

Public Facilities

Outstanding Questions/Comments:

- Are municipal services generally adequate to meet changes in population and demographics?
 - Re Library: 1) when the library loses power (several times per year), we are unable to perform as an emergency shelter or provide free wifi for the community. This will increasingly be an issue if Freeport's population increases and cellular service remains the same. 2) Anticipated increase in Freeport Middle School will result in an influx of students at the library after school. For the 2023/24 school year, we've welcomed on average 20-25 students daily (in our facility or on our campus) - sometimes as high as 40+. This is worth noting when evaluating whether or not this facility can meet the changes in population and demographics.
- Coordination with the Police Department is needed to ensure accurate information related to the number of calls per year. Data between 2012-2023 is needed from the Police Department.
- A detailed breakdown of the Freeport Water District and South Freeport Water District is needed in regards to –
 - Number of accounts for each district.
 - Governing bodies for each district
 - Areas served for each district.

Highlights

- Sewer and water expansions and upgrades are planned along Main Street and in the village areas. Public water and sewer is lacking in more rural areas of town.
- In 2023, the Transfer Station received 38% of municipal solid waste and the remaining 62% was collected by private haulers. The transfer station received 620 tons of bulky waste in fiscal year 2023, which was down from 671 tons in fiscal year 2022. Throughout fiscal year 2023 residents recycled 729 tons of material compared to 778 for 2022.
- Police Department calls have decreased by about 20% since 2012 from 10,434 in 2012 to 8,293 in 2022.
- Fire Department calls for structure fire response have increased by about 45% since 2012 from 24 calls in 2012 to 35 calls in 2022.
- Both the Fire Rescue and Police Department are experiencing staffing shortages.
- Three-phase power exists in most of the commercial and developed areas of town including along Route One, Main Street, South Freeport Road, Desert Road, and Pine Street. Three-phase power does not extend further east or west beyond Mast Landing School and Elm Street
- Downtown areas, South Freeport and Route 1 North lack adequate cell service and wifi.
- Enrollment at Freeport Middle School is projected to increase by about 17% through the 2026-2027 school year and enrollment at Freeport High School is projected to decrease by about 8% through the 2026-2027 school year.

Town Government

Freeport operates under a Town Charter, providing for a Council-Manager form of government with a seven-member Town Council who are elected for three-year terms. Three of the seats are “at-large” and the other four, consist of one Councilor for each of the four voting districts. The Town Council enacts and amends ordinances, approves contracts, sets Town policies, appropriates funds from Capital Reserves, appoints citizens for Boards and Committees, hires and supervises the Town Manager, and sets the annual budget and capital program for the Town.

Freeport has a number of volunteers serving in various offices and committees. There are over twenty (20) active boards and committees serving the Town of Freeport. Some of those include, the Board of Appeals Coastal Waters Commission, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Project Review Board, Sustainability Advisory Board, Police Advisory Committee, and Social and Racial Equity Committee.

Town Offices

Freeport’s Town Hall is located at 30 Main Street and is open Monday through Thursday from 7:30am to 6:00pm. The Town Hall houses the offices of the Town Manager, Town Clerk, Code Enforcement, Planning, Assessor, and Finance. Public meetings are broadcast through Freeport Community Television (FCTV 3), which serves the residents of Freeport on Comcast Cable Channel 3 and as a live stream on the town’s website.

Freeport’s administrative facilities include the Freeport Community Library, the Harbormaster Office, the Public Safety building (which includes Police and Fire Rescue), the Public Works Garage, the Transfer Station, and Town Hall.

The table below depicts historic staffing levels between FY 2019 and FY 2023 based on full time equivalent or hours budgeted for the department.

Town of Freeport Historic Staffing Levels-Five-Year Comparison							
	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	
						Full-Time	Part-Time
Town Manager	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	
Finance Department	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	
Assessing	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	
Town Clerk	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	
General Administration	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.00	2.00	
Train Station	2.29	2.29	2.29	2.29	2.29		2.29
Police Department*	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	18.00	17.00	1.00
Marine Warden/Harbormaster	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	2.00	0.10
Fire Department	11.75	11.75	11.75	13.75	14.53	6.20	8.33
Rescue Department	6.70	6.70	6.70	6.70	6.70	4.15	1.77
Police Reception**	0.90	0.90	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	
General Assistance	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00		
Public Works	12.85	12.85	13.90	13.90	13.90	13.90	
Solid Waste and Recycling	2.35	2.35	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.00	0.60
Town Engineer	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	
Community Library	8.95	8.95	8.95	8.95	9.03	8.04	1.55
Planning and Codes	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.40	3.00	0.40
Cable Television	1.72	1.72	2.12	2.12	2.25	1.00	1.25
Municipal Building Maintenance	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.00	0.00
Winslow Park	4.50	4.50	4.50	3.13	3.13	1.00	2.13
Totals	89.64	89.64	93.34	94.07	94.28	76.29	19.42

