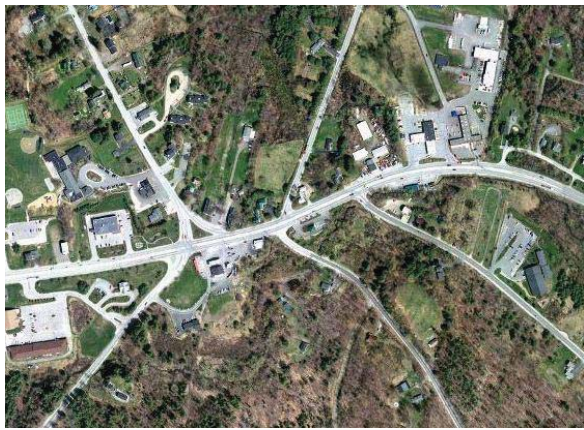


**TOWN OF MANCHESTER**  
**2011 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
**UPDATE –**  
**DRAFT 10/3/2011**





# TOWN OF MANCHESTER

## 2011 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### I-A: WHY A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The Manchester Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for managing the changes in the town and its surrounding environment that are anticipated over the next several years. The Comprehensive Plan serves several functions: It is an expression of the townspeople's vision of its future; it serves as a suggested list of the many public and private decisions that determine the Town's future; it serves as a source of basic information about the natural and social environment of Manchester; and it serves as the legal foundation of the Town's land use regulations.

Similar to private businesses, Manchester is a multi-million dollar corporation that is responsible for providing a set of services to its customers. In order to be successful, the Town must provide those services as economically as possible. Like any private business, it can do this best with a solid business plan. In the case of a municipality, this is called a comprehensive plan.

The Manchester Comprehensive Plan is not an ordinance. While it will serve as the legal basis for future ordinances, it is only an advisory document that will serve as a guide to the elected and appointed officials in their future land use decisions. In fact, recommendations for changes to land use regulations is only a relatively small part of the overall plan.

### THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS:

In 1988, the Maine Legislature adopted the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, commonly referred to as the "Growth Management Act". The Act outlines a process by which each municipality in the State, except those under the jurisdiction of the Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC), develop a local growth management program that guides the future growth of that community. The local growth management program should be consistent with State and regional goals and with the State's coastal policies.

Following is the list of the State planning goals, as identified in the Growth Management Act. These goals serve as the basis for the development of the plan, and are restated at the beginning of each chapter in Section II of this plan:

- Goal A: To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl.
- Goal B: To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

- Goal C: To promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.
- Goal D: To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens.
- Goal E: To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas.
- Goal F: To protect the State's other critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas and unique natural areas.
- Goal G: To protect the State's marine resources industry, ports and harbors, from incompatible development and to promote access to the shore for commercial fisherman and the public. (This goal does not apply to non-coastal towns, such as Manchester.)
- Goal H: To safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources.
- Goal I: To preserve the State's historic and archaeological resources.
- Goal J: To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters.

The law was changed in 1991 to eliminate a requirement that local plans be revised at least once every five years. It was amended again in 2008 to state that a plan that had not been revised at least once every 12 years would lose its status as a “consistent” plan under the law.

While comprehensive plans are adopted by the municipal legislative body, they do not necessarily have to meet the standards in the law. However, the law lays out significant benefits to towns that do so, including grant eligibility and preference for projects that help support growth. The State Planning Office (SPO) reviews a local plan following completion and determines whether it is consistent with the law. If this is not done every 12 years, the town loses its eligibility for benefits.

## MANCHESTER’S PLANNING HISTORY:

Manchester has a long history of comprehensive planning activity. The first comprehensive planning document for the Town was completed in 1978. Starting in 1986, the Town completed a major public effort and adopted a new plan in 1988.

Ironically, the Growth Management Law was enacted later that year, imposing a new set of goals and considerations into local planning. Because the Comprehensive Planning Committee and the townspeople were pleased with the existing Plan, they embarked on a revision whose sole objective was to update the 1988 Plan where necessary to meet the new State requirements, but still retain the main focus of the 1988 Plan.

The Town began work on the update in 1990. Upon Town receipt of a state planning grant and the raising of a 25% match, the Town retained Community Dynamics Corp. to assist with the overall planning process and guide the preparation of the Plan. The revised plan was adopted at Town Meeting in April of 1991.

The current edition of the Land Use and Development Ordinance was enacted by the Town in 1992, based on recommendations in the 1991 plan. The ordinance has been updated several times since then, although the plan itself has not been updated. The current Land Use Zones, around which the 1992 integrated Land Use and Development Ordinance, were developed at that time (figure 1).

Figure 1. ***Manchester Land Use Zones, established in the 1992 Land Use and Development Ordinance.***

In 2003, the Town identified specific shortcomings in its overall vision and appointed a Long Range Planning Committee to develop a new plan for public facilities and lands in the town. Early in this process, it became clear that the threat to open space was the primary issue driving the process, and thus became the focus. The result was the Long Range Public Facilities and Open Space Plan, which was adopted in June of 2004. This plan lays out several strategies to preserve the Town's natural assets at the same time as developing recreational and other facilities. Many of the recommendations laid out in the open space plan have been endorsed in this version of the comprehensive plan.

## I-B: THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS

The 2011 version of the comprehensive plan began in 2009. Recognizing that it was probably time to update the 1991 plan, especially in light of the State's 12-year deadline, the Town commenced an update process. A call was put out to residents of the town to volunteer for the Comprehensive Planning Committee. Funding for a consultant to guide the process was approved at Town Meeting. The Town retained Kennebec Valley Council of Governments to provide consulting services.

The Comprehensive Planning Committee was formed shortly thereafter, led by a member of the Board of Selectmen. The committee consisted of the following residents:

**Table 1. Comprehensive Planning Committee Members—2009-2011:**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Role</b>
Martha G. Nielsen	Chair
Leon Strout	Assistant Chair
<b>Subcommittee Heads:</b>	
Robert Gasper	Fiscal Capacity, Public Facilities, Transportation chair
Diane Daigle	Recreation chair
E. Patrick Gilbert	Economy chair
Jeffrey Janell	Natural Resources, Water Resources chair
Vicki Kozak	Historical Resources chair
Deborah Plengey	Agricultural and Forestry chair
Jim Pelsor	Housing, Land Use chair
<b>Members at large:</b>	
Garry Hinkley	Pia Holmes
Pat Hutchinson	Doug Ide
<b>Other Participants:</b>	
Theresa Bettis	Robert King
Raegan LaRochelle	Todd Mattson
Susan Melcher	Jeremy Pare
Mike Watts	Historical Society members
Fred Snow	Recreation Committee members
Conservation Commission members	Planning Board members
Road Committee members	

The Comprehensive Planning Committee work was divided among several subcommittees. Subcommittees included housing, public facilities, transportation, recreation, natural resources, historical, farm and forest, and land use. In many cases, these subcommittees either reached out to additional citizens, or worked closely with existing groups, such as the conservation commission and recreation committee. The committee was also supported by the town manager, code enforcement officer, and town clerk.



Commencing with an organizational meeting in late 2009, the committee has met once or twice a month through 2011. All meetings were open and advertised, and on multiple instances the committee welcomed visitors to participate. At one meeting, in May of 2010, the committee hosted members of the Winthrop comprehensive planning committee to discuss issues of joint and regional cooperation.

The highlight of the planning process was the public visioning session, held at the elementary school in January, 2011. The purpose of this all-day Saturday session was to gather townspeople together in an informal way to brainstorm some of the top issues that have been identified in the planning process. Results of the visioning session are detailed in the following chapter.

## I-C: A VISION FOR MANCHESTER

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While a comprehensive plan is a set of strategies for local action, the strategies must be leading us somewhere. A town like Manchester has a definite idea of how it sees itself in the future – a vision. This vision may clash with “the way things are,” and when it does, we have to set a new direction.

A vision of the future is a community-wide phenomenon. The first step towards the process of defining a community-wide vision was an extensive community survey that was conducted by mail in 2006. This survey, which covered many topics addressed in the Comprehensive Plan, was returned by XX percent of the residents who received a copy (it was distributed to a scientific, random sample of the community). In addition to extensive questions about residents opinions on development in town, community services, etc., there were open-ended questions that provided hundreds of ideas on what problems or opportunities existed in town, and how best to approach them. (The results of the 2006 community survey have been made available on the town’s web site, under Comprehensive Planning.) These collective ideas have significantly informed the comprehensive planning process, and several issues rose to the top of people’s concerns about our community. They include: Route 202, recreation, and economic development. In order for the comprehensive planning committee to further refine resident’s views of the way the town should be heading, (to clarify the **vision** for our future), it decided to hold a broad public meeting, described as a “visioning session.” The committee held this session on January 27, 2011, professionally facilitated by Frank O’Hara of the company Planning Decisions.

The visioning session was attended by 32 residents. A quick survey ascertained that the residents represented all parts of the town, and was spread between long-term residents and relative newcomers.

The visioning session, which lasted over five hours, consisted of a series of discussion topics, many of which resulted in brainstorming reduced to notations on maps. Notes from the session are reproduced below, and many of the ideas and suggestions have found their way into recommendations elsewhere in this plan.

---

## WHERE SHOULD NEW RESIDENTIAL GROWTH GO?

The first topic of discussion was on the history and future of residential growth in Manchester. This was not covered in the 2006 Community Survey, but was important to get community input on, as it concerns one of the main points of the comprehensive planning process. The residents were shown where and how much growth in residential housing had occurred between 1990 and 2009, during which time 307 new houses had been built (figure 2). This represents an average of just over 15 houses per year. Of these, one had been built in the Manchester Village zone, 3 in the General Development Zone, 78 in the Community Residential zone, and 225 were built in the Rural Residential zone.

Figure 2. ***Map showing Housing in Manchester: 1990-2009.***

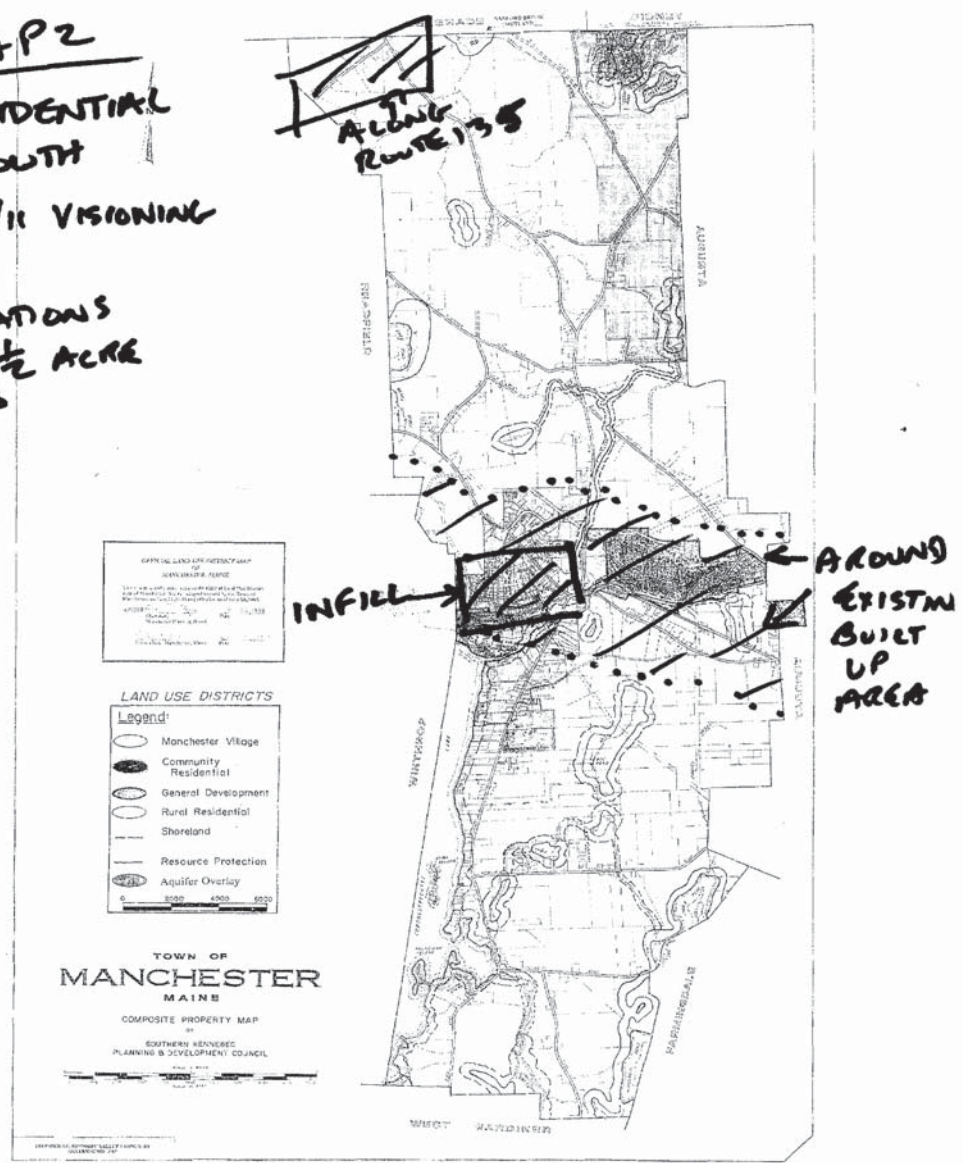
One of the questions for the Visioning Session was, “Where should the **next** 300 houses go?” Most participants recommended that new residential growth be located on ½ acre lots in or abutting existing homes in the town center. This implies that an expansion of sewer and water lines would make sense.

Some also identified the small section of Route 135 at the north end of town as a logical spot for higher density (1/2 acre) development.

Rural growth (2 acres) was recommended in scattered locations throughout Manchester, such as along the Prescott Road, in the back lands behind the Pond Road.

When asked if people would like to see even denser development in the center of town – say, ¼ acres, or condominiums or attached housing – the reaction was mixed. Several tables supported the idea, seeing it as “smart growth” that would make the center of town more vibrant. Others did not like it. One said that it was out of character with the rural/suburban character of the rest of town, and wouldn’t fit. Another said that the housing would cost less, and attract families with children, and would end up costing more to the rest of taxpayers in town.

**MAP 2**  
**RESIDENTIAL**  
**GROWTH**  
 1/27/11 VISIONING  
 LOCATIONS  
 OF 1/2 ACRE  
 LOTS



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 (207) 621-2623 fax (207) 621-4904 frankohara@roadrunner.com

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**THE TOWN CENTER**

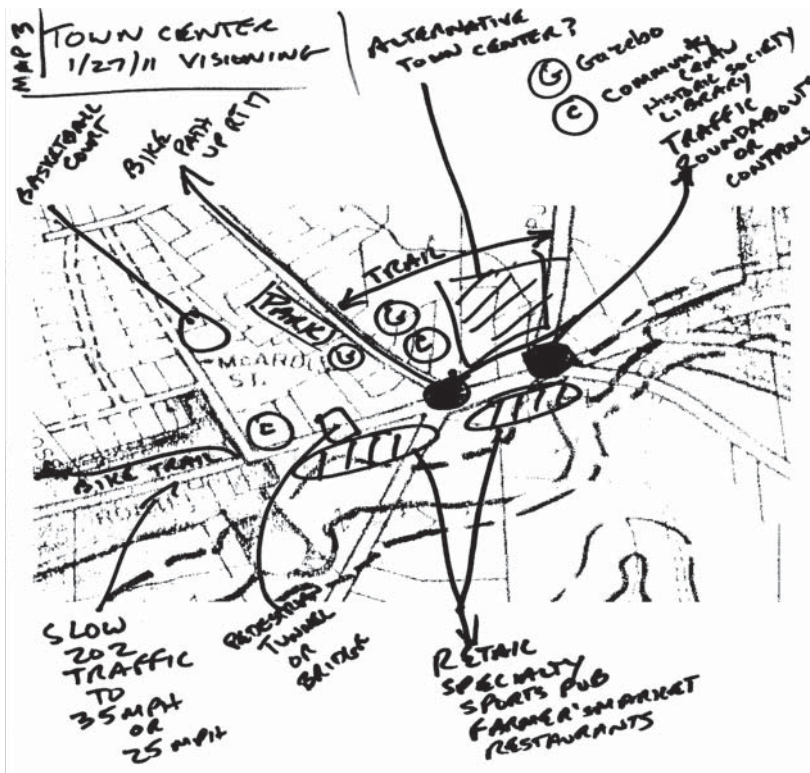
The next topic of discussion was on potential improvements to the Town Center in the future, or what should the town invest in, when considering how to make the town center more attractive and more functional.

What people saw in common:

- Slower traffic on 202 – 35 mph, or one table said 25 mph!
- Revitalized retail on the south of 202 – restaurants, specialty shops, farmer’s market, etc.
- A bike path and/or sidewalks along Route 17

## WHERE IS THE CENTER?

- Several groups had gazebos and community center facilities, which would mark the psychological center of the Town – but they had them in different places
  - Gazebo locations – at the old fire station, and across the street
  - Community center/library/historic center locations – across from Town Hall, and on the Drum property
- One table said to move the town center away from 202, up Puddledock Road, across from Longfellow’s – and put new facilities there.



## THOUGHTS ON THE ROUTE 202 CORRIDOR

As part of the discussion of Manchester's town center, the role and future of Route 202 was discussed at length. While the "region" of central Kennebec County sees Route 202 primarily as a way to quickly get from western areas into Augusta, Manchester residents view this major corridor rather differently. The 2006 Community Survey received many more comments on the "problem" of Route 202 than any other topic. Because of the tremendous volume of traffic and difficulty in crossing it, the 202 corridor essentially divides our community in half, right where our town center ought to be. Indeed, the widening of 202 in the 1980's is commonly regarded in town as having "destroyed" our town center. Thus, there is still a fair amount of acrimonious feeling towards the Department of Transportation and towards the route in general. We all recognize that we need it, that it holds the key to much of our future economic development, and that it will not go away, but almost no one likes it. Some of the development that has happened is regarded as an "eyesore" and the town adopted a set of architectural standards in 2007 in large part to prevent further degradation of the town's feel.

In order to try to move forward, and to try to develop a "town-centered" approach for what should and should not happen on Route 202 in the future, the Visioning Session asked residents to consider several topics on this area:

Participants watched an MDOT "flyover" plan for a divided Route 202, with "jug handles" for turnarounds every few hundred yards. Here are the reactions:

- "most asinine plan in New England"
- Great for Texas, Idaho, Florida – but not another road in Maine with this, except for Western Avenue, and no one wants that
- Would ruin every business on 202
- Anti-business
- Stops at J & S – doesn't solve the Town's problem

No one defended the plan. Then a more general discussion of 202 ensued:

- Decrease speed limit through town to 35 mph
- Make it 4-lane through Charlie's light, then 5 lanes (two on each side and a turning lane in the middle)
- Add bike paths on shoulders

Participants saw the plan as anti-business, anti-quality of life, and anti-home rule.

## WHAT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DO PEOPLE WANT – AND NOT WANT – IN THE 202 CORRIDOR

A discussion was lead on what kind of economic development people would like to see in town. The responses are summarized in table 2.

**Table 2. Visioning session—participants views on economic development in Manchester.**

Want	Don't Want
*Restaurants – especially ethnic, non-chain *Professional Offices *Small light, clean, quiet manufacturing *Healthy food grocery *Bakery *Coffee Shop *Pub *Consignment shop *Specialty ice cream Independent movies Flower shop Gift shop Hotel Clean energy Bicycle shop	*Big box stores *Fast food (though disagreement on this) *Adult books *Car dealer *Salvage or junk yards More competitors for current businesses Strip malls Methadone clinic Day care Gas stations

(\* = repeated many times)

## HOW ACTIVE SHOULD THE TOWN BE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

- Should plan for sewer expansion on 202
- Can use TIFs – but
  - Both sides, pro and con, need to be clearly explained to voters
  - Property tax implications for homeowners need to be spelled out
- Oppose “speculating” in vacant land or buildings
  - Help OK if tied to a real business expansion or relocation
- Pro business on 202 – will help taxes
  - But must be balanced with capacity to support with infrastructure
- Should talk to local businesses – why did you come?
  - For many on 202 – it’s 20,000 cars a day

## PROPOSED NEW RECREATION FACILITIES

Finally, in response to the many comments about recreational opportunities in Manchester (or lack thereof) that were submitted by residents in the 2006 Community Survey, the Visioning Session turned to the question of what kinds of recreational and community-centered facilities would be best for our community.

The moderator lead a discussion on what kinds of new recreational facilities and other possible public facilities the participants would like to see in Manchester’s future. The results are listed in table 3.

### MAJOR THEMES:

- Access to water for swimming
- Facilities in the town center for community gatherings

**Table 3. Visioning session—ideas for additions to public facilities.**

Facility	Where
Public beach	Country Club (mentioned twice)
Swimming, dock, water access	Cobbossee carry-in
Boys and girls club	Old Fire station
Multi-purpose community center (e.g., library, place for a cup of coffee)	
Sportsmen club (snowmobilers, etc.)	Puddledock, across from Longfellow’s
Park, gazebo, public seating	Next to town hall
Picnic area	Jamie’s Pond
More picnic areas	Anywhere
More tennis	
Bird-watching	
Separate snowmobile, skiing trails	
Public swimming, boat access	

## PROPOSED NEW TRAILS

Many people indicated a need or desire for additional trails and sidewalks in Manchester, both for recreation and for linking neighborhoods (Figure 3). Suggestions are summarized in table 4. After this exercise, participants were asked to prioritize their suggestions on new facilities and recreation opportunities, by table. The priorities are listed in table 5.

### MAJOR THEMES:

- A dense network of sidewalks and walking trails around the center of town, connecting the school and town hall with sidewalks up to Myrtle Street on Route 17, and over to McArdle and Woodridge Drive on Route 202, and completing a loop between Ingraham Street and Sylvan Court
- A bike lane on Route 202



- To the south, hiking or bike trails using existing right of ways like the trolley line, and whenever possible linking existing features and trails – such as Cobbossee Lake, Jamie’s Pond, the Town Forest, the KLT, bog pond, the Hallowell Reservoir.
- To the north, non-motorized trails connecting natural areas like the Whitney Forest, Tyler Pond, and Bond Brook Trail
- In the words of one table – “A network of trails that start at the center and radiate to its boundaries and beyond.”

**Table 4. Visioning session—Participant’s views on where trails should be in Manchester.**

Type of trail	Where	Times mentioned
Sidewalk	Town Hall up Route 17	5
Bicycle lane	Along Route 202	3
Sidewalk	Town Hall to Ingraham Street	3
Hiking trail	Along old trolley line	3
Hiking trail	Connect Town Forest, KLT bog pond, Jamie’s Pond, Hallowell Reservoir	2
Walk, ski, bike	Country club beach to Hallowell reservoir	1
Hiking trail	South along stream from Cobbossee carry-in	1
Hiking trail	On Prescott Road north of Whitney forest	1
Bicycle trail	Loop off of Route 17, north of Lions Club	1
Hiking/backpack	From Prescott Road (north of Summerhaven), east to Bond Brook Trail	1
Hiking	From Prescott Road (north of Summerhaven) north to Tyler Pond	1

**Table 5. Visioning Session—Top priorities for recreation in Manchester.**

Top Priorities, by table of participants:	
4 mentions:	Sidewalks and connections from Town hall to Ingraham Street
1 mention each:	Bicycle lane on Route 202
	Hiking trail on old trolley line
	Hiking trail from country club beach to Hallowell reservoir
	Boys and girls club
	Sportsmen’s club
	Swimming dock, water access

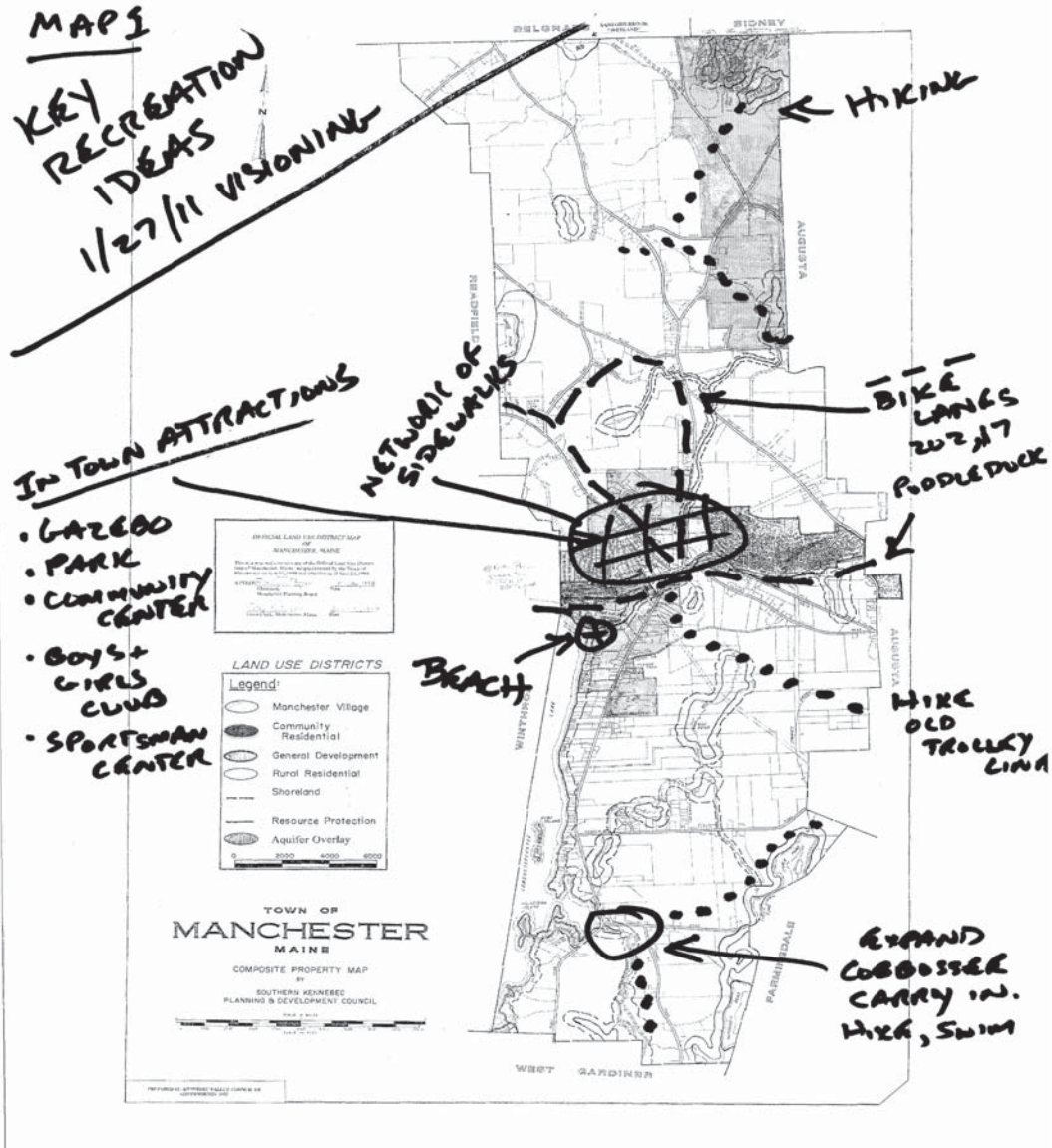


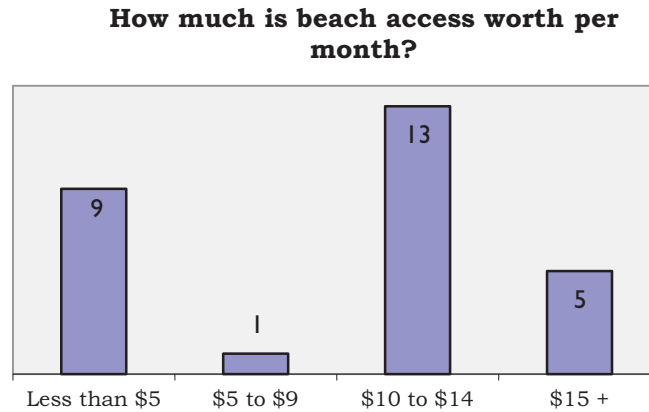
Figure 3. *Map showing some ideas for recreation in Manchester from the Visioning Session.*

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## BEACH ACCESS: HOW MUCH IS IT WORTH TO YOU?

The majority of participants at the session were willing to pay extra on their monthly tax bill to gain beach and swimming access, particularly for children (figure 4). But they made it very clear that this was only for beach access – simply a dock to put in boats did not have much value.

Figure 4. ***Visioning attendees opinions on paying for beach access (in property taxes).***



## II. PLANNING ELEMENTS

### II-A: POPULATION

This chapter presents a statistical profile of population in Manchester. Information is derived from US Census and other federal and state sources. The chapter also contains a speculative section on the future of Manchester, presented as a set of demographic scenarios. These are intended to illustrate the potential physical impacts of current or anticipated population trends.

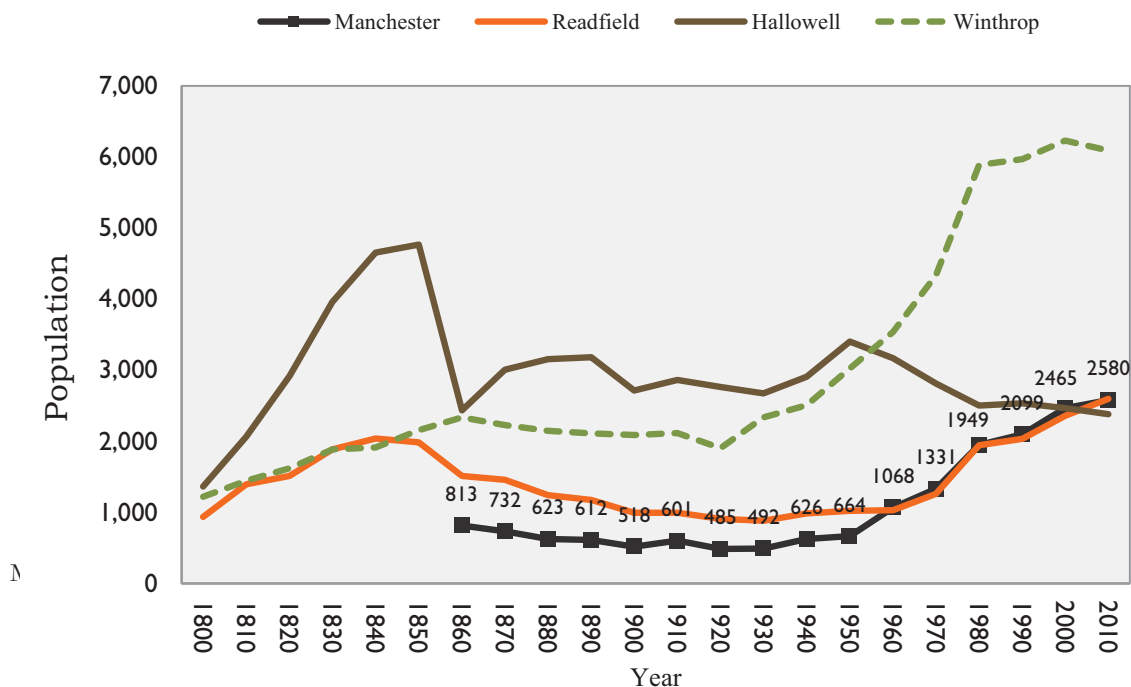
This chapter will be used in setting the groundwork for several sections of the comprehensive plan dealing with the impacts of growth.

#### POPULATION PROFILE:

“Population” is usually the principal criterion people use in measuring the size and vitality of a town. The current population is used as a yardstick for our role in the region, our expected level of public services, and so on. As of the 2010 census, Manchester’s population was 2,580.

Historic population patterns give hints as to social and economic trends. Figure 5, below, shows Manchester’s population since 1860 (line with population labels), along with that of neighboring towns.

Figure 5. **Manchester Historical Population Trends, and comparison with neighboring towns.**



Manchester's population history begins with its incorporation (as the Town of Kennebec) in 1850, so the trend line is shorter than several of our neighbors. Westward expansion during the late 1800's caused many rural Maine towns to lose significant population – Manchester less than most. Industrial towns, such as Hallowell, tended to be more stable.

Manchester's population bottoms out in 1920, but begins to build after that. Population really took off for a while in the 60's and 70's, as Manchester assumed a role as suburban community for Augusta. Manchester and Readfield have been on identical tracks since 1960, both now viewed as desirable suburbs of Augusta and both now larger than Hallowell.

Trends in population growth, both in the past and future, are visible representations of both demographic and economic changes. Projecting future growth and the demands it will put on town government is a matter of interpreting these trends accurately.

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## NATURAL CHANGE AND MIGRATION

Population change does not happen in a vacuum. It is the measurable result of trends. Two of these are **Natural Change**, which is the difference between births and deaths, and **Migration**, which is the difference between those moving into town and those moving out.

Natural change is an indicator of what is going on with the resident population. A plus number (more births than deaths) may mean a lot of babies but also a lot of young adults. A minus number (more deaths than births) indicates a more elderly population. Between 1990 and 2000, Manchester recorded a net increase of 65. Between 2000 and 2010, the net increase was still positive, but only 30. Fewer additions on the "birth" side have already shown up in declining school enrollments, indicative of fewer young families. By comparison, Augusta had a net decrease of 277 over the past decade; Readfield had an increase of 84.

Migration is calculated as the difference between overall population change and natural change. People choose to move into or out of a community based on many factors such as availability of employment, cost of housing, and quality of life. In the 1980's, Manchester had net in-migration of 44 people. In the 1990's, in-migration accelerated to 301 residents. Between 2000 and 2010, in-migration slowed to 85. This could be an indicator of lack of employment, lack of lower-cost housing availability, or a combination of both.

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## HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES:

As far as planning for the community is concerned, the basic unit of measure is not persons, but **Households**. Households include everyone living in a housing unit: single persons, families, and sometimes unrelated individuals. Table 6 illustrates the type of households in Manchester. Note the traditional "married couple families." Even though their numbers have increased, their growth rate is just about the same as the growth in households overall. Married couples made up fully 2/3 of all households in 1990; As of 2009, the percentage had dropped slightly to 64.6 percent.

**Table 6. Selected Household Characteristics, 1990, 2000, 2010**

Household Type:	1990	2000	2010	2000-2010 % change
Non-family Households	196	243	283	16.5
Households with at least one <b>over 65</b>	n/a	267	294	10.1
Married-couple families	534	630	631	0.2
Single-parent male-headed families	17	27	40	48
Single-parent female-headed families	57	77	90	16.9
<b>All Households</b>	<b>804</b>	<b>977</b>	<b>1,044</b>	<b>5.8</b>

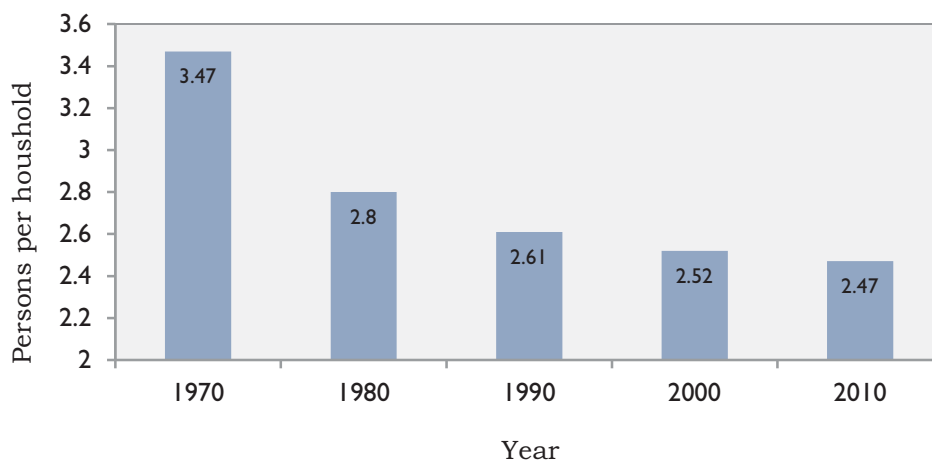
Source: US Census

The dramatic increase over the past decade has been in single-parent households. Combined with the increase in “non-family” households, the table shows that the ratio of traditional families to the overall number of households has gone from 66 percent in 1990 to 60 percent in 2010.

Non-traditional households tend to have different housing requirements. Although about 1/3 are simply families without either a father or mother, the other 2/3 are either single-person or several unrelated persons living together. These tend to be households in transition. Of particular importance to the community are elderly households. A statistic that wasn’t even reported in 1990 is now 28 percent of the total number of households. There are a lot of issues associated with the growth of elderly households, including the need for extended health and transportation services, and the potential market for smaller housing units.

