

2006

2006 Town of Farmingdale Comprehensive Plan

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2006

Town of Farmingdale Comprehensive Plan

(March, 2006)

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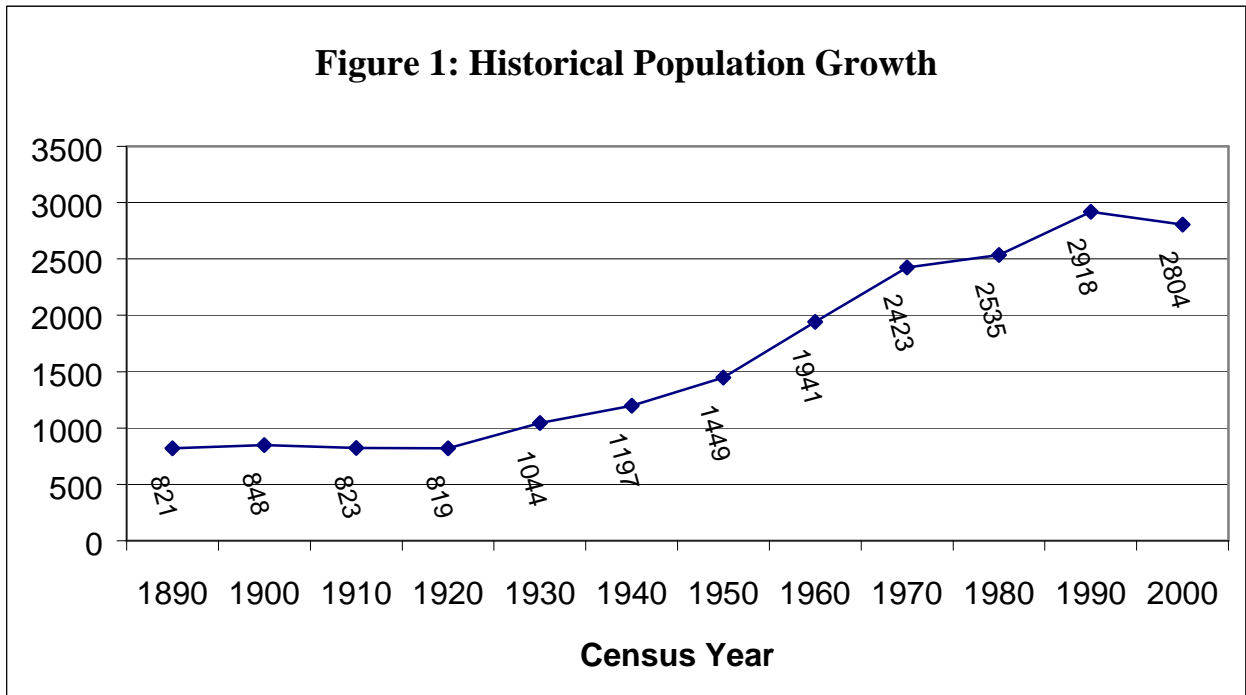
Appendices:

Survey Method and Results of the Community Survey
Excerpt from Appendix A of Updating your Comprehensive Plan (State Planning Office, 2003): “Selected Strategies for Managing Growth in Rural Areas”
Maps – Reduced versions of full-sized maps available for review in town office

Introduction: A Snapshot of Farmingdale

Farmingdale is a small town on the banks of the Kennebec River. Though bounded by cities to the north and south, Farmingdale has managed to keep its character and attractiveness. Part of the reason is the people. This introduction to the comprehensive plan provides an overview of the people of Farmingdale. It illustrates the “Raw material” that we have to work with in preparing a better plan for our future.

Population Statistics:



The first measure of a town is usually its population, and Farmingdale is no exception. Our historical population trends, depicted on Figure 1, above, show that Farmingdale has a history of slow, steady growth, beginning around 1920. This trend of growth stumbled slightly in the 1990's. Farmingdale's 2000 population was 2,804. Kennebec Valley Council of Governments using locally-reported new housing figures, now estimates a 2004 population of 2,817. This continues the trend of slow population growth, and illustrates the relationship of housing to population. Continued population growth is dependent on creation of more housing units.

Farmingdale’s population and growth rate is not unusual for this region. As the box at right shows, Gardiner and Hallowell both lost population in the past decade, and Farmingdale is right between. West Gardiner grew past Farmingdale, just in the past decade -- most likely because of the availability of less expensive land. The whole of Kennebec County grew only 1 percent during the 1990’s, with suburban towns like Monmouth and Litchfield the big gainers, and the older urban centers taking the losses.

**Neighborhood Snapshot:
Population**

Town	2000 Population	90-00 Growth
Farmingdale	2,804	-114 (-3.9%)
Gardiner	6,198	-548 (-8.1%)
Hallowell	2,467	- 67 (-2.6%)
West Gardiner	2,902	371 (15%)

Population Components: Migration and Natural Change:

A town’s population does not just grow; it changes. The way in which it changes can tell us a lot about what is happening in town. Change can be “Natural Change,” which is the difference between births and deaths, or “Migration,” which is the difference between those moving into town and those moving out.

Natural change tends to be a fairly slow-changing number, based on trends in longevity and fertility. Between 1991 and 2000, Farmingdale recorded 276 births and 275 deaths, for a net increase of 1. Between 1981 and 1990, we had 286 births and 223 deaths, for an increase of 63. The increase in deaths might suggest that Farmingdale is becoming home to an increasingly older population. The slight drop in births might be due to the aging of “Baby Boom” women out of their prime child-bearing years.

Migration tends to be more dependant on economics. People will choose to move into or out of a community based on factors such as availability of employment, cost of housing, and perceptions of community vitality. Migration is calculated as the difference between population change and natural change. Therefore, in the 1980’s, Farmingdale gained 383 residents through migration, whereas in the 90’s, we lost 115. Since the 80’s was statewide a decade of prosperity relative to the 90’s, the swing in migration patterns in this case reflects the economic prospects of the region, rather than anything local.

Families and Households:

The basic unit of measure from the perspective of the Census Bureau is not persons, but “Households.” Households consist of everyone living in a housing unit, whether it is a single person, a family, or unrelated individuals. There are occasionally persons who do not live in a “household,” and are classified as living in “group quarters.” In 2000, 34 Farmingdale residents did not live in a “household.”

Table 1, on the following page, illustrates the type of households in Farmingdale, and how they are changing over time. The table demonstrates what is conventional wisdom – that traditional families with two parents and children are becoming less dominant. Even though they still make up almost half of the total, single-person and single-parent households are becoming

more common. Single-parent families now make up 15 percent of the total number of households, single person households 30 percent.

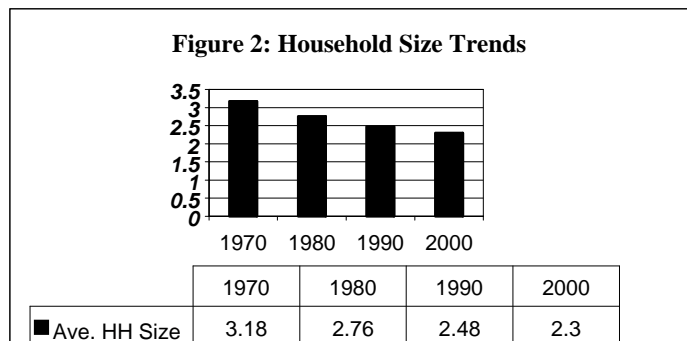
Table 1: Selected Household Characteristics, 1990 and 2000

Household Type:	1990	2000	% change
All Households	1,168	1,202	2.9
Single-person Households	279	358	28
Single-person “over 65”	107	118	10
Married-couple families	656	591	-10
Single-parent male-headed families	32	36	12.5
Single-parent female-headed families	135	151	12

Source: US Census

Why were there more households in Farmingdale in the same decade that the population decreased? There are fewer people in more households. This is not unique to Farmingdale. Throughout the country, the average number of persons per household has been in decline for decades. This is illustrated in the lower average “persons per household.” Contributors include smaller families, single parents, more independent living among the elderly, and delayed marriage among the young.

Clearly, those trends are mirrored in Farmingdale, as shown in Figure 2, at right. The average household in 2000 was 28 percent smaller than that of 1970, almost a full person less.



The shrinkage of household size relates to the supply of housing like this: at 3.18 persons per household in 1970, 314 housing units held 1,000 people. At 2.3 in 2000, it now takes 435 houses for the same number. The statistics in the housing chapter amply demonstrate: we saw 32 new homes in the 90’s, yet lost population. What about the future? If our household size drops just one more tenth, from 2.3 to 2.2, another 56 housing units will be needed just so the population *stays the same*.

Neighborhood Snapshot: Household Size		
Town	1990 HH Size	2000 HH Size
Farmingdale	2.48	2.3
Gardiner	2.58	2.41
Hallowell	2.24	2.06
West Gardiner	2.85	2.6

This trend also provides clues about the type of housing needed to accommodate population changes. Different housing types are in demand for one- and two-person households than three- and four-person households. Traditionally, urban areas have smaller household sizes and more multi-family

and congregate housing. As the box at left shows, household sizes in the Farmingdale area are

more in line with the urban areas to the north and south than the rural are to our west. In practical terms, this means that demand in Farmingdale for new housing is moving toward housing that suits smaller households (such as elderly or single-bedroom apartments).

Population Features:

Other physical features of the population are highlighted in the census. For us, the most important of these is age. The age profile of the population can tell us whether the priority is to plan for new schools or new senior citizen centers. In nearly every community, the significant feature of the age issue is the Baby Boom. These are persons born generally between 1945 and 1965. There were a lot of them -- so many that their impact was felt first in schools, then, as they aged in starter homes, now in premium and vacation homes, and soon in retirement centers.

Table 2 shows the impact of age group shifts in Farmingdale. In 1970, the Baby Boom was primarily under age 17. As the Baby Boom is aging, the segment in the middle has swollen. That will soon carry over into the retirement-age group. The “over 65” bracket, however, is already growing dramatically. That means that a relatively large number of people moving to town are already elderly. This could account for the increased death rate and the rapid decrease in household size over the decades.

Table 2: Percentage of Population by Age Group, 1970-2000

Age Group	1970	1980	1990	2000
under 18	34.0 %	28.4 %	25.0 %	24.2 %
18-64	55.8	59.8	61.6	60.9
Over 65	10.2	11.8	13.4	14.9

Source: US Census

In terms of actual numbers, in 2000 Farmingdale had 679 residents under age 18, versus 721 in 1980. Aged 65 and over, we had 419 in 2000, compared with only 300 in 1980.

More often, a community is evaluated by its “Median Age.” A median is a point at which exactly half the population is above and half below, and is not the same as “average.” Farmingdale’s median age in 2000 was 38.9. This is a 3.6 year aging from 1990 (35.3). If the median age of a population rises, it means that more people are being added to the “old” side of the equation than the “young” side.

Farmingdale’s median age is just a little above average. Kennebec County, in 2000, had a median age of 38.7, and Maine 38.6. Neighboring towns are shown in the box at right. An aging of 3.6 years is also about average, relative to other towns in the region. Gardiner and Hallowell show more rapid aging, which is common; people migrate to urban areas as they age, and in Hallowell is probably due to the increase in dedicated senior housing.

Neighborhood Snapshot:		
Median Age		
<u>Town</u>	<u>1990 age</u>	<u>2000 age</u>
Gardiner	33.4	38.1
Hallowell	36.0	42.4
Chelsea	35.3	39.3
West Gardiner	33.2	37.1
Farmingdale	35.3	38.9

Because it is an issue in many parts of the country, the census also tallies race and national origin. This is not a big issue in Farmingdale. Only 2.2 percent of the Farmingdale population is “non-white” including mixed-race. In Kennebec County, just 2.5 percent are classified “non-white,” and in Maine, the figure is 3.1 percent.

The ancestry of residents may be of some interest, though not necessarily from a planning standpoint. In Farmingdale, half of the population derives from the British Isles. Of the lesser groups, French or French-Canadian comprise 19.3 percent, German comes in at 7.2 percent, and Italian at 4.7 percent. No residents surveyed by the Census had non-European ancestries.

Farmingdale’s “Future:”

Demographic data is interesting because it shows us changes over time. But it becomes *valuable* if we can use it to predict the future. *With a good idea of our recent history, we can make planning decisions to affect our own future.*

The conventional mechanism of forecasting the future is to project past trends, using population as the trigger. A typical forecast would draw on the growth rate from the past 20 years, and assumes that it will continue into the next 20. KVCOG’s growth forecast is based on such a formula. KVCOG’s estimate for 2020 is between 3,050 and 3,100. (The State Planning Office “official” forecast uses more variables, but only extends to 2015. It predicts a future population of 2,786 – a *loss* averaging about one person per year, compared to KVCOG’s predicted *gain* of about 12 per year.)

Neighborhood Snapshot: KVCOG Projections		
<u>Town</u>	<u>2020 Pop. Forecasts</u>	<u>% change</u>
Farmingdale	3,050	+8.7
Chelsea	2,600	+1.6
Gardiner	6,000	-3.2
Hallowell	2,450	-0.7
West Gardiner	3,800	+30.9

The remainder of this section goes beyond forecasting by establishing a set of “what if” scenarios. These scenarios are not mathematical models; They are hypothetical situations which illustrate the impact on the town in three critical areas: population, housing, and employment. While each of these scenarios has some realistic chance, the one which actually “comes true” will be determined by demographic and economic factors over which we have no control *in addition to* the actions which we can take as a town to encourage or discourage growth.

Scenario 1: “Low Growth”

In Scenario 1, we are going to assume that Farmingdale’s population will hold steady, at its 2000 level of 2,804. This is not hard to imagine, since we lost over 100 in the 90’s, and the SPO projection predicts that to continue. Assuming neither growth nor loss, though, allows us to see what might happen even if “nothing happens.”

This scenario is labeled “low growth,” though, and not “no growth.” Population dynamics will continue, with persons being born and dying, marrying and divorcing, and moving into and out of town. That means the dynamics of household and job creation still operate, even though the number of residents stays the same.

To estimate the impact on housing, we have to think of population in terms of households, and here we run into the facts on household size (see Figure 2, page 3.). We have to assume that it will continue to shrink, which is not very risky considering it has for at least 40 years. But the rate of shrinkage is slowing. It shrank by .42 in the 70's, and only .18 in the 90's. For the purpose of this forecast, we will assume that it will take another 20 years to shrink another .18 – to 2.12.

Because of the decreasing household size, a constant population does not mean a halt to new construction; it took 34 new households in the 1990's to accommodate 114 fewer residents. In fact, using our household size assumption, a “no-growth” population of 2,804 in 2020 will require 1,307 housing units – 105 more than in 2000. Over 20 years, that is a building rate of five per year. Or, to look at it from another angle, we need to see a construction rate of five houses per year just to maintain our current population.

Scenario 1: “Low”	
New Residents:	0
New Housing:	105
New Jobs:	124

The demand for jobs will also change. The demand is tied to households rather than population. The ratio of workers to households has stayed relatively constant for twenty years, around 1.24. One Hundred twenty-four new jobs (assuming the same unemployment rate) will be needed to support 105 new households.

This scenario shows that even in a “steady-state” where the town has no population gain, there is still development going on, still increases in demand for jobs and public services. It also provides a good rule of thumb, that whatever growth path we follow, the first 5 houses per year (and the first six jobs) go to demographic trends, not population growth.

Scenario 2: “Moderate Growth”

According to the KVCOG projections, the town’s population will grow to somewhere in the vicinity of 3,050 by 2020. This means a ten-year growth of 123 people (a rate of 4.4 percent.), which is the same rate we grew at between 1970 and 1980. This provides a good population estimate on which to base our “moderate growth” scenario.

Scenario 2: “Moderate”	
New Residents:	246
New Housing:	220
New Jobs:	268

Using the same household size trends as we did in the low growth scenario, a population of 3,050 in 2020 will yield 1,422 households. That is 220 more homes than we had in 2000, about eleven per year.

Also, using the ratio of 1.24 workers per household, we can calculate the demand for new jobs that will come with these households. In 2020, 1,422 households will produce 282 new workers, an increase of about 20 percent over the year 2000. With

unemployment, another 268 new jobs will have to be created.

Scenario 3: “High Growth”

A high growth scenario is more problematic, because it does not resemble either the SPO projection of non-growth nor the KVCOG projection of moderate growth. Both of those are based on our more recent history, one of a fairly depressed economy and housing market. But, we only have to extend our perspective back a little further into history to cover the time when Hayford Heights was being built out, along with several of the apartment buildings we now have. Between 1970 and 2000, Farmingdale had an *average* of more than 16 new housing units each year.

So, rather than projecting on population, let’s base this scenario on housing. What if we have new construction at the rate of 15 per year? Over 20 years, the accelerated construction rate would produce 300 new housing units. Multiplying by the average household size would bring our total population in 2020 to 3,220, and our population growth rate to 7.4 instead of 4.4 percent per decade. This is still only half the overall growth rate Farmingdale experienced in the 1980’s.

Scenario 3: “High”
New Residents: 416
New Housing: 300
New Jobs: 359

With a total of 1,502 households, we have 1,862 potential workers, compared to the current 1,484. Factoring in the unemployment rate, 359 new jobs would be needed to support the 300 new homes.

A chart illustrating the changes in housing based on these three scenarios is presented at the end of the Housing Chapter, Chapter 3.

This comprehensive plan prepares us for growth. But, what level of growth do we prepare for? There are many factors that go into this decision. The economy has been picking up steam, but the prospect of military base closings and state government cutbacks might put a damper on it. We are within range of the very-hot Portland housing market, but it doesn’t seem to have arrived yet. We have more inviting neighborhoods, more developable land, and fewer constraints than Hallowell and Gardiner, but as of the period between 2000 (when these scenarios are based on) and 2005, we’re averaging only six new homes a year.

All in all, it seems as if the best growth scenario to plan for is “moderate growth.” This allows us to prepare for somewhat more than we have actually gotten over the past decade or so, but not enough to put a great strain on local services. One of the recommendations of the plan should be to keep a close eye on annual building permits, as an “early warning” indicator.

Chapter 1: An Historic Perspective

Planning for the future is best done with a foundation in history. A town like Farmingdale, over 150 years old, has a strong foundation to build on.

A Nutshell History:

The Kennebec River and its succession of inhabitants have a long and interesting record. The first settlers, the Abenaki Indians, had a permanent settlement at Cushnoc, on the east bank of the Kennebec River, near the falls, in what is now Augusta. Mary Calvert, author of The Kennebec Wilderness Awakens, wrote, “The Kennebec River was one of the earliest rivers to be explored on the eastern seaboard. A succession of European explorers sailed the Maine Coast and laid claims to the land of the Abenakis for their European sponsors.” The Italian explorer Giovanni da Verrazanno visited the mouth of the Kennebec River in May of 1524. He was soon followed by French explorer Samuel De Champlain in 1604 and the English explorer George Weymouth in 1605.

The English had the first and most lasting effect on the settlement of the region. In 1620, the King of England granted a charter to establish the Plymouth Company at Devon County, England and further granted the territory of modern day New England to that company. By the mid-1620's trading between the Abenakis and the first settlers began. In 1629, the Plymouth Colony granted William Bradford land along the Kennebec River, from south of Swan's Island in present day Richmond to the Wesserunsett River in Skowhegan. This land extended outward 15 miles on both sides of the river.

During this period, Abenakis sold land rights to the white settlers. They thought they were selling only the hunting and trapping rights, not the land. This led to a persistent conflict concerning ownership from the 1700's until the Indian Land Claims Settlements of the 1980's.

The French in the region were centered in nearby Norridgewock on the Kennebec River and Castine (then Pentagoet) at the mouth of the Penobscot River. The combined hostile activities of the French and their Indian allies made English settlements in the area hazardous at best. By 1675, the trading post at Cushnoc (current day Fort Western) experienced diminished trade and the post became untenable due to the outbreak of the French and Indian Wars.

When the French and Indian wars neared their end in 1751, a new group of proprietors bought the shares in the Kennebec claim and reactivated the company. Land boundaries were surveyed and several “great lots” above Cobbosseecontee Stream on the west side of the river

were laid out in 1753 (covering much of present day Farmingdale). Lots with one mile of frontage on the Kennebec and five miles deep were offered for sale in 1762.

European settlement centered upon Fort Western (Augusta), the Hook (Hallowell) and Cobbosseecontee Stream (Gardinerstown), all on the river. Hallowell settled in 1762 and included what are now the municipalities of Augusta, Hallowell, Chelsea and parts of Farmingdale and Manchester.

In 1852, Farmingdale incorporated as a town, combining parts of South Hallowell, North Gardiner and East/West Gardiner. Many and varied businesses existed in Farmingdale, most of them along the river.

