



# Downtown Redevelopment Plan 2020



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# Executive Summary

This redevelopment plan was created to identify public infrastructure and aesthetic improvement projects for Presque Isle's Downtown areas while also addressing the challenges of revitalization efforts in Maine. The focus area for this plan centers around the Downtown areas of Presque Isle specifically the major transportation arterials of Main Street, Maysville Street, Chapman Road, State Road, Parsons Street, Industrial Street, and other minor arterial roadways that converge into the downtown.

The Downtown Redevelopment Plan is an updated version from the 2009 edition that combines components of updated data from the proposed 2019 Comprehensive Plan and addresses new challenges facing economic development for 2020 and beyond. Areas discussed include residential housing, commercial space, zoning uses, parking, transportation, recreation, historic/cultural features, economic overview, public infrastructure and pedestrian safety.

Work was completed in a collaborative approach between the Presque Isle Downtown Revitalization Committee, Presque Isle Planning Board, and Presque Isle City Departments to reenergize redevelopment efforts within the downtown areas. Many of the productive conversations occurred over the course of two years in addressing the challenges of revitalizing the city's Downtown area while working on the City's proposed 2019 Comprehensive Plan.

The Downtown areas consist of 201 parcels containing 2,610,194 square feet of commercial space available. Based upon a U.S. trends of average retail floor space, it is estimated Presque Isle is positioned to expanding its role as a retail and service hub for Aroostook County and the surrounding New Brunswick & Quebec markets by developing marketing strategies to promote migration of new residents and private investment.

There are 102 residential parcels containing 571 dwelling units within the Downtown areas. The City has been experiencing an increase use of public funds to demolish blighted properties especially within the Downtown areas and is exploring opportunities to revitalize blighted properties using a multiprong approach of encouraging private investment in combination with rental and property maintenance educational efforts.

Branding insights about Downtown Presque Isle include the historic buildings, the intense traffic and visibility, and the potential for an entertainment/restaurant cluster. Several branding/slogan ideas have been implemented by the Downtown Revitalization Committee and the city is proactively exploring new public projects to utilize the Presque Isle Stream as an epicenter for arts, culture, and outdoor recreation.

Updated goals will be implemented using the Main Street 4-Point approach of Design, Economic Vitality, Organization and Promotion over a time line of short (less than 5 years), intermediate (completed in ten years), and long (completed within 30 years).



# Introduction

## Origin of Goals & Policy Vision

Presque Isle's Downtown district serves as the city's center for social, civic, and cultural activity since the city's incorporation in 1859. This designation has been challenged as early as the 1980's with an increase in blighted properties and outward migration.

In early 2006, a group of Presque Isle citizens formed the Presque Isle Downtown Revitalization Committee (PIDRC). This committee developed by-laws and is a publicly charged body appointed and partially funded by the City of Presque Isle. The PIDRC also recognizes and utilizes the four-point Main Street approach to revitalization: organization, economic restructuring, design, and promotion. This has its initial origins in the City's 2009 Downtown Revitalization Plan.

The PIDRC was later tasked to assist with addressing revitalization vision for Presque Isle's Downtown by contributing heavily to the proposed 2019 Comprehensive Plan which highlighted the need to:

- ★ Establish an economic development program that restores the Downtown as the heart and soul of community life.
- ★ Stimulate the Downtown area to be the crucial economic health and civic pride center of the entire community.
- ★ The development of private & public partnering is needed for a successful downtown redevelopment effort, which may and likely will mean a focused public investment strategy for the Main Street growth area.
- ★ Encourage economic growth & development within the context of historic preservation which is appropriate to today's marketplace.
- ★ Focus new growth efforts by first "filling-in" existing developed blighted properties within the designated Downtown.

## Public Participation

Through collaborative efforts, Presque Isle's Planning Board and City Council approved sending the proposed 2019 Comprehensive Plan for state review. It was during this time that the city desired to update the city's Downtown Redevelopment Plans that address the many changes in the local economy as well as updates to community projects.

City of Presque Isle staff began the endeavor of initially drafting the preliminary updates with rigorous revisions made through public participation at Planning Board and City Council meetings. The final plan was finally approved by City Council on **October 7, 2020**.

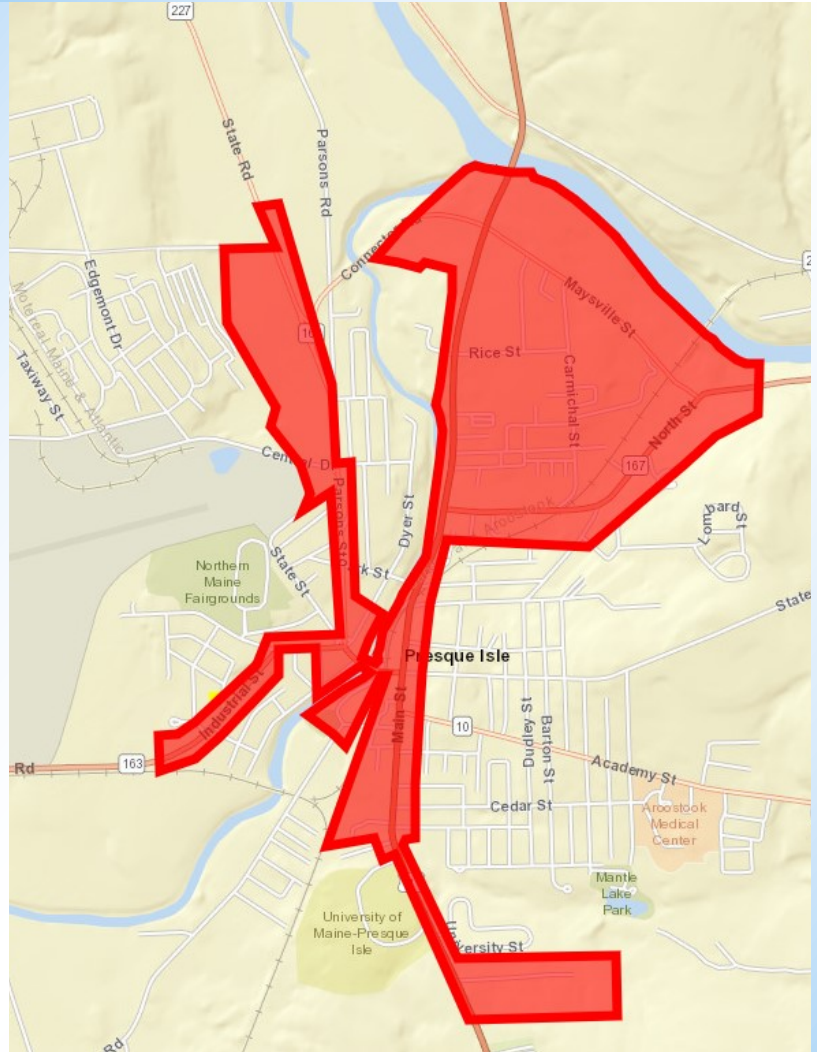


# Downtown Assessment

## About Presque Isle's Downtown

Presque Isle's Downtown district is centrally located within the city's defined Urban Compact Area as designated by Maine Department of Transportation. The area consists of major arterial and collector roadways that form the heart of the community. These roads include:

- ★ Main Street
- ★ Chapman Rd
- ★ Maysville Street
- ★ North Street
- ★ Rice Street
- ★ State Road & Street
- ★ Industrial Street
- ★ Second Street
- ★ Parsons Street
- ★ Riverside Drive
- ★ Green Hill Drive
- ★ Mechanic Street
- ★ And portions of minor collector roadways



Most commercial, social, and retail, services are located within this geographical area. The composition of properties within the Downtown area are diverse and well suited for mixed business and commercial use given the compact size of parcels and location near primary residential neighborhoods. Parcels in the northern Downtown area are generally larger and occupy many of the city's larger commercial space where adequate parking is required. Because of the factors mentioned above, the zoning within the Downtown Area consists of Business, Downtown Retail, Urban Residential and Residential Office zones.

## **Downtown Vision**

*Inspired by the proposed 2019 Comprehensive and 2009 Downtown Revitalization Master Plans*

Presque Isle's Downtown is historically enriched as being a major center for services and commerce for a rural agricultural community. Many of the buildings within the Downtown still offer important cultural, retail, and recreational services to the surrounding central Aroostook County towns and unincorporated territories. It is the City's vision to revitalize the downtown into the primary destination for residents and visitors of Aroostook County by not only incorporating our agricultural and service-based economies but also welcoming our growing outdoor recreation sector into our historic downtown.

