

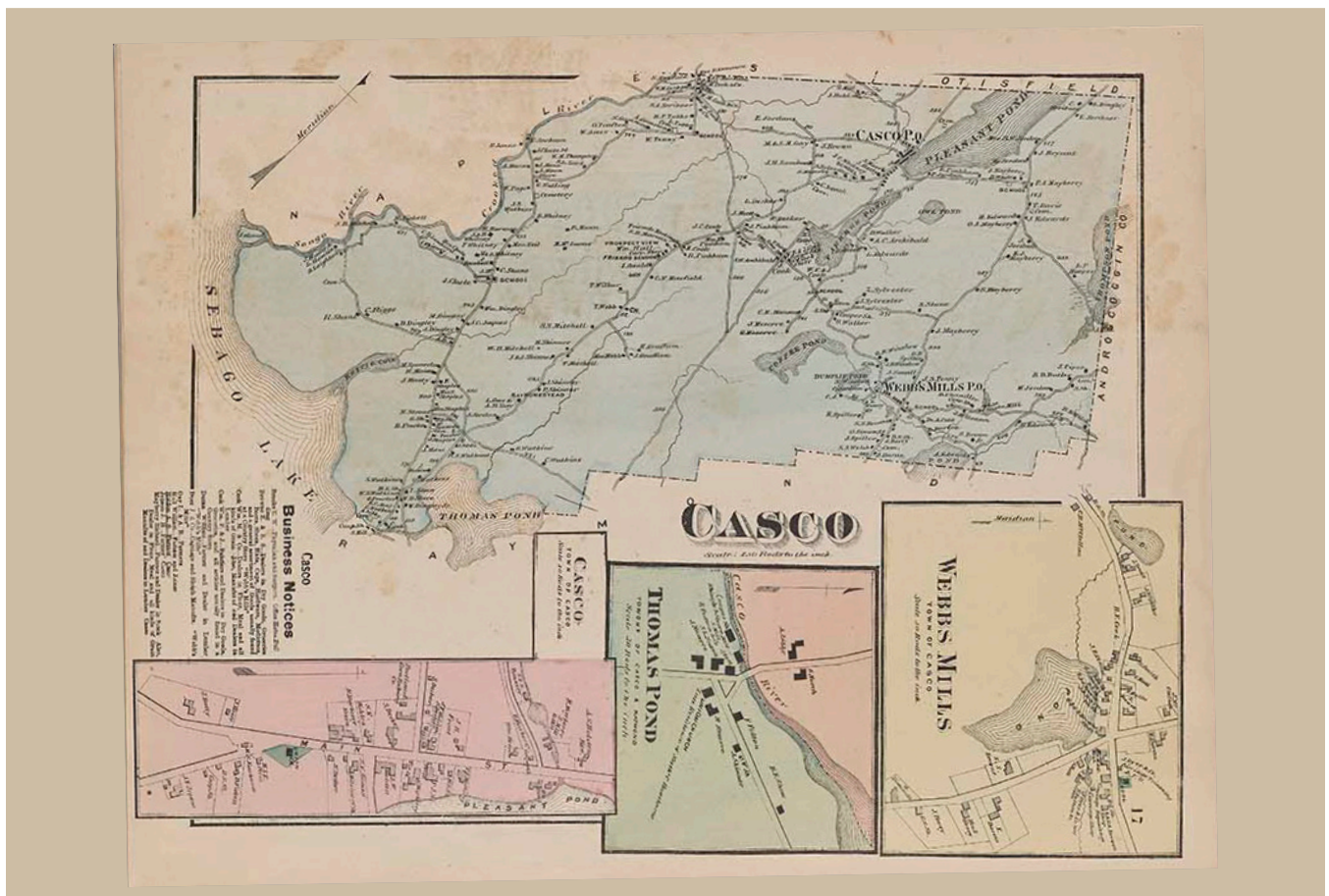
# CHAPTER 1

## **HISTORIC & ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to provide a current status of the historic and archaeological resources within Casco. To learn more about specific properties, residents may access the Cultural & Architectural Resource Management Archive (CARMA) map viewer at: [www.maine.gov/mhpc/quick-links/carma](http://www.maine.gov/mhpc/quick-links/carma)

This Chapter is organized into three sections:

1. History of Casco
2. Historic Resources
3. Threats to Historic Resources and Protective Measures



## History of Casco

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “An outline of the community’s history, including a brief description of historic settlement patterns and events contributing to the development and character of the community and its surroundings.”]**

Casco was formed in 1841 after a separation from then “Raymondtown”. Because there were geographically challenging areas in Raymondtown, there was a sense of disconnect and inefficiency with the way things were, and a committed group of people worked tirelessly to create two separate towns. Casco’s first town meeting was held at the Friends Meetinghouse on Quaker Ridge Rd., which was built in 1814 and still stands today.

Before European contact, the bountiful and widespread forests that grew here after the last glacier retreated were lightly managed by Native Americans and were still intact when early European settlers arrived in the 1700s. These settlers realized the economic potential of these forests and built an industry around them. Early sawmills were located next to waterways in South Casco Village, Cook’s Mills, Webb’s Mills, and Casco Village. These areas, with both water access and industry, proved to be magnets for both residential and commercial development. Farms became plentiful, having sprung up close to these village areas and in other areas where timber harvesting revealed excellent soils for agricultural use. Roads were built to connect these areas together as well as with surrounding towns.

Casco once consisted of a series of small village areas, each tending to have a church, a school, a general store, a blacksmith shop, mills, etc. in order to sustain the nearby residents. If you take a look at one of the old maps (1857, or 1871) you can see where homes and businesses were clustered. Webb's Mills and South Casco by Thomas Pond were two of the larger villages of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Casco has evolved through time just as it has in many surrounding Lake Region communities. Until after the Second World War, economic activity continued to be non-intensive and characterized by farming, timber harvesting, and pockets of small commercial and industrial activity, primarily in the early village settlements. Summer camps for boys and girls were established on some of the lakes. Seasonal homes were built around Casco's primary water bodies. Farming and commercial businesses started to dwindle.

Casco's population in 1960 was less than that in 1860, reflecting the westward expansion and the conversion from an agrarian economy. Cellar holes and stone walls mark many old farms. Casco's current population is more than three times what it was in the 1960's, but the Town has been able to keep much of its rural charm.

There are now five villages in the Town of Casco, nestled among thousands of acres of forest. The villages of today are well-kept and mostly residential in nature. Most villages do not have the same level of commercial activities happening in them as they did in historic times. Today, much of the commercial activity occurs along the Route 302 corridor, and residents travel outside Casco to obtain many goods, services and employment.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: "Are historic patterns of settlement still evident in the community?"]***

Historic patterns of settlement are very much still evident in the community today. See section of the plan, "The Villages of Casco" for descriptions of the settlement patterns that are still evident today, and are desired for protection and enhancement tomorrow in Casco's five villages.

# Historic Resources

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “An inventory of the location, condition, and use of any historical or archaeological resource that is of local importance.”]**

One of Casco’s biggest historical assets is the Raymond-Casco Historical Society. The Historical Society runs a history museum and holds a collection of historic and archaeological artifacts including many historic farming artifacts and a replica of the Friends School House. The Historical Society is currently hoping to expand programming at the museum and raise awareness of the historical significance of buildings in order to raise the level of historical stewardship in the two towns.

The following section includes the various historical properties and sites identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) as of March, 2021.

There are four properties in Casco listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

1. Friends Meetinghouse, Quaker Ridge (1814) in Casco Village.
2. Nathaniel Hawthorne’s Boyhood Home (1818)
3. The Watkins House and Cabins at the junction of Cape Road and U.S. 302 (1810-1920)
4. The Richard Manning House on Raymond Cape Road (1813) in South Casco.

There are two historic archaeological sites documented by the MHPC for Casco:

1. Cook’s Mills (CK)-1 which was significant in the early 19th century
2. Pike’s Corner (PI)-1 which was significant in the 19th century.

There are 10 prehistoric archaeological sites

identified by the MHPC in Casco. They lie on the shores of Thompson Lake, Thomas Pond, and Sebago Lake. Limited professional archaeological surveying has been conducted in the State Park and along the Sebago Lake shoreline east of the State Park.

There are many historic properties throughout Casco. Those identified by MHPC in the Cultural & Architectural Resource Management Archive include:

1. 15 historic properties in Casco Village along Route 121 between Mayberry Hill Road and Edes Falls Road. All that have been assessed are listed as in good condition.
2. 14 historic properties at the intersection of Route 121 and 11. All are in either good or fair condition with the exception of 598 Meadow Road, which is listed as in poor condition.
3. Four historic properties on Route 85 just South of Route 11 on Crescent Lake, three of which are listed as in good or fair condition.
4. Nine historic properties on Route 302 near the Naples border. Of the properties that have been assessed, all are in fair condition.
5. In Sebago Lake State Park, there is a Historic Bridge in good condition.

# Threats to Historic Resources and Protective Measures

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “A brief description of threats to local historic resources and to those of state and national significance as identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. Have significant historic resources fallen into disrepair, and are there ways the community can provide incentives to preserve their value as an historical resource? Work with the local or county historical society and/or the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for, and if necessary plan for, a comprehensive community survey of the community’s historic and archaeological resources.”]***

The Raymond-Casco Historical Society identifies a major threat to local historic resources in the lack of identification and knowledge of property and sites on private property. Sites that are not preserved under the national register of historic places are not protected by law, and thus are often changed and wiped of their historic qualities. Others have been left to deteriorate or even be demolished altogether. A recent significant loss was the Friends School House which was destroyed by a fire in 2018. The building and its contents were not saved, however, the Raymond-Casco Historical Society has created a replica on display at the museum.

To increase awareness of historical significance of sites in the towns, the Raymond-Casco Historical Society hopes to increase programming through their museum. One of their biggest projects currently underway is relocating the Watkins Historic Blacksmith Shop, which has fallen into disrepair, on Quaker Ridge to the Museum site. The Historical Society plans on moving the structure to Route 302 in Casco, restoring it to a

working blacksmith shop, and are hoping to offer introductory blacksmithing classes. Through the shop, the Historical Society is attempting to get the community interacting with, and see value in, the towns’ histories.

As recommended by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission in their inventory data packet, there is a need for further survey, inventory, and analysis of Casco’s prehistoric and historic archaeological sites and historic buildings, structures, and objects. Notably, there have been no professional surveys for historic archaeological sites in Casco. Prior to development within 50 yards of the shore, the shorelines of Thompson Lake, Thomas Pond, and unsurveyed portions of Sebago Lake need to be surveyed for prehistoric archaeological sites. Additionally, in future archaeological surveys, there should be a focus on potentially significant resources associated with Casco’s agricultural, residential, and industrial heritage, particularly those related to the earliest Euro-American settlement of the area in the 18th and 19th centuries. Finally, a comprehensive survey of above-ground historic resources should be conducted to identify other properties in Casco that may be nominated to the National Register for Historic Places.



***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “What protective measures currently exist for historic and archeological resources and are they effective? Do local site plan and/or subdivision regulations require applicants proposing development in areas that may contain historic or archaeological resources to conduct a survey for such resources?”]***

Protective measures exist in a number of locations within the zoning and subdivision ordinances. The effectiveness of the ordinances are subjective. One might argue no, evidenced by the exterior physical alterations that occurred after the Grange Hall in Casco Village was sold to be converted to a marijuana grow facility.

Casco has not completed a survey of historic properties or archaeological sites, while Maine Historic Preservation Commission has limited information. The ordinances and protections are only as effective as the data is accurate and available.

**The following regulations apply to development within the Shoreland Zone:**

§ 215-9.33 Archaeological site. Any proposed land use activity involving structural development or soil disturbance on or adjacent to sites listed on, or eligible to be listed on, the National Register of Historic Places, as determined by the permitting authority, shall be submitted by the applicant to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for review and comment at least 20 days prior to action being taken by the permitting authority. The permitting authority shall consider comments received from the Commission prior to rendering a decision on the application.

§ 215-9.36 Administration and enforcement. (2) A permit is not required for an archaeological excavation as long as the excavation is conducted by an archaeologist listed on the State Historic

Preservation Commission’s level 1 or level 2 approved list, and unreasonable erosion and sedimentation is prevented by means of adequate and timely temporary and permanent stabilization measures.

**The following regulations apply if constructing Wireless Communications Facilities:**

§ 215-8.9 Requirements for tower. (11) An analysis of the visual impact of the proposed facility, including tower and supporting structures, which may include photo montage, field mock-up, or other techniques that identify the potential visual impacts, at design capacity, of the proposed facility. Consideration shall be given to views from roads, public areas, private residences, historic resources, including historic districts and structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and archaeological resources. The analysis of the impact on historical and archaeological resources shall meet the requirements of the Maine State Historic Preservation Commission in its review capacity for the FCC. The overall analysis shall assess the cumulative impacts of the proposed facility and other existing communication facilities in the area.

§ 215-8.10 Planning Board review. E. Planning Board review guidelines. The Planning Board may require that the applicant submit documentation, in writing, that the guidelines established below will be met and maintained. The Planning Board will be guided in its consideration of a WCF application by the following parameters: (10) The proposed WCF facility will not unreasonably interfere with the view from any public park, natural scenic vista, historical building, major view corridor or designated scenic resource. (12) Based on information submitted by the applicant, the Planning Board shall ensure that: (c) Other technically feasible sites have been investigated

and the proposed facility has been located in order to minimize the effect of the location on visually sensitive areas such as residential communities, historical areas, and open space areas.

**The following is required for properties that are being subdivided:**

§ 210-8.1 Criteria for evaluation of subdivision.

A. The subdivision: (9) Will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area, aesthetics, historic sites, rare and irreplaceable natural areas, or any public rights for physical or visual access to the shoreline.

§210-9.5. Retention of open spaces and natural features. F. If the proposed subdivision contains any identified historical or archaeological site or any areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan or by the Maine Critical Areas Program as rare and irreplaceable natural areas, the areas shall be included in the open space and suitably protected by appropriate covenants and management plans.

**The following is required for properties located within the Resource Protection District:**

§ 215-9.37 Establishment of districts. A. Resource Protection District (RP).(1) Description. The Resource Protection District includes areas in which development would adversely affect water quality, productive habitat, biological ecosystems, or scenic and natural values. This district shall include the following areas when they occur within the limits of the shoreland zone, exclusive of the Stream Protection and Watershed Districts, except that areas which are currently developed and areas which meet the criteria for the Limited Commercial/Residential District need not be included within the Resource Protection District:

(i) Other significant areas which should be included in this district to fulfill the purposes of this Subsection A, including but not limited to existing public access areas and certain significant archaeological and historic sites deserving of long-term protection as determined by the municipality after consultation with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

**The following is required if a property is being developed under a Contract Zone Agreement:**

§ 215-3.4 Contract zoning. (b) When negotiating the terms of a contract zoning agreement, the Planning Board may consider, among other factors, the following:[9] Preservation and protection of historic and archaeological sites.



# CHAPTER 2

## WATER & NATURAL RESOURCES

This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to provide a current status of water and natural resources within Casco and the surrounding region.

This Chapter is organized into five sections:

1. Surface Waters and Groundwater
2. Soils
3. High Value Plant and Animal Habitat
4. Threats and Protections of Water and Natural Resources
5. Environmental Protections

# Surface Waters and Groundwater

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “A description of each great pond, river, surface drinking water supply, and other water bodies of local interest including: A. ecological value; B. threats to water quality or quantity; C. documented water quality and/or invasive species problems”]**

Over two square miles of the town’s surface area are lakes and ponds with over 40 miles of rivers and nearly 40 miles of shoreline. Many of Casco’s lakes, ponds, streams, wetlands, aquifers, and watersheds have good to outstanding water quality, but are at risk to threats by development in the region. See water resources map in “Protect Woods, Waters, and Open Space” Big Idea section for more information.

## Lakes and Ponds

The water quality in the majority of Casco’s lakes and ponds is stellar, particularly Pleasant Lake, Sebago Lake, and Thompson Lake which are locally known as standouts. The following descriptions of Casco’s lakes and ponds include information from the Lake Stewards of Maine’s Lakes of Maine data portal about water bodies’ size, water quality, conservation and stewardship, threats, and phosphorus allocation budget (for those that apply). The watershed-per-acre phosphorus allocation budget of lakes and ponds is the amount of phosphorus from development that each acre of a lake or pond’s watershed could accept without risking a perceivable change in quality of water and is calculated by the DEP.

- **Coffee Pond:** The pond has an area of 106 acres with a maximum depth of 70 feet. The pond hosts coldwater and warmwater

fisheries. There are no known invasive aquatic plant infestations. The lake has been surveyed by volunteers and professionals for invasive aquatic plants. Local stewards of the pond include the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District. Although unimpaired, MDEP has listed Coffee Pond as a nonpoint source priority threatened lake watershed because of its sensitivity to additional phosphorus inputs due to the pond’s hydrology and/or threats in the watershed, including risk from new development. Coffee Pond’s direct watershed area in Casco is 452 acres and it’s per acre phosphorus allocation is .053 lb/acre/yr.

