

Chapter 17

Regional Coordination

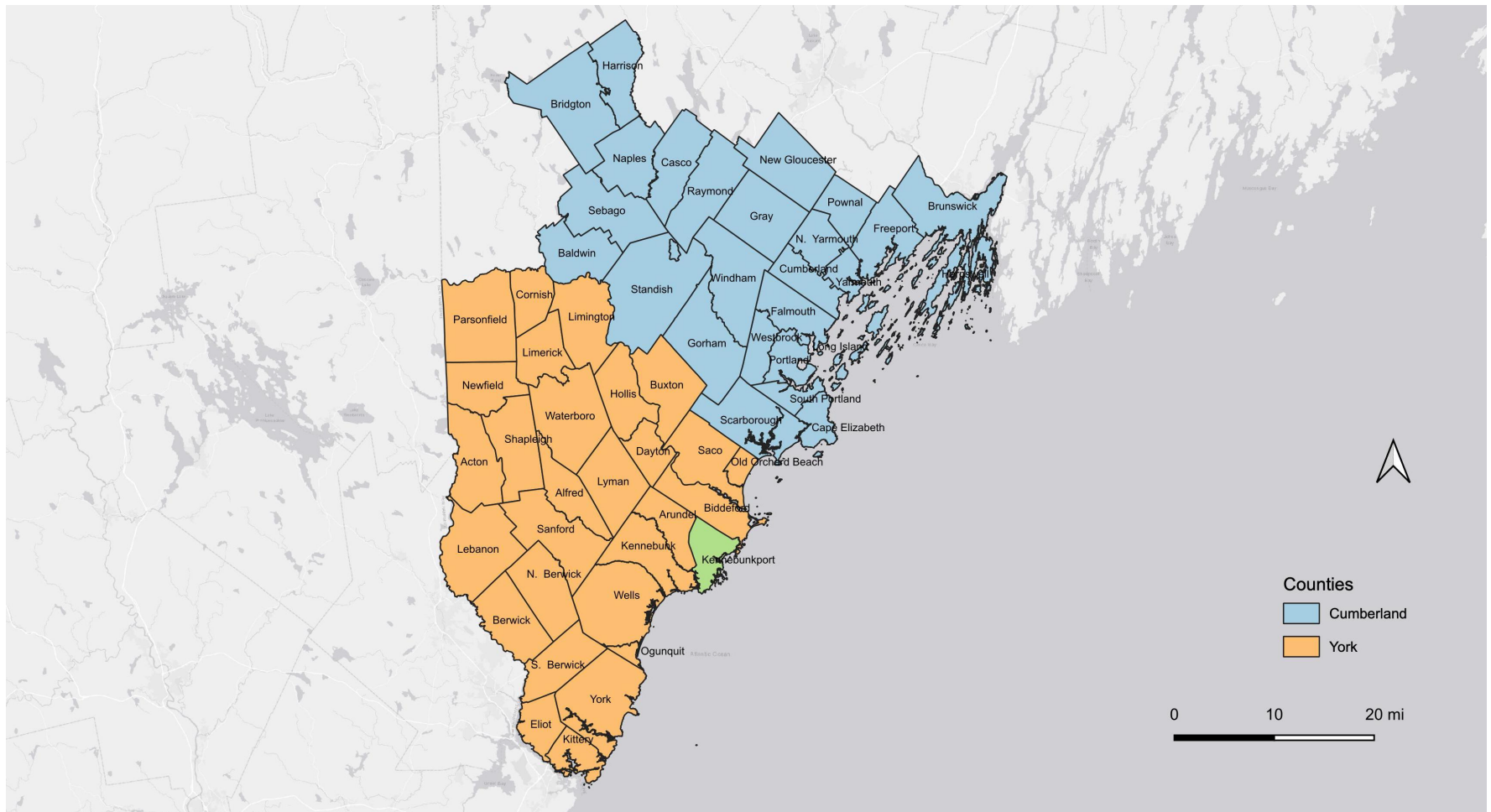


Figure 17-1 Kennebunkport's location within the region. Seen above are the counties of York and Cumberland.

Regional Coordination

The State of Maine’s criteria for determining whether a municipal comprehensive plan is consistent with the Growth Management Act (30-A M.R.S.A. §§ 4312-4350) are specified in an administrative rule, commonly referred to as Chapter 208. The rule specifies that a required component of the plan is a Regional Coordination Program.

Regional Coordination Program

Pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4326(4), a regional coordination program must be pursued with other communities (or Land Use Regulation Commission if the community abuts land under its jurisdiction) to manage shared resources and facilities, including but not limited to lakes, rivers, aquifers, and transportation facilities. The plan must identify any shared resources and facilities, describe any conflicts with neighboring communities’ policies and strategies pertaining to shared resources and facilities and describe what approaches the community will take to coordinate management of shared resources and facilities. In addition, the plan must include a summary of regional coordination efforts from all applicable topic areas.

Introduction

Kennebunkport collaborates with other municipalities in the region in a myriad of ways. This intermunicipal cooperation is evidenced by an array of programs, initiatives, and interlocal agreements in areas such as:

- Regional Planning
- Proximity to the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS)
- Bicycle Routes and Hiking Trails
- Shoreline Explorer (trolley) Network
- Police and Emergency Communications
- Emergency Management
- Fire and Ambulance
- Potable Water Supply
- Regional School Unit #21
- Solid Waste and Recycling
- Household Hazardous Waste Collection
- Undeveloped Habitat Blocks
- Habitat Focus Areas
- Kennebunk River
- Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge
- Aquifer Protection
- Water Testing at Little River
- Regional Sustainability & Resilience Program
- Kennebunkport Climate Initiative
- Building Economic Resilience Program
- Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Archaeological Resources

Regional Planning

Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission (SMPDC)

This regional planning commission was established in 1964 to serve York County municipalities, along with ten communities situated in nearby Oxford and Cumberland counties.¹

SMPDC’s principal charge is to coordinate planning in the region, and to take on those planning endeavors that extend beyond municipal boundaries (and that exceed the capacities of individual municipalities), yet are not sufficiently extensive to be a responsibility of the state. SMPDC addresses planning issues in the areas of transportation, energy, aquifer protection, solid waste, economic development, brownfield redevelopment, open space protection, regional trail systems, sustainability, resiliency, and regional response to climate change.

