



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** BELFAST COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE  
**FROM:** NOEL MUSSON  
**SUBJECT:** ECONOMY CHAPTER UPDATE  
**DATE:** SEPTEMBER 24, 2019

---

**The Economy chapter has been updated to represent current data and includes the following:**

- In 2017 40% (up from one-third) of the population worked in the management profession, about 25% (down from 30%) worked in sales and office occupations. Service occupations increased from 13% to 18.2%.
- Coastal Farms closed in 2014, which changes the narrative (page 2, page 5).
- Unemployment has steadily decreased since 2013. This changes the narrative (page 2).
- 8.3% of Belfast's resident labor force worked at home, up from 7% in 2010.
- Various changes in the economy since 2012 have or will change the analysis such as:
  - Reflection of the real estate valuation on page 3 – need to redo narrative related to “downturn” in real estate nationally
  - Update needed to reflect additional business development recently seen downtown.
  - Bank of American is no longer a large employer in Belfast. Narrative needs to be changed
  - Coastal Farms closed in 2014. This company was highlighted various times in the chapter.

**Historical knowledge of City events and/or information not found in the State's Data Pack includes:**

- According to Maine.gov Waldo County General Hospital is the largest employer with 500-999 employees. Need to find a more accurate number of employees.
- Are there recent new employers in Belfast that can be highlighted rather than or in addition to Athena health and Front Street Shipyard? New restaurants or retail open downtown?
- Did zoning on Route 3 encourage a large retailer since 2012? (page 6)
- Is poor broadband service still a problem outside of the commercial and industrial districts?
- Is the following statement still accurate with general consensus? (Page 5)
  - “Most believe that the amount of tourism in the community has grown significantly in the past 3 years, and that the community is poised to experience additional growth in the next 5 years.”
- Is Belfast still one of the top 5 ports in Maine for the number of cruise ship visitors per year?
- Regional and Economic Development Plans developed over the past five years – no recent plans on webpage. Are there plans of note that have not been listed? Below are potential plans to list:
  - Eastern Maine Development Corporation Report (2016?)
- Need to provide an update on Downtown/Waterfront TIF (page 15)

## ECONOMY

### Introduction

This chapter identifies and analyzes the local and regional economy, including employment sectors, businesses, employment rates, and retail sales. The goal of this chapter is to develop policies that expand the City's tax base, improve job opportunities for residents needing employment, and encourage overall economic well-being.

### A. State Goals

- (1). *Plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.*
- (2). *Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.*

### B. Analyses and Key Issues

- (1). *Where does the local population work and how does the community fit into the economic region (labor market area)?*

Belfast is the principal service center community for the labor market area and for Waldo County. Most of the region's jobs are located in Belfast. Accordingly, commute times for Belfast residents are noticeably lower than for the County as a whole, see Table 2-7a. The ~~Census-American Community Survey estimated~~ recorded in 2017~~00~~ that about 40%~~one-third~~ of the City's labor force worked in management, professional, and related occupations. ~~Almost~~ About one-~~30%~~~~worked~~fourth worked in sales and office occupations. The third largest category of service occupations employed 18.2%~~+3%~~ of the population. See Tables 2-5, 2-7b and 2-7c.

- (2). *Who are the major employers in the region and what is their outlook for the future?*

~~In 2012, Bank of America remained the largest employer in Belfast, about 1400 employees, which is about twice the number of employees as Waldo County General Hospital, the second largest employer in the City. While the number of employees is considerably less than the peak employment at MBNA (about 2400 in 2005), Bank of America's Belfast facility is one of the few remaining facilities in Maine which Bank of America chose to keep in operation. Employment at Bank of America has remained fairly constant over the past 3 years, and there are no indications that that may change in the near future.~~

Waldo County Healthcare, Inc., which operates Waldo County General Hospital, has about 650 employees (full-time equivalent). The Hospital has

**Commented [N1]:** With change in employment due to bank of America this section may not be relevant. What were the implications? How should we change the narrative in this version of the plan?

**Commented [SD2]:** 599-1000 estimated range today. Where do we find this specific number?

constructed 2 new office buildings, renovated the existing Hospital, and added physicians and support staff in the past three years. Medical and related occupations have remained strong, and are likely to increase with the aging of the City’s population.

Several major new employers have decided to locate to Belfast in the past 5 years. These include: athenahealth, inc, a company which provides services to medical practitioners, and which now employs about 380 persons; the Front Street Shipyard, a boat repair, boat retrofit, boat storage and boat building business which purchased and redeveloped the former Stinson Seafoods site in 2011 and which now has about 95 employees; and Coastal Farms, an agricultural processing facility which opened in 2012 and which had 40 seasonal workers in its first year of operation. These new enterprises and several long-standing significant employers, ~~Tall Pines Group Home (175 employees)~~, Ducktrap Seafood (120 employees), Mathew Brothers (110 employees), Penobscot McCrum (100 employees), and government services such as RSU 20, the City and the County of Waldo, provide a strong major employer base for the community and region.

Commented [SD3]: CLOSED IN 2014

Commented [SD4]: 100-249 employees. Need to find specific number

- (3). *Is the economy experiencing significant change, and how does this, or might this, affect the local population, employment, and municipal tax base?*

The Belfast economy, like most in the State, has experienced ~~increasing decreasing~~ levels of unemployment since ~~the nation-wide and state-wide depression of 2008 – 2009~~ 2012. ~~The rate of unemployment in the Belfast Labor Market area has often been slightly less than in the State.~~ The following table identifies the size of labor force, the number employed, the number unemployed, the unemployment rate for Belfast, and the unemployment rate for the State. Overall, the size of the labor force has grown ~~about 4% by 34~~ in the past 5 years ~~and the number of people employed in 2018 has increased by 127 from 2013, however, the number of persons employed in 2012 is only slightly larger (100 persons) than in 2008.~~

Date	Work Force - Belfast	Employed - Belfast	Unemployed - Belfast	Unemployment Rate - Belfast	Unemployment Rate - State
10/18	3,290	3,191	99	3.0	2.9
10/17	3,283	3,184	99	3.0	3.3
10/16	3,228	3,132	96	3.0	3.7
10/15	3,220	3,080	140	4.3	4
10/14	3,246	3,067	179	5.5	5.3
10/13	3,267	3,064	203	6.2	6.3
<del>10/12</del>	<del>13940</del>	<del>12910</del>	<del>1030</del>	<del>7.4</del>	<del>7.4</del>
<del>10/11</del>	<del>13700</del>	<del>12720</del>	<del>980</del>	<del>7.2</del>	<del>7.3</del>
<del>10/10</del>	<del>13560</del>	<del>12500</del>	<del>1060</del>	<del>7.8</del>	<del>8.4</del>

10/09	13450	12380	1070	7.9	8.3
10/08	13550	12,800	760	5.6	6.4

The Belfast economy experienced a tremendous loss in 2005 when MBNA sold its operations to Bank of America. MBNA, more than any other employer, helped pull Belfast out of the economic malaise it suffered in the late 1980's when several major processing plants closed in Belfast. From 1995 to 2005 MBNA quickly grew into employing nearly 2400 persons in Belfast, the largest of MBNA's operations in Maine. Fortunately, Bank of America remains a strong employer (about 1400 employees), and in late 2007 athenahealth purchased the former phase I MBNA campus and now employs about 380. athenahealth was seeking employees with similar skills to the former MBNA employees which provided employment opportunities for some who lost positions when MBNA left. MBNA, Bank of America, and athenahealth have resulted in a significant increase in the amount of professional office and service employment sectors in Belfast.