- **Crescent (Rattlesnake) Lake:** The Lake is situated mostly in Raymond with just the northern tip in Casco. It’s area is 703 acres and has 12,867 meters of shoreline and a maximum depth of 54 feet. The lake hosts coldwater and warmwater fisheries and has no known invasive aquatic plant infestations. The lake is patrolled by certified water quality monitors and invasive plant patrollers from its local stewards in the Crescent Lake Watershed Association. Crescent Lake’s direct watershed area in Casco is 904 acres and it’s per acre phosphorus allocation is .033 lb/acre/yr.
- **Dumpling Pond:** The pond has an area of 31 acres, 1,874 meters of shoreline, and a maximum depth of 14 feet. There are no known invasive aquatic plant infestations. It is listed as potentially at risk from new development. Dumpling Pond’s direct watershed area in Casco is 375 acres and it’s per acre phosphorus allocation is .054 lb/acre/yr.
- **Hog Meadow Pond:** The pond is in Casco and has an area of 18 miles and 1,455 meters

## WATERBODIES & WATERSHEDS



### Legend

#### Watershed Boundary Dataset

WBDLine

- 2-digit Hydrologic Unit
- 4-digit Hydrologic Unit
- 6-digit Hydrologic Unit
- 8-digit Hydrologic Unit
- 10-digit Hydrologic Unit
- 12-digit Hydrologic Unit
- 14-digit Hydrologic Unit
- 16-digit Hydrologic Unit

12-digit HU (Subwatershed)



14-digit HU



of shoreline. There are no known invasive aquatic plant infestations. Hog Meadow Pond's direct watershed area in Casco is 135 acres and its per acre phosphorus allocation is .051 lb/acre/yr.

- **Owl Pond:** The pond has an area of 21 acres, 1,271 meters of shoreline, and a maximum depth of 15 feet. The pond hosts warmwater fisheries with no known invasive aquatic plant infestations. Local stewards of the pond include the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District. Owl Pond's direct watershed area in Casco is 286 acres and its per acre phosphorus allocation is .032 lb/acre/yr.
- **Parker Pond:** The pond has an area of 167 acres, 5,700 meters of shoreline, and a maximum depth of 19 feet. The pond hosts warmwater fisheries. In 2000, variable-leaf milfoil, an invasive aquatic plant infestation, was identified in the pond, however, was eradicated in 2014 through efforts by the Pleasant-Lake Parker Pond Association. The association continues to conduct surveys and uses benthic barriers to control occasional VLM plants. Volunteers have conducted invasive aquatic plant screening surveys. Local stewards include the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Pleasant Lake and Parker Pond Association. Although unimpaired, MDEP has listed Parker Pond as a nonpoint source priority threatened lake watershed due to its sensitivity to additional phosphorus inputs due to the pond's hydrology and/or threats in the watershed, including risk from new development. Parker Pond's direct watershed area in Casco is 667 acres and its per acre phosphorus allocation is .038 lb/acre/yr.
- **Pleasant Lake:** The lake is split between Otisfield on the north end and Casco on the south. It has an area of 1,332 acres, 14,614 meters of shoreline, and a maximum depth of 62 feet. The lake hosts coldwater and warmwater fisheries. In 2000, variable-leaf milfoil was confirmed as an invasive infestation in the lake; however, VLM has not been observed since 2015 and is considered eradicated. There are certified water quality and invasive plant monitors active at the lake and invasive aquatic plant surveys have been conducted by both volunteers and professionals in the past. Local stewardship groups include Oxford County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Pleasant Lake and Parker Pond Association. Pleasant Lake's direct watershed area in Casco is 768 acres and its per acre phosphorus allocation is .046 lb/acre/yr.
- **Sebago Lake:** The lake is shared by the Towns of Casco, Naples, Raymond, Sebago, Standish, Windham, and Frye Island. It has an area of 29,992 acres, 6,861 meters of shoreline, and a maximum depth of 316 feet. The lake hosts coldwater and warmwater fisheries. Variable-leaf milfoil has been mapped by the Portland Water District in 12 colonies in the lake since first being discovered in 1970; the infestation is managed through Diver Assisted Suction Harvester and barriers. There are certified water quality and invasive plant monitors active at the lake and invasive aquatic plant surveys have been conducted by agency staff and volunteers in the past at nine different survey stations across the lake. Local stewardship groups include the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District, Raymond Waterways, Lakes Environmental Association, and the Portland Water District. Sebago Lake's direct watershed area in Casco

is 8707 acres and it's per acre phosphorus allocation is .047 lb/acre/yr.

- **Thomas Pond:** The pond is in Casco on the west side and in Raymond on the east. It has an area of 533 acres, 85 meters of shoreline, and a maximum depth of 64 feet. The lake hosts coldwater and warmwater fisheries. There are no known invasive aquatic plant infestations. There are certified water quality and invasive plant monitors active at the lake and invasive aquatic plant surveys conducted principally by volunteers. Although unimpaired, MDEP has listed Tomas Pond as a nonpoint source priority threatened lake watershed due to its sensitivity to additional phosphorus inputs due to the pond's hydrology and/or threats in the watershed, including risk from new development. Additionally, Thomas Pond feeds into Sebago Lake meaning contamination in the Pond has the potential to affect the quality of drinking water. Local stewardship groups include the Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District. Thomas Pond's direct watershed area in Casco is 2159 acres and it's per acre phosphorus allocation is .021 lb/acre/yr.
- **Thompson Lake:** Only the southernmost tip of the lake is in Casco, the rest is split between the Towns of Poland, Otisfield, and Oxford. The lake has an area of 4,419 acres, 47,925 meters of shoreline, and a maximum depth of 121 feet. The lake hosts coldwater and warmwater fisheries. Variable-leaf milfoil was identified in 1975 in the southernmost portion of the lake known as "the Heath." The infestation is managed by diver assisted suction harvesters and barriers. There are certified water quality and invasive plant monitors active at the lake and invasive aquatic plant surveys have been conducted by agency staff and volunteers

at five different survey stations. Local stewardship groups include Oxford County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Thompson Lake Environmental Association. Thompson Lake's direct watershed area in Casco is 2574 acres and it's per acre phosphorus allocation is .031 lb/acre/yr.

- **Panther & Nubble Ponds:** While located in Raymond, Nubble Pond's direct watershed area in Casco is 187 acres and its per acre phosphorus allocation is .035 lb/acre/yr. Also in Raymond, Panther Pond's direct watershed area in Casco is 2139 acres and it's per acre phosphorus allocation is .037 lb/acre/yr.

.....

## Rivers

Class AA is the highest classification of waters. It applies to waters which are outstanding natural resources and which should be preserved because of their ecological, social, scenic or recreational importance. Class A is the second highest classification. It applies to waters suitable for the designated uses of drinking water after disinfection; fishing; agriculture; recreation in and on the water; industrial process and cooling water supply; hydroelectric power generation; navigation; and as habitat for fish and other aquatic life. The classifications of Casco's rivers as identified on MDEP's list of nonpoint source priority watersheds are as follows:

- **Mill Brook:** At the confluence with Crooked River, the DEP has labeled 2.28 miles of Mill Brook (also known as Mile Brook) a class B impaired stream due to wastewater outfalls and Benthic Macroinvertebrates.
- **Robinson Brook:** Classified A
- **Edwards Brook:** Classified A
- **Meadow Brook:** Classified A (*Staples Brook,*



*Rolfe Brook in Raymond)*

- **Lord Brook:** Classified A (*Ring Brook, Sucker Brook*)
- **Lilly/Lily Brook:** Classified AA (*connects Parker Pond and Pleasant Lake*)
- **Decker Brook:** Classified AA
- **Songo River:** Classified A. Variable-leaf milfoil was first identified in the Songo River in 2004 when it was found above and below the lock. Until 2015, the infestation was managed through benthic barriers, hand removal, and a suction harvester. Since 2016, the infestation has been scattered and regrowth is managed by hand removal and barriers. Management efforts are led by the Lakes Environmental Association.
- **Crooked River:** Classified AA
- **Rolfe Brook:** Classified A
- **Dingley Brook:** Classified A

No streams in Casco are listed on MDEP's list as impaired nor threatened.

.....

## Groundwater/Aquifers

Groundwater is water that lies below the water table, saturating the soil and filling in the pores and fractures in the bedrock. Groundwater is recharged by precipitation that seeps into the ground. The bodies of rock and sediment saturated with groundwater are called aquifers. Aquifers can be confined if they have a layer of impenetrable rock or clay covering them, or unconfined if they lie below a permeable layer of soil. The two main dangers to groundwater are depletion and contamination. Depletion occurs when groundwater is used faster than it can be recharged through rainfall. Groundwater can

can occur from agricultural runoff that includes pesticides and herbicides, leaking septic tanks, and improper storage of waste and chemicals in landfills. Although groundwater is naturally filtered as it moves through the ground, this process may not be enough to remove all of the unnatural contaminants. Uncontaminated groundwater is particularly important to communities like Casco that rely on wells to supply household water as wells are direct points of discharge for aquifers.

Significant aquifers in Casco as identified in the Watershed Map compiled by Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Environmental Assessment, 2021 include:

- Along the Crooked River which divides Casco and Naples at 10-50 gallons per minute with a smaller portion at over 50 gallons per minute. This smaller portion has been highlighted as having land use risk on high yield sand and gravel aquifers.
- Small portions of land off of Crescent Lake, Thomas Pond, and Thompson Lake are aquifers of 10-50 gallons per minute.

Casco's aquifers are generally in good condition. In town code, they are protected by an Aquifer Protection Overlay District meant to "protect Casco's underground water supply by restricting uses and activities on land overlying aquifers and aquifer recharge areas." In the protection area, there are additional prohibited uses including but not limited to: uncontained manure storages, storage of hazardous materials, restaurants, and truck facilities. When more restrictive than those of the underlying zone, Aquifer Protection standards are applied. The most notable recent contamination of the groundwater in Casco was in the spill on Tenney Hill discovered in the early 2000s.



## Watersheds

Waters designated nonpoint Source (NPS) priority watersheds by Maine DEP include both waters already impaired or potentially threatened by NPS pollution. Many of Casco's watersheds are on the threatened NPS priority list.

- **Sebago Watershed:** Much of Casco lies within the Sebago Watershed. The watershed is 224.67 square miles and has outstanding water quality and is part of the public water system for Portland. The Sebago watershed has been identified by the U.S. Forest Service as at a high risk of losing forestland to development. According to Sebago Clean Waters, a advocacy collaborative of nine organizations and the Portland Water District, 84% of the 234,000 acres of watershed is forested. The forest helps keep the water of the region clean through filtration.
- **Thompson Lake Watershed:** A small portion of Thompson Lake Watershed is in Casco with the rest in neighboring Otisfield, Oxford and Poland. The watershed is 41.71 square miles with outstanding, although sensitive, water quality and is designated threatened by DEP.
- **Pleasant Lake Watershed:** A small portion of Pleasant Lake Watershed lies in Casco along

with Otisfield. It's area is 7.66 square miles and has outstanding, but threatened, water quality as well as supports a fish hatchery.

- **Parker Pond Watershed:** This watershed is wholly contained in Casco with an area of 1.93 square miles. The water quality is sensitive and the watershed is designated threatened.
- **Crescent Lake Watershed:** This watershed lies in Casco and Raymond at 7.42 square miles. The water quality of the watershed is sensitive and is designated threatened.
- **Thomas Pond Watershed:** This watershed is in Casco and Raymond with 5.28 square miles. The water quality is sensitive and the watershed is designated threatened.
- **Coffee Pond Watershed:** This watershed lies completely within Casco and is 0.88 square miles. The water quality of the watershed is sensitive and is designated threatened.

Deforestation of the watersheds, as a result of development (including clearing for installation of large solar farms), was expressed as a concern. Residents identified protection of the watershed as having direct correlation to the health of the lakes.

## Soils

The Natural Resources Conservation Service of the USDA rates soils by type and use. Soils defined as prime farmland soils are those that are well suited to producing food crops. Casco's prime farmlands are mostly located where farming occurred in the past.

The largest concentrations are located in the following areas:

- Along Mayberry Hill from the Otisfield town line and extending down the Heath Road.
- West of Casco Village, primarily along Leach Hill and the Fountain Hill Road.
- Between Pike's corner and Parker Pond.
- Along Route 85 south of Webb's Mills.
- Along Quaker Ridge.
- Along the Riggs Road in South Casco.

Other soils are also considered suited for use as farmland, even though they are not classified as "prime". The main concentration of these additional soil types is found south of Pike's Corner and from there runs west-southwest to the west side of Tenney Hill. Other smaller clusters, for the most part, are adjacent to prime farmland soils. Agricultural soils have been mapped at a large scale and are available for viewing at the Casco Town Hall. (Excerpt from 2003 Comprehensive Plan).

## High Value Plant and Animal Habitat

Much land in Casco serves as important natural spaces for plants and animal habitats. The following lists some notable areas of concern by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife:

- At Owl Pond, the Scarlet Bluet is identified as a species of special concern and the New England Bluet is identified as a species of conservation need.
- On the Poland-Casco border off of Route 11, the Fern-leaved False Foxglove is identified as a species of special concern.
- Around Route 121 West of Coffee Pond and at the Raymond-Casco border North of Panther Pond, the Great Blue Heron is identified as a species of special concern.
- At the Raymond-Casco border East of Coffee Pond, the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has reported Summer Grape as a threatened species, Purple Clematis as a species of special concern, and found areas of an Oak-Pine Woodland and Enriched Northern Hardwood Forest.
- Along the Crooked River, the Pygmy Snaketail is identified as a species of special concern.

See the Environmental Systems map for more information on high value plant and animal habitat locations.

# Threats and Protections of Water and Natural Resources

*\*See Environmental Protections in the Regulatory Framework of Comprehensive Plan.*

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are there point sources (direct discharges) of pollution in the community? If so, is the community taking steps to eliminate them?”]***

Between 1969 and 1980, Portland-Bangor Waste Oil operated a waste oil collection and storage facility in Casco at Tenney Hill. The oil, some of which was contaminated with lead and solvents, leached into the soil and groundwater at the site, leading to a DEP investigation from 2001 to 2003 which estimated that 58,000,000 gallons of groundwater below the site are contaminated and that the natural degradation will take more than 100 years. The site has added hazard in its position in the Crooked River watershed. The DEP designated the site as a State “uncontrolled hazardous substance site.” Following the decision, Casco was granted \$500,000 from the Waste Motor Oil Disposal Site Remediation Program funds for natural resource damages in the loss of use of groundwater at the site. The DEP determined that it was not feasible to decontaminate the groundwater so drinking water extraction from the area has been limited and the funds granted were to be allocated to local projects to protect groundwater from pollution. The funds continue to be available for low-income Casco residents to replace failing septic systems. However, according to the CEO, few residents have taken advantage.

Other point-source pollution concerns by staff include motorized boats and old septic systems and by Loon Echo Land Trust include short-term rentals on the waterfront.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are there non-point sources of pollution? If so, is the community taking steps to eliminate them?”]***

Some of Casco’s waters have the potential to be threatened by non-point source pollution. For individual assessments of water bodies, see descriptions above. Pollution monitoring and enforcement is handled by the local Code Enforcement Officer, Portland Water District (for Sebago Lake), and the DEP. In order to protect the water resources in and surrounding Casco, the public works department uses a minimal amount of salt on the roads. Although the amount of salt used has increased slightly in recent years, Casco still uses less than surrounding towns.

Although community members have noted that Casco rarely takes steps beyond requirements set by other regulating bodies to eliminate non-point sources of pollution, they have expressed a desire for educational programming to increase awareness about water resource protection. During public design week, community members suggested involving Lakes Environmental Association in schools and creating a summer environmental education program for kids who would then work to spread information to adults in Casco.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Do public works crews and contractors use best management practices to protect water resources in their daily operations (e.g. salt/sand pile maintenance, culvert replacement street sweeping, public works garage operations)?”]***

Town staff follow the Department of Environmental Protection rules for the quantity of salt used on streets. Staff also engage in online training for best practices. Casco employs a contractor to replace problematic culverts on driveway entrances and those that need to be increased in size.



***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are there opportunities to partner with local or regional advocacy groups that promote water resource protection? Is there current regional cooperation or planning underway to protect shared critical natural resources? Are there opportunities to partner with local or regional groups?”]***

There are volunteer groups monitoring water quality and stewardship groups active in the region including Sebago Clean Waters, Loon Echo Land Trust, Lake Stewards of Maine, Maine Lakes, and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection Lakes Program. The abundant number of water protection and other natural resource protection organizations in the Lakes Region shows ample opportunity to partner with local groups. It also indicates a level of volunteership in the community and willingness to take action.

There are many non-profit organizations that work throughout the Lakes Region to protect water and forestry resources. See notes above, and the chapter on Recreation for more information on regional cooperation for conservation of trails and open spaces.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “A summary of past and present activities to monitor, assess, and/or improve water quality, mitigate sources of pollution, and control or prevent the spread of invasive species.”]***

Volunteer organizations actively monitor most lakes and ponds. Lake Stewards of Maine (LSM) is one of the leading organizations in promoting lake stewardship and is the primary source of lake data in Maine; LSM trains, certifies and provides technical assistance to monitor the lakes for water quality and identify invasive aquatic plant and animal infestations. LSM publishes data for each lake on their website. Some of Casco’s lakes have their own specific stewardship groups such as the Crescent Lake Watershed Association, the

Thompson Lake Environmental Association, and the Pleasant Lake and Parker Pond Association. The Pleasant Lake/Parker Pond Association was established in the 1960s to address receding water levels of the time and later to monitor the purple loosestrife found in the water. Community members noted during the public design week that the lakes associations are important to protecting the lakes but that there should be additional efforts for conservation outside of the lakes themselves such as connection to land conservation and the conservation of watersheds more generally.

