

2004

# A Comprehensive Plan for the City of Caribou

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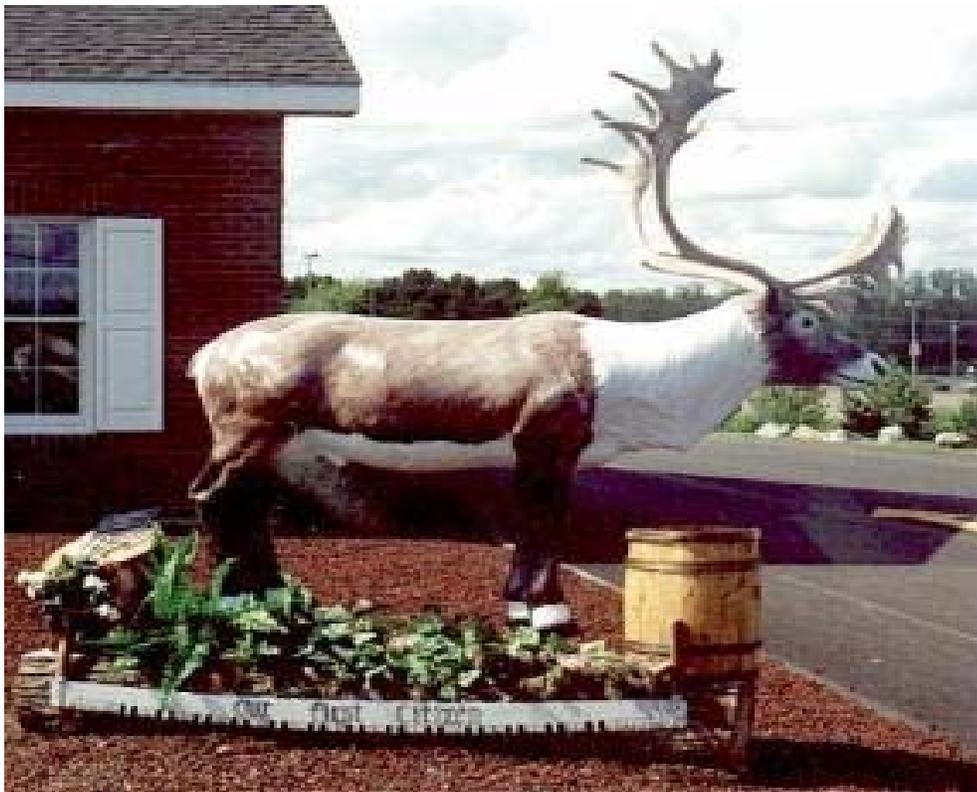
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# A Comprehensive Plan for the City of Caribou



January 2004

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Prepared with the technical assistance of:  
**Northern Maine Development Commission**  
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## A Comprehensive Plan for the City of Caribou

Adopted by the Residents On:

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## **Introduction**

Planning is an organized method of finding out what a community's needs are, and then setting up goals and policies to address those needs in a manner that will allow for future growth within the community, while making it a better place to live.

The Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act of 1988 established a cooperative program of comprehensive planning and land use management among the municipalities, regional planning councils, and the state. The focal points of the Act are:

1. The establishment of state goals to provide overall direction and consistency to the planning and regulatory actions of the municipalities and the state
2. The establishment of technical and financial assistance programs through the state planning office and regional planning councils to encourage and help communities develop comprehensive plans, and
3. The establishment of a process for the review of the comprehensive plans by the State Planning Office and regional planning councils to ensure that they are consistent with the Comprehensive Planning Act.

Part 1 of Caribou's Comprehensive Plan addresses the past and present resources, analyzes recent trends, and identifies potential problem areas. This section provides the overall community profile of such things as transportation, public facilities and services, natural and cultural resources, housing, land use, the local economy, and the city's fiscal capacity.

Part 2 of the Plan is the regional coordination program. Caribou is unique in many ways, however, the community shares its natural resources and public facilities with surrounding towns and likewise utilizes other communities' services and resources. This portion of the plan identifies those natural resources and public facilities that extend beyond the city's borders and develops implementation actions for the joint management of each.

Part 3 of the plan will discuss specific goals, policies, and strategies. These policies relate the findings of the inventories in the first part of the plan to the state, regional, and local goals. It is this portion of the Comprehensive Plan that residents can assist in the shaping of Caribou. The strategies discuss those programs, activities, and regulations that Caribou will undertake in the future to make sure that the goals and policies are met.

# Demographics

## Caribou's Vision

Caribou will constantly strive to be

- ❖ a dynamic community that is economically, culturally, and socially inviting;
- ❖ a community that promotes and aggressively pursues innovative business and economic development;
- ❖ a community that welcomes, supports, and responds to a diversity of new people and new ideas;
- ❖ a community that recognizes children as our future and shares collective responsibility for the nurturing and education of each generation;
- ❖ a community where family ties are strong, self respect and respect for others is instilled, where trust and courtesy is a way of life, and where the pace of life is consistent with these ideals; and
- ❖ a community that celebrates the values and lessons of a multi-cultural heritage that serves as its strength and as its foundation in a progressive, modern world

## **Demographics**

### **Introduction**

Demographic analysis and projections are the basic elements of any comprehensive plan; all other components of the plan depend on the current and projected population. The information generated from the demographic projections enhances the capacity of the town to prepare for the impact of future growth on such things as land use, housing demand, public services, and economic development.

According to the 2000 US Census, the population of Caribou was 8,312 people. Statistical data contained in the following section uses the 1990 and 2000 US Census data. Following 2000, statistics are based on figures compiled for the Maine State Planning Office by the University of Southern Maine. This model, REMI (Regional Economic Model, Inc became available in 2002. The REMI model will be used for State and County population statistics and projections whenever possible.

The demographic information included in this section encompasses the following: permanent population, age and sex of population, educational attainment, occupations of population, total number of households, household size, and household income. Also included in this section is an analysis of the data presented. The first portion of this section includes an assessment of the Maine population, Aroostook County population, and the population of communities located in the central Aroostook area. The following comparative communities used in the assessment include: Fort Fairfield, Presque Isle, Woodland, and Washburn. These communities will frequently be used to compare regional statistics versus local data.

The analysis, which follows, is an approximation of future growth, no projection or estimate can be exact because there are many independent variables which could affect the final estimates, such as an industry closing down or, for that matter, a very large industry relocating in town. Therefore, the projections are intended to reflect the general direction and size of changes. Changes in age groups should be viewed with the same importance as the total change in population.

### **State of Maine**

Maine has experienced a steady rise in the population level since the turn of the twentieth century. Since 1970, the state had increased in population by 239,000 persons, in 1990 accounting for an increase of 24.0 percent. In 2000, the state's population had risen to 1,274,923 according to the US Census. In 2005, a population of 1,300,000 is projected for the State. In the year 2010 the population of the state is projected at 1,330,117, and 1,371,022 for the year 2015. The US Census is used for data reference until the year 2000 for State and County figures. After 2000, population data is from the REMI model which has incorporated the use of the Treyz model in its statistical processes. The Treyz model is comprised of a "census undercount adjustment" and will account for population that is either miscounted or left out entirely in the Census counts. Additional data indicates that none of the growth since 1970 occurred in

Aroostook County. Aroostook County, with its vast areas of open land and the largest land area for potential growth, experienced a population decline.

## Aroostook County

According to US Census figures and a REMI projection model, from the turn of the century until the 1960's, the population of Aroostook County was on a steady rise, from 60,744 people in 1900 to 106,064 in 1960. However, since 1960 the population of Aroostook County has been slowly declining from this peak to 73,938 in 2000, closely paralleling the 1920 population. The County is expected to decrease again by the year 2005, with 73,303 people. Population is expected to increase slightly to a projected 73,537 people in 2015.

## Sub-Regional Population

Based upon the 2000 US Census and the 2002 University of Southern Maine's REMI projections, Caribou will lose 150 additional people by the year 2010, resulting in a projected total population of 8,162. However, REMI projects an increase of 233 in 2015 resulting in a population of 8,395. REMI also projects that each of the selected municipalities, with the exception of Woodland) will continue to lose population through 2010. However, the trend is projected to change between 2010 and 2015 in Caribou and each of the selected municipalities. There will be projected population growth, albeit small, in those communities. The projected population loss in Caribou of 17.7 percent between 1980 and 2000, parallels, but is slightly lower than the County's figure of a projected 22.5 percent population decrease by the year 2010. However, some of this population loss may be attributed to a segment of the out-migration population relocating to surrounding communities where the cost of living is perceived to be less expensive. This may be reflected in the increases, or at least the lesser declines, projected for some of the comparative regional communities.

## Sub-Regional Population and Projections, 1980-2015

Town	1980 Census	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 REMI Projection	2015 REMI Projection	% Change 1980-90	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 1980-15
<b>Caribou</b>	<b>9,916</b>	<b>9,415</b>	<b>8,312</b>	<b>8,162</b>	<b>8,395</b>	<b>-5.1</b>	<b>-11.7</b>	<b>-15.3</b>
Woodland	1,369	1,402	1,403	1,405	1,432	2.4	.1	4.6
Presque Isle	11,172	10,550	9,551	9,346	9,521	-5.6	-9.5	-14.8
Washburn	2,028	1,880	1,627	1,543	1,576	-7.3	-13.5	-22.3
Fort Fairfield	4,376	3,998	3,579	3,526	3,621	-8.6	-10.5	-17.3
Aroostook County	91,331	86,936	73,938	70,770	72,893	-4.8	-15.0	-20.2
State of Maine	1,124,660	1,227,928	1,274,923	1,385,109	1,371,022	9.18	3.83	21.9

Source: US Census, 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2002 REMI

In projecting population numbers, even the smallest loss can significantly skew statistical data. Since the next US Census count will be in the year 2010, statistical projections appear either optimistic or pessimistic in regards to proposed industries moving in or out and their projected effects on population. Caribou's "quality of life," rich cultural heritage, and location as a business and commerce center, makes it an attractive place for people and families to live.

The basic assumptions made by the REMI in the development of the projections are listed as follows:

- It is assumed there will be a very small increase in the birth rate during the next decade, but that an increase in out-migration will outweigh any substantial population gain.
- It is assumed that there will be an out-migration primarily of working age people between 25 and 44 years of age.
- It is assumed that there will be a very small decrease in the death rate during the next decade due to the projected average age of the population.

### **Caribou, Population Changes and Projections, 1960 to 2015**

The following table further details Caribou's population level since 1960 and gives percentage changes in accordance with these figures. As shown, the town has experienced a 0.1 percent increase in its population from 1960 to 2000, which greatly exceeds the 17.97 percent decrease in Aroostook County's population. The largest percentage decrease in a decade for the time period shown occurred in the 1990's when there was a net loss of 11.7 percent. Another factor to consider is that Maine experienced an increase in population of 27.04 percent between 1960 and 2000. However, this increase is insufficient to offset the out-migration that has and will continue to affect northern Maine. Projections show that population is expected to increase between 2005 and 2010 and again to 2015. It should be noted that even though Caribou is projected to experience a decrease in population through the year 2010, the surrounding community of Woodland is projected to experience an increase in population for the same time period. A segment of Caribou's population may not necessarily be out-migrating from Aroostook County, but rather relocating in the surrounding communities that have lower mil rates and perceived less costly living expenses.

## Population Trends, 1960-2015

Year	Caribou	Aroostook County	State of Maine
1960	8,305	106,064	969,000
1970	10,419	94,078	992,048
1980	9,916	91,331	1,124,660
1990	9,415	86,936	1,227,928
2000	8,312	73,938	1,274,923
2005	8,157	72,279	1,340,686
2010	8,162	70,770	1,385,109
2015	8,395	72,893	1,371,022
% Change 60-70	25.5	-11.3	2.4
% Change 70-80	-4.8	-2.9	13.4
% Change 80-90	-5.1	-4.7	9.5
% Change 90-00	-11.7	-14.9	3.8
% Change 60-2000	0.1	-30.3	6.1
% Change 2000-05	-1.9	-2.2	2.6
% Change 2000-10	-1.8	-4.3	6.1
% Change 2000-15	0.9	-1.4	4.9

Source: US Census, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2002 REMI

### Caribou Age Group Population

For the purposes of evaluation and to indicate the movement and distribution of age groups over the years, ages are broken down into five groups. They are: 0-4 years old, pre-school age; 5-17 years old, school age; 18-44 years old, child-bearing age; 45-64 years old, working age; and 65+, retirement age.

### Caribou Population by Age Group, 1980-2015

Age Group	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	% Change 1980-90	% Change 1990-00	% Change 2000-10	% Change 2000-15
Under 5	745	625	475	444	445	-16.11	-24.00	-6.53	-6.32
5,-17	2,615	1,695	1,463	1,065	1,063	-35.18	-13.69	-27.20	-27.34
18-44	3,504	3,837	2,744	2,481	2,471	9.50	-28.49	-9.58	-9.95
45-64	2,006	1,958	2,174	2,566	2,558	-2.39	11.03	18.03	17.66
65+	1,046	1,300	1,459	1,606	1,858	24.28	12.23	10.08	27.35
Total	9,916	9,415	8,315	8,162	8,395	-5.05	-11.68	-1.84	0.96

Source: US Census, 1980, 1990, and 2000 and 2002 REMI

### 0-4 Pre-School Age Group

This age group, which also includes Head Start and Pre-K students, experienced a decrease in population between 1980 and 1990 of 16.1 percent and a decrease of 24 percent between 1990 and 2000. The tendencies toward smaller families and the exodus of a portion of the child-bearing population have contributed to this situation. Between 1980 and 2000, the Pre-School

Age Group decreased by 36.2 percent. This age group experienced the second highest percent decrease of the age groups examined. It is expected to decrease again in 2010 and gain 1 person in 2015.

#### 5-17 School Age Group

This age group is referred to as the School Age Group and is comprised of children and adolescents. Similar trends have affected this age group as with the 0-4 age group (that is, smaller families and population exodus). After experiencing a decrease of 35.1 percent between 1980 and 1990, this age group experienced a second decrease between 1990 and 2000 of 13.7 percent. Between 1980 and 2000, the School Age Group experienced a decrease of 44.1 percent. Since this age group and the 0-4 age group experienced high decreases, decline in school enrollment could create funding and programming issues. This age group is expected to decrease again by 27 percent in 2010 and lose 1 additional person between 2010 and 2015.

#### 18-44 Child-Bearing Age Group

This age group experienced an increase of 9.5 percent between 1980 and 1990 and a decrease of 28.5 percent between 1990 and 2000. Between 1980 and 2000, this age group experienced a 21.7 percent decrease in population. The last segment of this population group could experience an increase due to changes in the status of the family. These changes include mature children leaving home and the subsequent move (return) to northern Maine of middle-aged adults seeking a quality of life and a return to their ancestral roots. Like the above two age groups, this segment of the population is expected to decline through 2015.

#### 45-64 Working Age Group

Known as the Working Age Group, this segment of the population experienced a decrease of 2.4 percent between 1980 and 1990, and an increase of 11 percent between 1990 and 2000. However, between 1980 and 2000, this group (one of only two) experienced the second highest overall increase with 8.4 percent. This is the first age group that is showing a projected increase on population through 2015.

#### 65+ Retirement Age Group

Referred to as the Retirement Age Group, they experienced an increase of 24.3 percent between 1980 and 1990 and another increase of 12.2 percent between 1990 and 2000. Between 1980 and 2000, the Retirement Age Group was one of only two age groups that experienced an increase (39.5 percent). Like the Working Age Group, this segment of the population is expected to increase in 2010 and again in 2015.

### **Age Group Analysis**

The distribution of Caribou's population has followed trends similar to that of Aroostook County. The effects of a continually growing retirement age population will place pressures upon the local taxpayers as they deal with a larger percentage of their citizenry living on fixed

retirement level incomes. There will be a need for additional elderly housing and services and an evaluation of the level of funding for educating declining numbers of school aged children.

### Regional Median Age

In 1980, Caribou's median age was approximately 29.6 years of age. By 1990, the median age had increased to 34.7 years of age. In 2000, Caribou's median age was 40.8. The median age in Caribou has shifted as a segment of the younger age population has decreased as reflected in the 1980, 1990, and 2000 US Census. This is due in part to a smaller number of families, smaller number of children per family, the decline and mechanization of the agricultural and the lumber industries, and out-migration. In comparison with the other communities in the region, there are very similar occurrences as the median age increased in every community during the same time period.

### Educational Attainment of Population Age 25+ Years

According to the 2000 US Census, 75.4 percent of persons 25 years of age and older in Caribou (5,930) are high school graduates or higher. In 1990, 71.1 percent of the population aged 25 years or older were high school graduates or higher. The overall percentage of those 25 and over going on to higher education had increased slightly between 1990 (33.9%) and 2000 (42%). Even with this improvement, the percentage of high school graduates or higher over the age of 25 was slightly lower than that of the Aroostook County 2000 figure of 76.9 percent and significantly lower to the State of Maine figure of 85.4 percent. In 2000, 17.9 percent of adults 25 years of age or older in Caribou had a bachelors degree or higher.

### Educational Attainment of Population Age 25+, 1990 to 2000

	Year	25 Years or Older Population	Years of Education						
			<9th	9 to 12	HS Grad	Some College	Associates	Bachelor's	Grad Degree
Caribou	1990	6,179	998	787	2,294	849	446	565	240
	2000	5,930	743	718	1,986	1,004	419	769	291
Presque Isle	1990	6,609	849	761	2,002	1,310	623	702	362
	2000	6,292	475	695	2,014	1,207	580	929	392
Fort Fairfield	1990	2,625	379	349	816	480	221	259	121
	2000	2,449	253	371	892	327	100	363	143
Woodland	1990	887	147	151	370	86	35	72	26
	2000	957	107	150	354	159	66	79	42
County	1990	55,738	N/A	N/A	9,027	7,176	23,912	8,676	6,947
	2000	51,439	5,802	6,066	19,799	8,893	3,345	5,544	1,990
State	1990	795,613	N/A	N/A	70,153	98,307	295,074	182,727	149,352
	2000	869,893	47,183	80,105	314,600	165,111	63,934	129,992	68,968

Source: US Census, 1990 and 2000

### Population by Industry and Occupation

The following chart summarizes characteristics of the working population of Caribou for 2000, by working population and percentage of working population. In Caribou, the Educational,

Health and Social Services sector comprises the highest percentage of workers at 28.8 percent. The second highest is Retail Trade at 13.9 percent, followed by Manufacturing at 8.5 percent. Caribou parallels the comparative regional communities of Presque Isle and Fort Fairfield. In Presque Isle, the Education, Health and Social Services sector comprises the highest percentage of workers with 29.3 percent, followed by Retail Trade with 17 percent, and Professional Services with 8.6. In Fort Fairfield, the Education, Health and Social Services sector ranks first with 30 percent, followed by Professional Services with 11.3 percent, and Retail Trade with 9.9 percent.

### Occupation by Industry, 2000

Type	Caribou		Presque Isle		Fort Fairfield	
	2000	Percent	2000	Percent	2000	Percent
Agriculture, Mining, Forestry, & Fishing	100	2.7	149	3.2	87	5.7
Construction	230	6.2	199	4.3	53	3.5
Manufacturing	316	8.5	386	8.3	100	6.5
Transportation	124	3.3	284	6.1	113	7.4
Wholesale Trade	106	2.9	109	2.3	32	2.1
Information	51	1.4	137	2.9	32	2.1
Retail Trade	514	13.9	790	17.0	152	9.9
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	164	4.4	159	3.4	54	3.5
Professional, Scientific, Admin., Waste Management	313	8.5	402	8.6	174	11.3
Education, Health, Social Services	1,068	28.8	1,360	29.3	460	30.0
Art. Entertainment, Recreation	248	6.7	288	6.2	73	4.8
Other Services	215	5.8	211	4.5	144	9.4
Public Administration	255	6.9	175	3.8	61	4.0
Totals	3,704	100	4,649	100	1,535	100

Source: 2000 US Census

It should be noted that the number of large manufacturers in Aroostook County continues to decrease. Caribou has done well to balance and diversify its economic base. The three dominant sectors are fairly close in percentages of workers, enabling the city's employed to avoid reliance on one sector of the economy. With this in mind, continued efforts should be made to diversify and promote economic opportunities in the Professional Services and Retail Trade sectors, while promoting the establishment of light manufacturing industries, agriculture, and other forms of material goods production.

### Households and Household Size

According to the 2000 US Census, Caribou had 3,517 households with an average household size of 2.32 people. Caribou's average family size in 2000 was 2.84 people. In 1990, Caribou

had 3,719 households with an average household size of 2.49 people. The average family size was 2.98 people. Caribou’s trend of smaller household and family size is consistent with that of Aroostook County. The smaller size can be attributed to the “empty nesters” returning to live in the area or retirees from the military staying in the region.

**Median Household Income**

In 2000, the median household income was \$29,485 and the per capita income of individuals was \$16,061. In Caribou, 24.1 percent of the total number of households was in the less than \$15,000 category. However, 25.5 percent of all households are in the greater than \$50,000 category and 19.2 percent are in the \$15,000-24,999 category. Caribou’s median household figure was below the 2000 US Census figure for the State at \$37,240. Caribou’s median household income is slightly above the 2000 Aroostook County figure of \$28,837. The distribution of household income in 2000 is listed as follows:

**Median Household Income, 2000**

Income	Households	Percent
<\$15,000	854	24.1%
\$15,000-24,999	678	19.2%
\$25,000-34,999	543	15.4%
\$35,000-49,999	559	15.8%
>\$50,000	901	25.5%
Total	3,535	100.00

Source: US Census, 2000

**Demographic Analysis**

Caribou has undergone significant changes in demographic trends over the last 30 years. Caribou’s population has declined 16.2 percent since 1980, much of which can be attributed to the closure of Loring Air Force Base. The trend of decreasing population is projected to continue into the year 2010 and possibly beyond. A population of 8,157 is projected for the year 2005 and 8,162 for 2010. The birth rate, death rates, and migration patterns for Caribou from which the projections have been derived may prove to be accurate. However, if the factors considered change, the projections could prove to be inaccurate.

Caribou’s residents enjoy the conveniences that exist with living in a center of industry and commerce. It has access to even larger population centers of Presque Isle and Bangor, yet retains the quality of life found in a smaller community. These attributes could possibly attract additional population in the future depending on possible industries and/or businesses moving into the area. Encouraging small-scale commercial and industrial growth that creates a range of

income opportunities may stimulate additional population growth. A large number of low-paying jobs should be discouraged and a balance between an increasing residential and non-residential tax base should be sought. Another favorable method for encouraging growth is planning for tourism development and the development of recreation areas.

Finally, the city must monitor the effects of an aging population on the public services which it offers. It must also monitor the trend towards a smaller school age population, resulting in smaller class sizes. A smaller school age group combined with an aging population and out-migration can have an effect on educational, recreational, cultural, and community programs, as well as the funding for these. An aging population will create a need to expand programs for the elderly, such as walking programs, shopping excursions, and social activities. The city should continue to update E-911 emergency care service.

# Land Use

## Caribou's Vision

Caribou will constantly strive to be

- ❖ a dynamic community that is economically, culturally, and socially inviting;
- ❖ a community that promotes and aggressively pursues innovative business and economic development;
- ❖ a community that welcomes, supports, and responds to a diversity of new people and new ideas;
- ❖ a community that recognizes children as our future and shares collective responsibility for the nurturing and education of each generation;
- ❖ a community where family ties are strong, self respect and respect for others is instilled, where trust and courtesy is a way of life, and where the pace of life is consistent with these ideals; and
- ❖ a community that celebrates the values and lessons of a multi-cultural heritage that serves as its strength and as its foundation in a progressive, modern world

## Land Use

The land use section is one of the most important components of the comprehensive plan. The location and amount of land available and suitable for particular purposes can be determined by reviewing past and present land uses. The planning program inventoried agricultural and forest lands, soil types and characteristics, natural resources, transportation networks, housing needs, demographics, local and regional economy, and public facilities and services. These inventories are then analyzed and reflected in a Land Use Plan. Implementation of the land use plan is accomplished through the development of a set of land use regulations.

Since the comprehensive plan is a long-range guide for the growth and development of Caribou, it can not be too specific or rigid. It has to be flexible and adapt to unforeseen changes and demands. An overall framework is provided to make intelligent and informed land use decisions within which adjustments can be made to any inevitable changes.

The city contains both urban and rural areas. Due to the lack of developable land with frontage on existing roads in the urban area, new residential development is primarily taking place in the City's more rural areas.

Caribou has designated all of the following zones as their "Growth" area: I-1, I-2, C-1, C-2, R-1, R-2, R-2A, and R-C2. This is the area that is presently served by city water and sewer.

Caribou's vision was developed by its residents through the Focus on the Future project. Many days and evenings of hard work went into this vision and its importance to the City is evident on a daily basis. The residents of Caribou are proud of their vision and city officials determined that it should be used as chapter breaks within the comprehensive plan.

Additionally Caribou has a strong history of land use regulations. A new zoning ordinance, site design review ordinance, and subdivision ordinance was certified by the State Planning Office and adopted by residents in 2001. The City also continually updates its Shoreland Zoning and floodplain management ordinance on a regular basis. Caribou is the only city/town in Aroostook County that has capacity to review large developments. Caribou's Planning Board, both past and present, have made strong and conscious efforts not to change district boundaries or land uses.

According to the Code Enforcement Officer, over 50 percent of the new home construction during the past 3 years has occurred in the City's designated Growth Area. Many of these homes are associated with subdivisions. The CEO projects that this trend will continue into the future.

On top of the strong land use controls, the city has made a conscious effort to put most of its capital improvement funds into the designated growth areas. The City has received downtown revitalization funds, applied for funds to rebuilt a wellness center in the downtown, seeking funds to connect the downtown with recreational trails in the rural areas, sought funds and constructed projects around Collins Pond for walking and bicyclist, and many other projects. The City has made a strong commitment to its downtown area and the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

## Land Use Regulations

### Citywide Zoning Ordinance

Caribou's general citywide zoning ordinance is comprised of 12 zones or land use districts. There is also an official two-part map set entitled "Urban Zoning" and "Rural Zoning." Land use districts and their current purposes include:

- **R-1 Residential District.** The R-1 District encompasses most of the older residential neighborhoods and is located within convenient reach of business facilities. The District is expected to contain most of higher density single-family type dwellings likely to be needed by the community. Certain additional uses which meet the requirements of this ordinance may be permitted which will contribute to balanced neighborhoods and enhance the attractiveness of the community.
- **R-2 Residential District.** The R-2 District encompasses most of the older residential neighborhoods and is located within convenient reach of business facilities. The R-2 District is expected to contain most of the multi-family or apartment type dwellings likely to be needed by the community. However, in harmony with the established neighborhoods, predominant land use will probably continue to be single-family residence. As in the R-1 District, certain additional uses which meet the requirements of this ordinance may be permitted, which contribute to balanced neighborhoods and enhance the attractiveness of the community.
- **R-2A Residential District.** The R-2A District is expected to contain mostly mobile homes on single lots. However, in harmony with the established neighborhoods land use will probably continue to be single-family homes.
- **R-3 Residential District.** The R-3 district encompasses most of the area outside the urban center and is intended for the kinds of uses which have traditionally predominated in rural New England; forestry and farming, farm residence, and a scattering of varied uses not inconsistent with a generally open, non-intensive pattern of land use. The minimum lot size requirement is high in order to prevent over-development where public sewers are not feasible and where a full range of urban services can not be provided economically.
- **R-4 Residential District.** The R-4 District is a District in which the principle use of the land will be for single-family housing only. The development of an attractive rural residential neighborhood will be encouraged.
- **C-1 Commercial District.** The C-1 District is intended primarily for commercial uses to which the public requires easy and frequent access. Centrally located and at the center of the existing downtown business district, the C-1 District is intended to encourage the concentration of commercial development to the mutual advantage of customers and merchants.
- **C-2 Commercial District.** The C-2 District is intended primarily for commercial uses to which the public requires free and easy access and to provide for a wider range of associated activities in the business community than in the "C-1" District.

- **RC-2 Commercial District.** The RC-2 District is intended for commercial uses to which the public requires free and easy access. The lot size requirements are larger than other commercial Districts, since the area may not be serviced by public sewer, and the set back requirements are greater, since most RC-2 Districts are expected to be along major traveled roads.
- **C-3 Commercial District.** The C-3 District is designed for a building or a group of buildings in single ownership with an initial minimum of 50,000 square feet used exclusively for any use permitted without special permission of the Board of Appeals in a C-1 or C-2 District. Upon review by the Planning Board, the Board of Appeals may permit as a special exception: a non-conforming building or use of a building or premises incidental to, and reasonably required for, the development of a neighborhood for a period of time not to exceed six (6) months. The Board of Appeals may renew the permit for further period of time, but not to exceed an additional six (6) months. The total duration of the permit shall not exceed one year.
- **I-1 Industrial District.** The I-1 District is to provide land which is conveniently located with respect to transportation and municipal services and where other conditions are favorable to the development of industry and which at the same time is so located as to prevent undesirable conflict with residential and business uses.
- **I-2 Industrial District.** The I-2 district is to provide land which is conveniently located to transportation facilities for business activities which require extensive land area, but do not require close proximity to residential and commercial areas of the community and to promote such land use in the community while at the same time located such activity as to prevent undesirable conflict with residential and business uses and reduce traffic congestion in these areas.
- **H-1 Health Related District.** The H-1 District is intended primarily for health use or uses compatible with a hospital or health-related purpose. Located in the proximity of the Cary Medical Center, the H-1 District is intended to encourage the concentration of medically related development for efficient land use.

