

Readfield's Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement:

The Town of Readfield is a scenic, dynamic, and diverse community committed to fostering an inclusive, vibrant way of life for people of all backgrounds and ages. This vision commits to preserving the rural character of our community with a plan for a sustainable future.

1. Overview:

Future Land Use Vision: Preservation of Readfield's character, natural beauty, and agricultural heritage were at the forefront of discussions during creation of the Comprehensive Plan. As the Comprehensive Plan vision relates to future land use, this section seeks to highlight the steady growth seen over the last decade, while charting a path forward to preserve, support, and improve the qualities town residents value. Encouraging sustainable growth and environmental conservation are paramount and can be achieved through proper land use strategies. As a town that possesses a variety of critical resources, significant water bodies and sources, and important historical landmarks, Readfield's future land use requires continued focus to preserve and secure these crucial elements for future generations.

Future Growth: One of the most important elements in the plan for Readfield's future is its plan for growth. This plan is based on many assumptions that support continued growth while prioritizing the preservation of town character and natural resources. Examples of assumed future growth include new home construction, increased economic development, expansion of public services and recreational opportunities, just to name a few. The physical impacts that are a direct result of projected future growth and development, and provision of public services are the primary issues addressed in this chapter. When planning for future growth, it is essential to bear in mind that public services are more costly to provide for development spread throughout town rather than to village areas or locations with higher density. This is true of not just roads but also for schools, buses, utilities, fire protection, and other services. A balance can be found between the existing growth trends of more rural development and Readfield's historic growth patterns, by guiding future development with careful intent and providing cost-effective public services, all in keeping with the town's vision for preservation of rural character and a sustainable future.

2. Future Land Use Plan

Readfield's Land Use Ordinance manages growth and sprawl by clearly setting parameters for allowable land uses in each zoning district. By providing zoning districts with different minimum lot sizes, different allowable land uses, and varying density standards, Readfield is providing residents, potential residents, and businesses with options to best fit their needs.

Readfield will maintain the same future growth areas designated in the previous plan, which are the two Village Districts, Village Residential Districts, and the Academic Districts, which collectively comprise a sizable area that, in part, encompasses land along a portion of the State Route 17 corridor, a location already densely developed. These growth areas were designated in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan and are still not at capacity.

Managing land use also protects natural resources, of which Readfield has many. The policies and strategies for managing the town's future land use are detailed in Part II (Policies and Strategies for Future Land Use).

The purpose of the Land Use Plan, and the Comprehensive Plan as a whole, is to highlight issues raised by the Town of Readfield and its residents, determine desired outcomes, and outline possible strategies to accomplish these outcomes in the appropriate section of the Plan. The Plan is not intended to implement or direct any specific regulatory or policy changes, as that would be too narrow a focus, and outside the intended scope of the plan. Implementation of the various provisions of the Plan would be accomplished within the context of the town's established administrative procedures and policies (e.g., formal adoption of ordinance revisions, Select Board consideration, public participation).

3. Current Land Use Patterns

As described in more detail in Part Eleven (Existing Land Use), Readfield's Land Use Ordinance establishes nine different land use districts (plus one overlay district) in order to "guide and direct development so that it will not conflict with the best interests of the town in regard to protection of the environment, public health, safety, flood damage prevention, and economic well-being." Existing land use controls have built a strong foundation to preserve the rural character of the town and are intended to direct growth towards appropriate locations. Readfield has two distinct village districts (while Kents Hill is a village, it does not have the Village District designation in the Land Use Ordinance) which allow a variety of land uses, an Academic District specifically for support services to the educational sector, and Village Residential Districts surrounding the villages and intended for a higher density of residential development on smaller lots. Any new development will be directed into one of these three generously sized districts, outlined in more detail in the Land Use Ordinance.

Readfield's pattern of development reflects initial settlement patterns, which resulted in higher density and more commercial development around the villages. Encouraging future growth in these already developed areas supports the community's vision and will serve to protect Readfield's abundant natural resources and farming heritage.

Upon completion of the Comprehensive Plan, the town's Land Use Ordinance should be reviewed to make sure it is updated to ensure consistency with state

statutes and the current needs of Readfield.

