



# News About Town

## A Message From Our Town Manager

Hello Citizens and Friends of Gray,

We're only a month into 2022, and I'm already excited to share two major infrastructure developments with you.



The [Village Gateway](#) project is proceeding apace as we collaborate on plans for the recently acquired property across from the Town Hall. The Town will be seeking public input soon as we work to make this long-term vision a reality. I much appreciate the energy and enthusiasm that our various partners have brought to this endeavor. You can read more about the work being done on the Village Gateway in this newsletter.

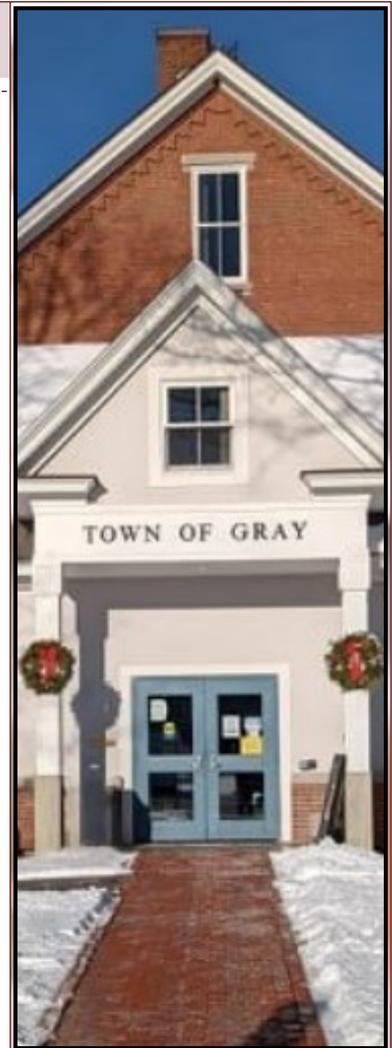
I'm also happy to report that the sidewalks on Shaker Road, one of the most traveled areas in Gray, have received substantial improvements, including now being compatible with the Americans with Disabilities Act. You can read about this project more on page five.

This is just a glimpse of the exciting direction in which Gray is headed. Thank you for being involved in our town's future.

All the best,

*Nate Rudy*

Town Manager



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## Upcoming Events

### **Feb. 2:**

6 p.m.: Open Space  
Committee—Zoom

### **Feb. 4 and 18:**

12 p.m.: Gray Food  
Pantry Open —  
Gray  
Congregational  
Church Parish  
House

### **Feb. 10:**

4 p.m.: Gray Town  
Council Budget  
Workshop - Zoom

### **Feb. 10:**

7 p.m.: Planning  
Board - Zoom

7 p.m.: Town  
Council Meeting -  
Zoom

### **Every Weds. And Friday:**

10:30 a.m.:  
Facebook Story  
Time — Gray  
Public Library  
Facebook Page

### **Feb. 23:**

7 p.m.: Zoning  
Board of  
Appeals—Zoom

# Town Leadership Looks Forward to Village Gateway Planning and Public Input

In 2020, Gray citizens approved a Comprehensive Plan, the Town's "blueprint" for the next 10 to 20 years, which provides policy guidance for a host of elements, including protection of natural habitats and directing where future residential and commercial development will occur.



Village Gateway sketch

In 2021, the Town had an opportunity to bring the Comprehensive Plan's vision to life by acquiring a seven-acre parcel located at the center of town. On June 8, Gray residents voted in support of the acquisition of this Village Gateway parcel, which will now feature largely in the strategic planning process for the long-term viability of the Gray Village. The parcel has the potential for not only sports fields, but also to further the Comprehensive Plan's goal of reshaping the Village as a more attractive environment for new business and real estate investment.

Town staff will soon present recommendations for the FY23 budget year that include project proposals for linking Town Hall and Newbegin Gym to the Village Gateway parcel (pictured above) via expansion of the Town's trail system and construction of recreational facilities. We hope that stakeholders and citizens will view these proposals in relation to the Village Gateway parcel acquisition and the Comprehensive Plan's goal of creating and maintaining additional off-street trail networks.