The growth in non-traditional households has been one contributing factor to the shrinking average size of a household (figure 6). Manchester’s average household size has been declining since at least 1970. In the earlier decades, the trend was fed by fewer children per family and an increasing divorce rate. More recently, the aging of the baby boomers has led to the “empty nester” and retiree household. The trend of shrinking household size has been slowing, however, and there are indications it may level off as baby boomer descendants build their own families.

Figure 6. **Decline in the Number of Persons per Household, 1970-2000**

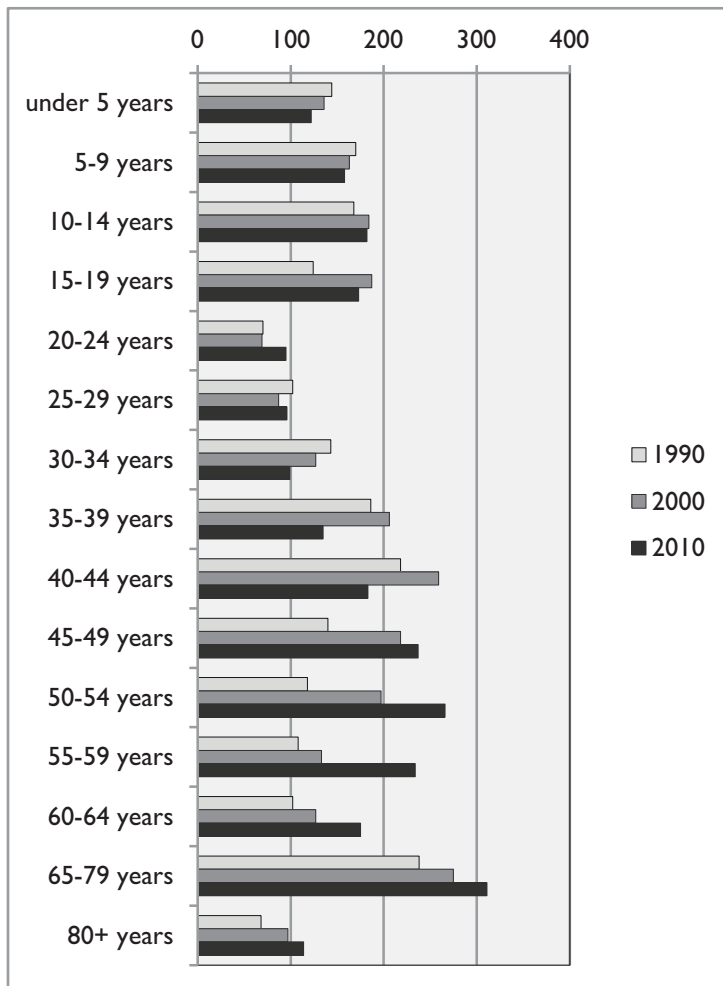


AGE:

A major contributor to changing household size is the aging of our population. In nearly every community in America over the past few decades, the significant feature of the population has been the baby boom. Technically, this refers to persons born between 1945 and 1965. The Baby Boom Generation changed the landscape – literally – during its tenure. First, more schools were built in the 1950s and 1960s; then, it was suburban housing; and soon, “mature” and senior housing developments will be peppering cities and towns.

Figure 7 illustrates the changes in Manchester’s population from 1990 to the most recent census in 2010. The under 15 population has not changed a tremendous amount over the last 20 years. Also, in all 3 time periods, there are significantly fewer residents in the 20-30 year age groups than children, as children move out of the home and out of Manchester. However, the baby boomers, who were in their late 30’s and 40’s in 1990 are now in their 50’s. This age cohort has been joined by an in-migration of other adults, as the overall numbers of residents in their 50’s and older has increased more than would be expected if the baby-boomers had just grown older. The number of residents between ages 50 and 60 is now double what it was in 1990. This is expected to have significant impacts

on the need for housing and medical care in the community in the future.



Often, **Median Age** is used to illustrate how the community is aging. A median is a point at which exactly half the population is above and half below, and is not the same as **average**. Manchester’s median age in 2010 was 46.2, over four years above where it was in 2000, and a big change from 1980 when its median age was 33. Many more people were added to the **old** side of the balance than the **young** side. According to the Regional Perspectives box, Manchester has a history as one of the “oldest” towns in the region.

Figure 7. **Demographic profile of Manchester Residents – 1990, 2000, 2010.**

As evidenced in both the table (Table 7) and chart (Figure 8) below, it is possible that the town will see significant declines in school age children in the next 5 years and increases in the 20-30 age group and a significant increase in the 50+ age groups.

**Table 7. Estimated Changes in Manchester’s Population by Age 2000 – 2014(est.)**

Age	2000	2010	2014 est.
Under 5	136	122	134
5 to 19	534	513	432
20 to 29	156	191	321
30 to 49	810	654	555
50 to 64	457	675	704
65 and over	372	425	478

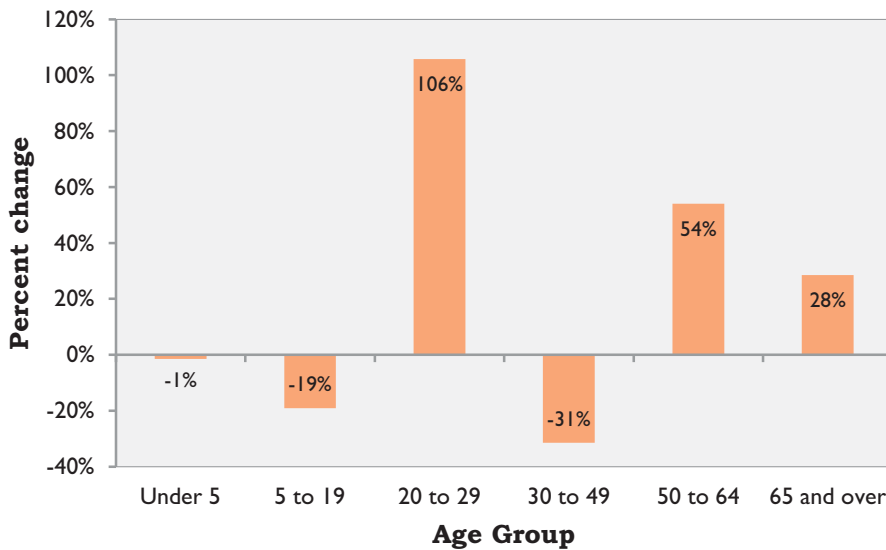
Source: US Census (2000, 2010)

**Regional Perspective:  
Median Ages**

Town	1990	2000
Augusta	36	40
Hallowell	36	42
<u>Manchester</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>42</u>
Monmouth	33	38
Readfield	36	38

Since household income trends upward with age and then drops after retirement – the changing age demographics of Manchester in the next 5 years could significantly impact the need for more affordable housing. Young people just starting their careers and families (those age 20 to 30) are often looking to establish their household (either buying their first home or renting) with limited financial means. Elderly and pre-retirement people may be looking to downsize.

Figure 8. **Manchester Population Percentage Change by Age Group 2000 to 2014**





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## IMPACTS OF POPULATION TRENDS:

A decreasing household size and aging population provide the context for future development in Manchester. At 3.47 persons per household in 1970, 2,500 residents (roughly today's population) would have required only 720 homes. Today, that population occupies 1,016 units.

What does this mean for the future? For every one-tenth drop in the average household size (e.g. from 2.5 to 2.4), about 40 new dwelling are required just to maintain Manchester's current population. And what kind of housing will it be? The big story over the next 10-20 years will be retiring baby boomers. For decades, we've built housing suited to growing, middle-class families. Empty-nesters and retirees will be looking for a lot different living environment. Failing to anticipate this demand will suppress future growth.

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## FUTURE SCENARIOS:

Historic population trends are amusing; but their true value is in predicting the future. The conventional mechanism of forecasting the future is to extrapolate past trends. A typical forecast would draw on the growth rate from the past 20 years, and assume that it will continue into the next 20 years. The Kennebec Valley Council of Governments' (KVCOG) growth forecast is based on such a formula. KVCOG's estimate for Manchester in 2030 is a population of 3,170. The State Planning Office (SPO) uses a more sophisticated formula that takes into account the survival rate of different age groups in town, migration patterns, and other factors. SPO's forecast for 2030 is 2,807.

The actual growth rate for Manchester was 17.4 percent in the 90's and 4.7 percent on the 00's. At least some of the slowing growth rate in the past decade can be attributed to the recession, but it is perhaps also possible that population growth is slowing down because potential new residents are looking for the type and price of housing that Manchester has not been able to supply.

Major factors driving (and controlling) population growth are the availability of housing and jobs. This suggests that we can work backwards to determine how many jobs and houses will be necessary to support a given population level. Why do this? We can *manage* job and housing growth to some extent, giving us the power to work towards a future instead of passively waiting for it.

In this section, we depict alternative possibilities for population growth over the coming twenty years. These are not projections; they are hypothetical future growth patterns, illustrating the relationships between jobs, housing, and other essentials of growth.

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## A "SLOW GROWTH" SCENARIO:

In the first scenario, we look at growth at about the rate we have experienced since 2000. That's about 12 residents per year and a growth rate of 4.7 percent per decade. The result of this rate of growth extended to 2030 would be 2,826 residents.

The first question should be, how many new houses will that bring us? As discussed above, we cannot assume a straight line between population and housing. If we could, we would just multiply the increase in population from 2000 to 2010 by the average household size and come up with a figure of 100 new homes. But it is likely that household sizes will continue to decline in the near future. With a current household size of 2.47, we can presume that by 2030, the household size would have shrunk to 2.40. If that is the case, a population of 2,826 will occupy 1,177 units, an increase of 134. One hundred thirty four is just exactly double the number of new households in the past decade, so we can get a sense of what this level of growth would look like.

One hundred thirty four new homes would have a proportional impact on the physical resources of the community. Each one will require acreage and street frontage, “how much” depending on where it is located.

If these new homes are located in the Rural Residential District, where the minimum lot size is 80,000 square feet, 134 new homes would occupy *at least* 246 acres and a little over five miles of street frontage, at maximum efficiency. If the homes were located on sewer in the Community Residential District, they would consume at least 123 acres. While most of the new development would be added on to existing roads, some new subdivision streets would be expected. Five miles of developed frontage, even though scattered through town, could have a significant visual impact.

It is a little more difficult to calculate the number of new jobs to support these households. Manchester in 2000 had 1.35 workers per household. Ordinarily, the ratio of workers to households stays fairly constant, but by 2030 many more households will be retired. In Kennebec County, the average worker to household ratio is 1.25, probably a more accurate estimate of what Manchester can expect in 20 years.

Manchester will have 1,177 households in 2030, under this scenario. At 1.25 workers per household, the town would have 1,470 workers, an increase of 150 over 20 years. Manchester now supplies 17 percent of its residents’ employment, so would need to create 26 jobs to support our 134 new households. (Most of Manchester’s current jobs go to out of town residents, so the actual job increase would be more than twice that number, if the ratio stayed the same.) That number of new jobs could be supported (for example) by 25,000 square feet of new retail space or 10,000 square feet of medical office space.

In summary, a growth rate similar to that experienced over the past decade would result in twenty years in an increase of 246 new residents, 134 new homes, and 150 new jobs (at least 26 of which would be in town.) This is a fairly conservative scenario, since it is based on a slow growth rate that, except for the most recent decade, the town has not experienced since the 1940’s, but still requires a fairly large investment in land area and roads.

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#### A “MODERATE GROWTH” SCENARIO:

We know that Manchester has the potential for faster growth than it has experienced this past decade. Manchester grew at 7.7 percent during the 80’s, 17 percent during the 90’s. For the purpose of this scenario, let’s assume a growth rate that the town averaged from 1990 until 2010: about one percent per year, 23 percent over the 20-year span.

This growth rate would result in a 2030 population of 3,171. Population gain would total 591 -- about thirty per year, compared to the 481 the town gained from 1990-2010.

Applying the same assumptions about household size to this scenario gives us a projected demand of 1,321 households. That is a total of 277 new households. The 14 new homes per year needed to support this scenario compares with the 11.6 new (year-round) houses per year in the 80's and 17.3 per year in the 90's.

That many new housing units, if placed on minimum sized lots in the Rural Residential District, would consume 509 acres of undeveloped land (almost a square mile) and 10.5 miles of road frontage, if every unit was built to the precise minimum dimensions. That is about 4 percent of the total land area of Manchester. If placed on sewer in the Community Residential District, the same number of homes would occupy closer to 255 acres – or as little as 100 acres if clustered on 40 percent in an open space subdivision. These are substantial numbers, enough to bring home the argument about the wastefulness of suburban sprawl.

The new total of 1,321 households, using the assumption of 1.25 workers per household, would generate 1651 workers by 2030, an increase of 331 from 2000. If Manchester continues to be a net exporter of workers, 56 of those jobs would have to be located in town. It is probably worth noting that jobs are sufficient but not necessary for population growth. If the number of jobs does not grow as housing development grows, either the unemployment rate or the home vacancy rate goes up. If job creation goes faster than projected, there is a very good chance population will grow proportionately, but so will house prices and construction due to the increased demand.

That many new jobs will require substantial new commercial construction. While some of the jobs will undoubtedly go under existing roofs, at least half of them will probably occupy new buildings. How much, depends largely on the type of business. Ordinary offices can usually support four or five workers per 1,000 square feet of office space; retail stores more often support only one or two. If we use an average of 2.5 jobs per 1,000 square feet, 58 new jobs will require 23,000 square feet of commercial construction.

In summary, a growth rate that reflects the average over the past twenty years is likely to result in an addition of 277 new homes, occupying between 250 and 500 new acres. The 2030 population of 3,171 would require at least 331 new jobs to support it.

\* \* \*

These two scenarios are intended to identify some of the issues associated with the next twenty years of growth. What will be the effect of 500 acres of residential development? Some of that depends on whether development comes in the form of subdivisions (higher visibility) or single-lots (more dispersed). If we need to develop ten miles of road frontage, will we use existing town streets, or new private roads? What will be the impacts of a hundred or more households on schools, roads, solid waste disposal, public safety, recreation facilities?

Actions that the town can take as recommended by this plan will have an effect on which of these scenarios – or either – “comes true.” For example:

- If a new business park or other major commercial development locates in Manchester, this would create far more jobs than necessary to support past growth rates. Depending on whether the types of jobs created are taken by Manchester residents, it could either reduce the outflow of commuters to Augusta or increase the inflow of commuters from neighboring towns.

- Creation of a large number of new jobs would increase development pressure for housing in town and accelerate population growth. In the short term, it would raise housing prices.
- Increasing the size of the Community Residential or Village Districts, together with expanding the sewer collection network, would lower the initial investment cost for housing. This could either accelerate development in town or re-direct it from the town's rural areas.
- Increasing protection for the town's valuable rural areas or the lake watersheds could raise the price of land elsewhere in town, slowing growth or redirecting it to designated growth areas.
- Targeting new housing development to the changing demographics of the town (aging, smaller households) will preserve options for existing residents. Prolonged development of "family-sized" homes will result in a turnover in population, an increase in school enrollment and, likely, a market surplus, reducing housing prices.

## II-B. MANCHESTER'S HOUSING

*State's Goal: Encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens.*

### PRINCIPAL ISSUES:

As documented in the previous chapter, changing demographics within a community means that we cannot keep a static housing supply, even with steady population numbers. In particular, smaller households mean more housing units for equal numbers of persons. At the rate that the household size in Manchester has declined over the past 20 years, the town needs nearly five new homes per year just to hold population steady; 4.85 is our “break-even” housing rate.

Smaller households tend to be either young or old (new workers, seniors, etc.) and clearly do not need as much house as family households. A specific type of housing serves them. Manchester has no senior housing or apartments. Yet, as can be seen in Figure 7 and Table 7, Manchester is experiencing a boom in elderly households, a trend echoed throughout Kennebec County (“Over 65” single households increasing almost triple the rate of overall population). The aging baby boom will create enormous demand for this type of housing.

If the private market does not move to satisfy this shift in housing demand, we could see a domino effect. The older generation will want to downsize, and would have to choose between leaving town and staying in their current homes. Their current homes may be more suitable for the young families needed to replenish Manchester's vitality. Without the young families, the population would begin to decline. There would still be an apparent demand for family-style housing, but it would be a substitute for the housing type that is really needed.

Manchester's affordable housing situation looks good, but that can be deceptive. Manchester's median household incomes are well above the average for Kennebec County, making home prices and rents appear to be affordable. But because Manchester is so unlike the rest of the towns in the region, it is not serving the regional average for workforce housing.

In order to afford a home costing \$136,000 a household would need an income of about \$46,000 (the Kennebec County average). According to data from the Maine Department of Labor, there are at least 350 occupations in Maine where the median annual salary is below \$46,000. For example, the average teacher salary in the Maranacook schools in 2007 was a little over \$42,000. That is well below 80 percent of median in the community. If we want teachers to be able to live here without taking a second job, we have to have some decent homes priced at \$136,000 and under.

### MANCHESTER'S PLANNING GOALS:

- Promote housing opportunities that meet the needs of various household and income levels in Manchester, and that are consistent with the residential and rural character of our town.

- Encourage residential growth where water and sewer are available.
- Encourage more affordable housing, with at least 10 percent of new housing affordable to households making 80 percent of median household income.
- Balance housing growth with preservation of water quality in Cobbossee Lake.

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**POLICIES:**

- A. Seek to improve ordinances so that affordable housing can be more successfully developed in Manchester.
- B. Promote water-quality preservation by using a combination of low impact development strategies and runoff mitigation banking in the Cobbossee watershed, thereby promoting development in compliance with Cobbossee watershed phosphorus runoff rules.
- C. Encourage higher density development and/or subdivisions in designated growth areas.
- D. Create more access to public water and sewer service in village residential zone through cooperation with Maine DOT, the Greater Augusta Utility District and the Manchester Sanitary District.
- E. Promote increased availability and affordability of senior housing in Manchester.
- F. Promote the preservation of historic houses in Manchester.
- G. Increase flexibility of subdivision rules to promote infill in the village residential zone, make bonus density provisions functional, and promote increased housing of all price ranges in growth areas.
- H. Continue to allow mobile home parks where currently permitted in Manchester.
- I. Implement new Maine standard building codes.

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**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:**

- 1) Review ordinances for obstacles to affordable housing, particularly in the village residential zone, and revise as necessary. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 2) Review multifamily ordinance provisions, and revise to permit greater density in the village residential zone. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 3) Develop a strategy to educate developers and builders about phosphorus runoff mitigation in Cobbossee watershed, to increase general awareness of the issue. *Conservation Commission, Mid term*
- 4) Develop a runoff mitigation banking program in Manchester that can be used to offset runoff increases

from development with reductions in runoff from Manchester local roadways. *Conservation Commission w/Cobbossee Watershed District, Mid term*

- 5) Increase flexibility of site-review and subdivision ordinances with respect to road building standards for subdivisions of 10 units or less (e.g. reduce mandatory width to 18'). *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 6) Develop a joint (public-private) development strategy for financing extensions of public water and sewer systems to new areas in the village residential zone and new targeted growth areas. *Planning Board, Board of Selectmen. Long term*
- 7) Review ordinances and revise to make senior housing an allowed use in some zones. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 8) Create and task a committee to work with regional nonprofit organizations to identify opportunities to increase the availability of senior housing in Manchester. *Board of Selectmen, Mid term*
- 9) Investigate the feasibility of developing a local tax-incentive program for the rehabilitation of historic housing stock, with caps, inspections, and time limits. (By Historical Society). *Historical Society and Assessor, Mid term*
- 10) Revise housing ordinances for targeted growth areas that will increase the variety and availability of housing in those areas. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term.*
- 11) Continue to permit mobile home parks in the Community Residential and General Development Districts only. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*

## INFORMATION ABOUT MANCHESTER'S HOUSING

Manchester's housing supply, prices, availability of land, and proximity to job centers combine to determine the potential for future growth in the town. While the development of housing stock has traditionally been a private sector function, a mixture of housing types encourages a mixture of residents – old and young, singles and large families, as well as different economic classes. This is a positive outcome for the community.

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### HOUSING SUPPLY AND TENURE:

Figure 9, below, shows the change in the number of housing units in Manchester since 1970. The 2008 total is based on adding in the number of houses built since 2000 according to local tax records.

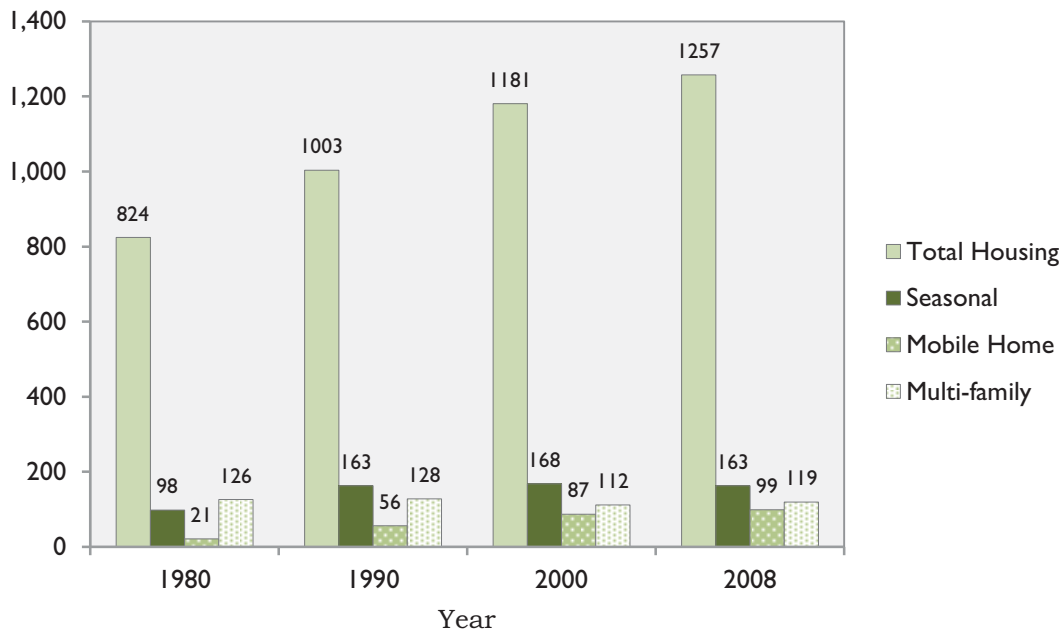


Figure 9. **Growth in Housing Supply, 1970-2008**

The overwhelming majority of housing is single-family (traditional). The number of mobile homes is relatively small (seven percent versus 11 percent for Kennebec County), and the number of multi-family housing units has changed little in 30 years. The number of seasonal units in 1990 exactly equals the number in 2008. There may have been several new camps built since 1990, and old ones converted and now listed as year-round dwellings.

It's fairly clear from the statistics that almost all of the housing stock growth in Manchester is from single family homes. Only about one in five new individual homes are mobile homes, and multi-family units are actually declining in number. Site built homes are generally the most desirable, but more expensive. In many communities, mobile homes are viewed as one of the solutions to affordable housing.

Apart from the style of housing, there is the question of tenure; that is, whether the housing unit is owner-occupied or rented. Owner-occupied housing is generally looked upon as "the ideal" because it is more stable – and indeed, the vast majority of housing in Manchester, Kennebec County, and Maine is owner-occupied. Nevertheless, rental housing is often the choice of people at opposite ends of the spectrum: older people who often do not want or can afford the investment, and young people, who may want it but cannot afford it. Rental housing tends to accommodate smaller households: In 2000, owner-occupied housing had an average of 2.61 persons in a household; a renter-occupied unit had an average of 1.95.



In 2010, Manchester had 149 rental units, just 14 percent of the total housing stock. Rental units, especially multi-family units, are characteristic of more urban patterns. As can be seen in the box at right, in 2000 Augusta had over 45 percent rentals and Winthrop 24, while other neighboring towns had in the teens. As Manchester moves towards a more urban style of development, it is likely to see the number of rental properties increase.

Regional Perspective: Rentals	
Town	2000 Rental Percentage
Winthrop	24.0 %
Augusta	45.5 %
<b>Manchester</b>	<b>13.3 %</b>
Monmouth	15.7 %
Readfield	11.9 %

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### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HOUSING STOCK:

The age of the homes in Manchester is reported in the census, and may give us some clues about the quality or and demand for the housing stock. For example, homes built before World War II have potential to be historic homes, while homes built in the past twenty years are more likely to be very energy-efficient.

Table 8, below, indicates housing age. The largest single decade of homes in Manchester was the 70's. More than half of homes existing in 2000 had been built within the past 30 years. Nineteen percent had been built in the 90's, and 20 percent pre-war. Home-building during the era of suburbanization has tended to move outward from cities, so it is not surprising that in Augusta, 32 percent of the structures are pre-war, while only five percent were built after 1990. Kennebec County also has a higher percentage of pre-war homes (28.5 %) and fewer post-1990 homes (13.5 percent) than Manchester.

The 2010 census indicates an addition of 74 new housing units in Manchester since 2000. That is a construction rate of less than 1/3 of the rate in the 90's.

**Table 8. Manchester Year of Construction of Homes**

Year Structure Built	Units	Percent
1990 to 1999	226	19%
1980 to 1989	177	15%
1970 to 1979	258	22%
1960 to 1969	81	7%
1940 to 1959	207	17%
1939 or earlier	232	20%

Source: 2000 Census

## HOUSING PRICES:

The price of housing is primarily a function of supply and demand. But sometimes, the price of homes can run up beyond the capability of local residents to afford them. The community has an interest in maintaining a range of housing prices and opportunities. Choices in housing lead to a diverse and vibrant community.

As of the 2000 Census, the median value of a single-family, stick-built home in Manchester was \$124,300. At that time, about 1/3 of all the owner occupied homes in Manchester had a value less than \$100,000. One out of five was worth more than \$200,000. The median value was 20 percent more than in 1990, when the median home was \$105,300. Table 9, below, shows the trend in actual housing sales since 2000. Prices took a sharp drop in 2008.

**Table 9. Median Household Income and Median Home price in Manchester by Year**

Year	Median Household Income	Median Home Price
2000	\$52,500	\$117,500
2001	\$60,248	\$134,000
2002	\$60,726	\$133,250
2003	\$60,854	\$150,000
2004	\$64,049	\$165,500
2005	\$65,338	\$208,000
2006	\$67,182	\$200,000
2007	\$69,291	\$232,875
2008	\$70,468	\$159,750
2009	\$71,570	\$186,000

Source: Claritas (income estimates) and Maine State Housing Authority

The table above bases its home price figures on actual sales. The American Community Survey, issued in 2009 and based on statistical sampling over five-years, reported that the median home value in 2009 dollars was \$178,600. Only 21 percent of homes were valued under \$100,000, and 38 percent over \$200,000.

Manchester has by far the highest housing prices in Kennebec County. This fact may limit access to potential home buyers. While buying a home is always a case-by-case decision, Manchester's prices certainly increase the chances that a buyer will find more home for the money in Hallowell or Winthrop. However, the dramatic decline in home values since 2008 will probably have a greater effect in Manchester than elsewhere, if only because the prices were higher to start.

In 2000, the median rent in Manchester was \$466. In 2009, the median rent was \$655. That is a 40 percent increase, less than home prices. However, there are only 114 renters in Manchester, compared to 119 in 2000, so the rental market is not expanding. One-quarter of renters pay more than 35 percent of their income for rent.

### Regional Perspective:

#### Housing Values

Town	2000 Home Value
Winthrop	\$97,300
Augusta	80,500
<b>Manchester</b>	<b>124,300</b>
Hallowell	92,000
Monmouth	90,800
Readfield	104,900

## HOUSING AFFORDABILITY:

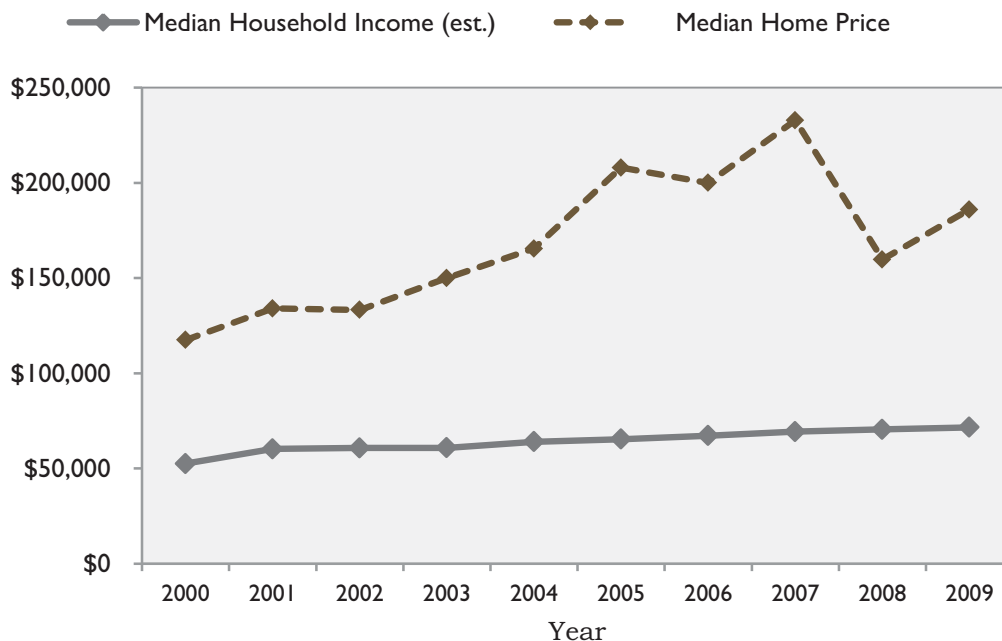
The price of a home must be considered in view of our ability to pay it. It was not that long ago that you could get a decent house in Manchester for under \$50,000 (1980, to be exact) -- but \$20,000 a year was a good income. In terms of the economic health of our community, the *cost* of a home is not as important as its **affordability**.

What measure do we use to define “affordable?” If you went to the bank, and they would not lend you enough to buy a home because you didn’t have the income to qualify, that would make the home unaffordable. Or, if you had a sudden income drop (for example, retiring) and could no longer make the payments on your home, that would make your home unaffordable. The guide used by analysts is 30 percent – that is, a household should not spend more than 30% of its income on housing. According to the 2009 census estimate (American Community Survey) about 154 out of 1,026 Manchester households currently spend more than 30 percent of their income on their homes.

Table 9 shows how both home prices and household incomes have risen since 2000. Using the table, 2009 home prices rose by 58 percent. Incomes rose only 36 percent. (These are independent income estimates. The 2009 ACS estimates the median income in Manchester at \$64,545. That would make an income rise of only 23 percent for the decade.) The inference is that homes in Manchester are less affordable than they were ten years ago.

Figure 10 below charts those same sales and income figures. Manchester experienced rapidly rising home prices during the housing price boom – with the median sales price peaking in 2007 at nearly double the 2000 median of \$117,500 – while income growth lagged home prices.

Figure 10. ***Change in Median Household Income and Median Home Price since 2000***



The mortgage crisis and recession in 2008 caused a significant drop in prices, but they rose again in 2009, by nearly \$30,000. This figure, though, is based on very few home sales in a one-year period, so may not be indicative of a trend.

Manchester’s median household income in 2009 of \$64,545 can afford the median value home of \$178,000 (though not the median in 2007). But a lack of lower-priced homes makes it difficult for community growth. Since 2004, less than 20 homes in Manchester have sold for \$100,000 or less and another dozen or so have sold for between \$100,000 and \$125,000. Nearly 60% of the homes under \$100,000 have been mobile homes or condominiums. The 2009 median income in Kennebec County of \$46,368 can afford only a \$140,000 home, making much of Manchester’s housing out of reach for the larger market area.

The 2009 ACS contains actual figures for affordability. Among existing Manchester homeowners, 136 households were paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing, including 78 households paying more than 35 percent. Among renters, 28 households (about 1/4) paid more than 35 percent of their income for rent.

MSHA statistics indicate the demand for affordable housing according to income levels. Table 10, below, shows a breakdown. This table illustrates that there are a certain number of households, even in Manchester, whose income levels are such that affordable housing may not be available to them. (Note these thresholds are based on the income estimates from Table 9, not the census.)

**Table 10. Manchester Income Classes by Tenure, 2008**

Household Type	Households below percentage of median Manchester income		
	Below 50% (less than \$35K income)	Below 80% (less than \$56K income)	Below 150% (less than \$106K income)
Owner households total	134 (14%)	312 (34%)	926 (100%)
Owners over 65	91 (37%)	144 (59%)	205 (84%)
Renter Households total	44 (31%)	77 (55%)	142 (100%)
Renters over 65	14 (59%)	19 (78%)	23 (96%)
Potential homeowners	14 (25%)	27 (48%)	56 (100%)

Source: MSHA *Housing Facts (2008)*

The table shows that one out of every seven homeowners and one out of three renters earned less than \$35,000 (50 percent of median) in 2008. An affordable house at that income is \$105,000; an affordable rent is about \$900/month. Thirty four percent of homeowners and 55 percent of renters earned less than \$56,400 (80 %). An affordable home for them is \$192,000; an affordable rent is about \$1,700/month. The state’s growth management law requires towns to target at least 10 percent of new housing to be affordable at the 80 percent threshold.

“Potential Homeowners” are current renters who are of an age to be in the market to buy a house – 25-44. There are 27 of these falling into the “80 percent of median” category in Manchester alone; therefore a potential for 27 new homes below the \$192,000 mark. Between 2005 and 2008, only six families locally took advantage of the MSHA “first-time homebuyers” incentive program.

Seniors are usually the class most in need of affordable housing, but in Manchester, most of the low income seniors are in their own homes already. MSHA statistics show there are 105 senior households in the “very low income” category, but only 14 of them are renters. Rental subsidies are available for seniors, and there are 30 subsidized units in Manchester. This makes Manchester one of the few towns with a surplus of senior rental subsidies. (There is still a shortage of family-based subsidized units.)

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#### Affordable Housing Needs for the Future:

Scenarios for future growth developed in Chapter II-A indicate that the town can expect between 134 (“slow growth”) and 277 (“moderate growth”) new households over twenty years. If we adhere to current ratios, between 19 and 40 of the units will be rentals; the remainder will be owner-occupied units.

The Growth Management Law directs that communities should plan to provide for at least 10 percent of their new housing stock to be affordable to households making 80 percent of median income. Median incomes as well as housing prices are bound to increase over 20 years, but we can get a good idea of our needs by using current figures.

Eighty percent of Manchester’s 2009 median household income of \$64,545 is \$51,636. An income of \$52,000 can afford a home priced at roughly \$160,000, using recent interest rates. That would mean that in order to meet the state goal, Manchester would have to see between 13 and 28 of the new homes priced under \$160,000, equal to about one per year. The town could conceivably meet the minimum threshold by just ensuring that all the new rentals projected during the period are priced under about \$1,200 (affordable rent.)

## II-C: TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

*State Goal: Plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.*

### PRINCIPAL ISSUES:

Manchester's road system, whether by chance or by design, radiates out from the village area like spokes on a wheel. The hub of that wheel is the village, clearly the critical element of the town's transportation system.

Past plans and expressions of public opinion have supported the re-establishment of a village setting, but the presence of a five-lane highway (US Route 202) bisecting the village has been an obstacle to that objective. The overall effect has been a lack of cohesion within the growth area and lack of alternatives to auto trips. Commercial development occupies a long segment of Route 202. The logical extension of this trend is the complete buildout of Route 202 until it connects with Augusta's Western Ave. commercial strip. The resulting proliferation of commercial driveways and traffic generators would create serious congestion concerns within a corridor already identified by Maine DOT as in need of attention.

Traffic at the hub is a more imminent concern. At least five separate roads intersect Route 202 within the space of about 300 yards, together with several commercial driveways (fig. 11). Both signalized intersections are DOT-identified high crash locations. Most major traffic generators are close to this convergence, including the Oakes and Parkhurst commercial center, the elementary school, several service stations, and the post office. A new business park is also planned for this vicinity. This is an opportunity to address congestion and conflict problems as well as build village cohesion.

Figure 11. ***Map showing transportation system in Manchester and traffic volumes on local roadways.***

Speeding in the village portion of Route 17 has also been identified as a problem. Structural techniques can "calm" traffic in a downtown setting such as this. Shifting the curbing out into the roadway at pedestrian crossings -- a "neckdown" -- makes drivers feel they must slow down to fit through a tighter space (the driving lanes are actually the same width). Pedestrians, meanwhile, feel safer with a shorter distance to cross the road. Stamped pavement (imitation cobbles) and speed tables (not speed bumps) also cause drivers to slow. Changes to the intersection profile at Route 202 can also reduce speeding. Sidewalks and other amenities would make Route 17 feel more user-friendly and less like a highway.