4. Land Use Districts Within Designated Growth Areas

Readfield has a sizable area designated for growth which includes three zoning districts with a variety of allowable uses. Unfortunately, in the last decade minimal new development has been located in the designated growth areas; most of it has been in the rural areas. The town is not proposing to change the designated growth areas, but to investigate new, effective ways of encouraging growth in desired locations. This approach is covered more fully in the Policies and Strategies Table in Part II. Areas currently designated for growth in the Land Use Ordinance and on the Future Land Use Map are:

- ***Village District***

Readfield Corner and Readfield Depot constitute the Village Districts and are depicted on the *Future Land Use Map*. These districts include the older settled sections of town and were defined based upon existing dense development patterns and infrastructure. They contain a variety of residential, commercial, recreational, municipal, and educational uses, all of which contribute to the village character. The configuration of these growth areas has been shaped since the early developmental days of Readfield when people traveled mostly by train. Both villages have multiple road junctions with several primary roads into and out of the districts.

The Land Use Ordinance describes the Village Districts as comprised of areas that can support a range of land uses including higher density residential uses, commercial, community and governmental facilities and light industry. The Village District designation strives to promote a compact and dense (rather than sprawling) pattern of development, allow mixed land use patterns while maintaining the character and historical integrity, and to ensure that proposed development and land uses are compatible with existing land uses already in the villages. The ultimate goal in the Village Districts is to encourage preservation, revitalization and expansion.

Readfield Corner is the only location in town that has a public water supply, but as previously discussed, its capacity is limited, and expansion is not possible. The town has no plans for pursuing public water and sewer services, as there is no demand or desire for this infrastructure.

Designating the Village Districts as growth areas is in line with the community's vision as they are ideal locations for the town's continued growth of mixed-uses including commercial and residential land uses at a higher density than in other

locations. Development in this area, if done properly, will minimize sprawl in rural areas and protect natural resources.

- ***Village Residential District***

The Village Residential Districts, shown on the *Future Land Use Map*, consist of the predominantly built-up areas of town with residential structures on small lots, and non-residential uses being strictly limited here. The Village Residential District includes areas around Kents Hill, Readfield Corner, and Readfield Depot. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan expanded the original Village Residential Districts by approximately 900 acres: roughly 530 acres north and west of Readfield Corner and 370 acres west and north of Readfield Depot.

The goal of this designation is to encourage and protect higher density residential development, in the pre-established existing scale, while preserving the character and visual appeal of the village areas. New construction, alterations, and proposed changes of use must be consistent with the residential character of the districts.

This growth area designation is in keeping with the community's vision because it promotes higher density residential development near the villages, prevents residential sprawl into rural areas, and supports a sustainable future by directing future growth into locations that are already densely settled. In addition, this reduces the cost of providing public services to more remote parts of town.

- ***Academic District***

The Academic District, created in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, is so designated to support only uses which are directly related to the principal permitted academic uses, including educational institutions and effective delivery of their programs and activities. This district includes areas owned or occupied by Maranacook Community School, Kents Hill School, and Readfield Elementary School. Allowable uses include housing, health care, and food services, to name a few. The purpose of limiting the allowable development in this district is to promote a homogeneous pattern of development on land now occupied by educational institutions, focused exclusively on accommodation of the institution's developmental needs, and excluding unrelated residential, commercial and industrial uses.

The Academic District reflects the community's vision by encouraging thoughtful development and creation of a plan for a sustainable future. Keeping all aspects and necessary services for the successful operation of academic

institutions in one location will reduce the cost of supplying these services as they will not be spread all over town.

Due to the rate and location of development in Readfield since the adoption of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, there is currently no need to increase or change the designated growth areas. They fit the criteria outlined in Section 7 below, are not at capacity, and align with the community's vision for the future of the town. There are no extraordinary natural constraints in the designated growth areas that would limit their potential for development. The most obvious constraint for development is that the town does not have or want public sewers and has a very limited public water supply that cannot be expanded. The areas currently designated for growth are shaped by natural opportunities and historic growth patterns, generally consist of locations with suitable land for development, and are home to many if not all public facilities.

In the last decade, most of the new development in Readfield has been outside of the growth areas and located instead in old farm fields and along rural road corridors. These rural locations are exactly what the town wants to preserve, by strategically defining intended growth areas away from rural locations and to areas that are already more developed.

