

Section III.D.

Regional Coordination Plan

Islesboro is a small island community off the coast of the service center town, Belfast; Lincolntonville, a non-service center town where the ferry lands in Waldo County; and Camden-Rockport in Knox County. While many island citizens work on-island, many travel off-island for jobs in these communities or other communities. The high cost of real estate on-island and the realities of island living make it difficult to grow the Town's year round population, having an impact on schools, involvement on town committees and board, and public services like the volunteer fire service.

While Islesboro is independent from its mainland neighbors, it looks to some of these communities, like Lincolntonville, for ferry access and other cooperation. Although Islesboro residents feel separated from the county because of its physical location, there may be opportunities to work with neighboring mainland communities and other island communities and interested organizations to support and strengthen the local and regional economy, meet residents' needs, efficiently provide public facilities and services, preserve natural resource based industries, and protect the area's exemplary environment.

The Town is an active participant in the Island Institute. The Island Institute has provided assistance with affordable housing, planning, and the working waterfront as well as contributing island fellows to support community efforts.

Some areas where the Town will focus regional coordination efforts include:

I. Economic Development

Investigate ways to work with Waldo and Knox County economic development efforts to highlight the unique needs and opportunities for island employment and businesses.

II. Affordable Housing

Investigate ways to work with mainland towns and other island communities through the Island Institute, Islesboro Affordable Property, and other regional and private interests to encourage and support the development of affordable housing in the community and region.

III. Transportation

Continue to work with Lincolnville, Belfast, Midcoast Regional Planning Commission, Maine Department of Transportation, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, and others to promote efficient on and off-island transportation. Other regional initiatives include a regional bike and trail system and increased ferry services. The airport provides Fed-Ex and UPS delivery from Owls Head.

IV. Public Facilities and Services

As an island community, there are several opportunities to explore shared facilities and services with mainland towns. The Town does have a cooperative agreement with other towns for fire protection for mutual aid and with Waldo County for sheriff's services. The Seacoast Mission boat is available to island communities for health services.

Emergency 911 dispatch is provided exclusively through Waldo County.

Fire protection, waste facilities and disposal, ambulance service, health care, and police services are all provided on-island and should remain so.

V. Parks and Open Space

Continue to work with the Maine Department of Conservation on issues involving the state owned Warren Island camping facility.

VI. Marine Resources

Work with organizations like the Midcoast Regional Planning Commission, the Island Institute, and the fishing industry and agencies, to establish shellfish management controls and restoration efforts as well as to prepare and adopt management plans.

VII. Natural and Cultural Resources

Work with surrounding communities and regional and community interest groups to identify and preserve important natural and cultural resources, open spaces, and scenic views of, from, and within the community.

VIII. Agricultural and Forest Resources

Work with surrounding towns and the Midcoast Regional Planning Commission, the Island Institute, and other interested parties to support farmers markets as a direct outlet to the market for island and regional agriculture. Coordinate with these same groups on forest management practices.

IX. Energy

As energy costs continue to rise, work with other towns in the region to investigate provision of energy services as well as support private sector efforts to expand access to alternative energy.

X. Island Coalition

Islesboro participates in the Island Institute's Maine Island Coalition which works to discuss and solve issues of interest to island residents including affordable housing, transportation and other issues. Islesboro also takes advantage of the Island Fellows program through the Island Institute.