City officials feel that the present ordinance is working well and adequately addresses its stated purposes. However there are a few minor changes that need to be addressed by the Planning Board. These include:

1. Allowing apartments on the second story of commercial buildings.
2. Reviewing land uses in the R-3 District.
3. Developing guidelines for the disposal of industrial wastes.
4. Telecommunications and windmill siting standards.
5. Changes in Planning Board and Board of Appeals wording.
6. Parking issues in the downtown.
7. Curb cut issues.
8. Traffic patterns in the downtown.

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## Shoreland Zoning

Caribou's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance was adopted by the city's legislative body in 1992 and subsequently approved by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. The ordinance basically follows the State's minimum guidelines and four (4) districts have been established including: Resource Protection, Limited Residential, General Development, and Stream Protection. The four districts are also officially identified on the City's Official Shoreland Zoning map. The zones are as follows:

- **Resource Protection:** Areas where development would jeopardize significant natural, scenic, recreational and historic resources, including but not limited to flood plains, precipitous slopes, wildlife habitat, and other areas critical to the ecology of the region or state.
- **Limited Residential:** Areas suitable for residential and recreational development.
- **General Development:** Areas of two or more acres devoted to commercial, residential, or recreational activities or a mix of both including but not limited to transportation rights-of-way, utility rights of way, areas devoted to retail trade of service activities, agricultural uses, and residential development.
- **Stream Protection:** This district generally includes areas within 100 feet of streams.

Shoreland Zoning waterbodies listed in the ordinance within the City include: Collins Pond, Aroostook River, Caribou Stream, Prestile Stream, Little Madawaska River, Moore Brook, Nichols Brook, Factory Brook, Greenlaw Brook, Wolverton Brook, Brandy Brook, Hardwood Brooks (I and II), Otter Brook, Farnham Brook, Longfellow Brook, and Violette Brook. In addition, there are 21 non-forested wetlands that are regulated under the ordinance. City officials do not feel the need to update this ordinance at this time.

## Floodplain Hazard Area Regulations

Caribou adopted Flood Hazard Area Regulations as part of its Citywide Zoning. The regulations established a Flood Hazard Development Permit system and review procedure for development activities located within designated flood hazard areas of Caribou.

Flood Hazard Development Permits granted by the Code Enforcement Officer incorporate specific development standards listed in the ordinance. These standards are designed to ensure that floodplain management measures are appropriately applied in flood hazard areas.

Parts of this regulation may be outdated and need to be updated to reflect changes in the federal floodplain program. City officials should review the definition sections of the most recent floodplain management ordinances available from the State Planning Office. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) can deny claims in a municipality with an outdated regulation.

## Caribou Existing Land Uses

The following chart illustrates the existing land uses in Caribou's urban area in 2002. Where there was multiple land uses on a particular lot, all land uses were tabulated. **Therefore, there**

**will be more total land uses than there are total lots** (e.g., store with an upstairs apartment, residence with a farm or woodlot, etc.). The land use categories are:

- Residential** - The residential category includes all areas in use for residential purposes. This includes single-family, two-family, multi-family, and mobile homes.
- Commercial** - The commercial category includes retail businesses and services.
- Industrial** - The industrial category includes land devoted to railroads, warehouses, shipping facilities, and food processing.
- Public** - The public category includes churches, parks, recreation areas, cemeteries, and public buildings.
- Agricultural** - Land used for production of food and fiber (e.g., potatoes, oats, peas, broccoli, hay, etc.) or for the pasturing / feeding of livestock.
- Vacant** - This category is comprised of: cropland reverting back to scrub growth, meadows, marshes, and wetlands. (Some of these are covered in greater detail in the Natural Resources section of this Plan).

According to a windshield survey conducted in the Winter of 2002, there are 1,949 lots exhibiting various land uses in Caribou. These figures should be used only as a reference tool due to the nature of the windshield survey and because the survey deals with land uses on the lot and not the number of units.

### **Urban Area Existing Land Use, 2002**

Caribou's urban area is defined by NMDC for the purpose of the windshield survey as portions of the Main Street, Access Highway, parts of Route 89, parts of Route 161, and parts of US Route 1. The urban area represents the area of city where the majority of residential and commercial growth has traditionally occurred. There were 1,949 lots counted as being within this area. The predominant landscape features in this area are Aroostook River, Caribou Stream, and Collins Pond. There are a wide variety of land uses in the village area.

## Urban Area Land Use, 2002

Land Use	Number of Lots in Urban Area	Percent of Type in Urban Area
Residential	1,527	78.3
Commercial	172	8.8
Agriculture	2	0.1
Vacant	177	9.2
Public	59	3.0
Industrial	12	0.6
Total Uses	1,949	100

Source: Windshield Survey Plotted onto Caribou Tax Map & Assessment records, 2002

Residential land uses comprise 78.3 percent of the lots in this urban area followed by vacant (9.2%), and commercial (8.8%) and public (3.0%) land uses. There is also a large amount of public land located in the village area. Public land use in Caribou is comprised of recreational areas, city offices, city garages, cemeteries, historic buildings, schools, churches, and a museum.

As noted above, there are 177 vacant lots in the urban area. Many of these lots are associated with residential subdivisions along Fountain, Newton, and Dahlgren Streets. City officials may want to review the city's ordinances to make these lots appealing to potential developers. Public water and sewer serve most of these lots. Another large block of vacant land is located along the Aroostook River in the vicinity of the Maine, Montreal, and Atlantic rail line.

### Rural Area Land Uses

Outside of the urban area as shown in a map at the end of this chapter, Caribou's urban area contains a mixture of agricultural, vacant, and residential lands. Development patterns have spread out along major transportation corridors. The residential lots outside the urban area are scattered throughout the city and many are located adjacent to agricultural or forested property along established roads. This area is zoned R-3 Residential District. The R-3 district encompasses most of the area outside the urban center and is intended for the kinds of uses which have traditionally predominated in rural New England; forestry and farming, farm residence, and a scattering of varied uses not inconsistent with a generally open, non-intensive pattern of land use. The minimum lot size requirement is high in order to prevent over-development where public sewers are not feasible and where a full range of urban services can not be provided economically

### Building Permit Activity

Caribou has seen significant growth and building permit activity since 1997. In total, 694 building permits have been issued with an estimated assessed value of \$26,521,000. There has

been a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial activity which has brought significant increases in property taxes to the city. According to city officials, approximately fifty percent (50%) of the value of construction was by non-profit or tax exempt organizations.

The following chart documents building permit activity for the period 1997 through 2002.

**Caribou Building Permit Activity 1997-2002**

Year	Permit Activity	Cost of Construction	New Housing Permits
1997	94	\$2,000,000	9
1998	118	\$2,586,000	10
1999	99	\$5,325,000	21
2000	126	\$4,710,000	23
2001	121	\$3,100,000	14
2002	136	\$8,800,000	20
Totals	694	\$26,521,000	97

Source: City of Caribou, 2002

**Access Management**

In May 2000, the 119<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature enacted P.L. 1999, ch. 676, An Act to Ensure Cost Effective and Safe Highways in the State. This legislation directed the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) to draft rules and regulations for the design of driveways and entrances on state and state aid highways. This legislation required that the Legislature review and approve the portions of these rules applicable to arterial highways.

For the first time, there are now a finite number of new curb cuts that can be constructed along highways. Route 1 from Caribou to Houlton, part of the National Highway System, has been designated a Mobility Corridor and, along certain sections, (Caribou to Presque Isle) a Retrograde Arterial. As such, this corridor is now afforded the highest level of protection under the new regulations. While these new regulations do not require landowners to give up existing driveways, they do regulate new residential and commercial entranceways and driveways. Those wishing to build along Route 1 now must obtain a permit from MDOT.

The City has access management standards in its ordinance. In some cases, this ordinance is more stringent than state standards. City officials will need to review the standards in the ordinance and determine how they are in conflict with State regulations or more stringent.

## Land Use Analysis

Caribou has an attractive future as a place to work, for the urban and rural quality of life it has to offer, and for recreation and leisure-time activities. The City contains an urban downtown area, developed residential, commercial, and industrial areas that surround the downtown, and large outlying areas that have retained much of their rural character, despite the current residential development pressures. The maps of current land uses in Caribou and the information about development pressures will allow the municipality to effectively maintain existing land uses and prepare and plan for future land uses by prioritizing those areas of the community which are best suited for residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and public uses. The City has also identified other areas where little or no growth should be encouraged, such as areas unserved and unserviceable by water and sewer, prime forest lands, prime agricultural lands, wetlands, areas of endangered natural resources, aquifers, etc. The present zoning ordinance attempts to direct development in those areas in which they are suitable, and will be updated following the release of the Plan to more closely promote those newly identified City goals.

Moderate portions of the land have been developed in Caribou, although there is ample land available for additional growth. However, it is important to target future growth in specific areas able to accommodate development to preserve existing rural resources within the City. There has been an increase in the past several years of residential and commercial development outside of the traditional village area, and this has put pressure on existing agricultural land. This could eventually lead to added expenses for the City in terms of utilities, public facilities and services, and busing costs. Therefore, the City should do what it can to promote development near the existing urban core.

The City should identify appropriate locations for affordable housing opportunities. There is no room for affordable housing within the village area as narrowly defined here. However, there is ample space adjacent to the village area, perhaps to the east. Mobile home parks are considered an important type of affordable housing, and should be allowed in R-2 Districts in the future, with incentives given to mobile home park developers who will extend existing infrastructure (including roads, sewer, and water systems) in conformance with HUD standards. Affordable housing locations would ideally be on or with easy access to public water and sewer systems, and would therefore facilitate relatively high density development.

Commercial development pressure is occurring outside the traditional urban area, particularly along US Route 1 south of the Route 164 interchange. This commercial development is occurring almost exclusively along the main highway, with little depth of development since access roads are not provided behind existing frontage. In addition, commercial lots are necessarily large since no public water and sewer are available and on-site systems must be provided. The combination of development along the main highway and large lots has the potential of creating a low-density commercial strip leading from the developed area of the City, south towards Presque Isle. This sprawl is inefficient, creates traffic hazards, and attracts some shoppers out of the downtown area.

City officials also may wish to consider monitoring the number of vacant commercial buildings in the downtown area, if resources allow in the future. A strong economic development plan that

highlights the existing infrastructure and buildings could help promote the downtown area. The recent announcement of the approved Downtown Revitalization Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) will help promote the downtown.

Caribou has a number of locational pluses, including its location near Canada and the Trans-Canada Highway, its location at the crossroads of Route 161, 89, and US Route 1, and its location close to three (3) major commercial international border crossings. Caribou also has rail and airport facilities and, as such, is an important transportation hub. Its development patterns may also be influenced by the creation of a new highway north from Houlton. The location of this highway stands to affect Caribou significantly, and the City stands to lose if the new alignment passes the City by. Therefore, the impacts of the project will depend on the configuration and location of the highway. The two most favored corridors are located within the city. City officials should continue to monitor progress on this project and should be involved in its planning at every opportunity presented.

Residents and City officials have an excellent opportunity to plan for the future through the preparation, adoption, and implementation of this Plan. Through preparation of the plan, residents must decide what they want their City to look like in the next 10 to 20 years. There is a strong potential for growth in the rural area with the general movement of people out of the urban area. The City should attempt to guide development to areas where public services can be provided to protect rural areas. A wise and thoughtful approach to zoning can protect rural land uses and help maintain the character of the City.

City officials should also develop specific access management strategies and requirements as part of the zoning ordinance to help the community avoid additional traffic problems caused by uncontrolled strip development along major roadways. The City's access management strategies along US Route 1 should be carefully examined and adopted citywide. Increasing and sprawling development along this corridor could have serious impacts on traffic flow, speed, tax dollars, and public safety.

The comprehensive plan cannot provide detailed solutions for all of the community's economic development issues. It does, however, identify many of the basic resources, facts, and local concerns so that the City's leaders, along with the residents, can have better information for future decision-making on some of the City's most pressing land use matters and issues.

The use of this planning document can contribute to an improved quality of life for City residents. Help to implement this Plan is available from many local and outside sources to assist with carrying out detailed actions to solve specific problems, such as: the Northern Maine Development Commission, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Maine Departments of Environmental Protection and Transportation.

LAND USE MAP (OVERALL)

LAND USE MAP (URBAN)

# Transportation

## Caribou's Vision

Caribou will constantly strive to be

- ❖ a dynamic community that is economically, culturally, and socially inviting;
- ❖ a community that promotes and aggressively pursues innovative business and economic development;
- ❖ a community that welcomes, supports, and responds to a diversity of new people and new ideas;
- ❖ a community that recognizes children as our future and shares collective responsibility for the nurturing and education of each generation;
- ❖ a community where family ties are strong, self respect and respect for others is instilled, where trust and courtesy is a way of life, and where the pace of life is consistent with these ideals; and

a community that celebrates the values and lessons of a multi-cultural heritage that serves as its strength and as its foundation in a progressive, modern world

## Transportation

United States Congress has enacted sweeping changes in transportation policy with Maine's Sensible Transportation Policy Act (STPA) of 1991, the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA, or "icetea") and the newest transportation bill, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century ("TEA-21"); all of which are outside influences which governs the states and provide the policies under which all transportation projects, including local, are funded. Locally, any municipality requesting state funding for projects must meet TEA-21. There are three important components to this new thinking: (1) continued sensitivity to natural resources, (2) continued sensitivity to the human environment, and (3) the conservation of energy resources. Given this changing climate, it is more important than ever that transportation planning, economic development, recreation, and land use activities in Caribou and northern Maine, as well as throughout the rest of the state, be coordinated with the natural environmental and community interests in mind. All of these are important in achieving overall local and regional growth and development goals in comprehensive plans and transportation initiatives.

To achieve these goals, the state has established a Regional Transportation Advisory Committee-Region 1 (RTAC-1) for northern Maine. RTAC-1, in cooperation with the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC), is charged with developing transportation plans for the region. The plans incorporate multi-modal projects and programs; address priority safety needs, system preservation needs, system rehabilitation needs, and system efficiency needs; and projects or programs needed to meet, manage, and reduce current and projected travel demands. In developing the plans, improvement options and alternatives are considered which adequately address and identify needs, are cost effective, and promote the established plan goals. It is the responsibility of the RTAC to advise the MDOT on: (1) transportation issues and goals; (2) regional transportation needs and deficiencies; (3) transportation improvement priorities; (4) multi-modal options; (5) social, environmental, and economic issues and goals; and (6) land use issues and goals. The RTAC submits its recommendations to MDOT in a written report in time to be considered in the development of the Regional Advisory Report, 20-Year Transportation Plan, and 6-Year Transportation Plan. Members of the RTAC represent the various transportation user and interest groups, reflecting both a balance and a diversity. They include: environmental and land use interests, alternative transportation groups, local government and planners, business interests, and the public at large.

Transportation networks tie a community together and link the town to the surrounding region. Local roads should provide safe, reliable access to work, schools, shopping, and residences. The livelihood of the town depends on how goods and services are imported and exported. In addition, the location and size of the town affects the modes of transportation available for traveling long distances.

Statistics showed that 86.65 percent of all manufacturing and 78.11 percent of the population in Aroostook County were located north of Houlton and Interstate-95. Because of this, a limited access highway or major improvements to the present road system has been proposed. In the past the proximity of communities to Route 11, Route 1, Route 1-A, and I-95 brought some form

of measurable growth to those towns.

Transportation networks are also important to the economic growth of the community in providing needed access to goods and services not found in the town. Roads into and out of the town are the main mode of transportation in nearly all rural areas and the condition of these roads is very important. Lately, the state government has realized the great expense needed to improve our interstate highways. If the condition of any state highway or bridge is not adequate, then it is up to the community to make its needs known to the state highway department and state representatives. The information provided in this section will assist Caribou in assessing those needs.

A safe, efficient transportation system is essential to the smooth functioning of the community. The location and quality of the local street system will have a major impact on where future growth is likely to occur. Transportation links to the outside world greatly influence the potential for economic growth, in as much as, the costs of transportation are an important factor for new businesses in searching for a location.

With the explosion in multi-media communications, and deregulation of the industry under the Communications Act of 1996, a new section is being added to this component of the Comprehensive Plan, telecommunications and the transportation of multimedia information.

## **Northern Maine Overview**

### Roads and Bridges.

There are 1125 miles of roadway in northern Maine, not including the interstate system. Of that roadway, approximately 35 percent is 50 or more years old. Since the early 1960's new road construction has been on a steady decline. The condition of the existing roadways in northern Maine and the rest of the state are deteriorating at a meaningful rate. Today 35 percent of northern Maine's roads are in "good" condition, a significant decline from 1990's 78 percent figure, and 45 percent of the roads are in "poor" condition, a significant increase from the 1990's 2 percent figure.

Houlton is the northern terminus for Interstate 95 in the United States before it connects with the Trans-Canada Highway System (Route 2) in New Brunswick, Canada. Along with the Trans-Canada Highway, all of these routes provide the necessary infrastructure to serve forest products industries, agricultural industries, connect population centers, encourage tourism, and provide access to and from Canada. These various highways also provide vital connections to the remainder of Maine, New England, and the Atlantic Provinces of Canada.

US Route 1 serves as a major north-south rural arterial north of Houlton (as a major collector south of Houlton) for northeastern Aroostook County extending from Houlton to Fort Kent, passing through major urban community centers. Route 1 is generally a two lane (three lanes at strategic points), undivided highway. Route 1-A, branches from Route 1 at Mars Hill and rejoins Route 1 at Van Buren. Although carrying less traffic, Route 1-A displays the same characteristics as Route 1. Town officials along Route 1-A have indicated a greater number of

trucks using the route than in the past because of the time saved and ease of movement. A recent survey shows that an average of 1.73 people occupy a vehicle on Route 1 and 1-A on a weekday. This number increases to 2.31 people on an average Saturday or Sunday.

Accident rate data for the years 1997 through 2001 reflects the 51 locations in Region 1 that are considered High Crash Locations (HCL) by MDOT. They include locations in Haynesville, Reed Pt. Sherman, Island Falls, Hersey, Dyer Brook, Smyrna, New Limerick, Houlton, Bridgewater, Moro Pt. Portage Lake, Fort Kent, New Sweden, Frenchville, Madawaska, Connor, Caribou, Presque Isle, T16 R4, and T17 R5.

There are 351 bridges in the northern Maine area. Of these, 74 percent are the responsibility of the state, 23 percent are municipal, and 1 percent are the responsibility of the Maine Forest Service. There are 334 rural bridges and 17 urban bridges. Two hundred and thirty-seven (237) bridges need no improvements at this time, 43 are in need of replacement, 30 need to be widened, and 41 need to be rehabilitated.

### Airports.

Maine is broken down for aviation planning purposes into eleven (11) regions. Region 11, which covers all of Aroostook County, has four system airports. These include: Northern Maine Regional, Northern Aroostook Regional, Caribou Municipal, and Houlton International.

### Caribou Municipal Airport

The Caribou Municipal Airport is a general aviation airport with a full service Fixed Base Operation providing airframe and power plant maintenance, flight instruction, air charter, and 100 L.L. aviation fuel sales. It is also the County Civil Air Patrol headquarters. It has two paved runways, (1-19) is 4003' X 100' north-south runway and (11-29) is 3017' X 75' east-west runway. Both have pilot controlled runway lighting. There are fifteen (15) outdoor tie-downs and the ability to hangar six (6) aircraft, waiting area, lobby, pilot's lounge, flight training room, and repair facilities. All facilities are handicapped accessible. The airport is a twenty-four (24) hour point-of-entry for US Customs. The navigational aids available include ASOS, VOR/TAC, GPS approach procedures, and Bangor Approach Control. One run-way (1-19) has been narrowed from 150 feet wide to 100 feet and new lights and a transformer building have been constructed. A new hangar was constructed in 2000 and includes an office for the Fixed Base Operator. The Fixed Based Operator will offer the following services: airplane repair, flight training, fire patrol during the summer months, scenic tours, and sky diving. Presently the City is working toward acquiring dedicated heavy equipment for the airport. This equipment will be utilized for repair work and snow removal and is required to maintain the air ambulance service. Caribou Municipal Airport is undergoing the development of its Master Plan. Goals in the plan include:

Goal: To provide facilities that will increase General Aviation usage (operations and based aircraft) by 10 percent by the year 2004.

Objective 1: Acquire a Fixed Based Operator

Objective 2: Relocate the trailer park

- Objective 3: Maintain existing facilities
- Objective 4: Install ramp lighting
- Objective 5: Provide the air ambulance with a hangar
- Objective 6: Install an electrical security gate
- Objective 7: Obtain snow removal equipment
- Objective 8: Construct t-hangars for six private planes
- Objective 9: Install a security camera for the terminal area

Goal: To provide a safe runway for general aviation airplanes, and adhere to Federal Aviation Administrations standards by the year 2004.

- Objective 1: Install VASI/PAPI system
- Objective 2: Remove the trees in the approach
- Objective 3: Repair the N/S runway where it is rough
- Objective 4: Repaint the centerline striping
- Objective 5: Install an approach system

Goal Provide services for the community and encouraging charitable donations and volunteer time by 5 percent per year.

- Objective 1: Acquire a Fixed Based Operator
- Objective 2: Foster aviation activities - host aviation events, and affiliate with aviation associations
- Objective 3: Provide flight training
- Objective 4: Hold monthly pilot meetings
- Objective 5: Provide hangar space for the air ambulance
- Objective 6: Propose the airport as the center of operations for Homeland Security, prepare a security plan, and coordinate with EMA emergency planning
- Objective 7: Provide forestry with heliport services

Goal: To provide economic development opportunities for local businesses, which would increase traffic by 5 percent by the year 2010.

- Objective 1: Install a kiosk showing local businesses, etc.
- Objective 2: Acquire a Fixed Based Operator
  - Track airport users
  - Provide aircraft mechanic services, flight school, charter and scenic flights
  - Ability to generate business
- Objective 3: Partnership with MDC - Maine Department of Tourism
- Objective 4: Develop marketing studies
- Objective 5: Market the airport to snowmobile and ATV tourists

### Radar Facilities

The Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) operates a long-range radar facility (ARSR 4) on the

Albair Road in Caribou. The radar has an operational radius of 250 miles and services air traffic from airports located in Presque Isle, Caribou, Houlton, and Frenchville. There are two full-time and one part-time federal employee located at the site overseeing the day to day operations.

#### Northern Maine Regional Airport.

The Northern Maine Regional Airport, located in Presque Isle, is one of only three certificated airports in the State and has two large paved runways measuring 7,440' x 150' and 5,994' x 150'. The airport has been designated an economic development airport and provides Aroostook County with daily commuter flights, as well as scheduled flights, operated by a number of overnight freight companies. Principle facilities include an air terminal building, a general aviation terminal and hangar facility, a crash rescue and maintenance building, and an office and hangar complex. The airport offers a full line of aviation services including air charter, aircraft maintenance, flight instruction, fuel services, aircraft deicing, and on-call customs and agricultural clearance services. The facility offers a full instrument landing system (ILS) and a variety of additional current technology navigational aids. The airport, although not currently used on a regular basis by large commercial jet aircraft, has the capacity to handle such craft.

#### Northern Aroostook Regional Airport.

The Northern Aroostook Regional Airport, serving northern Aroostook County in Frenchville, is an air taxi/charter airport with a 4,600' paved runway with 200' over-runs at each end. The airport is open year round seven days per week and is located on over 100 acres of land, has a 5,525 SF terminal building and hangar, as well as conventional hanger space, 100 octane low lead fuel, and 15 tie-down spaces. This airport is equipped with several navigation aids (navaids) including REILS, PAPI, ASOS, and NDB. There are plans to install a full precision GPS approach with either ALS or ALSF. When installed, this approach system will bring the minimums for the airport to 200 feet elevation and one half mile visibility. With the recent expansion of the runway to 4,600 feet, jets are now capable of utilizing the facility. Airport administrators are looking at constructing a jet fuel farm in the future.

#### Railroads.

There is only one rail line in Caribou. Presently, this line deadheads along the Aroostook River. Maine, Montreal, and Atlantic Railroad delivers fuel oil, on an infrequent basis, to the area. Overall, rail is of minor importance to Caribou.

#### Intermodal Facilities.

Presque Isle Industrial Council operates an intermodal facility located in the industrial park. The facility enables cargo containers to be transferred to train flatbeds via a piggy packer. Since the economy of northern Maine is based on natural resources, which tend to be high volume and low value, this facility opens new opportunities for economic growth and enhances the ability of northern Maine farmers and manufacturers to ship products throughout the United States. The intermodal facility will allow rail users and freight haulers the opportunity for dedicated train service to southern Maine and other parts of New England. Rail lines will connect with three (3) other proposed intermodal facilities in southern Maine.

## **Public Transportation.**

### Aroostook Regional Transportation System.

The Aroostook Regional Transportation System provides general public transportation throughout Aroostook County. Services are provided from each town in the County at least once a week to the nearest commercial center. Services are available to all members of the general public from the outlying towns to the commercial center and pick-up services are available in-town to the elderly and handicapped only. Fares are charged to members of the general public and half fare is charged to the elderly and handicapped. No fare is charged to Medicaid clients going to Medicaid covered services or to the elderly and handicapped going to a medical appointment. Services are provided to individuals with special needs who attend daily work or rehabilitation programs. These daily runs are also available to the general public, but no deviation from the special runs can take place due to time limitations.

### Cyr Bus Lines.

Cyr Bus Lines provides daily regional bus service from northern Maine to Bangor and points south with connections to the major national bus lines. The northern most pick-up point for the bus line is in Limestone.

### Taxi Service.

There are several taxi services in Aroostook County. Aroostook Cab, Caribou City Cab, and Town Taxi all serve the Caribou area.

## **Caribou Roadways.**

Public roads in Maine are classified into three categories based on the needs served by those roads. They are arterial, collector, and local. In total, Caribou has 150.12 miles of roadway. They are generally in good shape for present levels of traffic. With routine maintenance, the scraping back of the shoulder build-up, and the cleaning of the ditches, the life of the roadway surface can be prolonged and will save money. Should development pressure occur, a more thorough review of the transportation system, road construction standards, and maintenance will be necessary.

Caribou has 28.63 miles of arterial roads, 31.9 miles of collector roads, and 89.59 miles of local road. Collector roads, sometimes called "feeder roads", are major roads that collect or "feed" traffic to the arterial roads and are maintained by the State. They serve places of lower population densities and are somewhat removed from main travel routes.

There are 89.59 miles of local roads. Local roads or town roads include all public roads not within the arterial or collector category. These roads are maintained by Caribou for local service use and provide service to adjacent land areas and usually carry low volumes of traffic.

Funding for local projects is obtained from several sources, these include:

- On July 1, 1999 the Urban-Rural Initiative Program (URIP) replaced the Local Road Assistance Program (LRAP). The new initiative shifts the focus of municipal highway aid toward capital improvements. The program is divided into an Urban Initiative Program and a Rural Initiative Program. The Rural Initiative Program provides a voluntary partnership opportunity for the state and municipalities to reconstruct state aid minor collector highways. Funding for the program will be \$23,000,000 for fiscal year 2003 (July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003). Rural communities will continue to receive \$600 per lane mile for townways and state aid minor collector highways and \$300 per lane mile for seasonal townways.
- The concept of a Six-Year Transportation Plan (Plan) was developed in response to a need to provide a better linkage between MDOT's 20-Year Transportation Plan, which is policy based, and its Biennial Transportation Improvement Program (BTIP), which is project based. This Plan provides a view of project priorities beyond the traditional two-year period. The expanded vision provided by this six-year planning document provides MDOT with the opportunity for more effective management of its planning, project development, and financial resources. It allows communities to plan for their own multi-year capital improvement projects and heightens their awareness of how their transportation needs may be addressed. Projects and transportation initiatives included in the Plan are drawn from, and are consistent with, the policies, goals, objectives, and strategies articulated in MDOT's 20-Year Transportation Plan. The priority assigned to projects listed have been established with the assistance and cooperation of the state's Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) and the seven Regional Transportation Advisory Committees (RTACs). MDOT, with the assistance of the RTACs, has presented the Plan at a series of public information meetings held throughout the State to solicit public comment and input prior to its finalization. Projects for consideration in the development and preparation of the BTIP will be drawn from this Plan. The BTIP may include projects not identified in this Plan due to needs or priorities unanticipated at the time the Plan was prepared. The Plan will be updated every two years to reflect changing needs and priorities. The projects included in the Plan are consistent with the financial resources currently anticipated over the six-year period.
- The Biennial Transportation Improvement Program (BTIP) is designed to meet the challenges of the future through an integrated policy of preserving existing infrastructure and seizing upon new cost effective opportunities as they are presented. It is an all-out grant program with most programs not requiring a match. The program incorporates the principles of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century ("TEA-21"), the State's Sensible Transportation Policy Act (STPA), and the 20-Year and 6-Year Transportation Plans. The BTIP is a two-year improvement program which defines the capital investment projects in the state. The BTIP is consistent with the direction provided in the 20-Year Transportation Plan and contains proposed projects including system preservation, traffic demand management projects, intersection improvements, transit projects, safety projects, rail and air improvement projects, enhancement, and air quality improvement projects. Funding constraints require a review of projects to assure that available dollars are being used in a way that promotes the overall goals of preservation, environmental awareness, multi-modal integration, and economic stability. Projects listed in the BTIP typically take two (2) years to complete, although some may in fact take longer.

