

## APPENDIX A5 LAND USE PATTERNS

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(October 23, 2002)

### A. Overview

Sanford and Springvale grew from the river. First were power saw mills in Springvale, and then, beginning in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, large power textile mills developed in Sanford. These mills employed thousands of workers, who, along with their families and need for goods and services, created the urban centers of Sanford and Springvale.

For nearly 200 years, the pattern of settlement and land use was compact, centered around these two villages, which became interior York County's urban center. As late as 1960—several years after Sanford suffered the devastating loss of most of its textile industry—nearly 90% of the population lived in the urban areas of Sanford and Springvale. Most lived within walking distance of schools, churches, and stores, which were also concentrated in the urban centers.

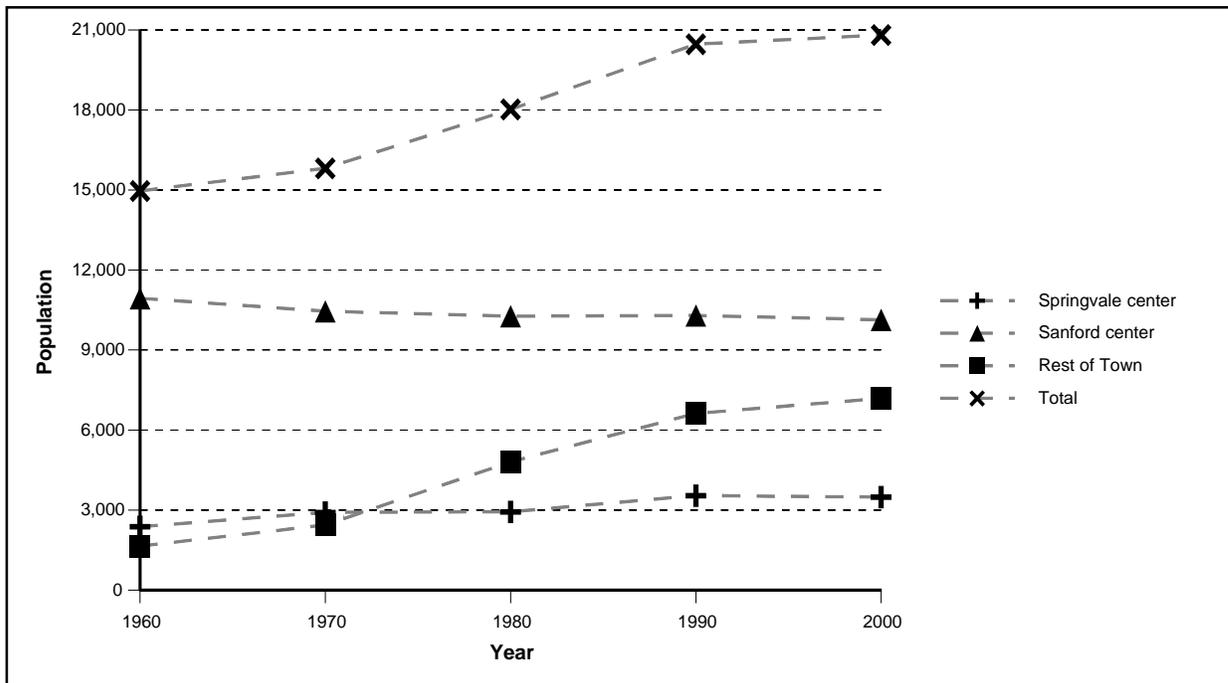
A dramatic change occurred in the last 40 years. Virtually every type of urban land use migrated from Downtown Sanford and Springvale to more rural areas. Much of the economic activity has moved south toward South Sanford along Route 109. Residential development has spread amoeba-like in all directions. At first this change was incremental—short distances from the centers—but during the last 20 years, it has leapfrogged to all corners of town, including former farms and woodlands, and along ridges and highlands.

Census statistics illustrate the suburbanization of Sanford's residents. In 1960, 89% of the population lived in the built-up centers of Springvale (16%) and Sanford (73%) (See Figure A5-1). In 1970, this proportion dropped to 84%. By 1980 it had fallen to 73%. In 1990 it was 67%. By 2000, 66% of the population lived in the built up areas of Springvale (17%) and Sanford (49%).

