

MASTER PLAN 2018

Town of Auburn, New Hampshire



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Master Plan Update was completed with the input and assistance of many community members, residents, and business owners of Auburn.

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I INTRODUCTION

Auburn Plan and Purpose

The Master Plan is created and adopted to provide a vision for the Town of Auburn, and to identify the necessary steps to reach that chosen vision. While the vision may take longer to realize, the Plan is focused on identifying implementation efforts over the next ten years. This effort focuses mostly on the physical aspects of the community, which include public facilities and infrastructure and how to best direct the form, type, and density of private development.

In accordance with State law, the Plan provides a basis for the Zoning Ordinance, which is Auburn's primary tool for regulating development. A vibrant and resilient community requires balancing diverse issues. This Master Plan addresses each of these issues and works to establish an appropriate balance for the future of Auburn. Our community must also be prepared to address local and global changes, such as shifting demographics, climatic change, retail shifts, and new energy opportunities. The Plan accomplishes this by delivering a clear vision and actionable implementation strategies that will serve as a work plan for the community.



Pictured Above: A view from Route 121 in Auburn, NH
Source: Monika McGillicuddy

Master Plan Adoption

The adoption of a master plan is essential for several reasons, but most importantly, a master plan is a legal pre-requisite to the adoption of a zoning ordinance. Specifically, under New Hampshire law (RSA 674:18), a Planning Board must adopt a master plan containing a vision section and a land use section before a municipal zoning ordinance is adopted. The foundation of this Master Plan update is based upon extensive research and analysis of existing physical, economic, and social conditions, an understanding of the regional context, as well as projections of the future growth of Auburn.

This Master Plan update draws from the Town's previous plans adopted in 2007 (by Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission), 2002 and 1996. Rather than replacing these plans, the 2017 Auburn Master Plan builds upon the foundation laid in the past, to effectively plan for the future. This update also provides the Planning Board with information necessary for the Town to address critical land use related concerns today through existing and innovative measures. The 2017 Auburn Master Plan is not a report of the past, but rather is a blue print for the future. The plan should be updated and revised every 5 to 10 years as the Town's conditions, goals, and objectives evolve.

What is a Master Plan?

A master plan is an official, public document that serves as the Town's development plan and land use policy. The basic purpose of a master plan is to assess existing resources and project future growth. Perhaps more importantly, it is a planning tool which can be used to answer questions of policy such as - Where and what type of development should occur in Auburn? Ultimately, a master plan is a strategy for the Town's future, which sets the stage for the implementation of specific programs, policies, and regulations designed to achieve the Town's visions and goals.

Pursuant to RSA 674:1, the preparation and amendment of the Master Plan is the duty of the Planning Board. Furthermore, RSA 674:1-II states that "it shall be part of the Planning Board's duties to consult with and advise public officials and agencies, public utility companies, civic, educational, professional, research and other organizations, and to consult with citizens, for the purposes of protecting or carrying out of the master plan as well as for making recommendations relating to the development of the municipality."

The description and purpose, as well as details concerning the preparation and adoption of the master plan, are set forth in New Hampshire state law at RSA 674:2(II).

2 VISION AND GOALS

During the writing of this Master Plan update, the Auburn Planning Board hosted a community forum to gather input from residents on the vision for the future. The vision and goals presented in this chapter were derived from the findings of the forum, previous public input efforts in Auburn, master planning work sessions hosted by the Planning Board, and the information gathering while drafting the chapters included in this Master Plan. At the regular monthly Master Plan Workshop Meetings, the Planning Board reviewed and updated the goals from the 2007 Master Plan and identified updated goals for the town. The actions the Town will need to take, in order to fully implement the goals and vision of the Master Plan, are included in the Implementation Chapter.

A Vision for Auburn

“Over the next ten years Auburn will remain a rural residential community with a distinct small town atmosphere and a commitment to the stewardship of the shared natural resources within the region.”

The community’s character will be further defined by the protected natural and cultural resources, a small village area, mixed-use commercial districts, and ample recreation opportunities. In order to sustain this small-town atmosphere, Auburn will need to implement planning practices that direct growth and development in a manner that will protect the distinct character, while meeting the needs of the community.

Regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives will be advanced to promote energy conservation and renewable energy production, new housing alternatives that provide a greater diversity of homes for a diversity of ages and income levels, transportation alternatives, strategic conservation, and higher density mixed use development where the infrastructure is available. Auburn will accomplish all of this while improving educational facilities, creating community facilities and programs for all ages, and sustaining a reasonable tax rate through regular communication and engagement with residents and property owners.



Goals

REGIONAL CONCERNS

- Actively participate in regional dialogue and initiatives that may be of benefit or concern to Auburn, so that the town's needs and interests are shared and heard at the regional level (i.e. Route 93 expansion).

HOUSING

- Encourage the use of energy efficient construction techniques including siting, landscaping, building envelope, energy efficient appliances, high efficiency heating and cooling systems, and renewable energy production.
- Encourage a diverse housing stock, including senior housing, that will ensure a broad range of housing costs and opportunities in Auburn.
- Encourage housing consistent with the rural character of Auburn while offering a range of residential living opportunities.



Pictured Above: Lake Massabesic

NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE

- Recognize the important contribution that the Town's natural resources to the overall character and well-being of the Town. Protect and manage Auburn's valuable **open space resources**.
- Protect Auburn's valuable water resources including wetlands, upland buffers, water recharge areas, and drinking water supply.
- Permanently protect Auburn's natural assets that contribute to public health and safety, economic vitality, and quality of life.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- Plan and provide for quality community facilities and services to effectively meet the municipal, social, educational, and other service needs of Auburn's residents and businesses in an efficient manner.
- Provide suitable recreation opportunities – land, programs, and facilities – to service the town's existing and projected populations. Encourage the long-term use, maintenance, and improvement of existing community and recreational facilities.

TRANSPORTATION

- Plan for and maintain an efficient and balanced transportation system that allows for the safe travel through town using a variety of modes while protecting the aesthetic, scenic, and rural qualities of town roads.
- Evaluate and coordinate new bus route between Exit 1 and Exit 2 with Manchester.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Encourage economic development and expansion that conform to the natural features of the land and the town's rural character, and contributes to Auburn's economic well-being.
- Encourage denser mixed use development in the areas where infrastructure is available to increase housing alternatives and promote transportation alternatives.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Promote the preservation and protection of Auburn's historic resources and cultural heritage.

LAND USE

- Preserve those community features that contribute to Auburn's current rural character and quality of life.
- Recognize and appreciate the unique role of the various land use patterns in Auburn and how they contribute to the economic well-being of the town.

3 REGIONAL CONCERNS

The Town of Auburn is located in a dynamic region of the state that places the community at the center of New Hampshire’s economic activity and transportation network. Auburn is part of a network of communities in this region facing the challenges of growth and land use changes in a rapidly changing world. Coping with this rate of change will require regular communication and collaboration. Additionally, new projects, such as the widening of interstate 93 continue to present opportunities and challenges for Auburn to consider. By being actively engaged in regional planning initiatives, the Town of Auburn can participate and plan for its future.

Moving Southern New Hampshire Forward 2015-2035

In 2015 the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) completed a regional plan titled *“Moving Southern New Hampshire Forward 2015 - 2035.”* The emphasis and focus of this plan is on sustainability as a means to providing for the needs of current and future generations. This regional vision of sustainability is intended to promote fiscally sound and socially responsible long term decision-making that will enhance the ecology, economy, empowerment, efficiency, and health of the region.

The goals identified in this vision can be further summarized as:

- A strong sense of community and local identity;
- Maintaining diverse settlement and land use patterns; and
- Expanding local transportation choices and opportunities.

These goals are reflected in the following Value and Vision Statements for the SNHPC Region:

Traditional Settlement Patterns: Historical settlement patterns vary from community to community and regional values reflect appreciation for this diversity; residents want future development to largely occur in areas that are already developed.

Housing Choices: Residents demonstrate a preference for a range of different housing types and neighborhoods, but everyone values housing choices that are safe and affordable for all.

Figure 3.1: Regional Map of NH



Transportation Choices: Expanding and improving upon our local and regional transportation choices for all modes of travel, including bicycling, walking and public transit; choice needs to be a priority to enhance our region.

Natural Resource Functions and Quality: Value for rural living is deeply rooted in enjoyment of the beautiful, quality environment; residents want to keep this way of life and protect the functions and quality of the environment and natural resources.

Community and Economic Vitality: Residents treasure the strong bonds in their communities and want to ensure they address the needs of seniors, attract youth, and serve every child and adult in between. They value the community strength that comes from quality schools, enhanced job creation and expanded economic development opportunities, including small business growth and local agriculture.

Climate Change and Energy Efficiency: Residents support renewable energy choices such as solar, wind, and geothermal that are climate-friendly. They support policies for higher energy efficiency standards in new buildings and incentives for home energy efficiency improvements. Many residents are also concerned about various weather-related events.

Local Decision-Making: Residents believe that equity is found in local decision making and strongly value being involved in their communities as well as collaborating regionally.

Regional Partnership Opportunities

There are a number of opportunities that the Town of Auburn may utilize in order to partner with neighboring communities in an effort to collaborate on these land use related planning efforts. Primarily, this can occur through the strengthening of day-to-day communications with the surrounding municipalities. Open communications between communities allows potential regional impacts to be identified and resolved as a joint effort, and can minimize unintended consequences of development.

In an effort to further strengthen its relationship with neighbors, Auburn can utilize the review of Developments of Regional Impact (DRI). Per RSAs 36:54 through 58, all municipalities are required to notify abutting communities of any developments of regional impact. SNHPC has also created *Developments of Regional Impact Guidelines* to facilitate this effort and establish equitable standards for all communities. The intent is to open dialogue between communities in the SNHPC region, encourage all communities to utilize equal standards, provide equal consideration to neighbors, and minimize potential conflicting points of view between communities.

Auburn should actively seek the input of abutting communities and the SNHPC if it has a potential development of regional impact. Conversely, if Auburn is notified of a development in an adjacent community, it should use the opportunity to submit comments to the other municipality so that Auburn's interests and needs are heard.

SNHPC is available to assist both municipalities as a neutral party when reviewing potential developments of regional impact.

In addition to the Southern NH Planning Commission there are a variety of organizations and agencies that work in a regional capacity that may be of assistance to the Town of Auburn when planning regional efforts and mitigating regional impacts. The following is a brief description of three of the possible partnership opportunities:

The Metro Center – This is a collaborative effort of the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce and the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development. The Metro Center unites Manchester and 13 surrounding communities, including Auburn, with the Chamber and NHDRED to promote regional level economic development. The Metro Center provides a forum to address regional issues such as new businesses recruitment, I-93 expansion, Airport related issues, and groundwater withdrawals. The forum will allow the participating communities an opportunity to react and take a proactive approach to various issues they may collectively face.

Rockingham County Conservation District – The Rockingham County Conservation District (RCCD) has been operating since 1946 as a legal state entity. The RCCD provides a variety of services to private landowners, municipalities, and other local interest groups on conservation and natural resource management. They provide technical assistance and guidance on issues such as surface and ground water quality and quantity, non-point source pollution, erosion and sedimentation, storm water management, flooding, wetlands, forestlands, wildlife habitats, and solid waste. The Town currently partners with the Rockingham Conservation District and should continue to do so in the future.

Transportation Advisory Committees – As a function of the Bylaws of the Southern NH Planning Commission, SNHPC can form technical advisory committees (TAC) by functional categories such as housing, intergovernmental relations, transportation, water supply and water pollution abatement, solid waste management, land use, etc. The most common and active at SNHPC is devoted to transportation issues. All member communities have representation on the TAC. The TAC presents regional transportation projects and discusses their feasibility and impacts across the region. Additionally, the TAC provides policy recommendations, on behalf of the municipalities, to the SNHPC staff and the Metropolitan Planning Organization.

4 DEMOGRAPHICS

Auburn’s central location and convenient access to the New Hampshire highway system is a driving force behind its development activity. The Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) region that Auburn is located within, is projected to experience increased population growth, reaching a total of roughly 320,000 people by the year 2035, compared to the approximate current population of 274,854 people. Much of this growth is anticipated to occur due to new business growth and development and related in-migration attracted to the region, as a result of the widening of I-93 from two to three travel lanes in both directions between Massachusetts and the City of Manchester. This improved, major highway will make it much easier for commuters and interstate commerce to travel between the two states and will likely result in attracting more businesses and people to the region. This documented in recently adopted region plan titled Moving Southern NH Forward.

As more people move to the region over the next 20 years, some people and businesses will choose to live in smaller communities which have convenient highway access, good schools, adequate public facilities and resources, and most importantly, a sense of community and a rural lifestyle. With this increase in growth, additional pressures will be placed on local government to expand services, improve public facilities and roads, and provide adequate schools and recreational facilities, including providing necessary services to support an aging population. All of these factors must be considered as Auburn plans how to guide future development, infrastructure investments, and land conservation.



Population

In 1850 the Town of Auburn had a total of 810 residents. Over the next hundred years the population grew to 1,158. By 1970 the community was home to 2,035 residents and in the midst of a period of growth and development. As of 1990 Auburn had grown to 4,085 residents and this rate of growth continued through the year 2000. More recently the rate of growth has slowed somewhat in the community and the region, and as of 2015 Auburn was estimated to have a population of 5,292 (US Census).

Figure 4.1: Population Change in the SNHPC Region

| Municipality | Census | | | 1990-2010 | | |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | Absolute Change | Percent Change | Growth Rate |
| Auburn | 4,085 | 4,682 | 4,953 | 868 | 21.25% | 1.06% |
| Bedford | 12,563 | 18,274 | 21,203 | 8,640 | 68.77% | 3.44% |
| Candia | 3,557 | 3,911 | 3,909 | 352 | 9.90% | 0.49% |
| Chester | 2,691 | 3,792 | 4,768 | 2,077 | 77.18% | 3.86% |
| Deerfield | 3,124 | 3,678 | 4,280 | 1,156 | 37.00% | 1.85% |
| Derry | 29,603 | 34,021 | 33,109 | 3,506 | 11.84% | 0.59% |
| Goffstown | 14,621 | 16,929 | 17,651 | 3,030 | 20.72% | 1.04% |
| Hooksett | 9,002 | 11,721 | 13,451 | 4,449 | 49.42% | 2.47% |
| Londonderry | 19,781 | 23,236 | 24,129 | 4,348 | 21.98% | 1.10% |
| Manchester | 99,332 | 107,006 | 109,565 | 10,233 | 10.30% | 0.52% |
| New Boston | 3,214 | 4,138 | 5,321 | 2,107 | 65.56% | 3.28% |
| Raymond | 8,713 | 9,674 | 10,138 | 1,425 | 16.35% | 0.82% |
| Weare | 6,193 | 7,776 | 8,785 | 2,592 | 41.85% | 2.09% |
| Windham | 9,020 | 10,845 | 13,592 | 4,572 | 50.69% | 2.53% |
| Total | 225,499 | 259,683 | 274,854 | 49,355 | 21.89% | 1.09% |

Source: SNHPC and US Census

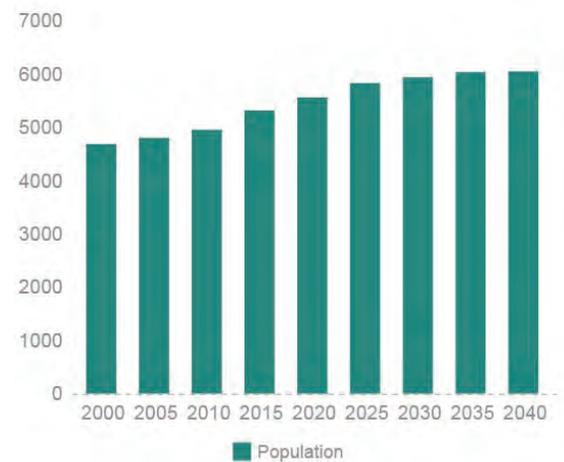
Community populations can fluctuate due to a variety of factors, including: changes in national and regional economic conditions; employment opportunities; cost and availability of land; quality of transportation networks; availability of public facilities and services; and state and local tax structures. As we attempt to plan for the future and forecast the potential population change that Auburn may experience, we must recognize a variety of assumptions that have been made in regards to the future trends for Auburn and the Region. Population projections are a planning tool designed to aid in providing general direction as to what is likely to be expected in the future based on the stated assumptions and are not a guarantee of actual population.

