MASTER PLAN

FOR THE TOWN OF

ATKINSON, N.H.

H. ANS

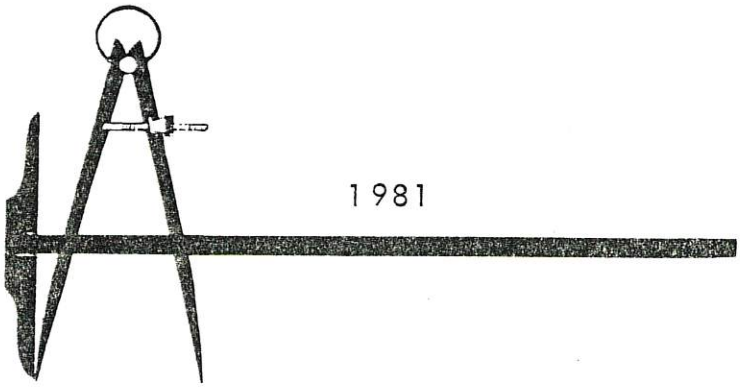
1980

14/30
PLANNING BOARD MEMBER

MASTER PLAN

FOR

ATKINSON, NEW HAMPSHIRE



1981

HANS KLUNDER ASSOCIATES, HANOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE, CONSULTANTS

TOWN OF ATKINSON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

MASTER PLAN

TOWN OFFICIALS

Board of Selectmen

Meredith E. Reynolds - Chairman
Dennis M. Spurling
Carol Grant
Patricia Consentino, resigned
Wayne Peak, resigned

Town Clerk

Linda S. Jette

Conservation Commission

Carole Hall - Chairman
Christa Slade
Stuart G. Hale
Linda Jette
Edward R. O'Keary
Chester M. Ladd
M. Elizabeth Wood

Highway Agent

A. Robert Stewart

Fire Department Board of Engineers

Donald L. Murphy, deceased
John Rockwell- Acting Chief

Planning Board

Evelyn B. Shore - Chairman
James F. Grimes
Ronald A. LaBelle
Roger R. Stork
Kathleen Dayotis
Jonathan White
Meredith E. Reynolds, Ex-Officio

Alternates

Roland Weeman
John Schaefer
Ivan Grotenhuis

Recreation Commission

Richard Fugere - Chairman
Joseph Elston
Thomas P. Gorski
Norma Honor
Sebastian Nicolosi

Police Department

Philip V. Consentino - Chief

1980

ATKINSON PLANNING BOARD
Town Hall, Atkinson, New Hampshire 03811

December 30, 1980

Dear Atkinson Citizen:

At Town Meeting in 1977, the citizens of Atkinson called for the formulation of a comprehensive Master Plan that would chart the course of the municipality's development within the foreseeable future. That same year, through the efforts of a small and dedicated group of volunteers, authorized by the Planning Board as a Master Plan Coordinating Team, a town-wide questionnaire was drawn up, distributed, tabulated, and analyzed for insights into the direction that residents wanted the town to take. Results showed that Atkinson wanted the town to achieve and maintain four characteristics:

1. Low density housing in a natural setting,

2. A non-polluted environment,

3. A pride in well-constructed and well-maintained buildings and land, both public and private, and

4. A responsible and reasonable tax program.

With these four factors in mind, the Coordinating Team set about the task of developing a comprehensive Master Plan that would incorporate all of the desired characteristics.

The Plan was developed in two stages. The first stage was a fact-finding one conducted by Team members and a number of town officials and residents, all of whom helped to provide the town with scientific and statistical information about itself. The second stage required the services of a professional planning consultant who would expand and synthesize the knowledge already gathered with future projections on alternative directions the town could take and the impact they would have. Once a direction was chosen, the consultant would finalize the Plan with a document, maps, related plans, ordinances, and subdivision regulations, all of which would articulate the total program.

Hans Klunder Associates was the firm chosen to assist the Coordinating Team and the Planning Board in the master planning endeavor. The product of that joint effort lies in the following pages and identifies the comprehensive Master Plan which the Planning Board has adopted.

Sincerely,

Evelyn B. Shore

Evelyn B. Shore
Chairman

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The preparation of this document by the consultant was greatly assisted by the citizens of Atkinson who have taken time to answer the questionnaires distributed and those who have contributed by attending meetings and making an input into this Master Plan effort. Among a large number of people participating, the consultant wishes to thank the following persons in particular for their cooperation and assistance: Evelyn B. Shore, Chairman of the Planning Board; Sumner F. Kalman, Town Attorney; Chester Ladd, Town Forester and member of the Conservation Commission; Barbara Snicer of the Master Plan Coordinating Team and Budget Committee; Meredith Reynolds, Selectman; Linda S. Jette, Town Clerk; John Rockwell, acting Fire Chief; Robert Stewart, Town Road Agent; Philip Consentino, Chief of Police; Dr. Herbert Q. Horne, former member of the Planning Board; Robert Crompton, Superintendent of Schools; and Lynne Monore, Director of the historic preservation project for the Strafford Rockingham Regional Council. The continued participation by the Master Plan Coordinating Team and the Planner's Council has lent this program objectivity and their efforts are greatfully acknowledged. In absentia, JoAnn Tredennick, resource planner for the Southern Rockingham Regional Planning District Commission, aided this program in the earlier phases of the study. The information furnished through the Strafford Rockingham Regional Council and the review given by George N. Olson in the planning process are greatfully acknowledged.

Credit is due to Robert Adams (Haverhill Gazette), Lois Marchand (Lawrence Eagle Tribune), and Sally Dowd (Plaistow News) for their thorough and objective reporting.

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Atkinson is located in the southern New Hampshire growth belt, one of the fastest growing regions in the United States. The Master Plan is designed to aid the community in dealing with its own future by practicing home rule as provided for under New Hampshire law.

The following document is divided into four essential parts:

1. Presentation of existing conditions,
2. Analysis and evaluation of these findings with the establishment of community goals, objectives and policies to implement these goals,
3. Formulation and recommendations of the land use plan and its support facilities, and
4. Recommendations on how the town can carry out the Master Plan through various actions at Town Meeting.

The Master Plan covers land use studies, population analysis and projections, economic base considerations, natural resources and their limitations on future development, highways and traffic, and community facilities including recreational, governmental, cultural, and projected civic.

The comprehensive plan presented here has been reviewed and adopted by the Planning Board. The adoption of this plan assures, in part, a future community of the kind Atkinson residents want and can afford.

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For more detailed information, see large-scale maps available at the Planning Board office.

POPULATION AND ECONOMY

POPULATION CONSIDERATIONS

Introduction

A community's population and economic base and the economic base of an area are inevitably interlinked. One is the result of the other. As the economic base of a community and of a region expands, so does the population of an affected town; and, in some instances, as the population and the potential labor pool grow, the economy will expand because of employment opportunities created by new industries.

In planning for Atkinson's future development, it is important that the economic and population bases are assessed. The future types of economic development make up the resultant and projected population. Any new major regional developments, especially those employing a sizable number of people, will influence Atkinson's population, housing market, and the need for added community facilities. Additionally, needs for street and highway networks, along with other public services, will be affected and must be addressed prior to embarking on anticipated major changes. The following section of the Comprehensive Master Plan for Atkinson is essentially a study showing projected populations and will be used ultimately to address potential impacts.

The economy and the population of the town have been inventoried and analyzed. The population data is based on sources indicated, and the economic data is based on a recently conducted survey by the Southern Rockingham County Region. The projections are based on trends and will show the impact that the town's own growth-controlling measures (or the lack thereof) will have on population projections. The Town of Atkinson will be impacted by two factors. The first is the regional economic growth and the second is the town's adopted constraints to curtail community growth that cannot be satisfactorily accommodated without incurring great financial obligations to the taxpayers.

The following report addresses population - past, present and future projections, birth over death, Atkinson's population in a larger setting, and Atkinson's demographic structure.

Physical Distribution

Atkinson's population distribution in 1978 was 388.4 persons per square mile. * Being one of the smallest communities in New Hampshire, ranking 11th among 233 towns, Atkinson ranks 212 in population density among the average communities in southern New Hampshire. For comparisons, Brentwood has 105 persons per square mile, Derry has 497, Exeter has 551,

* New Hampshire Office of State Planning, 1978.

Population Considerations (Continued)

Physical Distribution (Continued)

Plaistow has 550, and Windham has 192. Translated into more tangible figures, this means that in 1978, the Town of Atkinson had 1.8 gross acres per person or, assuming an average of 3.3 persons per family, approximately 6 acres for each family.

Considering the still prevailing rural characteristics of Atkinson, this shows an applied concern for maintaining a rural environment in the community. Much of the development has taken place in areas of new subdivisions in conjunction with developments along established old road patterns.

Probably the single most important aspect to the development in the community and its general distribution of population is its closeness to the Massachusetts border, resulting in a large growth of the southern portion of the town. More recently, East Road has developed because of its good access to Plaistow and Massachusetts and the available secondary school facilities nearby.

It is hoped that the future population distribution will reflect the suitability of land areas for development, considering the continued absence of public sewer and water services. Additionally, it is envisioned that emphasis will be on the southern portion of Atkinson because of its accessibility to both service and employment opportunities.

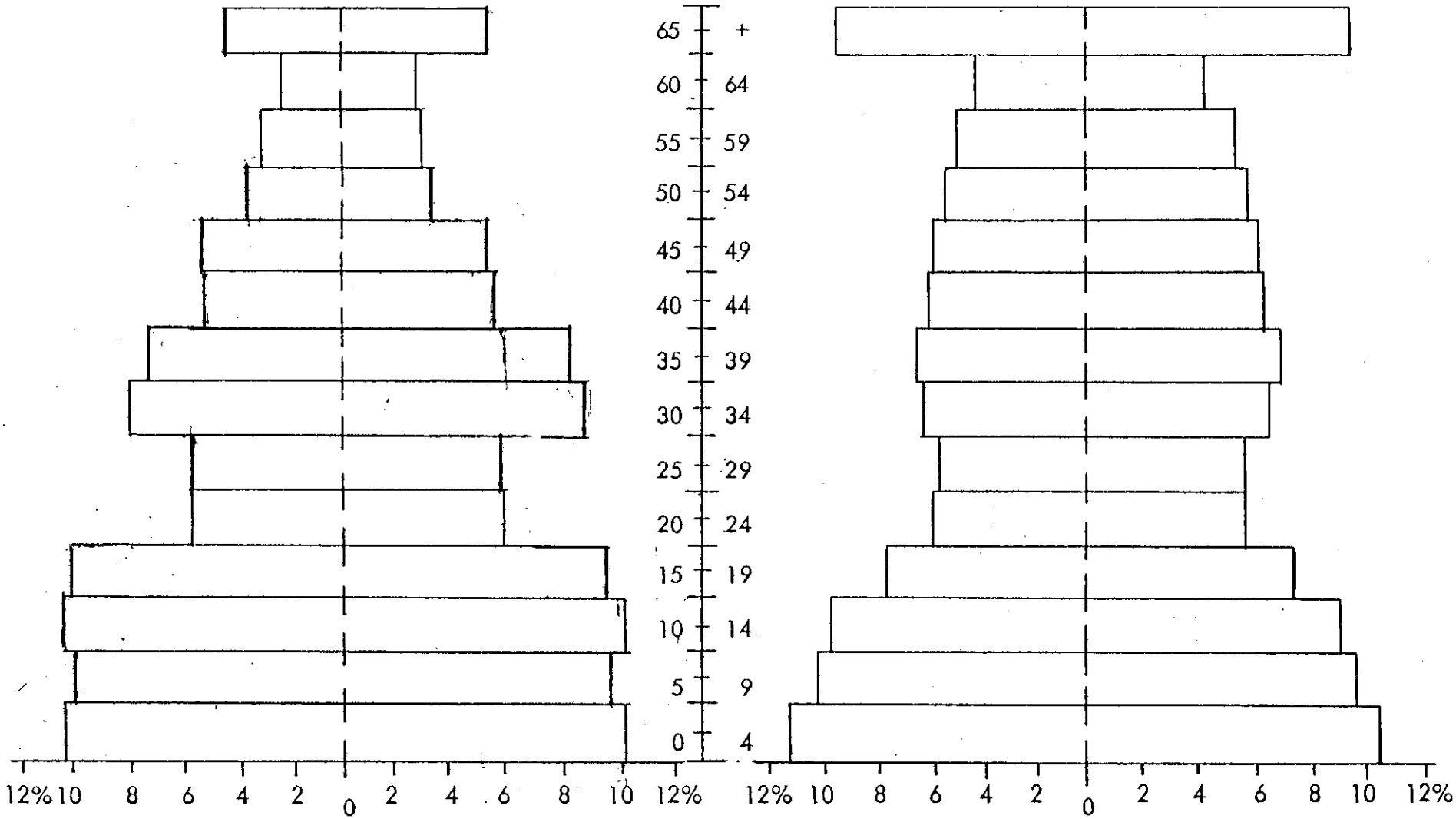
Age Distribution - Demographic Considerations

The adjacent graph compares New Hampshire's population with that of Atkinson's. It shows a bottom-heavy population pryamid, indicating a suburban type of community. (For example, in contrast, a retirement community would be a top-heavy population pyramid.) Taking into consideration that nearly 38% of the population are of school age or below, this places a burden on the remainder of the community to provide necessary educational services. The prime employable age group, ranging from 20 - 65, consists of slightly over 55% with only 6.1% being of retirement age. This population distribution by age reflects the migration into Atkinson and the raising of families in a rural small-town setting. If the town continues to provide a desirable environment, it is anticipated that this trend will continue. The town will attract families of child-bearing age requiring school and recreation facilities along with meeting the demands for other expanded community services.

TABLE I SEX AND AGE COMPOSITION: (1978)

Age	Number	% of Total	Age	Number	% of Total
0- 9	719	18.2	40-49	494	12.5
10-19	806	20.4	50-64	443	11.2
20-29	474	12.0	65+	241	6.1
30-39	775	19.6			

Totals - Male, 1,984, 50.2%; Female, 1,968, 49.8%
Source: Rockingham-Strafford Bi-County Census, 1978



ATKINSON 1978

Source: Strafford Rockingham Regional Council
Town of Atkinson, Community Profile, 1979

NEW HAMPSHIRE 1970

Source: U S Census

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE AND SEX

FIGURE I

Population Trends

The population trend is an interpretation of population growth patterns in the community and its interpretation of developments that are likely to take place. Nearby employment opportunities, the amenities of country living, and ready developers are reasons for people moving into Atkinson. Though development has caused an increase of 800% in population since 1950, fortunately it has not reached a crisis point. Steps should now be undertaken to deter such continuing rapid growth through the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan and, ultimately, implementation measures. This would be in keeping with the wishes expressed by the citizens, who, even though they are the reason for this growth, now feel a slower rate of growth is desirable.

In arriving at population projections, various sources were consulted. Different data sources will result in different projections. The Consultant's interpretation is one drawing on various sources, and, in particular, on Atkinson's growth relationship to regional and subregional population trends. All of these trends and projections are based on unabated growth through any means of growth management. It is the Planning Board's responsibility to relate actual population changes to forecasts and relate them to projections in this document, adjusting them on a periodic basis.

The adjacent table shows the change in population of Atkinson from 1880 - 1980. Over the past century, the population has changed from a decline of 6.2% to a growth of 289.6%. The decline occurred between 1880 - 1890, while the largest single growth occurred from 1950 - 1960, a direct result of post-war flight to the suburbs.

The growth since 1950 has gone from 492 people to an estimated 4,300 people in 1980. This is nearly a ten-fold increase; and for a small town, it is an identifiable change associated with rapid growth. There was a slowing in the rate of growth between 1960 - 1970, with an acceleration in the rate between 1970 - 1980. This Consultant estimates that the most recent population figures indicate that the town has now reached about 4,300 people. There appears to be no tangible decline in the rate of growth in sight. The facts are that the town has grown 700 people in the first five years and 1,300 people in the second five years of the last decade. This pattern does give cause for concern, particularly when community facilities must be planned for in order to meet the demands of the citizens of Atkinson.

POPULATION OF ATKINSON *

Past and Projected

Year	Population	% Change
1880	434	--
1890	407	- 6.2
1900	413	1.5
1910	440	6.5
1920	442	0.45
1930	483	9.3
1940	502	3.9
1950	492	1.1
1960	1,017	106.7
1970	2,291	125.0
1975	3,004	31.1
1977	3,394	13.0
1978	3,952	16.4
1980 **	5,670	43.5

* U S Census, 1880 - 1970
New Hampshire Office of State Planning
** Projected , New Hampshire Office of State Planning

TABLE II

POPULATION OF ATKINSON *

Past and Projected

Year	Population	% Increase	Numerical Increase
1970	2,291		
1971			
1972	2,411		
1973	2,630	9.1	219
1974	2,981	13.4	351
1975	3,068	2.9	87
1976	3,406	11.0	338
1977	3,719	9.2	313
1978	4,016	8.0	297
1979 **	4,257	6.0	241
1980 **	4,385	3.0	128

* Town of Atkinson, Master Plan Coordinating Team Report using Head Tax and School Census

** Projected

Notes: 1970 figure is as of April 1970 from U S Census
1978 Rockingham Strafford Bi-County Census gave a population of 3,952, mid year
Projected growth rates for Southern Rockingham are from N H Office of State Planning

RELATIVE TO PROJECTED GROWTH FOR SOUTHERN ROCKINGHAM REGION

Year	1 x	2 x	1 x	2 x	1 x	2 x
1985	4,985	5,650	2.6	5.2	600	1,265
1990	5,504	6,874	2.0	4.0	519	1,224
1995	5,930	7,969	1.5	3.0	426	1,095
2000	6,263	8,885	1.1	2.2	333	916

TABLE III

FEDERAL CENSUS BUREAU FIGURES arrived at through common method:

	1960	1970	Change	10-Year % Change	Average Annual % Change	Growth Rate % Annually
Atkinson	1,017	2,291	1,274	125 %	12.5 %	7.4 %
Rockingham County	98,642	138,950	40,308	41 %	4.1 %	3.4 %
Southern Rockingham [1] Comm. Area	19,782	39,021	19,239	97 %	9.7 %	7.0 %
Strafford-Rockingham [2] Regl. Council Area	142,968	182,728	39,760	28 %	2.8 %	2.5 %
Nashua Regl. Area	63,920	100,862	36,942	58 %	5.8 %	4.7 %

	1970	1980	Change	10-Year % Change	Average Annual % Change	Growth Rate % Annually
Atkinson	2,291	4,373	2,082	91 %	9.1 %	6.7 %
Rockingham County	138,950	190,047	51,097	37 %	3.7 %	3.2 %
Southern Rockingham [1] Comm. Area	39,021	54,041	15,020	38 %	3.8 %	3.3 %
Strafford-Rockingham [2] Regl. Council Area	182,728	227,715	44,987	25 %	2.5 %	2.2 %
Nashua Regl. Area	100,862	138,009	37,147	37 %	3.7 %	3.7 %

1 Atkinson, Danville, Hampstead, Kingston, Newton, Plaistow, Salem, Sandown, Windham

2 Southern Rockingham, Eastern Rockingham, and Strafford Counties

$$\left(\frac{1980 \text{ population}}{1970 \text{ population}}\right)^{.1} - 1 \times 100 = \text{annual growth rate}$$

TABLE IV

NEW DWELLING UNITS IN ATKINSON

Year	Single Family Residences	Apartments
1970 Census	591	
1970	29	
1971	42	
1972	70	48
1973	63	
1974	47	
1975	67	10
1976	88	4
1977	71	
1978	77	24
1979 *	70	
Total	1,215	86

* Estimated, New Hampshire Office of State Planning

BIRTHS AND DEATHS IN ATKINSON

Year	Births	Deaths	Increase
1970	46	18	28
1971	41	14	27
1972	37	12	25
1973	34	20	14
1974	39	10	29
1975	25	11	14
1976	32	14	18
1977	48	12	36
1978	42	17	25
1979	32	20	12

Source: Town Clerk

TABLE V

Population Considerations (Continued)

Population Projections

Population projections are important to the Comprehensive Planning process because they form a basis for estimating future needs for public lands and services such as schools, libraries, and utilities. They also produce data that is the basis for reducing the growth in order to maintain manageable community facilities and a capital improvement program.

