

# **CHAPTER THREE- GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

When using the terms “goals, policies and implementation strategies” we mean the following:

**Goals** are broad statements about New Gloucester’s desired future. Goals are the basis for taking future action.

**Policies** focus on the measurable kind of actions that will be used to achieve the goals.

**Implementation strategies** indicate specific actions or improvements for achieving goals and policies.

The goals, policies and strategies contained in this Chapter represent a major component of the Town’s comprehensive plan. In this section, New Gloucester’s vision for the future is defined and is translated into tangible, real life actions.

The goals, policies and strategies resulted from the inventory and analysis, survey results, and input of the committee and the public. As part of the process, the committee reviewed the 1986 Comprehensive Plan to determine the relevancy of the goal statements, to determine what actions (if any) had been taken and to decide what goals and strategies were still appropriate to the 1990 plan. The Town had also gone through a goal setting process in 1987/1988 during the development of 1988 land use plan. That policy document was also reviewed.

The following sections are organized by general topics such as land use, public facilities, etc. Preceding each set of local goals and policies is the appropriate state goal in *italics*.

## **1. Citizen Involvement**

### **Goals**

To seek to supplement the number of volunteers who participate in Town Government.

To reach as many citizens as possible with news about Town events.

To seek obtain public comment on issues in ways that are useful to the Town and the citizens.

### **Policies**

Develop an incentive program for Town volunteers that includes opportunities for training and recreation.

Acknowledge volunteer contributions.

Use the best possible methods to publicize Town events.

Promote creative types of public participation such that it satisfies both citizen needs and Town needs in an enjoyable and productive format.

## **Strategies**

Propose a board member incentive program that involves funding for attendance at pertinent workshops, and purchase of appropriate training video tapes.

Host a volunteer appreciation day with the intent of repeating it yearly.

Host a planning fair where information about Town planning efforts can be displayed in a fun format.

For the purpose of obtaining citizen input into new or ongoing planning initiatives, organize small focus groups on selected topics, rather than large, formal public hearings. Retain the services of a neutral moderator and facilitator.

Continue to use the New Gloucester News as method of getting the word out. Consider the use of full page inserts on major topics, such as any ordinance updates.

## **2. Land Use**

*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*

### **Goals**

To encourage a land use pattern that:

- preserves the natural and historic areas that give the town its unique, rural character;
- eliminates the current pattern of development sprawl;
- preserves open space;
- accommodates the housing needs of the population;
- attempts to stabilize the growth in property taxes;
- is based on the ability of the Town to provide adequate levels of town services over time and assures that service requirements do not exceed the Town's capacity;
- provides for the continuation of active agriculture and forestry.

To establish a definition of "rural character" that:

- begins to identify important, special features of the Town;
- acknowledges that a rural environment carries with it certain expectations regarding the type and availability of public services.

### **Policies**

The primary and most important land use policy shall be the preservation of 'rural character'. In New Gloucester, "rural character" is characterized by the following:

- concentrations of buildings in small Villages;
- winding roadways that, for the most part, are lacking suburban and commercial sprawl;
- a wealth of preserved or restored buildings of historic significance;
- a sense of space;

- large expanses of open areas;
- unrestricted public access;
- an informal trail network;
- sustainable agriculture and forestry;
- and a recognition that the range and geographic extent of public services and programs will be limited to reflect traditional rural lifestyles and preferences.

Features and concepts that are important elements of “rural character” shall be viewed as things to be retained as the town further develops.

Comprehensively planned residential developments and cluster housing are preferred alternatives to the grid pattern of land subdivision because of opportunities for open space preservation and reduced construction costs and the potential for large contiguous tracts of land where farming or forest management activities can be sustained profitably.

Maintain the land use pattern of traditional village centers surrounded by rural countryside by establishing a clear distinction between different zoning districts and densities of residential use.

The rural and growth area designations, in order to be effective, shall be implemented through the use of incentives for development in growth areas and disincentives against development in rural areas.

Eliminate the piecemeal lot by lot division of land that predominates the development pattern in New Gloucester due to exemptions and other allowances of the State Subdivision Law.

In varying the minimum lot size requirements, special attention shall be paid to soils and natural features, therefore: It shall be recognized that soil suitability for use of individual subsurface wastewater disposal systems will be the major factor that will determine future development densities and future locational patterns of development.

## **Strategies**

### **General**

Devise a method for reviewing the development of individual lots such as:

- Creating a local definition of “subdivision” to include the creation of two (rather than three) lots, thereby permitting the Planning Board to conduct site by site review for each lot developed in New Gloucester. A simplified, streamlined review process shall be designed for these smaller divisions so as to avoid hardship upon the individual applicant.
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- Creating an environmental site review of individual lots.

