Sanford
MAINE

Photo: Amy Rivard



City of Sanford
Comprehensive Plan

Adopted: XX/XX/XXXX

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Photo: Amy Rivard

Executive Summary: Sanford's Path Forward

The Sanford Comprehensive Plan (Plan) is a long-range plan for the City of Sanford (City, Sanford), encompassing both Sanford and Springvale. Throughout this plan, the term "City of Sanford" refers to the entire community, including both Sanford and Springvale, unless otherwise noted.

The Plan guides how the City accommodates housing and economic growth, invests in infrastructure and services, strengthens established centers and neighborhoods, and protects rural lands and natural resources. The Plan provides a durable framework for decisions, and priorities and strategies can adapt as conditions change while remaining grounded in the community's vision and goals.

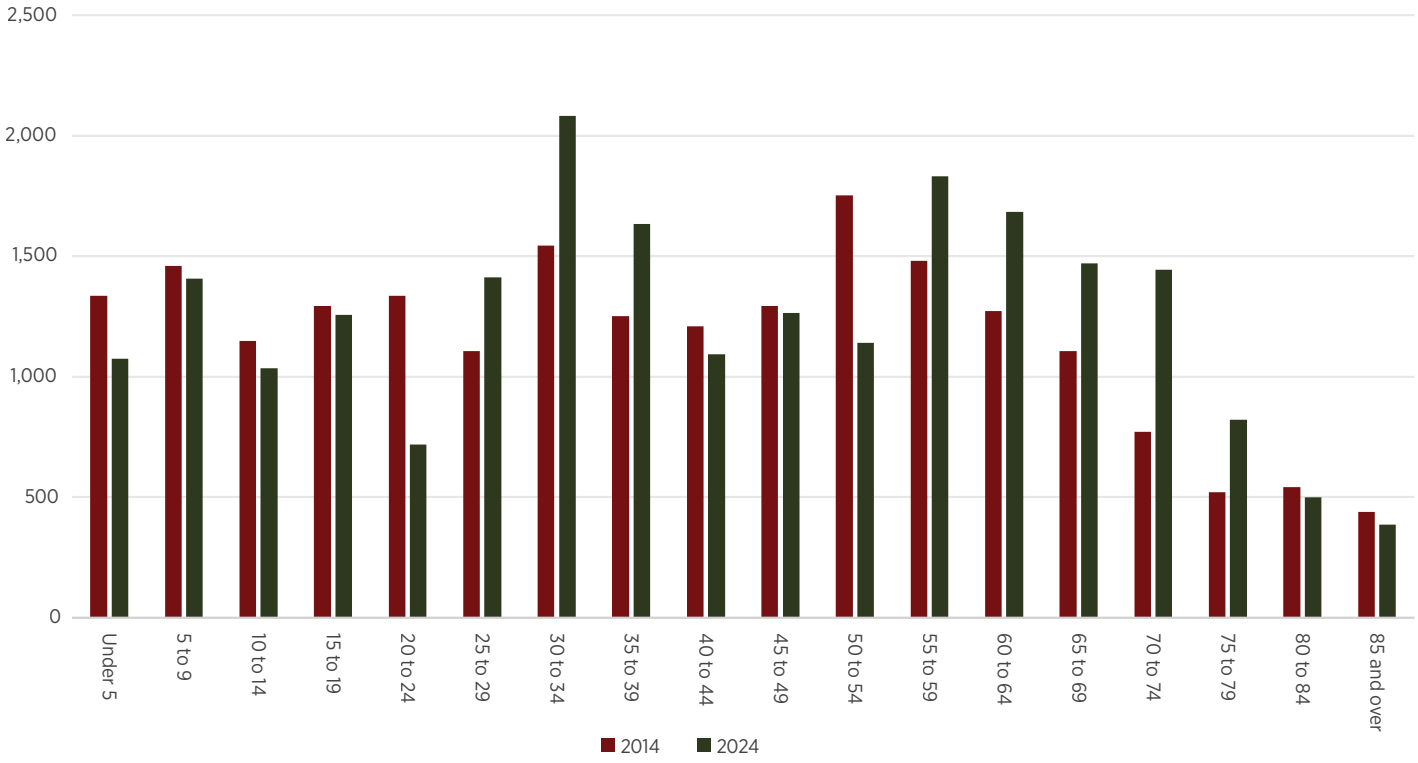
The Plan carries forward priorities from Sanford's previous Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2002 and amended in 2005, including investment in established centers, protection of rural and agricultural assets, economic opportunity, and reliable municipal services. It brings those priorities together with more recent local, regional, and State planning efforts and updates their application to current conditions. Community surveys, public events, an open house, online engagement, and guidance from the Steering Committee and City staff informed this Plan's direction, alongside analysis of demographics, housing, the economy, infrastructure, municipal services, and natural resources.

Responding to Changing Conditions

Sanford is experiencing population growth, demographic change, increased development activity, and rising demands on infrastructure and services. Its population is aging and households are becoming smaller, creating needs for varied housing choices, transportation options, and accessible community resources. Household incomes have increased, but housing costs have risen faster than local purchasing power. Although Sanford remains relatively affordable compared with nearby coastal communities, maintaining attainable options for existing residents and the workforce is a central concern. At the same time, the City's manufacturing base, downtowns, regional airport, and role as a regional service center provide opportunities for employment and investment. These conditions call for coordinated decisions about growth, infrastructure capacity, housing, and the long-term cost of municipal services.



Figure 1: Sanford Population by Age Category

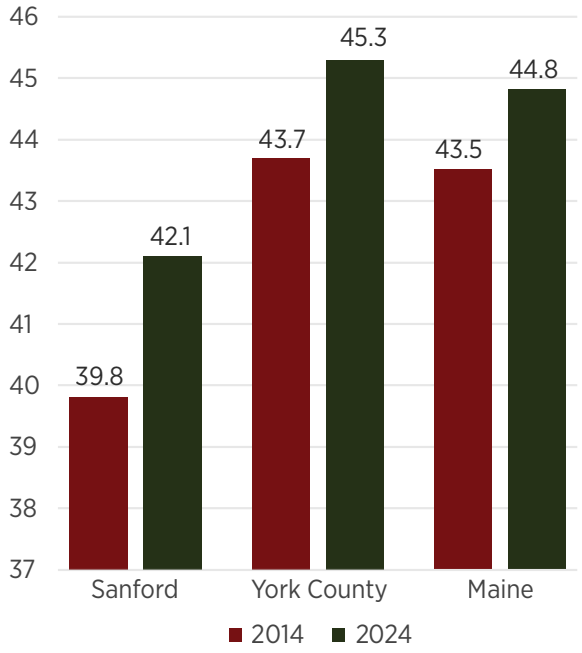


Age	2014	2024
Under 5	1,335	1,075
5 to 9 years	1,460	1,406
10 to 14 years	1,147	1,035
15 to 19 years	1,293	1,256
20 to 24 years	1,335	718
25 to 29 years	1,105	1,412
30 to 34 years	1,543	2,081
35 to 39 years	1,251	1,633
40 to 44 years	1,209	1,093
45 to 49 years	1,293	1,263

Age	2014	2024
50 to 54 years	1,752	1,140
55 to 59 years	1,481	1,830
60 to 64 years	1,272	1,684
65 to 69 years	1,105	1,471
70 to 74 years	772	1,444
75 to 79 years	521	822
80 to 84 years	542	499
85 years and over	438	385

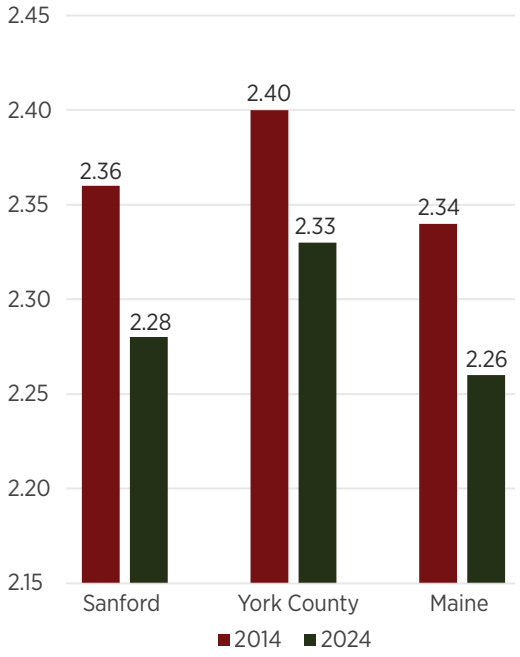
Source: 2014 and 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Figure 2: Median Age Change, Sanford-York County-Maine, 2014 – 2024



Source: 2014 and 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Figure 3: Change in Average Household Size, 2014 – 2024

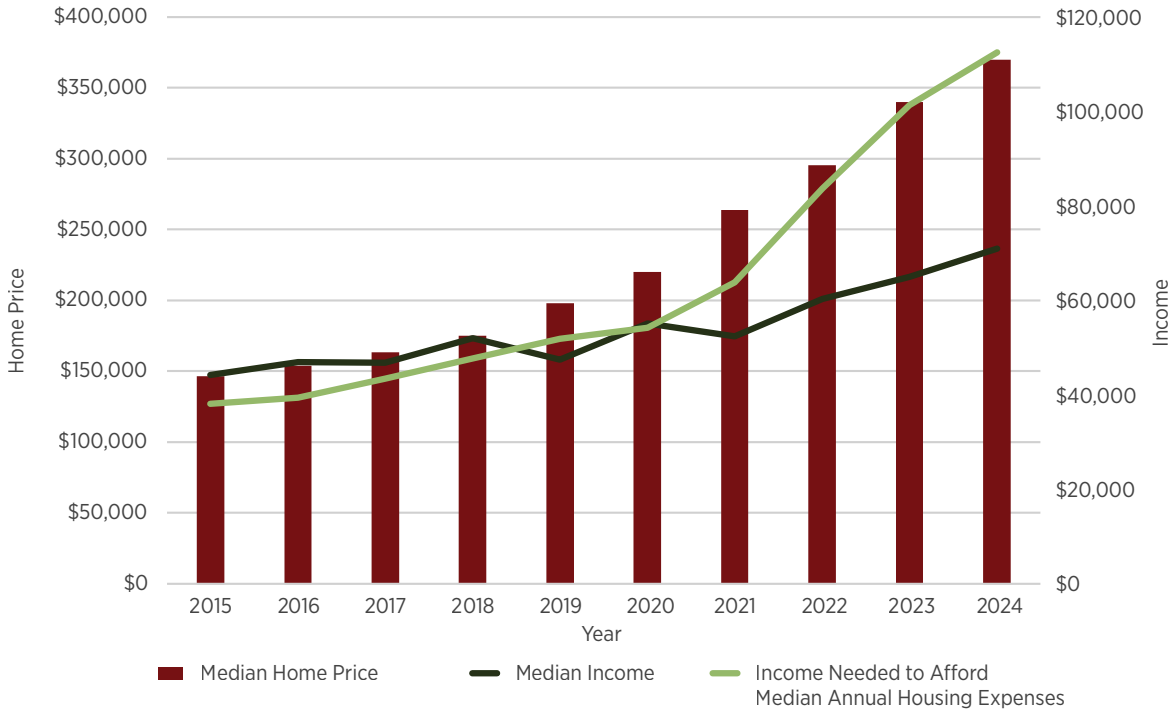


Source: 2014 and 2024 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Photo: Amy Rivard

Figure 4: Sanford Median Home Price and Median Income Trends



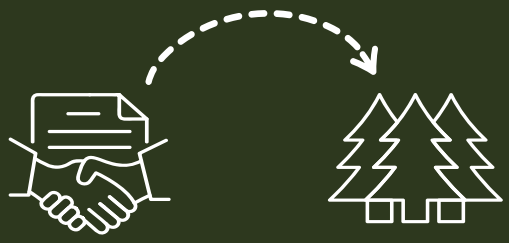
Year	Median Home Price	Median Income	Income Needed to Afford Median Annual Housing Expenses
2015	$146,500	$44,240	$38,085
2016	$153,950	$46,910	$39,408
2017	$163,500	$46,863	$43,491
2018	$175,000	$51,973	$47,697
2019	$198,000	$47,416	$51,844
2020	$220,000	$55,136	$54,227
2021	$264,000	$52,375	$63,769
2022	$295,500	$60,304	$83,726
2023	$340,000	$65,045	$101,381
2024	$370,000	$70,953	$112,470

Source: U.S. Census

A Community-Defined Direction

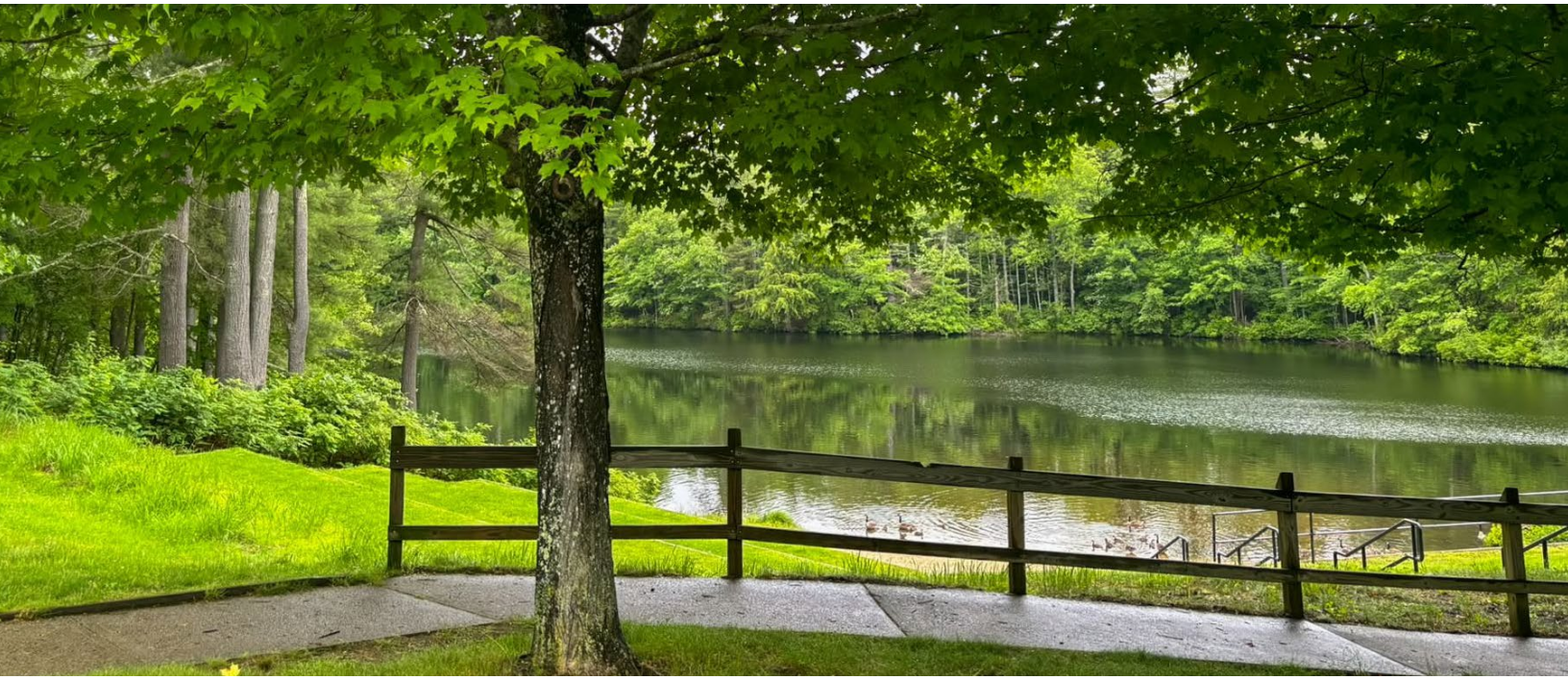
The vision describes a welcoming community that honors its history while embracing thoughtful growth, with walkable neighborhoods, thriving small businesses, revitalized commercial areas, preserved rural landscapes and natural resources, accessible recreation, and quality services. Community feedback emphasized affordability, downtown revitalization, local business opportunities, safety, reliable infrastructure, stronger connections, and transparent decision-making. Eight interconnected goals organize the City's response:

- Strengthen Community Identity and Connection
- Foster Inclusion, Health, and Well-Being
- Support a Vibrant, Diverse Local Economy
- Revitalize Downtowns
- Promote Housing Opportunities and Quality of Life
- Protect Natural Resources and Expand Recreation
- Invest in Infrastructure and Quality Services
- Strengthen Governance and Implementation



Connecting Policy to Place

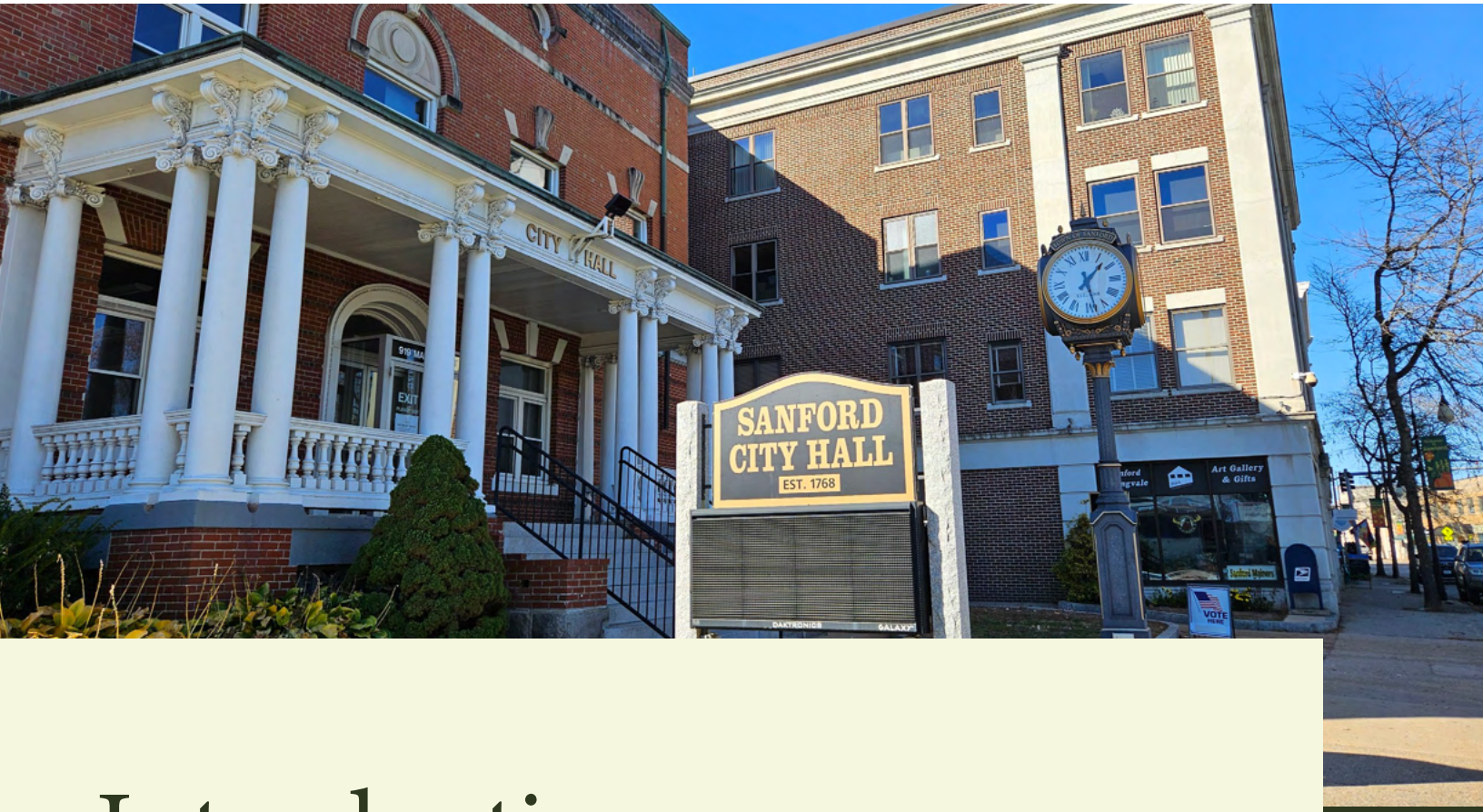
The Future Land Use Plan provides the geographic framework for these goals. Growth Areas direct additional housing, employment, commercial activity, redevelopment, and public investment toward Downtown Sanford and Springvale, mixed-use corridors, and industrial areas. Transition Areas accommodate more gradual, context-sensitive change through transitional neighborhoods and corridors. Rural Areas prioritize working lands, natural resources, open space, outdoor recreation, and compatible low-density development and rural businesses. Resource protections and hazard information apply across these areas and may constrain development regardless of its future land use designation. The Future Land Use Plan guides future zoning and investment decisions; it is not a parcel-by-parcel zoning map and does not itself establish regulatory standards.



Using the Plan

The Plan connects Sanford's vision for the future with the decisions needed to achieve it. The opening chapters establish the community's goals, and the Future Land Use Plan translates that direction into a framework for development and conservation. "Advancing the Vision" establishes the policies that guide City decisions, while "From Plan to Action" identifies the strategies and implementation framework for carrying them forward. Used together, these chapters help the City align its day-to-day work and longer-term investments with community priorities, from annual budgets and capital improvements to regulatory updates and more detailed planning. They also guide partnerships and efforts to secure funding. The appendices provide supporting analysis and community engagement findings, along with a glossary and references to prior plans.

Implementation will require sustained coordination among City leadership, departments, boards, committees, utilities, schools, businesses, service providers, community organizations, regional partners, and residents. The Action Plan framework identifies responsible parties, action types, time frames, and relative resource needs to support priority-setting. Annual review should connect those priorities to available funding, staffing, capital planning, and emerging opportunities. Progress should be considered both in terms of completed actions and the broader conditions those actions help create, including housing choice, active downtowns, protected resources, accessible services, and reliable infrastructure. Regular public reporting and periodic reassessment will help Sanford recognize progress, address barriers, and adjust implementation while maintaining its long-term direction.



Introduction

What Is the Sanford Comprehensive Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is a long-range plan that creates a vision for where and how Sanford should grow over the next decade and how the City should look to achieve that vision.

The Plan is a policy document that highlights the future that the community wants to see. The Plan acts as a guide for the decision-making process over the next decade. By engaging with community members, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (the Committee), and other stakeholders citywide, the vision statement was created to align with the community's priorities for future growth. The Comprehensive Plan is a tool that will help the City leverage its assets while addressing current challenges and constraints. The Growth Management Act identifies specific requirements that need to be met by a city's comprehensive plan, which are covered throughout this Plan.

The Plan considers existing zoning districts in Sanford Springvale to identify where development and other land uses are desired throughout the City. To balance demand for housing with preservation of open spaces, it is crucial to have a robust planning document in place. The Plan builds on previous planning documents and incorporates current budgets and existing capital planning to help identify actionable steps forward that can support the City in guiding development patterns and using policy to shape the community. Another important foundation to an impactful plan includes considering the strain that population growth, aging infrastructure, and climate-related impacts will have on the City's facilities and services. Incorporating and planning for future needs of the various departments that support the City and its residents was also considered throughout the comprehensive planning process.

Why Plan Now?

Sanford has experienced two decades of growth and change since its last comprehensive plan was adopted in 2005. The community has grown and changed demographically, household needs have shifted, incomes and housing costs have increased, and development activity and planning approvals have brought new investment and growth pressures. At the same time, aging infrastructure, changing transportation and housing needs, environmental considerations, and increasing demands on municipal facilities and services require the City to make thoughtful choices about where and how it invests.

The context in which local government operates has also changed. Technology has transformed how residents access information and services and how municipalities communicate, manage data, and engage the public. Communities increasingly need to coordinate decisions about land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, economic development, natural resources, and municipal services rather than addressing these issues independently.

At the same time, many of the priorities identified in Sanford's 2005 Comprehensive Plan remain relevant. The City continues to balance growth and development with the preservation of rural areas and agricultural lands. It continues to support investment in Downtown Sanford and Springvale and, while

providing the infrastructure and municipal services residents and businesses across the City rely on.

Updating the Comprehensive Plan also supports Sanford's responsibilities under Maine's Growth Management Law. Under the State's growth management framework, certification of a comprehensive plan is valid for 10 years, and municipalities seeking to maintain certification are expected to periodically review and update their plans to account for changing conditions, including growth and development. Maine law also requires municipal zoning ordinances to be consistent with an adopted comprehensive plan, making the Plan an important foundation for future zoning and land use regulations. Maintaining a current, consistent Comprehensive Plan can also position the City to pursue certain State funding and investment opportunities that are tied to local growth management and designated growth areas.

The comprehensive planning process provides an opportunity to review how Sanford has changed, revisit and confirm long-standing community priorities, and establish a shared direction for the next decade. Developing the Plan brought together data, community input, and guidance from City leaders and staff to understand current conditions and translate community priorities into a framework for future decisions and investment.

How the Plan Was Developed

The City's Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (the Committee) was developed in 2024. The Committee worked closely with the Council to conduct a Market Analysis which identified increased housing demands and affordability, as well as income and industry jobs and employment opportunities. The Committee's work highlighted the need to promote urban infill development while supporting rural uses. The City began



the comprehensive planning process with BerryDunn in December 2025. The Plan was developed with guidance from the Committee, which held monthly public meetings to review progress and provide direction for the Plan's vision and goals, and through input from City staff, community leaders, and members of the community.

Over the course of the planning process, the community had a variety of opportunities to be involved and provide input. In addition to the monthly Committee meetings, the City hosted a table at the July 3 Block Party event, held an in-person community open house event, conducted a community survey, and posted Questions of the Month on the Sanford Connects website to gain feedback from community members. Additionally, the website offered digital options for participating in engagement activities.

The inventory and analysis sets the stage for where the City is today, by evaluating demographics conditions and trends, economic factors, City facilities and services, natural resources, and the City's fiscal health. The inventory and analysis informed the development of the Plan and grounded decisions and goals in an analysis of data and understanding of current conditions.

By conducting extensive outreach and establishing a common understanding of the City's current challenges, the plan was informed by perspectives from community members, City staff, and the Committee. The input gathered from various stakeholders has helped to shape the City's vision statement guided Plan priorities and strategies that the community can implement over the next decade.

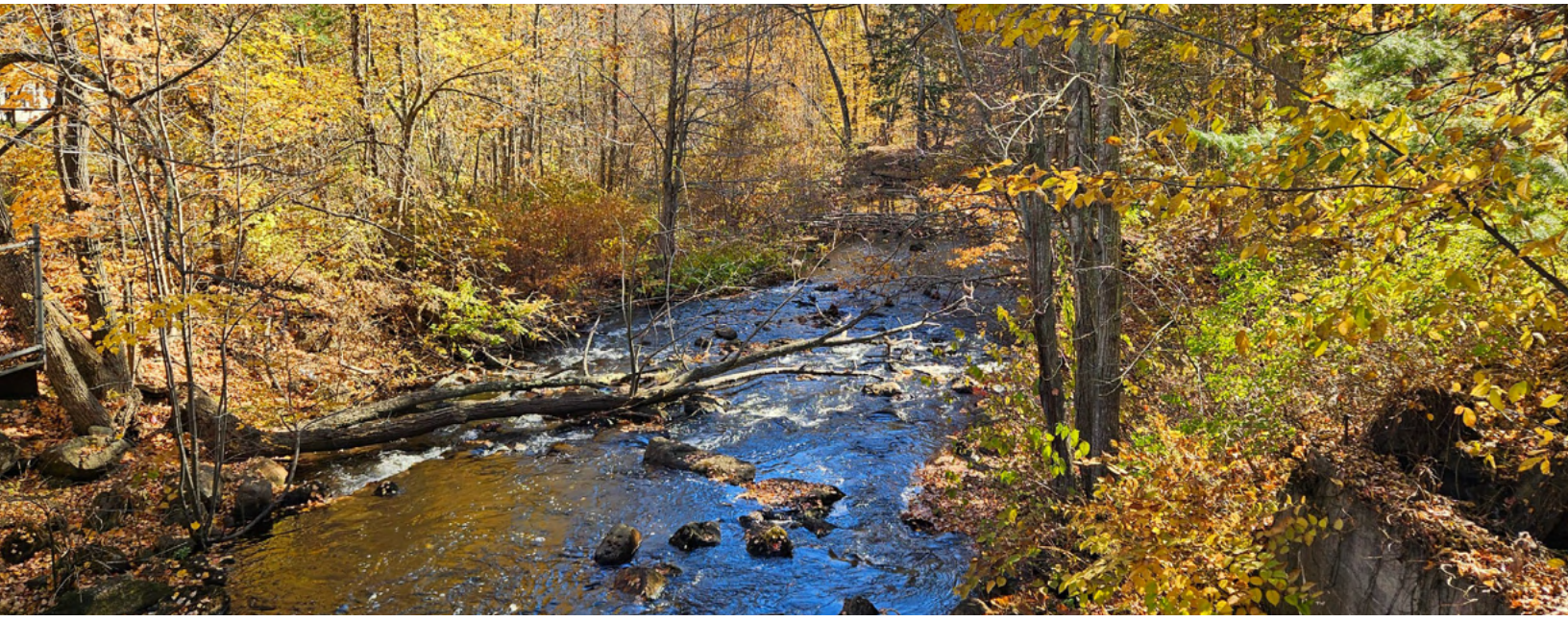




Photo: Jack McAdam

Investing in Sanford's Next Chapter

A Community That Continues to Reimagine Itself

Sanford's history has been shaped by its location along the Mousam River, its agricultural legacy, and its role as a center for industry and a regional service hub. For centuries before European settlement, indigenous peoples, known as the Wabanaki, used the rivers, wetlands, and uplands of what is now Sanford and Springvale for travel, fishing, hunting, and seasonal habitation. The Mousam River and surrounding waters provided reliable access to food and transportation and formed part of a broader network of indigenous travel routes across Southern Maine. Early European settlers in Sanford established farms while timber harvesting and water-powered industry developed along the Mousam River and its tributaries. Mills, dams, and mill ponds were centers for early economic activity and directly influenced the location of housing, roads, and village centers that are still prominent in Sanford today.

The Mousam River provided power for a growing textile industry in the 18th and 19th centuries. In addition to lumber from its sawmills, the town was a center for cotton, wool, carpets, and shoe production. Development along the river supported the growth of urban centers in Sanford and Springvale. For nearly 200 years, these villages were the center of concentrated residential, commercial, industrial, and civic uses. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, Sanford and Springvale emerged as regional industrial centers.

While the mills are no longer in operation, the historic buildings, neighborhoods, and street patterns that remain provide a strong foundation for Sanford's next chapter.

Today, Sanford is a hub for regional employment, health care, education, and serves the surrounding rural and coastal communities in Southern Maine. The City has grown and evolved throughout its history, and, while the City has continued to reimagine itself from an agricultural town to an industrial center to a regional hub, Sanford still carries the physical legacies of both its agricultural and industrial pasts. Sanford has compact downtowns, older neighborhoods, historic industrial buildings, and large swaths of rural lands. That legacy creates some constraints, but it also gives the City redevelopment capacity that many communities do not have.

By reinvesting in these established centers, supporting thriving small businesses, strengthening walkable neighborhoods, and preserving the rural landscapes and natural resources beyond them, Sanford can continue to evolve and build on the qualities that define the community. This approach supports a welcoming, vibrant, affordable, and connected community that honors its history while embracing continued, thoughtful growth.

Building on Past Plans and Investments

This Comprehensive Plan builds on over two decades of planning, policy, and investment in Sanford. The City adopted its previous Comprehensive Plan in 2002 and amended it in 2005, establishing direction for growth, development, conservation, infrastructure, and

community services that the City has seen over the past 20 years. Many of those fundamental priorities remain relevant today, including directing investment toward established centers, supporting economic development, protecting rural and natural areas, and providing the infrastructure and services needed to serve the community. This Plan carries that work forward while responding to the changes Sanford has experienced and the new opportunities and challenges anticipated over the next decade.

Since the previous Comprehensive Plan, Sanford has continued to address specific community needs through more focused plans, studies, policies, and investments. These efforts have addressed economic development, transportation and roadway safety, parks and recreation, trails, the Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport, water resources, conservation, infrastructure, and other municipal priorities. Recent efforts include the 2025 Sanford Market Analysis & Economic Development Action Plan, Sanford Downtown Improvement/RAISE Grant Project, 2020 Sanford Trails Master Plan, 2024 Safe Streets and Roads for All Safety Action Plan, 2025 Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport Master Plan, and Goodall Brook Watershed Based Management Plan, among others. Together, this work provides a substantial foundation for the Comprehensive Plan and has helped identify projects, investments, and policy priorities that remain important to Sanford's future.

Sanford's planning also takes place within a broader regional context. Transportation systems, housing markets, watersheds, natural resources, economic activity, and environmental hazards extend beyond municipal boundaries and require coordination with neighboring communities and regional partners. Regional planning efforts, including the York County Hazard Mitigation Plan, regional transportation planning, conservation planning, and analysis of climate conditions in Southern Maine, provide additional context for decisions made at the local level.

State plans, policies, and programs provide another important layer of the planning framework. State initiatives addressing housing, transportation, climate, water quality, natural resources, forestry, and growth management inform many of the topics addressed in this Plan. These include Maine Won't Wait, the State of Maine Housing Production Needs Study, Maine's Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan, statewide transportation and active transportation plans, MaineDOT's Complete Streets Policy, and forestry and woodland-management guidance.

This Comprehensive Plan does not replace these more focused local, regional, or State planning efforts. Instead, it provides a citywide framework for bringing them together around Sanford's community vision, Future Land Use Plan, goals, and long-term priorities. Recommendations from prior plans remain relevant where they continue to support that direction, while the Comprehensive Plan provides updated policy guidance for coordinating future land use, public investment, regulations, programs, and partnerships. As individual plans and studies are updated, they can provide more detailed direction for implementing the broader priorities established through this Plan.

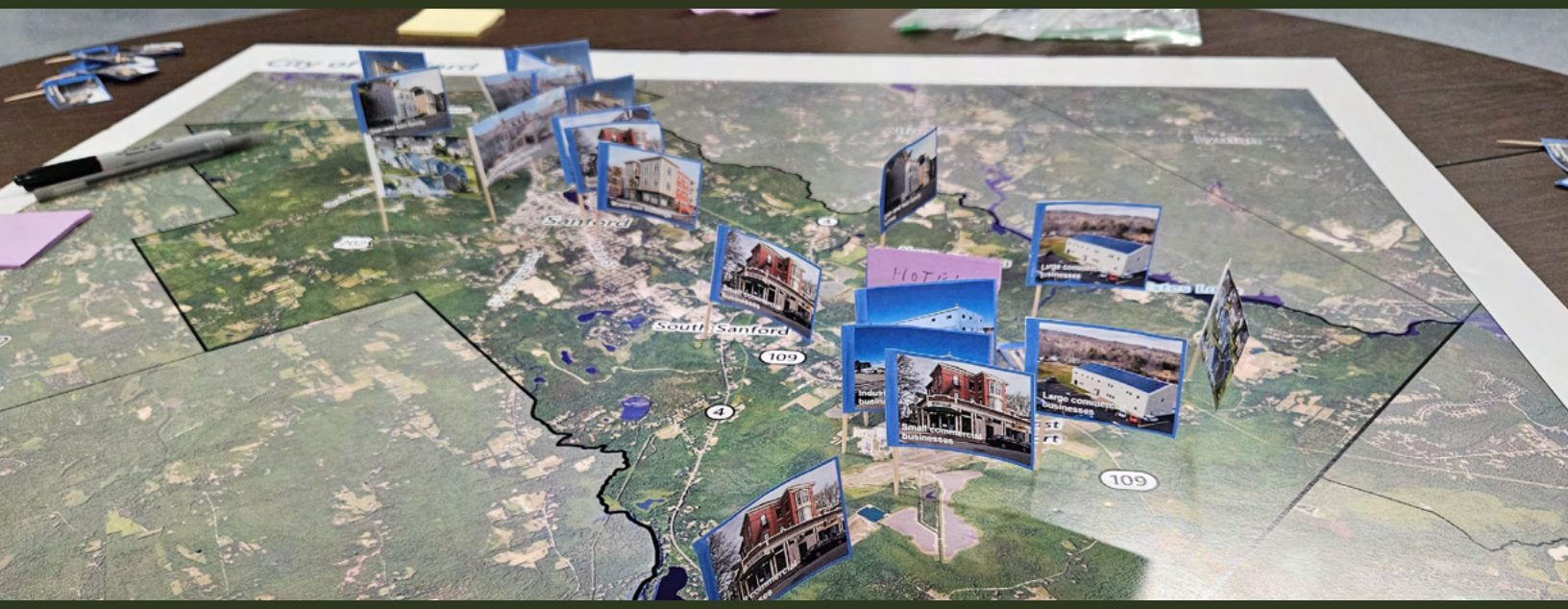
Sanford Today: Key Trends and Choices

Sanford is one of York County's largest population centers and is York County's largest city. Over the past decade, Sanford's population under age 20 declined by 8.8%, while the population age 65 and older increased by 36.8%. Household sizes have also become smaller, and nearly half of households now include at least one resident age 60 or older. These shifts will influence demand for different types of housing, transportation, healthcare, and other municipal services. At the same time, housing supply has tightened and costs have risen faster than local purchasing power, creating a need for more attainable, senior-oriented, and varied housing options in locations served by existing infrastructure. Sanford's median home price increased from approximately $146,500 in 2015 to $370,000 in 2024, while median rent rose from less than $800 per month during the mid-2010s to approximately $1,150. Although household incomes have increased, they have not kept pace with housing prices, widening the gap between what households earn and what they need to purchase a typical home. While housing costs in Sanford have increased, it remains more affordable than nearby coastal communities.