In Auburn’s case the *New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning* estimates that the population growth will continue at a slower rate and then level out as we approach 2040. By 2025 Auburn is projected to grow to a total of 5,828 residents. This estimate must continue to be evaluated over the coming years.

Age

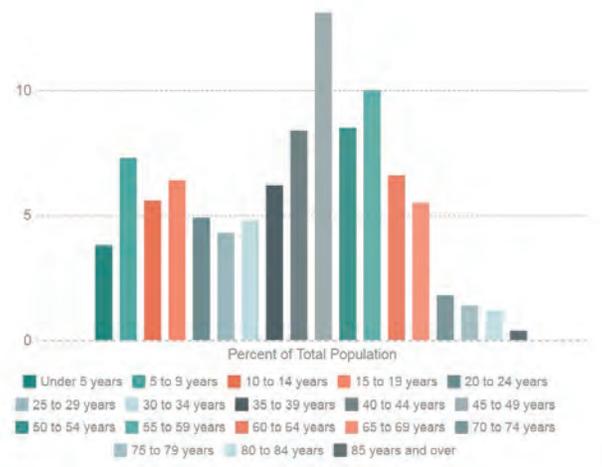
Auburn continues to age as a community and now has an average age of 43.9. This is slightly higher than the state average of 42 years of age. The median age of Auburn’s residents in 1990 was 32.7 years old and increased to 36.8 in 2000. While the average age of residents is of interest, the distribution of the population by age may be more important as Auburn plans for the future. The population is fairly well distributed across the age groups with the largest group composed of resident 40 to 59 years of age.

Figure 4.2: Population Growth Trends in Auburn



Source: NH Office of Strategic Initiatives

Figure 4.3: Age Trends in Auburn



Source: NH Office of Strategic Initiatives

Median Age:
43.9

The population of residents over 70 years of age is fairly small now but will likely grow over the coming decade. Looking beyond Auburn’s borders to the region, we see that the number of individuals 45 to 64 years old has increased over the past decade, but there has been a significant decrease in the 25-29 and 30-34 age groups. This appears to be in line with trends seen at the state level, where the 45+ age groups have seen large increases in the past 10 years and the young adult group has seen a large decrease. New Hampshire is growing older and the Southern New Hampshire region is in line with that trend. In a state-wide analysis of demographic trends, the *Carsey Institute at UNH* explains that “migration contributes to this situation, but the primary driver is the aging-in-place of those currently residing in New Hampshire”.

Housing Units and Household Size

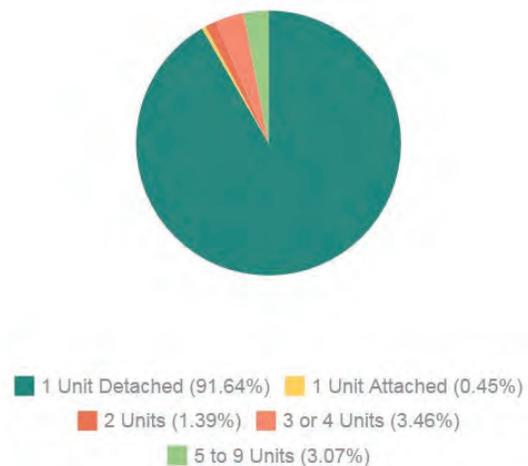
As of 2017, Auburn has a supply of 2,021 housing units. These units are primarily single family detached units. Single family housing units are also the predominant housing type in the region, however, they account for 56.19 percent of the housing units. Duplex and multi-family units account for 41.19 percent of the housing units in the region and manufactured homes and other housing types provide 2.62 percent of all housing units.

Within the region, Auburn experienced a modest increase in new residential units between 1990 and 2010 with 459 units constructed. During this 20-year period the communities immediately bordering Manchester, including Auburn, Bedford, Goffstown, Hooksett, Londonderry, and Derry, accounted for approximately 82 percent of the region’s housing unit increase. Manchester and the surrounding six towns, listed above, accounted for 71 percent of the regions housing units in 2010. The total increase in housing units for the whole region between 1990 and 2010 was 21,432.

While the number and type of dwelling units in Auburn is important, we also want to understand what the average number of residents is per dwelling unit and how that may be changing. Currently the average household size in Auburn is 2.54 persons per unit which is down from 2.96 in the year 2000, and 3.14 in 1990. According to the US Census, this trend reflects a combination of factors that include the current divorce rate, an increase in single person households, and smaller family sizes. As a result, a small population increase requires more residential units than similar population increases in the past.



Figure 4.4: Types of Housing Units



Source: SNHPC and US Census

Figure 4.5: Housing Units

| Number of Housing Units | | | | Percent change | |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Town | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 1990-2000 | 2000-2010 |
| Auburn | 1,355 | 1,622 | 1,814 | 19.70% | 11.84% |
| Bedford | 4,156 | 6,401 | 7,634 | 54.02% | 19.26% |
| Candia | 1,192 | 1,384 | 1,494 | 16.11% | 7.95% |
| Chester | 924 | 1,247 | 1,596 | 34.96% | 27.99% |
| Deerfield | 1,227 | 1,406 | 1,743 | 14.59% | 23.97% |
| Derry | 11,869 | 12,735 | 13,277 | 7.30% | 4.26% |
| Goffstown | 5,022 | 5,798 | 6,341 | 15.45% | 9.37% |
| Hooksett | 3,484 | 4,307 | 5,184 | 23.62% | 20.36% |
| Londonderry | 6,739 | 7,718 | 8,771 | 14.53% | 13.64% |
| Manchester | 44,361 | 45,892 | 49,288 | 3.45% | 7.40% |
| New Boston | 1,138 | 1,462 | 1,967 | 28.47% | 34.54% |
| Raymond | 3,350 | 3,710 | 4,254 | 10.75% | 14.66% |
| Weare | 2,417 | 2,828 | 3,466 | 17.00% | 22.56% |
| Windham | 3,327 | 3,906 | 5,164 | 17.40% | 32.21% |
| Total SNHPC Region | 90,561 | 100,416 | 111,993 | 10.88% | 11.53% |

Source: SNHPC and US Census

Income

As of 2015 the median household income in Auburn is \$104,231 which is up from the 2010 figure of \$92,938. Elsewhere in the region median household incomes range from \$54,282 in Manchester to \$131,490 in Bedford. It is important to note that approximately 20% of Auburn's households live on less than \$50,000 per year. It is also important to recognize that 127 Auburn residents (2.5% of the population) are currently living below the poverty level.



Commuting Patterns

The mean travel time to work for an Auburn resident is 28.9 minutes. This represents an increase in travel time to work from 25.6 minutes in 1990 to 26.7 minutes in 2000. Currently 87% of working residents commute out of town. Most of these commuters are headed for Manchester, Nashua, and Londonderry, but some are heading out of state. The data in Figure 4.6 is from the *Regional Plan* and shows how Auburn compared to other communities in the region during the last Census.

Currently 89% of the commuters in Auburn are driving alone in an automobile. Only 6% of commuters are carpooling and 1% reported that they are walking to work. Also, 3% of Auburn’s work force works from home and the remaining 1% travel to work by other means.

Figure 4.6 Commuting Patterns

| Municipality | Commuting Out of Town- 2010 | | | | | Mean Travel Time to Work |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Total OOT Commuters | % of Labor Force Commuting OOT | Most Common Commute To | 2nd Most Common Commute To | 3rd Most Common Commute To | |
| Auburn | 2,455 | 81.48% | Manchester | Nashua | Londonderry | 27.2 |
| Bedford | 7,622 | 70.18% | Manchester | Nashua | Merrimack | 25.6 |
| Candia | 1,863 | 75.52% | Manchester | Salem | Raymond | 27.3 |
| Chester | 2,117 | 79.80% | Manchester | Derry | Salem | 33.5 |
| Deerfield | 1,941 | 75.26% | Manchester | Concord | Salem | 36.3 |
| Derry | 14,064 | 70.36% | Manchester | | Salem | 30.7 |
| Goffstown | 7,589 | 72.75% | Manchester | Bedford | Concord | 24.1 |
| Hooksett | 5,651 | 71.26% | Manchester | Concord | Bedford | 24.7 |
| Londonderry | 9,623 | 66.27% | Manchester | Nashua | Salem | 29.6 |
| Manchester | 29,291 | 47.36% | Bedford | Nashua | Londonderry | 22.8 |
| New Boston | 2,287 | 74.11% | Manchester | Bedford | Merrimack | 30.1 |
| Raymond | 4,110 | 68.42% | Manchester | Exeter | Epping | 33.8 |
| Weare | 4,253 | 79.73% | Manchester | Concord | Nashua | 36.2 |
| Windham | 5,510 | 75.12% | Salem | Boston, MA | Manchester | 34.3 |
| Total | 92,866 | 58.76% | | | | |

Source: SNHPC and US Census

5 HOUSING

Housing is a significant planning issue for Auburn, as it relates to each resident’s basic need for shelter, accounts for most of the energy use in the community, impacts the land use pattern and character of the community over time, and creates demand for municipal services. While housing concerns have traditionally focused on the existing quantity, variety, and price range of units, there is a need to look beyond these characteristics to ensure that adequate housing is available to meet the needs of future residents. Demographic analysis shows that while the population is aging in Auburn, and throughout the state of New Hampshire, there is also a growing ‘Millennial’ generation who will be seeking housing opportunities in the coming years. These factors, along with a decreasing number of people per household, and a widening economic divide, will require new housing alternatives and new approaches to planning for housing in Auburn.

The *Regional Comprehensive Plan* identifies the region a desirable place to live, work and play. This Plan also projects that Auburn and surrounding communities will continue to experience population growth due to their attractiveness. An examination of the existing housing conditions in the Region has identified that housing production has begun to be outpaced by population. As a result, the existing housing stock does not meet the current demand for housing in the region. This section of the Master Plan examines this situation and is informed by an inventory of the existing housing supply, examination of the issues related to affordability, and identification of specific implementation actions for the community to pursue.



Households

The difference between a household and a family is that a household may consist of only one person, but a family must contain at least two members. The members of a multi-person household need not be related to each other, while the members of a family are related. In Auburn the average household size is 2.54 persons, and the majority of households own their housing unit (91.8%). Only 8.2% of households rent their housing unit.

Figure 5.1 SNHPC Households

| HOUSE-HOLD SIZE | Total households | Average household size | Average family size | Percent Owner-Occupied Households | Percent Renter-Occupied Households |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Auburn | 1,765 | 2.81 | 3.08 | 91.8% | 8.2% |
| Bedford | 7,364 | 2.81 | 3.19 | 86.6% | 13.4% |
| Candia | 1,450 | 2.70 | 3.04 | 92.3% | 7.7% |
| Chester | 1,534 | 3.04 | 3.28 | 92.7% | 7.3% |
| Deerfield | 1,537 | 2.78 | 3.09 | 87.4% | 12.6% |
| Derry | 12,537 | 2.62 | 3.10 | 66.7% | 33.3% |
| Goffstown | 6,068 | 2.56 | 3.00 | 80.3% | 19.7% |
| Hooksett | 4,926 | 2.59 | 3.01 | 82.7% | 17.3% |
| Londonderry | 8,438 | 2.86 | 3.21 | 88.0% | 12.0% |
| Manchester | 45,766 | 2.34 | 2.99 | 47.3% | 52.7% |
| New Boston | 1,883 | 2.83 | 3.15 | 85.7% | 14.3% |
| Raymond | 3,925 | 2.58 | 2.98 | 81.7% | 18.3% |
| Weare | 3,128 | 2.81 | 3.13 | 86.2% | 13.8% |
| Windham | 4,724 | 2.87 | 3.25 | 91.5% | 8.5% |
| Total SNHPC Region | 105,045 | 2.56 | 3.11 | 67.0% | 33.0% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

Auburn’s average household size of 2.54 persons per unit is higher than the figures for the region (2.56) and the State of New Hampshire (2.46). However, the average household size in Auburn has decreased since 2000, at which time it was 2.96 persons per unit and in 1990 it was 3.14 persons. These changes are an indication of the need for additional units and consideration of the type of housing that may be desired by residents in the coming years.

Housing Unit Supply

Over the past twenty-seven years Auburn has experienced an increase in housing units, but the pace of that increase has slowed since 2000. From 1990 to 2,000 the number of housing units in Auburn increased by 20%, and from 2000 to 2010 slowed to a 12% increase. Auburn was one of the fastest growing communities in the region until 2000, and is now experiencing an average rate of housing demand in the region. The majority of the housing units that currently exist in Auburn are single family detached units (94.6%), and it is very likely that existing and future residents will be looking for some different housing alternatives in the coming decade.



A better indication of Auburn’s housing supply can be seen by comparing the Town’s housing stock to the other communities located within the regional planning area. Despite Auburn’s growth, it remains one of the least populated towns in the region. In 2010, Auburn was fourth in the region for having the least number of dwellings. This is especially remarkable considering its location adjacent to Manchester, and Routes 93 and 101. The biggest reason for this is that a significant amount of land in town is owned by Manchester Water Works (MWW).

Since 2010 the number of building permits issued per year in Auburn has rebounded to approximately thirty. These new units bring Auburn to 2,099 total housing units as of 2016. As new units are constructed the availability of a diverse housing supply is a critical element to monitor. The housing stock in the Town of Auburn is comprised predominately of single-family homes, and lacks some of the diversity that might best meet the needs of the population and more efficiently use the remaining available land. Allowing a broader range of housing unit types will permit the market to respond to future demand in a way that is complementary to Auburn’s Vision Future Land Use Plan.

Figure 5.2 Year Built

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Built 2010 to 2013 | 61 | 3.00% |
| Built 2000 to 2009 | 200 | 9.90% |
| Built 1990 to 1999 | 277 | 13.70% |
| Built 1980 to 1989 | 586 | 29.00% |
| Built 1970 to 1979 | 260 | 12.90% |
| Built 1960 to 1969 | 105 | 5.20% |
| Built 1950 to 1959 | 126 | 6.20% |
| Built 1940 to 1949 | 92 | 4.60% |
| Built 1939 or earlier | 314 | 15.50% |
| Total housing units | 2,021 | 100% |

The overall condition of the existing housing supply must also be considered but cannot be described by a single criterion. A number of physical characteristics, such as the age of the structure, the type of plumbing and heating facilities, and occupancy conditions are used to provide an approximate assessment of the quality of a municipality’s housing stock. The age of existing housing units is one general indicator of quality. Older houses may be experiencing structural problems, increasing maintenance costs, may not be as energy-efficient as newer homes, or may need replacement of electrical wiring or plumbing.

Of the existing housing units in Auburn, 15.5% percent were built prior to 1939, and the majority of Auburn’s units were built prior to 1990 (73%). The 538 units constructed since 1990 are more likely to meet modern standards for energy and electrical efficiency, and experience fewer maintenance issues than those constructed prior to 1990.

Housing Unit Projections

Looking forward is an important aspect of this Master Plan to ensure that Auburn can predict and plan for the land that will be needed for increased residential development, and where that development should be located. The housing projections produced here are based upon the population projections developed by the Southern NH Planning Commission and assume that housing production will directly parallel population growth.