In a town, the population usually changes in two ways:

1. The relationship of birth to death

2. Migration

The result between birth and death is the natural increase or decrease. This is shown on the adjacent table and reflects a considerable natural increase in births over deaths.

The net result of a population increase between natural increase and actual increase is the migration. In Atkinson, in addition to the natural increase, there has been a considerable in-migration. This is reflected and shown on the trends table where population has been recorded from 1880 - 1980.

There have been several population estimates and projections made for Atkinson, ranging from 3,722 people for the year 1978* to 5,670 for the year 1980.*

Based on the relationship of the town to the county and its immediate region, building activity, natural increase, head tax and school census data, this Consultant estimates the population for the Town of Atkinson to be 4,346 in 1980. This is quite a bit less than the OSP projection of 5,670. The state and regional projections are 7,460 in 1985, 8,910 in 1990 and 10,580 in the year 2000.* The 1969 Anderson Nichols study showed Atkinson with 5,200 people in 1980, 8,100 in 1990 and 11,000 in 2000.

Taking into consideration this Consultant's own projections, without any growth management procedures introduced into the planning and Plan implementation process, it is envisioned that by 1990, the town could have approximately 6,300 people and by the year 2000, 8,729 people.

In arriving at a population projection, one uses certain assumptions that are explicitly stated. To help understand the process of population projection for Atkinson, it would be well to state these assumptions.

* New Hampshire Office of State Planning.

Population Considerations (Continued)

Population Projections (Continued)

1. By definition of "population projection", it is assumed that the factors affecting birth, death and migration will interact in such a manner that will result in the projected figure.

2. It is assumed that the form of development and the political, economical and social organizations in the area will not be substantially different from what they are today.

3. It is assumed that an all-out national emergency, epidemic or other disaster will not occur.

4. It is assumed that no civil disaster will occur.

The following techniques are employed in arriving at a population projection:

1. Geographical mathematical projection based on trends.

2. Projection based on the relationship between population growth in the area and county.

3. Projection of migration and natural increase.

4. Projection utilizing regional, state and federal agency projections of employment and population growth.

5. Projection adjusting for population data derived from different census-taking agencies.

The first method, namely the mathematical projection, is difficult to apply because of some of the erratic changes that have taken place, not only in the past decades but even within the last ten years. The method that is applied here is the projection that is based on Atkinson's relationship of population growth to Rockingham County and the Southern Rockingham Region. Using this approach, it appears that a forecast can be made assuming that no major changes will take place at the local, regional, state or national level.

Anticipating community services required to support the population based on these projections, the town should introduce growth management methods in order to maintain the quality of life that appears to be so important to citizens in selecting Atkinson as a community in which to

Population Projections (Continued)

reside. By comparing Atkinson's projected growth rate to that of the region, graphical and mathematical projections can be made of annual changes and applied to the Master Planning process. Should the town decide to grow at the rate indicated (based on regional and county growth), then the annual increase can be arrived at through this method.

A more manageable rate of growth can be depicted from the adjacent graph in comparison to uncontrolled and unmanaged growth.

Rather than assuming an accellerated or decelerated growth rate for Atkinson, (reflected in a parabolic curve), a straight line projection has been made and is used to arrive at a population projection resembling future population based on assumptions outlined above.

Any major deviations from these projections should be recorded by the Planning Board and reflected in its annual report to the town as part of the town's Growth Management Program.

TABLE VI

POPULATION PROJECTION

BASED ON ATKINSON'S RELATIONSHIP

TO ROCKINGHAM COUNTY AND THE SUB REGION

1940 - 2000

	ROCKINGHAM COUNTY			SUB REGION (Southern Rockingham Regional District)		
Year	Pop.	Atkinson's Pop.	Atkinson's %	Pop.	Atkinson's Pop.	Atkinson's %
1940	58,142 (1)	502 (1)	0.86			
1950	70,059 (1)	492 (1)	0.70			
1960	99,090 (1)	1,917 (1)	1.93	58,577 (2)	1,917 (1)	3.27
1970	138,951 (1)	2,291 (1)	1.65	67,438 (2)	2,291 (1)	3.40
1980	198,000 (2)	4,373 * (1)	2.19 *	85,300 (2)	4,373 * (1)	5.09*
1990	243,600	6,300 *	2.60 *	111,800 (2)	6,529 *	5.84*
2000	281,650	8,729 *	3.10 *	136,300 (2)	9,132 *	6.70*

* Projected, Hans Klunder Associates

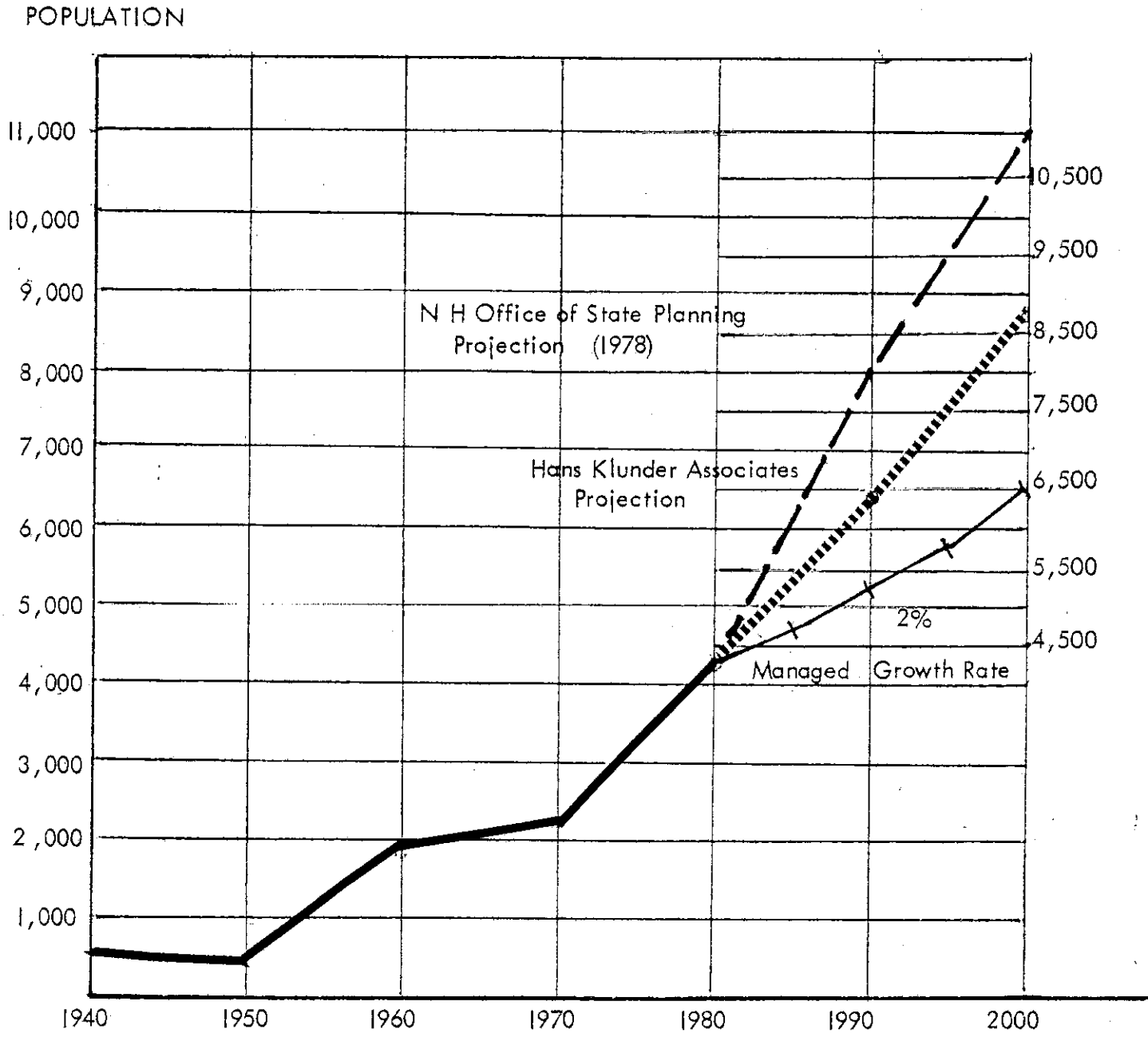
(1) U S Census

(2) New Hampshire Office of State Planning

FIGURE 2

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Town of Atkinson



Source: 1940 - 1980 U S Census

ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

Introduction

Town like Atkinson are subject to growth because of inherent employment opportunities in the nearby employment centers. In the determination of influences on the economic base, population growth, and Atkinson's particular natural resources, local employment opportunities (or the lack thereof) and commuting patterns are most significant.

Based on the 1978 survey, Atkinson's residents are relying on employment opportunities available in nearby Massachusetts. They also are commuting to nearby communities which gives the town a population characteristic that reflects a suburban demographic picture, (see Population Report). This suburban community pattern for Atkinson indicates that there are limited employment opportunities available within the community. However, it does render a natural and socialogical environment that the community prefers. (Were Atkinson combined with Haverhill and Andover, the result would reflect a central city community structure providing employment opportunities and would reflect a larger percentage in the employable age group rather than in the younger school age population.)

With the lack of employment opportunities available and the lack of shopping and other services, the town has a limited economic base, if one considers that the economic base describes employment opportunities and services rendered within the town.

For purposes of town planning, this situation is one that is significant. It would indicate that only limited areas must be set aside for employment opportunities. On the other hand, the Plan must reflect the quality of life that the citizens are seeking and enjoying, namely a suitable environment for residential endeavors. In fact, the creation of major industrial developments and major service industries could possibly be in conflict with the quality of life that Atkinson is providing to date. With a regional setting that does provide employment opportunities within commuting distance, this is an acceptable community pattern and should be evaluated in the determination of a Land Use Plan and comprehensive development for the town.

Employment Characteristics

Based on the census conducted by the Strafford Rockingham Regional Council in 1978, the distribution of employment by occupations reveals some interesting tangible data. 872 people or 22.1% were either in professional or managerial positions. There were 316 clerical and sales people. (As stated, this is based on 63% return of the questionnaires.) A surprisingly large number of retired people, 225 or 5.7%, were counted, surprisingly so because of the suburban characteristics of the community. Table VII shows the Distribution of Employment by Occupations and reflects the total population as calculated on the 1978 survey.

Economic Considerations (Continued)

Places of Employment

Based on 1,052 responses, the same survey reflected a commuting pattern of suburban characteristics. As Table VIII shows, only 15.5% of those reporting were working in the Town of Atkinson, meaning that 84.5% of the population were leaving the community to go to work. Of these, 707 or 67.1% were actually commuting to Massachusetts, 54 were employed in Salem, 40 in Milton, 18 in Sandown and 46 in other communities. With the ever increasing cost of travel, the long range impact of this large percentage of commuters must be of consideration. There are two possibilities: either people will seek residences closer to their place of employment or they will move their place of employment closer to Atkinson. Experience has shown that, in most instances, people will seek employment closer to their primary residence because of the educational or social connections in the community. On the other hand, commuting patterns are generally maintained, considering the cost of moving and relocation.

It is anticipated that for Atkinson, particularly with the relatively high income per household, commuting will continue to be a preferred way of getting to work rather than relocation.

Income Distribution

Table IX shows the distribution of income and puts Atkinson well in the upper average income bracket. This is in spite of the fact that in Atkinson, 6.2% have an income that is below the poverty level. In contrast, Salem only has 3.2% of families with an income that is below the poverty level. On the other hand, Epping has 8.1%. Atkinson does have a median family income of $19,374 or the third highest median family income in Rockingham County.. Only Windham and Newcastle reported a higher family income than Atkinson. *

What is probably significant is the observation that from 1969 - 1977, Atkinson's rank increased from 192 to 203 and at present is 214. This means that not only has Atkinson's median family income increased, but it has increased at a greater rate than communities throughout the state.

The implications of this are that Atkinson is a desirable community in which to reside and does provide for 6.2% of its families who have an income that is below the poverty level.

* New Hampshire Office of State Planning, February, 1980.

TABLE VII

DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION

Occupation	Number	Percent of Total
Professional, Technical, Managerial	872	22.1
Clerical,Sales	316	8.0
Service Occupations	123	3.1
Farm, Fish, Forestry	12	.3
Processing Occupations	8	.2
Machine Trades	40	1.0
Bench Work Occupations	99	2.5
Structural Work	111	2.8
Miscellaneous	95	2.4
Retired	225	5.7
Military	12	.3
Homemaker	462	11.7
Student	822	20.8
Not Employed	755	19.1
Total	3,952	100.0

Source: Strafford Rockingham Regional Council, 1978 Census

TABLE VIII

PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT

Place	Number	Percent of Total
Massachusetts	707	67.1
Atkinson	163	15.5
Salem	54	5.1
Hampstead	18	1.7
Milton	40	3.7
Sandown	18	1.9
Exeter	6	0.6
Other Towns	46	4.4
Total	1,052	100.0

Source: Strafford Rockingham Regional Council, 1978 Census

TABLE IX

DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Income Level	1970	Percent	1978	Percent	Percent Change
0 - 5,000	76	12.4	59	4.5	- 7.9
5,001 - 10,000	157	25.7	139	10.6	-15.1
10,001 - 15,000	163	26.6	212	16.1	-10.5
15,001 - 25,000	195	31.9	508	38.7	+ 6.8
25,001 - 50,000	16	2.6	352	26.8	+24.2
50,001 +	5	.8	43	3.3	+ 2.5
Total	612	100.0	1,313	100.0	

Source: Strafford Rockingham Regional Council, 1978 Census

Observations

1. The household income for Atkinson is above the state and national average, attributable to the quality the residents have created for themselves. In spite of this, Atkinson accommodates 6.2% of its families having an income that is below the poverty level.

2. The Town of Atkinson is a community that relies predominantly on its employment opportunities and services in nearby communities both in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. It is a typical residential community, and the Master Plan must reflect a continued desire to avoid conflict between its residential pattern and commercial/industrial areas.

3. The Master Plan must consider the "quality of life" sought by its residents.

4. With the ever-increasing cost of commuting, the possibility of creating local employment opportunities may become more realistic and desirable and should be reflected in the Land Use Plan.

5. Above all, the Plan must continue to provide an attractive community setting and residential environment and to balance this with an economic growth rate not in conflict with this environment.

LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT

EXISTING LAND USE

Introduction

In the process of comprehensive planning, the inventory of manmade features is an important step. The following chapter of the Master Plan study deals specifically with the present utilization of land areas in Atkinson. In this report, both the quantity of land use and the relative distribution of uses, which in turn reflect the development pattern of the community, are discussed. Through the existing land use pattern and the statistical analysis, the availability and suitability of land for future development can be identified. The present utilization of land, and in particular, the patterns of development, give an indication of the town's socio-economic role within itself and within the larger regional setting.

Not unlike many New Hampshire communities, the Town of Atkinson is very much oriented towards the automobile. This is reflected in the mobility of the residents, dependence on highways, and, in fact, the complete lack of central commercial facilities catering to the local population. It has resulted in a dispersal of land use, and land has been developed often at the initiative of the property owner rather than through the guidance and direction of the community for priority areas for development. People no longer have to live near their place of employment. They can live almost anywhere they desire and then commute. This mobility is beginning to show in the rural areas of New Hampshire where recent construction is the result of migration from nearby urban centers.

In addition to this relatively scattered growth in Atkinson, land once used for farming is growing over with second growth and is being put to such uses as housing developments and educational facilities, with farming activities yielding to development pressures.

More significant than the geographic distribution of the land uses in Atkinson is the time distribution in which the growth has taken place. Most recent growth began in 1950 when the town, in fact, had the same number of dwelling units as it did in 1767. However, in the period from 1950 to 1960, approximately 180 dwelling units were added, nearly doubling the inventory. By 1970, the community had 700 dwelling units. Between 1970 and 1978, 626 dwelling units were added. In 1978, 147 permits were issued for residential construction. While these statistics of construction may be alarming, they are cause for thought; for as building activities take place, less and less rural land will prevail.

In addition to developing along existing town roads, new roads were constructed as part of new developments, placing a burden on the community. This land use change has resulted in a shift in a primarily agricultural/forestry land use pattern to an almost suburban bedroom land use makeup. Yet, it is interesting to note that during a Community Attitude Survey, 465 out of nearly 600 people interviewed indicated that they would like to have Atkinson retain its "country flavor".

Existing Land Use (Continued)

Introduction (Continued)

As the adjacent Table X indicates, only 20.7% is identified as developed land. The community now has a two-acre requirement per dwelling unit; however, many homes are sitting on less acreage than that. In theoretical terms, some homes have more than two acres. Many have less than two acres, and it is reasonable to assume that approximately 1,400 acres of the town's total 7,235 acres have been consumed for home construction.

Forest Land Areas

Much of the town's land area is in a forested state, mainly because of its marginal conditions for agricultural activities and lack of suitability for prime development land. 4,844.6 acres have been identified as forest growth land. This constitutes 66.9% of the total land area and is largely responsible for the still "rural" setting the community renders.

Developed Land Areas

The second largest land area is developed land. 1,492.2 or 20.7% of the community's total land is devoted to development. It is utilized for home construction and ancillary facilities such as driveways, garages, water supply and sewage disposal facilities. Much of this development, for obvious reasons, is along existing roads and newly established residential streets. What is significant is that much of this development has taken place over the past 30 years. In fact, 800% of today's housing and population has been added since 1950.

Wetland Areas

The Consultant has measured 312.8 acres or 4.3% of the town's land area as wetland. Much of this wetland is pasture and meadowland devoted to agricultural endeavors. On the other hand, much of this land is also unsuitable for agricultural endeavors and, indeed, is of value to the community because of aquifer recharge qualities associated with wetland area.

Existing Land Use (Continued)

Idle or Marginal Land Areas

5.3% or 378.8 acres are identified as marginal or idle land areas. Again, some of this is second growth or discontinued farm land lying idle. Its inactive use reflects the discontinuance of farming activities, soil conditions unfavorable to development , or the holding in abeyance of development by choice of its owner.

Agricultural and Tillage Areas

120.5 acres or 1.6% of the land area is still in active agricultural use. These are active farms and, again, a key element in giving Atkinson the rural atmosphere it still has.

Water Uses

86.1 acres, most of which is Island Pond, constitute 1.2% of the town's total land area.

Other Uses

Public uses excluding those uses devoted to streets and highways plus seven commercial activities are included in the "developed" column. These constitute a small fraction and the small commercial acreage has given Atkinson its continued dependence on outlying areas for commercial and community services.

Land Use Distribution by Manmade Structures

The recently completed map by the Southern Rockingham Regional Planning District Commission shows the following identified land uses:

Single Family Residential	1,219
Seasonal Residential (mostly at Island Pond)	77
Home Occupation identified by signs	30
Multi Family Structures	9
Commercial	7
Mobile Homes	3
Governmental	12

Existing Land Use (Continued)

Observations

1. Atkinson's development pattern has been one of identifiable dispersal with little rhyme or reason for emphasis on priorities of development.

