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**1993 Update
of
The Readfield Comprehensive Plan
Final Plan**

Prepared by:

The Readfield Comprehensive Plan Committee

With Assistance from:

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November 1993



Readfield Comprehensive Plan

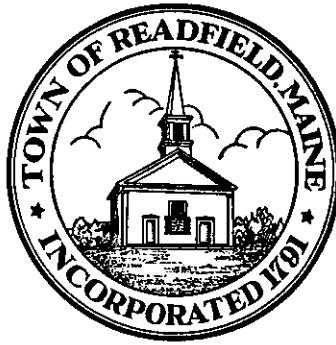
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SECTION I
INTRODUCTION

A. WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Readfield Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint for the Town's future, a tool for providing coordinated guidance and direction for meeting such challenges as growth, provision of public services, and environmental protection. It is a plan in the sense that it provides a detailed program of action for enabling the community to grow and change in ways local citizens feel are best, instead of having to passively accept whatever may occur. It is comprehensive in that it covers many areas of Town affairs, including municipal and economic matters, as well as those related to land use. The Comprehensive Plan provides a look at the overall structure and condition of Readfield; at the problems, needs, and opportunities the Town is facing; at goals and policies developed in response to these issues; and at suggested activities the Town can undertake to implement citizens' desires for the community.

A comprehensive plan, by State statute, is also a legal document. Land use ordinances apply limitations to individual actions on behalf of broader community needs. These limitations must meet the test of reasonableness. The Comprehensive Plan is the document which provides that justification for our local ordinances, though the Plan itself does not impose any restrictions.

In addition to providing the Town with a set of goals and policies with which to meet the future, other principal reasons for preparing this Plan have been to enable residents to become aware of the Town's needs, to determine methods for solving or avoiding problems, and to retain local control over our future. Toward this end the Comprehensive Planning Committee has held several public forums, conducted a townwide survey, and provided other opportunities for citizens to voice their concerns and comments. As a document, the comprehensive Plan incorporates these views in its policies; however, as a process, comprehensive planning will continue to be a way in which Readfield residents can add to or revise the policies that affect them.

Any plan is only a prologue. Its usefulness lies in its implementation. What is essential, therefore, is the willingness of the community to concern itself with its own future. Building on that concern, the Comprehensive Plan can be a catalyst for responsible and productive measures to guide the changes that inevitably will come.

Finally, the Comprehensive Plan is not written in stone but can and should be re-evaluated periodically to reflect changing circumstances.

B. THE PROCESS USED TO FORMULATE THIS PLAN

In response to State-established criteria for comprehensive plans and an offer for financial assistance, the Readfield Comprehensive Planning Committee was established in the fall of 1990 to prepare an update of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Early in 1991, the Committee solicited proposals from planning consultants to assist in the update process. Market Decisions, Inc. was hired in early summer.

By mid-fall, the Committee had conducted a Community Survey and held a forum to gather information on Town concerns and issues. By late spring of 1992 the Committee had completed the majority of its inventory and analysis of the Town's resources.

Draft Community Goals were prepared before the Committee broke for the summer. In late September, the Committee held another forum to test public reaction to the Draft Goals. In early October the Goals were revised based on public comment and the Committee began preparation of Draft Policies and a Proposed Future Land Use Plan to expand upon the Goals. Additional forums were held in the spring of 1993 to review Draft Policies and the Proposed Future Land Use Plan. Again, revisions were made to reflect public comment. In early summer, the Draft Comprehensive Plan was prepared for review and made available to all including Town boards and committees. A public hearing on the Plan in November will be followed by a vote at a special Town Meeting.

Throughout this process efforts have been made to ensure that the Plan reflects the interests of the Town's citizens. Key people have participated on the Comprehensive Planning Committee, including representatives of the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Board of Appeals, Budget Committee, Conservation Commission, business community, and other local groups. All of the Committee's meetings have been held in public places and have been open to anyone. The Selectmen, Town Manager, and local newspaper were notified of all meetings.

C. SUMMARY OF INVENTORIES AND ISSUES RAISED BY ANALYSES

What follows is a summary of the various inventories and the issues raised by the analyses. A few of the questions raised were beyond the scope of this Plan; others were determined to be unimportant, but most have been addressed by the Goals, Policies, and Implementation Strategies which follow. The full inventory is included in Section IV of the Technical Appendices.

1. Summary of Demographic Detail

Readfield's population grew at a significantly lower rate in the 1980's than it had during the prior 2 decades when extremely high rates of growth reflected the suburbanization of rural areas in many parts of Maine. The high rates of growth in the 1970's probably reflected people taking advantage of the low cost of rural land; relatively low property tax rates; short commuting distance to Augusta and Lewiston; area recreational opportunities; and the more open, slower-paced, and aesthetically pleasing environment.

Readfield experienced a net out-migration of at least 43 residents between 1981 and 1990. Readfield's reduced rates of growth experienced in the 1980's reflects reduced rates of growth in the region and county. In addition, Readfield's percent of the growth of the region declined dramatically. The shift of growth from Readfield to other communities in the region

probably reflected the increased cost of rural land and increased local regulation of development. Individuals employed in many of the new jobs created in the 1980's probably could not afford to buy land and construct a home in Readfield.

The attractiveness of Readfield, the presence of its lakes, and the ease of commuting to labor markets in Augusta and Lewiston make it likely that growth will continue, although at the reduced rate reflected in the 1980's. The development of seasonal homes is also likely to continue, also at reduced rates. One factor that could modify this expectation is the inventory of unbuilt subdivided lots of land. If this supply of lots lowers the overall cost of developing new housing in the community, growth could be somewhat greater in the 1990's than occurred in the 1980's.

Overall, household size has dropped significantly during the past 3 decades. This decrease in household size has had a substantial impact on residential development in Readfield since the number of housing units needed to house the same population has grown dramatically. Although this decline is projected to continue, it is expected to do so at a reduced rate.

As the population bulges at both ends of the age spectrum, the Town will need to examine the adequacy of its public facilities and services to meet the needs of both the young and the elderly. Hopefully, the community will anticipate the needs of these two groups to plan for the provision of selected facilities and services.

- a. Although Readfield's population grew at a significantly lower rate in the 1980's than during the 1960's and 1970's, the pattern of this growth was similar and had a significant impact on the community -- more houses dispersed along roadway frontages, loss of wooded and agricultural areas, increased traffic, increased solid wastes, increased demand on public safety and administrative services, more elderly folks, a more affluent population, rising property values, and more white collar commuters. Is that what should continue to happen to Readfield in the 1990's? Can and should the Town try to influence the rate and type of growth in Readfield? How can the needs of local folks be met in this situation?
- b. The young and the elderly are the two segments of the population that are growing the fastest. How should the Town prepare itself to meet the existing and future needs of both these groups? Are there any particular needs for other segments of the population?
- c. What is a healthy balance of seasonal and year-round populations for the community?

2. Summary of Economic Profile

Local jobs in Readfield increased by 41% between 1980 and 1990. The largest local employers are the public schools, the private Kents Hill School, and Saunders Manufacturing Company. By far, however, most residents work in a community other than Readfield,

generally in the Augusta area. In recent years there has been a significant increase in home occupations.

Readfield has a small manufacturing base as well as a number of forestry related businesses, several active farms, and a few gravel operations. More than 100 small commercial establishments are also located in Town. Among area towns, Readfield follows only Winthrop in regard to providing local job opportunities for its residents. The major service and retail centers of Town are in the villages.

The 1991 Community Survey suggests that most Readfield residents do not want large scale economic development in Town.

- a. Currently, home occupations are allowed anywhere in Town except in the Resource Protection District. Is this appropriate? How can the Town accommodate these businesses and assure that they are "good neighbors?"
- b. Is there a need to restrict certain types of businesses to designated areas? Presently, industrial development is allowed in Readfield Corner and Readfield Depot. Readfield Corner has a sizeable residential component. Are industrial uses in this area appropriate? Should retail and/or industrial development be allowed in the Rural District?
- c. The 1991 Community Survey suggests that most Readfield residents do not want to see large scale economic development in Town, but do support the development of smaller retail and service facilities. Should the Town regulate the scale of development in some or all areas to remain in keeping with the existing community character? If so, how can this be done without infringing on landowner's traditional rights to do what they want on their own property? What is the appropriate balance between people who work within the community and who commute to work outside of the Town?
- d. Should the Town encourage local job opportunities? If so, how?

3. Summary of Housing

Readfield's housing stock grew by approximately 14% in the 1980's. This is in spite of the fact that the Town experienced a net out-migration of population over the same period of time. Seasonal housing increased somewhat more (18%) than year round housing.

Readfield's housing stock remains overwhelmingly owner-occupied, single family detached, although manufactured housing accounts for nearly 10%. The amount of new residential housing construction has generally fluctuated with the national economy. An annual average of 19 homes per year have been issued building permits in Readfield since 1980. In 1989, the Town issued 39 building permits. While subdivision activity in the 1980's decreased from the levels of the 1970's, average lot sizes have increased. Readfield currently has a sizeable inventory of unbuilt-upon subdivided parcels which, if priced appropriately, could help

address affordable housing needs either by providing sites for "affordable homes" or by offering move-up opportunities for Town residents currently living in "affordable homes."

Readfield's affordable housing problem is not as acute as in some parts of southern and coastal Maine, where land and other costs have reached unbearable levels. On the other hand, the problem does exist. State law requires that "the municipality seek to achieve a level of 10% of new residential development in the municipality, meeting the definition of affordable housing." This would translate into a goal of about 3 affordable housing units per year, or about 15 such units over a 5-year period.

The particular strategies the Town chooses to address the affordability issue will reflect the level at which the Town wants to be involved in the affordable housing effort.

- a. While the condition of housing in Readfield is generally good, there are a number of households identified with rehabilitation needs. The Town recently received a Community Development Block Grant for funds to address these needs. Should the Town continue to pursue funds to address these needs? What else can the Town do to support the current quality of housing in the community?
- b. How involved does the Town want to be in addressing this problem? How can the Town encourage the development of modest priced single family homes? How can the Town assure that there is an adequate supply of modest rental housing affordable to lower income families and the elderly?
- c. Is there a role for condemnation in the Town's management of its housing stock? Is there a need for a building code?

4. Summary of Public Facilities and Services

With the exception of public water and sewer, Readfield's public facilities and services are extensive for a rural community. They range from a Town Hall with its support facilities to a Community Library, a Town Beach, Town Farm/Forest, several cemeteries, a local Elementary School, a regional middle and high school, fire, rescue, and a solid waste disposal system. The effects of growth may be seen in the need for careful capital improvement planning and annual budgeting to accommodate the future need for improved school and solid waste/recycling facilities. Readfield has taken practical steps to plan for the funding of most of its capital needs. The Town has its share of public health issues, including groundwater contamination from petroleum spills. The privately owned Readfield Corner Water Association may not have the capacity to serve other contaminated properties as oil and gasoline pollution extends beyond its present boundaries.

