

Local Economy

Overview of Local Economy

While Easton is often known and referred to as an “agricultural community”, it has a diversified local economy which is proving to be sustainable and growing in difficult economic times. In 1993, the sustainability of communities in Aroostook County was studied with support from the Quebec Labrador Foundation’s, Atlantic Center for the Environment and the University of Southern Maine. The study identified four key characteristics of sustainable communities; quality of life, economic security (a diversified economy), empowerment and responsibility (local action and support) and ecological integrity (keeping natural systems healthy and functioning). Easton has all of these characteristics and they remain important to its future. There has been significant public and private investment and Easton has created jobs and works to increase its population.

The reality is that the community is still part of a regional, state, and national economy. Easton is part of the Presque Isle Labor Market Area (LMA). A LMA consists of an economic center (in this case Presque Isle) and the associated towns in the area. Labor Market Areas are defined every 10 years based on commuting patterns.

Conditions and Trends

Even under present economic conditions, substantial public and private investment is continuing in Easton in the form of road construction, utility upgrades, border crossing upgrades, new business and industries locating in the community such as new trucking firms in support of McCain Foods USA and Huber), and the development of a health care center. Easton has a solid record of economic sustainability because of a diversified economic structure while supporting the mainstay agricultural and forestry industries located within the community. Local policies and strategies focus on an understanding of the structural components of the regional and local economy, long-term trends and how the community can strengthen its existing economic structure and develop or attract new structural components.

The table below lists the currently employers located in Easton as March 2014. A vast majority of Easton’s employers fall into the 1-4 employees and nearly all of the employers fall into the less than 20 employee categories. The table shows a nice mixture and diversity of employers in town. One of Aroostook County’s largest employers (McCain Foods USA) is located in Easton.

Easton Employers, 2014

Number of Employees						
1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100-200	250-999
Aroostook Solid Surface B&C Auto Sales BDI Commercial Repair	Easton Recreation Department Huber Engineered	County Farm Market Easton High	Flewelling Farms	Easton Elementary School Superintendent	J.M. Huber	McCain Foods USA

and Body Concrete Technologies CJ King Maple Moose Cronkite Merlon CTC of Aroostook Dan Ferris Plumbing and Heating Easton Community Center New Psalm Easton Highway Department Easton Fire Department Easton Housing Corp. Easton Pentecostal Church Easton Warehouse Easton Wesleyan Church Estes Park Cemetery Food Depot J&G Plumbing & Heating J&B York Painting John Handy Services Katahdin Trust Co. Keith's Automotive Repair Lane Memory Antiques Michael Collodel Construction Mt. Shilo Cemetery One Stop Pine Tree Church Cemetery PNT Trucking Rolling Acres US Customs	Woods	School Center Farms Inc		of Schools		
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Service US Post Office United Baptist Church Vintage Candle Works Village Health Care Aroostook Auction Barn Child's World Daycare						
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Source: Maine Department of Labor, 2014

Unemployment

The tables below show the annual average unemployment for Easton and the Presque Isle Labor market area (LMA). The trend shows that the LMA had an unemployment rate near or above the State's average while Easton's was below the state average. Most recently, the State's average unemployment rate has been improving while the LMA's has improved slightly or remained stable, potentially a sign of a lag in the regional economy. Economic activity is divided into "export" and "service" activities. Export activities bring dollars into the community through the sale of goods and services to the outside, i.e. the next town or the world. Service activities provide goods and services locally that re-circulate money that is already here. Some services, like retail sales, overlap as export and local activities.

Employment sectors help identify which activities are important exports in the local economy. Economic growth is driven by export activities which are also referred to as economic engines. Their importance cannot be over stated. Easton's unemployment rates increased from 5.3% in 2004 to 7.7% in 2013. According to the Maine Department of Labor, the high was in 2012 when 9.0% of Easton's workforce was unemployed. In 2007, Easton's unemployment rate was 4.1%.

