

4 ECONOMY

This section integrates local, regional and state economic information, and includes an inventory of major employers and local businesses. It also examines occupations, the labor force, income levels, commuter patterns and taxable retail sales. This information provides an important perspective on the overall well-being of the economy and as well as information necessary to determine the appropriate level and type of future economic development.

4.1 Knox County/Regional Economy

Major regional employers, with over 100 employees are; Dragon Cement in Thomaston. FMC Corporation in Rockland, Penobscot Bay Medical Center in Rockport, the Maine State Prison in Warren, the State of Maine, Bath Iron Works in Bath, and the Samoset Resort in Rockland. These employers are considered financially sound.

4.2 St. George Economy

The economy of St. George has always been based on its location on the coast. Fishing has been and remains important to the town's economy. The early and mid-nineteenth century years were the heyday of shipbuilding in Town. Most residents were involved in building or sailing ships. Seamen went to sea, while their families remained in town. After the decline of the shipbuilding industry, quarries became more active and immigrant stone cutters arrived to cut granite in the 1900s. This boom lasted only a short time, and the Town's economy stalled through the mid-1900s.

The economy changed as the coast of Maine became a major tourist attraction and desirable retirement location. The Town has seen an increase in tourist business over the past ten years with the conversion of several larger homes to Bed and Breakfast establishments. Currently, St. George is somewhat off the beaten path for tourism and so has seen only a small annual increase in tourism development during the 1980's and 1990's. The exception to this is the vast majority of individuals who visit Monhegan Island take the ferry from Port Clyde, rather than Boothbay Harbor. In the summer, the Monhegan Boat Line can transport up to 390 people per day to Monhegan Island.

The town has become more attractive to retirees and people who hope to have their vacation home become their retirement home. Some people have bought shore property as it becomes available for prices that local people find difficult to afford. Some small cottages have been expanded into larger homes. Even property which has a view of the water has become sought after. The increase in prices for shore property has raised taxes for those who wish to stay in their homes, making retaining ownership more difficult for these people.

The one of the largest employment sectors in St. George is the fishing industry, and most fishermen are self-employed and employ family members. In 2016 there were an estimated

135 lobster boats and an additional 7 other fishing vessels [e.g., draggers, urchin boats, etc.]. The lobster fishery includes several dealers and employs over 200 people. The building trades are also flourishing and employ many residents.

The major local employers, each with ten or more year-round employees are: Atwood Brothers Lobsters, St. George Municipal School Unit, Harbor Builders Associates, the Port Clyde General Store and the East Wind Inn. There are several seasonal businesses in town that employ up to 10 employees; there are numerous home businesses in Town. Many artists maintain studios in St. George.

The St. George Business Alliance (2011) is a collective of business owners, non-profits, professionals, artists, community organizations and residents working together to promote the businesses and cultural prosperity of St. George, Maine.

Table 4-1 Businesses operating in St. George October 2016	
Antiques	Coastal Antiques and Collectibles Real Finds Consignment
Arts	Mars Hall Gallery Stonefish Out of Sight Gallery Peter Achorn Signs Barbara Ernst Prey (painting) Sandra Dickson – Fine Art Port Clyde Art Gallery Faulkner Graphics Nancy Lincoln (jewelry) The Drawing Room Wiley Farm Studio Hannah Angela Anderson Studio Barbara Aras Arts First Light Gallery Lauren Gill Studio Linda Funk Illustrations Linda Bean Wyeth Gallery Granite Gallery Pond House Gallery and Frame Shop Marvin Hupper Maine Water Colors Studio K
Automotive	Beckett's Auto Service Larry Oakes, Automaster
Barber/Salon	George Rizkalla T.H.E. Salon
Bed & Breakfast	Long Cove Cottages The Humble Farmer Mill Pond House Pointed Fir B&B Lilac Cottage
Books	Roseledge Books Sunshine Books
Computers	Proteus Research Long Cove Computers Merlin Computing

Construction	Harbor Builders Associates Wiley's Corner Builders Mid-Coast Builders St. George Renovation Contractors Tweedie Builders Paul Anderson Painting Peninsula Construction JB Carpentry Logan Woodbridge Builders Sealand Services White Meadows Construction Lone Maple Construction JD Miller Construction William Morris and Son Gill Timber Frame
Divers	Mark Ausplund, diving Young's Dive Service
Entertainment	Echo Hill Lodge The Humble Farmer
Excavation	Dennison Excavation Ron Hall Landscaping Steve Joseph Tractor Service J. H. L. Construction
Financial Services	Margaret Sawyer CPA
Fish & Seafood	Tenants Harbor Fisherman's Co-Op William Atwood Lobsters Art's Lobsters Luke's Lobster Miller's Lobsters Port Clyde Fisherman's Co-Op Port Clyde Lobster Port Clyde Fresh Catch Superior Bait Company Teel Cove Fisheries
Food Stores	Tenants Harbor General Store Port Clyde General Store
Gift Shops	Lighthouse Gift Shop Dunnett Landing Nature's Gifts Coastal Antiques and Collectibles Blue Tulip Sea Star Shop

