

TOWN OF VASSALBORO STRATEGIC PLAN

June 2006

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

What is the Strategic Plan

The plan is a guide and expression of the community's vision.

The plan is a guide for managing change within the community for the next 10-20 years. It is an expression of the community's vision of its future by providing the framework for policy decisions.

It is based on local information.

While the plan cannot predict the future, the inventory of the town, current census, and state planning data which the Planning Committee collected and analyzed with the help of a professional planner provide a reasonable basis for recommending goals, policies and strategies that should help the town to realize its vision.

The plan is an ongoing process.

The plan is not the end of the planning process, but just the beginning. The local committees and town officials will further refine the policies and strategies as they are put into action. The plan may be adapted to meet the changing needs of the community.

The plan is not a law or an ordinance.

The plan is not an ordinance, nor a law of any kind. It is only the basis for developing policies. Some of those policies may lead to ordinances, which by law must come before the entire town through hearings and be considered at the Town Meeting.

The plan is built on the past and leads to the future.

The 2006 strategic plan is built upon previous planning efforts, the most recent of which was the work done between 1990 and 1992. This plan was brought up to date and integrated with new data from the 2004 survey, public forums, the 2000 Census and other local, state, and regional information.

The plan is meant to be used.

The plan's recommendations will do no good unless acted upon. The Strategic Planning Committee recommends creating some new committees to help implement the plan. Implementation of the plan will require the involvement and participation of many citizens. The more people involved, the better the plan will serve the whole town.

Acknowledgments

The Vassalboro Strategic Plan Committee would like to thank the Selectmen, Town Office Staff and the countless number of citizens who answered the survey, participated in public forums, and made other valuable contributions to the plan.

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GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Introduction

The goals, policies and implementation strategies are the community's action plan.. The goals are based upon ideas collected in the town survey, public meetings, and visioning sessions. The policies and implementation strategies take into consideration the many details and facts collected in the inventory section of the plan.

This is the heart of the plan because it sets out a path for the community to follow. It also specifies a group, committee or board responsible for implementation.

The policies are designed and intended to serve not as a destination, but as a point of departure. The members of the Strategic Plan Committee listened to the community and pieced together many ideas and suggestions into a cohesive set of policies.

The next step in the planning process is to have members of the public with the interest and expertise in a particular area to take a leadership role and further refine each of these recommendations. The work of the Plan Committee is completed, but over the coming years many citizens will further advance the ideas, and recommendations contained in the plan.

This section is divided into areas that match the inventory section of the plan. Policies and implementation strategies relate to specific areas such as housing or natural resources. However, it is important to remember that a particular policy might also have implications for other areas in the plan.

This section is divided into the following areas:

- Population
- Housing
- Archeological and Historical Resources
- Economy
- Transportation
- Public Services
- Fiscal Capacity
- Natural Resources

Policy Development

The policies and recommendations contained in the strategic plan represent many points of view. The Strategic Plan Committee tried to balance common concerns and needs by identifying compromises. The policies will be discussed and refined as the plan is put into action.

Goals, Policies and Implementation

Population

Goal: To plan for orderly growth and development throughout the community and to respond to changes in our population, while maintaining the rural character.

Some Key Issues:

- The town population has doubled in 50 years.
- Our population is aging. Birth rates are down but the school population has increased 13% in 20 years.
- People move into Vassalboro for its rural qualities, but Vassalboro is becoming one of the most densely populated rural towns in Kennebec County.

Policy:

- 1 The town should monitor demographic trends and incorporate any significant changes into the plan. Applicable policies and growth estimates should be revised.

The Town Manager and the Code Enforcement Officer should examine demographic data from the Census Bureau, Department of Human Services, and Kennebec Valley Council of Governments when it becomes available. Changes and trends should be reported to the Selectmen and other appropriate committees. Whenever necessary the planning process shall be modified to reflect new data and trends.

Timeline: Annually

- 2 The town should monitor medical service availability and access within the town and region especially as it impacts elderly residents.

The Town Manager, in cooperation with local, regional, state, and senior citizen organizations, should monitor how well residents can access medical services. Strategies should be developed to address deficiencies in cooperation with senior citizen groups and medical professional organizations.

Timeline: On-going

- 3 Major changes in the school age population should be addressed before they have critical impact on the public schools.

The Town Manager and the Code Enforcement Officer should survey incoming population regularly to estimate the number of children below school age and report back to the school board.

Timeline: Annually

Housing

Goals: To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all residents.

To identify and inventory the variety of types and densities of housing available to households of different sizes, ages and incomes.

To foster a responsible balance of housing and other development in rural portions of the community with the needs of farming and forestry operations.

Some Key Issues:

- Housing is anticipated to grow by at least 30 new units per year.
- New housing is scattered throughout the community.
- The north and east Vassalboro villages have municipal water and sewer available, however, very few new homes are located in these areas.
- New housing may impact existing farming and forestry operations.
- Housing prices are increasing in Vassalboro and the region.
- Some families may be priced out of the housing market.

Policies:

- 1 The town should explore ways to meet the housing needs of elderly citizens including senior housing, housing repair programs, regional housing ventures, in-law apartments and other similar strategies.

The town should create a senior housing committee to develop a housing plan for the community. The committee should seek public input and ideas and present a plan to the Town Meeting for consideration.

Timeline: 2008

- 2 The town wishes to encourage a mix of housing types and prices to attract households of varying incomes into the community. The town should monitor housing and land prices in order to keep tabs on the availability of affordable housing opportunities for residents, young families and seniors. Strategies to address deficiencies in affordable housing opportunities should be developed as the need arises.

The Town Manager, Selectmen, Assessor, and the Code Enforcement Officer shall monitor housing affordability and propose strategies to increase affordable housing in areas of the community close to services, jobs, shopping, and transport.

Timeline: Annually

- 3 The town should cooperate closely with existing organizations and groups that promote affordable housing such as Habitat for Humanity, MSHA, KVCAP and the CDBG Grant Program, to offer affordable housing opportunities for all residents.

The Town Manager and the Code Enforcement Officer shall maintain a working relationship with affordable housing organizations and programs to find affordable housing projects for the community.

Timeline: On-going

- 4 The town shall amend the subdivision ordinance to allow the option of Open Space Design Subdivisions. Appropriate standards shall be developed for Open Space Designs.

-

The Planning Board shall amend the Subdivision Ordinance to allow Open Space Design development and create standards for their design and construction.

Timeline: 2008

- 5 The town should continue to encourage affordable housing for the elderly to locate in the villages. Dimensional standards for homes with municipal services should be developed to allow for a density higher than those in the rural portions of the town. Existing development patterns in the villages should be considered.

The Planning Board should develop appropriate dimensional standards for village housing that reflects existing development patterns and the availability of municipal services.

Timeline: 2010

- 6 The town should develop lot size standards, for areas not served by municipal services, based upon the capacity of the soil to accommodate a subsurface wastewater disposal system. Larger lot sizes, for example, would be required for soils with a high water table or that are shallow to bedrock. Data from the Department of Health Engineering, and other appropriate sources should be used to develop the lot size standards. The overall purpose for these standards is to provide safe waste water treatment for the long term and to protect water sources.

The Planning Board shall develop lot size standards.

Timeline: 2008

Archeological and Historic Resources

Goal: To preserve the town's historic and archeological resources.

Some Key Issues:

- There needs to be a comprehensive survey of town archeological and historic resources.
- Funding sources need to be developed to conduct preservation projects.
- The town's historic records need to be cataloged.
- Measures should be taken to protect archeological and historic sites from development.
- The villages are an important part of our history.

- 1 The town should support the activities of the Vassalboro Historical Society and encourage them to undertake additional tasks necessary to identify and preserve our historic resources.

The Selectmen shall support the Historical Society and their funding needs.

Timeline: On-going

- 2 The town should undertake a survey of all its historic and archeological resources. Grants and other funding sources should be identified for the projects.

The Town Manager shall work with the Historical Society to identify funds or grants available for taking a survey of historical or archeological resources.

Timeline: 2010

- 3 The town should make sure that town records and artifacts are stored safely and cataloged.

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The Town Manager will work with the Historical Society to develop a plan to make sure that records are cataloged and stored properly and available for research.

Timeline: 2010

- 4 The town shall promote a variety of activities which serve to enhance appreciation of our heritage such as, oral history projects, historic structure markers, and historic tours.

The Town Manager shall work with the Historical Society to undertake a variety of projects designed to increase public appreciation of local history and shall identify grant and other funding sources for these undertakings.

Timeline: On-going

- 5 The town should make sure that all housing and commercial development projects will not adversely impact important archeological, historic, and scenic resources.

The Planning Board shall require all projects to check the maps from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for possible archeological and historic sites

Timeline: 2008.

- 6 The town shall make an effort to preserve the historic character of the villages.

The Planning Board, utilizing state and local resources including the Historical Society, shall identify ways to preserve the historic character of the villages.

Timeline: 2008.

Economy

Goal: To promote an economic climate that increases business, employment and overall economic well-being.

Some Key Issues:

- The community supports farming, forestry, professional and service business, light industry, and home based occupations.
- The town does not have its own economic development strategy.
- The town has not identified areas for future commercial growth.
- Regional economic development efforts have been difficult for the town to support.
- The aging population will impact the economy.
- 75% of Vassalboro workers commute to larger urban areas.
- There are a growing number of workers in service, office and sales work.

Policies

- 1 The town should create a local economic strategy to promote business and development activities that have been identified as beneficial for the community.

The town's new economic development committee will create a strategy for community economic development.

Timeline: 2010

- 2 The town should encourage home businesses and establish appropriate standards which balance the need for home based businesses while preserving the character of residential property and neighborhoods.

The Planning Board shall develop home businesses standards that allow many different types of activities and reflect the creativity and flexibility of the current economy while protecting adjacent properties from undo deleterious effects.

Timeline: On-going

- 3 The town should in cooperation with neighboring communities, the state, and private businesses promote high speed internet access and other forms of communication throughout the town in order to maintain local economic health and competitiveness.

The Economic Committee, Selectmen and the Town Manager shall make sure that the entire town has access to modern communication.

Timeline: On-going

- 4 The town shall promote agriculture, forestry and other natural based industries by working in cooperation with citizens and regional, state and federal programs and groups to make sure that rural activities have the resources to continue operation. The town shall maintain an open dialogue with local farmers, foresters and other related operations to make sure that their needs are being considered.

The Town Manager and the Economic Committee shall include agriculture and forestry and related activities as an essential component of our local economic strategy.

Timeline: On-going

- 5 The town should be an active participant in regional economic development efforts whenever such activities provide a benefit for the town.

The Economic Committee, Selectmen and the Town Manager should identify relevant regional economic programs and participate as appropriate according to the economic strategies developed by the town.

Timeline: On-going

- 6 The town should explore the feasibility of identifying one or more commercial development sites which could provide a site for new commercial and industrial activities.

The Economic Committee and the Planning Board shall jointly explore the possibility of creating a development site and present their ideas to the town for consideration.

Timeline: 2009

- 7 The town shall create an economic development strategy and include an analysis of the benefits of the following activities: Farm outlet product markets, Light Industry, Professional Offices, Innovative agricultural activities, Home business, Medical services, and Senior Housing,

The Economic Committee shall consider these activities in the development of an economic development plan for the community.

Timeline: 2010

- 8 The town shall plan for the economic and social ramifications of an aging population in cooperation with regional and state economic groups.

The Economic Committee shall address demographic changes in the town economic strategy.

Timeline: 2010

- 9 The town should encourage and support the activities of the local business association.

- The Economic Committee should work with local business association and other groups, to foster to foster a thriving economic community.

Timeline: On-going

Transportation

Goal: To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services to accommodate anticipated growth and needs.

Some Key Issues

- The town needs to balance the needs for safe and efficient transportation with the rural character of the community.
- The town does a very good job maintaining its roads.
- There is good public transportation for students but none for adults or people with disabilities.
- The community needs creative strategies to deal with increased traffic, speeding, recreational use of roadways, visibility, and access to roads and driveways.

Policies

- 1 The town should work with MDOT and neighboring communities on corridor transportation planning for Routes 3, 201 and 32.

- The Town Manager and the Selectmen should participate in corridor planning for Routes 3, 201 and 32.

Timeline: On-going

- 2 The town should adopt traffic access standards for local roads to ensure the safe flow of traffic and the movement of vehicles in and out of property driveways and parking lots. Local requirements should be based on MDOT standards and include the following provisions: sight distance, corner clearance, road drainage, minimum driveway widths, and vehicle turn-around.

- The Planning Board shall develop traffic access provisions.

Timeline: 2008

- 3 The town should maintain its existing road maintenance planning process and shall annually appropriate funds for ongoing road repair, and maintenance. The town shall also make available educational and training opportunities in the areas of road maintenance for members of local road associations and owners of private roads.

- The Selectmen and the Town Manager shall fund road work based upon a road plan and make sure training opportunities area made available for town staff as well as local citizens.

Timeline: On-going

- 4 The town should cooperate with the Maine Department of Transportation to improve those places identified in the plan that are problem areas, accident sites or roads in need of repair.

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The Town Manager shall advocate to MDOT to address transportation deficiencies in town.
Timeline: On-going

- 5 The town should work with MDOT to encourage walking and biking opportunities along roadways including more road shoulders and sidewalks.

