



Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	2
Vision.....	2
Mission	2
A Vision For The Future	2
Public Participation Summery	3
Regional Coordination Program.....	3
Evaluation	3
Population and Demographics	4
Employment and Economic Data	8
Housing.....	9
Water Resources.....	10
Natural Resources	16
Agricultural & Forest Resource	19
Historic and Archaeological Resources	24
Recreation.....	32
Public Facilities and Services.....	37
Fiscal Capacity and Capital Investment Plan.....	51
Existing Land Use.....	57
Future Land Use.....	57
Appendix.....	58

INTRODUCTION

The 2026 Stetson Comprehensive Plan provides a strategic framework for guiding the town's growth and development over the next decade. Developed in accordance with the State of Maine's Growth Management Act, the plan incorporates local data, community feedback and analysis of current trends. It outlines practical strategies to protect natural resources, support economic vitality, and maintain the quality of life in Stetson, while preserving the rural character.

- Population and Demographics
- Housing
- Transportation
- Economy
- Water Resources
- Natural Resources
- Agricultural and Forest Resources
- Historical and Archaeological Resources
- Recreation
- Public Facilities and Services
- Fiscal Capacity and Capital Investment Plan
- Existing Land Use
- Future Land Us

Mission

Serving the citizens of Stetson
through deliberate stewardship
and governance

Vision

Shaping Stetson today to
prosper tomorrow

A Vision For The Future

Stetson envisions a future where thoughtful stewardship and collaborative governance ensure that the town's rural character, natural resources, and sense of community are preserved and enhanced for generations to come. By shaping Stetson today to prosper tomorrow, the town is committed to balancing growth with the protection of its unique landscapes, supporting

economic vitality, and fostering a high quality of life for all residents. Through deliberate planning and active citizen engagement, Stetson will remain a resilient, welcoming community that honors its heritage while embracing opportunities for sustainable progress.

Public Participation Summary

In February of 2025, as a data collection effort for the Stetson Comprehensive plan, a survey was made available to the residents of Stetson. The survey was made available to residents electronically on the town's website, and paper copies were also available at the town office. The survey was available for three weeks and received 147 responses, which equates to approximately 13% of the town's population. The survey collected demographic information and quality of life feedback in a variety of areas, including emergency services, code enforcement, road maintenance, governance, recreational services, education, housing, renewable energy development, and economic development. The results of this survey will be used in conjunction with additional data the Committee has gathered to tailor Stetson's Comprehensive Plan to meet the current and future needs of Stetson residents, and meet our committee's mission and vision:

Regional Coordination Program

Stetson partners regionally for education through RSU #64, sharing resources and facilities with neighboring towns, and collaborates on public services such as waste disposal, emergency response, and code enforcement to improve efficiency and resilience. The town aligns its planning and investments with State of Maine policies and strategies, ensuring compliance and access to funding, while community feedback and ongoing evaluation help tailor services to local needs.

Evaluation

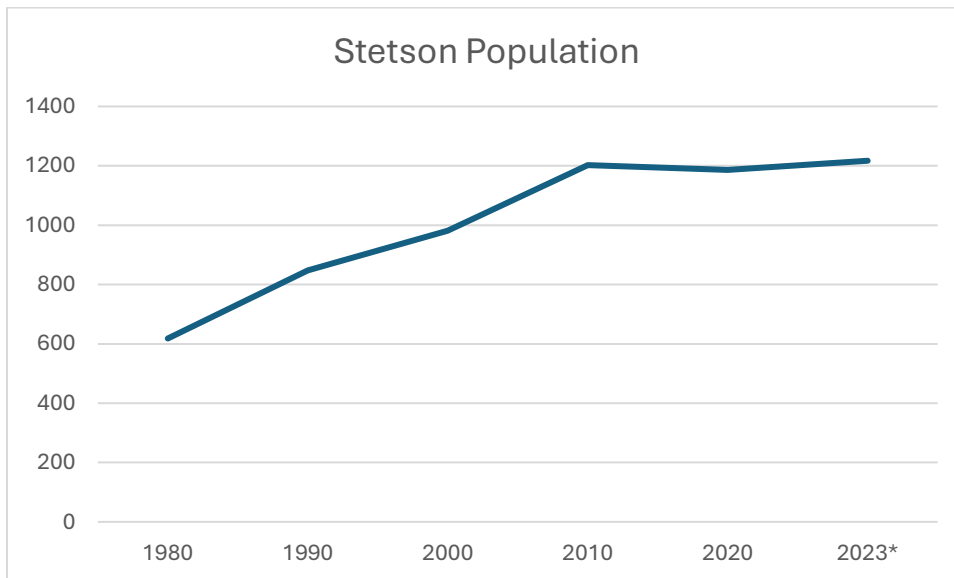
The community of Stetson will routinely monitor the degree to which future land use plan strategies have been implemented, the location and amount of new development, and the completion of capital investment projects. As new data becomes available over time, the existing data in the Comprehensive Plan chapters will be updated to ensure its contents are current and relevant.

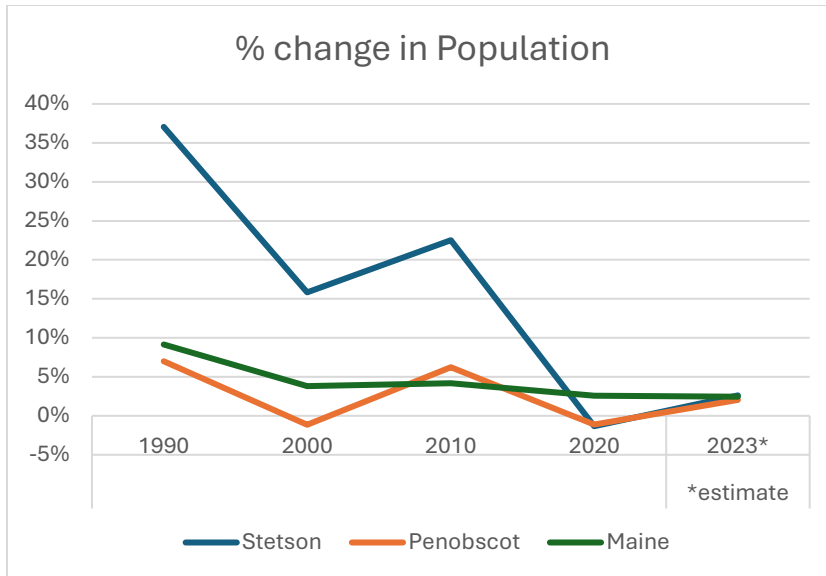
Population and Demographics

Based on U.S. Census figures, the population of Stetson increased every ten years between 1810 and 1870; there was a dramatic increase in population between 1830 and 1840 when the railroad was built through the town. Beginning with the 1880 Census, the population of Stetson decreased every ten years until 1980, except for one ten-year period between 1940 and 1950; this increase can probably be accounted for by the many men who returned from the war and started families. Since the 1970's, Stetson has experienced substantial increases in population, which are expected to continue. The population doubled between 1980 and 2010 and has since stabilized at approximately 1,200 residents.

The Maine State economist has provided a forecast of the population for the town which indicates an expected 2.5% increase from 2022 - 2032. Feedback from citizens also indicates they believe a small increase is likely based on the last couple of years of activity.

The year-round population, for Stetson in 2023 was estimated to be 1,217. This indicates no growth in the past ten years. This is generally in line with the lack of growth in population for Penobscot County over the same time frame.





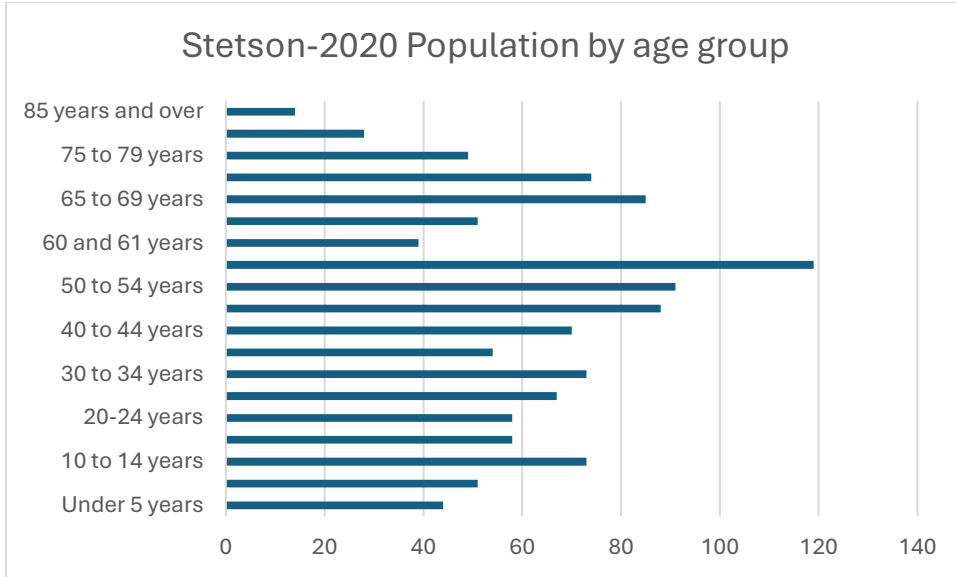
As housing becomes less available and/or more expensive in communities immediately adjacent to Bangor, greater growth would be expected in communities which are more outlying and yet still accessible such as Stetson. On the other hand, substantial increase in the cost of gasoline could decrease the desirability of Stetson as a residence for those working in Bangor.

Stetson has a significant seasonal population, based on the number of seasonal housing units. In 2022, 17.4% of the housing units were seasonal, which is much higher than the Penobscot County average of 7.7%. In addition, there is a 40 acre campground with 35 tent sites and 35 recreational vehicle sites located in town. There are, however, no commercial lodging places such as motels, hotels, inns or restaurants in Stetson.

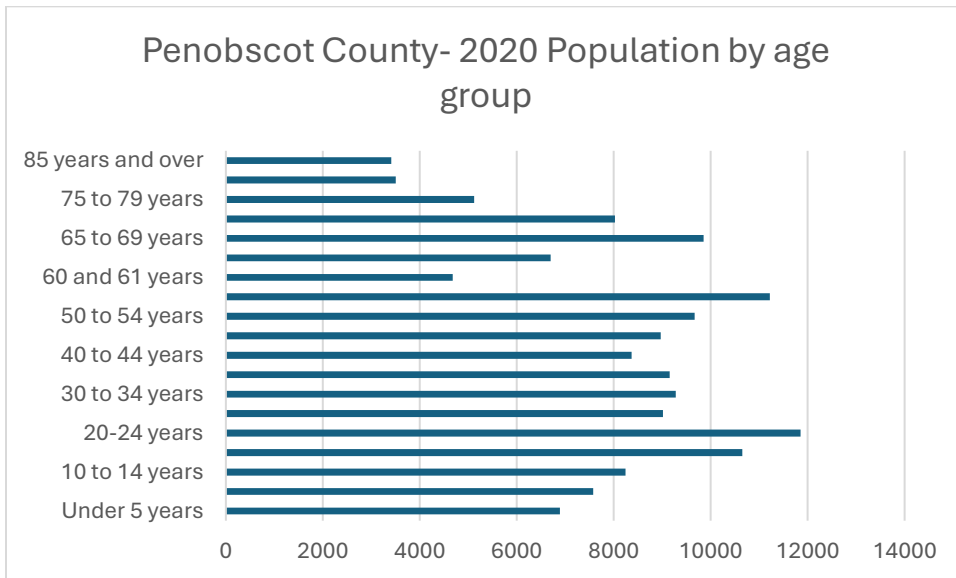
These season units are located primarily around Pleasant Lake. There are a limited number located in wooded areas for use during hunting season. Seasonal activity occurs primarily between Memorial Day and Labor Day, and during hunting season. In the summer, there is also day use of Pleasant Lake.

Age Distribution

In 2020, the largest percentage of Stetson's population was estimated by the Maine State Planning Office to be in the age group between 55-59 year of age; the second largest percentage was in the age group of 50-54 years of age. The percentage of the population 19 years of age and younger has decreased since 2010; from 24% to 19%.



The age distribution of Stetson’s population is generally in line with Penobscot County and the State of Maine as a whole.



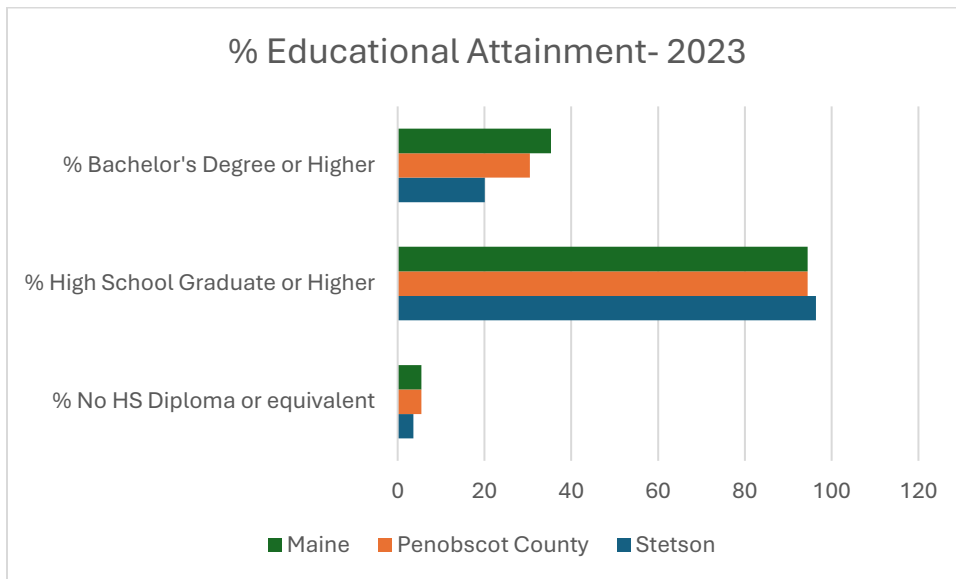
One would expect less pressure on our school systems with the falling number of youth and an increased upcoming pressure for Senior housing and elderly services as our two biggest age groups reach retirement age in the next decade or so.

Educational Attainment

Based on 2023 data, 96.4% of Stetson’s population had a high school diploma or higher, and 20.1% held a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Stetson residents had a higher percentage of high school diploma or higher, than the residents of Penobscot county (94.5%) or the State of Maine (94.5%) as a whole.

Stetson residents had a much lower percentage of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher than Penobscot county (30.5%) and the State of Maine (35.3%) as a whole.



Households

Correspondingly, Stetson has experienced a declining household size from 3.63 persons per household in 1970 to an estimated 2.9 persons per household in 1990 to an estimated 2.7 in 2023. A declining household size means that more dwelling units are needed to accommodate the same number of people.

Summary of Findings

1. While Stetson saw strong increases in population from the 1970s to 2010, it’s population has been flat over the last 14 years.
2. The population of Stetson is expected to grow very slowly over the next 10 years.
3. Stetson has a significant seasonal population, based on the number of seasonal housing units.
4. Stetson’s population has a substantially lower attainment of bachelor’s degree or higher education than Penobscot county or the State as a whole.
5. Our number of school age youth’s is declining while are biggest age subset is nearing retirement. This is very much in line with the State as a whole.

Employment and Economic Data

Median Household Income

The most conventional measure of a town's economic health is the income of its individuals and families. The Census provides median household income, which is the average income of the households within the town.

2023(US Census)	Stetson	Penobscot	Maine
Median Household Income	\$76,563	\$63,248	\$71,773

As one can see, Stetson's median household income is greater than Penobscot county's and the State of Maine as a whole.

% of Families below the poverty level

	Stetson	Penobscot	Maine
% of families below poverty level	4.2%	8%	6.5%

Occupations

Stetson is predominantly a bedroom community to the Bangor metro region. While we have several small businesses in town, we have no medium to large employers, and most are family owned and operated.

Of our estimated 516 employed citizens the following represents the largest types of occupations they work in:

Management, business, science and arts	167
Sales and office occupations	107
Natural resources, construction and maintenance	97
Service Occupations	76

Twenty individuals were noted as working from home.

Most people were found to travel to work using a car, truck or van as we have no public transportation and are a fair distance from Bangor and Newport, the most likely places of employment. Of travel commutes noted, a 30-34 minute commute was the most commonly noted, followed by 35-39 minutes and then 15-19 minutes.

Our town has no economic development office or TIF districts and therefore we have no defined priorities. We also have no traditional downtown or village center.

As noted earlier, the town does have a substantial seasonal population, mostly occupying camps surrounding Pleasant Lake but except for the Stetson Shores Campground there is no heavy reliance on tourism for our local economy.

There are no great opportunities for industrial or commercial development opportunities in Stetson as we do not abut any of the State's major throughfares and we do not have public water or wastewater treatment plants. In addition, the Town does not have good broadband internet access and very few areas with three-phase power.

Housing

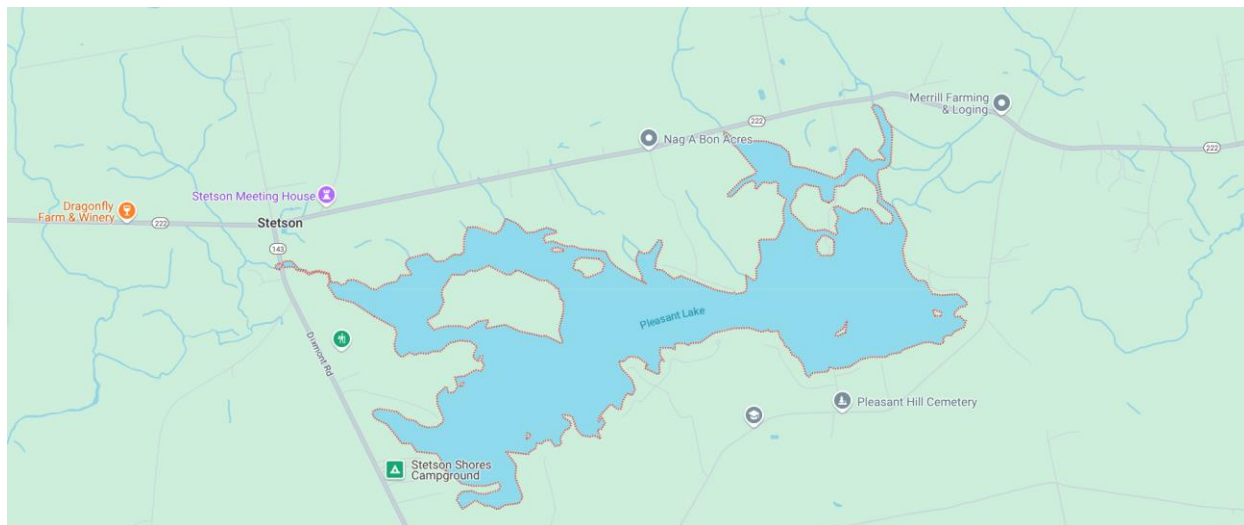
Based on the State economist's forecast for about a 2.5% population growth over the next decade the town would need approximately 12 additional housing units to meet this demand over the next decade.

Based on Maine Housing Authority data, Stetson has remained relatively more affordable for Stetson residents than experienced by residents in other parts of the State. Of the last 10 years of data, only in 2022 did our local median house price exceed the median house price determined to be affordable based on our population's median income. Based on 2024 data, the median house price was \$187,750. Said a different way, in 2024 only 52.6% of Stetson households can afford to purchase a home at the median house price, while only 35.7% of all State households can afford to purchase a home at the median house price and only 43.6% of Penobscot county households can do the same.

In 2022 Stetson had a high homeownership rate of 84.6% which is much higher than Penobscot county's 69.9%. Stetson has a very low number of apartment units which reported an \$806 per month median rent and a reported 0% vacancy rate. Our share of Senior renters that are cost burdened was 45.5% versus the county's 55.1%, while our share of Senior homeowners that are cost burdened was much lower at 24.5% versus the county's 25.8%.

Based on the very small projected population growth, along with our largest age subgroups nearing retirement and the high percentage of Senior's that are cost burdened there is likely a modest need for affordable senior housing development over the next decade.

Water Resources



Water resources are vital to Stetson residents, the environment, and the economy, as well as the surrounding communities. The sensible use and care of our water resources will contribute to the overall wellbeing of our citizens, agriculture and wildlife. The purpose of this section is to help the town identify, manage and safeguard our water resources, protect our wildlife and to protect the health of our residents.

Highlights

- Four water bodies; Pleasant Lake, Etna Pond, Mud Pond, and Lost Pond
- Zero Point Source (direct discharges) of pollution
- Most homes have drilled wells in bedrock, there is no public water source and none are anticipated at this time.

Analyses

Are there point sources (direct discharges) of pollution in the community? If so, is the community taking steps to eliminate them?

There are currently zero point sources of pollution in Stetson with none anticipated at this time.

Are there non-point sources of pollution? If so, is the community taking steps to eliminate them?