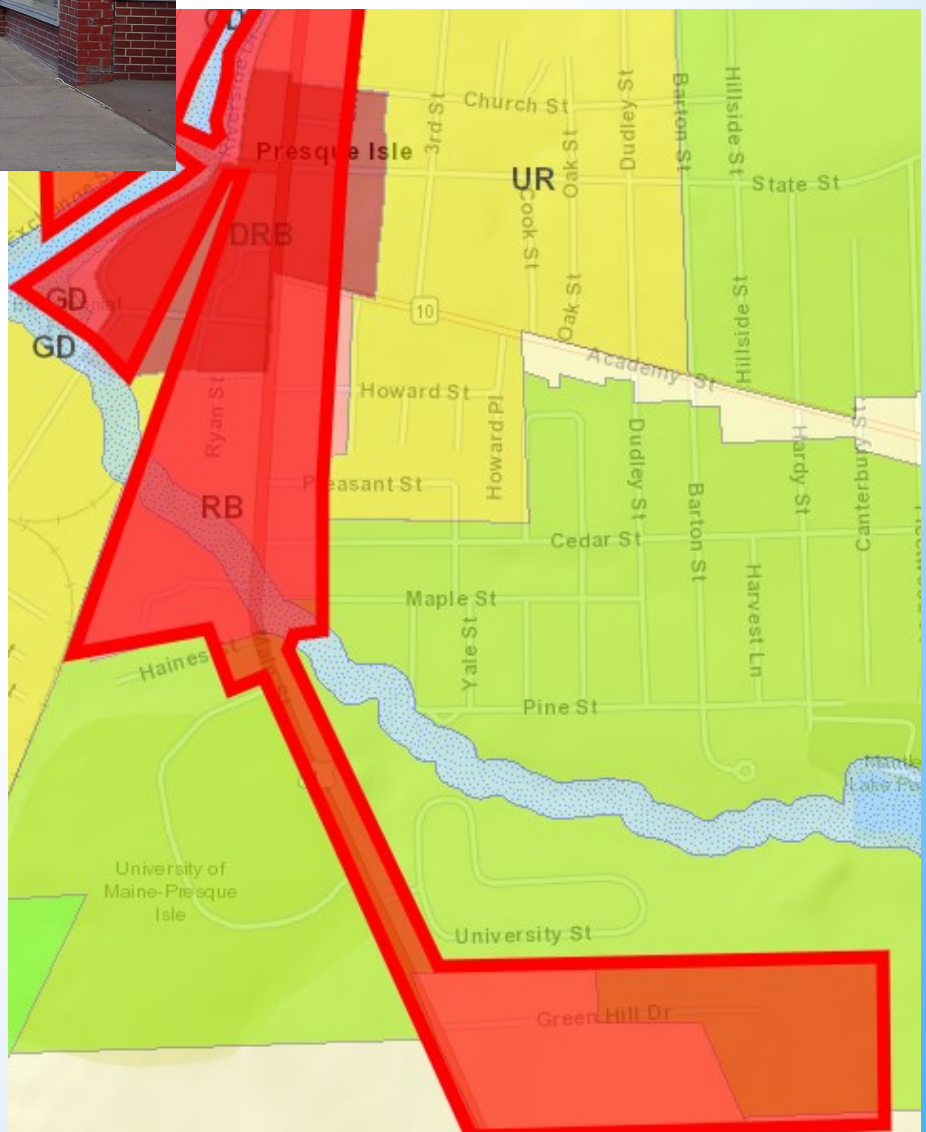


## Zoning Study of the Downtown Areas

The Downtown Plan highlights important sections of the downtown based on geographic location, history, and importance to the overall economy of Presque Isle.

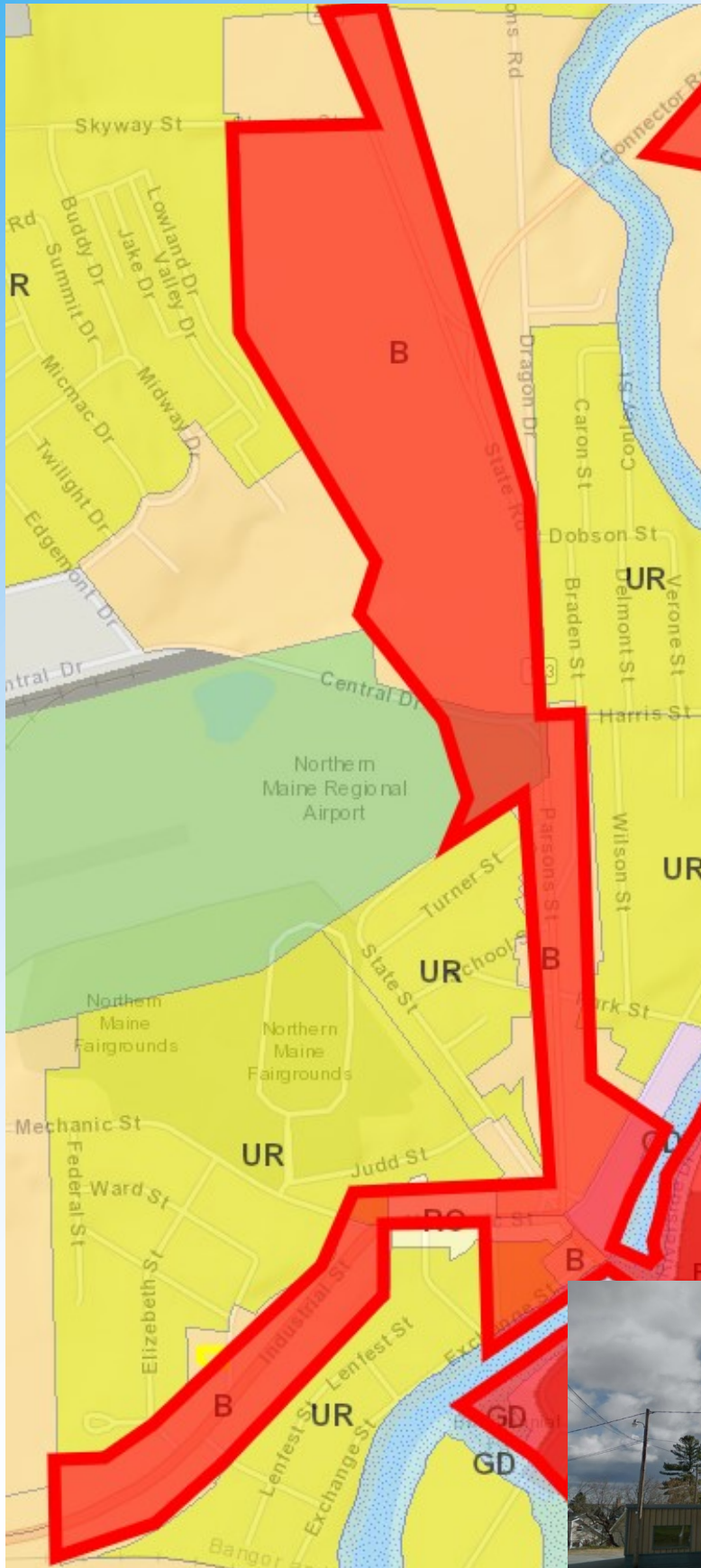
### **Downtown Business Area**

The first area to study consists of the downtown business area where many important historical and cultural features are located around supporting residential neighborhoods. Parcels at these locations are general compact with multiple uses integrated within the same building, i.e. residential, light commercial and retail services. The City of Presque Isle has identified this area as an important heart of the downtown given the central location to US Route 1 being the main corridor for traffic and commerce. Because of this special designation, the city has zoned most portions of this area as General Development, Retail Business, and Downtown Retail Business Zones.





## Downtown Industrial Area



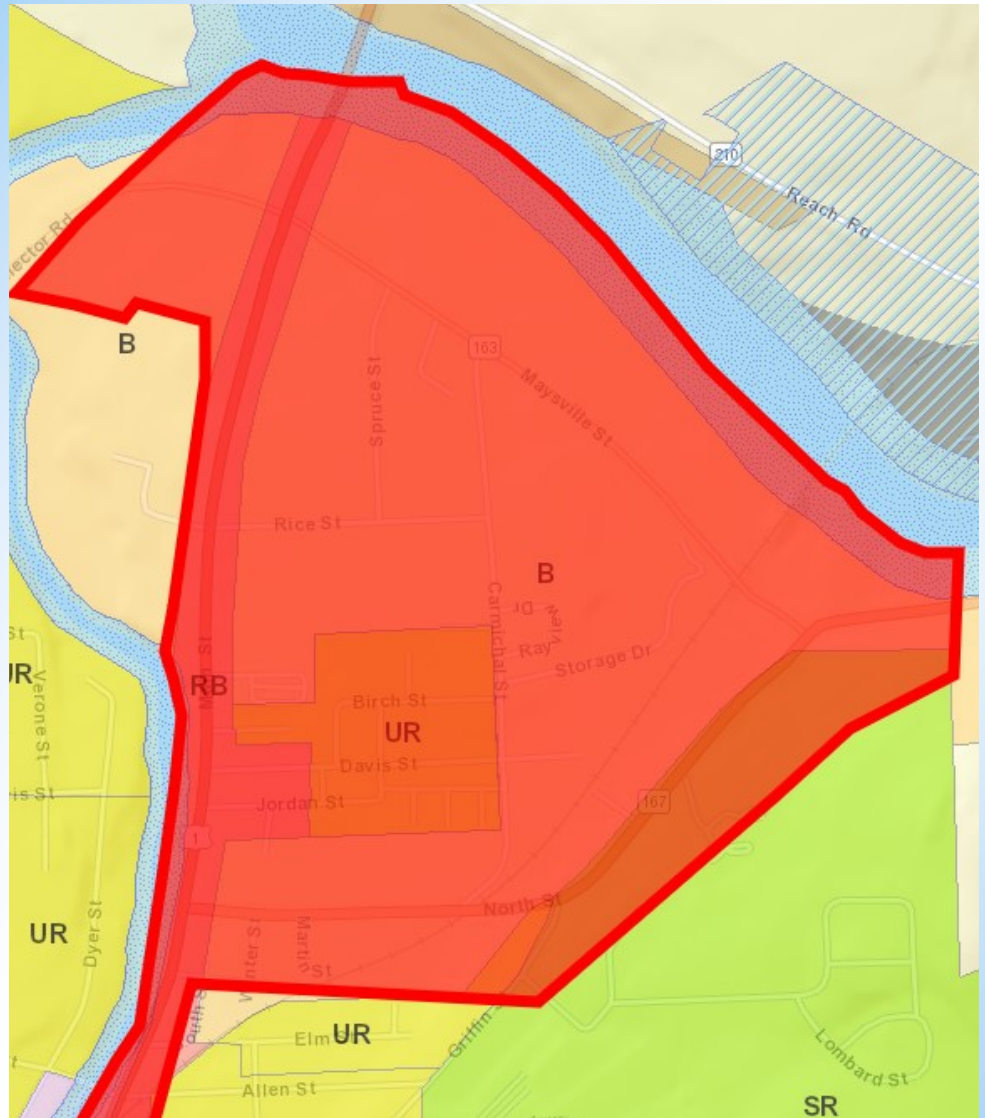
The next area to study serves as an important conduit for the economic region centered based on this area's close proximity to distribution and manufacturing businesses with supporting Urban Residential neighborhoods abutting around. Parcels within these zones are generally larger with single uses given the importance of buffering sound, light and odor impact on residential neighborhoods. The City of Presque Isle has identified this area as an important scaffolding to commerce given the close proximity of employees to commute with ease to employers located in the business and residential office zones.





