**Introduction**

Pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4326(4), a regional coordination program must be pursued with other communities (or LURC if the community abuts land under its jurisdiction) to manage shared resources and facilities, including but not limited to lakes, rivers, aquifers, and transportation facilities. The Clifton Comprehensive plan has identified:

* + relevant shared resources and facilities
    - SAD #63 and school administration with Eddington and Holden, ME
    - Bangor Water District
    - Fire Department and emergency services with Eddington, ME
    - Law enforcement coverage by county Sheriff services
    - Road maintenance with the State and neighboring towns
    - Major pond conservation enforcement with DEP
  + Current conflicts with neighboring communities’ policies and strategies pertaining to shared resources and facilities
    - Chemo Pond Dam and control of water level is currently an active issue
    - Wind Farm development impacted and restricted by Otis and Mariaville actions to limit such structures, thus restricting expansion of the Wind Farms in Clifton.
    - Allocation of regional fiscal support of fire suppression and emergency services, typical of shared services between towns
    - Solution to regional recycling and waste disposal, Clifton lacks resources for regional solution and awaits a broader solution
  + Approaches Clifton will employ to coordinate management of shared resources and facilities.
    - Rely on Maine Legislative representatives to communicate legislative activity with possible impact on the Town of Clifton.
    - Evaluate the potential benefits of establishing a municipal development officer position
    - Enlist assistance of Eastern Maine Development Corporation in identifying regional solutions
  + Summary of regional coordination efforts from all applicable topic areas is detailed in the below discussion.

**Implementation Strategies**

The strategies below describe what actions the community employs to carry out its policies. Minimum required strategies identified in Section 3 for each topic area are included, as Clifton is a small town of less than 900 residents and limited resources. Presently no alternative strategies are considered and the plan is anticipated to be developed compliant with 30-A M.R.S.A. §4326(3).

A strong regional approach enhanced by partnerships and collaboration can facilitate municipalities in reducing expenses, increasing services to citizens, and more effective planning and growth management. Clifton currently cooperates with neighboring communities in several key areas:

* Clifton coordinates emergency services in partnership with the Eddington Fire Department, County Sheriff’s Department. The law enforcement is further aided by the Penobscot County Sheriff’s Department and the Maine State Police, and the Regional Emergency Agency supports municipalities in response to disasters or emergency events.
* Trash services are provided to the town municipal properties and town citizens through an agreement in effect since 2020 for municipal solid-waste transfer.
* Town managers of Waldo, Hancock and Penobscot counties meet on an as needed basis as dictated by events of importance to the towns’ residents. Local financial officers meet irregularly, on an as needed basis, and there is some regional purchasing including road sand and salt and road stripe painting.
* Clifton residents share trails and land preserves owned and managed by the local land trusts, residents, Bangor Water District, and take advantage of the activities offered by regional athletic, arts, and cultural organizations.
* Additional opportunities for regionalization include affordable housing, public works, recreation, general administration, joint purchasing, infrastructure expansion, code enforcement, combating homelessness, and addressing the opioid crisis.
* Clifton considers its great ponds (Chemo, Hopkins and Springy) both recreational and scenic resources. Yet land ownership around these bodies of water is largely privately owned, residing in and four adjoining towns within three counties, as well as several multi-thousands acre land preserves with out-of-state owners. Public services to these areas are limited and coordinated by a matrix of road and land owner’s association.

Areas that stand out as being particularly appropriate to Clifton for a regional approach in the Eastern Maine Regions include economic development, infrastructure development including broadband, transportation planning, land use management, natural resource protection, renewable energy development, recycling and composting, and addressing the impacts of climate change. Clifton would support the establishment of a multi-town planning committee to develop policies on regional issues. As part of this planning process, the Clifton Planning Board has established a dialogue with the Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC). Such regional dialogues can all be tasked with exploring all possible partnering opportunities, analyzing the benefits and drawbacks of areas where regional efforts would seem to have a real impact and appear manageable, identify funding sources and recommend or create agencies to be responsible for implementing appropriate regional programs.

Many of the following recommendations for regional coordination are also addressed in the comprehensive plans of neighboring municipalities and will be, in many cases, unreachable. In virtually all of the strategies listed below, responsibility for implementation, where feasible, will rest with the Selectmen and be conducted on an ongoing basis. These recommendations include the following:

1. Establish a town water quality monitoring program to include the coordination of regular water testing of the town’s three great ponds with adjacent communities.
2. Create regional planning initiatives that focus on growth impacts, transportation, strengthening and retaining local and regional economic sustainability and the economics of regional services.
3. Examine the benefits of regional public transit on the shared Route 9 and Interstate 395 corridor.
4. Explore a regional approach for encouraging freight transport to shift from highways to railroad
5. Establish land use policies and development patterns across municipalities that are essential to preserving natural habitats, maintaining wildlife corridors, creating pollinator pathways, protecting watersheds, and conserving open spaces and view corridors.
6. Establishing incentives for regional land use planning, such as the purchase and/ or transfer of development rights, which allows such rights to be acquired in one municipality and used in another municipality’s receiving area.
7. Explore a regional approach for a multi-town plan for the protection of the water and natural resources within the town
8. Create regional solutions for solid waste disposal, recycling, and composting.
9. Create regional solutions to develop affordable housing and social services.
10. Explore the sharing of services with neighboring communities in the areas of fire protection, emergency medical services, code enforcement, public works and other municipal services.
11. Expand interlocal purchasing opportunities.

**Implementation and Evaluation**

There are multiple strategies in The Clifton Comprehensive Plan, ranging from the broad and ongoing to the specific and finite. This Plan is intended to serve as a guide for the Select Board as they develop their annual work plans and strategic goals, assist other Town departments as they plan and prioritize their respective work, and for the Planning Board as it considers future land use and development requests. Ultimately, the success and effectiveness of The Clifton Plan will be measured by its use during everyday decision-making. Monitoring the Plan’s implementation should be an ongoing, transparent process. At the least, the Select Board may conduct an annual review of progress toward meeting the goals of The Plan, identify strategies that have been implemented, report such progress in the annual Town Report and revise a work plan that identifies implementation priorities for the coming year. As such a Plan is implemented, the Planning Board and Select Board role will evolve into one of monitoring progress and identifying areas in need of further clarification or modification. Additionally, the Planning Board will coordinate with the Code Enforcement Officer in drafting amendments to the Town’s Ordinances. The Planning Board should also review all future recommended Ordinance changes for compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan. As required by the goals and guidelines of the Growth Management Act, progress on the Plan will be evaluated no less than every five years to determine the following:

* The degree to which the Future Land Use Plan strategies have been implemented;
* Percent of municipal growth-related capital investments and TIF funds that have been directed to growth areas;
* The location and amount of new development opportunities in relation to designated growth areas, rural areas, and transition areas;
* The amount of critical natural resource, critical rural, and critical waterfront areas protected through acquisition, easements, or other measures.
* Assess ability to recruit citizen involvement in town governance and municipal projects

For additional information on regional coordination, please contact the Town Office.