

Freeport, Maine Active Living Plan Text-Only Version:

The below text represents body text only from the Freeport, Maine Active Living Plan. Graphics, image captions, and maps are not included in this version of the report. Page numbers mentioned in the body text will not be correct, as they refer to the original layout of the document, available with full graphics in PDF format.

COVER PAGE

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Freeport Active Living Plan is the result of a highly engaged citizenry. Indeed, more than 800 Freeport residents provided input with the development of this plan. The Freeport Town Council commissioned this plan as part of its ongoing efforts to improve the quality of life for Freeport's residents. The Council appointed the Active Living Task Force to steward the development of the plan. The Task Force, composed of nine official members and many others who actively participated in the development of this project, devoted hundreds of volunteer hours to collecting data and surveys, conducting outreach, and ultimately shaping the recommendations found in this plan.

Donna Larson, Town Planner and Active Living Task Force Member Ex-Officio, and Al Presgraves, Town Engineer should also be thanked for their assistance in producing the Active Living Plan. Finally, thanks to the Portland Area Transportation Systems for providing funding support and guidance, the Bicycle Coalition of Maine for their ongoing input, and the Freeport Conservation Trust for all of their insight and mapping assistance.

THE ACTIVE LIVING TASK FORCE

The Active Living Task Force was developed to assess Freeport's existing walking, biking and hiking infrastructure and develop an active living plan that supports the Town's Comprehensive Plan and considers resource constraints. While dozens of people assisted their efforts, the Official Active Living Task Force members are:

- Anne-Marie Davee (Chair)
- Kristina Egan, Town Councilor
- Dede Bennell
- Julie Coleman
- Phil DiRusso
- Chris O'Neil
- Kent Simmons
- Barney Baker
- Gretchen Giumarro
- Donna Larson, Ex-Officio

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEEP FREEPORT MOVING!

After hearing from more than 800 people in the creation of the plan, it's clear that Freeport is ready to get moving! The title of this document, the "Freeport Active Living Plan," refers to a lifestyle in which people are able to build physical activity into their daily routines.

For some, active living means walking or bicycling to run errands, get to work, or go to school. For others it means taking a walk or snowshoeing along a wooded trail. Still for others, it means being able to walk the dog in the neighborhood, plant vegetables in a community garden, play with family and friends in a nearby park, or to have places to put a canoe or kayak into open water. For Freeport's children and teens, active living may involve all of the above, but also playing games at recess, participating in a sports team, and/or having safe access to recreational facilities after school and on the weekends.

For many residents, physical activity is a way of life, and the community's recreational opportunities are why they chose to live in Freeport. For them, Freeport is already an active town. However, not everyone in Freeport enjoys or takes part in these healthy activities. Some say they don't know where active living facilities are located. Others say they feel unsafe and that physical activity is just simply no longer part of their daily routine.

This Active Living Plan coalesces the community's concerns, but more importantly, its growing support for adding accessible, attractive, and convenient options for people of all ages to engage in daily physical activity. This Plan is a big step forward in the effort to keep Freeport moving!

ACTIVE LIVING IN FREEPORT: A COMMUNITY OF ASSETS

Freeport's civic leaders have already devoted considerable effort to advancing active living opportunities within the town. As projects are planned and implemented, the Town has extended sidewalks and begun to include shoulders on rural roadways to provide space for walking, bicycling, or running. The Town's supply of open space and publicly accessible land has steadily increased over the years, as has its supply of trails, giving residents many places and ways to recreate. These active living resources are the result of decades of collaboration amongst many entities - the town has worked closely with funders, landowners, businesses, and educators to advance active living opportunities. This collaborative process has been relatively successful and will continue to be a critical piece of moving Freeport forward.

However, the Town does not currently have a clear and written policy for how it considers future “active living” improvements. This Plan therefore offers recommendations for building upon these piecemeal improvements to substantiate a flexible, but more clear approach for advancing active living opportunities in Freeport for generations to come.

ACTIVE LIVING PLAN CONTENTS + APPROACH

Whether for health, economy, utility, the environment, or pure joy, this Active Living Plan seeks to further integrate physical activity into Freeport’s social and physical fabric. With that goal in mind, knitting Freeport’s existing active living infrastructure together with new trails, on-road facilities, and the acquisition of new open space is the focus.

Chapter 1. Introduction

The Active Living Plan provides a roadmap for achieving a wide variety of interrelated community goals through active living. The Town of Freeport should strive to make sure active living choices are the easiest, safest, and most attractive choices for citizens young and old. This Plan outlines how the Town of Freeport can get moving together to accomplish these goals.

The Active Living Plan seeks to increase quality of life for all Freeport residents. The Plan includes short-term, inexpensive measures as well as select long-term catalytic projects that may be supplemented by a variety of policy changes that will provide more opportunities for physical activity.

Chapter 2. Planning Process

The Active Living Plan process included an analysis of existing conditions, monthly Active Living Plan Task Force meetings, and two public forums, which attracted more than 100 total participants representing a variety of local interests. In addition, a survey was distributed throughout Freeport between September 2013 and January 2014. An impressive 719 total surveys were collected (more than 200 were from Freeport students!), which revealed a keen interest in expanding active living amenities.

Chapter 3. Active Living Plan

The Active Living Plan recommendations are organized into six areas of focus: Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Equity, and Evaluation. While physical, policy, and programmatic recommendations are offered for implementation town-wide, eight key Activity Centers emerged from the planning process, which include:

1. Downtown Freeport
2. Hedgehog Mountain/ Pownal and Hunter Road Recreational Fields
3. North Freeport Recreational Area
4. East Freeport Trails

5. Wolfe's Neck Farm and State Park
6. South Freeport Village
7. Casco Bay YMCA/Cousins River Trail
8. Winslow Park

The Plan's physical on-street, off-street, and open space recommendations telescopes into these focus areas, which seek to connect and enhance Freeport's current active living assets. In total, the Plan presents 88 projects to improve active living opportunities in Freeport in the short and long-term.

Chapter 4. Implementation

Planning for active living is the easy part. What matters next is taking the extensive list of recommendations in this Plan and carrying them forward to implementation. Key implementation strategies moving forward include:

- Align funding with the Town capital budget;
- Balance on and off-street implementation efforts;
- Prioritize 'quick wins' whenever possible; and
- Create a local and regionally coordinated approach through policy development and infrastructure investment.

Some of the projects suggested will be implemented relatively quickly, while others will require years of effort and collaboration between local, regional, and state entities. This chapter includes a summary of priority actions/projects, with a keen eye focused on Freeport's Capital Budget plan and how that might be used to support the implementation of active living projects. The list of priority projects appears on page 98-99.

Chapter 4 also includes a key first step to effective implementation: the transition of the Active Living Plan Task Force into the Active Living Advisory Committee. The Plan also recommends that Freeport consider hiring a part-time Active Living Plan/Parks and Recreation Coordinator to oversee a variety of efforts included in this plan and focus on maintenance, safety, and wayfinding on existing public lands and facilities. Even a part-time dedicated staff person will greatly increase capacity for addressing the recommendations in this plan.

As it relates to funding, the goal of the Implementation Plan is to supplement the Capital Budget plan by leveraging grants and a variety of funding resources to keep costs low and the Plan's impact high. To this end, approximately 20 federal, state, local, private, and non-profit sources were identified and may be pursued. Specifically, upcoming capital projects on Wardtown Road/125, South Freeport, and other locations are great candidates for additional funding to ensure that they include recommended active living elements - shoulders, signing, bike parking, trail parking, sidewalks, path crossings, and more.

MOVING FORWARD WITH ACTIVE LIVING

This Active Living Plan is the result of dedicated citizens volunteering their time, skills, and knowledge. The Plan's implementation will require an equal amount of civic dedication, if not more and it must be sustained over the years. If you want to help move this Plan move forward there will surely be a number of opportunities to help Freeport become a more active community!

1. INTRODUCTION

ACTIVE LIVING

One of the best ways for a community to make active living accessible to all is to increase the number and variety of opportunities for residents to become physically active. For some, this means being able to routinely walk or bicycle to run errands, get to work, or go to school. For others it means taking the stairs more often or enjoying a trail for a morning walk, lunchtime stroll, or even an evening run. Active living also means being able to walk the dog or play with family or friends in a nearby park; have locations to put a kayak into open water; to feel free to explore a variety of open spaces; and be able to take advantage of recreational and wellness facilities at the YMCA. For children and teens, active living involves all of the above but also playing games at recess, participating in a sports team, and/or having safe access to recreational facilities after school and on the weekends. In short, active living is advanced when people of a variety of ages have accessible, attractive, and convenient options for engaging in physical activity.

Regular physical activity is a key component in reducing the risk of obesity, which has significant consequences for physical and economic health for communities. Obesity is linked to chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers. Additionally, the costs associated with obesity are troubling: a 2012 study by the University of Maine estimated that the medical costs of obesity for children and adolescents in the state could reach \$1.2 billion over the next 20 years. As shown in the graphics on the following page, Cumberland County's obesity and inactivity rates are currently lower than state and national averages. Investment in Freeport's active living resources have and will continue to play an important role in keeping the region active and healthy.

THE ACTIVE LIVING PLAN

Active living planning is the process of assessing and addressing the needs of a community in the area of infrastructure, programs, and policies to better support physical activity as part of people's daily routine. After decades of decline and being pushed to the margins of society - and our roadways - people in Freeport and across the country are growing increasingly aware of the benefits derived from active living. Whether for health, economy, utility, the environment, or pure joy, this Active Living Plan seeks to further integrate physical activity into Freeport's social and physical fabric. With that goal in mind, knitting Freeport's existing active living

infrastructure together with new trails, on-road facilities, and the acquisition of new open space is a priority. Of course, improved connectivity and other active living improvements will not occur overnight. But, each trail extension, open space addition, and facility improvement will help Freeport leverage previous active living investments by increasing physical activity opportunities - and fun - for the Town's 8,000 residents.

It's clear that active living brings health and economic benefits to the State of Maine and to Freeport. The pursuit of active outdoor recreation has a major impact on Freeport's economy. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, active outdoor recreation supports 48,000 jobs across Maine and accounts for more than 7% of gross state product through tax revenue, retail sales and services. A good portion of this industry revolves around Freeport's most well known billion-dollar purveyor of active living: L.L. Bean.

Maine's bicycling industry brings millions of dollars to the state's economy each year and Freeport's scenic location, along the well-traveled East Coast Greenway route, presents great opportunities to increase bicycle activity locally and regionally. Freeport's walkable downtown is also an asset. Its infrastructure - including the sidewalks and crosswalks which have been developed and extended over the years - keeps downtown Freeport streets active throughout the year. These are desirable community traits that offer residents a high quality of life while also attracting millions of tourists each year. Freeport's downtown is also a foundation on which to build the town's future, one that provides a range of transportation and lifestyle options for a diversity of ages, incomes, and interests.

Freeport is located at the northern tip of Cumberland County, the most populated and healthiest county in the state (as noted before, Cumberland County's obesity and inactivity rates are significantly lower than the state average). Freeport's extended oceanfront and open space resources have been a draw for people across the region and visitors from all over the world. Thus, the town has an important role to play in sustaining and advancing the region's active living infrastructure. Promoting the use of Freeport's existing active living amenities, as well as expanding opportunities for residents to engage in additional physical activity, will require political leadership, an organized citizenry, and regional cooperation. This Active Living Plan is therefore a critical step forward because it offers a vision developed from more than 900 residents who took part in the planning process. The Plan is intended to help community leaders and residents better understand the opportunities and challenges in front of them so that active living concepts may be valued and realistically integrated into the Town's policy and infrastructure investment framework.

Put simply, this Plan provides a roadmap for achieving a wide variety of interrelated community goals through active living. The Town of Freeport should strive to make sure active living choices are the easiest, safest, and most attractive choices for citizens young and old. This document outlines how the Town of Freeport and its

citizens can get moving together to accomplish these goals. Some of the recommendations outlined in this plan will be accomplished quickly, while others may take decades to complete. As conditions change and progress is made, the Town may consider updating this plan in the next 5-10 years. Evaluation throughout the implementation process will help the plan remain relevant and useful as it is implemented and updated in the years ahead.

2. PLANNING PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to active living, Freeport has done more than many neighboring communities. Indeed, as projects are planned and implemented, the Town has extended attractive sidewalks in the village center. Additionally, the Town has begun to include shoulders of various widths as rural roadways are repaved. This aids walking, bicycling, and running for some users in this context. Finally, the Town's supply of open space and publicly accessible land has steadily increased over the years, giving residents many places to recreate.

Freeport's current active living resources are the result of decades of collaboration amongst many entities - the town has worked closely with funders, landowners, businesses, and educators to advance active living opportunities. This collaborative process has been relatively successful, and it will continue to be an important framework moving forward. However, the Town does not currently have a clear and written policy for how it considers future "active living" improvements. This Plan therefore offers recommendations for building upon these case-by-case improvements to substantiate a flexible, but more clear approach to advancing active living opportunities in Freeport.