## Caribou Road Inventory, 2002

The following is a road inventory for the City of Caribou in 2002. This inventory reflects recent E-911 road name changes.

### Caribou Road Mileage Inventory, 2002

Name of Road	Arterial	Collector	Local
Route 1	12.91		
Route 89	5.28		
Route 161	5.45	4.73	
Route 164	2.10	3.29	
Route 205		5.92	
Route 223		1.38	
Route 228	.64	.86	
Access Highway	.59		
Albair Road			6.44
Alexander Ave			.05
Aldrich Drive			.37
Alpha Drive			.20
Angle Street			.11
Armco Avenue			.20
Bailey Road			1.18
Baird Road			1.06
Barrett Siding			.30
Barrett Street			.04
Belanger Road			2.92
Bell Street			.04
Belyea Road			.47
Bernadette Street			.11
Belmont Street			.06
Bennett Drive	.87		
Beta Drive			.20
Birds Eye Avenue			.16
Bog Road			1.52
Bowles Road			1.45
Bradley Street			.21
Bridge Street			.06
Brissette Road			1.23
Broadway Street			.38

<b>Name of Road</b>	<b>Arterial</b>	<b>Collector</b>	<b>Local</b>
Brook Street			.27
Burns Avenue			.13
Buck Road			1.33
Camp Ground Road			1.15
Caribou Lake			1.61
Caribou Street			.16
Caroline Avenue			.10
Cedar Hill Lane			.19
Center Street			.03
Charles Street			.28
Church Street #1			.10
Church Street #2			.03
Clover Street			.19
Collins Street		.24	.25
Columbus Street			.04
Coolidge Avenue			.26
Corbin Street			.04
Corriveau Street			.17
Country Road			.33
Court Street			.10
Crosby Avenue			.27
Cross Street			.51
Dahlgren Street			.26
Dorcas Avenue			.09
Dow Siding Road			.54
Dorilda Circle			.06
Doyle Road			1.47
Dump Road			.45
East Green Ridge Road			.75
Elizabeth Avenue			.19
Elm Street			.11
Elmwood Avenue			.33
Evergreen Parkway			.07
Farrell Avenue			.07
Fenderson Street			.14
Fountain Drive			.24
Forest Street			.04
Fort Street		.26	.24
Franklin Street			.15
Garden Circle			.46
Glendale Road		.10	.21
Goldfrank Street			.15
Grange Street			.05

<b>Name of Road</b>	<b>Arterial</b>	<b>Collector</b>	<b>Local</b>
Green Ridge Road			2.67
Griffin Road			.17
Grimes Road		4.63	
Grimes Mill Road			2.85
Grove Street			.09
Haines Street			.08
Hammond Street			.17
Hancock Street			.08
Hardison Avenue			.24
Hardison Road			2.36
Harvest Road			.34
Harvey Street			.09
Heritage Lane			.12
Herschel Street		.22	
High Street		.32	
Highland Avenue			.05
Hillcrest Avenue			.20
Homefarm Road			.21
Hoover Avenue			.14
Huston Street			.07
Jacob's Avenue			.08
Joseph Lane			.35
Jefferson Street			.07
Katahdin Avenue			.29
Kelley Road			1.16
Kittenger Avenue			.27
Lafayette Street			.31
Laurette Circle			.05
Laurette Street #2			.15
Lee Street			.15
Liberty Street			.20
Limestone Street			2.68
Limestone Street #2			.06
Lincoln Street			.19
Lombard Road			1.36
Lyndon Street		.25	.65
Lynn Drive			.55
Madawaska Road		.98	3.51
Main Siding Road			.96
No. Main Street	.92	.28	
Old Grimes Mill Road			.39
Old Van Buren Road			.19
Otter Street			.35

<b>Name of Road</b>	<b>Arterial</b>	<b>Collector</b>	<b>Local</b>
Ouellette Road			.21
Maple Avenue			.06
Marshall Avenue			.22
Mayo Street			.14
Maysville Road			.81
MacArthur Avenue			.11
McGraw Siding			.39
McKinley Street			.08
Meadowbrook Lane			.26
Mecon Drive			.10
Midland Street			.20
Mitchell Road			.31
Montgomery Avenue			.10
Morgan Street			.12
Myrtle Street			.10
Nebraska Road		.45	
Nancy Street			.10
Newton Avenue			.13
North Street			.20
Northern Avenue			.03
Noyes Road		1.36	
Nylander Street			.05
Oak Avenue			.14
Ogren Road			.81
Old Washburn Road			2.37
Old Van Buren Road			.09
Page Street			.26
Paris Snow Drive		.35	
Park Street		.33	
Patton Street			.15
Peterson Avenue			.16
Pilgrim Road			.17
Pioneer Avenue			.33
Plante Road			2.27
Pleasant Street			.13
Pond Street			.05
Pool Avenue			.07
Powers Road		2.55	.58
Prospect Street		.05	.21
Rachel Street			.29
Railroad Street			.27
Raymond Drive			.08
Reach Road			.11

<b>Name of Road</b>	<b>Arterial</b>	<b>Collector</b>	<b>Local</b>
Record Street		.07	
Reservoir Street			.15
River Road			3.58
Roberts Street			.20
Roosevelt Avenue			.28
Rose Street			.36
Russ Street			.32
Saint Anne Street			.11
Sawyer Road		.48	
Scenic Avenue			.08
Searles Drive			.02
Shirley Drive			.05
Shirley Drive Ext.			.05
Short Street			.05
Sincock Street			.60
Skyway Drive			.13
Smith Street			.11
Solar Drive			.31
Solomon Street			.30
South Main Street		3.45	
South Park Street			.08
Spring Street	.35		
Spruce Ridge Road			.43
Stevens Street			.05
Sullivan Street			.31
Summit Street			.15
Superior Lane			.31
Sweden Street		1.64	
Teague Street			.20
Thomas Avenue			.18
Thompson Road			1.31
Townview Avenue			.15
Truman Street	.03		
Treatment Plant Road			.07
Vance Road			2.41
Vaughn Street			.22
Veronica Street			.11
Vesta Drive			.30
View Street			.06
Violet Street			.18
Washburn Street			2.48
Washington Street			.33
Water Street		.44	.05

Name of Road	Arterial	Collector	Local
Watson Memorial Drive			2.69
Wellington Avenue			.07
Wellington Avenue 2			.08
West Presque Isle Road		4.19	
West Gate Road		3.04	
Westwind Dr.		.24	
Whitt Street			.08
Wilbur Avenue			.19
Willow Street			.07
Windy Hill Drive			.10
Woodland Road		1.50	
Wright Street			.05
York Street		.48	1.75

Sources: Maine Department of Transportation, 2002 and Caribou Planning Board and E-911 Committee, 2002

### Local Road Update.

According to conversations with municipal officials, the following represents local road updates. These include name changes or roadways which should be identified on the Maine Department of Transportation map. They are:

Project	Cost	Funding Source	Amount Funded
<b>2003</b>			
Reserve	\$150,000.00	Carry Over 02	\$353,305.00
Powers Road	\$87,000.00	MDOT URIP	\$146,858.00
Bowles Road	\$7,000.00	03 Appropriation	\$150,000.00
Baird Road	\$22,000.00		
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$266,000.00</b>	<b>Total Available</b>	<b>\$650,163.00</b>
<b>2004</b>			
High Street 25 DOT proj.	\$250,000.00	Carry Over 03	\$384,163.00
Watson Memorial Drive	\$100,000.00	MDOT URIP	\$145,858.00
		04 Appropriation	\$150,000.00
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$350,000.00</b>	<b>Total Available</b>	<b>\$680,021.00</b>
<b>2005</b>			
Reserve	\$150,000.00	Carry Over 04	\$330,021.00
Ogren Road	\$100,000.00	MDOT URIP	\$145,858.00
		05 Appropriation	\$150,000.00
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$250,000.00</b>	<b>Total Available</b>	<b>\$625,879.00</b>
<b>2006</b>			
Main Street Match 25%	\$250,000.00	Carry Over 05	\$375,879.00
Madawaska Road	\$100,000.00	MDOT URIP	\$145,858.00
		06 Appropriation	\$150,000.00
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$350,000.00</b>	<b>Total Available</b>	<b>\$671,737.00</b>

2007			
Reserve	\$150,000.00	Carry Over 06	\$321,737.00
Madawaska Road	\$100,000.00	MDOT URIP	\$145,858.00
		07 Appropriation	\$150,000.00
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$250,000.00</b>	<b>Total Available</b>	<b>\$617,595.00</b>
2008		Carry Over 07	\$367,595.00

### **Access Management.**

The 119th Maine Legislature approved LD 2550, An Act to Ensure Cost Effective and Safe Highways in Maine. The purpose of the act is to assure the safety of the traveling public and protect highways against negative impacts of unmanaged drainage. The law is intended to ensure safety, manage highway capacity, conserve state highway investment, enhance economic productivity related to transportation; and conserve air, water, and land resources. The Access Management Program for Maine includes Access Management Rules and Corridor Planning and Preservation Initiatives.

The Act specifically directs MDOT and authorized municipalities to promulgate rules to assure safety and proper drainage on all state and state aid highways with a focus on maintaining posted speeds on arterial highways outside urban compact areas. The law also requires that the rules include standards for avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of safety hazards along the portions of rural arterials where the 1999 statewide average for driveway related crash rates is exceeded. Those rural arterials are referred to in the rules as "Retrograde Arterials". The full set of rules became effective on May 25, 2002.

Access management rules are viewed as only one part of the statewide access management program. The program envisions prioritized planning and preservation of Mobility Arterial corridors most at risk of losing capacity, safety, and of decreasing posted speeds, due to increasing development and commuter and visitor pressures. Mobility arterial corridors most at risk are those designated as NHS highways and highways where:

- Congestion is already being experienced,
- Driveway related crash rates exceed the 1999 statewide average,
- Municipalities have designated growth areas,
- Water and sewer infrastructure exists,
- Natural resources are threatened (e.g. water supply or salmon watersheds),
- MDOT highway reconstruction projects are planned, or
- Areas experiencing rapid uncontrolled growth.
- 

The identification of these "most-at-risk" Mobility Arterial corridors is currently under way. The Corridor Planning and Preservation Program includes corridors where MDOT, in partnership with adjoining municipalities, property owners, corridor committees, Scenic Byway corridor committees, and other stakeholders along a mobility arterial join forces to develop strategies that assures the stated purposes of the Access Management Law are met and maintained. Corridor Planning and Preservation Program partnerships would outline appropriate locations for access management techniques such as:

- Access rights acquisition,
- Development of frontage roads and shared driveways,
- Intersection improvements,
- Development of turn lanes,
- Installation of signals, and
- Development of appropriate local land use regulations that meet the intent of the law.

Plans will be required to outline corridor protection measures that assure maintenance of safety and speed, and management of drainage, as well as the development, protection, or enhancement of important natural and/or man-made environmental features along the highway corridor

Roads in Caribou that fall under the new rules include:

US Route 1 and State Routes 161, 89, 164

Belya Road	Grimes Road	Madawaska Road	Old Limestone Road
Presque Isle Road	Rd 1209	Sawyer Road	

### **Aroostook County Transportation Study**

The Maine Department of Transportation is in the process of developing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that is designed to improve the transportation system in northeastern Aroostook County. Presently there are two corridors under consideration of this study. Both corridors follow an easterly by-pass of the city. Since both corridors utilize, or have the potential of utilizing, the Route 1 corridor, the City will need to review how its residents and businesses can best access any potential new route while maintaining the carrying capacity of the route. City officials will work with the Maine Department of Transportation to develop a mutually acceptable management plan that is beneficial to both parties.

### **Parking.**

The City maintains eight (8) parking lots, all of which are located near the downtown shopping area. The parking lots are generally in good repair and meet existing guidelines for marking and lighting. The following is a list of parking lots and on-street parking in Caribou

## Parking in Caribou's Downtown, 2003

Parking Facility	Number of Spaces
<b>Parking Lot</b>	
American Legion	17
7 Hatch Drive	60
Downtown Mall	97 (25 all day parking)
20 Hatch Drive	30
Water Street	27
South Downtown Mall	39
37 Hatch Drive (Albair)	75
65 Herschel Street	59
<b>Total (lots)</b>	<b>404</b>
<b>On Street Parking</b>	
Herschel Street	14
Center Street	10
Stevens Street	9
Grange Street	9
Sweden Street	75
<b>Total On Street</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>Total Overall</b>	<b>521</b>

Source: City Officials, 2003

Parking in downtown Caribou has become a more serious problem in recent years as land uses have changed in the downtown. The number of service industries has increased and employees have left little room for retail parking customers. City officials are working with the Maine Department of Transportation and a consulting firm to complete a downtown revitalization project. As of the time of this writing, this plan has not yet been completed but parking will be addressed. City officials might also consider obtaining any tax acquired property in the downtown to be used for parking. In addition, town officials may consider constructing some form of parking facility in the downtown that will help alleviate parking problems.

### Sidewalks and Paths.

Sidewalks within the City generally are in good repair. Sidewalks are maintained by the Public Works Department and there have been no complaints regarding locations or conditions. However, within the proposed downtown revitalization area, sidewalks are in need of repair and replacement. Due to increased pedestrian traffic, City officials are working to make sidewalks in

this area safer and more user friendly.

### **Telecommunications.**

With the dynamic explosion in the field of information exchange and communications, this section is included as a form of alternate transportation (i.e.: people would no longer have to travel to attend meetings or to shop. They can do it from their home or business.)

Recently passed legislation has been directed toward the tearing down of barriers to competition between the providers of information transfer and exchange. Therefore, it is important that this comprehensive plan recognize what facilities and services are currently available, look at what future needs will be within the community for facilities and services, review what facilities and services will become available in the future, and how such facilities and services can be used by and for the benefit of the community. These technologies include:

- Wireless: Present technology and increasing competition makes wireless communication (weather satellite, radio/TV, cellular phone or paging) expandable to include the inter-exchange of multimedia information.
- Satellite: Direct satellite broadcast of information, for use by business and for entertainment is expanding rapidly. The ITV system in Maine makes it possible to "attend" meetings and take college courses anywhere in the state without leaving the Town.
- Cellular Phone/Paging - Two cellular phone systems are available, as are wireless paging systems.
- Global Positioning System (GPS) - This technology will become even more important. It is:
  - The basis for planned precision landing systems at regional airports.
  - Used to accurately locate all structures and roads in a community to support the implementation of an E-911 Emergency System and other projects.
  - Outfitted to vehicles with a GPS system and maps to accurately pinpoint location anywhere in the United States.
  - Used to locate deliveries, personnel, and equipment.
  - A guide in many transportation systems on land, sea, and air.
- Land Lines: Again, present technology and increasing competition make land lines (whether fiber optic, coaxial, copper pair, or power) potentials for the exchange of information.
- Telephone/Facsimile: On single lines, facsimile (FAX) service is available at no extra charge. The customer supplies the equipment.
- Verizon presently has unlimited multimedia capacity. Consideration should be given as to where such service might be expanded in the area.
- Internet: (Cyberspace = The electronic ether where on-line communications takes place). Electronic access to the world...without the need to travel. There is presently available local telephone number, cable TV, and satellite access to the Internet.

The importance of developments in this area as an alternate form of transportation can best be described by quoting the vision statement of the Maine Telecommunications and Information Technology Planning Project: "To foster Aroostook's economic development and support its citizens' quality of life, it is envisioned we have an advanced, integrated public and private telecommunications system that is affordable, easy to use, accessible everywhere in our region,

and used widely by individuals and by organizations of every kind in their homes, schools, and offices."

### **Biennial Transportation Improvement Program (BTIP) FY 2003-2004.**

The BTIP for 2003-2004 was developed with the advice of the Regional Transportation Advisory Committees established throughout the state as part of the Sensible Transportation Policy Act and included four (4) projects in Caribou: Caribou to Van Buren purchase access rights/corridor preservation \$200,000; Route 1 at North Main Street- mainline channelization \$346,000; Route 89/High Street rehabilitation \$116,000; and Bennett Drive convert 4 lane to 3 lane \$33,000 (City officials did not agree to this program). Caribou may apply for any additional projects in the FY 2005-2006 program applications including downtown intersection work. The City may wish to draft a list of projects it feels are important for future inclusion in the BTIP program.

### **Transportation Analysis.**

Unrestricted access to a collector roadway, in particular Routes 1 and 161, ultimately results in traffic congestion and safety problems. Most growth in Caribou occurs with single lot development along the collector/local roads and Route 1. The cumulative effect of numerous driveways onto Route 1 and 161 and the collectors causes "side friction" that impedes traffic flow and has proven to be a safety issue. Good access management--the careful planning of land uses, driveways, and intersections, can reduce accidents and prolong the useful life of the roadway. Regulations which control or manage access to a highway or main road are designed to avoid or resolve conflicts arising from the use of those properties abutting the roadway, and the function of the roadway to swiftly and safely move vehicular traffic. How this will be accomplished will depend upon existing land use patterns, policies developed under this growth management program, land use plans, and the priority given to the arterial and collector function over other functions, such as providing access to local businesses, and serving the needs of the Town where the roadway also serves as the main street. Controlling accesses and land uses adjacent to roadways can be addressed through the development of the Town's land use ordinances.

Except as noted in the above text, the roads in Caribou are for the most part in good condition. However, should the Public Works Department budget decline, there is the potential for the roads to deteriorate at a faster pace, therefore costing more to improve in the future, if only minimal care was applied at this time. The City has in place a 5 year management plan for the maintenance and reconstruction of local roads. The Public Works Department updates this plan as projects are completed.

City officials also need to be aware that it is cheaper to encourage development along existing maintained roads within the City or to infill within the growth area. Caribou may want to review and consider whether to discontinue any of the backroads. Discontinuance means the City is no longer responsible for the road's upkeep. The City may retain easements allowing access over the discontinued way to interior lands and water bodies and for public utilities. Alternatively, all public rights may be discontinued, although the City would be liable for damages if a parcel

became landlocked as a result of such an action. Caribou may discontinue a road for winter maintenance; this would allow for regular use of the road in the summer and fall while relieving the City of plowing responsibility, even if houses were built on the road.

Some Maine communities have enacted road classification, construction, and design regulations which prohibit development on selected roads unless the roads are brought up to certain design and construction standards. These standards may include, in some cases, adequate pavement and drainage. The cost of these improvements would fall either on the developer or the landowners served by the road. This discourages development on backroads and reduces the cost of the development that does take place. Caribou may want to consider such standards to relieve the burden on the taxpayers.

# Public Facilities and Services

## Caribou's Vision

Caribou will constantly strive to be

- ❖ a dynamic community that is economically, culturally, and socially inviting;
- ❖ a community that promotes and aggressively pursues innovative business and economic development;
- ❖ a community that welcomes, supports, and responds to a diversity of new people and new ideas;
- ❖ a community that recognizes children as our future and shares collective responsibility for the nurturing and education of each generation;
- ❖ a community where family ties are strong, self respect and respect for others is instilled, where trust and courtesy is a way of life, and where the pace of life is consistent with these ideals; and

a community that celebrates the values and lessons of a multi-cultural heritage that serves as its strength and as its foundation in a progressive, modern world

## **Public Facilities and Services**

The Public Facilities and Services section of the Comprehensive Plan includes an assessment of capital facilities and public services necessary to support future growth and development, to protect the environment, health, safety and welfare of the people of Caribou, and to explore the costs of these facilities and services.

The inventory of public facilities and services examines the facilities and services provided by the City of Caribou. The inventory includes information describing the facility and geographical service area, the condition, usage, and capacity of the facility. In addition, if the facility or service is provided outside the city limits, it will be included in this inventory. The inventory includes the following: water supply; sewage facilities; solid waste facilities; public safety; energy facilities; communications; health care; culture; education; recreation; cemeteries; and the general municipal administration and services.

## **Municipal Administration and Services**

The administration of governmental affairs are more complicated today and time consuming than in the past. The administrators of local government affairs must be well informed regarding the wishes of the majority of townspeople for the city. They must also be well informed about the details of numerous regional-state-federal assistance and regulatory programs, and have the time for necessary communication and follow through with program agency staffs. Caribou's city affairs are handled through a seven-member City Council with a City Manager to oversee the day to day operations of the city.

## **Municipal Administration**

The City of Caribou maintains the following positions that provide services to the residents:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Elected (E) or Appointed (A)</b>	<b>Number Serving</b>	<b>Term of Office (years)</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
City Council	E	7	3	Legislative Body of City.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Elected (E) or Appointed (A)</b>	<b>Number Serving</b>	<b>Term of Office (years)</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
City Manager	A	1	Indefinite	<p>Responsible for the administration of the city government under the direction of the City Council.</p> <p>Administers the personnel system for the city; directs and supervises the administration of all departments, offices, and agencies; attends all Council meetings; sees that all laws, provisions, and acts of the Council are executed; prepares and submits the annual budget, annual capital program, and annual financial and administrative reports to the Council; prepare and submit to the Council such reports; perform such duties as the Council may require and make such recommendations concerning the affairs of the city; assist insofar as possible, the residents and taxpayers in discovering their lawful remedies in cases involving complaints of unfair vendors; administrative practices and the powers and responsibilities granted by State Law. The City Manager is also the Superintendent of Roads, Streets, Bridges and Buildings. The Manger is also the primary purchasing agent for the City with the exception of the School Department and Cary Medical Center.</p>

<b>Position</b>	<b>Elected (E) or Appointed (A)</b>	<b>Number Serving</b>	<b>Term of Office (years)</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
City Clerk	A	1	Indefinite	Posting official notices and advertisements, the maintenance and preparation of official documents; the issuance of licenses and permits (such as hunting, fishing, marriage, and dog); recording various documents (death, births, marriage, burials); Registrar of Voters; supervision of the collection of excise tax; and the preparation of reports.
Tax Collector	A	1	Indefinite	Tax collecting, accounting and reporting for taxes received, placing liens, and billing.
Health Officer	A	1	3	Assessing, planning and providing needed services, investigating complaints of health related problems, coordinating investigations with appropriate city officials, and maintaining records.
Code Enforcement Officer	A	1	1	Enforcement of municipal codes and other applicable state and federal ordinances; enforcement of rules and regulations and initiating legal action in relation to city codes and ordinances; analysis of city codes and ordinances and making revision suggestions to the Planning Board.
Planning Board	A	6	3	Facilitating and interpreting land use ordinances.
Board of Appeals	A	6	3	Hear appeals of the City's ordinances.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Elected (E) or Appointed (A)</b>	<b>Number Serving</b>	<b>Term of Office (years)</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Housing Director	A	1	Indefinite	Administers Section 8 housing programs, Housing and Urban Development Housing Programs, and oversees the Housing Department.
Recreation Director	A	1	Indefinite	Development, implementation, and administration of the City's recreation program; planning department budget and the control of expenditures; promoting interest in the recreation program; the staffing and training of the department including permanent and seasonal employees; the preparation reports; maintenance of activity and attendance reports to be compiled for an annual report; directs the maintenance and upkeep of town parks, playgrounds, and recreation areas; prepares records of personnel and equipment needs; evaluates recreational needs, activities, and facilities and makes recommendations for changes; and prepares news releases and publicity for program activities.
Community Development Director	A	1	Indefinite	Maintaining liaisons with various state and federal agencies; coordinating projects with other agencies; monitoring project budgets; preparing grant proposals, applications, and contracts; preparing reports such as grant progress and performance, housing assistance plans, financial assessment, and project budget.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Elected (E) or Appointed (A)</b>	<b>Number Serving</b>	<b>Term of Office (years)</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Tax Assessor	A	1	Indefinite	Inspection, preparation, and valuation of all personal and real property for tax billing each year.
Fire Chief	A	1	Indefinite	Training, administering and supervising of fire fighting and fire prevention activities; the maintaining and budgeting of all department equipment and property; the extinguishment of fire; the protection of life and property; removing of fire hazards within the town; and has the authority to assume command of all fire scenes.
Police Chief	A	1	Indefinite	Direction of subordinate officers, setting major policies, regulations, goals, and program priorities affecting the improvement of police functions and extending to training, assignment, supervision, and discipline of all members of the Department; prepares annual budget and allocation; attends meetings and seminars; plans and directs the development and supervises the maintenance of police records and statistics; and plans and supervises the enforcement of traffic and safety regulations and programs of crime prevention and detection.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Elected (E) or Appointed (A)</b>	<b>Number Serving</b>	<b>Term of Office (years)</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Public Works Director	A	1	Indefinite	Directing and coordinating the activities of the highway crew which includes maintaining roads, planning and funding current and long term road construction projects, culvert replacement, major road ditching, and winter sand and salt preparation.
Librarian	A	1	Indefinite	Planning, coordinating, and operating of all aspects of the library; formulating and implementing goals and objectives; oversees all procurements to the Library collection; develop new programs and activities for uses of the Library; organize staff and services necessary for operations; prepare and administer the budget; direct overall maintenance of the facilities; plan and coordinate cultural and educational programs with surrounding communities and the state; responsible for developing and overseeing all educational programming.
Cary Board of Directors	A	11	3	Oversee the operations and programs of Cary Medical Center.
Caribou Utilities District	A	5	3	Oversee the operations and programs of the Caribou Utilities District.
Library Trustees	A	7	3	Oversee the operations and program of the Caribou Public Library.
Board of Education	E	6	3	Overseeing the educational programs of Caribou School Department.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Elected (E) or Appointed (A)</b>	<b>Number Serving</b>	<b>Term of Office (years)</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Recreation Commission	A	5	Indefinite	Development, implementation, and administering the City's recreational program.
Plumbing Inspector	A	1	1	Reviewing plumbing plans and inspecting buildings and other structures for compliance to the State plumbing code, issuing permits, and investigating possible violations

Caribou, like many communities in Maine, is heavily dependent on the large amount of time volunteered by residents for local government. The above chart shows many of the boards and positions that the city maintains. For example, a typical planning board member over the course of their city's comprehensive planning process will have donated 75 to 80 hours in formal meeting time and another 150 to 175 hours in meeting preparation time (i.e. reading, reviewing or researching materials). Thus a community with a 5 member Planning Board is the beneficiary of over 1,100 hours of volunteer time over a typical two year period taken to develop a comprehensive plan.

The product of the tremendous time commitment of all city volunteer boards and paid positions is a plan for and delivery of:

- The efficient delivery of public services,
- An efficient and well maintained transportation network,
- Compatible land use patterns of development that maintain or improve property values while conserving valuable prime farm and forestlands and other important natural resources,
- Potential economic development strategies to grow the local economy,
- Conservation of unique cultural and historical features/qualities that make the community special.
- Safe and affordable housing for its citizens, and
- Stability in property taxes.

## **Municipal Services**

### Solid Waste and Recycling Facilities

Tri-Community Recycling and Sanitary Landfill is a regional association that provides municipal solid waste disposal and recycling services to its member municipalities. The facility, located in Fort Fairfield, is owned by the Towns of Fort Fairfield, Limestone, and the City of Caribou. In addition, thirty four (34) municipalities from Aroostook County have contracted with Tri-Community to dispose of their solid waste.

There is also a regional recycling center and universal waste collection facility located at the landfill. The recycling center processes and markets all recyclable materials brought directly to the facility or collected through the drop-off igloos provided at satellite areas. Igloos are situated so that residents of the 34 municipalities can participate in the recycling program. The series of igloos accept newspaper, magazines, steel cans, colored #2 plastics, and natural #2 plastics and are serviced by Tri-Community staff. The cost of both disposal and recycling are included in the yearly membership assessment with Tri-Community. The generators of both bulky waste and municipal solid waste are responsible for the cost of transporting the waste to the landfill. This is accomplished primarily through commercial haulers, except that bulky waste is more likely to be directly hauled to the facility by residents.

### Caribou Police Department

The Caribou Police Department is made up of 14 full-time and 9 reserve police officers. All full-time officers are academy-trained. All reserves have completed the 100-hour required course. All officers also must obtain 20 hours of additional training per year. According to the Police Chief, recruitment of new officers has been problematic in the past. He expected this trend to continue into the future as requirements and training becomes more stringent. The Police Chief is looking into some contractual arrangements that would require a new officer to remain in the position for a period of time or be required to pay back a portion of training costs.

The Caribou Police Department has formal mutual aid agreements with Limestone, Fort Fairfield, and Presque Isle (pending). An understanding exists with the Aroostook County Sheriffs Department, and the Maine State Police concerning mutual support. The Caribou Police Department provides contracted dispatch service to Limestone.

The Police Department is located in the City Office at 25 High Street. The facility is generally in good condition. However, a new dispatch area is needed as the present dispatcher is located in an open area and there is the potential for damage to computers and dispatching equipment. In addition, there is a need for a larger overall storage space for the department. The fleet of cruisers is in good to excellent condition and a cruiser is replaced annually.