A major business on the Kennebec was harvesting and selling ice worldwide and Farmingdale was a significant player. The Knickerbocker Ice Company and the Marshall Ice Co. had icehouses at Bowman's Point (located along the Kennebec River adjacent to Foggy Bottom Marina). The Knickerbocker Ice Co. burned in 1894 or 1895 leaving only the chimney that stood until it was demolished in 1911 to make room for the Central Maine Power Plant. The Rich Ice Houses were the largest icehouses above the Gardiner Bridge with a storage capacity of 70,000 tons. These were located behind what was Butler Twins (long-time town florist), now VIP Auto Parts. Jennie G. Everson's book Tidewater Ice of the Kennebec River has pictures of these icehouses and is a valuable historical record of the ice industry on the Kennebec River.



Figure 1: Ship Loading Ice at Independent Ice Co.

Other businesses on the river in Farmingdale included shipyards, brickyards, potteries and a glue factory. The Berlin Mills Company had a large sawmill on the river on Bowman's Point. The manmade log booms by Brown's Island in the Kennebec (across from Airport Automotive) were placed there to hold logs being floated down the Kennebec. While the logs were in the "boom" area, they were rafted and sorted for the sawmills.

Commercial growth in ensuing years centered upon Gardiner, Hallowell and Augusta while Farmingdale never developed a town center to compare with those cities. Time, fires, floods and economic forces eventually removed the larger businesses. Today, Farmingdale exists largely as a strong and vibrant residential community whose residents work primarily in other cities. The distinction between the densely developed riverbanks and the open rural backland remains.



Figure 2: Kennebec River, stone crib foundations for log booms

Historical Structures and Artifacts:

The Maine Historical Preservation Commission has indicated several resources in Farmingdale that should be considered during the comprehensive planning process. This section serves to highlight areas for consideration listed below as well as some other sites of significance.

Sites known by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission are in three categories: Prehistoric archaeological; Historic archaeological; and Historic structures. They have identified the following:

Prehistoric archaeological sites in Farmingdale that are greater than 1000 years old include Native American camp sites located east of the railroad tracks near the Kennebec River and known to the Commission as 37.55 and 37.66. Both of these are considered archaeologically sensitive.

Historic archaeological sites in Farmingdale are the Rich Ice Houses, designated as ME 153-001, and the Log Boom storage area at Brown's Island, ME 153-002.

Other historic archeological sites, not identified by the Commission but worthy of consideration as significant links to Farmingdale's heritage are:

- The Knickerbocker Ice Co. founded in 1860
- Captain William Springer's shipyard at Bowman's Point (early 1800's). Currently the CMP building is located there.
- The Grant Shipyard (1851 – 1858) located at Grant's Crossing.
- The George Seavey Glue Factory (located near the "great gully" and Adkin's Brook, between The Renaissance and Budget Rental) supplied glue to the oilcloth factory in Hallowell. The building foundation is still there.

- A tavern site was located across from the glue factory on the easterly side of Maine Avenue. This was a large two-story house built and kept by Captain Eben Hinkley. The building no longer exists.
- The Pine Tree Stock Farm that was one of the State’s largest horse breeding farms in 1892 was located at the current site of Mattson’s Senior Apartments and the Kennebec Heights Country Club.
- The Gardiner Pottery Works that was located south of Pottery Brook. It burned around 1840.

Historic Structures that are on the National Register of Historic Places are:

- the Peter Grant House located at 10 Grant Street,
- the Captain Nathaniel Stone House located at 268 Maine Avenue.

Several other homes, primarily located along Maine Avenue, are over a century old and could have some historical elements worthy of note. Some of these homes, however, have been converted to apartments or businesses. Many other structures along Maine Ave. have been torn down or completely renovated to make room for new development. There are no known public buildings of historical significance.

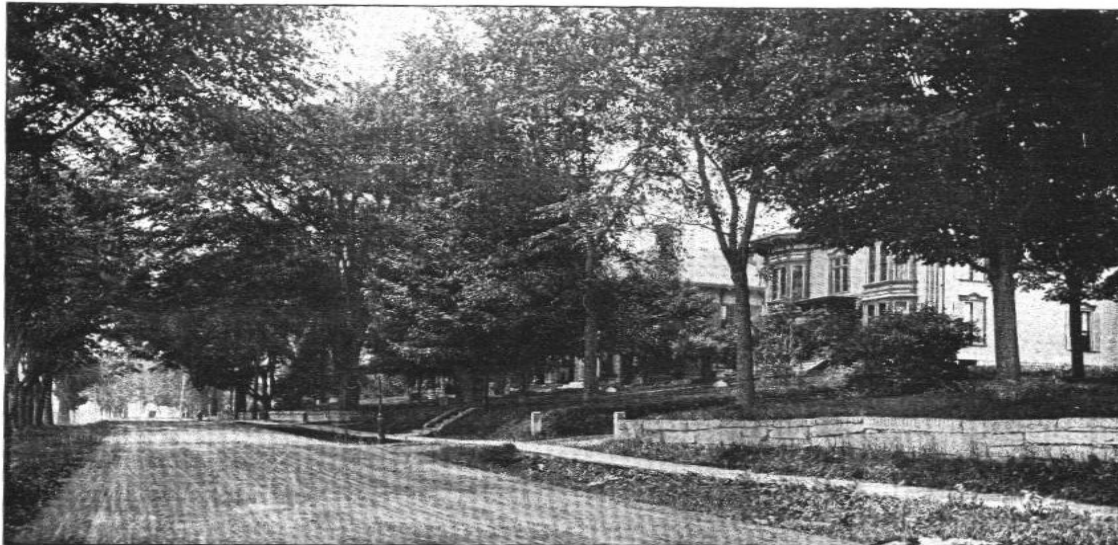


Figure 3: Historic Maine Avenue

Public Perception of Historic Preservation:

The Farmingdale Community Survey (2004) questioned residents about many aspects of town planning, including the worth of historic preservation. Asked whether Historic Preservation is an important issue to the town, 2/3 of the respondents said “Yes.” Asked whether they were satisfied with the current level of historic preservation, the same percentage said “No.”

The survey proposed several options for future efforts in historic preservation. The two suggestions gaining the strongest support were:

- Develop a plan to identify town historic sites, and
- Regulations to preserve historic buildings and sites eligible for the National Register.

The suggestion with the least amount of support was that the community should support the local historical group.

Chapter 2: Our Local Economy

The health of a community is often measured by its economic energy. Income and employment characteristics, in addition to describing the nature of the population, help us to predict demand for housing, recreation, social, and cultural services. The number and type of businesses in town help us to gauge our “economic climate” and their location helps us to plan for future public services.

Individual and Household Income:

The most common measure of the economic health of a community is the income of its individuals and families. The census reports two basic types of income measures: “per-capita income,” which is simply the aggregate income of the town divided by its population, and “Household Income,” which is the income (usually the median) of the households within the town. The latter is more helpful from a planning perspective, since households are the basic economic unit of the community.

One thing for which per capita income (PCI) is useful: comparison among towns. Farmingdale had a PCI in 2000 of \$18,494 (technically, income received the year before the census, or 1999). This was a little higher than Gardiner, lower than other neighbors. Several neighboring towns have been experiencing faster income growth. Kennebec County, in 2000, was right in line with Farmingdale’s figure, with a PCI of \$18,520, while Maine overall had a PCI of \$19,533. Inflation, during the decade of the 90’s, ran at 32 percent, so per capita income in Farmingdale did not make any real gains in the past ten years.

Neighborhood Snapshot: Per Capita Income			
<u>Town</u>	<u>1990 PCI</u>	<u>2000 PCI</u>	<u>% change</u>
Farmingdale	\$ 13,906	\$ 18,494	33 %
Gardiner	\$ 11,411	\$ 18,033	58 %
Hallowell	\$ 15,348	\$ 20,457	33 %
West Gardiner	\$ 12,784	\$ 19,832	55 %

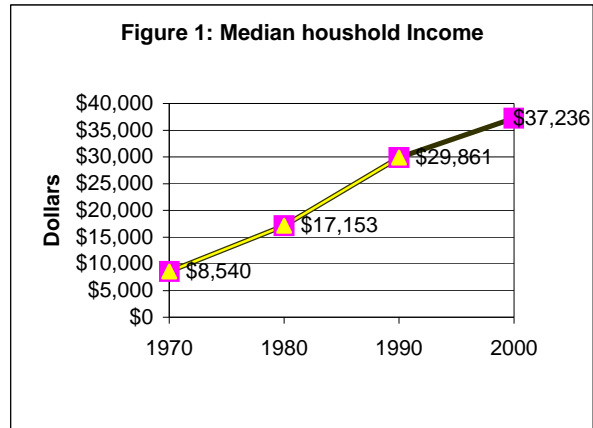
Household income represents the actual budget that most families have to draw from. In addition to “money earned,” two trends contribute to changing household income: 1) decreasing household size over time (fewer wage-earning adults), and 2) changes in the number of members of the household receiving income (working spouses or children). The actual median household income in 2000 (1999 income) was \$37,236. This is not a dramatic increase from the 1990 report of \$29,861 once inflation is added in; in fact, it is a loss of about seven percent in real dollars. But Farmingdale’s income levels are still a little above Kennebec County, which showed a five percent loss (in constant dollars), and in 2000 recorded a median of \$36,498.

How Farmingdale’s Household Income has changed over time is illustrated in Figure 1, below, with the actual 2000 breakdown of income levels in Table 1.

Table 1: Household Income by Category, 2000

<u>Range</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Less than \$10,000	114	9.4
\$10 – 25,000	283	23.3
\$25 – 50,000	456	37.5
\$50 – 100,000	313	25.7
\$100,000 and over	49	4.1

Source: US Census



The census recorded 187 households with social security income – about 22 percent of the total. It also identified 153 with retirement income. There is probably significant overlap between the two. It identified only eight households receiving public assistance.

The Census also calculates what it calls the *Poverty Rate*, which is a figure varying from state to state and the number of persons in the household. The actual rate for an area is not stated (because it is different for each household size) but the number of persons below that rate is reported. In Farmingdale, 67 families are below poverty level, consisting of eight percent of all families. For single-mother families, the situation is much worse. Fifty of the 149 single-mother families (1/3) in Farmingdale are below poverty level, and 3/4 of all poverty families are single-mothers. The overall poverty rate is 9.5 percent. That includes 27 people over 65, and 96 under age 18.

As in many cases, the numbers here do not tell the whole story. Farmingdale’s tradition of small-town neighborliness extends to helping the less fortunate as well, and there is anecdotal evidence that many families “get by” with casual labor and off-the-books exchanges of value. This “underground economy” is not significant or measurable, but it is another example of small town living.

Labor Force Participation:

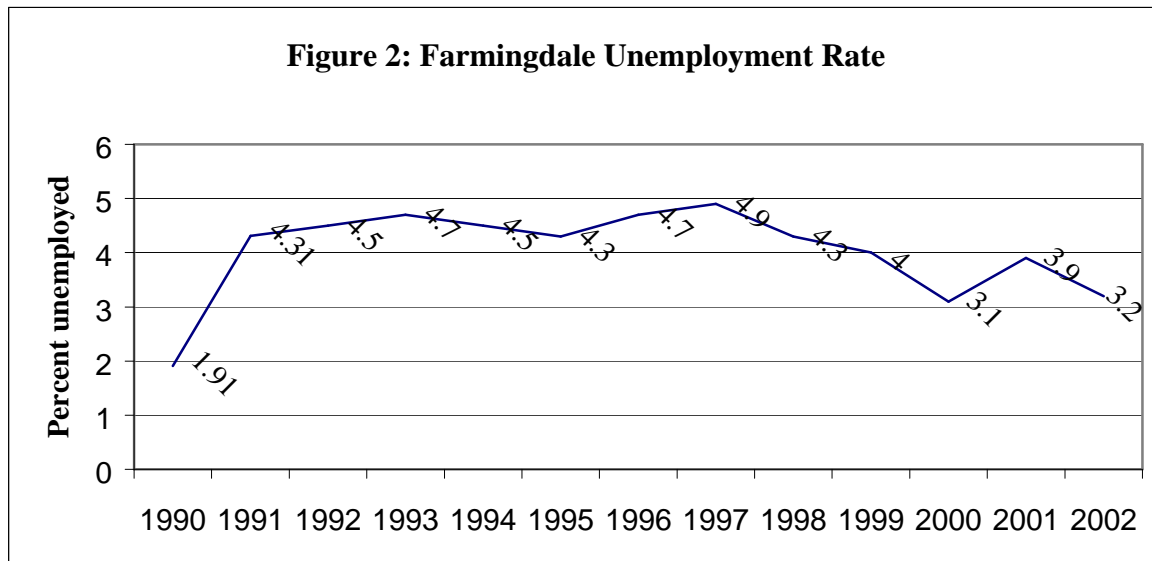
The labor force (also known as “workforce”) refers to the number of people either working or available to work within the working-age population, and includes both employed and unemployed. For the purpose of the census, the working-age population is everyone over age 16, including those of retirement age.

In Farmingdale, the 2000 labor force consisted of 1,493 people, 68 percent of the working-age population. That included 63 percent of working-age women -- 750 women, and 74 percent of working-age men -- 743 men. With 1,202 households in Farmingdale, an average of 1.24 members of each household are in the workforce. Put more practically, every fourth Farmingdale Comprehensive Plan

household in Farmingdale is a two-worker family. This is right about at the Kennebec County average of 1.26 workers per household.

With 63 percent of all women over age 16 in the labor force, it is clear that Farmingdale has a significant number of families where both spouses are working. This is actually down a little bit from 1990, when 63.1 percent of women were working, but up dramatically from 1980, when just half of the adult women were in the labor force.

According to the 2000 Census, 78 people in Farmingdale were unemployed (32 women), for an unemployment rate of 5.3 percent. However, unemployment is better reported by the Maine Department of Labor, which takes monthly surveys, than the census, which only asks once every ten years. Figure 2 shows the unemployment trend in Farmingdale over the past decade, according to the DOL.



As can be seen from the chart, Farmingdale's recent unemployment history has been fairly steady between 1991 and 1999, and dropping since then. In 2002, the DOL estimated 1,646 persons in the labor force, and an unemployment rate of 3.2 percent. That compares well with Kennebec County, with an unemployment rate of 4.3 percent. 2003 figures have not been published yet for municipalities, but Kennebec County's rose to 5.3 percent.

Farmingdale is one, relatively small player in a regional economy, and that must be considered in any economic development activities. Farmingdale is considered to be in the Augusta Labor Market Area. The Augusta LMA has a labor force (in 2003) of 46,600; Farmingdale's contribution is only 3.5 percent of that. The Augusta LMA had an unemployment rate of 4.1 percent in 2002 and 5.0 in 2003, so Farmingdale also compares well with the regional economy.

Farmingdale is a net contributor of workers to the regional economy, as are all small towns in this area. Augusta is the only net importer. The side-by-side boxes below show where Farmingdale Comprehensive Plan

Farmingdale residents work, and where Farmingdale’s employees live. Forty-six percent of Farmingdale’s workers commute to Augusta, while 16 percent stay in town. Oddly enough, more Gardiner residents work in Farmingdale than vice versa.

The commute from home to job is an important factor in the health of the regional economy. We recognize that most of the cars passing through town are on their way to or from jobs. The more that regional job growth is focused in the cities, the more commuting pressure there will be on the transportation system.

WHERE FARMINGDALE RESIDENTS WORK	
In Town of	Number (2000)
Augusta	648
Farmingdale	218
Gardiner	66
Hallowell	51
Lewiston-Auburn	48

WHERE FARMINGDALE WORKERS LIVE	
In Town of	Number (2000)
Farmingdale	218
Gardiner	79
Augusta	64
Winthrop	35
Chelsea	25
Hallowell	28

Job Classifications:

Table 2, below, lists the occupational categories of Farmingdale residents who were employed in 1990 and 2000. Unfortunately, as our economy changes, so do job descriptions, and many occupations today weren’t even considered a decade ago. For this reason, the census is constantly changing the way it classifies the thousands of different occupations it must cope with, making the categories difficult to compare from one decade to another.

Table 2: Occupational Profile of Farmingdale Workforce, 1990 and 2000

Occupation	1990	Percent of total	2000	Percent of total
Executive and Managerial	240	15.0	458	32.6
Professional	230	14.4	*	
Sales	135	8.4	437	31.1
Administration and Support	329	20.6	*	
Service	145	9.1	191	13.6
Farm and Forestry	8	0.5	4	0.3
Skilled Labor	179	11.2	316	22.5

* Category eliminated and combined with others in 2000 census

One-third of Farmingdale’s employed residents are executives and managers, a category that now includes professionals. This is a slight increase over 1990, and just exactly reflective of Kennebec County, where 33 percent are in those occupations. “Sales” looks as if it made a big

jump, but it now includes most of the former “Administration” jobs. The remainder went to “Skilled Labor.”

The census also classifies workers by the industry of employment. This is not as good as describing a person’s actual job, because a factory, for instance, may have secretaries, managers, sales staff and skilled machinists all together, but has the advantage of gauging which sectors of the economy are doing well, and the added advantage that the Maine DOL uses this classification for its annual updates.

Table 3, below, illustrates that almost all industrial classifications are losing workers to the service industry in the region. “Services” can include anything from restaurant workers to computer technicians, so any specific trends are difficult to nail down. The census did create a new category for 2000 – “Information services” – with 55 workers, but we do not know how many there were in 1990. Our profile looks much the same as Kennebec County’s, except that we have a higher percentage in Public Administration, and lower in manufacturing.

Table 3: Industrial Classification of Farmingdale Workforce, 1990 and 2000

<u>Industry of Employment</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>Percent of total</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Percent of total</u>
Construction	152	10.8	103	7.3
Manufacturing	144	10.2	103	7.3
Wholesale and Retail	279	19.8	237	16.9
Services, exc. Health and education	240	17.0	339	24.1
Health and education services	339	24.1	324	23.0
Agriculture and Forestry	17	1.2	9	0.6
Public Administration	237	16.8	192	13.7

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000

What are the implications of these figures for local or regional economic growth? Manufacturing, for example, grabs the headlines every time another plant shuts down. Yet, it is clear from the numbers that manufacturing is less than a tenth of our economic strength. Our main strength is among the service industry jobs, which, fortunately, are the growth industry both regionally and nationally. That means we are well-placed to take advantage of foreseeable development trends.

Education and the Economy:

Another measure of how well-placed we are to progress economically is the educational attainment of our populace. Jobs that require mastery of math, science and problem-solving skills are more likely to flow to areas with higher educational levels. College graduation is almost a basic requirement for many professional,

Neighborhood Snapshot: Graduates -- 2000		
<u>Town</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>College</u>
Farmingdale	90.5	24.7
Gardiner	83.9	17.9
Hallowell	92.3	36.2
West Gardiner	91.2	21.0
*percent of persons over age 25		

managerial, and educational professions. Income levels can also be expected to be higher for jobs requiring more education.

Farmingdale residents are well-educated. Twenty-five percent of our population aged 25 and over has a college degree; of which seven percent have graduate degrees. This is an improvement over 1990, when only 14 percent had bachelors, masters or PhDs. And it is well above the average for Kennebec County (20.7 percent) and Maine (22.9 percent). Farmingdale's 90.5 percent high school graduation rate is also impressive. Though Hallowell and West Gardiner in the immediate area both have slightly better rates, the graduation rate for all of Kennebec County is only 85 percent.

Local Business Environment:

Farmingdale provides a stimulating environment for establishment of local businesses. This is partially due to the proximity of downtown Gardiner, Hallowell, and Augusta, where open land or commercial space is at a premium, and partially due to the easy access and high traffic volumes on Maine Avenue. But we also just have a lot of enterprising people in town.

Farmingdale is a town of small business. In fact, the largest employer in Farmingdale is probably the school system. In total, there are 120 employers, with a total of 1,092 workers, according to Maine Department of Labor records.

The breakdown of employers, by size, is as follows:

- Six employers with more than 20 employees each
- Eight employers with 10-19 employees each, and
- 106 employers with fewer than ten employees.

Eighty-eight percent of the employers fall into the latter category.

Farmingdale is overshadowed by regional job centers. The largest regional employer is the State of Maine. Gardiner has several downtown businesses that employ 20 or more. In all, the Augusta-Gardiner Labor Market Area averaged 45,000 workers in 2002, making Farmingdale 2.4 percent of the overall labor market.

Table 4 lists the businesses operating in Farmingdale, as of early 2004. This list shows the diversity of business enterprises in town. There are:

- 20 restaurants and retail stores
- 12 automotive services
- 26 professional services, including 8 in the medical/dental field
- 16 household and personal services, and
- 16 construction-related businesses.

Although the list includes several home-based businesses, it does not include farms or independent forest workers, nor several smaller enterprises.

