

# Town of Windham

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**Comprehensive Plan Review Team #9  
RSU Superintendents Office Building,  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room (School Road Entrance)  
7:00 PM, Thursday, June 25, 2015**

## AGENDA

1. Public Comment/Review Team Comments from the Public
  - a. Summerfest – June 27. Any volunteers?
2. Summary of last meeting: May 28
3. Review of draft Inventory Chapters
  - a. Revisions
    1. Parks, Recreation & Open Space
    2. Agriculture & Forestry
  - b. New
    1. Economy
4. Upcoming meetings:
  - a. Review Team meeting – July 23 (4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month, and 1 meeting per month)
  - b. Summerfest – June 27.

**Comprehensive Master Plan  
Review Team  
May 28, 2015 Meeting**

Team Members present were: Frayla Schoerfeld, Marge Govoni, Tony Searles, Ken Grondin, Dave Nadeau, Dave Tobin, David Lavigne, Sparky Hurgin, and Mike Duffy.

Planning Director, Ben Smith, and Planner, Amanda Lessard, were also present.

Guest, Clayton Haskell was present.

Review of the Parks and Recreation Draft Chapter:

- Not all open space should be programmed.
- Focus on playing fields, not just trails and forested land.
- Include the RSU 14 properties in the inventory with a note regarding the limited public use.
- Lincoln Circle Subdivision has a public access field.
- Include town owned potential future fields?

Agriculture:

- The draft Agriculture chapter had been discussed at a mini-forum; sent to the Land Trust and the Community Garden.
- It should be determined how many people in town were currently involved in agriculture.
- The town hadn't preserved land and offers no financial support for those that do.
  - The public expects to use land for recreation, yet if they damage it the property owner must repair it.
- A large tract of land was currently for sale. Some of it had been purchased for farming.
- A map was needed to accurately depict the location of working farms and tree growth areas.
- The town has never followed through with the goals and strategies that were established in the 80s.
- Viewsheds were also important to retain rural character.
- Many owners of large tracts of land are counting on them for retirement. Limitation on usage through deed restrictions was not something they wanted.
- It was noted at the mini-forum that the tax burden was too high and land use/zoning regulations were too strenuous.
- If the town leased a portion of the agricultural land for recreation it would provide some income to property owners.
- The tax rate should be based on the current use, not the potential use.
- There were ways to reduce the property tax burden that were available. Most farmers were so busy farming that they didn't know about those options. A finance professional or the example of other towns and outreach could be helpful.
  - This could be a strategy, or researched as part of the planning process.
- A map of soils map showing prime agricultural land should be created.

The next Review Team meeting was scheduled for June 25<sup>th</sup>.



**SUSTAIN SOUTHERN MAINE**

*Partnering to strengthen our economy, environment and community*

## **Centers of Opportunity: Typologies**



**A report for Sustain Southern Maine  
Greater Portland Council of Governments**

**December 2013**

# ***Sustain Southern Maine Centers of Opportunity: Typologies***

## **Acknowledgements**

The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by funding under an award with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, grant number MERIP0020-10, awarded to the Greater Portland Council of Governments. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government.

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## Which Type of Center is Right for Your Community?

This tool is designed to assist municipalities with decision-making when working to create more livable and economically productive centers. To be successful, it's important to understand how different types (typologies) of centers function together regionally.

### A Successful Center is Based on Market Realities

Regardless of county or even town lines, a region is made up of an economic hierarchy of centers. There is a natural inter-reliance town-to-town, town to suburb, and suburb or town to city. Understanding this inter-reliance helps us think about the relationships between centers of various market size and the realities of how market decisions are made. This is important for municipalities to understand before they focus on the range of market possibilities within the region for their community.

If municipalities work together, they can help the region to become economically stronger by attracting right-sized businesses that will provide jobs, goods and services for their residents. Not every town can have a regional center, but all will have neighborhood centers, many will have community or downtown centers, and a few will have attributes making them capable of hosting a seasonal center. Some will become an employment center for surrounding communities. (Definitions for all these types of center are below.)

Key to good, long-term and feasible economic growth is to understand each municipality's economic roles in the region. Those roles are largely dependent on location and characteristics sought after by residents and businesses alike. Of course, a municipality's roles may transform over time, but the extent of the transformation is tied to a timetable that is largely unpredictable. Some will evolve over a relatively short period of time, while others will take many years. To attempt to rush the process, or create too many centers too close together (a common mistake) is doomed to failure, with the resulting empty storefronts, underutilized industrial parks and stalled residential developments that are all too common in Southern Maine.

Every type of center can be defined by:

- The geographic area from which it draws its customers, sales, and/or workers – this geographic area is known as the center's *trade area* (or, in the case of workers, its *labor market area*); and
- The characteristics of the center itself – these characteristics determine the *form* of the center (whether tight-knit, as in a hamlet, village, or downtown, or more spread out, as in a highway strip), how efficiently it functions (in proximity of homes, consumption of energy and use of land, etc.), and whether customers and workers will have choices for getting to the center (auto, bus, walking, bicycling).

## A Primer: Trade Area Economics

There is a natural hierarchy of centers that can be supported within an existing economy. In order to ensure success, it is important to understand how your emerging center will fit into the surrounding regional economy.

The economics of this hierarchy are routinely used by many regional and franchise retailers to decide where to locate stores and forecast sales. These economics often are not used by small independent retailers, and this contributes to failure, especially when the retailer is of a type (say, a women's clothing store) that tries to locate in a type of center (say, a small neighborhood center) that simply does not command the trade area needed for that kind of store.

A center's primary trade area can be defined as the contiguous geographical area that supplies the center with 60% - 70% of its sales. Its secondary trade area adds 10% - 15%. The rest comes from beyond the trade area (long-distance commuters or visitors passing through, etc.). The geographic and population sizes of these trade areas are measureable, as noted below. *We have also included visuals of these centers at the end of this document: an aerial view, a plan view and a street view.*

**1. Convenience Centers:** These centers are by far the most numerous. Most communities have at least one, larger towns have several, and larger cities have many. These centers are based on a convenience store/gas station or small general

store, with limited additional retail or personal services and often a take-out food place. Convenience Centers come in many styles and sizes: they may be located along a well-traveled suburban road corridor, at a rural four-corners, or at an intersection or along a main street in an urban neighborhood. In all cases, they will be located in a very convenient location just minutes away from their customers, who use them for routine pick-up or "on-the-spot" items, such as gas, single grocery items, or pizza. A Convenience Center needs a minimum primary trade area population of about 3,000 - 5,000 to support it. This means Convenience Centers can be quite close together in urban areas, and much farther apart in rural areas. This population can vary *somewhat* based on the amount of surrounding competition, the area's income, household size and other demographic characteristics, as well as volume of pass-by traffic.

Examples of Convenience Centers include Walnut Hill in North Yarmouth, Meetinghouse Hill in South Portland, Tory Hill in Buxton, Berwick Corner, West Cumberland around the intersection of Rte. 26 and Blackstrap Rd., the intersection of Rte. 77 and Broad Cove in Cape Elizabeth, the Town Market area of Falmouth Foreside, and Circle Plaza in Kittery.

**2. Neighborhood Centers:** Neighborhood Centers are anchored by a full-line grocery store and have a greater mix of retail and other everyday goods and services than a Convenience Center, including hardware store, banking, Laundromat, drug store, salons, fast food and/or coffee-shop or other small restaurant, and similar small retail and service

businesses, and usually some small professional or other offices. Neighborhood centers generate trips from a larger area than Convenience Centers, and users often do multiple tasks (grocery shopping, banking, dry cleaning) in one trip rather than making different trips to different locations. But most of the businesses provide routine goods and services that people want fairly close by.

The geographic size of the trade area depends on whether the center is in an urban or rural area. In an urban area, it might be a neighborhood within, say, a quarter-mile radius, or a section of the city. In a rural area, the population would occupy a larger geography at much lower density. In all cases, Neighborhood Centers rely heavily on a nearby residential base. A Neighborhood Center needs a minimum primary trade area population of perhaps 12,000 to 25,000, again varying somewhat based on surrounding competition and trade area demographics.

The physical form of existing Neighborhood Centers may be fairly compact, as in a hamlet, village, small downtown or city neighborhood; or may be a suburban strip along a highway. In a hamlet, village, downtown or city neighborhood, homes are integrated into the center or are in close proximity. In these more traditional settings, there also are other uses, such as town halls, post offices, places of worship, and schools.

Examples of Neighborhood Centers include Yarmouth Rte. 1, Deering Center and North Deering in Portland, Oak Hill in Scarborough, Springvale in Sanford, Gorham Downtown, Wells Center, and Mill Creek-Knightville in South Portland

**3. Downtowns:** Downtowns warrant a category and an explanation of their own. Downtowns once served, and in some cases still serve, as Neighborhood and Community Centers, but by the 1990s, the mix of retail and service activity – especially the supermarket and department store anchors -- that define the hierarchy of retail centers had abandoned downtowns for suburban locations. Many downtowns went through - and are still going through - a period of adjustment. And many have carved out new and invigorated roles. Most still support retail activity, especially if they have strong seasonal populations nearby, but their stronger roles are as centers for business and legal services, other office functions including the offices of professionals and the so-called “creative” class of innovators, government, restaurants and entertainment, and culture. Important signifiers of a Downtown are its historic, often central, location in the community and the presence of civic uses and gathering places as well as commercial and residential uses. Notably, Downtowns continue to grow as residential locations for young adults, seniors, singles, and others drawn to the walkability and varied amenities of Downtown.

***The next set of centers are included as examples of the larger types of centers that exist in Maine. Centers of this size are much less common. Because of the limited number available, Sustain Southern Maine did not choose any of these three typologies as pilot projects, nor did we provide illustrations of these centers.***

**4. Community Centers:** Community Centers have stores and services that consist of a combination of everyday goods and services *as well as* goods and services for which customers are willing to travel or comparison shop: Community Centers are common but less numerous than Convenience and Neighborhood Centers. They are co-anchored by a grocery store/supermarket *and* a general merchandise store of some type, usually a discount department store. This includes a “big box” stores in most suburban Community Centers. They have a mix of everyday goods and services and “comparison” goods stores, such as clothing, furniture, and appliance stores. They also include eating places, many types of personal services (medical, banking, personal care, etc.), and office uses.

General merchandise and other comparison goods stores have the ability to draw from larger trade areas than Neighborhood Centers and also require larger populations to support them. The minimum primary trade area population typically needed to support a Community Center is around 30,000 to 40,000 – though there are some examples of small Community Centers with smaller trade areas. In Maine, the trade area of a Community Center usually includes all or parts of *two or more municipalities*.

Many downtowns at one time served as Community Centers, but the loss of supermarkets and department stores to suburban locations has changed the role of downtowns (see below). The existing physical form of the majority of Community Centers today is highway strip development.

Examples of Community Centers: Falmouth Rte. 1, the South Sanford Center for Shopping area, Westbrook Crossing/Pine Tree Shopping Center (Westbrook/Portland), North Windham, Rte. 111/Alfred St in Biddeford. Downtown Portland and Downtown Saco still have elements of Community Centers. Outside of Sustain Southern Maine’s area, Downtown Bath is a good example of a downtown that continues to function as a small Community Center.

**5. Regional Centers:** These large centers are based primarily on goods and services for which customers are willing to travel and comparison shop: Centers anchored by department stores and with a host of other comparison goods stores adding up to 400,000 or more square feet of floor area require large trade areas - only a few exist in Maine. Several of Maine’s larger downtowns – Portland, Bangor, Lewiston, and Presque Isle, for example – once functioned as Regional Centers, but today Regional Centers are primarily take the form of malls and associated big box or “power” centers comprising large specialty stores near highway interchanges, which also host office and business parks.

Examples are the Maine Mall, the Auburn Mall, and the Bangor Mall. Certain specialty centers – such as factory outlet centers in Downtown Freeport and Rte. 1 Kittery – also rely are wide trade areas. These typically are not easily replicable and function outside of the traditional hierarchy of centers.

**6. Seasonal Centers:** This specialty category describes an area that does not fit into any of the above typologies based on heavy seasonal, tourist related or business traveler uses, and

in some cases based on heavy concentration of hotels, inns and motels and related eateries. These centers may include some uses that year-round residents utilize but the majority of the use is seasonal or aimed at business travelers.

Examples are parts of Wells, parts of York, parts of Old Orchard Beach.

**7. Employment Centers:** This category denotes an area that is anchored by a large employer or series of employers or business-type parks. There may not be any mix of uses directly around these centers but they represent a location where there is an opportunity to provide such a mix – whether complementary commercial or commuter services or even housing. If a mix of activity is highly unlikely – such as in the case of some industrial parks or distribution and warehouse centers – we have not included that area in our survey of all existing centers.

Examples of employment centers are Maine Medical Center (both in Portland and on Rte. 1 in Scarborough), Rte. 1 at Falmouth/Cumberland town line area, Pratt-Whitney in North Berwick.

### Success Strategies for Your Town's Center

The Sustain Southern Maine team mapped more than 160 centers in the Southern Maine study area. The large majority are existing or emerging Neighborhood Centers (both the smaller and the larger versions). The nine pilot studies in a sampling of these centers demonstrated their significant

capacity for growth.

