

### *Town Office*

Public facilities and services are concentrated in northwestern Winslow. These facilities and services are designed to provide the maximum benefit to residents, including efficiency, which can be produced by locating in the densest part of town. Forty years ago, the town moved from a Town Meeting format to a Town Council. In addition to the seven-member elected council, there is a full-time Town Manager who operates the day-to-day functions of the town. The Town Manager has 8 general government staff, including assessing and code enforcement operations. The full-time Code Enforcement Officer also serves as the municipal information technology assistant.

### *Health Care*

Health care is a major concern across Maine, and in Winslow. With an increasing aging population in town, access to quality health care will become even more of an issue in the upcoming years. Waterville has two major hospitals – the Thayer Unit of MaineGeneral and Inland Hospital (which is a osteopathic hospital). Though these two hospitals provide sufficient service for the Waterville-Winslow region, MaineGeneral recently announced their plans to close down inpatient services at the Thayer Unit within the next six years. That would leave only one hospital in the region. MaineGeneral’s main operations are in Augusta, and their strategic plan is to expand services in Augusta once the Thayer Unit in Waterville is closed. However, that would leave Winslow residents with a thirty minute drive for services that they can now receive in ten minutes.

Many general health care clinics and dental offices exist in Winslow. There are also numerous new outpatient and laboratory facilities in the FirstPark regional commercial park in Oakland. In addition to these private clinics, there are many non-profit organizations in the region providing healthcare-related services. The Winslow budget includes support for the Kennebec Valley Community Action Program Bus Service (which brings many seniors to clinics), American Red Cross, Senior Spectrum, Kennebec Valley Mental Health, Mid-Maine Interfaith Shelter, Hospice Volunteers, Family Violence Project, Rape Crisis Assistance & Prevention, and Crisis & Counseling Centers.

### *Public Works*

There are 15 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee in the Winslow Public Works Department. There is a new public works garage on Halifax Street, housing all trucks and equipment for the department. In 2002, a salt sand shed was constructed to keep salt under cover and maintain water quality. The staff and equipment is tasked with maintaining approximately 125 miles of road, including sidewalks, culverts, signs, signal lighting, and sewer and storm

drainage (30 miles of sewer lines and 20 miles of stormwater lines), as well as multiple town properties and vehicles.



**New Public Works Garage**

The department also provides weekly curbside residential refuse collection. This is kitchen-type waste only. Bulky and demolition-type waste should be brought directly to Waterville. Winslow and Waterville share a waste transfer station and recycling center, both located in Waterville. Recycling can either be dropped off at the small facility located at the Town Library (on Halifax Street), or brought directly to the large Recycling Center in Waterville (at the Industrial Park). Hazardous waste is collected during special regional collection days, usually on Saturdays, throughout the year.

The current recycling rate for Winslow is only approximately 33%. This represents an increase from the mid-1990s, when the town was only recycling approximately 25% of its waste. Nonetheless, state officials believe a realistic goal for every municipality is 35% recycling rate. The breakdown of recycling materials in Winslow can be reviewed in the report attached at the end of this chapter.

The sewage collection system in Winslow is town-owned and maintained by the Public Works Department. A large pipe under the Kennebec River connects Winslow's sewage system to the treatment plant in Waterville. This plant is owned by the Kennebec Sanitary Treatment District, which is jointly owned by Winslow, Waterville, Fairfield, and Benton. A major upgrade to the treatment plant and main pump stations was completed in 1999, including processing equipment, heating, ventilation, and control systems being replaced to allow for another 20 years of proper use. The upgrade was designed to serve an average of 14.9 million gallons per day, which translates into a population of 39,870. The current population being

served by the system is approximately 28,000, leaving ample room for new connections over the next 10 years.

The public water supply, both domestic and fire protection, is provided by the Kennebec Water District. The District serves Waterville, Winslow, Fairfield, Benton, and North Vassalboro. The single source of water is China Lake. The Kennebec Water District has the unique distinction of being the oldest water district in the nation. It was created by an Act of the Maine Legislature in 1899, and shortly thereafter began taking water from China Lake. The District's facilities were originally designed and constructed to serve not just the residential population in central Maine, but also the numerous industrial plants. Due to the steady decline of industrialization in this region, there is now significant capacity for new water customers. In 1994, the District was processing 11.5 million gallons per day. By 2006, the District was only processing 4.5 million gallons per day.