Consider ways of affecting the rate of growth such that necessary public facilities are in place prior to development, such as:

- Creating a development timing ordinance for some locations
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- Designing a system of impact fees to finance public improvements necessitated by new development.

## **Residential Growth**

Providing that soils are adequate, the preferred location for new development will be in and around the existing Town centers in the Upper and Lower Villages, with the intent of encouraging higher densities of development in areas where municipal services are easily provided. If soil limitations do not permit a continuation of Village pattern of development in these areas, or as population levels demand, the establishment of new Village Centers should be considered.

Development in and around village areas will seek to protect water quality, and will consider the cumulative impact of development on water resources. Further study should be done to assess water quality in these areas, in order to determine appropriate densities of development, and/or appropriate technologies for safe village development.

## **Cluster Development**

One of the primary methods for achieving the Town's desired land pattern is the use of clustered development provisions. While these are existing in the current ordinance, they should be improved. The current language concerning cluster development should be revised to grant the Planning Board the authority to require a clustered form of development when it is determined to be the best layout for achieving open space objectives and for carrying out the policies contained in this plan.

In amending cluster provisions, the following shall be considered:

- further defining acceptable management entities for open space lands and common areas including any options that allow for continuation of agriculture or forestry operations;
- a revision of the taxing system for open or common areas;
- the establishment of specific areas for public access to recreational or open lands;
- improved design standards
- further incentives for the use of cluster to achieve affordable housing
- barriers to prevent the approval of cluster plans that try to capitalize on flexible design standards and related cost savings without honoring the objectives and intent of the ordinance and this plan.

## **Commercial Uses**

A hierarchy of commercial uses shall be provided for in various zoning districts. In the residential zones, commercial uses are limited to those deemed to be compatible with residential uses, such as home occupations, and professional offices. Small scale retail and service businesses shall be allowed in mixed use areas. Certain types of resource based industries shall be allowed in farm, forest and open space areas, such as those that are related to land uses in the area and those that are respective of rural character. Light industrial development shall be limited to a specific zone designed for that use.

Commercial uses shall be restricted in the aquifer area, depending on the type of materials to be included in the wastewater flow, the type of wastewater treatment system, and the type of materials stored on the site.

The use of buffering and setbacks to minimize the conflict between residential and nonresidential land use should be encouraged, particularly with respect to gravel pits. Review needs and opportunities for new commercial and industrial enterprises, as identified in the Economic Development report commissioned by the Town Selectmen in 1990.

Develop and present to the town for enactment, zoning ordinance amendments which will enable expansion of existing businesses and location of new businesses within the Town provided they meet with the objectives of the Town's economic development policy as contained in this plan.

As part of any business development or expansion effort, the Town should design and enact a specific set of performance criteria to address:

- groundwater impact
- landscaping and buffering
- parking layout, lighting impact
- impact of noise, odor, vibrations
- outside storage, loading areas
- waste disposal, stormwater management, and impervious cover limitations

### **Roadway Corridors**

Performance standards for new development on major arterial roadways should strongly discourage strip development, by requiring the use of access management techniques such as limitations on curb cuts, requirements for shared driveways, and requirements for landscaped buffer areas.

A comprehensive corridor study of the Route 100 area should be undertaken to determine the most appropriate land uses and development restrictions for the areas.

### **Studies**

If New Gloucester continues to be the preferred location for a Turnpike exchange by the Maine Turnpike Authority, a comprehensive area study should be undertaken by the Town to determine appropriate development and conservation areas, and to make recommendations for subsequent zoning ordinance changes. All such studies shall be completed with the input of the towns of Auburn and Gray.

### **Open Space**

Using the Greenbelt/Open Space plan as a guide, the Town should aggressively pursue access and/or protective easements on open space properties, should establish priorities for purchase of passive and active recreational lands, and should aggressively seek state funding for acquisition of key properties.

Developers should be required to participate in articulated Town open space planning efforts. A method for exactions shall be reflected in the Town's subdivision regulations.

### 3. **Housing**

*To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens*

#### **Goals**

Promote well-constructed, well designed, well-sited structures that promote healthful, safe and energy-efficient living conditions in settings that are respectful of rural character.

Provide housing opportunities for all income and age groups.

Encourage alternative types of housing to accommodate the needs of the elderly.

Respect the significance of the Town's stock of historic buildings in any future housing strategies.

#### **Policies**

Make an effort to allocate more land area, as needed, to meet all housing demand, so that housing types such as attached multi-family dwellings, cluster housing, condominium developments and manufactured housing may be permitted and located in designated growth areas.

Create affordable housing (as defined by the Office of Comprehensive Planning), at a rate that, at a minimum, will result in creating 48 affordable units over the ten year period from 1990- 2000.