Sanford's economy is supported by manufacturing, retail, healthcare, construction, the airport, and its role as a regional service center. At the same time, a large number of Sanford residents commute out of the City for work to places like the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and coastal communities.

Decades of automobile-oriented development have dispersed housing and commercial activity across the City, increasing service and infrastructure costs while placing pressure on rural lands, forests, farmland, and water resources. These conditions support directing more growth and reinvestment toward Downtown Sanford and Springvale, established corridors, industrial areas, and other locations with water, sewer, transportation access, and redevelopment potential.

Sanford has transportation, recreation, utility, and other infrastructure assets, including regional road connections, an expanding trail network, public transit, the regional airport, and established water and sewer systems. However, gaps in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, aging infrastructure, flood hazards, and growing service demands require coordinated investment. Together, these conditions call for a fiscally responsible growth strategy that aligns land use with infrastructure capacity, protects natural and working landscapes, expands housing choices, reinvests in established centers, and directs limited public resources toward projects that advance multiple community goals.



Community Feedback

A robust community engagement effort was conducted as part of the comprehensive planning process, with Sanford residents and employees providing input on the City's current strengths, weaknesses, and future priorities. The goal of this effort was to identify community values and priorities, provide information to inform the Plan's vision statement, and guide Plan development and policy recommendations.

The engagement strategy included the following events and activities:

- A community-wide survey
- Tabling at community events, including the Healthy Living Expo and July 3 event
- Future land use open house event
- Presentations at the Trafton Center, Sanford High School, City Council, and the Planning Board
- Online engagement via the Sanford Connects website

To help inform the community of the project, several methods were utilized to engage participants in the process:

- Information on the City's website and social media accounts
- Events shared on the Sanford Springvale News and local organization social media pages
- Sharing through informal networks (e.g., steering committee members sharing information, social media groups)
- Direct outreach to local organizations and groups

Table 1 summarizes engagement participation totals across events.

Engagement and Event Totals

Community Heart & Soul event
~20-40

Sanford Comprehensive Plan Community Survey
826

March Questions of the Month
93

April Questions of the Month
59

May Questions of the Month
88

June Questions of the Month
96

Tabeling Events (Healthy Living Expo, July 3rd Block Party)
~75

August Questions of the Month
78

Trafton Center
5

Future Land Use Open House
~35

Photo Contest
7

High School Student Engagement
25

Total Inputs
~1,407

Community engagement highlighted a vision for balance. Residents want Sanford to be welcoming, affordable, safe, and connected while supporting thoughtful growth, local businesses, revitalized downtown areas, high-quality services, and expanded housing opportunities. At the same time, they value the City's historic identity, small-town feel, rural landscapes, and outdoor recreation access. These priorities are reflected directly in the vision statement, which describes a safe, vibrant, affordable community with walkable neighborhoods, thriving businesses, revitalized commercial areas, preserved natural resources and rural landscapes, accessible recreation, and quality public resources.

The Future Land Use Plan translates these aspirations into a geographic framework for growth, transition, and rural stewardship. Growth Areas direct additional housing, businesses, employment, redevelopment, and public investment toward Downtown Sanford and Springvale, mixed-use corridors, and established industrial areas. This approach responds to calls for downtown revitalization, additional shopping and dining options, greater housing choice, quality jobs, and more efficient use of existing infrastructure. Transition Areas provide opportunities for context-sensitive infill, neighborhood-scale development. Rural Areas prioritize farms, forests, open space, natural resources, outdoor recreation, and compatible rural economic activity, reflecting residents' desire to accommodate change without losing the landscapes that distinguish Sanford from other cities.

Engagement findings also inform the specific policy choices that will guide implementation. For example, concerns regarding affordability support policies that expand attainable housing options and direct higher-intensity development toward areas with infrastructure and services. Interest in vibrant, walkable centers inform streetscape improvements, public gathering spaces, and safer pedestrian and bicycle connections. Calls for more economic opportunity is reflected in policies that strengthen downtown businesses, concentrate major commercial and industrial activity in appropriate locations, and retain land for employment-generating uses. Together, these choices allow Sanford to pursue growth and reinvestment while managing fiscal impacts, protecting community assets, and maintaining a clear connection between what residents express and how the City makes future decisions. The full engagement summary is attached as an appendix (see Appendix C). Appendix C details each engagement, as well as its results, and summarizes feedback received from community members. Across all engagements, several themes emerged, shown below. These themes formed the foundation of the City's vision statement.

Address affordability and cost pressure:

Affordability emerged as a consistent concern across survey responses and activities, including housing costs, taxes, and the overall cost of living. Residents highlighted the need for a broader range of housing options fiscally responsible growth that allows households at different income levels, including existing residents, to remain in Sanford.

Revitalize Downtown and underutilized areas:

Participants frequently emphasized the need to strengthen Downtown Sanford and Springvale and redevelop key sites such as the mill district and vacant storefronts. Residents envisioned vibrant, safe, and walkable downtown areas that combine active businesses, housing, gathering spaces, and stronger connections between community destinations.

Expand local business, retail, and dining options:

Across multiple activities, residents expressed a desire for additional local shopping, dining, entertainment, and community amenities, noting that they often leave Sanford to access these options. Participants supported attracting and retaining small businesses, restaurants, retail establishments, and other employers that meet community needs and strengthen the local economy.



Balance safety concerns with community well-being:

Safety was a recurring theme, particularly in relation to homelessness, substance use, and perceptions of public spaces. Respondents emphasized improving safety in neighborhoods, parks, trails, and downtown while also recognizing the importance of supportive services, accessible public spaces, and community well-being.

Invest in infrastructure, services, and community facilities:

Respondents identified concerns about road and sidewalk conditions, transportation infrastructure, public facilities, parks, and the capacity of municipal services to accommodate growth. Feedback emphasized maintaining reliable infrastructure and services, improving access to community facilities, and considering the long-term financial impacts of public investments.

Enhance walkability, connectivity, and transportation options:

Residents highlighted the need for safer pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and stronger connections between neighborhoods, downtown, businesses, and community amenities. Improved walkability, public transportation, roadway safety, and connected public spaces were viewed as important to quality of life, accessibility, and economic activity.

Protect and expand parks, trails, and natural resources:

Outdoor recreation and access to nature were consistently identified as defining community assets. Residents supported expanding recreational opportunities and improving facilities while protecting trails, waterbodies, forests, agricultural lands, open spaces, and other natural resources for future generations.



Promote economic development and quality job opportunities:

Economic development emerged as a consistent priority, including support for small businesses, industry, major employers, and workforce opportunities. Future land use feedback supported concentrating industrial and larger-scale commercial activity in appropriate areas while allowing neighborhood-serving businesses and mixed uses in downtowns, corridors, and transitional areas.

Strengthen community connection, communication, and trust:

Respondents expressed mixed levels of community connection and identified barriers such as limited communication, insufficient gathering spaces, and difficulty engaging with decision-makers. Participants supported more inclusive engagement, transparent and accountable decision-making, improved communication, and additional opportunities for residents to connect with one another and participate in civic life.

Manage growth while preserving community feel:

Residents expressed a desire to preserve Sanford and Springvale's small-town character, rural landscapes, farms, natural resources, and community identity while accommodating new housing, employment, and investment. Feedback generally supported directing different forms and scales of development to appropriate areas, providing varied housing choices, and balancing redevelopment and economic growth with the protection of rural areas.



Project participants outlined their vision for Sanford in ten years and changes they would like to see to get there. A sample of responses are presented below:

> Love the mix of tradition, history and new people and things every year. There are lots of great ideas and enough community support to get most of them off the ground.

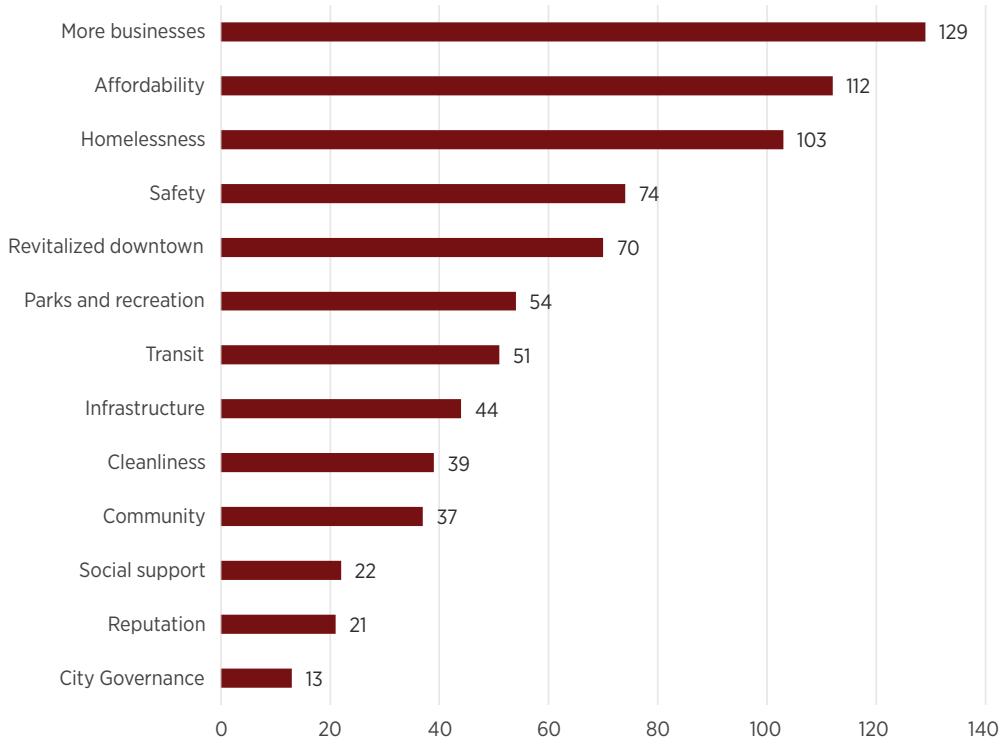
> I love the community of people, how they're willing to support and help each other. I love the potential it has looking at surrounding similar communities and what they've done to improve their community. I believe Sanford could do the same.

> The balance between small city, life and rural living. Meaning I love that there is so much access to hiking trails and swimming places and natural areas and at the same time so much accessibility to shopping and stores and businesses as well.

> Connecting people to projects or spaces that already exist. There are so many good things and resources around that people don't know about, like the Sanford Community Garden, York County Community Access, Sanford Backpack Program and more.

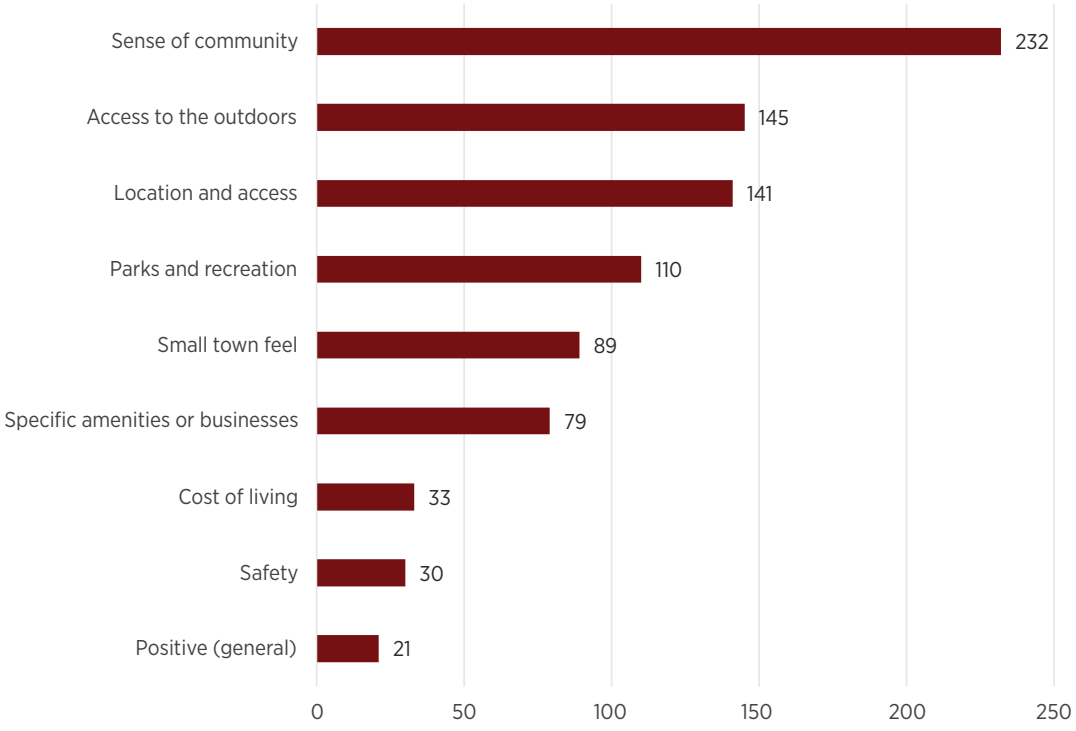

SANFORD
RECREATION

Figure 5: If you could change one thing about Sanford/Springvale, what would it be?



Source: Community Survey

Figure 6: What is your favorite thing about Sanford/Springvale?



Source: Community Survey

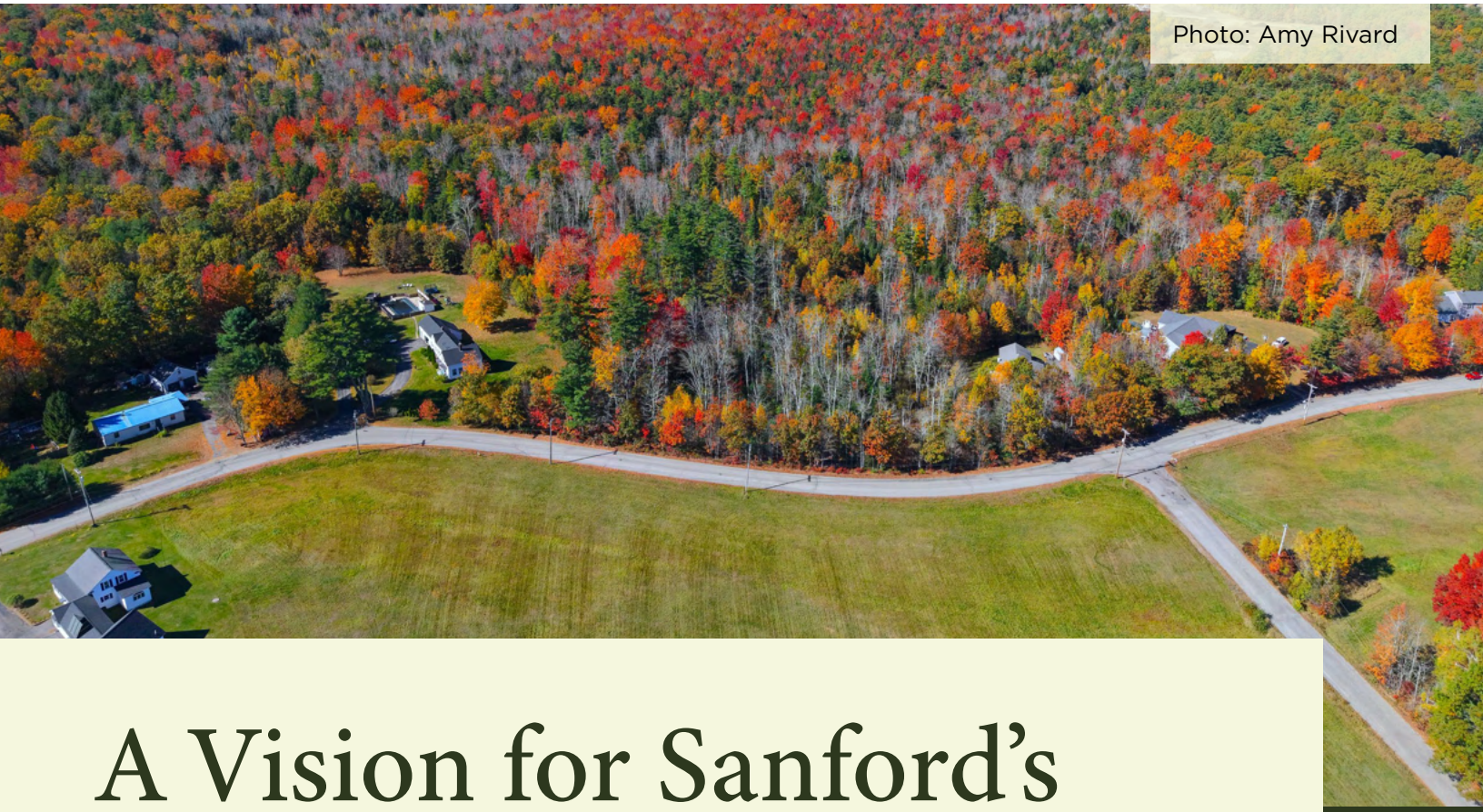


Photo: Amy Rivard

A Vision for Sanford's Future

The vision and community goals establish the foundation for Sanford's Comprehensive Plan and describe the future the community is working toward. The vision provides an overarching picture of what Sanford and Springvale should be like in the future, reflecting the priorities and values identified through community engagement and the planning process. The goals build on that vision by identifying the broad outcomes the City and its partners will work toward over the next decade.

Together, the vision and goals provide a common direction for the Plan. The Future Land Use Plan translates that direction into a framework for how different parts of the community should grow, change, and be preserved, while the policies and strategies later in the Plan identify how Sanford can advance each goal through future decisions, investments, programs, regulations, and partnerships.

Vision Statement

Sanford is a welcoming, hardworking Maine community that honors its history identities while embracing thoughtful growth. With a strong sense of connection and pride, the City offers a safe, vibrant, and affordable place to live, work, and gather. Walkable neighborhoods, thriving small businesses, and revitalized commercial areas are balanced with preserved natural resources and rural landscapes, accessible outdoor recreation, and high-quality services.

Community Goals

Strengthen Community Identity and Connection

Sanford's sense of community is built upon neighborhood and City pride, camaraderie among residents, a commitment to civic engagement and volunteerism, and a welcoming small-town way of life. Events, programs, and volunteer opportunities create a framework for residents to engage and connect. Sharing Sanford's evolution from an agricultural community and mill town to a regional hub strengthens the City's identity and connects its culture across generations.

Support a Vibrant, Diverse Local Economy

Sanford is the heart of York County—both as a geographically central hub and an economic center for the region. Encouraging a diverse and balanced economy through targeted business attraction and retention broadens the tax base to support economic resilience. Thoughtfully directing commercial growth to encourage industry in designated areas while supporting small businesses and local entrepreneurs will support economic stability and community vibrancy.



Revitalize Downtowns

Infrastructure and aesthetic improvements to downtown Sanford and Springvale will make the downtown areas more walkable, safe, vibrant, and desirable places to visit. Beautification initiatives, convenient parking, public spaces, and well-maintained properties can strengthen the image and perception of Sanford/Springvale.



Protect Natural Resources and Expand Recreation

Sanford's natural resources are a defining element of the City's identity. Amenities such as the Mousam River, ponds, trails, and parks provide residents and visitors with access to nature and enhance quality of life. Protection of farmland, open space, and environmentally sensitive areas is critical to maintaining outdoor recreation opportunities, preserving the rural character of Sanford, and protecting natural areas.



Invest in Infrastructure and Quality Services

Reliable infrastructure and high-quality public services form the foundation of a strong, thriving community. Well-maintained roads, utilities, and public systems support daily life, enable economic activity, and improve safety, while accessible transportation networks connect residents to jobs, services, and one another. By aligning infrastructure with planning for long-term growth, Sanford will be able to adapt to shifting needs and regional impacts to deliver essential services and sustain a high quality of life for current and future residents.

Promote Housing Opportunities and Quality of Life

A diverse and attainable housing supply is essential to sustaining a vibrant, inclusive community where people at different life stages and income levels can live, work, and thrive. Creating a diversity of high-quality and attainable housing options that build safe, well-connected neighborhoods and meet the needs of current residents and the workforce, will strengthen community connections and economic stability.

Strengthen Governance and Implementation

Clear, transparent, and effective governance provides the structure needed to translate community goals into meaningful outcomes. Modern, predictable processes build confidence among residents, businesses, and stakeholders, while consistent enforcement and accountability reinforce fairness and trust. By fostering collaboration and integrity in decision-making and supporting community-based long-range planning efforts, the City creates a governance framework that is rooted in community values.

Foster Inclusion, Health, and Well-Being

A healthy and resilient community is one where all individuals feel welcome, supported, and connected. Access to and affordability of essential resources—such as education, recreation, food, and health services—underpins overall well-being, while diverse social environments strengthen civic life and belonging.



Growing with Intention: The Future Land Use Plan

How to Use the Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan illustrates the community's long-term vision for how Sanford should grow, evolve, and invest over time. Rather than regulating individual properties, the map identifies the desired future character, intensity, and pattern of development across the City. It shows where housing, businesses, employment centers, civic destinations, open space, and conservation areas are generally intended to be located, as well as how these places should relate to one another. The map is intended to guide decision-making at a citywide scale and should not be interpreted as a parcel-by-parcel zoning map.

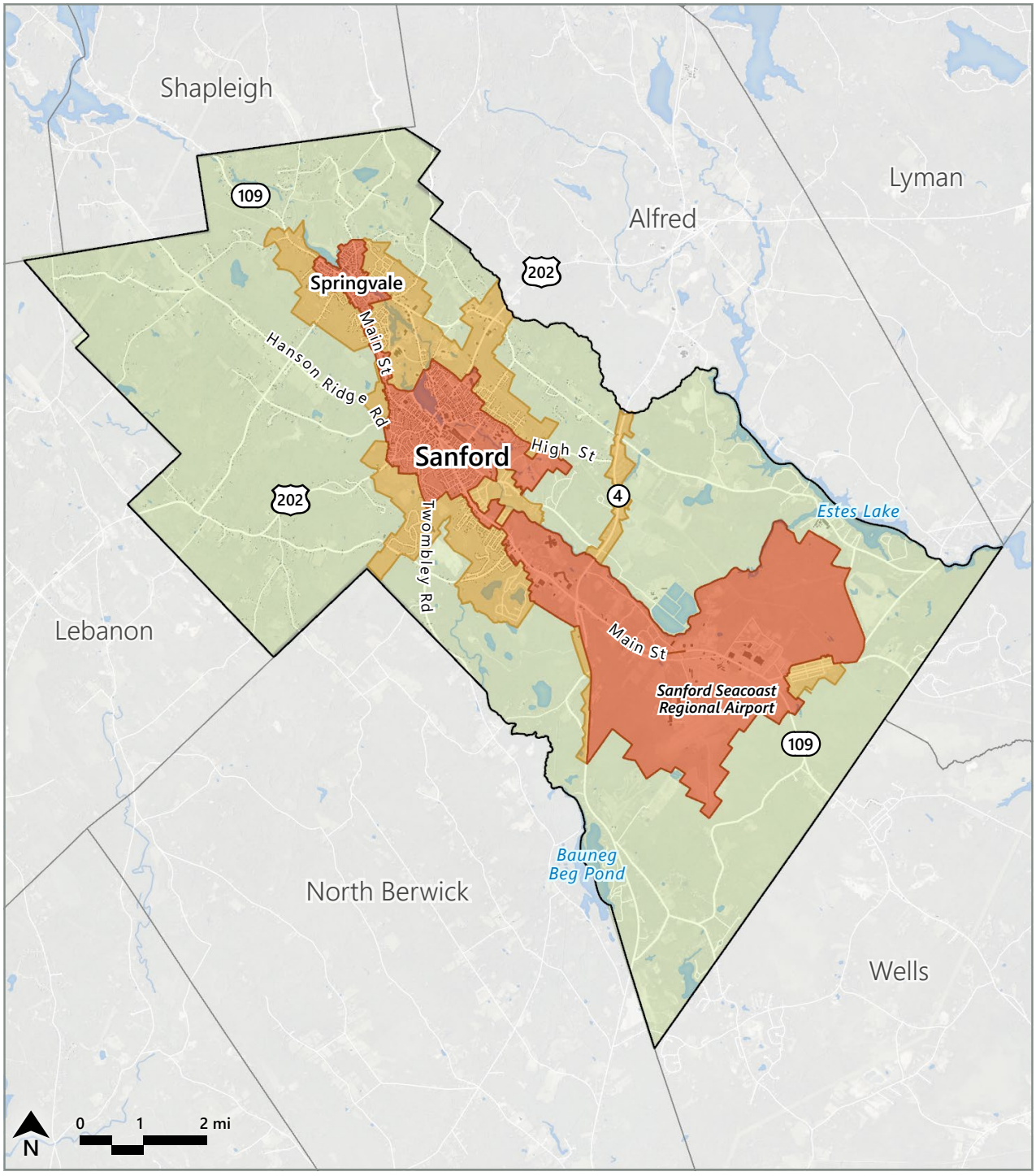
The Future Land Use Plan serves as the policy framework for future land use decisions and helps inform updates to zoning regulations, subdivision standards, and other development-related ordinances. Over time, the City may revise its regulatory framework to better align with the vision and place types described in this plan. The Future Land Use Plan also helps guide public investments, including infrastructure improvements, transportation projects, utility expansions, parks, and other capital investments, by identifying where growth, reinvestment, and conservation should be prioritized.

A Framework for Change, Stewardship, and Reinvestment

The Future Land Use Plan organizes Sanford into a framework of growth, transition, and rural areas that aligns with the Maine Growth Management Program. This framework recognizes that different parts of the community play different roles in accommodating growth, supporting economic activity, protecting natural resources, and maintaining quality of life. The Future Land Use Plan does not direct all growth to a single location or seek to preserve all areas exactly as they are today. Instead, it identifies where development should be encouraged, where change should be gradual and context-sensitive, and where conservation, agriculture, forestry, and rural uses should remain the predominant pattern.

The growth framework establishes the broad planning approach for different parts of Sanford, while the future land use categories provide more detailed guidance about the desired character, development pattern, and land use mix within each area. In other words, growth, transition, and rural areas identify where development should generally be directed, while the land use categories describe what that development should look like. Together, they provide the basis for future decisions related to zoning, infrastructure investment, redevelopment, conservation, and community growth.

Figure 7: Growth, Transition, and Rural Areas Map



Legend

- Growth Areas
- Transition Areas
- Rural Areas
- City Boundary

Source: MassGIS, NearMap, BerryDunn

Growth Areas

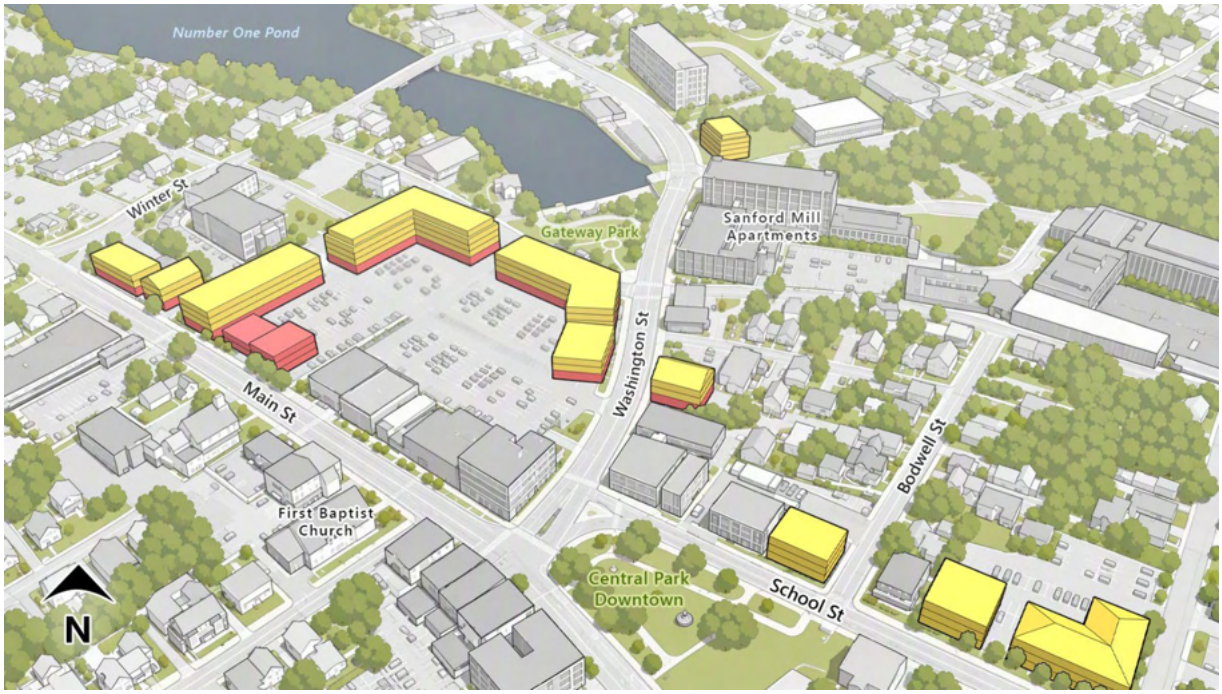
Growth Areas are intended to accomodate a significant share of housing, employment, commercial activity, and public investments should be directed over time. These areas generally have existing infrastructure, access to services, and development patterns that can support additional investment and redevelopment. Growth Areas are intended to accommodate a significant share of Sanford's future growth while making efficient use of public infrastructure and supporting walkable, connected places.

Growth Areas include the following land use categories:

1. Downtown Sanford and Springvale
2. Mixed-Use Corridors
3. Industrial Areas

Growth will take different forms depending on the setting. In Downtown Sanford and Springvale, growth may occur through infill, adaptive reuse, mixed-use development, and redevelopment of underused properties. Along Mixed-Use Corridors, growth may include new housing and commercial development that gradually creates more connected and efficient development patterns. In Industrial Areas, growth will focus on employment, production, business expansion, and complementary uses supported by appropriate infrastructure and transportation access. Together, these three land-use categories provide different opportunities to accommodate Sanford's future growth.

Figure 8: Illustrative Growth Area Scenario



Using Downtown Sanford as a representative setting, this conceptual visual demonstrates how additional development and reinvestment could be concentrated within an established area served by existing streets, utilities, public spaces, services, and community destinations. Highlighted buildings represent illustrative development opportunities, not specific proposals or anticipated changes to individual properties. Red components in the diagram represent commercial uses, while yellow represents residential uses.

The visual demonstrates the broader Growth Area principles of concentrating development, strengthening connections among buildings and streets, supporting a mix of activities, and directing public and private investment toward established areas. The specific form of development will differ among Downtown Sanford and Springvale, Mixed-Use Corridors, and Industrial Areas. The land-use categories that follow describe the appropriate uses, scale, form, and public-private relationships for each of these settings.

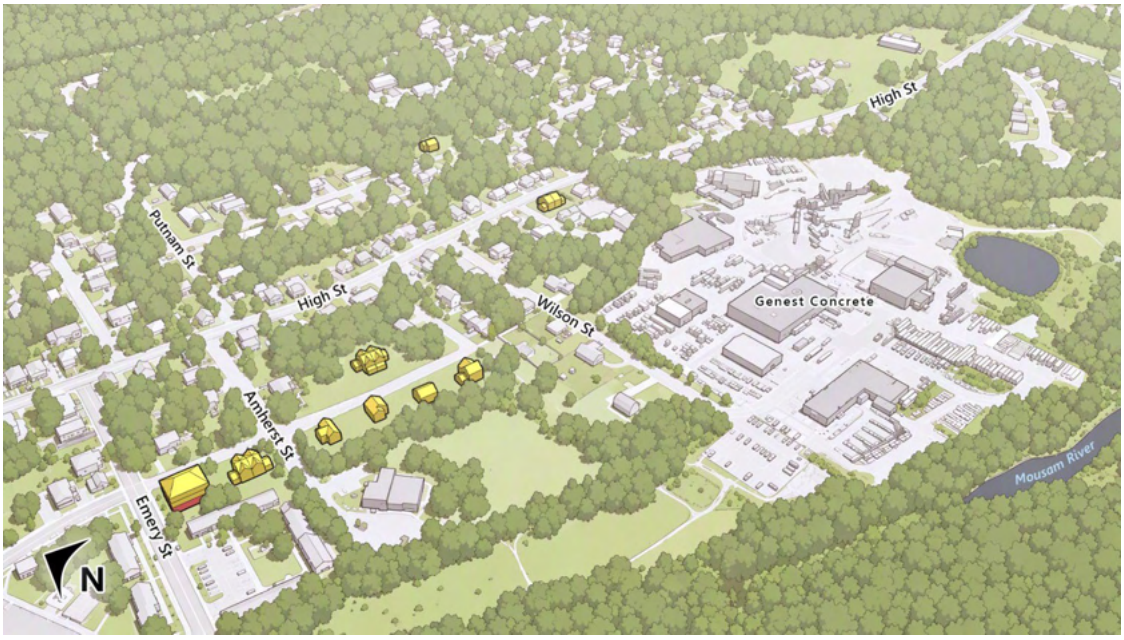
Transition Areas

Transition Areas provide a gradual change between more intensive growth areas and rural or lower-density parts of the community. These areas may accommodate limited growth, infill development, neighborhood-serving uses, or incremental redevelopment, but at a scale and character that respects surrounding development patterns. Transition Areas help manage the relationship between urban and rural environments, reduce land use conflicts, and provide flexibility as community needs evolve.

Transition Areas include the following land use categories:

1. Transitional Neighborhoods
2. Transitional Corridors

Figure 9: Illustrative Transition Area Scenario



Using an area along Hanson Ridge Road and Oak Street as a representative setting, this conceptual visual demonstrates how context-sensitive development could occur while maintaining the existing development pattern, open land, and vegetation. Highlighted buildings represent illustrative development opportunities, not specific proposals or anticipated changes to individual properties. Red components in the diagram represent commercial uses, while yellow represents residential uses.

The visual demonstrates the broader Transition Area principles of accommodating gradual change while maintaining an appropriate transition between more developed parts of Sanford and its rural landscapes. New development may occur in a dispersed or modest pattern, generally building from existing roads and development rather than introducing the concentration or intensity anticipated within Growth Areas. The specific form of development will vary between Transitional Neighborhoods and Transitional Corridors, with the land-use categories that follow providing more detailed guidance for each setting.

Rural Areas

Rural Areas are locations where the primary objective is to protect natural resources, working lands, open space, rural landscapes, and environmental functions while supporting compatible economic activity. These areas continue to play an important role in Sanford's economy, identity, resilience, and quality of life through agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation, habitat protection, and resource-based industries. While some residential development may occur in these areas, the Future Land Use Plan does not anticipate the same level of growth or infrastructure expansion envisioned within the Growth Areas and Transition Areas.

Rural Areas include the following land use categories:

1. Rural Areas

Figure 10: Illustrative Rural Area Scenario



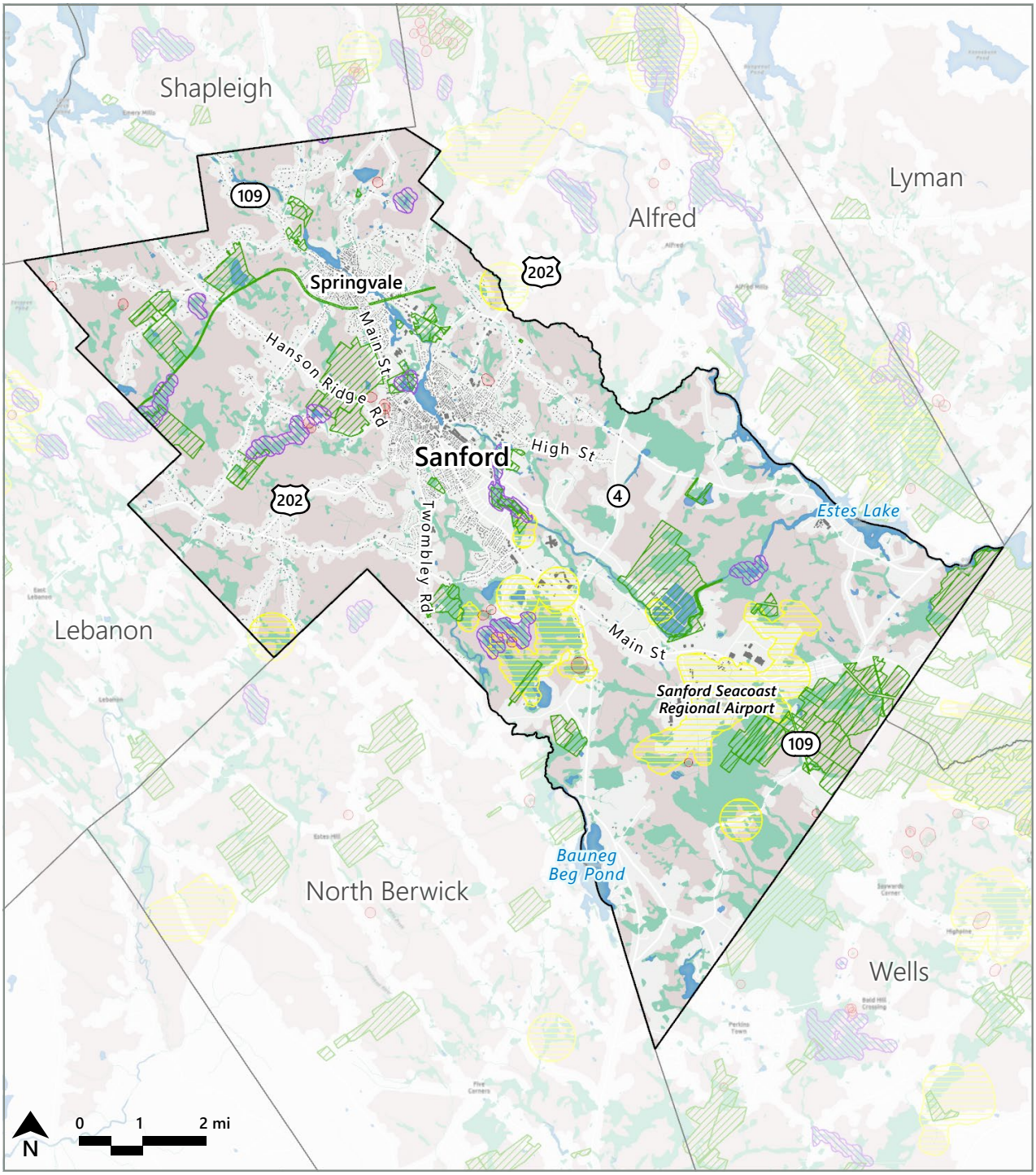
Using Hanson Ridge Road and Oak Street as a representative rural setting, this conceptual visual demonstrates how limited development could occur while maintaining the predominantly rural pattern of farms, forests, open land, and low-density development. Highlighted buildings represent illustrative development opportunities, not specific proposals or anticipated changes to individual properties.