2. Atkinson provides little private employment opportunities within its bounds.

3. Atkinson has little commercial activity, rendering it dependent on outlying shopping facilities in nearby communities.

4. Atkinson has recently assumed an increasing number of apartment dwellings, rendering an intrusion on the general country setting for single family homes.

5. Some of the development patterns are beginning to reflect the marginal conditions of soils and subsoils for suitability of development.

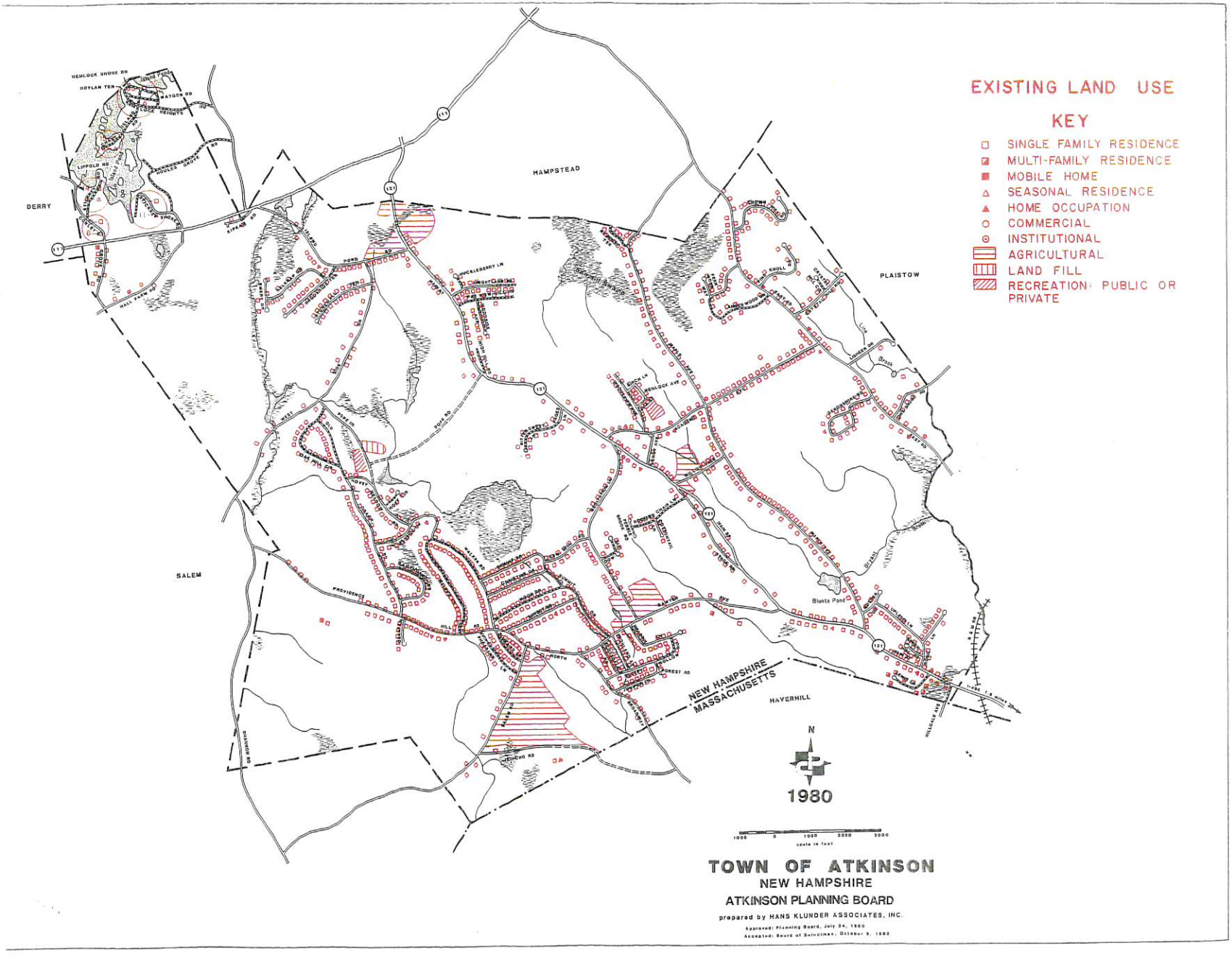
6. Having grown 800% in the last 30 years, the community has done remarkably well in retaining a rural New Hampshire, small town setting.

TABLE X

EXISTING LAND USES

Use	Acres	% of Total Acres
Forest Land Areas	4,844.6	66.9
Developed Land Areas	1,492.2	20.7
Wetland Areas	312.8	4.3
Idle or Marginal Land Areas	378.8	5.3
Agricultural and Tillage Areas	120.5	1.6
Water Uses	86.1	1.2
Total	7,235	100.0

Source: 1978 Air Photography Interpretation, Hans Klunder Associates


EXISTING LAND USE
KEY
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENCE
MOBILE HOME
SEASONAL RESIDENCE
HOME OCCUPATION
COMMERCIAL
INSTITUTIONAL
AGRICULTURAL
LAND FILL
RECREATION: PUBLIC OR PRIVATE
DERRY
HAMPSTEAD
PLAISTOW
SALEM
HAVERHILL
NEW HAMPSHIRE
MASSACHUSETTS
Blunts Pond
N
1980
scale in feet
TOWN OF ATKINSON
NEW HAMPSHIRE
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NATURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

The character of the natural resources in the Town of Atkinson represents one of the most important factors in directing future development. The impact that this development will have on the natural resources and the resources on development will directly affect the quality of life in the town. It is for this reason that the ability of the natural environment to support development should play a major role in determining land usage and development densities.

Determining the capabilities of each area of the town to support development is a complicated matter. Some limiting factors are additive - such as steep slopes and erosive soils - while others are independent - such as depth to bedrock and flooding tendencies. Often in community planning, natural resources issues are over-simplified and used to prevent development or they are ignored completely and development is allowed to take place under any conditions. To take either extreme is wrong and should not be allowed to occur.

Among the natural resources factors affecting development capabilities in Atkinson are soil types, depth to bedrock, location of the ground water table, topographic slope, flooding considerations, wetlands, and the potential to support agriculture. Maps of each of these factors have been evaluated, interpreted, and included on the Opportunities and Limitations for Development Map.

Opportunities and Limitations in the Planning Process

The Opportunities and Limitations Map does not attempt to specifically identify the problems of each area, but, rather, points the user to other maps which contain the required data. At first glance, the map may appear to preclude development anywhere in the town. However, it must be remembered that the map only suggests warnings and does not prevent development. The map has evolved from a number of sources including the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), Southern Rockingham Regional Planning Commission, and town furnished maps. In some cases, these data are very general and, in others, they are more specific. In all cases, the data are subject to interpretation errors, mapping errors, and scale errors, and, therefore, it is not intended that the Opportunities and Limitations Map be more than a guide. Where one or more limitations are indicated on the map, the town should demand that the developer take steps to show either that the problems are not severe or that adequate remedial measures will be undertaken to overcome any problems.

Natural Conditions Affecting Development

Wetlands

Wetlands are often extremely sensitive areas providing habitat for wildlife and helping to control flooding. Wetlands cause problems for most types of development as they contain unstable soils and have high ground water tables. For the Opportunities and Limitations Map, SCS soils mapped as wetland soils were depicted including Sawmill Swamp and areas along Line Brook. These wetlands were mapped as having very severe limitations.

Flood Prone Areas

Areas subject to flooding present dangers to life and property and require that development be prohibited or entirely flood-proofed. Consequently, all areas determined by Housing and Urban Development to lie in the 100 year flood limits of streams in Atkinson are mapped as very severe.

Soils

Soil-caused development problems include depth to bedrock and high ground water tables. Both cause problems during construction and the latter will continue to be a problem. Soil identified by SCS as having high ground water tables or bedrock within two feet of the surface were mapped as having severe limitations while those with bedrock between two feet and more than four feet were mapped as moderate limitations.

Slopes

Steep slopes cause problems with access to sites (excessive grades) and high rainwater runoff. When this occurs on some soils, excessive erosion occurs during construction and in areas where the natural ground cover has been disturbed. For the Opportunities and Limitations Map, slopes in excess of 15% were mapped as very severe limitations, 15 - 25% as severe limitations and 8 - 15% as moderate limitations.

Agricultural Potential

In northern New England there is competition between agriculture and development for many of the flatter areas. Because of a concern for the loss of potentially valuable agricultural resources, the SCS has identified those soils which have the neces-

Agricultural Potential (Continued)

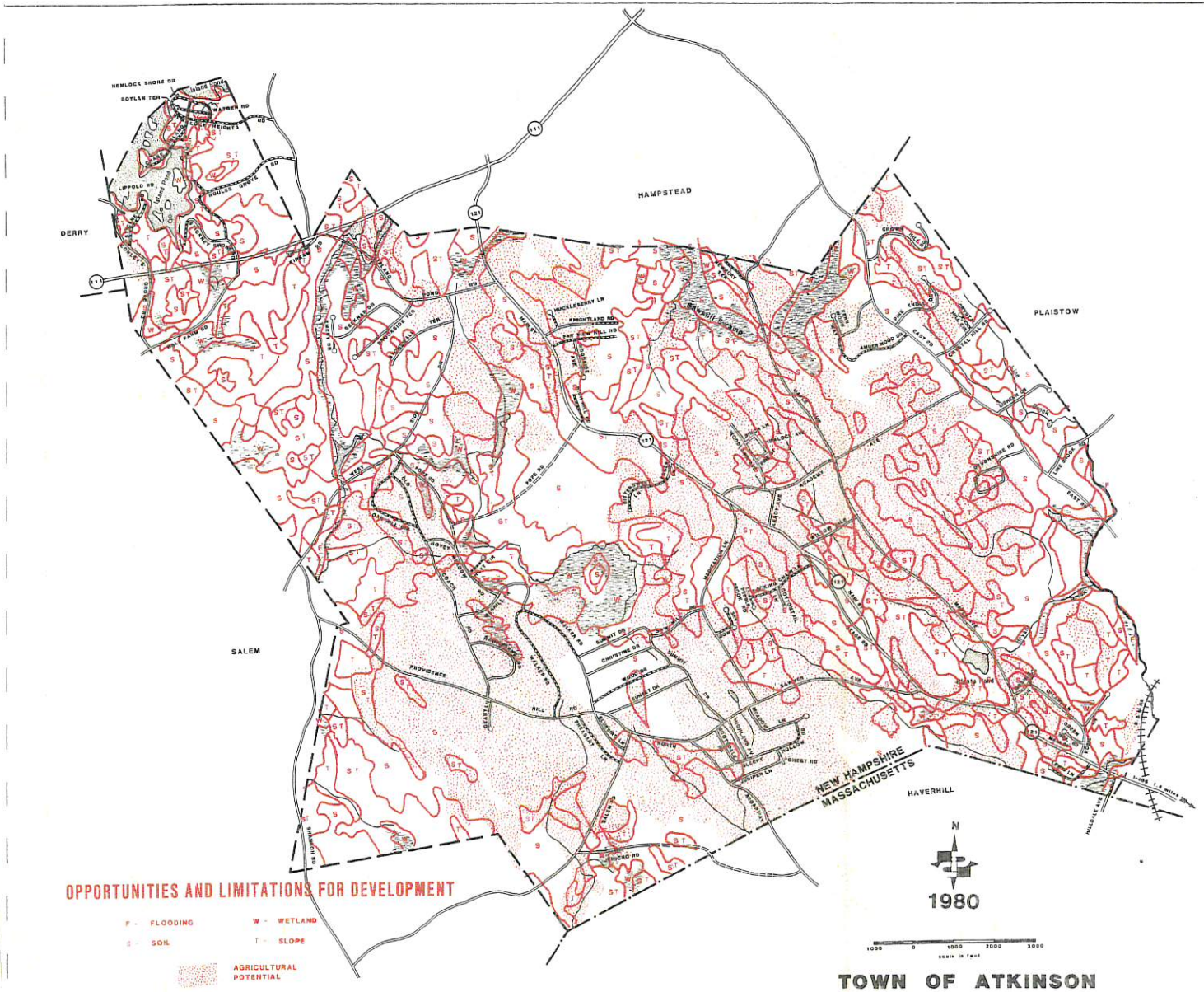
sary qualities to be classified as prime agricultural soils both on a national and on a state-wide basis. Development of these soils means that they are out of production forever. However, these areas are valuable resources when they are large enough to support agriculture and when there are interest, skills and financial resources necessary to farm them. For the Opportunities and Limitations Map, these soils have been depicted as having moderate limitations to development.

Summary

Limitation Gradient	Acres
Opportunities & Slight Limitations	460
Slightly Moderate	1,839
Moderate	590
Moderately Severe	2,360
Severe	1,190
Unsuitable for Development	805
Total	7,235 A.

Source: Photographic Interpretation Corporation,
Air Photography
Soil Conservation Service Soils Map

The above table reflects the interpretation of natural conditions identifying opportunities and gradations of limitations to development. In addition, approximately 2,625 acres, some of which has already been developed, have been identified as land suitable for agricultural endeavors, portions of which should be preserved for agricultural use in the future through the possible acquisition of development rights of prime agricultural lands.



OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

F - FLOODING
S - SOIL
W - WETLAND
T - SLOPE

AGRICULTURAL POTENTIAL

BOLD letters indicate severe limitations

LIGHT letters indicate moderate limitations

Floodplain data are from HUD maps , all others from Southern Rockingham Regional Planning Commission maps.

Data based Town of Atkinson soil survey USDA Soil conservation service

TOWN OF ATKINSON

NEW HAMPSHIRE

ATKINSON PLANNING BOARD

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VISUAL AND SCENIC INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

In recent years, particularly as some of the attractive landscape in the community was consummed by development, the visual qualities of the community have become an increasingly significant part of the planning process. The following study deals with Atkinson's landscape and a way in which it contributes to the quality of life in the town. In developing the visual inventory and analysis, the following objectives were taken into consideration:

1. To create an increasing awareness of the community's inhabitants in identifying the visual quality in the hopes of protecting it. Although Atkinson may wish to protect this landscape through special review requirements, informed citizens, however, can greatly contribute to the aims of retaining this particular aspect of quality of life through voluntary control.

2. To provide a landscape analysis that can serve as a pratical component in the development of Site Plan Review considerations. It is hoped that, in part, this visual analysis will contribute in the selection of land use density allocations in Atkinson. Wherever possible, the visual analysis should be applied in order to preserve the scenic qualities in the future developments of the community and avoid intrusions against these qualities (careful development in building locations).

3. To provide information to guide development in the town. It may be impossible to regulate all facets of visual qualities. However, the knowledge should be available and choices be made based on this information in order to help Atkinson's Planning Board in reviewing and negotiating with builders and developers.

The following study is undertaken with the aim of maintaining visual quality in Atkinson that can have psychological, planning, and economic benefits to the community. It is urged that high-quality landscape areas be not only understood by the residents and the voters, but be protected as much as possible.

It is the protection of quality of landscape that lends to the quality of life in a community and can instill and retain community pride and the community's desire to continue the thoughtful use of its land.

It is hoped that in the Comprehensive Planning efforts, the town will use its review process to minimize impacts of development and, as far as possible, promote positive effects of developments by exposing views and retaining qualities of landscapes as identified.

Visual and Scenic Inventory and Analysis (Continued)

Introduction (Continued)

In the preparation of the following inventory and analysis, the Consultant appreciates the assistance of Mrs. Evelyn Shore and Ms. Lynne Monroe. The visual analysis greatly benefited from the Cultural Resources Survey and Inventory conducted by the Strafford Rockingham Regional Council in 1979. It is hoped that the incorporation of this Survey into the Comprehensive Planning process will be, in part, a contributing element to the retention of quality of life in Atkinson, while allowing and continuing orderly community growth.

Contributing Elements to the Visual Quality of Atkinson

The basic elements of making an area one of pronounced quality is two fold:

1. The vista that a certain location renders.

2. The identification of short range, middle range, and long range views in the town's landscape.

Areas of High Visual Quality

In Atkinson, a generally beautiful community, there are areas that are particularly high in visual quality. This survey differs from the identification of historic areas and areas of architectural significance. However, it does, as the Cultural Survey indicated, give, in many instances, a glimpse of "old" Atkinson. Many of these highly scenic areas are those that have been preserved for centuries. They are identifiable and are located on the map. They include:

1. Providence Hill area

2. Jericho Road - North Broadway view shed

3. Main Street - Sawyer Avenue section

4. Lower Maple Avenue

5. Lower East Road

6. Town Center - south

Visual and Scenic Inventory and Analysis (Continued)

Areas of High Visual Quality (Continued)

7. Town Center - north

8. Island Pond Road - Route 111# plain

9. Island Pond environs

In addition, long distance vistas of significance have been identified as:

1. Pine Knoll area

2. Maple Avenue - Bragg Hill section

3. Hogg Hill

4. Providence Hill - west

Areas of Visual Quality

Providence Hill

This is the section that borders on Salem and is located in the southwest corner of Atkinson. It provides a view shed that is identifying agricultural meadowland encompassing an area of approximately one half mile. This area, though framed by mature forest stands and stone walls, gives one the feeling of spaciousness and of the "original" southern New Hampshire landscape.

Its retention should be accomplished by careful building placement, taking advantage of interfaces between open spaces and the forested areas.

Jericho Road - North Broadway Sector

This is a large area, nearly three quarters of a square mile in size and bound by Jericho Road on the south, Salem Road to the west, and North Broadway to the north.

It is one of the major areas in the community still in agricultural use and is indeed beautiful, restful to the eye, and rather unique in a community that is as heavily forested as Atkinson. Its active farm use contributes to the uniqueness.

Main Street - Sawyer Avenue Area

This area is located in the southern portion of Atkinson, bordering Massachusetts. It is an area that has, in addition to historic significance , a short range view that is of decisive significance. Not only is it exposed to a large volume of passers-by, but it has been virtually preserved by its marginal suitability for development. This marginal quality for development is one that should encourage the community to retain these characteristics of this view shed and render a setting to an identified historic area in the community.

Lower Maple Avenue

This area is one of uninterrupted view for approximately 2,000 feet to the west and encompasses nearly 4,000 feet in length along Maple Avenue. Because of the slope of Maple Avenue coming off from Bragg Hill, this is an area that is not only a short and medium range area, but has a significant long range view as well. The view shed is located generally between Main Street and Maple Avenue and is one that is characteristic of the high visual quality in Atkinson. It is an area that makes one wonder where the many people in Atkinson are actually residing. It is typical of the many open spaces that are still preserved and hopefully will be retained in the community's future landscape.

Lower East Road

This area is located in the southeast corner of the community and adjacent to Plaistow. Its significance is the large open area created by a high water table and marsh condition. Its beauty is framed by mature tree growth located approximately 1,500 feet to the southwest of East Road. The protection of this vista to the traveler along East Road is one of significance and should be preserved. In addition to its being a beautiful view, it is an introduction to an historic area identified as part of a Cultural Survey just south of Line Brook Road.

Town Center - South

Probably one of the most significant areas of visual quality in Atkinson is the view from the town center to the south. Not only is it an historic area from which the view is rendered, but it is one that encompasses both sides of Meditation Lane. It reaches from Main Street 180 degrees to Bittersweet Lane area to the northwest.