Table 4: Businesses In Farmingdale – 2005

A & B Associates	Duncklee & Assoc.	Libby Appraisals
ACE Design (Graphic)	EBB Tone Guitars	Maine Assoc. of Retirees
ACE Lawn Care	Ellis Construction	Major Appliance
Agway	Employment Support Services	Martins Barber Shop
Airport Automotive	Euro Construction	Mattson, C.B. Const.
Alden Longfellow's Greenhouse	Ferraiolo Corp.	McLaughlin-Hallee & Assoc.
All the Best	First Amendment	Mike's Place
Anytime Towing	First Choice	NAPA Auto Parts
Balloons & Blossoms	First Impressions	Neilson Sporting Goods
Barry Construction	Fitzgerald Electric	New England Metrology
Barry, E.C. & Son	Flagg, Patricia Tax Service	New England Pools
Barter Real Estate	Foggy Bottom Marine	Option Rentals
BH Builders	Gail, Aubrey Chiropractor	Paw Talk Grooming
Bowie Well Drilling	Garden Express	PC Surge'n
Brvant, Kerrv	Gentle Rhythms Yoga	Perfect Image Web Design
Captain Lewis Residence (Boarding	GHS	Performance Automotive
Central Maine Communications	Goslines Hardware	Pinkham Agency
Central Maine Pvrotechnics	Hall-Dale Manor	Prescott Automotive
Charlies Pizza	Harwood Real Estate	Psychiatric-Mental Health
Choate Electric	Heads-Up Hair Salon	Purbeck Isle
Choate, Dale Trucking	Hi Hat Diner	Renaissance Galley
Choate, Garv Trucking	HRM	Riverview Dental
Choate, Roland Electric	Icon	Rod & Joes Place
Claire Grace Gifts	Isamax Snacks	Rolfes Well Drilling
Clarks Car & Parts	J&S Oil	Rowe Bros Ground Care
Clarks Custom Car Care	JD's Car Wash	Rustic Cabin
Coffin Engineering& Surveying	Jones, Dennis @ Law	Sanctified Grounds
Community Advertiser	Justice Planning & Man.	Secured Creditor Service
Community Rehabilitation Services	Kalloch, Keith Paving Plus	Solare Tanning
Constellation College Funding	Ken's Auto Truck Service	Studio 201
Cormier, Richard Concrete/Flatworks	Kennebec Heights Country Club	Tao Martial Arts & Fitness
Crocketts Garage	Kennebec Home Brew Supply	Thayer Engineering
Curtis, J. Robert Surveyor	Kennebec Valley Animal Clinic	Timson & Assoc.
Cut-4-You	Kennebec Valley Health Club	Upholstery Nook
Dead River	L&D Safety	Vanessa Hair Salon
DNK Motors	Lajoie, Norman	VIP Auto
	Larrabee Plumbing	Webber's Ice Cream

There may be a wide variety of business types, but there is no question where the business center is in town. Eighty-two businesses are located on Maine Avenue, with several more located on side streets nearby. Eight businesses are located on Maple Street, six on Northern Ave., four each on Bowman Street and Hasson Street. At least 19 other street addresses are represented on the list.



Figure 1: Gosline's Hardware, Maine Ave.

Economic Growth and the Future:

In order to plan for adequate strategies to serve economic development, it helps to project the type of growth we may see, both as a result of past trends and in the regional context. Farmingdale currently has several assets to offer business, but these alone will not sustain the level or type of economic growth we want.

There are several measures of economic growth. The most essential one is in employment. This plan has already made projections of job needs as a result of projected population growth (pages 6 and 7). The three scenarios yielded a range of 124 to 359 new jobs over 15 years. However, it was also noted that because of Farmingdale's role in the regional economy, some 85 percent of new jobs could be expected to be out-of-town. That leaves a demand for between 19 and 55 new jobs in town over 15 years, or between one and four per year. Local job growth beyond that figure would, though, lead to better local opportunities.

These figures should be added to in-town jobs that already exist (not the number of employed persons in town, which is considerably higher). In 2000, Farmingdale hosted 693 workers, compared to 1990, when we hosted only 355. That is an increase of 34 workers per year, and not because of one large, new employer. That is clearly not a sustainable increase, and is in fact 1/3 of the total increase in workers in all of Kennebec County during that period. It is likely that this ten-year growth is an aberration.

Another measure of economic activity is the level of products sold. This is not a measure of employment or income, but may be useful as a gauge of square footage of retail business space. The State Planning Office report of taxable sales in Farmingdale indicates that we had \$13,932,500 in sales in 1996, which increased to \$30,492,400 in 2003. This indicates a growth rate of 12 percent a year. This, too, is unsustainable. Taxable sales for all of Kennebec County rose only 5 percent per year. In fact, sales growth in Farmingdale virtually stopped from 2002 to

2003. Sales are not evenly distributed among economic sectors. We have strong sales in restaurants, home furnishings and automotive, but very little general merchandise and food.

One only has to drive down Maine Ave. to understand the dynamic. Businesses are growing, but almost exclusively in expanded or replacement buildings. Little, if any, developable land exists for new growth. Can this continue? While we will always be able to increase the intensity of use on these commercial properties, growth on Maine Avenue has aggravated traffic and safety problems, and “more of the same” is undesirable. There is little trend or incentive to moving commercial development onto the side roads.

Future growth, then, should take place at a slower rate than in the past. A growth rate of five to ten jobs per year will not only support growth projections but improve local job opportunities. Based on current business sizes, we can estimate two to three new businesses per year, around 25 in the next decade. While some will be home businesses, others will be new storefronts, service businesses and offices.

Community Attitudes Towards the Local Economy:

The previous pages have profiled the current state of the local economy, but really do not take into account the perception of the community regarding good and bad aspects of it. The knowledge of what people want is just as important as knowing what we have.

Maine Avenue, the most commercially-developed part of town, is a frequent topic of discussion when looking toward the future. Town leaders often identify Maine Avenue traffic and development as two of our most important economic issues for the next decade. This important corridor’s two primary functions are to carry commuter traffic between Augusta and Gardiner, and to provide safe access for local business. Improvements to traffic flow and safety are in progress. Planning for future business and commuter traffic needs must be among our highest priorities.

The public opinion survey provided some information on attitudes towards economic development. Over 70 percent agree that we should be encouraging a diverse business base while maintaining our small town character. By a 3 to 2 margin, residents feel that it is important to provide job opportunities. But that does not really mean “growing” the economy. Three out of four respondents *disagree* that we should be encouraging economic growth. The majority feels that it would be a bad idea to develop an actual business park. Residents are about split on whether we should provide tax incentives for new business, or encourage development of a strip mall.

Residents do recognize certain shortcomings in the local economy. Fifty-five percent told us that they do not have adequate day-to-day shopping. Greatest identified needs are grocery store, pharmacy, and bank.

Asked whether Farmingdale should join with other area towns on programs to promote economic opportunities, 82 percent agreed.

Chapter 3: Housing in Farmingdale

One of the defining characteristics of a community is the character of its housing. While people come and go, housing stays. Housing is a part of the landscape, and without it, there is no town. In fact, population estimates are often based on housing trends, because the availability of housing drives population growth or decline. While a small town such as Farmingdale seldom gets directly involved in building or managing housing, there are many town policies that will impact the rate or location of new homes, and their price. Housing at a reasonable price is especially important, because it promotes a healthy diversity of households, essential for a healthy economy.

Housing Growth:

In Farmingdale, housing numbers have grown a lot faster than the population. This is the outcome of a long-term decline in the number of people per household, as discussed in the Introduction to this report. The total number of housing units in 1970 was 789. In 2000, the count of housing units had risen to 1,273, an increase of 61 percent. We gained 484 housing units in thirty years, and only 381 people!

Nearly all of those 1,273 units are year-round, occupied homes. The census only classified 13 houses as “seasonal” in 2000. And there were only 19 other vacant units, including rental vacancies and homes for sale.

Data since 2000 is less accurate than the Census. Our current housing estimates are based on building permit records. Since 2000, Farmingdale has permitted 24 new single-family homes and 6 new mobile homes. That would bring the total of housing units in Farmingdale to 1,303.

Housing Profile:

Table 1, on the following page, indicates the type of housing stock available in Farmingdale, and how it has shifted over the years. Clearly, the majority of housing is still traditional, single-family homes. The relative percentage of multi-family housing went up dramatically in the 1980's, as did the percentage of mobile homes. In the 1990's, more mobile homes were placed in town than stick-built structures. Since 2000, the trend is the other way. Still, in 1980, stick-built homes constituted 71 percent of the total housing stock; now they comprises just 60 percent.

Table 1: Year-Round Housing by Structural Type, 1980-2000

<u>Housing Type</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Single-Family (stick-built)	677	755	766
Multi-Family	179	333	339
Mobile Home	101	149	164

Source: US Census

The 2000 Census also reports on the age of Farmingdale’s housing. 12.3 percent of homes have been built since 1990, and 21 percent were built before WWII. The average is about 37 years old. Our housing is relatively new, due in part to Hayford Heights and several apartment buildings. In Gardiner, 55 percent of its housing was built before 1940, in Hallowell, 65 percent. Kennebec County as a whole averages about 28 percent built before 1940.

Also reported by the Census are indicators of whether housing may be inadequate by modern standards. . For example, four homes in town lack complete kitchen facilities, five lack complete plumbing facilities, seven lack a telephone, and 23 homes contain only one or two rooms. Compare this to 1970, when 87 homes in town had one or more of these features. The small number of homes in Farmingdale that don’t measure up to modern standards is an indication that we do not have a significant problem with housing quality in town.

Neighborhood Snapshot:	
Rental Housing	
<u>Town</u>	<u>2000 Rental Percentage</u>
Farmingdale	28.6 %
Hallowell	42.6 %
Gardiner	37 %
West Gardiner	12.8 %

28 percent of Farmingdale housing units are rentals, but that is relatively less than Gardiner and Hallowell. Rental units, especially multi-family units, are another characteristic of dense development coming as a result of public sewer availability. The rental percentage in West Gardiner – clearly a rural town – is much lower. Kennebec County as a whole is at 28.8 percent, so Farmingdale is about typical. The census does not say directly how many

rental units are apartments versus homes, but we can make a good guess. The total number of rentals is 344. The number of duplexes in town is 40, and the number of units of three or more is 298. So, according to the census at least, very few renters occupy single-family homes.

Housing Value and Affordability:

Farmingdale homeowners, like many in Maine, have seen property values rise and fall for the past twenty years. Between 1980 and 1990, the value of a “specified” (stick-built, on less than ten acres) owner-occupied home rose from \$41,100 to \$82,800, more than doubling. Since the inflation rate only rose 60 percent over that decade, homeowners came out ahead. Between 1990 and 2000, however, home values rose only 6 percent, to \$87,700. Inflation over that period was 32 percent, so homeowners lost value. Property values are still well above those in Gardiner, and below those in Hallowell. They are

Neighborhood Snapshot:	
Home Values	
<u>Town</u>	<u>2000 Home Value</u>
Farmingdale	\$ 87,700
Gardiner	\$ 76,900
Hallowell	\$ 92,000
West Gardiner	\$ 89,200

right on the average for Kennebec County, of \$87,200, and 10 percent below the average Maine price, of \$98,700.

The price of a home reflects a balance between the willingness of a seller and the ability of a buyer to afford it. However, *affordability* is an issue for the entire community. If the people who currently live and work in town cannot afford the housing, it means that some of our most essential residents – such as youth and seniors – will be forced to move out, and more affluent newcomers will be buying in. The character of the community will change as a result. The Growth Management Law requires us to look at the relationship between housing cost and income .

The affordable housing equation can be made for both homeowners and renters. Table 2, below, provides a snapshot of affordability. Households that pay less than 20 percent of their income towards housing costs are in good shape; households that pay more than 30 percent are in trouble.

Table 2: Housing Costs as a Percentage of Income, 1990 and 2000

<u>Percentage of Monthly Income</u>	<u>1990 #</u>	<u>1990 %</u>	<u>2000 #</u>	<u>2000 %</u>
Owner – ownership costs				
Less than 20 percent	207	47 %	327	59 %
20 to 30 percent	136	31 %	138	25 %
More than 30 percent	97	22 %	89	16 %
Renter – gross rent				
Less than 20 percent	55	61 %	123	35 %
20 to 30 percent	16	18 %	75	21 %
More than 30 percent	19	21 %	139	40 %

The table indicates that the percentage of population paying over 30 percent of their income on housing costs has declined during the decade for homeowners, but increased significantly for renters. This is consistent with the trend of housing values not keeping up with inflation but rents rising. Roughly one out of seven homeowners and four of ten renters are living beyond that “affordability” threshold.

An affordable home for the 2000 median income household in Farmingdale would be approximately \$99,700. According to the 2000 Census, 412 homes (73.8 percent) in Farmingdale are valued under \$100,000. This would provide a preliminary indication that affordability is not a major issue in the homeowner market. Additional data have been provided to the state by the market research firm *Claritas*, which indicate that the *affordability index* – the ratio between the price of a median home and what the average household can afford – has improved considerably since 2000. However, their estimates include an assumption that average incomes in Farmingdale have increased 33 percent in just two years, so may be overly optimistic.

Neighborhood Snapshot: Affordability	
2000: Paying more than 30%	
<u>Town</u>	<u>Of Income on Housing</u>
Farmingdale	25.1 %
Gardiner	24.9 %
Hallowell	28.0 %
West Gardiner	17.5 %

To put this in more realistic terms, we need to think about what people can afford on a reasonable salary. A wage of \$15 per hour is generally considered a good income. According to mortgage guidelines used by MSHA, that wage-earner could afford an \$83,000 home. That is not enough to afford the average house in 2000, much less the average of \$94,000 in 2002. If prices escalate faster than salaries, we soon have a problem. We force more household members to get jobs, putting pressure on the job market, or we lose the diversity of population typical of a small town.

Regardless of what the “average” household can afford, some citizens may always have trouble affording a place to live. Farmingdale has 261 people below the federally-defined “poverty line,” including 45 single mothers and 27 elderly. It has a total of 344 people on social security, with an average income from social security of \$9,000. In all, we have 397 households making below \$25,000 per year. \$25,000 buys a house about \$66,000 or can afford a rent of \$625/month. Farmingdale has fewer than 50 houses under that price, but it does have about 290 rentals.

We can also look at housing affordability as a regional issue; in the context of the question “Are people moving out of (or not moving into) Farmingdale because housing is more affordable elsewhere?” According to the “neighborhood snapshot” of affordability (inset), Hallowell’s housing is less affordable than Farmingdale’s despite being nearly half rentals, and West Gardiner’s is more affordable, even though most of their stock is single-family homes.

MSHA statistics on affordability indicate that the cost of a home in Farmingdale (2002) is almost exactly the same as the Augusta Housing Market. However, the median income in the region is about 18 percent below Farmingdale’s. That means our housing is slightly less affordable than in the region. However, it is still comfortably affordable: The median income in the Augusta Market Area can afford a \$118,000 home and Farmingdale’s average is \$94,000.

If we reduce the affordability level to 80 percent of median incomes (the threshold set by law), the affordable home value drops to \$78,900. According to the 2000 census, the lower quartile (one-quarter) of our housing is valued below \$76,600. That means that over 25 percent of Farmingdale’s existing housing is affordable at the lower threshold. An affordable rent is \$750/month. The census reports that only eight of 351 rentals exceed that threshold.

In fact, of its large rental stock, Farmingdale has 144 units subsidized for low income households. 111 of these units are project-based, and 33 are Section 8 vouchers (transferable). However, only five units are available exclusively for seniors. MSHA estimates that 39 senior households would qualify for subsidized housing, if available, based on current incomes.

Since 2000, MSHA has enrolled 12 Farmingdale households in its First-Time Homebuyers Program. This provides an opportunity for young families to get into their own homes at a discounted cost.

To summarize, the largest identifiable group in need of affordable housing are low-income seniors. However, newer development in Farmingdale has taken the form of suburban-

style homes, with fairly high price tags. If this trend continues, the free market may eventually see a need for lower-priced homes and the pendulum will swing the other way.



Figure 1: Diversity of Housing Opportunities in Farmingdale

Housing Geography:

Housing needs and styles have changed over the years, as has the geography of the “built environment” in Farmingdale. In order to successfully grow as a town, Farmingdale must anticipate the market and housing need into the future.

Farmingdale’s original settlement patterns were influenced by two factors. The first was the Kennebec River. A number of large homes, some very elegant, were built along what is now Maine Ave. in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. These were the “suburbs” of Gardiner. The second trend was more indicative of the rest of Maine – settlement of the agricultural lands. Farmingdale has more good examples of 19th Century farmsteads.

The first half of the 20th Century did not see much new construction, but that changed after WWII. Hayford Heights is the premier example of post-war construction. Most of the homes in this grid-style development in the northeast corner of town are small to mid-size capes and ranches, on lots under an acre. This accentuated the distinction between downtown Farmingdale – east of the Turnpike (built about the same time) and the rural area, west. Subsequent problems with subsurface wastewater systems in the neighborhoods led to the extension of sanitary sewer in cooperation with Gardiner, which led in turn to opportunities for multi-family and higher-density housing.

Several groups of small apartment buildings followed. Typical of these are Orchard Park (54 units on Loudon Street), Pine Hill (48 units on Hill Street), Maine Ave. Heights (32 units of low income) and Kennebec Village (24 units of senior housing). The typical building consisted of four or eight units on two stories.

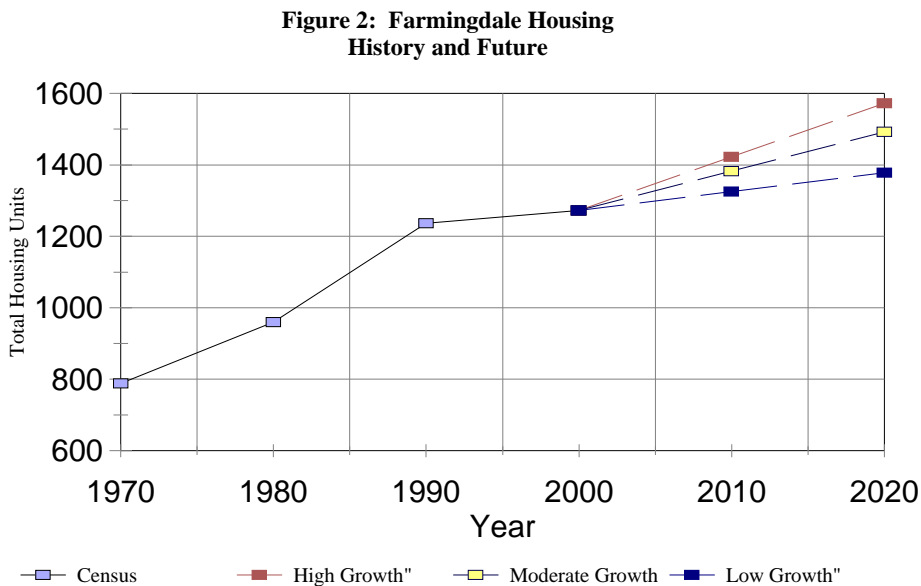
Meanwhile, the rural area of Farmingdale is beginning to be discovered. Although not serviced by public water and sewer systems, land west of the Turnpike became more attractive as the road system improved and people became more accustomed to commuting. Earlier development took the form of modest, individually-built homes and mobile homes. Only

recently have home and land values escalated enough that high-quality, rural subdivisions are feasible. Stone Ridge View Estates (see Figure 1) is the first such example west of the Turnpike.

Together, these trends have resulted in a healthy variety of housing styles and sizes in town. As long as we retain capacity for growth in both the urban and rural areas, we should continue to display this mix.

Future Housing Growth:

The three growth scenarios presented in the introduction ranged between five and fifteen new housing units per year between 2000 and 2020. (Figure 2, below) The construction level up to 2005 has averaged six units per year, but our hope and expectation is that we will average closer to eleven. Therefore, monitoring the actual rate of housing construction is important.



Tracking the *style* of new housing is also important. The growth projections are based on the continuation in the decline in the number of persons per household. As the baby boom ages, we will see even more demand for smaller houses. Housing that supports these trends would be the apartments, condos, and small houses typical of in-town locations. But if our new housing comes in the form of four bedroom colonials in the rural area, this will throw off the assumptions of decreasing household size and alter the character of the town’s population.

As noted, the Growth Management Act, which sets standards for local comprehensive plans, sets an affordable housing goal.¹ A goal of 10 percent of new housing units priced

¹ A community must “seek to achieve a level of at least 10 percent of new residential development (based on a five-year historical average, that meets the definition of affordable housing” (30-A MRSA, s.4326.3.G). Affordable housing is “a decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling, apartment, or living accommodation for a household whose income does not exceed 80 percent of the median for the area.” (30-A MRSA, s.4301).

affordably to a family making 80 percent of the median income means that in Farmingdale, in 2000, a home priced at \$78,900 or a rental set at \$750/month would qualify. As our incomes rise, the threshold for affordability would also rise, but also, housing prices might rise faster than our incomes. Ten percent of our anticipated growth scenario equals eleven affordable units per decade.

Chapter 4: Rural Resources

Farmingdale's rural resources are its farm and forest lands. Farms and forests are representative of the traditional landscape and economy of Maine. Though we have long emerged from the era when most of the population owned a farm or worked in the woods, many people in rural and suburbanizing towns like Farmingdale still depend on farmland and forest.