Unlike point source pollution that can be traced back to a specific place such as a discharge pipe, nonpoint source pollution or polluted stormwater runoff, often comes from a number of diffused sources within a watershed (all the land area that drains into one waterbody). Stormwater runoff is water that doesn't soak into the ground during a rain storm and flows over the surface of the ground until it reaches a stream, lake, estuary, or the ocean. Stormwater runoff often picks up polluting hitchhikers such as soil, fertilizers, pesticides, manure, and petroleum products. None are known at this time and it is up to the citizens of Stetson to protect against any non-point sources of pollution.

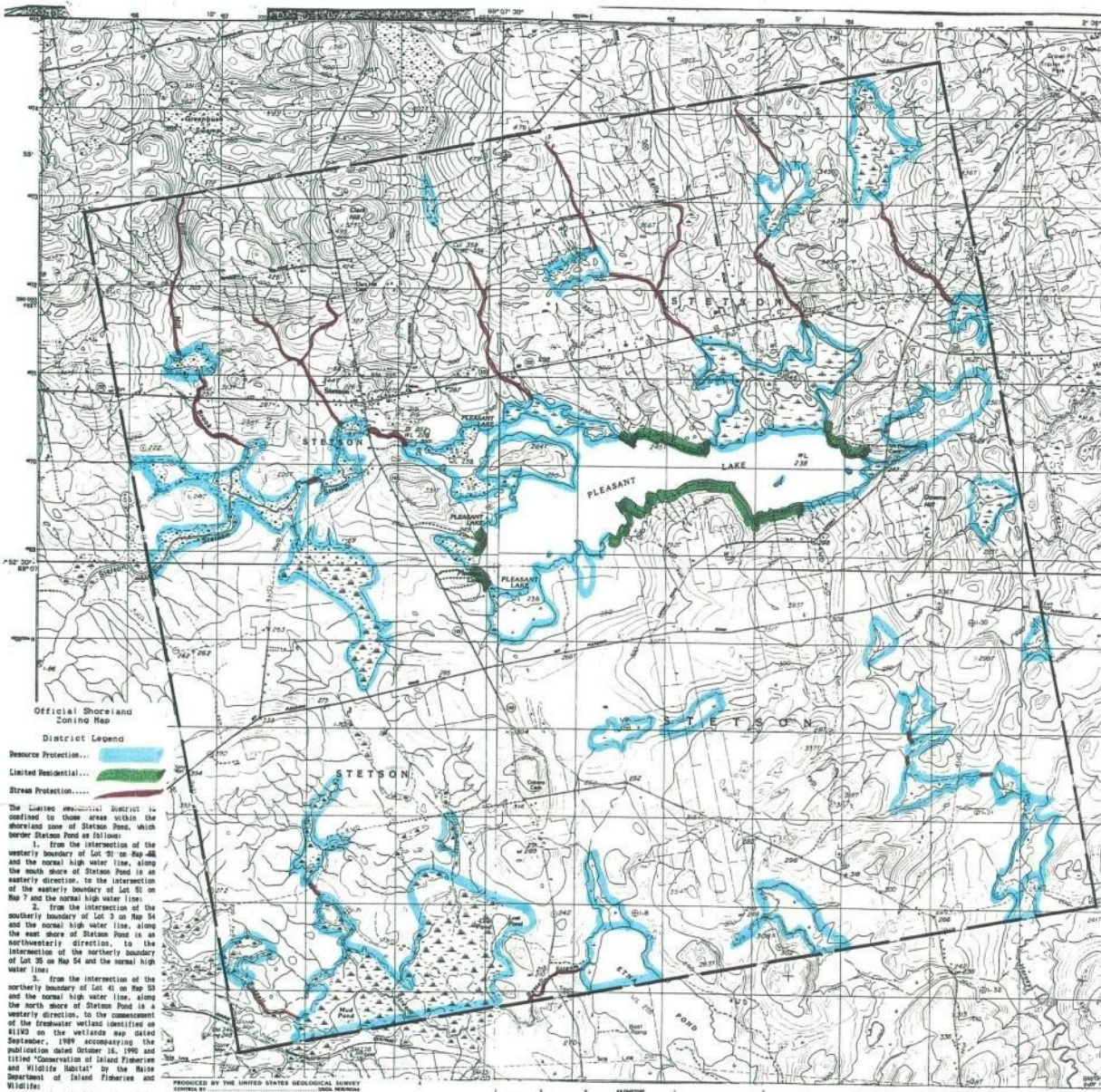
How are groundwater and surface water supplies and their recharge areas protected?

With a majority of Stetson being flat low lying land and the highest elevation being only 236 feet, most land is adequate for groundwater recharge.

With most homes in Stetson being on a drilled well the protection of groundwater relies on the homeowner who is guided by the Maine DEP subsurface wastewater disposal rules which regulate the design and installation of septic systems in order to minimize the likelihood of contamination to both ground and surface water.

Surface water is further protected by the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, which requires a 250 foot buffer around each water body.

TOWN OF STETSON
OFFICIAL SHORELAND ZONING MAP



Official Shoreland Zoning Map

District Legend

Demorce Protection... [Blue shaded area]

Limited Residential... [Green shaded area]

Stream Protection... [Red shaded area]

The Limited Residential District is confined to those areas within the shoreland zone of Stetson Pond, which border Stetson Pond as follows:

1. from the intersection of the westerly boundary of Lot 51 on Map 48 and the normal high water line, along the south shore of Stetson Pond in an easterly direction, to the intersection of the easterly boundary of Lot 51 on Map 7 and the normal high water line;
2. from the intersection of the southerly boundary of Lot 3 on Map 54 and the normal high water line, along the east shore of Stetson Pond in an northwesterly direction, to the intersection of the northerly boundary of Lot 35 on Map 54 and the normal high water line;
3. from the intersection of the northerly boundary of Lot 41 on Map 53 and the normal high water line, along the north shore of Stetson Pond in a westerly direction, to the commencement of the freshwater wetlands identified as B1420 on the wetlands map dated September, 1990 accompanying the publication dated October 16, 1990 and titled "Conservation of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Habitat" by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife;
4. from the intersection of the northerly boundary of Lot 25A on Map 8 and the normal high water line, along the west shore of Stetson Pond in an southerly direction, to the intersection of the southerly boundary of Lot 29 on Map 8 and the normal high water line; and
5. from the intersection of the northerly boundary of Lot 23.01 on Map 8 and the normal high water line, along the west shore of Stetson Pond in an southerly direction, to the intersection of the southerly boundary of Lot 21 on Map 8 and the normal high water line.

The zoning map and lot reference are in effect as of March 28, 1991.

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TO PLACE ON THE PREDICTED NORTH AMERICAN DATUM OF 1983, MEASUREMENTS MADE BY THE U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY IN 1957, 1967 AND 1974 WERE USED.
These may be precise readings within the boundaries of any Federal and State Reservations shown on this map.

PROVISIONAL MAP
Produced from original manuscript drawings. Information shown as of date of field check.



CONTAINER INTERVAL 10 FEET

THIS MAP IS A COMPOSITE PHOTOGRAPHY OF THE U.S.G.S. MAPS FOR STETSON, W. COBURN, CARMEL AND PLYMOUTH

STETSON, MAINE
PROVISIONAL EDITION 1982
4899-HD-TF-024

TOWN OF STETSON
OFFICIAL SHORELAND ZONING MAP

Date adopted: / / MUNICIPAL CLERK

THIS MAP IS A REDUCTION FROM THE ORIGINAL. A FULL SCALE MAP IS AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION AT THE TOWN OFFICE.

COPY 3.00

Do public works crews and contractors use best management practices to protect water resources in their daily operations (e.g salt/sand pile maintenance, culvert replacement, street sweeping, public works garage operations)?

Local road construction, repair, and maintenance are done using Best Management Practices as specified by the Maine DEP to minimize pollution.

Are there opportunities to partner with local or regional advocacy groups that promote water resource protection?

Yes, Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District

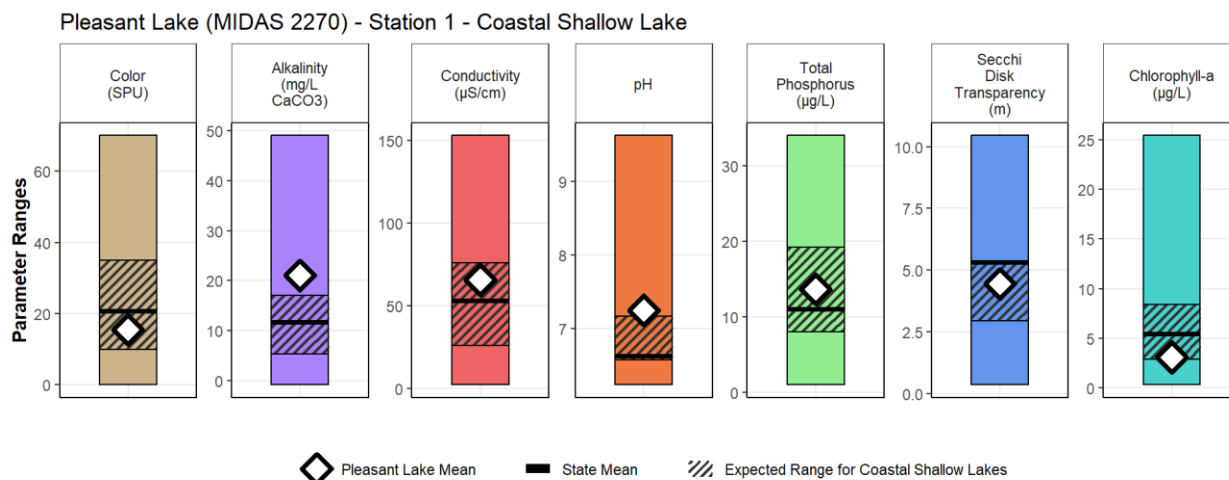
Conditions and Trends

A description of each great pond, river, surface drinking water supply, and other water bodies of local interest including:

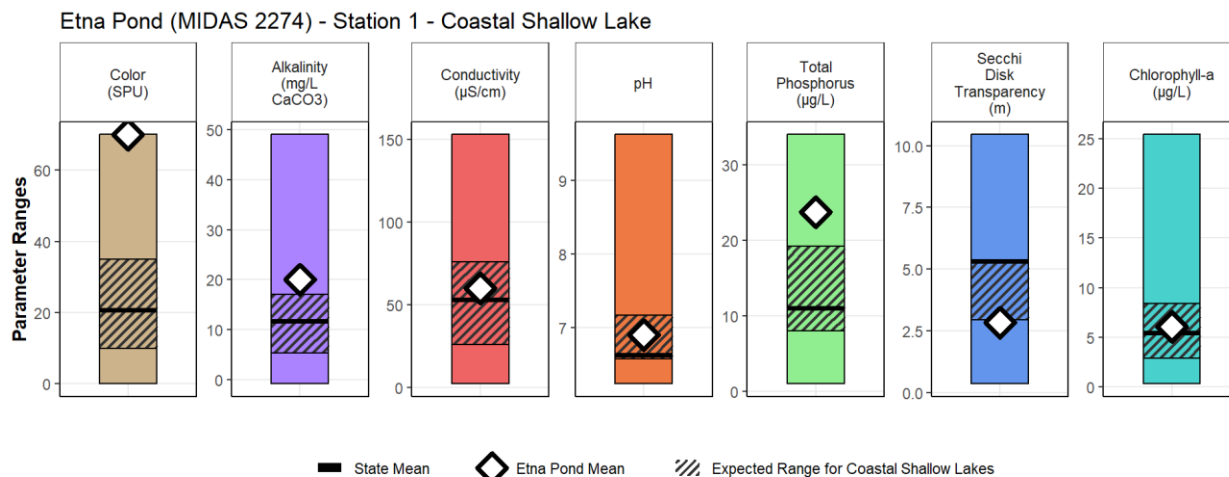
- Ecological Value
- Threats to water quality or quantity
- Documented water quality and/or invasive species

Pleasant Lake - 768 acres

Pleasant Lake is a 3-mile long lake that's popular for boating, hiking, and fishing. The lake is home to a variety of fish, including smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, black crappie, white perch, chain pickerel, brown trout, lake trout, and land-locked Atlantic salmon. It features the Pleasant Lake Shoreline Trail in the Pleasant Lake Preserve, a 150 acre public preserve. No known invasive aquatic species have been detected to date.



Etna Pond is a shallow lake in Maine that's popular for fishing and paddling. The lake is home to small and largemouth bass as well as chain pickerel. There are two basins, known as Big and Little Etna Ponds, connected by a narrow channel. It features Souadabscook Stream, a wide calm portion of the stream that flows out of Little Etna Pond. No known invasive aquatic species have been detected to date.



Mud Pond - 24 acres

Mud Pond is a small, warm water pond with a muddy bottom. It's surrounded by aquatic plants and is home to white and yellow perch, pickerel and smallmouth bass. It has limited access by means of 4-wheeler or canoeing up Buzzell stream.

Lost Pond - 8 acres

Lost pond is a small, warm water pond with a muddy bottom.

A summary of past and present activities to monitor, assess, and/or improve water quality, mitigate sources of pollution, and control or prevent the spread of invasive species.

Lake Stewards of Maine have two sampling stations on Pleasant Lake as well as one sample station on Etna Pond.

A description of the location and nature of significant threats to aquifer drinking water supplies

There are no known threats to the two aquifers within Stetson and most private wells in Stetson being drilled bedrock wells there is no major threat to drinking water. Generally water quality in Stetson is good; some wells do require pretreatment for iron, salt, and arsenic. The

townspeople claim there are some wells on a porous media aquifer and others on a fractured aquifer as some have better water than others.

Currently per the Maine Geological Survey there are 249 wells in Stetson. This data does not take into account wells in operation prior to 1986 when the database began.

A summary of existing lake, pond, river, stream, and drinking water protection and prevention measures, including local ordinances.

- Shoreland zoning applies to all land within 250' of the normal high water line of any great pond, river, or upland edge of freshwater wetland. As well as all land within 75' of the normal high water line of a stream. Roads and driveways shall be set back at least 100' of normal high water line of a great pond or river and 75' of normal high water line of streams and wetlands.
- All new construction shall be designed to minimize stormwater runoff in excess of the natural pre-development conditions.
- All subsurface sewage disposal systems shall be installed in conformance with the State of Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal rules.

State of Maine Policies

- Protect current and potential drinking water sources.
- Protect significant surface water resources from pollution and improve water quality where needed.
- Protect water resources in growth areas while promoting development in those areas.
- Cooperate with Newport and regional advocacy groups to protect water resources.

State of Maine Strategies

1. Adopt or amend local land use ordinances as applicable to incorporate stormwater runoff performance standards consistent with:

- A. Maine Stormwater Management Law and Maine Stormwater regulations (Title 38 M.R.S.A. §420-D and 06-096 CMR 500 and 502).
- B. Maine Department of Environmental Protection's allocations for allowable levels of phosphorus in lake/pond watersheds.
- C. Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Program

2. Consider amending local land use ordinances, as applicable, to incorporate low impact development standards.

3. Where applicable, develop an urban impaired stream watershed management or mitigation plan that will promote continued development or redevelopment without further stream degradation.

4. Maintain, enact or amend public wellhead and aquifer recharge area protection mechanics, as necessary.

5. Encourage landowners to protect water quality. Provide local contact information at the municipal office for water quality best management practices from resources such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service, University of Maine Cooperation Extension, Soil and Water Conservation District, Maine Forest Service, and/or Small Woodlot Association of Maine.

6. Adopt water quality protection practices and standards for construction and maintenance of public and private roads and public properties and require their implementation by contractors, owners, and community officials and employees.

7. Participate in local and regional efforts to monitor, protect and improve water quality.

8. Provide educational material at appropriate locations regarding aquatic invasive species

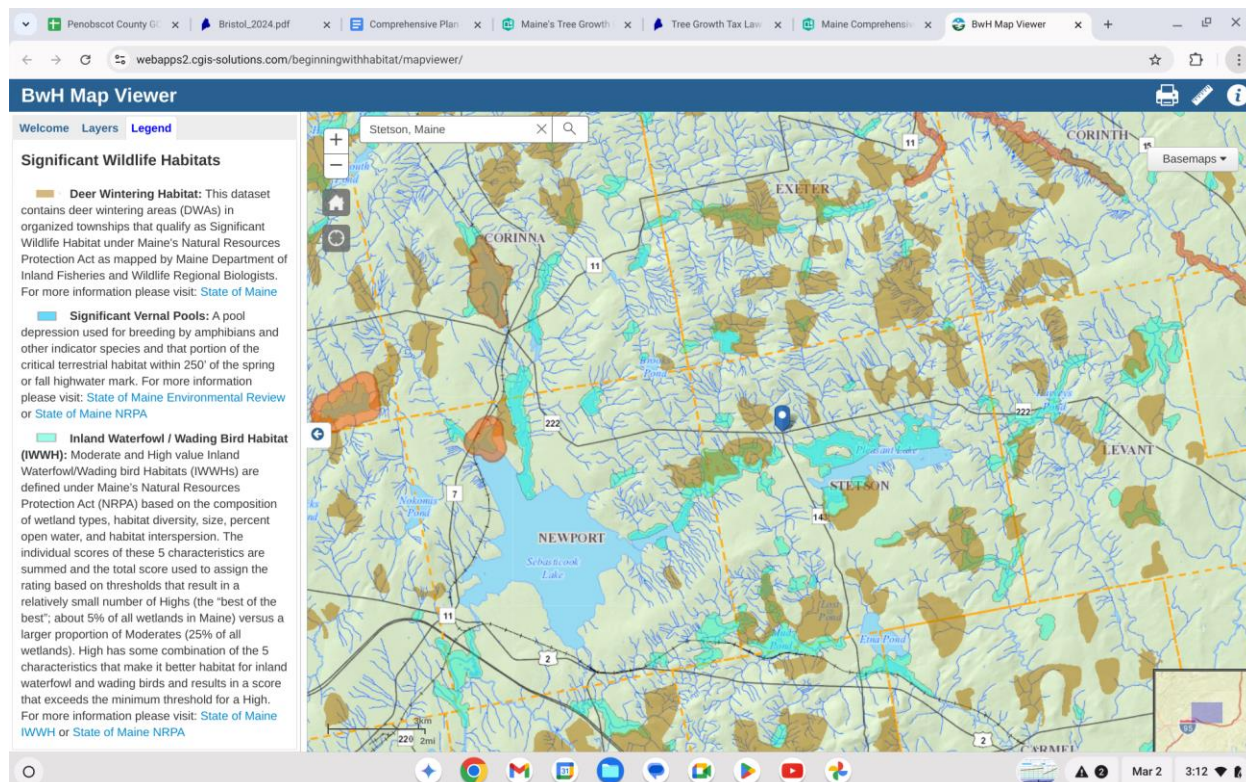
Natural Resources

Critical natural resources are integral to the wellbeing of those who live and visit Stetson. The section is intended to help The Town of Stetson identify, manage, and protect its critical natural resources. Critical natural resources are defined by the state as those areas in the community comprised of one or more of the following.

1. Freshwater wetlands
2. Shoreland zone
3. Streams and brooks
4. Great ponds and rivers
5. Significant/Essential wildlife habitat
6. Freshwater fisheries

Highlights

- 9 deer wintering areas as designated by the state of Maine.
- Pleasant Lake 1245-acre lake
- Pleasant Lake Preserve 150-acre public area with 4.4 miles of walking trail



Analysis

Are any of the community's critical natural resources threatened by development, overuse, or other activities?

No foreseen threats are expected but the state's green energy priorities should be taken into consideration in forming ordinances to protect our rural character.

Are local shoreland zone standards consistent with state guidelines and with the standards placed on adjacent shorelands in neighboring communities?

Yes, Stetson is in compliance with the mandatory minimum standards placed by the state on shoreland zoning.

What regulatory and non-regulatory measures has the community taken or can the community take to protect critical natural resources and important natural resources?

The high power transmission line ordinance passed by the town is the first step taken to protect our town's rural character.

