2014

Fairfield Maine Comprehensive Plan

Fairfield, Me.

Town of Fairfield

2014

Comprehensive Plan

November 4, 2014

Dear Fairfield Residents,

The Comprehensive Plan is a document that provides a backbone for community development by focusing on a town's goals and aspirations. It dictates policy in terms of demographics, history, housing, agriculture, infrastructure, public services, and economic development. After many meetings and discussions over the past two years, a group of dedicated residents met regularly to review and update the Town's Comprehensive Plan, which dated from 1996. That group of committed volunteers cares greatly for this community and wishes to see continued progress and growth as the town evolves.

The Comprehensive Plan committee was given the task of contemplating how the Town might change in the next ten years or more. We discussed the Town's priorities and what actions might be taken to influence our future. The revision of the Comprehensive Plan reflects the attitudes and desires of the greater Fairfield community. This plan is meant to be a living and working document, not one that is shelved until the next time it needs updating. It includes various recommendations and actions we hope that the Town Council, Planning Board, Economic Development Committee, Town Staff, and the general public will commit to for follow-through and implementation.

The Committee is grateful for the help of Joel Greenwood of Kennebec Valley Council of Governments and Nicole Martin of the Town's Office of Planning and Codes for assisting the Committee and providing necessary administrative support and information.

Respectfully,

Stephanie Thibodeau

Chairwoman, Comprehensive Plan Committee

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I. Introduction: The Planning Process

History of the Comprehensive Plan:

A comprehensive plan is a mechanism for managing the future of a community. Much like a business plan for a private business, the town's plan evaluates our assets and customer satisfaction levels, determines strategies to improve performance and profitability, and allocates resources. When it is a town doing the planning, our resources are the taxpayers' money, so even greater thought and effort must be put into spending wisely.

The Town of Fairfield has been actively promoting local planning for decades. Fairfield's first comprehensive plan, completed with the aid of a State grant, was adopted in 1960. The 1975 update consisted of over 150 pages and 27 maps. Another update followed in 1984.

Maine enacted the Growth Management Act in 1988, specifying the format and goals for local comprehensive planning. To comply with that law, Fairfield undertook an extensive update process in 1996.

The Growth Management Act was subsequently amended to require local comprehensive plans to undergo a new State review for consistency every 12 years, incorporating new data and findings into the planning process. Therefore the Town felt the need to take a fresh look, using the new State guidelines. This led to the 2013-2014 planning process.

Since the current (1996) plan is supposed to still technically guide the Town in its everyday activities, its age makes it less relevant. Responsibility for the update was assigned to the newly created Comprehensive Plan Committee and later merged with the Planning Board, with the instruction to involve all community members to the extent possible.

Community Involvement:

Fairfield's Comprehensive Plan Committee has taken the lead in drafting this update to the plan, assisted by the Town Manager and Code Enforcement Officer. Early in the process, the board reached out to Fairfield's local committees and organizations (many of which are profiled in this plan), department heads of the Town and regional districts, and individuals in constituencies such as real estate, business, downtown, and agriculture. The planning board's monthly meetings were always open to community members to participate in the discussions.

Community involvement culminated in a public visioning session held in June, 2013. The Community Center was the venue for an afternoon-long discussion of the direction of the town with regards to economic development, education, and housing, as well as downtown

improvements. Community members were also excited about possibilities to improve access to the river and recreation opportunities, utilize public parks, and improve the entrance to the downtown area. Follow-up public meetings on the draft plan were conducted in the fall of 2013 with businesses, farms, and the general public.

Many of the comments and suggestions from Fairfield's "Focus on the Future" have been incorporated into the recommendations of this plan.

Fairfield's Focus on the Future:

The "Focus on the Future" session also revisited the Vision Statement that was developed during a 2009 Strategic Plan for Economic and Community Development. Not surprisingly, that succinct vision statement still rings true, and required very little editing. Participants in the sessions used the statement as a starting point to expand upon its ideas and the comments were used to shape policies going forward. The text of the vision statement, as it emerged from the visioning session, is as follows:

"Fairfield is a destination community made up of rural villages, a vibrant downtown, and an inviting waterfront. Our Town is rich in history and tradition, teeming with educational and cultural opportunities. We foster economic growth to increase the prosperity of our citizens through planned development."

The key to a successful plan is not in the number of recommendations it can generate, but how well those recommendations can be put into action. This requires an implementation plan.

The responsibility for implementation almost always falls on the leadership of the town. Fairfield has discovered this

through several earlier plans. The last plan, adopted initially in 1996, has been a work in progress. To the town's credit, extensive changes were made to town ordinances and capital improvements matched up with grant possibilities; some new initiatives were begun, and others continued.

It is expected that this will also be the case with the 2014 plan. Though assembled by the Comprehensive Plan Committee, the plan contains ideas and contributions from town staff, elected officials, committees, outside organizations, and individuals. These constituents all have one thing in common: they are stakeholders in the future of Fairfield, and thus in this plan. It is their duty to see that the recommendations of the plan are carried forward.

While the implementation of the plan is dispersed through several individuals and organizations, a mechanism to monitor progress and resolve impediments is necessary. This plan recommends an annual, two-stage process:

1) The Planning Board will dedicate one meeting a year to review of progress on implementation of the plan. This meeting may be timed to coordinate with the annual report by the Code Enforcement Officer on residential and commercial growth for the year. The Planning Board will maintain a checklist of action steps that have been accomplished, those in progress, and those due to be addressed. The board will note any obstacles to implementation and suggest new or revised action steps if necessary.

2) The checklist will be forwarded to the Town Manager, who will present it to the Town Council for review and direction. The review may be timed to correspond with the beginning of the annual budget process, so that any recommendations requiring a dedication of town funds or personnel may be integrated into the budget process. The chair of the Planning Board may attend this meeting to assist with interpretation of the recommendations or follow-up. The council shall make a record of the actions taken to implement the plan.

This process should provide adequate oversight and feedback to ensure that this plan is not ignored or forgotten. The process should also tell us when the plan is nearing its completion and will require updating.

II. Community Assessment

One: Historic Profile

Two: Demographic Profile

Three: Fairfield's Natural Resources

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***Data in these chapters was the best available at the time of writing and should be used as such, new data may be available since the completion of the plan. ***

Part One: Historic and Archaeological Resources

Comprising an area of 35,200 acres, or 42 square miles, Fairfield is the southernmost town in Somerset County. It lies on the westerly side of the Kennebec River, 22 miles above head-tide. Included in its boundaries are the hamlets of Fairfield Center, Shawmut, Nyes Corner, Hinckley, and Larone. Fairfield Village, containing the downtown district and greatest concentration of population, is located at the southeastern corner of the town and adjoins the City of Waterville.

History:

From its beginning, Fairfield's development history has been a story of contrasts and conflicts. Two elements, agricultural and entrepreneurial, are reflected in two distinct settlement patterns, as farmsteads were built on the choicest land west in Fairfield Center and homes were constructed where the bank of the Kennebec provided opportunities in a variety of trades and callings.

Early Settlement:

The river settlers seem to have arrived slightly earlier than the farmers. Jonathan Emery is said to have built the first house in town, at Emery Hill in 1771. This native of Dracut, Massachusetts had moved up from Winthrop and was a carpenter as well as a small farmer.

Another of the river settlers was Peter Pushard, whose log house, built in 1774 at the present site of Hillman's Bakery, seems to have been the first home in Fairfield Village. But the Village took its original name of "Kendall's Mills" from the most successful river settler of them all, William Kendall. A Revolutionary War veteran, William Kendall bought much of the village area in 1780. His success was achieved by harnessing the Kennebec where it flows between the western bank and the first island and using it to drive a sawmill and a gristmill.

While William Kendall was consolidating his business enterprises in Kendall's Mills, the agriculturalists began to settle near what became Fairfield Center. In 1782 Elihu Bowerman arrived with his wife and two brothers at North Fairfield (near Holway Corner). They and some of their neighbors were Quakers from Massachusetts. However, most farmers were Methodist. The Methodist church at Fairfield Center was built in 1794. This structure served as a church until 1846 and as a town hall until 1875.

Kendall's Mills did not construct its own permanent church building until 1839 when the Union Meeting House was provided for the use of Methodists, Congregationalists, and Universalists. This building at the intersection of Western Avenue and Main Street was still maintained by the Methodists until 1968 when it became an automotive garage and was subsequently destroyed

by fire. Later a separate Universalist church in 1854, a Baptist chapel in 1875, and a Roman Catholic chapel in 1882 were established

In politics as in religion, Fairfield Center exhibited a greater cohesiveness in its early years. The farmers saw to it that Fairfield was incorporated as a town June 18, 1788. At the first town meeting on August 19, 1788, Elihu Bowerman, Josiah Burgess, and Joseph Town were elected selectmen and Samuel Tobey became town clerk/treasurer. With its church and public-spirited citizens, Fairfield Center was the original center of town. From 1807 until 1872 it was the site of the Fairfield Post Office, and it was located on the main road from Waterville to Skowhegan.

Until about 1840 the Nyes Corner village also enjoyed certain preeminence in the town. It boasted a church, various craftsmen's shops, a post office, and an inn kept by Col. Nathan Fowler on that same main road from Waterville to Skowhegan. Fowler drilled a militia company here and, after the railroad line was put in, it had a stop here called simply "Fowler's."

Emergence of the Village:

Kendall's Mills had an advantage as a commercial center. By the mid-19th century, the balance of power was shifting away from Nye's Corner and Fairfield Center. In 1848, covered bridges first made a convenient link between this particular corner of the town and points east of the Kennebec. This was followed in 1852 by the first rail service from Waterville and points south. Soon, rails from Kendall's Mills also tied that village to Skowhegan and to Bangor. Kendall's Mills became second only to Waterville as a transportation nexus.

Kendall's Mills also took the lead in the growing lumber industry. In 1836 a Boston firm replaced the original Kendall mill buildings with the first long block containing 16 saws. These mills burned in 1853, in 1882, and finally in 1895. After that third fire they were not replaced, and the industry was continued at Shawmut until the disastrous fires at the Hume and Newhall mill in 1911 signaled the end of an era. The lumber business spawned local factories which clustered south of the railroad station and produced such articles as window blinds, furniture, hardwood flooring, wooden ice-boxes, folding chairs, and even mail-order houses.

By the 1850's Kendall's Mills was becoming a bustling, prosperous place; this may still be seen in the increasing size and elegance of homes built there. In 1851, Henry C. Newhall built himself a large wooden house that is still standing. In subsequent years the Newhalls developed Newhall Street producing many fine Greek-revival homes. In 1866 Newhall sold the lot at the corner of Lawrence Avenue and Park Street to Ezra Totman whose grand Italianate residence still trumpets his taste and wealth. The Totman residence may well have been the inspiration for the many smaller Italianate houses which sprang up in the village in the following twenty years. Among the later houses of high quality are those of E.J. Lawrence (1884), S.A. Nye (before 1895), John Cotton (c. 1895), and F.E. McFadden (c. 1895).

The Newhalls deeded 2.4 acres of Monument Park to Civil War veterans, and much later Louise Page Newhall donated the fountain (1895) and the site for the Lawrence Library (1901).

In the 1850's the village also possessed a significant business district on Main Street near its intersection with Bridge Street. The original shops were wooden structures, but after a fire in August 1883, substantial brick blocks began to replace the wooden buildings there. This development was crowned in 1900 by the appearance of the four-story Gerald Hotel on the west side of the street. Electricity came early to this part of town when in 1891 Amos Gerald's Electric Company built its generating station on Mill Island just south of the bridge. The horse-car service that had linked the village with Waterville since 1888 was soon electrified.

Political Developments:

Kendall's Mills Village grew up economically and architecturally in the second half of the 19th century. By 1856 the residents of the village felt they needed police and fire protection, but were unable to convince a Fairfield Center-dominated town meeting that the valuable property in the southeastern corner of town merited a special expenditure of taxes. Frustrated, the villagers incorporated April 7, 1856 as the "Kendall's Mills Village Corporation." The same year this group raised $1,000 and purchased the "Victor," a hand-pumped fire wagon. In 1864 the organization's name was changed to the "Fairfield Village Corporation," and in 1872 the name on the local post office was altered from "Kendall's Mills" to "Fairfield." But the division between the Village Corporation and the Town of Fairfield persisted.

After the rash of fires in 1882, the Village Corporation purchased the steam fire engine "Amoskeag" (which still resides at the town fire station), and in 1886, a new fire house was built on Bridge Street. Corporation assessors levied a tax on property in the village, and in time this money financed street-lights, a night watchman, street signs, hydrants, and fire-alarm call boxes for the village. The Corporation provided the first public water system using a spring west of the present football field. The Town of Fairfield was asked to pay for any fire calls outside the village, and it was only in 1928, after the dissolution of the Corporation, that Town Meeting first began to vote money on a regular basis to support police, hydrants, etc.

The town and village did agree, however, upon the need for public education. Town Meetings first raised money for schools in 1793. By 1879 there were 18 elementary schools in town. In 1904 there were 25 schools, of which 10 are reported to have been located in the village.

Fairfield's first public high school was opened in 1873 in part of the grammar school then existing at the corner of Main Street and Western Avenue. In 1890, a separate high school building on Burrill Street was erected at a cost of $5,000, but soon it became inadequate. For $60,000 in 1907, E.J. Lawrence replaced the "Fairfield High School" with the grand brick edifice near Monument Park. Mr. Lawrence had suffered financial setbacks and the town feared that the taxpayers might have to pay to have the school completed. This fortunately was not the case, but when the school building was gutted by fire in February 1925, the repair was

made completely without its top story. In fact, the current Lawrence High School building (1960) is more typical of the town's stark utilitarianism than the optimistic local pride of E.J. Lawrence and others at the turn of the century.

The purest expression of civic pride is the gem-like perfection of the library building that E.J. Lawrence gave to the town in 1901. This level of idealism also inspired G.W. Hinckley when in 1889 he founded the Good Will Home and School in the area now known as Hinckley.

The development of Kendall's Mills Village as Fairfield's civic center happened to coincide with a brief outpouring of social and entrepreneurial enthusiasm. These forces combined in 1888 when Amos Gerald opened the "Fairfield Opera House," with a 50x36 foot stage and seating for more than 800 patrons. Once the Opera House was available it was the inevitable choice for town meetings and municipal functions. This grand structure, in a state of grave disrepair by 1961, was demolished to make way for our present, modest Municipal Building. By 1906, Fairfield's political and social patterns were set, but its economic base was entering a new phase.

In the seventy years since World War II, town government has changed in both form and function. In 1946 Fairfield went from administration by a three-member Board of Selectmen to a Town Council and Manager form of government. Municipal government has retained its Annual Town Meeting, with authority in various areas, particularly fiscal.

Commercial Development:

The decline of the lumber business starved out most of the wood-products industry. An exception to this trend was Martin J. Keyes, who set up his first machine in the corner of a sawmill in Shawmut in 1903. Keyes's venture became a significant Fairfield employer, later joined by paper mills in Winslow and Skowhegan. In 1900 the Kennebec Mills branch of the American Woolen Company (on Mill Island) had some 200 employees.

Industrial and entrepreneurial activity in Fairfield has slowed since the early years of the twentieth century. Since World War II Fairfield had turned increasingly to retail trade and to service businesses as the town became one of the "bedroom" communities of the region. It has more recently relied on healthcare and education as an employer. The proximity of the Village to I-95 (which reached Fairfield in 1960) and its position on Route 201 and rail lines has maintained this area's competitive advantage in transportation. In an effort to make the downtown area more appealing to shoppers, Main Street was extensively repaired in the 1980's. A state CDBG grant paid for this and enabled the town to buy up and demolish several decrepit apartment houses near the intersection of Lawrence Avenue and Main Street, creating the current site of Cumberland Farms Mini-Mall. In 2009 the Town designated a downtown development district and continues to make investments and improvements through property acquisition, demolition, and beautification.

In 2013 the former Gerald Hotel, which had most recently been a furniture store, was redeveloped into a 28-unit residence for senior citizens. This $6.5 million project has been a catalyst for other new developments and repairs in the downtown district.

Following the shuttering of Good Will-Hinckley's core programs in 2009, its Board of Trustees began planning a new direction that has seen the establishment and growth of the state's first charter school, the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences. A portion of the Good Will-Hinckley property was sold to Kennebec Valley Community College, which established a satellite campus including an organic farm, greenhouses, and expanded academic space, with future plans to build dormitories. It is expected there will be significant changes at the Hinckley campus during the next decade and beyond as both of these educational institutions work to develop the future workforce.

Historic Structures:

Fairfield has a great wealth of visible history in relatively good physical condition. Several structures have been placed on the National Register, as shown in the table below, with many others potentially eligible.

NAME	LOCATION	STYLE	SIGNIFICANT YEARS	CURRENT USE
Connor-Bovie House	22 Summit Street	Greek Revival	1858, 1856	Residential
Lawrence Library	33 Lawrence Avenue	Romanesque	1900-1924	Library
Amos Gerald House (The Castle)	107 Main Street	Other	1900-1924	Business (Funeral Home)
Quincy Building (LC Bates Museum)	Good Will Hinckley Campus	Romanesque	1900-1924	Museum
Good Will-Hinckley Home / School / Farm	Off US 201	Colonial Revival, Queen Anne, Mixed (more than two styles from different periods)	1899	School / Student Housing etc
Cotton-Smith House	42 High Street	Queen Anne	1875 - 1899	Museum
Asa Bates Memorial Chapel (Ten Lots Chapel)	2 Ten Lots Road	Classical Revival	1900-1924	Auditorium, Library, Religious Structure
Gerald Senior Residences (formerly Gerald Hotel)	151 Main Street	High-Style Victorian	1900-1937 2013-Current	Hotel Multi-unit residential, Retail

Based on preliminary architectural survey data from Maine State Historic Preservation, the following properties may also be eligible for listing in the Register:

- Farmstead, 174 Norridgewock Road
- Commercial Block, 176 Main Street
- Commercial Block, 144 Main Street
- Commercial Block, 160 Main Street

Some of the many other structures of historic significance in Fairfield include the Newhall Residence (1851), Totman Residence (1866), E.J. Lawrence Home (1884), S.A. Nye Home (before 1895), F.E. McFadden Home (c. 1895), Fairfield Primary School (c. 1906), Fairfield Center Methodist Church (1834), and Fairfield Friends Meeting House (1838). A more complete inventory is necessary to establish the construction dates and historical significance of many of these and other buildings.

Many of the original settlement buildings in Fairfield, after being destroyed by fire or old age, have been razed with new structures built on the sites. One exception may be the mill buildings from which Mill Island was named. These buildings were destroyed by fire some time ago, and the site is now a town park. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the oldest building in Fairfield stood where Hillman's Bakery is now -- itself a fairly old structure -- and the famous Opera House stood at the Town Office's current location.

Archaeology:

No significant work has been done with regard to either prehistoric or historical archaeology in Fairfield. It has been noted that Indian settlement was quite common along the Kennebec River, and archaeological sites have been uncovered in the region. There are currently six identified sites. One main site is located on Messalonskee Stream, and the other five sites are located on the banks of the Kennebec, including Hinckley and Shawmut. Due to the intensity of development along the river, particularly in the downtown area, much evidence must already have been lost.

Though not strictly "archaeological," Fairfield's historical cemeteries should be mentioned as well. They include: Covell Cemetery and Friend's Cemetery on the Middle Road; Ellis Cemetery and Goodwill Cemetery, near Hinckley; Nye's Corner Cemetery; Brooks Cemetery and Bates Cemetery on Martin Stream Road; Gage Cemetery, off of Six Rod Road; Emery Hill Cemetery, just north of the Interstate near the Kennebec River; and Fairfield Center (Tozier) Cemetery, on Green Road. Maplewood Cemetery, in downtown Fairfield, is the town's largest and most active cemetery.

All of the historic and prehistoric archaeological sites, as well as areas sensitive for prehistoric archaeology, and the listed historic buildings can be seen on the Historic and Archaeological Resources Map in the Appendix**.**

Part Two: Fairfield's Demographic Profile

Highlights of the Demographic Profile:

- Fairfield's population was counted as **6,735** in the 2010 census.

- The population of Fairfield has been growing slowly for at least the past 40 years. A brief fall in population between 1990 and 2000 has not continued, although growth has been slower than projected in the 1996 comprehensive plan.

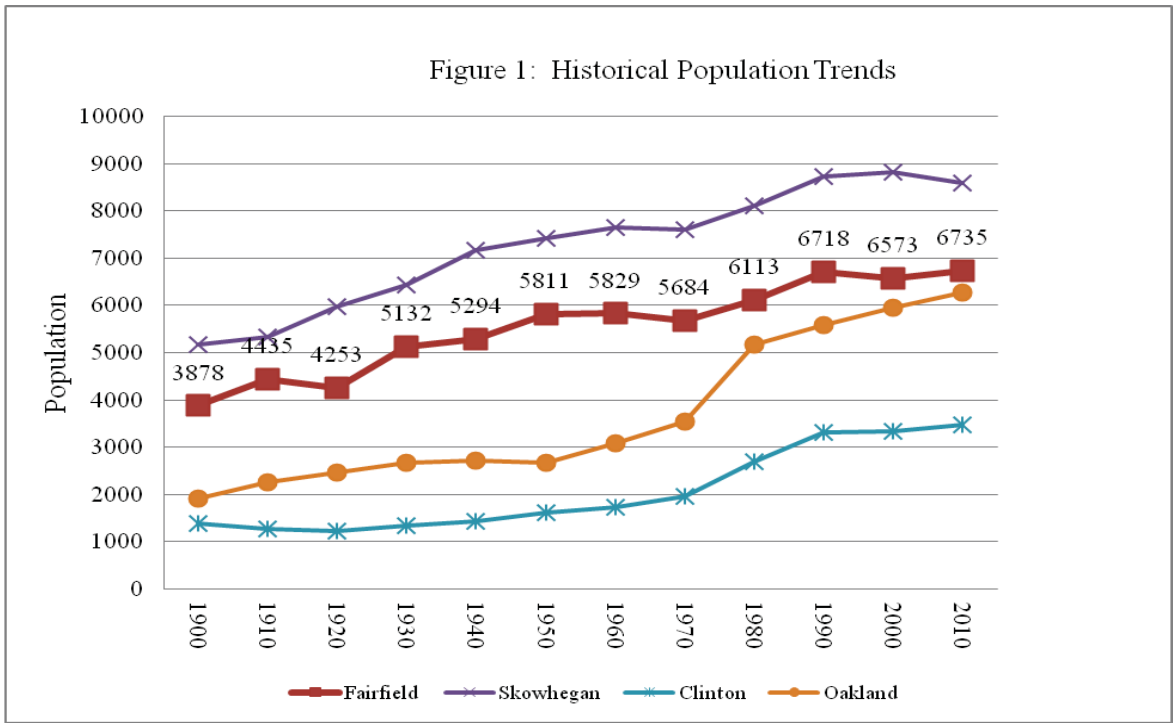
- The ratio between births and deaths has remained positive (more births than deaths), but a negative trend in migration has tempered it.

- Fairfield is aging as the baby boom generation moves through the population. The median age has progressed five years since 2000, and 45 percent of the population is now age 45 or older. A large portion of the population could be retiring within the next 20 years. Partly due to this trend, school enrollments are declining, with the most dramatic drop seen from 2007 onwards.

- Outside population projections estimate Fairfield's population to remain relatively stable at around 6,700 for the next 20 years. Outside projections do not take into account any initiatives for growth at the local level.

- The median household income in 2010 stood at $46,685. This represents a 28 percent increase since 2000, keeping pace with the 28 percent inflation rate. Incomes in Fairfield are just a little above the average for Somerset County. The poverty rate in Fairfield (14.1 percent) is below the average for Somerset County, except among the elderly, where it is higher.

Population Trends:



The most recent count of population by the U.S. Census, in 2010, puts Fairfield's population at 6,735. For decades, Fairfield's population has shown reasonable growth, declining slightly during the 1960's, but growing by a total of 622 residents since 1980. Similarly many towns of comparable size and location have also been growing (Figure 1). Skowhegan has seen an almost identical rate of growth to Fairfield but has recently seen a loss of population while Oakland has seen a fast growth rate that has not slowed at all.

Fairfield did see substantial growth from 1970 to 1990. This corresponded to a period of industrial stability within the town and region and related housing growth.

The dynamics of population change operate even when the population levels themselves are not changing. Population change is the result of two drivers: "natural change," the difference between births and deaths, and "migration," the differential between those moving into town and those moving out.

Natural change tends to reflect the characteristics of existing residents. If the population is older, it will be lower (or negative); if it is more in the range of young couples, it will be higher with the birthrate. Fairfield's natural change was a positive 245 between 1990 and 2000, and this trend continued with a positive 242 between 2000 and 2010 as the population maintained a relatively high birth rate and lower death rate (see following section). This is in contrast to

Somerset County as a whole, where the 2000-2010 natural change, while still positive, was only one-sixth of what it was in the 1990's.

The direction and rate of migration tends more to be a function of economics. People will choose to move into or out of a community based on factors such as availability of employment, cost of housing and transportation, and perceptions of community vitality. Migration is calculated as the difference between population change and natural change. In the 1990's, Fairfield experienced a net out-migration of 390. This is higher than the natural increase and accounts for the dip in population during this period. But in the 2000's, the town experienced a much lower net out-migration of 80, creating population growth once again. This demonstrates that Fairfield is retaining more residents and suggests that the local economy is slowly rebounding from declines experienced during the 1990's.

Age Composition:

POPULATION BY AGE GROUPS (1980 - 2010)

YEAR	TOTAL	Under 18		18 - 64		65+	
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%
1980	6,113	1,935	31.7	3,476	56.8	702	11.5
1990	6,718	1,862	27.7	4,070	60.6	786	11.7
2000	6,573	1,761	26.8	4,017	61.1	795	12.1
2010	6,735	1,568	23.3	4,224	62.7	943	14.0

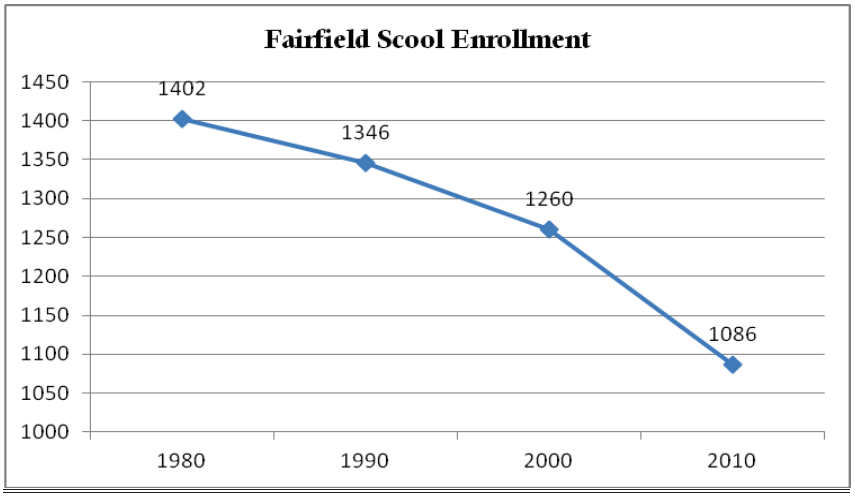
SOURCE: U.S. Census

Fairfield's age groups follow the nationwide trend of the aging baby boom generation. The number of infant and school-aged residents continues to drop, though not as drastically as many other towns, while the number in the retired persons group rises. The workforce age group has continued to grow over the last 30 years, showing that there is still a healthy workforce in town, despite the increase of seniors and the reduction of younger people of working age. Maine's population is the oldest in the country; however, the state has a higher percentage of the population over age 65 (15.9%) than Fairfield does (13.8%).

MEDIAN AGE IN YEARS					
PLACE	**1980**	**1990**	**2000**	**2010**	**Absolute (%) Change**
Fairfield	28.8	31.9	36.7	41.8	13 (43 %)
Somerset County	30.6	33.8	38.9	43.6	12.4 (42.5 %)
Maine	30.4	33.9	38.6	42.7	12.3 (40.5 %)
SOURCE: U.S. Census					

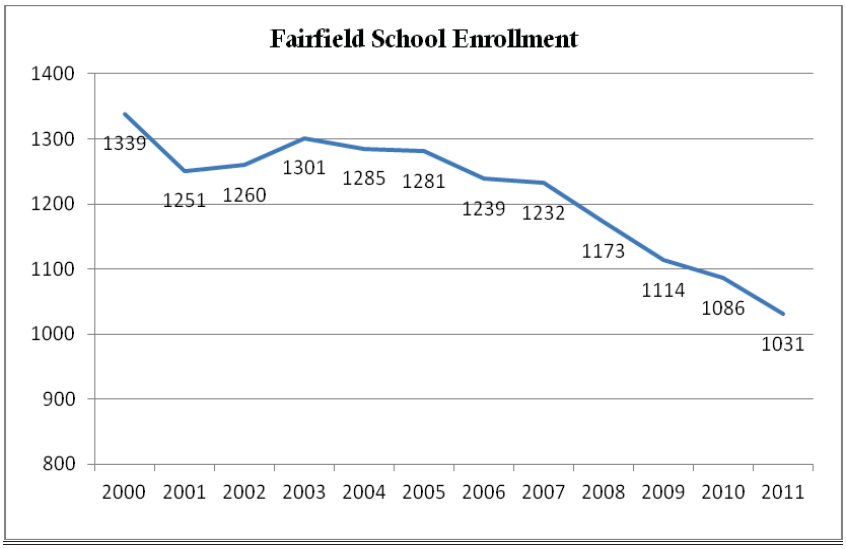
In 1980, Fairfield's median age was 28.8, discernibly younger than that of the county or state as a whole. By 2000, the county and state were still older by about the same degree, and by 2010, Fairfield's median age of 41.8 continues to be below the county and state level. Fairfield's median age is also below that of Skowhegan (43.7), but Oakland (40.7) and Clinton (38.7) both have a lower median age. Of course, without a larger net natural increase and/or young adult in-migration, the median age will continue to rise with the aging of the baby boom generation.

School Enrollments:



With the town's population maturing out of child-bearing age, school enrollments may be expected to drop. This has been the case with Fairfield. As the figure above shows, town enrollments have declined about 22 percent since 1980. The decline has also been speeding up. Although enrollments in the MSAD #49 region declined during the same period, it was at a much slower rate. Where Fairfield accounted for 40 percent of the students in the district in

2000, it now accounts for 44 percent. One of the impacts of this shift is that the cost of running the school system is swinging slightly toward Fairfield.



Population Projections:

Population projections are estimates of future population levels. They are based almost entirely on past trends. If a town's population has not changed much in the past twenty years, it is not likely to change in the future, and the projection would show that. This does not mean that the projection is a foregone conclusion. Once we know the numbers of people, houses, and jobs to expect, the town can make planning decisions that may actually alter the population projections.

There are two pre-existing projections available for Fairfield. Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG) uses a growth forecast based on percentage and numerical history. KVCOG's Fairfield growth estimate for 2030 is 6,752. The former State Planning Office uses a more sophisticated formula that takes into account the survival rate of different age groups in town, migration rates, and other factors, but the 2010 census figures have not been incorporated. Their most recent projection of Fairfield's population for 2030 is 6,494.

The 1996 Comprehensive Plan, using speculative figures regarding the town's growth rate between 1970 and 1990, projected that Fairfield in 2010 would have a population of between 7,440 (low projection) and 7,939 (high projection). That may seem a little implausible now, but those projections were based on a historical growth rate that has since leveled since 1996.

In planning for the future, it is always difficult to know what will occur, but developing a preferred scenario and making preparations to scale community facilities and services appropriately will provide the greatest degree of harmony in the system. This comprehensive

plan is being developed with a spirit of optimism about Fairfield, and a shared commitment to invest in the community as a quality place to live, learn, work, and play – which in turn provides an atmosphere conducive to population growth.

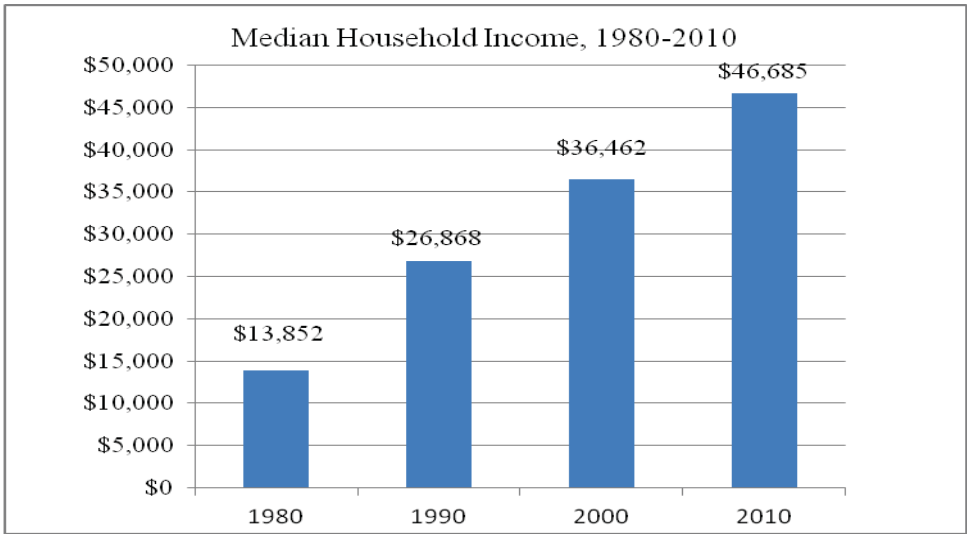
Educational Attainment:

The level of education attained by a person is a useful measurement as it relates to economic and social development. There is a direct correlation between educational attainment and income levels. Efforts to attract industries and provide job training must be matched with the skills of existing residents.