5. Land Use Districts Outside Designated Growth Areas

The Land Use Ordinance identifies and describes three land use districts (and one overlay district) that do not include designated growth areas:

- **Two Classifications of Rural Areas:** The purpose of the rural district designation is to ensure that proposed development and land uses are compatible with the preservation of Readfield's open, rural character and are protective of sensitive natural resources and visual/scenic qualities. The rural districts also accommodate certain commercial, light industrial uses, and strive to maintain a development pattern of mixed, low density use while protecting critical natural and scenic resources.
 - **Rural Residential District:** is generally located along major roadways and serves primarily low-density residential housing. The district severely limits commercial activities that are not related to natural resource uses. This district seeks to accommodate low density residential use, agriculture and forestry operation which are compatible with the preservation of Readfield's rural character, and which are protective of sensitive natural resources and scenic/visual qualities.
 - **Rural District:** This designation is intended to preserve existing rural development patterns of mixed-use, lower density developments in rural parts of town. This is the portion of the Rural District that is already developed to some extent. This District was created at the suggestion of

the 2009 Comprehensive Plan.

- **Three Classifications of Shoreland Areas:** The overall purpose of these designations is to protect water quality, productive fish or wildlife habitat and scenic and natural areas.
 - **Shoreland Residential District:** includes all shoreland areas within 250 feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-water mark of a great pond or the upland edge of a wetland consisting of ten (10) or more contiguous acres or as otherwise defined, other than those areas included in the Resource Protection District or the Stream Protection District. It includes areas that are appropriate for residential, recreational, and other non-intensive development activities.
 - **Resource Protection District:** includes areas having current moderate or high habitat value and in which development would adversely affect water quality, productive fish or wildlife habitat, biotic systems, or scenic and natural values. However, the Land Use Ordinance provides that areas which are currently developed and meet the criteria of this district are placed in another suitable land use district. This district includes:
 - Wetlands and the areas 250 feet horizontally of the upland edge of the following wetlands: a wetland that is 10 acres or greater; wetlands associated with great ponds; and wetlands which are rated “moderate” or “high” value by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.
 - Wetlands and the areas within 25 feet horizontally of the upland edge of wetlands that are greater than 2 acres and less than 10 acres.
 - Areas within 1,000 feet horizontally of the normal high-water line of Carlton Pond.
 - Areas within 1,000 feet horizontally of the normal high-water line of Mill Pond, Shedd Pond and Brainard Pond.
 - Areas of 1 or more contiguous acres with sustained slopes of 20 percent or greater.
 - The following areas when they are located within 250 feet horizontally from the normal high-water line of a great pond; within 250 feet of the upland edge of a wetland; and within 75 feet horizontally of a stream:
 - Important wildlife habitat
 - Natural sites of significant scenic or aesthetic value.
 - Areas designated by federal, state and local government as natural areas of significance to be protected from development.
 - Existing areas of public access and certain significant archeological and historic sites.

- **Stream Protection District:** includes all land area within 75 feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-water line of a stream as defined in Article 11 of the Land Use Ordinance and other streams of local significance designated on the Official Land Use Map, exclusive of those areas within 250 feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-water line of a great pond, or within 250 feet, horizontal distance of the upland edge of a freshwater wetland. Where a stream and its 75-foot shoreland area is located within the 250-foot shoreland area of a great pond or a freshwater wetland, that land area shall be regulated under the terms of the district in which the great pond or wetland are located.
- **Commercial and Industrial District (CID):** this is a “floating zone”, which is not depicted on the Land Use Map or Zoning Map, nor is it designated as a growth or rural area. This District was established for the purpose of allowing the opportunity for large scale commercial or industrial uses to locate or expand in the community if this can be accomplished with minimal negative impact, although large scale commercial operations are generally not in keeping with the town’s character. This district is the only district which can accommodate commercial and industrial uses with structures in excess of 5,000 square feet. The Land Use Ordinance seeks to ensure that proposed uses are compatible with existing uses and the rural character of the town and are protective of natural resources and visual quality. Proposals to designate land as commercial/industrial are required to be reviewed in accordance with the adoption procedures in Article 9 of the Land Use Ordinance. Applicable provisions of the Ordinance include:
 - Town Meeting approval is required for the development of commercial or light industrial uses proposing a structure greater than 5,000 square feet in size.
 - In addition to Town Meeting approval, Planning Board review is required under the site location provisions of the Land Use Ordinance. Any development proposed and accepted under this standard must be designed and constructed essentially as presented at Town Meeting.
 - Buildings for the storage of agricultural or forestry machinery or products are not subject to the requirements of this district.
 - Potential CID designation is not allowed in districts other than the Village District and the Rural Mixed-Use District.
- **Mobile Home Park Overlay District:** may accommodate mobile home parks and developments where designation on the Town of Readfield Land Use Map, subject to the requirements of the underlying district.

