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Community Visioning Handbook

How to Imagine - and Create - a Better Future

READ.

ENJOY.

PLAN.

PARTICIPATE.

ENVISION YOUR COMMUNITY WITH A PICTURE OF ITS FUTURE, THEN TAKE THE FIRST STEP.

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Imagine for a moment what your community could be at its very best.

visioning is the act of imagining the future.

Why envision the future? Because only by imagining where we want to go can we figure out how to get there.

Take the example of building a house. You need to know what you are building before you can buy the lumber and supplies. You need a blueprint. If you built your house without a blueprint, it would be chaos. The carpenter might start framing a 1-story cape. The plumber might put in pipes for a 2-story townhouse. The structure would not work.

A community is just like a house. Your community needs a blueprint. Otherwise the sewer district might put in lines for a residential neighborhood, while the conservation committee is buying land for a nature preserve, while the planning board is approving a car dealership – all in the same part of town! A community needs a blueprint to make sure that its land use laws and capital improvements and public facilities all work together, as well as to give clear signals to private developers about what is wanted. That blueprint is called a comprehensive plan.

But before a blueprint can be drawn up, there must be a mental picture. In the case of a house, there is the new owner who imagines her dream home, all landscaped with trees and gardens, with birds singing outside of the windows, and friends over for a party in the main room. The owner tells the architect her dream, and from this picture the architect draws up the technical plans. Every great house needs to start from a great dream.

It is the same with a community. Before there can be a meaningful comprehensive plan, the residents must agree on a mental picture of what they want the community to look like, feel like, and be like. They must imagine what people walking along Main Street should experience; imagine the sidewalks and bike trails and roads for cars and trucks; picture the parks and nature preserves; and identify the best places for new houses and what those houses might look like. This mental picture is a "vision."

The vision should be the driving force behind the community's comprehensive plan. The community creates the vision through a process (such as that described in this handbook), and the comprehensive planning committee takes the vision and translates it into the community's blueprint or comprehensive plan. The vision describes what people want, the comprehensive plan describes how to get there. As with houses, a great community needs a great vision to realize its potential.

This handbook describes what a community vision is (Part 1), provides a step-by-step guide to creating a community vision (Part II), and gives an example of a vision from one Maine community (Part III).

Imagine for a moment what your community could be at its very best. Now read on and find out how to get there.

PART I
Why Vision?

What is a community vision?

As described on the previous page, a **vision** is a mental picture of what residents want their community to look and feel like in 20 years. This picture may be captured in a report. It may be an illustration. It may be a map, a slideshow, or a story. It may be a combination of these. Whatever its form, its purpose is to capture a picture of the community's future any resident could quickly grasp and appreciate.

This vision does not represent one individual's or just one group's point of view. It must represent the consensus of a group of people drawn from every neighborhood, age group, and interest within the community. This is not to say that everyone in town will wholeheartedly endorse every part of the vision. They won't. However everyone in town *should* feel that the vision arose from a fair and representative process, and that therefore the vision as a whole is legitimate and acceptable.

The **visioning process** is how the product is created. At its heart, the process is simple – neighbors talking with neighbors about the future of their town. This process hinges on one or more large visioning sessions, where citizens gather and talk, argue, dream, and laugh in small groups.

A **vision that works** helps a community to reach for goals above and beyond what normally might be expected, to discover possibilities that were not apparent before. A good vision is a stretch, but still in the realm of the achievable. A good vision motivates people to take action together. A good vision makes people feel hopeful, optimistic, and focused. A good vision is presented in words and images that are concrete and easily understandable.

A vision can fail for any of a number of reasons. It may be too bold and leave people thinking it is impossible to achieve. Or, it may be so bland that that it fails to inspire anyone to carry it out. Or it may be so vague – "We want a nice rural atmosphere and good quality of life" – that it has no real meaning or content.

The vision is a product born from a community-wide process. When it works, communities turn their dreams into reality.

Visioning is a way to work with change.

Change happens. It can't be stopped. Efforts to do so lead to frustration and despair.

The trick of community planning isn't to try and stop change, but to understand the forces of change and to work with them to achieve a better future.

This is a hard approach to grasp. The normal human reaction to change, especially community change, is "I want everything to be the same as it is now."

But this is not realistic. Pretend for a moment that you had the power to put this idea into practice in your town. Pretend that you could rule that no new buildings could be built, and that no old buildings could burn down. Pretend that no one new could move into the community, and no one now living there could move out. This is the ultimate achievement of "no change" – right?

Not exactly. After 20 years the median age of the community will be 20 years older – maybe approaching 55 or 60 years of age. Schools will stand empty, and nursing homes will have long waiting lists. Baseball fields will be overgrown, and golf courses overcrowded. Music stores will be empty, and discount stores will be overrun. The "no change" scenario could in fact produce a more radical degree of change than practically any other future that might be imagined. It is this characteristic of life that inspired the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus to observe that "you can't step into the same river twice."

Our lives, our families, and our communities change all of the time, even when it seems they are standing still. Our community may look pretty much the same, but in the last 12 months jobs have been lost, other jobs have been created, businesses have gone under, businesses have started-up, people have moved in, people have moved out, buildings have fallen down, buildings have gone up. Life is change.

Further, even if it were possible to stop all change, it would not be desirable. No community is "perfect." Each has room for improvement. Your town may need more room for people to bike and walk, and less traffic congestion. It might benefit from protected fields and forests. It might need housing that teachers and town employees can afford. It might be more welcoming to different types of people. It might need businesses with higher paying jobs.

A visioning process is premised on the belief that people in a community with clear and unified goals can act together to channel market forces in ways that meet the common good. The visioning process is designed to work with change – not to turn back the clock.

How a vision relates to a comprehensive plan.

A vision is an important part of any comprehensive plan. It is the introduction, the "city on a hill" description that gives the rest of the plan drive and direction. It says, "This is where we want to go." The rest of the plan provides the concrete data necessary to move the community towards its vision.

But even though the vision is part of a comprehensive plan, it is different in character than the rest of the plan.

It is a mistake to subject a vision to the same critical tests as the rest of the plan. It is not the same kind of writing, it is not the same kind of thinking (see box below).

But a vision remains critical to the rest of the comprehensive plan. It provides:

• The test for determining appropriate policies.

• The explanation to the public of why the plan is the way it is.

• The yardstick for determining the effectiveness of the plan and its policies over time.

It is essential to revisit the vision as the comprehensive planning analysis goes along. Perhaps the vision is totally out of line with what would ever be realistically possible. Then the comprehensive plan committee should revise the vision to bring it more in line with reality. The vision should represent a stretch for the community, but not be impossible to achieve.

In sum, the vision and the rest of the comprehensive planning process should feed off of and support one another. Visioning without planning risks being uninspired. Planning without visioning risks being irrelevant. Good visioning and good planning strengthen each other.

The vision is the dream.	**The plan is the blueprint.**
The vision describes.	**The plan analyzes.**
The vision is poetry	**The plan is prose.**
The vision is about possibilities.	**The plan is about policies.**
The vision describes what.	**The plan shows how.**
The vision is an aspiration.	**The plan is a legal document.**
The vision appeals to imagination.	**The plan appeals to reason.**
The vision is striven for.	**The plan is implemented.**

The Practical Uses of a Vision Statement

What are the different ways a community can use a vision?

• As an ***introduction to*** the comprehensive plan. The vision should describe where the community wants to go. The rest of the plan should provide more of the concrete data necessary to move the community towards its vision.

• As a ***yardstick*** for determining which goals and policies will best get the community moving in the direction it wants to go. Remember to make sure the rest of the comprehensive plan addresses each piece of the vision. For example, if the vision describes "parks and recreation areas within walking distance of every home," then the rest of the comprehensive plan should address this vision.

• As an ***enclosure*** for grant applications to foundations and government agencies. They love to see how their projects fit into the community's "big picture."

• As a ***guide*** for reviewing other town plans and documents. Does the zoning ordinance or grant application or budget or capital improvement program move the community closer to or further away from its vision? If not, change the zoning ordinance, grant application, budget, capital improvement program, or even the vision itself.

• As an ***annual check-in.*** For example, at the beginning of every year, use the vision to ask whether the community is spending too much time reacting to problems and not enough time initiating positive steps towards achieving the vision.

• As a ***stimulus*** for new initiatives. For example, if part of the vision does not fall into the purview of any existing committee or group, then the community should create a new task force to explore the issue.

• As the ***vehicle*** for an annual community-wide meeting. A vision could be revisited to reassess the entire community's goals – and progress – every year. This will insure that the vision and comprehensive plan stay fresh and relevant.

Visioning involves a special kind of listening.

A visioning process is not the same as a survey – even if the questions are identical.
A survey asks people to answer questions individually, in the privacy of their homes, without the input of neighbors. A visioning process engages the individual in a group decision-making process. In many cases, the individual ends up supporting a proposal or idea that no one may have thought of before. Visioning creates new answers.

All key parties in town must be part of the discussion and decision-making.
Who is "key?" Generally people who have been in the community a while will know. Key people are the ones who show up at town meetings. They are the ones who serve on boards and committees. They are the ones who start community projects. They are the ones who regularly participate in town meetings and forums. They are from all age groups, from all parts of town, from large and small businesses, from different churches and civic groups. Diversity matters more than numbers. Forty people representing the full range of opinions in town will create a better vision than 150 people with a narrower perspective.

As a general rule, all decisions in the vision process should be by consensus.
This does not mean that every single person must wholeheartedly agree with every piece of the vision. But it does mean that every single person must feel that the full range of viewpoints was heard, and that therefore the decision was legitimate and one that residents can live with. Where it is not possible to reach consensus – for example, where some party absolutely cannot live with the majority view on an issue – then both (or more) points of view should be noted, and the issue should not be part of the general, agreed-upon vision statement.

The people's voice determines the vision, even if the vision doesn't follow textbook planning theory.
In our experience, most citizens have a common sense that is consistent with the basic values of professional planning. In other words, most people want to protect the environment, have affordable housing, support farmers, and preserve open space, even though they may never have heard of concepts from the planning literature such as "smart growth."

But sometimes, under some circumstances, people will compose a vision that in certain respects will go against the grain of professional planning theory. When this happens, the facilitator or consultant must make sure that people understand the implications of their choices; if they do understand, and persist in their convictions, the facilitator must faithfully record the result. Subsequent reviewing committees will have the opportunity to make changes to the vision as the planning process goes forward;

but the initial product must accurately report what the people say.

The bulk of time in visioning sessions is devoted to listening, not "educating."
While sharing some basic information is necessary to keep the participants focused on the future, the education that takes place in a visioning session happens for the most part through participatory exercises, not lectures.

Sessions are structured to maximize the opportunity for general discussion and not to let one or two people monopolize the discussion.
The approach described in Part II predominantly uses small group exercises, coupled with a few highly structured large group discussions. This decentralized format prevents one or two extroverts from dominating floor time and hijacking the agenda. It also ensures that everyone, including shy people, get a chance to talk and express their opinions in a safe and comfortable environment.

Visions are about what to do (and where to do it) – but not how to do it.
Visioning – what people want – is a matter of values and desires. In the arena of values and desires, everyone's opinion has equal value and weight.

How to achieve a vision – which is the goal of the comprehensive planning process – involves technical questions with regard to regulations, finances, building technologies, and the environment. Here the expert's knowledge is essential to good decision-making.

The average citizen is not an expert, and cannot be made into an expert in a few hours during a visioning session. Therefore visioning sessions concentrate on what it is that people want to happen and where they want it to happen, and defer questions of how to get there to the subsequent planning process.

This can be a hard rule to remember sometimes. There are many people who show up to visioning sessions who want to talk about town budgets or zoning. They will have to be reminded that a visioning session is not the proper setting to answer technical questions.

Considerations when designing a visioning process.

THE CONTEXT: ***Why is your community interested in visioning?***
Visions are about something. In this handbook, we concentrate on visions that relate to future town development and the comprehensive plan. But visions can also be made about what people want to happen in their schools. Or they might be about the future of a downtown. Or about how sidewalks and bike trails and roads should connect. Or about what kinds of business and jobs the community should encourage.

The community needs to be clear about what the issues are that the vision is intended to illuminate. If the issue is narrow, like developing a town consensus in the face of a controversial development proposal, then the visioning exercises must be carefully structured to address the specific issues raised by the proposal. If the issue is broad, such as creating or updating a comprehensive plan, then the exercises must be broad as well.

THE PACE: ***How divided are people in the community? How trusting?***
Different communities have different levels of community feeling, community trust, and experience working together. These are often related to geography and rates of growth – the more spread out people are and the faster the town is growing, the less likely people are to know and trust each other. Also, recent political fights may have lingering effects that will carry over into a visioning session. The more people are familiar with and trust each other, the faster the process can move. The less they know each other, the slower the pace.

PLACE AND TIME: ***Who's coming?***

Visioning must take place in a safe and comfortable setting. There are certain basic requirements that limit possible venues – there must be parking, a large room where everyone can gather, tables and chairs, perhaps audiovisual aids, and walls to tape sheets on. The room should be large enough to accommodate everyone comfortably, with tables that can be used for small-group discussions and with good acoustics. But often there are several buildings in town that meet the basic requirements. Then the evaluation of alternative settings gets into thinking about the groups who you are trying to attract, and where they would be most comfortable. In the same way think about the months and days and times that would be most convenient for them. And, of course, it always helps to have refreshments!

THE END DATE: ***When is the vision needed?***

A vision created in the first stages of a comprehensive planning process is likely to explore more possibilities, but may be less realistic. A vision created in the middle may be more realistic, but less creative. Where in the planning process will public input on the community's future be most useful? Regardless of what date you choose, give yourselves at least 3 months to plan and set up one or more visioning sessions, and another month after the sessions are over to analyze the results.

THE RESOURCES: ***Who are the people and what are the resources to do this?***

It is important that the community commit some resources to the visioning process. This includes meeting space, refreshments, and advertising at a minimum. Preferably it includes funds to hire a facilitator/consultant as well. The more people and resources that are available for visioning, the more ambitious the process can be. Visioning in this case might extend over a year, with involvement of school children and other groups. On the other hand, if people and resources are limited, one targeted session may be the most cost-effective approach.

Visualization tools

Visioning is, by definition, about *seeing*. A picture is worth a thousand words, and visual tools can be used to address certain issues better than discussion.

Visual tools both bring information to the visioning process and take it away.

First, visual tools can be used by the meeting facilitator to introduce information to meeting participants:

- a **graph** of population change can introduce a historical trend to the participants;
- an **aerial photo** chronology can introduce changing landscape patterns;
- old and new **land use maps** can introduce changing land use patterns, and
- any **special purpose maps** (for example maps of wildlife habitat).

Second, visual tools can return information from participants in the visioning process to the consultants and sponsors. For example, **blank maps** can be used to record participants' views and experiences on a wide variety of questions. Participants can be asked to: identify special places in the community; identify their favorite neighborhoods and streets (note: sometimes, under current regulations, such neighborhoods and streets can no longer be built in town); identify where they'd like to see recreation resources, open spaces, new houses, and schools.

Other visual tools include **sketches** (asking participants to work with a sketch artist to develop collaborative images of the future); and **photographs** (participants – or school students – can bring in photographs of things they like and don't like about the community or they can take the photos that day with disposable cameras). Two other visualization tools, build-out scenarios and visual preference surveys, are described in more detail in the text boxes.

Build-out analyses, visual representations of how development is likely to occur in the next 20 years, are one way to help participants anticipate and visualize change in the future. A **build-out scenario** shows on a map where new development is likely to occur in the future, assuming no changes in town policies or market preferences.

The initial impact of a build-out map is usually its shock value. Residents see how 10 or 20 years of growth will affect their community (assuming no changes to the municipality's policies).

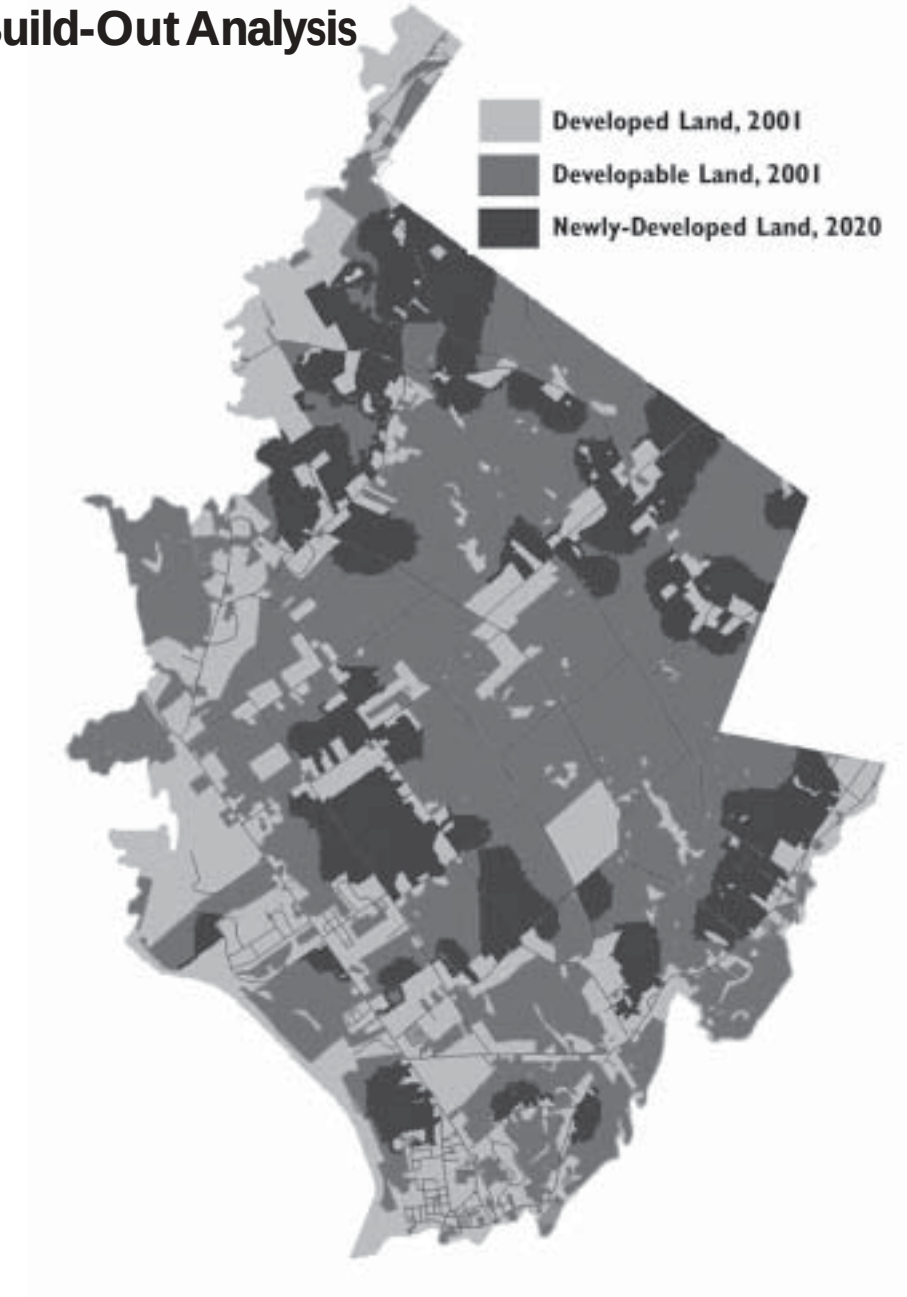
The shock can be turned into creative energy if people are asked to return to the maps and envision different patterns of development, and how this might affect the status quo.