The next question is what size, form, and mix of uses create the best chance for these centers to grow as efficient, appealing, “livable” hubs of activity – with the ability to absorb significant shares of future housing and job growth? Municipalities can use this guide to think about how to shape the growth of these centers. In the process, there will be many considerations. For example, it may be that more residential density is needed before businesses are attracted. It's possible that traffic and parking form a barrier and a new circulation patterns should be explored. Or maybe a cluster of housing exists and would benefit from some neighborhood business activity, like a market or convenience store that would reduce the need to drive.

Based on the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) Land Use Policy, to offer choices in housing, choices in transportation, room for job growth, and quicker return on public investments in infrastructure, centers should have a mix of uses, an optimum density of development within a defined area, and complementary open space. The targets below are intended to be a framework. They are a tool and not a mandate.

## How to Get Started

### *Tips/Process and the 4 D's:*

- Choose a location where your town wants to grow.
- Determine what land is available (undeveloped and unrestricted, landowner interest) and whether it is developable.
- Begin by considering the 4Ds (Density and Diversity, Design and Distance)<sup>1</sup>
  - **Density:** Look at population, housing and job projections.
    - Determine the % of jobs and % and type of housing (mix, density and intensity) you think can be captured in that center.<sup>2</sup>
  - **Design:** Determine what you want the place to look like including the maximum height (number of floors) of buildings and where surface parking is to be located.
    - Consider the need for other amenities like landscaping, lighting, access to open space.
  - **Distance:** Consider traffic circulation, carefully plan the location(s) of access points, limit the

use of dead ends, look for ways to interconnect existing streets. Create frontage or backage roads. Include sidewalks/crosswalks and trails in your planning. Think about whether provision for transit should be planned for.

- **Diversity of Land Use (Land Use Mix):** Strive for a mix that can share traffic, customers, and parking; and that will allow customers and residents to meet a reasonable number of needs within walking distance of homes and job locations.

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<sup>1</sup> Sensible Transportation, A Handbook for Local and Inter-Community Transportation Planning in Maine - MaineDOT

<sup>2</sup> Density is limited by availability of water and sanitary infrastructure. Public or Engineered (Community) sanitary systems permit for density based on treatment plant capacity or quality of soils.

In Table 1, note the synergies between activities as rated by Urban Land Institute

Table 1. Synergies between major land uses				
Land Use	Degree of Support/Synergy			
	Residential	Hotel <sup>a</sup>	Retail/Entertainment <sup>b</sup>	Culture/Civic/Recreation
Office	◆◆	◆◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆
Residential	◆◆◆	◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆◆◆
Hotel	◆◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆◆
Retail/Entertainment	◆◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆◆
Cultural/Civic/Rec	◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆
Bullets: ◆=very weak, ◆◆=weak, ◆◆◆=moderate, ◆◆◆◆=strong, ◆◆◆◆◆=very strong <sup>a</sup> Synergy is strongest between high end hotels and condominiums, less for mid-priced hotels and other residences. <sup>b</sup> Restaurants and food services are the main source of benefit for offices. Source: <i>Mixed Use Development Handbook</i> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition, Urban Land Institute, Washington, DC, 2003, p. 85.				

Use definitions:

Residential – Structures designed for people to live in, examples include detached single family homes, duplexes, townhouses, condos, and apartments (excludes dormitories, nursing homes, and barracks).

Hotel – Facilities offering transient lodging accommodations to the general public and providing additional services, such as restaurants, meeting rooms, entertainment, and recreational facilities.

Retail/Entertainment – Establishments offering sales, services, and/or amusement activities to end users, examples include restaurants, general stores, boutique stores, department stores, supermarkets, malls, delivery service, movie theaters, performing arts venues, bowling alleys, and sports venues.

Culture/Civic/Recreation – Facilities offering enrichment, community, and/or physical activities , examples include museums, art galleries, libraries, community centers, municipal services (town hall, policing, fire protection, public works), parks, playgrounds, tennis and basketball courts, ball fields, golf courses, swimming pools, and marinas.

## Densities and Data for Different Centers

The following tables are taken from the PACTS Land Use Policy.

### ***Convenience Center:***

	Radius of Area	Min. Area in Acres	Preferred Range of Area in Acres	Min. Population	Min. Housing Units	Housing Units per Acre	% Preferred Housing Mix	Min. # Jobs	Jobs per Acre	% Preferred Commercial Mix	% Public Uses
Primary	500'	18				4-8	50-80%		20-40	10-40%	10-15%
Secondary	1000'	36				2-4	50-80%		10-25	5-15%	10-15%
Total	1000'	54	25-125	200	100			100			

Floor area ratios (building square footage to total land area) for commercial buildings in small Neighborhood Centers should be no less than 0.3.

### ***Neighborhood Center:***

	Radius of Area	Area in Acres	Preferred Range of Acres	Min. Population	Min. Housing Units	Housing Units per Acre	% Preferred Housing Mix	Min. # Jobs	Jobs per Acre	% Preferred Commercial Mix	% Public Uses
Primary	750'	40				4-12	30-70%			20-60%	10-15%
Secondary	1500'	80				2-6	50-80%			15-30%	10-15%
Total	1500'	120	50-200	300	150			200	200		

Floor area ratios (building square footage to total land area) for commercial uses in this type of center should be no less than 0.5.

***Downtown Center (Urban and Rural/Suburban)***

<b>URBAN DOWNTOWNS</b>											
	Radius of Area	Area in Acres	Preferred Range of Acres	Min. Population	Min. Housing Units	Units per Acre	% Preferred Housing Mix	Min. # Jobs	Jobs per acre	% Preferred Commercial Mix	% Public Uses
Primary	2000'	288				4-14+	20-60%			30-70%	5 -15%
Secondary	4000'	578				2-8+	20-60%			20-60%	5 -15%
Total	4000'	866	400-1200	5000	2500			5000	30-40+		

<b>RURAL OR SUBURBAN DOWNTOWNS</b>											
	Radius of Area	Area in Acres	Preferred Range of Acres	Min. Population	Min. Housing Units	Units per Acre <sup>3</sup>	% Preferred Housing Mix	Min. # Jobs	Jobs per acre	% Preferred Commercial Mix	% Public Uses
Primary	1000'	72				4-12	20-60%			30-70%	10 -15%
Secondary	2000'	144				2-8	50-80%			15-30%	10 -15%
Total	2000'	216	100-400	1000	500			500	20-30+		

Floor area ratios (building square footage to total land area) in downtowns should be no less than 0.7 and in some locations could be much greater.

<sup>3</sup> Density allowed when Community or Public Sanitary Systems are available.

## **Illustrations of Centers**

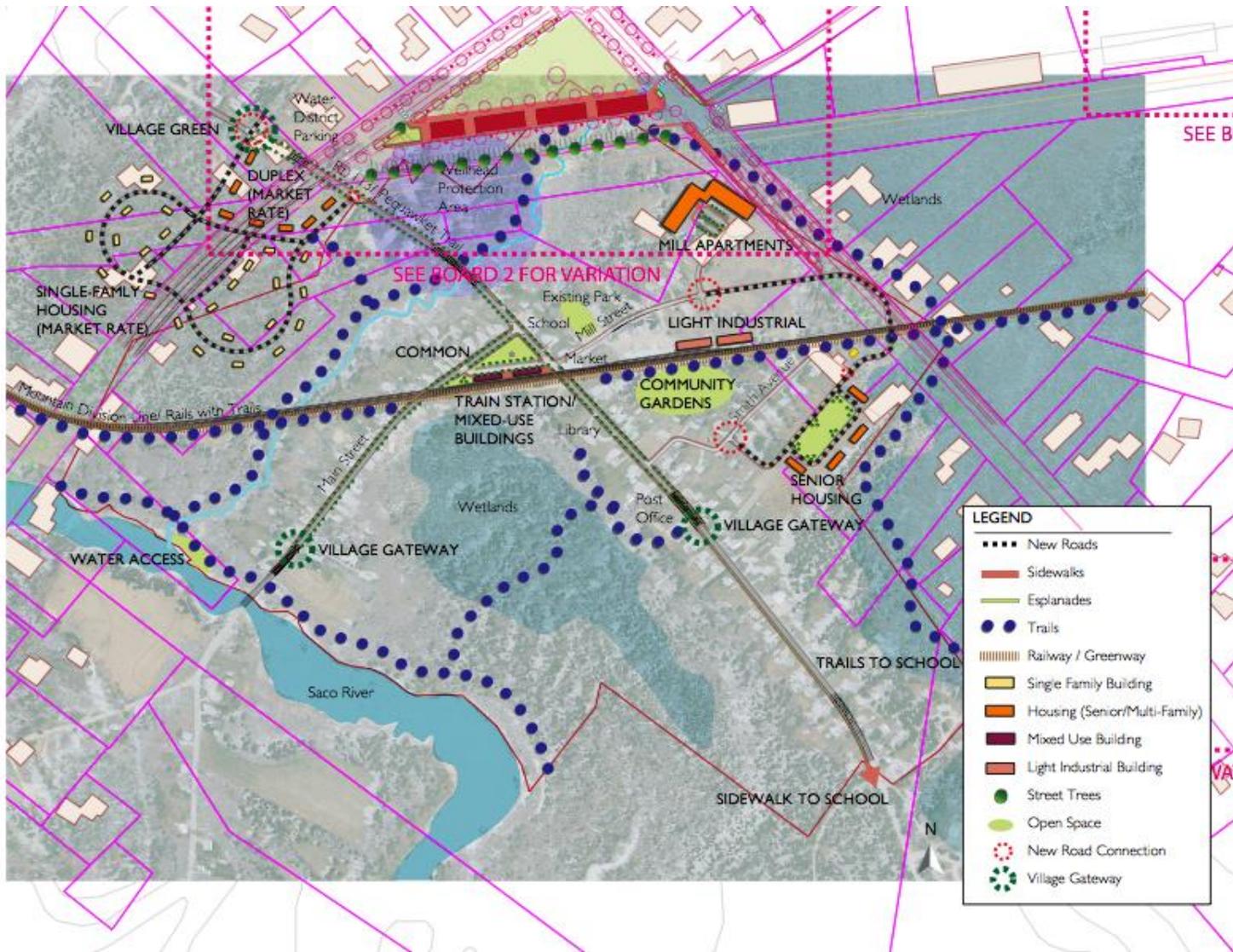
As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words. The following pages offer local examples and illustrations for the five most common kinds of Maine centers:

- A Rural Convenience Center: Steep Falls village in Standish
- A Suburban Convenience Center: Dunstan Corner on Route 1 in Scarborough
- An Urban Convenience Center: India Street Neighborhood in Portland
- A Downtown: Gray Village
- A Neighborhood Center: Mill Creek Plaza in South Portland

## Steep Falls Village in Standish: A Rural Convenience Center



Here is an aerial of the existing village area. Note it is very rural, typical of an older village that was once vibrant due to an active local mill economy. The closing of the mill reduced economic activity, but classically attractive architecture, rural amenities such as river and woodland trails and a core of residents remain.

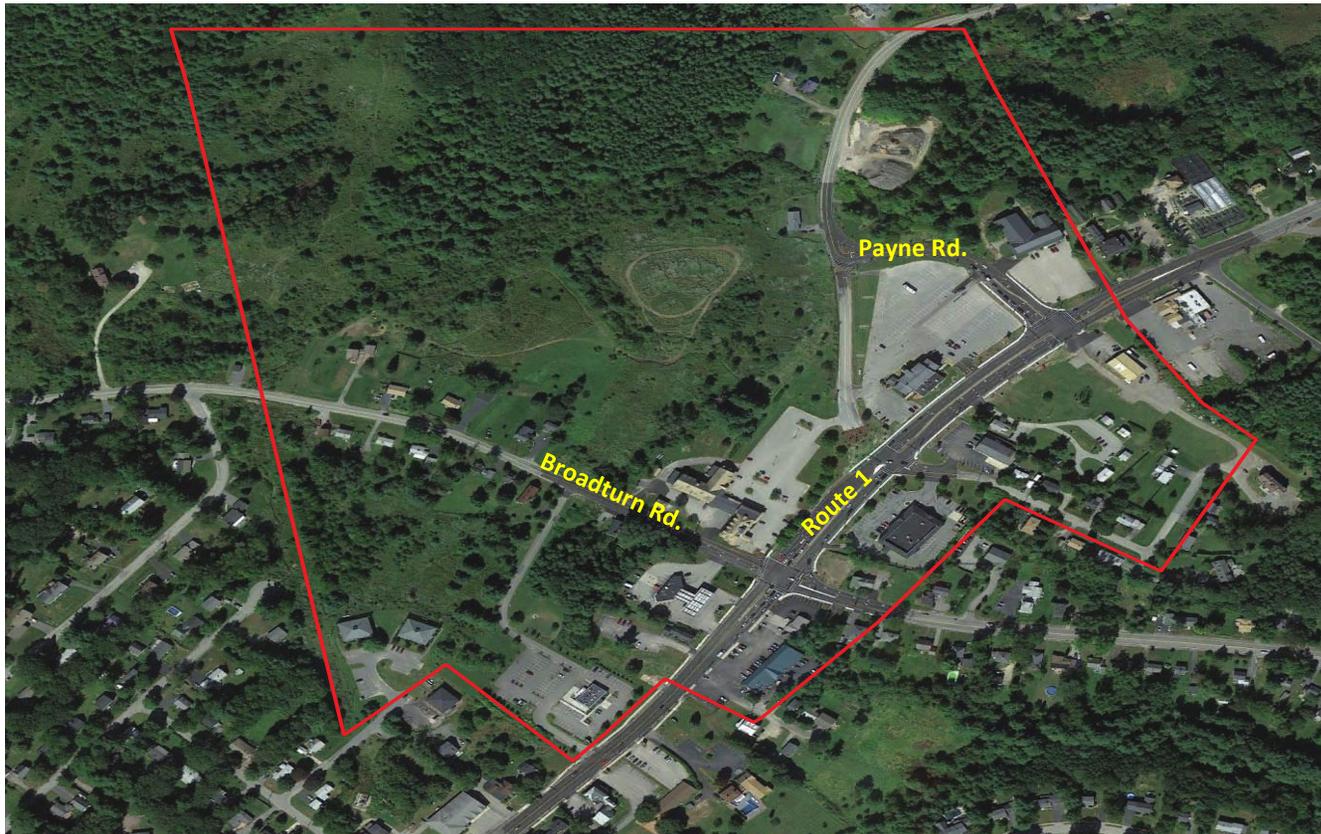


Here is an overhead view of how Steep Falls village could grow, with clustered senior housing, apartments, community gardens and smaller single-family housing. This growth would be enhanced by the creation of a rail stop on the Mountain Division Rail Line.