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan recommended maintaining the existing Rural Residential District and splitting the existing Rural District into two separate districts: Rural Resource and Rural Mixed Use. For a variety of reasons that recommendation

was not implemented. Under this Plan, the town should explore the creation of a Rural Resource District (in addition to the current Rural Residential and Rural) for the purpose of providing special protection to certain rural areas including, but not limited to: land in or eligible to be in Tree Growth, Farmland, or other open space tax law programs; significant wildlife habitat; substantial areas of soils rated as prime for agriculture or poor for development; scenic views; conservation areas; and, significant acreages of undeveloped land.

6. Anticipated Growth

At the conclusion of the Housing Chapter of this Plan, growth and population projections and land consumption estimates were presented based on current trends, ordinances, and lot sizes. One projection predicts no need for the construction of new housing, while another projection estimates approximately 8 – 17 new houses a year will be needed for the predicted population increase. A best guess would be on the lower side of this estimate of approximately 8 new houses per year. Considering the potential land use impacts of the estimated number of new houses is critical. Since growth happens slowly it is difficult to visualize, and the full effect is not realized until it is too late to change course.

Building lots in the Village Residential District have a minimum lot size of approximately 1 acre. Since the Village Residential District is in the designated growth area, this is one location where new construction should be encouraged. Even at the lowest growth projection of 8 new houses per year, with every new lot at the minimum legal size, a minimum of 80 acres of development, not considering new road construction or land required for utilities, would result over 10 years. If 8 new houses a year were constructed in the Rural Residential District, which has a minimum lot size of approximately 2 acres, the result would be a minimum of 160 acres developed, again not considering new road construction or other necessities associated with new developments. Both estimates outlined above are on the conservative side of the potential projection.

The minimal projection of 80 acres of new development in the Village Residential District equates to only one eighth of a square mile, well within the Village Residential District's 2.1 square mile capacity to accommodate. It is important to recognize that all the developed lots will require frontage on a public road or a newly created subdivision road. Hypothetically, if each one-acre lot was square, each would require 200 feet of road frontage. This scenario would result in a sizable number of roads filled with new homes and/or commercial development.

A potential location for new commercial development is the Academic District; however, the existing purpose of this district is to ensure a homogeneous pattern of development with the existing educational institutions. Currently, the only allowable uses are those that directly support or are related to the principal permitted academic uses. All other development, such as unrelated residential, commercial,

and industrial is not allowed, which is a limiting factor for commercial and industrial development in this district.

The Village Districts can also accommodate commercial and light industrial uses; however, the Village Districts are intended to promote a compact pattern of development, while encouraging preservation, revitalization, and expansion within the village areas. Per the Land Use Ordinance, development in the village areas must be done in a way that maintains the historical village integrity and character, while ensuring compatibility with existing uses.

The Commercial and Industrial District (CID) is a 'Floating Zone' not depicted on the Land Use Map or Zoning Map, nor is it designated as a growth area or rural area. It provides a mechanism that allows the town the opportunity to assess on a case-by-case basis the scale, impacts, and location of a proposed commercial/industrial use as part of an evaluation process to determine whether the proposal is in keeping with Readfield's community character. In accordance with Article 9 of the Ordinance, this Floating Zone is prohibited in the Village Residential District.

Readfield does not have public sewer and only limited public water, which further restricts commercial and industrial development and limits the types of development feasible in any approved locations. However, this can be leveraged as a way to preserve the rural character of the town by preventing unwanted or undesirable large scale commercial or industrial development.

The town is primarily residential, and when considering recent and historic growth trends in Readfield, it seems unlikely that a significant amount of commercial or industrial development will occur in the future. Commercial and industrial development is somewhat difficult to predict, and the limited number of appropriate locations available and lack of access to public water and sewer in Readfield make these predictions even less viable. In the past decade, the largest, new commercial developments have been the addition of two self-storage unit businesses. Other smaller, new commercial businesses include two medical marijuana retail establishments. This development has all occurred in the Village Districts.

The town is vastly more residential than it is commercial and typically does not promote land for these types of use. In the future, the most likely new commercial development would be more light-industrial uses of growing cannabis in greenhouses.