### Caribou Fire/Ambulance Department

The Caribou Fire and Ambulance Department provides both fire protection and ambulance service to the City of Caribou and surrounding communities. The department is made up of 14 full-time (including a Fire Prevention Officer) and 25 paid-call fire fighters. All full-time firemen are academy trained and hold certificates as Fire Fighter II. Paid-call firemen are trained within the Caribou Fire Department, though eight paid-call volunteers hold certificates ranging from Fire Fighter I, II and Paramedic. Duties of the department include hazardous materials response, cold water rescue, confined space rescue, weapons of mass destruction response, and homeland security. Formal Mutual Aid agreements are in place with Presque Isle, Limestone, Loring, Fort Fairfield and Washburn. The department responds to approximately 140 calls annually.

The Fire Department is located at 121 High Street and the building is in good condition. The building needs an additional bay to be located on the south side allowing for additional storage. Department personnel are also seeking to add video imaging cameras and communications equipment. This equipment will allow a paramedic on an emergency call to communicate with a hospital to provide a higher level of care for the patient.

The Caribou Fire and Ambulance Department has twelve vehicles, including 5 ambulances, 4 fire trucks, a 75-foot aerial ladder and a pick-up with skid tank, boat, and 3 utility trucks. The pick-up is primarily used to fight small brush fires. Each vehicle has its own reserve account and schedule for replacement. City officials should consider continuing to fund these reserve accounts.

Caribou received voter approval to construct a two-story fire training building in 1991. The training building includes movable internal partitions for apparatus training in a smoke-filled environment. Future plans include the addition of a third floor to better facilitate ladder rescue operations.

Ambulance service is also provided by the Caribou Fire and Ambulance Department, which operates 5 units (four units in Caribou, one in Loring). The department is a regional fire/ambulance department that serves a number of communities including; Limestone, Connor, Woodland, New Sweden, and Stockholm. Formal Mutual Aid Agreements are in place with Van Buren, Perham, and Presque Isle/Fort Fairfield (served by one service). Department personnel are concerned that additional communities could not be serviced without additional personnel. The ambulance service responds to approximately 1,950 calls annually. Department personnel include:

Paramedics	11
Critical Care Techs	1
Intermediate Techs	4
Basic Techs	<u>14</u>
	30

(All members are cross-trained)

There is a reserve account for the replacement of each vehicle. The Fire Chief and the City Council have made a commitment to replace equipment, as needed, with high end equipment. Additionally, billing is completed through a part-time staff person located in the City Office. City officials may wish to consider moving this position to the Department office in order to make billing and accounting more efficient.

#### Emergency Management Agency

Caribou's Emergency Management Agency coordinates all departments in times of a declared emergency. There are 55 volunteers located throughout the community that assist with a wide range of backgrounds. The agency provides training for each department and coordinates federal, state, and local resources. There is presently a feeding truck, two generators, and a supply of blankets, cots, and medical supplies.

A Hazard Mitigation Plan was completed which identified a number of potential hazards in Caribou. These include Collins Street, River Road clean-up, Madawaska Road, Caribou Lake Road, Cedar Hill, and the Doyle Road. Hazards include flood potential, hazardous materials, fire potentials and the identification and potential removal of dangerous buildings.

Future needs include the continued training of staff and volunteers, update of emergency management plans, the need to educate the public on homeland security and continued funding for special assistance.

The Emergency Management Office is located in the basement of the library. The office has outgrown its space and is looking for another location. Needs for a new office include being floodproof, blastproof, and fire proof. These requirements make it difficult to find a suitable location within the city.

### Public Works

The Caribou Public Works Department maintains 150 miles of city roads and streets, the associated infrastructure, sidewalks, parking lots, the municipal airport and buildings. The department is well equipped with modern well-maintained equipment, necessary for keeping the roads and streets in good repair, as well as open for traffic during the winter months.

The Public Works complex, located at 760 Main Street, has a modern garage facility including offices and vehicle maintenance bays. A new equipment storage building (140' x 60'), a sand and salt storage facility (110' in diameter), a 6,000 gallon storage and dispensing facility for calcium chloride and deicers, a large area for stock piles of gravel and other construction materials as well as screening capabilities. The facility also has a fuel island that provides fuel to the City's departments 24 hours per day. There are 20 employees making up the Public Works Department.

### **Recreation Department**

The Caribou Parks and Recreation Department is dedicated to meeting both the active and passive recreational needs of citizens in the Caribou community. Since the beginning of recorded community history, the community and its local government have been very pro-recreation. Although greater diversity of interests and needs of users make it more challenging for parks and recreation officials in lean economic times, Caribou's park and recreation program continues to be one of the most successful in the State of Maine.

The Parks and Recreation Department is overseen by a five member Park and Recreation Commission which is an all volunteer entity appointed by the Caribou City Council. The Commission works directly with the director and staff of the department to make decisions regarding budgeting and policy. The Department maintains the following resources in Caribou:

- **Caribou Community Pool:** open from mid-June to mid-August.

- **Caribou Recreation Center:**
  - The Recreation Center houses a gymnasium, a multipurpose room (with retractable walls to form 1, 2, or 3 rooms), an exercise and weight training area, locker rooms with showers, and a game room. The Center is open Monday through Friday from 3 to 6 pm and Saturdays from 1 to 5 p.m. for children of all ages. Students in grades 7 and up are welcome at The Rec. until 9 p.m. Monday through Friday (as well as during the times listed above). A study room, cd player, television, and various games are available for use. The building is supervised at all times.
  - Weight room programs, facilities and hours starting October 12, Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
  - Shower facilities and locker rentals are available. This facility is equipped with a variety of free weights, a universal gym, treadmills, bicycles, Nordic Tracks and various other equipment. Personalized adult fitness instruction is available at the "Hazardous Waist Treatment Center" under the direction of a nationally certified instructor.
  - Open Gym Schedule: The gym is open to the public for shooting basketball from 1 to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 1 to 5 p.m. on Saturdays.
  
- **North Caribou Park:**

Accessible via Route 1 North (Van Buren Road), this park encompasses 54 acres of fields and woodlands. A softball/baseball field, basketball courts, horseshoe pits and a nature trail make this the perfect spot for a family or group picnic.
  
- **Teague Park:**

Located in the heart of Caribou (bordered on either side by Bennett Drive and Glenn Street), Teague Park is a hub of activity year round. Within its five acres, you'll find a lighted softball/baseball field, lighted tennis courts, a creative playground, and the best picnic spot in town. In the colder months, Teague Park hosts a skating rink and nordic ski trails with a heated lodge for those really cold days.
  
- **Collins Pond Park:**

Located on Collins Pond on the South side of town, this park has a play area, group and family picnic sites and a 1.23 mile walking path. This is the second most utilized resource in Caribou.
  
- **Paul Soucie Sports Complex:**

Located on the south shore of Collins Pond (via Sincock Street), the Department maintains a lighted regulation-sized baseball field and a lighted soccer field, each of which play host to popular youth programs in the summer and fall.
  
- **Hardison Playground:**

This facility is popular with local residents but not well known. There are playground equipment and picnic tables.

The biggest obstacle facing the Recreation Department is the Recreation Center. City officials are in the process of applying for a \$500,000 Municipal Investment Trust Fund grant to demolish the present recreation center (old National Guard Armory) and develop a new recreation and health center. The present center is in poor condition and is presently unusable for recreational programs. Presently many of the recreational programs are located in the various school gymnasiums. Once constructed, this facility will be located in the heart of downtown Caribou, within easy walking distance of the Caribou Middle School and Teague Park School, and large portion of Caribou's residential neighborhoods.

### Utilities District

The Caribou Utilities District (CUD) Board of Trustees consists of a five person Board appointed by the City Council for a term of three years. The Board holds a regular meeting open to the public on the second Wednesday of each month at its office building at 176 Limestone Street.

The CUD was organized in 1945 to manage wastewater functions for the City of Caribou. In 1960, a primary treatment plant was constructed at 176 Limestone Street to treat wastewater prior to discharge to the Aroostook River. Significant industrial loadings were added to the CUD facilities from local processing plants. In order to provide an improved effluent quality, the Charles D. Hatch Treatment Facility was constructed in 1983 near Grimes Mills on the Aroostook River, approximately 2 ½ miles downriver from the primary plant. Three aerated lagoons with a capacity of 36 millions gallons were constructed along with disinfection facilities. Periodic improvements have been added to improve treatment and to comply with current standards.

The Caribou Waterworks was first established in 1889 as the Caribou Water, Light and Power Company. In 1943, the power generation assets were sold to Maine Public Service Company and General Waterworks Corporation of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania acquired the Waterworks. In 1989, the CUD purchased the Caribou Waterworks Corporation adding a water treatment and distribution system to the District. The filter plant was built in 1941 and was updated in 1971. Since then, several other improvements have been made to the facility to comply with more stringent water quality standards.

The Caribou Utilities District procures its water from the Aroostook River at the PDI-WPS hydroelectric dam. For three miles upstream the Aroostook River is a Class B River, meaning that it is fishable, swimmable, and suitable for a municipal water supply. During the past twenty-five years tremendous strides have been made in improving water quality in the river. Currently all industries and communities upstream treat all discharges to the Aroostook River.

All sources of drinking water are subject to potential contamination by constituents that are naturally occurring or are man made. Those constituents can be microbes, organic or inorganic chemicals, or radioactive materials. All drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

Chemicals used in the treatment process include Aluminum Sulfate to aid in filtration, Sodium Hydroxide for pH control, Sodium Hypochlorite for disinfection, and Fluoride for dental health.

## Water System Data

Caribou's water supply and distribution system includes over 28 miles of water main, serves 1709 customers and provides fire protection service through 154 hydrants. In the last twelve months, the utilities district has produced and delivered over 149 million gallons of water or about 400,000 gallons each day. The system also maintains over 1.5 million gallons in 4 storage tanks allowing the district to meet peak system demand periods and maintain an adequate supply during fire fighting activities.

In 2002, the CUD replaced a section of water main on Herschel, Prospect, and Sweden Streets with new 12-inch pipe at a cost of \$410,000. This project upgraded a substandard section of pipe on Sweden Street and provided a larger connecting link to Main Street via Prospect and Herschel Streets. Another section of water pipe on North Main Street between Harvest Road and Country Road was replaced with 12-inch pipe to improve flows to the western section of the City. Three new water services and three new sewer services were added in the City. The District completed an alternate intake at the water treatment plant, and began a three-year project to automate monitoring and cooperation of the plant.

According to the Utilities District Director, no expansions to the system are planned. According to the Director, the Utilities District is operating under capacity with both its water and sewer system and the system is projected to meet future needs. The District's One and Five year plans are in effect and have taken into account projected future needs on the system. This comprehensive plan supports the One and Five year plan.

The Utilities District is seeking qualified parcels of property that will serve as a site for the City's new well(s). The Utilities District will work to acquire parcel(s) of land that have been deemed suitable for the creation of a public water source. The Utilities District will utilize funds from a variety of sources.

## Community Development Office

The Community Development Office is housed in the City Office at 25 High Street. There is one full-time employee that is charged with a variety of tasks including, but not limited to, grant writing, community development, and grant administration. City officials may want to consider hiring an administrative assistant to assist the Community Development Director.

One of the largest projects currently underway is the downtown revitalization. City officials are seeking funds to upgrade utilities, business facades, improvements to the area bordered by Main Street, Hatch Drive, Prospect Street, and Herschel Drive including Sweden Street. This project will include entrances, lighting, landscaping, and signage. Future plans include extending the project along High Street to Bennett Drive. There are currently several consulting firms reviewing the project and will be making recommendation to improve entrances into the downtown. This project is funded through a CDBG grant and is a multi-year project.

Other projects include:

- Trail Feasibility Study- Examine ways to connect the various recreational trails around the City and to the downtown.
- Community Gateways- Seeking funds to purchase park benches, trees, and signage.
- Herschel St./Hatch Drive and Prospect St. Project- Working to improve inadequate sidewalks, drainage, and walkways. City is working with Maine Public Service, Time Warner, and Verizon to move utility poles and lines.
- Armory- looking at potential reuses and improvements to the Armory facility on Bennett Drive.
- Airport Improvements- City officials are looking to relocate trailers currently in the clearance zone. In addition, City officials will be looking at a number of differing uses at the airport. The loss of the Fixed Base Operator (FBO) has put some plans on hold. Potential reuses could include an air ambulance, charter service, and/or maintenance facility.
- Cary Intersection-Upgrade dangerous intersection on Route 1 at Cary Medical Center. City officials are looking to relocate the intersection further east near Caribou Ford. This relocation could potentially open additional land for economic development purposes and eliminate a dangerous situation on Route 1.
- Housing Rehabilitation- Apply for CDBG funds to complete housing assessments and rehabilitation projects throughout the city.
- Emergency Assistance Grant for the City- Program is designed to assist eligible City residents that have had wells go dry, septic system failures, or other home emergency situations arise. Participants will be required to meet income guidelines.

## **Education**

All four of the schools located in Caribou are presently located within the Growth Area and within easy walking distance of those wishing to live in the urban area of the community. In addition, all of the institutes of higher education are also located within this area. No new construction of school faculties is planned as they are adequate for current and projected school enrollments.

### Hilltop School

Hilltop Elementary School located at 19 Marshall Avenue houses grades kindergarten through grade two. The school was constructed in 1960. A school population of 375 students provide a teacher/student ratio of 1:20 or less.

One of two elementary schools in Caribou, it houses an excellent Early Literacy Program. The school also houses a Central Aroostook Child Development Center.

Hilltop Elementary School is also a Reading Recovery Teacher Training Site. This program is internationally recognized for its success in the teaching of reading to first grade students. Teachers employ well researched techniques including: manipulatives, individualized math and reading instruction, center based instruction, and hands-on science to accommodate varied learning styles.

Hilltop features a full sized gymnasium which is utilized for physical education classes, ball games, assemblies, and fairs, academic, citizenship, and other educational assemblies are offered throughout the school year.

All children have music, art, physical education, and library classes as part of their regular classroom schedules. An elementary second language program, providing integrated instruction in French, was instituted in 1999. Elementary guidance services are available to all of Hilltop's students.

### Teague Park

Teague Park School located at 59 Glenn Street, houses two pre-school classrooms as well as all third and fourth grade classrooms. The school also houses a Central Aroostook Child Development Center. The school population of 340 students offers a teacher/student ratio of 1:23 or less. The school was constructed in 1950.

The school's high quality preschool program for four year olds is based on the High Scope Philosophy and Curriculum developed in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Parent volunteers play a vital role in this program as well as in other programs in the school.

A computer lab and media center at Teague Park School offer the students an opportunity to complete writing and research assignments using computers, CD-ROMS, telecommunications and other forms of media.

Teague Park School features a full sized gymnasium which is utilized for physical education classes, ball games, assemblies, and fairs. Academic, citizenship, and other educational assemblies are offered throughout the school year.

All children have music, art, physical education, and library classes as part of their regular classroom schedules. An elementary second language program, providing integrated instruction in French, was instituted in 1999. Elementary guidance services are available to all students.

### Caribou Middle School

Caribou Middle School is located at 21 Glenn Street. The school's staff of teachers and educational aides serves a school population of 420 students in grades 5-8. Caribou Middle School is a member of the New England League of Middle Schools and has recently been selected by the Maine State Department of Education to represent Maine in the National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence Program. The school was constructed in 1921 with the addition of an Industrial Arts center in 1979.

Team teaching is used in the common-core areas of language arts, science, mathematics and social studies. Teachers of these core subjects interact with exploratory areas to build interdisciplinary units. Exploratory areas include: technology education, consumer sciences, health education, physical education, French, music, art, guidance and computer technology.

Qualified students receive instruction through such programs as Special Education, Chapter I Reading and Math, Higher Order Thinking Skills (H.O.T.S.), Gifted and Talented, Migratory, and Speech.

Caribou Middle School's student body is governed by the Student Organization which consists of 19 elected representatives and serves as the official body for expression of student opinion. Students elected to this body are usually active in school affairs and demonstrate desirable qualities of leadership

### Caribou High School

Caribou High School is located at 308 Sweden Street and has a school population of 583 in grades 9 through 12. The High School was constructed in 1966 with the addition of the Vocational School in 1975 and the Performing Arts Center in 1987. Recent studies have indicated that over 71 percent of the school graduates go on to higher education. There are sporting fields, lighted cross county ski trails, and the school is home to the Caribou Performing Arts Center. The High School has been the recipient of many regional, state, and national awards and maintains numerous programs. In addition to the many sporting teams, the High School provides the following activities

Band / Chorus	C - Club
Chess Club	Civil Rights Team
Computer Club	Drama Club
French Club	Jobs for Maine Graduates
Key Club	Math Team
National Honor Society	Peer Education
Reflector	SADD
Student Council	Youth Alive

### **Caribou Public Library**

Caribou Public Library is located at 30 High Street. Currently, there are nine staff members working at the library, three of which are full-time. The library also uses the City's Technical Coordinator when computer or system questions arise. The library is also overseen by the six (6) member Library Board of Trustees. The Library contains a reading room, children's room, a meeting room (Caribou Room), the Barb Brewer Children's Butterfly Garden, and the Caribou Emergency Management. According to the Library Director, internet service and computers have been provided through a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and many of the programs are underwritten through gifts and volunteer donations. In 2001, over \$100,000 was donated by local residents for a wide variety of projects and needed services.

In February 2000, the Caribou Public Library Board of Trustees presented a Five-Year Plan to the City Council. This Plan covers the period from 2000-2005 and was updated in June 2002. The Plan outlines a number of needed improvements to the library and for additional services.

One of the major concerns is the lack of space at the facility. Presently, the library has outgrown its storage space and is storing archival documents in unsuitable locations. The Library Board of Trustees has recommended utilizing space currently being used by the Caribou Emergency Management Agency. This space is only used in the event of an emergency and would provide

much needed storage space. Plans also include the construction of a handicapped accessible restroom and a computer technology room.

The Plan also outlines many additional needs and concerns for the library. City officials should consider implementing the Plan as funding sources are identified and/or donations are received.

### Cemeteries

The City does not maintain a cemetery but does provide financial assistance, upon request, to the private organizations maintaining cemeteries within the city.

## **Public Services**

### **Television**

Caribou is served by WAGM-TV Channel 8 in Presque Isle with a 60,000 ERP video and 6,000 ERP audio. There are no exact viewership figures or estimates specifically for Caribou. WAGM's total service area includes: Houlton to the South with a microwave facility in Linneus; the St. John Valley in the North with translators in Allagash, St. Francis, St. John, and Madawaska; Western New Brunswick to the East; and the Ashland, Portage Lake, and Eagle Lake to the West. There are an estimated 31,100 homes in the service area. It is also estimated that 30,604 (98%) of those households have television sets, 16,220 (53%) households have more than one set, 18,362 (60%) are cable subscribers, and 23,259 (76%) are VCR households.

### **Cable Television**

Time Warner Cable provides a full range of cable program services and choices, including 40 channels. There are currently 9,842 subscribers in the entire service area. Cable subscription rates begin at \$24.50 for a "basic" package. Add-on channels, such as HBO, Cinemax, Disney, Showtime, and the Movie Channel, range from \$9.01 to \$12.72 each. Time Warner Cable has expanded to include Vista Communications. No additional expansions to the service area or new viewing options are planned at this time.

### **Telecommunications**

Telecommunication provided in the central Aroostook Area include:

- Wireless: Present technology and increasing competition makes wireless communication (weather satellite, radio/TV, cellular phone or paging) expandable to include the inter-exchange of multimedia information.
- Satellite: Direct satellite broadcast of information, for use by business and for entertainment is expanding rapidly. The ITV system in Maine makes it possible to "attend" meetings and take college courses anywhere in the state without leaving the Town.
- Cellular Phone/Paging - Two cellular phone systems are available, as are wireless paging systems.

- Land Lines: Again, present technology and increasing competition make land lines (whether fiber optic, coaxial, copper pair, or power) potentials for the exchange of information.
- Telephone/Facsimile: On single lines, facsimile (FAX) service is available at no extra charge. The customer supplies the equipment.
- Verizon presently has unlimited multimedia capacity. Consideration should be given as to where such service might be expanded in the area.
- Internet: (Cyberspace = The electronic ether where on-line communications takes place). Electronic access to the world...without the need to travel. There is presently available local telephone number, cable TV, and satellite access to the Internet.

## Radio

There are two radio stations located in Caribou and a number of stations that service the northern Maine area. Radio stations in Canada also service the Caribou area both in English and French. These stations are owned by the Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC).

### Northern Maine Area Radio Stations

Call Letters	Frequency	Location	Style
<b>AM</b>			
WFST	600	Caribou	Christian
WREM	710	Monticello	Talk
WEGP	1390	Presque Isle	Talk
<b>FM</b>			
WTMS	96.1	Presque Isle	Contemporary
WBPW	96.9	Presque Isle	Country
WCXU	97.7	Caribou	Contemporary
WHOU	100.1	Houlton	Contemporary
WOZI	101.7	Presque Isle	Country
WCXX	102.3	Madawaska	Contemporary
WMEM	106.1	Presque Isle	Public

Source: Bangor Daily News

## Newspapers

Caribou is serviced directly by the Aroostook Republican, a weekly paper with news from the central Aroostook area; one daily paper The Bangor Daily News; and two weekend papers The Bangor Daily News, Weekend Edition, and the Maine Sunday Telegram.

## **Telephone Service**

Verizon services Caribou. Aroostook County is 100 percent digital meaning that touch tone is available should the customer so desire. Several inter-state long distance services are available in Caribou including: U.S. Sprint; AT&T, Telesphere Network Inc. (TEN); First Phone, TDX Systems Inc.; MCI; and Encore. Rates vary depending upon the serving company and the number of customers. One party residential service ranges from \$9.40 to \$10.90 per month. One party business service ranges from \$19.50 to \$31.02 per month. Presently, Verizon does not offer the full range of services as subscribers in southern and central Maine have, such as voice mail. City officials should work with Verizon to upgrade its programs and services in northern Maine.

Verizon, the intra-state provider, recently finished digital switching to the area and can now provide an extensive, broad based array of standard and customized service. Current services include: call waiting; call forwarding; three way calling; and speed calling. There are four "phone smart" services available including: call return; caller id; repeat dialing; and call trace. In the future, banks will be able to better access data through a number of computer/modern enhancements. Law enforcement personnel will have immediate access to information on missing/wanted persons, stolen vehicles, and other criminal information through NYNEX Digipath 11 (DDS 11).

## **Electricity**

Due to the deregulation of the energy industry, residents of the City have a couple of options to purchase power. However, Maine Public Service provides service to the City and is an investor owned electric utility with a wholly-owned subsidiary, Maine and New Brunswick Electric Power Company, LTD. located in Tinker N.B. Together, the companies provide energy to more than 33,000 retail customers in a 3600 square mile area. They have a system capacity of 154.3 Mega Watts.

## **Health Care Services**

Cary Medical Center is municipally owned and operates under the guidance of an eleven member board of Directors: seven (7) appointed by the City Council, two ex officio members, and two members from Limestone and Van Buren. Thirty doctors and 500 other health care professionals and staff provide medical care in this 65-bed facility. Cary provides a Special Intensive Care Unit, 24-hour physician emergency room service, operating rooms, ambulatory day surgery, birthing rooms, physical/occupational therapy, a unique Child Development Clinic, magnetic resonance imagery (MRI), computer axial tomography (C/T Scan) expanded laboratory facility with modern blood examination technology and expanded radiology equipment.

Cary provides a number of community education programs including: Community CPR, Diabetic Education, and Seniority. Seniority is a membership program for senior citizens, age 55 and older centering around preventive medicine community education. Cary, in cooperation with the Aroostook County Action Program, also operates a child day care program.

Located at the Cary facility is a 40-bed VA Center operated by Maine Veteran Home, Inc. This is one of three VA centers in the state, the others are located in Augusta and Scarborough. The facility is currently undergoing major expansions that will double its size.

Specialty Physician Services at Cary include:

Anesthesiology	General Surgery	Internal Medicine	Neurology
Obstetrics/Gynecology	Ophthalmology	Pediatrics	
Vascular/Thoracic Surgery		Urology	Emergency Medicine
Radiology	Pathology	Colo-Rectal Surgery	

Cary operates the St. John Valley Health Care Center, an ambulatory care facility in Van Buren, that also serves as an 8-bed intensive care-mental retardation facility. This facility is totally controlled and operated as part of the Cary Medical Center. There are also facilities at Loring Commerce Centre and in Presque Isle.

According to Cary officials, there are a number of issues facing the facility. Perhaps the most pressing is the effort and expense of keeping current with technology. New medical technology is very expensive to purchase and changes frequently. Officials at Cary should consider working with other regional health care providers and share current technology and costs. This would reduce the cost to both the patient and each facility.

Additionally, Cary officials are working towards tele-medicine capability. This technology will provide doctors at Cary with the ability to obtain specialized services through a teleconferencing system. However, most insurance companies do not pay for this service at this time.

Cary is also experiencing a shift from in-patient to out patient care. As a result, the facility has had to reallocate space from overnight to day care facilities. Cary officials feel that this trend will continue as advances in medical technology continue.

Other issues include:

- Need for an assisted living facility for the elderly.
- Work with local universities for the continued recruitment of professional staff.

### **Maine Veterans' Home-Caribou**

Maine Veterans' Home-Caribou (MVH-C) was the second of five multi-service homes. Opening in January of 1990, it is located in a beautiful country setting adjacent to Cary Medical Center in Aroostook County. MVH-C is equipped with 40 beds and provides skilled nursing, rehabilitation and Alzheimer's care. The facility includes a multi-purpose room, barber and beauty shop, modern therapy facilities, fully equipped kitchen, and a wheelchair accessible van.

MVH-C has a medical team including a Medical Director, 24 hour RN coverage, and therapists. The medical and therapy's team approach is to return the patient to their home. Staff develops an individualized plan of care for each patient that integrates nursing care with a rehabilitation program. Services available at MVH-C include: skilled care, respite care, comfort care,

Alzheimer's care, speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and respiratory therapy.

### **Aroostook Visiting Nurses (AVN)**

Aroostook Visiting Nurses is a state-licensed organization that provides non-Medicare services to clients in their homes, at industrial sites, and in clinical settings. AVN's RNs provide the following services:

- Prefill pill box
- Taking blood pressure
- Checking sugar level
- Prefilling insulin syringes
- Giving monthly infusion
- Drawing blood
- Removing staples and sutures
- General health assessments
- Health education
- Wound care
- Dressing change

### Telehealth

This service is provided by using a video monitor over a regular telephone line in the patient's home. A health professional provide a health assessment, teaching, or to monitor vital signs. The televisit is live and interactive. Televisits are for:

- Diabetes
- Chronic heart conditions
- Hypertension (adult onset / prenatal)
- Wound care
- Psychiatric care
- Hospice care
- Medication compliance

### **Social and Human Service Agencies**

The scope of social and human service programs in northern Maine has increased slightly over the past decade. One major service provider in Aroostook County is the Aroostook County Action Program, or ACAP, with administrative offices in Presque Isle and satellite offices in Fort, Kent, Houlton, and Madawaska. In addition, there are a number of other social service programs and facilities in Aroostook County.

Other service agencies and programs include the American Red Cross, programs and services for battered spouses and children, The United Way of Aroostook, Aroostook Area Agency on Aging, programs and services for developmentally disabled persons, disabled assistance, Helping Hands for Children and Families (educational), services and programs for the elderly, mental

health services, religious organizations, youth services and the Maine Department of Human Services which operates a referral service and has the latest information on State programs.

### **Aroostook Area Agency on Aging**

The Aroostook Area Agency on Aging (AAAA) is a private non-profit corporation created in 1973 and is owned by the older citizens of Aroostook County. There is a nineteen (19) member volunteer Board of Directors responsible for policy making, planning programs and services, funding, establishing service priorities, and the evaluation of programs. The staff consists of an Executive Director and 66 workers who provide the help needed to solve the problems encountered by people age 60 and older (approximately 4,400 in 1990, representing about 1/3 of the older population in the County). As an Area Agency on Aging, they are linked with a network of aging services that reaches every community in America. The goal of the Agency is to make it possible for persons 60 and older to remain in their homes longer and more comfortably. To meet that goal, the Agency provides the following services: Senior Information and Assistance, Legal Help, Insurance Counseling, Educational Programs, In-Home Care, Meals, Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Transportation, and Housing.

### **Aroostook County Action Program**

The Aroostook County Action Program Inc. (ACAP) is a private, non-profit corporation operated by and for the citizens of Aroostook County, to create maximum self sufficiency and eliminate poverty. Self sufficiency occurs when an individual is capable of providing for their own needs on a long term basis.

It is the mission of ACAP to act as a catalyst to make the entire community and its institutions more responsive to the needs and interests of the poor, by mobilizing all existing local, state, federal, public, and private resources. Furthermore, it is the mission of ACAP to actively seek out and eliminate all policies, practices, and procedures that discriminate against low-income individuals and families, no matter where they occur. ACAP has served the needs of over 20,000 families in the county, linking them not only to ACAP programs, but also to the multitude of area services.

Through the six divisions which encompass thirty programs and with a budget of approximately \$11 million, ACAP provides a variety of services in the area of health, pre-school, employment and training, housing, special services, and administration. With the addition of indirect services, such as outreach activities, case management, and referrals, ACAP offers a comprehensive approach to meeting human needs.

### **Child Development Services**

Child Development Services (CDS) works with the Maine Departments of Education, Mental Health and Mental Retardation, and Human Services to help parents/guardians identify and evaluate their concerns during the child's early years of physical, mental, emotional, and social development. CDS coordinates, develops, and monitors services for families with children aged five (5) and under with disabilities. Staff works with doctors and other health care providers to

develop a step by step plan for families and children. There is no cost to the family for services provided.