Traffic follows development, and traffic growth is likely to be tied directly to the location of housing and commercial growth. Manchester's Land Use Ordinance encourages residential development in proximity to the

village, but has not been very effective in slowing the sprawling pattern of individual homes in rural areas. Development in Readfield and beyond has also stimulated traffic growth on rural roads such as Route 17.

Like many small towns, Manchester's transportation options are limited. Motor vehicles have been the dominant form of transportation for decades, and the system has evolved in response. Within the planning period, the town will have to look at providing the infrastructure for alternatives, such as public transportation and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

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#### POLICIES:

- A. Prioritize community and regional needs associated with safe, efficient and optimal use of transportation systems.
- B. Safely and efficiently preserve or improve the transportation system.
- C. Promote public health, protect natural and cultural resources and enhance livability by managing land use in ways that maximize the efficiency of the transportation system and minimize increases in vehicle miles traveled.
- D. Meet the diverse transportation needs of residents (including children, the elderly and disabled) and through travelers by providing a safe, efficient and adequate transportation network for all types of users (motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists).
- E. Promote fiscal prudence by maximizing the efficiency of the state-aid highway network.

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#### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- 1) Continue the town road management program utilizing the recommendations of the Road Committee. Consider increasing annual funding for road maintenance projects. *Board of Selectmen, Road Committee, Ongoing*
- 2) Meet with MaineDOT and surrounding towns on a regular basis to discuss reducing the negative impacts of thru-traffic from commuters and/or other regional development activities. *Board of Selectmen, Town Manager, Road Committee, Ongoing*
- 3) Support any organization working to develop public transportation in Manchester and explore options with the Kennebec Explorer for system expansion. *Board of Selectmen, Ongoing and Mid term*
- 4) Maintain ordinance standards for access management, and ensure that future developments don't negatively impact traffic flow through town. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Planning Board – Ongoing*
- 5) Meet with Maine DOT regarding Route 202 improvements in town as recommended by the 2010 Route 202 Corridor Management Plan, specifically:

- a. Minimize additional ingress points to Route 202;
- b. Consolidate and/or connect Kerns' Hill Road with Granite Hill Road and realign Puddledock Road entry to Route 17;
- c. Implement speed calming techniques along Route 202 such as installation of rotaries at Pond Road/Route 17/Route 202, and Granite Hill Rd./Rte 202;
- d. Implement new traffic controls, such as rotaries at Pond Rd/Rte 17, and Granite Hill Rd., that can be used to increase the safety of the Puddledock Rd./Kerns Hill Rd, preventing left-turning traffic into and out of those two roads.
- e. Route 202 to Route 17 off-ramp should be modified to lessen speed. (Irrelevant if rotary is built)
- f. Add paved shoulder east of Route 17/Pond Rd. sufficient for bicycling.

*Board of Selectmen, Town Manager, Road Committee, residents, Short term*

- 6) Consider provision for sidewalks as road work is contemplated and designed where the economically feasible. Look for opportunities to build sidewalk connecting town office, post office, and fire station. Apply for Safe Routes to School funding to connect Kennison St. to Manchester Elementary School along Route 17. Road Committee, Ongoing (Safe routes to school application = Spring 2012)
- 7) Oppose additional state-aid road transfers from MDOT. *Board of Selectmen, Ongoing*
- 8) Request from MDOT a school zone speed limit sign and light on Route 17 by Manchester Elementary School. *Board of Selectmen, Short term*

## INFORMATION ABOUT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS IN MANCHESTER:

Manchester is highly dependent on its transportation system. Local businesses need transportation to move products and draw customers. Residents need a way to get to their jobs out of town, and employers need a way to access workers. Families need transportation to schools, services, shopping, and recreation.

Transportation to this point has grown from paths and wagon trails to the paved roads and highways we use now, without too much planning or thought in between. As the cost of building and maintaining the system grows, though, we suddenly have to begin planning for how to manage “more with less”. This plan explores how we can provide the most cost-effective transportation choices, while promoting land use and economic development choices that make the best use of the system.

### STATE AND STATE AID ROADS

The backbone of our transportation system is the state highway system, designed to accommodate significant volumes of motor vehicles. “State highways” also include the category of state aid roads, maintenance of which is only partially borne by the state. Manchester’s state highways (see fig. 12) are:

Figure 12. ***Map showing Manchester’s Town, State, and State Aid Roads:***



U.S. Route 202, the principal highway through Manchester, is also one of the state's major highway corridors. It connects Augusta with Lewiston on a modern, well-built highway. The state classifies it as a "retrograde arterial," which means that it is an essential highway that has, unfortunately, a higher-than-average incidence of driveway-related crashes. This is partly the result of the high level of development adjacent to the road.

Route 202 does not require any improvements to the highway surface, being well-maintained as warrants a major state highway. A widening some 30 years ago provided a four lane corridor through Manchester's downtown. This has proved a mixed blessing, providing good mobility and access for vehicles, but bisecting the original village and making pedestrian travel much more difficult.

To the east, Route 202 narrows to three lanes and then to two. Growing traffic volumes and commercial development have burdened this section. Widening or alternative improvements to ease traffic flow have been subject of study and conversation for decades, with very little concrete action being taken. Responsibility for improvements lies with the Maine DOT, which is relying heavily on local input.

ME Route 17 originates in Manchester village and leads to Readfield and northwest. It is a two-lane, major collector road, with approximately two miles in Manchester. Route 17 provides access to several public buildings (town office, post office, community church, and elementary school) and village-style residential development. The condition of Route 17 is good; however, it receives heavy use as a commuter access route.

Granite Hill Road is also classified as a major collector highway by the State. In contrast to Route 17, this road has not been improved to a large extent, and remains relatively narrow with a fair travel surface in Manchester. About 1.6 miles is located in Manchester, extending southeast from Route 202 in the village area. The road is moderately developed with roadside houses, but has the potential to service much development on back lots.

ME Route 135 is a north-south route running from Winthrop to Belgrade, cutting through the northwestern corner of Manchester. It does not provide significant transportation options to residents, and is deteriorating. Minor collector roads will never be improved unless a town agrees to pay 1/3 or more of the cost. (A proposal under consideration would make towns entirely responsible for improvement costs on minor collectors).

Pond Road is also part of the state highway network, classed as a minor collector, with a road surface in fair condition. It extends approximately 4.7 miles south from the intersection with Route 202 in the village center.

It is not surprising that almost all of the elements of the state highway system come together at the most congested point in Manchester. These intersections create a lot of activity. Congestion conflicts and opportunities to remedy them will be discussed later in this chapter.

Under the guidance of MaineDOT, Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG) completed a Multimodal Corridor Management Plan for the Route 202 corridor. This plan contains a set of recommendations for improvements not just to highways but all components of the transportation system, in an initiative to alleviate strain on the state highway system. The plan has been prepared with the participation of the town, and contains several recommendations appropriate for consideration in this plan.

**TOWN WAYS:**

Town ways are those roads for which the Town has maintenance responsibility. They do not include state aid roads (those for which the State is responsible for summer maintenance and the Town responsible for plowing.) They also do not include private roads, even if open to the public. State law prohibits the Town from spending public funds to maintain or improve private roads. Table 11, below, lists town ways in Manchester.

**Table 11. Manchester Town Roads and Ways**

<b>Town Roads</b>	<b>Mileage</b>	<b>Town Roads</b>	<b>Mileage</b>
Allen Hill Drive	.08	Lyons Road	.65
Benson Road	1.37	McArdle Street	.34
Collins Road	1.16	Meadow Hill Road	1.60
Cottle Road-East End	.27	Mount Vernon Road-South End	.47
Cottle Road-West End	.10	Myrtle Street	.42
Cram Road	.24	Old Winthrop Road	.29
Cross Street	.13	Pelton Road	.43
Elliot Avenue	.26	Prescott Road	6.00
Fifield Road	.28	Puddledock Road	1.67
Forest Circle	.17	Ryan Drive	.22
Foye Road	.24	Scribner Hill Road	1.78
Gardencrest (5 streets)	1.37	Smith Road	.14
Gilbert Drive	.25	Summerhaven Road	2.03
Heather Street	.11	Sylvester Dr.	.10
Hillside Road	.12	Tanning Brook Road	.07
Ingraham Street	.18	West Street	.24
Kennison Street	.25	Worthing Road	1.17
Kerns Hill Road	1.71		
Knowles Road	.24		

Summer and winter maintenance is performed by private contractors under a competitive bidding system. The Town had been experimenting with a shared public works department with Readfield, but after the latter voted in 2011 to disband it, that option is no longer available.

Maintenance is supervised by the Road Commissioner (Town Manager) and an appointed Road Committee. The Road Committee is responsible for monitoring and prioritizing road needs. The committee tries to stick to a constant budget from year to year (\$250-300,000), but recognizes that the current amount is insufficient to keep up with road needs.

**SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE ROAD SYSTEM:**

In order to function efficiently, the highway system needs certain additional elements of infrastructure. These include bridges, traffic controls (signals, directional controls), and parking.

**Bridges:** Manchester’s road system of necessity includes a number of stream crossings. Many of these are small culverts, which are the responsibility of the town to maintain. Culverts are cleaned and inspected regularly,

and replaced as necessary. Bridges of over 10' are the responsibility of the State. There are just two bridges on the DOT inventory (see figure 12):

- Pond Road, Bridge over Cobbossee Stream. This is a 105' concrete slab-type bridge in good condition, with a federal sufficiency rating of 71.8. (A rating of under 40 is cause for concern.)
- Collins Road, over Jamies Pond. Known as the "Beaver Dam Bridge," this is technically a culvert and is the responsibility of the Town. It is in very good condition.

The bridge inventory demonstrates that all bridges in Manchester are in working order, and there are no problem areas or pending replacements.

Traffic Controls: Traffic controls are infrastructure to help manage the flow of traffic. They range from STOP and YIELD signs to signals and raised islands.

Despite having a heavily-used major highway bisecting the town, Manchester has not yet been overwhelmed with traffic controls. Two signalized intersections on Route 202 serve to slow traffic in the downtown area. The signal at Route 202/Route 17/Pond Road is the primary control. Both Route 17 and Pond Road have channelization islands approaching the intersection, whereas Route 202 has a dedicated center left turn lane. "Slip lanes" allow westbound Route 202 traffic to turn right at Route 17, and eastbound traffic to turn right onto Pond Road. The former allows traffic to turn onto Route 17 without a significant loss in speed, which creates conflicts with prospective pedestrian traffic in an area with the elementary school, church, town office, and post office.

A second signal is located at the Route 202/Granite Hill road intersection. It is not connected to the other signal. Between the two signals, Puddledock Road and Kerns Hill Road intersect with Route 202. These roads are controlled only by STOP signs, creating potential for significant congestion and unsafe conditions.

Parking: Parking in Manchester is traditionally provided by the entity responsible for generating the demand. Most business sites provide their own, on-site parking lots. This includes the school and municipal buildings downtown.

No public parking is provided other than that associated with public buildings. A recent, 75-space addition increased parking capacity adjacent to the school. On-street parking is not permitted on Route 202, where most of the development provides off-street parking, but common along other roads. No parking issues are evident in town.

Strategically-placed parking lots have, in some cases, reduced road use, for example by allowing commuters and others to share rides, or by permitting patrons to access many businesses on foot in a village setting. Because Manchester does not have a concentrated commercial area, and is so close to Augusta, neither of these are considered feasible.

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## ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:

The road system has been recognized to have an impact on natural and environmental assets. In Manchester, perhaps the most sensitive impact is the runoff generated to affect lake water quality. Manchester's Land Use Ordinance has strong mechanisms to protect waterbodies from road construction activities as well as post-construction runoff, and the Town follows Best Management Practices in maintenance of its own roads. Route 202 is the largest source of impervious surface within the Cobbossee watershed, and runoff consists of sheet flow and open drainage ditches. There is opportunity to work with DOT to reduce runoff impacts.

The town maintains about 90 street lights along public roads. Commercial lighting is regulated by the Town's Land Use Ordinance, and no problems from glare are evident. Although Route 202 is a constant source of noise, there is minimal residential development immediately along the highway, and it is not seen as an issue.

Transportation facilities can also impact wildlife habitat, including travel corridors. The town has some concern that a DOT-operated sand and salt facility on Pelton Hill could be impacting habitat in the area. There are no perceived locations where existing roads conflict with wildlife movements.

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## TRANSPORTATION CHOICES:

Even though a huge majority of trips and miles travelled are by motor vehicle, there is still demand for alternatives. Some segments of the population (notably youth and some elderly) cannot use motor vehicles to get around, and the increasing costs and impacts of energy consumption argues for reduced automobile use into the future. While we do not anticipate an enormous shift in demand over the period of this plan, transportation systems take an enormous amount of time and money to put in place, and require planning well in advance.

Common alternatives to the car or truck in densely developed areas are the rail or public transit service; however, Manchester does not have enough development density to support either. No rail lines exist in Manchester, though freight access is conceivably available from either Augusta or Auburn. (A freight siding is available in Winthrop, but is undeveloped.)

Public transit is not generally available in Manchester. For special needs services, Kennebec Valley Community Action Program provides buses or vans on request. Manchester Healthy Futures is an organization that has begun to provide volunteer driver services. KVCAP also runs the Kennebec Explorer scheduled bus service within Augusta. They would consider extension of its service out of Augusta if the demand were justified, but past attempts have not succeeded and expansion funding is not currently available.

A variation on public transit is the use of carpooling or vanpooling. These are often informal arrangements or sponsored by large employers. "GoMaine" is a publicly-funded service matching prospective riders and drivers from one point to another. GoMaine will organize a vanpool if there is sufficient demand, but Manchester has not demonstrated a need and is close enough to Augusta that any savings would be minimal.

Informal ride-sharing arrangements are common, but undocumented. According to the US Census, about 250 Manchester residents – twenty percent of all commuters – carpool to work. This is more than double the number ten years prior. The attraction of carpooling is expected to rise consistent with the increase in gasoline prices. However, this volume is not reflected in use of public parking, so must be in the way of casual pickups. Parking spaces in the Oakes and Parkhurst lot and behind the old fire station have been used on occasion by ride-sharers.

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## SIDEWALKS AND BICYCLING:

For those with not so far to go, or an inclination for physical activity, the options are bicycling or walking. Sidewalks generally do not receive the investment that roads do. In Manchester, sidewalks are limited to a few disconnected segments along Route 202, generally in places pedestrians do not frequent. The Land Use Ordinance permits the planning board to require sidewalks in new development, but none of the current residential developments have sidewalks.

Pedestrians, including school children, are often seen walking (and biking) along village and rural roads where traffic is (usually) lighter. An informal path between the elementary school and Gardencrest neighborhood gets very little use, but would likely get more if it were a more formal path. Highest demand for pedestrian travel is probably along Route 17, where it runs through a densely-developed area adjacent to the intersection with Route 202. A relatively short stretch of road accesses the elementary school, post office, town office, fire station, local church, and several neighborhoods. The Route 202 Multi-modal Corridor Management Plan for Manchester identifies a need for sidewalk in this area.

Bicycle travel in Manchester is limited to on-street routes or cross-country trails. There are opportunities for dedicated bike trails or dedicated lanes on roadways, and facilities for bike storage at strategic locations.

Manchester is close enough to Augusta that commuting by bike is possible (though currently challenging). Also, bicycle touring is a large and growing component of tourism, especially in scenic areas such as Manchester. However, most of Manchester's rural roads are narrow and the shoulders are too poor to permit safe biking (or walking) for children. Some of the state roads with wider shoulders see a fair amount of cycle use during the summer. Route 202 west of the Pond Rd/Rte 17 intersection has shoulders wide enough for bicycling, but Route 202 towards Augusta has very limited shoulders, which makes bicycling to Augusta on Route 202 nearly impossible. Maine's Bicycle Map shows one bicycle tour, labeled the "Capitol Tour," that originates in Augusta, comes into Manchester village on Granite Hill Road, and passes out via Pond Road (both state roads).

A separate Winthrop-to-Kennebec bicycle trail has been suggested by several local and regional plans, most recently the Multimodal Corridor Management Plan. Such a trail could parallel Route 202 or utilize the old trolley bed, utility paths, or snowmobile trails to link Manchester with Augusta or Hallowell and Winthrop. The concept has been discussed jointly by Winthrop and Manchester, but no concrete action has yet been taken.

There are no public or private airports in Manchester, except a seaplane base at the northern end of Cobbossee Lake. Augusta State Airport is the nearest airport.

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## TRAFFIC AND DEVELOPMENT:

The quality of the transportation system depends on more than its physical condition. Government is generally responsible for the physical infrastructure, but in the past has not had much to say about how (and how much) it is used. Traffic is a function of the location and distance between trip points (“traffic generators”); traffic congestion and conflicts (“crashes”) are often the unintended consequence of those locations.

Manchester’s Land Use Ordinance attempts to channel development into the areas immediately surrounding the town center. This should lead to a reduction in the growth of traffic. However, the ordinance to date has failed to direct more than a fraction of residential development, and the growth areas do not permit sufficient density of development to justify investments in sidewalks, bike facilities or other alternatives.

Traffic levels have generally been growing over the past few decades. Freight (truck) traffic has grown noticeably, a result of our increased standard of living (more consumer goods and food travelling longer distances) and reduced rail use by freight carriers. In terms of volume, however, automobile traffic has the greater impact. Most trips originate in the residence and move to work, schools, or shopping. A sprawling land use pattern means that more rural residents drive longer distances to get to their destinations. Statistically, this would show up as increased use of roads leading into rural areas and stable or declining use of urban roads. This is illustrated in table 12.

**Table 12. Historical Traffic Volumes\***

Location	1980	1996	2006
Route 202 @ Winthrop TL		17,020	14,850
Route 202 w/o Rt. 17	10,515	14,900	16,510
Granite Hill Road @ Jct. 202		3,150	4,090
Pond Road @ Jct. 202	2,180	2,530	3,500
Route 17 @ jct. 202	3,895	5,830	6,870
Puddledock Road @ jct. 202	1,560	1,150	1,420

\* Traffic volume numbers are average daily trips past a given point over one year.

Source: 1991 Comp. Plan and MDOT Traffic Counts

Traffic on Route 202 rose 60 percent over 26 years in the downtown area, but actually declined at the Winthrop town line, meaning that growth in traffic volumes only made it as far as the village. Traffic increased 60 percent on Pond Road and 77 percent on Route 17. Granite Hill traffic increased by 30 percent in only 10 years.

Traffic volumes are sensitive to economic conditions. Traffic dropped off nearly everywhere in 2008, when gas prices peaked, followed by the recession. Traffic counts are likely to show little growth over the short term, but will resume growing as conditions improve.

No town roads or collector roads are in danger of exceeding their capacity, though more traffic usually means more wear and tear, and conflicts for road users. On many roads, traffic volumes may have doubled since they were last worked on. Where capacity may become an issue is on major roads like Route 202. Route 202 through the downtown is generally five lanes, with the center lane designated for left turns, so has reserve capacity even though it is the busiest road. Ironically, the single busiest stretch of road is over Pelton Hill, which had a traffic count in 2006 of 20,270, (not included on table because of lack of historical comparisons) a segment only two lanes in width. This is a classic bottleneck. Various solutions have been proposed over the years, only to meet with local objections. A DOT-led public advisory group is still studying alternatives.

The visible result of traffic growth and resulting conflicts is the traffic accident. While traffic accidents can happen anywhere and for any reason, traffic engineers can use a statistical analysis to determine if there are certain crash locations that are particularly prone. Route 202 is designated as a “retrograde arterial,” for example, because it has statistically more accidents stemming from driveway entrances than the statewide average. This is evident in Manchester, as two of the top “high crash location” intersections are Route 202/Route 17/Pond road, and Route 202/Granite Hill Road, based on 2006-2008 data. A segment of Route 202 east of these intersections (approximately The Scandinavian Inn to Pelton Hill Road) is also in this “high crash” classification, as well as almost all of Granite Hill Road. On Granite Hill Road, the most likely cause of accidents is either speeding on a relatively narrow road or the proliferation of driveways.

As simply a way of inspiring creative thinking about possible alternatives to the way that traffic moves through and across Rte. 202 in Manchester (especially across Rte 202 between northern Manchester and southern Manchester), the Comprehensive Planning committee looked at a series of imaginative changes that could be considered for these areas. The primary goals were to think about ways to increase the safety of going across Rte 202, increase opportunities for walking and sidewalks, and improve the look of Rte 202. These alternatives, presented on a series of aerial photos of the center of Manchester, are illustrated in Appendix A.

## II-D: THE LOCAL ECONOMY

*State Goal: Promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.*

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### PRINCIPAL ISSUES:

Manchester is a relatively well-off, suburban community with a traditional agricultural infrastructure and a growing commercial presence, drawn by Route 202. Manchester is a relatively small fraction (3 percent) of the overall labor pool in the Augusta area, almost 85 percent of the town's workers commute to jobs outside of town, and our portion of retail sales is a vanishingly small part of the region's total. Most recent figures indicate that Manchester's unemployment rate is at least a full percentage point below that of the county.

From this information, it is clear that economic development, as a means of increasing resident income levels or encouraging job growth is not as crucial a factor as is the case for some neighboring communities. Commercial development is commonly supported by municipalities as a way to broaden the tax base and relieve the householder of the entire tax burden. Manchester residents are no longer accepting that view without reservation. Our proximity to the expanding business strip in Augusta defines our opportunity to guide commercial growth on Route 202 through Manchester. The people of Manchester are not opposed to commercial development on the Town's major arterial, but as indicated in surveys, they are equally concerned about how commercial or industrial growth will reduce the overall aesthetic beauty, the recreational viability or residential land values in the community.

In these difficult times it is difficult to predict the future with respect to Manchester's economy. One advantage of literally being at the "crossroads" of a number of transportation routes is that Manchester may not feel the effects of closed service businesses to the extent of other communities. The presence of public water and sewer service and Route 202 are economic assets. It is clear that a number of local commercial enterprises in Town will benefit from the steadily growing population base.

This chapter seeks to assure that the comprehensive plan and updated land use regulation provide adequate opportunities for a variety of economic activities within the Town of Manchester, while continuing to support the values of Manchester's citizens. This "economic engine" will provide the necessary tax and income sources to maintain the Town's social and environmental character and stability, and reduce the burden on the individual tax payer.

### LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

- The Town should provide adequate opportunities for a variety of economic activities within the Town of Manchester, while continuing to support the goals of Manchester's citizens.
- The Town should work towards promoting itself as a place to do business



## POLICIES:

- A. The Town's role in economic development should be to encourage, but not overly regulate the marketplace.
- B. Continue to require a high standard of architectural design, sign control, and landscaping for new development.
- C. Continue to provide clear regulatory guidance, to allow decisions to be predictable, clear and based on objective measurable criteria for new development.
- D. Continue to work with developers to see that high value development in the new "TIF" district continues.
- E. Utilize the Economic Development Plan and "TIF" zone to increase private commercial assets to more than 8.4% of the Town's total valuation.
- F. Zoning should encourage a mixture of uses, including, where appropriate, residential uses.
- G. Guide growth in such a way as to preserve the overall aesthetic beauty, the recreational viability or residential land values in town.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- 1) Establish an Economic Development Committee to oversee requests and review unmet needs of future development in the "TIF" zones, and work to attract new high-value businesses in the General Development district and promote Manchester as a place to do business. *Board of Selectmen, Short term*
- 2) Create an Economic Development Plan for Manchester. *Economic Development Committee, Mid term*
- 3) Encourage businesses that are clearly desired by residents as expressed in public opinion polls, for example, a restaurant/pub style of establishment. *Economic Development Committee, Ongoing*
- 4) Include Agricultural opportunities in economic development plan – investigate opportunities for financial incentives for farmers who are actively working their land. *Economic Development Committee, ongoing*
- 5) Investigate formation a local chamber of commerce or board of trade. *Board of Selectmen & Economic Development Committee, Long term*
- 6) Review land use regulations to ensure regulatory fairness while protecting Manchester's core community values. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 7) Use the Manchester Apple Festival to highlight local businesses and create awards for different categories each year (best seasonal display, best pizza, best candy bars, best wine, etc.), *Chamber, Mid term and ongoing*

- 8) Continue participation in local/regional economic development groups (WKEDA and KVCOG for example). *Board of Selectmen, Ongoing*

## INFORMATION ABOUT MANCHESTER'S LOCAL ECONOMY:

The following presents an overview of the economic characteristics that affect Manchester. Income, employment, and education characteristics and trends help us understand town-specific demands for economic development, housing and other services. An examination of Manchester's past and present economic base will help determine future needs and identify potential problem areas.

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### ECONOMIC HISTORY:

Manchester, like many other Maine towns, watched its economy flourish during the mid to late 1800's. Manchester prospered in the early 1800's with the manufacturing of oil cloth, granite wedges and hay forks to serve its primarily agricultural economy. Around mid-century, Manchester experienced a decline in population as well as small business, as people moved out in search of better farmland or employment. As a result, Manchester again became a community largely dependent upon agriculture as its chief industry. The book "Manchester Maine 1775-1975" (available at the town office) has additional information on the history of the economy of Manchester.

More recently, the Town has experienced a substantial amount of growth of retail and service related business development located primarily along Route 202, which carries a substantial amount of traffic through Manchester daily. Because Manchester is located in the direct path of a commercial strip expanding outward from Augusta, opportunity exists to guide growth on the commercial strip (Route 202) through Manchester.

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### ECONOMIC INDICATORS:

Statistical figures from federal and state sources give us an idea of the extent of our workforce, the type of work they are engaged in, and the range of prospects for expanding our economy.

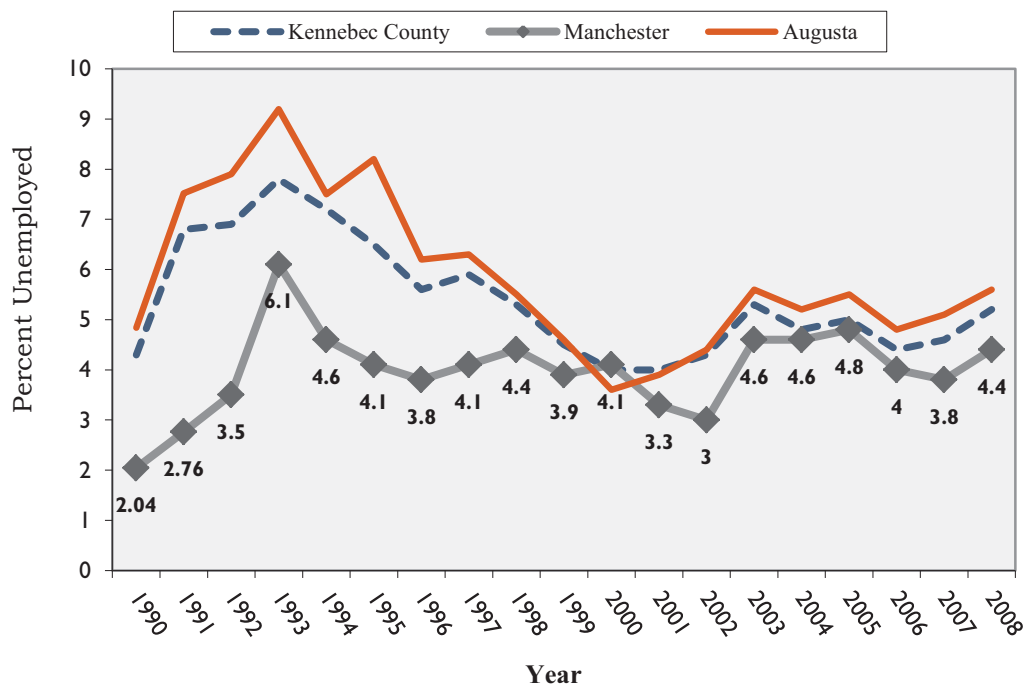
"Labor Force" refers to the number of people either working or looking for work within the working-age population. The Census Bureau considers everyone over age 16 as working-age, including those technically retired. Changes in the labor force are an indication of the number of jobs available, as well as the supply of workers for potential future growth.

In 2009, the US Census estimated a labor force in Manchester of 1,373 people, 65 percent of the working-age population. A shade under half of that number were women (622). That works out to an average of 1.33 persons in the workforce for each household in Manchester, or four workers for every three households. More accurate unemployment figures are reported by the Maine Department of Labor, which takes monthly surveys. According to the Maine Department of Labor statistics, as of 2010, Manchester had a total labor force of 1,393 people.

A portion of every labor force is going to be unemployed. The most recent Department of Labor data (2010) says that Manchester had 83 persons unemployed, for an unemployment rate of 6.0 percent. During the same period, the unemployment rate in Kennebec County was 7.4 percent.

Figure 13 highlights Manchester’s recent unemployment history, together with Augusta (narrow line) and Kennebec County (wavy line). Except for a blip in 2000, Manchester’s employment rates generally fare better than both Augusta and Kennebec County.

Figure 13. **Unemployment Rates, 1995-2008**



Source: Maine Department of Labor

Besides employment, the most conventional measure of a community’s economic health is income. Analysts use two basic types of group income measures: **per-capita income, (PCI)** which is the aggregate income of the town divided by its population, and **Household Income, (HHI)** which is the income of the households within the town. The latter is more helpful from a planning perspective, since households are the basic social and economic unit of the community.

Median Household Income represents the actual revenue from all sources for most families. Since household income is figured using all family members with income, individual households can see a dramatic change if a spouse or other family member starts or stops working. Manchester’s HHI was most recently estimated in 2009, with the median at \$64,545. This is a comfortable gain from 2000 (1999 income), which was \$52,500, however only five percent as figured in constant dollars (correcting for inflation). A similar comparison can be made between 2000 and 1990, when the median was \$37,550. The income gain was \$15,000 a year – 40 percent over ten years, but the overall inflation rate was 32 percent. Nonetheless, Manchester’s income levels have long been better than

Kennebec County, which showed median household income of \$46,368 in 2009 and in 2000 recorded an HHI of \$36,498. The county’s growth actually lagged behind inflation for the decade.

Looking at median income, however, does not give us a picture of the *range* of income levels. That is, it can tell us that 50 percent of the population makes less than \$52,500, but not how much less or how many are “low” versus “very low” incomes. Table 13, below, shows a breakdown of income levels (2009 census data not yet available), while Table 14 illustrates how the individual income levels compare with neighboring towns.

**Table 13. Manchester Household Income Brackets, 1990-2000**

Income Range	1990		2000	
	Number	Percentage of Households	Number	Percentage of Households
Less than \$10,000	88	11	8	1
\$10 ■ 35,000	264	34	253	26
\$35 ■ 100,000	365	47	555	57
\$100,000 and over	53	7	164	17

**Table 14. Median and high-income Comparisons, 2000**

Town	Total Households	Median income	Number of households > Median	Percent of households > Median	Rank	Number of households over....	
						\$100,000	\$200,000
Readfield	785	\$48,893	588	75%	1	78	15
Monmouth	1,199	43,906	871	73	2	63	12
W. Gardiner	986	45,434	719	73	2	69	14
Wayne	421	45,625	290	69	3	48	15
Winthrop	2,091	41,733	1,444	69	3	128	4
Mt. Vernon	517	39,779	344	67	4	31	11
Litchfield	1,064	41,096	714	67	4	74	0
Manchester	983	52,500	550	59	5	122	42

Source: US Census, Maine Revenue Service & State Planning Office

\* Household income over \$100,000: range is \$100,000 to \$199,999

Household income over \$200,000: range is \$200,000 and over

The 2000 Census identified only eight Manchester households earning less than \$10,000 per year. Another 253 households earned less than \$35,000 (roughly 2/3 of the median). This information will be useful in determining the need for affordable housing. One hundred sixty four earned more than \$100,000 per year as a household, far more than any other town in the region. The comparison with 1990 shows an emptying-out of lower income levels, though that is expected over a decade of rising incomes.

The census attempts to identify the sources of income as well. In 2009, over one-third of all households in Manchester received social security, but also 27 percent received retirement income. These numbers (and percentages) are up substantially from 2000. About three percent of households received some form of public assistance, about the same as in 2000.

Seventy-three percent of all households have income from earnings. The median income per worker from earnings in 2009 was \$31,605, but that included part-time workers. Notably, the median earnings income for female workers was \$33,148.

The Census Bureau also calculates the *Poverty Rate*. An actual “poverty level” for an area is not published (because it is different for each geography and household size) but the percentage of persons or households below that level is reported. In 200, 3.5 percent of residents of Manchester were below poverty level, compared to 2000 at 2.5 percent. That number included 4 percent of the population over the age of 65 and 4.7 percent of children (under age 18). It only includes 2.6 percent of all families, but up to 30 percent of single-mother families. The low poverty rate (poverty in Kennebec County is over 11 percent) is obviously reflected in the high median income and low rate of public assistance enrollment.

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#### MANCHESTER IN THE ECONOMIC REGION:

The Town of Manchester is located within the Augusta Micropolitan Economic Area and most households think of the entire region when it comes to jobs, goods and services. Statistically, Manchester is also part of the Augusta Labor Market Area (LMA), which roughly covers the southern half of Kennebec County. The Augusta LMA had an estimated labor force in 2010 of 43,640; Manchester’s portion being 1,393, or three percent of the workers. The Augusta LMA experienced an unemployment rate of 7.0 percent in 2010, slightly more than Manchester’s 6.0.

Manchester is a net contributor of workers to the regional labor pool, as are all towns but Augusta. According to the 2000 Census, only 220 of Manchester’s then-labor force of 1,320 workers worked locally; 563 residents worked in Augusta and another 212 worked elsewhere in southern Kennebec County. Three hundred sixty workers commuted IN to Manchester, about one out of six from Augusta, another one-sixth from Readfield, Mt. Vernon, and Fayette. (The 2010 census no longer collects town-to-town commuting figures.)

The net result of this activity is that the average travel time to work is 22.6 minutes, typical for a mostly-commuter community. In 1990, it was only 18 minutes. Either people have to commute further to their jobs, or congestion is getting worse.

Though Manchester provides a relatively small percentage of the total workers in this labor market area, the ratio is slightly larger in some professions. As can be seen in Table 15, below, 45 percent of Manchester’s workers are in management and professional occupations, compared to 35 percent in Kennebec County. On the other hand, only 7.4 percent are in service-related occupations, compared to 16.6 percent countywide.

Having more workers in those areas normally viewed as higher-paying and fewer in the lower-paying areas likely accounts for relatively high incomes in Manchester. For example, 15.4 percent work in wholesale or retail trade, compared to 17 percent countywide. 23.5 percent work for a unit of government (including public schools); only 20 percent do in the county as a whole.

**Table 15. Selected Worker Characteristics, Manchester and Kennebec County, 2009**

Occupation	Manchester		Kennebec County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Management/professional	580	45.2	20,836	34.8
Service	95	7.4	9,912	16.6
Sales and Office	284	22.1	15,700	26.2
Construction-related	110	8.6	6,353	10.6
Production/transportation	206	16.1	6,657	11.1
Government	302	23.5	11,846	19.8
Retired (est./SSI)	376	36.4	15,959	31.5

Source: US Census (American Community Survey)

**Regional Perspective: Per Capita Income**

Per capita income (PCI) can be used for comparisons among geographic areas, such as towns. Manchester's PCI in the 2000 census was \$28,043. This was – by a considerable margin – the highest figure among towns in the region, as well as showing the most substantial growth. Manchester's PCI was also

Town	1990 PCI	2000 PCI	% Change*
Augusta	\$ 13,209	\$ 19,145	13 %
Hallowell	\$ 15,348	\$ 20,457	1 %
<b>Manchester</b>	<b>\$ 17,410</b>	<b>\$ 28,043</b>	<b>29 %</b>
Monmouth	\$ 11,412	\$ 17,551	22 %
Readfield	\$ 14,915	\$ 20,707	7 %
Winthrop	\$ 15,413	\$ 19,447	- 6 %
Kennebec Co.	\$ 12,885	\$ 18,522	14 %

\* % Change calculated after 32 % decade inflation

the highest in 1990, so the town has been among the wealthiest for quite a while. However, since this is an aggregate figure, it could be skewed by just a few very high incomes. Manchester's PCI in 2009 was \$33,580, more than 1/3 higher than Kennebec County at \$24,575.

Manchester is also located within the Augusta Economic Summary District for the purpose of retail sales analysis. Based upon data from the State Planning Office, the Augusta Area generated \$898,376,000 in retail taxable sales in 2009. This represented a decrease of 1.94% between 2004 and 2009 and a 5.29% decrease between 2008 and 2009, which is roughly what the State experienced. The proportion of those sales in Manchester is so small, it is not reported.

