



CITY OF
**SOUTH
PORTLAND**

2024 Annual Report

South Portland's iconic fishing shacks on Fishermen's Point washed away in a historic rainstorm with an astronomical high tide on January 13, 2024. The shacks were part of the Willard Beach landscape for many generations and a symbol of South Portland's long fishing history, which dates back to the early 1700s. We are grateful to the many community members who help keep their memory alive with their stories, photographs, and artwork.

Photo: Shara Dee

City of South Portland
2024 Annual Report
January 1 - December 31



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Photo: Deidra Levasseur

Leadership

City Council

Mayor Misha Pride, District 3
Linda Cohen, District 1
Rachael Coleman, District 2
Steven Riley, District 4

Elyse Tipton, District 5
Richard Mathews, At-Large
Natalie West, At-Large

Appointed Officials

Scott Morelli, City Manager
Emily Scully, City Clerk (through April 2024)
Jessica A. Hughes, City Clerk (beginning May 2024)
Sally Daggett, Corporation Counsel (through March 2024)
Brandon Mazer, Corporation Council (beginning April 2024)



Top: Rachael Coleman, Steven Riley, Natalie West, Richard Mathews, Scott Morelli, Sally Daggett, Emily Scully. Bottom: Linda Cohen, Misha Pride, Elyse Tipton. Not pictured: Jessica Hughes and Brandon Mazer

Connect with your City Council!

Visit www.southportland.gov/citycouncil to learn more about the South Portland City Council, ways to engage, and to reach out to your City Councilors.

From the Mayor

Dear South Portland Residents,

As I reflect on my term as Mayor from December 2023 to December 2024, I am struck by both the significant challenges we faced and the important work we began in response. This year tested our city in unprecedented ways, particularly during the devastating January storms that battered our coastline, destroying our beloved fishing shacks and causing damage to our beach. These events made clear that we must accelerate our efforts to address climate change and build coastal resilience.

The destruction from these storms initiated important conversations about our city's future, but we recognize that much work remains to be done. While we convened experts and community members to begin developing a more immediate framework for coastal resilience, we are still in the early stages of understanding and planning for our changing climate reality. These discussions have highlighted the

complexity of the challenges we face and the need for sustained, long-term commitment to this work. Fortunately, our excellent climate action plan, One Climate Future, is in place to help guide the way.

Throughout the year, we made progress in planning the transformation of the Mahoney Middle School into a municipal campus that will house city offices, our library, and a community arts center. The



This year tested our city in unprecedented ways...we must accelerate our efforts to address climate change and build coastal resilience.

Mayor Misha Pride

project also includes the revitalization of our public safety headquarters. While this project holds great promise for our community, we acknowledge that significant work lies ahead to finalize plans and ensure this facility serves our community's needs well.

The City Council established three key priorities this year, each representing the beginning of crucial long-term efforts. Our work on climate resilience and sustainability has begun, but requires continued focus and resources. Our efforts to address housing affordability, particularly for "missing middle" households, have identified barriers to development, though removing these obstacles remains an ongoing challenge. While we've initiated improvements to our public service delivery, implementing new service standards and creating a more responsive city government will require sustained effort.

These initiatives were undertaken with careful attention to fiscal responsibility, particularly considering our residents on fixed incomes. We sought to balance necessary investments in our city's future with awareness of the financial pressures facing many in our community. These financial pressures intensified for many as assessed property values were adjusted here and across the state in accordance with the Maine Constitution. This led to a higher tax bill for many. That's why the South Portland City Council advocated at the state level in 2024 for property tax relief and reform. We will continue this critically important work.

Our comprehensive planning process continues, though much work remains to create a roadmap that will effectively guide our city's growth while preserving what makes South Portland special. We have learned valuable lessons about the importance of inclusive dialogue and transparent decision-making, even as we continue to improve how we engage with all members of our community.

The challenges we faced in 2024 – from natural disasters to ongoing housing pressures – have highlighted both our community's resilience and the work that lies ahead. While we have laid groundwork in several crucial areas, we recognize that addressing these complex issues requires sustained effort and commitment beyond any single year or administration.

As I conclude my term as Mayor, I am grateful for the opportunity to have served during this consequential time. Though many of our initiatives remain works in progress, I believe the foundations we've begun to lay, and the honest conversations we've started, will serve South Portland well as we continue to address these challenges together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Misha C. Pride". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "P".

Misha C. Pride, Mayor (2024)

From the Manager

Dear Community Members,

Annual reports are a good way for local government to be transparent with their residents about the actions undertaken in a given year. These reports also serve as a time capsule to help future residents better understand the history of their community.

As you will see from the highlights in this report, elected officials, committees,

and departments accomplished a lot in 2024. I am very proud of the work completed by so many.

In addition to all that was accomplished this past year, there are many things that we will see results from in 2025 (and beyond) due to the groundwork laid in 2024. For example:

- The Comprehensive Plan Committee is expected to conclude years of work in late summer/early fall of 2025 with a recommendation to the City Council. This document will help guide the city's actions for the next decade-plus.
- The January 2024 storms and resulting City Council workshop the following month on coastal resilience has led to a lot of planning and information gathering, and included many partners (for example, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers). In 2025 we expect to better understand our options related to mitigating sea level rise and the impact of severe storms.



In addition to all that was accomplished this past year, there are many things that we will see results from in 2025 (and beyond)...

City Manager Scott Morelli



- After two years of work, the *ad hoc* Facilities Committee presented its report on the existing conditions and future needs of several City facilities, and recommended the vacated Mahoney site be used as a consolidated city center to address many of these needs. The Council endorsed the committee's report and a new committee will be formed to obtain public feedback and create a final plan to present to the Council and ultimately to voters at a November 2026 referendum. If successful, the Council will also decide on what to do with the City Hall, Hamlin, and Library parcels that will be vacated. Options include selling the properties to generate sales revenue and new property taxes to help cover the Mahoney renovation costs, adding even more affordable housing, and others.
- Like communities all across Maine, South Portland was not immune from the unprecedented surge in home prices. This has led Maine towns and cities to perform required updates to property valuations, shifting more of the tax burden onto residential properties (and less on the commercial base since these equalization efforts are revenue neutral). While the City does not collect any more taxes from such a shift, it does mean residential taxpayers saw a larger increase in taxes last year, on top of budgetary increases. This led the City Council to call on the legislature for property tax reform and relief. Several bills were introduced related to this topic;

those will be debated and decided on during the 2025 legislative session.

- Thanks in large part to recommendations from the former Clean Air Advisory Committee, the City has partnered with the Maine DEP and Maine CDC to get a better understanding of our air quality. This includes monitoring sites at several areas in the City, some of which have been moved in recent years, along with fence-line monitoring at the six marine terminals. In 2025, we expect the CDC to provide its analysis of several years of data to help better inform the public about the quality of air they are breathing.
- The decision to merge bus services with Metro will save South Portland taxpayers over \$1 million over the next five years, including over \$100,000 in next year's budget. In addition, the city's switch from Microsoft to Google will save over \$226,000 over three years. The city will continue to pursue savings to help mitigate impacts on taxpayers.

As always, my thanks to the many dedicated public servants who help to make South Portland the vibrant community that it is.

Sincerely,



Scott T. Morelli, City Manager

Boards & Committees

The City of South Portland's volunteer boards and committees do incredible work to make our city a great place to live, work, and play. Residents put their knowledge, expertise and passions to work right here in their community. Volunteer members appointed by the City Council served on 24 boards and committees in 2024. They worked on important issues and initiatives related to affordable housing, transportation, human rights, historic preservation, public health, public arts, economic development and much more. To learn more about the committees, current vacancies, and how to apply, visit: southportland.gov/committees



Winner: 2024 AARP Community Beacon Award

AARP Maine named **Age Friendly South Portland (AFSP)** the winner of its 2024 Community Beacon Award. AARP Maine recognizes one organization each year to win this award, which recognizes an organization that has demonstrated excellence in serving older adults. AFSP is an *ad hoc* committee of the City of South Portland and member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. The committee spearheads a number of initiatives that serve our older community. *(Committee members celebrate this achievement, above.)*

2024 Boards & Committees

- Affordable Housing Committee
- Age Friendly South Portland (*ad hoc*)
- Bike-Pedestrian Committee
- Board of Appeals
- Board of Assessment Review
- Board of Health
- Cable TV Regulatory Board
- City Facilities Planning Committee (*ad hoc*)*
- Civil Service Commission
- Community Development Advisory Committee
- Comprehensive Plan Committee
- Conservation Commission
- Economic Development Committee
- General Assistance Fair Hearing Board
- Historic Preservation Committee
- Human Rights Commission
- Landcare Management Advisory Committee
- Library Advisory Board
- Open Space Acquisition Committee
- Planning Board
- Public Arts Committee
- Transit Advisory Committee
- Voter Registration Appeals Board
- Waste Reduction Committee

* *disbanded in 2024*

Accomplishments

City of South Portland boards and committees accomplished many important and impactful projects and initiatives this year. Here are just a few. We encourage you to read the

committees' reports to City Council of their 2024 work. Visit:

southportland.gov/annualreports

- **Age Friendly South Portland** organized numerous volunteers to shovel walkways for seniors, collaborated with the city's Public Works Department to deliver 114 sand buckets to seniors, organized a Resource Fair with 300+ attendees and 40+ vendors, distributed over 500 emergency "go bags" to seniors, and was awarded a \$12K grant to support emergency preparedness for those experiencing food insecurity.
- The **Affordable Housing Committee** worked to maintain and encourage the growth of a balanced and diverse supply of affordable housing throughout the city, which included 80 new housing units in 2024, 49 of which were dedicated to be below market rate.
- The **Bike-Pedestrian Committee** helped see through multiple traffic schedule changes, weighed in on Neighborhood Byway work with the new middle school in mind, and actively supported phase three of the Westbrook Street Multi-Use Path, which is done to completion.
- The **Comprehensive Plan Committee** (CPC) continued updating the city's 2012 Comprehensive Plan with a focus on four areas: key policy questions, coastal resilience, community design, and community goals and strategies. The CPC held

numerous public engagement events, including 13 meetings, two waterfront resilience events, two Comp Plan open houses, five district community conversations, and more.

- The **Economic Development Committee** held its annual Business Awards recognition event and planned for its 10th Anniversary event in 2025. The Committee provided feedback on the update to the city's Comprehensive Plan and began exploring a future Tourism Improvement District.
- The **Historic Preservation Committee** determined that the Sylvan Site neighborhood should be considered a historical site (no formal resolution by the city was achieved). The Committee also promoted the importance of the historic characteristics of the Mahoney School as its future use is planned, and emphasized the pertinence of the historical preservation ordinance.
- The **Human Rights Commission** continued promoting inclusivity, education, and cultural enrichment by hosting a number of events. These included a screening of "The Space Race" (a film about the history of America's Black astronauts), Performances by Bomba De Aqui, and the annual Juneteenth celebration.
- The **Landcare Management Advisory Committee** (LMAC) processed eight requests for waivers from the Landcare Management Ordinance. The group did a survey of residents and landcare professionals to assess current understanding of the Ordinance and gain ideas for how to implement it more effectively. Staff also made a presentation to the City Council in support of retaining LMAC, which Council opted to do.
- The **Open Space Acquisition Committee** (OSAC) completed its work towards the acquisition of 67.5 protected acres. The Committee finalized its Thornton Avenue parcel transaction, securing 30+ acres of wetlands and wild growth. OSAC also spearheaded the purchase of the 37-acre Petrulik Property, considered a priority potential acquisition since 2001. This property is adjacent to Hinckley Park and offers access to a pristine forest, rolling open fields, several vernal ponds, and a stream.
- The **Public Arts Committee** continued to move forward its Mill Creek mural project (expected installation: Spring 2025). The Committee also reviewed and made recommendations on a number of public art applications including a Re-Site art installation by Ling-Wen Tsai, a future Rwandan genocide memorial monument, and a future Fisherman's Point temporary silk art installation.
- The **Waste Reduction Committee** prepared for the City's first "Repair Fair" (January 2025), an event that brings together volunteer fixers and the community to repair items and keep them in use. The committee offered monthly waste reduction tips in the city's newsletter.

2024 Highlights

Of the many notable successes (and some challenges) the City of South Portland saw this year, some rise to the top. Here are the most important issues of the year.