**It is notable that the police reception line does not include the dispatch services received from Brunswick.

Please note that staffing levels indicated are shown in a full-time equivalent (FTE) which does not take into account the actual number of employees, but rather the total employee hours budgeted for that department and how many full-time employees that would equal.

Septic Disposal

Residents contract privately for service to pump and empty septic tanks. Septic disposal is regulated by Freeport’s Zoning Ordinance, which requires developments served by subsurface sewage disposal to demonstrate conformity to the Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal rules.

Freeport’s Wastewater Disposal Ordinance requires that any wastewater treatment system licensed by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection may continue in use as long as the discharges meet effluent limitations and licensed parameters. No wastewater treatment system is permitted to discharge into fresh or salt waters.

Sewer & Water

Sewer and Water Utilities in Freeport are not part of Municipal Government and instead have their own separate governing bodies.

The Freeport Sewer District is a quasi-municipal corporation that provides and maintains the public sewer system. There are approximately 18 miles of sewer mains in town. Public sewer is located along the entire stretch of Route One, in Mast Landing and along part of South Freeport Road. Pump stations are located at Lower Mast Landing, Porter's Landing, and Cushing Briggs. The wastewater treatment is located off Cushing Briggs Road. The Sewer District currently serves roughly 1,000 accounts (metered connections)..

The Freeport Water District is a private entity owned by the Maine Water Company. The Water District is governed by a three member Board of Trustees. There are approximately 36 miles of water mains in town. Water service exists along South Freeport Road from Shady Ledge Lane and Lambert Road to Pumphouse Road. The Water District currently serves 934 residential and 69 commercial accounts.

System Upgrades and Expansions

Freeport is planning sewer and water upgrades to its facilities in the next few years to better serve its residents and businesses, given there are currently some limitations. The Freeport Economic Development Department partnered with Woodard & Curran, a engineering consulting firm, to assess Transit Oriented Development (TOD) infrastructure needs Downtown and South of Route 1 to the Metro stop. The study contains estimates for infrastructure updates for water and sewer, which are summarized in the tables below¹.

In 2023, the Freeport Sewer District was awarded one of the USDA rural development program grants to update the wastewater treatment plant and collection system, which will improve operations and alleviate health and sanitary concerns².

¹ Freeport Economic Development Corporation, Woodard and Curran, Transit Oriented Development Infrastructure Planning, 2024

² *USDA RD invests over \$20M in Maine (Bangor, Brunswick, Freeport, Richmond, and Topsham)*. (2023, November 1). Rural Development.

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/news-release/usda-rd-invests-over-20m-maine-bangor-brunswick-freeport-richmond-and-topsham>

Sewer Upgrades

Area	Length	# Properties Served	Estimated Cost
Main Street Replacement	2,144	5	\$642,000
Cross Country Replacement	1,567	0	\$454,000
Southern Growth Expansion	4,414	20	\$1,360,000
Main Street Development Expansion	2,000	10	\$620,000
Village Sewer Replacement	6,688	5	\$1,960,000
Total			\$5,036,000

Source: Woodard & Curran, 2024

Water Upgrades

Area	Length	# Properties Served	Estimated Cost
Main Street Replacement	3,352	10	\$667,000
Southern Growth Expansion	3,189	20	\$666,000
Main Street Development Expansion	2,000	10	\$410,000
New Water Source in Freeport	n/a	n/a	\$3,000,000
Total			\$4,743,000

Source: Woodard & Curran, 2024

Solid Waste Disposal & Recycling

Freeport residents can either dispose of household waste at the recycling facility located at Hedgehog Mountain Road or hire a private hauler to pick up their trash. Hazardous household waste, such as herbicides, pesticides, pool chemicals, solvents, and weed killers is disposed of at the Riverside Recycling Center in Portland.

