PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES Inventory & Analysis

The Board of Selectman-Town Manager form of local government combines the political leadership of elected officials in the form of a Board of Selectmen with the managerial experience of an appointed local government manager. The Town Manager is appointed by the Board of Selectmen, who in turn appoints and manages all other town department directors.

Easton is governed by an elected five (5) member Board of Selectmen that have the authority to approve local laws, or town ordinances and set official rules, codes, and policies for the Town. The Board is the official governing body of the town and selectmen are elected to three (3) year terms. Elections are on a three year cycle with two selectmen elected in the first and second years and one in the third year. The Selectmen elect the Chairman from among its members following each election. The Chairman presides over all Selectmen meetings and acts as the Town Officer designated to represent the town in agreements with other governmental entities, but has no administrative duties except as required to carry out the responsibilities outlined in the Town Charter.

The Town Manager is the chief administrative officer of the Town of Easton, and is responsible for the management of all town affairs as provided for in the Town Charter. The Town Manager oversees each of the town departments, and is responsible for their performance.

The Town Manager assumes responsibility for:

- Overseeing day-to-day operations
- Hiring, supervising, and evaluating town personnel
- Developing and administering town policies and procedures
- Recommending policies or programs to the Board of Selectmen
- Overseeing the preparation of the annual municipal budget
- Attending and participating in Board of Selectmen meetings and various committee meetings
- Ensuring citizen recommendations and/or complaints are handled in a timely and professional manner
- Representing the Town at inter-governmental meetings, and serving on a variety of boards, committees, and commissions

Also located in the Town Office is the Town Clerk. The Clerk's mission is to accurately maintain all town records including vital statistics, conduct elections with professionalism in accordance with State Law, issue State and Town licenses and permits, and provide information to both Town Officials and the general public in a friendly, efficient, and confidential manner.

The Town Clerk conducts the following activities:

- Coordinates & supervises elections for the Town including absentee voting
- Serves as Voter Registrar
- Serves as Deputy Tax Collector & Deputy Treasurer
- Serves as custodian for all official Town records & ordinances

- Prepares Annual Town Reports
- Issues Licenses and Permits
- Serves as Payroll & Accounts Payable Clerk
- Prepares reports to IRS & Maine Revenue Services
- Prepares reports to state agencies
- Records & maintains Vital Statistics Records (Births, Deaths & Marriages)
- Issues Marriage Licenses
- Serves as Notary Public for residents of Easton free of charge
- Coordinates rental of the Odd Fellows' Hall

Overall, Easton's public facilities and services are very good, well maintained and meet the present needs of the community. They should continue to do so for the next ten years. Only one public service has been suggested as lacking in the community, a public library. This facility could be privately developed and would help secure tax base and employment. The challenges faced by the community in maintaining and improving its services relate substantially to declining State revenue sharing and the rising costs of operation and maintenance.

Facility	Location	Physical Condition	Ownership-Management			
Municipal	Station	Good	Town/Fire Dept.			
Building	Road					
Odd	Station	Good	Town/Recreation/Historical			
Fellows	Road		Society			
Hall						
Union	Ladner	Fair	Town			
Church	Road					
Highway	Fry Pan	Excellent	Town/Highway Dept.			
Garage	Road					
Baseball	Center	Poor	Town			
fields/tennis	Road					
courts						
Town	Center	Good	Town (leased to			
owned	Road		Mechanical Services)			
Warehouse						
Village	Center	Excellent	Town (lease/sale to Valley			
Health	Road		Health Services			
Services						
Grange	Station	Good	Town			
Apartments	Road					

Easton's Public Facilities

Source: Town of Easton, 2014

Highway Department

Easton's Highway Department is responsible for summer and winter road maintenance of the 26.9 miles of road located in Easton. The Department employees 2 full time employees and is overseen by the Town Manager who also serves as the Road Commissioner.

The Highway Department maintains a pickup truck, plow truck, backhoe, and loader. The town's priorities are ditching widening the right-of-way to include shoulders beginning in the northern most road (Fuller Road) and working progressively south. It is projects that the Fuller Road project should take about 2 years to complete and is considered the largest project in Town. Through the completion of ditching and culvert work, town officials believe that outside construction firms will then be able to reconstruct those portions of the road that needs work, finish each road in its entirely, and then move to the next road project. At the end of the 10 year plan, officials plan to begin road maintenance rather than reconstruction on these roads, thereby overall reducing road project costs in the future.

