CHAPTER 10: EXISTING LAND USE

This chapter includes a description of historical and current development patterns and a summary of City ordinances which regulate land use development. Future development patterns will be determined in large part by the limitations and opportunities imposed by existing land use patterns and natural resources and by land development trends occurring in the community.

HISTORICAL PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT

Waterville's land use reflects a traditional mill town pattern, with densely developed residential areas surrounding industrial and commercial uses along the Kennebec River. Over time, development expanded from this urban core along the riverfront.

In the 1960s and 1970s, development spread out in a more suburban pattern of subdivisions, filling in the area between the downtown and the Colby College campus on Mayflower Hill and along upper Main Street and Kennedy Memorial Drive (KMD). That was followed by "big box" retailers including Wal-Mart and Home Depot and more infill development in previously approved residential subdivisions.

Residential Development

There are several patterns of residential development in Waterville described as follows.

Downtown has a mix of homes, small apartment buildings, and relatively large apartment buildings. Some of the larger residential buildings in the Downtown include the Appleton Apartments at 13 Hathaway Street (which housed the Hathaway Shirt Company before it moved to Water Street (39 units), Elm Towers at 60 Elm Street (49 units), and the Melcher at 77 Elm Street (30 units). The Hathaway (67 residential units) at 10 Water Street, just beyond Spring Street, is a mixed use redevelopment project.

Housing in the densely developed urban core beyond the Downtown includes single family, two-family, and multifamily residences on relatively small lots in the historic South End, North End, and Union Street/Front Street neighborhoods. This pattern developed to house the workforce of the water-based industries, the railroad, and commerce. Street blocks tend to be fairly short and walkable, reflecting a time when pedestrians, rather than automobiles, dictated the City's form.

Farther from the Downtown there is a mixture of single family homes on small lots and large, stately homes on larger lots along streets branching out from the Downtown and along the Messalonskee Stream, on Silver Street and Burleigh Street, for example. This area also includes a fair number of two-family and multifamily buildings. City blocks are longer here, reflecting the availability of various modes of transportation over time.

Still farther away from the Downtown, west of the Messalonskee Stream, northwest of Maine Central Railroad's Springfield Terminal, and south of Kennedy Memorial Drive (KMD), there are single family homes on lots of approximately 10,000 square feet or slightly smaller which
generally are part of subdivisions. These neighborhoods were built to serve residents who owned automobiles.

The southern part of the City includes scattered homes along Webb, Eight Rod, Trafford, and West River roads on former farm lands. Many of these very large parcels still are owned by descendants of the early farmers. Others are owned by an out-of-state developer. The lots are large because of owner preference, not because of zoning requirements. In this area, the Rural Residential zone, a 20,000 square-foot minimum lot size was established to accommodate wells and septic systems on the same lot. This is the largest minimum residential lot size required by Waterville zoning.

Also in the southern portion of the City, there are three mobile home parks. Punky Meadows, Countryside, and Village Green are located off West River Road south of Webb Road. A fourth park is located off of Grove Street in the historic South End neighborhood.

Still more housing is provided in student dormitories located on the Thomas College and Colby College campuses. Approximately 1,600 of Colby’s students live on campus. Approximately 275 of Thomas College’s students live on campus and another 20 are housed across West River Road at the Orchard Park Apartments.

Over the past decade, many new dwelling units have been constructed on properties formerly used for other purposes. For example, 21 units of low-income senior housing were built by the Waterville Housing Authority on the former site of the YMCA on Pleasant Street, 35 units of low and moderate income housing were constructed inside the old Gilman Street School, and 67 units were built inside the old Hathaway shirt factory on Water Street mentioned above.

For more information, see Chapter 2: Housing.

**Commercial, Industrial, and Service Development**

Waterville's earliest industries located along the Kennebec River and the Messalonskee Stream to take advantage of hydropower. Employees of those industries lived within walking distance of their jobs in the woolen, cotton, paper, and other mills and warehouses. To meet the community's shopping and service needs, a Downtown formed around the Head of Falls. For many years this pattern changed little, except for an increase in the overall size of Waterville's urban core. Today, however, with the shift from a manufacturing to a service base, many of Waterville's strongest employment sectors (educational, health care, and social services and retail trade) are not dependent on waterfront locations, and are dispersed throughout the northerly two-thirds of the City.