Build-out exercises, to be valuable, require a lot of preparation. A base map of the community is needed with existing buildings and roads identified and, preferably, with environmental and zoning limitations also mapped out.

Build-out techniques are not utilized in Part II of this handbook, but there are references in the Appendix that describe alternative uses of this approach.

Pembroke 2020

Build-Out Analysis

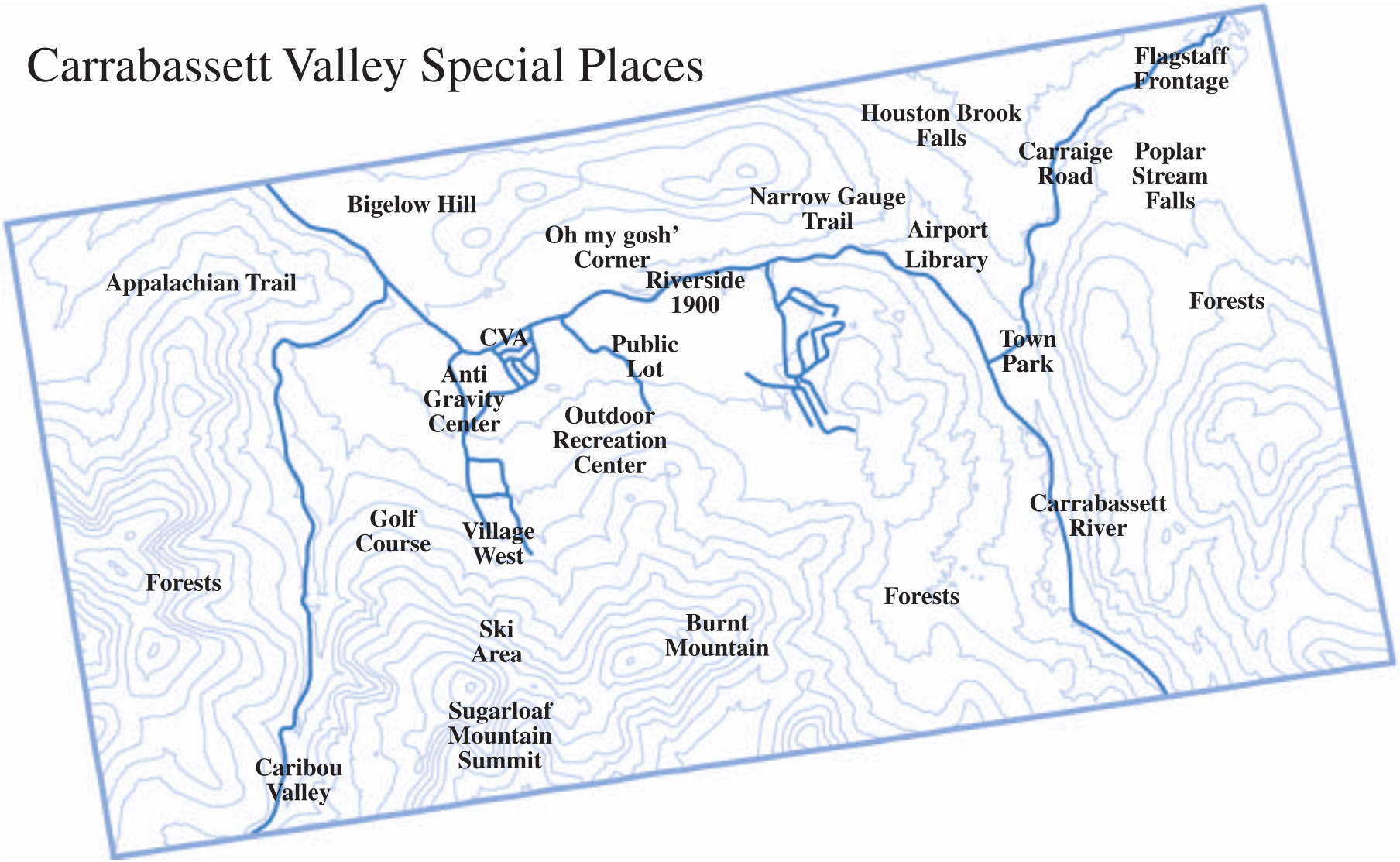


A **visual preference survey** can be a useful tool, but only if done carefully. This visual tool asks participants to react to different design alternatives. For example, to get input on different types of parking lots, the visual preference survey would present three slides. The first would be of a large parking lot in front of the store. The second would be of a parking lot half in front of the store and half on the store's side. The third would be of a parking lot completely behind the store. For each slide, participants are asked to rate each design on a scale from 1 to 10 and to add any comments they have.

Use of this tool depends upon the attitude of participants and the nature of the issues a community faces. In some cases participants can feel manipulated by such surveys – especially if, to use the example above, they don't want parking lots anywhere, or at the other extreme don't want to tell any business that their parking lot is not preferred. For more information on visual preference surveys, see Anton Nelessen's book "Visions for a New American Dream: Process, Principals, and an Ordinance to Plan and Design Small Communities." Visual tools are discussed in more detail in Part II.

Choose the visualization tools that you use in order to present information, get information, and allow the participants to have fun. Don't underestimate the importance of the latter point. Fun visioning sessions have much better attendance records the second time around than those that aren't.

With this as a general background, we go on in Part II to give a cookbook description of one particular visioning methodology that we have used in nine communities in Maine in 2001-2002.



This map is a product of a group exercise in Carrabassett Valley, Maine, in which participants identified the key natural and physical features of the community.

PART II
Visioning Toolbox

Visioning is the essence of local planning – residents talking with residents about their dreams for the future. Dreams vary. Residents vary. Communities vary. Because of this, there is no textbook that, when followed line by line, will create a successful vision. A successful vision relies as much on honesty and hard work while preparing for the visioning session, as on good participation during the visioning session.

Part II of this handbook points out where the honesty and hard work need to be applied in order to ensure good participation and a successful vision.

Part II leads a Visioning Planning Committee through a sample visioning session. This sample is designed to be five hours of public meeting, held either in one day or broken up over two days. The resulting sample vision statement is a two or three page document to be used as a guide throughout the rest of the comprehensive planning process. From start to finish, this sample process will take four months.

This handbook's goal is twofold: to introduce the concept of visioning to the comprehensive planning process; and to create a guide that would ultimately help simplify the visioning process and reduce its cost. To that end the handbook is designed to provide enough details to be useful while leaving enough flexibility for community differences.

Is the community ready to vision?

Before any preparations, before any recruitment, before any hard work, take the correct first step towards a successful vision by honestly addressing the following checklist:

☐ How will the vision be used?

Think about the how the Comprehensive Plan will use the vision. Start with the end in mind. How detailed does the vision need to be? A more detailed vision will likely need a longer visioning process and perhaps several public meetings. How will the vision be used during the rest of the Comprehensive Planning process? A vision that will be a starting point for the plan should be less structured and more free-flowing.

> This handbook is the outgrowth of a State Planning Office pilot project. Planning Decisions, Inc. was hired to conduct nine visioning sessions in 2001 and 2002. Each community was updating its comprehensive plan, and in each community the vision became a part of that plan.
>
> Everyone involved in the project was struck by the need for a different approach in each community. Communities ranged from rural towns to service centers, and from suburbs to seasonal communities. Some communities wanted to slow change while others wanted to spark change.
>
> The communities involved in this grant included Arundel, Carrabassett Valley, Harpswell, Kennebunkport, Newry, Ogunquit, Sanford, Surry, Turner, and Waterboro.

Who should be on the Visioning Planning Committee?

Here's the short answer – every group you want represented at the visioning session itself should be represented on the sponsoring or planning committee. There are three reasons for this:

1. to ensure that every topic of interest to different groups will be dealt with in one way or another at the session;
2. to identify ways to schedule and promote the session that will make attendance easiest; and
3. to actively recruit citizens to attend.

Be realistic. Remember that the public simply does not have enough time, expertise, or consensus to offer a detailed vision on every issue in town. Keep in mind where the public is able to provide direction and where it isn't. Above all, any committee calling a public meeting has the obligation to make efficient use of the public's time – few things are worse than asking the public to attend a meeting that doesn't achieve anything.

☐ Does the visioning have a dedicated leader?

The vision process requires honesty and hard work, and a dedicated leader to stitch these two together. Whether a consultant, town staff, or citizen volunteer, there must be a leader who is ultimately responsible for organizing effort, making unbiased decisions, and pursuing the best vision possible. The leader must encourage others to make an effort, stay honest to the concept of visioning, and ensuring accurate representation from all corners of the different interest groups in town.

☐ Is there a committee to organize and sponsor visioning meetings?

A leader alone cannot design a vision process. It takes brainstorming, discussion, recruiting, and preparation – activities a leader cannot complete alone. To that end, there needs to be a committee. Usually the Comprehensive Planning Committee fills this role. Sometimes, interested citizens or experts are added to the committee in order to provide a more complete representation or expertise. To ensure the visioning process retains its honesty and integrity, ensure the committee represents as many interest groups in the community as possible.

☐ Who will facilitate the visioning process?

The community has a choice. Is it going to hire a professional? A professional brings experience and an outsider's lack of bias but costs money. Is the facilitator going to be a local volunteer? Local volunteers are inexpensive and often have knowledge of local issues and perspectives.

☐ What issues should the community address?

The vision for a comprehensive plan must address, at minimum, such issues as the location of new development, open space, affordable housing, and the like. There may also be special issues the community faces that require extra attention in the visioning session. These special issues should be identified during the planning stages for the visioning sessions.

☐ What is the budget for the visioning process?

Decisions about hiring outside help, how long to make the visioning sessions, and even providing refreshments for visioning participants all depend on money. While this handbook is an attempt to defray some of the costs of a visioning process, it can't do it completely. The size of a budget as much as anything else can determine what type of visioning process to conduct.

First Planning Meeting

Hold the first planning meeting at least ten to twelve weeks before the visioning session. The goal of the first planning meeting is fourfold:

• to introduce the idea of visioning to the committee;

• to promote the benefits of visioning to community members;

• to identify issues that should be addressed during the visioning session; and

• to set a date(s), place, and time for the visioning session.

The easiest way to introduce the idea of visioning to the committee is to have someone with visioning experience discuss their experience. If the visioning leader does not have this background, try inviting a citizen from another town who has experienced the visioning process to share their knowledge.

The next step is to brainstorm a list of issues that will affect the community in the future. Think about issues that will change the community over the course of ten, fifteen, and twenty years. Typically, these issues are long-term trends that are slowly changing the community.

First Planning Meeting Agenda

1. Introduction to Visioning Product – examine sample vision statements from other communities

   Process – show sample vision session agenda and explain how exercises work
2. Roles and responsibilities – the committee handles logistics and recruitment, the consultant handles facilitation and writing up materials
3. Issue discussion – identify important issues in town, things that it would be good to discuss or get a sense of the community in a visioning session
4. Logistics – tentatively set a date(s), time and place for visioning session
5. Set a date, time, and place for the next planning committee meeting

Commonly addressed issues include:

• growth, both commercial and residential

• education and schools

• open space issues

• the environment

• economic development, economic diversification

• housing affordability

• elderly issues and services

• changing demographics

• recreation opportunities

• community image

• traffic, congestion

• tourism

• regional concerns

Make a long list. Ensure everyone has had the opportunity to share their thoughts. Not all of these issues will be addressed during the visioning session. Some may be too focused, and some may not provoke an efficient or honest discussion. No final decisions need be made at this point, but the facilitator should keep this list in mind when drafting the vision session agenda.

Finally, think about these issues:

Think about how many people might attend. Think about the groups and individuals you want to attend. How many people will come? Has the community had similar meetings recently? Town meeting? These tend to be good guides when gauging attendance for the visioning session.

Think about a place that will accommodate this number of people when seated at tables of 8 –10 people each. Is it comfortable? Convenient? Is there adequate handicapped access? How about parking?

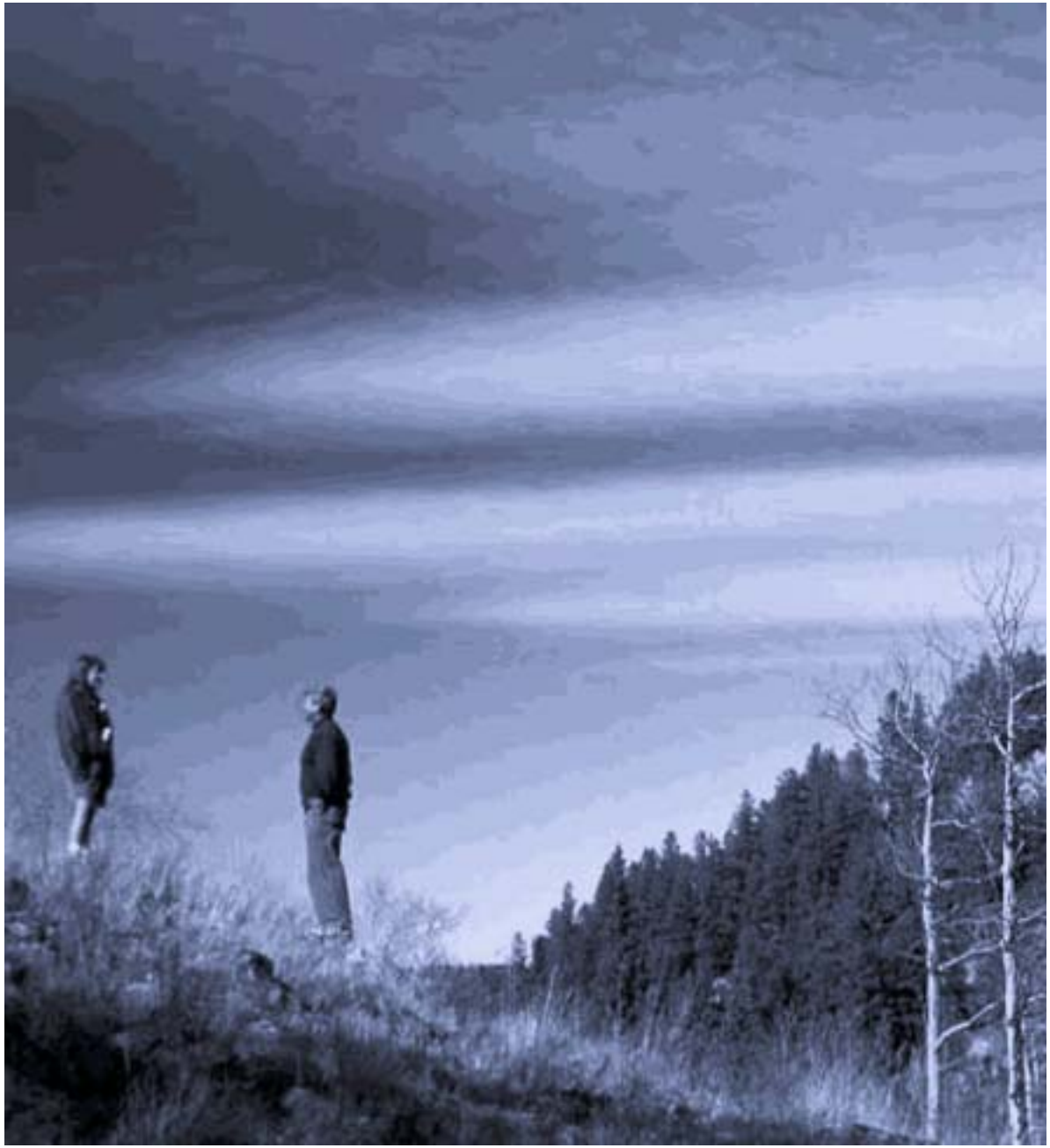
Think about when to hold the visioning session, because this can affect which parts of the community participate. For example, retirees are more available in the summer but tend to be absent in the winter. Retail businesses are busy during their tourist season and during the holidays. Parents with young children will tend not to be available during school vacation. Are there days of the week that will work better than others? Keep in mind that the committee will in most cases need 2 – 3 months to arrange the event.

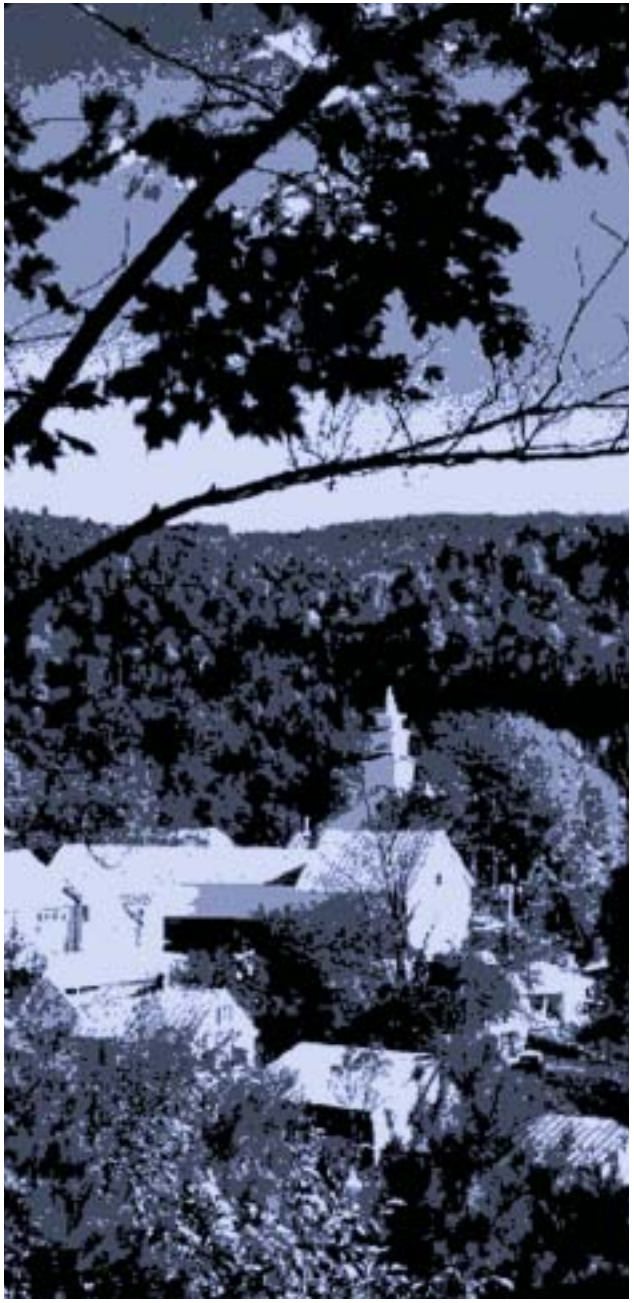
Should the session be held all on one day? Should it be divided into two days? If so, should the second session immediately follow

the first, or should it be held on the same night the following week. How about a Friday night/ Saturday morning combination? These combinations work equally well so long as there are no competing events in the community, and so long as the participant's comfort is considered (a five-hour long visioning session would even tire Superman).