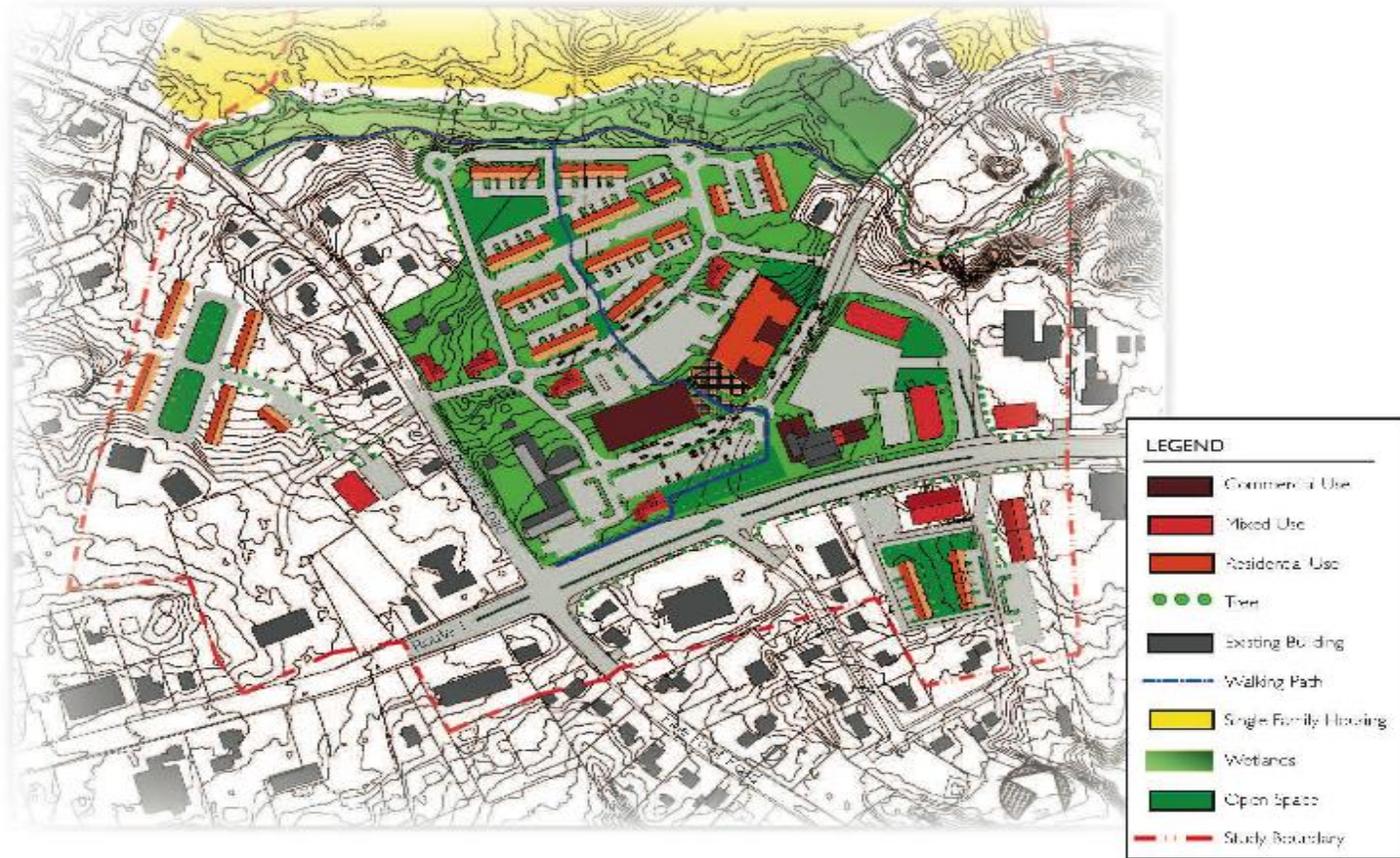


Finally, here is an artist's rendering of how new cottage-style clustered housing might look, easily fitting into the rural environment. In the distance, you can catch a glimpse of the existing town buildings, walking distance from the new housing.

## Dunstan Corner on Route 1 in Scarborough: A Suburban Convenience Center



Here is an aerial of Dunstan Corner. In a suburban setting at Route 1, MaineDOT has just recently rebuilt the intersection of Payne Road and Route 1 (right-hand side of study area), providing the opportunity to build a new road between Payne and Broadturn Road, creating a new mixed-use center with both residential and commercial development opportunities.

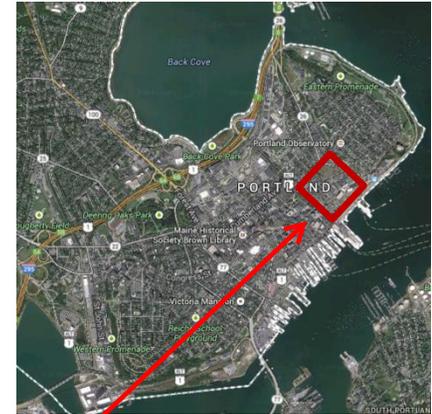


Here is a plan view of a new mixed-use development, with a new bicycle/pedestrian friendly “Main Street” bordered by retail stores and town homes. New single-family homes back up to rural land but remain walking distance to stores and restaurants. Retail can take advantage of Route 1 traffic and the surrounding existing residential housing for additional economic support.

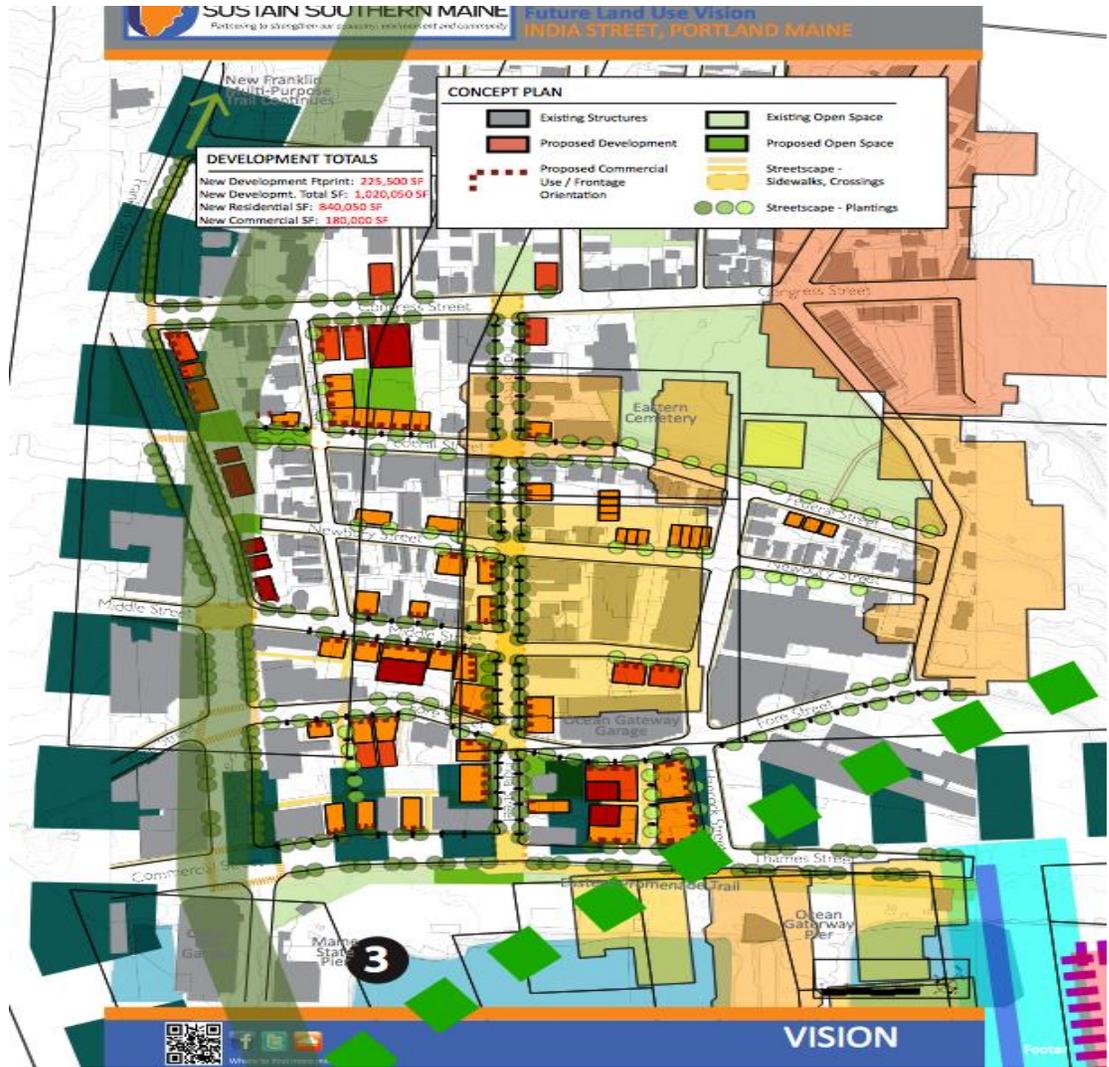


Finally, here is an artist's rendering of the new Main Street, showing how attractive and pedestrian-friendly such a development could be, while still side-by-side with busy Route 1.

## India Street Neighborhood in Portland: An Urban Convenience Center



Here is an aerial of the India Street neighborhood showing its adjacency to the Old Port, the waterfront and Munjoy Hill. Also note the relatively large amount of vacant space available.

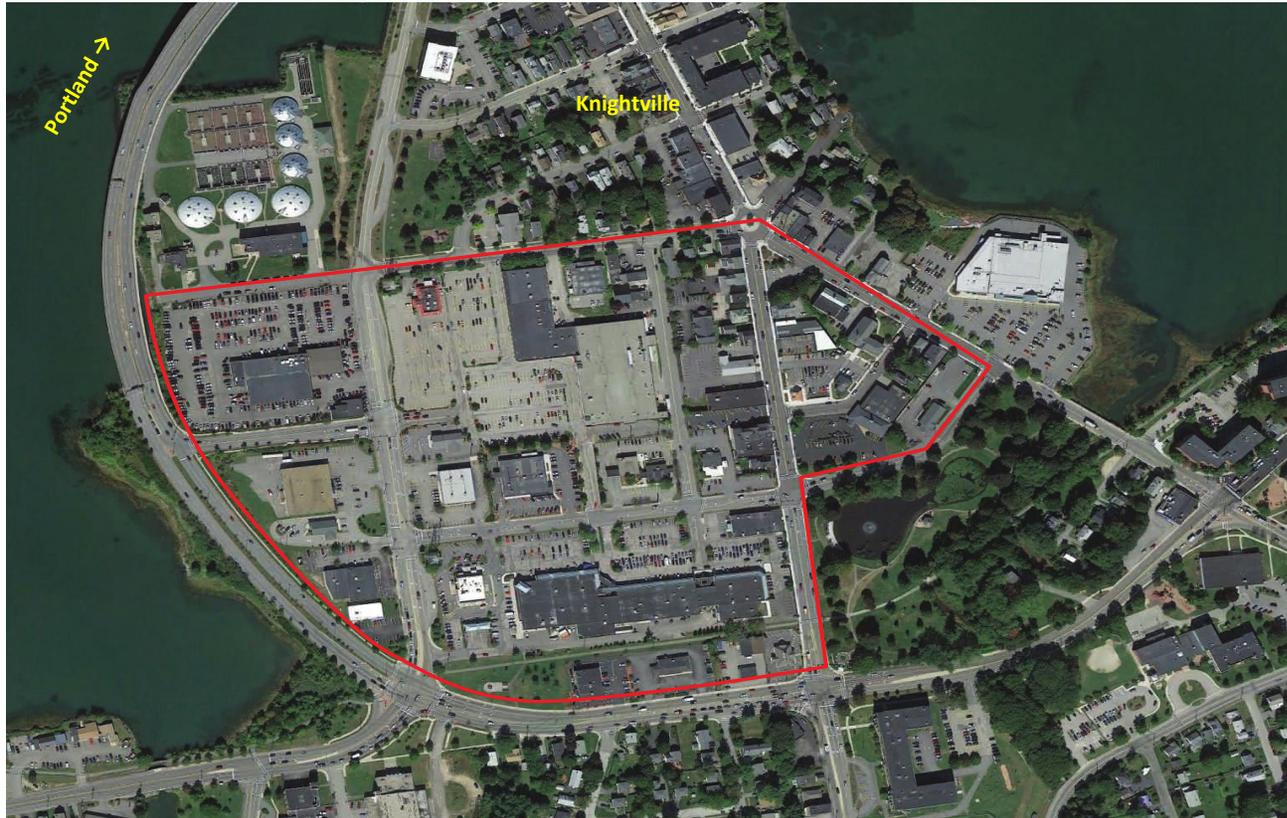


Here is an overhead plan view of how new infill development, green space and better pedestrian access could make this neighborhood come alive as a sought-after transition area between the Old Port and Munjoy Hill.