## Downtown Retail Area

The final area to study serves as an important center for retail and support services for Central Aroostook County. Parcels within this area are larger with single uses given the importance of buffering sound, light and odor impact on residential neighborhoods. US. Route 1 and Route 163 intersect in this vital region of Presque Isle's Downtown. Many employers that provide residents with jobs are located within this area. The City of Presque Isle has identified this area as a critical part of the County's economy and has designated most area as Business and Retail Business zones.



## Housing & Building Conditions in the Downtown Areas

In Downtown Presque Isle there are 102 parcels that host a variety of buildings that offer both commercial and residential uses on the same property. Within the Downtown areas, there are 571 multi-family residential and single family dwellings. The City of Presque Isle only has one Elderly Housing (55+ Community) available within the downtown areas.

Building Condition	Number of Parcels
Excellent	4
Very Good	32
Good	62
Above Average	102
Average	165
Below Average	25
Fair	6
Poor	5

The average built date of all buildings within the downtown is 1946. This condition poses property maintenance significant challenges to maintain the structural integrity of older buildings. Despite the age of buildings, the majority of parcels are of average condition or better when comparing buildings of similar age according to data collected from the City's Assessor's Office.

When analyzing the buildings rated below average (Below Average, Fair, & Poor), 69% of buildings under these categories fall under residential dwellings (Single Family Homes, Mobile Homes, or Multi-Family Residential). In reviewing ownership of below average condition properties, 21% of buildings are owned by landowners outside the city limits and 62% of properties are defined as residential rentals. The total building assessed value of these properties is currently \$720,400.00. The City's Assessing Department performed a scenario where building values were all increased to Good condition by promoting adequate education and incentive programming within the downtown areas would potentially increase the tax value of these blighted properties by 383% or \$ 3,994,736 in new taxable revenue.

Building Height	Number of Buildings
1 Story	221
1.5 Stories	38
1.75 Stories	44
2 Stories	89
2.5 Stories	1
3 Stories	7
4 Stories	2

The majority of buildings within the downtown are no taller than 1-story with an average building year of 1966. There are also a significant number of 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 single-family dwellings within the downtown areas that comprise the residential population.



Given the facts of building condition, the city should explore:

- ✪ Establish a Downtown Tax Incremental Financing District to financially support marketing and reinvestment in downtown areas
- ✪ Explore a Rental/Property Maintenance Ordinance to maintain and improve property conditions
- ✪ Consider a Forgiveness Credit Program where major renovation improvements in neighborhood appearances do not experience significant tax increases
- ✪ Design a new Elderly Community Village especially near Rice & Carmichael Streets that will support residents with pedestrian friendly access

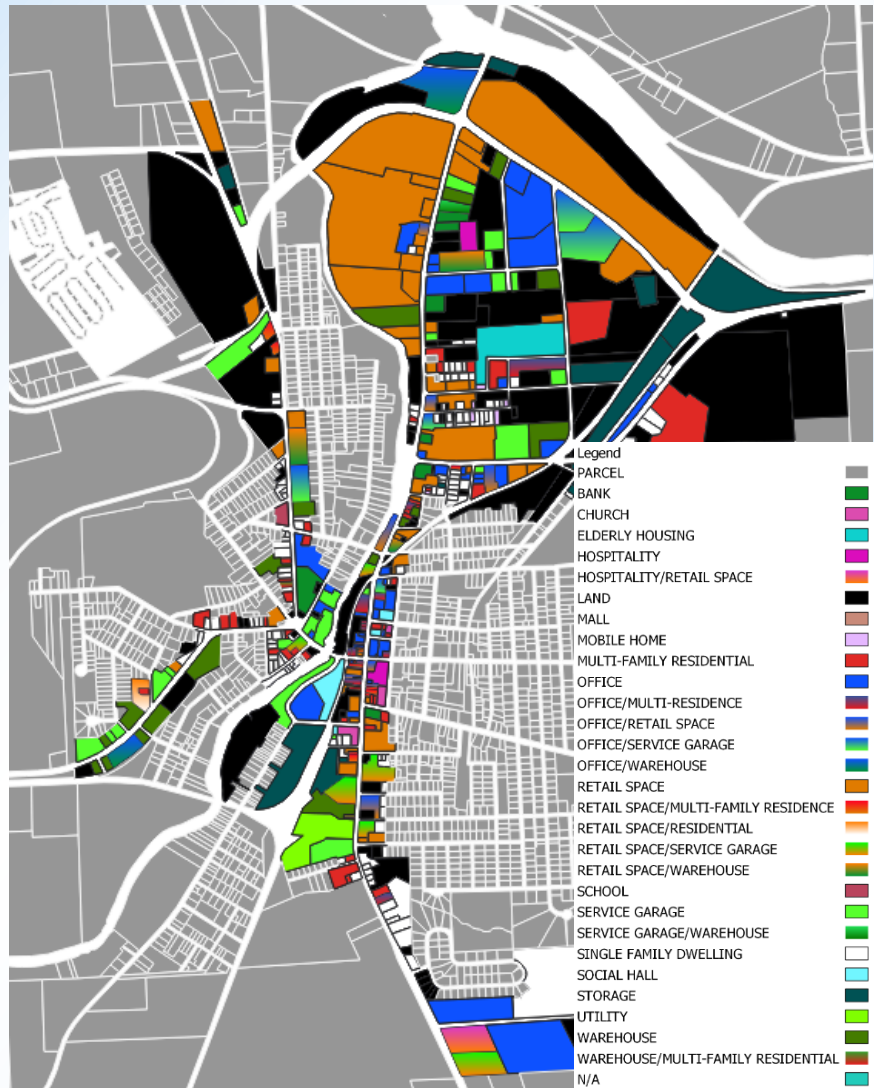


## Commercial Space in the Downtown Areas

Presque Isle's Downtown Commercial land composition is comprised predominantly of Retail Space (17%), followed by Office (8%), Mixed-Uses (7%), Storage (7%), Service Garage (4%), and Warehouse facilities (3%). The city is blessed to also have a significant amount of undeveloped land available for new development once fill-in has been accomplished. Given recent trends in working from home, Presque Isle is situated to expand its designation as the economic and service hub for Aroostook County should migration occur to northern Maine.

There is currently 201 parcels containing 2,610,194 square feet of commercial space (Banks, Hospitality, Mixed-Use, Office, Retail, Service Garage, & Warehouse) available within Presque Isle's Downtown areas. Of these properties, 38% are rentals and 62% owned by the business or sole proprietor.

The total square footage for retail space within the downtown is 1,349,842 sq. ft. As a general rule of thumb, the average sq. footage per capita is 24.5 sq. feet. Since many surrounding communities rely on Presque Isle as a major service destination, the city has 25.42 sq. ft. per capita when calculating the city's 25-mile market population. Given recent trends and decline of brick & mortar stores and expansion of online sales, the city should target a goal of filling-in vacant retail spaces especially at the Aroostook Centre Mall. This will require the city to aggressively market the opportunities available for businesses to open within the community.



Given the facts of commercial space availability, the city should explore:

- ✳ Rigorous promotion of Presque Isle's Economic Development programming and promotion to attract new investment to fill-in vacant retail properties
- ✳ Reform the city's Development Fund to encourage lending to small-businesses for property ownership
- ✳ Preparing development and design standards to help guide downtown development in more specific and appropriate ways by using Form Based Codes

## **Parking & Transportation within the Downtown Area**

### **Parking**

Presque Isle is fortunate to have over 21,000 parking spaces both public and business spaces available within the downtown area to accommodate vehicle parking within the downtown area. During conversations focused on parking, there was concern about addressing the lack of parking close to essential services within the downtown given the limited mobility of an aging population.