**Commented [N5]:** Narrative revision needed due to Bank of America

Belfast has a diverse economy and its many employers offer employment opportunities for persons who are highly skilled to positions with require lesser skills. On the whole, employment opportunities in Belfast, like most areas of the State and country are requiring more specialized skills and greater educational training.

The municipal tax base is affected most by changes in real estate valuation. The downturn in the real estate nationally has had an effect on Belfast. See the Housing Chapter for more information, including a discussion on business, industrial and residential property values.

**Commented [SD6]:** Any change here? Assume yes.

- (4). *What are the community's priorities for economic development? Are these priorities reflected in regional economic development plans?*

The City seeks to maintain and enhance a diversified economic base, with expanding job opportunities in various sectors, with emphasis on employing local residents, graduates of local schools, and attracting new working-aged residents to the City and region. Diversity in employment opportunities could protect the city from downturns in specific sectors, as seen in the past with food processing and more recently with finance. Likewise, the City believes that residents should have access to a wide range of retail stores and services. Accordingly, the City has and will continue to seek to attract new businesses that can serve resident needs.

Despite setbacks associated with the recession that began in 2007 – 2008, the City is greatly encouraged by the development of several new significant employers in the past 5+ years; athenahealth and h, Front Street Shipyard and Coastal Farms. In addition, in the past 3 years, over 20 new businesses have

**Commented [SD7]:** CLOSED in 2014

opened in the downtown area; including 7 restaurants, a similar number of retail establishments, and several offices and service businesses. While most of these businesses have only several employees, collectively, they represent a major addition to the workforce. Continuing, Belfast's Creative Economy, the importance of which was highlighted in the 2006 Creating Vibrancy Report, is growing, which is consistent with the City's goal to encourage entrepreneurial development and the health of the downtown area.

Commented [SD8]: Update numbers

- (5) *If there is a traditional downtown in the community, is it deteriorating or thriving? How is this affecting the community?*

Belfast's traditional downtown, which is located adjacent to its working waterfront, has experienced significant additional business development in the past 3 years; over 20 new businesses. In 2012, few buildings, the upper floors as well as the lower floors, were unoccupied. Upper floor development includes both residential apartments and professional office and service businesses. The amount of pedestrian and vehicular traffic has increased, and many believe that Belfast is beginning to experience a parking problem in the downtown --- too much demand for too few spaces.

Commented [SD9]: Update numbers

Growth in the downtown and the community's perception of the downtown and waterfront area has been spurred by the Front Street Shipyard's redevelopment of the former Stinson Seafoods property; a development which has had a transformative impact on the working waterfront and which has attracted additional business to the downtown. In addition, the community's decision to establish Our Town Belfast (Main Street program) has provided an invaluable resource to help organize downtown merchants and encourage additional events in Belfast. Further, the Belfast Creative Coalition, Waterfall Arts and the Friday Night Art Walks have provided support to the art community, encouraged more visitor traffic and generated excitement. Several of the larger new employers in the City, such as athenahealth and Front Street Shipyard, have cited the services and character of the downtown as one of the key reasons they chose to come to Belfast.

Belfast's downtown features many historic structures that are 100+ years old; most of which contribute greatly to the downtown's character. Downtown property owners and business owners have frequently had to adapt to shifting economic realities, such as in the 1960's when the Route 1 by-pass was constructed, and again in the 1980's when many of the manufacturing plants in the downtown permanently closed. At present, the downtown features a mix of traditional stores, such as a hardware store and a shoe store, as well as specialty shops, service businesses, a growing number and variety of eating establishments, and residential units (upper floors) for persons who want to live in the downtown. Downtown Belfast is a vibrant center for the City and the region.

- (5). *Are natural resource-based industries (including fishing, farming, or forestry) important in the community and, if so, are they growing or declining? What steps has the community taken to support these industries?*

Less than 2% of Belfast’s residents currently work in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations. It remains important, nevertheless, that the City and region’s environment be protected in order to allow a continuation of fishing and other marine based activities. Likewise, opportunities for forestry activities, as a way to augment the income of residents, must be done in a manner that sustains the forestry resources for future generations. Improper timber harvesting can negatively impact existing and prospective residents, through increased pollution runoff, degradation of groundwater drinking supplies and soil erosion. The City and area also appears to be experiencing a growing interest in agricultural operations, mostly small and/or specialized farms. Chase’s Daily, a downtown restaurant, is an example of a business which uses its agricultural fields in Freedom, Maine for the menu and goods that they sell in downtown Belfast. ~~The 2012 development of Coastal Farms, an agricultural processing operation which also intends to provide commercial kitchen space for specialty food makers, is indicative of the ongoing importance of agriculture.~~—See the Natural Resources Chapter for more information. Crucially, the tourism based economy could be threatened by degradation of our environment.

- (6). *Is tourism an important part of the local economy? If so, does the community want to foster this industry and what steps can it take to strengthen tourism?*

Tourism is an important part of our economy. Although less prominent than seen in communities to our south like Camden, tourism is a sector with promise for growth. Most believe that the amount of tourism in the community has grown significantly in the past 3 years, and that the community is poised to experience additional growth in the next 5 years. The City has worked with and funded the Chamber of Commerce and Our Town Belfast to enhance tourist-based businesses. Annual events and festivals are held to attract tourists, and the number of local events is growing. The development of the Front Street Shipyard, the collective efforts to focus on the Arts, and City’s efforts to improve its downtown infrastructure, such as the reconstruction of the Armistice Bridge in 2006 and construction of the Belfast Harbor Walk in 2013, all contribute to the health of the tourism market. Continuing, Belfast is one of the top 5 ports in Maine for the number of cruise ship visitors per year, and we are experiencing an increasing amount of bicycle related tourism. Belfast has worked hard to establish a good environment for both residents and tourists and the community’s efforts appear to be yielding results. Several tourism enhancing strategies are included in this plan.