EXISTING PLANS

As it relates to active living, Freeport's past planning efforts have paid dividends. Indeed, the Freeport Open Space Plan (1999) and Comprehensive Plan (2011) provide specific and general recommendations for expanding open space, transportation, and recreation options. Below is a summary of key advancements in active living planning in Freeport.

Through the latter decades of the 20th century, the Freeport Conservation Commission, the Freeport Conservation Trust, and motivated citizens, with special recognition to Mr. and Mrs. L.M.C. Smith, secured protection of and access to many important open spaces around town. Indeed, since 1977, the Freeport Conservation Trust's efforts have yielded approximately 1,500 acres of protected land, much of which is available for active and passive recreational uses. In 1999, the Freeport Conservation Commission's Open Space Plan was written with a focus on prioritizing land conservation and the development of recreational amenities.

Freeport's latest Comprehensive Plan (2011), aspires to reduce traffic congestion,

provide viable transportation options, and to increase the health of its citizenry through the maintenance and expansion of the Town's bicycle and pedestrian network. This Plan recommends that any new open space land acquisition should focus on parcels that connect existing open spaces so that a network is formed through on and off-street trails, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and natural land corridors. While no specifics are offered, the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan language lead to the more detailed recommendations provided by this Active Living Plan.

Finally, Freeport's ever-evolving capital budget, TIF funds, and general budget focus support various active living infrastructure improvements. A more detailed discussion of these funding sources discussed in Chapter 4.

PUBLIC TRANSIT + ACTIVE LIVING

Public transit is a key element of a community's active living infrastructure because transit riders frequently use multiple modes of transportation as part of their trip - they might walk or bike to a bus stop, or to reach their final destination. The arrival of Amtrak's Downeaster service in 2012 was a big step forward for Freeport. However, the service is limited and is not designed or priced to help people get around Freeport and its surrounding environs; there is no dedicated public transit provider for Freeport residents or visitors.

However, there have been a number of efforts to explore the possibility of improving transit service within the town. In 2011-2012, Freeport worked with the Midcoast Council of Governments to participate in a regional transit network study that also included the towns of Topsham, Brunswick, West Bath and Bath. The purpose of this study was to provide background information for the consideration of a more robust regional public transportation system that would allow residents and visitors to travel between these communities. This study was only a first step in the planning process, but it did reveal that there is a real need and opportunity to strengthen the regional transit system.

Freeport has also been working with the local transit provider Greater Portland METRO to explore the possibility of creating a fixed route bus service from Portland to Freeport. METRO currently offers fixed route bus service as far north as Falmouth. The extension of this service to Freeport could include stops in Cumberland, Yarmouth, and Freeport. While no decisions were made regarding this project at the time this Plan was completed, it is worth noting that there is some enthusiasm for this project in the community, again reinforcing that there is interest in Freeport for better transit connections to key regional destinations.

As Freeport continues to explore opportunities for improving transit access, it will be important to consider the strong connection between transit use and physical activity. To optimize active living benefits, transit planning efforts must consider bicycle and pedestrian access to transit stops and key destinations, including the provisions of sidewalks, crosswalks, and the use of bike racks on buses and near

transit stops.

ACTIVE LIVING FORUMS

In order to gather as much public feedback as possible, the planning process included two public forums, which attracted more than 100 total participants representing a variety of interests.

The first public forum took place on November 14th, 2013. The Forum included an overview of the active living plan process, a presentation of national and local active living trends, results from the Handlebar and Walkabout Survey (see page 19 for more information), and preliminary recommendations. A group of 65 participants were then asked to share their thoughts by marking maps of the town with their concerns and proposals for improving bicycling, walking, jogging, hiking, boating, and other physical activities. Feedback gathered at the first forum was used to create more complete draft recommendations, which were presented to approximately 35 citizens on January 15, 2014. Additional input was solicited from forum attendees and integrated further into the creation of this Active Living Plan.

HANDLEBAR + WALKABOUT SURVEY

Street Plans was joined by a small handful of Active Living Task Force members in conducting a “Handlebar and Walkabout Survey.” The Surveying was conducted in July, October, and November 2013 to inventory and assess Freeport’s active living challenges and opportunities. The process included bicycling and walking throughout the town so that roadway conditions, general bicyclist and pedestrian behavior, safe routes/dangerous routes, and interactions among various modes of transportation relative to safety, desire for facilities, and needs of the community could be understood.

The process also took stock of land use characteristics (urban, suburban, rural), levels of residential density, and popular destinations (school, libraries, shopping, offices etc.). This user-level approach helped our team identify and understand existing opportunities and the challenges inherent to advancing active living in Freeport. The findings from this Survey are summarized below.

FINDINGS SUMMARY

As with many communities in Maine, Freeport faces challenges in creating environments that support active living. Freeport is a relatively rural and auto-dependent community where many destinations are spread out, making it challenging for residents to get around without driving. This reality presents particular challenges for those who are not interested in driving, or who are too old or too young to do so. In addition to these challenges, the way roads and residential neighborhoods are designed does not currently support physical activity. However, there are local and regional models that may help maintain Freeport’s character

while also bolstering active living opportunities.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER + TRANSPORTATION

Like other classic New England towns, downtown Freeport is where daily life happens: sidewalks connect people to each other and to a wide variety of daily, weekly, and occasional needs; a variety of professional offices, restaurants, and retail stores provide a mixture of employment and entertainment opportunities; schools, playgrounds, and ball fields are clustered nearby; and civic buildings and places of worship offer formal community gathering spaces. In addition, various architectural styles reveal a charm befitting of Freeport's rich 225-year history and make it the worthy home of L.L. Bean, a business selling active living globally.

The design of downtown Freeport also impacts transportation - positively. The design of the buildings (close together and close to the street) and the sheer number of people walking on any given day signal to people driving that they must drive slow and be more alert. Moreover, the grid of connected streets provides travel choices no matter the mode of transportation. The connectivity of the streets is enriched further by pedestrian passages that connect retail stores and restaurants with parking lots. This allows for a permeable environment where walking is easy and pleasurable. It's also ideal for the millions of people who come to shop in Freeport each year because they can park once and walk throughout the downtown. While Freeport may have a lot of traffic congestion during the summer months, it'd have even more if this pattern did not exist!

Downtown Freeport's crosswalks are also well-marked and found at most intersections, including some mid-block locations and between the parking lots. Their presence sends the right message to people driving and facilitate safe crossings. Finally, the recent arrival of Amtrak increases opportunities for attracting out of state visitors who may now arrive car and carefree from points south for a weekend of shopping, entertainment and recreation. For those who commute to Portland or elsewhere, the Town also has two regional park and rides that can be used or carpooling across the region.

Freeport's compact downtown quickly gives way to wooded neighborhoods, open fields, farms, wetlands, coves and inlets. In these places, houses are located further apart and the character is decidedly more rural. In short, downtown convenience is exchanged for more privacy and less bustle within a rather bucolic setting. As such, sidewalks and crosswalks do not exist, and bicycle lanes and paths are currently non-existent. However, an increasing number of roadways include shoulders of some width and more and more neighborhoods are connected to adjacent parks and open space through Freeport's open space trail system.

Despite the town's wonderful built and natural resources, more recent residential and commercial growth patterns threaten to diminish the community's rural character. These new growth patterns spread people's homes and their destinations

(stores, work, schools) further apart, with connections coming only in the form of higher speed roadways that leave little to no space to comfortably ride a bike, walk the dog, or go for a jog.

The Town's land use regulations and conventional roadway design standards dictate that commercial buildings in these settings are located behind large parking lots, away from the busy roads, which make them more difficult and less convenient to access. Similarly, homes are located on cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets that intersect only with regional roadways and not with each other. While this growth pattern keeps high-speed traffic away from some neighborhood interiors, it effectively isolates residents who don't feel safe beyond their immediate surroundings because bike paths, sidewalks, and trails are not required of developers and rarely get built. And because the streets don't connect to each other, people are forced to drive onto just a few regional roadways, which effectively makes those roads feel even less safe for non-motorized users, to say nothing of the lacking facilities.

Developing land this way effectively isolates, rather than knits, Freeport's neighborhoods together. This pattern can limit opportunities for those too old and/or too young to drive, as they must rely upon others to get around or to engage in meaningful physical activity. And while not everywhere should look like downtown or the South Freeport village area, these areas do provide working examples of a more balanced and integrated land use and transportation pattern that allow for a more efficient delivery of municipal services. They also engender physical activity because more destinations are located nearby. Recommendations for improving land use and transportation connectivity are found on page 53.

BIKEWAYS

Freeport does not currently have any marked on-road bicycle facilities and there are very few places to mountain bike. That said, there are approximately 22 miles of paved shoulders (see map at left) according to measurements of all known shoulders on roadways of regional importance. The width of these shoulders varies greatly; some may be as wide as 10 feet on one side (such as along Route 1 near the Yarmouth town line) while others are no more than two feet wide. Freeport is also located along the East Coast Greenway, a bicycle route connecting Key West, Florida and Calais, Maine. At present, the Greenway goes unmarked through Freeport and could be improved to include signs and a higher level of service for local and regional-traveling bicyclists. While bike paths and trails cannot be built everywhere, this Plan recommends a variety of bikeway treatments for Freeport's range of roadway and land use contexts. See page 46 for specific bikeway recommendations.

BICYCLE PARKING

Bicycle parking is a low-cost and highly visible amenity that not only encourages bicycling but represents a community's values, a commitment to supporting active living. Today, bicycle parking is not common in Freeport. However, where it does

exist (YMCA, Bow Street Market, L.L. Bean, Library, Town Hall, Middle School etc.), the quality is relatively low and the placement not optimized. The need therefore exists to create low-cost but highly visible bicycle parking. Bicycle parking type and location recommendations may be found on page 50.

OPEN SPACE

Since 1977, the Freeport Conservation Trust in collaboration with the Town of Freeport has conserved approximately 1500 acres of open space. Lands owned by the Town of Freeport, the State of Maine, private property owners and others also contribute to the town's open space offerings. Additionally, an estimated 20 miles of trails have been built and are maintained by volunteers from the Freeport Conservation Trust, the Freeport Conservation Commission, and others.

Freeport's zoning code and subdivision ordinance have also greatly aided the town in preserving open space for active recreation. The town's 2008 Zoning Ordinance outlines the Open Space Subdivision as a residential development design pattern. An Open Space Subdivision is defined as one that permits reduced lot sizes, road frontage and setbacks, and maintains a quantity of open space that meets or exceeds the sum of the unbuildable land. The 2011 subdivision ordinance is designed to promote the use of open space subdivision design to protect connectivity between open spaces and establish buffers along boundaries with existing protected land.

A two-page inventory of Freeport's open space is available on page 32-33, while current conditions, broken down by land owner and open space are described below.

TOWN OF FREEPORT

The Town of Freeport owns a number of park and open space properties. The Freeport Conservation Commission oversees many of the town-owned properties. These include Hedgehog Mountain, Florida Lake, Hidden Pond, Quarry Woods and Soule Park. The following descriptions provide a brief overview of each park/open space.

Hedgehog Mountain is a well-used 196-acre property that is home to the highest point in Freeport. The property boasts over 5 miles of trails leading through moderate terrain comprised of pine and hemlock forest. While hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing are permitted on all of the trails, only a few are designated for more intensive uses like mountain biking and snowmobiling.

Pownal Road Field features a playground and a playing field used for football and baseball/softball. The facility also includes trails built and maintained by the Freeport High School cross-country running team.

Hunter Road Field is a large recreation complex. It features baseball, softball, and soccer fields and is connected to Hedgehog Mountain by a trail accessed on the

northeastern edge of the parking lot.

Winslow Park and Campground has 100 campsites and wooded trails that present views of Casco Bay. There is also a playground with basketball hoops. A boat launch provides water access for all types of vessels, including canoes and kayaks. Even though Freeport residents must pay a \$2.00 per person fee, low-cost season passes are available. It is also a popular spot for dog walking, running, and bicycling.

Quarry Woods is a 35-acre preserve adjacent to Mast Landing School with 1.5 miles of wooded hiking trails that pass through vernal pools, an orchard, and a historic granite quarry. It is geared more towards hiking and passive recreation such as bird watching.

Hidden Pond is a small open space located in northern Freeport. It features a trail that takes about 10 minutes to walk. It is a known destination for bird and wildlife watching.

Florida Lake is a 167-acre property in northern Freeport with trails that pass through forests and wetlands, which are often wet and difficult to traverse. Florida Lake is known for its walking paths and bird watching. A parking lot off of Route 125 allows public access.

Soule Park is a small public park in the center of South Freeport Village. It consists of a small lawn area next to South Freeport Road and a quiet wooded area of mixed hard and softwoods, linked by a winding path. The park is appropriate for low impact active recreation and is an amenity serving the residents of South Freeport.

Memorial Park is a small landscaped in-town “village green” intended for informal recreational and social uses. Like other civic spaces of this kind, it features a monument at its center, benches, and a tall flagpole.

Leon Gorman Park was recently built with the help of a generous donation from L.L. Bean. The park has a half-mile loop trail, picnic tables, and an open grassy area. The park is within walking distance of Main Street and the Mast Landing School.

