VERONA ISLAND, MAINE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2006

Prepared by the
Verona Island Comprehensive Plan
Committee

VERONA ISLAND - MAINE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
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Verona Island shall encourage both orderly residential and business growth and development while protecting the town's rural character, preventing sprawl, protecting the quantity and quality of the town's water resources and encouraging the preservation of large tracts of land for other locally appropriate and sustainable uses.

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INTRODUCTION

The Verona Island comprehensive plan is an advisory document that reflects desired growth patterns among town residents. Overall, it identifies current issues that the town is currently facing, or expects to face in the next 5-10 years. This plan is an update of the 1978 plan and replaces that document.

The plan will only become valid upon adoption by town residents at a town meeting; contents will be the legal basis for any changes to land use ordinances, which must similarly be voted on at a town meeting. It is important to remember that a public hearing is required to take place before a town vote. Also, since conditions in the town are expected to change over time, the plan should be reviewed on a periodic basis and updated accordingly.

The first section of the plan is the Inventory and Analysis section, which documents conditions in the town and is current as of December, 31, 2004. It should be noted that the Maine Department of Transportation was involved in the design and construction of a new bridge spanning the Penobscot Bridge between Prospect and Verona Island during the development of this plan. From information in this section of the plan, it is possible to glean trends or issues that stand out on Verona Island, used to formulate recommendations included in later sections of the plan. The second section includes the goals, policies, implementation strategies, and future land use strategies.

The comprehensive plan will be useful for the select board, planning board, and other town committees during any decision-making processes. The plan also will be useful whenever grant monies are sought after for municipal projects.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN INDEX
TOWN OF VERONA ISLAND – 2006

I. Inventory and Analysis

A. Population....2
B. Economy....8
C. Housing....16
D. Transportation....22
E. Public Facilities....25
F. Recreation....31
G. Marine Resources....35
H. Water Resources....38
I. Critical Natural Resources....40
J. Agriculture and Forestry Resources....43
K. Historic Resources....45
L. Existing Land Use....50
M. Fiscal Capacity....52
Summary....55

II. Goals, Objectives and Implementation Strategies

A. Population....58
B. Economy....58
C. Housing....60
D. Transportation....61
E. Public Facilities....61
F. Recreation....64
G. Marine Resources....64
H. Water Resources....64
I. Critical Natural Resources....68
J. Agriculture and Forestry Resources....69
K. Historic and Archaeological Resources....70
L. Existing Land Use....71
Capital Improvement Plan....73
Future Land Use....74

Maps

(Please note that full-size, color maps may be viewed at the Verona Island municipal building and are also available on the HCPC website at www.hcpcme.org)

Appendices

Town of Verona Island Citizen Survey

A. Inventory and Analysis - Population

1. Purpose

In order to best project the impact that population change will have on Verona Island 10 years into the future, it is important to look at past population trends and understand how they relate to those in Hancock County and the state. Future population changes will affect the need for housing, public facilities, transportation systems, recreational facilities and natural resources.

2. Key Findings and Issues

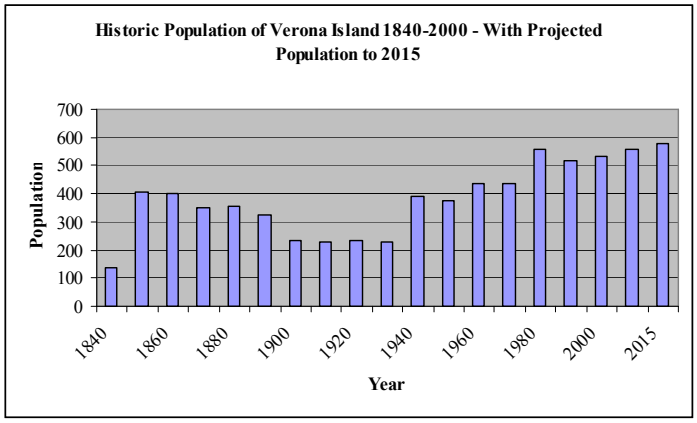
Though Verona Island's growth rate was lower than Hancock County overall in the last decade, the community did experience population growth. As of 2000, it had 533 year-round residents. The State Planning Office estimates that Verona Island's population will experience a somewhat higher rate of growth in the next decade. At the same time, Verona Island's population is also getting older. There is no noticeable increase in the resident population in the summer months.

3. Public Opinion Survey

Approximately 69 percent of survey respondents said they would like Verona Island's population to remain the same. Fifteen percent would like to see an increase while five percent would like a decrease. Fifty-six percent of the seasonal resident respondents said that they plan to make Verona Island their year-round home at some point in the future.

4. Historical Population Trends

Overall, Maine's population growth has been one of the slowest in the nation, with an increase of only 3.8 percent between 1990 and 2000. Between 1990 and 2000, Hancock County's population increased by 10.3 percent, similar to southern coastal regions. In recent years, Verona Island has generally experienced a lower rate of growth than the county overall. Verona Island's population ranges from a low of 139 residents in 1840 to a high of 559 in 1980. Generally, the island experienced a period of rapid growth in the mid - 1800's, followed by a relatively steady decline until 1930 when the population began to once again rise. Verona Island, in the year 2000, had a population of 533.



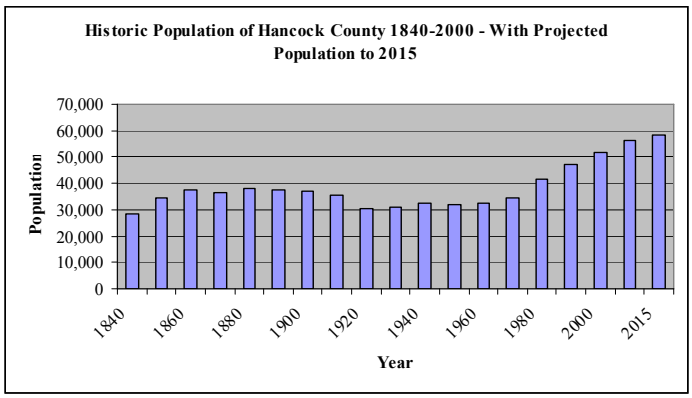


Table A1

Historical Year-Round Population Trends
Verona Island and Hancock County

Year	Verona Island	Percent Change	Hancock County	Percent Change
1840	139		28,605	
1850	405	191.4%	34,372	20.2%
1860	399	-1.5%	37,757	9.8%
1870	352	-11.8%	36,495	-3.3%
1880	356	1.1%	38,129	4.5%
1890	323	-9.3%	37,312	-2.1%
1900	234	-27.6%	37,241	-0.2%
1910	229	-2.1%	35,575	-4.5%
1920	233	1.7%	30,361	-14.7%
1930	228	-2.1%	30,721	1.2%
1940	391	71.5%	32,422	5.5%
1950	374	-4.3%	32,105	-1.0%
1960	435	16.3%	32,293	0.6%
1970	437	0.5%	34,590	7.1%
1980	559	27.9%	41,781	20.8%
1990	515	-7.9%	46,948	12.4%
2000	533	3.5%	51,791	10.3%
2015	577	3.2%	58,569	3.8%

Source: U.S. Census and 2015 estimates for Hancock County and Verona by the State Planning Office

The most notable population change occurred on Verona Island between 1840 and 1850, when it nearly tripled. Other periods of rapid growth occurred in the decades between 1930 and 1940 (71.5 percent) and 1970 and 1980 (27.9 percent). The greatest population decline occurred between 1890 and 1900 (-27.6 percent).

The State Planning Office estimates in 2015, the population is estimated to increase to 577, or just over eight percent more than in the 2000. Hancock County's population is expected to increase by approximately 13 percent, from 51,791 in 2000 to 58,569 in 2015. It should be noted, however, that small town populations are very difficult to project since there are a large number of factors affecting growth and decline. Any estimate must be considered general and should be revised at least every 5 years as more up-to-date projections become available.

By looking at natural population increases or decreases it is possible to determine the amount of population change that is due to net migration into or out of a community. Between 1990 and 2000, Verona Island's overall population grew by 18 people although there were 42 deaths and only 29 births. This means that there were approximately 31 people who moved into the community during the decade (it is possible that a larger or smaller number of people moved into the community if people were also moving away from the island).

5. Race, Age and Gender Characteristics

Approximately 48.6 percent of Verona Island's population is male and 51.4 percent is female. The 2000 U.S. Census found that 98.7 percent of Verona Island's population is white.

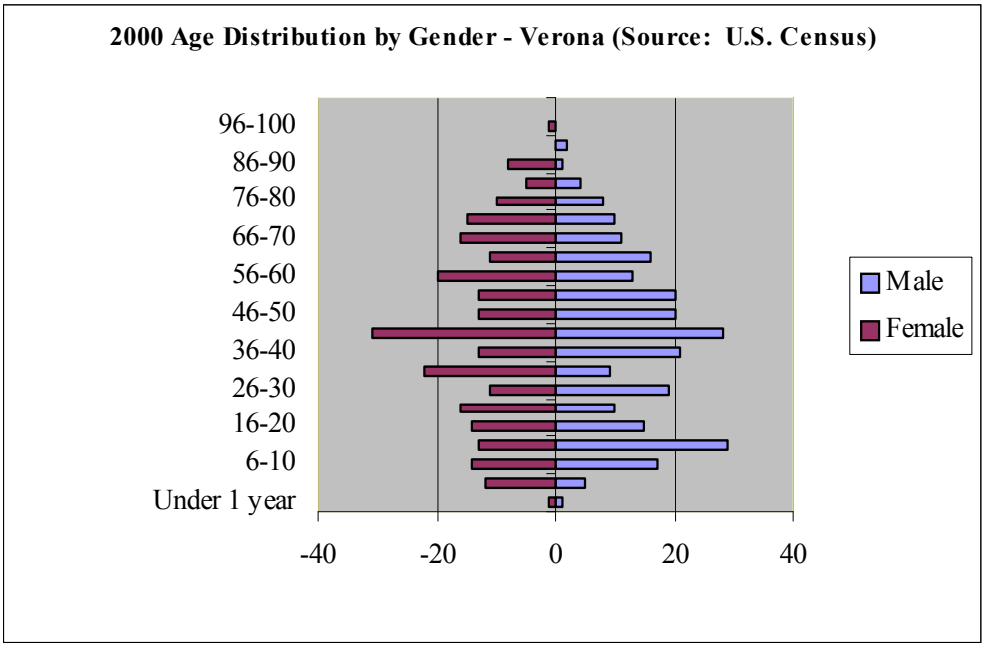
Verona Island has a higher median age than Hancock County as a whole. The median age of Verona Island residents increased from 29.4 in 1980 to 43.5 in 2000 while the median age for Hancock County changed from 32.7 in 1980 to 40.7 in 2000.

Table A2
Components of Verona Island's Population Change 1990-2000

Total 1990 Population	515
Births 1990-1999	29
Deaths 1990-1999	42
Natural Decrease	-13
Net In-Migration 1990-1999	31
2000 Population	533

Source: U.S. Census, Verona Island Annual Reports

The age group with the largest number of Verona Island residents is in the 45-64 year category while Hancock County overall has the largest number of people in the 20-44 year category.



Verona Island has a smaller percentage of people aged 0-19 and a greater number of people over the age of 65 compared to Hancock County overall. The change in age distribution on Verona Island between 1980 and 1990 is shown in the following table.

Table A3
2000 Age Breakdown: Verona Island and Hancock County

Verona Island			Hancock County		
Years of Age	**Number**	**Percent**	**Years of Age**	**Number**	**Percent**
0-4	11	2.1%	0-4	2,516	4.9%
5-19	106	19.9%	5-19	10,292	19.9%
20-44	157	29.5%	20-44	16,809	32.5%
45-64	163	30.6%	45-64	13,889	26.8%
65+	96	18.0%	65+	8,285	16.0%
Total	**533**	**100.0%**	**Total**	**51,791**	**100.0%**

Source: U.S. Census

6. Educational Attainment

The U.S. Census tracks the educational attainment of persons aged 25 years and older. According to the 2002 Census, there were 401 people on Verona Island that fall into that category. Of this group, approximately 82.5 percent of the group had a high school diploma or had attained a higher level of education. In comparison, in Hancock County overall, approximately 87.8 percent of the population 25 and older had attained a high school diploma or higher level of education. Only 18.5 percent of Verona Island residents had at least a bachelors degree, compared to 27.1 percent in Hancock County overall. Thus, educational attainment levels are higher in Hancock County than Verona Island.

Table A4
Educational Attainment - Verona Island and Hancock County

(Age 25 and older)	**Verona Island**		**Hancock County**	
	Total	**Percent**	**Total**	**Percent**
Less than 9th grade	24	6.0%	1,335	3.7%
9th-12th grade, no diploma	46	11.5%	3,121	8.6%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	177	44.1%	12,539	34.4%
Some college, no degree	66	16.5%	7,099	19.5%
Associate degree	14	3.5%	2,444	6.7%
Bachelor's degree	48	12.0%	6,213	17.1%
Graduate or professional degree	26	6.5%	3,665	10.1%

Source: U.S. Census

7. Household Size

Like Hancock County, the number of households on Verona Island has increased during each of the last three decades while the number of people per household has decreased. Factors such as higher divorce rates and the tendency for families have fewer children may be reasons for the decreasing numbers. According to the 2000 Census, Verona Island's average household size was 2.39 compared to 2.31 for Hancock County. Household sizes are important in estimating the number of housing units that will be built in the future. It is expected that further decreases in household size will be minimal. All year-round Verona Island residents are assumed to live in households as opposed to group quarters such as nursing homes, dormitories or other institutions.

Table A5
Change in Household Size - Verona Island and Hancock County

	Verona Island		Hancock County	
Year	**Total Households**	**People/ Household**	**Total Households**	**People/ Household**
1980	178	3.14	15,442	2.62
1990	186	2.77	18,342	2.48
2000	223	2.39	21,864	2.31
2015*	247	2.34	26,818	2.18

Source: U.S. Census
**Year 2015 estimates for # of households are extrapolations obtained using the following formula: (pop. Projection for 2015 - persons living group quarters /persons per household).*

8. Household Income

Personal income patterns concern the town mainly through economic development and affordable housing issues, as discussed later. Income levels also affect the town's economy and ability to raise revenue through taxes or fees, and may increase municipal expenditures.

Table A6
2000 Median Household Income, Verona Island and Adjacent Towns

Town	**Median Household Income**
Bucksport	$34,812
Orland	$39,345
Prospect	$36,607
Stockton Springs	$37,050
Verona Island	$41,827
Hancock County	$35,811

Source: U.S. Census

At $41,827, Verona Island's median income is higher than neighboring towns as well as Hancock County as a whole ($35,811). Approximately 25 percent of Verona

Island's working population make between $35,000 and $49,000. The next two largest categories are at higher income levels in contrast to income levels in Hancock County as a whole. Nearly 25 percent of Verona Island's working population makes less than $25,000, compared to 35 percent of Hancock County overall.

Table A7
Household Income - Verona Island and Hancock County

Amount	Verona Island		Hancock County	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Less than $10,000	20	8.6%	2,195	10.0%
$10,000 to $14,999	10	4.3%	1,778	8.1%
$15,000 to $24,999	27	11.6%	3,346	15.3%
$25,000 to $34,999	29	12.4%	3,342	15.3%
$35,000 to $49,999	57	24.5%	4,057	18.6%
$50,000 to $74,999	39	16.7%	3,945	18.0%
$75,000 to $99,999	34	14.6%	1,664	7.6%
$100,000 to $149,999	15	6.4%	1,066	4.9%
$150,000 to $199,999	2	0.9%	248	1.1%
$200,000 or more	0	0.0%	218	1.0%
Total	233	100%	21,859	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census

9. Seasonal Trends

The 2000 Census identified 22 housing units on Verona Island, or only 8.4 percent, that are used for seasonal, recreational or occasional use. In comparison, 31.4 percent of the housing units in Hancock County are determined to be for seasonal use. Year-round residents of Verona Island report that they do not notice any significant seasonal fluctuations.

B. Inventory and Analysis – Economy

1. Purpose

An understanding of recent employment trends and the local and regional economy is important if Verona Island's current and future needs are to be assessed.

2. Key Findings and Issues

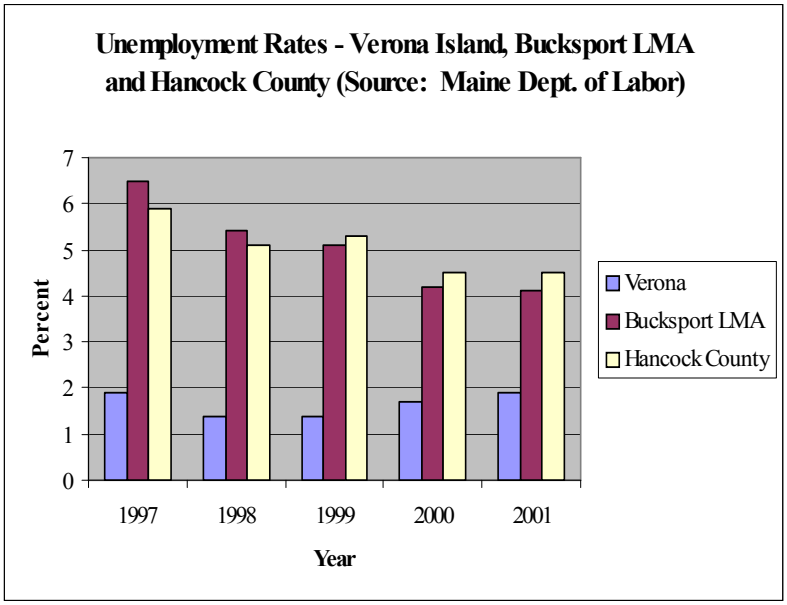
There are few businesses on Verona Island that employ more than one or two people, indicating that the majority of Verona Island's residents must travel outside of their community for work. Of those that travel outside of the community for work, Bucksport and Bangor are the two most common destinations. A significant number of businesses that are located on Verona Island are located along Route 1; there are also many home-based businesses. There is a lower unemployment rate among Verona Island residents than the rest of Hancock County and the median household income tends to be higher than neighboring communities.

3. Public Opinion Survey

Thirty-four percent of those surveyed thought that that job opportunities were a problem on Verona Island and 46 percent did not. Sixty-seven percent of respondents said they would like to see Verona Island stay much like it is today and 16 percent said they would like to see more suburban development, or a mix of residences and small businesses. Only eight percent said they would like to see additional industrial and/or commercial development. Fifty-seven Verona Island residents stated that if commercial development were to occur, it should take place along Route 1 (47 percent said the same thing about hotel and motel development). Sixty-three percent said they would not like to see heavy industrial operations be developed anywhere in town.