According to the 2010 Census, 90.8 percent of Fairfield adults have completed high school and 22 percent of adult residents are college graduates (up about nine percent from ten years ago). Fairfield has a higher proportion of college graduates than the Somerset County town average (14.6 percent). The town is about on par with the State for high school graduations and a little behind with college graduations (Maine has 89.4% high school grads, 26.1% college grads). These figures suggest that Fairfield is not at a competitive disadvantage for economic development within the State of Maine.

Income and Poverty Status:

"Median income" is a point at which half of the households realize more income and half less income. Its value is in determining how the community is doing over time and how well local households can pay for housing, services, etc. Median income is determined by the census using a sampling of the population over a five-year period (American Community Survey) and adjusting the results for "constant dollars."



Fairfield's median household income in 2010 was $46,685 (see chart above). This is a 28 percent increase over 2000. While this may seem like a substantial jump, the rate of inflation (CPI) between 2000 and 2010 also rose 28 percent. The result is that incomes in Fairfield over the ten-year period were in line with inflation. This is the first decade since 1980 that this happened. In other decades, local income growth had exceeded inflation by a substantial level.

While the median income may seem fairly comfortable, income distribution figures show a wide diversity of incomes. Seventeen percent of wage earners earn under $15,000 in Fairfield. Another 13.5 percent earned between $15,000 and $25,000. In total, 852 households fall under the $25,000 per year mark and 293 had earnings over $100,000 – 10.5 percent. Families, which exclude single-person households, earned more on average; the median family income was $53,841.

According to 2010 Census sample data, just over three-quarters of Fairfield's households reported earned income, with average earnings of $58,532. Almost one-third of households received social security income (average income from social security was $15,368), and 15 percent received some other form of retirement income. Almost four percent received supplemental security income, and 7.4 percent received income from public assistance. Figures for Somerset County are similar but a slightly greater percentage of households receive social security and retirement income, which is expected due to the fact that the median age of the county is older than Fairfield.

An additional measure of financial security is the percentage of residents below poverty level. "Poverty level" is an income threshold that varies based on the number of family members and other factors, so there is no fixed dollar level; the census reports on the population below that threshold. In Fairfield, 10 percent of all families fell beneath that line in 2010, but almost 15 percent of families with children under age 18 were living below poverty. These are significantly higher figures than in 2000.

PERCENT LIVING BELOW POVERTY STATUS IN 2010

POPULATION	FAIRFIELD	SOMERSET COUNTY	MAINE
All Persons	14.1 %	19.0 %	12.9 %
Persons 65 years and over	16.4 %	14.1 %	9.5 %
Persons under 18 years	15.4 %	25.6 %	17.8 %

SOURCE: American Community Survey (2006-10)

With an increasing poverty rate, the concern is whether certain populations may be at risk. The most vulnerable are generally children or the elderly. According to the census, the elderly are generally worse off than the population in general: 16.4 percent were below poverty in 2010. However, they are also worse off than in 2000, when only 12.4 percent were below poverty. Children have also become worse off during the past decade. According to the 2010 census,

14.6 percent of persons under age 18 are in households under the poverty line, compared to 9.8% in 2000. Having two working parents makes a significant difference, as 34.3 percent of single mother households are below the poverty line as of 2010. That is a high figure, but it is also an improvement from 2000 when the figure was 43.5 percent.

According to the 2010 Census, Fairfield fairs better than Somerset County on average regarding individuals and young people but is worse off for elderly. In Somerset County, 15.1 percent of all families, and 22.4 percent of families with children, have incomes below the poverty line. 25.6 percent of children and 14.1 percent of elderly fall below the poverty line.

Regional Income Comparison:

When comparing incomes between towns and regions, it is generally best to use "per capita income." This is the total income of the town divided by the population, so it is not skewed by different household sizes from town to town.

Regional Comparison: Per Capita Income

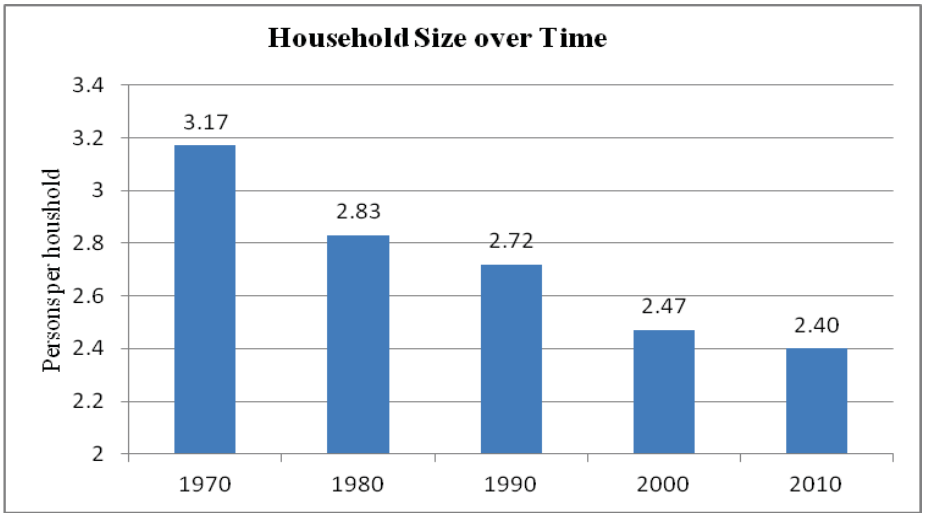
Town	2000 PCI	2010 PCI	% change
Clinton	$ 15,052	$ 18,903	26 %
Oakland	19,406	27,223	40
Waterville	16,430	19,411	18
Fairfield	**16,335**	**22,795**	**40**
Skowhegan	15,543	20,990	35
Somerset Co.	15,474	19,546	26
Maine	19,533	24,980	28

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey

Fairfield's per capita income in 2010 was $22,795. This was a gain of almost 40 percent over 2000, well over the pace of inflation. Among other small service center towns in the area, it is a good level of per capita income growth. It is nearly equivalent with Oakland and above Skowhegan, Clinton and Waterville. It is a well above the average for Somerset County, and growing at a faster rate. It is well behind the average for Maine, but also growing faster.

Household Size:

"Average household size" is the number which connects the population with the demand for housing. As the chart below shows, the average number of persons in a household in Fairfield has been shrinking steadily. This is a national trend. Almost all social and economic factors favor smaller households – more independent living among youth and elderly, fewer children per family, and more single-parent families. While there are early indications that this trend may be reversing in some parts of the country, it has not yet done so in Fairfield.



Part Three: Fairfield's Critical Natural Resources

Highlights:

- Fairfield is nestled in the central Kennebec River valley. There are a few glacial features that add topography to an otherwise fertile and level river bottom landscape.

- Development concentrated in the downtown area leaves most of the town in natural open space. There are extensive areas of forest and wildlife habitat. Moose Horn Bog and the Martin Stream Wildlife Management Area are regional natural resources with diverse habitat areas. They are not currently threatened by development.

- There are no significant pond or lake resources in Fairfield, the main feature being the Kennebec River and its tributaries of Martin Stream and Fish Brook. The water quality of the Kennebec is slightly impaired and could be improved, but this would need to be approached on a regional basis.

Town wide Overview:

Fairfield's geographical location was chosen for settlement due to its access to the surrounding natural resources. Located on the west bank of the Kennebec River, early settlers were able to take advantage of the river for transportation and water power. The town's topography is moderately varied and its soils are largely suitable for agriculture and development. Fairfield is located within the Kennebec River valley, within a large watershed that encompasses the majority of Somerset County and parts of adjacent counties.

Natural resources must be viewed as both an asset and a constraint. Forested and non-forested wetlands are associated with many of the streams draining portions of the town. By the same token, these wetlands act as a purification sponge for much of the water entering Martin Stream and other water bodies nearby.

Topography:

Topography, along with soil characteristics, tends to dictate appropriate land uses and environmental values. Slopes exceeding 15 percent tend to make poor building sites; slopes of less than 3 percent are characteristic of wetlands, but, if well drained, may be good agricultural land. The steepness of slope and soil type also determines how erodible a soil may be and how well water drains through it.

Fairfield has no summits in excess of 600 feet but Bear Mountain comes close in the northwest of town. Also the highest points along Back Road and Howe Road are well known high points within town.

Surficial Geology:

Underlying soil types dictate in general terms the suitability of land for various uses. Fairfield displays conditions laid down in large part by glacial activity. There are four main types of deposits, which have characteristic grain size distribution and topographic position. They are till, outwash, silts and clays, and muck/peat. A brief description of each follows.

Tills were deposited directly by glaciers which covered most of New England about 10,000 years ago. These deposits, not subjected to the action of flowing water, consist of mixtures of materials ranging in size from clay to boulders.

Outwash is also a product of glacial action; however, unlike till, it has been stratified by glacial meltwater. These deposits consist largely of sand and gravel. In Fairfield, outwash is found in rather extensive deposits along the bank of the Kennebec River on the eastern side of town, and in smaller deposits along Martin Stream. The outwash is geologically younger than the till, and may overlie it in places, particularly along Martin Stream.

The silts and clays of Fairfield were deposited in bays and inlets of the sea as the glaciers retreated. These materials are restricted to places below about 300 feet elevation, and are widespread at the eastern half of town. The silts and clays, which may be several hundred feet thick, were deposited at the same time as the outwash, but generally underlie the latter where the two are in contact.

Muck and peat deposits are water saturated with highly organic sediments. There are several large deposits of this type in Fairfield scattered along the far western third of town.

Soils:

Fairfield is blessed with soils that have food-growing and development capability. These soils also filter and store groundwater, not to mention provide gravel needed for road-building and other developed uses. Soils have been studied and classified throughout the town. Maps depicting various features of soil types accompany this plan in the Appendix.

Soil characteristics are particularly important to farming, road-building, and construction.

Unique Geology:

Fairfield has an unusually attractive sand deposit near Bear Mountain. The deposit is fully exposed and has features not unlike those of the Desert of Maine in Freeport. The location of this unique sight can be found in the northwest corner of the soils map and is designated as "DUNES."

Critical Natural Resources

Fairfield offers a variety of valuable habitat to land and water-resident animals. The extent and quality of wildlife habitat is an indicator of not just the abundance of animals but the overall health of the ecosystem. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) administers a program called *Beginning with Habitat* to illustrate information on wildlife habitat and critical natural areas. This information can be seen on the **Critical Natural Resources Map** in the appendix, with descriptions of essential features below.

Deer Wintering Areas:

Although deer are common in Fairfield, their existence is predicated on sufficient habitat. Summer habitat is not a limiting factor as winter habitat is. The existence of "deer wintering areas" is the controlling factor for deer numbers.

A deer wintering area (DWA) is defined as a forested area used by deer when snow depth in the open/hardwoods exceeds twelve inches, deer sinking depth in the open/hardwoods exceeds eight inches, and mean daily temperatures are below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. Non-forested wetlands, non-stocked clear-cuts, hardwood types, and stands predominated by Eastern Larch are included within the DWA only if less than ten acres in size. Agricultural and development areas within DWAs are excluded regardless of size. A rating of "indeterminate" means that no professional survey has been done to assess the value of the habitat.

Location	MDIF&W#	Rating*
North of Skyview Drive	020153	Indeterminate
Between Ohio Hill and Ridge Road	020181	Indeterminate
South of Hardwood Lane	020326	Indeterminate
Large area behind Pratt Road off 201	020329	Indeterminate
NW of Town between 139 and Norridgewock line	020330	Indeterminate
End of Archer Road and Bernies Way	020331	Indeterminate
West of 139 at Maes Way	020332	Indeterminate
Area between Davis and Martin Stream Road	020333	Indeterminate
West of Ten Lots Road crossing Rail line	020334	Indeterminate
Far SW of Town on Border of Smithfield & Oakland	020335	Indeterminate
West of Martin Stream Road at Bear Mountain and Smithfield Line	020342	Indeterminate
Far NE of Town between 201 and Skowhegan Line	020689	Indeterminate
South of Covell Road by 104	020710	Indeterminate
Far NW of Town on Border of Smithfield & Norridgewock	020731	Indeterminate

Source: Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, 02-28-2012

There has been no decrease in the number of deer wintering areas since the last plan.

Inland Waterfowl/Wading Bird Habitat (IWWH):

Five criteria are used to rate IWWHs as high, moderate, or low value: (1) wetland type composition, (2) number of different wetland types, (3) size, (4) interspersion, and (5) percent of open water. Wetlands with a rating of "High" or "Moderate" are the only ones required to be protected under Shoreland Zoning and other State Laws. These are depicted on the map in the appendix and listed in the table below.

Significant Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitat:

Location	MDIF&W#	Rating
Area on/around Fish Brook Pond	30705	Moderate
Martin Stream at Norridgewock line	30713	Moderate
Far SW of Town on Oakland Line	30716	Moderate
NE of Covell Road by Cayer Lane	30718	High
East of Martin Stream Road where rail line crosses	30722	Moderate
NW of Town on Smithfield Line	30726	Moderate
NW of end of Horn Hill Road	203969	Moderate

Source: Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, 02-28-2012

The number of habitat areas ranked as "High" or "Moderate" has decreased from 18 to 7 since the past plan. This ranking comes from the department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, so the reason for the decrease has been explained as a function of the department re-ranking them.

Significant Vernal Pools:

A vernal pool is a naturally occurring, temporary to permanent inland body of water that forms in a shallow depression and typically fills during the spring or fall and may dry during the summer. The vernal pool contains no viable populations of predatory fish, and it provides the primary breeding habitat for wood frogs, spotted salamanders, blue spotted salamanders, and fairy shrimp. The presence of any one or more of these species is usually conclusive evidence of a vernal pool.

Protection of vernal pools is required under Maine Law, but identification is difficult, because they are ephemeral, and can usually only be identified in mid-spring. Only one has been identified in Fairfield to date (in the Fish Brook Wetland area between the Routes 139/104 junction and 23), which is determined to be potentially significant. It is likely that more vernal pools will be identified on a case-by-case basis.

Rare and Endangered Species and Habitats:

No Bald Eagle Nesting Site has been identified within town but there are some on the eastern bank of the Kennebec River.

Certain habitat areas have features that are rarely seen in Maine. While they may not contain rare species, they contain a mix of plant and animal species not often seen in Maine.

There are two areas within Fairfield which are of rare or exemplary natural communities. The first is an area just north of the Martin Stream / Six Rod / Davis and Ten Lots Roads, which is classified as a circumneutral peatland. This peatland vegetation type is dominated by sedges or grades into dwarf shrubs. Sparse cedar or larch may dot the marsh. Shrubs may be patchy. Dominant sedges include deer-hair sedge and slender sedge; white beak-rush is locally common. Alpine cotton-grass, with its white wispy fruiting heads, is often obvious but not abundant. Shrubby cinquefoil and bog rosemary are characteristic.

These peatlands are influenced by calcium-rich, circumneutral (rather than acidic) water and remains saturated through the year. These peatlands occur in basins where contact with groundwater provides some nutrients to the plants. Sites are typically at lower elevations (<1000') and usually in areas underlain by limestone or other calcareous bedrock.

This community can be inhabited by the rare Clayton's copper butterfly, which uses shrubby cinquefoil as its sole larval host plant and primary adult nectar plant. This butterfly is found at only 14 sites worldwide, nine in Maine and five in New Brunswick. Thaxter's pinion moth uses sweetgale and larch as larval host plants and may be found in this community as well.

These plants are frequently found in this community type. Those with an asterisk are often diagnostic of this community.

Sapling/shrub	*Herb*	*Bryoid*	**Associated Rare Plants**
Larch*	Deer-hair sedge*	Campyliumfen moss	Capillary sedge
Northern white cedar*	Marsh muhly	Sphagnum warnstorfii*	Dioecious sedge
Sweetgale*	Northern blue flag		Livid sedge
	Northern bog aster		Low spike-moss
Dwarf shrub	Slender sedge*		Prairie sedge
Bog rosemary*	Tussock sedge*		Slender-leaved sundew
Leatherleaf*			Swamp birch

Additionally, a small area in the far west of town (about half way up Martin Stream Road by the town line) is designated as a Tall Grass Meadow. These dense swards of tall grassy vegetation are dominated by bluejoint reed grass, with smaller amounts of shrubs (alder, meadowsweet, willow) mixed in. Depending on the disturbance history, the shrubs may be low and not easily visible among the grasses, or taller, in which case the vegetation appears as mixed graminoid shrub marsh.

These sites occupy mineral soils in temporarily flooded rivershores or streamsides that are flat to slightly sloped. At some sites this type extends onto poorly drained uplands as grassy barrens. Soils are sandy to silty along rivers, with higher clay or organic content in other settings. The acidic to neutral soils (pH 5.0-7.0) are saturated or moist not far from the surface. Most sites are disturbance maintained, by ice scour flooding (larger rivers), by beaver flooding, or by fire (some Downeast grasslands).

In the absence of disturbance (flooding or fire, the latter often human-initiated), this community develops into dense shrublands dominated by alder. Maintaining both the natural disturbance regime and the hydrologic integrity of these systems is imperative to their conservation. Northern leopard frogs inhabit large grassy meadows associated with rivers in mid-summer where they forage. Northern harriers, Lincoln's sparrows, and rare short-eared owls may also nest and forage in these meadows.

These plants are frequently found in this community type. Those with an asterisk are often diagnostic of this community.

Sapling/shrub	*Bryoid*	*Herb*	**Associated Rare Animals**	**Associated Rare Plants**
Meadowsweet	Sphagnum mosses	Bluejoint*	Short-eared owl	Blue-leaf willow
Speckled alder		Flat-topped white aster	Yellow rai	
		Tall meadow-rue		
		Tussock sedge*		

Brook Trout Habitat is also found in sections of stream in the north end of town.

There is also an area of wild leek (*Allium tricoccum*) which occurs on the Good Will-Hinckley School property.

Since the last plan there is no longer any listing for Showy Lady's-slipper (last noted in the circumneutral peatland area), the Long-leaved Bluet (last seen along the Kennebec River), Pale Green Orchids (Fairfield Center), Shining Ladies'-tresses (Fairfield shorelands), and the Lopseed (along the Kennebec River). Regrettably it would appear that these previously rare species are now extinct within the town.

Wetlands:

Wetlands are an integral component of Fairfield's natural resources. They are also quite fragile and usually cannot be replaced. The many functions and values of wetlands support the health of all forms of plants and wildlife. Wetlands also improve quality of groundwater, limit the effects of flooding, and help to protect the value of streamside real estate.

Wetlands are essential breeding habitat for waterfowl, amphibians, fish, and some mammals. They also provide forage and protective cover for other wildlife species. Wetlands are home to many plant species that can not be found anywhere else. An important function for property owners is the ability of wetlands to act like sponges in retaining flood level waters. Wetlands also protect surface water and groundwater quality. Certain wetlands function as nutrient sinks or traps, filtering and reusing potentially harmful runoff from agricultural fields and developed, impermeable surfaces like roads and parking lots. Wetlands are particularly valuable in filtering pollutants out of aquifer recharge areas.

Activity in and around Fairfield's wetlands is mainly regulated through the Natural Resources Protection Act and the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. Through the Natural Resources Protection Act, a permit is required for disturbance of wetlands ten or more acres in size or ones associated with rivers and streams (and great ponds). Fairfield's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance also protects wetlands of ten acres or more or those within 250 feet of the normal high water mark of the Kennebec River and streams designated on the Town's Shoreland Zoning Map. There are, however, a number of wetlands in Fairfield that do not fall under the regulations. Some of these may prove important as waterfowl habitat, nutrient traps, or as wildlife migration corridors.

Fairfield has no major large wetland areas, but many smaller wetlands, both forested and non-forested, are scattered throughout the town. These wetlands and other surface water features may be viewed on the *Critical Natural Resources Map*.

Undeveloped Forest Blocks:

There is a direct relationship between the number and variety of wildlife, and the size of their habitat. We are used to urban wildlife, such as skunks and chickadees, which do not need much open land to thrive. But other types of animals are much less seen because they thrive in unbroken patches of forest. As roads, farms, and houses intrude on the landscape, the large habitat blocks break up and the wildlife that relies on them disappears.

The *Critical Natural Resources Map* illustrates the distribution of undeveloped blocks within Fairfield. The block that stands out as largest is the area between Route 139 and Martin Stream Road. This contains a variety of habitat types, including waterfowl and wading bird habitat, wetlands, and deer wintering areas. There is no apparent development pressure in this area. Additional large tracts can be found in the areas outside of the major road corridors. Any kind of development pressure on these areas should be monitored.

Conserved Lands:

There are two state-owned areas of conserved land within town, the first being the Martin Stream Wildlife Management Area in the west of town overlapping the tall grass meadow area

of rare ecosystems. It is approximately 195 acres and is primarily freshwater wetlands along Martin Stream.

The other area is on the banks of the Kennebec River at Shawmut where Land for Maine's Future helped fund acquisition of the site that offers easy access to an extremely productive fishery for brown trout and rainbow trout. Anglers frequent this site just below the Shawmut Dam throughout the year, coming from near and far. The tailrace beneath the dam is shallow enough for wading yet broad enough to accommodate many anglers at once. Until the State's purchase of two riverfront parcels (totaling 33 acres), this longstanding tradition depended upon the implied permission of private landholders -- access that could be revoked at any time or lost upon sale of the land. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife now manages the Shawmut dam site in Fairfield.

Visual Resources

Fairfield is an attractive town and its citizens appreciate the quality visual resources available, from the turn-of-the-century architectural styles of the downtown and residential neighborhoods to the views of the river along Route 201.

Particularly noteworthy resources within town include:

- Rural Villages and Agriculture
- Historical Architecture and Character
- Monument Park
- Mill Island Park

Where possible given the work load of the town Public Works department, developing a more conscious street tree program, minimizing tree removal during building site preparation and establishing attractive gateways are some of the approaches that could be utilized to enhance Fairfield's visual resources. Also inserting landscaping requirements into the land use ordinance.

The current entrances, or gateways, at the Town boundaries and as one enters the downtown area do not meet the community's expectations for itself; there needs to be a common brand or theme that might be utilized to solidify a positive image for Fairfield. Signage and landscaping utilizing the design could then be installed at these critical locations to welcome visitors to a friendly, well-kept community, and residents to their hometown. Although all entrances to the town and urban area should be addressed, priority locations are along Main Street and include the needed visual improvement of the railroad bridges.

Maintaining Fairfield's built environment is also a critical component in community attractiveness. Fairfield should focus on community development programs to attract public dollars to stimulate neighborhood revitalization as well as developing methods to minimize poor looking private housing, commercial storefronts, etc. In 2011 the Town successfully

launched a CDBG-funded Façade Improvement Program focusing on commercial properties in the Main Street district. The program has been successful, but has been sustained by the town. The details are as follows:

Downtown Facade Improvement Program

Goals and statement of purpose:

The Fairfield Downtown Facade Improvement Program (FIP) promotes economic development and stimulates business through public-private partnerships by offering economic incentives for renovation, restoration, and preservation of privately-owned building exteriors within the Fairfield Downtown Redevelopment District, as designated in the Town of Fairfield Downtown Redevelopment and Tax Increment Financing Development Program. Through facade improvements, the goals of the HP are:

- To increase the economic vitality and enhance the properties located within the Downtown District; and
- To restore and preserve the character of the Fairfield Downtown District.

Program description:

The Town, through FIP funding, will provide facade improvement assistance to Applicants for improvements to Facades of Eligible Buildings as approved by the Fairfield Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee (ECDC). Such Facade Improvement assistance will be in the form of a grant or forgivable loan. A grant or forgivable loan shall be paid on a reimbursement basis after completion of the project and acceptance of the same as being in conformity with the plans and specifications approved by the ECDC. The amount of the grant or forgivable loan shall not exceed 50% of the Cost of Construction up to $25,000 per single property, or up to $50,000 for those properties designated for Targeted Redevelopment.

Water Resources

Rivers and streams are an essential part of Fairfield's landscape and economy. These surface water resources contribute to the town's rural character by their natural beauty and open space. As public waters, they provide recreational opportunities for all of the town's residents. They yield a positive economic influence directly through attracting people to Fairfield as a place to live or visit. The surface waters are an ecological asset and are home to many species of fish and other aquatic animals and plants.

Ecological Value

The town of Fairfield has many important fisheries resources and nearly all of them are lotic (e.g., streams and rivers), rather than lentic (e.g. ponds and lakes). The most notable is the Kennebec River. The Kennebec reach that flows through Fairfield is known to locals as "Shawmut", as the Shawmut Dam is located at the upstream end of the section. This stretch of river hosts a rich and important fish assemblage comprised of both warm- and coldwater fish species including smallmouth bass, fallfish, yellow perch, white suckers, brown trout, and many other species. MDIFW currently manages this section of river as a put-grow-and-take brown trout fishery. In addition, there is a diadromous fish community comprised of stocked alewives and American shad, as well as American eel.

There are also a plethora of small tributaries in Fairfield that have been surveyed by MDIFW and do host wild brook trout (as well as many other fishes), and these are an extremely valuable inland fisheries resource. To protect these it is a good idea that any construction/road crossing projects that impact these small tributaries be completed during the construction window of July 15-September 30. Additionally, it is recommended that pre- and post- construction projects utilize Best Management Practices (BMP) with concern to erosion and sedimentation control. Reducing onsite sedimentation and erosion will benefit resident fish species downstream, ultimately reducing the impact on their health and habitat.

Rivers, Brooks and Streams:

Fairfield's surface waters are comprised of the Kennebec River and other streams of various sizes. There are no significant lakes or ponds in town, only very small ones, which presents one less concern for the resource base of Fairfield.

Given the town's topography, there are fourteen drainage basins contributing water either to the Kennebec River via the Messalonskee Stream, Martin Stream or Fish Brook, or to wetlands which filter the water for reuse.

All of the streams in town are classified as class B, third lowest level of water quality. Classes consist of: AA, A, B & C and all classes must attain the swimmable fishable standards established in the Clean Water Act. Discharges to Class B waters may not cause adverse impact

to aquatic life in that the receiving waters must be of sufficient quality to support all aquatic species indigenous to the receiving water without detrimental change in the resident biological community. Discharges to Class C waters may cause some changes to aquatic life, except that the receiving waters must be of sufficient quality to support all species of fish indigenous to the receiving waters and maintain the structure and function of the resident biological community.

The Kennebec River, and parts of Martin Stream and Fish Brook, are classified as rivers and are protected by a 250-foot Shoreland Zone as directed in the Fairfield Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. No development is allowed within this zone and timber harvesting is limited to selective cutting. Shade retention over brooks and streams is critical for fisheries habitat. Tree and shrub cover in general is beneficial for the riparian zone utilized by various wildlife species. All other streams in town are also protected through a 75 foot Shoreland Zone.

Kennebec River:

The Kennebec River is Fairfield's most prominent natural feature and is located along the eastern and urban portion of the town. The Kennebec River is recognized as a major community asset, and to many it is not realizing its full potential.

Overall in Fairfield the Kennebec is classified as class C (lowest level of water quality). Class C waters are managed to attain at least the swimmable-fishable goals of the federal Clean Water Act and to maintain the structure and function of the biological community. According to the State's 2010 Water Quality Assessment, the Kennebec River has a number of stretches in which water quality is below that expected for aquatic habitat. Inappropriate waste disposal, spills, and dumping are the main causes of the river's quality problems which has led to high levels of dioxins and Polychlorinated Biphenyls which affect the fish population.

A number of tributaries to the river meet Class B standards. Fish Brook was listed in 2010 as one of these. It is still listed as having impairments regarding impaired biota and organic enrichment/oxygen depletion. In 2012 a TMDL was completed and restoration work has been completed at agricultural operations adjacent to the brook.

Martin Stream is also class C and there is no data regarding any known impairment of its waters.

The town used to have two Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) that drained into the Kennebec. These were discharges of untreated wastewater from municipal sewerage systems that comprised of mixtures of sanitary sewage, storm water, and sometimes industrial wastes. They occur mostly during and after rain events or snowmelt. The town was removed from this program in late 2013 and sealed the outlets. This is a major step to helping improve water quality in the river.

Other point sources likely come from the Sappi paper plant and non-point sources are likely from farmlands or larger scale commercial development within the town. Any review of future development and expansion of agricultural activities should continue to consider its effect on pollution to the water bodies of the town through runoff etc.

Clearly Fairfield alone cannot meaningfully address the Kennebec River's water quality. A regional approach is required. The Kennebec County Soil and Water Conservation District is pursuing several projects along the river including the Kennebec River Initiative, and the Town of Fairfield should participate as appropriate.

The river has several points of public access, which include the Water Street boat launch, the Hinckley boat launch, and the Shawmut portage.

Flood Hazard Areas:

The Kennebec River experiences its share of flooding, and flood hazard areas present a real development constraint in many areas along the river.

Fairfield has quite a large amount of its developed area within the floodplain of the Kennebec River and little can be done about this; however, consideration should be given when looking at areas to locate future growth. It is worth noting that the Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance is up-to-date with federal requirements.

Groundwater:

There are generally two types of groundwater sources for drinking water in Fairfield: bedrock aquifers and sand and gravel aquifers (an aquifer being a saturated geological formation containing usable quantities of water). It has been estimated that 70 percent of homes with private wells in Maine rely on bedrock aquifers for their drinking water. It is safe to assume that the majority of homes in Fairfield that rely on private water supplies are tapped into bedrock aquifers. A Maine DEP study found that bedrock aquifers are vulnerable to contamination by such things as fuel storage tanks or failing septic systems.

That is not to say that sand and gravel aquifers are not as much of a concern for contamination. This geological formation functions as an area of groundwater recharge, which allows for precipitation to filter through it in order to supply the aquifer with water. One source of contamination can ruin an entire sand and gravel aquifer, an aquifer which often serves many households and businesses.

Fairfield has several sand and gravel aquifers that yield enough water (at least 10-50 gallons per minute) to sufficiently serve a group of homes or a public water supply. The larger of the two runs southwesterly from the Kennebec River at Shawmut to the Waterville line and the smaller one forms a semi-circle northeast of the intersection of Green Road and Ohio Road. Their exact locations can be found on the *Water Resources Map*.

Both types of groundwater sources can be contaminated by a number of activities:

Sand and Gravel Mining - there are a number of pits located in and around Fairfield's sand and gravel aquifers. Sand and gravel mining can allow quick introduction of pollutants into the groundwater.

Salt Storage - Fairfield's salt pile is located on the sand and gravel aquifer adjacent to the Public Works garage on Industrial Road.

Waste Disposal - the old, unlined town landfill sits in the larger sand and gravel aquifer while the Green Road landfill and a caustic soda disposal area are located on the smaller sand and gravel aquifer.

Underground Storage Tanks - most of the underground storage and fuel tanks in Fairfield are in the downtown area which is supplied by public water. There are some outside the reach of public water.

Industrial/Commercial Activity - lumber yards, sawmills, gas stations, cement production, and the like can be potential threats to groundwater.

Junkyards - all the fluids associated with motor vehicles can create groundwater pollution over time. There are some old junkyards on Martin Stream Road and Norridgewock Road in Fairfield Center.

Agriculture - a main concern with agriculture is animal waste, leaching nitrates into the ground. A secondary concern is pesticides or other toxic materials in use.

Failing Septic Systems - septic system effluent contains high concentrations of nitrates. Over 10 milligrams per liter of water causes health problems in children such as "blue baby" syndrome. A faulty system can discharge large concentrations of nitrates rapidly, though even a functioning system under the wrong conditions will contribute to elevated nitrates. These conditions are most likely to occur on soils which are high in permeability.

Public Water Supplies:

The Kennebec Water District (KWD) services a substantial portion of Fairfield as well as Benton, Vassalboro, Waterville, and Winslow. Water is supplied from China Lake for domestic, commercial, and fire protection purposes. KWD filters and treats the China Lake water in its Vassalboro filtration facility, a state-of-the-art plant placed online in August 1993.

Protection Efforts for Natural Resources:

Fairfield has long acknowledged the regional nature of the natural resource base of the town. Perhaps this is the upshot of living on a river.

The Town has a comprehensive set of Land Use Ordinances containing development standards to protect natural resources.

- The Floodplain Management Ordinance is currently in conformance with federal standards.
- The Shoreland Zoning Ordinance complies with State standards, and is more comprehensive in some respects.
- The Land Use Ordinance regulates land uses throughout town including natural resource protections.
- The Subdivision Ordinance regulates development of land, including roads and other improvements.
- Waste Disposal, Solid Waste, Sewer Use, and Automobile Graveyard/Junkyard Ordinances help prevent any pollution and/or contamination.

Part Four: Recreation and Cultural Resources

Overview:

- Recreational opportunity occurs largely through efforts of local volunteer groups as there is no formal municipal department or committee at present.
- Fairfield has reasonable opportunities for passive recreation with Mill Island Park being the main public asset, together with hiking trails on both public and private property through Good-Will Hinckley, north of Kennebec Valley Community College's Western Avenue campus, and to the west of Lawrence High School. The Kennebec Messalonskee Trails organization has mapped out these trails.
- The town's athletic fields are the main hub of organized recreation for children. The Police Athletic Leagues (PAL) organization provides for a range of sports and is supported by the towns of Fairfield, Albion, Benton, and Clinton. Lawrence High School also has additional facilities for sports. The PAL programs provide activities for about 1,500 children in the area each year.
- Fairfield has an outdoor skating rink and fully functioning zamboni, but in recent years the facility has not been maintained by volunteers.
- The Community Center is also used for recreation including indoor sports practice, and is also used by private clubs and for functions.
- Fairfield has both snowmobile and All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) clubs that organize their respective activities and maintain trails systems for this use in town.
- Most other recreational opportunities are found close by in the Waterville area, including facilities for indoor ice skating, swimming, etc.

Parks and Recreation Department:

A full-time municipal recreation department has never been formed, and the existence of a recreation committee has been sporadic over the years and has focused mainly on improving playground equipment and infrastructure at the municipal parks. For decades the Town has supported Fairfield PAL, which manages youth sports programs and a summer recreation program. In the early to mid-2000's the Town provided an afterschool program at the Community Center, but that program has since dissolved.