The Town Manager and the Conservation Commission shall advocate for road trails and other alternative transportation ways, especially whenever road improvements are planned by MDOT.
Timeline: On-going

- 6 The town shall make sure that whenever a private road is constructed that a road association is also created to handle ongoing road maintenance and repair.

The Planning Board shall amend the Road Ordinance to include a provision requiring a road association is developed for every private road proposed in a subdivision.
Timeline: 2008

- 7 The town shall require that proposed subdivisions address alternative transportation opportunities through a variety of options including preserving existing trails and paths and providing access to trails.

The Planning Board and the Conservation Commission shall work jointly to amend the subdivision ordinance to create options for walking and other alternative transportation.
Timeline: 2010

- 8 The town shall work closely with regional transportation providers including KVCAP to offer additional needed transportation services within the community for people with special needs.

The Town Manager shall advocate for increased transportation services for the community and shall also seek other creative ways to offer transportation services.
Timeline: 2009

- 9 The town shall develop a master trail plan for the community which should include many forms of alternative transportation.

The Conservation Commission shall in cooperation with other municipal and regional groups develop a master trail plan for the town.
Timeline: 2009

Public Services

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

To develop and maintain public services designed to be responsive to the citizens to Vassalboro.

Some Key Issues:

- Population is increasing with an expanded need for public services
- The town may need to expand public safety.

- It is becoming difficult to muster a pool of qualified volunteers for the Fire Department.
- Some of the sewer and water services in the villages are at capacity and need to be expanded.
- It is increasingly difficult to encourage and maintain a pool of local volunteers for the community.
- Municipal infrastructure is generally in good condition.
- The sanitary land fill is at capacity and recycling practices need to be assessed.
- High school choice is a popular option but regional changes may affect its feasibility.
- There is no clear method of communication for the community, town and social services. We need a local website, newsletter, or increased access to local newspapers.

Policies:

- 1 The town should identify and pursue grant funding whenever available to finance public service improvements, infrastructure upgrades and expansions.

The Selectmen and the Town Manager should monitor grant availability and apply for grants whenever feasible.

Timeline: Ongoing

- 2 The town should continue to maintain its level of municipal services and make sure that funding is adequate, training and educational opportunities are available for town staff; and new and creative ways and ideas are explored to improve services.

The Selectmen and Town Manager and municipal staff shall work together to provide efficient services for residents.

Timeline: Annually

- 3 The town recognizes that volunteers at every level of local government provide a tremendous amount of dedicated service for the community. The town also recognizes that without volunteers the cost of services would increase. Volunteers must necessarily continue to provide a high level of quality service for the town

The Selectmen and the Town Manager shall develop strategies to maintain and increase whenever possible the level of volunteer service and provide recognition and other enhancements for volunteer recruitment.

Timeline: 2008

- 4 The town shall work with the fire department to provide training, to maintain adequate services, equipment, and a sufficient number of trained volunteers.

The Town Manager and the Fire Chief shall maintain department resources and develop a plan in cooperation with neighboring fire departments and other groups to encourage membership of volunteer departments.

Timeline: 2008

- 5 The town shall explore ways to increase public safety throughout the community and to address concerns including speeding, vandalism, drugs, and response time.

The Town Manager and the Constable shall develop strategies to optimize public safety.

Timeline: 2008

- 6 The Town shall work in cooperation with the Vassalboro Sanitary District to develop a capital improvements plan for treatment and collection facilities to address any existing deficiencies and to allow for expansion and new users within the village area.

The Selectmen and the Sanitary District shall work together to develop a capital improvements plan for the District.

Timeline: 2009

- 7 The town shall work in cooperation with the Water Districts to develop effective capital improvements plans for the water system to address deficiencies, improve water quality and distribution and to allow for expansion and new users in the villages.

The Selectmen and the Water Districts shall work together to develop an effective capital improvements plan for the District.

Timeline: 2009

- 8 The town shall work to improve the recycling and transfer station in order to improve efficiency, increase recycling, and manage cost.

The Town Manager, Recycling Committee and the Transfer Station Staff shall develop a plan to improve services and efficiency.

Timeline: 2009

Fiscal Capacity

Goal: To finance an efficient system of public facilities to accommodate anticipated growth and economic development.

Some Key Issues:

- The current town capital improvement plans have functioned well and should be continued.
- The town is in good financial shape.
- The town should seek a fair balance between services and a low mill rate.

Policies

- 1 The town should maintain sound fiscal planning to ensure the adequate oversight of the town's fiscal affairs.

The Selectmen and the Town Manager should continue to wisely manage the fiscal affairs of the community and seek ways to improve the financial health of the town. Financial and similar training should be made available to municipal officials and town staff.

Timeline: Ongoing

- 2 The town shall continue to use a capital improvement plan to prepare for major expenditures. The town shall re-establish a Capital Improvements Committee to review and amend the plan in cooperation with the Selectmen and the Town Manager.

The town shall re-establish a Capital Improvement Plan Committee and shall annually review and amend their responsibilities as necessary.

Timeline: Annually

3 The town shall maintain appropriate financial reserves to provide funds for school and municipal operations.

- The Town Manager and the Selectmen shall make sure that the town has an appropriate reserve of funds consistent with sound accounting practices.

Timeline: Annually

4 The Selectmen should monitor the implementation of the strategic plan and make sure that appropriate resources are available to put the plan into action.

- The Selectmen should make sure that adequate resources are provided to implement the plan.

Timeline: Annually

5 The town shall find funding sources to finance a local land trust.

- The Town Manager, Selectmen and the Conservation Commission shall develop a local land trust and identify funding mechanisms for the program.

Timeline: 2009

6 The town shall explore the feasibility of using an impact fee system to require that development pay the cost of some development impacts such as roads, traffic, education and recreation.

- The Town Manager, Code Enforcement Officer and the Planning Board shall develop an impact fee proposal for the town to consider.

Timeline: 2010

Natural Resources

Goals: To protect and manage the quality of the town's water resources including rivers, streams, ponds and aquifers.

To protect the town's critical natural resources including wetlands, wildlife and fishery habitats, shoreland, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas.

To safeguard the town's agricultural and forest resources from development that threatens those resources.

Some Key Issues:

- Most of the China Lake shoreline in Vassalboro is a protected resource.
- Residents value the rural character and the outdoor resources of the town.
- There is still good agricultural and forested land but there is increased pressure to develop these areas into residential and commercial properties.
- Vassalboro has many water resources that are at risk: the Kennebec River, three lakes, numerous ponds, streams, bogs, and valuable aquifers.

Policies

1 The town should promote the voluntary use of land trusts, conservation easements and similar strategies to preserve agriculture, forestry and open space areas in the community.

-

The Conservation Commission and the Selectmen shall foster an open dialogue with local, state and regional conservation groups that promote land trusts and land preservation programs. Activities that foster interest in these types of preservation programs should be offered to landowners throughout the community.

Timeline: Ongoing

- 2 The town shall appoint a Conservation Commission to protect the environmental health of the community and to play a role in implementing the natural resource strategies of the plan. The Commission should also play a role as an advocate for local natural resources and develop educational projects to inform the community about our natural resources.

- The Selectmen should appoint a Conservation Commission and ask them to serve as an advocate for our natural resources. The Commission should develop educational programs, implement strategies identified in the plan and to foster volunteer efforts to enhance and preserve our resources.

Timeline: 2007

- 3 The town should continue to enforce existing ordinances that protect our natural resources such as Shoreland Zoning and shall revise ordinances as needed to reflect changes in State and Federal regulations.

- The Planning Board and the Code Enforcement Officer shall maintain and enforce ordinances according to State and Federal requirements and shall propose revisions as needed to address local needs and problems.

Timeline: On-going

- 4 The town should continue to support and work cooperatively with the China Regional Lakes Alliance and other watershed and lakes groups to improve water quality.

- The Conservation Commission shall work with local and regional watershed groups on water quality projects and shall promote improvements to our water resources.

Timeline: On-going

- 5 The town shall explore the feasibility of developing a town forest to be managed as a working forest and for recreational activities.

- The Conservation Commission shall develop a town forest plan which includes a process for purchasing or accepting gifts of land, a funding strategy, and a management plan.

Timeline: 2010

- 6 The town shall cooperate with local farmers and foresters, and other regional, state and federal organizations to seek ways to promote the economic health and vitality of agriculture and forestry. Emphasis should be focused upon making sure that additional hurdles are not placed in the way of existing agricultural and forestry operations.

- The Conservation Commission shall work with farmers and foresters locally and in the state to identify strategies to promote their operations.

Timeline: On-going

- 7 The town should monitor the environmental health and vitality of the town's natural resources and identify ways to mitigate any negative impacts imposed by development and inadequate environmental protection practices.

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The Conservation Commission shall monitor the condition of the town's natural resources and seek ways to maintain their vitality.

Timeline: On-going

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- 8 The town shall monitor gravel pit and mineral extraction operations and compliance with state laws and regulations. Recommendations for local ordinance standards may be considered as necessary to address future problems especially relating to safety, aquifer impacts, traffic, road impacts and operational practices.

The Planning Board shall propose gravel pit requirements as necessary.

Timeline: On-going

- 9 The town shall maintain and protect its water resources including; rivers, streams, ponds, aquifers, public wells, and private wells in a manner that will ensure the health of these resources for future generations. The town should enforce its existing environmental ordinances and work in cooperation with state and federal agencies. Strategies to promote public awareness about the importance of our water resources and volunteer compliance with practices to further protect these resources should be actively pursued.

The Conservation Commission shall actively pursue strategies to promote sound stewardship of water resources.

Timeline: On-going

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- 10 The Conservation Commission shall develop a list of natural resources that the community wants to preserve and develop a plan to fund the preservation efforts of the community.

The Conservation Commission shall develop a natural resource preservation plan for the community.

Timeline: 2008

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- 11 The town shall promote further discussion about our scenic resources and ways to preserve them for future generations.

The Conservation Commission and the Historical Society shall engage the public in a discussion about the value of scenic resources and seek to identify ways to preserve these areas.

Timeline: 2008

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Recreation

Goal: To promote and protect the availability of recreational opportunities for all citizens including access to surface waters.

Some Key Issues:

- The town's most significant recreational attributes need to be identified.
- Increased water access for swimming, boating and fishing are important.
- The town ball fields are popular and land is available for expansion.
- There is limited public access to the Kennebec River in Vassalboro.
- Community events and activities are desired but require volunteer time and money.

- The broader recreational needs of all segments of the population need to be addressed.
- There is an active Recreation Committee that is currently responsible for many youth team sport activities in the community.

Policies

- 1 The town should expand water access to the Kennebec River and area lakes and ponds for a variety of water dependent uses. Regional agreements among neighboring communities should be explored whenever feasible.

The Recreation Committee and the Conservation Committee should develop a long term plan to increase water access. Funding sources should be identified and pursued whenever possible.

Timeline: 2009

- 2 The town should continue to support the plans and activities of the Recreation Committee and make sure that adequate funding is available to implement their activities.

The Selectmen and the Town Manager shall provide resources, training, and funding support for the Recreation Committee.

Timeline: Annually

- 3 The town should develop a recreation plan for the community. The plan should address the needs of all segments of the community including children, and adults. Funding sources especially grants should be identified and whenever feasible regional partners should be identified.

The Recreation Committee shall develop a recreation plan for the town.

Timeline: 2009

- 4 The town shall develop a master trail plan for the town which addresses some of the following activities: walking, bicycling, snowmobile, ATV,s, and horse back riding; whenever possible links to neighboring towns and regional trails should be included. Sidewalks in villages should be promoted. The use of existing and new right-of- way's such as power lines and development public right-of- way's should also be explored for trail use.

The Conservation Commission and the Recreation Committee shall develop a master trail plan which includes opportunities for many activities.

Timeline: 2009

- 5 The town and the Kennebec Water District should explore the feasibility of the creation of a public swimming area on China Lake.

The Town Manager and the Recreation Committee shall pursue with the Kennebec Water District the possibility of creating a public swimming area on China Lake.

Timeline: 2008

- 6 The town, in cooperation with interested local landowners, state agencies, clubs and recreational organizations should develop a forum to discuss public access to private lands and identify strategies to make sure private land is respected and used in accordance with the wishes of the landowners.

The Conservation Commission and the Recreation Committee should develop an annual forum with input from the Department of Conservation to discuss with landowners their issues and

concerns about public use of land .

Timeline: 2007

Land Use

Introduction

The land use section of the plan provides the framework for many other sections of the plan. The land use plan is often one of the most visible outcomes of the planning process. The policies and strategies presented in the land use plan will help guide future development in the community.

The land use plan is important for the community and for it to be effective it must also be accepted by the community. The plan will have to balance often competing priorities and goals with a range of resident's ideas, attitudes and opinions concerning land use regulations, growth and development. The plan is designed to be a collection of the community's shared vision of how our town will look and grow in the coming years. It is a collection of ideas that are shared by most of the community and many compromises which acknowledge and respect different points of view.

The land use plan is meant to be implemented by the community and to guide new growth and development in a way that is in the interest of our citizens. It was put together after an analysis of past, present and potential future growth patterns.

The land use plan sets out some specific recommendation, however, mostly it sets forth a direction for the community to follow. In a sense the land use plan is not yet complete, because it still requires future public input and hard work as specific recommendations are developed and eventually considered at public hearings and town meetings.

Goals: To balance residential, commercial, and transportation needs and growth in the community with preservation of agriculture, forest land, recreation space and natural resources.