- a. Inadequate parking is a problem for Town Hall, the Community Library, and sometimes, the Elementary School. What, if anything, should the Town do to address this need?

- b. Upon completion of the current expansion of the Elementary School, the School will continue to be at recommended student capacity? What, if anything, should the Town do to address this need? Does the Town want or need a Middle School?
- c. How do we accurately project the growth rate of the school age population? How do we correlate the projected growth to the State recommended capacity?
- d. Fire and rescue protection is limited in Readfield during daytime hours. What, if anything, can the Town do to address this problem? Are there any other Town services that are not offered during the appropriate hours?
- e. Bringing Readfield's present solid waste disposal system up to current standards is representing a major financial expenditure for the Town. What should the Town do to encourage decreased volumes of waste and decreased expense for the community? Does the Town want to continue to allow other communities to use its new solid waste facility?
- f. The results of the Conservation Commission's 1987 survey showed widespread concern about potential contamination to wells, streams, and lakes. What should the Town do to minimize threats from potential sources of contamination?
- g. In 1977 the Southern Kennebec Planning and Development Council recommended a wastewater collection and treatment system for portions of Torsey Shores. Should the Town take action on that recommendation?
- h. Capacity for expansion of the Readfield Corner Water Association's system is severely limited. This may pose a problem since groundwater contamination may be spreading. Should the Town investigate the need for expansion of the system to serve other contaminated properties? If the need exists, should the Town aid/ participate in the expansion? Should the Town establish a public water system for the Corner or other areas of the community?
- i. Are the Town's non-educational public facilities adequate?
- j. Is police protection adequate?

5. Summary of Transportation System

Since 1980 growth in traffic volumes on major roadways in Readfield has varied. The highest growth has occurred on Routes 17 and 135. No intersections and roadway segments are considered high-accident locations under MDOT's criteria, although several raise safety concerns. Increasing traffic volumes combined with continuing development along these roadways create the potential for future problems.

- a. Increasing traffic volumes combined with continuing development along Readfield's roadways create the potential for future problems. Should the Town attempt to manage development through zoning, performance standards, or other means to preserve roadway capacity and character?
- b. Are there public transportation facilities, including bikeways and walkways, that could or should be developed for Readfield?
- c. In recent years due to financial constraints, the Town has limited its spending on paving and road construction. Should the Town reestablish a timetable for regular road maintenance? What priority should the Town have for this expenditure?
- d. Should the Town abandon its policy of ditching all roadways?
- e. Are gravel roads appropriate and desirable in some areas of the community?
- f. Should there be minimum standards for existing as well as new, private roadways to guarantee adequate emergency access?

6. Summary of Historic, Recreational, and Cultural Resources

Readfield has a rich history and a large variety of resources for a small community. Historic resources range from a good potential of prehistoric archaeological sites along the shorelines of its larger lakes to 2 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Readfield's lakes, fields, and forests provide abundant opportunities for swimming, bathing, waterskiing, fishing, hunting, hiking, nature observations, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling. The desire and potential for a town-wide trail network is something the community may want to consider.

Most athletic facilities are associated with the schools in Town. The recreation facilities of the Maranacook Community School appear to be inadequate to meet the needs of both the junior and senior high school students. Efforts to establish an ongoing community skating area on Maranacook Lake have not yet been successful.

The Town sponsors a variety of recreation program, primarily for elementary school age children. The continuation and expansion of these programs is dependent on the continuing efforts of volunteers. There is a shortage of playing fields for the various ball leagues.

The attractive lands around Carlton Pond are currently not open to the public for recreational use, except with permission of the Augusta Water District. The Town may want to explore the possibility of opening up the lands to limited recreation usage.

In 1990, the Town established an open space acquisition fund and incorporated open space acquisition into its capital improvements plan. However, to date, the fund reflects only a small sum of money.

Scenic resources of the community include views of water bodies like Maranacook Lake and Torsey Pond, scenic vistas of distant mountains, and rural landscapes of working farms. Cultural landmarks include the villages of Readfield Corner and Kents Hill. There are also several scenic road corridors.

The vitality of the community is reflected in the numerous organizations that serve the cultural and social needs of the community.

- a. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) indicates that there are no known prehistoric archaeological sites in Readfield, but that the shorelines of Torsey Pond, Maranacook Lake, and Carlton Pond should be designated "archaeological resource potential areas." Should the Town take such an action?
- b. The MHPC recommends that the Town undertake a comprehensive survey of its historic aboveground resources to identify properties that may be eligible for nomination to the National Register. Should the Town undertake or encourage such a survey? How can the Town work with the owners of historic properties to assure their protection without interfering with private property rights? Should the Town be involved with trying to protect these sites or assure that appropriate authorities have the opportunity to investigate the value of the sites before alterations begin? If so, how can the Town do this?
- c. A limited number of privately owned beach sites exist within the Town. Opportunities to acquire additional beach areas for public use at an affordable price are likely to diminish rapidly in the coming years. According to the community survey there is not currently broad interest in acquiring additional public beach area. Should the Town try to acquire an additional beach area(s) in the near future?
- d. The retention of private open space is key to preserving "traditional" recreational activities, such as snowmobiling, cross-country ski and walking trails. According to the Blizzard Busters, snowmobile trails have had to be rerouted around new developments in rural areas. To date, acceptable new routes have been found in most situations. What, if anything, should the Town do to work with property owners to keep land open and undeveloped and accessible as it has traditionally been accessible? Should the Town pursue development of a Town-wide system of trails? How can the Town encourage private organizations and landowners to aid in or direct this effort?
- e. Should the Town be working for expanded or new recreation facilities for the School? Should the Town try to maintain access to the Kents Hill School's facilities?

- f. Baseball fields are currently being used close to capacity and the logistics of the existing fields in several locations is difficult. Should the Town be working to create new or expanded fields?
- g. The Town Recreation Program relies almost exclusively on volunteers. Demand for recreation programs continues to increase, particularly for after-school programs by families with 2 working parents. Should the Town encourage expansion of the program? How can this be done?
- h. Although an open space acquisition fund has been established, the monies currently in the fund are very limited. Should the Town continue to contribute to this fund annually, biannually, sporadically, on a project basis, or not at all? How should it plan and/or establish priorities for expenditure of these funds? How should the Town add monies to this fund?
- i. Should the Town try to work with the Augusta Water District to improve access to these lands? How involved should the Town be with the development of a recreation and/or wildlife management program?
- j. Should the Town be involved in trying to preserve scenic views, cultural landmarks, and scenic roadway corridors? How can the public interest be balanced with private property rights?
- k. The vitality of the community is affected by much more than the official action of its government boards and committees. Over the years many organizations have been formed to serve the needs of local residents. How can the Town encourage private organizations to take a leadership role in implementing elements of the Comprehensive Plan?
- l. Are there recreational needs that the Town is currently not meeting?
- m. Kents Hill School is a cultural resource of the community. What, if anything, should the Town do to help ensure the continuation of this institution and maintenance of the opportunities it provides?

7. Summary of Fiscal Capacity

The Town of Readfield has a somewhat limited tax base consisting of a modest residential sector, small commercial and industrial holdings, a large amount of rural land, Central Maine Power Company, and the Kents Hill School. The ten largest taxpayers together account for approximately 10% of the Town's tax base. Tax exempt properties equal another 10% of the Town's valuation. The responsibility of picking up taxes not paid as a result of these exemptions falls on the owners of taxable properties, mostly homeowners.

Readfield is heavily dependent on the local property tax to finance the operation of local government. In recent years, the Town has seen the amount of revenue that must be raised through property taxes increase by about 41% (1986 to 1990). While this increase was offset somewhat by the growth in valuation of taxable property, the local tax rate still has had to be increased to raise the necessary revenue. While the ability of the Town to utilize other sources of revenue is constrained by State law, the possibility of increased application of user and service fees is one approach to relieving property tax burdens.

The Town faces important issues in the fiscal arena. On one hand, the demand for expanded services creates pressure for increased revenues. Without growth in the tax base, these increased costs are passed along to existing property owners. On the other hand, growth and expansion of the tax base will result in the demand for expanded services with additional costs. One approach to meeting the demand for services is through multi-town activities in which the costs are shared.

- a. Tax exempt properties in Readfield account for a substantial portion of the Town's valuation. The owners of taxable property have to make up the taxes not paid by tax exempt properties. Should the Town seek payment in lieu of taxes from some of the tax exempt properties?
- b. Continued economic pressures are likely to force shifts in land use of high value lands, shorelands and pastures and woodlands not classified under current use tax laws, to more intensive use. Should the Town try to maintain the most highly prized properties in their current use? How can this be encouraged?
- c. The trend of reduced State aid to local communities appears likely to continue. How should the Town replace these lost resources?
- d. How should the Town's taxation policy address the goals of the Comprehensive Plan?

8. Summary of the Built Environment

Readfield is characterized as a rural residential community with a moderate amount of commercial and a limited amount of industrial development. The Town is within commuting distance of the Augusta and Waterville areas. The proximity and job growth of those areas have influenced residential development in Readfield. The Town has experienced scattered suburban development, resulting in "strip" development which tends to become unattractive as vacant parcels along the road fill in. This pattern of development also stresses the traffic capacity of the roads and landlocks back parcels.

- a. What makes up Readfield's rural character? What are the elements of its community character? How can these elements be preserved to protect what makes the community special? If private property rights are one of the elements of the character of the Town that is valued, how can future growth be managed so that it preserves what is important while minimizing interference with private property rights?
- b. In the 1970's and 1980's, suburban development in Readfield increased significantly, the acreage under active forest management declined, and farmland acreage was reduced. Much of the development that took place was fairly evenly scattered throughout Town in a linear fashion along the Town's roadways and shorefronts. Is continued strip development a threat to the rural character of Readfield? As development along the roadways fills in the areas between the existing villages, will the distinction between villages and the surrounding rural hinterlands be lost? Will this have a negative effect on Readfield's community character? How should this loss be prevented?
- c. Other than the general growth in housing and the shift to more manufactured housing, housing trends have remained generally stable. Recent subdivision trends indicate that on average newer lots are considerably larger than those previously developed, larger than the Town's minimum lot size. Much of this development is taking place along existing roadway frontages. Does this trend raise concerns about a formerly rural landscape punctuated by discrete villages of concentrated development being transformed into a suburban landscape fronting along the roadway network? If so, how should the Town try to manage this phenomenon?
- d. The trend of seasonal conversions of lakefront properties to year-round use is expected to continue. Does this raise concerns for water quality and community character? How should the issue of conversions be managed?
- e. The pattern of home businesses and scattered small businesses raises questions about how these uses can be accommodated without affecting nearby residents. Should the Town control new commercial uses in these areas? Should "good neighbor standards" be developed to minimize potential conflicts?