Figure 5.3 Dwelling Unit Projections, 2000-2025

| Tenure and Occupancy | 2000 Census | Projected | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| | | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 | 2020 w/ I-93 exp. | 2025 |
| Total Dwelling Units* | 1,599 | 1,729 | 1,882 | 2,063 | 2,299 | 3,092 | 2,631 |
| Total Ownership Units | 1,463 | 1,603 | 1,745 | 1,912 | 2,131 | 2,867 | 2,439 |
| Owner Occupied Units | 1,460 | 1,579 | 1,719 | 1,883 | 2,099 | 2,824 | 2,403 |
| Vacant Units for Sale | 3 | 24 | 26 | 29 | 32 | 43 | 37 |
| Total Rental Units | 136 | 126 | 137 | 151 | 168 | 226 | 192 |
| Renter Occupied Units | 120 | 120 | 131 | 143 | 159 | 214 | 182 |
| Vacant Units for Rent | 16 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 11 | 10 |

*Excludes Seasonal Housing

Sources: SNHPC Population Projections, 2000 U.S. Census, DOT EIS

The anticipated increase in housing units required to support the projected population growth for the Town of Auburn will result in a 64.5 percent increase in the number of dwelling units from 2000 to 2025, an additional 1,032 units. As of 2015, this estimate was correct. These numbers will ultimately be influenced by the completion of the Interstate 93 project and other variables, but demonstrate a need to consider the type and location of new housing units in Auburn over the next ten years.

Affordability

Case law has made it clear that all New Hampshire communities must ensure, through their land use regulations, that affordable housing can be built within their municipal boundaries. Again, affordable housing is defined as housing for individuals and families of low and moderate income (LMI), in which housing costs do not require the expenditure of more than thirty percent of household income. A low-income household, by definition, earns less than fifty percent of the median family income in its relevant geographic area, while a moderate-income household earns less than eighty percent of the median area income (MAI). It is important to note, however, that increasingly those earning 100 to even 120 percent of the median area income are in need of housing affordable to the community's workforce. This is often referred to as "workforce housing".

Auburn has very few households with an identified lower income housing need, and most households can afford the high housing costs because Auburn's median household income is relatively high compared with the surrounding region. The Census reported that the median household income in Auburn was \$92,938 in 2010 and was estimated to be approximately \$104,231 by 2015. The average home price in Auburn (for all homes) decreased to \$287,700 as of 2015.

Based on the 2010 Census, the median monthly mortgage cost for owner-occupied housing in Auburn was \$2,188 which is up from \$1,230 in 2000. The median monthly rental housing costs in Auburn, excluding the cost of utilities, was \$1,095 in 2010 which is up from \$611 in 2000.

What is Workforce Housing?

"Workforce housing" means housing which is intended for sale and which is affordable to a household with an income of no more than 100 percent of the median income for a 4-person household for the metropolitan area or county in which the housing is located as published annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. "Workforce housing" also means rental housing, which is affordable to a household with an income of no more than 60 percent of the median income for a 3-person household for the metropolitan area or county in which the housing is located as published annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Figure 5.4 Household Income, Home Value, & Cost

| Overall Median Household Income | | Owner Occupied Housing | | | Renter Occupied Housing | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Municipality | Overall Median Household Income | Median Household Income | Median Home Value | Median Monthly Cost w/ a Mortgage | Median Household Income | Median Gross Rent |
| Auburn | \$92,938 | \$100,929 | \$327,400 | \$2,188 | \$42,344 | \$1,095 |
| Bedford | \$127,208 | \$133,566 | \$386,000 | \$2,633 | \$67,453 | \$1,576 |
| Candia | \$94,755 | \$97,227 | \$277,600 | \$1,970 | \$43,420 | \$1,619 |
| Chester | \$102,527 | \$105,236 | \$342,900 | \$2,454 | \$22,379 | \$895 |
| Deerfield | \$85,815 | \$92,031 | \$296,900 | \$2,258 | \$46,050 | \$1,060 |
| Derry | \$69,477 | \$89,767 | \$231,400 | \$2,109 | \$35,273 | \$990 |
| Goffstown | \$74,904 | \$80,625 | \$239,200 | \$1,997 | \$49,266 | \$1,067 |
| Hooksett | \$85,064 | \$88,179 | \$355,300 | \$2,221 | \$56,181 | \$1,063 |
| Londonderry | \$92,438 | \$100,509 | \$292,900 | \$2,240 | \$45,719 | \$1,259 |
| Manchester | \$53,278 | \$74,926 | \$231,200 | \$1,892 | \$34,653 | \$963 |
| New Boston | \$91,367 | \$102,986 | \$332,700 | \$2,305 | \$57,009 | \$1,119 |
| Raymond | \$66,438 | \$71,205 | \$212,000 | \$1,961 | \$48,234 | \$1,099 |
| Weare | \$78,810 | \$81,943 | \$257,300 | \$1,855 | \$54,493 | \$960 |
| Windham | \$117,402 | \$120,351 | \$391,500 | \$2,697 | \$77,734 | \$1,434 |

Source: 2010 U.S. Census SF3 Tables P53, H63, H85, H91 and HCT12

For those who do not currently reside in Auburn and wish to purchase a home there, it may still be challenging to do so. The Southern NH Planning Commission suggests that the fair share housing formula they calculate is a guideline to which each community should refer in meeting its goal of increasing the housing supply and providing decent, affordable housing. The fair share formula provides a mechanism by which each community can assess its fair share needs relative to other communities in the region and is included in the *2010 Housing Needs Assessment*. The Housing Needs Assessment does not calculate how well the community is meeting this goal. That needs to be calculated by the community through a housing assessment.

However, an initial review of Auburn’s land use regulations reflect the work of a community trying to provide housing units at a range of price points. The 2009 Workforce Housing Provision was enacted in an effort to meet the requirements of N.H. R.S.A. 674:59 which requires municipalities to provide reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce housing. The approval of Accessory Dwelling Units statewide is another way Auburn can accommodate additional units, and the community already had such a provision in place. Unfortunately, this may have limited application due to the limits of well and septic infrastructure on many existing properties. Auburn’s zoning ordinance allows the construction of multi-family units, manufactured housing, and elderly housing.

The following recommendations are suggested as a means to achieve Auburn’s goals and objectives as they relate to housing:

1. Complete a comprehensive review of Auburn’s land use regulations based on the Vision and Future Land Use Plan to identify additional housing types that may be permitted to promote greater diversity in the Town’s housing stock, assess compliance with existing affordable housing laws, identify additional tools for providing workforce housing, and identify appropriate locations for all of these selected housing types.
2. Review the area and dimensional requirements in the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision, and Site Plan Review Regulations to ensure reasonable opportunities exist for smaller single-family housing units.

674:59 Workforce Housing Opportunities

In every municipality that exercises the power to adopt land use ordinances and regulations, such ordinances and regulations shall provide reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce housing, including rental multi-family housing. In order to provide such opportunities, lot size and overall density requirements for workforce housing shall be reasonable. A municipality that adopts land use ordinances and regulations shall allow workforce housing to be located in a majority, but not necessarily all, of the land area that is zoned to permit residential uses within the municipality.

Such a municipality shall have the discretion to determine what land areas are appropriate to meet this obligation. This obligation may be satisfied by the adoption of inclusionary zoning as defined in RSA 674:21, IV(a). This paragraph shall not be construed to require a municipality to allow for the development of multifamily housing in a majority of its land zoned to permit residential uses.

6 NATURAL RESOURCES

This chapter of the Master Plan provides an overview of the complex system of natural resources in Auburn. These natural resources are not confined to Auburn alone, but are part of a larger regional network that provides critical ecosystem resources to surrounding towns as well. Access to clean air, water, and open spaces for recreation are all services that should not be taken for granted and contribute to the quality of life in the town and region. This chapter outlines the many resources that exist and why they need to be carefully considered as the community guides future land use changes. Every effort should be made to ensure these resources are maintained intact to serve future generations of residents.

The recently completed *New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan (WAP)* and *Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) Regional Plan* help provide some context and data related to Auburn's nearly 29 square miles of land and water area. Agricultural lands, extensive forests, and surface waters all contribute to the town's rural character. It is also important to recognize the less obvious soils, aquifers, and sand and gravel deposits. This chapter provides an overview of these resources, their current protection, and suggested implementation actions. A more extensive *natural resource document* from the 2007 Master Plan is available on the town website.

Resource Protection

Auburn is fortunate to have areas of the community permanently protected. This land includes a range of natural resources and provides many benefits to the community. The Auburn Conservation Commission currently receives 100 percent of the Current Use Penalty Tax to support the conservation fund. These funds, which are administered by the Conservation Commission, are used for obtaining additional property easements, purchasing the development rights of a parcel, purchasing property through fee-simple ownership, and assisting landowners with voluntary protection efforts such as deed restrictions or conservation easements that can be coordinated with non-profit preservation organizations. Private donations may also be made to this fund.



Pictured Above: A wetland in Auburn provides deep marsh habitat used by the state's endangered Blanding's Turtle. Source: West Environmental Inc.

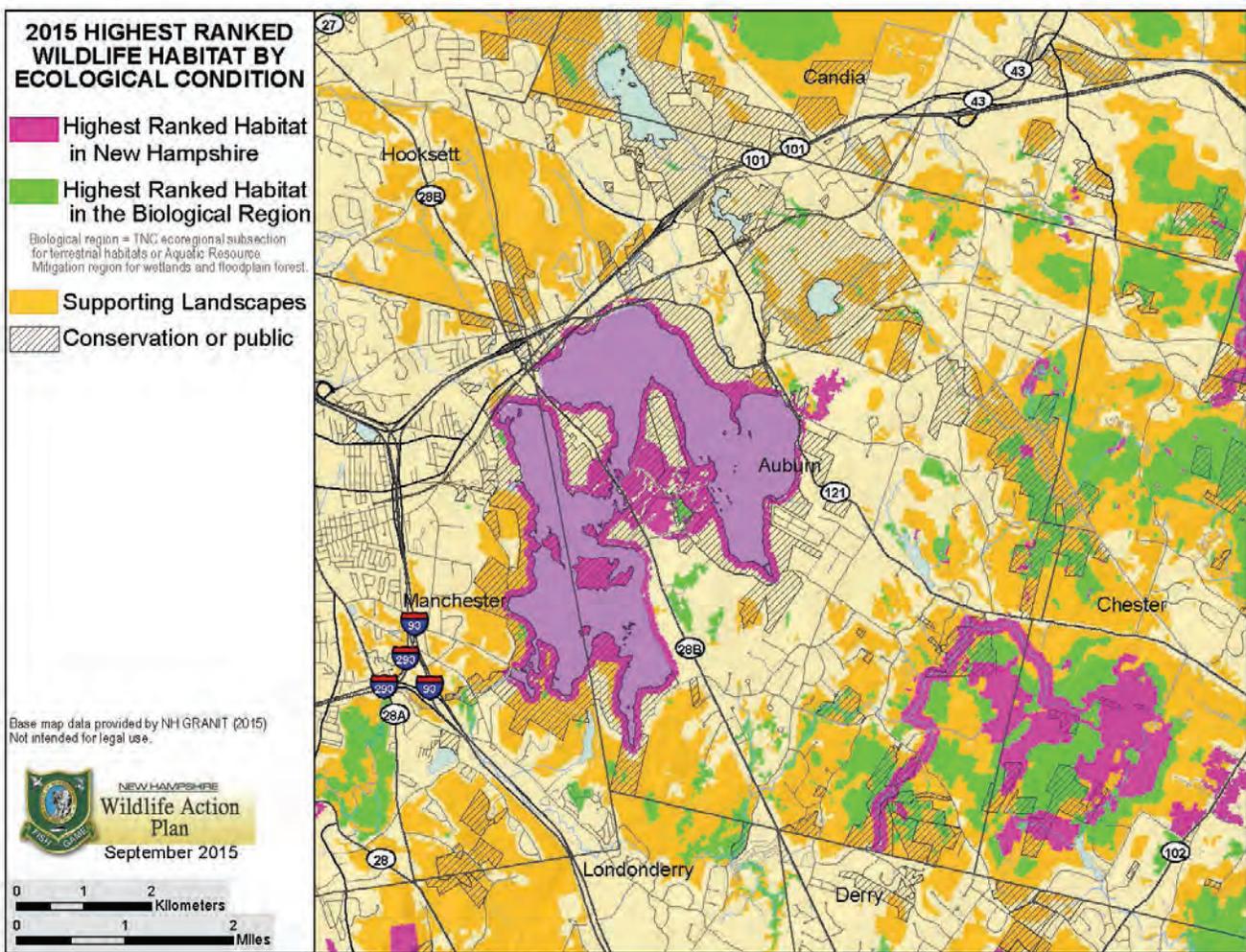


Pictured Above: Lake Massabesic

In 2016 the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department completed an update to the *Wildlife Action Plan*. The resulting plan was created in partnership with scientists from academic institutions and non-government organizations, state and federal agencies, and with considerable input from stakeholders and the public.

The plan identifies priority habitats, conservation threats, and strategies to address these threats throughout the state of New Hampshire. The planning process generated maps that identify quality wildlife habitat in each community. As illustrated in the map found on the following page, Auburn contains significant habitat identified through this process, however, some of it is not protected. These are high priority areas to consider for future protection.

Figure 6.1 Wildlife Action Plan Map



Source: NH Fish & Game Wildlife Action Plan

Wildlife, from bears to beetles, can be thought of as conveyor belts that move energy and nutrients within and between ecosystems, and thus play critical roles in how these ecosystems function. Every species requires adequate habitat, the area needed to provide sufficient food, water, and shelter, in order to survive and successfully reproduce. The ranked habitat blocks, identified in Figure 6.1, are noted for their quality, size, distance to nearest road, degree of fragmentation, presence of species of concern, pollution risk, and various other factors.

The recently completed 2015 *Regional Plan* also addresses resource protection issues within Auburn and southern New Hampshire, and gives some perspective related to what each community is contributing to resource protection efforts. This is extremely important in the rapidly developing Merrimack River Watershed where Auburn is located. The plans, introduced above, can serve the Town, and inform future regulatory and non-regulatory natural resource protection efforts.

Auburn's Natural Resources

Topography

Auburn's topography is characterized by a combination of bedrock outcrops, unstratified drift and glacial till, stratified drift, and wetland pockets. Auburn has approximately 1,769 acres with slopes between 15 and 25%. Additionally, Auburn has minimal acreage with slopes greater than 25%. The remaining majority of the land in Auburn has slopes less than 15%.

Slope

The "Soil Survey of Rockingham County, New Hampshire," prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service (now known as the Natural Resources Conservation Service) contains some of the most important natural resource data available for Auburn. The soil survey classifies soil types and provides sound, scientific information that can be used to help evaluate the capability of land to support development, agriculture, wastewater systems, recreation, wildlife, forestry and open space.

For planning purposes Auburn's soil types can be grouped together into 5 general categories:

- Wetland (hydric) Soils
- Seasonally Wet Soils
- Shallow to Bedrock Soils
- Deep, Well-Drained Stony Soils
- Sand and Gravelly Soils

Providing site specific soils information is required during the regulatory and local approval processes of development projects. This informs the local regulatory boards of the compatibility of the soils and the proposed development.

Surface Waters

Auburn includes some or all of five Great Ponds (defined by the State of New Hampshire as water bodies exceeding 10 acres) as identified in the Table below. Smaller surface water bodies include the Spruce Lakes and various small impoundments along major streams. Lake Massabesic is one of the region's most important surface waters, providing drinking water for the City of Manchester and a number of surrounding towns.

Figure 6.2 lists the five great ponds that are located in the Town of Auburn. Those that are considered regionally significant ponds are identified in bold print.

Nine named streams flow through the town, including one fourth order (Sucker Brook) and six third order streams (Clark, Cohas, Little Massabesic, Maple Falls, Murray Mills, and Preston brook). Headwater streams include Canfield Brook and Hook Brook and a number of unnamed streams. Protection of these surface waters from point and non-point sources of pollution is important as Auburn continues to develop over time.

Groundwater

Groundwater is the water stored within the soil and within bedrock, which supplies the many private wells in Auburn. Precipitation that percolates through the soil, either downwards from the surface or laterally from wetlands, maintains supplies of ground water. Groundwater supplies are sustainable only if the rate of recharge from precipitation equals or exceeds the rate of withdrawal for human use. Pavement and buildings create impermeable surfaces that cause water to run off rather than percolate back into the ground.