Once a tentative place and date are set, assign a committee member to make arrangements with the host facility (or backup facility). Make sure there is a backup date (in the event of snow, etc.) and make sure there are enough chairs, tables, and any other props necessary for your session.

Don't forget to schedule the next meeting, which should be at least 6 weeks prior to the planned visioning session.





Handout for First Planning Meeting: Sample visioning session agenda

Registration: Participants sign in and are assigned to a small group. Take an informal survey of where in town participants live by asking them to place a dot on a town map.

Introduction – Welcome the participants: Give a brief introduction to the visioning concept. Ask participants to introduce themselves to their small groups. Then ask each participant to mention why they live in the community. What characteristics are important to them? Friendly people? Low taxes? Close to work? Summarize the results.

Our Town Mapping Exercise: Work in small groups and ask participants to identify on a map all of the special landscape features (both natural and built) in the town. What places in town would, if lost or damaged, significantly change the character of the community? Open fields? Views? A certain tree? A monument? A bridge? A building? A village? Once the list of places is complete, ask each participant to identify their three favorite places listed on the map. Summarize the results.

Future Forces Presentation: Have a panel of local experts briefly discuss the forces that are influencing the town's future. This bridges the discussion between "today" and "tomorrow." What is going to be different in the future? Will there be more houses? If so, what type of houses? Will there be more jobs? What type of jobs? Will people be older? If so, what does this mean for municipal services/facilities. Ask three or four local experts (planners, business representatives, elected officials, professionals, etc) to each give a three minute presentation about future trends. Allow time for questions and answers.

Village / Section of Town Exercise: Ask each small group to think about the future of each village or section of town. People think in more detail when limited to a smaller geographic area. Between five and seven villages/sections of town are manageable for the time allotted. Considering the forces discussed in the previous exercise, what should be in this village/section of town? How should it look? How should it function? Summarize the results.

Conclusion Summarize the common vision that resulted from the various exercises and discussions. Explain what the next steps are for the vision and for the comprehensive plan. Thank the participants and goodnight.

Handout for First Planning Meeting: Sample Exercises

Community Character Exercise: Examine why people choose to live in the community. Ask participants to work in their small groups and identify which characteristics are important to the participant (i.e. low taxes, close to work, friendly people, etc)? What is it that makes your town unique? Record each answer on a flip chart and summarize them when done. Often, one or two community characteristics rise to the top of the list. These responses from this exercise are useful when writing the vision statement's introduction.

Our Town Mapping Exercise: Catalogue what is important in the community today. Work in small groups and identify on a map all of the important features in the community. What makes the town special? Is it a monument? Is it a forest? Is it a building? Is it a particular view? An open space? Where do you go? What do you think of when your town is mentioned? What would change the town's character if it were lost? Without these places, the community would not be the same. The places mentioned in this exercise might be candidates for some level of protection.

Future Forces Presentation: This exercise transitions from thinking about "today" to thinking about "tomorrow." What changes will really affect the community in the next 15 years? Ask two to four local experts to briefly discuss the trends that will change the community's future. These individuals could be planners, business representatives, elected officials, consultants, or any other individual that is able to address how things are changing and what to expect in ten or twenty years. Follow each three minute presentation with a short discussion.

Village / neighborhood Exercise: Often participants are able to think in more detail when they are restricted to smaller spaces. Consider delineating between five to eight neighborhoods or sections of the town. What should the future of each neighborhood be like? At a later point, these neighborhood visions will be aggregated into a larger vision for the entire community.

Pressing Issues Exercise: This slot is left open for a more detailed exploration of two or three important local issues. Often these issues are best worked on immediately following a presentation by a local expert. Ask participants to work in small groups and engage them in an interesting exercise. If the issue is the future of commercial development, ask the small groups to sketch what that development would look like. If the issue is image, ask them to discuss the most improbable change that would improve the image of the community.

Residential Development: Push the participants to consider what type of housing units should be added in the community and where they should go. Project the number of housing units that will be added in the next 15 years. Create four types of housing units (single family large lot, single family small lot, multifamily small lot, condominium development) and assign each a color of dot. Assign a number of housing units to each dot (if there will be 500 housing units, give each group 20 dots of each color so that each dot equals in this case 25 housing units). Ask them to select the type of housing that should be added to the housing stock and then locate the new housing units on a town map.

Favorite Street: Ask participants to look at a map and identify their favorite streets. Which is your favorite residential street? Which is your favorite commercial street/district/building? Which is your favorite rural street? These favorite streets might be used as models for future land use models and could be built into the vision statement as descriptive characteristics that people like.

Second Planning Meeting

The first planning meeting is introductory and sets the basic framework. The second planning meeting is where most of the hard work gets done (or at least assigned!).

Start by nailing down the logistics for the visioning session. Was the meeting facility confirmed? Are there enough chairs, tables, and other material for the session? Who should organize, pay for, and manage the set up/clean up of refreshments? Who will arrange for a large map that participants might draw upon?

For each of these questions, assign responsibilities to people. Any topic not assigned to someone won't get done.

Move on to the visioning session agenda. Start with the general format passed out at the first meeting, and then adjust it to address key issues the committee identified at the first meet-

Second Planning Meeting Agenda

1. LOGISTICS

- Place chosen and confirmed – any issues?
- Break out places, chairs, walls for wallpaper, projection screen?
- Refreshments – what, who arranges?
- Identify a map to use in exercises (to be drawn upon)?
- Identify desired "wallpaper" (graphs, maps, historical information, etc) and who will post them?

2. AGENDA

- Review draft agenda – any changes[1] ?
- Delineate neighborhoods for discussion about villages/neighborhoods.

3. EXPERTS[2]

- Identify experts for future forces presentation (i.e. realtors, business people, planners, town officials, etc).
- Who will recruit them?
- Will they have a couple of facts that can be a handout?

4. RECRUITMENT

- Make a list – groups and people in town who should participate.
- From each group – identify key people to invite.
- Go over list – who will contact each one (personal contact is more successful than mailed invitations)?
- Other publicity – newspapers, mailings, posters, cable?
- Pre-registration location[3] ?

5. NEXT PLANNING MEETING

(schedule for one week before visioning session)

[1] Make any changes to the exercises necessary to ensure the exercises adequately address the issues identified as important by the committee.
[2] Presentations should address important issues in the community and be followed by a question and answer period. Limit presentations to a few minutes and make sure they aren't too technical.
[3] Some communities choose a pre-registration location so they can have an idea how many people will attend. If you choose to do this, make sure to plan for enough people that don't register. Also get the people's phone numbers in case the visioning session needs to move to a larger facility, is canceled due to inclement weather, etc..

ing. Do not dwell on this item – it is easy to do so, but there is much more to accomplish at this meeting. Just get a few suggestions and comments, promise a new revision for the next planning committee meeting, and move on.

If there is going to be a discussion about the future of neighborhoods, remember to work with the committee separating the town into between five and seven neighborhoods. This will help facilitate the discussion about neighborhoods during the visioning session.

This sample visioning process uses local experts as a bridge between discussions about the present and the future. In other words, the future is not just the past projected forward. The future will be fundamentally different. Identify who these experts may be and think about the issues they should address.

For example, a residential housing developer or real estate agent might discuss current trends in the real estate market. A farmer might discuss

Change happens. Visioning uses a range of techniques to do two critical functions: (a) to show how change will affect the community, and (b) to give form and life to the participants' vision of the future.

Discussion is the easiest and most flexible technique. Discussions allow participants to describe, in their own words, their visions of the future. Discussion sessions are easy to prepare for – they only require that the issue is accurately framed – but it can be of limited use when trying to get more detail. In addition, discussions are limited by the participants' ability to express themselves verbally and by the facilitator's ability to interpret their intentions.

Graphic tools, including ***charts***, ***pictures***, ***sketches***, and the like provide more concrete detail for putting data into the visioning session as well as taking it out. For example, the facilitator might use a graph of residential building growth in a neighborhood to hammer home the idea that change is happening, and the participants may in turn be asked to sketch alternative development patterns that express their vision of protecting open spaces while accommodating the development. Graphic tools require more preparation than discussion, but if used well can provide much more detail.

Mapping tools are a subset of graphic tools, but are so important to visioning that they deserve their own category. Mapping is best used when the issues addressed have a graphical component to them (for example, the pace of development, the location of public facilities, the preservation of open spaces and/or special resources in the community). Build-out analyses, which are extrapolations of current and projected building patterns, are especially useful when conveying the impact of development on the landscape. In general, the more detailed the map required (and build-out analyses require a lot of detail), the more time it takes to perfect. Regardless, the information gleaned from a successful mapping exercise can be tremendous.

Photographs can also be used to identify changes over time as well as historic sites.

Handout for Second Planning Meeting: Draft Press Release to Publicize Visioning Session

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT:_____

Date_____ Telephone: xxx-xxx-xxxx

COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSION PLANNED

The _____ Comprehensive Planning Committee has scheduled a town-wide visioning session to be held on (month/day), (day of week), from (time) to (time). The session will be held in the (room) at the (place) on (address).

Planning Committee Chair (name) said, "The purpose of the session is to get a wide variety of opinions and viewpoints about what is special about _____ and needs to be preserved, and what needs to change and improve in the years ahead. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. The more citizens participate, the better the product will be."

This is the first step in the updating of the comprehensive plan for the Town of _____. " With (mention recent trend), _____ is on the edge of a new chapter in its history," (name) said. "Come talk with your neighbors and help us shape the future _____."

_____ residents, taxpayers, and municipal officials who are interested in attending are asked to call or leave their names with (name) at Town Hall (phone xxx-xxxx) so that the Comprehensive Planning Committee can have an advance idea of attendance.

what is happening in his business and what it will mean to local farmland in the next 20 years. The owner of a major business or institution in town might discuss the organization's future plans and prospects. A regional planner might present economic and population projections for the area.

Two or three presentations should be planned at most, and the presentations must be brief (no more than 3 minutes). They should be followed by question and answer session (no more than 20 minutes) – remember the purpose is to stimulate thinking, and not to give a lecture! Identify the most appropriate experts (perhaps one or two more than you need), and assign committee members with responsibility to recruit them.

The majority of this second planning session must address recruitment. A vision will not succeed unless it has been created by a group of citizens that represent all aspects of the community. Fifteen diverse citizens will create a more accurate vision than 150 like-minded citizens.

Recruitment for this sample visioning session has two components. The first is to make efforts to invite the citizenry at large. The second is to use personal phone calls and contacts to ensure a diverse group of citizens participate.

To invite the general citizenry, be sure to use all of the available channels. Legal notices in the paper are only the tip of the iceberg. Draft a press release. Contact the local paper and tell them what you are up to. Advertise on the local cable station. Create posters to hang at important community gathering places. Mail a postcard to everyone in the community. These techniques will have a lower yield but will cover a broader audience.

To ensure a diverse and representative group of citizens participate, consider this recruitment exercise. Ask the committee to identify every important group in town, by geography, age, occupation, and interest. Be sure to include "nay-sayer" groups, those who show up to oppose most new proposals and ideas in town (if they participate in the vision, they are more likely to understand and support the final plan). Write this list down. Then, starting at the top, go through each group and identify important individuals that are either leaders or well-connected or trusted by others in their group. Once individuals have been identified, assign committee members to make phone calls and personally invite each person. Invitations from acquaintances are easier to accept than those from strangers, so try to assign phone calls to the committee accordingly.

Some people are uncomfortable with this. Why must calls be made? Isn't this favoritism of one person over another? The answer is simple. General recruitment notices in the newspaper, by themselves, only attract a handful of people; usually these people have a lot of time and particular causes they are concerned with. These people are important to have at a visioning session, but if they are all who come, the session will not be successful.

Now think about yourself a moment. How many general community meetings have you attended that you read about in the newspaper? Now think about the meetings you have gone to because someone called you and asked you to go. If someone calls, and tells you that your attendance is important to a meeting's success, then you are much more likely to go.

In short, if you want to ensure broad participation, get on the phone and make it happen.

As mentioned in the beginning, this second planning meeting is a full one. If you don't get everything done in this meeting, you should schedule a quick follow-up. All of the logistics and issues discussed here should be clear at least 3 weeks before the actual visioning session is held. Contacts should be made 2 weeks before the visioning sessions begin.

Third Planning Committee Agenda

1. REVIEW RECRUITMENT

- Registrations OK? Phone calls OK?
- Any last minute recruitment needed?
- Estimate number of small groups (better high estimate than low).
- Mail postcards reminding individuals that the visioning session is fast approaching.

2. REVIEW LOGISTICS

- Anything unresolved, undone?
- Maps for walls set?
- Handouts set?
- Adjustments to be made?

3. ASSIGN VOLUNTEERS

- Set up tables and room.
- Sign in tables (two people).
- Small group facilitators (as many as there are groups).
- Assistant to help during visioning session.

4. REVIEW AGENDA FOR SESSION

Third Planning Meeting

The first planning meeting is introductory. The second lays out all the assignments. This third meeting is a final check-in.

How is the recruitment going? Have people made their calls? Are any groups questionable? Is there a need for a last minute push of one sort or another?

Go over the logistics. How's the food situation? Who will set up the table and chairs? Are there easels for every table, pads, pens, community maps? Are the local experts lined up? Who is making the packets to pass out when people sign in? Are there any historic pictures or interesting town maps to arrange on the walls or in an exhibit?

Make last-minute assignments. Who will be on the sign-in table? Who will facilitate small groups?

Finally, go over the agenda one more time, with an eye to identifying potential needs that haven't been addressed.

Leave with a pep talk. This will be a great event. It will be fun! Committee members must be confident and able to communicate this confidence with others in town.

Visioning Session

The following agenda details a one-day visioning session. This agenda addresses the major exercises, but doesn't cover everything. Keep the public's interest up by sprinkling in short surveys ("Stand up if you have lived in the community for more than 10 years.") or quick map exercises ("Put a dot on your house on the map.").

Public participation is critical. To maximize the amount of participation, randomly assign participants to small groups. Ideal group sizes are between 5 and 8 people. When a group is too large, participants feel their voices aren't heard. When a group is too small, there aren't enough opinions to spark a really good discussion.

It is important to summarize each exercise by asking the groups to share their notes. Ask one group for one idea; check to see how many other groups had that issue; and then ask for the next issue. Everything should be written down so that it can be recorded later. This ensures that the groups feel they've had the opportunity to express themselves.

Community Visioning Session

INSTRUCTIONS TO SMALL GROUP LEADERS

1. Your job is record the ideas people raise – either on the map or on sheets, as the moderator instructs.
2. Write down what people say – don't paraphrase in your own words
3. The moderator will describe the tasks for the groups item by item – wait for the moderator to move on to the next task before going on.
4. Everything gets recorded on the sheets – not just the things people agree on.
5. Make sure that everyone in your group feels that they have had a chance to make their voices heard.
6. You are a participant in the discussions as well – feel free to offer your own ideas and put your own ideas on the map or on the sheets, but make sure that you record the ideas of those you disagree with as well, and don't monopolize conversation.
7. You should try to get people to be as specific as possible. For example, ask a participant for more detail about the "rural character" they want to protect. Is it the landscape? Is it the people? What does it look like?
8. You may be asked to summarize your group's discussion for the broader audience.

Visioning Session, Detailed Agenda

– 1:30 Set up

• Set up small groups with approximately six to eight chairs per small group, an easel (and flip chart), two maps, markets, tape, and stickers.

• Set up sign-in table with sign-in sheets, name tags, markers and pens, "Where do you live" map, and handout packets.

• Set up refreshment table.

• Set up any other material, such as computer, projector, wallpaper, or charts.

Materials Needed:

• sign-in sheets
• name tags
• markers, sticker 'dots'
• small group leader instructions
• flip charts, easel pads, tape
• handout packets
• easel-sized maps
• larger maps
• refreshments

– 0:30 Prior to first session.

• Moderator goes over instructions with small group leaders and volunteers.

• Help at sign-in table

• Give each participant a name tag.

• Distribute handout packet with random small group number to participants.

• Ask participants to put dot on place where they live. Placing "dots" on a town map located at the entrance to the visioning session is a method of corroborating the amount of participation. If one area of town is over-weighted, the committee will have an idea that the visioning results are skewed.

0:00 Welcome

• MODERATOR
announces that the meeting is starting.

• CHAIR OF COMMITTEE:
Welcome everyone and thanks for coming out. Today we will go through a visioning process of imagining what we would like _____ to be like in 20 years. This will be a kick-off to preparing the comprehensive plan. Today's session will be led by _____. I'd like to thank everyone who made the day possible, including: _____. The value of what comes out of this depends on what is put into it, depends on your ideas and suggestions, so give it your best. Thank you. Now I will turn the session over to _____.

• MODERATOR:
We are here to work on a vision for our town 20 years in the future. The agenda starts with where we are now, what is important today, then moves on to what we want for the future. We will be done by _____. As we begin there are a few practical matters:
• restrooms are (where?)
• all decisions by consensus
• if disagreement, all viewpoints will be recorded
• one speaker at a time
• speak loudly so everyone can hear
• listen respectfully, no side conversations
• moderator may cut off discussions to keep flow
• return all sheets to the committee when the session is over
• refreshments, maps on wall
Any questions? Now I am going to give you a quick introduction to visioning.

+0:20 Introductions

• MODERATOR:
So that is why we are here. As we begin, let's take a moment to introduce ourselves to each other. I'd like you to say your name, what your connection is to this town, and

Community Visioning Sign-in Form

Name	Address	Email	Phone

name your favorite thing about the town. Why are you here? What is great about your town?

> If there are fewer than 50 participants, do these introductions in front of the entire group. If there are more that 50 participants, do the introductions in the small groups and then summarize their favorite things in front of the larger audience. Either way, the facilitator should encourage participants to be brief.

+0:45 Our Town Mapping Exercise

• MODERATOR:
Now let's identify some of the town's special places.

First use the GREEN marker. Using the map on your table, draw in your most memorable natural and scenic features. For example, the best views of the river or ocean, best fishing or hunting spots, best bird-watching spots, best hiking and kayaking spots, best beaches, prettiest farms, most distinctive rock formations, pretty hills. Be sure to write the name of the feature on the map.