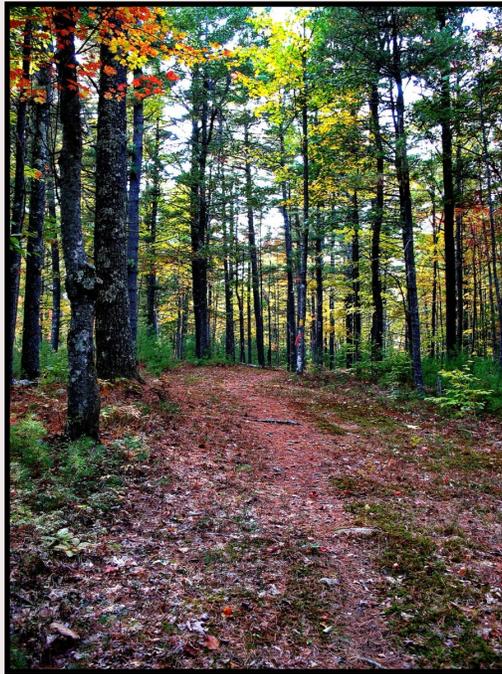
The Town Council will host public sessions to discuss the short- and long-term vision for the Village Gateway. We will share times and dates of those public sessions when they are decided.

# Libby Hills Trails

## Agreement Reached

The Town of Gray, MSAD 15 School District, and Gray Community Endowment are pleased to announce the approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Libby Hill Trails system located at the end of Libby Hill Road.

The result of a years-long effort to create a partnership between the three owner entities, the MOU will allow for the creation of an updated Forestry Management Plan, a long-term maintenance plan, and a fully developed Capital Investment Plan.



A section of the Libby Hills Trails system

Libby Hill Trails has become a central, highly utilized recreational gem over the years. The school district uses the trails for athletics – cross country track and Nordic skiing – creating a premiere location for Maine middle school and high school athletic meets and championships. In addition, the trails host classes, school projects, field trips, and Nonstop Nordic Races, among other things.

For more information about the Trails, please visit the newly updated Libby Hill Forest [website](#). If you are interested in becoming a member of the Gray Community Endowment or want to donate time or funds to the Trail system, please visit the endowment's [website](#).

### PSA: Being Safer in the Winter

Slips, trips, and falls are all-too-common in the winter. These tips can help you be safer while walking outside.

- Walk slowly, and point your toes out slightly to be more stable.
- [Walking like a penguin](#) is a safer way to get around on ice and snow.
- Don't text or read while walking.
- Don't take shortcuts over snow piles.
- Remove snow and water from shoes when entering buildings.
- Don't rush! Give yourself extra time in winter weather.

# Shaker Road Receives Improvements

Shaker Road, the road that links Main Street with Route 26A, is one of the most heavily trafficked areas in Gray. Recognizing that residents view traffic issues as a threat to their quality of life, one of the goals of the Town's 2020 Comprehensive Plan was "to address current transportation infrastructure needs to manage traffic and ensure safety of residents and visitors."

As a sign that the Town is working toward this goal, we are pleased to share that the Shaker Road sidewalk and drainage project is now complete. The project includes both sides of the road from Main Street to Chipman's Farm Stand. 28 drainage basins and four outfall pipes were replaced, more than 5,200 feet of aging sidewalk was reconstructed and widened, and about 860 feet of new sidewalk was added to the west side of the road going north. These sidewalks (including all road and driveway crossings) are now compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act standards.

This project, which ran from March to October 2021 and is on track to come in at or under budget, has only a few items remaining for this spring, including review of adequate grass cover, addressing any remaining paving or drainage concerns, and replanting trees at appropriate viable locations. The project was only possible thanks to funding from both the Town and the Maine Department of Transportation, and the efforts of those involved in the construction work.

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## Upcoming Nordic Races at Libby Hill

It's the season for some awesome ski races! Skiers can participate in Nonstop Nordic, a club of Nordic skiers comprised of all ages and abilities.

Middle and high school races are always after school, and the Nonstop Nordic races are on Sundays. Course prep begins the night before and organizers ask that people stay off the course during the race to avoid any mishaps or interference. Each of the Nonstop races will have a professional announcer broadcasting the race and keeping the action lively.

You can register on Nonstop Nordic's [website](#), and also view their [schedule](#). Races are contingent on snow.

If anyone has any questions or ideas of how the community can support these events, please [reach out](#) and share your thoughts.



Skiers of all ages can partake in Nordic fun!

# Volunteers Wanted For Blueberry Festival Planning Committee

To help make Gray's sixth annual Blueberry Festival the best one yet, the Blueberry Festival Committee is inviting 2-3 more people to join their all-volunteer Planning Committee.