The visual demonstrates the broader Rural Area principles of maintaining a low-intensity development pattern, locating limited new development in relation to existing roads and development, and retaining substantial areas of working and natural landscape. Development should be planned to reduce fragmentation of farms, forests, habitat, and open land while supporting agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation, rural residences, and compatible rural businesses. The intent is not to prevent change, but to accommodate change in ways that maintain the rural landscape and avoid the more intensive development and infrastructure patterns anticipated within Growth Areas.

Protecting Critical Resource Areas

The Future Land Use Map establishes Sanford's desired long-term development pattern, but it must be interpreted together with natural resource and hazard information that applies across land use category boundaries. Shoreland zoning districts, mapped flood hazard areas, wetlands and surface waters, drinking water resources, and other applicable regulatory or environmental constraints will overlay the Future Land Use Map and may limit the location, intensity, or design of development otherwise anticipated by a land use category. Beginning with Habitat maps and data, including high-value plant and animal habitats, undeveloped habitat blocks, habitat connectors, riparian areas, and Focus Areas of Statewide Ecological Significance, should also inform planning, development review, conservation priorities, and infrastructure decisions. These overlays do not create separate future land use categories; rather, they identify places where development should avoid or minimize impacts, incorporate buffers or resilient design, preserve ecological connections, and comply with applicable shoreland zoning, floodplain management, and environmental protection requirements. The City should update and apply these resource layers as more current information becomes available so that growth and conservation decisions protect public safety, water quality, habitat, and other critical natural resources.

Figure 11: Critical Resource Areas



Legend

- Water
- Wetlands
- Undeveloped Blocks
- Significant Vernal Pools
- Conservation Lands
- Endangered Threatened & Special Concern Wildlife
- Inland Waterfowl & Wading Bird Habitat
- City Boundary

Source: MassGIS, NearMap, BerryDunn

Land Use Categories

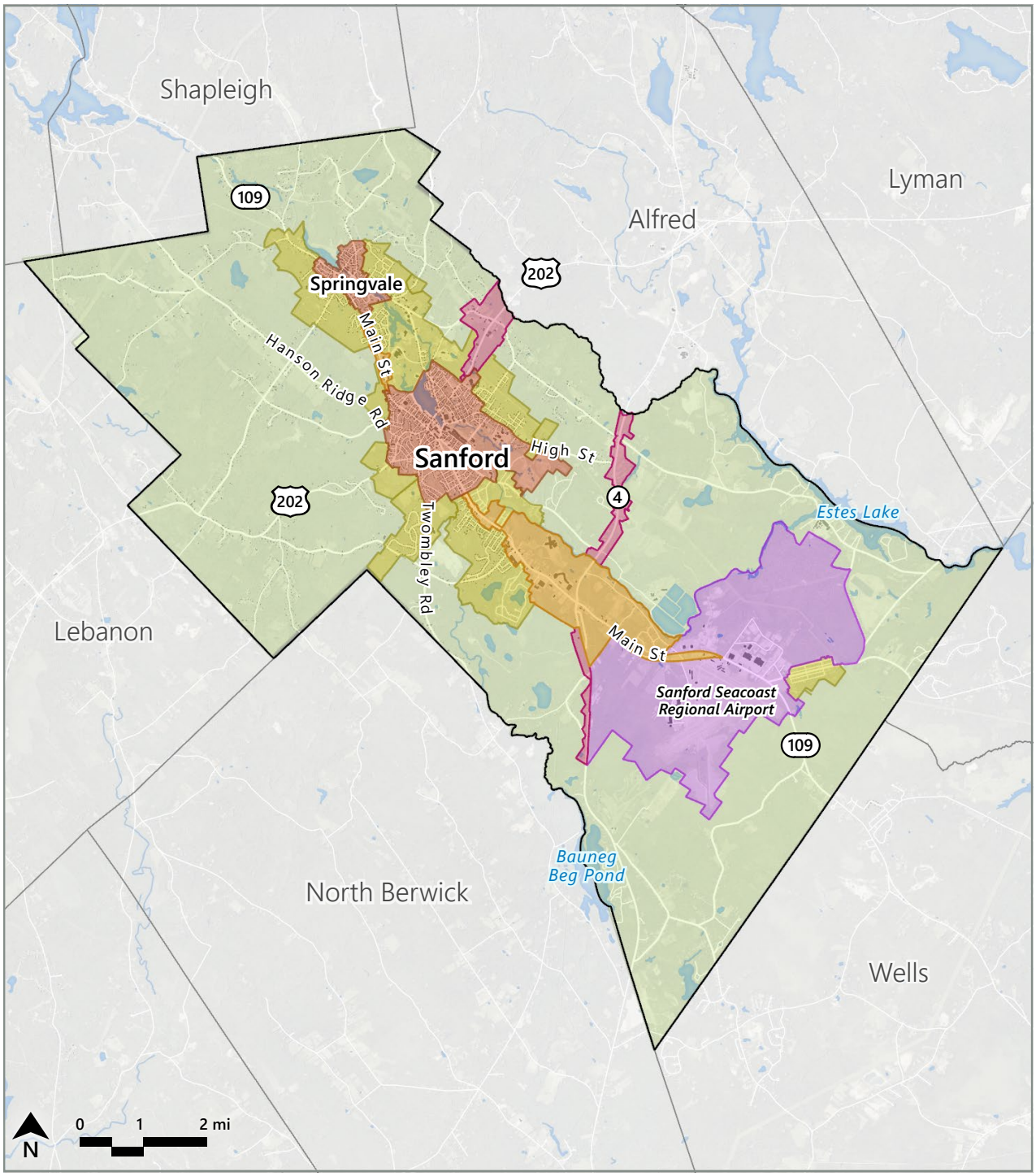
The Future Land Use Plan is implemented through a series of land use categories that describe the desired long-term character and development pattern for different parts of Sanford. While the growth framework identifies where growth, transition, and stewardship should occur, the land use categories provide more detailed guidance about the types of places the community wants to create, maintain, and enhance over time. Together, they establish a common vision for future development, reinvestment, conservation, and public investment across the City.

Each land use category includes four components that work together to describe the community's expectations for that area:

- **Vision:** A description of the area's desired long-term character, role, and function within Sanford.
- **Typical Uses:** The mix of land uses that are generally appropriate and expected within the area.
- **Density and Form:** Guidance on the scale, intensity, layout, and design of development, including how buildings, sites, and streets should relate to one another.
- **Public-Private Realm:** Expectations for how buildings, streets, open spaces, parking areas, sidewalks, and other public and private elements should interact to create safe, attractive, and functional places.

These categories are intended to guide future zoning updates, development review, infrastructure investments, and other planning decisions. They are not regulatory standards, but rather a framework for evaluating whether future growth and change align with the community's vision for Sanford.

Figure 12: Land Use Categories Map



Legend

- Downtown
- Mixed-Use Corridor
- Industrial
- Rural Areas
- Transitional Neighborhood
- Transitional Mixed-Use Corridor
- City Boundary

Source: MassGIS, NearMap, BerryDunn

Downtown Sanford and Springvale

Community feedback consistently identified Downtown Sanford and Springvale as priorities for reinvestment. Residents emphasized the importance of vibrant downtowns that provide local businesses, restaurants, services, housing options, and community gathering spaces. Participants also expressed a desire for walkable environments that strengthen community identity and serve as destinations for residents and visitors. This land use category designation directs growth and investment toward these established centers while supporting economic development and preserving Sanford's historic character. In addition to walkability and economic investment, housing affordability and availability emerged as a core community priority. These areas contain a range of housing types and can continue to accommodate a variety of housing growth through infill development in existing neighborhoods, redevelopment of vacant buildings, and new development.

Vision: Downtown Sanford and Springvale are vibrant, walkable centers that build on their historic development patterns, distinctive buildings, and established roles as community gathering places. These areas support a mix of small businesses, restaurants, services, civic and cultural destinations, employment opportunities, and homes that bring activity throughout the day and evening. New investment should complement the scale and character of the existing downtown cores while strengthening connections among buildings, sidewalks, public spaces, neighborhoods, and nearby community assets. Adaptive reuse should play a central role in revitalization, including reinvigorating historic mills and other older or underused buildings with active uses such as housing, businesses, workplaces, arts and cultural spaces, and community-serving facilities. Together, strategic redevelopment, compatible infill, and public realm improvements should reinforce Downtown Sanford and Springvale as welcoming destinations and enduring centers of community and economic activity.

Typical uses include:

- Residential and mixed-use development
- Commercial, office, lodging, small business, and other employment uses
- Civic, institutional, cultural, and community-serving uses
- Parks, recreation, open spaces, and other public gathering places

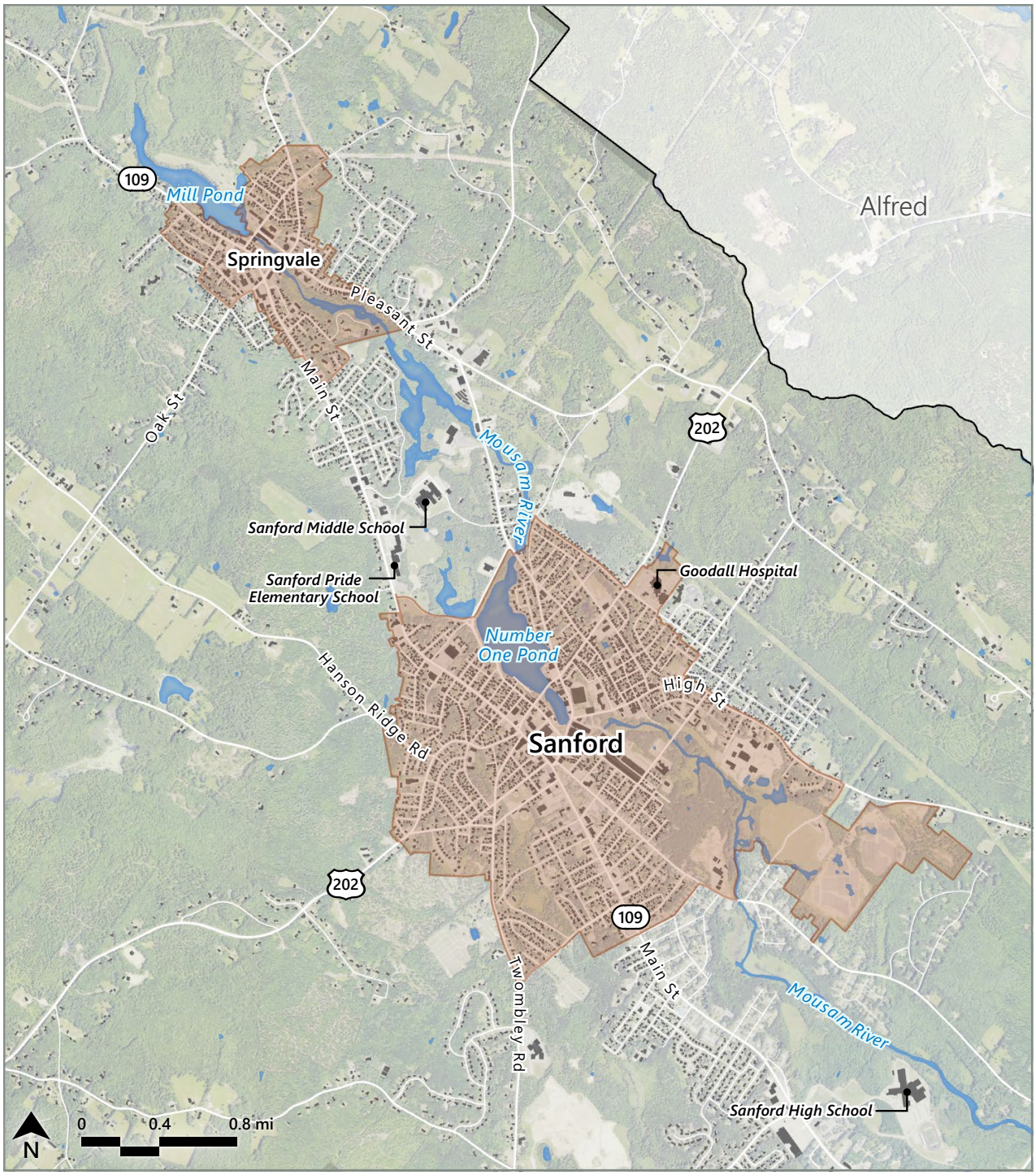
Density and Form: Development should create a continuous and engaging streetscape with buildings oriented toward sidewalks and public spaces. Ground-floor commercial, service, restaurant, entertainment, and civic uses should be encouraged along primary streets, while upper floors may accommodate housing, offices, lodging, or institutional uses. Public investments should prioritize streetscape enhancements, parks, public plazas, pedestrian connections, and multimodal transportation improvements.

Multi-story development is encouraged, generally ranging from two to five stories, with greater heights appropriate where compatible with surrounding development.

Public-Private Realm: Buildings should frame streets and public spaces, creating active, human-scaled environments. Entrances, storefronts, outdoor dining, public gathering spaces, and transparent facades should contribute to an active streetscape. Parking should generally be located behind buildings,

shared among uses, or integrated into the urban fabric in a manner that minimizes its impact on pedestrian activity.

Figure 13: Downtown Sanford and Springvale Map



Source: MassGIS, NearMap, BerryDunn

Mixed-Use Corridors

Community feedback identified the need for additional housing, convenient access to goods and services, and continued economic development while improving transportation safety, traffic, and the appearance of major corridors. These areas contain a mix of uses, access to public infrastructure, major roadway connections, and sites that may support infill or redevelopment. This category provides policy direction for coordinated reinvestment and gradual transformation from auto-oriented to complete development areas.

Vision: Mixed-use corridors are connected, evolving places that accommodate future multifamily housing and commercial growth while improving the function and appearance of major travel routes. These areas should transition over time from primarily auto-oriented development patterns into more complete corridors that support homes, businesses, services, employment, and community destinations. New development, infill, and redevelopment should make efficient use of existing infrastructure and strengthen connections to Downtown Sanford and Springvale and South Sanford. Over time, these corridors create safer, more comfortable environments for people walking, bicycling, using transit, and driving.

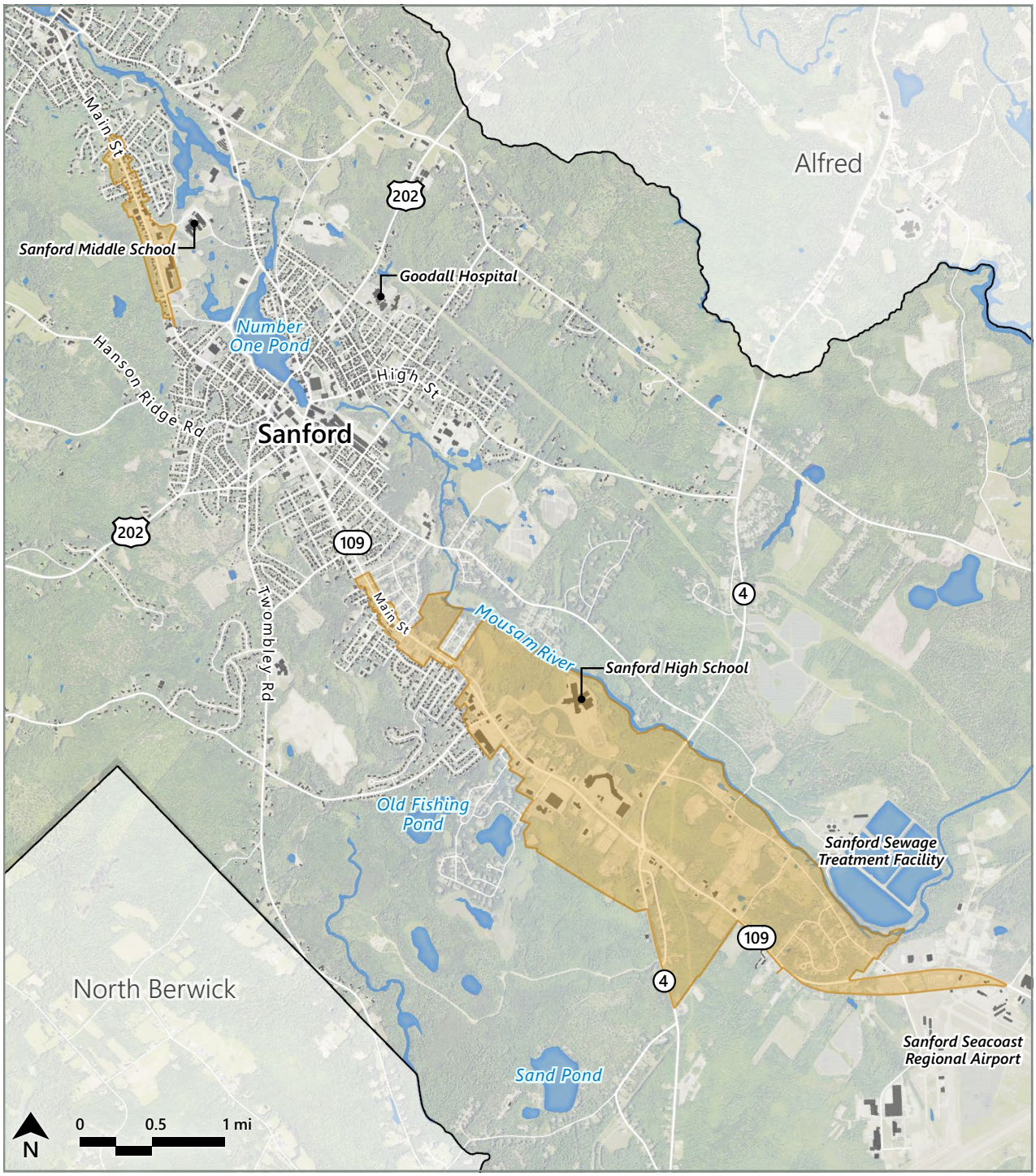
Typical uses include:

- Larger residential and mixed-use developments
- Commercial, office, lodging, and employment uses
- Institutional, recreational, and community-serving uses
- Compatible production, maker, and artisan activities

Density and Form: Moderate- to higher-density development is appropriate, with the greatest intensity concentrated near existing activity centers (Downtown Sanford and Springvale and South Sanford), major intersections, transit connections, and areas served by public water and sewer. Buildings should generally range from two to four stories, with additional height appropriate where compatible with surrounding development. Infill and redevelopment should reduce large gaps between buildings, use land more efficiently, and provide transitions in scale and intensity near established neighborhoods.

Public-Private Realm: Buildings should be oriented toward streets, sidewalks, and internal pedestrian connections, with visible entrances and direct access from the public realm. Sites should include safe and connected facilities for walking, bicycling, transit access, and vehicle circulation. Trails provide opportunities for off-street connectivity for walkers and bikers. Parking should be located beside or behind buildings where practical, shared among compatible uses, and designed to limit expansive areas of pavement along the street. Landscaping, street trees, lighting, signs, and coordinated access management should improve corridor appearance, safety, and comfort while supporting adjoining properties and neighborhoods.

Figure 14: Mixed Use Corridor Map



Legend

- Mixed-Use Corridor
- City Boundary

Source: MassGIS, NearMap, BerryDunn

Industrial

Community feedback identified economic development, job creation, and a stronger local tax base as important priorities. Sanford has established industrial and business areas with access to major roads, utilities, employment centers, and the Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport, together with sites that can support reinvestment and business expansion. This designation directs industrial growth to locations equipped to accommodate larger sites, intermodal movement, infrastructure demands, and potential impacts while promoting compatible transitions to nearby neighborhoods, rural areas, and natural resources.

Vision: Industrial areas are concentrated employment and production centers that support Sanford's economic base, provide locations for business growth, and capitalize on access to transportation infrastructure, utilities, and the Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport. These areas accommodate a broad range of industrial, manufacturing, logistics, aviation-related, and supporting commercial activities that may require larger sites, specialized facilities, truck access, or separation from residential neighborhoods. New investment and redevelopment should make efficient use of existing infrastructure, retain land for employment-generating uses, and promote well-designed business environments that can adapt to changing technologies and market needs.

Typical uses include:

- Industrial, manufacturing, production, and research activities
- Warehousing, distribution, logistics, and aviation-related activities
- Business parks, flex space, trades, and other employment uses
- Commercial, institutional, utility, and renewable energy uses that support or are compatible with the area's employment function

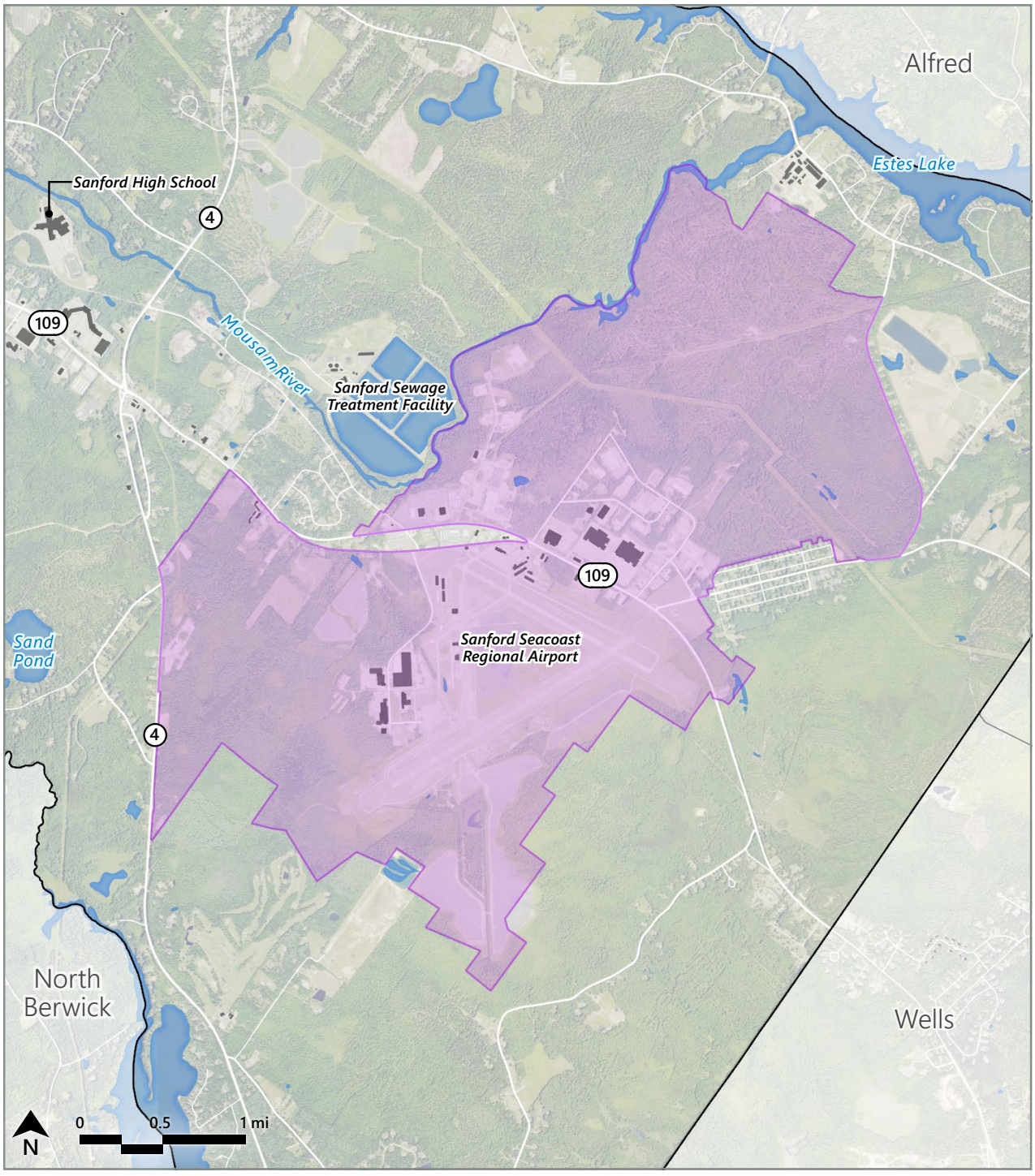
Density and Form: Large buildings, flexible floor plates, outdoor work or storage areas, and multiple-building campuses may be appropriate. Site design should support future expansion, shared infrastructure, and efficient freight and employee access. Where industrial areas adjoin neighborhoods, rural lands, or sensitive natural resources, development should incorporate appropriate transitions, setbacks, screening, and buffering to protect adjacent uses.

Public-Private Realm: Sites should provide safe, efficient, and clearly defined access for freight vehicles, employees, visitors, and emergency services. Buildings and primary entrances should present a coordinated appearance along public streets, while loading areas, service functions, utilities, and outdoor storage should be located or screened to limit visual and operational impacts. Internal circulation, access management, landscaping, lighting, stormwater facilities, and pedestrian connections should support safe operations and a functional employment environment. Connections to sidewalks, trails, and transit should be provided where feasible, particularly in areas with higher employment concentrations.

New development and redevelopment should evaluate environmental constraints and potential cumulative impacts, including effects on groundwater and drinking water supplies, surface waters and wetlands, wildlife habitat and ecological connectivity, air quality,

noise, light, hazardous materials, and nearby sensitive uses. Site planning, operations, stormwater management, emissions controls, spill prevention, buffers, and other mitigation measures should avoid or minimize these impacts and protect public health and natural resources.

Figure 15: Industrial Map



Legend

- Industrial
- City Boundary

Source: MassGIS, NearMap, BerryDunn

Transitional Neighborhood

Housing affordability and availability emerged as significant community concerns. Residents support expanding housing opportunities while directing greater housing density to locations with infrastructure and access to services and maintaining the stability and character of established neighborhoods. Existing conditions show that these areas contain much of Sanford's housing, are generally served by public infrastructure, and provide access to downtowns, schools, parks, and other community destinations. Demographic shifts, including growth among younger adults and older residents, reinforce the need for housing types that serve varied household sizes, abilities, and life stages.

Vision: Transitional Neighborhood areas are connected neighborhoods that provide a transition between Sanford's higher-intensity growth areas and its rural landscapes. These areas should retain and strengthen their established residential form while accommodating modest, context-sensitive housing growth. Infill development, redevelopment of underused sites, and a broader range of compatible housing types should expand housing choice, support residents at different life stages and income levels, and make efficient use of existing streets, utilities, schools, parks, and services. New developments reinforce neighborhood identity, improve connections to nearby downtowns and activity centers, and fit the scale and pattern of surrounding homes. Limited neighborhood-scale commercial uses, such as small cafés, markets, and home-based businesses, are sensitively located at street corners or other appropriate locations to create walkable neighborhood anchors and provide convenient services, while maintaining a concentration of business activity in Downtown Sanford and Springvale.

Typical uses include:

- A range of detached, attached, and small multifamily and single-family housing
- Residential care, supportive housing, and other compatible residential uses
- Schools, child care, places of assembly, parks, recreation, and other community-serving uses
- Home occupations and limited neighborhood-serving commercial uses where compatible with surrounding development

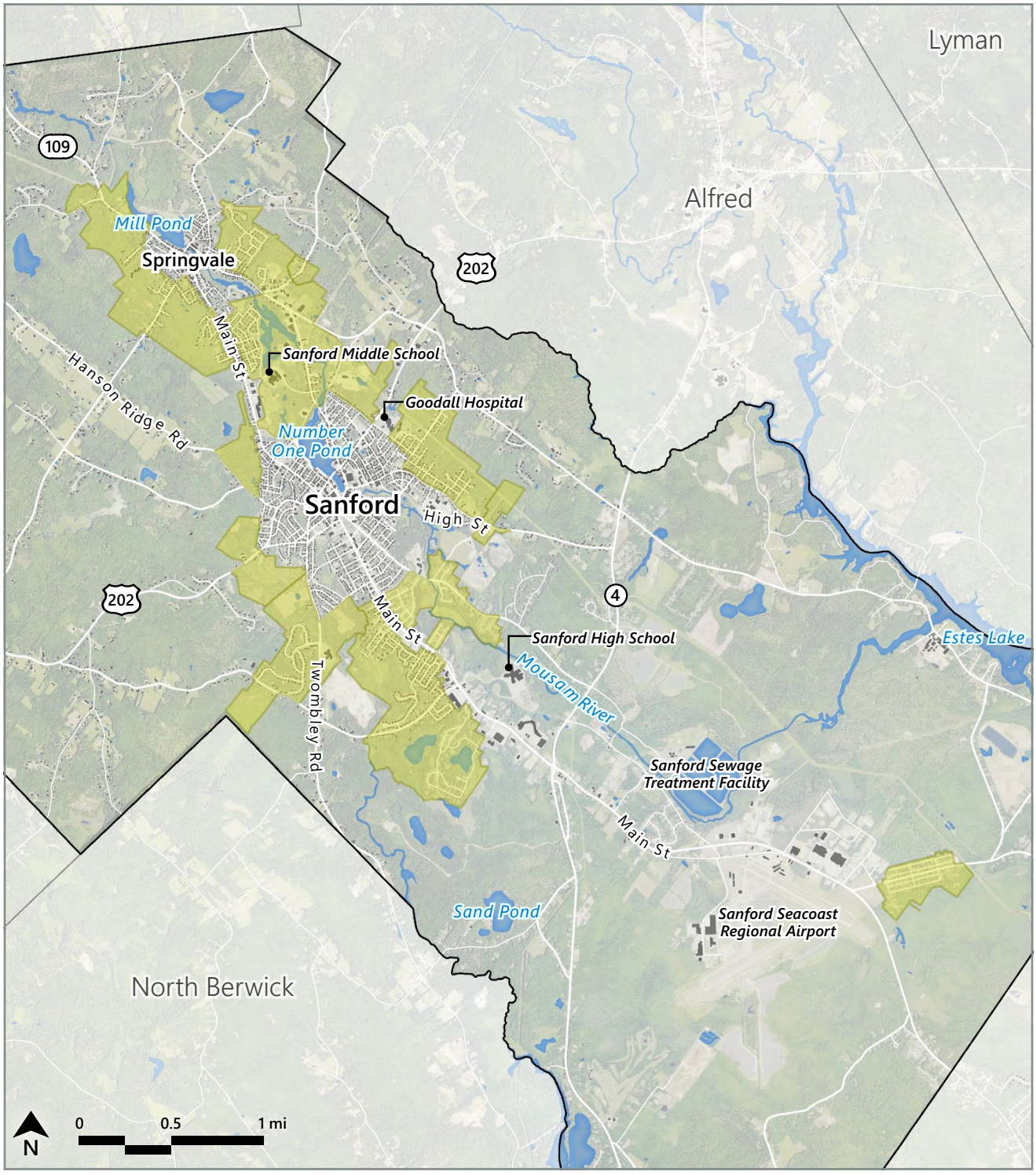
Density and Form: Low- to moderate-density residential development is appropriate, with incremental increases in density near downtowns, mixed-use corridors, schools, parks, transit, and locations served by public water and sewer. Development should generally include one- to three-story buildings and may include detached, attached, and small multifamily forms. Lot size, setbacks, building placement, and massing should fit into the existing neighborhood pattern while allowing compatible infill and a wider range of housing choices. Larger sites should use connected streets, sidewalks, and open spaces to create neighborhood-scale development rather than isolated projects.

Public-Private Realm: Homes and other buildings should relate to the street through visible entrances, front yards, porches, walkways, and windows that support an inviting neighborhood environment. Streets and sites should provide safe connections for walking,

bicycling, and vehicle travel, with sidewalks, trails, street trees, lighting, and traffic-calming measures added where appropriate.

Parking and garages should be located and designed to avoid dominating the streetscape, while shared open spaces, parks, and community facilities should be accessible from surrounding neighborhoods. New development and redevelopment should also respond to environmental constraints, including groundwater and drinking water protection, wetlands and surface waters, wildlife habitat, mature trees, steep slopes, drainage, and flood risk. Site design, stormwater management, landscaping, buffers, and limits on land disturbance should avoid or minimize impacts and protect neighborhood quality and natural resources.

Figure 16: Transitional Neighborhood Map



Legend

- Transitional Neighborhood
- City Boundary

Source: MassGIS, NearMap, BerryDunn

Transitional Corridors

Community feedback supports the growth of local businesses, access to goods and services, and continued economic development, while also emphasizing the importance of protecting Sanford's rural areas, neighborhoods, and overall development pattern. Transitional Corridor areas balance identifying locations for rural-based commercial activity near major transportation routes with preserving the rural feel of Sanford. This category is intended to accommodate commercial uses that may not fit within downtown or neighborhood settings but also don't require the size or scale as industrial areas. It provides a basis for targeted growth, while preventing scattered, poorly coordinated corridor development that could create additional traffic conflicts.

Vision: Transitional Corridor areas are areas that provide a transition between Sanford's higher-intensity growth areas and more rural-based commercial and small business use. These areas should retain and strengthen established rural gateway character while leveraging their proximity to State highway networks or employment centers to transition in scale and allow for commercial growth. These areas do not support intense dense or mixed-use development, nor a larger industrial footprint. Shared parking, access management, and site design and buffering will be important to preserve the rural feel of these corridors while allowing room for transitioning additional commercial uses.

Typical uses include:

- A range of rural-based commercial and small businesses
- Support for existing residential uses and limited growth of housing

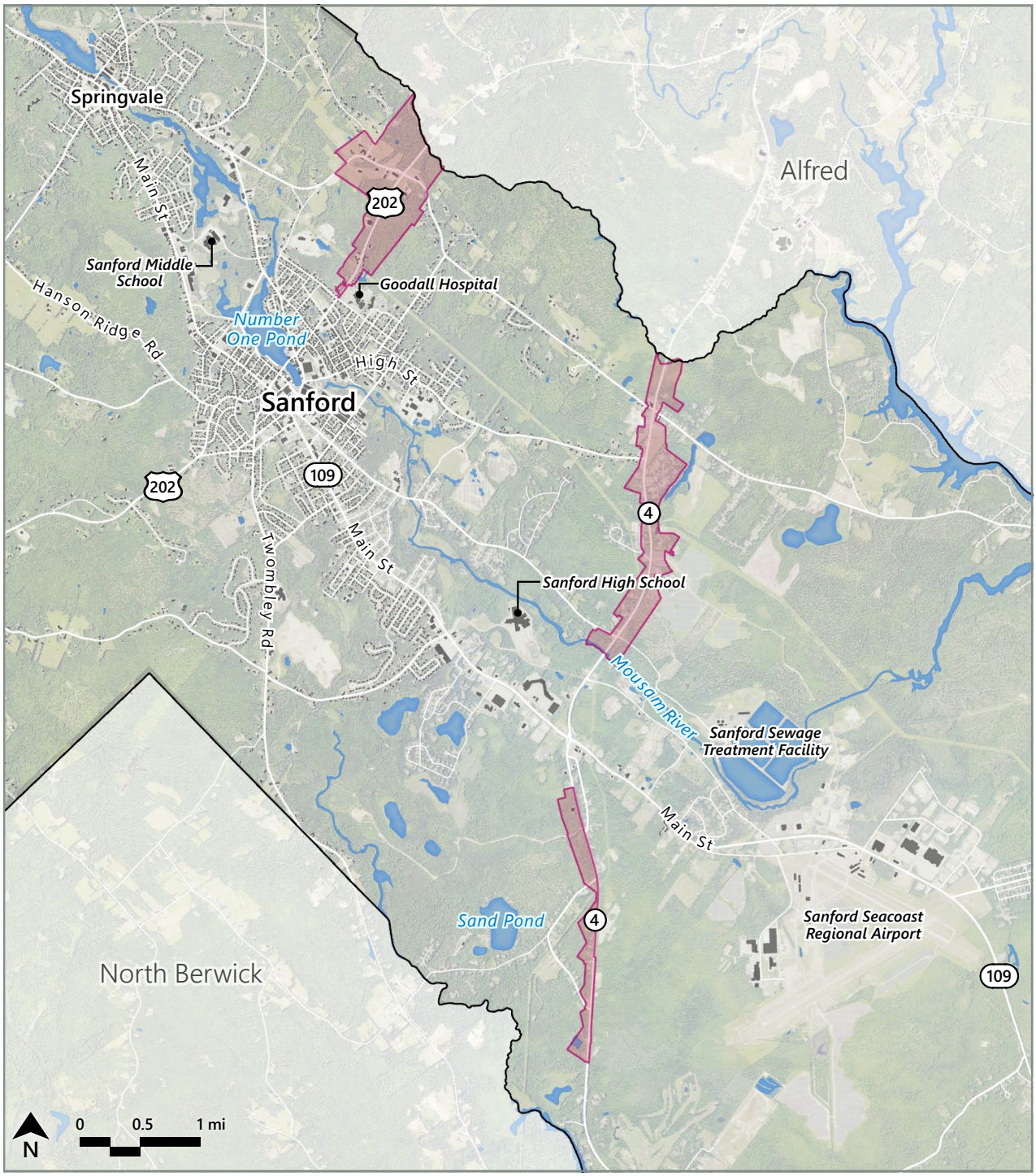
Density and Form: Low- to moderate-density commercial development is appropriate, with incremental increases in density near downtowns, mixed-use corridors, schools, parks, transit, and locations. Development should generally include one- to two-story buildings, with building scale, lot coverages, setbacks, lighting, and site design that remain compatible with neighborhoods, rural lands, and natural resources.