For significant reasons, not only is this view an historic setting, but the open fields framed by stone walls in the background and foreground make this a view shed that contributes greatly to the town's visual quality and should be protected.

Town Center - North

In the central part of town going north, just prior to reaching the low point before rising towards Hogg Hill, is a medium and short range vista to the north created by marsh lands and open lands framed by wooded areas. In a way, this is one of the more typical vistas in the Town of Atkinson and represents the kind of quality that makes Atkinson the pretty town that it is. It is a vista that should be protected.

Island Pond Road - Route 111 - Route 111 Area

This view shed is located in the northwest portion of Atkinson, framed by two highways rendering exposure to the travelling public. In addition to being one of the earlier settled areas in Atkinson, it is one that, for reasons of natural conditions because of high water tables and marsh areas, has been undeveloped, while in the easterly portion, particularly in the vicinity of the section of Main Street and Island Pond Road, agricultural endeavors have maintained the open space quality. Their quality is identified here and their protection should be accomplished, for it is one of the areas that creates the landscape which is predominant and makes Atkinson a visually attractive community.

Island Pond Environs

Island Pond is generally visible only to private property owners save for a few key vistas. One of these is on the approach to Chase Island; the second one is on the northern portion of the Hemlock Heights development.

The view connected to Chase Island is one into a wetland area created by a cove on Island Pond and renders a rather unique area of wilderness - wetland area. The view from the Hemlock Heights development is one showing a portion of Island Pond and its beauty created by the forest-covered shoreline contrasting with the tranquility of a large water body. These elements are being identified here to record their significance for future consideration as permits are being issued for further development in that northern-most portion of Atkinson.

Locations of Vistas

Maple Avenue - Bragg Hill

This point identified on the Visual Analysis Map is one that renders a great view towards the south and southeast from Maple Avenue. A possible visual easement consideration should be given to the retention of this long range distance view in the retention of visual qualities of Atkinson.

Pine Knoll

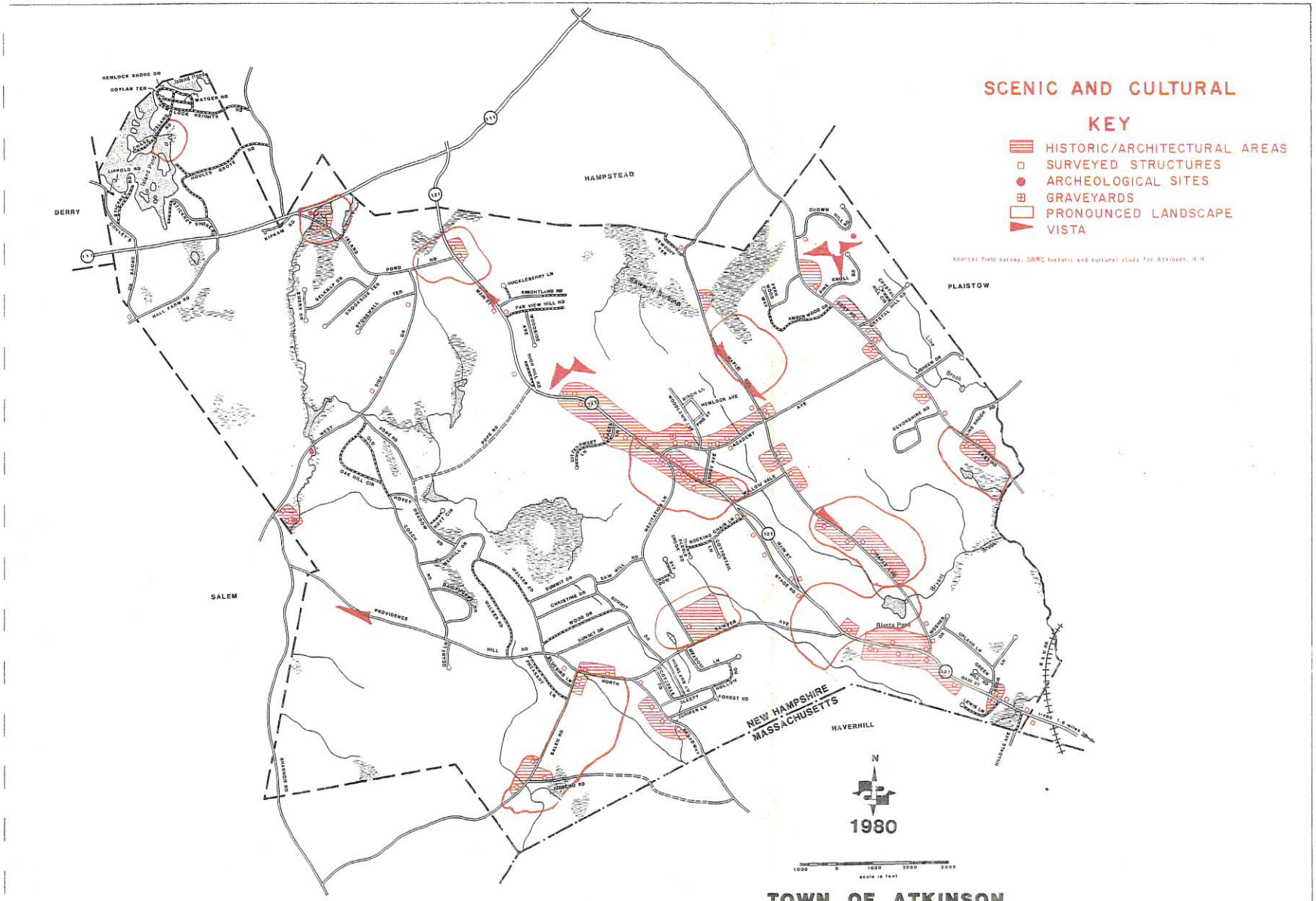
In the extreme northeast portion of Atkinson is the Pine Knoll - Crown Hill development area. Becuase of the high elevation of Pine Knoll, it does render an extremely beautiful view of the southern New Hampshire landscape. Much of the vista areas are occupied by private development,and possible future visual easements should be given consideration particularly if the potential public access to an area providing an outlook over the southern New Hampshire landscape could be accomplished.

Hogg Hill

Hogg Hill renders the most significant view towards the west from the Town of Atkinson. This view shed is a long distance view of the westerly portion of southern New Hampshire and is one similar to Pine Knoll, that of being increasingly absorbed by private ownership and development pressures. Possible acquisition of visual easements and a location of public lookout might be worthy of consideration in the town's planning efforts.

Providence Hill - West

The descending topography on Providence Hill Road, along with a view shed identified earlier, is also a long distance view rendered to the traveler. If possible, visual easements by controlling vegetative growth and development along particularly significant areas of exposure to this long range view should be accomplished through identification in the Comprehensive Plan expressing town-wide concern by retaining this unique view and protecting it for future generations.



TOWN OF ATKINSON

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PUBLIC FACILITIES

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Introduction

A community shows its face in its public buildings and the maintenance of its own facilities. In the effort to render a Master Plan for a community, public facilities, those for which the general public of the town is responsible, must be identified and evaluated as to their adequacy in performing the services that the community requires. In this instance, the Town of Atkinson's local public facilities include local governmental offices, a police station, fire station, public works garage, recreation and leisure facilities, school buildings and solid waste disposal facilities.

Surprisingly, in Atkinson, a preliminary observation shows that very little new facilities have been added to the town's own capital resource inventory. The town is still essentially relying on facilities that were created when the community had a population of less than half its present size. Not only services but additional facilities will be necessary, especially if the community continues to assume its share of regional population growth. The following is an inventory of the community facilities and town owned land resources. In the preparation of this, the assistance of Mrs. Evelyn Shore and Mr. Chet Ladd was invaluable and is applied in this study.

Town Hall

The Town Hall, a typical 19th century municipal facility structure, has served the community well. Today's governmental functions are, at best, conducted in a crowded condition in this building. The Selectmen are finding that the structure is in need of foundation repair, rewiring, and lacks insulating against severe winter conditions.

The Town Hall houses facilities for the Town Clerk, the office of the Selectmen, the Building Inspector, the Health Officer, the Fire Department Inspection Office, the Plumbing Inspector, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and is headquarters for the Recreation Commission and Budget Committee. Many of these meeting rooms are interchangeable and do have the appearance of overcrowded conditions. In the planning effort, the examination of the Town Hall should be undertaken and thoroughly reviewed, particularly in light of increased municipal administration demands.

Public Facilities (Continued)

Town Garage

Behind the Town Hall is the Town Garage housing the town's truck and sanding equipment. Again, this is a facility that has served the town well in the past but should be reviewed, particularly in light of needed additional town highway services as the community assumes increased responsibility for increased highway maintenance.

Library

Another building of the town's inventory is the Public Library. A recent addition (opened in 1975) has made this a modern and very attractive facility, located in the town center. The library is located in the geographic center of the community, as are other adjacent town facilities, making them accessible to all residents.

The library building itself is a two part facility: one providing for reading rooms and storage for 21,000 books, and the other providing a functional room for public meetings. The provision of these two activities make them not mutually exclusive, but complementary and an asset to the town's literary and community life. The only possible need identified is more work and special use space.

Police Facilities

The Police Department is housed in a small building across from the Town Hall complex and is serving as the police headquarters. It does not have any detention facilities and needs, more than this, more useful facilities.

With some adaptive steps, this old one-room schoolhouse can continue to serve the town's safety and protection functions well into the foreseeable future.

Fire Protection Facilities

The Fire Department, too, is centrally located near the junction of Main Street and Academy Avenue, adjacent to the library. The volunteer fire department, consisting of 34 volunteers, has a good facility from which to operate. In addition to the station itself is a hose-drawing tower.

Because of the lack of public water mains, the community relies on water hole locations to

Public Facilities (Continued)

Fire Protection Facilities (Continued)

render fire protection to the community. A total of 16 such fire holes are located, and while some of them are provided with hydrants, many do not have hydrant access. Because of the lack of central water systems and an adequate distribution network, the community has a very high fire insurance rating, one of 9 E.

Solid Waste Disposal

After the closing of the dump facility off Meditation Lane, the community is now maintaining a dump transfer station on Pope Road and trucking the refuse to a sanitary land fill out of town. This dumpster site is located in the former dump site and is located in the west central portion of the town, readily accessible to the majority of people.

Educational Facilities

The town is now served by the Rockwell School, a new elementary school, at the junction of Maple Avenue and Main Street. The former Atkinson Academy building is also serving as an elementary facility.

The Jr. and Sr. High School education is provided at Timberlane Regional Jr. and Sr. High Schools just outside of the Town of Atkinson, in Plaistow, located off Greenough Road.

Evaluation of the school facilities, their adequacies and present and future demands will be studied as part of the Public Facilities Analysis and Evaluation study along with school enrollment projections for Atkinson.

Recreational Facilities

The town presently controls slightly over twenty acres for recreational purposes, both active and passive. (This is in addition to indoor recreational activities carried out in the Town Hall, the library for preschool crafts, the Dyke Auditorium for basketball and gymnastics. and Timberlane Regional High School.) The recreational facilities that are actively serving the community are located off Pope Road, in Independence Park, on Amberwood Drive, on Stickney Shore Road, off Sawyer Avenue, and those associated with Atkinson Academy.

Island Pond is a major natural asset in the community that should and could render recreational opportunities to town residents.

Public Facilities (Continued)

Other Public Facilities

State Properties

The State of New Hampshire owns two identified parcels in the Town of Atkinson. One is located at the intersection of the Hall Farm Road and the new Route 111. The other parcel is located off East Road near Lisheen Drive, once serving as a source for state gravel.

Post Office

The Post Office is located in the southeast corner of Atkinson adjacent to the Massachusetts border along Route 121.

Public Town Parcels

According to Mr. Ladd's information, the community itself, outside the state and Timberlane District property, owns a total of forty-seven identifiable individual properties. This does not include rights-of-way dedicated for public road and highway purposes. The attached table is a list of these publicly held properties and identifies their current functions or uses.

Semi Public Facilities

Hospitals

The Town of Atkinson is served by the Hale Hospital in Haverhill, Mass., the Exeter Hospital in Exeter, N.H., Lawrence General Hospital in Lawtence, Mass., the Alexander Eastman Hospital in Derry, N. H., and the Bon Secours Hospital in Methuen, Mass.

Ambulance services are available through the Shanahan Ambulance Service, while New Market Health Center provides medical center attention and the Rockingham Nursing Home in Brentwood, N. H. provides nursing care.

Churches

The Town of Atkinson is served by the Atkinson Congregational Church and Pentucket Baptist Church. Other denominations are relying on nearby communities in New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

TABLE XI

LAND OWNED BY TOWN OF ATKINSON

	Parcel Location	How Acquired	Size in Acres	Designated Use
1.	Main Street	Purchase		Cemetery
2.	Academy Avenue			Police Station
3.	Main Street	Gift	.125	Town Common
4.	Academy Avenue	Gift	8.0	Library
5.	Academy and Woodlawn Avenue	Tax Sale		
7.	Pope Road	Purchase	5.0	Recreation
8.	Pope Road	Gift		Recreation
9.	Maple Road	Gift		Water Hole
10.	Academy Avenue	Gift	4.0	Town Hall
11.	Stickney Shore Road	Tax Sale	3.91	Recreation
12.	Crystal Hill Road	7½% Donation	2.4	Conservation
13.	Meditation Lane	7½% Donation	2.6	Recreation
14.	East Road next to Plaistow town line	7½% Donation	1.21	Water Hole
15.	Providence Hill	7½% Donation	5.7	Conservation
16.	Academy Avenue	Purchase		Cemetery
17.	At end of Robie Lane	7½% Donation	3.456	
18.	Off Crown Hill Road	Federal Funds (B O R)	5.9	Conservation (Rock Shelter) Town Forest

Land Owned by the Town of Atkinson (Continued)

	Parcel Location	How Acquired	Size in Acres	Designated Use
19.	Maple Avenue	7½% Donation	4.2	Conservation
20.	Stonewall Terrace	7½% Donation	3.47	
21.	West Side Drive	7½% Donation	.547	
22.	Crown Hill Road	Gift	1.46	Conservation Town Forest
23.	Off Maple Avenue	Gift	4.0	Conservation (Floating Island)
24.	Merrill Drive	7½% Donation	5.87	Recreation
25.	Sawyer Avenue	Purchase	20.0	
26.	Amberwood Drive	7½% Donation	2.731	Recreation
27.	Rocking Chair Lane	7½% Donation	5.90	
28.	Off Sawyer Road			
29.	East Road	Federal Funds (B O R)	23.4	Conservation Town Forest
30.	At end of Stonewall Terrace	7½% Donation	3.0	
31.	Pope Road	Federal Funds (B O R)	28.4	Conservation
32.	Sawyer Road	Federal Funds (B O R)	48.38	Conservation Town Forest
33.	Pope Road	Purchase	10.0	Dump Transfer Station and Recreation
34.	Bittersweet Lane	7½% Donation	7.53	Conservation

Land Owned by the Town of Atkinson (Continued)

	Parcel Location	How Acquired	Size in Acres	Designated Use
35.	Between Pope Road and Old Coach Road	7½% Donation	7.502	Recreation
36.	Pine Knoll Drive	7½% Donation	3.26	Conservation
37.	Hall Farm Road and Conley Grove Road	7½% Donation	1.70	Conservation
38.	East Road and Lisheen Drive	7½% Donation	1.77	Conservation
39.	Sawmill Swamp off Newbury Drive	Tax Delinquent	7.0±	Conservation
40.	Main Street and Pope Road	Federal Funds (H C R S)	11.67	Conservation
41.	Off Merrill Drive	7½% Donation	1.75±	Conservation
42.	Houle's Grove Road	Federal Funds (H C R S)	35.17	Conservation
43.	North Broadway and Forest Road	Federal Funds	57.87	Conservation
44.	Merrill Drive	7½% Donation	.17	Conservation
45.	Maple Avenue and Washington Road	7½% Donation	5.8	Conservation
46.	Maple Avenue and Washington Road	7½% Donation	3.47	Conservation
47.	Off Crown Hill Road	Tax Deed	.20	Conservation

Source: Mr. Chester Ladd

Public Facilities (Continued)

Observations

1. The Town of Atkinson is serving today's population of approximately 4,000 people with little more community services and public facilities than it did in 1960 when the community was half its population size (save for the schools).

2. The community has served its citizens well with the facilities that are available, with a noted shortage of open space and recreational land.

3. The addition of new facilities could prove, in the long run, more costly than the retention of current ones.

4. The town has no public sewer or public water facilities.

5. A nucleus for a New England town center and improved community facilities is established off Academy Road.

6. The recreational facilities, under the auspecies of the Recreation Commission, are serving the community to their fullest capacity and have in the past contributed to the quality of life in Atkinson.

7. Ways should be found to improve community facilities without diluting the quaintness and efficiency (largely because of volunteer participation) that make Atkinson the community that it is today.

TOWN FACILITIES
KEY
WATER HOLE
HYDRANT
TOWN OWNED LAND:
CONSERVATION
RECREATION
MUNICIPAL
HAMPSTEAD
DERRY
PLAISTOW
SALEM
HAVERHILL
NEW HAMPSHIRE
MASSACHUSETTS
TOWN HALL
ROCKWELL SCHOOL
ATKINSON ACADEMY
FIRE STATION
POLICE STATION
Blunts Pond
N
1980
scale in feet
TOWN OF ATKINSON
NEW HAMPSHIRE
ATKINSON PLANNING BOARD
prepared by HANS KLUNDER ASSOCIATES, INC.
Approved: Planning Board, July 24, 1980
Accepted: Board of Selectmen, October 6, 1980

STREET, HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

STREET, HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION INVENTORY

Introduction

For Atkinson, accessibility with streets and highways have been the most significant element in shaping today's community patterns. They have not only been responsible for the rapid growth, but they also have been responsible for the location and size of developments that have taken place in the community. Inasmuch as they are a prime determination in development patterns in a community, they must be considered as part of the Comprehensive Planning effort. Streets and highways are generally laid out in areas that are manageable for reasons of grades and are located in soil conditions suitable for street and highway construction.

The predominant southerly development pressures in Atkinson are a direct result of the highway accessibility to the south and nearby employment centers in Massachusetts. Route 125, along with Salem Road and Broadway linking the southern portion of the community to Haverhill,are contributing factors to the development patterns of Atkinson.

Route 111 in the north is an important east - west feeder in the state's highway network. However, with limited opportunities for employment east and west of North Atkinson, this highway has had little impact in shaping the town's development patterns.

This results in a strong north - south orientation in Atkinson, relying on Main Street, Maple Avenue, East Road, Providence Hill and North Broadway.

Street and Highway Classifications

To designate responsibilities of initial construction and subsequent maintenance, the State of New Hampshire has made a street classification system. The legislature has categorized the system into six basic classes. They are the following:

I Class I highways consist of highways in the primary system including federal aid primary.

II Class II highways are those existing and proposed in the secondary state highway network.

III Class III highways are those serving state public recreation facilities.

IV Class IV highways are those identified within compact urban areas.

Street, Highways and Transportation Inventory (Continued)

Street and Highway Classifications (Continued)

V Class V highways are those that are serving the town, and the responsibility for construction and maintenance is the town's.

VI Class VI streets and highways are public rights-of-way which are not normally maintained and repaired by a community in suitable condition for travel for five successive years or more.

In evaluating the classification of streets and highways for Atkinson, the following breakdown is currently recorded:

There are no Class I highways in Atkinson.

There are 9.47 miles of Class II highways (Route 121 and Route 111) .

There are no Class III highways.

There are no Class IV highways.

