

XII. LAND USE

A. Introduction

This chapter contains an analysis of land use and development trends that have led to the current pattern of land use in Salem, as well as an examination of the capacity for future residential development of the Town=s remaining undeveloped land, referred to as a buildout analysis. The recommendations from past master planning efforts and studies are reviewed, and recommendations are made for a future land use pattern to guide the Town during the effective life of this Master Plan.

B. Land Use Trends and Changes

Forty years ago, over three-quarters of the land area that comprises the Town of Salem was in open space. Today, three-quarters of the Town=s land area is developed. Table XII-1 compares the present use of land in Salem with data from 1962 and 1982 when similar studies were conducted. The land devoted to residential development has quadrupled over the forty year period while non-residential land use occupy almost six times more land than was occupied in 1962. At the same time the open lands of Salem have declined to the point where they represent about one-quarter of the Town=s total land area.

Table XII-2 contains a detailed breakdown of the types of development approvals and permits that have been granted by the Salem Planning Board between 1984 and 1999. A total of 6,129,518 square feet of non-residential floor space was approved, an average of 383,095 square feet per year. Forty-five percent of the total floor area was for retail land use while 36 percent of the floor area was devoted to industrial uses. Office uses accounted for 14 percent of the floor area approved during that time. In the same time frame, the Planning Board approved some 1595 dwelling units, or approximately 100 units per year.

C. The Future Residential Buildout of Land in Salem

As the amount of vacant, developable land declines in a community, it is appropriate to quantify the residential development potential of this remaining open land. This type of analysis, referred to as a Buildout@ analysis, provides not only a sense of the quantity of potential residential development, but also some insight as to the time frame during which the buildout will occur.

Exhibit 9 displays the existing districts in the current Zoning Ordinance within which is depicted the remaining developable land in Salem. Table XII-3 arrays the results of a buildout analysis utilizing the density standards for the existing zoning districts as applied to the area of developable land. The analysis indicates the potential for 2,771 additional dwelling units, 70 percent of which would be single family dwelling units and 25 percent of which would be multi-family, with the balance being manufactured homes and duplexes. The multi-family units would primarily be senior housing, with less than a quarter of the multi-family units being for general occupancy, well below the expected demand for such units as concluded in Chapter III, Population and Housing. If development occurs at the average rate that it has occurred over the past 16 years, the buildout would take 28 years to achieve; however, the projected growth rates in Chapter III suggest that the buildout could occur within half of that time period.

A second buildout analysis was conducted based on the assumption that as the municipal sewer service is extended into the Rural District, these areas will be rezoned to the Residential District, as the Rural classification will no longer be appropriate or defensible. The Lakes Area Infrastructure Plan was used to identify the land to which this change could apply with a resultant increase in the total potential for residential dwelling units of 3,295. Buildout of these units could take anywhere from 16 to 32 years, depending on the rate of development; however, there is no increase in the number of total multi-family units or the proportion of units for general occupancy vs. senior housing.

**Table XII - 1
Changes in Land Use 1962 - 2000**

Land Use	1962		1982		2000	
	Acres	Percen	Acres	Percen	Acres	Percen
1 Residential						
a Single Family	1,557	9.5%	3,600	21.9%	6,417.8	39.1%
b Manufactured					69.22	0.4%
c Two-family					432.78	2.6%
d Multi-family	85	0.5%	150	1.0%	312.53	1.9%
e Seasonal	153	1.0%	100	0.6%	103.7	0.6%
Residential subtotals	1,795	11.0%	3,850	23.5%	7,336.0	44.7%
					3	
2 Non-residential						
a Commercial	203	1.2%	1,320	8.1%	1,716.4	10.5%
b Industrial					323.41	2.0%
c	159	1.0%	159	1.0%	---	---
Non-residential subtotals	362	2.2%	1,479	9.0%	2,039.8	12.4%
					5	
3. Public/Semi-public	80	0.5%	1,100	6.7%	355.21	2.2%
4. Rights-of-way	398	2.4%	1,250	7.6%	1,830.5	11.2%
					2	
5 Open lands						
a Flood Plain	---	---	2,737	16.7%	---	---
b Wetlands	186	1.1%	690	4.2%	---	---
c Farm land	4,884	29.8%	652	4.0%	---	---
d Woodlands	7,918	48.4%	3,865	23.6%	---	---
Open Lands subtotals	12,988	79.3%	7,944	48.5%	4,056.3	24.7%
					9	
6. Water	761	4.6%	761	4.6%	783	4.8%
TOTALS	16,384	100.0%	16,384	100%	16,401	100%

Source: The 1962 and 1982 data are taken from the 1992 Master Plan; data for 2000 are from Town of Salem Property Fact Sheet Occupancy Summary, dated June 20, 2000. Total acreage of the Town and total water surface area in 2000 are based on measurements derived from the Town's GIS base map; the 2000 acreage figure for rights-of-way was obtained by subtraction of all other categories from total.