To find a mix of voluntary and regulatory land use standards that will encourage orderly, safe, and environmentally appropriate growth in the community.

To balance landowner rights to property and privacy while preserving and enhancing public access to natural resources for recreation.

Some Key Issues and Existing Patterns:

- People value the freedom to develop their land but also value the town's rural character.
- The villages are mixed use community centers with services such as small stores, small businesses, churches, gas stations, post offices, volunteer centers, bank, library, medical office, and recreational activities.
- The village areas and neighborhood clusters are not growing.
- Sewer and water capacity is limited in the villages. The sewer and water systems will need infrastructure upgrades in the coming decades.
- Most new housing lots are at least one acre or greater. The existing minimum lot size is 20,000 square feet in areas not served by municipal sewer.
- Present residential growth patterns are along all roadsides with occasional subdivisions.
- Fields, orchards and wooded areas are being turned into residential and commercial areas.
- Agriculture and forestry are still viable activities; however, they are experiencing changes.

- Access to rear lands is becoming more limited.
- Commercial activities take place mostly on Route 32, Route 3 and the southern end of Route 201.
- The resource protection area around China Lake offers many opportunities for recreation.
- Access to the Kennebec River is limited by terrain and private ownership.
- Energy costs are rising and will impact transportation and housing patterns.
- Vassalboro's large land expanse can absorb a great deal of housing development throughout the rural area region before some growth impacts are fully realized by the community.

Policies

- 1 The town should revise its ordinances and policies as recommended in the accompanying Land Use Plan.

The Planning Board should implement the recommendations of the Land Use Plan with appropriate public input.
Timeline: 2009.

- 2 The town shall explore the feasibility of creating a local land trust, and funding strategy to purchase land or easements to preserve wildlife habitat and corridors, farmland, forest, recreation land, scenic areas, and unique natural areas . The local land trust would be designed solely for the purchase of land or easements between the town and a willing seller.

The Conservation Commission shall develop a plan for a local land trust and funding strategies including local sources, and grants.
Timeline: 2010

- 3 The town shall actively encourage landowners to consider the use of land trusts, conservation easements, and similar mechanisms to voluntarily protect the future use of the land for farming, open space, recreation and other activities.

The Conservation Commission shall make available information and resources to landowners about the benefits of land use trusts and easements.
Timeline: On-going

- 4 The town should monitor growth and change within the community and determine if the proposed policies advocated in this plan are adequately addressing the needs of the town. Changes shall be proposed as appropriate to address contemporary issues.

The Planning Board and the Code Enforcement Officer should track development trends and at least once a year to discuss the effectiveness of ordinances and policies to address growth impacts. New policies should be developed and presented to the town for consideration as necessary.
Timeline: Annually

Land Use Planning

Land Use Strategy

The land use plan should be implemented through a combination of volunteer and regulatory strategies. The volunteer measures can be easily recognized because they offer people opportunities to take advantage of programs or are designed to provide information. Landowners electing to place land in a land trust or conservation easement or someone attending a workshop about natural resources are examples of volunteer strategies that are included in the strategic plan.

Regulatory strategies are much more problematic because they impose some type of requirement or ordinance upon the community. Vassalboro, in previous years, has attempted unsuccessfully to develop and approve zoning as a land use strategy. The town has developed a site review ordinance, subdivision ordinance, and shoreland zoning ordinance. Town wide zoning is not acceptable to the community, site review and subdivision ordinances are acceptable.

This strategic plan will respect the community's decision not to use zoning as a land use strategy to implement the land use plan. The existing site review ordinance will be the vehicle to implement most of the regulatory recommendation. Likewise, the subdivision ordinance will be used to implement policies affecting subdivision developments.

A Balanced Approach

Putting together a land use plan for the community is much like walking a tight rope because it requires balance and attentiveness to surroundings. The specific land use recommendations presented in the plan will attempt to answer some of those land use planning issues raised previously in this section. The land use plan will further pose some responses to issues by balancing different points of view and by paying attention to development trends.

A critical component of a fair and balanced set of land use recommendations is a dose of humility. The strategic plan committee is aware that over time some elements of the land use plan may become ineffective or unacceptable to the community. The town should periodically review this plan to evaluate its effectiveness and recommend revisions whenever appropriate.

The Land Use Plan

1. The existing site review ordinance will be used to implement many of the specific recommendations of the land use plan.
2. The rural character of the community which includes farmland, forest, small village clusters, natural resources, wildlife, and water resources are valued by residents. Housing and commercial development should respect these attributes.
3. The voluntary use of land trust and conservation easements is encouraged to promote the long term preservation of land for farming, forestry, recreation, open space, and wildlife habitat.
4. The water and sewer infrastructure in the north and east villages needs to be improved over time to adequately serve current users and accommodate future development.
5. The villages and neighborhood clusters should continue to allow mixed use activities including residential, commercial, retail, and service activities. New activities should be designed to respect neighboring properties. Site review standards for the villages should incorporate provisions for setbacks, buffers, building height and other encroachments, like light and noise. New structures should follow existing development patterns.

6. Senior housing and related developments should be encouraged to locate within the north and east villages.
7. Dimensional requirements including lot size, road frontage and setback in the north and east villages should be designed to respect existing development patterns and permit densities that reflect the availability of municipal water and sewer.
8. Pedestrian walking paths including sidewalks along road shoulders and other trails within the community should be improved to foster greater connectivity.
9. An open space subdivision design option should be included in the subdivision ordinance. This option would allow developers to preserve open space, farmland, or other land features to their benefit.
10. The subdivision ordinance should incorporate provisions for recreation in subdivisions containing a certain number of lots. A variety of recreational options should be available for the developer to select.
11. Traffic access provisions including sight distance, corner clearance, drainage, and minimum and maximum driveway and road widths should apply to all development along town roads to improve travel safety for all residential and commercial development.
12. Lot sizes for areas not served by municipal water and sewer should be developed based upon the capacity of the soils to handle a subsurface waste water disposal system and private wells. All new and replacement subsurface waste water systems shall be located at a minimum of 50 feet from all lot boundaries to provide fair and equitable opportunities for abutting land owners. This reflects the State Rule for separating wells and waste water systems.
13. Ordinances should be drafted to include provisions that would allow for rear lot development subject to reasonable access provisions. This would allow housing opportunities without using existing road frontages.
14. Regulations for adult businesses should be developed.
15. Regulations for junkyards should be updated.
16. A good neighbor booklet will be made available to the public. The booklet should include information about rural living and suggestions for placing a home on a lot to enhance privacy, respect rural character, and appreciate impacts of farming and forestry.
17. The existing ordinances will be revised to include provisions to guide how new homes and commercial building and structures are designed and sited. These provisions will be called proximity or location-based standards and will incorporate the following features and concepts:
 - a. New development will be placed on the lot in a way that respects existing land use activities.
 - b. The provisions will not specify whether a proposed use or activity is allowed in any location.
 - c. The provisions will only address how a proposed use or activity is sited at the location.

- d. The provisions will be designed to mitigate potential negative impacts of a development on neighboring properties.
- e. Minimal requirements will be acceptable whenever similar land use activities are neighbors.
- f. More requirements will be needed whenever differing land use activities are abutting.
- g. The provisions will address the following: road setbacks, side and rear setbacks, buffers along property lines, building setbacks from agricultural operations, commercial lighting, parking lot locations, noise, and traffic access.

THE PEOPLE OF VASSALBORO

Purpose: The collection of demographic data is not only interesting, but it provides a great deal of information about the community. The data will often confirm our own intuitions about what is happening in the community and more importantly it can show patterns and trends.

The town is growing and evolving. This will require us to respond to these changes with new ideas and strategies. The information provided in this section will be used throughout the plan and will help inform us about how the community has changed. Future growth projections for the town will also be discussed. The projections will help us plan for the increased housing and commercial development that will occur over the next twenty years.

Historical Population Trends

Over the past 115 years, Vassalboro's population has almost doubled. Between 1890 and 1950, except for a few decades, our population has remained close to 2000 persons. Beginning in the 1960's the population began to rise. The 40 year period between 1960 and 2000 experienced a population growth of 1,601 persons which is a 65% population increase.

Historical Population Trend Table

Source: Census

Year	Pop.	Decade Change		Year	Pop.	Decade Change
1890	2,052			1950	2,261	(285) (15%)
1900	2,062	(10) (0.5%)		1960	2,446	(185) (8%)
1910	2,077	(15) (0.7%)		1970	2,618	(172) (7%)
1920	1,936	(-141) (-7%)		1980	3,410	(792) (30%)
1930	1,815	(-121) (-6%)		1990	3,679	(269) (8%)
1940	1,931	(117) (6%)		2000	4,047	(368) (10%)

Vassalboro's population growth since the 1950's corresponds to a number of factors including an influx of new residents resulting from the "back to the land" movement, a preference for rural living, and the town's proximity to both Waterville and Augusta. Most rural communities throughout the state also experienced population increases during this time.

General Population Data

Source: Census

	1980	1990	2000
Total Population	3,410	3,679	4,047
Male Population	1,706	1,795	2,007
Female Population	1,704	1,884	2,040
Median Age	29	32.9	37.3
Total Households	1,106	1,324	1,549
Family Households	881	1,027	1,138
Family Households with Children	n/a	n/a	571
Married Couple Family Households	770	878	909
Non-family Households	107	297	411
Non-family Households Living Alone	n/a	238	295
Households With Persons Under 18 Years	n/a	n/a	618
Households With Persons 65 Years and Older	n/a	n/a	323
Persons in Group Quarters	56	47	24
Average Household Size	3.03	2.79	2.6
Average Family Size	n/a	n/a	2.94

Components of Change

Between 1990 and 2000 the town’s population increased by 368 persons; however, not all of these new residents actually moved into the community. The population changes in a community are a result of both natural change and net migration. Natural change is the result of both the total number of deaths and births in the community over a period of time. Net migration accounts for the balance of the population change not explained by births and deaths.

Between 1990 and 2000 natural change accounted for an increase of 213 persons. The Town Clerk reports these figures annually. Net migration accounted for 155 persons actually moving into the community. Will the ratio of natural change and net migration continue? Considering the aging population, a trend toward smaller families, and increasing housing values, it seems that future population increases will depend more upon new people moving into the community.

Population Trends 1980 to 2000

Source: Census

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	1980 % of total	1990 % of total	2000 % of total	20 year change
Population	3,410	3,679	4,047	637 (18.7%)
Median Age	29	32.9	37.3	8.3 (28%)
Household Size	3.03	2.79	2.6	(-0.43) (-0.14)
Under 5 years old	343 (10%)	309 (8%)	251 (6.2%)	(-92) (-26%)
6 - 17 years old	749 (22%)	693 (19%)	848 (21%)	99 (13%)
18 years and older	2,318 (68%)	2,677 (73%)	2,948 (72.8%)	630 (27%)
18 - 24 years old	351 (10.3%)	297 (8%)	262 (6.5%)	(-89) (-25%)
25 - 44 years old	967 (28.4%)	1,303 (35%)	1,250 (31%)	283 (29%)
45 - 54 years old	342 (10%)	377 (10%)	608 (15%)	266 (77%)
55 - 59 years old	165 (5%)	177 (4.8%)	199 (4.9%)	34 (20%)
60 - 64 years old	146 (4.3%)	139 (3.7%)	167 (4.1%)	21 (14%)
65 years and older	347 (10%)	384 (10.4%)	462 (11.4%)	115 (33%)

Population Trends:

- The median age is increasing as the baby boom generation is getting older and heading into retirement.
- The 45 to 54 year age category grew by 266 persons (77%) between 1980 and 2000.
- The number of people under 5 years old declined by 92 persons (26%) between 1980 and 2000. This will translate into a lower school age population.
- Household size is declining and this trend is expected to continue. A decline in the household size also translates into a need for additional housing.
- While the percentage of the population over the age of 65 years has remained somewhat stable the actual number of persons in this age category increased by 115 between 1980 and 2000.
- The population will continue to get older and size of households will decrease as will the birth rate.
- The community will need to respond to the changing demographic profile of town by responding to the needs of an aging population.

Land Area and Population Density 1990 - 2000

Source: Census

Town	Square Miles	1990 pop.	1990 persons per sq. mile	2000 pop.	2000 persons per sq. mile
State	30,864	1,227,928	39.8	1,274,923	41.3

Kennebec County	867	115,904	133.6	117,114	135
Vassalboro	44	3,679	83	4,047	92
China	49	3,713	74.4	4,106	83.8
Augusta	55	21,325	384.9	18,560	337.5
Pittston	32	2,444	76	2,548	79.6
Sidney	42.2	2,593	61.4	3,514	83.2
Windsor	34	1,895	55.5	2,204	64.8
Litchfield	37.4	2,650	70.9	3,110	83.2
Winslow	36.9	7,997	216.7	7,743	209.8
Waterville	13.6	17,173	1262.7	15,605	1147.4

Many people make the choice to live in a rural community for a variety of reasons. The table above shows that urban areas such as Augusta and Waterville have lost population. Vassalboro's growth rate mirrors a pattern found in similar rural communities of China, Sidney, Litchfield, Windsor and Pittston. The towns of China, Vassalboro and Sidney also serve as so-called bridge communities because they connect Augusta and Waterville.

Vassalboro has one of the higher population densities for a rural community among its neighbors and only the Town of China has a slightly higher population.