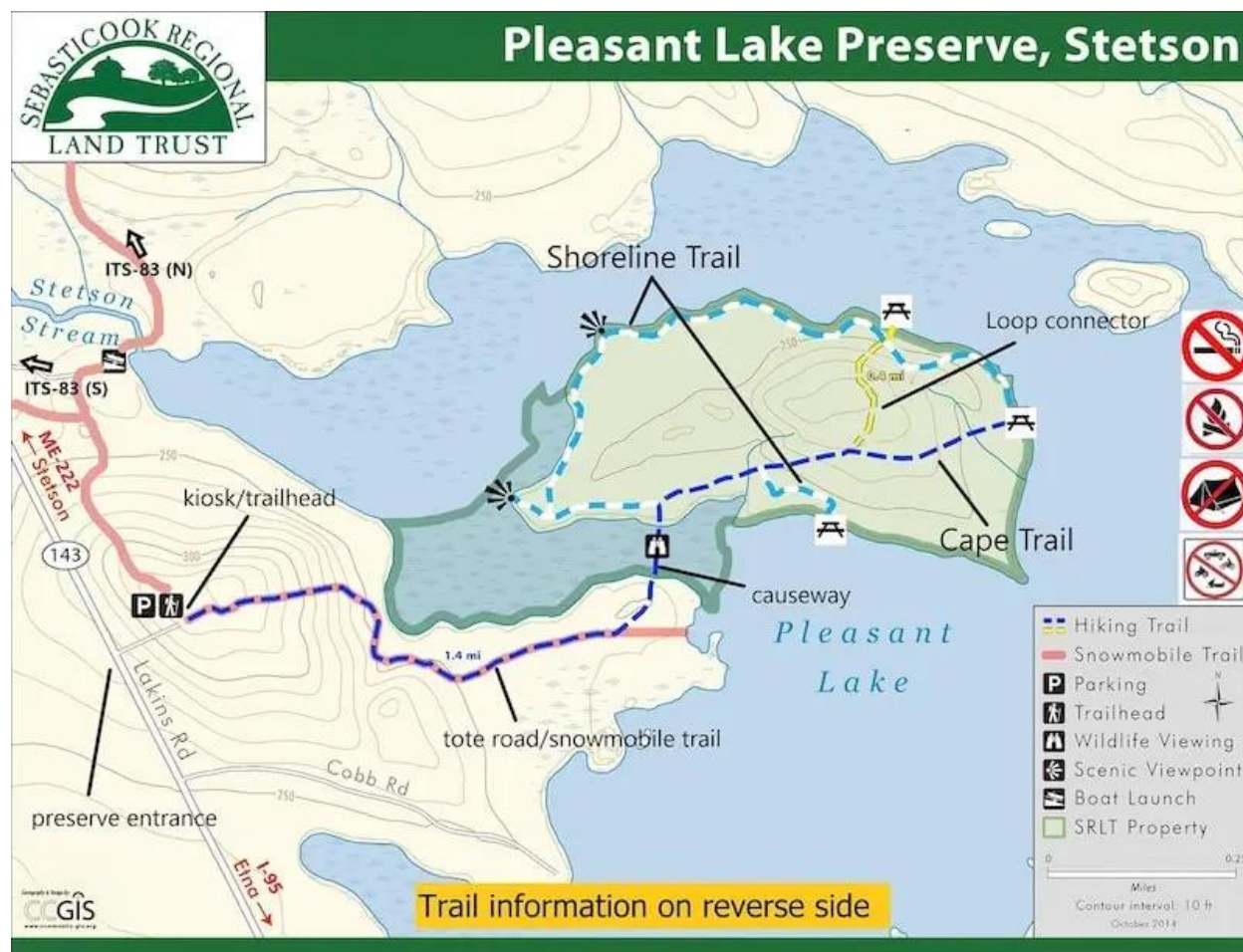
Is there current regional cooperation or planning underway to protect shared critical natural resources? Are there opportunities to partner with local or regional groups?

Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District is a regional group that can help protect critical natural resources within Stetson as well as the Sebasticook Lake watershed.

Condition and Trends

The community's Comprehensive Planning Natural Resources Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Department of Environmental Protection and the Office, or their designees.

A map or description of scenic areas and scenic views of local importance, and regional or statewide importance, if available.



State of Maine Policies

This committee tasks the selectman with enacting policies that:

1. Conserve critical natural resources in the community.

2. Coordinate with neighboring communities and regional/state resource agencies to protect shared critical natural resources.
3. Designate critical natural resources as Critical Resource Areas in the Future Land Use Plan.

State of Maine Strategies

1. Ensure that land use ordinances are consistent with applicable state law regarding critical natural resources.
2. Through local land use ordinances, require subdivision or non-residential property developers to look for and identify critical natural resources that may be on site and to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.
3. Through local land use ordinances, require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to include as part of the review process, consideration of pertinent BWH maps and information regarding critical natural resources.
4. Initiate and/or participate in interlocal and/or regional planning, management, and/or regulatory efforts around shared critical and important natural resources.

Agricultural & Forest Resource

Introduction

Farming was integral to the success of Stetson in its early days. Stetson is home to the largest pair of Oxen raised in the United States in the early 1900's. Farmland and forests are valuable natural resources in Stetson.

Highlights

- 1,119 acres of forest enrolled in Tree Growth
- 121 acres enrolled in Open Space
- 376 acres of farmland
- 951 acres of woodland

Analysis

How important is agriculture and/or forestry and are these activities growing, stable, or declining?

2022

STETSON # of parcels =48

Softwood 933 acres

Mixed wood 2,135 acres

Hardwood 1,119 acres

4,187 total acres

\$582,818 total value

2024

Softwood	819.10
Mixed Wood	2,035.53
Hardwood	1,006.10
Total Tree Growth Acreage	3,860.73

STETSON # of parcels =14

376 acres of farmland

951 acres of woodland

\$162,940 total valuation of farmland

\$130,130 total valuation of woodland

Open space

STETSON # of parcels =121

121 total acres

\$33,300 total valuation

Is the community currently taking regulatory and/or non-regulatory steps to protect productive farming and forestry lands? Are there local or regional land trusts actively working to protect farms or forest lands in the community?

Maine Farmland Trust, Sebasticook Regional Land Trust, Land in Common, Maine Farmland Trust, Maine Audubon, and Maine Woodland Owners are all local and statewide land trusts that work to protect and preserve farms and forests.

Are farm and forest land owners taking advantage of the state's current use tax laws?

There are few farms taking advantage of farmland, tree farms, and open space tax laws. Posting will be done in the town office to provide information on such programs.

Has proximity of new homes or other incompatible uses affected the normal farming and logging operations?

No

Are there large tracts of agricultural or industrial forest land that have been or may be sold for development in the foreseeable future? If so, what impact would this have on the community?

No

Does the community support community forestry or agriculture (i.e. small woodlots, community forests, tree farms, community gardens, farmers' markets, or community-supported agriculture)? If so, how?

Due to the rural character of Stetson and only one public park, most farms/forests are privately owned.

Does the community have town or public woodlands under management, or that would benefit from forest management?

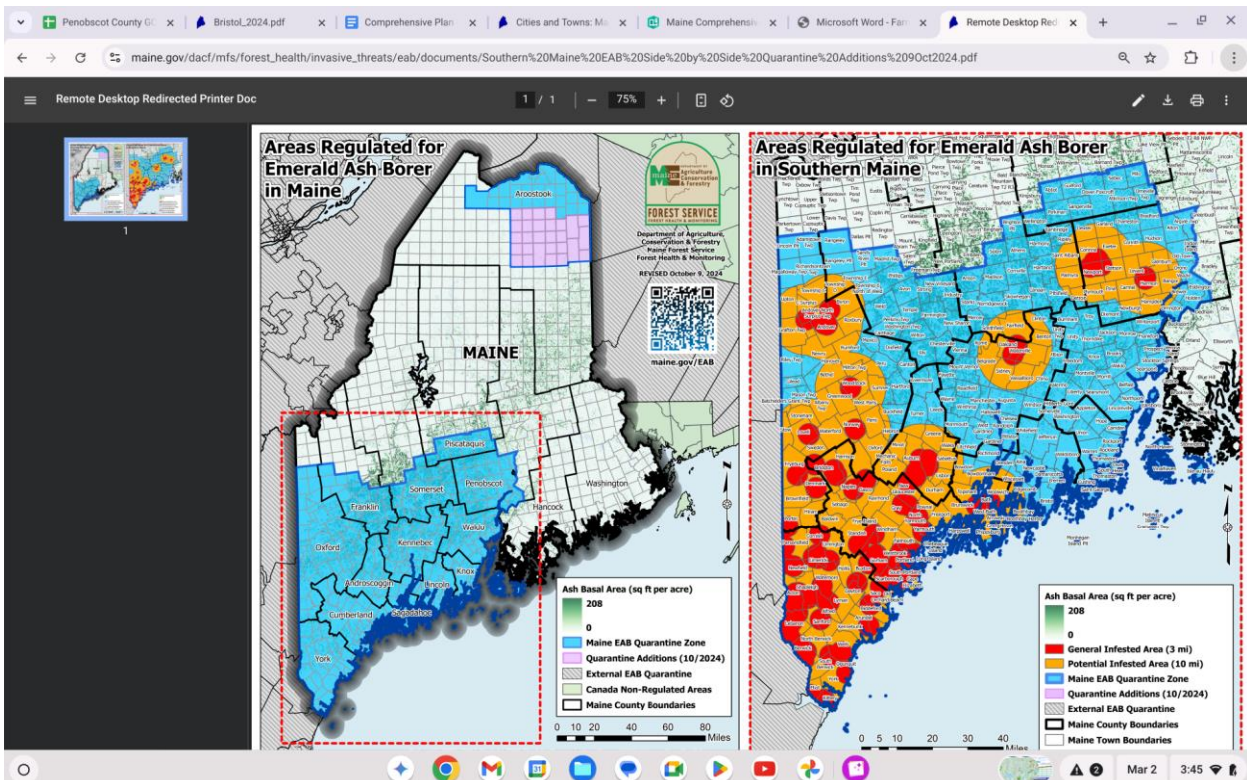
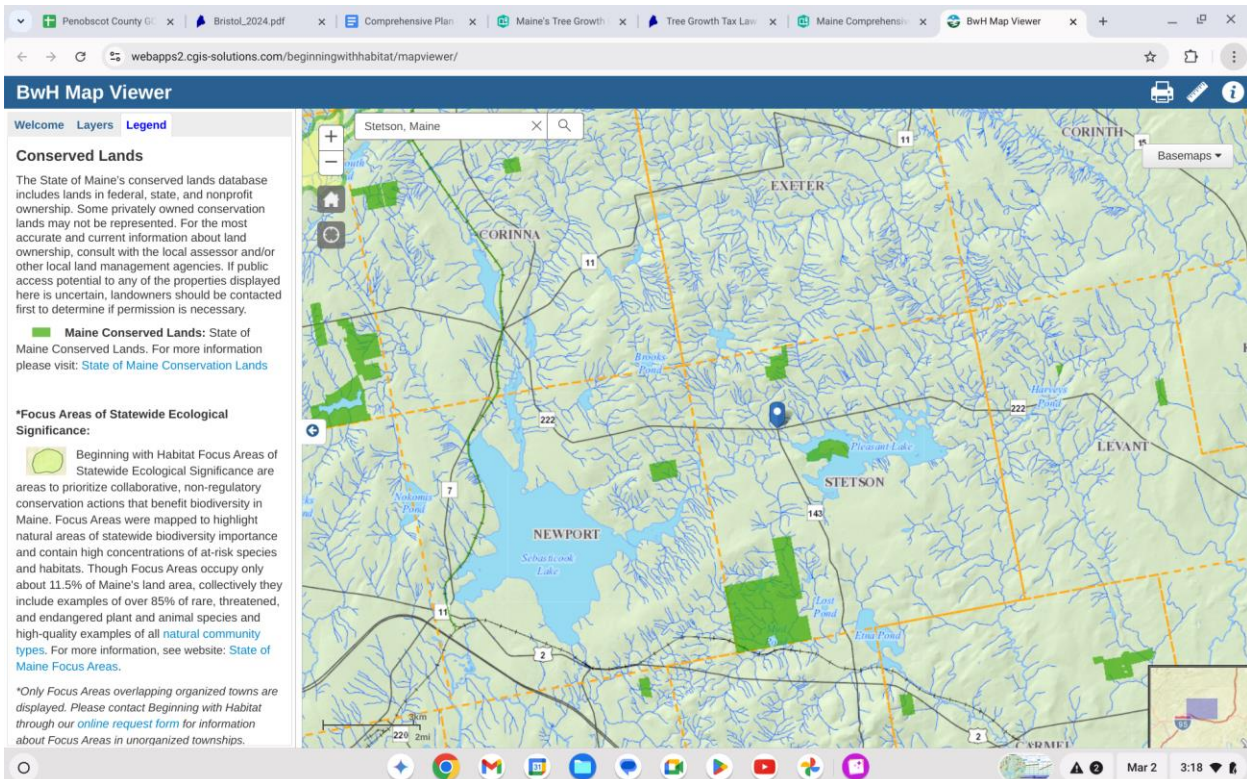
Other than one public park no.

Condition and Trends

The community's Comprehensive Planning Agriculture and Forestry Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Department of Agriculture, the Maine Forest Service, and the Office, or their designees .

No data sets are available

A map and/or description of the community's farms, farmland, and managed forest lands and a brief description of any that are under threat



A description of any community farming and forestry activities (e.g. community garden, farmer's market, or community forest).

Pleasant Lake Preserve 150 acre public area with 4.4 miles of walking trail

State of Maine Policies

This committee tasks the selectman with enacting policies that:

1. Safeguard lands identified as prime farmland or capable of supporting commercial forestry/farming
2. Support farming and forestry and encourage their economic viability

State of Maine Strategies

1. Consult with the Maine Forest Service district forester when developing any land use regulations pertaining to forest management practices as required by 12 M.R.S.A. §8869.
2. Consult with Soil and Water Conservation District staff when developing any land use regulations pertaining to agricultural management practices.
3. Amend land use ordinances to require commercial or subdivision developments in critical rural areas, if applicable, maintain areas with prime farmland soils as open space to the greatest extent practicable.
4. Limit non-residential development in critical rural areas (if the town designates critical rural areas) to natural resource-based businesses and services, nature tourism/outdoor recreation businesses, farmers' markets, and home occupations.
5. Permit land use activities that support productive agriculture and forestry operations, such as roadside stands, greenhouses, firewood operations, sawmills, log buying yards, and pick-your-own operations.
6. Include agriculture, commercial forestry operations, and land conservation that supports them in local or regional economic development plans

Postings

1. Encourage owners of productive farm and forest land to enroll in the current use taxation programs

Historic and Archaeological Resources

Analysis

Are historic patterns of settlement still evident in the community?

Since it's earliest documented history, Stetson has foundationally been an agricultural, livestock and timber harvesting community. Field stones marking past and present land parcel boundaries can be found throughout the town. Working farms exist to this day. The Stetson Meeting House, also known as the Stetson Union Church, was built in 1843 and currently serves as a meeting place for a congregation.

What protective measures currently exist for the historic and archaeological resources and are they effective?



Figure 1 Stetson Meeting House

The Stetson Meeting House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1981 and is now owned by the town of Stetson. To facilitate a more functional meeting place for residents, a foundation/basement was built directly behind the meeting house in 1986. The building was then moved from its original location on to the new foundation. At great expense, The Stetson Meeting House is maintained by the Town of Stetson and remains a functional building. The Stetson Historical Society was formed in 2001. The

Stetson Historical Society Museum was originally located at 42 Stetson Road. This leased building housed many items of historical significance such as nineteenth-century farm equipment and household items. Structurally the building was not sound and could not be repaired. The Historical Society recently leased a room at the Stetson Office complex where they hope to achieve an effective venue for public education and display.



The Historical society has a civil war uniform and sword belonging to Stetson Civil war veteran Sam Hurd Jr. Some of these items are now displayed at the town office complex.

Stetson is home to three cemeteries. The stone marks and associated documentation archived at the Town Office Complex serve as a historical

resource.

Maine's early lumber industry relied heavily on the control of water for the transportation and storage of cut timber.¹ Upper Stetson Stream Dam has been in place for many years. The dam is an integral part of life on Pleasant Lake as it serves to control flooding during high water events.



Figure 2 Upper Stetson Stream Dam-fishway

Do local site plan and/or subdivision regulation require applicants proposing development in the area that may contain historic archaeological resources to conduct a survey for such resources?

There are no locally adopted regulations or review documents requiring surveys of historic resources. The State's Subdivision Regulations provide such criteria.

Have significant historic resources fallen into disrepair, and are there ways the community can provide incentives to preserve their value as an historical resource?

Stetson Historical Society has recently moved artifacts and educational material from a leased farmhouse that had fallen into disrepair to a leased room at the Stetson Office Complex. The Stetson Historical Society has received a grant from American Recue Plan through the Penobscot County Commissioners. The money will be used to update a computer and printer, purchase archival software and storage supplies. The upkeep of the Stetson Meeting House is ongoing. The town has applied for a grant to help cover a portion of the cost to restore the steeple on the Stetson meeting house.

¹ <https://www.mainememory.net/record/76336> Accessed 11/02/2025

Conditions and trends:

The community's Comprehensive Planning Historic Preservation Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Historic Preservation Commission, and the Office, or their designees.

MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Inventory Data for Municipal Growth Management Plans

Resource: ___ Prehistoric Archaeological Sites: Arthur Spiess
 ___ Historic Archaeological Sites: Leith Smith
 X Historic Buildings/Structures/Objects: Kirk Mohny

Municipality: Stetson

Inventory data as of October, 2024 :

The following property is currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

Stetson Union Church, Route 222

A digital copy of the National Register nomination form is available by contacting the Commission at (207)-287-2132 x 2.

To see if other properties in your community have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register, please refer to the CARMA Sheet that is included in the data packet.

Needs for further survey, inventory, and analysis:

A comprehensive survey of Stetson's above-ground historic resources needs to be conducted in order to identify other properties that may be eligible for nomination to the National Register.

MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Inventory Data for Municipal Growth Management Plans

Resource: Prehistoric Archaeological Sites: Arthur Spiess
 Historic Archaeological Sites: Leith Smith
 Historic Buildings/Structures/Objects: Kirk Mohney

Municipality: **STETSON.**

Inventory data as of **October 2024** :

There is one prehistoric archaeological site (72.4) in Stetson, stone tools and ceramics located on the shore of Pleasant Lake, located by an avocational archaeologist.

No professional archaeological surveys have been completed in the township.

Needs for further survey, inventory, and analysis:

Pleasant Lake and Etna Pond shorelines need professional archaeological survey at low water levels, and Stetson Stream needs survey.

MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Inventory Data for Municipal Growth Management Plans

Resource: ___ Prehistoric Archaeological Sites: Arthur Spiess
 X Historic Archaeological Sites: Leith Smith
 ___ Historic Buildings/Structures/Objects: Kirk Mohny

Municipality: Stetson

Inventory data as of October, 2024 :

To date, one historic archaeological site has been documented for the town.

MunicipalGrowthQry						
SiteName	Sitenum	SiteType	Periods of Significance	NationalRegisterStatus	Town	Location
Turkeyfoot spoon	ME 415-001	artifact find, spoon	c.1600-1700	undetermined	Stetson	Location Known

Needs for further survey, inventory, and analysis:


No professional town-wide surveys for historic archaeological sites have been conducted to date in Stetson. Future archaeological survey should focus on the identification of potentially significant resources associated with the town’s agricultural, residential, and industrial heritage, particularly those associated with the earliest Euro-American settlement of the town in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Known Archaeological Sites* and Areas Sensitive for Native American Archaeology* in Stetson

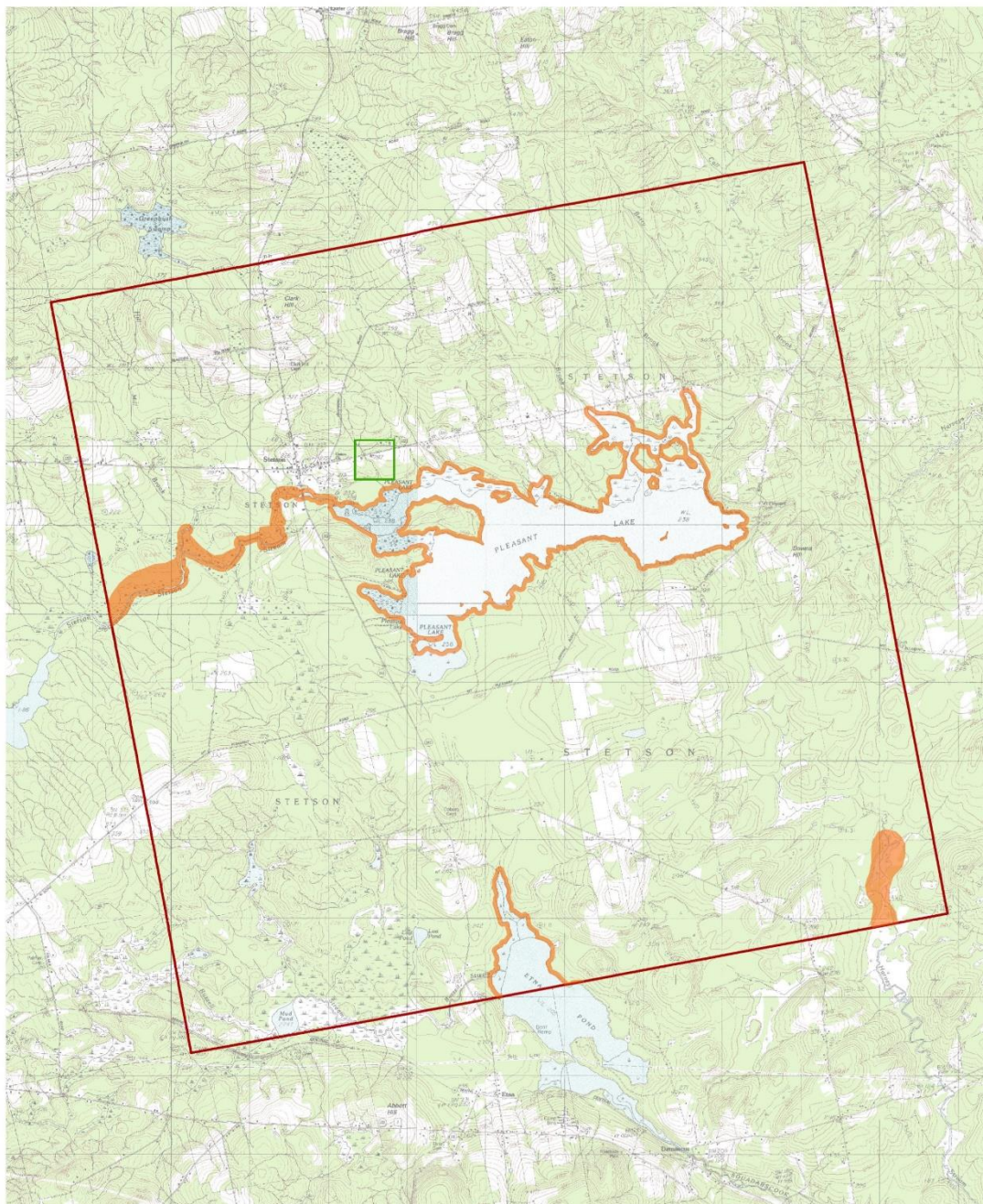
information provided by
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
September 2013

*dated material subject to future revision
map 1/1

 Areas sensitive for Native American, pre-European, archaeology

 1/2 k square intersecting a known historic archaeological site.