The Presque Isle LMA's unemployment rate also increased from 6.0% in 2004 to 9.0 percent in 2013. At no time has the LMA's rate been below 6.0% and the high was 9.7% in 2010.

Easton Unemployment 2004-2013

Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate %	State Unemployment Rate
2013	659	608	51	7.7	6.7
2012	675	614	61	9.0	7.2
2011	677	622	55	8.1	7.7
2010	675	622	53	7.9	8.2
2009	629	582	47	7.5	8.1
2008	638	606	32	5.0	5.4
2007	637	611	26	4.1	4.7
2006	657	621	36	5.5	4.7
2005	648	614	34	5.2	4.9
2004	639	605	34	5.3	4.6

Source: Maine Department of Labor, 2014

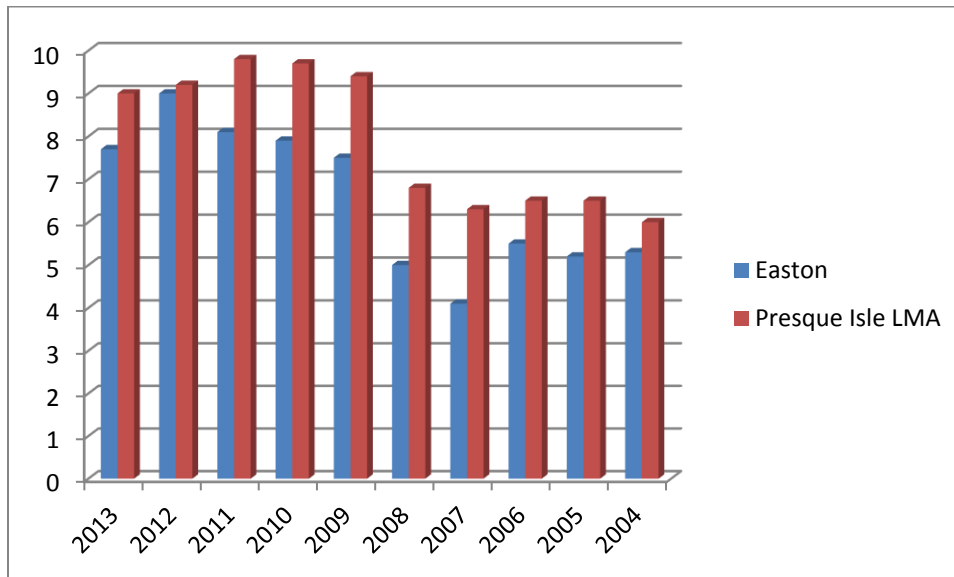
Presque Isle LMA Unemployment Rates

Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate %
2013	23,512	21,404	2,108	9.0
2012	23,803	21,606	2,197	9.2
2011	24,190	21,815	2,375	9.8
2010	24,184	21,829	2,355	9.7
2009	24,305	22,014	2,291	9.4
2008	24,583	22,914	1,669	6.8
2007	24,569	23,026	1,543	6.3
2006	24,951	23,332	1,619	6.5
2005	24,549	22,965	1,584	6.5
2004	23,961	22,516	1,445	6.0

Source: Maine Department of Labor, 2014

The following chart compares Easton’s unemployment with Presque Isle LMA between 2004 and 2013. Easton’s rate has consistently been below that of the LMA through the period.

Easton and Presque Isle LMA’s Unemployment rate 2004-2013



Source: Maine Department of Labor, 2014

The table below shows the major employment sectors in Easton and their relative importance in the local economy as compared to the State. The location quotients help to show which sectors are most important in the Town’s economy. They illustrate the ratio between the percentages employed in a given sector locally and at the State level. Location quotients significantly above 1 indicate that the sector is disproportionately important to the local economy. If the Town is more dependent on one sector as compared to the State then, in theory, it must be exporting some of these goods or services outside the region. Easton’s “export” industries create the engines that

power the local economy and its potential for growth. These are the structural components of the local economy.