There are 26.85 miles of Class V highways.

There are .51 miles of Class VI highways making a total of 36.83 miles of highways in the Town of Atkinson.

There is reason to identify functions of highways performed at the local level. In Atkinson, this applies to all Class V highways. In interpreting present traffic carriers, in addition to Routes 111 and 121, the town has within its jurisdictional responsibilities major collector highways consisting of the following:

Maple Avenue and East Road as the primary north - south connectors.

Westside Drive, Academy Avenue, Sawyer Avenue and Providence Hill Road as the primary east - west connectors.

In addition to the major collectors. there are primary service roads which consist of Meditation Lane, Salem Road and Island Pond Road. The remainder of the road network can be identified as service roads catering mostly to abutting properties.

Town Responsibilities

The Town of Atkinson is responsible for approximately 74% of the total road mileage within its bounds. While the initial construction within the community is the responsibility of developers and subdividers, it is the community's responsibility to make major improvements on the town road network and maintain the same. As the adjacent table indicates, the Town of Atkinson has approximately 148 persons per linear mile of town road responsibility. This compares somewhat unfavorably with Salem which has 208 persons per linear mile. However, when one considers that 25,000 people live in Salem and 4,000 people in Atkinson, Atkinson is faring relatively well. The Town of Kingston with a population of 2,882, has only 95 persons per linear mile, a relatively low population density.

This is not to say that the town should have a maximum density along local roads. This is merely to indicate that in Atkinson, 148 persons per mile are contributing to the local road maintenance program; in Salem, 208; in Kingston, 95.

In excercising the responsibility for road maintenance, the Town of Atkinson has taken pains to provide a service necessary to sustain the heavy traffic pattern on local streets. In areas where roads were recently improved, the standards are quite high, while older roads, such as Maple Avenue, portions of Main Street, Providence Hill Road and Sawyer Avenue, are roads of long standing in the community. Some of these roads go through land too wet for road construction. This makes maintenance difficult. Yet, in most instances, Atkinson has maintained an adequate and sound street and highway network which, with some minor improvements, will serve the community most adequately.

The local responsibility of streets and highways must be viewed in light of not only present but future demands,and there are instances where highway improvements will be recommended and should be receiving consideration as part of the continued operating budget for improvements and capital reconstruction to assure safer highways, particularly on collector streets.

Street and Highway Conditions

It is not unusual for older communities to have the best street and highway conditions in its most recently constructed subdivision streets. Atkinson proves no exception to this rule. Some of the best streets, save for Route 111 constructed by the state, are in approved and accepted subdivisions. On examination, streets like Hovey Meadow Road, Merrill Drive, Walker Road, Wood Drive, Summit Drive, Crown Hill Road, and FarView Hill Road are of remarkable quality for the function they serve. In fact, many of these subdivision service roads are of higher standards and specifications than such streets as Main Street, Maple Avenue and East Road.

TABLE XII

COMPARATIVE ROAD MILEAGE AND POPULATION

ATKINSON AND AREA TOWNS

Town	Class I	Class II	Class IV	Class V	Total	Town Roads	Pop. 1970 @	Persons per Town Rd. Mile
ATKINSON	0	9.47	0	26.85	36.32	26.85	4,000	148
Kingston	4.71	15.84	0	30.23	50.88	30.23	2,882	95
Exeter	8.25	7.35	30.13	20.09	65.82	50.22	8,892	177
Salem	9.72	7.24	88.74	33.52	139.22	122.26	25,427	208
Hampton	17.76	4.49	28.99	31.71	82.95	60.70	8,011	132

Source: New Hampshire Public Woorks and Highways
Office of State Planning

Street and Highway Conditions (Continued)

The travel conditions are, in most instances, safe for the speeds marked. Main Street, carrying a 35 MPH speed limit, is safe if that speed is maintained. There are (this is not to be underestimated) unsafe conditions resulting from vertical and horizontal visual distances. East Road at its intersection with Amberwood Drive is a totally unsafe situation as is a portion of Main Street in the vicinity of Bittersweet Lane.

The community has done extremely well in taking care of its 26.85 miles of local responsibility. This does not include such roads as portions of Pope Road, the discontinued portion of Jericho Road and those roads that have not been accepted by the community in the Island Pond area, including the roads in the Hemlock Heights development section.

Inasmuch as road conditions are related to quality of travel service and the usage the road receives, the following traffic counts are submitted and will ultimately be analyzed in relationship to the adequacy of the highway network that is serving the Town of Atkinson.

Traffic Counts

Through the New Hampshire Department of Public Works and Highways, the following traffic counts in Atkinson were made available. These traffic counts were for annual average daily traffic (AADT) and do not reflect peak hour or peak days in Atkinson' traffic pattern.

There are trend indicators available which show the increase in traffic reflected through the rapid growth of southern New Hampshire in general. In 1979, for example, Route 125 had a count of 14,910 AADT. For comparison purposes, this same traffic in 1971 was 10,730 and in 1975 was 13,120. In general, traffic has increased by over 60% between 1970 and 1979.

The count in Atkinson on Route 121 at the Plaistow town line has increased from 5,800 in 1975 to 6,200 in 1977.

Similarly, this traffic reflects a slight increase at the town line with Hampstead on Route 121. In 1977, 2,700 cars were accounted for as AADT while in 1978, 2,800 cars were counted, an increase of 100 vehicles.

In comparison, on East Road the traffic has increased 1,700 vehicles per day at the Plaistow town line, 2,200 vehicles in 1978. This is approximately a 30% increase, about half the general increase of traffic for major roads in southern New Hampshire.

Street, Highways, and Transportation Inventory (Continued)

Traffic Counts (Continued)

In evaluating a few counts that are available for Atkinson (Route 121 and East Road), they show that major highways in Atkinson are carrying a lesser portion of traffic for southern New Hampshire. In fact, on analysis, the growth and traffic volume seem to be directly proportional to the building activities. Therefore, it is safe to assume that the traffic in Atkinson is generated locally and is not the result of increased through-traffic within the community. This may, in part, explain the reason why no greater pressure for commercial/industrial development has taken place. Accessibility is a prime consideration for development and once accessible, traffic volumes will increase.

Future Street and Highway Recommendations

On review of traffic flow and street and highway use, it is recommended that a street and highway classification system be adopted. Route 111 should be considered a "thorough-fare" and Route 121, East Road, Academy Avenue and a potential extension of Academy Avenue to Providence Hill Road be designated as "major collectors".

The following should be designated as "collector roads": Meditation Lane, Providence Hill Road, Salem Road, portions of Old Coach Road, Westside Drive, Island Pond Road, and North Broadway. The remainder of the roads should be designated as service roads serving primarily residential areas, both existing and proposed.

Street Construction Program

It is recommended that highway construction programs take into consideration the improvement of the intersection of Willow Vale, Main Street and Stage Road, the curve and hill on East Road and its intersection with the northerly loop entrance off Amberwood Drive, the improvement of the intersection of Maple Avenue and Main Street, and the Sawyer Avenue and Main Street intersection. These improvements are not suggested to create high speed highways through the community, but to improve the safety of the local residential traffic.

In improving these situations, the town, through its road agent and the Board of Selectmen, should initiate action for state participation in any of these improvements. This is suggested because of the availibility of state funds on a matching basis, thereby stretching local dollars and creating a safer and better road network in the town.

Street Construction Program (Continued)

Along with this improvement it is suggested the town seek redesignation of Providence Hill Road and Sawyer Avenue in order to make it part of the state's secondary highway system. This is urged because of the intercommunity traffic resulting from Route 121 traffic seeking the Island Pond Road section in the Town of Salem.

Suggested Scenic Road Classifications

Through the authorization of New Hampshire's Revised Statutes Annotated, 253 of 1973, it is suggested that Atkinson establish scenic roads for its local highways to retain their basic integrity. Such a measure would control the removal of substantial trees and the disturbance of stone walls, requiring a hearing process with approval by the Board of Selectmen. It is recommended that as an initial step, Maple Avenue, Meditation Lane, portions of Providence Hill Road and Sawyer Avenue be designated as such roads of high scenic quality.

Summary

In summary, it is urged that the town establish a five-year program for road construction projects utilizing between $25,000 and $30,000 of state and local funds. The town should seek state and/or federal assistance in establishing intersection improvements outlined in the above highway recommendations.

Observations

1. Within the community's identifiable functions performed by various roads, street construction specifications reflecting these functions should be considered.

2. Some standards require a new road construction. Subdivision standards may be too high while higher classification roads may be too low.

3. The traffic in Atkinson has increased no more than the normal growth brought about by residential development.

4. There are definite identifiable areas of hazardous conditions that should receive the attention of major public improvements.

5. The town, currently operating its highway program on contractual arrangements, is doing very well save for some minor needs for improvement of critical situations. The road network is adequate to serve present and foreseeable future demands.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Introduction

The following is the discussion of the goals and objectives that are submitted for consideration by the Planning Board and the Planning Council both of which are assisting the community in developing a framework for the Master Plan. It is important that in the preparation of this Master Plan that physical development plans are designed and geared to address formulated community goals and objectives. It is important that these goals and objectives be approved by the Selectmen and adopted by the Planning Board so that subsequent planning recommendations can be set forth and Town Meeting may then guide the development of the Town of Atkinson.

On arriving at goals and objectives, the planning process, by its very nature, must become the responsibility of local administration. Recommendations leading to the implementation of the Master Plan must indicate programs, projects and policies that are designed to fulfill established goals and objectives. The following are recommendations for the consideration of the Planning Board and the Council. They should then include citizens' participation input. Ultimately, it is expected that these goals and objectives become part of the Master Plan and serve as an overall umbrella for the town's physical development plan.

Goals

The following goals are a statement made part of the Comprehensive Plan which hopefully will be approved by the Board of Selectmen, adopted by the Planning Board and approved by the general citizenry. The goals are defined as a fundamental purpose which requires the application of efforts and energies of the town over a long period of time. They are designed to give direction, guidance and coordination to the town's changes and development.

Objectives

As part of the attainment of goals, specific objectives are incorporated in this Comprehensive Plan. They are designed to make recommendations for accomplishment which contribute to the fulfillment of the established goals for Atkinson. Either attainment of one objective or a series of objectives must lead to the fulfillment of an established goal.

Policies

The Planning Board, by its very nature, may suggest policies to the Selectmen and the Town Meeting. Town Meeting, in turn, should make decisions that implement policy recommendations through legislative action. In order to realize goals and objectives, policies must be consistant with the Master Plan effort. Goals and objectives become reality through policy decisions that will implement the Master Plan.

Suggested Goals

The following are goals submitted for consideration by the Planning Board and the Planning Council along with their subsequent objectives for the attainment of such goals and suggested policies which translate these goals and objectives into programs and projects for Town Meeting action.

1. Retention of the "Quality of Life" for Atkinson Residents

This basic and broad goal is one upon which subsequent goals must rest. It is the most abstract of all goals. It is stated here, though broad, for true value and planning purposes. It is to assure the continued concern of Atkinson's identification with and implementation of measures leading to the continuation of the "quality of life" in Atkinson.

Objective

The objective of such a goal for Atkinson must be the creation of harmony within the community at large without infringing unduly on the opportunity for each incividual. The physical and socio-economic environment of all governmental policies and operations, as well as social and cultural environment, must be reflected and represent this community concern.

It is important that neither the town's interest nor the individual's interest is working against each other. In order to attain such a vast goal, the town must accept the responsibility of creating conditions for all citizens that may best meet basic human needs and are commensurate with individual desires. To attain this, it is important that both the individual and the community follow through with a plan that has as its aim a balanced program for change and development.

Retention of the Quality of Life (Continued)

Policy

Atkinson's role must be identified and planning and development carried out in accordance with a Master Plan. This plan must provide the framework for the continuation and improvement of policies aimed at providing for the well being of the citizens of Atkinson and providing for growth and change without undue hardship in retaining the qualities of life so well established. Policies must assure that the town is provided with adequate services and controls. The overall policy must become a directive for development.

2. Atkinson's Role in the Regional Setting

The goal is to provide ancillary employment opportunities within the town. The town should provide its own service needs and only limited employment opportunities, thereby accepting a continued dependence on the primary employment centers in outlying communities. This goal is being set in order to avoid large capital expenditures that are required to serve manufacturing industries and large wholesale and retail centers.

Objective

In order to attain such a goal, the town must devise a Land Use Plan that retains a desirable residential environment. Such a plan could provide the objective of creating services to the town such as retail and professional. The primary objective must be the creation of a residential community that satisfies its own service demands and depends for its employment opportunities elsewhere.

Policy

The policy must be one of adopting a Land Use Plan that is geared towards such a socio-economic goal. This means that plans and guidelines be adopted that will retain the residential character, providing needs and limited economic development opportunities as discussed in both the Transportation, Economic Base and Existing Land Use Inventory. The policy must be one that continues an attractive residential community and is very selective in the magnitude of any economic development. For such a goal, Atkinson will identify itself in a larger regional setting and adopt policies to bring about the realization of this goal.

3. Retention and Protection of Property Values

The Master Plan must recognize the importance of the protection of existing land values within Atkinson. Such a goal is designed to ensure property investments and to maintain open spaces, community pride and land values.

Objective

It is an objective to provide for growth and change maintaining the existing rural character of the community. The objective must reflect the densities and specific uses permitted within certain areas of the community, resulting in a pattern of development use. In attaining such an objective, the careful identification of land uses and their interrelationship and coordination with soil and subsoil conditions is imperative.

Policy

The policy recommendation is the revision of current local legislation. The adoption of improved subdivision regulations and a zoning ordinance that is designed to be commensurate with the community's capacity to assume growth and change must be kept in mind.

4. Recreation

Atkinson should make every effort to upgrade and expand the existing recreational facilities for the town. This goal is to provide for the continued opportunity for people to enjoy physical activities, especially as large tracts become less accessible through land owners' curtailing the free use of their land. It is recommended that through public and semipublic improvements, recreational lands and facilities be provided.

Objective

An objective must be the establishment of a long range open space and recreational improvement program that provides for strategic locations of publicly owned land.

Such an open space and recreational program must recognize the need for balanced recreational opportunities with summer and winter activities including, but not necessarily limited to hiking, swimming, crosscountry skiing, snowmobiling, and trail riding.

Recreation (Continued)

Policy

The policy necessary to implement such a goal is the required dedication of open spaces as development takes place through subdivision of tracts. Town Meeting must adopt a long range capital program annually setting aside funds, hopefully to be matched with state and federal funding, to acquire large tracts of open space.

5. Access With Streets and Highways

The goal should be to provide for a street and highway network that will discourage major through-traffic and be one that is primarily designed to serve the residents of the community. This goal should be adopted with the realization that major highway facilities will avoid pressures for undue development and will retain a rural small town characteristic environment for the Town of Atkinson.

Objective

The objective of such a goal is the creation of a residential community environment. This means that access should be provided, but that fast and high volumes of traffic be discouraged within the bounds of the town. This does not mean the creation of unsafe conditions, but the creation of road and highway networks that will primarily serve the residents of Atkinson.

Policy

The policy should be one of adopting road and highway standards that will retain the scenic roads, encourage the continuing maintenance of the road network, and adopt standards and specifications that are designed to meet the needs for the assigned functions.

6. Sewage Disposal and Water Supply

A goal is to maintain a sufficiently low population and development density that will allow for individualized sewage disposal facilities and individualized water supply. Such a goal is to be established under the existing water quality laws of the State of New Hampshire and those health regulations in the Town of Atkinson.

Objective

The objective is to avoid the large capital expenditure required to provide common and public sewer and water services. To assure the avoidance of town sewer and water, an objective is to provide for measures that will allow such densities and such regulations addressing subsoil conditions that will keep individualized water systems potable and sewage disposal systems efficient without ground water and surface water pollution.

Policy

The policy to attain such a goal and accomplish the objectives is to provide for a detailed project review that will address soil and subsoil conditions and incorporate them in the provisions of sewage disposal and water supply. This will also require sufficiently low densities throughout the community so that surface and ground water pollution will not occur beyond the capacity of the various subsoil stratifications, thus ensuring safe potable water for the foreseeable future. The policy must meet Town Meeting action for addressing natural resource regulations that will avoid development in areas identified as being marginally suited for development.

Summary

It is suggested that the goals and objectives be reviewed by the Planning Board and the Planning Council and be submitted to the Board of Selectmen for their perusal and approval as a basis for action in the Master Planning process. It should be recognized that the articulation of goals and the establishment of objectives along with the policies necessary to carry out these goals are an ongoing and changing process. Goals and objectives along with the appropriate policies for implementation may be added to, amended, and changed as necessary and should always be addressed as a basic element in the Master Planning process.

EVALUATION

The Consultant has submitted four Interim Reports which address issues germane to the planning task at hand. The last reports submitted discussed planning issues and goals and objectives that should be addressed as part of the planning program.

The series of studies conducted show that Atkinson today has come through a period of transition from a small rural New Hampshire community to a residential community of a suburban nature with an abundant amount of still "rural qualities". While the quantities of growth are indeed measurable, the quality of community life is far less tangible. In the studies conducted, it is evident that the Town of Atkinson, surrounded by communities like Salem, Derry and Plaistow, three of the fastest growing communities in southern New Hampshire, has generally remained an oasis. There are identifiable pockets of definite suburban characteristics within the town. This may have been caused when the typical one-acre subdivision was found no longer acceptable at Town Meeting and two acres were required per dwelling unit.

While having a fast rate of growth over the last two decades, Atkinson also has had very stable characteristics with a low turnover of residency. It is estimated by one local real estate agency that the average duration of stay in Atkinson is fourteen years. This is quite high considering that New Hampshire has communities where the average stay is as low as four years per family. This duration of stay in Atkinson seems to bring about a stability that the community in general reflects. The town has retained certain qualities, functionally (in form of governmental services) and esthetically (in form of a predominantly open space and rural environment).

It will take planning and the community's conviction to maintain its community environment in order to be neither capricious nor discriminatory. This is not only because of legal considerations, but because of the ever increasing pressure exerted on a community like Atkinson by the triangle formed by two major interstate systems (I-495 and I-93). Planning is a tool to maintain the course that a community has chosen.

Marginal soil conditions, recently exposed to community awareness through the adoption of wetlands regulations, and the absence of municipal sewer and water services have, in part, contributed to the maintenance of the low density development pattern. It is the pocket of one-acre and less than one-acre developments that are contributing to the hardly noticeable density of six acres per family in 1978. With the population growing and the land area being stable, the density is forced to increase. Considering today's development of approximately 1,000 acres of built-up residential land, subtracting from it approximately 500 acres zoned commercial-industrial, Atkinson has for future development approximately 5,000 acres available. While much of this land area may not be suitable for development,

a density approach can be utilized by concentrating development in those areas suitable for construction purposes. Making allowance for public lands and streets, the town has approximately 4,000 acres left for development. At a density of two acres per family, this would mean approximately 2,000 additional families or 6,000 people. In general figures, this would indicate a design population, namely a point at which no additional housing can be accommodated, of approximately 10,000 to 11,000 population.

Prime questions to be answered are, "Is this figure practical? Should this figure be reached through design and town planning; and if so, when?" These are issues that must be addressed through both proper growth management in the community and appropriate legislative measures adopted by the town reflecting goals and objectives adopted as part of this comprehensive planning process.

The evaluation of findings expressed in the foregoing states dramatically where Atkinson is today. The specifics, and how the community got there, are spelled out in the interim reports preceding this phase. Realizing this, the following phases of the program deal with alternatives from which the community may chose a future and long range plan of action.