New commercial development and redevelopment should avoid strip-style commercial patterns with frequent curb cuts, disconnected parking lots, and limited buffering. Sites should support safe access to major roadways, shared driveways or access points, and thoughtful circulation for customers, employees, and emergency access.

Public-Private Realm: Development should present an orderly, well-designed corridor environment while recognizing that these areas will remain more auto-oriented, given their access and siting along major State highways. Buildings should have visible entrances and site design that considers parking, roadway access, and potential connections to trail and other mobility corridors.

Access management is a defining feature in this area, focusing on shared driveways, cross-access between properties, coordinated curb cuts, and clear separation of pedestrian, car, and truck movements. Parking should be shared where feasible and sited to the side or rear of a property and screened from roadways. Additional buffering, including trees, landscaping, and fencing should be considered to protect neighboring residential and rural uses.

Figure 17: Transitional Corridors Map



Legend

- Transitional Mixed-Use Corridor
- City Boundary

Source: MassGIS, NearMap, BerryDunn

Rural Areas

Community feedback supports accommodating future growth while maintaining Sanford's rural character, open spaces, farms, forests, recreational resources, and scenic landscapes. These areas contain significant natural resources and agricultural and forested lands, often lack public water and sewer service, and are less suited to intensive development because of infrastructure limitations, environmental constraints, and distance from services. The Rural Areas designation helps limit fragmentation, preserve and support farming operations, avoid inefficient extensions of public infrastructure and municipal services, and sustain the environmental, economic, and community benefits of Sanford's rural landscape.

Vision: Rural Areas are places with working and natural landscapes where farms, forests, open spaces, water resources, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation, and rural residential development are located. These areas should support agriculture, forestry, resource-based businesses, and opportunities for low-density rural living, including new homes and accessory dwelling units on appropriately located and designed lots. Cluster developments may be appropriate to conserve larger blocks of undeveloped habitat. Rural residential development should follow established rural patterns, respond to available road and utility capacity, and protect groundwater, working lands, habitat, scenic views, and other natural resources.

Existing structures should be reused where practical, and new development should maintain the rural landscape and provide appropriate access to natural and recreational resources.

Typical uses include:

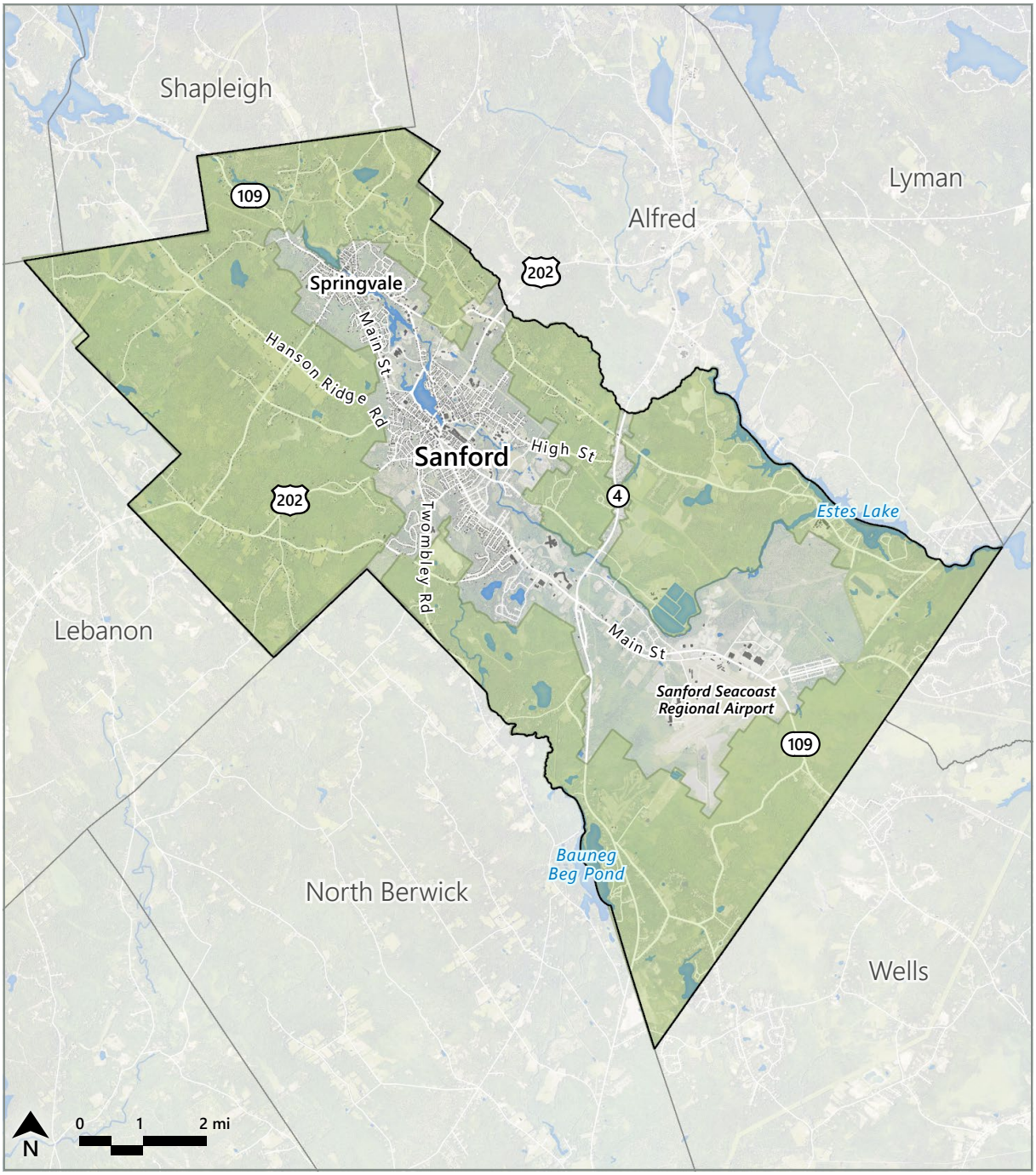
- Agriculture, forestry, and other resource-based activities
- Low-density and clustered residential development
- Conservation, outdoor recreation, and natural-resource protection
- Small-scale rural businesses, home occupations, and visitor-serving uses compatible with the rural setting
- Community facilities, utilities, and other uses that require or are appropriate for rural locations

Density and Form: Development should remain low density and follow rural land use patterns, with building locations and lot configurations that conserve contiguous agricultural, forested, and undeveloped land. New lots and structures should be located near existing roads and development where practical, use shared or clustered access where appropriate, and avoid linear development that fragments working lands or natural areas. Building scale, setbacks, and site design should reflect the surrounding rural context. Cluster subdivision or similar approaches may be used to concentrate limited development while permanently protecting significant open space and natural resources.

Public-Private Realm: Roads, driveways, buildings, parking, utilities, and outdoor activity areas should be designed to retain rural views, vegetation, and the visual character of the landscape. Private development should reinforce the rural public realm by maintaining natural edges along roads, preserving views across farms and forests, and providing compatible connections to public trails, recreation areas, water access, and conserved

lands where appropriate. Buildings, parking, signs, lighting, and service areas should be set back, screened, and scaled to avoid dominating shared rural spaces or neighboring properties. Public investments should prioritize resource protection, road safety, recreation access, and the continued viability of working lands rather than extending urban infrastructure that could induce more intensive growth.

Figure 18: Rural Areas Map



Legend

- Rural Areas
- City Boundary

Source: MassGIS, NearMap, BerryDunn



Advancing the Vision: Goals, Policies, and Strategies

This chapter translates Sanford's community vision and eight goals into policy direction for the next decade. It connects what the community wants to achieve with the choices, partnerships, and sustained initiatives needed to move Sanford forward. The section draws on the inventory and analysis, community engagement, and direction developed with the Steering Committee, City staff, boards, and community partners.

The Future Land Use Plan and the goals and policies in this chapter are intended to work together. The Future Land Use Plan provides the geographic framework for Sanford's desired growth pattern, identifying where growth and reinvestment should be encouraged, where development should transition in scale and intensity, and where rural lands and natural resources should remain the predominant pattern. The goals and policies provide the broader direction for the decisions, investments, regulations, programs, and partnerships needed to support that pattern.

Many of the goals apply across Sanford, but how they are implemented may vary by location. Housing, economic development, infrastructure, transportation, natural-resource protection, and public investment should be considered in relation to the Growth, Transition, and Rural Areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan. Together, the Future Land Use Plan establishes where different types of change should occur, while the goals and policies help guide how the City manages that change and advances its broader community priorities.

The goals in this plan are intentionally organized around community outcomes rather than individual departments or technical topics. Issues such as housing, economic development, transportation, natural resources, public health, and municipal services are closely connected, and progress will often support more than one goal. Implementation will therefore require coordination across City functions and sustained collaboration with schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, regional and State agencies, service providers, property owners, and residents.

To help move the plan forward, the plan is organized into several layers:



- **The community vision** describes the future that Sanford seeks to create over the next decade.
- **Goals** identify the broad community outcomes needed to advance that vision. The eight goals organize the Plan around interconnected priorities such as community identity, the local economy, downtown revitalization, natural resources, infrastructure, housing, governance, and community well-being.

- **Policies** establish the City's continuing direction and commitments under each goal. They provide a basis for evaluating future decisions, investments, regulations, programs, and partnerships.
- **Strategies** identify specific steps that the City and its partners can take to carry out the policies. Strategies may include regulatory changes, capital investments, programs, planning initiatives, partnerships, or ongoing municipal practices.

Goals and policies are presented in this chapter. The detailed strategies associated with each policy are located in the Implementation Plan in the "From Plan to Action" chapter. Together, these elements connect Sanford and Springvale's community vision to specific responsibilities, priorities, investments, and measures of progress.

How Each Goal Section Is Organized

Each goal section follows a consistent structure so readers can move from the community's aspirations to the City's policy direction:

- **Community Goal statement:** Describes the long-term outcome Sanford seeks to achieve and ties the Plan's vision to specific policy and implementation areas.
- **Context and Community Priorities:** Summarizes the key conditions, challenges, and community input that inform the goal and its policy direction.
- **How we will advance this goal:** Presents each policy with a short description of the related strategy themes and implementation considerations. These descriptions identify the major areas of focus without repeating every strategy in the Implementation Plan.

Using This Chapter with the Implementation Plan

This chapter and the Implementation Plan are intended to be used together. Advancing the Vision explains what Sanford is working toward over the next decade and establishes the policy basis for future decisions. The Implementation Plan explains how that direction will be carried out through specific strategies, lead and supporting parties, time frames, resource considerations, and best practice examples. Not every policy will result in an immediate City project. Some will guide ongoing decisions, regulatory updates, capital planning, grant pursuits, or coordination with partners over many years.

City leaders, staff, boards, committees, and community partners should use the goal sections to test whether proposed decisions and investments are consistent with the community vision. The Implementation Plan should then support annual work planning, budgeting, capital improvement planning, partnership development, and progress reporting. Priorities may shift as conditions, resources, and opportunities change, but future actions should remain grounded in the goals and policies. Clear implementation planning and regular review will help Sanford recognize progress, address barriers, and adjust its approach while maintaining a clear long-term direction.

Strengthen Community Identity and Connection

Community Goal: Sanford's sense of community is built upon neighborhood and City pride, camaraderie among residents, a commitment to civic engagement and volunteerism, and a welcoming small-town way of life. Events, programs, and volunteer opportunities create a framework for residents to engage and connect. Sharing Sanford's evolution from an agricultural community and mill town to a regional hub strengthens the City's identity and connects its culture across generations.

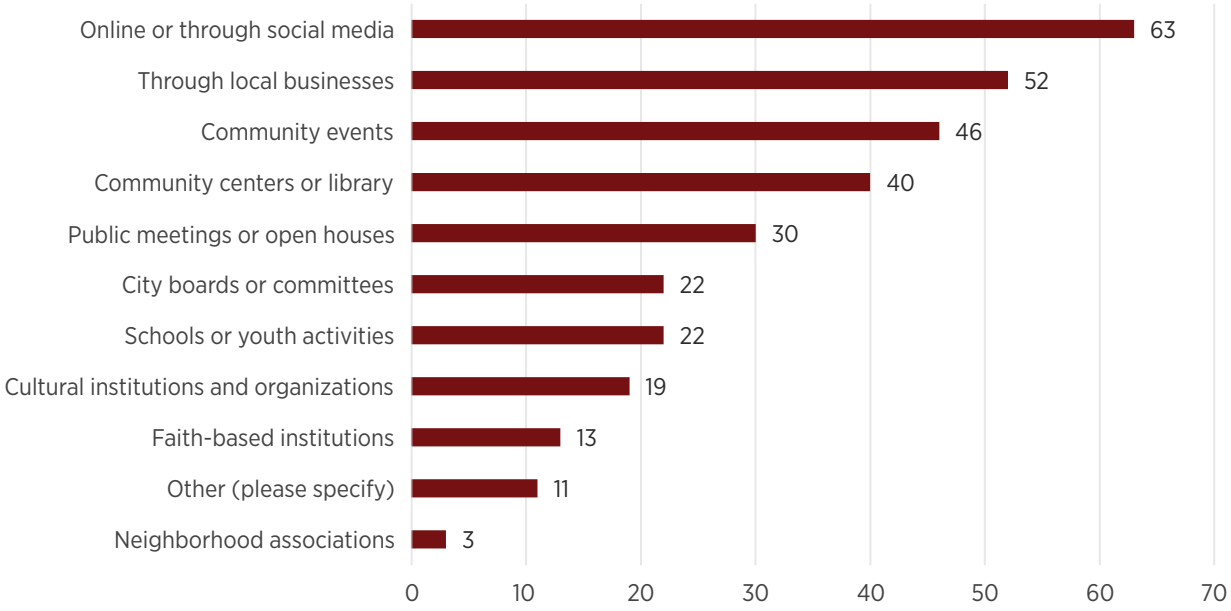
Context and Community Priorities

Strengthening community identity and connection will require the community to build on the places, institutions, stories, traditions, and relationships that make Sanford distinct. The community's agricultural roots, mill history, historic neighborhoods and downtowns, libraries, schools, arts and cultural organizations, parks, trails, civic groups, and long tradition of volunteerism provide a strong foundation for local pride and belonging. These assets help connect residents to the community's past while providing places and opportunities for people to gather, learn, participate, and support one another.

As Sanford grows and welcomes new residents, maintaining a strong community identity will require intentional efforts to connect people across neighborhoods, generations, and backgrounds. This includes preserving and sharing local history, supporting arts and cultural expression, creating welcoming community spaces and events, expanding lifelong learning and youth programming, and making it easier for residents to understand City services and participate in civic life. It also means strengthening partnerships among the City, schools, libraries, cultural organizations, businesses, community groups, and residents so existing resources can be used more effectively. Together, these efforts can help residents feel informed, included, and invested in Sanford's future while sustaining the small-town connections and community spirit residents value.

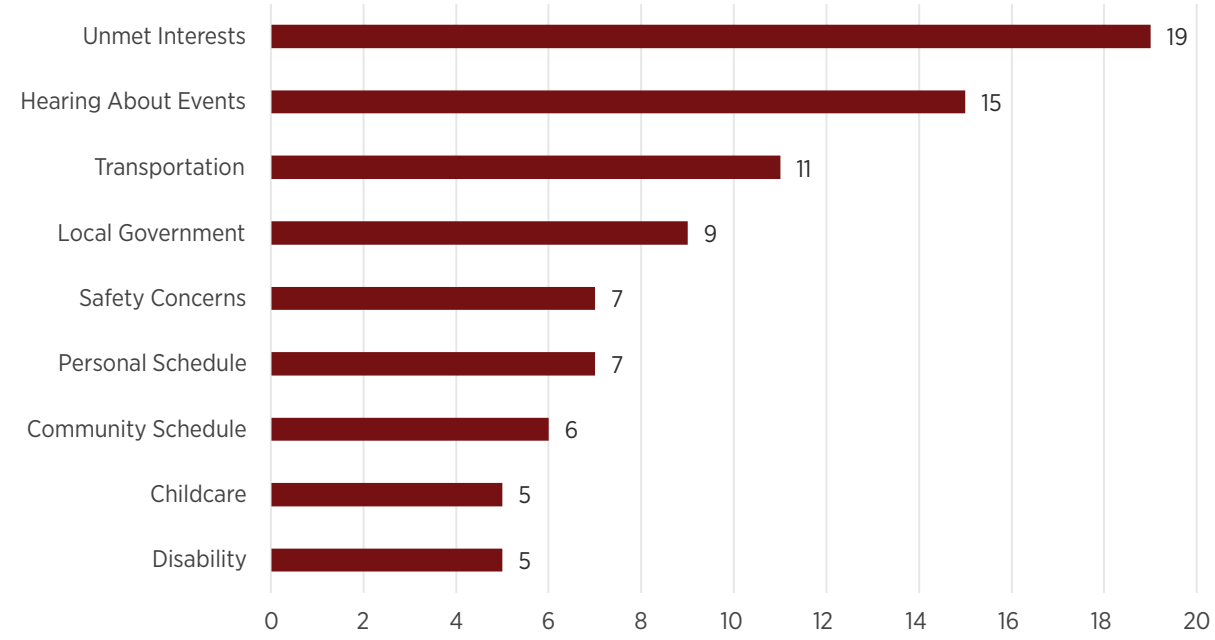
Community members value Sanford's small-town feel, local history, volunteer spirit, parks and trails, libraries, schools, and community organizations. They asked for more events and cultural activities, stronger youth and teen programming, resources for residents, and clearer ways to learn about City services and participate in local government. Residents also emphasized activating downtown and neighborhood spaces throughout the year, expanding arts and public art, and making volunteer opportunities and community resources easier to find.

Figure 19: How do you connect with the Sanford community today?



Source: March Question of the Month

Figure 20: What barriers do you face in connecting with the Sanford community?



Source: March Question of the Month

How Will We Advance This Goal?

Sanford will advance this goal by protecting historic and archaeological resources, strengthening arts and cultural programming, expanding opportunities for lifelong learning, activating community-serving spaces, and creating clearer pathways for residents to volunteer and participate in civic life. Implementation includes a comprehensive historic-resource survey, new-resident outreach, an arts and culture strategy, additional teen and after-school programming, investments in libraries and other community spaces, and a coordinated volunteer network. Together, these actions use Sanford's history, institutions, cultural assets, and community organizations to strengthen connections among residents and neighborhoods.

The policies below establish the City's direction and summarize the major areas of focus. The Implementation Plan provides further detail on specific actions, responsible parties, partnerships, timing, and measures of progress.

Policy 1: Protect, to the greatest extent practical, Sanford's historic and cultural resources.

This policy focuses on improving how historic and archaeological resources are identified, documented, and considered as development occurs. Strategies include preparing a comprehensive resource survey with the Sanford-Springvale Historical Society and Maine Historic Preservation Commission; incorporating available resource maps and information into development review; establishing clear procedures for consultation when development is proposed near known resources; and updating ordinance definitions, maps, application requirements, and review standards as new information becomes available.

Policy 2: Strengthen community identity through coordinated outreach, cultural programming, and civic engagement.

This policy expands the ways residents experience and participate in Sanford's cultural and civic life. Strategies include establishing a new-resident welcome program; strengthening the role of the Sanford Arts Commission; preparing an arts and culture strategy; creating affordable spaces for artists, makers, performers, and creative enterprises; incorporating public art and creative placemaking into community spaces; expanding downtown events and programming; and improving special-event permitting.

Policy 3: Support lifelong learning and development through expanded programming, facilities, and opportunities.

This policy recognizes that learning, skill development, and social connection occur throughout life and depend on accessible programs, supportive spaces, and strong relationships among schools, community organizations, and employers. Strategies include identifying locations and funding for a dedicated teen center or comprehensive teen program, expanding after-school programming at schools and community facilities, improving connections between schools and employers, and increasing awareness of the Sanford Regional Technical Center, SkillsUSA, vocational certifications, and other career pathways.

Policy 4: Leverage community assets, spaces, and partnerships to strengthen community connection.

This policy seeks to make fuller use of the spaces and institutions Sanford already has. Strategies include investing in libraries and other community-serving facilities, sustaining library services and programming, activating underused public and privately owned spaces through events and temporary uses, promoting available community resources, and coordinating organizations to share facilities and programming rather than duplicating efforts.

Policy 5: Build a coordinated and sustainable volunteer network that expands community capacity, strengthens social connection, and supports residents without replacing essential municipal or professional services.

This policy creates infrastructure for connecting volunteers with identified community needs. Strategies include establishing a central volunteer hub; coordinating opportunities such as transportation assistance, home support, community events, trail stewardship, and emergency-preparedness outreach; and partnering with the Sanford Regional Technical Center, Sanford Community Adult Education, employers, trade organizations, and colleges on supervised community-service projects.

Foster Inclusion, Health, and Well-Being

Community Goal: A healthy and resilient community is one where all individuals feel welcome, supported, and connected. Access to and affordability of essential resources—such as education, recreation, food, and health services—underpins overall well-being, while diverse social environments strengthen civic life and belonging. Infrastructure, public facilities, community programs, and policies support social connection and drive civic engagement and volunteerism.

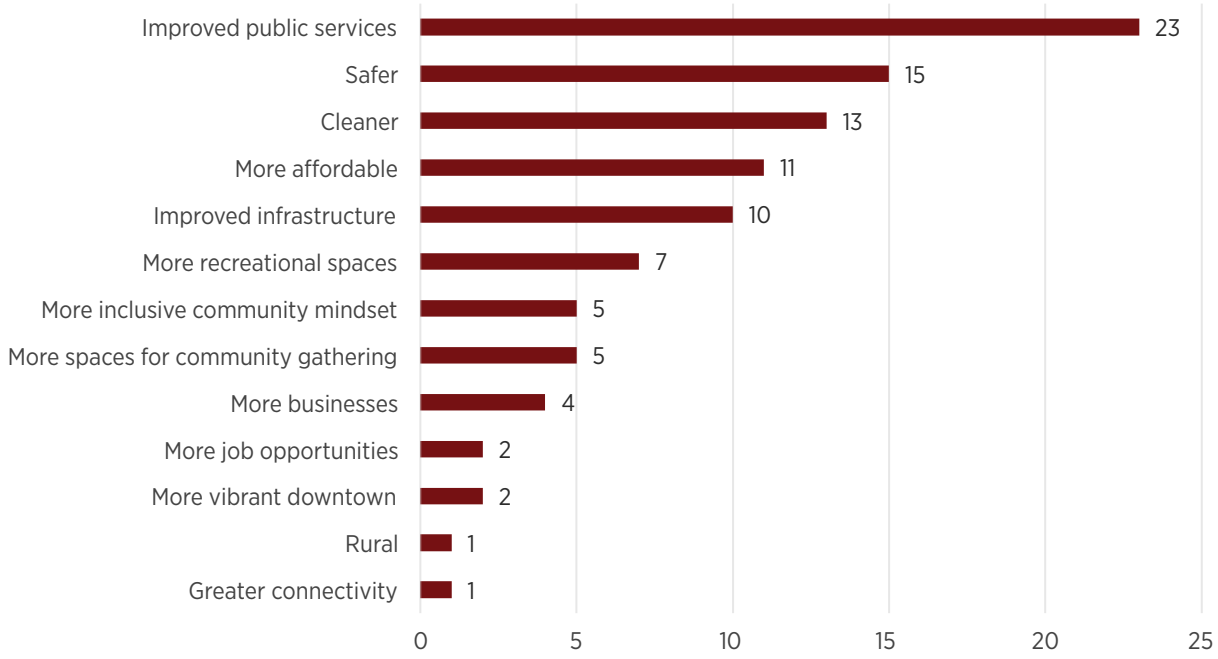
Context and Community Priorities

Fostering inclusion, health, and well-being means creating a community where residents can access the services, resources, spaces, and opportunities they need to live healthy, connected, and fulfilling lives. Sanford's schools, recreation programs, community organizations, health and social-service providers, libraries, and other public and community-serving institutions provide an important foundation for supporting residents throughout different stages of life. Access to recreation, education, nutritious food, technology, transportation, health and social services, and opportunities for social connection all contribute to individual and community well-being.

As Sanford's population and community needs continue to change, maintaining that quality of life will require attention to the barriers that can prevent residents from fully participating in community life. Community feedback emphasized the importance of accessible parks, recreation opportunities, schools, libraries, gathering places, and supportive services, as well as stronger programming for youth and older adults. Affordability, transportation, physical accessibility, communication, and digital access can also influence residents' ability to take advantage of available resources. Addressing these needs will require continued collaboration among the City, schools, service providers, health organizations, businesses, community groups, and residents to make existing resources easier to access, identify and address service gaps, and create opportunities for people of different ages, abilities, incomes, and backgrounds to participate and connect.

Community members emphasized the importance of accessible community facilities, parks, recreation opportunities, schools, libraries, and supportive services. Feedback called for stronger youth and teen programming, improved access to resources, additional opportunities for residents to gather and connect, and clearer communication of available services. Residents also identified affordability, transportation access, public safety, and the capacity of municipal and community services as important quality-of-life concerns, while emphasizing the need to balance safe public spaces with supportive services and an inclusive approach to community well-being.

Figure 21: If you could make one change to Sanford to improve the quality of life for all, what would it be?



Source: May Question of the Month



How Will We Advance This Goal?

Sanford will advance this goal by reducing barriers to recreation and community services, developing an age-friendly support network, strengthening education and workforce pathways, improving digital access and municipal technology, and expanding access to local food.

The City can help create the conditions for residents to access essential resources by maintaining accessible public facilities and recreation opportunities, improving communication and digital access, and considering transportation, affordability, and physical accessibility in municipal programs and services. Schools, health and social-service providers, community organizations, businesses, and other partners will play an important role in providing programs, services, information, and support that respond to changing community needs. This coordination and collaboration can reduce barriers to participation, strengthen connections among residents and available resources, and help people of different ages, abilities, incomes, and backgrounds participate fully in community life.

Policy 1: Provide affordable, accessible, and inclusive recreation programs for residents at every stage of life.

This policy uses participation data, waitlists, surveys, and partner input to better align recreation offerings with community needs. Strategies include expanding age-appropriate and adaptive programming; developing dedicated teen opportunities, maintaining financial assistance and evaluating additional affordability measures; addressing physical and other participation barriers; improving transportation access to recreation; and formalizing facility- and program-sharing relationships with schools and community organizations.

Policy 2: Support older adults in remaining safely, independently, and meaningfully connected to the Sanford community through coordinated housing, transportation, health, social, and home-support services.

This policy establishes a more structured approach to age-friendly planning and services. Strategies include preparing an age-friendly community action plan; creating a centralized resource guide; holding regular service-provider coordination meetings; supporting home repair, weatherization, accessibility, and fall-prevention programs; maintaining participation in the AARP Livable Communities Network; and coordinating volunteer assistance for transportation, home maintenance, technology, and other everyday needs.

Policy 3: Support high-quality, accessible, and adaptable public education and educational facilities that respond to student needs and changing community demographics.

This policy connects educational facilities and programs more directly with community and workforce opportunities. Strategies include engaging students in municipal and community initiatives, expanding shared use of school and municipal facilities, strengthening enrichment and mentoring partnerships, investing in educational facilities and technology, coordinating educational institutions and employers around changing workforce needs, expanding work-based learning, maintaining a centralized education and career resource guide, and reducing transportation, child care, digital, language, and other barriers to participation.

Policy 4: Expand equitable digital access and modernize municipal technology, data, and online services to improve community access, operational efficiency, transparency, and decision-making.

This policy addresses both community digital access and the City's internal technology and data systems. Strategies include tracking broadband availability and affordability, expanding digital literacy and device access, preparing a municipal technology modernization roadmap, expanding accessible online municipal services, establishing citywide data-governance standards, using GIS and dashboards to support municipal operations and planning, and publishing nonconfidential data and performance information in accessible formats.

Policy 5: Improve access to locally grown foods.

This policy builds connections among local producers, institutions, residents, and food entrepreneurs. Strategies include expanding local purchasing and farm-to-institution programs; improving year-round access to affordable and nutritious food; supporting community and school gardens; connecting food entrepreneurs and producers with kitchens, financing, permitting assistance, distribution networks, and markets; and convening food-system partners to address supply-chain gaps and coordinate programs and funding.

Support a Vibrant, Diverse Local Economy

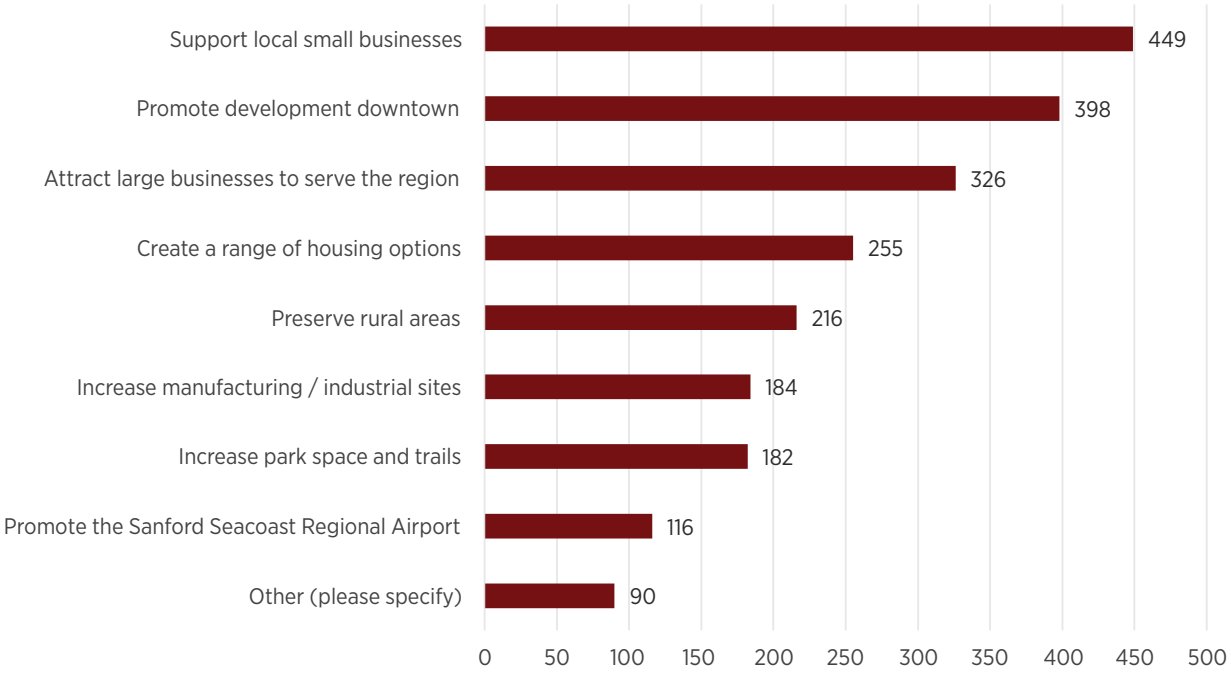
Community Goal: Sanford is the heart of York County—both as a geographically central hub and an economic center for the region. Encouraging a diverse and balanced economy through targeted business attraction and retention broadens the tax base to support economic resilience. Thoughtfully directing commercial growth to encourage industry in designated areas while supporting small businesses and local entrepreneurs will support economic stability and community vibrancy.

Context and Community Priorities

Over the next decade, the City will look to build on its role as a regional employment and service center while creating opportunities for businesses, workers, and entrepreneurs to grow and succeed. Sanford's manufacturing base, established commercial and industrial areas, regional airport, downtowns, small businesses, and access to the broader Southern Maine and New Hampshire economies provide a strong foundation for continued economic activity. Maintaining a diverse economy requires supporting existing businesses and entrepreneurs while creating opportunities for new investment, quality jobs, and industries that strengthen the local tax base and provide goods and services that meet community needs.

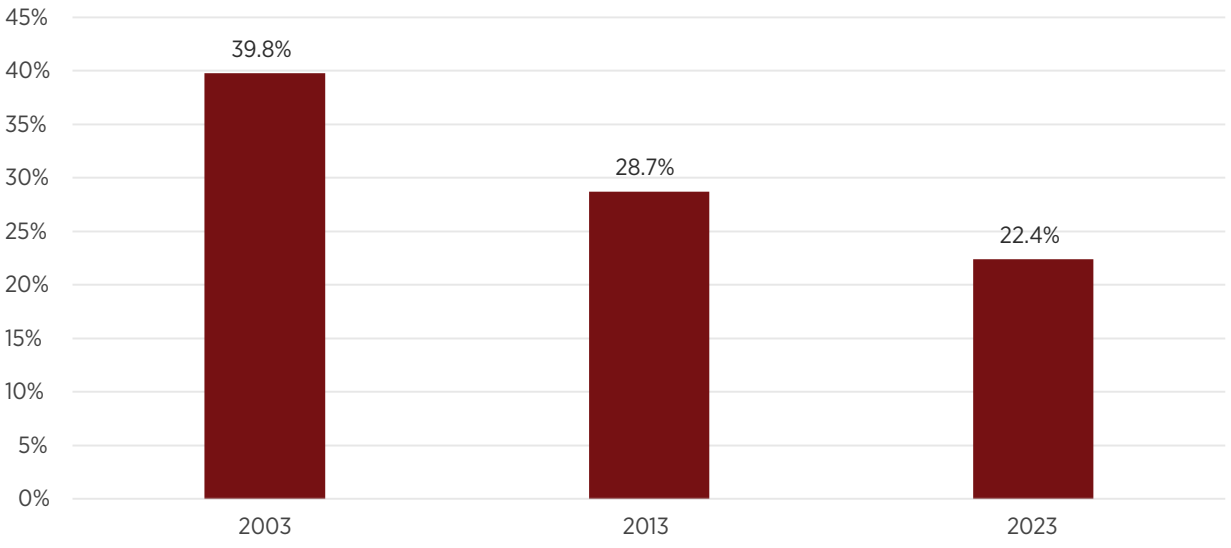
As Sanford continues to grow and change, economic development will also depend on having the land, infrastructure, workforce, housing, child care, and support systems needed to sustain that growth. Community members expressed a desire for more local businesses, restaurants, retail, entertainment, and employment opportunities, while also supporting investment in Downtown Sanford and Springvale and thoughtful commercial and industrial growth in appropriate locations. Strengthening partnerships among the City, Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council, educational institutions, employers, property owners, and other economic-development partners can help address workforce needs, prepare employment areas for investment, support small businesses and entrepreneurs, and expand opportunities in agriculture and other rural industries. Together, these efforts can help Sanford strengthen its economic base while directing investment in ways that support the community's broader vision for growth and quality of life.

Figure 22: What do you think are the most important development priorities for Sanford/Springvale to focus on over the next ten years?



Source: Community Survey

Figure 23: Percentage of Employees Living and Working in Sanford



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

How Will We Advance This Goal?

Sanford will advance this goal by strengthening its economic-development structure, creating clearer support systems for businesses and entrepreneurs, preparing priority employment sites for investment, addressing childcare as a workforce constraint, and supporting agriculture and forestry-based economic activity. The City and its economic development partners can help create the conditions for investment by maintaining appropriate infrastructure, preparing priority employment areas for growth, supporting predictable development processes, and connecting businesses and entrepreneurs with technical assistance, financing, workforce resources, and available properties. Employers, property owners, entrepreneurs, educational institutions, and other partners will play an important role in creating jobs, investing in the community, developing the local workforce, and expanding the goods and services available in Sanford. Together, these efforts can strengthen Sanford's role as a regional economic center, support a diverse and resilient tax base, and create more opportunities for residents and businesses to grow and succeed.