- f. Much of the land in Town remains open farm and woodland. These land uses, in combination with the rolling topography and fairly pristine lakes, in part define the Town's character and scenic views. How can the most important of these areas be kept open without infringing on private property rights? What role, if any, should the Town play in encouraging the continuation of working farms and forests? Does an acceptable Town role include the promotion of current use taxation?
- g. Should the Town adopt design standards to preserve historic character in key locations? To maintain community character?
- h. How should the Town protect private property owners' rights?
- i. Is there a need to define growth and rural areas in the community? If so, do existing land use regulations do that adequately? How should the Town reconcile the difference between the State requirement for the designation for growth areas and the sentiment expressed in the Community Survey for scattered development? Is there a diversity of opinion as to what dispersed growth or scattered growth is? Is scattered or dispersed growth different from sprawl?

9. Summary of the Natural Environment

Readfield is covered by a layer of glacial till. One variety is fine grained with low permeability and poor drainage. The other is loose, sandy, and stony with moderate permeability and fair to good drainage. The topography of the Town is generally rolling with a high elevation of 680 feet and a low approximately 200 feet above sea level. Soils are dominated by loam and sand developed from glacial till and meltwater and tend to have high water tables. The preponderant soils have severe to moderate limitations for construction of septic systems. Areas where septic systems are either completely inadvisable or where only replacement systems should be allowed are near lakes, ponds, and streams. Protection of these areas is important to protect groundwater quality and quantity and surface water quality.

One significant sand and gravel aquifer is mapped in Readfield. The remainder of the Town has a moderate to low or no potential groundwater yield. The Town's solid waste facility is identified as a potential source of groundwater contamination.

There are 5 major watersheds in Readfield draining to 8 adjoining communities. There are approximately 37 streams and brooks representing about 25 miles of moving water. All are of good water quality (Class B). Ten lakes or ponds are located in Readfield. Three others, located in adjacent towns, have portions of their watersheds in Readfield. Data suggests that the northern basin of Maranacook Lake is showing signs of accelerated aging. Two ponds, Carlton and Torsey, are listed by DEP as nonattainment lakes for dissolved oxygen; although the Cobbossee Watershed District suggests that water quality in these ponds is stable. Watershed management strategies may be needed in these and other watersheds to maintain water quality. Wetlands associated with the Town's hydrologic system provide important functions for water storage, filtration, habitat, and open space. The 13 active and nonactive gravel pits in Town are areas for potential groundwater pollution.

Water bodies, watercourses, and wetlands provide habitats for many wildlife species. Other special habitats are provided by wooded areas, including the rich, moist woodlands of Monks Hill-Shed Pond. The State has identified 4 natural heritage and critical areas in Readfield reflecting endangered or valuable plants. It has also mapped 13 wetlands valuable for wildfowl, furbearers, deer, moose, fish, reptiles, amphibians, small mammals, and small birds.

- a. The preponderant soils in Readfield are characterized as having severe to moderate limitations for construction of septic systems. Particularly sensitive areas, where subsurface septic systems are completely inadvisable or where replacement systems only should be allowed, are near lakes, ponds, or streams. Is the current system of oversight adequate? Should the Town rely on State requirements or are more stringent local requirements needed to assure protection of ground and surface waters? And if so, what?
- b. The Town's groundwater is recharged in part by precipitation percolating through the soil. Should the Town be involved in assuring that adequate infiltration is able to occur? Is protection of the quantity and quality of groundwater adequate?
- c. Readfield currently has regulations to control erosion and sedimentation. Are these regulations adequate to protect the surface waters in Readfield's watersheds?
- d. Readfield shares watersheds with the adjoining towns of Wayne, Winthrop, Mount Vernon, Fayette, Manchester, Belgrade, Oakland, and Sidney. How can Readfield work with these communities, to all towns' mutual advantage, to protect the quality of surface waters? What is the appropriate way to coordinate the watershed management efforts of the various communities?
- e. Areas of the Town are vulnerable to periodic flooding. Are the Town's existing requirements adequate to protect public and private property?
- f. Many of Readfield's perennial streams are protected by a stream protection district. Are the terms of this district adequate?
- g. Carlton Pond is a drinking water source for the City of Augusta. The Augusta Water District owns 710 acres in Readfield surrounding the pond and in the watershed. Although the pond is identified as a high water quality lake, since 1984, dissolved oxygen (DO) appears to have declined in the bottom waters and DEP lists the pond as a non-attainment lake because of low DO. The Cobbossee Watershed District suggests that the pond is stable. Are strict watershed protection measures needed to maintain water quality for this watershed?
- h. In 1979 the Cobbossee Watershed District predicted that the northern basin of Maranacook Lake would be eutrophic by 1995 if agricultural and developmental activity within its watershed was not controlled. The deterioration of the northern basin, along with intensification of agriculture and development, would result in a decline in quality in the southern basin which is a secondary water supply for Winthrop and a source of drinking water by some lakefront owners. Should best management practices be further implemented for both construction and agricultural activities? Are additional controls on land usage and site development appropriate?

- i. Little Cobbosseecontee Lake shows DO depletion and has algal blooms; however, water quality appears stable. Oxygen depletion occurs in Torsey Pond in the summer and the DEP lists Torsey as a nonattainment lake because of low DO. The Cobbossee Watershed District lists water quality in Torsey as stable. Are ongoing lake protection, runoff management, and subdivision controls needed to maintain good water quality in these water bodies and to protect lakes and ponds further downstream?
- j. Wetlands serve important functions as stormwater storage areas, surface water filtration systems, critical natural areas for wildlife and plant habitat, and as open space for recreation and aesthetics. Are existing regulations adequate to protect these areas or does the Town need to address this issue?
- k. According to 1991 aerial photographs, there are 13 active and inactive gravel pits in Town. These areas may serve as areas of groundwater recharge and potential groundwater pollution. They also may erode easily if disturbed. Is there a need for regulation of these and other areas which may be proposed for mining activity to protect groundwater quality and erodible soils?
- l. Readfield has a number of critical wildlife habitats and natural areas as well as wildlife habitats that range from indeterminate to high value (as defined by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife). Many, but not all, areas are in or adjacent to water bodies, watercourses, and wetlands. Protection of some of these areas is occurring through State agencies, nonprofit conservation organizations, and shoreland zoning. Is there a need for additional activities to protect these areas and, if so, how should it be accomplished? Should the Town be involved in these activities?
- m. Is there a need for timber harvesting regulations?

10. Summary of the Analysis of the Natural and Built Environment

The natural landscape--its topography, soils, surface water, groundwater, wetlands, vegetation, wildlife, potential for resource production, and other natural areas--as well as the built environment--special cultural resources or community facilities--present both constraints to and opportunities for development.

The constraints can be generalized as follows:

	Severe	Significant	Moderate	Least
Slope				
• greater than or equal to 20%	X			
Soils (w/septic)				
• systems not permitted	X			
• systems may be permitted			X	
• new systems permitted				X
Open Water	X			
100-Year Flood Prone Area	X			

	Severe	Significant	Moderate	Least
Aquifers				
• high yield		X		
• potential recharge areas		X		
Watersheds				
• primary water supply		X		
• secondary water supply			X	
• need protection			X	
• both water supply and need protection			X	
Wetlands	X			
Active Farms				
• active		X		
• prime agricultural soils		X		
Gravel Pits			X	
Unique Areas and Wildlife Habitat				
• waterfowl and wading bird habitats				
- high value	X			
- moderate value		X		
- indeterminate value		X		
• deer wintering yards				
- indeterminate value		X		
Special Cultural Resources				
• scenic views			X	
• cultural landmarks				X
• scenic road corridors			X	

The presence of a public water supply and/or public sewer system can overcome, in part or in whole, certain constraints related to soils. Provided that the soils are not hydric or otherwise indicative of wetlands, a public sewer system can convert a moderately or significantly constrained area to a "least" constrained area.

Using these generalizations as a guide, and with the inventories of the natural and built environments in mind, a constraints map of the Town can be created. See Figure 1. Much of the Town is constrained in some fashion, primarily reflecting surface water, flood plains, wetlands, aquifers, poor soils for septic disposal, and active resource utilization (agriculture, forestry, or gravel extraction). The results are summarized as follows:

1. Severely Constrained Areas

These areas are largely defined by the lakes and stream channels in Readfield and include open water, flood plains, wetlands, slopes greater than or equal to 20%, high value wildlife habitat, and soils with severe limitations for septic disposal. Development should be severely restricted in these areas.

2. Significantly Constrained Areas

Aquifers, watersheds for primary water supply, active farms, prime farmland soils, tree growth properties, moderate and indeterminate value wildlife habitat and deer yards define these areas around Carlton Pond and other scattered locations.

3. Moderately Constrained Areas

By far the largest area of the community is moderately constrained. These areas reflect watersheds for secondary water supplies and watersheds needing protection to preserve lake quality, active gravel pits, and areas of special cultural resources.

4. Least Constrained Areas

The least constrained areas occur off Route 135 north of Route 17 and the far western part of Town.

SECTION II

GOALS AND POLICIES

A. NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Local Goals: Protect the quality and quantity of the Town's natural resources and landscape, including shorelands, lakes, streams, wetlands, flood plains, ground waters, soils, steep slopes, forests, agriculture, critical habitats, open space lands, scenic views, and other significant natural resources and rural landscapes.

Ensure that the density of new development is compatible with the natural capacities of the soil to adequately treat waste water and runoff and to protect ground and surface waters.

