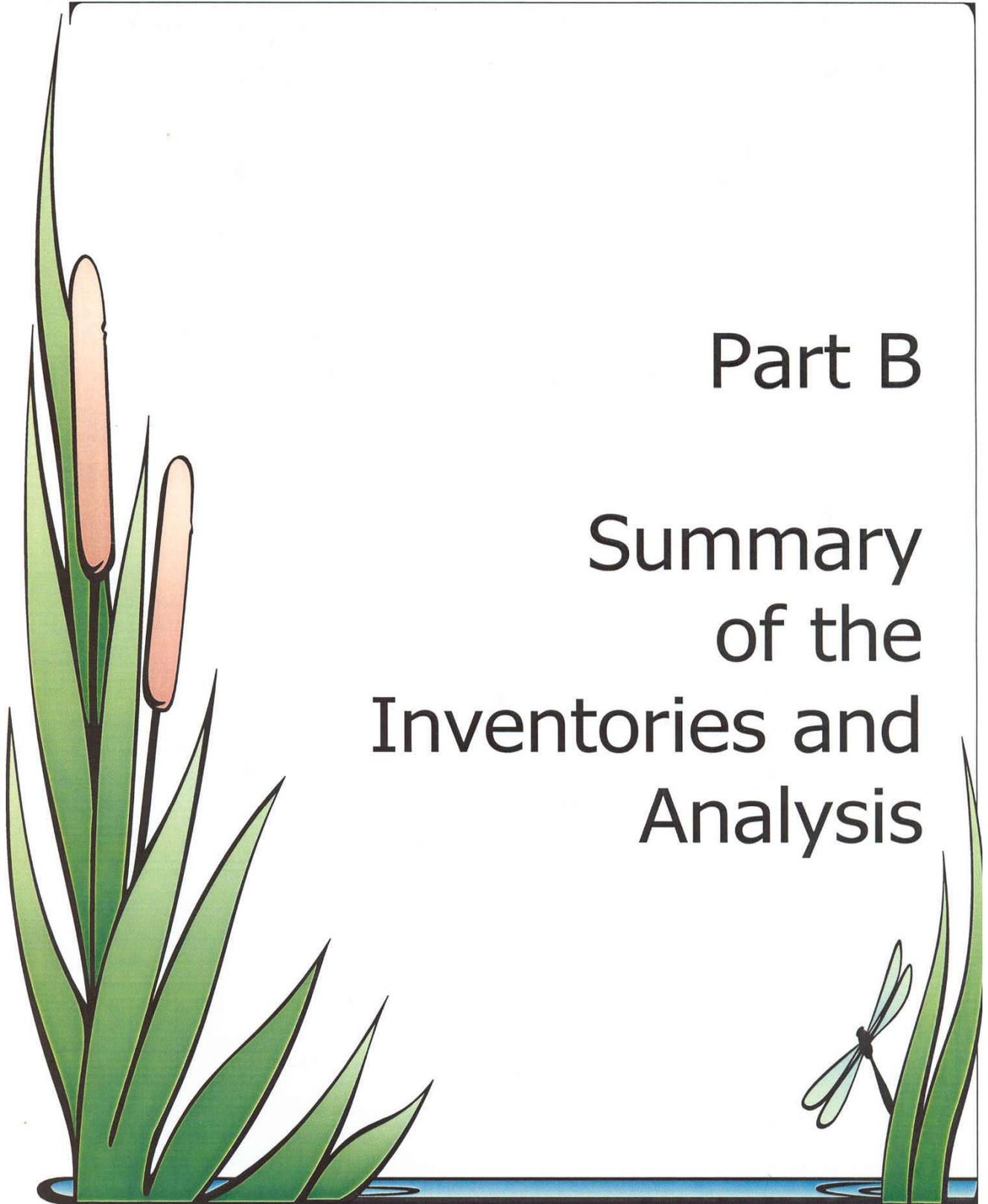


## Part B

# Summary of the Inventories and Analysis



## **CHAPTER 3.**

# **SUMMARY OF UPDATED INVENTORIES**

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(Revised 10-7-02)

The Town of Sanford's story is about being a center. A population center. A housing center. An economic center. A cultural and recreation center. The Town has filled this role for its residents and those of interior York County for centuries.

But a lot has changed, and a center in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is different from a 20<sup>th</sup> Century center. Automobiles can whisk people into the countryside in a matter of minutes. Telecommunications can link people and businesses together that are actually miles apart. Hydro power has been replaced by hydrocarbons. Food is imported from around the world.

Sanford/Springvale's story in 2002 is about adaptation to its role as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century center. Housing is spreading from Sanford/Springvale to surrounding communities, taking with it housing pressure and younger and more affluent families. The global economy and nascent economies in surrounding communities are siphoning off some of the Town's economic activity. As the population spreads out, the regional transportation network gets heavier use.

Despite these changes, Sanford/Springvale's future will be defined by its role serving the needs of the region's residents more than ever before. People will visit Sanford and Springvale for special services and health care. Most of the region's jobs will be located in town. People will use the town's recreation and cultural resources. As it adjusts, Sanford/Springvale will shoulder both the responsibility and the benefit from being a 21<sup>st</sup> Century service center.

This section summarizes the updated inventory sections. The full sections are contained in the appendices.

### **A. Trends Toward a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Service Center**

Regional trends underscore the movement of Sanford/Springvale towards a 21<sup>st</sup> Century service center.

