

Town of Windham

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MEMO

DATE: March 4, 2016

TO: Windham Town Council

THROUGH: Tony Plante, Town Manager

FROM: Ben Smith, Planning Director *BWS*

Cc: Comprehensive Plan Review Team
Planning Department

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update –
Draft Future Land Use Map

The Planning Department has been tasked with managing the project of drafting an update to the 2003 Comprehensive Plan that will meet the state goals of the Growth Management Act. The Plan will develop a Vision for the community, and include goals and strategies for implementing that Vision.

Staff is pleased to report that the Comprehensive Plan Review Team is through the draft Inventory chapters and has developed a draft Future Land Use Map. This map is based on a review of the public input received as part of the visioning process that began in the fall of 2014, the data supplied by the Town and State that formed the basis of the Inventory chapters, and the plans, policies, and studies adopted by the Town going back to, and including, the 2003 Comprehensive Plan.

At its core, the map shows areas where the Town should be directing most of the growth that is projected over the next 10 years, and where are the places that most of that growth should be diverted from.

Note that the State requirement for the Future Land Use Map is to show the following areas as defined below:

- Growth Areas - an area that is designated in a community's comprehensive plan as suitable for orderly residential, commercial, or industrial development, or any combinations of those types of development and related infrastructure, and into which most development projected over 10 years is directed.
- Transition Areas - an area that is designated in a community's comprehensive plan as suitable for a share of projected residential, commercial, or industrial development but

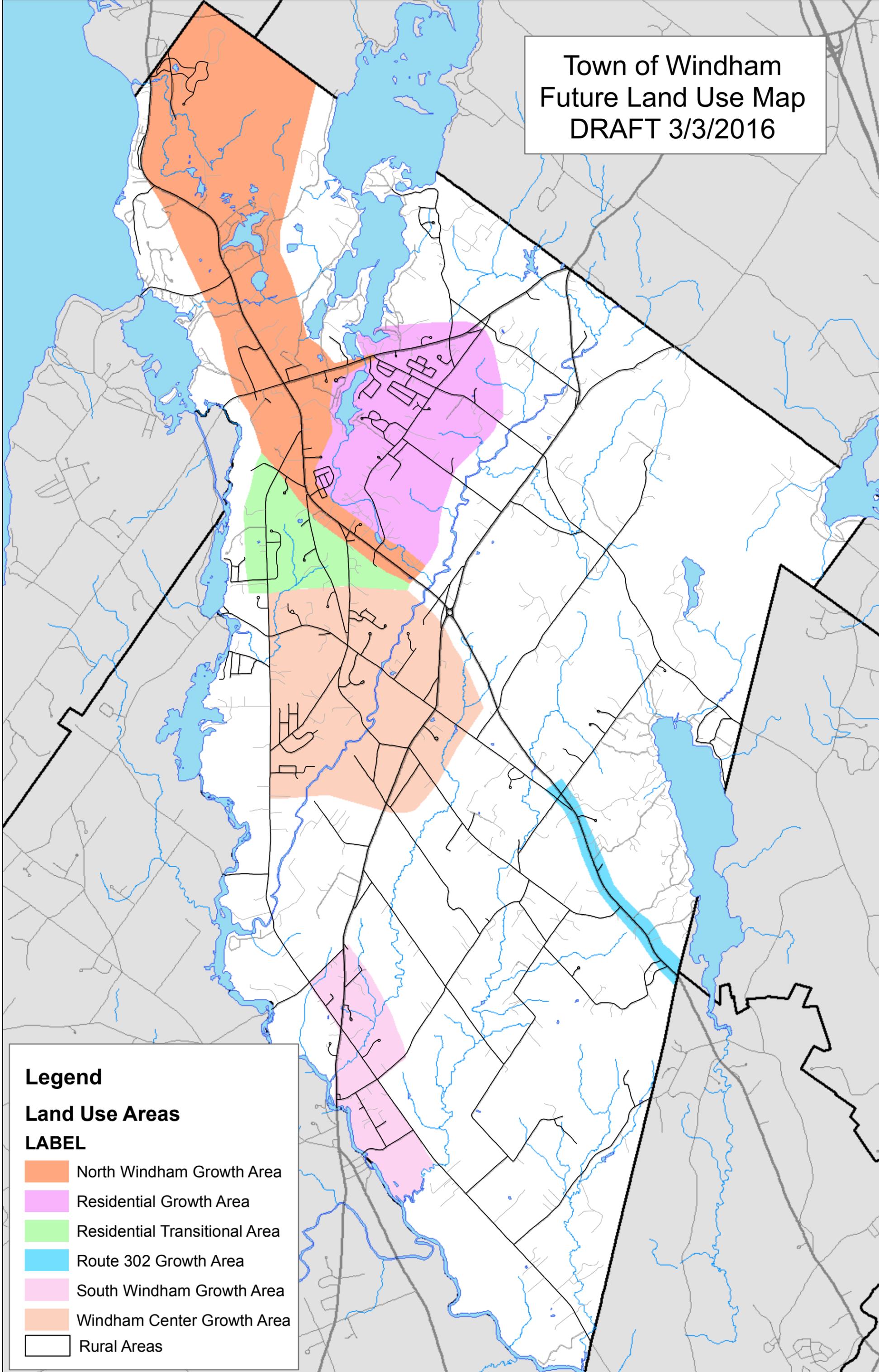
that is neither intended to accept the amount or density of development appropriate for a growth area nor intended to provide the level of protection for rural resources afforded in a rural area or critical rural area.