Got them all?

Now take the RED marker. Draw in the most distinctive, most memorable, built landmarks. Churches. Houses (both year-round and seasonal). Historic streets. Bridges. Inns. Campgrounds. Businesses. Town Buildings. Memorials. Parks. The things that you think about when your town is mentioned.

Now step back. Is everything there? Does the map have all the places you are proud to take out-of-town visitors?

Now take a moment and with your group circle and identify the best residential street or streets in town. Which are the places you would like to see future development look like?

Now answer the same question regarding a commercial street or streets or buildings. Which are the best commercial streetscapes in town?

Now I will ask the group facilitator to distribute three stickers to each participant. You are going to vote on what each of you thinks are the three most important features that you see on the map. No bullet voting; you can't put more than one sticker on each feature. Also, please try to keep the maps legible.

Put them on the three features that most stand out to you, the three that are sacred to the town's identity, that if they weren't there, your town wouldn't be the same.

+1:40 Break

Have the participants take a ten minute break. In the meantime, collect the maps and prepare a summary of the landscape features to share with the group.

+1:50 Summary

Summarize what you heard. Check in with them to see if they agree.

+2:00 Future Forces Panel Discussion

• MODERATOR:
So far you have talked about what is special to the town and what you'd like preserved. Now let's talk about the future.

Let's stop a moment and think about the forces which will be at work in the community and how they might threaten or enhance what you want to preserve, and likewise how they threaten or make more possible the improvements you would like to see?

Let's start with a little information.

We have asked some people to present information today (introductions).

Presentations by two or three local experts on trends in local economy, housing, transportation, etc. These should be issues that the committee sees influencing the town in the near future.

After presentations, hold a question and answer period. In what respect might these forces provide opportunities for the town? In what sense do they present dangers? Brainstorm a list of other future influences.

+2:45 Village/neighborhood Discussion

• MODERATOR:
Here is what we have found about the town's current resources and opportunities.

• MODERATOR:
Let's think about this town 20 years from now. Let's go neighborhood by neighborhood. I will mention a section of town and then will ask your group to decide how you want it to look and function in the future, 20

years from now. In other words, how would it be at its very best. Give your first impressions, your first feelings and impulses. Not problems, but how you want it to look in the best possible set of circumstances. Identify improvements. Don't just say "as is", but identify exactly what it is which is there now you still want in 20 years.

The facilitator can move around to each small group and prompt the discussion to be as detailed as possible. Each group does all neighborhoods.

- neighborhood A
- neighborhood B
- neighborhood C

• MODERATOR:
Now let's hear from a group. Who wants to share their vision for:
• neighborhood A... Any other tables want to add to this?
• neighborhood B... Any other tables want to add to this?

+4:45 Growth Exercise

• MODERATOR:
Now let's look more closely at this future that you are painting. You have gone through neighborhood by neighborhood and you know what you want in your minds. Here's my next question. We heard in the Future Forces Discussion that the town is growing and will continue to grow. There were 500 homes added over the last 10 years. Let's assume this growth rate stays even and within the next 20 years another 1000 homes will be built in town.

In this example, the community is facing pressures from residential and commercial development. This exercise forces participants to confront not only the amount of growth possible, but also the type of growth desired and the location of new growth.

How could 1000 homes and apartments and condominiums be built in this community in a way which maintains the values you have described? Think about it.

Each group has sets of 20 GREEN stickers. Each sticker of each color represents 50 housing units. As a group you must decide what type of housing units to add and where you'd like to see them added. Place them on the map. Each group must place ten stickers.

• MODERATOR:
Now think about your school system. Current demographics suggest that this housing pressure may require a new school to be built sometime in the next 20 years. Given where you've said housing should be added above, if a new school is needed, where might it best be located? Place the YELLOW colored dot on where your group thinks a new school could be located.

• MODERATOR:
Now we are going to think about recreation. Each group has two BLUE colored stickers. These represent recreation areas; parks, playgrounds, trail systems, athletic fields, adult recreation areas, skateboard parks, etc. Think about the needs of old people as well as young. Place them on the map at the places that seem best.

• MODERATOR:
Each group has two RED colored stickers to represent new business development. Remember, this isn't deciding the policy question of whether this should happen – this involves consideration of demand, utilities, expenses, etc. This is just an exercise of where such things should happen if they are to occur. Consider each RED dot to represent a cluster of businesses (either a business park or a shopping center or a village district). Identify the next ***two places*** *for business growth. Write on the side the kind of business growth you want and the kinds that you don't want. In an ideal world, where would it best go?*

+5:10 Break

• MODERATOR:
Let's bring the maps together in the front and see what people came up with. After we summarize these maps, we'll take another break.

+5:20 Wrap up

• MODERATOR:
Let's review what has happened so far start to finish....

Leave time to summarize the visioning session's key discussions. Also, leave some time for participants to raise other issues they felt weren't discussed earlier in the visioning session.

This completes tonight's visioning session. In the time remaining, let's identify the issues that didn't get covered that are important to the town's future?

The issues will be listed on the sheets around the room. If time, comments on the issues will be invited.

Moderator explains the next steps. Consultant will write materials up and then send them to the Committee to use as a vision in its efforts.

• CHAIR OF COMMITTEE:
Thank you for coming out tonight. Our committee will refer to this information throughout its activities. For any that are interested, the committee's next meeting will be held…

Creating the vision

After the session, the leader and committee are left with dozens of marked up maps and easel pad sheets and comment cards. What to do with it all?

First, write it all down. Write down every list of good things and bad things. Put together a composite map showing the major features people identified in town. These notes also provide the raw material from which the vision statement can be written. In this respect, they are also a check on the vision statement – does it accurately encapsulate the broader discussion?

See Appendix B for a sample town-wide summary.

The second step is more complex. From the information gleaned, put together a draft vision statement. The challenge of the vision statement is to provide enough specificity and concreteness to be of value to the comprehensive planning committee, while at the same time not "overstating" the consensus of the participants by positing agreements where none in fact existed. Phrases and ideas in the draft vision should have been said sometime during the visioning session by the participants.

The format for the visioning report can take any shape. Part III contains a sample vision based upon a session similar to that described in this handbook. The following describes how the exercises feed into the vision statement.

The opening narrative is taken from the introductory exercise and other comments throughout the day. It is general and even poetic, and may appear to simply be mood music, but it performs an important function. It is intended to capture the identity and feel of the Town. No matter what kind of future development takes place, or where, if this feeling and identity is lost, then the Town's efforts must be judged to have failed.

It is possible to use this narrative to create an annual "indicators" monitoring program, an annual questionnaire to residents, to see how well this feeling and identity is being maintained.

Whether or not such a formal effort is undertaken, the opening paragraphs will at a minimum be helpful to town planners ten years from now so that they will know exactly the way people felt about their community in 2001.

The map of special areas comes from the Our Town Mapping exercise. It displays the physical identity for the community, the places people are particularly attached to. The comprehensive planning process that follows the visioning session should develop strategies to maintain these places – either through purchase, easement, or regulation.

The village/section of town descriptions provide a very concrete picture of what people would like to see in these areas in the future. This will lead to recommendations for changes in local regulations, and for other actions such as capital investments, in the final comprehensive plan document.

The growth narrative provides a concrete picture of what kind of housing and business development is desired in town, and where it is desired. Likewise, it should be used to describe the need for updated regulations and capital improvements in the comprehensive plans.

Final Planning Committee Meeting

The final meeting of the planning committee is to review the results and look ahead.

First the committee should review the visioning notes (sample in Part III). Is it accurate? Are there any obvious errors or omissions? This document is the record of the event, and it is important that it faithfully represent the proceedings – even if the committee is not happy with what the people decided.

Secondly, the committee should review the draft vision statement prepared by the facilitator or consultant. Is it faithful to what happened? Is it concrete enough to be useful? Does it need additions, subtractions, or changes?

Again, these changes should represent what happened at the meeting. There may be – there almost certainly will be – elements in the vision statement that the committee disagrees with or thinks are unrealistic. The committee or town will have a chance to make some changes later. But at this point the task is still to create a document that reflects what people have said, and this is not a time to try to rewrite the record of what transpired.

The comprehensive planning committee should feel free to change the vision if it feels that the current version is unrealistic or undesirable. The test of a good vision is that it promotes the best possible local plan, not that it makes the committee immune from public criticism. When changes are made however, the committee needs to be clear in presenting its plan to the public where it has diverged from the resident consensus and why.

After reviewing the vision, the committee should revisit what went well and poorly at the session. This will be of use in case future sessions of a similar type are held. And there may be a final discussion of what happens next.

Final Planning Committee Agenda

1. Review of town-wide summary
2. Review/revise the vision statement
3. Evaluation of visioning workshop
   - what worked
   - what didn't
   - what could be done better next time, should there be additional sessions?
4. Discussion
   - lessons for the visioning process
   - what is needed to ensure success

Going Forward

At this point the vision folds back into the comprehensive planning process. At many times during the comprehensive planning process the committee will have the opportunity to use the vision statement. Specific examples of how the vision can be consulted during the comprehensive planning process include during goal setting, policy development, strategy selection, land use plan definition, and others. See Part I for more detail.

PART III

Sample Vision Statement: Ogunquit, Maine

A Vision for Ogunquit

SUMMARY OF THE OGUNQUIT VISIONING SESSION, APRIL 20, 2002

Ogunquit has something for everyone. In winter it is a friendly, quiet, close-knit community with caring neighbors. In summer it is bustling with activity, arts, culture, sophistication, and a worldly-charm. Add spectacular natural areas and a community rich in diversity. The result is a town with unsurpassed quality of life. Ogunquit is a real-life *Brigadoon*, waking from its cozy winter slumber to become one of the most active communities in Maine.

A. SPECIAL PLACES

Ogunquit, just four square miles, is shoehorned between Wells, York, and the Atlantic Ocean. Despite its diminutive size, it is bursting with special places that define the community. Marginal Way, with its cliffs, views, and many surprises, is at the heart of the community's identity. It is known not only in Southern Maine but around New England as a truly unique seaside trail. Marginal Way is bookended to the north and south by the spectacular Ogunquit Beach and Perkins Cove fishing village. These three special places are the jewels in Ogunquit's crown.

Behind this waterfront bulwark lie Ogunquit's human resources. The Ogunquit Museum of American Art, the Ogunquit Playhouse, and Beach Plum Farm are the core of these places. The library, ball fields, Dorothea Grant Common, Downtown, and densely-packed historical homes and buildings create a special atmosphere in town that attracts people from all walks of life.

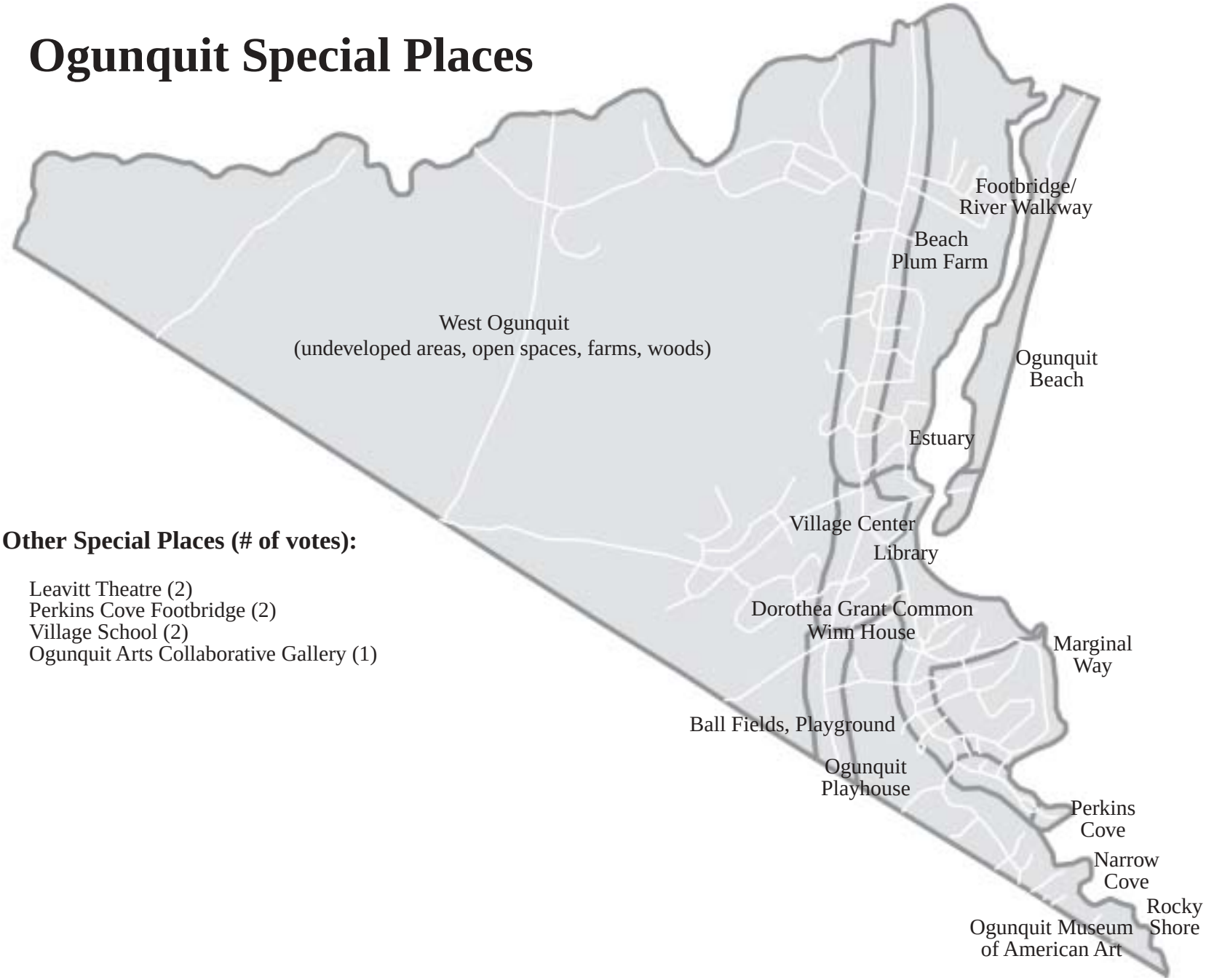
Farther inland are open spaces, farms, woodlands, and wildlife areas. Other special parks, resources, and viewscapes are scattered throughout town. All of these places are important to the residents and serve to define what Ogunquit is.

B. OGUNQUIT IN 2020

In 2020 the ***Downtown*** will be the core of the community, containing the central services, shops, and restaurants that serve the community. Businesses will be proud to operate here, and new businesses will be attracted (including convenience shopping, pharmacy, unique little shops, boutiques, a craft collaborative, an outdoor café, and a hardware store, as well as improving the quality of existing shops). Pedestrians will be able to move about in safety and with ease, thanks to sidewalk improvements, better traffic flow, new bike paths, and fewer crosswalks. Despite these changes, the Downtown will retain its New England character (improved lighting and landscaping).

Route 1 will continue to be the principal corridor into and out of the Downtown, but it will have a noticeably different feel. The New England character and pedestrian environment established in the Downtown will extend along this corridor. Pedestrians will be able to move around more easily and in greater safety due to new bike lanes and sidewalks along Route 1, including extending to the Ogunquit Playhouse. Vehicular traffic will be more prominent here, but commercial growth will have been controlled. Ocean views will be protected and the streetscape will be more attractive with trees, granite curbing, improved lighting, and underground utility lines.

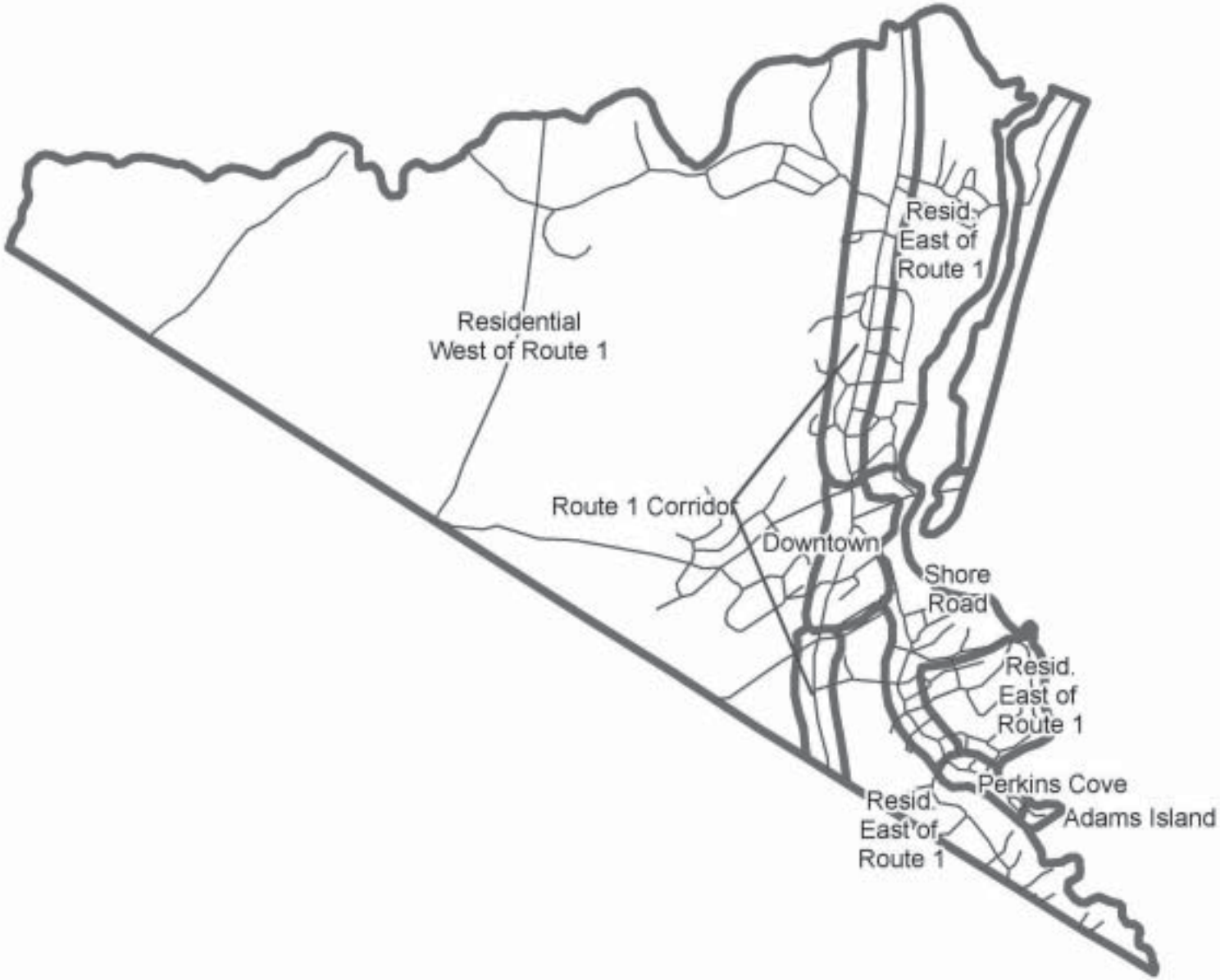
Ogunquit Special Places



Other Special Places (# of votes):

Leavitt Theatre (2)
Perkins Cove Footbridge (2)
Village School (2)
Ogunquit Arts Collaborative Gallery (1)

Ogunquit's Neighborhoods



Ogunquit's Neighborhoods

In 2020, the historic character of the ***Shore Road*** will be preserved. Expansion or new development will have been curtailed, or at least where it does occur, it will have conformed to the historical character of the area. Aesthetics will be improved with new tree plantings, new lighting, new sidewalks, and granite curbing and pedestrian safety will be improved by removing some crosswalks and improving the area's signage. All this is to be accomplished with special attention to the balance of residential and commercial interests.