The challenge in the creation of this plan is to work with the current rate of development, which most of the residents' feel is about right, and to manage development in such a way as to reduce the impacts it will have on both the town's rural character and on town services. The best way to accomplish this is by encouraging new development to be located near each other and close to existing public services rather than in more rural areas. Readfield's designated growth areas fit these criteria for directing new development into more densely settled areas and close to existing town services, but the town needs to find a way to successfully

encourage new development to locate into the designated growth areas to realize the town's vision.

The strategies listed in the Policies and Strategies Table are in keeping with the community's vision in that they promote community character by encouraging appropriate growth in the more densely settled parts of town. By directing residential, commercial, and industrial development into appropriate designated growth areas and away from rural locations, Readfield is preserving its agricultural, ecological, and rural character, while fostering a sustainable future for the town consistent with the community's vision.

7. Directing Growth

Some growth areas are intended to accommodate higher density housing, while others are intended for development necessary to support and improve Readfield's academic sector. Most commercial activities, except for home occupations and natural resource businesses (agriculture, forestry, etc.), should be directed or strongly encouraged to locations which have been designated as growth areas, as should most future municipal capital investments. Anticipated major capital investments needed to support proposed land use will depend on implementation of strategies described in the Public Facilities and Services Chapter.

A fundamental strategy when promoting a designated growth area is to direct a minimum of 75 percent of municipal growth-related capital investments into these locations. This strategy demonstrates the town's commitment to using public investments and land use regulations to reduce or discourage development pressure in other areas, while encouraging it in the designated growth areas. It is important to note that road maintenance and other maintenance-type expenditures in designated rural areas would not count as a "growth-related" expenditure.

Even designated future growth areas may have natural or developmental constraints. Examples of development constraints include: availability of public water and sewer infrastructure, the presence of wetlands, streams, and rock or ledge outcroppings. For obvious reasons, future growth should be directed away from sensitive natural areas and toward more densely developed areas closer to municipal services. Current designated growth areas have one or more of the following attributes which should also be considered in making any future designations of growth areas:

- Many of the town's public facilities and services are already in this location,
- The area contains existing homes and most businesses,
- The area is located at the intersection of most State Routes that run through town and has some available road frontage,
- The area is an existing downtown center,
- There are relatively few natural development constraints,
- The area aligns with the Vision Statement.

The following have been identified as possible general approaches to encouraging growth in the growth area:

- Review the Land Use Ordinance to ensure outdoor recreation is encouraged, allowed, and incentivized, especially in the designated growth areas.
- Develop areas as gateways to the community, with improved entry signs.
- Promote a range of compatible, mixed uses in both Village Districts, including high density residential uses, village-scale commercial uses such as businesses, offices, retail and industrial uses of 5,000 SF or less, community facilities such as governmental uses, and quasi-governmental facilities.
- Prohibit most new or expanded commercial and industrial uses in the Village Residential District.
- Explore how publicly owned Readfield land might be utilized in the designated growth area and identify potential for public land usage.

The following have been identified as possible general approaches to discouraging growth outside the designated growth area:

- Coordinate efforts to implement conservation projects and seek out land conservation opportunities.
- Incorporate future potential for agriculture and forestry into the town's economic development planning and strategies.
- Continue to promote enrollment in current-use agricultural and tree growth tax programs.
- Work with the Planning Board, Select Board, and developers to avoid infrastructure improvements and other types of development that promote growth in rural areas.
- Continue to avoid sprawl development while identifying locations for small-scale commercial development in the designated growth areas.
- Accommodate larger commercial and industrial development in the Rural Mixed-Use District under the special CID "floating zone" provisions provided the development is designed to preserve the rural character of the area and meets all other standards and requirements.
- Assure that town practices and regulations encourage or provide incentives for the protection of sensitive natural resources and the continued use of land for farming, forestry, and as open space.
- Consider larger lot sizes for lots in rural areas, including investigating lot size by soil type where prime farmland soils and other sensitive soils mandate larger lots of at least 10 acres, and in the Rural District consider even larger minimum lots for subdivisions.
- Require that all lot divisions in rural areas create lots with no less than 500 feet of road frontage and do not result in flag lots or back lots.
- Mandate that all subdivisions in rural areas be cluster developments or conservation subdivisions where at least 50 percent of the subdivided land in the

Rural Residential District and at least 75 percent of the subdivided land in the Rural District is permanently deed restricted against further development.