Sebago Clean Waters (SCW) is a collaborative of environmental nonprofits, including the Loon Echo Land Trust which was a founding member, and the Portland Water District. SCW works to increase the pace of forest conservation in the Sebago watershed, which makes up a significant part of Casco, in order to preserve the water quality of Sebago Lake. As the forest helps to filter water, the conservation of forestland is SCW’s primary methodology of source water protection in the region. SCW was recently awarded an \$8mil grant from the State’s Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Regional Conservation Partnership Program, \$5mil of which is to be used for conservation easements. In addition to direct conservation, the collaborative commissioned a research study in 2018 on the market-value of the ecosystem services that conserved lands provide in the watershed.

To address erosion around lakes across Maine, Maine Lakes, a non-profit dedicated to protecting Maine’s lakes and ponds, partners with local lake associations to create the LakeSmart education and reward program. LakeSmart is a voluntary program in which lakeside homes are evaluated by trained volunteers and homeowners are

given individualized suggestions on how to improve. Education provided includes practices for landscaping that minimizes erosion along the shoreline and into the lakes. Homeowners whose properties are determined to be lake-friendly receive the LakeSmart Award which includes two signs that can be posted at the waterfront and driveways.

The Lakes Environmental Association (LEA) is a nonprofit that aims to protect the water and watersheds in the Greater Sebago Lakes Region through advocacy, action, and scientific analysis. Previous actions taken by LEA include helping to begin the milfoil program, blocking a nuclear waste dumping facility near Sebago Lake, and increasing enforcement of Maine's environmental protection laws.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “A description of the location and nature of significant threats to aquifer drinking water supplies.”]***

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are any of the community’s critical natural resources threatened by development, overuse, or other activities?”]***

Waterfront development continues to threaten watersheds but residents want to take an active approach to conserving open space in order to protect the watershed. There is concern with the villages located close to lakes and the impact future development may have. However, during design week, residents indicated the importance of preserving natural areas and concentrating development to minimize impact to the lakes and watershed. Unrestricted development around the lakes presents the greatest threat compared to dense development in village centers.

There is debate about how to preserve Casco's open space with the minimum lot size ordinance. With the current minimum lot size, a subdivision

is required to take up more space than is always needed, making density difficult to implement. The requirement for more land threatens the current open space and forested lands to future development.

## Environmental Protections

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “How are groundwater and surface water supplies and their recharge areas protected?”]***

As part of the Town of Casco Code's water protections, groundwater and surface water supplies and recharge areas are considered in most zoning cases. The code defines groundwater inclusive of subsurface water present in aquifers as well as recharge areas. Throughout, the code prohibits activities that store or discharge inadequately treated material such that they may run off or seep into and pollute surface or groundwater to be harmful to human, animal, or aquatic life. Activities are restricted to where they may be geographically in relation to the water table and aquifers. (§ 215-5.34; § 215-9.32; § 215-7.5; § 210-8.1; § 215-4.10; § 62-8; etc.)

Replacement or installation of a new septic system within 200 feet of Sebago Lake requires a permitting process with the Portland Water District. Although Casco residents drinking water comes from private wells, Sebago Lake provides water for Greater Portland.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “A summary of existing lake, pond, river, stream, and drinking water protection and preservation measures, including local ordinances.”]***

### Streams and Wetlands Protection

The following is required for properties located within the Streams and Wetlands Protection District::



§ 215-4.8 Streams and Wetlands Protection District (SW). [Amended 3-9-1991 by Art. 157; 9-28-1991 by Art. 16; 6-12-2013 by Art. 27; 9-24-2014 by Art. 4] A. Intent. To protect the water quality of streams and brooks that flow into Crooked River and Casco's lakes and ponds and of significant wetland areas not protected under shoreland zoning. Buffering these areas will help protect them from the adverse impacts of development or environmental occurrences and maintain the high quality of Casco's larger water bodies. Toward the achievement of these purposes, the following minimum standards are established. B. Applicability. These standards shall apply to all land areas within 75 feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-water line of any stream or wetland of special significance as defined, exclusive of ponds and rivers protected under shoreland zoning. C. Permitted uses. (1) The following uses are permitted: (a) Recreational uses not requiring structures. (2) The following uses require Reviewing Authority review: (a) Timber harvesting that complies with shoreland protection performance standards herein. (b) Road and driveway crossings where necessary to provide access to lots. (3) All other uses are prohibited. D. Space standards. (1) None; no structures permitted. (2) Areas within the Streams and Wetlands Protection District composed of buildable land, as defined herein, may be included in determining the net residential area of contiguous land under the same ownership that lies outside the Streams and Wetlands Protection District.

### **Shoreland Zoning**

The following establishes the Shoreland Zoning District:

§ 215-9.1 Purposes. The purposes of this article are to further the maintenance of safe and healthful conditions; to prevent and control water pollution;

to protect fish spawning grounds, aquatic life, bird and other wildlife habitat; to protect buildings and lands from flooding and accelerated erosion; to protect archaeological and historic resources; to protect freshwater wetlands; to control building sites, placement of structures and land uses; to conserve shore cover, and visual as well as actual points of access to inland waters; to conserve natural beauty and open space; and to anticipate and respond to the impacts of development in shoreland areas.

§ 215-9.5 Applicability. A. This article applies to all land areas within 250 feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-water line of any great pond or river; within 250 feet, horizontal distance, of the upland edge of a freshwater wetland; and within 130 feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-water line of a stream. B. This article also applies to any structure built on, over or abutting a dock, wharf or pier, or other structure extending beyond, or located below, the normal high-water line of a water body or within a wetland.

§ 215-9.3 Shoreland Districts and Shoreland Zoning Map. A. Shoreland Districts. The Shoreland Districts, as established by this chapter in Article 4, § 215-4.1, are: (1) Resource Protection (RP). (2) Limited Residential/Recreational (LRR). (3) Limited Commercial/Residential (LCR). (4) Stream Protection (SP). (5) Watershed (WS).

### **Aquifer Protection**

The following apply to the Aquifer Protection Overlay District:

§ 215-4.10 Aquifer Protection Overlay District (AP). A. Intent. To protect Casco's underground water supply by restricting uses and activities on land overlying aquifers and aquifer recharge areas. Toward the achievement of this purpose, the following minimum standards are established.

B. Permitted uses. Same as underlying district (subject to site plan review where indicated) except for prohibited uses listed herein. C. Prohibited uses. (1) Dwelling, multiplex, and PRDs. [Amended 6-14-2017 by Art. 27] (2) Engineered sewerage systems. (3) Industrial and manufacturing uses, including light industrial uses. (4) Outdoor storage. (5) Uncontained salt and sand piles. (6) Uncontained manure storage. (7) Storage of hazardous materials. (8) Junkyards. (9) Restaurants. (10) Hotels. (11) Motor vehicle service stations. [Amended 6-14-2017 by Art. 27] (12) Motor vehicle repair garages. [Amended 6-14-2017 by Art. 27] (13) Truck facilities. (14) Construction services. D. Space standards. When more restrictive than those of the underlying zone, the following space standards shall be applied: (1) Minimum lot size: 120,000 square feet. (2) Minimum road frontage: 300 feet. (3) Maximum impervious surface to lot area: 10%. (4) Maximum building height: 35 feet. E. Other standards. (1) All spreading or disposal of manure shall conform to the Best Management Practices handbook published by Maine Department of Agriculture, 1988, and subsequent revisions. (2) Erosion and sedimentation shall be minimized by adherence to erosion control management practices contained in the Environmental Quality Handbook, 1986, published by the Maine Soil and Water Conservation Commission, and periodically amended. F. Appeal. Owners who contest the placement of their property in the Aquifer Protection District may appeal to Planning Board for map change in accordance with the procedures of § 215-3.3 of this chapter. In all cases, the burden of proof shall be on the owner to demonstrate that his property should not be included within the Aquifer Protection District.

## **Performance Standards**

The following are required performance standards:

§ 215-5.31 Stormwater quality and phosphorous control. [Added 6-10-2015 by Art. 29] A. Applicability. This section shall apply to all development, construction, alteration or building on lots, where any portion of the lot is within 250 feet of a great pond, as measured from the normal high-water line, or 100 feet of a perennial stream, as identified on a United States Geological Survey map. Projects that must meet this standard include but are not limited to: (1) All lots subject to site plan review, including any additions, modifications, or new commercial, retail, industrial, institutional and/or recreational structures and uses that have not received prior approval by the Planning Board that included a phosphorus export analysis or a stormwater plan that meets the applicable requirements of 06-096 CMR Chapter 500, Stormwater Management, as amended. [Amended 6-14-2017 by Art. 27] (a) All such lots subject to Article 7, Site Plan Review, shall conform to the requirements of § 215-7.4, Submission requirements, Subsection A(3), and § 215-7.5, Criteria and standards, Subsection A(5), Surface water drainage, in addition to the provisions of this section. (b) Except for minor developments and minor modifications, for which Planning Board approval is not required and the Reviewing Authority may approve, all projects subject to site plan review shall submit a phosphorus export analysis and calculations based on Phosphorus Control in Lake Watersheds: A Technical Guide to Evaluating New Development (latest edition), issued by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Minor developments and minor modifications subject to Reviewing Authority review only shall use the point system in Subsection B(1). (2) New residential structures

and uses that have not received prior approval by the Planning Board that included a phosphorus export analysis or a stormwater plan that meets the requirements of 06-096 CMR Chapter 500, Stormwater Management, as amended. [Amended 6-14-2017 by Art. 27] (3) Expansions of existing single-family structures and duplexes, new accessory structures associated with single-family structures and duplexes, or extensions of more than 150 linear feet of existing driveways, any of which individually or cumulatively increase the impervious area on the lot by 1,500 square feet or more.

§ 215-5.34 Water quality protection. No activity shall store, discharge or permit the discharge of any treated, untreated, or inadequately treated liquid, gaseous, or solid materials of such nature, quantity, obnoxiousness, toxicity, or temperature, such that they will run off, seep, percolate, or wash into surface water or groundwater so as to contaminate, pollute, or harm such waters or cause nuisances, such as objectionable shore deposits, floating or submerged debris, oil or scum, color, odor, taste, or unsightliness, or be harmful to human, animal, plant, or aquatic life.

Are local shoreland zone standards consistent with state guidelines and with the standards placed on adjacent shorelands in neighboring communities? Are land use ordinances consistent with applicable state law regarding critical natural resources?

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are local shoreland zone standards consistent with state guidelines and with the standards placed on adjacent shorelands in neighboring communities? Are land use ordinances consistent with applicable state law regarding critical natural resources?”]***

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “What regulatory and non-regulatory measures has the community taken or can the community take to protect critical natural resources and important natural resources?”]***

Casco has adopted the state guidelines for shoreland zoning. Also included in the Code are measures for erosion and sediment control, timber harvesting, and vegetation clearance.

# CHAPTER 3

## **AGRICULTURAL & FOREST RESOURCES**

This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to provide a current status of the agricultural and forestry capacity within Casco and the surrounding region. This Chapter is organized into four sections:

1. Agricultural Resources
2. Local Agricultural Protection
3. Forestry Resources
4. Implications

# Agricultural Resources

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “How important is agriculture and/or forestry and are these activities growing, stable, or declining?”]**

Agriculture is not a major part of the economy of Casco. According to the American Community Survey 5-year estimates, only 14 residents over the age of 16 were employed in farming, fishing, and forestry in Casco. Since 2010, there have been less than 30 people working in farming, fishing, and forestry in Casco. Previously, agriculture was a large part of the town’s economy and community. Community members have expressed interest in reinvesting in local agriculture.

Forestry is a significant part of Casco’s economy. Hancock Lumber Company has been in business since 1848 and still has a lumber mill, retail store, and its administrative offices in Casco. It has been prominent in Casco since its founding. The town was initially formed around mills, many of which have become today’s villages. Forestry has been a constant in Casco and has been relatively stable throughout town history.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “A description of any community farming and forestry activities (e.g. community garden, farmer’s market, or community forest) and a brief description of any that are under threat. Does the community support community forestry or agriculture (i.e. small woodlots, community forests, tree farms, community gardens, farmers’ markets, or community-supported agriculture)? If so, how?”]**

Agriculture is not a significant aspect of Casco’s economy; there are not many opportunities for the town to support community agriculture. Casco previously hosted a farmers’ market at the Village Green, however due to low participation and the onset of COVID-19, the market has not been held

in recent years. The biggest community farming operation in Casco is Hancock Family Farm which runs a very popular CSA and farm stand. The farm also runs a hands-on farmer training program to help new farmers learn all aspects of the farming business.

Known farming facilities in Casco include:

- Hancock Family Farm, 36 Quaker Ridge Rd.: Organic Farm with a CSA, Farmstand, and pick-your-own Flowers.
- Sweet William’s Maple Syrup, 66 Spiller Rd.: Maple products.
- Rooted Earth Farm, 28 Webbs Mills Rd.: Small, 5 acres, three person operation. The farm has a focus on sustainable farming and herbs.
- Mid Ridge Farm, 343 Mayberry Hill Rd.: Organically produced urban farm and farmers market.
- Thicket Hill Farm: Family-owned pig farm.
- Momentum community garden, 1059 Meadow Rd.
- E’s Beez: honey producer.

Additionally, the Casco (Wade) State Fish Hatchery is located at the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife just North of the Village off of Route 121 and is supplied water by Pleasant Lake. Fish species raised at the Hatchery include brown trout, rainbow trout, landlocked salmon, and brook trout seasonally. Annually, the facility produces 85,000 catchable fish, more than 45,000lbs.





***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Information on the number of parcels and acres of farmland, tree growth, and open space enrolled in the state’s farm, tree growth, and open space law taxation programs, including changes in enrollment over the past 10 years. Are farm and forest land owners taking advantage of the state’s current use tax laws?”]***

Farms, open space, and tree growth in Casco:

- 330.7 Acres, 7 parcels farm
- 64.5 Acres, 3 parcels open space
- 6,559.3 Acres, 68 parcels tree growth

In the 2021 Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary, Casco’s Cumberland County Assessor reported that there were 69 tree growth parcels, seven farmland parcels and three open space parcels, or a total of 79 parcels in current use programs. Of the 3389 land parcels in Casco, 2.33% are enrolled in current use programs as of March 1, 2021. Although land has continued to be enrolled in these programs over the past 10 years, some parcels of land have been withdrawn from these programs as well.

# Local Agricultural Protection

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Is the community currently taking regulatory and/or non-regulatory steps to protect productive farming and forestry lands? Are there local or regional land trusts actively working to protect farms or forest lands in the community? Are there policies to safeguard lands identified as prime farmland or capable of supporting commercial forestry. To support farming and forestry and encourage their economic viability?”]***

The Casco Open Space Commission’s mission includes protecting working agricultural land and forests. Through community engagement, the Commission has guided landowners toward strategies to protect the space such as through Farm land tax laws to reduce the landowner’s tax liability and using conservation easements. Beyond the Open Space Commission, the Town Code touches on farming mostly in the context of water protection policies, although the Planning Board is currently working on an alternative energy ordinance to help contain solar farm operations in balance with maintaining open space.

The Loon Echo Land Trust reported easements on a few sites that were historically agricultural lands, such as Helen Allen Farm; however, LET does not currently have any working farms under protection. The organization has expressed interest in doing work to acquire/conservate farms in Casco given the opportunity.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are there large tracts of agricultural or industrial forest land that have been or may be sold for development in the foreseeable future? If so, what impact would this have on the community?”]***

Until very recently, Hancock Land (Lumber) Company owned a significant portion of forested and open land in Casco. The company has a history of making their private land open to public access for recreation, including Jugtown Forest, a large conservation easement held by the State, a portion of which is in Casco. While Hancock and others’ lands have been a major resource for Casco residents, residents have expressed concern over the potentially unclear future of Hancock Land Company’s former land, as 90% of it has now transferred ownership to a private individual. Given the amount of land in large ownerships, changing ownerships, particularly if fragmented or for development, could be problematic for the forests, open space and outdoor recreational opportunities in Casco.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Does the community have town or public woodlands under management, or that would benefit from forest management?”]***

Casco has public woodlands although community members have observed that they have been managed poorly. Sebago Lake State Park is located in the Towns of Casco and Naples. The park, including its woodlands, is operated by the Maine Department of Conservation. Other publicly accessible lands are privately owned.



## Forestry Resources

Hancock Lumber Company operates sawmills, lumberyards, and component manufacturing. The company was founded in 1848 and today is the largest producer of Eastern Pine in North America. In addition to the location in Casco, Hancock operates two other sawmills in Maine and one in New Hampshire. They also operate related retail businesses which supply contractors and homeowners with lumber and building materials. Facilities in Casco include the Ryefield Sawmill, on Route 11, which produced over 17 million board feet of Eastern White Pine in 2001. There is also one retail outlet in Casco, and the corporate offices are on Route 11, across from the Ryefield Mill, Hancock Land Company owns and manages timberland.

Also in the lumber industry, The Red Mill Lumber is a sawmill that specializes in hardwood and hemlock timber mats, supplying the lake region with building materials since 1979.

The annual timber harvest for Casco has fluctuated in the last 30 years from under 200 to over 1000 acres harvested total; the average total harvest from 1991 to 2018 is 622 acres. Harvest is most often done through selection harvest and shelterwood harvests.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Does the community have a street tree program?”]**

Casco does not have a street tree program.