**PROFILE OF LOCAL BUSINESSES:**

The Town of Manchester has no major industrial establishments and approximately 101 commercial/institutional/public establishments, the locations of which are shown in Figure 14. Broken out by zone it looks like this:

<b>55</b> in General Development	<b>2</b> in Rural Residential South of 202
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14 in Rural Residential North of 202	1 in Community Residential South of 202
1 in Community Residential North of 202	28 in Manchester Village

Figure 14. **Map showing locations of commercial business establishments in Manchester, 2011.**

The above commercial establishments and public institutions provide approximately 497 jobs. Private commercial enterprises were assessed as of April 1, 2009 at a value of approximately \$24,733,300 or 8.4% of the Towns total 2009 valuation. Although this is a fairly significant percentage for an essentially suburban town, the percentage itself has changed very little over the past several decades. This suggests that commercial and residential development are proceeding at roughly the same rate in Manchester.

The commercial establishments that are located in Manchester represent a range of retail and service stores including food outlets (5), automobile related (9), recreational/lodging (6), greenhouse/landscaping (4), one major agricultural enterprise (Lakeside Orchards), and 2 or 3 existing cattle farms. Table 16, below, illustrates the range of commercial enterprises in Manchester in 2010.

**Table 16. Manchester Commercial Enterprises, 2010. An asterisk (\*) indicates that the business was here in 1990.**

<b>Agricultural &amp; Animal Care</b>	<b>Misc. Service</b>
Cat Hospital	B & S Paving*
Barks & Meows	Kennebec Valley YMCA
Lakeside Orchard*	Oakes and Parkhurst
Young's Trout Feed	Kennebec Savings Bank kiosk
	Hair Salons (3)
<b>Vehicle Sales/Service</b>	Steven A Barnard Accounting
J & S Oil - Car Wash/ Quick Lube	Lyon Construction
J & S Oil – Gas Station*	Western Ave Self Storage
Chas. Hippler & Sons*	Bianca's Bottle Redemption
A&J Auto*	Brookwood Builders
Blacks Garage	Central Maine Drywall
Scotts Recreation	Carmen Squires Accounting
Clark Marine	Game Day
Roy's Small Engine Repair	Karate schools (2)
	Newton Dentistry
<b>Bank &amp; Office Facilities</b>	Chief Lee Signs
Bunker & Savage Architects*	Dana's Barber Shop
Maine Osteopathic Associates*	Satellite TV Guy*
Maine Medical Education Foundation	Readfield Insurance Co.
Maine Medical Association*	Copies Etc.
Maine Dental Association*	Marston Banking Services
Sportag Association	Sylvester Excavation*
IBEW Local # 1837	Trash haulers (2)
J & S Oil Corporate Headquarters	Childcare services (2 or 3)
Savings Bank of Maine (was Gardiner Savings)*	
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers office*	
	<b>Public Service</b>
<b>Healthcare</b>	Post Office
Manchester Osteopathic Associates	Town Office
Manchester Family Health	Manchester Elementary School
Benoit Chiropractic	Manchester Sanitary District

other businesses in Jorgensen's	Manchester Fire Department
<b>Food Service</b>	<b>Recreational &amp; Lodging Facilities</b>
Pizza Stone	T's Golf
Subway	Fairway Motor Lodge*
Dunkin Donuts	Augusta Country Club*
Ballards Custom Meats*	Scandinavian Inn
The Lighthouse Wine & Cheese	
Lakeside Orchards	<b>Retail</b>
	Rite Aid
<b>Food Service / Gas Stations</b>	Steve's Bait Shop (ice fishing season)
Circle K	
J & S Oil*	
Mulligans	<b>Landscaping / Greenhouse</b>
Irving Gas Station	Longfellows Greenhouse*
	Pumpkin Patch Greenhouse
	Forgotten Stone Works
	Hopkins Flowers*

Prospects for the continued growth of the local economy are good. The Town has a new 33 acre Tax Increment Finance "TIF" district approved by voters in June of 2011, part of a commercial subdivision located adjacent to the village. To date, 14,000 square feet of building has been constructed and the developer has 60 percent of the commitment necessary to fill a second building. Occupancy of additional commercial buildings in Manchester is fairly stable, and there is land for sale within the General Development district.

Manchester's business community does not really have a strong individual identity. Manchester's energies are primarily directed at working to improve the regional economy. Several businesses in Manchester are members of either the Kennebec Valley or Winthrop Chambers of Commerce. Manchester is a member of the Western Kennebec Economic Development Alliance (WKEDA), which has played a role in bringing commercial opportunities to town. The Town is also a member of Kennebec Valley Council of Governments, which does economic infrastructure planning for the region and offers small business counseling and loan funds.



## II-E: NATURAL RESOURCES

*State's Goal: Protect the State's critical natural resources, including without limitation wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, Sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas.*

### PRINCIPAL ISSUES:

Manchester contains large expanses of open spaces supporting a variety of land-based and aquatic wildlife. Manchester residents have indicated strong support for maintaining these open spaces and resources for a variety of reasons -- quality of life, preservation of town identity, enhancing property values, maintaining wildlife habitat, protecting water quality and supply, and to support tourism, hiking, hunting, and fishing opportunities. This support has been evidenced, among other ways, by the adoption of an Open Space Plan in 2004.

Resource protection in Manchester will require three parallel initiatives: 1) Use of "set asides" or outright purchases of areas for their natural, scenic, or recreational values; 2) Protection of some critical natural areas (Figure 15) by regulatory means; and 3) Conservation by means of public and landowner education and awareness of valuable natural features within the "high value natural areas" defined by the 2004 Open Space Plan (Figure 16) or as found in any other part of Manchester.

Figure 15. ***Map showing Critical Natural Resource areas in Manchester***

Figure 16. ***Map showing High Value Natural Areas in Manchester***

This plan recommends open communication within the town (between the Planning Board and other entities) prior to development in any area potentially containing critical natural resources or in high value natural areas so that people are aware of existing habitats and waterways. It will be important for the town to update its own zoning maps to be sure that all regulated shoreland and resource protection areas are indicated accurately, and designate the "high value natural areas". Communication and consultation can occur as the Planning Board interacts with other committees such as the conservation or recreation committees, utilization of Beginning with Habitat maps, and consultation with state agencies to identify what resources are present and positive alternatives to best protect them. Critical to this activity is education of landowners who are in a position to minimize their impact on Manchester's natural resources. Enforcement of existing ordinances would continue, as would the option to purchase valued areas from willing sellers, usually through the assistance of a third party such as a land trust.

## POLICIES:

- A. To conserve critical natural resources in the community, using non-regulatory mechanisms wherever practicable.
- B. To conserve high-value natural areas in the community, primarily using non-regulatory mechanisms wherever practicable.
- C. To coordinate with neighboring communities and regional and state resource agencies to protect shared critical natural resources.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- 1) Designate and protect as Critical Rural Areas in the Land Use Plan the current Resource Protection District, Aquifer Management Overlay District and critical natural areas mapped and identified by the Beginning with Habitat program. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 2) Utilize GIS mapping to better define boundaries of areas deemed “critical natural areas” (resource protection zones) and “high value natural areas” (as defined by 2004 Open Space Plan). *Code Enforcement Officer, Conservation Commission, Short term*
- 3) Inform landowners of presence of critical natural resources and potential means of protection and enhancement. *Conservation Commission, Mid term*
- 4) Protect land in high value natural areas identified in 2004 Open Space Plan primarily through purchase of land or easements from willing sellers. Pursue public/private purchase options including but not limited to collaboration with Kennebec Land Trust. *Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, ongoing.*
- 5) Promote and establish connections between High Value Natural Areas identified in 2004 Open Space Plan through greenways, trails, and wildlife travel corridors including links with village neighborhoods. *Conservation Commission, Mid term*
- 6) Designate 100% of revenue from timber harvesting on town-owned land to utilize as seed money or matching funds for acquisition, protection or stewardship of important natural resources or High Value Natural Areas identified in 2004 Open Space Plan. *Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Short term*
- 7) Maintain or strengthen current Land Use Ordinance standards that protect critical natural resources including but not limited to open space subdivision provisions and buffering/screening provisions. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 8) Maintain current shoreland zone districts, setbacks, and other provisions regardless of potential future changes in state law or rules. *Planning Board, ongoing*
- 9) Notify Conservation Commissions of proposed development in shoreland zones, in or near High Value Natural Areas identified in the 2004 Open Space Plan. Email agendas and relevant application details to Conservation Commission chair at least 4 days prior to meeting when project will be discussed or considered. *Provisions to be included in Land Use Ordinance Review, Year 1. Implemented by Planning Board Secretary, Short term*

- 10) Allow Conservation Commission and applicable state agencies to offer review comments on development proposals and provide a copy of site plans and other supporting documents upon request. *Planning Board, CEO, Short term*
- 11) Incorporate into site plan review process consideration of impacts on critical natural resources by review of maps and information provided by State Beginning with Habitat program, High Value Natural and Scenic Resource Areas Maps from 2004 Open Space Plan, and 1992 Visual Resource Inventory and Evaluation. Applicants should seek alternatives as necessary. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 12) Request MDIFW written comments when a portion of a major development is within a High Value Plant and Animal Habitat Area as indicated on State Beginning with Habitat map to minimize negative impacts on these habitats. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term I*
- 13) Research available dark-sky lighting standards for the Land Use Ordinance, to further minimize night glare from nonresidential development and land use activities. *Conservation Commission, Short term*
- 14) Inventory vernal pools in Manchester and submit results to DEP for review of status, for interested landowners. *Conservation Commission, Mid term*
- 15) Explore options of providing financial incentives to landowners who allow public use of their open space. *Conservation Commission, Town Assessor, Board of Selectmen. Mid term*
- 16) Initiate and/or participate in interlocal and/or regional planning, management or regulatory efforts around shared critical resources including but not limited to collaboration with Kennebec Land Trust and other trusts when applicable. *Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen, Mid term*
- 17) Maintain planning board capacity in shoreland zoning by having planning board members attending DEP workshops, training and other avenues. *Planning Board, ongoing.*
- 18) Compare Manchester's ordinances for natural resource protection practices and standards for construction and maintenance of public roads and properties to those of the 2008 Maine Department of Transportation Best Management Practices for Erosion and Sedimentation Control and update to meet standards of best practice as necessary. *Road Committee, Town Manager, Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*

## INFORMATION ABOUT NATURAL RESOURCES

As a town with diverse set of natural attractions, Manchester places a high value on its natural resources. The town's special habitats and biological diversity contribute to its uniqueness, and Manchester must protect and embrace these resources as it develops. This section outlines Manchester's critical natural assets, the regulations that govern them, and the town's policies and strategies for protecting and enhancing them.

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### CRITICAL NATURAL AREAS

Manchester has a limited extent of natural areas, due partly to the fact that the area has been extensively farmed for centuries. This makes remaining natural areas all that much more rare and valuable.

The State of Maine's Beginning with Habitat (BwH) program provides detailed information about critical natural areas throughout Maine (see Figure 15). As of 2009, two high-value plant species had been identified in Manchester; the dwarf bulrush (*Lipocarpa micrantha*, threatened), and fall fimbry (*Fimbristylis autumnalis*, threatened), both found on the shores of Tyler Pond.

Beginning with Habitat identifies several deer wintering areas, predominantly in the northern and southern ends of town (fig 15). These are (generally) forested areas that are particularly valuable to deer during times of deep snow and cold. There are no specific protections in place for deer wintering areas in Manchester, and some of the areas identified by BwH could face pressure from development (especially along the Prescott Road, Scribner Hill Road, and east of the Pond Road). The IFW does not recommend limitations on development or timber cutting to preserve deer wintering areas, but encourages landowners to adopt management practices that will preserve their integrity.

Several areas of special wetland bird habitat have also been identified in Manchester. These include freshwater breeding, migration staging, and winter habitat locations for inland waterfowl, and breeding, feeding, migration and roosting areas for inland wading birds. There are several of these locations in and around Cobbooseecontee Lake and Stream, Hutchinson, Jimmie, and Shed Ponds, Vaughn Brook, Bog Brook, Tanning Brook, and Sanford Brook, and a recently-discovered nesting rookery for great blue herons off the Prescott Rd. These areas are generally within the regulated Resources Protection zone.

BwH also identifies several areas of High Value Habitat for Priority Trust Species throughout Manchester. These areas represent the top 25% important habitat for 91 species of important fish, wildlife, and plants as modeled by the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Gulf of Maine Coastal Program.

The 2004 Open Space Plan identifies eight separate regions in towns that it labels "High Value Natural and Scenic Resource Areas," which are shown on figure 16. Its identification of these areas is based on several criteria, including wetland areas, deer wintering areas, riparian and other habitat areas, exemplary natural communities, and scenic views. Land ownership did not directly impact the choice of these areas, although in many cases the areas contained high natural or scenic values in part because of the character of ownership. Since 2004, most of these areas have remained in the natural and scenic state that prompted their designation, with the exception of area 3 (the Old Trolley Line area, see fig. 16). A large illegal clearcut and development on the south side of Rte. 202 have reduced the significance of the natural resources in this area.

A critical component of wildlife habitat is the simple existence of undeveloped land. It has been demonstrated that species of wildlife thrive in relation to the size of undeveloped habitat blocks. In general, the larger the habitat blocks, the bigger and more diverse the wildlife population is likely to be. Manchester has three large blocks of undeveloped land: approximately 1,700 acres between Prescott Road and Mt. Vernon Road, approximately 1,300 acres between Prescott Road and Scribner Hill Road, and 2,600 acres in the Bog Pond area. The areas on either side of Prescott Rd. are known coyote, bear, fisher, and bobcat habitat areas. Route 202 acts as a significant wildlife migration barrier. While these areas are unregulated, landowners are encouraged to preserve these for their significant wildlife habitat benefits.

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## WETLANDS

There are dozens of wetlands located in Manchester, large and small, valuable and marginal, as illustrated in figure 15. Some wetlands, such as the one between Granite Hill Road and Route 202, are in areas likely to be developed. Others are in more remote areas of town. Manchester takes a very aggressive interpretation of state Shoreland Zoning Requirements, and has most if not all of its more valuable wetlands zoned in Resource Protection.

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## FLOODPLAIN

Floodplains are generally riparian areas that are inundated by floodwaters periodically. Federal Law mandates that areas with a one percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year be given special protections.

Floodplains in Manchester are fairly limited, in most cases to wetland areas and the immediate banks of local streams and ponds. Areas designated as 100 year floodplain do not seriously impede prospective development. Nevertheless, Manchester has adopted and maintains a Floodplain Management Ordinance.

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## SCENIC AREAS

Every community has its own areas where it values scenic vistas and natural beauty. Manchester created an inventory of these areas in its 2004 Open Space Plan. A total of two dozen areas were noted, based on an earlier Visual Resource Inventory from 1992. The most significant were the view of the farmland at the beginning of Prescott Road, between Puddledock and the Prescott Rd., the junction of Prescott Road with Lyons Road, Cobbossee Lake from Route 202 and from the junction of Pond Road and Collins Road, and Bog Brook from the high point of Meadow Hill Road.

The Open Space Plan encompassed some of these scenic areas within its designated high value natural areas (fig. 16) and included strategies for protection.

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## EFFORTS TO PROTECT CRITICAL NATURAL RESOURCES

The Town of Manchester's Land Use and Development Ordinance, adopted in 1992 and most recently amended in 2009, provides some protection for critical natural areas. The town's Shoreland District covers lands within 250 feet of the normal high water line of any great pond, river, Weston Stream, and most wetlands, and

within 75 feet of the normal high water line of other streams. Shoreland districts generally provide for seasonal and year-round residential and recreational development. The ordinance states that development within the shoreland district “requires closer scrutiny than development situated farther away” to protect the surface water resources in Manchester. These protections are consistent with required state shoreland zoning rules.

The Resource Protection District covers critical natural areas in Manchester that “should remain essentially undisturbed” by development due to their sensitivity and value as a resource. This district covers places “in which development would adversely affect water quality, productive habitat, biotic systems, or scenic or natural values”, and includes significant lakes, ponds, and streams. The district also includes areas within 250 feet of the upland edge of wetlands identified as moderate- to high-value waterfowl and wading bird habitat, which were identified using information provided by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and shown on the existing zoning map.

Although the Resource Protection (RP) District (see figure 1) does encompass significant portions of the critical natural areas identified by Beginning with Habitat and outlined above, there are some areas of waterfowl and wading habitat that extend beyond the areas identified as Resource Protection, and any inclusion of deer wintering areas and high value habitat for priority trust species appears to be coincidental. The rare plant locations around Tyler Pond are within the Resource Protection District.

The Land Use Ordinance also establishes an Aquifer Management (AM) Overlay District (figure 1), within the Bond Brook watershed in the northeastern part of town. The aquifer under Bond Brook is a public water supply. The AM District does not prohibit development, but limits it to low-intensity uses on larger lots than elsewhere.

The Open Space Plan identifies and ranks high value natural resources, using much of the same (albeit older) BwH data summarized above. The plan summarizes a series of strategies from Manchester’s 1992 Comprehensive Plan, and contributes some additional goals and strategies. Many of these have not yet been implemented, and should still be a priority in the protection of Manchester’s critical natural resources.

One of the goals of the Open Space Plan was to use non-regulatory mechanisms as the principal tool to protect high value areas. The plan describes several strategies available. The Town already works closely with Kennebec Land Trust and other organizations to educate landowners about their conservation options and has helped to identify and negotiate conservation easements. The Town is also building an open space fund to assist in the acquisition of development rights or land.

The Town of Manchester currently owns nearly 200 acres of land near Bog Pond, which is harvested and maintained for timber. Some of this town-owned land has been identified as deer wintering area and/or waterfowl and wading bird habitat. In the Open Space Plan, Manchester set a goal to manage the land primarily for timber harvesting, conservation, and trails. The town has an opportunity to manage this land in a way that optimizes and protects it as critical natural habitat.

The town’s land is part of the largest identified high value natural area – Bog Pond and Jamie’s Pond. This area also features the Jamie’s Pond Wildlife Management Area, an 800 acre collection of parcels owned by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife straddling Manchester and Hallowell acquired with Land For Maine’s Future bond money.

The Summerhaven lakes area – the land surrounding the pond complex in the northeastern corner of town – also contains inclusions of publicly-owned land. A town parcel covers 65 acres, and the state’s Tyler Pond Wildlife Management Area covers 128 acres.

One other natural parcel of note is the Allen-Whitney Memorial Forest, in the Shed Pond area. The 700 acre property owned by the New England Forestry Foundation is primarily used as a demonstration forest.

## II-F: MANCHESTER'S WATER RESOURCES

*State's Goal: Protect the quality and manage the quantity of the state's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries and rivers.*

### PRINCIPAL ISSUES:

Manchester's water resources are extremely important to the town. Manchester features 10 named lakes and ponds (figure 17), providing scenic beauty, recreational opportunity, tourism, and property value enhancement. It has numerous streams and flowages that provide open space, wildlife habitat, stormwater storage and water quality protection. The town lies over a significant portion of a large aquifer providing the primary source of water to the Augusta Water District.

Figure 17. ***Map showing water resources of Manchester.***

Manchester has been well served by information and guidance from the Cobbossee Watershed District. They have set standards to maintain lake phosphorous at a safe level that maintains water quality and property values while allowing on-going use of our lakes and streams. This Plan recognizes the importance of continuing to abide by these current standards as well as protecting current and future water supplies.

Lake Cobbosseecontee (Cobbossee Lake) and its watershed are also part of our downtown and proposed growth areas. Promoting development in this area while continuing to protect the water resource so vital to Manchester may seem to be an impossible contradiction. But there are methods to allow each to co-exist if research and planning is done carefully. It is far easier to protect our water than it is to attempt to restore it after damage has been done. Many lakes and ponds across Maine have lost ecological viability and recreational appeal due to poor planning and lack of compliance, and are currently paying the price for this in lost property values, lost recreation and tourism, and loss to wildlife, not to mention high restoration costs.

This plan outlines steps for us to stay current with needs and standards to maintain water quality while also being alert to additional threats such as aquatic invasives and pesticide/fertilizer usage. The Town will continue to fund the efforts of Cobbossee Watershed District, Friends of Cobbossee, and others to educate the public about its role in maintaining our valuable water resource.

### POLICIES:

- A. To protect current and potential drinking water sources



- B. To protect significant surface water resources from pollution and improve water quality where needed.
- C. To protect water resources in growth areas while promoting more intensive development in those areas.
- D. To cooperate with neighboring communities and regional/local advocacy groups to protect water resources.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- 1) Maintain or strengthen existing protections for current and proposed public drinking water supplies and aquifer recharge areas as part of site plan review. All new development with public water supply will establish appropriate wellhead protection areas. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 2) Maintain standards of Manchester's Land Use Ordinance to incorporate stormwater management. Performance standards will be updated and kept up to date with current:
  - Maine Stormwater Management Law and Stormwater Rules
  - DEP's allocations for allowable levels of phosphorus in lake/pond watersheds, unless those standards are weakened.
  - Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Program *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 3) Keep floodplain ordinance updated to be consistent with state and federal standards. *Planning Board, ongoing.*
- 4) Consider amending the land use ordinance to incorporate low impact development (LID) standards for development in the shoreland zone and entire Cobbossee watershed if compatible with Cobbossee Watershed District requirements. Require LID or a phosphorous mitigation banking system for higher-density development within Cobbossee watershed. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 5) Develop a stream watershed management program for Weston Brook that will promote development in Manchester Village without further stream degradation. Work with MDOT and examine methods to highlight Weston Brook as a village asset. *CWD and Board of Selectmen, Mid term*
- 6) Provide water quality best management practice (BMP) guidelines to farmers and loggers. Implement BMPs on town owned land as demonstration projects. *Conservation Commission, Mid term*
- 7) Review and compare practices used by Manchester Public Works and contractors to BMPs accepted in Maine Erosion and Sediment Control Best Management Practices (Maine DEP, 2003) and update as necessary. Affected town employees and contractors will attend a related Maine Local Roads Center workshop if updates are needed. *Road Committee, Town Manager, Short term*
- 8) Engage in and support efforts by Cobbossee Watershed District, Friends of Cobbossee Lakes, and other regional efforts to protect and improve water quality. *Board of Selectmen, ongoing.*
- 9) Provide funding for boat monitoring efforts and support distribution of educational materials regarding

invasive species at boat launches and appropriate locations. *Friends of Cobbossee, Board of Selectmen, ongoing*

- 10) Develop conservation easements or other means of permanent protection of Bog Pond and Fairbanks parcels. *Board of Selectmen, conservation commission, Long term*
- 11) Update inventory of all second order streams and wetlands and re-classify and update zoning maps if qualifying for SZ or RP status. *Planning Board, Short term*
- 12) Provide educational material to residents regarding the importance of utilizing phosphorous-free natural fertilizers on lawns and plantings including information regarding pesticide use guidelines and alternatives. The town will follow these guidelines on all town owned properties to be regarded as demonstration projects. *Friends of Cobbossee, Conservation Commission, Mid term*

## INFORMATION ABOUT WATER RESOURCES:

### LAKES AND PONDS

The lakes, ponds, and streams in Manchester are shown on the Water Resources Map (Figure 17). A list of the lakes and ponds in Manchester and some statistics of each of these ponds are listed in Table 17, below. Cobboseecontee (Cobbossee) Lake, Jimmie Pond, Little Jimmie Pond, Hutchinson Pond, Bog Pond and Shed Pond are in the Cobbossee watershed. Tyler Pond, Silver Lake, Fairbanks Pond, and Lily Pond are in the Messalonskee watershed.

**Table 17. Profile of Lakes and Ponds in Manchester**

Water Body Name	Acres	Perimeter (ft)	Depth Mean/Max (ft)	Volume (acre-ft)
Cobboseecontee Lake	5,516	326,401	37/100	127,371
Jimmie Pond	99	15,759	34/75	2,852
Little Jimmie Pond	5	3,250	n/a	n/a
Hutchinson Pond	105	15,764	10/24	839
Bog Pond	1	167	n/a	n/a
Shed Pond	51	7,483	5/10	219
Tyler Pond	25	5,019	24/70	450
Silver Lake (Figure Eight Pond)	34	7,197	17/62	495
Fairbanks Pond	16	5,632	10/35	122
Lily Pond	4	1,811	n/a	n/a

Source: Maine DEP

The southwesterly boundary of Manchester borders on the northeasterly shore of Cobboseecontee. Approximately 7.8 miles of actual lake shoreline falls within the boundaries of Manchester, all of which is privately owned and developed as lakeside camps and year-round residential property or recreational industry. The lake is

a very important part of Manchester's economy, bringing in significant revenue from residential taxes and tourism. Cobbossee Lake is a back-up water source for the Greater Augusta Utilities District (GAUD). In their 2003 Source Water Assessment, GAUD identified Cobbossee Lake as moderately- to highly-susceptible as a back-up water supply, based upon existing land use and water quality factors.

Of Manchester's lakes, Cobbossee is the one whose water quality is most threatened. It is classified by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as a "lake most at risk from new development" (Appendix A, Chapter 502, DEP Rules). Cobbossee was identified by DEP in the past as being prone to algae blooms, a condition resulting from high amounts of phosphorus entering the waterbody, often due to non-point source pollution. In 1995, the Cobbossee Watershed District was awarded a Section 319 grant from DEP to address non-point source pollution in the watershed. With the collaboration of DEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) were calculated for optimum watershed improvement and management, and public education efforts were stepped up. The water quality of Cobbossee Lake has gradually improved, and in 2006 the lake was removed from DEP's list of most threatened waterbodies.

Jimmie's (or Jamie) Pond is located in southeastern Manchester. It has been previously used as a public water supply for Hallowell. Much of the shoreline of the pond is owned by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and features carry-in boating, hiking and fishing in a natural environment, making it ideal for tourists. There is some residential use on the shoreline, which has some steep slopes. The water quality of the pond is average. It is also classified by the Maine DEP as a lake which is most at risk from new development, even though a considerable fraction of the watershed, and 90 percent of the shoreline, is state-owned conservation land.

Little Jimmie Pond is also located in southeastern Manchester. It is under five acres and undeveloped.

Hutchinson Pond, in southeastern Manchester, is also classified by Maine DEP as a lake which is most at risk from new development. Its water quality is listed as "moderate-sensitive" and it would be very susceptible to phosphorous loading if not for its rapid flushing rate (seven flushes per year). Like Jimmie's Pond and Little Jimmie's Pond, Hutchinson is fairly marshy, with little access and a limited number of ownerships. Central Maine Power Company recently acquired a substantial amount of shoreline, they may put in boat access.

Bog Pond is a small, undeveloped pond in south-central Manchester. It is protected by the Kennebec Land Trust, and is used recreationally for hiking and bird watching. The shoreland of Bog Pond is managed forest land.

Shed Pond in northwestern Manchester is also protected by Kennebec Land Trust, although it is subject to the threats of runoff. The pond is home to nine fish species, loons and other birds, and rare plants, making it popular for hiking and birdwatching. The shore front is undeveloped; watershed land uses are primarily undeveloped, with a small amount of residential and farming.

Tyler Pond, in northeastern Manchester is classified by DEP as a lake which is most at risk from new development. It is undeveloped, stocked with brook trout, and managed by IFW. Its hiking and carry-in boating opportunities make it popular for tourism and fishing.

Silver Lake is located half in Manchester, half in Sidney. It is popular as a swimming and fishing destination, and has a boat landing. Silver Lake faces some threat from development.

Fairbanks Pond in northeastern Manchester, is classified by DEP as a lake which is most at risk from new development. Fairbanks Pond has a public boat landing, and is popular for swimming and fishing. Six species of fish live in the pond, including brook and brown trout, which are stocked.

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## STREAMS

The streams and brooks in Manchester (see figure 17) include Tanning Brook and Spring Brook (draining into Bond Brook), Bond Brook (Mill Brook), Bog Brook (draining into Cobbossee Lake from Bog Pond), Jimmie Brook (feeding Jimmie Pond), Mears Brook(feeding Little Cobbossee Lake), Weston Brook (feeding Cobbossee Lake), and Cobbosseecontee Stream (draining Cobbossee Lake). All of the streams and brooks in Manchester are classified by DEP as Class B, the third highest quality rating for fresh surface waters. According to the definition in 38 MRSA Sec. 465 (3)A, Class B waters *“are suitable for the designated uses of drinking water supply after treatment; fishing; agriculture; recreation in and on the water; industrial process and cooling water supply; hydroelectric power generation, except as prohibited under Title 12, section 403; navigation; and as habitat for fish and other aquatic life. The habitat must be characterized as unimpaired.”*

None of the streams in Manchester have been identified by DEP as “Urban impaired streams.” However, Weston Brook has been identified locally as a concern, because of its proximity to the village, Route 202, and new development.

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## WATER QUALITY ADVOCACY GROUPS

There are several groups within the area that have an interest in and advocate for water resources in Manchester. The Cobbossee Watershed District, headquartered in Winthrop, provides professional assistance to efforts to protect, conserve and manage the lakes, ponds and streams of the Cobbossee watershed. Maine’s Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP) is active in the community. Other interested parties in the region include the Summer Haven Lakes Association, Bond Brook Salmon Restoration, Friends of Cobbossee Watershed, and the Cobbosseecontee Yacht Club.

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## GROUNDWATER:

Groundwater is generally abundant and accessible throughout Manchester. For residential purposes, there are few constraints on the volume available, and at the density of development permissible, residential development does not pose a threat to groundwater supply or quality.

Sixty-seven percent of Manchester's population relies on self-supplied water from wells, according to the 1990 census. Most of Manchester's rural area is supplied by bedrock wells. Some older homes may have dug wells, sometimes supplemented with a newer drilled bedrock well.

Naturally occurring water-quality threats to Manchester's wells include radon and arsenic at levels above the state drinking water limit. A recent report by the U.S. Geological Survey showed that over 50 percent of Manchester's bedrock wells have arsenic above the drinking water limit (10 micrograms per liter). The distribution of high-arsenic wells is considered fairly random within the town. It is recommended that all homeowners with drilled wells get their well tested for arsenic, and treat it as necessary.

Some areas within the town are covered by shallow sand and gravel aquifers, which can provide considerably higher yields than areas with only fractured bedrock (sand and gravel aquifers are shown in figure 14). These areas may be tapped for large-scale public water supplies. This is the case with the aquifer in northeastern Manchester, running from the Belgrade line approximately to the Lyons Road along Bond Brook (see Water Resources Map). This aquifer is the source of drinking water for the Greater Augusta Utilities District. Because of the gravel deposits associated with this aquifer, its surface area is also the site of major gravel pits in Manchester and Augusta. The aquifer is identified in the Manchester Land Use and Development Ordinance and protected by the Aquifer Management Overlay District. The District provides additional protection and land use restrictions to preserve and enhance water quality.

According to the Maine Drinking Water Program (DWP), there are five public water supplies in Manchester. DWP provides the following information about each of these sources:

- Lakehurst Acres. There are two wells that serve as the water supplies for Lakehurst Acres. The first is a bedrock well with a 300 foot wellhead protection radius. It is considered by DWP to be at moderate risk of contamination due to its type and site geology (unknown overburden thickness). Its existing risk of contamination is moderate (there is a septic system located within 300 feet of the well), and has a high risk of future contamination (limited or no land protection around the well). There is a low existing risk of chronic contamination, but a high future risk.

The second public water supply serving Lakehurst Acres is a bedrock well with a 300 foot wellhead protection radius, and an overburden thickness of 300 feet. There is a low existing risk of contamination from type and site geology. The well has a low existing risk of contamination, but a high risk of future acute and chronic contamination, because of limited or no land protection around the well.

- Maine Medical Association, Hanley Building. This public water supply is a bedrock well, 260 feet deep and producing 5 gallons per minute. It has a 300-foot protection radius. It is considered at moderate existing risk of contamination due to type and site geology (unknown overburden thickness). It has a moderate existing risk of acute contamination (septic system located within 300 feet of the well), and a high risk of future acute contamination (limited or no land protection around the well).
- Augusta Country Club. The public water supply that serves the Augusta Country Club is a 244-foot deep bedrock well, producing 100 gallons per minute. It is considered to be moderately at risk of contamination due to type and site geology. The well has a low existing risk of acute contamination, and a moderate risk of future acute contamination, due to limited land ownership and control.
- Kennebec Valley YMCA. This water supply is a drilled bedrock well, 325 feet deep. It has an unknown overburden thickness, putting it at a moderate existing risk of contamination due to type and site geology.

The well has a low existing risk of acute contamination, and a moderate risk of future acute contamination, due to limited land ownership and control.

- Add new well at Jorgensen's Doctor's Office.

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## THREATS TO WATER QUALITY

There are no known point sources of pollution in Manchester. DEP has no record of any wastewater outfalls, combined sewer overflows, or overboard discharges in town. There are several fueling stations and other commercial enterprises using potentially hazardous chemicals, but there have been no incidents of spills in recent memory.

Pollution that has no single, identifiable source, but rather several dispersed sources, is characterized as non-point source pollution, and has historically been a threat in Manchester. The development of Manchester's shorelines with its incremental increases in impervious surface has contributed to non-point source pollution of the water resource. Agriculture and forestry can also be significant contributors to sediment-carrying runoff, and both are practiced in Manchester (although generally with strong BMPs). Active gravel pits over the Bond Brook aquifer threaten non-point source pollution of a different type.

Threats to the water resource are generally addressed through both regulatory and non-regulatory methods. Manchester, in partnership with various advocacy groups and stakeholders, seeks to meet the challenges which may emerge in the future through facility upgrades, owner education, monitoring and management in the case of shorelands, and through its Land Use Ordinance.

The Land Use Ordinance contains the Aquifer Management Overlay District, which limits the type and intensity of development over the Bond Brook aquifer. The ordinance contains updated standards for phosphorous export from development and for stormwater management generally. The ordinance also contains rules for storage of potential pollutants.

Manchester contributes to and participates with the Cobbossee Watershed District. The CWD identifies erosion and other threats to surface waters, assists in development reviews, and provides an educational component.

## II-G: OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

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*State's Goal: Promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreational opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters.*

### PRINCIPAL ISSUES:

Outdoor recreation is a valuable element of community life, particularly in a town such as Manchester, with so many opportunities to explore. Manchester has large expanses of undeveloped open space, as well as multiple lakes for water-based recreation, and a good recreational infrastructure.

A key issue with regard to recreation is whether we are prepared for future demand. We need to look at expected demographic and economic changes, as well as our overall vision for future direction, to determine what the nature of future recreation demand will be.

Manchester's 2004 *Long Range Public Facilities and Open Space Plan* has guided the development of passive recreation facilities for the past several years and continues to be the driving force for recreational development. Five goals expressed in the plan are:

- Permanently conserve and passively use existing public land with high natural resource values;
- Permanently conserve other high value lands;
- Develop a town swimming area and increase access to Cobbosseecontee Lake;
- Create trails, sidewalks, and bike paths in the village area and between communities for fitness, safety, and a better environment;
- Make public space in the village and Route 202 corridor more appealing and functional for future generations.

Many of the recommendations in the open space plan have been implemented, with some still to come. The principal impediment to implementation is lack of funding for capital investments.

To date, most of the focus on programs for active recreation have always been on youth. This is entirely understandable, as youth tend to be more active and require supervision. However, Manchester is aging, evidenced at both ends of the spectrum: The population aged under 18 has declined by about ten percent since 1990, while the population over 65 has increased by over 60 percent, with baby boomers yet to start retiring.

We should anticipate this shift in planning for recreation opportunities. In the past, the kind of recreation provided to seniors has been more community- and indoor-oriented, but the current generation of retiring seniors is much more likely to be the “active retirement” type. These tend to show a preference for outdoor activities, such as boating, cycling, and fitness activities. The community survey published in the 2004 Open Space Plan identified sidewalks, bike trails, nature areas, and passive trails as top needs, along with a swimming beach.