Policies:

- A.1. Educate the public about the Town's natural resources, their importance to the community, the types of activities that can jeopardize them, and what landowners can do to protect them.
- A.2. Require applicants for projects requiring Planning Board review to identify all significant natural resources, wetlands, State-defined critical areas, rare plants, and critical habitats.
- A.3. Regulate new development within floodplain areas to minimize threats to property, public safety, and water quality.
- A.4. In conformance with the State Shoreland Zoning Law and the Natural Resource Protection Act, retain undeveloped buffer strips along and minimum setbacks from lakes, rivers, and streams to protect water quality, fisheries, and scenic values.
- A.5. To conserve unique natural areas, high value wildlife habitats, sites of endangered plant species and other critical habitats the Town should:
 - within areas designated as rural areas, require the use of cluster development or other development practices that:
 - minimize the fragmentation of large parcels of undeveloped land,
 - seek to preserve a variety of different habitats, and
 - seek to ensure that wildlife habitats are connected by travel corridors;
 - establish minimum protective measures, including but not limited to setbacks and performance standards; and

- encourage conservation easements and other voluntary land conservation tools to protect important wildlife habitats and unique areas.
- A.6. Work with State, regional, and federal officials to provide for the accurate identification and assessment of the Town's significant natural resources, particularly wetlands, flood plains, perennial streams, and wildlife habitats where existing information may be inaccurate or incomplete. Where necessary, appropriate changes to land use designations should be made.
- A.7. Protect, preserve, and enhance the wetlands of the community by:
- designating a Resource Protection District where development is prohibited within freshwater wetlands of 2 or more contiguous acres and within 250 feet of "moderate" or "high" value wetlands as defined by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife;
 - protecting and buffering those wetlands which play an important role in
 - groundwater recharge and discharge,
 - flood water storage,
 - erosion prevention,
 - sediment and toxicant retention,
 - food chain support, and
 - diverse habitat for fisheries and wildlife;
 - maintaining areas of uncut vegetation, limiting the amount of timber harvesting, and buffering wetlands from sources of excess nutrients in conformance with the State Shoreland Zoning Law;
 - minimizing adverse impacts of development in wetlands not located in Resource Protection Districts.
- A.8. Areas of 2 or more contiguous acres with sustained slopes of 20% or greater are designated Resource Protection. Maintain performance standards to regulate disturbance of slopes greater than or equal to 20% or on sites with soils having high erosion potential or limitations for on-site sewage disposal or structural development.
- A.9. Establish standards for local roadways, within the limits of safety, that reduce the impact of wide, paved corridors on the natural environment and on the visual character of the Town.
- A.10. Regulate earthmoving, tilling, and other land disturbance in Resource Protection and all other shoreland districts in accordance with the State Shoreland Zoning Law.

- A.11. The Town should initiate and/or cooperate with adjoining municipalities to identify and manage commonly shared resources and open space systems.

Local Goals: Protect sensitive shoreland and lake water quality from the effects of soil erosion, phosphorus loading, and malfunctioning septic systems.

Encourage and participate in regional efforts to maintain and upgrade the water quality of the Town's surface waters.

Policies:

- A.12. Continue to collect information and educate the public on water quality issues involving lakes, groundwater degradation, and potential sources of nutrients and contamination.
- A.13. Utilize the Department of Environmental Protection's handbooks, Comprehensive Planning for Lake Watersheds, Phosphorus Control in Lake Watersheds, or the most updated version or best available document to aid in establishing density, design, and setting standards to maintain lake water quality goals. Continue to work with the Cobbossee Watershed District to control phosphorus loading of lakes.
- A.14. Require upgrading of malfunctioning wastewater disposal systems at the time ownership of shoreland properties is transferred.
- A.15. Prohibit permanent docks in shoreland areas.
- A.16. Prepare performance standards for land use activities to protect lake water quality. Such standards should include, but not be limited to, practical and effective measures such as buffers, erosion and stormwater runoff controls, and other measures that minimize phosphorus contamination. Require developers to demonstrate that project designs manage the rate of stormwater runoff to a level which can be accommodated by the downstream system.
- A.17. Maintain standards for clearing, timber harvesting, filling and grading, tilling, spreading of fertilizer, and building of lawns in shoreland areas.
- A.18. Improve Town and private roads that are adversely affecting water quality.
- A.19. Protect aquifers and primary recharge areas through the development review process.
- A.20. Cooperate with the Cobbossee Watershed District and municipalities that share lake watersheds to establish standards that maintain lake water quality.

Local Goal: Promote the conservation and sound management of the forest, agricultural, and mineral resources within the Town.

Policies:

- A.21. Identify agricultural lands or high productivity forest lands of present or potential value and recommend techniques to protect those areas from incompatible land uses. Possible techniques include required clustered development, the public purchase of development rights, conservation easements, and minimum setbacks from working farmlands.
- A.22. Encourage owners of farmland, significant open space, and forest lands to participate in the farm, open space, and tree growth tax programs.
- A.23. Assure that the Town's regulations allow reasonable economic use of forest resources.
- A.24. Determine if topsoil and sand/gravel mining in Town require additional buffers, erosion and stormwater runoff controls, and site reclamation standards.

Local Goal: Encourage energy conservation in private and public development.

Policy:

- A.25. Educate the public about the benefits of energy conservation, creative site and building design, and the use of alternative energy technologies in development proposals.

B. GENERAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Locals Goals: Encourage future development in areas where the Town can most efficiently provide community services.

Provide for land uses in harmony with the Town's resource base by encouraging future development toward areas planned for growth.

Promote and maintain the character of current Town villages.

Preserve the open, rural character of the areas not designated for growth.

Separate incompatible land uses and guide them to suitable areas of Town and/or require them to meet performance standards. These performance or design standards are intended to assure that new commercial or industrial developments are well designed, protect the environment and neighboring properties, provide safe access, and promote the visual environment.

Policies:

- B.1. To protect significant natural resource areas, direct the projected growth in population, commerce, and industry to areas suitable for development. "Suitable areas" means areas relatively free of severe or significant natural resource constraints.

BACKGROUND

Readfield's community character is defined in large part by its nineteenth century villages and surrounding rural areas. This pattern is a product of the Town's historical development. The designation of growth and rural areas reflects the Town's desire to preserve the traditional development pattern. The village and rural pattern of settlement imposes less expense on municipal services, is easier to serve, and is less damaging to the Town's natural and scenic environment than a spread-out, suburban pattern of settlement.

- B.2 The Town should direct development toward the primary growth areas and should discourage, but not prohibit, development of land outside of the growth areas. In implementing this policy, the Town should consider an array of measures, including variable lot sizes and other land use regulations.

- B.3. This proposed pattern of development must:
- include an area of land sufficient to accommodate projected growth, keeping in mind the balance of supply and demand,
 - work to assure ample opportunity for affordable housing within growth areas, and
 - minimize the impact of this policy on owners of rural lands, development of which may be more restricted than at present.
- B.4. The Town should establish standards of site design that allow for development densities that are consistent with what currently exists and produce desirable village environments.
- B.5. Three types of primary growth areas are designated:
- villages, consisting primarily of compact residential and commercial development,
 - village residential areas, consisting primarily of compact residential development, and
 - commercial/light industrial areas, consisting primarily of large nonresidential uses.
- B.6. Development is proposed to be on a minimum of 40,000 square foot lots in the village and village residential areas. Existing legally created non-conforming lots are excused from this size requirement.
- B.7. Two village areas are identified:
- Readfield Corner and
 - Readfield Depot.
- B.8. In the villages, the Town's land use policy should allow a range of uses including higher density residential; home occupations, low intensity commercial uses, such as business, office, small retail; clean light industrial uses of 5,000 square feet or less; and community facilities, such as governmental and quasi-governmental facilities. Future development or conversion of property in these village areas should:
- maintain the existing character by controlling the placement of buildings, parking, and storage;
 - provide sufficient off-street parking and safe vehicular access; and

- protect adjacent residential areas from nonresidential encroachment or from adverse impacts of the change.
- B.9. The Town should maintain the character and quality of village areas by retaining open space near village centers and planting additional street trees where required.
- B.10. Improve traffic and pedestrian safety at and in the vicinity of the Route 41 and Route 17 intersection at Readfield Corner by:
- creating bike paths and sidewalks connecting the school, public facilities, and similar points in the vicinity; and
 - reducing traffic hazards.
- B.11. Strongly encourage public institutions, such as the Post Office and Town Hall, to remain in the villages.
- B.12. Three village residential areas should be identified:
- Kents Hill,
 - the area surrounding Readfield Corner, and
 - the area surrounding Readfield Depot.
- B.13. Village residential areas are designated where the primary use is higher density residential neighborhoods. To retain the character of such areas, nonresidential uses should be limited to home occupations and schools. Standards for new development, conversion, or renovation should be tailored to the existing character of each area in order to promote consistency in frontage, setback, building height, and other characteristics.
- B.14. In the village and village residential areas, standards must be established that provide for the safe disposal of septic waste without requiring a public sewage disposal system.
- B.15. Maintain the visual quality of the village and village residential areas, especially Kents Hill, by assuring that new buildings are compatible with the existing buildings.
- B.16. The location of commercial/light industrial developments proposing a structure greater than 5,000 square feet must be approved as a "commercial/light industrial area" at Town meeting. This process will allow the community the opportunity to assess the proposed use, its scale, impacts, and location as part of an evaluation of whether it is in keeping with Readfield's community character. Commercial/light industrial uses should not be allowed in the village residential areas.

B.17. Within designated growth areas, encourage the use of cluster development and other measures that preserve desirable elements of the landscape. Such measures should be mandatory townwide for development of 10 or more lots.

B.18. Outside the primary growth areas land should be designated as:

- rural areas,
- rural residential areas,
- shoreland areas, or
- resource protection areas.

B.19. Rural areas should remain relatively open and rural in character.

Agriculture and forestry should be encouraged in rural areas; gravel/sand mining and home occupations should be allowed in rural areas.

New construction, including expansion, should meet performance and site design standards to preserve rural character. For example, siting that preserves the visual environment by locating buildings in or adjacent to wooded areas (as opposed to open fields) to maintain the natural landscape to the maximum extent possible should be encouraged, but not required.

Direct access to rural roadways should be minimized by utilization of frontage roads, shared driveways, or access roads in the subdivision and site review process. Natural landscapes should be preserved alongside rural roadways.

New residential development should be limited to a level compatible with the natural capacities of the soil and other natural resources to adequately treat waste water. Use of cluster development and other measures that would preserve significant percentages of prime wetland, farm, and woodland, unique natural areas, wildlife habitat, and the interconnections of the resulting open spaces should be encouraged, and required for subdivisions of 10 or more lots.

B.20. The minimum lot size in rural areas should be 80,000 square feet. Existing legally created non-conforming lots are excused from this size requirement.

B.21. Encourage the protection of sensitive natural resource areas and the continued use of lands for farming, woodlands, and as open space through:

- assuring that the Town's land assessment policies do not place an undue burden on the owners of farm and woodlands by placing development values on land which is not suited for development,
- provide incentives to property owners to maintain the land's open status, including enrollment in current use tax programs and conservation easements, and
- establishing "right to farm" and "right to forest" provisions to explicitly provide that farming and forestry activities are permitted.

B.22. Rural residential areas generally follow major roadways.

B.23. Uses in the rural residential areas should be primarily low density residential, farming, and forestry operations, although home occupations should be allowed. Development is proposed to be on minimum 80,000 square foot lots. Existing legally created non-conforming lots are excused from this requirement.

B.24. Two types of shoreland areas are designated:

- shoreland residential-recreation and
- stream protection.

B.25. In the shoreland residential-recreation areas, residential and recreational development is appropriate; home occupations are allowed. Development is proposed to be on minimum 80,000 square foot lots, although legally existing nonconforming lots are excused from this requirement. These areas require standards to protect water quality, productive fish or wildlife habitat, and scenic and natural areas.