Fairfield's Parks:

Two municipal parks in Fairfield provide a different form of recreation, that of a more passive nature. Although these two areas are quite different, they both offer relatively quiet open space for walking, running, bird watching, picnics, etc.

Memorial Park

The oldest park, Veteran's Memorial Park, is dedicated to the memory of those Fairfield citizens who have died serving their country. It is located across from the Lawrence Public Library, and aside from the benches, fountain, and paved walkways, offers little else in amenities. Improved lighting is an identified requirement at Memorial Park that may improve its suitability for more use. Additionally, the gazebo requires structural maintenance and the addition of picnic tables in the park would provide a relaxing outdoor dining experience on a warm summer day.

Mill Island Park

Mill Island Park offers visitors more recreational variety. This park, established in 1982 by a volunteer Citizens Advisory Committee, comprises five to six acres at the northern end of Mill Island. The property was purchased as part of the town's Community Development program to remove unsafe and unsanitary housing conditions. Once residents were relocated and buildings demolished, however, little more was done in development of this area. Today a large open field exists for public enjoyment, and the northern section of the park is forested with several trails and historical markers placed highlighting the former industrial importance of the island. It is also a landmark along the Kennebec-Chaudière Corridor, which explores the history, landscape, and folklore of the communities of the corridor, from Saint-Georges and the forested wilderness of Jackman to the tidewaters of Merrymeeting Bay.

Because of its island setting, this property offers beautiful views of the Kennebec River and potential for various uses. A small playground is located near the parking area and adds to its versatility. Pedestrian access to the park is quite limited, and therefore most visitors arrive by automobile. During certain events, including Senior Appreciation Day, parking becomes quite an issue. There are currently plans to re-create a footbridge to the park that will provide a pedestrian gateway from the neighborhoods adjacent to Western Avenue. In recent years there has also been discussion on building a small pavilion to provide cover for picnic tables. Because of the intent to keep the park in a mostly undeveloped and natural state, it is better suited for development of passive recreation rather than additional softball fields, tennis courts, etc.

Publicly-owned Recreational Facilities:

The Town's athletic fields, known locally as the PAL fields, consist of baseball and softball fields and football and practice fields, located on Industrial Road. A softball field and the ice rink are located off Western Avenue adjacent to the Town Garage.

The Fairfield Police Athletic League, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that serves children and families from the towns of Fairfield, Albion, Benton, and Clinton.

With the help of many dedicated volunteers, Fairfield PAL provides numerous sports programs and a summer day camp for primary and middle school-aged children. The Fairfield Public works department has responsibility maintain all the grounds and facilities.

During 2011 the program served approximately 716 children in Fairfield and a total of 1,439 from all four towns in its service area. Many of these children participate in multiple programs and therefore the number of individual children participating is unknown.

School Facilities

Located at Lawrence High School is the Martin L. Keyes Memorial Athletic Complex. The facility, open to the public, includes basketball courts, two tennis courts, playfields, a practice football field, and a track. The high school is also the site of Keyes Field, which is restricted to SAD #49 student activities and some Babe Ruth and American Legion baseball, and a gymnasium, open to non-school groups by arrangement. The Junior High complex also has a gymnasium and the Williamson Performing Arts Center that hosts music and theatrical productions for the greater community.

The facilities at Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC) and the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (formally Good Will Hinckley) should also be mentioned. KVCC has a field house, outdoor soccer and baseball fields, and a cross-country track that are generally available to the public when suitable. GWH also owns over 1,000 acres of mostly undeveloped land. This acreage includes a trail and cross-country ski network and the public is invited to use these facilities.

SAD 49 Adult Ed

The local school district has a good adult educational program that includes many recreational opportunities such as arts & crafts, exercise & outdoor fun, health & wellness, home & family, music / dance and travel.

Community Center

Built in 1979, the Community Center is a building constructed for the betterment and enjoyment of the citizens of the town.

The center is the principal polling location for voting and municipal meetings and is an important civic space in this regard.

Residents and non-residents may rent the facility for a variety of functions. Groups rent the facility for various functions such as church services, dog training, professional wrestling, fundraisers, wedding receptions, graduation parties, baby showers, birthday parties, youth sports programs, dance recitals, etc. It has a full commercial kitchen to help with catering for events.

Many of the civic organizations in the community, like Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and Knights of Columbus, use the building for their events as well. A variety of school sports programs and PAL use the Community Center for basketball, baseball, volleyball, and cheering practice.

The Town also provides space in the gymnasium for people to walk for exercise during the winter months, usually from the second week in November to the end of April from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on weekdays.

The total Community Center budget for the 2013/14 was $31,625 (utilities $20,510, custodian $3,915, maintenance $4,000, supplies $1,000, and service fees $2,200). The Community Center Manager collected $13,325 in rental revenue to decrease the amount raised from taxation for Community Center operations to $18,300.

Privately-owned Recreational Facilities

Facilities located in Fairfield, Waterville, and other surrounding large towns serve most of Fairfield residents' needs for recreation with the following notable amenities nearby:

- Alfond Youth Center
- Sparetime Recreation Bowling Center
- Quarry Road Recreation Area
- Waterville Dog Park
- Skate Park
- Pine Ridge Golf Course
- Anytime Fitness and other local health clubs
- Sukee Arena
- Waterville Opera House
- Lakewood Theater and golf course
- LC Bates Museum
- Colby Museum of Art
- Colby College Recreational facilities
- All Pro Soccer
- Waterville Country Club

Outdoor Recreational Opportunities

Hunting & Fishing

Many Fairfield residents take part in the traditional outdoor activities of hunting and fishing. No problems regarding access to private land have been raised as concerns. Wildlife habitat is generally thought to be in good shape, although there are concerns about duck nesting and woodcock habitat loss. There are no organized hunting or fishing clubs in Fairfield. The town owns about 300 acres in parcels scattered throughout town. A few of these are developed with town facilities, but the great majority is undeveloped, including the 148 acre Town Farm. The Town Farm is currently grown up to forest, which is actively managed, and in principle available for public recreation, including hunting, fishing, and trapping. However, public parking is not available and driving into the Town Farm land with an automobile is prohibited, making it very difficult to utilize as an asset.

The Kennebec River offers excellent fishing and occasionally hosts derbies.

Swimming and Boating

The Kennebec River can be accessed by canoes, small boats, and personal watercraft via the Hinckley boat launch and the launch on Water Street beside the community center. There is also a canoe portage south of the dam in Shawmut.

Snowmobiling

The Fairfield Country Riders Snowmobile Club maintains groomed trails that traverse mostly private property with landowner permission. They are a nonprofit organization and rely on memberships from the community. The Town transfers the funds it collects from snowmobile registrations to support the maintenance of winter trails by the club for both motorized and non-motorized recreational uses. They have 36 miles of trails that are maintained and meetings are the first and third Thursday each month.

ATV Riding

The Central Maine ATV Club is a group of active ATV riders who enjoy the promotion of and the participation in ATV riding. There are about 25 miles of trails in Fairfield that can be enjoyed, and the trail network connects to both Oakland and Waterville. By ordinance, a section of Martin Stream and Horn Hill Roads allow on-street riding for the purpose of connecting two trails.

The club holds several “club rides" each year from the beginning of the season which runs from sometime after trails are dry, which is usually mid to late May up to the beginning of colder weather in late October.

Other Outdoor Recreation

Trails – Kennebec Messalonskee Trails

Aside from the small-scale trails in Mill Island Park and some at Good Will-Hinckley and other locations, there are two key trail systems listed by the Kennebec Messalonskee Trails organization: the Fairfield Woods Trail, which is west of the High School and adjacent to the PAL fields, and the KVCC Campus Trail, which runs along the northerly section of the Western Avenue campus.

In addition to the trails listed above, Kennebec Messalonskee Trails, together with public and private partners, has developed a series of trails in the surrounding towns. Those trails in Waterville, Benton, Winslow, and Oakland are mapped and described on the web site of the organization at www.kmtrails.org. They have recently opened new trails nearby and upgraded their maps, trail heads and markers.

Long-term plans exist to connect trails throughout the region and construct a bridge over the Kennebec River.

Churches:

There are many Places of Worship in and around Fairfield:

Adventist - Blessed Hope Church

Anglican - Holy Trinity Anglican Church

Baptist - First Baptist Church of Fairfield
First Baptist Church of Waterville

Catholic - Sacred Heart
Notre Dame
St. John the Baptist

Congregational - First Congregational Church

Episcopal - St. Mark's Episcopal Church

Evangelical - Fairfield Church of the Nazarene
Faith Evangelical Free Church
Calvary Temple
New Beginnings Church of God

Jewish - Beth Israel Congregation

Lutheran - Church of the Resurrection

Methodist - Fairfield United Methodist Church
Fairfield Center United Methodist Church

Mormon - Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

Quaker - North Fairfield Friends Meeting

Universalist-Unitarian - Universalist Unitarian Church

Non-Denominational - Element 3 Church
Moody Memorial Chapel at Good Will-Hinckley
Riverside Assembly
Calvary Chapel of Kennebec Valley

Fairfield Historical Society:

The mission of the Fairfield Historical Society (FHS) is to record and preserve the history of the Town of Fairfield and its region. The purpose of the organization is to receive and compile historical papers that might otherwise be lost, to obtain articles pertaining to the town (tools, furniture, manuscripts, etc.), and to contact townspeople and help make them aware of the town's interest and concern about the preservation of these articles and of all articles given or sold to the town that might have historical value.

History House Museum

The Cotton-Smith House, a Queen Anne Victorian, built in 1894 by John Cotton of the White Mountain Refrigerator Company, it is located at 42 High St. and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The house was purchased by the FHS with a bequest from founding member Ray Tobey in 1983. Painted ceilings were found under a false ceiling installed by Gertrude Smith in the 1950's. A twelve-inch stenciled honey maple woodwork is especially prevalent on the main stairs and entry. The barn houses special exhibits and events, tools, barbershop, general store, and schoolroom.

Museum Collections

Victorian Furniture, including Gertrude Smith's piano
Household Accessories, including quilts.
Victorian and Edwardian clothing, including historic wedding dresses.

The Lawrence Collection: furniture and memorabilia of the Lawrence family, including three generations of family wedding dresses. *Endowed by Mary Lawrence Halkyard.*

The Tobey Collection: furniture and accessories, historical and genealogical items.
It is a general collection of maps, photographs, and assorted documents, all pertaining to the town of Fairfield.

Land Use and Development

Community Overview:

Most of Fairfield's geography maintains a rural landscape. However, the more urban and developed southeast section of town possesses substantial commerce and industry, dense residential neighborhoods, and is an important transportation crossroads. Fairfield is considered a regional service center community with an increased daytime population, albeit much smaller than neighboring Waterville, mainly due to the large number of students commuting to KVCC. As such, some elements of institutional, commercial, and industrial development continue to grow. The town consists of a downtown area, linking to a commercial / industrial park beside the interstate and KVCC's Western Avenue campus, and several urban residential zones. The town also contains several unincorporated village areas of Shawmut, Fairfield Center, and Hinckley. Most other development is along the arterial roads and primary collectors that traverse through the town.

Fairfield gained traction as an industrial town with significant growth during the 19th Century into the early 20th century. This industrial growth caused the development of a fairly concentrated urban core with a few other village centers.

Due to the slower growing population over the past few decades, Fairfield has managed to avoid much of the sprawl and strip development characterized in much of central Maine. The addition of I-95 with an interchange has led to a commercial cluster at the 132 mile interchange, somewhat at the expense of Main Street, but the town has been able to integrate these trends with its overall development.

Industrial and Commercial Development:

Fairfield, like many New England towns, developed a river-powered industrial center surrounded by farm and forestland. Over the years, since World War II, Fairfield has turned increasingly to retail trade and to service businesses as the town became one of the "bedroom" communities of the region. The proximity of the Main Street area to I-95 (which reached Fairfield in 1960) and its position on Route 201 has maintained this area's competitive advantage as a retail location and transportation corridor. In an effort to make the downtown area more appealing to shoppers, Main Street has been extensively repaired and new street lighting installed. In 1986, a state urban development grant enabled the town to buy and demolish several decrepit apartment houses near the intersection of Lawrence Avenue and Main Street, now the site of Cumberland Farms Mini-Mall. During the next two decades several new businesses came to town, including a new supermarket, pharmacy, and other smaller businesses. Other businesses had also moved or closed during those years and

commercial vacancy rates began to increase. In 2009 the Town designated the Downtown Redevelopment and Tax Increment Financing District to make additional investments in public infrastructure and incentivize redevelopment and rehabilitation of properties in the district. In the years immediately to follow, a new commercial development was built toward the southern end of Main Street; a $6.5 million project to redevelop the Gerald into senior residences was completed; and several vacant commercial and residential properties were razed to make room for new development or public space.

In addition to the Downtown district, there are three areas where the town is focusing on industrial and commercial development:

Located just east of Interstate 95 is the Industrial Road Development District. Industrial Road extends from Western Avenue and travels south toward the Waterville City line. The park has a truck-grade paved road and utilities. The Town is actively promoting the future extension of Industrial Road to link to Waterville's Industrial Park. This district is designated a Pine Tree Development Zone and is also within a Tax Increment Financing District.

Fairfield's Business Park is located along the west side of Interstate 95 and adjacent to Western Avenue. Businesses currently located in the area include Sheridan Corporation, Central Maine Power Company, Dartmouth Medical Offices, Yellow Transportation, and Kennebec Montessori School. Hammond Tractor and Irving Travel Center are located on the other side of Western Avenue. The park has several developable lots with easy access to I-95, truck-grade paved road, and utilities.

Teague Business Park is located along Eskelund Drive, which links Western Avenue and U.S. Route 201. The park is adjacent to Interstate 95 with two points of access, and abuts Kennebec Valley Community College. There are several developable lots available and the park is located within a Tax Increment Financing District. The park has a paved truck-grade road and utilities. Beside the park on Route 201 is the former Wickes Lumber facility, which is currently for sale.

In 2013, Summit Natural Gas of Maine began construction on a natural gas pipeline transmission and distribution system that will serve most of the Kennebec Valley, including Fairfield. The investment in Fairfield alone is estimated to be $14 million, and the pipeline will serve commercial and industrial users, including Huhtamaki Packaging, in addition to residential customers. This investment is anticipated to quicken the rate of investment as Fairfield realizes an additional competitive advantage as compared to other locations in Maine.

The Institutional and Service Sector:

A number of Fairfield businesses provide critical services to people throughout the region. Accounting, engineering, legal services, office management, construction, veterinary services, animal boarding, chiropractic care, banking, insurance, surveying, and investment counseling

are all available in Fairfield. The area experiencing the most dramatic growth in Fairfield, however, is education.

Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC) is one of seven community colleges that operate under the authority of the Maine Community College System Board of Trustees. The longtime Western Avenue campus is located on a seventy-acre parcel, and the newly acquired Alfond campus in Hinckley sits on 561 acres, and includes the organic farm, recreation facilities, and the president's house. Dormitories are planned to be built before 2020. KVCC is a public, non-profit, post-secondary institution supported in part by State appropriations and federal funds.

Also of note are Good Will-Hinckley (GWH) and its newly chartered Maine Academy of Natural Sciences. Since 1889, the GWH mission has been to provide a home and helping hand for young people and families. The organization has helped more than 6,000 youth from Maine and other states. Historically, Good Will-Hinckley has been home to youth facing complex academic, social, behavioral and emotional challenges. Before going to GWH, they may have lacked sufficient support at home and/or in school. The 1,000-acre campus now serves high school students as an alternative high school, the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences. Making use of farmland, forest, and wilderness, the rigorous curriculum is focused on agriculture, forestry, and sustainability with a strong emphasis on project-based, hands-on learning.

Economic development and an attractive, thriving community work hand-in-hand. Having access to an educated workforce looking to build a successful career is attractive to companies looking to relocate. The possibility of working with KVCC for direct recruitment and training is an asset to companies looking to locate in Fairfield.

Retail Development Patterns:

Since the 1960's Fairfield has experienced a gradual but steady decline in its retail sector since the interstate was built. Numerous highway-oriented businesses, particularly fast food and retail chains, have located further south on the interstate at the two Waterville interchanges. The competition has affected Fairfield's downtown business district and the areas off exit 132 in town. While this trend has been a growing problem for Fairfield's retail sector over the last 25 years, the situation has particularly hurt the downtown where there are only a few businesses remaining.

Fairfield is not a town comprised of corporate fast-food chains and has an opportunity to develop and promote a quality local image with an unique appeal. There is an opportunity to consciously plan the future character and direction of the downtown area, and to develop an attractive and welcoming experience as visitors travel to and through Fairfield. The Town is faced with a tremendous challenge and opportunity -- to find a way to remake its downtown to take advantage of the link between needed goods and services and the significant number of consumers within Fairfield's market area, particularly the many that pass through town when

travelling to and from Waterville. The downtown district is the economic center of the community, and a critical contributor to the retail sector.

The Downtown:

Since the late 1960's, downtown Fairfield has been in decline, arising largely from the construction of I-95 and the growth of large shopping centers in Waterville, Augusta and Bangor. Prior to the opening of I-95, the traveling public passed through downtown Fairfield and patronized its shops. Fairfield possessed a critical mass of retail establishments that caused it to be a destination. As smaller stores lost market share to competition from larger shopping centers, downtown Fairfield inevitably lost its critical mass and ability to sustain a robust retail sector. Its decline accelerated through the 1990's and 2000's.

Main Street was extensively repaired in the mid-80's; over the next two decades additional improvements were made. Community Development Block Grants and other grants paid for much of this and enabled the town to acquire and demolish several decrepit apartment houses near the intersection of Lawrence Avenue and Main Street, now the site of Cumberland Farms Mini-Mall.

In 2002 a Downtown Revitalization Plan was created as part of the Quality Main Street Program. This plan followed the construction of the new bridges across the Kennebec to Benton, which included the razing of additional downtown buildings. Parts of the plan were pursued, including improvements to the Mill Street parking lot, including lighting. However, the town never followed through with financing most of the improvements that had been planned, and other projects took higher priority during the 2000's, including construction of the biotech center and large-scale sewer and rainwater separation projects. In fairness, the Quality Main Street plan did not include a finance plan or a time-phased project list that made clear the necessary annual investment to realize many of the improvements.

Agriculture:

The Town of Fairfield is relatively well-endowed with prime farmland in comparison with the region and State. Fairfield's largely ideal three to eight percent sloping topography and rich soils means that farming has long been a primary land use. The extent of Fairfield's prime farmland may be best seen on the *Agricultural and Forest Resources Map* in the Appendix.

Quality farmland is one critical component of agricultural activity, but is by no means the only one. Farming, after all, is a human activity and does not occur without a great deal of knowledge, effort, support services, financial assistance, and a viable place in the economy.

In discussions over the past years with the farm community of Fairfield, it is clear that despite significant challenges most of those engaged in agriculture in Fairfield wish to remain in business and there is little desire to sell land for development. This is very encouraging news in

a time period in which one of Fairfield's most prevalent traditional agricultural activities, dairying, is undergoing severe pricing problems and many farms are going out of business statewide. By 2013, only remnants of Fairfield's once thriving dairy farms remain. The average age of farmers in Maine is over 50 and it is very difficult to obtain financing to begin farming today, so in many areas, farms are going out of business as farmers retire.

While this is true to some extent in Fairfield, contemporary trends in agriculture show us that, just as with manufacturing or retail development or other major economic activity, farms must evolve into new markets or they will wither and die. This brings the conversation beyond preserving agricultural land for future generations to keeping the town's existing agricultural infrastructure and commercial viability in place. The number of small farms and other agricultural enterprises is now growing in Maine as niche markets are found and consumer demand increases for locally produced and organic foods.

Soils:

Prime farmland soils are those which have the least limitations for growing food and will produce the best yields with the least damage. According to *Soil Survey Data for Growth Management in Somerset County, Maine, Southern Part*, the following soils are considered prime farmland. The most prevalent prime farmland soils in Fairfield are the Bangor, Dixmont, Buxton and Thorndike-Bangor silt loams.

- BaB Bangor silt loam, 3-8% slopes
- BuB Buxton silt loam, 0-8% slopes
- DxB Dixmont silt loam, 0-8% slopes
- Ha Hadley silt loam
- MbB Madawaska fine sandy loam, 0-8% slopes
- Wn Winooski silt loam
- AaB Adams loamy sand, 0-8% slopes
- PgB Plaisted gravelly loam, 3-8% slopes
- TtB Thorndike-Bangor silt loams, 0-8% slopes
- TpB Thorndike-Plaisted loams, 0-8% slopes
- Lk Limerick silt loam

The best agricultural soils are also suitable for development, and in many communities the only good development soils are also prime farmland. Fairfield is fortunate to have a number of land areas that are well suited for development *in addition to* its prime farmland. The majority of prime farmland is on the eastern side of the town while there are still many areas of developable land on the west. This makes for far less conflict in designating land uses. Fairfield can afford to develop a land use plan that promotes agricultural use without sacrificing lands needed for development.

The built-up area of town, as well as most of the road network, was built on some prime farmland. But the concentration of most developed uses within the compact urban area has preserved the vast amount of Fairfield's productive land for natural resource-based uses. There is ample access via the existing road network to suitable soils in Fairfield.

Active Farms and Agricultural Producers in Fairfield:

Quimby Farm
169 Ridge Rd
Fairfield Maine

Somerset Patriot Farm
317 Ridge Rd
Fairfield, Maine

The Apple Farm
104 Back Rd
Fairfield, Maine

Harvey Wood Corp
103 Ohio Hill Rd
Fairfield, Maine

Hill Top Farms and Greenhouses
260 Middle Rd
Fairfield, Maine

Dirigo Alpacas
20 Townsend Rd
Fairfield, Maine

Bickford's Greenhouse
160 Norridgewock Rd
Fairfield, Maine

Dostie Farm
316 Back Rd
Fairfield, Maine

Sunset Flowerland and Greenhouses
491 Ridge Rd
Fairfield, Maine

Tozier Farm
62 Ohio Hill Rd
Fairfield, Maine

Tupper Farm
38 Oakland Rd
Fairfield, Maine

Farmers are encouraged to enroll land in the statewide program to reduce property valuations for tax purposes, known as the Farmland and Open Space Program. In Fairfield in 2013, 64 parcels are enrolled as cropland and/or woodland, totaling 3,778 acres (about 13 percent of total land) and $1,124,269 in valuation.

Farmer Attitudes:

For the 1996 Comprehensive Plan, over a dozen farmers were surveyed for their attitudes towards the future of farming. The results showed that most had not bought or sold land in the last ten years and did not plan to buy or sell land in the next five years. Also if they were to stop farming or sell land, all respondents would like to deed to an heir; sell to a farmer; sell to the state, town, or a land trust; or rent to a farmer. Given the choice, none of the farmers wanted to sell to a developer or let the land go inactive.

Most would not sell development rights and almost all the farmers felt that agriculture has a future in Fairfield and that there is a positive climate for it. Nearly all thought the Town can do more to promote commercial agriculture. Suggestions included lowering taxes or providing tax incentives, establishing a farmer's market, or easing regulations.

The following have the greatest effect on farm operators: high taxes on land; cost of equipment/structures; cost of feed/fertilizers/sprays; cost or lack of farm labor; and low prices for products, but they said that farming supplies are readily available.

Most farmers don't want their land zoned primarily for agriculture and most farmers have experienced land use conflicts, such as odor effecting neighbors. Most allow townspeople to use their land for various outdoor recreations, including snowmobiling and hunting.

Most respondents said that access to technical and management assistance is adequate, transportation or distance to supplies and markets is not a problem, and there have been no problems with groundwater contamination. Most of the farmers also utilize Soil Conservation Service Best Management Practices.

The Town could potentially help to guarantee the availability of farmland for future generations and maintain the current agricultural base by working with farm trusts and other organizations focused on agricultural production with purchasing farm properties and leasing them to new farmers. This would alleviate the debt load, which saddles farm operations and inhibits new farm start-ups.

Agricultural Issues and Proposed Solutions:

Residential development presents a problem to some forms of farm operations, particularly as increased demand for residential land use threatens the availability of land used for farming. Former farmland is also often overtaken due to lack of maintenance. New rural landowners often do not understand the need to fertilize land or think that grassland never needs to be re-seeded. Many former farmland areas of town have been reclaimed by forest after years without maintenance.

One proposal may be to establish an official town committee to address the status and needs of rural Fairfield (including agriculture, forestry, and open space). This committee could work on landowner education efforts, keep rural issues visible as an important aspect of Fairfield, and keep an eye on town regulations that might affect rural interests.

Can land use regulation play any role in supporting commercial agriculture? An agricultural zoning district could protect land from future development. But this concept might also cause division between protection landowner rights to use their property and a community vision that would promote certain regulation. Property taxes are seen as a problem related to *building valuation* rather than *farmland valuation* (explaining why few bother enrolling in the Farm and Open Space Tax Program). A zone in which buildings were also assessed at a lower rate if the land they were associated with was used for agricultural purposes seems to be worth exploring. A development rights purchase program could help keep productive land undeveloped and support the creation of incentives to keep new homes from being built on productive farmland that happens to be in areas allowing residential development.

The property tax burden on farms, due to the substantial land requirements to operate such a business, continues to be high. Very few landowners take advantage of the Farm and Open Space Tax Program because it offers only modest tax relief and has significant penalties for withdrawal. Some of the more significant property valuation is represented by homes, barns and farm equipment, which are not discounted in the Farm and Open Space program.

Fairfield Farmers Market:

A very positive development for Fairfield agriculture occurred with the establishment of a Fairfield Farmers Market, which has found a location on Main Street at the Church of the Nazarene parking lot. It operates mid-May to mid-June for seedlings, plants, and baked goods and mid-June to October 31 for all farm products.

The market offers a wide variety of products fresh from area farms. The market has shrubs, plants, landscape items, vegetable and flower seedlings, and baked goods in May. By late June, farmers will have a full array of fresh-farm produce that will increase in variety and volume as more and more items ripen in season. Honey, soaps, hand cream, and other farm- produced items are also available.

Over the years, the number of vendors has increased or decreased based upon the schedule of other farmers markets, the local economy, etc. It is hoped that additional local producers will join the market to increase the offerings available to residents who wish to support fresh, local food and home-made products.

Farmers markets help raise awareness within the public that local farming does occur and that fresh food with known components is worth supporting. Face-to-face communication between producer and consumer is a very powerful aspect of developing community support for local agriculture. The State also supports this notion, and has developed a "Get Real Maine" campaign to highlight local producers and markets.

The town is actively seeking a permanent home for the Farmers Market in downtown Fairfield that will provide adequate visibility and ease of access. In 2013 the town acquired several blighted properties on Main Street and plans to redevelop the area with the possibility of public parking and use by the Farmers Market.

Summary of Farming:

Farming's contributions to the local economy and preservation of the rural landscape have long gone underappreciated. Townspeople have grown apart from their agricultural heritage, yet Fairfield's commercial agriculture is a critical component of the local economy, providing not only jobs and a market for support services, but maintaining the infrastructure needed to feed the future population. Prime farmland, agricultural buildings and equipment, and the trained

and committed people who farm should be considered of equivalent economic importance to the Town's other industrial and commercial industries.

Due to national food policies that work against small-scale local farming, Fairfield's farms are on shaky financial ground. If townspeople wish to maintain an agricultural economic base and preserve its infrastructure for future availability, they must consciously care for this resource and invest in its maintenance. The need to produce food locally likely will become ever more important and Fairfield wishes to be prepared for this eventuality.

Farming as a viable enterprise must be maintained to keep the infrastructure available. Without activity, infrastructure such as land, buildings, and support services will either deteriorate or disappear. The knowledge of how to farm will also be lost. The viability of start-up agricultural efforts will be seriously eroded.

Forestry Issues:

Forest land within the state has a reasonable amount within wetland, therefore it can be difficult to conduct wetland-crossing activity when the ground is not frozen or relatively dry. While, from a pure environmental standpoint, logging should be a seasonal, rather than year-round activity, in many areas, this does not meet the economic needs of those earning a living from the woods. The market price for paper and other wood products does not cover the costs of a logger staying out of the woods when it is wet.

There are honest differences of opinion on the seriousness of soil disturbance caused by logging activity in other than clearly sensitive areas. Issues related to damage done on property by skidders can best be handled directly between landowners and logging contractors. Sample harvesting agreement language could be made available to woodlot owners at the town office. This sample language could outline expectations on issues regarding selective cutting, restoration of skid trails, and the disposition of slash. The Small Woodlot Owners Association of Maine (SWOAM) is a valuable resource for those who own woodlots. Investment in a forest management plan is recommended as the single most important step a landowner could take in both reaping maximum economic return and properly managing the natural resources in his/her backyard.

Additionally the Maine Forest Service (MFS) administers the WoodsWISE program, directed toward family forest landowners with ownerships of less than 1000 acres. District Foresters are available to walk and talk with these landowners, to get them started on a path of stewardship and responsible forest management. MFS will help landowners secure consulting services from a licensed forester. Cost-share assistance is available to help with obtaining a Forest Management Plan, prepared by consultants. When harvesting is recommended, further advice and referral to trained and certified logging companies is available.

Use of the Tree Growth Tax Program is modest, but slowly increasing. That woodlot ownership is generally more stable than farm ownership, and that woodland is often less suitable for developed uses, may explain why there is more registration in the Tree Growth Tax Program than in the Farm and Open Space Tax Program.

The Table below shows the recent history of tree growth enrollment in Fairfield. In 2013, 128 parcels of land were enrolled in the program, accounting for 8,835 acres (about 32 percent of all taxable land in town). This is close to the high point of enrollment for the six-year period. More than half of all acreage is classified as "Mixed," with 28 percent hardwood and 16 percent softwood.

TREE GROWTH TAX PROGRAM

Year	Number of Parcels	Softwood Acres	Mixed Acres	Hardwood Acres	Total Acres	Total Valuation
2008	127	1,681	4,726	2,665	9,062	$854,515
2009	127	1,681	4,726	2,665	9,062	$1,159,177
2010*	125	1,438	5,097	2,407	8,942	$1,062,093
2011	124	1,417	5,064	2,459	8,940	$1,062,150
2012	129	1,280	4,628	2,865	8,774	$1,058,748
2013**	128	1,310	4,679	2,845	8,835	$1,091,004

* One parcel of 11 acres was withdrawn with penalty of $5,835 assessed.
** One parcel of 11.4 acres was withdrawn with penalty of $1,540 assessed.
Source: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summaries, Maine Bureau of Taxation

Town Forests:

The Town owns approximately 148 acres known as the Town Farm which is managed for wood harvest and wildlife habitat. It is located in the northeast of the town close to the paper mill off route 201. The land is open to the public for recreation, including hunting, fishing, and trapping but the lack of direct access, parking and signage at the site severely limits its use.

Commercial Forestry:

Like most of Maine, Fairfield has returned to being largely forested after the massive clearing of land for farms in the 1800's. Most of the remaining cleared land is adjacent to roads, while backland has been left to become reforested.

It is estimated that around twenty Fairfield residents make their primary living from logging; this does not include employment at Fairfield's other forestry-based industries such as Hammond Lumber, nor at other regional wood products employers such as Plum Creek or the paper mills. Collectively, of course, the forest product industry employs a large number of workers in Fairfield as is true elsewhere in most of Maine.

Commercial forest land in Fairfield appears to be under a fair bit of pressure. Between 2006 and 2010, the Maine Forest Service had received 121 notices to harvest 2,481 acres of timber from Fairfield woodlot owners. Tellingly, for 71 of these acres, the owners planned to convert the land after harvest. This phenomenon can be attributed partly to the economic conditions that provided large economic incentive for forest land owners to convert to other uses as well as the increased market prices for both softwood and hardwood. Since the recent recession, there has been a noticeable drop off in this change (only one acre changed in 2010), but the town must consider the potential future losses of forest and the forest products industry to residential and commercial development as the economy changes.

Sappi Paper also contributes to the stability of Fairfield's commercial forest. The Sappi mill owns 852 acres of forest extending from the Hinckley Bridge west to Route 104 and north to the Skowhegan line. Sappi has owned this company since 1996 when it was bought from S.D Warren (Scott Company), which had owned this piece of property since the early 1970s and has not harvested any wood since. The company also assists woodlot owners in town through their Land Owner Assistance Forester and the Tree Farm Program based at the Timberlands Office in Fairfield. The Tree Farm Program includes timber management assistance, buying, harvesting, and brokering.

Summary of Timber Harvest Information

YEAR	Selection harvest, acres	Shelterwood harvest, acres	Clearcut harvest, acres	Total harvest, acres	Change of land use, acres	Number of active notifications
2008	365	130	0	495	24	23
2009	620	2	0	622	15	22
2010	436	0	6	442	1	21
2011	567	0	0	567	2.5	22
2012	340	130	0	470	83.8	22

Data compiled from Confidential Year-End Landowner Reports to Maine Forest Service.

Fairfield's Rural-Urban Balance:

According to the 2010 Census, 43 percent of Fairfield's population lives in its urban area. Considering that the urban area encompasses around five percent of Fairfield's geography, which does not seem out of line, but a snapshot does not show the whole picture. Over the past 40 years, while the population of Fairfield has grown slowly but steadily, the population of its urban area has dropped. The table below shows a loss of over 600 people from the urban compact, while the town as a whole gained almost 1,050. This rate has evened out over the last 20 years but the change is still an indicator of the pattern.

Urban-Rural Shift: 1970-2010

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Urban Population -- number	3,560	3,169	2,852	3,034	2,923
-- percent	63%	52%	42%	46%	43%
Rural Population -- number	2,124	2,944	3,911	3,539	3,812
-- percent	37%	48%	58%	54%	57%

Source: U.S. Census

Clearly, sometime in the 1980's the balance of population shifted west of the Interstate highway, and with it shifted the balance of housing.

