

A VISION FOR SANFORD/SPRINGVALE

Based on the Visioning Sessions of January 24 and February 7, 2002

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

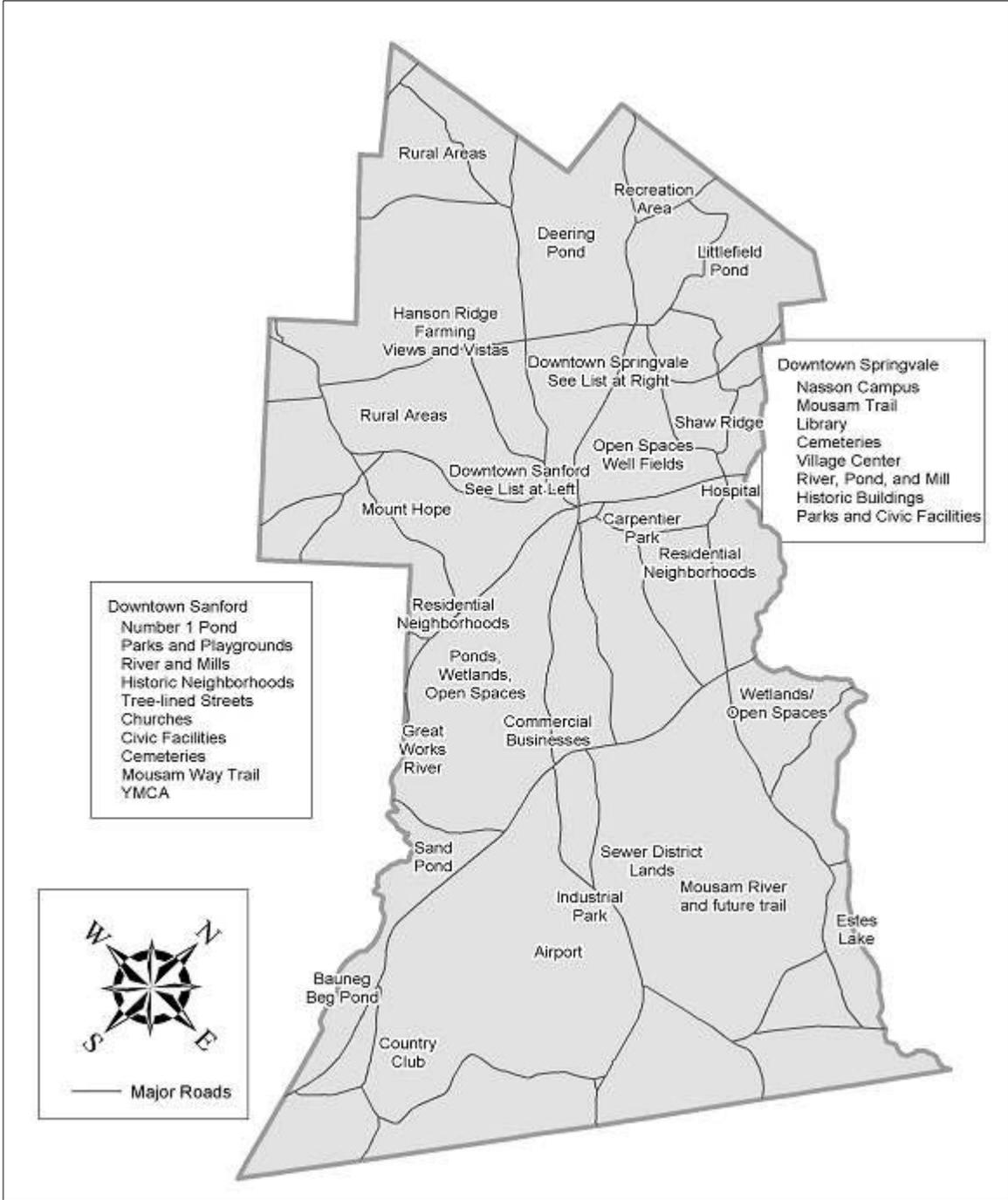
Sanford/Springvale is blanketed with special places. These are the places that people think of when ‘Sanford’ or ‘Springvale’ is mentioned. Special places deserve extra attention when the forces of change are at work.

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.

SANFORD/SPRINGVALE'S SPECIAL PLACES



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.

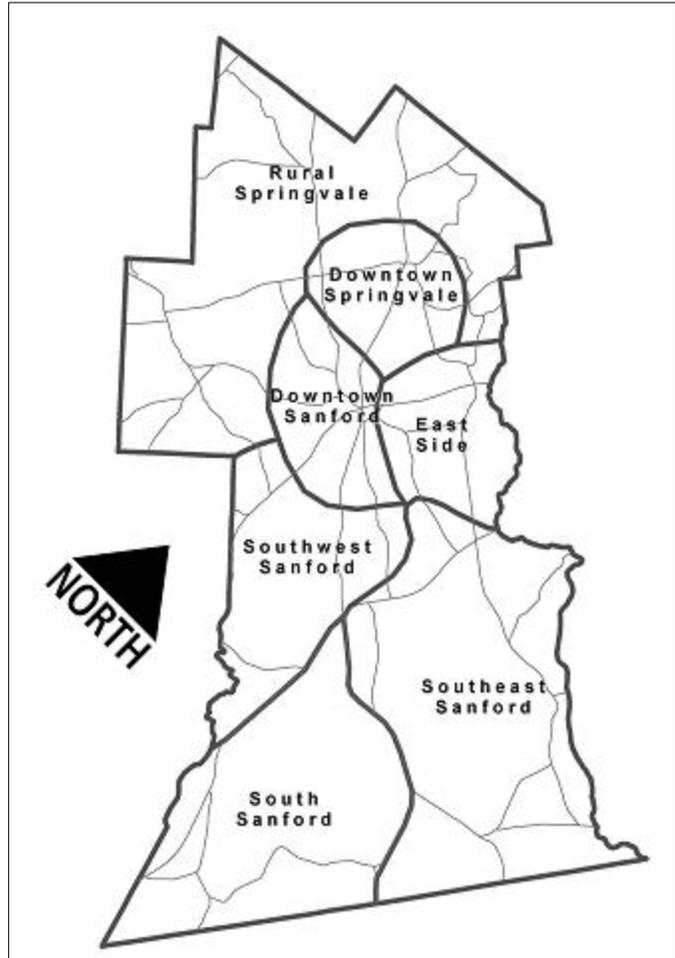
This section of town should remain entirely residential. Residential development should be limited. The residential development that does occur should be a mix of single family units on large lots, single family units on moderately-sized lots, and single family units in clustered development. Multi-family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