FREEPORT CONSERVATION TRUST

The Freeport Conservation Trust is a grass-roots land trust dedicated to conserving and sharing Freeport’s special natural places, which are important for recreation, wildlife habitat, clean water, farming, forestry, and scenic beauty. While not all land owned by the Conservation Trust is open to the public, there are many spaces protected by the Trust that are ideal for active recreation. A brief summary of these properties and the recreational amenities they offer is described below. Visit www.freeportconservationtrust.org for more information, access details, and detailed maps.

Brimstone Hill Trail is a 1.5-mile hiking trail bringing people around a short hilly

loop. A more flat portion of the trail connects to the Antoinette Jackman Trail (see below). The Brimstone Hill Trail is on private property, but the owner has partnered with the Trust to allow public access.

Kelsey Brook Trail traverses the back of a Mitchell Ledge Farm field and passes by Kelsey Brook. This trail is on private land, but public access is allowed for hiking on trails marked with blazes. It may be accessed from a small parking lot located on Litchfield Road.

Antoinette Jackman Trail connects to the Brimstone Hill Trail and the Kelsey Brook Trail. The Antoinette Jackman Trail is appropriate for hiking or jogging and is accessible at the terminus of Litchfield Road.

Calderwood Preserve is located off of Flying Point Road, near the Brunswick town line. The trails include a one-mile and half-mile loop for hiking.

Mill Stream Landing offers public access to the Harraseeket River for hand-carried boats such as canoes or kayaks. Parking is available for a small number of vehicles.

Tidebrook is a 44-acre privately owned preserve with wooded trails open to the public for spring, summer, and fall hiking.

Bliss Woods Trail is a one-mile hiking trail looping around Bliss Woods, an 85-acre working forest owned and managed by the New England Forestry Foundation. The trails links up with those found at Sayles Field.

Sayles Field is a 70-acre property that includes a two-mile trail through both field and forest. This trail can be used for hiking, cross county skiing, and snowshoeing. The Sayles Field trail is connected to the Bliss Woods trail with a 0.3-mile connector called Stonewood Trail. Sayles Field is accessed by parking on South Freeport Road and walking a short distance up to Pine Street to the trailhead, which is located on the street's west side.

Ridge Trail offers a one-mile walk with views of Casco Bay. It may be accessed near the intersection of Pine Street and South Freeport Road.

Cousins River Trail is a 0.6-mile trail over hills and boardwalks to the shore of the Cousins River. The trail was developed in partnership with the Casco Bay YMCA and is accessible by parking in the Y parking lot. Short side trails also allow access to Lambert Road and the Freeport Inn and Café.

Powell Point Trail is a 0.8-mile trail well-suited for short hikes. It has some nice elevation change and offers a view of Casco Bay. Parking is in a turnout off Lambert Road, approximately 1 mile from South Freeport Road, and the trailhead is further down the dirt section of Lambert Road on the right.

MAINE STATE PARKS, MAINE AUDUBON SOCIETY LAND, AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

Freeport is home to Wolfe's Neck Woods State Park, a more than 200-acre open space that was given to the state in 1969 by two Freeport residents, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence M.C. Smith. The park is home to a diverse ecosystem including hemlock and climax white pine forest, a salt marsh estuary, and two rocky shorelines. The park is open year-round to visitors, and it is a popular destination for bird and wildlife watching. It is also well equipped with trails for cross-country skiing, hiking, running, and snowshoeing.

The Maine Audubon Society owns the Mast Landing Audubon Sanctuary, located about one mile from downtown Freeport. The Sanctuary is a protected 140-acre parcel of diverse habitat on the uppermost reaches of the Harraseeket River estuary. The Sanctuary includes orchards, fields, and forests, with over three miles of trails that are ideal for hiking and cross-country skiing. The Sanctuary is open to the public dawn to dusk, year-round.

Pettengill Farm is a 140-acre farm owned and stewarded by the Freeport Historical Society. It contains woodlands and fields bordered by the Harraseeket River. The Farm offers four walking trails of varying length and difficulty, and the grounds are open to the public year round from dawn to dusk. Uses include walking, hiking, bird watching, and cross-country skiing. Uses are intended to be in tradition of its historic values. Its mission is focused on education.

Wolfe's Neck Farm is a 626-acre working farm open to visitors year round. The Farm provides opportunities for canoeing, kayaking, cycling, and hiking. Visitors can rent boats and head out on the calm water of Casco Bay. The farm has more than 3 miles of trails open to the public for hiking, running, cross country skiing or snowshoeing.

L.L. Bean Discovery Park is located on the by L.L. Bean campus. This small open space is used for summer concerts and other social and cultural gatherings.

Arnold Forest is comprised of the woods area bordering Staples Point Road. The land is owned and managed by the New England Forest Foundation. The Forest is intended to be conserved for logging and has not been promoted for public access.

WATER TRAILS

Water Trails (also called Blueways or Paddling Trails) are routes on navigable waterways such as rivers, lakes and coastlines for people using small non-motorized boats such as canoes or kayaks. Beginning in early 2013, the Royal River Conservation Trust (RRCT) and other community groups began developing a vision for a water trail along the Royal River to the south of the Town of Freeport. The Royal River Water Trail would connect trail users to the communities and recreation and conservation opportunities along the river. The Royal River Water

Trail project advances many environmental conservation goals and strives to improve water access for recreational activities. The project also focuses on improving public knowledge about water access points and creating maps and guides to facilitate use of the water trail.

The following page features a RRCT Royal River Water Trail map focusing on the Cousins River and the western waters in the Town of Freeport. This map is a great start to promoting and improving access to active recreation opportunities on local waterways. The Town of Freeport can expand upon the RRCT's efforts to produce a more detailed map of resources within the town, including areas around the Harraseeket River. Such a map could include conservation areas and recreational destinations in the Town of Freeport, such as Winslow Park, Sandy Beach, Pettengill Farm, the Mast Landing Sanctuary, Wolfe's Neck Woods State Park and others. It could also include information about services for boaters, such as docking areas and waterfront restaurants.

CONCLUSION

With more than 30 open spaces and miles of waterways available for public use, Freeport residents have many options for active recreation throughout the year. Still, the responses gathered from the Active Living Plan survey and the two workshops reveal four areas where further improvements could be made:

- The Town's supply of open space and the diversity of recreational activities offered are not always well publicized.
- Trails and trailheads are not always easy to find and could be more clearly marked.
- A strong sentiment emerged for increasing the number and quality of linkages between Freeport's open spaces using on- and off-street paths, trails, and enhanced street connections, including low-impact parking areas.
- There is strong interest in further diversifying the range of activities offered at select open spaces, like the Hunter Road Recreation Facility.

With this information in hand, it becomes clear that the challenge moving forward will be to continue protecting and maintaining existing open space resources, while also creating safe linkages and new activities. The opportunities and recommendations for doing so are found in Chapter 3.

Freeport Open Space Inventory Summary Chart

(graphic, not included in this version)

BICYCLE + PEDESTRIAN COUNTS

To better understand use patterns, bicycle and pedestrian counts were conducted using a count methodology recommended by the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Program (NBPD). The effort not only tallied the number of people

and their chosen mode of travel, but also their gender, direction of travel (with or against automobile traffic), and whether or not bicyclists were wearing a helmet.

The counts were advised by the Bicycle Coalition of Maine and conducted by Active Living Task Force volunteers. They took place on weekday and weekend dates in late September and early October, 2013. More specifically, data was collected on Saturday 9/14, Wednesday 9/11, and on both Saturdays and weekdays during the week of 9/28-10/5. To capture peak periods for commuting and recreational activities, counts were conducted at the following times:

- Saturday 8:00AM-10:00AM, and 12:00PM-2:00PM
- Weekday 8:30AM-6:30AM, 12:00PM-2:00PM, and 4:00PM-6:00PM

The data collected is visually summarized on the preceding page in the form of a composite map inclusive of all count tallies (maps for each count period are found in the Appendix). The data mostly represents bicyclists because that was by far the most prevalent activity at all of the intersection studied, except for the Main and Bow Street location.

The results reveals that at 74% of bicyclists counted, men are most prominently found bicycling. While this figure may seem surprising, it is consistent with larger trends across the United States where 76% of trips are made by men and only 24% by women. This is a stark contrast to similar data collected in northern Europe, where there are no significant differences in cycling rates across gender, income, or class categories. The counts also found that nearly all bicyclists were wearing helmets, which is not too surprising because frequent recreational riders, like those counted, generally wear helmets at higher rates than casual or utilitarian bicyclists.

The data shows that weekday morning and afternoon activity was quite similar, with just a slight uptick of activity during the morning hours. Worth noting is Saturday volumes were noticeably higher than weekday counts because organized group rides often occur on weekend mornings. And while count locations were spread across Freeport, many more bicyclists were found on the east side of I-295, which suggests a clear use pattern along the South Freeport Road/Flying Point Road/ Pleasant Hill Road corridor. It also suggests a need to improve conditions on the west side of I-295.

While these counts do not currently allow us to draw trend lines, they do provide an interesting snapshot of Freeport's bicycling and walking activity.

ACTIVE LIVING SURVEY FINDINGS

In 2012, the newly formed Active Living Task Force distributed a simple three-question survey to collect preliminary active living data. This survey was followed by a more detailed Active Living Plan survey, which was administered to better understand current behavior regarding physical activity, the most popular activities, existing deterrents and desired improvements. The survey was comprised of 18

questions, some of which allowed respondents to select more than one answer, which explains why some response percentages exceed 100%.

The survey was made available to the public in September of 2013 and was administered through January of 2014. While Active Living Plan Task Force members worked with community partners to distribute paper surveys at select locations, the majority were disseminated online through email and the Active Living Task Force's Facebook page. While 95 paper surveys were completed at select locations and returned to the Active Living Task Force, adults completed an additional 415 surveys electronically. In addition, a related survey was distributed to Freeport Middle and High School student. That survey garnered another 209 responses (see page 39 for student survey results). All told, 719 total surveys were collected, which is impressive given Freeport's small population size (8,000 residents).

The Active Living Plan Survey results reveal a number of interesting trends about physical activity in Freeport. The most popular physical activity interests are on-road biking, walking, running, and hiking. About one third of respondents reported that they bicycle in Freeport at least several times per month, and nearly 80% of respondents reported that they walk at least several times per month. For those who responded, the primary motivation for biking and walking is to engage in physical activity and recreation. For those who head to Freeport's parks or open spaces for recreational activities, Wolfe's Neck State Park, Winslow Memorial Park, and Hedgehog Mountain Park are the most popular destinations.

The survey suggests that enhanced facilities would encourage Freeport residents to engage in more physical activity. When asked what would encourage them to walk or bike more in Freeport, respondents favored better sidewalk conditions, safer and more connected cycling facilities, and traffic calming measures to reduce motor vehicle speeds.

A number of roadway intersections were also identified as particularly unsafe for biking and walking. Many respondents noted that traversing the two I-295 interchanges feels very unsafe. Other problematic roadways included Routes 1, 125 and 136. A selection of response graphs is located on the following page. All response graphs may be found in the Appendix of this Plan.

STUDENT SURVEY FINDINGS

The Active Living Plan Task Force created an 18-question survey for Freeport students so that their physical activity concerns, preferences, and habits could be better understood. The survey, which included specific questions about journey to school and other student-oriented questions, augments the data collected from the more general Active Living Survey summarized previously, in which the majority of respondents were adults. The survey was administered in the Fall of 2013. In total, 209 students from Freeport High School and Middle School completed the survey.

The vast majority of students reported that they traveled to school almost exclusively by bus or car. However, nearly all students reported that they walk in Freeport at least occasionally, and that for the most part, drivers seemed respectful to them while they were getting around on foot. The vast majority of students surveyed use parks in Freeport at least occasionally for physical activities like hiking, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing. The most popular park destinations for these activities are Wolfe's Neck Farm State Park and Winslow Park.

A much smaller number of students reported that they bicycle in Freeport. When asked what streets or intersection feel unsafe to bicycle and therefore act as deterrents, students mentioned Main Street more frequently than all other roadways, except for Route 136. This indicates that bicycle safety improvements along Main Street would bring greater comfort to students who often travel between the two schools. Not surprisingly, students also perceived high-speed thoroughfares like Route 1, 136, and 125 to be unsafe. Because many students must travel on these roadways to get to school (136/125 is one of two existing Interstate crossings), it should be no surprise that bicycling and walking to school remain unappealing to the students, let alone their parents.

However, students indicated that their primary reasons for biking or walking were to get exercise, to see friends, or to shop. A smaller number of students reported that they bike or walk to get to school or work. Students also indicated that they would feel more comfortable biking and walking in Freeport if there were better facilities to support active transportation – specifically, safe and connected bike paths and sidewalks, convenient bike parking, and traffic calming measures on relevant roadways.