Coastal Resilience

January rain and wind storms coupled with an astronomical high tide delivered devastating flooding and damage throughout Maine. The biggest impact on South Portland was the loss of the city's iconic fishing shacks. The city ramped up its coastal resilience planning and action as a result of these storms and anticipated effects of climate change. Learn more: Sustainability (PG. 59) and southportland.gov/coastalresilience

Mahoney

The City Council voted in September for the city to pursue combining many of its offices at the vacant Mahoney School as a solution to the city's pressing facilities needs. The project would create a new chapter for Mahoney as a vibrant civic and cultural hub and revitalize our public safety headquarters. Learn more: Facilities (PG. 33) and southportland.gov/mahoney





Bus Merger

The City Council voted unanimously in October to merge South Portland's city-run bus system into Greater Portland Transit District (Metro). South Portland is expected to save \$1 million over the next five years from this merger, while South Portland's bus drivers will earn more and riders will benefit from future service improvements and a stronger public transit system in the region. Learn more: [Bus Service \(PG. 22\)](#)

Property Taxes

Communities across Maine saw increases in assessed property values this year. Per the state constitution, assessed values should be based on market prices—which have risen dramatically in recent years. As a result, many South Portland tax payers, particularly single-family homeowners, saw a substantial increase on their tax bill. This prompted the City Council to advocate for tax relief and reform at the state level. Learn more: [Assessing \(PG. 19\)](#) and southportland.gov/taxbillfaq



Portland Harbor Dredge

After years of working to secure funding, the cities of Portland, South Portland, and partners announced that they secured the funds required for the Portland Harbor Dredge Project. The project is critical to the overall success and future of the cities' working waterfronts. A CAD cell for dredged material disposal is expected to be activated in early 2025. Learn more: [Economic Development \(PG. 29\)](#)



Russ Lunt Municipal Services Facility

South Portland lost community member Russ Lunt in 2024. Russ was a champion for the City, especially the Public Works Department, where he worked for 34 years. He was an enthusiastic presence at meetings and widely known as the “8th Councilor.” City Council voted to rename the Public Works building “The Russ Lunt Municipal Services Facility.” City officials cut the ribbon on the newly named building in September.

Development & Permitting

This year, the City began implementing changes to its permitting and development review processes. The improvements benefit anyone seeking a permit from the City’s Planning and Code Enforcement Offices. The changes streamline application and review processes, reduce timelines, and improve the applicant experience. They include a reorganization of the department and the addition of a staff member to improve service. Learn more: Code (PG. 25) and Planning (PG. 48)



New Website

The City launched a brand new website in March! The new site makes it easier than ever for community members to find information, report issues, contact staff, pay bills, and more. Residents can sign up to receive email alerts like job postings, public notices, City Council updates, and more. Visit: southportland.gov



Meet the Team

Nineteen departments provide municipal services to the community. These departments ensure that South Portland remains a highly desirable place to live, work and visit. They keep our community safe, maintain our roads, care for our parks and water, provide recreational opportunities, welcome businesses, and so much more. Together with their talented and dedicated staff, they keep the city running smoothly, solve problems, and work tirelessly for the betterment of this community. Meet our heads of departments (as of the end of 2024).



Daniel Ahern
Police Chief



Moe Amaral
Community TV



Karl Coughlin
Parks, Recreation &
Waterfront



Kevin Davis
Library



Mike Dery
Information
Technology



Fred Dillon
Water Resource
Protection



Don Hopkins
Facilities



Jessica A. Hughes
City Clerk



Melissa Hutchins
Public Works



William Mann
Economic
Development



Brent Martin
Assessing



Robert Nadeau
Human Resources



Milan Nevajda
Planning



Chris Pupke
Social Services



Nick Richard
Code Enforcement



Julie Rosenbach
Sustainability



Ellen Sanborn
Finance



Phil Selberg
Fire Chief



Josh Reny
Assistant City
Manager



Scott Morelli
City Manager



Assessing

Property sale prices in South Portland and across Maine have risen dramatically over the past five years, with the most significant increases seen in single-family homes. Since the State Constitution requires that property assessments align with market values, the Assessing Office updated valuations citywide in 2024. Though equalizing assessed values to catch up to the market resulted in an offsetting lower overall tax rate, many residents experienced higher tax bills from a shift in property values since residential property sales prices have increased more than other property types. In essence, catching values up to the market conditions caused a shift in the tax burden toward homeowners. This prompted the City Council to advocate for property tax relief and reform at the state level.

Here's a closer look at 2024 from Assessing, the department responsible for the valuation of all property in South Portland.

Rising Property Values

The total value of all taxable property in South Portland has climbed substantially over the past five years. In 2024, it reached \$6.2 billion, a significant jump from \$5 billion in 2023 and \$3.6 billion in 2019. This increase is the result of a strong housing market and new construction. Incremental changes to

assessed values are important as they help maintain fair and equitable property taxes for each owner. The quality of the assessing data plays a role in how much money the City receives from the state government – funding that helps to offset costs to taxpayers. Keeping property values accurate is crucial to fair taxation and for the city's financial health.

Continued Construction

While interest rates have been rising and available land is becoming scarce, construction in South Portland hasn't stopped. Construction of new homes and apartment buildings added \$10.8 million in value to the city's tax base this year. By incrementally updating land and building values, the city can maintain fair and equitable valuations based on current market conditions in different neighborhoods.

Tax Shift

While the value of commercial and industrial properties has also increased or recovered from the pandemic influences over the past few years, it hasn't risen as much as the value of residential properties. This means that residential property owners are now paying a larger share of the city's property taxes than other property types. This shift can be a burden on homeowners, considering this year's valuation increases came at the same

time older residents felt the effect of the state's elimination of its Senior Tax Stabilization Tax Relief program, which, for one year, helped control their property tax costs. City officials are actively working to advocate for property tax relief and reform at the state level and provide assistance locally via the city's Senior Citizen Property Tax Relief Program. If you have questions about available programs, Assessing staff can give you information as well as ensure your data is correct.

Business Investments and Fluctuations

On the business side, large companies investing in new equipment boosted the value of certain types of business property this year by \$70 million, bringing the total to \$450 million. This is a positive sign for the city's economy. However, the value of other taxable business property decreased this year by approximately \$13 million. This, combined with a lower tax rate, has resulted in a small decrease in the amount of property tax revenue the city receives from businesses. The City's Assessing Office is paying close attention to different sectors of the business community, including warehouses and other industrial properties, hotels, factories, and even utilities. The office market is also undergoing changes as both remote and return-to-work policies change. The Assessing Office is constantly monitoring influences to value of all property types.

Lower Tax Rate

Despite the increasing property values, the tax rate, also known as the mill rate, has been declining. It has dropped significantly from 19.1 in 2019 to 13.20 in

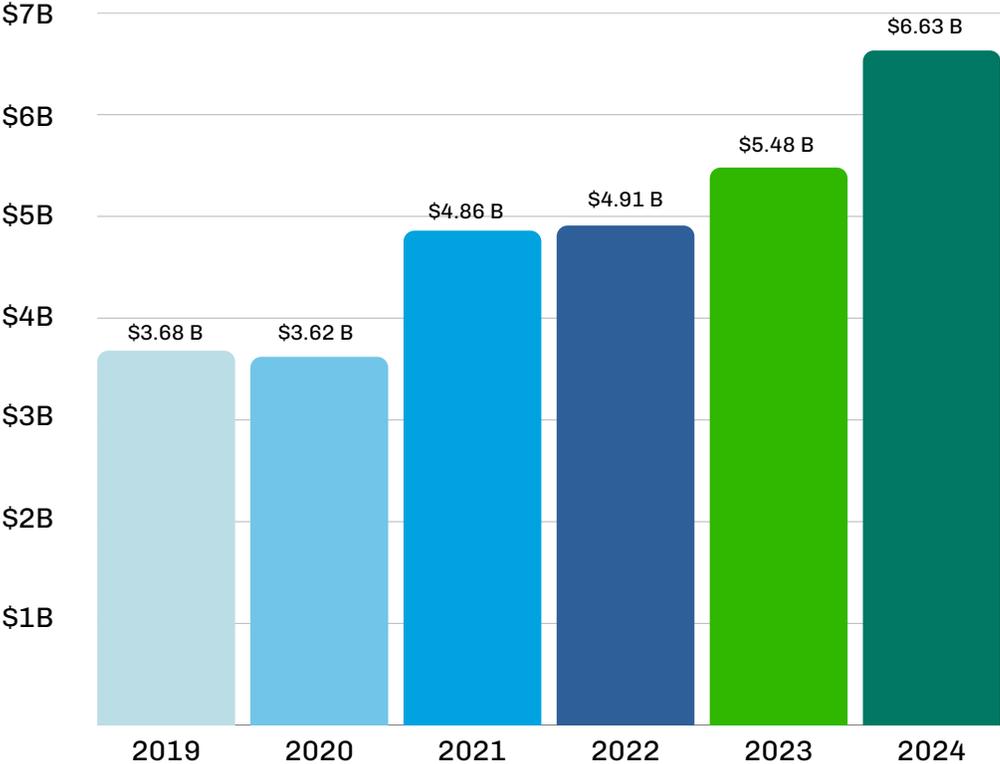
2024. This is the second lowest in over 40 years. This reflects the city's efforts to manage its budget effectively and keep the tax rate low, while still providing necessary services. This also helps to attract and maintain commercial properties to help offset the tax burden.

Accurate Tax Collection

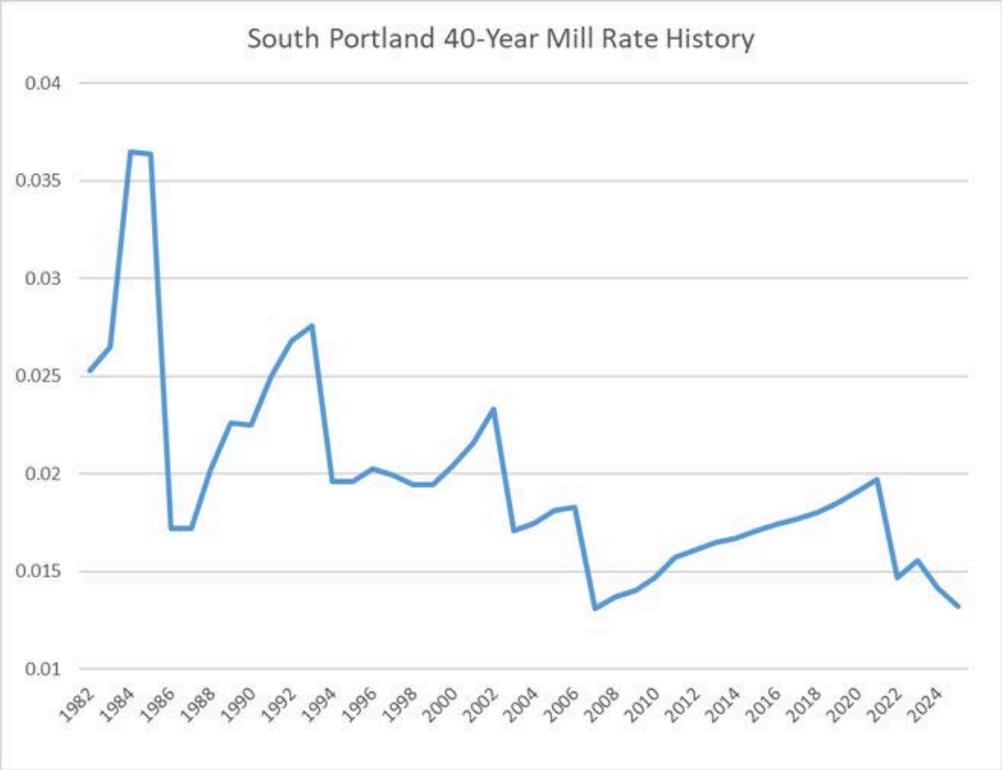
The City has a system in place to ensure that taxes are collected accurately. The Assessing Office works closely with the Finance Department to reconcile property values and tax bills. Assessing staff is dedicated to keeping property values up-to-date and fair according to State of Maine standards, which is essential for the budgeting process. The Assessing Office encourages residents to contact them with any questions about property values or the assessment process.