4. Recent Employment Trends

According to the U.S. Census, the labor force is comprised of people aged 18 to 64 who are able to work. According the 2001 figures from the Maine Department of Labor, approximately 212 people, or nearly 40 percent of Verona Island's year-round population was in the civilian labor force. These figures only consider persons employed or looking for work. They do not include self-employed persons or those who were not looking for work during the period of time during which the data was collected. The table below shows employment statistics for Verona Island, the Bucksport labor market area (LMA) and Hancock County over a period of five years.



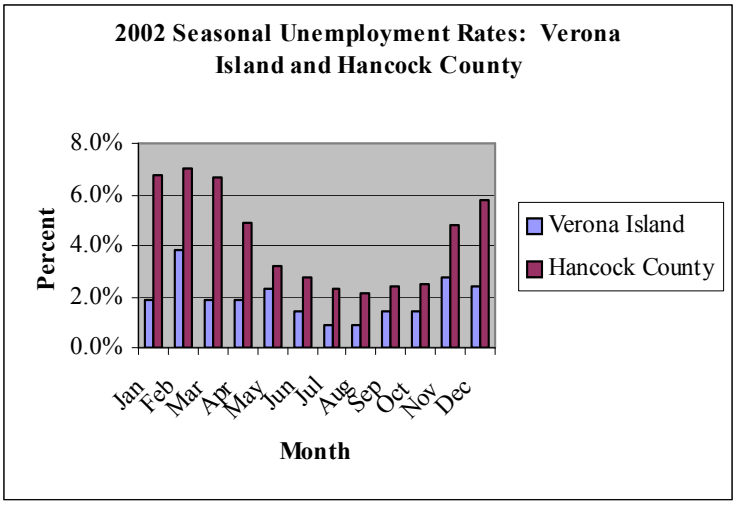
Overall, unemployment rates on Verona Island are lower than the average for both Hancock County and the Bucksport Labor Market Area (LMA). Of those 212 people in the civilian work force, approximately four percent, on average, were unemployed in 2001, resulting in an overall unemployment rate of 1.9 percent for the entire year. Low unemployment rates may be one possible explanation for a higher median income on Verona Island than surrounding towns or Hancock County on average.

Table B1
Employment Statistics - Verona Island, Bucksport Labor Market Area (LMA) and Hancock County

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Verona Island	Labor Force	210	208	217	230	212
	Employment	206	205	214	226	208
	Unemployment	4	3	3	4	4
	Unemployment Rate	1.9	1.4	1.4	1.7	1.9
Bucksport LMA	Labor Force	5,107	4,982	5,181	5,425	4,989
	Employment	4,776	4,714	4,918	5,198	4,786
	Unemployment	331	268	263	227	203
	Unemployment Rate	6.5	5.4	5.1	4.2	4.1
Hancock County	Labor Force	27,697	27,131	28,440	29,629	29,110
	Employment	26,062	25,752	26,937	28,297	27,803
	Unemployment	1635	1379	1503	1332	1307
	Unemployment Rate	5.9	5.1	5.3	4.5	4.5

Note: The Bucksport Labor Market Area (LMA) includes Bucksport, Orland, Verona Island, Prospect, Dedham and Stockton Springs.

Source: Maine Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Employment Security



Hancock County, as a whole, experiences considerable seasonal fluctuations in its employment rates. In 2001, Hancock County unemployment rates increased between January and February to the highest unemployment rate of 7.7 percent for the year. Rates decreased steadily from February until September, when the unemployment rate reached a low 2.2 percent and once again began to rise. During 2002, the highest unemployment rates were 7 percent, again occurring during the month of February. The lowest was 2.1 percent in August. Although there appears to be a very similar

pattern on Verona Island, an unemployment trend analysis is less reliable because of the small number of people.

Table B2
2000 and 2001 Seasonal Unemployment Rates - Verona Island and Hancock County

	2001		2002	
Month	Verona Island	Hancock County	Verona Island	Hancock County
Jan	3.6%	7.5%	1.9%	6.8%
Feb	3.3%	7.7%	3.8%	7.0%
Mar	3.7%	7.5%	1.9%	6.7%
Apr	2.4%	6.3%	1.9%	4.9%
May	1.4%	4.3%	2.3%	3.2%
Jun	1.9%	3.3%	1.4%	2.8%
Jul	1.4%	2.4%	0.9%	2.3%
Aug	1.4%	2.3%	0.9%	2.1%
Sep	1.4%	2.2%	1.4%	2.4%
Oct	1.4%	2.5%	1.4%	2.5%
Nov	1.4%	4.8%	2.8%	4.8%
Dec	1.0%	4.8%	2.4%	5.8%

Source: Maine Department of Labor

5. Verona Island Businesses Today

Verona Island has a relatively large number of home-based small business enterprises within the community. During the development of this Comprehensive Plan, Committee members compiled a list of nearly 30 Verona Island home-based businesses, many of which are part-time. It is clear that they constitute a significant level of economic activity in town.

Table B3
Verona Island Businesses as of 12/2004

Business	Street Address	Type of Business	Telephone	Number of Employees
Bridges Auto Body	42 West Side Drive	Auto	469-7255	2
Bridges Gun Shop	42 West Side Drive	Licensed Gun Dealer	469-7255	1
Dale's Take-out	87 US Rte 1	Seasonal Take-out Seafood	469-1012	3
Debits & Credits	100 US Rte 1, Suite 3	Notary, Taxes	469-3389	1
Ellie's Ceramics	153 East Side Drive	Ceramics	469-7655	1
Fort View Variety	87 US Rte 1	Food, Gas, Pizza, etc.	469-0004	9
Hanscom Trucking	83 East Side Drive	Trucking, Excavation	469-3998	1

Island Antiques	67 US Rte 1	Antiques	469-3735	2
Island Automotive	61 US Rte 1	Auto Repair, Routine Service	469-7966	2
Island Garden Cakes	72 West Side Drive	Catering	469-9979	2
Island Pool & Spa. Inc.	184 US Rte 1	Pool and Spa Sales	469-6004	5
J.D.'s Island Market	100 US Rte 1	Market, Tagging Station	469-2539	3
Kneeland Embroidery	7 Bridges Road	Custom Embroidery	469-7560	1
Kravings	42 US Hwy 1	Food	469-9900	1
Lanphere Excavation	66 West Side Drive	Trucking, Excavation	469-3479	1
Life's Treasures	5 Cove Street	50's Kitchen Utensils	469-6291	1
Linda Biz	98 West Side Drive	Graphic Design, Marketing	469-1049	1
Magical Memories	87 US Rte 1	Scrapbooking, Rubber Stamps	469-3931	1
Mayari Products	100 US Rte 1	Soaps, Beauty Items	469-0868	1
Newcomb Auto Body	136 US Rte 1	Auto Sales and Repairs	469-6480	2
Robert McIntyre	234 Westside Dr.	Rototilling, Bush Hogging	469-7024	1
Seabreeze Pizza & Subs	1 Maple Street	Food Service	469-1110	5-6
Shorey Mulch		Seasonal		1
Uncle Henry's Computers	98 West Side Drive	Computer Maintenance, Training	469-1049	1
Varnum's Glass	293 East Side Dr.	Auto Glass	469-6895	1
Verona Island Steel & Machine	83 West Side Dr.	Mfg. and Repair (Machine Products)	469-9600	3
Wm. Grey	63 West Side Drive	Custom Exhaust and Repairs	469-7467	1

Wooster's Healing Stones	133 US Rte 1	Minerals, Stones, Gems	469-3207	2
Source: Comprehensive Plan Committee Members				

6. Employment by Sector

A comparison of employment by industry sector for Verona Island and Hancock County as reported by the 2000 census follows. The industry sector refers to the type of industry the employer operates, not the actual jobs performed by workers. This table refers to all Verona Island residents who worked, whether they worked on Verona Island or commuted elsewhere.

Table B4
Proportional Make-up of the Employed Labor Force by Employment Sector - Verona Island and Hancock County

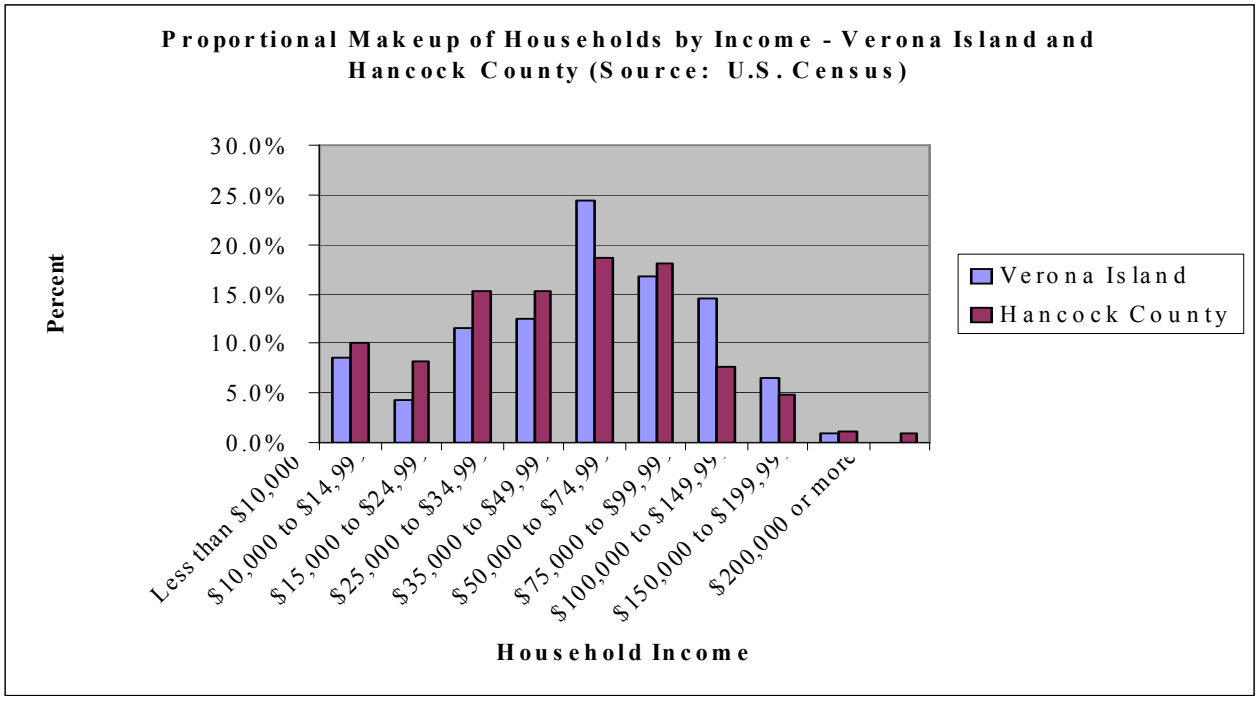
Category	Verona Island		Hancock County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	12	4.3%	1,315	5.3%
Construction	15	5.3%	2,524	10.1%
Manufacturing	61	21.7%	2,369	9.5%
Wholesale trade	15	5.3%	575	2.3%
Retail trade	18	6.4%	3,057	12.2%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	16	5.7%	883	3.5%
Information	0	0.0%	644	2.6%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	9	3.2%	1,191	4.8%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	13	4.6%	2,005	8.0%
Educational, health and social services	73	26.0%	5,544	22.1%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	30	10.7%	2,252	9.0%
Other services (except public administration)	13	4.6%	1,672	6.7%
Public Administration	6	4.6%	1,003	4.0%
Total	281	100%	25,034	100%
Source: U.S. Census				

The three top employment sectors for Hancock County residents are educational, health and social services (22.1 percent), retail (12.2 percent), and construction (10.1 percent). Like Hancock County, educational, health and social services is the top employment sector (26

percent) for Verona Island residents. The next two largest sectors on Verona Island are manufacturing (21.7 percent) and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (10.7 percent).

7. Income

As noted in the last chapter, Verona Island has a higher median income than any of the immediate surrounding towns and Hancock County as a whole, which may be due, in part, to the lower unemployment rates on Verona Island than the region. Verona Island has a lower percentage of people in each of the lower income categories, and a higher percentage of people in the $75,000 to $99,000 and $100,000 to $149,999 ranges.



8. Commuting Patterns

The 2000 Census reports that the mean travel time to work for Verona Island residents was 23 minutes, slightly higher than Hancock County's overall mean travel time of 22 minutes. Only 2.5 percent of Verona Island residents reported walking to work and 1.8 percent utilized public transportation. Approximately 10.5 percent carpool and 76.9 percent drive alone to work.

According to the 2000 Census, 34 percent of employed Verona Island residents travel to Bucksport for work. Fourteen percent live in as well as work on Verona Island and approximately eight percent commute to

Table B5
Residence of Verona Island's Workforce

Residence	Count
Bucksport	10
Orland	5
Sedgwick	2
Verona Island	39
Prospect	1
Swanville	2
Total	59

Source: U.S. Census

Bangor. Of Verona Island's total workforce, 66 percent live on Verona Island and 17 percent commute there from Bucksport.

The economy of the greater Verona Island area is changing. While once referred to as a mill town, some now describe Bucksport as a town with a mill. This term refers to a shift in employment patterns at the International Paper Mill. This trend has affected both Bucksport and Verona Island. At one time, the majority of mill employees lived in Bucksport and surrounding towns. As of 2003, Bucksport town officials estimated that only 20 percent of mill employees were Bucksport residents. By contrast, the 1992 Bucksport comprehensive plan estimated that 43 percent of the mill employees lived in either Bucksport or Verona Island. In earlier decades, an even larger portion of mill employees lived in town. Between 2001 and 2004, the number of mill employees decreased from 1,050 to 823. This compares to an estimated 1,252 employees in 1989 (reported in the 1992 plan).

Bucksport has been working hard to diversify its economy. In 1995 it prepared an economic development strategy. It has developed a business park and has worked to revitalize its downtown and waterfront. The town has hired an economic development director who is working to recruit new businesses.

In addition to changes in the Bucksport economy, Verona Island is being affected by broader regional changes. For example, recent job expansions in the Bangor and Belfast areas has meant more commuting to those areas. Also, the high cost of housing in places such as Mount Desert Island and Deer Isle-Stonington has resulted in more commuting from the Verona Island area. Overall, the economy is becoming more dependent on regional sources of employment.

Table B6
Employment Location of Verona Island Residents

Workplace	Count		Workplace	Count
Bar Harbor	5		Bangor	21
Blue Hill	6		Brewer	5
Brooksville	1		Glenburn	2
Bucksport	95		Hampden	6
Castine	8		Newburgh	2
Ellsworth	12		Orono	4
Gouldsboro	5		Orrington	2
Hancock	5		Milo	2
Orland	4		Belfast	9
Otis	3		Burnham	3
Penobscot	4		Prospect	7
Sorrento	3		Searsport	4
Southwest Harbor	3		Stockton Springs	2
Stonington	2		Swanville	3
Trenton	2		Deblois	2
Verona Island	39		Brazil	2
Rockland	4		Total	277

Source: U.S. Census

Table B7
Method of Commuting to Work - Verona Island and Hancock County

	Verona Island		Hancock County	
Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)	**23**		**22**	
Method	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Car, Truck or Van - Drive Alone	213	76.9%	18,459	74.5%
Car, Truck or Van - Carpooled	29	10.5%	2,774	11.2%
Public Transportation (including taxicab)	5	1.8%	133	0.5%
Walked	7	2.5%	1,568	6.3%
Other Means	6	2.2%	296	1.2%
Worked at Home	17	6.1%	1,552	6.3%
Total	277	100%	24,782	100%

Source: U.S. Census

C. Inventory and Analysis – Housing

1. Purpose

An understanding of the current housing stock and market situation is necessary in order to assess and maintain affordable, decent housing opportunities on Verona Island.

2. Key Findings and Issues

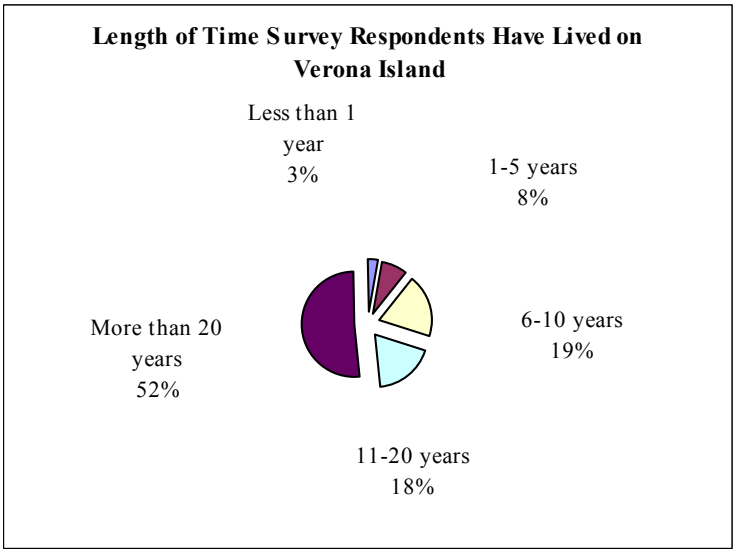
The median household unit value increased a total of 167 percent on Verona Island during the last 20 years, slightly less than the overall rate of change for Hancock County. The rate of growth in the number of housing units has remained significantly lower on Verona Island than for Hancock County during the same 20 year time period. The number of multi-family units increased by 100 percent and the number of mobile homes increased by slightly more than 80 percent in the last decade. A demand for shorefront housing and affordable housing near Hancock County service centers is expected to continue. As a relatively small island with little space for new development and limited carrying capacity due to water and waste water resources, a demand for already-existing housing may eventually lead to increased prices. Still, the community is not expected to face affordable housing problems in the near future.

3. Public Opinion Survey

Approximately 93 percent of survey respondents stated that they own their own home. Just one percent of the respondents stated that they rent.

Fifty-two percent of survey respondents have lived on Verona Island 20 years or more. Eighteen percent have lived on Verona Island between 10 and 20 years. Nineteen percent have lived on Verona Island between 6-10 years, eight percent between one and five years and just three percent have lived on Verona Island less than one year.

Approximately 84 percent of survey respondents stated that they are year-round residents of Verona Island. Of the seasonal residents responding to the survey, 56 percent plan to make Verona Island their permanent residence. Seventy-five percent of those respondents plan to do so within the next five years. Thirty-three percent were not sure if they would make Verona Island their permanent residence.



Seventy-two percent of survey respondents were in favor of developing single family houses on Verona Island. Fifty-two percent of the respondents were against the development of multi-family homes, 57 percent against the development of apartments and 58 percent against the development of mobile homes. While 39 percent are in favor of senior citizen housing, 29 percent are against it and 21 percent are undecided. At least one respondent thought that the development of bed and breakfasts or

inns should be encouraged.

If mobile parks were to be developed on Verona Island, 58 percent of the survey respondents said they should be developed in as few places in town as possible and 10 percent said they should be allowed anywhere but near residential areas. Ten percent said they should be developed in remote rural areas, six percent said adjacent to commercial areas and three percent said they should be anywhere in town.