Figure 6.2 Great Ponds in Auburn

| Pond Name | Size (ac) |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Calef Lake | 27.9 |
| Little Lake Massabesic | 49.5 |
| Clark Pond Dam | 58.1 |
| Lake Massabesic * | 2,900 |
| Tower Hill Pond* | 157 |

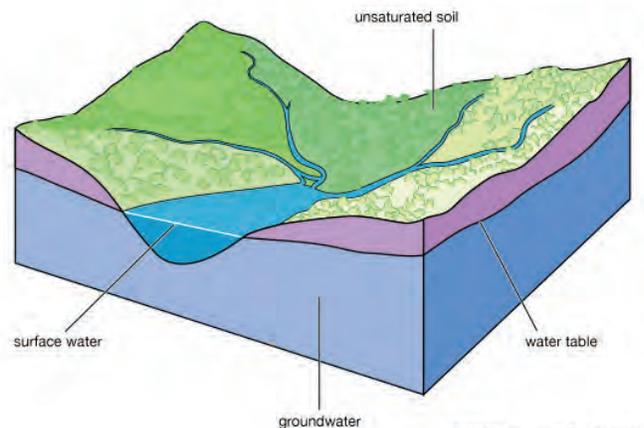
Source: DES List of Public Waters

*Partially located in adjacent municipalities



Pictured Above: Sucker Brook, Auburn NH

Figure 6.3 Cross Section of Water Table



Source: Encyclopedia Britannica

Groundwater supplies are also vulnerable to contamination from pollutants in water that percolates into the soil and when groundwater percolates through contaminated soil. Groundwater contamination is extremely difficult and expensive to treat.

Groundwater supplies are also known as aquifers, and vary widely in extent, depth, and yield. Aquifers may occur in sand and gravel deposits, which are known as stratified drift aquifers, or in spaces within bedrock, known as fractured bedrock aquifers. High-yield aquifers sufficient to provide a municipal water supply typically are able to deliver at between 500 and 1,500 gallons per minute. Approximately 383 acres of high-yield stratified drift aquifers are in Auburn. Sources of potential impacts to groundwater quality include, but are not limited to, salted roadways, road salt storage areas, underground storage tanks, sand and gravel operations, and the former incinerator site.

Wetlands

Wetlands play an important role in maintaining hydrologic resources by storing precipitation and snowmelt and releasing it gradually. Loss of wetland area results in greater runoff during major precipitation events, which can cause increased incidence and extent of downstream flooding. Loss of their long-term water storage capacity can also increase the impact of drought on native vegetation, stream flow, and human water supplies during periods of low precipitation. The Town of Auburn includes approximately 3,500 acres of wetlands recognized by the US Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory. These wetlands include emergent marshes, shrub-scrub wetlands, forested wetlands, and seasonal wetlands (such as floodplains), as well as open waters of lakes, ponds, and streams.

Wetlands

As defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): “Wetlands are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.”

Floodplains

Floodplains are low-lying areas adjacent to surface waters that hold water when these systems overflow their banks during snowmelt or periods of high precipitation. Development in floodplains puts human safety and property at risk. The volume of buildings, roadways, and other improvements/structures located in floodplains displaces water during flooding events resulting in elevated flood levels downstream. Special Flood Hazard Areas are land areas that are at high risk of flooding and consist of the 100-year flood plain. The 100-year flood plain is an area that has a 1 percent chance of flooding in a given year.

Similar in distribution to the wetland soils, the more significant concentrations of the special flood hazard areas are associated with Lake Massabesic, in the eastern and central portion of the community, around Little Lake Massabesic, Clark Pond and its associated brooks in the northern part of Town, and around Spruce Lake and Preston Brook in the northeastern part of town. These areas are important for flood storage and other important ecological functions. Flood storage refers to the land's ability to store water during times of high precipitation or snowmelt. Landforms that provide flood storage include wetlands and floodplains. GIS mapping has identified approximately 3,565 acres of flood storage lands in Auburn.

Development increases the amount of impervious surfaces within a watershed, resulting in an increase of the total volume of stormwater runoff to rivers and streams. When impervious surfaces exceed 10 percent of a watershed, excessive runoff can cause flooding, bank erosion and undercutting, and deterioration of aquatic habitats. It is important to recognize that flood events are changing and communities are starting to look beyond their 100-year floodplains as they plan for infrastructure improvements and future development.

Agricultural Areas

Agricultural soils support local food production and contribute to the local economy, rural character, and quality of life. Favorable agricultural soils are characterized by high crop yields with minimum investments of energy and other resources, and minimum environmental damage from farming activities. Of the 91 soil types identified in Rockingham County, 13 are considered prime agricultural soils, 10 are considered agricultural soils of statewide importance, and 13 are considered agricultural soils of local importance.

Where these soils are still intact they should be protected from development. Historically, Auburn citizens relied on farming to live. Because citizens clearly support rural character, it may be worthwhile to find funding or land protection strategies that promote further agricultural business, or at least preserve the opportunity to farm for future generations. Local agriculture contributes to the resilience and long term sustainability of the community.



Pictured Above: A portrait titled “New Hampshire Farm” by Edward Myers

Forestry

Forest systems constitute the natural vegetation for most of New Hampshire's landscape. Forests play critical roles in water and nutrient cycling, microclimate regulation, watershed protection, flood control, soil conservation, carbon sequestration, and air purification. They provide important wildlife habitat and contribute to recreation and tourism, education and overall human quality of life. Large areas of unfragmented forest are better able to function ecologically than smaller ones.



Pictured Above: A forested trail up Mt. Misery in Auburn, NH.

Sand and Gravel Deposits

Sand and gravel are coarse sediments that are used for a variety of construction purposes.

Sand and gravel deposits suitable for commercial use with minimal processing are assessed on the following properties: gradation of grain sizes, thickness of the deposit, and content of rock fragments. Auburn currently has two active excavation operations that the Planning Board regulates through NH RSA 155 – E and the local Earth Excavation Regulations. Excavation sites must be properly maintained and ultimately reclaimed so as to not have an adverse effect on the town's surface and groundwater as well as other natural resources.

Existing Regulatory Protections

Auburn has adopted a series of regulatory tools that work to ensure that natural systems are carefully considered during the development approval process. The State of New Hampshire also provides protections to resources that are important to all New Hampshire residents and should be considered. These include:

- The Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (RSA 483-B) establishes a protected shoreland of 250 feet around all great ponds (surface water bodies of ten acres or more in size) and along the banks of all rivers and streams of fourth order or greater.
- In 2009, Auburn amended the Watershed Protection Ordinance, which is more restrictive than the State Shoreland Protection Act requirements. The amended Watershed Protection Ordinance requires a 125-foot buffer zone from the edge of Level 1 wetlands and water bodies, within which no structures, septic systems, lawns, yards, parking lots or landscaping are permitted. The Ordinance also requires a 75-foot and 25-foot buffer zone from Level 2 and Level 3 wetlands, respectively. A more in-depth description of Auburn's Watershed Protection Ordinance can be seen in the Wetland section of this plan.

-
- In 2011, Auburn updated the existing Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Controls as part of its Site Plan and Subdivision Regulations. This program was created to minimize runoff and erosion related impacts from development. The Town also utilizes Best Management Practices (BMPs), which are State guidelines that were created in order divert runoff from impermeable surfaces into the ground rather than nearby streams. To assist in addressing total volume stormwater runoff, the regulations require that at least 10% of the increase in the total volume of runoff be infiltrated.
 - New Hampshire RSA 485, the Safe Drinking Water Protection Act, regulates groundwater generally. RSA 485-C, the Groundwater Protection Act, enables municipalities to protect valuable groundwater if those municipalities allow regular inspection of potential contamination sources to ensure that best management practices are in place.
 - Auburn's Zoning Ordinance includes an Underground Storage Regulation (3.19) which "regulates facilities which may significantly and adversely affect the groundwater of the town" and addresses "the storage and handling of hazardous substances, motor fuels, heating oils, and lubricating oils." The ordinance specifies the type of containment required for underground storage.
 - In an effort to protect the Lake Massabesic drinking water supply, the City of Manchester amended its zoning ordinance to establish the Lake Massabesic Protection Overlay District (LMPOD) in November 2006. The LMPOD places restrictions on certain land uses in the Lake Massabesic watershed in Manchester. To address the Lake Massabesic watershed located in Auburn, in March 2007, Manchester Water Works (MWW) granted a conservation easement on 460 acres of its land in Auburn, known as Battery Point, to the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF). The conservation easement prohibits commercial and/or residential development within the easement area in perpetuity.
 - Auburn's Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Controls within the Town's Site Plan and Subdivision Regulations are intended to control stormwater runoff, promote infiltration of increased runoff volume, and reduce erosion issues, resulting from development activities. The Regulations require that development in Auburn utilize Best Management Practices (BMPs), which are state guidelines that were created in order divert runoff from impermeable surfaces into the ground rather than nearby streams.
 - In New Hampshire, a state Agricultural Lands Protection Committee may designate certain lands as agricultural protection sites "by any governmental body or charitable corporation or trust which has the authority to acquire interests in land" and is taxed at current market value. The same statute protects farms from being sued as "nuisances," if those farms have been in operation for at least a year and were not considered nuisances when they began operation.

-
- New Hampshire regulates sand and gravel excavation through RSA 155-E, which described permitting requirements, prohibited projects, and operational standards. Auburn adds to this regulation in its Zoning Ordinance, requiring that excavation and soil removal are allowed pending confirmation from an independent study, demonstrating that no negative impacts on neighborhood character, water supplies, health and safety, or other features will occur.

Recommendations

1. Identify the Town's most valuable natural resources in need of protection by conducting a comprehensive natural resource inventory.
2. Based on the results of the natural resource inventory develop a comprehensive Open Space Plan for the Town in order to identify, prioritize and protect the Town's remaining open spaces.
3. Protect the quality of Auburn's groundwater and water supply resources through easement, acquisition and land use regulations.
4. Promote and encourage the gift or purchase of conservation easements and properties.
5. Easements and forest management overlay districts can be effective tools for protecting productive forest lands. In an effort to save open space for forestry in the future, the Town of Auburn should promote and encourage the gift or purchase of conservation easements for this purpose. Conservation easements provide private landowners a practical option to protect their land while retaining ownership. There are also numerous tax benefits, which make conservation easements attractive for the landowner.
6. Protect the remaining agricultural and forestry soils through the use of overlay districts.

7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Providing community facilities and services for the safety and benefit of the Town's residents is one of the primary responsibilities of a town government. Community facilities must be updated and improved to address the growing needs of the residents as the population and demographics change.

The tax base in the Town of Auburn is primarily residential, which means that the Town must balance its community facility needs and services with its desire to maintain a reasonable tax rate. Most large-scale planned improvements are included in the regularly updated Capitol Improvements Plan (CIP). The CIP helps by proposing a schedule for these improvements and Town departments intend to fund each improvement.



Pictured Above: Interior and Exterior of Fire Department

Fire Department Staff

- Two full-time employees
- One part-time Fire Chief
- Thirty-four paid call employees
- Stations not manned 24/7 - dispatch services through Derry
- Ambulance services from Derry

Fire Department

Currently, there are two fire stations in Auburn which enable fire crews to provide a reasonable response time to emergency calls throughout the Town.

When the Safety Complex was constructed the 2nd floor was left unfinished. Since the 2007 Master Plan, the Department has finished this space, adding a conference room, work-out area, TV room, bathroom, shower room, a bunk room, and several closets. Most of the improvements were constructed by the Department's own personnel. The improvements were funded by the Auburn Volunteer Fireman's Association, rather than through Town taxes.

In 2016 the Auburn Fire Department responded to approximately 612 calls ranging from structure fires, brush fires, motor vehicle accidents, to mutual aid emergencies.

Fire Department Facilities

Station One

- Single story building, constructed in 1986, located on the southerly end of town at 6 Pingree Hill Road.
- Bay area for six apparatus, a tool room, secondary dispatch, kitchen meeting room, and three offices.

Headquarters

- The Fire Department’s headquarters are located in the Safety Complex.
- Constructed in 2000, located on the northerly end of town at 55 Eaton Hill Road.
- The first floor has a bay area for six apparatus, an SCBA room, tool room, radio dispatch, kitchen, meeting room and two offices.
- The second floor was built to accommodate future growth of the Fire Department.

Figure 7.1: Fire Department Major Equipment

| Vehicle/Year/Make | Type | Pump | Tank (gallons) | Replacement |
|------------------------------------|------------|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| 55-E1 2012 HP-75 E1 Quint - Ladder | 75’ Quint | 1,750 gpm | 500 | 2032 |
| 55-E2 2008 E1 Cyclone | Pump | 1,500 gpm | 1,000 | 2028 |
| 55-T2 1997 Laverne | Tanker | 1,500 gpm | 2,500 | 2027 |
| 55-R1 2004 Ford F-550 | Rescue | 0 | 0 | 2018 |
| 55-C1 2013 Tahoe | Automobile | 0 | 0 | 2026 |
| 55-F1 2015 Ford F350 | Forestry | 300 gpm | 300 | 2025 |
| Marine 1 2004 Avon | 14’ Boat | 0 | 0 | 2027 |
| Gator 825i John Deere 2014 | ATV | 0 | 0 | 2024 |
| 55-2201 Ford Explorer | Automobile | 0 | 0 | 2020 |

Source: Auburn Fire Department Staff Interview - 2017

The previously proposed sub-station, to be located on the Hooksett town line is no longer part of the Departments future planning. However, the Department is planning to propose either adding an additional full-time firefighter or to change the current Fire Chief position from part-time to full-time. Besides the Department equipment replacement schedule included in Figure 7.1 and replacing the siding on Station One, no major expenditures or changes are being proposed.

Police Department

The Auburn Police Department is part of the Auburn Safety Complex located at 55 Eaton Hill Road. The Police Department provides 24-hour coverage and has mutual aid agreements with the neighboring communities of Allenstown, Hooksett, Manchester, Raymond, and Candia.

The Department has one sedan, seven marked police cruisers, one unmarked vehicle and one Harley Davidson Motorcycle. The Town is reviewing the Department’s space needs to plan either an addition to the current building or a detached garage / storage facility on site. An expansion of the building would have the potential for a work-out/locker area and additional office space on the second floor.

Police Department Facilities

- Offices – Police Chief, Records Manager, Office Manager, Lieutenant, Detective, Sergeant, and Patrol Sergeant
- A kitchen area
- Two bathrooms with lockers for the officers
- Officer area with one private interview room
- Booking room with two holding cells
- Sally Port capable of housing two police cruisers.
- Main reception area with file storage

In 2016, the Police Department responded to 7,322 calls, which steadily increased over the past five years. To handle this volume of calls, the Police Department employed eight full-time and 10 part-time officers. As recommended by the 2016 Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI) evaluation, the Department has transitioned to 10 full-time officers and six part-time officers as of 2018. Other full-time officers will be proposed when the Town population dictates the need, while the current part-time staff will be decreased by means of natural attrition as these officers retire or leave the department.

Highway Department

The Town of Auburn has an elected Road Agent official who is responsible for all road work. The Town hires sub-contractors for snow removal, road maintenance and road reconstruction projects. In 2016, the Highway's roadway maintenance budget was \$947,000 and the road reconstruction budget was \$800,000. The Road Agent works much like an independent contractor, in that all hours spent on Town business are billed to the Town, as opposed to being a salaried employee. In addition to his billable hours, the Road Agent receives an annual stipend, which was \$2,190.36 in 2016.

Town Hall

Town Hall is located at 47 Chester Road. The building was originally constructed in 1836 as a Methodist Episcopal Church and was converted to Town Offices in 1951. Prior to 1951, the Town Officials worked out of their homes. The offices located in Town Hall are those of the Selectmen, Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Planning and Zoning, and the Building Inspector.