SMPDC provides technical assistance to its member communities. Additionally, one of the agency’s most useful functions is providing a forum in which municipal officials can compare notes and share solutions to challenges that they face in common.

Kennebunkport has long been an active member of SMPDC, and is represented at the SMPDC by a Town staff member who serves on SMPDC’s Executive Committee.

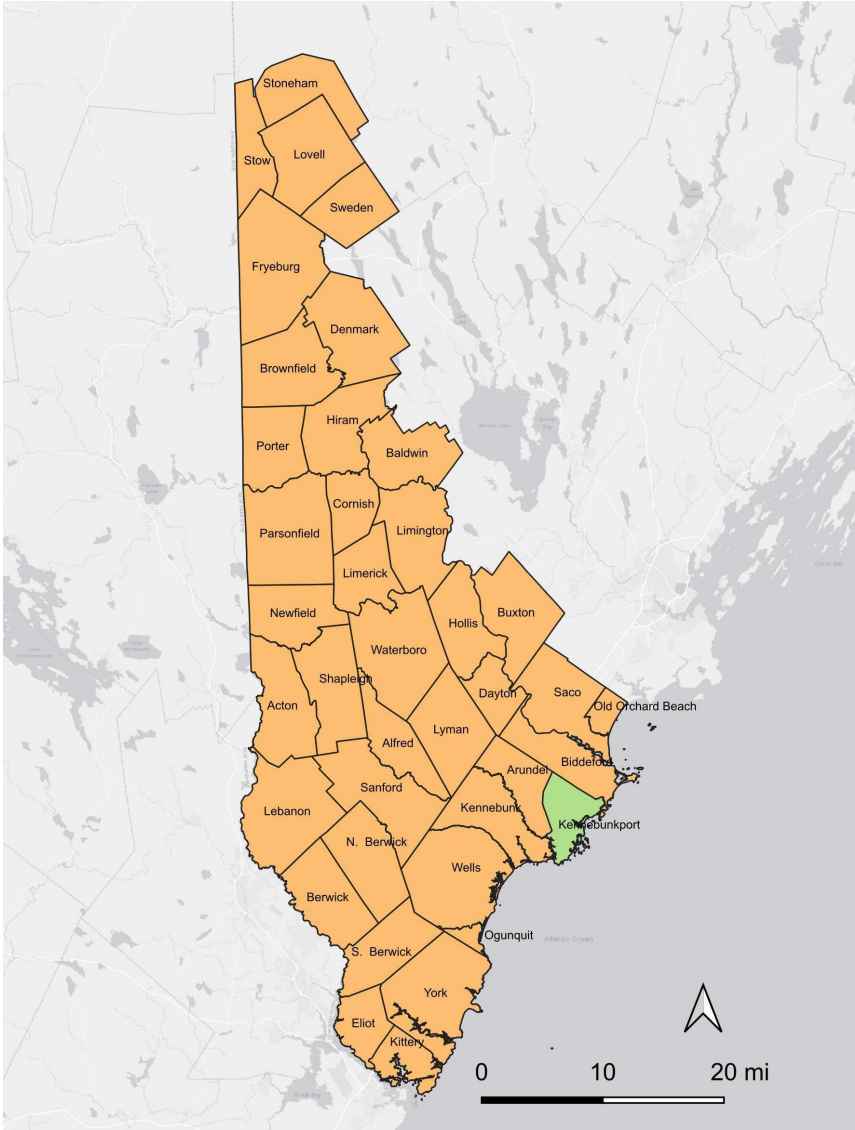


Figure 17-2 Municipalities Served by the SMPDC

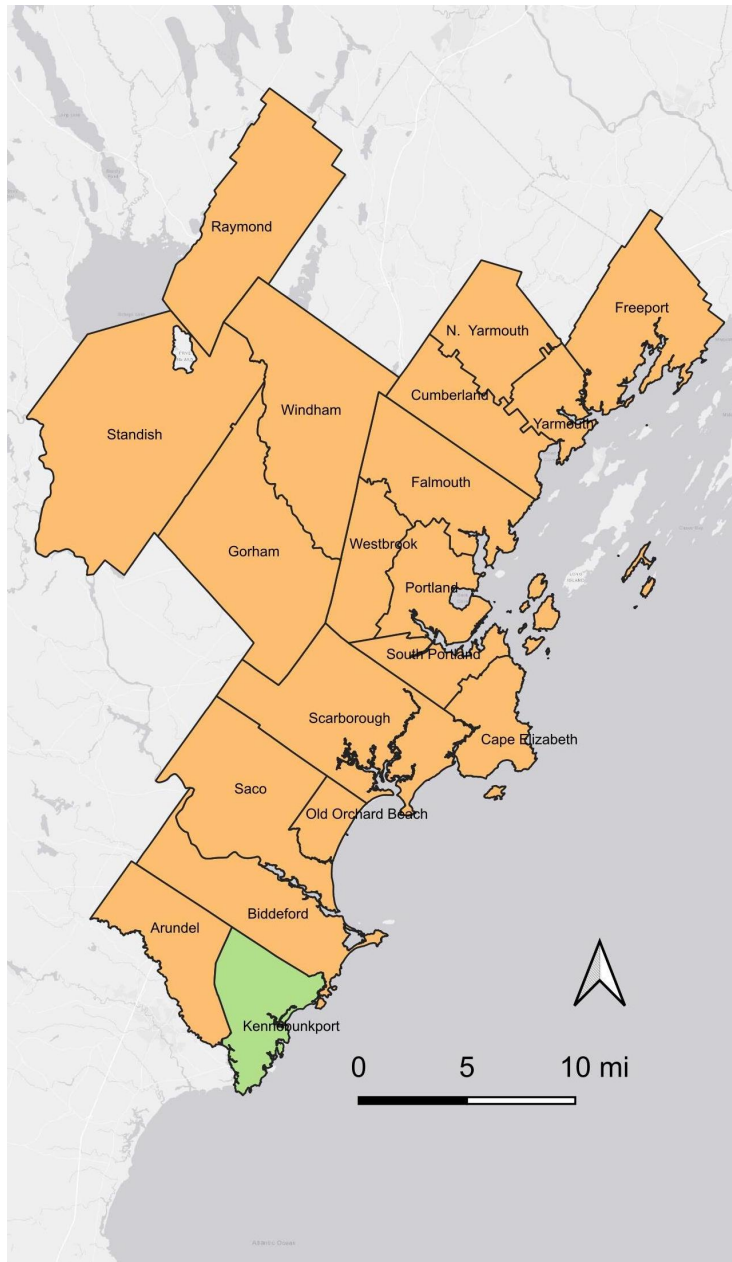


Figure 17-3 PACTS Municipalities (depicted in orange)

Transportation

Proximity to Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS)

The federal government established Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to plan and program federally funded transportation projects within a designated Metropolitan Area. PACTS is the name of the Portland area MPO. The extent of the Metropolitan Area changes occasionally in response to the results of the federal decennial census. On an annual basis, PACTS allocates transportation improvement funds in an amount upwards of \$25 million.

Kennebunkport is situated just outside of the Portland Metropolitan Area, while the neighboring communities of Arundel and Biddeford are situated within. Kennebunkport's proximity to the MPO bears mentioning due to the potential of MPO decisions to impact the town, and the opportunities this proximity may offer Kennebunkport.