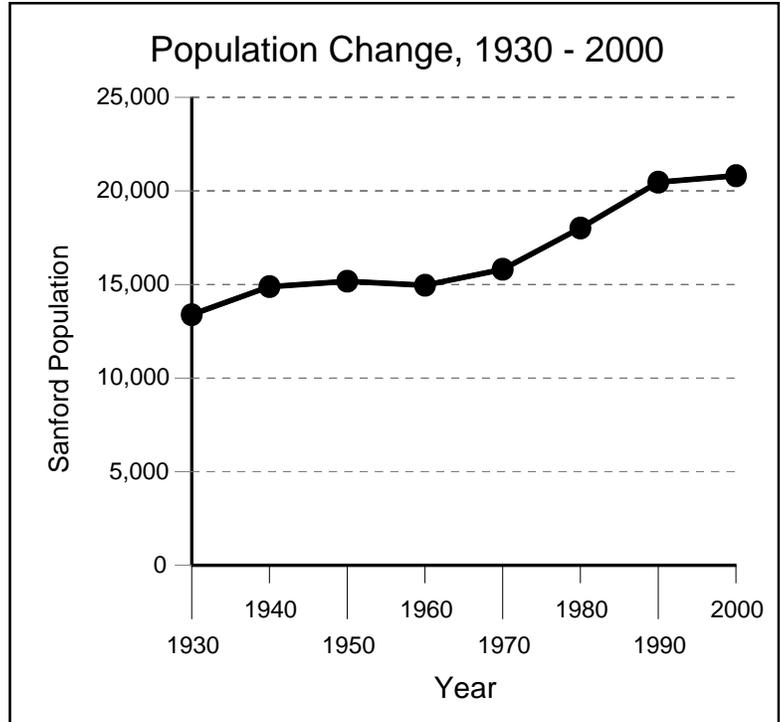
#### **1. Population Trends**

In 2000, Sanford's population reached 20,806. Historically, growth has been cyclical—strongest during the boom years of the 1970s and 1980s and weaker at other times. In the 1990s, the population increased by 343 residents, or 1.7%. It

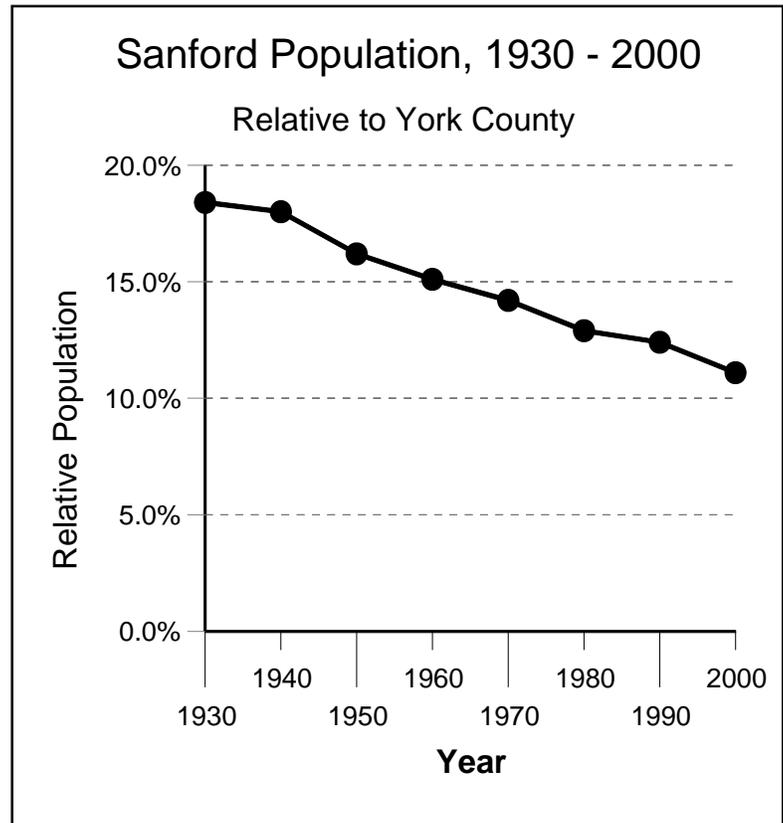
has been slowly moving from downtown Sanford and Springvale towards more rural areas. During the decade, the population in the Downtown areas contracted by 1.6 percent while rural areas grew by 8%.

This same trend is occurring on a larger scale between Sanford/Springvale and the surrounding communities. Despite the Town's population growth between 1930 and 2000, York County grew at a much faster rate. In 1930, more than 18% of York County's residents lived in the Town of Sanford. By 2000, this number was down to 11%. This change is even more dramatic when the Town is compared with its neighboring communities. In 1970, the total population of Sanford's neighbors was 16,768. By 2000, these communities more than doubled to 36,220 – close to twice the size of the Town.

Much of the region's population growth is occurring beyond the town line, a pattern of growth projected to continue for the foreseeable future. In response, these surrounding areas are improving school systems, creating jobs, and in short becoming more suburban while Sanford/Springvale sees its population skewed toward lower income, less educated households.