Easton Employment – Occupation/Location Quotient 2013

	Easton		Maine		Location Quotient
	Number	Percent Employed	Number	Percent Employed	
Civilian employed population > 16 years	596		651,335		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting, mining	23	3.9	15564	2.4	1.6
Construction	24	4	47092	7.2	0.5
Manufacturing	87	14.6	62054	9.5	1.5
Wholesale trade	32	5.4	15957	2.4	2.3
Retail trade	100	16.8	89517	13.7	1.2
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	29	4.9	26241	4	1.2
Information	20	3.4	12280	1.9	1.8
Finance and insurance, and real estate	46	7.7	40187	6.2	1.2
Prof., scientific, mgmt., admin., & waste mgmt.	31	5.2	56069	8.6	0.6
Education, health care, & social assistance	165	27.7	174744	26.8	1.0
Arts, entertain., rec., accommodation, & food	14	2.3	54953	8.4	0.3
Other services, except public administration	16	2.7	29129	4.5	0.6
Public administration	9	1.5	27548	4.2	0.3

Source: American Community Survey, 2014

The leading areas of employment or occupations fall into four broad categories. The highest number includes Education, Health Care and Social Assistance with 27.7% of the workforce employed in this sector. Next is retail trade which is represented by the retail sector and other businesses. The third highest Manufacturing which is not surprising with the two major employers located in Easton. The final category is finance and insurance and real estate.

Based on location quotient analyses agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining is more important in the local economy than in the state economy. In 2010, Aroostook County employment in the forest sectors of logging, manufactured products and paper totaled 3,500 jobs and \$714 million in sales. Huber Engineered Woods is located in Easton the parent company generates over \$1 billion in revenues each year.

Agricultural products in Aroostook had a market value of \$170 million in 2013. Based on cropland acres in Easton, the market value of the town’s agricultural products is estimated to be \$15.7 million. This does not take into account the value of product brought into Easton to be processed at McCain Foods. According to McCain’s Foods USA, one of every three french fries sold worldwide are produced at one of their factories. McCain’s has annual sales of over \$6

billion (Canadian) annually. The local economic impact of the potato industry is extensive and far reaching and agriculture and forestry is almost entirely a product and raw material export industry.

The potato is the primary agricultural product and in the 1940s Maine's potato production was top in the nation. Maine had fallen to the eighth ranked potato producer and the seventh in the number of acres devoted to potato cultivation in the United States.

The number of acres of farm land devoted to potatoes has decreased in recent years because of rotational crops, conservation and fewer farmers. Over time the potatoes grown have also shifted away from table stock and into specialty markets. Nearly 25 percent of Maine's potato production is for seed to supply the east coast. Another 45 percent is used for french fry processing, 20 percent for potato chips and 10 percent for the fresh market for home, restaurant and institutional raw potato use. Recent economic impact studies of the potato industry on Maine's economy finds total sales in excess of \$540,000,000 with total employment of 6,150 jobs and a total income greater than \$233,500,000 annually.

Town specific agricultural information is difficult to obtain but Aroostook County information was obtained through the Census of Agriculture and American Community Survey. In 2011, Aroostook County had the highest farm related employment in the state at 4.3%. In the same time frame, Maine had the lowest farm related unemployment at 1.5% of the working populations.

Aroostook County Potato Production

Potato acreage has dropped in Aroostook County since 1990 and while yields (CWT) have fluctuated, they have remained steady. Markets for crops grown in Easton are available through McCains Foods and other processors located either in town or in the region. Easton is home to the last French fry processor located on the east coast of the United States. Changes in the market conditions need to be watched carefully and agricultural producers in Easton are well aware that they are part of a national and global market and subject to changes in dietary thoughts of the general public. This does not take away from the fact that Easton's farms and farmland is an important part of the Town's complex identity and economic sustainability.