- (7). *What role do/should home occupations play in the community, if any?*

Commented [SD10]: Still accurate?

Commented [SD11]: Still accurate?

Home occupations are allowed in all residential districts; in recognition of the value such businesses have in our local and regional economy. The adopted Future Land Use Plan proposes revisions to current standards governing home occupations in rural areas, with the intent of creating more opportunities for home based businesses. Working from home for one's self or telecommuting to save transportation costs, is becoming increasingly popular. In 2017~~10~~, about ~~8.3%~~~~7%~~ of Belfast's resident labor force worked at home. Residents are more likely to remain in our community if the City affords them the opportunity to earn a better living through their own ingenuity. At the same time, City land use code provisions seek to protect the residential character of neighborhoods, by limiting those activities that could cause a nuisance or threaten the environment, and so would be better located in industrial and commercial districts.

- (8). *Are there appropriate areas within the community for industrial or commercial development? If so, are performance standards necessary to assure that industrial and commercial development is compatible with the surrounding land uses and landscape?*

The City has a business park and districts zoned for commercial and industrial uses, and aviation uses (Belfast Municipal Airport). Performance standards and design guidelines are in place as well, and include buffering for adjacent residential uses. The City has established a specific zoning area on Route 3 on which it seeks to attract a large retailer, such as Walmart or Target. The City has established a contract rezoning process to consider this application and also has incorporated requirements of the State Informed Growth Act into local ordinances. See the Land Use Chapter for more information and for recommendations.

Commented [SD12]: Needs updating

- (9). *What types of public facilities, including sewer, water, broadband access or three-phase power, are needed to support the projected location, type, and amount of economic activity, and what are the issues involved in providing them?*

Public and private provision of sewer and water are described in the Public Facilities Chapter and are mapped. Opportunities for businesses to connect to these and other infrastructure like broadband (DSL, T1, wireless, and cable) and three-phase power are available in the commercial and industrial districts accessing Routes 1 and 3. Outside of these areas, broadband service is poor or unavailable, limiting business activity and home occupation opportunities that require internet connectivity. The City's intent is to use existing areas which feature public sewer and water as its prime growth areas to support non-residential development. To date, most larger employers have located in areas with existing services and public infrastructure. The City believes that modern facilities are available for new and expanding businesses, and are estimated to meet the need of the planning period (10 years) of this comprehensive plan as

Commented [SD13]: Still accurate?

well as for future years. Belfast far surpasses its neighbors in the provision of public facilities.

**C. Conditions and Trends**

Minimum data required to address state goals:

- (1). The community's Comprehensive Planning Economic Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Office or its designee.

Table 2-1

Median Household Income	1999	2010	2017	Change %
Belfast	\$32,400	\$40,137	\$59,260	82.9% <del>23.8%</del>
Waldo County	\$33,986	\$41,524	\$50,162	47.5% <del>22.1%</del>
Maine	\$37,240	\$45,695	\$53,024	42.3% <del>22.7.0%</del>

Source: Census

Table 2-2

% of Families Below Poverty Level	1999	2010	2017
Belfast	10.0%	12%	11.1%
Waldo County	10.9%	11.6%	9.6%
Maine	7.8%	7.9%	8.4%

Source: Census, Claritas, Inc.

Table 2-3

% of Individuals Below Poverty Level	1999	2010	2017	Change %
Belfast	13.2%	NA	15.1%	14.3%—
Waldo County	12.2%	12.4%	14.3%	17.2% <del>1.6%</del>
Maine	9.9%	10.7%	12.9%	30.3% <del>8.1%</del>

Source: Census, Claritas, Inc.

Table 2-4

80% Median Household Income (Low Income Category)	1999	2008 est.	2017	Change %
Belfast	\$25,920	\$32,494	\$47,408	82.9% <del>25.4%</del>
Waldo County	\$27,189	\$34,009	\$40,129	47.6% <del>25.1%</del>
Maine	\$29,792	\$36,041	\$42,419	42.3% <del>21.0%</del>

Source: Census, Claritas, Inc.

Table 2-5

Belfast Occupation Type (2000 - 2010)	<del>2000</del>		<del>2010</del>		2017	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	988	33.2%	813	25.6%	1,157	40.9%
Service Occupations	410	13.8%	745	23.4%	515	18.2%

Sales and office occupations	888	29.8%	743	23.4%	<u>737</u>	<u>26%</u>
Construction, extraction, and natural resource	314	10.5%	502	15.8%	<u>224</u>	<u>7.9%</u>
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	379	12.7%	377	11.9%	<u>199</u>	<u>7%</u>

Source: Census

Table 2-6

Belfast Means of Transportation to Work (2000)	2000		2017	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Car, truck, or van; drove alone	2,244	77.8%	<u>2,020</u>	<u>73.7%</u>
Car, truck, or van; carpooled	295	10.2%	<u>309</u>	<u>11.3%</u>
Public transportation	7	0.2%	<u>0</u>	<u>0%</u>
Motorcycle	0	0.0%	<u>=</u>	<u>=</u>
Bicycle	21	0.7%	<u>=</u>	<u>=</u>
Walked	135	4.7%	<u>130</u>	<u>4.7%</u>
Other means	6	0.2%	<u>55</u>	<u>2%</u>
Worked at home	176	6.1%	<u>227</u>	<u>8.3%</u>
Total	2,884	100.0%	<u>2,741</u>	<u>100%</u>

Source: Census

Table 2-7a

Commute times (In Minutes)	1980	1990	2000	2017	Change %
Belfast	12.7	16.3	20.2	<u>17.9</u>	59.1%
Waldo County	21.1	23.5	26.4	<u>26.4</u>	25.1%

Source: Census

Table 2-7b

Top 10 Communities in which Belfast Residents Worked in 2000	Persons	Percent
Belfast	1,981	68.7%
Searsport	109	3.8%
Camden	101	3.5%
Bucksport	72	2.5%
Rockland	59	2.0%
Bangor	57	2.0%
Waldo	49	1.7%
Lincolnton	40	1.4%
Rockport	38	1.3%
Unity	32	1.1%
Other Areas	346	12.0%
Total	2,884	100.0%

Source: Census

Commented [SD14]: Still needs updating.