In numbers, the urban centers of Springvale and Sanford in 1960 had about 13,300 people; the outlying areas had only about 1,650. Today, the urban centers have roughly the same population (13,600 people) but the outlying areas have grown 4.4 times to 7,200.

Sanford covers 50.36 square miles (32,230 acres). Suburbanization across this area raises questions not only about conflicts between traditional rural land uses and new development, but also about the cost of delivering Town services over such a wide area.

**Figure A5-1.  
Sanford/Springvale Population Growth, 1960 - 2000**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

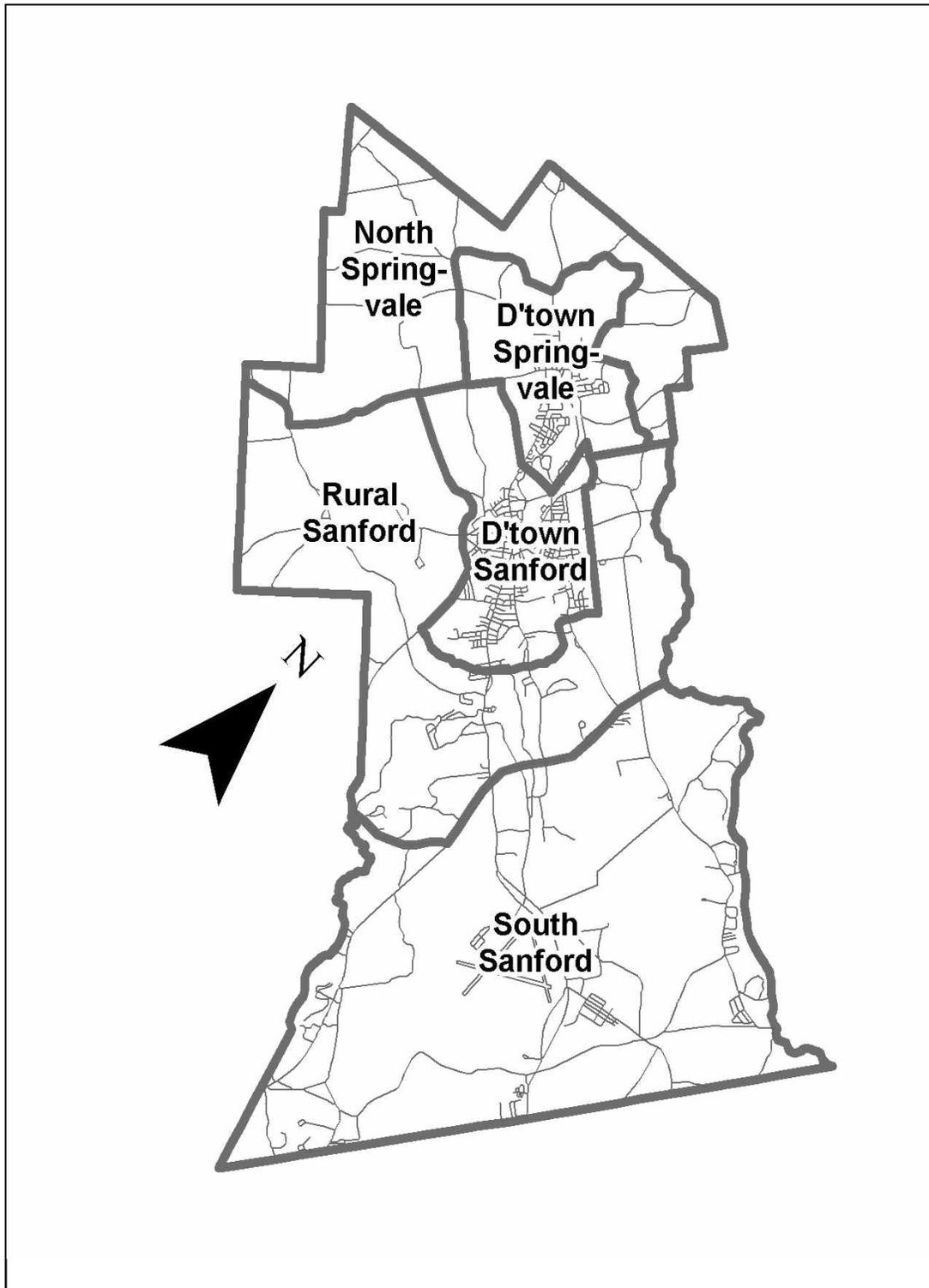
## **B. Residential Development Since 1980**