3. ACTIVE LIVING PLAN

INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive approach will be needed to achieve the goals, projects, and actions set forth in this Active Living Plan. In attempt to meet this challenge, we've structured this plan by adapting the League of American Bicyclists "6 E's" methodology for evaluating bicycle-friendly communities. The six E's are:

- **Engineering/Planning**
- **Education**
- **Encouragement**
- **Enforcement**
- **Equity**
- **Evaluation**

There are recommendations for all six focus areas, however you'll find the Engineering/Planning section to be the most robust. This is not to downplay "the other five E's" - they will be instrumental in building a more active community - but rather to recognize that the community's active living aspirations are geared

towards physical change. To this end, the Engineering section includes recommendations for building bikeways; adding bicycle parking and signs; improving the East Coast Greenway; Bridging Interstate-295; increasing Safe Routes to School; constructing sidewalks; and increasing the already impressive number of trails that exist within Freeport's ever-growing supply of designated open space; and adding still more recreational opportunities.

Regarding this last item, you'll find several recommendations for not just improving existing trails, but also the construction of new ones. Please note that such proposals are presented merely as concepts that express the well-documented desire to connect Freeport's many open space and recreational assets. In some cases, these connections may never be built, while in others, the right mix of willing property owners, needed funding, and trail stewards may be found. The nature of these projects will be opportunistic, but also catalytic.

ACTIVITY CENTERS

Eight nodes of physical activity - referred to in this Plan as activity centers - emerged from the planning process. Radiating out from downtown Freeport in a clockwise fashion, they are:

- 1. Downtown Freeport**
- 2. Hedgehog Mountain/ Pownal and Hunter Road Recreational Fields**
- 3. North Freeport Recreational Area**
- 4. East Freeport Trails**
- 5. Wolfe's Neck Farm and State Park**
- 6. South Freeport Village**
- 7. Casco Bay YMCA/Cousins River Trail**
- 8. Winslow Park**

While the recommendations include all of Freeport, this document telescopes into these 8 distinct areas, which should be considered assets, but also great areas of opportunity that need to be connected.

The average person will walk to a destination if the environment is safe, convenient, and interesting. This radial distance differs from place to place, but it is most often believed to be a quarter to half-mile and is referred to as the "pedestrian shed." After this approximate limit is reached, however, it is assumed that a destination's ability to attract people walking decreases as distance from the destination increases and comfort diminishes.

If one considers that the average bicyclist can travel three times faster than the average pedestrian, the formulation of "bicycle sheds" greatly expands a destination's "active living" catchment area if bicycling is made as appealing as other modes of travel. Indeed, just as a five or 10-minute walk should be convenient and enjoyable for the pedestrian, so too should it be for the average bicyclist, who is able to cover much more ground - one mile easily - with an equal outlay of time.

While pedestrian and bicycle sheds are a helpful planning tool, they remain conceptual without the physical development of infrastructure within and between them. Thus, each “shed” should not be viewed in isolation, but as a network capable of connecting people to important destinations - schools, neighborhood destinations, employment and retail centers, open space, and civic destinations.

The Activity Centers used to structure this Plan revolved around the center of eight key destination areas that were identified throughout the planning process. Recommendations for improving and connecting them are found herein.

ENGINEERING/PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

Freeport’s past work in preserving open space, creating parks, building sidewalks and trails, and enhancing access to the ocean and waterfront has played an enormous role in increasing the attractiveness of the town and its quality of life. It should be no surprise, then, that infrastructure is the most visible and perhaps most important element of a community’s efforts to advance active living. To be sure, scores of surveys and research efforts continue to show that people will become more physically active if the design of the built environment invites them to do so safely and comfortably. Thus, the goal of the Active Living Engineering Plan is to guide improvements to Freeport’s roads, trails, and existing open spaces so that physical activity is appealing to all residents.

BIKEWAY NETWORK

A wide range of bicycle facility types now exists. Calibrating what is suitable to Freeport involved analyzing the community’s variety of physical characteristics. A visual dictionary is provided on page 46 so that Freeport’s decision-makers and the general public can better understand how these recommendations look on the roadway.

While bicyclists have the right to use almost all roadways, Freeport currently has two forms of bicycling accommodations: paved shoulders of various widths and mountain bike trails. This Plan recommends expanding both, while also adding an additional three bikeways types to Freeport’s network. The Plan also recommends adding bicycle parking, wayfinding signs, and intersection treatments that will make bicycling more visible, safe, and appealing. Guidance for the design and application of such treatments is available through the PACTS Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design Guidelines.

A summary of the bikeway network plan, with key project highlights is found below and on the following two pages. Moreover, recommendations for bikeways in each of the eight activity centers are shown in more detail on pages 60-81.

Freeport’s bikeway network consists of approximately 22 miles of paved shoulders.

This plan recommends almost tripling the network to include more than 60 miles of bikeable roadways and shared use paths, which would be broken down as follows:

Existing Bikeway Network

- Existing Bikeway Types: 2 (paved shoulders, mountain bike trails)
- Existing Bikeway Network Miles: 21.83 miles*

* measured using Google Earth, does not include existing trails that currently allow mountain biking.

Proposed Bikeway Network

- Proposed Paved Shoulder - 11.27 miles
- Proposed Bike Lane - 3.5 miles
- Proposed Signed Bike Route - 16.65 miles
- Proposed Shared Use Lanes - 5.12 miles
- Proposed Shared Use Paths - 5.5 miles

Proposed Bikeway Network Summary

- Proposed Bikeway Network Types: 5
- Proposed Bikeway Network Miles: 42.04
- Total Bikeway Network Miles 63.87*

* measured using Google Earth, does not include proposed mountain bike trail additions.

Bikeways: A Visual Dictionary (graphic, not included in this version of the report)

Key Project Recommendations

Across all eight Activity Center, five key projects stand out in this Bikeway Network Plan. They should be prioritized because of their potential regional and local impact, as well as their ability to connect Freeport's Activity Centers. Each of the projects are put into geographic context in the pages ahead, but are described in some detail below.

Route 125/Wardstown Road Paved Shoulders

According to the Freeport Capital Plan, the reconstruction of Route 125/Wardstown Road is slated for funding in fiscal year 2015, with help from the Maine DOT. This is a key opportunity to improve bicycling and other physical activity in north Freeport. Route 125 is a regional roadway that provides access to Florida Lake and Hidden Pond, as well as points north. It is recommended that paved shoulders of at least 4' be added wherever possible along this corridor so that bicycling, walking, jogging become more feasible.

Beth Condon Pathway Extension

In this planning process and others, the Route 1 corridor was identified as a priority for improvement. Yarmouth's Beth Condon Pathway is a key off-road segment of the East Coast Greenway (see page 51) that should be extended north to South Freeport

Road. This project will provide much needed comfort within a stretch of roadway that is currently very intimidating. The project will require collaboration between Freeport and Yarmouth, as well as PACTs and the MaineDOT.

Hunter Road/ Pownal Road Fields Shared Use Path

The Hunter Road/Pownal Road/Hedgehog Mountain recreational complex is an enormous recreational amenity for the Town of Freeport. However, it remains isolated from the core of the community it serves, particularly Freeport's schools. This challenge may be addressed with the construction of a shared use path, which would eventually require a bicycle/pedestrian bridge spanning Interstate 295 (see page 65). The proposed path would allow for myriad recreation forms (walking, jogging, biking, skating, cross-country skiing, etc.) to occur between downtown Freeport and the recreational complex. The path and bridge would require a variety of local, regional and state partners and should be considered a long-term project with many benefits, including providing safe routes to schools.

Main Street Bicycle Lanes + Shared Use Lane Markings

Main Street, from Desert Road to Kendall Lane could become a lot more comfortable for bicyclists. It is recommended that Main Street be re-stripped, from Desert Road to West Street, to include two 4.5' bicycle lanes. This could be accomplished without widening the pavement or moving existing curb lines. It is also recommended that Shared Use Lane Markings be added from West Street to Kendall Drive.

Mallett Drive Bicycle Lanes and Shared Use Path Crossing

Facilitating safe movement along, and across Mallett Drive should be a priority. A proposed path between Freeport Middle School and Elm Street is discussed in more detail in the pages ahead (see page 65), however creating a high-visibility connection for this path across Mallett Drive, as well as striping bicycle lanes connecting Main Street with the intersection of Pownal/Durham Road could be pursued as a single project. Particular attention should be paid to how the proposed bicycle lanes and path crossings interact with the Interstate-295 on and off-ramps. See page 51 for one such way to handle this challenge.

BICYCLE PARKING

While bikeways are the most visible element within a bicycle network, bicyclists must also have safe and convenient places to store their bicycles. Bicycle parking is commonly excluded or insufficiently addressed in the planning, town design, and development process. As a result, accessible, attractive, and safe parking options for both short and long-term use are often undersupplied and/or poorly sited. Because Freeport is a relatively rural town, residential bicycle storage is not a challenge, as it is in more urban environments. However, bicycle parking downtown and at other select destinations could be improved both in quantity, quality, and visibility. This will encourage bicycling for transportation and communicate to residents and visitors that Freeport values active transportation. Decorative public art that doubles as bicycle parking can add vibrancy to any streetscape but should not be

pursued unless the design can meet the criteria for safe and effective bicycle parking.

Key Recommendations

Designate Inverted Standard Rack Type

Work with the Parking and Traffic Committee to select a version of the inverted U-rack or Post and Ring rack for town-wide implementation. These rack types meet all bicycle parking design standards and may be implemented with standalone racks or in clusters serving highly frequented destinations. Selecting a single rack design type will improve user recognition and streamline the purchasing and implementation process.

Use APBP Parking Design Guide

The Association for Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals has developed a comprehensive bicycle parking manual. When siting and implementing bicycle parking in the Town of Freeport, public and private entities should consult this guide.

Bicycle Parking Ordinance

Consider revising the Town of Freeport Traffic and Parking Ordinance to encourage the provision of bicycle parking in new development within all village commercial and mixed-use areas.

General Activity Center bicycle parking location recommendations are found in the pages ahead. They include downtown Freeport, Pownal and Hunter Road Recreation areas, South Freeport Village, and Winslow Park.

BICYCLE WAYFINDING + INTERSECTION TREATMENTS

Beyond bikeways and bicycle parking, a variety of other amenities and treatments are proposed to make Freeport more bicycle-friendly. These include adding bicycle route and wayfinding information along designated bikeways - particularly at key decision points - and the inclusion of specific treatments for bicyclists at intersections, which is where most crashes occur.

Key Recommendations

Accept Merrymeeting Wheelers Sign Donation

The Merrymeeting Wheelers, a bicycle club based in Brunswick, have donated money for bicycle safety signs. It is recommended that the Active Living Committee and the Freeport Traffic and Parking Committee prioritize locations for sign placement. This small project should be considered a pilot for Project #2 below.

Implement Bicycle Route, Safety, and Wayfinding Signs

As of the writing of this Plan, PACTS is currently developing guidelines for the placement and design of bicycle safety and wayfinding signs. It is recommended that Freeport work with PACTS, MaineDOT, and Freeport Traffic and Parking Committee to determine where bicycle route, safety, and wayfinding signs should be

implemented. Recommendations for East Coast Greenway signs are found on page 53, and bicycle safety signs referenced in the Enforcement section of Chapter 3. Note, a small portion of the Freeport Capital Budget could include such signs, which may be rolled out over time.

Enhance Visibility and Safety for Bicyclists at Intersections

Work with PACTS, MaineDOT, and Freeport Traffic and Parking Committee to implement intersection safety and comfort measures as part of larger future projects, or as standalone upgrades. Treatments may include bicycle detection at intersections, pavement markings that continue bikeways visibly through the intersection, or markings/treatments/signals that warn/slow motorists in advance of shared use path or trail crossings. Refer to the PACTS Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Design Guidelines for more details and appropriate guidance.

Consider Strategic Lane Width Reductions

Reducing the width of the travel lane for motorized vehicles can help slow traffic and create additional space for cyclists, runners, walkers, and others who wish to use the road for active recreation. This is particularly important at intersections where bicycle and walking facilities are typically squeezed to accommodate turning vehicles. While not appropriate for all roadways and intersections, strategic travel lane width reductions will be an important step to creating space for active living opportunities along Freeport's roadways.

THE EAST COAST GREENWAY

The East Coast Greenway (ECG) is a nearly 3,000 mile bicycle route connecting Calais, Maine with Key West, Florida. Freeport's 8.5 mile section of the (ECG) is currently unmarked, but includes portions of Route 1, South Freeport Road, Lower Mast Landing Road, Flying Point Road and Pleasant Hill Road. An alternate route through downtown Freeport is also a possibility for riders wishing to visit downtown. The route passes through four Freeport activity centers, which means enhancing the route will not only improve access regionally, but also locally as residents and visitors seek out recreational opportunities and transportation options. More details on the below recommendations can be found in the Activity Center #7 section, on pages 78-79.

Key Recommendations

Add East Coast Greenway Signs

Work with the East Coast Greenway and the Maine DOT to implement East Coast Greenway signs along the route.

Beth Condon Pathway Extension

Work with the Town of Yarmouth and the Maine DOT to extend the Beth Condon Pathway along Route 1 to South Freeport Road.

East Coast Greenway Route Improvements

Enhance segments of the Greenway route with wider shoulders; adjacent trails where feasible; and sidewalks in South Freeport village center, along the South Street missing - between West Street and Bow Street - and from Leon Gorman Park to Upper Mast Landing Road.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL – SAFE ROUTES FOR EVERYONE!