CDS offers the following programs:

Audiology	Case Management	Family Training and Counseling
Health Services	Medical Services	Nursing Services
Nutritional Services	Occupational Therapy	Ophthalmological/Optomterical
Psychological Services	Physical Therapy	Social Work
Special Instruction	Speech/Language Therapy	Transportation

### **Aroostook Mental Health Center**

The Aroostook Mental Health Center's (AMHC) goal is to maintain and improve existing services, to develop new accessible, non restrictive, cost effective services, and to promote responsible decision making and healthy lifestyles concerning mental health and substance abuse issues to all people in Aroostook County. AMHC works with the family, friends, and associates of the client to benefit all involved.

The Center's programs are partially funded by federal, state, and local funds. Client fees are, however, necessary to help defray the costs associated with the provision of services. Fees are based on the client's ability to pay and are determined on the basis of income. No one is refused service because of inability to pay.

AMHC provides the following services:

- Outpatient Counseling Service
- Community Support Program
- Substance Abuse Services
- Family and Children's Services
- Speech and Language Services
- Community Education and Prevention Services
- Employee Assistance Programs
- 24-Hour Emergency Helpline

# Fiscal Capacity

## Caribou's Vision

Caribou will constantly strive to be

- ❖ a dynamic community that is economically, culturally, and socially inviting;
- ❖ a community that promotes and aggressively pursues innovative business and economic development;
- ❖ a community that welcomes, supports, and responds to a diversity of new people and new ideas;
- ❖ a community that recognizes children as our future and shares collective responsibility for the nurturing and education of each generation;
- ❖ a community where family ties are strong, self respect and respect for others is instilled, where trust and courtesy is a way of life, and where the pace of life is consistent with these ideals; and
- ❖ a community that celebrates the values and lessons of a multi-cultural heritage that serves as its strength and as its foundation in a progressive, modern world

# **Fiscal Capacity**

## **Introduction**

In Caribou, as with most other Maine towns, the demand of providing services devolves from the federal and state levels to the municipal level. This ultimately places the burden of funding these services on a town's number one source of revenue: the property tax. Over the past five years, Caribou has been successful in fortifying itself against decreases in state assistance by building up a surplus, and using it to stabilize its mil rate, while implementing needed projects and equipment purchases.

As the people of Caribou consider recommendations to make capital improvements and/or upgrade public services during the comprehensive planning process, they must also consider their ability to finance these improvements. This section will show that the City has maintained its financial health while making some major fiscal improvements. It will also analyze the City's fiscal capacity to meet future needs through public expenditures and other fiscal policies.

## **Caribou's Municipal Finances**

The following table, taken from Caribou's Annual Reports (1996-2001), lists generalized revenues and expenditures over the past five years and calculates for each revenue and expenditure its percentage of total revenues. The table also calculates the difference between revenues and expenditures for each year, identifying deficit and surplus years.

### **Revenues**

The table shows a 17.38 percent increase in total revenues over the past five years. Property taxes have ranged between 41.42 and 47.63 percent of total revenues, and have increased 5.31 percent over the past five years due to annual increases in the City's valuation. Other revenues 37.6 and 44.7 percent of total revenues and has experienced a 36 percent increase. Other revenues are made up of excise taxes, fee for services, Highway Block Grants, Tree Growth reimbursement, education subsidies, and other state and federal assistance.

### **Expenditures**

Municipal expenses have increased by 17.43 percent between 1996 and 2000. In all years reviewed, municipal revenues have exceeded expenditures. Education typically comprises the largest expenditure in a municipality. There is a formula of state and city revenue sharing that is based upon the city valuation. The largest annual expenditure for Caribou has been education which averages nearly 47 percent of the total expenditures.

Caribou experienced the largest increase for the five-year period in the Insurance and retirement category with a 66.89 percent increase. This increase appears to continue as the cost of these programs has seen significant changes in the past and the trend is expected to continue. The second highest increase occurred in the Public Works category with a 44.73 percent increase.

This shows a commitment on the part of Caribou to improve and maintain its infrastructure.

The largest decreases in expenditures over the past five years examined were in the General Assistance category with an 88.04 percent decrease, followed by other with a 23.95 percent decrease and County Tax with a 4.27 percent decrease. It should be noted that Caribou has increased its total expenditures during the time period. However, many of these expenditures were required to complete much needed infrastructure improvements and the general cost of increasing insurances and retirements in the future. The City Council has worked hard to maintain or reduce the level of spending and will continue to do so in the future.



## Property Valuation and Taxes, 1998-2002

Caribou's primary source of revenue is from property taxes. The following table indicates the annual percent changes and five-year average of the City's total valuation, property taxes, and mil rate from 1998 to 2002. Mil rates have remained relatively stable through out the period as the City Council has strived to maintain spending within the City. The highest mil rate was 22.5 in 2001 but dropped back to 21.25 in 2002. The average mil rate for the five-year period was 21.4 mils.

Caribou's total valuation rose between 1998 and 2002, from \$234,578,000 to \$253,150,000. This increase of 51.85 percent was, again, due to in part to significant new construction occurring in Caribou. The average total valuation for the five-year period was \$240,842,400. For the same time period, the average property taxes were \$4,078,923.

### Caribou, Property Valuation and Taxes, 1998-2002

Tax Year	Total Valuation	% Change	Property Taxes	% Change	Tax (Mil) Rate	% Change
1998	\$234,578,000	n/a	\$4,632,916	n/a	21.0	n/a
1999	\$232,434,000	-0.9	\$4,881,114	5.36	21.0	0.0
2000	\$241,600,000	3.9	\$5,001,107	2.46	21.25	1.2
2001	\$242,450,000	0.35	\$5,321,850	6.4	22.50	5.9
2002	\$253,150,000	4.4	\$5,557,630	4.4	21.25	-5.5
Average	\$240,842,400	1.93	\$4,078,923	4.66	21.4	0.4

Source: Maine Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summaries

## Regional Comparative Tax Information, 2002

The following table compares Caribou's tax information with other communities in the central Aroostook region. The comparative communities are: Fort Fairfield, Limestone, Presque Isle, New Sweden, Woodland, and Easton. Caribou is in the mid range for most of the information that pertains to its taxes. Caribou's Property Tax Levy of \$5,001,107 is second highest behind Presque Isle. Caribou's Property Tax Spending Per Capita is fourth lowest at \$601.67 with Woodland being the lowest. Woodland's figure is skewed as there has not been a revaluation in many years and many of the properties in city are undervalued for tax purposes. Woodland is completing a revaluation in 2003.

## Regional Comparative Tax Information, 2002

Community	Full Value	Population 2000 Census	Full Value Per Capita	Property Tax Levy	Property Tax Spending Per Capita	Full Value Tax Rate Per \$1,000
Fort Fairfield	\$130,450,000	3,579	\$36,448	\$2,456,058	\$686.24	19.59
<b>Caribou</b>	<b>\$253,150,000</b>	<b>8,312</b>	<b>\$30,446</b>	<b>\$5,001,107</b>	<b>\$601.67</b>	<b>21.05</b>
Limestone	\$44,950,000	2,361	\$19,038	\$772,846	\$327.34	18.75
Presque Isle	\$360,250,000	9,511	\$37,877	\$8,316,278	\$874.39	24.16
Easton	\$84,100,000	1,249	\$67,333	\$2,451,311	\$1,962.61	18.60
New Sweden	\$20,150,000	621	\$32,448	\$343,160	\$552.59	18.37
Woodland	\$27,900,000	1,403	\$19,886	\$388,170	\$276.67	15.67

Source: Maine Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summaries

### Per Capita Taxes, 1998-2002

Using the 2000 US Census population figure for Caribou of 8,312 and yearly property tax data, it is estimated that the property tax spending per capita experienced an increase of 19.95 percent from 1998 to 2002. The following table indicates that the average total property tax levy for the City for the five-year period was \$4,078,923 and the average spending per capita for the same time period was \$611.04.

### Caribou, Per Capita Taxes, 1998-2002

Year	Property Tax Levy	Property Tax Spending Per Capita
1998	\$4,632,916	\$557.38
1999	\$4,881,114	\$587.24
2000	\$5,001,107	\$601.67
2001	\$5,321,850	\$640.26
2002	\$5,557,630	\$668.63
Average 98-02	\$4,078,923	\$611.04
% Change 98-02	19.95	19.95

Source: 2000 US Census and Maine Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summaries

## **Fiscal Capacity Analysis**

Caribou has worked hard to control its tax rate while striving to maintain and improve the City's services and facilities. Education is typically the city's largest expenditure and Fort Fairfield, on average, spends \$1.6 million annually to its share of the appropriation. It would appear that this expenditure would have to increase in order to reduce the deficit spending. In addition, it is projected that over the next five years, state subsidies for education will continue to decrease. At the same time, property values are likely to increase as new development occurs. However, City Officials need to be aware of the impact of tax exempt properties on public facilities and services.

Caribou's ability to generate tax revenue depends heavily on industrial, commercial and residential growth. There has been an increase in industrial development and the re-opening throughout the city which could significantly increase property taxes with a small impact to the expenditures. Residential development tends to cost more to the municipality than the amount of taxes it generates. Overall, Caribou has attempted to control departmental budgets where feasible, cut extra expenditures and managed to maintain and improve its infrastructure and improve its roads. However, Caribou may want to consider strategies that will protect future revenue generation through long range planning efforts with a focus on diverse and sustainable economic development, a balance of modest industrial growth and natural resource preservation, and preparation of suitable locations for residential development.

# Housing

## Caribou's Vision

Caribou will constantly strive to be

- ❖ a dynamic community that is economically, culturally, and socially inviting;
- ❖ a community that promotes and aggressively pursues innovative business and economic development;
- ❖ a community that welcomes, supports, and responds to a diversity of new people and new ideas;
- ❖ a community that recognizes children as our future and shares collective responsibility for the nurturing and education of each generation;
- ❖ a community where family ties are strong, self respect and respect for others is instilled, where trust and courtesy is a way of life, and where the pace of life is consistent with these ideals; and
- ❖ a community that celebrates the values and lessons of a multi-cultural heritage that serves as its strength and as its foundation in a progressive, modern world

## **Housing**

The following information is a summary of existing housing data for Caribou. It should be noted that current, reliable data for Aroostook County, Caribou, and the surrounding communities is severely limited and oftentimes out of date. Therefore, this section will attempt to reflect this data for historic reference only. The remainder of the text will be culled from conversations and meetings with the Comprehensive Planning Committee, City Officials, and other interested parties. This section attempts to address, as completely as possible, the current availability of housing and the costs associated with obtaining decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling units. The main emphasis of the comprehensive planning process related to housing is an assessment of the affordability of the housing within the community. An important component of the process is to identify the segment of the population most significantly affected by the costs of housing, their income ranges, what type of housing stock is needed (if any), and the geographical areas which are a priority. Ultimately, the community should be able to project the future housing needs of the residents and base policy and strategy decisions upon those findings.

The inventory and analysis, with the current 2000 US Census data, complemented by the input from the Comprehensive Planning Committee, City Officials, Housing Department, and other interested parties, provides the informational framework for considering the actions to be taken by the community to insure affordable housing for all the residents. This section on housing examines various statistical housing data for Maine, Aroostook County, Caribou, and several surrounding communities.

The US Census defines a household as all the persons who occupy a housing unit. A housing unit is a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied as separate living quarters. The US Census defines family as a householder and one or more other persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.

The following chart presents the 1990 and 2000 US Census information for comparison of housing in Caribou.

## 1990- 2000 US Census Housing Data, Caribou

	1990	Percent of Total	2000	Percent of Total	Percent Change 90-00
Total housing units	4,089	100.00	3,831	100.00	-6.31
Occupied housing units	3,875	94.77	3,508	91.57	-9.47
<b>YEAR BUILT</b>					
1999 to March 2000	na	na	36	0.94	na
1995 to 1998	na	na	123	3.21	na
1990 to 1994	na	na	91	2.38	na
1980 to 1989	744	18.20	447	11.67	-39.92
1970 to 1979	342	8.36	609	15.90	78.07
1960 to 1969	768	18.78	341	8.90	-55.60
1940 to 1959	313	7.65	1,042	27.20	232.91
1939 or earlier	993	24.28	1,142	29.81	15.01
<b>ROOMS*</b>					
1 room	628	15.36	28	0.73	na
2 rooms	1258	30.77	130	3.39	na
3 rooms	1553	37.98	394	10.28	na
4 rooms	514	12.57	746	19.47	na
5 rooms	99	2.42	875	22.84	na
6 or more rooms	na	na	1,658	43.28	na
<b>SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS</b>					
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	23	0.56	25	0.65	8.70
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	15	0.37	5	0.13	-66.67
No telephone service	30	0.73	51	1.33	70.00
<b>HEATING FUEL</b>					
Utility gas	0	0.00	6	0.16	600.00
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	39	0.95	22	0.57	-43.59
Electricity	505	12.35	272	7.10	-46.14
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc	2785	68.11	3,004	78.41	7.86
Coal or coke	20	0.49	0	0.00	-100.00
Wood	352	8.61	199	5.19	-43.47
Solar energy	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00
Other fuel	7	0.17	0	0.00	-100.00
No fuel used	11	0.27	5	0.13	-54.55

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

\* Bedrooms as opposed to total rooms in 2000

## 1980-2000 Housing Trends

The number of housing units existing today versus the past two decades helps the community better understand how the overall housing stock is growing or declining. Demographic trends within Caribou, such as an increase or decrease in family size, as well as changes in the number of housing units, play an important part in the future housing needs of the community.

The inventory of housing trends includes data from communities within the central Aroostook County sub-region, Aroostook County, and the State of Maine. Towns studied in this section include; Presque Isle, Fort Fairfield, New Sweden, Woodland, Caribou, and Stockholm. The selected communities all showed an increase in the number of housing units between 1980 and 1990, and 1980 and 2000. However, all but Woodland and New Sweden lost housing units in the 1990s. The number of housing units in Caribou has grown from 3,694 in 1980 to 3,831 in 2000, a 3.7 percent increase. Between 1980 and 1990, New Sweden reflected the fourth highest percent growth of the selected subregional communities at 10.7 percent. Caribou had the greatest decline in housing units in the 1990s. It should be noted that many of the surrounding communities have smaller numbers of housing units and that any fluctuations in housing units can significantly skew the percent changes.

### Housing Units Comparison, 1980-2000

	1980	1990	2000	Percent Change 1980-90	Percent Change 1990-00	Percent Change 1980-00
New Sweden	270	317	319	17.4	0.06	18.1
<b>Caribou</b>	<b>3,694</b>	<b>4,089</b>	<b>3,831</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>-6.3</b>	<b>3.7</b>
Woodland	468	532	577	13.7	8.4	23.3
Presque Isle	3,996	4,411	4,405	10.4	-0.14	10.2
Fort Fairfield	1,567	1,661	1,654	6.0	-0.42	5.5
Stockholm	134	137	135	0.2	-1.5	0.07
Aroostook County	35,920	38,421	38,719	7.0	0.7	7.8
State of Maine	501,093	587,045	651,901	17.2	11.0	30.1

Source: 1980-2000 US Census.

When reviewing the following chart, according to the 1990 and 2000 US Census the total number of housing units in Caribou decreased by 6.3 percent. According to the Housing Department Director this decrease is not representative of Caribou's housing situation and may be attributed to a housing unit over count in the 1990 Census. However, it should be noted that the vacancy rates between 1990 and 2000 for year round units had remained fairly stable.

Town	1990 Total	Occupied	Vacant Year Round	% Vacant	2000 Total	Occupied	Vacant Year Round	% Vacant
New Sweden	317	272	38	11.99	319	246	49	15.36
<b>Caribou</b>	<b>4,089</b>	<b>3,719</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>8.22</b>	<b>3,831</b>	<b>3,508</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>8.07</b>
Woodland	532	485	45	8.46	577	528	37	6.41
Presque Isle	4,411	4,124	216	4.90	4,405	3,963	382	8.67
Fort Fairfield	1,661	1,494	111	6.68	1,654	1,523	91	5.50
Stockholm	137	120	11	8.03	135	111	24	17.78
Maine	576,095	465,312	33,902	5.88	638,834	518,200	32,231	5.05

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

The following chart shows that single unit housing units make up a vast majority of the total housing units in Caribou with 56.7 percent in 1990 and 63 percent in 2000. According to the US Census' the total number of single unit houses has increased by 4 percent during the time period. It is interesting to note that mobile homes, a housing type that is often considered affordable decreased by 30 percent during the decade and dropped from 14 percent of the housing stock to just over 10 percent. With the exception of single units, all other housing unit types decreased in Caribou in the 1990s. However, this may be due to a Census over count in 1990.

### Housing Units by Type

Type	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	% Change 90-00
1 Unit	2,321	56.76	2,417	63.09	4.14
2 Units	221	5.40	175	4.57	-20.81
3 or 4 Units	393	9.61	358	9.34	-8.91
5 to 9 Units	318	7.78	269	7.02	-15.41
10-19 Units	162	3.96	113	2.95	-30.25
20 or More	92	2.25	92	2.40	0.00
Mobile Home	582	14.23	407	10.62	-30.07
Total	4,089	100.00	3,831	100.00	-6.31

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census

### Caribou Housing Trends

The 2000 US Census reported that Caribou had 3,831 housing units. This was down 6.3 percent from the 1990 US Census count of 4,089 units. The comparative data revealed an increase of 137 housing units in the 20-year period from 1980 to 2000, or a percent increase of 3.7.

One thousand one hundred and forty two units (1,142) were built before 1939 (29.8%), 1,042 during the 1940s and 50s (27.2%), 341 during the 1960s (8.9%), 609 during the 1970s (15.9%), 447 units during the 1980s (11.7%), and 214 in the 1990s (5.5%). Thirty five (35%) percent of all the housing units were built either before 1939 or during the 1990s.

Of the 3,831 total housing units, 28 units had 1 room, 130 units had 2 rooms, 394 units had 3 rooms, 746 had 4 rooms, 875 had 5 rooms, and 1,658 had 6 or more rooms. Twenty five units lacked complete plumbing facilities, 5 lacked complete kitchen facilities, and 51 had no telephone service. Three thousand and four (3,004) used fuel oil for heating fuel, 199 used wood, 272 used kerosene, and 22 used bottled gas.

### **Additional Housing Characteristics, 2000**

Source: 2000 US Census

Of the 3,508 occupied housing units in 2000, 1,737 units (49.5%) were owner occupied and surveyed by US Census staff. Of the 3,508 occupied units, 536 had people move into the unit before 1969, 517 during the 1970s, 642 during the 1980s, 1,272 during the 1990s and 541 between 1999 and March 2000---51.6 percent of the residents moved into their household unit during the 1990s. Fifteen (15%) percent of the owner occupied housing units have been inhabited before 1969.

Nineteen percent of the 1,737 owner-occupied units had shelter costs greater than 30 percent of the income. In other words, 332 units had residents paying more than 30 percent of their income to live there. The median selected monthly owner cost for homeowners with a mortgage was \$680 per month according to the 2000 US Census. This figure included everything paid to the lender including principal and interest payments, real estate taxes, fire, hazard, and flood insurance payments, and mortgage insurance premiums. The median selected monthly owner cost for homeowners without a mortgage was \$273 per month.

1,076 renter occupied units were surveyed by the Census staff. Of those, 97 did not pay rent. 196 of the units had a rent less than \$200, 91 from \$200-\$299 per month; 542 from \$300 to \$499 per month, 139 paid between \$500 and \$749 per month, and 5 paid between \$750 and \$999, and 6 paid more than \$1,000. The median rent paid was \$396 per month. The percent of renter-occupied houses where the shelter costs were greater than 30 percent of the renter income was 26.6 percent.

This type of information provides an overview of the households in Caribou as well as insight into the potential types of housing units the community may want to develop to meet the future housing needs of the community.

### **Caribou Housing Agency**

The Caribou Housing Agency was established in 1977. It currently has two and one half employees (2 ½). The purpose of the agency is to administer the City's Section 8 and Voucher as well as other Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Housing Programs. The Agency received \$750,000 per year to assist 195 families in the City. These funds were used to assist families with housing assistance payments and to support the staffing of the Agency. The major goal of the Agency is to encourage self sufficiency of the participating families.

The Caribou Housing Agency is part of the Central Aroostook Housing Collaborative. The Collaborative is made up of housing agencies and authorities from Van Buren, Caribou, Presque Isle, and Fort Fairfield. In 1994, a \$1 million grant was received to develop the Families

Investment Center (FIC) program. This program provided training and assessment for eligible low income families. Graduates of the program have gone on to become nurses, teachers, and self sufficient members of the community. The FIC program has utilized all available funding and will be seeking additional revenues from HUD.

The agency has developed a 5-Year Plan that includes the following goals:

- Continue to apply for additional funding from HUD and other agencies for rental assistance.
- Rejuvenate the FIX-ME program with the assistance of MSHA, NMDC, ACAP and other agencies.
- Develop a citywide housing assessment and rehabilitation program,
- Develop a region-wide housing assistance program.
- Housing rehabilitation. Encourage subdivisions in growth area.
- Bring substandard housing up to code.
- Implement Section 8 home ownership programs.
- Review and adjust ordinances accordingly.
- Continue to work toward lowering vacancy rates.
- Work to remove older mobile homes in mobile home parks as the owners vacate the unit.

### **Subsidized Apartment Units**

The following chart represents subsidized housing units in Caribou as of August 2002. As of this date, there were 304 total units consisting of 216 elderly units and 88 family units. The city has worked closely with developers to establish subsidized housing units and at the present time there appears to be an adequate amount of the units for the demand. According to the Housing Department Director, the number of subsidized apartment units in Caribou is adequate for current and projected needs. However the amount of funding under the Section 8 voucher system is inadequate for the current need. There are currently 128 persons on a waiting list for Section 8 vouchers

## Subsidized Apartment Units, 2002

Name	Type	Number
Home Farm Apartments	Elderly	20
Lee Estates	Family	26
Rose Acres I	Elderly	18
Rose Ares II	Elderly	24
Rose Acres III	Elderly	24
Summit Street Apartments	Family	10
The Willows	Family	24
Farmview	Elderly	32
Caribou Gardens	Elderly	20
Townview Estates	Elderly	22
Mill Park Apartments	Family	20
Lyndon Heights	Elderly	37
Caribou Apartments	Elderly	10
Scattered Sites	Elderly	9
Scattered Sites	Family	8

Source: City of Caribou, 2002

In addition to the variety of housing options located in Caribou, other types of housing in the region were inventoried. These included Assisted Living Facilities, or Residential Care Facilities, that are available to assist adult and youth mentally ill and mentally retarded individuals. There are a variety of assisted living housing types, all which must be licensed by the State. The following types of services and housing are available under this category. (1) Adult Day Services: A group program of care carried out on a regular basis for at least 2 hours per day for more than 2 adults. (2) Adult Family Care Home: A family-style home which provides personal care and other assisted living services for up to 5 elderly or disabled adults. Homes are equipped with life safety devices that allow residents to age in place. Home operators are trained by the Department of Human Services. (3) Adult Foster Home or (Level I Residential Care Facility): A home caring for up to 6 residents. Homes provide a broad array of assisted living services, including 24-hour supervision. (4) Boarding Home or (Level II Residential Care Facility): A home caring for more than 6 residents. Homes provide a broad array of assisted living services, including 24-hour supervision. (5) Congregate Housing: A comprehensive program of supportive services provided in individual apartments and which includes a congregate meal program.

### Assisted Living Facilities

There are nine (9) assisted living facilities in the Caribou/ Presque Isle Service Center area with a total of 119 beds. At the time of the writing of this assessment, all of the facilities had vacancies. However, due to state budget cuts, one facility was looking at the possibility of closing. If closed, this facility could create a void in service provided.

## Assisted Living Facilities in the Central Aroostook Area, 2003

Name/Location	Facility Type	# of Beds	Handi-capped	Elderly	Mentally III	Mentally Retarded	Traumatic Brain Injury	Alzheimer's
Daybreak Adult Care-Caribou	Adult Daycare	12	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Jandreau Foster Home- Caribou	Type I	4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Philbrook Foster Home-Caribou	Level I	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Daybreak II- Presque Isle	Adult Daycare	10	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Limestone Manor, Inc.- Limestone	Level II	40	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
One Seventy Main Street- Presque Isle	Level I	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Skyhaven- Presque Isle	Level II	12	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Southern Acres Boarding Home- Westfield	Level II	30	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Tompkins Foster Home-Fort Fairfield	Level I	4	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
<b>Total</b>		<b>119</b>						

It should be noted that Aroostook County has a wealth of Assisted Living facilities. For example, the St. John Valley has 27 Assisted Living facilities with a total of 267 beds available. Many of these units are located in Van Buren and available for use by residents of Caribou. However, several facility managers stated that both residents and families prefer to have a facility in the person's home town or near by.

### Elderly Housing Units

Elderly Housing Units were also inventoried. With an aging population and aging housing stock, City officials need to prepare for the needs of this segment of the population. As stated below, nearly 27 percent of Caribou's population is over the age of 55. Using basic assumptions of retirement aged people living on a fixed income combined with increasing home maintenance costs, Caribou could be faced with an elderly housing crunch in the near future. Caribou has eleven elderly housing complexes with a total of 178 units. At the present time, there were 11 vacant units (6.2%). In the Caribou/Presque Isle Service center area, there are 359 elderly units spread throughout the area. The vacancy rate of these units averages approximately 5 percent.

The following table indicated the elderly population of Caribou. The percent of elderly individuals in Caribou is nearly equal to that of the surrounding communities' percentage and the Aroostook County percentage. To further define the elderly population of the region and Aroostook County, data was obtained to compare the three distinct categories of the elderly population as classified by the Maine State Housing Authority. The three classes of elderly are defined as those in the 55 to 64 age group; 65 to 74 age group; and 75 and older group.

<b>Location</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>Percent of Population</b>	<b>65-74</b>	<b>Percent of Population</b>	<b>75+</b>	<b>Percent of Population</b>
Aroostook County	8,048	10.88	6,811	9.21	5,740	7.76
<b>Caribou</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>10.86</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>9.69</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>7.86</b>
Presque Isle	859	9.03	774	8.13	734	7.17
Fort Fairfield	397	11.09	346	9.66	263	7.34

Source: US Census 2000.

Caribou's population of "young elderly" is nearly equal the region's percentage of population as well as Aroostook County's percentage. The "middle-Aged elderly" is slightly higher than that of the County and the region percentage rate. Finally, the frail elderly makes up 7.8 percent of Caribou's population as compared to the County average of 7.7percent. An area of concern is that in all cases nearly 30 percent of the population is over the age of 55. Combined this figure with that of an aging housing stock and the assumption that many of these individuals are on fixed incomes, the need for housing rehabilitation becomes more important.

### **Nursing Homes**

There are 14 nursing homes in Aroostook County. The table below describes the number of beds, the total number of residents, percent occupied, type of ownership, location within a hospital, and participation in Medicaid/Medicare programs.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Beds</b>	<b>Residents</b>	<b>Percent of Occupied Beds</b>	<b>Medicare participant</b>	<b>Medicaid participant</b>	<b>Type of Ownership</b>
Aroostook Medical Center	Mars Hill	72	48	67%	Yes	Yes	Non-profit
Borderview Manor	Van Buren	71	65	92%	Yes	Yes	For profit
Caribou Nursing Home	Caribou	86	80	93%	Yes	Yes	For profit
High View Manor	Madawaska	63	58	92%	Yes	Yes	For profit
Madigan Estates	Houlton	87	28	32%	Yes	Yes	For profit
Maine Veterans' Home	Caribou	40	38	95%	Yes	Yes	Govt.
Presque Isle Nursing Home	Presque Isle	83	82	99%	Yes	Yes	For profit
St. Joseph Nursing Home	Frenchville	41	40	98%	Yes	Yes	For profit

## **Housing Revitalization/Rehabilitation Efforts**

Home maintenance is also an important component of housing affordability. Several federal and state programs exist to help lower income families to repair and preserve their homes. Rural Economic and Community Development (RECD) grants and low interest loans, MSHA housing preservation loan funds, and Community Development Block Grants awarded to municipalities are examples of assistance that can be obtained to help low income families. The City of Caribou has expressed an interest in developing a city and region wide housing assessment. This assessment is needed to help housing agency staff apply for housing rehabilitation grants.

In addition, city officials recently met with representatives of the MSHA, Aroostook County Action Program, and other housing authority representatives in an attempt to revitalize the state's FIX-ME program. MSHA is completing several pilot projects in the southern and central portions of the state and city officials expressed the strong need for this program in northern Maine.

### **Affordable Housing**

The Growth Management Law requires that Maine towns prepare a Comprehensive Plan that addresses the state goal of promoting affordable housing opportunities for all Maine citizens.

A rented home is considered affordable to a household if the monthly estimated rent, insurance costs, and utility costs do not exceed 30 percent of the household monthly income. According to the 2000 US Census in Caribou, 38.1 percent of the renter-occupied households had shelter costs of 30 percent or more of the income; and 19.1 percent of the owner-occupied households had shelter costs of 30 percent or more of the income. An owner-occupied home is considered affordable if the unit's sale price or value does not exceed that for which monthly estimated mortgage payments (including principal and interest), property tax, insurance costs (homeowner's and private mortgage insurance), maintenance costs, and utility costs equal 28 percent of the household's monthly income.