Graphic Design	Betsy Welch Cushman Creative
Heating	Maine Coast Petroleum St. George Heating GC Minery Plumbing and Heating
Inns	The East Wind Inn The Ocean House Hotel Craignair Inn Seaside Inn
Lawn & Landscaping	St. George Property Management Granite Gardens Long's Landscaping Service Gregory's Landscaping Service Jim's Lawn Service Rocky Coast Landscaping Steve Scott Brush Cutting Hoppe's Tree Service Hedgerow
Learning Centers	Blueberry Cove Camp Herring Gut Learning Center Hurricane Island Outward Bound
Marine	J. Parker, Boatbuilder Monhegan Boat Line Star Boat Company Tenants Harbor Boat Yard C. Stickney Boatbuilders Clark Island Boat Works Allied Marine Transport
Massage	C. Anderson Massage
Masonry	Jay Cook Masonry Craig Wilgus
Miscellaneous	Brooks Textiles Solsten Cabinet Maker R. Faustini- Monuments/Cottages St. George Carriage Co. Paper Path Imaging Port Clyde Kayaks - Brian and Tamara Cody Crow Manufacturing Ridge Forge St. George Dragon Dharma Design – Custom furniture India and John McConochie - Green Bean Catering

	Roadside Rescue and Diesel Service Carolwood Productions Oryx Worx – Fitness
Pottery	St. George Pottery George Pearlman Pottery Blue Crow Pottery
Plumbing	David Olson – Jones Brook Plumbing Glenn Haight GC Minery Plumbing and Heating
Real Estate	True Hall Realty Tenants Harbor Real Estate St. George Realty
Restaurants	Dip Net Restaurant Village Ice Cream Shop The Black Harpoon Miller’s Lobsters Luke’s Lobster Happy Clam School House Bakery Drift Inn Canteen East Wind Inn Craignair Inn Port Clyde General Store
Web Design	Alane Kennedy Jeff Boulet

There has been no new industrial development in St. George in recent years. In 1970 the Port Clyde Canning Company burned, and shortly thereafter, the Samco Can Co, which made cans for them, left. The Crowe Rope/Lace factory burned in the early 1980’s, but was eventually replaced in the late 1900’s by the Hi-Liner Rope Company and Brooks Textiles.

4.3 Labor Force

The unemployment rate for 2016 in St. George was 3.1%, slightly lower than the rate for Knox County (3.6%) and for the state as a whole (3.9%). **Table 4-2** shows the labor force figures for St. George, Knox County, the State of Maine and five reference communities.

Table 4-2 Civilian Unemployment Rates				
	2000	2005	2010	2015
Cushing	2.1	4.02	6.59	4.10
Friendship	2.7	4.83	6.04	3.30
Rockland	4.9	5.03	8.49	4.90
S. Thomaston	2.6	5031	8.06	4.10
St. George	1.9	3.76	7.09	3.10
Thomaston	5.7	4.32	8.04	3.50
Knox County	3.4	4.23	7.4	3.80
State of Maine	4.8	4.88	7.88	6.40

Source: Maine State Planning Office

Note: The Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics classifies persons as unemployed if they do not have a job, have actively looked for work in the prior 4 weeks, and are currently available for work.

4.4 Occupations

Table 4-3 exhibits the occupations of employed residents of St. George and the State of Maine for 2000 and 2010. The most popular industries in St. George are: education, health and social services (19.7%); art, entertainment, food, recreation, accommodation (11.9%); and agriculture which includes forestry, fishing, hunting, and farming(11.4%).