# CHAPTER 4

## POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to provide a data snapshot about the population and demographics (including income and employment) of Casco. The information in this chapter should be considered against the information in the Housing Chapter, specifically costs of housing, unit types, and condition.

# Population and Demographics

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Is the rate of population change expected to continue as in the past, or to slow down or speed up? What are the implications of this change? What will be the likely demand for housing and municipal and school services to accommodate the change in population and demographics, both as a result of overall change and as a result of change among different age groups?”]***

The rate of population change is unpredictable due to many factors including the continued effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and mitigation, the fluctuating regional and national. How and where the town chooses to invest tax dollars to support services that individual population cohorts need to maintain a good quality of life is another important factor in local population shifts. Finally, future community choices about land use and zoning policy could affect the rate of growth. If the trend of outward migration from Greater Portland continues as people seek more affordable housing choices, Casco’s 2 acre minimum lot zoning and affordable land could result in an influx of subdivision developments and thus, new population.

Because of proximity to Portland, increased trends to telecommute, and the attractiveness of Casco as a town that can support a recreation-based lifestyle, we surmise the population will not decline. Examining the makeup of Casco’s new residents can help reveal current trends in population growth and the potential makeup and needs of the future population of the town.

The following data from 2020 (unless otherwise stated) describe the population of residents that are new to Casco:

- 12.9% of the population was new residents.
- The vast majority of people moving to Casco (90%) were moving from another town within Cumberland County. Only 1% were from a different county within Maine, and 9% were moving from out of state.
- 25.8% of people moving to Casco had income below the poverty level. 27.3% of those moving to Casco from within the county were below poverty level while none of those moving from out of state were below the poverty level.
- The incomes of new residents tend to be higher than those already living in town. A higher portion of new residents earned \$75,000 or more in individual income than the portion of total town residents who earn \$75,000+ (15.6% of new residents vs. 11.6% of total Casco residents).
- The vast majority of new Casco residents (84.9%) live in owner-occupied housing. This is the highest proportion of new residents living in owner-occupied housing in the past decade. A larger proportion of those moving from out of state rent (25.7%) than those moving from within the county (14.2%).
- People moving from within the county (median age 25.4) are younger than the town median of 50.1. The median age of those moving from within the county has been decreasing in recent years.
- The median age of those moving from out of state (50.2) is older than those moving from within the county and has been increasing in recent years.



**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Does your community have a significant seasonal population, is the nature of that population changing? What is the community’s dependence on seasonal visitors?”]**

Casco has a significant seasonal population that arrives in the late Spring/Summer and supports Casco’s local economy. For more information on how the community is affected by seasonal visitors, please see the Economy section.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “If your community is a service center or has a major employer, are additional efforts required to serve a daytime population that is larger than its resident population?”]**

Casco is not a service center. The largest service centers are Lewiston/Auburn to the North-East and Portland to the South-East. The closest service centers are Bridgton to the West, Oxford to the North, and Windham to the South-East.






## DEMOGRAPHIC FACTS

### Employed in Casco

 **579** employees work in Casco

 **83%** of those who work in Casco **reside in another town**

#### Top Residence Locations:

 Casco	<b>96</b>
 Naples	<b>45</b>
 Windham	<b>38</b>
 Bridgton	<b>30</b>
 Oxford	<b>28</b>

### Reside in Casco

 **1652** workers reside in Casco

 **94%** of workers who reside in Casco **work in another town**

#### Top Work Locations:

 Portland	<b>259</b>
 Windham	<b>129</b>
 Naples	<b>109</b>
 Casco	<b>96</b>
 South Portland	<b>92</b>

# CHAPTER 5

## ECONOMY

This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to provide a current status of economic development within Casco and the surrounding region.

This Chapter is organized into three sections:

1. Economic Overview
2. Labor Market
3. Priorities

## Economic Overview

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are public facilities, including sewer, water, broadband access or three-phase power, needed to support the projected location, type, and amount of economic activity, and what are the issues involved in providing them?”]***

Public sewer and water do not exist, and according to town staff are not needed in the foreseeable future, as Casco is still rural and spread out. Water extension along Route 302 would be significantly expensive and would require an intensity of development to support its cost that Casco residents do not support. Residents support discrete locations for intense development, and that type of development can be handled through wells and advanced wastewater technologies. Broadband improvements including wireless communications services are needed, and portions of the Town are covered under the Cumberland Oxford Lakes Area Broadband Initiative. The town’s commercial zones have three-phase power.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “How can/does the community use its unique assets such as recreational opportunities, historic architecture, civic events, etc. for economic growth?”]***

Casco’s economy is fundamentally derived from natural resources - woods and waters. With a significant portion of the land enrolled in Tree Growth, and Hancock Lumber headquartered in Casco, it has been thought that the long term socio-economic picture of Casco should continue to be based on resources. That, if trees are no longer harvested and lumber is no longer produced, the large contiguous blocks of woods should be secured for recreational use, habitat and water quality protection. During the public design week, residents identified a number of locations for land and trails connectivity, as

well as increased public access to waters. See “Connectivity” map. The residents want this amenity to remain in perpetuity, as it enriches their quality of life, but they also recognize that people can and will seek out Casco for these very same amenities.

However, tourists come and stay in Casco during the summer but because there aren’t businesses in the Town, they leave and go to other towns to access those places. Casco could be capturing some of that economic activity if additional commercial development happened in strategic locations.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Is the economy experiencing significant change, and how does this, or might this, affect the local population, employment, and municipal tax base?”]***

According to ACS in 2020, Casco’s unemployment rate was 3.9%. In 2020, the top three employment industries were:

1. Construction;
2. Educational services, healthcare, and social assistance
3. Retail trade.

In 2010, the top employment industries were retail trade; educational services, healthcare, and social services; and wholesale trade.

Much of the business done in Casco is by contractors. Although it has not impacted their amount of business, COVID-19 has created problems for contractors obtaining supplies.

From 1:1 interviews with staff, Planning Board and leadership, we also heard that the marijuana and solar industries are rapidly growing in Casco, and there is a lack of guidelines or site location criteria. The concern is the deforestation of large

properties currently enrolled in Tree Growth to accommodate acres upon acres of solar infrastructure. Further, the town has no mechanism in place to capture impact fees from solar farm installations.

The indirect impact will come if land valuations decrease because of impacts by either industry - smell, aesthetic, changes to water quality as result of deforestation. The two industries are locating here because of low land costs, and what is built could further reduce land values long term, discouraging higher quality reinvestment in the Rt 302 corridor particularly.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “If there is a traditional downtown or village center(s) in the community? If so, are they deteriorating or thriving?”]***

There are five villages in the Town of Casco. The villages are well-kept and mostly residential in nature. Most villages do not have the same level of commercial activities happening in them as they did in historic times. Because it would take so long to travel between villages by horse and carriage, the villages needed to sustain themselves. Each had at least one village store and a handful of industries. Today, much of the commercial activity happens along the Route 302 corridor, and residents travel outside Casco to obtain many goods, services and employment.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Is tourism an important part of the local economy? If so, what steps has the community taken to support this industry? What is the community’s dependence on seasonal visitors?”]***

Tourism is a significant part of the town’s economy and is concentrated geographically around Sebago Lake. The town has two vacation resorts, Migis Lodge at Sebago Lake, and Point Sebago Resort; a golf course, restaurants, and bed and

breakfasts making up the industry. There are multiple lakeside summer camps that draw children and families to Casco in the summer. Sebago Lake State Park hosts campgrounds, beaches, and trails and Casco receives visitors to its other trails around town.

In talks with the Comprehensive Plan Committee, residents have observed that the large crowd of tourists that is attracted to Casco in the summer has led to many housing units used for short-term rentals through Airbnb and Vrbo, further limiting available housing stock for permanent residents.

The Committee also recognizes that protection of water quality is fundamental to the local economy of the town, and as such has identified a number of strategies earlier in this plan to protect water quality and address resiliency.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “If there are local or regional economic development incentives such as TIF districting, do they encourage development in growth areas? A description of any economic development incentive districts, such as tax increment financing districts, in the community.”]***

Casco does not have a TIF district or local economic development incentive program to direct growth. A TIF district is not anticipated at this time.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “A brief historical perspective on how and why the current economy of the community and region developed.”]***

Casco has evolved through time just as it has in many surrounding Lake Region communities. The bountiful and widespread forests that grew here after the last glacier retreated were lightly managed by Native Americans and were still intact when early European settlers arrived in the 1700s. These settlers realized the economic potential of

these forests and built an industry around them. Early sawmills were located next to waterways in South Casco Village, Cook's Mills, Webb's Mills, and Casco Village. These areas, with both water access and industry, proved to be magnets for both residential and commercial development. Farms became plentiful, having sprung up close to these village areas and in other areas where timber harvesting revealed excellent soils for agricultural use. Roads were built to connect these areas together as well as with surrounding towns.

Until after the Second World War, economic activity continued to be non-intensive and characterized by farming, timber harvesting, pockets of small commercial and industrial activity, primarily in the four early village settlements. Summer camps for boys and girls were established on some of the lakes. Seasonal homes were built around Casco's primary water bodies. Farming and commercial businesses started to dwindle. The village areas attracted more housing. Route 302 continued to be the major transportation hub for the town, and as such, over time the majority of economic activity shifted to the corridor.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: "A list of local and regional economic development plans developed over the past five years, which include the community."]***

Casco does not have a local development plan. Some local initiatives held over the past five years have included:

- Casco has hosted a local business showcase in the past where business owners set up tables at a community event. The purpose of the event was to show community members what businesses existed and make local goods available for purchase. The showcase has not taken place recently. Attempts to produce a newsletter listing local businesses

have not yet been realized.

- Casco also hosted a farmers' market in the Village Green, however low participation and the onset of COVID-19 has meant it is discontinued.

Casco is part of an Economic Development District (EDD), one of 25 communities in Cumberland County. The EDD publishes a "Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy" every five years and provides annual updates. The last document was published in 2018 and identified the following three Strategic Goals

1. Sustain our regional strengths and seize our opportunities. Our first goal focuses on the positive aspects of our analysis in section two, building our economic and social prosperity by increasing jobs and investments, sustaining existing employment and clusters, and growing our exports.
2. Overcome our regional deficits. Our second goal focuses on our weaknesses identified in section two with efforts to address our demographics, our need for better educational and workforce outcomes, and our commitment to reduce poverty and increase equity.
3. Plan for and mitigate our external threats. Our third strategy focuses on economic and environmental resiliency, addressing our need to better plan for the disruptions we can foresee, and those we cannot.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: "Do they coordinate with regional development corporations and surrounding towns as necessary to support desired economic development?"]***

Casco is part of two Chambers of Commerce. The Greater Bridgton Chamber of Commerce promotes local businesses in 13 towns and villages in the Bridgton region through marketing and social media, including Casco. The Sebago



Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce promotes commerce through marketing, advocacy, education, and networking and is the most active in Casco of the two Chambers.

Casco's leadership participates in the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG), which is not a regional development corporation but convenes Casco's neighbors and other member municipalities within the region (see above re: Cumberland County Economic Development District, which is also housed at GPCOG). Through this connection, Casco participates in regional economic development efforts.

## Labor Market

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: "Do/should home occupations play a role in the community?"]***

Home occupations exist in Casco and, according to the Casco CEO, they will continue to be acceptable as long as they do not impede the flow of traffic or draw traffic in excess to areas.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: "Where does the community's population work and where do employees in your community reside? A description of the major employers in the community and labor market area and their outlook for the future."]***

- See demographic facts under Big Idea, "Support Diversity and Multi-Generational Community Life".
- Of the Casco working population of 1,959, the top industries for residents are education services and healthcare and social assistance at 368 people, construction at 310, and retail trade at 283. (ACS S2405) Point Sebago Resort is by far the largest employer in Casco with 250-499 employees. The next two largest employers are Hancock Lumber Casco Sawmill and Spurwink School which

both have 50-99 employees. (GPCOG Community Profiles) 85.4% of employed Casco residents work in Cumberland County. (ACS S0801) Although there are some workers that commute into Casco (495), the number of Casco residents that commute out of the Town for work is far greater at approximately 1,568 people. Only approximately 110 people live and work in Casco.

- P&K Sand and Gravel Inc., which is based out of Naples, operates Heath Quarry in the Town of Casco on Route 11. The company does residential, commercial, and development excavation, and produces Redi-Mix concrete and rock products out of the Quarry.
- From Center for Workforce Research and Information (<https://www.maine.gov/labor/cwri/employers2.html>) the Casco Inn has 20-49 employees, Freeport Nursing and Rehab has 50-99 employees, Fryeburg Health Care Center has 100-249, Momentum has 20-49, Point Sebago Boutique has 20-49, and Sebago Lake State Park has 20-49. Most employers in Casco have under 20 employees. Many of the places with smaller employment in Casco are summer camps like Camp Sunshine and Camp Cedar and municipal offices such as Casco Fire and Rescue Department and Casco Town Office.

## Priorities

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Does the community have defined priorities for economic development? Are these priorities reflected in regional economic development plans? What type of economic development activity does the community desire? What is the community’s role in the region?”]***

Yes. Through the public engagement process used to create this plan, the community identified priorities for economic development. See Big Idea, “Attract Local Businesses and Entrepreneurs”. The content for this Big Idea was crowd-sourced from the community, and calls for supporting local businesses, attracting a dynamic workforce, and recruiting new local and non-franchise businesses to Casco.

Regionally, while the Greater Portland Region’s 2018 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy mentions the Lakes Region, Casco and neighboring towns are not included with substance.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are there appropriate areas within the community for industrial or commercial development? If so, are performance standards necessary to assure that industrial and commercial development is compatible with the surrounding land uses and landscape?”]***

Appropriate areas for commercial development are identified on the “Conservation, Preservation and Development” Map. This map categorizes the various areas by level of preservation, enhancement or transformative growth. The map also identifies a number of Special Districts, one being the Rt 302 Highway Special District where the most broad range of land uses should occur.

Limited, smaller scale commercial activities are intended for the villages to provide neighborhood services and amenities.

For each area identified on the map, building, site and design standards will be necessary to ensure that new development respects the architectural history and village aesthetic of the town. Buildings on Rt 302 and in industrially zoned lands can be larger and simpler, and those standards should be made explicitly clear through a system of building types in zoning.

Other lands currently zoned for industrial uses will continue to be available for that purpose.

# CHAPTER 6

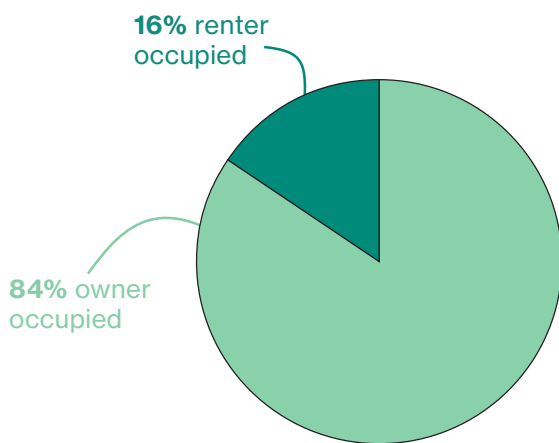
## HOUSING

This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to provide a current status of housing within Casco. This Chapter is organized into two sections:

1. Housing Stock
2. Housing Affordability

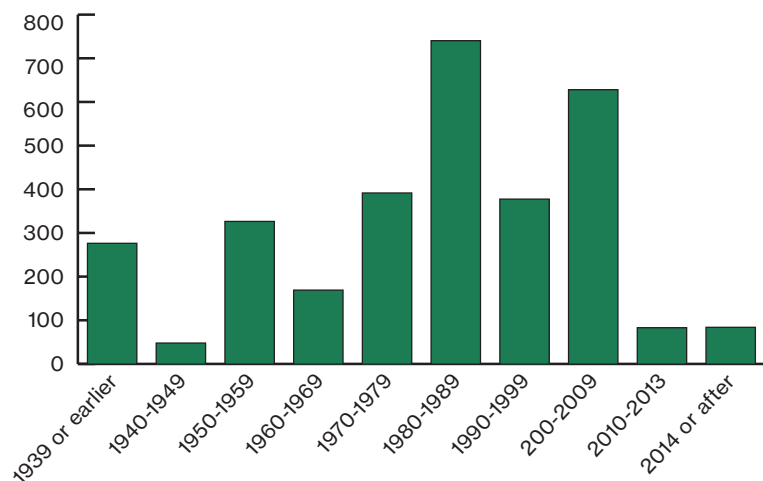
# HOUSING FACTS & AFFORDABILITY

**3130** total  
housing units



**1363** units  
are for **seasonal, recreational,  
or occasional use**, which is  
**44%** of Casco's  
housing units

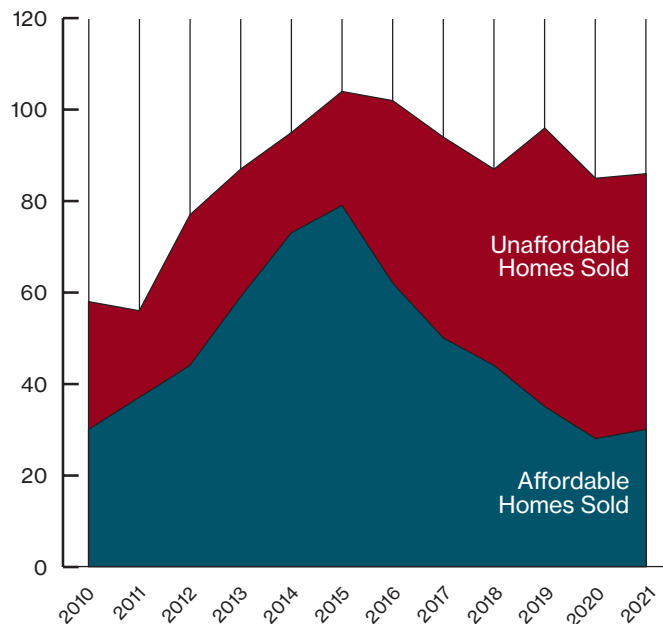
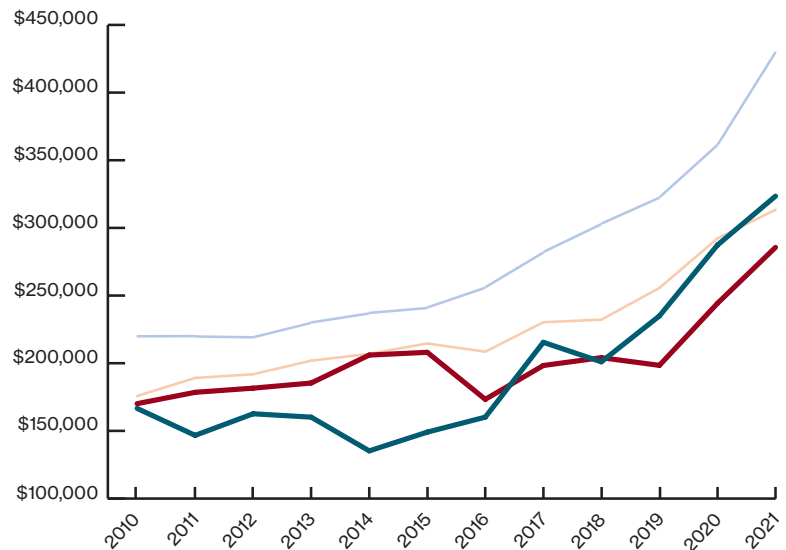
**37%**  
of housing units  
were built  
after **1990**



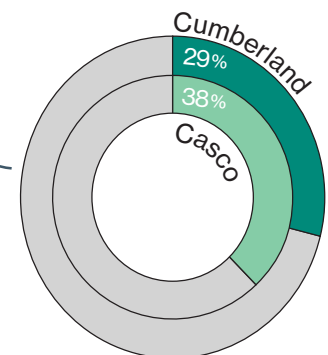
**19%** of housing units are **mobile homes**

The median home costs  
**\$323,750**  
 which is unaffordable for  
**56.6%** of households

■ Casco Median Sale Price  
 ■ Casco Price Affordable to Median Income  
 ■ Cumberland County Median Sale Price  
 ■ Cumberland County Price Affordable to Median Income




Casco renters spend  
**9% more**  
 of their income on rent  
 than the county median




**33** units  
 without complete  
 kitchen facilities


**16** units  
 without complete  
 plumbing facilities


**94** units  
 without telephone  
 service available



## Housing Stock

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “How many additional housing units (if any), including rental units, will be necessary to accommodate projected population and demographic changes during the planning period?”]***

In 1:1 interviews with town staff and in conversation with the planning board and comprehensive plan committee, we heard that housing is precarious in Casco. There are only a handful of houses on the market in Casco at a time, estimated by staff around five at the most. Much of the rental housing stock consists of short-term rentals particularly through Airbnb and Vrbo. Outside of these, there aren’t many units available to rent for long-term housing. If someone wants to move to Casco, they would likely have to buy a house or rent for more than a mortgage.

There is potential for denser housing in a number of locations in Casco, as described on the Conservation, Preservation and Development Map in Part I of this plan. As residents who desire a more rural environment to live in already reside outside of the village, staff predict that residents would not object to incrementally increasing density within the village.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are seasonal homes being converted to year-round use or vice-versa? What impact does this have on the community?”]***

According to town staff, there have been no conversions of seasonal homes to year-round or vice versa in recent years. If there were to be conversions, particularly from seasonal to year-round, there would be necessary steps to take such as converting septic systems and insulation for coverage beyond two seasons.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are there other major housing issues in the community, such as substandard housing?”]***

As recorded by the State Economist of Maine, of the 1,913 housing units occupied in 2020, 33 lacked complete kitchen facilities, 16 lacked complete plumbing facilities, and 94 lacked telephone service. Many buildings are in poor condition, an issue the Code Enforcement Office has been attempting to rectify. Although many of these buildings are unsafe, families are often unable to afford to repair the problems.

The lack of housing is the most major housing issue in Casco.

## Housing Affordability

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Is housing, including rental housing, affordable to those earning the median income in the region? Is housing affordable to those earning 80% of the median income? If not, review local and regional efforts to address the issue. Will additional low and moderate income family, senior, or assisted living housing be necessary to meet projected needs for the community? Will these needs be met locally or regionally?”]***

The shortage of housing in general severely limits the affordable housing options in Casco. The Casco Selectboard has discussed the possible use of the Berry Property for affordable/senior housing. The Board reached out to Avesta Housing regarding the potential for the site and found that there are multiple potentially limiting factors to Casco securing funding from Maine Housing such as Casco’s low walkability, modest area rents, unlikely chance the town would provide a TIF, and Casco’s position not as a service center community.

There are multiple assisted living and residential care facilities in Casco and the surrounding towns.

- The ACS 2021 five-year estimate identifies the median household income in Casco as \$64,767. The average rate of homeownership in Casco is higher than in the rest of Maine (89.6% vs. 74.8%). The median gross rent in Casco is \$933.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Information on existing local and regional affordable/workforce housing coalitions or similar efforts.”]***

There is no affordable/workforce housing coalition that covers the Town of Casco.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “How do existing local regulations encourage or discourage the development of affordable/workforce housing? A summary of local regulations that affect the development of affordable/workforce housing.”]***

Minimum lot size standards, parking standards and additional steps to permit multi-family housing stand in the way of adding to housing stock, particularly standing in the way of affordable and workforce housing.

**The following regulation applies in the Village District:**

§ 215-4.5 Village District (V). A. Intent. To provide a variety of housing types and services within a compact area while reinforcing existing village characteristics. This district is established to combine the convenience of village life with the physical amenities of a rural environment and to encourage development near adequate roads and Town services. Toward the achievement of these purposes, the following minimum standards are established.

E. Density bonus for affordable housing. Single-family subdivisions comprised of 25% or more of affordable housing units as defined shall have minimum lot sizes of 50,000 feet. Multiplex and planned residential developments that include

25% or more affordable housing units as defined shall have a minimum of 50,000 square feet of net residential area per dwelling unit.

**The following performance standards apply to planned residential development:**

§ 215-5.24 Planned residential development.

“A. Purpose. The purpose of these provisions

is to encourage greater flexibility and more

creative design for the development of single-family dwellings and multiplex dwellings than

generally is possible under strict application of the

space standards of this chapter. It is intended to

encourage a pattern of residential development

which will result in the following attributes:

[Amended 6-14-2017 by Art. 27] (1) Preservation

of Casco’s rural character by retention of open

space. (2) Preservation to the greatest extent

possible of existing landscape features and

the utilization of such features in a harmonious

fashion. (3) Protection of environmentally

sensitive areas.(4) Economical and efficient

building arrangement, traffic circulation and utility

construction. (5) Recreation facilities that may be

better located and used than would otherwise

be provided under more conventional land

development. (6) Planned variety and coordination

in the location of structures and building forms

and relationships. B. General requirements. (1)

Planned residential developments are permitted

in Village and Residential Districts and, in the

Limited Residential/Recreational Shoreland

Subdistrict, shall conform and be subject to net

residential density calculation. (2) All single-family

subdivisions of 20 lots or more shall be reviewed

by the Planning Board as PRDs and be subject

to the net residential calculation for PRDs. (3) All

multiplex developments of 10 dwelling units or

more shall be reviewed by the Planning Board

as PRDs and be subject to the net residential

calculation for PRDs. (4) In the Village District,

subdividers/developers of parcels five acres or larger may choose to have their projects reviewed as PRDs. (5) In all other districts in which they are allowed, subdividers/developers of parcels 10 acres or larger may choose to have their projects reviewed as PRDs. (6) All PRDs shall meet the use standards of the districts in which they are located. (7) All PRDs shall meet the requirements of Chapter 210, Subdivision of Land, and site plan review provisions of this chapter. (8) Allowable densities for PRDs shall be based on net residential density and shall be calculated in the following manner: (a) Determine the net residential area of the parcel (see definitions and § 215-5.19). (b) Divide the net residential area by the minimum land area per dwelling unit size for the particular district to establish the maximum net residential density for the project. (c) Except for projects qualifying for the affordable housing density bonus, in no case shall the density of a PRD or multiplex project exceed the density established by the minimum land area per dwelling unit for the district where the project is located. C. Single-family PRD standards. (1) Except in the Village District, lot sizes may be reduced below the minimum lot size normally required in the zoning district [see Subsection C(2) and (3) below] as long as the residual open space created by such reductions, plus the areas which are subtracted from gross area to calculate net residential area, are designated as open space. (2) Except in the Village District, lot areas for individual lots may be reduced up to 25% below the minimum lot size required in the zoning district. In no case shall lot sizes for PRDs be less than 50,000 square feet. (3) Except in the Village District, frontage for individual lots may be reduced up to 25% below the minimum frontage required in the zoning district. In no case, including instances when lots front a cul-de-sac, shall road frontages be less than 75 feet. (4) Front, side and rear setbacks shall

not be reduced below the minimum standards required in the zoning district. (5) Shore frontage and shore setback requirements shall not be reduced below the minimum shore frontage or shore setback required in the zoning district. (6) A setback of 100 feet on an arterial street is required and shall include a fifty-foot landscaped strip. (7) No building or structure shall be sited in areas treated as 100% deductions from the parcel's net residential acreage. Siting of structures on areas treated as 50% deduction (poorly drained soils) is discouraged but is permitted where the applicant/developer demonstrates that no adverse impacts will result. D. Multiplex PRD standards. (1) Front, side and rear setback for the perimeter of multiplex PRD developments shall be double the minimum front, side and rear setbacks required in the zoning district. (2) Distances between detached multiplex clusters shall be at least 50 feet. (3) A setback of 100 feet on an arterial street is required and shall include a fifty-foot landscaped strip. E. Planned residential development open space standards. (1) The total area of open space within the development shall equal or exceed the sum of the areas by which the building lots in single-family subdivisions are reduced below the minimum net residential area per dwelling unit required in the zoning district. (2) In no case shall a planned residential development reserve less than 15% of the gross area as open space. Street rights-of-way and impervious surface areas shall be excluded from the calculation of minimum dedicated open space. (3) All open space with PRDs shall also comply with § 215-5.23, open space performance standards. F. Location of buildings. (1) Buildings shall be oriented with respect to scenic vistas, solar access, natural landscaped features, topography, and natural drainage areas in accordance with an overall plan for site development. (2) Buildings shall be

compatible in terms of physical size, visual impact, intensity of use, proximity to other structures, and density of development with other permitted uses within the district. G. Utilities. (1) Water supply. (a) All dwellings in the development shall be connected to a common water supply and distribution system or individual on-site water systems. (b) The subdivider/developer must clearly demonstrate that adequate groundwater or treated surface water is available for all and that the water source is safe from both on-site and off-site contamination. (2) Sewer. (a) All structures with required plumbing in the development shall be connected to individual septic systems or a private central collection and treatment system in accordance with the minimum standards set forth in the Maine State Plumbing Code. (b) If a central collection and treatment system is proposed for a single-family PRD, the applicant/developer must show that at least one site on each lot has soils suitable for on-site subsurface waste disposal in accordance with the minimum standards set forth in the Maine State Plumbing Code. (c) If a central collection and treatment system is proposed for a multiplex PRD, the applicant/developer must show that a second site on the parcel has such size, location and soil characteristics as to accommodate a system similar to the one proposed for the primary site.

# CHAPTER 7

## RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to provide a current status of the recreational opportunities and open space in Casco.

This Chapter is organized into four sections:

1. Recreational Facilities
2. Open Space Protection
3. Recreational Water Access
4. Unmet Needs



# Recreational Facilities

*\*For a map of open spaces, recreation and water access, see the Connectivity map.*

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “A description of important public and private active recreation programs. ”]***

The biggest asset of the Parks and Recreation Department is the Community Center in Casco Village where the majority of the department’s programming takes place. The Community Center houses a gym, two conference rooms, a kitchen, and the department office; outside, there is a playground, tennis courts, and additional basketball courts.

The department hosts recurring activities such as yoga twice a week, open gym time, Lakes Region youth basketball, Girls on the Run, field hockey, pickleball, tennis, playgroup, storytime, and senior meals. The department also hosts annual celebrations including Christmas tree lighting in the Community Center, Halloween in Casco and an Easter egg hunt at the Community Park. The department is dedicated to providing programming for all Casco residents from children to seniors.

Important recreational facilities in Casco include the following:

- Casco Community Center and the adjacent Village Green.
- Casco has two public beaches open to Lake residents: Crescent Lake Beach and Pleasant Beach.
- Casco has three playgrounds including at the Community Center, Casco Community Park and Libby Park.
- There are sports courts and fields at Dingley Field, which is used for Rookie and Minor

League Baseball and 10 and under softball; Libby Park, which has tennis and basketball courts; and the Community center.

- Casco Community Park is a new park that has full-sized fields, lights, a concession stand, and a quarter mile walking trail.
- Although school recreation takes priority of their facilities, Crooked River School is sometimes used to supplement recreational space as well.
- Bushido Karate Dojo and Fitness is a private martial arts studio in Casco that hosts classes for kids, teens, and adults and hosts other classes in Raymond, Bridgton, and Fryeburg.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “A description of local and regional trail systems, trail management organizations, and conservation organizations that provide trails for all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiling, skiing, mountain biking, or hiking. Are recreational trails in the community adequately maintained? Are there use-conflicts on these trails?”]***

Casco residents have many opportunities for outdoor recreation on the many hiking, snowmobiling, and ATV trails. While there are no designated mountain biking trails, State Park trails and ATV trails are used. While LEIT Preserve and State Park trails are maintained by their respective owners, recreation clubs are also very active in maintaining Casco’s trails for their members. The Crooked River Snowmobile Club is a Maine Snowmobile Association affiliated club in Casco. The club maintains almost 50 miles of groomed trails. Hancock Land Company as well as large and small landowners have made their land available to the club for snowmobile use. The Casco system of trails connects to systems in Raymond, Naples, Otisfield, and Poland. The Lakes Region ATV Club maintains 57 miles of trails

in Bridgton, Casco, Denmark, Harison, Naples, Sebago, and Otisfield.

Trails in Casco include:

- Hacker's Hill Preserve: the Preserve includes 27 acres of fields and woods that welcomes visitors to take in scenery, picnic, bird-watch, hunt, and walk. The Preserve has restrooms, parking, and picnic tables in addition to a .7 mile loop for walking. The Preserve is maintained by the Loon Echo Land Trust.
- Mayberry Hill Preserve: the Preserve includes 160 acres of woodlands, meadows, and streams and a .9 mile trail loop with benches alongside where visitors can walk and cross-country ski. The preserve is maintained by the Loon Echo Land Trust.
- Jugtown Forest: the Jugtown Forest trail is a 2.7 mile loop. The area is primarily used for off-road driving and snowmobiling as well as cross-country skiing and mountain biking. Some trails are maintained by the Crooked River and Muddy River SnoSeekers Snowmobile Clubs.
- Que Five Trail: 3.9 mile trail primarily used for ATVs and snowmobiles but is groomed by the snowmobile club in the winter so can be used for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing as well.
- Sebago Lake State Park: includes the 3.4 mile Outer Loop trail from Cub Point for hiking, the 3.8 mile Blue Loop for hiking, and private trails for guests of Migis Lodge.
- Owl Pond: 1.7 mile trail for hiking and cross-country skiing, and other snowmobile and ATV trails.
- Rattlesnake Mountain via Bri-Mar Trail: popular 2.5 mile trail that is accessible year-round for walking, running, and snowshoeing with

views of Panther Pond and towards Raymond. Residents have reported a shortage of parking near the trailhead, which is located in Raymond.

Residents have reported that most of the area's trails are well maintained, particularly those facilitated by Hancock Lumber in Jugtown Forest and the ATV club. Due to the multipurpose nature of some trails, such as those that host both hikers and ATV riders, there are some reported use-conflicts.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: "Regional recreational opportunities as appropriate."]**

*See connectivity map for regional trail connections.*

## Open Space Protection

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: "A map or description of scenic areas and scenic views of local importance, and regional or statewide importance, if available."]**

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: "Does the community have a mechanism, such as an open space fund or partnership with a land trust, to acquire important open spaces and access sites, either outright or through conservation easements? Are important tracts of open space commonly used for recreation publicly-owned or otherwise permanently conserved?"]**

Open space conservation has been a priority in Casco for many years, particularly following the establishment of the Open Space Committee, now Commission, by the 2003 Casco Comprehensive Plan. The Committee initially identified four focus areas for land acquisition and protection, which the current Commission continues to use. The areas identified include:

- Pine Hill/Owl Pond/Heath area with 1,800 acres comprising Owl Pond, the only pond in

the town that is undeveloped on the shores, and trails.

