



GRAY, MAINE



GRAY VILLAGE GATEWAY & HAMILTON PARCEL ACQUISITION INFORMATION

www.graymaine.org



BACKGROUND

In 2019, the citizens of Gray approved a Comprehensive Plan (CP) that shapes the long term vision of our town. Specifically, the approved CP establishes top priorities and goals. For example:

- Focus on moving people safely through Gray and getting around via walking, biking, car, or public transportation
- Protect Gray's rural character and natural resources
- Prioritize municipal investment in the Village
- Invest in Village and community programs
- Strengthen community connections through town-wide events and Parks and Recreation facilities and programs
- Create a Village downtown plan, the scope of which could include a market analysis, streetscape and design guidance recommendations, and traffic analysis with suggested roadway improvements
- Create programs and provide services for older people who would like to age in place in Gray

The acquisition of the Hamilton Parcel is an opportunity to secure a tangible asset tailor-made as a palette to implement the desires of our citizens and the goals of the CP:

Design: Reclaim the Village as a lively hub for residents, visitors, workers, and shoppers who can safely get around by foot, bicycle, and vehicle.

Organization: Sustain leadership and momentum focused on public and private investment.

Promotion: Position the Village as an essential gateway to Western Maine and the Sebago Lakes Region.

Economic: Re-establish the Village as a marketplace in the region for commerce and creativity.

VISION

To provide opportunities for potential recreational, economic development, parking and other possible uses to benefit the community of Gray.

The following rendering is a carefully considered concept for the Village Gateway Project intended simply to present to the community as a “potential uses as a vision” for the property as citizens consider its acquisition. Final design and use of the property, if acquired, will take additional study with the various stakeholders in the future.



This design envisions the property as primarily open space. At the rear of the site, there are ball fields bracketing a multi-purpose field. At the center, there is more open “flex space,” a restrooms and storage building, and community parking.

To the front there are areas for potential future development, either privately funded or a public-private partnership, envisioned to meet the needs of our populace and encourage investment in our town. Conceptual ideas include seniors housing and mixed-use commercial such as office space, shops, and a cafe.

In addition to being primarily open space, the site is designed with wooded buffers, and is pedestrian and bicycle friendly, with sidewalks, paths and Village Area Loop Trail (VALT) connections. It creates safer street crossings, connections to existing trail loops, sidewalks, and the rest of town. Near the entrance to the parcel, it encourages desired traffic calming in the form of a mini roundabout or splitter island design.



BENEFITS

The town's acquisition of the 7-acre "Hamilton Parcel" can provide opportunities for us to shape Gray's future, together, by creating potential recreational, economic development, parking and other possible uses with significant lifestyle and economic benefits for our community.

Potential Lifestyle Benefits

- Commitment and leadership of the town in revitalizing the Village
- A lively Village hub that protects Gray's rural character and natural resources while encouraging economic activity by visitors
- Safer routes for bikers, walkers, and drivers about town
- New homes for town recreation and programs and such as Little League and other sports, community gardening, the Blueberry Festival, and other events
- More convenient parking that takes the pressure off of other areas of town
- Traffic calming initiatives
- A chance to enhance our whole community lifestyle through placemaking and connectivity
- Encourage development that could serve the needs of our citizens, such as small business owners, or seniors wishing to remain in town as they age
- Encourage People to Drive TO Gray, Not *Through* Gray

Potential Economic Benefits

- A tangible asset that can be carefully planned and developed under the purview of the town, its stakeholders and citizens to meet our needs and goals without subjecting the parcel to the open market and outside parties
- Economic stimulus, investment and redevelopment that can offset the cost of acquisition
- An asset and opportunity to offset millions of dollars of investment in utilities such as water lines and stormwater infrastructure already approved by residents and encumbered by the town
- The broadening of our tax base through encouragement of development and a resulting increase of tax revenue from the parcel
- Increased land values for all through the creation of carefully planned innovation, attractiveness, and development

By voting on referendum warrant articles #10 and #11 on the June 8th ballot, Gray residents can take the first step toward a better Village through support of the town's acquisition of this strategic 7-acre parcel, and a chance to shape Gray's future, together.