

Harbor Overview

Study Area

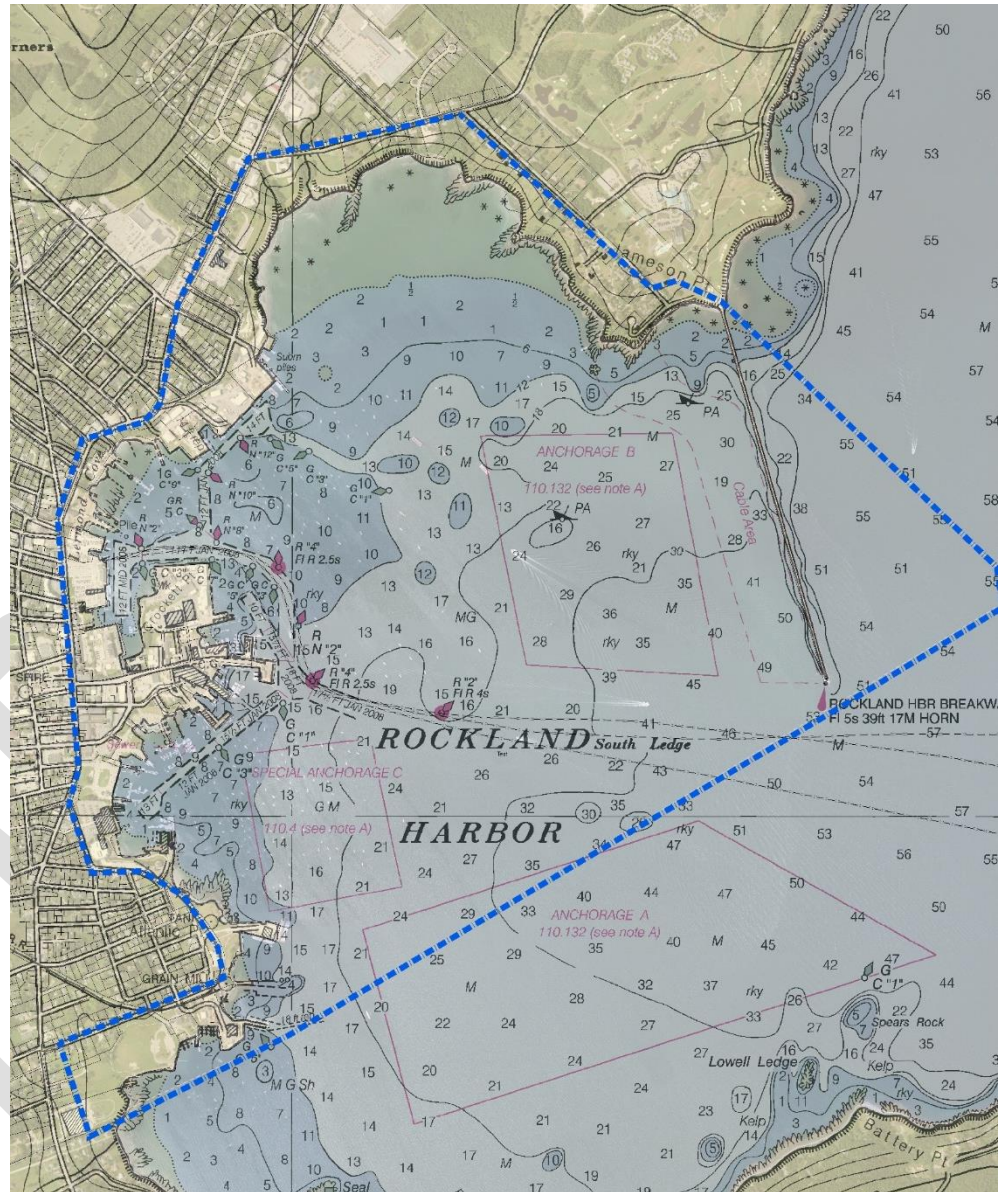
Rockland Harbor lies just north of the entrance to West Penobscot Bay, about 75 miles northeast of Portland. It lies between the Owls Head peninsula on the south and the peninsula separating the harbor from Clam Cove to the north.

The study area for this plan encompasses only the portion of the harbor that is within the municipal boundary of the City of Rockland. The study area extends inland only as far as the adjacent waterfront properties and nearby public streets for the purpose of considering public access. Zoning and other land use considerations are addressed in the main body of the comprehensive plan.

Navigational improvements within the study area include the breakwater, dredged channels entrance buoys and other navigational aids.

Water depths within Rockland Harbor can exceed 50 feet at Mean Low Water (MLW) near the entrance. They gradually shoal to mudflats at low tide in the northwest and southwest limits of the harbor. The tidal range is from 9.7 feet above MLW to 3.5 feet below MLW, for a total rise and fall of 13.2 feet.

Uses within the harbor are diverse, and include a mix of commercial and recreational vessels. Three ferry routes operate from Rockland Harbor to connect to off shore island communities. The land uses along Rockland's four-mile waterfront varies and includes commercial, industrial, and residential development as well as public space.



Municipal Functions

Rockland Harbor's diverse mix of maritime activities makes it one of the most vibrant and attractive harbors in Maine. The City plays an essential role in supporting and enhancing the harbor and waterfront through a variety of core municipal functions which can be grouped into four (4) broad categories:

1. *Harbor Safety and Navigation.* Those activities which help to maintain navigational safety for all types of vessels within the harbor and security for the public at large, including:
 - Navigational channels at appropriate functional depths
 - Aids to navigation (channel markers, no wake buoys, navigational hazards, etc.)
 - Security
 - Harbor Master and Staff
 - Emergency response
 - Relationships with federal and state navigation and public safety partners
2. *Landside Services and Amenities.* Those services, activities, or amenities on public properties that support the needs of the public and vessels that use Rockland's harbor, including:
 - Public launch ramp and access
 - Temporary and long-term docking and slip space
 - Temporary and long-term mooring space
 - Dinghy space and storage for small personal watercraft (e.g. kayaks, paddles boats, etc.)
 - Amenities such as restrooms, Wi-Fi, showers, and laundry
 - Parking for long term use and short terms use
 - Access for loading/removing gear and supplies
 - Maintain a commercial fish pier with space for landing and selling catch and associated refrigeration
 - Hosting year-round ferry service
 - Boat pump-out facilities
3. *Public Access.* Those facilities and locations which provide opportunities for both physical and visual access to the public-at-large, including:
 - Public docks, slips, moorings, and launching spaces
 - Waterfront parks and amenities (e.g. beach and shore access, visual access, seating, etc.)
 - Points of referral, wayfinding, and visitor information (signage, kiosks, etc.)
 - Waterfront trails and recreational opportunities (e.g. Harbor Trail, lighthouse, breakwater, etc.)
4. *Public Policy, Regulation, and Investments.* Those policies, regulations and/or investments that help to support the goals of this plan and help to maintain the diversity of commercial, industrial, recreational and transient uses along the waterfront and within the harbor, including:
 - Policies that support the maritime heritage and the entities that carry it forward
 - Land use and harbor policies that support and maintain a diverse mix of commercial, industrial, recreational and transient uses
 - Waterfront regulation and infrastructure that supports a diversity of uses
 - Municipal investments that are necessary to maintain and enhance access
 - Policies and infrastructure that protect the health of the harbor