B.26. In stream protection areas, allowed uses should be restricted to preserve water quality, productive fish or wildlife habitat, and scenic and natural values.

B.27. In resource protection areas, allowed uses should be severely restricted to preserve water quality, productive fish or wildlife habitat, and scenic and natural values.

B.28. Undertake cooperative efforts with adjoining communities to minimize conflicts associated with growth and rural area designations.

B.29. Require new subdivisions and commercial developments to protect view corridors, scenic vistas, and important pieces of open space to the maximum extent possible as identified in the inventory and analysis. Additionally, encourage individual lot owners to site their development to preserve view corridors, scenic vistas, and important pieces of open space.

BACKGROUND

Because the vast majority of land in Readfield is in private ownership and will remain so in the future, the individual decisions of landowners will play an important role in shaping the future of the Town. While public regulation of these landowners can accomplish some of the Town's goals, much can be accomplished through a cooperative effort which balances the landowners' interests with the interests of the general public.

- B.30. The Town should recognize and respect the rights and interests of private land owners.
- B.31. Educate the public as to the role private landowners play in defining Readfield's character.
- B.32. Work with landowners and developers to assist in planning for the use of their land to help them realize their financial objectives while recognizing the Town's interests.

C. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Local Goals: Promote rational and economical patterns of residential settlement for various types of households and income levels in an environment that is safe and quiet and retains the rural character of the Town.

Maintain and, where appropriate improve the quality of the existing housing stock.

Policies:

- C.1. Review and modify ordinances to provide appropriate locations for nursing homes, boarding homes, congregate housing, and housing for the elderly. Unreasonable regulations that discourage the development of these type of residential uses should be revised or eliminated.
- C.2. Mobile home parks should be allowed within one-half mile north of the village residential area north of Readfield Depot. This is an area adjacent to an existing park. Mobile home parks should be required to be designed and sited to coexist harmoniously with existing and projected surrounding development, including addressing considerations of roadway buffers, setbacks, landscaping, and buffering from adjacent residential uses.
- C.3. Continue the efforts of the Community Development Block Grant Committee to improve the quality of the existing housing stock.

Local Goal: Encourage affordable housing for low and moderate income families.

Policies:

- C.4. Consider adoption of mechanisms to foster construction of well-planned, affordable housing developments. The goal for the Town is that 10 percent of the construction of new homes should be affordable. Mechanisms that deserve consideration include:
- assuring that local development regulations do not result in unnecessary development costs beyond those required to assure that the public is protected;
 - allowing the conversion of single family homes in the village and village-residential areas of Town into multifamily units at greater densities than now permitted, provided the capacity for such increased density is met;
 - providing density bonuses for subdivision developers in growth areas who agree to set aside some lots for affordable housing and assure that they remain affordable;
 - providing land or other incentives for the construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing in Town; and
 - discouraging developers from setting minimum house size requirements.
- C.5. Promote and participate in regional efforts to provide affordable housing in the area.

D. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Local Goal: Allow for new commercial, service, and clean light industrial growth in designated areas to diversify the Town's tax base, promote local job opportunities, and make important services available for local citizens. The scale of new uses should be in keeping with existing community character.

BACKGROUND

Clean, light industrial activity involves manufacturing, packaging, processing, or assembly of finished products from previously processed materials. It does not include the processing of raw materials, the generation or use of extremely hazardous materials, or salvaging operations. The facility, including storage of material and equipment, must be consistent with existing community character. Its activity should be conducted substantially within buildings and must limit the potential nuisances of noise, odor, and air and water pollution beyond the property's boundaries.

Nonresidential uses provide goods and services used by the residents of the community, as well as local jobs. At the same time these uses can have undesirable impacts on neighboring properties and the environment, such as noise, dust, litter, traffic, visual degradation, or loss of privacy. Mitigating these impacts will protect both parties and assure that the quality of life in existing residential neighborhoods is maintained.

Policies:

- D.1 The Town should establish provisions that allow legally existing nonconforming industrial and commercial activities to continue and expand current operations.
- D.2. Clean light industrial uses, commercial (excluding home occupations), and retail land uses should be directed to village or commercial/light industrial areas, away from incompatible land uses.
- D.3 Incorporate performance and design standards for commercial and industrial developments into the zoning ordinance and site review process. These standards should assure that new developments, and modifications of or additions to existing developments, are well planned, make good use of the site, provide adequate and safe vehicular access, and protect adjacent residential neighborhoods and commercial establishments. These standards should regulate the scale, type of use, impact on the visual and natural environment, landscaping, fencing, buffers with existing or potentially incompatible uses, screening of parking areas and dumpsters from public view, access into the site, routes of travel, hours of operation, waste disposal, and the nuisances of noise, smoke, fumes, odors, and glare from outdoor lighting.
- D.4. Continue to allow nursery schools and day care facilities throughout the Town subject to the standards described in Policy D.3.
- D.5. Home occupations should be divided into two categories as follows:
 - low impact and
 - high impact home businesses.

Low impact home businesses should be allowed throughout the Town. They should be carried on primarily within residential structures and have a limited number of employees. They should be small in scale and generate impacts, such as traffic or noise, that are similar to those generated by a residential use.

High impact home businesses are those carried on primarily outside of residential structures and generate impacts, such as traffic and noise, at levels higher than residential use. Establishment of high impact home businesses should require Planning Board approval.

Both types of home occupations should be required to meet the standards described in Policy D.3.

E. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Local Goal: Provide essential public services including education, fire and police protection, emergency rescue, solid waste disposal, roads, recreation, libraries, cemeteries, assessing, public health and welfare, community planning, development review, and code enforcement.

Policies:

- E.1. The Town should continue to plan for capital expenditures through an annual Capital Improvements Program (CIP), which looks at the needs for maintenance, new, or expanded public facilities, the ability of the Town to pay for these facilities, and establishes the priorities for capital spending.
- E.2. To assist with the planning for capital expenditures, the Town should:
- undertake long-range school facilities planning,
 - annually assess the adequacy of and need for future replacement of fire equipment,
 - plan for bridge and road improvements, maintenance, and construction needs,
 - continue to plan for long range solid waste disposal and recycling needs, and
 - adopt a community park and recreation strategy.

- E.3. Investigate the feasibility of a public facility impact fee system which would ensure that new developments which require improved or expanded Town services, especially transportation, education, and solid waste services, pay their fair share of that municipal cost.
- E.4. Support adequate staffing of both Readfield EMS and the Fire Department by:
 - continuing to work with local employers to develop programs which allow volunteer participation by employees and
 - targeting the recruitment of volunteers who are available during weekdays.
- E.5. Explore the need for an administrative assistant to the Fire Chief to be shared with other towns.
- E.6. Review and update plans for emergency response to school, local employment, railroad, and trucking fires, especially when they involve the release of hazardous materials.
- E.7. Work with State and County officials to increase enforcement of traffic laws, especially in residential neighborhoods.
- E.8. The Town should be diligent in following up on the State's monitoring of the Readfield Corner water contamination problem.
- E.9. Review and revise this Comprehensive Plan on a regular basis.
- E.10. Clarify the authority and responsibilities of the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and Board of Appeals by adopting appropriate charter, ordinance, or by-law changes.

Local Goal: Establish a solid waste disposal program which encourages recycling and the reduction of waste.

Policies:

- E.11. To reduce the cost and volume of materials to be disposed of, maintain a recycling strategy. This strategy should include:
 - provisions for the separation of recyclables, proper disposal of hazardous waste, and home composting;
 - cooperating with other communities for a regional solution to disposal of solid waste, demolition materials, white metal goods, stumps, and tires; and

- providing periodic opportunities for disposal of items not normally accepted at the transfer station.

E.12. Enforce a stiff fine for illegal dumping.

Local Goal: Protect the safety, character, and traffic bearing capacity of the Town's road system.

Policies:

- E.13. Plan, build, and encourage transportation improvements that complement and reinforce desired land use patterns.
- E.14. By means of ordinances, protect the safety and traffic-carrying capacity of major rural roads by limiting direct access and encouraging shared access.
- E.15. Work with the State to improve the condition of and correct safety deficiencies in the existing roadway system, particularly in the high-accident locations identified in the inventories.
- E.16. Take into consideration scenic road corridors identified in the inventory and analysis when planning, commenting to the State, designing, and executing roadway improvements in these areas.
- E.17. Establish a Town policy for retaining unpaved roads and/or discontinuing roads in those areas of the community where growth is discouraged.
- E.18. Ensure that road ditching operations minimize erosion, phosphorous runoff, protect groundwater, and maintain safety.

Local Goals: Provide for Town recreation opportunities.

Protect significant view corridors and parcels of land.

Policies:

- E.19. Encourage cooperative arrangements with private landowners to maintain controlled access to open land for cross-country skiing, walking, snowmobiling, and water recreation. Formalize these arrangements with easements or licenses whenever possible.
- E.20. Develop a plan for and implement a Townwide system of interconnected trails for walking and cross-country skiing.
- E.21. Continue to support maintenance of the snowmobile trail network.

- E.22. Maintain and increase, where possible, opportunities to use local private recreation facilities including, but not limited to, Camp K-V and the Kents Hill School.
- E.23. Continue to support and expand Town recreation programs. Continue to encourage participation and improve coordination of volunteers.
- E.24. Consider long-range public beach needs and explore the acquisition of additional shorefront area(s) for public use.
- E.25. Work with the State to establish reasonable controls on motorized traffic on Maranacook Lake.
- E.26. Explore opportunities to provide recreational access on the Augusta Watershed District lands surrounding Carlton Pond.
- E.27. Continue to add to the Open Space Fund established for future acquisition of natural lands.
- E.28. Identify potential greenbelts through the Town for wildlife habitat, open space, and recreation that could be established in cooperation with private land owners.
- E.29. Continue to develop opportunities for recreation on Town-owned parcels. Improve, if possible, access to the Town Forest.
- E.30. Retain public easements for recreational purposes on any Town roads discontinued in the future. Research discontinued and abandoned roads to determine present public rights.

F. HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Local Goal: Identify and preserve the Town's historic, archaeological, and cultural heritage sites.

Policies:

- F.1. Encourage the preservation of historic structures in the community, particularly in the village areas.