## POLICIES:

- A. Maintain or upgrade existing facilities as necessary to meet current and future needs.
- B. Preserve open space for recreation.
- C. Seek or continue at least one major point of public access to major water bodies for boating, fishing and swimming and work with property owners to address concerns.
- D. Create trails, sidewalks and bike paths in the village area, and between communities that link lakes and other attractions for fitness, safety and environmental protection.
- E. Promote and support a wide range of public recreational activities, and provide residents with information on available recreational opportunities.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- 1) Maintain public facilities through Town budget, community fundraising and small program fees in a manner that encourages a safe, outdoor recreation experience for community members of all ages. *Town Manager, Recreation Committee, Ongoing*
- 2) Explore citizen interest in the establishment of a community center through establishment of an ad hoc study group to evaluate assets and needs. Also, study needs for outdoor basketball court and picnic areas. *Board of Selectmen with Special Committee, Mid term*
- 3) Support the installation of low-maintenance landscaping materials around the Castletown playground area. *Recreation Committee, Short term*
- 4) Retain existing and acquired town lands that have a high value for conservation, recreation and timber harvesting. *Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Recreation Committee, Ongoing*
- 5) Work with public and private partners such as the Kennebec Land Trust and Manchester Country Riders, and landowners, to extend and maintain a network of trails for motorized and non-motorized uses, including connections with regional networks. *Conservation Commission, Manchester Country Riders, Ongoing*



- 6) Continue to identify land available for public use and promote appropriate behaviors for using public and private property. Provide education regarding the benefits and protections for landowners allowing public recreational access on their property. Formalize these arrangements with easements or licenses whenever possible. *Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen, Recreation Committee, Ongoing*
- 7) Make maps available of existing hiking, biking, ATV, or snowmobiling trails either through downloadable files on town website or for purchase locally to encourage utilization of existing open space. *Town Office staff, Recreation Committee, Healthy Futures Mid term*
- 8) Contact and encourage neighborhoods, civic organizations and businesses to adopt trails and take responsibility for their oversight and maintenance including signage. *Conservation Commission, Short term and ongoing*
- 9) Explore the potential to increase membership with the Town of Readfield for use of Readfield Town Beach on Maranacook Lake. *Recreation Committee, Short term*
- 10) Notify town residents through town publications, web site etc. that no-cost swimming opportunities exist for Minnehonk Lake and the Hallowell reservoir. *Town Office staff, Short term*
- 11) Continue to investigate the feasibility and look for opportunities to establish ownership or access to a beach facility on Cobbosseecontee Lake for town residents. *Board of Selectmen, Recreation Committee, Special committee? ongoing*
- 12) Foster and maintain a strong relationship and lines of communication with Maine DOT to incorporate traffic calming measures and plans for sidewalks and bike lanes into road improvements in the village area. Apply for Safe Routes to School funding for Route 17 sidewalk. *Road Committee, Board of Selectmen, Short term*
- 13) Develop local ordinance standard and incentive programs to mitigate traffic flow problems on Route 202. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 14) Work with neighboring communities and organizations such as the YMCA, Healthy Futures, RSU 38, Maine DOT and Bicycle Coalition of Maine to advocate for planned sidewalks, bike lanes and bike paths, appropriate signage and attractive linkages between and among communities. Make recommendations as to how such facilities should be funded, constructed, and maintained. *Road Committee, Town Manager, Planning Board, Ongoing*
- 15) Continue to identify public and private property that could provide trails or sidewalk between Manchester neighborhoods or the village center. Formalize any arrangements with easements or licenses whenever possible. Provide education regarding the benefits and protections for landowners allowing public recreational access on their property. *Conservation Commission, Recreation Committee, Ongoing*
- 16) Continue to support the Manchester Summer Recreation program for grades K-6 and explore potential for increased utilization and participation in the program. *Recreation Committee, Board of Selectmen, Ongoing*
- 17) Continue to support the efforts of community volunteers as listed in organized recreational opportunities. *Recreation Committee, Ongoing*
- 18) Continue to support the Apple Festival, Tree Lighting Festival, and Saturday Community gatherings. *Recreation Committee, Board of Selectmen, Ongoing*
- 19) Encourage and provide financial support for the Manchester Recreation Committee to explore and provide adult recreational activities. *Board of Selectmen, Town Manager, Ongoing*

**INFORMATION ABOUT OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES:**

Outdoor recreation can generally be classified into two categories: organized, or “active,” recreation – usually supported by developed facilities and programs, and unorganized, or “passive,” recreation, often with supporting facilities, but more a solitary or family activity. Both are addressed here. Not addressed are indoor forms of recreation, such as the Y, or school and senior programs; they are described as public facilities and services.

**ORGANIZED RECREATION**

As illustrated in Table 18 and on figure 18, Manchester has a wide assortment of organized recreation opportunities, including programs and activities run by a variety of organizations. There are playing fields for baseball, softball, soccer, and other activities located in several parts of town. Refer to figure 18 for locations, shown by map number.

Figure 18. **Map showing location of recreation facilities, outdoor recreation areas, hiking trails, and public and conserved land in Manchester.**

**Table 18. Community Recreation Facilities. Locations shown on fig.18.**

Public within Manchester	MAP No.	Baseball	Softball	Football	Soccer	Multi	Track	Tennis	Basketball	Playground	Ice Rink	x-skiing running trails/walking trails	Weight lifting	golf
Manchester Castletown and facilities	1	1	1		1			2		1				
Manchester Elementary School	2								1					
<b>Private within Manchester</b>														
Lion’s Club	3	1				1								
YMCA	4						1		1	1			1	
<b>Outside Manchester</b>														
Maranacook Community Middle school and High School	--	2	2	1	2	1	1	3	2			1	1	

UMA leisure center	--							2				1		
Hallowell Recreation Area	--	1							1 (outdoor)			1		
<b>Private</b>														
YMCA Augusta	--					1	1		1				1	
Camp KV	--					1								
Kents Hill	---	1	2	2	4	1		6			1			
Augusta Country Club	--							2						1

The town currently supports a variety of recreation programs, mostly on the efforts of many community volunteers (Table 19). Funding for the programs comes from community fundraising, small program fees, and town support when requested.

**Table 19. Community Recreational Programs in Manchester**

Activity	Age Group
Maranacook Youth Football League	
Maranacook Youth Soccer	Kindergarten to grade 6
Manchester Summer Recreation	Kindergarten to grade 6
Basketball	K-3 coed, 4-6 male and female teams
Baseball	k-6
Softball	k-6
Manchester/Readfield Middle school rec	Grades 6-8
Maranacook Youth Hockey	K-8 grade
MHW hockey	Grades 9-12
Kennebec Lacrosse	Kindergarten to grade 12
Apple Festival	All
Manchester Adult Basketball	Adults

Other programs in the form of youth travel leagues are also available.

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## UNORGANIZED RECREATION

Unorganized recreation can be further divided into water-based and land-based activities.

**WATER ACCESS AND ACTIVITIES:**

Manchester has lakes for water-based activities, but the limiting factor tends to be in the available access points. Table 20, below, illustrates current opportunities for Manchester residents (see figure 18 for water access locations in Manchester, refer to map no. on table 20):

**Table 20. Water Access Opportunities for Fishing and Boating. Locations shown on fig. 18.**

Public within Manchester						
Water Body	MAP No.	Boat access	Type of boat access	Size of water body/ depth of water body	Fishing allowed	Type of fish
Jamie's Pond	5	Jamie's Pond Rd via Outlet road in Hallowell or Collins Road in Manchester	Hand carry boats and canoes; small trailers	107 acres/75 feet	yes	Brook Trout, splake, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, chain pickerel
Shed Pond	6	Access through Allen Whitney Memorial Forest to Gannet Woods	Small boat carry in (1/4 mile walk to put-in)	37 acres/ 10 feet deep	Yes	Chain pickerel
Tyler Pond	7	DIFW maintains a boat access site on the north end.	Hand carry boating	22 acres/ 70 feet deep	yes	Brook trout
Lower Silver Lake	8	Southwest end of Silver Lake located off Summerhaven Rd	Small trailer boat or carry-in	29 acres/ 62 feet deep	Yes	Brown trout
Hutchinson Pond	9	Unimproved road off the Benson Rd Access via the outlet which crosses the Collins Rd	Walk-in, carry-in only; permission required from landowner to access via Collins Rd. outlet	100 acres/ 24 feet deep	yes	Largemouth bass and pickerel
Cobbosee Outlet Dam	10	Upstream of dam at Cobbosee Bridge on Collins Road	North of dam or carry in	Stream	yes	

Cobbossee Lake	II	Bridge on the corner of Pond Road and Collins Road	Carry in small boat or canoe/kayak	5543 acres/ 100 feet deep	yes	Brown trout, smallmouth bass, chain pickerel, white perch, yellow perch
<b>Public outside Manchester</b>						
Maranacook Lake	--	Rt 41, Readfield, Maine	Trailer boat access	1673 acres / 118 feet deep	yes	Brown trout, lake trout, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, white perch, pickerel, rainbow
Cobbossee Lake	--	Off Route 202 East Winthrop Note: difficult put-in & off of the South Rd., Monmouth	Trailer boat	5543 acres/ 100 feet deep	Yes	Brown trout, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, chain pickerel, white perch, yellow perch
Little Cobbossee Lake	--	Outlet north of route 202, East Winthrop	Hand carry boating and canoes	75 acres/ 33 feet deep	yes	smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, chain pickerel, white perch
Maranacook Lake	--	Winthrop and Readfield	trailer or hand carry	1673 acres / 118 feet deep	Yes	Brown trout, lake trout, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, white perch,
Carlton Pond - Winthrop	--	no	owned by Augusta Water District; Public prohibited.		no	
Annabessacook Lake	--	Unimproved launch located along Waugan Road, Monmouth	Unimproved launch along Waugan Road	1420 acres / 49 feet deep	yes	smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, chain pickerel, white perch
Minnehonk Lake	--	Village of Mt Vernon	Trailer boat	99 acres/ 73 feet deep	Yes	Splake, brook trout, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass
Torsey Pond	--	off of the Old Kents Hill Rd., Readfield	Hand carry; Personal watercraft prohibited	770 acres/ 45 feet deep	yes	Smallmouth bass, white & yellow perch, chain pickerel, hornpout, eel, White sucker
Echo Lake	--	North shore in Mt. Vernon off State Route 41	Trailer boat	1185 acres / 117 ft deep	yes	Togue, Brook trout, splake, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, chain pickerel, white perch and
Kennebec River	--	Public access in Hallowell and Augusta	Trailer boat	Large	Yes	??

There are also limited swimming opportunities for residents. As illustrated in Table 21, opportunities are either privately owned or outside of the town. Refer to locations shown on figure 18, by map number.

**Table 21. Manchester Beach Areas**

<b>Within Manchester:</b>					
<b>Public</b>	<b>MAP No.</b>	<b>Body of Water</b>	<b>Beach area</b>	<b>Fee for use</b>	<b>Details of fee</b>
Bridge on the corner of Pond Road and the Collins Road	<b>10</b>	Cobbosseecontee Stream:	Rocky. Swimming officially not allowed. Dam area--potential danger.	no	Note: Town has considered posting the area for swimming (i.e., formally prohibiting it) but is worried about liability exposure.
<b>Private</b>					
Augusta Country Club	<b>12</b>	Cobbosseecontee Lake	Sandy Beach	yes	Social membership required
Cobboosee Yacht Club	<b>13</b>	Cobbosseecontee Lake	Sandy Beach	yes	Small yearly fee for membership in club; Club holds weekly Laser ragatta
<b>Outside Manchester</b>					
<b>Public</b>		<b>Body of Water</b>	<b>Beach area</b>	<b>Fee for use</b>	<b>Details of fee</b>
Winthrop Beach	--	Maranacook Lake	Sandy Beach	no	Available for town residents only
Readfield Beach	--	Maranacook Lake	Sandy Beach	yes	20 passes are available for Manchester residents at a fee of \$65.00. Access from 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Mt Vernon	--	Minnehonk Lake	Sandy beach	No	Available for town residents and non-residents
Hallowell	--	Hallowell Reservoir	Sandy beach	No	Available for town residents and non-residents
<b>Private</b>					
Camp KV	--	Maranacook Lake	Sandy Beach	yes	Requires membership; see YMCA

## LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES

Land-based passive recreation includes activities such as hunting, hiking, bird-watching, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and cycling. Land-based recreation can take place throughout town, but depends upon public lands or access to tracts of undeveloped, private land. Recreational open space was one of the principal goals of the Open Space Plan, itself an implementation strategy of the 1991 Comprehensive Plan. The Open Space Plan identifies the following recreation and conservation lands in Manchester, in table 22 (refer to figure 18 for locations, by map number). In addition to the public recreation areas listed below, there are two golfing

establishments in town: the Augusta Country Club (membership required) and T's Driving Range, both located on Route 202.

**Table 22. Recreation and Conservation Lands**

Property	Map No.	Ownership	Uses	Approximate acreage
Town of Manchester Recreation area	1	Town	Municipal park for public use and elementary school. Home of summer recreation program k-6	3.67 acres for the recreation fields and 1.0 acres for the tennis courts. (Parking space is not included.)
Tennis Courts	14	Town	Recreation facility	
Fairbanks Pond	15	Town	Open Space Easement, all non-motorized travel, swimming, ATV's and snowmobiles on designated trail use access limited and difficult	65 acres 778 feet of frontage on pond
Tyler pond	16	Maine DOC	state-maintained ATV trail network ; hunting, boating, fishing	128 acres
Allen Whitney Forest	17	New England Forestry Foundation	Non motorized trails on open space properties; hunting, skiing, hiking, biking Snowmobiles on designated trails only. Managed forestland.	708 acres
Gannett Woods	18	Kennebec Land Trust	Protected open space with public access Snowmobiles on designated trails only. While the trailhead is in Manchester the property and trail are in Readfield. Hiking trail. Hunting.	120 acres
Lakeside Orchards	19	Land for Maine's Future	Protected open space with public access, home of the annual Apple Festival; interested in establishing public trails	189 acres
Town Owned Land ( the "town woodlots" off of the Patch Rd.)	20	Town	Town Owned open spaces with public access Snowmobiles on designated trails only; hunting. Managed forestland.	184 acres
Jamie's Pond and Wildlife	21	Maine DIFW	Protected open space with public access, houses 3 public parking spaces, hiking, skiing,	550 acres
Islands owned by Kennebec Land Trust	22	Kennebec Land Trust	Protected open space with public access. Located in E. Winthrop.	
ATV area on Summerhaven Rd.	23	IF&W	Newly-opened public ATV area on east side of Summerhaven Rd. – formerly informal ATV use.	unknownn

Bog Pond Preserve	24	Kennebec Land Trust	Protected open space with public access, although access is difficult and no trails have been developed.	Need to get from KLT
<b>Outside of Town Limits:</b>				
Wyman Memorial Forest	--	Kennebec Land Trust	Protected open space with public access. Hiking trail. Possible links to Gannett Woods trail and NEFF trails.	40 acres
Hallowell Reservoir Recreation Area	--	City of Hallowell	Walking/Hiking, mountain biking, swimming (no lifeguard), ball field, picnic tables, XC skiing. Open to non-residents of Hallowell.	Approximately 180 acres
Vaughn Woods, Hallowell	--	Privately held, easement held by Kennebec Land Trust.	Public walking trails, limited parking	unavailable

There are many casual and developed hiking and walking trails in Manchester. Table 23 contains an inventory of those trails. Some of the trail systems are poorly mapped and marked. Mapped trails shown on figure 18, and on the Manchester Conservation Commission’s map of recreation areas in Manchester, available at the town office.

**Table 23. Manchester Recreational Trails**

Trail	Map No.	Access Location	Ownership	Notes
Jamies Pond and Wildlife Management	21	Jamie’s Pond Rd via Outlet road in Hallowell or Collins Road in Manchester or Meadowhill Rd. in Manchester	DIFW - Protected open space with public access	There are 3 spaces off the Collins Rd., perhaps 15 spaces at the parking area off of the Outlet Rd. Well-maintained and marked walking trails, with water access. Trails maintained by Hallowell Conservation Commission.
Walking L o o p s at Longfellow’s Greenhouses	22	Puddledock Road, Manchester	Longfellows	Retail space
Allen-Whitney Forest	17	Scribner Hill Road, Manchester	New England Forestry Foundation	Parking at North Manchester Meeting House (users may not interfere with church functions). Trails somewhat rough in places, trail marking needs improvement.
Fairbanks Pond	15	Summer Haven, Manchester	Town of Manchester	Difficult access. Many unmarked trails. Water access.
Unimproved trails	--	various	Town of Manchester or Public	Old Sewer lines, Old Trolley trails etc. Many unimproved trails throughout the town on private land that are used by local residents. Public access unclear.
YMCA	4	Winthrop Street	YMCA	Small, reduced fee for use of the



				indoor track
Tyler Pond WMA	16	Summerhaven	DIFW	Multi-use trails, ATVs and snowmobiles permitted

There are over thirty miles of snowmobiling trails in Manchester groomed by the local club, the Manchester Country Riders. These trails connect with adjacent towns and are part of the statewide system of snowmobile trails. These trails can be used during the winter for other winter sports but care should be used when skiing or snowshoeing as these are primarily snowmobile trails. Each year, changes to the trail system are made, so residents are encouraged to use the most recent maps, made available for purchase on a yearly basis.

Hunting for large and small game is an activity traditional in rural areas. As rural areas are developed, conflicts are inevitable between residents and hunters. Landowners, too, are becoming increasingly hesitant to permit unsupervised hunting on their lands. For these reasons, it is important to identify and preserve existing hunting opportunities (Table 24). At Manchester’s visioning session, it was suggested that forming a local sportsman’s club might help to preserve these opportunities.

**Table 24. Hunting Lands in Manchester**

Property	Ownership	Uses	Approximate acreage
Tyler Pond	Maine DOC	All non-motorized travel. ATV and snowmobiles on designated trails.	128 acres
Allen Whitney Forest	New England Forestry Foundation	Non motorized trails on open space properties. Snowmobiles on designated trails only.	708 acres
Jamies Pond Wildlife Management	Maine DIFW	Protected open space with public access, houses 3 public parking spaces	550 acres
private lands	Private	Hunting by permission only	--

Sidewalks (also discussed in Section II-C, Transportation) provide a more sedate variety of recreation, especially suited for aging citizens and smaller children. In some neighborhoods, roads are quiet enough to be an alternative to sidewalks, but along major routes the lack of sidewalks is a safety hazard and deterrent to casual recreation. There are a few short, disconnected sidewalk segments along Route 202 and none on Route 17.

In addition to walking and hiking trails in Manchester, residents have access to a large number of trails within a short distance of the community. Some of the more significant are listed below:

- Kennebec River Rail Trail; Augusta to Gardiner multi-use trail skirting Kennebec River;
- Gannett Woods: Access from Scribner Hill Road, owned by Kennebec Land Trust;

- Mount Pisgah: Trail to peak in Winthrop, owned by KLT, managed by Winthrop;
- Bond Brook Trails: owned by City of Augusta, multi-use trail network under development;
- Maranacook Trails: Recreation/exercise trails on schoolgrounds in Readfield.

Bicycling is becoming increasingly popular as a recreational activity as well as a form of transportation (also discussed in Section II-C, Transportation). Except for mountain biking, most cycling takes place on public roads. Very few off-road or designated bike routes exist in Manchester. This is a significant, untapped opportunity. A bicycle network linking the lakes, village, and other attractions would not only alleviate some transportation-related problems, but could serve as a tourist attraction and health asset.

## II-H: PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES/FISCAL CAPACITY

*State's Goal: Plan for, finance, and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.*

### PRINCIPAL ISSUES:

Planning for the future of municipal services and infrastructure is one of the key elements of the comprehensive plan. Manchester is a multi-million dollar business, collecting tax revenue and providing a variety of services to its customers in exchange. Like any private business, the Town can only keep its costs under control by ensuring that it is operating as efficiently as possible while providing for its customers' needs. This is done by continually forecasting business trends and large-expenditure needs, but the comprehensive plan is an opportunity to compare the daily operation of town government with larger trends of land use, economic development, evolving resource constraints, outside influences, and other factors.

Manchester, though relatively small in population, supports a variety of public services because of its well-run management structure. Most Maine towns of 2,500 do not have the luxury of public water and sewer systems, an arterial highway, a professional quality fire department, a full time town office, and several other benefits that Manchester residents enjoy. We can only continue to do this through effective cost control. Part of cost control is anticipation of future demand. Trends such as state and federal mandates, residential development sprawl, and commercial strip development work against cost control.

Besides cost control, the largest threat to effective delivery of public services is the need for large, one-time capital investments. New buildings, new roads, and so on, can create havoc with a local budget. On the other hand, if we identify investment needs well in advance, we can spread out the cost over a number of years or identify alternative sources of funding.

### MANCHESTER'S PLANNING GOAL FOR PUBLIC SERVICES:

- Provide and maintain efficient and high-quality municipal services and facilities to meet the needs of the citizens of Manchester, including the public health, recreation, safety, education and welfare.

## POLICIES (PUBLIC FACILITIES):

- A. To efficiently meet identified public facility and service needs.
- B. To provide public facilities and services in a manner that promotes and supports growth and development in identified growth areas.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES (PUBLIC FACILITIES):

- 1) Continue to implement the solid waste recycling program and increase recycling education programs for residents. *Conservation Commission/Board of Selectmen, Ongoing*
- 2) Continue to study options to reduce total solid waste disposal costs through disposal alternatives to Hatch Hill facility. Consider curbside collection program and regional transfer station options. *Conservation Commission/Board of Selectmen, Ongoing*
- 3) Evaluate the condition of the sand and salt shed on Sylvester Drive for roof and wall maintenance issues, make recommendations for a maintenance or replacement plan. Develop a maintenance plan, to include improving the appearance of the surrounding area. *Board of Selectmen/Road Committee, Short term*
- 4) Investigate other towns' use of impact fees, in-kind contributions or assistance with construction or maintenance of facilities, for significant commercial and residential expansions and make recommendations for implementation of similar program in Manchester. *Planning Board/Board of Selectmen, Mid term*
- 5) Explore citizen interest in the establishment of a community center through establishment of an ad hoc study group to evaluate assets and needs. *Board of Selectmen with Special Committee, Mid term*
- 6) Plan to raze the old fire station and reuse the site. Determine suitable uses and apply for grants for redevelopment. *Board of Selectmen, Mid term*
- 7) Continue to explore participation in regional initiatives for services that can provide better value to the town than other available sources. *Board of Selectmen, Ongoing*
- 8) Investigate the future capacity of the town cemeteries, and report to the Board of Selectmen. *Cemetery Committee, Short term*
- 9) Review utilization of the town office and establish a plan for building upgrades and long-term maintenance needs. Develop long-term maintenance plan for the new fire station. *Board of Selectmen, Mid term*

## INFORMATION ABOUT MUNICIPAL AND REGIONAL SERVICES:

This section profiles the public services available in Manchester. Services are provided by town government either individually or as a partner with neighboring towns or regional districts.

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## GENERAL GOVERNMENT:

The Manchester Town Office is the base of operations for general government services. It includes offices for the town clerk, tax collector, assessor, town manager, general assistance, treasurer, and code enforcement officer, as well as meeting space for municipal boards and committees. The town office is open 36 hours a week, Monday through Friday.

The town office is located at the intersection of Routes 202 and 17 (Figure 19). The original building dates from the 70's, with an addition completed in the 90's. The office is generally considered adequate for most functions, although some larger meetings are now held in the new fire hall. There are no capital needs associated with the town office at this time.

Figure 19. ***Map showing location of Municipal and Public Facilities and Public Utilities in Manchester.***

General government services are considered satisfactory by residents, with no major issues or complaints. The small, full-time staff is supplemented in their work by appointed officials and active volunteer boards and committees. Augmenting the board of selectmen, Manchester has a budget committee, planning board, board of appeals, cemetery committee, conservation commission, , recreation committee, and road committee. The work of some of these committees is outlined in the discussion of specific services below.

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## PUBLIC SAFETY:

Manchester does not have its own police department. It is served by the Kennebec County Sheriff's office and Maine State Police through a call coverage sharing agreement. Manchester does not appropriate funds for a dedicated officer. Augusta and Hallowell, to the east, and Winthrop to the west have full-time departments. The majority of public safety calls in Manchester are for motor vehicle violations or accidents, with one percent or less being investigation of crimes such as burglary or assault.

The Manchester Fire Department is an all-volunteer department. There are no issues with manpower or training. The town has an ISO rating of 6 – quite good for an all-volunteer department. In 2009, the town completed a new fire station, with the capacity to house all equipment and vehicles for the foreseeable future. In 2011, a set of solar panels was installed on the fire department. The town sets aside \$10,000 per year in a vehicle replacement reserve, with a plan to retire and replace one engine every 15 years.

Initial PSAP (E911) calls come in to the Somerset County Communications Center in Skowhegan and are forwarded for the appropriate response. There have been studies at the state level recommending further regionalization of PSAP and dispatching services, so Manchester's future PSAP service supplier may change as a result of changes to the state system.

Ambulance service is contracted from the Winthrop Regional Service. Winthrop also serves Wayne, Readfield, Mt. Vernon, and Fayette. In 2008-09, the regional service responded to 2,058 calls for service, a 25 percent jump from the prior year. Depending on the location and nature of the call, transport may be to any of six different hospitals. The ambulance service consists of three full-time employees and another 30 part-time EMT's and paramedics. The service occupies a new facility in Winthrop, which is expected to be adequate for at least fifteen years.

The Fire Chief is the Emergency Preparedness Director for the town. The Town is up to date with all of its planning and preparation requirements. The Town also appoints a separate Animal Control Officer.

There are two unusual fire hazards in town. J & S Oil is a petroleum storage facility, and Longfellow's Greenhouse stores some chemicals and other materials to support its growing operations. Both hazards are well within the department's equipment and training capacity.

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## PUBLIC WORKS:

Public works functions include local road maintenance, waste management, and cemeteries. Manchester does not have a separate department to provide these services. For the most part, they are contracted services managed by local committees. The town owns a sand/salt shed (figure 19) on the Puddledock Rd., which is used to store sand and salt for use on town roads in the wintertime.

Road maintenance and improvements in Manchester are managed by the Road Commissioner (town manager) and a Road Committee. The Road Committee uses a project analysis process to determine priorities for improvements, and has managed several large-scale improvements over the past few years. Construction has generally been performed by private contractors, with a summer road budget of \$350-400,000. A separate contract is let for winter plowing and maintenance.

In 2010, Manchester participated in a joint public works department with Readfield and Wayne, allocating some projects and snowplowing to this crew. Readfield is carrying the burden of the department, however, and its future with Readfield voters is unclear. This is not expected to seriously affect the ability of the Town to provide services.

Solid waste disposal is a continuing issue in Manchester. Right now, residents contract with private haulers for curbside collection. The town also pays a per capita fee to the City of Augusta for access to Hatch Hill Landfill, amounting to almost \$40,000 per year (2012). It is not clear whether private haulers are required to bring their loads to Hatch Hill. This system results in unnecessary costs. A committee is currently studying options and is considering establishing municipal or town-licensed curbside collection.

Recycling in Manchester has been in place since the 1980's, however community participation had tailed off until recently. In 2009, the town established a single-sort, "silver bullet-style" recycling trailer behind the town office and recycled roughly 100 tons of material. The trailer is managed by Ecomaine in South Portland, and costs the Town roughly \$13,000 a year.

Cemeteries in Manchester are managed by the Sexton and a Cemetery Committee. The principal public cemetery, Manchester Forks, is up to date and has no capacity problems. St. Mary's Cemetery, on the Augusta city line, also has capacity.

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## EDUCATION:

Public education in Manchester has recently been incorporated into Regional School Unit #38, together with Readfield, Mt. Vernon, and Wayne. The administrative structure is the result of consolidation. The change in administration has not really affected the delivery of educational services. Manchester Elementary School (see figure 19) serves Manchester primary students, while Maranacook Middle and High Schools serve the region's secondary students. In order to balance enrollments, the Manchester 6<sup>th</sup> grade was moved over to the middle school.

The middle and high schools are fairly new and modern. Manchester Elementary is an older school but has not experienced any facility or capacity problems. All facilities are adequate for the foreseeable future.

Declining enrollment is a continuing issue, and threatens to force up the costs of maintaining the school system and reduce the quality of educational offerings. As can be seen in Figure 17, resident enrollment has been declining since 2001. As the demographic of Manchester changes with the aging of the baby boomers, there are likely to be even fewer young families in town. The solution is not as simple as attracting more young families, as this trend is common throughout the country.

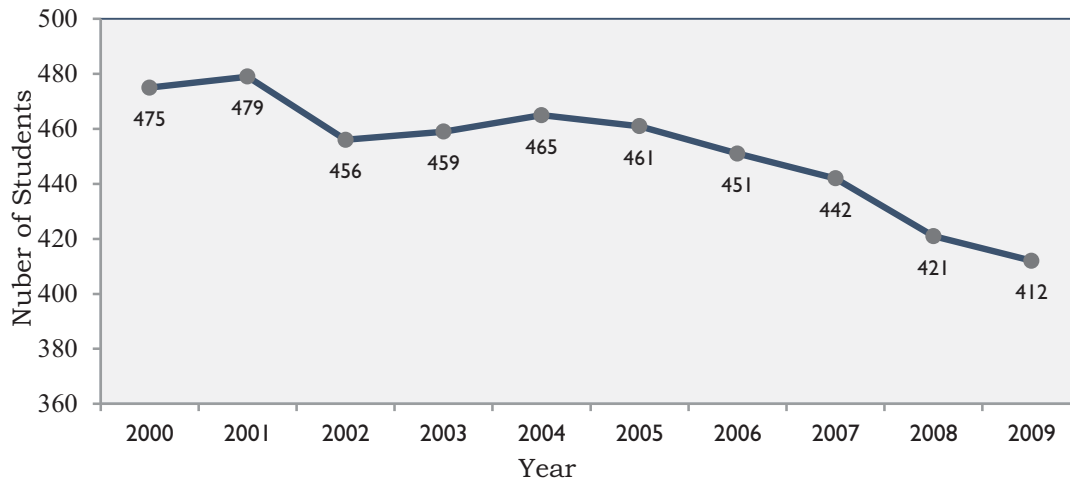


Figure 20. **Public School Enrollment -- April 1, 2001-2009**

Source: Maine Department of Education

Per pupil costs are a means of comparing expenditures between towns or districts. For the 2009-10 school year, the average per-pupil operating cost of Manchester Elementary was \$9,160 and secondary was \$10,083. The overall average was \$9,466 per pupil, a very slight decrease from the prior year. By comparison, Winthrop's was \$9,330, Augusta's was \$9,037, and Monmouth's was \$8,491. Average per-pupil costs statewide were \$9,632.

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## RECREATION:

Manchester has an active recreation committee, managing both the facilities and programs of the Town. Traditionally, the committee has focused on outdoor recreation programs for youth, but it recognizes and is searching for ways to serve other generations. Perhaps the greatest need is for a permanent, indoor facility. Townspeople do have access to a YMCA with limited facilities and to the school, but the possibility of developing a community center was strongly endorsed at Manchester's visioning session.

Information on outdoor recreation facilities is expressed in detail in Chapter II-G.

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## UTILITIES:

Public water and sewage treatment service is provided to a portion of Manchester by the Greater Augusta Utilities District. Location and capacities of both water and sewer lines are depicted on figure 16. The main feed of the water line comes from Augusta through northern portions of Manchester, then distributes into the village.



For various reasons, this is not the optimum situation, and long-range plans are to relocate the primary feed to Route 202 in coordination with future highway improvements. There are no known capacity, volume, or pressure issues with the water system.

The Manchester Sanitary District is a quasi-governmental entity operating separately from the Town. Manchester's sewers feed into a multi-community trunkline on Route 202. The trunkline carries waste (including septage) from Manchester, Winthrop and Monmouth to the Greater Augusta Utilities District Sanitary Treatment Plant. However, the trunkline does not access all of Route 202, relying on gravity feed from part way up Pelton Hill to a junction near the village. There are no capacity issues. The trunkline was originally sized to serve Carleton Woolen Mills in Winthrop as well as several other industrial users now shut down, so there are more concerns for lack of flow than for capacity.

Current District policy regarding utility extensions has been to permit them when privately financed. Developments within 300 feet of the public sewer are required to connect, but beyond that is the developer's option. As development along Route 202 has expanded, the sewer line has been extended a parcel at a time. Lack of an available sewer line keeps property values down and reduces the likelihood of significant new development in an area zoned "general development." The Town could consider upfront investment in the sewer line at the same time as highway improvements are made, to be followed by private reimbursement through a TIF or impact fees.

Electric power is distributed in town through Central Maine Power facilities. Manchester itself has no significant generation capabilities. Three phase power is generally available in the commercial areas of town and is not an issue. Broadband internet access is easily accessible in the developed area and primary roads.

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## MANCHESTER'S PLANNING GOAL FOR FISCAL CAPACITY:

- Administer the financial responsibilities of the Town in a prudent and fiscally-sound manner that meets the needs of the residents of Manchester.

## POLICIES (FISCAL CAPACITY):

- A. Finance existing and future facilities and services in a cost effective manner.
- B. Explore grants available to assist in the funding of capital investments within the community.
- C. Direct a minimum of 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments into designated growth

areas in the Future Land Use Plan.

- D. Reduce Manchester's tax burden by staying within LDI spending limits
- E. Continue to maintain a fair and equitable tax structure for all property owners.

#### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES (FISCAL CAPACITY):

- 1) Develop a capital improvements plan modeled after the Capital Investment Plan for managing investments (Section III-B). Identify priorities: high priority (address immediate need), medium priority (should address future growth in growth areas), low priority (can wait until more pressing projects are completed). Determine debt requirement, reserve requirements and methods to pay for improvements. *Board of Selectmen, Town Manager, Short term*
- 2) Continually monitor funding options from private, state and federal resources. *Board of Selectmen, Town Manager. Ongoing*
- 3) Continue to strive to make certain town programs self-sustaining, such as summer recreation and apple festival. *Board of Selectmen, Town Manager. Ongoing*
- 4) Continue to increase the balance of the Capital Improvement Fund with proceeds from the management of town owned properties. *Board of Selectmen. Ongoing*

#### INFORMATION ABOUT MANCHESTER'S FISCAL CAPACITY:

A significant element of the public services picture is the ability of the town to finance and maintain its services. Town governments are faced with multiple challenges: ordinary population growth, new patterns of development, new technology and mandates from state and federal government, and more sophisticated demands from residents for protection, education, recreation, and so on.

This comprehensive plan is not intended to influence the day-to-day financial decisions of local government. Its purpose is to identify long-term trends and needs resulting from growth and development. These needs usually resolve into new or expanded capital facilities or an increased range of public services. These needs must be balanced against the capacity of the town to fund them.

Manchester is primarily a residential town in terms of taxable property. The 2010 property Valuation was \$309,150,000 (table 25). Less than six million of that consists of personal property, which is commercial and industrial equipment. Another nine million is tax-exempt property, primarily utilities, churches, and other charitable properties. Manchester's valuation has grown by \$74 million since 2006, even allowing for a slight drop due to the recession. That is an average increase of 7 percent per year. A longer perspective (Table 26) indicates valuation has been growing about 5.8 percent per year since 1993.

**Table 25. Table 15. Valuation and Mill Rate Comparison.**

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Total Valuation</b>	<b>Mill Rate</b>	<b>Commitment</b>
W. Gardiner	\$264,350,000	8.00	\$2,021,524
Mt. Vernon	254,500,000	10.75	\$2,383,655
Monmouth	401,200,000	11.40	\$4,395,629
Winthrop	627,750,000	12.50	\$7,391,602
Litchfield	324,600,000	12.60	\$3,574,604
<b>Manchester</b>	<b>309,150,000</b>	<b>12.80</b>	<b>\$3,712,390</b>
Wayne	206,600,000	13.50	\$2,340,811
Readfield	282,150,000	15.40	\$3,466,356

Source: ????

At the 2009 “full value” tax rate of 12.8 mills, growth in taxable valuation of 7 percent should yield revenue growth of roughly \$240,000 per year. According to the audit report for the year ending June 30, 2009, town revenues increased by 4 percent over the prior year, while expenses increased only 1.8 percent. Growth in expenditures was only a little over \$100,000.

**Table 26. Mill Rate and Commitment History**

	<b>1993</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2008</b>
Full Value Mill Rate:	12.96	16.25	13.56	12.23
Commitment (\$ raised from property tax)	\$1,595,627	\$2,158,952	\$2,730,194	\$3,712,390

Manchester has had a tough time staying within its LDI limits since enactment of the law. The town has required a vote to exceed LDI limits on several occasions, including 2011. Part of the issue is the decline in state funding from revenue sharing. In 2007, the Town collected \$3.3 million in taxes, about 63 percent of total revenue. In 2007, the Town received \$1.37 million in miscellaneous revenues, the lion’s share of which was from the state. The FY 2012 budget anticipates only \$755,000.

The principal threat to a stable budget is the one-time, large ticket expenditure, such as new buildings or equipment. In Manchester, capital investments are funded through a combination of appropriations, reserve funds, grants, lease programs, or bonding. Capital projects accounts contained about \$337,000 in 2009; the town keeps separate capital accounts for fire engine replacement and sand and salt shed replacement.

The town limits its borrowing and looks for options whenever possible. Based on its state valuation, the town has a borrowing capacity of roughly \$15 million, but it has outstanding debt of only \$1.6 million. By far the largest component of that debt is the new fire station.