- Rattlesnake Mountain with 1,400 acres comprising the Town's highest point, trails, a heron rookery, and rare plant communities.
- Quaker Ridge East with 1,600 acres comprising wetlands, high quality agricultural soil, and trails.
- Quaker Ridge West with 1,800 acres comprising a deer wintering area, old-growth hemlock, trails, and stream and wetlands.

The Open Space Commission has prepared maps detailing public land, natural features, large parcels, and tree growth, and inventoried town-owned properties, supported the purchase of open space land including Hacker's Hill, participated in the Lake Region Greenprint Partnership, and created stewardship plans. The Commission meets monthly at the Casco Community Center and, as of 2018, have been active in trying to acquire private, open, underutilized land. The Commission has an Open Space Fund which is used for direct acquisitions in the name of the Town of Casco with landowners and to negotiate agreements with landowners for conservation easements or leases on land in Casco. The Commission may also engage services of outside professionals such as foresters, ecologists, and land use planners, to accomplish its goals.

Loon Echo Land Trust (LELT) plays a major role in conservation of open space and more generally as well as protecting public access to the outdoors in the Lakes Region. LELT conserves 8,500 acres of land and manages over 32 miles of trails while collaborating with residents, businesses, and organizations to acquire and protect more land through conservation

easements, land purchases, and land donations. In Casco, LELT has multiple focus areas and has worked to protect Hacker's Hill and Mayberry Hill Preserves, the latter of which was acquired in partnership with Casco and was the land trust's first preserve. Although none have public access guaranteed, LELT maintains easement properties in Casco on private land, securing development rights to the land trust. Current LELT projects include the installation of historically and ecologically informative interpretive signage in Hacker's Hill Preserve and improving safe parking access and trails at Mayberry Hill Preserve.

Loon Echo Land Trust uses a regional approach to land preservation and protection. The land trust serves seven towns in the Sebago Lake Region and regularly works with town governments to acquire and manage sites. They collaborate with other land trusts and partners in Maine to work on a landscape-level rather than hyper-locally. The organization is embarking on a new regional conservation strategy with other land trust partners that will focus on climate resilience and resilient landscapes. This includes examining the level of connectivity and areas where resilient habitats can or should be connected, particularly in areas that are fragmented or have habitat loss where conservation of small connecting pieces or corridors could have an outsized impact on larger resilient landscapes. LELT does additional regional work through Sebago Clean Waters (see Water and Natural Resources Chapter) which operates independent of town lines, focusing instead on stakeholders in the Sebago Lake watershed.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: "Is traditional access to private lands being restricted?"]***

*Jugtown Forest is an example of private lands being made available for public use.*

## Recreational Water Access

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Does the public have access to each of the community’s significant water bodies? An inventory of any fresh or salt water bodies in the community determined locally to have inadequate public access.”]**

There are two public beaches open for exclusive use by Casco residents: Crescent Lake Beach on Edwards Road and Pleasant Lake Beach on Mayberry Hill Road. The director of Park and Recreation has reported sediment build-up issues at Pleasant Beach being difficult to clear. Around Sebago Lake there are a handful of private resorts that have private beaches. Sebago Lake State Park, which costs \$6 entry fee for adult Maine residents, has a beach. Dumpling Pond does not have public access for Casco residents.

There are an adequate number of boat launches located at Coffee Pond, Parker Pond, Pleasant Lake, and Sebago Lake State Park. There is one boat pumpout station in Casco which is located at the Kettle Cove Marina off of Sebago Lake.

## Unmet Needs

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Will existing recreational facilities and programs in the community and region accommodate projected growth or changes in age groups in your community? Is there a need for certain types of services or facilities or to upgrade or enlarge present facilities to either add capacity or make them more usable? identification of unmet needs.”]**

While projected population growth in Casco does not show a significant increase, the Parks and Recreation Department has expressed a need to better accommodate the existing population. Despite the fact that a significant amount of Parks and Recreation’s programming takes place there,

the Community Center lacks adequate space to support activities and storage. In addition to Parks and Recreation activities, the Community Center also hosts municipal meetings, which lack a home in other municipal buildings. These meetings further limit the use of the space for recreation activities. If municipal meetings find a space outside of the Community Center, existing recreational facilities and programs in the community should be able to accommodate growth and changes in population in Casco. Additionally, the capacity of the department’s staff, primarily the director, is stretched thin, making adding programming difficult. An additional staff member will join the department January 1, 2023.

The director of Parks and Recreation has reported residents’ desire for the expansion of recreation opportunities in a few specific areas including accommodating the growth of pickleball, creating a covered outdoor ice rink, and making an accessible and dog-friendly swimming area available to the public. Casco currently lacks an ice skating rink and a public area that allows dogs. All three of these growth areas could be addressed through the use of the Berry Property, soon to be the subject of a feasibility study, to expand recreation. The land has space for a new year-round covered pavilion which could be flooded to create an ice rink in the winter and used for pickleball and tennis in the warmer seasons. The property connects to the waterfront at Parker Pond, where a beach and dog park could be built. The property has great potential as a center of recreation as there may be opportunity to connect to the waterfront through a new trail. The potential expansion of the municipal campus and addition of recreational space at the Berry Property would make existing recreation space more available in the Community Center and provide some of the programs and spaces currently missing from Casco.

Improved opportunities for walking have been voiced as a desire by the community. Casco does not have infrastructure for walking in the Village where the Community Center is located. Except for a tiny section, Route 121, which connects the Village and Town Hall, does not have sidewalks. Cars often reach speeds of over 50MPH, making it dangerous for pedestrians and dog-walkers who continue to use the road despite the risk. Additionally, there are no trails in Casco accessible by modes of transportation other than by car. No trails currently connect to the Village or to area schools, although there is potential for trail connections to the Crooked River School. Outside of the Village, there have been complaints that Casco has ATV, snowmobile, and horseback riding trails but not enough ability-inclusive walking trails.

## **Recommendations**

In conversation with the Loon Echo Land Trust, various funding opportunities were suggested for conserving open space in Casco. They include taking advantage of Land for Maine's Future, which was recently funded for the first time in 10 years. The program is the State of Maine's primary funding source for conserving land for its natural and recreational value. It is an opportunity for towns, especially in partnership with a land trust, to secure funding for major conservation projects. Casco has previously partnered with LEIT to conserve open space, including in order to form Hacker's Hill Preserve. Another available funding program is the Land and Water Conservation Fund which Casco accessed to build the Casco Community Park. Under the Land and Water Conservation Fund are the Forest Legacy Program and the Forest Legacy Program which are part of a budget process currently. LEIT has also expressed interest in preserving or supporting working farmland, which Casco currently lacks for the most part. The land trust is willing to assist the town in accessing the Maine Farmland Trust, a statewide nonprofit land conservation organization, for funding.

# CHAPTER 8

## TRANSPORTATION



This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to provide a current status of the transportation systems within Casco and the surrounding region.

This Chapter is organized into four sections:

1. Local Street Networks and Safety
2. Access to Transportation
3. Alternative Modes of Transportation
4. Regional Context

# Local Street Networks and Safety

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “What are the transportation system concerns in the community and region? What, if any, plans exist to address these concerns?”]**

*\*See Big Ideas: Support Diversity & Multi-Generational Community Life and Connect all the Villages with Safe Streets and Trails.*

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Seasonal fluctuation in accident data? Costs to the town for traffic violations.”]**

According to Maine DOT data from 2012-2022, more traffic crashes occur in the winter months, between November and March. Coverage by the Cumberland County Sheriff’s department is set as an annual fee. Additional coverage for special events and circumstances may be contracted on an as needed basis. For more information on accident data see the Casco Crash Map or the Maine DOT Map Viewer at: [www.maine.gov/mdot/mapviewer](http://www.maine.gov/mdot/mapviewer)

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “To what extent do sidewalks connect residential areas with schools, neighborhood shopping areas, and other daily destinations? How are walking and bicycling integrated into the community’s transportation network (including access to schools, parks, and other community destinations)?”]**

The only sidewalks in Casco are located in Casco Village. Walking is not integrated into the community’s transportation network and is not an option for residents to get to daily destinations. The lack of sidewalks in some areas has resulted in people walking on dangerous roads, particularly in the summer as the population rises. Community members have reported an increase in pedestrians on the street when sidewalks are not available during the COVID-19 pandemic as

crowds in traditional outdoor spaces like the parks grew overwhelming.

Bicycling is rarely used as a mode of transportation in Casco as roads are too fast and have no designated space for cyclists. Residents have expressed interest in bike lanes to make it more of a possibility.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “What is the community’s current and approximate future budget for road maintenance and improvement?”]**

The fiscal year 2023/24 road budget is approximately \$750K, and for the life of this plan is anticipated to be between \$750K - \$1M annually.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “List and locate municipal parking areas including capacity, and usage. Are there parking issues in the community? If so what are they?”]**

Municipal parking areas include: Pleasant Lake Beach, Crescent Lake Beach, Town Office, Casco Community Park, Casco Community Building, Hacker Hill, Mayberry Hill Trail Parking, and Brown Ave. Ball Field. There is an electric vehicle charging station in Casco Village behind the community center and in South Casco near the baseball field.

Capacity and usage is generally not an issue in Casco. There have been concerns about the lack of parking at the trailhead for Rattlesnake Mountain. There have been instances of large cars parking in ways that block the passage of emergency vehicles down narrow residential

streets, particularly in the summer with the increased temporary population.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “If there are parking standards, do they discourage development in village or downtown areas?”]***

Casco has parking standards. Standards are restrictive such as 2 spots per dwelling and 1 spot per 200 feet of retail space. New zoning standards should be considered to reduce off-street parking requirements.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Does the community have local access management or traffic permitting measures in place?”]***

Casco has design standards for streets and includes traffic considerations for the approval of developments (see § 210-9.10 Design and construction of streets).

There are three types of roadways that are managed in Casco: private, public, and state roads. Casco uses the road commissioner and the State Department for state roads such as Routes 11, 302, 85, and 121 are managed by MDOT. The municipal roads are managed by the Town of Casco.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Do the local road design standards support the community’s desired land use pattern? Do the local road design standards support bicycle and pedestrian transportation?”]***

The current road design standards should be reviewed and right-sized to ensure the community’s desired land use pattern will be achieved. In some cases, the metrics are excessive - right of way and pavement width in particular. There are also only three street thoroughfare types and a few more could be considered. Standards are focused on cars, parking, and shoreland zone environmental

protections and rarely take pedestrian and bicycle transportation into account.

The town’s local design standards can be found in § 210-9.10 Design and construction of streets.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Do planned or recently built subdivision roads (residential or commercial) simply dead-end or do they allow for expansion to adjacent land and encourage the creation of a network of local streets? Where dead-ends are unavoidable, are mechanisms in place to encourage shorter dead-ends resulting in compact and efficient subdivision designs?”]***

All planned and recently built subdivision roads dead-end and have little to no connection opportunity. A mixture of road standards have been applied.

The following applies to the design of street layout in regards to dead-ends: § 210-9.10 Design and construction of streets. (10) In the case of dead-end streets, the Planning Board may require that additional right-of-way widths be provided if it determines that future extension of the street may occur. Such additional widths shall be consistent with the right-of-way width of the dead-end street.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Location and overall condition of roads, bridges, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities, including any identified deficiencies or concerns.”]***

According to town staff, a number of state roads traversing through Casco need repair, ditch work, and annual maintenance. The town does not have equipment to do spring sweeping. Shoulders and ditch work need attention in many locations in Casco. There are no formal bicycle facilities in Casco.

The greatest concern is geometry: road geometry supports and encourages excessive speeding,

creating dangerous hazards for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Identify potential on and off-road connections that would provide bicycle and pedestrian connections to neighborhoods, schools, waterfronts and other activity centers.”]***

*\*See Big Idea Connect the Villages for Connectivity Map.*

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Identify major traffic (including pedestrian) generators, such as schools, large businesses, public gathering areas/activities, etc. and related hours of their operations.”]***

Traffic has increased recently on major roads in the morning south in the direction of Portland and Westbrook. This has particularly been true as more people move to Casco and have jobs elsewhere.

As one of the few businesses in town, Kindred Farms gets significant traffic, particularly in the summer with the increase in tourists. The Crooked River School sees daily traffic during and around school hours. The Town Office, Casco Public Library, Post Office, and Community Center have steady traffic during regular business hours.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Identify policies and standards for the design, construction and maintenance of public and private roads.”]***

- **§ 210-9.10 Design and construction of streets** A detailed table sets quantitative design and construction standards for public or private industrial streets. There are standards for entrances to different types of roads and driveways. There are standards for intersections including keeping them as close to 90 degrees as possible. Projects are to be approved by the planning board and

construction to be overseen by the Casco Road Commissioner.

- **§ 215-5.25 Road construction**

A. Roads shall be located, constructed, and maintained in such a manner that minimal erosion hazard results. Adequate provision shall be made to prevent soil erosion and sedimentation of surface waters. B. Additionally, all roads constructed shall conform to the following standards: (1) Road crossings of watercourses shall be kept to the minimum number necessary; (2) Bottoms of culverts shall be installed at streambed elevation; (3) All cut or fill banks and areas of exposed mineral soil shall be revegetated or otherwise stabilized as soon as possible; and (4) Bridges or culverts of adequate size and design shall be provided for all road crossings of watercourses which are to be used when surface waters are unfrozen.

More in depth regulations for roads in relation to water protections including guides on drainage and distance set back required from high-water lines of great ponds, rivers, and other bodies of water. (for more see shoreland zoning: § 215-9.21 Roads and driveways.)

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Identify existing and proposed marine and rail terminals within your community including potential expansions.”]***

Not applicable.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “If coastal communities identify public ferry service and private boat transportation support facilities (may be covered under Marine Resources with cross reference) including related water-side (docks/piers/wharves) and land-side (parking) facilities.”]***

Public boat landings in Casco include a marina

on Thompson Lake near Heath Road, in Casco Village on Pleasant Lake near Mayberry Hill Road, on Coffee Pond near Coffee Pond Road, and at the mouth of Crooked River where it connects to Sebago Lake. While not located in Casco, the Frye Island Ferry launches from nearby Raymond connecting to Frye Island at the center of Lake Sebago.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “If the community hosts a transportation terminal, such as an airport, passenger rail station, or ferry terminal, how does it connect to other transportation modes (e.g. automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, transit)?”]**

Not applicable.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “If the community hosts or abuts any public airports, what coordination has been undertaken to ensure that required airspace is protected now and in the future? How does the community coordinate with the owner(s) of private airports?”]**

Not applicable.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “If you are a coastal community are land-side or water-side transportation facilities needed? How will the community address these needs?”]**

Not applicable.

## Access to Transportation

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Do available transit services meet the current and foreseeable needs of community residents? If transit services are not adequate, how will the community address the needs?”]**

The Maine Council on Aging has reported trends showing that if a community does not have dedicated senior housing (assisted living, graduated care), seniors will leave the community. As Casco does not have these facilities nor

transportation options to connect seniors with health and other services, many seniors are unable to age in place. For the most part, the population moving to Casco (purchasing homes when seniors leave) has financial resources and vehicles.

## Alternative Modes of Transportation

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Identify bus or van services. Nonprofit ride services.”]**

The Lakes Region Explorer is the only bus route serving Casco. As part of Cumberland County, Casco is serviced by the Regional Transportation Program (RTP) which provides van, bus, and ride-share service for disabled, elderly and low-income individuals and those with special needs. RTP services include rides to essential medical services.

The town has identified the desire to have a town-operated ride service to transport seniors and school children to and from activities. Because of COVID, the school district cut bus service from the schools to the community center and library. The loss of this service has been felt by the community. Some residents have suggested that, by having a town-controlled service, future disruption of service won't be an issue.

## Regional Context

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are conflicts caused by multiple road uses, such as a major state or U.S. route that passes through the community or its downtown and serves as a local service road as well?”]**

Highways SR 121, SR 11, and US 302 run through Casco. According to Casco's Public Works department, there are no notable conflicts caused by multiple road uses at this time, however

road repairs and speed limit differences do occasionally have conflicts.

Speed is a conflict, caused by excessive pavement width and wide-curving road geometry, and in many places wide paved shoulders. US 302 is overbuilt and dangerous. This creates a conflict for drivers, and a conflict between drivers and anyone who attempts to bicycle or walk here. Walking to and across US 302 does occur, as people move from the Tenney Hill area to the south side of US 302 to pick up the Lakes Region Explorer.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “How do state and regional transportation plans relate to your community?”]***

MaineDOT has plans to improve a large culvert in Casco between 2021-2023. Casco will not be significantly impacted by regional transportation plans.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Identify airports within or adjacent to the community and describe applicable airport zoning and airspace protection ordinances your community has in place.”]***

There are no airports in Casco.

# CHAPTER 9

## PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES



This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to provide a current status of the public facilities and services within Casco and the surrounding region.