Aroostook County's potato industry was recently hit with a reduction in price and acreages from its largest processor. There have been cuts in the price paid to growers and a 20 percent reduction in the volume of orders. In 2013, the price paid to growers per hundredweight of potatoes was \$10.35 which is projected to drop 48 cents to \$9.87, roughly a 5 percent reduction.

McCain Foods USA also wants fewer potatoes from growers and it is believed that Frito-Lay, will be negotiating similar cuts with their growers. While there are smaller processors in the region, including Naturally Potatoes in Mars Hill, it is believed that orders are being reduced in contracts across North America.

According to the Maine Potato Board, potato farmers generally earn profit margins of between 3 percent and 4 percent and \$3,000 is the average cost to plant an acre of potatoes, and each acre

can yield up to about 32,000 pounds. At the negotiated price, that would mean the farmer is paid about \$3,158 per acre. The growers could absorb a decrease in the price per hundredweight, but they'll still have the same amount of land and fixed costs associated with owning it, including harvesting equipment. Most growers likely will have to plant fewer acres or face losses with potatoes they can't sell.

Aroostook County Potato Production 1999-2012

	Acres Planted	Acres Harvested	Yield/Acre	Production (000)
1999	65,000	62,500	285	17813
2000	64,000	64,000	280	17920
2001	62,000	62,000	260	16120
2002	64,000	64,000	265	16960
2003	66,000	65,500	260	17030
2004	63,500	62,000	310	19220
2005	57,500	56,200	280	15736
2006	58,500	58,000	315	18270
2007	57,100	57,000	290	16530
2008	56,000	54,700	270	14769
2009	56,500	55,500	275	15263
2010	55,000	54,800	290	15892
2011	57,000	54,000	265	14210
2012	58,000	57,300	270	15471
Average	60,007	59,107	280	16515

Source: Maine Potato Board, 2014

Fiber Optics-Three Ring Binder

To improve Maine's connectivity, the 3-Ring Binder project was designed and proposed by a group including the University of Maine and GWI, a telephone and internet provider. The federal government, as part of the economic stimulus programs in 2008-2009, awarded \$25.4 million for this project, supplemented by a private investment of \$7.5 million from Maine Fiber Company (MFC), which owns and operates the fiber facilities. MFC completed construction of this new 1100 route-mile fiber-optic network in August of 2012. Fiber is now available for lease in some of Maine's most rural areas. MFC is actively seeking customers to lease fiber-optic facilities, and has several carriers, retail ISPs, and public sector customers currently utilizing fiber on the network.

- The 3- Ring Binder is a 1,100 mile, open access, middle-mile fiber optic network that was completed in August of 2012. The project will make broadband Internet access more readily available to approximately 110,000 households in Maine.
- As of November 2012, (12) carriers have signed up to use the network. In addition, there are (2) higher education organizations, and (2) municipalities taking advantage of the

middle-mile fiber. The University System of Maine uses the fiber to connect 22 of their campus and satellite locations.

- The network passes through approximately 172 towns in the state, including many in very rural areas of Maine.
- The project connects 100 community anchor institutions (CAI) to the network. Community anchor institutions include hospitals, rural healthcare clinics, community colleges, University of Maine campuses, libraries, government facilities, and public safety departments.

Economic Climate

One of Easton's greatest economic strengths is its geography along with a well-defined village area. The village area is the retail center for goods and services that serves the residents of town as well as those working at the largest employers. As such, it is an important and viable economic sector that depends on the jobs and wages generated by the town's economic engines as well as what happens in the neighboring service center of Presque Isle.

Even in the present economy, substantial investments are being made in Easton. Activities and events are being centered in the village area and new businesses are locating within the community. The Amish Community has opened several small businesses ranging from metal roofing, to carpentry, to a small convenience store. Town officials are working with other small business owners on finding locations to develop as well as developing residential subdivisions so that people can locate to town. These are great examples of local empowerment and responsibility that supports this important sector and community sustainability. Local civic organizations and clubs also make vital contributions to this element of sustainability.

