



# News About Town

*A Message from our Town Manager*

Hello Gray,

Allow me to introduce myself: I'm Michael Foley, your new Town Manager, and I'm so thankful for the opportunity to serve this community. I'm wrapping up my position as Mayor of Westbrook, and coming from that nearby city means I've definitely heard of Gray and its stellar reputation as the crossroads of Maine. I know this town's future is remarkably vibrant.



Mike Foley, Gray's  
New Town Manager

I'm getting up to speed on the day-to-day activities of Gray's government, and I'm already diving into long-term projects that will require a steady hand and forward-thinking leadership. Interacting with Town staff during my initial days has only heightened my excitement for the potential that lies within Gray, and I am eager to contribute to the town's continued success.

My heartfelt thanks go to the Town Council for placing so much faith in me as I assume this leadership position, and for Josh Tiffany for ably shepherding Gray between Town Managers.

I look forward to meeting and listening to the community's needs. I know the Town Council will host a meet-and-greet soon so you and I can get to know each other. Details about this event will be published on our social media and website when they are available.

Thank you for the warm welcome, and I can't wait to become an integral part of the Gray community. If you have any questions, please email me at [mfoley@graymaine.org](mailto:mfoley@graymaine.org) or call 207-657-3339 x101.

Thanks,  
Michael Foley



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## FY25 Budget Public Input Session to Gather Feedback from Gray Residents



The Council Chambers will host public feedback on the FY25 budget.

Town of Gray municipal leadership is preparing our Fiscal Year 2025 budget, which runs from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025. One of the most important aspects in crafting this year's budget is *your input*.

Please know there is a Fiscal Year 2025 budget public input session hosted by the Town Council on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 6 p.m. at the Henry Pennell Municipal Complex at 24 Main Street in Gray. If you can't attend the meeting in person, you can watch it on GCTV-2, or participate remotely via [Microsoft Teams](#). If you are unavailable that evening but still wish for your voice to be heard, feel free to email your thoughts and comments on the FY25 budget to [admin@graymaine.org](mailto:admin@graymaine.org).

This public input session is a chance for residents to voice their thoughts on what should be in the FY25 budget. Public input is critical to the Gray Town Council as it balances fiscal

## Upcoming Events

### February 6

5 p.m.: Town Council Workshop — 24 Main Street and Microsoft Teams

6 p.m.: FY25 Budget Public Input Forum — 24 Main Street and Microsoft Teams

7 p.m.: Town Council Meeting — 24 Main Street and Microsoft Teams

### February 8

6 p.m.: Planning Board/ Open Space Committee Workshop — 24 Main Street and Microsoft Teams

7 p.m.: Planning Board Meeting — 24 Main Street and Microsoft Teams

### February 3, 6, 10

1 p.m.: Movie Time—Gray Public Library

### February 7

6:30 p.m.: MSAD #15 School Board Business Meeting — 24 Main Street

**FY25 Budget Public Input Session to Gather Feedback from Gray Residents**

responsibility, meeting the needs of the community, and preparing for Gray’s bright and vibrant future. We want to hear from you!

All FY25 budget information, including upcoming meetings, past meeting recordings, and all budget documents and spreadsheets, will be made available on a dedicated [webpage](#). The budget process is one of the things that makes the Town of Gray special – our budget must be voter-approved to be adopted. We hope you become part of the process prior to the budget being presented to voters on June 11. Together, we will shape the future of this town.

**Town Office to Host Gray Republican, Democratic Party Caucuses on February 3**

The Council Chambers, located in the Town Office at 24 Main Street in Gray, will host the Gray Democratic Party caucus and the Gray Republican Party caucus on Saturday, February 3, 2024.

The Republican Party caucus will be from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., and the Democratic Party caucus will be from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.



Attendees will, among other things, elect municipal party leaders.

Caucus attendees will elect state convention delegates and municipal party leaders, hear from candidates, offer opinions, suggest campaign activities, and connect with each other. All registered party members and new voters who wish to register with either party are invited.