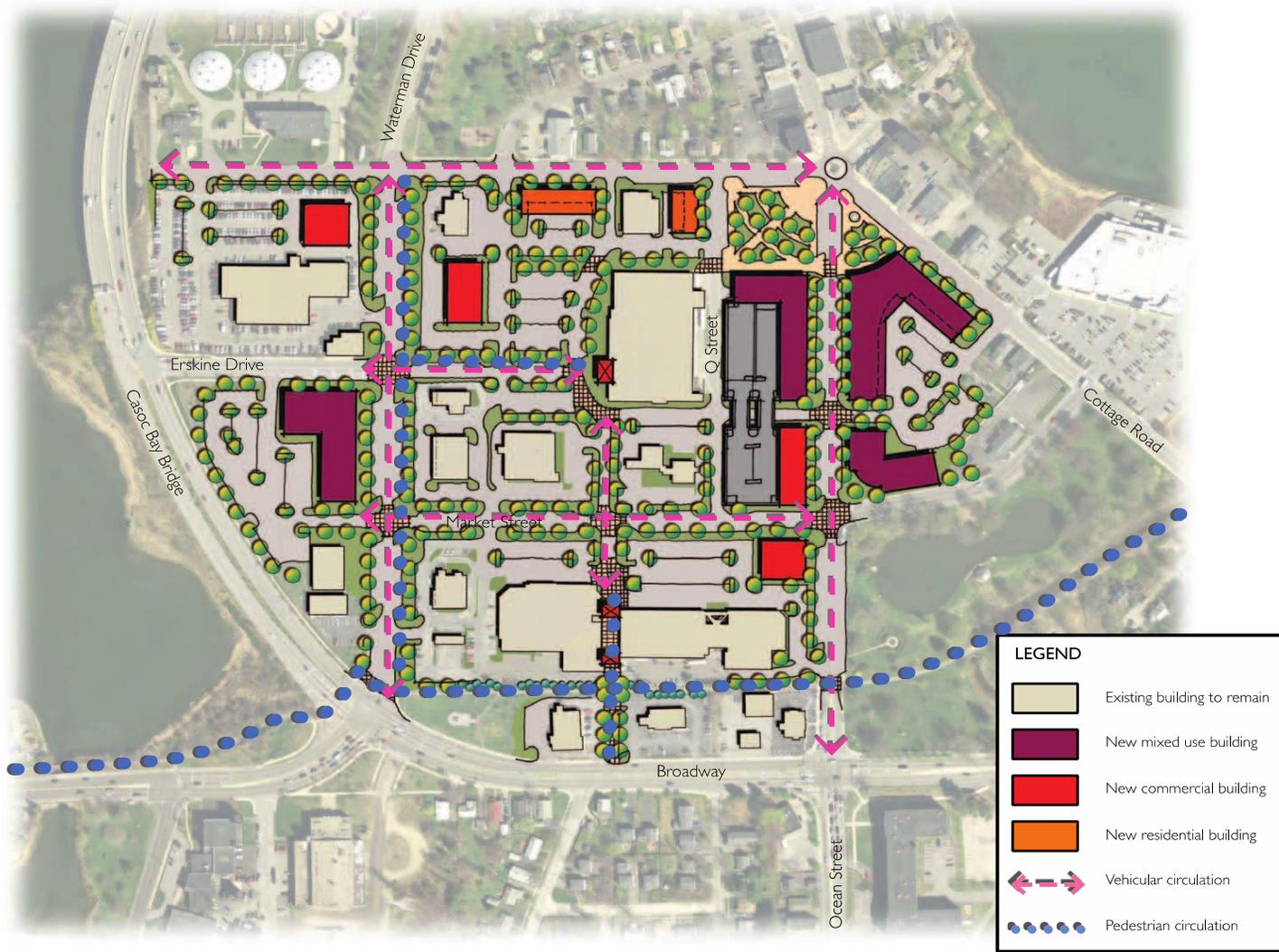


Finally, here is an artist's rendering looking down India Street towards the harbor, showing how simply adding infill buildings close to the street, pedestrian bumpouts and small parklets could make this hidden neighborhood a showplace for a range of businesses and new residents.

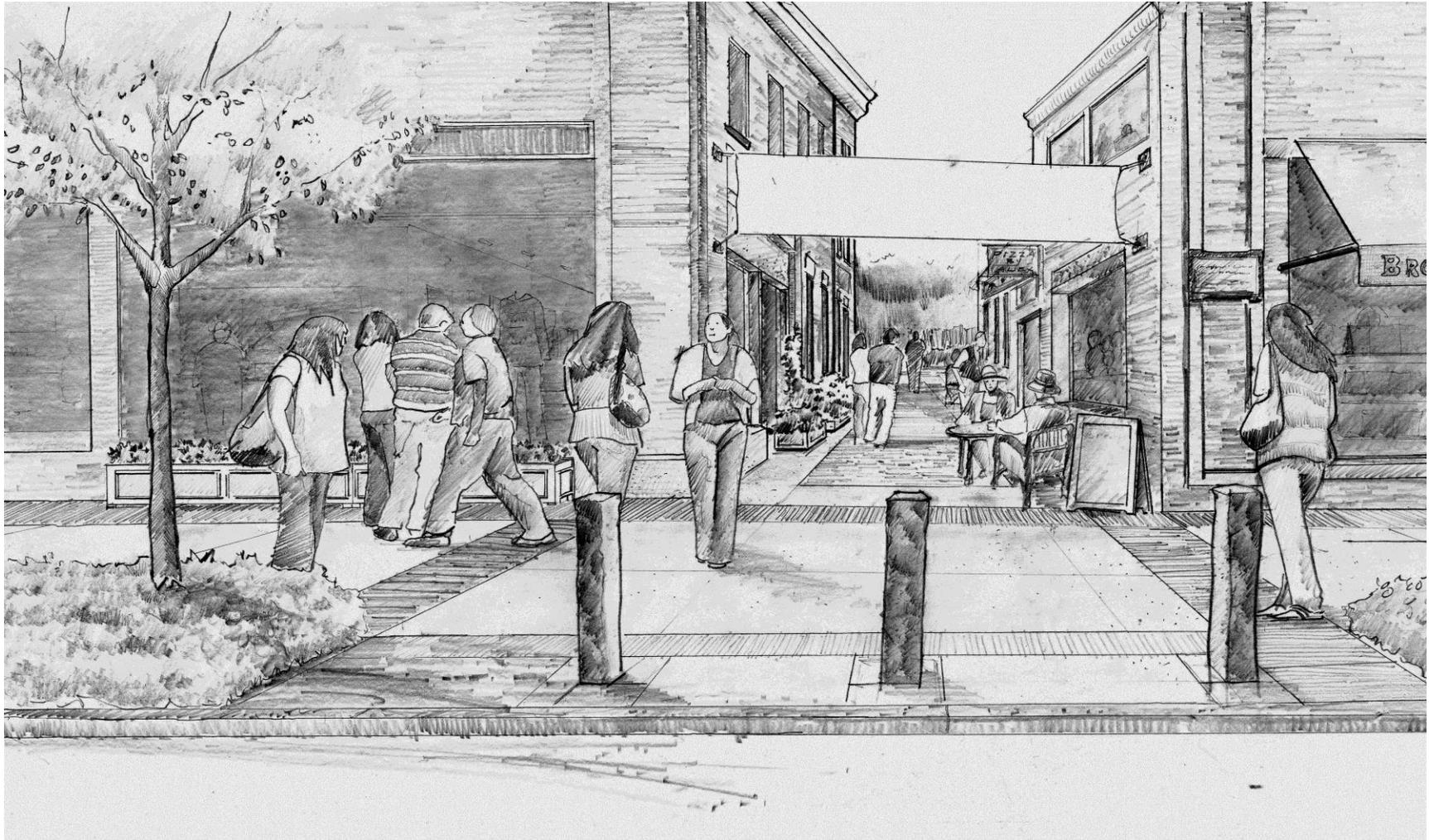
## Mill Creek Plaza: A Neighborhood Center



Here is an aerial of Mill Creek Plaza in South Portland. Adjacent to Knightville and just a bridge away from Portland, this area already has transit service and is on a well-used trail system, but is currently dominated by underutilized parking lots.

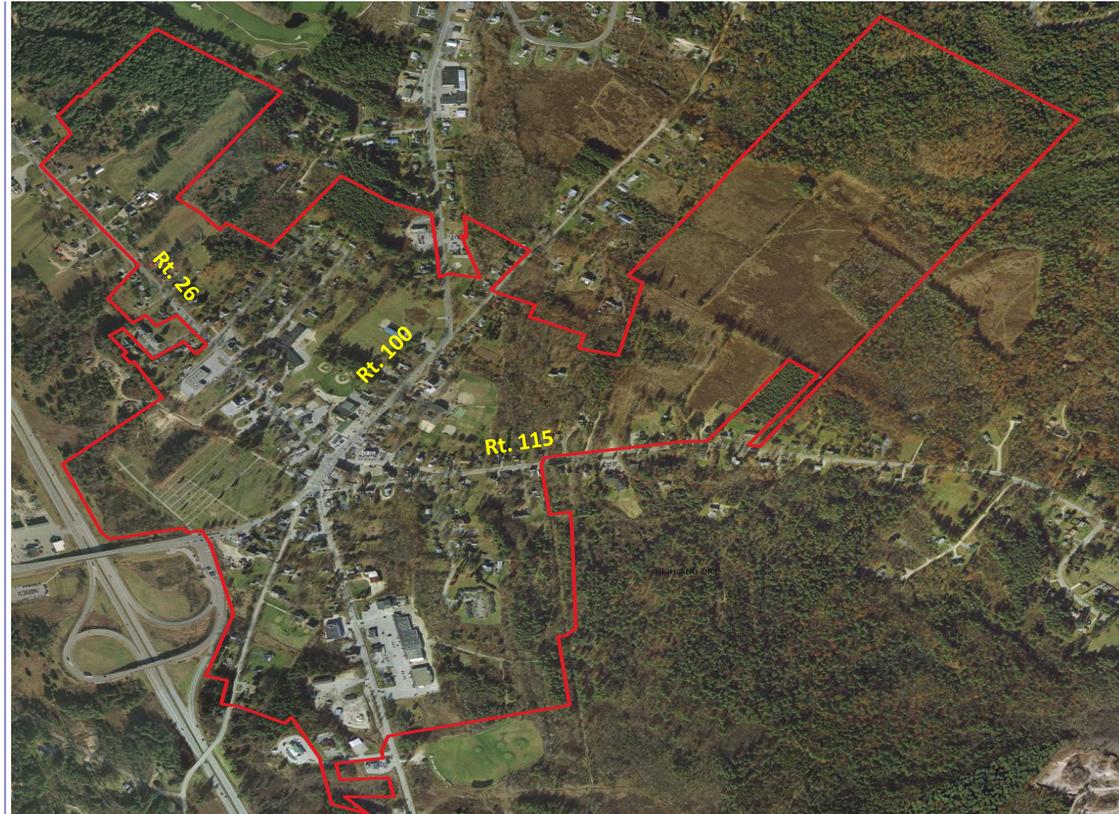


Here is an overhead plan view of how new retail and residential infill development, pedestrian walkways and street trees could turn an underused shopping center into an oasis of activity.