It is projected that projects on the southernmost road (Hersom Road) will be completed in 2023.

Fire Department

The Easton Fire Department consist of 25 to 30 volunteer on-call firefighters who provide fire suppression, Rescue, HAZMAT, Inspection, and Fire-Life Safety Education to the Town, as well as mutual aid to all surrounding communities.

The Easton Fire Department was incorporated in 1955. Operating out of the Easton Fire Station, the department has the ability to supply 9000 gallons of water to the scene of an emergency at one time. Although there is not a hydrant system in town, techniques have been developed to "shuttle" water to the scene of a fire quickly and effectively. The Easton Fire Department also operates their own set of hydraulic rescue tools or "Jaws of Life" which are supplied by the Amkus Corporation, and are tested routinely by both the Fire Dept. and by the corporation themselves. The Department generates a very good response of firefighters in the community through the help of McCain Foods USA, Huber Engineered Woods, and the Easton School Dept. along with other employers or educators in the community who understand the need for the release of firefighters from their everyday lives during an emergency.

The Department maintains the following apparatus:

- 2010 E-One Fire Raider 2, 1800 gallon Pumper/Tanker, 1500 GPM, 30 gallon class A foam. This unit responds second out for all working fires.
- 1994 Central State 1500 gallon pumper, 1000 GPM, 20 gallon class A foam. This unit responds first out for all working fires, and second out for all rescue calls.
- 1984 Middlesex 1000 gallon pumper, 1000 GPM 2 stage pump. This pumper responds first out for all grass/forest fire calls.
- 1985 Freightliner 5000 gallon tanker.
- 2007 Chevrolet, 4x4, carries hydraulic rescue tools, 5000 watt generator and medical equipment. Responds first out for all rescue calls, responds to all calls as manpower is available.

Ambulance Service

Ambulance service is provided by Crown Ambulance, a department of The Aroostook Medical Center (TAMC), which has bases of operation in Fort Fairfield, Limestone, Mars Hill, and Presque Isle and provides emergency medical services in 16 Aroostook County cities and towns. Crown operates a critical care transport service which transfers patients from TAMC to hospitals in Bangor, Augusta, Portland, and Boston when needed. It is the largest emergency medical service in Aroostook County.

Calls are dispatched through the 911 system in Houlton. According to Crown Ambulance, the average response time to Easton (after being notified by the 911 system) is 8 minutes depending on location and road conditions. In 2013, Crown responded to 86 calls in Easton, 97 times in 2012, and 103 in 2011.

FairPoint Communications has been awarded a contract to build its Emergency Services IP network (ESInet) 911 service for the state of Maine, one that will serve over 1.3 million people. When the network build is complete, Maine will become one of the first states to deploy a next-generation 911 (NG-911) system that's aligned with the National Emergency Number Association standards known as i3. Under the terms of the contract, the telephone company will provide system and support to serve the state's 26 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), which answer all 911 calls in their local coverage areas.

Unlike traditional 911 systems, an NG-911 platform can be used to deliver a mix of voice, text, video, and enhanced data to each PSAPs. Other benefits include improved call setup time and the speed where voice and data arrive at the PSAP. Emergency response teams will also have access to more detailed information before coming to an emergency site.

Police Protection

Easton's police protection is provided by the Aroostook County Sherriff's Department and the Maine State Police. Protection is adequate and the town is not considering the creation of a local police department for the 10 year planning period.

Water and Sewer

There are no public water or sewer systems in Easton. None are projected for the 10 year planning period.

Solid Waste Management

Easton has a signed contract to dispose of solid waste with Tri-Community Recycling and Sanitary Landfill located in Fort Fairfield. Current contracts are on a ten year basis and will be renegotiated in 2018. The Town has also contracted with Pine Tree Waste for roadside household garbage removal. Easton's residential garbage is picked up every Thursday; commercial pickup is Wednesday. Residents are allowed to drop off waste at the landfill but the town will not pay for tipping fees. The landfill has adequate space in its cells for solid waste disposal to at least 2030.