The town, too, depends on its rural areas, for another reason: taxes. Some towns, particularly fast-developing ones, assume that in order to get on top of rising taxes and service demands, they have to add to their tax base, which means more development. They overlook the fact that, throughout Maine, taxes are lowest in rural, undeveloped towns, and highest in urban and suburban towns. The simple fact is that, though open land doesn't add much to the tax base, it demands even less in services. The same cannot be said of commercial, residential, or any other type of development.

The American Farmland Trust, a national agricultural advocacy organization, has documented this in dozens of "Cost of Community Services" studies across the country, including Maine. Their findings: the average commercial development demands about \$1 worth of services for each \$1 in taxes it pays. The average home demands about \$1.15 for every \$1. The average farm acre demands only 27 cents. That means a community takes three out of every four dollars that farmland owners pay in taxes to provide services to its increased "tax base." It might make sense, therefore, to encourage landowners to keep as much land undeveloped as possible.

In Farmingdale, large tracts of land dominate the rural area; many have been in the same family for generations. This multi-generational ownership has brought with it a considered approach to management of the resource (whether farm or forest), allowance to public access, and development. Deference should be given to these attitudes in our planning to support conservation, development, and economical public services.

Farming in Farmingdale:

Despite its name, farm activities are not, and have not in the recent past, been extensive in Town. There is limited cattle raising and haying, done mostly as a part-time enterprise. One fairly large greenhouse operation has prospered over the years. Full-time farming is not an especially lucrative occupation. Farmingdale has several small farms that provide a supplemental income, but little in the way of farm infrastructure. There are no areas of "Prime Farmland" in town, though there are spots of prime agricultural soils, primarily along Litchfield Road.

All the available statistics from Kennebec County on farms, farmlands, and numbers of persons operating farms come from the US Census of Agriculture (most recently in 1997). The statistics show gradual overall decline in the number of farms, the amount of farm acreage, and the number of full-time farmers. Indeed, the US Census reported only four full-time farmers in Farmingdale in 2000, versus eight in 1990.

Commodity farms are in particular peril. Farms raising dairy animals, field crops, and apples are shrinking rapidly. There is a bright spot, though. Certain types of farming are prospering. The value of “Nursery and Greenhouse Products” jumped by 54 percent between 1992 and 1997; the value of “Livestock and Poultry Products” rose by 25 percent. The practice of beekeeping is also growing. In Kennebec County, farming as a part-time occupation, supplying specialty products from small acreages, has been booming. This has been reflected in the increased number of farmstands and farmers’ markets in the county.



Figure 1: Active farmland on Northern Avenue

There are several programs available to support farming and farmland preservation in the state. The Maine Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Resources has begun promoting local farming, through its “Buy Local” campaign and sponsorship of farm events like Maine Maple Sunday and Open Farm Days. State law allows farmers to apply for a reduced-tax “current use valuation” under the Farmland and Open Space Program (no Farmingdale land is enrolled in this program). And several public and private groups offer to purchase or accept donations of conservation easements and development rights from active farms. Heifer Project International has active program in Aroostook and Waldo Counties.

Citizens of Farmingdale seem to want to protect farmland in the hope that it will survive as an economic asset. In our Public Opinion Survey, people agreed by a 3 to 1 margin that Farmingdale needs regulations to promote and protect agriculture. There was general agreement (60 percent) that we should have larger lot sizes in agricultural areas. And also (66 percent), that we should provide tax incentives to encourage preservation of open space.

Large-scale farming is not likely to re-emerge in Kennebec County, so efforts such as preservation of prime farmlands and infrastructure may prove fruitless. It is very likely, however, that the future holds the emergence of small-scale operations – a berry or flower farm, maple syrup operation, or tree nursery, for instance – and the town can take actions to support this new form of 21st century agriculture.

Forestland:

Forests are the natural setting for Farmingdale, as it is for the most of Maine, providing much of the wildlife habitat and local recreational opportunities, such as hunting, snowmobiling and scenic walks. While current forest acreage is not available by town it appears that about 2/3 of Farmingdale is forested.

Farmingdale forested lands have remained fairly constant over the last several years. Three recent subdivisions have infringed on forested land, however, the homes have been sited tastefully in the wooded areas, not clear-cut as sometimes happens. Little commercial harvesting has taken place in recent years, although two fairly large operations cut and split firewood for sale. According to Maine Forest Service records, there have been only ten timber harvest permits issued since 1995, accounting for 152 acres cut. Ninety-seven percent of the cutting was selective (not clearcut), and only 16 acres were permanently removed from forest management.

In addition to the opportunities for preservation of forest land through conservation easements, landowners have the opportunity to enroll in the “Tree Growth” current use valuation program authorized by state law, allowing their land to be valued at \$135 per acre (mixed woodland rate). Farmingdale has low enrollment. Of the roughly 4,000 acres of forest in the town, one parcel, totaling 41 acres, is enrolled. Only two towns in Kennebec County have lower enrollment: Randolph and Waterville. Requirements of the program, including withdrawal penalties and management plans, together with low existing assessments, seem to be disincentives for enrollment.

The recent community survey undertaken by the Comprehensive Planning Committee found that residents want the Town to adopt regulations to promote and protect forests (76 percent). Among other things, residents support property tax incentives to preserve open spaces (66 percent) and regulations to direct growth into developed areas away from prime forestlands (73 percent).

Chapter 5: Natural Resources and the Environment

The identification and analysis of Farmingdale's natural resources is a vital part of our comprehensive planning efforts. The town's land and water resources, including the marine environment, are important assets to our community. Appreciating the value of our environmental attributes, we are, and will continue to be, mindful of their protection in any plans for growth and development.

Mapping:

The description of natural resources is very conducive to being depicted on maps, and analysis of them is part of our overall plan. Several maps of Farmingdale's resource base were created or obtained from various sources for this report. (Maps numbered 1, 2, and 3 were created for this report – others are reproductions from state or federal sources.) The original maps, listed below, are stored at the town office. They are mapped at a scale of 1"=1,000'. Small reproductions are included at the end of this report.

Natural Resource Inventory Maps:

- Topography
- Water Resources and wetlands
- Wildlife Habitat
- Aerial Photo
- Soils for Development
- Undeveloped Habitat Blocks
- Sand and Gravel Aquifers

Topography:

Topography is the "lay of the land" --- its hills and valleys, ridges and plains. The use of the phrase "lay of the land" in everyday life reflects people's needs to identify the major factors defining a given situation. The phrase derives from the influence topography exerts upon people's actions on the land. Topography provides the physical framework in which people act.

Farmingdale's terrain ranges from relatively flat to rolling and hilly, with gently rolling countryside dominating the whole. The lowest land lies along the Kennebec River in the east, comprising the only area in town less than 150 feet above sea level. This area lies in a swath 2,000 feet from the river's edge, in narrow bands flowing to the Kennebec from higher land to the west. Several ravines punctuate this part of town. The first road from Gardiner to Hallowsell skirted the river through this area and the first settlers built their homes here.

The land rises to the west, ranging in elevation from 150 feet along the river to over 400 feet in hills at the western end of town before dropping back to about 170 feet around Jamie and Hutchinson ponds. Most of the central land, probably three-fourths of the area of Farmingdale,

ranges from 150 to 300 feet above sea level. Bowman Street on the east side of town breaks for a mile due to the largest hill in town, before continuing on westward.

The height of land lies in a north-south ridgeline in western Farmingdale. The highest elevation in town, just over 460 feet, occurs toward the northern end of these hills. The Litchfield Road, running southwesterly from Hallowell, rises into the hills and follows the ridgeline in areas of level land and gradual inclines.

Steep slopes (over 25%) occur, rarely, in the areas of higher elevation in central and western Farmingdale, as well as along the ravines leading to the Kennebec River. (See map) The sharply defined ravines are quite visually evident as one drives through town on Route 201. The steep areas in the hills are not so prominent, access being limited and development having occurred in more level areas.

The development of Hayford Heights was used in the past to highlight the lack of foresight in planning for stormwater runoff on steep slopes. Since that time, Farmingdale requires subdivisions to provide adequate stormwater control through the use of catch basins and holding ponds.

Surface Water:

Farmingdale lies in the Kennebec River watershed, which drains a large area of central and northwestern Maine. A large watershed like the Kennebec River basin contains many primary and secondary watersheds within it, each defined by drainage divides and the major watercourse draining the area. All of the water flowing from Farmingdale eventually reaches the Kennebec River. The primary watershed divide between the Cobbosseecontee Stream drainage and the direct Kennebec River drainage runs diagonally from northwest to southeast through town. Each watershed drains approximately half of the town: water in the Cobbosseecontee Stream basin flows west or south into the stream; water in the direct Kennebec drainage flows east or northeast into the river.

Four secondary watersheds comprise the Cobbosseecontee drainage: Jamie Pond, Hutchinson Pond, Cold Stream, and a tributary to Cold Stream. The stream leaving the southern end of Hutchinson Pond flows west and joins Cobbosseecontee Stream just before it crosses from Manchester into West Gardiner. East of Hutchinson Pond watershed lie the headwaters of Cold Stream. The stream and its tributary drain over one-quarter of the town's land area in south-central Farmingdale. They flow south through West Gardiner, reaching Cobbosseecontee Stream prior to its confluence with the Kennebec River in downtown Gardiner.

Several secondary watersheds flow directly into the Kennebec River watershed in Farmingdale: Vaughn Brook, Meadow Brook, and several direct un-named tributaries to the river. The headwaters of Vaughn Brook drain north central Farmingdale, flowing northeasterly into Hallowell and hence to the Kennebec. Meadow Brook also flows northeast, forming a corner of the town's northeast boundary where the stream meets the Kennebec.

Surface water resources in Farmingdale are not abundant. Though numerous small streams drain the town, the major surface water bodies are three in number: Jamie Pond, Hutchinson Pond, and the Kennebec River. Their natural characteristics, existing uses and shoreline development define the limits for further utilization of the three.

Great Ponds:



Figure 1: Jamie Pond, from Hallowell looking into Farmingdale

Jamie (or Jimmie's) Pond is a small, deep pond, 94 acres with an average depth of 34 feet. It is listed as a water supply to Hallowell, though currently unused. It is relatively deep and has a good flushing rate (the time it takes to renew the pond's water volume) of 1.24 flushes per year. This means that the pond can more easily absorb pollutants, particularly phosphorous, which can trigger algae blooms. Total watershed area in Farmingdale is only 533 acres, with the majority of watershed in Hallowell and Manchester.

Hutchinson (or Hudson) Pond, on the other hand, is a shallow, marshy, fast flushing pond, 91 acres with an average depth of only 10 feet. Its shallowness would make it very sensitive to phosphorous were it not for its rapid flushing (7 flushes per year), which removes the nutrients quickly from the system. Just over half of Hutchinson Pond's direct drainage area (watershed) is in Farmingdale, coming to 788 acres.

Both ponds have a high tolerance for the addition of nutrients, which means it would take a large increase in phosphorous loading to increase the concentration and thus trigger an algae bloom. Both ponds have a rapid response time, responding very quickly to changes in water quality so that increased pollutant loading is likely to be detected. Correspondingly, the ponds' water quality will rapidly reflect efforts to reduce nutrient input, unless they begin a cycle of nuisance algae blooms.

The current quality of Hutchinson Pond as established by DEP is "moderate-sensitive." Hutchinson Pond has a high enough concentration of phosphorous; however, that additional loading may reach the critical level that triggers blooms. It thus has a moderate need for protection, which current resource protection zoning of its shorelands in Farmingdale and

Manchester provides. In any case, ownership and access are limited, and the pond's shallow marshy character limits its desirability for active recreational or developmental use. DEP's permitted phosphorous allocation at a moderate protection level is 0.04 lbs. per acre per year. Jamie Pond, with water quality rated "good", apparently exhibits a low need for protection due to its high assimilative character and the fact that ownership of most of the watershed is the State of Maine. Its established use as a water supply, however, warrants special concern, since treatment costs increase as productivity (plant growth due to nutrient loading) increases. At a high level of protection, DEP's phosphorous loading standard is .039 lbs. per acre per year.

A large block of the watershed of Jamie Pond, including more than 90 percent of its shoreline, is state conservation land. This greatly reduces the potential for development. Except for a few, small out-parcels, the entire watershed in Farmingdale is state land. Hutchinson Pond is not as attractive to development and a few individuals own most of the land in the watershed. A small amount of shoreline development has taken place, but otherwise, the pond is nearly inaccessible.

The River, and Coastal Resources:

The Kennebec River is the most visible water resource in Farmingdale. The town's eastern boundary runs down the middle of the broad, flat-water river as it flows south to the ocean. The river is classified as a coastal resource. Tidal influence reaches as far north as Waterville, although salt-water influx stops near the Chops Narrows in Woolwich, to the south.

Flowing water in streams and rivers creates a dynamic, constantly changing shoreline. In the long run, however, the continual and steady erosion and deposition of materials slowly shapes the marine geology of the river. The Maine Geological Survey conducted a study identifying the marine geology of the Kennebec River. Mud flats are the most common depositions occurring throughout the shorelands. The made land, however, is the most visually prominent from Route 201. Rock-filled log cribs dot the river on both sides of Brown's Island. Point bars exist on a bend towards the northern boundary of the river.



Figure 2: The Kennebec River at Foggy Bottom Marina

The Kennebec River has seen a dramatic improvement in water quality over the past two decades. Nevertheless, threats from some sources, such as mercury and non-point source runoff, remain, and diligence in maintaining water quality is essential. The combination of improved river water quality and sewer improvements in Farmingdale makes development more attractive and stimulates recreational use along the river. .

The Kennebec River offers greater potential for various kinds of recreation than does either of the two ponds to the west. However, existing development constraints on the Kennebec, including the floodplain, and the Maine Central Railroad along much of the riverbank, greatly limits the opportunities for riverfront development in town.

The only part of the river with access to allow marine-related activities such as mooring and winter smelt fishing is from the Foggy Bottom Marina south. The town-appointed harbormaster does not allow any mooring without owned or approved written agreement. Some of the Farmingdale side is part of the channel, which cannot be impaired. Water speed and wake enforcement are emerging issues on the water. Winter smelt fishing has not been an issue in the past, but is becoming more important.

Inaccessibility and steep banks limit recreational access to the river. Foggy Bottom Marina is a private, commercial access point. The Gardiner Boat Launch, less than a mile from Farmingdale, is very well-equipped. *The most that Farmingdale should consider is a carry-in launch associated with other recreation improvements.*

The Kennebec River provides some of the best (and only) scenic opportunities in town. Viewing points are limited, however. The harbormaster recommends that these be maintained so that vegetation does not grow up and obscure the views.

Floodplain:

The flood hazard areas in Farmingdale reflect the influence of topography. They broaden in flat, low-lying areas and constrict along quickly rising shorelands. The floodplain around Jamie Pond is quite narrow compared to that on the north and south ends of Hutchinson Pond, which incorporates extensive wetlands. Narrow flood hazard areas follow the streams for the most part except for areas on Cold Stream and its tributary and on Meadow Brook.

The steep slopes along the Kennebec in northern Farmingdale constrict the floodplain there, while it spreads out more in the lower land along the river to the south. South of Park Street, the floodplain sometimes reaches all the way to the railroad grade. The floodplain corresponds to contour elevations on the river, following the 29 foot contour from the Farmingdale-Gardiner boundary northward, and gradually rising to the 31 foot contour before reaching the Farmingdale-Hallowell line. This floodplain area is within Shoreland Zoning jurisdiction, and should all be zoned Resource Protection.

Ground Water:

The availability of ground water depends upon geologic resources. Some areas are more optimum as ground water supplies than others. The ability of a spring or well to supply water varies with the type of material the water must pass through to enter the ground water and the storage space available to accumulate large volumes.

The issues associated with groundwater are the quantity (yield) and quality of the source. In Farmingdale, as most of Maine, quantity – for residential and most commercial uses – is adequate. The quality is a function of pollution potential from a variety of sources. Permeable soil material allows pollutants to enter the groundwater. Many soils in Farmingdale are susceptible enough so that we should closely monitor land use activities that have the potential to spill toxic or hazardous chemicals into the ground (e.g. petroleum products, solvents).

Prime ground water resources in Farmingdale do not appear to be extensive. Most of the town is overlain by till and marine silts. The location of the silt and clay in the eastern portion of town corresponds to the extent of the public water system, avoiding potential water supply problems in densely developed areas of town. Till lies primarily west of the Turnpike where residents rely upon private well supplies. One small portion of the town, lying between the river and Maine Avenue, north of Second Street, is the only mapped “Significant Aquifer” in town.

There are no public water supply sources from groundwater identified in Farmingdale. (Jamie Pond is a surface water supply.) Public Water Supply wells are located far enough outside of Farmingdale that no buffer area influences the town.

Farmingdale Soils:

Kennebec County is mapped with a “medium-intensity” survey. The attached map specifically identifies soil types that are either ideal for development, or unsuitable for development. The existence of small, scattered patches of a different soil in an area of one dominant soil type makes it impractical to map each one precisely on a county-wide scale. Therefore, each mapping unit contains inclusions of soils other than the designated soil type. They are generally small areas of varying slope or differing soils type.

This situation does not invalidate the use of the medium-intensity soil survey on a town-wide level for land use planning. The map gives a generalized picture of the kinds of soils and associated quality to be found throughout town. This can be useful to the Planning Board, a resident or a developer in evaluating the possible suitability or limitation of a site for a particular use. The actual development of a site, however, does require an on-site soil survey that does a better job of determining soil suitability.

Wildlife Habitat and Critical Natural Areas:

We presently retain sufficient wildlife travel corridors, even in the largely built-up areas east of the Maine Turnpike, to maintain a variety of the wildlife indigenous to the area. When

mapped over time, however, we see that the corridors are getting narrower and more fragmented. This is especially true east of the Turnpike, and along the river. It is important that we maintain what we now have by identification of these corridors, deer wintering areas, waterfowl areas, etc.

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife have identified deer Wintering Areas. In Farmingdale, they are located in several blocks south of Northern Avenue and south of Hutchinson Pond, and in one, large block north of Litchfield Road where Maple Street intersects. (See Map)

IFW has also identified waterfowl and wading bird habitat. There are few large wetlands in Farmingdale, so habitat areas are limited. The best waterfowl habitat is to be found in the marshes surrounding Hutchinson Pond, and also adjacent to Jamie Pond. There are a few smaller habitats to the north of Litchfield Road, straddling the Hallowell boundary. There should also be some habitat areas located in the immediate vicinity of the Kennebec River, but these do not show up on the maps as either inland or coastal habitat.

Beginning with Habitat, a program promoting the planning and preservation of valuable wildlife habitat, has supplied information and maps to the town. There are no critical natural areas or endangered species on record in Farmingdale. *Beginning with Habitat* did identify large blocks of undeveloped land in Farmingdale, as potential habitat areas of value. Six blocks, identified on the Map of Undeveloped Habitat Blocks, are listed below as they are the larger more significant blocks still intact:

- 189 acres located south of the Farmingdale/Hallowell line running almost to Bowman Street, lying primarily south and west of Hayford Heights, and including portions of the golf course.
- 157 acres north of Hall-Dale High School, including Vaughn Woods in Hallowell.
- 273 acres south of Northern Avenue across from Peacock Road, including parts of Gardiner and West Gardiner.
- 2,906 acres south of Northern Avenue, west of the Maine Turnpike to the Litchfield Road, including a portion of West Gardiner. Includes Waterfowl/Wadingbird Habitat and Deer Wintering areas of Statewide Significance.
- 924 acres bounded by the Maine Turnpike in the east, to the Litchfield Road in the west, south of Maple Street to north of Bowman Street and Northern Avenue.
- 2,119 acres east of the Farmingdale/Manchester line to west of the Litchfield Road, running south of the Hallowell line to the Farmingdale/West Gardiner line, plus a small section located in West Gardiner.

Not identified by BWH, but of value because of its location, is the largely-undeveloped strip of shoreline along the Kennebec River. This provides valuable riparian habitat and a travel corridor for river-based wildlife.

Chapter 6: The Transportation System

The transportation system is a critical cog in the development of Farmingdale and the region. A good transportation system supports economic development and growth. But public transportation facilities are one of the most visible and expensive services of government. In fact, the costs of maintaining the system are shared by the town, state, and federal governments.

The Road System:

The road system is the largest single component of the transportation structure. According to E-911 street maps, the road network in town consists of 103 separately-named roads, extending for more than 35 miles. About nine miles of private roads are included in the E-911 system, even though the public has no maintenance responsibilities for them. (I-95 is not included.)

Some roads are in fact state roads, for purposes of maintenance or ownership. These are classified according to the role they play in moving traffic, and – more importantly – by who pays for their maintenance. Their mileage in Farmingdale, and their classification include the following:

- Maine Ave (Route 201), 2.51 miles, arterial highway. All maintenance performed by the state.
- Litchfield Road, 2.6 miles, major collector. Winter maintenance by the Town, repaving and improvements by the state.
- Maple Street, 2.2 miles, minor collector. Winter maintenance by the Town. Costs for improvements shared by Town and State.
- Northern Ave., 4.7 miles, minor collector. Winter maintenance by the Town. Costs for improvements shared by Town and State.