Table 4-3 Occupations of Employed Residents 2000 and 2010				
	St. George		Maine	
	2000	2010	2000	2010
Agriculture (farm, fish, forest)	14%	11.4%	2.6%	2.1%
Construction	6.3%	6.6%	6.9%	7.2%
Manufacturing	10.9%	9.2%	14.2%	12.2%
Wholesale Trade	2.5%	2.0%	3.4%	2.9%
Retail Trade	11.5%	9.9%	13.5%	11.5%
Transportation (utilities)	4.0%	4.0%	4.3%	4.6%
Information	3.1%	2.8%	2.5%	2.3%
Fire**	3.9%	3.8%	6.2%	6.1%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative	5.5%	6.4%	6.9%	7.7%
Education, health and social services	17.1%	19.7%	23.2%	26.1%
Arts, entertainment, food, recreation, accommodation	10.4%	11.9%	7.1%	7.7%
Other services	6.5%	7.7%	4.7%	5.0%
Public administration	4.5%	4.6%	4.5%	4.6%

** FIRE – finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics reported by clrsearch.com

4.5 Income

In 10 years, the median household income for St George has more than doubled (137%: \$24.8K to \$58.8K). Whereas the state's median income rose 78% to \$49.2K. Household income levels in St. George were higher than State levels in 2010. A lower percentage of the households in St. George made less than \$15,000 per year (9.77%) than at the state level (13.36%). Households earning \$50,000 to \$75,000 made up the largest number of households in St. George and the state as a whole. Table 3-3 shows household income levels for St. George and the State of Maine as reported in the 2010 census.

Table 4-4			
Household Income Levels – 2010			
(household = all occupants 15 years and older earning money)			
	St. George		State of Maine
	#	%	%
Less than \$15,000	115	9.8	13.3
15,000-24,999	108	8.4	10.2
25,000-34,999	139	10.9	11.3
35,000-49,999	174	13.6	15.9
50,000-74,999	263	20.6	20.2
75,000-99,999	230	18.0	14.0
100,000-124,999	95	7.4	7.2
125,000-149,999	77	6.0	3.2
150,000 or more	12	.9	2.0
Median income	\$58,888		\$49,193

Source: US Census, 2010 (clrssearch.com)

Table 4-5 displays the 1979, 1987, 2000, and 2009 per capita incomes for St. George, the five referenced communities, Knox County and the State. Per Capita Income is calculated by dividing the total income by the number of people, 15 years and older, earning income. For St. George, per capita income experienced a 10% increase between 2000 and 2009, increasing from \$23,272 in 2000 to \$25,525. This increase compares to 27% for Knox County and 28% for the State.

Table 4-5 Per Capita Income					
	1979	1987	2000	2009	30 yr chg
Cushing	5,904	10,249	20,264	27,363	460%
Friendship	5,233	8,707	20,409	26,483	506%
Rockland	5,389	8,975	16,659	19,624	364%
S. Thomaston	5,929	10,026	21,303	26,129	440%
St. George	6,018	9,665	23,272	25,525	424%
Thomaston	4,865	8,276	17,199	23,246	478%
Knox County	5,659	9,724	19,981	24,421	449%
State of Maine	5,766	10,478	19,533	24,980	433%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, 2010 and Maine State Planning Office for 2009

4.6 Households Below Poverty

Table 4-6 displays the 2000 and 2009 Households Below Poverty for St George, the five referenced communities, Knox County and the State. While the St George poverty rate did increase slightly (<1%) over the nine-year period, our increase was significantly below the 3% increase seen by Knox County.

Table 4-6 Households Below the Poverty Level				
Town	2000		2009	
	# of Families	Percent	# of Families	Percent
Cushing	51	9.5%	87	15%
Friendship	59	11.7%	81	16.9%
Rockland	511	14.8%	752	21.6%
S. Thomaston	35	6%	27	4.4%
St. George	103	9.2	118	10%
Thomaston	211	15.8%	262	16.0%
Knox County	1,692	10.2%	2,218	13.1%
State of Maine	59,607	11.5%	69,374	12.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, ACS 5 year

Table 4-7 shows how people commuted to work in 2009. For each town the table shows the percentage of people using different modes of transportation.

Table 4-7 Commuting to Work				
Town	Drove Alone	Carpool	Public Trans	Walk
Cushing	74.2%	16.9%	0	0
Friendship	71.5%	11.5%	0	2.6%
Rockland	71.1%	15%	0	4.1%
S. Thomaston	76.9%	8%	0	4.9%
St. George	65.9%	13.4%	0	5.9%
Thomaston	79.1%	6.6%	0	4.4%
Knox County	75.5%	10%	.9%	3.4%
State of Maine	78.3%	10.4%	.8%	4.1%

Source: Maine State Planning Office: ACS 5-year

4.7 Taxable Retail Sales

Taxable retail sales (Includes Consumer Retail Sales plus special types of sales and rentals to businesses where the tax is paid directly by the buyer (such as commercial or industrial heating oil purchases) can be used to analyze the strength of the local retail economy in St. George and the neighboring towns. **Table 4-8** highlights total consumer retail sales information for St. George, Knox County and the other towns from 2000 - 2010.