Table 2-7c

Top 10 Communities with Residents who worked in Belfast in 2000	Persons	Percent
Belfast	1,981	30.8%
Searsport	438	6.8%
Swanville	339	5.3%
Northport	308	4.8%
Lincolnville	185	2.9%
Morrill	185	2.9%
Searsmont	185	2.9%
Stockton Springs	171	2.7%
Belmont	169	2.6%
Brooks	133	2.1%
Other Areas	2,344	36.4%
Total	6,438	100.0%

Source: Census

Commented [SD15]: Still needs updating

Table 2-8

Unemployment Rate	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2018	Change % (03-07)
Belfast	5.7%	5.3%	4.9%	5.0%	5.6%	3.0%	-1.8%-48%
Belfast LMA	5.6%	5.0%	5.2%	5.2%	5.6%	2.7%	-52% No Change
Maine	5.0%	4.6%	4.8%	4.6%	4.7%	2.9%	-42%-6.0%

Source: Maine Department of Labor

Note: Belfast LMA includes the municipalities of Belfast, Belmont, Brooks, Freedom, Islesboro, Jackson, Knox, Liberty, Monroe, Montville, Morrill, Northport, Searsmont, Searsport, Stockton Springs, Swanville, Thorndike, Unity, and Waldo.

- (2). *A brief historical perspective on how and why the current economy of the community and region developed.*

Belfast has been and remains the largest service center community in Waldo County. Historically, residents of surrounding communities have chosen to work and shop in Belfast. That trend continues. See the History Chapter for more information. The market for goods and services offered in Belfast extends well beyond the City's borders and its population. Belfast's economy has weathered the rise and fall of several once significant sectors, from maritime activities, fishing, shipbuilding, to food processing, and most recently financial services. Tourism including most prominently accommodations, retail stores, and to a lesser but growing extent, artisan crafts and fine arts, has had a steadily increasing importance to the local and regional economy. With the aging of Belfast's long-time and new residents, the provision of medical and social services continues to grow as well.

(3). *A list of local and regional economic development plans developed over the past five years, which include the community.*

- Belfast Leadership and Action Summit: A Summary Report. 2007. Eastern Maine Development Corporation / KWRED.
- Creating Vibrancy in Belfast, Maine. 2006. Crane Associates.
- Eastern Maine Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. 2007. Eastern Maine Development Corporation.
- Retail Trade Analysis for the City of Belfast, Maine. 2007. Eastern Maine Development Corporation
- The Economic Impact of Locally Owned Businesses vs. Chains: A Case Study in Midcoast Maine. 2003. Institute for Local Self-Reliance.

**Commented [SD16]:** No recent plans listed on Belfast's webpage

(4). *A description of the major employers in the community and labor market area.*

~~In 2012 Bank of America remained the largest employer in Belfast and Waldo County with nearly 1400 employees. Waldo County Hospital was the second largest employer, with about 650 employees, and athenahealth the third largest employer with about 380 employees. In 2018 Waldo County Hospital was the largest employer in Belfast and Waldo County.~~ The table below identifies the diversity of employment in Belfast, with several manufacturers, the school district, and a retailer (Hannaford) all having more than 100 employees. Overall, there are more jobs available in Belfast than there are persons over 18 years of age who are in the workforce; Belfast is a net importer of jobs. Most employers located outside of Belfast but within the Belfast labor market area operate businesses that employ less than 100 persons. The following table lists major employers in Belfast and in the labor market area.

**Commented [SD17]:** All the schools combined, yes.

**Commented [SD18]:** Where do I find this employment data?

Table 2-9 MAJOR EMPLOYERS

<b>Belfast Labor Market Area Major Employers with 50+ Employees Each (Sorted by Size, then by Name)</b>				
<b>Company/Organization Name</b>	<b>Partial Address</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Employees</b>
Belfast Area High School	Waldo Ave	Belfast	Education	50-99
Troy Howard Middle School	Lincolnton Ave	Belfast	Education	50-99
Belfast Co-op	High St	Belfast	Grocery	50-99
Viking Lumber, Inc.	Searsport Ave	Belfast	Construction	50-99
Renys Department Store	Belfast Plz	Belfast	Retail	50-99
Mc Donald's	Belmont Ave	Belfast	Restaurant	50-99
Front Street Shipyard	Front Street	Belfast	Boat Repair & Bldg	50-99
Sweetser	Sweetser Dr	Swanville	Social services	50-99
Irving Oil	Station Ave	Searsport	Oils-petroleum	50-99
Mt View High School	Mount View Rd	Thorndike	Education	50-99
Hamilton Marine	US 1	Searsport	Marine equipment-supplies	50-99