The following are suggested non-regulatory measures to encourage development in the designated growth areas that do not require changes to the town's Land Use Ordinance:

- Invest in growth areas with infrastructure and improvements.
- Create an inviting environment in the designated growth areas that is attractive to development.
- Proximity of growth areas to parks.
- Improve and create sidewalks to promote walkability in village areas.
- Continue to market available land and buildings.
- Improve access to back lots.
- Improve parking provisions.
- Pursue downtown development improvements.
- Make façade improvements.
- Encourage outdoor recreation and community-based recreation in growth areas to attract and retain development.
- Encourage the development of affordable housing and workforce housing in designated growth areas.

Traditionally, expansion of public water or sewer would be considered as a non-regulatory change to encourage development in designated growth areas, but as discussed in other chapters, the minimal public water infrastructure is limited and cannot be expanded. Additionally, expansion of this type is not desired or necessary.

8. Land Use Regulation and Monitoring

As described in more detail in Part Eleven (Existing Land Use), Readfield has a comprehensive Land Use Ordinance in place that establishes standards for land use and development. The town reviews and updates its Land Use Ordinance regularly to ensure its currency, enforceability and consistency with State rules and legislation. This Ordinance includes provisions to meet the requirements of the Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act, regulate subdivisions, set phosphorus control standards, regulate stormwater management, establishes permit and site plan review requirements, and addresses other aspects related to land use and development. The town also has a separate Floodplain Management Ordinance, as mandated by the State.

Readfield employs a part-time, fully certified Code Enforcement Officer and has a Planning Board consisting of 7 volunteer members and three alternates who are actively involved in the community.

The Land Use Ordinance should be reviewed upon completion of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure consistency. It will also need to be reviewed once

the State establishes guidelines for the new legislation for affordable housing that was enacted in early 2022.

Although the town updates the Ordinance on a regular basis, several issues related to the Ordinance were identified during development of the Comprehensive Plan that should be evaluated/addressed:

- A process should be outlined for preventing the submission of repeat applications that are substantively similar to previously denied applications, to avoid wasting time and effort and undermining the integrity and purpose of the application process.
- Article 7- Land Use Districts and Regulations:
 - Academic District is missing from the list of Land Use Districts, but is described in the list of District Purposes and is shown on the Zoning Map,
 - The Commercial and Industrial District (CID) is not fully explained as a Floating Zone in Article 7 nor is “floating zone” defined in Article 11. Under Section 4- District Purposes, for the Commercial and Industrial District, information should be included that explains in which districts the CID floating zone can be established.
 - It should be clear which districts make up the designated growth areas and rural areas. Currently, there is no reference to the designated growth areas in the description of the districts.
 - A chart breaking the districts down would help clarify the intent of the district. For example, the chart would show Designated Growth Areas followed by which districts make up that area, Rural Areas followed by the districts that make up the rural areas, Shoreland Districts and which districts fall into that category, and Other Districts, which would include the Commercial and Industrial Floating Zone and the Mobile Home Park Overlay District.
 - The town may want to revisit the parameters and allowable uses in the Academic District. In discussions with town staff, it was pointed out that the uses in this district are not currently homogenous and exclusive to uses that strictly support the permitted academic uses. There are underutilized or unused student housing buildings in this district that have potential for affordable or workforce housing, but under the exact limitations of the Academic District as laid out in the Land Use Ordinance, this type of mixed-use housing may not be allowable because it is not related to the principal academic uses.
- The “Expanded Village Residential District” delineation needs to be removed from the Zoning Map. This area was created by the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, but now has been incorporated into the original Village Residential District. As it currently appears, it looks like a district separate from the Zoning Districts in the map key.

The town should consider establishing a formal system for tracking growth and

development that would monitor growth on at least an annual basis and trigger an appropriate response if it becomes apparent that growth is occurring beyond expected levels or not in line with the community's vision. The Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) would be instrumental in setting up this tracking system, as they already keep records of permits issued and subdivisions. The following methods are recommended:

- The CEO will continue to utilize a permit tracking system to identify the location, by district, of new housing and commercial buildings. Conversions from seasonal lake camps to year-round residences should also be tracked.
- The CEO will prepare a written report for the 2023 calendar year, and on an annual basis, thereafter, containing the data from the permit tracking history. The report will be presented to the Planning Board and town Select Board for review and discussion.
- The Planning Board and town officials should continue to do a comprehensive review of the Land Use Ordinance regularly to ensure it reflects the town's changing needs, in conjunction with the annual town meeting warrant development process.