All users of the Recycling Facility/Transfer Station must have a valid Freeport Transfer Facility Sticker on their vehicle. The cost of a sticker for Freeport residents is \$6 per calendar year. In addition to the cost of the sticker, for household trash, Freeport charges residents a 90 cent fee for each 30 gallon sized bag of household trash weighing up to 30 pounds. Residents can purchase a garbage drop-off punch card for \$18 for a 20 pound bag and \$9 for a 10 pound bag.

Residents can also dispose of recyclable materials at the Recycling Facility or at the multiple recycling containers located throughout Town. Recycling is hauled through ecomaine. Some items are accepted for free at the Transfer Station including motor oil, auto and marine batteries, leaf and grass clippings, Christmas trees, microwaves, fluorescent bulbs and CFLs, and thermostats with mercury switches.

The facility has seen a steady increase in users for the past six years, and with the increase in users there has been an increase in the volume of every type of material coming into the Transfer Station. According to the Town Annual Report from 2023, the Transfer Station received 38% of municipal solid waste and the remaining 62% was collected by private haulers. The transfer station received 620 tons of bulky waste in fiscal year 2023, which was down from 671 tons in fiscal year 2022. Throughout fiscal year 2023 residents recycled 729 tons of material compared to 778 for 2022.

Freeport does not have a curbside composting program, however residents may drop off their food scraps to the recycling facility on Hedgehog Mountain Road at no cost. This program is managed by “We Compost It,” which is a local food waste collection and composting company that serves Freeport Schools in addition to restaurants, hospitality, and health care facilities throughout southern Maine. The Transfer Station sells Earth Machine backyard composters, compost turners, thermometers and rain barrels.

Year	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Operating Costs for Recycling Services per \$1,000 assessment	\$17.78	\$17.87	\$18.72	\$20.64	\$19.08
Tons of Materials Recycled in Silver Bullets	502	445	316	336	325
Tons of Material Disposed of at ecomaine	1,558	1,576	1,604	1,814	1,728
Percent of Waste Recycled	30	35	32	32	32
Tons Recycled by Pinetree	195	194	191	216	189
Tons of Recyclables Brought to the Recycling Center	160	206	254	283	263

Stormwater Infrastructure

Freeport is subject to the General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4). The town is one of 28 municipalities in the state that is regulated under the Clean Water Act Phase II Stormwater Regulatory Program for the discharge of stormwater. The town has a five year Stormwater Management Plan with six control measures: Public Education, Public Participation, Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination, Construction Runoff Control, Post Construction Runoff Control, and Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping, which are required of the MS4 permit. The MS4 permit will influence how runoff is managed and will potentially mitigate some impacts on the existing storm drain infrastructure. As an MS4 community, Freeport is also required to implement Low Impact Development ordinances that will require localized and disconnected stormwater treatment, and a volume control design approach.

To support the implementation of the MS4 Permit, Freeport is a member of the Casco Bay Interlocal Stormwater Working Group (ISWG), a coalition consisting of 14 MS4 Municipalities in addition to the University of Southern Maine and Southern Maine Community College in the Greater Portland and Saco Areas. The Town has made progress on all six of the Minimum Control Measures (MCM) goals:³

- MCM 1 Education/Outreach Program
 - BMP 1.1 Outreach to Raise Awareness Campaign
 - BMP 1.2 Outreach to Change Behavior Campaign
 - BMP 1.3 Effectiveness Evaluation
 - BMP 1.4 Additional Activities
- MCM 2 Public Involvement and Participation
 - BMP 2.1 Public Notice Requirement
 - BMP 2.2 Host Public Events
- MCM 3 Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
 - BMP 3.1 Continue to Implement the Non-Stormwater Discharge Ordinance
 - BMP 3.2 Maintain the Written IDDE Plan
 - BMP 3.3 Maintain Storm Sewer System Infrastructure Map
 - BMP 3.4 Infrastructure Inspections and Outfall Monitoring
 - BMP 3.5 Conduct Investigations on Suspect Illicit Discharges
 - BMP 3.6 Significant Contributors of Pollutants
- MCM 4 Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control
 - BMP 4.1 Erosion Sediment Control Ordinance
 - BMP 4.2 Site Plan Review Procedures
 - BMP 4.3 Procedures for Notifying Construction Site Developers and Operators
 - BMP 4.4 Develop Written Procedures, Conduct and Document Construction Site Inspections
- MCM 5 Post Construction Stormwater Management in New Development/Redevelopment
 - BMP 5.1 Promote Strategies to Prevent or Minimize Water Quality Impacts
 - BMP 5.2 Maintain Post Construction Ordinance or Similar Measure
- MCM 6 Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations
 - BMP 6.1 Operations at Municipally-Owned Grounds and Facilities
 - BMP 6.2 Training
 - BMP 6.3 Continue Street Sweeping Program
 - BMP 6.4 Catch Basin Cleaning
 - BMP 6.5 Stormwater Conveyance and Outfall Rehabilitation and Maintenance
 - BMP 6.6 Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs)