This Chapter is organized into nine sections:

1. General Government
2. Drinking Water Supply
3. Sewer Service
4. Public Works Facility
5. Safety Services
6. Public Education
7. Public Library
8. Telecommunications

# General Government

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are municipal services adequate to meeting changes in population and demographics?”]***

Generally, municipal services are adequate to meet the needs of the population, with exception to police coverage, fire station space and condition, and public works.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “To what extent are investments in facility improvements directed to growth areas?”]***

The town has begun to build a municipal campus near the Crossroads of Rt 11 and Rt 121.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Will other public facilities, such as town offices, libraries, and cemeteries accommodate projected growth?”]***

The town office was recently constructed and provides appropriate space for staff. If needed, the site has ample space to support an expansion.

The Public Works department is struggling to keep up with the deteriorating condition of some of the older cemeteries where many old headstones are broken and require more maintenance than the department has the capacity for currently. There is concern over dwindling remaining cemetery space and a need for more caretakers. Most cemeteries in Casco are private, although the Town has taken over some in recent years.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Is the town considering impacts to public facilities and services as result of climate change?”]***

The town has applied for a Community Action Grant through the Community Resilience Partnership for projects to make the Town more prepared and resilient to climate change.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “General physical condition of facilities and equipment; capacity and anticipated demand during***

***the planning period; identification of who owns/manages the systems; estimated costs of needed capital improvements to public facilities; Municipal Government Facilities and Services – Describe facilities and staffing for municipal administrative, enforcement, and public works operations. estimated costs of needed capital improvements to public facilities;”]***

The Central Fire Station is relatively new and in good condition; however, it is over capacity as it currently houses both the CFRD and the public works department along with both departments’ equipment and trucks.

Administrative staff at the Town Office report a strain on their capacity in the summer season. The Town Office employs one part-time and two full-time administrative staff members.

The public works department currently employs a single staff member who oversees the day-to-day operations including overseeing the contracted companies Casco utilizes for most public works services. The Town has contracts for plowing, sidewalk maintenance, grass, park, and beach maintenance, tree services, road improvements, and waste. Casco plans to grow the department in the coming years to a crew of six and take over the contracts themselves.

The gate to public works’ sand and salt shed is broken and lacks security allowing contractors to take product by the barrel. A new, more secure gate is needed or a relocation of the pile to the bulky waste facility across from the shed.

See individual sections for more detailed accounts of staffing, enforcement, and physical condition of facilities and equipment and identification of ownership and management of services and systems.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Street Tree Program - Describe the community’s street tree program. Does the community have a street tree program?”]**

Casco does not have a street tree program.

## Drinking Water Supply

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “If public water supply expansion is anticipated, identify and protect suitable sources? If the community has a public water system are any public water supply expansions anticipated? If so, have suitable sources been identified and protected?”]**

Casco does not have a public water supply and does not anticipate moving toward it.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Is the water district extension policy consistent with the Future Land Use Plan? If the town does not have a public sewer or water system, is this preventing the community from accommodating current and projected growth?”]**

The town does not have a public water supply. Properties are served by private wells. According to staff, the Town is still too rural for public water and sewer; The private systems are not preventing the community from accommodating growth. On one occasion, an affordable housing agency reported that Casco’s lack of public water and sewer contributed to the inaccessibility of funding for senior housing development.

## Sewer Service

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “If the community has a public sewer system, what issues or concerns are there currently and/or anticipated in the future? Is the sanitary district extension policy consistent with the Future Land Use Plan as required by (38 M.R.S.A. §1163), or will it be?”]**

Casco uses private septic systems

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Stormwater Management – Identify combined sewer overflows. For Municipal Separate Stormwater System (MS4) communities, describe plan and status of the major goals of the MS4 requirements. Are existing stormwater management facilities adequately maintained? What improvements are needed? How might future development affect the existing system?”]**

Stormwater management systems are designed to meet the criteria of a twenty-five year storm based on rainfall in Portland, Maine. Subdividers may not overload an existing or future stormwater drainage system downstream from the subdivision and must finance improvements to existing systems in order to accommodate possible increased storm flows. Developments are required to take measures to correct and prevent soil erosion as detailed in a sediment and erosion plan. Casco does not have stormwater management facilities currently in place. Casco is not a Municipal Separate Stormwater System.

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Septage – Identify any community policies or regulations regarding septage collection and disposal. Identify the number and types of users, and percent of households served. How do residents dispose of septic tank waste? Are there issues or concerns regarding septic tank waste?”]**

Septic tank waste is pumped and removed by private companies and disposed of by Maine regulations. There is concern about old/abandoned septic tanks and leaking/failing tanks, especially as a contamination threat to aquifers and the groundwater. Following a waste spill on Tenney Hill, Casco created a one-time \$250,000 budget to assist residents fixing their septic systems. Very few residents have taken advantage of the fund. The Code Enforcement Office checks septic systems as a free service. Other septic system concerns are in cases where more people use systems than what they were designed for

such as when accessory apartment dwellers or campers use the same system as the main house.

**The following is required within shoreland zoning:**

§ 215-9.24 Septic waste disposal. [1] All subsurface sewage disposal systems shall be installed in conformance with the State of Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules and the following:

(Note: The Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules require new systems, excluding fill extensions, to be constructed no less than 100 horizontal feet from the normal high-water line of a perennial water body. The minimum setback distance for a new subsurface disposal system may not be reduced by variance.) A. Clearing or removal of woody vegetation necessary to site a new system and any associated fill extensions shall not extend closer than 75 feet, horizontal distance, to the normal high-water line of a water body or the upland edge of a wetland; and B. A holding tank is not allowed for a first-time residential use in the shoreland zone.

**The following are required by Town Performance Standards:**

§ 215-5.27 Sanitary provisions. A. All subsurface sewage disposal systems shall be located in areas of suitable soil and comply with the minimum standards set forth in the State Plumbing Code. B. All subsurface sewage disposal systems shall be located in areas of suitable soil at least 1,000 feet in size. C. The minimum setback for subsurface sewage disposal facilities shall be no less than 100 horizontal feet from the normal high-water line of a water body. This requirement shall not be reduced by variance. D. No materials of any kind shall be permanently or temporarily placed or deposited directly into or in the floodplains of any river or stream, lake or ponds, or on the ice thereof where such material may fall or

otherwise find its way into said watercourses, nor shall such material be placed or deposited directly in pits, wells or on ground surface except in conformity with the State Plumbing Code and local ordinances. E. A marina shall provide, for use by its customers, shower and toilet facilities and shall also provide an environmentally safe means of removing accumulated waste matter from boats which have self-contained sanitary waste disposal units. F. No dwelling or structure shall be converted from seasonal to year-round use that is located within 250 feet of the high-water line of any lake, pond, river, stream or body of water more than one acre in size, including abutting wetlands, until the owner shall prove that the subsurface disposal system is located at least 100 feet from the high-water line of that water body and was legally installed after July 1974, or a performance bond equal to the estimated cost of the system shall be posted to insure that the new subsurface disposal system will be installed at least 100 feet from the high-water line, prior to completion or occupancy of the building. Any existing bedrooms or other rooms that could be used as bedrooms that may have been added or will be added must be calculated as bedrooms for septic system design. Any increase in the number of bedrooms or potential bedrooms above the original subsurface disposal system design shall mandate the installation of a new or expanded subsurface disposal system.

**The following is required improvements and design standards for subdivision:**

§ 210-9.9 Adequate utilities. B. Sewage disposal. (1) In no instance shall a septic disposal system be allowed in soils classified by the Maine Plumbing Code as having “extremely severe limitations.” (2) An application for an individual septic system shall be completed by a Maine professional engineer, Maine certified soil scientist

or licensed site evaluator in full compliance with the requirements of the State of Maine Plumbing Code. (3) Each proposed lot must show at least one test pit indicating suitable soils for subsurface waste disposal. (4) Plans for engineered systems as defined in the Maine State Plumbing Code shall be designed by a professional civil engineer and approved by the Department of Health and Human Services. [Amended 6-14-2017 by Art. 27] (5) In subdivisions involving multiplex dwellings, the Planning Board shall require designation of a second site on the parcel adequate to accommodate the proposed central sewage system for the project. (6) The Planning Board may require that additional sites be reserved for future sewage disposal in instances where the size, character or location of the project raises public safety concerns.

C. Solid waste disposal. The subdivider shall show adequate provision for the collection and disposal of solid waste. D. Demolition debris disposal. For all subdivisions 10 lots or larger, the subdivider shall demonstrate that debris generated by the development and construction of the subdivision shall be collected and disposed of at a licensed facility other than the Casco Recycling and Transfer Facility.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Is the solid waste management system meeting current needs? Is the community reducing the reliance on waste disposal and increasing recycling opportunities? Are improvements needed to meet future demand? Solid Waste – Describe the community’s solid waste management system. Identify types and amounts of municipal solid waste and recycled materials for the past five (5) years.”]***

Waste is disposed of at the Casco-Naples Transfer Station and Casco-Naples Bulky Waste Station on the junction of Leach Road and Route 11. The Transfer Station is open four days a week from 7:00AM to 5:30PM and serves as a municipal waste service to the towns accepting

household/food waste in its Compacting Hopper and recycling in its Recycling Bins. It is owned and operated by the two towns jointly. To use the facility, residents of Casco and Naples must display a current sticker or permit on their windshield or car window.

The Bulky Waste Station is open four days a week from 7:00AM to 4:45PM. It is owned and operated by Naples and Casco and provides additional service to the Towns of Otisfield and Raymond. To use the facility residents may pay as they go or use coupons obtained from the town office or, for renters, from landlords. The station handles items including metals, stumps, demolition materials, waste oil, tires, etc. A universal waste section accepts items such as televisions, batteries, fluorescent light bulbs, mercury containing thermostats, etc. An attached shopping section displays items with potential use value for sale. Both stations handle materials but pass waste and recycling on to be processed elsewhere.

The recycling program at the transfer station makes recycling an option for Casco residents as it is in the same location as waste disposal. The Town Code of Casco prioritizes recycling in its waste management section, stating the purposes of waste management is to be cost effective and protect the environment which they will carry out “by recycling as many materials as possible and, eventually, by reducing the volume of nonrecyclable materials through composting.”

The Casco/Naples Earth Day Clean Up is an annual event to clean up litter on the Towns’ roads and grounds. The event is run by volunteers.

## Public Works

Public Works is the newest formed department, and provides maintenance for a number of municipal properties in addition to plowing and limited road maintenance. It provides maintenance of municipal building grounds and cemeteries including in Casco Village on Old Stagecoach Road, Poland Spring Road, Allan Pond Road, in Cook's Mills on Tenney Hill Road, in Webb's Mills on Webb's Mills Road, and in South Casco on Route 302. They maintain landscaping and snow removal at the municipal building and library in Casco Village on Route 121.

## Safety Services

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: "Is the community's emergency response system adequate? Are improvements needed? Are local and regional health care facilities and public health and social service programs adequate to meet the needs of the community?"]***

Casco Fire Rescue Department (CFRD) has reported inadequate communications systems for emergency response. Like emergency response departments across the country, CFRD is facing a staffing shortage. Although the number of emergency calls has remained the same, there has been a decrease in staff numbers to respond. The type of staff also presents challenges; the majority are per diem day-shift workers rather than full-time or volunteers, which the department ran on previously. Of the roster of 35, there are only four active volunteers. The only administrative support the department has comes from the fire chief himself who is also one of the few full-time members of the team. Understaffing has led to burn out among those who are left to run and support the department.

Even with smaller staff, the current fire station does not provide sufficient room for CFRD. The limited space of the current fire station means they are unable to isolate dirty gear and returns from the living quarters as is recommended to reduce cancer risks. CFRD also needs more room to accommodate growth. Additional office and general space as well as space for more rucks is essential to allow the department to function more effectively. CFRD does not have a ladder truck and must instead rely on the surrounding towns for support or face fires alone with increased risk. A ladder truck would not have a place at the current station. The CFRD currently shares space with the newly formed and soon expanding Public Works department which is housed in the fire station's annex/garage. Already at capacity, CFRD does not have room for the increased number of emergency response and managerial staff and equipment required to meet Casco's emergency service needs. Although the department sees it as their responsibility to handle as many of the emergencies in Casco on their own, they are greatly limited by lack of staff, space, and equipment. These challenges will be considered as part of the new station feasibility study.

CFRD has also reported challenges reaching emergencies due to access problems on roads that are too small for the trucks, plow status of roads, and, in the summer in particular, residents' or visitors' cars blocking roads.

Casco relies on regional health care facilities to serve the population. CFRD have transfer and emergency services, and take patients to care outside of Casco, most often Portland and Bridgeton in addition to other surrounding towns like Lewiston and Norway. CFRD is required to take patients where they request to go. This leaves a wide area for the department to travel



with each service and costs the department staff, trucks, and equipment for the significant time it takes for a crew to transfer patients round trip. If the population increases, and if the makeup of that population trends older, service coverage during transfers may require additional staffing.

In addition to receiving regional assistance for emergencies in Casco, CFRD assists neighboring towns as well— participating in a regional system of mutual aid.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Emergency Response System –Average call response times for fire, police, and emergency/rescue. h. Health Care - Describe major health care facilities (hospitals, clinics) and other providers serving the community. Identify public health and social services supported by the community through municipal subsidy.”]***

There are no hospitals in Casco; the closest hospital is Bridgton Hospital. Sebago Primary Eye Care Services is located on 302. First Light Home Care provides at-home health services to residents of Cumberland, Oxford, Androscoggin, and York Counties. There are two assisted living facilities: The Casco Inn Residential Care Facility and Country Village Assisted Living. In nearby Raymond there is a family medicine practice, Raymond RediCare.

There are two fire stations in Casco, Central and Brown Avenue. Central Station is staffed 24/7 by two Firefighters/EMTs and the Fire Chief; during the day there are five people on the floor and at night there are three who are accommodated by sleeping quarters for two staff. The Brown Avenue Station is smaller with four bays and a day room and is staffed from 6:00AM to 6:00PM by two Firefighters/EMTs. The Fire Department has an automatic mutual aid agreement with the Towns of Naples, Raymond, and Otisfield to provide additional support and resources. Average

emergency response times may be measured in the process of the upcoming feasibility study, although may be currently estimated at 15-20 minutes to the site of emergency.

Casco does not have a police force and relies on Maine State Police and the Cumberland County Sheriff’s Office. Family Crisis Services, the Domestic Violence Resource Center for Cumberland County has drop-in hours located in the Standish Town Office. Also available are resources from the Lakes Region Outreach Site.

The Cupboard Collective is a cooperative food transportation program that was piloted in Casco and Naples in 2011. The program is designed to address barriers to transportation required for food access in rural areas by partnering with local governments, food pantries, and state emergency food providers like Good Shepherd Food Bank to deliver food. Emergency food resources have largely been centralized in Portland, far and expensive to get to from the Lake Region.

## Public Education

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Is school construction or expansion anticipated during the planning period? Are there opportunities to promote new residential development around existing and proposed schools?”]***

No school construction is currently planned. Most recently, Crooked River Elementary School was reopened. Community members have expressed desire for school expansion.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Estimated costs of needed capital improvements to public facilities; g. Education – Identify school administrative unit. Include primary/secondary school system enrollment for the most recent year information is available and for the ten (10) years after the anticipated adoption of plan.”]***



Casco's school administrative unit is RSU 61 (formerly MSAD 61), which includes the Towns of Casco, Naples, and Bridgton. Included in the system are Lake Region High School (located in Naples), Lake Region Vocational Center (Naples), Lake Region Middle School (Naples), Songo Locks School (Naples), Stevens Brook Elementary School (Bridgton), Crooked River Elementary School (Casco) and Lake Region- Fryeburg Adult Education. There are 587 students from Casco in school under the age of 18.

## Public Library

Casco has a public non-profit library which is open four days per week. The Casco Public Library owns, maintains and operates its own building. The library provides a welcoming space for visitors and offers physical and digital resources including books, ebooks, movies, and literacy resources. The "Library of Things" makes other items like snowshoes, games, and puzzles available for check out. The library hosts a weekly storytime with readings, sing alongs, and crafts for kids. Other programs hosted by the library include StoryWalks®, experiential learning through gardening, and mahjong, knitting and book groups. The Library organizes the Casco Winter Fun Day on the Casco Village Green with snow activities, games, crafts, and more. It also participates in Halloween Trunk or Treat and Christmas in the Village. The Library plans to expand its presence in South Casco with a "Little Free Library," a self-serve way of accessing and sharing books.

The Library primarily serves the towns of Casco and Otisfield, who provide financial support to it. People from other communities also use the Library and accounts are free to anyone who requests one, even if not a resident of the town.

Other funding for the Library comes from fundraising activities, individual and business contributions, and grants. The library actively seeks grant funding to support activities. Recently, ARPA funds were used to create kits for children and families of developmentally appropriate interactive games and activities.

The last library expansion occurred in 2002, and no longer meets the physical space needs of the community. While expansions have provided enough space for books and reading areas in the Library, it lacks space for quiet patron work as well as storage. If needed, the Library has space on site for expansion. Fundraising efforts are currently underway to make about \$300K available for identified improvements

Donations to the Library Bookstore provide the opportunity to purchase books at low cost and all proceeds directly support library operations.

## Regional Resources

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Has the community partnered with neighboring communities to share services, reduce costs and/or improve services? In what ways?”]***

Schools, emergency response, and solid waste services are shared in the region. Social and environmental organizations, such as the Loon Echo Land Trust and Crooked River Snowmobile club also work throughout the region. See individual chapters and sections for details.

