

MAY 8, 2025

TOWN OF CASCO

Open Space Plan

NORTHSTAR
PLANNING

**Aceto
Kimball**
Landscape Architecture

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April 28, 2025



Anthony Ward, Town Manager
Casco Town Office
635 Meadow Road
Casco, ME 04015

Dear Anthony,

North Star Planning, supported by Aceto Kimball Landscape Architecture, is pleased to submit this proposal to develop an Open Space Plan for Casco. Our team of planners and designers is highly qualified and eager to take on this important project to identify priorities for recreation and conservation that support community needs, economic development, and resilience for your town.

North Star Planning (NSP) is a full-service planning firm working throughout northern New England. We are known for our local knowledge, expertise, creativity, and engagement skills. Our projects span comprehensive and open space planning, community engagement and facilitation, land use ordinance development, transportation planning, and planning board services. Our plans are recognized for their focus on implementation, easily understandable priorities, and high-quality graphics and mapping. NSP will lead the project, using our experience to guide the planning, land use, community engagement, and implementation plan.

NSP has extensive experience in open space, recreation, and conservation planning. We are currently working on the Gorham, Maine Open Space & Trails Master Plan in partnership with Aceto Kimball Landscape Architecture. Over the last few years, we completed Open Space Plans for Windham and Yarmouth, along with recent comprehensive planning work in Freeport, Standish, Raymond, Yarmouth, and Bath. A common theme through these planning projects has been to develop implementable recommendations around the conflicting needs of natural systems, growing recreation demands, and traditional working lands and rural economies in the fast-growing southern Maine region.

At a more regional scale, we've also provided planning services for the management plan and framework document for the Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument in Millinocket and Patten, Maine; and community engagement services for a regional planning initiative to connect recreation, economy, and conservation issues in The Forks, Maine, for the Western Mountains & Rivers Corporation.

Aceto Kimball Landscape Architecture (AKLA) is a New England-based landscape architecture and design firm passionate about designing places that balance nature and culture, integrating resiliency and sustainability to meet community needs. AKLA will provide maps and place-based analysis, using design expertise to develop innovative plans for future trails, connections, linkages, and outdoor spaces. AKLA has developed open space, parks, and trails plans for communities across Maine, including Gorham, Windham, Sanford, Portland, and Scarborough, as well as in towns across Colorado.

I hope you agree that our Maine-based team of professionals is fully qualified to carry out the important work of the Casco Open Space Plan. We would love to create resilient recreation strategies that support the town's current and future needs. If you have any questions about this proposal, please feel free to contact me at (207) 400-6097 or bmsith@northstar-planning.com.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ben Smith".

Benjamin Smith, AICP, Principal
North Star Planning

PROJECT TEAM

North Star Planning was founded in 2017 to help communities create and sustain the places that make New England a special place to live, work, and play.

We excel at meeting the needs of municipalities, public stakeholders, and private companies through consensus-based solutions and an inclusive planning process. We are experts in multimedia communication and using a mix of online and in-person programming to solicit diverse engagement. Our work is centered on ensuring our clients can implement the plans we write through accessible products, specific goals, and measurable results.



Ben Smith, AICP
FOUNDER,
PRINCIPAL IN CHARGE
10% availability



Charles Tetelman
PROJECT MANAGER,
PLANNER II
25% availability



Sam Peikes
PLANNER
10% availability



Kate Burch, AICP
SENIOR PLANNER
20% availability



Addy Smith-Reiman, AICP
PLANNER
15% availability

ACETO KIMBALL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Nick Aceto, PLA, ASLA
Grace McNeill



AK
-L
A

Aceto Kimball Landscape Architecture is a New-England based landscape architecture and urban design firm committed to thoughtful intervention at the intersection of community, environment, art, and economics. ALA was founded on the notion that placemaking is a product of careful listening and observation, clear communication, and creative exploration of the genius loci or 'sense of place.' Our studio is committed to building stronger, more resilient communities throughout New England and beyond with strong partnerships in the planning, architecture, and engineering fields and a growing body of work across a broad range of scales both public and private.

Our diverse team brings a balanced perspective to our projects, well-equipped to harmonize with the objectives and priorities of each endeavor. We integrate our unique experience and visualization skill set to craft powerful places, built upon a commitment to resiliency and sustainability.

Our studio's passion for enduring built places, experience, and valued partnerships affords us the ability to collaborate across broad geographic, socio-economic, and cultural horizons. ALA maintains two working studios at the heart of the Old Port district in Portland, Maine and a second in the heart of the White Mountains in Jackson, New Hampshire.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE + URBAN DESIGN | ACETOKIMBALL.COM | TEL +1 207.221.3390



BEN SMITH, AICP

FOUNDER & PRINCIPAL PLANNER
bsmith@northstar-planning.com | 207-400-6097

SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Building Community Strength - Multiple Communities, ME

Team member for a Grow Smart Maine capacity-building program to help rural communities throughout the state develop ordinances that protect open space and natural resources.

Freeport Comprehensive Plan - Freeport, ME

Principal in charge responsible for staff coordination, public workshop development and facilitation, and quality assurance on final plan documents.

Standish Comprehensive Plan - Standish, ME

Principal in charge responsible for assisting Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings, public workshop development and facilitation, and quality assurance on final plan documents.

Raymond Comprehensive Plan - Raymond, ME

Principal in charge responsible for assisting with Committee meetings, public workshop development and facilitation, and quality assurance on final plan documents.

Villages Zoning - Gorham and Windham, ME

Leading the development of zoning standards to implement recommendations from the Villages Downtown Master Plan approved by both towns in 2023.

Yarmouth Comprehensive Plan Update - Yarmouth, ME

Principal in charge responsible for project oversight, public workshop facilitation, data analysis, and co-managing team of subconsultants.