The advent of rideshare services such as Uber and Lyft provide Kennebunkport residents with convenient and reasonably priced transportation to destinations throughout the region, including the Amtrak stations in Wells and Saco, the Portland Jetport, and all transit lines within the PACTS service region.

PACTS member communities are depicted in orange on the map to the left.

Bicycle Routes

The Eastern Trail runs through Kennebunk, Arundel and Biddeford. The trail is readily accessible via Kennebunkport's Log Cabin Road, as is the nearby US Route 1 bike trail. Maine's Department of Transportation promotes three bike tour loops through Kennebunkport, all of which originate at the Wells Intermodal Transportation Center. More investments in Kennebunkport bicycle infrastructure would permit visitors and residents alike to spend more time on bicycles and fewer hours in motor vehicles.



Hiking Trails

The Kennebunkport Conservation Trust maintains an extensive trail system, part of which extends into Arundel and Biddeford. (See Chapter 11 Transportation, and Chapter 15 Recreation for details.)

Parking

Dock Square and Kennebunk Lower Village effectively function as a single commercial center. Accordingly, visitors to one often find it convenient to park at the other, without regard to municipal boundaries.

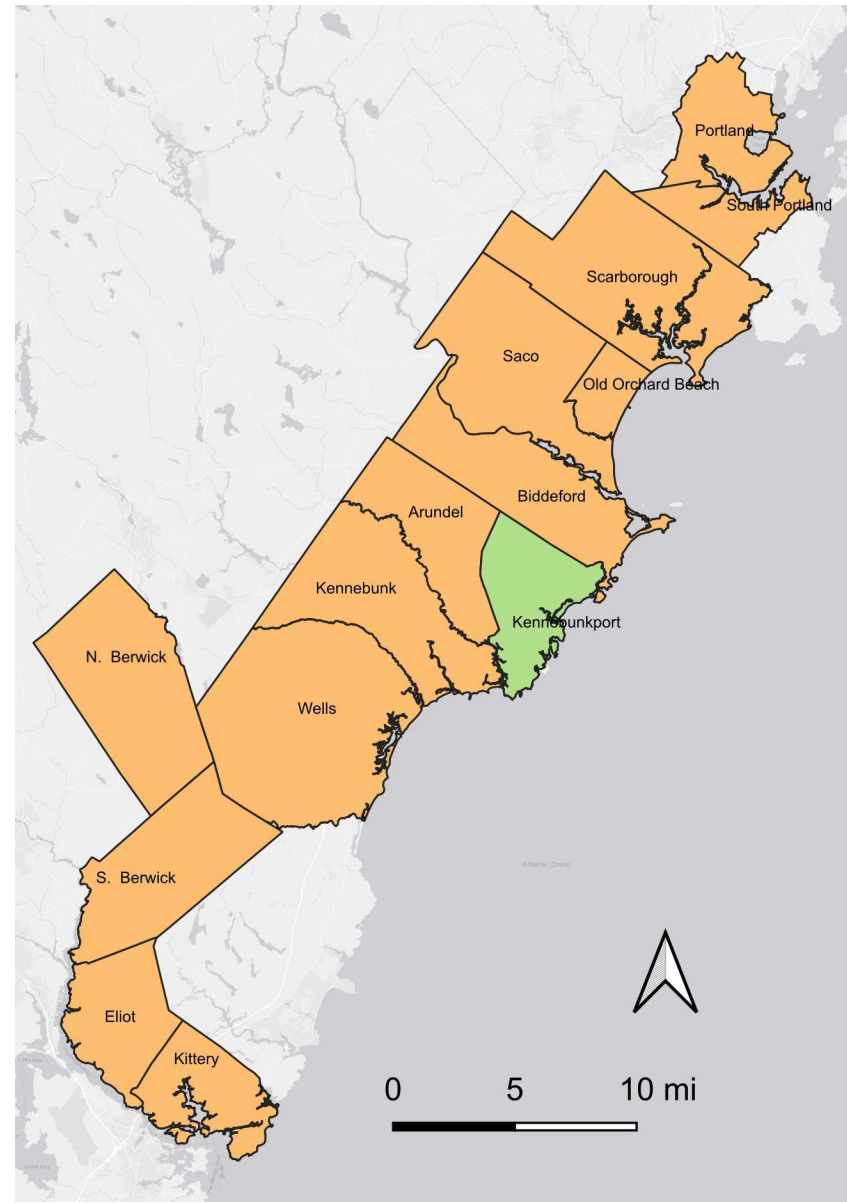


Figure 17-4 Southern Maine Municipalities in the Eastern Trail Corridor (depicted in orange)