Population and Household Size Comparison 1990 - 2000

Source: Census

Town	1990 Pop.	1990 household size	2000 Pop.	2000 household size	Population % change	Household size % change
State	1,227,928	2.56	1,274,923	2.39	(3%)	(-6.67)
Kennebec County	115,904	2.55	17,114	2.38	(1%)	(-6.67%)
Vassalboro	3,679	2.79	4,047	2.6	(10%)	(-6.81%)
China	3,713	2.94	4,106	2.65	(11%)	(-9.86%)
Augusta	21,325	2.29	18,560	2.1	(-13%)	(-8.30%)
Pittston	2,444	2.76	2,548	2.52	(4%)	(-8.70%)
Sidney	2,593	2.93	3,514	2.66	(36%)	(-9.22%)
Windsor	1,895	2.78	2,204	2.61	(16%)	(-6.12%)
Litchfield	2,650	2.86	3,110	2.61	(17%)	(-8.74%)
Winslow	7,997	2.63	7,743	2.35	(-3.2%)	(-10%)

Waterville	17,173	2.63	15,605	2.13	(-9.1%)	(-19%)
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Seasonal Population

The town has 214 seasonal housing units located mostly around Webber Pond, and a 65 unit campground facility. There are also a small motel located along Route 3. The seasonal population can range between 600 and 1000 persons during the summer months. The higher range might be reached around the 4th of July weekend and during August, a popular vacation period, in fact, the entire central Maine lakes region, extending from Augusta into Belgrade, experiences a rise in summer population.

Population Projections

Population estimates are a view into the future accounting for all the trends and influences that can be identified at the present. As the situation of the economy or housing market changes so will the growth rate for the community. It is important that the community pay close attention to annual changes in housing growth and other local and regional indicators to be aware of changes on the horizon. This will require the town to look carefully at all the available demographic data released by the Census Bureau in addition to local sources such as KVCOG and the State of Maine.

Keeping track of demographic data will allow the town to determine if some projections made in this strategic plan are accurate and whether revisions are necessary to change policies and strategies.

The population projections rely upon the following assumptions:

- A rural lifestyle will continue to remain popular.
- Vassalboro has ample land to support new development.
- Vassalboro's location between Augusta and Waterville will continue to make it popular.
- The new Route 3 bridge connection will improve commuting for some households.
- The annual rate of growth between 2000 and 2003 is 1.36%.
- Between 2000 and 2003 a total of 92 new homes were constructed.
- The town is anticipated to add at least 30 new units per year.
- The annual rate of growth between 1980 and 2000 was 0.9%.

Population projections:

Year	Population
2000	4,047
2010	4,459
2020	5,100

ECONOMY

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

Purpose: The economy section of the strategic plan seeks to describe trends in the local economy and identify opportunities in public policy to enhance the attractiveness of Vassalboro for economic growth and development.

A Snapshot of the Local Economy

- 1 Vassalboro is considered to be part of the Augusta labor market area.
- 2 The Augusta labor market area benefits from the employment stability provided by state government.
- 3 Vassalboro serves as a bridge between the Augusta and the Waterville labor market areas. Residents can avail themselves of jobs and services from both communities.
- 4 Vassalboro is served by Routes 3 and 201 which are significant arterials.
- 5 Route 32 is a major collector that connects the North and East Villages.
- 6 The town has established village areas which provide a mix of housing and commercial activities.
- 7 Commercial activities are located along Routes 32, 201, and 3.
- 8 Ample areas are available for future economic expansion.
- 9 Housing growth is healthy and families enjoy the rural character, moderate taxes and good schools.
- 10 Vassalboro has the ninth highest industrial property valuation in Kennebec County.
- 11 Public sewer and water are available in the North and East village areas.
- 12 The Kennebec River borders the entire west side of the town.

Commuting Patterns

The following tables show the towns where Vassalboro residents work and the towns that send workers into Vassalboro. The town is part of the Augusta labor market area and sends 35% of workers into the City of Augusta. Residents that work in Vassalboro account for 13% of the workforce and 30% of residents work in Waterville and Winslow.

Commuting Patterns for Vassalboro Workers, 16 years and older
Source: 2000 Census

Total Number of Vassalboro Workers: 1957 persons

Workplace and # of workers	Workplace and # of workers	Workplace and # of workers
Augusta 691	Oakland 26	Benton 19
Waterville 467	Bath 25	Rockland 18
Vassalboro 246	Pittsfield 23	Gardiner 15
Winslow 113	Hallowell 23	Belfast 13
China 42	Skowhegan 22	Sidney 13
Fairfield 29	Monmouth 20	21 other towns 152

Most residents (77%) work in the towns of Augusta, Waterville, Vassalboro and Winslow. The remaining 23% work in one of the other 34 communities in the region. The majority of residents commute to communities either to the south towards Augusta or to the north into the Waterville region. Only 3% of workers travel to the Belfast and Rockland region for employment. The location of MBNA in both Belfast and Rockland has not attracted many workers from the community.

Commuting Patterns for Persons Working in Vassalboro
Source: 2000 Census

Total Number of Persons Working in Vassalboro: 634 persons

Residence and number of workers	Residence and number of workers	Residence and number of workers
Vassalboro 246	Winslow 40	Pittsfield 15
Waterville 65	Oakland 22	Winthrop 13
China 54	Chelsea 16	Albion 12
Augusta 43	Fairfield 15	21 other towns 93

Vassalboro residents make up 39% of total number of people that work in town. The remaining 61% mostly commute from neighboring communities.

Vassalboro Workforce Listed by Occupation

The following tables show the occupations of the workforce as reported in the 1990 and 2000 census. The number of occupational categories has been revised in the 2000 census so the two tables will not directly correspond.

Occupations of Employed Persons 16 years and over 1,728 workers
Source: 1990 Census

Occupation	Number & %	Occupation	Number & %
Management & Administrative	211 (12.2%)	Professional & specialty	285 (16.5%)
Technicians & support	77 (4.5%)	Sales	113 (6.5%)
Administrative & clerical	241 (14%)	Protective service	19 (1%)
Service occupations	229 (13.2%)	Farm, forestry & fishing	47 (2.7%)
Precision craft & repair	250 (14.4%)	Machine & assembly	133 (7.7%)
Transportation & moving	64 (3.7%)	Laborers	59 (3.4%)

Occupations of Employed Persons, 16 years and over 1,973 total workers
Source: 2000 Census

Occupation	Number & %	Occupation	Number & %
Management/professional	517 (26.2%)	Service occupations	292 (14.8%)
Sales and office	579 (29.3%)	Farm, forestry & fishing	15 (0.8%)
Construction, maintenance & extraction	245 (12.4%)	Production, transportation & moving	325 (16.5%)

Between 1990 and 2000 employment increased in sales/office and service occupations. Manufacturing jobs declined and while more people are employed in professional and management occupation in 2000 as a percentage of total employment this category declined from 28.7% in 1990 to 26.2% in 2000. Less people are also employed in farming, forestry and fishing.

Vassalboro Listed by Industry

The following tables show the number of workers employed in various industrial categories taken from the 2000 Census. Some changes include: manufacturing is no longer divided between durable and non-durable goods and there is the new category of information technology.

Persons Over 16, Employed by Industry

Source: 1990 Census

Industry	Number & %	Industry	Number & %
Farm, forestry & fishing	50 (2.9%)	Construction	165 (9.5%)
Manufacturing non-durable	189 (11%)	Manufacturing durable	160 (9.3%)
Transportation	51 (2.9%)	Public utilities	32 (1.8%)
Wholesale	32 (1.8%)	Retail	231 (13.4%)
Finance, insurance & real estate	13 (0.7%)	Business & repair	71 (4%)
Personal services	39 (2.2%)	Recreation	17 (1%)
Health services	294 (17%)	Education	125 (7.2%)
Professional	123 (7.1%)	Public administration	136 (7.8%)

Persons Over 16, Employed by Industry

Source: 2000 Census

Industry	Number & %	Industry	Number & %
Farm, forestry & fishing	27 (1.4%)	Construction	157 (8%)
Manufacturing	255 (12.9%)	Wholesale	64 (3.2%)
Retail	385 (19.5%)	Transportation & utilities	130 (6.6%)

Information	48 (2.4%)	Finance, insurance & real estate	55 (2.8%)
Recreation, arts & food service	106 (5.4%)	Education, health services	396 (20.1%)
Public administration	177 (9%)	Professional, management	71 (3.6%)
Other Services	102 (5.2%)		

Between 1990 and 2000 the following trends in industry employment occurred:

- The retail sector increased by 154 persons and now accounts for 19.5% of employment.
- Education and health services declined by 23 jobs and as a percentage of employment decreased by 4%.
- Manufacturing declined by 94 jobs and now accounts for 12.9% of employment compared to 20.3% in 1990.
- Transportation and utility employment increased by 47 jobs.

Household Income

The following tables provide household income data for Vassalboro and neighboring communities

Household Income (1,541 households surveyed) Median household income \$37,923

Source: 2000 Census

Income Range	Households	Income Range	Households
Less than \$10,000	128 (8.3%)	\$10,000 to \$14,999	74 (4.8%)
\$15,000 to \$24,999	256 (16.6%)	\$25,000 to \$ 34,999	221 (14.3%)
\$35,000 to \$49,999	369 (23.9%)	\$50,000 to \$74,999	316 (20.5%)
\$75,000 to \$99,999	116 (7.5%)	\$100,000 to \$149,999	41 (2.7%)
\$150,000 to \$199,999	13 (0.8%)	\$200,000 or more	7 (0.5%)

Income Data: Vassalboro and Kennebec County 1990 & 2000

Source: 1990 & 2000 Census

	Kennebec County 1990	Kennebec County 2000	Vassalboro 1990	Vassalboro 2000
Per capita income	\$12,855	\$18,520	\$11,770	\$16,281
Median household income	\$28,616	\$36,498	\$28,820	\$37,923
Median family income	\$33,375	\$43,814	\$31,300	\$40,192
Persons below the poverty rate	11,464 (10.2%)	12,637 (11.1%)	329 (9.1%)	426 (10.6%)
	3,417	3,592	100	114

Children under 18 below the poverty rate	(11.9%)	(13.2%)	(2.7%)	(2.8%)
Persons 65 and older below the poverty rate	2,080 (14.4%)	1,624 (10.2%)	46 (13.1%)	49 (10.6%)
Families below the poverty rate	2,268 (7.3%)	2,655 (8.5%)	75 (7.2%)	95 (8.3%)

The median income is higher than Kennebec County and the State but is lower as compared to the surrounding rural communities. Household income levels are diverse and 202 households (13.1%) earn less than \$14,999 which is almost as many that earn over \$75,000 (177 households, 11.5%) Most households earn between \$35,000 and \$74,999 (44%), and (30.9%) earn between \$15,000 and \$34,999.

The town still has a significant number of persons below the poverty rate which increased between 1990 and 2000 by 97 persons. Most of the people in poverty range in age between 18 and 65 years old.

The shift in employment to retail jobs from manufacturing among other factors is a contributing factor in the number of households with lower incomes and the high poverty rates.

Community Median Income Comparison

Source: 2000 Census

Location	Median Income		Location	Median Income
State of Maine	\$37,240		Kennebec County	\$36,498
Vassalboro	\$37,923		China	\$41,250
Augusta	\$29,929		Pittston	\$39,609
Sidney	\$42,500		Windsor	\$40,039
Litchfield	\$41,096		Winslow	\$39,580
Waterville	\$26,816		Manchester	\$52,500

Educational Status

The following table shows the educational status for both Kennebec County and Vassalboro according to the 1990 and 2000 Census Reports. Education is a critical indicator of the competitiveness of the local and regional workforce.

Education Status

Source: 1990 & 2000 Census

	Kennebec County 1990	Kennebec County 2000	Vassalboro 1990	Vassalboro 2000
Persons in pre-school	2,377	1,619	123	57
Persons in elementary & high school	19,880	22,240	631	816

Persons enrolled in college	7,498	6,428	183	149
Persons 25 years and older with a high school degree	(78.9%)	(85.2%)	(80.5%)	(87.1%)
Persons 25 years and older with a bachelor or higher degree	(18.1%)	(20.7%)	(18.1%)	(18.8%)
High school graduate (no further degree)	-	(37.7%)	(38%)	(40.2%)
Some college, no degree	-	(19.1%)	(17.6%)	(21.8%)
Associates degree	-	(7.8%)	(6.7%)	(6.3%)
Bachelor's degree	-	(13.1%)	(12.7%)	(11.3%)
Graduate or professional degree	-	(7.6%)	(5.4%)	(7.5%)

Local Major Employers

The following is a list of the town's major employers.

Vassalboro Elementary School
Duratherm Window
Kennebec Bean Company
Maine Criminal Justice Academy

Vassalboro is part of the Augusta labor market area meaning that the majority of workers travel to Augusta and neighboring towns for employment. A significant number of workers also work in both Waterville and Winslow which is part of the Waterville labor market area. The local economy is dependent upon what occurs in the both labor market areas. Only 12.5% of the workforce is employed within the community. Vassalboro provides 634 local jobs and residents fill 246 positions or 39% of the total.

Local Businesses

Vassalboro provides a mix of local retail, service and manufacturing operations. Many businesses including a bank, post office, medical offices, retail stores and auto repair facilities are located in the North and East villages. Other businesses are located on Routes 3 and 201 and 32. A partial list of commercial and service activities includes: nurseries, orchards, farms, a 65-unit campground, two motels, restaurants, medical offices, manufacturing, auto sales and repair, schools, and numerous home occupations.