Perkins Cove will retain its look and feel of quaintness by maintaining its role as a functioning fishing village (allow parking for fisherman and preserve fishermans' rights and privileges). This role should be complemented by focusing future commercial development, if any, on cafes and restaurants, pushcart sales, juried crafts, or outdoor entertainment. New sidewalks and improved lighting should be added in conjunction with these new pedestrian-focused businesses. Public parking could be restricted and the parking lot turned into greenspace, thereby making the area more pedestrian friendly. The bridge should be maintained as it is.

The residential areas ***East of Route 1*** will retain their current character. This character is defined by historical homes, views to the ocean and estuary, Rights-Of-Way to the waterfront, and buildings that complement each other. With this goal in mind, there is currently no consensus on how to achieve it. Some suggest clustering houses on smaller lots in order to preserve the open spaces and views, and others suggest increasing the minimum lot size and setbacks and restricting the number of square feet that can be built. Single family housing should be promoted; additional condominiums, timeshares, inns, restaurants, or multifamily housing units should be discouraged. Better lighting and new infrastructure improvements (water and sewer) will serve these neighborhoods, and parking regulations near the footbridge should be enforced.

Residential areas ***West of Route 1*** will counterbalance the denser development in the eastern part of town. Wooded areas and open spaces will be preserved for recreation and habitat protection. Again, there was not much consensus on methods to accomplish this goal. Some suggest clustering housing and requiring that the rest of the land be preserved as open space while others suggest spreading the housing out across the rural area. Other visions for this part of town include encouraging moderate income housing (especially for young families and the elderly) and prohibiting communication towers and campgrounds/RV parks. Ogunquit will partner with other towns and organizations to protect open areas and wildlife habitat (land trusts) as well as offer services (for example partnering with Wells to provide fire/rescue services to this area of town).

C. TOURISM STRATEGIES

Ogunquit wouldn't be Ogunquit without tourism. Tourism creates many benefits, but it also has many costs. In 2020, Ogunquit will have better balanced these competing pros and cons by:

• **preserving Ogunquit as a unique place** by retaining the character of the town (perhaps through the use of an architectural review board),

• **maintaining a resource-based tourist** experience that attracts tourists to the town's cultural and environmental resources,

• **maintaining support for local businesses** (perhaps by supporting the creation of proper seasonal-employee housing or creating a welcome plan for out-of-area employees),

• **using user fees to offset the costs to year round residents and businesses** (for example charging more for parking or taxing room rentals),

• **improving the traffic situation**, and in particular addressing truck traffic in town, the toll situation on the Maine Turnpike, and considering a Route 1 bypass to reduce traffic and improve air quality, and

• **rigorously and continually examining the tax balance between businesses and residents.**

D. PARKING AND TRAFFIC

In 2020 there will be less vehicular traffic on the town's major roads and the Downtown will have a safer and more pedestrian-oriented pattern of use. There is no pure consensus on how this might occur, but several options have broad support. There could be an expanded role for public transportation and safer alternatives for pedestrians, which would include bike paths, better sidewalks, and an expanded trolley system. Public parking areas should be less visible, but still efficient and able to conveniently get people to their destination (for example a satellite parking lot could move people from the Maine Turnpike into Downtown and to Ogunquit Beach). A Route 1 Bypass that parallels the Maine Turnpike (mitigating environmental impacts) could remove much of the regional traffic from the Downtown's jammed streets. Finally, the Town could push for an alternative toll structure on the Maine Turnpike that eliminates the incentive to travel on Route 1 through the Downtown.

Ogunquit Vision

VISIONING SESSION NOTES

The Session was held from 8:30 until 2:00 on Saturday, April 20th, 2002. Approximately 80 citizens participated.

Sixty-seven participants indicated where they live in Ogunquit. Of those, 27 lived west of Route 1 and 40 lived east of Route 1. Of those living east of Route 1, 15 lived north of the Downtown and 25 lived south of the Downtown.

WHY DO YOU LIVE IN OGUNQUIT?

Participants were asked why they chose to live in Ogunquit.

Small town
clean
friendly
natural beauty
safe
marginal way
population diversity
beach arts
air quality
topography
small town
arts and culture
closeness of community/friendly
seasonally changing
community
where is it any better?
nearness to the ocean
small town, voice can be heard
close knit community (help each other)
location
inclusive, diverse
arts, culture
famous
beautiful
good restaurants
schools (student/teacher ratio)
seasonal changes (spring, fall, tourists)
small town with sophistication
community spirit
chamber of commerce
recreation- marginal way, tennis, ball field, skating
cosmopolitan
performing arts
geography
beach
small town
variety of things to do
lifestyle
quiet in winter, bustling in summer
Marginal Way
low key-diversified lifestyle
natural beauty of ocean location
safe and secure environment
location/laid back environment
the people
likes the water
the ocean and the people
natural beauty and residents
beach in summer, peace and quiet inwinter
small town atmosphere
Brigadoon quality, alive in summer, sleepy in winter
I love all the wonderful people in town
mix of cultural activity and fishing and informality
peaceful and safe
Beach
Marginal Way
Perkins Cove
small town
friendly
location
chamber
natural beauty/beach
cultural openess and diversity
care of resources
caring volunteers
small/intimate/ comfortable
serenity
proximity to other resources
small community
rural environment
worldly charm
convenient to other cities and towns
diversity of population
friendly people
art friendly
safe/secure town
values its heritage
in Maine
home and enjoy the people
Maine people
potential
our three great treasures
playhouse
country and beach
great community
art colony

WHAT ARE OGUNQUIT'S SPECIAL PLACES?

Participants were asked to locate their favorite places on a map of Ogunquit. After all of the places were identified, participants were asked to vote for their favorite places. Special places with the number of votes received are listed below:

- 46 Marginal Way (lighthosue, flume, rock formations)
- 42 Ogunquit Beach, dunes
- 29 Perkins Cove
- 11 Beach Plum Farm
- 10 Ogunquit Musuem of American Art
- 10 West Ogunquit, undeveloped areas, open spaces, woodlands, Mt. A.
- 9 Estuary, wildlife, clamflats
- 7 Dorothy Grant Common, Winn House
- 7 Library
- 7 Village Center
- 6 Ogunquit River Footbridge/River Walkway
- 5 Shore land south of Narrow Cove
- 4 Narrow Cove
- 3 Ball fields
- 3 Ogunquit Playhouse
- 2 Dump/Transfer Station
- 2 Leavitt Theatre
- 2 Perkins Cove Footbridge
- 2 Shore Road
- 2 Village School
- 1 First School House
- 1 North Bewick Road
- 1 Ogunquit Art Collaborative
- 1 Wyman Land
- 1 Roby's Pond, Moody's Pond
- 1 Waterfall/Town entry on Wells town line
- Baptist Church
- Barn Gallery
- Cedar Pond
- Dunaway Center
- Fire Training Facility
- Island House
- Josiah River
- Marshes
- Nellie Littlefield House
- Ogunquit River
- Recycle Center
- Trolley Trail path

WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF EACH NEIGHBORHOOD?

DOWNTOWN

sidewalk on both sides

take down Hamilton's back to seats and make into a sidewalk

control delivery parking and double parking

fewer crosswalks

maintain current structures

make it pedestrian friendly (add or improve sidewalks)

restore Hamiltons

add local pharmacy

maintain New England character

replace yellow sodium streetlights

traffic/bypass

building maintenance

sidewalks on both sides

safety of pedestrians

parking on Main Street?

expand what is defined as village center

sidewalks on both sides of Route 1

pedestrian tunnel/ bridge

improve site lines- remove Hamiltons

improve quality of clothing shops

lamp post lighting, eliminate overhead lighting

retain small town look and feel

unique little shops

well landscaped

building beautification

keep veterans park the same

outdoor café maintained

maintain small boutique feel

adjust crosswalks (too many)

create a craft collaborative

continue the sidewalk on west side

better sidewalks for more comfortable walking

eliminate the street parking in center in season

renovating run down looking businesses

make our town very pedestrian friendly

promote/support foliage, flowers, etc (aesthetics)

more bicycle parking

sidewalk on west side of Route 1

bicycle paths

aesthetic improvements to some buildings

limit T-shirt shops- more art and upscale merchants

need pride of ownership

limit trucks and speeders

sidewalks on the rest of Route 1

no outdoor loudspeakers

Route 1 bypass for those going north

old time look 1930s

windows good

Hamilton needs work

delivery trucks should be limited to a schedule

sidewalks on both sides

bike path

build bypass

get turnpike to go free to Wells

one-way along Shore Road

widen sidewalks

parking lot south of square

beach shuttle from satellite parking lots

Al fresco cafes

retain central services

positive it will remain a center

municipal services

stores- hardware, pharmacy, clean up buildings

remove Hamiltons

redesign shore road and Main Street

strengthen design review

sidewalks

pedestrian bridges and subways

too many cross walks

maintain New England character

WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF EACH NEIGHBORHOOD?

ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR

sidewalks

bike lanes

clearer identification of handicap parking

landscaping on Route 1 south

stoplight at Ocean Street in summer

left turn from Berwick Road

control commercial growth

landscape buffer zone (trees)

bicycle path

sidewalk south to Playhouse

keep building height restrictions

benches

maintain the New England character

diversity of buildings

sidewalks on both sides

bike paths

lighting

crosswalks

preserve ocean views where they exist

building maintenance

landscaping to beautify

new buildings/ renovations- architecture fitting codes in New England style

bike routes

sidewalk

trolley route expansion to Playhouse

lamp post lighting

parking areas off turnpike with shuttle to town

bike paths

sidewalks

improved landscaping (whiskey barrels, trees)

limit additional growth

parking south of town with trolley service

maximize use of playhouse parking

sidewalks on both sides

bicycle paths

foliage and flower beautification

more attractive street lights

no national chain stores

cap the number of hotel/motel rooms on Route 1

working street lights on Obeds and Route 1

keeping our town pedestrian friendly

bypass of Route 1 for those going north

bike route

a better walking areas from town center to the playhouse with proper lighting

granite curbing all through our area

playhouse/chamber/ former briar brook excellent entrance from south

Juniper Hill stone wall and open space

beach plum farm

bike lanes

sidewalks

lighting

seamless trolley with wells

trees and other vegetation

granite curbstones

underground electric everywhere

street lights like center on all main arteries

eliminate stadium lights

pedestrian control officer on Beach Street

sidewalks on both sides

no strip malls

take property (Village Inn)

maintain New England character

WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF EACH NEIGHBORHOOD?

SHORE ROAD, ADAMS ISLAND

no more commercial development

downward lighting, no glare

improve signage to Route 1 south and at Perkins Cove

speed bump before Billy's

fewer crosswalks

"historic preservation" for buildings

retain current "character" of homes

restrict hotel expansion

sidewalks also west to museum

building- architectural reviews and 'proper look' and renovations

balance of residential and commercial

sidewalks on both sides

keep ocean views

lamp post lighting

limit additional growth

finish sidewalks with granite curbing

stay as is, maintain shops in house setting

architectural review to maintain town's character and charm

close the cove to traffic

retain the ambience of the area

eliminate any further development

granite curbs, better sidewalks on both sides

no parking at all in Perkins Cove at least around the triangle

no more building residential or commercial

better lighting with a more New England look

historic preservation committee to have a better presence

on Adams Island, what is going to happen to island house

no more expansion

historic presence

sidewalk

bike path

parking limit

sidewalk cafes

more benches

no more conversions from residential property to commercial

do not widen shore road

plant trees on shore road

maintain old and historic buildings

bike paths

side walks on south side of library

signage to parking and museum

PERKINS COVE

maintain parking for fisherman and lobstermen

restrict back parking lot to local use for residents and businesses

refocus lighting

compliance with glare ordinance

no more building expansion

remove tourist parking area/ban cars

replace parking with a park

increase trolley service

maintain character of fishing village

remove yellow lights in Cove

improve boatyard- no cars

maintain/preserve fisherman's rights and privileges (and tour boats, sailing, etc)

walk only area/park/no more commercial activity

maintain bridge as is

review docking rights/ system mooring

satellite parking

lamp post lighting

trolley access only

maintain "character", same look and feel

no parking except for businesses and fishers

maintain quaintness

additional natural type landscape

maintain fish shacks

keep busses out

keep fishing boats and recreation boats

limit spotlighting

protect commercial fishing

eliminate parking on Oarweed Road

residents and commercial traffic only

less parking, especially around traffic

more a pedestrian walkway

don't change a thing

no fences

outdoor entertainment for families such as puppet show, jugglers, music, etc

view easements

no parking zone except for fishermen and core residents

outdoor cafes and dining

historic plaques

extend boardwalk, bridge to boatramp

less glaring lighting

permit pushcart sales, juried crafters

more benches

remove paving and replace with green areas

retain architectural character as an old fishing village with residences with lights

no more benches

remove stadium lights

no public parking in the Cove

no further development

no more benches

WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF EACH NEIGHBORHOOD?

RESIDENTIAL EAST OF ROUTE 1

restrict building

enforce parking restrictions

increase lot size and decrease density allowed

no more multi-family units

expand historic district

reduce glare

speed bumps on Ocean Street

limit/eliminate landscape lighting

restrict (increase) lot size to greater than one acre

no condos or timeshares

increase lot sizes and setback requirements

height restrictions

town to purchase land-parks (family parks not for dogs)

restrict view blocking, ocean views can't be blocked

cluster housing

young families

limit height of new buildings

extend water and sewer

maintain minimum lot size

limit to single family homes

maintain open space (Hoyt's Lane)

architectural review board for entire town

promote families living in town

houses that are razed should be no bigger than what was there

pretty much keep it as it is

path on Marginal Way needs to be made safer

no cluster housing

single family only

zoning

limit square foot area

ROWs to estuary

maximize lot size

retain residential character

private residential singly family only

no more B&B, inns, restaurants

no more parking at footbridge

no future development possible

RESIDENTIAL WEST OF ROUTE 1

preserve wooded areas with landtrust common land

increase buffer areas

town purchase for park

reconsider Route 1 bypass

eliminate York toll

increase minimum lot size

maintain conservation area/acquire some land

increase lot size- 2 acres

no cluster housing

sidewalks up berwick to Agamenicus

assisted living facility

moderate housing

affordable development (cluster and seasonal)

effort to define areas of new development

town purchase, work with regional land trusts

no campgrounds or RV parks

no "apartment style" highrise buildings

change lot sizes required

Minimum lot size

consider limiting the number of new permits per year

open space- cluster housing

young families

green area with cluster housing

preserve space for wildlife

tax breaks for open space

housing for families

maintain open space

moderate growth with limited building permits

satellite parking

promote moderate income family homes

re-zone minimum 2 acre lot size

extend residential protection area to 250'

develop recreation area

town offer substantial tax breaks to leave it as open space

beyond the public water and sewer system, the house lots should be 2.5 acres minimum

move toll booth entrance north from Ogunquit area and move closer to exit 2

no communication towers

cluster

limit growth to maximize open space

retain wildlife areas and corridors

dog park

large park with a playing field

increase frontage setbacks

new construction blasting limited to offseason

no cluster housing

town buy parcels/land trust

assisted living facility

clustered housing with mandatory green space

shared fire and emergency services with Wells

larger maximum sized lots

widen shoreland zone for Ogunquit River

maintain open space with clustered housing

all development has greenspace

housing for the elderly

WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF TOURISM?

PROS

Lower taxes

income from parking lots

support of "culture" by tourism

new "interesting" visitors/people

attraction of tourists to become new residents

keeps up good appearance

jobs- year round

jobs

brings good restaurants

taxes?

Improved services

parking revenue

employment

commercial property tax base

quality restaurants

keeps town standards high

income (parking, employment, lower taxes)

public transportation

business variety, quality

maintains performing arts/culture

cultural exposure

tax base

fabulous restaurants

income (revenues from parking)

money to maintain the resources in town

keeping landscape up by businesses

income from tourism

lower tax rate

increase in property valuation

diversity (international, ethnic)

helps support our areas

helps fund our security

our only industry besides the Molly Corp

should help the taxes with the money the tourist bring to Ogunquit

our famous summer theater

we need to try to manage this industry as well as possible to make it a place that

both the tourists and residential can live with

Perkins Cove and the Beach is a pro and Marginal Way

income to businesses

income to working population

good restaurants

nice shops

summer theater

arts and cultural events

full time fire department

full time medical services

diverse population

business support for fundraising efforts of the community

lower property taxes

generates surplus in parking revenues

number of people that come here as tourist to become residents

supports small business owners

brings diversity when tourists leave

parking fees

many residents were tourists first

business income

community owners, restaurants, good variety and good quality

seasonal and permanent jobs

sustains cultural interests

fine restaurants

income, lower taxes

employment opportunities

diversity of visitors

playhouse

bus system

fine performing arts

CONS

traffic

crime

cost of services

destruction of habitat/ natural environment

resurfacing of roads

loss of quality of life

overcrowding on Marginal Way/Beaches

water/air quality

inequitable taxation (business/residential)

traffic

insufficient contribution business to town with increasing costs to residents

traffic/parking

difficulty managing bubble crowds

commercial property tax base

not enough seasonal employees/housing

wear/tear on natural resources and infrastructure

safety getting through crowds

traffic (2 months)

crowds

stress on municipal services

parking

traffic

crowds

increased community services (police, maintenance)

not enough police control on the beach

cigarette buts

more pollution/trash

commercial tax rates versus residential tax rates

excessive traffic

overcrowded beaches

undercurrent of town politics and business interests

"money talks"

traffic

the businesses in town do not support the cultural events in general

impact on the infrastructure

air pollution, more litter

WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF TOURISM?