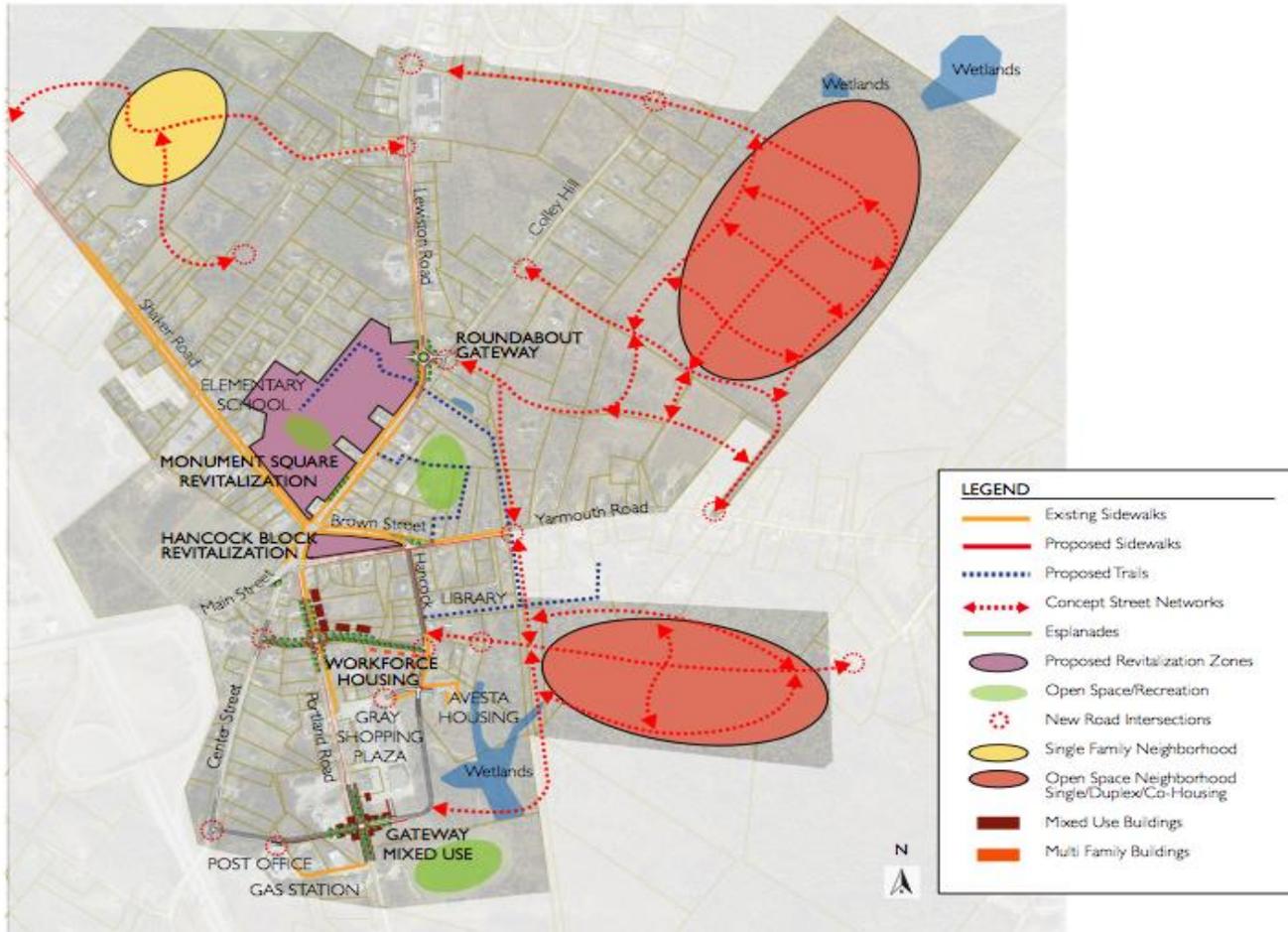


Finally, here is an artist's rendering of how new retail space and pedestrian-friendly amenities could create a more human scale within the plaza, attracting students from SMCC as well as retirees looking for reasonably priced urban living in an area that boasts an impressive number of close-by recreational and shopping amenities.

## Gray Village: A Downtown Center



Here is an aerial of Gray Village, an older downtown at the junction of Routes 26, 100, and 115. Significant through-traffic and insufficient bike and pedestrian amenities have stopped this attractive downtown from realizing its potential.



Here is an overhead plan view of how new residential infill development, better pedestrian access and traffic calming could transform Gray Village into a thriving and active downtown for families and other residents.



Finally, here is an artist's rendering of how new retail space and better bike and pedestrian access could enhance the existing architecture to make the downtown an attractive and vibrant destination.



# Windham Maine

## Economic Development Strategic Plan

### Vision

To create a business friendly environment that provides a high-quality of life, a vibrant economy, and a welcoming atmosphere, while protecting our town's rural characteristics and natural resources.

### Mission

To encourage economic growth and development in a manner that supports increased prosperity in the Town of Windham and improves the quality of life for all of its citizens.

### Core Values

Industry Diversity • Innovative Community Building • Sustainable Growth  
Expanded Employment Opportunities • Skilled Workforce • Proactive Customer Services

### Objectives

**Objective 1: Plan for the Future-** Identify and implement policies, programs, and initiatives that support the Town's economic and community development needs.

**Objective 2: Support Business Growth and Prosperity-** Proactively seek opportunities to diversify Windham's economy, create jobs, and strengthen existing business.

**Objective 3: Create and Maintain an Efficient Review and Approval Process-** Establish review and approval processes that are efficient and in alignment with economic and community development initiatives, as well as provide resources to parties utilizing these services.

**Objective 4: Develop a Support System for Economic Development-** Ensure the sustainability of economic development initiatives in Windham through collaborative efforts of town officials and departments with the Windham Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), regional agencies, local business groups, and citizens, in addition to identifying and utilizing strategic funding sources.

## **Objective 1: Plan for the Future**

**Goal: Engage stakeholders in a planning process designed to identify opportunities to enhance economic and community development in Windham.**

**Strategies:**

- WEDC to host public hearings to gather input from businesses, developers, citizens, and other stakeholders on issues related to the economic and community development needs of the Town
- Incorporate strategies for economic development into the Comprehensive Plan
- Complete the Comprehensive Plan
- Town Council to approve the Comprehensive Plan
- Develop implementation strategies for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Plan
- Develop implementation strategies for the 302 North Corridor Plan
- Develop Town policies for the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF), impact fees, loan programs, and other economic development tools

**Goal: Create a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) that supports the economic and community development needs identified in the Comprehensive Planning Process.**

**Strategies:**

- WEDC to make recommendations of short, intermediate, and long-term infrastructure needs to the Town Council on an annual basis
- Town Council to annually approve the CIP and support the Town Manager in its implementation
- WEDC to identify grants, TIF's and other programs available to help fund capital investments

**Goal: Define and create a true sense of place in North Windham and other villages within the Town.**

**Strategies:**

- Implement the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Plan in a manner creates a true town center
- WEDC to study underground utility upgrades including electric, water, wastewater management, natural gas, and fiber optic cable
- WEDC to engage Windham businesses in a planning process to enhance connectivity through parking and back lots in order to improve both vehicle and pedestrian flow
- Implement a pedestrian and bikeway system that connects to the new Donnabeth Lippman Park
- Implement strategies that leverage the strengths of all villages in Windham

**Goal: Implement the 302 North Corridor Plan, including the realignment of the Anglers Road and Whites Bridge Road intersection.**

**Strategies:**

- Support growth in the Enterprise Development District/Quarry Ridge Business Park through planning initiatives
- WEDC to work to ensure appropriate level of industrial, manufacturing, and warehousing space is available to support growth in Enterprise Development Districts
- Support Whites Bridge and Anglers Road intersection improvements through CIP and other planning initiatives.
- WEDC to work with developers to advocate for the infrastructure needs of the corridor within their development proposals
- Coordinate 302 corridor planning and improvements with federal/state DOT programs as well as PACTS to ensure Windham remains the region's central commercial corridor

**Goal: Advocate for increased focus on workforce development to meet industry needs in all sectors in order to provide quality employment opportunities for citizens and attract new businesses.**

**Strategies:**

- Identify skill sets required by industry clusters and work to fill gaps
- Collaborate with representative from the Town, WEDC, Chamber of Commerce, St. Joseph's College, and Adult Education to promote resources available to businesses and employees for continued education/training.

**Objective 2: Support Business Growth and Prosperity**

**Goal: Identify industry sectors that will add diversity and create jobs in Windham.**

**Strategies:**

- WEDC to examine current industry sectors to determine their strengths and weaknesses
- Identify specific business sectors deemed central to supporting Windham's economy
- WEDC to identify under-represented business sectors and make recommendations as to how these gaps can best be filled
- Develop a list of prospective businesses to fill the gaps
- Identify specific districts to house the new business sectors
- Develop strategies to create a business campus in Windham

**Goal: Develop a marketing plan to attract desired business sectors in order to improve economic diversity**

**Strategies:**

- Identify the strengths of the community that can be used to attract new businesses and residents
- Create a brand for Windham and develop promotional materials designed to solicit new businesses
- Develop a web site for the WEDC to be used to market the Town of Windham
- WEDC to promote commercial vacancies and development opportunities on its website
- Create a Relocation Guide for businesses and residents interested in moving to Windham
- Identify opportunities to promote tourism for Windham's growing hospitality industry
- WEDC to host bi-annual informational and networking events for developers, real estate brokers, and area businesses to discuss how we can work together to bring more business to Windham
- Identify success stories and send press releases to media

**Goal: Promote Windham as the retail and service center for the Sebago Lakes Region**

**Strategies:**

- Continue to cultivate the Retail project that began in 2012
- Continue Windham's "Buy Local" campaign
- Encourage local and regional market choices for shoppers through expanded promotion of Windham serving as the "Marketplace of the Sebago Lakes Region"

**Goal: Capitalize on the strengths of Windham's agriculture industry to encourage continued growth**

**Strategies:**

- Develop an understanding of the existing agricultural industry to identify potential for growth in the areas of production, processing, and distribution of products
- Establish a "working farms" index to measure the vitality of the local agriculture industry compared to regional performance
- Establish a high end farmers market in the town center

**Goal: Continue to develop the manufacturing industry in Windham**

**Strategies:**

- WEDC to identify opportunities to develop additional industrial, manufacturing, and warehouse space
- Promote development opportunities in Enterprise Development Districts

**Objective 3: Create and Maintain an Efficient Review and Approval Process**

**Goal: Examine all Town services to measure impact on economic development goals and activities and to simplify and streamline the review processes to the extent possible**

**Strategies:**

- Review services to ensure they align with desired objectives and efficiently serve the customer
- WEDC to engage in communication between departments, committees, and boards that are involved in the review and approval process to identify methods of improving current methods
- WEDC to gather feedback from local businesses related to current practices
- Identify State and other municipalities review processes that can be adopted by Windham (e.g. DEP site plan review)
- WEDC to recommend changes to current practices to the Town Council

**Goal: Develop communication strategies and resources to guide businesses and individuals through the approval and review process**

**Strategies:**

- Establish clear expectations for review and approval processes and communicate to the public
- Create a *Guide to Doing Business in Windham* with licensing, permitting, and start up information
- Provide on line tools to guide parties through the approval process and link to state and regional resources
- WEDC to shepherd parties through the approval process
- Implement a means of gathering feedback from parties that have completed the approval and review process and use as a method of evaluating current practices

**Objective 4: Develop a Support System for Economic Development**

**Goal: Establish the WEDC as the champion for economic development activities/issues in the community**

**Strategies:**

- WEDC to advocate for the business community and economic development issues
- Invite Town officials to WEDC meetings to discuss relevant topics
- WEDC to provide quarterly updates to the Town Council
- Establish an Annual Report of Windham's economic development efforts and the ongoing work of the WEDC

**Goal: Develop strategic partnerships in order to leverage resources available for economic and community development**

**Strategies:**

- WEDC to proactively seek partnerships with businesses, organizations, regional agencies, and citizens to collaborate on economic and community development initiatives
- Provide businesses, real estate brokers, and developers with relevant economic, demographic, and psychographic information and educate them on how to use this to impact their bottom lines
- Establish a business visitation plan to proactively solicit feedback from the business community in municipal and economic development issues

**Goal: Identify strategic funding mechanisms to enhance investment in economic development initiatives**

**Strategies:**

- Identify sites that are best suited for TIF, inclusion in the CIP, and State programs to assist in development
- Town to develop a TIF Establishment and Usage Policy
- Town to set up and manage Development Districts as needed
- Town to develop an Impact Fee Establishment and Usage Policy
- WEDC to identify grants and other programs available to assist in investments
- Seek private investment and develop guidelines for a Business Loan Fund
- WEDC to keep Town up-to-date on relevant incentive programs used in other communities
- Continue funding of the WEDC initiatives that support strategic objectives

**Goal: Ensure that economic development initiatives remain a consistent and ongoing focus**

**Strategies:**

- Establish annual work plans designed to accomplish the objectives outlined in the strategic plan
- Establish specific benchmarks to measure success, and adjust strategies as necessary
- Review this Economic Development Strategic Plan every three years

**Performance Measurements**

**Objective 1: Plan for the Future**

1. Update the Town's Comprehensive Plan
2. Adopt a TIF Plan
3. Adopt a CIP Plan
4. Implementation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Plan as measured by adopted and funded initiatives, ordinance changes, capital investments, and new development/Re-development of existing downtown properties
5. Complete realignment of Anglers Road
6. Increase employment opportunities as measured by total jobs in Windham
7. Increase the number of quality jobs as measured by median income

**Objective 2: Support Business Growth and Prosperity**

1. Improve retail marketplace vitality as measured by annual retail sales
2. Retail sector sustainability as measured by maintaining stable vacancy rates
3. Industrial sector vitality as measured by increasing inventory, maintaining stable vacancy rates, and increasing jobs in this sector
4. Professional/office sector sustainability as measured by improving vacancy rates and increasing jobs in this sector

**Objective 3: Create and Maintain an Efficient Review and Approval Process**

1. Adopt regulatory reform
2. Satisfactory feedback from parties completing the review and approval process

**Objective 4: Develop a Support System for Economic Development**

1. Satisfactory completion of objectives contained in the WEDC's annual work plan
2. Funded TIF
3. Establish a Downtown District
4. Establish an Incentive Program for business relocation
5. WEDC to create an Annual Report/Economic Scorecard

## Economy

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

## Conditions & Trends

### Windham's Economy – A Brief History

The economy of early Windham was focused around the Presumpscot River. The River was a means of transporting goods, including floating King's Pines down to Falmouth, and a source of power for the first saw mills and woolen mills in the settlement of New Marblehead, which later became the Town of Windham. The first settlement in what is now Windham was located along River Road near Anderson Road at the southern end of Town.