Policy 1: Strengthen economic management, implementation capacity, and partnerships.

This policy creates a more defined structure for carrying out Sanford's economic-development priorities. Strategies include adequately supporting the Sanford Growth Council, clarifying responsibilities among the City and economic-development partners, preparing an Economic Development Plan based on Market Analysis, establishing regular coordination around redevelopment and funding opportunities, and maintaining an annual work program with priorities, responsibilities, funding needs, and performance measures.

Policy 2: Support small businesses, entrepreneurship, and locally owned properties.

This policy creates more direct pathways for starting, retaining, and expanding businesses in Sanford. Strategies include connecting businesses with technical assistance, financing, workforce resources, succession planning, and available space; marketing locally owned businesses; developing a centralized business resource guide; supporting pop-ups, shared commercial spaces, incubator or maker-space concepts; periodically assessing gaps in retail, dining, services, and other offerings; and pursuing regional economic-development opportunities.

Policy 3: Position Sanford's industrial districts and priority employment sites for business investment and job growth.

This policy focuses on making priority employment areas more development-ready and connecting them to Sanford's workforce and infrastructure investments. Strategies include coordinating utilities, transportation, broadband, and capital planning with industrial and airport-area sites; reviewing development standards; maintaining an inventory of priority employment sites; strengthening career pathways and work-based learning; positioning airport-area properties for aviation-related and complementary investment; and evaluating appropriate financial tools for priority economic-development projects.

Policy 4: Strengthen Sanford's childcare system as critical infrastructure that supports workforce participation, economic competitiveness, and quality of life.

This policy treats childcare capacity as a component of Sanford's workforce-development environment. Strategies include assessing capacity and geographic or age-specific service gaps, reviewing regulations governing childcare facilities, supporting expanded capacity through grants and facility improvements, and working with employers and providers on employer-supported childcare, shared services, flexible scheduling, and related workforce approaches.

Policy 5: Promote agritourism and agriculture/forestry-based community events.

This policy supports income-generating activities that complement Sanford's working farms and forests. Strategies include allowing farm stands, pick-your-own operations, roadside markets, small-scale greenhouses, firewood, and agritourism; incorporating agricultural, commercial forestry, and land-conservation investment into regional economic-development planning; and supporting existing community-supported agriculture programs with local farmers.

Revitalize Downtowns

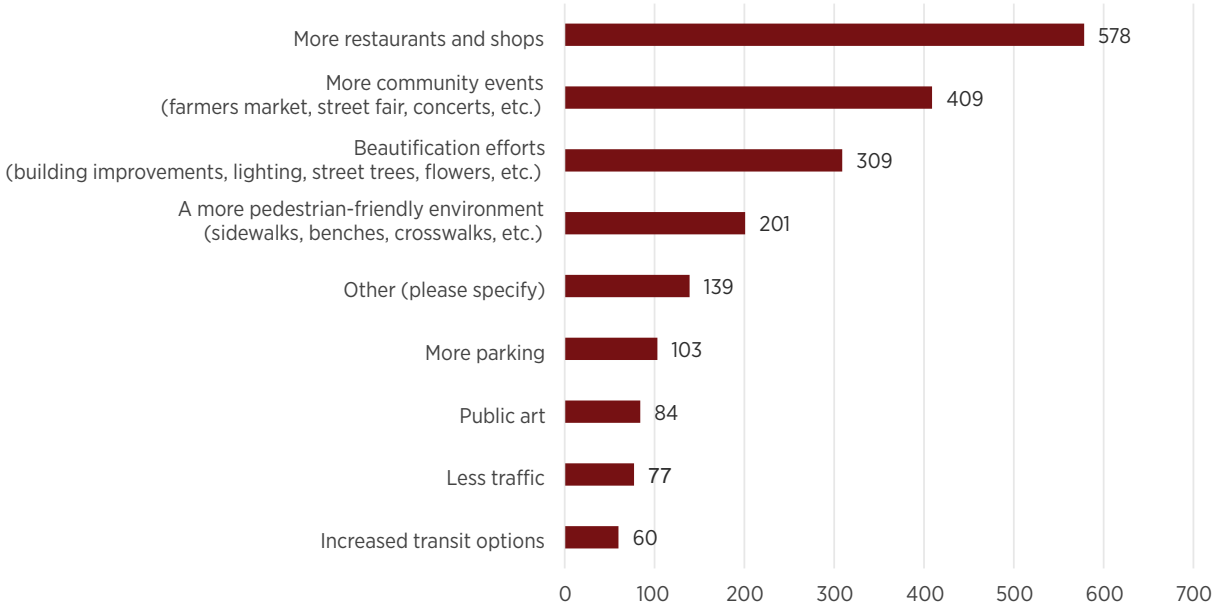
Community Goal: Infrastructure and aesthetic improvements to downtown Sanford and Springvale will make the downtown areas more walkable, safe, vibrant, and desirable places to visit. Beautification initiatives, convenient parking, public spaces, and well-maintained properties can strengthen the image and perception of Sanford/Springvale.

Context and Community Priorities

Strengthening the City's established downtown centers as vibrant, walkable places where people can live, work, shop, access services, and gather. The downtowns are defined by their historic development patterns, distinctive buildings, mix of businesses and civic uses, surrounding neighborhoods, and long-standing role as centers of community activity. These existing assets create opportunities for continued reinvestment through adaptive reuse, infill development, new housing and businesses, improved public spaces, and stronger connections among downtown destinations and surrounding neighborhoods. Reinvestment in these areas also supports Sanford's broader approach to growth by directing development toward established centers where streets, utilities, services, and other public investments already exist.

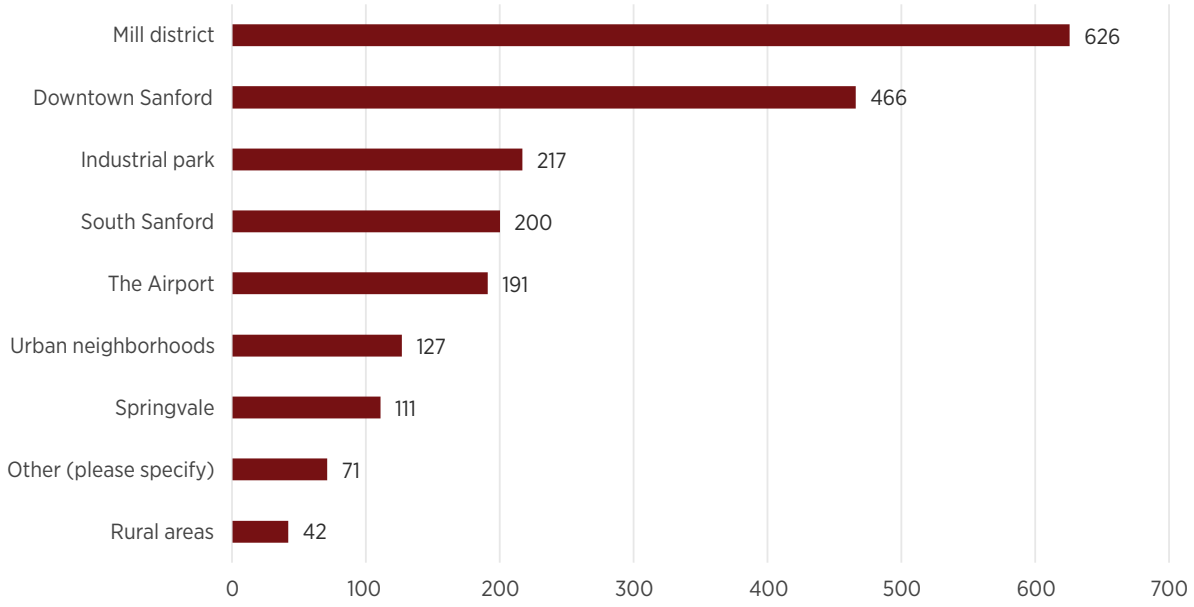
At the same time, realizing the full potential of Downtown Sanford and Springvale will require addressing vacant and underused buildings and properties, aging infrastructure, gaps in pedestrian and bicycle connections, and the quality and function of streets and public spaces. Community members consistently identified both downtowns as priorities for reinvestment and expressed interest in more local businesses, restaurants, services, housing, entertainment, and gathering places. Feedback also emphasized revitalizing vacant storefronts and the mill district, improving safety and walkability, enhancing public spaces, and creating stronger connections between downtown destinations and surrounding neighborhoods.

Figure 24: What Would Encourage You to Visit Either Downtown More Often?



Source: Community Survey

Figure 25: What areas in the community do you think are underutilized or need redevelopment?



Source: Community Survey

How Will We Advance This Goal?

Sanford will advance this goal by pairing property redevelopment and adaptive reuse with coordinated downtown management, streetscape and transportation improvements, and reinvestment in surrounding neighborhoods. Successful revitalization will depend on coordinated public and private investment over time. The City can help create the conditions for reinvestment through infrastructure and streetscape improvements, predictable development processes, support for adaptive reuse and infill, and partnerships with property owners, businesses, community organizations, and other entities. At the same time, private investment and active businesses, housing, and community uses will be important to bring more people and activity downtown. These efforts can reinforce Downtown Sanford and Springvale as distinctive centers of commerce and community life while making better use of existing buildings, infrastructure, and public resources.

Policy 1: Revitalize Downtown Sanford and Springvale as walkable, mixed-use centers.

This policy establishes a redevelopment framework for the two downtown areas. Strategies include creating a coordinated downtown management structure; improving sidewalks, crossings, lighting, landscaping, wayfinding, streetscapes, and bicycle facilities; attracting housing and community-serving uses; reducing regulatory barriers to infill and adaptive reuse; developing a coordinated approach to Midtown Mall and other opportunity sites; preparing a downtown and mill district action plan; establishing a building reuse and façade improvement program; developing a parking and access-management strategy; and securing outside funding for mill, brownfield, and downtown redevelopment.

Policy 2: Strengthen access and connections to and within Downtown Sanford and Springvale.

This policy concentrates on the transportation and access conditions that influence downtown activity. Strategies include closing gaps in pedestrian, bicycle, trail, and transit connections; regularly assessing parking and reviewing parking requirements for walkable areas; creating a permitting and funding process for community-led placemaking; leveraging State and regional infrastructure funding; and using public-private partnerships to connect new development with needed transportation improvements.

Policy 3: Strengthen established neighborhoods and neighborhood centers through coordinated reinvestment.

This policy extends reinvestment beyond the downtown cores into established neighborhoods and smaller neighborhood centers. Strategies include identifying locations where coordinated investment can address housing conditions, infrastructure, vacant properties, pedestrian connections, public spaces, and neighborhood-serving businesses; using the Land Bank Authority to return distressed properties to productive use; supporting small-scale commercial and mixed-use nodes; maintaining neighborhood parks and gathering spaces; and improving connections from neighborhoods to downtowns, schools, parks, trails, and transit.

Promote Housing Opportunities and Quality of Life

Community Goal: A diverse and attainable housing supply is essential to sustaining a vibrant, inclusive community where people at different life stages and income levels can live, work, and thrive. Creating a diversity of high-quality and attainable housing options that build safe, well-connected neighborhoods and meet the needs of current residents and the workforce, will strengthen community connections and economic stability. By addressing evolving demographic needs and supporting residents experiencing housing instability, the community advances a shared vision of quality of life that is equitable, supportive, and responsive to changing needs.

Context and Community Priorities

Promoting housing opportunities and quality of life means expanding the number, type, location, and affordability of homes available in Sanford while maintaining and improving the housing residents already rely on. Housing demand has increased, vacancies have tightened, and home prices and rents have risen faster than the purchasing power of many local households. Sanford also has an aging housing stock, with nearly 35% of housing units built in 1959 or earlier, creating continued need for rehabilitation, weatherization, accessibility improvements, and health-and-safety investments. These conditions affect more than where people live. Limited housing options can make it more difficult for older adults to remain in the community, workers to live near their jobs, families to find suitable homes, and residents experiencing housing instability to access appropriate support.

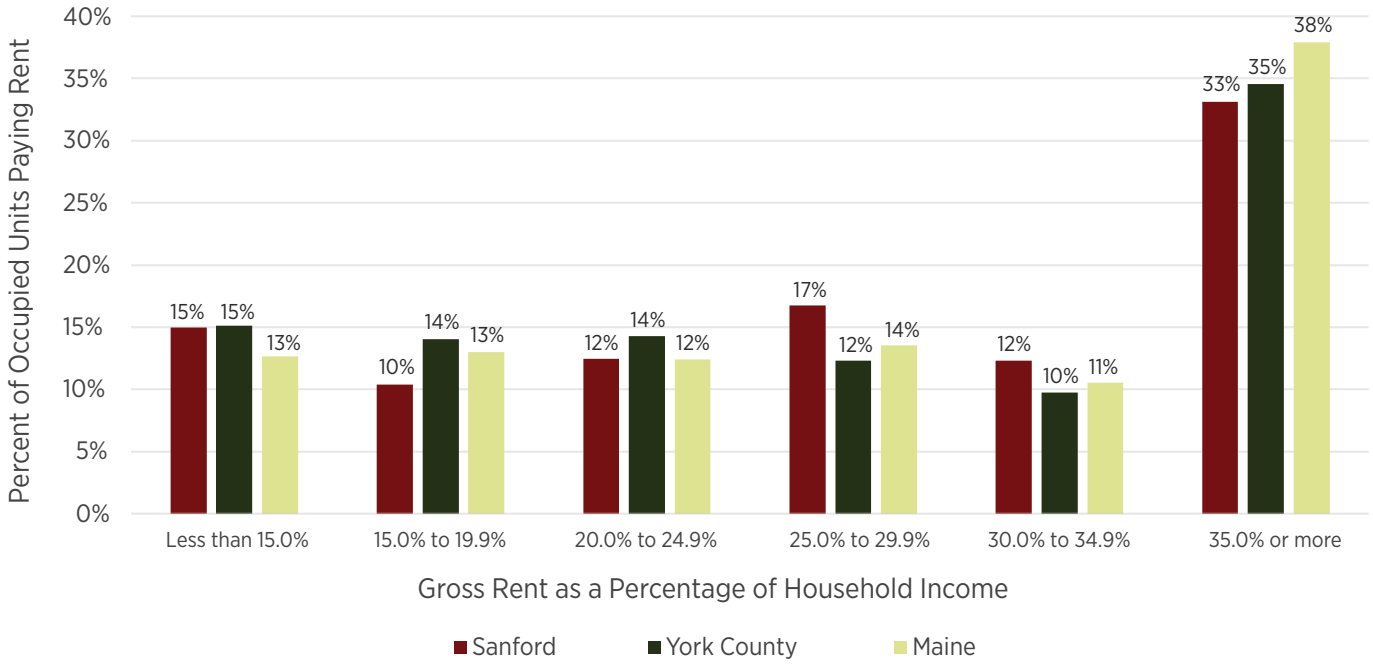
This goal focuses on allowing a broader range of housing types, directing growth toward locations with infrastructure and services, supporting infill and adaptive reuse, returning vacant and distressed properties to productive use, and preserving existing housing through rehabilitation and code compliance. It also recognizes that addressing housing instability and meeting affordable, workforce, senior, accessible, and supportive housing needs will require sustained coordination among the City, the Sanford Housing Authority, the Sanford Land Bank Authority, housing and service providers, employers, developers, State and regional agencies, and community organizations.

Affordability and cost pressure were consistent concerns throughout community engagement. Residents emphasized rising rents and home prices, property taxes, and the difficulty of finding housing that meets the needs of households at different income levels and life stages. Participants called for more affordable and workforce housing, accessible apartments, senior housing, rental options, entry-level ownership opportunities, and lower-

barrier housing for residents experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Feedback also highlighted the importance of helping existing residents remain in Sanford throughout all stages of life, including opportunities for older adults to age in place, residents to purchase their first home, and opportunities to downsize or buy larger homes depending on household needs.

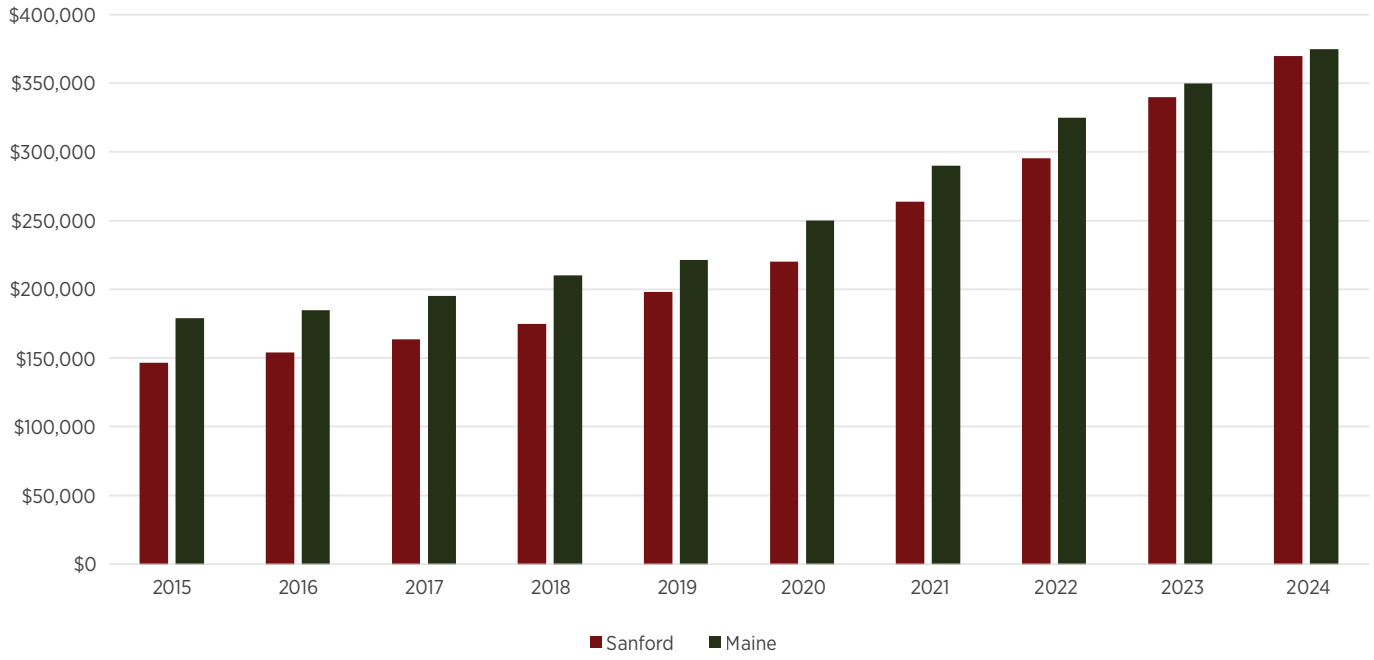
Community members supported rehabilitating vacant and deteriorated buildings, reusing mills and other underused properties, strengthening code enforcement, and improving the condition and safety of existing neighborhoods. At the same time, residents expressed concern about residential growth spreading into rural areas and the increasing costs of infrastructure and services. Engagement generally supported locating a broader range of housing in Downtown Sanford and Springvale, established neighborhoods, mixed-use corridors, and other areas with access to water, sewer, transportation, services, and community destinations. Residents also emphasized that housing policy should support safe neighborhoods, walkability, access to daily needs, community connection, and the ability to live and work in Sanford.

Figure 26: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income



Source: U.S. Census

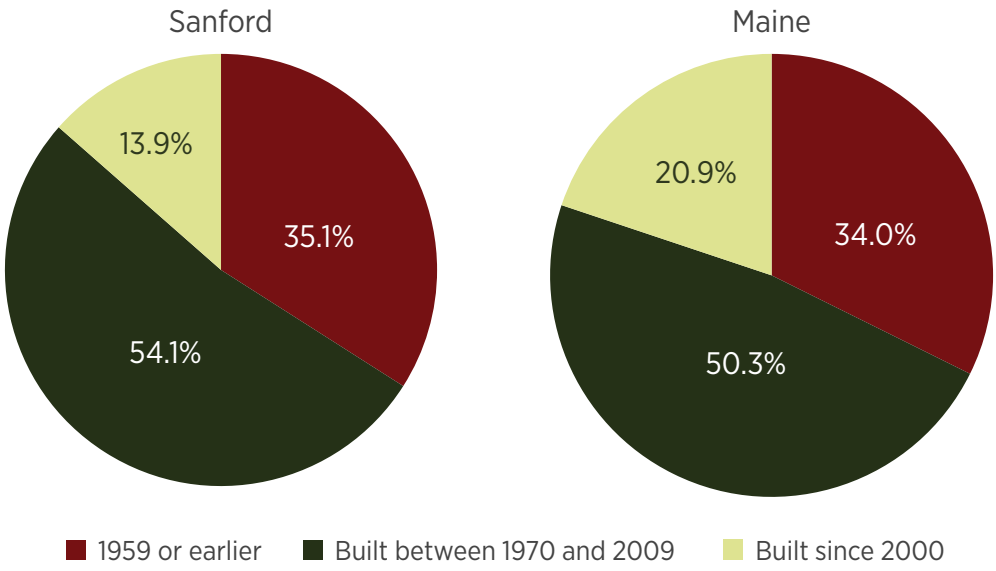
Figure 27: Change in Median Home Price



Source: U.S. Census

Year	Sanford	Maine
2015	$146,500	$179,000
2016	$153,950	$185,000
2017	$163,500	$195,000
2018	$175,000	$210,000
2019	$198,000	$221,450
2020	$220,000	$250,000
2021	$264,000	$290,000
2022	$295,500	$325,000
2023	$340,000	$350,000
2024	$370,000	$375,000

Figure 28: Housing Stock by Year Built Comparison



Source: U.S. Census



How Will We Advance This Goal?

Sanford will advance this goal through a combination of zoning reform, targeted housing investment, property rehabilitation, redevelopment, and stronger housing-service coordination. Implementation includes allowing a broader range of housing types in growth areas, reducing locally controlled barriers to affordable and workforce housing, and targeting at least 10% of new residential development during the next decade as affordable under applicable State standards. It also involves directing housing toward serviced areas, using the Land Bank Authority and financial tools to address difficult properties, expanding rehabilitation assistance, establishing housing-navigation resources, and creating stronger local and regional structures for monitoring and implementing housing priorities.

Policy 1: Expand the supply and diversity of quality housing to meet the needs of residents across income levels, ages, household sizes, and life stages.

This policy addresses the overall supply, diversity, and affordability of Sanford's housing. Strategies include updating growth-area zoning to accommodate duplexes, townhouses, small multifamily buildings, mixed-use housing, accessory dwelling units, cottage courts, manufactured housing, and other compatible forms; reducing development barriers; coordinating housing with workforce needs; expanding options appropriate for older adults; pursuing the 10% affordability objective; and monitoring production, prices, rents, cost burden, vacancy, and permitting timelines.

Policy 2: Direct housing growth to locations with appropriate infrastructure, services, transportation access, and neighborhood connections.

This policy links housing development to the Future Land Use Plan and infrastructure capacity. Strategies prioritize new housing, infill, and adaptive reuse in Downtown Sanford, Springvale, established neighborhoods, mixed-use corridors, and other serviced growth areas; coordinate approvals with infrastructure and facility capacity; establish appropriate locations for mobile home parks and manufactured housing; and use conservation subdivision design outside growth areas to protect working lands, habitat, water resources, scenic areas, and trail connections.

Policy 3: Use public resources and partnerships to close housing feasibility gaps and return vacant and distressed properties to productive use.

This policy focuses on cases where public tools can help overcome barriers to otherwise-needed housing or redevelopment. Strategies include evaluating an affordable-housing tax increment financing district, maintaining an inventory of vacant and distressed properties through the Land Bank Authority, establishing criteria for using public property and incentives, pursuing MaineHousing and Community Development Block Grant resources with development partners, and supporting alternative ownership and long-term affordability models, such as community land trusts and shared-equity housing.

Policy 4: Maintain and improve the safety, accessibility, efficiency, and resilience of Sanford's existing housing.

This policy prioritizes preservation and improvement of the housing Sanford already has. Strategies include expanding rehabilitation, weatherization, lead-hazard reduction, energy-efficiency, accessibility, and health-and-safety programs; prioritizing assistance that enables older adults and people with disabilities to remain safely at home; pairing code enforcement with rehabilitation or redevelopment resources where feasible; and improving access to information about repairs, energy assistance, tenant and landlord resources, and fair-housing protections.

Policy 5: Address housing instability and the needs of residents who face the greatest barriers to safe, stable housing.

This policy strengthens the connection between housing and supportive services for residents facing instability. Strategies include supporting affordable and supportive housing through partnerships with housing, healthcare, development, and service organizations; establishing a housing-navigator program; coordinating connections to emergency, transitional, supportive, and permanent housing and related services; and establishing appropriate locations and standards for emergency shelters, supportive housing, community living arrangements, and related uses.

Policy 6: Strengthen local and regional capacity to plan for and implement affordable and workforce housing.

This policy strengthens the connection between housing and supportive services for residents facing instability. Strategies include supporting affordable and supportive housing through partnerships with housing, healthcare, development, and service organizations; establishing a housing-navigator program; coordinating connections to emergency, transitional, supportive, and permanent housing and related services; and establishing appropriate locations and standards for emergency shelters, supportive housing, community living arrangements, and related uses.



Protect Natural Resources and Expand Recreation

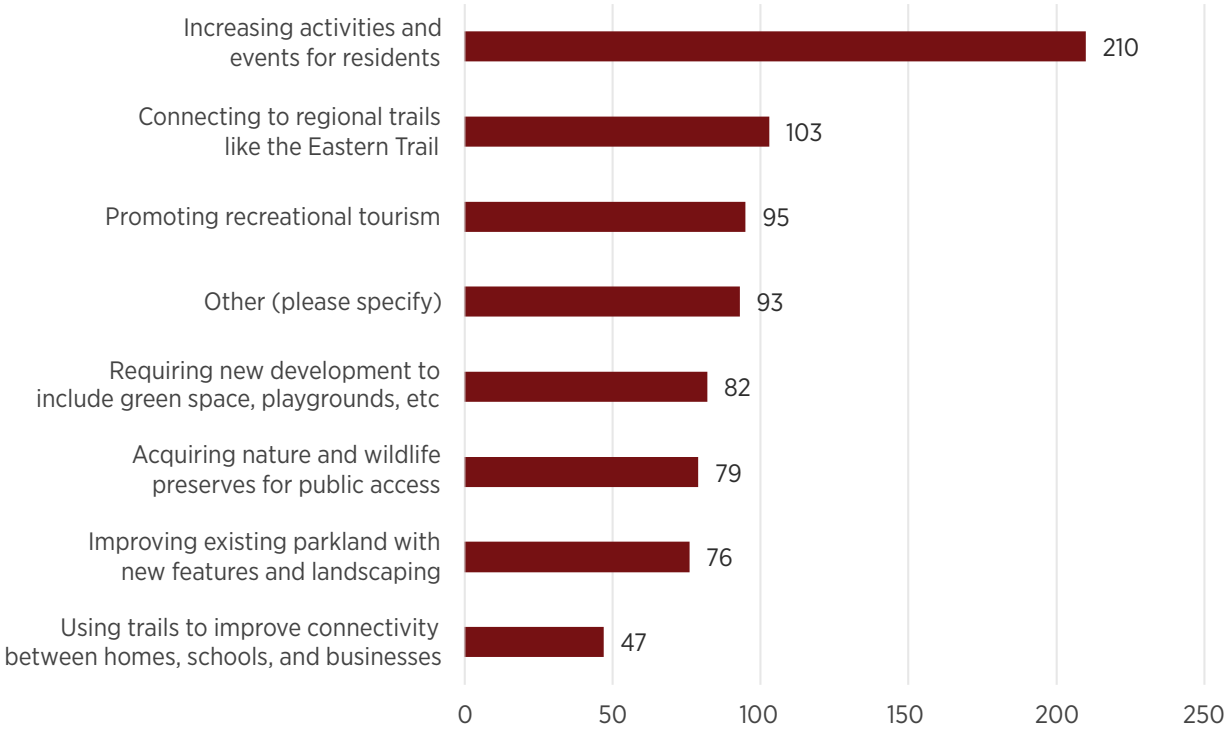
Community Goal: Sanford's natural resources are a defining element of the City's identity. Amenities such as the Mousam River, ponds, trails, and parks provide residents and visitors with access to nature and enhance quality of life. Protection of farmland, open space, and environmentally sensitive areas is critical to maintaining outdoor recreation opportunities, preserving the rural character of Sanford, and protecting natural areas.

Context and Community Priorities

Protecting natural resources and expanding recreation includes balancing access to Sanford's parks, trails, waterways, and outdoor spaces with long-term stewardship of the natural systems that support the community. Sanford's rivers, ponds, forests, farmland, open spaces, trails, and recreation facilities contribute to community identity and quality of life while providing important environmental functions. These resources support wildlife habitat, drinking water and water quality, working farms and forests, outdoor recreation, and opportunities for residents to connect with nature. Protecting them becomes increasingly important as development occurs and competing demands for land, infrastructure, recreation, and conservation increase.

Community members consistently identified parks, trails, waterways, forests, agricultural lands, and access to outdoor recreation as important community assets. Feedback supported expanding and improving recreational opportunities while protecting the rural landscapes and natural resources that distinguish Sanford. As the City grows, development patterns, infrastructure investments, and land management decisions will influence water quality, habitat connectivity, open space, working lands, and opportunities for public access. Directing more intensive growth toward areas that can accommodate it, while conserving sensitive resources and maintaining rural areas, can help Sanford balance development with long-term stewardship.

Figure 29: What do you think is the most important priority for Sanford/Springvale to focus on over the next ten years regarding its parks, trails, and open space?



Source: Community Survey



How Will We Advance This Goal?

Sanford will advance this goal through coordinated recreation planning, capital investment, environmental regulation, conservation partnerships, and public education. The City can strengthen its recreation network through coordinated planning, maintenance, capital investment, and improved connections among parks, trails, and neighborhoods. At the same time, protecting water resources, habitat, farms, forests, and open space will require thoughtful development standards, conservation tools, landowner participation, public education, and collaboration with conservation organizations, utilities, neighboring communities, and State and regional partners. These efforts can expand opportunities for recreation and public access while protecting the natural and working landscapes that contribute to Sanford's identity, environmental health, and quality of life.

Policy 1: Maintain and improve parks, recreation facilities, trails, and programs to meet current and future community needs.

This policy establishes an asset-management and capital-planning approach to Sanford's recreation system. Strategies include updating the 2017 Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan; maintaining an inventory and condition assessment of parks, fields, playgrounds, trails, buildings, water-access facilities, and related infrastructure; and preparing a prioritized, multiyear capital improvement program. The City will also evaluate year-round indoor recreation capacity, conditions at heavily used athletic facilities, public access to ponds and rivers, the future role of the Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee, and funding options that account for long-term operating and replacement costs.

Policy 2: Expand and connect Sanford's trail system for recreation, active transportation, community access, and regional tourism.

This policy carries the Trails Master Plan forward through a phased work program with identified projects, responsibilities, funding, permitting, maintenance needs, and annual progress measures. Priorities include advancing the Downtown Connector and Eastern Trail Connector; improving trailheads, maps, wayfinding, bicycle parking, and seating; and coordinating off-road trails with the City's broader walking and bicycling network. Additional strategies address compatible trail uses, volunteer stewardship, agreements with private trail owners, a public-access trail map, a unified identity for public and private networks, and recreation and educational programming that makes greater use of Sanford's trails.

Policy 3: Preserve open space and maintain public access to Sanford's natural and recreational resources.

This policy focuses on protecting priority open space, habitat, water resources, recreation lands, and trail corridors through voluntary partnerships and coordinated investment. Strategies include working with land trusts, conservation organizations, State agencies, and willing landowners; aligning conservation and recreation priorities with development review, capital planning, grant programs, and

anticipated growth; and providing landowners with information about conservation tools, trail easements, and Maine's landowner-liability protections.

Policy 4: Protect current and potential drinking water sources.

This policy emphasizes better monitoring, clearer protection areas, and practical stormwater-management tools. Strategies include establishing discharge-detection and stream-health monitoring programs; continuing wellhead and aquifer-recharge protection zones in identified risk areas; offering mitigation credits for rain gardens, bioswales, and similar retention and filtration infrastructure; and improving the City's GIS information for public wellhead and aquifer-recharge areas.

Policy 5: Protect water and natural resources concurrent with sustainable development in designated growth areas.

This policy integrates water-quality and habitat protection into development and infrastructure decisions. Strategies include updating the water-quality inventory and online GIS layers; screening road projects for green-infrastructure opportunities; maintaining management agreements for community septic systems; providing septic-maintenance education and technical assistance; retaining shoreline and habitat protections; and evaluating low-impact development standards and permeable surfaces for parking areas, streets, and alleys.

Policy 6: Minimize pollution discharges through the upgrade of existing public sewer systems, wastewater treatment facilities, and responsible stormwater-management practices to protect the City's rivers, streams, ponds, and lakes.

This policy focuses specifically on watershed planning, stormwater funding, and pollution-control standards. Strategies include updating the recommendations of the Goodall Brook Watershed Management Plan, establishing a stormwater fee based on impervious surface, maintaining and improving stormwater best management practices, and retaining or revising ordinance standards that regulate phosphorus and other pollutants associated with watershed runoff.

Policy 7: Build partnerships with neighboring communities, regional and local advocacy groups, and State and regional resource agencies to protect water resources and shared natural resources.

This policy uses education and interorganizational coordination to build broader stewardship of shared resources. Strategies include preparing water-quality materials for landowners and easement holders; working with local schools, the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection on water-resource and monitoring curricula; providing information about aquatic invasive species at recreation access points; and conducting natural-resource outreach during Maine's free fishing weekends.

Policy 8: Conserve the City of Sanford's critical water and natural resources and habitat from pollution.

This policy establishes a more targeted framework for habitat conservation and stewardship. Strategies include educating residents about Atlantic white cedar swamps, hemlock swamps, pitch pine barrens, and other distinctive habitats; updating the Sanford Conservation Plan through a Conservation Stewardship Program Plan; incorporating Beginning with Habitat and Maine Stream Habitat Viewer information into development review; establishing funding for sensitive stream and lake corridors; and identifying critical resources in the Future Land Use Plan. The policy also supports regional planning, land and easement acquisition from willing sellers, public information about resource-protection programs and regulations, wildlife monitoring, and an annual cleanup around Number One Pond.

Policy 9: Protect farms, prime farmland, and forests for agricultural use and for cultural, economic, historical, and scenic value to the City of Sanford.

This policy combines landowner assistance, ordinance updates, and educational initiatives to sustain Sanford's working and rural landscapes. Strategies include coordinating with the Maine Forest Service, WoodsWISE, and Soil and Water Conservation District staff on best management practices and technical assistance; limiting fragmentation and incompatible development in critical rural areas; promoting native pollinator plantings; consulting the Maine Forest Service when developing forestry regulations; and expanding enrollment in Maine's farmland and tree-growth current-use tax programs. Additional actions support educational programming about forestry and compatible rural enterprises such as natural-resource businesses, outdoor recreation, nature tourism, farmers' markets, and home occupations.

Policy 10: Protect rural, waterfront, and natural resource areas from the impacts of development while supporting appropriate working-land and recreation uses.

This policy establishes how the Future Land Use Plan will be applied alongside Sanford's environmental and rural-resource protections. Strategies include incorporating resource and hazard information into development decisions; avoiding or minimizing impacts to sensitive natural and agricultural resources; using conservation tools to maintain connected rural lands; supporting compatible working-land, recreation, and small-scale rural uses; and coordinating waterfront development and public access with water quality, resilience, safety, and neighborhood considerations.