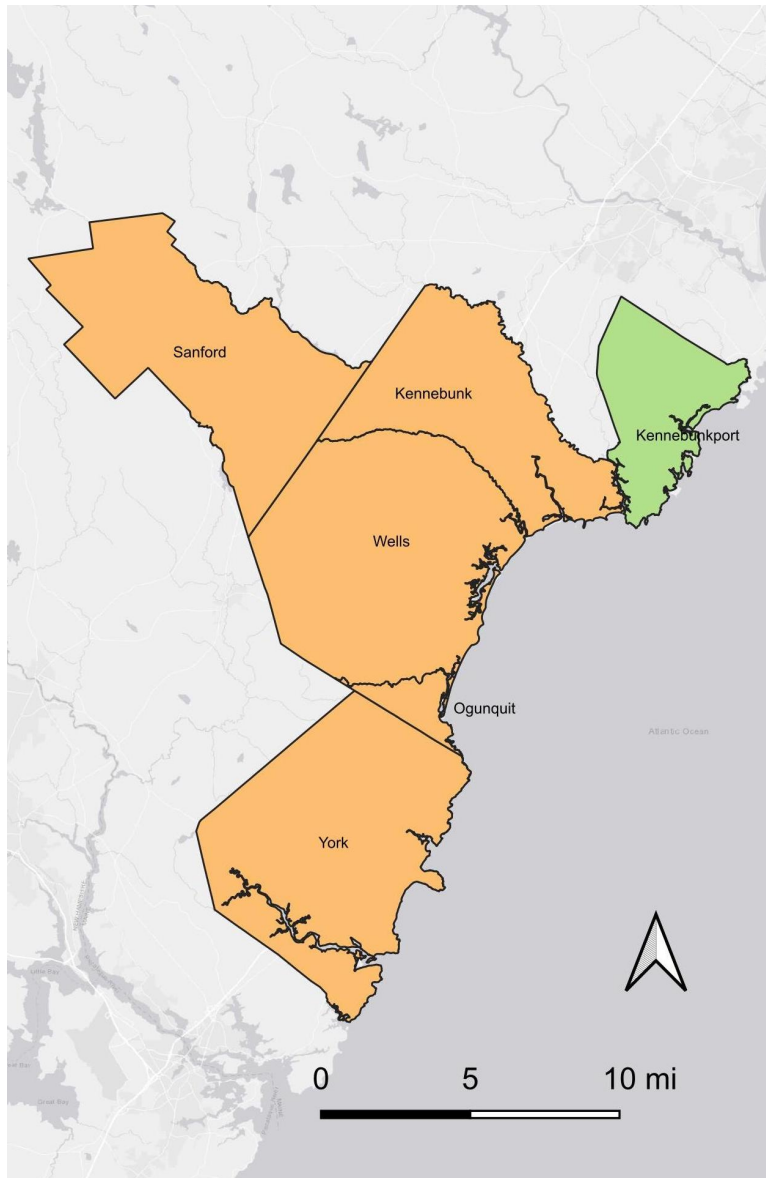


Figure 17-5 Municipalities Served by the Shoreline Explorer Network (depicted in orange and green)

Shoreline Explorer Network

This network of trolley operators provides connecting service to Kennebunk, Wells, Sanford, Ogunquit, and York. (See Chapter 11 Transportation for more detail.)



Shoreline Explorer courtesy photo

Friends in Service Helping (FISH)

FISH operates out of Kennebunk's Senior Center. The program organizes a cadre a volunteers to transport seniors who have no other means of transport to travel to appointments with health care providers. The program serves seniors in Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Arundel.

Emergency Response

Police

Kennebunkport’s police department is a signatory to three Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) that outline collaboration with other law enforcement agencies.² One MoU details a mutual aid agreement with Kennebunk. The second describes the Town’s participation with the Regional Tactical Team that serves York County. The third MoU is a relatively recent development, and was initiated by Kennebunkport. This MoU was developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and ensures that York County municipalities that suffer police staffing issues due to COVID-19 will be assisted by other York County police departments.

Emergency Communications

All emergency calls are routed to the Town of York’s dispatch center where they are screened, and then forwarded to Kennebunkport Dispatch.

Emergency Management

During emergencies, Kennebunkport’s emergency management team works closely with its counterparts in other York County communities, and with Maine’s Emergency Management Agency. Local operations are guided by a Comprehensive Emergency Plan, and supplemented by a hazard mitigation plan for York County that is updated periodically. The most recent version was adopted in 2015.

