports the Northern New England Passenger Railroad Authority’s initiative to extend Amtrak’s Downeaster Service from Brunswick to Rockland. This new service will include a stop in downtown Wiscasset to bring visitors to our community and provide our residents with access to Amtrak’s nationwide rail network. Also, believed to ease traffic congestion during the summer.



Photo Credit: Aaron Chrostowsky

AFFORDABLE LIVING WITH LD 2003

One of Wiscasset’s main priorities remains the need for additional housing.

Maine recently passed a law requiring towns to increase housing density, encouraging more affordable housing development. In Wiscasset, the Town is updating its Ordinances to comply with the new laws.

One exciting development in the works is the Islebrook Village at Wiscasset, an Everbrook Senior Living Community. Everbrook converted an old primary school into 105 apartments for independent, assisted, and memory care living. This center will make a big difference for the community.

Several active subdivisions are in the works, so developing housing is certainly a priority for Wiscasset. “We want to attract families to move here,” Simmons says. “We have land available to build on. Come build a house!”

There is no doubt that Wiscasset is an attractive place for families. Simmons tells us, “We have a good school system and a wonderful community center. There’s a great quality of life here.”

AIRPORT DEVELOPMENTS TAKING OFF

Wiscasset is home to Wiscasset Airport, a general aviation airport that helps bring people and business to and through the town. It’s well-positioned for the area and has the space and availability to support all transportation needs, from corporate to cargo to regular commuter and charter flights.

As Simmons tells us, “I believe the airport is underutilized. It’s a gem in the rough.”

Their goal is to add additional flights to help make the airport more sustainable, bringing new jobs and money into the community.

Thanks to funding from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the town rebuilt the entire runway of the Wiscasset Airport last year. Plans are

also underway to rebuild the apron, renovate the terminal, and build additional hangars, hopefully within the next few years.

MORE DEVELOPMENTS UNDERWAY

The airport is a major part of the town's economy, but Wiscasset has several large areas with incredible potential for development or redevelopment.

The town Public Works department has a multi-year road plan to improve all town roads. Work on the Old Ferry Road is being done to rebuild a failing tidal crossing that threatened to disrupt commercial activity. The Old Ferry Road connects the rest of Wiscasset to the Town-landing on the Back River, Ferry Road Technology Park, a large tract of town-owned property on the Back River slated for the potential development adjacent to Ferry Road Technology Park and across the street from the former Maine Yankee Atomic Power Company site. The town obtained substantial federal and state grants to pay for this project, which will protect the road from storm surge and sea level rise, while improving the

environment and habitat of the upstream salt marsh.

The Town is in the planning stages with a large tract of town-owned property on the Back River slated for the potential development adjacent to Ferry Road Technology Park. The property has nearly 300 acres of wooded land on the Back River and adjacent to the Town-landing. The town is planning to conduct a site assessment on the property, and once complete, it will determine what type of development to use. There are a lot of different ideas floating around for this area, so that's a project that could come to fruition in the next couple of years.

Wiscasset is home to Mölnlycke Health Care, a Swedish medical device company. Central Maine Power has a maintenance facility in the Technology Park, with lots available for development. The former Maine Yankee Atomic Power plant was located on Old Ferry Road. It has since decommissioned, and the company currently stores its spent nuclear fuel rods on-site in casks in a highly secure independent storage facility.



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WISCASSET, ME

Another exciting rejuvenation project involves an old power plant called Mason Station. The town owns a lot of land around the plant, so there's a lot of potential there.

Due to the town's legacy in the energy production industry, much of the power distribution network is still in Wiscasset. This would make it ideal for new clean energy production, storage, and an off-shore wind farm interconnection site.

PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Wiscasset benefits from wonderful people committed and engaged in the town's planning and development processes.

The Town's Comprehensive Plan Committee is in the process of updating the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

The Town has a Climate Action Team working on a Community Resilience Partnership Grant.

The Town's Waterfront Committee is developing plans

to improve the Recreational Pier at the Waterfront to enhance the visitor boater experience and to build a Riverwalk connecting the Creamery Pier with the Waterfront Piers. Wiscasset is located on the banks of the Sheepscot River which provides the waterfront access to a deepwater port.

The Town just created an Ad Hoc Economic Development Advisory Committee to work with the new Economic Development Director on a new Economic Development Plan.

The Town works closely with the Wiscasset Area Chamber of Commerce and Wiscasset Creative Alliance to help support and promote small businesses and the community. The Chamber and the Alliance host several events throughout the year, including Art Walk, Schooner Fest, Homes on Tour, and Holiday Marketfest. This June, the Town will be hosting its first annual Worm Fest. According to National Geographic, Wiscasset is the Worm Capital of the World.



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Photo Credit: Phil Di Vece

Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission provides the town with various technical and planning services. In particular, Wiscasset’s contracts with the LCRPC provide the Planning Board and the applicant professional planning assistance as they navigate the permitting process. The Town is fortunate to have Emily Rabbe, the new Executive Director of the LCRPC, as our staff planner. As Chrostowsky tells us, “For a town this size and in Maine, it’s rare to have a planner and economic developer on staff.”

The town works closely with the Midcoast Council of Governments staff on economic development matters such as TIFs and the state Department of Economic Community Development (DECD).

Wiscasset has secured funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to purchase generators to improve the sewer system and pump stations. The town is the beneficiary of \$5,000,000 in 2023 Congressional Directed Spending to upgrade its existing collection system and conduct a feasibility

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study for relocating the wastewater treatment plant.

The town is looking to do a needs assessment for their office building. It was built in the late sixties and houses the police, EMS, and fire station. It wasn’t designed to hold all this, so it’s beyond capacity. “Simply put, we’re out of the room,” says Simmons. He hopes that they can secure funding to fix this issue. When the building was first built, the Town didn’t offer 24/7 full-time professional police and EMS services.

2024 AND BEYOND

Many projects are in the pipeline, but the town manager has had one big goal in mind since he took office in 2020: restoring the Mason Station. He told us that a developer is exercising and studying the feasibility of buying the station and modernizing it into a mixed-use development.

He explains: “That plant has been sitting there vacant since the mid-1990s with not much of any



Photo Credit: Bob Bond

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activity at all. It's a beautiful piece of land and a beautiful building. I want to turn it into something that benefits the town as a whole."

Simultaneously, Simmons is focused on cleaning up the town's Brownfield sites. They completed one last year and are starting another \$700,000 project this year. The Town is working closely with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission (LCRPC), and the Town's consultant, Sevee & Maher, to get brownfield remediation grants to clean up town-owned property around Mason Station.

The town focuses on rejuvenating old and unused spaces into new, improved properties while maintaining their historic charm, which is the appeal of Wiscasset.

The town is constantly trying to improve its infrastructure. It will be exciting to see what's to come in the next few years.

PREFERRED VENDOR/ PARTNER

■ Castle Tucker - Historic New England

www.historicnewengland.org

Historic New England is the oldest, largest, and most comprehensive independent preservation organization in the United States. It operates thirty-eight museums and a major collections and archives center. Through engaging education programs, award-winning exhibitions and publications, and an innovative preservation easement program, Historic New England preserves and shares everyone's history.

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■ Islebrook Village at Wiscasset - An Everbrook Senior Living Community

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