The annual volume of solid waste sent to Tri-Community Recycling and Sanitary Landfill has remained relatively stable over the last 5 years. According to Tri-Community, the following tonnages have been received from Easton:

2013	1,225
2012	1,148
2011	1,197
2010	1,181
2009	1,242

Igloo Recycling Centers are located in fifteen (15) communities throughout central and northern Aroostook County. In Easton, igloos are located near the town office. Recycling rates specifically for the Town of Easton are not available as all of the towns that Tri-Community provides recycling services for (including Easton) are lumped together. Individual towns used to receive a report from the State (State Planning Office) that provided recycling rates. Generally speaking, rates used to run in the 30-35% range but there was a change in the way it is calculated for the 2013 report, and that changed resulted in a lower rate for TCL; which was 21% for 2013.

Power and Communications

Emera Maine provides electrical service to Easton. The company is wholly owned by Emera Inc., a full-service energy company based in Nova Scotia. Emera Maine is the new name for Bangor Hydro and Maine Public Service, who for nearly a century have been bringing power to the people of Maine. Bangor Hydro and Maine Public Service effectively had been operating as one company for some time, and became one utility, Emera Maine, on January 1, 2014. Residential rates are \$7.59 for the first 100 KWH and 0.075852 per KWH over 100KWH. Commercial rates vary depending on the size and make-up of the business and if it is located in a special zone (Pine Tree Zone, Economic Development zone, etc). Three-phase power is available on all arterial routes that lead to and enter the town center. Many local businesses utilize 3-phase and availability can serve new development in existing commercial zones and future industrial sites.

Time Warner Cable Television is available throughout much of Easton's village area and along arterial routes and major collector routes. Several local roads are not served with cable.

Telephone service is provided through Fairpoint Communications. Cell phone providers include Unicell and Verizon and broadband internet access service is available to most geographic areas of Easton through Verizon and Pioneer Wireless Network. Broadband is not accessible though all areas of the community with the area around the Rivere du Chute being the largest area without access. The cost to extend broadband to rural areas is very expensive and it is doubtful that services will be expanded much beyond what is available today. The Three Ring Binder project proposes to create an open access fiber-optic network extending to the most rural and disadvantaged areas of Maine The project proposes a 1,100-mile network that will pass through more than 100 communities make broadband more readily available to 110,000 households, 600 community anchor institutions, and a number of last mile service providers. The public-private partnership expects to provide 100 Mbps broadband capabilities for University of Maine campuses, community colleges, government facilities, public safety departments, the MaineREN research and education network, and rural healthcare clinics and hospitals. The project plans to benefit clinics and hospitals by allowing for more immediate contact with clinical healthcare specialists and by increasing the collaboration of local community-based healthcare providers with specialists in major metropolitan areas.

This project proposes to:

- Provide middle mile fiber for broadband service providers to bring cost-effective, high-speed broadband services to areas without access.
- Connect 51 anchor institutions 10 campuses and outreach centers of the University of Maine System, three community colleges, and 38 government facilities.
- Attract businesses by establishing geographically diverse, fiber-optic routes through Western Maine to Northern New Hampshire and Vermont, and through Eastern and Northern Maine to New Brunswick.
- Create the infrastructure necessary to support existing and diversified industries.
- Enable and promote interconnection of local fire, police, safety, and emergency management agencies.

Easton School Department

The school system in Easton is managed by the Easton School Department. There are two schools in the Department, both located in Easton. The Elementary School is located on the Bangor Road and houses grades Pre-K through 6. The Junior and Senior High School is located on Center Road and houses grades 7 through 12.

According to School Department staff, enrollment for the 2013/2014 school year was 206, up slightly from 2012-13. Projected enrollment for the next school year is presented below.