The town's proximity to both Augusta and Waterville makes it difficult to attract major retail and service activities.

Beneficial Businesses and Services

The following activities have been identified in the community survey as the most beneficial:

- Agricultural and related activities
- Forestry
- Professional businesses
- Light Industry

- Home based occupations
- Tourism and recreation

The Role of Natural Resource Based Activities

Traditional farming and forestry operations have played a major role in the economic life of the community and they still contribute a great deal to the character and economic vitality of the town. Many acres are enrolled in the tree growth tax program. Local agricultural activities include orchards, hay fields, crops and nurseries. Agriculture is undergoing many changes. There is a shift away from large operations involving dairy and other mass commodity crops towards smaller farms targeted towards local markets, organic products and niche markets. Another interesting trend is that farmers are retaining a larger share of farm income, the result of marketing directly to the consumers.

Economic Development Issues and Trends

The economy in the state and the nation are undergoing many significant changes and the most notable is the impact of the global economy upon traditional manufacturing and retail operations. Vassalboro is not immune to these changes which are evident in the loss of manufacturing jobs over the past 10 years. An increasing number of persons in the region are now employed in the service and retail sectors. The higher wage jobs are in professional or skilled professions that require advanced educational credentials.

The following is a brief discussion of some of the trends that are affecting the community:

The popularity of home occupations: The widespread availability and affordability of the internet and high speed access offers employment opportunities for many people. This trend will likely continue especially among those workers that possess a highly marketable skill that is not dependent upon working at a fixed location

The loss of traditional manufacturing: Several manufacturing facilities and mills have closed in the past 20 years. This trend is not new and began with the closure of shoe and textile operations. The remaining manufacturing operations involved in a mass commodity product are all subject to competition from abroad.

The big box retail trend: The retail trend towards very large stores is evident both in Augusta and the Waterville. Larger box stores offering low prices and sometimes wide product selections make it difficult for the smaller retailer to compete. Although the popularity of large stores will continue, there will be a growing niche market offering custom goods through the internet and small stores. The impact of large retail operations has impacted general merchandise, clothing, shoes, hardware and pharmacies.

Commercial growth is attracted to service center communities: Over the past ten years the vast majority of new retail and employment opportunities have moved into Augusta and Waterville. This trend makes it difficult for smaller communities to compete for jobs and commercial opportunities.

Agriculture is undergoing change: Throughout Maine the traditional large farming operations, including dairy, have been shrinking. As a result, some farms are diversifying into different activities. A growing percentage of agricultural income is also being retained by the farmer. This is a consequence of marketing directly to the customer. A growing segment of the agricultural market is specialty produce, pick-your-own operations, niche products, organic produce, grain, meat and dairy, and finished products such as cheese, maple syrup, and bread. Farming operations have also become smaller in

size and often began as part-time operations. Other popular activities also include greenhouses and horse-boarding operations.

The importance of education: The jobs of the future will require the workforce to be well educated and have the skills to transition to different jobs depending upon the demands of the economy. Today the average worker already changed jobs and careers several times throughout his life. This trend will continue and the persons with the ability and knowledge to quickly move into high demand occupations will be the most successful.

Maine's population is getting older and more retirees are choosing to move into the state. Those factors, combined with a low birth rate and a very low immigrant population, means that the workforce will shrink. The state already has one of the highest percentages of older residents in the nation. Other states and cities that can attract young people or newcomers from other countries are better able to provide workers. The ability to attract and retain good jobs is also dependent upon the available workforce.

HOUSING

Goals: To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all residents of the town.

To provide a variety of types and densities of housing available to households of different sizes, ages and incomes.

Purpose: The housing section will address a variety of housing related issues such as affordable housing, mobile homes, residential growth patterns, neighborhoods, building activity, subdivisions, multi-family housing, rural land development and future housing needs.

Housing Growth Trends

The following table shows housing growth trends between 1970 and 2000 for various types of housing types and occupancies.

Housing Growth Trends, 1970 - 2000

Source Census

	1970	1980	1990	2000	30 year change
Total housing units	965	1,357	1,602	1,838	873 (90%)
Single family residential units	592	854	1,157	1,349	757 (128%)
Mobile homes	74	134	256	330	256 (346%)
Seasonal units	n/a	247	221	214	(-33) (13%)*

Owner occupied units	598	901	1,069	1,231	633 (106%)
Renter occupied units	124	205	255	318	194 (156%)

* Seasonal housing change was tabulated for a 20 year period.

The total housing units increased by 873 units over thirty years, annual average increase was twenty-nine units. Housing increased the most between 1970 and 1980. A total of 392 housing units were added during this decade. The annual average increase in housing between 1980 and 2000 is twenty-four units.

Between 2000 and 2003 the town added a total of ninety-two units which averages 30 units per year. This trend more closely matches housing growth in the 1970s. A housing growth rate of at least thirty units per year is anticipated to continue.

Seasonal units actually decreased by thirty-three units between 1980 and 2000. Some of these homes may have been converted into year-round homes. A significant portion of the China Lake shore in Vassalboro is owned by the Kennebec Water District. Webber Pond is the location of most of the seasonal properties.

Type of Housing Units
Total housing units: 1,838

Source: 2000 Census

Type of Unit	Number & percentage	Type of Unit	Number & percentage
1-unit detached	1,324 (72%)	1- unit attached	25 (1.4%)
2 units	49 (2.7%)	3 or 4 units	61 (3.3%)
5 to 9 units	20 (1.1%)	10 to 19 units	22 (1.2%)
20 or more units	7 (0.4%)	Mobile homes	330 (18%)

Single family housing makes up 91% of the town's housing stock and multi-family units comprise the remaining 9%. Rental occupied units total 318 or 17 % of total housing stock. It would appear that some of the rental units also include single family units.

Structure Age

Source: 2000 Census

Year structure was built	Number and %	Year structure was built	Number and %
1990 to 2000	321 (17.5%)	1980 to 1989	277 (15.1%)
1970 to 1979	261 (14.2%)	1960 to 1969	194 (10.6%)
1940 to 1959	203 (11%)	1939 or earlier	582 (31.7%)

A total of 46.8% of the housing stock is less than thirty years old and 21.5% is between 30 and 60 years old. The town has a significant number of older homes which comprise 31.7% of the housing

stock. Many of these homes are in the villages or one of the stately farmhouses that are spread throughout the community

Vassalboro has a higher percentage of older homes as compared to its neighbors; the older housing stock only makes up 19% in Winslow, 18.9% in China and 21% in Windsor. Housing improvement programs especially for elderly and low income residents would be a beneficial strategy for the town to explore.

Housing Value, Selected Units (701 units surveyed) Source: 2000 Census
 Median Home Value is \$ 88,500

Housing Value	Number and %	Housing Value	Number and %
Less than \$50,000	31 (4.4%)	\$50,000 to \$99,999	437 (62.3%)
\$100,000 to \$149,999	144 (20.5%)	More than \$150,000	89 (12.7%)

Some Interesting Housing Facts

The Census collects a number of interesting housing facts including heating sources, mean number of rooms, and number of vehicles per housing unit. The following is a list of some of the information as reported in the 2000 Census.

- Oil heat is used by 81.5% of homes. LP gas is used by 7.9% and wood by 7.7%.
- Eighteen housing units lack complete plumbing facilities
- Fifteen homes lack telephone service.
- Homes with two vehicles make up 48.4% of the total. One vehicle households are 29.2%, three or more vehicle homes are 18.5% and homes without a vehicle are 4%.
- The mean number of rooms per housing unit is 5.4 rooms.

Housing Cost and Affordability

The following tables and information describe the housing affordability and how residents are handling housing expenses. Affordability is defined as how households of various income levels can find homes within their price ranges.

The median housing price listed in the 2000 census is \$88,500. The Maine State Housing Authority has calculated the median cost for 2003 as \$120,382. This amounts to a 36% increase in the median house value which is a significant increase. According to the 2000 census, 62% of Vassalboro's housing stock is valued between \$50,000 and \$99,999. This seems to indicate that the town has an ample inventory of moderately priced homes. However, if housing values are rising at rates reported by the Housing Authority then the availability of affordable properties will go down.

Owner Occupied Housing Cost

The median monthly mortgage cost according to the 2000 census is \$829 and the median monthly housing cost for households without a mortgage is \$279. The following table shows monthly cost as a percentage of household income. Typically housing cost above 30% of household is considered unaffordable.

Cost as a Percentage of Household Income Source: 2000 Census
 Selected Survey

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Less than 15% (31.5%)	221 households	15% to 19.9% (20%)	140 households
20% to 24.9% (15.5%)	109 households	25% to 29.9% (12.3%)	86 households
30% to 34.9% (7.1%)	50 households	35% or more (13.6%)	95 households

A total of 145 households (20.7%) pay more than 30% of their monthly income for housing.

Rental Occupied Housing Cost

The median monthly rent according to the 2000 census is \$519. Most renters (43.8%) pay a monthly rent between \$500 and \$749 and another 26% pay between \$ 300 and \$499. Similar to mortgage cost a monthly rent that exceeds 30% of a household income is considered unaffordable. According to a selected survey reported in the 2000 census, 35.7% of households pay more than 30% of their monthly income for rent. This is much higher than homeowners and indicates that many people are unable to locate a reasonable rent.

Affordable Housing

The ability of individuals, families, newcomers, and retirees to find housing within their price range plays a vital role in the social and economic health of the town. Communities that can offer a wide range of housing types and price offerings can enjoy a mix of people from many diverse backgrounds; the availability of affordable housing is important to the long term growth potential of the town.

The discussion about affordable housing is based upon data collected by the Maine State Housing Authority for 2003 and includes income and housing cost from Claritas, Maine Revenue Service, Maine Housing Authority, Multiple Listing Service and State and Federal sources. Affordable housing will be discussed for both homeowners and renters.

Housing Purchase Affordability

The Maine Housing Authority (MSHA) has developed an affordability index to show how many households can potentially afford a home in a town, market area, or county. An index more than 1 is affordable. Therefore a high index number will show greater affordability. The index relates to how many homes of a certain price range are affordable to the median income in a town or region.

The following table shows the 2003 affordable index for Vassalboro and the region.

Location	Index	Median Income	Home affordable for median income	Median home value	Income needed to afford a median home
State of Maine	0.81	\$41,645	\$121,532	\$150,000	\$51,400
Kennebec County	1.14	\$39,025	\$111,010	\$97,200	\$34,171
Augusta Market Area	1.09	\$40,838	\$117,539	\$108,250	\$37,611
Vassalboro	1.23	\$41,025	\$120,382	\$98,000	\$33,398

A total of 626 Vassalboro households (39.1%) are unable to afford a median valued home of \$98,000. These households would have incomes below \$33,398 or earn less than \$16.06 per hour. This shows that a considerable number of the current households would have a difficult time locating a home or their housing choices would be very limited. It is also important to remember that not all of these households are in need of housing or in housing market.

The percentage of homes that sold above the affordable level for median income households was 34.3% in 2003. The positive side is that at least 65% of the homes sold in 2003 were at or below the median home value of \$120,382.

The following table shows the value of housing that is affordable for various income levels.

Income Category	30% of median	50% of median	80% of median	median income	150% of median
Income level	\$12,308	\$20,513	\$32,820	\$41,025	\$61,538
Households	161	170	284	893	431
% of households	8.2%	8.8%	14.6%	46%	22.2%
Affordable home value	\$33,821	\$58,491	\$95,611	\$120,382	\$180,651

Households with less than 50% of the median income will have a very difficult time locating an affordable home in Vassalboro. Those households with incomes of 50 % and 80% of the median income will fare better; however, their selection will be limited. Affordable housing opportunities for these households will include a limited number of existing modestly priced homes and mobile homes. If we use the standard that at least 10% of housing should be affordable then this would mean about 3 homes per year or 30 per decade. This threshold is achievable at current housing market sales. Between 1999 and 2003, 41 families took advantage of MSHA first-time homeowners program which offers below market mortgage rates. This has helped to maintain the town's level of affordability.

Rental Housing Market

Rental occupied housing totals 318 units or 20% of the occupied housing. Multi-family housing units account for 10% of the town's total housing stock. Rental housing plays a modest yet important role in Vassalboro housing mix. Typically rural communities do not have very many rental units. The town may have a higher number of rental units because of its village areas. A greater selection of rental properties is available in both Waterville and Augusta.

The median rent is \$519 according to the 2000 census and the town currently has 41 subsidized apartments. According to MSHA, 120 (36.3%) of rental households do not have the \$21,900 income to afford a rent of \$547. They estimate that 50 affordable rental units would be needed to serve families and 20 units are needed to serve seniors aged 65 years and older.

Based upon recent construction trends this unmet affordable rental housing need will not be addressed by the building of new units. Throughout the region very few new rental units are constructed and hardly any are being placed in rural communities. Some potential may exist for new senior housing projects but not for families. The only possibility would be for an expansion of rental assistance for existing units, however, state and federal funds for these programs are limited.

Mobile Homes

Mobile homes total 330 units and 18% of the total housing stock. Vassalboro has a slightly higher percentage of mobile homes as compared to neighboring towns. China has 12% and Kennebec County has 11.1%, while Windsor has 28%. Rural communities have a higher number of mobile homes than their urban and suburban counterparts.

Mobile homes provide an affordable housing opportunity for many families. Mobile homes are now typically placed on individual lots instead of in mobile home parks. The town currently has two mobile home parks.