South Portland Total Valuation 2019-2024



South Portland 40-Year Mill Rate History





Bus Service

This year, the Bus Service had its final year as a City of South Portland-operated transportation service. South Portland Bus Service merged with Greater Portland Transit District (Metro) at the end of December, paving the way for stronger service to riders in the region, better pay for bus drivers, and savings for the city.

While the merger is the big news for the Bus Service this year, it also had a number of accomplishments.

Highlights

- The Bus Service began replacing damaged plexiglass in most bus shelters throughout the city in

December. These partially grant-funded improvements will continue in 2025.

- Bus launched its vehicle locator system (Swiftly) in August. The system includes a mapping app that enables riders to track their bus in real time.
- The department equipped buses with WiFi in June, enabling riders to connect to the internet for free while on board.



Press Release (October 9, 2024)**South Portland Bus to Merge with Greater Portland Metro**

On October 8, 2024 South Portland City Council voted unanimously to merge South Portland's city-run bus system into Metro. The merger was approved by Greater Portland Metro's Board of Directors on October 24 and went into effect on December 29. Metro will operate South Portland's bus routes, assume maintenance and compliance responsibilities, and fully integrate South Portland's routes into Metro's system in 2025 and going forward.

With the merger, service to South Portland is expected to remain the same, although Metro will likely offer suggested route improvements in the next few years. Metro will also carry forward a project to improve access and accessibility to a number of bus stops in South Portland, for which the city has secured grant funding. **South Portland is expected to save \$1 million over the next five years from this merger. This is due to Metro's assessment to South Portland being \$100,000 to \$170,000 less per year than what South Portland would otherwise have to budget, Metro paying South Portland over \$252,000 up front to acquire equipment such as buses, and in**

avoided capital costs for which South Portland would otherwise be responsible.

As part of the merger, Metro agreed to hire all South Portland bus drivers, honor their seniority in terms of pay and benefits, and allow them to operate South Portland's bus routes if they prefer. All bus drivers will receive increased compensation as Metro employees. South Portland will seat four representatives on Metro's board, and will have direct input on any decisions affecting South Portland's service.

South Portland left Metro in 1983 and has operated its own bus system since. Rejoining Metro has potential for improved regional connections between South Portland and the Greater Portland region.



South Portland agrees to consolidate bus service with METRO

Maine Public | By Nicole Ogrysko

Published October 9, 2024 at 11:15 AM EDT



We can confidently say this merger benefits all groups: riders, taxpayers, bus employees, and the region. Riders can still expect the same quality services as before, with new possibilities for improvements. South Portland taxpayers will benefit from the savings. Bus staff will retain their routes and earn more...and we'll benefit from a stronger, more unified regional transit provider.

City Manager Scott Morelli



City Clerk

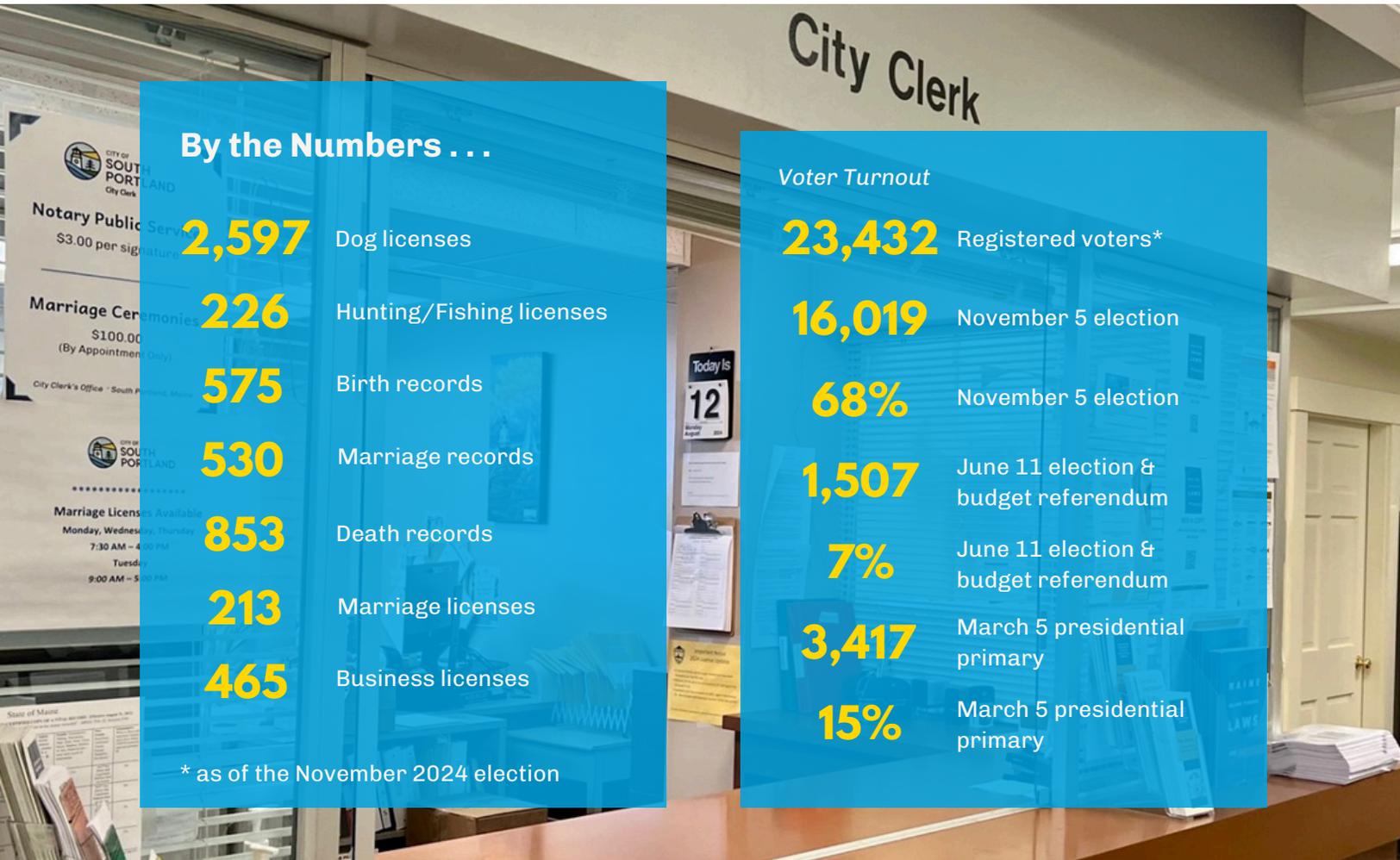
The City Clerk's office is responsible for keeping and providing copies of city records, vital records, issuing various licenses and permits, and organizing elections. The staff also posts all material provided to the City Council for meetings and workshops on the city website. The City Clerk's office is often referred to as the "historian" of the city and provides general information to residents about government services.

Staff

The Clerk's Office is staffed by one full-

time city clerk, one full-time deputy clerk, one full-time licensing administrator, and two part-time assistant city clerks.

This year, the department welcomed a new city clerk, Jessica A. Hughes, as well as a licensing administrator, Dana Chabot, and assistant clerk, Deborah Tillman Stone. The city honored Emily Scully, outgoing City Clerk, and the longtime service of Tina Weden and Karen Morrill upon their retirements.



By the Numbers . . .

- 2,597** Dog licenses
- 226** Hunting/Fishing licenses
- 575** Birth records
- 530** Marriage records
- 853** Death records
- 213** Marriage licenses
- 465** Business licenses

* as of the November 2024 election

Voter Turnout

- 23,432** Registered voters*
- 16,019** November 5 election
- 68%** November 5 election
- 1,507** June 11 election & budget referendum
- 7%** June 11 election & budget referendum
- 3,417** March 5 presidential primary
- 15%** March 5 presidential primary

Code Enforcement

The Code Enforcement Division issues permits and conducts inspections for all land use and construction activities within the city. The office administers the regulations for excavation licenses, street excavation permits and the E-911 street naming and numbering rules. The health inspector inspects food service establishments and handles other health-related issues. Code Enforcement staff provide technical information related to zoning, and team members serve as staff liaisons for the Board of Appeals and Board of Health.

This year the Code Enforcement Division saw the retirement of Director Barb Skelton in August and the promotion of Nick Richard to lead the division. Planning Director Milan Nevajda also took over as the director for both the Planning and Code Divisions to streamline and integrate these two teams that work closely together to regulate development in the community. The department added a building and plumbing inspector position in 2024.

Highlights

- Processed more permits and approvals than in any other year on record!
- Successfully reduced typical permit processing from 8 weeks to 2-3 weeks

- Completed reorganization of the Division to bring on a new planning and code director, code division director, deputy director, and building/plumbing inspector
- Developed new online permit processing software that will allow resident/contractor self-service, faster and more comprehensive processing times, and more streamlining overall.



Connect with Us!

Report an issue online and contact us:

 southportland.gov/reportanissue

 829 Sawyer St.  (207) 767-7603

 codeenforcement@southportland.gov

By the Numbers . . .

\$29,510,241

Total estimated value of construction

\$997,184

Fees collected

171

Plumbing permits

679

Electrical permits

2,208

Total permits

161

Health inspections

132

Complaints responded to

3

Board of Appeals cases

Community Television

South Portland Community Television (SPC-TV) focused primarily on community engagement in 2024 through a vigorous production schedule covering municipal meetings, community events and local-interest stories. The station launched the monthly show *South Portland Forward* in March. The show has been very warmly received by the community and has resulted in a strong uptick in viewer engagement.

South Portland Forward

SPC-TV produced ten episodes of “South Portland Forward.” The program has been syndicated by several other access centers across the country from Massachusetts to Wisconsin, resulting in potential exposure for the program to over one hundred thousand viewers. Sponsorship opportunities for *Forward* are planned to be made available in 2025.

Maine LD-1967

Maine LD-1967 “An Act to Protect Municipal Franchise Agreements” became effective in August. The bill safeguards agreements between municipalities and utility companies and preserves local control over these arrangements, even if the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) makes changes to broader regulatory frameworks. SPC-TV

staff participated in the legislative process through the station’s affiliation with Maine Community Media Association, where SPC-TV had strong representation serving as chair and secretary in 2024.



Productions & Programming

Throughout 2024, SPC-TV and SPPA-TV continued to be programmed with a diverse and evolving selection of public, education and government content—reflecting a commitment to delivering South Portland residents the best local access programming possible.

SPC-TV covered a number of high-profile community events, including: Art in the Park, USS Eagle Memorial Ceremony, Mill Creek Tree Lighting, Memorial Day Parade, Bug Light Car Show, Age Friendly Resource Fair, SPSD Justice Symposium, SPSD Schools Convocation, Chamber of Commerce Housing Forum, and the Municipal Services Facility renaming ceremony.

SPC-TV produced and/or carried numerous local interest productions and community interest pieces in 2024 including: “Tuskegee Airmen” (South Portland Public Library), “Pedestrian Safety Forum” (South Portland Public Library), “Early Gravestones of New England” (South Portland Historical Society), “You Belong Here” (SPSD), City Council and School Board Candidate Forums (League of Women Voters), and many more. SPC-TV also produced short videos for City departments and committees.

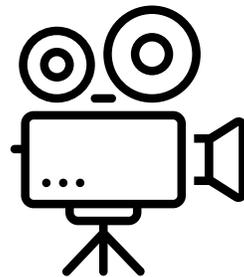
SPC-TV produced 130 total productions, averaging a production every 2.81 days, including the following publicly-facing municipal bodies live on cable and streaming: City Council, Planning Board, Comprehensive Plan Committee, Board of Education, Board of Appeals, Board of Assessment Review, City Council/Board

of Education Inauguration, South Portland School Department State of the Schools.

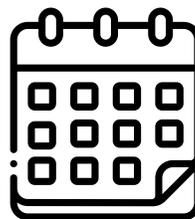
Technical Improvements/Support

SPC-TV continued to provide remote/hybrid meeting Zoom support to various departments and committees in 2024. The department also replaced its primary broadcast server. This upgrade resulted in improved programming automation, captioning, timely delivery of community information, and greater general functionality.

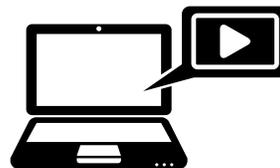
By the Numbers . . .