The town does not maintain a formal Capital Improvements Plan. The creation of a plan has been subject of discussion for some time.

In addition to long-range planning, the town is active in seeking ways to reduce capital expenditures by regionalizing services. The town participates in a dispatch center and ambulance service shared by five towns. . . The Manchester Sanitary District is also active in regional cost sharing, with Monmouth, Winthrop, and Augusta.

## II-I. MANCHESTER'S HISTORICAL RESOURCES

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*State Goal: Preserve the State's historical and archeological resources*

### PRINCIPAL ISSUES:

Manchester began as an agricultural community, and never developed more than a smattering of commercial and public infrastructure. As a result, it has a large number of private homes but very few public buildings of an historic nature. Until recently, interest in preserving historical resources has been slight. With the establishment of the Manchester Historical Society in 2010, efforts can be started on several fronts to begin more comprehensive protection.

Manchester's development standards do little to protect historical or archeological resources from destruction in the process of development. While much of the lake and stream frontage that would be most likely to contain Native American artifacts has already been developed and/or flooded by the Cobbossee Lake dam (1917), there are both prehistoric archeological sites already identified and several upland sites of historic archeological potential.

### POLICIES:

- A. Protect to the extent practicable the significant historical and archaeological resources in the community.
- B. Recover lost items of the town's history through photos and texts. Enhance the gathering of information to include neighboring activities that impacted Manchester, such as log drives, granite and ice, the state house, and natural disasters.
- C. Preserve significant historical and cultural sites, artifacts, and buildings in the community.

### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- I) Develop a working relationship with the Manchester Historical Society that identifies town support that can be provided for implementation of Comprehensive Planning strategies for the benefit of the entire

town. *Board of Selectmen, Short term*

- 2) Work with neighboring historical societies and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for and plan for a comprehensive community survey of Manchester's historical and archaeological resources. *Historical Society, Long term*
- 3) Adopt a set of standards to use as a guide in determining whether a site meets historic preservation criteria. *Historical Society, Short term*
- 4) Prioritize a list of projects to preserve the town's history and identify the time and money needed for completion. *Historical Society, Mid term*
- 5) For sites designated as having potential for historical or archeological resources, require subdivision and non-residential development applicants to identify historical and archaeological resources associated with the site and show how they will take appropriate measures to protect those resources. The planning board will incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission and the Manchester Historical Society as evidence of potential for historical resources. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 6) Develop a dedicated display space in town for historical information and artifacts for public education and enjoyment. *Historical Society, Mid term*
- 7) Educate the public about the importance of historical sites and artifacts. *Historical Society, Ongoing*

## INFORMATION ABOUT HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

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### HISTORICAL BASIS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The area that makes up the Town of Manchester was settled as part of a larger area that included Augusta, Hallowell, Readfield, and Winthrop, and was first known locally as "The Forks." The first settlements appeared around 1774, with the arrival of Nathaniel Floyd in the southern part of town and Thomas Allen in the northern part. In 1776, Captain John Evans, Francis Fuller, and Reuben Brainard arrived, followed by Samuel Cummings in 1778, and many more families after that. The Manchester Community Church was organized in 1833.

Manchester was incorporated as a town in 1850 with the name of Kennebec; in 1854 the name was changed to Manchester, after the town in Massachusetts from which many of the residents came. Census records indicate that there were 813 people living in Manchester in 1860. The town annexed land from Readfield in 1852 and from Farmingdale and Hallowell in 1870, and ceded land to Winthrop, Readfield, Augusta and Hallowell through 1873.

Manchester has always been an agricultural community, well-known for its fine orchards. In the mid 1800s, Manchester tried its hand at manufacturing, producing such items as oil cloth, granite wedges, and hay forks. In 1886, Manchester was home to three churches and seven public schoolhouses. Following the opening of the West for homesteading, Manchester and surrounding towns experienced a decline in population. The industrial revolution drew more residents away from town and into nearby cities for employment. As a result, Manchester reverted largely back to its roots as an agricultural community.

The area where Route 17 and the Pond Road join Route 202 became the center of town during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The town office, school, post office, and fire department are all located on Route 17 near this intersection and the strip of Route 202 that connects Augusta and Winthrop has experienced substantial growth of retail and service-related business developments.

Historic patterns of development are still evident in Manchester: the original village area (The Forks) and rural clusters (Prescott Rd, Shore Road, etc) are generally still characterized by these land uses today. However, the proximity of Manchester to Augusta's service center has put a development premium on agricultural land. There are many, many more homes in the rural area today that have nothing to do with the agricultural heritage of the town.

Further information on Manchester's history can be found in the book "Manchester Maine 1775-1975", available for purchase at the town office.

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## HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

There are several interesting historic sites and old homesteads in Manchester, many of them dating back to the town's original settlers. A preliminary inventory of historic structures done in March of 2010 showed four existing structures built before 1800, 44 built from 1800 to 1855, and 55 built from 1856 to 1918 (Figure 21). At least 23 old cellar holes have been identified. The town has four public and three private cemeteries containing valuable genealogical data.

Figure 21. ***Map showing historic structures in Manchester by date of construction, and cemeteries.***

A grouping of historic objects can also be considered an historic landscape, because of its significance to settlement and development patterns. Among these may be the Rockwood Road, an historic carriage road still evident in portions of Manchester, as well as the old trolley line, the grade of which has been discussed as a possible site for a new bike trail.

Several historic homes have interesting stories, special town significance, and/or unique architectural value. A more complete reference to these homes can be found in the book, *Manchester 1775-1975*, published by the Manchester Bicentennial Committee in 1975.

Some public buildings in Manchester have historical value. The three most notable are:

- Manchester Community Church
- North Manchester Meeting House
- Manchester Grange

In an April, 2009 survey of its databases, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) did not identify any historic buildings, structures or objects in their database, but stated that "a comprehensive survey of

Manchester's historic architectural resources needs to be undertaken in order to identify those properties that may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places."

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## ARTIFACTS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Two interesting historical artifacts exist in Manchester. The first is a road marker chiseled on a large stone, dating back to the "Coos Trail" days, which reads, "5M to K River" (5 miles to Kennebec River). The other is a large rock called "Footprint Rock", located beside the North Manchester Meeting House. It has several large footprints and a smaller child-size footprint implanted in the granite rock. There are several theories on how the footprints got there, but one theory is that it may have been a trail marker made by Native Americans when they traveled through Manchester.

In the survey of its databases, MHPC identified one historic archaeological site in Manchester; the "Roderick-Hadfield Artifacts", Anglo-American domestic artifacts dating from the late 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. MHPC states that no professional survey for historic archaeological sites has been conducted to date in Manchester, and that "*future such fieldwork could focus on agricultural, residential, and industrial sites relating to the earliest Euro-American settlement of the town beginning about 1774.*"

MHPC's database review did identify six known prehistoric archaeological sites in Manchester, all around "The Outlet" of Cobbossee Lake. Two of the sites, Cobbossee Dam North and Cobbossee Dam South, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and include components ranging in age from 1000 to 7500 years old.

The commission states that although limited areas of the shoreline of Cobbosseecontee Lake, Cobbosseecontee Stream, Jimmie Pond, and Hutchinson Pond have been surveyed, additional areas of these shorelines still need to be. These are to be considered as areas of potential archeological value. One of these sites, off the Benson Road, is a well-known local stopping place, and has been visited by elementary school children on field trips in the past.

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## MANCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Manchester Historical Society was organized in 2009 and incorporated as a Maine nonprofit 501(C)(3) corporation in 2010. The Society has been cataloging historic and cultural assets in town, and plans on producing an informational booklet for public distribution and use. The Society is also planning on identifying structures and/or sites within town that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and working with owners to get them listed, if possible.

Although the Manchester Historical Society is in its infancy, the group has several enthusiastic members and has received considerable interest (and donations) from area residents and businesses. Luckily, there are still many historical and archaeological resources within the town that are in good condition, and many opportunities exist for the Society to work with landowners and the town to preserve and protect them.



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## REGULATION AND PROTECTION

Currently, there are limited protections in place to preserve the integrity and character of historic and archaeological resources in Manchester. The Town's Land Use and Development Ordinance is the primary tool for regulating development in Manchester.

The subdivision portion of the ordinance requires applicants to identify areas of "Secondary Conservation," including existing historic structures, on an Existing Features Plan prepared as part of the application process (Article II, Section 12b). The identified conservation areas are used in determining possibilities for open space within the subdivision.

Article II, Section 8L(3)e of the ordinance contains the following requirements regarding wireless telecommunications facilities (WTFs) and historic buildings:

- A WTF located on or within an historic structure shall not alter the character-defining features, distinctive construction methods, or original historic materials of the building
- Any alteration made to an historic structure to accommodate a WTF shall be fully reversible
- WTFs authorized by this subsection shall be concealed within or behind existing architectural features, or shall be located so that they are not visible from public roads and viewing areas.

Beyond the provisions cited above, there are no standards in the ordinance requiring prospective developers to identify or protect historic or archeological resources.

## II-J: AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

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*State Goal: Safeguard the state's agricultural and forest resources from development that threatens those resources.*

### PRINCIPAL ISSUES:

Manchester's traditional landscape is a product of our rural resources – agriculture and forest land. Though we have passed the era when most of the population owned a farm or worked in the woods, rural and suburbanizing towns like Manchester still value the traditional land uses that keep our community healthy and productive and retain our connection to a local food system.

There is another excellent reason for maintaining farm, forest, and other open space land – it is good for the tax base. Some towns, particularly fast-developing ones, conclude that, in order to get on top of rising taxes and service demands, they have to add to their tax base, in the form of more development. But studies across the country, including Maine, show that in more undeveloped towns, taxes are lower. The simple fact is that, though farm and forest land generates relatively little tax revenue, it requires virtually no expenditure in public services. The same cannot be said of commercial, residential, or any other type of development – all of which are subsidized by undeveloped land. New development is not the cure for rising taxes; it is the cause.

Manchester's 2004 *Long Range Public Facilities and Open Space Plan* includes farmland and working farms as high value assets and recommends the use of conservation easements and other tools for preserving working farms.

### MANCHESTER'S GOALS FOR AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY:

- Support existing farms and forest
- Encourage new farms and forest

### POLICIES:

- A. Safeguard lands identified as prime farmland, established farm or capable of supporting commercial

forestry

- B. Promote use of best management practices for timber and agriculture production
- C. Support farming and forestry and encourage economic viability

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- 1) Consult with the Maine Forest Service District Forester when revising land use standards pertaining to forest management practices. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 2) Consult with Soil and Water Conservation District staff when revising land use standards pertaining to agricultural management practices. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 3) Retain subdivision standard in Land Use Ordinance that protects high value farmland and requires lots to be sited on soils least suitable for agriculture. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 4) All new commercial development in rural areas must preserve prime farmland soils as open space to the greatest practical extent. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 5) In high value natural and scenic resource areas (see Figure 13, Open Space Plan) encourage development of farms, farm markets, commercial woodlots, nature tourism, outdoor recreation, and home occupations. *Land Use Ordinance Review, Short term*
- 6) Encourage owners of productive farms to enroll in the current use taxation programs. *Town Assessor, Conservation Commission, Ongoing*
- 7) Continue to allow activities that support small farms and wood lot operations, such as roadside stands, plant nurseries, and pick-your-own/cut-your-own operations. *Planning Board, ongoing.*
- 8) Include farming and commercial forestry support in local and regional economic development plans. *Town Manager, Mid term*
- 9) Manage town forest land primarily for timber harvesting, conservation, and trails, using non-intensive timber management techniques. Use these lands as demonstration forest of these techniques. *Town Manager, Town Forester, Ongoing*
- 10) Research and make recommendations for tax relief or other forms of financial assistance for farmers and foresters who are actively working their land, especially those who allow access to their land. *Conservation Commission, Short term*
- 11) Establish a small education fund for workshops and technical assistance for farmers to stay up to date on regulations and best practices. *Conservation Commission, Mid term*
- 12) Inform townspeople about right to farm laws by including information on website and providing brochures at the town office. *Conservation Commission, Town Office staff, Mid term*
- 13) Develop an “electronic Farmers Market” on the Town website for farmers to list products for sale. *Conservation Commission, Town Office staff, Short term*

## INFORMATION ABOUT AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY IN MANCHESTER

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## AGRICULTURE

During the past century, a remarkable decline in agricultural activity has occurred in Manchester, taking the town further and further from its roots as a predominantly agricultural community. The Agricultural Resources Map (figure 22) shows the location of farms and areas of agricultural use in Manchester in 2009. Table 27 summarizes the amount of farmable and potentially farmable land in Manchester.

Figure 22. ***Farmland in Manchester and distribution of farmland soils.***

**Table 27. Distribution of Farmland Soils in Manchester**

<b>Farmland Soil Type</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
All areas of prime farmland	973	7%
Farmland of statewide importance	1559	11%
Farmland of local importance (cleared)	458	3%
Farmland of local importance IF CLEARED	8594	59%
Not potential farmland	2878	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14461</b>	<b>100%</b>

These soils are well-distributed throughout Manchester, with the majority of prime farmland existing in the northern part of town. Much of this land is either developed or forested, and is therefore unavailable for farming use. Analysis of land use type from the Maine Land Cover Dataset indicates that there are existing approximately 304 acres of cultivated crop land in Manchester, as well as 974 acres of pasture/hayfield, and 50 acres of grassland.

The farms and agricultural organizations that remain in town are an important part of Manchester's community identity. The town's agricultural community includes vegetable and cattle farms, orchards, stables, greenhouses, and acres of pasture, mowed field, hayfield, and diversified farmland. The biggest concentration of active farms are in the Prescott Road/ Puddledock Road area, though Lakeside Orchard, at 188 acres on Route 17, is the only farm with an agricultural easement in place.

The Farmland Tax Program provides reduced assessments to farmland in exchange for promises to keep the land working. Participation in Manchester is relatively low. In 2009, only 15 acres of cropland and nine acres of woodland were enrolled, from a single owner. In 2005, three parcels had been enrolled, for a total of 56 acres of cropland and 76 acres of woods. Among towns in the area, only Hallowell has fewer acres in the tax program. The Town attributes the lack of enrollment to low market values assigned in assessing farmland.

Farmland is a vital part of Manchester's economy, and the scenic views provided by the farms, fields and open spaces is a character that Manchester values, and has sought to protect through its *Open Space Plan*, and provisions in its Land Use and Development Ordinance.

According to the US Census of Agriculture, farming is on the rebound in Kennebec County. Farm acres, number of farms, net profits are all up; the only thing that is down is the size of farms. This is indicative of the trend in Maine. Various constraints put us at a serious disadvantage in the national and international commodity market, but farmers have responded by becoming smaller, more diversified, and more locally-oriented. The “Dairy Barn” business model may be strained, but the “2-acre herb garden” model is becoming very successful.

Many agricultural support organizations are responding to this trend. Among them are the Maine Dept. of Agriculture, with its “buy local” promotions and programs, the USDA, with programs like grants for building winter greenhouses, and the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, with buy local and organic certification programs. The key, from a local perspective, is that the new business model for agriculture relies much less on investment in land, machinery, and prime soils, and much more on developing local markets.

Manchester does not have its own farmer’s market, however, residents have easy access to locally-grown foods at several nearby farmer’s markets (Gardiner, Augusta, Winthrop). Other structured programs that provide support for local agriculture, including farm CSAs and community gardens, are limited in Manchester, but the local orchard is popular during apple season.

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## FORESTRY

As with other towns in this region, forestry has not played a major role in Manchester’s economy in recent decades. However, limited small-scale timber harvesting activities do occur throughout the community. There are no large tracts of industrial forest land in Manchester. All forest in town is second- or third-growth, and the quality of forest in some areas has been declining.

Figures from the Maine Department of Conservation for the last twenty years show a small but steady amount (0-20 acres) of Manchester forest land being converted to a new use yearly (with a one-time spike of about 110 acres coming out of forest use in 1999). The number of forested acres harvested yearly in the same time period is summarized in table 28 below.

**Table 28. Forest Harvesting Permits, 1991-2007**

YEAR	Selection harvest, acres	Shelterwood harvest, acres	Clearcut harvest, acres	Total Harvest, acres
1991	565	180	0	745
1992	412	60	22	494
1993	275	0	4	279
1994	147	0	1	148
1995	75	0	4	79
1996	182	0	1	183
1997	183	20	7	210
1998	367	30	12	409
1999	238	45	27	310

2000	170	63	0	233
2001	96	0	0	96
2002	153	0	0	153
2003	274	25	0	299
2004	259	0	0	259
2005	388	30	0	418
2006	139	0	0	139
2007	147	0	0	147
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,070</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>4,601</b>

Source: *Maine Dept. of Conservation*

The data indicates a cyclical, but generally steady, rate of forestry harvesting in town. An average of 270 acres a year are harvested, mostly through selection cutting. While selection cuts are designed to promote regeneration, the quality of long-term management of Manchester’s woodlands has been erratic, and the overall quality of the forest has deteriorated over time.

There are currently 118 acres on two lots in Manchester that are enrolled in the American Tree Farm system (Figure 23). As of 2009, there were 1,076 acres enrolled in the Tree Growth Tax Program. Tree Growth provides reduced assessments on forest land in exchange for a promise to maintain it in managed forest. Table 29, below, indicates the distribution and trend in Tree Growth Enrollments since 1999.

Figure 23. ***Areas of tree growth parcels and other forested areas in Manchester.***

**Table 29. Tree Growth Tax Enrollments, 1999-2009**

Tax Year	Parcels Enrolled	Softwood	Hardwood	Mixed
1999	7	433	363	177
2005	6	338	373	262
2008	9	373	389	303
2009	10	376	392	308

Source: *Municipal Valuation Returns Statistical Summary*

The town owns about 250 acres of land which is managed for non-intensive timber harvesting practices by the town forester. The revenue from these harvests goes to the town’s capital improvement fund (75%), and the Conservation Commission (25%) for long-term conservation projects. The 2004 *Open Space Plan* recommends that this revenue go entirely to the conservation account, to be used to negotiate for easements or open space land.

The Allen-Whitney Memorial Forest, located in North Manchester, is a 700-acre tract managed by the New England Forestry Foundation as a demonstration forest. There are also several tracts of state-owned land,

managed primarily as wildlife areas. Manchester has identified its desire to preserve more forest land as open space in the community, as outlined in their *Open Space Plan*.

Manchester does not currently have an Urban Forest program. While many rural roads in Manchester run through naturally wooded areas, the village area could benefit from a structured program of tree planting and maintenance, as the town works to revitalize and improve the village center. The Maine Forest Service has an Urban Street Tree Program, which could assist towns in beginning local initiatives.

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## DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION

For the past decade, significant residential growth in Manchester has taken place outside of the growth area. This trend, if it continues, could pose a significant threat to the farms and forested areas that exist in the more rural parts of town, breaking up large tracts into smaller and smaller parcels.

Manchester's *Open Space Plan* sets forth the desires of residents to (among other priorities) preserve farmland, forests, and other open space from the negative impacts of sprawl. One of the main ways in which Manchester has made this a priority is by working open space provisions into the subdivision portion of the Land Use and Development Ordinance. The ordinance provides design standards and requires Open Space Subdivisions for major subdivisions, permitting density bonus provisions for developers who incorporate these concepts into their proposals.

## II-K: LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

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*State Goal: Encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of the community, while protecting the state's rural character, making efficient use of public services, and preventing development sprawl.*

### PRINCIPAL ISSUES:

The Town of Manchester developed originally as a rural agricultural community. The existing village emerged from the crossroads as a center of local activity, while seasonal development gained hold along the Cobbossee shoreline and Summerhaven area. Manchester does not have a history of industrial development, although US Route 202 bisecting it has provided impetus for commercial development. Neighboring Augusta is a major employment and service center, and drives local development, including increasing suburbanization of the rural areas.

Threats to Manchester's rural character have been documented repeatedly, including the 1991 *Comprehensive Plan*, 1992 *Land Use and Development Ordinance* and 2004's *Long Range Public Facilities and Open Space Plan*. The Land Use Ordinance, in particular, has been amended repeatedly, adding such elements as open space subdivision requirements and architectural standards. Ironically, a couple of large subdivisions built out in the 70's and 80's were located immediately adjacent to the village and Route 202, minimizing the perception of rural sprawl in the 1991 plan. The buildout of these neighborhoods and the 1992 revision of the Land Use Ordinance coincided with a huge shift of residential development to single lots in the rural areas.

Land along rural roads has been consumed at a significant rate since 1990. Even though the development is, in some parts of town, high quality, it has the kind of impacts one would expect in a rural area – increasing traffic and driveway conflicts on rural roads, consumption of valuable economic assets (farm and forest land), interference with enjoyment of the pastoral landscape, rising costs of school busing and emergency services, and so on.

Manchester's infrastructure for development is in the village and outskirts, and along Route 202. While public water and sewer have significant capacity for extensions, Route 202 is not functioning efficiently. While this is mostly due to added traffic from more far-flung suburbs, it is interfering with the function of the village and with intersections of town's roads, which radiate from the village center like spokes from a wheel. The Department of Transportation has wrestled with expansion plans for the highway for decades. Commercial development of Augusta's Western Ave. is creeping closer to Manchester. It will likely be confined within the Town's General Development District, but the highway improvement project and availability of public sewer and water will have a significant effect on the timing and design of new development.



## MANCHESTER'S GOALS FOR DEVELOPMENT:

- Preserve the rural character and quality of Manchester.
- Protect the significant natural and scenic resources in Manchester.
- Recognize the importance of private landowner rights.
- Encourage future growth in the community residential zone while preserving and enhancing the rural areas.

## POLICIES:

- A. Encourage compact development activities along established traditional village centers.
- B. Maintain land-use standards that promote the public good while recognizing private property rights of individual land owners.
- C. Encourage future residential, commercial, and industrial activities in appropriate areas of the town and which are harmonious with those areas.
- D. Create future growth areas (expanded Community Residential and General Development Zones) that promote growth in these areas to help preserve the rural character of the other areas of Manchester.
- E. Direct growth into areas that have the best access to currently available public services.
- F. Support the level of financial commitment necessary to provide needed infrastructure in growth areas.
- G. Work to continue to enhance the primary town center along Route 17 north of Route 202.
- H. Discourage further sprawl along rural roadways.
- I. Use the Conservation Commission to further strengthen ties to regional land conservation organizations to help promote long-term access to and preservation of public open space areas in Manchester.
- J. Work to improve the efficiency of the permitting process by clarifying and simplifying land use ordinances, while preserving the existing protections for critical natural and cultural resources.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:

- 1) Create a land use ordinance review committee to implement regulatory strategies. *Board of Selectmen, Immediate*
- 2) Revise land use ordinances as applied to community residential, village residential, and general development zones to increase allowable housing density, where appropriate. *Land Use Ordinance Review Committee, Short term*
- 3) In concert with increasing density allowed, devise strategy for ensuring water-quality runoff goals set by the Cobbossee Watershed District. *Land Use Ordinance Review Committee, assisted by Conservation Commission and Cobbossee Watershed District, Short term*
- 4) Expand the Community Residential and General Development zones into adjacent areas that are harmonious with those uses, and that take best advantage of current public services (public water and sewer). *Land Use Ordinance Review Committee, Short term*
- 5) Update shoreland zone overlay, using new watershed, stream, and wetland land cover information available through GIS. *Code Enforcement Officer, Short term*
- 6) Identify long-term infrastructure needs for the future growth of public water and sewer, roads, and amenities to growth areas, and incorporate into capital improvement plan. *Town Manager, Board of Selectmen, Manchester Sanitary District, Greater Augusta Utility District, Mid term, continuing.*
- 7) Revise subdivision and road ordinance standards to encourage lower impact (narrower) roads in rural areas, without sacrificing public safety needs of the community. *Land Use Ordinance Review Committee, Short term*
- 8) Create long-range plan for the development of the town center, including sidewalks, bike lanes, open-space areas, and future municipal building needs. This should incorporate the areas from the Drum Property through the new Fire Station, and should include plans for the redevelopment of the old fire station site. *Board of Selectmen, Town Manger, School Rep., consultant, Mid term*
- 9) Continue ordinance standards to preserve water quality in Cobbossee Lake, protect significant wildlife habitats and shore land areas, and preserve significant scenic vistas. *Land Use Ordinance Review Committee, Ongoing*

## INFORMATION ABOUT LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT IN MANCHESTER:

Land use patterns in Manchester have evolved over time. They will continue to evolve as long as Manchester keeps growing. It is the role of the Town government to recognize the changing patterns and manage or prepare for them, so that adequate public services are available to future residents and businesses.

This section profiles existing and historical land use patterns and regulation, identifying issues that may affect future policies.

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## HISTORICAL LAND USE:

European settlers were originally attracted to Manchester by relatively flat land for farming, and a farm community quickly sprang up in the 1700's. Originally, there were many small, subsistence farms, but a lot of those were abandoned when families moved out west in the late 1800's, and they were either absorbed into larger farms or reverted to woodland.

As Augusta and Lewiston grew into industrial centers, the road between the two grew busier. The original village center of Manchester, "The Forks," containing a few public and commercial buildings, expanded in response to this added commerce. Eventually, the road itself was widened to the point where it now affects the identity and function of the village, while at the same time providing a strip of attractive commercial frontage.

Residential development in Manchester has followed a pattern as well. Originally, most residents were farmers on far-flung homesteads. As the economy of Manchester transitioned from subsistence farming, many more homes were built closer to the village.

The innovation of the automobile in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century had immediate impacts on development patterns in two areas. First, many camps appeared along Cobbossee Lake. These were not conceived as permanent homes; they were only for the summer use of residents of Augusta and nearby areas. Second, many more permanent houses appeared throughout the town. These were not new farmsteads, for the most part, but residences of people who worked at a mill or shop or office and commuted by car to their jobs.

Because of the high demand for new, suburban-style housing in the 70's and 80's, much of the development in that period took the form of entire neighborhoods close to the village area and Route 202. These were built out into the 90's, but are pretty much exhausted now. Over the past 20 years, the majority of new development has taken place outside of the center of town.

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## CURRENT LAND USE:

The Town developed and adopted a comprehensive plan in 1991, and a comprehensive revision to its Land Use Ordinance in 1992. Since that time, the Code Enforcement Officer and Assessor have tracked new development to determine what is happening and where.

The Land Use Ordinance is a unified ordinance that incorporates zoning, subdivision review, commercial site plan review, and shoreland zoning requirements. (Floodplain regulation is in a separate ordinance.) It identifies seven separate districts (six geographic districts plus one overlay district, see figure 1), ranging from a traditional village district to a Resource Protection District, and sets standards for lot dimensions, development types, and styles of development in each district. The availability of public sewer is a significant factor in dimensional requirements. The smallest permissible lot size, on sewer, is 20,000 square feet; the largest among the conventional districts is 80,000. Table 30 illustrates the dimensional requirements of the ordinance.

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Land Use Districts*</b>						
	<b>MV</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>GD</b>	<b>RR</b>	<b>SL</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>AM Overlay</b>
Minimum lot area (sq. ft. in thousands)							
with public sewer	20	40	40	60	60	130	120
without public sewer	40	60	60	80	80	218	200
Minimum road frontage, ft (public or private)							
with public sewer	100	125	150	175	100	175	250
without public sewer	125	200	200	200	125	200	300
Minimum lot depth,ft	150	150	150	200	200	200	200
Minimum setbacks, ft (principal and accessory structure)							
Front setback (from centerlines)							
Route 202	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Other State road	50	50	50	75	75	75	75
Town or private road	30	30	30	75	30	75	75
Rear/Side setback	15	20	20	30	30	30	30
Driveway and parking area side setback, ft	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Maximum lot coverage (%)							
Building coverage	50	20	40	20	20	20	20
Impervious area	70	30	60	20	20	20	20

**Table 30. Table: Land Use Ordinance, Dimensional Requirements**

MV=Manchester Village; CR=Community Residential; GD=General Development; RR=Rural Residential; SL=\_\_\_\_; RP=Resource Protection; AM=Aquifer Management

\*See figure 1 for locations

The comprehensive plan, in accordance with state law, designated three of the zones as growth areas: the Manchester Village, Community Residential, and General Development districts (figure 1). Although not explicitly stated in the 1991 plan, the intent was to guide the majority of development into the growth area.

In this purpose, the plan seems to have largely failed. According to assessing records, approximately 28 percent of homes built between 1990 and 2009 have been in the growth districts (Table 31, Figure 2, Figure 24). And the majority of those were built on subdivision lots existing before enactment of the plan. Ballard Acres was largely built out during that time. Most of the homes built in the Rural Residential District were built on individually created lots. Figure 24 illustrates development patterns.

Figure 24. **Land use in non-farm, non-forested areas (2009) and locations of new houses, 1990-2009.**

**Table 31. Number of New Housing Units by District, 1990-2009**

<b>Planning District</b>	<b>Number of new houses since 1990</b>
Manchester Village	1
Community Residential	78
General Development	3
Rural Residential	202

*Source: Town of Manchester*

As demand for new housing slowed in the 90's and 00's, it became uneconomic for developers to make big investments in major subdivisions. There have been twenty new subdivisions approved since 1990. These were generally small developments, ranging from one or two splits to ten or a dozen lots. However, of the twenty subdivisions, only one was located entirely within the Community Residential District. One commercial subdivision is located in General Development, and one is just outside the Village District.

Indications are that, in addition to the general trend of people looking to the rural areas for land availability, the lack of development activity in growth areas is largely due to scarcity of land in those zones. In 1991, existing subdivisions were not built out, and the idea was to update the comprehensive plan within 5-10 years. In 2011, there is very little developable land remaining in growth districts, and some of that is constrained by ownership choices. The Land Use Ordinance in some cases prevents effective infill of remaining land, by limiting landowners' ability to further subdivide property that has been subdivided previously.

Nor has there been the desire for investment in infrastructure to encourage growth. There have been no expansions to public water or sewer service, nor road improvements or village enhancements that would motivate a developer or prospective resident to choose to build in or near the village.

Commercial development (see figure 24) seems to have been much more "well-behaved." Many forms of commercial development require public sewer or water services, substantial power and/or bandwidth, and a major arterial highway. Availability of this infrastructure pretty much defines the existing growth areas. Of 41 new or expanded commercial structures since 1990, 18 have located in the General Development District and 13 in the village. Two businesses located in Rural Residential were just at the edge of the General Development District, and one additional business was in the Community Residential District. The recently approved commercial subdivision is on Route 202 in the General Development Zone, and alone has sufficient capacity for all of the job growth projected by this plan.

The ordinance does encourage development design in keeping with Manchester's traditional village character. Design standards regulate the form of commercial architecture in the Village and General Development Districts. The ordinance requires cluster or open space subdivision design with the required ratio of open space increasing

from village to rural districts. Mobile homes are permitted in all development districts but mobile home parks are only permitted in Community Residential and General Development.

All land use ordinances, including the building code, are enforced by the Code Enforcement Officer, a part-time employee who is also responsible for maintaining the GIS system and tracking new development. Approvals for subdivisions or site plans are issued by the 7-member planning board.

## III. IMPLEMENTATION

### III-A FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

This section discusses specific changes proposed for the land use regulatory system in Manchester. It includes a Future Land Use Map (proposed zoning changes) and suggested changes to the land use ordinance. The essence of the Land Use Plan is the distinction between growth areas and rural areas. The plan seeks to shift future growth from 72 percent in the rural areas (between 1990 and 2009) to 72 percent in the growth areas within 10 years. The effort, as outlined below, will require both an expansion of growth areas and a series of strategies to encourage more development in the growth areas and discourage it in rural areas.

#### ESTIMATING DEMAND FOR GROWTH:

The growth scenarios outlined in Section II-A indicate that Manchester will have to accommodate between 150 and 250 new households over the next 20 years. The location of these new households will have an impact on our ability to provide services to them. The location will also affect the amount of land and road frontage they will consume.

Housing units built on public sewer in the growth area are the most efficient users of land. If all of the anticipated new housing were built on the minimum lot size in the Village District, they would occupy between 70 and 115 acres of land; if in the Community Residential or General Development District, they would occupy between 140 and 230 acres. By contrast, that number of homes in Rural Residential on individual lots would occupy at least 275 to 460 acres. Four hundred sixty acres is over 3 percent of Manchester's entire land area.

All new homes require road frontage. The projected number of housing units, built as single family homes in the Rural Residential District, would require a minimum of 200 feet per unit, or as much as five miles of road, both sides. In subdivisions, that would mean five miles of new road (or less, if designed to open space standards), but as individual lots it would mean an additional five miles of existing roadway lined with houses within twenty years.

While it may be desirable to locate as much as  $\frac{3}{4}$  of new growth in the growth area, it is impractical in Manchester under the current zoning. The principal reason for this is that the growth area is too small. The Village District is virtually built out. The Community Residential District has several areas where natural resource constraints preclude development, and some areas of buildable land that are inaccessible or prevented from subdivision by ordinance. There are several buildable parcels in the General Development District, which may be more suited for commercial use.

Possible solutions include increasing the permissible density in the existing growth areas, increasing the size of the existing growth areas, or adding new growth areas. It might also be possible to redirect some small percentage of development to the growth areas by more directly discouraging it in the rural area.

Increasing density is another way of saying increase the number of housing units per acre. Since this could have a negative effect on the perception of Manchester's community character, it must be done carefully in order to minimize potential visual impacts. An example would be to permit multi-family buildings, such as apartments, into the General Development District at significantly higher density than one acre per unit. A 3-story, 18 unit apartment building or condominium could, in theory, be sited on just one acre of land with no more visual impact than a commercial building

Increasing the acreage of existing growth areas or adding new areas is a logical response to the growth that is expected to occur. When the existing growth area is used up, you need to expand it. With projected demand of between 140 and 230 acres, you would be looking for at least a 500-acre area of expansion, into land that is not heavily constrained by soils, slopes, or ownership, and is not already consumed with existing housing.

Participants in Manchester's Visioning Meeting undertook to identify potential areas for growth. The result was a map with a number of locations circled. Areas suggested included Readfield Road (Route 17), Belgrade Road (Route 135), Prescott Road, and Granite Hill/Kerns Hill Roads. Obviously, this was a brainstorming exercise, and other factors such as ownership of undeveloped tracts must be taken into account. For example, Lakeside Orchards, under a conservation easement, occupies most of the western side of the Readfield Road.

Growth areas should expand based on availability of public facilities and lack of resource constraints. On the roads mentioned in the above paragraph, very little exists in the form of resource constraints. One large wetland occupies some land at the eastern end of Granite Hill Road. The current primary distribution line for the water system crosses Prescott Road, and could be a source of public water supply. Water does not extend into the other areas mentioned. The sewer system is generally limited to areas of existing development. A sewer line extends along Granite Hill Road, but it is a pressurized line which cannot be directly tapped.

We must also plan to accommodate new commercial development. Commercial growth is much harder to project than residential growth. Our growth scenario estimates a need for 23,000 square feet of commercial space, but that could come in the form of a single office building or a dozen small stores and restaurants. Manchester's new commercial subdivision could support that many square feet alone, if in the form of offices. Augusta's development of Western Avenue is also likely to put development pressure on Route 202.

Unlike the residential development pattern, Manchester has had no trouble constraining commercial development to the growth areas. The General Development District is primarily designed for commercial growth, and most of it is served by public water and sewer and access to the arterial highway.

Commercial development is much more likely to impact road and utility services than homes, so planning must focus on that aspect. Expansion of commercial development is most likely to take place on or near Route 202 east of the village. In this area, there are two strong considerations:



- The existing public sewer extends less than a mile east along Route 202 from the village center, and public water about ¼ mile. Public sewer is a requirement for some types of business and an incentive for other types. Sewer extensions are currently entirely the responsibility of the developer. That places an extra hurdle in the way of development. Manchester could craft a way to extend sewer, making the area more attractive to development, while still requiring the cost be borne by developers. Mechanisms for doing this include TIFs and impact fees.
- Traffic and road conditions along Route 202 are already a safety concern. Solutions offered by Maine DOT may affect the ability of new businesses to access the road. On the other hand, additional growth along the highway could increase congestion and safety hazards. This argues for a comprehensive and proactive approach to planning for the development of the Route 202 corridor, rather than waiting for things to happen.

The General Development District is also a very appropriate location for higher density residential development. There is infrastructure to support high densities, and the Land Use Ordinance contains sufficient protections from neighboring commercial uses. It would not be economical, however, for a developer to put in a multi-family development if limited to one unit for every 40,000 square feet.

## LAND USE DISTRICT CHANGES:

This plan recommends expansion of two growth districts: the General Development District, and the Community Residential District. The areas recommended for expansion are illustrated in the Future Land Use Map (figure 25).