This shift has implications for our economy and for our ability to deliver public services. Demand for housing in rural areas strains the ability to support a farm and forest economy. The town is also losing, to a smaller extent, the village economy. Cheaper and more accessible rural land is drawing development to the rural area, leading to more strip development and greater dependence on the automobile. A rural population and dependence on automobiles place additional burdens on downtown businesses, requiring parking spaces for every customer.

The impact on public services is obvious. The town office, police station, fire station, community center, library, schools, and other public facilities are all located in the urban area of town. While their location makes sense, in that it serves the highest concentration of people, the shift to rural areas places a definite priority in finding ways to deliver services to the *majority* of the population. All of this creates strain on the other major public facility, and the one with the greatest public investment, the transportation system. The further people move from the centers of commerce and activity, the more miles they put on public roads. This explains why

in Fairfield, traffic on our rural roads is growing by two percent per year, which is significant. (A sustained two percent growth rate means that traffic will double in less than 30 years.)

Public sewer and water service is also affected. As growth is broadly dispersed throughout rural Fairfield, the water and sewer lines have not been extended. This makes sense in the short term, as housing is too widely distributed to justify the extension of expensive utilities. But as the density of housing continues to slowly increase in formerly rural areas, a point will be reached where utility extensions are not only feasible but necessary, and the expense must be paid by the townspeople. In the meantime, these homeowners have invested in individual wells and septic systems, and continue to put pressure on groundwater reserves. Additionally, sewer rates are largely driven by the number of ratepayers and the size of the infrastructure. The loss of population in the urban compact during the past several decades has gradually increased the relative cost per household to pay for sewer. The least expensive cost sharing arrangement is a relatively large number of ratepayers sharing the cost of a system in a relatively small geography. If current trends continue, the system may become much more distributed relative the number of ratepayers, which would result in higher sewer rates.

Open Space:

The growth in housing in the rural area, while significant, has been largely limited to road frontage and diminished by the sheer size of the town itself. If we assume an average of one acre per home, the total area of rural Fairfield devoted to housing would amount to a little over two square miles, out of a total rural area of 52 square miles.

Undeveloped Land Acreage	
Tree Growth	8,940
Farm & Open Space	3,795
Maine Academy of Natural Science (Good Will-Hinckley)	2,700
Kennebec Valley Community College	600
SAPPI - Industrial	852
Town Farm	148

The above table lists the major portion of undeveloped land in Fairfield. It does not include several tracts of forest or farmland, but does indicate a general pattern (see *Existing Land Use Map*). Together, Tree Growth and Farm/Open Space account for 75 percent of the rural land base. Good Will-Hinckley accounts for another 20 percent.

Maine Academy of Natural Sciences and the Town Farm have at least some deed-restrictions to preserve their undeveloped nature, and so they are more or less permanently undeveloped. Tree Growth and Farm/Open Space land is preserved by tax policy, and could be developed if tax policy or development values change significantly. As seen on the map, the combination of these tracts produces a very solid block of protected open space north of Shawmut and west of Holway Corner. The only significant inroads into this undeveloped area are along Route 139 and Martin Stream Road.

Subdivision Development:

New subdivisions tend to reflect patterns in development. Subdivisions are regulated in Fairfield by ordinance, so we have a good record of their size and location. The table on this page provides information on subdivisions since 2000. This is not, however, the total story on development patterns in Fairfield.

Residential Subdivisions since 2000

Year	Name	Location	Number of lots	Zoning
2003	Mildred Mushero	Map 36, Lot 10	3	Residential
2005	Sunrise Estates	Map 2A, Lot 7	17	Residential
2006	Faith's Way Sub.	Map 7, Lot 2A	3	Rural Residential
2010	Meadow View Estates	Map 7, Lot 38	6	Rural Residential
2010	Cottage Estates	Map 23, Lot 87	6	Urban Residential
2012	Gerald Senior Res.	Map 18, Lot 138	28	Main Street
2013	Fox Den Subdivision	Map 14, Lot 23A	2	Rural
2014	Koon's Subdivision	Map 2, Lot 10	2	Rural Residential
2014	Lighthouse Apartments	Map 36, Lot 12-1	3	Industrial

Land Use Districts:

Rural District (RU)

The purpose of the Rural District is to provide for a healthy agriculture, forest, and resource base for the town, while accommodating low density residential habitation and appropriate economic opportunity. Development activities in the district are intended to provide an outlet for local resources, and housing, employment, and service opportunities for residents of the District.

Residential District (R)

The purpose of the Residential District is to provide a substantial portion to the town devoted to accommodate medium-density residential development based on the potential for public water and sewer, as well as associated commercial development on collector roads.

Rural Residential District (RR)

The purpose of the Rural Residential District is to provide an area of prime development land suitable for low-density residential development. Commercial development in the area will be accommodated because of available land, but should be limited to that which will not impact the need for public facilities, the development capability of the land, or suitability of neighboring properties for residential use.

Urban Residential District (UR)

The purpose of the Urban Residential District is to preserve the quality and integrity of the town's older residential neighborhoods and permit higher-density housing in the area closest to the town's public facilities and services, and within walking distance of its principle commercial area.

Village District (V)

The purpose of the Village District is to promote small-scale, mixed-use development characteristic of the town's three existing village neighborhoods. A healthy mix of locally-oriented commercial development and medium-density housing (or high-density where public water and sewer are available) is encouraged.

Main Street District (MS)

The purpose of the Main Street District is to promote commercial development of a density and location to serve local residence in the most central location and with efficient delivery of public services. The Main Street District should be considered a variation of the Commercial District, with flexible standards suited to the highly-developed, small-lot and mixed use character of the

Town's existing downtown blocks. Infill and redevelopment to preserve the viability of the downtown is to be encouraged.

Commercial District (C)

The purpose of the Commercial District is to provide a generous public facility and land base on which to build on regional economic development opportunities. This district provides the necessary encouragements for locations of all forms of commercial and industrial development oriented to broadly based employment and services, including proximity to the Interstate and public water and sewer service.

Industrial District (I)

The Industrial District is a specialized commercial district intended to provide for a variety of employment uses without adverse effect on adjacent neighborhoods and with an attractive industrial environment including access to arterials roads and public water and sewer systems.

District Dimensional Standards:

STANDARD:	MS	I	C	V	UR	R	RR	RU
Lot area, Principle Structure	5,000	none	none	20,000	7,500	30,000	80,000	varies*
Lot area, add per add'l dwelling unit or principle struc. allowed	1,200 (5)	none	none	10,000 (1)	5,000	20,000 (2)	40,000	Not Allowed
Lot coverage, maximum	none	25%	25%	25%	25%	10%	10%	10%
Street frontage	50'	150' (3)	150' (3)	100'	75'	150' (3)	200'	250'
Front setback	15'***	25'	25'	15'	15'	25'	50'	50'
Side & Rear Setback	5'***	50'** (4)	10'**	10'	10'	10'	20'	20'
Building Height, maximum	75'	85'	75'	35'	35'	35'	35'	35'

* Flexible Standard, see Land Use Ordinance Section 7.10.a
** Additional buffer area required; See Section 7.3
*** "or the average of the adjacent properties from Gerald Terrace north to the train trestle on both sides".
(1) - limited to six dwelling units per building
(2) - May be reduced to 10,000 sf per unit if public sewer is available
(3) - May be reduced to 75' if public sewer is available
(4) - 25' set back within Industrial property abutting an Industrial property
(5) - Except apartments above the ground level commercial spaces shall be exempt from the lot area req. of 1,200sf per dwelling unit; each individual apartment shall contain not less than 400sf of habitable space

Part Six – Business and the Economy

Highlights of the Economic Profile:

- The town of Fairfield is a well-recognized employment center for southern Somerset and northern Kennebec Counties. Over three-quarters of Fairfield's workers commute to out-of-town jobs, while some 2,500 non-residents commute into town. Only about 13 percent of the jobs in the labor market area are in Fairfield.

- In 2010, Fairfield had a labor force of 3,478 workers, with about 51:49 men to women ratio. It averages out to 1.26 workers per household.

- Fairfield's unemployment rate during most of the 2000's averaged around six percent. The rate grew to a high of 8.8 percent during the national recession in 2008-2009, but has been slowly dropping back since then, standing at about 7.1 percent in 2013.

- Fairfield has a diverse mix of commercial and industrial employers, with Huhtamaki Packaging being the largest. Health care and education industries are the town's largest employers. Almost 85 percent of workers are in the private sector, either self-employed (8.8 percent) or working for wages (75.5 percent). 15.7 percent work in the public sector.

- Recently the installation of the natural gas pipeline has been a big development that has the potential to help the local economy with lower energy costs.

Introduction:

Fairfield has always been a dynamic town with regard to economic development, particularly in the industrial sector. The Historic Profile outlines the active role that community leaders and citizens in general have played in purposefully attracting employment and tax base to Fairfield throughout its history. These efforts continue to this day, as the Town must try to keep up with shifts in economic activity that has shifted from manufacturing and agriculture to a more service-oriented economy, as well as changes in retail consumption patterns.

This chapter seeks to describe current conditions, outline Fairfield's role in the regional economy, identify the town's numerous economic development assets, examine visible trends and areas of need, incorporate public sentiment and lay out a direction and strategy to guide the Town's economic development efforts for the foreseeable future.

Fairfield's Role as Regional Employment Center:

Fairfield is a major source of labor for the region, with an estimated 3,206 townspeople working. As one can see from the table below, nearly a quarter of Fairfield workers hold jobs in town, and a substantial portion of workers from Benton and Clinton also work in Fairfield. Almost 300 people who work in Fairfield come from Waterville and nearly as many come from Skowhegan.

FAIRFIELD'S ROLE AS A REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT CENTER

Town of Residence	Employed Workers in 2010	Working in Fairfield in 2010	Percent Employed in Fairfield	2010 Unemployment Rate
Fairfield	3206	727	22.7%	8.8 %
Benton	1266	170	13.4%	8.8%
Smithfield	458	41	9.0%	9.8%
Norridgewock	1468	63	4.3%	10.2%
Burnham	526	19	3.6%	11.9%
Clinton	1519	153	10.1%	10.3%
Oakland	3172	111	3.5%	8.0%
Winslow	3731	177	4.7%	7.5%
Canaan	853	64	7.5%	11.1%
Skowhegan	3649	265	7.3%	10.0%
Albion	961	60	6.2%	8.4%
Pittsfield	1838	68	3.7%	11.7%
Waterville	6978	297	4.3%	8.4%

SOURCE: 2010 Civilian Labor Force Estimates,"; (Maine Department of Labor), 2010 U.S. Census

The other 77 percent of Fairfield's residents commute primarily to work in the communities listed in the table above. In particular, over a third commute to Waterville and ten percent commute to Augusta. The average commute took 19.3 minutes in 2010, but had increased to 20.9 minutes in 2010, suggesting that lower percentages of residents may work in Fairfield now, or that commuting distances have steadily increased as new employment opportunities are created throughout the region.

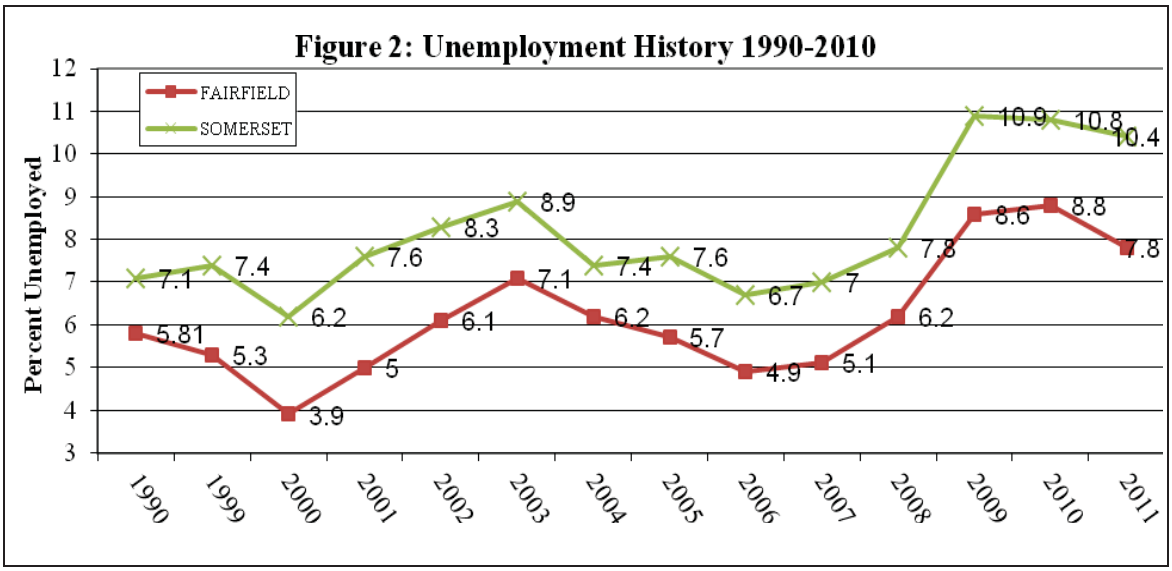
SIGNIFICANT WORKPLACES OF FAIRFIELD WORKERS IN 2010	
Place of Employment	**Number of Fairfield Workers**
Fairfield	727
Waterville	1104
Augusta	311
Winslow	130
Skowhegan	119
Benton	95
Oakland	90
Employing 30-50: Norridgewock, Clinton and Pittsfield.	
SOURCE: 2010 U.S. Census	

Fairfield is part of the Waterville Micropolitan Labor Market Area (LMA), which is how most Department of Labor (DOL) statistics are organized. Waterville Micropolitan LMA currently encompasses eight towns and cities, including Albion, Benton, Clinton, Fairfield, Oakland, Unity Township, Waterville and Winslow, though boundaries change every ten years. The total labor force in the LMA, as of 2012, was 22,760, with Fairfield comprising about 15 percent of the workers and 13 percent of the jobs. With Fairfield providing a fair share of employment in the LMA, it is not surprising that the unemployment rate for the town and LMA are about the same (preliminary for 2012: 7.7% workers and 7.8% of the jobs).

Local Labor Force and Employment

In 2010, Fairfield had a labor force of 3,478, according to the census. Census numbers are based on a statistical estimate; Department of Labor numbers are considered more accurate and its estimate for 2010 was 3,516. The census provided that the labor force contains an estimated 1,786 males and 1,689 females. That is 68 percent of all working-age males and 62 percent of all working-age females. (The census defines "working-age" as everyone over 16 years of age, regardless of whether they are retired.) That is an average of 1.26 workers for every household. In 87 percent of households with children, both parents worked.

The recent history of the unemployment rate in Fairfield and in Somerset County is illustrated in the graph below. Both lines follow the statewide and, indeed, national trends in the economy. The recession beginning in 2008 interrupted what was a positive trend. Fairfield's unemployment rate has been significantly below that of Somerset County through the recent past. Fairfield's unemployment rate shot up to 8.8 percent in 2010, but slid back to 7.8 percent in 2011 (preliminary 8 percent in 2012).



The census categorizes workers by the type of industry they work in (table at right) and their occupation (table overleaf). "Industry" refers to the type of business they are employed in, and is a good measure of the strength of various industrial sectors. "Occupation" refers to the type of job a worker does, and may indicate trends in education, salary levels, and opportunities for future growth.

A diversity of employment opportunities available to area residents is very healthy for the community. In 2010, employment in the education and health care industries led the way; three other sectors – construction, retail, and other services – were the next largest groups. This is quite consistent with national trends, where manufacturing has been on the decline, while any form of service-based economy is on the rise. With KVCC, large local schools, and hospitals in the area, an increasing number of jobs in education and health-related occupations are likely to remain available.

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF FAIRFIELD WORKERS IN 2010		
Industrial Sector	**Number of Workers**	**Percent of Workforce**
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	11	0.3
Construction	359	11.2
Manufacturing	257	8.0
Transportation	157	4.9
Wholesale trade	132	4.1
Retail trade	308	9.6
Information Services	8	0.2
Insurance, real estate and other finance	116	3.6
Professional, scientific, management service	165	5.1
Education and health care	1,075	33.5
Entertainment and recreation services	157	4.9
Other services	297	9.3
Public Administration	163	5.1
Source: American Community Survey (2006-10)		

Over one-third of Fairfield's workers are in a management or professional occupation. These tend to be among the highest salaried areas of employment. It would be nice to determine which of these occupational categories is changing over time, but the census bureau shuffles them every few years to account for new occupations arising.

Among Fairfield workers, 75.5 percent are employed in the private sector as wage or salary workers, and another 8.8 percent are self-employed. A healthy 15.7 percent work in the public sector.

OCCUPATION OF FAIRFIELD WORKERS IN 2010		
OCCUPATION	**Number of Workers**	**Percent of Workforce**
Managerial and Professional	1,216	37.9%
Sales and Administrative	758	23.7%
Service Occupations	523	16.3%
Natural Resources or Construction	377	11.8%
Production, Transportation	331	10.3%
Source: American Community Survey (2006-10)		

Local Business:

The town maintains a directory of over 200 Fairfield businesses, but keeping that information up-to-date has been challenging. Much of the data available is limited to the business name, mailing address, phone number, and contact person. It would be helpful to understanding the local economy to collect some additional information, such as the nature of the business (included in some cases now), number of employees, and perhaps any business needs or concerns (e.g. trained labor, access to markets, room for expansion, environmental permitting, etc.). The Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce conducts a Business Visitation Program and some of this information is gathered, but there is no central repository. Additionally, many self-employed people are not listed in the town's directory, so the actual number of businesses in town is probably between 250 and 300.

The largest private employer is the Huhtamaki Manufacturing Company (formerly Keyes Fibre), which lies in both Fairfield and Waterville on the town line. Huhtamaki had 500 employees as of 2014, and after some lean times, has good prospects for the immediate future. The company manufactures molded paper products for food packaging.

Other significant employers include Sheridan Corporation, Central Maine Power, the Apple Farm, James D Julia Auctioneers, Mainely Trusses, LN Voilette Builders, Hillman's Bakery, Plum Creek, Hammond Tractor, Pike Industries, Hammond Lumber, Johnny's Selected Seeds, Kennebec Valley Community College, MSAD 49 (administrative offices, high school, junior high, and primary school), and the Town of Fairfield.

The greatest concentration of commercial activity, primarily retail and professional, is within downtown Fairfield, with several commercial blocks, mini-malls, and many single business locations. Anchor businesses include a grocery store, a pharmacy, and multiple places to eat. Most of the remaining retail is scattered throughout town, with a minor concentration at Fairfield Center. Both Routes 201 and 139 are primary commercial corridors, connecting points north and south with Interstate 95 and access east of the Kennebec River.

There are two interstate highway interchanges located in Fairfield. The interchange with Route 201 (northern) is flanked by the Teague Business Park and former Wickes Lumber, several light industrial and service facilities, and a Maine DOT facility. It is also well known as an "antiques corridor" with several large antique stores and auctioneers that are a destination for many visitors. It would seem to have a lot more potential for development, particularly with the extension of municipal sewer and gas lines north of the interchange. Nevertheless, the more developed interchange is located at Western Avenue (southern), with a major truck stop, KVCC, CMP, Hammond Tractor, some warehouses, and a developing business park. An industrial park is also proposed for an area within half a mile of this intersection.

Local Opportunities:

The town's economy continues to evolve and future opportunities will likely be centered on growing smaller value-added enterprises that export goods and services from the region. The local mills (SAPPI and Huhtamaki) are doing well, and their transition to natural gas in 2014 should allow them to continue being competitive into the future. However, although some new jobs may be created, the number of jobs in these industries likely will not recover, as technology and innovation continue to improve productivity. Therefore, opportunities for more significant growth may include agriculture, wood products, precision machining, and other similar industries. It is also expected that more people will work from home, taking advantage of high-speed internet connections and new technology. As demographic trends suggest, the number of jobs in the education sector may subside or remain stable, but those in the healthcare sector are expected to increase significantly as the baby boomer generation ages.

Industrial Sector Analysis:

As outlined in the History section of this Plan, Fairfield, like most colonial towns, grew up around a river-powered industrial center of town surrounded by farm and forestland. Over the years, the industrial base has continued to decline, Fairfield has turned increasingly to retail trade and to service businesses as the town became one of the "bedroom" communities of the region. The proximity of the Village to I-95 (which reached Fairfield in 1960) and its position on Routes 201 and 139 has maintained this area's competitive advantage in transportation.

The largest industrial operations in the immediate area are the Huhtamaki plant in Fairfield and Waterville, which produces molded paper products used for food packaging, and the SAPPI plant in Skowhegan, which produces high quality paper used in magazines and the like. Other industrial enterprises include Mainely Trusses, Sheridan Corporation, and several small companies specializing in machining, milling, etc.

The town's larger industrial enterprises have remained strong, but the number of mill employees has been on the decline for decades. Since the 1996 plan, Huhtamaki has decreased its workforce by nearly 40 percent. Other mill closures in the region have also had an impact on Fairfield. However, there has been growth and increasing diversity of businesses in the industrial sector as a whole. Smaller companies have been created or have grown in the past few decades and this trend is likely to continue.

Service Sector Analysis:

A number of Fairfield businesses provide critical services to people in the region. Education, accounting, engineering, legal services, computer support and repair, construction, veterinary services, animal boarding, chiropractic care, banking, insurance, surveying, investment counseling, hair and beauty salons, and health and fitness services are all available in Fairfield. The town's service sector has been gradually increasing during the past decades and many of

these services are provided by home-based businesses. The number of banks in town has decreased to two, Skowhegan Savings and TD Bank, and the number of attorneys practicing from Fairfield offices has also declined as none are presently known about. The town has seen growth in the health industry with the presence of the Maine Center for Integrated Rehab, Kennebec Valley Dental Arts, and Dartmouth Family Practice. However, Maine General recently announced major renovations at its Thayer Campus in Waterville that will result in several practices moving to that location, including Dartmouth. Hometown Veterinary Care and Anytime Fitness are also relatively new businesses for Fairfield, having located in the West Ridge development on Western Avenue.

Retail Sector Analysis:

In an effort to make the downtown area more appealing, for the past several decades the town has pursued initiatives to extensively repair and beautify the downtown area. CDBG grants have aided the town with a variety of projects, the most recent being a Façade Improvement Program managed since 2011. The retail sector in the downtown area has been in decline for many years, but there has been some recent investments made and the town is hoping it has turned a corner. The former Northern Mattress property has been converted into a 28-unit residence for seniors, and maintains a retail space with a new specialty food and drink store now opened. A new restaurant is also set to open right downtown and there is a new gym open on that same block of old downtown buildings.Toward the southern end of Main Street, a large retail strip mall has been built adjacent to the Village Market, and the Family Dollar has located there. Beside that development, a building has been rehabilitated and converted into a multi-unit retail location which currently includes a dance studio and convenience store/bottle redemption. At the northern end of the downtown area, Irving operates a full-service convenience store and gas station that was built after the former Jim's Variety was shuttered in the late 2000's. Across the street the town has acquired several blighted properties and has cleared the lot and develop an area for parking, green space, and a possible foot bridge to Mill Island Park.

Economic Development Strategy:

With a commitment to pursuing a sound economic development strategy, Fairfield should be able to improve its economic position. The municipal government assumes an active role in planning for economic and community development. In 2009 a Council-appointed Commission developed a Strategic Plan that outlines the immediate priorities and goals of the Town's Economic & Community Development Program. These include:

1. Creating a Vibrant Downtown and Inviting Waterfront
2. Preserving Rural Villages, Open Space, and Recreational Opportunity
3. Promoting Commercial and Industrial Development
4. Expanding Educational and Cultural Opportunities

Implementation of the Strategic Plan is guided by the Economic/Community Development Advisory Committee, which is an appointed group of six, but all residents are welcome to attend and participate in meetings.

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to create a process whereby the citizens of Fairfield may play a role in determining their vision and goals for Economic and Community Development and the associated strategies and objectives to achieve them. This is intended to be a continually evolving and living document, which emphasizes the process as much as the product. This document was intended to be a short-term project that focuses on implementation strategies, action plans, and the necessary metrics to measure success.

Assisting Businesses:

The Town of Fairfield provides assistance for Economic Development through several local programs, and partners with other resources/agencies to assist businesses with their needs. There are many resources for new or established businesses and developers from the State level down to the local level. These resources include technical assistance, developing a business plan, searching for financial assistance, or finding answers to general questions. The Town of Fairfield partners with the following organizations:

Central Maine Growth Council

- Site location, technical assistance

The Central Maine Growth Council is a non-profit, public/private partnership Development Corporation, dedicated to collaborative economic development within Central Maine.

Kennebec Valley Council of Governments

- Business development assistance, technical assistance, financing

Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG) is a municipal services corporation owned and operated by and for the benefit of its members. KVCOG is home to several partners including:

- Maine Small Business Development Center
- Maine Department of Economic and Community Development
- Maine Manufacturers Extension Partnership
- Maine Procurement Technical Assistance Center

Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce

- Marketing, promotion, business advocacy

The Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit business association that promotes member businesses and our community's economic growth and development.

Somerset Economic Development Corporation

- Technical assistance, financing, site location

Somerset Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) is a non-profit economic development organization tasked with implementing the comprehensive economic development strategy for Somerset County.

Town Programs

The Town of Fairfield is also a resource for current and prospective businesses and developers. The town provides documents as a quick guide to help local business development:

- Guide to Doing Business in Fairfield
- Business Assistance Programs and Resources

The town also tries to offer financial assistance with the following programs available to qualified businesses and developers:

- Tax Increment Financing
- Grant/Loan programs
- Pine Tree Development Zones (State Program)

Other areas of interest related to economic development include Planning, Land Use and Zoning, Trails, Parks, and Recreation, Promoting Workforce Development, Supporting Community Events and Activities and Senior and Low-Income Housing.

Downtown Revitalization Plan:

The town commissioned a Downtown Revitalization Plan which was completed in January 2002.

This plan analyzed the physical form of the downtown with the recommendation for public improvements and how best to utilize downtown space.

It also had recommendations for a revitalization strategy that has progressed only modestly since its inception. Some of the following recommendations may be out-of-date or unrealistic, but others are just as valid as they were at that time:

Organizational Recommendations:

1. Downtown Organization - The long-term success of Downtown depends on developing a viable Downtown organization that can initiate activities, promote Downtown, and be a spokesperson for Downtown interests. This organization should include Downtown business and property owners, as well as representatives of the broader community. The new state Maine Street Center provides a good model for the structure of such an organization. This type of organization could be charged with implementing the Revitalization Strategy in conjunction with the Town of Fairfield's Economic Development Committee.

2. Work Plan for the Downtown - Once the downtown organization is created, Town staff should work with the group to develop a meaningful work plan for the organization that spells out the activities it will undertake over the next 12 months. The work plan should address the areas of organization, marketing and promotion, design, and economic revitalization.

Design Recommendations:

1. Main Street Parking Management Program - The Town and Downtown organization should develop a program to maximize the availability of on-street parking for customer use. This program should include an informational campaign to discourage Downtown business people and employees from using these spaces, increased enforcement of parking regulations, and efforts to allow people to back out of the diagonal parking spaces during busy periods.

2. Public Improvement Program - The Town and Downtown organization should undertake a program to improve the appearance and attractiveness of Downtown. This could include a streetscape improvement program to install and upgrade streetlights in the business district as well as working with property owners on downtown building improvements. A detailed streetscape improvement plan is needed.

Specific elements should include:

- sidewalk enhancements to improve physical connections
- installing and upgrade of pedestrian-scale lighting
- developing a gateway and directional signage program
- installing streetscape amenities such as benches, planters. and street trees
- relocation of overhead utility lines

3. Municipal Parking Lot Improvements - The Town should undertake a comprehensive program to improve the usability and safety of the municipal parking lot along the riverfront. A detailed survey and redesign is needed. This could include improved lighting, better pedestrian access, relocation of the long-term commuter parking, and the provision of a permanent site/facility for the farmers market.

4. Pedestrian Way to Main Street - The Town should improve the attractiveness of the pedestrian way from the municipal parking lot to Main Street to encourage customers and employees to use the parking lot. A detailed redesign is needed.

Specific elements include:

- ornamental tree pruning, removal, and replacement
- replacement and upgrade of pedestrian-scale lighting
- compliance of ramps to ADA guidelines and installation of handrails

5. Rear Building Entrances/Facade Improvements - The Town should encourage the improvement of the rear building area by the owners by providing an architectural assistance program. Specific elements to be considered include:

- possible rear entrances for some stores
- signage identification
- pedestrian lighting and wall mounted fixtures
- display windows
- screened dumpsters with enclosures
- rear paved area upgrade to define delivery and pedestrian areas

6. Riverside Area Redevelopment - The Town should develop a riverfront master plan for a proposed riverside park and trail. A detailed design is needed. Specific elements include:

- riverside trail with pedestrian scale lighting
- a riverside park with restroom facilities
- a place for the farmers market structure

7. Lawrence Avenue Redevelopment - The Town, in cooperation with private property owners, should encourage and guide development along both sides of this street in the downtown. Further architectural/urban design/land development services from professionals may be appropriated. Specific elements and options include:

- sidewalk enhancements
- pedestrian-scale street lighting
- infill building redevelopment along both sides of the street
- relocation of the town hall and a new town common

8. Design Standards/Urban Form - The town should consider simple design standards for public/private construction in the fringe areas; this should include Main Street, north and south, and Lawrence Avenue. The purpose of the design guidelines would be to assure that any new development blends with the downtown from both a site design and architectural perspective. Recent development is spreading out the downtown/commercial district and is taking on a more highway commercial design versus the design of traditional downtown

buildings. The town should review its codes to decide if they want this spreading to continue and in what form. The key will be to understand what uses are appropriate south of the Post Office and what design standards should apply in these adjacent areas. A planner/landscape architect/urban designer could be commissioned to develop the guidelines.

Promotion and Marketing Recommendations:

1. Buy Local Program - A major focus of promotion and marketing efforts should be on a campaign to urge residents of the Convenience Goods Trade Area to make more of their everyday purchases at local businesses. This effort should include a directory of local convenience businesses, information about the importance of these businesses to the community, and a media campaign urging residents of the Convenience Goods Trade Area to increase the percentage of the day-to-day shopping they do in Fairfield. The media campaign should emphasize the advantages to the customer and the community of shopping in Fairfield: convenience, service, provides local jobs, pays local taxes etc.

2. Coordinated Advertising Campaign - The Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee (ECDAC) should develop a coordinated advertising program to promote downtown Fairfield as a comparison goods shopping destination. This effort should attempt to involve all or most comparison goods retailers and other businesses in a periodic joint advertising program that focuses on the downtown business district rather than individual businesses.

3. Cross Shopping Program -The Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee could develop a cross shopping program that provides customers with discounts at downtown stores if they make a purchase in another store. This then gives those customers who come to Fairfield to patronize a specific business an incentive to explore what else is available.

Economic Revitalization Recommendations:

1. Care Convenience Stores - The Town and the Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee should actively work to find appropriate locations for key convenience goods stores to relocate or expand in Downtown Fairfield. This effort should be designed to assure that the convenience goods role is maintained by retaining a critical mass of these retailers including groceries, drug stores, hardware, and banking.

2. Home Goods Business Recruitment Program - The Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee should undertake a business recruitment program to attract businesses to Fairfield to strengthen the home goods cluster. This program should include the following activities:

The community should develop a marketing package that provides a potential business with detailed information about the downtown trade area, existing businesses, and available space and rental rates.

The organization should develop and periodically update a potential contact list.

This list should include:

- Home goods businesses located in other central Maine locations that would be appropriate for downtown.
- Small, emerging businesses that are ready to move into a commercial location.
- Regional businesses that may be interested in opening a branch location in Fairfield.

Representatives of the Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee should personally contact the businesses on the list. Ideally, this would be a one-on-one contact by a member of the organization. The objective of this contact should be to make the business owner aware of why Downtown Fairfield could be a good location for his or her business.

The Economic and Community Development organization should establish a program of follow-up contacts on a periodic basis with any business that indicates any interest in Downtown Fairfield. This is important since business relocations are often driven by external forces such as lease expiration, expansion, sale of a building, etc. It is therefore important to maintain ongoing contact with potential prospects.

The organization and Town staff should also be able to provide minor assistance to businesses that express an interest in downtown. This should include making contacts with real estate people, helping them understand permit requirements, etc.

3. Outdoor Recreation Center - The Town, in conjunction with the Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee and local businesses, should promote the outdoor recreational activities provided by the Kennebec River. While a major focus of this effort should be on fishing, all recreational aspects of the river should be addressed.

Several of the aforementioned programs or efforts have been pursued since the 2002 Downtown Plan was originally commissioned. However, much work remains and certain aspects of this plan were never adopted by the Town. It is recognized that after more than a dozen years a new and updated plan is required. There have been significant changes during the past decade, from the establishment of a Downtown Redevelopment and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, to the construction and renovation of several properties, to the removal of others in an effort to eliminate blight. The former plan envisioned the recreation of a dense commercial core of the size it had been in the early 20th century. Current thinking has changed, and a more realistic goal may be to create a low-density, pedestrian-oriented and welcoming area that will attract people to eat, shop, and play.

Public Attitudes

Using the Public Participation process Fairfield citizens wish to go through with economic development to achieve the following:

- More manufacturing
- Identify & promote anchor businesses
- Promote agricultural growth
- Micro businesses (home-based)
- Help provide financing
- Small commercial businesses spread throughout the town
- Creating more local jobs
- Focus on Downtown Improvement

Economic Development Assets

The commission determined that it is a combination of places and attributes that contribute to the overall quality of life in the community. Quality places centered on the concept of rural villages with unique characteristics and lots of open space, a vibrant downtown valued as the core of economic, social, and political activities, and a treasured waterfront that promotes the economy, recreation, and general quality of life. Certain community attributes addressed include Fairfield being a place of great opportunity for attractive small town life, with a rich history, and also having some economic opportunities. Contributing to the accomplishment of this vision is the notion that much improvement is influenced through planned development.