Commute to Work 2012

The table below suggests employment location based on travel time to work. According to the American Community Survey, the largest percentage of Easton's workforce over the age of 16 travels to work in a personal vehicle. It is assumed that those traveling under 15 minutes to work reside in Easton. Based on this, 29% of residents that are employed work in Easton. Approximately 48% commute between 15 and 25 minutes which suggest that Presque Isle may be the largest employee destination of Easton residents. According to the American Community Survey 11 residents are employed outside of Aroostook County.

High rates of out-commuting are more common in rural areas of Maine. Economic development is sometimes affected by commuting in unanticipated ways: strategies aimed at increasing jobs in a community will not necessarily mean jobs for residents. Conversely, creating job opportunities for residents does not always require bringing jobs into that community.

High out-commuting rates can also separate tax revenues from demands for services, complicating fiscal planning for local governments. "Bedroom communities," those with high levels of out-commuting, may struggle to provide social services, housing, and other required services and faculties without an adequate source of revenue. Higher levels and longer distance

of commuting likely indicate a housing-job imbalance. This can result from unaffordable housing prices or other residential constraints.

Travel Time to Work, 2012	Easton	Aroostook County	Maine
Workers over 16 who did not work at home	548	29,525	603,825
Less than 5 minutes	38	4,071	34,968
5 to 9 minutes	42	6,226	82,483
10 to 14 minutes	77	5,107	94,091
15 to 19 minutes	143	4,573	89,091
20 to 24 minutes	122	3,198	84,226
25 to 29 minutes	37	1,196	35,260
30 to 34 minutes	59	2,387	68,637
35 to 39 minutes	3	448	15,591
40 to 44 minutes	4	403	20,702
45 to 59 minutes	12	824	39,560
60 to 89 minutes	0	704	26,012
90 or more minutes	11	388	13,204

Source: American Community Survey, 2013

Taxable Retail Sales

Due to the small number of businesses in Easton and confidentiality issues, taxable retail sales are not reported by Maine Revenue Services.

Median Household Income

The US Department of Commerce derives household income by taking the income of all persons living in a household aged fifteen (15) and over and dividing by the total number of households within the town. In 2013, the median household income for Easton was \$36,938. This is slightly lower than the Aroostook County median household income of \$37,434 (\$496 per household). As compared to the State's median household income, Easton is lower by \$11,281 per household, with the Maine's median household income equalling \$48,219.

Per Capita Income

Per capita income is derived by adding the incomes of all residents of Easton and dividing by the total population of the town (even those with no income). According to the 2013 American Community Survey, the per capita income for Easton equals \$20,436. This is slightly lower than the per capita income for Aroostook County, which equals \$21,034, and significantly less than Maine's per capita income of \$26,464.

Poverty Status

According to the 2013 American Community Survey, the poverty status of residents living in Easton shows 19.3 percent of all persons have incomes below the poverty level. This is higher than the Aroostook County statistic of 15.9 percent and significantly higher than the State of Maine's 13.3 percent of all persons having incomes below the poverty level. The highest percentage for all categories surveyed belongs to families with female householder, no husband present with 75.9 percent having incomes below the poverty level.

Regional Plans

Northern Maine Tourism Plan

With funding from the USDA Department of Agriculture-Rural Development, NMDC and Aroostook County Tourism (ACT) began planning for a five-year tourism plan in January, 2011. The result of their efforts is the *Northern Maine Tourism Action Plan 2011-2016*. This tourism action plan has been shaped through extensive community engagement with sector businesses and nonprofits, committee participation, and general research. It includes all of the towns, townships and communities within Aroostook County and builds upon, and is a continuation of, the previous tourism business plan completed in 2005.

There are five goals listed in priority, for building a stronger tourism sector:

1. Improve organizational structure and capacity
2. Enhance tourism sector through education and training
3. Build and maintain collaborative partnerships and networks
4. Clarify the message and sharpen communications
5. Strengthen the product and expand the market.