Maine Avenue (Route 201) is highly important to the state, which is reflected in higher construction and access standards, and the fact that the state pays for all maintenance and improvements. Litchfield Road, Maple Street, and Northern Ave. are all important on a local level, which is why the Town pays a larger share of maintenance costs. These roads are sometimes referred to as “state aid,” meaning that the state pays a portion of their overall costs.

I-95, the Maine Turnpike, bisects the town, but does not provide access. Therefore, it is not discussed as a part of the local system.

Well-used local roads are: Almar St. (0.54 miles), Blaine Road (0.80), Bowman St. (1.81), Park St. (1.40), and Sheldon St. (0.48).

Maine DOT keeps track of traffic counts on the roads within its jurisdiction and others as necessary. Most recording stations are only counted every second- or third-year. Table 1, below, shows traffic counts within Farmingdale, 2001 compared to 1991:

Table 1: Historical Traffic Volumes

Station	2001 AADT	1991 AADT	Annual change
Maine Ave., north of Northern Ave.	17,210	17,440	- 0.1
Maine Ave., north of Park St.	16,660	17,150	- 0.3
Blaine Rd., north of Bowman St.	720	730	- 0.1
Bowman St., west of Maine Ave.	810	790	0.25
Northern Ave., west of Maine Ave.	2,540	3,150	- 2.2

Source: Maine Dept. of Transportation

According to the Table, traffic volumes in Farmingdale have remained relatively constant during the ten years 1991-2001. This is good news from the perspective of congestion and maintenance costs. In contrast is the Litchfield Road. There are no traffic counts on the segment in Farmingdale, but a counting station in West Gardiner indicates traffic growth of about 3 percent per year. This is probably the result of growth in West Gardiner, Monmouth, and Litchfield, but may also be travellers trying to avoid existing congestion on Maine Ave.

Maine Avenue:

Maine Avenue carries a relatively large amount of traffic for a two-lane highway. The count of 17,000 AADT (Average Annual Daily Traffic in 2002) indicates that the highway is functioning almost at capacity. The addition of the large number of access points exacerbates capacity and safety issues. Congestion is common during heavy traffic hours, with slowing and turning traffic creating unsuitable conditions.

Unsafe conditions are indicated by high crash rates. The DOT monitors accident data and has created a listing of “High Crash Locations (HCL).” These are areas where there have been more crashes than would be normal, considering the number of cars, including at least eight crashes in the past three years.

All three of Farmingdale’s High Crash Locations are located along Maine Ave. The first is at the intersection of Maine Ave. and Northern Ave. The second is between Kennebec Drive and Hill Street. The third is between First Street and Second Street. The fact that two out of three HCL are *between* intersections rather than *at* intersections, suggests that crashes are taking places at driveways instead .

Another High Crash Location is located where Maple Street intersects Maine Ave. Though technically in Hallowell, this intersection serves a lot of Farmingdale residents and

businesses, including the Hall-Dale High School and Middle School. Data indicates that this is the most severe of the crash locations in the area.

Reconstruction of Maine Ave. is now underway. Far from being a simple repaving, we are looking at relocation of driveways, power poles, and street lights, new sidewalks, and a center left turn lane for protections from turning traffic. This project should ease some of the safety and congestion problems. It is expected to cost about \$3 million, with Phase One scheduled for completion in November, 2005.

While these improvements may help to reduce safety problems in the short-term, they will not reduce the total volume of traffic and may in fact increase it over the long term. Continued development of the street commercially will also contribute traffic and more conflict points, unless carefully planned. There is no room for further expansion, and few options for diversion, so it is up to us to do the best we can to prevent future problems with traffic flow and safety.

Local Roads:

The Town has ownership of a number of Town Ways, and also maintenance responsibility on state collector roads. The total comes to about 26.6 miles, for snowplowing purposes.

Town roads are in generally good condition, with very few areas of poor road condition or unpaved. The Town has an elected Road Commissioner. Since the annual budget for town roads is well over \$300,000, this is no small task. The town contracts out maintenance duties, such as paving and plowing. All projects estimated at over \$5,000 are required to go out to bid, by town ordinance, and the Road Commissioner oversees the contractor.

The town owns little road maintenance equipment and no facilities. Most services and materials used for road improvements are supplied by the contractor.

There are several small bridges in town, all managed by the DOT. According to the available information, all bridges in town are in good condition.

Other Transportation Elements:

The vast majority of the transportation system is a road network and private vehicles. Farmingdale has very little access to alternative transportation, but there are alternatives available in the region.

In many areas, the principal alternative to travel by private vehicle is travel by public transit. Bus service is available in areas where the population is higher density. KVCAP services the Kennebec County area with general-purpose bus service. In the past, KVCAP has tried to connect Augusta and Gardiner with scheduled service, with stops in Farmingdale. The

route was never profitable, however. KVCAP bus service is available on demand for elderly, disabled, or otherwise-handicapped persons.

Carpooling or vanpooling is another alternative, which reduces the traffic counts. Carpooling may be an informal arrangement between co-workers to share the driving, or it may be organized into park-and-ride lots and computerized ride matching. According to the 2000 Census, 11 percent of the workforce in Farmingdale did carpooling, which is about average for the State. Most of it must be informal, because there are no designated park-and-ride lots in town. There are lots located in Randolph and Gardiner.

The nearest airport is Augusta's State Airport, about six miles north. The airport offers limited scheduled passenger service. However, for most people, the Portland Jetport, 50 miles to the south, is preferable for passenger service. General aviation is also available at Augusta.

A rail line runs between Maine Avenue and the riverbank through Farmingdale. It is owned by the State. It was recently leased to a private operator, Maine Eastern Railroad, headquartered out of Bath, but there is little to no activity at the moment. There are no sidings in Farmingdale.

The right-of-way of the rail line is now used partially for the Kennebec River Rail Trail. This bike and pedestrian path, when finished, will generally follow the alignment of the railroad from Gardiner to Augusta. A portion of the trail in Farmingdale, from Hill Street south, is already completed and used regularly, but the continuous corridor is not in place. Some of the trail will co-exist with Maine Avenue, following its reconstruction. Expected completion date for the trail is 2006. *The rail trail offers possibilities for recreation as well as transportation, and could become an economic attraction with suitable planning and support.*

Sidewalks offer a short-distance transportation alternative. There are sidewalks along several interior streets in the urban portion of town. Along Maine Ave., sidewalks extend from Hill Street south, and will be installed with the DOT project from DNK Motors north, leaving a gap in between. The Public Opinion Survey completed for this plan indicated that 63 percent of the town favors a sidewalk on Maine Ave., with a strong preference for the west side. *Sidewalk construction is a part of the MDOT project, but a share of the cost must come from the Town.*

Chapter 7: Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation has historically been a matter of personal choice and endeavor. Most of us can remember being able to play in the street or ramble through open woods and fields without any regard for property. But more and more, private property is being posted, and more people are competing for less space. Now, recreation has become the responsibility of the community. Especially with regard to active (organized) recreation, the community must provide some level of facilities and organization.

Recreation and physical fitness has become a major activity in our lives and it is not surprising that Farmingdale is experiencing increased interest in these areas. Both passive and active recreation, as well as water-oriented recreation, have shown an upsurge in popularity. Especially along the Kennebec River, we can expect added interest and development pressure, due to the desire of people to enjoy the scenery and access the river for recreation.

Water Access:

The Kennebec River has been greatly improved in recent years, for most of its length, following the discontinuation of log driving, the elimination of mill wastes, treatment of municipal sanitary wastes, and removal of Edwards Dam. The Waterville-Gardiner stretch of river, in particular, has benefited remarkably by removal of the dam. The subsequent free flowing river has flushed substantial pollutants down the stream. The river now meets Class C water quality designation, greatly increasing its recreational potential. Increases in boating and fishing activities have already occurred.

Local access to the river is limited to the privately-owned Foggy Bottom Marina at present. The Town does own property between the railroad and the river, behind the Ferraiolo gravel pit. It is currently undeveloped. It could be left in its present state, for wildlife habitat and open space, or developed to include a picnic area, a rest stop for the rail trail, historical interpretive signage, or a nature walk and exercise trail. Though limited by the terrain abutting the river, it could also be used for a carry-in site for canoe or kayak launches. Any plans for development of this site, however, must be tempered by the potential impact on wildlife habitat and travel corridors. The Gardiner Boat Launch is a well-developed facility for access to the river, and is located less than a mile from Farmingdale.

There is limited public access to Jamie Pond through state-owned property on foot. Hutchinson Pond is only accessible, with landowner permission. The state owns much of the frontage on Jamie Pond, for conservation purposes. It is listed as a public water supply, but not currently used.

Passive Recreation:

Passive recreation including walking, riding, hunting, fishing, birding, cross-country skiing, and other pursuits that don't require an organized level of activity or facilities, has historically been a favorite pursuit of Farmingdale residents. There is plenty of opportunity these activities, on the side streets in the urban area, on the rail trail, and on the new sidewalks along Maine Avenue.

The Kennebec River Rail Trail is an attractive recreational facility, and will be more so when completed through to Augusta. Plans call for completion in 2006, part on the rail right-of-way, part adjacent to the highway. The off-road portion is currently available for both walking and biking. Long-term plans call for it to be a component of a trail network stretching to Florida. According to the survey, there is strong citizen support for the trail.

Organized Recreation:

There are additional opportunities for both passive and active recreation in Farmingdale, though few are actually administered by the Town. The Town annually contributes to many recreational activities (recreation program, Hall-dale youth sports teams, snowmobile club, seniors), but until recently has not owned any facilities or properties developed for recreation. The Town recently acquired Sheldon Street School. The property has a playground and softball field, but their use is not allowed due to lack of insurance while the town debates its future. *The disposition of the school, including the recreation facility, is currently under study by the town.*

Development of a community center has been talked about in town for some time. The school could provide such a structure if it were determined to be adaptable, or revenue from sale of the property could go towards a new community center.

The Hall-Dale High School-Middle School complex has a number of recreation facilities. Among them are a baseball field, track, soccer field, tennis courts and basketball courts. These facilities are open to the public when not in use by the students.

The Hayford Heights Community Club owns Wing Park, but it is open to the general public. There have been suggestions that the Town acquire the park from the club, so that it may be more extensively developed. Ideas include a playground and nature walk. The benefit to town ownership is that we could qualify for grants.

The Barnstormers Snowmobile Club is active in Farmingdale, maintaining and improving an extensive trail system. This system is completely dependant on arrangements with local property owners. Without the participation of these landowners, this trail system would be greatly reduced. While the in-town network does not contain any of the numbered trail system, it does connect to other trails out of town. The Town has in the past made annual contributions to the club.

Recreation Programs:

The Farmingdale Recreation Committee coordinates an 8-week Summer Recreation Program in conjunction with Hallowell, for youth in the community. The program includes swimming, arts and crafts, field sports, and basketball. Farmingdale youth can also participate in seasonal recreation programs offered through the school or other towns, such as basketball, softball, and soccer.

There is limited opportunity for adult and senior recreation through the town. There are some adult education programs offered by SAD 16, and others available in Manchester, Gardiner, and Maranacook. The Town is annually asked to support Senior Spectrum, a facility and program for older citizens located in Hallowell. But we recognize the growing need to expand programs in sports and fitness for older adults, in the face of the aging baby boom.

Private Recreation Facilities:

There are a good number of private commercial recreation facilities in town. The Kennebec Heights Golf Club has an 18-hole course situated right adjacent to the urban part of town.

The Foggy Bottom Marina provides a private marina, boat sales, and campground. Farmingdale Kayak and Canoe Rentals provide water-based recreation. The KV Health Club provides indoor recreation facilities.

Chapter 8: Government and Public Services

A large element of comprehensive planning is the evaluation of local government and its services. Our purpose is to identify and plan for the services demanded by taxpayers. Our goal is to do it with the most efficient long-term use of tax dollars on these services.

Through comprehensive planning, we can predict the needs of an aging population, or increasing demands on existing facilities. We can avoid costly, last-minute decisions and find alternative funding that may save tax money. Not only can we plan to save money, we can predict the effects of the rate and pattern of development to delay or avoid some expenditures altogether.

A comprehensive plan can also shed some light on major local issues, such as Maine Avenue improvements, choices for the Sheldon Street School, and Farmingdale's form of government. Though the plan is not the forum for decisions on these issues, it can help the town make better choices based on more information.

Education:

The largest single expenditure in the local budget, public school education is a function over which municipal government has little control. However, the quality of education and capacity of the school system does have an influence on the overall growth and well-being of the town.

Farmingdale is in SAD 16, together with Hallowell. The result is a District enrollment that stands at about 839 (2003), including tuition students from Chelsea and Dresden (short-term arrangement). Farmingdale enrollment trends (table 1) show that enrollment levels are slightly declining, consistent with trends in the region. Enrollment went from 545 in 1980 to 467 in 1990, to 489 in 2000 and 486 in 2003. Since Hallowell's enrollment dropped even faster, Farmingdale's proportion of overall district enrollment went from 48.8 percent in 1980 to 57.9 percent in 2003.

Table 1: Farmingdale School Enrollment Trends

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>
Elementary	362	279	- 23	335(+20%)	344(+ 3%)	311(-10%)
Secondary	183	141	- 23	132(- 6%)	132(0%)	178(+35%)
TOTAL	545	420	- 23	467(+11%)	476(+ 2%)	489(+ 3%)

Source: Me. Dept. of Education, April 1 Census

This is due partly to aging of the population out of its child-bearing years. Enrollments have fluctuated, rising in the 90's, after a steep drop 1980-85. A large swell of enrollment hit the elementary grades between 1985 and 1990, and the secondary grades 1995 to 2000. This group of "baby boom babies" is now departing.

The largest educational facility in the District is the Hall-dale High School and Middle School. It is located on Maple Street in Farmingdale. The school complex has been expanded over the years, with the result that some of the school is up-to-date, some is in need of significant improvement. It does have adequate capacity, though, in light of stable enrollments.

With the closing of the Sheldon Street School, Farmingdale elementary students are attending Hallowell Elementary School. This is a temporary solution, made possible by declining enrollments, and necessary by building problems at Sheldon Street. Construction has started on a new elementary school building on Winthrop Street in Hallowell, which will serve both communities adequately for the foreseeable future.

The relationship between enrollment, expenditures, state subsidies, housing prices and styles, and future building expansion needs is a very complicated one, not likely to be easily summarized. In general, the school district does its own facility planning. But the Farmingdale plan can create a better vision for school planners, as to the level of future growth in student populations, and where that growth is likely to occur.

Protective Services:

Fire Service:

The Farmingdale Fire Department is the most visible form of protective service in the community, and coordinates the delivery of emergency services such as medical care, disaster response, etc.

Perhaps the most important criteria for fire service is response time, especially so in rural areas. About three miles by road is generally considered the radius of effective response surrounding a station. Located on Maine Avenue adjacent to the town office, the main fire station can easily respond to calls in the urban area east of the Turnpike. This station shares extremely tight and cramped quarters with the town office, on a small site. Meeting space is limited, with the basement training facility below the 100-year flood level and parking at a premium. During the flooding of 1987, equipment had



to be relocated, since the station itself was cut off from most of town by floodwaters. The garage itself has two bays, and was built in 1956.

A branch station located on Litchfield Road provides initial response coverage for the rural areas. This station is basically a one bay garage with two trucks squeezed into it. It is located on private property, and too close to the busy road. There is no room for storage, training, or servicing the vehicles. None of the newer trucks would be able to fit into the garage. The good news is that the department is working on a donation of property nearby, on which a new station could be built.

The fire department is staffed by 25 volunteers (who are paid a per-call stipend) and led by a fire chief, who is appointed by the selectmen. The department has mutual aid agreements with Pittston, Randolph, Gardiner, West Gardiner, and Hallowell.

Rolling stock available to the department includes:

- 1978 GMC Model 6500 Pumper, with 750 gallon pump. In Fair condition, due to replaced in five years.
- 1994 Ford Model LS8000 Pumper/tanker, with 1,450 gallon tank. Expected replacement in 2025.
- 2001 Freightliner Model FL70 Pumper, with 1,000 gallon tank. Expected replacement in 2034.
- 1967 Military Jeep 4x4 Forestry Truck, with portable pump and 210 gallon tank. Used only for woods and grass fires, may last another ten years.

Other equipment includes a 15 kilowatt generator, housed at the Litchfield Road station, a thermal imaging camera, a positive pressure vent fan, two 300 gpm pumps, and CO monitors.

The town enjoys an ISO rating of “5” in the areas served by public water supply lines, and a “9” in other areas of the town. The ISO rating measures the quality of fire service for the purposes of insurance; a better rating means lower insurance premiums. The lower the number, the better. In addition to hydrants on the public water system, the department maintains six dry hydrants and pond access in the rural areas.

Emergency Services:

Dispatching for all public safety services is handled through the Sheriff’s department in Augusta. The Town completed its street addressing for the E-911 system, and is now fully prepared. Town satisfaction with this service is high.

Ambulance service is provided by Gardiner Fire Department through an agreement. Response time is good, and satisfaction with the service is high. Emergency medical patients are transported to MaineGeneral Hospital in Augusta. There are no trained EMTs available in town.

The Town is in the process of preparing a Civil/Emergency Preparedness Plan, which would address all forms of emergencies, from flooding to terrorist attack. The plan is expected to be in place within a year. The emergency relocation facility is designated to be Hall-Dale High School. There is a generator on site for emergency use, but not yet installed.

Law Enforcement:

Farmingdale police coverage is shared by county and state personnel. The nearest State Police barracks is in Augusta, as is the Sheriff's Office.

Farmingdale has a constable system, providing service not available from state or county police. The system includes 6 part-time constables, including four regular constables, the animal control officer and the truant officer. Constables are paid on a monthly stipend, plus vehicle allowance. Equipment, including weapons and radios, is owned by the Town. There is no office space available to the constables.

Constables receive regular training through the Criminal Justice Academy. However, their authority is limited, and any expansion of their mission would require additional expenses for time, equipment, and training.

Water And Waste Services:

Water Supply:

Public water supply in Farmingdale comes from two sources. The Gardiner Water District maintains a storage tank on Almar Street and the distribution lines through the majority of the urban area. The water system is not very old, and is in good condition. Major distribution lines are 8" or 10" in diameter (6" in a portion of Maine Avenue.) The Hallowell Water District provides service to the High School, and a portion of Blaine Road, and is tied in to Gardiner Water District on Maine Avenue. Hallowell's line extends 500' past the school down Maple Street.

The source of water for Gardiner's system is a wellfield in Gardiner. Hallowell's water source used to be Jamie Pond (now wells in Chelsea). In general, volume and pressure are good, though some of the higher elevations in Farmingdale suffer from pressure problems.

Under our current ordinances, new development is not required to hook into the public water supply system, even within the existing system area.

Wastewater:

Sanitary waste disposal in Farmingdale is provided through a system managed by the Town of Farmingdale. This system was installed in the 70's and 80's, partly in response to septic system failures in Hayford Heights. The system is in good condition, and well-maintained.

The sewer system extends through most of the urban area, ending on Northern Avenue at the trailer park, and on Bowman Street at Peacock Road. In both cases pump stations and force mains are required for a portion of the distance. Three other pump stations are located on the system. All are owned and maintained by the Town. The sewer line follows Maine Avenue as

far north as the Renaissance Gallery. Beyond that point, the owner of Orchard Park Apartments has paid for and owns an extension to Loudon Street.

Sanitary waste is directed to the treatment plant of the Gardiner Sanitary Treatment District. This plant has a secondary treatment capacity of 1,650,000 gallons per day in dry weather. The Town owns a percentage of the treatment plant, based on sewage volume estimates when the plant was constructed in 1971. The town is contributing only about half as much as original estimates, and discussions are under way to reallocate the treatment plant costs. Farmingdale's recent sewage flows have ranged between 164,000 and 255,000 gallons per day.

Even though the plant is only running at about 55 percent of capacity in dry weather, improvements are under way to improve its wet weather capacity. The plant can occasionally exceed its wet weather capacity due to stormwater flows and infiltration problems in Gardiner and Randolph. Farmingdale does not have any significant infiltration problems and there are no storm sewer tie-ins or combined sewer overflows (CSO) which could pollute the river.

Unlike the water system, new development within 150 feet of the public sewer system is required to tie in. A hookup fee is charged.

Solid Waste:

For the most part, residents are responsible for disposal of their own solid waste. Many use private haulers; some take waste directly to the Hatch Hill Landfill in Augusta. The Town has a contract for disposal at Hatch Hill, and private contractors are expected to deliver their waste there.

The town has, for the past several years, organized a Spring Cleanup (skipped in 2005). The purpose of the Spring Cleanup is to dispose of yard and bulky waste that would not ordinarily be taken along with household trash. The Town makes the arrangements, but homeowners are responsible for disposal costs.