The Presumpscot remained the single biggest driver of the local economy through the 1800s. South Windham Village in Windham and Little Falls village in Gorham grew up around the mills located there. Further up the River, the [Oriental Powder Mill](#) located at Gambo Falls in the Newhall area was a major employer in the community for most of that century. Popeville grew up around the mills on the Pleasant River, in the vicinity of Gray Road (Route 202) and Pope Road.

The first half of the 1900s saw both the decline of Windham's large industrial employers along with the rise of the roads as the predominant transportation mode for shipping goods over long distances. Trucks began to replace rail, just as rail had replaced reliance on the [Cumberland & Oxford Canal](#) as a means transporting goods to markets in Portland and beyond.

By the end of the 1900s, Windham's economic center had moved from South Windham Village to the crossroads of US Route 302 and State Routes 115/35 in North Windham. This new economic center was built around the mobility provided by the automobile.

### Windham's Economy Today

#### *Windham's Role in the Regional Economy*

North Windham plays a significant role in the Greater Portland area's economy as a regional retail center. It is the largest retail center between Portland and Conway, New Hampshire and draws customers from a wide geographic area. North Windham offers convenience shopping, but also the kind of comparison shopping that few communities in our region provide, such as automobile/recreational vehicle sales and home building supplies. The Windham Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) commissioned a retail study in 2012. The "Primary Retail Trade Area Map below is from that study.

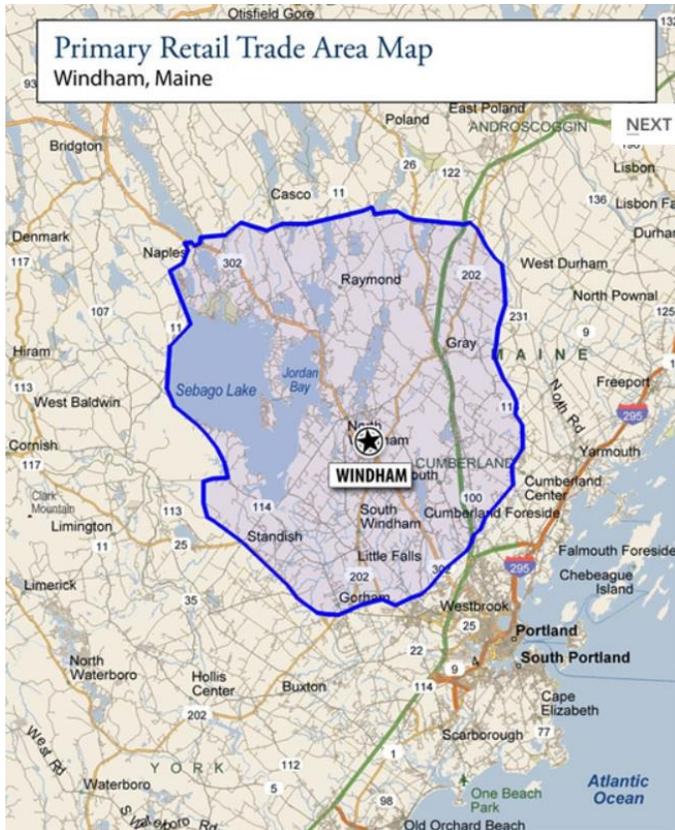


Figure 1 - Retail Trade Area map from Retail Study, 2012

The Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG ) has been involved in a multi-year regional planning project called Sustain Southern Maine (SSM). One of the first tasks of the SSM project was to identify “Centers of Opportunity,” which are existing commercial or mixed used activity centers that were classified by the types of businesses they contain, and the areas that these centers serve. Though no centers in Windham were among the subset of those identified for further study and technical assistance, this effort did map centers in the Town. A complete map of centers identified, along with a closer view of the centers identified in Windham appear below. The “Centers of Opportunity: Typology” report, dated December 2013, can be [found here. \(fix link\)](#).

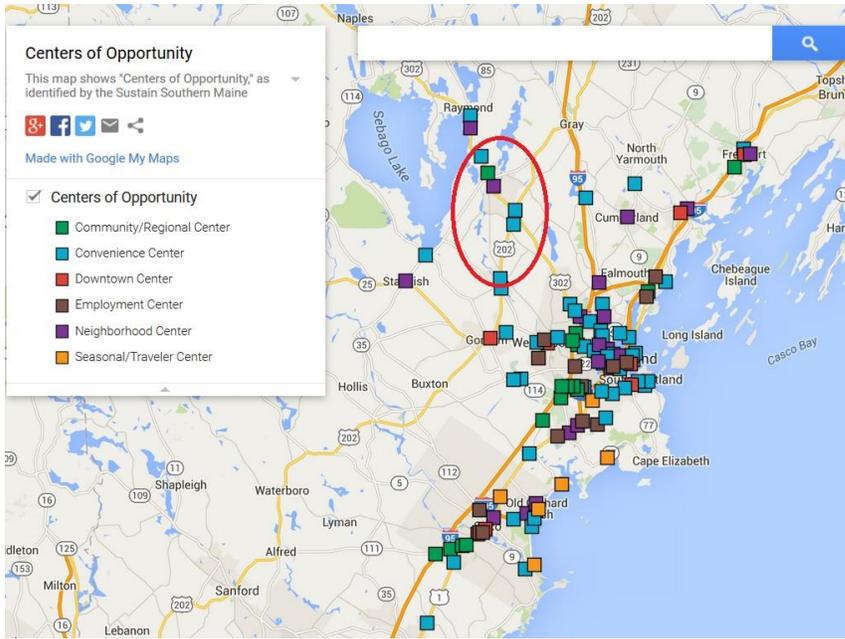


Figure 2 - Regional "Centers of Opportunity," Sustain Southern Maine. Windham "centers" circled in red.

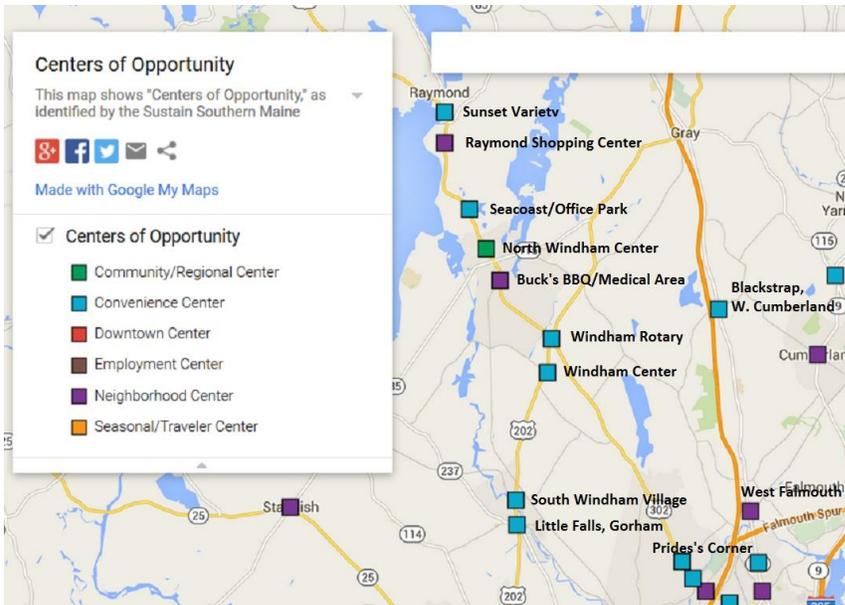


Figure 3 - Windham & other "Centers of Opportunity," Sustain Southern Maine

### Workforce

As might be expected, labor data estimates from different sources and from different dates vary slightly. Source data is noted for all the numbers below in order to put these discrepancies in context.

### Employment

The American Community Survey (2006-2000) from the U.S. Census bureau estimated the employed population at 8,660 in 2010, compared to 8,009 in 2000. This represents an increase of 8%, compared to an increase in the overall population for the same time period of 14%. As noted in the Population & Demographics chapter, this is a reflection of the higher numbers of school age children and those over retirement age in the community.

Figure 3 shows Windham's unemployment rate almost exactly mirrors the County rate (about 6%), and both are consistently and notably lower than the state (about 8%) and the nation (about 9%). This information comes from the Maine Labor Department, and is included in the state data set provided to communities for comprehensive planning purposes.

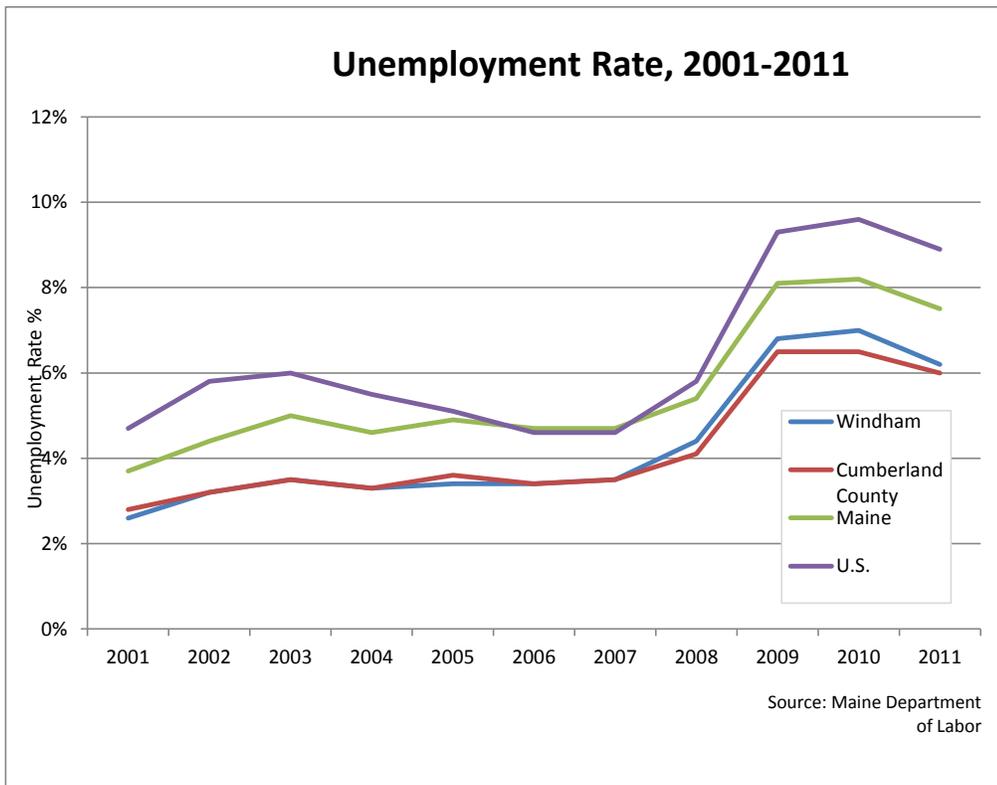


Figure 3 - Unemployment Rate

## Jobs

The Maine Department of Labor estimates there were 5,111 jobs in Windham in 2011. This compares with about 6,162 jobs in 2001. This represents a slight decrease in the number of jobs in Windham over that time period. Figure 3, below, was provided by the state data pack for Windham for comprehensive planning purposes. It shows changes in job growth from 2001-2011. The numbers are show this modest decrease for the Town, are flat for the state, along with modest overall increases for Cumberland County, New England overall, and the nation. Note two interesting points shown in Figure 3; first, the variability in the Windham line, likely because it is the smallest scale of data shown on the graph, and second, that at all levels the sharp decline in the job growth rate between 2008 and 2009 was followed by an almost equally dramatic “bounce” in the growth rate between 2009 and 2010, and positive growth in 2011, except in Windham, which saw more job losses in 2010 and 2011.