Villages Masterplan - Windham and Gorham, ME

Project manager of this downtown revitalization plan, including survey design, public outreach, workshop facilitation, zoning analysis, collaborating with landscape architect design team

Windham Open Space Plan - Windham, ME

Responsible for drafting Windham's first Open Space plan, which the town adopted in 2021. The Plan was nominated for MAP Plan of the Year.

EDUCATION

M.A. University of Southern Maine, Community Planning & Development

B.A. Bates College

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Planning Association, Northern New England Chapter

Maine Association of Planners

AWARDS

Windham Open Space Plan - Nominated for 2021 MAP Plan of the Year

21st Century Downtown Plan Implementation for North Windham - 2018 GrowSmart Maine Public Policy Award

21st Century Downtown Plan for North Windham - 2014 MAP Plan of the Year

PRESENTATIONS

Municipal Strategies for Protecting & Promoting Access to Farmland, Maine Farmland Trust, 2024

Rethinking the Master Planning Process and Product, NNECAPA 2023

Working with Planning Consultants, NNECAPA 2022



CHARLES TETELMAN

PLANNER II

charles@northstar-planning.com | 207-405-4274

SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Freeport + Standish Comprehensive Plans – Freeport/Standish, ME

Planner and project manager assisting inventory chapter writing, public meetings facilitation, Planning Board meetings presentation, subconsultant and client management, and final plan documents.

Acton Zoning Audit – Acton, ME

Completed an audit of Acton's zoning, site plan, and subdivision ordinances and developed recommendations to improve processes and procedures, comply with state law, and better support town needs.

Villages Zoning – Gorham and Windham, ME

Assisted in drafting zoning language to implement the zoning recommendations from the Villages Downtown Master Plan approved by both towns in 2023.

LD 2003 Implementation – Madawaska and Dover-Foxcroft, ME

Assisted municipalities with the implementation of LD 2003 through ordinance amendments, planning board presentations, and public engagement.

Shoreland Zone Ordinance – Portland, ME

Assisted consultant in updating Portland's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance to be compliant with state statute. Work included policy development and GIS mapping.

Coastal Resiliency – Hallowell, ME

Coordinated with volunteers and municipal staff to review Coastal Resilience capabilities using NOAA's checklist.

Comprehensive Planning – Multiple Communities, ME

Led comprehensive planning initiatives in multiple communities (Fayette, ME; China, ME; Jackman, ME; Monmouth, ME.)

Municipal Technical Assistance – Kennebec & Somerset County, ME

Provided technical assistance for over 20 municipalities in service region. Assisted in ordinance development for existing land use and zoning ordinances as well as new ordinances for cannabis.

EDUCATION

M.P.P.M. Muskie School of Public Service,
University of Southern Maine, Community
Planning & Development

B.A. Government, Skidmore College

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Planning Association,
Northern New England Chapter

Maine Association of Planners

PRESENTATIONS

What Is Downtown Revitalization?

Growsmart Maine Building Community
Strength, April 2024

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Ordinance Drafting

Development Review

GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis

Policy Implementation

Project Management

Public Engagement



KATE BURCH, AICP

SENIOR PLANNER

kburch@northstar-planning.com | 207-805-4767

SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Yarmouth Zoning Audit - Yarmouth, ME

Leading an audit of Yarmouth's zoning and subdivision ordinances to identify barriers to housing development and implement best practices to increase housing diversity. Developing new residential zoning standards along with a buildout analysis to evaluate the impact of proposed changes.

Vermont Climate Framework - State of Vermont

Part of a team developing a framework to implement the state's Climate Action Plan at the regional and municipal level.

Community Resilience Partnership Service Provider - State of Maine

Technical assistance to help three towns enroll in the Community Resilience Partnership, and to lead two communities to complete a vulnerability assessment, develop priority actions, and apply for funding.

Washington Street Reimagined - Auburn, ME

Project manager for urban design and corridor revitalization project, with a focus on traffic safety, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and new form-based code standards to promote revitalization of an industrial corridor.

Freeport Design Review Ordinance Update - Freeport, ME

Leading a team to audit and re-write Freeport's downtown zoning and ordinances to improve processes, increase housing, and meet town goals from the Downtown Vision Plan.

Bowdoinham VPI Study - Bowdoinham, ME

Land use planning to support a transportation study to improve traffic safety and make Bowdoinham's village more walkable and bike friendly to support park improvements and promote economic development.

Raymond Comprehensive Plan - Raymond, ME

Project manager responsible for inventory chapters, communications materials, facilitating public meetings, online public engagement, subconsultant and client management, and final plan documents.

Lakes Region Homeless Services Study - Cumberland County, ME

Project manager, research, and data analysis about housing conditions and socioeconomic indicators for 9 towns in the Lakes Region of southern

EDUCATION

M.P.P.M. University of Southern Maine,
Community Planning & Sustainable Development

B.F.A. New York University

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Planning Association,
Northern New England Chapter

Maine Association of Planners

AWARDS

Bath Comprehensive Plan 2024 MAP Plan
of the Year

Lakes Region Homeless Services Study
2025 MAP Plan of the Year

PRESENTATIONS

Comprehensive Planning in Maine, R1CC
Climate Planning Workshop, October 2023

Overview of Downtown Planning, Maine
Downtown Institute, September 2023

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

GIS Spatial Analysis

Adobe Creative Suite

Website development

Video production

Data analysis

Meeting facilitation



ADDY SMITH-REIMAN, AICP

PLANNER I

asmithreiman@northstar-planning.com | 207-400-9421

SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Gorham Open Space and Trails Plan - Gorham, ME

Managing the process for a comprehensive open space and trails master plan, with public outreach, stakeholder engagement, and asset inventories.

Solar and Energy Storage Handbook and Model Ordinance - State of Maine

Managing the research and ordinance development for a Statewide comprehensive handbook for solar and storage projects

Planning Board Support - Arundel, ME

Provide development review assistance and Planning Board facilitation as needed.