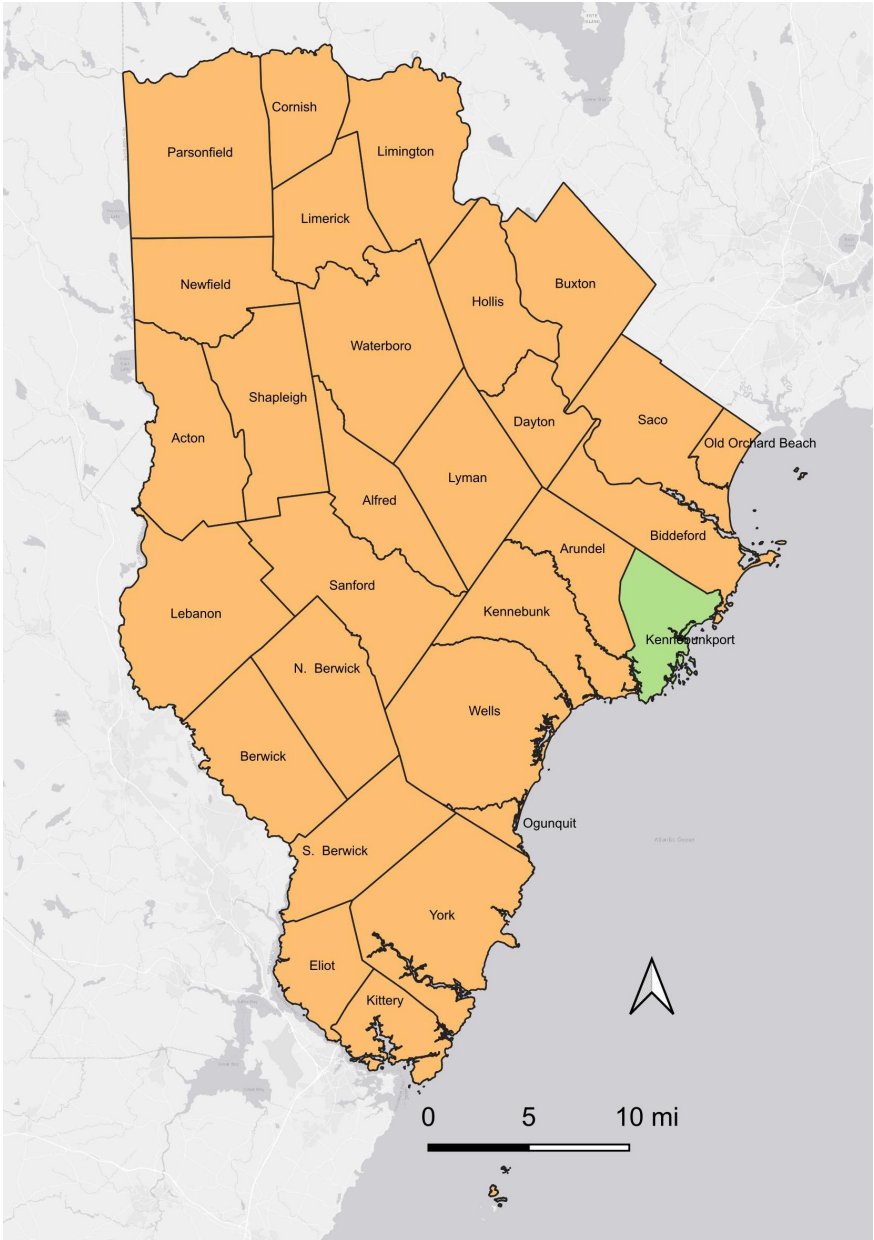


Figure 17-6 York County

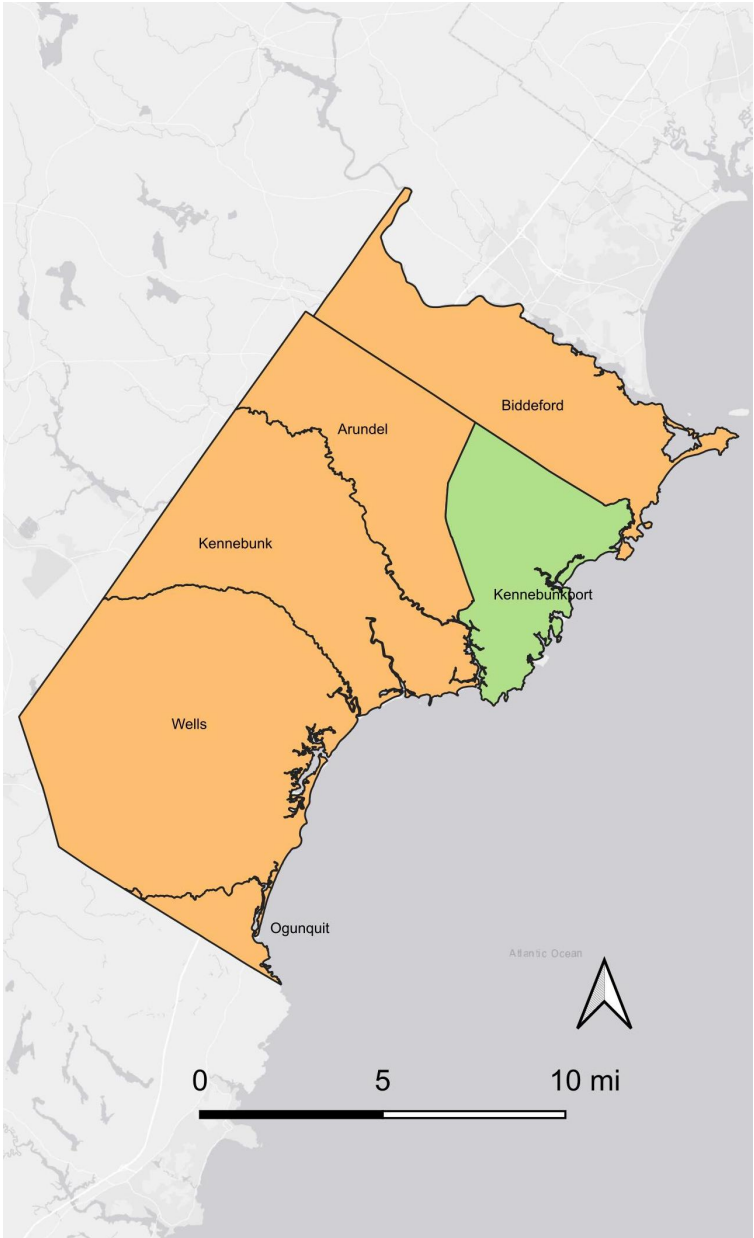


Figure 17-7 Mutual Aid Responses by the Kennebunkport Fire Department in 2019

Fire

In 2019, Kennebunkport firefighters responded to mutual aid calls from Arundel, Biddeford, Kennebunk, Ogunquit, and Wells. These departments stand ready to provide assistance to Kennebunkport when requested.



