



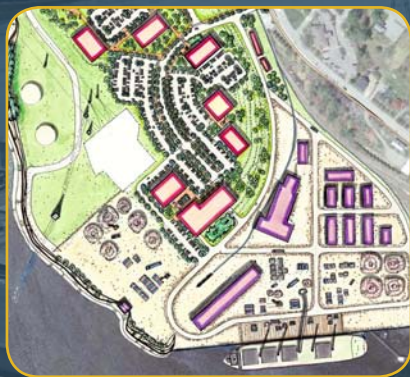
Executive Summary

A.D.A.P.T. BUCKSPORT

AIM DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN FOR TOMORROW

EPA Area-Wide Brownfields Plan

November 2018



PROJECT PARTNERS:



CONSULTING TEAM:



The Partnership for Sustainable Ports

PLAN BACKGROUND



Photo Credit: Christopher Grindle Photography

The economy of Eastern Maine was, for years, dependent upon the forest products and papermaking industry. In recent years, however, new economic realities emerged as five mills in the region closed – including the Verso Paper Mill in Bucksport in 2014. American Iron & Metal (AIM) purchased the property in 2015 with intentions to dismantle and recycle much of the existing facility and ultimately redevelop the property. AIM and the Town of Bucksport established a close working relationship that grew into a joint effort with Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC) to plan for the future of the former mill. In 2017, EMDC secured a grant from the U.S. EPA through its Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Program to work with the community, AIM, and other stakeholders to develop a redevelopment plan and implementation strategy for the former Mill.

A SHARED VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The Plan represents a shared vision and strategy among AIM, EMDC, town officials, and community residents. As part of the planning process, the Project Team held two public open house events to collect community input and solicited input via an online survey. One-on-one interviews were conducted with dozens of stakeholders and experts. A Local Advisory Committee comprised of residents, town and state officials, business owners, and stakeholders provided input and guided the process. The public input helped guide and shape the plan and was used to develop an overarching vision statement for the redevelopment area:

VISION STATEMENT

The A.D.A.P.T. Area is an economic engine at the head of Penobscot Bay that respects its past while looking to the future as an ongoing source of community pride, identity, and economic vitality.

Bucksport welcomes partnerships with industries that provide jobs in clean, resilient, and diversified businesses. Prosperous enterprises, using the Area's rich set of assets, are located adjacent to high-capacity power generation and an active port of regional significance.

The Area is integrated with the Town of Bucksport in a manner that sustains the long-standing and established community spirit and character for current and future generations.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to public and stakeholder input, the planning process analyzed economic and market opportunities to identify potential redevelopment uses of the Project Area. The analysis studied industry and real estate trends as well as the physical conditions of the site and surrounding areas including infrastructure, brownfield and environmental characteristics, transportation, land use and zoning, and a port feasibility assessment. Several strong redevelopment opportunities were identified:

- A Bulk Aggregate-Focused Port
- Logistics & Distribution Operations
- Aquaculture & Food Processing/Packaging
- Wood Products Manufacturing
- Composites Manufacturing

The analysis also revealed other opportunities to leverage redevelopment of the Project Area for communitywide economic development and Main Street revitalization.



REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

The Redevelopment Master Plan is a future vision for the build out of the area. It includes a mix of uses that are anchored by a State-of-the-Art Aquaculture Facility being developed by Whole Oceans. The company announced plans for the property after the research and analysis phase of the A.D.A.P.T. Plan. The project provides new redevelopment opportunities for the Project Area and Region. The initial phase of the Project includes a 370,000 Sq. Ft. indoor salmon farm, one of the first in the nation and part of the leading wave of what is expected to be a substantial industry of the future.

The Plan features additional uses including an institutional "Marine Campus" for regional R&D collaboration and workforce training for aquaculture and marine industries. An enhanced port is proposed along the waterfront with an export focus on materials such as wood chips, gravel, and other bulk aggregates. A "Community Hub" will provide support services for businesses and act as a community amenity for residents through a community/fitness center and co-working facility. New industrial development areas are proposed along with a new workforce housing neighborhood. A trail connecting to the existing Waterfront Walkway will tie the new development together and with the Waterfront and Main St. area.

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

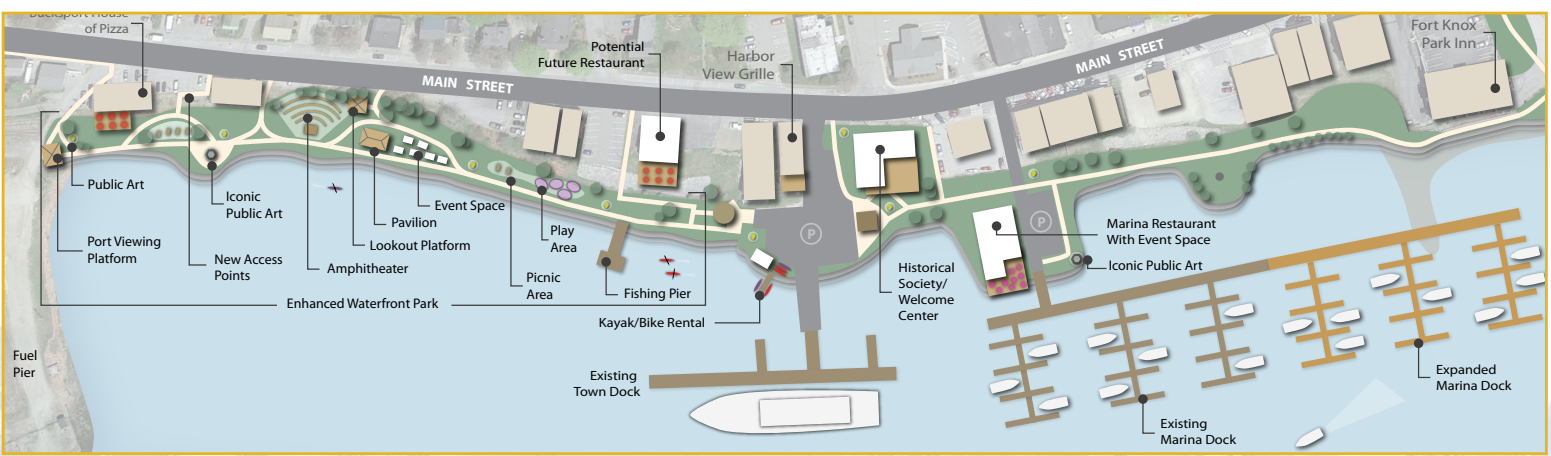
The Master Plan can be built out in a number of configurations. The A.D.A.P.T. Plan presents several development concepts that illustrate potential site plans for specific areas of the Master Plan. While these illustrations are conceptual, they represent the envisioned uses, scale, and layout of the Master Plan areas and other key areas of interest.