4. Recent Housing Trends

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Verona Island has 22 seasonal and 240 year-round housing units. The rate of growth in the number of housing units has remained significantly lower than Hancock County for each of the past two decades. The rate of growth of housing units for Verona Island was 20.7 percent between 1980 and 2000, compared to 35.4 percent for Hancock County overall.

Just 8.4 percent of Verona Island housing units are identified as seasonal, compared to 31.4 percent of Hancock County. While the U.S. Census estimates of seasonal homes are sometimes subject to error, comprehensive planning committee members confirmed during the development of this report that the estimate was accurate. The greatest period of growth in the number of seasonal homes on Verona Island took place between 1980 and 1990, when there was an increase of 257.1 percent. Interestingly, there was a negative growth rate in the number of seasonal homes during the next decade. This might be due to residents converting their home into a year-round residence or homes being sold.

Table C1
Change in Total Dwelling Units - Verona Island and Hancock County 1980-2000

		1980	1990	2000	Percent Change 1980-1990	Percent Change 1990-2000	Percent Change 1980-2000
Verona Island	Year-round units	210	226	240	7.6%	6.2%	14.3%
	Seasonal	7	25	22	257.1%	-12.0%	214.3%
	Total	217	251	262	15.7%	4.4%	20.7%
Hancock County	Year-round units	17,057	20,260	23,273	18.8%	14.9%	36.4%
	Seasonal	8,005	10,136	10,672	26.6%	5.3%	33.3%
	Total	25,062	30,396	33,945	21.3%	11.7%	35.4%

Source: U.S. Census

5. Housing Unit Type

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 83.8 percent of the total housing units on Verona Island are single-family and 12.4 percent are mobile homes. Slightly less than four percent, or ten housing units, were multi-family (buildings with more than two apartments). The number of multi-

family units increased 100 percent between 1990 and 2000. Single family homes increased by 6.4 percent and the number of mobile homes increased by 88.2 percent.

Table C2
Change in Housing Units by Type - Verona Island 1990, 2000

	1990		2000		Percent Change 1990-2000
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total units	226	100.0%	259	100.0%	14.6%
Single family	204	90.3%	217	83.8%	6.4%
Multifamily	5	2.2%	10	3.9%	100.0%
Mobile homes	17	7.5%	32	12.4%	88.2%

Source: U.S. Census

It should be noted that the number of total units listed in the table to the left is slightly different from the total units listed in the above table due to differences between a 100 percent count derived from the short form and a sample population that was required to fill out the long form.

Under 30-A MRSA 4358 (the state statute regulating manufactured housing), municipalities must allow mobile homes on individual lots in a number of locations where other single-family residences are permitted. Mobile homes may not be restricted solely to mobile home parks, and towns may not impose overly restrictive standards on parks. Towns may, however, establish design criteria to assure that mobile homes are well sited and look attractive, provided that these standards don't have the effect of banning mobile homes. As of 2003, there are no mobile home parks located on Verona Island.

6. Housing Conditions

Table C3
Housing Units Lacking Complete Plumbing - Verona Island and Hancock County 1990, 2000

	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Verona Island	1	0.4%	2	0.9%
Hancock County	1,752	5.8%	370	1.7%

Source: U.S. Census

Lack of complete plumbing and overcrowding are indicators of substandard housing. The 1990 Census only counted one housing unit without complete plumbing on Verona Island, or 0.4 percent. The 2000 Census counted two units without complete plumbing. In comparison, the 1990 Census 5.8 percent of the housing units in Hancock County were considered to be without complete plumbing, versus 1.7 percent in 2000. A home is considered overcrowded if there is more than one person per room. According to the 2000 Census, 100 percent of the 222 occupied housing units on Verona Island had one or fewer occupants per room. In Hancock County overall, 99 percent of the occupied housing units had one or fewer occupants per room, 0.7 percent had 1.01 to 1.50 occupants per room, and .3 percent had 1.51 occupants or more.

7. Housing Occupancy

The U.S. Census counts both occupied and vacant housing units in its inventory. A housing unit is considered occupied if it is the usual place of residence of the person or group of people living in it at the time of enumeration or if the occupants are only temporarily absent (i.e. away on vacation or business).

Table C4
Estimated Tenure of Occupied Year-Round Housing (Does not include seasonal and vacant units) - Verona Island 1990, 2000

	1990		2000	
	Number	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Renter Occupied	16	8.6%	23	10.3%
Owner Occupied	170	91.4%	200	89.7%
Total Occupied Units	186	100.0%	223	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census

According to the 2000 Census, there were a total of 223 occupied housing units of which 23 (10.3 percent) were rented and 200 (89.7 percent) were owner-occupied. There were seven additional rental units and 37 additional owner occupied homes in 2000 than there were in 1990.

8. Housing Affordability

Data from the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) indicate that affordable housing is not a problem in the greater Verona Island area. The MSHA uses an affordability index, or an expression of the relationship between the purchasing power of the median income and median home price, to assess housing affordability in any given region. The affordability index may be interpreted as a percent. An index of .95 means that a household with the median income has only 95 percent of the income is needed to buy the median priced house. The Verona housing market; had, in 2004, an affordability index of 1.21 for moderate income (an income level defined as 80 percent of the county median) households. That would mean that a moderate income household in the Bucksport housing market area has a sufficient level of income to purchase a median priced house ($98,250 in 2004) according to the MSHA Office of Research and Planning. For households under the moderate income threshold, housing is less affordable. For example, the affordability index for households at 50 percent of the median income in 2004 was 0.74 and for those at 30 percent the index was 0.43.

For comprehensive planning purposes, the State of Maine defines affordable housing as safe, decent and sanitary living accommodations that are affordable to very low and low-income. In 2000, a family of four in Hancock County would be considered very low-income if it earned $18,805 or less, and low-income if its income were at or below $30,100. According to the 2000 Census, about 31 percent of Verona Island's households were very low-income to low-income. To be considered affordable, housing should cost less than 30 percent of income for renters and less than 33 percent for homeowners. The state encourages all towns to assure that 10 percent of all new housing is affordable to very low-income and low-income groups. According to the 2000 Census, the median monthly rent on Verona Island is $488, less than the median monthly rent of $514 for Hancock County. The median value of owner-occupied housing units is $78,400 on Verona Island and $108,600 in Hancock County overall.

9. Housing Prices

Verona Island has a higher percentage of housing units in the two lowest value categories included in the 2000 Census. Approximately 14.9 percent of the housing units on Verona Island are valued less than $50,000 compared to only 6.4 percent in Hancock County. Approximately 59.7 percent of the housing units on Verona Island and 38.2 percent in Hancock County are valued between $50,000 and $99,000. There are 21 units, or approximately 16 percent, located on Verona Island that are valued between $100,000 and $149,000 compared to almost 26 percent in Hancock County. Nine housing units located on Verona Island, or 6.7 percent, are valued between $150,000 and $199,000. Hancock County has 12.8 percent of its overall housing units located in this range. Only four units, or three percent, are valued above $200,000. Nearly 17 percent of the total units located in Hancock County fall into this category.

Table C5
Contract Rent of Renter-Occupied Units - Verona Island and Hancock County 2000

	Verona Island		Hancock County	
Monthly Rent	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Less than $200	0	0.0%	412	8.2%
$200 to $299	0	0.0%	320	6.4%
$300 to $499	5	33.3%	1,286	25.7%
$500 to $749	4	26.7%	1,753	35.1%
$750 to $999	0	0.0%	447	8.9%
$1,000 to $1,499	0	0.0%	101	2.0%
$1,500 or more	0	0.0%	3	0.1%
No cash rent	6	40.0%	676	13.5%
Total	15	100.0%	4,998	100.0%
Median	488		514	

Source: U.S. Census

Table C6
Value of Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units

Value	**Verona Island**		**Hancock County**	
	Number	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Less than $50,000	20	14.9%	685	6.4%
$50,000 to $99,000	80	59.7%	4,118	38.2%
$100,000 to $149,999	21	15.7%	2,785	25.8%
$150,000 to $199,999	9	6.7%	1,383	12.8%
$200,000 to $299,999	2	1.5%	1,030	9.6%
$300,000 to $499,999	2	1.5%	510	4.7%
$500,000 to $999,999	0	0.0%	190	1.8%
$1,000,000 or more	0	0.0%	78	0.7%
Total	134	100.0%	10,779	100.0%
Median	78,400		108,600	

Source: U.S. Census

10. Housing Projections

The median housing unit value increased a total of 197 percent for Hancock County between 1980 and 2000, compared to 167 percent for Verona Island. Although the rate of change of the median housing unit value has remained lower for Verona Island than Hancock County overall, the gap has become smaller in each of the last two decades. In the next ten years, the value of housing units on Verona Island are likely to increase at a higher rate, reflecting issues such as the construction of fewer decent, affordable homes in the region and an increased demand for property located near service centers and the waterfront.

Table C7
Comparison of Median Household Price Changes 1980-2000 - Verona Island and Hancock County

	1980	1990	Percent Change 1980-1990	2000	Percent Change 1990-2000	Percent Change 1980-2000
Hancock County	$36,600	$85,200	133%	$108,600	28%	197%
Verona Island	$29,700	$64,800	118%	$78,400	21%	164%

Source: U.S. Census

D. Inventory and Analysis – Transportation

1. Purpose

Transportation infrastructure has a direct impact on the economy, safety and overall aesthetic quality of a community. An understanding of current transportation and road systems on Verona Island will allow the community to evaluate any needs and prepare for both short and long-term impacts of any necessary changes to existing and proposed thoroughfares, secondary routes, pedestrian ways and parking facilities.

2. Key Findings and Issues

As the Inventory and Analysis is being conducted, the condition of the Waldo-Hancock Bridge is being evaluated and the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) may soon decide whether the bridge will be repaired or a new one altogether constructed. There are new developments on an almost weekly basis while the future of the bridge is under consideration. Traffic has been disrupted in the area during this evaluation process, leading to slower moving traffic and access problems for those attempting to turn left from Westside Drive. The construction of a new bridge or maintenance on the current bridge is certain to have significant short and long-term impacts in the Verona Island community. Currently, there are no parking issues on Verona Island.

3. Public Opinion Survey

Fifty-six percent of survey respondents expressed that summer traffic was a problem on Verona Island. Thirty-one percent stated that it was not a problem and 5 percent were undecided.

4. Highway and Road Classification

In the early 1980's, the Maine legislature authorized and directed the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) to classify all public roads throughout the state. The classification system that was established was based on the principle that the roads which serve primarily local needs should be a local responsibility. The state classification system includes the following:

State Highways are usually arterials and are comprised of a system of connected highways throughout the state, which serve arterial, or through traffic. Volumes of traffic typically range from 10,000 to 30,000 vehicles per day. There are 1.24 miles of state highway located along Route 1 on Verona Island.

State Aid Highways are usually collectors and are roads that are not included in the system of state highways, but which serve as feeder routes connecting local service roads to the state highway system. Volumes typically range from 2,000 to 8000 vehicles per day.

Local Roads include all other public roads not included in the state highway or state aid classification system. These roads are maintained entirely by the municipality

and, based on the state system, serve primarily as local service roads that provide access to adjacent land. Verona Island has a total of 9.43 miles of local roads.

Route 1, East Side Drive and West Side Drive together make up the 10.67 miles of public roads in the Town of Verona Island. Due to the minimal mileage of town roads, there are few town road issues. The Loop Road around the island is a state aid road with scheduled maintenance provided by Maine DOT with state funding. This road was resurfaced in 2003 and is scheduled to be done every 6 years. Road-side mowing is conducted by Maine DOT. Snow plowing is the responsibility of the town.

The remaining roads are considered local roads and anticipated improvements are scheduled on an as-needed basis by the selectmen. Labor is provided by the road commissioner with town funds. All current conditions of local roads at this time are adequate. The bridges connecting the island to the mainland are the responsibility of the Maine DOT for scheduled maintenance.

5. Access and Mobility

The MDOT reviews municipal comprehensive plans for how they address access and mobility issues. Access refers to roads where entrance and egress to the adjacent properties are most important. These would include roads where there is considerable commercial or residential development. Mobility refers to roads that provide for relatively high overall travel speeds with minimum disruption of movement due to turning of vehicles on and off the road.

There are advantages to preserving certain roads for access and others primarily for mobility. By concentrating areas of high access, it is easier to plan for improvements such as shared service roads, traffic lights and turning lanes. Preserving roads for mobility allows the fast movement of traffic.

There is a considerable amount of commuter traffic along the portion of Route 1 that runs through Verona Island. It is especially important to preserve mobility in this area.

6. Parking

There are three areas, not including commercial businesses, on Verona Island where public parking is available. Altogether, there are approximately 140 public parking spaces located at the Town Hall, the Rest Area located near the Waldo-Hancock Bridge and the public boat launch area. The paved Town Hall parking lot, located on School Street, is the largest space, with enough room to accommodate approximately 100 vehicles.

The boat launch at the head of the island has space available to accommodate approximately 20 vehicles and their trailers. Due to the fact that people do not launch all at the same time, there appears to be adequate accommodations. This is a state-owned property that was recently renovated with an improved boat launch ramp and parking area.

The rest area has space available for approximately 20 vehicles. This is a state-owned and maintained area, however, a local women's group called "The Islanders" improve the beautification of this area by planting and maintaining shrubs and flowers. This facility is closed

during the off-season. The DOT maintains the Route 1 portion of Verona Island. Verona Island's Road Commissioner handles the plowing on local and state roads.

7. Public Transportation

Two regional public transportation systems are currently available. The Washington-Hancock Community Agency has free transportation available on a request basis for Medicaid patients who need to travel to medical appointments. Downcast Transportation Inc. provides public transportation. Terry's Taxi and Transportation is a private taxi service based in Bucksport that is available for use by Verona Island residents. Nearby airports are located in Bangor, Belfast, and Stonington.

8. Sidewalks

There are currently no sidewalks on Verona Island. While a lack of sidewalks could potentially create safety hazards, especially along the busy Route 1 portion where many of Verona Island's businesses are located and where traffic is the busiest, the road does have a wider shoulder in this area than on other roads with less traffic. The town does not presently have a sidewalk plow or other means to remove snow and maintain a sidewalk. Construction of a sidewalk would mean removing shade trees that are treasured by many residents.

9. Bicycle Facilities

There are no official pedestrian ways or bike paths on Verona Island, however, residents can often be found walking along their favorite sections. Residents have noticed that bicycle traffic seems to be increasing on the island loop road, especially during the mild-weather months. This may be due to an increase in local biking clubs.

10. Accident Data

According to the Maine Department of Transportation, there were 29 accidents on Verona Island between 1997 and 2001. Nearly 25 percent of all of the accidents that occurred during this time period occurred on Route 1. More accidents occurred on Westside drive than Eastside Drive.

Table D1
Verona Accidents 1997-2001

Cause	Number
Defective Breaks	1
Driver Inattention - distraction	5
Driver Inexperience	3
Failure to yield right of way	14
Illegal; unsafe speed	4
Improper passing - overtaking	1
Improper turn	1
Other human violation factor	0
Vision obscured - sun; headlights	0
Source: Maine Department of Transportation	

11. Regional Issues

Regional transportation issues faced with Verona Island mostly have to do with the bridges that connect the island to the mainland, especially the Waldo-Hancock Bridge currently under inspection and improvement. Future improvement or replacement of the bridge will significantly impact the flow of traffic on the island. At the time that the inventory and analysis was being finalized, there was a new bridge under construction between the towns of Prospect and Verona Island.

E. Inventory and Analysis – Public Facilities

1. Purpose

A community's pattern of growth and development is greatly influenced by a range of services typically offered by municipalities, including utilities, streets, schools, parks and other. An understanding of current public facilities and services on Verona Island, along with their associated financial resources and needs, will help the community identify potential weaknesses or areas that might be better able to accommodate future growth with improvement.

2. Key Findings and Issues

Police protection may be one area where improvements are needed, since a majority of survey respondents indicated that services were inadequate. Twenty-two percent of Verona Island survey respondents were not sure if cemeteries or health care options were adequate in town, indicating that these may be issues that should be explored further.

Verona Island is increasingly sending more sewage to the Bucksport treatment facility than the treatment facility has the capacity for. Several improvements are also needed in the town office. Finally, 24 percent of survey respondents stated that solid waste disposal services are in need of improvement. Currently, there are no recycling options for Verona Island residents and the town needs to ensure they are able to laws regarding universal waste and electronics disposal. Safe household hazardous waste disposal may be another area that should be considered.

3. Public Survey

Table E1
Municipal Services Assessment Results

Type of Service	More than adequate	Adequate	Needs improve-ment	Not sure	Supports improvement through increased taxes	
					Yes	No
Fire protection	11%	75%	7%	1%	15%	52%
Police protection	4%	39%	49%	2%	37%	39%
Ambulance	13%	77%	4%	2%	12%	53%
Recreational facilities	4%	38%	33%	11%	23%	49%
Recreational programs	1%	36%	30%	14%	18%	50%
Public shore access	7%	62%	21%	5%	11%	53%
Town office	17%	68%	10%	0%	9%	54%
Snow removal/sanding	16%	62%	18%	0%	21%	45%
Summer road maintenance	7%	58%	18%	6%	17%	43%
Schools	6%	66%	6%	10%	17%	40%
Cemeteries	3%	50%	13%	22%	6%	48%
Health care	4%	44%	13%	22%	9%	44%
Solid waste disposal	11%	60%	24%	1%	19%	45%

A majority of all respondents thought that major municipal services inquired about in the

survey, with the exception of police protection, was adequate or more than adequate. A majority of respondents disapproved of increased taxes for the improvement or expansion of services. The percentage of those who are in support of increasing taxes in order to improve police protection was almost even with the percent of respondents not in favor of increased taxes for improvements.

4. Water Supply

Verona Island's residents do not currently have access to a public water supply but instead obtain their water from springs or drilled wells. The center of the island, located on a higher elevation, is a boggy area that acts as a natural reservoir. Water captured in the bogs travels over bedrock, through various channels and eventually ends up at lower elevations where it is relatively easily accessible for residential use.

5. Sewage

While a majority of Verona Island residents have septic systems for sewage disposal, a portion of Verona Island residents and commercial businesses utilize Bucksport's sewer system. When the facility was originally constructed, Verona Island opted to purchase a portion of the capacity. Currently, Verona Island can send 12,000 gallons a day to the facility for treatment.

Bucksport's system consists of 14 miles of gravity sewers, .33 miles of force main, six pump stations, and a primary treatment plant that went into operation in January of 1988. Verona Island's system, constructed around 1990, has two pump stations and pipes it to Bucksport across the Bucksport/Verona Island Bridge (officially known as the Edward Thegan Bridge). A full time superintendent and a full-time operator are employed at the plant. The town office conducts the day-to-day clerical business of the system.