The 1947 Fire, photo courtesy of Kennebunkport Fire Department

Ambulance

Kennebunkport Emergency Medical Services (KEMS) has a mutual aid agreement with Arundel, Biddeford, Kennebunk, and Wells.

Public Facilities & Services

Potable Water Supply

Approximately 40% of the parcels in Kennebunkport are served by the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport & Wells Water District (KKWWD). The district’s principal source is Branch Brook, a stream that flows from Sanford to Wells. The district supplements this supply with purchased water from Maine Water and the York Water District. The former sources water from the Saco River in Biddeford, while the latter pumps from Chase’s Pond in York.

Public School System

Maine Regional School Unit 21 (RSU 21) provides public education for students in Kennebunkport, Kennebunk, and Arundel. Elementary age children in any of the three towns have the option of attending any of the four schools within their respective age groups: Consolidated School in Kennebunkport (K-5), Kennebunk Elementary School (pre-K through 2), the Sea Road School in Kennebunk (3-5), or the Mildred L. Day School in Arundel (K-5). RSU 21’s Middle School and High School are both located in Kennebunk.

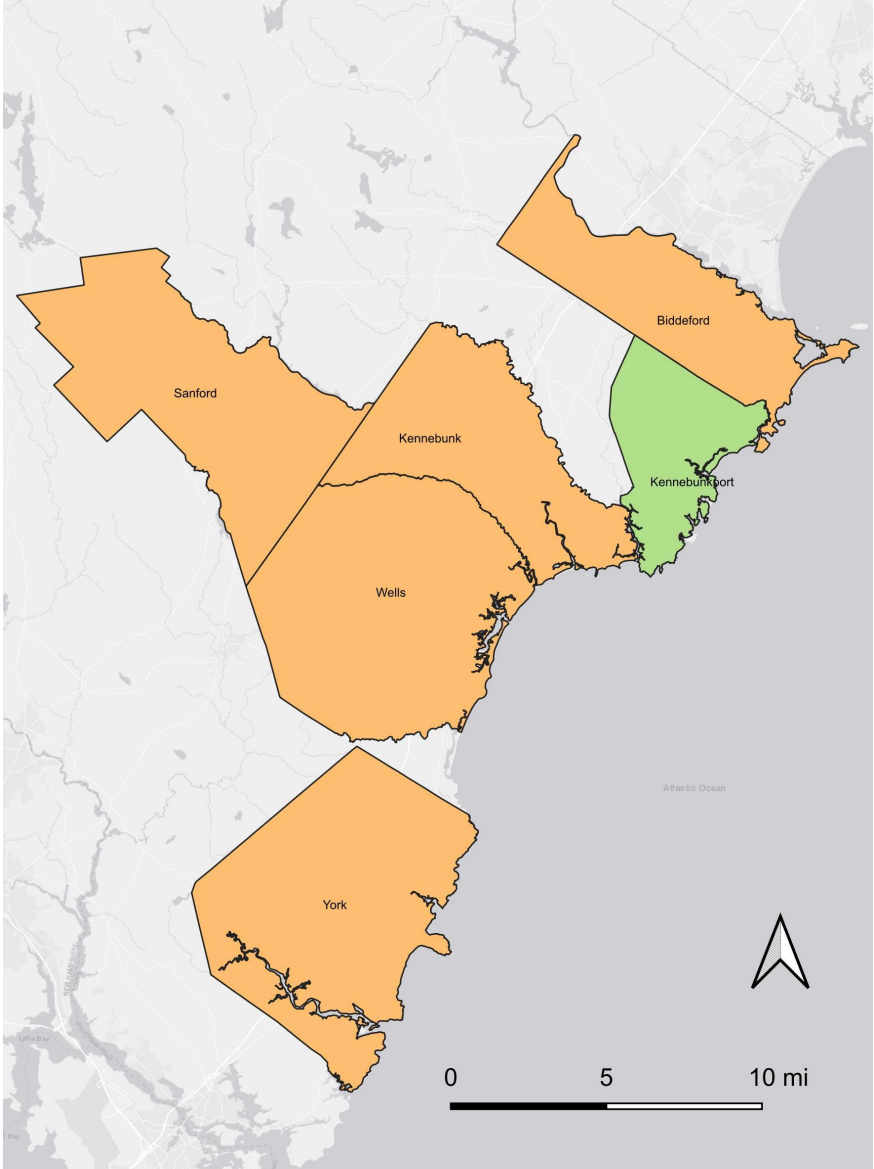


Figure 17-8 Sources of Kennebunkport’s Potable Water Supply (depicted in orange)

Solid Waste

Kennebunkport relies on regional facilities to process and transfer its household waste at Cassella Waste Systems facilities in Arundel, Dayton and Westbrook, and household recyclables at ecomaine in Portland.

Staples (Biddeford and South Portland) accepts dry cell batteries, rechargeable batteries, toner cartridges, and electronics. NAPA (Biddeford) accepts lead batteries. Home Depot (Biddeford and South Portland) accepts compact fluorescent light bulbs. Hannaford (York, Scarborough and South Portland) accepts redeemable bottles and single use plastic. The latter is also accepted by Shaws (Saco and Sanford).

Oversize Recyclables

Recyclable items that are too large for curbside pickup can be dropped off at Kennebunk's Sea Road Transfer Station & Recycling Drop-Off Center. The transfer station also accepts appliances, wood, brush & stumps, windows, mattresses, furniture, tires, cardboard, electronics, waste oil, asphalt shingles, and metals.

Household Hazardous Waste

Household Hazardous Waste drop-offs are held periodically in conjunction with the area towns of Kennebunk, Arundel and Wells. The event is hosted by Kennebunk at its Sea Road transfer station.