Figure 7.2: Vehicle Inventory

| Vehicle | Make/Model | Year |
|--------------------|---------------|-------|
| Chief's Car | Ford Taurus | 2013 |
| K-9 Unit | Ford Explorer | 2014 |
| Lieutenant | Ford Explorer | 2017* |
| Patrol | Ford Explorer | 2015 |
| Patrol | Ford Explorer | 2018 |
| Patrol | Ford Explorer | 2017 |
| Auxiliary | Ford Explorer | 2017* |
| Detective/Unmarked | Ford Explorer | 2018 |
| Harley Davidson | Motorcycle | 2017 |

Source: Auburn Police Department Staff Interview - 2018
 *Ordered 2016, received 2017 models



Pictured Above: Safety Complex, housing Police and Fire

5-Year Roadway Reconstruction Plan

- Lovers Lane – 1,540 lf
- Nutt Road – 1,700 lf
- Squirrel Drive – 920 lf
- Lakeview Way – 1,120 lf
- Rockwood Terrace – 820 lf
- Walnut Drive – 1,130 lf
- Acorn Avenue – 570 lf
- Joan Drive – 1,470 lf

There are currently six full-time employees and three part-time employees working in the building. In 2010 the Town Hall was renovated and many significant changes were made. All the offices were moved to the first floor, both floors are now handicapped accessible and have accessible bathrooms as well. The heating system was replaced and a new water filtration system was installed. New storage systems were installed to handle the large volumes of paper files that are kept on-site. The meeting room was also improved, providing adequate space for most of the Selectmen, Planning, Zoning and Conservation meetings that are held weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly.



Pictured Above: Town Hall

In addition, an employee break room/kitchen was constructed in the basement. Improvements to the drainage around the building were installed, a stand-by generator was also part of the renovation. Later, in 2014, the existing, failed septic system was replaced with a compliant, state-approved system. In addition, an infiltration basin was added to handle the back wash from the water filtration system.



Pictured Above: Recent Improvements to the Town Hall

Griffin Free Public Library

The Griffin Free Public Library is located at 22 Hooksett Road. The library has one full-time director and six part-time assistants. An elected three-member Board of Trustees administers the library.

Currently the library has 1,452 family memberships and approximately 14,399 volumes. The estimated circulation in 2016 was 15,795, which was down from previous years. The decline can be attributed to the increased availability and use of the internet. But the trend reversed in 2017 with the annual circulation of 18,202. In addition, the library had experienced a steady increase in the number of visitors coming to the library to utilize its services and attend sponsored, on-site events. In 2016 the number of events held at the library have doubled, while in 2017 it grew again to 184 programs with 1,335 attendees. Due to the increase in patrons, in 2016, three additional paved parking spaces were constructed, reducing the need to park along Hooksett Road. As part of the pavement expansion, the northern-most storage building was relocated and an infiltration basin was installed and connected to the westerly wing of the library, to mitigate the additional impervious, paved, land coverage. This project maximized the one-half acre parcel. In 2018, voters approved the purchase of a two-acre parcel adjacent to the library property that will support an expansion of the library or the siting of a separate, stand-alone community center-type facility.

Educational Facilities

Auburn Village School provides public education for school-aged children in grades K - 8. The Auburn School Board has an agreement with Pinkerton Academy in Derry, for the high school age students through a paid tuition.

Auburn Village School is located off Route 121 at 11 Eaton Hill Road. The building was constructed in the 1940's with additions constructed in 1966, 1987 and 1995. The school has 33 classrooms, 6 of which are located in portable units and 3 that are located in an attached, modular building.



Pictured Above: Griffin Free Public Library

Figure 7.3: Student Population Trends

| Year | Village School | High School |
|-----------|----------------|--------------|
| 2013-2014 | 566 students | 301 students |
| 2014-2015 | 568 students | 302 students |
| 2015-2016 | 586 students | 295 students |
| 2016-2017 | 615 students | 304 students |



Pictured Above: Auburn Village School

In 2018, voters approved a \$14.3 million dollar bond that is financing an alteration and addition project to the Auburn Village School anticipated to be completed in time for the school year to begin in September 2019. The project will result in expanding the total instructional space at the Auburn Village School from 32 classrooms and science labs to 37; expanding the total resource and group learning space from eight spaces to 14+, and remove the modular / portable classrooms. The updated facility will also add six spaces for special education, project-based, team-based and hands-on learning.

Enrollment in the Town's school system has been on an upward climb over the past 4 years. In 2013 The H.L. Turner Group, Inc. conducted a study and prepared a detailed Facility Assessment Report for the Auburn School District. It can be found on the School's website at www.auburn.sau15.net.

Auburn students, grades 9 through 12 attend Pinkerton Academy in Derry. The number of students from Auburn enrolled at Pinkerton Academy in 2016 was 304. The tuition cost per student for was approximately \$11,700.

The Auburn School Board had purchased a 58 acre parcel of land on the corner of Dollard and Hooksett Road. The previous plans for a new school on this parcel have been abandoned and the parcel had been on the market to be sold.

The Auburn Village School serves as an invaluable community resource. The school is utilized most evenings and weekends during the school year as a meeting place for various educational and recreational organizations serving Auburn residents.

It is recommended that the Town provide adequate educational facilities to support the existing and future population growth. Because the past two warrant articles, proposing the construction of a new school, have failed to acquire the necessary votes, it is recommended that the necessary upgrades, repairs, and potential expansions be carefully considered over the following 5-10 years.

H.L. Turner Report - Examples of Recommended Repair/Maintenance Items

- Minor Drainage repairs and upgrades
- Install ADA parking spaces, ramps, handrails and routes to athletic fields
- Upgrade bathrooms to ADA
- Reclaim and repave paved areas
- Cut back vegetation from building and paved areas
- Install dumpster pads/screening
- Separate playground & Parking with physical barrier for safety
- Provide battery powered emergency light fixtures
- Outlets within 6' of sinks should be replaced with GFI outlets
- Replace fire alarm panel
- Replace the 1940's electrical switchgear and panelboards
- Replace various components of HVAC system over the next five years
- Replace non-working Gymnasium HVAC unit
- Replace failing boiler plant
- Replace failed and single pane windows
- Generate plan to replace an amount of ceiling tiles per year
- Replace significant areas of roofing over next few years
- Many other minor roofing repairs
- Numerous trim, caulking, vinyl siding and paint maintenance

Transfer Station

The Town of Auburn has a “Host Community Agreement” with Waste Management of New Hampshire which allows residents to drop-off solid waste and recycling at the transfer station. Waste Management owns and operates the Transfer Station, located at 24 Gray Point Avenue, directly off the Route 28 By-Pass.

Recreation

The Town of Auburn Parks and Recreation Commission runs a number of recreational facilities and programs for its residents. The recreational facilities include the Wayne R. Eddows Memorial Fields which has six ball fields, one soccer field, a playground, a parking lot for larger events, and an on-site building used as a concession stand during games; the Circle of Friends Playground at Bunker Hill, which has a large playground, including a grassy area and a variety of play structures; Appletree Park, which has a small playground, a basketball court, swings and a see-saw; Bicentennial Park, which is located on the Lake across from Town Hall and has multiple Veterans Memorials and some benches; and the new Safety Complex outdoor ice rink / basketball court.

The Parks and Recreation Commission sponsors a variety of programs that are offered throughout the year, such as trips for seniors, an annual senior citizens dinner, the school ski program and the annual duck race, parade and town fair. Additionally, a number of organizations utilize Wayne R. Eddows Memorial Fields, such as the YMCA, Little League, and Auburn Soccer Club.

The Town of Auburn Parks and Recreation Commission consists of seven volunteer commissioners, two part-time maintenance employees, and one part-time coordinator employee who works out of the Town Hall. Future needs of the department include general maintenance and repairs of the facilities, as well as upgrading equipment and expanding recreational programs and opportunities for the community. With the recent sale of the old Fire Station, the Recreation Commission no longer has a maintenance facility. Their intent is to establish a maintenance building at Eddows Memorial Fields. The Parks and Recreation Commission is also in the process of designing, funding, and constructing additional parking and ADA access for the Wayne Eddows Recreation Fields.



Pictured Above: Wayne R. Eddows Memorial Fields

Town Cemeteries

There are two cemeteries in the Town of Auburn; Longmeadow Cemetery and Auburn Village Cemetery. At present, both cemeteries have adequate burial spaces available and foresee a long-term capacity of 20 years.

The Longmeadow Cemetery is located on Chester Road. The cemetery was established on July 14, 1793. The earliest recorded burial at Longmeadow Cemetery is that of Mrs. David Carr who was laid to rest in 1796. There is also a stone marking serving as a testimonial to the interment of Bernard Merrill on March 7, 1797. On May 1, 1908, the Longmeadow Cemetery Association was established. The cemetery was maintained by the Association until October 1979 when it was turned over to the Town of Auburn.



Pictured Above: Longmeadow Cemetery

The Auburn Village Cemetery is located on Eaton Hill Road, behind the Auburn Village School. The earliest recorded burial at the Cemetery is that of Mary Hook, daughter of Samuel and Judith Hook in 1822. The Auburn Village Cemetery began as a public cemetery, but there are no records of the origin or of whose land the original burial ground was located on. The cemetery was extended in 1910 when John P. Griffin deeded the Town a portion of his property. Partial payment of the land was in the form of six plots for Griffin's family. The grounds were extended even further in the 1950's when the Trustees and Town Officials negotiated another piece of land, formerly owned by Mr. Griffin, from Manchester Water Works.

8 PUBLIC UTILITIES

Domestic and Municipal Water Supply

The greater part of Auburn’s population is serviced by private, individually owned wells. However, Manchester Water Works provides municipal water services to a few areas in town.

In addition to Dartmouth Drive, industrial water supply is also available in the southwest part of Town, at the Town of Derry town line, along the Londonderry Turnpike/Route 28. Future expansion of the water line is also possible at this location upon a petition request.

Based on historical surveys, it does not appear that there is a great deal of interest in the community to increase the supply of water service in Town. There are currently no plans to bring municipal water to other areas in Auburn, but it is available as part of franchise expansion plans into Town.

Wastewater Collection Systems

Since the completion of the 2007 Master Plan, the extension of sewer lines has been completed along Route 28 by-pass up to the intersection with Rockingham Road in Manchester. Presently, the Wellington Business Park has a dry sewer line in place and service will be available if an extension of the sewer line is completed, including a pump station. Although dry lines have been installed on Dartmouth Drive, the Town does not presently have a wastewater collection system, so all properties are serviced by on-site subsurface septic systems. Furthermore, there are no plans in the immediate future to construct a wastewater collection or treatment facility.

Approximately 90 Municipal Water Connections in Auburn:

- Manchester Road
- Orchard Street
- Neal Avenue
- Allen Avenue
- Cottage Avenue
- Rockingham Road
- Dartmouth Drive

Natural Gas

Natural gas is currently only available in the Wellington Business Park. As part of the construction of the Wellington Business Park, a natural gas main was installed from the Manchester city limit on Wellington Road to Dartmouth Drive. Liberty Utilities is the natural gas service provider.

Electrical Power

Electric service is provided to the majority of the Town by Eversource, with their headquarters located in Manchester. A small area at the southern part of Town has service through New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NHEC), which is headquartered in Plymouth, NH.

Auburn requires developers to contact the utility companies to coordinate development design. The Town also has an ordinance that requires all new developments to install utilities (telephone/cable/electric) underground.

Telephone/Cable Television

Telephone service in Auburn is provided by Fairpoint Communications and Granite State Communications and cable service is provided by Comcast. Comcast offers digital high speed internet and digital phone service.

Internet Service

High speed internet service is available through Comcast by means of a cable modem. DSL internet service, which is slower than a cable modem is also available through most telephone providers. Residents and Businesses may also obtain internet service through various satellite (dish) companies.

Cell Phone Service

Cellular phone service through all major providers is available in Auburn. According to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), there is currently one operating cellular tower located on Leppert Way. The Town has approved a cellular tower at the Wellington Business Park, but it has not been constructed. There are a number of cell towers located in the surrounding communities that service Auburn, including the City of Manchester and Towns of Chester, Derry, Londonderry, Hooksett and Candia.

9 TRANSPORTATION

The purpose of the Transportation chapter is to identify highway, roadway and other transportation issues of concern to Auburn officials and residents, and to recommend proposed actions. Transportation planning is a local and State responsibility and the majority of the long-range transportation planning occurs at the regional and State levels.

Auburn's proximity and accessibility to the greater Manchester area, including Nashua and Londonderry, has historically contributed to the Town's role as a predominantly residential "bedroom" community. Figures included in the 2015 Southern New Hampshire Regional Plan estimated that approximately 87 percent of Auburn residents commute to other municipalities for employment. Auburn shares the concern of many other local communities regarding the anticipated additional growth that will be experienced as a result of the on-going I-93 expansion. The widening of I-93 and the potential impacts of the project are likely the most important transportation issues to be faced by the Town of Auburn in the foreseeable future. This chapter will identify specific issues related to this project and its impacts on the Town.

Roadway Classification

Municipal roadways and highways are classified according to administrative functional classification systems. Administrative classification systems define the roles and responsibilities of the various government agencies responsible for activities such as construction and maintenance. The road and highway network within a municipality can be defined through a functional classification system based on the role that a roadway facility serves, based on the amount of traffic it carries and the specific function it serves within a network hierarchy. The following sections describe functional and administrative classification systems as they relate to roadways in the Town of Auburn.

General functional classifications of the three roadway types as found in Auburn are as follows:

Arterial Streets: intended to carry traffic from collector streets to the system of highways

Collector Streets: carry traffic between local streets and the arterial system

Local Streets: provide primarily for access to abutting properties.

Functional Classification

The Town of Auburn has the following classification system for local roadways:

- **Local Arterial Streets** include Hooksett Road, Bunker Hill Road, Wilson's Crossing Road, Pingree Hill Road, Candia Road and Rockingham Road.
- **Local Collector Streets** include Eaton Hill Road, Rattlesnake Hill Road, Chester Turnpike, Dearborn Road and Raymond Road.
- **Local Streets** include all other paved roads not designated as Local Arterial or Local Collector Streets.
- **Local Gravel Roads** include Hook Road (partial), Tower Hill Road, Depot Road (partial), Kimballs Point, Penny Lane, Snowdale Lane, and Raymond Road.

Administrative Classification

Administrative classification of roadways in the State of New Hampshire is based on information contained in New Hampshire Planning and Land Use Regulations. Highways under state maintenance and control include Class I, II, and III highways. Class IV, V and VI highways are under the jurisdiction of municipalities. A general description of the administrative roadway classification from New Hampshire Planning and Land Use Regulations is as follows:

Road Classification Miles

| | |
|----------|------|
| Private | 13.1 |
| Class I | 12.5 |
| Class II | 8.6 |
| Class V | 61.4 |
| Class VI | 6.2 |

Source: NHDOT 2017

- Class I highways consist of all existing or proposed highways which are part of the primary state highway system excepting all portions of such highways within the compact sections of 27 towns and cities listed in RSA 229:5, V.
- Class II highways consist of all existing or proposed highways on the secondary state highway system, except those portions of such highways which are within the compact sections of 27 towns and cities listed in RSA 229:5, V.
- Class III, Recreational Roads, consist of all roads leading to, and within, state reservations designated by the legislature.
- Class III-a, highways consist of new boating access highways from any existing highway to any public water in the state.
- Class IV, Town and City Streets, consist of all highways within the compact sections of 27 towns and cities listed in RSA 229:5, V. The extensions of Class I and Class II highways through these areas are included in this classification.
- Class V, Town Roads, consist of all other traveled highways which the town has the duty to maintain regularly.
- Class VI, Unmaintained Highways, consist of all other existing public ways, including highways discontinued as open highways, highways closed subject to gates and bars, and those highways which have not been maintained by the Town in suitable condition for travel for a period of five years or more.
- Scenic Roads are special town designations (by vote of the town meeting) of any road, other than a Class I or Class II highway, where the repair, maintenance, reconstruction, or paving work shall not involve or include the cutting or removal of trees, or the destruction of stone walls, except as provided for under RSA 231:158.

As of 2017, there were approximately 88.7 miles of public roads in Auburn. Approximately 12.5 and 8.6 miles, respectively, of Class I and Class II highways exist in the Town. The Town roads consist of approximately 61.4 miles of Class V roads and approximately 6.2 miles of Class VI roads.