Industrial Development Site
A new industrial site on underutilized land in front of the existing landfill will accommodate new industrial growth in target industries helping to create jobs and grow the tax base in Bucksport.

Workforce Neighborhood
New quality single family homes are needed in the community for existing households and for new workers that will be employed in the Project Area. The neighborhood will feature preserved open space and walking trails.

Waterfront Park
An enhanced waterfront park will transform a stretch of inactive and obsolete railroad tracks into a positive community amenity with an amphitheater, outdoor event space, picnic areas, children's play areas, and public art. The park will help tie the Project Area into the rest of the community.



PRIORITY PROJECTS

The Priority Projects were selected by the Advisory Committee to help focus implementation efforts on initiatives likely to have the greatest impact with respect to realizing the Master Plan, building momentum and catalyzing additional projects, supporting economic development, and addressing critical needs and opportunities. Many of the priority "projects" are collections of similar and related plan recommendations that should be considered together when pursuing these priority initiatives.

Marine Campus. An institutional anchor providing collaborative R&D and workforce training facilities. Potential opportunities for hands-on training and research associated with Whole Oceans development. Administrative offices for AIM and port users are incorporated into the walkable campus setting.



Enhanced Port. A phased development of a regionally significant deep-water port with access to the Atlantic Ocean. Potential exists for truck and rail intermodal operation with upgraded rail spur connection. Market potential for the export of bulk aggregate materials.

Waterfront Walkway. The existing Waterfront Walkway is extended into the Project Area providing pedestrian connectivity to the Project Area, including the Marine Campus, Whole Oceans, and other future development areas in and around the Project Area such as the workforce neighborhood.

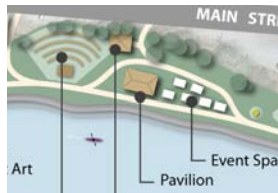


Marketing. Economic development and business recruitment strategies to bring new investment and jobs to Bucksport and the region. New community marketing initiatives to bring new visitors and residents into the community including a focus on Main St. dining, shopping, and entertainment.



Main St. Upgrade. A comprehensive streetscape improvement of the Main Street/River Street corridor that will provide an attractive and pedestrian friendly corridor connecting the Main St. business district to the entire Project Area. New programs to support Main Street businesses and properties.

Waterfront Park. Transforming the inactive and obsolete stretch of rail corridor directly adjacent to the Town's Main Street Area and Town Dock. The park will feature a mix of uses such as performance space, event space, picnic areas, and other park amenities as desired by community members.



Workforce Housing. Policies and programs to increase the supply of quality housing options in the Town with a focus on attracting new workers in the Project Area to live in the community and support local businesses.



FOCUS: ENHANCED PORT



A phased port development strategy is proposed beginning with the utilization and enhancement of the existing property and infrastructure. In this phase, circulation improvements, dock extension, and conveyor system are recommended to create a functioning, bulk aggregate-focused port. The long-term vision for the port is to explore filling in the Log Pond area adjacent to the Project Area that is currently unnavigable, shallow, and muddy. This will allow for a greater capacity port with potential for additional importing/exporting such as locally produced seafood and food products and container shipping.

OTHER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The A.D.A.P.T. Plan includes a number of other recommendations, projects, and initiatives to assist the Town of Bucksport and Eastern Maine Regional use redevelopment of the Project Area to create jobs, grow and attract businesses, enhance quality of life, and achieve other community goals. These include:

- Public art campaign to build a new salmon-themed identity
- Welcome center with paper-making & aquaculture exhibits
- Annual seafood and salmon themed festival
- Aquaculture program partnership for local students (RSU 25)
- Fiber optic expansion to Project Area, Main St, and Heritage Park
- Community co-working center with shared work spaces

ACHIEVING SUCCESS

The Plan includes a detailed guide for implementation including approaches to priority projects, timelines, priority levels, project champions, partners to assist in carrying out recommendations, and potential funding sources and financial feasibility analysis.

Highlighted Implementation Strategies:

- Local Implementation Committee
- Town TIF Implementation Fund
- New Economic Development Support Position
- EMDC Implementation Assistance
- Reactivated Local Economic Development Corporation

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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To View the Full Plan Visit: www.bucksportmaine.gov