Encourage housing projects that accommodate the needs of New Gloucester's aging population in an affordable setting, in locations where appropriate support services exist or will be developed.

#### **Strategies**

Establish an affordable housing subcommittee to monitor the amount and cost of new housing being created, to study ordinance provisions and to carry out other tasks as mentioned in this section.

Review the town's need for alternative layouts of housing such as, for example, zero lot line development, and prepare and present to the town of enactment amendments to the zoning ordinance setting forth performance standards and other requirements for those types of housing.

Review Town owned land (especially tax acquired land) to determine its suitability for location of an affordable housing project.

Publicize current provisions for affordable housing contained in Town ordinances such as the affordable housing density bonus, cluster housing, and the standards for accessory apartments, perhaps by holding a workshop for area developers.

Support and encourage the creation of a Community Land Trust for affordable housing in the Town, or the region. A Community Land Trust is a private, non-profit corporation created to acquire and hold land for the benefit of a community and the individuals within it. A CLT differs from a regular land trust in that the latter traditionally holds easements on or owns land for open space preservation purposes. The CLT holds the deed to land and provides long term or lifetime land leases to building owners, who may be individuals, families, housing cooperatives, or even small businesses. The leases carry restrictions on the use of property as well as limitations (such as price) at which any buildings may be sold.

Evaluate the areas where traditional housing for the elderly, congregate housing, boarding care and nursing homes are currently allowed to determine the best potential location for elderly housing, taking into consideration proximity to major transportation corridors, proximity to services and other potential impacts.

Support the creation of affordable rental housing and housing for the elderly through the conversion of existing buildings, where the lot size and site conditions will support additional density. Review Town ordinances to ensure that conversions are possible in a variety of locations.

Adopt a building code to establish minimum structural standards for new construction and to promote energy efficiency. The Selectmen should appoint a special committee, consisting of the Code Enforcement Officer, the Fire Chief, a representative of the Planning Board, and two citizens with knowledge of construction and architecture. This committee should prepare a building code through study and public hearing for review by the Planning Board and Selectmen and presentation to the town for enactment.

#### **4. Environmental Protection**

*To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas*

*To protect the State's other critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas, and natural areas*

*To safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources.*

#### **Goals**

Retain the town's natural, rural and residential character and protect the Town's natural resources while accommodating change in ways that meet the needs of the residents.

#### **Policies**

Areas that pose constraints to unregulated development due to the presence of critical environmental or man-made features include: the sand and gravel aquifer, areas containing wetlands, streams and floodplains, important views, historic districts and sites, unsuitable soils, agricultural land and soils, watersheds, important wildlife areas, forested lands, and other unique features such as important vegetative species and geologic features. These areas are important for economic, social and environmental reasons. Such areas shall be

designated as “rural” and “conservation areas” and protected from incompatible levels of residential development through critical areas zoning, environmental overlay districts, financial incentives and/or other protective mechanisms. In some cases, limited development may be permitted, subject to performance standards.

The Town should continue to plan for future development in the context of private water supply and private sewage treatment, i.e. allowable densities of development and locations of new development should not lead to or cause the need for these public services. Due to limited information and knowledge regarding groundwater characteristics, and limited financial ability to study the resource, the “safest” land use alternative is to limit development densities. However, recognizing the vulnerability of private wells, it should also be recognized that a public water supply may have to be established at some future time, particularly in the Upper Village.

There should be a financial commitment on the part of both the public and private sector to study land use/water quality relationships so that potential growth areas can be identified and a more varied pattern of land use can be proposed in the future.

All wildlife resources are recognized as having significant importance to the town and are considered a constraint to development, whether identified on Comprehensive Plan maps or through site by site analysis.

Forested land is recognized as a critical Town resource based on its value as an important economic commodity, its open space characteristics, and its historical importance to the Town as recreational land. Forest areas shall be protected by management policies that stress maintenance of economic value, regeneration capabilities, value as wildlife habitat, value as recreational and open space areas and aesthetic value.

Both large and small farms are significant and should be protected. There should be incentives to encourage continued working of current active farms, combined with opportunities for the preservation of potential farmland. Besides economic value, active farmland enhances the goals of preservation of rural lifestyles and character, and contributes to scenic and recreational enjoyment of residents.

Sabbathday Lake and Lily Pond should be afforded a high level of protection on DEP’s scale of low, medium or high protection, because of:

- the importance of water resources to the community,
- the amount of recreational use sustained by the waterbodies,
- the presence of cold water fisheries rated as high by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (Sabbathday),
- use of lake as a drinking water source for seasonal residents,
- scarcity of surface water bodies in the Town, and
- DEP’s rating of Lilly Pond as extremely vulnerable and Sabbathday Pond as highly vulnerable.