130
Total productions



2.81
production frequency (days)



18,374
Views online



Economic Development

The Economic Development Department is responsible for working to maintain, enhance, and expand the economic vitality within the City of South Portland for the benefit of all who reside or have businesses within our community. The Department does this by managing the city's business retention and attraction efforts. Staff also supports workforce development and job creation. The Department strives to provide excellent customer service to all, including those who have or are interested in investing in the community, starting and/or growing a business, and creating meaningful employment opportunities in the city.

Staff

William J. Mann, economic development director and Lea Duffy, economic development specialist

2023 Annual Business Awards

The Economic Development Committee held the city's annual Business Awards in February at the South Portland Middle School. The event provided a great opportunity for the City and School Department to collaborate and showcase this wonderful new asset to community members who might not otherwise have the chance to visit. Congratulations to our 2023 awardees!

2023 Business Award Winners

Bridgeway Restaurant - Small Business of the Year

AVESTA Housing & Kaplan Thompson Architects - SoPo Sustainability Award

restore HYPER WELLNESS - New Business of the Year

Lyric Music Theater - Santo "Sam" DiPietro Community Impact Award

Brant and Cochran - Maker Business of the Year

Diodes Incorporated - Business of the Year

Edward H. Palmer Sr. - Business Leader of the Year

To learn more about the South Portland Business Awards and Business of the Month, visit:
southportland.gov/businessawards

Portland Harbor Dredge Project

The Portland Harbor Dredge project made significant progress in 2024 with the finalization of funding and a competitive bid process for the work to be completed. The secured funding totals \$25 million, including \$10 million from the State of Maine via the Governor's Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan (American Rescue Plan funding), \$1.45 million from the U.S. EPA, \$6 million from the Maine Department of Transportation, \$4 million from the City of Portland, \$1 million from the City of South Portland, and \$2.64 million in private fees that will be assessed on pier owners who elect to participate in the project.

It is estimated that 47 waterfront properties, including piers, marinas, and public boat facilities on both sides of the harbor, will participate in this important project to address long-term sediment buildup that is jeopardizing the future use of those facilities. The dredging is estimated to displace up to a quarter million cubic yards of sediment over the next three years, and any contaminated material will be carefully disposed of in a confined aquatic disposal (CAD) cell to protect the aquatic ecosystem. This project will ensure the ongoing vitality of the South Portland waterfront.

Tax Increment Financing

Municipal Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a flexible finance tool used by the city to leverage new property taxes created through development within a defined geographic area. A portion of those new (incremental) taxes are used to finance public or private projects, which is an effective tool to induce certain types of

development, grow the city's tax base to support quality public services, and provide needed jobs or housing for the benefit of the community. Several important TIF-supported projects advanced in 2024. They included:

- Construction progressing at Betsy Ross House to support the creation of 52 units of affordable senior housing
- An amendment to the Landry Woods TIF Development Program was completed and the project is now anticipated to begin in 2025, ultimately creating an additional 34 units of affordable senior housing
- An amendment to the Downtown TIF Development Program was completed to remove property at 170 Ocean Street from the development district in order to establish a new district
- Creation of a new development district called the 170 Ocean Street TIF Development Program to incentivize an ~\$80 million mixed-use development in Mill Creek that will include retail space and more than 124 apartments

Additionally, two long-established TIF Development Programs expired in 2024. They included:

- Cummings Road Business Park Development and TIF District Development Program
- Fairchild Semiconductor Municipal Development and TIF District

Development Program (facility is now owned by Diodes Incorporated)

Ongoing Business Grant Programs

The City continues to offer Conditional Economic Development Grants and Level II Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station Grants. More information can be found about these programs on the Economic Development Department web page at southportland.gov.

Marketing and Outreach

During 2024, the Department expanded its reach for content promoted on social media including Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn. The monthly Economic Development Newsletter highlighted business-related current events, news and accolades.



The City celebrates the opening of Mr. Chickpea and Island Affairs in October



Snapshots from the South Portland Business Awards in February. Left: South Portland Middle Schoolers volunteering. Right: Lyric Music Theater accepts the Santo "Sam" DiPietro Community Impact Award.



Executive

The Executive Department is comprised of the city manager, assistant city manager, the executive assistant, the management & special projects associate, and the communications officer. Together this team leads the City, provides support for leadership, ensures successful completion of projects led by the City Manager's office, and oversees effective communication with the public.

Highlights

- Provided leadership for 19 departments whose staff provided exceptional services to the South Portland community
- Facilitated 38 public meetings of the City Council with supporting agendas and materials
- Presented the fiscal year 2025 (FY25) municipal operating budget (less county tax) to the City Council in the amount of \$60,915,726. The City Council's adopted budget for fiscal year 2025 was \$61,046,630 (less county tax) for municipal services
- Presented the FY25 capital budget in the amount of \$10,429,725. The City Council approved the total FY25 capital budget in the amount of \$11,154,725
- The city manager and human resources director recommended that the City of South Portland transition to a 4-day workweek for most staff in an effort to better compete with neighboring communities as a workplace and to improve employee recruitment and retention. After a pilot period, the 4-day workweek was permanently implemented in March 2024.
- Recognized important milestone years of service for staff members and celebrated all of the city's dedicated staff at the annual employee appreciation breakfast
- Completed two important surveys: a public survey about the city's communications and the new 4-day workweek, and an internal survey to staff about the 4-day workweek
- Launched a new, fully accessible website in March, making it easier than ever for community members to find information and conduct city business online
- Responded to 43 Freedom of Access Act requests
- Sent 39 press releases, getting important information about city matters out to the public

Facilities

The Facilities Department is responsible for the maintenance, repair, custodial services and capital improvement projects of approximately 400,000 square feet of the city's facilities. This division maintains the structures, including all building infrastructure. The Facilities Department also provides custodial services and transport of supplies and equipment between department locations.

Highlights

- Managed the City Facilities Project and led the City Facilities Committee. Led the presentation of the final Facilities Report and recommendation to City Council to consolidate city services on the Mahoney property, build a new police station, and renovate the Central Fire Station at its current location
- Hired an owner's representative to assist with the next phase of the City Facilities Project
- Completed pool roof capital project
- Installed heat pumps at the police station
- Worked with Revision Energy to update some electric vehicle (EV) chargers in the city
- Completed projects at the Hamlin building, including adding exterior insulation and installing a heat pump and water heater
- Remodeled and re-wired the Treasury Office
- Oversaw the installation of duress buttons for employee safety
- Administered preventative maintenance contracts to cut down on reactive calls

Mahoney Reimagined!

Stay up to date on this important project. Subscribe to get news at:
southportland.gov/mahoney



Finance

The Finance Department is charged with the responsibility of financial management of the city. The Department operates under the Governmental Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Code of Ethics. Sound fiscal management and transparent stewardship of public funds is integral to a strong and resilient city government.

The city maintains one of the highest market credit rating in the state, which is assigned by firms who evaluate a number of criteria related to the financial strength of a community. Key components of the city's strength are sustaining available cash balances and reserves, sound fiscal management and having financial policies in place. Various fiscal functions encompass the day-to-day operations in Finance, including the receipt, recording, and reconciling of money for the city.

The Finance Department performs all accounting and budget administration functions, manages the annual financial audit, and processes vendor payments and payroll for all departments including the Schools Department. The Department also oversees procurement for the City's purchases of goods and services.

Treasury Office

The Treasury Office is the public service center for Finance, where residents register vehicles and pay taxes. This

year, the Department has seen an increase in transactions, as the city's population has grown and demographics have shifted. To address the resulting longer wait times, the Finance Department added a position shared with the Clerk's Office to gain capacity to better serve the public during staff absences and vacancies. This has made a difference, although there are still peak times when waits are longer. The Finance Department encourages residents to take advantage of online services to pay taxes, re-register vehicles, and pay sewer bills and parking tickets. Visit: southportland.gov/onlineservices

By the Numbers . . .

Finance annual figures (on average)

18,000

Vehicle registrations processed

11,000

Property tax accounts administered

25,000

Payments for goods and services

1,000

Employees for whom payroll is processed

Budget

Staff identified a \$4 million shortfall in January in the amount of taxes that were billed for FY24. This was the result of a calculation error that occurred when completing the state Municipal Valuation Return form that all municipalities use to determine their tax assessment. While the city did not overspend the budget that the City Council approved, nor did staff budget too little, the error on the form meant that the city billed less than the City Council approved to support the budget. The city used surplus revenues, grant and reserve funds for eligible costs, and reduced department expenses to make up the loss of tax revenue. The unbilled portion will be factored into the FY2025 tax assessment. The Finance and Assessing Departments have implemented new processes to ensure the error does not occur again.

Audits, Budgets & More

Detailed financial information, such as annual audits and budgets, and additional information can be found on the City's website under the Finance Department, at: southportland.gov/177/Finance

Connect with Us!

Pay bills online and contact Finance:

 southportland.gov/onlineservices

 25 Cottage Rd.  (207) 767-7612

 finance@southportland.gov







Fire-EMS

The South Portland Fire Department (SPFD) strives for excellence in providing the highest level of emergency services, prevention, and outreach to the residents, businesses, and visitors of South Portland. Due to the dedication of its staff and the continued support of the community, SPFD is ranked by the Insurance Services Office as one of the top fire departments in the country.

Highlights

- SPFD is continuing to invest in its operating fleet and facilities. This year the Department received delivery of a 100' Tower Ladder and a new Type 3 ambulance. SPFD also ordered a new Type 3 ambulance and will be sending an older ambulance for a re-chassis. The Department used American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to upgrade a number of furnishing items in fire stations and to award a contract to refurbish a 20-year-old kitchen at our Western Avenue Fire Station.
- SPFD received \$171,000 from the MEMS stability grant funding program which has been used to purchase a new power-lift stretcher system, a new cardiac monitor/defibrillator, fund Advanced EMT training for some newer employees, and begin an on-site wellness program for employees.
- 28 members of the department participated in a voluntary cancer screening program funded through a FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program.
- The Department used ARPA funds to begin the replacement of legacy AFFF foam containing PFAS chemicals and will be swapping to a non-PFAS containing fluorine free foam concentrate.
- SPFD re-structured the EMS coordinator position and created an EMS lieutenant as well as added an additional EMS lieutenant. As the profession of EMS care continues to evolve and calls for service continue to heavily skew to EMS, it is important that SPFD has leadership positions to help the Department maintain a high quality of care.
- The Department continues to face staffing challenges. This year SPFD had several resignations and hired six new employees. The Department is in the process of hiring an additional five employees, which will still leave a deficit of two. However, SPFD is working hard to recruit.



Human Resources

The Human Resources (HR) Department provides organizational leadership for the City of South Portland in all areas of personnel management and development. The Department endeavors to create a positive, engaging, productive and safe workplace for all employees. The City of South Portland is an equal opportunity employer.

The City of South Portland employs approximately 310 full- and part-time, benefit-eligible employees. The City also employs numerous temporary, seasonal, and call employees throughout the year, such as for summer recreation activities, parks maintenance, winter snow operations and fire service. Its talented and dedicated employees are among the City of South Portland's greatest assets.

HR supports and develops employees by partnering with city departments to provide the necessary training, tools, equipment, and technology for them to be successful. The Department also provides opportunities for promotion and career advancement while maintaining a positive, supportive and healthy workplace culture where employees are motivated, engaged, creative and productive.

Highlights and Focus Areas

- *Recruitment, including Diversity Hiring* - Recruiting and hiring in general has been the major challenge and focus area for the department this year. Due to employee retirements and departures and with an increasingly tight labor market, with worker shortages and high demands for pay, both retention and recruitment have absorbed most of the departmental work capacity. HR is grateful that through the tireless work of Police and Fire Departments, these departments are now at or near full capacity.
- *Collective Bargaining Processes* - The city was able to execute a collective bargaining agreement with its firefighters in the fall of 2024. This contract was settled only after long negotiations, but HR is hopeful that this will provide an opportunity for greater collaboration and cooperation going forward. HR has also recently begun negotiating with Police Patrol and looks forward to working together with that unit to settle a contract.
- *Supervisor Training* - HR instituted a new supervisor training program that it hopes to conduct semi-annually to complement the city's quarterly New Hire Orientation.
- *City Safety Program* - HR's safety office works very hard to meet compliance directives for all facilities

and departments. The safety coordinator oversees all required safety trainings for new hires and regularly conducts safety and OSHA-related trainings throughout the city. The Safety Coordinator also responds to safety-related questions and ensures OSHA record keeping is properly maintained.