Freeport is very fortunate to have five schools clustered within the 1-mile radius that defines the downtown Activity Center: Cricket Hunt School, Morse St. School (pre-K to Grade 2), Mast Landing School (Grades 3-5), Freeport Middle School (Grades 6-8), and Freeport High School (Grades 9-12). While all of these schools are located adjacent to the existing sidewalk network, additional physical and programmatic improvements could be made to enhance safety and access. Such “safe routes to school” projects do aid students, families, and teachers getting to school, but they also provide safer routes for everyone.

Key Recommendations

Mallet Drive Safe Routes to School Path / Bike and Pedestrian Bridge + Path

While more detailed project and programmatic recommendations are included in the Activity Center #1 plans on pages 60-63, and the Education/Encouragement Plans found on pages 84 - 88, Freeport should prioritize two key projects that will provide safer routes to school: The first is the proposed path between Freeport Middle School and Freeport High School, which includes a high-visibility Mallett Drive crossing as well as constructing a ramp/stairs from Mallett Drive to Guptill Avenue, and sidewalks on Snow Road. The second is the proposed bicycle and pedestrian bridge and proposed shared use path between the Hedgehog Mountain/Hunter Road/Pownal Road recreation area, and downtown Freeport.

SIDEWALKS

As a relatively rural town, sidewalks are not appropriate in all places. Yet, Freeport has six miles of sidewalks, a number derived from measuring the Town’s streets. These sidewalks are key to downtown’s walkability and economic success. Specific recommendations for expanding Freeport’s sidewalk network in select locations are found in the Activity Center Plans for areas #1 and #6 (pages 66-67 and 76-77 respectively). However, there are also regulatory tools to ensure that sidewalks are built not only in existing places, but also in future development projects.

Key Recommendations

Amend Zoning Code to Require/Incentivize Sidewalks/Paths

Currently, only the Village Mixed Use District 1 + 2 require the consideration of

sidewalks and bike facilities. This requirement should be expanded to include all new subdivisions, regardless of land use zone, but be tied to proposed development size. In other words, once projects cross a certain threshold, either in acres (residential) or square footage (commercial), then sidewalk consideration requirements would kick in. The amendment should also include a “complete streets” provision in the preliminary review of development applications.

Amend Zoning Code to Require Street Connectivity

Standards for public streets (Chapter 25) do not currently regulate intersection density. Block size regulations should be included for developments in select locations exceeding a certain size (units or acres) so that intersection density is effectively increased, allowing for greater pedestrian connectivity. This requirement should also include a provision for maximum block size/distance in the “Four step Design Process.”

TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE

Including RSU No. 5 facilities, Freeport has more than 30 locations dedicated to active living. That’s a lot for a Town of Freeport’s size! However, there are two key actions that should form the basis of Freeport’s approach to open space in the coming years.

The key to further activating Freeport’s existing open space and recreation amenities is connectivity! To this end, the proposed on-street sidewalk and bikeways projects will be very beneficial. However, off-street connections are what will attract the most people and make them feel the most safe. Unfortunately, it’s difficult to demonstrate specific proposals for off-street connections. Indeed, increasing access to open space through the construction of trails is generally an opportunistic endeavor; land is donated or agreements slowly reached to allow public use of formerly private land. Thus, it is worth repeating that the off-street connections and other open space projects throughout this Plan are concepts only; they do not indicate the trajectory of a specific route but merely suggest the need for increased connectivity. That being said, linking key spaces, like Florida Lake and Hidden Lake, should be prioritized. The following three recommendations look at ways to accomplish these two general goals town wide.

Key Recommendations

Convene a Sub-Committee to Assess Needs and Resources for Upgrading Open Space Access Points

There are a lot of trails and open spaces in Freeport, and even more access points to them. Some are more clearly marked and useful than others. While this is partially by design, it is recommended that the Freeport Conservation Commission team up with the Active Living Committee and the Freeport Conservation Trust, and any number of interested parties to discuss prioritizing select open space

improvements. Parking options at trailheads should be a particular area of focus. This effort should include the discussion of funding by the Town of Freeport and the ongoing search for grants. Doing so collaboratively will ensure that Freeport's variety of open space managers/organizations work with each other, rather than compete over limited resources.

Diversify Activities Within the Town's Existing Portfolio of Parks and Open Spaces

Properties like the Hunter Road/Pownal Road Recreational fields and Leon Gorman Park represent recent and sizeable community investments in recreation. Because these facilities are relatively new, they have understandably not yet reached their full potential. It is recommended that the Town of Freeport pursue ways to further activate these facilities through the addition of programming and/or relatively low-cost but highly desirable recreational amenities. A few ideas for additional uses are described on the previous page.

Hire an Active Living Plan/Parks & Recreation Coordinator

Open space management and improvement efforts will require ongoing collaboration amongst a variety of volunteers, staff, and advocates. Guiding the implementation of the projects and actions identified in this plan will be difficult to achieve with volunteer committees alone. Frameworks do exist to provide open space management services. For example, there is the existing non-profit organization Recreation and Community Education (RCE), managed within the school administrative district (RSU No. 5). RCE focuses on providing balanced programming for all segments of the community in areas of education, recreation, cultural and civic affairs. RSU No. 5 Operations staff also assist in the maintenance of the Hunter Road/Pownal Road fields. These organizations play an important role in open space programming and maintenance.

However, there is no existing staff person dedicated to town-wide open space management and improvement efforts. Thus, it is recommended that the Town of Freeport consider hiring a part-time Active Living Plan/Parks & Recreation Coordinator to oversee a variety of efforts included in this plan. The Coordinator should focus on maintenance, safety, and wayfinding on existing public lands and facilities. They would also work on advancing the Evaluation efforts recommended at the end of this chapter. This person may be assisted by interns from area high schools or nearby colleges and universities, and perhaps move to full-time as needs dictate and resources allow. Additional location-specific trails, open space, pedestrian, and bicycle recommendations are included in the pages ahead.

Open Space Amenities: A Visual Dictionary (graphic, not included in this version of the report)

ACTIVITY CENTER #1: DOWNTOWN FREEPORT BIKEWAYS

Downtown Freeport has the right 'bones' in place to become a very bike-friendly

environment. The following four bikeway recommendations prioritize changes to downtown streets to make them more bicycle-friendly. Note, the first two projects are recommended as not just downtown, but townwide priority projects.

Key Recommendations

1. Main Street Bicycle Lanes + Shared Use Lane Markings

It is recommended that Main Street be re-stripped, from Desert Road to West Street, to include two 4.5' bicycle lanes. This could be accomplished without widening the pavement. As the street context and width changes in downtown, the bicycle lanes should give way to Shared Use Lane Markings between West Street and Kendall Drive.

2. Mallett Drive Bicycle Lanes

As described previously, striping bicycle lanes to connect Main Street with the intersection of Pownal/ Durham Road should be pursued as a priority for both local and regional connectivity benefits.

3. School/Elm Street Shared Use Lane Markings

The Elm Street/School Street corridor provides an important connection between Mast Landing School, Bow Street Market, Leon Gorman Park, Main Street, and the Elm Street neighborhood. It's also within close proximity to the Morse Street School and would provide additional continuity to the proposed Snow Road/Holbrook Street Shared Lane Markings. Finally, Elm Street will take on increased importance should a bicycle and pedestrian bridge be built over I-295.

4. West Street Shared Use Lane Markings

Adding Shared Use Lane Markings to West Street will facilitate a clear connection between Main , Town Hall, the Freeport Community Center, and the East Coast Greenway. This connection will provide opportunities for those who want to avoid riding through downtown Freeport and help "complete" a street that recently received new pavement and a sidewalk.

ACTIVITY CENTER #1: DOWNTOWN FREEPORT BICYCLE PARKING

The majority of bicycle parking recommended in this Plan is directed towards downtown Freeport. The following six locations should be prioritized for new racks entirely, or the replacement of old racks.

Key Recommendations

1. Replace "comb rack" with inverted U-racks; move to school

Freeport Middle School should replace the comb rack (pictured on page 48) with up to 10 inverted-U racks. Move the new racks closer to the school's entrance and consider placing under shelter to protect bicycle from the elements. Increase supply of racks if/when needed.

2. Main Street Bicycle Parking

Add up to 20 inverted-U racks, placed parallel to the curb, from West Street to the

McDonald's on Mallett Drive, on town-owned properties and/or other public lands. While this works out to approximately two racks per block (one on both side of the street), a few blocks should receive up to four if demand is high enough. Each rack will hold up to two bicycles.

3. Freeport High and Morse Street School Bicycle Parking

Add high quality bicycle racks to Freeport High and Morse Street School. If possible, find location with shelter to protect bicycles from the elements.

4. Town Hall Bicycle Parking

Remove existing comb rack and replace with two inverted-racks. Locate the new racks as close to the side entrance steps as possible and fix them to a small concrete pad.

5. Freeport Community Center Bicycle Parking

The Freeport Community Center serves a wide range of people and is active most hours of the day. Two high quality inverted-U racks should be placed as close to the entrance as possible.

6. Leon Gorman Park Bicycle Parking

Add an inverted-U rack at the entrance to School Street entrance of Leon Gorman Park. Add another rack if/when needed.

ACTIVITY CENTER #1: DOWNTOWN FREEPORT – FIVE OPTIONS FOR SPANNING INTERSTATE 295

There are only two locations for crossing I-295, and doing so without a car is a well-documented challenge. Each of the five options considered at left is summarized in the table above, with the pros and cons of each discussed briefly below. The Pownal Road and Elm Street crossing seems most promising because it links three schools and offers the possibility of threading a new path from the center of Freeport, past the Pine Tree Academy and on to the Pownal Road/Hedgehog Mountain/Hunter Road recreational area (Activity Center #2, see page 68-69).

1. True Street - Kendall Lane

Pros: Direct connection to Freeport Middle School and the sidewalks of Kendall Lane. **Cons:** Not centrally located; users will still be far from Hunter Road/Pownal Road/Hedgehog recreational amenities.

2. Pownal Road - Elm Street

Pros: Provides a more central connection, links Pine Tree Academy with downtown schools. **Cons:** May not be viewed favorably by Elm Street neighborhood.

3. Farmview Lane - Holbrook Street

Pros: Connects to Freeport High and Morse Street Schools.

Cons: Requires the construction of an additional pathway leading to bridge;

Farmview Lane is not a public street.

4. Farmview Lane - Summer Street

Pros: Links both sides of the highway with possible connection to Hunter Road Fields/Hedgehog Mountain. **Cons:** Farmview Lane is not a public street, offers no direct connection to existing schools.

5. Hunter Road - Meetinghouse Road

Pros: Direct connection to Freeport Middle School and the sidewalks of Kendall Lane. **Cons:** Not centrally located,; users will still be far from Hunter Road/Pownal Road/Hedgehog recreational amenities.

A more detailed preliminary engineering study should be undertaken to better understand the cost and feasibility of the project. The completion of such a study will assist The Town of Freeport in the pursuit of funding.

ACTIVITY CENTER #1: DOWNTOWN FREEPORT WALKING, SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL, AND OPEN SPACE

The majority of physical activity that takes place in Downtown Freeport is walking. The map on the previous page highlights a number of missing sidewalk links and suggests that they be constructed as time and money allow. A small number of open space improvements at Leon Gorman Park could also help activate that area, particularly with school age kids from nearby Mast Landing School and nearby residents. Of all the possible projects, the following five recommendations should be prioritized.

Recommendations

1. Safe Routes Between Schools

Enhance the connectivity between Freeport Middle School, Morse Street School, and Freeport High School by building a trail between Freeport Middle School and Mallett Drive. The Town of Freeport, Active Living and Traffic and Parking Committees, and RSU No. 5 should work with PACTS and the Maine DOT to build a high-visibility pedestrian crosswalk at Mallett Drive. Work with property owner to consider creating a connection to the terminus of Guptill Avenue with a stair/ramp to street level. Construct a sidewalk along Snow Road to existing sidewalk on Holbrook Street. This project is essential to the safety of school age children who are already making this trip.

2. South Street Sidewalk Extension

Extend the South Street sidewalk past the West Street/Torrey Hill Range Road intersection all the way to the intersection of South Street and Lower Mast Landing Road.

3. Bow Street Sidewalk Extension

Extend the Bow Street sidewalk to Upper Mast Landing Road.

4. Pine Street Trail

Work with L.L. Bean and other property owners to explore options for building a trail connection between West Street and Pine Street.

5. Leon Gorman Park Improvements

Diversify recreational opportunities at Leon Gorman Park. Consider re-purposing the skating rink (at least on a seasonal basis) with low-cost solutions such as the creation of a bicycle pump track (see image at right).

ACTIVITY CENTER #2: HEDGEHOG MOUNTAIN / HUNTER ROAD / POWNAL ROAD RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

This large recreational complex represents one of the newest investments in active living made by the Town of Freeport. The following recommendations are intended to further leverage this investment by increasing access and recreational opportunities.

Key Recommendations

1. Shared Use Path

Study and build a shared use path between Pownal Road/136 intersection and the Hedgehog Mountain/ Pownal Road/Hunter Road Recreational Facilities.