Electricity in Winslow is provided by the Central Maine Power Company. There is a networked system of high- and medium-voltage lines encircling the greater Winslow-Waterville area. This network is connected to the larger high-voltage grid serving the rest of the state and New England. Two substations serve local residents, one on Benton Ave. and the other on the China Rd. Each of these substations has untapped capacity, and any new growth in town could be supported by the existing electricity supply network.

#### *Police and Fire*

The Police and Fire Departments are housed within the main Town Office complex on Benton Avenue. Both have a sizable staff of full-time and reserve personnel. The Police Department employs nine full-time and four part-time officers. They also have one administrative staff person. The Fire Department has seven full-time and 24 part-time firefighters. Both departments also have some newer equipment, such as computer technology, as well as older equipment, such as some pumper fire trucks.



**Winslow Town Office, also housing Police and Fire Services**

There is some regional cost-sharing of services. The Fire Department shares a chief with Waterville. Fire truck equipment is also used to provide service to neighboring towns. The Police Department also provides a School Resource Officer to the Winslow School System. Police officers and firefighters provide emergency and rescue services to Winslow residents. In fact, two-thirds of all calls to the Fire Department are for rescue services, as opposed to putting out fires.

### *Library*

In the late 1990s, the town renovated an old roller skating rink on Halifax St. into the new town library. It is a nice one-story structure, including a large separate room for display of historic resources. The town employs three full-time and two part-time library staff. There are over 5,000 patrons and over 50,000 materials for adults and children.



**Winslow Town Library (recycling drop-off on right)**

## *Schools*

Winslow residents currently send their children to schools in the School Union #52 system. The elementary, junior, and high schools are located next to each other in a large school complex east of Benton Ave. just north of the Town Office. With a new high school, the system has positioned itself for quality education in the years to come. Also, with this new building, the school system is only operating at 80% capacity. The future of SU52 is in question, however, as state school consolidation legislation works its way through the system. It is still unclear if and how Winslow schools will consolidate into a larger school system.

In addition to providing childhood education, Winslow schools provide adult education programs in the evenings. There is even a daycare program in the elementary school. The high school offers an alternative education program to encourage some kids to stay in school. Approximately 2 in 5 kids in the SU52 system receive a free or reduced cost lunch at school.

## **Analysis and Key Issues**

Though Winslow has an upgraded public water and sewer system with room for new customers, the systems could use some work. One of the main costs for sewage treatment plants is processing stormwater flow due to stormwater leaking into the sewage system. This is a significant problem in Winslow, and due to both a poor storm drainage infrastructure and old sewage system pipes. The town needs to continue funding the capital improvements that replace the aging storm drainage system and sewage pipes.

Winslow residents and businesses should make more of an effort to increase recycling. With residential trash pick-up, the town should consider curbside recycling pick-up. Though there would be an increased cost, the town would benefit significantly from increased revenue from recycling and reduced landfill costs. Studies have shown that urban residents receiving curbside waste pick-up are much less likely to bring their recycling to a separate location.

Major public facilities, including town office, schools, public works garage, and library, are located in northwestern Winslow. Recent investments, such as the new high school and public works garage, placed these buildings within the existing dense developments in northwest Winslow. The proposed Future Growth Area is based in large part upon the extent of the existing public water and sewer line. All these statements lead to the conclusion that Winslow is investing in its growth area now, and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

## **Policies**

- The town should efficiently meet identified public facility and service needs.
- The town should provide public facilities and services in a manner that promotes and supports growth and development in identified growth areas.

## **Strategies**

- ✓ The town should identify any capital improvements needed to maintain or upgrade public services to accommodate the community's anticipated growth and changing demographics.

The Town has a comprehensive Capital Improvements Plan now, and it should continue to maintain and review said Plan.

- ✓ The town should locate new public facilities comprising at least 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments in designated growth areas.

The town recently constructed a new high school and public works garage in the growth area, and future plans for major capital investment, such as a new police department office or general town office, include locating these facilities in the growth area. The Town Council should continue its practice of locating new public facilities in the growth area.

- ✓ The town should explore options for regional delivery of local services.

The Town Council should continue supporting regional organizations providing health care and community services. The town should also continue exploring collaboration options with Waterville and surrounding communities for fire and police services, waste disposal and recycling, water treatment, education, and all other municipal services.