Elderly Housing

Planning for housing opportunities for an aging population is an important issue for Vassalboro and the region. The town is fortunate to have a village where both municipal water and sewer are available. The village has the potential to support elderly housing at a density that may provide affordable housing options. The village also hosts some necessary services within walking distance. Other strategies that might be beneficial include in-law apartments and regional housing projects with neighboring communities.

Housing is just one of the many areas that impact an aging population. Other related areas include: health services, recreation, transportation, affordable housing, and social services.

Seasonal Housing

Seasonal housing accounts for 214 units located mostly along Webber Pond. There is also a 65 unit campground and two small motels that contribute to the seasonal population. The number of seasonal units is small for a lake community since the majority of China Lake shore front is owned by the Kennebec Water District. Seasonal housing is not anticipated to increase. However, a trend towards conversion of seasonal dwelling into year round dwelling is popular especially for property owners approaching retirement.

Neighborhoods

Vassalboro's north and east villages can be defined as neighborhoods. The villages form a traditional grouping of homes, businesses and other civic and social activities. Despite Vassalboro's rural character many other neighborhoods can be found throughout the community. While these neighborhoods might not share many elements found in the villages or other residential neighborhoods found in urban towns they nevertheless serve as housing clusters. Most often these rural housing neighborhoods can be found surrounding an intersection, along a stretch of a road or they may have developed over the years through the grouping of individual subdivision developments.

The attached neighborhood map shows these residential housing clusters. The map shows clusters of seasonal homes located around Webber Pond.

Subdivision Activity

Subdivisions are providing many of the new housing options. Most are located in the rural parts of the community. One advantage of a subdivision is that unlike incremental housing placement, the town,

through the Planning Board, is able to oversee the project design and make sure that critical items such as stormwater, traffic and roads are properly addressed.

The following table shows recent subdivision activity.

Date permitted	Subdivision name and location	Approved lots	Vacant lots
1996	Crowell Hill Road #1	4	0
1997	Szady Acres	20	0
1998	Riva Ridge (expansion)	10	0
1999	Fishers	3	0
2001	Appaneal	3	0
2001	Bradley Lane	8	1
2003	Katie Drive	6	2
2004	Crowell Hill # 2	14	9
2004	Hidden Heights	8	6
2005	Branstrom Road	8	4
2005	Mystic Ridge	11	11
2005	Crowell Hill	13	10
2005	Mathews Ave.	3	0
2005 (pending approval)	Coyote Ridge	20	20
2006 (approved June 2006)	Arrowhead Ridge (condo units)	36	36
2006 (approved June 2006)	Old Meadow Road	10	8
2006 (pending approval)	Maple Street	34	34

NOTE: The status of subdivisions indicated as pending approval is current as of 06/30/06.

Archeological and Historic Resources

Goal: To preserve the town's historic and archeological resources.

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to identify the town's archeological and historic resources and to identify strategies that will preserve the distinctive characteristics of the community. The task of preserving the places, buildings, and memories of the past is important for the legacy of the town. The remaining evidence of our ancestors, whether it consists of cemeteries, old homes, records and books, or prehistoric sites, all contribute to the individuality and identity of the community.

A Brief History

The Abanaki Indians inhabited the area before the arrival of the Europeans. The Kennebec River was the principal travel way for both the Indians and the Europeans. The first European to travel to the area was Captain Gilbert from the Popham Colony in 1607. He traveled up to Bacon's Rips in Vassalboro and was reported to have had friendly contact with the Indians.

The land along the Kennebec River including Vassalboro eventually became part of the Kennebec Patent that was granted to the Plymouth Colony in 1654. A series of local conflicts between French and English settlers halted further settlement of the Kennebec patent for an extended period of time. Two French missionaries, Fathers Rasle and Druillette established successful settlements in Norridgewock and along the Kennebec River near Vassalboro. The missionary sites were abandoned after the English prevailed over the French for control of the area.

Forts in Augusta and Winslow protected the river and opened the way for settlement. Land was surveyed all along the Kennebec River and people settled the area. Vassalboro's first town meeting was held in 1771 and the population was close to 892 persons. At this time Sidney was a part of Vassalboro until it separated in 1793. The town prospered as a farming and commercial center. Mills, textiles, food processing, and other enterprises flourished in Vassalboro. Transportation was first provided by the river and later stage coach routes. The first railroad lines connected Brunswick, Augusta, Vassalboro, and Waterville. A narrow gauge railroad also ran between Wiscasset and Winslow.

Prehistoric Archeological Sites

Prehistoric archeological sites reveal information about the Native American inhabitants, who did not leave any written records. The following four types of sites are significant:

Habitation workshop sites are next to canoe-navigable waters.

Lithic quarries are places where stone raw materials are gathered.

Cemeteries are found on well-drained sandy or gravelly sandy soils usually near a river or lake.

Rock art sites are found immediately next to canoe-navigable waters on bedrock outcrops.

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission is currently aware 35 sites and reports that at least 20 of them are or may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The known sites are grouped along the Kennebec River and a few sites can be found on Webber Pond and China Lake. Additional sites could also exist along the Kennebec River, China Lake, Webber Pond and other waterways. These potential sites would have characteristics found in other known archeologically sensitive areas throughout the State. Searching for potential sites based upon what already has been learned is called a predictive model. A map, provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, shows archeologically sensitive areas where new sites may be found.

Since many of the prehistoric archeological sites occur adjacent to water bodies some protection is already provided by the structure setback regulations imposed by Shoreland Zoning. The Subdivision Ordinance also requires applicants to identify archeological or historic sites that would be impacted by their development proposal.

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission recommends further survey work to locate potential sites especially along the shorelines of Webber Pond, China Lake, ThreeMile Pond, SevenMile Stream, and Outlet Stream.

Historic Archeological Sites

Historic archeological sites are mostly European-American and include English and French trading post, forts, and homesteads of the 1600's and 1700's. Since water bodies, especially rivers and streams that could provide water power and transportation were essential, most of the historic archeological sites are near lakes, ponds, rivers and streams. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has identified six sites in Vassalboro. They further indicate that no professional historic archeological survey has been conducted in town. Future research could focus on agricultural, residential and industrial sites relating to the earliest Euro-American settlement on the town beginning in the 1760s. A significant goal of this survey would be to locate the 17th century mission of Fr. Dreuillette.

The six identified sites are as follows:

ME 445-001	Dreuillette's Mission*	French Mission	1600s
ME 445-002	Train Depot Dump	American Dump	1800-1900s
ME 445-003	Cox & Tapley Paper Mill	American Saw/Paper Mill	1800s
ME 445-004	Pier	American Quay	1800s
ME 445-005	Seven Mile Stream Dam	American Dam	1700-1800s
ME 445-006	Seven Mile Stream Mill	Saw & Grist Mill	1700-1800s

* The location of the mission may be located in Augusta

Historic Buildings and Structures

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has identified the following six structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

River Meeting House (Oak Grove Chapel)	Route 201
East Vassalboro Grist and Saw Mill.	Route 32 (Masse Saw Mill)
Mill Agent's House	Route 32
Philip Leach House,	Hussey Hill Road
Dutton-Small House	Bog Road
Riverview House	Route 201 (Sturgis House)
Arnold Trail	along the Kennebec River

The Commission has suggested that a comprehensive survey of Vassalboro's historic-above ground resources be conducted in order to identify other properties that may be eligible for nomination to the National Register.

Local Historic Sites and Places and Artifacts

The following is a list of significant places within the town. These are structures and sites that are special to Vassalboro residents or portray some significance to the history of the community and its development.

- 1 Oak Grove –Coburn School
Former school now used as the Maine Criminal Justice Academy
- 2 Local Churches: River Meeting House (Oak Grove Chapel)
Congregational Church, Riverside
Society of Friends, East Vassalboro
First Baptist Church
- St. Bridget's Catholic Church
- North Vassalboro Methodist Church
- Center Baptist Church

- 3 Union Campground
- 4 Grange Building in East Vassalboro
- 5 Cemeteries: (26 Cemeteries)
- 6 North Village: A combination of farmsteads, housing, public buildings and mills
- 7 East Village: A combination of farmsteads, housing and mills.
- 8 Kirarlis House in East Vassalboro
- 9 Trolley Building near Webber Pond Outlet
- 10 White Haven House in North Vassalboro
- 11 Lalime's Brick House on the Bog Road
- 12 Hilton Place on Old Route 201 (a.k.a. formerly Nettie Burleigh Place)
- 13 Mill Complex in North Vassalboro
- 14 Lombard Dam on Route 32
- 15 Municipal Records and maps (Materials are not cataloged)
- 16 Archeological sites including an Indian Village located on an Island in the Kennebec River

Vassalboro Historical Society

The Historical Society conducts activities and programs to increase public awareness of the Town's history and artifacts. The society maintains a museum at the former East Vassalboro School.

Scenic Areas

Although scenic areas might not be considered historic or archeological resources, they can be highly valued by citizens. Often these scenic areas are a cherished attribute that many people identify about their community. For these purposes, scenic areas are locations that can be viewed from public roads or other public places. Views accessible from only private property while, noteworthy, will not be considered. The following is a partial list of some of Vassalboro's scenic vistas.

A view of the Oak-Coburn Complex from Route 201.

Spectacle Pond and surrounding lands.

Webber Pond as viewed from roads to the east and west of the pond.

- Views of farms and pasture lands
- Views of orchards

Issues

Vassalboro has many archeological and historical attributes and has played an important part in the lives of both Native American and European habitants. The Historical Society has contributed greatly to educate the public about the past and to preserve key artifacts, places and buildings. It is important to recognize their role in history and the efforts of other citizens to preserve and cherish our legacy. However, it is also important to recognize tasks yet unfulfilled and projects to be tackled. The following is a list of ideas and areas that deserve attention:

- 1 Archeological and historic surveys to identify additional sites would provide valuable information.
- 2 Increase awareness about the town's history and important, sites, places and structures.
- 3 Catalogue important municipal records, maps and artifacts.

- 4 Continue to support for the work undertaken by the Historical Society.
- 5 Identify scenic areas that residents would like to preserve through voluntary agreements with property owners or by purchasing the site if available.

Recreation

Goals: To promote and protect the availability of recreational opportunities for all Vassalboro residents, including access to surface waters.

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to inventory all of the Town's recreational facilities and to identify current and future needs.

Public Recreational Facilities in Vassalboro and the Region

Public Facility Table

Source: Town and State Data

Name of the Facility	Location and Brief Description
Spectacle Pond Boat Access	Carry-on boat access on Spectacle Pond
Webber Pond Boat launch	Boat launch on Webber Pond
Three Mile Pond Boat Launch Areas	Two Boat launch sites located on Three Mile Pond in Vassalboro One boat launch is located at a rest area along Route 3 with frontage on Three Mile Pond.
China Lake Boat Launches	Public boat launch in East Vassalboro, at southern portion of lake, in China, on the causeway
Historical Society Museum	former East Vassalboro School
Spectacle Pond Land	Wildlife management area consisting of 270 acres and pond access.
Vassalboro Recreation Area	52 Acre site with 3 ball fields and one multi-purpose field
Vassalboro Elementary School	Playground, one basketball court, two ball fields and Gym.
Swimming/China Lake	People use the boat launch areas for swimming (China side of the lake, see below).
Swimming/Webber Pond	Swimming area at boat launch area
Lake St George	Route 3 in Liberty, the State park offers swimming, camping and picnic areas.
Damariscotta Lake	A 19 acre state facility that offers swimming and picnic areas.
Pine State Arboretum	Located in Augusta, the facility offers 16 acres of trails.

Alonzo Garcelon Wildlife Area	Located in Windsor the facility offers trails and shore frontage along Moody Pond
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It should be noted that China Lake is used a public water source in Vassalboro. Public swimming is not permitted in the West Basin.

Private Recreational Facilities

The following table shows some of the private recreational and cultural facilities available within the immediate vicinity of the community.

Name of the Facility	location and Brief Description
Cook Hill Trail	Two-mile trail available to the public (by permission only)
Natanis Golf Course	Golf Course with 9 miles of winter cross country ski trails
Green Valley Campgrounds	Campground on Webber Pond with 65 camp sites
Shorefront/ West Basin of China Lake	The Kennebec Water District owns undeveloped China Lake frontage surrounding the West Basin.
Wild Flower Preserve	A wild flower preserve is located off the Cushnoc Road and a trail is open to the public.

A variety of recreational and cultural opportunities are available in Augusta, Waterville and in the Belfast and Camden areas. Vassalboro is an easy commute to all of these communities. Some activities include: movie theaters, various sports such as bowling and skating, swimming areas, hiking trails, snowmobile trails, programs at area schools and colleges, music and concerts and numerous craft and related shows.

Vassalboro, like most of its rural neighbors, provides a variety of outdoor activities that include hiking, fishing, cross country skiing, hunting, snowmobile and ATV trails and horse back riding. Many of these activities occur with the consent and permission of private landowners who graciously allow residents to travel over their property. The participation of many private property owners is necessary to allow citizens to partake in one or more of outdoor recreational pursuits. Outdoor recreation would be very limited if the public was restricted solely to public land or fee-based access.