## **Strategies**

### **General**

Among other methods discussed in this section, sensitive environmental features will be protected by basing allowable development densities on the amount of buildable land area left after subtracting out critical areas.

All resource protection boundaries should be evaluated to ensure that all features listed as warranting resource protection status are included within that zoning category and that the minimum requirements of the new State Shoreland Zoning Ordinance are met or exceeded. The Conservation Commission shall continue to investigate the environmental impacts of proposed development projects and to comment to the Planning Board on same.

### **Surface Water**

A watershed protection plan, incorporating modern standards for protection should be developed for Sabbathday Lake and Lily Pond and incorporated into the zoning ordinance. Such standards, at a minimum, should make use of: the “lake vulnerability index” and phosphorus loading models developed by the Department of Environmental Protection.

Phosphorus control performance standards shall include timber harvesting standards, recommendations for agricultural practices, retention of forested areas to act as phosphorus buffers, and road construction and maintenance standards.

Per acre phosphorus calculations should be employed on a single lot basis as well as for subdivisions. Methodologies for this technique and for administering it should be included in zoning and subdivision regulations.

Development projections for lake watersheds should be updated every 5 years to adjust the phosphorus allocation accordingly.

Consideration should be given to further limiting the expansion of non-conforming uses and structures around lakes and streams, except for cases of proven hardship.

Methods for acquiring public access to Sabbathday Lake should be identified and pursued.

The stream protection district provisions of the State Shoreland Zoning Ordinance should be applied to streams within the Town.

Required setbacks from intermittent streams and drainageways shall be determined during the development review process based on soil and vegetation characteristics, erosion potential and slope.

A regional watershed protection effort in conjunction with the Towns of Gray, Poland, Raymond and others who share common watersheds should be continued. The Conservation Commission shall be responsible for continued communication.

### **Wetlands**

The wetlands protection section of the current zoning ordinance should be amended to include the latest recognized criteria for defining wetland boundaries. The burden of proof for determining the existence or no-existence of wetlands should fall on the developer.

The wetlands protection section of the current zoning ordinance should be continually modified based on new research, findings and technologies that afford more practical and workable solutions.

The Town Water Resources Map which shows wetland locations should be prominently displayed in Town Hall and used as a guide during the development review process.

Additional buffer areas around identified wetlands shall be retained for the purposes of protecting critical wildlife habitat areas. The most recent information on buffers developed by the State Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife shall be used for guidance for determining buffer width.

### **Floodplains**

All 100-year floodplains shall be given resource protection status.

### **Water Supply/Aquifer**

Although it is planned to protect water quality and quantity in new Gloucester so that a public supply is not necessary, studies should be undertaken to determine the exact location of future public well site. A request for funding for additional study should be presented to Town Meeting. Methods for site acquisition and/or protection for the potential “zone of influence” should then be explored.

A comprehensive Town-wide water supply protection effort should be developed to address bedrock aquifer resources, springs and surface water, as well as the sand and gravel aquifer resource. Recent data compiled at the State level indicates that bedrock aquifers in some areas of the state may be equally, if not more, prone to contamination than sand and gravel aquifers.

Clustered development and mixed use development in village-like patterns may be allowed in designated areas where hydrogeologic analysis shows it to be appropriate and safe.

The boundaries of the existing groundwater protection overlay zone should be reviewed on an annual basis, in light of any new credible data that may become available concerning the location of aquifers and recharge areas, as well as the restrictive provisions applicable to that zone, and recommendations for any amendments necessary to assure adequate protection for the groundwater resources of the town should be proposed.

A regional groundwater protection effort in conjunction with the Towns of Gray, Poland, Raymond and others who share the sand and gravel resource, should be continued. The Conservation Commission shall be responsible for continued communication.

The Town-wide water quality monitoring program should be continued, and funded by yearly appropriations. The continued focus of the program should be on well and lake/pond monitoring efforts, and expansion into the area of non-point source pollution assessments (using conductivity meters) along streams and the Royal River. This program shall be the responsibility of the Conservation Commission.

The Conservation Commission should continue to investigate the equipment and resources needed to accurately record and map water quality information on a computer data base. A request for funding should be submitted to the Town Meeting if needed.

A standing committee on Water Resources should be appointed by the Selectmen, to take advantage of the expertise of certain Town residents in hydrology, geology and biochemistry. This group could serve in an advisory capacity on such issues as impact of major new developments, water quality problems and plans for future monitoring and control measures.

Potential areas of non-point source pollution and areas where historical land uses may have impacted water quality have been mapped by the Conservation Commission. Further testing/investigation should be done to document the effect of the mapped sites.

The aquifer protection standards contained in the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations should be examined for consistency.

### **Sewage Disposal**

Deficiencies in the State Plumbing Code should be analyzed, and a supplemental (local) plumbing code developed to address these inadequacies.