Over the last half century, major retailers have developed and/or relocated from the Downtown to Kennedy Memorial Drive (KMD) (JFK Mall and Shaw's Plaza) and Upper Main Street (Elm Plaza and Waterville Commons) to anchor shopping centers. Many smaller retailers and services followed. Today Waterville has three distinct commercial areas, the Downtown, KMD, and Upper Main Street.
Public Utilities, Facilities, and Services
Most of the City’s facilities are located close to the urban core of the City. Public Works
maintains its compound, a three acre site, on Wentworth Court off of Main Street just north of
Downtown. Central Fire Station is located at College and Main Streets. Waterville Public
Library is located on Elm Street. See Chapter 6: Public Facilities and Services.

Waterville's schools are distributed throughout the developed areas of the City. For a description
of the schools, see Chapter 6: Public Facilities and Services.

Public recreation facilities are fairly well distributed throughout the developed areas of the City.
However, some parks are not easily accessible to people residing in low-income areas without
cars. One third of the City’s residents live in those three neighborhoods (the North End, the
South End, and the Downtown) located along the Kennebec. For a description of the parks, see
Chapter 7: Recreation.

The Kennebec Sewerage Treatment District's wastewater treatment plant is located on the
Kennebec River on Water Street. The facility and the Waterville Sewerage District's collection
system serve the most developed areas of the City, extending to residential subdivisions off of
Upper Main Street west of I-95 and south along West River Road to Punky Meadows Mobile
Home Park. Outlying areas are served by privately owned septic systems. See Chapter 6: Public
Facilities and Services.

Public water is provided to the majority of Waterville's housing units by the Kennebec Water
District. The District's water supply flows from China Lake through a filtration facility in
Vassalboro to a pumping station off Western Avenue and, from there, throughout the City.
Public water is not provided to elevations over 270 feet. See Chapter 6: Public Facilities and
Services and Chapter 9: Natural Resources.

Central Maine Power Company (CMP) distributes electricity to the City. See Chapter 9: Natural
Resources regarding the four hydroelectric stations on Messalonskee Stream.

Open Space
Open space is generally found in the northwestern parts of the City, particularly at higher
elevations, and in the southern portions of the City that are not served by public water and sewer
facilities. Colby College also has a very large nature preserve. See Map 10-1.

Agriculture, Forestry, and Mining Activities
There no longer are any dairy farms in Waterville, although some land is hayed and horses are
kept in rural areas off of Marston Road and Eight Rod Road.

Two parcels currently (July 2012) are registered with the City Assessor under the Tree Growth
Tax Law. One is off of Trafton Road and the other is off of West River Road south of Thomas
Drive. The Tree Growth Tax Law affords property owners a reduced tax rate when land is
specifically managed for tree growth.
There are three active gravel pits in Waterville, all located off the West River Road.

**Transportation**

Waterville's major access routes include:

- Interstate 95 which crosses the northwestern corner of the City and then roughly parallels the western border of the City; interchanges are located at Upper Main Street and KMD;

- Route 104 which runs southeast as Upper Main Street to Downtown, then southwest as Silver Street to KMD, and then as West River Road farther south in the City;

- Routes 11, 100, and 201 converge in the northeast corner of the City and extend along the River as College Avenue to Downtown where Routes 100 and 201 cross the River and extend south in Winslow, while Routes 11 and 137 continue southwest in Waterville as Silver Street and then west as KMD.

Two branches of Pan Am’s right-of-way cross Waterville.

The municipally-owned Robert LaFleur Airport is located on 387 acres east of I-95 and south of KMD off Airport Road.

See Chapter 5: Transportation.