	Grade														
School Year	Pre- K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Grand Total
2014/2015 (projected)	15	14	12	13	14	15	12	13	13	12	23	15	12	27	210
2013/2014	14	12	13	14	15	12	13	13	12	22	15	12	26	13	206
2012/2013	13	17	17	17	14	12	11	12	20	12	10	23	13	14	205
2011/2012	15	20	16	16	13	10	12	23	15	9	24	12	15	22	222
2010/2011	15	14	13	11	12	14	21	14	10	26	13	16	21	17	217
2009/2010	13	12	13	13	17	21	14	9	25	12	19	17	15	15	215
2008/2009	14	12	16	19	21	13	8	27	12	13	23	13	16	14	221

Source: Easton School Department, 2014

Social Services Supported by Easton

Aroostook County Action Program, Inc (ACAP):

ACAP is a private, non-profit corporation that provides extensive services and resources that help individuals and families achieve greater economic independence. Program areas include Child & Family Services including Head Start, child care and other programs; Employment and Training providing assistance to job seekers and employers seeking trained workers; Health Services including family planning, community health, nutrition and others; Energy & Housing including rental assistance, energy audits and residential rehabilitation programs; and Community Services including case management and other support to access services of other agencies.

Aroostook Area Agency on Aging:

The Agency on Aging provides services on a county-wide basis in program areas which include Elder Care that provides personal, housekeeping and companionship support; Nutrition that provides meals at dining centers or delivered to homebound seniors; Outreach that provides access help to other programs and assistance with Medicare Part D, heating and rental tax-refund programs; Options Counseling that offers guidance on long term care; RSVP, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, that helps identify and place persons in volunteer service opportunities; and Caregiver that provides support and training for older adults with caregiver responsibilities and caregivers of Alzheimer's and dementia patients. The mission of the Aroostook Agency on Aging is improving the quality of life, maximizing the independence and promoting the wellbeing of older people in northern Maine.

American Red Cross

Named the Pine Tree Chapter in Northern Maine, American Red Cross maintains offices in Bangor, and Caribou, with a staff and volunteers that serve 296 communities. The Pine Tree Chapter fulfills the Red Cross mission of helping people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. They operate with a network of volunteers throughout their chapter communities to spread messages of preparedness and ensure that Red Cross services are available. Their work includes training in lifesaving skills such as first aid, CPR, and defibrillator use; training in how to protect families from fires, winter storms, and other disasters; and training in lifeguarding and swimming instruction, and babysitting skills. Emergency Disaster Services and Armed Forces Emergency Services are also provided.

Clubs, Organizations, and Religious Institutions

The following clubs, organizations and religious institutions are located in Easton:

Organizations

Future Farmers of America

Meets at Easton High School and works with students to prepare them for careers in agricultural and agricultural related fields.

Kiwanis Club

Meets 1st & 3rd Tuesday at the Odd Fellows Hall. The Kiwanis Club completes community based projects relating to children. Projects are chosen based on community need.

Easton Trailbreakers

Meets 3rd Saturday September to March at the Odd Fellows Hall. Easton Trailbreakers maintain the snowmobile trails located in town. They also provide safety training programs.

Easton ATV Club

Meets the 2nd Tuesday at the Odd Fellows Hall. Easton ATV Club maintains the ATV trails located in town. They also provide safety training programs.

Easton Happy Days Club (Senior Citizens)

Meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at the Manor Recreation Room. Easton Happy Days Club provides senior citizens with recreational and other programs.

Historical Society

Located on the 2nd floor of the Odd Fellows Hall. Works on historic preservation projects in Easton.

Parent Community Organization (EPCO)

Located at the Easton Elementary School, the EPCO works to encourage volunteerism of parents, encouragement of teachers and students, community involvement, and welfare of students and families

Little School Restoration Committee

Works on the Little School restoration project and includes the development of fundraisers.

Religious Institutions

The following religious institutions are located in Easton:

- Easton Pentecostal Church
- Easton Wesleyan Church
- Pine Tree Baptist Church
- United Baptist Church
- ➢ New Song Church

Health Care Services in Easton

Village Health Care

Village Health Care, located on Center Road, opened in May 2014 and provides Easton's residents with primary care options. The facility employs 5 persons.