Table XII - 2

Development Approvals Granted by the Salem Planning Board 1984-1999

Year	Industrial	Office	Retail	Institutiona l	Other	Total Floor Area	Subdivisi on lots
	sf	sf	sf	sf	sf	sf	#
1984	300,760	61,600	129,975	19,900	0	512,235	136
1985	498,800	115,160	57,080	15,000	26,650	712,690	147
1986	127,240	36,480	349,746	9,955	44,832	568,253	135
1987	309,600	47,000	40,000	0	0	396,600	169
1988	204,000	97,000	202,400	0	0	503,400	74
1989	41,600	75,000	1,179,455	0	0	1,296,055	49
1990	21,000	1,098	6,400	0	0	28,498	136
1991	16,400	0	240,489	0	3,100	259,989	40
1992	25,880	17,300	49,600	0	0	92,780	88
1993	42,000	54,700	142,060	0	1,512	240,272	12
1994	88,720	34,000	32,618	9,856	0	165,194	93
1995	177,670	0	46,530	0	0	224,200	104
1996	81,950	134,600	11,000	2,790	0	230,340	45
1997	161,000	91,540	43,485	8,775	0	304,800	241
1998	57,095	29,880	144,550	0	94,280	325,805	68
1999	38,300	61,296	112,811	56,000	0	268,407	58
TOTA LS	2,192,015	856,654	2,788,199	122,276	170,374	6,129,518	1595

Source: Salem Planning Department

**TABLE XII - 3
SALEM BUILDOUT SCENARIO #1**

Completion of Residential Development as Permitted by the Current Zoning Ordinance

Zoning District	Total Land Area	Developable Land	85% of Developable Land Area ¹	Development Density	Total New Units
	acres	acres	acres	Units per Acre	#
Rural	8,009	2,035	1,729.75	0.5	865
Residential	4,458	729	619.65	1.8 ²	1,115
Recreational	424	48	40.8	1.74	71
Garden Apt	93	15	12.75	12.45	159
Manuf'd Hsg	35	18	15.3	1.74	27
Town Center	426	67	56.95	20 ³	380 ⁴
Bus/Com/Ind	2,174	182	154.7	20	155 ⁵
Totals	15,619	3,094	2,629.9		2,771

¹ Developable land area is reduced by 15% to allow for road construction, utility installation, layout inefficiencies caused by the shape of the lot, etc.

² Assumes that 90% of new development in this district will be single family dwellings and 10% will be two-family dwellings.

³ Density estimate for senior housing is derived from FAR=s and other design requirements in Section 309-177 of the Zoning Ordinance.

⁴ One-third of the developable land in the Town Center District is assumed to be used for senior housing.

⁵ Five percent of the developable land in the Business, Commercial, and Industrial Districts is assumed to be used for senior housing.

**TABLE XII - 4
SALEM BUILDOUT SCENARIO #2**

Completion of Residential Development Under the Current Zoning Assuming the Rezoning of 1,862 Acres from Rural to Residential (Based on Planned Sewer Extensions)

Zoning District	Total Land Area	Developable Land Area	85% of Developable Land Area ¹	Development Density	Total New Units
	acres	acres	acres	Units per Acre	#
Rural	6,147	1,561	1,326.85	0.5	663
Residential	6,320	1,203	1,022.55	1.8 ²	1,841
Recreational	424	48	40.8	1.74	71
Garden Apt	93	15	12.75	12.45	159
Manuf'd Hsg	35	18	15.3	1.74	27
Town Center	426	67	56.95	20 ³	380 ⁴
Bus/Com/Ind	2,174	182	154.7	20	155 ⁵
Totals	15,619	3,094	2,629.9		3,295

D. Past Master Plan Direction for Land Use

While some of the current land use patterns are based on the 1962 Master Plan, several of the changes made in the 1972 Master Plan have had the greatest influence on the Town=s growth and development. In particular, the commercialization of Broadway was based on the recommendations of the 1972 Plan, as was the designation of several disparate industrial areas and the establishment of the apartment district on Cluff Crossing Road. The 1986 Master Plan

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decried some of those changes made in 1972, regarding the supplanted 1962 recommendations as lost opportunities for the Town. While the 1986 Plan did not introduce any significant new proposals for change in land use patterns, it did address concerns relative to the diminishing amount of open space, the need for recognition of historic resources, the importance of the appearance and aesthetics of new development, and the desirability of revitalizing Salem Depot.