³ Freeport Stormwater Management Plan, 2022

https://www.maine.gov/dep/ftp/temp/2022-ms4-gp-noi-review/Freeport%20NOI%20and%20SWMP%20for%20Public%20Notice%20Posting/SWMP_Freeport_2022-MS4%20GP.pdf

Freeport requires yearly stormwater management reports for development review projects and subdivisions that require stormwater infrastructure (including swales, drainage basins, culverts, etc.) described in the Post Construction Stormwater Management Ordinance, amended October 3, 2023. Standards differ slightly for projects located within urbanized areas and for projects located outside urbanized areas.

The Town has completed the following projects and policies over the past twenty years in regards to the community's MS4 permit:

- In the early-mid 2000's the Town built a stormwater pond in Leon Gorman Park that was designed with extra capacity so other users in the area could connect into the stormwater treatment facility.
- In 2004 Freeport enacted a Stormwater Discharge Ordinance that prohibits the discharge of stormwater runoff into storm drain systems.
- In 2022 the Town established the Concord Gully Brook TIF Fund to improve stormwater management and infrastructure in the downtown area.

Public Safety

Freeport's Public Safety Building is located on Main Street and houses both the Police Department and Fire Rescue Department. Both departments are currently facing difficulties with staff retention and hiring personnel. The Town has started to consider upgrades to the Public Safety Building and the needs for both the Police and Fire Rescue Department.

Police Department

Freeport's Police Department consists of twenty staff, which include a Police Chief, a Lieutenant, two Sergeants, a Records Clerk, a Detective, a School Resource Officer, a Harbor Master and Marine Resources Officer, five Patrol Officers, a K-9 Officer, and a Reserve Police Officer. In 2022, the Department responded to 8,293 total calls, made 204 arrests, issued 66 parking fines, and 870 traffic summons. The Department saw a noticeable decline calls around the COVID-19 pandemic, which combined with a court system that is backed up over 3,500 cases, has reduced call volumes for offense and arrest reports drastically as many of the cases that would have been charged in past years are not longer viable for the District Attorney's (DA's) office policy for non-violent crimes and criminal traffic offenses. In 2019, the Department had a sharp influx of calls involving homeless residents associated with mental health psychological issues and substance abuse disorder. The final factor in reduced call volume has been due to staffing. The Department has been down 3 positions between 2019 and 2024. With three (3) open full-time positions, the overtime budget was much higher than normal due to minimal staffing and not enough full-time officers to handle shift coverage.