North Yarmouth Land Use Ordinance Updates - North Yarmouth, ME

Implementing Land Use Ordinance revisions based on the 2023 Land Use Audit

Washington Street Reimagined - Auburn, ME

Supporting community engagement for this urban design and corridor revitalization project.

Freeport + Standish Comprehensive Plans - Freeport/Standish, ME

Assisting with public meetings and facilitation.

The Portland Society for Architecture, Executive Director

October 2017 - January 2024

Managed the executive function of a small local non-profit. Realized the vision and the mission, in concert with the Board of Directors; fostered municipal, public and non-profit partnerships; produced programs including design competitions and community visioning for long-term planning and housing, under the banner The Complete City; co-developed Building Bird Safe policy with Maine Audubon.

Senior Planner/Project Manager at Riverlife, Pittsburgh, PA

2011-2013

Managed the design, construction and maintenance planning for Three Rivers Park, Pittsburgh's downtown 13 mile riverfront park along the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio rivers.

EDUCATION

M.R.P. + M.L.A. Cornell University

B.A. Sarah Lawrence College

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Planning Association,
Northern New England Chapter

Maine Association of Planners

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Facilitation

Project Management

Community engagement + public outreach

Parks + Open Space Planning

Regional, rural and urban planning

Inventory and analysis

Grant writing

Adobe Creative Suite



SAMANTHA PEIKES

PLANNER I

speikes@northstar-planning.com | 207-405-1574

SELECTED PROJECT EXPERIENCE

VT Climate Manual - State of Vermont

Plan and policy research a climate manual to be used as a guide for climate action and vulnerability plans for the State of Vermont.

Community Resilience Partnership Track 1 - State of Maine

Working with town staff for Pownal, Raymond and Turner for enrollment in the Community Resilience Partnership. Prioritizing goals and action strategies, organizing a public meeting and collecting data.

Gorham Open Space & Trails Masterplan - Gorham, ME

Currently assisting in helping draft an open space plan for the town of Gorham. Assisting in website updates and management, stakeholder outreach, policy recommendations and plan drafting.

Solar & Battery Storage Handbook and Model Ordinance - State of Maine

Currently assisting in drafting a handbook manual for the state on solar and battery storage. Researching key terms and considerations and land use and zoning implications, conducting stakeholder interviews with town staff and community leaders and plan drafting.

Arundel Contract Planner - Arundel, ME

Serve as the town planner for Arundel. Provide application assistance and Planning Board facilitation for the development review process, review post approval activities, code enforcement and department facilitation, ordinance work and application inquiries.

Lakes Region Homeless Services Study - Cumberland County, ME

Provided research and written report using census data, zoning and GIS data to assess the risks of homelessness and housing insecurity for several communities within the greater Lakes Region of Maine.

Villages Zoning - Gorham and Windham, ME

Assisted in drafting zoning language to implement the zoning recommendations from the Villages Downtown Master Plan approved by both towns in 2023.

Raymond Comprehensive Plan - Raymond, ME

Inventory chapter drafting, data collection and analysis, ensuring compliance with state goals, assisting with surveys, public outreach, comprehensive plan committee facilitation and final plan drafting.

EDUCATION

M.S. The Conway School of Landscape Design and Planning

B.A. Smith College, Environmental Science & Policy

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Planning Association, Northern New England Chapter

Maine Association of Planners

Bicycle Coalition of Maine, Community Spoke

Portland Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Ordinance Drafting

Development Review

GIS Mapping and Spatial Analysis

Policy Implementation

Project Management

Public Engagement

NICK ACETO | PLA, ASLA

ACETO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

PRINCIPAL, LICENSED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT (NH, CO, NC)

NA@ACETOLA.COM

PERSONAL BIO

Nick is a licensed Professional Landscape Architect and founding principal of Aceto Landscape Architects (ALA) based in Portland. Nick is passionate about placemaking and the power of design to influence positive outcomes in our communities. Nick has worked on projects across the United States where he has won several awards and recognition for his contributions to the design world.

SELECT PROJECTS**The DOWNS | Scarborough Maine**

ALA has worked closely in collaboration with the Planning and Engineering staff at Gorrell Palmer to provide master planning and design services for this 500+-acre master plan which includes a large town center, varying home typologies, a nature play pocket park, and gravel wetlands with elevated boardwalks, benches and signage.

Mercy Redevelopment | Portland Maine

ALA has been the lead urban designer and landscape architect of record for the redevelopment of the former Mercy hospital site. The project master plan is organized around a central woonerf with several adjacent urban courtyards and multi-use public spaces. The woonerf is designed to be universally accessible and elegantly marries the historic building character to a new building addition.

East Windham Conservation Open Space Master Plan | Windham Maine

Nick and Trilbey worked in close collaboration with the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust, Town of Windham, and stakeholder groups to develop a master plan for this 650-Acre parcel. Program includes more than 10 miles of recreational trails connecting to a larger network with parking, trailhead kiosks, and other destination elements. This project allowed the Town to secure grant support for implementation.

Basalt Our Town | Basalt Colorado

ALA provided visioning documents including graphic sketches, plans, and other renderings in addition to participating in public meetings, and running a storefront, nonprofit community design center.

Cooks Corner Design Guidelines | Brunswick Maine

Nick and Grace McNeill worked with the Town to create Design Guidelines for future development within Cooks Corner. This document is critical to supporting future placemaking, safe transportation and contextually sensitive architecture.