CONS, continued

traffic

trash

overload on facilities

added cost to town

increase cost of food

no parking to residents

enjoy labor day

traffic

wear and tear on all natural resources

increase safety risks

cost to our infrastructure

increases drug traffic

traffic

crowding

noise, air pollution

limits our access to beach/other public places

over taxes our municipal services

littering throughout the town

creates imbalance from summer to winter

threatens our environment and quality of life

traffic problems

stress on public services

overcrowding

quality of life

fireworks

STRATEGIES

increase parking fees

Route 1 bypass to reduce traffic and improve air quality

more equitable taxation between businesses and residents

re-route or control traffic during July 4th

move July 4th fireworks to another date

contributions from businesses to support low income families

and decrease residential taxes

raise cost of parking to reduce the cost of services

increase environmental areas and "green space"

consider increasing parking rates (balance)

improve transit system for employees coming in

add proper seasonal housing

work to increase

welcome plan for new out of area employees

address truck traffic and tolls

put walking patrols on the beach

keep paid parking

provide parking south of town

increase user fees for non-residents

seasonal toll booth at

entrance to town

eliminate toll booth at Exit 4 or lower fee to help traffic through town

dollar tax on room rate

traffic cop for pedestrians

maintain a resource based tourist experience

accent on cultural tourism

accent the things a high-quality tourist wants to have

maintain support for locally owned businesses

raise tourist fees

raise impact fees

architectural review board

eliminate sidewalk (or sidework) art show

eliminate christmass lights in the summer

WHAT IS YOUR VISION OF OGUNQUIT'S PARKING AND TRAFFIC SITUATION?

MAINE TURNPIKE EXIT

would not improve traffic in Ogunquit

cost

move toll

where, Capt. Thomas Road?

intrusive- change nearby resident's lifestyle

elevate traffic

Captain Thomas Road (not Berwick)

encourage more residential development

would need traffic light/ gas station

raise weight limit on Turnpike

would need signage

no benefit

more traffic, wider roads to accommodate more cars

concern about how it would feed into Route 1

not in the best interest of the Village setting

negative impact on wildlife

unless the toll at exit 4 is moved an interchange would hurt instead of help

need a new toll in Kittery and tolls should be commensurate with mileage

new interchange at Tatnic Road

bypass along Route 1

no curb cuts from Agamenticus to Tatnic

growth will be increased and traffic will increase

ROUTE 1 BYPASS

decrease traffic downtown

increase the cost for land taking

loss of housing/green space

less disruption to residents versus the current Route 1 congestion

benefit to Route 1 businesses

better "downtown" people moving

where????

alternative to congestion

allow for wider sidewalks, paths, etc

tunnel

concern noted about the impact on property owners

negative impact on wildlife

would divert traffic

location should be parallel to current turnpike

maybe put a bypass on the power company ROW

will not solve traffic problem

better change to increase the problem

ALTERNATIVES

increasing pollution

add a warning light on the Maine Turnpike that says "traffic backed up 1 – 2 hours in Ogunquit"

satellite lot

jitney buses

free shuttles/trolley

move tolls to just past Wells to help alleviate Route 1 congestion

satellite parking off turnpike with a trolley to the downtown (like the Saco conference center)

parking before you enter town

ten to fifteen minute turnaround for trolleys

express toll service from parking

season trolley pass

close York toll booth

equalize/reverse load limit for trucks

moving the toll both makes the most sense

right turn only out of shore and beach

underpass for pedestrians to parking garage and movie theater

move toll booths to Wells

lower Turnpike fee from $1.50 to $0.50

Route 95 is a bypass, bring tolls down to a reasonable fee

Appendix:

This appendix includes eight vision statements from communities that completed the process outlined in this Handbook. Use these examples from Arundel, Carrabassett Valley, Harpswell, Kennebunkport, Newry, Sanford, Turner, and Waterboro as a guide to determine how a vision process might benefit your planning efforts.

Additional Visioning Resources

For additional information on community visioning, visit some of these resources:

The **National Charrette Institute** is a nonprofit educational institution that helps communities a collaborative planning process.
http://www.charretteinstitute.org

The **Green Communities Assistance Kit** is a step-by-step guide for planning and implementing sustainable communities. This site is hosted by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.
http://www.epa.gov/greenkit/index.html

The book by: The **American Planning Association** has joined with 60 other public interest groups to form *Smart Growth America*. This coalition will advocate better growth policies and practices at local, state, and federal levels to promote farmland and open space protection, neighborhood revitalization, affordable housing, and livable communities.
http://www.planning.org/resources-yc/smartgrowth.htm
http://www.smartgrowthamerica.com/

Community Visioning: Planning for the Future in Oregon's Local Communities is a report by Stephan Ames on Visioning in Oregon.
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Community Visioning: building a strategic vision for the future is a slideshow by Stephen Ames on visioning in Oregon.
http://projects.dcilgp.qld.gov.au/seq2001/documents/pdf/vision_amespresentation_280901.pdf

A Guide to Community Visioning: Hands-on Information for Local Communities is a handbook by Steven Ames. It was published by the American Planning Association.
http://www.communityvisioning.com/aguidetocommunityvisioning/
http://www.communityvisioning.com/home/

Models of Strategic Visioning is a primer on several state's visioning programs, including Oregon, Pennsylvania, Missouri, and Arkansas.
http://www.drs.wisc.edu/vision/visinf/vmodels.htm

A Vision for Arundel

NOVEMBER 4 and 11, 2002

Prepared by Planning Decisions, Inc.

Arundel is a rural community. It has deep forests and open farmlands. It has friendly people, pretty neighborhoods, and a good school. It is peaceful, safe, and quiet.

Arundel is also one of the fastest growing communities in Maine. These rural characteristics, combined with the town's proximity to beaches, cities, and shopping, are attractive to newcomers and long-time residents alike. Despite the pressures of growth faced by the town between now and 2020, the town's rural character should not change.

SPECIAL PLACES

Arundel's special places are spread throughout town. Whether for swimming or canoeing or birdwatching or contemplating, the Kennebunk River, which borders the town to the south, is one of the town's most important places. In addition, various open spaces –wooded areas, farmlands, conservation areas – and the road corridors that access these places – Alfred Road, Brimstone Road, Route 111 – signify the ruralness of the town's landscape and residents. A Good school, the trolley museum, and the cluster of buildings at the intersection of Route 1 and Limerick Road are other important special places where residents meet and form a community.

These special places, the ruralness of the town, and the town's location create an attractive community that will continue to face development pressures through 2020. Arundel recognizes these growth pressures, and will work to accommodate growth in a manner that complements the ruralness, the special places, and the values that exist in town today.

Commercial development should be environmentally friendly and should reflect the values of the town's residents. Larger businesses or business parks should be located at the northern edge of town along the major transportation corridors. Smaller businesses and town facilities could be centered around a community center or village that also supports residential housing (including multi-unit affordable housing).

Residential development should include everything from multi-unit affordable housing to large lot residential housing and upscale infill housing. Cluster development could allow residential development while encouraging the protection of open spaces and natural resources. Housing options and services should be available for the town's growing elderly population, and recreation areas should be within easy reach of all residents (so residents don't have to go to other towns for recreation opportunities).

NEIGHBORHOOD VISIONS

Within this general pattern, the following are the visions for each of Arundel's neighborhoods.

Traveling the ***Route 111 Corridor*** from east to west should be a continuum from commercial development to farmland preservation. The eastern edge of the corridor near the Biddeford border should have larger businesses, perhaps even an environmentally-friendly business park. This should be followed by higher-density residential development for the elderly and affordable housing. The western edge of this corridor should be dedicated to farmland pres-

ervation with large-lot residential development set back from the road in the woods.

The ***Thompson/Irving Roads*** neighborhood should be primarily residential. Housing units could be on larger lots that reflect the neighborhood's current rural character. This is where the majority of the larger-lot homes could be built in the next 20 years. There should be expanded recreation opportunities in this neighborhood.

The ***Mountain Road*** neighborhood could have new assisted living or retirement living facilities as well as new high-density affordable housing near Biddeford. There should be a school in this neighborhood with ample recreation opportunities in a centrally-located recreation facility that serves all of the town's residents.

New residential neighborhoods in the ***Limerick Road*** neighborhood should complement the established residences in the neighborhood. Some of these new residences could be higher-density single-family developments that permanently protect significant open space resources. There should be a new recreation/conservation area with access to the Kennebunk River. The potential to add a new school in this neighborhood is increased with the recreation opportunities that exist with the utility corridor that runs through the center of Arundel.

The ***Route 1 Corridor*** should be the commercial heart of Arundel. The northern half of the corridor should have most of the larger businesses that move into town, including a business park set back from the road in the woods. The southern half should be full of smaller commercial, retail, and service businesses that could become into a new community center or village. This community center or village could be the heart of Arundel's community.

The ***Old Post Road Corridor*** should remain in much the same state as it is today. It should remain rural, with many of the environmentally-sensitive areas preserved. Any residential development in this corridor should be single family housing on smaller lots. Some commercial development immediately adjacent to the rail line might be located in the northern corner of this corridor, but much of the rest should be dedicated to preservation.

The ***River Road*** and ***Sinnott Road*** neighborhood could have more single family housing on larger lots with some upscale infill housing that reflects the character of the current neighborhoods. Open spaces and wooded areas should be preserved and there should be recreation opportunities along the Kennebunk River. Some tourism-related businesses could be located in this neighborhood along Log Cabin Road and at Town House Corner that reflect the character of Kennebunkport and Freeport.

A Vision for Carrabassett Valley

NOVEMBER, 2001

Prepared by Planning Decisions, Inc.

Carrabassett Valley is known far and wide as a haven for active recreation. Carrabassett Valley is skiing, climbing, and hiking. It is biking, skating, cross-country skiing, and fishing. Golfing. Hunting. Snowboarding. Sledding. Camping. Swimming. Snowshoeing. But when residents and visitors alike slow down to catch their breath, they discover how attractive Carrabassett Valley is as a year-round community.

Carrabassett Valley is a community in which friendliness is sacred and everyone knows each other. It has schooling that attracts students from across Maine and around the world. Scenic views and a quality of life that compare with anything in New England.

The combination of recreation activity and an attractive year-round community is Carrabassett Valley's alluring riddle. It is what makes Carrabassett Valley special. Retaining this alluring combination of characteristics in 2020 will be the Town's benchmark for success.

SPECIAL PLACES

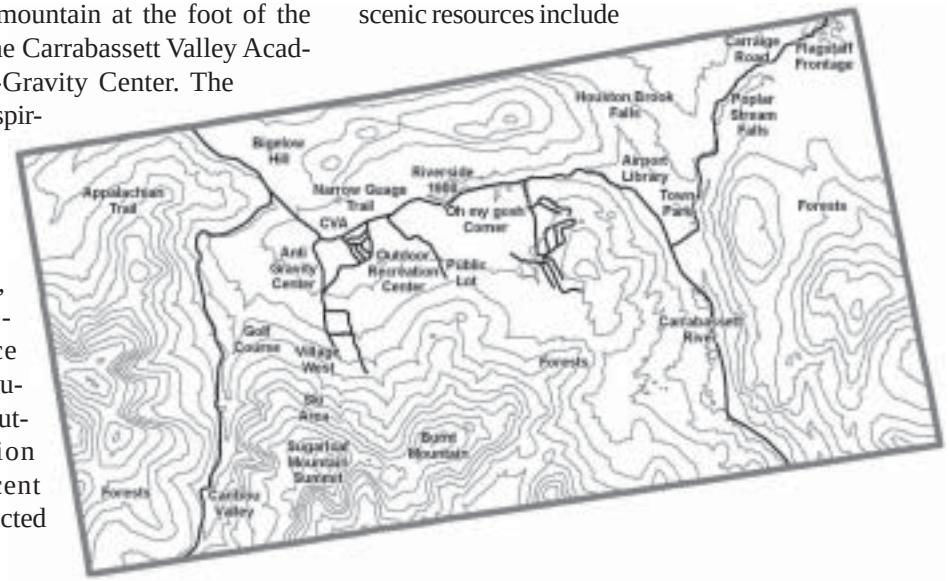
Carrabassett Valley is full of special places whose character should not be changed by 2020. More than half of a mile above the valley floor, the summit of Sugarloaf Mountain is not only the highest point of land within 50 miles, it is also the most prominent place in Town. Whether preparing for a plunge down the slopes or enjoying the view, the summit is exhilarating.

From the summit it is a quick trip down to the ski area and its amenities. Whether it is golfing in the summer, skiing or snowboarding in the winter, sightseeing from the summit, or dining or shopping at the base area, these facilities are crucial to the town.

Farther down the mountain at the foot of the Access Road are the Carrabassett Valley Academy and the Anti-Gravity Center. The Academy attracts aspiring skiers from around the world; the Anti-Gravity Center, not even open for one year, has become a tremendous resource for residents and students alike. The Outdoor Recreation Center and adjacent 2,000 acres of protected lands are important resources to residents and visitors alike.

The Carrabassett River forms the town's backbone. It not only connects the upper and lower valleys; the river and its tributaries create a web of important places across the town. Starting i Caribou Valley, Houston Brook Falls, and Poplar Stream Falls, the river tumbles through the valley. The Narrow Gauge Trail follows the river and provides a wonderful riverside trail from the mountain down to the Town Park

Scenic views abound. "Oh My Gosh Corner," with its sweeping views of Burnt, Sugarloaf, and Crocker Mountains, is a scenic resource as is the view from Bigelow Hill. Other scenic resources include



the views of and the views from both Burnt Mountain and Bigelow Mountain. Trails are recreational areas for Carrabassett Valley. The Carriage Road from Valley Crossing to the Frontage on Flagstaff Lake is an important place. The Appalachian Trail makes its way through Carrabassett Valley. In addition, all of the forests in the town are important resources.

DEMOGRAPHICS IN 2020

The Carrabassett Valley of 2020 should resemble the Carrabassett Valley of 2001. The demographics will be similar- the same proportion of active residents, students, and employees as there are today. There will be moderately more year-round residents. There will be slightly more seasonal residents. There should be more summer tourists visiting the area than there are today, playing golf, hunting, biking, and playing on the water. Also, there will be modest growth in the number of winter tourists that use the mountain, Outdoor Recreation Center, and other winter resources. These tourists will be more in number and more consistent throughout the seasons.

NATURE AND LOCATION OF GROWTH

In 2020, there should be a village or community center in Carrabassett Valley. This will have many of the town's resources and services in one location. The center could be some retail shopping, services, restaurants, cultural activities (including a theater, library, cultural center, etc.), or residential housing. The location of the village or community center is uncertain, but it could be located at the base of the Access Road, near the Outdoor Recreation Center, or in the Valley Crossing area.

In 2020 residents and guests will have a more diverse range of recreation opportunities available to them, especially summer activities that attract visitors in what is now a quiet season. These could include expanded golf opportunities with a clubhouse, athletic fields for tournaments, indoor skating and or rollerblading, expanded opportunities at the Anti- Gravity Center, boating on Flagstaff Lake, or more accessible hiking and biking trails in the woods or along the Route 27 corridor.

Other opportunities that should be available in 2020 include cultural activities. These will include an expanded summer series, a pavilion and cultural center, a ski museum, and a multi-generational center (for dance, chorus, theater, book groups, and poetry readings). This should be located in the village or community center. An outdoor leadership program could be available to residents and tourists alike.

In 2020, there should be more partnerships that have been so successful in the past. Building on the success of the Sugarloaf Golf Course and the Anti-Gravity Center, he Sugarloaf

Mountain Corporation, Carrabassett Valley Academy, and the Town of Carrabassett Valley will have created more year-round opportunities. These could take the form of affordable housing, employee housing, seasonal housing, economic promotional opportunities, recreational opportunities, or other cultural resources. The Penobscot Indian Nation, which currently owns one-half of the land in town, will be a partner in these activities whenever it becomes appropriate.

Sugarloaf Mountain ski area will continue to provide stable year-round employment and will be a profitable year-round business. Infrastructure that protects the quality of the environment will have been added, and aesthetically pleasing architecture and quality development that offers affordable housing to residents and ski area employees will have been developed.

A Vision for Harpswell

MAY 4, 2002

Drafted by Planning Decisions, Inc.

In Harpswell the ocean is all around. Rocks, trees, fields, islands, farms, and stone walls combine to create an ever-changing landscape. The smell of salt water and mud flats hang in the air. The peaceful evenings are lit up by stars. Harpswell has a diverse natural beauty.

There is diversity in the people as well. There are newcomers and old-timers, fishing families and retirees. They meet in the town's small historic villages, or on their boats in the harbors. They meet at the post offices, or in the libraries, or on walking trails, or at school events. Harpswell is a cozy, caring community, where people see each other often. Every citizen is equal, and every citizen is listened to in town meetings.

This is the special character of Harpswell that must endure forever.

SPECIAL PLACES

The character of Harpswell is reflected in its special places.

Harpswell consists of long narrow peninsulas. The views along the roadways driving through Town, Routes 123 and 24, capture its diversity and beauty. There are inlets and farms, forests and historic churches, harbors and villages, stone walls and winding paths.

The tips of the Harpswell peninsulas are special places to visit and look out on the ocean, including Pots Point, Land's End, and West Cundy's Point. Special coves and beaches include Sandy Cove, Mackerel Cove, and Stover's Beach.

HARPSWELL'S FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The Town of Harpswell wishes to keep its rural and peaceful atmosphere, and preserve its natural environment; but at the same time remain affordable and home to a diversity of people, young and old, fishing families and business leaders, newcomers and old-timers.

To accomplish both goals, the Town's future development needs to be carefully managed. The Town's water supply must be protected, and to achieve this alternative sources - such as desalinization - might be considered. Access to the waterfront should be preserved, especially for fishermen and women. Pump-out facilities could be established in each harbor, in order to protect water quality. Open space can be purchased and protected, at the same time that land for affordable housing is identified and made available. In particular housing for the elderly should be developed within existing village areas. Libraries and post offices should also remain in village centers. Historic preservation activities should maintain the buildings and surrounding character of old houses and village centers. Bike and walking paths can connect the villages and school and recreation areas. Road improvements, street lights, and signs can be limited to preserve the rural, peaceful, unhurried feel of the community. Local stores and businesses should be encouraged, particularly inside village areas, and chain operations discouraged. The reestablishment of regular ferry service to Portland, either at Bailey Island or South Harpswell, could reduce automobile traffic.

HARPSWELL'S VILLAGES

Within this general framework, here are the visions for the individual villages, neighborhoods, and areas within Harpswell.

Cundy's Harbor should remain a village that accommodates multiple activities - from fishing access to tourist/restaurant to village center (library, church, retail - and a relocated post office). Because the village sits atop a fragile water supply, and is limited in land availability, future development ought to be on a very small and careful scale. New housing should be sized to fit with the existing buildings, be located on land near the village (not spread out along Cundy's Harbor Road), and be planned in a way that does not harm the water supply or further burden traffic. The village itself should be made more walkable to discourage driving - new sidewalks put in, utility poles buried below ground, and bike paths created to connect to other parts of Town. Retail should be locally-owned and small in scale. Holbrook Wharf ought to be maintained with a small restaurant and working fishing operations, and restrooms and a pump out facility might be added. Land could be purchased to create beach access to Sandy Cove for local residents.