Monthly mortgage payments have been computed based on information in the list of assumptions provided below. The figures do not include points or legal fees associated with the loan. As discussed below, the resulting data indicates that a VLI family (50% of the median family income for the State of Maine: \$45,179) is unable to afford the average sale price of housing units priced at \$60,000. However, data on average sales prices for homes indicates that they are affordable to families of moderate and low income levels (LMI).

In conversations with the 13 local realtors, all stated that housing market conditions in Caribou are very strong. All also went so far as to state they had had the best sales year between 2002-03 than they had in many years and rivaled pre closure of Loring Air Force Base.. Several quoted that they had also sold houses for the highest amount ever, one at over \$300,000 and another at just over \$265,000. Most felt that the strong sales were due in part to the very low interest rates and the fact that there an adequate number of mid range (\$60-85,000) properties for sale. One realtor stated that in the past, her property turn-over rates were anywhere from 60 to 90 days during peak selling season. Now most properties are selling in 45 to 60 days. All realtors also

stated that there was a wide range of housing availability in Caribou. Most also stated that there was adequate land for sale within the city.

Affordable housing availability is focused on very low income, low income, and moderate income households defined as follows:

- Caribou’s median household income in 2000 was \$29,485.
- Very low income means 50 percent of the city’s median household income based on 2000 US Census information.
- Low income means between 51 percent and 80 percent of the city’s median household income.
- Moderate income means 81 percent to 150 percent of the city’s median household income.

	<b>Very Low Income</b>	<b>Low Income</b>	<b>Moderate Income</b>
Percent of Median Income	50 %	51% to 80%	81% to 150%
In dollars	\$14,742	\$15,037-\$23,588	\$23,883-\$44,228
Affordable Rent	\$369	\$376-\$590	\$597-\$1,105
Affordable Mortgage	\$369	\$376-\$590	\$597-\$1,105
Less Taxes and Insurance	+/- \$200	+/- \$207	+/- \$214
Affordable Mortgage Payment	\$169	\$169-\$383	\$383-\$891
Affordable House Price	\$28,100	\$28,100-\$63,545	\$63,545-\$147,800

### **Housing Sales June 1999-June 2003**

<b>Sale Price Range</b>	<b>Number of Sales and Percentage of Total Sales</b>
Under \$20,000	27 (8.6%)
\$20,001-\$40,000	75 (24.0%)
\$40,001-\$60,000	112 (35.9%)
\$60,001-\$80,000	56 (17.9%)
\$80,001-\$99,999	19 (6.1%)
Over \$100,000	23 (7.4%)

Source: Real Estate Transfer Records

A total of 312 home sales were considered as part of the housing affordability study. During the period, the average sale price was \$56,285 with a high of \$219,000 and a low of \$6,500.

### Affordable Housing Availability

- At least 27 home sales between June 1999 and June 2003 were affordable to very low income families
- At least 214 home sales between June 1999 and June 2003 were affordable to low income families.
- The moderate income families had the widest available options for home sales with 289 sales between 1999 and 2003 being affordable.
- Very low income families had the fewest options but still had potential access to nearly 9 percent of the sales during the period.

### Rental Affordability

Rental units make up 1,076 or 28.1 percent of the total housing stock in Caribou according to the 2000 US Census. Rental affordability was determined with 2000 US Census information.

- The median rent was \$396.
- The vacancy rate was 14.5%.
- At least 287 rental units (26.7%) had rents that were affordable to very low income families.
- At least 829 rental units were affordable to low income families (77.1%).
- At least 1,070 rental units (99.4%) were affordable to moderate income families.

The owner-occupied housing affordability was more difficult to verify since not all households in Caribou had completed a recent housing rehabilitation survey. Of the 1,737 housing units in Caribou in 2000, 543 have homes valued at less than \$50,000, 982 between \$50,000 and \$99,999, 135 were valued between \$100,000 and \$149,000, 72 between \$150,000 and \$299,999, and 1 unit was valued at over \$1 million. The median value of homes in the community is \$61,700. The drop in interest rates over the past year has resulted in refinancing of existing mortgages. This has helped Caribou residents lower their mortgage payments thereby increasing housing affordability. According to realtors, the low interest rates have made the housing market stronger and lowered the turnover time for their properties. In addition, new homeowners had the ability to purchase housing units that may have been out of their price range due to higher rates. City officials will, however, need to be watchful of increasing property taxes that could create financial hardships on lower to middle income homeowners.

From 1999 to 2003, the City Office recorded 312 real estate transfers. In 2000, there were seventy three (73) purchases of residential homes with an average sales price of \$62,214.38. In 2001, the sale price of fifty-four (54) purchases of residential homes had dropped to \$58,309.79. In 2002, there were eighty-one (81) units sold with an average sale price of \$50,440.37. These comparisons were based on all home sales within Caribou during the period, including foreclosure, mobile homes, and urban and rural properties. They do not include sales due to family transfers or divorces. During the entire time period the low sale price for a housing unit was \$6,500 and the high was \$219,000.

In this survey, 54 percent of those responding (748 total) felt that the City was lacking in affordable housing that was “for sale”. Additionally, 34 percent of those responding had looked for new housing but were unable to find a housing unit within their price range. Many also stated in the comment section that the condition of housing units was “sub par” and often times in need of “major renovations.

## **Housing Analysis**

Shelter is the primary need of every community. When a community begins to lose sight of this fact, a slow process of decay will eventually result in dilapidated and inadequate housing units and vacant businesses. A feeling of despair, evident in many small rural communities losing population can be brought on by the poor physical appearance of the community and its housing stock. According to the 2000 US Census, one-fourth of the American people lived in rural areas, and they lived in about one-half of the nation’s substandard housing. This is the result of several factors: (1) Much of the rural housing stock is old; (2) few rural communities have adopted or enforced housing, building, plumbing, electrical, and fire prevention regulations; (3) lending institutions generally prefer to lend money to individuals and developments in larger cities, rather than small towns; and (4) low family incomes, due mainly to poor economic conditions and limited opportunities, mean that many families cannot afford better housing or to even maintain their current housing. This housing section provides an important link between the community’s growth goals, and the economic development and land use sections. If a town wants to have population increases and economic development, then adequate, safe, and affordable housing will be needed for residents of differing income levels.

According to the Housing Agency, affordable housing is not a significant problem in Caribou. However, a quick review of the 2000 (US Census information) average home selling price and a review of property tax information shows that housing may not be affordable to very low and low income families. Housing affordability should not be a problem to other segments of the city’s population. There are an ample number of rental units available and these units average a 9 percent vacancy rate. Average rentals prices are well within the means of very low and low income families.

A review of the housing issues that could affect Caribou has been evaluated over the past three years. Although the focus of Caribou City officials has always been on housing rehabilitation because this was the wish of its residents, a thorough review of other issues that may or may not exist was undertaken. At this time, there appears to be a lack of quality vacant housing in the community for anyone wishing to relocate to Caribou. The educational and property tax burden for the community is about average for Aroostook County.

The issues of substandard homes throughout the community as well as the rehabilitation needs of elderly housing in Caribou are the only two issues in need of addressing. The City of Caribou began the task of addressing substandard housing in their community in 1977. Residents of Caribou faced problems with their housing stock; i.e. age, condition, and severity of housing needs.

According to the 2000 US Census, Caribou's rental vacancy rate is high at 14.5%. City officials are looking at lower this vacancy rate through housing rehabilitation grants from the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development. Possible programs could include merging CDBG rehabilitation moneys with the Section 8 voucher program. Those rental units that currently do not meet the standards could participant in the CDBG rehabilitation program and/or other grant and loan programs. Once brought up to standards, the Housing Department could inspect those units and work with the owners on rents, possibly steering very low, low, and moderate income families to those units in the future.

Housing issues in rural communities reminiscent of Caribou revolve around repairing existing homes. Caribou has an attractive future as a place to work, for the urban and rural quality of life it has to offer, and for recreation and leisure-time activities. The city contains an urban downtown area, developed residential, commercial, and industrial areas that surround the downtown, and large outlying areas that have retained much of their rural character, despite the current residential development pressures. In the city, where there is strong economic development activity and a wide range of recreation and leisure activities, the housing demand is becoming significant.

Caribou's housing stock is getting old. Over 80 percent of the current housing stock was built before the 1980s and nearly 57 percent was constructed prior to 1959, according to the 2000 US Census. Over the past 5 years mostly single-family detached units have been constructed. Housing officials have expressed their frustration at the lack of housing rehabilitation funds available. Officials are also working on several grant applications and projects that should bring rehabilitation funds to the city. If successful, these housing rehabilitation efforts will also enhance Caribou's ability to market itself to future potential businesses and industries, which is critical to the City's economic revitalization and future job creation. The City should continue to improve housing conditions for its residents wherever possible by actively pursuing federal and state grants for housing rehabilitation.

It should also be noted that Caribou's population is expected to decline through 2010 and gain less than 1 percent in 2015. Housing demand therefore should be minimal through the planning period. Even with the projected increase of population between 2010 and 2015 the historic population levels of the 1970s and 1980s has not been met.

Municipal officials should also, as part of this comprehensive planning process, review the City's existing zoning ordinance to ensure it is compatible with its current economic development goals. The zoning ordinance should eventually be updated to protect existing residential land uses, while discouraging incompatible land use encroachment into established neighborhoods, all-the-while providing safe and sanitary housing for present and future residents.

Finally, the City should monitor the development of housing and its potential impacts on the availability of municipal services. New development will be coming to Caribou as will more economic opportunities. Proper use of existing and proposed regulations by the CEO, Planning Board, and Board of Appeals will assure that new development will fit into the community and become a valuable asset, not a liability. Good planning means good development and this will in turn reduce demands upon the community's limited resources in the future.

# Local Economy

## Caribou's Vision

Caribou will constantly strive to be

- ❖ a dynamic community that is economically, culturally, and socially inviting;
- ❖ a community that promotes and aggressively pursues innovative business and economic development;
- ❖ a community that welcomes, supports, and responds to a diversity of new people and new ideas;
- ❖ a community that recognizes children as our future and shares collective responsibility for the nurturing and education of each generation;
- ❖ a community where family ties are strong, self respect and respect for others is instilled, where trust and courtesy is a way of life, and where the pace of life is consistent with these ideals; and
- ❖ a community that celebrates the values and lessons of a multi-cultural heritage that serves as its strength and as its foundation in a progressive, modern world

## **Local Economy**

Caribou is located in the Caribou-Presque Isle Labor Market Area (LMA) and depends on the region's economic health for its survival. The LMA's boundaries include Bridgewater to the south, Portage and Oxbow to the west, Stockholm, Conner and Caswell to the north, and New Brunswick, Canada to the east. Caribou is one of the two major Service Centers in the LMA and many job holders from the surrounding communities work in the City. Local retail and service establishments depend on shoppers from other areas for a portion of their trade. In terms of employment, manufacturing, health care and education are the most important industries located solely in City.

In terms of employment, education, health, and social services, retail trade, and manufacturing are the largest employers of Caribou residents.

## **Local and Regional Economy**

### **Forestry**

Most of the commercial forest tree species found in Maine are also found in Caribou. The three major forest cover types include softwood, hardwood, and mixed forest stands. Generally, softwoods dominate the shorelands, wetlands, and lowlands. According to the USDA-Forest Service, balsam fir, red spruce, and northern white cedar, respectively, comprise the majority of the softwood stock growing in Aroostook County. Aspen, sugar maple, and red maple comprise the majority of the hardwood growing in the County. Other species include white birch, beech, and yellow birch.

Small woodlots located throughout the City, are also important to their owners and others in the community. The City should encourage these small woodlot owners to contact professional consultant foresters serving the area to gain technical assistance in managing their forestlands. These small woodlot owners should be aware of the requirements of Maine's Forest Practices Act. In addition, City officials may wish to make small woodlot owners aware of the Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP) administered by the Maine Forest Service that was established to foster sound and sustainable multi-use management of forest land resources. The future use of the City's forest lands should be planned with all of these multi-use considerations in mind.

Forestry is of minor importance to Caribou. Only a very small amount of land is forested and most are associated with small woodlots. Presently, there are 455 acres of land enrolled in Tree Growth. City officials feel that the management of these small woodlots is important to the owner's economic vitality.

### **Agriculture**

Agriculture is of greater importance to the local and certainly regional economy. However, town specific data is not available. There are 5 large farmers in Caribou and agriculture would

normally be the largest land user in the City. According to a recent Maine Potato Board report and the 1997 Census of Agriculture, active agricultural acreage in Aroostook County has remained relatively stable during the past 5 years and is projected to remain so in the foreseeable future. Potato growers are averaging about 65,000 acres per year. Also in conversation with area growers, the amount of active farmland is projected remain the same with little selling off of marginal farmland for residential land uses

## **Tourism**

It is generally agreed that tourism is providing a significant economic impact to Aroostook County. However, no specific data is currently available detailing the positive impacts to the region. Several agencies are working to better document the impact of tourism in northern Maine and more useful information should become available in late 2003. These groups are also working to expand the tourism season beyond from winter and market the region as a four season tourism destination.

There are over 2000 lakes, rivers, streams, and ponds in northern Maine, covering some 80,000 acres. Combined with its vast forestlands, it is an outstanding inland recreation area. Tourism development organizations in the northern Aroostook County area include the Chambers of Commerce located in Caribou, Limestone and Presque Isle along with Aroostook County Tourism (ACT). Tourism revolves mainly around outdoor recreation opportunities, especially winter activities; and the region's natural resource-based economy. The following are assets in the Caribou area that offer tourism potential:

### The North Maine Woods

The North Maine Woods is a 3 million acre tract of predominately private, commercial forest land in northwestern Maine that is filled with oral and physical history. It's southern boundary is located along the Penobscot River south of Baxter State Park, the eastern boundary is Route 11, and the northern and western boundaries are the Quebec border. The forest is made up of 21 major landowners and land managers. The State of Maine is one of these landowners with roughly a 5 percent share of the acreage. The area is an active commercial forest open to public recreational visitors on a registering and fee basis. Public recreational use is one of many multiple uses of this private forestland. The North Maine Woods organization was established in the early 1970's to manage and administer the recreational uses of the North Maine Woods Multiple-Use Management Area. The landowners have sought to accommodate existing uses but have not promoted increased use of the area. Coordination with state agencies has recognized the state's ownership and responsibilities in the area.

### Allagash Wilderness Waterway

The Allagash Wilderness Waterway is a 92-mile long river segment nationally recognized for outstanding canoe trips. It is the only New England river in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

### Fish River Chain of Lakes

The Fish River Chain of Lakes is comprised of nine (9) major lakes, interconnected by the Fish River. It contains the most productive landlocked salmon fishery in the world and is registered as a Maine Critical Area.

### Maine Public Reserve Lands

Deboullie Mountain (T15-R9) and Eagle Lake (T16-R6), and a portion of T16-R5 are large tracts of land set aside for public use in the northern subregion. Facilities include camping, picnicking, swimming, fishing, boat launches, snowmobiling, and hiking trails.

### Snowmobiling

You can get almost anywhere on the snowmobile trails in Maine; trails extend from New Hampshire to Quebec to New Brunswick. These trails include Maine's 3000 mile ITS system from Alfred to Rangeley to Madawaska to Calais. The 270 local snowmobile clubs located throughout Maine maintain approximately 6000 miles of club trails. In northern Maine there are over 2200 miles of well groomed snowmobile trails. Over 40 clubs maintain these trails---rated among the best trails in New England.

Caribou's Snowmobile Club (Club) maintains 170 miles of groomed snowmobile trails, which are all part of the 2200 miles of trails that crisscross Aroostook County. The Club is responsible for a portion of ITS 83, ITS 90 and local trails 87 and 89. Currently, the Club owns its own grooming equipment. Total trail funding maintenance, including grooming, is partially reimbursed through grants from Maine Department of Conservation. Issues which affect grooming, maintenance, and trail retention include increased snowmobile traffic, trespass, and landowner relations.

### Other trails systems

Railroad rights-of-way and designated trails serve as cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, and snowmobile trails in the winter; hiking and nature trails during the non-winter months; and access for fire control year-round. The continued maintenance of these trails for recreation and transportation pursuits will enhance recreational and transportation programs and economic development in the area. Caribou had regular rail freight service from the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad (BAR) and Aroostook Valley Railroad (AVR) with their rail lines in City. Today, some of these rights-of-way are abandoned and are part of an extensive regional recreational and pedestrian trail system from Van Buren to Caribou onto Presque Isle, Mapleton, as well as Easton and Houlton. Continued development of these rights-of-way could enhance recreational programs and economic development in the area.

Services are available for trail users in Caribou. Because of the location of these trails, the City could benefit from the year-round use of the trails. In addition, with proper and compatible trail development and tourism promotion, small-scale economic development could be realized. To

further enhance the trail system the construction of a parking lot in the Industrial Park was completed. The parking lot is designed to accommodate snowmobilers but is also used by those walking or biking the trail system.

## **Natural Resources**

The Aroostook and Little Madawaska Rivers support a significant fishery for wild brook trout and, to a lesser extent, landlocked salmon. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W) documents the fishery through reports from anglers and other census work. Biologists feel that the fishery is seasonal as trout move from the main river into smaller tributaries and spring holes during the warmer summer months. Other small streams support wild brook trout and very likely a locally important small-scale sport fishery.

The abundance of prime forestland soils, and wetlands in Caribou are an indicator of the City's potential to support wildlife. In addition, agricultural land that is no longer in production and reverting back to upland vegetation provides important habitat for woodcock and other upland birds, snowshoe hare, deer, bear, and moose. Collins Pond, located in the downtown, serves as a resting area for thousands of migrating waterfowl, especially Canada Geese. Cut-over woodland areas also provide significant amounts of browse, provided they are near uncut areas. Populations of these important species are influenced by land use practices on both agricultural and forestlands.

## **Lodging and Festivals**

There are numerous opportunities for both lodging and entertainment and dining in the Caribou area. Most of these are discussed in more detail in the Cultural and Historic Resources section.

### Caribou Winter Carnival and Snowmobile Festival

Held in February each year, this event provides a week long festival during the winter months. There are family fun days, downhill canoe rides, dogsled rides, golf, the snow goddess snowmobile poker runs and barbecues. In addition, the Keystone Kops arrest local residents with bail being set and paid as a local fundraising event.

### Caribou Fest/Caribou Cares About Kids

Event is held for four days in July. There is a parade, concerts, games, pool party, health and safety fair, fireworks and hayrides.

### Caribou Fall Arts and Crafts Festival

Held in October each year, this is the oldest crafts fair in the County.

### New Sweden's Midsommar Celebration.

On the weekend nearest to June 21, the Swedes in northern Maine, like those in Sweden, celebrate the summer solstice. Activities center around the decoration of the Maypole, and

includes, among other activities, Scandinavian fiddle music, Swedish dancing and a variety of traditional meals.

#### The Maine Potato Blossom Festival.

The Maine Potato Blossom Festival is held during the third week of July in Fort Fairfield, when hundreds of acres of potato fields come into blossom throughout Aroostook County. Events include a gigantic festival parade, mashed potato wrestling, the Maine Potato Blossom Queen Scholarship Pageant, and a farmer's jamboree. The festival ends with a fireworks display.

#### The Can-Am Crown International Sled Dog Race.

The Can-Am Crown International Sled Dog Races are held in March in Fort Kent. There are three courses---250 miles, 60 miles, and 30 miles. The feature race makes a 250 mile loop that begins and ends in Fort Kent and runs through the wilderness of northwest Aroostook County.

#### The Mardi Gras

The Fort Kent Mardi Gras celebrates “Fat Tuesday” before Lenten season begins as it does in New Orleans, where they share the same Acadian heritage.

#### The Acadian Festival.

The Acadian Festival celebration in Madawaska is a week long festival in late June that features a family reunion, parade, traditional Acadian supper, reenactment of the landing of the Acadians, French Quarters and many other activities. The Festival usually attracts a crowd of over 5,000 every year.

### **Local and Regional Economy**

The purpose of looking at the local economy is to help the community create policies and programs that can lead to steady growth over the long run. A community's economy can usually be broken down into two segments; the export base and the secondary base.

The export base is made up of those goods and services that the City exports to other towns or regions in order to bring in money. These earnings can provide the community with the means to import goods and services. Export based industries include manufacturing, agriculture, and forest products. Export based businesses have a greater potential for growth due to the broader market area that they serve. As export based businesses grow, they employ more people and attract new workers to the City. This increase tends to have a multiplier effect, increasing the demand for goods and services of the secondary businesses. In turn, secondary based businesses grow and provide more jobs and income.

The secondary based businesses serve the local economy. The size of these local businesses usually is reflective of the size of the City, For instance, in a small City, these businesses are not likely to grow much. They include gas stations, grocery stores, and other retail establishments.

## Employment and Unemployment

The most meaningful information concerning unemployment is available through the Maine Department of labor (MDOL). MDOL releases information on a monthly and annual basis. When compared to surrounding cities and towns in the central Aroostook area, Caribou had the third lowest unemployment rate in 2001 (4.5%) following New Sweden (6%) and Fort Fairfield (5.3%). Caribou's unemployment rate was similar to that of the State, County, and the Caribou LMA. LMAs are defined by where residents of communities do their daily business and their travel patterns.

### Employment and Unemployment Estimates for Caribou and Selected Central Aroostook Communities, 2001

	<u>Labor Force</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Unemployment</u>	<u>Percent Unemployed</u>
New Sweden	300	282	18	6.0
<b>Caribou</b>	<b>4,090</b>	<b>3,907</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>4.5</b>
Fort Fairfield	1,952	1,849	103	5.3
Presque Isle	4,892	4,847	135	2.7
Westmanland	22	22	0	0
Woodland	668	647	21	3.1
Maine	683,900	656,800	27,100	4.0
Aroostook County	37,310	35,650	1,660	4.4
PI/Caribou LMA	20,065	19,790	860	4.1

Source: MDOL Civilian Labor Force Estimates 2000-2001

According to the Maine Department of Labor, "Labor force gains in the next 10 years will probably come from those aged 25 and over, much of this increase will be accounted for by females and older workers, as the youth population is projected to decline." The suggestion that youth labor will play a less significant role in Caribou's labor force is substantiated by population projections for the younger age groups which show significantly less school age children for the 2000's in comparison with the previous decade. Also, Caribou's 18-44 age group will increase in population, thereby filling the potential shortfall of workers.

## Civilian Labor Force by Labor Market Area, 2001

Labor Market Area	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Percent Unemployed
-				
Fort Kent	4,000	3,770	240	5.9
Houlton	6,130	5,890	250	4.0
Madawaska	3,720	3,610	110	3.0
Patten/Island Falls	1,900	1,760	140	7.4
<b>Caribou/Presque Isle</b>	<b>20,650</b>	<b>19,790</b>	<b>860</b>	<b>4.1</b>
Van Buren	1,350	1,270	80	5.9
Maine (000)	683.9	656.8	27.1	4.0

Source: Maine Department of Labor, July 2002

An analysis of the above chart shows that the Patten/Island Falls LMA had the highest unemployment rate for 2001. Caribou/Presque Isle LMA, of which Caribou is a part of, had the third lowest unemployment rate of all LMAs located in northern Maine. It should be noted that June is a month when seasonal labor opportunities are typically beginning which can lower the unemployment rates.

### Employment by Industry

The following chart summarizes characteristics of the working population of Caribou for 2000, by working population and percentage of working population. In Caribou, the Educational, Health and Social Services sector comprises the highest percentage of workers at 28.8 percent. The second highest is Retail Trade at 13.7 percent followed by Manufacturing at 8.5 percent. Caribou parallels the comparative regional communities of Fort Fairfield and Woodland. In Fort Fairfield, the Education, Health and Social Services sector comprises the highest percentage of workers with 30 percent, followed by Professional, Scientific, Admin., Waste Management with 11.3 percent, and Retail Trade with 9.9 percent. In Woodland, the Education, Health and Social Services sector ranks first with 29.7 percent, followed by Retail Trade at 10.1 percent, and Public Administration with 7.8 percent.

## Occupation by Industry, 2000

Type	Fort Fairfield		Caribou		Woodland	
	2000	Percent	2000	Percent	2000	Percent
Agriculture, Mining, Forestry, & Fishing	87	5.7	100	2.7	38	6.3
Construction	53	3.5	230	6.2	45	7.5
<b>Manufacturing</b>	100	6.5	<b>316</b>	<b>8.5</b>	44	7.3
Transportation	113	7.4	124	3.3	29	4.8
Wholesale Trade	32	2.1	106	2.9	27	4.5
Information	32	2.1	51	1.4	7	1.2
<b>Retail Trade</b>	152	9.9	<b>514</b>	<b>13.9</b>	61	10.1
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	54	3.5	164	4.4	12	2.0
Professional, Scientific, Admin., Waste Management	174	11.3	313	8.5	45	7.5
<b>Education, Health, Social Services</b>	460	30.0	<b>1,068</b>	<b>28.8</b>	179	29.7
Art. Entertainment, Recreation	73	4.8	248	6.7	35	5.8
Other Services	144	9.4	215	5.8	33	5.5
Public Administration	61	4.0	255	6.9	47	7.8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,535</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3,704</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: 2000 US Census

It should be noted that the number of large manufacturers in Aroostook County continues to decrease. Caribou needs to consider ways to balance and diversify its economic base. The three dominant sectors are fairly close in percentages of workers, enabling the City's employed to avoid reliance on one sector of the economy. With this in mind, continued efforts should be made to diversify and promote economic opportunities in the Professional Services and Retail Trade sectors, while promoting the establishment of light manufacturing industries, agriculture, and other forms of material goods production.

### Major Employers

The following table identifies Caribou's major employers in 2003, all of which export goods or services to other communities or regions. Six of the top nine employers located in Caribou are in the health care field with the largest employer being the city owned Cary Medical Center.

## Major Employers in Caribou, 2003

Employer	Type	# of Employee (range)
Cary Medical Center	Health care	500-999
Aroostook Mental Health Center	Mental health care	100-249
Caribou Nursing Home Inc	Health care	100-249
Visiting Nurses Of Aroostook	Health care	100-249
A T X Forms Inc	Tax software developer	50-99
Caribou Inn & Convention Center	Hotel	50-99
First Technology,	Manufacturing	50-99
Pines Health Center	Health care	50-99
Professional Home Nursing Inc	Health care	50-99

Source: Labor Market Information Services, 2003

## Median Household Income

Household income includes the income of the householder and all persons aged fifteen and over living in the household. Median household income is derived by taking the total household incomes within the city and dividing it by the total number of households. Because some households contain only one person, the median household income is usually less than the median family income

In 2000, the median household income was \$29,485 and the per capita income of individuals was \$16,061. In Caribou, 24.1 percent of the total number of households earned less than \$15,000 per year. However, 25.5 percent of all households are in the greater than \$50,000 category and 15.8 percent are in the \$35,000-49,999 category. Caribou's median household figure was below the 2000 US Census figure for the State at \$37,240. Caribou's median household income is slightly above the 2000 Aroostook County figure of \$28,837. The distribution of household income in 2000 is listed as follows:

## Household Income, 2000

Income Level	Caribou	Percent of Total	Aroostook County	Percent of Total	Maine	Percent of Total
<\$15,000	854	24.1	7,802	25.8	92,490	17.9
\$15,000 to \$24,999	678	19.2	5,428	17.9	76,633	14.8
\$25,000 to \$34,999	543	15.4	4,677	15.4	73,614	14.2
\$35,000 to \$49,999	559	15.8	5,391	17.8	94,848	18.3
> \$50,000	901	25.5	7,019	22.8	180,787	34.9
Total Households	3,535	100.0	30,317	100.0	518,372	100.0

Source: 2000 US Census

## **Median Family Income**

The US Department of Commerce derives family income by taking the income of all family members aged fifteen (15) and over and dividing by the total number of families within the city. The median family income is slightly higher than the median household income for Caribou, equaling \$33,446. This is slightly lower than the Aroostook County median family income of \$36,044 by \$2,598 per family. As compared to the state median family income, Caribou is lower by \$3,794 per family, with the Maine's median family income equaling \$37,240.

## **Per Capita Income**

Per capita income is derived by adding the incomes of all residents of the city and dividing by the total population of Caribou (even those with no income). According to the 2000 US Census, the per capita income for Caribou equals \$14,757. This is slightly lower than the per capita income for Aroostook County, which equals \$15,033, and significantly less than Maine's per capita income of \$19,533.

## **Poverty Status**

According to the 2000 US Census, the poverty status of residents living in Caribou shows 16.7 percent of all persons have incomes below the poverty level. This is higher than the Aroostook County statistic of 14.3 percent and significantly higher than the State of Maine's 10.9 percent of all persons having incomes below the poverty level. The highest percentage for all categories surveyed belongs to families with female householder, no husband present with 64.8 percent having incomes below the poverty level.

The poverty status for a family of four (4) in 2000 was \$15,575. For families residing in Caribou, 9.8 percent have incomes below the poverty level. This is equal to Aroostook County's average of 9.8 percent, and similar to Maine's average of 7.8 percent. Statistics show that 19.6 percent of the families with children under the age of 18 years of age have incomes below poverty level. This percentage is higher than both Aroostook County's percentage of 14.9 and the State of Maine at 11.9 percent. In Caribou, 25.7 percent of families with children under the age of five (5) years had incomes below the poverty level.