**RECENT DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS**

**LAND USE: 1996 AND 2012**

Table 10-1 shows acreage by land use category in 1996 and 2012. Data are from the City’s last comprehensive plan, adopted in 1997, and from the current assessor database. Using the assessor database to make those comparisons is complicated by the fact that the assessor database now uses different land use classifications than it did in 1996. For example, twenty-one (21) Seton Village acres, fifteen (15) Waterville Housing Authority acres, and one (1) convent acre now listed as tax exempt land were classified as residential in 1996. Those and other differences in land classification codes make it appear as though Waterville has 355 fewer acres of residential development than it did in 1996. In addition, although 24 acres of mixed use development are included in the residential category, the Hathaway redevelopment project, which converted the former shirt factory to both commercial and residential use, has a commercial code.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential Developed</td>
<td>3,814</td>
<td>4,258</td>
<td>2,389*</td>
<td>2,034*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Developed</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial** Developed</td>
<td>61**</td>
<td>50**</td>
<td>237**</td>
<td>227**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Developed</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>See Tax Exempt</td>
<td>2,082</td>
<td>See Tax Exempt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities [&amp; Transportation] Developed</td>
<td>33**</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>99**</td>
<td>36 Electric plant, substation, right of way**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand &amp; Gravel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax Exempt</td>
<td></td>
<td>289</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL DEVELOPED</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,513</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,079</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,241</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,388</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Residential</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>1,527</td>
<td>1,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Commercial</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Industrial</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL VACANT</strong></td>
<td><strong>512</strong></td>
<td><strong>398</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,332</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,156</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,025</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,477</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,573</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>7,559</strong>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Some acres listed as residential in 1996 are classified as tax exempt in 2012.
**The Utilities & Transportation category includes railroad land in 1996, but not in 2012. In 2012, railroad land is included in the Industrial category.
***Acres were lost when the town line between Oakland and Waterville was surveyed in 2008. Discrepancies also may be caused by rounding.
Tax Exempt Acres
Table 10-1 shows that in 2012, of the 7,559 acres of land in Waterville, 2,449 acres, or 32 percent, are tax exempt. Ownership of those acres is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAX EXEMPT LAND</th>
<th>ACRES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Waterville</td>
<td>1,207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary (includes colleges)</td>
<td>794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWD</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KSTD</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Seton Village)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraternal</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHA</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Maine</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSD</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Government</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,449</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Map 10-1
Map 10-1 shows the location of land uses by category, providing a graphic representation of the parcels and acreages provided in Table 10-1. For easier viewing, Map 10-1 also is available on the City’s web page where it can be enlarged.

Subdivisions and Site Plans Approved and Constructed after 1996
The following list includes developments that were reviewed by the Planning Board and constructed between 1996 and 2012. Developments in each category are listed in chronological order of construction.

Note that additional development occurred, but is not listed because it did not require Planning Board review. For example, several homes were built between 1996 and 2012 on individual lots or on lots in subdivisions that were approved prior to 1996. Map 10-2 shows that many homes were built after 2000 on vacant lots in the old McBrady subdivision located between Ridge Road and I-95 and in previously approved subdivisions on Barnet Avenue and Forest Park.

Residential Development
Sunset Home, a 9,300 square foot senior citizen housing facility at 114 College Avenue
The Woodlands, 34,000 square foot addition at 147 West River Road
Bard 4-lot subdivision at the intersection of First Rangeway and Oakland Street
Stream View Drive, 9-lot subdivision
The Woodlands, Alzheimer’s Unit at 147 West River Road
Oak Grove Nursing Home expansion on Cool Street
Haley Way, 4-lot subdivision
Lincoln Green, 39 condominiums off of Lincoln Street
Waterville

MAP 10-2

Built since 2000 in Rural Area
Built since 2000 in Growth Area
Bard apartments, 10 units at 99 Oakland Street
Yawkey Way subdivision, 5 lots off of County Road
Fieldstone Landing off of Shores Road, 7 units in Waterville, others in Oakland
Hathaway Creative Center at 10 Water Street, 66 apartments
Pleasant Crossing, WHA at 89 Pleasant Street, 21 low-income senior units
Gilman Street School conversion to 33 low and moderate income apartments
Saint Frances Apartments, 58 low-income senior apartments at 52 Elm Street (under construction in April 2013)