Recycling is done through Hatch Hill or private contractors. In 2002, the recycling rate reported for the Hatch Hill Site was a respectable 40 percent, but there is no breakdown by town of that figure.

Municipal Property:

In addition to the facilities previously described, the Town owns and maintains several pieces of property, some of which have current uses, others not.

The Town owns three active cemeteries. They are located on Maine Avenue, Northern Avenue, and Litchfield Road. All are in good condition, and have adequate capacity and provisions for perpetual care for the foreseeable future.

The Town owns nine parcels of undeveloped land, ranging from .06 acres to 8.25 acres. Some of these are parcels acquired for drainage or buffer areas. The largest parcel is situated

east of the railroad grade, running down to the river. This is an undeveloped parcel, with potential as a recreational site. Potential uses for this parcel are discussed in Chapter 7.

The Town was recently ceded the old Sheldon Street School, relinquished by the School District. The property consists of five acres of land and a large school building. During the past year, the Town commissioned an analysis of the condition of the building. It demonstrated that it would be very expensive to preserve the structure and convert it to any municipal use. While it is possible that the structure could be utilized to meet the town's needs for office space, fire department, community center, library, or other uses, it may turn out to be more economical to sell the property and start anew.



Figure 2: former school on Sheldon Street

The Sheldon Street School Committee was formed by the selectmen, with the mission to draft a set of options and recommendations for the property. The committee will be meeting and soliciting public comment during 2005, with a report expected before the 2006 Town Meeting.

Municipal Governance:

Town government administrative services are provided out of the town office on Maine Avenue. (see figure 1, page 52.) The office is a 1,200 square foot, one-story brick structure, with a full, daylight basement. Built in 1956 and remodeled in the 1980's, it is in excellent structural condition, but fails to meet modern standards in several aspects. Administrative office space is insufficient. The amount of parking is marginal when meetings are held, though adequate for day-to-day business. The office itself as well as the meeting room in the basement is not handicapped accessible. The basement is below base flood level.

The purpose of local government is to provide services for its population, raise enough money to pay for those services and find the means to pay for them. To do this two things are necessary; (a) participation of the municipality's citizens, which provides the governing body

with the understanding of what the citizens require, and (b) a form of government that will enable the governing body to provide the services effectively and economically.

The Public Opinion Survey administered in 2004 gives a good indication of the way Farmingdale citizens feel toward their local government. They overwhelmingly praise the administration of the town and do not favor any change in the present form of government. A summary of pertinent questions is as follows:

Town operations are good:	63% agree
People have equal chance to make important decisions:	58%
People have chance to participate in town affairs:	78%
Town officials listen to citizens expressing needs:	52%
Town officials work well with businesses:	70%

When asked if it was time to change to another form of government only 33 percent agreed that change is needed.

In a separate question, residents were asked what form of government they would prefer, *if not the current one*. Respondents indicated the following:

Town Meeting-Selectman-Manager	41%
Town Meeting-Council	21%
Council-Manager	21%
Mayor-Council-Manager	17%

Two other options were offered as alternatives; neither was endorsed:

Enlarge Board of Selectmen	22%
Elect Selectmen by district	32%

This being the case, there is no citizen support for a change in our form of government at this time. We do have a need, however, for improvements in communications between Selectmen and town committees. Two areas of concern are: (1) the lack of direction or mandate given to ad hoc committees, and (2) the need for the Selectmen to receive periodic feedback from all committees. A more formal approach to these areas would help to improve communications and efficiency.

Fiscal Operation:

The table on page 53 contains a review of fiscal data for the six-year period beginning in 1998. It is taken from town audit reports. Several trends are evident from this table, that reflect upon the town fiscal capacity. First of all, the town has been very diligent in keeping the tax rate down. It reached a high of 17.8 mills in 2001, but dropped for two years since. This corresponds with a reduction in spending for public works. The town's overall spending, including education and county government tabs, rose each year, but was outpaced by the increase in property valuation.

Category	2003		2002		2001	
	Expenditure	% of total % increase	Expenditure	% of total % increase	Expenditure	% of total % increase
General Gov't.	\$213,810	7.7%	\$193,204	7.2%	\$178,379	6.7%
Public Safety	\$220,309	7.9%	\$210,849	7.9%	\$193,282	7.3%
Public Works	\$335,731	12.0%	\$368,820	13.8%	\$410,366	15.5%
Health/Sanitation	\$29,442	1.1%	\$29,442	1.1%	\$30,560	1.2%
Health/Welfare	\$8,142	0.3%	\$8,013	0.3%	\$8,629	0.3%
Comm. Dev't.	\$12,038	0.4%	\$8,684	0.3%	\$8,060	0.3%
Education	\$1,706,424	61.2%	\$1,631,655	61.0%	\$1,600,372	60.5%
County	\$132,694	4.8%	\$126,868	4.7%	\$117,318	4.4%
Recreation	\$28,969	1.0%	\$12,793	0.5%	\$22,992	0.9%
Unclassified	\$88,730	3.2%	\$83,827	3.1%	\$76,319	2.9%
Total	\$2,788,365	100.0%	\$2,674,155	4%	\$2,646,277	9%
Adjusted: 1998 \$	\$2,476,068		\$2,420,110	2%	\$2,453,099	7%
Local Valuation	\$105,294,559		\$103,617,049		\$97,840,470	-2%
Mill Rate	16.5		17		17.8	
Assessment	\$1,689,546		\$1,761,490		\$1,791,061	6%
State Valuation					#VALUE!	2%
Full Value Mill					17.21	
Category	2000		1999		1998	
	Expenditure	% of total % increase	Expenditure	% of total % increase	Expenditure	% of total % increase
General Gov't.	\$138,222	5.7%	\$168,123	7.7%	\$157,920	6.7%
Public Safety	\$189,060	7.8%	\$213,958	9.8%	\$179,108	7.6%
Public Works	\$348,564	14.4%	\$236,010	10.8%	\$521,551	22.2%
Health/Sanitation	\$31,678	1.3%	\$31,678	1.4%	\$31,678	1.3%
Health/Welfare	\$7,461	0.3%	\$19,088	0.9%	\$15,824	0.7%
Comm. Dev't.	\$5,074	0.2%	\$4,020	0.2%	\$4,032	0.2%
Education	\$1,474,079	60.7%	\$1,315,849	60.2%	\$1,257,360	53.5%
County	\$108,457	4.5%	\$104,160	4.8%	\$105,377	4.5%
Recreation	\$12,437	0.5%	\$21,674	1.0%	\$25,015	1.1%
Unclassified	\$112,574	4.6%	\$70,395	3.2%	\$53,080	2.3%
Total	\$2,427,606		\$2,184,955		\$2,350,945	
Adjusted: 1998 \$	\$2,286,805		\$2,125,961		\$2,350,945	
Local Valuation	\$99,649,034		\$98,692,765		\$97,739,613	
Mill Rate	17		16.25		15.5	
Assessment	\$1,694,033		\$1,603,757		\$1,514,964	

Another observation is the individual expenditure items. The single largest expenditure – over sixty percent of the total budget – is for education. That line item is the only one to show steady increases for each of the five periods illustrated in the table. Over that time, the education bill increased by about \$450,000. Coincidentally, that is the same amount that the municipal budget increased over that period. That means that the entire increase in municipal spending is attributable to the education bill – the municipal and county side of the ledger showed no net increase for five years. In inflation-adjusted dollars, the town has had to reduce its spending every year to hold the tax rate down in the face of school spending.

The increase in valuation is only one reason why property taxes have been relatively stable. Property taxes accounted for only 65 percent of total revenues in 2003. Other significant contributors included excise taxes (17 percent), state revenue sharing (9 percent), homestead exemption reimbursement (3 percent) and local road assistance (2 percent).

In 1998, property taxes accounted for 63 percent of all revenues, so there appears to have been a slightly increased burden on local property taxes. However, in 1998, we received a one-time FEMA reimbursement. Without that revenue spike, the property tax would have accounted for 69 percent of revenues.

The town balances revenues and expenditures through its general fund balance. In years when revenues exceed expenditures, we add to our balance; when the reverse happens, we draw from it. The general fund balance at the beginning of 1998 was \$499,000. At the end of 2003, it was \$615,000. That means that during the six-year period, on balance we have kept revenues ahead of expenses. The Maine Municipal Association recommends that towns keep between two and six months of expenditures in their balance, in order to weather cash flow and collection problems. Farmingdale's fund balance amounts to about 2 1/2 months.

The town is also in good shape in terms of total debt. A town is allowed to borrow up to a certain percentage of their valuation for specified purposes, but Farmingdale is well below that level in all areas. Other than a portion of SAD debt, the only outstanding debt of the town is a sewer bond, at \$599,000.

The Selectmen are currently working on a plan to shift the fiscal year to a July-June calendar, beginning in July, '06. Though this will cause some confusion and dislocation at first, it is expected to facilitate budgeting. Other entities, including the school district and the state, are already on that calendar.

Regional Service Delivery:

Many public services and facilities benefit from drawing on a regional base. A town of 3,000 cannot afford to provide as many services as we would like, but together with other towns can realize efficiencies and provide more for our dollar. Farmingdale has for many years taken advantage of participation in regional projects. This section summarizes those efforts.

The Kennebec River corridor generates many opportunities for regional cooperation. The river is the focus of the Kennebec-Chaudiere Trail, a regional organization dedicated to promoting tourism in the region. A new umbrella organization, the Kennebec River Historic Farmingdale Comprehensive Plan: Government and Public Services

Waterway, was formed by the 2004 legislature, for the purpose of enhancing and promoting the corridor's scenic, historic, and recreational attributes. Although this organization is not required to interact directly with towns along the river, some of its goals and Farmingdale's could overlap.

Loosely associated with the Kennebec River is the Rail Trail. As currently designed, the multi-use trail would extend from Gardiner to Augusta. But the trail itself is part of a growing network of recreational trails designated as the East Coast Greenway. When completed, the greenway will allow cyclists from the entire eastern seaboard to tour Maine through Farmingdale. The Town has contributed to development of the trail, which could bring later benefits to the region.

Farmingdale shares several facilities with other towns. The town is part of SAD 16 with Hallowell. The middle and high school are located on the town line, and serve both towns.

The road network is perhaps the most visible of shared facilities. Route 201 (Maine Avenue) is the most critical; It connects Augusta and Gardiner at the same time as acting as Farmingdale's principal commercial street. Even though the state is responsible for maintaining and improving the highway, the towns that share it have a lot to say about how it functions in their communities. Route 201 is to be improved in the near future, and Farmingdale has had good opportunity to work with DOT on design details. *Farmingdale and its neighbors should also be examining the impact of development along the highway, and how it, too, affects the function of the roadway.*

The Hallowell-Litchfield Road is another state responsibility. It is in the rural part of Farmingdale, but experiencing traffic increases. As development and traffic grow, this road will emerge as a potential problem. Development in Farmingdale is only part of the problem; West Gardiner is growing more quickly. And the road is known as an alternate route to Augusta from Litchfield, which is also growing.

The urban area of Farmingdale is served by two public water supply systems. The southern portion is served by Gardiner Water District. The Hallowell Water District serves a much smaller, northern portion. Both districts have adequate reserve capacity, which means that primary lines could be extended to developable areas of Farmingdale, at developer's expense.

The Gardiner Sanitary Treatment District, with Farmingdale as a member, runs the treatment plant in Gardiner. The plant has adequate reserve capacity, which means that additional connections may be made. However, partly because of the topography of Farmingdale, it would be more difficult to extend sewer than water. The town has a sewer committee, responsible for the collection system and pump stations in Farmingdale.

The town currently utilizes Augusta's Hatch Hill Landfill for its solid waste service. The landfill is located in eastern Augusta, so that any individuals who wish to utilize it must drive a ways. The landfill provides for all types of solid waste disposal; however, some towns in this area have expressed dissatisfaction with the level of recycling at the landfill and are meeting to determine a better alternative. Farmingdale is participating in these discussions.

Farmingdale does not have its own library, but residents are permitted to use the Gardiner Public Library and Hubbard Free Library (Hallowell). The Town appropriates funds each year for this purpose.

The Town has a coordinated emergency service with several entities. Dispatching is handled through the county sheriff, as is some police coverage. Our ambulance service comes from Gardiner. We have mutual aid fire protection with several neighboring towns. We participate with the county emergency preparedness efforts.

Chapter 9: Land Use And Development

The development patterns in Farmingdale have an important impact on many other sections of the plan, including housing, economic development, natural resources, and transportation. They evolve from our historical perspective, and, as they grow, generate demands for public services. As such, the land use discussion, and especially the plan for future land use, is the “glue” that holds the rest of the plan together.

The discussion of land use patterns is unique to every town. In some, most of the development is in subdivisions, in others, it is all single lots in the rural area; some towns have a dense urban area, others have several small villages. In the case of Farmingdale, the discussion should focus in three areas: The Maine Avenue Corridor, the developing area between Maine Avenue and the Maine Turnpike, and the rural area west of the Turnpike.

Farmingdale is a small town in geographic extent, with a land area of approximately 6,400 acres. The size of the town becomes significant when considering the area’s population growth and development, because Farmingdale does not have the land resource available that many of its neighbors have to accommodate people and structures. The impact of fifty new homes on Farmingdale’s overall land resource is much greater than on a town three times its size.

Today, the town offers both urban and rural residential environments bounded by thousands of acres of privately owned open space. Farmingdale in particular, due to its size, its proximity to employment, and current installation of sewers, needs to address the issues of maintaining varied residential environments, protecting farmland from development, providing recreational areas for residents and setting aside valued natural areas before ongoing, unplanned construction activities lessen the town’s options by default.

Undeveloped And Open Land:

At one time, agriculture activities defined the landscape of Farmingdale. The visual evidence is the few, widely scattered farmsteads throughout the area above the river. But now, much of the farming involves either the pasturing of cattle or haying, and there are fewer, larger ownerships. Agricultural land and reverting fields are especially prone to developmental pressures. In a time when farming is not an especially lucrative occupation, the burden of taxes and lure of high prices for house lots places existing agricultural uses at a disadvantage in competition for other uses. The loss is two-fold: land is no longer available to produce food, and the rural nature of the town gradually disappears.

Currently, woodland by far predominates among land use types in Farmingdale. As the economy changed and people left farming, fields gradually grew up with brush and reverted back to the land's initial state – forests. Currently, about 2/3 of the town is covered by woodland. The ratio is much smaller east of the Turnpike, larger west of the Turnpike. Some of it is under active forest management, which implies long-term land use stability, and a small proportion in the northwest corner of town (Jamie Pond watershed) belongs to the State.

Development In Farmingdale:

Farmingdale has one of the highest population densities in Kennebec County, due to its small size and urban development along Maine Ave. A majority of Farmingdale's development lies to the east of the Turnpike. The remainder of town evidences widely scattered roadside development, mostly on existing town roads.

Part of the work to update the town's Comprehensive Plan involved a survey of land use by car to map existing uses. The survey showed that, while there is a smattering of roadside and single-lot development, most of Farmingdale's growth over the past two decades has been in multi-family complexes or small subdivisions, and most has been along Maine Avenue and east of the Turnpike.

We also reviewed building permits issued since 1995 for new homes or business. The review showed that during that period 93 of 142 new housing units (66 Percent) have been located east of the Turnpike, and 10 of 13 new commercial buildings. West of the Turnpike, 10 of the 49 new homes came out of one subdivision (Stone Ridge View), and at least 7 were apparently family transfers (homes built by children on the parents' land). Two of the three commercial buildings in the rural area were storage buildings. (It should be noted that not all building permits end up as completed homes. Several were never built).

Farmingdale consists of three distinct areas:

Maine Avenue:

Maine Avenue runs the length of Farmingdale, north to south. From Maple Street to Kennebec Drive, encompassing a 500 foot swath on the land side, and the river to the east, the road is characterized by mixed commercial and high-density residential development on both sides of the road, as well as intersections with side streets yielding significant traffic. The blend of commercial access and side streets with an arterial road carrying around 17,000 cars per day makes for a somewhat chaotic situation – not conducive to additional development. The entire length of Maine Avenue is now served by public water supply and the sanitary sewer system.

Improvements to Maine Avenue, scheduled for the near future, are likely to reduce conflict points and increase safety and drivability of the road. This could, in turn, lead to pressure for more intensive development. No single form of development has asserted itself along the road. Local stores and services mix with highway-oriented development and restaurants. Large-scale development is constrained by the railroad tracks on the river side of the road, and topography on the land side.

Maine Avenue from Kennebec Drive south to Northern Avenue, including a 250' corridor on the west side, and all lands on the eastside to the Kennebec River, has a slightly different nature.

South of Kennebec Drive to the east, the road is constrained by the Rail Trail and the railroad tracks, which sometimes run right up against the road. A portion of the eastside is also in the Kennebec floodplain, and development is confined to little patches of high ground, e.g. near the town office and Foggy Bottom Marina. The higher ground west of the road is almost completely built out, with businesses, apartments, and a row of imposing, historic homes; many now converted to multi-family or commercial use.

Rural Area:

The western 3/4 of Farmingdale consists of a great expanse of undeveloped land broken by a few roads and roadside homes. The few businesses that are in this area are home businesses, agriculture/forestry businesses, or construction contractors, primarily employing family members. The principal roads are the Hallowell-Litchfield Road, Maple Street, and Northern Ave. The Litchfield Road is fairly well-traveled, whereas the other roads are relatively quiet.

Housing construction on individual roadside lots is slowly affecting rural roads. Such development, if it increases, could increase traffic hazards due to the number of driveways entering major roads. Subdivisions in the rural area, which to date have been limited to one recent one near the Hallowell town line and a few three-lot clusters, have a more visible and immediate impact, but in the long run may be a more efficient use of the land.

The challenge is to encourage and guide development in such a way as to maintain the town's existing urban/rural distinction without infringing on landowners' property rights, provided that consideration is given to protection of the towns' lake watersheds and other environmental assets.

Land Between Maine Avenue and the Turnpike:

The largest concentration of residents in Farmingdale is located in this area. Many of the roads and homes were built as Hayford Heights and Windward Acres, two 60's-era developments that account for much of the development pattern of the area. Other recent subdivisions in the area include Schoolhouse Crossing, a cul-de-sac off of Maple Street; Harwood Estates, off the Blaine Road; and Wedgewood Drive, off of Dale Street Extension. Maple Street, Bowman Street, and Northern Avenue are east-west collectors, heavily built-up at their eastern ends, and Blaine Road connects Maple and Bowman, north-to-south.

The extension of public sewer service in the late-70's, early 80's alleviated a growing problem of septic system failures in the area and also allowed for higher residential densities. Since then, a good number of small apartment complexes and multi-family structures have been erected. Orchard Park, Timberland Apartments, and Kennebec Drive (four-plexes) are among them. These all have immediate access onto Maine Avenue.

The town sewer system serves much of the older developed area, including Maine Avenue south to Northern Avenue. The sewer line extends west up Bowman Street to Peacock Road, and up Northern Ave. to the mobile home park just beyond Peacock Road. While the sewer line could be extended further along Northern Avenue Beyond the Barry Farm, up Bowman Street and along the Blaine Road, this does not seem to be feasible in the near future, due to the cost to provide services to an area of lower housing density.

The Gardiner Water District owns a water storage tank on Almar Street in Hayford Heights. Public water supplies most of the area also served by public sewer, and ties in along Maine Avenue with the Hallowell Water District. Hallowell's water service extends up Maple Street about 500' beyond the high school, and part way down Blaine Road. New development in town is not required to connect to water service; Sewer hookup is mandatory if within 150' of an existing line.

Punctuating the center of this area is the 18-hole Kennebec Heights Golf Course. This course provides valuable recreation and open space in the middle of an urbanizing area, but also presents a bit of a barrier to natural expansion.

The most logical extension of development within this area would be up Bowman Street and Blaine Road. If the vacant parcels along these roads were to be developed, we could expect to see more developments of the type of Harwood Estates. The density of any new development would be contingent on the availability of town sewer.

Land Use Regulations:

State and local laws regulate development in Farmingdale. Separate laws govern different types and aspects of development, permitting the town to impose a different level of regulation in response to different impacts. For the most part, however, most local ordinances are state-mandated.

The town has a Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, imposed according to state requirements. This ordinance regulates all development within 250 feet of a water body (75' for streams). Zoning restrictions range from Resource Protection (most new development prohibited) to General Development (already developed). In part due to the inaccessibility of the two ponds and the Kennebec River (steep banks), Shoreland Zoning does not have a major impact on development in town.

The town also has Subdivision Regulations pursuant to the state Subdivision Law. These regulations establish a process and standards under which the planning board permits subdivisions. This regulation has produced some high quality subdivisions; however, it is dated and needs to be revised to conform to changes in the subdivision law and modern engineering practice.

All road-building, including subdivisions, must conform to the Town's Street Design and Construction Standards. This ordinance sets engineering and procedural standards. The existence of this ordinance ensures a high standard of road construction; it has been recently updated.