Other assets of the town were also identified in several categories:

Natural

Kennebec River, Martin Stream, Fish Brook, Messalonskee Stream, Water Access, Fisheries, Wildlife, Farms, Four Seasons, Scenic Beauty, Land, Open Space, Terrain, Rolling Hills, Forests, Wetlands

Built

Boat Ramps (3), Variety of Trails (ITS-Snowmobile, ATV, Pedestrian, Rural/Urban), I-95 and exits (2), Route 201, Kennebec Bridges (2), Railroad (no siding), Downtown, Villages (4), Architecturally Distinct Buildings (Residential/Commercial), Commercial Land/Buildings, Electric Power/Utility Distribution, Teague Park, Library, Grange, Community Center, Schools (Public/GWH/KVCC/Montessori), Parks (2), Playgrounds, Playing/Sports Fields

Social

Churches (9+), Social Clubs (10+), Community Center, All School Clubs, School Athletics (Big game nights), PAL, Town Meeting/Government, Town Committees

Economic

Local Government, Large Employers (ex. Sheridan, KVCC, GWH, Hammond Tractor, etc.), Small Business/Employers, 201 Antiques Corridor, Available Water & Wind Power, Workforce (skilled, trained, literate, flexible, strong work ethic), Housing Stock, Available Commercial Real Estate, Agriculture, Farmers Market, Plum Creek, Local Access TV

Cultural

Williamson Center, LC Bates Museum, Moody Chapel, History House, Library, Historic Downtown, Funeral Home, Old Gerald Hotel, Mill Island Park/Heritage, Park/Gazebo, Summer Concerts,

Community

SAD 49, KVCC, Maine Academy of Natural Sciences, Montessori, Public Safety and Municipal Services, Child and Day Care Centers, Health Services, Klearview, MCI Rehab, Senior Services, Nursing Homes, Assisted Living, Senior Housing, Pedestrian Access, Homecoming Weekend, Community Dinners, Fairfield Days Festival, Chocolate Festival, Senior BBQ, Farmers Market

Characteristics of Desirable Fairfield Business

The following characteristics, identified as desirable in Fairfield businesses, should guide the use of community resources in recruiting and/or supporting new or expanded business ventures.

Examples:

- Adds diversity to employment/product base
- Has potential for steady growth and permanence
- Is in a location community favors for that type of activity
- Is visually compatible with the community
- Contributes to community through personnel and financial involvement
- Makes a positive contribution to the tax base and does not overload community services
- Is environmentally friendly
- Offers full-time pay with benefits
- Locally-owned and committed to hiring Fairfield residents

Economic Development Strategy Ideas

The following strategies have been suggested for improving Fairfield's economic health. (Taken from the 2009 Strategic Plan):

Goal #1: Developing a Vibrant Downtown and Inviting Waterfront

Redevelopment and Restructuring

1. Establish a Downtown and Riverfront Development Plan that provides long-term land use goals of specific properties and areas along the riverfront and in the downtown. The plan should address preservation and conservation, including habitat protection, of areas along the riverfront and the creation of future green space to retain/complement its quality of place. It should also reflect the community's desire to expand both riverfront green space and downtown commercial activities.

2. Create a Downtown Building Inventory of all buildings in the core downtown area to determine condition, location, uses, occupancy, features such as elevator access, etc. The inventory should list for what use upper-level space may currently be used, and what needs to be done to expand/diversify future uses (Office, retail, housing, etc.).

3. Create a Redevelopment Property Portfolio of buildings/properties, including those to be redeveloped and/or are for sale. Portfolio data should include the current owner, asking price, general condition, age of building, location, size, features, available redevelopment incentives, etc.

4. Create a Property Acquisition Program that outlines sources of internal funding and external grants to acquire land in pursuit of development goals. The program should address several scenarios, including:

a. Building/land to be razed and converted to municipal-owned green space

b. Building/land to be razed and resold for commercial development

c. Building/land to be razed and used for housing development

Design & Façade Improvements

1. Review and create an inventory of current building designs along Main Street. Potential themes should be explored to aid in developing local design standards.

2. Examine model design guidelines and develop local standards that reflect the values of the community and promote "buy in" from the downtown business/property owners. Standards should consider the unique placement of development along certain areas of Main Street and within the downtown to conform to riverfront development goals.

3. Develop a Design Improvement Program that couples design guidelines with financial incentives and resources. The strategy of improving design and facades places emphasis on incentives and not on restrictions. Funds must be raised and dedicated to implement the program through public/private partnerships. The program should outline sources of internal funding in addition to external grants. The Town should apply for grants, utilize the Fairfield Revolving Loan Fund, and create a TIF district.

Improving Parking, Access, and Connections

1. Develop a Parking Inventory and Master Parking Plan to determine current and future parking needs downtown. Inventory should be created from existing parking, including number of spaces, locations, etc. The inventory should explore usage, including short-term, long-term, transient, local, employees/customers, etc. The effects of growth and redevelopment on future demand for parking should be determined. The focus of the plan is to meet future parking needs.

2. Improve lighting and parking area maintenance, specifically at Mill Street parking lot

3. Examine and improve access to Downtown and Riverfront for cars and people. Traffic Management, Signage, and Pedestrian Assistance tools may be used to improve accessibility. Access Management tools used in other municipalities should be explored and utilized.

4. Develop a Downtown Pedestrian and Biking Trail Plan that improves east/west connections between the river, downtown, and residential neighborhoods. The plan should also explore the downtown corridor concept. A footbridge to Mill Island Park is recommended.

Promoting and Marketing to People & Businesses

A. Develop a Marketing Plan for Downtown Fairfield that attracts business and people. The riverfront should be promoted for its quality of place, and the plan should address attracting river-dependent and complementary businesses, eating and drinking places, and artists and art. Public restrooms may be constructed for people in the downtown in the future. The marketing plan should include properties that are for sale or lease, and effort must be made to coordinate with sellers/owners, brokers, banks, etc.

B. Expand and sustain downtown events and activities. A summertime festival, such as Fairfield Days, should continue and more River-related events (fairs, markets, etc.) should be planned. The Town should continue to support current events such as Summer Concerts in the Park, the Chocolate Festival, and the annual parades.

C. Support should be given to the Fairfield Farmers Market, including identification of a permanent home for the market along Main Street on municipal-owned property. The Market also needs permanent (seasonal) signage beside this property.

D. Establish a free and public Wireless Network in the Downtown area to attract consumers/pedestrians to downtown

E. Solicit assistance from and work with State and regional partners. The Central Maine Growth Council should be asked to assist with developing and marketing the property portfolio. Connect Fairfield to regional plans and programs focused on expanding Kennebec River access and promoting conservation and downtown waterfront revitalization. Fairfield could seek to attain a Maine Downtown Network designation, and ultimately attain a NTHP "Main Street" Designation.

Creating an Organization to Achieve Results

A. Establish/Expand an Action Team/Committee to plan and implement downtown and riverfront revitalization. The group should be diverse and include representation from the downtown businesses/property owners, the Fairfield Historical Society, environmental advocates, people of the "creative economy," government representatives, and other Fairfield residents.

B. Grow the Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee. As new businesses come to Fairfield's downtown, they should be engaged and invited to become members of the Committee.

C. Engage citizens, businesses, and government leaders to grow support and commitment to achieve the goal through community outreach. Tactics include improving the municipal website, developing a community newsletter, providing programming to CATV (meetings, interviews, etc.), and regularly communicating activities to the media.

Goal #2: Preserving and Promoting Rural Villages, Open Space, and Recreational Opportunities

Land Uses and Development Strategy

A. Conduct a baseline inventory of the five rural villages to identify unique characteristics and assets. Inventory should include current land uses, buildings and residences, commercial and industrial uses, and historic/cultural assets. Layered maps should be created to support planning activities. Residents and businesses should be surveyed to determine local issues of importance.

B. Review and update Land Use Ordinance to implement a mixed-use development strategy that promotes future land uses compatible with the rural scale of the villages. The Land Use Ordinance should be reviewed to determine current development patterns, and an Ordinance update should integrate the strategy. The Ordinance update should address establishment of home businesses, retail/commercial/industrial uses, recreation, agriculture and farm stands,

community gardens, retail and wholesale horticulture, green energy, non-grid scale alternative energy facilities, sustainability, etc.

C. Enhance links between villages and also Downtown, including maintaining and improving transportation options. Signage should be used to enhance links (i.e., getting from here to there).

D. Promote villages as having open space and as centers for recreation. Existing recreation opportunities should be promoted and expanded. A Green Space and Recreation plan should be developed to focus on preserving open space and developing a mid and long range perspective.

E. Market the distinct characteristics of the Rural Villages as part of the Vision, utilizing a complete and in-depth asset mapping for the Villages. Identify "unique" aspects (e.g. gateway to downtown, easy in-out access, mix of compatible uses, complementary "live here, work there"). Incorporate Rural Villages into the overall marketing strategy.

Goal #3: Economic Growth through Commercial & Industrial Development

Infrastructure, Land, and Buildings

A. Conduct an inventory and characterize land and buildings available for industrial and commercial development/use. Commercial and industrial zoning within the Land Use Ordinance should be reviewed to facilitate economic development. Gaps in infrastructure, including roads and utilities, should be determined and a plan developed to implement those projects over time.

Development Incentives and Facilitation

A. Catalogue various business incentives, subsidies, and programs and market to businesses and key investors/developers. Update the Doing Business in Fairfield Guide and provide guidance and facilitate the application process for building permits, development programs, etc. Work with various businesses and developers to make the process easy and encourage location in this community.

B. Harness the power of Pine Tree Development Zones and Tax Increment Financing Districts as development incentives and market their availability to prospective businesses and developers.

Skilled and Available Workforce

A. Characterize local and regional workforce and make information available, including labor numbers, skills, education, cost, demographics, etc.

B. Work with regional partners to develop a system for supporting workforce development to including strategies to:

a. Attract and retain talented people of all ages

b. Coordinate with K-16 education system to produce better educated/trained workforce

c. Conduct an education/skills inventory to determine what education/skills are available

d. Inventory existing jobs and forecast new jobs with emphasis on healthcare, educational services, alternative energy, precision manufacturing, biotechnology, government, etc.

Business Attraction and Retention

A. Promote cooperative and cross-marketing of local businesses. Businesses should be encouraged to join the Chamber of Commerce, and businesses along Main Street should be encouraged to participate in a Downtown Business Association / Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee.

B. Develop a town-wide strategy for business attraction/retention to determine the "types" of businesses that are in demand or gaps in the market that need to be filled. The program should also address business retention and marketing of established businesses. Established regional initiatives and efforts should be fully supported.

Organization

A. Create an effective organizational structure to deliver the town's economic development program that is private, capable, and well-funded; with a business plan, visibility, and transparency; inclusive, committed leadership; and members focused on deal flow and velocity. Harness the potential of the Economic/Community Development Advisory Committee to fulfill its role as a corporation focused on private development.

B. Retain all municipal functions with the Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee, including strategic and comprehensive planning, budgeting, and administering municipal projects and activities. Vocalize the rationale for development planning and project implementation to build and maintain citizen and leadership support.

Goal #4: Expanding Educational & Cultural Opportunities

Expanding Housing for Kennebec Valley Community College

A. Create more opportunities for on- and off-campus student housing at KVCC to expand numbers of students living in and becoming familiar with Fairfield as a means of attracting new residents during and after graduation. Increases in quality student housing will expand the

geographic draw to KVCC. Local public support for public/private investment in student housing must be expanded.

B. An inventory of existing housing supply should be compiled into a database. Central Maine Apartment Owners, Real Estate Brokers, Bankers, and Rental Agencies should be targeted.

C. Compile data on availability, size, condition, location, and cost of housing and make data available on website. Perhaps use an intern to accomplish the work.

D. Consider using private sector to develop a fee-based student-apartment matching program and write a Business Plan for the program, public or private.

Support K-12 Education System

A. Establish a robust connection between K-12 faculty, students, and parents, local colleges, and the business community, to support Economic Development goals including workforce development. The intent is to yield an integrated and coordinated system supporting regional workforce needs.

B. An effort should be made to assist in changing the perception of the K-12 system that reflects high-quality student preparation and achievement. Facts, figures, and accomplishments should be collected to demonstrate career paths of Fairfield students and people moving to Fairfield. A system may be developed in collaboration with the school district to provide strategic communications about the K-12 system and the quality and accomplishments of Lawrence High School to share among private and public consumers, opinion leaders, faculty, students, parents, colleges, and community. Perceptions must be changed inside and outside school. Recruit and support a leadership team with representation from all interested parties to push initiative. Develop an alumni mentoring system to support career planning. Expand cultural offerings at Williamson Center to bring people to Lawrence High School.

Expand Cultural Opportunities

A. Expand appreciation of culture – presently underutilized, limited, undervalued.

Projections and Land Use Implications

It is difficult to do commercial and industrial projections with any degree of accuracy, but it is critical for the community to be clear about the type of growth it desires and have appropriate locations available to accommodate such growth.

After internal review and discussion and evaluating the results of the public participation process, the Town's current commercial and industrial districts are believed to be suitable and adequately spacious for anticipated commercial and industrial development. The areas that

have been identified for commercial and/or industrial development include the Downtown District, lower Main Street from High Street south to the town line, upper Main Street and Route 201 corridor to Shawmut, Western Avenue from School Street west to Ridge Road, Fair Fields Business Park and Sheridan Drive, Industrial Road and adjacent land, and Eskelund Drive and adjacent land. Other opportunities for business development may exist along the town's main transportation corridors, including Routes 139 and 201.

Part Seven - Fairfield Housing Profile

Highlights of the Housing Profile:

- Due to the steadily declining size of the average household, Fairfield's housing stock continues to grow despite the lack of significant population growth. The town has 904 more housing units now than in 1980, and 688 more households.

- Since 1980, the housing supply has grown by 40 percent; over three quarters of those are single-family units or mobile homes.

- The town will continue to add housing units, but the style of unit may need to change to fit the demographic need. There are more than three times the number of small households as there are appropriate-sized units. About one-quarter of all households in 2010 were single persons, and over a third of that number were elderly. As the population continues to age, there will be more and more demand for smaller units that accommodate seniors and single persons.

- The housing stock is in generally good condition, and is average for Somerset County. There are significantly fewer new homes recently built than the county average.

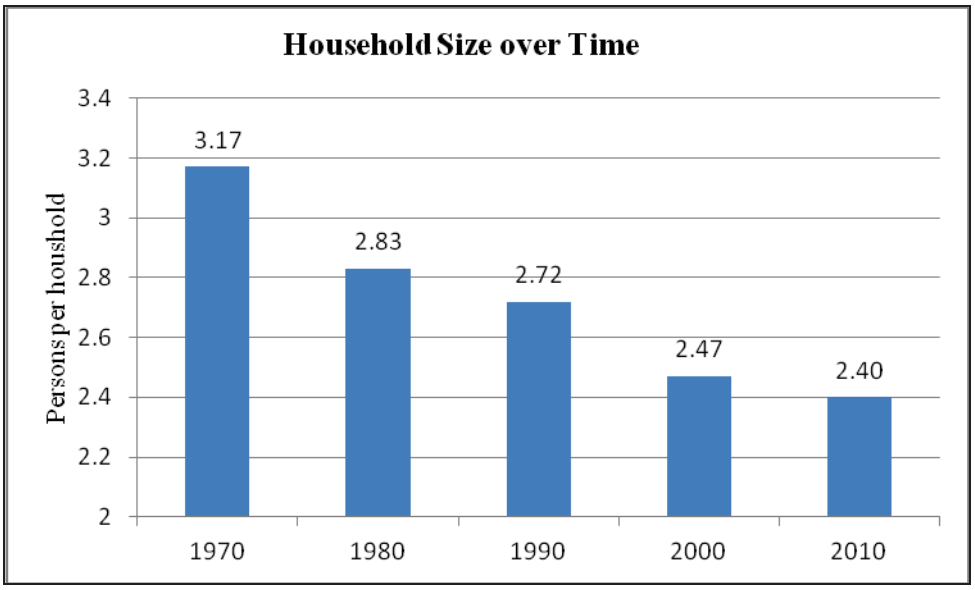
- The value of residential property in Fairfield made a healthy jump in the past decade, from $78,300 to $114,300 for the median single-family home. The 2010 figure, however, was based on a sample that included some homeowners before the 2008 recession, so it may not be up to date. Homes in Fairfield – at least the average ones – are currently affordable for households making 80 percent of median household income.

- At the same time that property values were going up, rents in Fairfield were also rising. The median monthly rent rose by 65 percent, from $433 in 2000 to $715 in 2010. Unlike owner-occupied housing, rents are becoming unaffordable. Forty-one percent of renters are paying more than 30 percent of their income for rent.

- Projections for growth in housing stock must account for continued decline in household size. Assuming a five percent smaller household in 2030, Fairfield will need to add (or reconfigure) 132 housing units, an average of 6.6 per year, to maintain its current population level. To establish a growth rate similar to what was estimated in the 1996 plan, the town would need to add an average of 12 per year. This would result in a 2030 population of 7,775.

Fairfield's Housing: Supply and Demand

The purpose of housing is to provide residence for the population. The characteristics of the population drive the demand for housing, and vice versa. An aging population or a number of single-person households signals a demand for smaller housing units, while a surplus of large homes will naturally attract larger households or conversions to smaller units. A community that does not respond to changes in housing demand is one that is likely to lose its population or change its character.



"Average household size" is the number which connects the population with the demand for housing. As the above chart shows, the average number of persons in a household in Fairfield has been shrinking steadily. This is a national trend. Almost all social and economic factors favor smaller households – more independent living among youth and elderly, smaller families, and more single-parent families. While there are early indications that this trend may be reversing in some parts of the country, it has not yet done so in Fairfield.

What does this mean for housing demand? In short, fewer persons per household means more housing is needed for the same population. When the average household in Fairfield contained 3.17 persons in 1970, the town had 1,773 occupied housing units. With the town gaining 1,051 residents in the past 40 years, it now has 2,793 households. Over the 40 year period, that averaged about 25 new homes per year. This is a household increase rate far exceeding the increase in individuals, as, with an average household size of 2.4, only 440 new housing units would have covered the population increase. (In Fairfield, there are also 29 people who are not in households, and not counted in the calculations. These are people in group living facilities such as nursing homes, etc.). Overall this indicates a great decline in household size and possible increase in housing vacancies.

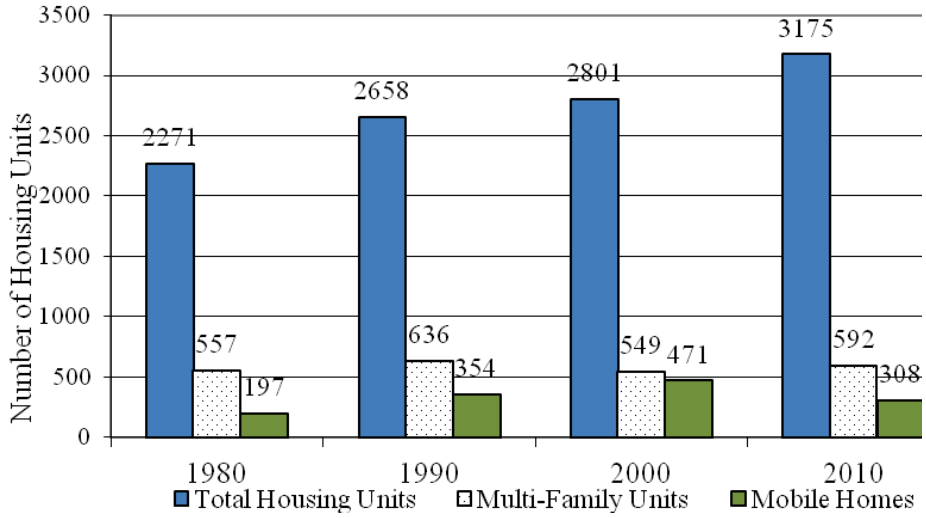
Of the 2,793 households in 2010, two-thirds of them (1,851) were families. The average family size was 2.85. About half were families with a traditional two-parent household. Almost 300 were single-parent families. Another 725 households (about one-quarter) were single-person households. In 256 of these, the single occupant was over 65 years old. In 2000, 226 households were single and elderly.

The table overleaf illustrates changes in Fairfield's housing supply over the past thirty years. Overall, the supply of housing has grown by almost 40 percent. Any individual component growing below that rate is lagging; components growing above that rate are becoming more prominent. The stock of traditional, site-built homes has grown faster than the average. The numbers show major reduction in both smaller and larger multi-family units. There has also been an increase in mobile homes, although dampened somewhat by a decline since 2000. Mobile homes only became a popular affordable option in the late 70's-early 80's, accounting for the big bump at that time.

TRENDS IN HOUSING STOCK AND TENANCY, 1980 – 2010										
Type of Unit	1980		1990		2000		2010		Change 1980-2010	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
All Housing Units	**2271**		**2658**		**2801**		**3175**		904	39.8%
1-unit site-built	1460	64.3%	1668	62.8%	1784	63.7%	2275	71.7%	869	55.8%
2-4 units	366	16.1	489	18.4%	435	15.5%	374	11.8%	8	2.2%
5 or more units	191	8.4%	147	5.5%	114	4.0%	218	6.8%	27	14.1%
Mobile home	254	11.2%	354	13.3%	471	16.8%	308	9.7%	54	21.3%
Year-Round Housing Units	2257	99.4%	2650	99.7%	2774	99%	3145	99.1%	888	39.3%
Seasonal Units	14	.06%	8	.03%	27	1%	30	.09%	16	14.3%
Vacant Units	154	6.7%	183	6.8%	215	7.6 %	352	11.2%	198	128.6 %
Owner-Occupied Units	1507	66.8%	1793	67.6%	1957	75.7%	2054	65.3%	547	36.3%
Renter-Occupied Units	598	26.5%	682	25.6%	629	24.3%	739	23.5%	141	23.6 %
SOURCE: U.S. Census										

Fairfield has a very small percentage of seasonal units compared to many other towns in the region. Oakland, for example, has 343 seasonal units, and Winslow has 176. One reason for this is that Fairfield has no lake frontage suitable for camps. Most seasonal units that do exist are owned by local residents, so seasonal population fluctuation is not an issue in Fairfield. The number of vacant units is a concern, though 2010 may be an anomaly brought on by the recession. The rental vacancy rate (8.3%) is higher than the owner vacancy rate (1.9 %).

Figure 2: Housing by Type, 1980-2010



When interpreting the graph, it looks as if the proportion of rental units is increasing over time. However, the numbers are relatively small. A swing of just fewer than 13 percent from rental to owner-occupied makes it appear as if rentals are falling behind.

The census estimates that only 199 housing units have three or fewer rooms – 6.3 percent of all units. A single-person household is most suited to three or fewer rooms. Fairfield has 725 of these, so there is more than three times the number of small households as there are appropriate-sized units. That is even assuming that all of the <3 room units are already devoted to single-person households. The census estimates that 69 houses in Fairfield contain more than one occupant per room.

Housing Location Trends

Fairfield's community character is defined to some extent by its urban core and rural environs. This is perhaps under threat from continued development and maintenance of existing homes in the rural areas. In 2000, the census reported that there was a roughly 50/50 split between housing found within the "urban cluster" and rural areas. However, in subsequent census data

releases, Fairfield was not determined to have a qualifying urban area, and the count was not thus categorized.

Statewide, the trend for development of new housing has been characterized by the term "suburban sprawl." In recent years small suburban towns have shown an explosion in population, while cities have had a decrease in population. Fairfield is somewhat in the middle. The town has an active urban core, but also rural land available for development if ownership patterns and zoning encouraged it.

Housing Conditions

The 2010 Census found that the vast majority of Fairfield's housing units met criteria for complete kitchen and plumbing facilities. There are 48 housing units that do not. This data are extrapolated from a sample of Fairfield's homes, so errors are certainly possible, but the figure is probably reasonably accurate.

In 2006 the town commissioned a comprehensive report on housing. A "windshield survey" showed there were 355 housing units rated as "severely deteriorated", which represented roughly 14.5% of the housing stock at that time.

Age of Houses in Fairfield

Age in 2010 (years)	#	Percent of total
0 - 5	143	4.5
6 - 10	61	1.9
11 - 20	271	8.5
21 - 30	472	14.9
31 - 40	761	24
41 - 50	78	2.5
51 - 60	290	9.1
61 - 70	218	6.9
over 70	881	27.7

The age of structures is sometimes an indicator of condition as well. Some very old homes are structurally very sound but may have inadequate wiring or plumbing. Homes built in the 1970's and earlier tended to have inadequate insulation, whereas homes built more recently have mostly conformed to modern building code requirements. In Fairfield, 881 houses (27.7% of all houses) were built prior to WWII. Compare this to Somerset County, where 29.6 percent

are "pre-war" homes. A total of 475 homes (14.9 percent) were built between 1990 and 2010; in Somerset County, that figure is 19.5 percent.

Fairfield currently does not have any municipal housing projects.

Price and Affordability

The growth management goal for affordable housing states that 10 percent of new housing should be affordable to households making less than 80 percent of the median household income. The goal leaves it up to towns to determine whether that ten percent should be as stick-built homes, or mobile homes, or rentals or elderly apartments.

The determination of whether housing is affordable begins with a discussion of cost. The census provides very good (though sample-sized) data regarding price of housing in Fairfield (see table below). This price is arrived at by owners' estimates of value, meaning it does not necessarily match up with actual recorded sales prices. According to the census, the median value of owner-occupied housing in 2010 was $114,300. The rise in property values since 2000 was 46 percent, a substantial increase even considering the 28 percent inflation rate and the recent dip in home prices. The rise between 1990 and 2000 was only 18 percent.

VALUE[1] OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS, 2000 and 2010

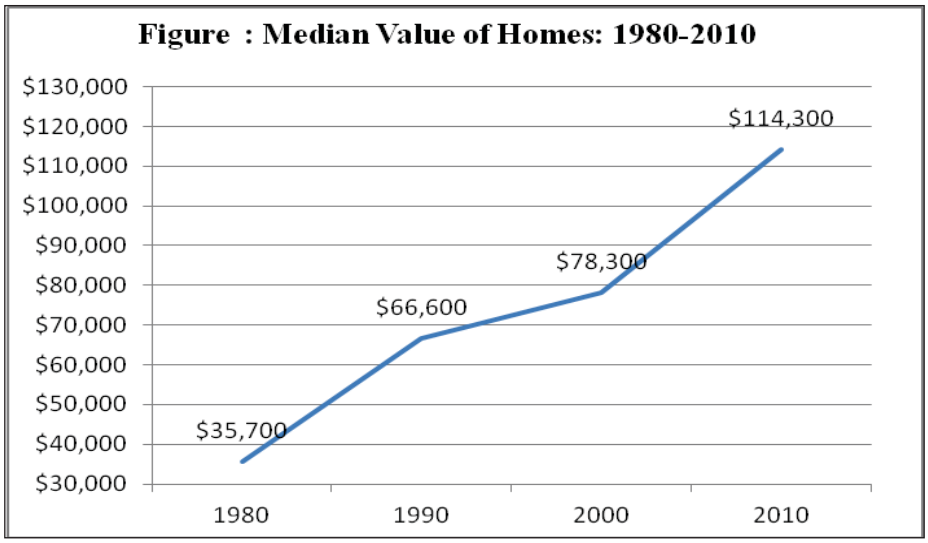
	2000	2010	change
Median Value of Specified[2] Housing Units	$78,300	$114,300	$36,000 (46 %)
Number of Units Valued at:			
Less Than $50,000	128	145	17
$50,000 - $99,999	897	756	-141
$100,000 - $149,999	132	477	345
$150,000 and over	41	775	734

SOURCE: U.S. Census

1/ "Value" is the census respondent's estimate of how much the property would sell for if it were for sale.

2/ "Specified" units exclude one-family houses on ten or more acres and units with a commercial establishment on the premises. In 2000, mobile homes were excluded as well, but not in 2010, accounting for the significant rise in housing counts.

Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) tracks actual sales data, though it is sometimes out of date by the time it is published. According to MSHA, the median price (actual sales) of a home in 2008 was $99,000. This represents a precipitous drop from the high in 2007 – a factor which homeowners may not have taken into account when they reported on property values to the census.



The median household income reported by the census in 2010 was $46,685, making the threshold of 80 percent of median to be $37,348. MSHA calculates an affordable home at various income levels, factoring in interest rates and other variables, and using the rule of thumb that a household should pay no more than 30 percent of its monthly income in housing costs. According to MSHA figures, an income of $35,643 should be able to afford a home priced at $130,786. That means, in rough terms, that a third of households are unable to afford the median price.

The table overleaf shows changes over time in the cost and affordability of rental housing in Fairfield. The median rent charged increased by 58 percent, a rate faster than inflation and faster than home values. As might have been predicted with such a jump in prices, there are virtually no rentals available for less than $200 a month, and where there were no rental units costing more than $750 a month in 2000, there are now 130 – 28.7 percent of the total rental stock. More important are the figures on affordability. Affordable rental housing has declined, while the number of renters paying more than 30 percent of their income for rent has nearly doubled.

COST OF RENTER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS, 2000 and 2010			
	2000	2010	% change
Median Monthly Rent Specified Renter-Occupied Units	$ 433	$712	65 %
# of Units With Cash Rent of: Less Than $200 $200 - $499 $500 - $749 $750 - $999 $1000+	 46 335 136 38 0	 0 109 307 138 78	 -100 % -67% 126% 263%
Rent as a Percentage of Household income: Less than 20 percent 20 – 30 percent 30 percent or more	 264 100 191	 64 234 315	 -76 % 134% 65%
Rental Vacancy Rate	10.4 %	17.6%	
Source: US Census, American Community Survey (2006-10)			

MSHA also tracks rental data. According to MSHA statistics, in 2009, the average two-bedroom rental in Fairfield was $652. The income needed to afford that rent was $36,072. That means that the average two-bedroom unit in Fairfield still qualifies as "affordable," though that data conflicts with the census data. However, MSHA estimates that 282 renter households earn less than 50 percent of the median income level – able to afford only $500 a month rent. According to MSHA, the average rent between 2000 and 2009 rose by 43 percent, while the median income of renters rose by only 20 percent.

Compared with surrounding communities and Somerset County as a whole, Fairfield's housing prices appear to be comparable. In 2008, median home values in neighboring communities ranged from $79,750 in Clinton to $111,875 in Winslow. Waterville's median home value was $101,000. The median value of homes in Somerset County was $116,000. The median rental cost in Somerset County was $640 per month, putting Fairfield's median rental cost of $712 a fair bit above. Median rents in towns surrounding Fairfield ranged from $785 for Benton to $651 in Clinton. Waterville's was $715 as of 2009.

Provision of affordable housing options is assisted by MSHA programs. MSHA provides some state and federal options for buyers and renters. Subsidized rent programs participating housing complexes in Fairfield are:

- Fairfield Family Apartments on Route 201 operated by Stanford Management LLC
- The Gerald Hotel (151 Main St.) operated by C&C Realty Management
- Island Apartments (2 Island Avenue) operated by Dirigo Management Company.

Projections

Referring to the population projections in the Demographic Profile, it is difficult to anticipate any demand at all for housing – a population estimated by two outside sources as continuing at about 6,700 over the next 20 years. However, that does not take into account the decline in household size. Between 1970 and 2010, the simple fact of the shrinking household drove demand for 25 new homes per year. Between 1990 and 2010, while Fairfield was only adding 17 residents to the population, it added approximately 495 housing units to the tax rolls.

We cannot expect household size to continue to shrink indefinitely, but if we assume that it will shrink another five percent over the next twenty years, the average will go to 2.28 persons per household. In order to house 6,700 residents (less 29 "not in households"), the town would need to contain 2,925 households, adding an average of 6.6 housing units per year, 132 in total. That is construction at a considerably lower rate than actually happened between 1990 and 2010 although the recent slowdown in new constructions may not have been evident in these figures.

The town could also choose to visualize a scenario of growth.

Scenario #1: Somerset County increased its housing stock by about nine percent in the 2000's. If Fairfield were to increase its housing stock at the same rate, over twenty years, the town would see 286 new homes – an increase of nearly 15 homes per year. At a household size of 2.28, that would result in a 2030 population of 7,387.

Scenario #2: The 1996 plan estimated a growth rate of 52 persons per year. If we took that estimate and projected it to 2030, the population would be 7,775, with a construction rate of new homes of 12 per year.

A construction rate of only 6.6 homes per year makes it difficult to establish a target of ten percent of new homes affordable. Over a ten-year period, though, 66 new homes would mean about 6 ½ would need to be affordable under the planning goal – a sale price of $130,786 or rent of $800 a month. Under the two growth scenarios, affordable housing requirements would mean 1.5 units per year (#1) or 1.2 per year (#2). The aging of the population also suggests that condominiums and innovative retirement community living arrangements are likely to be needed in town within the next 15 years. While not necessarily falling within the definition of affordable housing, this is a housing type that will be in demand. There has already been some new housing development to meet this growing demand, including Cottage Estates affordable retirement community and Gerald Senior Residences' 28-unit low-income senior housing property.

The addition of housing units will require the consumption of more land for development and the question of how much will be needed to accommodate demand is important With the rural minimum lot size of 2 acres, development at the 10-year projected rate would consume at least

132 acres if located entirely in the Rural District. Under the fast growth scenario, it would consume at least 300 acres. Building lots are also required to have at least 250 feet of frontage. Sixty-six new units would occupy 16,500 feet of frontage, equivalent to a little over 1.5 miles of new road, developed both sides. Four hundred new houses would occupy at least 100,000 linear feet, or a new road nine miles long.

Development of the rural area is a worst-case scenario typical of sprawl. Fairfield would undoubtedly experience a high percentage of new development within its urban zones. Placement of 75 percent of new housing units in the town's designated growth area is consistent with the comprehensive planning guidelines. If 75 percent of the projected housing is in the Residential districts, at an average of 20,000 square feet per unit, the requirement for land drops to 55 acres (23 in the growth area for 50 units, plus 32 in the rural area for 16 units). Under the fast growth scenario, the land requirement is only 145 acres. Under either scenario, there should be adequate vacant and buildable land in the districts. Some of the districts may have very little opportunity for infill.