Homes or businesses located along the Verona Island sewer line must pay a portion of the sewer bill, regardless of whether or not they are actually hooked up to the system. Those that are not hooked up pay a lower amount than those that are. There are 50 residences hooked up and three that are not. There are two businesses that are using the system, and one that is not. Bucksport bills the town on a quarterly basis. Verona Island customers are also billed on a quarterly basis.

The superintendent at the plant reports that the flow of material coming from Verona Island is increasingly more than the 12,000 gallon capacity. This most commonly occurs in the fall and spring. The town of Verona Island does have the option to purchase more capacity from the town of Bucksport at a future date. As of 2005, there is no excess capacity and there is unlikely to be any unless the Bucksport system is improved substantially.

Table E2
Hancock County Sheriff's Department
Total Incidents 1998-2002

Year	Number of Incidents
1998	34
1999	28
2000	41
2001	48
2002	36

Source: Hancock County Sherriff's Department Report

6. Police Protection

Police protection for the island is provided by the Hancock County Sheriff's department, which is dispatched out of Ellsworth. The Maine State Police is dispatched out of Orono. The dispatch time may vary depending on availability, travel time and road conditions.

A preliminary survey for the comprehensive plan showed that 39 percent of respondents find this service adequate and 49 percent indicate that improvements are needed. Support for increased taxes in order to make improvements was split with approximately 37 percent voting yes and 39 percent voting no.

7. Fire Department

Verona Island residents depend on its neighboring town of Bucksport for fire-related emergencies. Bucksport has an agreement with surrounding towns for extra help when needed. A survey showed that 75% felt the service was adequate. The Bucksport Fire Department consists of 5 full-time and 45 on-call part-time employees. The town has designated fire road markers across the island.

Verona Island's cost of fire protection, paid to the town of Bucksport, is steadily increasing. Between 1998 and 2002, the amount appropriated for fire-related services increased from $10, 681 to $19, 704, or approximately 85 percent. When taking inflation rates into account, the rate of increase is $7,528 or 71 percent. Verona Island's portion of the budget is calculated by using a formula that takes into account the population, valuation, number of calls from the previous year and the estimated total budget. There is no threat to Verona Island's continued use of the Bucksport Fire Department.

8. Rescue/Ambulance Service

Rescue and ambulance service is provided by the 911 service through the town of Bucksport. Seventy-seven percent of survey respondents believe that ambulance services are adequate. The amount appropriated for ambulance service decreased from $4,370 in 1998 to $3,861 in 2002, or negative 12 percent. When taking inflation rates into account, the rate of increase over the 5 year period is actually $1,121, or approximately negative 23 percent.

9. Public Buildings

The town hall, where most town business is conducted, is located on School Street and is one of two buildings owned by the town. The two-story building is just over 3,000 square feet and contains the clerk's office and selectmen's meeting area. The building also contains kitchen facilities on both floors. Open areas of the town hall can be rented out to groups for occasions such as wedding receptions, birthday parties and benefit suppers. Town functions have priority.

The town hall is in need of several improvements, including:

- Replacement of the upstairs ceiling;
- Improve upstairs ventilation;
- Renovate upstairs kitchen area;
- Improve lighting in voting booth area;
- Replace sink in downstairs kitchen;
- Re-surface counter top in downstairs kitchen;
- Provide handi-cap bathroom facilities; and
- Improve drainage on the east side of the building.

Town staff includes 1 part-time clerk and 1 part-time assistant. The town office is open to the public on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 a.m. until noon and from 1:00 p.m. until

4:00 p.m. It is also open on Thursdays from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Several changes are recommended to increase the efficiency of tasks conducted by staff, including:

- Updating tax maps;
- Increase fireproof safe capacity;
- Renovate upstairs storage space for town office needs;
- Obtain additional fire cabinet;
- Replace computer and printer; and
- Increase hours of assistant clerk.

Currently, selectmen hold meetings in the selectmen's office on the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m. The planning board meets in the downstairs open area on the second Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. The planning board will return to its normal time of 7:00 p.m. once the comprehensive planning process is complete. The downstairs area is utilized by the Verona Island Women's Club on the first Thursday of every month at 6:00 p.m.

The other building owned by Verona Island is the town salt storage shed, located at the Penobscot Bay Rod and Gun Club on Westside Drive. The building is a Quonset hut-style 50' by 80' building with cement floor and walls. In an agreement with the rod and gun club, the town does not pay rent to utilize the property.

10. Solid Waste Disposal

The Town of Verona Island currently contracts with Northern Waste for the removal of municipal solid waste, done on a weekly basis. The material is taken to the Penobscot Energy Recovery Company in Orrington, approximately 16 miles from town. Verona Island is a charter member of the facility and currently pays a tipping fee that is around $58 per ton. Currently, curbside pick-ups also include waste from commercial businesses located in the town. The town provides for the collection of bulky waste and white goods once a year, at no cost to town residents. Residents can obtain a fire permit to burn wood and tree stumps.

Table E3
Solid Waste Disposal Costs 1999-2002

1999	$29,663
2000	$28,940
2001	$29,801
2002	$30,363

Source: Municipal Reports

Verona Island's recycling rate for 2002 was a mere 2.2 percent, or 7.9 percent when adjusted for the returned bottle credit. There are no options available for residents wishing to recycle materials such as cardboard, paper, aluminum or glass. This means that the town is likely spending more money on waste disposal than if there a recycling program in place. Also, there are no local options available for universal waste (UW), which includes mercury-containing items and electronics. Town officials understand that the town is required by state law to provide options for the disposal of this UW by January 1, 2005. Currently, there are plans to hold special one-day collections for UW each year. Businesses are already required to recycle UW.

Household hazardous waste (HHW) management is a challenge for the town due to the cost associated with disposal and because of the lack of regular local collections. The town may be

especially vulnerable to problems associated with the improper disposal of HHW because of the unique nature of the town's water resources.

11. Libraries and Cultural Facilities

Verona Island residents are able to use the Buck Memorial Library, located on Main Street in Bucksport. Verona Island has donated $500 to Bucksport each of the past 5 years for use of the service. Other local cultural facilities which residents can access include the Northeast Historic Film, Bucksport Historical Society and the Bucksport Community Theater.

12. Education

Verona Island is a member of the Maine School Administrative District (MSAD) number 18, along with the town of Prospect. There are no schools operating in the district at the present time. Instead, the district contracts with the town of Bucksport to send school-aged children to K-12 schools there. The town of Bucksport generally approves a contract with the district to provide education services every 5 years. By working through this district, the towns receive an increased amount of state subsidy funds and have an assurance of financial aid for any school building construction they might undertake.

Education expenditures have increased by $122,278, or 86 percent, during a ten year period between the 1992/1993 school years. When adjusted for inflation, the increase is actually $71,148 or 37 percent during that period. The greatest amount of change occurred in the 1993/1994 budget, when Verona Island paid nearly $39,000. The least change occurred in the 1997/1998 budget with only a $395 increase.

School enrollment has stayed relatively stable over the past 5 years, with approximately 12-140 elementary enrollments and between approximately 175 and 180 secondary enrollments. As of April 1, 2002, 181 children

Table E4
Education Expenditures 1997/1998-2001/2002

Year	Amount	Change	Percent Change
1992/1993	$142,028		
1993/1994	$180,871	$38,843	27.35%
1994/1995	$216,762	$35,891	19.84%
1995/1996	$208,041	-$8,721	-4.02%
1996/1997	$213,867	$5,826	2.80%
1997/1998	$214,262	$395	0.18%
1998/1999	$216,650	$2,388	1.11%
1999/2000	$218,621	$1,971	0.91%
2000/2001	$241,848	$23,227	10.62%
2001/2002	$264,306	$22,458	9.29%
Change 1992/1992 - 2001/2002		$122,278	86.09%
Change 1992/1992 - 2001/2002 Adjusted for Inflation		$71,148	36.83%

Source: MSAD # 18 Annual Report 2001/2002

Table E5
Enrollment History of Verona Island Students in MSAD 18 1997/1998-2001/2002

	Elementary	Secondary	Total
1997/1998	139	42	181
1998/1999	134	46	180
1999/2000	121	55	176
2000/2001	131	55	186
2001/2002	123	58	181

Source: MSAD #18 Annual Report 2001/2002

from Verona Island were enrolled in the MSAD number 18.

It is expected that school enrollment in Bucksport schools will continue the current trend of small declines but no significant change in enrollment over the next five-ten year period.

13. Cemeteries

Currently, there are four graveyards located on Verona Island. There is one graveyard located on U.S. Route 1, one on Westside Drive, and the Bridges family plot on Eastside Drive. The Abbot family plot is located on the McKeen Road. The town spends $500 per year toward mowing expenses. Fifty-three percent of survey respondents stated that the cemeteries were adequate or more than adequate. Thirteen percent stated that they needed improvement and 22 percent were unsure.

F. Inventory and Analysis – Recreation

1. Purpose

As development increases in rural and coastal lands, there is often less access to sources of traditional outdoor recreation. To maintain or create a balance between free access to the outdoors and individual property rights, municipality should first inventory existing recreation, parks, open space areas and significant point of public access to shorelands.

2. Key Findings and Issues

The inventory and analysis shows that Verona Island has several opportunities for outdoor recreation enthusiasts, including as Porcupine Island, a 400 acre conservation easement and a public boat landing. Results from the public opinion survey, however, indicate that the percentage of those who think recreational facilities or programs on Verona Island are adequate or more than adequate is significantly close to the percentage of those who think there should be improvement. Perhaps residents are interested in having indoor or alternative outdoor recreational opportunities available in town. Another consideration is that currently available facilities that are town, state or privately owned could potentially become unavailable for public use in the future.

3. Public Opinion Survey

Forty-two percent of survey respondents stated that recreational facilities on Verona Island were accurate or more than accurate and thirty-three percent stated that they need improvement. Eleven percent of those respondents were unsure. Thirty-seven percent thought that recreational programs were adequate or more than accurate while 30 percent thought they need improvement. Fourteen percent were unsure. The majority of survey respondents would be unwilling to improve or expand recreation facilities or services through increased local taxes.

Sixty-two percent thought that public shore access was adequate and 21 percent thought that access needs improvement. Seven percent were more than adequate and five percent were unsure.

4. Existing Municipal Parks and Recreation Facilities

Verona Island does not have a recreation department or anyone employed to facilitate recreation activities on the island. Verona Island's recreational facilities are summarized below.

Verona Island Town Hall

- Location: School Street
- Size: 4,422 square feet
- Available Facilities and Adequacy: The town hall provides a central meeting area for town business, as well as rental space for community and private events. There are kitchen facilities available in the bottom floor meeting area.

- Threats to Continued Use: There are no expected threats to continued use.

Porcupine Island

- Location: Approximately one mile downstream from the Verona Island Boat Landing in the Penobscot River
- Size: Ten acres
- Available Facilities and Adequacy: Having acquired the property from the Maine Audubon Society, on behalf of John and Katherine Plimpton in 1981, the island offers opportunities for hiking and exploration. There are pleasant views of the Verona Island and Orland shorelines and Great Pond Mountain. The island is accessible by canoe, kayak, small boat or on foot at low tide. While the island lacks purpose-built camping facilities, there are clear level areas that allow for overnight camping. Several various use restrictions were incorporated into the deed, including:
  - -Use is restricted to outdoor use only. No residential, commercial, industrial, or mining activities are permitted.
  - -No permanent structures are permitted on the island. Protective fences, litter control containers and signage related to nature interpretation or safety are permitted.
  - -No surface alterations are permitted, except to construct foot trails.
  - -Timber cutting is prohibited, except to selectively cut trees consistent with good forestry practice and provided it does not significantly change the scenic appearance of the island.
  - -Any bridges or causeways connecting the two islands or Porcupine Island to the mainland are prohibited.
- Threats to Continued Use: Because it is owned by the town, protected from development by the terms of the deed, and because the ability to access the island is limited by time and method of transport, the potential for overuse of the island is minimized. Overall, water quality in the Penobscot might influence people's desire, or lack thereof, to access and utilize this area.

State of Maine Rest Area

- Location: At the intersection of Route One and Westside Drive
- Size: 1 Acre
- Available Facilities and Adequacy: The property is owned and maintained by the State of Maine. The Islanders, a group of civic-minded volunteers, assists with grounds maintenance and beautification. Picnic tables, some walking space and public restrooms are available.
- Threats to Continued Use: Since the property is owned and maintained by the State, continued use is subject to funding decisions, transfer of property, or widening-improvements for Route One. The rest area could also be impacted by construction of a new Waldo-Hancock Bridge.

5. Other Outdoor Recreation and Open Space

Rod and Gun Club

- Location: 185 Westside Drive
- Size: A clubhouse sits on 30 Acres
- Available Facilities and Adequacy: The club is a private, nonprofit club available for use by the greater public for events, subject to approval by the membership. The club permits the Town of Verona Island to use the property from time to time for various public activities, such as the Verona Island Field Day and Picnic organized by the Verona Island Women's Club. There are kitchen facilities available on the premises. The property also provides open space for hiking, hunting, cross-country skiing and other outdoor activities.
- Threats to Continued Use: Since the club is private property, the community has use of this area only at the discretion of the current or future property owners.

Conservation Easement, Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (21447)

- Location: Center of Island
- Size: 400 Acres
- Available Facilities and Adequacy: Given to the Town by Dr. Arthur Joost on December 15, 1993, the land trust provides open space for wildlife and a critical recharge area for the island's freshwater aquifer. It is available to the public for non-motorized recreational purposes such as hiking, camping and wildlife observation. The public can easily access the property along the western side of the property from Eastside Drive. The property is in close proximity to the state designated Essential Wildlife Habitat, American Bald Eagle nest BE 166A. Except for one unimproved road into the area, there are no facilities or signage. The conservation easement outlines actions that are necessary to maintain the existing dams, trails, and woods roads. The cutting of live trees for commercial purposes is prohibited. Trees are allowed to be cut only for improving wildlife habitat, control of disease or fire, maintain existing field and open areas for wildlife habitat or to provide low impact use for the general public. Hunting is allowed on the site.
- Threats to Continued Use: Since the land is protected by a land trust, development is prohibited and there are likely no threats to continued use.

Island Loop Road

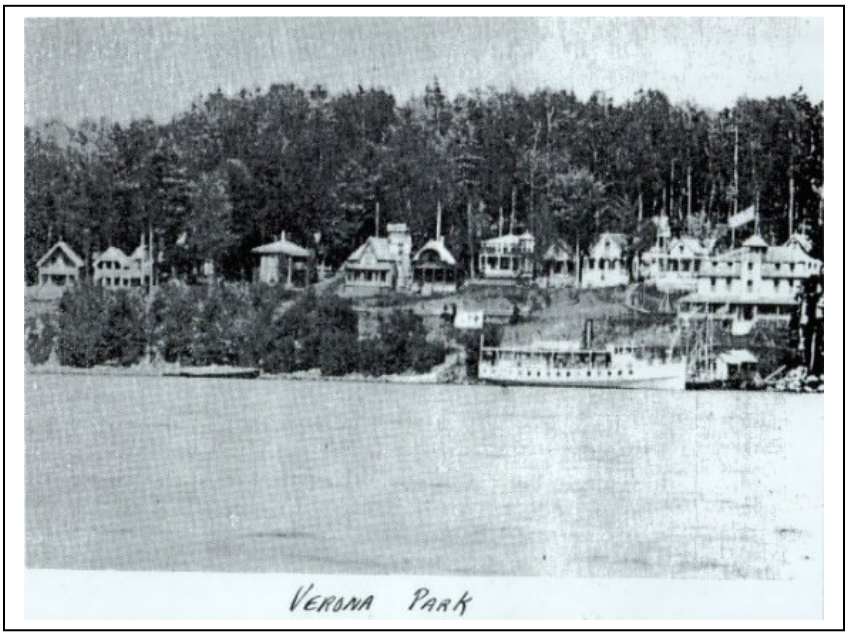
- Location: Comprised of East and Westside Drive
- Size: Approximately 9.5 miles
- Available Facilities and Adequacy: The road supports little or no through traffic. With traffic limited to primarily residents, the road provides a quieter and safer alternative to Route one for bicycling, running and other activities. The Town maintains the road, which was last ditched and resurfaced in 1997. Though the road lacks bike lanes, the low traffic volume, combined with a relatively low speed limit, permits automobiles to share the road with recreational users.

- Threats to Continued Use: Increases in the island population along this route could create traffic levels that make it uncomfortable and unsafe for alternative or recreational use.

6. Public Access Points to Water Bodies

State of Maine Town Landing

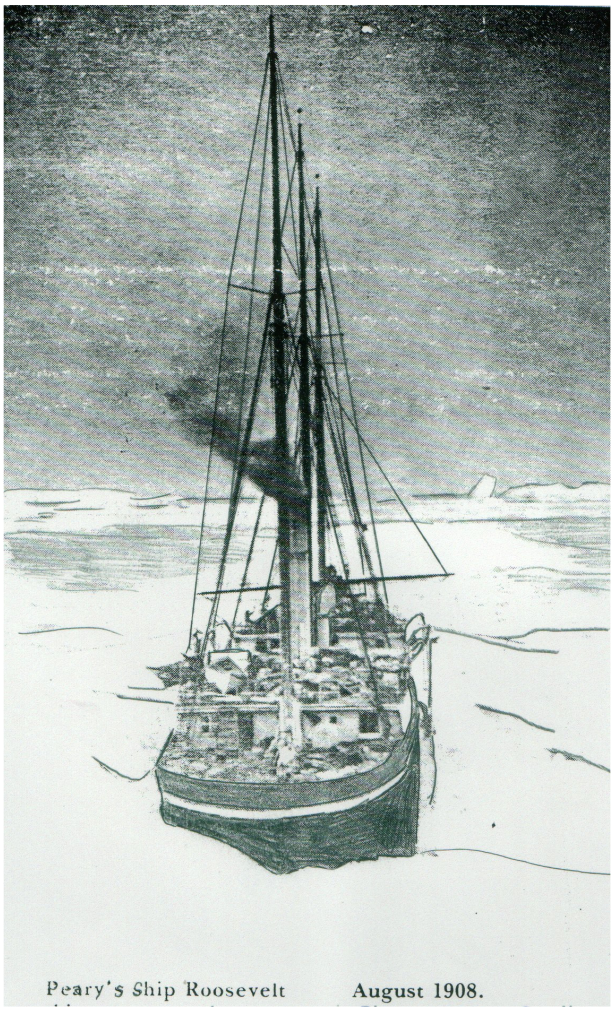
- Location: Admiral Peary Lane
- Size: Three acres; can accommodate approximately 20 vehicles with trailers.
- Available Facilities and Adequacy: Located on what was formally the McKay and Dix Shipyard, the landing provides the only public water access to the Penobscot River in the immediate Verona Island-Bucksport area. The launching area is adequate but more than one person is required to launch a boat because the landing does not have a dock or other tie-off facility. The State of Maine owns the property and provides funds for maintenance.
- Threats to Continued Use: The State of Maine could elect to withdraw funding to operate the property as a boat launch. In that case, the State would maintain ownership of the property.