Personnel Updates

The Human Resources Department strives to attract, hire and retain the most qualified, motivated and knowledgeable candidates for open positions in city government. Position vacancies routinely are posted on the city's website, as well as a variety of online job forums. The department is also exploring additional avenues to enhance recruitment efforts.

With Thanks for Their Service

The following are staff members who retired in 2024 who had 20 or more years of experience working with the City of South Portland:

- Pierre Corbeau, WRP, 22.5 years
- Philip Rumery, Fire Dept., 25 years
- Richard Sargent, Bus Service, 41 years
- Jeffrey Caldwell, Public Works, 36.5 years
- John Erskine, Parks and Recreation, 40 years
- Donald Hopkins, Bus Service, 22 years
- Karen Morrill, 26.8 years

The public service, talents, dedication, and historical knowledge of these employees are greatly missed.

By the Numbers . . .

48

FT or PT employees separated from service

44

FT or PT new employees hired

31.3%

Women as % of regular employees

19%

Women as heads of departments

4.51%

Ethnically diverse as % regular employees





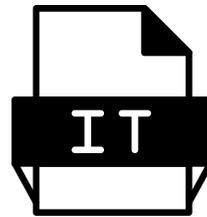
Information Technology

The City's Information Technology (IT) department provides resilient IT infrastructure for City operations and public safety, provides business applications for management of information, and supports City departments with all digital initiatives.

Highlights

- Installed new phone system infrastructure to allow for enhanced features and robust call processing and performance
- Started the internal email migration from Microsoft Outlook to Google Workspace to be completed in January 2025
- Processed over 5,600 service tickets
- Deployed over 54 new PCs to employees
- Maintained a network system that was up and running 99.999% of the time, enabling productivity across the municipality. This achievement is called "5 nines" in the industry.

By the Numbers . . .



56,000

Service tickets processed



99.999%

Percentage of time network system ran



54

PCs deployed to staff

Library

In 2024, the South Portland Public Library sustained its place as a service destination serving approximately 200 users daily. While the lending of books and other materials remains the backbone of its services, the Library continues to see growth in non-material based services, such as use of the library buildings as a place to work, to study, to meet and to socialize.

Physical Collections

The Library provides the community access to more than 111,000 items from its physical collections housed at the Main Library at 482 Broadway and the Branch Library at 155 Wescott Road. In addition, thanks to being a founding member of the statewide Minerva consortium of libraries, library users have ready access to millions of items housed in libraries across the state.

In 2024 the Library lent out 136,623 items to the community, with 21,573 of these items being borrowed from partner libraries. The Library lent out 19,878 items from its collections to partner libraries for use by their users.

Digital Collections

The online cloudLibrary service saw continued growth throughout its second full year of availability. The cloudLibrary platform provides access to eBooks, digital audiobooks, digital magazines and streaming video to South Portland library users, 24/7, from anywhere. There were 3,355 unique users of the cloudLibrary eBook & digital audiobook collections in 2024, with an average 53 new users signing up for the service each month.

The digital audiobook collection is consistently more heavily used than the



eBook portion of the collection, resulting in 10,514 audiobooks being borrowed, compared to 6,648 eBooks.

Beyond Books, Beyond Our Walls

In addition to services, programs, and events held at the libraries, staff are regularly out in the community. Staff hosts a regular children's story time at the Redbank Community Center, conducts several programs in partnership with the Parks and Recreation Department and, as weather permits, hosts regular story time activities outdoors at Bug Light Park.

The Library's Outreach Services Division, which provides access to library materials to homebound South Portland residents, delivered 2,241 items to citizens in 2024, providing not only reading/viewing/listening materials, but valuable social contact in the lives of many residents.

Programs and Events

In addition to regular program offerings during the year, the Library partnered with many City departments and outside organizations throughout 2024, bringing a rich diversity of topics to the public. The Parks and Recreation, Public Safety, Sustainability, and Planning Departments all contributed to Library programming this year, as well as the Southern Maine Agency on Aging and the Age Friendly South Portland Committee.

This year, 6,971 children and their family members participated in 203 programs and events for younger library users. The Library also hosted 449 programs for adults, with a total of 5,916 participants.

Staffing

When presented with staff vacancies, the Library continues to evaluate its operational structure with the goal of gaining efficiencies, aligning staff skills with library needs, and providing opportunities for staff advancement within the library. When the Library's deputy director moved out of state, the Department chose to eliminate this position and, within the budget allocated for it, created a new head of adult services position, a full-time library assistant position, and a part-time library aide position within the Adult Services Division. This realignment of positions allowed for an internal promotion of an existing staff member into a position of increased responsibility, the onboarding of a new full-time employee, and the creation of a new part-time position. This provided the Department with additional payroll hours devoted to frontline service at a reduced cost to the city.



Traffic Officer Rocco Navarro, Public Works Director Melissa Hutchins, and Planning Director Milan Nevajda present at a pedestrian safety panel at the library in December.

By the Numbers . . .

Physical collections

136,623 Items lent to SoPo users

114,870 SoPo items lent to SoPo users

21,753 ILL* items lent to SoPo users

13,4748 SoPo items checked out

19,878 SoPo ILL* items lent to other library users

*ILL = Interlibrary Loan

cloudLibrary Usage

3,355 Active users

646 New patrons

17,162 Checkouts count

6,648 eBook checkouts

10,514 Audiobook checkouts



Parks, Recreation & Waterfront

The Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Department manages the city's many parks and public waterfront areas and provides a diverse range of recreational programs for all ages.

Events

The Department hosted over 20 well-attended events, large and small, in 2024, impacting thousands of community members. These included the July 4th Celebration, Bug Light Car Show, Trunk or Treat, Art in the Park, the Holiday Tree Lighting, the Youth Triathlon, Kids Night Out and more.

Park Ranger & Conservation

The Park Ranger and Conservation

programs had some great highlights this year. They held 107 nature programs, talks, and tabling events. These engaged 3,084 participants and included: Nature Story Times (which averaged between 30-50 attendees); field trips, including a trip to Willard Beach for every kindergarten class in the city and a Hinckley Park animal habitat exploration for every second grade class; and numerous hikes including a nature walk for people living with dementia. The Conservation program removed invasives to reclaim as open space at Hinckley Park, Legere Park, and at the bottom of Willow Street by Willard Beach. The Department restored a 300-foot section of shoreline and planted 300



native plants at Hinckley Park to stop erosion. For the 43rd year, the City of South Portland is a certified Tree City USA participant recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation.

Community Centers

There were many visits to the two Community Centers in 2024. There were 11,983 uses of the indoor walking track, 10,917 open gym visits, and over 40,000 swim sessions. The South Portland Community Center and Redbank Community Center hosted over 570 programs, events, and rentals. Redbank got important upgrades this year thanks to a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) that includes new scoreboards, parking lot repaving, and more.

Teen Center & Drop-in Senior Center

The Teen Center and drop-in Senior Center continued to be a success. 90 teens were registered this year, with 19 kids on average attending each day and participating in programs including Skills & Drills and Craft Club. Over 4,000 seniors visited the drop-in Senior Center for events that included a Senior Halloween Party, Valentines Day Brunch, Irish Luncheon and more. The Senior Center offered popular programs and new ones this year, including Artist of the Month, Bridge Time, Armchair Travel, Senior Corn Hole, Trivia, and more — thanks in large part to partnerships with local organizations. Seniors also attended a number of trips, including excursions to Butternut Farm, LL Bean, Portland Jetport, and a number of walks and hikes.

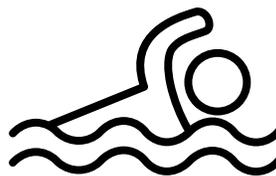
Youth & Adult Programs

Youth and adult programs thrived this

year. The youth division offered over 90 sports and enrichment programs, including soccer, basketball, lacrosse, and a new All Girl Sports Camp. There was a large increase in adult participation in 2024, with classes selling out and additional sessions and leagues being added. 3,263 adults participated in open gym in 2024, and the department organized 12 basketball leagues and three softball leagues. Camps and after school clubs served over 650 South Portland kids ages 5 to 14 and their families by providing high-quality, affordable childcare programming.

Aquatics Program

The aquatics program continues to thrive. The Department provided 220 pool programs and lessons for all ages,



40,000

Uses of the swimming pool



11,983

Visits to the indoor track



10,917

Visits to open gym

including the Riptide Program, which served over 300 kids. Families enjoyed a number of pool events including Flick & Float and Pool Pumpkin Splash. The High School Swim Club taught approximately 50 high school students to swim, many of whom joined the High School Swim Team! A new roof was also completed on the pool this year, which provided much-needed upgrades to the space.

SoPo Unite

SoPo Unite, the coalition to prevent youth substance use, ran a host of successful programs. These included multi-lingual tobacco prevention groups, a high school Transportation Board focused on improving transportation in the city, restorative practice circles, Narcan training for high school students and staff, and more. Students created a graphic novel about problem gambling that will be published and available nationally in 2026.

Wainwright Athletic Complex

Wainwright Athletic Complex has steady use with 4,000 hours of use in 2024 for Recreation programs and rentals for ultimate frisbee and youth baseball. A new full-time employee came on board to join the five seasonal employees to efficiently and effectively maintain the facility. This is the facility's fourth year using organic fertilizer and management controls for sports fields. The Complex hosted Lax Fest, a Youth Baseball Tournament, and the Lobster Pot Ultimate Frisbee Tournament. This event drew 1,800 participants from 82 college teams around the country.

Golf Course, Skate Park & Bug Light Boat Ramp

The South Portland Golf Course, Skate Park, and Bug Light Boat Ramp remain popular. The Golf Course hosted over 20,000 rounds of golf, a senior league, adult league, ladies golf clinic, and youth clinics. The new Skatepark continues to be used on a daily basis. Over 40 children participated in skate lessons through the Recreation department. The Boat Ramp served over 1,700 members of the public by providing a safe and affordable place to launch their boat in South Portland.





Planning

The mission of the Planning Division is to promote a safe, attractive, equitable and prosperous South Portland. The Division strives to achieve this through its service areas and strategic approach, which includes:

- Development review
- Maintenance of land use regulations
- Long-range planning and policy research
- Community engagement
- Board, committee, and commission representation
- Collaboration with city, community, and state or regional partners

Boards, Committees, and Commissions

In 2024 the Planning Division supported, administered, and participated in the following public bodies that help guide and inform community development in South Portland: Affordable Housing Committee; Public Arts Committee; Historic Preservation Committee; Bike-Pedestrian Committee; Comprehensive Plan Committee (CPC); Conservation Commission; Open Space Acquisition Committee; Planning Board; Board of Appeals (as needed); Human Rights Commission (as needed)

Highlights

Major Projects Approved by the Planning Board:

- 18 Daniel P Tuell St - New, 100%

affordable, 38-unit senior housing project

- 675 Main St. - 80-unit apartment building
- 149A Front St. - Soil remediation
- 2401 Broadway - New 25,500 sq. ft. pickleball facility
- 95 Darling - 90,000 sq. ft. Fork Food Lab expansion

Major Policy Projects Completed:

- Land Use Tables - Modernized all land uses definitions and converted to tables
- Complete Street Manual - Adopted a new complete street manual
- FEMA Standards - Updated to new FEMA maps and modernized floodplain construction standards
- Mobile Home Parks and Manufactured Housing - Overhauled the city's mobile home park and manufactured housing regulations under a moratorium to align with state law and to streamline housing opportunities
- Sprinkler Ordinance - Streamlined sprinkler requirements with the Fire Department

- Re-Zoning for Development:
 - Created MSCR Zone to enable 80 market-rate, mixed-size, apartments
 - Expanded G-7 to enable an additional 50+ affordable housing units
 - Increased building coverage in the CCR to allow infill in the Maine Mall area
 - Removed adaptive reuse barriers for B&B lodgings
 - Presented Council-directed revisions to address noise near the airport and owner-occupancy for ADUs. Neither was passed.
- Updated Planning Board Regulation #2 - Improved erosion and sedimentation control standards
- Miscellaneous Amendments (2) - Zoning housekeeping items

Other Initiatives:

- Comprehensive Plan Update:
 - Held 15 CPC meetings and 11 community engagement events
- Open Space/Conservation - Acquired 37+ acres on Stillman near Highland
- Housing:
 - Received \$10,000 in grants for leadership on LD2003 implementation
 - Awarded \$50,000 from the Maine Housing Opportunity Program for zoning updates (pending)
- Public Art - Public art mural commissioned, with installation planned for April, 2025
- Historic Preservation - Concluded Sylvan Site historical evaluation

By the Numbers . . .