Great Island should continue to develop as a community center. It could include a town recreation area - with ball fields, tennis courts, skateboarding, a place for seniors - either near the Town Hall or at a more intensively-used school complex. The area is a good location for a post office (moved from South Harpswell). Route 24 should be preserved as an open, winding, beautiful entrance to Town - curb cuts for new developments restricted, street lights discouraged, and bike trails set alongside. This is an area where marine-related and home-based businesses can develop - but not strip malls. Water activities should remain quiet, with controls place on jet ski usage. Open space can be identified and purchased, and walking trails can be developed to connect the areas.

Orrs and ***Bailey Islands*** should also retain their village/fishing/rural character. Restaurants, shops, post office, and church ought to remain in the village center. The Orrs Island Library should be preserved and become a community center. Town landings with parking should be added to both islands. A ferry connection to Portland might be reestablished here (or in South Harpswell). Public transportation and bike paths could connect to the villages, thus reducing car traffic. Public access to the waterfront for fishermen and women, and to Cedar Beach (including access for the handicapped), should be created and maintained. Mackerel Cove ought to be preserved in its current state. Development and seasonal conversions should be limited in order to protect water supplies.

North Harpswell should retain its current historic character. Skolfield Farm's buildings and orchards and fields ought to be fully protected by a land trust. A village center could be created near the church and Bailey Store. There small-scale stores and home-based businesses might be encouraged, so long at they do not require too much parking, and are done in ways sensitive to the historic architecture of the area. Public access to the water can be created at Lookout Point and on the state property off Allen Point Road. The vegetable corner is a special place, but traffic at the intersection of Mountain Road and Route 123 needs careful management. At the north end of Route 123 a cluster affordable housing development with green space could be built. Route 123, like Route 24, should retain its rural character, with protected open space, bike paths, no street lights, junk removed from yards, and no strip commercial development.

South Harpswell should also retain its historic village character. The old Fuel Depot is a key resource for the future. It can be redeveloped with recreation and open space in mind for local residents. The Dolphin Marina is currently and should remain a focal point for a restaurant, fishing boats, and pleasure boats. More water access should be created for fishermen and women. Parking should be added to the existing wharf. The library could be open more hours, and serve as a community center. The West Island School should remain open for early grades. The post office might move to Mountain Road. Craft stores, gas and food stores, should be encouraged. The historic character of Potts Point an the Auburn Colony should be preserved. Development should be carefully controlled to protect clam flats and preserve the water supply. More recreation in the form of a bathing beach, recreation area, biking and walking trails, should be created.

THE CHALLENGE FOR HARPSWELL

After many years of relative stability, Harpswell has been discovered as a beautiful place to live by the outside world. New people and new houses are part of Harpswell's future. This is unavoidable. This vision describes one way that the future change can be directed to occur in ways that enhance the community as a whole. The challenge for the Town and its Comprehensive Planning Committee is to put in place the tools to accomplish this vision.

A Vision for Kennebunkport

OCTOBER, 2001

Prepared by Planning Decisions, Inc.

CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNITY

Kennebunkport has a small-town charm derived from the distinct areas that comprise the Town as a whole: Cape Porpoise, Dock Square, Goose Rocks, Turbats Creek, Cape Arundel, the Village, Wildes District, and Town House. Each area evokes a distinct feeling. Yet each also shares a common Kennebunkport heritage of historic New England colonial and shingle-style homes, sidewalks and shade trees, views of the shore and the forest, working waterfronts and farms, proud churches and locally-owned stores. The Town is peaceful and safe, with excellent municipal services. Kennebunkport is a good place to raise children. Its people are friendly, caring, and involved in community life.

Kennebunkport also has a lively cultural life. From its diverse and talented citizens, Kennebunkport has created good schools, fine libraries, a historical society, conservation groups, service clubs, and an array of interesting art galleries, restaurants, and stores. When people need more, they can take an easy drive from Kennebunkport to Portland or Portsmouth, or to Boston, or to several major airports for points further away.

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

The identity of Kennebunkport is captured in its well-known places such as the historic homes in the Village, Dock Square, and the village at Cape Porpoise. But there are many other smaller places that are also special to Kennebunkport's identity.

VILLAGES AND AREAS

Here is the vision that emerged from the visioning process for how Kennebunkport's distinctive villages and areas might look in the future.

Cape Porpoise will remain an unpretentious, livable community. Its homes will reflect its diverse year-round population - including fishermen – and will be modest in scale and affordable. The harbor will be home for fishing and lobster boats as well as pleasure craft. The village stores will be oriented towards basic goods, such as groceries and hardware. The village itself will be walkable, with maintained and extended sidewalks. For those seeking a longer walk, there will be bike paths and walking paths. Streets will remain narrow, and automobile traffic will be minimized. The area's 19th century feel will be preserved.

Goose Rocks Beach will retain its flavor as a family-oriented village with cottage-style houses. Tide's Inn will remain a landmark. The beach will remain uncrowded and walkable, with public bathrooms and public access. The beach patrol will manage boat and jet ski use, and dogs will be controlled. Wildlife areas and the piping plover will be actively protected; more land will be in conservation easements. New houses and stores will be in scale with the buildings already there. The Route 9 area is one where new village-scale residential development may be considered for the future. If more parking is needed, it will be away from the beach and village area.

Dock Square will remain a retail center. Its stores will include day-to-day convenience items as well as high quality, locally owned galleries and shops. The historic architecture of the area will be strictly maintained, and buildings will stay in scale with the surrounding Town. The commercial area will cover the same area it does now – it will not expand. The appearance of Dock Square will be improved by burying utility lines and screening dumpsters. Parking will be provided off-site, with connecting shuttles. There will be public restrooms.

The Main Street/Village Residential area will remain the center for municipal services in town – with the Town Hall, fire station, and library. Improved sidewalks and bike paths will make it easier to get around. The tree canopy overhead will be maintained. Historic homes and structures will be maintained; none will be torn down. Traffic will flow smoothly and all-day parking restricted. Bed and breakfast establishments will be encouraged in historic buildings.

The farm/forest area will have an expanded Town forest, continuing farmland uses, free-range and domestic animals, hiking trails and picnic/recreation areas, wildlife refuges, watershed protection areas, and wilderness and open space. The character of the area will remain rural, with few public improvements. (Note: This is an area needing intensive planning attention in the immediate future).

Cape Arundel will retain its nineteenth century resort character, with the Colony Hotel, the Cape Arundel Inn, Walker's Point, St. Anne's, and the shingle-style houses. Parson's Way will remain open, the Colony Beach Road will remain unpaved, Wandby Beach will remain public. Better ways of moving tourists and visitors through the area will be found. New homes, as well as the reconstruction and modification of existing homes, will be in the same scale and style, and use the same materials as the older homes.

The Riverfront area will have a town dock and public access to the water. There will be visitor slips for those who want to come to Kennebunkport by boat. An improved sidewalk system will make walking in the area more convenient and safer. Government Wharf and fishing activities, as well as other marinas and yacht clubs, will be maintained. Buildings will be mixed in their use, and small in scale, as now. The river will be kept clean from pollution and protected from degradation. A maritime museum will be a place for teaching about the town's long maritime history.

The Town House area will develop as a small village, with a neighborhood of affordable housing and small convenience stores nearby. As much of this area is in Arundel, the area's future will be cooperatively planned with the Town of Arundel. Farms will remain in the area. This may be a location for parking for a shuttle or trolley to Dock Square. There will be converted hiking and biking trails.

PRINCIPLES FOR MANAGING FUTURE GROWTH

The Town of Kennebunkport will need to accommodate more residents and visitors in its future. The goal is to do so in ways consistent with the character of the Town, in ways that preserve the distinctive landmarks of the Town, and in ways that enhance the villages and areas of the Town. With this in mind, here are some key principles to guide future growth.

1. Preserve existing village identities. Kennebunkport's unique villages and districts are part of its identity. New development should take place in a way that respects and even enhances the differences among the various areas, rather than homogenizing the Town and blurring differences. At the same time, new development within the villages should maintain the character of that area and be compatible with the existing scale and style of construction.

2. Encourage new housing growth in new village centers. In the visioning sessions, citizens suggested considering possible new village residential centers at Town House, in the North Street/School Street area, and in the Route 9 area of Goose Rocks Beach. The wisdom of

A Vision for Kennebunkport, continued.

these alternatives require technical study from the Growth Planning Committee, since any new village center will require innovative zoning policies and utility expansions. In general, new housing clustered in village centers is the preferred pattern of development.

3. Encourage alternative means of transportation. Preserving the character of the Town and its villages will require reducing both the volume of automobile traffic and the need for on-site automobile parking. Affordable alternative transportation, a network of bike trails, sidewalks, and walking trails throughout the town for year-round residents, and a strategy for tourist/visitor management involving off-site parking lots and shuttles or trolleys, are all essential for the future quality of life in Kennebunkport. The Town should require new development to address alternative transportation issues.

4. Maintain the diversity of the population. Part of the quality of the community in Kennebunkport is its diversity, the fact that it includes young as well as old, fishermen as well as software consultants, old-timers as well as newcomers, and all income groups. To maintain a diversity of people, a diversity of housing types and costs must be maintained as well. This goal was strongly endorsed by participants in the visioning session.

5. Maintain good communications. Kennebunkport is distinguished by its friendly atmosphere and extensive participation by volunteers in community and civic functions. The way to keep involvement high, and to avoid "us vs. them" confrontations, is to maintain good communications through meetings, newsletters, web sites, and the like.

6. Keep the local elementary school. This is part of the small scale and personal feel of Kennebunkport and should be maintained.

7. Promote the performing arts. Culture and the arts are important components of the quality of life in Kennebunkport and the community needs to find ways to foster them.

8. Protect natural and scenic resources. The most frequently mentioned special places from the visioning session include beach and coastal areas, islands, brooks and rivers, open fields, and forests. These are important habitats for wildlife and plants as well as being valued by residents for their natural and scenic qualities. They are part of the essential and enduring character of Kennebunkport, and they must not be compromised by future development.

A Vision for Newry

APRIL, 2002

Prepared by Planning Decisions, Inc.

Newry is a great place to be outdoors. It is set in the Western Mountains along two valleys running alongside the Bear and Sunday Rivers. It has forests and valuable minerals like tourmaline. It has beauty and peace and quiet. At the same time it has world-class skiing. It has snowmobiling, hiking, hunting, and swimming.

The wide outdoors brings with it breathing space for the individual. In Newry people are free. They can choose their own lifestyles and pursue their own interests. This is why such a small Town has such a diversity of talented people and is part of such a vibrant school system. The combination of natural beauty, outdoor recreation, and individual talent makes Newry a great place to live.

NEWRY SPECIAL PLACES

The character of Newry is reflected in its special natural and cultural features. The Sunday River Resort is the most prominent. It dominates the southern Sunday River Valley. Across the way is Bald Mountain. A tree-canopied road snakes along the Sunday River valley floor and passes a covered bridge along the way. The Valley has the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School, the Letter S, the Yates field, and Royer House.

In the next valley over, separated by a mountain, is the Bear River Valley. A drive along Route 26 reveals peaceful fields and spectacular views of the surrounding mountains (especially from Davis's Field and Wight's Field). The Bear River flows over numerous waterfalls and into several holes on its way south, including the Deep Hole, Step Falls, and the Olde Mill Site and Falls. The church lies in the heart of the Bear River Valley.

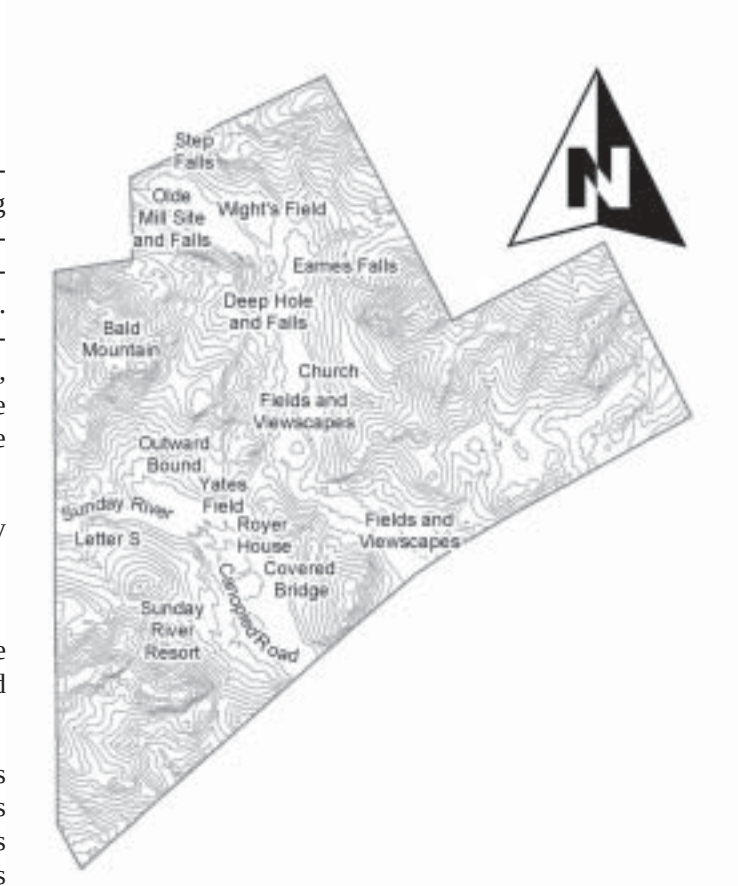
These are the special places that embody Newry's identity.

THE FUTURE NEWRY

Newry's future is deeply intertwined with the Sunday River Ski Resort, the Outward Bound School, and surrounding communities.

The Sunday River Ski Resort is the Town's dominant business. In ten years the resort plans to double the number of skiers, expand trails and lifts, build a new golf course and tennis courts, add a new hotel, add an amphitheater and health club, double the number of homes and condominiums (in its existing village), and expand recreational activities such as tubing and snowboarding, as well as cultural activities. The Sunday River Resort will be better connected to users from Boston, Canada, and overseas; and it will be used for more months of the year.

The Resort will, as a result, be an even more



important source of tax revenue to the Town. The Town of Bethel will remain Newry's commercial and service hub, and Newry will keep development small- scale, locally-owned, and rural. Newry will work with the Sunday River Resort to create improvements to the access road or alternative access into the Sunday River Valley in order to improve emergency access to the ski area.

The Hurricane Island Outward Bound School

A Vision for Newry, continued.

is the second key influence on Newry's future. The school will expand its season through offerings of short adult courses. It will link with more remote sites in Canada. It will continue to provide search and rescue services to the region, and to maintain hiking trails. The Town shares the School's desire that the area retain its rural wilderness character overall. The Town will work with School representatives to create The Loop Trail in a way that doesn't infringe on the property rights of the people living in the community.

Because Newry plans to remain rural with a small town character, it must partner with surrounding communities to provide essential services. The Town already works with its neighbors to provide fire, education, and solid waste services. In the future Newry will also cooperate with neighboring towns to provide emergency services and regional economic development services. In the regional economy, Newry will remain a rural area for recreation and residential life, while Bethel will be the service center for shopping and groceries although residents will continue to travel to Norway, Rumford and New Hampshire for goods and services.

Houses in the future Newry will be as diverse as the people who live here. There will be affordable housing for people who work on the Mountain or at Outward Bound. At the Sunday River Ski Resort, a new resort type village development might occur. The Bear River Valley should remain residential and agricultural. A bike trail or lane should be added along Route 26.

Businesses in the future Newry will be small-scale, locally-owned, and fit into the natural environment. Examples include a family restaurant, a wood products business, a computer-based business, or expanded farming and forestry.

THE NEWRY COMMUNITY

Newry today is a blend of the old and new, and in the future it will continue to be so. There will be more people coming from the outside to live near the Sunday River Resort in the new housing, and at the same time there will continue to be year-round people whose families have lived here for generations, many along the Bear River Valley. New development contains dangers such as high land and housing costs and a loss of rural character. At the same time it creates the opportunity for new businesses and a richer community life. It is the opportunity for an even more diverse community in the future that this vision builds upon.

A Vision for Sanford/Springvale

JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 2002

Prepared by Planning Decisions, Inc.

Sanford/Springvale has the "best of both worlds." It has stunning views from its northwestern hills and ridges and quiet repose along the shores of its southern lakes and ponds. The urban cores of Sanford and Springvale are a dramatic contrast with its rural fringes and large undeveloped blocks of land. New housing developments are located near older, established neighborhoods. Traditional manufacturing jobs are located within sight of high-tech jobs. The Comprehensive Plan Update will be successful if the Town is able to retain the essential elements of these different "worlds."

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Sanford/Springvale's intangible characteristics underscore the Town's tremendous potential. Friendly neighborhoods retain vestiges of their historic and ethnic past. Access to urban centers, rural areas, the ocean, and the mountains attract residents and employees alike. The Town is brimming with open spaces, views, and recreation areas that add immeasurably to residents' comfort. Community facilities and services far exceed what is available in any surrounding town.

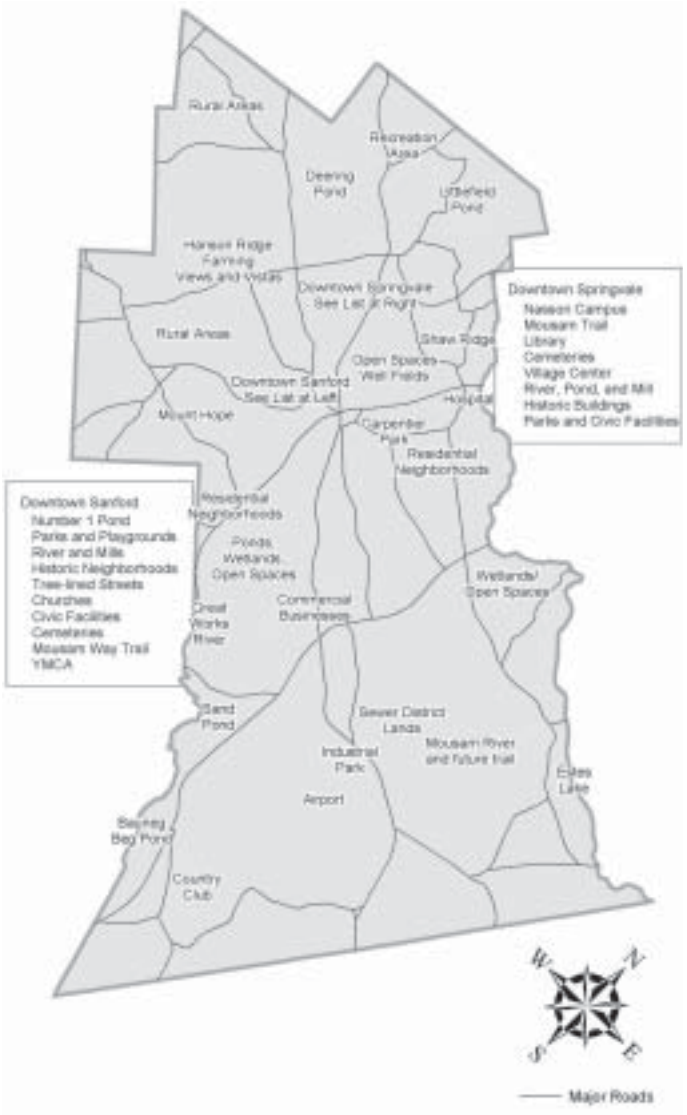
SPECIAL PLACES

Sanford/Springvale is blanketed with special places. These are the places that people think of when 'Sanford' or 'Springvale' is mentioned. Special places deserve extra attention when the forces of change are at work.