G. Inventory and Analysis – Marine Resources

1. Purpose

Traditional marine activities are becoming less common in the state with increasing waterfront development that leads to inaccessible resources. An understanding of any existing marine resources and infrastructure, including existing ports, harbors, commercial moorings, commercial docking facilities, and shellfish and worming areas will better allow the Verona Island community to manage new development that might prevent access for traditional use.


Peary's Ship Roosevelt August 1908.

2. Key Findings and Issues

There does not at this time, nor is there expected to be within the next 10 years, problems related to shore access for shellfish or worm harvesters. Should there be major turnover in property ownership along the shoreline, access to these areas could be threatened and the issue may have to be re-examined. The boat ramp area does not allow for convenient loading or unloading of boats since there is no dock to temporarily tie up to while an unloaded vehicle is being parked. Other inadequacies of the boat launch area include lack of fuel facilities, lack of protection against strong tides and lack of a sewage pump-out facility.

3. Public Opinion Survey

Sixty-nine percent of Verona Island's survey respondents think that public shore access is adequate or more than adequate. Twenty-one percent think improvements are needed and five percent are unsure. Sixty-nine percent support the development of measures to protect Verona Island's shoreland. Twenty-two percent do not and three percent are undecided. Fifty-three percent of survey respondents would not support improvements or expansion through increased local taxes and eleven percent would (it should be noted that there were relatively few respondents to this question).

4. Shore Access

The SPO has broadly defined public access as being the opportunity to reach the shoreland physically, visually or psychologically. Verona Island has one public access to

the Penobscot River, a boat launch area located on the northeast end of Verona Island. At the time of this report, the area is in poor repair and town officials, in collaboration with the town of Bucksport, is working with the State of Maine to secure funding and develop a plan to refurbish the facility. Among the problems that have been identified are:

- Lack of floats arranged so boaters can control and load boats upon launching;
- Lack of public mooring facilities in reasonable proximity to the facility;
- Strong ebb and flood tidal currents make launching and retrieval difficult;
- Lack of fuel and fresh water availability;
- Lack of a sewage pump-out facility; and
- Potential impact on parking capacity with more frequent usage.

5. Marine Resources

Marine resources were very important to the initial settlement and development of Verona Island, largely because of its close proximity to Bucksport, a major port during the time of Verona Island's early settlement. Today, only a small number of Verona Island residents own commercial fishing licenses. Marine activities in the Verona Island region currently include commercial and recreational lobster fishing, worm harvesting, shellfishing, alewife collection, commercial and recreational smelting and various sport fishing. No data on shellfish resources or harvesting are currently available from the Maine Department of Natural Resources (DMR). It should be noted that the number of licenses purchased in a given community is indicative of where individuals choose to conduct fishing activities.

Table G1
Number of Fishing Licenses Held by Verona Island Residents by Type, 1998-2002

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Commercial Shrimp - Single	0	0	2	2	0
Commercial Fishing - Single Operator	2	4	6	6	0
Eel	0	0	2	2	0
Lobster/Crab Apprentice	0	2	2	2	2
Lobster/Crab Class I	4	4	2	2	2
Lobster/Crab Class II	6	6	4	4	4
Lobster/Crab Class III	0	0	2	2	2
Lobster/Crab - Non-Commercial	4	4	2	2	4
Lobster/Crab Over Age 70	0	0	2	2	2
Mussel - Dragger	0	0	2	2	0
Mussel - Hand	2	0	0	0	0
Scallop - Diver	2	2	4	4	4
Scallop - Dragger	0	0	2	2	2
Scallop - Tender	2	2	0	0	0
Total	20	24	32	32	22

Source: Maine Department of Marine Resources

6. Effectiveness of Existing measures to Protect and Preserve Marine Resources

Marine resources on Verona Island are primarily protected through the shoreland zoning ordinance. Verona Island may want to occasionally revisit the shoreland zoning ordinance to review such water quality concerns that may stem from erosion and the adequacy of enforcement standards.

H. Inventory and Analysis – Water Resources

1. Purpose

The state requires that the implementation section include strategies to "Protect, maintain and, where warranted, improve the water quality of each water body pursuant to Title 38, chapter 3, subchapter 1, article 4-A". An understanding of a community's lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas is necessary in order for a community protect the quality and quantity of its water resources.

2. Key Findings and Issues

Verona residents utilize wells or springs for their household water source. Construction of a central water supply probably is not economically feasible. Therefore, the quantity and quality of well water must be adequately protected for current and future Verona residents. A large number and high concentration of septic systems is expected to have negative impact on the overall water quality on the island and development should be limited as a result. There are no licensed overboard discharges in town.

3. Public Opinion Survey

In the municipal services assessment portion of the survey, 61 percent of survey respondents stated that they thought that Verona's drinking water supply was adequate or more than adequate. Eleven percent expressed that it needed improvement and 17 percent were unsure. Another question on the survey asked if drinking water was a problem on Verona Island and 23 percent of survey respondents indicated it was. Fifty-five percent answered that it was not and 10 percent were undecided. Eighty-five percent of survey respondents supported the development of measures to protect ground water. Nine percent did not and one percent was undecided.

4. Topography

It is commonly accepted that land with a slope of zero to three percent may present some drainage problems but generally is suitable for most types of construction, especially for larger buildings. Land with a slope of three to eight percent is suitable for single family homes on small and medium lots, multifamily housing, secondary and minor roads, and smaller commercial and industrial buildings. With the exception of McCloud Mountain and land areas immediately adjacent to the shoreline, Verona largely consists of gently to moderately dipping slopes of 0-8 percent. McCloud Mountain is the highest point on Verona, standing approximately 344 feet above sea level. The interior of the island, with several boggy areas, acts as a natural reservoir, capturing precipitation and channeling the water to lower elevations where homes tend to be located.

5. Surface Water Resources

While Verona Island has no major lakes or great ponds located on the island, there are several perennial, or year-round, streams located on the island and several smaller streams that only flow during a portion of the year. Thus, lake and great pond protection is not an issue on Verona Island. It should also be noted that Verona Island is not a participant of the National Flood Insurance Program.

The two types of surface water contamination come from point and non-point sources. Point pollution can be attributed to a specific source, such as a pipe discharging directly into a stream. Non-point sources cannot be identified and may include stormwater runoff, or erosion. Currently, there are no active licenses for overboard discharges in the town of Verona, meaning point source contamination is not a threat to surface water contamination. Also, there are few areas of impervious surfaces where non-point source pollution is likely to be a threat.

6. Ground Water Resources

An aquifer is commonly defined as a saturated geological formation that contains usable quantities of water. According to the Maine Geological Survey, there are no sand and gravel aquifers present on Verona Island. There are, however, other types of surficial deposits in several locations on the island that are capable of supplying enough water for domestic needs. All Verona residents get their household water from wells or springs.

The Maine Drinking Water Program (DWP) lists one public water source for the town of Verona, well number 11685101 located at the town office. Like most other water sources on the island, the well taps into a bedrock aquifer. The DWP rates public water sources for both existing and future risk of contamination, determined by periodic tests for coliform and nitrate tests and location in relation to land use around water supply source and land ownership status. The Verona well received a "high risk" rating in the existing risk of Acute Contamination category and "moderate risk" in the future risk category. The well received an overall rating of "low risk" based on well type and existing geology.

A 1979 analysis of groundwater resources for the Verona Conservation Commission recommends a minimum of 2.2 acres per dwelling in order to prevent most well water contamination. There are no known problems on Verona Island with groundwater supply. There have been several complaints regarding poor water quality. Potential threats to groundwater quality may include saltwater intrusion (from heavy pumping by a number of wells clustered near the shore), an increase in impervious surfaces that would lower the rate of recharge, and an increase in fertilization and pesticide use.

7. Adequacy of Existing Measures to Protect and Preserve Significant Water Resources

Verona's current measures to protect water resources consist of the shoreland zoning ordinance and the land use ordinance. The ordinances should be periodically reviewed to determine whether they provide for adequate protection, especially with any notable increases in new development.

I. Inventory and Analysis – Critical Natural Resources

1. Purpose

An understanding of a community's critical natural resource enables that community to adopt appropriate land use policies or ordinances that are, at a minimum, consistent with associated state laws. According to the State Planning Office, the comprehensive plan inventory and analysis should include information about wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, significant plant habitat, coastal islands, sand dunes, scenic areas, heritage coastal islands, sand dunes, scenic areas, unique natural areas and heritage coastal areas as defined under Title 5, Section 3316.

2. Key Findings and Issues

Two bald eagle nesting sites, considered "essential habitats", have been identified on Verona Island and should continue to be protected. Otherwise, no essential areas have been identified by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW). Verona Island, with a largely undeveloped island center and a 400+ acre conservation easement, already has impressive space set aside to accommodate and protect much of its existing natural resources. Still, the town might consider a re-examination of its shoreland zoning ordinance or methods to evaluate the adequacy of enforcement for the protection of natural resources. The town might also consider a stronger public education strategy so residents are aware of natural resource protection requirements through the Shoreland Zoning and Land Use and Development Ordinances. There are no coastal sand dunes located on Verona Island.

3. Public Opinion Survey

While all survey respondents were in favor of developing measures to protect resources included in the survey, wetlands and shoreland had the least support, with 22 percent against the development of protection measures. Ground water invited the largest level of interest, with 85% stating they are in favor of developing protection measures.

Table I1
Survey Responses Regarding Support for the Development of Measures to Protect Various Resources

	Support	Not in Support	Undecided
Ground water	85%	9%	1%
Forest land	70%	17%	7%
Rural areas	73%	14%	4%
Wildlife habitat	70%	19%	5%
Wetlands	68%	22%	3%
Shoreland	69%	22%	3%
Residential areas	73%	16%	5%

4. Wetlands

The State Planning Office characterizes wetlands according to functional significance in several categories, including cultural, freshwater fish habitat, flood flow control, wildlife habitat, marine habitat and sediment retention. For each wetland area, a score of zero or a score of one is given for each category. A score of zero indicates there is no significance and a score of one indicates significance. In total, there are 39 wetlands scored for Verona Island. Of those, two areas were noted for their cultural significance. Nineteen have been scored as being significant for both freshwater fish and marine habitat. There were four areas significant for flood flow

control, two for sediment retention and 28 for wildlife habitat. A major portion of wetlands identified on Verona Island are already protected because they are in the shoreland zone or in the area under conservation easement.

5. Significant Plant and Wildlife Habitat

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has identified several areas of Significant and Essential Wildlife Habitat on and around Verona Island. Significant Habitat is defined under Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act and includes:

- High or Moderate Value Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat,
- High or Moderate Value Deer Wintering Areas,
- Shorebird nesting, feeding and staging areas,
- Seabird Nesting Islands,
- Atlantic Salmon habitat,
- Significant Vernal Pools, and
- Habitat for Threatened or Endangered Species.

Significant Habitat identified on and around Verona Island is shown on the Water, Marine, and Natural Resources Map. This habitat includes Inland Waterfowl, Wading Bird Habitat, Tidal Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat, and Shorebird Habitat.

Essential Habitat is mapped by IF&W as specified in the Maine Endangered Species Act, in order to protect habitat essential to the conservation of a species listed as Endangered or Threatened in Maine. Two bald eagle nest sites have been designated as Essential Habitat on Verona Island. The Essential Habitats extend ¼ mile from each nest site. Any activity in an Essential Habitat area that either a) is funded or carried out by the State or the Town, or b) requires a permit from the state or the town must be approved by the IF&W Regional Wildlife Biologist. Currently designated Essential Habitats on Verona Island are shown on the Water, Marine, and Natural Resources Map. These designations are revised annually, and any changes are provided to the town.

6. Policies Relating to Significant and Critical Natural Resources

Verona Island has adopted several community development policy documents that incorporate protection measures for significant natural areas. For example:

- Among the criteria considered for approval of a subdivision on Verona Island's 1980 Subdivision Standards is that the proposed subdivision "*Will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area, aesthetics, historic sites or rare and irreplaceable natural areas."* Section 9.5.1 states that the Board may require that a proposed subdivision design include measures for the "*preservation of scenic, historic, or environmentally desirable areas",* but how such areas are determined is not evident. Also, section 9.9.4, titled "Clustered or Planned Unit Residential Development" in part states that "*residual open space shall be useable for recreation or other outdoor living*

> *purposes and for preserving large trees, tree groves, woods, ponds, streams, glens, rock outcrops, native plant life, wildlife cover and the like.*"

Provided that individuals are in conformance with land uses permitted in the Land Use Ordinance, permits are not required for forest management activities other than timber harvesting or for wildlife management practices.

7. Scenic Resources

The greatest scenic resource identified for Verona Island is the Waldo-Hancock Bridge, also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This resource includes the bridge itself, as well as the panoramic view from the bridge. Because of structural problems, a new bridge is currently under construction. Plans for the new structure include observational decks where aesthetic qualities of the environs may continue to be enjoyed.

J. Inventory and Analysis – Agriculture and Forest Resources

1. Purpose

An inventory and analysis of Verona Island's agricultural and forestry resources will help the community discourage new development that is incompatible with uses related to those industries. Agriculture and forestry were important factors in Verona Island's early development and to this day remain an important part of Maine's overall character. It was noted in Verona Island's 1978 Comprehensive Plan that more wood per acre was harvested on Verona Island than any other town in Hancock County during the early 19th century.

2. Key Findings and Issues

With only one sizeable animal farm in town and low rates of wood harvesting, farming and forestry activities are a relatively minor part of the overall Verona Island economy. The mill in neighboring Bucksport, however, plays an important role in the Verona Island economy because of the relatively large number of people employed there. An increasing demand for locally grown fruit and vegetables might invite the development of small-scale agricultural activities in the community. Farming and forestry activities continue to tie into the "rural way of life" in Maine. With an overwhelming portion, or 88 percent of survey respondents indicating that a rural way of life is important to maintain on Verona Island, farming and forestry activities should not be discouraged.

3. Public Opinion Survey

Eighty-eight percent of survey respondents stated that it is very important to maintain a rural way of life on Verona Island, compared to six percent who stated that it was not very important and two percent who stated that it is unimportant. Sixty-nine percent would like to see Verona Island stay very much like the way it is today. Seventy percent of survey respondents support the development of measures to protect both forest land and wildlife habitat and 73 percent support the development of measures to protect rural areas.

4. Forest Resources

According to Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Reports, between 1992 and 2002, there was only one parcel of land in a tree growth area. The parcel contained a total of 69 acres with 55 hard wood acres and 14 mixed wood acres. Not all forest land is held in tree growth taxation, however, and forests are the primary undeveloped land use on Verona Island. The tree growth method assesses land at its value as forest rather than at its developed value. To qualify for the property tax breaks offered by the tree growth program, a parcel must have a minimum of ten acres and a timber management and harvesting plan.

5. Agricultural Resources

The Farm and Open Space Act allows tax breaks for owners of farmland property if a parcel is more than five acres and provided that certain conditions are met (e.g. a minimum farm income requirement). According to Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Reports, between 1992 and 2002, there were no parcels of land held under the Farm and Open Space Act, indicating that agriculture is not an important component of Verona Island's overall economy.

As with tree growth, not all land used for agriculture will be qualified or choose to benefit from in the Farm and Open Space Act. According to the Comprehensive Planning Committee, there is only one significant working farm on Verona Island.

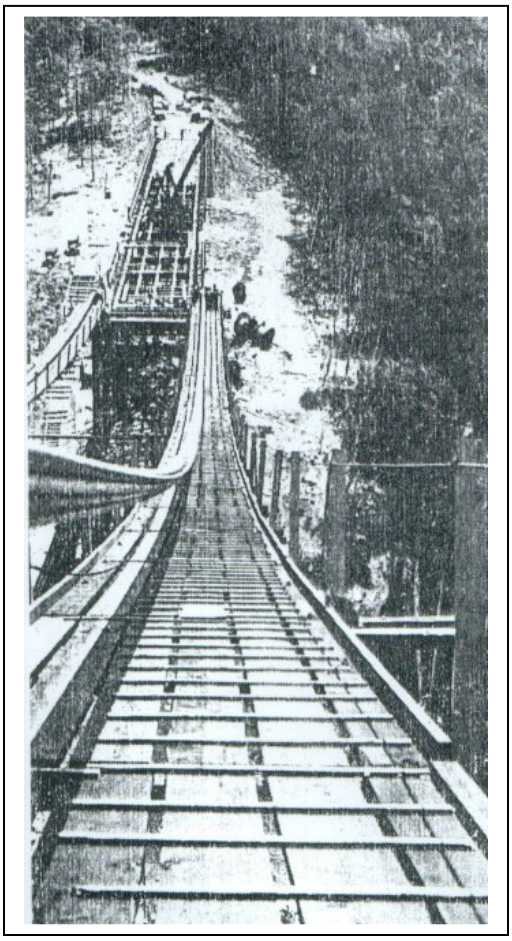
According to a recent U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soil Survey of Hancock County, Verona Island primarily consists of two types of soils, Dixfield-Lyman-Dixfield and Lamoine-Lyman-Dixfield. The USDA does not consider either of these soil types to fit the requirements of prime farmland classification. Only approximately 10 percent of Hancock County's soil meets the requirement.

6. Effectiveness of Existing Measures to Protect Farm and Forest Lands

With the exception of the area included under shoreland zoning, market forces currently influence the protection of farm and forested land. Verona Island has not adopted town-wide zoning or farm and forestry districts, when relatively large lot sizes or other density limitations are set and the use of cluster development is encouraged.

A 400-acre conservation easement, located toward the center of the island, ensures that this largely forested parcel will not be harvested for commercial purposes. Sale of the 69-acre parcel held in tree growth or decision by the current owner to take that land out of the tree growth program could threaten the existence of the forest area.

K. Inventory and Analysis – Historic and Archaeological Resources



1. Purpose

An understanding of a community's historic and archaeological resources allows adequate protection strategies to be recommended in the implementation section of the plan, as is required by the State of Maine Growth Management Act.

2. Key Findings and Issues

According to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC), Verona Island's only designated site on the National Register of Historical Places is the Waldo-Hancock Bridge. There are three known historic archaeological sites and two known prehistoric sites.

It should be noted that more detailed historical information may be found in Verona Island's 1971 Comprehensive Plan. Also, at least one resident on Verona Island has made an impressive hobby of gathering historical records that contribute to the story of the community's development. The town would benefit from keeping a copy of this archive for public use. Additionally, as recommended by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, the town might consider a comprehensive survey of the town's historic and archaeological resources to identify properties that may be eligible for designation to the National Register of Historic Places or other significant areas. The town also might consider minor alterations to the Land Use and Development Ordinance and Subdivision Standards to strengthen definitions and to provide protection measures for sites not necessarily designated in the most recent Comprehensive Plan.