Natural Resources

Undeveloped Habitat Blocks

Undeveloped habitat blocks are large tracts of land that have not been fragmented by roads and development. The largest unfragmented area in town, located to the northwest of Guinea Road, comprises 2,086 acres within the town and is part of a 3,035 acre block that extends into Arundel and Biddeford. Maintaining large undeveloped areas and corridors or connections between these areas will be especially important to helping wildlife respond to changes in climate that impact the suitability of habitat and composition of species in an area (See Chapter 7 Natural Resources).

Beginning With Habitat Focus Areas

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) designated 140 focus areas of statewide ecological significance. Two areas are located partially within Kennebunkport: the Biddeford/ Kennebunkport Vernal Pool Complex and the Wells & Ogunquit Marsh. The focus areas are intended to help communities and landowners plan for and conserve priority lands.

Kennebunk River Committee

The towns of Kennebunk and Kennebunkport established the Kennebunk River Committee to manage this shared resource via an inter-local agreement signed in 1995. The committee is comprised

of three members from each from Kennebunkport and Kennebunk, and one from Arundel. The committee's primary focus is safety and environmental protection.

Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge

Over 550 acres of conservation land in Kennebunkport are part of the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge was established in 1966 to protect salt marshes and estuaries for migratory birds. Habitats found within the refuge include forested upland, barrier beach/dune, coastal meadows, tidal salt marsh, and rocky coast. The portion of the refuge that lies in Kennebunkport is part of a 50-mile long stretch of protected land in York and Cumberland counties.

Aquifer

There are 118 acres of high yield sand and gravel aquifers in Kennebunkport (See Chapter 8 Water). The aquifer is located near the intersection of Guinea Road and Whitten Hill Road, known as Beacon Corner, and at an area off Oak Ridge Road that extends into Biddeford. The portion of the aquifer that underlies Biddeford is protected by the City's Aquifer Protection Overlay District.

Water Testing

Kennebunkport has participated in the Maine Healthy Beach program since 2003 in order to ensure that local

beaches are as free as possible from bacteria that causes illness. The program relies on numerous volunteers. Kennebunkport volunteers test the water as far east as the Little River, a water body that marks the boundary between Kennebunkport and Biddeford.

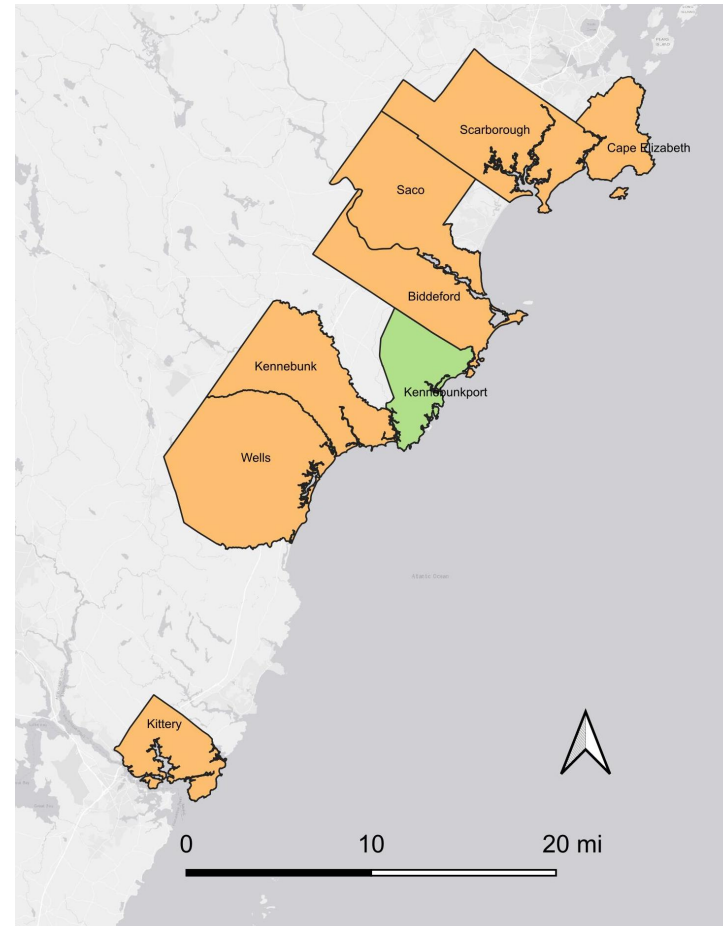


Figure 17-9 Municipalities that Host the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge

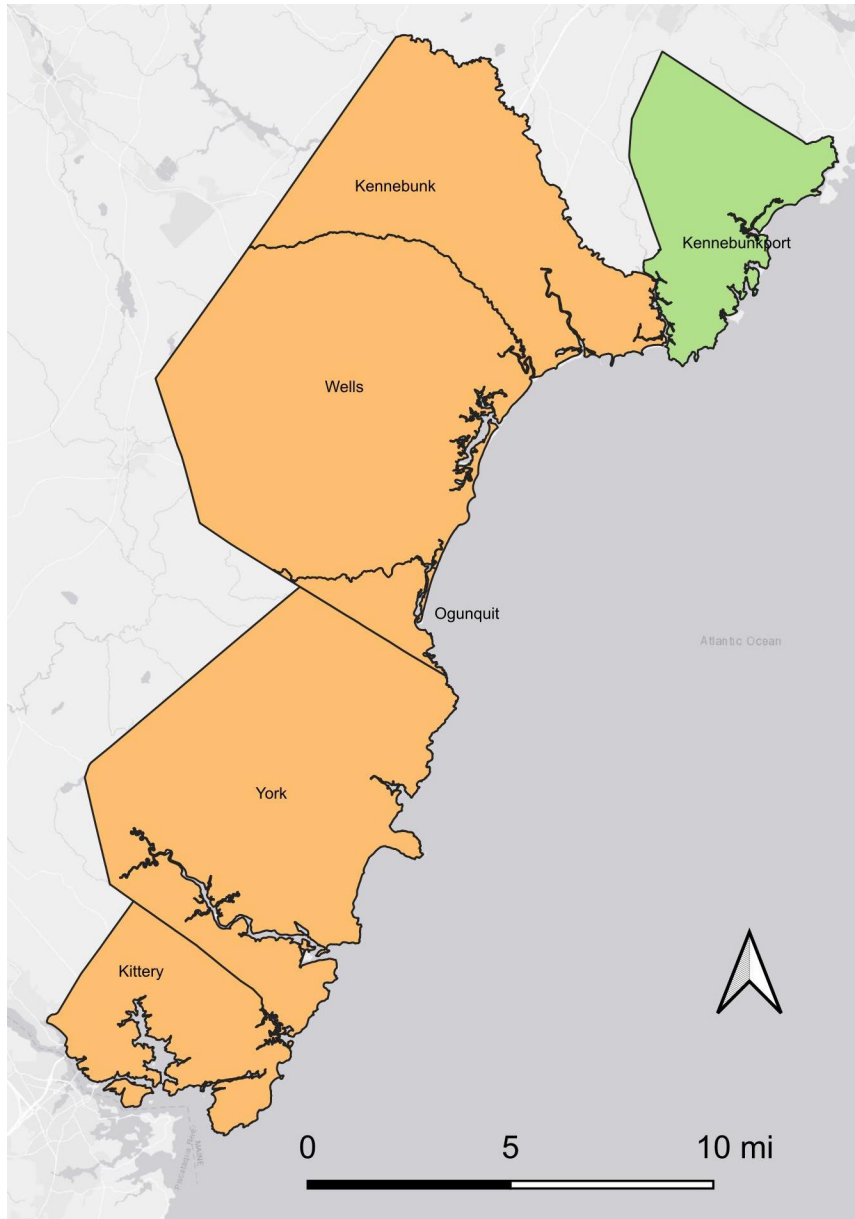


Figure 17-10 Member Towns of the SMPDC Regional Sustainability & Resilience Program

Climate Change

Regional Sustainability & Resilience Program

In 2019, the coastal York County towns of Kittery, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, Ogunquit, Wells, and York established the Regional Sustainability & Resilience Program. The impetus came from Kennebunkport's Town Manager who recognized the advantage to had by pooling municipal resources in order obtain the technical expertise that no one town could readily afford on its own. This regional approach, one that is unique in Maine, has drawn praise from the Maine Climate Council.³

Kennebunkport Climate Initiative

This program was launched in 2020 by the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust (KCT) for the express purpose of educating, empowering and activating young people in the region.⁴ The regional nature of this endeavor is evidenced by the identity of its climate network partners: Gulf of Maine Institute in Portland, the University of New England in Biddeford, RSU 21, and the Ecology School in Saco.

The Economy

Building Economic Resilience

The SMPDC will soon commence an assessment of sea level rise and storm impacts, and examine strategies for building economic resilience in coastal York County. This endeavor will be funded by a grant from the US Economic Development Administration. The project will be similar to SMPDC's recent Tides, Taxes and New Tactics project in Kennebunk, Wells and York.⁵

Regional Chamber of Commerce

The Kennebunk Kennebunkport Arundel Chamber of Commerce serves the local business community in a multitude of ways, and with considerable enthusiasm.

Archaeology

Cape Porpoise Archaeological Alliance

In 2017, the Kennebunkport Conservation Trust (KCT) and the Brick Store Museum entered into a collaborative partnership for the purpose of conducting research in the vicinity of Cape Porpoise Harbor, supported by experts from the University New England.⁶ The Brick Store Museum's stated focus is on "the Kennebunks and surrounding communities."⁷

Summary Table - Regional Coordination & Collaboration

Table 17-1 Municipalities That Coordinate & Collaborate with Kennebunkport

Municipality	Regional Planning (SMPDC)	Proximity to PACTS	Bicycle Routes	Hiking Trails	Parking	Shoreline Explorer Network	Friends in Service Help	Police	Communications	Emergency Management	Fire	Ambulance	Potable Water Supply	Public School System	Solid Waste	Oversized Recyclables	Household Hazardous Waste	Undeveloped Habitat Blocks	Beginning With Habitat	Kennebunk River	Rachel Carson NWR	Aquifer Protection	Water Testing at Little River	Regional Sustainability	KCT Climate Initiative	Economic Resilience	Chamber of Commerce	Archaeological Alliance
		Transportation					Emergency Response					Public Services					Natural Resources					Climate	Economy					
Arundel	●	●	●	●			●	●		●	●	●		●	●		●	●									●	
Biddeford	●	●	●	●				●		●	●	●	●		●			●	●			●	●		●			●
Cape Elizabeth		●																			●							
Dayton	●							●		●					●													
Kennebunk	●		●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●			●		●	●	●
Kennebunkport	●			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Kittery	●		●					●		●											●			●		●		
Ogunquit	●					●		●		●	●								●					●		●		
Old Orchard Beach	●	●	●					●		●																		
Portland		●	●												●										●			
Saco	●	●	●					●		●					●										●			
Sanford	●					●		●		●			●		●													
Scarborough		●	●												●													
South Portland		●	●												●													
Wells	●					●		●		●	●	●	●				●		●		●			●		●		
Westbrook		●													●													
York	●					●		●	●	●			●		●									●		●		

¹ <https://smpdc.org/region>. SMPDC communities beyond the bounds of York County are Baldwin, Hiram, Porter, Brownfield, Denmark, Fryeburg, Sweden, Lovell, Stow, and Stoneham.

² Interview with Kennebunkport Police Chief Craig Sanford on February 19, 2021.

³ Maine Won't Wait - A Four-Year Plan for Climate Action, published by the Maine Climate Council in December 2020, page 94.

⁴ <https://www.kportclimate.org/about/>

⁵ <https://smpdc.org/coastalprojects>

⁶ <https://www.kporttrust.org/archaeology-1>

⁷ <http://brickstoremuseum.org/about/>