Source: US Census



Source: US Census

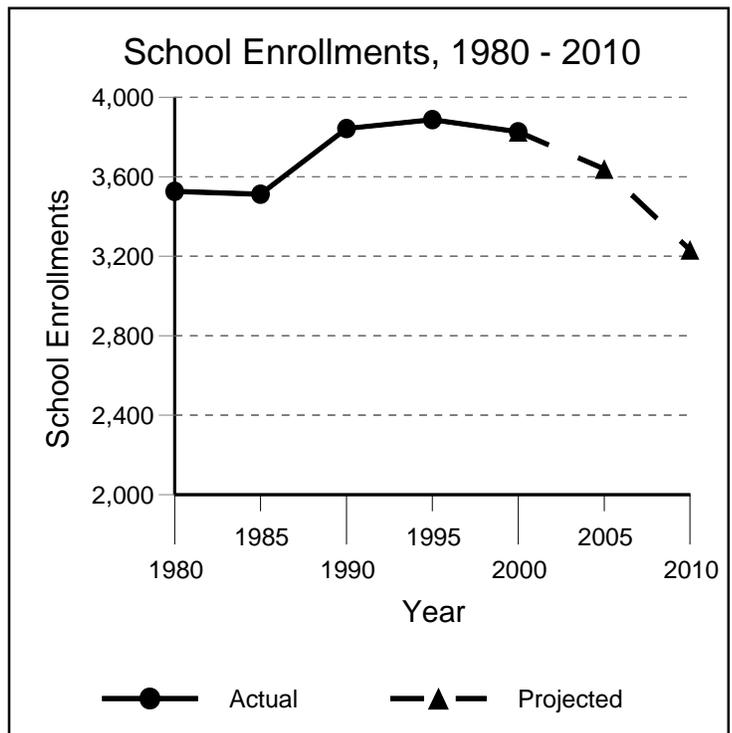
But Sanford/Springvale will remain the service center for itself and all of these neighboring communities. It will have most of the region's job opportunities. It will have the health care facilities. It will be the center for retail shopping, special services, recreation opportunities, and cultural activities. Its role as a service center in a fast-growing region of Maine creates many opportunities to improve the lives of its residents.

## 2. Demographic Trends

The pattern of demographic changes complements the pattern of population change. In general, Sanford/Springvale is growing older, less well educated and less affluent.

In some ways, the Town's residents are better educated than ever before. The percent of residents with a high school diploma has been steadily increasing for decades. This reflects a nation-wide trend towards higher levels of education. However, fewer residents with a graduate or professional degree lived in Sanford in 2000 than did in 1990. This suggests that residents with a college education (a population that grew dramatically in neighboring towns) are choosing to live elsewhere.

Following another national trend, the age of the Town's residents has continued to increase. The median age of a Sanford/Springvale resident was 36.6 years in the 2000 US Census, an increase of nearly 5 years since 1990. Neighboring towns increased at a similar rate, but are on average older than Sanford residents. Despite this, the number of residents between 5 and 17 (school-aged children) increased in neighboring communities and decreased in Sanford. This suggests that families with children are choosing to live in neighboring communities rather than in Sanford/Springvale.



Source: Maine Department of Education; Planning Decisions, Inc.

The average Sanford/Springvale household is earning more than ever (nearly \$35,000 per year in 1999). However, the rate of increase in household income in the Town of Sanford is lower than in the rest of the State and in surrounding communities. Whereas the average Sanford/Springvale household earned the same as the average State household in 1990, by 2006 the average Sanford/Springvale household is projected to earn only 90% of the State average.

While most of these demographic trends are small and subtle, over time Sanford/Springvale will have to adjust its services and facilities to its new demographic characteristics while striving to retain the former balance.

### **3. Housing Trends**

Sanford/Springvale added more housing units than people between 1990 and 2000 (343 people and 615 housing units). This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that the average number of people living in each housing unit is lower than it was in 1990. This trend towards smaller household sizes is projected to continue. The Town has a large number of rental housing units, although the percentage of rental housing units is average when compared with other communities of a similar size.

### **4. Transportation Trends**

Despite the population trend towards neighboring communities, the Town of Sanford remains the service center for all of the towns in the area. Sanford/Springvale and its neighboring communities total nearly 60,000 people, all of whom regularly or occasionally come to or pass through the community to work, eat, and recreate.

The impact of this growth on the community's transportation infrastructure is great. Traffic volumes are increasing rapidly on Route 109 in South Sanford and on Route 11A in Springvale. These two locations are increasing at more than 2% per year. The Route 202 corridor near the Grammar Road is increasing at close to 2% per year.

In addition to traffic volumes, highway safety is an issue to be addressed. The intersection of Oak Street and Hanson's Ridge Road is the most dangerous stretch of road in the town. As high traffic corridors clog with congestion, travelers will seek alternative routes, most of which are on rural roads that are unable to handle high volumes and high speeds.

Improvements to the transportation network are expensive, but they will improve the safety and convenience of residents, employees, customers, and its role as a service center.

## **B. Land Use Changes**

Changes are occurring within Sanford/Springvale that mirror the changes that are occurring within the region. These changes will impact the cost of providing services and facilities to Sanford residents.

Sanford residents are moving away from the built-up downtown areas and towards the more rural areas. In 1960, 89% of the population lived in the built-up centers of Springvale and Sanford. By 2000, 66% of the population lived in the built-up areas of Springvale and Sanford.

Several factors account for this dramatic population shift. First, nearly 80% of the new housing units built in Sanford/Springvale between 1990 and 2000 were located in rural parts of town. Second, housing units in the downtowns are older than the newer housing being built in rural areas. This affects population trends because older housing is more likely to be demolished (thereby decreasing the available supply in the downtown areas) and it is typically smaller housing than that demanded by today's families.

Also, the Town of Sanford's businesses have been moving away from downtown areas. While Downtown Sanford was the primary commercial center for Sanford and surrounding towns 40 years ago, today this same commercial activity is spread out across the town. Manufacturing, service businesses, and retail activity has spread out along Route 109, especially to the south.