There are no known Native American archaeological sites in the town of Stetson at this date.



0 0.5 1 2 3 4 5 Kilometers

An Outline of the community’s history, including a brief description of historic settlement patterns and events contributing to the development and character of the community and its surroundings.

The location of the town of Stetson is the southwestern part of Penobscot County, about 18 miles west northwest of Bangor. Bordering towns are Exeter on its north; Levant on its east; Etna and Carmel on its south; and Newport on its west. The town has a total area of 36.65 square miles (94.92 km²), of which 34.99 square miles (90.62 km²) is land and 1.66 square miles (4.30 km²) is water.²

Early inhabitants of Stetson settled because of excellent farmland, and an abundance of natural resources such as forestland, wildlife, wetlands, and water resources. Nestled near the center of the town’s 6 square miles is beautiful 798-acre Pleasant Lake aka Stetson Pond or Pleasant Pond³. The town was incorporated in 1831 and is named after Amasa Stetson. Of historical significance, it was Amasa Stetson who built the Stetson Union Church, more commonly known as the Stetson Meeting House in 1843.⁴

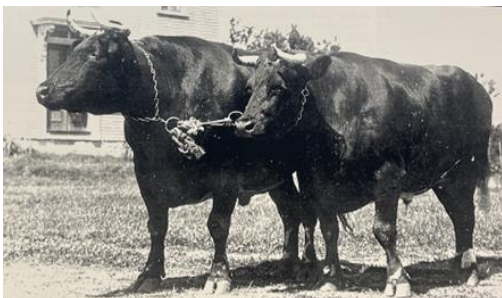


Figure 3 Image Mt Katahdin and Granger

In the early 1900’s, Stetson was the proud birthplace of Mt Katahdin and Granger. They were touted as the world’s largest oxen and famously displayed at agricultural events throughout the northeast and at Madison Square Garden in New York.

By the late 1900’s Stetson was home to three sawmills, a grist mill, a cheese factory and a carriage factory.⁵ The railway came into existence in

the mid-19th century. The development of transportation routes facilitated economic growth, trade and communication with nearby towns and cities.

Census data shows population has been relatively stable. With just over 1,000 residents, the town is still known for its small farms, strong rural character and scenic beauty. Many residents find Stetson the perfect “bedroom community” with Bangor located 17 miles to the west.^{6 7}

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stetson,_Maine accessed 10/26/2025

³ <https://maineanencyclopedia.com/stetson/> accessed 10/26/2025

⁴ History of Stetson written by Lilla Wood Daniels covers the years 1800-1931 and Volume two written by Ellen (Nellie) Merrill covers the years 1931-1981.)

⁵ <https://maineanencyclopedia.com/stetson/> accessed 10/26/2025

⁶ <https://maineanencyclopedia.com/stetson/> accessed 10/26/2025

⁷ <http://www.stetsonmaine.net/> accessed 10/26/2025

An inventory of the location, condition, the use of any historical and archaeological resource that is of local importance.

Name	Location	Condition	Use
Stetson Meeting House/Union Church	Rt 222 Corner of Village Rd and Wolfboro Rd	Fair	Rented to Congregation
Historic artifacts owned by The Stetson Historical Society Museum	394 Village Rd Town Office Complex	Artifacts good/building poor	In storage
Stetson Resident Samuel Hurd's Civil War Uniform and sword	394 Village Rd Town Office Complex	Good	In storage
Vital Records	394 Village Rd Town Office Complex	Fair/Good	In Storage
Upper Stetson Stream Dam	Access from Rt 143 Stetson Boat Launch Road	Fair/Good	In Use
History of Stetson Vol I 1800-1931 and Vol II 1931-1981	70 Village Rd Stetson Library	Poor/Fair	Available to Public

A brief description of threats to local historic resource and to those of state and national significance as identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

Climate change presents a threat to the future of historic properties in Maine. Reductions in air quality and a higher frequency of intense storms and high winds could impact the historic infrastructure. To assist in the protection and preservation of historical resources and plan for the impacts of climate change, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission has created a web page that consists of toolkits and links to resources from State preservation partners.

State of Maine Policies

- 1). Protect to the greatest extent practicable the significant historic and archaeological resources in the community.

State of Maine Strategies

- 1). For known historic archaeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archeology, through local land use ordinances require subdivision or non-residential developers to take appropriate

measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.

2). Adopt or amend land use ordinances to require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission into their review process.

3). Work with the local or county historical society and/or the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for, and if necessary, plan for a comprehensive community survey of the community's historic and archaeological resources.

Recreation

State Goal

To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface water.

Town Goal

To promote outdoor recreational opportunities and water access.

Analysis

Will existing recreational facilities and programs in the community and region accommodate projected growth or changes in age groups in your community? Demographic? Age groups?

The demographics of Stetson's population are not expected to significantly change for the next 10 years. According to statistical data, Stetson has a higher number of people in the 50–61-year age group compared to the population of Penobscot County.

1. Is there a need for certain types of services or facilities or to upgrade or enlarge present facilities to either add capacity or make them more usable?

There are ongoing discussions about how best to accommodate community activities to build a stronger community. There is ample capacity regarding facility space. Stetson Office Complex currently has two rooms which are currently leased and a larger "all purpose room" with kitchen facilities available to lease for events. In 2022, Stetson Library facilitated community activities with the construction of a new Community Room. The Stetson Meeting House is currently leased to a congregation.

2. Are important tracts of open space commonly used for recreation public owed or otherwise permanently conserved?

Pleasant Lake Land Preserve This track of land is open to the public and is owned by Sebasticook Regional Land Trust. There is an easement which allows public access.

Boat Launch is open to the public and owned by the Town. The boat launch road is accessed by easement of private property.

Helen Hunt Park has a basketball half court and is owned by the Town.

Town Park is a 20-acre wood lot open to the public for walking/hiking.

Ball field and playground is owed by the Town and open to the public

Clark Hill Project is 125.11 acres of private land in Farmland Trust and can be accessed with landowner permission.

Penobscot County Preservation Association is 1510.26 acres of privately owned land. Public access is unknown.⁸

Stetson Shores Campground is privately owned and provides seasonal access to Pleasant Lake for a fee.

Does the community have a mechanism such as an open space fund or partnership with a land trust, to acquire important open space and access sites, either outright or through conservation easements?

Stetson currently has no designated fund or plans to acquire open spaces.

3. Does the public have access to each of the community's significant water bodies?

The most significant body of water is Pleasant Lake, which the public has adequate access to a public boat launch.

4. Are recreational trails in the community adequately maintained? Are there use conflicts on these trails?

Pleasant Lake Preserve is maintained very well by volunteers of the Sebasticook Regional Land Trust organization. In winter, the woodlot right of way is shared with snowmobilers.

⁸ https://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/publications_maps/conservation_lands_maine.html accessed 11/02/2025



Figure 4 <https://www.maintailfinder.com/trails/trail/pleasant-lake-preserve>

5. Is traditional access to private lands being restricted?

Yes, however, landowners whose land contains a trail that has historically been accessible to the public are generally supportive of the maintenance and accessibility of these areas. Examples of easements by way of privately owned lands are Pleasant Lake Land Preserve and Stetson's Public Boat Launch.

Conditions and Trends

1. The Community's Comprehensive Plan Recreation Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Department of Conservation and the Office, or their designees

No data available

2. A description of important public and private active recreation programs, land and water recreation areas (including hunting and fishing areas), and facilities in the community and region, including regional recreational opportunities as appropriate, and identification of public access

There are various opportunities for recreation for the community. The Stetson Office Complex has a ball field, playground and a local dance instructor rents space to provide dance classes to the community. Stetson Public Library hosts senior games, reading programs, crafting groups and various public interest activities and classes.

Dragonfly Farm and Winery is a privately owned, family friendly business that provides wine and cheese tasting, public events, outdoor fire pits, homemade preserves and merchandise to the public.

Pleasant Lake is a Category 2 body of water and is open to fishing year-round.⁹

Pleasant Lake Land Preserve provides year-round public access for hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, mountain biking and hunting with permission.

Stetson Shores campground is available to patrons and has a private boat launch and swimming area for guests.

Stetson and Etna have public boat launches which provide water access for recreation such as fishing, canoeing, kayaking, boating and other water sport activities

Local snowmobile trails provide winter access to Pleasant Lake for Ice Fishing on Pleasant Lake and Etna Pond.

There are a variety of game hunting such as white tail deer, bear, turkey, partridge, rabbit and other small game available on private land which can be accessed by land owner permission.

Regionally, Stetson is situated centrally in Maine. Residents enjoy a rural community surrounded by larger towns such as Newport, Bangor and Brewer with numerous indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities both public and private.

3. An inventory of any fresh or salt water bodies in the community determined locally to have inadequate public access.

Mud Lake

Lost Pond

4. A description of local and regional trail systems, trail management organizations, and conservation organizations that provide trails for all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiling, skiing, mountain biking or hiking.

Local: As previously mentioned, Pleasant Lake Preserve provides year-round, public access to 150 acres of land and 4.4 miles of walking trails. This land is open to hunting with permission, hiking, snowshoeing, skiing and mountain biking. The preserve can also be accessed by canoeing or kayaking from Pleasant Lake.

Sebasticook Snowmobile club is in Newport and manages local snowmobile trails.

⁹ <https://www.lakesofmaine.org/lake-water-quality.html?m=2270> Accessed 11/02/2025

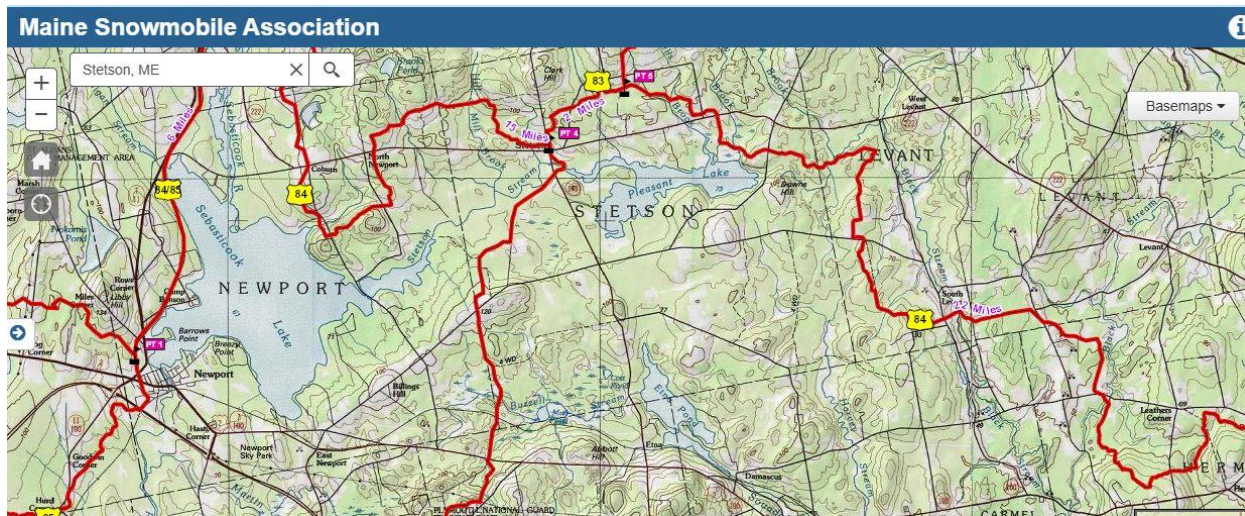


Figure 5 <https://msa.evtrails.com/#>

State: Maine Interconnecting Trail System (ITS) provides snowmobile trail access via local trail system.

Local ATV clubs provide access to The Four Seasons Adventure Trail that connects the communities of Newport, Corinna, Dexter, Sangerville and Dover-Foxcroft.

5. A map or list of important public-used open spaces and their associated facilities, such as parking and toilet facilities.

Location	Facility
Town office Complex	Parking and restrooms
Public boat Launch	Parking (limited)
Pleasant Lake Land Preserve	Parking (limited)

State of Maine Policies

1. To maintain/upgrade existing recreational facilities as necessary to meet current and future needs.
2. To preserve open spaces for recreational use as appropriate.
3. To seek to achieve or continue to maintain at least one major point of public access to major water bodies for boating, fishing, and swimming, and work with nearby property owners to address concerns.

State of Maine Strategies

1. Create a list of recreation needs or develop a recreation plan to meet current and future needs. Assign a committee or community official to explore ways of addressing the identified needs and/or implementing the polices and strategies outlined in the plan.
2. Work with public and private partners to extend and maintain a network of trails for motorized and non-motorized uses. Connect with regional trail systems where possible.
3. Work with an existing local land trust or other conservation organization to pursue opportunities to protect important open space or recreational land.
4. Provide educational materials regarding the benefits and protections for landowners allowing public recreational access on their property. At a minimum, this will include information in Maine’s landowner liability law regarding recreational or harvesting use, Title 14 M.R.S.A. 159-A

Comments

Public Facilities and Services

State Goal

To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

Town Goal

To ensure public facilities and services meet the needs of Stetson citizens.

Local Partnerships

To increase the affordability of community services, the town shares a school system, a solid waste disposal service, emergency services, fire protection services and code enforcement services with other municipalities. By partnering with neighboring municipalities to provide services, community resilience and social capital are strengthened.

Analysis

Are municipal services adequate to meeting the changes in population and demographics?

In the coming years, the population of Stetson is no expected to change significantly¹⁰. To support and attract residents and businesses, the community must be able to offer municipal services to support residential and commercial development. To support the attraction of

¹⁰ [MaineCityTownPopulationProjection2040.xlsx](#) accessed 10/25/2025

residents, a diverse housing stock, adequate road maintenance, reliable internet access and phone service are essential for community growth.

Has the community partnered with neighboring communities to share services, reduce costs/or improve services? In what ways?

To create financial efficiency, the town of Stetson has consolidated RSU #64 for grades pre-K -12. Stetson no longer has a volunteer fire department. The town contracts Fire and EMS services with the Town of Levant and Northern Light. The Penobscot Sheriff's Department and Maine State Police provide police services.

The Levant Fire and Rescue Department has opened discussions to explore a regionalized approach for coverage and protection partnering with other towns for staffing and response which would provide long-term savings for participating towns in equipment and future capital purchases.

Stetson contracts a private refuse collection contractor and with Eagle Point Energy Center Company to facilitate consolidated waste disposal. Stetson contracts with a private contractor for municipal snow removal and roadside mowing.

If the community has a public sewer system, what issues or concerns are there currently and/or anticipated in the future? Is the sanitary district extension policy consistent with the Future Land Use Plan as required by (38 M.R.S.A 1163), or will it be?

At present, the community relies on private septic systems. There is no public sewer system. There are currently no indications for concern about failing septic systems and water contamination in local bodies of water such as Pleasant Lake.¹¹

If the community has a public water system are any public water supply expansions anticipated? If so, have suitable sources been identified and protected? Is the water district extension policy consistent with the Future Land Use Plan?

At present, the residents rely on private wells with no anticipated expansion. Stetson Shores Campground has been categorized as a public water supply.¹²

If the town does not a public sewer or water system, is this preventing the community from accommodating current and projected growth?

¹¹ <https://www.lakesofmaine.org/lake-documents-and-data.html?m=2270> accessed 1/25/2025

¹² <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/sites/maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/files/PWSbyCounty.pdf> accessed 11/7/2025

At present, residents and businesses follow code enforcement guidelines for well and septic design and placement which is projected to be able to accommodate current and future growth.

Are existing stormwater management facilities adequately maintained? What improvements are needed? How might future development affect the current system?

Stetson actively participates with all appropriate licenses. Storm drains and related infrastructure are routinely maintained in compliance with the federal and state requirements. At present, rainwater and snow melt runoff are managed adequately with regular road work such as cleaning, repairing and replacing culverts and roadside ditching.

How do residents dispose of septic tank waste? Are there issues or concerns regarding septic tank waste

Residents and businesses hire local companies to dispose of septic tank waste. There are currently no concerns regarding this method of disposal. Currently, Stetson is not considered a high-risk site for PFAS contamination.¹³

Is school construction or expansion anticipated during the planning period? Are there opportunities to promote new residential development around existing and proposed schools?

The location of RSU #64 is in the neighboring town of Corinth and therefore, there are no opportunities in Stetson to promote new residential development around those existing schools.

Is the community's emergency response system adequate? Are improvements needed?

The Penobscot County Sheriff's Office and Maine State police provide this service.

The Town contracts with Levant Fire & Rescue Department, which is a volunteer service that provides 24-7 Fire Protection and Non-Transport Medical Services. The town has a contract with Northern Light Medical Transport of Bangor, Maine to provide patient transport with a staffed ambulance at Levant's Station. They serve about 6,000 residents with a coverage area of 46 square miles. Levant Fire & Rescue department is made up of a Chief who is hired by the Town Manager & Selectmen. An Assistant Chief, two Captains, four Lieutenants, and a Fire Warden who are all appointed by the Chief. In all they have 31 active members. Levant Fire & Rescue has an agreement with the towns of Hermon, Carmel, Stetson and Etna to respond automatically to all Wildland & Buildings. For the expected coverage, the response time is okay, but by no means

¹³ <https://www.mainepublic.org/health/2021-10-22/maine-dep-identifies-34-towns-with-high-priority-sites-pfas-chemicals-testing> accessed 10/25/2025

adequate. There will always be delays in response time due to the location of Stetson and planned staffing.

In terms of improving the current emergency response system, discussions have included:

- Staffing of more personnel or working to staff daytime coverage in the town building for added coverage
- Investigating the feasibility of a response boat for the residents living on Pleasant Lake shoreline
- Investigating the feasibility of replacing Stetson's larger fire engine with a smaller mini pumper that is better able to access narrow, unpaved camp roads that are poorly maintained
- Installing more dry hydrants strategically to enhance water supply
- Replacing Air Pack that are close to the end of life per NFPA standards
- Working to enhance interest in joining volunteer fire department

Is the solid waste management system meeting current needs? Is the community reducing the reliance on waste disposal and increasing recycling opportunities? Are improvements needed to meet future demand?

The Town's solid waste management system is currently meeting the needs of the community. Stetson contracts with a private company for curbside pickup and disposal of waste which is delivered to a "waste-to-energy" facility located in Orrington, Maine. The Town provides the community with one or two "big trash day" opportunities to dispose of larger, specific items which are transported to the Orrington for disposal. In addition, residents can access the town of Newport Transfer and Recycling Center at their own expense. Stetson discontinued curbside recycling due to increasing cost to taxpayers. However, the town supports opportunities to improve and increase recycling.

Are improvements needed in the telecommunications and energy infrastructure?