The sharing of common leach beds should be discouraged unless a soils and hydrogeologic analysis shows that cluster housing, multi-family, institutional, elderly/group housing or commercial uses such as motels can be safely accommodated, or unless new technologies become available. This shall be accomplished through the addition of specific standards to appropriate regulations.

The adoption of a townwide septic waste management program should be considered, to be implemented by the Code Enforcement Officer. Elements of the program would include periodic inspections, pumping, a response program for malfunctioning systems and an educational program regarding septic system maintenance.

### **Wildlife**

All available information on wildlife resources (such as updated deer yard maps) should be used by the Planning Board during the project review process. Critical areas, wetland areas, and deer yards, among others, shall be considered a constraint with impact mitigated or prohibited during the review process.

### **Forest**

Incentive programs should be developed to offer owners of timberland better opportunities for retention of land in forestry use.

The Town should become active in affecting policy changes at the State level to make the Tree Growth Taxation law more effective and to allow municipalities to alter their taxation structure to offer additional incentives for the management of forest land.

Available information on tree growth taxation should be displayed in Town Hall.

An educational program about appropriate use of woodlands by snowmobiles and ATV's should be sponsored by the Conservation Commission or Recreation Commission.

Unauthorized dumping of solid waste and white goods should be policed and appropriate regulations enforced.

### **Unique Features**

Unique features and critical areas as identified in the inventory section of this plan shall be considered development constraints with impact mitigated or prohibited during the review process.

## **Visual Resources**

Important scenic areas shall include all those areas identified on the Comprehensive Plan development constraints map; or as identified during the development review process. These locations should be further refined and prioritized using documented methodologies. Performance standards related to clearing, building height and location should then be formulated to protect scenic areas.

## **Farmland**

Zoning regulations and other non-regulatory incentives should be developed to provide actively managed farmland better opportunities for sustainable agricultural use. The protection of potential farmland (i.e. techniques to insure the availability of acreage), even if these areas are not actively farmed, should also be considered to reserve these areas for future agricultural activity.

Strip development of lots on rural roadways in agricultural areas of the Town should be discouraged through the adoption of performance standards and incentives such as clustering.

The Town should work with owners of agricultural land who wish to subdivide, to arrive at a layout and plan that preserves farmland to the maximum extent.

The Conservation Commission should pursue a variety of activities to encourage the viability of farming, including initiating a strategy for joint marketing of local products by publishing a listing of products available from farms in New Gloucester.

The Town should become active in affecting policy changes at the State level to make the Farm and Open Space Taxation law more effective and to allow municipalities to alter their taxation structure to offer additional incentives for the ongoing management of agricultural land.

## **Gravel Pits**

Existing standards for development and management of gravel pits should be updated as needed to reflect credible new information on management and reclamation techniques.

## **Radon**

The Conservation Commission should map areas of potential high radon levels within the Town and should organize a program of education and prevention. A testing program involving measurements of air and water radon (similar to the well testing program) should be organized.

## **5. Historic/Archaeological Preservation**

*To preserve the State's historic and archaeological resources*

### **Goal**

Encourage the preservation of the historic structures and areas and archaeological sites throughout the Town.

## **Policies**

Individual historic buildings and sites, although isolated from concentrations of like areas, shall be considered significant and worthy of protection.

## **Strategies**

The current zoning ordinance regulations which provides a method for regulating the compatibility of new construction within historic districts shall be evaluated for possible changes, including designation of new areas, amendment of current allowable uses, and standards for modification of existing structures.

The inventory of all historic structures and areas in the town, conducted by the Town Historical Society should be published and a campaign to design and place appropriate markers on all structures and areas important in the historical development of the town should be initiated.

The Historical Society should continue their efforts by completing the nomination process for any buildings or areas eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

The information contained in this plan concerning potential archaeological sites should be used by the Planning Board when reviewing development proposals.

The New Gloucester Historical Society should seek appropriate outside funding to conduct a program of oral history interviews with the town's older inhabitants and to systematically expand and complete its museum collection of books and objects pertaining to the history of the town.

The New Gloucester Historical Society should seek a building, to serve as a meeting place, museum and record/artifact storage.

The Selectmen should appoint a special committee consisting of the Code Enforcement Officer, a representative of the Planning Board, a representative of New Gloucester Historical Society, and two inhabitants of the town with knowledge of architecture. This committee should review present design standards, examine alternative methods of regulation through study and hold public hearings for review and comment. The committee should present an ordinance proposal for enactment by the Town.

The committee should investigate the possibility of preparing an ordinance to satisfy state requirements for participation in the Certified Local Government program, which would permit New Gloucester to share in historic preservation funding along with the other certified communities.

The committee should compile photographs and other examples of typical features of period structures into a guidebook to serve as an aid to the Planning Board when reviewing development in historic areas.