In response to this spreading of the population and commercial activity, Sanford has had to adjust the type of services it provides and the manner in which it provides them. Public safety, public utilities, schools, recreation facilities, public works, and others have altered their operations to deliver services to a wider area. Regional partnerships, especially in fire protection, have often helped defray the costs of broader coverage, but in most cases, the Town has had to shoulder an increased financial burden.

## **C. Economic Activity**

Along with changing demographics, the Town's economy is changing.

### **1. Local Economy**

The Town of Sanford's economy is adapting to its changing role. For a century, Sanford and Springvale were synonymous with manufacturing. In the 1960s, manufacturing began to lose ground to other sectors of the economy. By 2000,

manufacturing had been supplanted by service-based jobs as the preeminent occupation. Services accounted for 33% of the jobs in 2001 while manufacturing accounted for 30% (retail, the third leg of the town's economy, accounted for 22%). This trend away from manufacturing is projected to continue.

The economic landscape is changing as Sanford/Springvale's businesses are spreading out across the town. The mills in downtown Sanford and Springvale now stand largely underutilized. They have been replaced by newer facilities located mostly in South Sanford and along Route 109. Much of the retail and service activity has shifted to strip malls and box stores along Route 109.

## **2. Local Workforce**

As production jobs in manufacturing have become more scarce, Sanford/Springvale residents have changed their occupations. More than one-quarter of the Town of Sanford's residents are still production and transportation employees; another quarter are technicians, salespeople, and administrative support personnel. Twenty percent are managers or professionals. In general, commuting patterns suggests that most workers live and work in town, but that those who commute from Sanford/Springvale work to the south and east while those traveling to work in Sanford/Springvale come from the north and west.

## **3. Regional Trends**

Despite all the other changes, the Town of Sanford remains the dominant economic center in the area. While the number of people employed in surrounding communities has been increasing faster than the increase in Sanford/Springvale, the increase has been modest and largely the result of growing suburban populations demanding local goods and services (for example, convenience stores and teaching positions). The Town's public water and sewer, utilities, large labor force, and established business services ensure it will remain the region's economic center for decades to come.

## Employment

	1990	2001	% Change
Sanford	10,347	10,648	2.9%
Sanford Labor Market Area <sup>1</sup>	21,592	22,597	4.7%
York County	89,794	100,557	12.0%
Sanford as % of Sanford Labor Market Area <sup>1</sup>	47.9%	47.1%	Not Applicable
Sanford as % of York County	11.5%	10.6%	

*Source: Maine Department of Labor*

### D. Local Resources

While its changing role in the region demands particular attention, The Town of Sanford, first and foremost, provides for the health and well being of its residents.

#### 1. Historic, Cultural, and Recreation Resources

Sanford and Springvale's rich history has left many historic structures and cultural opportunities within the community. These include the mills, churches, historic homes, neighborhoods, scenic farms and forests, theater, and libraries. These have had various levels of funding and protection to ensure they are available for generations to come. In addition, available recreational activities include parks, playgrounds, trails for hiking and biking, sports fields, a gymnasium, water sports, a YMCA, and recreational programs for residents of all ages.

#### 2. Natural Environment

Seeming to defy its long industrial history, Sanford and Springvale have a very rich natural environment. The topography varies from the dramatic hills and ridges in the north to flat glacial plains in the south. In general, the community is heavily forested with a few open fields, grasslands, and wetlands breaking the canopy.

Critical natural resources are those that are extremely rare in Maine or that are in danger of extirpation. Animals that are critically imperilled in Maine that are found

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<sup>1</sup> Maine Department of Labor defines a Labor Market Area as “an economically integrated” grouping of communities “within which workers may readily change jobs without changing their place of residence.” Sanford’s LMA includes Acton, Alfred, Lebanon, Limerick, Newfield, North Berwick, Sanford, Shapleigh, and Waterboro.

in Sanford/Springvale include Hessel's Hairstreak, the Eastern Box Turtle, and the Grasshopper Sparrow. Plants include Yellow-Eyed Grass, Spotted Wintergreen, and the Great Rhododendron. Habitats include the Pitch Pine-Heath Barren, Atlantic White Cedar Bog, and Pitch Pine-Scrub Oak Barren. Most of these resources are located along in the Great Works River watershed or in South Sanford.

The town's waterways are generally healthy, but are affected by poorly functioning septic systems, surface water runoff from development, industrial activities, and stormwater runoff. Effluent from the Sanford Sewerage District's treatment plant impacts the Mousam River in the summer; the District is working on correcting this problem.

### **3. Municipal Facilities**

The Town of Sanford has completed several recent capital projects. The Town Hall and Annex were renovated and now house the Administrative Offices, School Department, and Police Department. The Highway Department has recently expanded their garage to accommodate more vehicles for storage and repair. Two elementary schools, Margaret Chase Smith and Carl J. Lamb, have been constructed. These investments have all increased the level of service available to the community's residents.

Wear and tear, technical advances, and the need for still better service will require the Town to make more capital investments in the near future. The Springvale Fire Station is almost obsolete since it was built 100 years ago; much of today's fire fighting equipment will not fit into the building. The Police Department needs more space than is available in the basement of the Annex. Many of the School Department's facilities, especially the older elementary schools, need renovation or repair. The transfer station will likely need more space within the next decade. Demand on recreation facilities is increasing and the need for a dedicated community center is growing.

While not a direct municipal expense, improvements to the Sanford Sewerage District's treatment plant will be paid in part by residents and businesses. These improvements will be necessary to reduce summer effluent loading in the Mousam River.