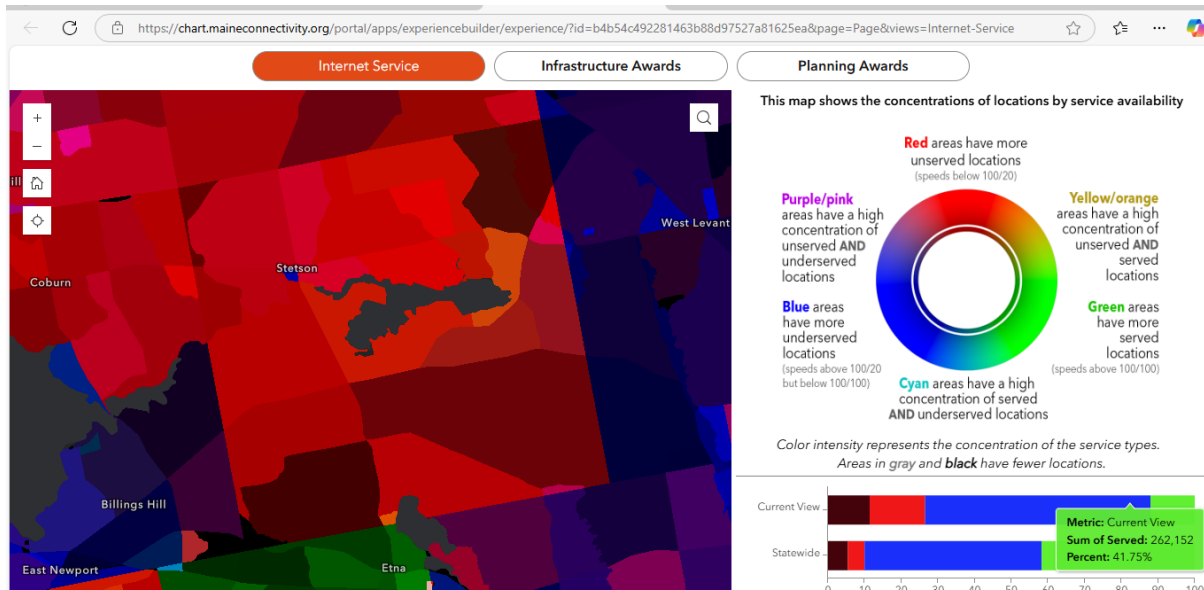


Figure 6

<https://chart.maineconnectivity.org/portal/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=b4b54c492281463b88d97527a81625ea&page=Page&views=Internet-Service>

In 2022 Maine connectivity organization mapped internet speeds above and below the FCC's 100/20 Mbps Standard. Stetson is "more underserved" with connectivity speeds below FCC's standards when compared to other locations in Maine.

A portion of the Town is serviced by landline TDS fiber, which provides up to 1 Gig of symmetrical internet speed. The remaining portion of the Town is serviced by landline TDS DSL, which varies in upload/download speeds, but generally is in the 10-50 Mbps range. TDS has stated that they intend to build out the remainder of the Town with fiber, but as of December 2024 there is no timeline for when this will occur. Some residents can also access wireless internet service, but this is location dependent.

Within the last 24 months a cell tower has been installed in the southwest section of the Town, offering 4G cell service to those within signal reception range of the tower. However given the location of the tower, there continues to be locations in Town that still have little to no cell phone signal reception and may or may not have access to other forms of wireless (satellite or cell) communication, resulting in some residents having only DSL as an option for telecommunication.

In terms of energy infrastructure, Central Maine Power is our energy provider. The Town is primarily serviced by four independent circuits that are not interconnected (no tie-in option), resulting in no secondary (back up) alternative when there is a primary circuit interruption. This creates service reliability and public safety concerns in a community that, among other things, is completely reliant on private wells for water and in some cases has limited telecommunication

options. CMP is looking into the possibility of some interconnection/tie ins of these circuits, as well as other hardware and technology upgrades that may improve service reliability. CMP is working on a project to upgrade their Carmel substation, which services parts of Stetson, in hopes of further improving service reliability. CMP recently initiated a ground to sky tree trimming project along one of these mentioned circuits in Carmel/Levant that is highly prone to tree related outages, in hopes of reducing service interruptions.

Are local and regional health care facilities and public health and social service programs adequate to meet the needs of community?

Locally, there are no health care or public health facilities located in the Town. However, there are facilities in surrounding towns that are accessible to residents.

Regionally, the town has access to several Health Care facilities.

There are challenges for these programs to meet the needs of the community. Maine hospitals are currently facing a significant financial crisis. The consistent underpayment by Medicare and Medicaid has been a long-standing issue, with hospitals in Maine being short-changed by roughly \$350 million per year. This financial strain is exacerbated by the state's aging population and rural character, which means higher costs for care and more small hospitals serving these communities. The COVID-19 pandemic further worsened the staffing problem, leading to increased reliance on costly traveling nurses.

Maine's primarily rural population poses unique challenges for health care delivery. Hospitals in rural areas struggle to maintain the necessary resources, staff, and up-to-date health care services needed to serve their communities. In the past year, some rural hospitals, such as Penobscot Valley Hospital and Calais Regional Hospital, have even entered bankruptcy.

Access to mental health services is another major challenge. Approximately 41% of Maine children aged 3-17 who need mental health services have difficulty getting the treatment they need. This indicates a gap in the availability and accessibility of mental health care for the population.

For children with special health care needs (CSHCN), transitioning to adult health care services is a significant challenge. About 72% of CSHCN aged 12-17 have not received the necessary services for this transition. This highlights the need for better support and resources to ensure a smooth transition for these individuals.

Overall, while the health care system in central Maine has several strengths, these challenges need to be addressed to ensure that the needs of the population are adequately met.^{14 15}

Will other public facilities, such as town offices, libraries, and cemeteries accommodate projected growth?

Stetson has sufficient public facilities to accommodate future growth. Upgrades are currently underway to the town office complex which has a playground and a baseball field. The library provides community activities and internet Wi-Fi access for residents. A review of current records indicates there is sufficient burial space available for future needs in each of the three town cemeteries.

To what extent are investments in facility improvements directed to growth areas?

Upgrades have been made to the town office complex to facilitate rental rooms for residents. Examples are capital improvements to the Stetson Meeting house which is rented to a congregation and the ongoing improvements made to two rooms residents can rent, one of which is now a dance studio. These upgrades continue to enhance community growth.

Does the community have a street tree program?

Stetson does not currently have a street tree program however, the Town does support the preservation and protection of its green spaces, land and natural resources.

Conditions and Trends

1. Location of facilities and services areas (mapped as appropriate)

In the “Stetson Facilities” map below, various service areas such as the library, Stetson Town Office, Meeting House cemeteries, bodies of water and local roads are mapped.

¹⁴ <https://www.newscentermaine.com/article/news/health/maine-hospital-association-financial-crisis-rural-health-care-system/97-bf0e6208-bc55-44e9-be66-883f6cfed25c>
Accessed 10/25/2025

¹⁵ <https://www.newscentermaine.com/article/news/health/maine-hospital-association-financial-crisis-rural-health-care-system/97-bf0e6208-bc55-44e9-be66-883f6cfed25c> accessed 10/25/2025

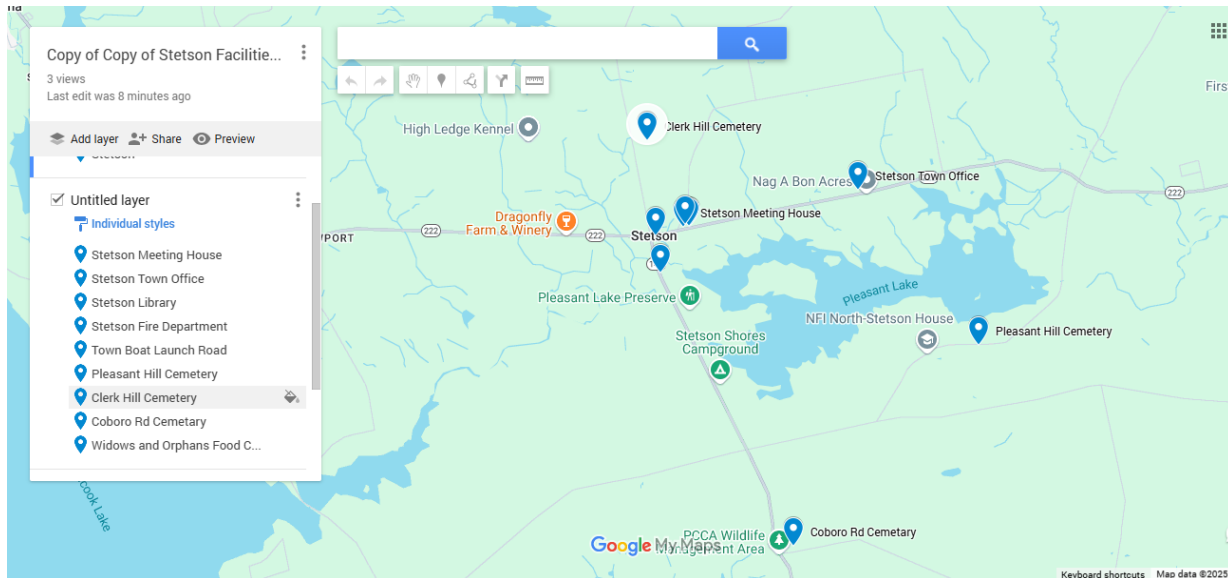


Figure 7 <https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=150TT6kl51H3WTDyC6HcX-nJraRKECf0&usp=sharing>

2. General physical conditions of facilities and equipment

Facility	Condition
Town Office Complex	Good ongoing renovations for room rentals
Library	Good
Fire Department Building	Fair renovations needed to be functional
Public Boat Launch	Good
Stetson Meeting House	Fair/good needs steeple work
Cemeteries	Good
Widows and Orphan Food Cupboard	Good
Upper Stetson Stream Dam	Functioning/upgraded 2000

3. Capacity and anticipated demand during the planning period

It appears that Stetson is positioned equally well with other small towns regarding staffing. The community does not anticipate an appreciable increase in demand for public facilities.

4. Identification of who owns/manages the system

Stetsons owns and maintains the Stetson Office Complex, library, fire house, boat and Upper Stetson Stream Dam. The Town of Levant Selectmen in partnership with the Levant town

manager own Levant Fire and Resue Department and work in contract with the Stetson select board. RSU #64 owns and maintains the public school system.

5. Estimated cost of needed capital improvements to public facilities and the following information related to each of these public facilities and services

RSU 64 is facing some potential capital improvement needs. Those include a new septic system for middle and high school, which may also encompass upgrades to athletic fields. Drinking water issues are another concern across all three buildings. There's been a variety of issues with water pressure loss, and for the middle and high school; those buildings may face the need of upgrades to the water lines to address EPA rules as it relates the use of lead solder when the lines were installed.

These costs are listed in the Capital Investment Plan located in the Fiscal Capacity and Capital Investment Plan chapter.

a. Sewage and/or Water Supply-Identify number and types of uses, and percent of households served.

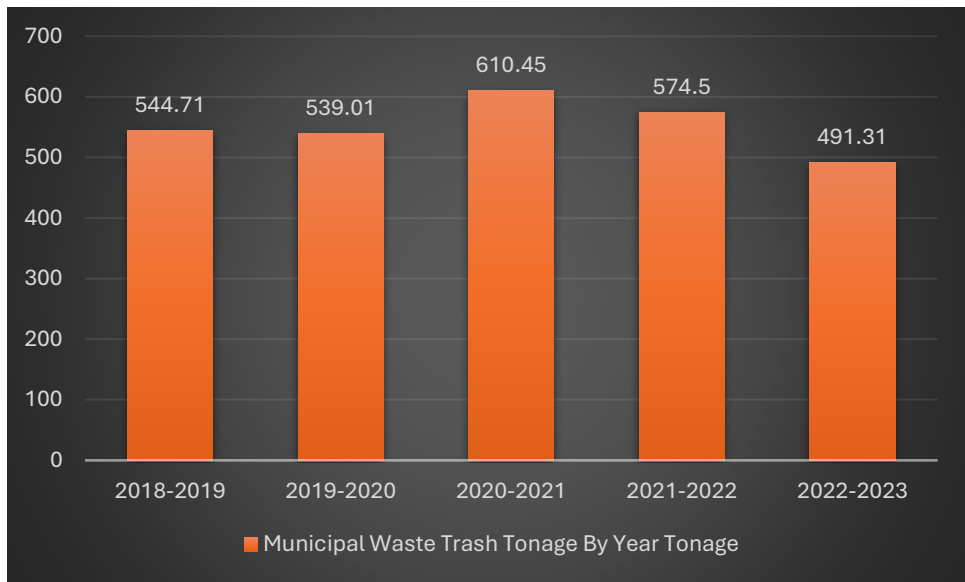
Residents and businesses cover their own well and septic placement and upkeep costs.

b. Septage- identify any community polices or regulation regarding septage collection and disposal

Stetson actively participates with all appropriate licenses. Storm drains and related infrastructure are routinely maintained in compliance with the federal and state requirements.

c. Solid waste-Describe the community's solid waste management system. Identify types and amounts of municipal solid waste and recycled materials for the past five years

Stetson provides residents with weekly curb side pick-up. The town contracts with a private refuse collection contractor to pick up household trash weekly and with Eagle Point Energy Center Company to facilitate consolidated waste disposal.



Source: Town of Stetson

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Amounts of Waste/Tons	544.71	539.01	610.45	574.5	491.31
Recycled material	0	0	0	0	0

d. Stormwater Management- identify combined sewer overflows. For Municipal Separate stormwater System (MS4) communities, describe plan and status of the major goals of the MS4 requirements

There is no public sewer system at present.

e. Power and Communications-Availability of 3-phase power, Internet (including broadband), and cable within the community

There is no 3-phase power available within the Town, which is serviced by Central Maine Power. There is no landline cable available within the Town. Landline fiber internet is available in a portion of the Town, and DSL is available elsewhere, both provided by TDS. Wireless internet options are also available on a location-by-location basis in Stetson from service providers including Starlink, Redzone Wireless, HughesNet and Viasat. Wireless internet options may also include cellular providers such as Verizon, AT&T and T-Mobile on a location-by-location basis. The estimated cost to bring 3-phase power into Town and to finish installing fiber is unknown.

TDS may offer a TV package (call that equivalent of cable) with their landline fiber, once there is a full build out in Town

f. Emergency Response System- Average call response time for fire, police and emergency/rescue

Levant Fire & Rescue Department/ Northern light: Response times vary according to the travel distance to location and how the call is prioritized from low to high emergency. Northern Light provides an ambulance on site to Levant Fire and Rescue Department during the day then Levant covers emergency calls at night. The average response time for the years 2023 and 2024 was 23 minutes

Penobscot Sheriff Department: Officers are assigned specific zones within Penobscot County. Response times vary greatly depending on travel distance and how the call is prioritized. Average response time is difficult to calculate and ranges from minutes to over an hour.

Maine State Police: Response times vary depending on the nature of the call. Priority is given to calls involving life and safety. This agency does not keep track of response times.

g. Education-Identify school administrative unit. Include primary/secondary school system enrollment for the most recent year information is available and for 10 years after the anticipated adoption of the plan.

RSU 64 provides service for Pre-K to grade 12 in five towns: Bradford, Corinth, Hudson, Kenduskeag, and Stetson. Rhonda Sperrey is Superintendent of Schools for RSU 64. Stetson holds 3 of the 18 school board positions. ¹⁶

¹⁶ <https://www.rsu64schools.org/page/superintendent-letter> accessed 10/25/2025

Students residing in Stetson 2024-2025				
Grade	Enrolled in RSU 64	Homeschool	Private School	Public funded Charter School
Pre-K	2	0		
Kindergarten	5	2		
1	7	3		
2	7	3		
3	5	0		
4	9	3		
5	9	2		
6	2	3		
7	8	2		
8	13	6	8-12 grade	8-12 grade
9	8	1		
10	6	0		
11	11	1		
12	10	1		
Total	102	27	3	4

Superintendent of RSU # 64 Rhonda Sperrey reports she does not anticipate any large increases or decreases and feels comfortable that the current facilities could accommodate an additional 150-200 students if the five towns saw that kind of an influx in students.

h. Health Care- Describe major care facilities (hospitals, clinics) and other providers serving the community. Identify public health and social services supported by the community through municipal subsidies

Major Health Care facilities include Northern Light Hospital in Bangor and Pittsfield, St Joseph's Hospital in Bangor, Northern Light Primary Care in Newport, Pittsfield and Corinth Maine. Specialists such as ophthalmologists and dentists are available to Newport, Pittsfield and Bangor.

The closest public health organization to Stetson is Penquis District Public Health Unit. This unit serves Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties and is part of the Maine CDC's Division of Public Health Systems. There are several free and income-based clinics around the area that provide various health services. Examples include: Sebesticook Family Doctors in Newport and Physical Therapy Balance in Corinth. Katahdin Valley Health Center in Corinth and Hometown Health Center in Palmyra are new local facilities.

As a social service, the Town provides general assistance services to qualified residents and supports the locally operated Widows and Orphans Food Cupboard

i. Municipal Government Facilities and Services-Describe facilities and staffing for municipal administrations, enforcement and public works operations.

Stetson Board of Selectmen- The Town of Stetson operates under a 5-person Board with staggered terms, Selectmen's Meetings every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month which are open to the public. The board of selectmen is the official governing body for the Town. Some of their responsibilities include overseeing the day-to-day operations, overseeing the poor, hiring, supervising, and evaluating town personnel and preparing the annual budget.

Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen- The duties of this appointed position include Treasurer, Town Clerk, General Assistance Manager, Agent to all State Programs, Deputy Tax Collector, Deputy Registrar of Voters.

Deputy Town Clerk – a one person appointed position. Duties include Tax, collector, Registrar of Voters and Deputy Treasurer

Police- Penobscot County Sheriff's Department and Maine State Police

Fire and Ambulance- Levant Fire and Rescue Department and Northern Light Ambulance Service

Other Elected and Appointed Offices and Positions- Stetson has a Road Commissioner and contracts for Winter Road Maintenance

j. Street tree Program- Describe the community's street tree program.

Stetson does not currently have a street tree program; however, the Town does support the preservation and protection of its green spaces, lands and natural resources.

State of Maine Polices

1. To efficiently meet identified public facility and service needs.
2. To provide public facilities and services in a manner that promotes and supports growth and development in identified growth areas.

State of Maine Strategies

1. Identify any capital improvements needed to maintain or upgrade public service to accommodate the community's anticipated growth and changing demographics

Office Complex Fire Door- Three sets of fire doors need to be replaced at the office complex

Meeting House Steeple-The meeting house steeple needs to be repaired.

Play Gound Foundation- Groundwork to stabilize the playground equipment and create a safe environment

Handicap Accessible Bathroom in Community Room- Ongoing

Office Complex Parking Lot- pave the gravel parking lot

Road Maintenance There is the ever present need to resurface paved roads, which in some cases may involve some reconstruction of the subsurface and repair/replacement of culvert crossings. Stetson's Road Commissioner has recommended maintaining a repeating 7–9-year cycle of paving 1-2 miles of paving yearly to keep up with road maintenance. Additionally, the town maintains several dirt roads with no current plans to pave them.

High Speed Broadband- ongoing negotiations with TDS Telecom

Stetson Upper Steam Dam - There has been some concern regarding the stability of the dam on Pleasant Lake. There have been attempts to have a qualified entity inspect the dam and provide a report. There are no imminent issues for the dam at this time.

EMS Response Boat for Pleasant Lake- ongoing discussions

Fire Truck-ongoing discussions to purchase mini pumper -5-person cab to reach hard to access areas

RSU 64 School Renovations and Maintenance -Estimated capital improvement costs for RSU 64 for the next 10 years, and what portion of that Stetson might be responsible for paying is unknown. There is a study underway to examine the replacement of the septic system and new outdoor athletic facilities for the middle school and high school. Additionally, the middle school and high school need renovations to the locker rooms and the middle school could benefit from a new front vestibule. There are no cost estimates, or a timeline for construction currently.

2. Locate new public facilities comprising at least 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments in designated growth areas.
3. Encourage local sewer and water districts to coordinate planned service extensions with the Future Land Use Plan
4. If public water supply expansion is anticipated, identify and protect suitable sources?
5. Explore option for regional delivery of local service.

Comments:

Fiscal Capacity and Capital Investment Plan

Analyses

1. How will future capital investments identified in your plan be funded?

Funding will come from tax funding, state and municipal grants, donations, private funds, volunteers, and reserve accounts.

2. If the community plans to borrow to pay for capital investments, does the community have sufficient borrowing capacity to obtain the necessary funds?

Currently, the town of Stetson has no outstanding debts and has sufficient borrowing capacity.

3. Have efforts been made by the community to participate in or explore sharing capital investments with neighboring communities: If so what efforts have been made?

As previously stated, the town shares a school system with four other municipalities, a solid waste disposal service with Eagle Point Energy Center Company and a fire department with four other municipalities.