- F.2. Identify additional structures, sites, and archaeological resources to be preserved.
- A comprehensive survey of historic above-ground resources should be completed and made available to identify properties which may be eligible for nomination to the National Register.
 - An archaeological survey should be conducted.
- F.3. Ensure that known historic structures, sites, and archaeological resources are protected in the development review process.
- F.4. Support the work of the Readfield Historical Society, Friends of the Union Meeting House, and others to:
- preserve and/or restore sites, dams, and buildings of historical or architectural significance;
 - finish the organization and conservation of Town records;
 - encourage historical and genealogical research and publication;
 - continue to record oral history interviews with the Town's older citizens; and
 - develop a walking tour of the Factory Square area.
- F.5. Recognize that the Town's historic and cultural facilities are integral to the character of Readfield and continue direct and indirect financial support of them. Some of these facilities include the Town Library, Historical Society building, Union Meeting House, Jesse Lee Church, among others. In addition, use every available opportunity to promote their upkeep and appropriate community usage while preserving them for future generations.
- F.6. The Town should explore and encourage continued cooperation with the Kents Hill School, Winthrop YMCA, and other municipalities, organizations, and individuals for shared cultural and recreational activities.

G. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Local Goal: Provide for a predictable, timely, and cost effective land use decision-making process.

Policies:

- G.1. The Town should increase the hours of the Code Enforcement Officer to provide for additional opportunities for education, landowner assistance, and code enforcement.
- G.2. Review the need for and adequacy of each of the Town's ordinances and regulations. Unnecessary ordinances should be repealed and outdated ordinances should be updated.
- G.3. Each Board should periodically review its administrative process to assure predictable times and cost-effective decision making.

Local Goal: Encourage citizen participation in community affairs.

Policies:

- G.4. Provide wider distribution of school newsletters to the community.
- G.5. Improve citizen participation in Town government by:
 - encouraging residents to volunteer for local boards, committees, and activities;
 - establishing a "people resource" bank of volunteers with special skills;
 - issuing a biweekly newsletter with a synopsis of Town board actions and news of other community activities; and
 - annually recognizing individual volunteers who have made significant contributions of their time.
- G.6. Maintain a central file and record system in the Town Office of board and committee minutes and materials for convenient public inspection.
- G.7. Annually publish a directory of all local officials, organizations, businesses, and services, perhaps as a pullout section in the Town report.
- G.8. In order to inspire a sense of community spirit, Readfield Community Days should be held annually.

Local Goal: Maintain taxes as low as practicable.
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Policies:

- G.9. To protect the Town from future public costs, encourage development in areas where public facilities, such as roads or access, and natural resources are adequate to service the development.
- G.10. As part of the Planning Board review process require documentation of adequate financial and technical capacity.
- G.11. Require developers to provide necessary facilities to serve new developments, including the upgrading of existing public facilities, if they are necessary to accommodate new development.

SECTION III

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The goals and policies set forth in **Section II.** provide a general vision of how the Town of Readfield should guide its growth and development and the use of its land resource over the coming decade. Key elements of the community goals and policies include preserving the character of Readfield by encouraging development in growth areas and managing growth in rural areas. The primary tools the Town proposes to use include a proactive landowner assistance program, acquisition of conservation easements and development rights, working with the State to provide Towns opportunities for growth management, limiting direct access and encouraging shared access to major rural roads, and preserving the natural landscape through mandatory cluster techniques.

This Section translates the general goals and specific policies of **Section II.** into proposals to assure that the Town of Readfield's goals and policies are met. The proposals are divided into three categories:

- a Land Use Plan which tries to balance the interests of property owners with the public interest;
- an implementation strategy to take the actions necessary to translate Readfield's vision of its future into reality; and
- a capital investments program essential to meeting the service needs of the community in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

A. LAND USE PLAN

The Growth and Rural Areas Map (also referred to as Future Land Use Map), Figure 2, graphically depicts how the Town should grow. It is not a zoning map, and the boundaries of identified areas on the Map are general. But the Map will help to guide the development of future zoning, other land use measures, and the capital improvements program.

The designation of areas on the Map is intended to provide for the best use of the various areas of the Town in accordance with the community's goals and policies. Each designation addresses particular situations and is designed to reflect both the natural constraints and opportunities of the land and the desires of the community.

The Map embodies the concept that the Town should include rural areas and growth areas. Designation of these areas has evolved directly from:

- an understanding of the Town's natural resource systems, some of which represent barriers to development, others of which represent opportunities;

- the historic development of the community;
- a desire to preserve a traditional village and countryside pattern of living; and to keep the character of each intact;
- the need to extend and use public services in the least costly manner possible;
- a desire to provide opportunity for the development of reasonably priced housing;
- the State-mandated guidelines of the Growth Management Law; and
- the input of community comments received in the Community Survey and at public meetings and forums.

For purposes of the Land Use Plan, rural and growth areas have been subdivided as follows:

1. Growth Areas

As suggested by Maine's Growth Management Act and its regulations, **growth areas** include lands that:

- are largely developed;
- can be efficiently served by public facilities;
- are physically suitable for development or redevelopment;
- contain sufficient area to accommodate planned growth and development; and
- promote a compact, rather than a sprawling, pattern of development.

a. Village Areas

These area have traditionally accommodated a higher density of Readfield's population than occurs in the rest of the Town. Furthermore, a large part of the Town's small-scale commercial and social and cultural activity takes place in the villages. This designation is intended to encourage the preservation, revitalization, and expansion of the villages in Readfield and to protect them from encroachment by incompatible uses.

Two Village Areas are identified:

- Readfield Corner and

- Readfield Depot.

The primary objective of this designation is to reinforce the concept of villages and village lifestyles. To accomplish this, the Town should adopt an approach to dealing with existing buildings that encourages their full utilization by allowing flexibility in their use. Development is proposed to be on a minimum of 40,000 square foot lots, although existing legally created nonconforming lots are not bound by this requirement. Any newly created lots smaller than 80,000 square feet must have at least two approved sites for subsurface waste water disposal.

A range of land uses should be allowed in Village Areas. These should include single and multifamily residential; home occupations; low intensity commercial uses, such as business, service, office, day care/nursery schools, small retail; clean light industrial uses of 5,000 square feet or less; and community facilities, such as governmental and quasi-governmental facilities, and parks and recreation uses which meet the day-to-day needs of residents of Readfield. Village Areas should also serve as the centers of the community's social and cultural life.

To encourage growth in Village Areas, development and redevelopment should create an attractive environment including open spaces, street trees, sidewalks or pathways connecting residential, business, social, and cultural uses. The reuse or construction of structures should be of high quality and maintain or improve the existing character of the village by carefully controlling the placement of buildings, parking, and storage; by providing sufficient off-street parking and safe vehicular access. Adjacent residential areas should be protected from nonresidential encroachment or from adverse impacts of a change in use by landscaping and adequate buffering. Access to serve new uses should be regulated to conform with the character of the village.

b. Village Residential Areas

Portions of Village Residential Areas have also traditionally accommodated a higher density of Readfield's population than occurs in the rest of the Town. However, this designation is intended to provide areas for higher density residential neighborhoods, generally adjacent to the mixed use Village Areas. Nonresidential uses, except for home occupations and schools, are not proposed to be allowed.

Three Village Residential Areas are identified:

- Kents Hill,
- the area surrounding Readfield Corner, and
- the area surrounding Readfield Depot.

In the Village Residential Areas standards should be adopted to allow new development and renovation to be compatible with the character of the existing pattern of development. In those areas where there is an established historic character, such as Kents Hill, new construction should be compatible with the historic character of existing buildings in terms of the scale, placement, and use of materials. As in Village Areas development is proposed to be on a minimum of 40,000 square foot lots, although existing legally created nonconforming lots are not bound by this requirement. Any newly created lots of less than 80,000 square feet must have at least two approved sites for subsurface waste disposal.

c. **Commercial/Light Industrial Areas**

This designation is identified for commercial developments proposing a structure greater than 5,000 square feet. Commercial/Light Industrial Areas may be located anywhere in Town other than village residential areas if approved at Town Meeting. While review at Town Meeting is not a substitute for any required Planning Board review, it will allow the community the opportunity to assess whether the proposed use and its scale, impacts, and location are in keeping with the Town's character.

Large scale commercial operations generally are not in keeping with the Town's character. However, a few large uses currently exist compatibly. The purpose of the Commercial Areas designation is to allow the opportunity for existing and new large uses to locate and/or expand in the community if they can do so with minimal negative impact.

Commercial/Light Industrial Areas should avoid prime agricultural soils, retain and buffer significant natural resources and wildlife habitats, and promote the rural character through the thoughtful siting of buildings and lots and the preservation of natural vegetation along Town roads. Prior to designation of a Commercial/Light Industrial Area the Town should find that such use is not incompatible with rural character including agricultural and forestry resources.

Commercial/Light Industrial Areas should be allowed if proposed developments are well planned, protect the visual character of the Town, preserve significant natural resources, control access to local roads, minimize the impacts of the use off-site, and buffer adjacent uses and areas from on-site impacts. Flexibility in the planning and laying out of developments should allow development proposals to creatively protect the environment, town character, visual quality, and to address traffic impacts. The intent of this designation is to foster creative negotiation between the Town and developers to work together to make the project fit the conditions of the site and the Town's goals and policies.

2. **Rural Areas**

As suggested by Maine's Growth Management Act and its regulations, **rural areas** include lands that:

- consist of large, contiguous open spaces, farmland, and forest land;

- are relatively free of development sprawl and strip development; and/or
- contain critical natural and scenic resources that should be protected.

a. Rural Areas

These areas have multiple natural resource constraints and/or are especially important for their recreational, scenic, or other resource-based opportunities. This designation is intended to preserve the open, rural character of Readfield by encouraging agricultural and forestry uses in these areas and rural development patterns of mixed, lower density land use. Minimum lot size in Rural Areas shall be 80,000 square feet per dwelling unit, although existing legally created nonconforming lots are not bound by this requirement.

Allowed land uses include agricultural and forestry uses, mineral extraction, single and two-family residential uses, cluster development, manufactured housing, home occupations, small-scale light industrial uses (5,000 square feet or less), governmental uses, institutional uses, parks and recreation areas and common shoreland access, campgrounds, piers and docks, public utilities, automobile graveyards, signs, and day care/nursery schools.

To help preserve the aesthetic character of Rural Areas, the Town should encourage the use of frontage roads, shared driveways or access roads, and the preservation of natural landscapes alongside roadways. In cluster subdivisions, the Town should allow the creation of smaller lots for residential developments if the balance of the area needed to meet the density requirements is permanently set aside for agricultural, forestry, or open space use.

Suburban-type residential development activity is discouraged by encouraging the use of cluster housing techniques and requiring it for subdivisions of 10 or more lots. Cluster developments should be designed to protect prime agricultural soils, retain and buffer significant natural resources and wildlife habitats, and promote the rural character through the thoughtful siting of buildings and lots and the preservation of natural vegetation along Town roads.

b. Rural Residential Areas

These areas are similar to the Rural Areas in terms of resource constraints and recreational, scenic, or other resource-based opportunities and in terms of most of its intent. Minimum lot size in Rural Residential Areas shall be 80,000 square feet per dwelling unit, although existing legally created nonconforming lots are not bound by this requirement.