The effectiveness of land use planning is greatly improved, if it not vastly different across town lines. Therefore, this plan recommends that the town make efforts (at least once per year) to meet with neighboring communities to coordinate land use designations and regulatory and non-regulatory strategies.

9. Comprehensive Plan Implementation

Readfield's Select Board should consider an approach to implement and monitor the progress of this Comprehensive Plan. One option is creating and appointing an Implementation Committee that will work in coordination with the Select Board. Currently, the Select Board and Town Manager review the Comprehensive Plan quarterly to ensure and evaluate implementation and progress. The Implementation Committee could expand on that, by consulting the 2009 Comprehensive Plan and determining which strategies were implemented and evaluating their level of success. Part of this process should include reviewing which strategies were not implemented and the reasons why, enabling the committee to make informed decisions about implementation probabilities for this plan and ways to achieve success.

As the committee works towards implementation of the Strategies identified in this Comprehensive Plan, implementation progress should be reviewed in the following specific categories:

- The degree to which the Future Land Use plan strategies have been implemented,
- The percent of municipal growth-related capital investments in designated growth areas,

- The location and amount of new development in relation to the community’s designated growth areas, rural areas, and transition areas (if applicable),
- The amount of critical natural resources, critical rural, and critical waterfront areas protected through acquisition, easements, or other measures.

If the evaluation concludes that portions of the current plan and/or its implementation are not effective, the Implementation Committee could propose changes. To ensure adequate communication, progress, and focus, the Select Board, Town Manager, and Implementation Committee should meet and review the Comprehensive Plan regularly.

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
<p>Future Land Use Plan:</p> <p>Readfield’s Land Use Ordinance manages growth and sprawl by clearly setting parameters for allowable land uses in each zoning district. By providing zoning districts with different minimum lot sizes, different land uses, and varying density standards, Readfield is providing residents, potential residents, and businesses with options to best fit their needs.</p> <p>Readfield will maintain the same future growth areas designated in the previous plan, which are the two Village Districts, Village Residential Districts, and the Academic Districts. Collectively, these districts amount to a sizable area that encompasses land roughly along the State Route 17 corridor, a location already densely developed. These growth areas were designated in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan and are still not at capacity.</p> <p>Goal: To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the state's rural character, making efficient use of public services, and preventing development sprawl.</p> <p>Managing land use also protects natural resources, of which Readfield has many. The policies and strategies of managing the town’s future land use are detailed in the Land Use Chapter, but presented here in summary:</p>		
Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
1. Encourage development (housing or nonnatural resource commercial development) to occur within the Town’s designated growth area and in	1.1: Evaluate the existing Land Use Ordinance to ensure that its provisions including, but not limited to, those related to subdivisions and Shoreland Zoning, encourage appropriate development within the designated growth area and protect	Planning Board, CEO, mid-term.

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
<p>appropriate districts, in a manner that is protective of natural resources and the Town’s rural character.</p>	<p>natural resources.</p> <p>1.2: Revise the Land Use Ordinance as appropriate, to achieve the outcomes described in 1.1.</p> <p>1.3: Explore incentives to create cluster subdivisions in appropriate areas, such as density bonuses.</p> <p>1.4: Consider rewording and redefining the Academic District in the Land Use Ordinance to allow residential housing not related to academic uses. Residential housing not used for the academic sector already exists in this district and could be expanded to create affordable housing and workforce housing close to the village areas and major highways.</p> <p>1.5: Explore the desire/need for redeveloping underutilized or unused student housing buildings in the Academic District for affordable and workforce housing.</p>	<p>Planning Board, Select Board, mid-term.</p> <p>Town Manager, Select Board, Planning Board, CEO, mid-term.</p> <p>Town Manager, Select Board, Planning Board, CEO, short term.</p> <p>Town Manager, Select Board, Planning Board, CEO, KHS Officials, mid-term.</p>
<p>2. Support the maintenance/development of infrastructure in growth areas, including support for the necessary, associated financial commitment.</p>	<p>2.1: Look to develop and encourage usage of village areas as public spaces.</p> <p>2.2: Clean up existing sidewalks and walking paths in village areas of town and look to make more areas accessible on foot.</p> <p>2.3: Continue to market any available land and buildings for commercial development and expand access to land by improving access to the area.</p>	<p>Select Board, Town Manager, near-term.</p> <p>Public Works, Trails Comm., mid-term.</p> <p>Select Board, CEO, Town Manager, ongoing.</p>