HONORS + AWARDS

Grand Prize | Bayside Adapts Design Competition, a study of climate impacts and sea level rise (2017)

National ASLA Honor Award, Design Team Member | Lafitte Greenway (Design Workshop, 2013)

Selected Entry | Town of Basalt Monument Sign Design Competition (2012)

Guest Lecturer | North Dakota State University School of Architecture (2011)

Honor Award | Fort Collins Urban Design Awards (2009)

First Prize | CLARB Wayne Grace Memorial Design Competition (2008)

AFFILIATIONS AND VOLUNTEERISM

Member | Portland Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Member | Portland Society for Architecture Board Member

Member | City of Portland Public Art Committee

GRACE MCNEILL

ACETO KIMBALL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
GM@ACETOLA.COM

PERSONAL BIO

Grace is a landscape designer from Kennett Square, PA. She received her BLA in 2021 from Pennsylvania State University, and has been working at AKLA since then. At AKLA, Grace is involved with projects at every scale, from high end residential projects in North Carolina, to multiunit housing co-ops, to writing design standard ordinances. This variety of experiences makes Grace a versatile and adaptable designer, who ultimately is interested in fostering the growth and development of a world designed with our collective future in mind. Outside of the studio, Grace enjoys spending time with her dog Ginger at the beach, knitting and embroidering, and painting scenes from around New England.

SELECT PROJECTS

Homeless Services Center | Portland, Maine

Along with the AKLA team, Grace was one of the designers responsible for the design of Portland's new emergency homeless services center in Riverton. Their design goal is that the space will make guests feel not only comfortable and welcome, but most importantly safe and dignified. This project is presently under construction, with estimated completion in mid-2023.

Lambert Woods Housing Co-Op | Portland, Maine

This project is poised to be one of the first housing co-ops in Portland. It features row homes and apartments centered around a community green and pedestrian mews. Grace has worked closely with the project consultants and developers to work towards creating a sustainable co-op.

Villages Master Plan | South Windham and Little Falls, Maine

AKLA, along with North Star Planning, was hired by the towns of Windham and Gorham to revamp the Villages Master Plan, which was last updated in 1998. To create the final document, the design team gathered community input through social media posts, a project website which included online surveys, by attending several community events, and by hosting two community meetings. The final document includes inventory and analysis completed by the team and recommendations regarding streetscapes, zoning, and catalyst sites.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Honor Award | ASLA Student Awards, 2021

PUBLICATIONS AND RECOGNITION

HOME | BSLA Fieldbook, Issue 12, 2021

AFFILIATIONS AND VOLUNTEERISM

Architalx Board Member, 2022-Present

Penn State Landscape Architecture Professional Mentor, 2022-Present

OUR APPROACH

Casco is a small town that offers a rural lifestyle near the regional service centers of Windham and Bridgton. As part of the greater Lakes Region, much of Casco's economy relies on lake-related tourism. Our team's experience in this area - including the Windham Open Space Plan & related park planning, and the Raymond and Standish Comprehensive Plans, as well as our knowledge of best practices for open space planning regionally, prepare us to meet Casco's unique needs and create an Open Space plan that works for town staff and volunteers.

Conservation & Access - The first Big Idea from the Comprehensive plan is to protect Casco's wealth of forested lands, waters, and scenic natural landscapes. These natural resources make Casco a special place to live and visit, and support a tourism-based economy of summer camps and resorts. Conservation is important to Casco, with vast areas of the town enrolled in the tree growth tax program, largely stewarded by two major landowners. However, because most natural resources are privately owned, there is limited and informal public access. Our work will analyze opportunities to increase collaboration between private landowners and land trusts, balancing the need for conservation of resources with the desire for recreation and access.

Identifying Opportunities & Connectivity - Casco grew up as a town of villages, which were highlighted as revitalization opportunities in the comprehensive plan. Recreation can be a key part of economic development and identity for these villages. Two of the deliverables for this project will be an opportunities/linkages map and a mini master plan of an opportunity area. These designs will identify potential trail connections with a focus on connecting open space to Casco's villages, new opportunities for open space and recreation, and priority parcels for collaboration with private landowners. AKLA's mini master plan will sketch opportunities for recreation, wayfinding, and multigenerational programming at a specific site.

Building Resilience - Resilience and sustainability are key values identified in the Casco Comprehensive Plan. Our open space plan will prioritize these values by incorporating Maine state climate data into our mapping and analysis, looking at conservation priorities through the lens of natural resource resilience and water quality, and incorporating challenges exacerbated by climate impacts, like invasive species, into our recommendations.

Implementable Plans - We're proud of the way our long-range plans have provided seamless transitions to implementation for municipal staff. The Windham Open Space Plan, a collaboration between NSP and AKLA, identified priority conservation areas with a vision for design. The plan was used to secure funding to acquire a high-priority parcel less than one year after the plan was adopted by the Town Council. AKLA's mini master plan design for the multi-use property has been implemented, and the East Windham Conservation Area opened to the public in 2024.

Community Engagement - Meaningful community engagement is key to the consensus-based approach on which all our plans are based. NSP is a leader in creating inclusive engagement through a combination of in-person and digital opportunities, with a flexible approach that adapts to results as the project develops. We collaborate with municipal staff and volunteers, working with stakeholders to gain targeted feedback while also using a ground-up approach through pop-ups, digital and traditional marketing, and community events to hear from as many voices as possible.



SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work that follows is an example of the process our planning team recommends based on the RFP and project timeline. This scope is intended to be illustrative of a typical process; a more detailed scope will be developed as part of the contracting stage if the NSP/AKLA team is selected for this project.

Task 1: Project Meetings

Close coordination with Casco staff will keep us on track through this planning project. The project begins with a kick-off meeting with Casco staff and a site visit to learn more about Casco, discuss and refine our approach, and to better understand the scale and inventory of open spaces, parks, trails, and other town-owned facilities, and village locations. Various members of our team will meet monthly as needed, and your NSP project manager will coordinate directly with staff and hold monthly check-in meetings. Towards the end of the project, we'll hold meetings with the Open Space Commission and Select Board to review the draft plan and recommendations.