2, 3. Pownal and Hunter Road Paved Shoulders

Add paved shoulders 4' in width to Pownal and Hunter Roads. These projects take on additional importance if the shared use path between Pine Tree Academy and the Hunter Road / Pownal Road Recreational Fields cannot be built or is delayed.

4, 5, 6. Add Bicycle Parking

Add bicycle parking at paved areas between physically disabled parking spaces at Hunter Road Recreational Facilities. Add Bike Parking at Pownal Road Field.

7. Create Additional Recreational Amenities

Consider adding a bicycle pump track, tennis courts, or even a winter ice rink to the Hunter Road recreational facility; seek other ways to utilize existing facilities, particularly in the summer and fall months.

8. Enhance Hedgehog Mountain

Improve trail information signing and add mountain bike trails/events where appropriate; preserve low-key use of northwest area.

9. Signed Bike Route

Add Bike Route Signs to intersection of Murch Road and Pownal Road/Hunter Roads.

10. Beech Hill Road (Not shown on map)

The proposed Beech Hill Road resurfacing project should include lane striping, shoulder space, Bike Route signs, and bike and pedestrian safety signing.

ACTIVITY CENTER #3: NORTH FREEPORT OPEN SPACES

Florida Lake and Hidden Lake offer wonderful passive and active recreation opportunities in north Freeport. The following recommendations seek to improve accessibility to the amenities offered by these parks.

Key Recommendations

1. Add Paved Shoulders

Prior to its reconstruction, the the Town of Freeport and the Active Living and Traffic and Parking Committees should work with Maine DOT to add paved shoulders at least 3' in width, to Route 125/ Wardtown Road. Include Bike Route and appropriate bike safety signs along the length of the project.

2. Signed Bike Route/Loop

Curtis Road offers a key connection between Route 125/Wardstown Road and Route 136. The creation of a signed bike route on Curtis Road allows for a 5.3-mile loop just north of the Hunter Road recreation facility. The route would run up Route 136, along Curtis Road, and back down Route 125/Wardstown Road until it intersects with Route 136 once more. Add Bike Route Signs to intersection of Murch Road and Pownal Road/Hunter Roads to direct riders to the route. Add appropriate bike safety signs as needed.

3. Florida Lake Trailhead Improvements

Add new trailhead map and trail markings; consider making improvements to allow accessibility for the physically disabled.

ACTIVITY CENTER #4: EAST FREEPORT TRAILS

While East Freeport is one of the least populated areas of town, it has a well-established network of trails. Access to most of them (Brimstone Trail, Antoinette Jackman Trail, Kelsey Brook Trail, and Bessie's Trail) is found along Litchfield Road, which is slated for municipal improvement before 2018. The following four recommendations seek to improve access while keeping this area relatively quiet.

Key Recommendations

1. Improve Wayfinding

Litchfield Road is easy enough to miss while riding a bicycle, let alone driving. The Town of Freeport should consider the inclusion of PACTS approved bicycle wayfinding signs as part of the money it plans to spend reconstructing the road. The signs should be placed at the intersection of Flying Point and Litchfield Road.

2. Consider Improving Trailhead Markings/ Kelsey Brook Access Trail

Install signage for the Antoinette Jackman Trailhead at the end of Litchfield Road. Add more clearly marked information (maps, markings etc.) about the greater East Freeport trail network it serves.

3. Connect Litchfield Road with Calderwood Preserve/Trails

When feasible, a connection between the Calderwood Trail system and the greater East Freeport trail network should be pursued.

4. Add Mountain Biking Trails

Add mountain biking trails and signs to the trail systems that intersect with Litchfield Road; connect to and add mountain bike trails to Calderwood Preserve Trails.

ACTIVITY CENTER #5: WOLFE'S NECK FARM/ STATE PARK

The 626-acre Wolfe's Neck Farm and the 233-acre Wolfe's Neck State Park offer an incredible range of active and passive recreation opportunities. Uses include camping, walking, hiking, kayaks, canoes, bicycling, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. While there is already much to do, the following recommendations are offered as a way to make these two recreational destinations even greater.

Key Recommendations

1. Improve Bicycle Access/Wayfinding

Wolfe's Neck Road is a low-trafficked and relatively safe road for recreational cycling. It is recommended that Bike Route/wayfinding/safety signs be added to Wolfe's Neck Road, especially where Burnett Road splits off of Wolfe's Neck Road. Visitors should be encouraged to ride, jog, or walk the Wolfe's Neck Road/Burnett Road/ Lower Flying Point Road/Flying Point Road loop.

2. Upgrade the Visitor Experience

Wolfe's Neck Farm attracts a lot of visitors who are often unfamiliar with the Farm, the State Park, and the area in general. It is recommended that the Town of Freeport support the Farm in its efforts to upgrade and improve the visitor experience. This may include additional trail markings/wayfinding, visitor maps, and kiosks at select locations (like the Burnett Road parking area denoted by the #2 at left) so that visitors get the most out of their experience.

3. Connect the Park and the Farm!

The core of the Farm's educational and recreational programming is so close to Wolfe's Neck State Park, but still feels so far away. Recommendations #1-2 will help, as will the current Small Harbor Improvement Program (SHIP) grant project to build stairs from Burnett Road to the beach area at the base of the bridge. Still, it is advised that the Active Living Committee and the Farm work with the State to explore creating direct, non-motorized access between the two destinations.

ACTIVITY CENTER #6: SOUTH FREEPORT VILLAGE

Offering a variety of civic, educational, commercial, and recreational amenities within walking distance, South Freeport Village functions as Freeport's secondary community center. The following five recommendations are intended to enhance the village experience and recreational opportunities for all.

Key Recommendations

1. Sign Pine/Main Street as a Bike Route

Add PACTS approved Bike Route/safety signs along Pine Street, between Route 1 and the terminus of Main Street at the Harraseeket Lunch and Lobster Company.

2. Provide Clear Instructions for Parking at both Trail Entrances to Sayles Fields

There isn't a great place to park if you want to access the trails at Sayles Field. Moreover, there is little information to tell you the trajectory and distances of the trails. While there are constraints that make parking enhancements a challenge, it is recommended that the Active Living Committee continue discussions with stakeholders on this issue. If possible, it is recommended that car parking be enhanced adjacent to the Pine Street trailhead, even if only for 1-2 cars, and that a kiosk containing a clear facility map associated use, safety, and amenity information be added for users.

3. Consider safe accommodations for Pedestrian traffic on Village Streets

Given the The Town of Freeport's preliminary plan to improve Main, Middle, and Park Street in fiscal year 2017, the Parking and Traffic committee, Town Planner, and Public Works Department should prioritize infrastructure for pedestrians (such as sidewalks or gravel paths) along Main and possibly include South Freeport Road, Pine Street (to Sayles Field), and a portion of Harraseeket Road if and when funding and local support is available.

4. Add Bicycle Parking at the Town Dock and Town Owned Properties in the Village

South Freeport Road serves as a small activity node. The post office, church, school, and currently vacant retail store, should be serviced by simple inverted-U racks to facilitate bicycle trips. Similarly, the Harraseeket Lunch and Lobster Company and the town dock are destinations.

ACTIVITY CENTER #7: YMCA/COUSINS RIVER

The Casco Bay YMCA / Cousins River Trail is a well-used active living destination for residents of Freeport, Yarmouth, and beyond. The following five projects enhance and increase accessibility and comfort.

Key Recommendations

1. Beth Condon Pathway Extension

Work with Maine DOT, PACTS, and Town of Yarmouth to extend the Beth Condon Pathway to Old South Freeport Road, and designate it as part of the East Coast Greenway with commensurate improvements. The pathway extension would ideally allow walking, jogging, bicycling and other non-motorized recreation / transportation modes between Yarmouth and Freeport. This extension may be added to the shoulder of the existing road/road right-of-way (with a retrofitted pathway) and may necessitate a new bridge structure spanning the Cousins River.

2. Add East Coast Greenway and Bike Route Wayfinding Signs

Per recommendations for the whole East Coast Greenway, official signs designating the route should be located at key intersection/decision points. This includes the intersections of Route 1 and South Freeport Road, and South Freeport Road and Lambert Road.

3. Sign Lambert Road as Bike Route

Lambert Road connects South Freeport Road/East Coast Greenway to Cousins River/ Powell's Point trailheads. Use PACTS sign standards, work with Freeport Public Works to designate and sign Lambert Road as a Bike Route. Add appropriate safety and wayfinding signing as needed.

4. Improve Cousins River Trail Access Point

To help relieve parking constraints at the Casco Bay YMCA improve the Cousins River Trailhead, parking/ access point on Lambert Road.

5. Connect Cousins River and Powell's Point Trails

Seek ways to connect the Rivers Edge preserve and Cousins River Trail with the Powell Point Preserve. As a long-term project, consider in the short-term connecting the two areas through a "water trail" making direct use of the Cousins River.

ACTIVITY CENTER #8: WINSLOW PARK

Winslow Park is a particularly active park during the summer. People from Freeport and beyond travel there to launch a boat, walk their dogs, or bring their children to the playground. It also has more than 100 campsites for rent, which keeps the park and playground (basketball, volleyball, etc.) multi-use pavilions, and walking trails busy. The park hosts weekly summer concerts and events like the annual Lobsterman Triathlon in September, a competition for 1000 triathletes. The park provides family passes for Freeport residents at a discounted rate. The park is run by an appointed Commission and a Park Manager, meaning that it has more resources than most Freeport Parks. With all of this in place, a couple of small improvements should be considered.

Key Recommendations

1. Improve Bicycle Access

Work with Freeport Public Works and the Winslow Park Commission to sign Staples Point Road with Bike Route, Safety, and Wayfinding signs.

2. Initiate Public Education Campaign

Work with the Winslow Park Commission and newly created Active Living Committee to initiate a public campaign to educate park users about environmental preservation along the shoreline and in the park. The campaign should focus on encouraging users to pick up their trash and pet waste, stay on trails, and respect the facilities.

THE OTHER FIVE E's

INTRODUCTION

Beyond designing and building infrastructure, the advancement of education, encouragement, enforcement, equity and evaluation efforts - the other five e's - must play an important role in making Freeport a more active town. And while the Town's current fiscal and staff resources do provide limitations, the recommendations contained in this section are considered feasible if approached incrementally by staff and the town's impressive array of civic and volunteer resources. As recommended earlier in this plan (on page 59), hiring an Active Living Plan/ Parks and Recreation Coordinator remains an important consideration, as this would greatly increase capacity for addressing the recommendations to follow. That being said, the Town and its resources alone will not bring these recommendations to fruition; organizational, regional, and statewide partnerships will be needed to implement the many aspects of this Plan.

EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Active Living Education Plan is to inform Freeport residents about the benefits of active living and the resources available to them in the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle. So, whether it's knowing how to safely overtake a bicyclist riding in traffic, taking that first yoga class, or knowing where to put in a kayak, education will play a central role in advancing active living. The following seven projects should be pursued in close partnership with local stakeholders, such as the school system and police force, as part of the Freeport Active Living Plan implementation process:

Create Active Living Plan Section on the Town of Freeport Website

Utilize the Town of Freeport website to create an Active Living page. The page should include a downloadable version of this Plan, direct users to a variety of other resources (Maine DOT, PACTS, Freeport Conservation Trust, Casco Bay YMCA etc.), and offer periodic updates regarding events, Active Living Task Force meetings, and the implementation of this Plan.

Educate road users about mutual rights and responsibilities

Utilize the Town of Freeport Active Living website page to direct visitors to

information about roadway safety, rights, and responsibilities. The Bicycle Coalition of Maine and Maine DOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program provide great resources. Additionally, work with the Freeport Police to develop and distribute information about roadway safety that can be distributed to people demonstrating unsafe behavior.

Promote environmental awareness and preservation

Utilize the proposed Town of Freeport Active Living website page and strategically placed signage to educate residents and visitors about their responsibilities to preserve active recreation resources. The campaign should focus on encouraging users to pick up their trash and pet waste, stay on marked roads and trails, and respect the facilities.

Expand Safe Routes to Schools Education Efforts

Work with the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, RSU 5, and other organizations to pursue Safe Routes to School education efforts. Leverage Maine DOT mini-grants to educate students about safe bicycling and walking (see Chapter 4 Funding section). These efforts could include, but are not limited to hosting bicycle rodeos, helmet giveaways, organizing a “walking school bus,” and student safety training.

Relay Active Living Plan implementation information, news through official Town and local media communication channels

Periodically convey Active Living Plan-related implementation and education news via the Freeport Active Living Facebook page, Tri-Town Weekly, the Freeport Municipal Bulletin, and RSU No. 5’s Community Education and Recreation Guide. This may include information like the striping of a new bicycle lane, proper open space use etiquette, or the completion of a new sidewalk.

Encourage Freeport bicycle advocates to become League of American Bicyclists League Certified Instructors (LCI); host annual training

Encourage residents to seek LCI training so that they may teach fellow residents about bicycling safely and with confidence. Invite LCIs and bicycle advocacy organizations, like Bicycle Coalition of Maine, to host at least one public adult bicycle skills course per year in the Town of Freeport.