The immediate past Master Plan which was adopted in 1992 made some modest proposals for modification to the land use arrangements in Salem. Recommendations included establishing an area of industrial, townhouse, and/or manufactured housing in North Salem along Route 111 northerly of East Broadway; creating a new business/office/medium density residential district in the area of South Policy Street, Pleasant Street, and Lowell Road; allowing a mix of residential, office, and service uses along Main Street easterly of the Depot with retail to be added to the mix in the Depot itself. The 1992 Plan echoed the 1986 Plan's call for attention to design standards, retention of historic character, and protection of open space, while adding concerns about the traffic and transportation implications of land use.

E. Future Land Use Plan

Exhibit 10 displays a pattern of future land use which Salem should strive to achieve under the guidance of this Master Plan. A discussion of future residential and non-residential land uses follows herein.

1. Future Residential Land Uses.

While the buildout analyses indicate that there is enough residentially zoned land in Salem to provide for the projected number of needed housing units for at least another decade, these units would be primarily single family dwellings, together with a modest number of senior housing units, and a relatively small number of general multi-family, two-family, and manufactured housing units. The projected number of general multi-family units is below the estimated demand for such units in Salem. Multi-family units need not be garden apartments but can include townhouses and attached dwellings at a range of densities. Any land area that is considered for these type of units should have municipal utility services available as well as reasonable access to local roads with capacity for additional traffic.

One option for providing more opportunity for higher density housing is the South Policy/Pleasant Street area, as described in the South Policy/Pleasant Street Area Plan (December 1990). The case studies contained in that document indicate that higher density housing is a compatible land use in areas adjacent to a mall or intensive retail development, and can function as a buffer between the retail development and existing nearby neighborhoods of single and two-family dwellings, such as those that exist north of the Rockingham Mall on Pleasant Street.

Another option to add higher density housing is to implement the recommendations of the 1992 Master Plan which had recommended townhouses in North Salem along Route 111, medium density housing in the Pleasant Street/South Policy Street area, and residential development as a part of the mix of uses allowed along Main Street and in the Depot.

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With regard to further single family and two-family development, the current system of Rural and Residential zoning districts seems to provide adequate opportunity for such. As noted in Buildout Scenario #2, as municipal utilities are extended, Rural Districts should be rezoned to Residential Districts except in those instances where the majority of the land is wetland or floodplain.

2. Future Non-residential Land Use

As Salem approaches a buildout condition, attention should be given to redevelopment opportunities and areas that may be appropriate for a change of land use. The Depot has been previously recommended for redevelopment. Some of the areas of early industrial and commercial development along Route 28 may be in need of some selective redevelopment as well. With regard to changes in land use, the past recommendations of the South Policy/Pleasant Street Area Plan have yet to be addressed, and while the occasion may not arise during the effective life of this Plan, it is appropriate for the Town to contemplate the most desirable direction for the environs of Rockingham Park should changes occur to this facility.

The South Policy/Pleasant Street Area Plan addresses the future disposition of land to the north and west of the Rockingham Mall. As discussed above with regard to future residential development, high density residential is offered as a future use or at least part of a mix of uses for Pleasant Street south of the entry to the Mall. Areas south of Lowell Road and west of South Policy Street are recommended for office and light industrial uses.

The South Policy/Pleasant Street Area Plan also addresses disposition of land use on Main Street between the Depot and Pelham Road. What happens to land use on Main Street west of the Depot largely depends on decisions related to transportation. If there is no effort to re-direct traffic and institute traffic calming, then Main Street will need to be widened with the consequent loss of character of the existing land use and likely, a shift to different land uses.