Fire Rescue Department

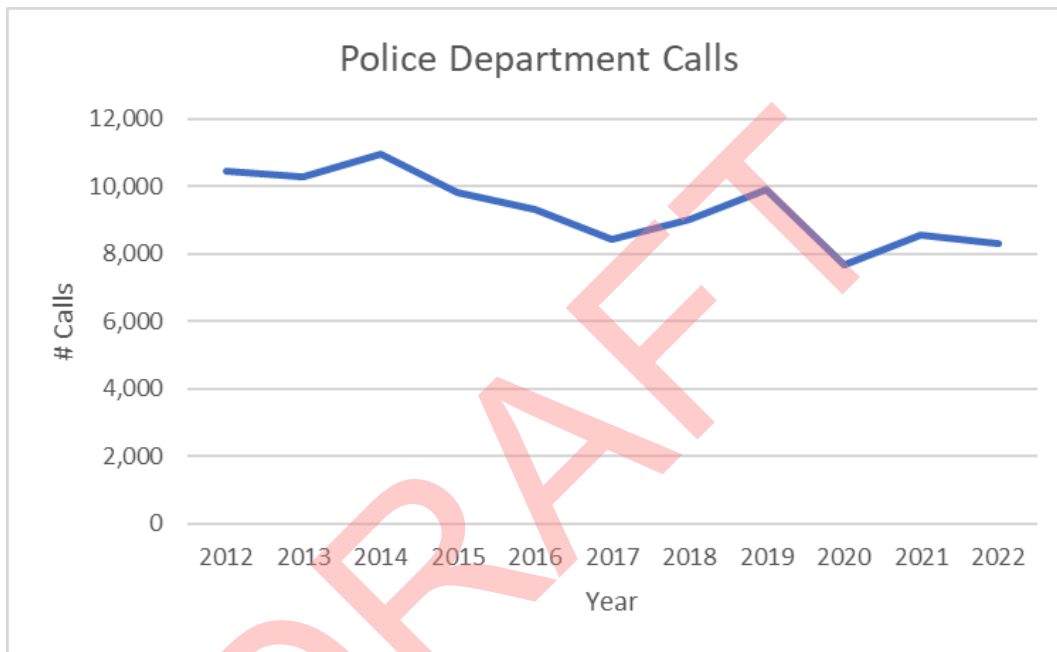
Freeport's Fire Rescue Department includes a Fire-Rescue Chief and approximately 45 staff members. This includes 4 full time staff and a dozen on-call members, with the remainder being per diem staff. The Department currently struggles with adequate staffing and employee retention and is in need of additional working and living space for staff. The needs for the Department over the next ten years include recruitment of staff members, maintenance of apparatus, full time staffing, access to educational programs for the advancement of personnel, training and education for the growth of department personnel in leadership and management, and development of a strong fire code inspections program. The Department relies on mutual aid communities to help respond to a variety of high risk potential calls and stretches response boundaries often. Fire equipment is in good to excellent condition. The oldest fire apparatus is Ladder 1 which is scheduled for replacement in 2026. The current fleet of fire trucks and ambulances is adequate, however, with the increasing ambulance calls for service, the service life of an ambulance may be shortened over time.

DRAFT

Police and Fire Rescue Calls

# Calls	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Police Department	10,434	10,293	10,951	9,828	9,320	8,411	9,035	9,902	7,650	8,556	8,293
Fire Department	24	27	28	24	21	15	24	7	5	31	35

*** Note: This data will be updated in coordination with the Police Department**



Public Works Department

Freeport's Public Works Department maintains and plows 87 miles of roads and 6 miles of sidewalks. The Department has 13 full time staff. The Public Works Department ongoing work includes road paving & maintenance and street cross culvert replacement.

Regional Cooperation

Freeport contracts with Brunswick for consolidated dispatch services. In FY 2022, a Public Safety Radio Communication Project was completed with the installation of new equipment at four communications sites that link to the dispatch center in Brunswick. The conversion from analog to digital equipment provides significantly better coverage throughout the Town and allows for quicker response times.

Freeport is also part of the Coastal Mutual Aid Association, which comprises eleven towns. Members of the organization of this cooperative group have pledged to provide each other with their available resources for any emergency.

Energy Infrastructure

Freeport is served by Central Maine Power (CMP) for its power and electricity needs. Three-phase power exists in most of the commercial and developed areas of town including along Route One, Main Street, South Freeport Road, Desert Road, and Pine Street. Three-phase power does not extend further east or west beyond Mast Landing School and Elm Street⁴.

In 2022, Freeport passed a resolution endorsing the declaration of a climate emergency and creation of a climate action plan. As part of this declaration, the town commits to improving municipal energy and electricity efficiency. Freeport partners with Efficiency Maine to encourage homeowners and businesses to participate in the town's energy rebate program, which provides resources for energy efficiency. With the funding from the program, eligible homeowners can receive up to \$1,200 off on heat pumps plus additional assistance for energy assessments, weatherization, and insulation plus discounts on electric vehicles, bikes and lawn mowers⁵. In March 2023, the Towns of Freeport and Yarmouth hired a joint Sustainability Coordinator to further support and advance these climate action and sustainability goals.

⁴ ArcGIS Online 'Maine Three-Phase Power Map

⁵ Office, F. (2024, January 24). *January's action: Take advantage of Freeport's energy efficiency rebates*. FreeportCAN. <https://freeportcan.org/january-2024-action/>

Cellular & Internet Infrastructure

Although Freeport does have a number of wireless carriers with antennas in town, certain parts of Town still have limited cellular service. Downtown and South Freeport Village are two known areas with limited cell service. The downtown area also does not have public wifi.