Part Eight – The Transportation System

Introduction

Transportation is essential to participation in society. Public ways define the layout, pattern of mobility, and modes of transportation in the community. The basis of a community is the times in which people come together and interact; the transportation system needs to facilitate this social function, as well as getting people to and from work and essential services. The character of transportation sets a tone in the community and makes a difference as to how people involve themselves in the local economy. The design of roads, sidewalks, parking lots, and other transportation facilities impacts greatly a community's nature and attractiveness. Without conscious actions to the contrary, vehicle-oriented transportation pervades community design and can make pedestrian and bicycle travel unpleasant and unsafe.

Pedestrian Transportation

Fairfield has many attractive urban walking areas, due to its parks, river views and historic architecture. The Town has established and maintained a sidewalk network of approximately 8.5 miles for decades in the town's urban compact.

A map showing the town sidewalks in in the appendix.

Many of the sidewalks in town are in disrepair and significant maintenance is needed. Road maintenance has for many years taken priority over sidewalks when competing for scarce resources. There are several areas along primary pedestrian corridors where sidewalks do not exist or they are inadequate to facilitate safe travel. Additionally, the town lacks a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan that should be used to guide future capital improvements.

Western Avenue – The sidewalk along Western Avenue currently terminates at School Street. Pedestrians regularly continue traveling westerly to both the PAL Athletic Complex and Kennebec Valley Community College. The construction of a sidewalk at this location is a high priority.

Main Street South – The sidewalk along the southern part of Main Street that passes under the railroad bridge is narrow and vehicles travel at a high rate of speed at that location. The Town of Fairfield should work with Maine DOT to explore the possibility of a redesign that may include a reduction in automobile lanes, widening of sidewalks for bicycles and pedestrians, and a dedicated turning lane at the intersection of High Street.

In our motor vehicle-oriented society, drivers tend to forget that other modes of transportation also legitimately use the roads. Fairfield residents wish to reinforce the fact that roads serve multiple

transportation modes, especially in the urban area. Signage, including road cones, helps remind motorists that pedestrians and cyclists have legitimate use of the road and the right-of-way.

Aside from the small-scale trails at Mill Island Park and Good Will-Hinckley, there are two trails listed by the Kennebec Messalonskee Trails (KMT) organization: the Fairfield Woods Trail, which is in the wooded area adjacent to the PAL fields, and the KVCC Campus Trail located at the Western Avenue campus. KMT has been working for many years to develop a comprehensive trail system in the region, but limited resources and planning seems to have impeded some of the progress. However, successes can be found, particularly the Rotary Centennial Trail in Benton, Messalonskee Stream Trail in Oakland, and Quarry Road Recreation Area in Waterville. Fairfield's Mill Island Park is a small jewel, but it is nevertheless an island, with limited connections to a greater trail system. The bridges that traverse the Kennebec River between Fairfield and Benton provide some connectivity, but even that trail terminates without further connectivity.

Fairfield's position on the Kennebec River provides incredible opportunity to further develop off-road pedestrian connections. The town has acquired property along the river at the intersection of Main Street and Western Avenue and a long-planned footbridge would provide improved access between Mill Island Park and the nearby residential neighborhoods. The town should also focus on the long-term goal of creating a trail along the Kennebec River from Water Street south to Waterville. KMT has set a long-term goal to recreate a bridge on piers that are remnants of a former railroad bridge that crossed the Kennebec River many years ago. Although an expensive proposition, the vision and foresight would result in a significant improvement in the region's quality of place, and should be pursued as a long-term goal, in collaboration with our neighbors.

Bicycling

Bicycling should be promoted for its mutual benefits of transportation, air quality, recreation, and fitness. Bicycling provides the main mode of transport for youth and should be promoted as a lifelong activity and suitable mode of transportation within the local area. Creating an environment that considers safety and the inclusion of necessary amenities and infrastructure are paramount in making Fairfield a desirable place to cycle for all ages.

The town should provide bike racks in the downtown area and designate bicycle lanes along the primary corridors and routes travelled most frequently by cyclists. Providing safe cycling routes between educational institutions, the downtown, and Waterville and Skowhegan should be priority.

Noteworthy hazards for cyclists have been identified as where the main road through town (201) goes under the railroad and the road narrows, putting pressure on cyclists with less space.

Rail Facilities

Currently there is only freight passing on the rails through Fairfield, but the Town may wish to remain in a position to resume passenger service as transportation needs evolve. Rail advocates note the

extension of the Downeaster to Brunswick and current plans call for future expansion to Auburn, Rockland, or points further north including Augusta and Waterville. The return of passenger rail to Central Maine is likely many years away, but Fairfield could be a future rail stop along such a line.

Safety at rail crossings and the condition of those crossings remains a concern, although several crossings have recently been improved. The town has worked with Maine DOT and Pan Am Railways to close two vehicle crossings that will result in an extensive repair to the track and crossings in the town's urban compact. The crossings to be closed are without signals, and the only remaining grade crossing with only a crossbuck warning sign is located on Horn Hill Road.

Air Service

There are no airports within town but several in the region, including:

- Robert Lafleur Airport – Waterville
- Pittsfield Municipal Airport
- Central Maine Municipal Airport in Norridgewock

Full commercial passenger and cargo service is available 53 miles northeast at Bangor International Airport, 82 miles southwest at Portland International Jetport. Limited commercial passenger service is also available 27 miles south at the Augusta State Airport with daily connections to Boston.

Bus, Van, Taxi, and Ride Sharing Services

There is no local or long-distance scheduled bus service in Fairfield. The Kennebec Valley Community Action Program (KVCAP) operates the "Kennebec Explorer" service that runs four daily buses from Downtown and KVCC to Waterville downtown and Elm Plaza. There are also connections to Augusta and Inland Hospital. There are plans to increase the frequency of this service and also link the routes to the Somerset Explorer via the KVCC Alford Campus and Route 201. The town supports the expansion of public transportation to facilitate greater access to education, jobs, and healthcare, and to reduce traffic on the road system.

Commercial long-distance bus service is available north and south along I-95 with the closest bus stop in Waterville.

Private taxi service is available and several companies are based in Fairfield.

There are currently no State-owned Park and Ride lots in Fairfield or the greater Waterville area. Using town owned land for these could be an option with cooperation from the Maine DOT.

Roads

Fairfield was settled on the Kennebec River and US Route 201 has been improved over a number of years as an important transportation corridor that runs along the river all the way from the coast in Brunswick to the Canadian Border. Route 201 follows old river trading routes of the Abenaki native

people. Parts of Benedict Arnold's expedition to Quebec took place along the same route. US Route 201 used to be New England Interstate Route 20 (NE-20) in the 1920's. The original 1922 plan had NE-20 starting in Portland. The southern half was later shifted east to start in Brunswick. The southern end of the original Route 20 is now State Route 100 from Portland to Augusta.

In the mid-1960's, I-95 was constructed through Fairfield with two major intersections with Routes 201 and 139. The interstate also resulted in a dramatic decline in traffic on Route 100, which traversed downtown Fairfield and continued north east to Bangor. State Route 104 runs through town, connecting Augusta and Skowhegan. Route 139 connects north to Norridgewock and then east to Benton, Unity, and Winterport by the mouth of the Penobscot River. Route 23 crosses the Kennebec River in town and connects Belgrade to the Dover-Foxcroft area of Piscataquis County. A small section of the long east-west Route 100/11 also runs through downtown Fairfield.

There are a total of 89.95 miles of roads in Fairfield. State Roads make up 23.67 miles and town roads 66.28. Of the local roads, 61.38 miles is paved and 4.9 miles is unpaved.

State Roads

State Highways are generally the responsibility of Maine DOT to maintain and improve, and to issue permits for access.

- I-95 is a federal interstate highway, carrying the most traffic through town. It has two interchanges in Fairfield, with Routes 201 and 139.

- US 201 is a principal arterial, built to National Highway System design standards. US 201 is an important regional north-south link, particularly for freight traffic and international travel. The road is kept in a very good physical condition.

- Routes 23 and the northern section of 104 are listed as major collector roads*. Savage Street, Newhall Street, and West Street along with Bridge Street over to Benton are also considered major collectors. The physical condition of these roads is the responsibility of the DOT, although they are a low priority in limited budget years.

  *Collectors link smaller towns, villages, neighborhoods, and major facilities to the arterial network. Traffic is collected from local residential roads and delivered to the nearest arterial. Daily traffic volumes generally range in the thousands. Collectors are divided between rural and urban collector roads. As a further division, rural collectors are divided between major and minor collector roads.

- Routes 139, 100 / 11, the lower part of 104 and Route 201 from downtown to the interstate is classified as a minor arterial, primarily because of its link to the I-95 interchange. As a minor arterial, it has a higher priority for maintenance and a higher standard for access control than other local roads.

Road Maintenance

There are a total of 89.95 miles of roads in Fairfield. The town's Public Works Department is responsible for all the minor roads and for the major roads in the downtown area (inside the Urban Compact). The state is responsible for the rural sections of Route 201, 139, 23, and I-95 -- about 30

miles. In the winter the town maintains 75.98 center-line miles of roadway (the towns 61.38 plus the State's 9.7 miles paved and our 4.9 miles of unpaved)

The town has established a road surface management system for the purpose of prioritizing and budgeting for road repairs. In 2012, the analysis showed an improvement in general conditions over the prior year, but still many deficiencies remain. The results are reproduced in the table below.

Fairfield Road Repair Needs – 2010		
Paved Roads		
Repair Strategy	Mileage	Percent
Reconstruction	3.28	7.1
Rehabilitation	6.70	14.6
Preventative	9.90	21.6
Routine maintenance	1.65	3.6
None	24.35	53.1
Total	**45.88**	

Priorities for repair are calculated with a formula involving traffic volumes, road conditions, and overall roughness. According to the formula, the highest priority for repairs in 2010 and the near future are sections of Fish Hill Road, Upper Ridge Road, Six Rod Road, Davis Road, Covell Road, and Lower Ridge Road. Reconstruction work generally involves recycling the pavement to build the base, a 2" overlay, and ditch and shoulder work. Some of these projects have been completed and the town continues to rebuild approximately one mile of road per year. Six Rod Road received an overlay in 2012, which was the first time in many years that the department undertook such maintenance to prevent losing a road. The road inventory is at a point where more road miles are becoming in need of reconstruction faster than the town is rebuilding roads. Within the next five years the town should consider issuing a bond to rebuild all roads that require reconstruction.

There are almost six miles of unpaved roads in town, but they are not surveyed and put into the above program. They are a three-mile section of the Martin Stream Road; a 0.8-mile section of the Horn Hill Road; Bear Mountain, which is a half mile; and Bretton's Hill, which is a third of a mile. According to the public works department, Horn Hill, Bear Mountain and Bretton's Hill are in good condition, while the Martin Stream Road is in poor condition.

The town's budget for road paving was $231,000 in 2011, $210,000 in 2012, and $220,000 in 2013.

The Public Works Department is also responsible for approximately 9.3 miles of sidewalks in the downtown area. Many of the sidewalks, especially on side streets, are in need of some form of repair, but, at the moment, the department has only the resources to keep them reasonably passable. It is hoped that, with any future road reconstruction plans the Town will consider following the State Complete Streets Policy which will encourage funds to be included for sidewalks as well.

In addition the department has to maintain 257 manholes, 405 catch basins, and 808 culverts totaling 26,815 feet. The town also has approximately 20 miles of sewer lines (105,600 feet).

Use of the Highway System

The highway system functions as more than simple infrastructure. Its purpose is to provide mobility to vehicular travelers. One measure of this is the volume of traffic that the roads carry. This is illustrated in the table below. Traffic is measured as "Average Annual Daily Traffic" (AADT), the number of vehicles that pass a given point during a 24-hour period. The important element of the counts is the change over time. This tells us whether the particular road will continue to have the capacity to serve its function as traffic grows.

Table: Historic Traffic Counts

Location	Historic Count (1996)	2006	2011	Average Annual Change to 2006	Average Annual Change to 2011
I-95 Southbound	9533	10150	11510	0.63%	1.26%
I-95 Northbound	7710	9690	10980	2.31%	2.39%
Rt 100/11/201 (Main St)	13900	12690	12520	-0.91%	-0.69%
Rt 201 (Skowhegan Rd)	7180	9620	9100	2.97%	1.59%
Rt 23 Ohio Hill Rd	1910	1860	1630	-0.26%	-1.05%
Rt 23 Oakland Rd	2650	2860	2240	0.77%	-1.11%
Davis Rd SW of 104/139	830	640	620	-2.57%	-1.93%
Rt 104/139 Pung Hill Rd	9950	11210	10690	1.20%	0.48%
Rt 104/139 Norridgewock Rd	8350	9440	9220	1.23%	0.66%
Rt 104/139 Norridgewock Rd (North of Davis Rd)	7360	8900	8750	1.92%	1.16%
Rt 139 Norridgewock Rd (North of Adams Rd)	4690	5830	5780	2.20%	1.40%
Rt 139 Center Rd (West of Ridge Rd)	4220	5250	5530	2.21%	1.82%

Source: MDOT *Traffic Volume Counts*

The table shows two growth rates – one as of 2006 and one as of 2011. Traffic throughout the state peaked in 2007. In 2008, traffic dropped dramatically, the result of the one-two punch of the gas price spike followed by the recession. Traffic levels have slowly risen since then, but in many locations have not yet equaled 2006 levels. Therefore, the average change to 2006 is more likely to reflect "normal conditions."

Fairfield's highest traffic levels, excluding the interstate, are on the bridge and on Main Street (US201 / 139) between Lawrence Avenue and Western Avenue. Another high level area (but with a declining rate) is Main Street 100/11/201 between downtown and Waterville. Route 201 and 139 saw the biggest increase. A two-percent growth rate means that traffic will double in less than 30 years.

The Maine DOT no longer provides detailed accident data for local planning. In its place, the department identifies High Crash Locations (HCLs) based on historical crash data. An HCL is an intersection or road segment that has had at least eight crashes over the prior three years, and where the rate of crashes exceeds the average for the volume and design of the road. There are three locations in Fairfield that meet this criterion. Unsurprisingly, one of these is the area of highest traffic on Main Street both north and south of the bridge. Other areas identified include two segments of Route 201 where there are intersections with minor roads and the junction with the bridge of Route 23.

Bridges

The Maine DOT inventories and rates the conditions of all public bridges in Fairfield, a total of 19, according to the DOT database. Of these, four are interstate bridges and three are railroad bridges not to be considered important for this plan. Of the remaining, three are town-maintained and the rest are state-maintained.

The following table lists non-interstate and non-railroad bridges in Fairfield and their characteristics. The important column in this table is the "federal sufficiency rating" (FSR). If the FSR falls below 50, it is a red flag that the bridge has flaws that must be addressed promptly.

Table: Non-interstate or railway Bridges in Fairfield, as of 2012

Bridge Name	Road	Passes Over	Length	Type	FSR	Notes
George W Hinckley	Route 23	Kennebec River	643’	Steel Girder	95.7	
Black Mills	Route 104	Martin Stream	80’	Steel Girder	65.9	
Kennebec River	Route 11/100/139	Kennebec River	390’	Steel Girder	86.6	Replaced in 2003
Kennebec River	Route 11/100/139	Kennebec River	158’	Steel Girder	92	Replaced in 2003
Kennebec River	Route 11/100/139	Kennebec River	361’	Steel Girder	86.6	Connects to Benton
Goodwill Farm	Route 201/23	Martin Stream	15’	Steel Culvert	88.5	
Parker	Martin Stream Rd	Martin Stream	42’	Steel Culvert	99	
Emery Brook 1	Eskelund Drive	Emery Brook	72’	Wood Girder	93	Replaced 2005
Emery Brook 2	Eskelund Drive	Emery Brook	10’	Aluminum Culvert	98.9	Replaced 2005
Larone	Route 139	Martin Stream	33’	Concrete Culvert	96.1	
Western Ave	Route 139	I-95	281’	Steel Girder	71	Deck Poor
Fish Brook Pipe	Route 104/139	Fish Brook	12’	Steel Culvert	86.7	

Source: Maine DOT *Public Bridges Inventory*

The Town-owned bridges are both of the Emery Brook Bridges on Eskelund Drive and the Parker Culvert over Martin Stream. All Town bridges appear to be in good condition, although the Parker Culvert should be monitored.

Access Management

Access Management is the practice of regulating the location and design of driveway entrances. Vehicles turning into and out of driveways are responsible for a large proportion of crashes, and it has been demonstrated that good driveway practice can reduce the frequency of crashes. Driveway design also plays an important role in managing stormwater and roadside drainage.

Reducing the overall number of driveways and eliminating "uncontrolled" curb cuts (an entrance that extends virtually the length of the frontage) can cut back on the frequency of access points. These practices are important in built-up areas, where traffic volumes are high and driveway entrances proliferate. In more rural areas, the best access management practice is to assure "sight distance." Sight distance is the length of road that a driver can see as they are pulling onto the road. Adequate sight distance allows drivers the time to see and react to potential conflicts from entering or turning traffic.

The Maine DOT has a strong set of access management regulations for state roads. Any person who wants a driveway entrance on an arterial or collector road must get a permit from the DOT; larger developments must be preceded by a traffic study to determine if road improvements (such as islands or traffic signals) are necessary. The design rules are fairly simple for collector roads (sight distance and drainage only), but are increasingly strict for more important roads, such as Route 201.

The state's rules do not apply to town roads. The Town had upgraded its access management regulations since the 1996 plan to include requirements for the following: (1) Access to Public Roads; (2) Design of Access Points; (3) Access Location and Spacing; and (4) Number of Access Points. The Land Use Ordinance, covering most commercial developments, contains strict requirements on access-way location and spacing. Fairfield's subdivision ordinance contains extensive access standards, which apply to new subdivision roads.

Environmental Impacts of the Transportation System

The transportation system provides many benefits to the citizens of Fairfield, but it also has the potential for negative impacts. Many negative impacts are the result of design considerations that can be addressed. Common negative impacts are in the area of noise, light, stormwater management, and wildlife movements.

In general, noise impacts from the transportation system are minimal, because volumes are relatively low. If volumes were higher at any point, particularly near residential areas, it might suggest the need for noise barriers.

Lighting impacts consist of glare from nighttime driving or from signage lighting at night. There are no reported instances of highway glare in Fairfield. The town's zoning ordinance has strict standards on lighting of commercial signs.

Stormwater runoff can be a problem in all areas of impervious surface, and paved roads are one of the most common generators. While runoff cannot be eliminated completely, there are several management practices that may be instituted to minimize the impacts. These include proper ditching and re-vegetation, culvert maintenance, detention areas, and other techniques collectively titled "best management practices." Training is available in these practices for local highway crews, and Fairfield should be participating in them if it is not already. There is also a set of technological advances that are reducing runoff volumes, such as porous pavements and bio-remediation areas. While these are not generally appropriate for highway construction, they could be very useful in development of parking lots.

Roads have the potential to interfere with wildlife movements. In some areas with important wildlife corridors, structural techniques may be used to minimize conflicts between wildlife and vehicles. Areas of transportation-wildlife conflict can be identified by a larger-than-expected number of wildlife deaths. There are no reported areas of this type along Fairfield's road system. In addition to considering species included in the DOT's animal-vehicle collision database (e.g., deer, moose, bear), it is also worthy to consider strategies for enhancing passage and habitat connectivity for other terrestrial and aquatic organisms during transportation planning.

Part Nine - Essential Services

General Government:

Town Council

Fairfield utilizes a Council/Manager/Town Meeting form of Government. The Town Council has five members; councilors are elected at-large to three-year terms. Elections are on a three-year cycle with two councilors elected in the first and second years and one in the third year; vacancies in the Council are filled by appointment and candidates run to complete the unexpired term at the next Municipal Election in November.

The Council elects the Chairman from among its members following each election. The Chairman presides over all Council meetings and acts as the Town Officer designated to represent the Town at events or functions, but has no administrative duties except as required to carry out the responsibilities outlined in the Town Charter.

The Council typically meets twice monthly and sessions are broadcast on local access cable.

Department Organization

The Town Manager is responsible for running the Town and hiring all other employees. The staff is organized into departments, with department heads and certain offices reporting directly to the manager.

Departments with employees include the following:

Administration

- Town Clerk
- Town Manager
- Assessor
- Treasurer/Tax Collector
- Codes and Planning
- Human Resources
- Health & Welfare

Community Center
Lawrence Public Library
Police Department
Fire Department

Public Works

Citizen Committees

Civic involvement is the lifeblood of the town. How people feel about their community is greatly influenced by how they receive information, how involved they are in decision-making, and how open and fair they perceive the process to be.

Like the issue of departmental organization, the Town's volunteer base also needs attention. Civic engagement has been in decline for years and the town needs active, productive, accountable citizen committees advising and assisting the Town Council and staff on various aspects of Town government. These Committees need a support system, just as paid workers do, to effectively perform their jobs, including factors such as:

- clear mission and objectives;
- leadership;
- access to information and effective communication;
- adequate meeting space;
- clear expectations of committee members, including attendance requirements;
- committed participants who understand the time and effort expected of the job; and
- Public recognition and appreciation from the Town Council and staff for the valuable public service provided.

Currently the following Boards/Committees are active in Fairfield. Members are sworn in after appointment by the Town Council.

- Planning Board
- Land Use Board of Appeals
- Budget Committee
- Board of Assessment Review
- Board of Appeals for Voter Registration
- Economic and Community Development Advisory Committee

The Town of Fairfield is a member of numerous local districts and regional organizations, in addition to partnering with several independent local entities. The following entities are partners with the Town of Fairfield, and the town maintains continuous representation.

- MSAD #49 Board of Directors
- CATV Board of Directors
- Kennebec Sanitary Treatment District (KSTD)
- Kennebec Water District
- Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG)
- Kennebec Regional Development Authority (KRDA) / FirstPark

- Central Maine Growth Council (CMGC)
- Robert Lafleur Regional Airport
- Somerset Economic Development Corporation (SEDC)
- Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce

The town also makes financial contributions (or pays membership) to the following organizations as of 2012:

- PAL Recreation
- Alfond Youth Center
- KVCAP transportation
- KV Headstart
- Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce
- Family Violence Project
- Fairfield Historical Society
- Kennebec Behavioral Health
- Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter
- Spectrum Generations
- Catholic Charities Homecare
- Hospice of Waterville
- SEDC
- Fairfield Interfaith Food Pantry
- Fairfield Country Riders Snowmobile Club
- Central Maine CATV

Town Office:

Fairfield's town office, located on Lawrence Avenue, adjacent to the Fire Station, is the center of general town administration and records. Public meetings are typically held at the Fairfield Community Center on Water Street. The Town Office building was built in 1966 and houses eight employees in the areas of town administration, finance, assessing, codes, and welfare. It also has a large downstairs room used primarily for storage. The public area of the building is ADA accessible.

Public Safety:

Police Protection

Security is a high priority of Fairfield residents and they have expressed their willingness to pay for it. The Town is well served by a small full-time police department and 24-hour dispatch service provided by the Somerset County Communications Center. There are nine full-time sworn officers including the chief, one detective captain, and two patrol sergeants. There are also nine reserve

officers, an administrative clerk, and an animal control officer. Additional protection may be provided by mutual aid with neighboring towns, or by the Somerset County Sheriff's Office and State Police. The Police Department is headquartered at One Police Plaza off Water Street.

The police vehicle inventory is adequate to meet the needs of the department. There are four primary patrol vehicles, which are typically in service for three years before replacement. Additionally the department possesses vehicles for the chief and the detective.

The police station is a masonry building completed in 1983 and is in good condition. A new security system, including door locks and cameras, was recently installed. System upgrade and other maintenance are ongoing.

In 2011 the deputy chief position was eliminated causing a reduction in succeeding years operating budgets. The 2012/13 actual expenditures dipped to $889,276 after peaking over $1 million dollars in 2009/10. Overall police expenditures had increased about 6% per year until 2009, but then reduced by an average of 4% per year through 2013 to a level comparable to the 2007/08 fiscal year.

The Fairfield Police Department received 11,358 "calls for service" from January l to December 3l, 2013. Out of these "calls for service," 5,549 were actual incidents, arrests, citations, warnings, and accidents which generated a case number. A case number is generated when an officer has to take some sort of action or a follow-up is required.

Fairfield also employs an Animal Control Officer who works under the Police Department.

Fire Protection

The Town of Fairfield provides emergency medical services and fire services for the Town and Benton. Since 2014 this is done via Interlocal Agreement for the joint financing of the department. The department also has mutual aid agreements with neighboring municipalities. The department consists of a full-time fire chief, three full-time captains, two full-time lieutenants, and one full-time firefighter/emergency medical technician. There are also roughly 20 on-call firefighters.

There are two fire stations located in the Town of Fairfield - Station #1: Lawrence Avenue, Fairfield and Station #2: Old Center Road, Fairfield Center

The department is headquartered out of the central station on Lawrence Avenue, adjacent to the town office. That building has approximately 6,400 square feet on one floor, and houses four trucks as well as offices, training space, a kitchen, employee lounge, and sleeping quarters. The town also maintains a branch station at Fairfield Center. That station is only 900 square feet, and is primarily used for storage.

Equipment in the department includes one EMS vehicle, three fire engines, and one off-road brush truck, ranging in age from a 1970 to a new 2013 model.

The Department is in the process of trying to lower the town's fire insurance rating. Part of this project involves increasing training for members of the department and planning has begun for a new training facility on town property by the Public Works Garage. This site will allow firefighters to train in many areas such as live fires, gas/propane fires, and vehicle extractions.

They also have been very fortunate to receive a newer military surplus vehicle through the Maine Forest Service. This is a 1987 vehicle completely refurbished in 2007. This will replace a 1971 version of the same vehicle. The vehicle itself came with no cost to the taxpayers, although the department did need to purchase a water tank and transfer the portable pumps and equipment. It is used for woods and grass fires or other "off-road" incidents.

The department also has on loan to it an "ARGO" off-road vehicle from Somerset County Emergency Management Agency. This is a track type vehicle and will be used for ATV and Snowmobile incidents as well as woods and grass fires.

Both of these vehicles add to the response capabilities for woods fires and off-road incidents.

Emergency calls have slightly increased during the past several years, with most of the increase coming from EMS calls. Over the past few years, this has been the area with the most increase, as major building fires seem to be on the decrease, in line with the rest of Maine and the country. About 10 percent of emergency calls are medically related including injuries from vehicle accidents.

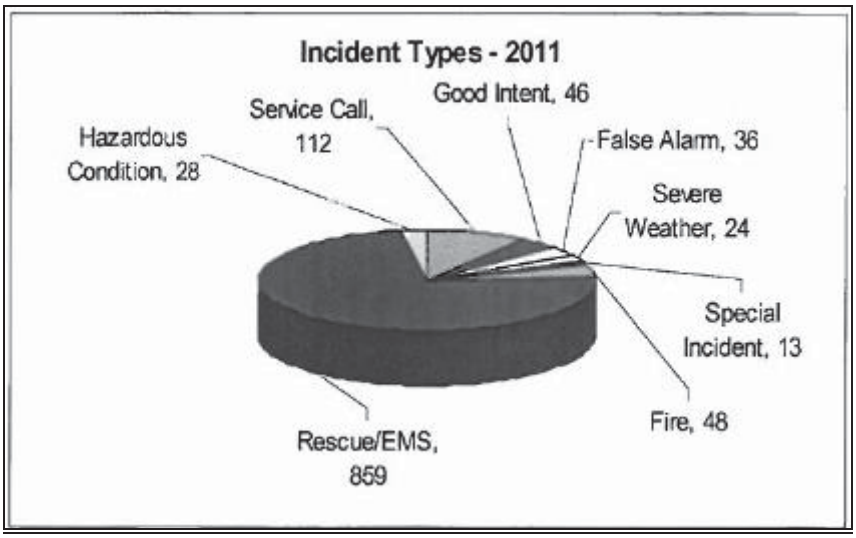
The town's ISO rating is currently 6.9. ISO is a means of setting fire insurance premiums based on the quality of local fire protection. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 is the best.

There are some water supply concerns at North Circle Drive and Sturtevant Drive as it relates to fire hydrants.

The response time from Central Station (first dispatch) to Hinckley is 10-12 minutes, and Larone is 15-18 minutes.

Ambulance service is provided by Delta Ambulance, a private non-profit corporation.

The station is staffed 24 hours per day with two personnel. The Chief works 40 hours per week Monday through Friday, and is on call for larger incidents.



Public Works:

The functioning of the Public Works Department is discussed separately from transportation because of the wider nature of their responsibilities. In addition to roads (both summer and winter maintenance) and sewers, Public Works cares for sidewalks, street trees, parking lots, drainage ditches, clearing of railroad rights-of-way, and 25 acres of parks and cemeteries. Public Works also maintains police and fire vehicles as well as its own fleet.

Public Works manpower consists of a director, foreman, mechanic/spare operator, loader operator, four truck drivers/skilled laborers, a grader operator, sewer mechanic/truck driver, the cemetery foreman and the Public Works secretary. Training and expertise of the employees is well-suited to their mission. Considering the historic size of the department, the number of staff is down slightly.

Equipment for Public Works is budgeted through an annual capital appropriation in the municipal budget. This appropriation (equipment reserve) can be carried over for higher-cost items. The current public works building was built beginning in 1995 to replace the former structure.

The Public Works department provides excellent road maintenance as a priority, as well as snow removal.

Library:

The Lawrence Public Library is administered by the Library Director who is appointed by the Town Manager. The library has historically operated quite autonomously and there still exists an unofficial Advisory Board, which consists of five patrons from the community who regularly meet with the Library Director. The Role of the Advisory Board:

- Recommends a competent and qualified library director for employment.
- Considers and recommends written policies to govern the operation and programs of the library.

- Participates in efforts to secure adequate funds to carry on the library's programs.
- Knows the programs and library needs and keeps abreast of standards and library trends and assists in planning programs.
- Establishes, supports, and participates in planned public relations.
- Advises the library director in the preparation of the budget.
- Supports library legislation in the state and nation.

Funding for the library comes from an annual appropriation of the town, but trust funds, gifts, and other revenues help offset costs to a lesser extent. Over the past few years, the annual cost of operation has averaged around $178,000. There are six staff members, half of whom work part-time. The other two full-time positions include an Assistant Librarian and Children's Librarian. Membership is free for Fairfield residents. Non-resident membership is $25.00 per family per year. Benton patrons are reimbursed $25.00 by their town when they join this library or any other library.

The library is open 40 hours a week and has access to numerous books and audio books from all over the state. It also provides internet access and computer usage to town residents and manages programs for both children and adults. The Friends of the Lawrence Public Library also host "concerts in the park" series each summer

The library building, located on Lawrence Avenue, was donated to the town by E.J. Lawrence in 1901 and is an impressive historical structure.

Cemeteries:

Fairfield has four public cemeteries. There are a few private and family cemeteries and the town oversees multiple trust funds that aid with maintenance costs. The Town has no jurisdiction over private markers, but does try to keep them upright. Maplewood Cemetery is the largest cemetery in town. Several notable residents and historical figures are buried there. The public cemeteries are maintained by the Cemeteries and Parks Department which falls under the Fairfield Public Works Department.

Solid Waste:

Currently, the town has no municipal waste management system, with residents paying private haulers individually to pick up at curbside and transport to Casella's Pine Tree transfer station in Waterville, which is the town's designated transfer station. Residents can also purchase trash stickers for $1.50 per bag (30 lb. bags) at the Town Office. After they purchase the stickers, they then bring their garbage to the transfer station where there is a dumpster reserved for Fairfield residents.

The town's latest report to the state in 2011 estimates the total annual waste to be approximately 4,040 tons of waste with the majority of that being residential. This figure does not include bulky wastes (furniture, tires, and appliances) which may be hauled to the disposal site in Norridgewock.

The Town also offers a fall season hazardous waste drop-off day in the month of October. Residents may bring their hazardous waste items to a designated facility on that day, free of charge. The date and location is advertised in the local Morning Sentinel newspaper and by the town.

The town also runs an annual spring cleanup for a week each May. The town provides curbside pickup of non-household garbage, with certain limitations, and residents appreciate and value this annual service. Additionally, the town contracts with Central Maine Disposal on Gerald Terrace to provide a one-off day for residents to drop off waste materials free of charge.

Recycling:

An issue of more immediate interest is that of recycling. Fairfield has no municipal recycling program or incentives, and state estimates show the town with only a 10.92 percent recycling rate, primarily from credits like the bottle bill. The town therefore may be excluded from possible grant consideration related to solid waste and recycling, etc.

Currently Fairfield contracts with Central Maine Disposal (CMD), which is located behind Lawry Brothers Funeral Home on Main Street, and residents may drop off recyclable materials there at any time. Central Maine Disposal is a full recycling facility, accepting plastics, glass, newspaper, cardboard, etc., but hazardous waste or electronics are not accepted.

There are several private bottle redemption centers in town.

There has been some recent discussion on the need to establish a municipal-managed waste and recycling program within town and it is considered an issue the town needs to address.

Public Water:

The foundation for Fairfield's public water system was established in 1899. Originally, water was pumped to Fairfield village from the Messalonskee watershed, but after several outbreaks of disease, Fairfield opted to join the Kennebec Water District (KWD), obtaining water primarily from China Lake. KWD is reputed to be the oldest public water district in America.

The district has the capacity to pump over 31 million gallons per day (mgd) to its customers in Waterville, Benton, Winslow, Vassalboro, and Fairfield. Fairfield's portion is about 4.5 mgd. The district generally has excess capacity, since manufacturing plants formerly on the system now pump directly from the Kennebec River. Water mains serve downtown Fairfield, Route 201 to Shawmut, and Route 139 to Fairfield Center.