F. Future Land Use Recommendations by Sub-area

Pelham Road (I-93 to Commercial Drive)

- X Buffer residential areas on Pelham Road and Brookdale Road from commercial encroachment
- X Prohibit commercial/industrial access onto Brookdale Road
- X Maintain high quality development, including building design, landscaping and signage
- X Tie future development to road improvements in Townwide Study
- X Allow limited retail uses to serve office/industrial employees
- X Minimize curb cuts on Pelham Road
- X Extend Stiles Road to Lowell Road
- X Add sidewalks along major roadways
- X Preserve wetlands and floodplain along Porcupine Brook
- X Preserve visual buffers along roadway and I-93

Route 38 (I-93 to Quill Lane)

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- X Upgrade standards for commercial/industrial development.
- X Restrict retail uses.
- X Encourage redevelopment of junkyards and landfill
- X Expand Hedgehog Park - add recreation equipment, trails, parking, and picnic facilities
- X Minimize curb cuts
- X Identify future road improvements
- X Explore use of school property for future school or other use
- X Limit boundaries of commercial/industrial development to current zoning lines
- X Prohibit commercial/industrial access onto Brady Avenue
- X Extend water and sewer lines to commercial boundary
- X Construct West Salem fire station

Lakes Area (Arlington, Shadow, Captain=s, Canobie, Millville, World=s End)

- X Protect water quality
- X Encourage sewer line extensions to area around Arlington, Shadow, Canobie and Millville
- X Restrict uses to residential and recreational
- X Develop public access points and beaches
- X Increase building and septic setbacks to protect water quality
- X Restrict seasonal conversions
- X Upgrade roads

Town Center (Geremonty/Veterans Parkway)

- X Allow government, institutional, and public uses, such as Senior Center, Teen Center, Public Safety facility
- X Maintain architectural design standards
- X Acquire more land - Lord, Najuck, Wieszeck and other parcels
- X Expand cultural/recreation facilities
- X Preserve open space and wetlands
- X Implement traffic improvements at Veterans/Geremonty and Veterans/Lawrence

Main Street

- X Allow residential uses, offices, and service businesses
- X Maintain integrity of historic district and historic character of area
- X Restrict building sizes and designs
- X Complete intersection improvements per Townwide Traffic Study
- X Maintain tree line along roadway

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Salem Depot

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- X Encourage planned redevelopment
- X Allow retail, office, and multi-family residential uses
- X Develop additional public parking
- X Require architectural design standards for buildings
- X Widen roads per Townwide Traffic Study and Depot Traffic Study
- X Complete streetscape and facade improvements
- X Acquire additional land
- X Create new downtown area

South and North Broadway

- X Require architectural design standards, increased landscaping, and smaller signage
- X Consider underground utilities
- X Require combined access points, connector driveways, connected parking lots, and other techniques to reduce traffic congestion
- X Restrict east-west boundaries of commercial development
- X Encourage redevelopment of older commercial properties
- X Widen road (5 lanes north from Veterans Parkway to Rt. 111) per Townwide Traffic Study
- X Improve pedestrian facilities by expanding sidewalks and providing ways to safely cross roadway at key intersections
- X Encourage relocation of existing mobile home parks
- X Preserve wetlands and floodplain along Spicket River and Worlds End Brook

South Policy/Pleasant Street

- X Allow business office and medium density residential development.
- X Prohibit retail uses
- X Consider overlay-zoning district with incentives for combining lots
- X Require architectural design standards and increased landscaping
- X Widen roads to accommodate future development
- X Accommodate proposed park-and-ride lot off So. Policy Street
- X Preserve character of northern section of Pleasant Street
- X Preserve wetlands and floodplain along Policy Brook

Rockingham Park Area

- X Maintain and enhance Racetrack and associated uses
- X Encourage mixed uses (residential apartments, limited retail, office, entertainment, hotels, convention center, and concert facility)
- X Consider creation of new pedestrian-oriented downtown district
- X Limit new access points on South Broadway
- X Require high quality architectural, landscaping and signage standards
- X Screen views of parking lots from South Broadway and Rockingham Park Boulevard
- X Consider use of parking garages or decks

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- X Encourage public transit connections to other attractions and destinations
- X Create pedestrian and vehicular links to Racetrack, Mall, and Depot

Supporting Studies and References

XDepot Design Plan, Salem, New Hampshire; prepared by Pat Kolbet and Cynthia Hayes, Conway School of Design; June, 1995.

XLand Use Controls; Town of Salem, New Hampshire; September, 1999.

XMaster Plan, Salem, New Hampshire; prepared by Hans Klunder Associates; adopted on September 3, 1986.

XMaster Plan, Salem, New Hampshire; prepared by the Master Plan Advisory Committee; adopted on September 22, 1992.

XSouth Policy/Pleasant Street Area Plan, Salem, NH; prepared by Hawk Planning and Development Consultants; December, 1990.