4. Identify community revenues and expenditures by category for the last (5) years and explain trends.

Revenues					
Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Property Tax	1,525,282	1,568,707	1,554,341	1,613,246	1,586,707
Excise Taxes	227,198	232,047	278,026	244,420	254,852
Intergovernmental	176,330	227,672	291,977	484,738	318,666
Charges for Services	-	-	9,244	12,302	14,025
Licenses & Permits	3,145	1,200	3,579	1,172	1,366
Investment Income	-	-	813	330	1,636
Interest & Lien Fees & Penalties	21,688	35,019	17,381	16,506	13,965
Interest Income	2,703	2,608	-	-	-
Other/Miscellaneous	168,297	11,722	30,062	8,117	3,827
Totals	2,124,643	2,078,975	2,185,423	2,380,831	2,195,089

Source: Town of Stetson

Expenditures					
Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
General Government	414,371	360,806	329,697	284,347	264,112
Public Safety	16,092	28,427	65,522	57,451	63,415
Public Works Streets & Hwy	451,517	380,943	430,849	489,000	548,056
Sanitation	100,612	99,997	104,378	97,165	101,312
Education/ Intergovernmental	1,087,309	1,098,574	997,625	962,208	990,164
County Tax	-	-	137,971	150,758	163,693
Health & Welfare	1,356	2,385	2,295	3,952	2,874
Recreation & Culture	10,247	8,006	7,705	10,365	5,416
Capital Outlay	-	31,500	-	-	-
Other/Unclassified	6,539	7,847	-	-	4,772
Totals	2,088,043	2,018,485	2,076,041	2,055,245	2,143,815

Source: Town of Stetson

Data retrieved from Stetson Annual Reports Statements of Revenues, and Changes in Fund Balances, Government Funds years 2019-2023

Trends Comparison 2019 to 2023:

Trends and Analysis

- **Revenues:** The overall five year trend in revenues shows fluctuations across different categories, with significant increases in Excise Taxes and Intergovernmental revenues. The total revenues show fluctuations, with a peak in 2022 due federal APRP fund awarded the town and a decrease in 2023 which is primarily attributable to a decline in the mill rate in 2023.
- **Expenditure:** The overall 5 year trend in expenditure shows fluctuations across different categories, with notable increases in Public Safety in 2021 when the Town contracted Fire/EMS services and public works in 2023 with road reconstruction/paving. The total expenditure shows minor fluctuations, indicating a relatively stable spending pattern.

In summary, both expenditure and revenues show fluctuations across different categories, with notable increases in specific areas. The overall trends indicate a relatively stable spending pattern and revenue generation.

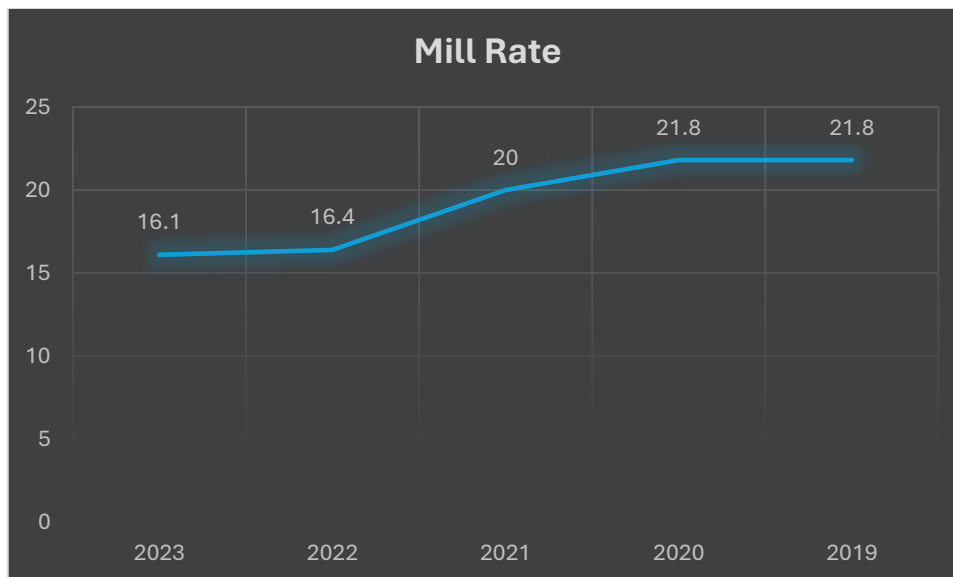
5. Describe means of funding capital items (reserve funds, bonding, etc.) and identify any outside funding sources.

Funding for capital items historically comes from a variety of sources, primarily from municipal property taxes, State revenue sharing and reimbursements and the use of both designated and undesignated fund balances. The Town historically has not used bonds as a source of funding capital items, and currently there is no anticipation of changing this historic practice for funding capital items.

The mill rate is the amount of tax levied per \$1,000 of assessed value. The mill rate in Stetson decreased approximately 26.15% from 2019 to 2023. A revaluation of property in the Town occurred in 2020, that coupled with some new construction growth, resulted in the Town being able to lower the mill rate in years 2022 and 2023.

Year	Mill Rate
2023	16.10
2022	16.40
2021	20.00
2020	21.80
2019	21.80

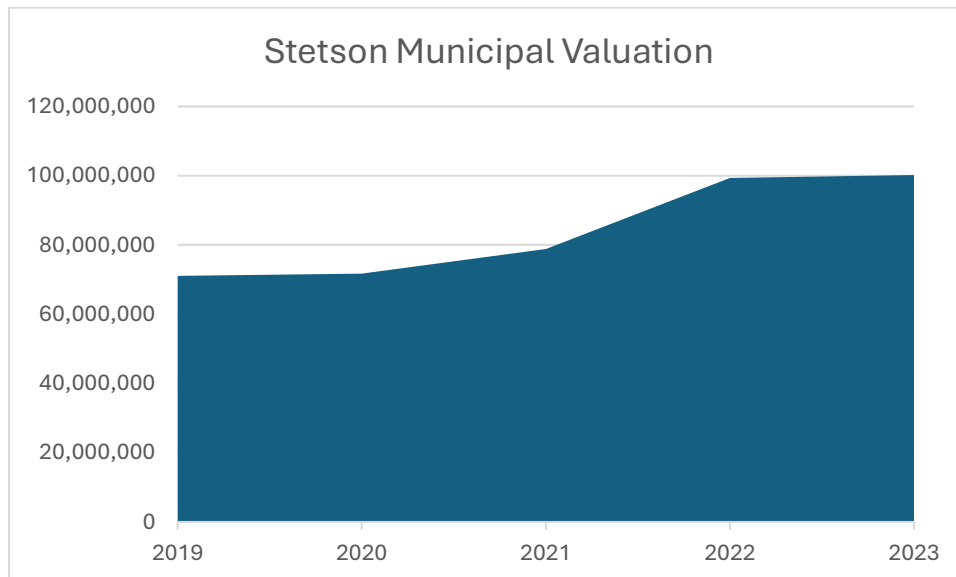
Source: Town of Stetson

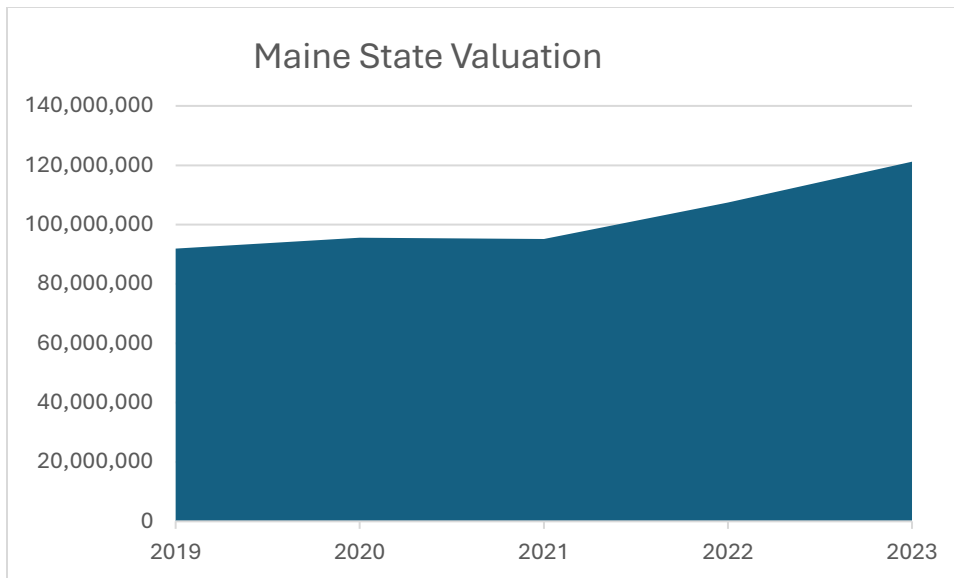


Municipal Valuations							
Year	Commitment	Mill Rate	Total Taxable Municipal Valuations	Taxable Land Valuations	Taxable Building Valuations	Exemptions	Total Taxable Land and Building Valuations
2023	1,613,245	16.10	100,201,600	39,119,300	69,884,100	8,801,800	100,201,600
2022	1,629,440	16.40	99,356,100	38,854,800	69,728,700	9,227,400	99,356,100
2021	1,576,429	20.00	78,821,440	38,632,900	48,945,100	8,756,560	78,821,440
2020	1,564,157	21.80	71,750,344	30,432,300	48,221,300	6,903,256	71,750,344
2019	1,549,749	21.80	71,089,414	30,332,900	47,427,600	6,671,086	71,089,414

Source: Town of Stetson

Stetson Municipal Valuations	
Year	Valuation
2019	71,089,414
2020	71,750,344
2021	78,821,440
2022	99,356,100
2023	100,201,600





Maine State Valuation	
Year	Valuation
2019	91,900,000
2020	95,600,000
2021	95,150,000
2022	107,400,000
2023	121,200,000

Source: Maine Revenue Services

Stetson's valuation growth rate (40.97%) outpaced the Maine State valuation growth rate (31.88%) over the same period. There was a sharp increase in Stetson's valuation in 2022. This indicates that Stetson experienced a higher rate of property value increase compared to the state calculations.

Both Stetson and Maine State valuations show positive growth trends, Stetson's valuations grew at a faster rate, particularly between 2021 and 2022. This could be due to local economic factors, development projects, or other influences specific to Stetson

6. How does total municipal debt (including shares of county, school and utility) compare with the statutory and Maine Bond Bank recommended limits on such debt?

State of Maine is subject to a statutory limitation of its general long-term debt equal to 15% of the State valuation of the town. In fiscal year 2024 the Town of Stetson's indebtedness was zero.

Item	Estimated Cost	Estimated Timing	Potential funding Source
Set of 3 fire doors for office complex	\$30,000	2025-26	Private Funds, Tax Funds, Reserve Fund
Meeting House Steeple	\$32,000	2025-26	Private Funds, Reserve Fund
Play Gound Foundation	\$20,000	2027-28	Private Funds, Grants and Volunteer Labor, Reserve Fund
Handicap Accessible Bathroom in Community Room	\$8,000-10,000	2025-26	Private Funding, Reserve Fund
Paving Office Complex Parking Lot	\$70,000	2025-26	Private Funding, Reserve Fund
Stetson Road Paving	\$83,000	2025-ongoing	Federal Grant Funding/ARPA
Stetson Upper Stream Dam	unknown	none	Tax funded, Grants, Private Fund, Reserve Fund
High Speed Broadband	unknown	none	Private, Federal Grant Funding
Fire Truck and EMS Capital Improvement	unknown	2026-27	Tax funding, Grants, Reserve Fund, Sale of existing equipment
EMS Response Boat for Pleasant Lake	unknown	none	Tax funded, Grants
RSU 64 School Renovations and Maintenance	unknown	2025-ongoing	Tax funded, Grants. Reserve Fund

Above is a summary list of all the municipal capital investments the Town of Stetson anticipates to accomplishing between 2025-2035. RSU 64 capital investments are managed separately by RSU 64 budget and costs are shared between the five communities that comprise RDU 64 on a formula basis.

State of Maine Policies

1. To finance existing and future facilities and services in a cost effective manner.
2. To explore grants available to assist in the funding of capital investments within the community.
3. To reduce Maine's tax burden by staying within LD1 spending limitations.

State of Maine Strategies

1. Explore opportunities to work with neighboring communities to plan for and finance shared or adjacent capital investments to increase cost savings and efficiencies.

Capital Investment

The capital investment plan must include a capital investment plan that:

1. Identifies and summarizes anticipated capital investment needs within the planning period in order to implement the comprehensive plan, including estimated costs and timing, and identifies which are growth related capital investment.
2. Establishes general funding priorities among the community capital investment; and
3. Identifies potential funding sources and funding mechanism.

Comments:

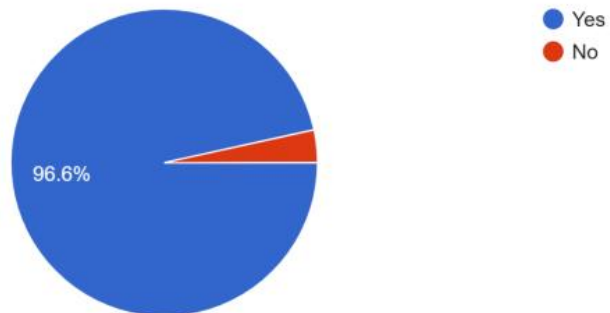
Existing Land Use

Future Land Use

Appendix

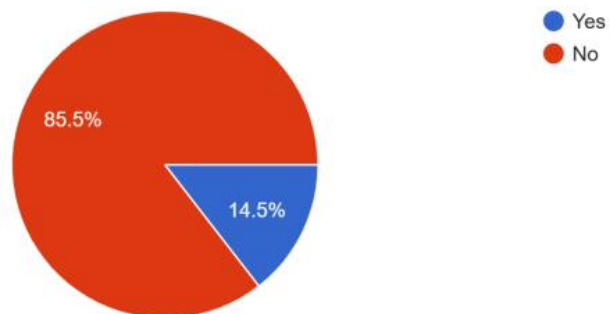
Are you a Stetson Resident

145 responses



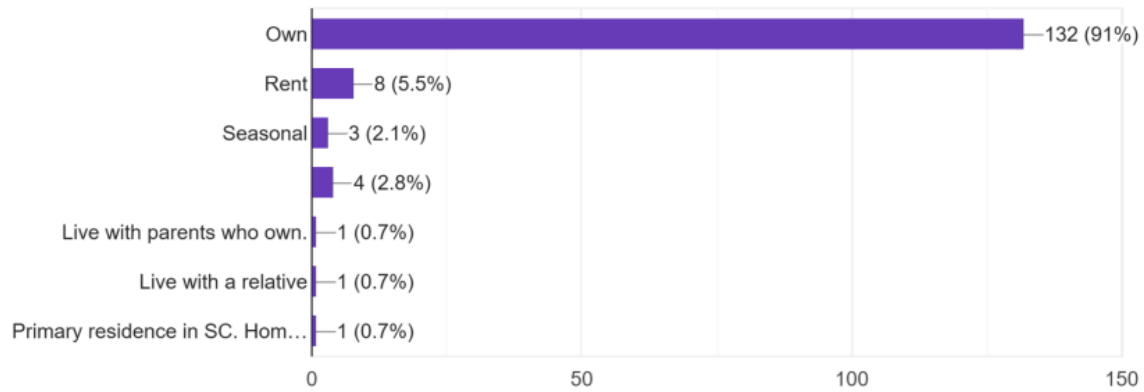
Are you currently serving in the US military or a US military veteran

145 responses



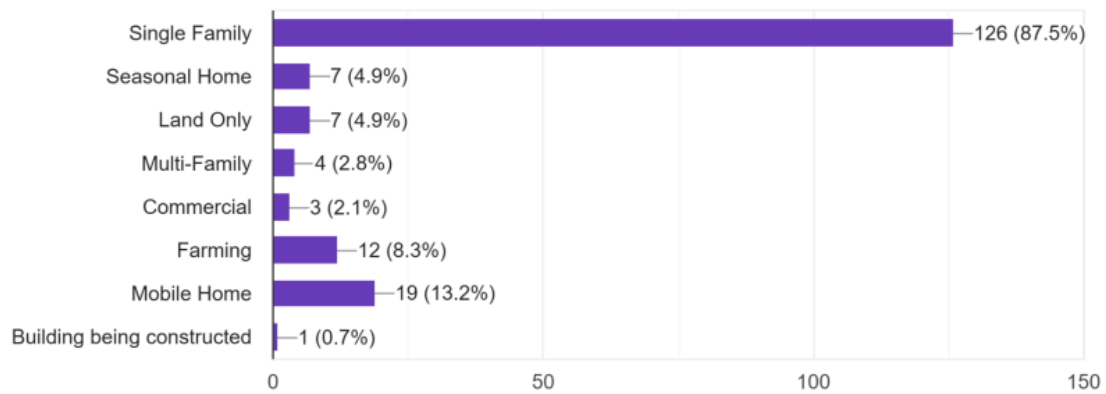
What is your current property ownership (check all that apply)

145 responses



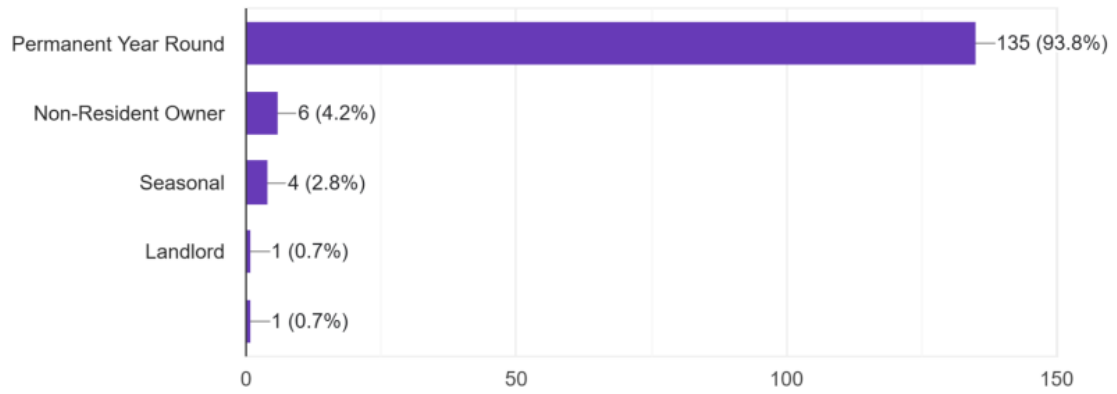
What is your property type (check all that apply)

144 responses



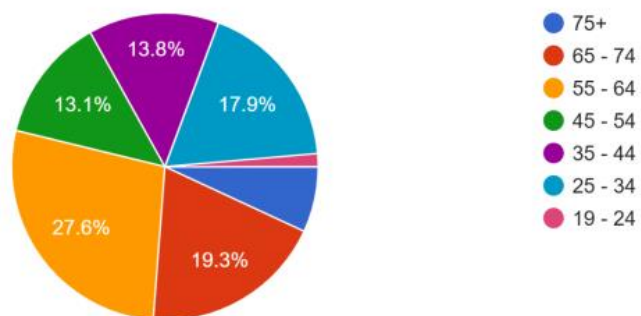
What is your residency (check all that apply)

144 responses



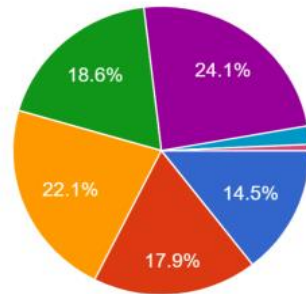
What is your age group

145 responses



What is your education level

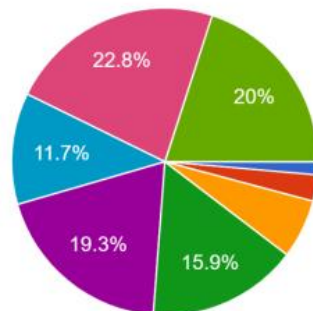
145 responses



- Advanced college degree (Master's or above)
- 4 - year college degree
- 2 - year college degree
- Vocational school / Trades certification
- High School diploma
- Some High School
- Grades 1 - 8

How long have you lived in Stetson

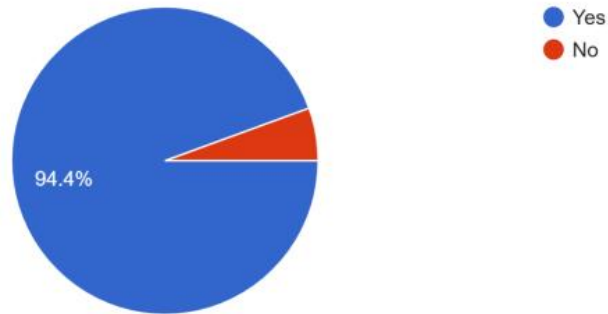
145 responses



- 70+ years
- 51 - 69 years
- 41 - 50 years
- 31 - 40 years
- 21 - 30 years
- 11 - 20 years
- 6 - 10 years
- 5 years or less