The Fairfield portion of its system has been functioning very well in the past year with few leaks and water quality complaints. The one major project that was recently completed is the upgrading of the pump station that provides a pressure boost to Center Road and the Fairfield Center area.

KWD has had to raise its rates after 2012 but before then had not increased rates since January 1, 2007. They had been able to find efficiencies and implement process changes that have allowed them to hold expense levels relatively stable over that period. Just as importantly, KWD has found new value through the operation of its hydroelectric station on the Messalonskee Stream (M4). KWD has historically used generated power from the facility to offset power costs at its primary pump station and has sold the remaining generation to the grid. In 2011 KWD took steps to certify the station as a Low Impact Hydropower Project. With that distinction, KWD gained renewable energy credits (RECs) which it is able to sell in states requiring a specific minimum percentage of renewable energy in electricity sales portfolios.

The Kennebec Water District Customer Service department is continuing its meter replacement program in all of its communities. In 2012, that department, with assistance from summer interns, installed and activated outside transmitter units on structures in the Fairfield area. This program is part of a three year program to automate meter reading system and add efficiency to reading and billing operations.

There are five public water supply wells located within town (shown on the Water Resources Map in the appendix), which are identified by the Maine Drinking Water Program (MEDWP).

Public Sewer:

Public Sewer service is supplied to Fairfield (Downtown and Shawmut) through a cooperative effort of the municipality and the Kennebec Sanitary Treatment District (KSTD). KSTD maintains a sewage treatment plant with a capacity of 12.7 mgd, and is responsible for the trunk line and pump stations along Route 201. The town has approximately 20 miles of sewer lines (105,600 feet) and several pump stations.

Kennebec Sanitary Treatment District treats the sewage from four communities including the Town of Fairfield. KSTD maintains the Fairfield pump station located on 32 Water Street, which pumps 75 percent of the town's sewage and all of the Town of Benton's sewage to the treatment facility in Waterville. The remaining 25 percent is gravity fed through two flow-measuring meters on the county line behind Huhtamaki and on Savage Street.

As of 2011 Fairfield's average daily flow was 0.64 million gallons, down from 0.65, which is 9.3 percent of the 2.542 million gallons treated annually at KSTD. KSTD treated 7 million gallons per day in 2011, up from 6.7 million gallons the previous year. The District also treated 225,748 gallons of trucked in septage from approximately 225 Fairfield homes not connected to the town's sewer system. The hauler was charged $0.43 per gallon for disposal at KSTD.

Fairfield's latest three year average of sewage flow was of 245 million gallons. This had a net allocation charge of $231,544 (10.6 percent of the district).

Fairfield's past improvement to the sewer system infrastructure continues to be successful in reducing total flow to the District. Both Fairfield's two Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) outlets, and KSTD's three CSO outlets have not lost any combined sewage / storm water surcharging within the sewer system and overflowing into the Kennebec River. This is a major accomplishment that will help reduce the need of costly improvements to both Fairfield's and KSTD's sewer infrastructure in the future.

Even with this success Fairfield will need to continue to work in harmony with the KSTD CSO Master Plan, which outlines a logical approach of actions and budgeting to reduce inflow or infiltration of groundwater into the sewer during wet weather conditions.

The KSTD facility has considerable capacity available to handle any new industries or population growth in all communities.

Health Care:

While not typically a municipal function, basic medical services are an essential regional service. Fairfield is fortunate to have a very high level of quality medical services available close by. In Waterville is the Maine General Thayer Campus and Inland Hospital. Within town are Maine Dartmouth Family Practice and the Four Seasons Family Practice, in addition to other private practices and a variety of specialists. In neighboring Skowhegan is Redington-Fairview Hospital, which is more easily accessible by residents who live at the northern parts of Fairfield. In 2013 Maine General completed a new regional hospital in Augusta to also serve the greater Waterville area.

Convalescent Care and Assisted Living

Fairfield is fortunate to have the Klearview Manor Nursing Home, as well as numerous facilities nearby in Waterville. There are also the Mill Island Apartments and the newly converted Gerald Senior Residences that are primarily senior housing facilities.

Home health care is provided primarily by HealthReach. In-home hospice is provided by HealthReach, while in-patient hospice care is conducted by Maine General staff. The two providers coordinate closely to assure consistent treatment for patients in transition. The Hospice Volunteers of Somerset County make house calls. Assistance Plus is based in Benton and provides similar services to HealthReach.

There is also a mental health rehabilitation center on Route 201.

Education:

Public education for Fairfield residents is provided by School Administrative District MSAD #49, which also serves the communities of Benton, Albion and Clinton. Schools operated by the district are Albion Elementary (grades K-6), Clinton Elementary (grades K-6), Benton Elementary (grades 1-6) Fairfield Primary, (pre-school, kindergarten, and day care), Lawrence Junior High School (grades

7-8), and Lawrence High School (grades 9-12). The total enrollment for the district in 2013/14 was 2,182.

The school system (which employs around 430 people) is a high priority of Fairfield residents. This is evidenced on an annual basis with the adoption of a school budget that is higher than that of some surrounding communities. This strong commitment to education puts an increased level of strain on the municipal budget of over $3.5 million, and as a combined tax rate, it can be hard on many property taxpayers.

Table: Per-pupil Expenditures, 2011-2012 Fiscal Year

School District	Elementary	Secondary
MSAD 49 (Fairfield)	$8,627	$9,565
MSAD 53 (Pittsfield)	$7,411	$9,383
MSAD 54 (Skowhegan)	$8,752	$11,525
RSU 18 (Belgrade)	$8,480	$9,158

For the 2011-2012 fiscal year expenditures within MSAD 49 were roughly on par with other school districts when measured on a per-pupil basis, as seen above. Per-pupil expenditures are the common method for comparing school investments across jurisdictions. Since per-pupil expenditures would be expected to rise as a result of falling enrollments, as has been happening in Fairfield, the fact that MSAD 49 costs are still comparable with neighboring districts demonstrates some fiscal adaptation to changing demographics.

As evidenced by enrollment trends in the demographics chapter, enrollment in public schools has been declining on average one percent per year for much of the past decade. Some of this is to be expected as a result of the children of the baby boom generation having already completed their studies, but the accelerated decline since 2007 may be due to other factors. MSAD 49 enrollments are also in decline, although the non-Fairfield portion of those numbers is declining faster, therefore, Fairfield is assuming more of the cost burden.

Regrettably all the schools in the district have been graded as D except Clinton Elementary which was a C, using the Maine School Performance Grading System uses a familiar A-F scale to bring transparency and accountability to school performance across the state. IT measures scores and changes for math and reading. This is problematic as a good and desirable school system is essential to attract and retain residents to the town.

Elementary Education

Fairfield Primary enrollment is 159. Day care and Stepping Stones early childhood programs are also available.

School Transportation

SAD #49 provides its own busing and transportation. The district's rural school population is sparse, and buses often run with excess capacity. Therefore, additional students locating on rural routes would be unlikely to increase district costs for the foreseeable future. Unless there is a dangerous situation or an empty bus going by, students who live within half a mile of the high school and the junior high school walk. Budget cuts have led to more neighborhood pickups over individual stops.

Lawrence Junior High and Lawrence High School

These schools have an enrollment of 351 and 680, respectively.

There has been some call to look to improving the standards of all the schools in Fairfield, as better schools lead to a much more desirable place to live along with the obvious social and economic advantages. The town as an entity can do little, however, and the School District would have to be engaged to deal with these issues.

Goodwill-Hinckley/ Maine Academy of Natural Sciences

Goodwill-Hinckley is located on Route 201 in Fairfield's Hinckley village. This school had been operating as a group home and school for teenagers for almost a century. Their mission was to provide a home and helping hand for young people and families. The organization has helped more than 6,000 youth from Maine and other states. Historically, Good Will-Hinckley has been home to youth facing complex academic, social, behavioral, and emotional challenges. The school has experienced substantial changes in its organization and the 1,200 acre campus which now serves high school students as an alternative high school and charter school known as the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences. Making use of their farmland and forest, they designed a rigorous curriculum focused on agriculture, forestry, and sustainability with a strong emphasis on project-based, hands-on learning

Current enrollment at the school is approximately 50 and the school's goal is to grow to more than 100 students within the next several years. The school focuses on agriculture, sustainability, forestry, workforce skills training, and independent living, and offers a unique high school experience for the active, real-world learner.

Kennebec Montessori School

There is another privately funded school in town, Kennebec Montessori School, which offers primary and elementary Montessori programs to 90 children from ages 3 to 9. Their four classrooms are all multi-age: three primary classrooms (ages 3 to 6) and one elementary classroom (Grades 1 to 3). They also have a before and after school care program and a summer Program that runs for eight weeks each year, offering a variety of activities, both inside and out.

Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC)

KVCC's main campus is located at 92 Western Avenue adjacent to the Interstate. Its second campus, known as the Harold Alfond Campus, is located in Hinckley off Route 201 on what had formerly been Good Will-Hinckley's middle campus. The school provides post-secondary education in numerous technical and liberal arts disciplines. KVCC has been expanding for a number of years and the acquisition of the Hinckley campus represents its largest project in recent history.

Kennebec Valley Community College is one of seven community colleges which operates under the authority of the Maine Community College System Board of Trustees, located on a 70-acre campus on Western Avenue and 583-acre campus off Route 201 in Hinckley. KVCC is a public, non-profit, post-secondary institution supported in part by State legislative appropriations and federal funds, and is accredited and/or approved by the following agencies:

- New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc. Commission on Institutions of Higher Education;
- the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs;
- the Maine Board of Emergency Medical Services;
- the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM);
- the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Programs on recommendation of the Medical Assisting Education Review Board;
- the Maine State Board of Nursing;
- the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission;
- the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education;
- the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education of the American Physical Therapy Association;
- the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT);
- the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care;
- the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Professions on recommendation of the Joint Review Committee on Education in Diagnostic Medical Sonography;
- the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP)

Part Ten: Fiscal Capacity

Overview:

Similar to other towns in Maine, Fairfield is limited in the methods it may use to raise revenues. The property tax is an overly burdened yet stable source of revenues. The Town has always been conscious about the need to develop and maintain a strong and diverse non-residential tax base with which to support municipal services. The strong ties between the Town and its major employers have been important over time in maintaining taxpayer willingness to contribute to municipal needs and the community's quality of life.

Fairfield offers a level of service reflecting the needs and priorities of the community utilizing a combination of public and private resources. For example, a full-time public police department provides protection, while taxpayers have opted for private waste hauling. Fairfield boasts a full-time library and has a well-used community center in addition to other core services.

The Town has a reputation in the region for having high taxes. Fairfield is one of the larger towns in the service area and supports a broad but older infrastructure. In addition, it has higher than average tax-exempt property, due to the type of facilities that locate in regional service centers. However, the Town is in a stable financial position. Fairfield's 2013 tax rate of $20.25 per thousand dollars of valuation is certified as 100 percent. Taxes reflect the community's strong commitment to education expressed by a voter-approved local option budget (that amount over and above the minimum required to match allocated State funds). $10.73, or 55.93 percent, of total expenses is allocated to SAD#49; $7.36, or 36.36 percent, supports municipal services; and $2.16, or 10.67 percent, supports Somerset County.

With its relatively high valuation compared to other towns in the school district, Fairfield carries 45.1 percent of the four-town school district's financial burden. Without the additional local option funding, the Town's tax rate would be lower; however, the impact on educational services provided would also be noticeable if the local option were not funded. During 2012-2013, the four-town tax base is supporting a high proportion (about 33.2 percent) of the cost of education in SAD #49, with the State contributing 61 percent and SAD#49's Fund Balance and Additional Revenues picking up the remaining 5.8 percent.

While this chapter will not focus on educational or county budgets, it is important to understand the significant impact these assessments have on the municipal tax rate. In 2012, the municipal budget, inclusive of the capital budget, totaled 54.78 percent of all town expenses; Somerset County represented 8.87 percent and SAD#49's portion amounted to 36.35 percent. While a dollar spent in any of these programs has the same eventual impact on taxpayers, it is helpful for taxpayers to realize the level of financial support going to various services.

The Town has a clear accounting and budgeting system in place which makes it very easy to track expenditures by program and line item. This enables town officials and members of the public to readily understand how municipal funds are spent. A summary of expenses and revenues by account for 2010-2014 appears in the table on the following seven (7) pages.

Table: History of Actual Expenditures (2010-2014)

Account	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	5-year change	Av. ann. change
ADMINISTRATION	$ 469,562.68	$ 481,905.71	$ 492,975.81	$ 514,733.92	$ 566,349.03	$ 96,786.35	3.8%
ASSESSING	$ 50,769.76	$ 49,811.84	$ 49,811.84	$ 54,559.96	$ 56,606.00	$ 5,836.24	2.2%
HEALTH OFFICER	$ 799.77	$ 784.68	$ 799.47	$ 399.88	$ -	$ (799.77)	-100.0%
PLUMBING INSPECTOR	$ 8,420.11	$ 8,261.24	$ 8,426.60	$ 5,614.80	$ -	$ (8,420.11)	-100.0%
INSURANCE	$ 107,108.88	$ 125,115.61	$ 127,181.11	$ 126,995.48	$ 151,286.63	$ 44,177.75	7.2%
ELECTIONS	$ 6,611.91	$ 5,223.35	$ 5,372.19	$ 5,139.15	$ 5,799.92	$ (811.99)	-2.6%
LEGAL	$ 8,304.11	$ 9,619.93	$ 10,000.00	$ 18,031.52	$ 11,216.60	$ 2,912.49	6.2%
LIBRARY	$ 176,276.00	$ 175,593.54	$ 176,722.81	$ 170,766.61	$ 179,638.00	$ 3,362.00	0.4%
POLICE DEPARTMENT	$ 917,184.00	$ 897,205.25	$ 860,600.17	$ 877,174.91	$ 837,058.81	$ (80,125.19)	-1.8%
FIRE DEPARTMENT	$ 722,603.00	$ 652,977.85	$ 695,183.68	$ 695,494.66	$ 719,223.87	$ (3,379.13)	-0.1%
STREET LIGHTS	$ 55,360.23	$ 60,299.83	$ 64,000.00	$ 66,254.48	$ 66,927.71	$ 11,567.48	3.9%
HYDRANTS	$ 119,325.36	$ 119,325.36	$ 119,325.36	$ 120,816.93	$ 125,291.64	$ 5,966.28	1.0%
PUBLIC WORKS	$ 881,198.41	$ 914,901.13	$ 933,164.45	$ 959,477.87	$ 1,004,769.97	$ 123,571.56	2.7%
MUNICIPAL DEBT	$ 366,856.98	$ 703,662.73	$ 460,262.26	$ 410,606.27	$ 377,549.87	$ 10,692.89	0.6%
COMMUNITY CENTER	$ 28,588.45	$ 26,787.09	$ 27,689.94	$ 29,861.40	$ 29,344.03	$ 755.58	0.5%
CEMETERIES & PARKS	$ 70,401.19	$ 69,735.59	$ 66,480.94	$ 88,677.41	$ 77,864.03	$ 7,462.84	2.0%
SOLID WASTE	$ 507,491.23	$ 466,584.03	$ 478,860.00	$ 568,700.83	$ 554,591.63	$ 47,100.40	1.8%
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT	$ 25,000.00	$ -	$ 25,000.00	$ 25,000.00	$ 25,000.00	$ -	0.0%
EQUIPMENT RESERVE	$ 50,000.00	$ 25,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 100,000.00	$ 50,000.00	14.9%
PAVING	$ 195,000.00	$ 193,173.12	$ 231,000.00	$ 210,000.00	$ 220,000.00	$ 25,000.00	2.4%
ECON DEV	$ 90,000.00	$ 10,236.07	$ 15,540.75	$ 17,000.00	$ 15,166.50	$ (74,833.50)	-30.0%
CONTINGENCY	$ 5,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ (5,000.00)	-100.0%
COMPUTERS	$ 7,500.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ (7,500.00)	-100.0%
REVALUATION RESERVE	$ 20,000.00	$ -	$ 20,000.00	$ 20,000.00	$ 20,000.00	$ -	0.0%
MSAD 49	$ 3,069,736.39	$ 3,092,628.45	$ 3,315,437.06	$ 3,611,739.61	$ 3,803,702.62	$ 733,966.23	4.4%
COUNTY	$ 840,862.33	$ 899,597.56	$ 880,877.24	$ 880,976.66	$ 840,193.45	$ (668.88)	0.0%
SEWER ENTERPRISE	$ 13,720.00	$ 13,720.00	$ 13,720.00	$ -	$ -	$ (13,720.00)	-100.0%
REG GROWTH COUNCIL	$ 12,345.00	$ 12,654.00	$ -	$ 12,654.00	$ 12,654.00	$ 309.00	0.5%
FIRST PARK	$ 34,925.51	$ 36,359.33	$ 36,021.20	$ 35,367.69	$ 35,460.47	$ 534.96	0.3%
GENERAL ASSISTANCE	$ 6,379.35	$ 24,233.36	$ 24,000.00	$ 14,738.36	$ 8,014.87	$ 1,635.52	4.7%
PAL	$ 39,000.00	$ 39,000.00	$ 39,000.00	$ 35,582.00	$ 35,582.00	$ (3,418.00)	-1.8%
PAL MAINTENANCE	$ 25,000.00	$ 25,000.00	$ 25,000.00	$ -	$ -	$ (25,000.00)	-100.0%
WTVL BOYS/GIRLS CLUB	$ 2,000.00	$ -	$ 180.00	$ 140.00	$ 240.00	$ (1,760.00)	-34.6%
KVCOG	$ 8,106.00	$ 8,106.00	$ 8,106.00	$ 8,463.00	$ 8,463.00	$ 357.00	0.9%
KVCAP	$ 2,500.00	$ 2,500.00	$ 2,500.00	$ 2,500.00	$ 2,500.00	$ -	0.0%

MEM DAY CELEB	$	1,500.00	$	1,500.00	$	1,500.00	$	1,500.00	$	1,500.00	$	-	0.0%
KV HEADSTART	$	2,000.00	$	1,500.00	$	3,200.00	$	3,000.00	$	2,500.00	$	500.00	4.6%
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	$	1,000.00	$	500.00	$	500.00	$	500.00	$	500.00	$	(500.00)	-12.9%
FAMILY VIOLENCE	$	1,500.00	$	1,500.00	$	1,500.00	$	1,500.00	$	1,500.00	$	-	0.0%
RED CROSS	$	1,000.00	$	1,000.00	$	400.00	$	-	$	-	$	(1,000.00)	-100.0%
CHILDREN'S CENTER	$	1,000.00	$	1,000.00	$	1,000.00	$	-	$	-	$	(1,000.00)	-100.0%
HISTORICAL SOCIETY	$	6,000.00	$	3,000.00	$	3,000.00	$	5,000.00	$	3,000.00	$	(3,000.00)	-12.9%
KVMH CENTER	$	6,524.00	$	-	$	3,000.00	$	3,000.00	$	2,000.00	$	(4,524.00)	-21.1%
HOMELESS SHELTER	$	1,800.00	$	1,800.00	$	1,800.00	$	1,800.00	$	1,800.00	$	-	0.0%
SPECTRUM GENERATIONS	$	4,330.00	$	4,000.00	$	4,000.00	$	2,000.00	$	2,500.00	$	(1,830.00)	-10.4%
SR CITIZEN DAY	$	900.00	$	900.00	$	900.00	$	900.00	$	900.00	$	-	0.0%
CATH CHARTIES HOME	$	2,500.00	$	2,000.00	$	2,000.00	$	1,000.00	$	-	$	(2,500.00)	-100.0%
HOSPICE OF WATERVILLE	$	1,000.00	$	1,000.00	$	1,000.00	$	1,000.00	$	1,250.00	$	250.00	4.6%
S.E.D.C.	$	100.00	$	100.00	$	100.00	$	100.00	$	100.00	$	-	0.0%
FAIR INTERFAITH FOOD PANTRY	$	3,000.00	$	3,000.00	$	3,000.00	$	6,000.00	$	6,000.00	$	3,000.00	14.9%
SNOWMOBILE CLUB	$	2,912.80	$	2,409.68	$	2,462.64	$	1,575.56	$	2,072.06	$	(840.74)	-6.6%
CATV	$	30,000.00	$	24,887.47	$	18,449.37	$	16,647.59	$	15,187.71	$	(14,812.29)	-12.7%
TOTAL BUDGET	**$**	**9,011,003.45**	**$**	**9,205,099.80**	**$**	**9,416,050.89**	**$**	**9,782,990.55**	**$**	**9,931,304.42**	$	920,300.97	2.0%
TAX RATE (per $1000)	$	18.95	$	19.20	$	19.20	$	19.70	$	20.25	$	1.30	1.3%

Note for this table and overleaf: These figures represent actual expenses, not the figures that had been budgeted. These figures provide an accurate picture of the true cost of municipal government.

Table: Actual Revenues From Sources Other Than Property Tax: 2010-2014

ACCOUNT	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	5-year change	Av. ann. change
State Revenue Sharing	$ 577,361.00	$ 618,823.00	$ 714,755.94	$ 714,988.77	$ 485,646.78	$ (91,714.22)	-3.4%
Auto Excise	$ 891,348.00	$ 887,237.00	$ 900,559.78	$ 950,434.34	$ 994,295.27	$ 102,947.27	2.2%
Boat Excise	$ 6,317.00	$ 5,538.00	$ 6,229.50	$ 5,674.40	$ 5,695.59	$ (621.41)	-2.0%
Snowmobile Reimb.	$ 2,912.80	$ 2,410.00	$ 2,462.64	$ 1,575.56	$ 2,072.06	$ (840.74)	-6.6%
Interest on Taxes	$ 49,249.00	$ 43,074.00	$ 38,246.78	$ 39,981.25	$ 44,739.02	$ (4,509.98)	-1.9%
Lien costs	$ 19,625.00	$ 13,230.00	$ 15,901.24	$ 15,451.87	$ 18,421.71	$ (1,203.29)	-1.3%
Misc. Clerk Fees	$ 11,740.00	$ 4,946.00	$ 4,406.42	$ 3,811.69	$ 4,230.22	$ (7,509.78)	-18.5%
Plumbing permits	$ 2,343.00	$ 1,854.00	$ 3,705.00	$ 4,530.00	$ 4,211.25	$ 1,868.25	12.4%
Community Ctr. Rental	$ 17,514.00	$ 20,260.00	$ 21,250.00	$ 19,000.00	$ 13,325.00	$ (4,189.00)	-5.3%
Land Use Permits	$ 16,127.00	$ 9,522.00	$ 14,732.35	$ 22,733.73	$ 11,252.82	$ (4,874.18)	-6.9%
Library Revenue	$ 3,683.00	$ 3,233.00	$ 3,495.89	$ 2,716.54	$ 2,954.78	$ (728.22)	-4.3%
Agent Fees	$ 25,670.00	$ 26,220.00	$ 25,566.00	$ 25,738.00	$ 26,192.00	$ 522.00	0.4%
Trash Sticker Revenue	$ 6,627.00	$ 6,347.00	$ 5,966.50	$ 4,973.00	$ 5,231.75	$ (1,395.25)	-4.6%
Trash Hauler Revenue	$ 257,957.00	$ 261,929.00	$ 306,448.85	$ 336,323.82	$ 323,269.87	$ 65,312.87	4.6%
Perc Rebate	$ 113,150.00	$ 111,254.00	$ 101,657.93	$ 120,059.05	$ 102,369.16	$ (10,780.84)	-2.0%
Investment Income	$ 1,491.00	$ 1,778.00	$ 476.52	$ (6,385.40)	$ -	$ (1,491.00)	-100.0%
Police Misc. Income	$ 5,286.00	$ 7,714.00	$ 3,277.01	$ 3,792.12	$ 5,386.30	$ 100.30	0.4%
Public Works Income	$ 19,926.00	$ 16,686.00	$ 27,897.49	$ 16,550.72	$ 17,807.97	$ (2,118.03)	-2.2%
LRAP-Local Roads	$ 84,143.00	$ 74,820.00	$ 77,528.00	$ 77,024.00	$ 78,676.00	$ (5,467.00)	-1.3%
Grave Openings	$ 3,750.00	$ 5,800.00	$ 6,575.00	$ 4,752.00	$ 7,950.00	$ 4,200.00	16.2%
Chinet Bond Income	$ 17,600.00	$ 182,700.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ (17,600.00)	-100.0%
KVCC Mortgage Pymt	$ -	$ 85,408.07	$ 94,907.00	$ 94,907.00	$ 94,907.00	$ 94,907.00	
Sewer Entp. Income	$ 143,677.00	$ 167,105.00	$ 167,989.72	$ 175,125.00	$ 174,662.00	$ 30,985.00	4.0%
Benton Fire Protection	$ 115,000.00	$ 120,000.00	$ 130,000.00	$ 140,000.00	$ 150,000.00	$ 35,000.00	5.5%
First Park Revenue	$ 16,751.00	$ 14,379.00	$ 14,772.73	$ 14,981.57	$ 15,110.71	$ (1,640.29)	-2.0%
Rec'd from SAD #49	$ 37,646.00	$ 40,160.12	$ 41,649.67	$ 41,813.60	$ 6,000.00	$ (31,646.00)	-30.7%
State of Maine GA	$ 4,212.20	$ 14,556.49	$ 12,828.86	$ 11,148.41	$ 4,132.16	$ (80.04)	-0.4%
TOTAL REVENUES	**$2,451,106.00**	**$2,746,983.68**	**$2,743,286.82**	**$2,841,701.04**	**$2,598,539.42**	$ 147,433.42	1.2%

Note for this table and overleaf: These figures represent actual revenues received, not the estimates that had been budgeted. These figures provide an accurate picture of the true level of revenues other than property taxes.

In general, revenues had remained stable through the 2009 recession, with the exception of Excise Taxes, which have rebounded since 2010. Other revenue sources most affected by the economic slump were State Revenue Sharing and Investment Income. Over the past five years, the revenue totals have increased by a modest 1.2 percent or roughly $147,000 per year on average. This has enabled the Town to offset some of the recent increases in education costs to keep the tax rate stable.

State Revenue Sharing, which is based on state sales and income tax revenues, decreased significantly as the recession took hold and the Legislature began raiding those program funds. State Revenue Sharing would likely recover if the program was fully funded by the Legislature. Unfortunately, no reversal of current policy is evident as the state is still addressing its own fiscal hardship. Investment Income is still significantly lower and economists predict that interest rates will be low for the next few years; however, the town's fund balance continues to grow, which will also aid in the recovery of investment income.

Excise taxes are starting to pick up as the economy comes back and this revenue source will likely continue to increase slightly each year.

The following tables display information about Fairfield's tax base. Table below displays the significant proportion (14 percent) of the Town's tax base that is exempt from taxation. The Town could explore fees in lieu of taxes to recover some support for especially relevant municipal services (e.g. roads and public safety), thereby expanding the towns income.

Table: Exempt Real Estate Property

EXEMPT CATEGORY	2009	2010	2011
US and State of Maine	$9,915,100	$9,796,800	$10,808,000
Public Municipal Corporation	$18,366,800	$18,307,800	$18,300,000
Benevolent & Charitable	$14,726,400	$14,747,200	$13,676,000
Literary & Scientific	$208,400	$208,400	$208,400
Churches & Parsonages	$4,211,400	$4,227,100	$4,429,800
Fraternal Organization	$123,800	$123,800	$123,800
Veterans	$568,800	$568,800	$568,700
Public Water Supply	$2,324,100	$2,324,100	$2,324,100
Pollution Control	$1,786,100	$1,783,400	$1,783,400
Blind Exemptions	$16,000	$12,000	$16,000
Other (KVCC, SAD#49)	$1,182,000	$1,302,000	$1,272,000
TOTAL EXEMPT PROPERTY	$53,428,900	$53,401,400	$53,510,200
STATE VALUATION	$366,700,000	$385,700,000	$381,300,000
PERCENT EXEMPT	14.6%	13.6%	14.03%

SOURCE: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summaries, Maine Bureau of Taxation

Table: Real And Personal Property By Type										
Year	**Land**	**Distribution and Transmission**	**Dams**	**Total Land**	**Buildings**	**Total Land & Building**	**Production Machinery & Equipment**	**Business Equipment**	**Other**	**Total Personal Property**
2009	$100,489,300	$5,676,045	$17,031,000	$123,196,345	$230,405,100	$330,894,400	$21,728,800	$864,900	$2,467,500	$25,061,200
2010	$103,586,500	$6,019,500	$17,031,000	$126,637,000	$234,214,200	$337,800,700	$20,872,100	$951,400	$2,063,200	$23,886,700
2011	$103,156,100	$5,191,000	$17,436,500	$125,783,600	$233,966,200	$337,122,300	$20,530,300	$959,500	$2,337,800	$23,827,600
SOURCE: Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summaries, Maine Bureau of Taxation										

Regional Comparison:

Compared with surrounding communities and county averages in 2011 (the latest year for which comparative population, valuation, and tax rates are available), Fairfield's full value tax rate in 2013 was high at $20.25, being well over the county average of 15.89% but not the highest in the area (Waterville). Within the other communities of the school district, you can see the tax commitments are low and the rates are low as well.

Also interesting to note is that Skowhegan's valuation is much higher than that of Fairfield's. Even though the valuation is much higher, the tax commitment is also much higher. Skowhegan's per capita assessment is $2,016 in comparison to Fairfield's at $1,029.

Table: Relative Tax Burden - 2011, Fairfield And Reference Communities

JURISDICTION	2011 POPULATION	2011 STATE VALUATION	PER CAPITA VALUATION	2011 COMMITMENT	FULL VALUE TAX RATE	PER CAPITA ASSESSMENT
Fairfield	6,735	$381,300,000	$56,614.70	$6,930,238	$19.20	$1,029
Skowhegan	8,589	$1,100,250,000	$128,099.90	$17,315,924	$15.86	$2,016
Waterville	15,722	$810,050,000	$51,523.34	$15,477,074	$24.65	$984
Winslow	7794	$580,150,000	$74,435.46	$8,743,500	$15.50	$1,122
Benton	2,732	$171,950,000	$62,939.24	$1,597,188	$11.50	$585
Clinton	3,486	$165,100,000	$47,360.87	$2,171,931	$12.54	$623
Oakland	6,240	$500,650,000	$80,232.37	$6,568,524	$13.05	$1,053
Norridgewock	3,367	$169,300,000	$50,282.15	2,489,958	$20.50	$740
Smithfield	1,033	$110,350,000	$106,824.78	$1,485,268	$14.55	$1,438
Somerset County	52,228	$4,358,800,000	$83,457.15	$65,801,719	$14.97	$1,260
Kennebec County	122,151	$10,208,650,000	$83,574.02	$140,884,011	$13.54	$1,153
Waldo County	38,786	$4,792,900,000	$123,572.94	$56,913,118	$12.19	$1,467

SOURCE: 2010 Census; Maine Revenue Services
2010 State Equalized Valuation and Tax Rates: 2010 Municipal Valuation Return Statistical Summary

Accounting Practices:

The Town has its financial records audited annually. The 2012 audit was performed by the firm of RHR Smith & Company and includes a detailed description of all Town funds and accounting practices. The report was favorable in its characterization of the Town's approach to financial management. In 2012, the General Fund balance at year-end was calculated at $1,133,430. This does not quite satisfy the 3-month expenditure cushion that accountants recommend be kept on-hand, but the Town has made great strides during the past several years to rebuild fund balance to that level. In fiscal year 2014, the Town dipped into the fund balance to cushion another significant cut in state revenue sharing. This will result in slower growth of the fund balance.

The audit indicated that the Town invested funds wisely to protect the funds, while having cash available as needed and earning as much interest that can be earned in a down economy. The Town's deposits are insured by federal depository insurance and consequently not exposed to custodial credit risk.

Grant Income:

Grant income is kept out of the regular budget, so it does not appear in the statements displayed earlier in this section. The town had little in the way of grant income except the previously mentioned Housing Repair Program Grant for $250,000 via CDBG in 2013.

Special Revenue Funds:

The following special revenue funds have been established to hold and account for specially designated resources that are restricted by law or administrative action:

Capital Project Funds:
The Town also maintains separate capital project funds which often receive transfers and intergovernmental revenue. The Town maintains a capital equipment replacement plan and fully funds that plan each year. The Town has a capital equipment account, capital improvement account, and the three larger departments (Police, Fire, and Public Works) have reserve funds for contingency or special appropriations.

Fiduciary Funds

These funds are used to account for resources held for the benefit of parties outside the Town of Fairfield. These funds are not reflected in the government-wide financial statements because the resources of these funds are not available to support the Town's own programs. The accounting used for fiduciary funds are much like that of proprietary funds. They use the accrual basis of accounting.

As of the end of the 2012 financial year there was $1,045,957 in Fiduciary funds.

Proprietary Funds:

The Town of Fairfield maintains one proprietary fund, the sewer department. These funds are used to show activities that operate more like those of commercial enterprises. Proprietary funds provide the same type of information as the government-wide financial statements, only in more detail. Like the government-wide financial statements, proprietary fund financial statements use the accrual basis of accounting. No reconciliation is needed between the government-wide financial statements for business-type activities and the proprietary fund financial statements.

For the Enterprise Sewer Fund:

Total assets: $3,566,259

Total liabilities: $2,121,035

Total liabilities and net assets: $3,566,259

Current Debt Service:

At June 30, 2014 the Town had $3,022,766 in bonds and notes outstanding versus $3,845,944 last year, a decrease of over 21.4 percent. Other obligations include accrued vacation pay and sick leave.

Tax Collection Rate:

Despite efforts to manage the Town's funds as frugally as possible, the property tax burden is high and unaffordable to many of the Town's taxpayers. If non-payment at the end of the fiscal year is a reliable indicator, the Town's collection rate on 6/30/2014 was 95.70%.