- * Task 1.1: Project Kick-Off Meeting & Site Visit
- * Task 1.2: Monthly staff check-ins (6)
- * Task 1.3: Open Space Commission & SB Meetings
- * Task 1.4: Project Management & Coordination

Task 2: Existing Plans & Conditions

NSP will complete a review of existing plans and reports, as well as regional and state initiatives. NSP and AKLA will collaborate on gathering data on existing conditions, facilities, and assets, including geospatial data, town data, and climate data. NSP will create a basemap in ArcGIS. The background information and geospatial data collected in this phase will form the foundation of our plan and recommendations. The GIS data will be packaged and shared with Casco at the conclusion of the project.

- * Task 2.1: Review & analysis of existing plans and reports
- * Task 2.2: Asset inventory & data collection
- * Task 2.3: Create GIS basemap

Task 3: Public Participation

NSP and AKLA will develop a public participation plan at the start of the project to be reviewed by Casco staff. We propose pop-ups at Casco Days as the major community touchpoint, where the project team and municipal staff can table to share the project with the public and solicit input on maps and open-ended questions. Building our public engagement into this well-attended event will ensure that a wide range of the Casco community is reached, including residents and summer visitors. Additional opportunities to reach the public in person and online will be discussed as part of the participation plan development. We'll summarize the input from the public to inform our plan drafting.

- * Task 3.1: Public Participation Plan
- * Task 3.2: Pop Up at Casco Days
- * Task 3.3: Summaries of Public Input

Task 4: Plan Drafting

Using the results of the public participation with the data collected in the previous task and regional context, we'll create a comprehensive needs assessment that identifies priority open spaces for conservation, potential new trails and connections to existing bike/ped infrastructure and villages, and community recreation needs. AKLA will create a map of open spaces, recreational trails, wildlife corridors, villages, and linkage opportunities, as well as a "mini master plan" that visualizes improvements for one key site, including open space or trails, wayfinding, and programming opportunities. NSP and AKLA will also create an implementation guide with a priorities matrix that considers the identified needs alongside public feedback on priorities. The matrix will prioritize the strategies and provide phasing options based on efficiency, potential to incorporate strategies alongside other initiatives, and funding sources.

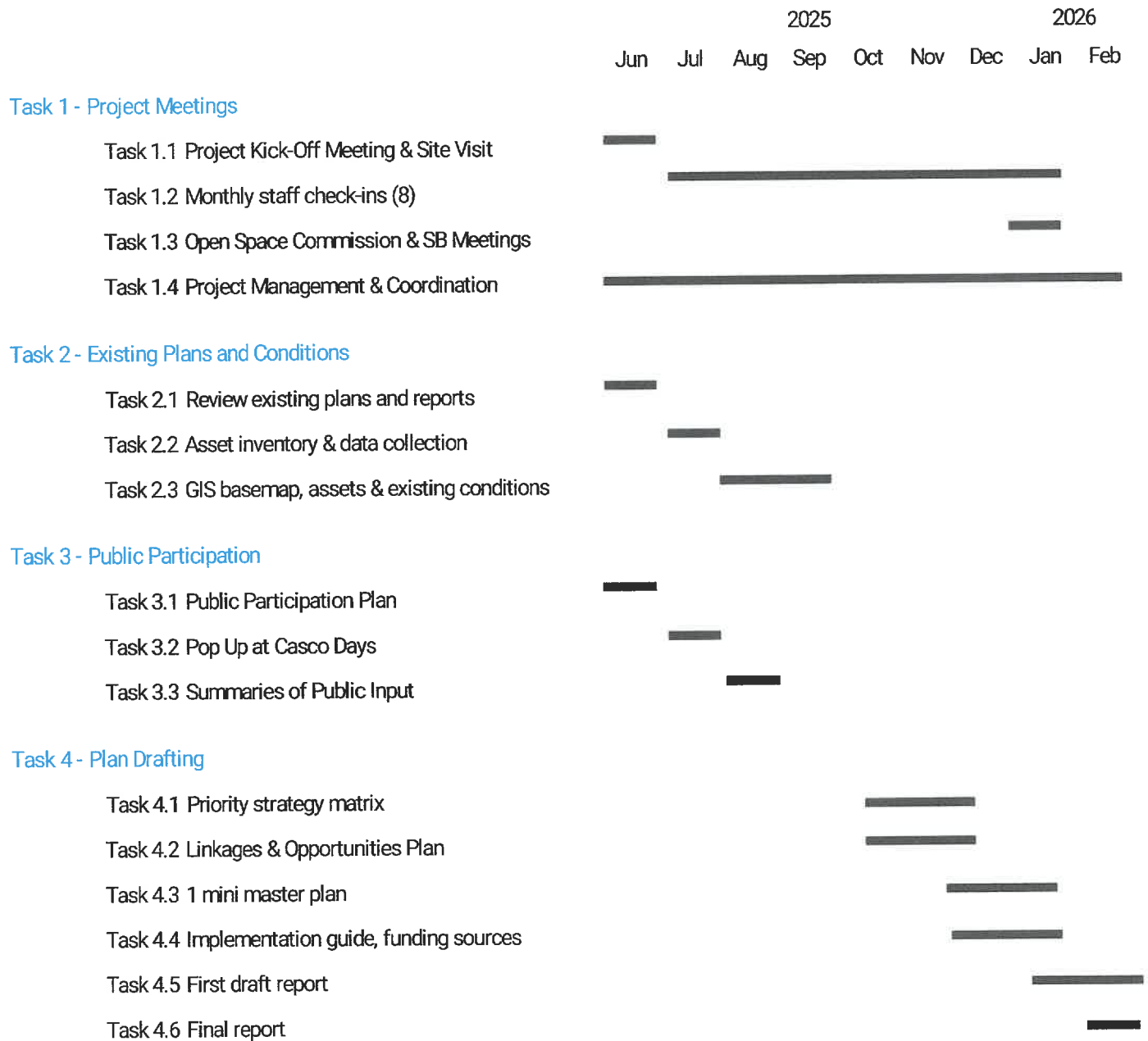
NSP and AKLA will compile all materials and products including narrative, maps, designs, graphics, recommendations, and the implementation plan into a visually engaging first draft report, presented to the Open Space Commission and Select Board at meetings and available for public review online, followed by a final report that incorporates feedback and edits.