Promote physical activity and open space benefits

There are many social, economic, environmental, and health benefits to be derived from increasing open space and physical activity. It is recommended that the Active Living Committee partner with organizations like the Freeport Conservation Trust to make these benefits more transparent to the general public. One idea is to use clever, low-cost signs that share these benefits.

Fund education initiatives

Work with Freeport schools, Maine DOT, PACTS, and any other local, regional, state, and national organizations to seek funding for active living education and outreach initiatives. Some possibilities are listed in the Funding section of Chapter 4.

ENCOURAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this Active Living Encouragement Plan is to support as many Freeport residents and visitors as possible in the engagement of physical activity. While some people need no incentive to get active, many others do. For these folks, the planning of fun, simple events and activities will serve as a gateway to more social and physical health activities. The following nine encouragement actions emphasize low-cost measures that will encourage people to get moving.

Introduce annual Bike and Walk to Work Day activities

Partner with employers, local schools, and organizations like the Bicycle Coalition of Maine to promote an annual Bike and Walk to Work Day. This one day event offers an opportunity to utilize volunteers in promoting physical activity that, even for a day, can help participants shift their behavior and teach them about active living resources available in the community.

Encourage and Promote Groups Walks

Every month the Freeport Conservation Trust organizes and leads an open group walk at a local open space/trail. The initiative encourages physical and social activity while also exposing participants to Freeport's wide range of open spaces. It is recommended that these walks be promoted and that other group meetups like it (running, kayaking, cross-country skiing etc.) be encouraged. Such initiatives can be organized online and made more accessible by using free social tools like meetup.com.

Develop an annual event to promote physical activity

While street fairs and festivals can draw thousands of people to downtown environments, they rarely focus on physical activity. The Open Streets (www.openstreetsproject.org) and Play Streets movement, which is now found in communities of all sizes, temporarily closes streets to automobiles, so that people may bicycle, walk, jog, dance, and socialize. A similar event was implemented during L.L. Bean's 100th anniversary and it is recommended that Freeport plan and implement such an initiative on an annual basis. This one day, low-cost event should be free to the public and may be sponsored by local and regional businesses, organizations, and the Town of Freeport.

Create a Freeport Open Space Guide

There is no central resource for active living information in Freeport. It is recommended that the Town of Freeport work with the Active Living Task Force and the Freeport Conservation Trust to develop a comprehensive guide to Freeport's open spaces and recreational opportunities. The Guide should include maps, and key information about allowed activities, hours/season open, accessibility, and more. The Guide should be distributed in print and online formats at a variety of locations and events, and be updated and re-distributed when supplies run low. See the Town of Yarmouth Open Space Guide for a good example.

Create a “Passport Program” to encourage use of the Guide and exploration of more than 20 Freeport Open Spaces

To encourage exploration, the creation of the Freeport Open Space Guide can be coupled with an Open Space Passport Program, whereby stamps are physically placed at parks and trailheads so that participants may mark their Guide when visiting for the first time.

Advocate for Amtrak Bicycle Access

Freeport is fortunate to have a new Amtrak station in its downtown. However, people with bicycles are currently not allowed to bring them on Northeast Corridor trains unless they are boxed up. This out of date regulation limits eco-tourism and runs counter to sensible intermodal transportation policy that encourages bicycling, walking, and transit use. Whenever possible, the Town of Freeport and other local advocates should join forces with the Bicycle Coalition of Maine, and dozens of other New England organizations, to support efforts aimed at repealing this regulation.

Organize an annual Park(ing) Day Installation

Park(ing) Day is an annual event where people repurpose parking spaces into parks. The event, which happens in hundreds of towns and cities across the globe, calls awareness to a number of interrelated social, environmental, and health issues. It’s also a lot of fun, as designs range from charming to cheeky. It is recommended that the Freeport Active Living Committee work with the Parking and Traffic Committee and the Department of Public Works to select an appropriate parking space for the annual organization of a Park(ing Day) installation. While the design can change from year-to-year, the theme should remain focused on increasing active living in Freeport. Information can be distributed (Guides, maps, roadway rights and responsibilities etc.) and local awareness heightened about the importance of physical activity.

Create a “Walk Freeport” campaign with low-cost, temporary information signs

In order to make walking information more transparent, the Walk [Your] City website (<http://walkyourcity.org/>) allows users to customize pre-made pedestrian wayfinding sign templates. The Active Living Committee should work with the Town of Freeport to purchase a number of these signs to pilot test in downtown Freeport. The signs could be placed on street signs or telephone poles in a matter of hours and can be customized to convey local walking information. The signs encourage physical activity but encouraging people to replace driving trips with walking.

Fund encouragement initiatives

Work with PACTS, MaineDOT, Bicycle Coalition of Maine, foundations, corporate partners, and other local, regional, and national organizations to identify and obtain funding for active living encouragement programs.

ENFORCEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Traffic laws and regulations are designed to ensure safety for all road users. Effective enforcement requires officers to not only understand the laws, but also know how to enforce them equitably to ensure public safety for all. However, the wide array of state and local laws/ordinances does not make this an easy task. The primary goal of the Active Living Enforcement Plan is to build upon Freeport's reputation as a bicycle and pedestrian friendly town, a place where local police officers are up to speed on applicable local and state bicycling and pedestrian laws. To accomplish this goal, the following six enforcement actions are recommended.

Encourage enforcement of safe and lawful, pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist behavior.

The Freeport Police Department and Maine State Police should encourage the enforcement of laws that reduce bicycle/motor vehicle crashes and increase mutual respect between all roadway users. This includes the State of Maine's recent amendments (LD 1460 "A Bill to Revise Maine Bicycle Law") that clarifies numerous bicycle-motor vehicle interactions, including the need to give bicyclists 3 feet of clearance when overtaking them in a motor vehicle. If officers do not know about this amendments, the completion of this Plan would be a good excuse for communication.

Ongoing Officer training

In accordance with state requirements, Freeport law enforcement officers participate in a mandatory training each fall to learn about all new laws enacted by the legislature. This practice ensures that officers maintain current knowledge of all laws, including traffic laws concerning the use of bicycles and affecting pedestrians on Maine roadways. Nearly half of all full-time officers in Freeport have also completed a cyclist training course. It is recommended that officer education around safe cycling be continued and expanded wherever possible. Such training should cover the three-foot law, the 'dynamics' of the door-zone and right-hook collision-conflicts (where motorists turn right and bicyclists are traveling straight through an intersection), and methods for reducing conflicts between bicyclists and motorists. Additionally, putting officers normally behind the wheel of an automobile through a bicycle training course may sensitive them to the challenges of cycling.

Where possible, improve traffic safety and education outreach material

The Town of Freeport Police Department should work with other Town and State departments to ensure that any traffic safety related material includes bicycle and pedestrian safety information and may be distributed to educate violators.

Encourage officers to watch for and when possible, contact motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians involved in the following unsafe driving behaviors:

Motorists

- Turning in front of bicyclists without properly using turn signals

- Overtaking bicyclists without at least three feet of horizontal clearance
- Parking or traveling in bicycle lanes, bicycle paths, or other facilities designated for the exclusive use of bicyclists
- Driving or parking on sidewalks or other areas designed for pedestrians
- Opening the doors of parked vehicles in the path of bicyclists—“dooring”
- Rolling through stop signs or disobeying traffic control devices
- Harassing/intimidating/assaulting bicyclists and/or pedestrians
- Driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Speeding

Bicyclists

- Ignoring traffic control devices
- Bicycling against the flow of traffic, except in those instances where contra-flow facilities are provided
- Bicycling without lights at night
- Minors bicycling without helmets
- Bicycling on sidewalks
- Failing to yield to pedestrians
- Bicycling while under the influence of drugs or alcohol

Pedestrians

- Walking along roadways at night without any reflective material or flashlight
- Crossing at a signalized intersection without the pedestrian light
- Walking while under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Walking along active train tracks

Continue using radar speed feedback signs; consider buying another unit

Studies show that radar speed signs effectively lower the speed of motorists. Currently, the Town of Freeport owns and deploys two radar speed feedback signs. Should enforcement resources need to be increased, the Town of Freeport should consider purchasing a third unit for use and deploying it to known “hot spots,” like trail crossings or high speed stretches of roadway.

Have an officer participate with regularity on Active Living Committee Meetings

As the Active Living Committee shifts its focus from planning to implementation, it should continue to ensure that a member of the Freeport Police Department regularly participate in meetings. This practice will maintain strong communication and help prioritize enforcement.

EQUITY

INTRODUCTION

Achieving equity in active living planning is a challenge on a national and local level, as many groups remain under-represented in physical activity participation. In the United States, for example, 76% of all bicycle trips are made by men, while only 24% are made by women. This gender split is consistent with bicycle count data collected

in Freeport (see Section 2: Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts). With a population that is 52.6% female, it is important for Freeport to consider the needs of women in the implementation process, no matter the activity.

Income and age are also important considerations for active living planning. Both of these factors have a large impact on an individual's ability to own and operate a private vehicle. Data from the 2008 American Community Survey reveals that nearly 8% of Cumberland County residents had an income below the poverty level. According to 2010 Census data, just over 6.5% of Freeport residents are aged 75 and over. These numbers are lower than national averages, but for individuals who find it unaffordable or unsafe to drive their own vehicle, options for accomplishing daily activities are a matter of necessity.

The goal of the Active Living Equity Plan is to ensure that efforts to improve opportunities for daily physical activity benefit everyone in the community. It is essential to consider the needs of populations often underserved in the planning process, including women, disadvantaged populations, the elderly, and the disabled. The following three equity actions items should be pursued as part of the Freeport Active Living Plan implementation process.

Solicit input from under-represented groups

As projects planned and lined up for implementation, partner with neighborhood, advocacy, and social service organizations to solicit input from under-represented groups, including women, disadvantaged populations, elderly populations, and the disabled. Make sure to include representatives of these groups on project advisory committees, such as the Active Living Committee.

Consider the needs of all users in infrastructure planning and enhancement by adopting a customized local "Complete Streets" policy

Municipalities, MPO regions, and even whole states are adopting "complete streets" policies as a method for ensuring the needs of all users are considered in the planning and infrastructure design process. At present, Portland is the place in the State of Maine with such a policy. It offers a good precedent, as it was ranked one of the best policies in the nation in 2012. The Active Living Committee should work with the Town of Freeport Department of Public Works and the Traffic and Parking Committee to customize an appropriate policy for the Town Council to review, and hopefully adopt.

Invest in improvements equally throughout the community

When developing projects and undertaking actions in support of this Active Living Plan, consider the location of improvements within the Town of Freeport to ensure that all parts of town benefit from active living planning efforts.

EVALUATION

Introduction

The goal of the Evaluation Plan is to help the Active Living Committee, the Town of Freeport, and its implementation partners (MaineDOT, PACTS, Freeport Conservation Trust etc.) periodically collect, evaluate, and publish data. This process will reveal use patterns, safety trends, and ultimately where limited resources should be invested in order to have the largest impact. The following six actions are recommended for Town of Freeport to evaluate and implement the Active Living Plan.

Consider Hiring an Active Living Plan/ Parks & Recreation Coordinator

Evaluation efforts will require ongoing collaboration amongst a variety of volunteers, staff, and advocates. However, coordinating the following five recommendations, as well as general active living / open space / recreation planning will require more dedicated time than the Town of Freeport's staff currently has. It is recommended that the Town of Freeport consider hiring a part-time Active Plan/Parks and Recreation coordinator to oversee a variety of efforts included in this Plan, including evaluation. This person may be assisted by interns from area high schools or nearby colleges and universities, and perhaps move to full-time as needs dictate and resources allow.

Collect and map crash data

Work with the Maine DOT, PACTS and the Freeport Police Department to collect and analyze location of pedestrian, bicyclist, and motor vehicle crashes. Adjust priority projects and safety upgrades to address intersection, crossing, and corridor "hot spots" in as timely a manner as possible.

Track all upcoming roadway improvement projects at the Town, County and State level

Coordinate with appropriate Town, PACTs and Maine DOT departments, as well as Freeport Town Council members to ensure the inclusion of active living infrastructure within capital improvement and regional/State public works and open space conservation projects. This should include the roadways scheduled for new surface overlays where new striping patterns supporting active living may be incorporated into the project.

Develop a bi-annual Active Living Inventory

The Active Living Committee should develop and administer an Active Living Inventory. This bi-annual evaluation tool should track the status of various active living projects, events, and number of completed projects/current inventory of amenities as measured in miles, acres, and facilities. The inventory should also include a bi-annual survey use low-cost tools like SurveyMonkey to create and distribute a bi-annual survey regarding active living preferences and project priorities. This entire inventory should be presented to Town Council, Public Works, the Town Manager, and other decisionmakers for consideration when developing the capital budget plan, pursuit of grants, and spending of general funds.

Evaluate and address maintenance needs

Continue working with Town of Freeport Public Works, the Traffic and Parking and Active Living Committees, PACTS, and the MaineDOT to integrate restriping, pothole filling, storm grate replacement, sign replacing and other small maintenance projects into a bicycle and pedestrian-friendly capital improvement and maintenance plans. Work with Freeport Conservation Trust and Freeport Conservation Commission to flag trail and open space maintenance needs. Develop a maintenance work plan that may be addressed by the Town of Freeport, volunteers, and/or other partners.