### **1. Pattern of Development**

For purposes of this analysis, the Town has been divided into five sections (Figure A5-2):

- X Downtown Springvale– delineated by the US Census Bureau as Springvale Census Designated Place
- X Downtown Sanford– delineated by the US Census Bureau as Sanford Census Designated Place
- X North Springvale– remaining area around Springvale (Census Tract 301 excluding Springvale CDP)
- X Rural Sanford– remaining area around Sanford (Census Tract 302 excluding Sanford CDP)
- X South Sanford– Census Tract 303

**Figure A5-2. Census Designated Areas of Sanford and Springvale**



*Source: US Census*

Tables A5-1 and A5-2 quantify changes in the residential pattern of development between 1990 and 2000. Among the important conclusions drawn from the tables are:

- X Nearly 4 in every 5 new housing units added to the Town of Sanford's housing stock between 1990 and 2000 was in the rural parts of town (386 out of 481 total new units), which include North Springvale, Rural Sanford, and South Sanford. This suggests that the outlying areas of Sanford/Springvale are growing at a faster rate than the more urban areas and could impact the way in which facilities and services are offered.
- X The vast majority of new housing was in single family and mobile homes.

**Table A5-1.  
Housing Units, 1990 - 2000**

	1990	Absolute Change	% Change	2000
<b>Downtown Springvale</b>	1,469	32	2.2%	1,501
<b>Downtown Sanford</b>	4,275	63	1.5%	4,338
<b>North Springvale</b>	277	48	17.3%	325
<b>Rural Sanford</b>	670	122	18.2%	792
<b>South Sanford</b>	1,635	216	13.2%	1,851
<b>Total Sanford</b>	8,326	481	5.8%	8,807

Source: US Census

**Table A5-2.  
Type of Housing Unit, 1990 - 2000**

	1990	Absolute Change	% Change	2000
<b>Single Family</b>	4,933	382	7.7%	5,315
<b>Duplex</b>	1,151	-75	-6.5%	1,076
<b>Multi-Family</b>	1,761	29	1.6%	1,790
<b>Mobile Home</b>	433	187	43.2%	620
<b>Other</b>	37	-31	-83.8%	6
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	8,315	492	5.9%	8,807

Source: US Census

## 2. Residential Zoning

This pattern of residential development has been fostered, or at least abetted, by the town's zoning requirements. The residential zones— general residence, single residence, residential development, and rural residence— allow greater variety and density of housing near the urban core, and less variety and density moving away from the urban core.

General Residence (GR), which allows a mix of single family, multifamily, institutional, and professional and business office uses, surrounds the town's commercial and older industrial sectors. Much of the older residential part of the town is contained in this zone, which has little vacant land remaining. Allowable density in the GR district is one unit per 5,000 square feet (or about 8 units per acre).

The Single Residence zone encompasses the single family neighborhoods that have long been a part of the urban center. They are generally, but not always, separated from the commercial and old industrial core by the GR zone but are still very much a part of Sanford's urban fabric. The single residence zone is virtually all sewered, and the allowable density is one unit per 10,000 square feet (or about four units per acre). Little vacant, developable land remains in this zone.

The Residential Development zone is designed as a transitional area between the older urban center—with its matrix of commercial, mill yard, and residential activity—and the surrounding rural area. The zone allows single family and two-family dwellings by right, and multi-family dwellings are allowed as a conditional use. A number of institutional, agricultural, and extractive uses also are allowed as conditional uses. Public sewer has been extended to parts of the Residential Development zone, but much of it is not sewered. The maximum density is 10 dwelling units per acre (if the development is designed as an urban neighborhood) and 6 units per acre otherwise.