Figure 25. ***Map showing proposed changes in General Development and Community Residential Districts (Future Land Use).***

The General Development District is proposed to be expanded slightly along Puddledock Road. The expansion will generally encompass several existing commercial properties adjacent to the district, including Clark Marine, Longfellow's Greenhouse, and B & S Paving. The expansion also includes a parcel of undeveloped land behind the paving business, and includes the area where the water main from Augusta crosses the Puddledock Rd. The expansion is not proposed to continue north to the Prescott Road, because there is an identified High Value Resource Area adjoining it ("Prescott Road Gateway area"). The total proposed expansion is 133 acres in two areas on the Puddledock Rd (fig. 25).

The proposed expansion abuts the existing GD district. The greenhouse is a high traffic business; the paving and excavating companies have low volume but a high ratio of truck traffic. Puddledock Road is problematic for commercial traffic at its intersection with Route 202, but an intersection improvement solution is recommended (see Transportation Section II-C). Neither existing business has sufficient demand for public sewer to justify an extension.

The Community Residential District is proposed to be expanded in two areas. The first is an expansion north along Route 17 as far as the Worthing Road (fig 25). The district currently ends just beyond Myrtle Street.

The expansion would be limited to the east side of the road; as Lakeside Orchards is on the west side of Route 17. The frontage is largely undeveloped and the parcels are close to 1,000 feet deep. The land has no resource constraints. The total size of this proposed expansion is 162 acres.

The second, larger area consists of land adjacent to Kerns Hill and Granite Hill Roads, abutting and slightly overlapping the current General Development District (fig 25). Both roads have already experienced quite a bit of residential development, including over two dozen homes built and four subdivisions since 1990. In fact, a minor impediment is the amount of frontage already developed. As frontage is consumed, it cuts off back lots, making them harder and more expensive to develop. This is a situation that will only increase as more land in Manchester is developed along roadsides. The proposed district expansion is deep enough to make it economical for a developer to create quite a good sized subdivision without consuming more public road frontage.

In addition to some already-developed land, this area has a few more resource constraints. The terrain is hilly, though in no location too steep to build. There is an existing wetland with Resource Protection zoning, which would form the eastern extent of the proposed district (fig 25). The total size of this proposed expansion is 352 acres, of which roughly 1/3 is already developed.

Infrastructure within the proposed growth area is fair. Granite Hill Road is a state aid road which was repaved in 2008. Kerns Hill Road is a town road, relatively narrow but recently improved. Granite Hill Road is signalized at the intersection with Route 202 in Manchester, and also links via Hallowell to commercial areas in Augusta. The intersection of Kerns Hill Road with Route 202 has been identified as a problem, but this plan proposes to address it.

Neither public water nor sewer is available to the majority of the area. A sewer forced main runs along Granite Hill Road, so it would not be too challenging to run a new gravity line to the pump station at the base of the grade. At this point, the residential density does not support the investment.

All of these expansions remove land primarily from the Rural District. (the Longfellow's Greenhouse area would move from Village District, and part of the new expansion along the Granite Hill Rd. would move from General Development.) This will result in a net loss of rural acreage. However, this plan recommends that a subset of the rural district be classified as Critical Rural Area. These areas would include the current Resource Protection District and Aquifer Management Overlay District and critical natural areas identified and mapped by the Beginning with Habitat program. , The boundaries will be subject to further discussion and negotiation.

## STRATEGIES TO DIRECT DEVELOPMENT TO APPROPRIATE AREAS:

This plan recommends a number of changes to existing regulations or town policies which are intended to foster a shift in development pressure from rural areas into growth districts. As with the existing Land Use Ordinance, these proposals will not inhibit any landowner in pursuing their current activities, but may affect their future development choices. In general, land in the growth districts will be more in demand for development, while rural land will be less in demand.

Most of these recommendations are repeated from other sections of the plan. The use of land for development is strongly linked to how we pursue economic development, housing, resource protection, and the provision of public facilities. Many, but not all, of these recommendations are intended to be incorporated into Land Use Ordinance changes.

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#### IN THE VILLAGE DISTRICT . . .

- Create a long-range plan for development of the town center, including sidewalks, bike lanes, open space areas and future public building needs.
- Devise a strategy to ensure that water quality runoff targets are met, possibly through cooperative or joint improvement projects. Develop stream watershed management plan for Weston Brook that will promote development without further stream deterioration.
- Review ordinances for obstacles to affordable housing, particularly with regard to multi-family developments, amending to permit greater residential densities.
- Permit/encourage senior housing (also in CR District).
- Incorporate traffic calming measures and plans for sidewalks and bike lanes into road improvements in the village area.
- Review ordinances for obstacles to allowing infill of undeveloped land within the Village district. Some ordinances limit landowner's ability to re-subdivide land that has at one time been subdivided, which prevents effective infill of potentially developable areas.

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#### IN THE COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT . . .

- Increase flexibility of subdivision road standards to reduce development costs.
- Review ordinances for obstacles to allowing infill of undeveloped land within the Community Residential District. Some ordinances limit landowner's ability to re-subdivide land that has at one time been subdivided, which prevents effective infill of potentially developable areas.
- Investigate potential needs for water/sewer utilities.

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#### IN THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT . . .

Create a master plan for development of the GD District along the eastern portion of Route 202, in consultation with landowners. Include recommendations for utility needs and financing, access points, commercial/residential ratios, and development designs and densities.

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## IN THE RURAL DISTRICT . . .

- Revise the subdivision and road ordinance standards to reduce the environmental impact of road building without sacrificing public safety.
- Continue to prohibit mobile home parks.
- Pursue public-private partnerships and purchase of land or easements with willing sellers in critical resource areas and other areas identified in the Open Space Plan.
- Involve Conservation Commission in development reviews.
- All new commercial development in rural areas must preserve prime farmland soils as open space to the greatest practical extent.
- In high value natural and scenic resource areas (see Figure 13, Open Space Plan) encourage development of farms, farm markets, commercial woodlots, nature tourism, outdoor recreation, and home occupations
- Research and make recommendations for tax relief or other forms of financial assistance for farmers and foresters who are actively working their land, especially those who allow access to their land.

## III-B: CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan strongly supports capital improvement programming as part of the Town's annual budgeting and administrative process. A Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) is a process for identifying public facilities that will require major investment over the coming years, either due to growth or due to capital deterioration. The CIP determines the priority and when each investment will be necessary, and how to pay for it. The Capital Investment Plan is a suggested beginning to a CIP, incorporating recommendations of the plan for growth and service provision. The budget committee and Board of Selectmen will work together in the development of the CIP.

- The CIP allows Manchester to predict upcoming “big-ticket” items – no surprises.
- The town can have a reasoned discussion about priorities.
- Having a pre-planned list enables Manchester to take advantage of unexpected opportunities, like grants and low interest rates.

### DEVELOPING A CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN:

- The scope of the CIP is determined by the Town. In Manchester's case, the CIP should include items above \$10,000, and could include the normal road maintenance and paving schedule. It also sets a plan window, e.g. no projects more than ten years away are included.
- Items and prospective costs are identified for inclusion. Items can range from replacement of existing facilities (e.g. road improvements) to expansion of water and sewer service, to acquisition of new facilities (e.g. open space land, beach area) to acquisition of new or replacement equipment. Costs are estimated – “ballpark” – and priorities are set.
- Timing is worked out. Generally, timing is consistent with priority, but the purpose of the plan is to balance costs over time, so if too many items are coming from a single source, they may have to be staggered.
- A source of funding for each item should be identified. The more “iffy” the item is, the more speculative the funding can be.
  - Funding from annual appropriations: While funding a major purchase in a one-time annual appropriation is too disruptive to the budget, it is an alternative for lower-priced equipment, or when a continuing monetary stream can be tapped for regular needs. Such would be the case for annual road improvements.

- Funding from Reserve Accounts or Bonding: Manchester in the past has used both reserve funds (saving for a number of years for a single purchase) and bonding (borrowing over time for an immediate purchase). Both of these techniques allow the Town to spread the cost of major purchases over time.
- Funding from Grants: Grants are generally competitive, and therefore not assured. A grant as the only option is acceptable for “wish list” items, but not for essentials. A grant search should be part of the annual update process.
- Funding from outside sources: In many cases other organizations may join with the Town to contribute to a project of joint benefit. The outside source could be a private organization, regional group of towns, or state or federal government. While this source of funds may be more reliable than grants, it requires coordination with timetables outside of the Town’s control. Funding for some items, such as sewer system expansion, may come from fees, and could be tied to the rate of collection, and, indirectly, to the economy.
- The financing of the CIP may come from any of a mix of sources, but the most important element is to ensure that the impact on the annual town budget is spread out.

**MANCHESTER CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLANNING MATRIX (PRELIMINARY):**

The table below provides a **suggested approach** to the CIP, based on recommendations of the comprehensive plan. The actual CIP will be established and revised annually by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee.

**Table 32. Capital Improvement Plan Items to consider.**

Item	Priority	Timing	Anticipated Cost	Source of Funds
Raze old fire station	High	2012	\$50,000	appropriation
Road Improvement Fund	High	annual	\$300,000	Appropriations
Community Center	Medium	2015	\$1,000,000	Bond, grants
Cobbossee access	High	2018	unknown	Grants, state, appropriation
Route 17 sidewalk	High	2015	\$500,000	DOT Safe Routes
Route 202 intersection improvements	Medium	2020	unknown	DOT
Regional bicycle trail	Low	2020	unknown	DOT, grants
Water and /or Sewer extensions	Medium	2017	unknown	TIF, impact fee, bond?
Open Space acquisition	Medium	open	open	dedicated revenue fund

### III-C: IMPLEMENTATION AND REGIONAL COORDINATION:

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#### PLAN IMPLEMENTATION:

In order to become an effective tool, this plan must not be adopted and put away; it must be implemented by the Town. Implementation is the process of converting the recommended strategies in this plan into visible action.

There are over 130 separate strategies listed in this plan. Taken as a package, that seems quite overwhelming. It will be important to sort through the strategies to prioritize them in terms of timing and importance, to monitor their implementation and evaluate their effectiveness. To do this, the plan recommends the establishment of an **Implementation Committee of 3-5 members**. The Implementation Committee should be comprised of representatives of the major committees charged with carrying out the tasks (Selectmen, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission), but should also include additional citizens. The implementation committee is charged with reporting to the Board of Selectmen twice a year to report on the progress in implementing the Plan for the first 3 years, and annually after that. The Implementation Committee may request a representative of each town committee to present their progress annually to the Board of Selectmen. The Implementation Committee will write a summary of progress on implementing the Plan for the town's Annual Report each year. Implementation of the plan will require the efforts of many of Manchester's citizens and assistance from town office staff as necessary.

The Implementation Committee may request the formation of an independent Ordinance Review committee, to work on changes to the Unified Land Use and Development Ordinance, as laid out in the Plan.

The Implementation Committee will initially be responsible for assigning priorities. Step one of that process will be to sort the strategies by who is responsible for carrying them out (listed by strategy in this plan). Step two will be to meet with each committee, and help them work out which of their items is highest in importance, for example a "top three" or "top five". This will take some coordination effort, since the top actions in importance may not be the first in timing, and some activities may need to be deferred until others are complete, and some implementation items require multiple committees/boards to work together. Step three will be the continuing process of monitoring, so that when one activity is complete or in process, the next on the list may begin. The Implementation Committee will assist each committee in having a list of "next items" to work on as implementation items are accomplished.

Timing for implementation of the strategies is already suggested in the plan, although it is certainly not set in stone. The suggested timing is as follows:

- "Ongoing" refers to an action which is currently underway. The plan suggests that this activity continue.
- "Short-term" are activities that should commence within a year of the adoption of the plan, and for the most part be completed within a year or two of commencement. The primary short-term activity will be revisions to the Land Use Ordinance, with specific revisions documented in multiple strategies throughout the plan.

- “Mid-term” are activities which may commence within 2-4 years. For the most part, these are activities which address problems not as pressing, or which require other elements to be in place beforehand.
- “Long-term” are activities which will not commence until five years or more from adoption. Long-term activities include those for which considerable additional planning, fund-raising, or other administrative activity must be in place.

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## EVALUATION:

An evaluation of the success and effectiveness of this plan’s recommendations is an important element in implementation. Several of the strategies contain performance measures, such as for affordable housing or residential development. It will be the job of the Implementation Committee, assisted by the Town Manager and Code Enforcement Officer, to analyze the results of actions taken under this plan and to recommend additional actions if the results are not as desired.

Specific evaluation benchmarks include, but are not limited to:

- The effectiveness of land use strategies in directing growth to the growth areas;
- The degree to which public spending is directed to the growth areas (percentage of expenditures on capital improvements);
- The overall degree of implementation of recommended strategies;
- The success of affordable housing goals; and
- The success of efforts to preserve critical natural resources and protect critical water resources.

The Implementation Committee will be responsible for preparing an annual report, to be published in the annual town report, documenting progress and results. The report may also contain recommendations for future plan amendments.

## REGIONAL COORDINATION

Regional coordination is an excellent way to provide public services and facilities more effectively at a lower cost. Cooperation can be among towns or between the town and a public or non-profit entity, or simply by supporting a larger group. It may take many forms, from financial or technical support to interlocal agreements or joint ownership.



Manchester is in a very good position to take advantage of regional initiatives. It is sandwiched between two other towns that have a larger service base (Augusta and Winthrop). Listed below are some examples of the type of cooperation already in place, in three distinct areas: public services, economic development, and resource protection.

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#### PUBLIC SERVICES:

- **Emergency Services:** Manchester utilizes the Kennebec County Sheriff's Office and Maine Department of Public Safety for police protection and dispatching. It shares ambulance service with five other towns, based in Winthrop. The fire department has mutual aid agreements with several neighboring towns.
- **Utilities:** Public water and Sewer services are coordinated through the Greater Augusta Utilities District (GAUD). The district is part of the "trunkline group," which administers the Winthrop-Monmouth-Manchester sewer collector system, delivered into the GAUD treatment plant. GAUD supplies public water service where available in Manchester.
- **Solid Waste:** The town has longstanding agreement with the Augusta Municipal Landfill (Hatch Hill) for waste disposal, and participates in an annual household hazardous waste collection event with other towns in the Augusta region. The communities that participate in the Hatch Hill Landfill are now able to consider the implementation of a proposed new pay-as-you-throw system, with the recent development of a model ordinance by the regional recycling committee.
- **Public Schools:** Manchester is part of RSU 38 that includes Mount Vernon, Readfield, and Wayne.
- **Social Services:** Manchester contributes to several regional social service organizations, including Senior Spectrum, Kennebec Valley Mental Health Association, Hospice of Kennebec Valley.

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#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- The Kennebec Valley and Winthrop Area Chambers of Commerce both provide opportunities for Manchester businesses to become members and participate in joint promotion.
- Western Kennebec Economic Development Alliance (WKEDA) is a non-profit organization formed to promote sustainable economic development in the western part of the county. Although the major portion of its funding and activities are centered in Winthrop, WKEDA is currently working on projects in Manchester.
- Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG) is a regional organization providing both community and economic development services to a three-county area. KVCOG has connections to federal and state grant funding for economic development projects, as well as small business counseling and loan funding. Manchester has traditionally supported KVCOG with membership on the Board of Directors and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee.

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## NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT:

- Cobbossee Watershed District: The CWD is a nine-town collaboration, existing since 1973, described as a lake management district. CWD maintains a broad portfolio of watershed activities, including education, development review, technical assistance, and planning.
- Kennebec Land Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to acquiring property or easements in support of conservation. KLT operates in 21 towns within Kennebec County. The town makes an annual contribution to KLT and coordinates acquisitions with the group.

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## FUTURE ACTIVITIES:

There are abundant opportunities for additional regional cooperation. Not all of them require the active involvement of town government.

To help identify and brainstorm some opportunities, the comprehensive planning committee met with its counterpart from Winthrop prior to development of this document. The meeting was devoted to exploring what has been done and where possibilities exist for additional work. The following items were identified:

- An inter-community bicycle trail, using the old trolley line or other existing rights-of-way. Planning, engineering, and grant-writing.
- Development along the Route 202 Corridor. Individual towns' expectations and coordination of development planning through DOT Corridor Management Plan.
- Winthrop's Performing Arts Center. Potential for use by Manchester school groups (Manchester facility is inadequate.)
- Collaboration on recreation activities, particularly senior citizen programs, swim and summer programs, trails (interconnections).
- Open Space Planning. Manchester has an exemplary plan; Winthrop will be developing one.
- Economic development. WKEDA has a Manchester project under development.

This plan offers multiple recommendations for continued or expanded regional coordination. These recommendations are found in the respective action plans for each chapter.

## MAPS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

The following pages have the maps that accompany this plan (In the online version, they are included in a separate document):

- Figure 1. Map showing Manchester Land Use Zones, established in the 1992 Land Use and Development Ordinance.
- Figure 2. Map showing Housing in Manchester: 1990-2009.
- Figure 11. Map showing transportation system in Manchester and traffic volumes on local roadways.
- Figure 12. Map showing Manchester's Town, State, and State Aid Roads.
- Figure 14. Map showing locations of commercial business establishments in Manchester, 2011.
- Figure 15. Map showing Critical Natural Resource areas in Manchester
- Figure 16. Map showing High Value Natural Areas in Manchester
- Figure 17. Map showing water resources of Manchester.
- Figure 18. Map showing location of recreation facilities, outdoor recreation areas, hiking trails, and public and conserved land in Manchester.
- Figure 19. Map showing location of Municipal and Public Facilities and Public Utilities in Manchester.
- Figure 21. Map showing historic structures in Manchester by date of construction, and cemeteries.
- Figure 22. Map showing Farmland in Manchester and distribution of farmland soils.
- Figure 23. Map showing Areas of tree growth parcels and other forested areas in Manchester.
- Figure 24. Map showing Land use in non-farm, non-forested areas (2009) and locations of new houses, 1990-2009.
- Figure 25. Map showing proposed changes in General Development and Community Residential Districts (Future Land Use).

# Figure 1.

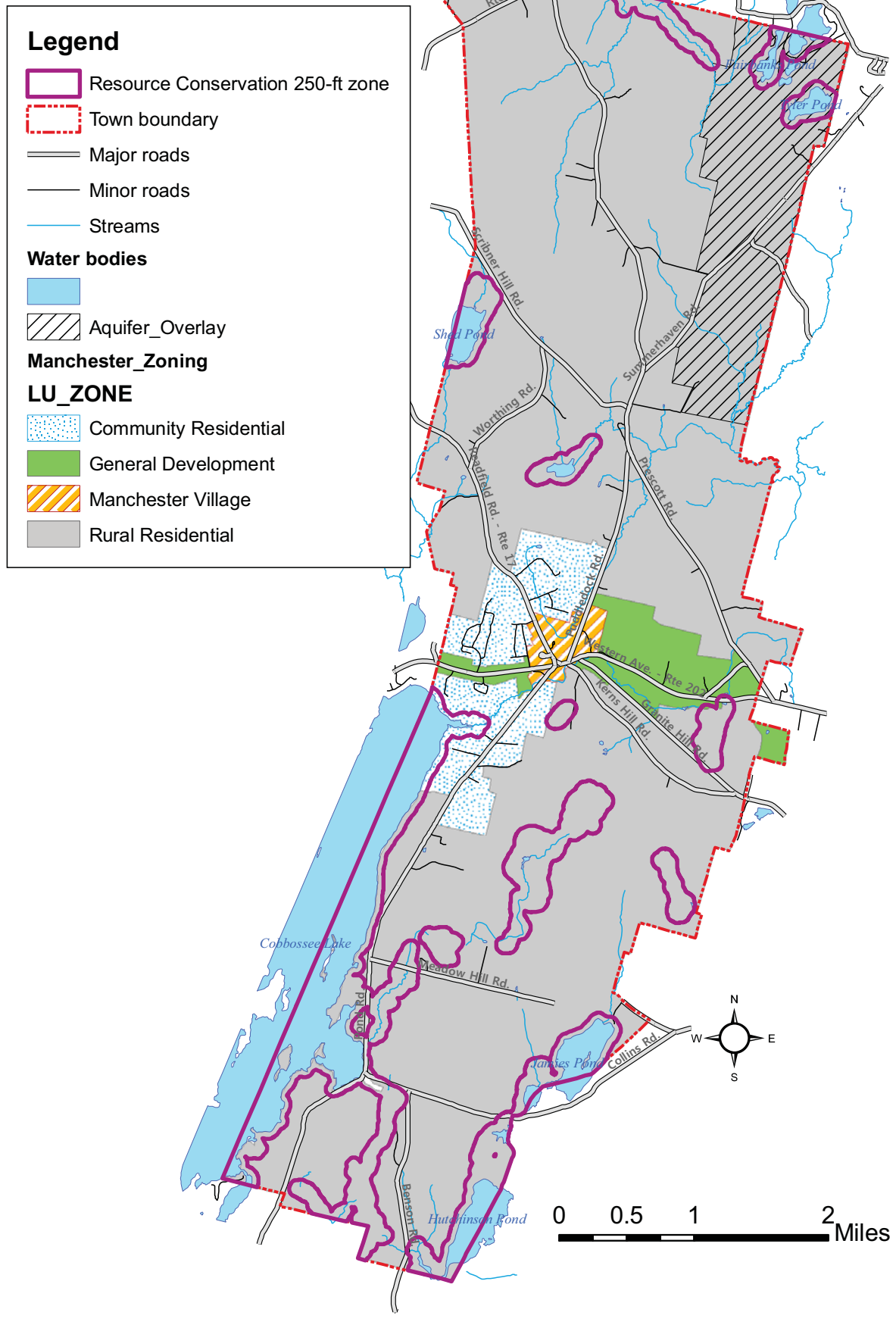
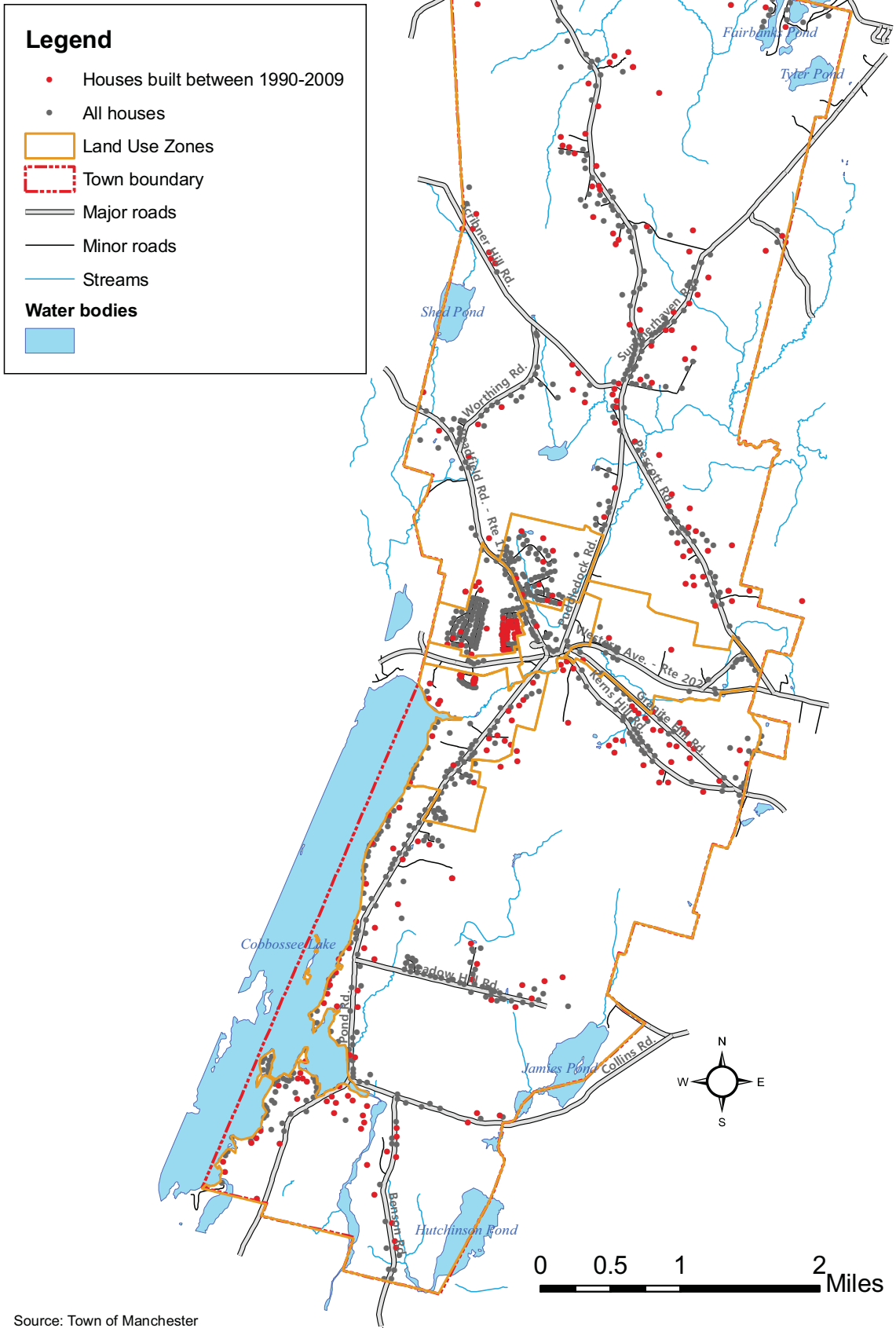


Figure 1. Manchester Land Use Zones, 2010

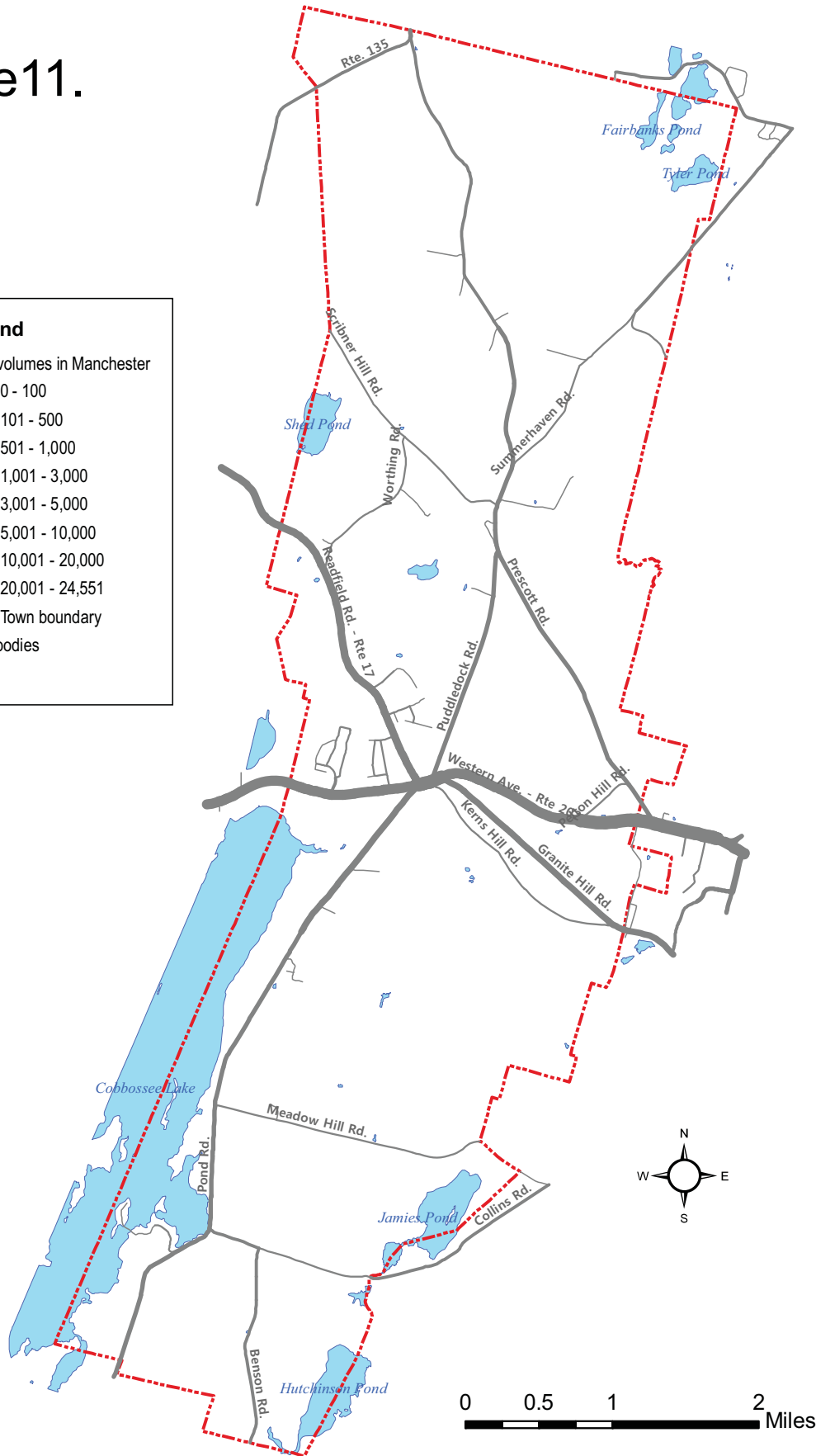
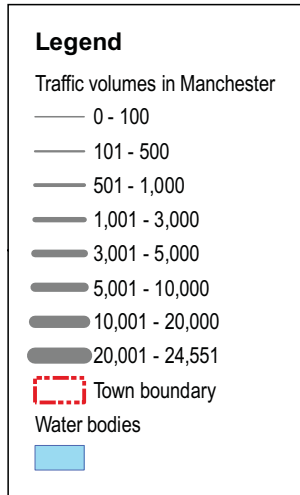
# Figure 2



Source: Town of Manchester

Figure 2. Housing in Manchester: 1990-2009

# Figure 11.



Source: Maine DOT Transportation for Decision Enhancement, 2009  
 Counts represent factored average vehicles per day

Figure 11. Transportation system in Manchester and traffic volumes on local roadways.

Figure 12.

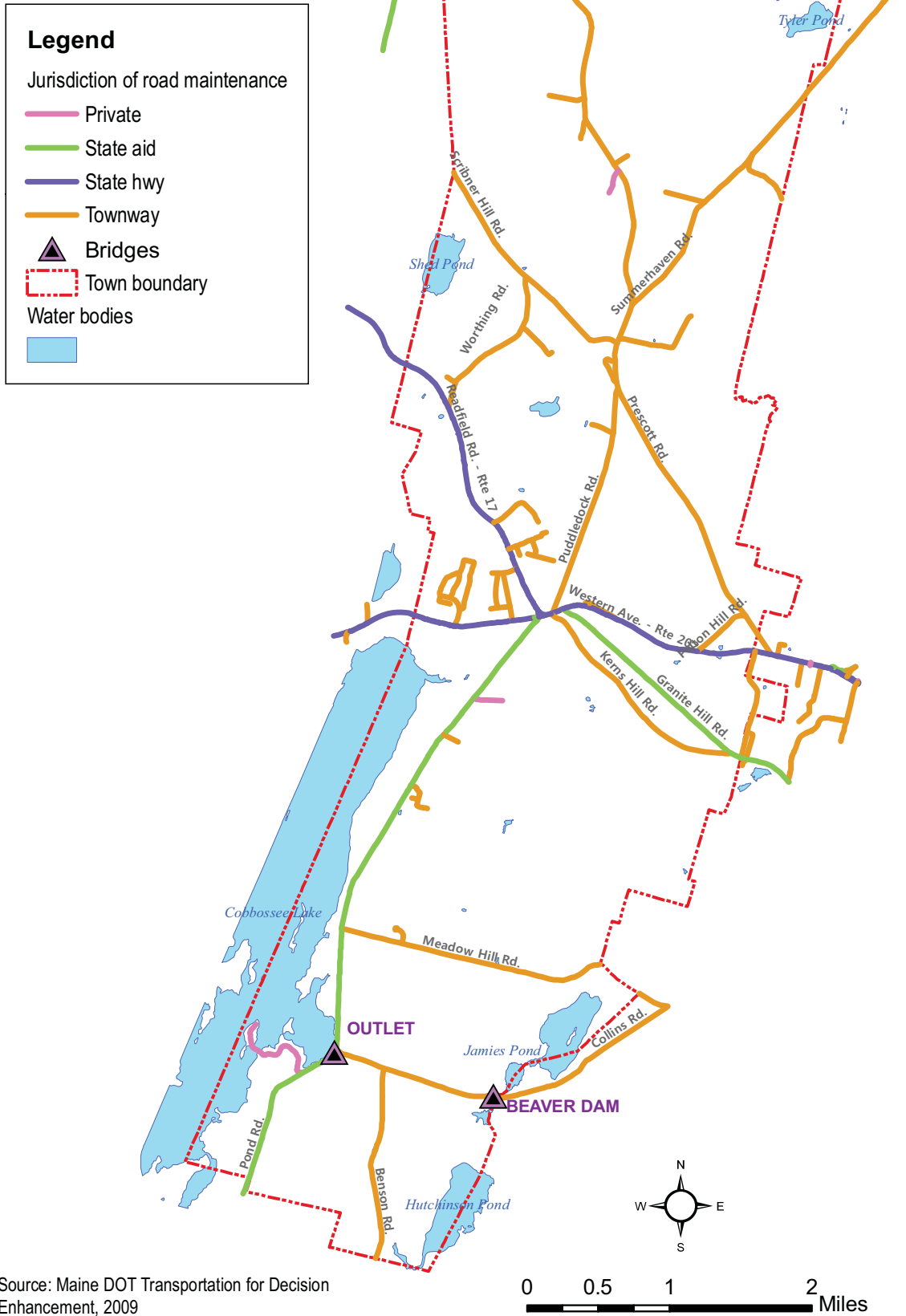


Figure 12. Manchester's Town, State, and State Aid roads.

Figure 14.

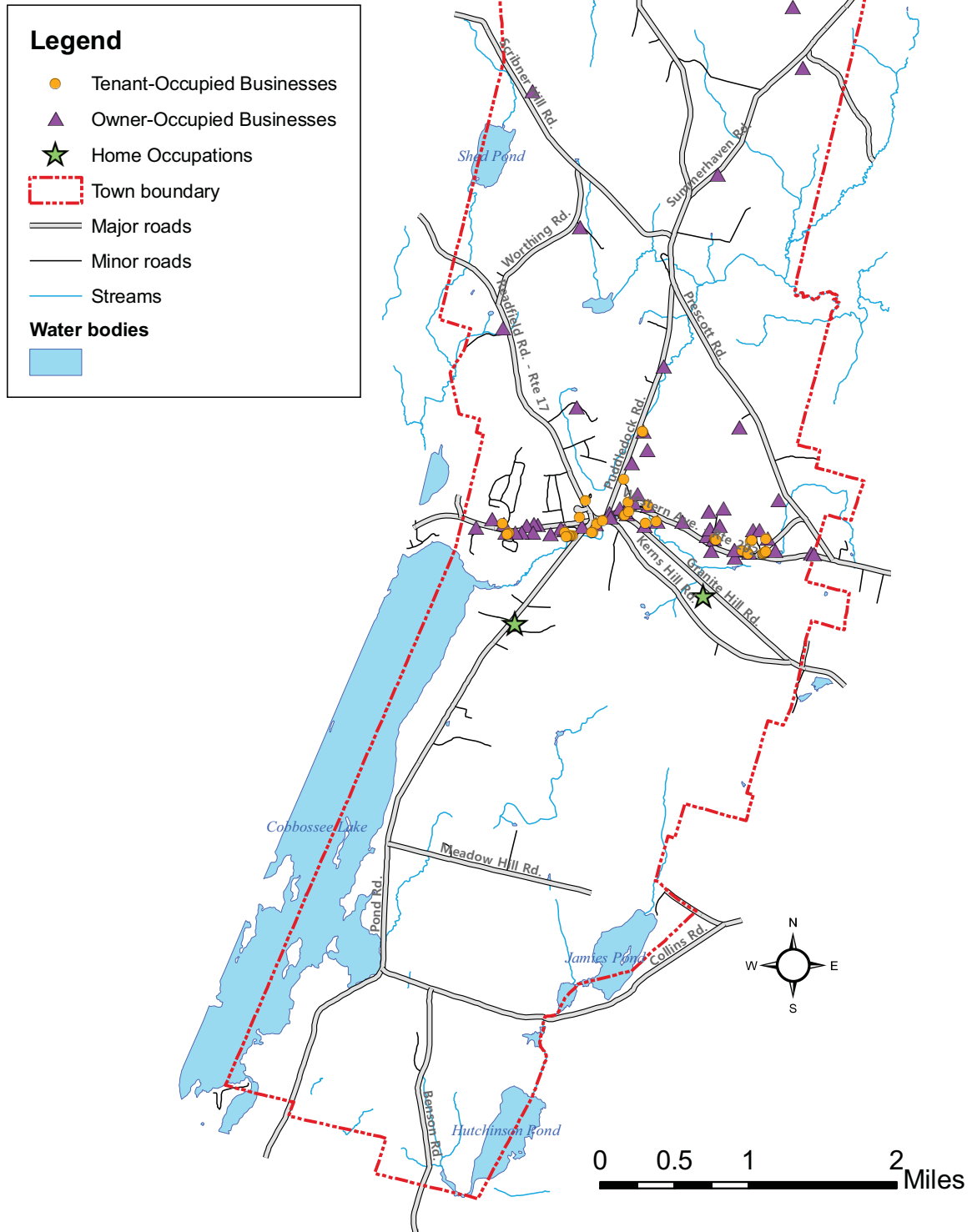


Figure 14. Locations of commercial business establishments in Manchester, 2011.