The Rural Residential Areas are generally located along major roadways and are more restrictive in allowed land uses than the Rural Areas designation. Manufactured housing, mobile home parks, commercial uses, industrial uses, campgrounds, and automobile graveyards should not be allowed.

To help preserve the aesthetic character of Rural Residential Areas, the Town should encourage the use of frontage roads, shared driveways or access roads, and the preservation of natural landscapes alongside roadways. In cluster developments, the Town should allow the creation of smaller lots for residential developments if the balance of the area needed to meet the density requirements is permanently set aside for agricultural, forestry, or open space use.

Suburban-type residential development activity is discouraged by encouraging the use of cluster housing techniques and requiring it for subdivisions of 10 or more lots. Cluster developments should be designed to protect prime agricultural soils, retain and buffer significant natural resources and wildlife habitats, and promote the rural character through the thoughtful siting of buildings and lots and the preservation of natural vegetation along Town roads.

c. Shoreland Residential-Recreation Areas

Shoreland Residential-Recreation Areas include all shoreland areas within 250 feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-water mark of a great pond or the upland edge of a freshwater wetland, other than those areas included in Resource Protection and Stream Protection Areas.

This designation includes areas that are appropriate for residential and recreational development, uses that are allowed in Stream Protection Areas, filling or other earth moving activities involving less than 10 cubic yards, clearing for approved construction, and signs. In addition, multifamily residential, cluster development, manufactured housing, home occupations, governmental uses, campgrounds, and day care/nursery schools may be appropriate if that are sensitive to the special needs of the shoreland environment. Additional frontage, setback, height, lot coverage, access, and other standards in these areas are appropriate to protect water quality and sensitive shorelands.

Minimum lot size in Rural Residential Areas should be 80,000 square feet per dwelling unit, although existing legally created nonconforming lots are not bound by this requirement.

d. Stream Protection Areas

Stream Protection Areas include all land areas within 75 feet, horizontal distance, of the normal high-water line of a perennial stream, 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.

The intent of this designation is similar to that of Resource Protection Areas in that fragile ecological systems should be protected. A wider variety of uses are allowed, however, including timber harvesting and agriculture to the extent allowed by State law. In exceptional

circumstances, single family homes may be allowed, minimizing environmental impact to the greatest extent possible.

Stream Protection Areas should be an overlay district with minimum lot size governed by the underlying zone.

e. Resource Protection Areas

This designation is intended to preserve fragile ecological systems, which, if intensively developed or substantially altered, would damage water quality, wildlife and aquatic habitat, biotic systems, and ecological relationships. The objective of this designation is to prevent intrusions which upset the ecological system or create potential threats to the public health or safety. Resource Protection Areas follow the guidelines in Maine's model shoreland zoning (March 1990).

They include:

- freshwater wetlands (swamp marshes, bogs, and similar areas) of 2 or more acres supporting wetland vegetation and hydric soils and areas within 250 feet of wetlands that are of "moderate" or "high" value as defined by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife,
- 100-year floodplains, and
- areas of 2 or more contiguous acres with sustained slopes of 20% or greater.

Such areas may occur both in rural and growth areas.

These areas should be off limits to virtually all development, except forest management, wildlife management, harvesting of wild crops, and open space uses not involving structures. Uses such as timber harvesting, filling or other earth moving, agriculture, parks and recreational areas and common shoreland access, temporary piers and docks, public utilities, signs, and accessory structures may be suitable in these areas if they are carried out in a way which does not damage the resource or lower its value in meeting natural resource functions. Human activities that do go on in these areas should adhere to standards such as those presented in the model shoreland zoning ordinance. To the extent allowed by State law, in exceptional circumstances, single family homes may be allowed, minimizing environmental impact to the greatest extent possible.

The areas shown on Figure 2 are only general indications of the locations of the Resource Protection Areas. When land use regulations are adopted to implement these designations, the Town should provide an administrative mechanism to allow for adjustments in the boundaries of these areas based upon actual conditions in the field.

B. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Readfield's implementation strategy is broken into three levels:

- short-term activities which should be initiated within one year of the adoption of this Plan;
- mid-term activities which should be initiated within two years of the adoption of this Plan; and
- long-term activities which should be initiated within three years.

1. Short-Term Activities

Within the year following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Readfield should undertake the following activities to implement the recommended goals and policies:

a. Oversight Committee

The Board of Selectmen should act as an Oversight Committee. The Board of Selectmen should be responsible for preparing an annual evaluation of the progress of implementation of the Comprehensive Plan to be included in the Annual Report of the Town. It should meet quarterly with each of the working groups responsible for doing the work defined in the Implementation Strategies to review progress and expectations.

b. Revised Land Use Ordinances and Regulations

Representatives of the Planning Board, the Comprehensive Plan Committee, and the general public should revise the land use ordinances and regulations to bring them into conformance with the goals and policies of the Plan. Ordinances should be adopted within two years of adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

These revisions should:

- update the standards in the Planning Board review process to better identify and protect significant natural resources, aquifers, wetlands, steep slopes, State-defined critical areas, rare plants, critical habitats, desirable elements of the landscape, and historic resources (Policies A.2.-5, A.7.-8., A.13., A.19., B.17., B.29., F.3.). When protecting, preserving, and enhancing wetlands, take steps to:
 - avoid the impact by not allowing certain incompatible activities to occur;
 - minimize the impact by limiting the magnitude, duration, or location of an activity, or by controlling the timing of the activity;
 - rectify the impact by restoring the affected area;
 - reduce or eliminate the impact through preservation and/or maintenance operations during the life of the project; or
 - compensate for the impact by replacing the affected significant natural features.
- review and, if necessary, revise standards for cluster development to conserve unique natural resources (Policies A.5., B.17., B.19.);
- review and, if necessary, amend road construction and access standards to reduce the impact on the natural environment and on visual character (Policies A.9., E.13., E.28.) and to protect the safety and traffic-carrying capacity of roads (Policy E.14.);
- review the land use ordinances to assure compliance with all applicable State land use laws and rules (Policy A.4., A.10.);
- adopt standards, based in part on Department of Environmental Protection recommendations to protect lake water quality, habitats, scenic areas, and control phosphorus loading of lakes (Policies A.13., A.16.-17., B.25.);
- require upgrading of malfunctioning wastewater disposal systems at the time ownership of shoreland properties is transferred (Policy A.14.);
- incorporate the eight land use designations including the appropriate use and density requirements into the zoning district structure (Policies A.3., A.7.-8., A.15., B.1.-8., B.11.-14., B.16., B.18.-20., B.22.-27., C.1.-2., D.2., D.4.-5., G.9., Land Use Plan);
- determine if mining activities require additional protective standards and, if so, adopt them (Policy A.24.);

- establish standards of site design in the village areas that allow for development consistent with what currently exists and produces a desirable village environment (Policies B.4., B.8., B.13.-15.);
- in conjunction with other implementation strategies, establish standards to preserve rural character (Policy B.19.);
- establish standards for new subdivisions and commercial development to protect view corridors, scenic vistas, and important pieces of open space as identified in the Plan (Policy B.29.);
- establish regulations directing the Code Enforcement Officer to visit the site of individual residential developments prior to granting building permits with the goal of encouraging landowners to site their development to preserve view corridors, scenic vistas, and important pieces of open space. This may include, but not be limited to, height restrictions and staggering or offsetting buildings to preserve view corridors;
- review development regulations to assure that they are necessary and adequate (Policy G.2.);
- review development regulations to assure that they provide appropriate locations for nursing homes, boarding homes, congregate housing, and housing for the elderly (Policy C.1.);
- consider adoption of mechanisms to foster construction of well-planned affordable housing (Policy C.4.);
- develop provisions that allow legally existing nonconforming industrial and commercial activities to continue and expand current operations subject to Planning Board approval (Policy D.1.);
- adopt performance and design standards to assure that new commercial and industrial developments are well planned, provide adequate and safe vehicular access, and protect adjacent residential neighborhoods (Policy D.3.);
- develop standards to differentiate high and low impact home occupations and to regulate high impact home occupations (Policy D.5.);
- incorporate into the Planning Board review process a requirement for documentation of adequate financial and technical capacity for commercial and industrial projects and continue to require this documentation for residential subdivisions (Policy G.10.); and

- continue to require developers to provide facilities necessary to accommodate new developments (Policy G.11.).

c. Landowner Cooperation/Assistance

Landowner cooperation and assistance is an important new non-regulatory element of Readfield's implementation strategy (Policies B.30.-32.).

A new group, the Landowners' Cooperation and Assistance Committee (LCAC), should be formed to undertake this effort. It should be made up of members of the general public, including large landowners, who have desirable skills or interest.

Identify goals and establish a process, which includes extensive public review, and in the first year develop an Open Space Plan. The Committee, in conjunction with the Conservation Commission, should identify:

1. key properties and areas in the Town with natural, cultural, and visual resources that are important to the Town (Policies A.21., B. 17., B.19., B.21., F.2.);
2. a potential greenbelt and trail network connecting key properties and areas (Policies B.10., E.19.-21., E.28.);
3. policy recommendations, including a strategy for action specifying general and first year goals for contacting and working with landowners and provide a method for evaluating the success of the LCAC program; and
4. necessary promotional materials and funding sources.

Once a Plan is in place, the Landowners' Cooperation and Assistance Committee should initiate contacts with key landowners. The purpose of these contacts should be to work cooperatively with landowners in making wise and informed decisions about the use of the land and to assure that landowners consider the natural opportunities and constraints of land and the value of cooperative arrangements to maintain controlled access.

In cases where landowners are interested in preserving all or portions of their property, the Committee should offer to assist the landowner in that effort. In cases where the landowners are interested in selling or developing all or part of their property, the Committee should assist in the preparation of a plan for meeting the landowners' financial and other objectives while meeting the Town's goals for protection and preservation. (Policies A.5., A.21.-22., B.1., B.3., B.19., B.21., E.19.).

As funding needs or legal issues arise, the Committee should prepare recommendations to the Town (Policy E.30.).

d. Public Education

The Conservation Commission should continue the public education program to inform the public about:

- the Town's natural resources, especially water quality, their importance to the community, the types of activities that can jeopardize them, and what landowners can do to protect them (Policies A.1., A.12.);
- the value of conservation easements to protect important wildlife habitats and unique areas (Policy A.5.);
- the farmland, open space, and tree growth tax programs (Policy A.22.);
- the benefits of energy conservation, creative site and building design, and the use of alternative energy technologies in development proposals (Policy A. 25.); and
- the role private landowners play in defining Readfield's character and the value of individual lot owners siting their development to preserve view corridors, scenic vistas, and important pieces of open space (Policies B.29., B.31.).

e. Capital Improvements Program

The Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager should incorporate capital expenditures identified in the Plan into the next annual Capital Improvements Plan. In addition, the Selectmen should adopt a consistent program of long-range capital improvement planning by **annually** preparing an updated Capital Improvements Plan which inventories the Town's capital needs, assesses the community's ability to pay for capital projects, and establishes short- and long-term capital spending priorities. (Policies A.18., B.9.-10., E.1.-2., E.13., E.20., E.27., F.4.-5.).