Partnerships, grants, and federal/state dollars often help pay for many of these improvements. But at least part of the money will have to be raised by the Town. The recent financial slowdown, combined with the continuing rise in the cost of education and public services and the prospect of less state aid, may translate into greater tax increases than during the 1990s. However, at least in fiscal terms, the Town has considerable borrowing capacity.

**CHAPTER 4.**

**IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF SANFORD/SPRINGVALE**

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(Revised 10-7-02)

The updated inventories suggest a number of issues and implications that need to be considered in the planning for the future of Sanford/Springvale:

**A. Population and Demographics**

The updated inventory of population and demographics suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the update of the comprehensive plan:

- X The Town of Sanford's population growth between 1990 and 2000 was modest, but that it grew at all was positive. According to the US Census, of the 13 Maine communities with more than 15,000 people in 2000, only five increased their population by more than 1.0% (Scarborough 36%, Saco 11%, Sanford 2%, Brunswick 1%, Biddeford 1%).
- X Sanford/Springvale's population relative to its surrounding communities as well as the rest of York County has steadily declined. This trend is projected to continue and Sanford's role as the residential center in southwestern Maine will continue to change.
- X The population has grown in the rural sections of town and declined in the built-up sections. This trend could alter the type and expense of providing facilities and services to Sanford/Springvale residents.
- X By 2010, a projected decline in the average household size will suppress population growth despite the projected steady increase in the number of new housing units.
- X The Census suggests that while Sanford/Springvale residents were more likely to have had high school diploma in 2000 than in 1990, there was a continuing decrease in the percent of residents with a college degree. This suggests that college-educated residents have been moving out of Sanford/Springvale to other communities.

- X The household income of residents of Sanford/Springvale continues to lag behind that of York County as a whole and the surrounding communities. During the 1990's, household income growth was slower than in York County and most surrounding towns.
- X The share of lower income households living in Sanford/Springvale continues to increase. This trend will have significant consequences for the community if it continues.

## **B. The Local Economy**

The updated inventory of the local economy suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the Update of the Comprehensive Plan:

- X Sanford/Springvale remains a job center, however the type of jobs available in town are continuing a decades-long shift from manufacturing to service and retail positions. This could have an impact on the employment base as well the education and training needs for the Town's residents.
- X The number of jobs available in Sanford/Springvale is not growing as quickly as in other communities in the Sanford Labor Market Area. While nearly half of the jobs available are in Sanford/Springvale, this proportion is decreasing.
- X Three-in-every five employees commute to Sanford/Springvale from other towns, predominantly from towns to the north and west of Sanford. The large number of commuters into the Town of Sanford is projected to increase and will impact the transportation corridors, especially in more rural areas that haven't had the necessary infrastructure improvements.
- X Sanford/Springvale residents are increasingly likely to commute to other communities for employment, typically to the south and east. This trend is projected to continue and will impact the transportation corridors as well as the type of services that are offered by the Town of Sanford.
- X The Town's growing retail and service role, especially in South Sanford, has been contributing to sprawling development and subsequent impacts on transportation, open space, wildlife, and the urban shopping districts. Neighboring communities are becoming more competitive in attracting consumer's dollars.

## **C. Natural Resources**

The updated inventory of natural resources suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the Update of the Comprehensive Plan:

- X The ridges surrounding the developed areas of Sanford and Springvale have significant areas of shallow to bedrock soils. This constraint will make the extension of sewer and water service into these areas difficult and costly.
- X Water quality in Estes Lake has dramatically improved as a result of advances levels of treatment at the sewage treatment plant. While the major source of phosphorous in the lake is the sewage treatment plant, further activities to control nutrient loading to the lake from surface runoff and poorly functioning septic systems may be desirable to assure that future algae problems are minimized.
- X The water quality in many of the Town's ponds, including Bauneg Beg Pond, Ell Pond, Curtis Lake, Sand Pond, and the small ponds in the Great Works River watershed are vulnerable to degradation due to increased phosphorous levels and possible algae problems. Activities to control nutrient loading to these water bodies may be desirable.
- X Branch Brook is the source of supply for the Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District. The watershed of the brook probably includes Sanford airport and development in the area of the airport. Development in this area is important to the Town's economic base. Therefore, there is a need to balance the Town's interest in seeing further development in this area with the regional interest of water supply protection.
- X The continued existence of combined sewers is a potential water quality problem, despite the progress that has been made. The Town and Sewerage District should work together to continue separating combined sewers to allow the remaining combined sewer overflows to be discontinued.
- X The Sanford Water District relies on groundwater from sand and gravel aquifers to supply the public water system. Extreme care must be taken to protect the recharge areas of these wells from contamination. Careful regulation of the use of land in these recharge areas will be necessary to balance the need to protect the public water supply with the rights of private property owners within these areas.
- X The location of the Town's airport and industrial areas over a large sand and gravel aquifer presents the potential for contamination of the groundwater in