## **6. Transportation**

### **Goals**

Provide an adequate network of roads to safely accommodate present traffic and anticipated increases.

Minimize/eliminate public spending for roadway improvements associated with new, private development.

Create a system of regulatory standards for new road construction that results in construction of roads that are in keeping with rural character and sensitive to environmental conditions.

Provide adequate and safe winter roads.

Use every possible means to prevent the pollution and contamination of groundwater when storing and using salt and other chemicals.

Prevent construction of new roads prior to review by the Code Enforcement Officer or the Planning Board.

### **Policies**

Disturbance of land via clearing, scrubbing, grading and/or constructing roads prior to the approval of plans by the appropriate authority shall be considered a violation of Town ordinances and will be prosecuted accordingly.

Supplement Town financial contributions to roadway improvements with financial support from those who create the need for such improvements.

Future road locations and roadway realignments should be respectful of historic structures and sites.

### **Strategies**

Review the town street design standards and the provisions of the subdivision regulations and zoning ordinance concerning roads, road frontage and access and prepare and adopt or present to the town for enactment amendments that will establish flexible standards for road design. An objective in redesigning such standards will be to create new roads that combine features of traditional New England streets (retention of curves and trees, narrower right of ways) with modern safety standards.

Have the Planning Board review, in consultation with the Road Commissioner and Selectmen, the existing road network, the system of rangeways, the present and projected needs of town for road access with the objective of creating a town road plan. Appropriate ordinances should be created and presented for adoption to require developers to participate in road construction according to the officially adopted plan.

Road frontage requirements should be amended to discourage the current practice of development of interior lots on substandard private roads.

A comprehensive sign ordinance should be drafted based on safety and aesthetic considerations of signs as viewed from public roadways.

Prohibit the clearing for and construction of new roads without prior approval of either Town staff or the Planning Board, depending on the nature of the project. New regulations should be established to require a permit to construct a new road. For roads in proposed subdivisions, the Planning Board would issue the permit as part of the subdivision review process. In projects outside of subdivisions, the Code Enforcement Officer would review plans for compliance with Town road standards and for erosion control measures.

Conduct a small area study of the Upper Village and create a plan for improvement of access to properties such that traffic safety is enhanced.

Enlist the cooperation of Upper Corner business owners in improving access conditions via joint driveways, and defining of curb cuts via curbing and installation of landscaping.

Appropriate techniques such as shared driveways and a limitation on curb cuts should be adopted to improve traffic safety on major roadways.

Implement a system of impact fees to offset costs for roadway improvements.

The Town should carry out effective erosion control measures such as stabilization and seeding, and should be aware of Town buffering requirements in carrying out maintenance and construction projects.

Existing roadway, bridge and intersection deficiencies on local roads should be programmed into the capital improvements program.

The Town should actively participate in planning and negotiating for repairs of existing roadway, bridge and intersection deficiencies on state maintained roads.

## 7. **Recreation**

*To promote the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters.*

### **Goals**

To provide an opportunity for citizens of New Gloucester to participate in a wide range of recreational programs thus enhancing the quality of life within the community.

### **Policies**

To maintain and improve the existing facilities through the use of a capital improvements plan based on citizen support and need.

To create new recreation facilities in the future that will coincide with New Gloucester's long range goals and policies.

To provide for a maintenance program that will keep all facilities, at a minimum, at their present condition level.

## **Strategies**

The Recreation Committee should work closely with the Capital Improvements Committee to program long term capital recreational needs into the Town's overall capital improvement program.

Investigate additional funding sources such as state and federal grants and other monies to carry out long term plans.

Advocate for, and where possible, participate in the development of a green belt system.

Consider the creation of an impact fee system to allow private developments to contribute to the Town's recreational objectives, in an amount commensurate with the development's impact on recreational resources.

## **8. Public Facilities and Services**

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

### **Goal**

Develop and maintain a system of town facilities and services adequate in all its capabilities for present service and future anticipated needs, while keeping tax rates reasonable and maintaining a rural atmosphere.

To implement a procedure for long range planning for capital facilities.

To meet the current and projected needs of the town for effective, fair, and efficient government.

### **Policies**

Maintain efficient and fair town fiscal management practices.

Maintain a mix and level of public services to satisfy expectations associated with a rural environment and lifestyle.

Avoid as much as is reasonably possible, reliance on the residential property tax as a method of raising revenue.

## **Strategies**

### **Capital Improvement Planning and Capital Needs**

Continue to implement the proposal for a 5 year Capital Improvement Plan contained in Appendix C.