Table 4-9 shows the makeup of taxable sales in St George and shows the changes from 2005 to 2010. Notable is the 50% increase in lodging sales and the 20% drop in restaurant sales.

Table 4-8 Total Taxable Retail Sales 2000-2010				
Town	2000	2005	2010	10 year % Change
Cushing	\$630,3000	\$696,700	\$1,017,400	161%
Friendship	\$980,6000	\$2,836,700	\$2,778,300	283%
Rockland	\$171,566,900	\$243,365,000	\$210,577,600	123%
S. Thomaston	\$2,549,400	\$3,684,700	\$4,106,000	161%
St. George	\$4,302,800	\$7,116,00	\$8,404,300	195%
Thomaston	\$20,868,700	\$28,837,300	\$46,409,600	222%
Knox County	n/a	\$495,414,100	\$468,847,300	
State of Maine	n/a	\$16,676,380,800	\$16,464,063,800	

Table 4-9 Breakdown of St. George Taxable Retail Sales 2005-2010			
	2005	2010	% Change
Personal	\$5,179,100	\$5,077,000	-2%
Business Op	\$1,936,900	\$3,327,200	72%
Other	\$1,031,600	\$1,055,100	2%
Restaurant	\$1,673,000	\$1,364,900	-19%
Lodging	\$898,600	\$1,351,700	50%
Rest and Lodging	\$2,571,600	\$2,716,600	6%
Total	\$7,116,000	\$8,404,300	18%

Source: Taxable Retail Sales – Annual from Maine Revenue Services

4.8 Goals, Policies, and Strategies

A. State Goal

Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.

B. Local Policies and Strategies

Pursuant to the State goal the Town of St. George has the following policies:

Strategies proposed in this Comprehensive Plan are assigned responsible parties and a timeframe in which to be addressed. **Short Term** is assigned for strategies to be addressed within one to three years after the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, **Midterm** for strategies to be addressed within five years, and **Long Term** for strategies to be addressed within ten years. In addition, **Ongoing** is used for regularly recurring activities.

Policy 1: Support existing commercial activities in St. George and encourage the development and expansion of light impact businesses.

Strategy	Responsibility	Date
Investigate, and where appropriate, implement various strategies for the development and expansion of light impact businesses, including marine-based industry. These strategies could include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Make available at the Town Office information on existing Federal, State, and regional programs designed to assist business development and expansion. b. Take advantage of Federal, State or other funding programs such as the Community Development Block Grant program or the Economic Development Administration program, to support the development of light impact businesses. c. Promote land use regulations that encourage light impact business development. 	<p>Select Board/Town Manager</p> <p>Town Manager</p> <p>Planning Board</p>	Ongoing
Encourage participation in the regional economic development efforts of organizations which seek to expand job opportunities in the region. Where appropriate, work with regional organizations and regional employers to address job training needs of St. George residents.	Select Board/Town Manager	Ongoing
Review and revise the land use regulations as necessary to assure that there is an adequate supply of appropriately located and serviced land to accommodate commercial and industrial development	Planning Board	Short Term (1-3 Years)

Policy 2. Protect and promote marine-based industry.

Strategy	Responsibility	Date
Review and revise as needed the Official zoning map to preserve the working waterfront for marine related industries.	Planning Board	Ongoing
Maintain the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance which permits a variety of uses and allows adequate space for water-dependent uses and protects environmentally sensitive issues and commercial fishing, marine activities. (Planning Board/	Ongoing
Continue to encourage marine based industries through the current use working waterfront taxation laws.	Select Board/Town Manager	Ongoing

Policy 3. Encourage local small business awareness.

Strategy	Responsibility	Date
Make Contact information (phone numbers, e-mail addresses, fax numbers, hours of operation, address, location) of local small businesses available at the Town Office.	Town Manager	Ongoing
Encourage the formation of a committee to pursue economic development opportunities.	Select Board	Short Term

Policy 4. Continue to allow home occupations that do not detract from residential neighborhoods or the rural character of St. George.

Strategy	Responsibility	Date
Review and revise land use regulations to continue to permit home occupations that do not cause a distraction (e.g. noise, excess traffic, smells) from residential neighborhoods or the rural character in all areas of the Town except the Resource Protection District	Planning Board	Ongoing
Support access to high speed communications in all homes in St. George.	Select Board	Ongoing