18	Site plans
3	Special exceptions
7	Subdivisions
3	Nonconforming lots of record
13	Ordinance amendments
21	De minimis changes





Police

South Portland Police Department (SPPD) is the fourth largest municipal department in Maine, answering tens of thousands of calls for service in a year. SPPD is a nationally accredited agency by the Commission on Accreditation Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). SPPD reviews, creates and modifies its policies and standard operating procedures on an ongoing basis in accordance with the nationally recognized best practices

established by CALEA. The South Portland Police Department's CALEA accreditation is a "Mark of Public Safety Excellence."

Highlights

Recruiting

SPPD began the year seven officers down, and through its dedicated recruitment team, ended the year



only one officer down. SPPD graduated a total of seven officers from the Maine Criminal Justice Academy in 2024. As a result, the Department was able to fill vacant specialty assignments such as criminal investigations detective, a second traffic specialist, and two new community response officers.

Behavioral Health Liaison Program

The Behavioral Health Liaison program stands out this year. SPPD's two full-time social workers embedded in patrol with the co-response model greatly improved the Department's efficiency and effectiveness in responding to people suffering with mental health, drug dependence or co-occurring illnesses. Our behavior health liaisons' value not only lies with their response to hundreds of calls for service, but also their valuable expertise in this area and bringing this training to the whole department.

Calls for Services

SPPD responded to 29,867 calls for service, up from 28,375 in 2023. Police responded to several high profile cases during the year including:

- A search warrant for a child exploitation case in January
- A bank robbery in January
- A major car crash involving several cars and city property in March
- An arrest and two search warrants for a large multi-agency drug investigation in March
- An escape from Long Creek Youth Detention Center and subsequent robbery in July
- An active shooter threat hoax at the

high school in November

- A shooting in Redbank and on Gorham Road in December

Community Events

Participating in events with the community and getting to know residents and businesses is very important to the South Portland Police Department. Here are some events SPPD was pleased to be a part of in 2024:

- Christmas Toy drive with South Portland Parks & Recreation and the School Department
- Coffee with a Cop
- DEA Drug Take Back
- National Night Out
- Breakfast with Santa
- Tip a Cop for Special Olympics
- Trunk or Treat Halloween event
- Law Enforcement Torch Run to support Special Olympics



Junior Police Academy

This year, for the first time since COVID-19, SPPD conducted the Junior Police Academy (JPAC) program. The weeklong program helped nearly thirty middle-school-aged kids develop their communication, decision-making, teamwork, and leadership skills.

Accomplishments

There were a number of notable accomplishments in the Police Department this year including:

- Detective Jonathan Stearns was named 2023 Officer of the Year
- SPPD hired Officers Coombs, Barker, Harrer, Newton, Burton and Fippinger
- Officer Gray was named Maine Association of Police School Resource Officer of the Year
- Detective Stearns received the Meritorious Service Medal from the Maine Association of Police
- The Department received re-accreditation through CALEA
- SPPD expanded its officer wellbeing and mental health work
- SPPD acquired, trained, and put into service a new police canine team. Welcome K-9 Officer Mel and her Handler Officer Jordan Peters!

Training

The Department received 2,747 hours of training during 2024. This training ranged from field training and new law updates to more specialized training like evidence recovery, SWAT, active threat, firearms and crash reconstruction.

Goals for 2025

- Use the expanded Community Response Unit to increase transparency through community engagement and social media presence
- Expand outreach to individuals struggling with mental health and substance use disorders
- Increase traffic enforcement with the new traffic specialist
- Continue to focus on officer wellness and retention through training and the wellness committee



Public Works

The City of South Portland's Public Works Department is located at 929 Highland Avenue in the newly renamed Russ Lunt Municipal Services Facility.

The Department has many responsibilities including street and sidewalk repairs and maintenance, trash pickup, paving, roadside collection, sign installation, streetlight maintenance, traffic signals oversight, and Transfer Facility operations. The Public Works Department works closely with other city departments to meet the needs of the community.

A major responsibility of the Department is winter operations. Plowing, sanding and salting of streets and sidewalks are handled through a combination of staff and outside contractors. The Public Works Department maintains approximately 330 lane miles of road during winter operations. Staff works around the clock to help provide safe streets for travelers and emergency vehicles during inclement weather.

Highlights

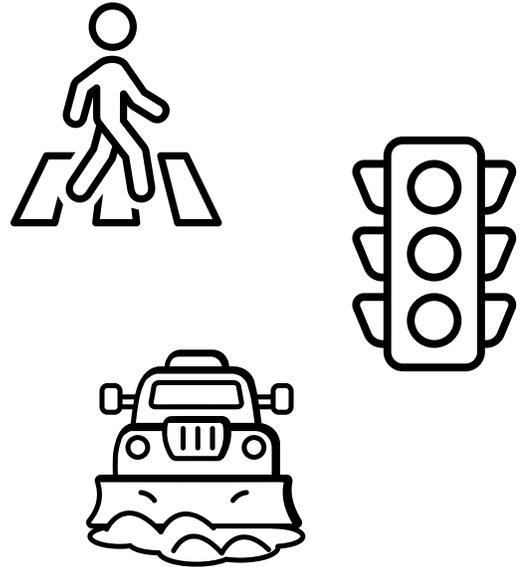
- Renamed the Public Works facility in



honor of the late Russ Lunt, community champion and longtime Public Works employee

- Completed Westbrook Street Multi-Use Path. The path runs from Westbrook St. at Gorham Rd. to Wescott Rd.
- Completed sidewalk upgrades on Evans St.
- Made sidewalk repairs across the City
- Completed annual curbside leaf collection and Christmas tree collection
- Delivered 114 sand buckets for Age Friendly South Portland
- Completed street sweeping across the city
- Repaired damage to pavement and curbing throughout the city
- Received \$280,000 in grant funding for sidewalk installation on Church St.
- Received \$150,000 in grant funding towards sidewalk installation on Broadway between Whitehall Ave. and Church St.
- Upgraded six intersections with video detection to optimize traffic flow
- Completed multiple paving projects:

- Ocean St. (Waterman to A)
- Evans St. (Highland to Nutter)
- Casco Bay Bridge
- Broadway (Casco Bay Bridge to Cottage)
- Sterling Ave. (Sawyer to dead end)
- Portland St. (Front to dead end)
- Lake St. (Broadway to dead end)
- Cedar St. (Sawyer to Fairlawn)
- Derby Rd. (Ocean to Plymouth)
- Preble St. (Broadway to Franklin)
- Preble St. (Deake to Cape line)



Connect with Us!

Report an issue and contact us:

 southportland.gov/reportanissue

 929 Highland Ave.  (207) 767-7671

 publicworks@southportland.gov





School Department

Dear Community Member,

At South Portland Schools, students, educators, and staff are embracing the district theme “Together We Grow.” With a focus on our growth as educators, support staff, and students, we have ambitious goals that are guided by our core belief that we can expand student potential and foster a sense of belonging among all members of the school district community.

I’m pleased to share the following highlights from the past year:

- We have demonstrated significant progress with student attendance, which has been a national concern following the pandemic. Between the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school year, we experienced a 6% decrease in chronic student absenteeism, and we continue to see improved attendance this school year.
- Guided by the principles of a community school, South Portland Middle School supports opportunities to improve student learning, create stronger families, and support healthier communities. The middle school integrates a variety of support services, including a school-based health center led by our partners at Greater Portland Health.
- South Portland High School (SPHS) music students received many honors. Gold medal ratings were earned at the respective state finals for the Marching Band, Symphonic Band, and Jazz Bands. The choral program received the highest honor at the Great East Festival.
- 34 SPHS students were awarded with the Seal of Biliteracy, who demonstrated proficiency in English and an additional language.
- The high school’s outstanding robotics team finished 12th out of 185 teams in the New England competition and earned five victories at the FIRST Robotics international competition in Houston.
- The South Portland High School boys’ track team won two championships in the 2023-24 season for indoor and outdoor track. Arnaud Sioho won four events at the outdoor competition, setting state records in the long jump and the triple jump, leading the Red Riots to their first state Class A championship in 22 years.
- The South Portland Adult Education program continues to grow. We currently offer 27 classes for adults increasing their English skills, and

there are 20 students in Integrated Education Training, which focuses on workplace readiness and customer service skill building in the hospitality industry.

- The district's Education Justice Conference was held in October for our educators and staff members. The conference offered immersive and thought-provoking opportunities for staff to advance their knowledge and personal growth on topics of key relevance to their role as champions of education justice.
- The School Department is guided by an active and engaged School Board who ensure that the community's financial investment produces positive results for our students. In 2023-24, Jennifer Ryan and Molly Schen served as Chair and Vice Chair respectively with the membership also including Rosemarie DeAngelis,

Claire Holman, Jennifer Kinney, and Tandy Ratliff. Gabe Domingos, Angela Kabisa, and Eliot Wertheimer served as student representatives during that term.

The success of "Quality Learning for All" happens through collaboration with our students, their families, our outstanding staff, and community members. We are excited about the future of the South Portland School Department, and we look forward to sharing our continued progress.

Sincerely and appreciatively,



Tim Matheney, Superintendent of Schools



Social Services

The City of South Portland Social Services Department is an office under the Human Resources Department. The Department’s primary function is to administer the General Assistance (GA) program, which is regulated by state statute and ordinance that provides financial assistance to eligible people to meet their basic necessities, such as rent, food, personal and household supplies, medication, heating fuel and utilities. The Social Services Department also provides referrals to other local resources (for example, food pantries, clothing closets, etc.) for people in need.

Highlights

- In addition to assistance granted solely through GA, the office collaborated with community partners to refer applicants to

outside resources to meet their needs above what GA alone is able to do. This included:

- 66 instances of preventing evictions or otherwise securing housing
- 23 instances of preventing utility disconnects, restoring service after a disconnection, and keeping homes heated
- Over 100 referrals to Maine Needs, which provided clothing, bedding and household supplies
- Guided several applicants through the Hardship Abatement process for property tax assistance
- Assisted Age Friendly South Portland with the administration of several programs to support the City’s senior citizen community.

By the Numbers . . .

GA applications processed

Total: 1,734





Sustainability

The mission of South Portland's Sustainability Department is to guide the development of policies and practices that simultaneously promote economic well-being, strong community connections, and a healthy environment.

South Portland's climate action and adaptation plan, *One Climate Future*, was adopted in November 2020 as a roadmap for achieving the City's council-adopted goals of (1) reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050, (2) running municipal operations entirely on clean renewable energy by 2040, and (3) building the resilience of the city's neighborhoods, infrastructure, and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change.

The plan contains 68 strategies designed to meet these goals. Now in the fourth year of implementation, the Department continued to make significant progress. Of the total strategies, 13% are in action, 51% are in progress, and 29% have not been started. An additional 3% have been tabled while CMP completes essential work, and 3% apply only to Portland.

Highlights

Created new Coastal Resilience Online Resource:

- Building on previous work, South Portland partnered with the Greater

Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) to create an online tool showing flood risks to coastal neighborhoods in South Portland under 3.9ft of sea level rise during an average high tide, at highest astronomical tide, and with a major storm.

- The Department held engagement events and issued a survey to provide input on the Comprehensive Plan.
- This program was funded by an FY23 grant totaling \$50,000.

Kicked Off Two Coastal Resilience Zoning Projects:

- Sustainability and Planning staff developed, secured funding for, and awarded contracts to consulting firms for the following projects (which will begin in January 2025):
 - Development of a Coastal Resilience Solutions Assessment



to evaluate a range of hardscape solutions for building resilience at six sites along the City's waterfront. This project is funded with \$133,000 in ARPA funds.