The Aroostook Medical Center

The Aroostook Medical Center (TAMC), a not-for-profit organization, is the leading provider of healthcare services in Northern Maine. Their mission is to restore, maintain and improve the health of Aroostook County's residents in a compassionate and professional environment. TAMC is governed by a local volunteer board of trustees TAMC is a member of Eastern Maine Health Services which allows them to offer a wide range of healthcare services not typically available in rural communities. TAMC employs over 60 physicians and a team of over 1000 employees, and offers advanced cancer care, cardiology, dialysis, sleep medicine, imaging, emergency response, and orthopedics services.

Aroostook Mental Health Center: AMHC is a private, non-profit mental health care organization based in northern Maine. Incorporated in 1964, AMHC has evolved into a community health organization offering a wide variety of outpatient and residential services including: Community Support, Mental Health, Substance Abuse, Emergency Services, Employee and Student Assistance, Psychological Testing, and Assessment and Consultation and Education.

Cemeteries

There are three cemeteries located in Easton, Mt. Shilo, Estes Park, and Pine Tree. Mt. Shilo is located on Route 1-A south of Easton Center and is at capacity. Estes Park is Easton's largest cemetery and is located on the Easton Center Road. This cemetery contains the gravesites of Civil War Veterans along with many of Easton's earliest settlers. There are new sections that have been added to this cemetery and it contains adequate burial space for the projected planning period. The third cemetery is the Pine Tree Cemetery located on the Easton/Fort Fairfield town line. There are approximately 80 sites located at this cemetery.

Residents were concerned with the condition of the cemeteries, especially those of the older sites where gravestones have fallen over. As a result, town officials are working with the University of Maine at Presque Isle and Aroostook Aspirations to complete cemetery projects. These includes mapping and cataloging all burial sites, cleaning brush and general landscaping, and maintaining and fixing headstones that have fallen over. Maps and catalogs of names of each cemetery will be kept at the Town Office. This project is expected to be completed in 2015. Town officials are also in the process of seeking grants for the perpetual care of the cemetery.

Analysis/Key Issues

The process of identifying the issues facing the town's facilities/services over the next ten years involved participation from all department heads, except for recreation, which is addressed

separately in the recreation section. Department heads have direct knowledge of the day to day workings and challenges of managing their facilities. This allowed many significant issues related to capacity, maintenance, energy use, staffing and training to be identified. They agreed that the burden of cost needs to be distributed fairly among the beneficiaries including residents, developers, tax-exempt organizations and neighboring communities.

The location and type of development occurring in Easton impacts most departments in some way. However, the development of land use regulation or ordinances must be done in a way that does not deter growth. Determining public facility and service investment priority is always difficult and is even more so in a down economy and with steady population. Every facility/service requires investment but some may be prioritized based on cost benefit. Investments should help improve efficiency, control long term operation and maintenance costs particularly related to energy use, attract new residential, commercial or industrial development and create tax or customer base. These considerations help establish priority.

The Town may wish to consider the development of a Community Energy Plan (CEP) that takes a comprehensive look at energy use at all facilities and charts a path for investments that reduce energy use and costs. Other types of investments are obligatory to comply with laws and regulations and the service life of the facility, component or equipment. In these cases, investment can only be delayed so long before disruption of service or operating cost creates bigger problems. Roads, public safety and recreation were all identified as priority areas for investment.

Easton partners with neighboring communities in several ways that help reduce costs and improve services for all parties. The primary areas of cooperation include solid waste disposal/recycling, ambulance service, septic waste disposal, recreation and public works related joint purchasing. Neighboring communities are also discussing cooperation in tax assessment and revaluation services.

There are no major school construction or expansion projects anticipated during the planning period. The population and demographics section explains the impact of declining enrollments at the 2 schools that comprise Easton School Department.

Easton provides experienced, responsible and well equipped emergency response system that includes fire and public works. The system is well coordinated with the Aroostook Emergency Management Agency and the town participates in the county hazard mitigation planning process.

The solid waste management system is operated by Tri-Community Recycling and Sanitary Landfill and private haulers and is meeting the needs of the residents. The facility still accepts mixed household waste, but provides for voluntary separation of cardboard/paper, plastics, metal, electronics and batteries. Recycling igloos are available in Easton for some of the recyclables and all are accepted at the landfill in Fort Fairfield. The recycling rate is presently under the State's goal of 50 percent.