- * Task 4.1: Priority strategy matrix
- * Task 4.2: Linkages & Opportunities Plan
- * Task 4.3: 1 mini master plan
- * Task 4.4: Implementation guide, funding sources
- * Task 4.5: First draft report
- * Task 4.6: Final report

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

Casco Open Space Plan

The following schedule is based on the scope presented. A more detailed schedule will be developed with town staff as part of the contracting process if the NSP team is selected.



WINDHAM OPEN SPACE PLAN



Windham, ME



C WINDHAM CENTER TOWN HALL ACTIVITY CENTER

1. CLUSTER RECREATION AND COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE PROGRAM WITHIN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO ENCOURAGE WALKING BETWEEN FACILITIES AND OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY
2. PROVIDE TRAIL AND BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES CONNECTING SCHOOL CAMPUS, PARKS, TOWN FACILITIES, AND NEIGHBORHOODS
3. CONSIDER TRAIL CORRIDOR ALONG BLACK BROOK FOR COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY
4. CONSIDER TRAILHEAD ENHANCEMENTS FOR FISHING AND OPEN SPACE RECREATION ACTIVITIES
5. CONSIDER UPGRADES TO DUNDEE PARK PROGRAM INCLUDING UPDATED PLAY SPACE, TRAIL CONNECTIONS, KIOSKS, AND SIGNAGE
6. CONSIDER UPGRADES OR ADDITIONS OF ADDITIONAL PARK PROGRAM, SIGNAGE, TRAILS, AND SIGNAGE WITHIN BLACK BROOK PRESERVE
7. PROVIDE WAYFINDING SIGNAGE TO HELP GUIDE VISITORS TO PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES
8. MAKE PHASED TRAIL CONNECTIONS TO ADJACENT COMMUNITIES AND OPEN SPACE
9. PROVIDE PARKING AND ACCESSIBILITY UPGRADES AT ALL PARKS



The town of Windham has a history of working lands and outdoor recreation that have made rural character essential to the town's identity. These assets, like many in the communities of southern Maine, have seen incredible pressure due to significant growth and development in recent years.

The Windham Open Space Master Plan, the town's first, called for better protections of wildlife corridors, streams and rivers, while also identifying geographic areas that did not have direct connections to open space or recreational facilities. The plan identified the need to multiply the value of these assets (identified as an 'activity area') with trails between local and regional destinations, like the Sebago to the Sea Trail. The town's acquisition of a 700-acre parcel, adjacent to Lowell Preserve, is one direct result of this plan. AKLA developed the Master Plan for this parcel, and it was opened in 2024.

Project Team

North Star Planning (lead),
Aceto Landscape Architecture
(landscape architecture and design)

Completion Date: 2021

Client Reference

Amanda Lessard,
Senior Planner/Project Manager
207-894-5900 ext. 6121
allessard@windhammaine.us

[View the final plan](#)

YARMOUTH OPEN SPACE PLAN



Map ID #	Priorities to pursue opportunities for (not listed by priority)
1	Pratt's Brook Park expansion.
2	Frank Knight Forest expansion and protection.
3	Expansions to Riverfront Woods Preserve, Sweetsir Farm Preserve, and Sligo Road, as well as opportunities for connections between each site and into North Yarmouth.
4	Land protection around Upper Cousins River Marsh and Pratt's Brook Marsh and improved trail systems on the associated existing town owned parcels.
5	Land protection around lower Cousins River Marsh and improved water access.
6	Improved water access to Casco Bay
7	Access to and land protection on the islands.
8	Connections around Fels-Groves Farm Preserve, including land protection around undeveloped forest block along Pitte Creek and potential connections and protections around Whitcomb Creek.
9	Land protections of large undeveloped forest block and potential connections to West Side Trail.
10	Connections into Cumberland's Twin Brook Recreation Area and land protection around Maxfield Brook and undeveloped forest block.
11	Connections into North Yarmouth and land protections around forested wetlands and undeveloped forest block.
12	Improved and expanded water access and trail connections along upper Royal River.
13	Improved and expanded water access to lower Royal River including trail connections to existing open spaces.
14	Connections into North Yarmouth open spaces and associated large undeveloped forest block.
15	Connections into Freeport and large undeveloped forest block.
16	Small pocket parks, resting spots, and shaded areas within The Village, with attention given to enhancing village streetscapes.

The town of Yarmouth has an extensive trail network and park system, and vast coastal resources. Popularity and population growth has put pressure on these assets, and the Open Space Plan identified ways to mitigate increased use.

Developed in collaboration with Town departments, the Royal River Conservation Trust, and local volunteers, the Yarmouth Open Space Plan focused on three goals: maintain and enhance town-owned properties; prioritize new acquisitions of valued open space; and update town ordinances and policies to include an open space acquisition policy and protect park and conservation lands in perpetuity.

Recommendations also called for regional coordination and partnerships with nonprofits and neighboring communities to create a network of regional open space assets, and sharing the resources to manage and steward.