While voting to support a high local option portion of the school budget, all are affected by the result, regardless of ability to pay. Tax liens were placed on 6.7% of the real estate parcels for which tax bills were issued in 2014. The collection rate for current year taxes has been running in a similar range. Town officials, both elected and appointed, remain vigilant at trying to minimize the tax burden.

Summary and Findings:

This Comprehensive Plan finds that the Town Council and administration have been doing a good job in providing the taxpayers with value for their dollar. The Town Council is committed to the efficient and cost-effective delivery of public services. The council continues to review the current mix of public services and develop budget recommendations that protect the provision of essential services, set priorities, and emphasize the need for tax relief. The Town Council is striving to lower taxation with respect to the municipal budget and seeks innovative and sustainable solutions to that end. They are also committed to limiting the need to incur new public debt by reviewing and updating a multi-year capital plan that addresses the town's needs.

III. Recommendations

One: General Recommendations

Two: Land Use Plan

Three: Capital Investment Planning Process

Four: Regional Coordination

One: General Recommendations

This section of the Plan lists general recommendations, in the form of policies and strategies, for each of the elements of the plan. These recommendations are intended to address the issues raised in the review and analysis of the elements in Section II, *Community Assessment*. The matrix also shows a suggested implementation timing and responsible party.

For the purpose of this chapter, the implementation priority is divided into near-term, mid-term, and long-term:

- "Near-term" is presumed to be activities which can be completed within two years. These are primarily changes to Zoning and other ordinances, and easily-achievable actions.
- "Mid-term" activities will be commenced and/or completed between two and five years after adoption. These consist of lower-priority activities or those which require additional planning or preparation.
- "Long-term" activities are those which are more nebulous, and for which the path to implementation has not yet come into focus.
- The term "ongoing" is used to identify strategies which are currently in place and should continue.

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
HISTORIC RESOURCES: Historic buildings, sites, and artifacts are common in Fairfield, and remain a connection with our valued heritage. Like many towns in Maine, we have an active historical society, but insufficient resources to do all the identification and preservation work that is warranted. Some historic and archeological resources have been identified in Fairfield, but more work is needed to preserve and restore them. **Goal: To preserve the town's historic and archeological resources for the enjoyment and education of future generations.**		
1. The Town recognizes the importance of buildings and sites of historic significance and will assist the Fairfield Historical Society to further develop historic listings.	1.1 – Support the Historical Society in efforts to integrate and catalog historical documents with the Lawrence Library. 1.2 – Conduct a comprehensive inventory of historical buildings in Fairfield, for potential identification and inclusion on state, or federal historic listings. 1.3 – Establish a historical marker program for Mill Island and other historical sites and buildings in Fairfield.	Historical Society, Library, near term. Historical Society, near term. Historical Society, mid term.
2. The Town will prevent disturbance of archeological resources by regulating development in areas likely to contain those resources.	2.1 – Retain the existing provisions in the Land Use Ordinance that require applicants to identify and protect archeological resources in sensitive areas. 2.2 – Make MHPC information and map of areas with high archeological potential widely available.	Planning Board, ongoing Code Enforcement Officer, near term

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
3. Preserve and Enhance Historical Waterfront	3.1 – Encourage the development of an archeological inventory of the Kennebec River shore. Including its industrial heritage, with possible signage for public use / tourism.	Town Council, staff, KRI, ongoing
NATURAL RESOURCES: Fairfield's land and water assets provide a necessary buffer against environmental degradation and support for resource-based economic activity such as forestry and farming. Water-based assets provide a basis for recreation and tourism, as well as sustaining life. Protection of these assets from over-development is an important function of this Plan. **Goals: To protect Fairfield's natural resources, including wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, shorelands, scenic vistas, and unique natural areas. To protect the quality and manage the quantity of Fairfield's water resources, including the Kennebec River, its tributaries, and groundwater aquifers.**		
4. Provide strong regulatory protection for critical natural resources, including surface and groundwater, wildlife habitat, and wetlands.	4.1 – Continue strong standards in the Land Use Regulation, subdivision, shoreland zoning, and site plan ordinances regarding pollution, erosion control, and preservation of natural features. Update to current practices as necessary.	Planning Board, ongoing
	4.2 – Add protection provisions to zoning ordinance and incorporate maps and information from Beginning with Habitat into analysis of protected areas.	Planning Board, near term
	4.3 – Add wellhead protection zone standards to land use ordinances.	Planning Board, near term

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
	4.4 – Continue to work with Somerset County to develop and maintain an all-hazard emergency response plan.	EM Director, ongoing
	4.5 – Continue to keep the Flood Ordinance up to date.	Planning Board, ongoing
	4.6 – Educate the public on septic system upkeep, etc., through the enforcement of the plumbing code and sewer ordinance	CEO, ongoing
	4.7 – Continue erosion control training for Best Management Practices by Public Works employees.	Town Manager, ongoing
5. Engage in community-wide and regional efforts for the Town's principal environmental asset: Kennebec River	5.1 – Research and consider joining a local Conservation Commission or similar regional conservation efforts	Town Manager, ongoing
	5.2 – Research and consider becoming involved with a local Land Trust.	Town Manager, ongoing
	5.3 – Encourage MSAD #49, KVCC, MeANS, and town events to utilize the Kennebec River as a learning resource. Provide landowner education for protection of critical natural resources.	Town Manager, ongoing

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
RECREATION AND CULTURE: Fairfield has some facilities that provide indoor and outdoor recreation and cultural opportunities for area residents. Access to recreation and cultural facilities is available for a wide spectrum of interests and needs especially in the region. With such a broad range of opportunities, obviously there are several areas available for improvement. **Goal: Promote and protect the availability of indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities for Fairfield citizens, including access to surface waters.**		
6. Improve water access to the Kennebec River.	6.1 – Improve and promote non-motorized boat access to Kennebec River. 6.2 – Continue working towards the creation of a linear riverfront park. 6.3 – Investigate the feasibility of a pavilion and removable dock on parkland adjacent to the river.	Town Manager, mid term Town Council, ongoing Town Council, long term
7. Continue improvements to town parks and open spaces, including local recreation programs.	7.1 – Consider the position of Recreation Director, perhaps collaborating with MSAD #49 and/or PAL. 7.2 – Expand opportunities in parks, possibly through establishing non-sport activities for adults, community gardens, and more community events. 7.3 – Continue to maintain current town facilities and promote access to facilities.	Town Council, mid-term Town Manager, near term Town Manager, ongoing

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
8. Improve local recreational trail opportunities.	8.1 – Continue to support snowmobile groups with trail maintenance/development.	Town Council, ongoing
	8.2 – Improve/maintain walking paths in urban portion of town.	Public Works, ongoing
	8.3 – Continue to work with local trails groups (KM Trails) for more trail opportunities through town and region.	Town Manager, mid term
	8.4 – Create a local or regional Bicycle / Pedestrian Plan.	Town Manager, mid term
9. Improve information about and access to local cultural offerings.	9.1 – Adequately support the needs of the library, including proper maintenance of the building.	Town Council, ongoing
	9.2 – Promote the local arts community and creative projects in cooperation with local organizations and Maine Commission for the Arts.	Town Manager, ongoing
	9.3 – Encourage newspapers to expand coverage of municipal affairs. Improve and update the town website as necessary.	Town Manager, ongoing

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: The local economy is the top priority of the Town of Fairfield. The Town is fighting trends that are not favorable, such as being in a rural part of the state and lack of investment capital. But Fairfield has several assets as well – good infrastructure, interstate access, and good quality of life. Fairfield must continue to do a good job of building on those assets, cooperating with private business and regional economic players, and maintaining a focus on suitable matches if it is to succeed in building a regional employment center. **Goal: To promote an economic climate that increases job opportunities and overall economic well-being.**		
10. Continue to work with regional development partners and public-private initiatives to identify and develop new business and employment opportunities.	10.1 – Participate in regional economic development planning efforts of Central Maine Growth Council, Kennebec Valley Council of Governments and Somerset Economic Development Corporation. 10.2 – Expand cooperation with the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce. 10.3 – Continue to utilize TIF districts to enable greater economic growth.	Town Manager, ongoing Town Manager, near term Town Manager, ongoing
11. Improve access to funding, business, and training opportunities for prospective entrepreneurs and job seekers.	11.1 – Promote access to the Small Business Development Center for business advice and counseling. 11.2 – Seek out and develop opportunities for more skill training through adult education, vocational programs, KVCC, or employer-based programs.	CMGC, ongoing CMGC, near term

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
12. Target development efforts to specific commercial clusters within the town – downtown, Western Ave and the Industrial Park	12.1 – Continue to market the industrial park and location tax credits such as Tax Increment Financing. 12.2 – Develop a comprehensive strategy and master plan for the Downtown with improved gateway signs, parking, and pedestrian access, etc. 12.3 – Host a meeting/series with downtown merchants to identify infrastructure and parking improvements, façade improvements, and amenities for the Main Street block.	ECDC, ongoing Town Council, Manager, ECDC, near term ECDC, near term
13. Ensure that local economic development remains a priority, with local energy and resources dedicated to economic development efforts.	13.1 – Continue supporting the Economic Development Committee and ensure that adequate staff resources are dedicated to economic development activities. 13.2 – Identify appropriate grant programs to further the Town's economic development strategies in the most cost-effective manner possible. 13.3 – Continue to recognize the value of Agriculture and Forestry and an increasing economic driver and work to support and foster these activities.	Town Council, Town Manager, mid term Town Manager, ECDC, CMGC, ongoing Planning Board, ECDC, Town Manager, ongoing

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
HOUSING: Fairfield has a diverse housing stock, including urban and rural neighborhoods, classic architecture, contemporary homes, and mobile homes. Considering the changing demographic structure of the town, the town can anticipate need for more rental housing and senior housing. Also, student housing will be needed with the continuing college expansions. Affordability is not an issue for owner-occupied homes, but it is an issue for rentals, partly because of the tight market for them. Local land use standards protect residential neighborhoods to some extent from commercial encroachment. **Goal: To encourage and promote a range of affordable, decent housing opportunities for Fairfield citizens.**		
14. Continue to ensure that housing in Fairfield is available and affordable for the existing and projected workforce. At least 10 percent of new housing units should be affordable.	14.1 – Review the existing Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances for provisions which might drive up the price of housing unnecessarily. 14.2 – Continue to permit mobile home parks under the current standards of the Land Use Ordinance.	Planning Board, near term Planning Board, ongoing
15. Plan for shifting demographic demands for housing.	15.1 – Investigate the feasibility of forming a local housing consortium to construct more rental housing. 15.2 – Work with local hospitals/senior organizations to develop a plan for senior/assisted housing within the community or region. 15.3 – Add standards to Land Use Ordinance that will allow a single accessory apartment on a single family lot without additional acreage requirement.	Town Manager, mid term Town Manager, long term Planning Board, near term

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
	15.4 – Use the occupancy permit system to monitor building permit progress and communicate with town assessor.	Code Enforcement Officer, near term
	15.5 – Work with local Colleges to develop a plan for student housing within the community or region.	Town Manager, long term
	15.6 – The town should retain certain tax-acquired properties and purchase appropriate sites throughout town which are best suited to provide housing opportunities for low income and elderly.	Town Council, ongoing
16. Maintain the quality of the existing housing stock.	16.1 – Seek grant funding for local homeowners to upgrade homes and make them more energy efficient.	Town Manager, ongoing
	16.2 – Maintain an adequate Building Inspection program and consistently enforce the MUBEC.	Town Council, CEO, ongoing
	16.3 – Update the Land Use Ordinance to allow the highest and best use of the current housing stock that will enable continued investment and repair, i.e. lot size, multi-unit standards, stick built homes, etc.	Planning Board, near term
17. Preserve residential neighborhoods.	17.1 – Maintain and enforce current home occupation standards.	CEO, ongoing
	17.2 – Enlist the aid of community service organizations to address issues of nuisance or unkempt yards.	Town Manager, near term

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
TRANSPORTATION: In today's society, transportation is a critical element to the local economy and community, providing access to jobs, services, and products. Fairfield's transportation system is structured to provide access both within the town and to a larger market area. The road network serves primarily motor vehicles and is generally in good condition, including excellent access to the interstate system. The town has a reasonable pedestrian network, and limited access to public transportation. **Goal: To maintain and improve an efficient transportation system that aids economic growth and serves all users.**		
18. Maintain a safe and convenient intermodal transportation system in the most cost-effective manner within budgetary constraints of the town.	18.1 – Maintain adequate funding in the local road budget for continued maintenance of local roads. 18.2 – Participate in DOT funding solicitations and planning for future road improvements in Fairfield and the region. 18.3 – Review access and parking standards in the Site Plan and Subdivision Ordinances to ensure consistency with DOT rules and minimal conflicts with neighboring properties.	Town Council, ongoing Town Manager, ongoing Planning Board, near
19. Create and maintain a safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle network in the urban portion of town.	19.1 – Work with DOT to create an entry point to downtown Main Street (201), with improved parking, crosswalks, gateway signage etc. 19.2 – Request DOT look at the possibility of Bridge Street / Main Street reconfiguration.	Town Council, Manager, near term Town Manager, long term

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
	19.3 – Request DOT look at the possibility of eliminating four traffic lanes along the southern section of Main Street with improved intersections at Winter Street and High Street and improved sidewalks and pedestrian gateways.	Town Manager, near term
	19.4 – Request Safe Routes to School funding to improve access to school complex.	Town Manager, ongoing
	19.5 – Prepare a bicycle-pedestrian plan to identify gaps or infrastructure needs in the system.	Town Manager, ECDC, near term.
20. Ensure that the transportation system is compatible with other community values.	20.1 – Review ordinance provisions to ensure that noise and glare from the transportation system does not create a nuisance.	Planning Board, near term
	20.2 – Train Public Works crews in best management practices for erosion control and habitat protection.	Public Works Director, ongoing
	20.3 – Continue support of any Public Transit Initiatives as they arise.	Town Manager, ongoing

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
PUBLIC SERVICES: Fairfield provides many public services to its residents. The Town is responsible for police, fire, and emergency services, public works, and other utilities, and cooperates with the school district on education. It is part of the Kennebec Water District. The Town must therefore be very good at controlling its budget. Cost-effective methods of service delivery are a top priority. **Goal: Meet the public service demands of the Fairfield citizens and business community in the most cost-effective manner possible**		
21. Utilize fiscal responsibility and public involvement to provide needed GENERAL GOVERNMENT services in the most cost-effective manner possible.	21.1 – Actively pursue cooperative purchasing opportunities with neighboring towns, regional organizations, and the school district. 21.2 – Continue to utilize a team approach to town government operations, sharing labor on joint projects, and meeting regularly among department heads. 21.3 – Welcome community involvement through use of informational displays and flyers, and active use of the Town website.	Town Manager, ongoing Town Manager, ongoing Town Manager, ongoing
22. Provide EMERGENCY SERVICES at current level of staffing and continue to fund improvements through Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).	22.1 – Collaborate with the county sheriff's office to ensure adequate police coverage while securing an equitable funding policy. Continue local police force at current levels. 22.2 - Actively seek opportunities for regionalization of fire protection services, including shared equipment purchases and training sites and other opportunities.	Town Council, Police Chief, ongoing Town Council, Fire Chief, ongoing

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
	22.3 – Continue to monitor the adequacy of fire call response time and hydrant / water availability.	Fire Chief, ongoing
	22.4 – Continue EMS and provision of emergency first aid by town personnel. Monitor insurance and training requirements for first responder personnel.	Town Council, Fire Chief, ongoing
23. Look at opportunities for solid waste management and recycling services.	23.1 – Look at possible regional programs to provide waste and recycling services to residents.	Town Manager, long term
	23.2 – Explore contracting with private companies for a municipal waste and recycling service in a cost-effective manner.	Town Manager, mid term
	23.3 – Research Pay-As-You-Throw Program for costs and benefits.	Town Manager, mid term
24. Manage the SEWER SYSTEM efficiently while reducing stormwater intrusion and rehabilitating older infrastructure as needed.	24.1 – Continue funding and working with the Kennebec Sanitary Treatment District.	KSTD, Town Manager, ongoing
	24.2 – Plan sewer system work with road projects to make most efficient use of tax dollars.	Town Manager, Public Works Director, ongoing
25. Work with EDUCATION providers to promote learning and involvement in civic affairs while keeping affordable.	25.1 – Elected school board members and Town Council should meet to discuss issues of joint interest.	Town Council, School Board, ongoing
	25.2 – Promote the use of service learning opportunities to get students contributing to civic improvement.	Town Manager, School Superintendent, near term

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
FINANCIAL RESOURCES: Fairfield is in good financial condition, with low debt and sound financial management. In general, revenues have been very stable even with the 2009 recession. The Town Council is committed to working to lower taxation with respect to the municipal budget and seek innovative and sustainable solutions to that end.		
26. Recognize the limitations of the property tax, and seek to diversify the tax base while exploring creative sources of municipal funding.	26.1 – Seek new and diverse forms of commercial development.	Town Council, Town Manager, near term
	26.2 – Support legislative initiatives to increase state financial support to towns and schools.	Town Council, ongoing
	26.3 – Explore grant opportunities available to assist in the funding of capital investments within the community.	Town Manager, near term
27. Improve the town's fiscal capacity to provide public facilities with minimal impact on the annual budget.	27.1 – Formalize the town's Capital Improvement Program and expand its scope.	Town Manager, near term
	27.2 – Capitalize the Capital Improvement Reserve Account with estimate of annual depreciation of existing buildings.	Town Council, near term
	27.3 – Work with Kennebec Water District and Sewer Department to identify expansion needs and potential for impact fee program to finance expansions.	Town Manager, near term
	27.4 – Maintain a listing of grants and deadlines for financing special projects.	Town Manager, ongoing

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY: Natural resource-based industry was Fairfield's first form of economic development, and still provides jobs and income for many households. In addition, farms and forest land provide multiple other benefits. Farming in Maine overall is evolving from a commodity-based mass market industry to a locally-based business. Forest management is supported by markets for wood products that are beyond local control, but since the forest gains value from one year to the next, it can generally withstand temporary fluctuations. **Goal: To safeguard Fairfield's agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources, by building a strong and healthy resource-based economy**		
28. The Town will consider farming and its infrastructure a critical part of its economic base. Agriculture will be supported to the same extent as other businesses.	28.1 – Incorporate commercial agriculture into the Town's commercial and industrial development efforts through planning for incentives such as tax credits, business promotion, and financial assistance. 28.2 – The Town should promote local foods and value-added industry through support of the farmers market and incentives for related businesses. 28.3 – The Town will review Land Use Ordinance to ensure that it is farm-friendly.	Town Manager, ECDC, near term Town Manager, ongoing Planning Board, near term
29. The Town recognizes the importance of land as an agricultural base. Identification of prime farm soils will help to preserve this base.	29.1 – Work with Maine Farmland Trust, local Land Trusts and other programs which offer conservation / agricultural easements and similar programs to preserve valuable farmland.	Town Manager, ongoing

Policies:	Strategies:	Implementation:
	29.2 – Require identification of prime farmland soils on subdivision plans. 29.3 – Look into working with KVCC and Maine Academy of Natural Sciences to determine local and regional needs and advocate for farm and forest issues.	Planning Board, near term Town Manager, near term
30. Seek to manage forest land in the town for sustainable yields and multiple uses.	30.1 – Maintain the forest management plan for the town farm. 30.2 – Report violations of the state timber harvesting regulations.	Town Manager, ongoing CEO, Town Manager, ongoing

Two: Land Use Plan

Current Land Use Patterns:

Fairfield has developed and continues to develop as a classic New England town – a strong urban core and a rural expanse of undeveloped land. This pattern of development may be partially due to a Zoning Ordinance which has been in effect for several decades, but probably has much to do with the accessibility of public water and sewer service and a network of in-town services and amenities.

The Census-Designated-Place (CDP) that encompasses downtown Fairfield contained 40 percent of all residential units in 2010. The CDP is essentially the area inside the interstate to the river and is significantly smaller than the growth districts designated in the existing Comprehensive Plan and Land Use and Zoning Ordinance.

The past ten years have been an era of continued steady growth for Fairfield – with 374 new housing units since 2000. During slow growth periods, there tends not to be a lot of moving around but Fairfield has seen an out migration of 80 in the last 10 years; this was a much slower rate than previous decades. Statistically, the rural districts have seen the majority of building permits since 2007 (85 percent).

Subdivisions are listed below since 2000:

Subdivisions since 2000				
Year	Name	Location	Number of lots	Zoning
2003	Mildred Mushero	Map 36, Lot 10	3	Residential
2005	Sunrise Estates	Map 2A, Lot 7	17	Residential
2006	Faith's Way Sub.	Map 7, Lot 2A	3	Rural Residential
2010	Meadow View Estates	Map 7, Lot 38	6	Rural Residential
2010	Cottage Estates	Map 23, Lot 87	6	Urban Residential
2012	Gerald Senior Res.	Map 18, Lot 138	28	Main Street
2013	Fox Den Subdivision	Map 14, Lot 23A	2	Rural
2014	Koon's Subdivision	Map 2, Lot 10	2	Rural Residential
2014	Lighthouse Apartments	Map 36, Lot 12-1	3	Industrial

The urban portion of Fairfield has experienced both single-family and multi-family development over the past decade, as well as a general rehabilitation of the residential housing stock. It is clear that the value of living close to the center of Fairfield outweighs all other considerations except for family ones.

Notable Issues:

In community discussions, it has been clear that the pattern of growth is not really an issue in Fairfield. There is adequate land available in Fairfield's existing growth districts, so that no expansion of growth districts is warranted. The Land Use Ordinance is structured to accommodate unforeseen development trends.

The Land Use Ordinance is due for a revision and the following recommendations have been made:

- The current ordinance does not have provision for accessory ("in-law") apartments. There is a perceived need for these, especially as the need for smaller residential units increases. Accessory apartments are a good solution to issues of affordability and senior housing needs, as well as a means to keeping the in-town area active. Accessory apartments should be permitted in several growth districts.

- The Ordinance needs to be updated to accommodate the impacts of new types of development. Specifically, the ordinance should contain provisions for wind generation structures, telecommunications structures, and utility/pipeline installations.

- Look into the possibility of an Educational Zone, to accommodate increasing needs (student dormitory buildings, laboratories, etc.) and development that is likely to occur from KVCC's expansion.

- Allow clearer language to permit the re-use of large housing stock to be split into several dwellings. The current land requirement is one impediment.

- Look into the regulation of mobile home units relocating to in-town lots and the allowance of more density in the downtown area to promote mixed-use development etc. This ensures the retention of neighborhood character and house prices.

Vision:

Fairfield's vision guiding the town's activities contains multiple references to ideals that can be achieved through good land use strategies:

"Fairfield is a destination community made up of rural villages, a vibrant downtown, and an inviting waterfront. Our Town is rich in history and tradition, teeming with educational and cultural opportunities. We foster economic growth to increase the prosperity of our citizens through planned development."

Active Land Use Planning is explicitly named as an ideal and can be used to achieve the vision.

Land Use Plan Strategies:

Growth/Rural Boundaries:

Due to the lack of demand for development overall and the adequacy of current supply, no change is proposed to the definition or boundaries of existing zoning districts.

"Growth Districts" on the map include all districts *except* Rural. These are clearly shown on the Future Land Use Map in the appendix which also shows the development constraints (natural resources and shoreland zones that are protected). There is still plenty of developable land within these growth areas.

The districts and their requirements are summarized in Section 6 of the Land Use Ordinance and in the towns Shoreland Zoning ordinance.

This plan recognizes the need for a higher level of protection in specific valuable resource areas within the Rural District. In its ordinance revision process, the Planning Board will propose a Critical Resource District. The Critical Resource District will include land in the immediate vicinity of identified areas and may include other areas determined by the Board to warrant these protections.

The fundamental strategy is to direct a minimum of 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments into designated growth areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan. This shows the Town's approach of using public investments, rather than regulation, to reduce development pressure in the rural area and encourage it in and around the village. (It must be noted that by definition, road maintenance and some other rural investments would not count as "growth-related")

Regulatory Changes:

The Planning Board will review the existing Land Use, Subdivision, and Shoreland Zoning Ordinances over the forthcoming 18 months. The review should be completed and a report and proposed changes submitted to the Town Council by November of 2016.

In addition to a general modernization and coordination of definitions and procedures, the review will address the following elements:

Suggestions for consideration:

- Increase the permissible density in certain growth districts by permitting accessory apartments (in-law apartments) to be added to existing homes without additional acreage requirement.
- Increase the permissible density of the Rural Residential District by lowering the minimum lot size of un-sewered lots from 80,000 square feet to 60,000.

- Reduce development pressure in the Rural District by limiting new mobile home parks (and expansions) to no more than four lots or units.
- Review permitted uses and standards for commercial development in the Rural District. Large-scale commercial development should not be permitted unless it is resource-dependent. Resource-dependent uses, especially farms and on-farm operations, should be encouraged with a minimum of regulatory restrictions.
- Review growth districts to ensure that they permit or encourage mixed-use developments, especially in the Main Street and Village Districts. Review performance and density standards and parking/access requirements for ease of mixed-use development.
- Add provisions regulating wind turbines, cell towers, and pipelines/utility corridors.
- Strengthen resource protection provisions and incorporate reviews of *Beginning with Habitat* Maps into the development review process.
- Consider conservation subdivision approaches during subdivision ordinance discussion. Conservation subdivisions are an approach to cluster subdivisions that consider protection of natural features in their design.
- Add standards for Water Wellhead Protection.
- Require identification of prime farmland soils on subdivision applications.
- Look at the dwelling units per size of the lot in some districts.

Non-regulatory Changes:

The Town recognizes the potential and reality of market-based incentives to steer growth away from valuable rural areas and towards existing built-up areas. Historically, both residents and businesses have been attracted to the availability of public services, utilities, and amenities in Fairfield's downtown. In particular, water and sewer service (for commercial and multi-family development) and parks, sidewalks, and an inviting downtown have proven strong attractions for continued development in the growth area.

The Town has contributed to this trend by investing in its downtown infrastructure. Although not ignored, rural areas of town have not been targeted for capital improvements outside of transportation infrastructure and location-dependent recreation facilities. All schools, public buildings, water and sewer service, and active recreation facilities are located within growth areas.

Nevertheless, opportunities exist to encourage growth in the urban area while discouraging additional growth in the rural area without imposing a regulatory burden. The strategies recommended in this section are a wide range of non-regulatory tools for directing growth.

Strategies to Encourage Growth in Growth Areas:

- Pursue the development of a riverfront park along the Kennebec.
- Expand usage of urban parks generally, with dog walks, community gardens, and places to hold community events.
- Clean up sidewalks and walking paths in urban portion of town.

- Continue to market the industrial park and expand access to land by extending Industrial Road.
- Develop areas as a gateway to the downtown, with improved entry signs and traffic calming.
- Identify infrastructure and parking improvements, façade improvements, and amenities for the Main Street block.
- Prepare a bicycle-pedestrian plan for the downtown and/or region.
- When considering sewer and utility extensions, coordinate extensions with private developers to be more efficient and cost-effective for the overall area. The Town will not authorize extensions outside of the growth districts.
- Look at creating a new Main Street master plan and apply for the CDBG downtown grant program.

Strategies to Discourage Growth in Rural Areas:

- Coordinate efforts to implement conservation projects and seek out land conservation opportunities.
- Incorporate commercial agriculture into the Town's economic development planning and strategies.
- Continue to promote enrollments in current-use tax programs.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The Town should put into place a system to track growth and development. This will become more important as growth picks up again in the near future. The Town should be able to monitor growth on at least an annual basis and respond if it becomes apparent that growth is not responding to the strategies in this plan.

The following strategies are recommended:

- The Code Enforcement Officer will continue to utilize a permit tracking system to identify the location by district of new housing and commercial buildings.

- The Code Enforcement Officer will prepare a written report for the 2014 calendar year and on an annual basis thereafter with the results of the permit tracking. The report will be presented to the Planning Board and Town Council for review and discussion.

- Beginning with the next fiscal cycle, the Town will budget in its capital improvements plan for Geographical Information Systems (GIS) equipment, software, and training for the purpose of better tracking development applications, building, tax assessment, and resource protection.

Part Three: Capital Investment Planning Process

Description of Existing Process:

The Capital Investment Plan (CIP) component of the Comprehensive Plan identifies growth-related capital investments and a strategy for accommodating them. The CIP anticipates future expenses, sets priorities and timetables, and proposes a mechanism to fund them. The plan is important because it alerts both municipal officials and citizens about future expenses and allows the Town to find the most cost-effective way to finance the improvement.

The Capital Investment Plan will include items identified in this plan that are called capital expenses. A capital expense is defined as having a cost that is not a maintenance or operating expense.

The Town of Fairfield already does some form of capital planning for its municipal facilities. The Town maintains a prioritized listing of anticipated capital needs.

Over recent years, the Town of Fairfield has utilized capital budgeting to assist with the community's growth and infrastructure development. Budget lines are included each year to cover capital expenditure costs and is currently set at **$25,000** for buildings and **$150,000** for equipment, vehicles, etc. Tax Increment Financing funds (TIFs), some of which are used for capital improvements, are administered separately from the Town's Budget.

The Capital Investment budget line has been reduced by $15,000 since 2009 but the equipment reserve line has tripled over that time. This is largely due to limits that have been placed on rolling unexpended funds from department budgets to capital accounts. Therefore, an increase in the equipment line was needed to make up the difference.

As the coordinator for all the town's activities, the Town Manager is responsible for the CIP. However, he/she must rely on the department heads to submit needs and cost estimates, and on the Town Council to help set priorities. Thus, the CIP process should be prepared alongside the annual budget, so that a portion of the annual budget is set aside to fund the CIP. This can be in the form of contributions to a reserve fund, one-time appropriations, or commitment to pay interest on a loan.

Fairfield's CIP will continue to be developed as directed by the Town Manager, with input from the budget committee and Town Council, by incorporating the guidelines needed to reach the goals of the initial project list presented in the plan.

The revised CIP will be integrated with the budget process beginning in 2015. The capital investments listed in the table below include both those identified by this plan and other capital improvement projects that have come up in town discussions over the past three years.

ITEM	COST (est)	FUNDING	TARGET
Fire:			
Replace 1998 Engine No. 2	$300,000	Reserve	FY23
Police:			
Annual Cruiser Replacement	$30,000 per year	Reserve	Annual
Public Works:			
Replace 2000 JD810 Backhoe	$100,000	Reserve	FY16
Replace 2002 Volvo	$200,000	Reserve	FY17
Replace 2005 Mack	$210,000	Reserve	FY20
Replace 2000 JD624 Loader	$210,000	Reserve	FY21
Parks and Recreation:			
Other:			
Replace Sewer Vac Truck (co-owned with Winslow)	$100,000	Reserve	FY19
Road Projects	$200,000	Budget	Annual
	$1,000,000	Bond	FY16

Other recommendations:

1.) Create a Building Committee. With the initial purpose of a comprehensive review of Public Safety facilities and to determine the need for a joint public safety facility.

2.) MSAD#49 is planning a new primary/elementary school facility, construction date unknown; the town may acquire the Fairfield Primary building. It needs to be decided how this could be re-used or re-purposed. Perhaps this would require its own committee?

Part Four: Regional Coordination

As part of the mid-Maine (Greater Waterville) service area, Fairfield has an important role in bringing together communities for the purpose of enhancing economic development, managing government resources, and protecting natural resources. In addition, Fairfield participates in larger regional organizations where it is evident that a regional effort is more effective.

Current regional activities include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Mutual aid with neighboring municipalities for police coverage and fire-rescue services;
- Fairfield partners with the Town of Benton through an interlocal agreement to provide Emergency Services, including fire, rescue, and emergency management. Fairfield and Benton jointly finance the department, which is operated by the Town of Fairfield;
- Active participant in the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce, Somerset Economic Development Corp., Central Maine Growth Council, and Kennebec Valley Council of Governments;
- Fairfield has partnered with other local municipalities to plan the development of a Regional Emergency Services Training Facility.
- All four towns in the MSAD #49 area, including Fairfield, contribute to the PAL organization, which is the de facto sports and recreation program for local youth.
- Fairfield partners with Waterville and Winslow to stock sand for each municipality. Fairfield and Winslow jointly own and operate a sewer vacuum truck, and Waterville paints traffic lines in downtown Fairfield each year.

For the purpose of this comprehensive plan, several of the recommendations contain a regional component. The following is a listing of those strategies:

- Look to join or become involved with a local Conservation Commission or similar regional conservation efforts. (5.1)
- Look to join or become involved with a local Land Trusts. (5.2)
- Encourage MSAD #49, KVCC, MeANS, and town events to utilize the Kennebec River as a learning resource. Provide landowner education for protection of critical natural resources. (5.3)

- Continue the support of the PAL programs within the region. (7.1)

- Continue to work with local trails groups (KM Trails) for more trail opportunities through town and region. (8.3)

- Create a local or regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan. (8.4)

- Promote the local arts community in cooperation with local organizations and Maine Commission for the Arts. (9.2)

- Participate in regional economic development efforts of the Central Maine Growth Council, Kennebec Valley Council of Governments, and Somerset Economic Development Corporation. (10.1)

- Expand cooperation with the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce. (10.2)

- Actively pursue cooperative purchasing opportunities with neighboring towns, regional organizations, and the school district. (21.1)

- Actively seek opportunities for regionalization of fire protection services, including shared equipment purchases, training sites, and other opportunities. (22.2)

- Look at possible regional programs to provide a waste and recycling service to residents. (23.1)

- Work with Maine Farmland Trust, local Land Trusts and other programs which offer conservation/agricultural easements and similar programs to preserve valuable farmland. (29.1)

Appendix: Maps

Basic Planning Map

Historic and Archeological Resources

Critical Natural Resources Map

Soils Maps:
- Soil Types
- Soil suitability for low density development

Water Resources

Existing Land Use

Future land Use

Forest and Farmland

Transportation maps:
- Basic Transportation
- Bridges
- Traffic Counts
- Crash Locations
- Sidewalk Inventory