Mobilize Northern Maine

Since 2009, Aroostook Partnership for Progress and NMDC have been working with consultants from ViTAL Economy as well as community and industry leaders, to implement the statewide Mobilize Maine process in northern Maine. Mobilize Maine is a partnership between FairPoint Communications and the six economic districts in Maine, each of which are participating in development strategies based on their region's indigenous assets and opportunities.

In northern Maine, the planning process involved establishing five-year goals, mapping the region's indigenous assets, and conducting an in-depth analysis for two industry clusters: Renewable Energy and Information Technology/Operations Centers. Next steps include exploring additional industry action teams focused on air space, secondary wood products, and tourism development.

Great Region Designation

Aroostook, Washington and Piscataquis Counties share many of the same strengths and challenges. It is the common assets, which has led to the United States Department of

Agriculture- Rural Development to name the counties Maine's first Great Region. USDA defines a Great Region as a multi-county region with a regional economic development plan developed by a local/regional team with broad participation, where the plan is built upon careful analysis of the region's assets, including its key current and emerging economic clusters.

Those clusters for Maine's Great Region are agriculture and forestry, specifically supporting local and regional food systems and promoting the bio-based economy.

Analyses

Easton is not experiencing any significant fundamental changes in its economic structure. The Town has gained a few economic engines mainly in the form of small businesses and the existing major employers have restructured in ways that have helped them adjust to the present economic conditions. Easton's economy remains diversified and relatively stable.

Priorities for economic development in Easton identify natural resource based businesses as vital economic engines with the greatest potential to create jobs and enhance the local economy. One area of focus is on agricultural and forest resources and supports for businesses that produce, harvest and add value to these resources. Another priority is ensuring that the community can help provide the infrastructure, facilities, services and capital needed by natural resource based businesses of all scales. The final priority is to support and maintain existing economic diversification to ensure long-term economic sustainability. Higher education, health care and tourism are vital components. The town's economic development priorities are detailed in the policies and strategies section that follows. These priorities are also reflected and detailed in the regional economic clusters report and tourism action plan.

The town capitalizes on its many natural resource based tourism assets as well as its cultural distinction. These are discussed in more detail in the sections on Recreation and History and Culture. The most notable efforts to capitalize on the town's unique assets involve local clubs and several other local organizations that sponsor major events and generate extensive media attention. These include the Easton Days and the World Cup Biathlon Races in nearby Presque Isle. The economic impact of these events requires further study to understand their significance to the local economy. Snowmobiling has been a major calling card in the region for 25 years and trails are highly rated thanks to club efforts. ATV riding and trail network development is expected to grow significantly during the planning period and may surpass snowmobiling in economic impact.

Home occupations contribute to the local economy and provide many needed services and advantages to residents and business owners. Residents have convenient access to products and services and owners are allowed affordable space to try new enterprises. While home occupations most often involve services, the sale and display of products is also allowed. Regulations designed to protect neighborhood character and address traffic should be considered.

Given the region's long-term trend of population decline it seems practical that local economic development efforts focus on creating modest job and population growth by balancing attention and support in all economic export sectors. This should be done in a manner that protects and

enhances community sustainability and the quality of life component of community sustainability. It is important to remember that economic growth can influence change in the community that is not always popular or favorable. Local economic development policy should be based on an understanding of local issues. The persons that are directly involved in the types of business that drive Easton's economy should be engaged in implementing policy. The State goal for Comprehensive Planning, as it pertains to local economy, is to promote an economic climate that increases job opportunity and overall economic well-being while keeping public facilities/services and housing affordable and while maintaining environmental quality. A balanced approach should work well in Easton.

LOCAL ECONOMY

Goals, Policies, and Strategies

State Goal

To promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.

Local Goal

To foster economic growth and increase population through the creation of natural resource, alternative energy, technology, and service based jobs.