Given the rural nature of Aroostook County, car travel is now essential to commute, shop, or drive to important medical or service related appointments. It has been highlighted by the city and community at large that this reliance on one form of transportation has created a barrier for economic and social mobility for area residents who lack the financial means or ability to use personal vehicle for transportation. As such, the city has been part of conversations to explore increase transportation options into the downtown area to allow for economic and social mobility of area residents. The city has not explored linking transportation for residents and businesses through an airport shuttle service.

### **Transportation Infrastructure**

Presque Isle has a mixture of city & state-owned roadways. Maintenance is generally under the responsibility of the city with maintenance agreements by the Maine Department of Transportation to help fund the costs of state road repairs within the Presque Isle Urban Compact area.

Transportation concerns within the downtown areas are unique with their own set of challenges. One primary concern is regarding the rapid degradation of Main Street (U.S. Route 1). Since major repair efforts were completed four years ago, Main Streets road conditions is at the point of repair which is concerning given that the average lifespan of roads in Presque Isle are twelve years. Attention should be given to study why the sudden decline in road condition. There are also concerns with commercial truck traffic turning onto Main Street and egressing onto Academy Street within the Downtown area. Multiple incidents have occurred with damage to vehicles and city-owned property from commercial trucks unable to make the sharp left and right turns. Additionally the five-point intersection at Mechanic Street is in need of improvement to aid in traffic flow on the west side of the Presque Isle Stream and to better utilize the Presque Isle by-pass that is currently in the design phase of the second connector. Another trouble intersection is at Blake Street & Riverside Drive intersect with Main Street. The area at Riverside Drive is troublesome for lack of sight clearance in a busy intersection and need to cross railroad tracks onto Main Street during peak hours. At present state, the benefit of this section of Riverside Drive to the city is minimum as it currently serves as a thoroughfare for commuter traffic and commercial truck parking spot.

It is recommended the city should complete the following project goals regarding transportation of the downtown:

- ✧ Develop transportation programming for the downtown area for visitors and residents using the city Airport
- ✧ Explore traffic solutions for the five-point Mechanic Street intersection and designate a commercial truck route to alleviate congestion into the Downtown Retail Business Area
- ✧ Discontinue Riverside Drive north of State Street intersecting with Main Street to aid in development of Riverside Art & Cultural District

**5-Point Parsons Street Intersection**





## **Recreation within the Downtown Area**

### **The City's Recreational Offerings**

Presque Isle currently offers many opportunities for residents and visitors to take part in recreation within the Downtown area. The city currently offers three city-owned parks, a bike loop, and 6.34 miles of pedestrian sidewalks. In 2020, Presque Isle is exploring opportunities to expand recreational trail access along the Presque Isle Stream, expansion of a new bike loop, and to connect recreational trails from Mantle Lake Park to A.R. Gould Northern Lights Hospital property to allow residents to connect with nature in new ways.

In coordinating with the city's Recreation Department, it was discovered that there is no inventory list of all recreational amenities owned by the city (i.e. benches, pavilions, picnic tables, trails, etc.) with a corresponding maintenance schedule to increase the lifespan of current assets and to plan for recreational programming.

### **Market Trends & Underutilized Assets**

Recreational tourism serves as an important economic driver for the City's Downtown businesses. Many businesses offer recreational repair services and supplies for visitors and residents of Presque Isle. When completing an assessment of recreational offerings, DECD staff noticed a lack of new programming linked to the Presque Isle stream. This dammed tributary offers deep slow moving waters that can offer tremendous opportunities in paddle boarding, kayaking, water tubing, and ice skating in the winter. In addition, according to the latest 2019 figures collected by Aroostook County Tourism, snowmobilers and ATV provide hundreds of millions of direct spending across the state including within the local economy. One challenge facing Presque Isle is a lack of direct access to the Downtown Retail Business area for snowmobilers to shop, rest, or eat. This could be remedied by constructing all purpose bridge over the Presque Isle Stream for the purpose of capturing more of this important market share for the downtown.



Another area to explore is increased programming and marketing of pet-friendly vacationing to the city. Market trends state that 68% of U.S. Households (85 million families) own a pet and spend a combined \$95.7 billion in the U.S. economy. Many people consider their pets as part of their vacation plans, which is confirmed with statistics by the city's airline provider (United Airlines) which transported 138,000 animals in 2017. The city should utilize its strength of housing Aroostook County's only pet-friendly hotel by developing pet-friendly programming and marketing plan complete with a city-owned unleashed dog center.

### **As such, the city should explore innovative ways to tie recreation into Downtown life including:**

- ✧ Establish a City Recreational Inventory & Maintenance Plan for Department Operations
- ✧ Building an ATV/Snowmobile bridge to offer access to the downtown area
- ✧ Design new water recreational programming along the Presque Isle Stream
- ✧ Designate pet-friendly recreation opportunities within the downtown
- ✧ Initiate new age-friendly urban trails and wellness programs
- ✧ Expand recreational trail offerings by exploring private-public partnerships



## Historic & Cultural Features within the Downtown Area

The Downtown Area hosts a range of historic properties some even qualifying for the National Registry of Historic Places. Two properties are currently listed on the NRHP including the Presque Isle National Bank and the city's Post Office. In addition, Presque Isle was recently awarded a Distinctive Designation as part of the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the Maysville Museum and 1875 Vera Estey House Museum.



In addition, Presque Isle offers a wide range of cultural activities for area residents. Recently the city renovated the City's library which has expanded service and their inventory of books for all ages. In addition, the city built a new community center to enrich the lives of families and senior citizen residents with new opportunities to grow and learn while living in Presque Isle. The City has also expanded new cultural programs to increase a sense of community within the downtown by offering a summer concert series, a downtown farmers market and multiple parades through the downtown area.



The City of Presque Isle highlighted the importance in preserving the city's historic and cultural features as part of the proposed 2019 Comprehensive Plan. With an increase trend in cultural and historic tourism, the city envisions revitalization of the downtown area that exemplifies the charm of Presque Isle while also looking towards the future by expanding cultural programming and street aesthetics of our downtown area by:

- ★ Continue the beautification redesign efforts for the Downtown Revitalization Plan of 2009
- ★ Increase Downtown promotion and marketing operations
- ★ Redevelop a robust facade program for historic building preservation
- ★ Establish a Riverside Drive Arts & Cultural District