The Town also has a mandated Floodplain Management Ordinance, restricting development within its floodplains. The major impact of this ordinance is along Maine Avenue adjacent to the river. The Town's Flood Program is reviewed periodically by the state and is currently in approved status.

The Town has adopted a Building Ordinance. This Ordinance requires a permit prior to construction of any new structures over a specified value. It also requires a planning board permit for mobile home parks. The ordinance contains dimensional standards as follows: minimum lot size of 3/4 acre; minimum road frontage of 150'; minimum shoreline frontage of 100'; minimum set back from a public road of 30' from the lot line or 50' from the pavement; minimum set back from other lot lines of 20'.

The Ordinance does not set other standards or criteria for a building permit. Examples of areas in which standards could be established are: construction standards for residential buildings, for fire safety, structural quality or appearance; site development standards for commercial buildings, to ensure adequate parking and access, protection from noise, air pollution, and other environmental impacts, and neighborhood compatibility.

The Shoreland Zoning Ordinance (imposed) and Floodplain Management Ordinance limit development geographically over a very small portion of the town. The state's Comprehensive Planning Law requires us to look at growth throughout the town in a comprehensive manner. *We must determine areas of town where new growth should be encouraged and other areas where it should be discouraged.* Our choices should be based on environmental limitations, existing development patterns, and availability of public services. These areas need to be enforced by regulation or incentive.

Land Use Regulation in Adjoining Towns:

Because Farmingdale is sandwiched between two cities and two rapidly-growing suburbs (Manchester and West Gardiner), we must also look at the land use activities and regulations beyond our borders. The extent to which neighboring towns regulate development has a direct impact on Farmingdale. One school of thought is that Farmingdale gets the development that would not be allowed in Gardiner or Hallowell, because its rules are less restrictive. The size of lots, setbacks, and other conditions on development, especially in areas adjacent to town boundaries, may have unanticipated impacts across town lines. For example, if we encouraged development at a much higher density than Hallowell on Maple Street, impacts on traffic and other areas would be felt in Hallowell. The reverse is true as well.

The Town of West Gardiner has a townwide minimum lot size of 1.5 acres – appropriate to its generally-rural environment. Manchester has a two-acre minimum lot size in the area adjoining Farmingdale.

Gardiner has a sophisticated zoning strategy. In the immediate vicinity of Route 201, the area is zoned Central Business District. The CB District has a minimum lot size of 7,500 square feet, and permits most forms of residential, excepting community living facilities and mobile

home parks. It also allows most forms of commercial development, except for land-consumptive uses, such as resource extraction and lumber yards.

A portion of the city adjoining Northern Avenue is zoned High Density Residential, with a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet. The remainder of land adjoining Farmingdale is zoned Residential Growth, with lot sizes of 15,000 square feet on sewer, 40,000 square feet without sewer. In both these districts, commercial uses are prohibited except home occupations.

To further regulate the impacts of commercial and residential development, Gardiner’s ordinance has extensive development design standards. These standards allow the city to dictate requirements for screening, signs, driveways, etc.

The City of Hallowell also has a complex land use regulation with several districts. The area bounding Farmingdale east of the high school is designated moderate-density residential. This allows a minimum lot size of 6,500 square feet and a maximum of 4 multi-family units per structure. The district allows most forms of residential uses and home occupations, but does not allow mobile home parks or commercial development, except office uses right on Water Street.

West of the Turnpike, Hallowell’s District is called Rural-Farm. The minimum lot size is one acre. The district permits all forms of residential uses and a limited number of commercial uses, including farming and forestry, home occupations, restaurants, and recreational facilities.

Public Opinion:

In determining whether to plan for changes in the development patterns of town, we must enlist the support of residents. A new land use plan will involve not just conceptual patterns on a map, but acceptance on the ground. This will affect the residents and landowners.

There are many options for land use strategies, and we want to choose those with strongest public support. We asked several questions on the public opinion survey regarding land use and regulations. Residents were invited to “agree strongly,” “disagree strongly,” or something in between. Of the 14 questions we asked, *every one of them received strong support, none less than 7 in 10*. Responses are summarized in Table 1, below:

Table 1: Responses to Land Use Questions, 2004 Public Opinion Survey

<u>Suggestion</u>	<u>“Strongly Agree”</u>	<u>“ Agree”</u>
Need for Land Use Planning	32 %	47 %
Zoning Improves Areas	27 %	51 %
Larger Lot Requirements in Ag. Areas	40 %	30 %
Town Roads built to State Standards	41 %	39 %
Restrict Single-wide Mobile Homes to Parks	35 %	44 %
Regulations to Separate Land Uses	38 %	47 %
Regulations to Control Development Density	38 %	44 %
Regulations to Protect Community Character	41 %	45 %
Restrictions on Mobile Homes	29 %	42 %
Restrictions on Manufacturing	47 %	37 %

Restrictions on Retail/commercial Locations	44 %	40 %
Restrict Communication Towers	42 %	47 %
Town control Sand and Gravel	40 %	43 %
Restrict Development on Floodplains	50 %	39 %

Residents supported both the concept and the regulatory part of land use planning. The strongest support was expressed for “restrictions on manufacturing,” “restrict development in the floodplain,” and “restrictions on retail and commercial business locations.” Good support was also expressed for “regulation to control development density,” and “regulation to protect community character.” The least support (but still many more supporters than detractors) was for “restrictions on mobile homes,” and “larger lots in agricultural areas.”

There were no questions that asked residents specifically where they would like to see the town’s growth occur, but plenty of evidence that respondents wanted to preserve the small town character they now enjoy, while also preserving rural lands, environmental assets, and historic areas.

Taken as a “big picture,” Farmingdale’s attitudes are fairly consistent: people live here because they like the quality of life and small town character, and they are willing to do what it takes to keep it that way.

Chapter 10: Land Use Plan

A Land Use Plan, in its simplest form, consists of a map and set of strategies for managing development in growth and rural areas. Generally, growth areas are extensions of current growth patterns (assuming no environmental constraints), and rural areas are set up to protect natural resources and rural assets (farms and working woodlands.)

The intent of the growth area is that most of the new development in a town will take place in it. This presumes that the town makes a determination of how much growth will occur. A town wishing faster growth will designate a larger growth area; a town wishing slower growth, a smaller one. The growth area does not have to be exactly the same size as the expected growth; generally, it is double or triple the expected growth.

We may find that there is more area suitable for development than we need. The state also allows us to designate “transitional areas.” These are areas where growth is not to be encouraged, even though it is not anticipated to be necessary in the next few years.

In a town like Farmingdale where the land use pattern is already fairly well established, we may choose to plan for different kinds of growth in different areas. For example, we may decide that commercial growth really belongs along Maine Avenue; that lots served by public sewer and water are best suited for multi-family development, whereas single-family homes may be more appropriate for large lots not served by public sewer. We will need to implement these ideas in different ways, for example by setting standards for redevelopment of existing commercial properties, for allowing conversions of older homes, or planning for sewer and water extensions into unserved areas. Instead of one “growth area,” you might have several, labeled “mixed development,” “urban residential,” and “residential.”

Designation of Growth and Rural Areas:

Drawing a line around the existing developed areas of Maine Ave., its feeder streets, and Hayford Heights, we can see that there is very little vacant land available for growth. In many cases, new development has replaced pre-existing buildings or uses. Therefore, the type of growth most likely to occur is technically the same use, but more intensive. Commercial buildings are expanded or replaced, large homes are subdivided into apartments, lots are split in half. From a land use perspective, this is a more efficient way of developing than consuming virgin land, but from a public services perspective, we need to ensure that roads, sewer and water, and other services can absorb the growth.

The existing built-up area will not be able to accept much more new growth without losing its existing character, even though that is where most of our previous growth has occurred.

On the other hand, we would like to avoid too much growth leapfrogging across the Turnpike, because of the added demands on public services and consumption of natural resources.

The urban growth pattern would logically expand east of the Turnpike, on roads such as Northern Avenue, Bowman Street, Maple Street, or Blaine Road. Bowman Street, Maple Street, and Blaine Road form a loop, which could make for efficient future extension of sewer and water if development densities permit, and road connection options. A growth area defined by access to these three roads would provide access to a number of undeveloped parcels, while minimizing the impact on Maine Avenue or our rural resources.

New growth would certainly be welcome in the built-up section of town and Maine Avenue, but because it would consist mostly of in-fill or redevelopment, would be governed by whatever strategies would be adopted to protect neighboring properties from adverse impacts.

The identification and extent of the growth areas must be based on a level of projected growth. Our three growth scenarios allow for somewhere between five and fifteen new homes per year. At the current density of 3/4 acre per lot, this could amount to between 4 and 12 acres per year, or 40 to 120 acres every ten years. Our recent development history indicated that two thirds of new homes have been built east of the Turnpike, perpetuating the desired development pattern. If our goal is to maintain this pattern, we must expect growth areas to absorb between 35 and 100 new housing units – at least 27 to 80 acres of development – over ten years. Additional land would be needed for new commercial development along Maine Ave., but the total land requirement might be less if growth comes in the form of multi-family housing units.

The designation of growth areas follows (See Land Use Plan Map for delineation)

Residential Development District: All Farmingdale lands east of the Maine Turnpike, from Maple Street south to between Bowman Street and Northern Avenue, excluding the Maine Avenue Development District and the Maine Avenue Scenic and Historic District (See below). This district includes both existing neighborhoods and undeveloped land, in an effort to imitate the existing neighborhood development pattern. The total extent of this district is about 2,000 acres. Deducting existing developed area, some small wetland areas, and the golf course yields about 480 acres. In order to utilize much of this land, however, new roads would be needed. *The primary objective of this district is to encourage residential development at densities similar to our existing built-up area.* A secondary objective is to provide for small-scale commercial development compatible with residential neighborhoods.

Maine Avenue Development District: Maine Avenue from Maple Street south to Kennebec Drive, including a 500' corridor on the west side of the street, and a corridor on the east side extending to 250' from the river (shoreland zone). The gross area of this district would be about 160 acres. There is very little vacant land; most growth would come from redevelopment of existing parcels. *The primary objective in this district is improving the quality of commercial and multi-family uses.*

Rural Development District: Rural areas in Farmingdale must expect to accommodate a third of new residential growth, amounting to only five or fewer homes per year. Only that type of

commercial development that is reliant on rural resources or has minimal impact on surrounding property is expected to occur. The designation of a rural area is as follows:

All land west of the Turnpike, and land east of the Turnpike that is south of Northern Avenue. This consists of roughly 4,000 acres. This area is currently lightly developed with a predominance of open space. *The objective in this district is to provide for the maintenance of a healthy rural environment and protection of natural resources while permitting slow development.*

Based on existing trends, the identification of an area this large as a rural district will not have much effect on growth patterns. The building rate is currently far fewer than five new homes per year in the area. Outside of the Stone Ridge View Estates on the Hallowell line, virtually all of the new development could be classified as multi-generational.

One other area is designated in Farmingdale, based on its unique characteristics and limitations:

Maine Avenue Scenic and Historic District: Maine Avenue from Kennebec Drive south to Northern Avenue, including a 250' corridor on the west side, and all lands on the eastside to the Kennebec River. This district has two limitations: floodplain and shoreland zoning restrictions to the east of Maine Avenue, and historic homes to the west. As such, there is very little opportunity for growth. *The objectives of this district are to preserve the scenic and historic values of this short stretch of Maine Avenue.*

Implementation of Land Use Plan:

The following strategies will implement the Land Use Plan. The purpose of the strategies is, first of all, to get development to go where it is best suited, and second, to ensure that new development is of good quality.

<u>District</u>	<u>Implementation Strategies</u>
Residential Development	Maintain the current 3/4 acre minimum lot size. Minimize requirements for additional land area for multi-family buildings. Amend the subdivision ordinance to encourage grid-style development and road construction to allow for future interconnections. Establish standard in Commercial Development Ordinance limiting the size and type of business in this District, and protecting neighboring property through buffers and impact standards. Require impact studies be prepared for all commercial

developments over 10,000 square feet to assure that proposed use does not disrupt the character of the surrounding area.

Consider proposals for smaller individual lot sizes in cluster- or grid-style development, providing overall density is maintained.

Maine Avenue Corridor

Establish standards through a Commercial Development Ordinance to ensure quality new development. Standards will include:

- Design and limitation of curb cuts, for safety and ease of access,
- Provision of adequate off-street parking,
- Strict standards to control stormwater runoff,
- Provisions for landscaping along Maine Avenue,
- Requirements for compatibility with neighboring development, including noise, dust, smoke, etc.
- Requirement to connect with public water and sewer.
- Limitations on outdoor lighting, particularly of signage and parking areas,
- Requirement for buffer yards or structures when adjacent to existing homes.

Utilize the upcoming reconstruction of Maine Avenue to encourage upgrading of access (vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle) and improvements to facades and signage.

Rebuild and extend sanitary sewer service within the district.

Rural Development

Limit the proliferation of driveways entering into major roads.

Amend the subdivision ordinance to encourage open-space type development design for any subdivisions over five lots.

Inform rural landowners of development options such as conservation easements and the banking of agricultural and forested lands to help preserve open green space, and help to facilitate efforts between willing buyers and sellers.

Establish a Rural Development Task Force, composed primarily of district residents, to develop a vision and strategies for guiding future development in this area.

Maine Avenue Scenic and Historic

Limit all new construction east of the road from Kennebec Drive to Northern Avenue to uses that are compatible with and enhance the scenic and recreational assets of the river.

Seek to establish all or part of the area west of the road from Grant Street to Northern Avenue as a historic area to preserve and maintain its architectural identity and integrity.

Consider setting up a fund that could be used to acquire land or conservation easements along the east side of Maine Avenue from Kennebec Drive to Northern Avenue.

Chapter 11: General Recommendations

This chapter is based on preceding chapters. Those chapters contained mostly descriptive information, based on facts from federal and state agencies, information in town reports, and observations of the town by the comprehensive planning committee. It also contained some mention of the issues facing the town, and public opinion concerning those issues.

This is the chapter where we put it all together. A plan is not a plan without recommendations for changing or continuing action. These recommendations are the work of the comprehensive planning committee – our best suggestions of what to do, based on the information at hand, the public opinion survey, and our own discussions.

This chapter is organized as follows: 1) a brief summary of the highlights and issues from the original chapter; 2) the goal, based on goals set by the state law; 3) policies, actions, and implementation, in table format, for each goal.

1: Historical Perspective

Conclusions:

- \$ Farmingdale was settled and has grown thanks to its location on the Kennebec River. Part of the town owes its growth to commerce on the river. Another part of town has historically resembled a self-sufficient farming community.
- \$ Alongside the Kennebec River, there is a rich collection of historical and pre-historical development sites, as well as fine examples of period architecture.
- \$ In 2004, Farmingdale residents formed a local historical society, promoting local historical preservation.
- \$ Based on the inventory of historical assets, the town should focus its preservation efforts along the river. These efforts must include both regulation of development and education/awareness-building.

LOCAL GOAL: To preserve Farmingdale’s historical and archeological resources.

<u>Policy:</u>	<u>Actions:</u>	<u>Implementation:</u>
Establish a structure for the preservation of	Begin a repository of historical photos and documents,	<i>Begin immediately, town committee/historical society</i>

historical records and storage in the town office, and artifacts preservation of storage in the town office, and periodic displays in the meeting house.

Encourage the historical society locally, and cooperation with the Gardiner Historical Society. *Ongoing, town meeting*

Establish standards for the preservation of archeological sites along the Kennebec River.

Require new development within 1,000 feet of the river to perform archeological testing and preservation (similar to current standard in Shoreland Zoning).

To be included in new Commercial Development Ordinance

Add language to subdivision and commercial development review that if a portion of a development site has been identified as having historic or archeological resources that the development plan shall include appropriate actions to protect them.

1-2 years, ordinance changes recommended by PB

Promote the historical character of the town in relation to the river.

Perform a professional inventory of above-ground historical assets between Maine Avenue and the river.

2-5 years from now, authorized by town meeting

Raise funds for the identification and promotion of historical buildings in town, through signage, publication, and enrollment on the National Register, or other forms of publicity.

1-3 years from now, authorized by town meeting, performed by historical society

Participate in development of the Kennebec River Historic Waterway.

Begin immediately, selectmen designate representative

Apply for funding under the DOT Gateway Program to inform residents and travelers of

2005 or 2006, selectmen or designee

Farmingdale's heritage.

Develop a calendar of 3-5 years from now, historical community events to promote *society* the town's heritage.

2: The Local Economy

Conclusions:

- \$ Farmingdale residents have enjoyed a moderate increase in per capita and household incomes over the past decade, with growth rates running a little behind inflation. A possible explanation is that we now have over 20 percent of our population on social security or retirement.
- \$ Farmingdale has a total workforce of 1,500 people (2000 Census). That is 68 percent of all adults, male and female. Only about 1 in 6 of our labor force works in Farmingdale; almost half work in Augusta. We have a relatively-low unemployment rate of 3.2 percent (2002).
- \$ Over the past decade, we have seen an increase in residents employed in managerial and professional, and skilled trade jobs – a decrease in those employed in service jobs, especially health and education.
- \$ There are roughly 120 businesses in Farmingdale, employing almost 1,100 workers. Ninety-five percent of these businesses have a payroll of less than 20 people. Many of these are one- and two-person home businesses.
- \$ Maine Avenue is hands-down the most popular location for business. Two-thirds of all businesses in town have a Maine Avenue address. Except for a few gaps, they are spread all along the 2.5 mile length of the highway, contributing to concerns over the safety and capacity of the road. Commercial growth is continuing, despite this.
- As Farmingdale grows economically, we can expect to see more pressure on Maine Avenue. With very few vacant, developable parcels, most of the pressure will be for redevelopment at higher densities. The reconstruction of Maine Ave. may make it more attractive for commercial uses, but unless we quickly take a firm hand in managing the relation between traffic and development, traffic conflicts will quickly return to troublesome levels.
- Away from Maine Ave., few areas are suitable for customer-oriented commercial development. The side streets may be able to absorb some small professional offices or service businesses, if neighborhoods are protected.

LOCAL GOAL: To promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.

<u>Policy:</u>	<u>Actions:</u>	<u>Implementation:</u>
Support the development and growth of local, small business in Farmingdale.	Designate a section on the town office bulletin board to advertise local products and services.	<i>Immediate, done by town office staff</i>
	Develop a resource center in the town office, with information on small business counseling, financing, job and skill training, and continuing education in the area.	<i>1-2 years, done by town office staff.</i>
	Encourage local businesses to link to and advertise on the town's website.	<i>1-2 years, done by town's webmaster and town office.</i>
Develop a long-term, comprehensive strategy for the future growth along Maine Avenue.	The town should form a "Maine Avenue Task Force" composed of town officials, businessmen and landowners, to develop a vision and strategies for future growth that will enhance the area.	<i>Within the next six months, authorized and appointed by selectmen.</i>
	The task force should work closely with DOT to assimilate landscaping, pedestrian access, and safety improvements into its development planning.	<i>Within the next year</i>
Continue to participate in regional economic development programs and organizations and monitor their activities for impacts on Farmingdale.	Actively participate in First Park development efforts	<i>Ongoing, selectmen's representative</i>
	Seek representation on the Gardiner Board of Trade.	<i>2-4 years, selectmen appoint representative</i>
	Participate in regional tourism development initiatives, e.g. Historic Waterway	<i>Begin immediately, planning board or appointed individuals</i>
Continue to regulate new and expanding commercial development through a planning board permitting	Propose a commercial development permitting ordinance that will establish local authority for review of new	<i>1-2 years, prepared by planning board</i>

process, with rules to commercial development.

protect residential

properties, environmental

quality, and the continued

delivery of public services.

Establish development standards for screening from residential uses, noise, water, and air pollution, including erosion control and storm water management, off-street parking, curb cuts, and water and sewer service.

1-2 years, prepared by planning board

3: Housing

Conclusions:

\$ Farmingdale supports a wide range of housing ages and styles, from imposing heritage homes along the river, to well-kept garden apartments on town water and sewer, to upscale subdivisions and mobile home parks along outlying roads.

\$ Of the town’s 1,273 homes (2000 census), 339 of them are multi-family units, and 164 are mobile homes. Our current building rate is about 7-9 new homes per year, about half of which are mobile homes.

\$ The average value of a house in 2000 was \$87,700, though prices may have risen significantly in just a few years since. Census statistics seem to indicate that more people (approximately one in four) are having trouble affording the cost of their homes. This is in spite of the good mix of affordable housing in town. In fact, almost half of all renters have to pay more than 30 percent of their income on rent alone.

\$ Future growth of the town depends on expansion of the housing stock. We expect to be adding between 5 and 15 new homes per year. State guidelines require 10 percent of these new homes be affordable to people making below average income, to maintain decent housing opportunities.

\$ There is no evidence to indicate that housing in Farmingdale is unsafe or substandard. The Town has an ordinance regulating construction of mobile home parks but not other housing types.