Some access to private lands has been lost over the years as more development occurred and longtime residents sold their land. A combination of higher development densities in rural portions of the town, new property owners unfamiliar with the Maine tradition of private land access and, unfortunately, irresponsible use of private lands by some individuals has reduced access. A model used by snowmobile clubs to obtain access for trails is one way that recreation groups and communities can use to maintain land access.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Comparison Table

The Bureau of Parks and Recreation provides recreation facility guidelines using both small town averages and the Bureau's own suggested standards. The following table has been adjusted to reflect Vassalboro's current population of 4,047 persons. The comparison is intended to show how local

recreational facilities and programs compare with other small communities. Only public and town facilities are shown on the table. Each town must identify its own recreational needs based upon local interest.

Activity	Vassalboro	Small Town average	Bureau Standards
Park Acreage	52 acres	41 acres	n/a
Baseball fields	2 fields	1.8 fields	.68 fields
Softball Fields	1 field	1.7 fields	1.3 fields
Multi-purpose Field	2 fields	1.7 fields	.88 fields
Basketball Courts	1 court	1.7 courts	2 courts
Tennis Courts	-	2.3 courts	2 courts
Recreation Halls	-	.40 halls	4 halls
Playgrounds	1 playground	2.3 playgrounds	2 playgrounds
Picnic Tables	12 tables	10 tables	8 tables
Swimming pools	-	3,172 square feet	4 pools
Boat ramp parking	33 spaces	17.7 spaces	n/a
Nature Trails	2 miles	1.3 miles	4 miles
Exercise Trails	-	n/a	4
Bike Routes	-	n/a	n/a
X Country Trails	-	4.44 miles	4 miles
Ice Skating	-	10,880	n/a
Sled Areas	-	n/a	n/a

The town does a good job of providing a variety of recreational facilities as compared to other small towns. Some activities, such as swimming, are available at private beach areas and state parks. Many other outside activities such as sledding and ice skating are available on private property or on frozen ponds. According to the table the town could use some more basketball courts and a few tennis courts. The town is adding another ball field to the East Vassalboro Recreational area and ample land is available for future expansions. An outdoor skating rink is under construction and should be open for use in the winter of 2006-7.

Vassalboro Recreation Committee

The Recreation Committee is responsible for directing the town's recreation programs. Activities are available for both children and adults. The following sports programs are offered for ages 5 through 12:

- 130 participants in baseball and softball
- 94 participants in soccer.
- 170 participants in basketball

The basketball program is considered intramural while the baseball, softball and soccer competitions take place in the Dirigo League which includes: China, Chelsea, Windsor, Palermo, Whitefield, and Jefferson. The Vassalboro Recreation field is used for baseball, softball and soccer; school hosts basketball and their ball fields are also used for league play.

Community Recreation Priorities

The following are some activities identified as priorities

- Local swimming areas
- Increased water access for a variety of activities
- Increased access to the Kennebec River
- Local community events and activities
- Increased usage of the Recreation Field
- Recreation center
- Trails for walking, biking, snowmobile, and ATV use
- Activities for all age groups in the community
- Improved access along Route 32 for walking and biking.

Snowmobile Trails

The Kennebec Valley Trail Riders Club operates and maintains the local trail system over private lands. The trail system extends into neighboring communities and to the interstate trail system. Snowmobile rider-ship remains popular and has evolved into a family sporting event.

ATV Trails

ATV use is becoming popular, however, there is a lack of designated trails and often property owners are unwilling to provide trail access due to poor behavior on the part of a few operators. A possible solution would be a trail system organized similar to snowmobile trails that are maintained and monitored by local clubs.

Trail Systems

A popular recreational activity for all ages especially adults is making use of walking and biking trails. Both the North and East Villages have streets that are suited for walking. Many rural roadways do not have paved shoulders and high speed traffic makes it difficult to safely walk along the roadway. Route 201 has road shoulders that are accessible for both walking and bike travel. Route 32, outside of the village, does not have adequate shoulders for bike or pedestrian travel. The State Department of Transportation has upgraded Route 32 from the intersection at Route 3 in China. This is an opportunity for the town to make sure that road shoulders designed for bike and pedestrian travel when the work continues into Vassalboro.

The town may consider developing a trail plan for the community that would over time create a comprehensive trail system throughout the town and into neighboring communities. This trail system could be developed using a combination of grant funds and voluntary trail easements from property owners.

Kennebec River Access

There is no public access point to the Kennebec River in Vassalboro. The closest boat launch is located in Augusta. The west side of the river has several boat launch points located in Fairfield, Waterville, Sidney, and Hallowell. The Fort Halifax Park located in Winslow, Fort Western Park in Augusta and Butternut Park in Chelsea are three other public areas adjacent to the River.

Creating public access to the Kennebec River for boating and possible other recreational activities such as fishing, and gatherings would be beneficial for the community. The stretch of the river through Vassalboro is especially pleasant since the removal of the Edwards Dam and has become a popular location for fishing and boating.

Recreational Activities and Programs for Senior Citizens:

It is important to identify recreational opportunities for adults and especially the elderly. Many older residents enjoy a variety of outdoor activities such as fishing, hunting, walking and snowmobiling. Other activities currently include: a local senior group that meets weekly in the town hall, Grange activities, programs offered by Senior Spectrum. Historical Society activities, civic groups and programs offered at area churches.

Other Recreational Programs and Activities

Some other notable recreational activities currently available in the community include:

- Cub Scouts
- Boy Scouts
- Girl Scouts
- 4 H Clubs
- Community Tree Lighting in December

The newly-formed Vassalboro Business Association is organizing and sponsoring Vassalboro Days. Two days of activities town-wide are planned and the goal is to make the celebration an annual event.

TRANSPORTATION

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

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to inventory and analyze the Town's transportation system, including roads, bridges, rail, airport and pedestrian ways.

General Transportation

The town residents are dependent upon the automobile for access to work, shopping, services and recreation. Most residents work in Augusta and the surrounding communities. Both Augusta and Waterville have become the destination for shopping as well as access to many other services.

Routes 201 and 32 are the major north to south travel corridors providing residents access into Augusta and Waterville. Route 3 located in the southeast corner of the town is the major east to west corridor that provides access into Augusta and Belfast.

Roads

The following table shows some vital information about all the public roads in Vassalboro. There is a total of 77.97 miles of both state and local roads in town. The breakdown is as follows:

State Arterials	11.01 miles
State-Aid Roads	18.63 miles
Local Roads	48.33 miles

Road Condition

The State is fully responsible for maintenance including snow removal for State Routes 3 and 201. The minor collectors including Route 32, Stanley Hill Road, Oak Grove Road, Webber Pond Road and a portion of the Bog Road are maintained jointly by the State and Vassalboro. The town is responsible for snow removal and on-going maintenance. Funds are annually allocated to the town for this purpose from the Department of Transportation. Major road work and construction are paid for jointly by the state and town.

Local roads are the full responsibility of the town which has used a road maintenance plan to schedule road work and improvements for many years. The town has a public works crew which performs much of the road maintenance and snow removal.

The road data was supplied by the Town Manager and reflects conditions as of the spring of 2005. Roadway speed limits are established by the State. The Department of Transportation will consider local request to modify speed limits on a case-by-case basis.

Road Name	Road Length (Miles)	Surface Type	Road Class	Condition
Route 3 North Belfast Road	1.94	Paved	Arterial	Good
Route 100/201 Riverside Drive	9.07	Paved	Minor Arterial	Good
Route 32	4.97	Paved	Minor Collector	Fair
Stanley Hill Road	2.35	Paved	Minor Collector	Fair
Oak Grove Road	3.11	Paved	Minor Collector	Fair
Webber Pond Road	5.4	Paved	Minor Collector	Good
Bog Road	2.8	Paved	Minor Collector	Fair
Bog Road	1.8	Paved	Local	Good
Alpine Street	.15	Paved	Local	Good
Barrows Road	.1	Gravel	Local	Good
Bradley Lane	.3	Paved	Local	Good
Brann Road	1.65	Paved	Local	Good
Burleigh Road	.52	Paved	Local	Good
Canal Street		Paved	Local	Fair
Carll Lane	.08	Paved	Local	Good
Cemetery Street	1.48	Paved	Local	Good

Church Hill Road	1.49	Paved	Local	Good
Cook Hill Road	.58	Gravel	Local	Fair
Cross Hill Road	5.5	Paved	Local	Good
Crowell Hill Road	1.94	Paved	Local	Good
Cushnoc Road	1.89	Paved	Local	Good
Court Street	.03	Paved	Local	Fair
Danielle Avenue	.16	Paved	Local	Good
Dam Road	0.1	Gravel	Local	Fair
Dunham Road	1.81	Paved	Local	Good
Dollis Avenue	.1	Gravel	Local	Good
Dow Road	.19	Gravel	Local	Fair
Evans Road	.27	Paved	Local	Good
Fortin Road	.27	Gravel	Local	Fair
Getchell's Corner Road	.62	Paved	Local	Good
Gray Road	1.52	Paved	Local	Good
Hannaford Hill Road	2.13	Paved	Local	Good
Hunt Road	.57	Gravel	Local	Good
Hussey Hill Road	1.27	Paved	Local	Good
Holman Day Road	1.55	Paved	Local	Good
Horseshoe Court	.07	Paved	Local	Fair
Lang Street	.13	Paved	Local	Good
Legion Park Road	1.03	Paved	Local	Good
Lombard Dam Road	.91	Paved	Local	Good
Maple Street	.16	Paved	Local	Good
Mudgett Hill Road	1.25	Gravel	Local	Good
Mill Hill Road	.48	Paved/gravel	Local	Good
Nelson Road	3.9	Paved	Local	Good
Old Stage Road	.08	Gravel	Local	Fair
Old Route 3	.01	Paved	Local	Good
Priest Hill Road	2.73	Paved	Local	Good
Preble Hill Road	.14	Paved	Local	Good

Quaker Lane	.93	Paved	Local	Good
Riva Ridge	.26	Paved	Local	Good
Reynolds Road	.17	Paved	Local	Good
Saw Mill Road	.1	Gravel	Local	Good
Sherwood Lane	.47	Paved	Local	Good
Seward Mills	1.37	Paved	Local	Good
Station Hill Road	.20	Paved	Local	Good
St. Bridget's Way	.12	Gravel	Local	Fair
Stone Road	1.64	Paved	Local	Good
Taber Hill Road	2.67	Paved	Local	Good
Three Mile Pond Road	.50	Paved	Local	Good
Town Farm Road	.28	Gravel	Local	Fair
Willow Street	.07	Paved	Local	Good
Whitehouse Road	.59	Paved	Local	Good

Road Maintenance

The state arterials consisting of Route 3 and 100/201 are in good condition. The road pavement and drainage are in adequate condition and the shoulders are paved which allow for bike and pedestrian travel.

All the minor collectors except for the Webber Pond Road and the Stanley Hill Roads are in fair condition. Route 32, extending 1.4 miles from the junction of Route 3 to Winslow (the section in Vassalboro), is scheduled to be paved in 2005. The town is required to share in a portion of the total cost of the road improvements. The Department of Transportation is responsible for planning and implementing the road improvements.

The majority of local roads (97%) are rated in good condition which is evidence that using a road maintenance plan is beneficial. A total of 91.8% of town roads are paved and 8.2% are gravel. Most of the roads rated in fair condition are gravel roads which consist of 1.53 miles.

The town uses a road management plan to maintain the road network which results in the roads being in good condition. Road improvements for the state roads are scheduled by MDOT according to a two year, six year and 20 year road plan. Plans for the 2006 - 2007 years are listed below.

Gravel roads are often scheduled to be paved based upon a number of conditions including: traffic volume, road safety, road condition and public input. Some residents do not want their gravel roads upgraded because it could attract development and take away from the rural character of the area. The town will need to balance the competing wishes of the public between preserving the rural character of a gravel road with traffic and road improvements.

The 2006 - 2007 MDOT road improvement plan lists the following three projects:

- 1 Bridge Improvement on the Scott Clark Bridge # 3722 over the Webber Pond Outlet. Work will consist of work on the bridge surface and the estimated budget is \$220,000.

- 2 Road surface improvements to a 0.27 mile section of the Webber Pond Road. The budget for the project is \$101,170 from the State and \$ 49,830 from the town.
- 3 Road surface improvements to a 4.40 mile section of Route 201 beginning south of the Bog Road and extending to the Town Line. The budget for the project is \$456,000.

Traffic Count

The traffic count table shows the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), the average number of vehicles that pass by a given point on a road during a 24-hour period. The Maine Department of Transportation typically takes these counts every three years.