PLANNING ISSUES

PLANNING ISSUES

Introduction

The purpose of identifying planning issues is to articulate issues unique to the Town of Atkinson in order to assure that the underlying problems of the community are acknowledged and dealt with to the greatest extent possible, through both local and state enabling legislation. The information included in this section is based on the Consultant's observations and review of surveys conducted by the Master Plan Coordinating Team.

Planning Issue No. 1 Maintenance of Quality of Life in Atkinson

When Town Meeting voted for the two-acre zoning, the primary purpose of this was to maintain Atkinson's residential features. Subsequent surveys conducted by the Master Plan Coordinating Team have indicated that the people prefer the small town atmosphere; they like Atkinson because of its good air and quaintness.

An expressed concern and an issue to be addressed is the maintenance of a slow rate of growth in order to provide the services necessary to maintain the community atmosphere and quality of life that exist today.

Planning Issue No. 2 Town Government vs Individual Rights

Many communities, as they face the question of how to protect the land resources over which they have jurisdiction, have faced the equally perplexing dilemma of curtailing individual freedoms. The residents of Atkinson have indicated a high degree of willingness to yield some measures of personal freedom in exchange for an attractive and healthy town by adopting two-acre zoning and, thereby, a land use restriction.

Continued community participation is important to the predominance of the community over individual, indiscriminate development. The issue is: as one gains protection, one must give up certain rights. The majority must excercise their right in controling the community's destiny over short term individual gains at the expense of the town.

Planning Issue No. 3 Adequate Town Services

Atkinson has maintained adequate community services with a minimum of "dipping into the public trough". This is to say that Atkinson, save for the large school budget, has maintained a frugal and prudent local administrative operation. As the community grows, these services must be continued and can be continued as long as the growth is moderate and within acceptable numbers.

Planning Issues (Continued)

Planning Issue No. 3 (Continued)

One issue to be addressed in the planning process is the provision for more recreational and open space, which is important as land becomes consumed by the small property owner through the continued subdivision of land.

Planning Issue No. 4 Preservation of Historic Characteristics and Open Spaces

A planning issue must be the identification and preservation of historic sites, historic areas and those areas that are visually unique.

Planning Issue No. 5 Critical Areas Preservation

An issue is the protection of identified critical land areas. These consist of wetland areas, high water table situations, areas of shallow bedrock and other identified land areas in the Natural Resources Inventory.

As the Master Planning process continues, additional planning issues may be identified and addressed, and suggested implementation measures will be considered at subsequent town meetings.

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

PLAN ALTERNATIVES

Introduction

The Planning Board, by nature of its function and as provided for under New Hampshire enabling legislation, has been charged with the responsibility of providing the community with measures that will guide future development of a municipality. The Master Plan, by its very nature, is not a stagnant document, but is a guideline that represents the end result of a series of studies. The alternatives, one or a combination of several that ultimately spell out the program, will be translated into a comprehensive Master Plan to be adopted by the Planning Board and serve as a basis for recommendations through legislative and regulatory measures acted upon by citizen vote. At this point, the alternatives submitted are offered for perusal by the Consultant. The Consultant will submit these alternatives and utilize citizen and committee input in order to devise a Land Use Plan and subsequently a comprehensive Master Plan reflecting the community's choice and based on experience, legislative feasibility, and practicality.

Alternative I:	Continuation of Present Zoning Provisions
Alternative II:	Emphasis on Residential Development
Alternative III:	Emphasis on Conservation
Alternative IV:	Emphasis on Economic Development
Alternative V:	Empahsis on Slow Growth

Alternative I: Continuation of Present Zoning Provisions

With little planning justification, the town is requiring two acres per dwelling unit. This has led to litigation and a temporary slowdown in application for subdivisions. In spite of this and a tight money market situation, the community has still grown. The present concept is one allowing for relatively low density development and recognizing the need for some community services in the form of industrial development along Route 111 and commercial development in the center of town and at the southern border near Route 125. The present Zoning Ordinance obviously reflects the wishes of the majority of people in Atkinson. In order to be valid, the Ordinance must be subject to the test of justification under New Hampshire statutes.

Implications of This Alternative

One implication of this alternative is the continued rate of growth in Atkinson. Atkinson has established itself sufficiently in the larger regional context and is a desirable community in which to reside.

Plan Alternatives (Continued)

Alternative I: Continuation of Present Zoning Provisions (Continued)

A second implication is the continued pressure on the small amount of land areas remaining that are suitable for development. Even though Atkinson has adopted a wetlands regulation protecting these wetland areas, it is this pressure that may ultimately lead to a two-acre density provision rather than the two-acre lot size.

Present conditions, with the continued development patterns as they exist based on studies of soil and subsoil conditions, will not provide for the continued potability of private water supply realizing the continued disposal of liquid wastes into the ground. Unless additional restrictive measures are taken, increased developments will ultimately affect the ground water situation as it already has done in some areas.

A further implication of the continuation of this growth pattern is the enforcement of rules and regulations designed to protect the health and safety of those residing in Atkinson.

Should development continue, the possibility of a required public sewer system will be necessary, certainly in areas that indicate waste water seepage into the ground-water table. This would be at a considerable expense to the community and certainly to those required to hook on to such a system.

Growth at the existing rate will place an increased burden on community services as is beginning to be demonstrated through public sentiment. Atkinson has managed to provide excellent community services for its residents to date. Adjustments must be made and can be made without a great increase in the taxes if diligent growth management were applied. The continued two-acre approach does not seem to have the slowing down effect that some may have expected.

This alternative would have a dispersed demand on community services and facilities. This means that rather than provide services in key locations where development is planned to take place, dispersed and therefore expensive community services will need to be provided. Among these are highway improvements, public safety improvements (fire and police), and dispersed open space recreational facilities.

Two-acre zoning throughout the community will have a scattered development pattern as its end result, which is not only expensive to maintain but difficult to provide with simple services. This alternative will continue to provide for a rural residential environment. Careful location of drives and buildings must be practiced in order to avoid giving Atkinson the typical "suburban look" which, thus far, it has managed to avoid.

In evaluating the highway network, this Consultant concludes that two-acre patterns will require highway improvements in order to provide services equal to today's standards.

Alternative II: Emphasis on Residential Development

This alternative, in contrast to the present two-acre zoning, would be one that would allow for indiscriminate residential development requiring a minimum of land area, yet still protecting the wetland areas. The emphasis would be on creating a residential environment that would be conducive to building single and multi-family homes requiring services and increased recreational and open space needs. Along with this would be the increased demand for road construction and road maintenance. Atkinson could adopt such an alternate indicating their desire to develop to maximum density. The most tangible implication would be the necessary provision of either municipal sewer or water and ultimately, both. The ultimate demand would be to create a water system that not only would render potable water, but would render a water supply adequate for fire protection.

A residential community generally insists on services not only by the town but for shopping and conveniences. Offices and stores will have to be part of the community plan, to a larger extent.

Experience has shown that once a large number of people congregate in a community, the desire for employment opportunities increases and fosters industrial development. A residential community ultimately seeking industrial development to support its economic base would find it difficult to adopt and practice growth management to a measurable benefit.

Atkinson would develop to a higher density than presently envisioned. The remaining 3,825 acres would, as in the case of nearby communities, accommodate by allowing densities of two families per acre (or easily an additional 20,000 people or a designed population of 25,000) in contrast to the 11,000 designed population under the two-acre proviso. Such an alternate has been adopted by other communities, and the long range implications of such densities can be observed in communities like Salem and Derry.

Alternative III: Emphasis on Conservation

By connotation, such an alternative would mean the protection of the natural environment. The protection of the natural environment would preclude excessive development and require most careful planning and, in particular, location of any manmade changes to Atkinson's natural environment.

Plan Alternatives (Continued)

Alternative III: Emphasis on Conservation (Continued)

Implications of the Plan

Plans for conservation could essentially have as its implication a no-growth plan. Aside from the conservation of natural resources, it would also mean a conservation of financial resources of a community. The realities of community government, particularly in southern New Hampshire, would make a conservation plan too ideal to be acceptable.

A conservation alternative would be most protective of present private investments. It would encourage historic preservation and stabilize community services and functions. Signs of development such as leach field effluents, advertising signs of home occupations, increased surface runoff through pavements indicate an ever-growing community. Conservation as an alternate would preclude industrial and commercial development of any kind. It would leave Atkinson depending on services and employment opportunities rendered elsewhere.

Nonetheless, in part, conservation must be an element in the Comprehensive Plan and for this reason should be considered as an alternative, parts of which should be incorporated into an ultimate Master Plan for the town.

Alternative IV: Empahsis on Economic Development

Many communities are developing industrial parks designed to provide employment opportunities for the residents of the community and the residents in the surrounding areas. Such industrial parks are often an asset to the community; and, while they do provide employment opportunities for the residents of the area, they place a burden on the services that the community provides.

An alternative of this nature would have to focus on the accessibility to Atkinson via Routes 111 and 125. A strategic location for such a development would be in the southeast corner of the town where not only access to the interstate is available within two miles, but where rail access could be available.

In the long range, such an alternative would have to be designed in a manner to allow for expansion should the community be successful in attracting large and small scale manufacturing industries and warehouse operations.

Alternative IV: Emphasis on Economic Development (Continued)

Implications of the Plan

A plan of such a nature would require needed services such as sewer and water. If they could not be provided by the community itself, the money could be raised through federal economic development assistance. The expectation of having manufacturing establishments provide their own water supply necessary for fire protection and waste disposal facilities would place Atkinson in a relatively unfair position competitively speaking.

The second implication of such a measure is Atkinson's shortcomings as far as large-scale community services are concerned. Fire protection and public safety services, while adequate to serve the present residential community, would not be capable of handling any kind of economic development endeavors.

An alternative with economic development in the form of manufacturing industry, warehousing, and large-scale service and shopping facilities would have a severe impact on the community both financially and physically. Such a plan alternative would be tapping the community's resources beyond which Atkinson appears to be financially capable.

Economic endeavors apparently carried out in Atkinson largely through home occupations are of significance. The community has accepted such home occupations in the past, but the fact that they are increasing must be recognized in the Comprehensive Planning efforts. Areas must be set aside for the location of such "home occupations" which are growing to the point where they are creating adversities in residential neighborhoods.

Alternative V: Emphasis on Slow Growth

A slow growth alternative has less land use implications than it does socio-economic implications. A slow growth plan alternative takes into consideration the community awareness for the preservation of the quality of life in the Town of Atkinson.

A slow growth alternative would establish protectorates of areas unsuitable for development without large scale expenditures for public sewer and water supply. It would require the establishment of lot sizes recognizing the capability of lands beyond the presently established two-acre limitations. In addition to the recognition of the land's limitation to absorb development, a public policy must also follow that will bring about a greater growth management within the community's fiscal capabilities.

Alternative V: Emphasis on Slow Growth (Continued)

Implications of the Plan

A slow growth plan would place the community in control of future development based on the town's capability to provide adequate services, protect the presently developed areas, and place future developments in locations where soil capabilities exist to carry such development without large scale community investments.

A slow growth plan alternative would require a slowing down of growth from the present rate of 5% to a lesser rate approaching 2% per year or 20% per decade.

In contrast to the other plan alternatives, it would establish a definite time schedule for growth and community investment,recognizing the implications of such growth on the obligations of the community to provide municipal services.

A slow growth policy might have a curtailment of subdivision of land areas (as it is presently experiencing as a result of the two-acre zoning). However, such an initial curtailment in marketability of land areas would have a long range effect (as experienced in other communities) of increased land values. It would allow for a community development pattern to accommodate not only single family housing, but multi family housing in a cluster development concept basis.

A slow growth plan alternaive would recognize conversions of seasonal homes, particularly in the Island Pond area. To slow such conversions, stringent enforcement of year around requirements for water supply and sewage disposal facilities (the requirements of distances to water etc.) should be met, hopefully discouraging conversions from taking place.

The slow growth plan alternative would have as its basis the designation of developable land areas and assigned priorities for development based on community services, both public and private, necessary to support such limited growth.

It would be the responsibility of the Planning Board to supervise the growth, approve subdivision lots on a scheduled basis, paying heed to the community's ability to support growth and development, and, through the Board of Selectmen, curtail issuances of building permits.

A slow growth plan alternative would be a two-fold approach to comprehensive planning and plan implementation. The first would be the physical plan development, the town setting aside areas for development and assigning such developments on a priority basis. The second would be the community's fiscal capability to furnish required services, taking into consideration the realities of local assessment and taxes to be raised.

CITIZEN INPUT

QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

Introduction

Questionnaires distributed in early October and returned to the Planning Board are a most significant input into the Comprehensive Planning effort. Through this citizen input, where nearly 50% of the households responded, the Consultant is better prepared to make recommendations which will meet community desires.

Of the 1,550 questionnaires distributed, 697 valid returns were evaluated for a 45.2% return. This is, by all means, a most valid return and gives meaning to concerns expressed by the people and to their feelings towards the community. More specifically, the following points are most noteworthy:

1. Under residential areas, 92.4% expressed the desire for single family housing while a distinct minority (23.9% of those responding) thought that town houses were an acceptable means of accommodating residential growth.

2. In the non-residential area, a surprising response was that a majority of the community is opposed to shopping facilities located in the town, 54.9% to 41.7%. On the other hand, there was a desire to have professional services meeting an important community need. Similarly, the community felt strongly that industry should not play an important role in the Town of Atkinson.

3. On the question of publicly-owned land, the majority of people felt there should be more land for conservation and recreation and that the municipal buildings should be maintained rather than replaced or expanded.

4. The majority of people felt that street construction should meet the traffic requirement a street is designated to carry. The overall road network seems to be satisfactory in meeting today's needs. A surprise was the response to sidewalk and pathways; people felt that there was no need for major improvements in that direction.

5. Overwhelmingly the people have indicated that individualized water and sewer facilities should be maintained. The response was opposed to either common or town-owned water and sewer services. This is particularly important in the consideration of the long-range plan for the Town of Atkinson.

Introduction (Continued)

6. People felt that private hauling is the most preferred method of solid waste disposal. 47.3% felt that there should be some form of recycling, with 40% being opposed to such a method.

7. The people have responded overwhelmingly to protect historic buildings and to provide for the means to retain, as much as possible, the scenic landscape qualities in Atkinson. Again, this is an element to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. Recommendations for the retention of these community qualities will be made.

8. People felt that the inspection and enforcement of land and building construction requirements should be carried out with more rigor. 51.7% in contrast to 38.1% felt there should be an intensified inspection program while 55.5%, in contrast to 33.7%, felt there should be more stringent enforcement.

9. Among other comments, the most frequently mentioned was the need for medical services. Recreation, shopping, and industrial facilities, along with needed job opportunities, ranked second, third, fourth and fifth respectively.

Many people took pains to comment on their feelings about the town. Among those comments most frequently mentioned were:

1. Single family housing was desired because it would insure the quality of life in Atkinson.

2. Home occupations were found acceptable provided they would be strictly regulated so that such home occupations would not adversely affect adjacent properties.

3. Industries of a light industry nature were generally acceptable provided they were in the "proper location" in the town.

4. The community is favoring recreational activities, urging that something be done with the present town-owned land.

Questionnaire Summary (Continued)

Introduction (Continued)

5. The Consultant will incorporate other comments expressed by those that have responded on the town buildings, finding ways to improve and maintain structures rather than making major capital outlays for new facilities.

Probably the single most important element gained from the questionnaire is that the people are in Atkinson because they like it; they like the community and its people and wish to see the retention of both the physical and socio-economic climate preserved through the Comprehensive Planning effort.

DON'T FORGET! WILL BE IN SOMEONE GOING TO PICK UP THIS SATURDAY OR SUNDAY, OCT. 14-15, 1980

The initial Attitude Survey of 1977 and a later one early this year showed that residents of Atkinson want "low density housing in a natural setting, a non-polluted environment, well-constructed and well-maintained buildings and land in town, and a responsible and reasonable tax program." Now we need to have you be more specific. Please put a YES beside those town assets you'd like to have in Atkinson and a NO beside those you wouldn't like to see. There's a place to expand your answer if you want to. Each time you answer YES to an item, though, be sure to indicate in the last column whether or not you're willing to pay an increase in taxes in order to see the asset you'd like to have actually become a reality in the future.

DESIRED TOWN ASSET	YES/NO			REASONS/CONDITIONS/COMMENTS	TAX INCREASE ACCEPTABLE: YES/NO		
Residential Areas	YES	NO	AB.		AB.	YES	NO
1. Single Family Housing	645	29	23		206	197	294
2. Apartment Housing	127	540	30	FINAL	423	51	223
3. Condominiums	163	491	43	Distributed - 1,540	423	51	223
4. Town Houses	166	491	40	Valid Returns - 697	427	33	337
5. Mobile Home Parks	68	593	36	Percentage Return - 45%	465	37	195
6. Home Businesses Throughout Town	307	339	51		Not Applicable		
Non-Residential Areas				TABLE XIII			
7. Some kind of in-town convenience shopping area	290	383	24	NUMERICAL FINDINGS	389	59	249
8. Some kind of professional and service area (doctor, lawyer.....)	424	247	26		337	82	278
9. Some kind of light industry	235	410	52		383	56	258
More Town-Owned Land							
10. For recreation	370	293	34		296	220	181
11. For Conservation/town forest	413	251	33		304	205	188
12. For new or expanded town buildings and facilities	244	433	30		387	151	159

(see reverse side)

DESIRED TOWN ASSET	YES/NO	REASONS/CONDITIONS/COMMENTS		TAX INCREASE ACCEPTABLE: YES/NO		
	YES	NO	AB.	AB.	YES	NO
Town Buildings						
13. Restoration and maintenance	483	109	105	253	304	140
14. Replacement and new construction	185	415	97	308	144	145
Streets and Pathways						
15. Road network offering better access to all parts of town	141	483	73	437	81	179
16. Construction requirements of roads based on kind of traffic they carry	428	200	69	336	205	156
17. Sidewalks and pathways	206	435	56	299	137	261
Water Supply System						
18. Individually-owned wells	526	103	68	Not Applicable		
19. Shared-in-common system owned by private company or association	183	397	117	Not Applicable		
20. Town-owned and operated system	115	531	51	464	65	158
Sewer System						
21. Individually-owned	481	100	116	Not Applicable		
22. Shared-in-common system owned by private company or association	129	167	101	Not Applicable		
23. Town-owned and operated system	139	521	37	459	82	156
Solid Waste (trash) Disposal						
24. Private citizen hauling	461	158	78	Not Applicable		
25. Collected by town	134	491	74	454	64	176
26. Collected by private hauler hired by town	158	479	60	459	66	172
27. Mandatory sorting of recyclables for cost savings	331	278	88	Not Applicable		

DESIRED TOWN ASSET	YES/NO			REASONS/CONDITIONS/COMMENTS	TAX INCREASE ACCEPTABLE: YES/NO		
Protections/Preservation	YES	NO	AB.		AB.	YES	NO
28. Historic buildings in town	534	115	48		243	220	234
29. Scenic landscapes in town	454	182	61		283	204	220
30. Expanded and intensified inspection program regarding land and building construction	360	266	71	FINAL Distributed - 1,540 Valid Returns - 697 Percentage Return - 45%	338	178	181
31. Expanded and intensified enforcement program regarding land and building construction	386	235	76		337	178	182

Number, according to your priorities, services that you feel are needed in town:

32. #____ Medical, #____ Recreational, #____ Industrial, #____ Shopping, #____ Job Opportunities, #____ (Other)_____

Mention as many things you can think of that make Atkinson a desirable town to live in:

Other Comments:

THANK YOU !! THANK YOU !! THANK YOU !! THANK YOU !! THANK YOU !!