POLICY

Encourage, create and attract companies that produce, harvest, utilize and add value to agricultural and forest related resources to remain or locate in Easton.

Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Identify businesses that supply materials and products to large manufacturers and processors and focus effort to attract local expansion of these companies.	Town Officials	2016 and annually
Analyze the economic advantages for Canadian natural resource based (and other) companies to expand in Maine and locate in Easton.	Town Officials	On-going
Seek State/Federal grant and loan funding and identify job creation and capital equipment related tax incentives that may benefit existing businesses and communicate with business owners Determine the regulatory, licensure and other requirements for local companies and prospective companies to access port facilities in Canada.	Town Officials, NMDC, Planning Board, DECD, USDA	On-going
Continue to explore and support opportunities for biomass utilization and other alternatives for heating and electrical generation.	Town Officials	2016 and on-going
Identify medium sized, natural resource based, Maine companies and implement an ongoing business outreach/attraction program that targets their expansion.	Town Officials	On-going
Evaluate the interest of local farmers in the establishment of a packing/shipping and grain milling facility.	Town Officials	2017
Identify areas within Easton that would be suitable for alternative energy sites, such as windmill and solar.	Planning Board	2017
Expand the TIF and Pine Tree Zones in Easton.	Town Officials	2020

POLICY

Focus local economic development efforts on securing funding for the infrastructure, facilities, services and capital needed to support natural resource based, alternative energy, technology, and service based businesses of all scales.

Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Work with local, regional, State and Federal organizations to develop and maintain incentive packages for business expansions and start-ups.	Town Officials	2016 and annually
Study the feasibility of a new industrial park development at locations identified in the future land-use plan.	Planning Board	2016
Study the feasibility of extending infrastructure to prospective industrial sites and seek funding for the development of infrastructure improvements.	Planning Board and Town Officials	2016-18
Participate and support regional business development/attraction initiatives.	Town Officials.	2016 and on-going
Research, support and initiate with industry participation, a private or public vocational/technical program in forestry and forestry equipment operation.	Town Officials	2018
Contact existing natural resource based businesses to determine their interest in expansion or diversification and provide assistance.	Town Officials	On-going
Research and identify available central Aroostook labor force skills and expatriated labor force skills and use in business attraction.	Town Officials, NMDC, Aroostook Partnership, University, Community Colleges	On-going
On an on-going basis, advocate for changes in State and Federal policy that are favorable to business.	Town Officials	On-going

POLICY

Support continued economic diversification to ensure the long term sustainability of the local economy.
Seek funding to initiate new programs.

Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Support the needs of existing businesses by applying for business assistance, energy efficiency and other grants that address specific needs.	Town Officials	2016 and annually
Continue to utilize the ICS and UDAG reserve accounts to provide capital for business startup and purchases.	Town Officials	On-going
Work with all potential sources including local banks, private interests, local government, the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development and other State and Federal institutions to assist with business startups and expansions.	Town Officials	On-going

Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Seek grants to assist small, home-based businesses with needs for capital improvements, market access and other challenges.	Town Officials	2016 and on-going
Support on-going efforts and investment in telecommunication system redundancy to facilitate internet based businesses.	Town Officials	On-going
Continue to work with the Central Aroostook Chamber of Commerce on their efforts to promote tourism, organize festivals and events and support the needs and interests of retail businesses.	Clubs, Recreation Dept., and Town Officials	On-going
Maintain a dialog with the University of Maine at Presque Isle, The Aroostook Medical Center, Northern Maine Community College, and other major employers to understand their need for local support. Encourage education and job creation in health care areas that serve an aging population.	Town Officials	On-going
Continue to partner with Easton's civic organizations and clubs on projects that provide a broad benefit to community members and visitors.	Town Officials and Clubs	On-going
Participate in and support regional efforts to improve telecommunications infrastructure needed to support hi-tech, information based companies.	Town officials	On-going