<b>Belfast Labor Market Area Major Employers with 50+ Employees Each</b>				
<b>(Sorted by Size, then by Name)</b>				
<b>Company/Organization Name</b>	<b>Partial Address</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Employees</b>
School Administrative Dist #3	Mount View Rd	Thorndike	Education	50-99
GAC Chemical Corp	Mack Point	Searsport	Chemicals-industrial	50-99
<del>Broadreach Family &amp; Comm Serv</del>	<del>Stephenson Ln</del>	<del>Belfast</del>	<del>Social services</del>	<del>100-249</del>
<del>Commons at tall pines</del>	<del>Martin Ln</del>	<del>Belfast</del>	<del>Physical therapists</del>	<del>100-249</del>
<del>Duck Trap River of Maine</del>	<del>Little River Dr</del>	<del>Belfast</del>	<del>Seafood-wholesale</del>	
<del>Harbor Hill Ctr</del>	<del>Footbridge Road</del>	<del>Belfast</del>	<del>Nursing care</del>	<del>100-249</del>
<del>Group Home Foundation, Inc.</del>	<del>Little River Dr</del>	<del>Belfast</del>	<del>Social services</del>	<del>100-249</del>
<del>Hannaford Supermarket &amp; Phrmcy</del>	<del>Lincolnville Ave</del>	<del>Belfast</del>	<del>Grocery</del>	<del>100-249</del>
<del>Mathews Brothers Co.</del>	<del>Footbridge Rd</del>	<del>Belfast</del>	<del>Millwork</del>	<del>100-249</del>
<del>Penobscot MC Crum, LLC</del>	<del>Pierce Street</del>	<del>Belfast</del>	<del>Manufacturing</del>	<del>100-249</del>
<del>JD Flagging</del>	<del>Quaker Hill Rd</del>		<del>Contractors-equip</del>	<del>100-249</del>
<del>Aeme</del>	<del>Morse Rd</del>	<del>Morrill</del>	<del>Grocery</del>	<del>100-249</del>
<del>Robbins Lumber, Inc.</del>	<del>NA</del>	<del>Searsmont</del>	<del>Lumber</del>	<del>100-249</del>
<del>Unity College</del>	<del>Ghent Rd</del>	<del>Unity</del>	<del>Education</del>	<del>500-999</del>
<del>Athenahealth, inc</del>	<del>Hatley Drive</del>	<del>Belfast</del>	<del>Health Services</del>	<del>250-500</del>
<del>Waldo County Healthcare, Inc.</del>	<del>Northport Ave</del>	<del>Belfast</del>	<del>Hospital</del>	<del>500-999</del>
<del>Bank of America card svs</del>	<del>Hatley Drive</del>	<del>Belfast</del>	<del>Finaneial</del>	<del>1000-2500</del>
<b>Belfast Labor Market Area Major Employers with 50+ Employees Each</b>				
<b>(Sorted by Size, then by Name)</b>				
<b>Company/Organization Name</b>	<b>Partial Address</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Employees</b>
Waldo County Healthcare, Inc.	Northport Ave	Belfast	Hospital	500 - 999
Pride Manufacturing Co LLC	10 N Main St	Burnham	Furniture- Manufacturers	250-499
Broadreach Family & Comm Serv	Stephenson Ln	Belfast	Social services	100-249
Tall Pines	Martin Ln	Belfast	Nursing & Convalescent Homes	100-249
Duck Trap River of Maine	Little River Dr	Belfast	Seafood-wholesale	100-249
Genesis Health Care LLC	2 Footbridge Rd	Belfast	Health Services	100-249
Hamilton Marine	US 1	Searsport	Marine equipment - supplies	100-249
Hannaford Supermarket & Phrmcy	Lincolnville Ave	Belfast	Grocery	100-249
Hidden Valley Camp	161 Hidden Valley Rd	Montville	Camps	100-249
Harbor Hill Ctr	Footbridge Road	Belfast	Nursing care	100-249
Mathews Brothers Co.	Footbridge Rd	Belfast	Millwork	100-249
Penobscot MC Crum, LLC	Pierce Street	Belfast	Manufacturing	100-249
Robbins Lumber, Inc.	NA	Searsmont	Lumber	100-249
Unity College	Ghent Rd	Unity	Education	100-249
Belfast Area High School	Waldo Ave	Belfast	Education	50-99
Fair Haven Camps	81 W Fairhaven Ln	Brooks	Campgrounds	50-99
Front Street Shipyard	Front Street	Belfast	Boat Repair & Bldg	50-99
GAC Chemical Corp	Mack Point	Searsport	Chemicals-industrial	50-99
Irving Oil	Station Ave	Searsport	Oils-petroleum	50-99

<b>Belfast Labor Market Area Major Employers with 50+ Employees Each</b>				
<b>(Sorted by Size, then by Name)</b>				
<b>Company/Organization Name</b>	<b>Partial Address</b>	<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Employees</b>
Lane Construction Corp	190 Swan Lake Rd	Belfast	General Contractors	50-99
Leroy H Smith School	319 S Main Street	Winterport	Schools	50-99
Mt View High School	Mount View Rd	Thorndike	Education	50-99
Renys Department Store	Belfast Plz	Belfast	Retail	50-99
RSU #71	173 Lincolnville Ave	Belfast	Schools	50-99
Sweetser	Sweetser Dr	Swanville	Social services	50-99
Troy Howard Middle School	Lincolnville Ave	Belfast	Education	50-99
Viking Lumber, Inc.	Searsport Ave	Belfast	Construction	50-99
Sequel Care of Maine	321 W Main St	Searsport	Counseling Services	50-99
Tarratine Golf Club	241 Golf Club Rd	Islesboro	Golf Courses	50-99
Xact Telesolutions	4 Clifford Cmns	Unity	Telephone Companies	50-99

Source: Maine Department of Labor, info USA 2008.

Note: Belfast LMA includes the municipalities of Belfast, Belmont, Brooks, Freedom, Islesboro, Jackson, Knox, Liberty, Monroe, Montville, Morrill, Northport, Searsport, Searsport, Stockton Springs, Swanville, Thorndike, Unity, and Waldo.

- (5). A description of retail stores by type and how the composition has changed over past five or ten years.

Taxable sales are one of the few available indicators of the actual size, growth, and retail economic character of a region. Table 2-10 shows total taxable retail sales for Belfast for the third quarter of several years. All figures are in real dollars, not adjusted for inflation. From 2002 to 2007, total taxable sales in Belfast increased by 4.6%. The largest sector was Building Supply, comprising almost 27% of total taxable sales in 2007. This sector saw an increase of almost 11% during this six-year period. Percentagewise, Food Stores had the largest increase in sales, while Restaurants had the largest decrease. In 2007 Belfast's total retail sales comprised more than 56% of the total retail sales of Waldo County, a decline from 2002 when that figure was 61%. Categories are defined after Table 2-11.

Table 2-10

<b>Belfast Retail Sales: 2002-2007</b>							
<b>Categories</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>Change %</b>
Business Operating	4,404,100	4,843,800	4,696,000	4,885,100	5,900,000	5,147,200	16.9%
Bldg. Supply	33,672,500	36,221,100	39,540,200	42,338,100	41,285,200	37,355,100	10.9%
Food Store	16,193,700	17,387,500	17,656,200	18,444,100	19,160,000	20,330,600	25.5%

City of Belfast Comprehensive Plan Section 3 7. Economy

General Mdse.	17,925,500	10,684,700	11,480,500	12,277,000	16,153,100	18,366,100	2.5%
Other Retail	11,143,000	11,965,500	11,689,900	12,927,700	13,321,600	12,823,300	15.1%
Auto-Transportation	26,818,400	25,710,700	26,940,400	24,920,700	23,753,000	24,665,200	-8.0%
Restaurant	19,082,800	18,427,800	18,035,900	15,886,000	16,484,000	16,347,100	-14.3%
Lodging	4,280,300	4,290,800	4,205,600	4,359,000	4,601,300	4,597,500	7.4%
Total	133,520,300	129,531,900	134,244,700	136,037,700	140,658,200	139,632,100	4.6%
Of which: Personal Consumption	129,116,200	124,688,100	129,548,700	131,152,600	134,758,200	134,484,900	4.2%
<b>Belfast Retail Sales: 2011-2016</b>							
<b>Categories</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Change %</b>
Business Operating	4,413,021	4,540,110	5,078,216	5,239,223	5,098,778	5,656,717	28.1%
Bldg. Supply	25,046,622	27,341,668	26,534,210	30,050,157	31,943,869	33,239,741	32.7%
Food Store	21,952,177	23,065,734	23,724,923	24,612,652	25,267,016	32,263,631	46.9%
General Mdse.	19,031,206	19,034,959	19,201,905	19,507,721	19,911,327	20,494,165	7.6%
Other Retail	13,195,140	13,829,856	13,688,196	13,522,527	13,935,968	14,657,589	11%
Auto Transportation	25,265,575	25,154,649	27,816,221	29,390,461	30,701,843	29,411,296	16.4%
Restaurant	18,237,873	20,307,316	21,264,981	21,087,681	20,226,043	21,736,843	19.1%
Lodging	4,496,654	4,891,625	5,046,875	5,064,444	5,593,684	5,502,670	22.3%
Total	131,638,268	138,165,917	142,355,527	148,474,866	152,678,528	162,962,652	23.7%
Of which: Consumer Retail Sales	127,225,247	133,625,807	137,277,311	143,235,643	147,579,750	157,305,935	23.6%