Commercial Development
Century Drive, a 6-lot commercial subdivision off of KMD developed by Union Front (Dunkin' Donuts was constructed there in 2003)
105 KMD converted from residential to office use (United Way)
Veterinary office on Washington Street
129 Silver Street converted from residential to office use (financial planner)
91 Silver Street converted from residential to spa/restaurant use
Warehouse expansion on Marston Road
Maine Eye Care Associates expansion at 325 KMD
McDonald’s 435 KMD
Transfer Station on LaFleur Road
Hampton Inn on KMD
Applebee’s Restaurant at Shaw’s Plaza
Waterville Commons Shopping Center
Doctors’ office building on Washington Street
AutoZone on KMD
Uncle Dean’s health food store at 78 Grove Street
D.L. Electric on Jefferson Street
Hamlin’s Sports World boat storage buildings at 290 West River Road
Waterville Self-Storage buildings on Airport Road
Clark and Company addition at 56 Airport Road
Bangor Savings Bank on Upper Main Street
Advance One Cleaning garage at 57 Water Street
Flagship Cinema at Shaw’s Plaza
Burger King at 44 College Avenue
All Pro Soccer off of West River Road
Office subdivision on Washington Street
Ware Butler warehouse on North Street
J&S Oil car wash, gasoline pumps, express lube, and convenience store at 320 KMD
Caswell’s expansion at 68 Armory Road
KMD Plaza at 270 KMD
Irving Oil expansion at 445 KMD
CVS Pharmacy at 1 KMD
Kennebec Savings Bank addition at 226 Main Street
Off-track betting, formerly Coyote Country restaurant and banquet facility, on Jefferson Street
Tim Horton’s at 333 Main Street
Kennebec Federal Savings Bank branch bank at 11 Washington Street
People's United Bank (formerly Merrill Bank) at 335 Main Street
Hallowell storage building at 1 LaFluer Road
Expansion of the JFK Plaza
Rite-Aid at 210 Main Street
Taco Bell/KFC on KMD
Maine State Credit Union at 81 Grove Street
High Partners office building at 14 Colby Street (leased by Social Security)
Spring Brook Ice and Fuel bulk propane storage facility on Airport Road
Maine General Elmwood Family Practice to former Rite-Aid building at 211 Main Street
Adams Speech Therapy at 155 KMD, house demolished, office building constructed
Delta Ambulance at 29 Chase Avenue

Public Facilities
WSD, 9,200 square foot facility off of Water Street
Softball field, soccer field, and parking lot off of West River Road
Kindergarten wing at the Mitchell School at 58 Drummond Avenue
Office building in the Public Works Compound on Wentworth Court
Central Fire Station addition
KWD office building on Cool Street
Sand and salt storage building in the Public Works Compound
Fleet maintenance garage in the Public Works Compound
City snow dump off of College Avenue
Waterville Senior High School addition and parking lot

Institutional Facilities
Alford Youth Center on North Street
Colby College dormitory off of Washington Street
Thomas College auditorium
Maine General Surgical wing on North Street
Inland Hospital doctors' office building on KMD
Colby College studio art building
Blessed Hope Church auditorium/gymnasium at 10 Pleasant Street
Kennebec Valley New Life Center church on Trafton Road
Maine Army National Guard Ready Building at 29 Armory Road
Thomas College dormitory
Lakewood Manor expansion at 220 KMD
Colby College alumni & development building
Waterville School Department office building on Messalonskee Avenue
Waterville Area Humane Society on Webb Road
Faith Evangelical Free Church youth building on KMD
New Beginnings Church addition 392 Main Street
Mount Merici convent at 172 Western Avenue
Thomas College Alford recreation center
Colby College Diamond Building
Colby College Pulver Pavilion addition to Cotter Union
Inland Hospital Emergency Department expansion
Thomas College, 12 townhouses
Educare Central Maine at the Mitchell School
Colby College biomass heating plant
Colby College Lunder art museum expansion
Thomas College Student Center expansion
Homeless shelter at 19 Colby Street

GROWTH AND RURAL AREAS

Development after 2000 in Growth and Rural Areas
Map 10-2 shows development from 2000 to the present in designated growth (green) and rural (red) areas. Through adoption of the 1997 comprehensive plan, the City Council designated all areas in the shoreland zone and all land zoned Rural Residential or Resource Protection the City’s rural area. The City’s growth area is comprised of land in all other zoning districts and, for the most part, the growth area is where water and sewer lines are in place and a fairly extensive road network exists.

Map 10-2 shows that only about a dozen homes, the Humane Society facility (on the south side of Webb Road abutting the east side of I-95), and Kennebec Valley New Life Center (a church on Trafton Road) have been built in the rural area since 2000. Map 10-3, the zoning map, shows most of the rural area: Rural Residential parcels in white and Resource Protection parcels in dark green. The remainder of the rural area can be seen on Map 10-4, the shoreland zoning map. Map 10-4 shows both land in the shoreland zone and parcels zoned Resource Protection—light green on this map. All three of those maps are posted on the City’s web page.