- this area. The Town should consider regulations which assure that new developments in this area incorporate safeguards which reduce the risk of groundwater contamination and protect the groundwater.
- X The Town contains significant areas of wetlands. These areas are unsuitable for many uses, and some areas have value as wildlife habitat. The Town may want to restrict the alteration or filling of identified wetlands to protect against unsound development and to maintain their value as habitat.
  - X Much of the mapped 100 year floodplain in Sanford/Springvale is undeveloped. Unwise use of the floodplain creates the potential for property loss, contamination of the water and increased flooding due to damming action. The Town should consider restricting development in floodplains and regulating activities in these areas to prevent contamination, to minimize property damage, and to assure that flooding of upstream properties is not increased.
  - X The Town contains significant areas in which soil conditions limit the installation of septic systems. The Town should consider restricting new, unsewered development in these areas and should direct growth away from these parts of the Town unless sewers are available or feasible.
  - X The ability of the soils to accommodate on-site sewage disposal varies greatly. The density of development in areas outside of the sewer service area should be tied to the suitability of the soil for septic systems.
  - X The Town contains only a very limited amount of prime farmland soils. Only a portion of these areas are in current agricultural use.
  - X The riparian zone adjacent to the Town's rivers and streams play an important role in their value as fishery and wildlife habitat. The Town should consider working to retain naturally vegetated buffers along stream segments that have high or medium value as fishery or wildlife habitat.
  - X The Town contains significant wildlife habitat that is not protected under current regulations. The Town should consider working to protect these resources, especially areas that have high concentrations of threatened and endangered species.

## **D. Water and Sewer Service**

The updated inventory of water and sewer service suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the Update of the Comprehensive Plan:

## **Water Supply**

- X The District currently relies on land ownership and the Wellhead Protection Program to protect the quality of groundwater in the vicinity of its wells. The recharge area for the wells typically extends significantly beyond the land owned by the District. This creates potential conflicts over the use of land in these areas.
- X Federal and State water supply standards rendered the main well field inadequate for drinking water consumption. The loss of water supply from this well field has been offset by new wells elsewhere in town. Advances in microfiltration may allow this well field to come back online.
- X Residential demand for water is increasing slightly. Commercial demand for water is expected to decrease as several large water users are cutting back their operations or relocating their business altogether.

## **Sewer Service**

- X There are still a number of Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) that, during large rain events, occasionally allow untreated sewer to flow into the Town's water bodies. These CSOs are currently being eliminated under the CSO Master Plan.
- X While the District and the Town maintain communication on planned developments and the District participates in development reviews, expansions of the system currently result from individual development projects or District improvements. This could result in a haphazard system with a large number of small pump stations and force mains which become an operational problem. The District and the Town should work toward identifying potential expansion areas, development master sewer plans for these areas, and establishing a program for financing the needed improvements which may involve impact fees or similar mechanisms which involve sharing the cost of the improvement among the property owners benefitting from the project.
- X Low seasonal flow rates in the treatment plant's receiving waters (the Mousam River) create a treatment issue. While the treatment plant can handle 4.4 million gallons per day, during the summer months, the receiving waters can only handle a maximum of 3.48 MGD. The Sewer District is looking into tertiary treatment so that it would be able to discharge more than 3.48MGD during the summer months.

## **E. Land Use Patterns**

The updated inventory of land use patterns suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the Update of the Comprehensive Plan:

- X The shift in the population from the urban centers to the rural areas will alter the way services and facilities are offered to residents. Historic and current services and facilities may not be compatible with future demands.
- X Increasing residential and commercial development in the town's rural areas, especially South Sanford, will at times conflict with wildlife habitats, scenic views, open spaces, and traditional land uses.
- X The future role of the urban centers is unclear, but changes within the town and within the region create opportunities to craft a future role that better serves the changing needs.

## **F. Transportation**

The updated inventory of transportation suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the Update of the Comprehensive Plan:

- § Roadway improvements Downtown raise difficult issues. On the one hand, the widening of roads and intersections would allow traffic to move more freely and probably more safely. Without improvements, the levels of service are projected to become seriously deficient. Shoppers, commuters, and others may be inconvenienced to the point of seeking to avoid Downtown altogether. On the other hand, widening of roads and intersections eliminate some on-street parking perceived as crucial to the businesses on which the spaces front. And widening almost always makes downtowns less friendly to pedestrians. Where is the balance? What Downtown traffic improvements, if any, should be endorsed by the Comprehensive Plan?
- § The increase in traffic levels, not just on arterials or commuter routes, but on local and rural roads generally, and relatively high accident rates in several of these locations, are signs of the growth in rural parts of Sanford over the last decade.
- § Route 202 is a major east-west arterial and truck route. Its intersection with Route 109 Downtown is not well aligned. On the other hand, realignment and reconstruction may disrupt nearby land uses.

- § The Town's roadway standards are conventional, favoring wide, paved travel ways. Do they properly balance the need for safe, easily maintained roads against the need for good urban design and the ability to produce reasonably priced housing?
- § The management of the number and design of driveways along thoroughfares is a key tool for traffic safety and in trying to make existing roadways work as efficiently as possible. The Town has recognized this need and already enacted provisions to manage access.
- § While most of Sanford's growth over the last 20 years has been outside of the urban and village centers, these centers maintain a density that continue to justify public bus service.
- § Should the Town's designated growth areas be designed in a way (appropriate density, mix of uses) that reduces dependence on the automobile and makes walking, biking, and bus use more feasible?
- § The airport is recognized as an important part of the Town's economy. Like most forms of transportation -- roads, rail, mass transit -- revenues directly generated by the airport probably will have to continue to be supplemented by public funds for the foreseeable future.
- § How should the Town and airport approach a solution for protecting the headwaters of Branch Brook?