The Rural Residence zones surround the built up parts of Sanford. They allow single family homes and a variety of traditional rural and suburban uses. The allowable residential density is one unit per two acres, which makes it almost indistinguishable from unsewered parts of the Residential Development zone.

The preponderance of residential development during the 1990s was in the Residential Development and Rural Residence zones. There is no identifiable pattern to the development.

## **C. Commercial Land Use**

### **1. Pattern of Development**

Commercial land uses have spread out of Downtown Sanford along Route 109, especially to the south. Until 40 years ago, Downtown was the primary commercial center for Sanford and surrounding towns. It contained general merchandisers, food stores, apparel and other specialty stores, and financial and other services. It served as a community center that offered a mix of convenience and comparison goods and services.

In the mid-1960s, the first suburban shopping center was built at the intersection of Old Mill Road and Route 109, a mile-and-a-half south of Downtown. The 94,000 square foot center was co-anchored by a supermarket and a discount department store. This was the first large-scale suburban commercial development.

In response to the suburbanizing shopping pattern and in an attempt to revitalize Downtown Sanford, the Town, with assistance from the federal government's urban renewal program, cleared a block of deteriorated buildings and helped construct the Mid-Town Mall. Mid-Town Mall is a split level, 70,000 square foot, suburban style shopping center in the heart of the Downtown, with a large off-street parking lot owned by the Town. Initially, it was mostly oriented towards selling goods (it was anchored by a discount department store). But the mall, competing with suburban shopping stores, has become increasingly service-oriented (personal, health, recreational, social, and financial services).

The Mid-Town Mall and similar developments helped to bolster Downtown's commercial activity, at least for a period of time, but it did not stem suburbanization. Auto-oriented businesses, banks, and small office spaces moved toward and around the Shaw's shopping center to the south. In 1989, the 226,000 square foot Center for Shopping opened at the intersection of Route 109 and Route 4 in South Sanford. In the early 1990s, the epitome of the suburbanizing shopping pattern—the big box retailers—moved into South Sanford.

In addition to the movement of goods and services from the Downtown to the fringes, manufacturing and office space has moved to outlying areas, typically in an industrial or business park near the airport.

### **2. Downtown Sanford**

As with many downtowns in older urban centers, the future role of Downtown Sanford is unclear. Currently, its role is being defined more by what is left over after suburbanization than by any particular vision of what Downtown should be and how it should get there. Beginning efforts to revitalize the Downtown as a multi-

use, residential and commercial center are taking shape and if enacted could dramatically reshape the function of the Downtown for Sanford as well as the rest of the region.

Nevertheless, the Downtown has vitality:

- X There is a significant amount of commercial space (approximately 250,000 square feet, which is larger than the typical footprint of a Super Big Box store) along Main Street in Downtown Sanford.
- X Downtown Sanford is a local finance center, with several banking institutions.
- X Downtown Sanford is a local government center, including Town Hall and related functions.
- X Downtown Sanford is a funnel for traffic on Routes 109 and 202, with an annual average daily traffic count in 1999 of more than 20,000 vehicles per day.
- X Downtown Sanford is surrounded by a substantial population base in a compact residential settling easily accessible to Downtown.

On the other hand, the Mid-Town Mall is a good example of how suburban competition has taken its toll on the mix of the Downtown's commercial activity, especially the retail trade. In the important "comparison goods" category—which includes general merchandisers (department and variety stores), apparel stores, furniture and household furnishing stores, and other specialty stores—fewer than 15 such stores remain Downtown. These are important stores because of the type of destination, comparison-shopping traffic they generate. Much of the Mid-Town Mall was once retail space and is now mostly service space.

In the face of suburban shopping centers and big box competition, some downtowns have sought to serve specialized roles: for example a financial/cultural/entertainment role (Portland); a specialty theme role (factory stores in Freeport); a tourist role (Camden). By virtue of geographic and/or demographic limitations, Downtown Sanford probably does not have these options. The market area population is too small and too blue collar to support a sizeable cultural/entertainment/restaurant center. Portland and Portsmouth are too close for Sanford to evolve as a regional financial or business services center. Sanford is off the major paths for tourists.