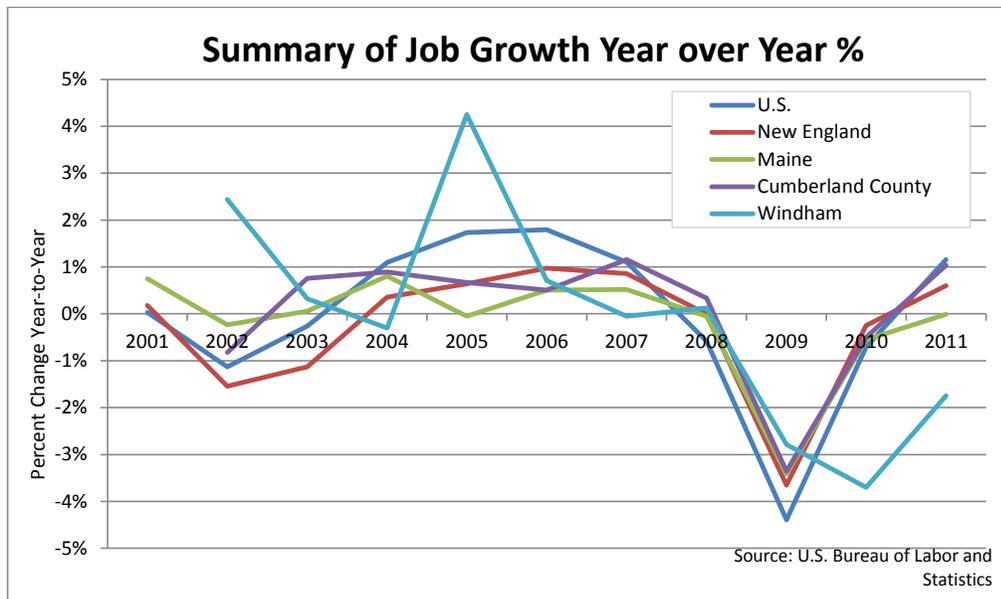


Figure 4 - Job Growth

This chart seems to tell a very different tale from Figure 3 on the preceding page. A relatively low unemployment rate combined with a growing workforce seems to fly in the face of relatively flat job growth. This interesting dichotomy can be explained by a relatively mobile population and growing number of job commuters.

## Employment Distribution

The American Community Survey (2006-2000) from the U.S. Census bureau estimated the employed population at 8,660 in 2010. This is close to the 8,380 estimate used in the Journey to Work data noted in the Population & Demographics Chapter of this Plan. In that chapter, it was noted that about 1,940 Windham workers work in the Town of Windham out of a total of 5,202 jobs, which leaves the Town to

deduce that 3,262 Windham jobs are filled by workers from other communities. The table below is synthesized from data used by GPCOG and the Regional Transit Providers (RTP) in a report of the Lakes Region Bus, so the “jobs filled by...” column is only broken down by municipalities served by the Lakes Region bus, but the numbers are still informative.

Table 1 - Workforce Distribution

Windham residents work in...	Windham jobs are filled by people from...		
Portland	2,615	Windham	1,940
Windham	1,940	Raymond	370
South Portland	755	Casco	300
Westbrook	630	Naples	155
Scarborough	330	Westbrook	145
Falmouth	290	Portland	150
Gorham	290		
Other places	1,810	Other places	2,142
Total employed	8,660	Total jobs	5,202

**Major employers and industries**

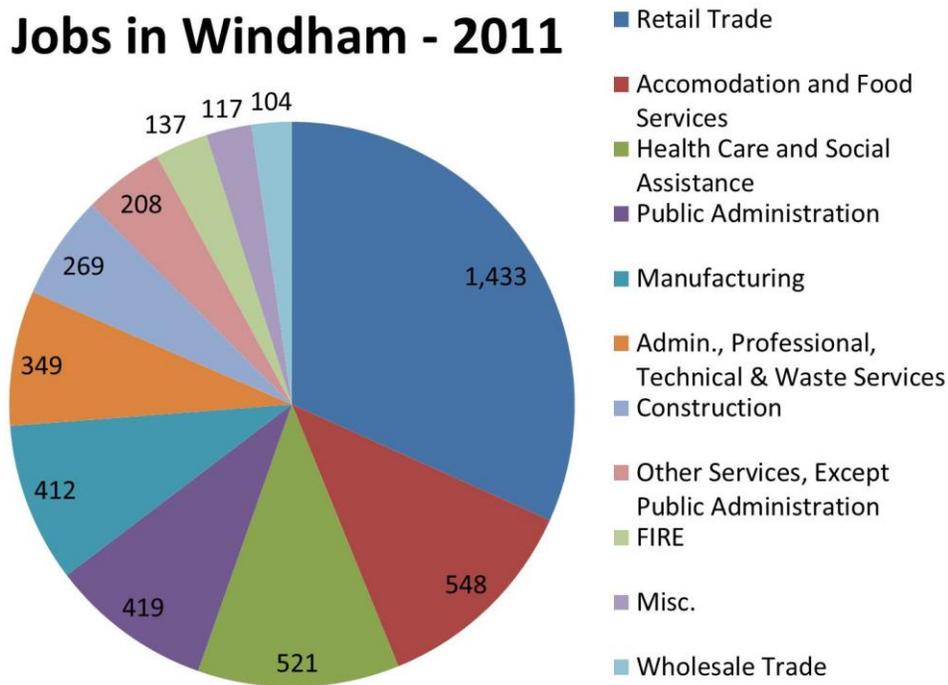
Windham does not have a single large dominating employer, like a mill or shipyard. Rather, the jobs landscape is made up of many small and medium sized employers. The following table shows Windham employers with over 100 employees in 2012.

Employers in Windham with Over 20 Employees (2012)			
Company Name	Employer Size	Industry	Partial Address
Hannaford Supermarket and Pharmacy	100-249	Retail	797 Roosevelt Trail
Home Depot	100-249	Retail	20 Franklin Dr.
Ledgewood Manor Inc.	100-249	Health Care	200 Tandberg Trail
Lowe's Home Improvement	100-249	Retail	64 Manchester Dr.
Maine Correctional Center	100-249	Public	17 Mallison Falls Rd.
Maine Standards Co.	100-249	Manufacturing	765 Roosevelt Trail #10
Shaw' Supermarket	100-249	Retail	770 Roosevelt Trail
Walmart Supercenter	100-249	Retail	30 Landing Rd.
Windham Fire Department-Public Safety	100-249	Public	375 Gray Rd.
Windham High School	100-249	Public	406 Gray Rd.
Windham Middle School	100-249	Public	408 Gray Rd.
Windham Primary School	100-249	Public	404 Gray Rd.

In Windham, the single largest sector of the economy by employment is the retail sector (28% of all Windham jobs). This sector employs almost three times as many people as the next leading major sector of the economy in Windham. The other major sectors in Windham are Accommodation & Food Services, Health Care & Social Assistance, Public Administration and Manufacturing round out the top

five sectors (10.7%, 10.2%, 8.2% and 8.1% respectively). Again, these are 2011 numbers attributable to the Maine Department of Labor. The chart below shows the size of each sector in Windham.

## Jobs in Windham - 2011



Between 2001 and 2011, there were several shifts of note within the number of jobs in Windham, especially when compared to the overall job mix in Cumberland County. These can be sorted into the good news and the bad news.

- Bad News
  - Construction jobs. 375 in 2001 to 269 in 2011, down 28.3%.
    - The County was down only 11% in the same period.
      - Analysis: Recently, we experienced a significant slowdown in new commercial and residential construction (the last 3 years of the time period). However, this time period also includes many very active building years (the first two thirds of the time period). It remains to be seen if these jobs return to Windham or elsewhere in the region as construction activity continues to increase.
  - Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing jobs. 21 in 2001 to 14 in 2011, down 33.3%.
    - The County was up 37% in the same period.

- Analysis: These are very small numbers, and some members of the community have questioned them based on local knowledge. However, it does seem that Windham has not seen an increase in the number of people involved with farming or forestry despite the growing demand for local food products and general move away from fossil-based heating sources.
- Good News
  - Retail jobs. 1,379 in 2001 to 1,433 in 2011, up 3.9%
    - The County was down 12% in the same period.
      - Analysis: Even though this is a modest increase in local retail employment, it has occurred in the face of drop of retail jobs County-wide. This reinforces the view as a strong, growing retail center for the region.
  - Manufacturing jobs. 256 in 2001 to 412 in 2011, up 60.9%
    - The County was down 31.5% in the same time period.
      - Analysis: Most encouraging, and perhaps most surprising among all the data related to changes in employment mix, is the increase in manufacturing jobs, especially given the drop County-wide. More should be done to understand this trend and encourage further development.

## Current Planning Efforts and Initiatives

### WEDC Plan

In 2013, the Town Council adopted the “Economic Development Strategic Plan,” developed by the WEDC. [This plan can be accessed by clicking here \(fix link\).](#) The vision for this plan is “to create a business friendly environment that provides a high-quality of life, a vibrant economy, and a welcoming atmosphere, while protecting our town’s rural characteristics and natural resources.” In order to achieve this vision, ~~this~~ plan is focused on the implementation of four objectives:

- Plan for the Future – implementation of policies and programs to support economic growth
  - Support Business Growth and Prosperity – business recruitment, promotion and marketing efforts
  - Create and Maintain an Efficient Review and Approval Process – simplify, streamline permitting processes and guide new businesses through this process.
  - Develop a Support System for Economic Development – develop advocacy, partnerships and funding capacities.
- The WEDC organized itself into sub-committees focused on the implementation of each of these areas: Planning, Business Growth, Review and Approval Process, and Community Engagement. Each has worked with municipal, community and other partners to complete priority strategies for each objective. The WEDC is currently in the process of evaluating progress on the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

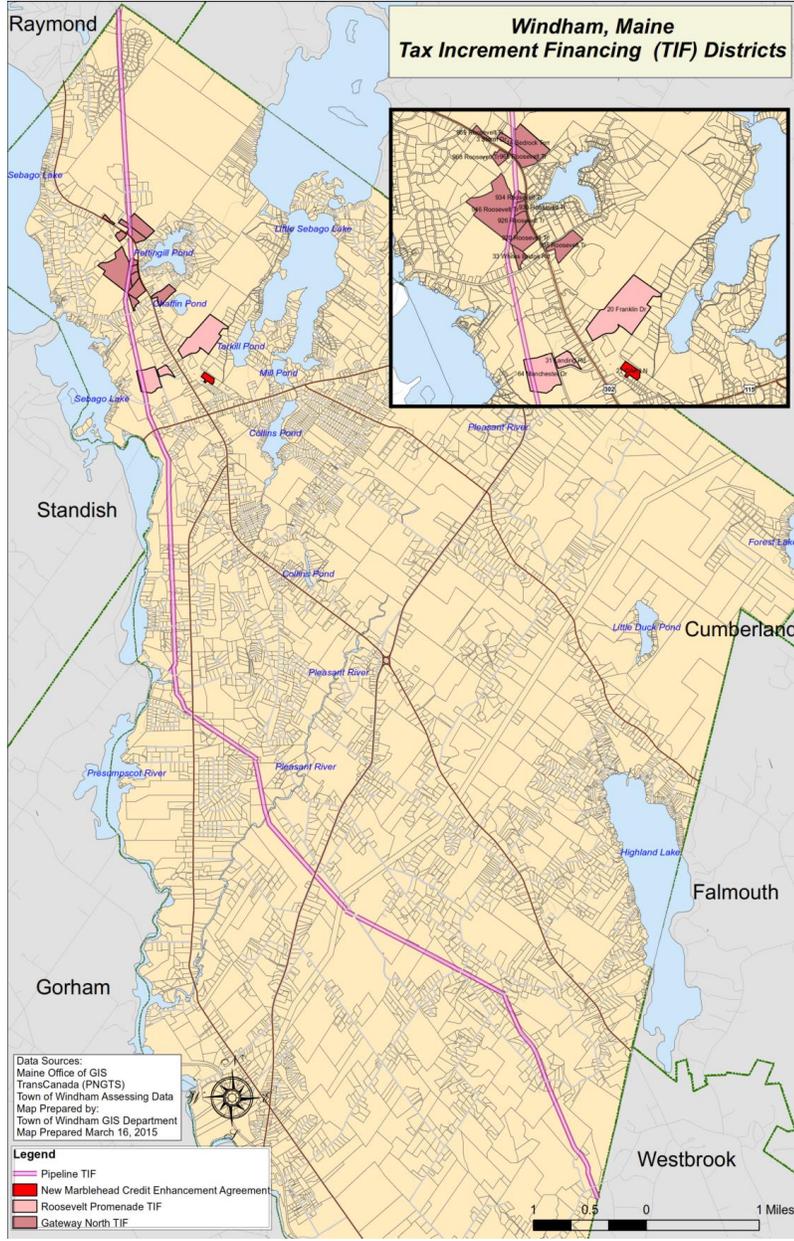
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### *Tax Increment Financing*

Windham has used Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts for many years, as a way to dedicate toward expenses related to economic development. TIF districts are established by the Town Council, and when the property is developed, the amount of additional taxes based on the increase in value from when the district was established to the current taxable value (the tax increment) are dedicated to a segregated fund that is separate from the Town's general fund. These TIF funds can be used for a variety of specific uses per state statute, but they must be related to capital improvements or other expenses that are meant to increase economic activity in the community.

