

# **DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

## About the City of Saco, Maine

### Demographics

The City of Saco, Maine, incorporated in 1867, is located at the mouth of the Saco River on the southerly side of Saco Bay in the Gulf of Maine. Saco is the second largest city in the state's fastest growing county, York County, and the tenth largest city in Maine. The City of Saco continues to be a key area within the state for residential, commercial and industrial growth. The City of Saco is ranked among the top five cities within the State of Maine for its growth. Saco has a land area of 38.5 square miles and a population of approximately 16,822. The City is empowered by the state to levy a property tax on both real and personal property within its boundaries. The City of Saco is a municipal government, non-profit 501c(1) organization.

### City Government

The City operates under the mayor-council-city administrator form of government. Policy making and legislative authority are vested in the seven member City Council, which is elected on a non-partisan basis. The mayor and seven council members are elected to two-year terms from seven districts (wards). The City Council is responsible, among other things, for passing ordinances, adopting the budget, and confirming mayoral nominations of committees and the city administrator. The city administrator is responsible for carrying out the policies and ordinances of the City Council, for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the City, and for appointing the heads of the City's departments, some with City Council confirmation.

The City of Saco is a full service provider, with services that include police and fire protection, wastewater collection and treatment, snow removal and road maintenance, parks and recreation, code enforcement and building inspection. Each department is responsible for providing services to the citizens within the Saco community. Services may be extended beyond city limits through mutual aid agreements.

Fourteen departments operate within the city, with a mixture of appointed and elected officials as department heads.

Legislative- The Legislative Department is responsible for overall authorization of all City activities. The Mayor and City Councilors within this department are responsible for approving the fiscal year 2002 budget, which includes the various funds granted to public agencies within the City of Saco.

City Administration- The Administration Department is responsible for the overall administration of all City activities. The City Administrator is responsible for preparing the budget document through its three stages of "Proposed," "Draft," and "Adopted." Its direct function includes Human Resources.

Finance- The Finance Department is responsible for financial planning, budget reporting and control and is divided into the following divisions: purchasing and accounting, treasury and tax collection.

City Clerk- The City Clerk Department is responsible for performing all duties for the City Council as it may require, for authenticating documents with his/her signature and for administering the divisions of public welfare and voter registration. The department is also responsible for the filing, indexing and safekeeping of all proceedings of the City Council, which shall be open to public inspection.

Assessing- The Assessing Department is responsible for the valuation of all taxable property within the City of Saco in a fair and equitable way and in accordance with state statutes.

Building Maintenance- The Building Maintenance Department is responsible for the maintaining of the City Hall building that houses the city's administrative offices

Legal- The Legal Department is responsible for providing independent legal advice and for the drafting of all instruments, which may be required by any ordinance or by any city official.

Police Department- The Police Department is responsible for the enforcement of law and order within the City of Saco

Fire Department- The Fire Department is responsible for fire prevention and extinguishments, the protection of life and property against fire and the removal of fire hazards within the City of Saco.

Building Inspection/Code Enforcement- The Building Inspection/Code Enforcement Department is responsible for the issuing of permits to build, alter, move or erect all buildings, signs or structures, to install equipment or to occupy.

Planning and Economic Development- The Planning and Economic Development Department is responsible for all matters within the scope of urban revitalization, community development, facilities planning or open space preservation.

Public Works- The Public Works Department is responsible for the administration, professional work and directing of all phases of municipal public works, except the treatment plant, including landfills, sewers, streets, motor vehicle maintenance , garbage and refuse collection and disposal and snow plowing and removal.

Parks and Recreation- The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the maintenance of the city's park system and recreation facilities and for the administering and directing of the city's recreation programs.

Education-The Education Department is responsible for the educating of children who reside within the City of Saco. The Board of Education is

responsible for preparing the education budget and for presenting this budget to the City Council.

### **City Budgeting and Budget Process**

The City of Saco, Maine derives its authority to expend public monies from the Charter of the City. Per the City's Charter, the Department Heads submitted their budget requests to the Finance Director on January 24, 2001. The Finance Director then met with each Department Head to go over their requests between January 30, 2001- February 1, 2001. These requests were then summarized and put together with the revenue projections and submitted to the City Administrator for final review. Per Article V1, Section 6.04 of the City Charter, the City Administrator then submitted the budget to the City Council on March 19, 2001. On April 16, 2001, the City Administrator submitted a summary of the Board of Education and the City Administrator budget that included principal sources of revenue, the amount to be raised by property taxes, expenditures itemized by department, and published a summary of this proposed budget in the newspaper. The Council then met according to the budget schedule outlined for them, which included a Public Hearing on May 21, 2001. After the public hearing, the Council adopted the fiscal year 2002 budget on June 4, 2001.

Once adopted, the City budget document creates dedicated spending authority and transfers that authority to department heads. City purchasing policies are in place to govern expenditures. Additionally, the Finance Director and the Internal Auditor review bills prior to payment. This review allows for the opportunity to spot-audit purchases prior to expending public funds for payment.

City Councilors maintain a contingency account in each annual budget specifically for unbudgeted emergencies.

Article VI, Section 6.05 of the City's Charter provides that the City will prepare and present a Capital Improvement Program with the annual budget. The Capital Improvement Program includes necessary capital expenditures and infrastructure needs for the City. The Capital Improvement Plan includes:

- A clear general summary of its contents.
- A list of all capital improvements which are proposed to be undertaken during the 5 fiscal years ensuing, with appropriate supporting information as to the necessity of such improvement.
- The cost estimates, methods of financing, and recommended time schedules for each respective improvement.
- The estimated annual cost of operating and maintaining the facilities to be constructed or acquired.

Section 6.07 of the Charter provides that the City Council will hold a public hearing to consider the Capital Improvement Program. Following the Public Hearing, the City Council may adopt the Capital Improvement Program, with or without amendments, on or before the first regular City Council meeting in June.

The Capital Improvement Program includes an inventory of possible capital projects, some of which may ultimately be financed through the issuance of indebtedness. The assurance of debt, however, is subject to the prior review and approval of the City

Council. Pursuant to Article VI, Section 6.15 of the Charter, the City Council may incur indebtedness to provide funds to finance projects for the acquisition of land, the construction, reconstruction, major alteration, extraordinary repairs, and equipment of buildings and other permanent public improvements, the purchase of machinery and equipment, and the payment or refunding of bonds, notes and certificates of indebtedness previously issued, through a bond issue.

The City Council, upon approval of the issuance of said bonds or notes, shall take all necessary legal steps to submit their action to the voters of Saco for ratification or rejection at the next regular municipal election or at a special election that shall be called, advertised and conducted according to the law relating to municipal elections, but the total number of votes cast at said special election must be equal to or exceed 20% of the total votes cast for all candidates for Mayor at the previous general municipal election. No bond or note issue except borrowing for emergency appropriations or in anticipation of taxes, shall be valid unless the voters of Saco as above have ratified the City Council's action provided.