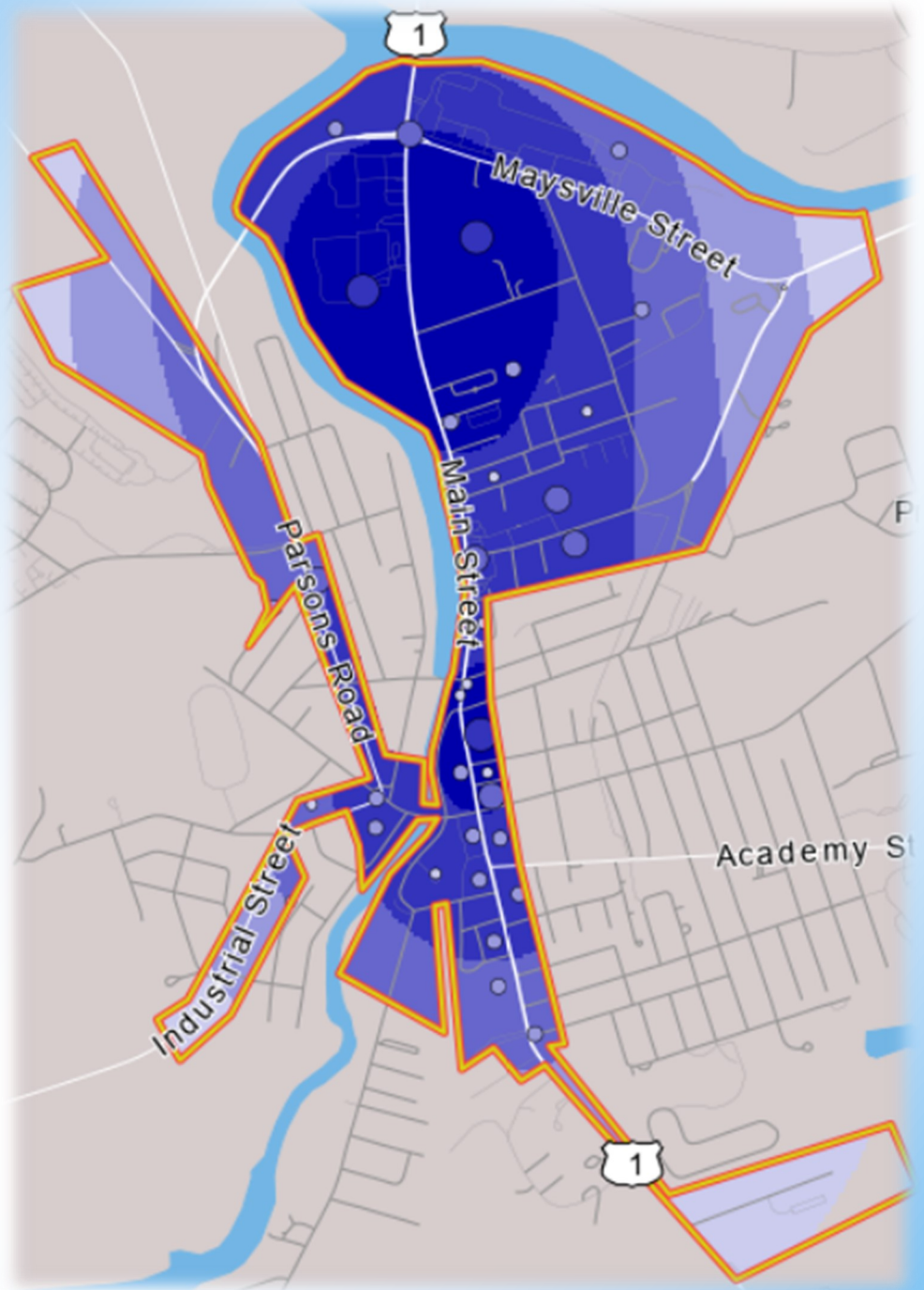


## Employment within the Downtown Area

The Downtown Area offers a variety of economic activity for the City of Presque Isle. Each of the three areas of the Downtown offer varying employment opportunities for residents and the surrounding communities.

### **Job Demographics**

There are currently 2,685 jobs within the Downtown area with a majority of the positions are in the industries of retail trade, finance & insurance, education services, health care & social services and accommodation & food services. 29.8% of jobs pay less than \$1,250 per month, 42.9% of jobs are between \$1,251-\$3,333 per month and 27.2% of jobs pay over \$3,333 per month. Sex of Employees scale more to female at 54.1% compared with male counterparts at 45.9%. Educational levels of workers vary with 25.4% with a high school degree, 27.2% with some college or associate degree, 16.8% with bachelor's degree or advance degree, and 25% educational attainment not available (for workers younger than 29 years old).



With this demographic information regarding the workforce within the Downtown area, Presque Isle should explore:

- ✱ Develop a marketing strategy to discover ancillary businesses opportunities to support employment market (i.e. retail and food services)
- ✱ Partner with educational institutions to develop certification programs
- ✱ Create new programs and events to attract young workers to socialize after work

## **Public Infrastructure Assessment of Downtown Presque Isle**

### **Wastewater & Sewer Infrastructure**

In conjunction with the Presque Isle Public Utility District, the Presque Isle Department of Economic & Community Development assessed current capacities of the City's Downtown public infrastructure capabilities. Currently, the Public Utility Wastewater Treatment Plant is able to process 5.2 million gallons per day (MGD) and can store up to 3,000,000 gallons in three storage tanks. The district is working on expanding capacity to 9.6 MGD as the plant is out of compliance with their DEP Discharge Permit. This issue has been present for some time however, with changes in environmental regulations, all flows are required to receive secondary treatment. Normally this is not an issue in the summer and winter when flows average 800,000 to 1,000,000 gallons per day. However, during high flows in the spring and fall, gallons needed to be processed peak to 13-14 MGD. Project costs for the design and construction of the wastewater treatment plant upgrades are estimated at \$15.6 million.



The utility district is also working to explore the conditions of pipe infrastructure to help in mitigating wastewater challenge while also obtaining a clear assessment of all underground water infrastructure. After assessment, the District will establish a maintenance and repair schedule of dilapidated pipes within the downtown area. It is anticipated that the costs of engineering, excavating, pipe repair/installation, paving, etc. are approximately \$1,000,000.00 per mile of pipe. The city should take proactive measures to help in planning efforts to replace poor public infrastructure.

### **Telephone/Electric Line Infrastructure**

The City currently has over 8.5 miles of overhead electric wires within its downtown with approximately 11,100 feet of overhead wires located in two sections to relocate all electric and telephone wires off Main Street. These sections are divided from the geographic regions of Aroostook River to Park Street and from Chapman Road to Green Hill Road. The estimate cost of relocation for both sections to be complete is \$832,500.

**It is recommended the City of Presque Isle adopt the following goals for public infrastructure improvement:**

- ✧ Coordinate with Public Utility District to complete a mapped assessment of all wastewater and storm-water infrastructure within the downtown areas
- ✧ Develop a maintenance schedule with the Utility District to plan coordinated projects that will improve wastewater operations and move telephone/electric lines underground at the same time



## Sidewalks & Pedestrian Safety

According to the 2008 Presque Isle Curb Survey & Map project, the city has over 29,123 feet of sidewalk throughout the downtown areas. 84% of sidewalk composition is asphalt followed by concrete at 16%. 76% of the sidewalks are in good condition, 8% are in fair condition, 15% are in poor condition, and 1% have no condition assigned as the sidewalk portions were under construction at the time of the survey. Based on the data, areas of improvement include the sidewalks of Second Street, Chapman Road, Main Street, Dyer Street and Intersection of Academy Street onto Main. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's ***Guide for Maintaining Pedestrian Facilities for Enhanced Safety***, USDOT estimates the lifespan of concrete sidewalks at approximately 80 years and 40 years for asphalt sidewalks. Actual lifespans vary depending on weather conditions, base of soils, and how the sidewalks were constructed.

The Presque Isle Police Department tabulated incident report data over the past five years to assist in strategic planning of pedestrian safety improvement projects. According to the data, there were 902 incidents within the downtown areas. Specific high volume pedestrian incidents were centered on the Main Street intersections at Walmart, Maysville/Connector Roads, State Street, Academy Street, Park Street, North Street & Chapman Road. The top pedestrian safety issues are highest among 5-way intersection of Mechanic, Parsons, Dyer, & State, followed by the intersections of State & Riverside, Main & Ryan, Main & Blake, and Bradley Carwash business egress onto North Street. The city should also explore the bike collision cases with vehicles at Main & Cedar Streets, and State & Whitney Alley to prevent future incidents.

**It is recommended the City of Presque Isle adopt the following goals for public safety improvement:**

- ✪ Utilize Downtown TIF revenues to fund improved conditions of sidewalk and pedestrian safety that are in compliance with U.S. DOT & Maine DOT guidelines
- ✪ Establish a maintenance and replacement plan for sidewalks in fair & poor conditions



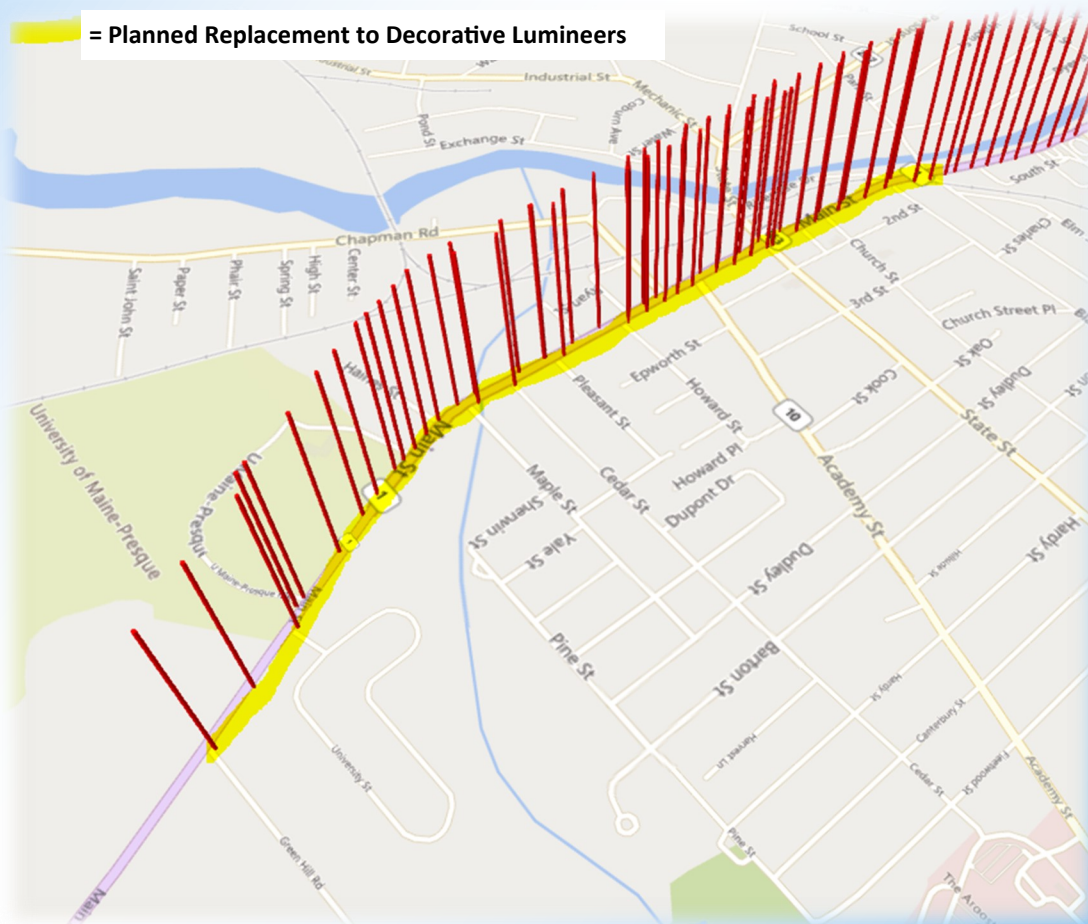
## Electric Poles and Light Fixtures

The City of Presque Isle's light poles and fixtures were surveyed in partnership with the University of Maine Presque Isle's GIS Department in 2018. This data was analyzed to determine the current light assets of the downtown and how best to improve the aesthetics of the downtown area for the future. There are 325 light poles throughout the downtown areas. In reviewing the composition of pole material, the majority (78%) are comprised of wood with the reminder (22%) metal. The Electric Power Research Institute estimates the longevity of pressurized wood poles at 40-50 years. The age of the poles were not cataloged during survey work and it remains to be seen if any entity has data on this. In analyzing the light fixtures of the downtown area the majority of luminaires are cobra head (contemporary) style lighting at 96% compared with decorative (aesthetic) lighting at less than 2%. All decorative lighting is located in the Downtown Retail Business Area where downtown revitalization efforts have been focused in the 1980's to present. There are 52 cobra head luminaires within this area which if relocated will enhance the city's downtown historic charm.