## **G. Housing**

The updated inventory of housing suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the Update of the Comprehensive Plan:

### **Market Trends**

- § Recent market changes suggest that Sanford/Springvale is becoming part of a larger regional housing market, evidenced by low rental vacancy rates and a recent increase in rents and home prices. Low costs in Sanford/Springvale are attracting residents from a larger regional market. The US Census for 2000 indicates that Sanford/Springvale had the 4<sup>th</sup> lowest rental vacancy rate in the State among communities of 15,000 or more.
- § Single-family home prices in Sanford/Springvale surged during the 1980s, reaching an average of about \$100,000 in 1988. This was followed by an extended period (1989-1999) during which average prices remained in the

\$80,000 - \$90,000 range. Only in the last two years has the average single-family home price in Sanford/Springvale again climbed above the \$100,000 mark, after a nearly 10-year period of flat prices.

§ The average single-family home price last year was about \$103,000 and the average listing was about \$110,000 in Sanford/Springvale. The average listing price in the Sanford Labor Market Area (LMA) outside the Town of Sanford was \$145,000. Homes listed outside the town are generally newer, larger, and on bigger lots than homes available within Sanford. Given the relative affordability of homes in Sanford/Springvale, Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) first-time buyer mortgages appear to have supported the majority of single-family home sales within the community in recent years.

§ Local rental costs and purchase prices, though now increasing, are lower than in the faster growing coastal markets. Sanford/Springvale remains relatively affordable in the southern Maine region—buyers can still purchase a home in the Town of Sanford for just over \$100,000.

§ Property taxes paid by the average homeowner in the Town of Sanford are lower than in most of Maine's large cities and towns with similar services. However, as of 2000, Sanford's taxable value per capita was quite low in comparison to these communities.

§ During the past 15 years, the number of sales of developed residential property in Sanford/Springvale was equivalent to about 33% of the number of such properties. However, due to multiples of sales of the same properties, only 15% of all developed residential parcels in Sanford/Springvale changed hands at all during that period.

§ The recent increase in sales activity of duplex and multifamily property, and increasing rents, indicate an opportunity to increase the level of local investment in the multifamily stock, and a potential market for increased owner-occupancy in the community's 2-4 family structures.

§ During the 1980s and the 1990s, between 38-40% of the net increase in housing units with the Sanford Labor Market Area took place in the Town of Sanford. During the 1990s, Sanford/Springvale represented only 16% of the activity as the direction of new development turned increasingly to the outlying towns of the area.

§ Sanford/Springvale presents a potentially good market for retirees, and a demonstrably good market for first time homebuyers. It probably has less appeal to the move-up market among buyers age 35-44 than the rural communities of greater Sanford and those on the coast. The Town is the

region's principal service center, and its resources represent a potential marketing tool that could help retain more of this market.

### **Low Income Demands and Assisted Rental Housing Inventory**

- § Sanford/Springvale serves as the principal provider of rental housing in the Labor Market. With nearly 1,200 households residing in some form of assisted rental housing, Sanford/Springvale is virtually the sole provider of low cost rental housing for its region (90% of the Labor Market Area's<sup>2</sup> assisted renter households live in Sanford/Springvale).
- § The concentration of rental housing in Sanford/Springvale is a natural outgrowth of its role as an economic center. In comparison to other cities and towns of 15,000 or more in Maine, the Town of Sanford has ratios of assisted housing units per capita that are comparable to other urban centers.
- § A comparison of the State's TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) caseload in Maine's largest communities indicates that the Town of Sanford has one of the highest ratios of TANF recipients per capita (second only to Lewiston based on this measure). The concentration in Sanford/Springvale is partly the result of in-migration of low income households from areas with higher housing costs. Sanford's older housing stock, with its lower costs, provides comparatively affordable housing in the broader regional context of the southern Maine and New England housing markets.
- § Very little market-rate rental housing has been produced in Sanford/Springvale over the past 30 years; most rental housing production in the town has been government assisted. Moderate income, market-rate rental alternatives exist principally within a very old rental stock.

### **Housing Age and Condition**

- § Sanford/Springvale has a very old, high density multifamily housing stock and related needs for investments in maintenance and improvements. Based on assessment data for 2001 for two or more family properties in Sanford/Springvale:
  - X Over 80% were built prior to 1940;
  - X 73% are more than 75 years old; and
  - X 33% are over 100 years old.

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<sup>1</sup>The Maine Department of Labor defines a Labor Market Area as a central city or cities and the surrounding territory within commuting distance. It is an economically integrated geographical unit within which workers may readily change jobs without changing their place of residence.

- § In 1990, 25% of all housing units in Sanford/Springvale were in 2 to 4 family structures; 36% were in 2 or more family structures. The Town's public water and sewer utilities are subject to topographic and environmental constraints that will limit higher-density residential development in the future. This means more pressure is likely to be placed on the older, high density housing stock to supply lower cost units. The average lot size of single-family homes built in Sanford/Springvale has been increasing each decade, as new homes consume more land farther from utilities.
- § The location of the lowest value residential properties in Sanford/Springvale correlates with the neighborhoods having the oldest housing units in town, and with places of relatively high concentrations of lower income households according to the US Census.
- § A sample of the Town's code enforcement logs for residential properties over the past two years indicates that the average structure subject to code enforcement action was built in 1926. Among duplex and multifamily properties in code enforcement responses, the average structure was built in the early 1900s, or typically about 100 years old.
- § Over 2/3 of the assessed valuation in the Town of Sanford is residential. As of May 2001, there was roughly \$600 million in residential assessed value in Sanford. Should that value decline by 5% due to disinvestment, it would represent a loss of \$30 million in taxable value. This underscores the fact that, while expansion of commercial and industrial values is important to economic development, so is the preservation of the quality and value of the Town's housing stock.