- Development of a Coastal Resilience Overlay Zone that will require new development in areas at risk of inundation to include resiliency measures. This project is funded through a \$32,000 grant and \$75,000 in ARPA funds.

Applied for Multiple Grants:

- In addition to utilizing ARPA funding, Sustainability staff applied for eight grants in 2024.
- The Department was awarded three grants: a Maine Coastal Community grant (\$32,000) for coastal resilience overlay zoning; a Natural Resources Council of Maine grant (\$1,500) for repair fairs; and an Efficiency Maine grant (\$40,000) to install four networked EV chargers in Mill Creek.
- The Department is at this time waiting to hear from the Community Action Grant (submitted jointly with Portland for \$175,000 in December) for the creation of a Risk Based Asset Management Tool.

Expanded the South Portland Electric Tool Library (SPETL):

- The SPETL opened in 2023 with 18 pieces of electric lawn equipment including six lawn mowers, six leaf blowers, two string trimmers, two hedge trimmers, and two edgers.

- In 2024, the Department added two lawn mowers and two string trimmers. Additionally, staff improved the checkout system so that patrons can reserve equipment online, as opposed to having to call or appear in person to be added to the waitlist.
- The SPETL had 374 checkouts in 2024; a 15% increase from last year.

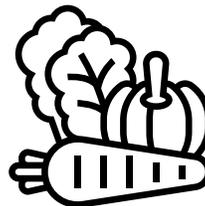
Renewed Resilient Yards Program:

- Back by popular demand, the Department partnered with Maine



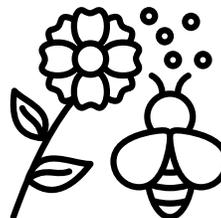
374

Electric Tool Library checkouts



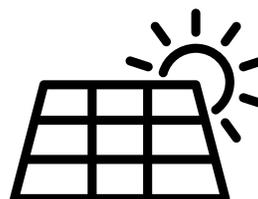
15

New vegetable gardens planted



600

Native pollinator plants planted



\$575,000

Amount City saved this year due to solar arrays

Audubon, the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA), and 20 volunteers to complete a second year of the Resilient Yards program, which helps transform South Portland properties into more resilient yards.

- Participants established 15 new vegetable gardens and planted 600 new native pollinator plants. Staff also developed a resource guide for residents who want to start their own native pollinator garden.
- This program was funded with a FY23 grant and city funding left over from the previous year.

Benefited from Second Full Year of Solar Project:

- In 2024, the city's solar arrays generated more than 7million kWhs of clean, renewable energy (equivalent to powering 570+ homes), and saved the city more than \$575,000.





Water Resource Protection

The Water Resource Protection Department (WRP) safeguards and restores local water resources, including freshwater streams, the Fore River, and Casco Bay. WRP's highly skilled professional staff delivers cost-effective public services while maintaining strict compliance with water quality and safety requirements. Highlights of the Department's major accomplishments for 2024 are summarized below.

Treatment Systems

The Treatment Systems Division manages essential infrastructure that protects public health and the environment. The facility on Waterman Drive removes wastewater pollutants while the network of 31 pumping stations ensures reliable wastewater collection and transport from most areas of the city. This complex system operates continuously to protect water quality and public health through the following metrics:

Pollutant Removal Efficiency: The wastewater treatment process removes pollutants through multiple stages including screening, settling, biological treatment, and disinfection. In 2024 WRP:

- Processed 2.1 billion gallons of

wastewater from domestic, commercial, and industrial users (one billion gallons is about 1,500 Olympic-sized swimming pools).

- Treated 2.7 million pounds of organic waste at a 91% removal efficiency and 2.1 million pounds of solid waste at a 94% removal efficiency (the permit issued by the State of Maine requires 85% removal for both).

Effluent Limitations and Monitoring

Performance: The state permit requires monitoring for over 21 different parameters ranging from bacteria levels to chemical concentrations. This year WRP:

- Recorded no violations out of 1,542 analyses. However, due to a record-setting storm surge of 14.57 feet above sea level, the city experienced an overflow of partially treated wastewater on January 13, 2024 and reported this incident to state regulatory authorities.

Wet Weather Management: During severe storms, flows can exceed the wastewater treatment facility's hydraulic capacity. WRP's wet weather

program aims to minimize impacts when this occurs. The plant prepares for high flows by ensuring standby equipment is operational and available for storage and treatment of excess water when the anticipated flow exceeds 10 times the daily average.

- In 2024, the city experienced eight bypass events during extreme storms with a total overflow volume of 33.65 million gallons - or less than two percent of all processed flow.

Biosolids Management: Biological treatment processes generate biosolids that require responsible handling and disposal following state and federal regulations. In 2024 WRP:

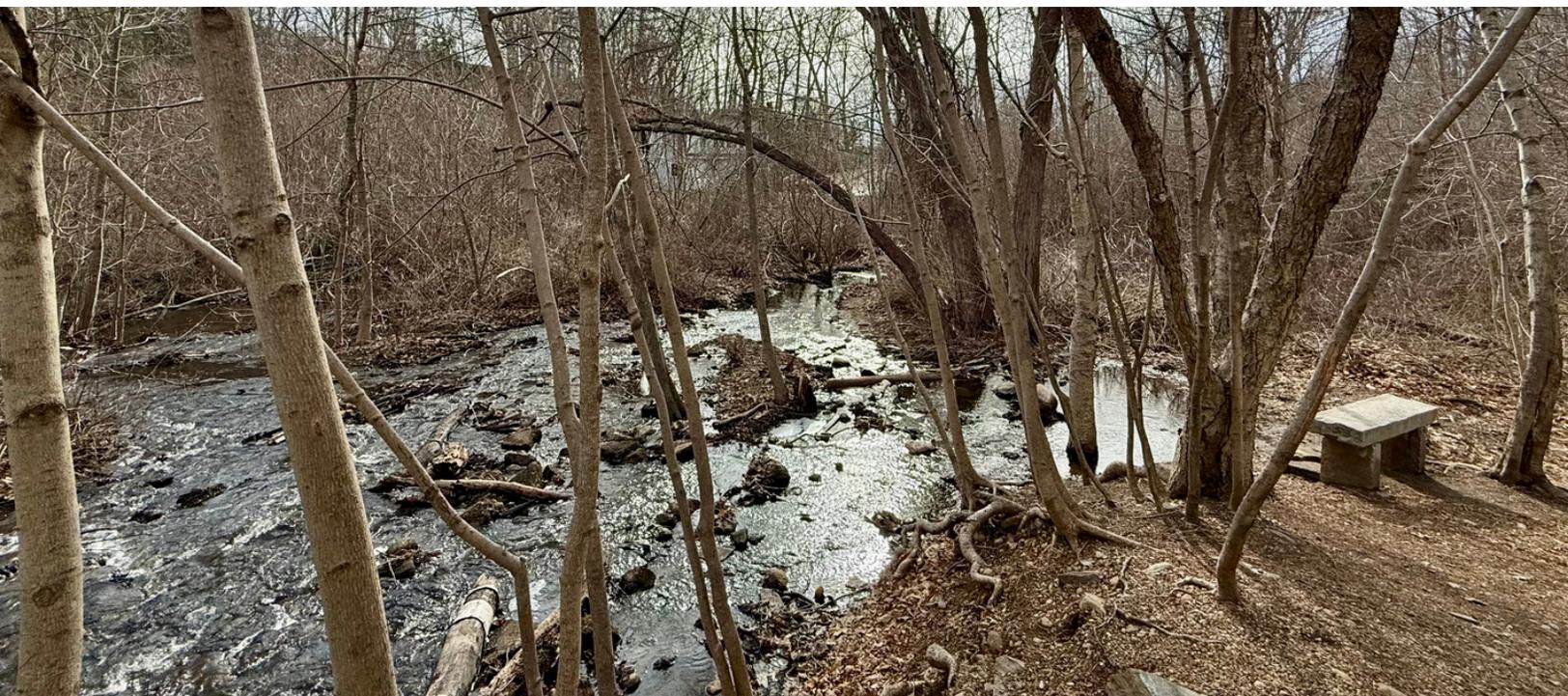
- Treated and processed over 4,800 tons of dewatered biosolids (on average about 92 tons per week on a year-round basis.)
- Initiated an equipment modernization project to replace 26-year-old equipment. The new process will

result in drier material, significantly reducing associated trucking costs because less water will be transported with each load.

Asset Management: WRP expanded its asset management program through systematic work orders, predictive maintenance protocols, and standardized operating procedures. Maintenance staff now executes many complex projects in house, thereby reducing contractor costs while building internal expertise. Recent examples include the replacement of a disinfection drain pump at the wastewater treatment facility and large scale pump replacements at the Long Creek Pump Station. The treatment plant has continued an extensive and sophisticated electrical equipment upgrade which is being performed by outside contractors. WRP was also pleased to welcome Stephen Trembley to the maintenance staff.

Collection Systems

The Collection Systems Division plays a



vital role in protecting public health and environmental quality by maintaining the city's essential piped infrastructure. WRP oversees both sewer and stormwater systems consisting of approximately 3,000 sewer manholes and 106 miles of sewer pipe along with over 4,200 stormwater structures and 76 miles of storm drains. The Division is also responsible for implementing the city's Stormwater Management and Impaired Waters Restoration Programs.

Sewer System Maintenance: Much of the city's sewer system consists of aging clay pipes and brick manholes nearing the end of their useful service life. To proactively address potential issues, WRP conducts ongoing video inspections to assess pipe conditions and prioritize repairs and replacements. In 2024, WRP inspected over 7.6 miles of the system, hydraulically cleaned 7.8 miles of pipe, root cut 4.1 miles of pipe, and repaired or replaced over a half mile of aging pipe.

Catch Basin Cleaning: In most areas of the city, catch basins serve as the first line of defense to reduce the amount of pollutants in stormwater runoff from entering surface waters. Every year WRP cleans nearly all (~2,800) publicly-owned catch basins. In 2024, WRP prevented approximately 266 tons of sediment from being discharged to local surface waters.

Stormwater Management Program: WRP maintains compliance with state regulations through the implementation of six Minimum Control Measures (MCMs), designed to minimize environmental impacts from polluted stormwater runoff. Detailed annual

reports documenting these efforts are available on the WRP web page.

Impaired Waters: The State identifies surface waters that do not meet water quality standards, primarily due to the adverse impacts of surrounding development. In South Portland, five streams and Willard Beach are listed as impaired. In November, the city received a \$272,000 grant from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation's National Coastal Resilience Fund (read more below).

Trout Brook NFWF Grant

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's National Coastal Resilience Fund announced in November that the City of South Portland won a \$272,000 grant to enhance Trout Brook's environmental infrastructure. The funding will support engineering designs for five key culvert upgrades implementing "Stream Smart" crossings. These innovative structures will enable natural flow of sediment, debris, and fish during extreme weather events while preventing structural damage and local flooding. This upgrade will help restore Trout Brook to a more natural waterway, moving away from its current function as an urban drainage system. The project is one of only two projects in the state to receive this highly sought-after funding and is an important step in the city's coastal resiliency efforts.

Engineering

The Engineering team is vital to ensuring that WRP's assets continue to function properly in the long term. Their responsibilities include managing and implementing the Long Term Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, and Asset Management Program. They also oversee the design and construction of critical infrastructure.

Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Mitigation

WRP is moving forward with its Long Term CSO Facilities Plan by continuing the design of the Pearl Street Pump Station upgrade and the sewer lining program. Previous work has resulted in significant decreases in the frequency and volume of CSO events, providing a direct benefit to the water quality of the Fore River and Casco Bay. The CSO Facilities Plan maps out the next ten years of CSO projects and is based on a complex cost benefit evaluation.

Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Electrical Upgrades

The final phase of the WWTP Electrical Upgrades project is in progress. Once complete, the WWTP will have a new distribution system, electrical room, emergency generator, and motor control center. The project design included a review of the aged and obsolete electrical distribution equipment, condition of spaces, mechanical and material conditions of equipment and lighting, and two years of power monitoring.

Dewatering Upgrades

WRP is in the design phase of upgrades

to its dewatering system to prepare for the replacement of aging equipment with a system that provides the best dewatering capabilities to improve both operations and sludge disposal. The project is currently scoped through conceptual design. Next phases will include pre-procurement of essential components and additional design.