3. Public Opinion Survey

Fifty-three percent of survey respondents stated that Verona Island cemeteries were adequate or more than adequate. Thirteen percent stated that they were not and 22 percent were unsure. Six percent of those would support improvements or expansion through the increase of local taxes and 48 percent would not. There were no other survey questions that directly or indirectly applied to currently existing or potentially eligible historic or archaeological preservation issues on Verona Island.

4. Historical Development Trends

It should first be noted that more detailed historical development information may found in Verona Island's previous Comprehensive Plan or from records collected by the town's amateur historian, Lisa Bridges.

In brief, Verona Island's earliest recorded settlement is estimated to have occurred in the 1780's, likely related to development in neighboring Bucksport, already considered high-profile boomtown during the 19th century. By the early to mid-1800's there were approximately 400 people fishing and tending sheep on the island. Commerce was very important to the region and the primary related activities on Verona Island evolved to include forestry, farming, and fishing by the late 1800's. Early names for the community include "The Isle of Lett", "Orphan's Isle" and the "Isle of Wetmore". Verona Island was named in 1861 when it was incorporated as a town. In 2004, Verona Island was officially changed to Verona Island.

Of the most significance in Verona Island's relatively recent development probably is bridge development, connecting the community first to neighboring Bucksport and then to Prospect. This increased mobility of island residents and facilitated the expansion of economic activity. The first wooden structure connected Verona Island to the mainland at Bucksport and was built in the early 1900's. Later, with the construction of the Waldo-Hancock bridge, a concrete structure was erected in its place. This was replaced with the Edward Thegan bridge in the 1990's.

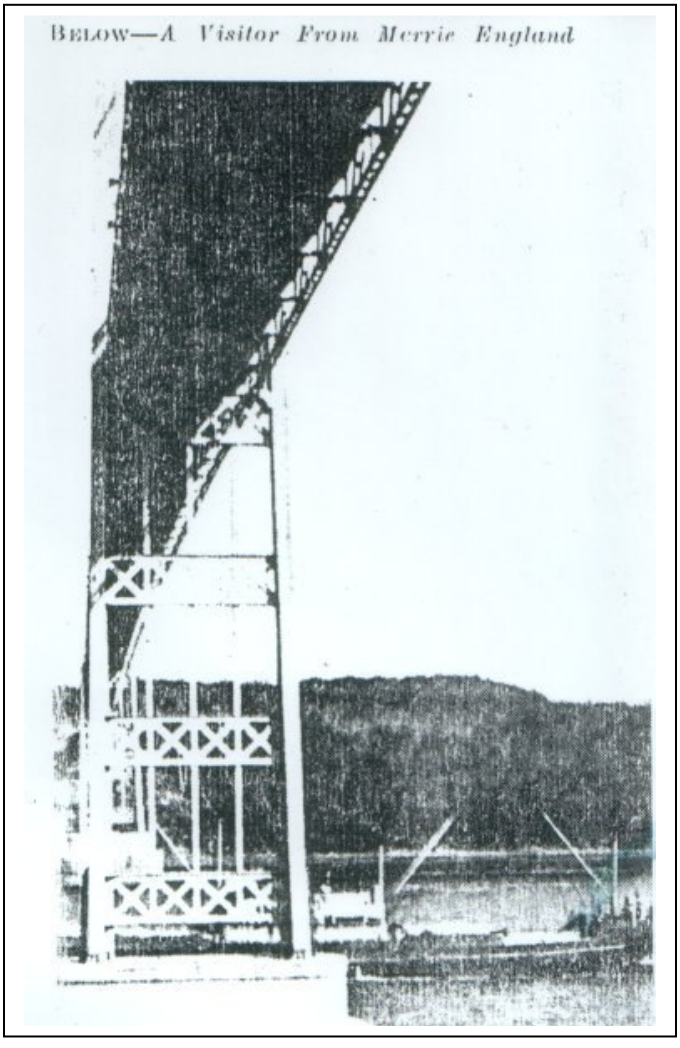
Another period of significance occurred in the late 1800's and early 1900's with the development of Verona Island Park, a colony of summer cottages with a grand hotel, located on 25 acres of the west side of the island. In 1889, the park consisted of 52 cottages, a hotel, boathouse, a wharf and stable. The park faded during the early 1900's and the Verona Island Land Company eventually abandoned the project and ceased to exist. Undesireable conditions resulted from such concentrated development, including problems with waste management, water contamination and fire control. The hotel failed under several owners and was eventually torn down. Many owners of lots let their title lapse to the town in lieu of taxes or sold them. The hotel now is gone, and few cottages are now being used as year-round dwellings.

One other item of note has to do with Verona Island's relationship with Bucksport. In 1959, both Verona Island and Bucksport residents had two opportunities to vote on merging the two towns. On the first vote, Bucksport approved the merger and Verona Island residents did not. The second time around, Verona Island voters were in approval but Bucksport voters were not. Today, Verona Island continues to have a close relationship with Bucksport, partnering with the community for many services and jobs.

5. Existing Significant Historical Sites

The National Register of Historic Places defines "historic" as being: "a district, site, building, structure, or object significant in American history, architecture, engineering, archaeology, and culture" that is at least 50 years old. This definition includes (but is not limited to) houses, barns, old mills, city parks, colonial forts, and Native American settlements. Sites can be important on a national, state, or local basis.

The Waldo-Hancock Bridge is the only structure in town that is recognized on the National Register of Historic Places. The bridge, constructed in the early 1930's, has an overall span of 2,040 feet, with the main span of the bridge, about 800 feet. When it was originally constructed, the bridge had a toll house on the Verona Island side to help cover the cost of construction. Clearance above the river was approximately 135 feet, so ships and barges could easily pass. Currently, the bridge is in poor shape and a replacement is already under construction. Even with its historical significance there is little chance that the current Waldo-Hancock Bridge will be saved for recreational use or any other purpose.



As of November, 2003, there were three known archaeological sites located on Verona Island. Site ME 447-001 is the location of the wreck of a tugboat called the "Penobscot". Site number 447-002 is the location of an unnamed American barge. The third site is the Heath Homestead, which is located at a former campground at the base of the new Verona-Prospect bridge. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission recommends that any future fieldwork conducted on Verona Island focus on sites relating to the earliest European settlement of the town, beginning in the later 18th century.

As of December, 2003, there were two relatively insignificant prehistoric sites have been identified. One is located near the boat ramp at the north end of the island

and on near the Waldo-Hancock Bridge reconstruction area. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission recommends that a survey be conducted along the island shoreland to locate any additional sites.

6. Existing Protection Measures

Verona Island has adopted several documents related to community development that incorporate protection measures for historically significant locations. For example:

- The section pertaining to archaeological sites on Verona Island's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, adopted in 1992, states *"Any proposed land use activity involving structural development or soil disturbance on or adjacent to sites listed on, or eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historical Places, as determined by the permitting authority shall be submitted by the applicant to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for review and comment, at least 20 days prior to action being taken by the permitting authority. The permitting authority shall consider the comments received from the commission prior to rendering a decision on the application".*

- The Land Use and Development Ordinance, also adopted in 1992, states that a land use permit will be granted provided the proposed use meets several criteria, including that the proposed development "*will protect known archaeological and historic resources as designated in the comprehensive plan".*

- Among the criteria considered for approval of a subdivision on Verona Island's 1980 Subdivision Standards is that the proposed subdivision "*Will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area, aesthetics, historic sites or rare and irreplaceable natural areas."* Section 9.5.1 states that the Board may require that a proposed subdivision design include measures for the "*preservation of scenic, historic, or environmentally desirable areas",* but how such areas are determined is not evident.

- Overall, the land use ordinance measures addressing the protection of historical and archaeological resources are somewhat general and could benefit from a greater level of detail.

VERONA PARK

L. Inventory and Analysis – Existing Land Use

1. Purpose

An inventory and analysis of current land use allows one to better understand current and projected development patterns. Maine's Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act requires that "growth" and "rural" areas be designated. Growth areas should sufficiently accommodate residential, commercial and industrial development, taking into account 10-year forecasts. Rural areas should discourage incompatible development and may include agricultural, forest, open space and scenic areas within the community. Verona Island's land use policies and ordinances should reflect the type of growth that is appropriate for the designated growth and rural areas.

2. Key Findings and Issues

Residential growth on Verona Island has been occurring at approximately four percent in the last decade and 21 percent in the last two decades. Growth should be manageable if it continues at four percent.

3. Public Opinion Survey

Sixty-seven percent of survey respondents indicated that they would like to see Verona Island much like it is today. Sixteen percent stated that they would be interested in additional suburban development, or an increase in residences and small businesses. Eight percent were in favor of some additional Industrial and/or commercial development.

Eighty-eight percent expressed that it is very important to maintain a rural way of life in the community. Six percent said it was not very important and two percent stated it was unimportant.

Sixty-nine percent of survey respondents stated that they would like Verona Island's population to stay the same. Fifteen percent would like to see an increase, and five percent would like to see a decrease.

Survey respondents indicated that they would prefer to see certain types of development, if they do occur in the community, to take place in the locations indicated below.

Route 1 is the favored located for growth related to business activities. Sixty-three percent do not approve of heavy industrial operations being located anywhere in town. Fifty-two percent of the survey respondents thought residential development should be able to occur anywhere in town, while 17 percent indicated that there should be designated locations.

Seventy-two percent of respondents think single family housing should be encouraged and 39 percent were in favor of encouraging senior citizen housing. A majority of respondents were not in favor of encouraging multi-family houses, apartments or mobile homes.

4. Land Use Patterns

Verona Island consists of 4,347 acres, of which 400 acres, or approximately 11 percent, have been placed into a conservation easement. A ten acre island owned by the town (Porcupine

Island) also is protected from development through a deed. As an island community, most development has occurred around the perimeter of the town the interior portions are largely undeveloped. The most concentrated development is located along the northeastern portion of the island near Route 1. Verona Island's major business establishments are located in this region.
\
A major concern for Verona Island residents is the safety of their water source. Whether or not there is a limited water supply is unknown at this time and officials are hesitant to allow large-scale development without adequate testing to determine whether or not the quantity and quality of available water would be significantly impacted. A majority of island residents obtain their drinking water from wells; protection from both point and non-point source pollution is a priority.

5. Build-out Scenario

According to U.S. Census figures, the total number of dwelling units changed approximately 21 percent from 217 in 1980 to 262 in 2000. Growth slowed from 16 percent in the period between 1980 and 1990 to nearly 4.5 percent during the following decade. If growth continued at the same rate as the last decade, there would be an additional 12 dwelling units on Verona Island by 2010. If development occurred at the same rate as it has in the last two decades, there would be an additional 54 dwelling units by 2020.

A look at building permits issued between 1994 to 2003 shows that, on average, there are four new houses and garages, three additions, one remodeling, two mobile homes and 1 new business built per year.

Table L1
Building Permits - Verona Island 1994-2003

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
House	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	6	3	4
Garage	5	5	1	4	6	4	3	5	1	3
Addition	6	0	1	1	1	2	6	4	7	4
Remodeling	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	2
Mobile Home	4	3	1	2	4	0	1	3	1	0
Business	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0

Source: Verona Island Code Enforcement Officer Records

M. Inventory and Analysis – Fiscal Capacity

1. Purpose

A careful analysis of Verona's fiscal capacity will help the community implement a strong Capital Investment Plan, or CIP, in the Implementation Strategy section as required by the State when a comprehensive plan is created. This will assist officials in their understanding of a municipality's need to accommodate anticipated growth in designated growth areas and the ability to finance them in the future.

2. Key Findings and Issues

Currently, the only outstanding debt the town has is relatively low compared to its overall tax assessment, well within the state guidelines. Verona benefits greatly by contracting for various services from the town of Bucksport. There are no expected expenses to be incurred in the near future that would require further debt liability.

3. Public Opinion Survey

Sixty-five percent of survey respondents indicated that property taxes were not a problem on Verona Island. Twenty-one percent thought that they were a problem and seven percent were undecided. One survey question asked residents about the adequacy of the different services listed below and whether or not they would like to see them expanded through increased local taxes:

- Fire protection
- Police protection
- Ambulance
- Recreational facilities
- Recreational programs
- Public shore access
- Town office
- Snow removal/sanding
- Summer road maintenance
- Schools
- Cemeteries
- Healthcare
- Solid waste disposal
- Drinking water supply

With the exception of police protection, a majority of respondents indicated that services were adequate or more than adequate for each of those listed. The percent responses of those in favor of improving recreation facilities and recreational programs nearly tied those who thought they were in need of improvement. Out of the respondents who answered the first section of the question regarding adequacy of programs, fewer answered the part about supporting improving or expansion of programs through local taxes. Of those respondents who did answer the question, a large majority were not in support of increasing local taxes.

4. Assessed Value of the Community

According to town reports, the local town valuation increased from approximately $20 million in 1992 to $26 million in 2002 (see table M.1). When adjusted for an inflation increase, there was a nearly 38 percent increase in valuation. This is close to the state's valuation, which also increased from approximately $20 million in 1992 to $26 million in

2002. When adjusted for inflation, the state's change in assessed value over the ten year period is approximately 36 percent, just slightly lower than the locally assessed value.

5. Operating Expenditures and Revenue

Table M2 contains a summary of general fund expenditures for Verona for the ten-year period from 1992-2002. At approximately $264,000, education is the single largest expenditure on Verona Island for 2002. General government, at approximately $57,000 was the second largest expenditure for the same year. The table shows that the two highest percent increases were for protection and education. In both cases, Verona contracts for services with the town of Bucksport and the increases are related to a similar rise in cost for the town of Bucksport.

Table M1
Trends in Valuation - Verona 1992-2002

Year	State Assessed Value	Annual % Change (State)	Local Assessed Value	Annual % Change (Local)	Ratio Local/State
1992	$20,250,000		$19,989,780		0.987
1993	$20,400,000	0.74%	$20,568,540	2.90%	1.008
1994	$22,100,000	8.33%	$20,682,810	0.56%	0.936
1995	$21,800,000	-1.36%	$21,350,090	3.23%	0.979
1996	$21,350,000	-2.06%	$21,795,790	2.09%	1.021
1997	$21,900,000	2.58%	$23,799,120	9.19%	1.087
1998	$22,300,000	1.83%	$23,191,450	-2.55%	1.040
1999	$22,200,000	-0.45%	$25,263,510	8.93%	1.138
2000	$22,950,000	3.38%	$24,631,660	-2.50%	1.073
2001	$24,400,000	6.32%	$25,151,170	2.11%	1.031
2002	$25,750,000	5.53%	$25,673,190	2.08%	0.997
Change 1992-2002	$5,500,000	27.16%	$5,683,410	28.43%	
Change 1992-2002 Adjusted for Inflation	$7,260,000	35.85%	$7,502,101	37.53%	

Note 1: State valuations are amounts used by Hancock County to assess the county tax, and for calculations for various state reimbursements such as education funds.

Note 2: Municipal valuations are amounts used by local assessors as basis for the tax commitment. Any adjustments by supplemental tax or abatement are not included.

Note 3: Figures from both sources include Real Property (Land & Buildings) and Personal Property. Excluded are non-taxable properties and amounts for veterans, homestead exemptions, etc. and values exempted because of the Tree Growth Classification.

Source: Municipal Reports

Table M2
Summary of Major Town Expenditures by Category
Verona Island 1992-2002

	1992	2002	Change	Percent Change	Change Adjusted for Inflation	Percent Change Adjusted for Inflation
Culture and Recreation	$2,426	$2,271	-$155	-6.4%	-$205	-11.1%
Unclassified	$6,777	$8,821	$2,044	30.2%	$2,698	52.6%
Assessments and Debt Service	$8,951	$17,324	$8,373	93.5%	$11,052	163.0%
General Government	$39,864	$57,307	$17,443	43.8%	$23,025	76.2%
Protection	$4,785	$21,070	$16,285	340.3%	$21,496	593.0%
Highways and Bridges	$19,686	$27,084	$7,398	37.6%	$9,765	65.5%
Health and Sanitation	$23,848	$36,060	$12,212	51.2%	$16,120	89.2%
Education	$127,498	$264,306	$136,808	107.3%	$180,587	187.0%

Source: Municipal Reports

There are no expected major capital expenditures that the town of Verona expects to face in the next few years. Minor expenditures may include improvements to the town hall or maintenance on the sewer line.

6. Municipal Debt and Capital Financing

Currently, Verona has an extremely low volume of debt compared to the maximum allowed by state law. The state allows a municipality to borrow up to 15 percent of their total state valuation but strongly encourages municipalities to keep it below five percent. In 2002, five percent of Verona's state assessed value was 1.3 million. In the same year, Verona's only outstanding debt was approximately $55,000 for the sewer line, significantly lower than that ideal maximum amount established by the state.

Summary of Key Findings and Issues
Verona Island Inventory and Analysis Section

A. Population

Though Verona Island's growth rate was lower than Hancock County overall in the last decade, the community did experience population growth. As of 2000, it had 533 year-round residents. The State Planning Office estimates that Verona Island's population will experience a somewhat higher rate of growth in the next decade. At the same time, Verona Island's population is also getting older. There is no noticeable increase in the resident population in the summer months.

B. Economy

There are few businesses on Verona Island that employ more than one or two people, indicating that the majority of Verona Island's residents must travel outside of their community for work. Of those that travel outside of the community for work, Bucksport and Bangor are the two most common destinations. A significant number of businesses that are located on Verona Island are located along Route 1; there are also many home-based businesses. There is a lower unemployment rate among Verona Island residents than the rest of Hancock County and the median household income tends to be higher than neighboring communities.

C. Housing

The median household unit value increased a total of 167 percent on Verona Island during the last 20 years, slightly less than the overall rate of change for Hancock County. The rate of growth in the number of housing units has remained significantly lower on Verona Island than for Hancock County during the same 20 year time period. The number of multi-family units increased by 100 percent and the number of mobile homes increased by slightly more than 80 percent in the last decade. A demand for shorefront housing and affordable housing near Hancock County service centers is expected to continue. As a relatively small island with little space for new development and limited carrying capacity due to water and waste water resources, a demand for already-existing housing may eventually lead to increased prices. Still, the community is not expected to face affordable housing problems in the near future.

D. Transportation and Roads

As the Inventory and Analysis is being conducted, the condition of the Waldo-Hancock Bridge is being evaluated and the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) may soon decide whether the bridge will be repaired or a new one altogether constructed. There are new developments on an almost weekly basis while the future of the bridge is under consideration. Traffic has been disrupted in the area during this evaluation process, leading to slower moving traffic and access problems for those attempting to turn left from Eastside Drive. The construction of a new bridge or maintenance on the current bridge is certain to have significant short and long-term impacts in the Verona Island community. Currently, there are no parking issues on Verona Island.

E. Public Facilities and Service

Police protection may be one area where improvements are needed, since a majority of survey respondents indicated that services were inadequate. Twenty-two percent of Verona Island survey respondents were not sure if cemeteries or health care options were adequate in town, indicating that these may be issues that should be explored further.