One challenge in relocating luminaire fixtures and electric lines on Main Street in the Downtown Retail Business Area is the uncertainty of current electric lines underground. The City's Public Work's Department mentions past conversations with Emera regarding the location of underground electric lines on Main Street.

Presque Isle should consider to improve lighting of the downtown:

- ★ Installation of decorative lighting in the Downtown Retail Business Area on Main Street from Chapman Road to Park Street





## Internet Infrastructure in Downtown Areas

Presque Isle's internet capabilities are currently a mix of broadband fiber and wireless infrastructure. According to the Federal Communication Commission, Presque Isle has approximately 7.32% of residents with access to internet speeds of 1 Gigabyte/100 megabytes per second (mbps) upload and download speeds. These services are offered by Pioneer Communications, where 51.1 miles of gigabyte-capable fiber throughout the City of Presque Isle. Most of these lines are located on Main Street, Maysville, North, Parsons, Mechanic, State and Dyer Streets. The majority of residents (96.66%) have access to speeds 250 mbps/25mbps download and upload speeds. This is by and large because of the offerings by Spectrum Cable which offers high-speed internet through cable fiber that run through many areas of the city. While the city has data regarding speeds from the federal level, internet congestion continues to be a challenge for residents and businesses. This is an issue nationwide but one of importance for the city to explore as economic revitalization will be connected to strong broadband coverage and infrastructure.

It is recommended the City of Presque Isle adopt the following goals for improving internet capabilities within the downtown areas:

- ★ Study internet coverages and speeds at a micro-level to determine where improvements can be made
- ★ Develop a Downtown free WiFi program with a sign-in webpage for promoting the Downtown brand and events
- ★ Begin studying and coordinating efforts of planning 5G projects with cellular providers in the downtown



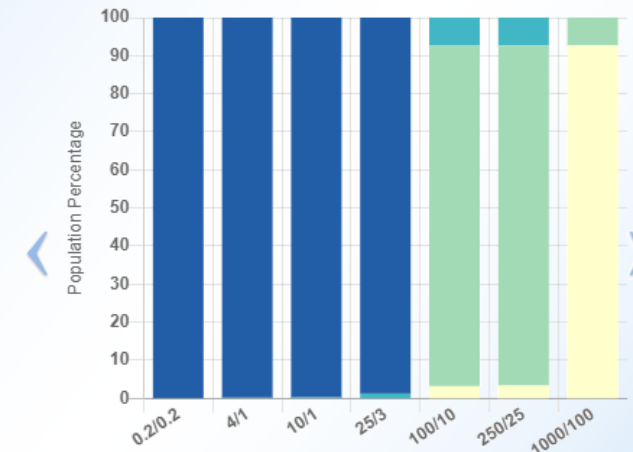
### Presque Isle, ME

#### Number of Fixed Residential Broadband Providers

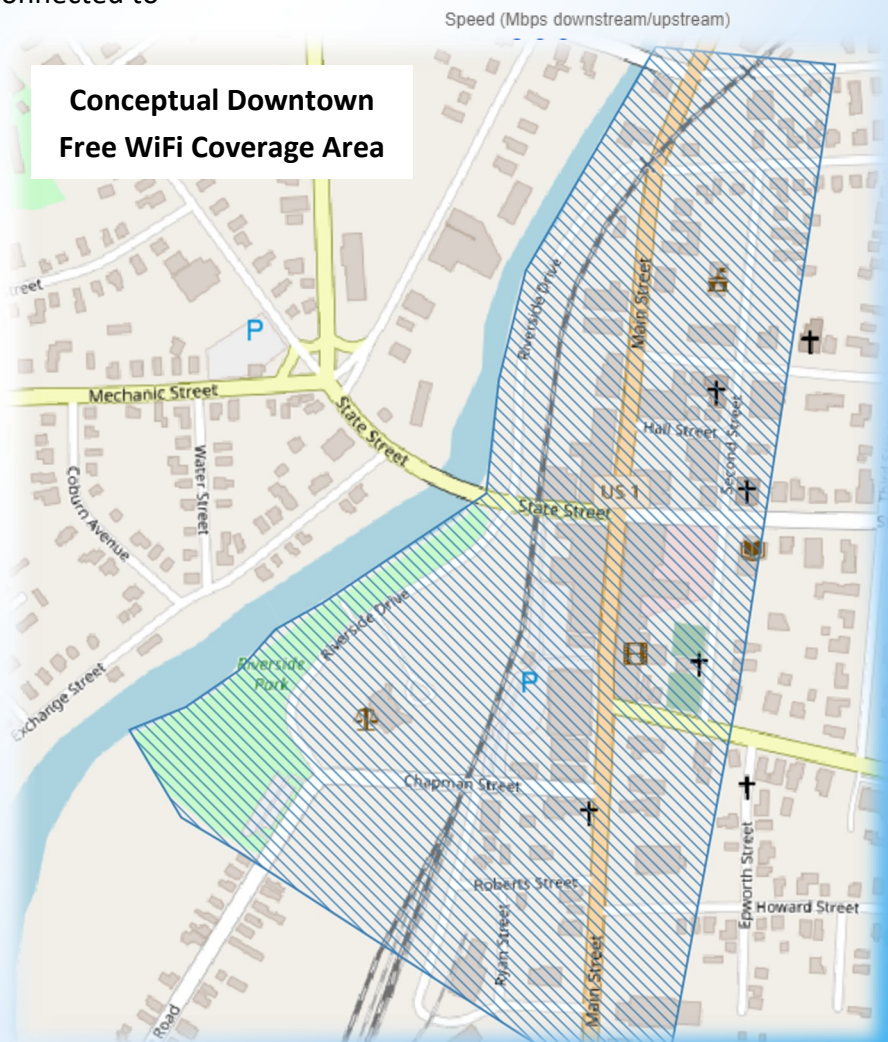


#### Broadband

**Technology** ADSL, Cable, Fiber, Fixed Wireless, Satellite, Other  
**Speed** ≥ 1000/100 Mbps  
**Date** June 2019 (latest public release)



#### Conceptual Downtown Free WiFi Coverage Area



# Strategy for Revitalization

## SWOT Analysis of Downtown Areas

*When assessing a vision for revitalization of the City's Downtown Areas, it is important to consider the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats from the survey results of the previous pages. Below is a SWOT analysis listing the Committee has highlighted from the survey data:*

### **Strengths**

- ★ Strategic location as economic & service hub for Aroostook County
- ★ Increase offerings in recreational amenities & community events
- ★ City diligently planning new projects that benefit downtown areas
- ★ Historical Downtown Main Street Aesthetics
- ★ Updated public infrastructure for size of city

### **Weaknesses**

- ★ Poor building conditions in certain areas
- ★ Sidewalks are in need of improvement
- ★ Lack of city brand and identity recognized within the state & country
- ★ Trend of more properties being taken off the tax-rolls
- ★ Declining population that is aging

### **Opportunities**

- ★ Establish a Downtown TIF District to support implementation of vision
- ★ Increase promotion of downtown programming/marketing
- ★ Potential for new growth given market trends working from home
- ★ For new elderly community village within the downtown
- ★ Establish 10-year strategic plans for city departments and utilities that bring cohesiveness in addressing community challenges in a uniformed approach

### **Threats**

- ★ Change in policy focus by governing body or management
- ★ Unavailable economic redevelopment funding by Federal, State, & Local Governments
- ★ Public opinion/support no longer focused on revitalization efforts



## **Main Street 4-Point Approach**

Presque Isle has adopted a Main Street 4-Point approach in addressing economic revitalization efforts as part of the City's proposed 2019 Comprehensive Plan. The goals over the next ten years using the Main Street 4-Point approach include:

### **Design**

*Supports a community's transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart.*