## **Distribution of Work Force**

Of the 3,704 employed persons 16 years of age and over living in Caribou, 2,547 of these are wage and salary workers in private industry. There are a total of 824 government employees. There were 328 self-employed workers listed in the City and 5 unpaid family workers.

## **Commuting to Work**

There were 3,663 workers 16 years of age and over surveyed for this question living in Caribou. Of that 77.6 percent of these workers drive alone (i.e. SOV=Single Occupant Vehicle). Of the total number of Caribou's workers, 15 percent carpool, 0.7 percent reported using public transportation; 0.4 percent use other means; and 6.2 percent walked or worked at home.

The mean travel time to work for the workers living in Caribou was 17.2 minutes. This is slightly below Aroostook County's time of 18.3 minutes and Maine's mean travel time to work of 22.7 minutes.

The following two maps show where residents of Caribou work where do people working in Caribou live.

#### Where Do Residents of Caribou Work?

The graphical representation indicates that 2,193 of 3,663 working residents are employed in Caribou, followed by 647 residents being employed in Presque Isle, and 324 in Limestone. The remaining Caribou commuters are spread throughout from Island Falls to St. John Plantation. It should be noted that a majority of Caribou's residents are employed either in Caribou or only a short commuting distance to the surrounding communities. The successful economic development activities at the Loring Commerce Centre can be seen by the number of residents working in Limestone.

#### Where Do People Working in Caribou Live?

According to 2000 Census figures there are 1,789 non-resident commuters working in Caribou. Woodland exports the greatest number of workers to Caribou, followed by Presque Isle and Limestone. Similar to the commuting patterns of Caribou's residents, commuters from all over Aroostook County commute to Caribou to work. This is not surprising as Caribou has been designated as a regional Service Center.

Where do Caribou Residents work map.

Where do people working in Caribou Live map



## Taxable Retail Sales

Retail sales tax data is available from the Maine State Planning Office for the Caribou-Presque Isle Economic Summary Area, which is virtually identical to the Labor Market Area. The following pages reveal retail sales performance in the Caribou-Presque Isle Economic Summary area for the years 1997-2001, both in terms of the overall economic performance and or specific retail areas. The retail sales categories used in this analysis are:

- **Building Supply:** Includes building supply items typically found in lumber yards and hardware stores.
- **Food Stores:** Includes taxable sales at all food stores. Sales of food to be eaten in the home (the majority of the sales at these stores) are not included because such food items are not taxable.
- **General Merchandise:** Includes department stores and stores selling product lines such as clothing, furniture, shoes, appliances, home furnishings, and/or other major items.
- **Other Retail Sales:** Includes a large and diverse group of establishments selling items not covered in other categories such as dry goods' stores, drug stores, jewelry stores, sporting good stores, antique dealers, book stores, photo supply stores, gift shops, florists, and opticians.
- **Auto:** Includes auto sales and all transportation items such as boat and auto leasing, parts, and accessories
- **Restaurant and Lodging:** Includes all businesses selling prepared food for immediate consumption. The lodging group includes only rental tax thereby making it an accurate indicator of lodging business in the State.

The following table shows mainly growth between 1997 and 2001 in the taxable sales categories. The information contained in the table does not provide a complete picture of retail sales since it includes only taxable sales and not items such as food (changed in 2002). Nevertheless, the information is a valuable indication of how the Economic Summary Area is performing in terms of retail sales. All categories showed an increase in sales, except Food Stores. Other Retail and Restaurant/Lodging may have shown an increase due to gains in tourism both summer and winter.

## Caribou-Presque Isle Economic Summary District (CPIESD), 1997-2001 Taxable Retail Sales

(in thousands of dollars)

Retail Category	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	C-PIESD Average Annual Percent Change 1997-01
Building Supply	23,286	22,608	25,848	25,612	26,643	3.4
Food Store	33,459	35,615	37,450	37,772	31,571	-1.4
General Merchandise	67,564	68,029	71,825	75,214	82,175	5.0
Other Retail	21,133	22,823	22,748	22,198	21,199	0.1
Auto Transportation	66,119	71,796	78,652	75,960	76,557	3.7
Restaurant/Lodging	31,529	30,674	31,276	31,584	32,847	1.0
<b>Total Consumer Retail Sales</b>	<b>243,092</b>	<b>251,543</b>	<b>267,798</b>	<b>268,339</b>	<b>270,992</b>	<b>2.8</b>

Source: Maine State Planning Office, Maine Retail Sales Quarterly Report Annual Review, October 2002

### Local Economic Development Issues

#### Caribou Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The Caribou Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) provides a wide range of economic development activities and business support for the city. The CCCI changed its name from the Caribou Development Corporation in 2000 to reflect a merger between the Caribou Chamber of Commerce and the CDC. CCCI receives financial support from the City of Caribou, its members, and a variety of grants. Many of the CCCI's activities are based on two main areas: industrial/service/ and technology attraction and retail support and attraction. The CCCI performs the following functions:

- Capital loan injection;
- Business retention programs;
- Business attraction programs
- Capital improvements;
- Information services;
- Member support;
- Community support;

- Community projects such as the City-wide Yard Sale, Winter Carnival, and Caribou Cares about Kids;
- Residential recruitment
- Support for the Focus on the Future program.

The CCCI is in the process of developing a 5 Year Strategic Plan. While the Plan is not yet complete, there are a number of concerns that will be addressed. According to CCCI officials, strategies and projects to be included in the Plan include, but are not limited to:

- Inventory of industrial/commercial buildings.
- Assisting City Officials with a review of local ordinances that address conforming uses.
- Support of the Rural Empowerment Zone.
- Marketing
- Support the Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) proposal efforts.
- Maintain and upgrade industrial space so that it is closer to turn key.
- Work with the Community Development Office on downtown revitalization efforts.
- Update Community Profile.
- Increase financial lending program by identifying and seeking funds through organizations and agencies such as FAME and USDA.
- Maintain retail base
- Define retail market through a comprehensive retail marketing and retention plan.
- Recognize that tourism is a major industry and support various programs such as the TAP program.
- Provide entrepreneurial support for business start-ups.
- Self promotion of Caribou as a vital community.

While the main purpose of the CCCI is to promote Caribou and its members, CCCI officials should consider developing regional programs that promote that area as well. There are local Chambers of Commerce in Fort Fairfield, Presque Isle, and Limestone, all in competition for similar funds and seeking out similar funding sources. Many of the projects currently being reviewed can have a regional impact. Tourism is one such area. CCCI officials could consider developing, with other Chambers, package deals with golf courses, motels/hotels and inns, restaurants and other entities that will not only strengthen the local economy but the region's as well.

### **Other Efforts**

Community and economic developers in the region are looking at continuing or developing a number of projects that could benefit Caribou. These developments could provide a significant number of jobs to area residents. It should be noted that these projects are in the preliminary stages.

International Market Development: Continuation and expansion of efforts to market the region, and its products and services, to Canada and Europe. Activities include development of an export assistance program for existing and new businesses, international marketing for business

and tourism as part of the regional marketing plan, and generation and attendance at trade shows and trade missions.

International Development District: Development of a trade alliance with the Provinces of New Brunswick and Quebec to foster business relationships and to work on joint development projects. Developers are studying existing trade alliances between Canada and the US, and their experience in developing programs to simplify and accelerate international trade, and establishing communication with regional development organizations across the border.

Maine Seed Potato Program Improvements: Provision of funding and continued support of the Maine Potato Breeding Program through the Maine Potato Board Research Committee.

Aroostook Product Development and Testing Center: Focus on developing new and value added products from existing natural resources, specific to the needs of forestry and agriculture industries in northern Maine. Services include a lab/kitchen to develop, produce and test new food products; a manufacturing and testing laboratory, business incubator space, and staff assistance for business start-ups.

Maine Potato Market Advisory Program: Funding to allow the continuation of a program that provides information to the potato industry in Maine and nationwide. Services include dissemination of information through radio, television, toll-free market recording; statistical data base services research assistance and market consulting services.

Snowmobile Aroostook Campaign: Continuation of a successful marketing effort to promote snowmobiling in Northern Maine.

Transportation Improvements It is generally agreed upon by land use planners, City officials, and the general public that the transportation system in northern Maine needs improvements. There are plans by the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) to improve the movement of traffic along US Route 1 and 161. Any improvements planned by the MDOT will not happen during the course of a single year or even over the course of several years but as funding becomes available. Any improvement to US Route 1 and associated state routes will help move goods from Caribou to other areas of the County and state.

## **Economic Conclusions**

Caribou's potential for economic growth in the future is only limited by the imagination and creativity of its residents. Caribou is a Service Center for the surrounding communities and as such offers a wide range of commercial, industrial, retail, and professional opportunities. The City also serves as a "bedroom" community to the Loring Commerce Centre and surrounding communities, as many of the residents live in Caribou but are employed elsewhere. Caribou is fortunate in that it contains a wealth of assets which could be developed to enhance economic growth which include its location, transportation facilities, and its cultural resources. It provides a wealth of public facilities and services and maintains its cultural heritage.

One of Caribou's greatest economic assets is its residents. There is a strong work ethic and a desire to succeed which, while hard to quantify, provides a strong sense of community. The city's economic base is fairly well diversified, with regionally significant jobs related to natural resource production, manufacturing, health care, and miscellaneous retail and other services. This diversification can protect local employment as a whole from significant economic downturns that might otherwise devastate a town that relies more heavily on just one or two industries.

Health care (as well as education and government) is typically an important employer in a regional center such as Caribou. Current expansion at Cary Medical Center is testimony to its continuing importance in the region, in terms of both the necessary medical care it provides within the region and employment.

While Caribou has seen the creation of new retail centers such as Save-a-Lot and Northland Discount, other businesses have closed, such as Big A Auto Parts. Also, taxable consumer sales figures have remained fairly flat between 1997 and 2001, with some fluctuation in intervening years. This indicates that, despite new retail establishments locating in Caribou, the total dollar value of taxable goods being sold is not significantly increasing. This also indicates that more retail establishments do not necessarily equate to more money being spent in the local economy. Caribou should carefully consider the impact that any additional new retail centers may have on its existing businesses, and should also consider when it may be appropriate to support existing and new infill businesses. It is difficult to effect a positive net growth in retail sales unless population, earnings, and employment growth in the region also occur.

In order to promote its existing downtown businesses, Caribou may wish to consider developing an inventory of its vacant commercial buildings in order to promote infill, discourage sprawl, and draw on any potential synergistic advantages of locating businesses together (including economies of scales and multi-purpose shopping trips. An inventory would be useful to economic developers should a business contact the City with an interest to locate there. The inventory should, at a minimum, include information on the square footage of each vacant building, its age, zoning district, construction type, and asking lease or purchase price.

It is expected that some businesses will continue to locate along U.S. Route 1 where they are highly visible and can easily cater to motorists, and these businesses will continue to be important to the community. However, downtown Caribou and Bennett Drive can remain a viable shopping destination with City support (such as through the suggested inventory), through determined patronage by local residents, and through its continued promotion by its merchants. Downtown merchants may also wish to somehow promote a niche market that ties in with the region's strong agricultural heritage. In addition, projected downtown improvements can provide ample parking, public facilities, and improve the nature of the architecture. The City should be commended for its past support of downtown businesses, and should periodically evaluate its ability to further promote downtown in any way feasible.

Caribou is also blessed with a wealth of natural resources. Thanks to good to excellent water quality in area waterbodies, they support cold water fisheries of statewide significance. City officials may wish to look at strengthening their land use controls to protect these valuable

natural resources while at the same time encouraging economic development. In addition, Caribou officials may wish to look at additional public access locations along the Aroostook River and apply for state funding to construct these access sites.

City officials may wish to maintain, improve, and "market" these assets in an effort to increase tourism within the community. Summer tourism is an industry where most of Aroostook County could further benefit from. There are ample natural and cultural resources in the area to draw large numbers of people each year. The development of additional lodging and eating establishments could boost the number of visitors to the City.

However, Caribou needs to market itself to the greatest number of potential residents. Part of this marketing plan should include reasons why future businesses should locate in Caribou such as school systems, access to other transportation facilities, access to recreational and cultural facilities, and quality of life. All of these give added value to the desirability of Caribou as the site of commercial or industrial development.

The construction of a limited-access four-lane highway from I-95 at Houlton, northward to the St. John Valley would have a significant impact on Caribou. While the highway would open up untold tourism, shopping, and roadside service opportunities, it would also affect existing businesses along U.S. Route 1. When a highway alignment is eventually selected will it be possible to determine if those impacts on existing U.S. Route 1 businesses will be positive or negative. The City needs to continue to make every effort to follow any proposals related to this potential project, and should provide continual input into the planning process at every opportunity possible.

# Natural Resources

## Caribou's Vision

Caribou will constantly strive to be

- ❖ a dynamic community that is economically, culturally, and socially inviting;
  - ❖ a community that promotes and aggressively pursues innovative business and economic development;
  - ❖ a community that welcomes, supports, and responds to a diversity of new people and new ideas;
  - ❖ a community that recognizes children as our future and shares collective responsibility for the nurturing and education of each generation;
  - ❖ a community where family ties are strong, self respect and respect for others is instilled, where trust and courtesy is a way of life, and where the pace of life is consistent with these ideals; and
  - ❖ a community that celebrates the values and lessons of a multi-cultural heritage that serves as its strength and as its foundation in a progressive, modern world
-

## Natural Resources

### Topography.

Caribou is characterized by a moderately sloping terrain that is dissected by numerous wetlands, brooks, ponds, and streams as they flow into the Aroostook River, Madawaska River, and Caribou Stream. Caribou's other significant topographic features are the ridges including Campground Hill that rise up throughout the township. The City covers a land area of approximately 72 square miles or 46,080 acres. Presque Isle borders Caribou to the south; Woodland and Washburn to the west; Connor and New Sweden to the north; and Limestone and Fort Fairfield to the east. Elevations range from a low of 400 feet above Mean Sea Level (MSL) along the Aroostook River at the Fort Fairfield townline to a high of 900 feet in the southeast corner of City. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection has identified and mapped twenty (20) non-forested wetlands and the National Wetland Inventory has identified many more.

### Soils.

Soils are the fundamental resource by which the suitability of the land to support a variety of land uses is determined. The United States Department of Agriculture-Soil Conservation Service (USDA-SCS) has mapped the soils found in Caribou. The various soil types that occur have been detailed in the USDA-SCS's Aroostook County Soil Survey - Northeastern Part issued in 1964. Usually, it is assumed that soils are somewhat different in each region. Caribou is located in the central portion of the soil survey area and has soils similar to the surrounding region. Soils information for this natural resource inventory is from two sources, Soils Survey-Aroostook County, Northeastern Part (Map #'s 58, 59, 67, 68, 69, 77, 78, 79) issued in August 1964 and Soil Survey Data for Growth Management in Aroostook County, Maine, Northeastern Part.

### Definitions.

**Soil Associations** - several main patterns of soil types.

**Soil Types** - distinct soils irrespective of slope.

**Soil Series** - soils with profiles that are almost alike.

**Soil Group** - soil series that have many internal features in common.

**Phases** - distinct soil type including slope.

### Soil Types.

Soils are listed two ways in the soil surveys. First, they are listed by name (i.e. Plaisted gravelly loam). Secondly, they are listed as a symbol containing three letters (PgC). The first two letters indicate the soil type (i.e. Pg, Ha, Ma) and the last letter indicates the slope on the map ("A" indicates a 0-2 percent slope, "B" 2-8 percent, "C" 8-15 percent, "D" 15-25 percent, and "E" 25-45 percent). For example, PgC indicates a Plaisted gravelly loam, located on an 8-15 percent slope.

There are thirteen (13) distinct **soil types** mapped by the USDA-SCS within Caribou. Of these 13 types, Monarda and Burnham silt loams make up the greatest proportion of soils and are a couple of the dominate soil types found within the Northern Aroostook County Soil Survey area.

## **Agricultural and Forest Resources**

### Agricultural Resources.

Agriculture within Caribou has followed the regional trends of declining acreages of active farmland, and declining numbers of operational farming units. Some of these declines are a result of improvements in farming mechanization that enabled a farm operation to improve crop production while reducing labor requirements. Thus, fewer farming operational units were needed to plant and harvest more or equal amounts of acreages with improvements in farm equipment technology. Probably a larger factor in the declining number of farmers and cultivated acreages of row crops (primarily potatoes) in Caribou and the region, were the significant increases in the costs of production that occurred during the 1970's and 1980's while the market price for the crop produced remained somewhat stable, or in the case of high yielding years, (where surplus stocks outstripped market demand) market prices that were below the costs of production.

Most of Caribou's prime agricultural soils are not being actively farmed. However, any proposed land use ordinance amendments to be developed during the implementation phase of this comprehensive planning process might provide that the principal use of certain sections of Caribou be "agricultural" to potentially prevent prime farmlands from being taken out of agricultural production. Residential development that may occur along some of the rural roads that are surrounded by agriculture may be incompatible with agriculture as it places a different set of demands on natural resources. Through proper land use controls, nuisance conditions arising from incompatible land uses can be avoided. Caribou should strive to maintain the operational integrity of viable farming units by controlling residential development on prime farmlands. Many of the soil types that are prime farmland are also those that are the most suitable for subsurface wastewater disposal. This places a greater demand on those areas that have suitable soils.

### Forest Resources.

Most of the commercial forest tree species found in Maine are also found in Caribou. The three major forest cover types include softwood, hardwood, and mixed forest stands. Generally, softwoods dominate the shorelands, wetlands, and lowlands. According to the USDA-Forest Service, balsam fir, white and red spruce, and northern white cedar, respectively, comprise the majority of the softwood stock growing in Aroostook County. Aspen, sugar maple, and red maple comprise the majority of the hardwood. Other species include white birch, beech, and yellow birch.

There is a small amount of commercial forestland located in Caribou located in the northwestern and southwestern portions. Wood harvested in this area goes to mills in St. Leonard, Nashville, Ashland, Portage, Masardis, Fort Kent, Easton, and Fort Fairfield.

Small woodlots located throughout Caribou are important to their owners and others in the community. The City should encourage small woodlot owners to contact professional consultant foresters serving the area to gain technical assistance in managing their forestlands. Municipal officials should attempt to make the small woodlot owners aware of the requirements of Maine's Forest Practices Act. In addition, officials may wish to make small woodlot owners aware of the Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP) administered by the Maine Forest Service that was established to foster sound and sustainable multi-use management of forestland resources.

### **Wetland Areas.**

Freshwater Wetlands are defined under Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act, MRSA Title 38, Section 480-3 as: "freshwater swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas that are: inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and for a duration sufficient to support and which under normal circumstances do support a prevalence of wetland vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soils; and are not considered part of a great pond, coastal wetland, river, stream, or brook. These areas may also contain small stream channels or inclusions of land that do not conform to the above criteria."

Some of the local benefits of Caribou's wetlands relate to wildlife, flood control, and water quality protection. The amount and variety of plants found in wetlands create excellent habitat for wildlife such as moose, deer, snowshoe hare, songbirds, ruffed grouse, and waterfowl. The dense cover and available browse found in wetlands and their fringe areas are essential for the survival of wildlife during the long winter. During periods of heavy rain and spring run-off, wetlands act as catchment basins or sponges that collect and hold water and gradually release it as stream flow or groundwater recharge. All wetlands, regardless of size, perform the important function of reducing flooding. The biological composition of wetlands allows them to absorb tremendous quantities of nutrients and pollutants, which makes them act like a water purification system. The quality and quantity of ground and surface water is maintained by healthy, undisturbed wetlands.

According to the Freshwater Wetland Map, prepared by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, Caribou has twenty (20) non-forested wetlands. All of the wetlands are over 10 acres in size, therefore requiring mandatory protection under the Shoreland Zoning Act, Title 38 MRSA, Sections 435-488. Caribou has zoned all of the wetlands as Resource Protection affording them the highest level of protection. Prior to the adoption of the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, wetlands were encroached upon by timber harvesting to the detriment of ground and surface water. The largest wetland has received a moderate Wading Bird and Waterfowl habitat rating for part of its length by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

Caribou's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance was completed in 1992. Wetlands identified in the plan use MDEP's older mapping system. City officials may consider updating their wetland

inventories using newer National Wetland Inventory maps. These maps identify a larger number of wetlands down to one (1) acre in size throughout the community.

## **Water Resources.**

Water resources play a significant role in Caribou's economic potential and quality of life and are divided into two separate categories, groundwater and surface water. Each type of water provides benefits to the community and may be threatened by certain land uses.

### Groundwater.

Groundwater is typically the most important resource the City can have by providing drinking water to the residents of Caribou. The Maine Geologic Survey has identified nine (9) sand and gravel aquifers in Caribou. The largest is located along the Little Madawaska River. All are rated as good to excellent yielding (i.e.: potential for ground water yield of greater than 50 gallons per minute).

Caribou's ground water resources, although abundant, are susceptible to contamination from a variety of sources and thus need to be afforded a planned level of protection. Some potential sources of groundwater contamination that have been identified by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP) are: faulty/substandard septic systems, agricultural chemicals, underground fuel tanks, ground discharging floor drains, old solid waste dumps, and sand/salt storage piles. There are three (3) locations in Caribou that have been identified as having contaminated groundwater by the MDEP. All locations are sites of present or past gasoline stations and have experienced spills. The Technical Services Division at MDEP is currently monitoring these locations.

### Surface Water.

Caribou's surface waters are contained within three (3) watersheds; Aroostook River, Caribou Stream, and Little Madawaska River. In addition, there are numerous tributaries and springs that feed into the larger streams and ponds. Caribou has numerous water resources. However, due to the lack of size of many of the ponds and streams, there is not much available printed data. Presently, there is no water quality monitoring efforts taking place on any of the waterbodies.

The Aroostook River and its tributaries have been assigned three water quality goal classifications on two segments in the City of Caribou, as identified by the Maine DEP. This means that any activity which needs permitting must meet the standards set by the classification. The classifications try to be consistent with what the rivers or streams are, or are capable of being. The highest classification is AA, which are outstanding waters worthy of protection. Class A waters are to remain in a "natural" biological condition, Class B waters are to remain "unimpaired" by pollutants, and Class C waters may be changed but not below a certain level. The following are classifications for river segments and streams in Caribou.

## Aroostook River

- \* From its confluence with the Presque Isle Stream to a point located 3 miles upstream of the intake of the Caribou water supply including all impoundments: Class C.
- \* From a point located 3 miles upstream of the intake to a point 100 yards downstream of the intake, including all impoundments: Class B.
- \* From a point 100 yards downstream of the intake of the Caribou water supply to the international boundary, including all impoundments: Class C.

## Tributaries

- \* Little Madawaska River and its tributaries: Class B.
- \* All other tributaries (including Caribou Stream): Class A.

Three ponds are located in Caribou: Violette Pond in the upper part of the Otter Brook watershed, Ketch Pond within the boundaries of Loring Commerce Centre, and Collins Pond created by the dam on Caribou Stream. All are small, less than 10 acres.

The Caribou Dam on the Aroostook River is owned by Maine Public Service Co., and is intended for generation of electricity. It is 12 feet high, and was equipped with a new concrete fish way in 1955. The dam on the Caribou Stream was built by Collins Lumber Co. years ago for holding logs for the mill. Currently it serves as an informal recreational area.

According to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP), Caribou Stream is the only waterbody in Caribou that does not meet its water quality classification. In 1999, Caribou Stream was evaluated for aquatic life and found to be in non-attainment. As a result, MDEP is required to complete studies within the stream by 2012. At the present time, this study has not yet happened. MDEP suspects that this water body is a non-attainment waterbody due to urban run-off as pollutants are washed off of City streets and parking areas.

In the past, the City has worked to remove point source pollutants in the downtown including straight pipes and dilapidated buildings. In addition, according to the Code Enforcement Officer, there has been no new development along Caribou Stream for the past 10 years. The City also utilizes the Stormwater Management Regulations and its Subdivision and Site Design Review criteria when new large developments occur in the watershed. These regulations contain stormwater management standards. While the City recognizes that this is a non-attainment waterbody, it also expects to receive, as soon as completed, MDEP's report detailing the causes of the non-attainment of Caribou Stream. Once reviewed, the City will work with MDEP to development strategies towards bring that waterbody to classification.

The Little Madawaska River is classified as an "Impaired Water" due to chemical and fuel contamination at Loring Air Force Base in Limestone. Massive clean-up efforts are underway at the site and should improve the water quality in the river.

According to Maine Department of Environmental Protection staff in Presque Isle, Collins Pond's water quality meets its present classification. This pond is a man made waterbody located in the downtown area. City officials feel that the present citywide zoning and stormwater management strategies are sufficient to meet and maintain the classification of this waterbody.

### **Fisheries and Wildlife Habitat.**

Caribou has a wide variety of natural habitats that are capable of supporting most of Maine's major wildlife and fish species. Caribou's tracts of woodlands, wetlands, combined with significant cropland acreages, abandoned farmlands, and other habitat (i.e.: fringe areas, regeneration areas, etc.) are capable of supporting a tremendous amount of wildlife from songbirds to large animals, such as deer and moose. The long, cold winters and the amount of winter habitat are a limiting factor in all of Aroostook County for the amount of wildlife present.

#### Fisheries Habitat.

It should be noted that when discussing the local fisheries resource, it is essential to clarify the critical role that all of the City's streams play in the health of the resource. Though all of the streams may not support trout populations, they serve to maintain the cold water temperatures necessary for healthy, viable populations. Brook trout become stressed in water temperatures above 68 degrees Fahrenheit for extended periods of time. Maintaining shade cover along all streams helps to keep water temperatures at more tolerable levels.

According to Maine's Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W), Regional Fisheries Biologist, the Aroostook and Little Madawaska Rivers, and Caribou Stream support a significant fishery for wild brook trout and, to a lesser extent, Atlantic salmon. IF&W documents the fishery through reports from anglers and other census work. Biologists feel that the fishery is seasonal as trout move from the main river into smaller tributaries and spring holes during the warmer summer months. The Aroostook River has special regulations that do not allow the use of live fish as bait (certain sections are exempt for children.)

Other small streams support wild brook trout and very likely a locally important small-scale sport fishery. The few small ponds located in City have not been surveyed by IF&W, but biologists feel that these likely provide little direct benefit as trout fisheries.

#### Wildlife Habitat.

The abundance of prime forestland soils, and wetlands in Caribou are an indicator of the City's potential to support wildlife. In addition, agricultural land that is no longer in production and reverting back to upland vegetation provides important habitat for woodcock and other upland birds, snowshoe hare, deer, bear, and moose. Collins Pond is a resting area for migrating waterfowl. Cut-over woodland areas also provide significant amounts of browse, provided they are near uncut areas. Most of Maine's wildlife needs a diversity of habitat including wetlands, fields, fringe areas, and woods. Populations of these important species are influenced by land use practices on both agricultural and forestlands.

According to wildlife biologists from the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife in Ashland as of 2003, there are no deer wintering areas (DWAs) in Caribou. The Beginning with Habitat information, also received in 2003, indicated six (6) wading bird and waterfowl habitats. City officials may want to consider working with the landowners and IF&W to develop cooperative agreements for the protection of these resources. City officials should contact the Regional Biologist in Ashland for more information.

**Unique Natural Areas.**

Unique natural areas include any occurrences of endangered, threatened, or rare plants, animals, and natural biological communities as identified by the Natural Areas Division of the Maine Department of Conservation. These areas also include registered, qualified (but not registered), or nominated State Critical Areas by the Maine State Planning Office, and areas designated as National Natural Landmarks by the National Park Service. On the local level, any natural resource area that is unique to the City of recognized local value may be considered for protection as a unique natural area.

The Natural Areas Division (NAD) has documented seven (7) rare plant species or natural communities in Caribou that are on the state’s inventory and data management system. The main purpose of the NAD inventory is to monitor the location and status of rare features that contribute to our natural diversity and to provide data for land use planning, permit review, and conservation planning. The following unique natural areas, including rare plants and natural communities have been listed:

**Rare Plant Species or Natural Communities.**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Global Rank	State Rank	Habitat
Dryopteris Goldiana	Goldie's Wood Fern	G4	S2	Rich, mostly calcareous woods.
Circumneutral Fen	Circumneutral Fen	G3	S2	Generally occur as part of larger peatlands.
Cypripedium Reginae	Showy Lady’s Slipper	G4	S2,S3	Bogs, and sunlit openings of mossy woods
Malaxix Monophyllos	White Adder's Mouth	G5	S1	Damp talus, peats, swales, and fens.
Ophioglossum Pusillum	Adder's Tongue Fern	G5	S1	Acid swales, wet thickets, shores, damp sterile pastures
Symphyotrichum Boreale	Rush Aster	G5	S3,S4	Circumnetural fens, swamps, wet gravels, and shores.
Valeriana Uliginosa	Marsh Valerian	G4	S2	Circumnetural fens, open areas.
Ophiogomphus anomalus	Extra striped snaketail dragonfly	G5	S3	Dragonfly seen in caribou
<i>Ophiogomphus howei</i>	Pygmy snaketail dragonfly	G5	S3	Dragonfly seen in Caribou

Source: Maine Department of Conservation, 2000

Key to rare plants and communities table:

- S1** Critically imperiled in Maine because of extreme rarity. (five or fewer occurrences.)
- S2** Imperiled in Maine because of rarity (6-20 occurrences)
- S3** Rare in Maine (20-100 occurrences)
- G** Global rating and follows the same criteria for the State rank.
  - G4** Apparently secure
  - G5** Demonstrated to be secure

## **Hazard Areas.**

There are two types of hazard areas found in Caribou, floodplain areas and areas of steep slopes. There are fairly extensive floodplains located throughout City along most of the major streams and waterbodies. The major flood hazard areas are, according to data supplied by the National Flood Insurance Administration, along the Aroostook River, Caribou Stream, Little Madawska River, and the numerous small tributaries of these rivers. All of the floodplains are considered un-numbered "A" zones, meaning that flood elevations have not been determined. The National Flood Insurance Program is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Program has been designed to provide flood insurance for existing properties and to discourage additional development within the 100-year floodplain. A 100-year flood is a flood with a one percent chance in any given year of being equaled or exceeded. Floodplains are best suited for uses such as open space, recreational uses not requiring major structures, wildlife habitat, or agriculture lands.