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
	<p>2.4: Develop areas as a gateway to the community, with improved entry signs at village area and town lines.</p> <p>2.5: Direct a minimum of 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments into designated growth areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan.</p> <p>2.6: Identify infrastructure and parking improvements, façade improvements, and amenities for the designated growth area.</p>	<p>Town Manager, Select Board, mid-term.</p> <p>Town Manager, Select Board, ongoing.</p> <p>Town Manager, Select Board, long term.</p>
<p>3. Establish/maintain efficient permitting procedures, especially in growth areas.</p>	<p>3.1: Provide the Code Enforcement Officer and Planning Board with the tools, training, and support necessary to administer and enforce land use regulations and ensure that the Code Enforcement Officer is certified in accordance with 30-A M.R.S.A. §4451.</p> <p>3.2: Track new development in the community by type and location.</p> <p>3.3: Monitor development and growth through a Development Tracking System to evaluate the effectiveness of the growth management program in meeting the goals of this plan. Adjust implementation strategies as needed.</p> <p>3.4: The CEO should summarize findings from this tracking system and report these findings on a yearly basis to the Planning Board. The Planning Board will then discuss if changes to the Land Use Plan or Ordinances are necessary.</p>	<p>Town Manager, Select Board, ongoing.</p> <p>Planning Board, CEO, ongoing.</p> <p>CEO, short term.</p> <p>Planning Board, CEO, short term.</p>
<p>4. Review and revise the existing Land Use Ordinance as necessary to address</p>	<p>4.1: Reword and clarify ambiguous language in the uses and definitions section.</p>	<p>Town Manager, Select Board, Planning Board,</p>

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
known issues.	<p>4.2: Create process to negate and disallow repeat applications with only marginally different plans or changes that were already denied in order to protect the efficiency and integrity of the application process.</p> <p>4.3: Update formatting and clarify explanation of Zoning Districts.</p> <p>4.4: Periodically review and revise the Land Use Ordinance as necessary to address changes in state law rule, update standards and requirements, and enhance clarity.</p>	<p>CEO, mid-term.</p> <p>Town Manager, Planning Board, CEO, mid-term.</p> <p>Town Manager, Planning Board, CEO, mid-term.</p> <p>Town Manager, Select Board, Planning Board, CEO, ongoing.</p>
5. Facilitate the maintenance of Readfield’s rural character and the protection of natural resources.	<p>5.1: Discourage large, high-density and high impact development in rural areas through appropriate revisions to the Land Use Ordinance.</p> <p>5.2: Explore the creation of a “Rural Resource” District (in addition to the current Rural and Rural Residential Districts) for the purpose of providing special protection to areas including but not limited to: land in or eligible to be in Tree Growth Farmland, or other open space programs; significant wildlife habitat; substantial areas of soils rated as prime for agriculture or poor for development; scenic views; conservation areas; and, significant acreages of undeveloped land.</p>	<p>Town Manager, Select Board, Planning Board, CEO, mid-term.</p> <p>Town Manager, Select Board, Planning Board, CEO, mid-term.</p>
6. Continue to encourage and market Readfield as a regional outdoor recreational hub.	6.1: Work with various, appropriate committees and citizens on the creation, expansion, and maintenance of trails and other outdoor recreational opportunities.	Town Manager, Planning Board, Age Friendly Comm., Cemetery Comm., Conservation

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
		Comm., Recreation Comm., Trails Comm., long term.
7. Coordinate the community's land use strategies with other local and regional land use planning efforts.	7.1: Meet with neighboring communities to coordinate land use designations and regulatory and non-regulatory strategies.	Town Manager, Planning Board, Select Board, ongoing
8. Periodically, at least every five years, evaluate the implementation of the Future Land Use plan, in accordance with Section 2.7 of the Chapter 208 Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule.	<p>8.1: Consider the formation of an Implementation Committee to evaluate the success in implementing the 2009 plan to include determining which strategies were not implemented and why.</p> <p>8.2: Explore the possibility of setting a standing schedule for reviewing the Plan. For example, set a meeting date quarterly between the Select Board, Town Manager, and various implementing entity to ensure progress is being made in implementing the plan.</p>	<p>Select Board, Town Manager, short term.</p> <p>Select Board, Town Manager, short term.</p>