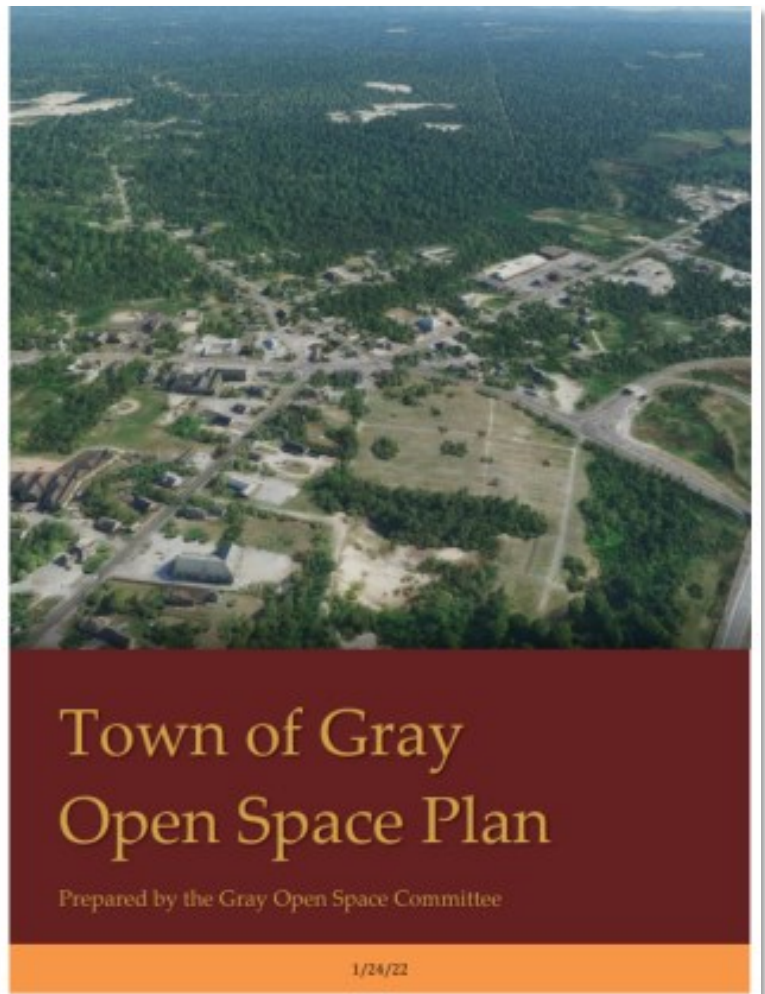
## Help Preserve Open Space in Gray by Joining Committee

The Town of Gray Open Space Committee is a small but eager group of citizen volunteers charged with implementing the town's Open Space Plan. They do this by engaging in discussions with landowners and regional land trusts, making recommendations to the Town Council to help secure access to land/corridors through various forms of agreements, while also assisting with fundraising for land/corridor acquisition from private and public sources.

They have also had opportunities to meet with potential developers and offer feedback to the open space aspects of their plan before they meet with the Town of Gray Planning Board.

Here are some highlights of what they have accomplished to date:

- Wrote Gray's first-ever [Open Space Plan](#), adopted by the Town Council in 2022. This plan is linked to the 2020 Gray Comprehensive Plan and will help guide the committee's work in the coming years.
- Created the Landowner Principles of Cooperation, a pledge from the town to work cooperatively and respectfully with Gray landowners who allow their land to be used for recreation.
- Created the Landowner of the Year Award to honor the generosity of Gray



The cover of the Open Space Plan, the guiding document for the Open Space Committee.

## Help Preserve Open Space in Gray by Joining Committee

landowners who allow the public to use their land.

- Held an informational meeting with Gray landowners to introduce the Open Space Plan and discuss conservation strategies and resources.

Here's what they are working on now:

- Creating maps and other tools to help identify and prioritize open space to conserve.
- Identifying potential trail corridors and land parcels to conserve.
- Providing input for updates to our Residential Open Space Subdivision ordinance to align with the new Open Space Plan.

This fun and important work will help protect Gray's rural character, protect wildlife habitat, conserve land for public recreation, and continue progress toward creating an off-road trail network.

The Gray Open Space Committee is currently recruiting new members. Please consider joining by submitting a committee member application. If you want to learn more, visit their [webpage](#) or connect with them via the Community Development Department at 657-3112.



You can help protect valuable green and open space in Gray by joining the Open Space Committee!

## Celebrating Community and Culture in 2024

### 2nd Annual Gray Community Day

*Saturday, May 18, 2024 (tentative date)*

[www.facebook.com/graycommunityday/](http://www.facebook.com/graycommunityday/)

Organizers for this event are looking for fun ideas, awesome volunteers, and local sponsors. The inaugural Gray Community Day was a big hit last year, as many people and community groups came to Newbegin Gym to celebrate the volunteerism that drives our community's success. The inaugural Chili Cook-Off was especially popular! Send your ideas to Lisa Lehne-Gilmore at [gcd@graymaine.org](mailto:gcd@graymaine.org).

### 8th Annual Gray Wild Blueberry Festival

*Saturday, August 10, 2024*

[www.facebook.com/graywildblueberryfestival/](http://www.facebook.com/graywildblueberryfestival/)

[www.wildblueberries.me/grayfestival/](http://www.wildblueberries.me/grayfestival/)

Craft-Artisan Booths and Non-Profit Groups: Lisa Lehne-Gilmore is your Festival Booth contact. Early-bird registration information will be sent in the coming days to the 2023 GWBF booths, so be sure to check your email/junk email for the new online registration form.

Local Sponsors, Food Court, and Musicians: Lacy Antonson will be your Festival contact. Food Court registration information will be sent soon to the 2024 food trucks & food tents, so be sure to check your email/junk email for our new online registration form.