## **H. Public Facilities**

The updated inventory of public facilities suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the Update of the Comprehensive Plan:

### **General Pattern of Development**

Over the past decade, the Town has seen much of its new growth and development occur outside of the built-up areas of Sanford and Springvale. This has led to the need to decentralize municipal services (South Sanford Fire Station, M.C. Smith School) and has resulted in the need to provide intensive services over a larger geographic area, straining the resources of the operating departments.

## **Fire Protection**

The slower response times in outlying areas such as the Country Club/Bauneg Beg Pond neighborhood and areas along the New Dam Road, coupled with restricted water supply, limits the fire department's fire fighting capabilities for uses other than scattered single family residences.

The lack of available water supply in the northern end of Springvale and along Route 202 west of Redcoat Lane limits fire protection in these areas for uses other than scattered single family residences.

The lack of water mains to provide fire suppression through sprinkler systems limits the desirability of commercial, industrial, institutional, or multifamily residential uses in areas outside of the portions of Sanford and Springvale serviced by the Sanford Water District.

The outdated Springvale Fire Station inhibits the level of fire protection offered in Springvale.

Firefighters' time is increasingly being consumed by increased training levels and responding to a larger number of service calls.

## **Police Department**

The facilities of the police department are becoming inadequate. Additional space is needed for personnel and equipment as well as secured storage for impounded material. Additional parking is needed. The reorganization of the department's space to relocate the dispatch to the public reception area is a high priority of the department.

## **Solid Waste Department**

Increasing tipping fees for service with MERC make alternative waste disposal options more attractive.

Additional services solid waste services and a projected increase in the level of use of the transfer station increase the likelihood that the station will need to be improved or enlarged.

## **Schools**

Despite the projected decline in school enrollments over the next decade, the school department will still need improved spaces for education. Program changes,

regulatory requirements, and currently over-crowded classrooms all have a need for more space and/or dedicated space. In addition, the potential benefits of consolidating similar grade levels in facilities should be studied.

## **Hospital Expansion**

The need for Goodall Hospital to grow and change needs to be accommodated, while balancing this change with the needs of the surrounding neighborhood.

### **I. Recreation and Open Space**

The updated inventory of recreation and open space suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the Update of the Comprehensive Plan:

- § Demand for playing on Town fields has increased. Fields are booked heavily during the spring, summer and fall months to meet the needs of Little League, Babe Ruth baseball, school programs, youth soccer and others. Goodall Park and the Little League fields are the only areas currently lighted for night use, providing off-hours for baseball and youth softball. Lighting existing fields is a solution to make existing facilities available to meet the growing demands. Lighting Blouin Fields would increase available playing time. This cost to provide outdoor lighting has not been accurately estimated but could be approximately \$120,000.00.
- § Demand for tennis court time has increased, and the Town does not have any lighted tennis courts. Instead of constructing new tennis courts, the Town could install lights at the Gowen Park courts to extend court time in an economic manner.
- § A community center is badly needed to provide adequate meeting space for Recreation Department activities as well as meeting places for other community groups. The department uses school space for after-school programs but frequently cannot get adequate space until late in the afternoon or early evening, which limits the Department's activities. Funding for such a building has not yet been included in the Capital Improvements Plan.
- § Vehicle traffic in Gowen Park has caused damage to lawns and detracts from its aesthetic value. Care should be taken to continue to make this area friendly and inviting.

§ Siltation and accumulation of sawdust and decaying vegetation on the bottom of No. 1 Pond has resulted in weed growth. Which interferes with the boating, fishing and other recreational pursuits as well as detracting from the aesthetic qualities of the pond. The Capital Improvements Plan recognizes that this is a controversial issue because some agencies and residents prefer that the pond not be touched. The No. 1 Pond Committee has held two clean-up days at the pond. These have attempted to clear the edges of the pond of debris and litter. In addition, handwork of removing weeds from the pond has been done with results yet to be determined.

## **J. Cultural Facilities**

The updated inventory of cultural facilities suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the Update of the Comprehensive Plan:

- X The lack of a performance center hampers Sanford's role as a regional performing arts center.
- X Space in the town's libraries is adequate. The Goodall Memorial Library needs funding to improve its handicap access.

## **K. Historic and Archeological Resources**

The updated inventory of historic and archeological resources suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the Update of the Comprehensive Plan:

- § There has never been a comprehensive inventory of the town's prehistoric and historic archaeological resources. As the development pattern in Sanford/Springvale focuses more on the town's rural areas, these prehistoric and historic resources could be harmed.
- § The Historic Committee's collection has filled the space it has available in the Town Hall Annex. If efforts aren't made to increase the amount of storage space or to find a dedicated facility, the Committee will have to cease collecting and archiving Sanford/Springvale artifacts.
- § In addition to protecting community artifacts, the Committee is interested in efforts to protect the character of the Sanford/Springvale.

## **L. Fiscal Capacity**

The updated inventory of fiscal capacity suggests the following issues and implications that should be considered in the Update of the Comprehensive Plan:

- X Like most municipalities in Maine and New England, the current economic slowdown, combined with the continuing rise in the cost of education and public services and the prospect of less state aid, may translate into greater tax increases than during the 1990s. This will put pressure on the Town to scrutinize all proposed new expenditures, including expenditures that this Comprehensive Plan Update may show to be desirable.
  
- X On the other hand, at least in fiscal terms, the Town has considerable borrowing capacity. The town's professional management and tax base have contributed to the Town's positive financial status.
  
- X The Town's public utilities are operated as separate entities and each has its own mechanisms for financing capital improvements and the operations of their systems. The Town needs to be cognizant of their programs, since they are also paid by the taxpayers.

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