Pump Station Upgrades

WRP is working on upgrades at several additional pump stations including force main replacements for the Main St. and West High Pump Stations, a generator upgrade at the Main St. Pump Station, electrical upgrades at the Loveitt's Field Pump Station, in-house upgrades at the Elm St. Pump Station, and electrical upgrades at the Willard Beach Pump Station.

Staffing Changes

After 31 years working in various capacities for WRP, Jeff Moulton was promoted to Collection Systems Division Manager following the retirement of Dave Thomes, who had been with WRP for 35 years. Jeff's previous position as Collection Systems Supervisor was filled by Mike Adriance. Stormwater Program Coordinator Fred Dillon was promoted to the WRP Director's position following the retirement of Brad Weeks, who had served the department for 16 years. In November, the City hired Aubrey Strause as the new Stormwater Program Coordinator. She has extensive experience protecting water resources and is a welcome addition to WRP's team.



From Legislators

Dear South Portland Friends and Neighbors,

It is my tremendous privilege to serve you in the Maine House of Representatives. I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with South Portland's other State Representatives, Christopher Kessler and Deqa Dhalac, as well as Senator Anne Carney, and our legislative colleagues throughout Maine. We all work together to address the issues and challenges facing our city and the entire state.

I have been appointed to serve this term on the Joint Committee on Labor, which oversees policies affecting working Mainers and the businesses where they work. This includes wage and hour laws; working conditions, including health and safety; unemployment compensation; workers' compensation; labor relations; collective bargaining; private sector retirement; professional and occupational licensing; retirement eligibility and benefits for state and municipal employees, including teachers; and much more.

As I write this, the Legislature is just starting the first session of the 132nd Legislature. During this session, we will be tasked with passing a balanced two-year state budget as well as a supplemental budget reflecting necessary revisions and changes for the

final six months of the current budget period through the end of June 2025.

I'm cautiously optimistic that we can reach agreements in this session to provide some residential property tax relief to those who need it most while continuing our commitments to addressing the affordable housing shortage, environmental issues, health care, education, and emergency services.

As your State Representative, I want to hear from you if I can ever be of assistance to you or your family. If you have a problem or question concerning services provided by the State of Maine, please contact me by email at matthew.beck@legislature.maine.gov or by calling my home number: (207) 799-4025. If I don't answer, please leave a message and I will call you back.

My sincere thanks for giving me the opportunity to represent you in Augusta.

Best regards,




Matthew Beck
State Representative,
House District 122

Dear South Portland Neighbors,

It is an honor to have the opportunity to serve you in the Maine House of Representatives. Over the next two years, I will be working hard as your advocate in Augusta to make life better for everyone in our district and in our state.

As I write this, we are well into the first session of the 132nd Legislature that began in January 2025. We have a lot of work ahead of us, which will include doing more to lower costs for Maine families, build an economy that works for everyone, increase access to housing and health care, and more. I'm looking forward to working with all of my colleagues to tackle these challenges head-on.

Our most significant priority will be crafting a two-year state budget, which will shape the direction of our state in the near future. I will be fighting to ensure that the budget includes policies that will provide relief and make it easier for more Maine families to build their lives here and make ends meet. Some of my other top goals for the budget include continued support for housing, lowering energy costs, advocating for a living wage for all Maine workers and lowering property taxes, which are threatening many Mainers' ability to remain in their homes.

This session, I have been appointed to serve on the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee, where we are tasked with crafting a two-year state budget that works to improve the lives of

all Mainers. It is a huge responsibility to work on this committee, and I am very grateful to ensure that our budget will support development in our South Portland community and across the state.

Please feel free to contact me if you ever need my help. My email is Deqa.Dhalac@legislature.maine.gov and my phone number is (207) 553-0303. I also send out monthly e-newsletters that provide updates on our work at the State House and offer helpful information and resources. Please let me know if you would like to receive them.

I am so grateful to be entrusted with this great responsibility, and I look forward to connecting with you over the next two years.

Sincerely,




Deqa Dhalac
State Representative,
House District 120

Dear Neighbors,

The first session of the 132nd Legislature began in January 2025. I'm honored to serve you in the Maine House of Representatives this session and over the next two years. I'll be working hard for the things I know are important to you and everyone in our district and state: housing, access to health care, lowering costs, and an economy that works well for all of us.

I have been appointed to serve on the Energy, Utilities and Technology Committee this session, where we will work to remedy increasing energy costs and construct policy regarding the use of renewable energy sources in our state.

During the budget process, I will be working to ensure that the state budget includes policies that support families and make it easier to make a good life here in Maine. Some of my other top goals for the budget include addressing the lack of affordable housing and the rising cost of living.

Please always reach out if there's something I can help with. My email is Christopher.Kessler@legislature.maine.gov and my phone number is (207) 956-0882. I'm also happy to add you to receive regular emails from my office with updates on our work, resources, and information you may find helpful. Just send me a note and I'll get you signed up.

I deeply appreciate the opportunity to serve you and everyone in District 121. Let's stay connected.

Sincerely,



Chris Kessler
State Representative,
House District 121

Dear Friends and Residents of South Portland,

Thank you for the opportunity to continue serving as your State Senator. I am honored and humbled by the responsibility of representing you, your families and our community in Augusta. I promise to work hard to do just that. Property tax relief, preserving our green spaces, and addressing climate change are significant issues in our community. As the session proceeds, please share your thoughts about these and other issues the Legislature takes up this year.

On December 4th, I was sworn in for my third term alongside my fellow Senators, and the Legislature began meeting regularly on January 8th. As a reminder, you are always welcome to visit the State House. I hope you will consider testifying at a public hearing on a bill that is important to you. And I'd love to greet you during your visit; please coordinate through my office. Additionally, we have lots of opportunities for young students to experience the Senate firsthand through the Maine Senate's Honorary Page program.

In the 132nd Legislature, I am again serving as Senate Chair of the Judiciary Committee. I will also serve on the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee, an exciting role that will allow me to work on conservation and economic growth from a new angle. Some of my priorities this Legislature include ensuring our legal system is fair and just; addressing climate change and reducing pollution of our air, water and soil; advancing legislation that keeps our communities,

homes, schools and streets safe; and providing working families with the support they need to thrive.

If you have any questions or concerns, I am always available to listen and help. Please email me at Anne.Carney@legislature.maine.gov or call my Senate office at (207) 287-1515. I also encourage you to sign up to receive my regular legislative updates at mainesenate.org.

I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,




Anne Carney
State Senator, District
29

Dear Friends,

It is an honor to represent Maine in the United States Senate, and I welcome this opportunity to share several key accomplishments for our state from the previous year.

As Vice Chair of the Appropriations Committee, I have secured nearly \$580 million for 230 projects across all of Maine's 16 counties to promote job creation, workforce training, and economic development; expand access to health care; support law enforcement; improve public education and infrastructure; and protect our environment. As the new Congress begins, I am honored to be taking the helm of the Committee, the first Mainer to do so in nearly a century, and I remain committed to ensuring that federal spending produces real results for our state and nation.

Maine has the oldest average age in the country, which is why I have long prioritized health-focused legislative efforts. There were more than 1,860 health care bills introduced during the 118th Congress. Only 15 health care bills were signed into law, and I was a lead sponsor of five of them. These bills will enhance care for individuals with Alzheimer's, autism, and substance abuse issues through improved research funding, strengthened public health programs, and increased support for rural first responders.

Another important bill that I coauthored was the Social Security Fairness Act. Since 2003, when I led the first-ever

Senate hearing on the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset, I have sought to end these provisions of the Social Security Act that unfairly reduce the Social Security benefits that public employees or their spouses have earned. I am pleased to say that with the passage of my bill, the Social Security Fairness Act, in December, public sector retirees will now receive the full Social Security benefits they have earned.

When the Maine way of life was under threat, I was certain to defend the interests of our state. I worked to protect Maine's potato farmers when the Department of Agriculture tried to reclassify the potato from a vegetable to a grain. I thwarted efforts to consolidate USPS mail operations at the Hampden postal facility, which would have disrupted mail delivery throughout our state. I sounded the alarm with leaders at the FBI and Departments of State and Treasury on the spate of illicit marijuana growing operations that are destroying properties and providing refuge to foreign criminals in our state. Following damage to our working waterfronts after last winter's storms, I secured \$15 million to help fishing communities recover. I championed funding to support the Maine Air National Guard base, Bath Iron Works, and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

As of last December, I have cast more than 9,100 consecutive votes, continuing my record of never missing a roll-call vote since my Senate service began in 1997. My ranking as the most bipartisan Senator reflects Maine's tradition of

working with a spirit of cooperation and respect.

My highest priority as a Senator is to ensure that Maine's needs are met. If ever I can be of assistance to you, please contact one of my state offices or visit my website at collins.senate.gov.

Sincerely,

Susan M Collins



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator

Dear Friends,

Each year comes with renewed hope – to celebrate each other's successes and care for each other in times of need. I am thankful to each town in Maine for their commitment to their communities, to their citizens, and to this country. We always work together to get things done. This past year was no different.

First, it was a true honor to be reelected to the United States Senate for another six-year term. Throughout my travels around the state, I heard many concerns about the cost of living and affordability of housing. Many of you also shared your concerns about access to medical and mental health services. The *Inflation Reduction Act* has been incredible for older people in Maine – Medicare is finally negotiating lower prices for prescription drugs, on top of the \$35 per month cap for insulin that took effect in 2023. We have an opportunity to build on what we have in common and do what Maine people do best; we will continue to help each other and lead through example.

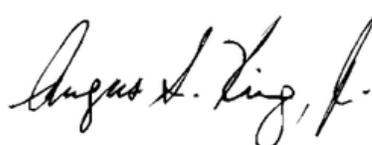
I have also been consistently working to help our veterans. My team has repeatedly been successful in securing long-overdue recognition of military medals for many of Maine's combat veterans and working to resolve issues with claims, travel pay, and access to healthcare and benefits our veterans earned through their selfless service to our country. I have also worked with my Veterans Affairs and Defense partners in Washington to successfully pass a national defense bill that strengthens our

national security, takes care of our service members, and supports Maine businesses from Aroostook to York County.

I am also thankful to have such an incredible team across Maine available to you for hurdles you may face with the federal government. Whether it be veteran issues, social security problems, student loans, immigration, IRS and more, please never hesitate to reach out to my offices in Presque Isle, Bangor, Augusta, Portland, or Biddeford and allow us the chance to be part of your solutions.

Together, over the next six years, I know we can continue to build a stronger, brighter future for our great state. Thank you for being one of the reasons Maine is so special; it is not only a pleasure to serve you — it is a pleasure to know you. Mary and I wish you a happy and safe 2025.

Best Regards,




Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

City Directory

ASSESSING - 41 Thomas St.

Assessor: (207) 767-7604

CITY HALL - 25 Cottage Rd.

City Clerk: (207) 767-7601

City Manager: (207) 767-7606

Finance: (207) 767-7612

GA & Social Services: (207) 767-7617

SPC-TV: (207) 767-7615

HAMLIN BUILDING - 829 Sawyer St.

Code Enforcement: (207) 767-7603

Economic Development: (207) 767-7603

Planning: (207) 767-7603

Sustainability: (207) 347-4148

CENTRAL FIRE STATION - 684 Broadway

Fire Department: (207) 799-3314

POLICE STATION - 30 Anthoine St.

Police Department: (207) 799-5511

LIBRARY - 482 Broadway

Library Department: (207) 767-7660

Branch (155 Wescott Rd): (207) 775-1835

RUSS LUNT MUNICIPAL SERVICES

FACILITY - 929 Highland Ave.

Parks: (207) 767-7670

Public Works: (207) 767-7635

COMMUNITY CENTER - 21 Nelson Rd.

Recreation: (207) 767-7650

Redbank Community Center: (207) 347-4145

WATER RESOURCE PROTECTION - 111

Waterman Dr.

Water Resources (207) 767-7675

SOUTH PORTLAND SCHOOLS - 120

Wescott Rd.

School Department (207) 871-0555



CITY OF
**SOUTH
PORTLAND**

Connect with us!

Website

southportland.gov

City Staff Directory

southportland.gov/directory.aspx

Citizen Request Portal

southportland.gov/reportanissue



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