Traffic Flows

The volume or flow of traffic is measured annually, in an effort to evaluate the adequacy of the capacity of the Town's roads. The SNHPC's annual regional traffic counting program and data from the SNHPC regional travel demand model were used to compile existing traffic volumes on the roadway network of the Town. Existing (2015 & 2016) average daily traffic volumes (ADT) on the following roads:

2015

- Chester Road – 5,542
- Lovers Lane – 660
- Manchester Road (Rte. 121), Left of 4-Corners – 2,794
- Raymond Road – 1,237

2016

- Beaver Brook Road – 3,108
- Bunker Hill Road – 1191
- Eaton Hill Road – 818
- Hills Road – 494
- Hooksett Road (north of Eaton Hill Rd) – 4,175
- Hooksett Road (north of Old Candia Rd) – 7,560
- Hooksett Road (north of Rockingham Rd) – 4,162
- NH 28 By-Pass – 6,449
- Old Candia Road – 2,765
- Pingree Hill Road – 428
- Spofford Road – 1,239

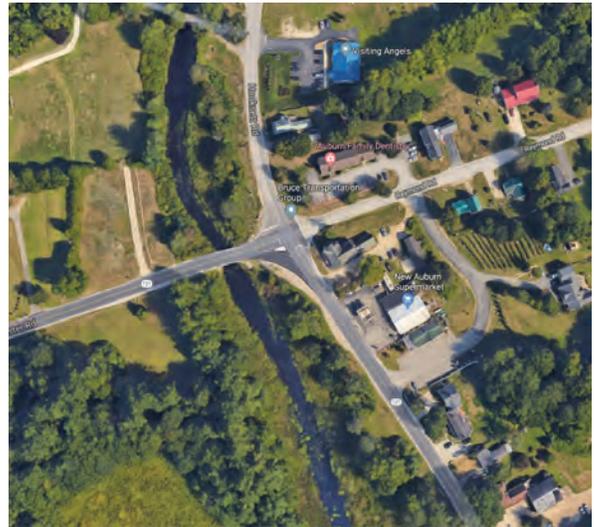
The State of New Hampshire Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan 2017-2026 includes an evaluation of traffic congestion on the State highway system. Information on traffic congestion on the major highway links in the Town of Auburn is included in this evaluation. In the document, congestion is measured by level of service, which is an indication of how well traffic flows on the highway system. Level of service (LOS) is expressed by a letter grade with LOS A representing little or no congestion and LOS F representing a roadway link operating at capacity. The information presented in the document indicates that portions of the State roadway network in Auburn are currently operating at LOS A and B with little or no congestion. These roadways include the eastern portions of NH Route 101 and the southern portion of NH Route 121. Other portions of the roadway network are operating with moderate congestion (LOS C and D). These roadways include the western portion of NH Route 101, NH 28 Bypass and the northern portion of NH Route 121 in the vicinity of NH Route 101.

The significant State roadways that pass through Auburn and the Town's Class V roadways experience little to no congestion issues. Considering the current level of residential housing in Auburn the likelihood of the I93 expansion causing congestion issues on the Town's roadways is unlikely. However, the LOS of the State highways, noted above, are likely to be impacted.

Traffic Accidents

Crash data was obtained from the Auburn Police Department for the three-year period from 2014 to 2016. During this period, there were a total of approximately 275 accidents in Town. For the three-year period, the four roadways with the most accidents were Chester Road (41 accidents), Londonderry Turnpike (34 accidents), Hooksett Road (33 accidents) and Manchester Road (21 accidents). This data is summarized in the table on the right.

Crash data received from the Town was also used to identify high accident intersection locations in Auburn, and this information is summarized in the Table below. The table shows that for the period from 2014 to 2016, the three highest intersection accident locations were Hooksett Road/Old Candia Road, NH Route 101/Hooksett Road and Chester Road/Bunker Hill Road. During the three-year period, the Hooksett Road/Old Candia Road and NH Route 101/Hooksett Road intersections both had a total of six accidents while the Chester Road/Bunker Hill Road intersection had five accidents.



Pictured Above: Re-constructed 4-way intersection in Auburn Village

Figure 9.1 High Accident Mid-Block Locations, 2014-2016

| Location | Total |
|----------------------|-------|
| Chester Road | 36 |
| Londonderry Turnpike | 47 |
| Hooksett Road | 44 |
| Manchester Road | 22 |

Source: Auburn Police Department, 2017

Figure 9.2 High Accident Intersections, 2014-2016

| Intersection | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | Total |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|-------|
| Hooksett Road and Old Candia Road | 3 | 0 | 5 | 8 |
| Hooksett Road and Route 101 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 10 |
| Chester Road and Bunker Hill Road | 0 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| NH 121/Hooksett Road/Raymond Road | 0 | 4 | 1 | 5 |

Source: Auburn Police Department - 2017

NHDOT Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Program/SNHPC Transportation Improvement Program

The SNHPC FY 2017 – FY 2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) represents a vital link between plan development and the implementation of transportation projects where plans are converted into specific improvement projects and then programmed for implementation on the basis of priority and fiscal constraint. The FY 2017 – FY 2020 TIP was developed using projects in the SNHPC region contained in the first three years of the NHDOT Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan. The SNHPC TIP is a staged multi-year program of regional projects for the SNHPC Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area. The TIP is updated by the MPO in accordance with joint federal metropolitan planning regulations, 23 CFR 450, issued by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), U.S. Department of Transportation. Currently, the Town of Auburn does not have any proposed road projects that are eligible for NHDOT funding under the NHDOT plan.

The Town is also proceeding with a bridge rehabilitation project, that involves NHDOT. The replacement of the bridge carrying Griffin Mill Road over Maple Falls Brook (29316) was approved by NHDOT for State Aid Bridge funding in 2022. Preliminary engineering design and environmental permitting is underway; the work to complete the rehabilitation is planned to start in 2021.

Roadway Reconstruction and Drainage Infrastructure Improvements

Over the past ten years, the Town of Auburn has been reconstructing many of the existing the Class V roads. The reconstruction involves replacement of the drainage infrastructure and full depth replacement of the gravel and pavement sections. In most cases, shallow ledge, unsuitable soils, and organic matter has been excavated and removed. Starting with an acceptable subgrade, the road is then reconstructed with 12” of sand, 18” of gravels, and 4” of pavement. The Town is now transitioning to an alternate roadway improvement and maintenance program, that will include pavement overlays, crack sealing, and localized roadway repairs. The 2017 Capital Improvement Plan indicates that the road reconstruction budget will be gradually reducing from the current budget of \$800,000 down to \$500,000 in 2023.

The Town’s roadway system includes eight gravel roads. The Town intends to upgrade Hook Road from gravel to pavement within the next five years. At this time, there are no future plans to improve the remaining gravel roads.

Currently, the Town is working on plans to replace the Griffin Mill Road bridge, through the NHDOT Bridge Aid Program. Also, the Town is working with MWW to improve the available sight distance at the Depot Road and Hookset Road intersection.

In addition to the road reconstruction, the Town has successfully corrected a number of flooding issues by replacing undersized culverts with larger culverts and in several instances, precast box culverts. The Town has successfully applied for and received FEMA grant monies on a number of these drainage improvement projects. As funding is available and the needs arise, the Town will continue to improve and replace the aging drainage infrastructure in Town.

Alternative Modes of Transportation

NHDOT has indicated that five roads within the town have been designated as part of the Statewide Bicycle Route System. Auburn roadways currently designated as regional bicycle routes include Hooksett Road, Manchester Road (NH Route 121), and Wilson's Crossing Road. Additionally, Rockingham Road and Old Candia Road have been designated as Statewide Bicycle Routes. Currently, Stantec is in the process of designing and permitting a multi-use path on Route 121 from Eaton Hill Road to Shore Drive. The Town intends to apply for NHDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding in 2018 for 2019 construction.



Pictured Above: Rockingham Recreational Trail

10 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To effectively balance the Town's goal to maintain its rural, bedroom community while encouraging the appropriate balance of economic growth and development; the Town must consider many factors including but not limited to housing, commercial development, environmental considerations, local and out-of-town labor supply, and the desired rural character. Excessive economic development/growth can result in negative effects in areas such as community character, available housing, and the environment; however, the Town's present low percentage of commercial businesses and employment opportunities can leave Auburn vulnerable during periods of economic recession. Therefore, it is important that Auburn appropriately balance the needs for community character and diversified and expanding economic base.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the economic base of Auburn, review the conditions that have shaped the current economic climate, and review past economic development strategies. This chapter also includes recommendations regarding how to balance the growing need for economic development, while preserving Auburn's rural character.

Previous Economic Development Efforts in Auburn

Historically, the Town of Auburn has placed the desire to preserve the Town's rural character ahead of economic development and growth. In addition, the Town does not have readily available infrastructure (municipal water and sewer) to achieve significant economic growth. The Town's 2007 Master Plan cited these infrastructure issues noting: "With the exception of its northwestern section, Auburn's lack of public water, along with the lack of a wastewater system, represents an impediment to an economic development program. Without a municipal wastewater treatment facility, the opportunities for higher density development and business growth are limited."



Pictured Above: Wellington Business Park

Over the past years, several studies and evaluations have been conducted in an effort to plan the interconnection of a municipal sewer system to the City of Manchester or the Town of Hooksett, along the Route 101 corridor. The results of these studies indicated that the cost of the connection and required sewer infrastructure appear cost prohibitive. Because of this, the Town has not further investigated this issue.

The Town has attempted, on several occasions, to implement a downtown “Village District”. These efforts have not proven successful for several reasons; the lack of municipal infrastructure, lack of developable land, and the significant environmental limitations associated with Lake Massabesic.

The Auburn Development Authority (ADA) was created in 1999 in order to work with prospective businesses and industries that are interested in locating in Auburn. After the development of the Wellington Business Park, the ADA has not been active.

Current Economic Conditions

As with many rural communities in the area, Auburn’s residents largely commute outside of Town to reach their places of employment. These characteristics have sometimes been used to describe some of the more rural towns on the periphery of the Manchester metropolitan area as “bedroom communities”. Auburn has a diverse employment base that consists of technical and professional services, construction trades, real estate, retail trade, and food service, and administrative and public administration.

The relatively limited number of employers in the Town reinforces the fact that the majority of Auburn’s labor force commute outside of Auburn to their jobs. Auburn’s location on the periphery of Manchester, as well as its proximity to highway access, makes it an attractive location to live.

The Town of Auburn is fortunate, in many ways, to have such a large amount of its land area owned and controlled by Manchester Water Works. A program was agreed to between the Town and MWW to reduce the tax rate on this land; however, the large amount of land provides the Town with a significant tax base income with little to no strain on the Town’s resources. This significant revenue helps the Town overcome the relatively limited, existing commercial and industrial property tax base.



Pictured Above: Auburn Businesses on Londonderry Turnpike



Pictured Above: Auburn Tavern

Employment

According to the Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau, in 2016 approximately 89.5% of the Town's employed residents work outside of Auburn, which represents a 2.5% increase from the 2000 census figures, with only 9.9% working out of state. This status mitigates the need for large scale employment growth due to the pull effect of the adjacent, Manchester and Boston economies. As of 2016, Auburn had a civilian labor force of 3,295 residents, 79 of which were documented as unemployed, resulting in an unemployment rate of 2.4%, which is down from 3.1% in 2006.

Tax Base

The economic base of any community can be defined as all the sources from which the town receives revenue. In general, a more diverse the economic base, results in a lower per capita tax burden. In Auburn, as with most surrounding communities, the primary source of revenue is property taxes, with the greatest percentage of those taxes coming from residential properties. According to the NH Dept. of Revenue Administration, in 2017, Auburn's property tax rate was one of the lowest in the region at \$21.15 per thousand.

The Town has attempted, on several occasions, to implement a downtown "Village District". These efforts have not proven successful for several reasons; the lack of municipal infrastructure, lack of developable land, and the significant environmental limitations associated with Lake Massabesic. Typically, to achieve a balanced tax base, the ideal ratio of residential to commercial land use would be 10:1 or less. As shown in the table above, Auburn's ratio is 13:1. This data further supports the need for Auburn to encourage the planned increase in commercial and industrial use through zoning amendments, development bonuses, and other incentives to alleviate the lack of growing municipal infrastructure.

Income Characteristics

Auburn has one of the highest median household income levels in the SNHPC region. The Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau reported Auburn's median household income as \$104,231 per year. The same report notes the annual median income for full-time employed men as \$68,790 and women as \$50,726. The report further indicates that only 2.5% of the Auburn population's individual income is below the NH poverty level (\$12,060).

Figure 10.1: Total Local Assessed Valuation of Property by Type, Auburn 2016

| Type of Property | Total Local Assessed Valuation | Percent of Total |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Commercial/Industrial | \$ 46,457,854 | 7.1% |
| Residential | \$ 599,371,738 | 91.6% |
| Other | \$ 8,506,367 | 1.3% |
| Total Value | \$ 654,335,959 | 100.0% |
| Residential to Commercial/Industrial Ratio: | 13:1 | |

Source: Town of Auburn 2017 CIP Report

Future Economic Conditions

A number of factors influence the economic base of Auburn. Some of these factors are geographic location, land/building availability, home/business occupations, water and sewer infrastructure availability, and environmental constraints.

The relationship between tax base and economic development requires an analysis of tax revenues from different types of revenue sources, such as commercial/industrial, mixed use, and residential.

In general, commercial/industrial uses are tax revenue positive relative to the cost of community services while residential development is tax revenue negative relative to the tax base and the cost of services. However, any assessment must take into account the impact that each type of development will have upon community character and environment. Auburn has and should continue to balance commercial and industrial development with the Town's desire to retain its rural character.

Manchester Water Work's significant undeveloped woodlands, Lake Massebesic's water resources, the lack of municipal infrastructure, and the desired "small town feel" are the primary reasons why its citizens have not and do not encourage any large-scale retail or commercial expansions. Large scale development would, most likely, effect the vital natural resources of the community and change the existing rural atmosphere. However, it remains important to study and plan for economic growth of commercial/industrial development adjacent to the Route 101 & I-93 corridors and along the Route 28 By-Pass. Carefully planned commercial and industrial growth in these areas will result in a positive effect on the Town's economic base, and can take the place of potential large- scale expansions at the expense of the Town's rural character and environmentally sensitive lands.

Future Employment Trends

As with many rural bedroom communities, Auburn's future economic well-being is closely linked to the economic climate of Southern New Hampshire. Assuming that Southern New Hampshire's economic prosperity continues and considering that 89.5% of all Auburn residents work out-of-town, there will continue to be promising employment opportunities within a reasonable commuting distance. The region's economic viability directly affects Auburn's own economic development.

In many ways, geographic location is one of the most significant contributors to Auburn's economic base. The amount of open space and proximity to the Manchester and Boston areas has made Auburn a prime area for residential development and expansion. The natural assets of the community make it a desirable place to own a home and the adjacent metro area provides many economic opportunities for the Town's residents.

Home occupations are an important component of the local economy of Auburn. Home offices, businesses and shops are regulated under Article 4 of the Town's Zoning Ordinance and are permitted by right or by special exception in the residential zones, and allowed by-right in the commercial-two (C-2) zone. The Town does not currently have any type of mechanism in place to track the home occupations for the purpose of tracking employment and percentages of local versus out-of-town employment forces.

Fiscal Strategies and Resources

There are other opportunities Auburn can leverage to promote economic development, such as tax increment financing (TIF). A TIF is an innovative tool that uses tax revenue from new developments, in designated areas, to pay for new infrastructure to serve those new businesses, expansions of existing businesses, and residential developments. The State of New Hampshire grants municipalities the authority to create TIF districts through RSA 162-K:1-15. However, the creation of TIF districts have numerous legal requirements to be established. Tax increment financing is an attractive means of providing economic development incentive within the community without taking resources from other community projects and needs. Currently the Towns of Derry, Hooksett, and Londonderry are the only towns in the SNHPC region which have adopted TIF districts.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are a valuable resource available for funding a variety of public needs. In addition to funding affordable housing programs and community centers, CDBG funds can also be used for economic development projects. Such projects could include expansion of public water and sewer facilities or loans to help businesses or industries build or expand.

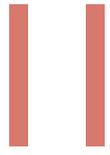
Another funding source is the Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA), which provides financial and technical assistance to community development corporations, worker cooperatives, and certain municipal entities. CDFA administers a variety of economic development grant programs, including the Economic Development Ventures Fund, Tax Credit Program, Community Development Investment Program, and various discretionary grants. This funding source should be considered by the Town as action items are implemented in an effort to attract additional commercial and industrial businesses.