LOCAL GOAL: To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities, including at least 10 percent of new housing affordable to persons making below 80 percent of median household income (currently around \$30,000 in Farmingdale).

Policy:

Actions:

Implementation:

Promote the development

Develop a building construction

2-4 years, developed by Code

of a good quality, quantity, and variety of housing opportunities in Farmingdale.	ordinance, modeled after the International Code Council model ordinance	Enforcement Officer (CEO) and planning board, piggyback on current building permit process.
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Adopt the Life Safety Section of the Housing Maintenance Code of the ICC for multi-family units.	<i>2-4 years, developed by CEO and planning board</i>
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Monitor the cost, rate, and location of new housing on an annual basis, using the Building Ordinance.	<i>Begin immediately, done by CEO, annual report to planning board</i>
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Assure a continuing supply of housing affordable to all of Farmingdale's economic classes. This includes at least two new homes per year for sale at less than \$80,000 or rent of less than \$500 per month, in 2005 dollars.	Provide information to town residents through the town office on housing improvement and financial assistance programs available through Maine State Housing Authority, KVCAP, and other regional housing groups.	<i>Begin within the next year, done by town office staff and CEO</i>
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Support and cooperate with affordable housing programs in Hallowell and Gardiner.	<i>3-5 years, begin with outreach to program directors if monitoring shows problem developing.</i>
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To promote housing, specifically for senior occupancy, reduce the land area and performance requirements for, multi-family housing, limited to seniors.	<i>3-5 years, done by planning board</i>
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4: Rural Resources

Conclusions:

- \$ Even though much of the area west of the Turnpike consists of large tracts of undeveloped land, most of it is forested, and there are no large-scale farms left. Most of the remaining fields are located on Northern Ave., and are used for hay or pasture.
- \$ There is no farm infrastructure left in Farmingdale. There is one large greenhouse operation and a few small, part-time farms.

- \$ About 2/3 of the land in Farmingdale is forested, primarily west of the Turnpike. However, very little of this considerable acreage is enrolled in Tree Growth. Farmingdale has the third-smallest enrollment in Kennebec County (Randolph and Waterville).
- \$ The large, undeveloped blocks of land in Farmingdale are valuable for other purposes, including environmental, wildlife, and recreational. At present, the public does not pay for these amenities; access and use are at the landowners' discretion and permission.
- In total, the town's large expanses of open space west of the Turnpike produces economic benefit for the owners at the same time as having potential for development. The town should seek out ways to make the land more profitable in its natural state, if only to avoid the increased tax burden of development.

LOCAL GOAL: Economic use of Farmingdale's agricultural and forest resources and protection from development that threatens those resources

<u>Policy:</u>	<u>Actions:</u>	<u>Implementation:</u>
Encourage the development of small-scale farming and forest enterprises.	Allow and encourage the development of farmstands/farmstores, barns, and greenhouse/nursery operations.	<i>Ongoing, planning board</i>
	Designate a section on the town office bulletin board to advertise local produce and forest products.	<i>Within 1 year, done by town office staff</i>
	Stimulate interest among farmers and home gardeners to contact area farm markets and local grocery stores, or if sufficient interest develops, establish a farmers market in town.	<i>Ongoing, done by selectmen and planning board</i>
	Establish a Rural Development Task Force, composed of municipal officials, residents and landowners, for the purpose of identifying ways to develop in Farmingdale's rural areas while maintaining existing rural values and assets.	<i>Within six months, authorized and appointed by selectmen, consultation with planning board.</i>
Seek to protect large tracts of land in the rural area	Establish a Conservation Commission for the purpose of	<i>Within 1 year, selectmen designate committee. Within 5</i>

from development.

promoting rural resources and assisting landowners and others in conservation efforts.

years and every 5 years thereafter, the committee, with PB assistance, should report to the town on land use changes that could affect the conservation of undeveloped land and open space.

Promote workshops to help landowners achieve habitat conservation goals while managing their land for agriculture, timber, wildlife and recreation.

Selectmen, CEO, Planning Board members, and other officials/committees involved in conservation effort

Encourage open space set-asides for future subdivision in the rural area.

Within 1-2 years, amendment to subdivision ordinance, done by planning board

Encourage greater participation in tax reduction programs for rural lands.

Begin immediately, done by selectmen/assessors

Promote and advocate for greater state support to alleviate the fiscal impacts of landowner participation in tree growth and agricultural tax programs.

Begin immediately and ongoing, done by selectmen and Conservation Commission.

5: Natural Resources and the Environment

Conclusions:

§ Farmingdale consists, for the most part, of gentle topography and landforms. There are very few areas in town that have environmental development constraints. Except for the immediate vicinity of the ponds, wetlands are few and scattered. Areas of floodplain and hydric soil are limited to the proximity of the few small streams snaking through town.

§ The dominant environmental feature in Farmingdale is the Kennebec River. The river is tidal at this point, but for the most part difficult to access or develop due to steep slopes.

• Farmingdale is classified as a coastal town, due to the tidal flow on the Kennebec, but has very few coastal characteristics. Access to the river is limited by geography, keeping

development and usage pressures low. Visual appeal, however, is high, with good views from Maine Ave. The developing rail trail can be an asset or a liability to the coastal resource, depending on how it is managed.

§ Jamie's Pond and Hutchinson Pond lie on the western boundary of the town with Manchester. Both ponds are nearly pristine and undeveloped. Most of the watershed of Hutchinson Pond is inaccessible (though privately owned). Most of the watershed of Jamie's Pond is owned by the state.

§ Adequate groundwater supplies exist throughout rural Farmingdale, though the only identified high-yielding aquifer is in the very northeast corner of town. The urban portion of Farmingdale utilizes public water supplies, but the sources of both are well out of town.

- Thanks to the large expanse of undeveloped land and travel corridors, there is a relative abundance of wildlife in town. The IFW has identified deer wintering areas along the West Gardiner boundary and north of Vaughn Brook. No endangered plants or animals have been documented in town.

LOCAL GOALS: To protect quality and manage the quantity of our water resources, including lakes, aquifers, rivers and coastal areas.

To protect our other natural resources, including wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, shorelands, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas.

To protect our marine resources industry from incompatible development and to promote access to the shore for commercial fishermen and the public.

Comprehensive plans for all towns classified as "coastal" must include and implement the state's coastal policies. Farmingdale is classified as coastal because the river is tidal at this point. The town herein adopts the following state policies:

1. **Port and harbor development.** Promote the maintenance, development and revitalization of the State's ports and harbors for fishing, transportation and recreation;
2. **Marine resource management.** Manage the marine environment and its related resources to preserve and improve the ecological integrity and diversity of marine communities and habitats, to expand our understanding of the productivity of the Gulf of Maine and coastal waters and to enhance the economic value of the State's renewable marine resources;
3. **Shoreline management and access.** Support shoreline management that gives preference to water-dependent uses over other uses, that promotes public access to the shoreline and that considers the cumulative effects of development on coastal resources;
4. **Hazard area development.** Discourage growth and new development in coastal areas where, because of coastal storms, flooding, landslides or sea-level rise, it is hazardous to human health and safety;

5. **State and local cooperative management.** Encourage and support cooperative state and municipal management of coastal resources;
6. **Scenic and natural areas protection.** Protect and manage critical habitat and natural areas of state and national significance and maintain the scenic beauty and character of the coast even in areas where development occurs;
7. **Recreation and tourism.** Expand the opportunities for outdoor recreation and encourage appropriate coastal tourist activities and development;
8. **Water quality.** Restore and maintain the quality of our fresh, marine and estuarine waters to allow for the broadest possible diversity of public and private uses; and
9. **Air quality.** Restore and maintain coastal air quality to protect the health of citizens and visitors and to protect enjoyment of the natural beauty and maritime characteristics of the Maine coast.

Implementation strategies addressing these policies are addressed under the policy for protection of the Kennebec and coastal resources, listed below, and in other recommendations of this plan:

<u>Policy:</u>	<u>Action:</u>	<u>Implementation:</u>
Maintain the current quality of the town's two great ponds.	Develop regulatory standards that will maintain a moderate level of protection (0.04 lbs. Per acre per year) from the impact of phosphorous runoff within the watersheds of the two ponds.	<i>2-4 years, done by planning board, modeled on DEP phosphorous control standards.</i>
	Work with landowners within the watershed to promote conservation easements or other land conservation activities.	<i>2-5 years, conservation commission</i>
	Coordinate activities with the Town of Manchester.	<i>2-5 years, conservation commission</i>
Promote conservation of and appreciation for natural resource assets in Farmingdale.	Establish a town Conservation Commission to promote and encourage protection of the town's significant resources and scenic and natural areas.	<i>Within 1 year, selectmen designate commission. Within 4 years, complete inventory and plan</i>
	Encourage the beautification of town roads.	<i>3-5 years, done by conservation commission</i>
	Include environmental performance standards for evaluation and protection of wildlife habitat,	<i>1-2 years, done by planning board in amending subdivision ordinance,</i>

wetlands, steep slopes, stormwater runoff, groundwater, and scenic views into existing and proposed ordinances. *writing Commercial Development Ordinance.*

Promote landowner cooperation and encourage them to contact the Maine Natural Areas Program and Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife prior to submission of development applications and building permits when identified wildlife, valuable natural areas, and rare plants are involved. *Begin immediately, planning board*

Use the information in this plan, and referenced maps and documents, to expand the awareness to townspeople and planners about land and water capabilities and sensitivities. *Begin shortly, planning board and conservation commission.*

Adopt a municipal ordinance for shoreland zoning to replace the state-imposed one. *1-2 years, done by planning board and proposed for adoption at town meeting.*

Provide special protection for the Kennebec River and coastal resources. Establish standards and practices to protect the scenic views of the river, including designation of "Scenic and Historic District." *1-2 years, done by planning board in Commercial Development Ordinance*

Regulate shoreline "hardening" activities such as wharves, bulkheads, etc. *1-2 years, done by planning board in Shoreland Zoning, Commercial Development Ordinances*

Consider the need for wildlife corridors and natural habitat in planning for development (or other uses) of town property along river. *2-3 years, in conjunction with planning for recreation, done by committee.*

Develop rules and guidelines to manage river activities such as moorings, boating enforcement, and *2-4 years, done by Harbormaster, with support from selectmen*

smelting practices.

6: Transportation Systems

Conclusions:

- \$ The principal transportation element in Farmingdale is the road system. Excluding I-95 (which has no access to Farmingdale), there are over 35 miles of roads, of which about 12.2 are state roads and 10 are private.
- \$ The public road system is generally in good condition, and almost all town roads are paved. Town road work is overseen by a Road Commissioner, and all work is done by private contractors.
- \$ The most highly-traveled road in Farmingdale is Route 201 – Maine Ave. – which forms the backbone of the transportation system and commercial activity in town. The two-lane road is scheduled for reconstruction in 2005 (Phase I), at which time several traffic flow improvements will be made.
- \$ Other forms of transportation available in Farmingdale include the little-used state-owned rail line along the river, and the partially-constructed trail alongside. The lack of sidewalks along the entire length of Maine Ave. has been identified as an issue.
- As traffic on Maine Ave. continues to grow, there will be more pressure for alternatives – ranging from the Kennebec River Rail Trail to public bus service to traffic signals to alternative highways. How the town (and the region) manage these alternatives will influence to a great degree our future development potential.

LOCAL GOAL: To plan for an adequate transportation system to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development in Farmingdale.

<u>Policy:</u>	<u>Action:</u>	<u>Implementation:</u>
Directly address the issues of traffic flow, safety, and commercial development along Maine Avenue as improvements are made.	Form a “Maine Avenue Task Force” to evaluate and recommend local actions to improve Maine Avenue, including intersection improvements, development access, and beautification.	<i>Within 6 months, authorized and appointed by selectmen</i>
	Evaluate the potential for alternate north-south flow to relieve traffic on Maine Ave., for example, a	<i>3-5 years, Maine Avenue Task Force and selectmen</i>

frontage road near the Turnpike, or an interchange with the Turnpike in Farmingdale

Implement access control for new development, to complement DOT standards. *1-2 years, incorporated into Commercial Development Ordinance*

Connect sidewalks on the western side of Maine Ave. *2007, in cooperation with Maine DOT*

Complete the Kennebec River Rail Trail. *2006, regional initiative*

Improve the cost-effective maintenance of town road system. Continue active participation of the town road committee. *Selectmen and road commissioner*

Develop contract specifications and procedures for town road projects. *1-2 years, road committee.*

Establish a priority list for potential repaving and drainage work on town roads. *Establish listing 1-2 years, done by selectmen/road commissioner/road committee.*

Develop/review standards for acceptance of new town roads, and construction standards in existing subdivision ordinance. *1-2 years, planning board in cooperation with road committee*

7: Recreation

Conclusions:

- Farmingdale residents enjoy many opportunities for outdoor recreation, but few provided by the town itself. Facilities include the Foggy Bottom Marina for (private) access to the river, the Kennebec Heights Country Club for golf, Wing Park in Hayford Heights, the Kennebec Rail Trail, Barnstormers Snowmobile Club, and high school/middle school recreational facilities.
- The Kennebec River is a largely-untapped recreational resource. Access is limited (and privately-owned) and there are few opportunities for on-river activities.

- There is no developed access to the town’s two ponds in town, though access is available from Manchester and Hallowell, and there has historically been casual (walk-in) access available with landowner permission. State law guarantees access to all great ponds.
- The town offers a summer recreation program, and supports other programs through budget allocations.
- The town has historically gotten by with very little investment in outdoor recreation. There are several embryonic projects – both locally and regionally – that, with a little municipal support, could provide a lot more recreational opportunity to residents.

LOCAL GOAL: To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for Farmingdale citizens, including access to surface waters.

<u>Policy:</u>	<u>Action:</u>	<u>Implementation:</u>
Cooperate with Gardiner and Hallowell to offer a wider range of recreational programs to Farmingdale residents.	Improve access to school facilities.	<i>Ongoing, Recreation committee and SAD 16</i>
	Develop a wider range of senior citizen events and programs.	<i>2-4 years, done by selectman (cooperating with other towns) and recreation committee</i>
Offer greater municipal opportunities for public recreation and access.	Identify potential parking facilities and public access points to Jamie and Hutchinson Ponds and the Kennebec River to handle year-round use of these resources. Explore opportunities for better fishing and boating access.	<i>3-5 years, conservation commission and recreation committee</i>
	Explore acquisition of Wing Park from the Hayford Heights Community Club.	<i>3-5 years, selectmen, town meeting</i>
	Evaluate and plan for town-owned property between the rail line and the river, considering potential rail-trail access, picnic and hiking opportunities, and carry-in boat access, or leave it in its natural state	<i>1-2 years, selectmen designate committee, develop plan within 3 years</i>
	Develop/improve recreation facilities at old Sheldon Street	

School property.	<i>Contingent on decision for disposition of school property</i>
Support efforts of the snowmobile club to seek grants and other funding for trail improvements.	<i>Ongoing, selectmen</i>

8: Government and Public Services

Conclusions:

- § For a small town, Farmingdale provides a very high level of many public services, most in cooperation with regional service providers. Law enforcement, solid waste disposal, water and sewer service, and education are examples of regional cooperation. Fire protection and road maintenance are examples of local services that may benefit from increased regional participation.
- § Fire protection is a highly-valued town service, well-supported, but in need of new buildings and equipment in order to continue providing its high-quality service. Expanded regional cooperation on fire protection is an opportunity to consider.
- § Solid waste disposal and recycling is the responsibility of the property owner, but financially supported by the town.
- § Town government is well-run, but there have been periodic discussions about the structure of government and its future in the face of change.
- The Town has benefited in the past from regional cooperation in public service delivery.
- With constantly increasing costs and complexity of government, the town is bound to come to a point, in the near future, where we need to examine how we can do our business better and cheaper. We may choose a different form of government, more management capacity, more regional cooperation, or a number of other alternatives.

LOCAL GOAL: To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development

<u>Policy:</u>	<u>Action:</u>	<u>Implementation:</u>
Continue a strong policy of regional cooperation to maintain quality and cost-efficient services.	Continue strong representation on regional boards and districts. Work with the Gardiner Water District and Farmingdale Sewer Committee to plan for expansion of	<i>Ongoing</i> <i>1-5 years, water district, sewer committee, selectmen</i>

utility service areas in coordination with our land use and development plan and CIP.

Work with Augusta to seek improvements in local recycling opportunities. *3-5 years, selectmen appoint recycling committee*

Work with the State and City of Hallowell to correctly establish and map the municipal boundary. *3-5 years, selectmen*

Seek mechanisms to improve financial stability and reduce property tax burden. Maintain a community advisory committee to develop grant-worthy projects and seek out grants programs. *Ongoing, selectmen*

Explore the feasibility of development impact fees for water and sewer extensions. *1-3 years, planning board*

Continue to organize annual town cleanup day. *Ongoing, town meeting, selectmen*

Implement a Capital Improvements Plan, based on preliminary work in this section (below) *1-3 years, selectmen*

Improve the day-to-day operation of town government. Re-establish a townwide newsletter. *Within 1 year, town office staff*

Access training and professional assistance for town boards and committees to improve job performance. *Begin immediately, using available services from Maine Municipal Association, Kennebec Valley Council of Governments*

For all new and existing committees, Selectmen should state the purpose, duties to be performed, reporting requirements, and the number of members to be appointed. *Begin immediately, done by selectmen*

Require all committees to report at *1-2 years, selectmen set*

least quarterly to the Selectmen on *schedule* the status of their activities.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY:

The Capital Investment Strategy, required under state law, provides an opportunity for the town to plan for and prioritize its capital expenditures. Over the long term, this means that local budgets can become more stable, and the town can take advantage of cost-saving opportunities, such as grants and low interest rates.

The selectmen of the Town should develop and maintain a Capital Improvements Plan (an annual version of the Capital Investment Plan). The plan should emphasize meeting short-term priorities through grants, and long-term priorities through reserve funds and existing capital project accounts. The plan should be able to respond to growth in business and commercial development, such as preparing the fire department to fight chemical spills or hazardous situations as a result of commercial uses. The plan should also take advantage of regional opportunities for sharing the cost of major capital improvements.

The items in the following table should stand as an initial basis for the plan:

Capital Item	Estimated Cost	Priority	Needed by:	Funding Source
Maine Ave. Fire Station Improvements	unknown	Low	2009	Reserve account
Litchfield Road Fire Station (new)	\$120,000	High	2006	Bond
Purchase and improve Wing Park	\$ 25,000	Mid	2006	Donations, appropriation
Sheldon Street School	Subject to committee recommendations			
Improvements to town office	\$50,000 or part of Sheldon Street recommendations	High	2007	Appropriations
Water line replacement on Maine Ave.	\$1,200,000	High	2005-6 (Phase I)	Bond, grant
Water and sewer line extensions into Blaine Road area	unknown	Mid	2010	Impact fees

Chapter 10: Land Use and Development

Conclusions:

- The existing land use pattern in Farmingdale is well-established, with distinction commercial, residential and rural areas.
- Historical growth has been in small business and single-family homes, but the recent trend has been towards apartments and specialized housing.
- Based on emerging growth trends, Farmingdale is evolving in two respects: a rural area turning to residential suburb, and a vital thoroughfare turning into a commercial strip. Neither of these are reflective of the desires of a majority of our citizens. If we decide that it is important to maintain the traditional values indicative of Farmingdale, we will need to make enforceable decisions about its future growth and development. We are going to have to take the bull by the horns, and soon.

LOCAL GOAL: Encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of Farmingdale, while protecting the town’s rural character, making efficient use of public services, and preventing development sprawl.

<u>Policy:</u>	<u>Action:</u>	<u>Implementation:</u>
Implement the recommendations of the Land Use Plan (chapter 10)	Update the town’s Subdivision Ordinance to conform to the current state law, Farmingdale’s land use plan, and modern engineering practice.	<i>2-3 years, planning board</i>
	Update the town’s Street Design and Construction Standards to meet modern engineering and environmental practice.	<i>2-3 years, planning board, road committee</i>
	Amend the town’s Building Permit Ordinance to include a section on construction standards for residential buildings.	<i>3-5 years, planning board and Code Enforcement Officer</i>
	Draft a commercial development ordinance providing standards for; (a)	<i>1-2 years, planning board</i>

commercial building construction and reconstruction; (b) parking; (c) access; (d) air pollution, (e) noise, (f) environmental protection; and (g) neighborhood compatibility.

Monitor the rate and location of new developments. If annual report shows a trend away from 2/3 occurring in the growth area, additional policies should be considered for this plan. *CEO tally and report to planning board annually. Planning Board to meet with task forces if growth trends warrant consideration of policy changes.*

Review town policies and practices to identify ways to further implement the land use plan.	Establish and provide guidance for a Maine Avenue Task Force.	<i>Within six months, authorized and members appointed by selectmen.</i>
	Establish and provide guidance for a Rural Development Task Force.	<i>Within six months, authorized and members appointed by selectmen.</i>