Figure 15

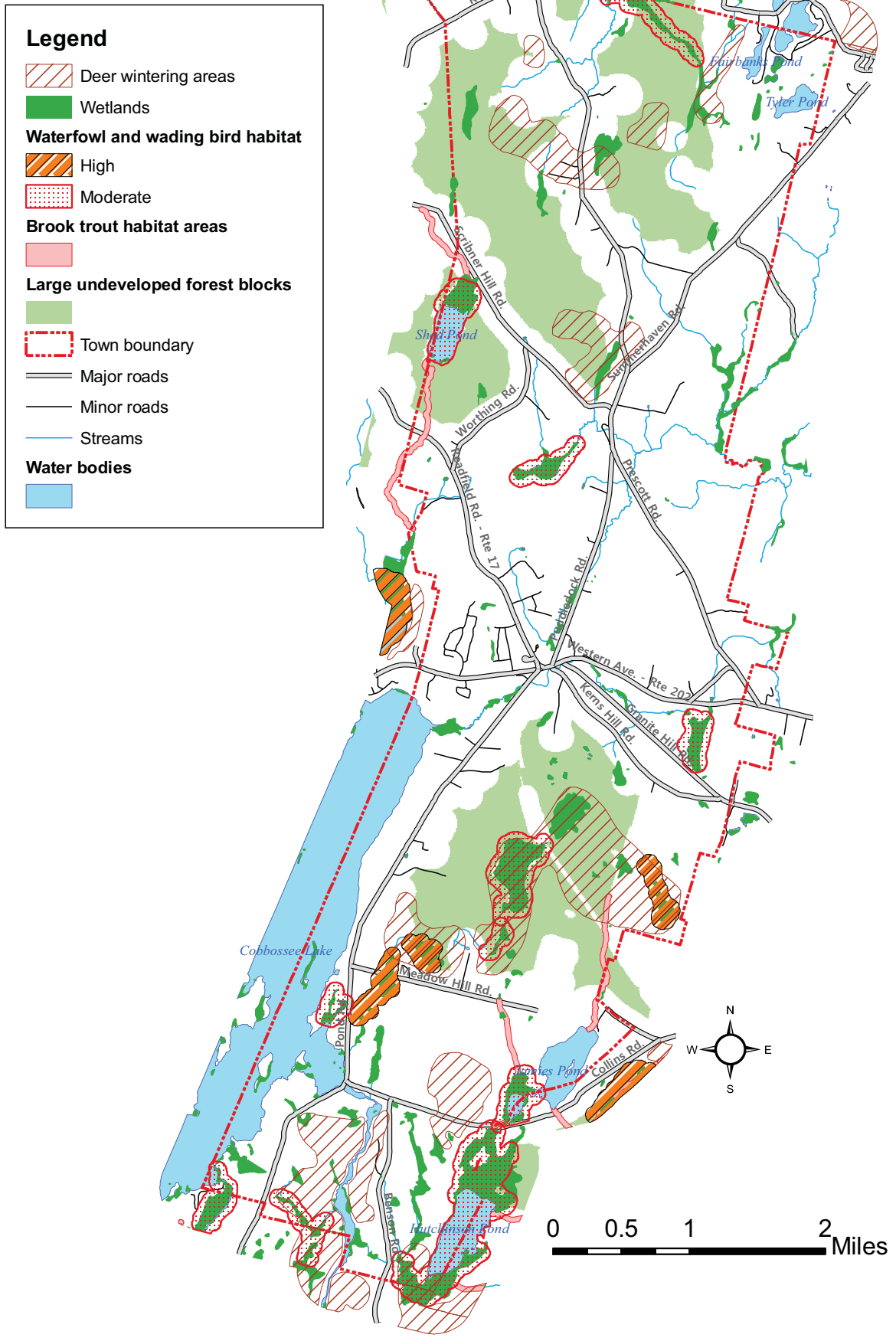


Figure 15. Critical natural resources of Manchester.

# Figure 16

**Legend**

- High-value Natural Areas
- Town boundary
- Streams

**Water bodies**

- Farms and fields (2009)
- Non-forested wetlands
- Public or Dedicated Open Space

Id	Name
1	Hutchinson Pond Area
2	Bog Pond and Jamies Pond Area
3	Old Trolley Line Area
4	Prescott Road Gateway Area
5	Lakeside Orchards Area
6	Prescott Road/ Puddledock Area
7	Shed Pond Area
8	Summer Haven Ponds Area



Figure 16. High value natural areas in Manchester.

Figure 17.

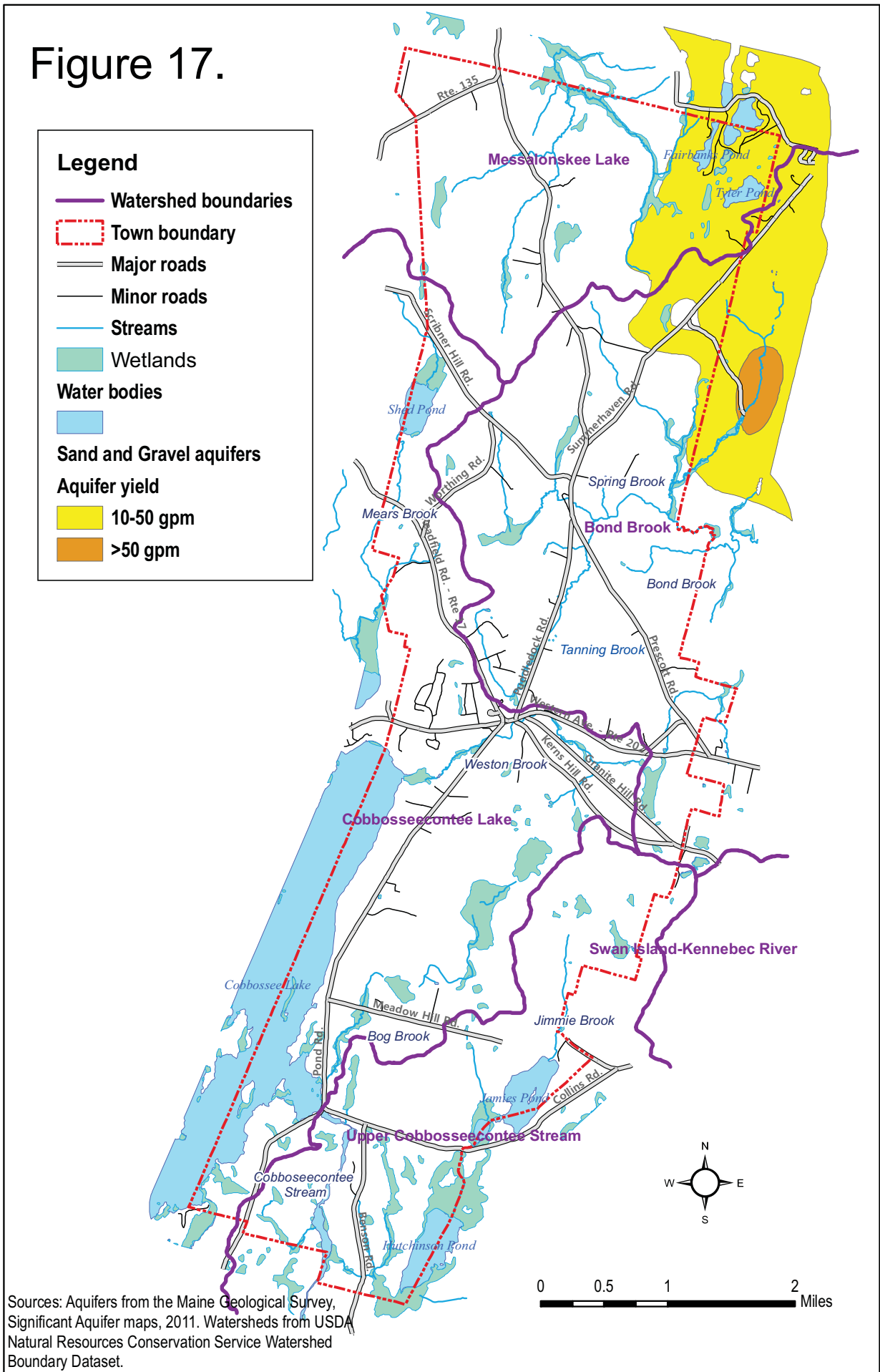


Figure 17. Water resources of Manchester: water bodies, streams, watershed boundaries, and sand and gravel aquifers.

# Figure 18.

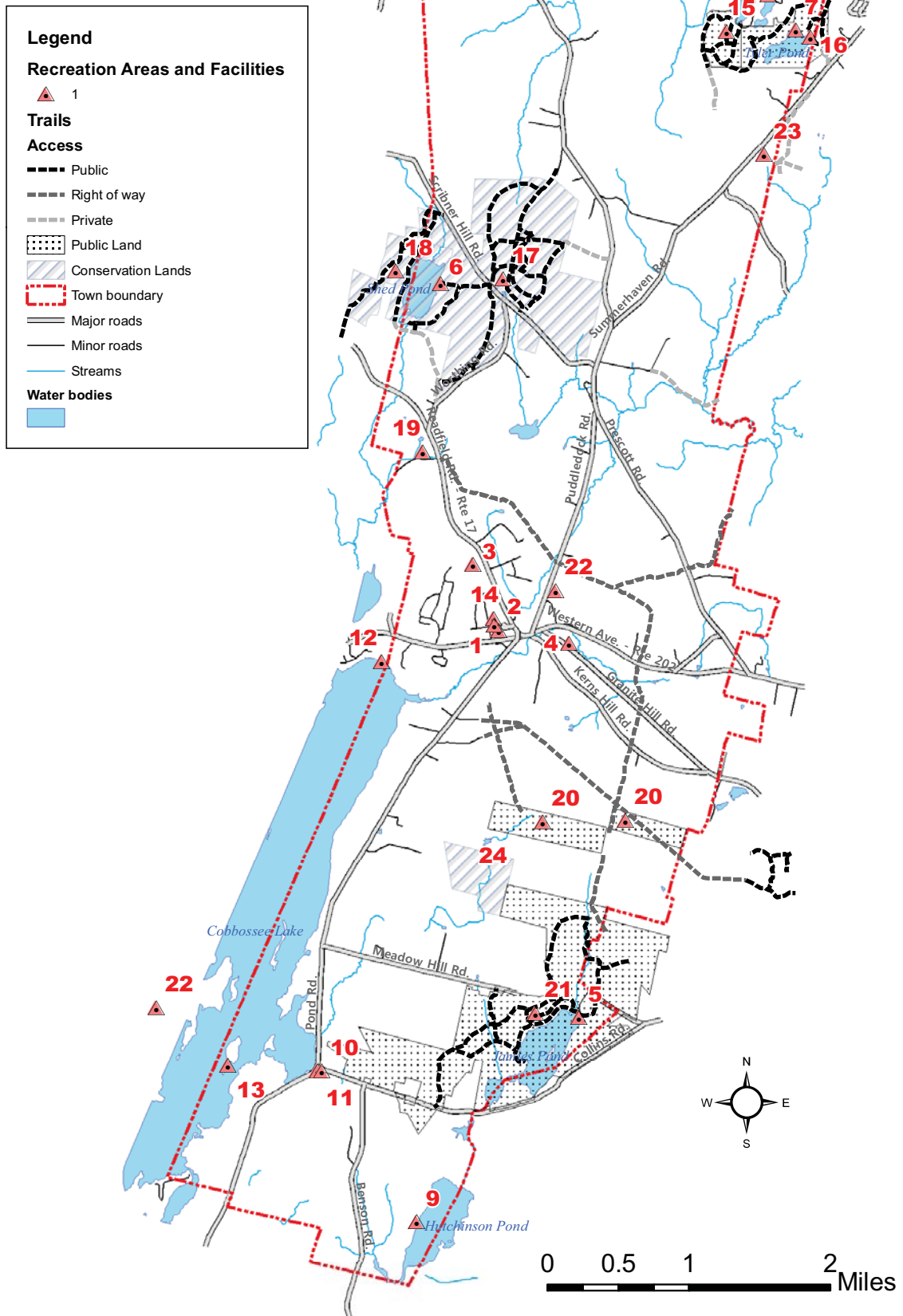


Figure 18. Recreational facilities in Manchester.

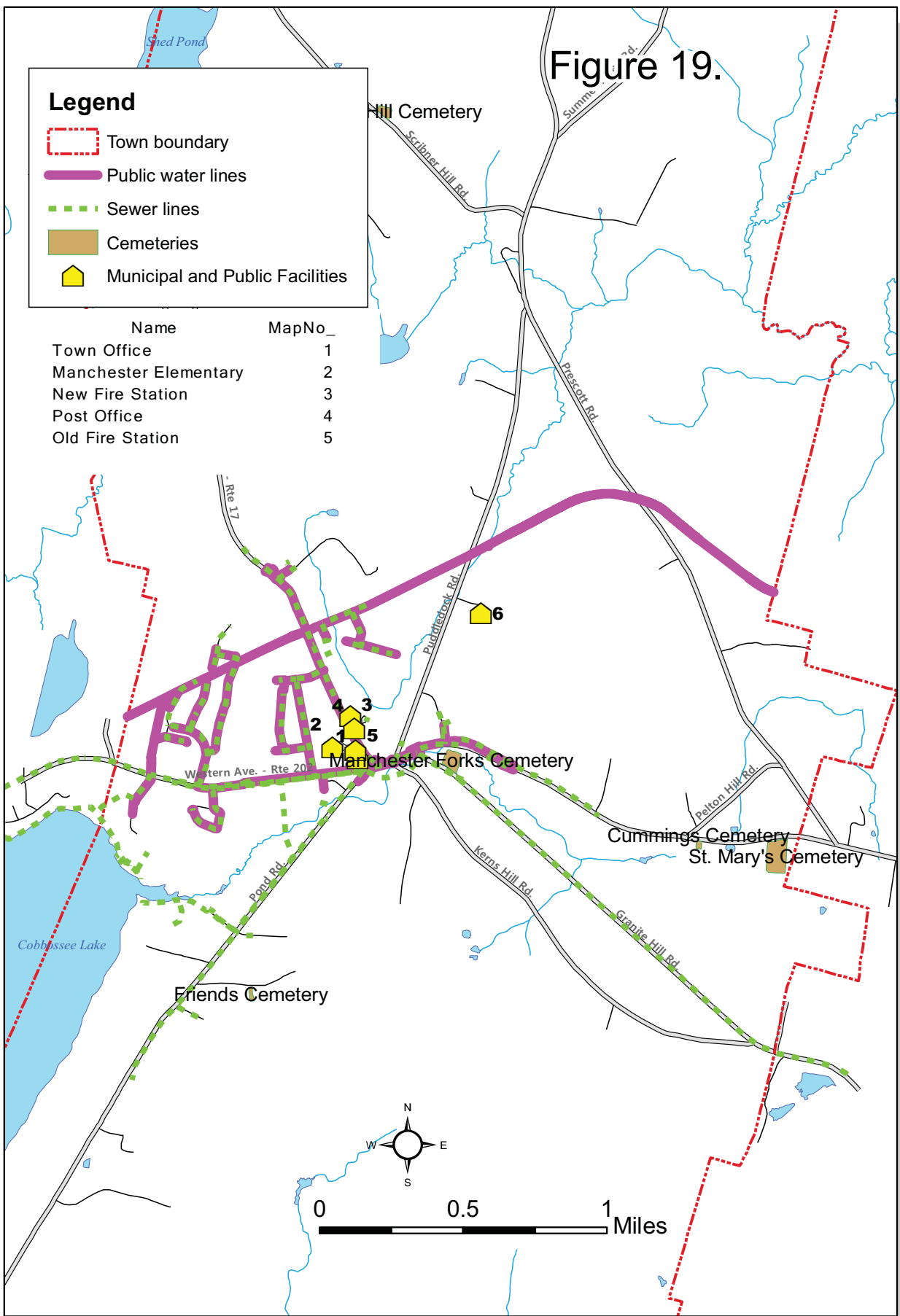
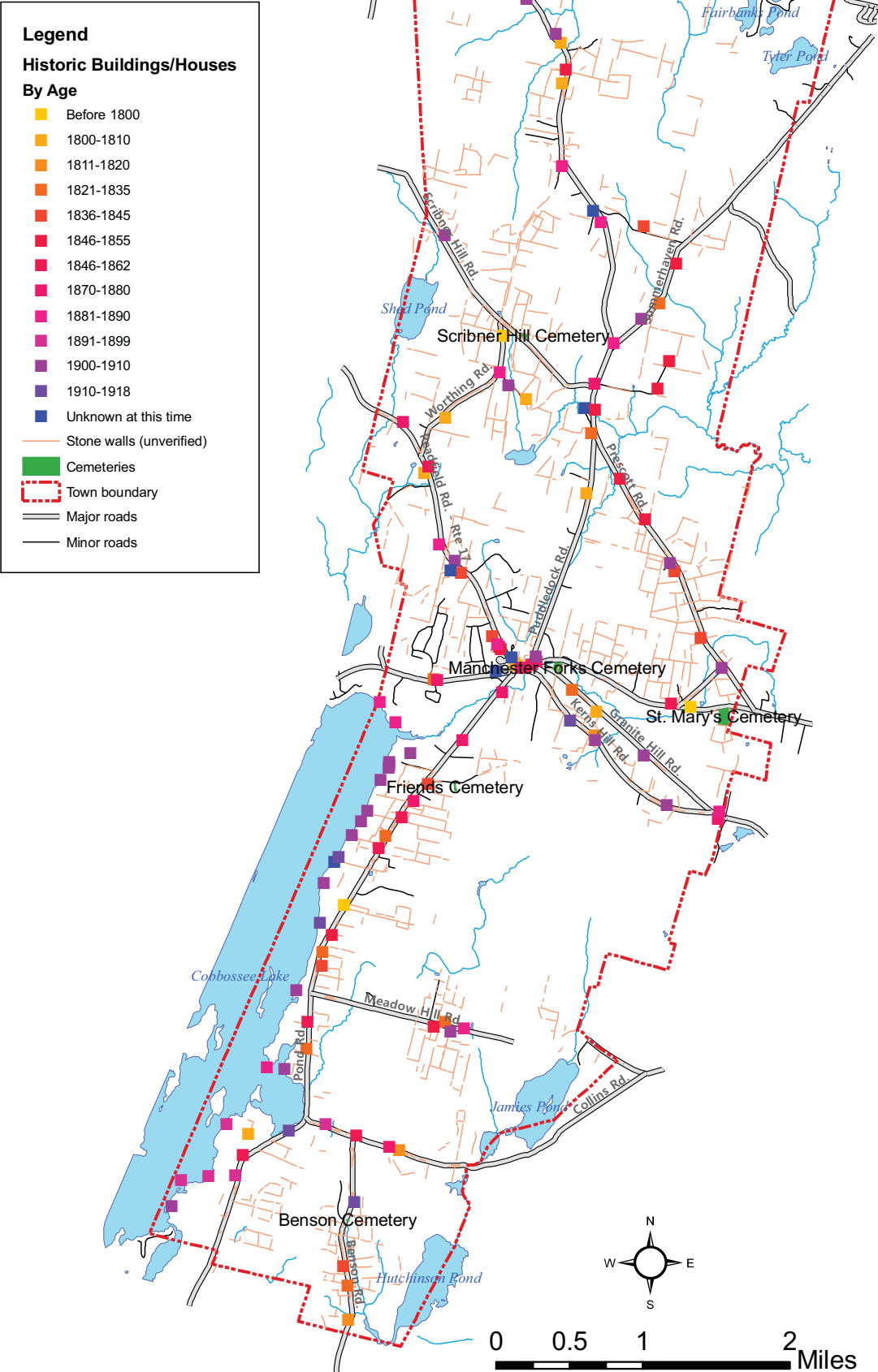


Figure 19. Municipal and public facilities in Manchester



Figure 21.



Note: age of historic houses from tax records.

Figure 21. Historical resources of Manchester: historic buildings/houses, cemeteries, and stone walls (as seen on LiDAR elevation dataset).

Figure 22.

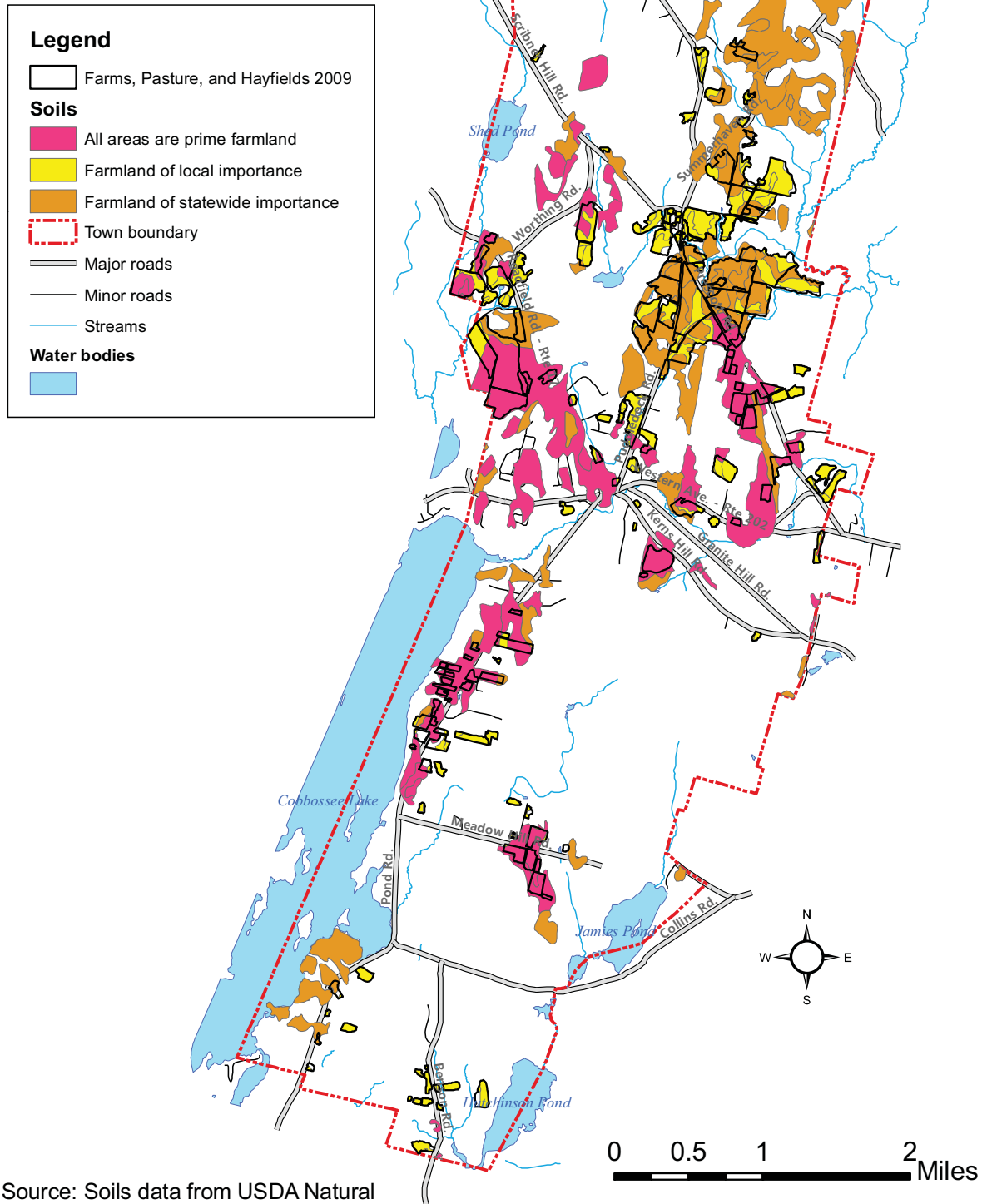


Figure 22. Farmland in Manchester and distribution of farmland soils.

Figure 23.

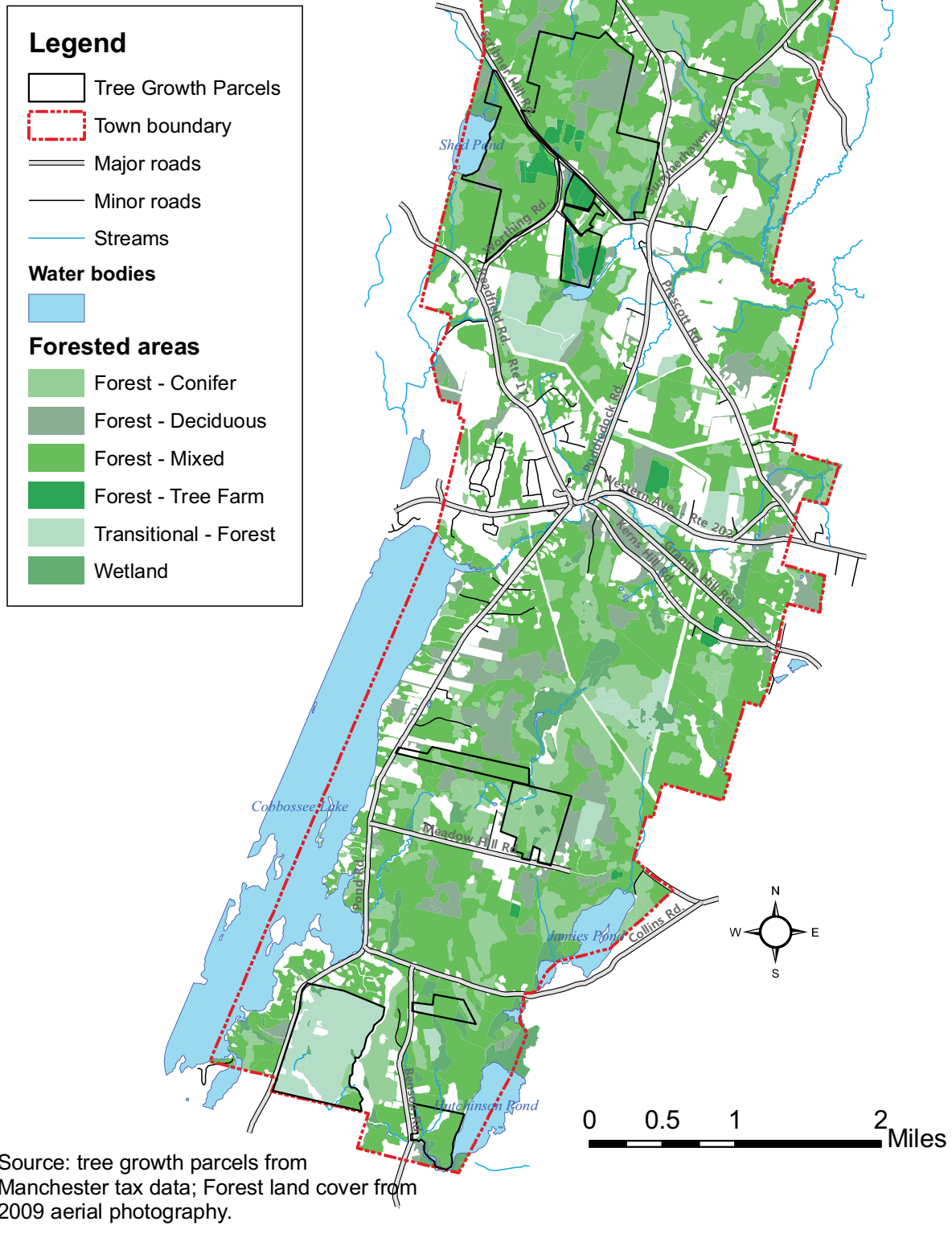


Figure 23. Areas of tree growth parcels and other forested areas in Manchester.



Figure 24.

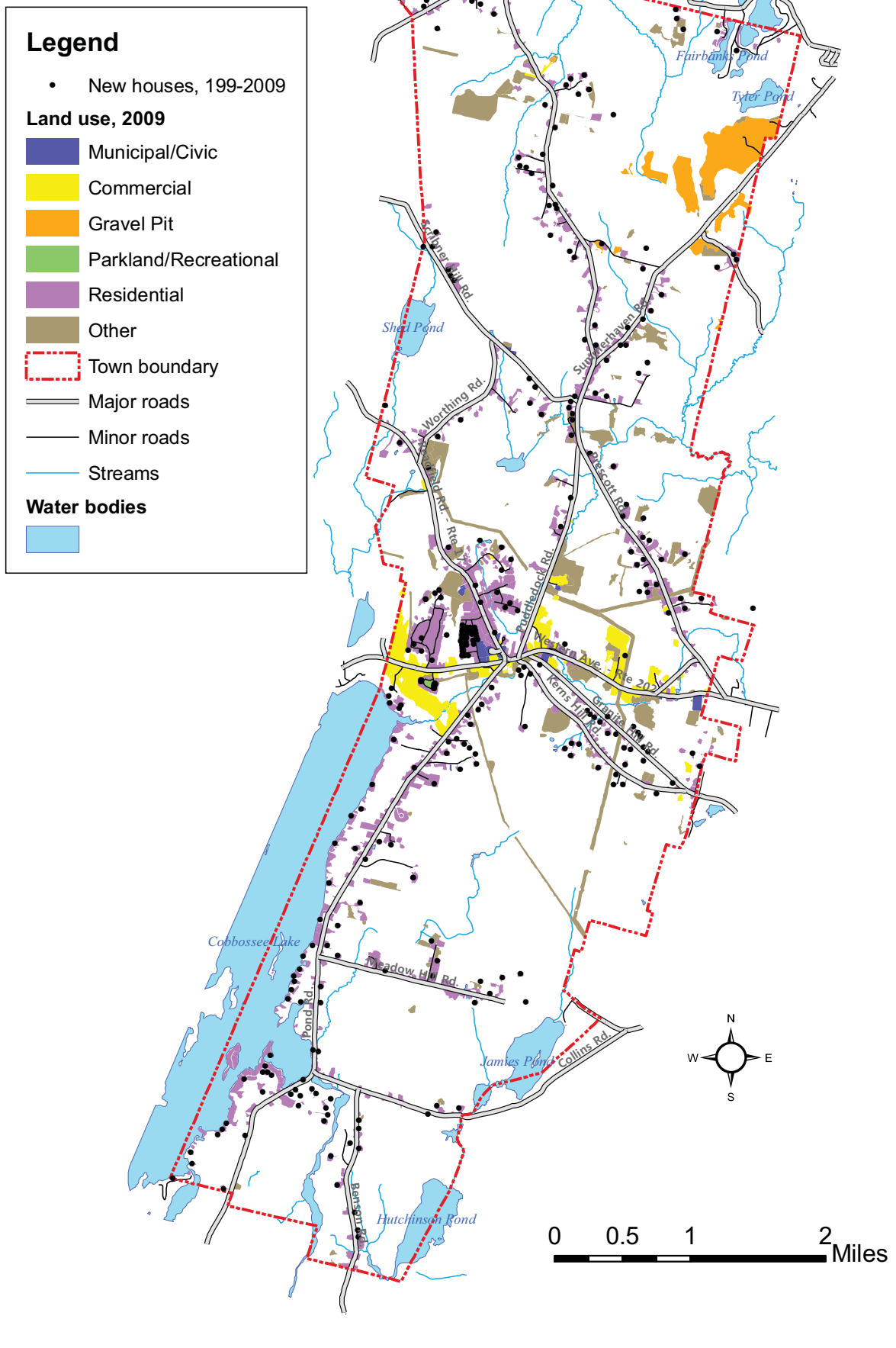


Figure 24. Land use in non-farm, non-forested areas (2009), and locations of new houses 1990-2009.

Figure 25.

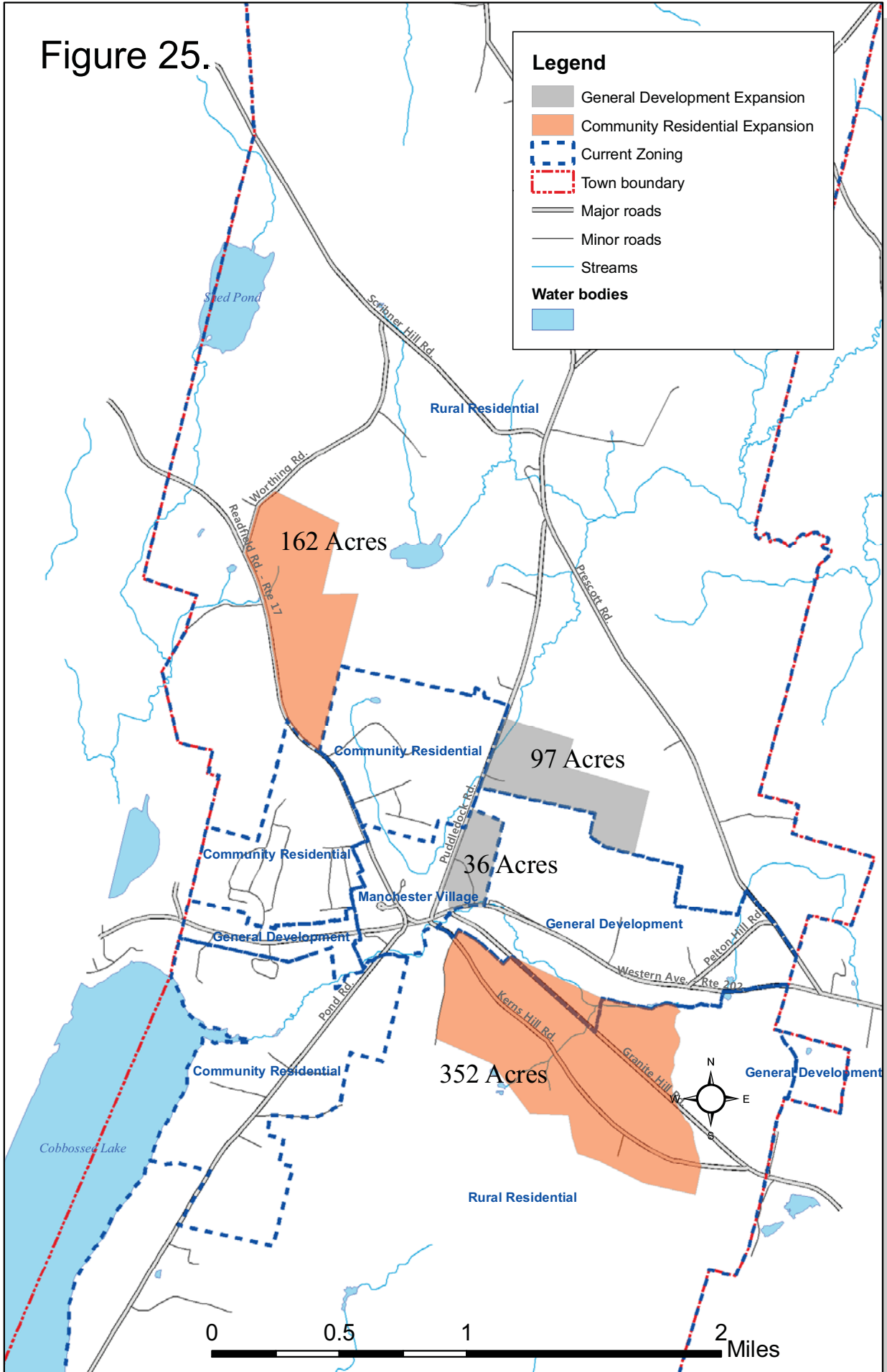


Figure 25. Proposed changes in General Development and Community Residential Districts (Future land use).

## APPENDIX A. ALTERNATIVE THINKING ON ROUTE 202

As simply a way of inspiring creative thinking about possible alternatives to the way that traffic moves through and across Rte. 202 in Manchester (especially across Rte 202 between northern Manchester and southern Manchester), the Comprehensive Planning committee looked at a series of imaginative changes that could be considered for these areas, shown in the aerial photos below (the primary goals were to think about ways to increase the safety of going across Rte 202, increase opportunities for walking and sidewalks, and improve the look of Rte 202):