Pursue Bicycle-Friendly Community Bronze Designation

The League of American Bicyclists has awarded self-nominated communities of all sizes with various levels of its Bicycle-Friendly Community award. The process involves assessing and evaluating a communities success with implementing the Five E's. Bath and Brunswick are the only two communities in Maine to achieve this designation. Freeport should seek Bicycle-Friendly Community Bronze status by 2019.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

WE'VE GOT A PLAN! NOW WHAT?

Planning for active living is the easy part. What matters now is taking the long list of recommendations in this plan and carrying them forward to implementation. This section includes a summary of priority actions/projects and possible funding sources, with a keen eye focused on Freeport's Capital Budget plan and how that may be used to support the implementation of active living projects.

TRANSITION ACTIVE LIVING TASK FORCE INTO ACTIVE LIVING COMMITTEE

The first step to effective implementation is to transition the Active Living Plan Task Force into the Active Living Advisory Committee. Members of this Committee should be appointed by the Town through a public application process. Members should represent all four voting districts in Freeport and include representatives from key stakeholder groups such as the Freeport Conservation Commission, the Freeport Conservation Trust, the town Traffic & Parking Committee and L.L.Bean. It is recommended that four Active Living Committee members serve as liaisons to the following four committees: Conservation Commission, Traffic & Parking, Planning Board, and Municipal Facilities Committee. Each liaison should be tasked with connecting relevant portions of the Active Living Plan to the issues being addressed by the other committees.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

Some of the projects included in Chapter 3 of this Plan can and will be implemented relatively quickly, while others will require years of effort and collaboration between local, regional, and state entities. The following matrix includes 26 projects recommended for prioritization. Note, they are organized first by discrete geographic area, as defined by the Activity Centers introduced on the map found on

page 56, and then more generally for recommendations not constrained by location. Each priority project recommendation includes information regarding project type (Engineering, Education etc.) time horizon (short-term vs. long-term) and the estimated relative cost (Low, Medium, High). Cost ranges are included to demonstrate the order of magnitude for projects. These ranges may change over time and are not intended to be mandates for funding. All proposed projects would still be subject to existing processes for town expenditures.

The projects were selected based on findings from initial assessments (such as the Handlebar Survey discussed on page 19), the Active Living Plan survey results, public meetings, Active Living Task Force meetings and communications, and current budgetary constraints. To this last point, priority consideration was also given to active living improvement projects that align with the Town of Freeport's existing Capital Plan (mapped and discussed on pages 103-104). A full recommendation matrix, which includes 88 projects, is located in the Appendix on page 107.

PRIORITY PROJECT MATRIX (Graphic - not included in text only version)

FUNDING

Funding active living infrastructure and programs is both the least fun and most important element for implementing this Plan. Fortunately, a wide variety of federal, state, local, private, and non-profit sources may be pursued. The following section is by no means comprehensive, however it does provide several potential funding sources for implementation. In general, funding for this planning effort seeks to:

- Align funding with capital budget;
- Balance on and off-street implementation efforts;
- Prioritize 'quick wins' whenever possible; and
- Create a local and regionally coordinated approach through policy development and infrastructure investment. Leverage grants and implementation resources to keep costs low and impact high

Federal Funding

According to the Federal Highway Administration, Federal surface transportation law provides tremendous flexibility to States and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), like PACTS, to fund bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Funding sources comes from a wide variety of programs, including well-established and new efforts. Virtually all the major transportation funding programs can be used for bicycle and pedestrian-related projects, and will be disbursed through State Departments of Transportation and MPOs. These include the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality, improvement program (CMAQ); the Surface Transportation Program (STP); and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), which folded together federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS), Recreational Trails (RTP) and Transportation Enhancements (TE) programs. Visit http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/funding/bipedfund.cfm for the latest information.

Maine Department of Transportation (DOT)

The MaineDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program is funded almost exclusively by Federal funds. The MaineDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program is a partnership between the DOT and local communities to encourage and enable safe bicycling and walking in Maine. In the past, the DOT relied primarily on Transportation Enhancement (TE) and Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funding. Today, these two programs have been folded into the TAP program, which includes flexible funding for bicycling and pedestrian projects that improve safety and mobility by connecting neighborhoods, schools, downtowns, and village areas. Through this program, municipalities in Maine have funded capital projects including sidewalks, paved multi-use trails, trail connections, and other walkability enhancements. For more information on MaineDOT's Safe Routes to School Program, including its mini-grant awards, visit: <http://www.maine.gov/mdot/bikeped/saferoutes/>.

The Maine Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Education Program

This program is a partnership between the MaineDOT and the Bicycle Coalition of Maine. The Program involves multiple components that contribute to increased bicycle and pedestrian safety in the state including classroom education, after-school bike clubs, bike safety education for adults, and law review and enforcement workshops with local law enforcement officials. Communities throughout the state can request a presentation or workshop through the Coalition's website. More information is available at: <http://www.bikemaine.org/what-we-do/bike-ped-safety-education>.

Small Harbor Assistance Grants

The Small Harbor Improvement Program (SHIP) promotes economic development, public access, improved commercial fishing opportunities and works to preserve, and create, infrastructure at facilities in tidewater and coastal municipalities. Certain types of active living projects or initiatives may potentially be eligible if they meet the grant program's criteria, available here: <http://www.maine.gov/mdot/pqa/qcp/ship/>.

Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry - Bureau of Parks and Public Lands

Maine Trails Fund

While Federal RTP funding has been rolled into one Transportation Alternatives program, the Maine Bureau of Parks and Lands' Grants and Community Recreation Program is still disbursing moneys from the old RTP. Municipalities may apply for RTP funding through the Bureau of Parks and Lands for projects such as construction of new trails, maintenance, restoration of existing trails, trail linkage projects, and safety education programs. More information can be found at: http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/grants/maine_trails_fund.html.

Boating Facilities Fund

The Bureau of Parks and Public Lands issues grants to municipalities seeking to

enhance public access to recreational boating opportunities through the Boating Facilities Fund. The Fund can be used for project development or land acquisition projects. Grantees are required to match the funding at a level of no less than 50%. Additional information is available at:
http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/grants/boating_facilities_fund.html.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1964 (LWCF) assists federal, state and local governments in the acquisition and/or development of public outdoor recreation facilities. On a federal level, this program is administered by the National Parks Service. Here in Maine, it is administered by the Bureau of Parks. LWCF grants can provide up to 50% of allowable costs for acquisition or development projects. For more information, visit:
http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/grants/land_water_conservation_fund.html

Land for Maine's Future Program

The Land for Maine's Future Program is the State's primary funding vehicle for conserving natural and recreational land. The program was established in 1987 when Maine citizens voted to fund \$35 million to purchase lands of statewide importance. In 1997, new priorities were set forth by a commission of Maine citizens. Since that time the program has administered multiple bonds and even instances of general fund appropriations. The Program works to coordinate and finance acquisition of lands. Through the use of matching funds, the program encourages partnerships with local, regional, statewide, and federal conservation organizations. Land for Maine's Future Board issues calls for proposals on a periodic basis, so it is good to check in from time to time. Applicants are encouraged to work with program staff to complete the application process, which is described in the Land for Maine's Future Workbook, available here:
<http://www.maine.gov/dacf/lmf/publications.shtml>.

Maine Conservation Corps

The Maine Conservation Corps (MCC) works with municipal governments and non-profit organizations to dispatch Field Teams to construct and rehabilitate recreational trails all across Maine. These trails must be accessible to the public to be eligible for a MCC partnership. The MCC Field Teams undertake a variety of projects such as cutting new trail, stone staircases, bog bridging, boardwalk, timber bridges, stepping stones, water bars, side hill, and other maintenance. If it has not already, Freeport should consider joining MCC's partner database and working with MCC to maintain and enhance Freeport's trail network. For more information, visit:
http://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/get_involved/conservation_corps/field_team_program/partners.shtml

Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) Funding

PACTS is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Portland, Maine region, which includes portions of Freeport. PACTS helps coordinate transportation planning decisions by state, municipal and public transportation organizations.

Through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), PACTS authorizes the Federal Highway and Transit Administration to release funding for local projects, including bicycle and pedestrian improvements, road rebuilding, and intersection safety upgrades. PACTS has awarded funds to Cumberland County communities for projects that improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Freeport may apply for funding for projects in the eligible section of the town through the Bike/Pedestrian Application, Intersection Application, or Road Rebuild Application programs.

Town of Freeport

Capital Budget

The Town of Freeport spends anywhere from \$250,000 to \$750,000 each year on projects called Comprehensive Town Improvements. These projects typically include roadway infrastructure in the form of paving, roadway reconstruction, stormwater drainage, sewer, sidewalks and crosswalks, traffic-calming, roadway signing etc.

The Town of Freeport has also outlined its fiscal year 2015 - 2018 projects. They are mapped at left and include the following:

2015 - (\$716,000 planned):

1. Wardtown Road/Route 125 (50% DOT Funding)
2. Pownal Road Fields Stormwater and Parking Lot Improvements
3. Public Safety Apron Paving

2016 - (\$400,000 planned):

1. Litchfield Road Reconstruction

2017 - (\$300,000 planned):

1. South Freeport Village Project (Main Street, Park Street, Middle Street)

2018 - (\$475,000 planned):

1. Curtis Road Reconstruction

Of these projects, the fiscal year 2015 projects are relatively firm and not likely to change. However, the projects slated to occur in 2016 - 2018 may change in order and dollar amounts. Other projects may also be added as funding and needs are available and apparent. Note that Wardtown Road/125, Litchfield Road, South Freeport Village, and Curtis Road are all locations for active living improvements recommended in this plan.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Maine TIF laws allow communities to capture incremental growth in property tax for investment in community projects. TIF funding is a protected financial resource for the town; the TIF shelters the value of new development from certain financial obligations, such as taxes the town is required to pay the county each year. TIF funds are frequently used for small local projects, such as building sidewalks and

other small-scale streetscape improvements. TIF funding can also be used as a local grant match to leverage state grants, many of which require some form of local match, either through funding or materials and labor. The existing TIF framework in Freeport only allows for funding projects in the downtown area. An opportunity for better leveraging the TIF framework is to institute a new TIF dedicated to funding bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities throughout the town.

General Fund

In recent years, the Town's general fund has allocated a budget has been \$425,000, but there was an additional \$100,000 in FY 2014 from our Impact Fee funds. These projects are intended to preserve and upgrade the existing local road system, so they do not include paved shoulders or sidewalks. [There is a separate operating budget for sidewalks (\$4,000) under Public Works that is used to repair sidewalks outside of the Destination TIF funding area.]

Bonding

Freeport could also consider a local bonding initiative for larger sidewalk or bicycle and pedestrian connectivity projects. For such efforts, local advocates typically work with town leaders to bring a potential bond before voters.

Non-Profit/Foundation

People for Bikes

PeopleForBikes (formerly Bikes Belong) is a national advocacy organization uniting individual riders, businesses, community leaders, and elected officials to boost bicycling on a national level. The PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program provides funding for projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S. These projects include bike paths and rail trails, as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives. To date, the Community Grant Program has awarded 272 grants to non-profits and local governments across the country. For more information about this program visit:

<http://www.peopleforbikes.org/pages/community-grants>

League of American Bicyclists

The League of American Bicyclists is an advocacy organization that represents cyclists in the movement to create safer roads, stronger communities, and a bicycle-friendly America. The League does have some grant funding available for specific initiatives. Several years ago, the League launched the Women Bike program to seed, support and spread the best campaigns and ideas that are getting more women on bikes. The Women Bike program has a grant component that aims to provide best practices on women's bicycling outreach and engagement to advocates nationwide. Grants have been awarded to local advocacy organizations around the country including the Washington Area Bicyclist Association, Women Bike PHL and the Marin County Bicycle Coalition. For information about current and future grant opportunities through this program, visit:

<https://www.bikeleague.org/content/women-bike-funding>

Alliance for Biking and Walking Grants

The Alliance for Biking and Walking is a coalition of local and state bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations across North America. The Alliance has over 200 members, representing bike/walk advocacy groups across the country. In Maine, both the Bicycle Coalition of Maine and the Hallowell bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee are members. Members receive many beneficial resources, including access to grants to support advocacy, capacity building, and strategic projects to improve bicycle mobility. For more information about membership and available grants visit: <http://www.peoplepoweredmovement.org/site/>

Corporate Partners

Corporations can be important partners in funding active living improvements. Indeed, companies like L.L. Bean has given generously over the years to the advancement of active living in Freeport. A few other corporate partners may include, but is certainly not limited to DeLorme Mapping Co., Hannaford Brothers Company, through the Hannaford Charitable Foundation, and Tom's of Maine, which grants 10% of profits to non-profit, community-based organizations dedicated to human services, health and the environment through the company's Giving for Goodness Grant Program.

APPENDIX

PROJECT COST RANGE ESTIMATE CHART (Graphic – not included in text version)

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN COUNTS (Graphics – not included in text version)