Verona Island is increasingly sending more sewage to the Bucksport treatment facility than the treatment facility has the capacity for. Several improvements are also needed in the town office. Finally, 24 percent of survey respondents stated that solid waste disposal services are in need of improvement. Currently, there are no recycling options for Verona Island residents and the town needs to ensure they are able to laws regarding universal waste and electronics disposal. Safe household hazardous waste disposal may be another area that should be considered.

F. Recreation

The inventory and analysis shows that Verona Island has several opportunities for outdoor recreation enthusiasts, including as Porcupine Island, a 400 acre conservation easement and a public boat landing. Results from the public opinion survey, however, indicate that the percentage of those who think recreational facilities or programs on Verona Island are adequate or more than adequate is significantly close to the percentage of those who think there should be improvement. Perhaps residents are interested in having indoor or alternative outdoor recreational opportunities available in town. Another consideration is that currently available facilities that are town, state or privately owned could potentially become unavailable for public use in the future.

G. Marine Resources

There does not at this time, nor is there expected to be within the next 10 years, problems related to shore access for shellfish or worm harvesters. Should there be major turnover in property ownership along the shoreline, access to these areas could be threatened and the issue may have to be re-examined. The boat ramp area does not allow for convenient loading or unloading of boats since there is no dock to temporarily tie up to while an unloaded vehicle is being parked. Other inadequacies of the boat launch area include lack of fuel facilities, lack of protection against strong tides and lack of a sewage pump-out facility.

H. Water Resources

Verona residents utilize wells or springs for their household water source. Construction of a central water supply probably is not economically feasible. Therefore, the quantity and quality of well water must be adequately protected for current and future Verona residents. A large number and high concentration of septic systems is expected to have negative impact on the overall water quality on the island and development should be limited as a result. There are no licensed overboard discharges in town.

I. Critical Natural Resources

Two bald eagle nesting sites, considered “essential habitats”, have been identified on Verona Island and should continue to be protected. Otherwise, no essential areas have been identified by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW).

Verona Island, with a largely undeveloped island center and a 400+ acre conservation easement, already has impressive space set aside to accommodate and protect much of its existing natural resources. Still, the town might consider a re-examination of its shoreland zoning ordinance or methods to evaluate the adequacy of enforcement for the protection of natural resources. The town might also consider a stronger public education strategy so residents are aware of natural resource protection requirements through the Shoreland Zoning and Land Use and Development Ordinances. There are no coastal sand dunes located on Verona Island.

J. Agriculture and Forest Resources

With only one sizeable animal farm in town and low rates of wood harvesting, farming and forestry activities are a relatively minor part of the overall Verona Island economy. The mill in neighboring Bucksport, however, plays an important role in the Verona Island economy because of the relatively large number of people employed there. An increasing demand for locally grown fruit and vegetables might invite the development of small-scale agricultural activities in the community. Farming and forestry activities continue to tie into the "rural way of life" in Maine. With an overwhelming portion, or 88 percent of survey respondents indicating that a rural way of life is important to maintain on Verona Island, farming and forestry activities should not be discouraged.

K. Historic and Archaeological Preservation

According to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC), Verona Island's only designated site on the National Register of Historical Places is the Waldo-Hancock Bridge. There are three known historic archaeological sites and two known prehistoric sites.

It should be noted that more detailed historical information may be found in Verona Island's 1971 Comprehensive Plan. Also, at least one resident on Verona Island has made an impressive hobby of gathering historical records that contribute to the story of the community's development. The town would benefit from keeping a copy of this archive for public use. Additionally, as recommended by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, the town might consider a comprehensive survey of the town's historic and archaeological resources to identify properties that may be eligible for designation to the National Register of Historic Places or other significant areas. The town also might consider minor alterations to the Land Use and Development Ordinance and Subdivision Standards to strengthen definitions and to provide protection measures for sites not necessarily designated in the most recent Comprehensive Plan.

L. Existing Land Use

Residential growth on Verona Island has been occurring at approximately four percent in the last decade and 21 percent in the last two decades. Growth should be manageable if it continues at four percent.

M. Fiscal Capacity

Currently, the only outstanding debt the town has is relatively low compared to its overall tax assessment, well within the state guidelines. Verona benefits greatly by contracting for various services from the town of Bucksport. There are no expected expenses to be incurred in the near future that would require further debt liability.

PART II
GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

This section of the Verona Island Comprehensive Plan outlines the goals of the community, strategies developed to achieve these goals and parties responsible for implementation. This should be periodically reviewed by town officials to evaluate effectiveness.

A. Population

Summary: Though Verona's growth rate was lower than Hancock County overall in the last decade, the community did experience some population growth. As of 2000, it had 533 year-round residents. The State Planning Office estimates that the community's population will experience a somewhat higher rate of growth in the next decade. At the same time, Verona Island's population is also getting older. Currently, there is no noticeable increase in the resident population during summer months. As an island community with limited water and waste water infrastructure, the carrying capacity of the island is naturally limited and population growth is not expected to rise out of control in the foreseeable future.

Goal: Population growth on Verona Island will neither be encouraged nor discouraged.

Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeline
Verona Island officials will keep track of population growth as well as the characteristics and distribution of its population.	The town will keep track of its population through the 10 year census, tax records, and resources available at the state level.	Selectmen, Town Clerk	On-going

B. Economic

Summary: There are few businesses on Verona Island that employ more than one or two people, indicating that the majority of Verona Island's residents must travel outside of the community for employment purposes. A significant number of businesses located on Verona Island are located along the Route 1 portion of the island; there also are many home-based businesses. There is a lower unemployment rate among Verona Island residents than the rest of Hancock County and the median household income tends to be higher than neighboring communities.

Goal: Verona Island will encourage business development along the Route 1 portion of the community, which already has good transportation infrastructure and relatively easy access to emergency services. Home based businesses also will be encouraged.

Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeline
Verona Island officials will closely monitor the development of new business and their locations.	Development can be monitored through permits requested from the Planning Board, and Code Enforcement Officer inspections.	Selectmen, Planning Board	On-going
Proper access management is a necessary requirement for the development of small home-based businesses.	Any site for which a new business is proposed will be reviewed by the Planning Board and CEO for access management issues. Specific standards to guide development review will be adopted as part of the land use ordinance revisions.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer	2006-2008
For any proposed business development evidence must be provided by the developer showing that the environment is able to absorb the proposed development without serious harm. Water protection is a significant concern.	The Planning Board will define what is considered serious harm to the environment as well as outline required evidence showing that any new proposed development does not seriously negatively impact the environment of Verona Island. These standards will be proposed as an amendment to the town's current land use ordinances.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer	2006-2008
The community shall maintain relationships with local economic development organizations in order to stay apprised of regional development efforts that may have an impact on the community.	Selectmen will appoint representatives of the community to attend relevant meetings of economic development groups, such as the Eastern Maine Development Corporations, Coastal Acadia Development Corporation, Bucksport Chamber of Commerce, or other.	Selectmen, appointed community members	On-going

C. Housing

Summary: The median household unit value increased a total of 167 percent on Verona Island during the last 20 years, slightly less than the overall rate of change for Hancock County. Though the rate of growth in the number of housing units has remained significantly lower on Verona Island than for Hancock County during the same period of time, the number of multi-family units increased by 100 percent and the number of mobile homes increased by slightly more than 80 percent in the last decade. A demand for shorefront housing and affordable housing near Hancock County service centers is expected to continue. As a relatively small island with little space for new development and limited carrying capacity due to water and waste water resources, a demand for already-existing housing may eventually lead to increased prices. Still, the community is not expected to face affordable housing problems in the near future.

Goal: Verona Island strives to maintain a variety of safe, decent and affordable housing options for various household types and income ranges and promote policies that allow at least 10 percent of new housing to be affordable to those of low to moderate income.

Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeline
Town officials will closely monitor local housing trends, such as demand for different types of housing and prices.	Real estate advertisements will be followed in local newspaper listings by the selectmen or town clerk.	Selectmen, Town Clerk	On-going
Verona Island will participate in regional affordable housing endeavors.	The municipality will maintain a relationship with neighboring town officials and local housing-related organizations, such as the Maine State Housing Authority and Washington Hancock Community Agency, in order to stay apprised of any initiatives that may impact Verona Island.	Selectmen, Town Clerk	On-going
Mobile homes or mobile home parks will continue to be allowed in any area of Verona Island, provided water, waste water conditions, and other land use requirements are adequately addressed.	The code enforcement officer and planning Board members will review applications for proposed mobile home or mobile home parks to ensure that the site can adequately support the proposed land use.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer	On-going

One accessory dwelling per primary dwelling will be allowed, provided at least one unit is owner-occupied.	Language specifically addressing accessory dwellings will be incorporated into Verona Island's land use ordinance.	Planning Board, Town Voters	2006-2008

D. Transportation

Summary: At the time that this comprehensive plan is being developed, a new Waldo-Hancock Bridge is under constructed. There are new developments on an almost weekly basis while the future of the bridge is under consideration. The construction of the new bridge is certain to have significant short and long-term impacts in the Verona community. A lack of sidewalks may create safety hazards along the Route 1 portion of the island. Currently, there are no parking issues on Verona Island.

Goal: Verona Island strives to maintain a safe transportation routes that promotes ease of mobility for both motorized and non-motorized users.

Policy	Implementation Strategy	Responsible Party	Timeline
The town will encourage new businesses to be located along the Route 1 portion of the town, where they can be easily accessed by service vehicles without unnecessarily tying up normal traffic patterns.	The planning board will draft land use ordinance standards that promote sound access management by encouraging shared driveways, restricting curb cuts and the channeling of traffic onto secondary access roads wherever possible, Apart from home occupations, which are allowed anywhere in town except Resource Protection zoned areas, commercial uses will be allowed only along Route 1.	Planning Board, CEO	2006-2007

E. Public Facilities and Services

Summary: Police protection may be one area where increased service is needed, since a majority of survey respondents indicated that services were inadequate. Twenty-two percent of Verona survey respondents were not sure if cemeteries or health care options were adequate in town, indicating that these may be issues that should be explored further. Verona Island is increasingly sending more sewage to the Bucksport treatment facility than they have the capacity for. Also, many improvements are needed in the town office. Finally, 24 percent of survey respondents stated that solid waste disposal services are in need of improvement. Currently, there are no recycling options for island residents and the town needs to prepare for new laws regarding universal waste and electronics disposal. Providing safe household hazardous waste disposal alternatives may be another service that should be further explored.

Goals: Verona Island strives to keep taxes low for residents while also providing adequate public facilities and services.			
Policy	**Implementation Strategy**	**Responsible Party**	**Timeline**
Verona Island residents will continue to be provided with an adequate level of fire protection, through contractual arrangement with the Town of Bucksport.	Selectmen will continue to review, on an annual basis, the level of need and service provided by the Town of Bucksport Fire Department. Any necessary changes will be adjusted accordingly.	Selectmen	On-going
Town officials recognize that the Town Office is an important hub for town business and social functions. Therefore, adequate staffing and equipment will be maintained so as to continue or, if necessary, expand the level of service provided at this location.	Demand for various types of services provided through the Verona Island Town Office will be reviewed on an annual basis and any necessary adjustments will be made accordingly.	Selectmen, Clerk	On-going
Affordable, quality education shall continue to be provided to Verona Island children through the Bucksport school system.	Selectmen will closely monitor costs and services provided by the local school system as well as benefits to the immediate community.	Selectmen	On-going
Maintenance needs for current cemetery space and the acquisition of new space will be monitored.	Selectmen will base demand on inquiries received at the town office.	Selectmen, Clerk	On-going

Verona Island officials will develop a waste-related educational program and residents will be given the opportunity to participate in periodic regional one-day special or household hazardous waste collections.	The town office will have educational brochures available regarding proper disposal of special and household hazardous waste disposal, and utilize waste management services provided at no cost by the Hancock County Planning Commission.	Selectmen, Clerk	On-going
Verona Island officials will continue to monitor the quantity and types of emergency-related calls and develop a plan to increase service, if needed.	Reports from the Sheriff's department and other local emergency service bureaus will be collected and assessed.	Selectmen, Clerk	Annually
Verona Island residents will vote to appoint necessary committees, such as a Town Hall Committee or Comprehensive Plan Update Committee to address matters that require new or on-going attention.	There will be an option to appoint new or sustaining committee members at each Verona Island annual meeting.	Town residents, selectmen	Annually

Town officials will continue to work with Bucksport sewage treatment officials to assess the potential of acquiring more excess capacity for use by island residents.	The select board checks periodically with sewage treatment plant officials and offers to serve as co-sponsors for any grant applications.	Select board	Bi-annually

F. Recreation			
Summary: The inventory and analysis shows that Verona Island has several opportunities for outdoor recreation enthusiasts, including as Porcupine Island, a 400-acre conservation easement and a public boat landing. Results from the public opinion survey, however, indicate that the percentage of those who think recreational facilities or programs on Verona Island are adequate or more than adequate is significantly close to the percentage of those who think there should be improvement. Perhaps residents are interested in having indoor or alternative outdoor recreational opportunities available in town. Another consideration is that currently available facilities that are town, state or privately owned could potentially become unavailable for public use in the future.			
Goal: At a minimum, Verona Island officials are in support of maintaining the types of recreational facilities and programs currently available to residents.			
Policy	**Implementation Strategy**	**Responsible Party**	**Timeline**
Verona will continue to provide financial support to Bucksport recreational facilities available for use by Verona Island residents.	Town officials will continue to budget, on an annual basis, for recreational programs in neighboring communities available for use by Verona Island residents.	Selectmen	Annually

G. Marine Resources
Summary: There does not at this time, nor is there expected to be within the next 10 years, problems related to shore access for those in the fishing industry or shellfish and worm harvesters. Should there be major turnover in property ownership along the shoreline, access to these areas could be threatened and the issue may have to be re-examined. The boat ramp area does allow for convenient loading or unloading of boats, though there is no dock to temporarily tie up to while an unloaded vehicle is being parked. Inadequacies of the boat launch area include lack of fuel facilities, lack of protection against strong tides and lack of a sewage pump-out facility.

Goal: Verona Island strives to maintain a healthy fishing industry and availability of public access to key access points used by those involved in the fishing industry.			
Policies	**Implementation Strategy**	**Responsible Party**	**Timeline**
Verona Island officials will monitor the availability of adequate access points on behalf of those involved in the fishing industry.	The town office shall keep a record of any complaints from private landowners regarding trespassing by those attempting to access the shoreline or from those in the fishing industry who can no longer access points traditionally available to support work-related activities. Increased complaints may be an indication of decreasing access, and policy options will be examined at that point in time.	Town Clerk	On-going
Verona Island officials will promote safe fishing practices.	The Verona Island Town Office shall monitor listings of areas closed to shellfish harvesting by the Department of Marine Resources.	Town Clerk	On-going
Verona Island officials will promote improvements to the boat launch area	Verona Island officials will monitor proposed improvements to the boat launch area to assure that needed improvements, including assessing the pros and cons of a breakwater, are implemented. This will be done in conjunction with the town of Bucksport and the Maine Department of Marine Resources. If necessary, the town will serve as a co-sponsor for any grant applications.	Select board, town of Bucksport, Maine Department of Marine Resources	On-going

H. Water Resources			
Summary: Verona Island residents utilize wells or springs for their household water source. Construction of a central water supply probably is not economically feasible. Therefore, the quantity and quality of well water must be adequately protected for current and future Verona Island residents. A large number and high concentration of septic systems is expected to have negative impact on the overall water quality on the island and development should be limited as a result. There currently are no licensed overboard discharges in town.			
Goal: Water resources on Verona Island will be protected in a way that accommodates a balance of economic, aesthetic and health properties.			
Policy	**Implementation Strategy**	**Responsible Party**	**Timeline**
Maintain that any new subdivision development must be able to accommodate adequate sewage disposal system.	Any new development must be reviewed by Planning Board officials and approved before construction.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer	On-going
Maintain two acre lot size for single-family units in the area not accommodated by the Bucksport sewage disposal system in order to provide for well protection in case of sewer failure.	Any new development must be reviewed by Planning Board officials and approved before construction.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer	On-going
Maintain minimum distance requirement of 100 feet space between leach field and well for any new single-family dwelling units.	Any new development must be reviewed by Planning Board officials and approved before construction.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer	On-going
Septic system must be designed by qualified engineer.	Proof of adequate design must be presented to the Planning Board and CEO will inspect.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer	On-going

Universal Waste will be kept out of the municipal waste stream.	Annual collections will be scheduled for town residents to properly dispose of mercury-containing materials.	Selectmen, waste hauling company	Annually
A stronger household hazardous waste education program will occur.	Brochures regarding waste disposal methods and hazardous material alternatives will be available at the town office. The town will support any efforts of local schools to educate children about the dangers associated with improper hazardous materials disposal.	Town Clerk, selectmen	On-going

I. Critical Natural Areas			
Summary: Significant habitat identified on and around Verona Island is shown on the Water, Marine and Natural Resources Map. This habitat includes inland waterfowl and wading bird habitat, tidal waterfowl and wading bird habitat and shorebird habitat. Verona Island, with a largely undeveloped island center and a 400+ acre conservation easement, already has impressive space set aside to accommodate and protect much of its existing natural resources. Still, the town might consider a re-examination of its shoreland zoning ordinance or methods to evaluate the adequacy of enforcement for the protection of natural resources. The town might also consider a stronger public education strategy so residents are aware of natural resource protection requirements through the Shoreland Zoning and Land Use and Development Ordinances. There are no coastal sand dunes located on Verona Island.			
Goal: To provide special protection for Verona Island's critical resources as well as natural and scenic areas.			
Policy	**Implementation Strategy**	**Responsible Party**	**Timeline**
Closely review new developments for compliance with shoreland zoning ordinance and monitor existing developments for compliance.	Planning Board officials will closely examine new development plans for inconsistencies in relation to Verona Island's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, Land Use Ordinance or other official documents.	Selectmen, Code Enforcement Officer Planning Board	On-going
Encourage residents to respect existing conservation easement and porcupine island to preserve access as well as habitat sensitively	Ask residents to report any delinquent behavior in the conservation or other sensitive areas.	All Verona Island residents will be involved in self-policing and Selectmen will issue warnings when/where warranted.	On-going
Maintain contact with IF&W for any special building requests near Verona's identified critical natural areas.	IF&W will be contacted if any development is proposed near identified critical natural areas.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer	On-going