This magical, annual event held the second Saturday in August at Pennell Park, 24 Main Street in Gray is made possible by the generous support of our local sponsors – and another reason why it's important to Shop Local!

**Did you know there is a G-NG Garden Group that started in 2023?** This new garden group is open to Gray and New Gloucester residents who care about pollinators, and who enjoy community gardening, educational field trips, garden tours, making crafts from/for your garden, and/or learning more about gardening in Maine. Group typically meets semi-monthly during the spring, summer, and fall. For more information, you're invited to join their private Facebook group, called the [G-NG Garden Group](#).



## Gray Gets First Public Commercial-Grade EV Chargers



One of the new EV chargers at 24 Main Street.

Are you an electric vehicle owner in Gray looking for a convenient and reliable charging spot? Look no further! The Henry Pennell Municipal Complex is now equipped with two cutting-edge EV chargers, marking a significant milestone as the town's first public commercial-grade charging stations. These chargers can accommodate two electric vehicles simultaneously. The cost is \$0.20 per kilowatt and \$2 per session.

A generous \$32,000 grant from

[Efficiency Maine](#), an independent, quasi-state agency established to plan and implement energy efficiency programs in Maine, made this installation possible.

The introduction of these chargers is a positive step toward making electric vehicle ownership more accessible and convenient for the Gray community. Whether you're a resident or just passing through, the Henry Pennell Municipal Complex is now a hub for sustainable transportation, providing an essential service to support the growing number of electric vehicles on our roads.

The number of electric vehicles on the road has grown by more than five times since 2018, and that trend only appears to be continuing, according to the [National Resources Council of Maine](#).

## Resiliency Corner | February 2024

*The Resiliency Corner is a monthly update from the [Resiliency Committee](#), which is charged with educating residents on topics related to resiliency planning, waste reduction, climate action, and the like.*

For the second December in a row, a bugaboo of a windstorm hit, this one paired with some rather intense flooding. Events like these make us all more conscious of practical concerns impacting ourselves and our neighbors. And as we prepare for the next storm, it seems like a good time to give an update on the Resiliency Committee.



The solar array near the Transfer Station on Seagull Drive is an example of Gray's push for resiliency.

Resiliency has a restored quorum and has met five times in the past three months to bring new members up to speed on what resilience strategies make the most sense for Gray and the community. Water quality/protection, climate change education, emergency planning, waste reduction, public transportation, biodiversity, energy, housing, and food, are all things that we have our sights on as we think about improving resilience in Gray. Identifying groups impacted more gravely by extreme weather events and economic disruptions and the value of our lakes, forests, and open spaces are also a consideration.

One of the top projects for the committee is to complete the process of enrolling in the Community Resilience Partnership. The committee began working with 207permaculture to qualify for enrollment in the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future program. Royal River Conservation Trust, Cumberland County Soil and Water, and North Star Planning have also supported the committee's work. Once enrolled, the Town qualifies for \$50,000 grants, with no match, to implement some resiliency priorities. To qualify, the Town needs to have a public workshop to discuss resilience priorities, complete a self-evaluation form, and pass a resolution.



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In March 2023, the committee hosted a workshop that looked at resilience broadly and generated a list of actions of importance to a thriving future Gray. New Gloucester and Durham held similar workshops and the three towns have been collaborating to envision a resilient future. You can learn about the effort to identify what is most relevant [here](#).

They also conducted interviews to get a broader view of what some of the risks and hazards are to the town, and a survey was completed. In February, the committee plans to meet with the Town Council to review data collected, priorities, and next steps which includes a request to pass a resolution that will state the priorities for climate action in Gray and complete the process of enrolling in the Community Resilience Partnership. Subsequent meetings with the Council will include grant opportunity discussions.

Stay tuned for more information about resilience work in Gray!

There are open committee seats if anyone is interested in joining. More details can be found [here](#).

# Gray is Looking for Committee Members

*Serve your town by volunteering for these committees!*



Various committee/board members meet for a Leadership Academy in 2022.

- **Wild 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 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.
- **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 influences the path our community will take toward climate resilience, energy efficiency, waste management and renewable energy.
- **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.
- **MSAD #15 School Board:** Shapes the functioning of the Gray-New Gloucester school system.
- **Recreation Committee:** Advises and recommends to the Town Council on recreational and public parks matters, such as: programs, policies, development, and leisure time activities.

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! We currently have openings for Transfer Station personnel, and an administrative assistant for the Assessing Department, among others.

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

- Dog registrations were due on January 31. If you have yet to register your dog, expect a \$25 late fee when you register [online](#) or at the Town Office.
- The Town of Gray is looking for election workers to help administer elections in 2024, including the March 5 Presidential Primary. Learn more and apply [here](#).
- The Town of Gray recently adopted Microsoft Teams for all public and non-public meetings. Learn more about this switch [here](#).

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

Questions can be directed to:  
Kyle Hadyniak  
Interim Director of Comm. and Information  
207-657-3339 x116

Find Us!