Implementation Actions

To encourage and stimulate the desired economic development, as outlined in the vision statement, it is recommended that the Town focus their efforts on the following action items:

1. Consider the economic development goals when modifying the land use regulations, to promote commercial and industrial development within the desired districts.
2. Consider the noted tax and financing opportunities, when encouraging commercial and industrial growth.

-
3. Appoint new committee members and reactivate the Auburn Development Authority to work with the Boards and Staff to further evaluate and plan future economic development opportunities.
 4. Encourage the BOS and Town Staff to promote the recently announced expansion of the Liberty Utilities natural gas line between Manchester and Auburn, providing the potential for natural gas availability along Route 101 and I93.
 5. Consider establishing a Town Business License to track these home business.
 6. Reevaluate the possibility of an interconnection with Manchester's or Hooksett's sewer system.



HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Historic Setting

The early settlers came to West Chester from England and North of Ireland. The settlers are recorded as settling in what would later become Auburn in the 1700's. Prior to its incorporation in 1845, the Town of Auburn was known as West Chester. Like the towns of Candia and Raymond, Auburn separated from the Town of Chester. In the early days, Auburn was a rural farming town, comprised of small family farms, wooded hillsides, green pastures and brilliant lakes, brooks and ponds. The settlers led simple lives and, by all means, lived in moderation.

Population growth in Auburn during the early years was slow due to the lack of roads and transportation. Additionally, the early settlers' fear of encountering Indians also impacted population growth. As improvements in road systems and transportation methods emerged, population experienced both increases and decreases. In 1860, Auburn had a population of 886 with 31 persons per square mile. By 1900, the population had decreased 23 percent to 652 and 24 persons per square mile. The population did not start to climb until after 1920 when the population reached 807 persons in 1940. In 2000, the U.S. Census reported that the population in Auburn was 4,682. The most recent population estimates completed by the Office of Energy and Planning (OEP) in 2015 puts Auburn's population at 5,141.

The railroad came to Auburn in the 1860's, making the Town easily accessible for vacationers to visit in the summer. The fare from Boston to Auburn was only one dollar which, in combination with its beautiful natural setting, made it a very popular destination for summer boarders.



Pictured Above: Auburn Depot on Depot Road



Pictured Above: Battery Point on Lake Massabesic

When the summer resort activities began to decline, the inns and hotels that once housed the summer residents were converted to private homes. Many of these homes can still be seen in Auburn today. In 1890, Auburn had its first telegraph equipment installed, with rural phones to follow in 1909. The introduction of telecommunications allowed the residents of Auburn to communicate with others in faraway locations at any given time.

Automobiles are recorded as being in Auburn as early as 1918. By 1924, there were 164 vehicles registered in Town. This number quickly increased to 236 automobiles in 1926 and surpassing 300 in 1940. In the late 1940's and early 1950's, Auburn improved many roads by installing a hard surface to better accommodate the automobile.

In an effort to protect persons and properties, Auburn elected its first Zoning Board of Adjustment in the 1950's. The role of the Zoning Board was to create and enact ordinances to protect the protection and health of the community. The formation of the Planning Board followed in 1963 in order to address the urbanization that was occurring in Auburn. In 1967, the Town adopted its first Zoning Ordinance.



Pictured Above: School House #3, 1907 - located in Village Area



Pictured Above: Griffin Family Homestead

Figure 11.1: Historic Resources

| Sites of Cultural and Historical Significance | Date | Location | Comments |
|---|--------|--------------------------|---|
| Auburn Historical Association | | 102 Hooksett Road | Used as Auburn Historical Association |
| Auburn Village Cemetery | 1843 | Eaton Hill Road | |
| Bay View Inn | 1898 | 33 Bunker Hill Road | Originally a boarding house, currently used as a private residence |
| Calef/Blanchard Mill/ Underhill/Griffin | 1771 | Hooksett Road | Site of a former structure of historical significance |
| Clark Mill/Griffin | 1796 | Depot Road | Site of a former structure of historical significance |
| Davis House | 1730 | 129 Pingree Hill Road | Once a parsonage for the Longmeadow Cemetary Meeting House |
| Dearborn Mill | 1751 | Old Chester Turnpike | Site of a former structure of historical significance |
| Dockham Store | | Dearborn Road | Old store on the grounds of a private residence |
| The Elms (Tom Emery's) | 1850 | 19 Chester Road | Originally a boarding house, currently used as a private residence |
| Fire Tower on Mine Hill | 1930's | Chester Road | Site of a former structure of historical significance |
| Gagnon House | 1740 | 103 Wilson Crossing | Currently used as a private residence. |
| Griffin Free Public Library | 1890 | 22 Hooksett Road | Given to the Town on April 28, 1893 by Sebastian Griffin |
| Hall/Harwood/Pingrey Mills | 1771 | Dearborn Road | Mill buildings have been completely removed. Site later occupied by private residence, which has since been destroyed by fire. Site currently owned by Manchester Water Works |
| Island View Hotel/Tilton | 1900 | 55 Chester Road | Originally a boarding house, currently used as a private residence |
| Longmeadow Cemetery | 1793 | Chester Road | |
| Longmeadow Church | 1847 | 4 Wilson's Crossing Road | |
| Mc Duffee Farm | 1758 | 16 Penny Lane | Currently used as a private residence |
| McKinley Farm | 1739 | 52 Pingree Hill Road | Currently used as a private residence |
| Methodist Church (Town Hall) | 1836 | 47 Chester Road | Currently used as Town Hall |
| Oak Farm Inn/Emery | 1800 | 29 Chester Road | Currently used as an apartment building |
| Pine Bluff Hotel | 1775 | 34 Bunker Hill Road | Originally a boarding house, currently used as a private residence |

| Sites of Cultural and Historical Significance | Date | Location | Comments |
|---|------|------------------------|---|
| School House #1 | 1857 | Chester Road | Original structure suffered major fire damage in the 1930's. Present building has been altered and is not as originally built. Currently used as a private residence. |
| School House #2 | 1857 | Wilson's Crossing Road | Currently used as a private residence |
| School House #5 | 1851 | Bunker Hill Road | Currently used as a private residence |
| School House #7 | 1828 | | Originally located on Hooksett Road. Sold, split into two halves in the 1930's and moved a mile closer to the Village. Converted to a private home, which was later completely destroyed by fire. |
| School House #8 | | Londonderry Turnpike | Vacant in 2005 |
| Severance School | 1921 | Manchester Road | Presently occupied by Faith Baptist Church |
| Smith's Boarding House/ Severance | 1835 | 360 Manchester Road | Currently used as a private residence |
| Town Pound | 1853 | 311 Chester Road | |
| Towne Homestead | 1734 | 434 Pingree Hill Road | Currently used as a private residence |

Sources: Auburn Historical Association, Town of Auburn Hazard Mitigation Plan, and *Auburn, New Hampshire*, by Carl Cheswell Forsaith

Protection of Historic and Cultural Resources

The first step in a historic preservation effort is to conduct a historic and cultural resources inventory to identify all structures and sites of potential value (see Figure 11.1 Historic Resources). Generally, the inventory should include the location of each structure, its age and architectural style, photographs and any unusual characteristics. The results of such a survey might suggest that one or more sites of high historical interest may be eligible for listing on the State or National Register of Historic Places.



Pictured Above: Dockham Store



Pictured Above: Auburn Historical Society

Historic Preservation Easements

Historic preservation easements allow a property owner to grant a portion of the rights of the property to a group that commits to preservation. The property owner retains the right to sell the property, however all subsequent property owners forever relinquish the development, demolition, alteration, or other rights waived as part of the easement. Historic preservation is not inexpensive. Easements provide property owners with a mutually beneficial alternative. Not only does the property owner retain ownership, along with any potential financial benefits, but there is also the possibility of a federal tax deduction. These benefits are balanced by the knowledge that the owner has contributed to the preservation of a historic or culturally significant place.

Properties must meet certain qualifications set by the IRS in order to qualify for tax benefits. To be eligible, properties must be on the National Register of Historic Places or be located within a historic district and certified by the U.S. Department of the

Interior as historically significant to the district. At present, Auburn does not have a historic district, so only properties listed on the National Register would currently qualify. Certification must come prior to the easement, or before the owner files a tax return for the year the easement was granted. Additionally, qualified properties must be accessible to the public. Depending on the nature of the site, this could mean as few as a couple of hours or days per year, or even the ability to view the site from a distance.

Historic preservation easements generally prohibit the destruction or alteration of the property without review and approval by the easement holder. Development and subdivision restrictions are also common. Additionally, some easements require the owner to maintain or restore the property to certain conditions. Historic preservation easements provide ownership of the property, thereby alleviating the financial burden of maintaining the property alone.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines outline locally acceptable site and architectural design and can be formulated to identify desirable community characteristics. They focus on the aesthetics and promote new development and substantial improvements to existing structures that is harmonious with the surrounding area, town center, or historic district. The guidelines can specify locally desired architectural styles, construction materials, building scale, window and door design, sign size and design, awnings and canopies, lighting fixtures, landscaping, fencing, and screening methods. These guidelines are typically incorporated within the communities' Site Plan Review or Land Use Development Regulations. These regulations can range from providing a general clause requiring the preservation and protection of historic features to location-specific guidelines for new development.

The neighboring towns of Chester, Goffstown, Hooksett, Londonderry and the City of Manchester have established design guidelines. These guidelines were created to ensure that future growth and development in their historic centers is compatible with its surroundings. In the future, Auburn may wish to explore the possibility of creating guidelines which will address the preservation of historic buildings and the maintenance of the town's historic character.

Conclusion and Recommendations

If the Town of Auburn were to decide to pursue an effort toward historic preservation, the first step for would be to organize a Historic District Commission or a Heritage Commission. Once established, these organizations could utilize the tools necessary for preservation, such as those methods mentioned above. Towns that have created a Historic District Commission or Heritage Commission, and have utilized the various preservation tools, may find it easier to apply for the various state and federal designations outlined previously in the types of preservation. Through listing in state and national registers and the protection of historic features, Auburn can reinforce the historic charm that characterizes the Town. Such designations can provide education on the value of preservation to both visitors and citizens alike, thus encouraging future preservation efforts.

Regardless of the advantages of designation, it is important to realize that sites are still vulnerable to loss. Timing is critical in terms of historic preservation. Rapid increases in population and the accompanying developmental pressures on historic and cultural resources continue to put properties and districts at risk. Auburn should educate itself and its citizenry about the advantages and disadvantages of historic preservation and implement the types that are most suited to the Town's historic resources.

In an effort to achieve the goals set forth in this chapter, the Town may wish to consider the following recommendations:

1. Work with the Auburn Historical Association to conduct a historic resource inventory.
2. Apply for National, State Historic Register, or State Historic Markers designations for eligible properties in conjunction with the Auburn Historical Association.

II FUTURE LAND USE

Many factors influence a community's land use patterns; these include natural resource networks, agricultural and forestry practices, as well as residential development and commercial and industrial development. This chapter of the Master Plan describes the existing land use and zoning patterns in Auburn and reviews the development patterns which have occurred over the past decade. Additionally, this chapter contains recommendations for the various types and locations of future land use activity in Auburn and is intended to assist Town officials and residents in determining what regulatory and non-regulatory actions will best guide future land use changes toward Auburn's chosen vision.

The Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) Regional Plan notes the loss of open space to development within the region, and notes the need for protecting the regions natural resources from development. This network of resources provides the natural capital for the region and can't be replaced once lost. This network of natural resources is critical to Auburn's vision as a rural community and must be balanced against the need to provide a diverse supply of housing and locations for local businesses to prosper. The future land use recommendations in this chapter reflect the vision statement and findings of the various chapters of this master plan. The recommendations also recognize the type and distribution of existing land use activities; opportunities for and constraints imposed on future development; population and housing projections; the opinions of residents of Auburn; and Auburn's location within the region. The following summary of the vision statement identifies Auburn's Plan for the future.

Looking forward, Auburn's vision calls for efforts that will enable the Town to primarily remain a rural residential community with a distinct small town atmosphere.

This will require a commitment to protecting the natural and cultural resources in the community. This will also require implementing planning practices that direct growth and development in ways that protect Auburn's distinct character. Auburn is also a community that is looking forward and is committed to promoting energy conservation and renewable energy production in ways that reinforce this vision. New housing alternatives and higher density, mixed-use developments need to be promoted in areas where the necessary infrastructure is available. Lastly, if Auburn truly wants to preserve the rural feel of the community in close proximity to Manchester it must commit to further land protection and low impact development practices.



Existing Land Use

Auburn's Growth and Development

Historically, the growth in Auburn has been predominately single family residential developments. Many of these new residential developments are occurring in previously undeveloped, rural areas and require the construction of new roads for access. Auburn's land use today can be described as follows:

- Rural residential development dispersed throughout town consisting of single family detached homes on individual lots;
- Limited agriculture uses
- Limited forestry uses;
- Two primary commercial/industrial areas;
- A small village center; and
- Significant land holdings, owned by Manchester Water Works, primarily located around Massabesic Lake

The dispersion of new residential dwellings throughout the rural areas of the community is a major land use trend in Auburn. This has become a growing concern, as the Town has experienced continued, steady growth over the past few years. Another influential land use trend is the lack of commercial and industrial growth in Auburn. While there is interest in more commercial, manufacturing, and light industrial development within the community, there is limited infrastructure for this intensity of land use.

Existing Land Use Analysis

Auburn's greatest regional assets are its large, forested areas that contribute to its rural atmosphere, and the open space and recreational areas around Lake Massabesic. Many of the remaining, undeveloped areas of the community have constraints to development and include some critical lands as identified in the Natural Resources section of this plan.

Additionally, Massabesic Lake and the surrounding watershed protection area occupy a significant number of acres in Auburn. Manchester Water Works currently owns 3,906 acres of land in town, which is approximately 24 percent of the total land area in Auburn. When taking the surface water area and Manchester Water Works land into account, approximately 33 percent of the town is currently reserved as open space; however, tracts are not permanently protected.

As a result the Town of Auburn is predominantly a residential or "bedroom" community. The SNHPC Regional Comprehensive Plan also noted this profile for Auburn. After the economic slowdown, during the recession, recent building permit data indicates that approximately 30 units per year are being constructed in Auburn.

Future Land Use

| | Total Units 2010 Census | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | Total Units 2015 |
|----------------------|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------------------|
| Single Family | 1656 | 8 | 30 | 39 | 27 | 35 | 31 | 1826 |
| Multi-Family | 118 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 134 |
| Manufacturing | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 40 |
| Total Housing | 1814 | 9 | 32 | 41 | 32 | 38 | 34 | 2000 |

Source: NH Office of Strategic Initiatives

The Future Land Use Map (see Appendix) presents a graphic representation of the vision statement, goals identified in this plan, and the land use recommendations contained in this plan. The purpose of this map is to provide the Planning Board with a planning tool that can be used in an advisory nature, to guide the future growth and development of the Town as well as assist the Planning Board in developing and improving the Auburn's land use regulations.

Due to the lack of infrastructure and the interest in preserving Auburn's rural residential atmosphere, residents would prefer to concentrate proposed development within previously developed areas. A greater mix of uses could be accommodated, over time, in the commercial districts on the west side of the community. However, the community's earlier desire to create a mixed use village district appears to be unrealistic due to the lack of infrastructure and natural resource constraints related to Massabesic Lake.

The following areas of the community have been identified as important elements of Auburn in the future and each have a distinct character. The creation of updated land use regulations will assist in reinforcing the vision for the community while accommodating a mix of housing units in the years to come. Complimented by strategic conservation initiatives, Auburn can guide future development while remaining a rural bedroom community.

Auburn Village

At the center of the community is the village which is an integral part of the community. Auburn Village is the focal point of the community's governmental, cultural and social activities. As such, it should continue to serve as a thriving and sustainable part of the community. This area of the community is different because it possesses the following characteristics:

- A walkable neighborhood development pattern;
- A civic core with a mix of neighborhood uses, residential structures, and municipal buildings; and
- An interconnected street network.