Invest in Infrastructure and Quality Services

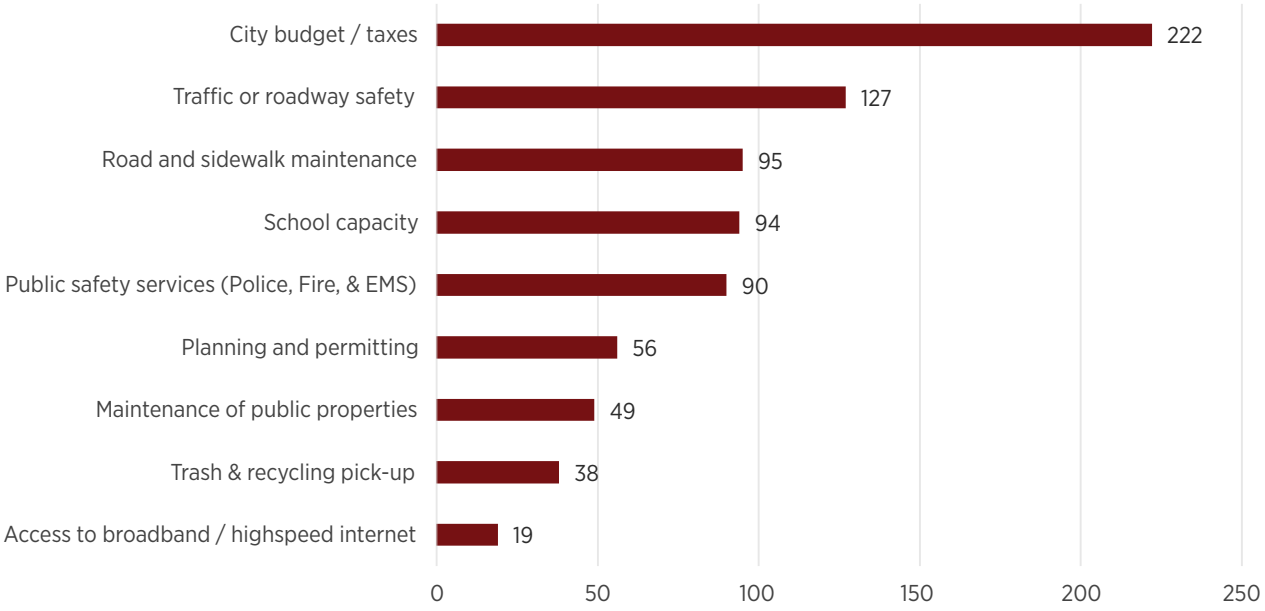
Community Goal: Reliable infrastructure and high-quality public services form the foundation of a strong, thriving community. Well-maintained roads, utilities, and public systems support daily life, enable economic activity, and improve safety, while accessible transportation networks connect residents to jobs, services, and one another. By aligning infrastructure with planning for long-term growth, Sanford will be able to adapt to shifting needs and regional impacts to deliver essential services and sustain a high quality of life for current and future residents.

Context and Community Priorities

Implementing the community's vision requires coordinated public facilities, municipal services, and infrastructure that allows Sanford to function efficiently and effectively as the community grows and changes. Roads, sidewalks, water and sewer systems, stormwater infrastructure, municipal buildings, public safety services, transportation networks, and other public assets support daily life while also creating the foundation for housing, economic development, and community investment. Maintaining these systems over time requires balancing immediate needs with long-term planning so that existing assets are protected and new investments respond to anticipated growth and changing service demands.

Community feedback emphasized the importance of reliable municipal services, well-maintained roads and sidewalks, safe transportation options, and public facilities that can continue to meet community needs. At the same time, aging infrastructure and facilities, changing demographics, new development, and evolving transportation and service needs create additional demands on City resources. These conditions reinforce the importance of coordinating infrastructure and service planning with the Future Land Use Plan so that investment supports the areas where Sanford intends to accommodate growth, while avoiding unnecessary extensions of infrastructure and the long-term costs associated with dispersed development.

Figure 30: If the population grows, what do you think will be the greatest challenge related to public services in the future?



Source: Community Survey



How Will We Advance This Goal?

Sanford will advance this goal by linking infrastructure maintenance and capital planning with the City's desired growth pattern, modernizing municipal facilities, strengthening workforce capacity, and adapting public safety and social-service coordination to changing community needs. The Future Land Use Plan supports this approach by directing growth and reinvestment toward Downtown Sanford and Springvale, mixed-use corridors, and industrial areas where existing infrastructure can support additional development. Prioritizing infill, adaptive reuse, and redevelopment in these locations can expand the tax base while making efficient use of streets, water and sewer systems, and other public investments already in place. Coordinating development with available capacity and targeted upgrades can help Sanford accommodate new homes and businesses while limiting unnecessary infrastructure extensions, which can increase tax burden. Investment decisions should consider the potential tax revenue alongside the long-term costs of operations, maintenance, replacement, and municipal services so that growth strengthens the City's fiscal position.

Transportation investments will emphasize implementation of Sanford's safety initiatives, a more connected walking and bicycling network, improved local and regional transit, continued investment in the Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport, and preservation of existing roads and other transportation assets.

Implementation will also rely on updated capital and facilities plans, coordination with water and sewer districts, regional service partnerships, grant funding, and data-driven evaluation of infrastructure and service needs. Making these investments will require looking beyond individual projects and considering how infrastructure, facilities, transportation, staffing, and service delivery work together. Capital planning and preventive maintenance can help the City manage existing assets and anticipate major investments before needs become more urgent, while coordination with utilities, transportation providers, neighboring communities, and other partners can help address needs that extend beyond City government. Aligning these decisions with Sanford's desired growth pattern can help the City make effective use of limited public resources, support safe and accessible connections, maintain reliable services, and provide the infrastructure needed to serve current and future residents and businesses.

Policy 1: Prioritize operations and maintenance funding and strategic capital investments to protect infrastructure investments and strategically plan for upgrades.

This policy establishes a more proactive approach to maintaining and funding Sanford's infrastructure. Strategies include working toward full funding of the Public Works Operations and Maintenance Program; incorporating financial productivity into infrastructure prioritization; updating the Capital Improvement Plan to address building systems, fleet replacement, and drainage infrastructure; and coordinating future water and sewer service extensions with the Future Land Use Plan. The City will also pursue grant funding, evaluate additional grant-writing capacity, and explore opportunities to plan and finance shared or adjacent capital investments with neighboring communities.

Policy 2: Modernize aging municipal facilities to meet operational needs and improve service delivery.

This policy focuses specifically on the condition, functionality, and long-term management of City facilities. Strategies include establishing a comprehensive facilities maintenance plan, replacing outdated fire stations, planning for a new Public Works garage, and addressing aging HVAC and other building systems through strategic facilities and maintenance planning. The City will also explore shared regional emergency-service facilities and direct at least 75% of infrastructure and facility investments to growth areas where services can be provided most efficiently.

Policy 3: Strengthen City workforce capacity through recruitment, retention, and training initiatives.

This policy addresses the staffing and skills needed to maintain municipal operations and respond to service demands. Strategies include continuing in-house commercial driver's license training, supporting retire-rehire programs and expanded academy pipelines, providing employee wellness education and support, and working toward full staffing across City departments. Longer-term efforts will strengthen partnerships with regional community colleges and the Sanford Regional Technical Center to expand vocational programs, align training with workforce needs, and develop a pipeline of skilled workers.

Policy 4: Maintain responsive and coordinated public safety and emergency services that adapt to community growth, changing demographics, emerging risks, and evolving service demands.

This policy uses service data, partnerships, and preventive approaches to adapt public safety resources to changing community needs. Strategies include using population, development, call-volume, response-time, and service-area data to evaluate staffing and capital needs; expanding behavioral-health, crisis-response, and community-paramedicine partnerships; strengthening post-crisis connections to housing, healthcare, recovery, employment, and transportation resources; and coordinating development review with emergency-service providers. Additional actions include regional mutual aid and joint training, community risk-reduction and emergency-preparedness programs, coordinated continuity planning, and accessible and multilingual emergency communications.

Policy 5: Work to eliminate all traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries.

This policy establishes roadway safety as a specific infrastructure and transportation priority. Strategies include implementing Sanford's 2024 Safe Streets and Roads for All Safety Action Plan, including context-sensitive speed limits, traffic calming, and street redesigns focused on the High Injury Network; establishing a standardized crash-review process; deploying quick-build improvements in response to injury crashes; prioritizing preventive infrastructure improvements; and maintaining access-management requirements that support pedestrian-oriented design.

Policy 6: Expand and connect the City's active transportation network to support walking, biking, and micromobility as viable modes for daily travel.

This policy develops a more comprehensive approach to walking, bicycling, and other forms of active transportation. Strategies include preparing a citywide Active Transportation Plan and sidewalk gap analysis; establishing a sidewalk maintenance and replacement program integrated with pavement management; adding benches, bicycle racks, pedestrian-scale lighting, and other amenities to downtown streetscapes; creating gateway treatments that combine aesthetics with traffic calming; and exploring bicycle-share and recreational equipment-rental partnerships. The City will also update development standards to better support future bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and other transportation connections.

Policy 7: Enhance transit service to meet diverse transportation needs of residents (including children, the elderly, and disabled) and through travelers by providing a safe, efficient, and adequate transportation network for all types of users (motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists).

This policy focuses on making transit more useful for everyday trips and strengthening connections to the wider region. Strategies include expanding York County Community Action Corporation (YCCAC) fixed-route service to weekends, prioritizing frequent and reliable service in core neighborhoods, establishing standards for accessible and safe transit stops, and exploring regional shuttle connections to existing services in Biddeford, Saco, and Wells and to Amtrak Downeaster stations. Additional actions include evaluating on-demand or microtransit where fixed-route service is not appropriate, coordinating volunteer transportation with existing providers, participating in regional and State transit planning, encouraging transit-oriented development, and working with major employers and institutions on commuter connections and transit access.

Policy 8: Preserve and improve the transportation system while maximizing fiscal efficiency.

This policy prioritizes maintaining and improving existing transportation assets while coordinating major roadway investments with Sanford's land use and economic-development objectives. Strategies include implementing infrastructure improvements associated with the RAISE grant, prioritizing preservation and rehabilitation over roadway-capacity expansion, and coordinating with MaineDOT to apply

complete-streets principles along Routes 109 and 202. The Implementation Plan also calls for a community-driven process to develop a Route 109 Downtown Corridor Overlay Zone within Sanford and Springvale growth areas so future state highway investments better support the City's desired development pattern.

Policy 9: Promote safe, efficient, and optimal regional connectivity through strategic airport investment and multimodal access.

This policy carries forward Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport planning as part of the City's broader transportation and economic infrastructure. Strategies include implementing the Airport Master Plan and Business Plan, supporting private-sector hangar development through the existing tax increment financing district and streamlined approvals, and investing in critical airport infrastructure.

Strengthen Governance and Implementation

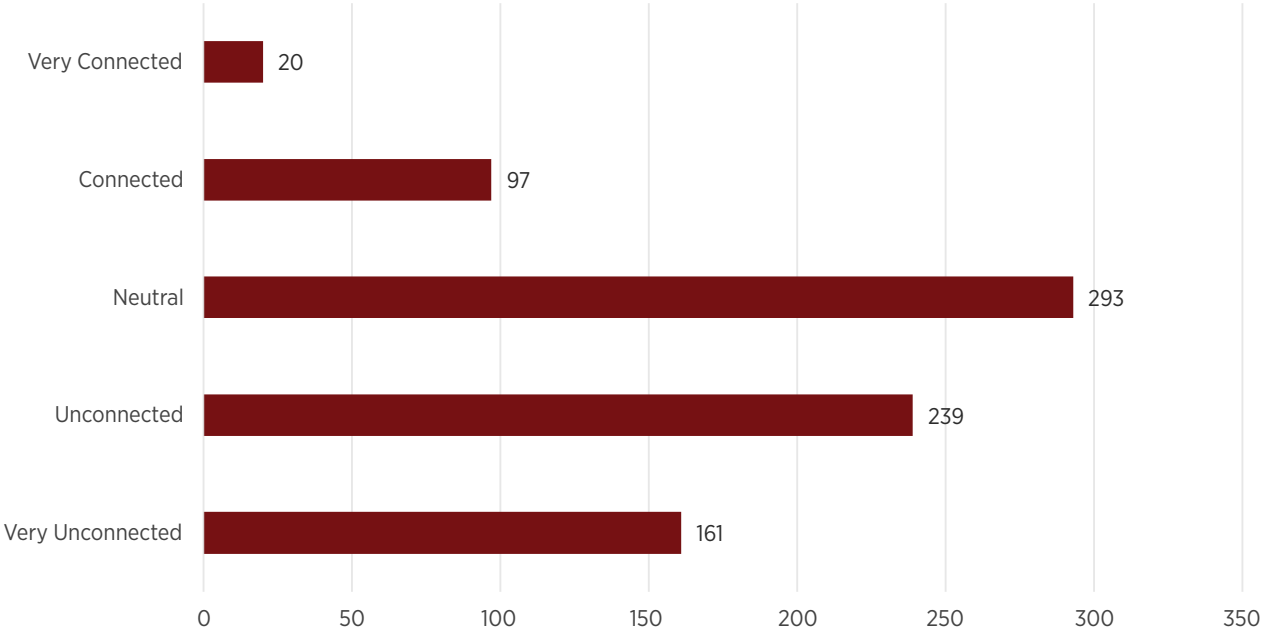
Community Goal: Clear, transparent, and effective governance provides the structure needed to translate community goals into meaningful outcomes. Modern, predictable processes build confidence among residents, businesses, and stakeholders, while consistent enforcement and accountability reinforce fairness and trust. By fostering collaboration and integrity in decision-making and supporting community-based long-range planning efforts, the City creates a governance framework that is rooted in community values.

Context and Community Priorities

Strengthening governance and implementation means creating the regulatory, investment, administrative, and accountability framework needed to put the Comprehensive Plan into practice. Unlike goals focused on a particular community outcome, this goal addresses how the City makes and carries out decisions across all areas of the Plan. It connects the Future Land Use Plan to zoning and development standards, capital investments, infrastructure decisions, permitting and code enforcement, and ongoing municipal planning. A clear and coordinated implementation framework can help the City make consistent decisions, establish priorities, and align limited resources with its long-term vision.

Community members emphasized transparent and accountable decision-making, clearer communication, and stronger opportunities to participate in local government. Feedback also supported thoughtful growth that directs different forms and scales of development to appropriate locations, protects rural areas and natural resources, and considers the long-term costs of infrastructure and public investment. As Sanford grows and conditions change, maintaining a clear connection among the Comprehensive Plan, development decisions, public investments, and community priorities will help the City respond to new opportunities while remaining grounded in its long-term direction.

Figure 31: How connected do you feel to the community and its decision-making processes?



Source: Community Survey



How Will We Advance This Goal?

This Plan is a living document that requires ongoing evaluation and stewardship to implement over the next decade. Implementation will require the Plan to become part of the City's ongoing decision-making rather than a document that is revisited only periodically. Land use regulations, capital planning, annual budgeting, infrastructure priorities, departmental work plans, and other long-range planning efforts provide opportunities to carry the Plan forward over time. Regular monitoring and reporting can help the City understand where progress is occurring, identify barriers or changing conditions, and adjust priorities when appropriate. Clear responsibilities, coordination across departments and partners, and continued public communication can help maintain accountability and keep future decisions connected to the vision and goals established through the comprehensive planning process.

Policy 1: Coordinate capital investment and infrastructure capacity with Sanford's desired growth pattern.

This policy connects infrastructure spending directly to the locations where Sanford intends to accommodate future growth. Strategies include incorporating anticipated water, sewer, roadway, sidewalk, bicycle, transit, stormwater, public safety, school, park, broadband, and other facility needs into capital planning and directing at least 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investment to designated growth areas. The City will coordinate the timing of improvements with development capacity, housing and employment objectives, utility and transportation plans, and long-term maintenance needs; avoid growth-inducing infrastructure extensions into rural and resource-protection areas except under identified circumstances; evaluate infrastructure constraints early; and establish appropriate long-term maintenance responsibility for privately owned infrastructure outside growth areas.

Policy 2: Align Sanford's land use regulations with the Future Land Use Plan and ensure adequate planning and code enforcement capacity.

This policy focuses on the administrative systems and staff capacity needed to implement land use policy consistently. Strategies include updating regulations to reflect the Future Land Use Plan; maintaining transparent and efficient permitting procedures; exploring administrative and concurrent review, consolidated preapplication meetings, submission checklists, and predictable timelines; and providing applicants with current, plain-language development information. The City will also clarify responsibility for Future Land Use Plan implementation, provide planning and code-enforcement staff with appropriate staffing, technology, mapping, training, legal, and inspection resources, maintain current GIS information, track development by location and type, and coordinate periodically with neighboring communities on cross-boundary land use, transportation, housing, infrastructure, natural-resource, and economic-development issues.

Policy 3: Establish a coordinated framework for Comprehensive Plan implementation and accountability.

This policy establishes an ongoing process for measuring progress and keeping implementation connected to municipal decision-making. Strategies include preparing an annual Comprehensive Plan progress report, establishing a focused set of community indicators, incorporating implementation priorities into annual budgeting and capital planning, and periodically reviewing actions to determine whether they have been completed, need modification, or should be reprioritized as conditions change. The City will also periodically evaluate whether actual development patterns align with the Future Land Use Plan and identify regulatory or investment adjustments needed to better achieve the desired growth pattern.

Policy 4: Strengthen transparent, coordinated, and accessible municipal decision-making.

This policy focuses on how municipal decisions and long-range planning are communicated and coordinated. Strategies include continuing support for a communications specialist to improve public awareness of planning, budgeting, investment, and implementation decisions; coordinating transportation, housing, economic development, recreation, facilities, infrastructure, resilience, and other long-range planning efforts across City departments; continuing to evaluate methods for reaching residents who face barriers to participation; and periodically reviewing the responsibilities of boards, committees, advisory groups, and implementation partners to improve coordination and reduce duplication.

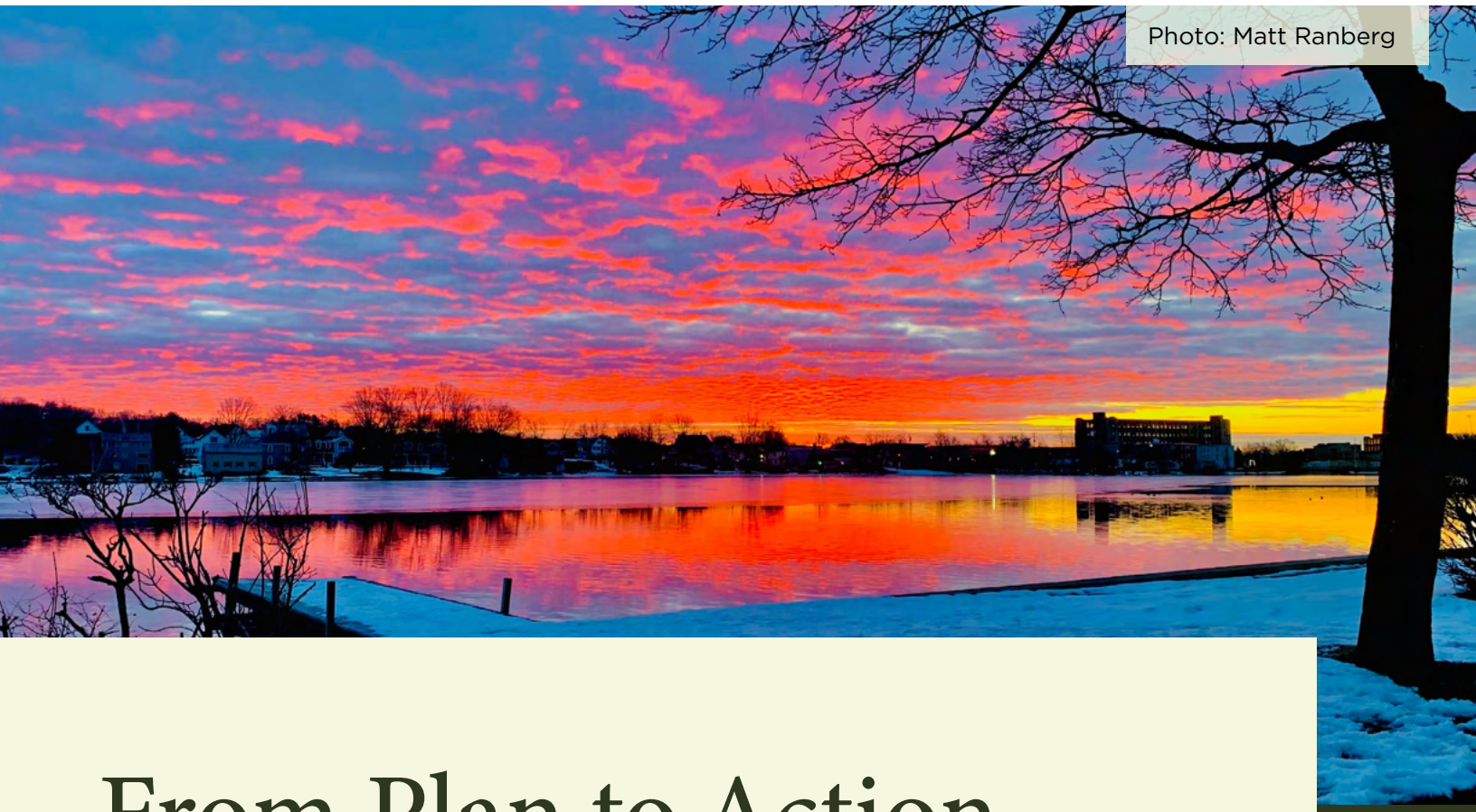


Photo: Matt Ranberg

From Plan to Action

Implementation Approach

Advancing the City of Sanford's shared vision of creating a welcoming, walkable community while protecting its natural resources and encouraging growth for local businesses and entrepreneurs involves effective implementation of this plan. It is important to define what the implementation will look like, who will play a role in the steps within the action plan, and how they will tie into annual work plans and budgets. City leadership, staff, and committees will need to establish a coordinated plan for reviewing the action plan when it comes to annual budget and capital planning.

During annual budget setting and capital planning, the City should assess the status of the action plan and identify what priorities need to be incorporated. Integrating priorities for the following years should align with available funding, staffing capacity, community needs and emerging opportunities, such as grants or partnerships. Throughout the implementation process there should also be opportunities for public discussion on updating priorities as needs and circumstances change and providing feedback on what is or is not working well in the community. In addition, reviewing implementation progress in a public process allows for City leadership and staff to recognize the progress that has been made and celebrate successes. A coordinated implementation approach will allow the City to achieve the community's vision of transparent and consistent public decisions that clearly tie to the priorities of the Comprehensive Plan.

Desired Future Outcomes

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan is intended to move Sanford toward the community vision and goals established in this Plan. While the Action Plan identifies specific strategies the City and its partners can undertake, successful implementation should ultimately be measured by the conditions those actions help create. The following desired future outcomes provide a shared picture of the progress Sanford is working toward and can help guide annual priority-setting, investment decisions, and long-term monitoring.

Through implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, Sanford will work toward a future where:

- Residents feel welcome, safe, connected, and proud of their community.
- Downtown Sanford and Springvale are active, walkable, and attractive centers for business, housing, services, and community life.
- Local businesses, employers, and entrepreneurs have opportunities to start, grow, invest, and create jobs.
- Housing options meet the needs of residents across ages, incomes, household sizes, and life stages.
- Residents can access education, recreation, health, food, technology, and other resources that support health and well-being.
- Parks, trails, open spaces, water resources, farmland, forests, and wildlife habitat are protected and connected.

- Roads, sidewalks, utilities, transportation options, public facilities, and municipal services support current needs and planned growth.
- Public decisions are transparent, consistent, and connected to clear priorities for implementation and investment.

These outcomes are intentionally broader than the individual strategies in the Action Plan. No single strategy will achieve an outcome on its own, and progress may depend on actions across multiple goals, departments, and community partners. Taken together, the outcomes can provide a consistent framework for evaluating whether implementation activities, capital investments, regulatory changes, programs, and partnerships are moving Sanford toward its long-term vision.

Regional Coordination

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will require sustained coordination beyond City government. Many priorities cross municipal boundaries or depend on the authority, expertise, funding, infrastructure, and services of other organizations. The City should work with neighboring communities; county, regional, State, and federal agencies; schools and educational institutions; utilities and transportation providers; nonprofit and community organizations; businesses, employers, property owners; and residents to align plans, share information, pursue funding, coordinate investments, and carry out strategies that no single organization can advance alone. The following sections identify key areas where continued or expanded regional coordination will be particularly important to implementation.

Transportation

The City has completed multiple transportation initiatives since 2022, with grants from MaineDOT and the U.S. Department of Transportation. The City and MaineDOT coordinate annually to partner on projects within the City of Sanford. With a strong awareness of the need for multimodal transportation options, the City aspires to be a welcoming, and walkable community while still allowing for efficient vehicle travel. Achieving this goal means strong regional coordination with organizations, such as the YCCAC that offers a demand-response bus connecting Sanford with Biddeford and Saco. The YCCAC also connects the City with the Wells Transportation Center which is served by the Amtrack Downeaster and Greyhound lines. The City owns and operates the Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport. The Airport supports charter services, emergency preparedness, flight training, aircraft storage, business aviation, helicopter instruction, LifeFlight operations, and special events. The Airport Master Plan supports further growth and expansion for the Airport which will bolster the City's economy.

The City has a well-connected trail network east of the Route 109 corridor near Sanford Middle School and Sanford Pride Elementary School, and additional trails and connections along the Mousam River which allow for active transportation accessibility connecting surrounding neighborhoods to schools, recreation facilities, and other amenities in the area. While these trails are well-connected to the amenities in the immediate area, there are limited routes to other destinations. Continuing to identify opportunities for trail expansion and connectivity to other neighborhoods and amenities will help to improve accessibility.

For example, creating a shared-use path connection along Jagger Mill Road is a key focus of the ongoing South Sanford Multi-modal Transportation Study.

Water Quality Protection

Water quality and watershed health are heavily impacted by land use activities. Watersheds often span multiple municipal boundaries, making intermunicipal coordination critical in addressing surface water quality. It is important to establish coordination with nearby communities whose land use may impact the water quality within the City such as Shapleigh which is just upriver from Sanford. The City should also continue coordination with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (Maine DEP) to consistently administer the agency's Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan. The location, type, and design of future development and redevelopment will impact nonpoint source pollution. The City is working to improve the Goodall Brook water quality through the implementation of the Goodall Brook Watershed Based Management Plan.

Resiliency

As Maine encounters increased severe weather events, and heightened risk of drought and flooding, it is important for cities to coordinate in resiliency planning efforts. Severity of weather events combined with aging infrastructure and limited system capacity is increasing risk for several areas of Sanford determined to be at high risk of flooding. The City should continue participation with the Community Resilience Partnership to help plan for the impacts associated with climate change. Increasing resiliency to flooding will require collaboration with funding partners, MaineDOT, and Maine DEP to increase culvert sizing and update stormwater infrastructure. The City will also continue to align floodplain management ordinances with the State's updated FEMA flood hazard area maps and York County's Hazard Mitigation Plan.

In an effort to move toward energy independence, the City has taken strides to install 15 solar arrays to support the City's energy needs. Energy independence can increase resiliency for a community especially when facing severe weather events. The City's efforts to expand renewable energy resources is aligned with the State's goal to expand renewable electricity generation and reduce emissions. The City will continue to coordinate with State agencies to access funding and technical expertise to support ongoing resiliency efforts.

Economic Growth

As the most populous community in York County, the City of Sanford is a regional service center with an economic role closely tied to the surrounding region. The City's location, approximately 30 miles north of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, positions the City to be supported by the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. As of 2024, 573 Sanford residents were employed at the shipyard, meaning coordination with the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard will be vital for the City's continued economic growth. While the City has a strong manufacturing base and a desirable location, Sanford is also facing a shrinking workforce. Coordinating with the York County Community College (YCCC) located in Wells, to align educational programs with the workforce needs of the City should remain a high priority. Continuing to leverage the City's regional

airport could also offer increased economic growth for the City and the surrounding region.

Housing

Similarly to the rest of State, the City has experienced a dramatic increase in remote workers who have moved to the area and purchasing homes or second homes during and following the 2020 pandemic. The increase in new residents and homeowners has led to increased home prices that are unaffordable to the local workforce. The City's Land Bank Authority works with the private real estate sector to address abandoned properties, improve housing stock, and manage dangerous buildings. The City of Sanford Housing Authority (SHA) manages subsidized housing properties and serves as the housing voucher administrator for the region, operating across nine jurisdictions. Homelessness is a growing and complex issue that requires coordination among municipalities and local, regional, and State service providers. Financial pressure continues to strain the City's resources, and regional and State coordination and support is crucial to address this issue and to meet the housing needs in Sanford.

Capital Investment Strategy

As the heart of York County, the City is uniquely positioned to lead the region in creating an impactful capital investment strategy. By preparing a formal long-term Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) the City will be more equipped to plan for capital investments related to equipment needs, facility maintenance and upgrades, and infrastructure projects. The ongoing investment in public resources is also balanced with requests for allocation to address aging infrastructure and promote strategic economic development.

Preparing and maintaining the CIP in alignment with the Comprehensive Plan priorities and identified capital needs over the near and long-term will help the City prioritize spending and phase costs over time, reducing the risk of high costs of emergency repairs and reactive spending. The CIP will also allow the City to connect investment to the Downtown area to support the priority for new growth in this area.

Monitoring, Reporting, and Adaptive Management

Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan gives the City an opportunity to assess progress, share successes, and streamline any inefficiencies. The City should annually publish an implementation update and review the implementation progress every year over the next decade. Conducting these updates and reviews will support the City and residents as they establish budgets and conduct any capital planning. The City should also identify the most important indicators to evaluate progress and highlight those indicators on a public facing dashboard

Additionally, the implementation matrix assigns responsibility to the department responsible to document changes in conditions, completed actions, barriers, and recommended amendments. The importance of assigned responsibility is discussed further in the following section (Plan Stewardship).

Plan Stewardship

Carrying out the action steps to support the City's vision of a welcoming, vibrant community while protecting its natural resources will involve coordinated and flexible stewarding. The Action Plan will assign responsibility for each item to ensure coordinated annual reporting across departments, boards and committees and that any amendments are brought forward in a streamlined manner. By assigning clear responsible parties the amendments will have a clear process to follow and are more likely to be implemented. Establishing a recurring public forum for reviewing progress and resetting priorities will support the City in tracking implementation actions and adapting to future changing needs of the community.

Action Plan

The Action Plan translates the Comprehensive Plan's policies into specific strategies that the City and its partners can carry forward over time. Each strategy is paired with a set of implementation indicators that identify who will be involved, the type of action required, the anticipated time frame, and the relative level of resources needed. These indicators are intended to support annual work planning, budgeting, capital planning, partnership development, and regular review of implementation progress.

The indicators are planning tools rather than fixed commitments. Timing, responsible parties, and resource needs may change as funding, staffing, community conditions, and opportunities evolve. During annual implementation reviews, the City should use the Action Plan to identify strategies that are underway or completed, determine which strategies should be prioritized next, and document where adjustments are needed.

Responsible Agencies

Responsible agencies listed in the Plan are City departments, boards, committees, and council and quasi-municipal agencies and organizations (e.g., Sanford Sewer and Water Districts, Sanford Housing Authority). To further the implementation of this plan, The City will coordinate with community partners, organizations, businesses, and individuals to support plan implementation. Responsible agencies are the City department or board that will initiate and coordinate efforts on the City's side, in partnership with external organizations.

- Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport
- City Manager
- Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement
- Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council
- Emergency Management Agency
- Finance
- Fire Department
- Land Bank Authority
- Police Department
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Works
- Sanford Sewerage District
- Sanford Water District
- City Council
- Airport Advisory Committee
- Arts Commission
- Design Review Committee
- Housing Authority
- Recreation Advisory Board

- Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee
- Sanford School Department

Strategy Type:

Strategy type identifies the kind of action needed to carry out each strategy. A strategy may include more than one type when implementation involves a combination of programs, planning, regulations, investments, communication, or partnerships. The types are:

- Program: A municipal program or initiative that provides services, activities, or assistance to address an identified community need.
- Plan: A plan, study, or assessment that evaluates conditions, identifies needs, and establishes recommendations for future decisions or projects.
- Regulation: A municipal rule, ordinance, standard, or guideline that establishes expectations for development, activities, or municipal review.
- Investment: A capital project or expenditure to acquire, construct, improve, or replace infrastructure, facilities, equipment, or other public assets.
- Communication: Outreach, education, information sharing, or public engagement that improves awareness, access to resources, or participation in community decisions.
- Partnership: Collaboration with external agencies, community organizations, businesses, or other municipalities to coordinate resources and advance shared priorities.
- Ongoing Planning: Recurring coordination, monitoring, review, and updates that incorporate Plan priorities into municipal work plans, budgets, and decisions.

Timeline:

Timeline identifies the anticipated period for advancing each strategy following Plan adoption. Short-term strategies fall within the first zero to three years, medium-term strategies within years three to six, and long-term strategies within years six to 10. Ongoing strategies are recurring activities carried out throughout the planning period. Some strategies may require early preparation or phased implementation across multiple periods. Timing should be reviewed annually in light of funding, staffing, prerequisites, and partner readiness.

- Ongoing
- Short – 0 – 3 years
- Medium – 3 – 6 years
- Long – 6 – 10 years

Relative Cost

Relative cost indicates the general level of financial and staffing resources needed to implement each strategy, rather than a detailed cost estimate or funding commitment. The scale distinguishes strategies that can be substantially accommodated within current budgets from those requiring some additional resources or substantial new funding. Actual costs, funding sources, and any ongoing operating and maintenance needs should be evaluated as individual strategies are developed.

- $ - Can be achieved substantially with current operating and/or capital budgets
- $$ - Some new or increased funding/ staffing required for implementation
- $$$ - Substantial new funding or grant support needed for implementation



Photo: Alyssa Laflamme

Full Action Plan

Goal 1: Strengthen Community Identity and Connection

Sanford's sense of community is built upon neighborhood and City pride, camaraderie among residents, a commitment to civic engagement and volunteerism, and a welcoming small-town way of life. Events, programs, and volunteer opportunities create a framework for residents to engage and connect. Sharing Sanford's evolution from an agricultural community and mill town to a regional hub strengthens the City's identity and connects its culture across generations.

Policy 1: Protect, to the greatest extent practical, Sanford's historic and cultural resources.*

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Require subdivision and non-residential development applicants to continue consultation with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) regarding known archaeological sites, and, where resources are identified, implement appropriate mitigation efforts in line with MHPC recommendations (e.g., limiting extent of excavation, modifying site design).	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement ; Planning Board; City Council	Ongoing	$	
Require the planning board to continue incorporating maps and information provided by MHPC into their review process.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Planning Board; City Council	Ongoing	$	
Establish clear procedures and share processes on the City website for consulting with MHPC when development is proposed near known historic resources, including the Mousam River corridor, mill ponds and lakes, abandoned mill sites, and other areas identified during future surveys.	Regulation, Communication	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Planning Board; City Manager's Office	Medium	$	Historic Commission | Durham, Maine https://durhammaine.gov/pages/historic-commission
Update ordinance definitions, resource maps, application requirements, and review standards as new historic and archaeological information becomes available through future resource surveys.	Regulation, Communication	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement ; Planning Board; City Council	Short	$	Historic and Scenic Preservation Local Option Property Tax Reimbursement | Maine Historic Preservation Commission https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/programs/protection-and-community-resources/prevention-planning/historic-and-scenic-preservation
Work with the Sanford-Springvale Historical Society, MHPC, property owners, and other partners to prepare a comprehensive survey of Sanford's historic and archaeological resources.	Plan	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$$	

Policy 2: Strengthen community identify through coordinated outreach, cultural programming, and civic engagement.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Develop a new resident welcome program providing information packets at vehicle registration, voter registration, or other city touchpoints. This should highlight trails, recreational facilities, civic organizations, community services, schools, transit options, and local businesses.	Program, Communication	City Manager's Office	Short	$	The Guildford Guide | Guildford, Vermont https://guilfordvt.gov/available-now-the-guilford-guide/
Empower the Sanford Arts Commission by providing adequate operating budget and ensuring meaningful consultation on City branding, design, and cultural initiatives.	Communication, Regulation	City Manager's Office; City Council; Arts Commission; Parks and Recreation	Medium	$	
Work with the Sanford Arts Commission to prepare an arts and culture strategy that identifies priorities, partner roles, target locations, funding needs, and near-term actions for cultural facilities, public art, creative businesses, performances, and events.	Program, Plan, Partnership	Arts Commission; Parks and Recreation	Short	$	
Support affordable and accessible spaces for artists, makers, performers, cultural organizations, and creative enterprises through adaptive reuse, shared facilities, temporary use of vacant storefronts, pop-up programs, and partnerships with property owners.	Partnership, Investment	Arts Commission; Parks and Recreation; Planning, Permitting and Codes; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Medium	$$	Creative Arts Center | AVA Gallery and Arts Center | Lebanon, NH https://www.avagallery.org/
Use public art, streetscape elements, and creative placemaking to share Sanford's industrial, agricultural, and community histories and to strengthen connections among Downtown Sanford, Springvale, neighborhoods, parks, trails, and the Mousam River.	Communication	Public Works, Arts Commission, Parks and Recreation; Sanford Regional Growth Council	Medium	$	
Support community events and programming that activates downtown spaces with enhanced marketing and promotion.	Program, Communication	Planning, Permitting and Codes; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Short	$	
Improve the special events permitting process to encourage a variety of community events, including block parties, neighborhood-based events, and other special events.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting and Codes	Medium	$	
Create a Civic Engagement and Transparency Handbook or Program that includes a public handbook, online resources, and ongoing communications to improve understanding of City operations, increase awareness of engagement opportunities, and reduce barriers to participation in local government.	Program	City Manager's Office	Short		

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Promote the Sanford Performing Arts Center to expand arts and cultural programming and events in Sanford.		Arts Commission; Sanford School Department			

Policy 3: Leverage community assets, spaces, and partnerships to strengthen community connection.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Support investments in libraries and other community-serving facilities that allow them to continue serving as accessible spaces for learning, programming, civic participation, and community connection.	Ongoing	City Manager's Office; City Council	Ongoing	$$	
Ensure libraries have resources to sustain services and expand community-centered programming.	Investment	City Manager's Office City Council	Ongoing	$$	
Promote partner services and resources and leverage spaces and partnerships to activate community spaces across Sanford for new and existing residents.	Program, Communication, Partnership	City Manager's Office	Short	$	
Identify and work with partners to activate underused public, institutional, nonprofit, and privately owned spaces through community programming, temporary uses, events, gatherings, and other activities that create opportunities for social connection.	Program, Partnership	City Manager's Office; Parks and Recreation; Arts Commission	Medium	$	
Coordinate with community organizations, schools, libraries, cultural organizations, recreation providers, businesses, and other partners to share spaces, coordinate programming, expand community activities, and reduce duplication.	Partnership	Sanford School Department; Parks and Recreation; Recreation Advisory Board; Arts Commission; City Manager's Office	Short	$	

Policy 4: Build a coordinated and sustainable volunteer network that expands community capacity, strengthens social connection, and supports residents without replacing essential municipal or professional services.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Establish a community volunteer hub or coordinating partnership that maintains a central listing of volunteer opportunities, service requests, participating organizations, training requirements, and points of contact.	Ongoing Planning	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; City Manager's Office; Parks and Recreation	Short	$	Partners | Volunteer Maine https://www.volunteermaine.gov/commission/partners Yarmouth Volunteer Fair on 11/14 https://www.yarmouth.me.us/_T17_R103.php
Coordinate volunteer programs that may include friendly calls and visits, transportation, grocery and medicine delivery, seasonal yard work, snow assistance, technology help, minor home repairs, accessibility improvements, community events, trail stewardship, and emergency preparedness outreach.	Program	City Manager's Office; Parks and Recreation; Police Department; Fire Department; Public Works; Sanford Housing Authority	Short	$	
Partner with Sanford Regional Technical Center, Sanford Community Adult Education, local employers, trade organizations, and community colleges to undertake supervised community-service projects aligned with student learning and resident needs.	Program	Sanford School Department	Medium	$	

Goal 2: Foster Inclusion, Health, and Well-Being

A healthy and resilient community is one where all individuals feel welcome, supported, and connected. Access to and affordability of essential resources – such as education, recreation, food, and health services – underpins overall well-being, while diverse social environments strengthen civic life and belonging. Infrastructure, public facilities, community programs, and policies support social connection and drive civic engagement and volunteerism.