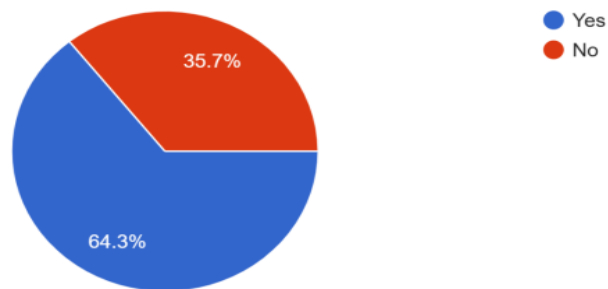
Do you have internet access

144 responses

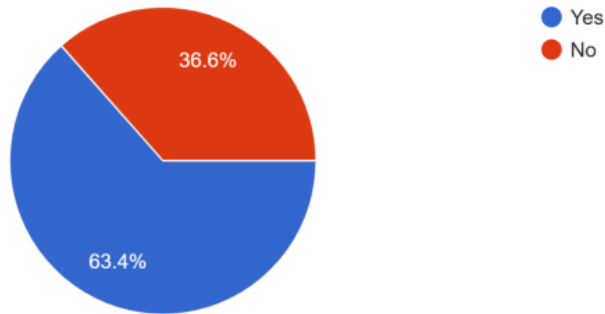


If you have internet access, is it adequate

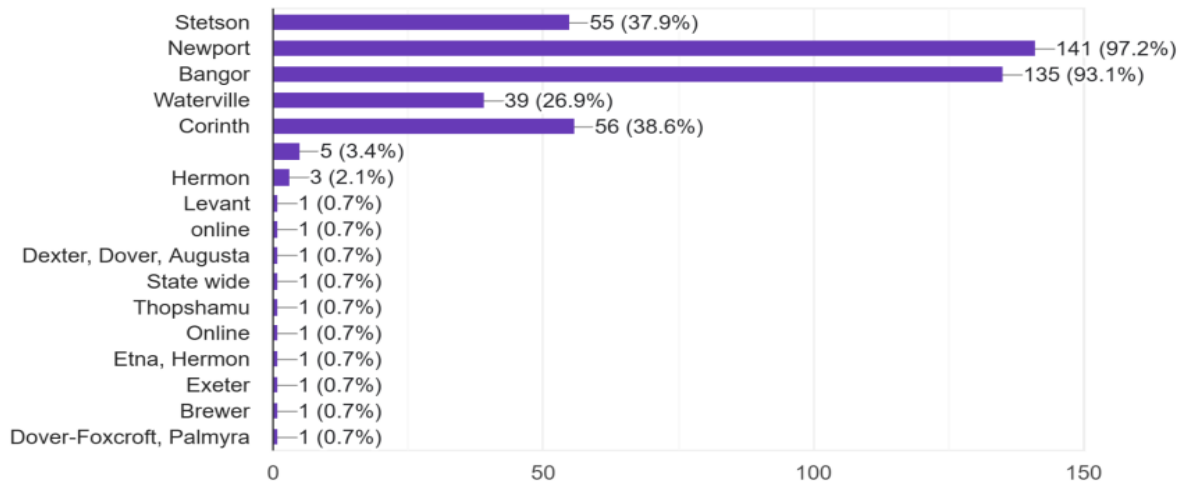
140 responses



Do you access / use the Town of Stetson website
145 responses

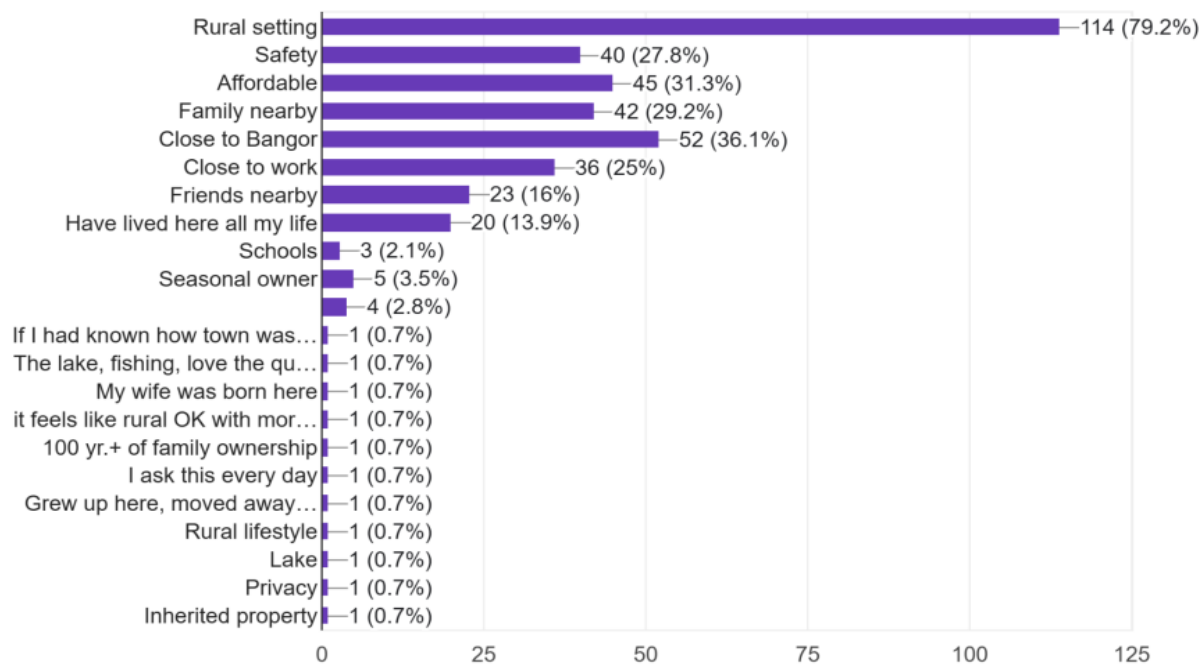


Where do you shop (check all that apply)
145 responses



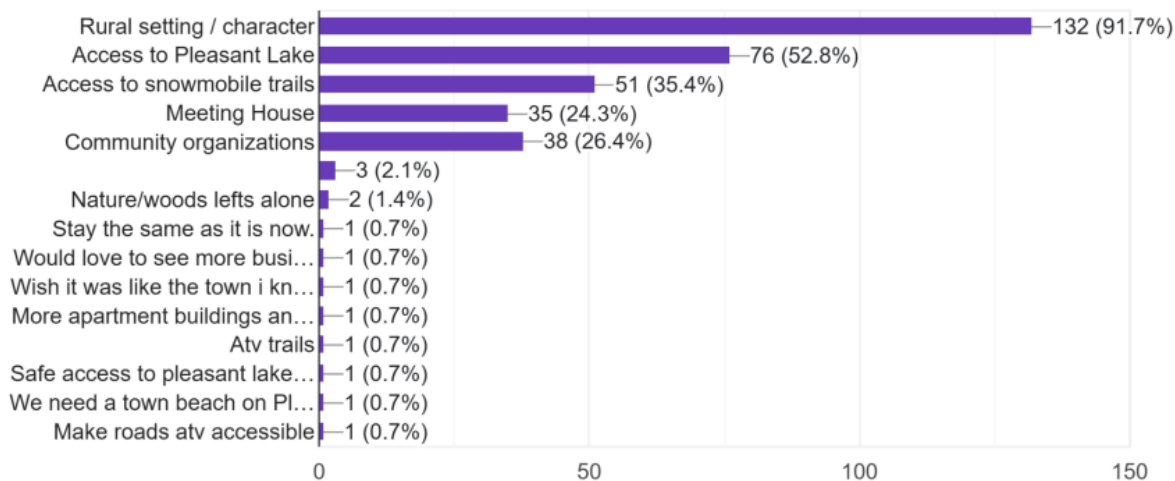
Why do you live in Stetson (check all that apply)

144 responses



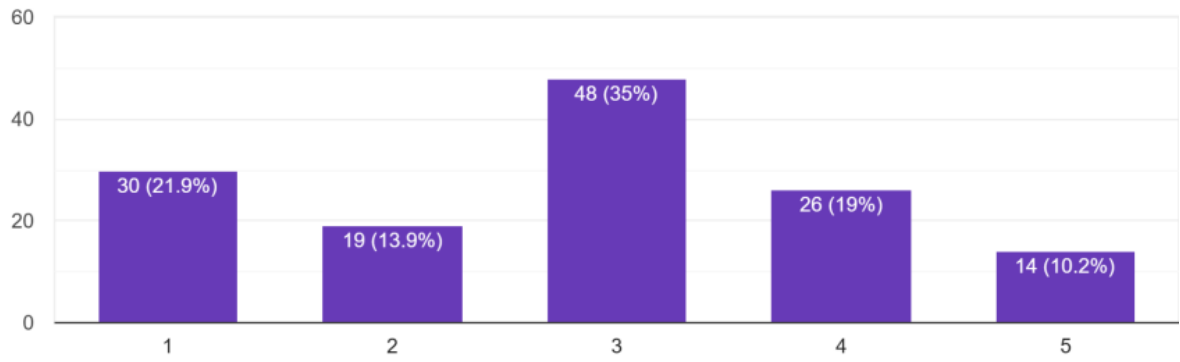
What would you like to see remain the same in Stetson (check all that apply)

144 responses



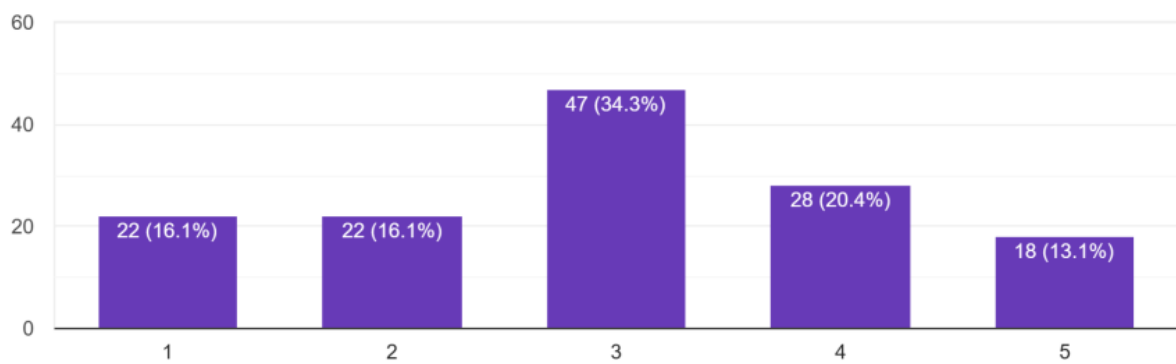
How satisfied are you with Stetson's contracted FIRE DEPARTMENT service

137 responses



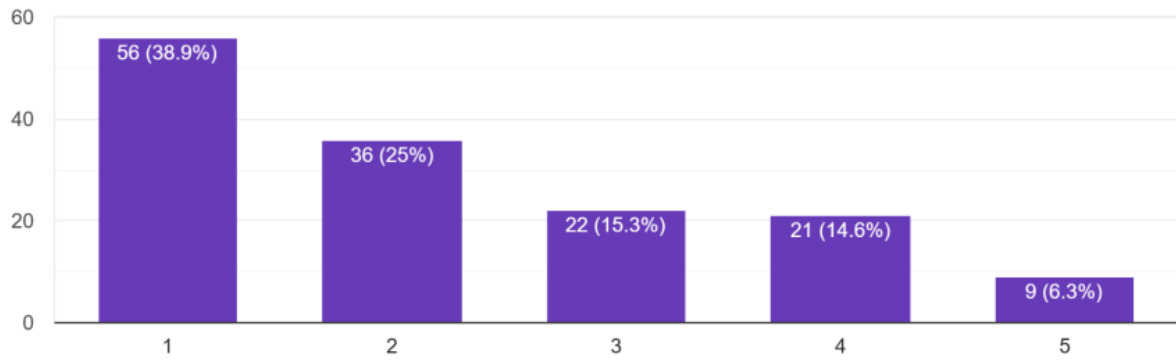
How satisfied are you with Stetson's contracted AMBULANCE service

137 responses



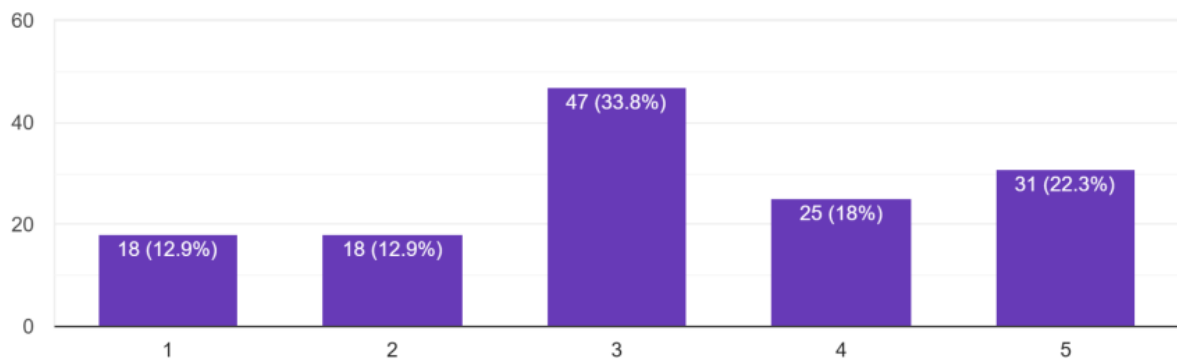
How satisfied are you with Stetson's SNOW REMOVAL / PLOWING / SANDING service

144 responses



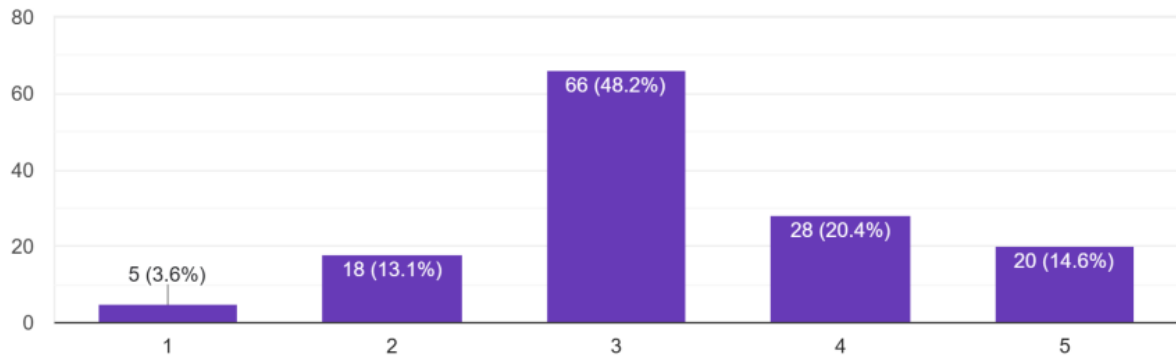
How satisfied are you with Stetson's STREET LIGHTS

139 responses



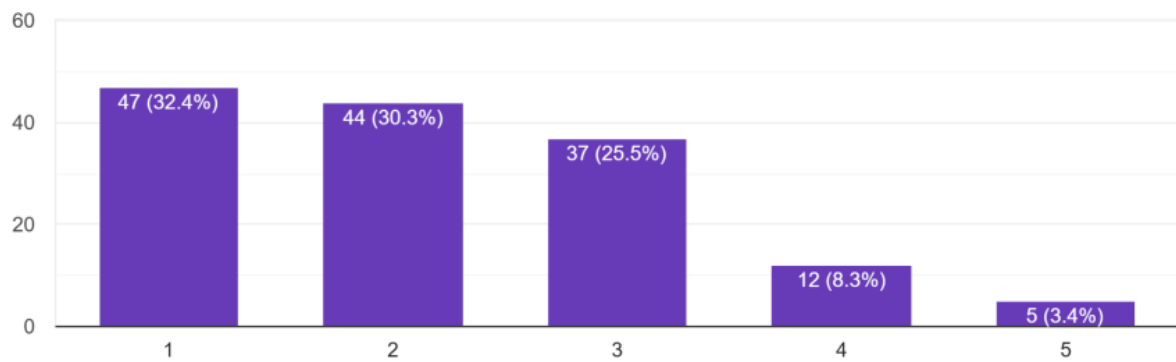
How satisfied are you with Stetson's CODE ENFORCEMENT

137 responses



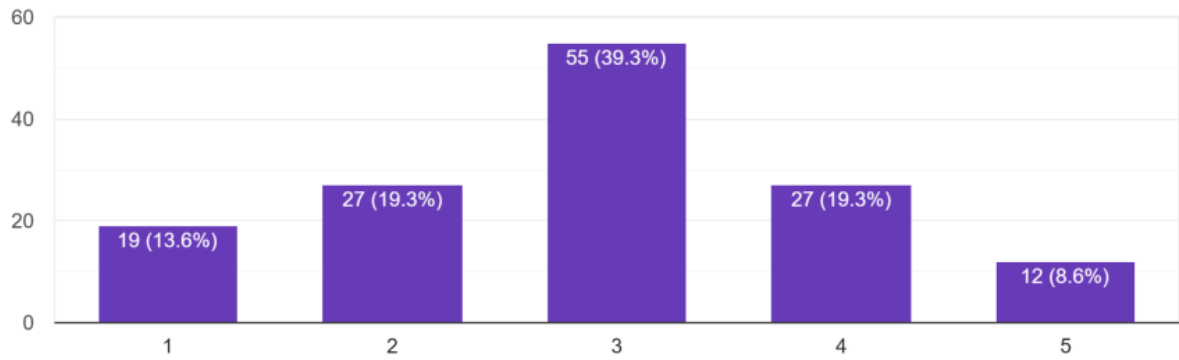
How satisfied are you with Stetson's ROAD MAINTENANCE

145 responses



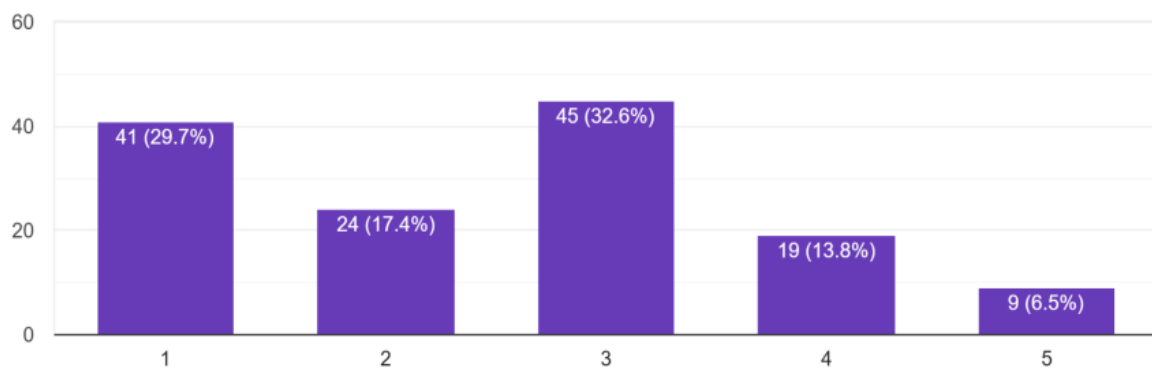
How satisfied are you with Stetson's overall town GOVERNANCE

140 responses



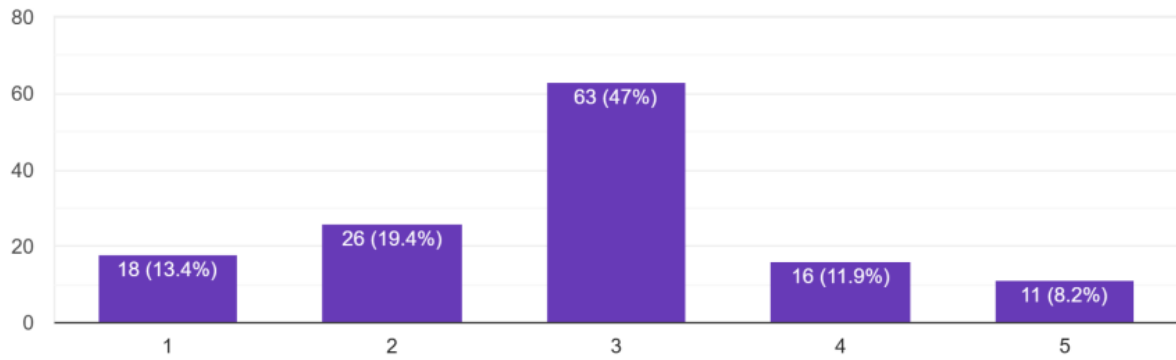
How satisfied are you with Stetson's RECREATIONAL SERVICES