Areas of steep slopes are referred to as hazard areas for a number of different reasons. Generally, the steeper the slope the more potential hazards exists. Steep slopes generally have a high surface run-off rate and accelerated erosion. Development on steep slopes requires sound engineering and more sophisticated sediment and erosion control planning. The cost of developing roads, buildings, and other structures tends to be significantly greater because of the increased hazards. Also, the operation of machinery can be extremely hazardous on slopes 15 percent or greater.

## **Natural Resources Analysis.**

Caribou is blessed with a wide variety of natural resources. City officials have taken steps to protect many of these resources through the development and adoption of land use or zoning ordinances. The City has adopted both a floodplain and Shoreland Zoning ordinance that are designed to protect the city character and important natural qualities.

### Forestry

Forestry has an impact on both Caribou's and the region's economy. There is a moderate amount of commercial forestland located in Caribou most of which is located in the northeastern and southwestern portions of city. Prime forestlands have implications for future community growth and change. Well-managed forestlands have multiple uses including wildlife habitat, production of wood, protection of water quality, and recreation. The future of Caribou's forestlands should be planned for these multiple use considerations.

## Water Resources

The Maine Geologic Survey has identified nine (9) sand and gravel aquifers in Caribou. The largest mapped aquifer is located along the Little Madawaska River. All are rated as good to excellent yielding (i.e.: potential for ground water yield of greater than 50 gallons per minute). These aquifers offer potential areas for growth in City. They are, however, susceptible to contamination from a variety of sources.

Caribou's surface waters are primarily rivers, perennial streams, and brooks. City officials have zoned a majority of these streams under a Stream Protection District (SP), 75 foot buffer, under their Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. City officials may wish to consider reviewing the ordinance to determine if there is an adequate level of protection for these resources.

## Fisheries

Several of the City's streams, brooks, and tributaries provide good fisheries habitat. The Aroostook and Little Madawaska Rivers are well-known and prolific brook trout fisheries for residents and visitors to the region. City officials may wish to work with surrounding communities to develop protection strategies for this valuable resource.

## Wildlife

Caribou has two (2) identified Deer Wintering Areas (DWAs), and three (3) mapped Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitats (WWH). City officials may want to consider working with the landowners and IF&W to develop cooperative agreements for the protection of these resources.

# Cultural and Historic Resources

## Caribou's Vision

Caribou will constantly strive to be

- ❖ a dynamic community that is economically, culturally, and socially inviting;
- ❖ a community that promotes and aggressively pursues innovative business and economic development;
- ❖ a community that welcomes, supports, and responds to a diversity of new people and new ideas;
- ❖ a community that recognizes children as our future and shares collective responsibility for the nurturing and education of each generation;
- ❖ a community where family ties are strong, self respect and respect for others is instilled, where trust and courtesy is a way of life, and where the pace of life is consistent with these ideals; and
- ❖ a community that celebrates the values and lessons of a multi-cultural heritage that serves as its strength and as its foundation in a progressive, modern world

## **Cultural and Historic Resources**

Current and potential businesses and residents have a deep interest in the quality and quantity of community services and cultural resources because they help to establish the "quality of life" for the City. Cultural resources are those activities, opportunities, and benefits the City has that reflect the culture and heritage of the community, the recreational resources, scenic resources, and public access plans.

- Scenic resources are those areas of the community that may offer scenic vistas, such as areas identified by the state as having scenic value, scenic views, natural or cultural features (churches, trees, fields, mountains...), and parts of the community that contribute to the character of the City (village green, historic site...).
- Public access plans are those opportunities which the people have to obtain entry to and use waterbodies and tracts of land for recreational pursuits.

The City's ability to attract and retain economic growth often depends on the quality and quantity of cultural resources. People are not usually attracted to settling down in a community only because of a transportation network or an expanding population base. Instead, individuals and families are/will be attracted to Caribou in part because of their desire to enjoy the variety of its open spaces, scenic areas, numerous public and private recreational opportunities, community history, and its look, feel, and overall character. Conversely, individuals and families stay in the City for these very reasons as well.

Archaeological, prehistoric, and historic resources include sites on the National Register of Historic Places, sites on existing historical surveys, local historic areas, and other sites of potential historic significance. It is important to review these resources and identify the surrounding land uses or other areas which may impact these resources and then plan accordingly.

### **Cultural Resources.**

#### The Caribou Performing Arts Center.

The largest facility for hosting performances in the area, the Center has a seating capacity of 825. The Center is maintained by the school department with its own full time director. The center was built as an adjunct to the Caribou High School in 1987 using school bond money. Through this facility, a wide range of cultural and entertainment events are offered.

#### The Nylander Museum.

The Nylander Museum, located at 393 Main Street, provides a variety of geological and natural history exhibits throughout the year. The museum has its own Board of Directors, appointed by the City Council, and functions through a part time director and volunteer staff. The museum is open from Labor Day through Memorial Day, Wednesday through Sunday, and on the weekends the rest of the year. The natural history museum houses fossils, rock minerals, butterflies and

shells collected by Olaf Nylander, a native plant garden, as well as various other items for exhibition.

#### The Caribou Historical Society.

Located on US Route 1, the society is comprised of a four member Board of Directors, officers, various committees, and a membership of over 100 people. Monthly meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month, starting in March and ending in November. Historical items can be viewed at the Lyndon Center between June 1 and September 1 from 9-5 Tuesday through Saturday.

#### Lyndon Center.

The Lyndon Center is part of the Caribou Historical Society and has a 16 x 20 foot frontier school house constructed of logs, complete with cupola and bell.

#### The Thomas Heritage House.

Located at 152 Main Street, the house is named after an early settler named Perez Thomas. The home was restored and refurbished with furnishings dating back to the 1880s and is open to the public by appointment only.

#### The Rosie O'Grady Balloon of Peace Monument.

Located near Main Street (south), it is a monument honoring Ret. Col. Joe W. Kittinger Jr., who in 1984 was the first balloonist to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean. His trip broke the distance record set earlier by the Double Eagle II Flight. He left Caribou on September 14, 1984 in a helium balloon named the "Rosie O'Grady Balloon of Peace" and landed in Savona, Italy approximately 84 hours later on September 18, 1984.

#### The Lister Art Gallery.

Located on Route 161 north of Caribou, the gallery currently represents several northern Maine artists. The gallery provides a unique opportunity for local artists to display their work in a high traffic, retail area.

### **Libraries.**

#### The Caribou Public Library.

The Caribou Public Library, with a collection total of 46,765 items reflected a circulation figure of 65,700. The State of Maine support of libraries on a per capita level is the next to the lowest in the United States. A reserve fund for the library has been initiated as part of the city's capital improvement plans. Patron support continues to be an important element in the efforts of the librarian and the staff in implementing better and more comprehensive library services.

## **Festivals and Events.**

### Caribou Winter Carnival and Snowmobile Festival

Held in February each year, this event provides a week long festival during the winter months. There are family fun days, downhill canoe rides, dogsled rides, golf, the snow goddess snowmobile poker runs and barbecues. In addition, the Keystone Kops arrest local residents with bail being set and paid as a local fundraising event.

### Caribou Fest/Caribou Cares About Kids

Event is held for four days in July. There is a parade, games, pool party, health and safety fair, fireworks and hayrides.

### Caribou Fall Arts and Crafts Festival

Held in October each year, this is the oldest crafts fair in the County.

### New Sweden's Midsommar Celebration.

On the weekend nearest to June 21, the Swedes in northern Maine, like those in Sweden, celebrate the summer solstice. Activities center on the decoration of the Maypole, and includes, among other activities, Scandinavian fiddle music, Swedish dancing and a variety of traditional meals.

### The Maine Potato Blossom Festival.

The Maine Potato Blossom Festival is held during the third week of July in Fort Fairfield, when hundreds of acres of potato fields come into blossom throughout Aroostook County. Events include a gigantic festival parade, mashed potato wrestling, the Maine Potato Blossom Queen Scholarship Pageant, and a farmer's jamboree. The festival ends with a fireworks display.

### The Northern Maine Agricultural Fair.

An agricultural fair established in 1854, runs during the first week in August in Presque Isle. The Fair features the largest midway in the County, amusement park rides, agricultural exhibits, arts and craft exhibits, fireworks, and evening entertainment performances and harness racing.

### The Acadian Festival.

The Acadian Festival celebration in Madawaska is a week long festival in late June that features a family reunion, parade, traditional Acadian supper, reenactment of the landing of the Acadians, French Quarters and many other activities. The Festival usually attracts a crowd of over 5,000 every year.

### The Can-Am Crown International Sled Dog Race.

The Can-Am Crown International Sled Dog Races are held in March in Fort Kent. There are three courses---250 miles, 60 miles, and 30 miles. The feature race makes a 250-280 mile loop that begins and ends in Fort Kent and runs through the wilderness of northwest Aroostook County.

### **Tourism.**

Northern Maine has made steady gains in the tourism sector, with employment in tourism-related businesses rising. Four season tourism has a significant impact on the northern Maine economy; while the summer season is by far the strongest season state-wide, winter is Aroostook's strongest season, followed closely by fall.

Organizations involved in tourism development in the Caribou area include the Chamber of Commerce located in Caribou, the Maine Swedish Colony, Inc., Caribou Historical Society, and Aroostook County Tourism (ACT). Their responsibilities include disseminating information to businesses and tourists interested in coming to the area, and organizing events. Aroostook County Tourism (ACT) has been created to promote year-round tourism in northern Maine. There are many attractions and festivals that take advantage of the beautiful natural surroundings and celebrate the rich heritage and local way of life in the Caribou area.

### **Recreational Resources.**

Parks and recreation are major community assets and concerns. They are often the tool that will help prospective residents to decide to live within a particular community or for a business to relocate. They reflect a sense of pride, community, and quality of life and they provide open space for residents and visitors and enhance a community's appearance. People in this area enjoy the snow through a variety of activities such as downhill and cross country skiing, snowmobiling, ice-fishing, skating, and tobogganing. In the summer and fall, residents and tourists alike enjoy outdoor activities ranging from fishing, hunting, camping, and hiking. The area is dotted with many lakes and streams with public access which provides the opportunity for most water sports. Many people have rented or purchased camps within the area to enjoy the season more fully. In the southwestern portion of the subregion, access to Mount Katahdin and Baxter State Park offer excellent opportunities for outdoor activities including mountain climbing.

With its cluster grouping of a recreation center, parks, outdoor pool, and nine-hole golf course, Caribou contains a wealth of recreation opportunities. Recreational content of the City include a wide variety of traditional activities for area youth such as baseball, tennis and basketball as well as a growing compliment of life-time sport activities such as kayaking, canoeing, trekking, cycling, cross country skiing and more. A nordic ski program and 10 miles of groomed ski trails offer all residents, great winter sport opportunities. Caribou High School also contains lit ski trails. The development of an U.S. Biathlon Regional Centers of Excellence in Presque Isle/Fort Fairfield, Fort Kent, and Mars Hill and offices at Loring Commerce Centre, affords local youth unlimited opportunity to develop their nordic skiing skills. Caribou offers a full compliment of both active and passive recreational activities, for adults. These include, bowling leagues,

softball leagues, basketball leagues, soccer leagues, golf and tennis lessons/leagues and a variety of public and private health and fitness centers. For persons wishing to utilize public facilities for self guided activities Caribou provides the Hazardous Waste Treatment Center, which has a variety of weight and workout equipment.

### Recreation Trails.

Caribou's Snowmobile Club (Club) maintains 170 miles of groomed snowmobile trails, which are all part of the 2200 miles of trails that crisscross Aroostook County. The Club is responsible for a portion of ITS 83, ITS 90 and local trails 87 and 89. Currently, the Club owns its own grooming equipment. Total trail funding maintenance, including grooming, is partially reimbursed through grants from Maine Department of Conservation. Issues which affect grooming, maintenance, and trail retention include increased snowmobile traffic, trespass, and landowner relations.

### Other trails systems

Railroad rights-of-way and designated trails serve as cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, and snowmobile trails in the winter; hiking and nature trails during the non-winter months; and access for fire control year-round. The continued maintenance of these trails for recreation and transportation pursuits will enhance recreational and transportation programs and economic development in the area. Caribou had regular rail freight/passenger service from the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad (BAR) and Aroostook Valley Railroad (AVR) with their rail lines in City. Today, some of these rights-of-way are abandoned and are part of an extensive regional recreational and pedestrian trail system from Van Buren to Caribou onto Presque Isle, Mapleton, as well as Easton and Houlton. Continued development of these rights-of-way could enhance recreational programs and economic development in the area.

Services are available for trail users in Caribou. Because of the location of these trails, the City could benefit from the year-round use of the trails. In addition, with proper and compatible trail development and tourism promotion, small-scale economic development could be realized. To further enhance the trail system the construction of a parking lot in the Industrial Park was completed. The parking lot is designed to accommodate snowmobilers but is also used by those walking or biking the trail system.

Issues which should be reviewed by this Plan include, among others; compatible use of the trails; alternative trails for incompatible uses; need for additional trails or connectors; trail maintenance; and private property rights.

### **Scenic and Open Space Resources.**

Scenic and open space resources are those areas of the community that may offer scenic vistas or large tracts of open fields, such as areas identified by the state as having scenic value, scenic views, natural or cultural features (churches, trees, fields, mountains...), and parts of the community that contribute to the character of the City (village green, historic sites...).

There are no areas in Caribou identified by the state as having scenic value of statewide significance. However, the City is endowed with a number of scenic and open space areas and views. The City's topography with several ridges and rolling hills, provides for some incredible panoramic views. These areas are a major resource and should be maintained. Caribou does not have local ordinance provisions which consider impacts of certain types of development upon scenic or open space sites. The City should consider mechanisms for; the identification, assessment, and protection (as needed) of existing or potential sites, and performance standards for development activities within or adjacent to existing or potential sites. The planning committee has identified the following scenic and open space areas:

1. Aroostook River
2. Campground Hill Road

According to the Recreation Director, the city contains a wealth of open space and public access to private property. Posting of land is currently not a major problem and is not seen to become one in the near future. However, the development of subdivisions, especially in the growth area, has created linkage issue between recreational trails. In particular, connections between the Aroostook Valley and the Bangor and Aroostook trail system. Recreation department personnel have been in on-going negotiations with landowners to develop a permanent linkage between the trail systems.

Additionally, City officials are working on connections between the Canadian Atlantic trail (east side of the Aroostook River) and the Bangor and Aroostook trail (west side of the Aroostook River). Currently there is no easy way to access the two systems and the Aroostook River bridge was not designed for ATV/snowmobile traffic.

#### **Public Access.**

Public accesses are those opportunities which the people have to obtain entry to and use of waterbodies and large tracts of land for recreational pursuits. The streams and brooks in Caribou provide for good fishing opportunities. The Aroostook River, and its tributaries, which traverse the City, affords numerous points of access off the City's roads and the river has been recognized by the IF&W with fisheries values in need of guaranteed public access or additional access development. There are 2 boat launching facilities located on the Aroostook River, one above and one below the dam. There are also facilities on the Little Madawaska River off of the Bowles Road and near the dam.

As noted, Caribou has no local ordinance provisions which consider impacts of certain types of development upon areas of public access or work to obtain guaranteed public access. The City should consider mechanisms for; the identification, assessment, and protection (as needed) of existing or potential public access sites, and performance standards for development activities within or adjacent to existing or potential public access sites.

#### **Archaeological, Prehistoric, and Historic Resources.**

Archaeological, prehistoric, and historic resources include sites on the National Register of

Historic Places, sites on existing historical surveys, local historic areas, and other sites of potential historic significance. It is important to review these resources and identify the surrounding land uses or other areas which may impact on these resources and then plan accordingly.

### **Native Americans.**

Historians generally agree that Native Americans have inhabited the St. John River watershed drainage area in Maine and New Brunswick for at least 3000 years. The tribes traditionally depended on fishing and hunting with some planting of maize for its substance. With the advent of white settlement, their traditional hunting territories were encroached upon and the combination of overhunting by whites and the clearing of land for farms drastically diminished game stocks, forcing the tribes into a more sedentary lifestyle.

### **Native Americans - The Micmacs.**

The Micmac Indians were among the first native North Americans encountered by European explorers to the New World. Their initial contact with Europeans in the early years of the 16th century gradually changed their way of life forever. The chief basis for early Micmac relations with Europeans was trade. During the second half of the 16th century, the fur trade appears to have changed from a subsidiary activity of fishermen to the major occupation of many European sailors. The fur trade had an immediate, and ultimately negative, impact on the Micmacs. The demand for furs dramatically expanded the traditional fur hunting season and thus altered the intricate seasonal cycles of the Micmacs. By reducing the annual periods traditionally spent along the seashore, the Micmacs increased their dependence on European trade goods and food, and therefore were left more susceptible to sudden famines. This also caused a radical wild game depletion in their usual hunting areas and ultimately became a motivating factor in acts of warfare among the tribes in the region.

In the latter half of the 17th century, under pressure from the French, the Micmacs formed a loose alliance with other members of the Algonquian tribes, which became known as the Wabanaki Confederacy. The Wabanaki Confederacy tribes were involved in military actions throughout the late 17th and 18th centuries, generally on behalf of the French against the English. The wars between the Wabanaki Confederacy and Iroquois League had come to an end by 1700. In 1749, the "Great Council Fire" was created, in which the Iroquois League and the Wabanaki confederacy signed a peace treaty at Caughnawaga.

After their French allies were defeated by the English, some Micmac sagamores signed the Treaty of Halifax (1752). In return for offering peace to the English troops who now occupied parts of Micmac country, the Micmacs were promised that the English King would protect and defend Micmac lands -- except for small areas which were already settled by the English. The treaty reserved for Micmacs the rights of free trade and unrestricted hunting and fishing, but was not respected by the British government in later years. Treaties negotiated with the American government in the late-18th century raised similar expectations and were similarly ignored.

The boundary line created by the Treaty of Paris of 1763 ran through the middle of Wabanaki Confederacy lands. It created an artificial distinction between those Indians then living in Canada and those in Maine, which had clear ramifications in terms of the way in which the Canadian and American governments chose to treat the Native Americans under their jurisdiction.

The growing interests of the white settlers in Canada had pressed British Colonial authorities to delineate approximately 80 small Micmac Reserves under a variety of treaty arrangements. These were primarily at Micmac encampment sites, scattered over the Maritime Provinces of Canada. Later, through the British North America Act of 1867, the new Canadian federal government became responsible for "Indians and land reserved for Indians." The act ruled that Micmac land rights in Canada were limited to Reserves -- which meant that Micmacs lost 95 percent of the Canadian lands which were supposedly protected by the Halifax Treaty.

From the early 19th century on, Micmacs made splint baskets for local farms, regional markets, and export. The 20th century rise of the potato as a booming cash-crop in Maine especially created a large demand for the sturdy baskets, which were used to harvest potatoes. With the growth of the lumber and potato farming industries in Northern Maine, in particular following the introduction of railroads in the last decades of the 19th century, Micmacs were also able to find jobs as lumberjacks, river-drivers, seasonal farm workers, and as odd-job laborers working on roads, in factories, etc. Consequently, many Micmac families settled down in towns in Aroostook County.

The World War I economy provided a brief boom in job options for the Micmacs, and during this time some traveled widely in search of new work and adventure. But the vast majority of Micmacs remained locked into low-paying and sporadic seasonal work, including guiding, commercial fishing, lumbering, and farm labor.

In the latter half of the 20th century, large numbers of Micmacs, still in search of an income, went to Boston and cities like Hartford to work in high steel construction jobs. By 1970, at least one out of every three men in the labor force of Restigouch (the largest Micmac Reserve in Canada) had spent some time (usually in Boston) working in construction on high rise buildings.

### The Micmacs Today.

At present, the estimated Micmac population enrolled on Canadian Band-lists is more than 10,000. Only 7,000 of these live on Reserves; the other 3,000 live scattered over the Maritimes and New England, or are just "on the road." In addition, there are an estimated 2,000-3,000 Micmacs who live in Canada who are not registered on the Band Rolls of the Canadian Reserves. In total, there are about 5,000 registered and non-registered Micmacs in new England, the majority of whom live in Boston. Aroostook County provides the major transitory route to and from the Canadian Reserves and the urban areas along the Atlantic seaboard of the U.S., both because of its location and because of the presence of a strong Micmac community.

The Micmacs were not part of the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980 and, as such, were without the services of the State of Maine's Department of Indian Affairs, which had closed

its doors. In response, the Aroostook Micmac Council, Inc. was formed, which obtained recognition and assistance from the federal government's Bureau of Indian Affairs. Currently, funding is available from the Administration of Native Americans, a branch of the Department of Health and Human Services and the National Indian Lutheran Board.

In June of 1982, members of the Micmac Indian Tribe in Aroostook County chose Presque Isle as their headquarters. As heirs of the First People, the Micmac Indians are part of the Eastern Algonquian-speaking peoples who have traditionally inhabited the territories of Maine and the Maritime Provinces.

Today, the resident core of the Aroostook Band of Micmacs consists of approximately 562 people. Of the 233 adult members, 135 live within a 20-mile radius of Presque Isle, 46 (20 percent) in and around Houlton, and 22 in and around Madawaska.

### **Caribou – A History.**

Taken from the 1992 Comprehensive Plan

The City of Caribou has throughout its history been known by different names. In 1840, what is now the municipality was termed "Plantation H" and "Plantation I". In 1870, the names changed to Lyndon and North Lyndon. Finally, in 1877, the entire area was re-designated Caribou.

The first white man to set foot on the soil of what is now known as the City of Caribou was probably Alexander Cochran, a Canadian, who came up the St. John and Aroostook River in 1829 looking for a mill site. When what was to become known as the Bloodless Aroostook War threatened, in the winter of 1839, Caribou was still not on the map.

The actual settlement of Caribou began when Ivory Hardison, the first American settler, drove a span of horses to bring a load of soldiers from Bangor to Fort Fairfield. Mr. Hardison stayed that summer and assisted the State Land Agent in surveying the area and delineating lots of land for settlers who were beginning to come to Aroostook. Hardison took land for himself in Township "Letter H", Range 2.

In the spring of 1842, Mr. Hardison and his son cleared their lot. They built a house of hewn timber on the land. In February of 1843, the Hardison family started from their Winslow home for Aroostook. They were sixteen days on the journey of two hundred and fifty miles. The family was the first settlers of what is now Caribou.

In March 1843, Harvey Ormsby of Fryeburg, who had been prospecting in this area the summer before, returned with his family and settled some three miles from the Ivory Hardison farm. In June of 1843, Winslow Hardison from Hartford, Maine, and his brother Hiram from Buckfield, Maine, came to Presque Isle. There they built a raft on which they descended the river to the Hardison landing place. Winslow selected the first lot south of the Hardison lot. Hiram took the lot in more recent years owned by Silas Hatch.

The first post office at Presque Isle was established in 1843. The mail came via Houlton, at first, once in two weeks, then once a week. The settlers of "Plantation H" took turns going to Presque

Isle after the mail. The first post office in "Plantation H" was the house of Ivory Hardison, who was appointed the first postmaster in 1844.

In the spring of 1844, the next settlers arrived, two single men - Samuel W. Collins and Washington A. Vaughn. Mr. Vaughn and Mr. Collins decided to build a saw and grist mill. In building the two mills, Collins and Vaughn secured four lots comprising all the land now occupied by Caribou village (except that owned by Alex Cochrane). In the sawmill they sawed the great Pine trees into square timber for shipment to England, floating it down the Aroostook and the St. John Rivers.

In 1852 the first real school house was built on land belonging to Winslow Hall with funds raised by private subscription. Pupils from all parts of the plantation were obliged to go there to school as there was no other school in the plantation.

A little one room schoolhouse was built in 1857 at a cost of \$375. The schoolhouse was built at the present site of the Superintendent's Office. This was the first public school building in the present village and was used for many purposes: as a school, for church services of all denominations and for meetings of all kinds.

Frank Records came from Readfield in 1862 and engaged in what was then the important business of hauling freight or "teaming" from Bangor to Lyndon. At the time it took four and six horse teams to go to Bangor, a distance of one hundred and seventy-five miles. The time taken for the trip depended on the season of the year, taking about twice as long in the spring as at any other season.

The first bridge across the river at Caribou was built in 1863. The State appropriated one-half the cost. The bridge made life easier for those living on the east side of the river.

In 1865 the little village comprised three stores, a sash and blind factory, a tannery, a blacksmith shop, a grist mill, a tub factory, one tavern and seventeen private dwellings.

In the summer of 1867 the first church was erected. It was known as the Union Meeting House. Previously, religious meetings had been held in barns in different portions of the township and, as mentioned, in the one room school house.

By 1870 the town valuation was \$127,279; the population was 1,410, nearly five times as large as that of 1860 when it was only 297.

Abe Holmes first came to Caribou in 1872 from Boston to establish a starch factory. This marked the beginning of the great starch and potato industry in Aroostook County. The starch industry developed a cash market that was greatly needed. Farming as an occupation took on a more encouraging aspect when barter and exchange of goods were replaced by money.

With the resulting increase in agriculture, the need for a railroad became pressing. In 1874, a stock company was formed and work on a railroad begun. The first requirement to build the railroad was construction financing. A town meeting was called on August 15, 1877, where it

was voted that the Town of Lyndon lend its credit to the amount of 5 percent of its valuation to help finance a rail line to connect with the New Brunswick Railroad at Fort Fairfield. The rail connection was completed in the fall of 1878. A station was built on the east side of the river opposite the village.

The railroad opened the area to more settlers and provided access to outside communities. Caribou could now produce for an outside market and also readily obtain the finished goods it needed.

The population continued to grow until 1960. The peak in Caribou's population was 1960, with a steady decline since. The Federal Census figures for Caribou showed a population of 4,758 in 1900, 5,377 in 1910, 6,018 in 1920, 7,248 in 1930, 8,218 in 1940, 9,923 in 1950, 12,464 in 1960, 10,419 in 1970, 9,916 in 1980, 9,415 in 1990, and 8,312 in 2000.

The commercial area of Caribou expanded with the growth of the community. New schools were built, the municipal airport was constructed in the late 1920s and the present municipal building was completed in 1939. Birds-Eye Snyder constructed a frozen food plant in 1945 and later added a french fried potato plant to its facilities. The construction of Loring Air Force Base and the introduction of manufacturing took on important dimensions in the economic base of Caribou as agriculture and food processing declined in the 1950s and 1960s. The Caribou Industrial Park resulted from the recognition of the changing economy.

Caribou has some houses of significant local importance that have not been recognized for their architectural merit. They include the Thomas House, two structures in the "McElwain House" style and others that need to be surveyed and catalogued.

### **Caribou Historic Resources.**

It is important for communities to remember and preserve traces of their past -- houses, churches, farms, or grange halls, to name a few. Such buildings and sites contribute texture to the City, bring history to life for many, and set a standard for other contributions into the future. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) is the central repository in the state for all archaeological and prehistoric survey information. Survey files include computer files, map sets, paper data forms, field notes, detailed unpublished reports, photographic archives, and published works. Most of the basic information is retrievable on a town by town basis. It is the policy of MHPC that the standard of historic value reflected in municipal plans should normally be eligibility to or listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

According to the MHPC, there are seven (7) known archaeological or prehistoric sites in Caribou, as of September 2001. Archaeological resources are physical remains of the past, most commonly buried in the ground or very difficult to see on the surface. These sites are all located along the Aroostook River and were identified during hydroelectric relicensing studies. The significance of these sites has not yet been determined. In many areas of Maine these areas are generally found within 50 yards of an existing or former shoreline.

According to MHPC, Caribou has two (2) properties currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. They are:

1. McElwain House (Still listed but has been renovated and will be delisted)
2. Gray Memorial United Methodist Church and parsonage.

MHPC recommends that future surveys need to be done to focus on historic above-ground resources to identify other properties which may be eligible for nomination to the National Register. These could include a focus on sites relating to the earliest settlement of the City, beginning in the late-19th century and characterized by the distinctive Scandinavian ethnic group.

The following list is buildings and sites in Caribou that have local historic significance and would be of a benefit to the people as a reflection of the history and development of the community and area. The following are the locally identified resources:

1. Hutchings Farmstead, 1840 1900
2. Orchard Dump, late 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Caribou has local ordinance provisions which consider impacts of certain types of development upon historic structures and sites. The City will consider updating mechanisms for; the identification, assessment, and protection (as needed) of existing or potential sites, and performance standards for ground disturbing activities within or adjacent to existing or potential sites.