Policy 1: Provide affordable, accessible, and inclusive recreation programs for residents at every stage of life.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Use participation data, waitlists, surveys, and partner input to evaluate demand and expand programming for children, teens, adults, and older adults, including active recreation, outdoor education, arts and enrichment, adaptive recreation, and low-impact wellness activities.	Plan, Program	Parks and Recreation; Arts Commission; Recreation Advisory Board; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee	Medium	$	
Maintain resident discounts and financial assistance for eligible programs and evaluate scholarships, equipment lending, transportation assistance, free community activities, and sliding-scale fees to reduce financial barriers without undermining program sustainability.	Plan, Partnership	Recreation Advisory Board; Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	$$	
Identify and address physical, sensory, communication, cultural, financial, scheduling, and transportation barriers in facilities, registration, staffing, and programming. Apply universal design and inclusive recreation practices as facilities and programs are updated.	Plan; Investment	Parks and Recreation	Short	$$	
Coordinate recreation programming with walking, bicycling, transit, and school transportation initiatives so residents who do not drive can reach major facilities, parks, trails, and events.	Partnership	Parks and Recreation; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee; Sanford School Department	Short	$	Maine Trails Program: Grant Program: Bureau of Parks and Lands: Maine DACF https://www.maine.gov/dacf/parks/grants/maine-trails-program.shtml
Continue to formalize agreements with schools, the Sanford-Springvale YMCA, the Trafton Senior Center, youth sports leagues, libraries, health organizations, and other providers to share facilities, coordinate schedules, fill service gaps, and avoid unnecessary duplication.	Partnership	Sanford School Department; Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	$	

Policy 2: Support older adults in remaining safely, independently, and meaningfully connected to the Sanford community through coordinated housing, transportation, health, social, and home-support services.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Coordinate with local partners to create an age-friendly community action plan that identifies needs, existing resources, service gaps, partner responsibilities, funding opportunities, near-term priorities, and progress measures.	Partnership; Plan	City Manager's Office	Medium	$	
Coordinate with local partners to support the development of a centralized, accessible resource guide for transportation, housing, home repair, accessibility modifications, food assistance, healthcare, recreation, technology assistance, social connection, caregiver support, and emergency preparedness.	Plan, Partnership	City Manager's Office	Short	$	Lifelong Maine – Community Connectors: Pilots https://www.lifelongmaine.org/community-connections/pilots
Continue to conduct regular service-provider coordination meetings to reduce duplication, identify unmet needs, coordinate outreach, and improve referrals among organizations serving older adults and caregivers.	Partnership	Sanford Housing Authority; General Assistance	Ongoing	$	
Support home repair, weatherization, energy-efficiency, accessibility, fall-prevention, and property-maintenance programs that help older adults remain safely in their homes.	Program	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	
Continue to maintain participation in the AARP Livable Communities Network and actively pursue grants and technical support to implement age-friendly policies and infrastructure.	Program, Partnership	City Manager's Office	Ongoing	$	https://livablemap.aarp.org/member/sanford-me

Policy 3: Support high-quality, accessible, and adaptable public education and educational facilities that respond to student needs and changing community demographics.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Engage students and educators in municipal planning, sustainability, public safety, civic engagement, recreation, natural-resource stewardship, and community improvement projects.	Program	Sanford School Department; Recreation Advisory Board; Public Works	Short	$	
Encourage shared use of school, municipal, and community facilities for recreation, cultural programming, continuing education, emergency sheltering, civic activities, and community events where appropriate.	Program	Sanford School Department; Public Works; Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	$	Recreation Program Partners | Westland, MI https://cityofwestland.com/608/Recreation-Program-Partners

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Strengthen partnerships among schools, libraries, community organizations, cultural institutions, healthcare providers, and recreation providers to expand educational, enrichment, mentoring, and after-school opportunities for students and families.	Program	Sanford School Department; Parks and Recreation; Sanford Housing Authority; Arts Commission; Recreation Advisory Board	Ongoing	$	
Support investments in school facilities, technology, transportation, and educational resources that help provide high-quality learning environments for current and future students.	Plan	Sanford School Department; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Long	$$	
Conduct regular meetings between Sanford Regional Technical Center, Sanford Community Adult Education, Sanford School Department, York County Community College, employers, workforce organizations, labor representatives, and economic development partners to identify changing education and workforce needs.	Plan, Partnership	Sanford School Department; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Ongoing	$	
Coordinate with local partners to expand opportunities for internships, job shadowing, cooperative education, apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, service-learning projects, and work-based learning opportunities with municipal departments, local employers, trades, healthcare organizations, and nonprofit partners.	Program, Plan	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; Sanford School Department	Medium	$	
Maintain a centralized, plain-language education and career-resource guide describing technical training, adult education, financial assistance, career services, transportation options, and supportive services.	Program, Communication	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Short	$	
Coordinate transportation, child care, digital access, language assistance, career navigation, and other supports that help residents participate in technical and adult education.	Program, Partnership	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; Sanford School Department	Medium	$	
Improve communication about Sanford Regional Technical Center, Skills USA, and vocational certifications with local high schools.		Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; Sanford School Department			

Policy 4: Expand equitable digital access and modernize municipal technology, data, and online services to improve community access, operational efficiency, transparency, and decision-making.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Maintain current information on broadband availability, affordability, reliability, and adoption; identify underserved locations and populations; and coordinate with providers and state and regional partners to close remaining access gaps.	Partnership, Communication	Public Works; City Manager's Office	Ongoing	$	
Partner with libraries, schools, adult education, housing organizations, service providers, and employers to expand digital literacy, device access, technical assistance, and affordable internet enrollment for residents and businesses.	Program, Partnership	Sanford School Department; Sanford Housing Authority; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Medium	$	Digital Resources - GrowSmart Maine https://growsmartmaine.org/digital-resources/
Prepare and maintain a municipal technology modernization roadmap that prioritizes secure, accessible, interoperable, and maintainable systems; identifies replacement needs and life-cycle costs; and coordinates investments across departments.	Plan	City Manager's Office	Medium	$$	
Expand secure and accessible online service delivery for high-demand transactions, applications, permits, payments, requests, and public information while maintaining phone, in-person, and other non-digital options for residents who need them.	Plan	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; City Manager's Office	Medium	$	
Establish citywide data governance standards for data quality, ownership, privacy, cybersecurity, retention, accessibility, integration, and responsible public release, with clear departmental responsibilities and regular staff training.	Plan	City Manager; City Council	Short	$	
Use geographic information systems, shared dashboards, and performance measures to support capital planning, development review, asset management, emergency response, service delivery, and annual reporting on Comprehensive Plan implementation.	Plan	City Manager's Office	Ongoing	$	
Publish high-value, nonconfidential datasets and performance information in accessible formats, supported by plain-language context, data definitions, update schedules, and contact information.	Communication	City Manager's Office; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	

Policy 5: Improve access to locally grown foods.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Coordinate with schools, early childhood programs, health care providers, municipal departments, and other institutions to expand local food purchasing and farm-to-school or farm-to-institution programs where operationally and financially feasible.	Program	Sanford School Department; City Manager's Office	Ongoing	$	School Partnerships - Cultivating Community https://cultivatingcommunity.org/schools/
Partner with food assistance organizations, farms, retailers, schools, and health care providers to improve year-round access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally responsive food, including benefit enrollment, food distribution, mobile markets, and transportation or delivery options.	Partnership, Program, Communication	General Assistance Department; Sanford Housing Authority; Sanford School Department	Short	$	Good Shepherd Food Bank | Hunger Relief | Maine Food Bank https://www.gsfb.org/
Support community gardens, school gardens, edible landscapes, and shared growing spaces on suitable public, institutional, nonprofit, or privately owned land, with clear provisions for water access, soil safety, maintenance, accessibility, and long-term stewardship.	Partnership	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Parks and Recreation	Medium	$$	
Connect food entrepreneurs and agricultural producers with shared or commercial kitchen space, business planning, permitting guidance, financing, distribution networks, and opportunities to test and sell products at markets, events, and local businesses.	Program, Partnership	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Ongoing	$	
Convene local and regional food-system partners periodically to identify supply-chain gaps, coordinate programs and funding, strengthen connections between producers and buyers, and track progress on food access and agricultural business development.	Plan	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Ongoing	$	

Goal 3: Support a Vibrant, Diverse Local Economy

Sanford is the heart of York County – both as a geographically central hub and an economic center for the region. Encouraging a diverse and balanced economy through targeted business attraction and retention broadens the tax base to support economic resilience. Thoughtfully directing commercial growth to encourage industry in designated areas while supporting small businesses and local entrepreneurs to revitalize downtown to attract visitors and meet the needs of residents will support economic stability and community vibrancy.

Policy 1: Strengthen economic management, implementation capacity, and partnerships.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Support the Sanford Growth Council and provide sufficient staff and financial resources to carry out the annual work program. Clearly define the supporting roles of City departments, committees, downtown organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, and regional economic development organizations to reduce duplication and coordinate economic-focused initiatives.	Plan, Program	Sanford Chamber of Commerce; Sanford Growth Council; City Council; City Manager's Office	Ongoing	$	
Building on the Market Analysis, establish an Economic Development and Business Attraction and Retention Plan with clear actions and implementation coordination to target and attract businesses in key sectors.	Plan	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Short	$$	
Establish regular coordination among the City, businesses, property owners, nonprofit organizations, arts and cultural groups, and regional partners to advance redevelopment projects, events, cross-promotion, and grant opportunities.	Partnership	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council, City Manager's Office, Arts Commission, Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	Events | Castle Rock, CO - Official Website https://www.crgov.com/1963/Events
Maintain an annual economic development work program with defined priorities, responsible parties, funding needs, partner roles, and performance measures such as business retention contacts, private investment leveraged, commercial vacancy, jobs created or retained, and redevelopment milestones.	Program	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Ongoing	$	
Enhance employment services and connections between job seekers and local employers through the York County Career Center and local workforce development programs.	Program; Partnership	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Short	$	
Support transportation access to employment, job training, and social services through expanded transit options and coordination with YCCAC.	Partnership	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Medium	$$	

Policy 2: Support small businesses, entrepreneurship, and locally owned properties.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Coordinate with local and regional partners to connect businesses and entrepreneurs with technical assistance, financing, workforce resources, succession planning, and available commercial space throughout Sanford.	Partnership	Land Bank Authority; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Short	$	Fit-Up Grant Program | City of Bath, Maine https://www.cityofbathmaine.gov/Departments/Economic-and-Community-Development/Fit-Up-Grant-Program
Partner with the Friends of Downtown, Chamber of Commerce, downtown stakeholders, and regional organizations to market locally owned and independent businesses and promote coordinated events and cross-promotion.	Partnership, Communication	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Ongoing	$	
Maintain and update regularly, a clear, centralized business resource guide that explains permitting, available properties, technical assistance, financing programs, and local and regional contacts for starting, expanding, or relocating a business in Sanford.	Communication, Regulation	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	
Support low-cost opportunities for entrepreneurs and emerging businesses, including pop-up retail, shared commercial space, business incubator or maker-space concepts, and programming that helps businesses test products and build local markets.	Program	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Short	$	Creative Arts Center | AVA Gallery and Arts Center | Lebanon, NH https://www.avagallery.org/
Conduct periodic assessments of retail, dining, service, and commercial gaps and use the findings to guide business recruitment, property-owner outreach, and marketing, with emphasis on needs residents currently leave Sanford to meet.	Plan	Sanford Chamber of Commerce; Sanford Growth Council	Short	$	
Coordinate with regional economic development organizations, neighboring municipalities, workforce partners, and state agencies to identify and pursue collaborative economic development opportunities, funding programs, infrastructure investments, and workforce initiatives that benefit Sanford and the surrounding region.	Program, Partnership	Sanford Growth Council	Ongoing	$	

Policy 3: Position Sanford's industrial districts and priority employment sites for business investment and job growth.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Coordinate utility, transportation, broadband, and capital improvement planning with the City's priority industrial sites, airport district, and other designated growth areas.	Plan, Partnership, Regulation	Public Works; Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport; Sanford Sewer District; Sanford Water District	Ongoing	$$$	
Review zoning, development standards, and permitting procedures to support the desired scale, design, intensity, and location of industrial and commercial development while maintaining clear standards for infrastructure, environmental protection, and compatibility.	Plan, Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	
Maintain an inventory of priority employment sites and identify actions needed to improve development readiness, including utility capacity, access, environmental review, parcel assembly, and marketing.	Plan	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport ; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Ongoing	$	
Coordinate utility planning and capital improvement planning with business development goals by prioritizing capital investments in commercial growth areas.	Plan, Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Sanford Sewer District; Sanford Water District; City Manager's Office; Public Works	Ongoing	$$$	
Work with employers, educational institutions, workforce organizations, and business groups to align training, housing, transportation, and child care initiatives with workforce needs.	Partnership, Program	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Short	$	
Formalize career pathways, internships, apprenticeships, and work-based learning partnerships among employers, Sanford schools, York County Community College, and regional workforce organizations, with emphasis on manufacturing, construction, healthcare, transportation, and other sectors with documented workforce needs.	Partnership, Program	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; Sanford School Department	Medium	$	About Us | Maine Career Catalyst https://mainecareercatalyst.org/about-us/
Coordinate with Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport, the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, regional partners, and major area employers to position airport-area sites and facilities for aviation-related, advanced manufacturing, logistics, and complementary business investment.	Partnership	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport	Medium	$$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Make strategic financial commitments, when necessary and fiscally responsible, to support priority economic development projects and needed public improvements. Evaluate local tax dollars, tax increment financing districts, Community Development Block Grants and other grants, bonds, impact fees, brownfields assistance, public-private partnerships, and other legally available mechanisms based on project benefits, costs, risks, and long-term fiscal impacts.	Investment	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; City Manager's Office	Medium	$$$	

Policy 4: Strengthen Sanford's childcare system as critical infrastructure that supports workforce participation, economic competitiveness, and quality of life.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Work with childcare providers, employers, schools, regional service organizations, and state agencies to assess childcare capacity, identify service gaps by age group and geography, and establish priorities for expansion.	Partnership	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; Sanford School Department	Short	$	
Review zoning, permitting, and development regulations to ensure family childcare homes, childcare centers, after-school programs, and other childcare facilities can be appropriately located within neighborhoods, mixed-use districts, employment centers, and growth areas.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$$	
Support the expansion of childcare capacity through partnerships, grants, technical assistance, facility improvements, adaptive reuse of existing buildings, and other locally appropriate tools.	Investment	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Finance	Medium	$$	Catalyst Program | Northern Border Regional Commission https://www.nbrc.gov/Catalyst
Coordinate with major employers, workforce organizations, educational institutions, and childcare providers to identify opportunities for employer-supported childcare, shared services, flexible scheduling, and workforce recruitment initiatives.	Partnership	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Medium	$	

Policy 5: Promote agritourism and agriculture/forestry-based community events.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Permit and encourage complementary land use activities that support productive agriculture and forestry operations such as farm stands, pick-your-own operations, roadside markets, small-scale greenhouses, firewood, and other agritourism activities, where appropriate.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	
Include a strategy and supporting actions dedicated to investments in agriculture, commercial forestry operations, and land conservation that supports them in the next update of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Southern Maine, as developed by Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission.	Plan	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Medium	$$	
Coordinate with farmers to build on and support existing community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs with local farmers.	Partnership, Program	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Short	$	
Include agriculture, commercial forestry operations, and land conservation that supports them in local or regional economic development plans.	Plan	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Ongoing	$	

Goal 4: Revitalize Downtowns

Infrastructure and aesthetic improvements to downtown Sanford and Springvale will make the downtown areas more walkable, safe, vibrant, and desirable places to visit. Beautification initiatives, convenient parking, public spaces, and well-maintained properties can strengthen the image and perception of Sanford/Springvale.

Policy 1: Revitalize Downtown Sanford and Springvale as walkable, mixed-use centers.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Establish a coordinated downtown management and implementation structure that clarifies roles among the City, Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council, downtown organizations, property owners, businesses, and community partners for business support, events, marketing, beautification, maintenance, redevelopment, and implementation of downtown priorities.	Program, Partnership	City Manager's Office; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Medium	$$	
Evaluate the need for a tourism and marketing position or initiatives at the Sanford Regional Growth Council to support awareness of businesses and attract people to the downtowns.	Investment, Program	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Ongoing	$$	
Prioritize coordinated improvements to sidewalks, crossings, lighting, landscaping, wayfinding, public spaces, streetscapes, and bicycle connections that improve safety, accessibility, and the pedestrian experience.	Investment	Public Works; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Medium	$$$	Bike-Ped Plan | Gray, ME https://www.graymaine.org/1308/Bike-Ped-Plan
Provide technical-assistance and evaluate opportunities for a small grant process for community-led placemaking projects, including public art, parklets, outdoor dining, temporary installations, seasonal displays, neighborhood events, and other activities that contribute to active and welcoming downtown spaces.	Plan, Investment	Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Short	$$	
Regularly evaluate land use and building regulations to reduce barriers to infill, adaptive reuse, upper-story housing, and mixed-use redevelopment while protecting public health, safety, historic resources, and neighborhood compatibility.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement, Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Ongoing	$	
Encourage active ground-floor uses and storefront designs along priority downtown streets, including transparent windows, visible entrances, outdoor seating, displays, adaptable commercial spaces, and ADA accessible access that contribute to pedestrian activity and support changing business needs.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement, Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Ongoing	$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Develop a coordinated redevelopment approach for key opportunity sites, including Midtown Mall and underused or vacant properties, with attention to pedestrian connections, urban design, viable tenant mixes, infrastructure, and phased implementation.	Investment	Land Bank Authority; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	
Partner with state, regional, federal, and nonprofit organizations to secure technical assistance and funding for mill, brownfield, and downtown revitalization, including historic tax credits, cleanup assistance, grants, tax increment financing, and infrastructure funding.	Partnership, Investment	Land Bank Authority; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Short	$$	Continue coordination with the Maine Redevelopment Authority https://maineredevelopment.org/
Conduct a 'Reimagine Central Park' initiative to enhance the role of the Park in Downtown Sanford.	Plan, Investment	Parks and Recreation, Recreation Advisory Board, Arts Commission	Medium	$$	

Policy 2: Strengthen access and connections to and within Downtown Sanford and Springvale.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Improve pedestrian, bicycle, trail, and transit connections between Downtown Sanford, Springvale, surrounding neighborhoods, major community destinations, and regional transportation services, with emphasis on closing gaps that limit safe and convenient access to downtown businesses and services.	Program	Parks and Recreation; Public Works	Ongoing	$$	
Establish a permitting and funding process for community-led placemaking efforts.	Investment, Program	Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement	Short	$	Portland's Creative Placemaking initiative from Portland's Plan 2020-2025: https://portlandmaine.com/placemaking/
Leverage state and regional funding and planning efforts to support downtown development and infrastructure investments.	Plan, Investment	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; Public Works	Ongoing	$	
Pursue public-private partnerships with developers to ensure development contributes proportionally to transportation improvements.	Partnership, Investment	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Public Works	Medium	$$	

Policy 3: Strengthen established neighborhoods and neighborhood centers through coordinated reinvestment.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Identify established neighborhoods and neighborhood centers where coordinated public and private reinvestment could address housing conditions, infrastructure needs, vacant or underused properties, pedestrian connections, public spaces, and neighborhood-serving businesses.	Plan, Investment	Land Bank Authority	Short	$	
Support small-scale neighborhood commercial and mixed-use nodes that provide daily goods, services, gathering places, and small-business opportunities within convenient reach of surrounding residents while maintaining compatibility with neighborhood character.	Plan, Regulation	Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$$	
Maintain and enhance neighborhood parks, playgrounds, community spaces, and other small-scale gathering places that provide opportunities for recreation and social connection close to where residents live.	Investment, Program	Parks and Recreation; Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement	Medium	$$	

Goal 5: Promote Housing Opportunities and Quality of Life

A diverse and attainable housing supply is essential to sustaining a vibrant, inclusive community where people at different life stages and income levels can live, work, and thrive. Creating a diversity of high-quality and attainable housing options that build safe, well-connected neighborhoods and meet the needs of current residents and the workforce, will strengthen community connections and economic stability. By addressing evolving demographic needs and supporting residents experiencing housing instability, the community advances a shared vision of quality of life that is equitable, supportive, and responsive to changing needs.

Policy 1: Expand the supply and diversity of quality housing to meet the needs of residents across income levels, ages, household sizes, and life stages.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Review and amend growth area zoning and development standards to allow a broader range of housing types, including duplexes, townhouses, small multifamily buildings, mixed-use housing, accessory dwelling units, cottage courts, manufactured housing, and other compatible housing forms.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Planning Board	Medium	$	
Reduce locally controlled barriers to affordable and workforce housing in serviced growth areas, including increased residential densities, smaller lot and frontage requirements, reduced setbacks and road widths, shared driveways, flexible parking standards, density bonuses, predictable review procedures, and other incentives appropriate to the development context.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Coordinate housing initiatives with employers, Sanford schools, workforce organizations, and economic development partners to support and attract workers in target industries, like healthcare, manufacturing, construction, education, public service, hospitality, and other locally important sectors.	Program, Partnership	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; Sanford Housing Authority; Sanford School Department	Short	$	
Support housing options that allow older adults to remain in Sanford and offer the right size as their needs change, including accessible apartments, accessory dwelling units, cottage communities, smaller ownership units, and housing near services and transportation.	Regulation, Investment	Sanford Housing Authority; Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement	Medium	$$	
Seek to have at least 10% of new residential development built or placed during the next decade qualify as affordable housing under applicable state standards, and track progress annually by tenure, housing type, location, and affordability level.	Plan	Sanford Housing Authority; Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement	Long	$$$	
Monitor housing production, rents, sale prices, cost burden, vacancy, permitting timelines, and progress toward state and regional housing production targets to identify needed policy or program changes.	Plan	Sanford Housing Authority ; Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	
Develop and maintain a library of preapproved or permit-ready building plans for housing, childcare facilities, small commercial buildings, mixed-use development, accessory dwelling units, and other priority development types. Pair the program with expedited review procedures, standardized design guidance, and technical assistance to reduce development costs, shorten permitting timelines, and encourage investment in designated growth areas.	Plan	Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement	Medium	$$	City of Bangor, ME https://www.bangormaine.gov/822/Pre-Approved-Housing-Plans

Policy 2: Direct housing growth to locations with appropriate infrastructure, services, transportation access, and neighborhood connections.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Prioritize new housing and adaptive reuse in designated growth areas, including Downtown Sanford, Springvale, established neighborhoods, mixed-use corridors, and other locations served or planned to be served by public water, sewer, transportation, and community facilities.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Medium	$$	
Coordinate housing approvals and public investment with available and planned capacity for water, sewer, roads, sidewalks, schools, emergency services, parks, and other municipal facilities. Regularly include these areas in development review and track metrics on housing and infrastructure capacity to mitigate impacts early.	Plan, Regulation	Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement; Planning Board; Site Plan Review Committee	Short	$	
Designate locations in growth areas where mobile home parks are allowed pursuant to Title 30-A, Maine Revised Statutes, Section 4358(3)(M), and allow manufactured housing pursuant to Section 4358(2).	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Long	$	
Outside of growth areas, use conservation subdivision design to protect contiguous open space, working farms and forests, habitat, water resources, scenic areas, and trail connections while locating homes to reduce infrastructure and service impacts.	Regulation, Plan	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; City Council; Parks and Recreation	Medium	$	NH Economy, Conservation Subdivision https://www.nheconomy.com/getmedia/e7c5db84-9bc8-44e6-9ba2-e4b593d635bd/ilupt-chpt-1-4.pdf

Policy 3: Use public resources and partnerships to close housing feasibility gaps and return vacant and distressed properties to productive use.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Evaluate establishing an affordable housing tax increment financing district to support eligible housing development, infrastructure, site preparation, rehabilitation, and related public improvements.	Plan, Investment	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; City Council; Sanford Housing Authority	Medium	$	
Through the Sanford Land Bank Authority, continue to maintain an inventory of vacant, abandoned, dangerous, and underused properties and prioritize acquisition, stabilization, rehabilitation, demolition, disposition, or redevelopment in designated growth areas.	Plan	Land Bank Authority	Ongoing	$	
Establish clear criteria for using public land, tax-acquired property, grants, loans, fee reductions, infrastructure investments, and other incentives to support housing types and affordability levels that address documented needs.	Regulation	City Manager's Office; City Council	Ongoing	$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Partner with private and nonprofit developers to seek MaineHousing programs, Community Development Block Grants, federal resources, and other funding for affordable rental housing, attainable homeownership, workforce housing, senior housing, and supportive housing.	Partnership	Sanford Housing Authority	Medium	$	
Encourage alternative ownership and long-term affordability models, including community land trusts, limited-equity cooperatives, shared-equity homeownership, and deed-restricted housing, where they can reduce barriers to homeownership or preserve affordability.	Plan, Program	Sanford Housing Authority	Medium	$$	

Policy 4: Maintain and improve the safety, accessibility, efficiency, and resilience of Sanford's existing housing

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Continue and expand housing rehabilitation, weatherization, lead-hazard reduction, energy efficiency, accessibility, and health-and-safety programs for income-eligible homeowners and rental properties.	Program	Sanford Housing Authority; Land Bank Authority	Medium	$	
Coordinate rehabilitation assistance that helps older adults and people with disabilities remain safely in their homes and communities, including accessibility modifications and repairs that address escalating maintenance costs.	Program, Investment	General Assistance; Sanford Housing Authority; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	
Continue coordinated code enforcement and property intervention for unsafe or distressed housing, paired where feasible with technical assistance, financing, and a clear path to rehabilitation or responsible redevelopment.	Ongoing Planning	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$$	
Provide information to property owners and residents about available repair programs, tenant and landlord resources, energy assistance, fair housing protections, and strategies to preserve naturally occurring affordable housing.	Program, Communication	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; City Manager's Office	Short	$	
Continue to support the Sanford Land Bank Authority and property owners to return vacant, abandoned, distressed, and underused properties to productive use, with priority given to properties that negatively affect surrounding neighborhood conditions.	Investment	City Council, Land Bank Authority	Ongoing	$	

Policy 5: Address housing instability and the needs of residents who face the greatest barriers to safe, stable housing.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Partner with the Sanford Housing Authority, housing and service providers, healthcare organizations, developers, and state and regional agencies to support affordable and supportive housing for low-income households, older adults, people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, and people at risk of displacement.	Partnership	Sanford Housing Authority	Short	$	Example: Home for Good Housing Project https://sanfordspringvalenews.com/project-aims-to-provide-home-for-good-to-unhoused/
Pursue county-wide solutions and partnerships to address homelessness and substance use disorder collaboratively across the region.	Partnership	City Manager's Office; Sanford Housing Authority	Ongoing	$	
Work with community organizations to establish a housing navigator program with accessible digital and print resources that connect residents to housing searches, rental and homeownership assistance, rehabilitation funding, accessibility services, legal resources, and homelessness prevention.	Program, Communication	Sanford Housing Authority; General Assistance	Medium	$$	
Coordinate with service providers to connect residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness with emergency, transitional, supportive, and permanent housing and with related behavioral health, recovery, employment, transportation, and benefits services.	Partnership	Sanford Housing Authority; General Assistance	Short	$	
Evaluate land use regulations to identify appropriate locations and clear standards for emergency shelters, supportive housing, community living arrangements, and other housing-related services consistent with applicable state and federal law.	Regulation, Plan	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement;	Short	$	

Policy 6: Strengthen local and regional capacity to plan for and implement affordable and workforce housing.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Support and participate in local and regional housing coalitions that address affordable and workforce housing needs, including shared data, funding applications, legislative priorities, homelessness response, and development opportunities.	Partnership, Investment	SHA; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	
Prepare an annual housing implementation report that documents housing production and affordability, progress toward the 10% affordability objective, ordinance changes, public investments, vacant-property outcomes, partnership activities, and recommended next steps.	Plan, Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$$	
Coordinate with surrounding municipalities, Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission, MaineHousing, employers, housing authorities, and regional service providers on housing needs that cross municipal boundaries.	Partnership	Sanford Housing Authority; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council; City Manager's Office	Ongoing	$	
Create a housing committee to support and foster the development of a variety of housing types, including affordable and workforce housing, senior-specific housing, and missing-middle housing types in Sanford.	Plan, Investment	City Council; Sanford Housing Authority	Short	$	

Goal 6: Protect Natural Resources and Expand Recreation

Sanford's natural resources are a defining element of the City's identity. Amenities such as the Mousam River, lakes, ponds, trails, and parks provide residents and visitors with access to nature and enhance quality of life. Protection of farmland, open space, and environmentally sensitive areas is critical to maintaining safe and accessible outdoor recreation opportunities, preserving the rural character of Sanford, and protecting natural areas for sustaining wildlife habitats and the enjoyment of the community.

Policy 1: Maintain and improve parks, recreation facilities, trails, and programs to meet current and future community needs.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Update the 2017 Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan to assess current and projected needs, including field and indoor facility capacity, deferred maintenance, staffing, programming, accessibility, and sustainable funding.	Plan	Parks and Recreation	Short	$$	
Following a Master Plan update, develop a prioritized, multiyear capital improvement program for parks and recreation assets, including court resurfacing, field lighting, skate park improvements, building systems, and other identified needs to include in the City's capital improvement program.	Plan, Investment	Parks and Recreation; City Manager's Office	Medium	$$$	
Evaluate staffing levels for the Parks and Recreation Department and plan for staffing levels in line with growth and maintenance responsibilities.	Investment	City Manager's Office, Parks and Recreation Department	Ongoing	$$$	
Maintain a current asset inventory and condition assessment for parks, athletic fields, courts, playgrounds, buildings, trails, lighting, shelters, water access facilities, and supporting infrastructure. Use consistent criteria, including safety, accessibility, use, deferred maintenance, operating cost, neighborhood need, and project readiness, to prioritize investments.	Plan	Parks and Recreation;	Ongoing	$	
Evaluate options to expand year-round indoor recreation capacity and relieve sustained demand at Veterans Memorial Gym, including improved scheduling, renovation or expansion, shared use of school or partner facilities, and development of additional multipurpose space.	Plan, Investment	Parks and Recreation; Sanford School Department	Short	$$$	
Evaluate field capacity, scheduling, surface condition, lighting, drainage, restrooms, storage, and support amenities at Blouin Fields, Witham Street Fields, Goodall Park, and other high-use facilities before acquiring or developing additional athletic fields.	Plan	Parks and Recreation	Short	$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Maintain and improve public access to Sanford's significant ponds and rivers for boating, fishing, swimming, and other water-dependent recreation. Coordinate with nearby property owners and relevant partners to address parking, safety, accessibility, environmental protection, maintenance, and neighborhood compatibility.	Partnership	Parks and Recreation; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee	Medium	$$	
Evaluate whether the Trails Committee's role should expand to include broader parks, recreation, and open space implementation while retaining trail expertise, with oversight and support from Parks and Recreation staff.	Plan	Parks and Recreation; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee	Short	$	
Use a balanced funding strategy that may include the capital improvement program, bonds, grants, Land and Water Conservation Fund assistance, sponsorships, donations, program revenue, impact fees where legally appropriate, and public-private partnerships. Account for life-cycle operating and replacement costs before committing to new facilities.	Plan, Investment	Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	$$	
Establish Sanford as a youth athletics center in the State, coordinating existing and future field and court needs and wrap around services to support youth sports events and leagues.	Investment	Parks and Recreation Department	Ongoing	$$$	

Policy 2: Expand and connect Sanford's trail system for recreation, active transportation, community access, and regional tourism.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Finalize and implement the Trails Master Plan through a phased work program that identifies priority projects, responsible parties, funding, maintenance needs, permitting, and annual progress.	Program	Parks and Recreation; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee; Recreation Advisory Board	Ongoing	$$	
Advance the Downtown Connector and Eastern Trail Connector to link Sanford's neighborhoods, Downtown Sanford, Springvale, the Sanford-Springvale Rail Trail, Sanford Community Forest, parks, schools, employment areas, and regional destinations.	Program	Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee; Public Works	Medium	$$$	
Improve trailheads with consistent wayfinding, maps, regulatory and etiquette information, bicycle parking, seating, and other amenities appropriate to each setting.	Investment, Program	Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee; Parks and Recreation	Medium	$$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Plan trail projects for compatible motorized and nonmotorized uses based on site conditions, safety, environmental sensitivity, accessibility, user demand, and long-term maintenance capacity.	Plan	Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee; Parks and Recreation	Long	$	
Coordinate trail planning with the City's active transportation initiatives so off-road and on-road facilities form a connected network for walking, bicycling, and mobility devices.	Partnership, Plan	Parks and Recreation; Public Works	Medium	$	
Use volunteer stewardship agreements, training, and recognition to support trail maintenance, cleanups, invasive species management, events, and other community projects without replacing necessary municipal staffing.	Program	Parks and Recreation; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee; Recreation Advisory Board	Short	$	
Coordinate with private trail owners to expand public access to trails, in line with landowner goals.	Partnership	Parks and Recreation; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee; Public Works	Long	$	
Create an easy to use, digital map of trails with public access in Sanford, including access instructions, connection points, and parking.	Communication	Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee; Parks and Recreation; Public Works	Short	$	
Coordinate with land trusts and other private partners to create a unified identity for Sanford's public and private trail networks.	Partnership, Plan	Parks and Recreation; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee	Medium	$	
Expand Parks and Recreation Department and private partner programming that leverages Sanford's trail network for guided walks, outdoor education, wellness activities, youth programs, stewardship events, seasonal recreation, and community events.	Program, Partnership	Parks and Recreation; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee; Recreation Advisory Board; Sanford School Department	Long	$$	
During the development review process, review existing trials in proximity to the proposed development and coordinate efforts for trail easements or connections to existing networks.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting,and Code Enforcement; Site Plan Review Committee; Planning Board	Short	$	

Policy 3: Preserve open space and maintain public access to Sanford's natural and recreational resources.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Coordinate conservation efforts with land trusts, conservation organizations, state agencies, and willing landowners to protect high-priority open space, habitat, water resources, recreational land, and trail corridors.	Partnership	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Planning Board; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee	Medium	$$	Conservation Planning | Natural Resources Conservation Service https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/conservation-technical-assistance/conservation-planning
Use the Comprehensive Plan, development review, capital planning, and grant programs to coordinate conservation and recreation investments with future growth.	Investment	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Planning Board; Parks and Recreation, Public Works	Ongoing	$$	
Incentivize land owners to place trails and open spaces into easements, and provide landowners with information about conservation tools, trail easements, and Maine's landowner liability protections for recreational or harvesting use under Title 14, Maine Revised Statutes, Section 159-A.	Communication	Parks and Recreation; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee, Planning Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	Exploring the Outdoors on Private Land: Outdoor Partners Program: Programs & Resources: Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife https://www.maine.gov/ifw/programs-resources/outdoor-partners-program/explore.html

Policy 4: Protect current and potential drinking water sources.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Create discharge detection and monitoring programs to gather data on pollutants and stream health. Monitoring allows the City and the Sanford Water District to measure or model progress toward stormwater goals.	Program	Sanford Water District	Short	$$	
Continue to designate public wellhead and aquifer recharge area protection zones in for all public well heads, including those in aquifer risk areas like the wastewater outfall in Downtown Sanford, the airport, the sand and gravel pits along New Dam Road, and the City's snow storage location in accordance with the City of Sanford Code of Ordinances, Chapter 280: Zoning, Article 15 Performance Standards.	Program; Regulation	Sanford Water District	Ongoing	$$	https://ecode360.com/36886122