138 responses



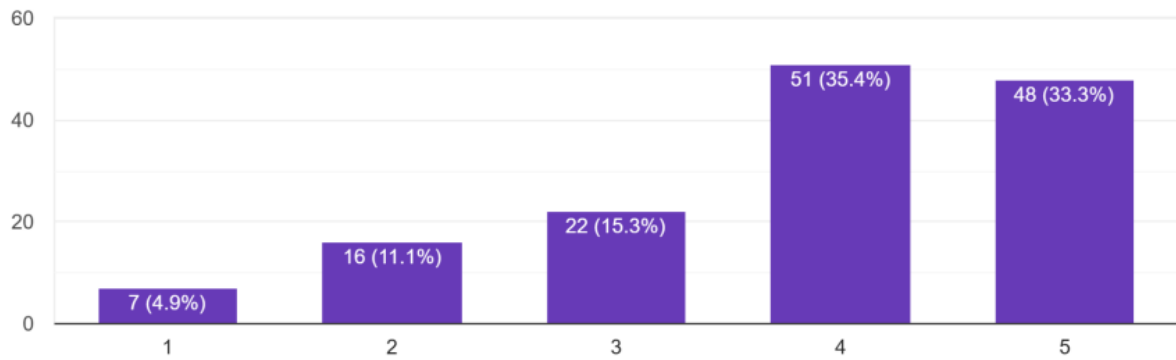
How satisfied are you with Stetson's participation in/with RSU 64 (Education)

134 responses



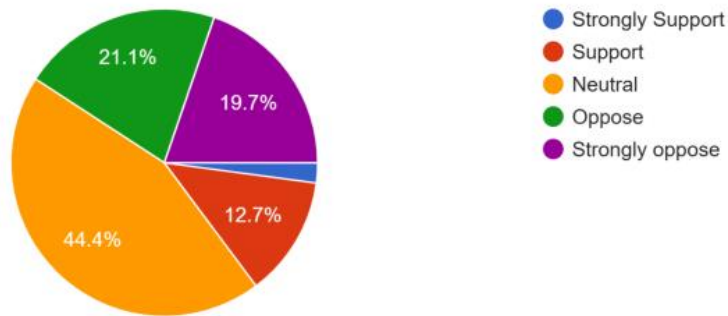
How satisfied are you with Stetson's SOLID WASTE (TRASH) SERVICE

144 responses



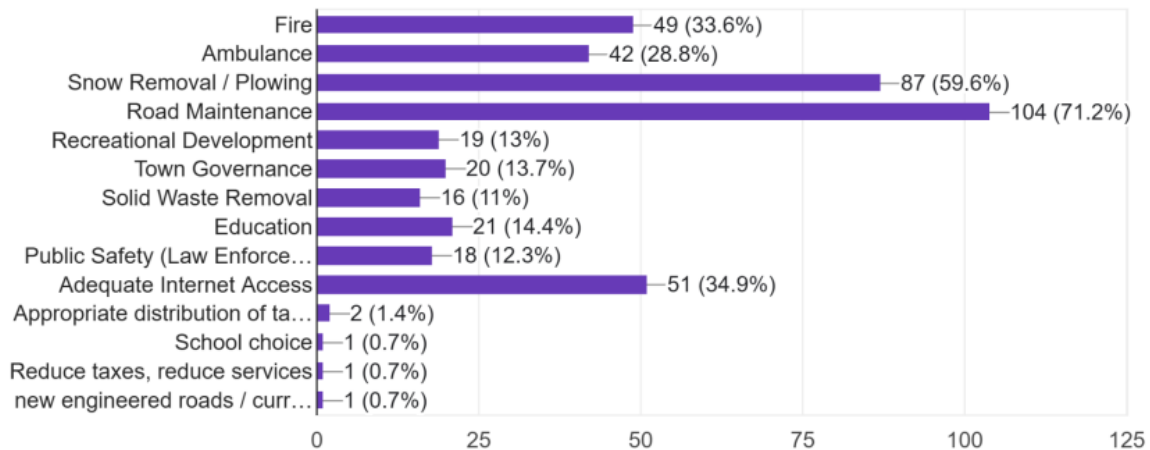
Do you support TAX INCREASES for corresponding maintenance / upgrade(s) of Stetson services

142 responses



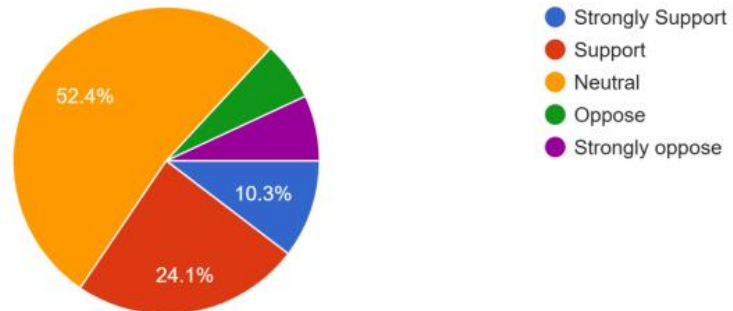
Please select what you think should be Stetson's TOP THREE service priorities (Check ONLY 3 options)

146 responses



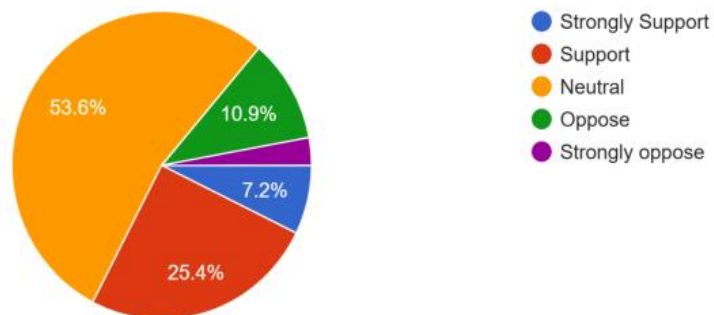
Do you support IMPROVING STETSON VILLAGE (Town Center)

145 responses



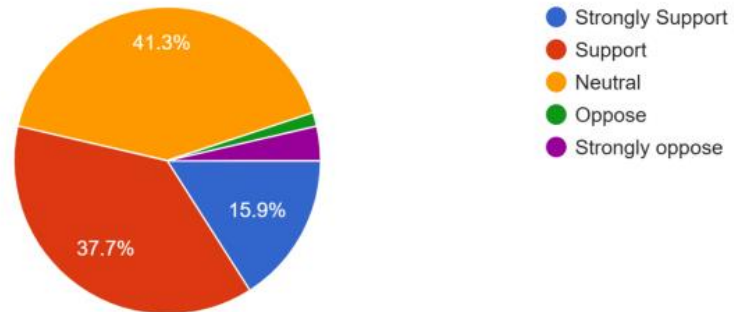
Do you support IMPROVING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

138 responses



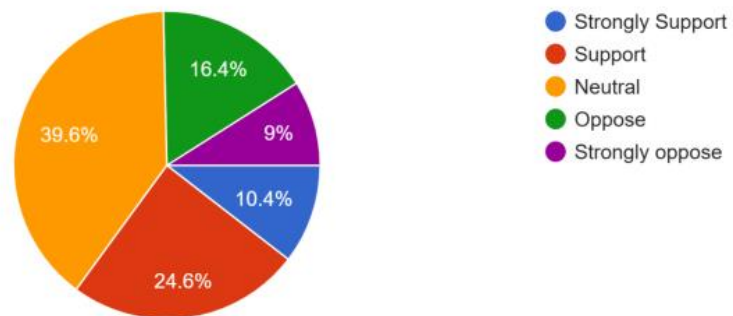
Do you support IMPROVING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

138 responses



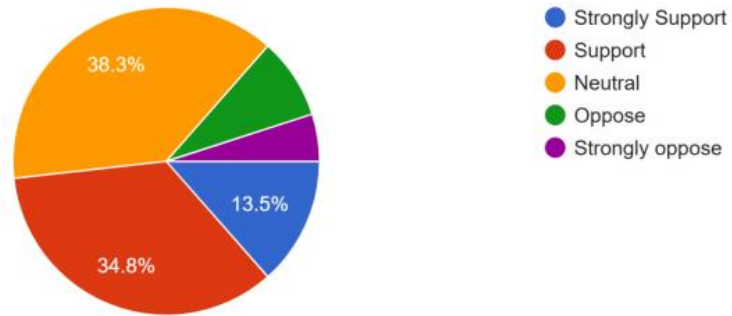
Do you support IMPROVING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AVAILABILITY

134 responses



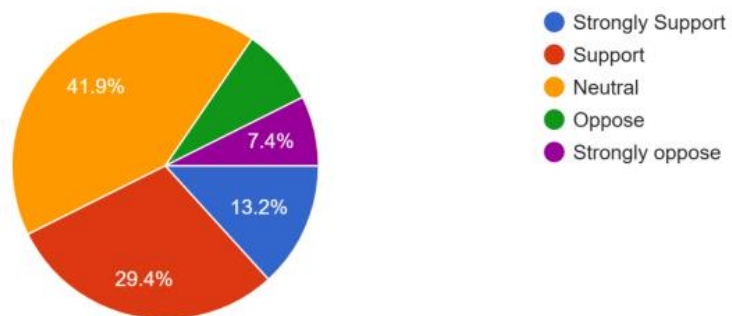
Do you support INCREASED AVAILABILITY TO SENIOR HOUSING

141 responses



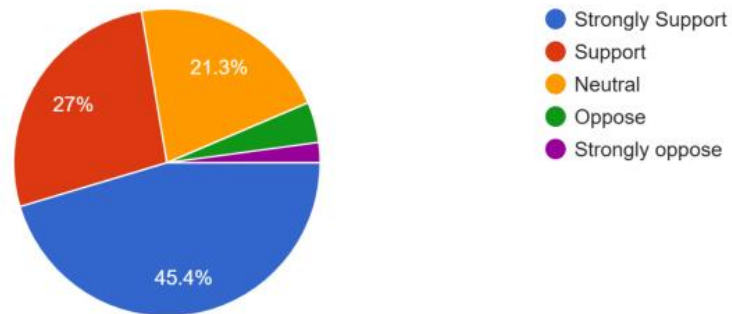
Do you support ACTIVE CODE ENFORCEMENT

136 responses



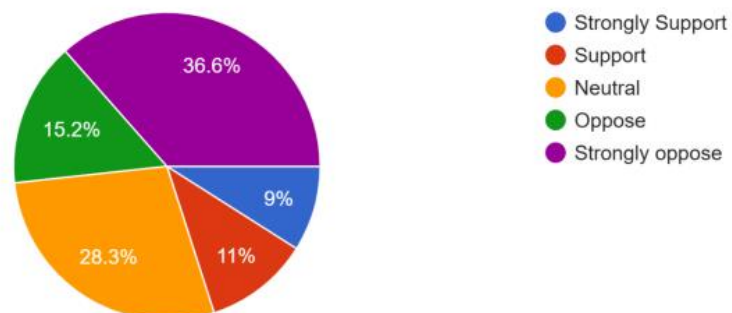
Do you support Stetson PRESERVING FARM, WOODLOT, AND OPEN (UNDEVELOPED) LAND

141 responses



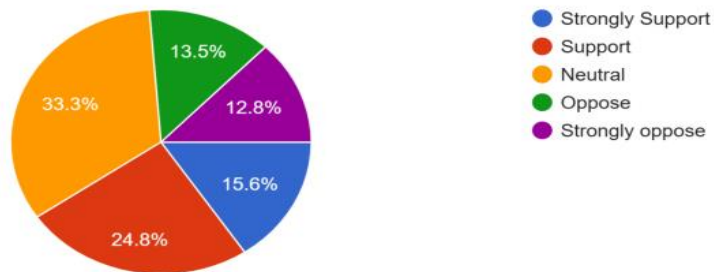
Do you support the RETAIL SALE OF MARIJUANA AND MARIJUANA PRODUCTS IN STETSON

145 responses



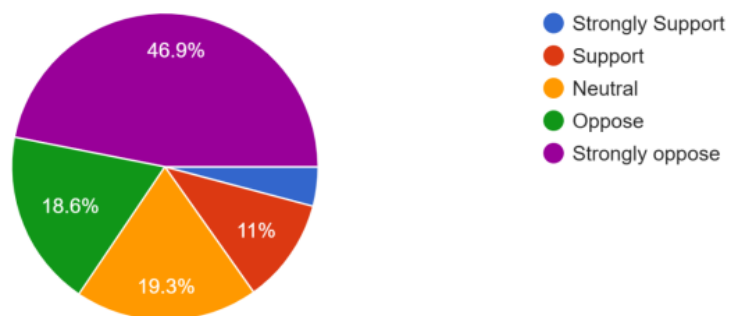
Do you support CELL TOWER DEVELOPMENT IN STETSON

141 responses



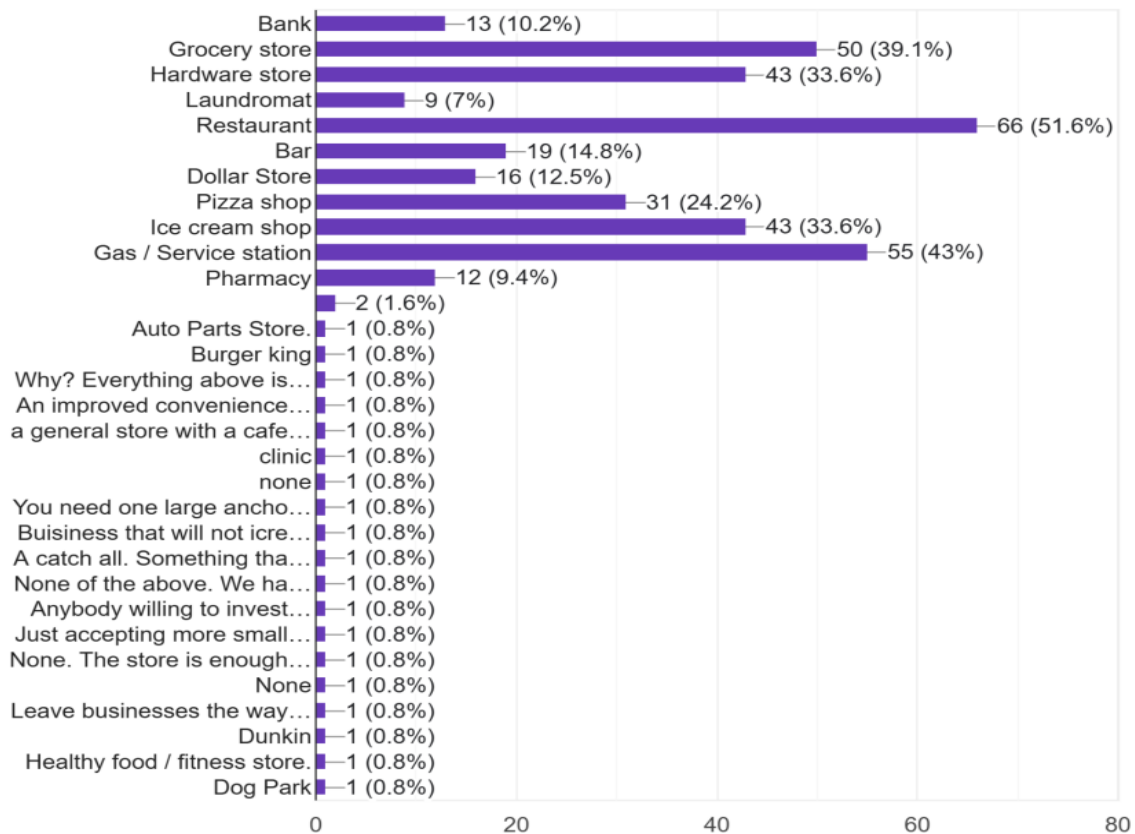
Do you support the DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY (SOLAR/WIND FARMS, BATTERY STORAGE FACILITIES....) IN STETSON

145 responses



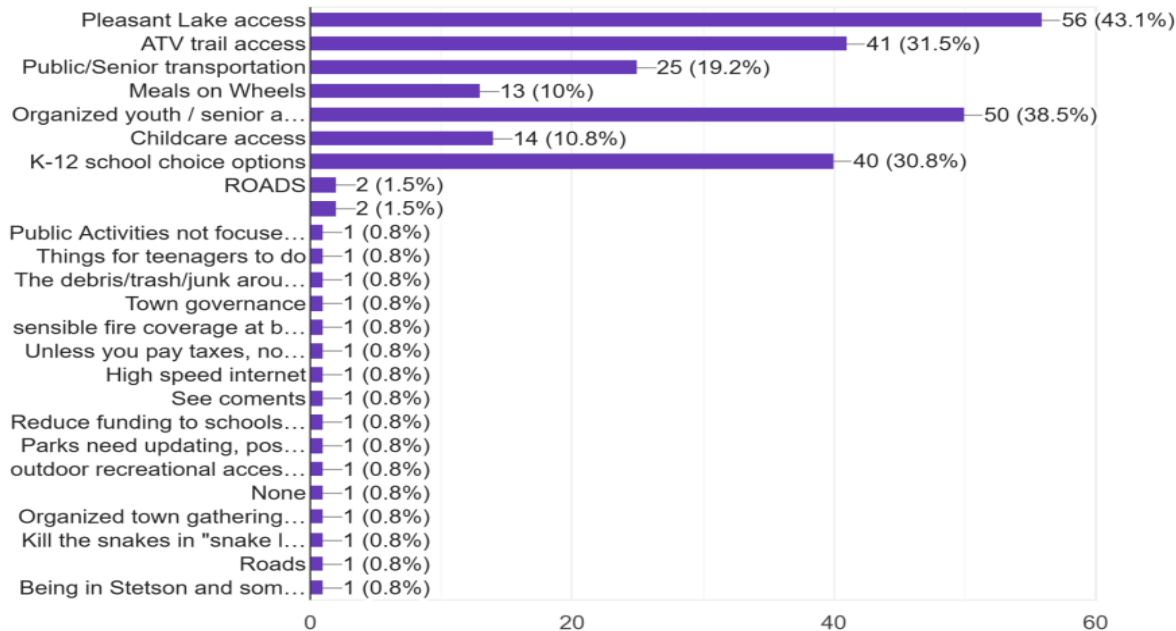
What type(s) of business would you like to see established in Stetson (check all that apply)

128 responses



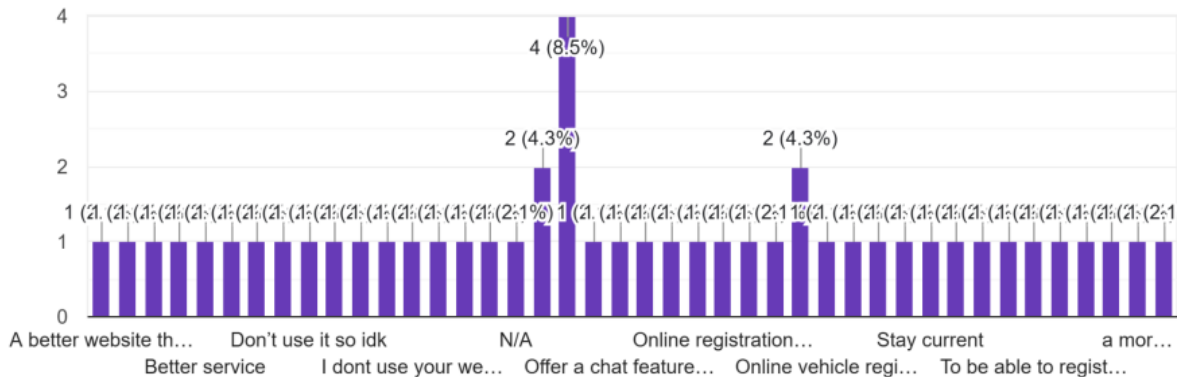
What would you like to see changed or improved in Stetson

130 responses



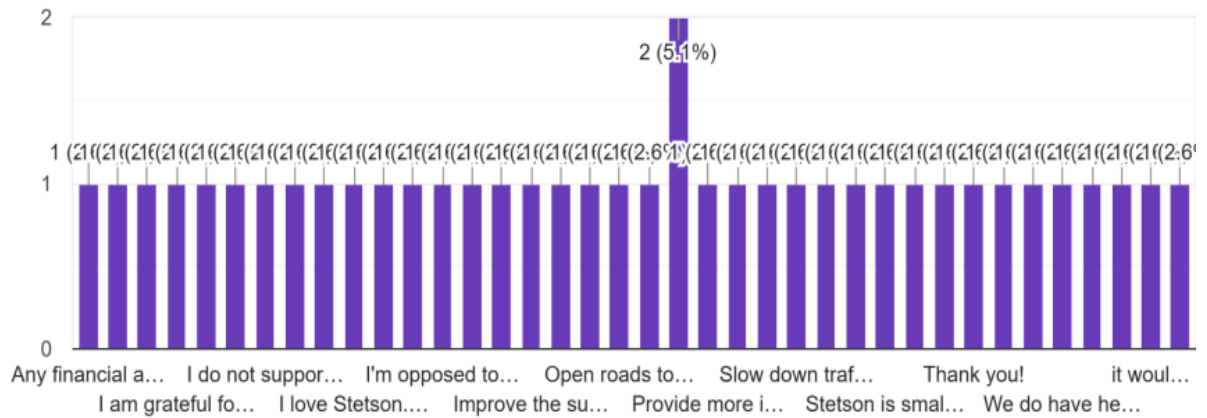
What, if any, changes would you like to see regarding the Stetson town website and/or online services offered

47 responses



Please provide any additional comments you would like to make. Thank you for participating in this survey!

39 responses



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