Project Team

North Star Planning (lead),
Aceto Landscape Architecture
(landscape architecture and design)

Completion Date: 2019

Client Reference

Karyn MacNeil,
Yarmouth Community Services
Director
(207) 846-2406
kmacneill@yarmouthme.us

[View the final plan](#)

RAYMOND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



“Thank you!!! North Star Planning made this project the best it could be! I would not hesitate to work with you again. — Sue Look, former Town Manager

Raymond is a small town known for its lakes, forests, and scenic landscapes. North Star Planning was contracted to lead this comprehensive plan update, completing all state-required elements and helping the Comprehensive Plan Committee tackle local challenges. NSP helped the Committee engage with the Raymond community through existing connections to local organizations including lake and road associations, youth sports, parent groups, and more.

Much of Raymond's Plan focused on how appropriately-sized growth in the right areas to protect natural resources, and targeted investments in infrastructure to meet current and future needs. The goals and actions were developed to both fit the town's current capacity, along with opportunities to pursue as capacity expands in the future. The plan was certified by the State in early 2025 and will be voted on at Town Meeting.

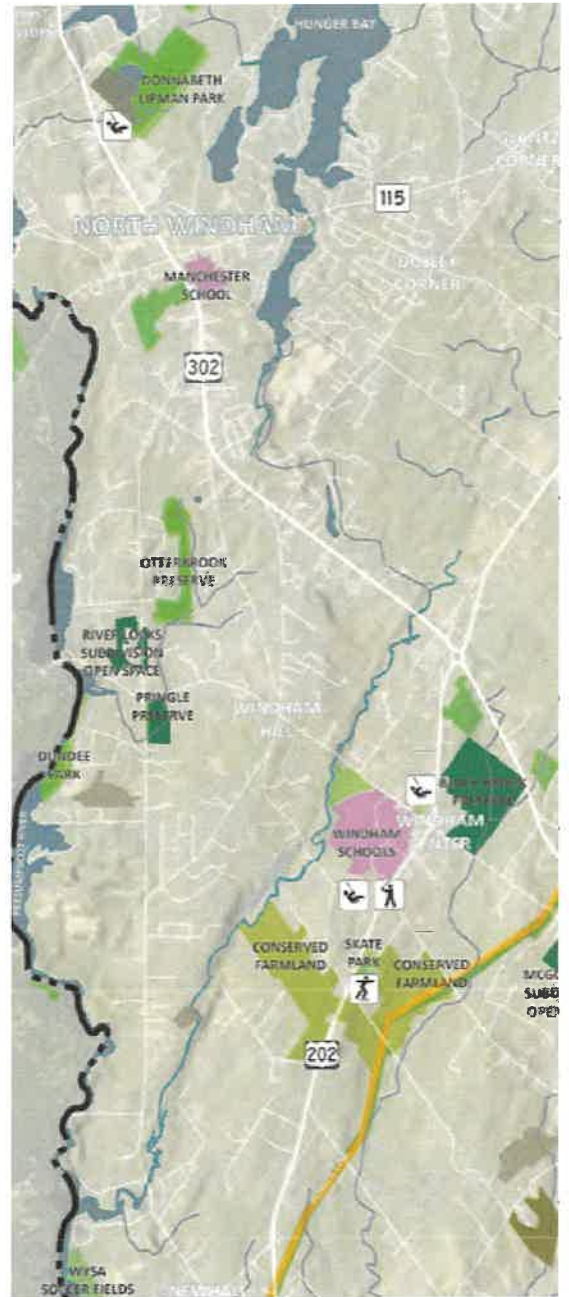
Project Team

North Star Planning

Completion Date: 2024

Client Reference

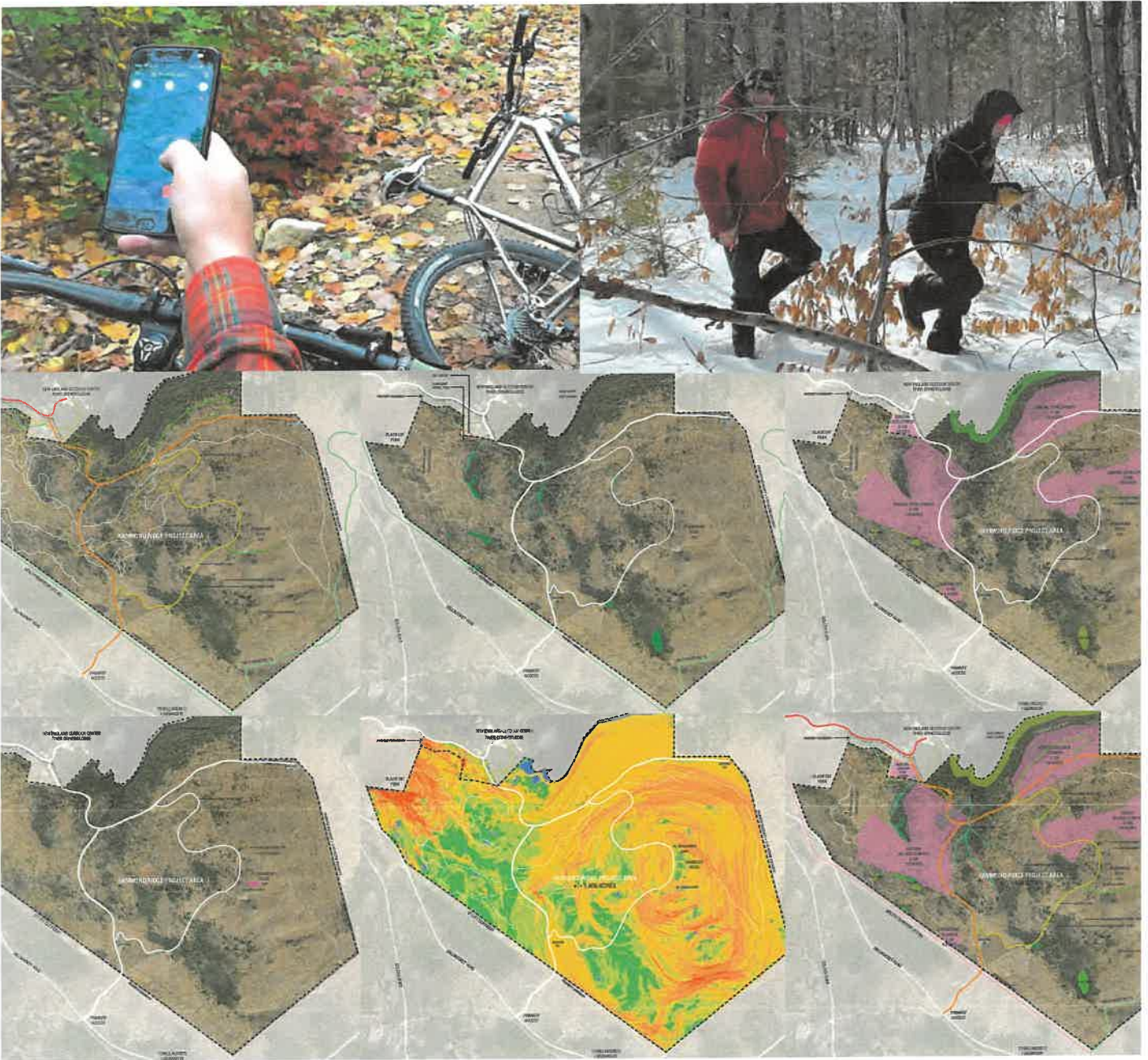
[View the final plan](#)



