

Economic Development Drivers

- Tourism / Recreation
- Clamming
- Restaurants
- Light industry
- Trades
- Home occupations
- Agriculture
- Retail / antiques
- River / marine related

Town Infrastructure

Positives

- New sewer system
- Water system in good shape, water is good
- Excellent new DPW barn
- Transfer station works well

Challenges

- Town hall and library need extensive repair
- Police / fire / public safety building needs replacing

Public Health & Safety

Positives

- Sewer System = clean river
- Drinking water is good
- Police & fire departments are outstanding

Challenges

- Emergency vehicle access to open space is sometimes limited
- No street lights
- There are a few traffic spots with high accident rates

Transportation

Positives

- Route 133 rebuild
- CATA bus service
- Ipswich-to-Crane's beach bus

Challenges

- Limited nature of CATA service
- Taxis generally unavailable
- No bike lanes
- Pedestrian safety on town streets mediocre
- No parking on Causeway and South Essex area
- Town has no control of state-funded maintenance schedule
- Causeway has numerous environmental issues

River

Positives

- Entertainment
- Museum events
- Watching Harold
- Route 133 rebuild
- Public access – marinas, ramp
- Conomo Point
- Cleanliness

Challenges

- No public landing
- Access limited by limited parking
- Limited walking / hiking opportunities
- No central information center
- Need more diversity of activity

Housing (1313 households in 2000)

Positives

- High real estate values
- Diverse housing stock
- Good services and infrastructure – schools, fire, police, water (sewer)

Challenges

- High real estate values
- Difficulty of permitting
- Scarcity of good housing sites
- Lack of affordable housing
- High costs exclude youth and age
- Zoning discourages density
- Zoning discourages multifamily development
- Zoning discourages small houses

Tourism / Recreation / Restaurants / Retail

Positives

- Causeway concentration
- Museums
- History & charm
- Other natural resources & open space
- River

Challenges

- Changing habits and tastes
- Internet
- Lack of “sense of place”
- Diminished community culture
- State of the national economy
- Lack of public dock space
- Town aesthetics

Open Space / Resource Protection

Positives

- Land trusts
- Private land in conservation
- Community Protection Act
- Working agriculture (hay, poultry)
- Undevelop-able nature of land
- Zoning allows mixed use

Challenges

- High land costs
- Outdated zoning controls
- Lack of zoning districts

Essex Long-Range Planning Committee
Unranked Issues List

Opportunities – your most cherished hope for the town

- A Conomo Point destination – dock / restaurant / hotel
- Public docking facility on the Causeway
- Beautified Causeway
- New Town Offices and Public Safety Building
- A full-service hotel and conference center on the outskirts of town
- A community / cultural center in the village center
- Immediate and aggressive development (recreational & tourism) of the Museum-to-Shea's waterfront area
- Revitalization of agriculture – community-supported
- Adopt Essex Reconnaissance Report – see <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/histland/reconReports/essex.pdf>
- Promote public access to the river, develop infrastructure
- A comprehensive rewrite of the zoning by-law
- Develop and beautify the town center – Town Hall to Southern Ave
- Create an art installation on the River with the whole town