The Town of Windham has ~~several~~ four TIF districts, shown on Figure 5, below. The New Marblehead Credit Enhancement Agreement is an affordable housing TIF, which encourages and supports the development of affordable housing. The Roosevelt Promenade TIF captures the value associated with the development of the Home Depot, Lowes, and Goodwill store properties. The Pipeline TIF applies to the oil pipeline right-of-way that extends from the Raymond town line all the way to the Westbrook town line. The Gateway North TIF applies to a dozen properties along Route 302 in the vicinity of the Anglers Road/Whites Bridge Road intersection and Enterprise Drive intersections. These properties include the Microtel Suites hotel, Seacoast Adventure Park, and the WEDC's property at Anglers Road.

Descriptions and maps for these districts are attached.



(insert district descriptions and maps here)

**Figure 5 - TIF District Map**

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## Analysis

### Changes in the Windham Economy

The economy of Windham is not experiencing the kind of radical change associated with the loss of a major employer, as many Maine towns have had to deal with over the years. The loss of a mill or military base can shift the ground under a community's feet. However, the economic landscape is changing in Windham.

Since at least the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the number of jobs in Windham has not kept pace with the number of people moving to Town. Many of the people who live in Windham work in the large job centers of Greater Portland. Indeed, as noted above, eight of the twelve largest employers in Windham are building supply stores, grocery stores and the public schools. The idea of Windham as a large bedroom community for Portland is not a completely accurate view of the Town, but that conception fits in many ways.

As the difference in value between residential and commercial/non-residential development continues to expand, the higher the burden will be on individual residential property owners to pay for additional services or expansion of existing municipal and school services. As the number of Windham residents who work in Portland, South Portland, Scarborough and Falmouth increases, the challenge of maintaining mobility on the major roads that connect to the job centers in the region will need to be addressed. This includes Route 302, as well as River Road and Falmouth Road.

### Description of Commercial Development Areas

Earlier in the chapter, the work of the Sustain Southern Maine (SSM) project to categorize existing commercial and mixed use areas in Greater Portland identified six "activity areas" in Windham. These are described below. The SSM typography, or categorization of these activity areas are based on the types and sizes of businesses and the market areas they serve. The hierarchy of these categories, from smallest to largest is listed below. For more information on these centers, and other types of centers not currently found in Windham, please refer to the [Center of Opportunities: Typography Report by clicking here](#) (fix link).

- Convenience Center
  - Most common. Every community has one, Windham has several.
  - Located conveniently along busy roads or at key intersections.
  - Characterized by uses like gas stations, take-out food, single grocery items.
  - Generally serves a primary trade area of 3,000 to 5,000 people
- Neighborhood Center
  - Anchored by grocery store, with greater mix of retail and day-to-day items.
  - Characterized by additional uses like banking, fast food, small restaurants and coffee shops, small businesses and services, professional offices. Routine goods and services many people want close by.
  - Generally serves a primary trade area of 12,000 to 25,000.
- Community Center

- Not every town in Greater Portland has this type of large center.
- Anchored by grocery store/supermarket and goods and services that people will travel to or involve comparison shopping. These centers have “gravity” and draw people from larger areas, especially in rural or suburban settings.
- Characterized by additional uses like “big box” stores, offices and a wide variety of services such as medical and banking, clothing, automobiles and appliances.
- Generally serves a primary trade area of 30,000 to 40,000 people.

The activity centers identified by SSM are listed below, and this Plan recognizes the value of comparing commercial activity centers based on the mix and intensity of uses and service areas, but does not use the labels in the SSM report.

### *North Windham*

#### Regional Retail Center, Local Services, Mix of National and Regional/Local Restaurants

When people from outside our community think of Windham, whether they are from surrounding towns or from out of state, they think of North Windham. For many people around the state and throughout the Northeast, North Windham is the only impression of Windham people have. North Windham was identified as a Community Center in the SSM report.

Windham’s regionally strong retail sector is centered in North Windham. Shopping options range from small specialty shops for clothing and jewelry, to “big box” style general merchandise stores, discount department stores, to large specialty retailers for automobile parts, office supplies, and two large national pharmacies.

North Windham hosts almost all of the dining options in Town outside of several notable pizza and convenience food options in other parts of the community. National and regional fast food chains are augmented by great local options such as Rustler’s Steakhouse, Gilbert’s Chowder House, Bob’s Seafood, Masa Grill and many others.

Banking services are concentrated in North Windham, as are professional offices and personal services.

### *River Road/Turning Leaf Drive*

This activity center on Route 302 just to the south of the North Windham activity center described above. It was classified differently and considered separately from North Windham based on the lower intensity of uses. Even though there are banks, medical offices, more great local restaurants, and automobile and repair services found here, there are no “big boxes” in this area, and it has a different feel than the rest of North Windham. The difference in character between these two areas was noted and acknowledged in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Plan for North Windham, where this lower-intensity commercial area was identified as a gateway into North Windham. This area was identified as a Neighborhood Center in the SSM report.

### *Enterprise Drive*

This section of Route 302 is just north of the North Windham activity center. Similar to the River Road/Turning Leaf activity center above, it is still in what many consider “North Windham” but might be

considered a separate center based on the scale and types of uses. This center is in the vicinity of Seacoast Adventure Park, the adjacent office condominium development, and the commercial condominium projects on the corner of Enterprise Drive and directly across from Enterprise Drive on Crimson Drive.

In early 2015, the Town's first hotel in a branded chain opened its doors. The Microtel Suites by Wyndam Hotels opened in North Windham, between the intersections of Anglers Road/Whites Bridge Road and Enterprise Drive, across Route 302 from Seacoast Park.

This area was called out in the SSM effort as a Convenience Center. With the new hotel, relatively new development on Crimson Drive and with future development potential on the hotel site and within the Quarry Ridge Business Park on Enterprise Drive, this area could soon be, if not already be considered a Neighborhood Center that has more "gravity" (draws customers from a larger area) than a Convenience Center.

#### *Route 302 Rotary*

This area is located primarily on Route 302 on either side of the Route 302/Route 202 rotary close to the geographic center of Windham. Mercy Quick Care and Hancock lumber are located in this vicinity, as well as Windham Automotive, Seavey's Appliance, Hall Implement, Lee's Family Trailer, Pyro City Fireworks and other convenience retail and food services. This activity area was classified as a Convenience Center by SSM.

#### *Windham Center*

Located at the crossroads of Windham Center Road and Gray Road (Route 202), Windham Center is one of the original activity centers in Windham. Convenience food and grocery needs are served at Corsetti's, known for its pizza and breakfast sandwiches, as well as serving as a social crossroads during the busy morning times. Corsetti's benefits from the vehicle and foot traffic associated with the RSU School Campus and Town Office building nearby. For the purposes of this classification, the Windham Center activity area could also include the Windham Hill area near the crossroads of Windham Center Road and Pope Road, as well as the Popeville area at the crossroads of Pope Road and Gray Road. This activity area was classified as a Convenience Center by SSM.

#### *South Windham*

South Windham has a long history as a commercial and residential area in Windham. South Windham Village could be considered the traditional "downtown" for Windham, but from an economic activity standpoint, the Village has not rebounded since the closure of the Keddy Mill. SSM classified this Convenience Center around the Blue Seal store. For the purposes of this analysis, this Convenience Center could include the areas of South Windham Village along with the convenience shopping provided by Ruggiero's at the River Road and Gray Road and Thayer's Store on River Road and Newhall Road. It would also include the Dolby Funeral Home area, the Post Office on Gray Road, and the soccer field facility at Gambo Road.

#### **Home Occupations and Rural Economy**

Not all economic activities are in "commercial" areas.

This section will discuss:

- the Rural Economy
  - generally, not to the extent of the Agriculture & Forestry Chapter
  - WEDCs goals to support and grow this part of the economy.
- home based occupations in otherwise residential or rural areas
  - what role will these activities play in Town today?
  - What place is there for home occupations in the future? Any changes anticipated in how or where?

#### Infrastructure needs

Most of the discussion in this plan regarding infrastructure will occur in other chapters. For example, roads will be addressed in Transportation and water, sewer, gas and 3-phase power will be addressed in the Utilities chapter.

It is worth noting here where there are infrastructure deficits that need needed to be addressed in order to meet community and economic development goals.

#### Sewer

All of the residential and commercial development in North Windham is served by private subsurface wastewater systems (septic systems). To be sure, the larger users and systems that handle grease and other restaurant waste are more sophisticated engineered systems compared to the types of systems used in single family homes. However, the exclusive use of these systems in North Windham presents issues from several standpoints.

- Space required for development. Requiring every commercial development to find space on their own property to locate a septic field means that developers must purchase more land for a given use that would be required if the development were served by some type of sewer system.
- Limitations of types of commercial development. Certain types of commercial uses require a lot of water, like certain manufacturing uses and brewing. The rule of thumb when thinking about wastewater is “water in = water out” meaning that in general, big water users require big septic systems. Very large water users find a lack of sewer infrastructure a critical limitation when making decisions on where to locate or expand, even if public water is available.
- Inability to meet community development goals on septic systems. Some of the main goals from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Plan and the Economic Development Strategic Plan deal with increasing the number and diversity of jobs in North Windham. In addition, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Plan calls for increasing the number of residents in North Windham. These goals focusing increased density and diversity of uses in North Windham to create a strong sense of place where people choose to spend time, spend money, and find community will be difficult to fully realize or the reasons noted above.
- Aquifer/groundwater considerations. The Town has been monitoring nitrate levels in the groundwater for years. The presence of nitrates in groundwater is associated with septic

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systems. The level of nitrates in North Windham groundwater has been increasing over time, even accounting for seasonal variations in the levels of nitrates detected based on groundwater levels. In general the higher the groundwater level, the more water is in the ground, and the concentration of nitrates and other measurable pollutants (salt, suspended solids, organics, etc.) is lower based on dilution. In dryer times of the year, the lower the groundwater levels and the higher the concentrations of nitrates in the ground.

### **Broadband Internet**

Certain types of businesses and telecommuters require internet speeds that are currently not generally available in Windham. The WEDC is spearheading an effort with St. Joseph's College and the Towns of Raymond and Standish to connect to the high-speed fiber optic infrastructure that was installed around the state with federal stimulus funds as part of a plan to bring high-speed internet (1 gigabyte +) to rural Maine. This system is known as the "3-ring binder" network, and the closest point to this fiber "backbone" is in Standish at the intersection of Routes 35 and 114. It remains to be seen exactly how and on what timeline access to this infrastructure will be provided to North Windham or the Town more generally, but a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy needs a 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure. Access to this high-speed network will be important to expanding the options for Windham businesses in the future.

List status/extent of existing/missing infrastructure, evaluate adequacy and needs for:

- Roads
- Water & Sewer
- 3 phase power
- Broadband internet

### **Uniquely Windham**

What are Windham's unique assets such as recreational opportunities, historic architecture, civic events, etc. for economic growth?

### **Policies and Suggested Strategies to Implement Policies**

NOTE: BLUE HIGHLIGHTED ARE THE REQUIRED STATE GOALS AND POLICIES — WE CAN CUSTOMIZE

YELLOW HIGHLIGHTED ARE WEDC OBJECTIVES (POLICIES) OR GOALS (STRATEGIES)

GREEN HIGHLIGHTED ARE STATE & WEDC OVERLAP

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**Policy:** To support the type of economic development activity the community desires, reflecting the community's role in the region. (See WEDC Plan Objective 2, Support Business Growth and Prosperity)

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*Strategy 1. Enact or amend local ordinances to reflect the desired scale, design, intensity and location of future economic development.*

~~*Strategy 2. Define and create a true sense of place in North Windham and other villages within the Town. This effort will focus on issues of connectivity, parking, pedestrian and bikeway systems, and strategies customized for the strengths and scale of village in Windham.*~~

*Strategy 3. Continue to implement the Town's Economic Development Strategic Plan, and update this plan every 5 years.*

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*Strategy 4.*

*Strategy 5.*

**Policy:** To make a financial commitment, ~~if necessary,~~ to support desired economic development, ~~included including~~ needed public improvements. (See WEDC Plan, Objective 1, Plan for the Future.)

~~*Strategy 5. If appropriate, assign responsibility and provide financial support for economic development activities to the proper entity Windham Economic Development Corporation.*~~

~~*Strategy 6. If public investments are foreseen to support economic development, identify the mechanisms to be considered to finance public investments that support economic development them (local tax dollars, creating a tax increment financing district, a Community Development Block Grant or other grants, bonding, impact fees, development districts, etc.)*~~

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~~*Strategy. Develop a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that includes infrastructure projects in order to prioritize needed investments, allows the Town to incorporate local improvements with outside agency projects, (including MaineDOT, Portland Water District) and plan for required funding needs over time.*~~

~~*Strategy 7. Focus on implementing existing and future plans that support economic development and create a true sense of place in North Windham and other villages within the Town inof, Windham, (ie North Route 302, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Plan).*~~

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*Strategy: Implement the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Plan in a manner that creates a true town center.*

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*Strategy: Develop neighborhood or district plans for Windham Center and South Windham.*

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*Policy: To coordinate with regional development corporations and surrounding towns as necessary to support desired economic development.*

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*Strategy 7. Participate in any regional economic development planning efforts.*