Source: [Maine Revenue Services State Economist 2016](#)

Notes: See Category descriptions below Table 2-11

Taxable Retail Sales—Quarterly (Thousands of \$)						
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belfast, Maine	-	-	-	-	-	-
	2007-Q3	2008-Q3	2009-Q3	2010-Q3	2011-Q3	2012-Q3
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Personal	41,536.40	38,636.30	37,955.50	36,837.90	38,200.30	39,478.30
Business Op	1,194.30	1,295.90	1,186.30	1,112.50	1,073.20	1,021.90
Building	11,441.20	9,785	8,315.50	7,206	7,476.70	7,502
Food Store	5,807.90	6,001.30	6,183.70	6,224	6,282	6,628.20
General	4,992.70	5,240.80	5,459.90	5,437.40	5,226.60	5,296.80
Other	4,076.10	3,655.30	3,566.30	3,459.40	4,001.50	4,095.60
Auto Trans	6,888.10	5,673.50	6,222	5,982.50	6,451.30	6,415
Restaurant	5,737.40	5,785.10	5,868.30	6,084.50	6,217.60	6,903.80
Lodging	2,593	2,495.30	2,339.80	2,444.10	2,544.60	2,636.90
Rest and Lodg	8,330.40	8,280.40	8,208.10	8,528.60	8,762.20	9,540.70
	-	-	-	-	-	-
	92,597.50	86,848.90	85,305.40	83,316.90	86,236.00	89,519.20
Taxable Retail Sales - Quarterly (Thousands of \$)						
	-	-	-	-	-	-

	2013-Q3	2014-Q3	2015-Q3	2016-Q3	2017-Q3	2018-Q3
Belfast, Maine	-	-	-	-	-	-
Personal	\$51,389.40	\$53,605.90	\$55,296.40	\$58,322.80	\$58,915.70	\$63,864.10
Business Op	\$2,028.43	\$2,053.61	\$1,933.05	\$2,105.39	\$2,144.39	\$2,704.34
Building	\$9,113.09	\$10,328.50	\$10,337.00	\$10,403.00	\$11,100.20	\$1,4252.00
Food Store	\$9,003.95	\$9,138.18	\$9,124.80	\$11,608.00	\$11,247.10	\$11,687.50
General	\$5,707.67	\$6,140.89	\$6,245.74	\$6,326.47	\$6,750.07	\$7,009.24
Other	\$5,397.60	\$5,015.19	\$5,308.13	\$5,501.07	\$6,035.38	\$5,931.63
Auto Trans	\$8,859.26	\$9,258.01	\$10,287.30	\$9,597.99	\$8,824.81	\$9,246.91
Restaurant	\$8,526.10	\$9,030.60	\$8,597.99	\$9,386.57	\$9,468.59	\$10,186.90
Lodging	\$4,781.78	\$4,694.57	\$5,395.46	\$5,499.68	\$5,489.56	\$5,519.90
Rest and Lodg	\$13,307.90	\$13,725.20	\$13,993.40	\$14,886.30	\$14,958.10	\$15,706.90
Total	\$118,115.00	\$122,991.00	\$126,519.00	\$133,637.00	\$134,934.00	\$146,139.00

Table 2-11 shows total taxable sales for Waldo County. From 2011 to 2016, total taxable sales in Waldo County increased by approximately 25%. Like Belfast, the largest sectors were "Building Supply", "Food Store" and "Lodging", comprising more than 24% of total taxable sales in 2016 countywide. These sectors saw an increase of almost 23% each during this six-year period. Percentage-wise, Business Operating had the smallest increase in sales, while Restaurants had the largest decrease.

Table 2-11

Waldo County Retail Sales: 2002-2007							
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Change %
Business Operating	14,282,500	14,276,000	15,163,600	16,867,100	18,449,600	22,451,100	57.2%
Bldg. Supply	49,389,700	53,141,400	60,805,900	65,774,000	65,196,600	60,625,000	22.7%
Food Store	29,969,800	31,338,300	32,393,500	34,557,100	35,148,500	36,529,700	21.9%
General Mdse.	22,946,300	15,754,800	17,217,000	17,806,700	22,100,200	24,733,800	7.8%
Other Retail	21,262,000	21,665,000	21,748,300	26,057,500	23,378,500	23,289,000	9.5%
Auto Transportation	42,369,400	42,412,800	43,237,200	43,365,700	40,678,900	42,793,900	1.0%
Restaurant	30,212,200	29,576,000	29,324,000	27,297,800	28,296,900	27,596,200	-8.7%
Lodging	8,390,800	8,389,500	8,226,100	8,836,000	9,656,300	9,640,300	14.9%
Total	218,822,700	216,553,800	228,115,600	240,561,900	242,905,500	247,659,000	13.2%
Of which: Personal Consumption	204,540,200	202,277,800	212,952,000	223,694,800	224,455,900	225,207,900	10.1%
Waldo County Retail Sales: 2011-2016							
Categories	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Change %
Business Operating	\$8,130,000	\$7,926,000	\$8,958,000	\$8,580,000	\$8,122,000	\$8,417,000	3.5%
Bldg. Supply	\$27,854,000	\$30,239,000	\$29,503,000	\$34,079,000	\$35,291,000	\$36,812,000	32.16%
Food Store	\$28,467,000	\$29,815,000	\$31,006,000	\$31,907,000	\$31,996,000	\$39,533,000	38.87%
General Mdse.	\$19,896,000	\$20,015,000	\$20,309,000	\$21,335,000	\$21,886,000	\$22,738,000	14.29%
Other Retail	\$15,326,000	\$16,078,000	\$16,758,000	\$16,765,000	\$17,342,000	\$18,339,000	19.66%

Auto Transportation	\$29,421,000	\$29,539,000	\$32,439,000	\$34,433,000	\$36,292,000	\$35,511,000	20.70%
Restaurant	\$21,363,000	\$23,169,000	\$24,303,000	\$24,474,000	\$23,745,000	\$25,837,000	20.94%
Lodging	\$7,152,000	\$7,895,000	\$8,168,000	\$8,460,000	\$9,673,000	\$9,936,000	38.92%
Total	\$157,609,000	\$164,676,000	\$171,445,000	\$180,034,000	\$184,347,000	\$197,123,000	25.07%
Of which: Consumer Retail Sales	\$149,480,000	\$156,750,000	\$162,487,000	\$171,454,000	\$176,225,000	\$188,706,000	26.24%

Source: [Maine Revenue Services State Economist 2016](#)

Note: In Maine’s sales tax system, codings are by store type, not product. Thus, each store is coded into one of the store-type groups below depending on its predominant product; i.e., furniture sold by a furniture store will be included in General Merchandise sales while furniture sold by a hardware store will be included in Building Supply sales.