#### **Short Term (within 5 years)**

- ★ Continue the beautification redesign efforts for the Downtown Revitalization Plan of 2009
  1. Make pedestrian crosswalks more prominent in width and surface texture
  2. Add pedestrian islands at street centerline with bollards or pole-mounted lights at each end
  3. Add pole-mounted pedestrian-scale lighting on Main Street
  4. Add wall-mounted pedestrian-scale lighting in rear parking lots east of the railroad tracks
  5. Add pedestrian crossing lights and signage on Main Street
  6. Add decorative bollards to enhance pedestrian crossing at the railroad tracks
  7. Update street furniture and banners
  8. Add/replace trees on Main Street
- ★ Preparing development and design standards to help guide downtown development in more specific and appropriate ways by using Form Based Codes
- ★ Develop a Downtown free WiFi program with a sign-in webpage for promoting the Downtown brand and events

#### **Intermediate Term (Complete within 10 years)**

- ★ Further develop the Riverside parking lot area by enhancing the pedestrian walkways and group areas
- ★ Establish a Riverside Drive Arts & Cultural District
- ★ Create a designated truck route upon completion of the by-pass to reroute commercial trucking from downtown areas through Maysville Street

#### **Long Term (Complete within 30 years)**

- ★ Explore constructing a parking garage to serve the needs of this mixed-use Downtown Retail Business Area .
- ★ Design a new Elderly Community Village near Rice & Carmichael Streets that will support residents with pedestrian friendly access to local businesses
- ★ Installation of decorative lighting in the Downtown Retail Business Area on Main Street from Chapman Road to Park Street

## **Economic Vitality**

*Focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.*

### ***Short Term (within 5 years)***

- ★ Establish a Downtown Tax Incremental Financing District to financially support marketing and reinvestment in downtown areas
- ★ Partner with educational institutions to develop certification programs
- ★ Coordinate with Public Utility District to complete a mapped assessment of all wastewater and storm-water infrastructure within the downtown areas
- ★ Study internet coverages and speeds at a micro-level to determine where improvements can be made
- ★ Establish a maintenance and replacement plan for sidewalks in fair & poor conditions
- ★ Create a written City Recreational Inventory & Maintenance Plan for department operations

### ***Intermediate Term (Complete within 10 years)***

- ★ Utilize Downtown TIF revenues to fund improved conditions of sidewalk and pedestrian safety that are in compliance with U.S. DOT & Maine DOT guidelines
- ★ Develop a maintenance schedule with the Utility District to plan coordinated projects that will improve wastewater operations and move telephone/electric lines underground at the same time
- ★ Develop transportation programming for the downtown area for visitors and residents using the city Airport
- ★ Consider a Forgiveness Credit Program where major renovation improvements in neighborhood appearances do not experience significant tax increases
- ★ Repurpose Peace Park as a dog-friendly park

### ***Long Term (Complete within 30 years)***

- ★ Discontinue Riverside Drive north of State Street intersecting with Main Street to aid in development of Riverside Art & Cultural District
- ★ Explore traffic solutions for the five-point Mechanic Street intersection and designate a commercial truck route to alleviate congestion into the Downtown Retail Business Area
- ★ Building an ATV/Snowmobile bridge to offer access to the downtown area
- ★ Initiate new age-friendly urban trails and wellness programs
- ★ Expand recreational trail offerings by exploring private-public partnerships



## Organization

*Involves creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the district*

### **Short Term (within 5 years)**

- ★ Revise Downtown TIF District Policies to allow greater flexibility for the diverse downtown areas
- ★ Explore a Rental/Property Maintenance Ordinance to maintain and improve property conditions
- ★ Redevelop a robust facade program for historic building preservation
- ★ Establish a City Recreational Inventory & Maintenance Plan for Department Operations
- ★ Create new water recreational programming along the Presque Isle Stream

### **Intermediate Term (Complete within 10 years)**

- ★ Reform the City's Development Fund to encourage lending to small-businesses for property ownership
- ★ Study internet coverages and speeds at a micro-level to determine where improvements can be made
- ★ Complete traffic counts of city-owned collector streets & roads

### **Long Term (Complete within 30 years)**

- ★ Begin studying and coordinating efforts of planning 5G projects with cellular providers in the downtown
- ★ Coordinate with Public Utility District to complete a mapped assessment of all wastewater and storm-water infrastructure within the downtown areas
- ★ Develop a maintenance schedule with the Utility District to plan coordinated projects that will improve wastewater operations and move telephone/electric lines underground at the same time



## Promotion

*Positions the downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community's unique characteristics.*

### **Short Term (within 5 years)**

- ★ Design a promotional strategy for the downtown brand that is easily recognizable at state & national level
- ★ Increase Downtown promotion and marketing operations to create new programs and events to attract young employees to socialize after work

### **Intermediate Term (Complete within 10 years)**

- ★ Develop and implement a marketing strategy to discover ancillary businesses opportunities to support employment market
- ★ Create 4-season event programming that highlights Presque Isle as a tourism destination for arts, culture, & recreation
- ★ Continue progress made at the Farmer's Market Pavilion area to expand the operations and usage

### **Long Term (Complete within 30 years)**

- ★ Rigorous promotion of Presque Isle's Economic Development programming and promotion to attract new investment to fill-in vacant retail properties
- ★ Develop and improve signage to Downtown Presque Isle that is uniform and inviting for visitors to the area





# Projects

## The City's Capital Improvement Program Analysis for Downtown Presque Isle

The City of Presque Isle has adopted an annual Capital Improvement Program to provide economic revitalization within the Downtown Area. In total, the city anticipates spending \$ 6,285,720.00 for the next five years in projects that will benefit downtown Presque Isle. Most of the revenue sources to accomplish these projects are estimated to be paid for through General Fund appropriations.

The city's share of funding these projects include:

- ✪Technology Upgrades for City Hall Operations (\$ 73,500.00)
- ✪City Hall Renovations (\$ 250,000.00)
- ✪Planning/Consultant Services (\$ 30,000.00)
- ✪A Downtown Area Master & Municipal Comprehensive Plans (\$ 187,000.00)
- ✪Update Sidewalks, & Public Facilities in Downtown (\$ 800,000.00)
- ✪Replace Fire Tanker One (\$ 400,000.00)
- ✪Replace Ambulances Program (\$ 375,000.00)
- ✪Replace Police Cruisers Program (\$ 301,500.00)
- ✪Public Safety Building Maintenance Program (\$ 150,000.00)
- ✪Recreation Vehicle & Equipment Replacement (\$ 161,000.00)
- ✪The Forum Improvement Program (\$ 557,000.00)
- ✪General Park Improvement Program (\$ 145,000.00)
- ✪Bike Path Repaving Program (\$61,000.00)
- ✪Paving Maintenance Program (\$ 1, 269,670.00)
- ✪Public Works Equipment Replacement Program (\$ 1,525,050.00)

For a detailed listing of program features, please visit the appendix in the back of this plan. The majority of capital expenditures relating to the Capital Improvement Program for the City are towards public infrastructure improvements and public safety operations. Given that the majority of economic activity and transportation thoroughfares are located within Presque Isle's Downtown areas, it is anticipated the bulk of these projected programs are justified in revitalizing the downtown for the benefit the businesses and residents that reside in the Downtown Business, Retail and Industrial Areas. The majority of funding is intended to be from the City's General Fund, however there are revenues planned from the State, miscellaneous grants, and from another Tax Increment Financing District (BLD TIF).