Implement the findings of the Town Building Analysis Committee via the five year capital improvements plan for the following building improvements:

- Addition to the Town Library
- Addition to Public Works Garage

- Renovate second story of Town Office
- Construct additional fire/rescue facility

Implement the following capital equipment needs via the five year capital improvements plan:

- Additional highway truck
- Refurbishing of pumper tanker
- Replace two dated highway truck
- Replace grader
- Replace fire truck
- Replace loader

### **Fiscal Management**

Continue to utilize the gross budgeting system and update a fixed assets list for the auditor.

The Town should continue to place 60% of surplus funds into the undesignated fund balance, with the remaining 40% put toward offsetting the tax commitment of the following year.

The Town should monitor recent fiscal management strategies and continue to implement new procedures/standards as needed.

### **Solid Waste**

Move ahead with safe closure of the old landfill as soon as is reasonably possible.

Proceed with relicensing of the transfer station, implementing modifications (if any) that need to be made to comply with State law.

Continue the current arrangement with MMWAC regional incinerator for disposal of trash.

Continue to be active in MMWAC policy making via Town representative on MMWAC boards/committees.

Per the current agreement, begin the disposal of demolition material at the RWS facility in Gorham, when the facility begins operating.

Increase the participation rates in the Town recycling program to meet state mandates by conducting public information programs, by considering the adoption of a mandatory recycling ordinance, and by recycling additional materials when feasible.

Actively pursue additional grant monies for the improvement of the recycling program.

Consider the possibility of entering into a regional recycling program if the program represents a cost savings to the Town and improves marketing of recycled materials.

Work out arrangements with MMWAC to mutually satisfy tonnage requirements for the incinerator and tonnage requirements to meet State mandates for recycling.

The tasks of the existing Town Recycling Committee should be expanded to cover all solid waste issues including oversight of the transfer station and involvement in such issues as roadside dumping.

### **Septage**

Establish a contingency plan for septage disposal in the event that disposal through the Lewiston-Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority is no longer available.

### **Water Supply**

Initiate engineering studies to determine the appropriate location of a potential future water supply (including, but not limited to the Upper Village) in the event that exhaustion or contamination of groundwater makes such a system necessary.

Actively seek a long term solution to existing contamination of water supplies in the Upper Village.

### **Social Services**

The Town Manager and Selectmen should review available local social services programs yearly in order to determine whether townspeople are adequately served, and seek funding by appropriation or otherwise for any necessary additional programs.

### **Energy Conservation**

Update the heating system in the Town Office and enclose the Office's fuel tanks for energy conservation purposes.

### **Procedures**

Provide adequate civil emergency preparedness that will enable the town to direct and coordinate activities in the event of any civil emergency.

Institute a method for clearing and deicing winter roads that uses a minimum amount of salt and deicing chemicals to ensure safe roads while honoring the Town's commitment to maintaining good water quality.

The Code Enforcement Officer should establish a computerized land records system to track land use activity, permits, violations and property characteristics.

Town staff, boards and legal staff should implement a protocol for preventing land use violations.

### **Data Collection**

Continually update the database for town planning, including population, social, economic and other trends that might affect overall town planning and the educational program and physical facilities of School Administrative District 15.

### **Staffing**

The Town Manager shall continue to review with each town board and commission its present and future needs for staff support and should recommend staffing increases

necessary to meet those needs. The need for in-house planning assistance should be investigated.

Incentives for retaining and attracting volunteers should be developed, such as training.

## **9. Greenbelt/Open Space**

### **Goals**

Provide a connection system of trails and undeveloped land from one end of town to the other, so to maintain the townspeople's traditional access to open land.

Effectively preserve open land that is significant due to the presence of scenic views, wildlife habitat, wildlife travel corridors, stream corridors, water resources, potential public access points, potential sources of water supply and other critical features.

### **Policies**

Trail connections should include connections with surrounding communities; appropriate coordination should continue.

Utilize existing woods roads, trails, the interurban system and other spaces to connect various area of the community

Provide trail and access systems that connects to various lake, pond and river and wetland resources, as well as critical wildlife habitat.

Tie trail systems to visually significant areas.

Incentives for keeping land in open space use should be examined because (in addition to environmental reasons) open land doesn't require the provision of services and expense of tax dollars, as does residential and commercial development.

### **Strategies**

#### **Methods**

Work with the Planning Board to establish standards and regulations that require developers to take into consideration the permanent preservation of existing trails that run through their proposed development; utilize the development constraints map as a base for identifying such trails and update on a periodic basis.

Working with the New Gloucester Land Trust, acquire trails and open space areas of significance through fee simple acquisition, donation or through tax acquired property.

Where outright ownership is impossible, secure easements or establish restrictive covenants during the review process across various parcels to protect their quality as an important piece of open space, wildlife area or connection trail.