- Rural Areas - a geographic area that is identified and designated in a community's comprehensive plan as an area that is deserving of some level of regulatory protection from unrestricted development for purposes that may include, but are not limited to, supporting agriculture, forestry, mining, open space, wildlife habitat, fisheries habitat, and scenic lands, and away from which most development projected over 10 years is diverted.

Please note that the attached narrative is meant to provide some additional detail, guidance and vision for just what each of these areas on the map are meant to represent. Not all growth areas are the same, and some rural areas may need to be treated differently than other areas in the future. For example, it is envisioned that the North Windham Growth Area and Windham Center Growth Areas will each build on their own strengths and evolve along separate paths that will make them great community assets in the future. Some rural areas may be worthy of special protections beyond the Rural Area designation, that will protect rural economic activities like mineral extraction and forestry, important agricultural soils, or areas that are sensitive for environmental reasons.

Finally, the Review Team wanted to note that this draft map is very similar to the Future Land Use Map in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan. The summary of the discussion at the meeting on February 25, was that the current map from the 2003 Plan is not a bad product and needs little updating, but the map alone was not enough to shape and direct growth in Windham between 2003 and now. Thinking about how to implement the adopted Plan update should be a priority for the Town Council as soon as the current Plan update is adopted.

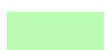
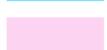
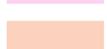
Town of Windham
Future Land Use Map
DRAFT 3/3/2016



Legend

Land Use Areas

LABEL

-  North Windham Growth Area
-  Residential Growth Area
-  Residential Transitional Area
-  Route 302 Growth Area
-  South Windham Growth Area
-  Windham Center Growth Area
-  Rural Areas

From visioning work associated with the development of the Core Values and Vision Statement in January 2015, updated based on Review Team discussions in January and February 2016...

North Windham continues the transformation that has already begun from a regional retail and convenience center to true town center with a mix of uses and activities that is a destination within the Greater Portland region. As the 21st Century Downtown Master Plan is implemented, North Windham evolves into a place where people chose to live, work and play due to improved traffic flow, the creation of pedestrian and bicycle networks, quality architecture and streetscapes, and open space. Activity in North Windham is bolstered as more homes and mixed-uses develop within the core commercial area.

Residents find a more diversified jobs center in North Windham. The diversification in jobs is led by the traditionally strong retail sector and supported by gains in manufacturing, restaurants, and professional offices. This growth as a job center is enabled by smart investments in infrastructure needed to support these activities.

South Windham attracts new village-scale residential growth by capitalizing on the neighborhood's assets including a rebuilt River Road, the existing sewer system, improvements to Town-owned spaces (including streets), state improvements to the Mountain Division Trail, and access to the Presumpscot River. New single family homes on small lots and town-house style multifamily unit buildings are built next to and among the existing, upgraded and refurbished housing stock. New residents support small, local businesses on Main Street. Cooperation with the Town of Gorham and the Little Falls community on the other side of the Presumpscot ensures that a revitalized South Windham melds with Little Falls as a single community.

If North Windham is the commercial core of Windham, then Windham Center is the civic core. Windham Center takes advantage of the location of school and municipal facilities, along with the Windham Land Trust's Black Brook Preserve, the skate park, and the Community Garden, to become a different type of "village" in the geographic center of the Town. This "civic village" focuses on increasing the number of single-and two-family homes on smaller lots, resulting in a neighborhood that is attractive to families with school-age children who want to live within walking distance of schools, the library, recreation facilities, playing fields, and conserved open-space.