In the past decade development has occurred primarily in the growth area as the City intended. From the list of projects above, we see that most of the residential units were in multi-family developments in renovated buildings (the Gilman Street School and the Hathaway shirt factory) or on previously developed sites (Pleasant Crossing on the old YMCA site). Much of the non-residential development was expansions of existing projects and campuses: Colby College, Thomas College, Inland Hospital, MaineGeneral, JFK Mall, Shaw’s Plaza, and the Public Works compound, for example. Other projects that did not technically expand existing developments abut it: Waterville Commons and Elm Plaza, for instance.

LAND FOR FUTURE GROWTH
How much land is needed for projected population growth? Over the next decade, Waterville’s population is projected to grow by only 400 persons. At an average of 2.13 persons per household, we would need only 188 units to house those new persons. If all of the housing were developed in the Rural Residential zone where the largest lots are required (20,000 square foot minimum lot size, but 7,500 square feet per dwelling unit), we would need a maximum of thirty-two (32) acres plus land for roads to serve those units. However, given the age and income level of our population and the type of development that has occurred in recent years, more housing
units are apt to be constructed in apartment buildings in the center of town than in the Rural Residential zone.

There are numerous sites that potentially could be redeveloped for the construction of apartment buildings. Among them are the former Harris Bakery, the old Boys & Girls Club, the Hains and Levines buildings on Main Street, and the Marden’s and CMP buildings on Water Street. One redevelopment project already approved by the Planning Board but not yet constructed is 58 units of low-income senior housing on the Saint Francis Church site. (See Chapter 1: Demographic Profile.)

Adequate land to accommodate future commercial, industrial, and institutional development also appears to be available. Both Colby College and Thomas College recently completed campus master plans, and MaineGeneral is moving in-patient care to a new hospital in Augusta in 2013. Only about eleven (11) percent of the developed area of Waterville is used for commercial purposes. (Commercial development, however, accounts for approximately 27% of the City’s total valuation. See Chapter 4: Fiscal Capacity.) Even less land, about four (4) percent, is in industrial use (including railroad property).

**LAND USE CONTROLS**

Land use ordinances serve to provide a balance between public and private property interests, a goal consistently upheld by the courts. Land use ordinances in Waterville include the Zoning Ordinance of which Shoreland Zoning is a part, the Subdivision and Site Plan Review Ordinance, and the Floodplain Management Ordinance. All of Waterville’s ordinances are posted on our web site along with our Zoning map and Shoreland Zoning map.

**Zoning Ordinance**

Waterville’s Zoning Ordinance (posted on the City’s web page) establishes land use districts and for each district sets forth permitted uses, special exceptions, and dimensional requirements. The Zoning Ordinance also contains a number of performance standards governing specific land uses. In addition, the Zoning Ordinance specifies that certain projects are subject to site plan or subdivision review and approval by the Planning Board.

**Site Plan Review and Subdivision Ordinance**

**Purposes.** The purposes of subdivision and site plan review include minimizing the environmental, public facility, and transportation impacts of proposed developments.

**Applicability.** Subdivision review applies to the division of parcels or buildings into three or more lots or units within a five-year period. Projects requiring site plan review and approval by the Planning Board (as set forth in Section 6.4 of the Zoning Ordinance) include the following (single-family dwellings, duplexes, and certain agricultural activities are exempt):

- Any combination of building footprint and impervious area which exceeds 5,000 square feet;
- New construction of 4,000 or more square feet of building footprint;
- Additions to existing buildings of 2,000 or more square feet;
- Impervious surfaces of 8,000 or more square feet.

**Floodplain Management Ordinance**
The City recently updated its Floodplain Management Ordinance, and it is consistent with State and federal standards.

**Issues and Needs**
The major land use and land use control issues facing Waterville include the following:

1. Historic Resources. There is a need for mechanisms to protect historic and archaeological resources, especially in the Downtown and in the historic South End neighborhood, including the City-owned chapel and Pine Grove Cemetery.

2. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety. Waterville does not have a City-adopted greenway plan to connect existing recreation and open space areas or a plan to promote pedestrian and bicyclist safety.


4. Comprehensive Plan Implementation. There is a need to ensure that mechanisms are developed to ensure implementation of the comprehensive plan on an ongoing basis.