Natural and rural features form bookends around the town's urban centers. The northwest part of town is defined by its rural areas - scenic Mount Hope and Hanson and Shaw Ridges, farms and forests, ponds and recreation areas. These features in the north are mimicked in the south - Bauneg Beg Pond, Sand Pond, numerous wetlands and forested stands, Estes Lake, and the Mousam River.

Surrounded by these bookends are Sanford/Springvale's suburban special places. These include the commercial and industrial businesses along Route 109 as well as the airport and country club. The hospital, residential neighborhoods bordering the urban centers, and suburban parks and recreation areas are important to the Town's residents.

Finally, the urban cores are replete with special places. Historic neighborhoods and tree-lined streets, the old mill buildings and their water sources, the Mousam River, recreation resources, and civic facilities define downtown Sanford and are critical to all of the town's residents. Springvale also has numerous civic resources, including the former Nasson College campus, library, recreational facilities, and established neighborhoods.



A Vision for Sanford/Springvale, continued.

SANFORD/SPRINGVALE IN 2020

The character of Springvale should be preserved. This should include protecting historic buildings and homes, keeping development pedestrian-friendly (locating new development in the downtown), and continuing redevelopment of the former Nasson College campus. The Mousam River should remain clean and accessible from new recreation areas and an expanded and improved trail system. Facilities, including a gym, magnet school, Veterans Cemetery, Post Office, and fire station should be created or improved.

There should be a range of new development options in Springvale. Infill housing that respects the host neighborhood's character should be created in the village. In other areas, clustered developments and multi-family housing should be created. Retail and other service buildings that mimic the buildings in the heart of the village (with apartments on the upper floors) should be created to ensure the village remains vibrant. The former Nasson College campus should form the core of the job-creation opportunities. These jobs should be predominantly new office/professional jobs

Rural Springvale should maintain its rural character. Undeveloped areas should be protected, perhaps with conservation easements or other preservation options in which the Town wouldn't own the land. This rural area should have more recreation opportunities - especially those that extend the existing trail network - and better access to the recreation areas. The transportation network should be improved. All of the historic sites in Rural Springvale (as well as the rest of the community) should be identified and protected.

This section of town should remain entirely residential. Residential development should be limited. The residential development that does occur should be a mix of single family units on large lots, single family units on moderately-sized lots, and single family units in clustered development. Multi-family residential development and commercial development in this section of town should be limited.

The ***East Side*** should be upgraded through reinvestment in its residential neighborhoods and expansion in the number of available job opportunities. The largest change should be the expansion of health care facilities and services for the elderly near the hospital. Surrounding this health care center should be reestablished neighborhoods that capitalize on their proximity to the East Side's new and improved recreation opportunities (trails, parks, water access) and cultural resources (French Cultural Center, youth center, gymnasium). The East Side's open spaces and scenic views should be preserved. The area should serve as an attractive gateway to the community from Alfred.

New residential development should be predominantly clustered single and new multi-family units, condominiums, and some single family units on moderately-sized lots. The hospital should be the core of any new commercial development, creating numerous office/professional opportunities for the region's residents. There should be some new manufacturing jobs in the East Side.

Downtown Sanford should remain the cultural and commercial heart of the community. This should be underscored by a major redevelopment of the mill buildings and surrounding areas. The redevelopment could include new recreation opportunities on and around the Number 1 Pond and Mousam River, new commercial opportunities in the mills themselves, as well as residential opportunities in the upper floors of the renovated or reconstructed mills. In this and other core sections of the downtown, new pedestrian activities could include an amphitheater, parks, restaurants, galleries, shopping, performing arts center, hotel, and other opportunities. Historic neighbor-

hoods and public spaces should be protected and beautified with more street trees and better sidewalks. The transportation network should be upgraded to improve traffic flow and ample parking should be created.

New residential development should be dense and should mimic the residential development patterns that define the Downtown's historic neighborhoods. Clustered single family housing and multi-family housing should be located within a reasonable distance of Downtown's core. This includes renovation or reconstruction of the mill buildings so that access to town facilities and services is not dependent on vehicular transportation. New business development should be mostly retail, but there should be abundant office/professional and a few new manufacturing jobs available in Downtown.

Southwest Sanford should remain predominantly rural. What limited residential development occurs should not impact the quality of the environment or character of the open spaces. Important natural and scenic areas, in particular the slopes of Mount Hope, the Great Works River, and the numerous ponds, should be preserved. On the eastern edge of Southwest Sanford, the Route 109 corridor should be improved. A traffic solution should improve the flow of both regional and local traffic.

Both residential and commercial development should be limited. Residential development, in order to protect the quality of the many natural areas in Southwest Sanford, should be clustered single- family or multi-family. Commercial development should also be limited - to the Route 109 corridor and comprised mostly of retail jobs.

Southeast Sanford should be seen as a case-study that proves that growth and the environment can coexist. The majority of the new development should occur near the Route 109 corridor. Utilities (water, sewer, natural gas) should be expanded and used as a tool to attract and manage growth. Access to rail lines and the Maine Turnpike should be improved by upgrading existing routes or adding new routes. Industrial and commercial growth should be concentrated in an industrial park or near a new hotel/convention center. Residential development should be connected to a multipurpose trail network and recreation areas. The scenic and environmental quality of the Mousam River and Estes Lake should be protected.

Housing development in this section of town should be multi-family, clustered single-family, or single-family on moderately-sized lots. Business development should be concentrated in a new industrial park along Route 109. These jobs will be predominantly manufacturing and office/professional with some retail jobs along the Route 109 corridor.

South Sanford should be the gateway to Sanford with attractive landscaping along Route 109. Some type of accommodations should be available near the airport, perhaps in conjunction with a conference center or hotel. The airport should be a major resource; the runway approaches should be protected from encroachment and land around the airport should be preserved in case future expansion becomes necessary. Except for industrial and commercial business development around the airport, the rural character of this section of town should be protected. Sensitive wetlands and waterbodies, including Bauneg Beg Pond and El Pond, should be preserved. Better recreation opportunities, perhaps including new ballfields or golf course expansion with new condominium development, should be located in this section of town.

New residential development should be either single-family units on 1-acre lots or clustered housing. These housing units should respect sensitive environmental areas, be located near recreation opportunities, and not impede the airport's operations. Business development around the airport should stress mostly manufacturing and office/professional jobs.

EDUCATION IN 2020

Sanford/Springvale's vision of the education system in 2020 is founded on the premise that a well- educated populace attracts good citizens and good jobs. The education should be thought of as being larger than the School Department. The core of the education system should still be the K-12 system - including neighborhood schools, improved facilities at the Junior High School and High School, and technologically challenging programs. The community education system should include a closer or formal partnership between students and community businesses and between public, parochial, and private schools. This system should also include lifelong education for adults through a college or technical college, virtual classrooms, and distance learning. And it should include a performing arts center for the enrichment of all residents.

A Vision for Turner

NOVEMBER 1, 2001

Prepared by Planning Decisions, Inc.

CHARACTER AND SPECIAL PLACES

Turner is a town of contrasts. It has farm families that go back many generations, and young families who just moved in last year. It has a modern state-of-the-art school and historic grange halls. It has remote undeveloped forests and a busy commercial highway. It has lakes and farms, homes and businesses, villages and open space. Yet all of Turner has these two things in common. The people are caring and friendly. And the community has an open, rural feel.

There is a feeling of home and community in Turner. Many families and family businesses have been a part of the Town for generations. The schools have a widespread reputation for excellence. People are independent, and prefer lower property taxes to city-type services.

The rural character of Turner is felt in its open space, its woods and fields, its scenery, and its peacefulness.

Some of the special places in Turner include Turner Center, with its historic Grange Hall, churches, library, cemetery, and the Leavitt Institute; the views from Turner Hill; the Androscoggin River with its State Game Preserve and boating opportunities; the town beach on Bear Pond; and North Turner Village.

FUTURE GROWTH

Turner will continue to attract development in the future because of its good schools, pretty scenery, low taxes, and community feeling. Commercial development will be concentrated along the Route 4 corridor. Elderly housing and multi-family housing will fit best in Turner Center and Turner Village. Single family homes will continue to be located throughout the community. Within this general pattern, here is the community vision for Turner's villages and districts.

Turner Village will be redeveloped. The town office will be relocated or renovated. There will be a new post office. Old deteriorated buildings will be demolished. There will be new residential development. There will be a park and better access to New River. Access from one side to another on Route 4 will be eased for local residents by a tunnel or overpass. The sewerage treatment plant will be updated.

In ***Turner Center*** there will be new adult education and recreational opportunities around the school, new sidewalks, and a new library.

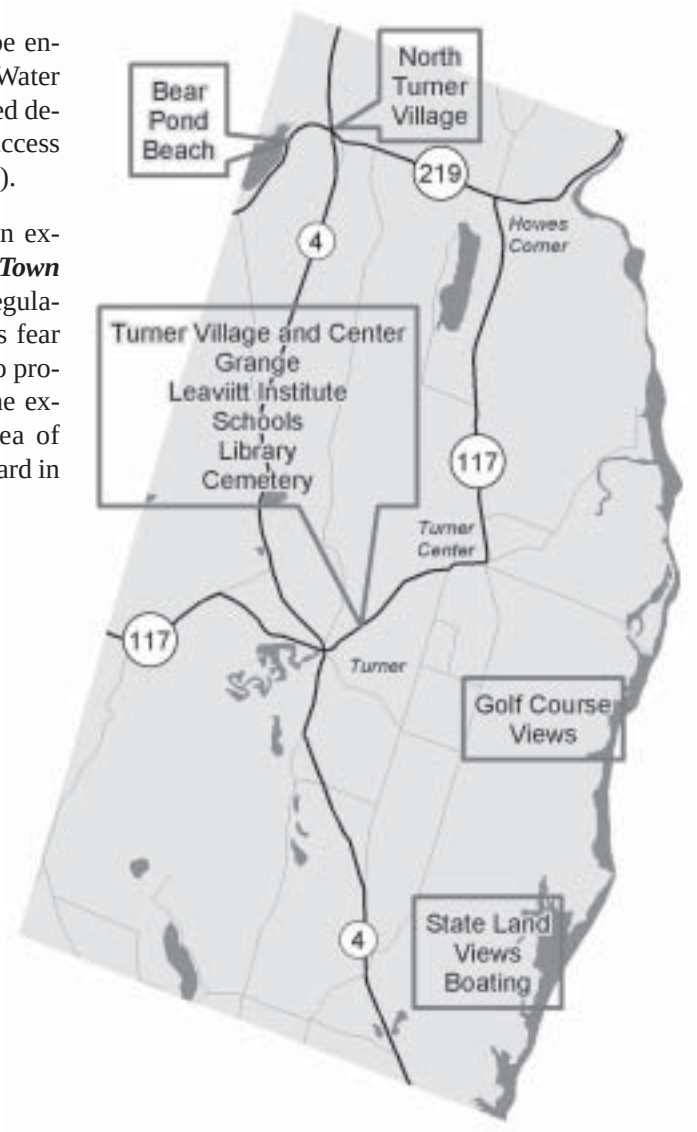
In ***South Turner*** Route 4 will continue to develop and expand as a commercial hub. The road will have four lanes with limited access, plus a turning lane. Public sewer and water will run alongside. The intersection to the Turner Business Park will be improved. Business and commercial development will go all along Route 4 in South Turner (with the exception of used car dealerships). The airport will be expanded and its runway extended. Back away from Route 4, there will be new residential development. Along the river there will be a greenway, with improved access to the state land. The water quality in the aquifer will be protected.

North Turner will stay pretty much the way it is – namely perfect! The post office, GAR, church, and Boofy Quimby Memorial Center will remain. Recreation opportunities will be expanded, with public access to Bear Mountain and a community park on Martin Stream.

There will also be a ballfield at the beach. The Route 219 intersection will have an overpass. Ponds will be protected. Route 4 will develop commercially, as to the south, but on a smaller scale, with limited access commercial parks, and no large retail "box" stores.

The ***rural areas*** of Turner will continue to have farm activities. Where farming is no longer economically viable, the state government will purchase open space to keep the Town's rural feel. Agricultural-tourism will be a new economic activity, with people coming from the cities to the south to experience life on the farm. Also food processing and related agricultural industries will be encouraged, such as cheese processing. There will be trails for walking, for snowmobiles, and for cross country skiing. Where housing occurs, clustering will be encouraged. There will be no junk yards. Water bodies will not be threatened by "funneled development" (the practice of combining access for many inland homes to the waterfront).

Note: Residents at the visioning session expressed a special concern about ***future Town regulation.*** Some see the need for new regulations to protect the water bodies. Others fear that such regulation will be a tool used to protect existing seasonal homeowners to the exclusion of local people. This is an area of sensitivity for the Town as it moves forward in its planning.



A Vision for Waterboro

MAY 6, 2002

Prepared by Planning Decisions, Inc.

GENERAL CHARACTER

Waterboro is a peaceful rural town with historic village centers, uncrowded lakes, hills and nature preserves – all located within easy driving distance of the Maine Turnpike and Greater Portland. Waterboro is a place where you can listen to loons and observe wild turkeys. It has old country roads with farms and stone walls alongside. It has hills and mountains, lakes and ponds. It is a friendly community. It is a great place to raise children - with excellent schools and wonderful outdoor recreation opportunities. It has four distinct historic villages, each with a unique feel and function. It has historic houses, churches, farms, community buildings, and cemeteries.

Some of these special places are shown on the map to the right. These places are part of the permanent identity of Waterboro, in the past, today, and for the future. Waterboro, in short, is a great place to live.

VILLAGES AND AREAS

Waterboro is one community, but it is composed of several distinct villages and areas. Each plays a special role in the town fabric, and each has a special future.

South Waterboro is the ***gateway*** to Waterboro, the primary road entrance to the south. In the future it shall have renovated homes and businesses, and a sidewalk and bike path along Route 202. Elm trees and landscaping will shade the stores and sidewalk. Historic buildings will be restored; new buildings will retain a small scale, village character. The roadfront stores will consist of small, locally-owned, attractive retail shops - such as a pharmacy, dry cleaners, bookstore, restaurant, and coffee shop - as well as professional offices. Behind the retail businesses there will be small business parks for wholesale and light manufacturing activities. New housing will be developed in a village-type neighborhood settings. If a new middle school is built, it would be connected by sidewalks and trails to the residential areas. Open space behind the roadways and houses will be preserved.

Waterboro Center is the ***civic and cultural hub*** of the community. A new library and new post office would be located near to the Town Hall. Other possible civic/cultural buildings in the area would include a community center, a senior center, an ecology education center, or an arts center. The Center is also a place for seasonal businesses such as restaurants and food stores, gift shops, sporting goods stores, and craft shops. Finally, this is a place where additional elderly housing or assisted living units could be built. The village will be easily walkable, with sidewalks and safe intersections and new landscaping. Land will be acquired around the village to serve as parks and open space. New recreational opportunities will be developed with winter sports on Ossipee Hill, and possibly a park at the northern end of Town House Road. Outside of the village area, the rural character of the farms and open space will be preserved.

East Waterboro is the ***shopping/retail center*** of the community. The intersection of Routes 202 and 5 is the best place to concentrate retail uses. A grocery store is there now. Other large stores, or an office/business park, could be located right next to or behind the existing development. The retail/business area should be clustered around the intersection, with good sidewalks and landscaping between stores. Outside of this intersection, East Waterboro should remain rural and residential. Open space along Deering Ridge and Roberts Ridge should be conserved, with hiking trails and picnic areas. Housing may be clustered near to the school.

Lake Arrowhead is a ***new residential village*** in the community. It has grown rapidly in the last twenty years, and the vision for the next twenty years is consolidating and managing what has already occurred, and integrating residents into the larger community. The consolidation involves encouraging residents to buy abutting vacant lots (both keeping open space

and reducing future construction); upgrading roads; adding an elementary school in the area; creating satellite fire stations; putting in sidewalks and bike paths; improving the water system; creating ballfields and recreation. Over time, the residents of Lake Arrowhead should be encouraged to become more involved in community activities and organizations.

North Waterboro is a ***rural village*** of the community. It is important that the character of this area be preserved for the future - the Elder Grey meeting house and cemetery, the saw mill, the churches, the farms. Small-scale retail shops would be located in the village along Route 5. Housing for the elderly could also be located near the village. Other new residential housing should be inconspicuous and scattered - no large subdivisions should be allowed. The land along Chadbourne Ridge and Edgecomb ridge should be considered for conservation and nature trails. Recreation should be encouraged in the area.

Ross Corner and the **Pine Barrens** are ***rural open space*** areas. This area, with its lakes and Pine Barrens, has a wilderness fee. It is rich in wildlife and natural features. Traditional logging, farming, hunting, and fishing activities should continue. Any new housing that is developed should be small in scale and in a cluster arrangement, thus allowing large blocks of open space to remain protected. Roads should

not be greatly improved, remaining dirt where possible, so as to discourage trucks and through traffic. The Pine Barrens conservation area should be expanded and linked to Ossipee Hill, creating one large nature preserve. Trails for snowmobiles and ATVs should be designated, as well as trails reserved for hikers only. This area must retain its wilderness character.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Business development should constitute between 10% and 20% of future development in Waterboro - a higher percentage than at present. Residents would most like to see locally-ownedbusinesses (not chains), professional offices, technology-based businesses, recreational businesses (bowling alleys or golf courses), high technology clean manufacturing, book stores and coffee shops, medical offices, a garden center, bakeries and pubs, etc. Any business should be clean, quiet, and compatible with a primarily residential community.

Town role in creating future

Participants in the Waterboro visioning session indicated strong support for an active Town role in creating the vision. Almost all said that the Town should strongly consider:

- more parks and recreation
- land purchase and protection programs
- stronger zoning regulations
- new bike and walking trails
- more recycling incentives
- impact fees for new development
- a new business park

For actions such as a growth cap, a sewage disposal plan, and a jet ski ordinance, there remained overall support, but in these cases there were significant minorities in disagreement.

Community Visioning Handbook

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