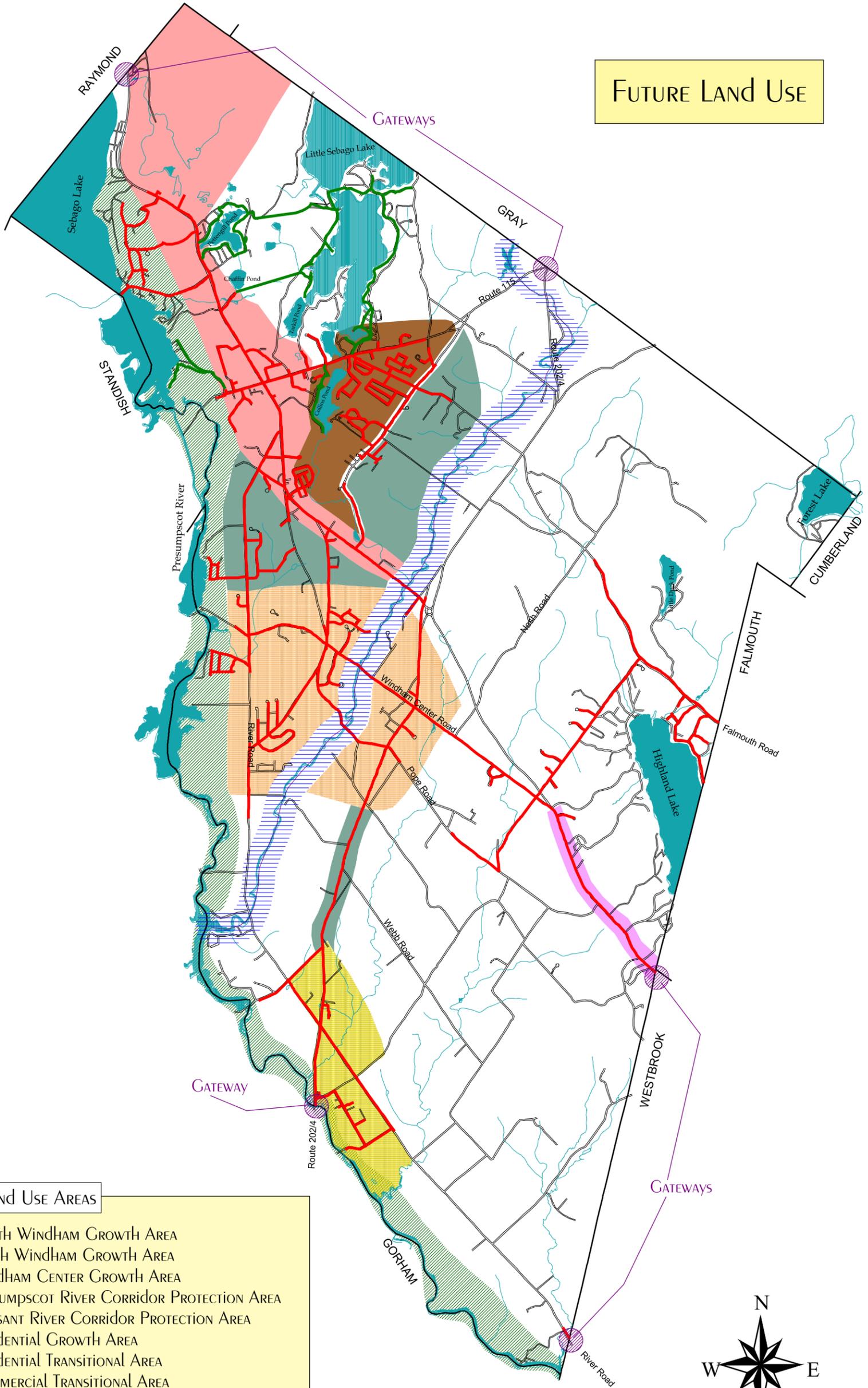
Other existing residential neighborhoods (such as those in the Varney Mill Road area, the Cornerbrook and Brookhaven neighborhoods just off Roosevelt Trail, and the Timberhill and Evergreen neighborhoods along Park Road) are valued for their sense of community. The character of these areas remains essentially unchanged. These neighborhoods accommodate limited additional single family homes that fit the existing character of these neighborhoods, either within the neighborhoods as "infill" development or on adjacent parcels that are incorporated into the existing neighborhoods.

An important gateway area to the community on Route 302 near the town line with Westbrook will continue to see new commercial development. Through a focus on building a small commercial node centered on the Albion Road and Roosevelt Trail intersection, along with the implementation of design guidelines as new and existing businesses continue to evolve, the area will become a valuable community asset and a welcoming and scenic entry to Windham.

Rural areas of Windham are valued by the community for the recreational, scenic, cultural, and quality of life benefits they provide. The Town continues to recognize that agriculture and forestry are important pieces of the local economy and works to encourage and support new agricultural uses on the rural landscape. The community identifies the most important and scenic open spaces and undeveloped properties including agricultural land, and works with land owners and partners in the non-profit community to permanently protect these areas to proactively ensure that there will be conserved open space and productive working farmland available for future generations, and that the most scenic and iconic views of rural Windham are preserved.

COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN TOWN OF WINDHAM, MAINE

FUTURE LAND USE



FUTURE LAND USE AREAS	
	NORTH WINDHAM GROWTH AREA
	SOUTH WINDHAM GROWTH AREA
	WINDHAM CENTER GROWTH AREA
	PRESUMPCOT RIVER CORRIDOR PROTECTION AREA
	PLEASANT RIVER CORRIDOR PROTECTION AREA
	RESIDENTIAL GROWTH AREA
	RESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONAL AREA
	COMMERCIAL TRANSITIONAL AREA
	RURAL AREAS
WATER LINES	
	SEASONAL
	YEAR-ROUND