Residential Districts

Surrounding Auburn Village are three residential areas with slightly different goals and corresponding densities. Auburn has a long tradition of concern regarding the protection of the natural environment and maintaining the rural character of the community, as expressed in this and past master plans. Much of this work is still relevant today. This Master Plan confirms that these central concerns remain an important priority to the residents of the community. The following natural features have been identified as being significant and important priority areas that warrant special protection, while guiding the development of future residential units. These areas include but are not limited to:

- Farmland Soils
- Steep Slopes
- Wetlands and Vernal Pools
- Rivers, Lakes and Shorelines
- Aquifers
- Floodplains
- Forest Resources
- Open Space/Land Conservation

Mixed Use Districts

In the northwestern portion of Auburn a mixed use/high density districts are envisioned (see future land use map). In the location of the current commercial/industrial zoning districts, and with access to water and sewer infrastructure, these areas have the greatest potential for increased density and a mix of uses that could include higher density residential uses. This will require revising the existing zoning for these areas, and developing architectural guidelines so that consistent and complimentary architectural styles result over time. It may also be necessary to apply a new approach such as a form based code to make the best use of these limited areas as redevelopment takes place.

Form Based Codes place greater emphasis on building location and size, and are less concerned about the resulting mix of use as long as there is a mix overall. Other benefits of design guidelines for these areas include formalizing two main gateways to the community and managing traffic flow.

Green Infrastructure

In order to reach Auburn's vision and still have a rural feel to the community, it must retain intact natural resources and include natural areas in new development.

What is Form Based Code?

A form-based code is a zoning regulation that fosters predictable building patterns and high-quality designs of the public way by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the regulation. A form-based code is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into municipal zoning.

<https://formbasedcodes.org/definition/>

Often referred to as green infrastructure, this approach includes the protection of unfragmented blocks of land, the creation of connected greenways of open space, and even site scale design elements that:

- Encourage habitat conservation measures;
- Promote stormwater management; and
- Incorporate native landscaping.

The Planning Board should evaluate the Auburn's current Site Plan and Subdivision Regulations to determine if green infrastructure elements are required and add the necessary guidelines to encourage the protection of these resources.



Pictured Above: Bioswale next to residential street curb
Source: Environmental Protection Agency

Implementation Actions

To direct future land use changes in a way that is consistent with this vision it is important that Auburn work to implement the following action over the coming years:

1. Review and revise the zoning regulations for each of the areas identified to ensure that they address the land uses, type of housing units, and density of development that are most appropriate.
 - Decrease density in rural areas? Other tools for guiding development here? Flexible lot sizing?
 - Form based code and architectural standards for mixed use areas?
 - Should we specify changes to the types of residential units allowed in each area of town?
2. Encourage both residential and non-residential development to identify existing natural resources so that they are conserved in an appropriate manner;
3. Utilize the New Hampshire Department of Fish & Game's Wildlife Action Plan and other available information sources to identify important natural resources and work to preserve them;
4. Encourage new residential and non-residential developments to protect and, where possible, enhance valuable green infrastructure;
5. Encourage public/private partnerships between the town and other private and civic organizations to provide conservation and recreation opportunities; and
6. Identify the water resources in Town in an effort to protect them.

12 IMPLEMENTATION

This section of the Master Plan prioritizes each implementation action and identifies who is responsible for implementing each action. The table organizes goals and actions by chapter topic. The following recommendations cover a wide variety of action types including education and outreach, zoning and policy changes, investment, and strengthening connections throughout the region.

Table Legend

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| RESPONSIBILITY: | Committee |
| PB = Planning Board | LT = Library Trustees |
| BOS = Board of Selectmen | SB = School Board |
| ZBA = Zoning Board of Adjustment | BI = Building Inspector |
| TA = Town Administrator | PRIORITY: |
| CC = Conservation Commission | Near – 1-4 years |
| REC = Recreation | Medium – 4-6 years |
| | Long – 6-10 years |

| Auburn Master Plan Implementation Actions by Topic | Priority | Responsibility |
|---|----------|----------------|
| Land Use Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserve those community features that contribute to Auburn’s rural character and quality of life. Recognize and appreciate the unique role of the various land use patterns in Auburn and how they contribute to the economic well-being of the town. | | |
| Review and revise the zoning regulations for each of the areas identified to ensure that they address the land uses, type of housing units, and density of development that are most appropriate. | Near | PB |
| Encourage both residential and non-residential development to identify existing natural resources so that they are conserved in an appropriate manner during the development process. | Long | PB & BOS |
| Utilize the New Hampshire Department of Fish & Game’s Wildlife Action Plan and other available information sources to identify important natural resources and work to preserve them. | Long | PB & CC |
| Encourage new residential and non-residential developments to protect and, where possible, enhance valuable green infrastructure during the development process. | Long | PB & BOS |
| Encourage public/private partnerships between the town and other private and civic organizations to provide conservation and recreation opportunities. | Medium | BOS |
| Identify the water resources in Auburn and the available capacity through a formal water study in an effort to manage this resource. | Near | PB & CC |
| Explore condominium, multi-family, & elderly residential related zoning changes. | Medium | PB & ZBA |
| Investigate the creation of a new R3 zone for higher density housing near existing commercial and industrial zones. | Medium | PB & ZBA |

| Auburn Master Plan Implementation Actions by Topic | Priority | Responsibility |
|---|-------------|----------------|
| Evaluate the potential to use design guidelines, form based codes, and/or TIF District in the higher density mixed use areas of the community to ensure these areas develop efficiently and encourage high value development. | Long | PB |
| Research new fees to adopt in Auburn including: -Impact Fees -Landlord related fees | Long | PB |
| Community Facilities Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and provide for quality community facilities and services to effectively meet the municipal, social, educational, and other service needs of Auburn’s residents and businesses in an efficient manner. Provide suitable recreation opportunities – land, programs, and facilities – to service the town’s existing and projected populations. Encourage the long-term use, maintenance, and improvement of existing community and recreational facilities. | | |
| Elementary school study, evaluation and establish community support | Near | BOS & SB |
| Library (community center) expansion evaluation, design | Near | BOS, LT |
| Historic and Cultural Resource Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the preservation and protection of Auburn’s historic resources and cultural heritage. | | |
| Study and update historical sites and educate public regarding new additions | Near/Medium | PB & BOS |
| Propose new/additional landmarks, notices, and signs for historical sites | Near/Medium | PB & BOS |
| Housing Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the use of energy efficient construction techniques including siting, landscaping, building envelope, energy efficient appliances, high efficiency heating and cooling systems, and renewable energy production. Encourage a diverse housing stock that will ensure a broad range of housing costs and opportunities in Auburn. Encourage housing consistent with the rural character of Auburn while offering a range of residential living opportunities. | | |

| Auburn Master Plan Implementation Actions by Topic | Priority | Responsibility |
|---|----------|----------------|
| Complete a comprehensive review of Auburn’s land use regulations based on the Vision and Future Land Use Plan to identify additional housing types that may be permitted to promote greater diversity in the Town’s housing stock, assess compliance with existing affordable housing laws, identify additional tools for providing workforce housing, and identify appropriate locations for all of these selected housing types. | Medium | PB & BI |
| Review the area and dimensional requirements in the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision, and Site Plan Review Regulations to ensure reasonable opportunities exist for smaller single-family housing units. | Medium | PB & BI |
| Investigate the possibility of creating a new R3 zoning district in the southwest portion of town to accommodate higher density multi-unit housing development near available infrastructure. | Near | PB |
| <p>Natural Resources and Open Space Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the important contribution that the town’s natural resources and cultural and historic amenities make to the overall character and well-being of the town. Protect and manage Auburn’s valuable open space resources. Protect Auburn’s valuable water resources including wetlands, upland buffers, water recharge areas, and drinking water supply. Permanently protect Auburn’s natural assets that contribute to public health and safety, economic vitality, and quality of life. | | |
| Identify the Town’s most valuable natural resources in need of protection by conducting a comprehensive natural resource inventory. | Near | PB & CC |
| Based on the results of the natural resource inventory develop a comprehensive Open Space Plan for the Town in order to identify, prioritize and protect the Town’s remaining open spaces. | Long | PB & CC |
| Protect the quality of Auburn’s groundwater and water supply resources through easement, acquisition and land use regulations. | Long | PB & CC |
| Promote and encourage the gift or purchase of conservation easements and properties. | Long | PB, CC & BOS |
| Easements and forest management overlay districts can be effective tools for protecting productive forest lands. In an effort to save open space for forestry in the future, the Town of Auburn should promote and encourage the gift or purchase of conservation easements for this purpose. Conservation easements provide private landowners a practical option to protect their land while retaining ownership. There are also numerous tax benefits, which make conservation easements attractive for the landowner. | Long | CC, BOS |

| Auburn Master Plan Implementation Actions by Topic | Priority | Responsibility |
|---|----------|----------------|
| Protect the remaining agricultural and forestry soils through the use of overlay districts or other regulatory tools. | Long | PB & CC |
| Regional Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively participate in regional dialogue and initiatives that may be of benefit or concern to Auburn so that the town's needs and interests are shared and heard at the regional level. | | |
| Water and Sewer – Evaluate the potential to expand water and sewer infrastructure in the areas of the community where higher density development is a priority. | Near | PB, BOS, TA |
| Evaluate and coordinate new bus route between Exit 1 and Exit 2 with Manchester. | Medium | PB, BOS, TA |
| Economic Development Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage economic development and expansion that conform to the natural features of the land and the town's rural character, and contributes to Auburn's economic well-being. Encourage denser mixed use development in the areas where infrastructure is available to increase housing alternatives and promote transportation alternatives. | | |
| Consider the economic development goals when modifying the land use regulations, to promote commercial and industrial development within the desired districts. | Near | PB & BOS |
| Consider the noted tax and financing opportunities, when encouraging commercial and industrial growth. | Near | PB & BOS |
| Appoint new committee members and reactivate the Auburn Development Authority to work with the Boards and Staff to further evaluate and plan future economic development opportunities. | Near | BOS |
| Encourage the BOS and Staff to promote the recently announced expansion of the Liberty Utilities natural gas line between Manchester and Auburn, providing the potential for natural gas availability along Route 101 and I93. | Medium | BOS |
| Consider establishing a Town Business License to track home business. | Medium | BOS |
| Reevaluate the possibility of an interconnection with Manchester's or Hooksett's sewer system. | Long | PB & BOS |
| Transportation Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for and maintain an efficient and balanced transportation system that allows for the safe travel through town using a variety of modes while protecting the aesthetic, scenic, and rural qualities of town roads. | | |

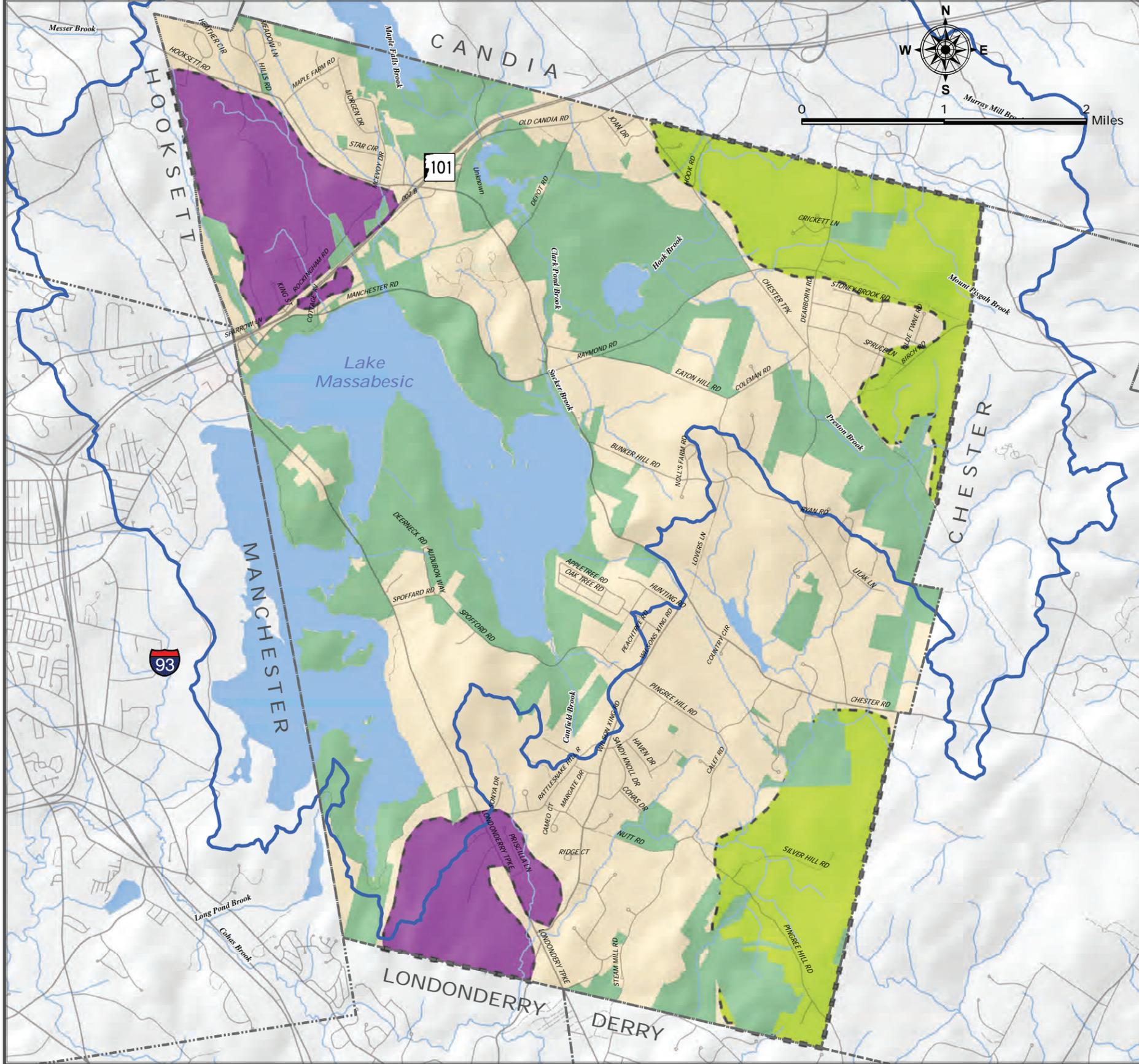
| Auburn Master Plan Implementation Actions by Topic | Priority | Responsibility |
|--|----------|----------------|
| Evaluate, coordinate new bus route between Exit 1 and Exit 2 with Manchester | Medium | PB, BOS, TA |
| Public Utilities Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for and maintain public utilities that support Auburn’s desired land use pattern. | | |
| Complete sewer, water, and natural gas connection/expansion studies | Near | PB, CC & BOS |

It is the Auburn Planning Board’s intent to focus their immediate attention on the near-term implementation actions, as identified in the implementation table. These include but are not limited to:

- Affordable Housing
- Senior Housing
- Water Resource Protection Ordinance
- Implementation of the Future Land Use Plan and Map
- Village District Zoning Change

In conjunction with their efforts, the Planning Board will collaborate with the other Auburn municipal boards, Town staff, and citizens to implement these action items. The intent of the Planning Board is to then move forward with the mid-term and long-term action items over the coming years, in an effort to bring this vision into reality for Auburn.

Map 23: Future Land Use TOWN OF AUBURN



- Future Land Use**
- Commercial/Industrial/Residential
 - Residential
 - Rural
 - Lake Massabesic Watershed
 - Lake/Pond
 - Town Boundaries
 - Watershed Protection Lands
- Road System**
- State Secondary Highways
 - Town Maintained Roads
 - Town Unmaintained Roads
 - Brooks and Rivers

Data Sources:
 NH GRANIT Digital Data (1:24,000)
 NH Department of Transportation
 Town of Auburn

The individual municipalities represented on this map and the SNHPC make no representations or guaranties to the accuracy of the features and designations of this map.

Map Produced by
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This map is one of a series of maps that were produced as part of a Town's Master Plan 2018 and for planning purposes only. It is not to be used for legal boundary determinations or for regulatory purposes.



New Hampshire
 Location
 Map