## Telecommunications

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Estimated costs of needed capital improvements to public facilities: e. Power and Communications – Availability of 3-phase power, Internet (including broadband), and cable within the community. Are improvements needed in the telecommunications and energy infrastructure?”]***

Casco is largely cabled by Spectrum, their incumbent cable company, and also has a digital subscriber line (DSL) available through Consolidated Communications, their incumbent telephone company. Casco is part of the Cumberland Oxford Lakes Area Broadband initiative, a regional effort to expand broadband access. Each town will appoint two representatives, at least one whom is a member of an elected government body and at least one representative from each town to form a communication team. Broadband initiatives are most effective as part of regional effort as networks are better able to share resources.

# CHAPTER 10

## **FISCAL CAPACITY & CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN**

Casco Comprehensive Plan

This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to provide a current status of the fiscal capacity within Casco and the surrounding region.

This Chapter is organized into three sections:

1. Taxation and Revenue
2. Funding for Future Capital Investments
3. Regional Efforts in Shared Investments

# Taxation and Revenue

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Identify community revenues and expenditures by category for the last five (5) years and explain trends. Identify local and state valuations and local mil rates for the last five (5) years.”]**

## GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES FOR THE LAST 5 YEARS

	General Gov't	Public Safety	Health & Sanitation	Public Works	Social Services	Parks, Rec, & Cemeteries	County Tax	Education	Unclassified	Capital Outlay	Debt Services	Total
FY 2020	118,834	1,046,744	285,785	576,018	24,647	74,122	466,125	6,545,475	224,677	1,137,530	324,762	11,894,231
FY 2019	960,882	763,942	229,711	941,952	20,889	81,719	450,494	6,369,442	280,991	1,321,127	331,813	11,752,962
FY 2018	944,710	658,874	255,574	694,696	36,353	125,658	442,722	6,625,836	587,704	736,875	335,090	11,444,073
FY 2017	799,835	598,823	231,916	723,135	30,144	121,873	433,703	6,470,752	368,026	1,227,910	15,841	11,021,958
FY 2016	820,890	445,339	237,165	685,747	63,145	108,465	438,764	6,402,869	322,704	821,999	N/A	10,347,087

## GOVERNMENT REVENUES FOR THE LAST 5 YEARS

	Property Taxes	Excise Taxes	Intergovernmental revenues	Interest Income	Charges for Services	Miscellaneous	Total
FY 2020	9,443,643	789,673	672,213	57,857	476,109	186,029	11,625,524
FY 2019	9,351,838	799,541	434,343	51,349	294,535	237,757	11,169,363
FY 2018	9,017,012	788,923	404,605	47,898	231,384	435,524	10,925,346
FY 2017	9,152,612	742,309	461,955	71,196	271,033	242,929	10,942,034
FY 2016	8,746,513	727,121	378,603	59,690	281,773	127,521	10,321,221

## LOCAL AND STATE VALUATIONS AND MIL RATES FOR THE LAST 5 YEARS

	State Valuation	Tax Mil Rate
FY 2021	757,400,000	15.66
FY 2020	707,700,000	15.40
FY 2019	680,050,000	
FY 2018	648,250,000	
FY 2017	637,100,000	15.10

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Describe means of funding capital items (reserve funds, bonding, etc.) and identify any outside funding sources.”]***

A majority of funding is done through capital reserves, local appropriations through budgetary process. There is one active bond with \$2.75 million for general capital improvements, which has 7 years remaining. For land acquisition, Casco uses some private grants and donations. Community Development Block Grants have paid for some parks and recreation programming. The library is a private entity and is funded by fundraising and some town assistance (\$87,000) through budget appropriations.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “How does total municipal debt (including shares of county, school and utility) compare with the statutory and Maine Bond Bank recommended limits on such debt?”]***

The town is operating within the recommended limits.

## Funding and Future Capital Investments

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “How will future capital investments identified in the plan be funded?”]***

See above. Same funding sources will be used. The town manager has also suggested that lease/purchasing may be an option for the town to exercise, particularly for vehicles and equipment.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “If the community plans to borrow to pay for capital investments, does the community have sufficient borrowing capacity to obtain the necessary funds?”]***

The town has sufficient borrowing capacity with a capital reserve of \$3.7 million (the auditor’s recommended level of capital reserve being \$2.7 million).

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “The comprehensive plan must include a capital investment plan that: Identifies and summarizes anticipated capital investment needs within the planning period in order to implement the comprehensive plan, including estimated costs and timing, and identifies which are municipal growth-related capital investments; Establishes general funding priorities among the community capital investments; and Identifies potential funding sources and funding mechanisms.”]***

The town recently adopted an annual capital improvement planning process. The plan is for a 5-year term, and establishes priorities that will be evaluated on an annual basis, informing the budgetary process. Staff anticipate extending this period of planning to a 10-year term. The recommendations contained in this plan affecting capital investments will be considered each year as part of the annual capital improvement planning process. For more information, see section “Financing the Plan.”

## Regional Efforts in Shared Investments

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Have efforts been made by the community to participate in or explore sharing capital investments with neighboring communities? If so, what efforts have been made?”]***

Notable cost sharing programs include animal control with Naples and Raymond and the Transfer and Bulky Waste Station with Naples. Otisfield also brings bulky waste to Casco’s transfer station (enterprise account).

The town is currently exploring the possibility of regional EMS services. The conversation was initiated at the request of the region’s fire chief’s. This could consist of providing services in regional districts as opposed to county-wide. Fire and rescue service was initially considered but after a study was conducted, the conversation was discontinued.

With the COLAB initiative, the town and other Lakes Region towns, Casco is looking to study the feasibility of expanded broadband.



# CHAPTER 11

## **LAND USE & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to answer some of the questions about existing and future land use. However, a much deeper analysis, discussion, and set of action strategies are identified in Part I of this plan under “A Vision for Tomorrow”.

## Analyses

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Is most of the recent development occurring: lot by lot; in subdivisions; or in planned developments? Is recent development consistent with the community’s vision?”]***

There has been a dramatic increase in building permit requests in recent years; last year saw double the number of the year prior at over 200 permits requested. Popular requests include permits for renovations and accessory apartments, the latter of which has seen an increase in requests for permits. Casco has been more willing to accept in-law apartments because the additions would not require full kitchens and washer/dryer so would be more efficient. Although based on the number of requests the community seems to have interest in accessory apartments, the planning board has been hesitant to change allowances for in-law apartments to the more general accessory apartments because residents of accessory apartments would be less likely to share amenities with the main building and thus would lack the same efficiency of in-law apartments. Even with in-law apartments, there is some concern that after the apartment is sold, it might become a full apartment. There could also be problems as septic systems and amenities designed for the main house may not accommodate additional users.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “What regulatory and non-regulatory measures would help promote development of a character, and in locations that are consistent with the community’s vision?”]***

Casco’s regulations are business friendly with few barriers to development. The Casco Code Enforcement Department has a tiered site review process in which permit requests for developments small enough, under 5,000 square feet, are granted through Code Enforcement

staff review rather than all the way through the Planning Board which approves larger projects. The process is very supportive of small developments as it allows projects under the threshold to proceed more efficiently. While regulation allows for it, Casco has not seen the type of development that is desired in businesses such as restaurants and small, local shops. To bolster the benefits of the tiered site review, the threshold at which permit requests must go to the Planning Board could be raised. As it stands, many businesses have stayed just under 5,000 square feet. Additionally, Casco has very slim design standards which could be made to better fit the ideal of the Town, particularly in areas like the Village to preserve the distinct character.

In recent years, there has been commercial development, especially in marijuana cultivation and solar projects. These are not the types of development desired most by the community, but the state has been slow to instruct towns how to regulate them. As an aesthetic solution, most of the solar projects will be screened from the main roads, but some residents fear the projects taking up natural space that is so critical to the town’s identity.

Community desires do not align with the code as residents often attempt to split a lot at an acre to sell for a minimal amount. Casco has a back lot standard but people rarely take advantage of it.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Is the community’s administrative capacity adequate to manage its land use regulation program, including planning board and code enforcement officer?”]***

As reported by the town’s code enforcement officer, the community’s administrative capacity is adequate to manage its land use regulation program.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “Are floodplains adequately identified and protected? Does the community participate in the National Flood Insurance Program? If not, should it? If so, is the floodplain management ordinance up to date and consistently enforced? Is the floodplain management ordinance consistent with state and federal standards?”]***

The town has reported that flooding is not a problem and is under control through the use of dams. The last major flooding event occurred in the Patriot’s Day Nor’easter, after which the town took extra flooding precautions including increasing culvert size.

Floodplains are adequately identified and protected. The floodplain management ordinance is up to date and consistently enforced.

## Conditions & Trends

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “An existing land use map, by land use classification (such as mixed-use, residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, agricultural, commercial forests, marine, park/recreational, conserved, and undeveloped land). A description or map identifying the location of lots and primary structures created within the last ten years. Include residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial development.”]***

See “A Vision for Tomorrow” in Part I of the plan. See “Conservation, Preservation, and Development Map” which identifies and describes existing land use activities and development, and where future intended development is desired. Casco’s zoning map is unique in that its districts align with its historic future land use map. This alignment will continue with the adoption of this plan, though recommendations do suggest further refinement of zoning districts to better guide development. A “Vision for Tomorrow” also describes where development has occurred over the past 10+ years - and historically.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “A summary of current district lot dimensional standards.”]***

**The following applies to the Village District:**

§ 215-4.5 Village District (V). Space standards.

(1) Minimum lot size: 60,000 square feet. (2)

Minimum land area per dwelling unit (for duplex, multiplex and PRDs): 60,000 square feet of net residential area. [Amended 6-12-2013 by Art. 27]

(3) Maximum building coverage: 20%. (4) Minimum road frontage: 150 feet. (5) Minimum setbacks:(a)

Front: 40 feet. (b) Side: 15 feet, except as provided in Subsection C(6) below. [Amended 6-15-2002 by Art. 72] Rear: 15 feet. (6) Reduced side setback for

accessory structure. The minimum side setback for an accessory storage structure of 100 square feet or less of floor area shall be 10 feet, provided that all of the following conditions are met:

[Added 6-15-2002 by Art. 72; amended 6-14-2017 by Art. 27] (a) The accessory storage structure

must meet all other setback requirements.(b) All structures larger than 100 square feet in area on the property abutting the side of the accessory storage structure shall be set back at least 15

feet from the shared property line. (c) The height of the accessory storage structure shall not

exceed 12 feet. (d) No more than one accessory storage structure per lot shall be entitled to the

ten-foot side setback. Any additional accessory structures must meet the full fifteen-foot setback

requirement. (e) The use of the accessory storage structure shall be exclusively for storage. There

shall be no human occupancy of the accessory storage structure and no cooking or bathroom facilities shall be permitted in the structure. (f)

No variance shall be permitted from this ten-foot setback requirement. (7) Maximum building height:

35 feet.

**The following applies to the Residential District:**

§ 215-4.6. Residential District (R). Space standards. (1) Minimum lot size: 80,000 square feet. (2) Minimum land area per dwelling unit (for duplex, multiplex and PRDs): 60,000 square feet of net residential area. [Amended 6-12-2013 by Art. 27] (3) Maximum building coverage: 15%. (4) Minimum road frontage: 200 feet. (5) Minimum setbacks: (a) Front: 50 feet. (b) Rear: 25 feet. (c) Side: 25 feet, except as provided in Subsection C(6) below. [Amended 6-15-2002 by Art. 72] (6) Reduced side setback for accessory structure. The minimum side setback for an accessory storage structure of 100 square feet or less of floor area shall be 10 feet, provided that all of the following conditions are met: [Added 6-15-2002 by Art. 72; amended 6-14-2017 by Art. 27] (a) The accessory storage structure must meet all other setback requirements. (b) All structures larger than 100 square feet in area on the property abutting the side of the accessory storage structure shall be set back at least 25 feet from the shared property line. (c) The height of the accessory storage structure shall not exceed 12 feet. (d) No more than one accessory storage structure per lot shall be entitled to the ten-foot side setback. Any additional accessory structures must meet the full twenty-five-foot setback requirement. (e) The use of the accessory storage structure shall be exclusively for storage. There shall be no human occupancy of the accessory storage structure and no cooking or bathroom facilities shall be permitted in the structure. (f) No variance shall be permitted from this ten-foot setback requirement. (7) Maximum building height: 35 feet.

**The following applies within the Shoreland District:**

§ 215-9.14 Minimum lot standards. Area requirements within the shoreland zone:

	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Min. Shore Frontage (ft.)
Residential, per dwelling unit	80,000	200
Governmental, institutional, commercial or industrial, per principal structure	80,000	300
Public and private recreational facilities	80,000	200

**The following is required as a general restriction:**

§ 215-3.1 General restrictions. D. If more than one residential dwelling unit is constructed on a single lot or parcel in any district except for Commercial, all dimensional requirements for that district shall be met for each additional dwelling unit. E. If one residential and one commercial structure, or two or more commercial structures, are sited on a single lot or parcel in the Commercial District, all dimensional requirements for the Commercial District shall be met.

# DEFINITIONS

**Affordable Housing:** “Affordable housing” means a decent, safe and sanitary dwelling, apartment or other living accommodation where the cost of occupancy is no more than 30% of that family’s household income. Affordable income targeting is meant to create affordability for households at or below 80% AMI (Area Median Income) driven by affordable housing finance requirements. Those affordability targets go to 120% AMI in the context of homeownership (defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development under the United States Housing Act of 1937, Public Law 75-412, 50 Stat. 888, Section 8, as amended).

**Attainable Housing:** There is no agreed upon definition about what Attainable housing is, except that it is generally considered market rate (non-deed restricted to remain affordable) housing that can be afforded by people making 80% - 120% AMI. This income parameter aligns with the definition of Workforce Housing.

**Comprehensive Plan:** “Comprehensive plan” means a document or interrelated documents containing the elements established under section 4326, subsections 1 to 4, including the strategies for an implementation program which are consistent with the goals and guidelines established under subchapter II.

**Form Based Code (*aka Form Based Zoning*):** “Form-based code” means a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. A form-based code is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law. A form-based code

offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation. (defined by Form Based Codes Institute)

**Growth Area:** “Growth area” means an area that is designated in a municipality’s or region’s comprehensive plan as suitable and desired for residential, commercial or industrial development, or any combinations of those types of development, and into which most development or investment is directed. Growth Areas include the following Placetypes that are common and recognizable settlement patterns in Maine and that are demonstrated to produce a positive municipal return on investment: Downtown, Village Center, Rural Crossroads, High Impact Corridor, Adjacent Neighborhood, Rural Farmstead, and Working Waterfront.

Growth Areas also include locally identified Special Districts that have a unique pattern of development based on an established and recognized historic pattern, which are supported by locally calibrated land use regulations.

Placetypes are identified locally as areas for either limited growth or intended growth. Both limited and intended growth areas may be considered as high value to the municipality, financially, economically, or socially, and as such are intended for ongoing investment in infrastructure, buildings, housing, businesses, and civic spaces and buildings. Limited growth areas, because of their historic pattern of development or extent of build-out under locally calibrated neighborhood standards, may be the focus of ongoing investment, while not the subject of intensive new transformative development. As a result, limited and intended growth areas have different tools for managing development within the placetype.



As part of a comprehensive planning process, a community may identify locations for establishing new placetypes, excluding High Impact Corridors, where the newly established placetype meets the definition herein, excluding the requirement for the year the placetype was planned and built. New placetypes must have adopted locally calibrated neighborhood standards that enable a development pattern that is consistent with the intent and definition of the placetype.

**Place Type:** “Placetype” means a definable geographic area that includes buildings and streets, as well as other elements, that are familiar and identifiable within Maine based on a number of characteristics related to the size of the developed area, the arrangement of buildings, the pattern and arrangement of streets, the types of activities that occur within buildings, the type of infrastructure, and the presence of civic spaces and civic buildings. The following placetypes are identified and defined in this chapter: Downtown, Village Center, Rural Crossroads, High Impact Corridor, Adjacent Neighborhood, Rural Farmstead, and Working Waterfront.

**Rural Area:** “Rural area” means a geographic area that is identified and designated in a municipality’s or region’s comprehensive plan as an area that is deserving of regulatory protection from unrestricted development for purposes that may include, but are not limited to, supporting agriculture, forestry, mining, open space, erosion mitigation, water retention, wildlife habitat, fisheries habitat, scenic lands, public water supplies, scarce or especially vulnerable natural resources, and open lands functionally necessary to support a vibrant rural economy.

**Village Center:** “Village Center” means an area with a loose grouping of predominantly contiguous mixed-use parcels that contains a mix of multi-story buildings. These areas were planned, built, and/or used for a mix of uses prior to 1940, and typically include buildings of historical or architectural significance. The area primarily consists of buildings that contain commercial, residential, and civic activities. Buildings are typically close together, often attached, and located adjacent to the sidewalk with a zero-foot or shallow front setback. Buildings tend to be located along a loose network of streets. Sidewalks may be present. Village Centers may also be designated in locations for new development where neighborhood standards are in place in local land use regulations.

**Workforce Housing:** “Workforce housing” means a decent, safe and sanitary dwelling, apartment or other living accommodation where the cost of occupancy is no more than 30% of that family’s household income. Workforce rental units aim to create affordability for households at or below 120% AMI typically driven by affordable housing finance requirements.

**Zoning Ordinance:** “Zoning ordinance” means a type of land use ordinance that divides a municipality into districts and that prescribes and reasonably applies different regulations in each district.