Traffic Count Table	Source: MDOT	Annual Average Daily Traffic per year
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Road name	Location	1998	2001	2002	2003
Route 3	.25 miles west of the China town line		7,334		
Route 3	Southwest of the Stone Road	7,450	8,060		8,730
Route 32	South of the South Stanley Hill Road		2,540		2,990
Route 32	Southeast of Maple Street	3,580	3,870		4,070
Route 32	Northwest of Preble Hill Road		4,620		4,660
Bog Road	East of Route 100/201				1,480
Bog Road	West of Route 32	1,230	1,400		1,680
Oak Grove Road	Southwest of Canal Road	1,460	1,520		1,560
Oak Grove Road	Northeast of Route 100/201	810	790		1010
Cross Hill Road	North of Stone Road				590
Taber Hill Road	Southeast of Oak Grove Road				440
Webber Pond Road	North of location # 2234				1,110
Stanley Hill Road	East of Route 32				1,020
Priest Hill Road	Northeast of Preble Hill Road	880			900
Route 100/201	South of Cushnoc Road			4,340	4,470
Route 100/201	Northeast of Winslow town line				5,550
Route 100/201	North of Oak Grove Road	4,090	4,540		5,210
Route 100/201	South of Webber Pond Road		5,160		5,550

Route 100/201	North of Bog Road		4,710		5,340
Route 100/201	South of Bog Road	3,800	4,420		4,900
Hannaford Road	East of location IR 443		680		800
Legion Park Road	Southeast of Route 3				550
Stone Road	Northwest of Route 3				520
Webber Pond Road	East of Route 100/201	1,050	1,080		1,240

It is not surprising to Vassalboro's morning and afternoon commuters that traffic especially along Routes 3, 201, and 32 is increasing. Most residents work in Augusta, Waterville and the surrounding communities and also travel outside town to shop and obtain other services. The AADT figures in the above table show an 8% increase in traffic volume every three years along Route 3 which may increase again as a result of the new bridge connecting Route 3 and Route 95. Traffic along the Route 201 corridor is increasing in volume at least 11% every three years. Traffic increases are a combination of trips through the community and local traffic consisting of commuters and residents. A noticeable increase in traffic is evident near Oak Grove Road due, in part, to the location of the State Police training facility

Route 32 connects Vassalboro's villages and is a principal corridor into Waterville and south into China and Route 3. Most of the traffic volume flows towards Waterville and has increased 5% between 2001 and 2003. Traffic heading south along Route 32 has increased by 17% between 2001 and 2003.

Local traffic is also increasing due to population increases, dispersed housing development and a workforce that travels to surrounding towns for employment. Multiple year traffic counts are available for the Bog and the Webber Pond Roads. Traffic has increased along both of these roadways between 1998 and 2003. Similar increases would also be expected for other local roads.

Traffic and Road Problem Locations

The following is a list of local traffic and road issues. Some areas will require cooperation with the Department of Transportation.

- Some gravel road residents do not want their road upgraded to a paved surface.
- Many residents are proud of the fact that there are not any traffic lights in town.
- Fast moving traffic and the desire of some residents to lower road speed limits on certain roads is a concern.
- Route 32 from China into the East Village lacks a paved shoulder to safely allow pedestrian travel.
- Walking and biking along roadways is a popular form of recreation.

Regional Traffic Planning

The Route 201 extends up the west side of the town and Route 3 intersects the southern tip of the town. These roadways play a significant role in moving both local and regional traffic. Route 32 also is an important road that moves local traffic between neighboring communities. The long term health and vitality of each of these roadways is important not only to Vassalboro but to the state and neighboring communities. It is important that the town take an active role in any regional corridor planning to make sure that these roads are properly maintained, improved and move traffic in an efficient manner. The economic and social health of the community is partly dependent upon how well these roadways function.

Maine Department of Transportation Traffic Access Rules

Traffic access rules govern the design, placement and construction of all driveways and entrances onto all state and state-aid roads. Generally driveways would be typically used by housing and other low volume traffic activities and entrances denote commercial and other high volume traffic uses. All driveways and entrances must meet basic standards for sight distance, minimum widths, drainage, distance from road corners, intersection angles, radius of edges, and turnaround areas for vehicles entering a roadway.

The traffic access rules are designed to allow vehicles to safely enter and exit the roadway and to allow for the smooth flow of traffic along the road. State and state-aid roads, classified as arterials and collectors, are subject to these rules because they move the vast majority of traffic throughout the state. The traffic access rules apply to the following roads Routes 3, 201, and 32, Stanley Hill Road, Oak Grove Road, Webber Pond Road and a portion of the Bog Road. Another ramification of these traffic access rules is that the town cannot issue a building permit for a structure with access onto a state or state-aid road without confirmation that a traffic access permit has been obtained by the applicant.

Alternative Transportation Resources

The principal mode of transportation in a rural community is the automobile. Other modes of transportation also play a role in our daily lives. The following is a discussion of some of the other modes of transportation

Airport Service

The Augusta and Waterville airports offer a limited number of commercial flights and provide service for private and corporate planes. Airports in Portland and Bangor offer a wider selection of commercial flights including commuter service to Logan Airport.

Rail

A rail line used primarily for freight extends along the Kennebec River. An intermodal rail facility is located in Waterville creating the opportunity for increased freight service for the region. Passenger rail service is now operating between Portland and Boston and long term plans envision extending service into the Brunswick and the Augusta area.

Bus Service

Interstate bus service is available and the closest connections are in Waterville and Augusta. Service is provided into Boston and other New England States.

Other Public Services

Transportation services are provided by the Kennebec Valley Community Action Program which offers a bus service in Waterville and a rider-ship service for people meeting certain income guidelines. Private taxi service is also available.

Pedestrian Modes

Walking is a common sight in the north and east villages and often along some rural roads. The lack of paved shoulders, combined with some narrow rural travel ways, require a walker to be wary of the traffic. Bike routes along paved road shoulders are available along Route 3, and Route 201. Some portions of Route 32 are better than others for riding. Other bike routes in the area include Route 3, Route 202, Route 32 south and Route 17.

PUBLIC SERVICES

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

To develop and maintain public services designed to be responsive to the needs of the citizens of Vassalboro.

To maintain the most cost effective and highest quality public services by exploring ways to develop regional service delivery programs that retain the character of local control.

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to examine all of the public services currently offered by the Town and to identify areas for improvement or the creation of new services.

Town Government

Vassalboro has a Town Meeting form of government with three Selectmen and a Town Manager. The new town office was constructed in 1999 and provides space for municipal offices and meetings. Some of the other significant municipal committees, employees and boards include the following:

- Five-member School Committee
- Ten-member Budget Committee
- Code Enforcement Officer
- Plumbing Inspector
- Animal Control Officer
- Health Officer
- Police Chief
- Two Transfer Station Staff
- Eight-member Recycling Committee
- Seven-member Recreation Committee
- Five-member Planning Board
- Five-member Board of Appeals
- Four in the Public Works Crew
- One Town Clerk
- Two Deputy Clerks
- Two Librarians
- Fire Chief
- Nine Library Board Trustee's
- Eight-member Food Pantry Board

General Government Services

The new town office building and existing staff levels are adequate to serve the on-going needs of the community. The town's rate of housing growth may require additional hours be allotted for code enforcement officer to handle the volume of permits, inspections and enforcement requests.

Fire Department

The Vassalboro Volunteer Fire Department has 18 members and operates from two stations. The main station, built in 1990, is located on Route 32 and has 4 bays. The second station, built in 2000, is located on Route 201 and has 3 bays. The two stations are necessary to serve the town because of its extended shape running from north to south and Webber Pond which splits the southern part of the town. The department has 7 vehicles divided between the two stations. The newest vehicle was purchased in 1999. The town is planning to purchase a new truck in 2007, according to the capital improvements plan.

The department responds to over 100 calls per year. The number of calls has increased over the years due to a combination of new development and increased vehicle traffic. Vassalboro, like other volunteer departments, is depending more upon mutual aid agreements to make sure an adequate number of firefighters respond to each emergency. Usually a sufficient muster of firefighters is available in the evenings and on the weekends. However, since most residents work outside of the community, coverage during the day often depends upon the use of volunteers from neighboring towns. Another related issue is that volunteers must comply with new and complex training requirements. This, along with the already significant time commitment and risk assumed by volunteers, has created difficulties in staffing volunteer departments throughout the state.

Ongoing fire department issues include the following:

- Maintaining fire trucks and other equipment
- Maintaining volunteer enrollment
- Training for volunteer firemen
- Planning for capital equipment needs - especially trucks.
- Maximizing grant programs to fund capital needs.

Ambulance and Rescue

Ambulance service is provided by Delta Ambulance which also provides services to many neighboring communities. Service provided by the Fire Department complements Delta's medical and transport operations. The department responds to vehicle accidents and many other emergencies. Delta's services are financed by the user through insurance and other similar types of coverage.

Police Protection

Police services are provided by the Kennebec County Sheriff and the Maine State Police. The town also complements the coverage with a part-time police chief who provides coverage for 15 hours per week. The total number of police calls usually exceeds 600 calls per year. One or more of the three police departments will respond to a 911 call. Dispatch for all emergency services is provided by Kennebec County; the County then contacts the appropriate department to respond.

The town may need to re-assess its level of police coverage considering its current rate of growth. New homes and increased traffic can expose a rural community to more criminal activity; the slower response time for county and state police provides an incentive for criminal activity. A community can select from a menu of options to address these concerns: neighborhood watch, increased local police coverage, contract police services from the county or state, or sharing coverage with a neighboring town.

E-911 System

The Town has completed the E-911 addressing for the community and is responsible for maintaining the system by assigning new street numbers and names. Property owners are responsible for providing an appropriate street number for their home or business.

Library

The library located in East Vassalboro is operated by the Vassalboro Library Association. The library offers a number of products and services including a growing book collection and computers for public use. The library is opened on Saturday between 10:30 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. and between 1:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Public Works

The public works garage is located on the Bog Road and was constructed in 1997. The building has four bays. The Town's major equipment includes four trucks, one grader, one back hoe and one road mower. A new truck is scheduled for purchase in 2007 according to the town capital improvements plan. The town has a four-person public works crew who maintains the roads, drainage systems, town property, plows snow and performs some road work. The services of a private contractor are used for large road projects including paving. A salt and sand shed building was also constructed in 2000.

Solid Waste and Recycling

A town transfer station has operated since 1988 and includes both solid waste and recyclable collection. The facility collects solid waste and bulky materials which are sent to the Penobscot Energy Recovery Company for disposal. The facility will need a additional space in the near future. The 2004 Recycling Report issued by the State Planning Officer gives the town an adjusted recycling rate of 48%. The town is actively seeking ways to improve recycling and locating the best prices for the materials.

Vassalboro Food Pantry

The food pantry is operated by volunteers and has an eight-member board of directors. Food is provided to local families and individuals in need. The pantry has, until recently, operated from the second floor of the main fire station. The pantry will have a new location and its own building in the near future.

Municipal Water Supply

The north village has public water supplied by the Kennebec Water District. The Kennebec Water District takes water through an intake pipe in China Lake. The water is treated at the treatment plant facility in Vassalboro and supplied to the communities of Winslow, Waterville, Fairfield, Benton, Oakland, and Vassalboro. The District owns the majority of shoreland on the west side of China Lake.

The East Village has water supplied by a private water company; there are three wells operated by the East Vassalboro Water System. This system has on-going system maintenance issues relating to the pump facility.

Community Water Systems

The State of Maine has identified the following community water sources in addition to the Village Water systems:

- Dearborn Hill Apartments
- Green Valley Camping Area
- Maine Criminal Justice Academy
- MDOT Rest Area (Route 3)
- Elementary School
- Natanis Golf Course
- Volmer Country Living Center
- Fat Cat Grille
- Arrowhead Ridge subdivision near the golf course

These community water systems are regulated by the Maine Drinking Water Program.

Private Wells

The majority of Vassalboro residents obtain their potable water from their own private wells. Well installation and placement are governed by State Rules for Well Installers. Setback requirements from subsurface wastewater system are also specified in the State Subsurface Wastewater Disposal rules. The setback between a well and a subsurface disposal system is 100 feet which may, under some conditions, be reduced according to certain requirements contained in the State Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules. Property owners are responsible for testing and treating their own well water. It will become increasingly important for the community to monitor well water quality and quantity as new housing development densities increase in portions of the town. Housing in areas with lots mostly using the minimum lot size will be of particular concern.

Municipal Sewer System

The Vassalboro Sanitary District was formed in 1972 and the current treatment facilities were installed in 1980 in both North and East Vassalboro at a cost of \$1.6 million. Currently over 80 structures are served by the public system. System users are assessed a quarterly fee which funds operations and maintenance.

Improvements have taken place in the treatment system over time including repairs to the sand filter systems. A pipe crossing the Outlet Stream in the vicinity of St Bridget's Church is a current concern because it is exposed during periods of lower water. This exposure to the elements can create maintenance problems and freezing in the winter. The remedy would require a new pipe installation. Grant funds for this project are currently being explored by the town and sanitary district.

The system serving the north village area is near its capacity while additional capacity is available in the east village. Anticipated growth within the North and East Village areas served by the sewer system is projected to be stable since most development is taking place in the rural areas of the town. The sewer system treatment facility would need to be upgraded to accommodate new development in the villages.

Private Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Systems

The majority of structures in town are served by individual subsurface wastewater disposal systems. The State Department of Human Services has rules that govern the design and construction of subsurface system. Local plumbing inspectors appointed by each town permit and inspect systems. The local plumbing inspector also responds to complaints about malfunctioning systems.

Some important planning concerns related to subsurface wastewater systems include the following:

- The local inspector needs to have the time and resources to perform inspections for all new systems.
- Proposed subdivisions provide soil suitability data showing that a system could be installed on each proposed lot. This data should be verified by the Planning Board
- A prompt response to check malfunctioning systems by the local plumbing inspector will protect public health.
- Water quality may be harmed if subsurface systems are not installed properly.
- Systems installed or replaced in the Shoreland Zone must meet specific local and state requirements.

Education

Vassalboro is part of School Union #52 with the communities of Winslow and China. A five-member School Committee represents the Town. A new elementary school, built in 1991, serves Vassalboro students in Grades K to 8. High school students may select to attend area high schools. Erskine Academy and Winslow High Schools are the most popular choices.

School Enrollment: Students Educated at Public Expense

Source: Department of Education and Town Records

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Grade	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
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