ON THRC ME Y ! FILL IN SC ON GO G TO CK UP S DAY R SUNDAY CT. , 1

The initial Attitude Survey of 1977 and a later one early this year showed that residents of Atkinson want "low density housing in a natural setting, a non-polluted environment, well-constructed and well-maintained buildings and land in town, and a responsible and reasonable tax program." Now we need to have you be more specific. Please put a YES beside those town assets you'd like to have in Atkinson and a NO beside those you wouldn't like to see. There's a place to expand your answer if you want to. Each time you answer YES to an item, though, be sure to indicate in the last column whether or not you're willing to pay an increase in taxes in order to see the asset you'd like to have actually become a reality in the future.

DESIRED TOWN ASSET	YES/NO			REASONS/CONDITIONS/COMMENTS	TAX INCREASE ACCEPTABLE: YES/NO		
	YES	NO	AB.		AB.	YES	NO
Residential Areas							
1. Single Family Housing	92.4	4.1	3.5		28.7	27.4	43.9
2. Apartment Housing	18.3	77.4	4.3	FINAL	60.7	7.4	31.9
3. Condominiums	23.5	70.4	6.1	% of 697 Returns	60.7	7.4	31.9
4. Town Houses	23.9	70.5	5.6		61.3	4.9	33.8
5. Mobile Home Parks	9.8	85.0	5.2		66.5	5.3	28.2
6. Home Businesses Throughout Town	44.0	48.7	7.3		Not Applicable		
Non-Residential Areas				TABLE XIV			
7. Some kind of in-town convenience shopping area	41.7	54.9	3.4	PERCENTAGE FINDINGS	55.8	8.4	35.8
8. Some kind of professional and service area (doctor, lawyer.....)	60.7	35.5	3.8		48.3	11.8	39.9
9. Some kind of light industry	33.7	58.9	7.4		55.1	8.0	36.9
More Town-Owned Land							
10. For recreation	53.0	42.0	5.0		42.5	31.6	26.0
11. For Conservation/town forest	59.3	36.0	4.7		43.7	29.4	26.9
12. For new or expanded town buildings and facilities	35.0	60.7	4.3		55.7	21.6	22.7

(see reverse side)

DESIRED TOWN ASSET	YES/NO	REASONS/CONDITIONS/COMMENTS		TAXPAYER ACCEPTABLE: YES/NO		
Town Buildings	YES	NO	AB.	AB.	YES	NO
13. Restoration and maintenance	69.3	15.7	15.0	36.3	43.6	20.1
14. Replacement and new construction	26.4	59.6	14.0	58.5	20.7	20.8
Streets and Pathways						
15. Road network offering better access to all parts of town	20.2	69.3	10.5	62.8	11.7	25.5
16. Construction requirements of roads based on kind of traffic they carry	61.4	28.7	9.9	48.2	29.4	22.4
17. Sidewalks and pathways	29.5	62.5	8.0	43.3	19.6	37.1
Water Supply System						
18. Individually-owned wells	75.5	14.8	9.7	Not Applicable		
19. Shared-in-common system owned by private company or association	26.2	57.0	16.8	Not Applicable		
20. Town-owned and operated system	16.5	76.0	7.4	66.6	9.3	24.1
Sewer System						
21. Individually-owned	69.0	14.3	16.7	Not Applicable		
22. Shared-in-common system owned by private company or association	18.5	67.1	14.4	Not Applicable		
23. Town-owned and operated system	20.0	75.0	5.0	65.7	11.8	22.5
Solid Waste (trash) Disposal						
24. Private citizen hauling	66.2	22.6	11.2	Not Applicable		
25. Collected by town	19.2	70.2	10.6	65.7	9.2	25.1
26. Collected by private hauler hired by town	22.6	68.8	8.6	66.0	9.5	24.5
27. Mandatory sorting of recyclables for cost savings	47.3	40.0	12.7	Not Applicable		

DESIRED TOWN ASSET	YES/NO			REASONS/CONDITIONS/COMMENTS	ACCEPTABLE: YES/NO		
Protections/Preservation	YES	NO	AB.		AB.	YES	NO
28. Historic buildings in town	76.5	16.5	7.0		34.9	31.6	33.5
29. Scenic landscapes in town	65.3	26.1	8.6	FINAL	40.6	29.2	30.2
30. Expanded and intensified inspection program regarding land and building construction	51.7	38.1	10.2	% of 697 Returns	48.7	25.4	25.9
31. Expanded and intensified enforcement program regarding land and building construction	55.5	33.7	10.8		48.6	25.4	26.0

Number, according to your priorities, services that you feel are needed in town:

32. #____ Medical, #____ Recreational, #____ Industrial, #____ Shopping, #____ Job Opportunities, #____ (Other)_____

Mention as many things you can think of that make Atkinson a desirable town to live in:

Other Comments:

THANK YOU !! THANK YOU !! THANK YOU !! THANK YOU !! THANK YOU !!

PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN

PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN

Introduction

The following is an interpretation of existing conditions and their relationship to identified future demands on the land resources of Atkinson. In the case of this community, much land is still vacant, and of this, some is readily developable. At the same time, prime land resources, particularly those readily accessible, have already been used for recent housing construction.

In Atkinson, based on the new soil conservation survey for the community and this consultant's own interpretation, large land areas are marginally suitable for developmental purposes. The phenomenon is one that is given due consideration in the preparation of a Land Use Plan, which constitutes a primary input in the formulation of the Master Plan for the town.

It is the responsibility of the Planning Board to review and adopt the Land Use Plan as part of the Master Plan for the community. Once the plan is adopted, the major plan elements and their objectives (discussed below), constitute the basis for recommended revisions of present implementation ordinances and regulations.

As this Land Use Plan is prepared, existing land uses, subsoil conditions, accessibility, economic considerations and the recently conducted citizens survey were taken into consideration and incorporated. Their translation is now submitted for consideration as the key element in the Master Plan and forms the bases for the designation of future land uses and their areas in the town.

Objectives of the Land Use Plan

As in all local planning elements, the primary objective of the Land Use Plan is to provide for orderly growth. Such growth differs from the land development in the past when land use in a community was largely dictated by the demand to fulfill immediate need for development and the residents. The proposed Land Use Plan is designed to accomplish the objectives of controlled growth with foresight. Utilizing a plan, however, the community must now assume the responsibility of designating its own future, taking into consideration New Hampshire enabling legislation to achieve the land use pattern most suited to Atkinson's needs and also protecting the omni-present fragile environment in the community.

A second objective is the realistic application of concerns expressed by the citizens as to the retention of rural characteristics and community atmosphere existing in Atkinson today.

Proposed Land Use Plan (Continued)

Objectives of the Land Use Plan (Continued)

To attain the above objectives, various categories of proposed land uses have been established which include the accommodation of public needs through public land uses and their locations and designations. The accommodation of a community service center by creating a town-center focal point, provisions for various measures to protect the natural resources of the community through residential densities, the designation of land reserves, and recreation must meet community needs.

Proposed Land Use Plan

The proposed Land Use Plan differs from the Zoning Map in its context. The Land Use Plan is a guidance for formulating zoning recommendations. In addition, the Land Use Plan indicates areas that are designated for public acquisition either in fee or in easement. Therefore, the Land Use Plan shows not only those areas suggested for private land use, but also indicates such public use designations as are appropriate in light of long range planning for the community. The following are the land use classifications to be considered for adoption as part of the Master Plan effort by the town.

1. Public and Conservation Areas (PCA)

The Land Use Plan shows those areas already owned and controlled by the town and those areas suggested to be considered for future land use acquisition in order to make public land areas part of the total community pattern. The areas recommended for control by the town, either through holding in fee or through easements for public active and passive use, is approximately 1125 acres. This includes both those land areas already controlled by the community and those suggested to be acquired. Not included in this public land acreage are drainage easements to be acquired as part of the town's review procedure of pending subdivisions. It is recommended that easement acquisition and negotiations be undertaken at an early date to set aside those land areas identified as critical wetland areas and aquifer recharge areas important to the town's individualized water supply system, as well as those public lands planned for recreation.

The areas suggested for conservation acquisition include such key areas as Sawmill Swamp, the wetland areas along Hogg Hill Brook, a conservation area north of Pope Road, and one north of Summit Drive. In addition to the already town-owned land off Fernwood Way, an area on the southerly end of East Road, generally westerly of East Road, and a recommended conservation area north of West Side Drive west of its intersection with Pope Road are recommended for public control.

Proposed Land Use Plan (Continued)

2. Residential Uses

The residential areas are those making provisions for the primary residential uses in Atkinson. The recommended densities reflect the town's fragile environment. The densities are such that the town may continue to grow without the necessity of municipal sewer or water systems. In addition, the Land Use Plan reflects the Regional Water Quality Management Plan submitted by the Strafford Rockingham Regional Council which suggests the provision of growth with a sufficiently low density to avoid the need of waste water facilities. As suggested in this document, in arriving at land use densities, the Consultant has used the Land Capability Maps prepared by the Southern Rockingham Regional Planning District Commission.

It is recommended that the density approach using the cluster concept or similar mode of construction be established as a possible alternate in all residential areas. This means that for each proposed dwelling unit, the total land area required under the density provision must be met. However, a residence may be located on less than the required acreage or residences may be clustered on lots less than the required acreage in their respective districts, provided open space is used to compensate for and to meet the total requirements per unit.

A. Rural Residential - 4

It is recommended that approximately 1,000 acres be set aside for Rural Residential - 4, the lowest density for development in the Town of Atkinson. It is suggested that a density in that area be adopted assuring the avoidance of over-development in terms of community services available and the land's capability. In RR-4 the area has similar soil limitations as RR-3 but is found to be remote from any municipal services presently provided for, or planned for in the foreseeable future. A recommended net density of development in the RR-4 section is not more than one dwelling unit per four acres. Inasmuch as this designation is based on natural resource capability and the now and future lack of public sewer and water, it is a density that should be established to discourage over-development both for community service and natural resource reasons.

The areas recommended for RR-4 are those in the extreme west and northwest sections of the town generally bordering on the Town of Salem and Hampstead.

Proposed Land Use Plan (Continued)

Residential Uses (Continued)

B. Rural Residential - 3

It is suggested that approximately 1,000 acres be devoted to that classification. It is an area that does render limitations from a natural resource point of view. Much of the land use area has either moderate or severe limitations based on soil classification interpretations. For this reason, a density of three acres per single family dwelling is recommended. Unlike RR-4, where four acres are suggested, there is an improved accessibility to municipal services in the RR-3 area. It is an area recommended for greater priority for development than the more remote sections in the town.

The second difference in RR-3 land use designation is that those areas that have been identified with no limitations on the Soil Limitations Map or can be proven by an applicant as having no limitations to development are allowed to provide for no more than one dwelling unit per acre. Within that area, approximately 70 acres of no or only slight limitations for development have been identified on the Natural Resource Opportunities and Limitations Map.

The area encompassed by this is generally the north and central portion of the town reaching from the west side of Main Street to the east side of East Road, north of Academy Avenue, and Pope Road.

C. Town Residential - 2

The largest area in the town is designated for this land use designation. Almost 4,000 acres are suggested to be in a Town Residential category, identifying those areas mostly consisting of moderate limitations to development. As the earlier studies indicate, large tracts of land area have already been developed; and, in fact, most of the major developments having taken place are within the recommended Town Residential category. It is suggested that the presently adopted two-acre lot requirement be maintained within this area with the exception of those areas identified with no limitations to development where a one acre density could be established.

Proposed Land Use Plan (Continued)

3. Town Center

It is suggested the Town Center designation make provisions for a community focal point. Within the Town Center provisions should ultimately be adopted to allow for community services and facilities of a speciality retail nature and civic function as well as professional service nature. It is suggested that this not only be a functional but also a design control district to create a community focal point both functionally, psychologically and visually.

4. Commercial Land Uses

It is recommended that 65 acres be devoted to Commercial use. The area is suggested to be at the key entrance to the community: off the lower end of Main Street towards Haverhill.
These areas are so designated because of the high volumes of traffic and general accessibility to the community. There should be restrictions, however, to allow only those shopping facilities serving town and neighborhood needs rather than those catering to regional shopping demands.

5. Commercial/Industrial Designations

The Town of Atkinson has had a tangible increase in home occupations. It is for this reason that a Commercial/Industrial area is suggested within the bounds of the community in its northwestern extremity. Route 111 does provide ready access and is generally accessible to the community at large. To make provisions for this ever-growing economic activity and for any potential warehousing, industrial or commercial development, this area is set aside. Zoning provisions must control impacts that would be contrary to the objectives of the overall community plan. No industry requiring fire and police protection or water and sewer services in excess of those currently available by the community should be demanded by such an establishment located in the Commercial/Industrial area.

Proposed Land Use Plan (Continued).

Proposed Land Use Plan (Continued)

PROPOSED LAND USE AREAS

RR - 4	1,020 Acres
RR - 3	1,043 Acres
TR - 2	3,756 Acres
Public and Conservation	1,125 Acres
Town Center	50 Acres
C/I	90 Acres
C	65 Acres
	7,149 Acres
Water	86 Acres
	7,235 Acres

PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN
Rural Residential (4 acres)
Rural Residential (3 acres)
Town Residential (2 acres)
Commercial
Commercial-Industrial
Public Use (generalized)
Wet Lands
Town Center
HAMPSTEAD
DERRY
PLAISTOW
SALEM
HAVERHILL
NEW HAMPSHIRE
MASSACHUSETTS
N
1980
scale in feet
TOWN OF ATKINSON
NEW HAMPSHIRE
ATKINSON PLANNING BOARD
prepared by HANS KLUNDER ASSOCIATES, INC.
Approved: Planning Board, July 24, 1980
Accepted: Board of Selectmen, October 6, 1980

IMPLEMENTATION

PROPOSED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND BUDGET

Introduction

Planning is not an end product. Planning is a process. Capital improvement, programming and budgeting must also be a process. It is a tool in planning and particularly in planning the expenditures of municipalities. For a town to manage its affairs under the auspices of a Planning Board, the process of fiscal resource allocation must be adopted not only because it is a state law, but because it will serve the Planning Board in logically and soundly administering the town's affairs in accordance with sound priorities, economic reality, and its relationship to the town's natural and manmade resources.

A projected financial plan is necessary for both operating and capital purposes. Through the capital improvement program and the budget, based on the Comprehensive Plan, this section studies the capital expenditures of the financial plan and integrates them into total costs, including those for operating purposes. This is done with a proposed capital improvement program showing priorities, a capital budget showing method of financing by year, and a consolidated annual budget for past and future years including both expenditures and revenues.

Some of the benefits from this process are:

1. A realistic means of managing growth can be achieved.
2. There is a means of assuring projects will be carried out by priority needs.
3. Advance acquisition of needed real estate is possible and usually in a more favorable market.
4. Desired land retention by municipality is assured.
5. Lead time for proper planning of projects is made available.
6. Concurrent construction of related projects can be scheduled.
7. Public work activities can be planned.
8. Pressure groups are more easily satisfied and/or controlled, and more impartial treatment is likely to evolve.
9. Required bond issues and tax income can be foreseen and necessary provisions made.
10. Lastly, the community can obtain its desired goals.

Introduction (Continued)

In preparing this section, the staging of a long range program in a realistic manner has been carefully considered. A program has been proposed that is within the means of the community if the community so desires. In some cases the program may seem fairly rugged in terms of dollars and cents; but if it isn't done, the problem will still remain in the next decade but in greater magnitude and at a greater expense. The standard of adequacy varies from community to community; so no arbitrary standards were used, but rather what was needed for this particular community to fulfill the needs and desires of its citizens and visitors.

Special emphasis must be given to the fact that this is a process – a means of providing better local government. A process by its definition is a systematic series of actions – a continuous operation or series of changes. So should this process be. This means that the capital improvement program, capital budget and projected income and expenditures should be frequently revised. Since the key document is the annual municipal budget, this means the process has a recurring cycle that requires annual attention. By doing this, the information can be kept current and reflect actual physical changes and new or different needs as they develop. This is the responsibility of the planning board, chief executive, and policy making body of the community, whether town meeting, selectmen or council. The planning board is responsible for keeping the capital improvement program and budget current; the selectmen are responsible for inserting the current year's capital budget into the proposed annual budget; the policy making body (town meeting) is responsible for passing an annual budget, within the ability of the community to pay, to provide for immediate and future needs.

Various methods of financing have to be considered. Ideally, from a cost point of view (saving of interest costs), all financing should be done out of current revenues. Very seldom (and sometimes it isn't desirable) is this possible. Some of the means available for use are long term bonds and notes, capital reserves, revolving funds, and annual appropriations. The particular method of financing selected is based on state legal requirements, financial condition of the community, type and extent of capital improvement, and urgency of need.

An annual work outline the community might follow in keeping this process current is outlined below. A more detailed outline is found under future planning.

Introduction (Continued)

I. Planning Board Duties

a. Request capital needs from all departments, agencies and offices concerned, including those previously submitted and not funded, with any modifications found desirable.

b. Review these requests.

c. Alter existing capital improvement program as seems necessary.

d. Prepare a new capital budget for the next five years.

e. Adjust the fiscal tables by incorporating the existing year's expenditures and revenues into appropriate tables and adding a new five year projection of income and expenditures.

f. Submit the above information and recommendations to chief executive.

II. Budget Committee Duties

a. Review material from planning board.

b. Prepare estimates of changes in operating costs by a proposed capital budget item.

c. Prepare a recommended budget reflecting effect on operating costs.

d. Prepare annual budget including the first year of the proposed capital budget.

e. Submit proposals to policy making body.

III. Policy Making Body (Citizen and Town Meeting) Duties

a. Study proposals submitted.

b. Hold public hearings.

c. Weigh needs of the community.

d. Adopt annual budget.

Introduction (Continued)

A town should run its affairs as does a good business and apply sound business procedures for a successful operation. An over-riding element is sometimes short-term expendiencies and money-saving measures resulting in long term costs. The town has established some capital reserve funding. However, the town has not made some of the capital provisions necessary that would be anywhere near commensurate with the recent population growth. In fact, the town budget proportion of total appropriations has actually decreased while school measures have increased, as did county measures in terms of the percentage of local funds raised. This leaves the town furnishing the bare necessities in order to maintain a local tax rate at the cost of deferment of capital needs in both town administration and public land management programs. The Town of Atkinson must avoid the continuing decline in municipal services in proportion to the town growth.

The following Capital Improvement Program is a suggested type of improvement outline which the town should be undertaking over the next five years to improve and replace physical inventory. It is not designed as a static program, but is one that should be reviewed every year by the Planning Board and be updated according to what has been accomplished and what changes have been made at town meeting action.

Atkinson has done remarkably well, as part of the Master Plan, in maintaining the services that it has, considering the fundings made. However, there are signs of stress in the town's administration and services. Sound management procedures, particularly in relationship to growth, must be adopted in light of the ever-increasing cost of public services for the county, the school system, and the town's own affairs.

A sound Growth Management Program in Atkinson is doubly important because of its residential community base. Employment opportunities are rendered in nearby Massachusetts and other New Hampshire towns to which Atkinson serves as a "bedroom" community. This means that the residents are paying the freight for all of the town, school and county services. The average house in the town, excluding the land and land areas, paid $818.40 in 1978 for these services. In comparison to state wide figures, Atkinson rates in the lower one-third (87th out of 234 communities). Based on New Hampshire Office of State Planning statistics, the average 1978 value per capita in Atkinson was $17,210, compared with $26,098 per capita in Hampstead. The low in Rockingham County is Fremont with $12,692 per capita valuation. This means that for the same budget, the per household expense or per capita cost is proportionally higher as the per capita assessed valuation is lower. Atkinson today, because of its rapid growth, is burdening the residential home owner. Inasmuch as they are the voters in the community, they often see to it that the budget accounts are kept low.