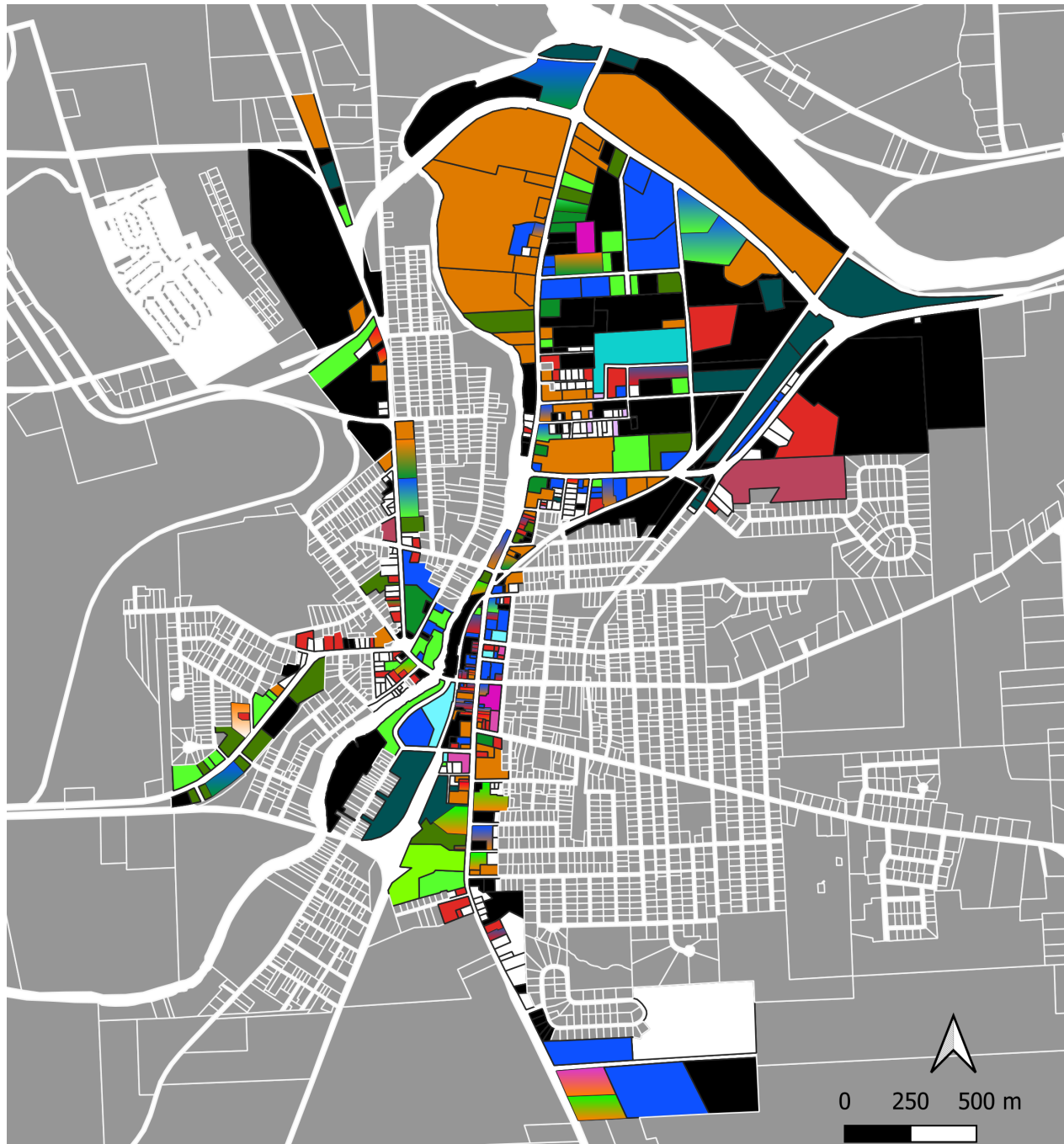
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6. Employment Demographics Map
7. Outdoor Recreation Map
8. Water & Sewer Utilities Map
9. Cable Fiber Map
10. Sidewalk & Curbing Map
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13. U.S. DOT Guide for Maintaining Pedestrian Facilities
14. City of Presque Isle Capital Improvements Project Descriptions
15. City of Presque Isle Sign Ordinance
16. Luminaire & Post Survey Results
17. Incident Report
18. Minutes from Downtown Steering Committee



### Parcel Use Type Breakdown

Business Type	# of Parcels	% Locally Owned	% Total Assessment	% of Acreage
Banks	7	29%	3%	1%
Church	3	100%	1%	0%
Elderly Housing	1	100%	2%	2%
Hospitality	2	50%	4%	0%
Land	95	53%	3%	36%
Mobile Home	6	100%	0%	0%
Multi-Family Residential	44	52%	6%	4%
Office	43	65%	16%	8%
Retail	50	62%	30%	17%
School	2	100%	1%	2%
Service Garage	23	74%	5%	4%
Single Family Dwelling	125	76%	7%	8%
Social Hall/Government	3	100%	1%	1%
Storage	16	63%	1%	7%
Utility	1	0%	0%	0%
Warehouse	18	44%	4%	3%
Hospitality/Retail	1	0%	1%	1%
Office/Multi-Family Residential	15	67%	3%	1%
Office/Retail Space	9	89%	2%	1%
Office/Service Garage	5	80%	2%	1%
Office/Warehouse	2	50%	1%	1%
Retail Space/Multi-Family	12	83%	2%	0%
Retail Space/SFD	1	0%	0%	0%
Retail Space/Service Garage	6	67%	2%	1%
Retail Space/Warehouse	3	67%	1%	1%
Warehouse/Multi-Family	2	50%	0%	0%

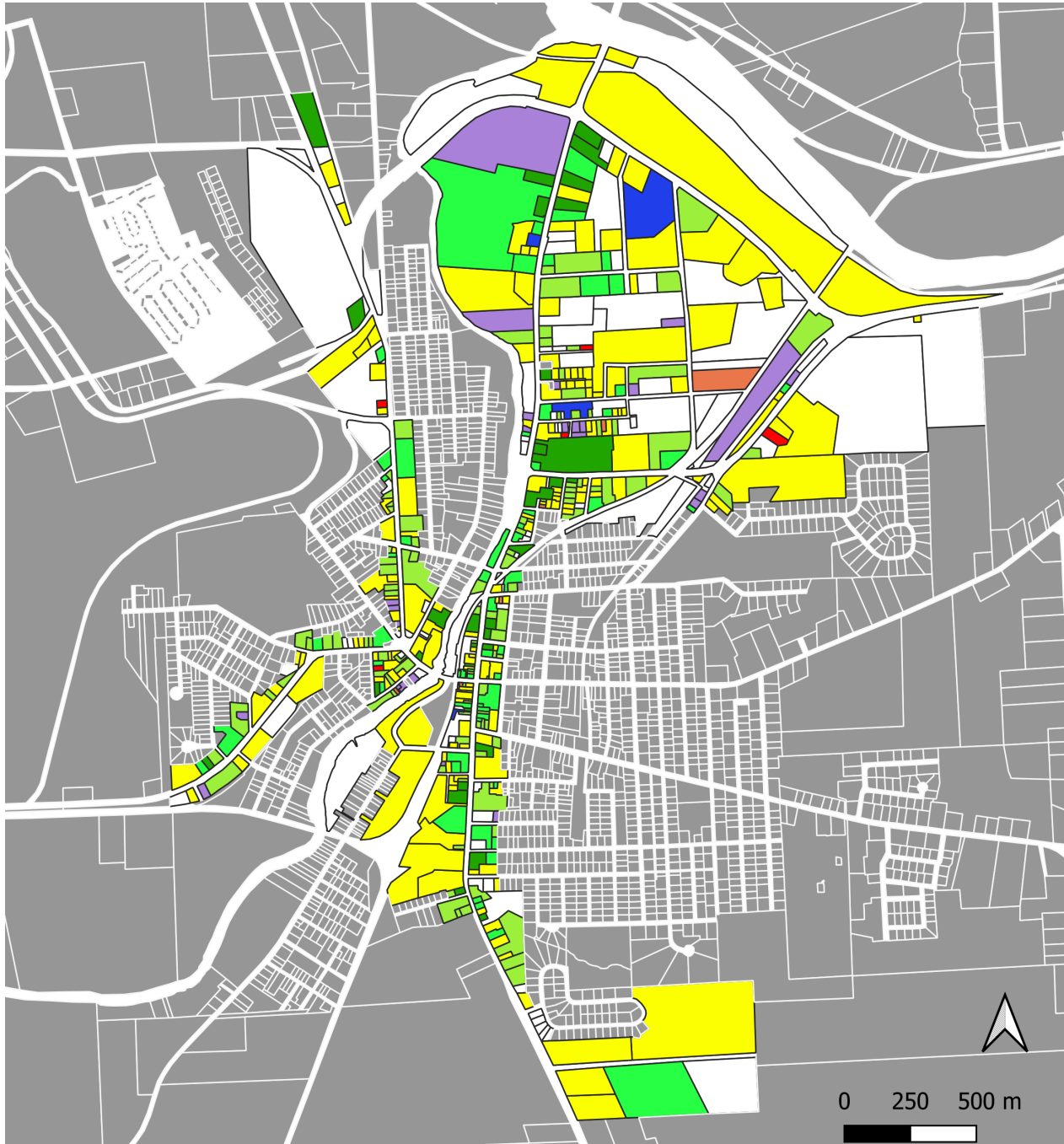


# Legend

PARCEL	
BANK	
CHURCH	
ELDERLY HOUSING	
HOSPITALITY	
HOSPITALITY/RETAIL SPACE	
LAND	
MALL	
MOBILE HOME	
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	
OFFICE	
OFFICE/MULTI-RESIDENCE	
OFFICE/RETAIL SPACE	
OFFICE/SERVICE GARAGE	
OFFICE/WAREHOUSE	
RETAIL SPACE	
RETAIL SPACE/MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENCE	
RETAIL SPACE/RESIDENTIAL	
RETAIL SPACE/SERVICE GARAGE	
RETAIL SPACE/WAREHOUSE	
SCHOOL	
SERVICE GARAGE	
SERVICE GARAGE/WAREHOUSE	
SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING	
SOCIAL HALL	
STORAGE	
UTILITY	
WAREHOUSE	
WAREHOUSE/MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	
N/A	







Department of Economic & Community Development  
City of Presque Isle

12 Second Street  
Presque Isle, ME 04769  
207-760-2727

LEGEND

Building Condition	
ABOVE AVERAGE	
AVERAGE	
BELOW AVERAGE	
EXCELLENT	
FAIR	
GOOD	
NO BUILDING	
POOR	
VERY GOOD	
Downtown TIF Spreadsheet Parcels MASTER	

# FCC Internet Coverage Map & Conceptual Downtown Free Coverage Project Area

Presque Isle, ME



Number of Fixed Residential Broadband Providers



Broadband



**Technology** ADSL, Cable, Fiber, Fixed Wireless, Satellite, Other  
**Speed**  $\geq 1000/100$  Mbps  
**Date** June 2019 (latest public release)

Presque Isle