Improvements in telecommunications and energy infrastructure are ongoing in the region and in Easton. The primary systems are owned and managed by Fair Point Communications, US

Cellular, Pioneer Wireless Network, Time Warner Cable, and WAGM-TV, for telecommunications and Emera for electrical energy. Emera is a regulated electric transmission and distribution utility serving approximately 36,000 electricity customers in northern Maine. Corporate headquarters are located in Presque Isle. MPS is a wholly owned subsidiary of Emera, Inc.

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES Goals, Policies, and Strategies

State Goal

Plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate growth and economic development.

Local Goal

Maintain and improve Easton's facilities and services in a manner that is cost effective and efficient and that helps support job creation and population growth.

POLICY

Maintain and, when justified, improve department capacity in the areas of communication, equipment, staffing and training.

Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Continue to budget for annual expenses related to all town owned building maintenance.	Town Officials	On-going
Replace fire vehicles and equipment outlined in the Town's capital improvement plan. Continue to raise funds through the use of incremental contributions to reserve accounts and application to Homeland Security and other Federal and State grant programs.	Fire Dept. and Town Officials	On-going
Have Highway Department equipment evaluated for refurbishing or replacement to help decide either to upgrade or extend the life of the equipment.	Highway Dept.	2016-17
Participate in a regional firefighter training and recruitment program with automatic/mutual aid departments and seek funding under FEMA- Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) and other sources.	Fire Dept.	2016 and on-going
Focus fire fighter recruitment efforts on trained and experience personnel and develop an incentives package based on a percentage of the cost of training.	Fire Dept.	2016
When developing a building permit application process, include identification of the use of manufactured laminate, trusses, beams and joist and create a Fire Department response code for these structures.	Planning Board and Fire Dept.	2016
Gradually increase/expend funds for stipends, wages and training in fire department budgets	Town Officials	2018 and on-going
Continue to control costs by utilizing access to State/Federal grant programs and surplus sites for some purchases.	Town Officials	On-going
Designate and train a staff member as a certified facility manager to conduct annual facility inspections and develop the maintenance budget.	Town Manager	2017

Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Seek State/Federal grant funding for energy efficiency upgrades and use maintenance budgets as leverage.	Town Manager	2017
Install dry hydrants at strategic location in town as back-up water volume demand during firefighting.	Fire Dept. and Highway Dept.	2018
Evaluate through a professional energy audit the opportunities to lower building operating costs related to energy efficiency for heating and lighting.	Town Officials	2019
Include recommended energy efficiency upgrades, including overhead doors, in Easton's updated Capital Improvement Plan	Town Officials	2019
Complete a feasibility study of an alternative energy boiler to heat public works, Odd Fellows Hall, grange hall, and town office.	Town Officials	2019
Continue to participate in existing cooperative purchasing with the MaineDOT and NMDC on culverts and road salt.	Town Manager	On-going
Create new regional opportunities for cooperative purchasing with other departments, municipalities and private companies in such areas as fuel, lubricants, tires, parts and other.	All departments and Town Officials	On-going
Evaluate the necessity of the construction of a small public water and sewer facility in the village area should project growth occur	Planning Board	As needed.

POLICY

Improve efficiency, cost for services and revenue generated by all Departments to minimize property tax burden and promote community growth.

Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Continue to update computer systems and software every 3-5 years to improve speed and reliability.	Town Officials	On-going
Develop the Town's information database and technology to include the following online services; vehicle registrations, hunting/fishing licensing, electronic funds transfer for property tax, and other fee payments, submission of building permit applications, real estate assessment data and expand over the next 10 years.	and Town	On-going

POLICY

Encourage non-profits and entrepreneurs to provide new community services, when appropriate, as a means of creating jobs and serving local needs.

Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Publicize the need for new local services through the Town's website	Town Clerk	On-going
and contact with non-profits and entrepreneurs.	Town	
	Manager, and	
	all Depts.	
Continue to seek grants and provide local funds for non-profits and new	Clubs and	On-going
service businesses.	Town Officials	
Work with the Central Aroostook Chamber of Commerce to promote the	Town Officials	On-going
need for new services.		