Proposed Capital Improvement Program and Budget (Continued)

Introduction (Continued)

Because of the frugal operations of the town departments, Atkinson has managed to remain a community well served with town functions. However, such facilities as the town building, the lack of recreational facilities, the lack of open space and the needed improvements for the fire department (in terms of water holes and fire equipment) are evidences of short comings of lack of appropriations for better equipment and facilities.

The following Capital Improvement Program and Budget is submitted to set forth a management program taking into consideration a reduced rate of growth through growth management. As can be seen, some of the proposed capital expenditures are in fulfillment of already-existing needs rather than providing for current or future municipal requirements. It is recommended that the town indeed slow down until community services are rendered more adequately, buildings are more sound, and administration and construction programs are commensurate with growth and change.

Suggested Capital Improvement Program

Land Acquisition

Stretching the town dollars with state and federal matching funds, the town has done very well in recent large tract land acquisitions. They are essentially land areas in key locations serving the long range needs for open space in Atkinson.

As the town plan indicates, the town should control environmentally critical areas either through acquisition in fee or through partial acquisition by purchasing development rights, particularly in those areas that are the groundwater table recharge soils.

In addition to its usual funding program for the Conservation Commission, the town should set up a wetlands and aquifer recharge area budget relating it to the town's growth, urging the appropriation of funds necessary for one acre of fragile critical land each time a permit is issued. This levy should be assessed town-wide in order to create a pool of funding for the acquisition of these fragile areas so necessary for the town's water supply system.

Land Acquisition Program for Recreation and Other Active Town Purposes

In accordance with the Master Plan, the Conservation Commission should be authorized to acquire lands prior to development in the northwest, northeast, southwest and southeast portions of the community for long-range needs for community functions. These land areas should be acquired now or at an early date in order to allow for future recreation locations and other public functional activities, including a substation for fire protection purposes, without having to pay future investment prices.

Island Pond Access

The town fronts on Island Pond. At the present time, the shore line is a very heavily-developed area. The town should appropriate funds for acquisition of shore property for public access in addition to verifying its ownership pattern to the rights-of-way to the Pond.

Stream and Drainage Easements

The town should establish an acquisition program of easements along the major natural drainageways. If this is not feasible as part of the administration of Subdivision Regulations, then other means should be sought. These drainageways should be acquired 100 feet in width, 50 feet on each side.

Critical Land Area Acquisitions

Those areas indicated as critical on the Opportunities and Limitations to Development Map should be acquired by the town either in fee or through easements. It does not seem appropriate for the town to restrict their use without making an effort to compensate property owners for their restricted rights. It is suggested that these critical land areas include key wetland areas as identified, key aquifer and aquifer recharge areas, and those areas identified as of highest scenic quality.

Public Safety

Fire Department

The fire department has done remarkably well with the equipment available at its disposal. Its volunteer effort is one that is worthy of commendation by the community.

Public Safety (Continued)

In the past, capital reserves were established for major equipment replacements. It is urged that such practice of capital reserve funding be carried on at the rate of $15,000 per year to build up a capital reserve and, at the same time, through bonding, to acquire a badly-needed tank truck. Equally important to the equipment funding is the funding program necessary for the development of additional water holes. The town has at the present time water holes rather randomly-dispersed throughout the community. Their maintenance, along with the development of new water holes for fire protection purposes, is essential and should be incorporated into a sound capital improvement program not only meeting projected needs, but satisfying an existing demand that has been neglected.

Police Department

As pointed out in the Master Plan study, the police department is performing an outstanding function for the community it serves. Greater utilization of volunteer manpower could be achieved by providing it with needed equipment funding through town appropriations. It is recommended that capital expenditures make provisions for the acquisition of an additional cruiser and place the cruisers on a biannual rotating basis.

Town Hall Building

The town has made do with its Town Hall facility. Recent modernization really amounted to "window dressing". Basic improvements particularly in relationship to energy conservation and greater utilization of the facility are badly needed. It is recommended that the Town Hall be listed as high priority for project improvements. Because energy conservation measures are direly needed in this building, funds from the United States Department of Energy should be sought for a $250,000 energy conservation - renovation project for the Town Hall.

Streets and Highways

The town must initiate a street and highway classification system in accordance with the Master Plan. On that basis, it should then proceed with a reconstruction program of those streets that are the local responsibility and major traffic carriers or major town roads. It is recommended that rather than continuing repair work and expensive maintenance particularly in lowland areas, that reconstruction be conducted. This is not to suggest the creation

Streets and Highways (Continued)

of high-speed highways, but the building of roads that are low in maintenance costs.

The town has a very low per capita expenditure for streets and highways. This would indicate the soundness of the town's lease and contract approach to maintaining streets and highways. It is urged that such an arrangement be carried out on a long-term basis, rather than on a year to year basis, which would serve both the contractor and the community well and assure the continuation of a mutually satisfactory street and highway program.

Because of the increased traffic flow, both pedestrian and vehicular, a pathway program should be initiated with the highest priorities being for Academy Avenue and the town center portion of Main Street. This does not suggest sidewalks along the street, but, preferably, pathways away from the travelway linking key locations.

Suggested Capital Improvement Budget

Schools

In preparing the Capital Improvement Budget projections, the Consultant has assumed the straight line budget increase for the operations of schools. This would make allowance for inflation rate and an assumed reduction in capital expenditures and operations because of the anticipated leveling-off of school enrollments for Timberlane School District. Future enrollments and obligations by the Town of Atkinson towards the school district are assumed to be leveling-off as well. The incorporation of the school budget is therefore done, utilizing the information furnished by the superintendent's office which reflected projected enrollments, classroom needs and anticipated obligations by Atkinson. It is encouraging to see that the school expenses, generally consuming approximately 80% of the town's appropriations, are leveling-off and, in fact, in 1980 show a decline in total town funds required.

Rate of Inflation

In projecting the expenditures, past inflation has been incorporated and a 10% inflation rate is assumed. The Planning Board in exercising their responsibility for the Capital Improvement Program and Budget should annually review the rate of inflation and therefore incorporate into the Captial Budget the increased expenses as a result of the devaluation of the dollar.

Projected Tax Rates

In arriving at the projected tax rates, the following five tables are submitted. Table XV is a listing of recommended capital expenditures to be recommended by the Planning Board at Town Meeting. Table XVII, which is the reflection of the fiscal history outlined on Table XVI, shows the resultant total town expenditures required. This is an expansion of the town's operating costs utilizing increased funding as a result of inflation and normal population growth. Table XVII, also reflects the capital expenditures in the Estimated Town Expenses column. In arriving at this, the Consultant included the net town expenses excluding revenues such as motor vehicle excise taxes, state and federal contributions and revenues other than real estate taxes. These other sources are eliminated in order to arrive at a realistic tax rate required to support the operating expenses by the town and the estimated capital expenditures.

Table XVIII is a projection of town expenses showing increased operating expenses and capital outlays along with incurred indebtedness and annual debt payments.

Table XIX shows the estimated projected valuation for the town. In 1984, it is assumed that the revaluation has taken place and the town would then once more assess at a 100% assessed valuation. It is assumed that prior to that time the town will operate at an assessed valuation of 75% market value. The projected tax rate is arrived at by combining projected town, county and school expenses, arriving at the total expenditure to be borne from real estate taxation and the resultant tax rate by dividing expenditures into the assessed valuation.

We are greatful for the help of the following people and committees: John Rockwell - Assistant Fire Chief; Robert Stewart - Road Agent; Linda Jette - Town Clerk; Phil Consentino - Police Chief; Robert Crompton - Superintendent of Schools; the Budget Committee; the Conservation Commission.

TABLE XV

RECOMMENDED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT - BUDGET AND PRIORITIES

	Capital Improvement Item	Year	Estimated Funding	Source of Funding
1.	Land Program	1981		
	Critical Areas (30 Acres)		$ 45,000	GR/F&S
2.	Public Works	1981		
	Walkways (2,000')		10,000	GR
	Road Improvement (TRA)		50,000	GR and State
3.	Public Safety	1981		
	Fire (Tank-pumper truck) ($120,000)		45,000	CR and RS
	Fire Capital Reserve		15,000	GR
	Police		8,000	GR
4.	Revaluation	1981	15,000	GR
5.	Public Works	1982		
	Gravel Pit		50,000	Bonding
	Road Improvement (TRA)		110,000	GR and State
	Walkways		10,000	GR
6.	Land Program	1982		
	Critical Areas		45,000	GR/F&S
	Stream Easements		5,000	GR/F&S
	Town Beach Study		5,000	GR/F&S
7.	Recreation Capital Reserve	1982	10,000	GR
8.	Public Safety	1982		
	Fire Capital Reserve		15,000	GR
	Police Capital Reserve		14,000	GR/F&S
9.	Town Hall Improvement Study	1982	10,000	GR
10.	Revaluation	1982	15,000	GR

Table XV (Continued)

	Capital Improvement Item	Year	Estimated Funding	Source of Funding
11.	Town Hall	1983	$ 250,000	Federal
12.	Land Program	1983		
	Critical Areas		45,000	GR/F&S
	Easements		5,000	GR/F&S
13.	Public Works	1983		
	Sidewalks (trails)		10,000	GR
	Road Improvements (Main Street, Willow Vale)		120,000	Bonding/State
14.	Public Safety	1983		
	Fire Capital Reserve		15,000	GR
	Police		8,000	GR
15.	Administrative Assistant	1984	20,000	GR
16.	Island Pond Access	1984	120,000	Bonding/F&S
17.	Land Program	1984		
	Critical Areas		5,000	GR/F&S
	Town Land Capital Reserve		15,000	GR/F&S
18.	Public Safety	1984		
	Fire Capital Reserve		15,000	$50,000 Bond
	Police Car		7,500	GR
	Police Special Equipment		15,000	GR
19.	Public Works	1984		
	Road Improvement		60,000	Bonding
	Trails		12,000	GR
	Equipment Capital Reserve		10,000	GR
20.	Recreation Capital Reserve	1984	15,000	GR
	Development at Island Pond		50,000	GR/F&S

Table XV (Continued)

	Capital Improvement Item	Year	Estimated Funding	Source of Funding
21.	Land Program	1985		
	Critical Areas		$ 50,000	GR/F&S
	Town Center		100,000	Bonding/Federal
22.	Public Works	1985		
	Walkways		12,000	GR
	Roads/Highways (East St.)		45,000	TRA/ GR
	Equipment Capital Reserve		10,000	GR
23.	Public Safety	1985		
	Fire Capital Reserve		15,000	GR
	Police		8,000	GR
24.	Recreation Capital Reserve	1985	15,000	GR

GR General Revenue
F Federal
S State
CR Capital Reserve
TRA Town Road Aid
RS Revenue Sharing

TABLE XVI

FISCAL HISTORY

1970 - 1979

TOWN OF ATKINSON

Year	Appropriations: Town	School	County	Total	Net Assessed Valuation (x 1,000)	Rate
1970	$ 39,804.09	$527,855.86	$ 26,025.12	$593,685.07	$12,566	48.80
1971	36,371.07	605,252.79	26,763.22	668,387.08	13,047	52.50
1972	69,831.52	644,275.87	33,777.55	747,884.94	14,300	53.80
1973	69,421.96	698,158.92	31,490.14	799,071.02	27,067	30.60
1974	90,544.44	768,672.15	44,710.34	903,926.93	28,910	32.00
1975	125,749.51	843,983.05	46,738.88	1,016,471.44	30,077	34.50
1976	156,333.13	977,155.10	46,238.15	1,179,726.38	32,558	36.80
1977	87,532.00	1,094,053.00	56,653.00	1,238,238.00	36,433	34.60
1978	185,803.00	1,215,206.00	49,209.00	1,450,218.00	39,675	37.20
1979	175,816.00	1,341,897.00	68,601.00	1,586,314.00	42,838	36.20

Source: Town Reports

TABLE XVII

RECOMMENDED ANNUAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

1981 - 1985

1981	90,500 including		
1982	109,500 including	$ 15,000	Debt Payment, 1982
1983	85,000 including	30,000	Debt Payment, 1982-1983 plus $250,000 Federal Grant
1984	177,000 including	64,000	Debt Payment, 1982-1984
1985	195,000 including	78,500	Debt Payment, 1982-1985

TABLE XVIII

PROJECTED TOWN EXPENSES

1981 - 1985

Year	Annual Town Operating Cost*	Capital Expenditures**	Total Town Budget
1981	$ 189,416	$ 90,500	$ 279,916
1982	203,016	109,500	312,516
1983	216,616	85,000	301,616
1984	230,216	177,000	407,216
1985	243,816	195,500	439,316

* Based on 1970 - 1979 Average Annual Increase of $13,600

** Including Debt Payment

TABLE XIX

PROJECTED VALUATION, EXPENDITURES AND TAX RATE

1980 - 1985

Year	Valuation x 1,000	Expenses				Tax Rate
		Town	School	County	Total	
1980	$ 45,300	$ 180,000	$ 1,609,477	$ 85,000	$ 1,874,477	$ 41.38
1981	46,500	279,916	1,717,639	90,360	2,087,915	44.90
1982*	81,000	312,516	1,825,801	95,720	2,234,037	27.58
1983	82,500	301,616	1,933,963	101,080	2,334,659	28.29
1984	84,000	407,216	2,042,125	106,440	2,555,781	30.43
1985	85,500	439,316	2,150,287	111,800	2,701,403	31.60

* Estimate after Revaluation

The following is a synopsis of detailed recommendations under consideration for adoption by Town Meeting and regulatory agencies for the Town of Atkinson:

ZONING ORDINANCE

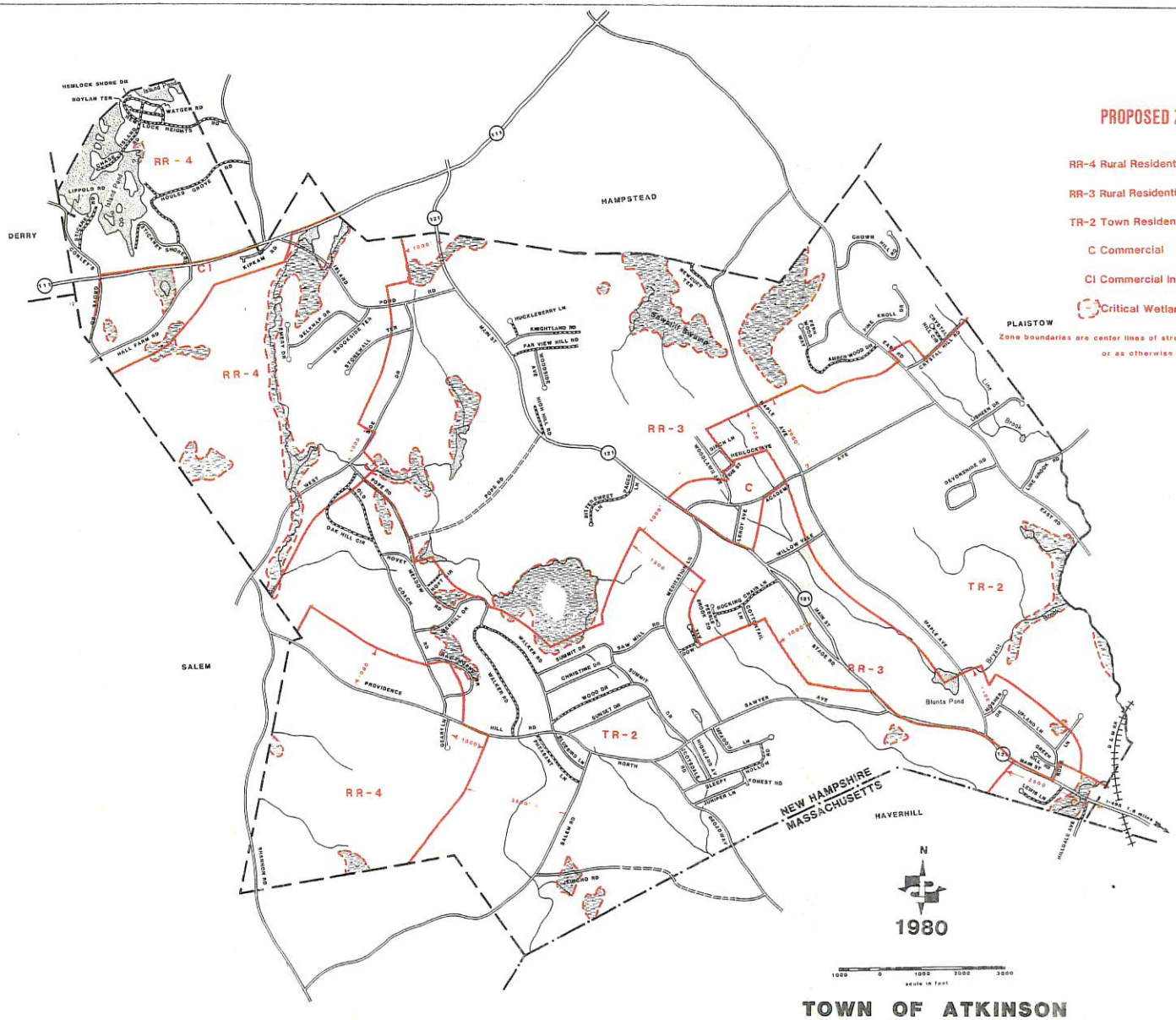
It is recommended that the present Zoning Ordinance be amended through Town Meeting action. This would mean the designation of zoning districts based on the density provision provided for in the Land Use Plan. The Zoning Ordinance should establish four-acre, three-acre, and two-acre districts along with a town center area, commercial area, and commercial-industrial area.

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Subdivision Regulations should reflect the 15% public land provision set forth in the Master Plan. It is urged that the use of roads be specified and, as a result, that different road construction standards be developed. It is also urged that the Planning Board adopt Unique and Critical Areas Regulations similar to the present Wetlands Ordinance. Such regulations would protect the visual and cultural integrity of the community, identify subsoil conditions and crucial water recharge areas, and indicate special requirements for steep slopes, high water tables, and other unique critical areas.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Under enabling legislation recently enacted by the State of New Hampshire, the town should adopt a Growth Management Plan. It is urged that the community adopt a two percent growth rate, limiting new residential and commercial construction. This would mean the curtailment of new building permits in order to reduce the rapid rate of growth that the town has experienced over the past three decades. Inasmuch as Atkinson has grown as fast as 20% in a year, it should now underake measures to establish a rate of growth that is commensurate with that of the surrounding region and that recognizes, as well, the financial obligation the town must assume in serving and increasing population adequately.



PROPOSED ZONING MAP

RR-4 Rural Residential (4 acres)

RR-3 Rural Residential (3 acres)

TR-2 Town Residential (2 acres)

C Commercial

CI Commercial Industrial

Critical Wetlands, Flood Plains

Zone boundaries are center lines of streets, 500 feet parallel to streets or as otherwise shown.

TOWN OF ATKINSON

NEW HAMPSHIRE

ATKINSON PLANNING BOARD

prepared by HANS KLUNDER ASSOCIATES, INC.

Approved: Planning Board, July 24, 1980

Accepted: Board of Selectmen, October 6, 1980

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