Healthcare Facilities

Freeport does not have any hospitals or urgent care clinics. The closest hospitals are located in Portland and Brunswick. It is a 20-minute drive to Portland and a 15-minute drive to Brunswick, which is roughly a 20 minute drive away. Freeport Medical Center is the largest primary care and family practice in town. There are other medical offices at 174 South Freeport Road with a variety of providers. Freeport Place, Bella Point Freeport, and Hawthorne House provide nursing and assisted living care for the elderly.

Social Services

Freeport's General Assistance program provides services to those in need. General Assistance assists eligible residents with rent/mortgage, heating, food, personal care and clothing. As of 2021, Freeport Community Services administers the General Assistance program. Freeport Community Services has a food pantry, medical equipment, transportation services and heating assistance and has done a lot of work assisting new Mainers residing in Freeport.

Libraries

The Freeport Community Library is located at 10 Library Drive. The Library is open Monday, Thursday and Friday 10am-5pm, Tuesday and Wednesday 10am-7pm and Saturday 10am-2pm (Seasonal Saturday hours). The mission of the Library is to provide a safe welcoming community space connecting people to information, ideas and each other to promote curiosity, discovery, informed citizenship and life-long learning through free and open access to information. The Library is a Town department of the Town of Freeport with an advisory Board of Trustees, which consists of 9 members who serve as community advocates for the library. Given that the Library is a department of the Town, it is not governed by the Board of Trustees.

According to the 2022-2024 Library Strategic Plan, in 2020 there were a total of 52,266 library visits, 5,946 library program attendees, and 80,358 books checked out. Young adult program attendance increased from 613 in 2018 to 1,182 in 2019 and then decreased to 496 in 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of young adult programs offered at the library has increased as well as the number of people using the children's and young adult rooms. The Strategic Plan also acknowledges Freeport's changing population and will need to provide a

variety of services and programs for all ages. In the future, the Library will rely on more technology and social media for interacting with others and for service delivery.

Schools

Freeport is part of the RSU 5 school district along with Durham and Pownal and has four public schools; Morse Street School, Mast Landing School, Freeport Middle School and Freeport High School. School enrollment numbers have remained relatively stable over the last ten years.

According to the New England School Development Council report from 2021, enrollment at Morse Street School is projected to decrease by about 4% through the 2026-2027 school year and enrollment at Mast Landing School is projected to increase by about 8% through the 2026-2027 school year. Enrollment at Freeport Middle School is projected to increase by about 17% through the 2026-2027 school year and enrollment at Freeport High School is projected to decrease by about 8% through the 2026-2027 school year⁶. School construction is not anticipated during the planning period.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	10-year average
Freeport High School	519	484	490	513	535	582	580	606	597	620	545.11
Freeport Middle School	301	310	308	316	356	351	347	314	296	307	322.11
Mast Landing School	271	280	257	263	251	257	234	213	235	253	251.22
Morse Street School	268	252	240	233	259	272	309	284	301	327	268.67

Source: Maine Department of Education School Enrollment Data, 2023

⁶ New England School Development Council RSU #5 Freeport, ME pg. 2

Street Trees

In 2019, the Freeport Sustainability Advisory Board conducted a street tree inventory to locate, quantify and identify the trees existing in the right of way along Freeport’s downtown villages and major residential streets. The 323 public trees that were inventoried provide an estimated \$5,069 in benefits to residents, visitors and businesses in Freeport and store nearly \$60,000 of carbon. The 323 inventoried trees comprise 35 different species and 19 different genera. Most of Freeport’s trees were assessed as being in excellent or good condition. In the future, Freeport will need to continue the stewardship and maintenance of existing trees to promote longevity and integrity of a sustainable and diverse public tree population⁷. Additionally, much of this work coincides with the Complete Streets Policy, which encourages planted tree esplanades as a method for traffic calming, as well as the Climate Action Plan, which encourages more green infrastructure such as green roofs and rain gardens. Trees and other green infrastructure not only promote wildlife diversity and conservation, but also reduce urban heat island and sequester carbon.

Capital Improvement Plan

***This plan will be attached to the end of the plan**

⁷ Town of Freeport Street Tree Inventory Report, 2019