#### **Oversight**

New Gloucester citizens should establish an independent Trails Association to develop and maintain Town-protected trails. The Association should include the snowmobile clubs,

horseback-riding groups, cross-country skiing, and other interested parties. The Association should request an annual appropriation from the Town to cover direct expenses. Matching State funds are available and should be sought.

### **Funding**

The Town should establish a Land Acquisition Fund for acquisition of recreation and open space land and easements.

- a. Establish a town policy that requires at least 50% of the proceeds from all sales of tax-acquired property be credited to the Land Acquisition Fund.
- b. Formally include the New Gloucester Land Trust as an advisor and potential intermediary in acquiring open space lands.
- c. Seek additional funding from state and federal sources, as available, to match town funding for individual parcels. Funds may be available through Land for Maine's Future and the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

### **Priority Geographic Areas**

The Town should acquire recreational or conservation easements to all snowmobile/recreation trails identified on the Committee's map. The Town should coordinate protection of the trail system with surrounding towns. A primary goal is to connect Pineland Center land to the Interurban.

The Town should seek to acquire or protect, through recreation and conservation easements, the former right-of-way of the Interurban Railway. The Selectmen should appoint a committee to lead this effort, with assistance from the New Gloucester Land Trust.

The Conservation Commission should study ways to protect Lily Pond and surrounding land from resource degradation.

The Conservation Commission, or a special committee, should study the feasibility of future acquisition of town access to Sabbathday Lake, including possible development of the beach across from the Grange Hall.

The Selectmen should write a letter to the Department of Transportation, requesting that the DOT develop a canoe launching and parking area adjacent to the Morse Road bridge.

The Town should consider acquiring and developing a parking and canoe access area on Route 231 at the Royal River bridge.

The New Gloucester Land Trust should identify large parcels of land that receive high public usage, discuss future plans with the landowners, and develop a priority list of lands for possible protection with easements, or acquisition.

The Town should acquire conservation easements to protect the three areas mapped as State Critical Areas.

The Conservation Commission should meet with other towns to establish a Royal River Corridor Commission to establish guidelines and procedures for ensuring protection of the

River and lands along its banks and should work with the Greater Portland Council of Governments on the current Royal River watershed project.

The Town should prioritize the acquisition or protection of any lands needed for the protection of a future public water supply.

## **10. Economic Development**

*To promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.*

### **Goals**

To ensure that natural resource protection goals and strategies contained in this Plan are carried out in conjunction with any business development efforts.

To balance the current reliance on the residential property tax via the encouragement of development of selected businesses and industries.

To establish a front line response in Town Government for dealing with inquiries and providing information about the Town and Town regulations to prospective developers.

### **Policies**

Create an economic development policy that satisfies the following goals of the Town:

- shifts the tax burden away from residential, agricultural, forested and open space properties;
- preserves the rural and historic characteristics of New Gloucester;
- maintains the safety and traffic carrying capacity of New Gloucester's major arteries;
- ensures that infrastructure and service requirements do not exceed the Town's ability to provide them.

To reflect general community feelings and needs in establishing the scope and direction of town's future economic growth.

To meet the needs of the town's population in terms of retail sale of goods and services rather than regional needs.

To reserve land area for business development so as to ensure its availability when the economy is favorable.

To limit business development such that it functions as a stabilizer/enhancer to the tax base rather than an additional burden requiring the need for town financed public improvements.

### **Strategies**

Review the needs and opportunities for new commercial and industrial enterprises as identified in the Economic Development Report commissioned by the Town Selectmen in 1990.

Evaluate the short and long term net impact economic development will have on the Town's residential tax burden.

The current business zones should be evaluated for the presence of environmental constraints and to determine whether they include the correct mix of allowable uses in each location, and rezoned as appropriate to mixed use Village districts.

The current zoning ordinance should be amended to prohibit new residential development in the designated business area so as to reserve this area for its long term intended use.

The Town should focus business/light industrial development efforts near the New Gloucester/Auburn town line. A mixed use business area should be designated here, that allows for light industrial development and which does not allow retail establishments.

New Gloucester is primarily interested in attracting economic development as a method of reducing property tax impacts on residential land owners. The Town should get active in the property tax reform movement at the local, regional and state level to work towards other, additional solutions to the property tax issue. Similarly, the Town should address costs of residential sprawl by effectively limiting new growth to targeted growth areas.

Agreements between Auburn and New Gloucester should be pursued such as sharing of utilities and/or possible joint investment in facilities and programs that may benefit both jurisdictions (e.g. Lewiston's investment in the Airport)

New Gloucester should seek representation on Auburn committees that deal with issues of regional concern such as the airport.

The zoning ordinance should be amended so that it encourages the types of businesses that the Town supports.

Existing performance standards should be reviewed and amended if necessary, to insure that new business development will not negatively affect natural resources and will be visually attractive.