- Consumer Retail Sales: Total taxable retail sales to consumers
- Total Retail Sales: Includes Consumer Retail Sales plus special types of sales and rentals to businesses where the tax is paid directly by the buyer (such as commercial or industrial heating oil purchases)
- Building Supply: Durable Equipment Sales, Contractors’ Sales, Hardware Stores and Lumber Yards.
- Food Stores: All food stores from large supermarkets to small corner food stores. The values here are snacks and non-food items only, since food intended for home consumption is not taxed.
- General Merchandise: In this sales group are stores carrying product lines generally carried in large department stores. It includes clothing, furniture, shoes, radio-TV., household durable goods, home furnishings, etc.
- Other Retail: This group includes a wide selection of taxable sales not covered elsewhere. Examples are dry goods stores, drug stores, jewelry stores, sporting goods stores, antique dealers, morticians, book stores, photo supply stores, gift shops, etc.
- Auto: This sales group includes all transportation related retail outlets. Included are auto dealers, auto parts, aircraft dealers, motorboat dealers, automobile rental, etc.
- Restaurant/Lodging: All stores selling prepared food for immediate consumption.
- The Lodging group includes only rentals tax.

(6). A description of any economic development incentive districts, such as tax increment financing districts or Pine Tree Zones, in the community.

Belfast, in 2006, designated a Downtown/Waterfront TIF (Tax Increment Financing) District. Taxes assessed above the figure set on the date that the TIF was established can be used for improvements in this District, including infrastructure enhancements that will make the area more attractive for existing and new development, and will bring more consumers to the downtown. When the TIF was first established the City anticipated that the Belfast Bridge, LLC

redevelopment project proposed for the former Stinson Seafoods site would generate considerable annual revenues to the TIF. Unfortunately, this project was unsuccessful and few dollars flowed into the TIF for its first 5 years. However, the 2011 - 2012 Front Street Shipyard's development of the same former Stinson Seafoods site is now starting to generate revenues to the TIF, an estimated \$140,000 from this development by July 2014. The City has already committed the use of some of these new revenues to construction of the Harbor Walk, a project which the City believes will generate additional development in the downtown - waterfront area.

Commented [SD19]: Needs to be updated.

The City also established the Northport Avenue TIF district in 2005, mostly so the City could obtain revenues to pay the cost of a sewer extension to the Mathew Brothers manufacturing plant on Perkins Road; an approach which helped the company expand.

Belfast was an original member of the Midcoast Pine Tree Zone program, however, with State changes to the program which now offers potential benefits to employers located throughout the State, it is no longer necessary for the City to participate in a specific Pine Tree Zone district.

#### D. Policies

- (1). *To support the type of economic development activity the community desires, reflecting the community's role in the region.*
- (2). *To make a financial commitment, if necessary, to support desired economic development, including needed public improvements.*
- (3). *To coordinate with regional development corporations and surrounding towns as necessary to support desired economic development.*

### ORGANIZATION

**Goal: To provide an effective local and regional organizational structure to address economic development concerns.**

Policies:

- 1) Identify and work with appropriate organizations and interests to promote economic development in Belfast.
- 2) Promote and participate in the establishment and ongoing operations of a regional organization to address economic development concerns.

Actions:

- 1) Continue to participate in local, regional and state-wide efforts to address economic development concerns in Belfast. Local efforts include working with the Belfast Chamber of Commerce, Our Town Belfast (Belfast Main Street program) and Waterfall Arts, regional efforts are those such as the Midcoast Regional Planning Commission, and state-wide efforts are those such as the Maine Community Foundation.
- 2) Ensure City efforts to address economic development issues include persons who are actively involved in business enterprises and that their ideas and knowledge are sought in examining how the City should proceed.
- 3) The City should annually commit adequate resources to implement its preferred approaches to address economic development concerns. The Council decision to hire an economic development director in 2010 and the ongoing funding of this position is critical to the City's economic development efforts.
- 4) The City should identify and actively pursue potential state and federal grant programs, such as Community Development Block Grants, to address its economic development priorities.
- 5) The City should explore and if appropriate implement programs which can serve as good tools in encouraging economic development. The City's past decision to participate in the Midcoast Pine Tree Zone and the use of Tax Increment Financing are examples of such.

#### **INDUSTRIAL & JOB CREATION DEVELOPMENT**

**Goal: Encourage the expansion of existing industrial/job intensive uses and provide opportunities for the attracting new industrial/job intensive development.**

##### Policies:

- 1) Actively pursue attracting 'green industry' development to Belfast (reference definition of 'green industry' below).
- 2) Ensure Belfast has sufficient areas that have needed infrastructure to support industrial and job intensive uses.

##### Actions

- 1) Promote and encourage use of the Belfast Business Park for appropriate development.
- 2) Analyze the desirability and feasibility of creating an expanded or new business park to meet the near-term and long-term needs for economic development in Belfast.
- 3) Ensure the City has adequate 'tools' available so it can compete for economic development activities. Such tools include but are not necessarily limited to: public infrastructure, tax increment financing, Pine Tree Zone benefits, and such.
- 4) Target attracting Green Industry to Belfast. Green Industry can include businesses that:
  - are highly energy efficient
  - produce in a sustainable manner, with no/minimal pollution
  - manufacture components for the production of renewable energy\*, improving

- energy efficiency, electric or zero-emission vehicles, etc.
- produce and/or use renewable energy\*

\* Note: Renewable energy is defined by leading climate and energy experts to include solar, wind, tidal, ocean current, and geothermal. These experts do not include biofuels, wood, and similar fuels in their definition of renewable energy. These so-called renewables consume resources that are used for other purposes, deplete soils, pollute, and lead to the elimination of more natural habitat, deforestation, including wetlands. They are already causing shortages in other uses [and will cause more], and resultant price rises in other products. They also use much energy to produce them [for ethanol, more energy is used to create it than derived from it], they create other forms of pollution [wood smoke is carcinogenic and produces more greenhouse gases], and the focus on these pseudo-solutions serve to distract from the need to convert our planet to forms of energy that will sustain us into the future [as well as combat climate change].