On the other hand, Downtown Sanford might well take note of its survival over the last decade in the face of suburban competition, and of the evolving mix of business

that has allowed that survival. In addition, while the Town of Sanford's population has remained relatively stable, the population of the surrounding communities has grown dramatically. Increasingly, Sanford/Springvale is expanding its service center role by offering personal, local financial, educational, governmental, social, and recreation services for the region. That, combined with the remaining nucleus of specialty retail stores, could serve as the foundation for a long-term strategy of growth.

## **D. Industrial Land Use**

Sanford/Springvale has two principal industrial areas.

The oldest and largest, in terms of building space, is the former Goodall Mill complex in the center of Downtown Sanford, now known as the Sanford Mill Yard. Occupancy in the mills had been relatively high through the mid 1990s, but has fallen recently as a few large users have decided to relocate their operations. Ownership of the complex is fragmented; consequently, there is no unified promotions or maintenance of the space.

The largest industrial area, in terms of land, is in South Sanford. More than 2,000 acres of land from the Airport to the New Dam Road are zoned for industrial use. Some of this land is occupied by the airport itself. Nearly 500 useable acres of this land exists within the Airport Industrial Park, the Sanford Industrial Park, the Sanford Estates Industrial Park, and the Adams Business Park. In addition, several large independent business/industrial sites are interspersed among the parks and airport. The remainder of the land, roughly between the power line right-of-way and the New Dam Road is vacant and unserviced. Much of this land was proposed for an oil refinery in the 1970s and zoned accordingly, but no industrial use materialized. An exception in this area is Levalley Lumber, located at the juncture of New Dam Road and the Mousam River.

The focus of the Town's industrial development effort has been in part focused on the industrial park development in South Sanford. This effort has had to increasingly be aware of, and take into account, environmental concerns, including:

- X wetlands associated with the low sandy plain that characterizes much of the area;
- X a recharge area around one of the water district's well heads; and
- X the headwaters of Branch Brook, which flows into Kennebunk/Wells and becomes the source of the water supply for the Kennebunk-Kennebunkport-Wells Water District.

Another industrial area site includes two former mill buildings in Springvale (between the Mousam River and Railroad Avenue). These two mill buildings are in use.

## **E. Farm and Forest Land**

### **1. Farm Land**

As noted in the chapter on Natural Resources, only limited veins of prime farmland soils are found in the Town of Sanford. One runs along Hanson's Ridge and Deering Ridge, reaching down into the Blanchard Road area. Another is along the Mount Hope/Route 202 corridor. A third vein is along the Route 109 corridor in South Sanford. And a patch is found in the Bernier Road area. There are also isolated pockets of prime farmland soils in other areas of Town, such as along the Grammar Road, near Littlefield Pond, and in the Country Club area.

Agriculture has not been central to the Town's growth as a community, but it has become an important component of the town's identity. Some of these agricultural operations remain active and vestiges of agriculture's past remain throughout Sanford/Springvale. A number of hay fields and orchards dot the town, especially the scenic Hanson's Ridge area. Many of the larger farms from Sanford's past have been replaced by smaller specialty farms spread throughout town.

### **2. Forest Land**

Outside of the urban center, the South Sanford industrial area, and the farm fields of Hanson, Deering, and Shaw's Ridges, most of the land in Sanford is wooded. The species vary widely, from white pine in the sandy plain of South Sanford to hardwoods in the uplands of the Deering area. A total of 4,981 acres are enrolled in the Tree Growth Tax Program.

## **F. Municipal Land Use**

As described in more detail in other chapters (see Public Facilities and Recreation and Open Space), most of the Town's public facilities are located in the urban centers of either Sanford or Springvale. This is because historically this is where the population was. As population has spread out in recent decades, public facilities have also begun to disperse.

Nevertheless, the concentration of public facilities in the urban center is important from several standpoints. Town Hall is an anchor for Downtown Sanford. Schools are within walking distance of much of the population. Other public buildings, like the libraries, are both conveniently located and important parts of the Town's identity. In the face of a scattering development pattern, these public buildings help Sanford/Springvale keep its 'sense of place.'

## **G. Issues and Implications**

- 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.