The 1993 Capital Improvements Program (in process) should be expanded to address the issues raised by this Plan.

f. Regional Coordination

Portions of the Comprehensive Plan can be implemented only in cooperation with neighboring communities. Such cooperation already is vital to the Town's operations in such areas as education, and it should continue. Expanded regional cooperation is needed to coordinate common interests, like watershed protection, open space uses, minimizing conflicts associated with growth and rural area designations, affordable housing, emergency services, and solid waste management. The Board of Selectmen should continue to work with the adjoining communities to provide the necessary coordination (Policies A.11., A. 20., B.28., C.5., E.5., E.7., E.11.).

g. Community Development Block Grant Strategies

The efforts of the existing Community Development Block Grant Program have had clear benefits. The housing rehabilitation effort should continue (Policy C.3.). The Program should consider expanding into other areas, including:

- improvements in the village and village residential areas (Policies B.9.-10.) to assure the continued and expanded desirability of development in the Town's growth areas and
- affordable housing (Policy C.4.).

h. Historic Resources Strategy

The Board of Selectmen should ask the Readfield Historical Society to prepare a strategy (Policies F.1.-F.5.) for:

- encouraging the preservation of historic structures in the community, particularly in the village areas;
- identifying additional structures, sites, and archaeological resources to be preserved;
- preserving and/or restoring dams, sites, and buildings of historical or architectural significance;
- finishing the organization and conservation of Town records;
- encouraging historical and genealogical research and publication;
- continuing to record the oral history interviews with the Town's older citizens; and
- developing a walking tour of the Factory Square area.

i. Public Facilities and General Government

The Board of Selectmen and Town Manager should be responsible for overseeing and implementing the policies of Section G. General Government, including recommendations about staffing, emergency response plans, hours of operation, ordinance and comprehensive plan review, boards and administrative process, fine for illegal dumping, traffic improvements, monitoring of the Readfield Corner water contamination problem, citizen participation, central file and record system, directory, and Readfield Community Days (Policies B.10., E.4.-6., E.7.-

10., E.12., E.15.-16., G.1.-8.). Consider providing additional working hours for the Code Enforcement Officer to allow adequate time for inspection and enforcement duties.

2. Mid-Term Activities

Within two years of adopting the Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Readfield should initiate the following activities to implement the recommended goals and policies:

a. Acquisition of Conservation Easements/Development Rights

The Landowner Cooperation Assistance Committee (LCAC) should encourage owners of unique natural areas, wildlife and critical habitats, agricultural lands, and high productivity forest lands to manage their land in an environmentally sensitive manner and, where appropriate, to protect them with conservation easements and/or to participate in the Tree Growth Tax Program, the Open Space Tax Program, income tax credit for forestry-related investments, and other programs designed to retain land as forests (Policies A.5., A.21., B.21.).

b. Right-to-Farm/Right-to-Forest Policy

Representatives of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, Planning Board, the Board of Assessors, and the Town Assessor should review the Town's tax assessment policies to assure that they:

- do not place an undue burden on the owners of farms and woodlands by placing development values on land which is not suited for development, and
- provide incentives to property owners to maintain the land's open status, including enrollment in current use tax programs and conservation easements.

Members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee and Planning Board should review the Land Use Ordinance to assure that the Town's regulations allow reasonable economic use of forest resources (Policy A.23., B.21.).

c. Land Assessment Policy

Representatives of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, Planning Board, Board of Assessors, and the Town Assessor should develop a policy for the assessment of rural, undeveloped land (Policies A.23., B.21.). This policy should be consistent with State law but should clearly establish that the Town's land use regulations and the natural resource constraints which affect the land's development potential should be considered in determining the assessed value of this land.

The policy should be adopted by the Board of Selectmen to guide their decision-making.

d. Roads Policy

Representatives of the Conservation Commission and Planning Board should work with the Roads Committee and the Road Commissioner to review and prepare amendments to the Road Ordinance and the Town's Road Maintenance and Improvements Plan, particularly dealing with roadway maintenance, not paving unpaved roads in those areas where the Town is trying to not encourage development, restricting direct access, and retaining public easements for recreational purposes on discontinued Town roads (Policies A.9., A.18., B.19., E.13.-18., E.30.). These amendments should emphasize the Town's desire to improve roads that adversely affect water quality and retain rural character. The Roads Committee and Road Commissioner should require that all road contractors, working on Town roads, follow "best management practices" to control erosion and protect water quality. The Conservation Commission should work with contractors, the Roads Committee, and lake associations to educate them about "best management practices" to control erosion and protect water quality.

The maintenance and condition of the Town's roads contributes to the overall safety, appearance, and character of the Town, as well as affecting the value of private property. The Road Maintenance and Improvement Plan should also cover priorities and general standards for maintenance of both paved and unpaved roads, the importance of planning and building improvements to complement and reinforce desired land use patterns, as well as spelling out the protection of community and individual property from damage or encroachment.

e. Solid Waste and Recycling

The Town should maintain its recycling strategy with provisions for separation of recyclables, proper disposal of hazardous waste, and home composting; cooperation with other communities for regional solutions; and periodic opportunities for disposal of items not normally accepted at the transfer station (Policy E.11.). Furthermore, the Board of Selectmen should prepare an ordinance requiring the enforcement of a stiff fine for illegal dumping (Policy E.12.).

f. Recreation Strategy

A multi-year park and recreation strategy (Policy E.2.) should be implemented as follows:

1. LCAC should contact private landowners to formalize arrangements for controlled access to open land for cross-country skiing, walking, snowmobiling, and water recreation based on the plans for interconnected trails and key properties identified in the Open Space Plan developed in year one (Policies E.19.-21., E.28.).
2. The Recreation Board should:

- contact the owners of private recreation facilities and programs to maintain and, where possible, increase opportunities to use their facilities (Policies E.21.-22., F.6.); and
 - identify where and how Town recreation programs should be supported and expanded (Policy E.23.).
3. The Beach Board should:
- explore opportunities for acquisition of additional shorefront area(s) for public use and, where appropriate, bringing those opportunities to the Town's attention (Policy E.24.).
4. The Selectmen should:
- contact and work with the State to control motorized traffic on Maranacook Lake (Policy E.25.).
5. The Conservation Commission should:
- contact the Augusta Water District to explore opportunities to provide recreational access to their lands surrounding Carlton Pond (Policy E.26.);
 - encourage the Town to make an annual addition to the Open Space Fund (Policy E.27.); and
 - identify opportunities for recreation on Town-owned parcels, including improved access to the Town Forest (Policy E.29.).
6. The Planning Board should:
- research discontinued and abandoned roads to determine present public rights and, when appropriate, encourage the Town to retain public easements for recreational purposes on any Town roads that are discontinued (Policy E.30.).

3. Long-Term Activities

The Town of Readfield should initiate the following long-term activities within three years of adoption of the Plan, recognizing that many of these activities will be continuing activities or take five or more years to complete due to the nature of the effort.

a. **Natural Resource Information**

The Planning Board should work with the appropriate State and Federal agencies and local property owners to refine and update natural resource information (Policies A.6., A.12.). Furthermore, once refined floodplain information is available, the Selectmen should petition the Federal Emergency Management Administration to amend Readfield's floodplain maps to more accurately reflect the location of floodplains in the community.

b. **Impact Fees**

The Board of Selectmen should investigate the use of impact fees as a method of defraying part of the public costs associated with new development in the community (Policy E.3).

c. **Comprehensive Plan Update**

The Board of Selectmen should initiate a review and update of the Comprehensive Plan within five years (Policy E.9.).

C. CAPITAL INVESTMENTS STRATEGY

The capital facilities of local government are essential to meeting the service needs of the community in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The Town of Readfield should continue to formulate and use a capital budgeting system for municipal facilities and equipment. The Town's 1991 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is included in Section V of the Technical Appendices. While the Community School District is responsible for the capital budgeting of facilities relating to school operations, the CIP incorporates the capital programs for both municipal and school facilities as developed by the responsible parties.

This Comprehensive Plan strongly supports capital improvement programming as part of the Town's annual budgeting and administrative process. While the Town adopted a CIP which calls for annual updates, the Plan has not been updated since its original adoption. If the CIP is to be used for long-range capital planning, it must be used and updated on an ongoing basis.

This subsection describes the capital investments identified in the **Inventories and Analyses, Goals and Policies, and Implementation Strategies** which do not appear in the Town's 1991 CIP.

- a. Town Hall - The second floor is described as not usable and not handicapped accessible. If use of this space becomes necessary, repairs will be required.

- b. Community Library - The second floor is in poor condition and is not handicapped accessible. Additional parking may be needed in the future.
- c. Elementary School - The Elementary School is said to be at recommended student capacity, even with the recent addition. The Town should investigate this situation and undertake long range facility planning to anticipate potential major future financial needs.
- d. Maranacook Community School - The CSD is proposing an addition or separate building to house 6th - 8th grades. The CSD does not anticipate action on the proposal until 1995-1996. In addition, recreation facilities at the school are described as inadequate to serve both junior and senior high school needs.
- e. Fire and Rescue Building - The Fire and Rescue building is at capacity for vehicle storage. There is also a need to improve access to the basement for use as a meeting space.
- f. Fire Truck - The Fire Chief identified the potential need for a new equipment truck to transport mutual aid gear.
- g. Revised Land Use Ordinances and Regulations - The Town's Land Use Ordinances and Regulations will need to be updated within two years of the adoption of the updated Comprehensive Plan.
- h. Open Space Plan - The Comprehensive Plan calls for the development of an Open Space Plan to support the Landowner Cooperation/Assistance Program and the development of a Recreation Strategy.
- i. Community Development Block Grant Strategies - If the Town wished to seek CDBG or other grant funds to make capital improvements in the village and village residential areas, this may require matching funds.

The Town should program these capital investments into its annual budgeting process, establishing priorities using the system developed in its 1991 CIP.

The capital proposals set forth in this section represent an ambitious goal for the community and are put forward with the recognition that some projects may not be able to be accomplished during the next decade or that projects desirable to enhance the quality of life may need to be scaled back, deferred, or funded through private sources.

Other areas of capital improvement will become evident as time goes on. Each annual review should assess anticipated needs over the next five years.