- 5) Ensure there is an adequate amount of privately owned land which can be used for industrial and intensive job creation activities.
- 6) Ensure that the working waterfront safeguards opportunities for marine oriented development, including but not limited to boat building, boat storage and repair.
- 7) Zoning and land use regulations that the City adopts to implement its future land use plan should allow sites to be used for light manufacturing and similar uses, provided the use is supported by hydroelectricity/power generated at the site.

### **DOWNTOWN**

**Goal: Support and strengthen Downtown's position as an important and economically viable center of cultural, government, and retail activity.**

Policies:

- 1) Promote downtown and the adjacent waterfront as a destination for residents and non-residents.
- 2) Promote the use, both residential and nonresidential, of the upper level floors of buildings in the downtown.
- 3) Promote and encourage new construction in the downtown and waterfront area to be compatible with existing development.

Strategies:

- 1) Provide good quality public infrastructure in the downtown area, with an emphasis on pedestrian connectivity and accessibility.
- 2) Ensure public infrastructure is constructed to handicap accessible standards and encourage private businesses and building owners to retrofit existing buildings to better meet handicap standards.

- 3) Analyze the desirability and feasibility of constructing a multi-use/performing arts center in the downtown area.
- 4) Strategically use funds acquired through the Downtown-Waterfront Tax Increment Financing District established in 2005 to upgrade and maintain public infrastructure in the downtown and waterfront area.
- 5) Analyze amending the Tax Increment Financing District program to allow building owners that make accessibility improvements to their buildings to benefit from property taxes assessed on their property. In particular, target the installation of elevators in 3 plus story buildings in the downtown to encourage use of the upper floors.
- 6) Recognize the Belfast's downtown is part of state and nationally recognized historic district and require new development to be compatible with existing development.
- 7) Encourage appropriate development and redevelopment for the downtown and adjacent waterfront area, particularly redevelopment of the Wakeag Landing (former Stinson Seafood) property.
- 8) Support the operations of Our Town Belfast (Main Street program) and cooperatively work with the organization and its members to strengthen the downtown area.

### **TOURISM & CREATIVE ECONOMY**

**Goal: Promote Belfast's tourism economy and strengthen its creative economy.**

#### Policies

- 1) Promote Downtown Belfast and the adjacent waterfront as an area which is attractive as a tourist destination.
- 2) Promote the natural beauty of Belfast and its opportunities for active outdoor recreation as a means of attracting tourism.
- 3) Recognize and actively support the arts and creative economy as a way of encouraging entrepreneurial activity and encouraging tourism.

#### Actions

- 1) Belfast should provide good quality infrastructure and services to support tourism activities. Pedestrian oriented facilities and high quality waterfront facilities are a key. The Belfast Footbridge constructed in 2006 and the upcoming 2013 construction of the Belfast Harbor Walk are examples of such.
- 2) Enhance the 'Emerald Necklace' and series of recreational trails in Belfast, and provide information regarding such, as a means of encouraging outdoor oriented tourism.
- 3) Work with and support the Chamber of Commerce, the Belfast Arts Group, New Year's By the Bay, Our Town Belfast and other local organizations to ensure there are regular and year-round festivals to encourage tourism. The goal is 12 festivals per year, which would be accompanied by other events such as the Thursday Night Music in the Streets program and the Farmer's Market.

- 4) Encourage and support the development of a comprehensive tourism marketing plan for Belfast (as suggested in the Belfast Leadership Summit Report) and the implementation of this plan.
- 5) Improve the quality of the City of Belfast website and ensure it is linked with other appropriate websites as a means of providing better quality services and encouraging tourism.
- 6) Examine and implement ways of creating greater connectivity between east and west Belfast.
- 7) Support efforts of the Belfast Historical Society to promote the historical heritage of Belfast as a way of supporting tourism development.
- 8) Ensure local land use regulations allow opportunities for individuals to participate in the creative economy in appropriate zoning districts.
- 9) Offensive and excessive noises can adversely affect the quality of life in the community and tourism, thus the City should increase enforcement of existing local, state and federal laws which regulate noises associated with motor vehicles and motorcycles which use muffler systems that do not comply with applicable laws.

#### **COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Goal: To promote and strengthen Belfast’s position as a commercial center for local residents and surrounding communities.**

Policies.

- 1) Identify appropriate locations for larger scale and smaller scale commercial activities.
- 2) Pursue land use regulations that ensure commercial development is compatible with the character of Belfast.

Strategies

- 1) Encourage the development of a larger retail store on the so-called “Les Hills” property on Route 3, and ensure City zoning regulations allow development of a larger retail store.
- 2) Adopt land use regulations that will ensure that commercial development is compatible with the character of Belfast and reflects well on the community. The adoption of good quality performance standards is the key.
- 3) Adopt approaches that attempt to attract commercial development to core/central areas, shopping districts, rather than encouraging sprawling commercial activities.
- 4) Work with the Our Town Belfast and the Chamber of Commerce to promote Belfast as a location for commercial oriented development.

### TECNOLOGY

**Goal: To ensure high quality technological services are available through-out Belfast to serve the needs of residents, businesses and government.**

Policies:

Promote the delivery and expansion of technology services by the private sector in Belfast.

Strategies:

- 1) Analyze competitive advantage/disadvantage of the technology available for business and residents.
- 2) Pursue the most current technology infrastructure for Belfast.
- 3) Ensure reliable voice and broadband access to all of Belfast.
- 4) Ensure that technology enhancements are in place to encourage use of unused office space.
- 5) The city should market Belfast as a place that is well-connected and easy to work from.
- 6) Encourage WiFi.
- 7) Promote the Hutchinson Center as a tech-enabled center.
- 8) Ensure Belfast land use regulations consider the evolving needs of firms that provide technological services.

### OVERALL LAND USE

**Goal: To implement land use ordinances that reflect the desired scale, design, intensity and location of future economic development.**

Consistent with the land use plan included in this Comprehensive Plan, to attract, enhance, and support existing and future economic development while minimizing negative impacts associated with incompatible uses. Thus, the City should amend land use ordinances as necessary to include appropriate provisions regarding permitted and prohibited uses and to identify appropriate areas for commercial/nonresidential development.