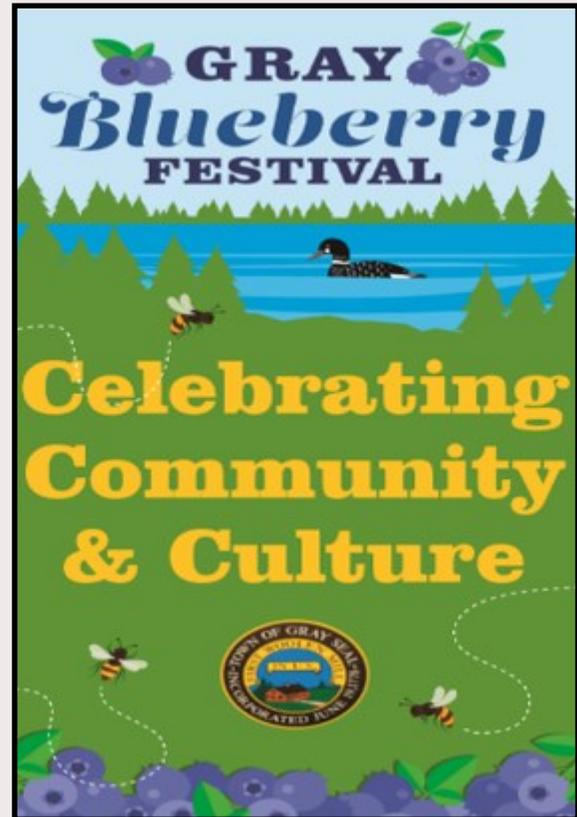
Joining this committee is a great way to practice and perfect valuable skills, such as marketing and communications, event planning, logistics, community outreach, fundraising, leadership, graphic design, and other similar talents.

Some new ideas the committee may entertain for 2022 include: launching a website and creating video promotions, applying for a grant, creating a new logo, and rebranding as "Gray's Wild Blueberry Festival."

Meetings are monthly. For more information, email [blueberryfestival@graymaine.org](mailto:blueberryfestival@graymaine.org) and visit [Gray Blueberry Festival](#) on Facebook.

Did you know the festival's activities raise \$5,000+ for participating G-NG School and Community Groups? This success is made possible by the continued support of local sponsors. Special thanks to our 2021 PRESENTING Sponsor: Enercon Technologies. Our 2021 MAJOR Sponsors are Bruns Bros., Cumberland County Federal Credit Union, Hannaford, Otelco, and Patriot Dental.

Gray residents, high school students, college students, and company employees are invited to join the Planning Committee. Submit your online [Community Volunteer Application](#).



The Gray Blueberry Festival is one of our community's most prominent events.

# The Town of Gray is Looking for Committee Members

*Serve your town by volunteering for these committees!*

**Blueberry Festival Committee:** Celebrates and promotes local businesses, community and school organizations, and the Pennell Complex.

**Community Economic Development Committee:** Promotes community and cultural connections in Gray and supports established businesses.

**Community Television and Communications Advisory Committee:** Makes recommendations regarding broadcast options for Gray, and recommends improvements to public, educational, and governmental programming.

**Dry Mills School House Committee:** Preserves the rich history of the Dry Mills School House.

**Library Trustees:** Adopts policies related to the library's operation and planning.

**Open Space Committee:** Makes recommendations to the Town Council to help secure access to land/corridors through acquisitions, easements, land swaps, and other forms of agreements.

**Planning Board:** Reviews and approves subdivision plans, site plans, conditional uses, and Shoreland Zoning applications in accordance with State Statutes and Town Ordinances.

**Resiliency Committee:** Promotes climate action planning and related actionable items.

**Zoning Board of Appeals Committee:** Hears and decides administrative appeals where it is alleged there is an error in any order, requirement, decision, or determination by the Code Enforcement Officer.

**MSAD15 School Board:** Shapes the functioning of the Gray-New Gloucester school system.



**To apply to any of these committees, go to [graymaine.org/volunteer](https://graymaine.org/volunteer).**

## The Town of Gray is Hiring!

We hire great people from a variety of backgrounds to do the town's important work. If you are looking for a career opportunity, check out our [Employment page](#) to see if there's an opening that's right for you!

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

- The ice rink behind Newbegin Gym is now open to the public. Please make sure you use the rink safely and follow the rules posted near the rink.



- Did you know Gray has its own community television channel, and that YOU can put content on it? The Gray Community Television channel is a community-based video portal operated by the Town of Gray, serving to entertain our viewers, ensure freedom of speech and improve the quality of life. If you have a programming idea, check out our [website](#) to get started.

**If you have an idea for a newsletter submission, please fill out this [form](#).**

Questions can be directed to:

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