J. Agriculture and Forest Resources			
Summary: With only one sizeable animal farm in town and low rates of wood harvesting, farming and forestry activities are a relatively minor part of the overall Verona Island economy. The mill in neighboring Bucksport, however, plays an important role in the Verona economy because of the relatively large number of people employed there. An increasing demand for locally grown fruit and vegetables might invite the development of small-scale agricultural activities in the community. Farming and forestry activities continue to tie into the "rural way of life" in Maine. With an overwhelming portion, or 88 percent of survey respondents indicating that a rural way of life is important to maintain on Verona, farming and forestry activities should not be discouraged.			
Goal: To maintain the rural way of life on Verona Island.			
Policy	**Implementation Strategy**	**Responsible Party**	**Timeline**
Encourage Verona Island residents to utilize neighboring Bucksport farmer's market.	Information regarding the Bucksport Farmer's Market will be available at the Town Office.	Selectmen, Town Clerk	On-going
Encourage backyard composting in home gardens over use of artificial pesticides and herbicides.	Verona Island will participate in special composting events sponsored by local organizations, such as the Hancock County Planning Commission and University of Maine Cooperative Extension. Relevant publications will be made available at the Town Office.	Selectmen, Town Clerk	On-going
Have information available at town office regarding benefits of tree growth areas.	Information regarding the benefits will be made available at the Town Office.	Town Clerk, Selectmen	On-going
Encourage home businesses that may be related to the agricultural and forest industry.	Verona will work with local Chambers of Commerce to promote unique business culture of Verona Island.	Town Clerk, Selectmen	On-going

K. Historical and Archaeological Resources			
Summary: According to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC), Verona Island's only designated site on the National Register of Historical Places is the Waldo-Hancock Bridge, which is soon to be replaced with a new bridge. There are two known historic archaeological sites and two known prehistoric sites.			
Goal: To preserve important Verona Island historical areas.			
Policy	**Implementation Strategy**	**Responsible Party**	**Timeline**
To periodically evaluate the need for an historical society on Verona Island.	Given enough interest, a committee will be appointed to evaluate the need for a historical society or, at a minimum, to locate a central area to store documents related to the Verona Island's rich history.	Town residents, Selectmen, Committee Appointees	On-going
To collaborate with Bucksport historical society regarding rich shared history.	Regularly communicate with members of the Bucksport Historical Society to maintain relationship.	Town residents, Selectmen, Committee Appointees	On-going
Revise town land use ordinances to enhance protection of historical, prehistoric and archaeological resources	Add language to the subdivision and land use ordinances that states "if any portion of a site has been identified as containing historic, prehistoric and archaeological resources, the development application must include appropriate measures for protecting these resources, including but limited to, modification of the proposed design of the site, timing of construction and limiting the extent of excavation.	Planning board	Concurrent with other land use ordinance revisions. (2006-2007)

L. Existing Land Use			
Summary: Residential growth on Verona Island has been occurring at approximately four percent in the last decade and 21 percent in the last two decades. Growth should be manageable if it continues at four percent. Twenty one percent residential growth in the next two decades may present some special challenges for the community.			
Goal: To maintain an affordable and attractive community where Verona Island's children will continue to want to live and work as adults.			
Policy	**Implementation Strategy**	**Responsible Party**	**Timeline**
To promote any new large business growth development along Route 1 portion of the island while preserving safe, efficient and convenient access for customers and emergency vehicles.	Amend town land use ordinances to restrict commercial uses to the Route 1 corridor.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer draft the proposed land use ordinance changes.	2006-2007
To require cluster development on subdivisions of ten units or (set back requirement from abutting property cluster units is 30 feet set back - within cluster 10 feet from abutting properties) and that a sewage treatment facility be provided; open area requirement.	The plan recommends that town land use ordinances be revised to require cluster on subdivisions of ten units or more	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer draft the necessary changes to the land use ordinances.	2006-2007

Any large business will be required to first show that there are adequate water supplies to sustain it without harming the quantity available or quality of neighboring businesses or residences.	An engineer's analysis will be required before a permit will be issued.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer	On-going
Water run-off area tools implemented by businesses.	Best management practices will be retained in the land use ordinance	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer will retain the standards when revising the land use ordinances.	2006-2007
Businesses will be required to provide vegetative buffers.	These standards will be incorporated into the land use ordinances.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer will draft the necessary language changes.	2006-2007
Affordable housing will not be restricted anywhere on Verona Island.	Designs for affordable housing must include adequate sewage disposal and water quality before permits will be issued.	Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer	On-going
Land use regulations will be evaluated every 3 years according to growth.	Land use regulations will be evaluated and changed, if necessary, to best reflect the needs of the community based on growth rates and type of development. If growth rates exceed those projected in the plan, the plan recommends that more restrictive land use controls be implemented. This would require an amendment to the current comprehensive plan.	Planning Board	Every 3 Years.

Capital Improvement Program

1. Purpose

A capital improvements program (CIP) is necessary in order to identify needed facilities to accommodate projected growth in the community, prioritize projects and locate potential sources of funding for various programs. Capital expenditures are normally considered to be separate from day-to-day municipal operating expenditures and may include purchases of new equipment, studies, and acquisition costs of $5,000 or more. Potential sources of funding may include loans, grants or gifts. A CIP should identify immediate, short-term and long-term needs and be updated on a regular basis to adequately meet the anticipated needs of the community.

2. Identification of Current Needs

Currently, Verona Island is facing relatively low development pressure and, as a result, town officials do not expect the need for major capital improvements in the near future. Verona Island officials currently work closely with Bucksport town officials in order to best optimize the efficiency of various services on behalf of residents in both communities (e.g. limited sewage treatment and emergency service). With its close proximity to Bucksport, this relationship benefits Verona Island residents greatly; conditions are not expected to change in the near future but should be revisited by town officials on an annual basis in order to prepare for expected changes or adequately react to unexpected conditions.

3. Estimation of Costs, Timing and Funding Sources

A capital improvement plan is outlined in the table below with a priority rating.
An "A" score indicates that the project is of high priority and should be completed within the near future. A score of "B" indicates that the project is of lesser priority and does not need to be completed within the immediate future. "C" is of lowest priority and is not considered necessary in order to maintain normal town functions.

Capital Improvement Plan

Project	Priority	Responsible Party	Funding Source
Historical Society Room or Building	B	Appointed Committee	CDBG/Other Grants
Town Hall Expansion Project	B	Selectmen	Increased Taxes/CDBG/Donations
Boat Launch Area Improvements	A	Selectmen	CDBG/Other Grants
Purchase of Property for Recreational Purposes (Preferably Shorefront Property)	C	Residents at Large	Donations of Land or Funding/Cost Share Funding
Matching funds for pedestrian facility improvements.	A	Selectmen	General municipal revenues

Future Land Use Plan

1. Purpose

An inventory and analysis of current land use allows one to better understand current and projected development patterns. Maine's Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act require that "growth" and "rural" areas be designated. Growth areas should sufficiently accommodate residential, commercial and industrial development, taking into account 10-year forecasts. Rural areas should discourage incompatible development and may include agricultural, forest, open space and scenic areas within the community. Verona Island's land use policies and ordinances should reflect the type of growth that is appropriate for the designated growth and rural areas.

2. Key Findings and Issues

Residential growth on Verona Island has been occurring at approximately four percent in the last decade and 21 percent in the last two decades. Growth is expected to be manageable if it continues at this rate. As a relatively small island community, the town already possesses some natural restrictions on growth, including limited land availability and limited water and sewer treatment capacity. Furthermore, there is only one road circling the island that is unable to handle large volumes of traffic and which can accommodate emergency vehicles. A significant amount of Verona Island acreage has been placed under conservation easement and restricts future development. To best protect water resources, residents of Verona Island are in favor of locating future commercial development along the portion of Route 1 that runs through the northwestern most portion of the island. There are no recommendations for restrictions on residential development, provided measures are in place to protect groundwater resources.

3. Public Opinion Survey

Sixty-seven percent of survey respondents indicated that they would like to see Verona Island much like it is today. Sixteen percent stated that they would be interested in additional suburban development, or an increase in residences and small businesses. Eight percent were in favor of some additional Industrial and/or commercial development.

Eighty-eight percent expressed that it is very important to maintain a rural way of life in the community. Six percent said it was not very important and two percent stated it was unimportant.

Sixty-nine percent of survey respondents stated that they would like Verona Island's population to stay the same. Fifteen percent would like to see an increase, and five percent would like to see a decrease.

Survey respondents indicated that they would prefer to see certain types of development, if they do occur in the community, to take place in the locations indicated below.

Route 1 is the favored located for growth related to business activities. Sixty-three percent do not approve of heavy industrial operations being located anywhere in town. Fifty-two percent of

the survey respondents thought residential development should be able to occur anywhere in town, while 17 percent indicated that there should be designated locations.

Seventy-two percent of respondents think single family housing should be encouraged and 39 percent were in favor of encouraging senior citizen housing. A majority of respondents were not in favor of encouraging multi-family houses, apartments or mobile homes.

4. Land Use Patterns

Verona Island consists of approximately 4,347 acres, of which 400 acres have been placed into a conservation easement. A ten acre island owned by the town (Porcupine Island) also is protected from development through a deed. As an island community, most development has occurred around the perimeter of the town the interior portions are largely undeveloped. The most concentrated development is located along the northeastern portion of the island near Route 1. Verona Island's major business establishments are located in this region.

5. Build-out Scenario

According to U.S. Census figures, the total number of dwelling units changed approximately 21 percent from 217 in 1980 to 262 in 2000. Growth slowed from 16 percent in the period between 1980 and 1990 to nearly 4.5 percent during the following decade. If growth continued at the same rate as the last decade, there would be an additional 12 dwelling units on Verona Island by 2010. If development occurred at the same rate as it has in the last two decades, there would be an additional 54 dwelling units by 2020.

A look at building permits given out between 1994 to 2003 shows that, on average, there are four new houses and garages, three additions, one remodeling, two mobile homes and 1 new business built per year.

Future Land Use Plan -Table 1
Building Permits - Verona Island 1994-2003

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
House	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	6	3	4
Garage	5	5	1	4	6	4	3	5	1	3
Addition	6	0	1	1	1	2	6	4	7	4
Remodeling	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	2
Mobile Home	4	3	1	2	4	0	1	3	1	0
Business	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0

Source: Code Enforcement Officer Records

6. Current Development Districts

Verona Island currently has limited capacity for both business and residential growth due to several factors:

- The community's need to protect water quality;
- Lack of sewage infrastructure;

- Limited availability of acreage for development;
- Geological conditions unsuitable for growth;
- Existence of at least two critical natural areas;
- Transportation infrastructure and access management; and
- Ordinance restrictions.

Verona Island's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance requires:

- All land uses shall be located on soils in or upon which the proposed uses or structures can be established or maintained without causing adverse environmental impacts, including severe erosion, mass soil movement, improper drainage, and water pollution, whether during or after construction. Proposed uses requiring subsurface waste disposal, and commercial or industrial development and other similar intensive land uses shall require a soils report based on an on-site investigation and be prepared by state-certified professionals;
- New construction and development shall be designed to minimize storm water runoff from the site in excess of the natural predevelopment conditions. Where possible, existing natural runoff control features, such as berms, swales, terraces and wooded areas shall be retained in order to reduce runoff and encourage infiltration of the storm waters. Control systems shall be maintained as necessary to ensure proper functioning;
- No building shall have an area of less than 10,000 square feet with a sewer and 20,000 square feet without a sewer,
- The minimum lot area is two acres; and
- All lots shall have a minimum of 150 feet frontage on all roads whether private or public.

Verona's Land Use Standards require that the minimum setback shall be 300 feet from any shoreline where daily sewage flow exceeds 2,000 gallons. All other setback requirements of the State Plumbing Code shall be met in full. Setbacks from shorelines for all subsurface disposal facilities shall not be reduced by variance.

Three distinct districts have been identified and are defined below.

Limited Commercial District

The Limited Commercial District, as outlined in Verona Island's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance (adopted in 1992 and updated in 1993), includes areas of mixed, light commercial and residential uses. The district includes areas of two or more contiguous acres in size devoted to a mix of residential and low intensity business and commercial uses. The Limited Commercial District is located along the Route 1 corridor between the Waldo/Hancock and Dr. Thegan Bridge, otherwise known as the Bucksport/Verona Bridge. The sewer currently accommodates a significant portion of already-existing residential structures in this area. Currently, several small businesses also utilize this service. It is important to once again note that the sewer line currently cannot accommodate additional developments on Verona Island

The Shorland Zoning Ordinance requires that:

- Convenient and safe emergency vehicle access be provided and maintained for all commercial and industrial uses at all times; and

- Structures in this district shall not exceed 35 feet in height (which does not apply to structures such as transmission towers, windmills, antennas, or similar structures with no floor area).

Limited Residential/Recreation District

The Limited Residential and Recreation District includes areas suitable for residential and recreational development. A majority of land located along both Eastside and Westside Drives are considered to be part of the Limited Residential/Recreation District. This district also includes the conservation easement located toward the center of the island and Porcupine Island, where development is prohibited. Structures in other areas are required to meet standards defined in Verona Island's Shoreland Zoning and Land Use Ordinances.

Shoreland District

The Shoreland District includes all land area located within 250 feet, horizontal difference, of the normal high-water line of any saltwater body.

- The minimum setback requirement for new principle and accessory structures in the Shoreland District is 75 feet from mean high tide;
- Structures in this district shall not exceed 35 feet in height (which does not apply to structures such as transmission towers, windmills, antennas, or similar structures with no floor area); and
- The minimum shore frontage requirement is 300 feet.

Other development requirements in the Shoreland District are outlined in the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance.

Land uses permitted in conformance with the Land Use and Shoreland Zoning Ordinance are listed below:

Key:

Planning Board Permit Required	PB
Code Enforcement Officer Permit Required	CEO
Licensed Plumbing Inspector Permit Required	LPI
Allowed (no permit required)	yes
Prohibited	no
Note: In the Shoreland Zone, "yes" means that no permit is required but the use must still comply with all applicable land use standards.	

Future Land Use – Table 2 **Land Use Permitting Requirements**			
Type of Use	**Land Use**	**Shoreland Zone**	
	General	**LR**	**LC**
Non-intensive recreational uses not requiring structures such as hunting, fishing, and hiking	n/a	yes	yes
Motorized vehicular traffic on existing roads and trails	n/a	yes	yes
Forest management activities except for timber harvesting	yes	yes	yes
Timber Harvesting	yes	yes	yes
Clearing of vegetation for approved construction and other allowed uses	n/a	yes	yes
Fire prevention activities	yes	yes	yes
Wildlife management activities	yes	yes	yes
Soil and water conservation practices	yes	yes	yes
Mineral exploration	yes	yes	yes
Mineral extraction including mineral and sand extraction	PB	PB	PB
Surveying and resource analysis	yes	yes	yes
Emergency operations	yes	yes	yes
Agriculture	yes	yes	yes
Aquaculture	n/a	PB	yes
Principle structures and uses	n/a	yes	yes
One and two family residential	n/a	PB	PB
Multi-unit residential	n/a	PB	PB
Commercial	PB	no	no
Industrial	PB	no	no
Governmental and Institutional	PB	no	no
Small non-residential facilities for educational, scientific or nature interpretation purposes	PB	CEO	CEO
Structures accessory to allowed uses			
Piers, docks, wharfs, bridges, and other structures ands uses extending over or below the normal high water line or within a normal wetland	n/a	CEO	CEO
Temporary	CEO	CEO	PB
Permanent	CEO	PB	PB
Conversions of seasonal residences to year round residences	n/a	LPI	LPI
Home occupations	PB	PB	CEO
Private sewage disposal systems for allowed uses	LPI	LPI	LPI
Essential services	n/a	PB	PB
Service drops, as defined, to allowed uses	n/a	yes	yes
Public and Private recreational areas involving minimal structural development	yes	PB	CEO
Individual, Private campsites	n/a	CEO	CEO
Campgrounds	PB	PB	PB
Road and driveway construction	CEO/PB/DOT	PB	PB
Parking Facilities	PB	PB	PB
Marinas	n/a	PB	PB
Filling and earthmoving of < 10 cubic yards	n/a	yes	yes
Filling and earth moving of > 10 cubic yards	yes	yes	yyes
Signs	PB	yes	yes
Uses similar to allowed uses	CEO	CEO	CEO
Uses similar to uses requiring a CEO permit	CEO	CEO	CEO
Uses similar to uses requiring a planning board permit	PB	PB	PB

7. Growth Area Exemption

7.1 Some background information: One of the requirements of Maine's Planning and Land Use Regulation Act is that municipal comprehensive plans identify and designate at least two basic types of geographic areas:

1) "Growth areas, which are those areas suitable for orderly residential, commercial and industrial development or any combination of those types of development, forecast over the next 10 years. Each municipality shall:

   a) Establish standards for these developments;

   b) Establish timely permitting procedures;

   c) Ensure that needed public services are available within the growth area; and

   d) Prevent inappropriate development in natural hazard areas, including flood plains and areas of high erosion; and

2) Rural areas, which are those areas where protection should be provided for agricultural, forest, open space and scenic lands within the municipality. Each municipality shall adopt land use policies and ordinances to discourage incompatible development."

7.2 Exemption from requirement for growth and rural areas. The law also provides an exemption from the requirement to designate growth and rural areas:

> "A municipality is not required to identify growth areas for residential, commercial or industrial growth if it demonstrates that it is not possible to accommodate future residential, commercial or industrial growth in these areas because of severe physical limitations, including, without limitation, the lack of adequate water supply and sewage disposal services, very shallow soils or limitations imposed by protected natural resources; or it demonstrates that the municipality has experienced minimal or no residential, commercial or industrial development over the past decade and this condition is expected to continue over the 10-year planning period. A municipality exercising the discretion afforded by this paragraph shall review the basis for its demonstration during the periodic revisions undertaken pursuant to section 4327." *(note: section 4327 of the law requires that the municipality periodically review its growth management program).*

7.3 Verona Island's situation:. This plan demonstrates that Verona is very rural and should be exempt from the requirement to designate detailed growth and rural areas. The reasons for designating the entire town as a rural area, except for the Route 1 corridor, include the following:

1. **Very Limited commercial growth**. There has been very limited commercial, industrial or institutional development in the community outside of the Route One corridor in the past 25 years.

2. **Low level of residential growth between 1994 and 2003.** Building permit trends show that 37 permits for new homes were issued during that time, an average of 3.7 a year. (see FLU table 1).

3. **Low rates of projected growth through 2020**. The plan projects 54 units between 2000 and 2020 or 2.7 a year. The natural tendency of people to avoid homes on busy Route 1, means that these few dwellings are likely to locate away from the areas that expect commercial development.

4. **No excess sewer capacity.** Verona Island has no excess sewer capacity in the small portion of the island served by the Bucksport system. There is no municipal water system at all.

5. **Existing land use controls**. The town's land use ordinance, subdivision review standards and shoreland zoning provide a basic level of control sufficient to regulate the current level of development.

6. **Growth control triggers**. The true test of any plan is time. The plan thus recommends that growth trends be reviewed on an annual basis by mapping where new development takes place. Three years after adoption of the plan, the town will need to assess the total number of new residential units. If the rate of growth is higher than projected, the plan recommends that the town review its growth policies and determine if more stringent measures are needed.