EAST WINDHAM CONSERVATION OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN WINDHAM ME

AKLA worked in close collaboration with the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust, Town of Windham, and stakeholder groups to develop a master plan for this 650-Acre parcel. Program includes more than 10 miles of recreational trails connecting to a larger network with parking, trailhead kiosks, and other destination elements.

KEY STAFF	Nick Aceto, Trilbey Smith-Nelson
SERVICES	Landscape Architecture, Planning, GIS
STATUS	Under Way
REFERENCE	Linda Brooks, Town of Windham Parks and Recreation Director



NEW ENGLAND OUTDOOR CENTER - HAMMOND RIDGE MILLINOCKET, ME

NEOC is a growing outdoor recreation hub encompassing more than 2,000 acres in northern maine. ALA has been working closely with the NEOC/HAMMOND RIDGE Team to incorporate housing and commercial development with a delicate natural resources and extensive recreation framework. In 2022, ALA and North Star Planning successfully re-zoned 1,400 Acres for future mixed use and continued trail and recreation use development.

KEY STAFF	Nick Aceto, Caitlin Aceto
SERVICES	Master Planning, Landscape Architecture, Visualization
STATUS	Ongoing
REFERENCE	Matthew Polstein



ROBIE PARK MASTER PLAN GORHAM ME

Community driven design process that was comprised of surveys, public charrette and open house. We worked closely with a steering committee throughout the design process and met at various milestones to review progress. AKLA assembled various Concept Plans which were distilled into one plan that was adopted by the Town Council. PHASE one recently went out to bid.

KEY STAFF	Caitlin Aceto, Grace McNeill
SERVICES	Master Planning, Visualization, Construction Documents
REFERENCE	Tom Poirier - Gorham Director of Community Development tpoirier@gorham.me.us Mike Chabot - Steering Committee Member mac1@maine.rr.com
STATUS	Complete

PROPOSED BUDGET

Casco Open Space Plan

Prepared
May 2025

The following budget is based on the scope presented. A more detailed scope and budget will be developed with town staff as part of the contracting process if the NSP team is selected.

	NSP			AKLA	
	PRINCIPAL PLANNER \$175/hr	PLANNER II \$135/hr	PLANNER I \$120/hr	PRINCIPAL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT \$150/hr	PROJECT DESIGNER \$115/hr
Task 1 - Project Meetings					
Task 1.1 Project Kick-Off Meeting & Site Visit	4	6	4	4	4
Task 1.2 Monthly staff check-ins (8)	2	10	8	6	4
Task 1.3 Open Space Commission & SB Meetings	4	10	4	4	2
Task 1.4 Project Management & Coordination	2	8	0	4	0
	\$2,100	\$4,590	\$1,920	\$2,700	\$1,150
					\$12,460
Task 2 - Existing Plans and Conditions					
Task 2.1 Review existing plans and reports	0	4	6	2	0
Task 2.2 Asset inventory & data collection	0	8	6	2	0
Task 2.3 GIS basemap, assets & existing conditions	0	20	0	4	0
	\$0	\$4,320	\$1,440	\$1,200	\$0
					\$6,960
Task 3 - Public Participation					
Task 3.1 Public Participation Plan	0	4	4	2	0
Task 3.2 Pop Up at Casco Days	2	12	10	16	12
Task 3.3 Summaries of Public Input	1	4	8	2	0
	\$525	\$2,700	\$2,640	\$3,000	\$1,380
					\$10,245
Task 4 - Plan Drafting					
Task 4.1 Priority strategy matrix	2	6	4	6	2
Task 4.2 Linkages & Opportunities Plan	2	6	0	12	8
Task 4.3 1 mini master plan	2	2	0	8	10
Task 4.4 Implementation guide, funding sources	0	4	4	4	0
Task 4.5 First draft report	2	12	8	8	10
Task 4.6 Final report	2	10	0	6	6
	\$1,750	\$5,400	\$1,920	\$6,600	\$4,140
					\$19,810

Project Labor Total \$49,475

Mileage, Aerial Imagery, + Expenses \$500

Total \$49,975

REFERENCES



Jenn Curtis, Planning Director
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Erin Zwirko, AICP, Director of Planning & Development
Yarmouth, Maine
207-846-2401
EZwirko@yarmouth.me.us

**Aceto
Kimball**
Landscape Architecture

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Millinocket, Maine
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matt.polstein@gmail.com

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Matt Hill, Engineer & Director of Public Works
Sanford, ME
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