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Offer mitigation credits for the installation of rain gardens, bioswales, and other water retention and filtration infrastructure to mitigate stormwater runoff.	Program	Sanford Water District; Sanford Sewerage District	Medium	$$	Example: MDEP Chapter 501; exploration by Brunswick, ME https://www.brunswickme.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_04282026-3824?html=true
Update the City of Sanford's GIS map to make information on public wellhead and aquifer recharge protection areas easier to find and use.	Communication	Sanford Water District	Short	$	
Continue to identify and protect land around wells through wellhead protection areas.	Program	Sanford Water District; City Manager's Office	Ongoing	$	
Identify factors that may impact safe drinking water, including groundwater contamination, impacts of extreme weather events, supply chain disruptions, and work toward mitigating these factors to support safe drinking water.	Program	City Manager's Office; Sanford Water District	Short	$$	
Work with Kennebunkport & Wells Water District on watershed protections for Branck Brook, as this is a shared drinking water source.	Partnership	City Manager's Office, Sanford Water District, Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	
Coordinate with the Town of North Berwick and North Berwick Water District on wellhead protection ordinances across municipal boundaries to help ensure safe drinking water.	Partnership	City Manager's Office, Sanford Water District, Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	

Policy 5: Protect water and natural resources concurrent with sustainable development in designated growth areas.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Update the water quality inventory and develop an online GIS map with layers that visualize nutrient overloading, critical freshwater habitat, proximity to construction projects, proximity to agriculture, recreational use areas, and groundwater recharge areas.	Ongoing Planning	Sanford Water District	Short-Med	$$	
Review and update water quality protection practices and standards for construction and maintenance of public and private roads to include a screening for green infrastructure practices for each road type.	Regulation	Sanford Water District; Public Works; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	The EPA Green Streets Handbook provides best practices for each road typology. https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/documents/green_streets_design_manual_feb_2021_web_res_small_508.pdf
Continue to require maintenance agreements between property owners with community septic systems and the City to guarantee effective management and maintenance of septic systems in growth areas not served by sewer infrastructure.	Regulation	Sanford Sewer District; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	
Create educational materials on septic system maintenance and offer technical assistance to homeowners to replace failing septic systems and reduce potential risks associated with leaking or failures.	Program, Communication	Sanford Sewer District	Short	$	
Maintain the codes that established wooded and non-wooded buffer maintenances to protect shoreline areas in the City of Sanford, Code of Ordinances, Chapter 275, Article 5 Performance Standards.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	
Revisit the City of Sanford, Code of Ordinances, Chapter 275, Article 11 Design Guidelines and identify opportunities to implement low-impact development standards and require permeable surfaces (such as pavers) on parking areas, streets, and alleyways.	Regulation, Plan	Sanford Water District; Public Works; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	https://ecode360.com/9240481

Policy 6: Minimize pollution discharges through the upgrade of existing public sewer systems, wastewater treatment facilities, and responsible stormwater management practices to protect the City's rivers, streams, ponds, and lakes.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Revisit and update the recommendations of the Goodall Brook Watershed Management Plan (2014). https://cms5.revize.com/revize/sanford/Document Center/How Do I/Document/Goodall_Brook_WBP.pdf	Plan	Public Works; Sanford Water District; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	
Implement a stormwater fee program, calculated by total impervious surface of a lot, including rooftops, parking lots, and driveways.	Program	Public Works	Short	$$	
Implement the Drainage Capital Improvement plan to maintain and improve stormwater best management practices that reduce pollutant runoff, improve stormwater quality, and protect Sanford's rivers, streams, ponds, and lakes.	Ongoing planning	Public Works	Ongoing	$	
Maintain and revise the codes that set limits on allowable levels of phosphorus and other performance standards in watersheds from stormwater runoff in Sanford's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 275, Article 47.	Regulation	Public Works; Sanford Water District; Sanford Sewerage District; Planning Permitting and Code Enforcement	Short	$$	https://ecode360.com/9240447

Policy 7: Build partnerships with neighboring communities, regional and local advocacy groups, and state and regional resource agencies to protect water resources and shared natural resources.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Work with local land trusts and partners to develop public education materials to educate landowners and easement holders on protecting water quality.	Communication, Partnership	Sanford Water District; City Manager's Office	Ongoing	$	www.highlandlakemaine.org
Work with local school systems, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, and Maine DEP to develop educational curriculum on water resources, water quality, and water monitoring for Sanford's elementary, middle, and high schools.	Partnership	Sanford Water District; Sanford School Department	Short	$$	
Provide educational materials at popular recreation access points regarding aquatic invasive species.	Communication	Parks and Recreation	Short	$	
Develop and distribute water quality and natural resource education materials during Maine free fishing weekends in February and May.	Communication	Parks and Recreation	Short	$	

Policy 8: Conserve the City of Sanford's critical water and natural resources and habitat from pollution.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Launch an educational campaign to educate local landowners and residents on the regional importance of Sanford's unique habitat areas like its Atlantic white cedar swamps, hemlock swamps, and pitch pine barrens.	Program, Communication	Parks and Recreation; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee	Medium	$	
Develop a Conservation Stewardship Program Plan to update the Sanford Conservation Plan and access annual payments from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to implement best management practices for habitats and open spaces. https://www.sanfordmaine.org/departments/planning___development/planning/conservation_plan.php	Plan	Planning, Permitting,and Code Enforcement	Long	$$	Information on best practices and strategies for developing a Conservation Plan is available on the USDA website (https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/conservation-stewardship-program/maine/conservation-stewardship-program-in).
Set up a wildlife camera at endangered or threatened species and waterfowl habitat or nesting areas for residents and visitors to take part in monitoring or observing behavior of local species communities. This strategy also supports surveillance of endangered or threatened species habitats to catch illegal hunting or baiting.	Program	Parks and Recreation	Long	$$	
Require the planning board to review the Beginning with Habitat and Maine Stream Habitat Viewer to visualize priority habitats in development plans and approval.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Planning Board, Site Plan Review Committee	Ongoing	$	Maps are available on the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife website (https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fish-wildlife/wildlife/beginning-with-habitat/maps/index.html).
Provide a designated fund for protection of sensitive stream and lake corridors including Estes Lake, Bauneg Beg Lake, and Goodall Brook given their statuses as priority watersheds or sensitive waterbodies.	Investment	City Council; City Manager's Office; Sanford Water District	Long	$$	
Designate critical natural resources and wildlife habitat areas as Critical Resource Areas in the Future Land Use Plan.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	
Utilize the Climate Action Plan Toolkit from the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission to participate in interlocal and/or regional natural resource planning, management, and/or regulatory efforts.	Partnership	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Pursue public/private partnerships by partnering with Mousam Way Land Trust, Three Rivers Land Trust, and local landowners to protect critical and important natural resources such as through purchase of land or easements from willing sellers.	Partnership	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Parks and Recreation	Long	$$$	
Distribute educational materials about the Maine Current Land Use Programs, the Maine Natural Resources Protection Act, and Resource/Shoreland Overlay Protection Zones to Sanford residents living in or near Resource Protection and Shoreland Overlay Zones about current use tax programs and applicable local, state, or federal regulations.	Communication	City Assessor; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$$	
Hold an annual cleanup around Number One Pond to trim the vegetation, clean trail areas, remove invasive plant species, and planting native species.	Program, Communication	Sanford Water District; Parks and Recreation; Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee	Ongoing	$	

Policy 9: Protect farms, prime farmland, and forests for agricultural use and for cultural, economic, historical, and scenic value to the City of Sanford.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Coordinate with Maine Forest Service, WoodsWISE planning support, and Soil and Water Conservation District staff to develop agricultural best management practices and provide technical assistance programs for Sanford landowners with prime farm and forest lands. https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mfs/policy_management/ww_resilience.html	Partnership, Communication	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	
Update the Code of Ordinances to designate critical rural areas for the City of Sanford to limit non-residential development and growth in these areas and to protect them from fragmentation.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	Article 13: Open Space Subdivisions - Town of Raymond, ME https://ecode360.com/38520369#38520439
Update the City of Sanford's Code of Ordinances to require planting of pollinator-friendly native plant gardens in open spaces to support pollinator health in the City of Sanford.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; City Council	Medium	$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Work with Maine Forest Service to develop an educational story walk at popular trail systems in the City of Sanford to educate recreationalists on the history of forestry and forest lands in the region.	Partnership, Communication	Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee; Parks and Recreation	Medium	$$	
Consult with the Maine Forest Service district forester when developing any land use regulations pertaining to forest management practices as required by 12 M.R.S.A. §8869.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	
Update the City of Sanford's Code of Ordinances to limit development in critical rural areas, outlined as Agriculture, Forest, and Resource Protection Areas in the Future Land Use Plan, and instead promote natural resource-based businesses and services, nature tourism and outdoor recreation businesses, farmers' markets, and home occupations.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$$	
Coordinate with partners and land owners to expand the enrollment of Sanford's eligible farm and forests in Maine's Farmland and Tree Growth Concurrent Use Tax Programs.	Program	Trails Development and Urban Forestry Committee; City Assessor's Office	Medium	$	

Policy 10: Protect rural, waterfront, and natural resource areas from the impacts of development while supporting appropriate working-land and recreation uses.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Continue to evaluate and implement shoreland zoning, floodplain management, wetland and water-resource protections, drinking water safeguards, and current Beginning with Habitat information as overlays that may limit the location, intensity, or design otherwise anticipated by a future land use category.	Partnership, Communication	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	
Require development to avoid or minimize impacts to high-value habitat, undeveloped habitat blocks, habitat connectors, riparian areas, wetlands, surface waters, flood-prone areas, aquifers, public water supplies, productive agricultural soils, and other sensitive resources through site design, buffers, clustered development, reduced disturbance, and other appropriate measures.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Site Plan Review Committee, Planning Board	Ongoing	$	Article 13: Open Space Subdivisions - Town of Raymond, ME https://ecode360.com/38520369#38520439
Use conservation subdivision standards, easements, acquisition from willing landowners, current-use taxation information, and partnerships with land trusts and state agencies to protect connected rural and natural resources.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Support agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation, home occupations, and small-scale rural enterprises that are compatible with rural infrastructure, environmental conditions, and the intended low-growth pattern.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	Article 13: Open Space Subdivisions - Town of Raymond, ME https://ecode360.com/38520369#38520439
Coordinate waterfront development and public access with water quality, flood resilience, habitat protection, public safety, parking, maintenance, and neighborhood compatibility.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	$	

Goal 7: Invest in Infrastructure and Quality Services

Reliable infrastructure and high-quality public services form the foundation of a strong, thriving community. Well-maintained roads, utilities, and public systems support daily life, enable economic activity, and improve safety, while accessible transportation networks connect residents to jobs, services, and one another. By aligning infrastructure with planning for long-term growth, Sanford will be able to adapt to shifting needs and regional impacts to deliver essential services and sustain a high quality of life for current and future residents.

Policy 1: Prioritize operations and maintenance funding and strategic capital investments to protect infrastructure investments and strategically plan for upgrades.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Work towards fully funding the Department of Public Works Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Program.	Investment	Public Works; City Council; City Manager's Office	Medium	$$	
Integrate financial productivity analyses into infrastructure maintenance Cost Benefit Value Equation prioritization, focusing resources on economically productive areas. Reference models that employ factors like property tax revenue, job density, or proximity to trip generators.	Ongoing Planning	City Manager's Office; Public Works		$	
Update Capital Improvement Plan to include building systems, fleet replacement, and drainage infrastructure allowing proactive replacement before failure. Ensure representation from all relevant City departments in planning process.	Plan	City Manager's Office; Public Works	Medium	$$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Continue to work with the Sanford Sewer and Water Districts to coordinate planned service extensions with the Future Land Use Plan. Explore opportunities for regional service delivery.	Ongoing Planning	Sanford Sewer District; Sanford Water District; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; City Manager's Office; Public Works	Ongoing	$	
Continue to actively pursue grant funding for capital investments and evaluate the need for a grant writer position to fully take advantage of grant opportunities and awards.	Plan	City Manager's Office	Short	$$$	
Explore opportunities to work with neighboring communities to plan for and finance shared or adjacent capital investments to increase cost savings and efficiencies.	Partnership, Plan	City Manager's Office; Public Works; Sanford Sewer District; Sanford Water District; Police Department; Fire Department,	Short	$	

Policy 2: Modernize aging municipal facilities to meet operational needs and improve service delivery.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Establish a comprehensive facilities maintenance plan with clear responsibilities between the Director of Facilities and department staff.	Plan	Public Works	Medium	$	
Complete construction of two new fire stations to replace outdated facilities and improve response times.	Investment	Fire Department	Long	$$$	
Develop and implement plans for a new Public Works garage to replace the current facility approaching end of functional life.	Plan	Public Works	Long	$$	
Explore opportunities for regional dispatch center facilities and shared emergency services infrastructure with neighboring communities.	Partnership	Fire Department; Public Works; Emergency Management Agency; Police Department	Short	$	

Policy 3: Strengthen City workforce capacity through recruitment, retention, and training initiatives.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Continue in-house CDL training programs to address statewide shortages of truck drivers and equipment operators.	Program	Sanford Adult Education; Sanford Regional Technical Center	Ongoing	$$	
Support retire-rehire programs and expanded academy pipelines to address City staffing challenges.	Program, Investment	Sanford Adult Education	Medium	$$	
Provide education and support for employee wellness and balanced lifestyles.	Program	Sanford Adult Education; Sanford School Department; Sanford Growth Council	Ongoing	$	
Work toward full staffing levels across departments to meet growing service demands.	Investment	City Council; City Manager	Medium	$$	
Strengthen partnerships with regional community colleges and Sanford Regional Technical Center to expand vocational training programs, align curriculum with local workforce needs, and develop a robust pipeline of skilled workers to support Sanford's economic vitality and long-term growth.	Partnership	Sanford School Department; Sanford Regional Technical Center	Long	$	
Evaluate creative solutions to hire specialized municipal staff members, including public works, fire, police, and other municipal positions, including bunk-in and live-in programs, progressive shift schedules, vanpooling or commuter stipends, school buy-back programs, and facility improvements.	Program	City Manager's Office; Police Department; Fire Department; Public Works	Short	$$$	Capital District Fire Live-In Program https://wnyt.com/top-stories/fire-ems-service-offers-free-housing-to-recruit-college-students/

Policy 4: Maintain responsive and coordinated public safety and emergency services that adapt to community growth, changing demographics, emerging risks, and evolving service demands

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Continue to use population, development, call volume, response-time, and service area data to evaluate public safety staffing, equipment, station coverage, and capital needs and inform the Capital Improvement Plan and annual budgeting.	Ongoing Planning	Police Department; Fire Department	Ongoing	$	
Coordinate with regional partners to pursue grant funding and pilot programs that support behavioral health response teams, community paramedicine, crisis stabilization services, and innovative public safety partnerships.	Partnership	Emergency Management Agency; Fire Department; Police Department	Medium	$	
Evaluate opportunities to expand the use of behavioral health clinicians, crisis workers, social workers, peer-support specialists, community paramedics, or other civilian specialists to assist with crisis response, post-crisis follow-up, service navigation, and prevention efforts.	Partnership	Police Department; Fire Department	Ongoing	$	
Strengthen post-crisis follow-up programs that connect individuals and families with housing resources, behavioral health services, recovery supports, transportation, employment assistance, healthcare, veterans' services, and other appropriate community resources.	Program	Police Department; Fire Department	Medium	$$	
Evaluate opportunities to expand community paramedicine and proactive wellness programs that provide home-safety assessments, fall-prevention education, chronic disease management support, post-hospital follow-up, medication management assistance, caregiver support referrals, and connections to community resources for residents who may otherwise experience repeated emergency-service utilization.	Program	Police Department; Fire Department	Medium	$$	
Continue to coordinate development review with Police, Fire, Emergency Management Services (EMS), public works, school, utilities, and other service providers to identify and mitigate the public safety and service impacts of new development proposals.	Regulation, Plan	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Police Department; Fire Department; Site Plan Review Committee	Ongoing	$	
Continue mutual aid, joint training, shared purchasing, specialized response teams, and other regional service arrangements with neighboring communities and York County to improve local and regional readiness, service quality, and cost efficiency.	Ongoing planning	Police Department; Fire Department	Ongoing	$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Strengthen community risk reduction programs, including fire prevention, emergency preparedness, severe weather readiness, and emergency planning to support City agencies and community members in effectively responding to emergencies.	Program	Police Department; Fire Department	Ongoing	$$	
Coordinate emergency preparedness and continuity planning with the Sanford School Department, healthcare providers, housing facilities, older-adult service organizations, utilities, businesses, and nonprofit organizations.	Partnership	Police Department; Fire Department	Ongoing	$	
Maintain accessible, multilingual, and redundant emergency communications, including approaches that reach residents who lack internet access, use assistive technology, have limited English proficiency, or may require additional support during an emergency.	Communication	Emergency Management Agency	Short	$	

Policy 5: Work to eliminate all traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Strive to eliminate all traffic-related fatalities in Sanford within this planning period.	Planning	Public Works	Short	$	
Implement Sanford's 2024 SS4A Safety Action Plan actions such as context-sensitive speed limits, traffic calming measures, and street redesigns, prioritizing the High Injury Network. https://www.sanfordmeconnects.com/safe-streets-for-all-grant-ss4a?tool=map#tool_tab	Investment, Program	Public Works	Long	$$$	
Establish a standardized crash review process triggered by any injury crash, using data-driven analysis to identify patterns and deploy quick-build safety interventions. The crash review process can utilize open access tools like the Strong Towns crash analysis studio to reduce costs and maintain the review process in Sanford.	Plan	Public works; Police Department; Fire Department	Short	$	
Deploy quick-build mitigations in response to injury crashes.	Program	Public Works	Short	$$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Prioritize crash prevention over crash response through proactive infrastructure improvements, enhanced crosswalks, traffic calming, and pedestrian safety devices.	Program	Public Works	Medium	$$	
Maintain and expand access management requirements to require pedestrian-oriented design in the City of Sanford Code of Ordinances in Chapter 280, Zoning.	Regulation	Public Works; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	https://ecode360.com/13226209#13226209

Policy 6: Expand and connect the City's active transportation network to support walking, biking, and micromobility as viable modes for daily travel.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Develop and adopt a citywide Active Transportation Plan including a sidewalk inventory and gap analysis.	Plan	Public Works	Long	$$$	
Develop a comprehensive sidewalk maintenance and replacement program addressing the varying conditions across the City. Integrate sidewalks into the Pavement Management Program.	Program	Public Works	Long	$	
Enhance downtown streetscapes with benches, bike racks, pedestrian-scale lighting, and other amenities that improve walkability.	Program; Investment	Public Works; Parks and Recreation	Medium	$$$	
Implement gateway treatments at key City entrances combining aesthetic improvements with traffic calming measures.	Program	Public Works; Parks and Recreation	Medium	$$$	
Explore partnerships for bike share programs for trail use and recreational equipment rentals (kayaks/SUPs for Number One Pond) to support recreation and tourism.	Partnership	Parks and Recreation; Public Works	Short	$	
Develop ordinance standards for subdivisions and roads to foster transportation-efficient growth patterns and provide for future street and transit connections like required bike parking and amenities, discounted transit passes, or priority parking for carpools.	Regulation	Public Works; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$$	

Policy 7: Enhance transit service to meet diverse transportation needs of residents (including children, the elderly, and disabled) and through travelers by providing a safe, efficient, and adequate transportation network for all types of users (motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists).

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Coordinate with partners to expand YCCAC fixed-route service to include weekend operations, addressing the current Monday-Friday limitation.	Investment	Public Works	Short	$$$	
Develop transit-stop standards addressing accessibility, safe crossings, lighting, seating, shelters, snow clearance, bicycle access, wayfinding, schedules, and real-time information, with improvements prioritized at high-use and high-need locations.	Plan	Public Works	Medium	$	
Explore regional shuttle service to improve connections to existing regional services, including Southern Maine Connector service to Biddeford and Saco, Orange Line service to Wells, Biddeford-Saco-Old Orchard Beach Transit, Amtrak Downeaster stations, and other regional destinations.	Program, Plan	Public Works; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$$	
Encourage transit-oriented development near major corridors through zoning incentives and streamlined permitting.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	
Actively participate in regional and state transit planning efforts.	Partnership; Planning	Planning, Permitting and Code Enforcement; Public Works	Ongoing	$	
Evaluate on-demand or microtransit pilots in areas or time periods where fixed-route service is not operationally or financially appropriate, including first-mile and last-mile connections to regional routes.	Program	Public Works	Short	$	
Coordinate volunteer transportation with York County Community Action Corporation and other providers so volunteer drivers supplement rather than duplicate fixed-route, flex-route, demand-response, medical, and other specialized transportation.	Program, Partnership	Public Works; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	Friends in Action, Ellsworth, ME: https://friendsinactionellsworth.org/individual/
Building on existing transportation options to Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, coordinate with employer, educational, healthcare, and institutional partners to support transit passes, coordinated schedules, first-mile and last-mile connections, stop improvements, commuter services, and operating assistance.	Partnership, Program	Public Works	Medium	$$	

Policy 8: Promote safe, efficient, and optimal regional connectivity through strategic airport investment and multimodal access.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Implement the Airport Master Plan and Business Plan to guide facility development and financial sustainability.	Ongoing Planning	Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport	Long	$$$	
Support private sector hangar development through the TIF district and streamlined approvals.	Regulation	Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport; City Manager's Office; City Council	Medium	$	
Continue to invest in critical airport infrastructure.	Investment	Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport	Long	$$$	

Policy 9: Preserve and improve the transportation system while maximizing fiscal efficiency.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Implement infrastructure improvements in line with the RAISE grant implementation.	Investment	Public Works	Long	$$	
Prioritize preservation and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure over capacity expansion, ensuring a state-of-good-repair along state highways and municipal roadways.	Plan, Investment	Public Works	Medium	$$$	
Coordinate with MaineDOT to apply complete streets principles on Routes 109 and 202, designing multimodal facilities that accommodate regional traffic while supporting local access and economic development.	Plan, Partnership	Public Works	Long	$	
Initiate a community-driven process to develop a Route 109 Downtown Corridor Overlay Zone for segments within Sanford and Springvale growth areas, to ensure state highway investments catalyze development patterns generating optimal fiscal return. Utilize Maine Office of Community Affairs form-based code methodology.	Regulation	Public Works; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Long	$	Example: Standish. https://ecode360.com/6382121#29444870
Periodically evaluate and amend ordinances to address and avoid conflicts with: a. Policy objectives of the Sensible Transportation Policy Act (23 M.R.S.A. §73); b. State access management regulations pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. §704; and c. State traffic permitting regulations for large developments pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. §704-A.	Regulation	Public Works; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Promote public health, protect natural and cultural resources, and enhance livability by managing land use in ways that maximize the efficiency of the transportation system and minimize increases in vehicle miles traveled.	Program	Public Works	Ongoing	$$	
Maintain and amend ordinance standards for subdivisions and for public and private roads as appropriate to foster transportation-efficient growth patterns and provide for future street and transit connections.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Public Works	Short	$$	
Continue to maintain and leverage local, regional, and state partnerships to support investments and long-term project success, in like with the City's Technical Manual.	Partnerships	Public Works	Ongoing	$	

Goal 8: Strengthen Governance and Implementation

Clear, transparent, and effective governance provides the structure needed to translate community goals into meaningful outcomes. Modern, predictable processes build confidence among residents, businesses, and stakeholders, while consistent enforcement and accountability reinforce fairness and trust. By fostering collaboration and integrity in decision-making and supporting community-based long-range planning efforts, the City creates a governance framework that is rooted in community values.

Policy 1: Coordinate capital investment and infrastructure capacity with Sanford's desired growth pattern.

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Include in the Capital Investment Plan anticipated municipal investments needed to support the Future Land Use Plan, including water, sewer, roads, sidewalks, bicycle and transit facilities, stormwater systems, public safety, schools, parks, broadband, and other community facilities.	Plan	City Manager's Office	Short	$$$	
Direct at least 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments to designated growth areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan.	Investment	Finance; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Long	$$$	
Identify and coordinate the timing and location of public improvements with development capacity, housing and employment goals, utility plans, transportation priorities, redevelopment opportunities, and the ability to maintain infrastructure over its full life-cycle.	Ongoing Planning	Public Works; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Sanford Water District; Sanford Sewer District	Ongoing	$$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Limit extensions of urban water, sewer, and other growth-inducing infrastructure into rural and resource protection areas unless needed to resolve a documented health or safety problem or serve an essential public purpose consistent with the plan.	Ongoing Planning	Public Works	Long	$	
Use development impact analysis, capital forecasting, and available utility capacity information to identify growth area constraints early and establish fair approaches to funding necessary improvements.	Ongoing Planning	Public Works; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Medium	$	
For development outside designated growth areas that requires privately owned infrastructure, consider amending applicable ordinances to require an enforceable and adequately funded mechanism, such as a homeowners association, road association, condominium association, maintenance agreement, recorded covenant, or other legal entity or instrument, to assign long-term responsibility for the ownership, operation, maintenance, repair, and replacement of private roads, stormwater systems, utilities, open space, and other shared infrastructure.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Public Works	Medium	$$	
Withdraw technical standards from ordinances and formally accept the City Technical Manual to provide clear guidance to developers.	Regulation	Public Works; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$$	

Policy 2: Align Sanford's land use regulations with the Future Land Use Plan and ensure adequate planning and code enforcement capacity

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Using the Future Land Use Plan narrative, maintain, enact, or amend zoning, subdivision, site plan, design, performance, and other land use standards to clearly define the desired uses, scale, intensity, form, and location of future development within each land use category.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	
Update ordinances and direct most future growth, redevelopment, and public investment to growth areas in ways that advance the Plan's vision and use infrastructure and land efficiently.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short		

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Maintain fair, transparent, and efficient permitting procedures. Explore administrative review, concurrent review, clear submission checklists, predictable timelines, consolidated preapplication meetings, and other streamlining measures for projects consistent with growth area standards.	Regulation	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	
Provide applicants with plain-language guidance, current forms, fee schedules, review criteria, infrastructure information, and points of contact, and maintain a coordinated process among Planning, Code Enforcement, Public Works, utilities, public safety, and other reviewing entities.	Partnership, Communication	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; City Manger's Office	Ongoing	$	
Periodically review development standards and procedures with applicants, residents, boards, staff, and other users to identify ambiguity, unnecessary delay, or unintended barriers without weakening public health, safety, environmental, design, or infrastructure requirements.	Ongoing Planning	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	
Assign primary responsibility for coordinating implementation of the Future Land Use Plan to the Planning and Development Department, supported by the Planning Board, City Council, Code Enforcement, Public Works, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee or successor body, and other relevant departments and boards.	Plan	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Short	$	
Provide the Code Enforcement Officer and other land use staff with adequate staffing, technology, mapping, legal support, training, and inspection resources to administer and enforce land use regulations consistently. Maintain Code Enforcement Officer certification in accordance with Title 30-A, Maine Revised Statutes, Section 4451.	Regulation, Investment	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$$	
Track new development by type, location, housing units, non-residential floor area, land use category, growth area status, infrastructure service, approval time, and other useful indicators. Report annually on the share of growth and growth-related capital investment occurring in designated growth areas.	Plan, Program	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$$	
Maintain current geographic information system layers for future land use categories, zoning, utilities, transportation, development activity, critical resources, hazards, conserved lands, and other information used in planning and review.	Ongoing Planning	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Public Works	Ongoing	$	

Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
Meet periodically with Alfred, Lebanon, Wells, North Berwick, Shapleigh, Acton, and other neighboring communities to coordinate adjoining land use designations, transportation corridors, natural resources, mutual aid and emergency services, infrastructure, housing, economic development, and development proposals with cross-boundary effects.	Partnership	All City Departments, Sanford Housing Authority; Sanford Sewer District; Sanford Water District	Ongoing	$	General 2 — Imagine Standish https://www.imaginestandish.com/standish-planning-work

Policy 3: Establish a coordinated framework for Comprehensive Plan implementation and accountability.

No.	Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
	Prepare an annual Comprehensive Plan progress report that summarizes major actions completed or underway, development and investment trends, progress toward measurable objectives, emerging implementation challenges, and priorities for the upcoming year.	Plan	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; City Manager's Office	Ongoing	$	
	Establish a focused set of community indicators to monitor progress toward the Community Vision and Goals, using existing data where practical and aligning measures with departmental reporting and other City plans.	Plan, Program	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; City Manager's Office	Short	$	
	Review implementation priorities as part of the annual budget and capital planning processes so that departmental work programs and investment decisions reflect the Comprehensive Plan.	Ongoing Planning	City Manager's Office	Ongoing	$	
	Conduct periodic implementation reviews to identify strategies that have been completed, require modification, are no longer relevant, or should be reprioritized because of changing conditions, emerging needs, new funding opportunities, or changes in state or federal requirements.	Plan	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	
	Periodically evaluate whether development patterns are consistent with the Future Land Use Plan by reviewing the location, type, intensity, and infrastructure needs of new development and identifying regulatory or investment changes needed to better achieve the desired growth pattern.	Regulation, Plan	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement	Ongoing	$	
	Advocate for policies at the State level that further plan implementation and the City's goals.	Partnership	City Manager	Ongoing	$	

Policy 4: Strengthen transparent, coordinated, and accessible municipal decision-making.

No.	Action	Action Type	Responsible Party	Timeline	Relative Cost	Best Practice Example and Resources
	Continue to support a communications specialist position, to support consistent, accessible public communication practices and support public awareness of major planning, budgeting, capital investment, and implementation decisions, including how those decisions advance adopted City goals and plans.	Communication	City Council, City Manager	Ongoing	$$	
	Coordinate long-range planning efforts across City departments so that transportation, housing, economic development, recreation, facilities, infrastructure, resilience, and other functional plans use consistent assumptions and support the Comprehensive Plan.	Plan, Partnership	Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council	Ongoing	$	
	Continue to evaluate new community engagement approaches and establish consistent expectations for community engagement in major municipal planning and policy initiatives, including approaches for reaching populations that may face barriers to participation.	Ongoing Planning	City Manager's Office; Planning, Permitting, and Code Enforcement; Public Works	Ongoing	$	
	Periodically evaluate the roles of boards, committees, advisory groups, and implementation partners involved in Comprehensive Plan priorities to identify opportunities to clarify responsibilities, improve coordination, or reduce duplication.	Ongoing Planning	City Manager's Office	Ongoing	$	



Photo: Jack McAdam

Appendix A: Glossary

Accessory dwelling unit (ADU): A self-contained dwelling unit located within, attached, or detached from a single-family dwelling unit located on the same parcel of land as a primary dwelling unit.

Access management: The coordinated planning and design of driveways, intersections, medians, shared entrances, and connections between properties to improve roadway safety and function.

Active transportation: Human-powered travel, including walking, bicycling, and travel using mobility devices. The term may also include small electric mobility devices, such as electric bicycles and scooters.

Adaptive reuse: The renovation and reuse of preexisting structures for new purposes.

Affordable housing: Rental housing that a household whose income does not exceed 80% of the median income for the area as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development under the United States Housing Act of 1937, Public Law 75-412, 50 Stat. 888, Section 8, as amended, can afford without spending more than 30% of the household's monthly income on housing costs. With respect to housing that is owned, housing that a household whose income does not exceed 120% of the median income for the area as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development under the United States Housing Act of 1937, Public Law 75-412, 50 Stat. 888, Section 8, as amended, can afford without spending more than 30% of the household's monthly income on housing costs.

Agritourism: A commercial or educational activity conducted on a farm or agricultural property that brings visitors to the site, such as farm tours, pick-your-own operations, farm stays, seasonal events, or educational programs.

Best management practice: A method, measure, or practice used to prevent or reduce environmental impacts, protect natural resources, improve safety, or support effective operation and maintenance.

Brownfield: A property where redevelopment or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants.

Buffer: Landscaping, vegetation, fencing, open space, setbacks, or other design features used to separate potentially incompatible uses or reduce visual, noise, lighting, environmental, or operational impacts.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP): A CIP lays out the financing, location, and timing for capital improvement projects over several years. A CIP typically consists of one or more capital improvement projects, which are financed through a capital budget. CIPs are important tools for local governments, allowing them to plan strategically for community growth and transformation.

Cluster development: Cluster developments allow for a reduction in the minimum lot size and building footprint requirements (without an increase in the overall number of units in a development) to conserve a portion of the property as common open space for recreation and/or the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas. These neighborhoods essentially "cluster" homes into smaller lots on a smaller overall portion of a lot to preserve open space or natural resources.

Complete streets: Streets planned, designed, operated, and maintained to provide safe and appropriate access for people of different ages and abilities using multiple travel modes, including walking, bicycling, transit, motor vehicles, and mobility devices.

Context-sensitive development: Development designed to respond to the scale, character, land use pattern, natural resources, transportation conditions, and other defining features of its surroundings.

Critical natural resource: A natural feature or area with significant ecological, habitat, water-resource, agricultural, scenic, or public-safety value that warrants consideration in planning, development review, conservation, and infrastructure decisions.

Curb cut: An opening or access point along a curb or roadway edge that allows vehicles to enter or leave a property.

Density: The amount of development within a defined area, commonly expressed as the number of dwelling units or amount of building area per acre.

Development intensity: The overall scale and concentration of development, considering factors such as building size, height, lot coverage, density, activity, traffic, and infrastructure demand.

Development pattern: The physical arrangement and relationship of buildings, lots, streets, infrastructure, open spaces, land uses, and natural areas.

Development review: The municipal process used to evaluate a proposed project for consistency with applicable ordinances, plans, standards, and approval criteria.

Dwelling unit: A room or group of rooms designed and equipped exclusively for use as permanent, seasonal, or temporary living quarters for only one family at a time, and containing cooking, sleeping, and toilet facilities. The term shall include mobile homes and rental units that contain cooking, sleeping, and toilet facilities regardless of the time period rented. Recreational vehicles are not residential dwelling units.

Form: The physical characteristics of development, including building height, massing, placement, setbacks, lot coverage, orientation, and relationship to streets and adjoining properties.

Growth area: The Growth Management Act defines growth areas as "an area that is designated in a municipality's or multi-municipal region's comprehensive plan as suitable for orderly residential, commercial or industrial development, or any combinations of those types of development, and into which most development projected over 10 years is directed."

Infill development: New development or redevelopment on vacant, underused, or previously developed land within an established neighborhood, downtown, corridor, or other developed area.

Low-impact development (LID): A site design approach that uses planning, development, and stormwater-management practices to minimize impervious surfaces, reduce runoff, and lessen environmental impacts from development.

Mixed-use development: Developments that provide more than one use or purpose within a shared building or development area. Mixed-use projects may include any combination of

housing, office, retail, medical, recreational, commercial, or industrial components.

Multimodal: Multimodal planning refers to planning that considers various modes of transportation (walking, cycling, automobile, public transit, rail, truck, air, etc.) and connections between those modes.

Neighborhood-serving use: A small-scale business, service, civic use, or facility primarily intended to meet the everyday needs of nearby residents.

Open space: Open space includes all unbuilt areas, whether publicly or privately owned, protected, or unprotected. Open space lands include forests and grasslands, farms and ranches, streams and rivers, and parks. They provide ecosystem services, support agricultural and forest production, and offer opportunities for recreation.

Redevelopment: The action or process of developing something again or differently.

Resource protection area: An area where natural, agricultural, habitat, water-resource, hazard, or other environmental conditions warrant conservation or limitations on the location, intensity, or design of development.

Rural area: The Growth Management Act defines non-growth or rural areas as "a geographic area that is identified and designated in a municipality's or multi-municipal region's comprehensive plan as an area that is deserving of some level of regulatory protection from unrestricted development for purposes that may include, but are not limited to, supporting agriculture, forestry, mining, open space, erosion, mitigation, water retention, wildlife habitat, fisheries habitat and scenic lands, and away from which most development projected over 10 years is diverted."

Shoreland zoning: Shoreland zoning is a specific zoning type, required by the State of Maine, which covers all land within 250 horizontal feet of great ponds, rivers, wetlands, and certain streams. Shoreline zones are required to be regulated by specific ordinances in each municipality.

Tax increment financing (TIF): Municipal tax increment financing (TIF) is a flexible finance tool used by municipalities, plantations, and unorganized territories to leverage new property taxes generated by a specific project or projects within a defined geographic district. Any portion of the new taxes may be used to finance public or private projects for a defined statutorily allowable period. The municipality or plantation defines the district size, determines the amount of new taxes to be captured, and identifies allowable public and private projects along with the term, with the whole proposal requiring local approval.

Traffic calming: Street design and operational measures intended to reduce vehicle speeds, improve safety, and create more comfortable conditions for people walking, bicycling, or using nearby properties.

Walkability: Walkability refers to the measure of how friendly an area is to walk, encompassing factors such as the presence of sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and proximity to essential services. It is also defined as the ability to safely walk to services and amenities within a reasonable distance, typically a walk of 30 minutes or less.

Wayfinding: Signs, maps, landmarks, pavement markings, digital information, and other features that help people understand their location and navigate between destinations.

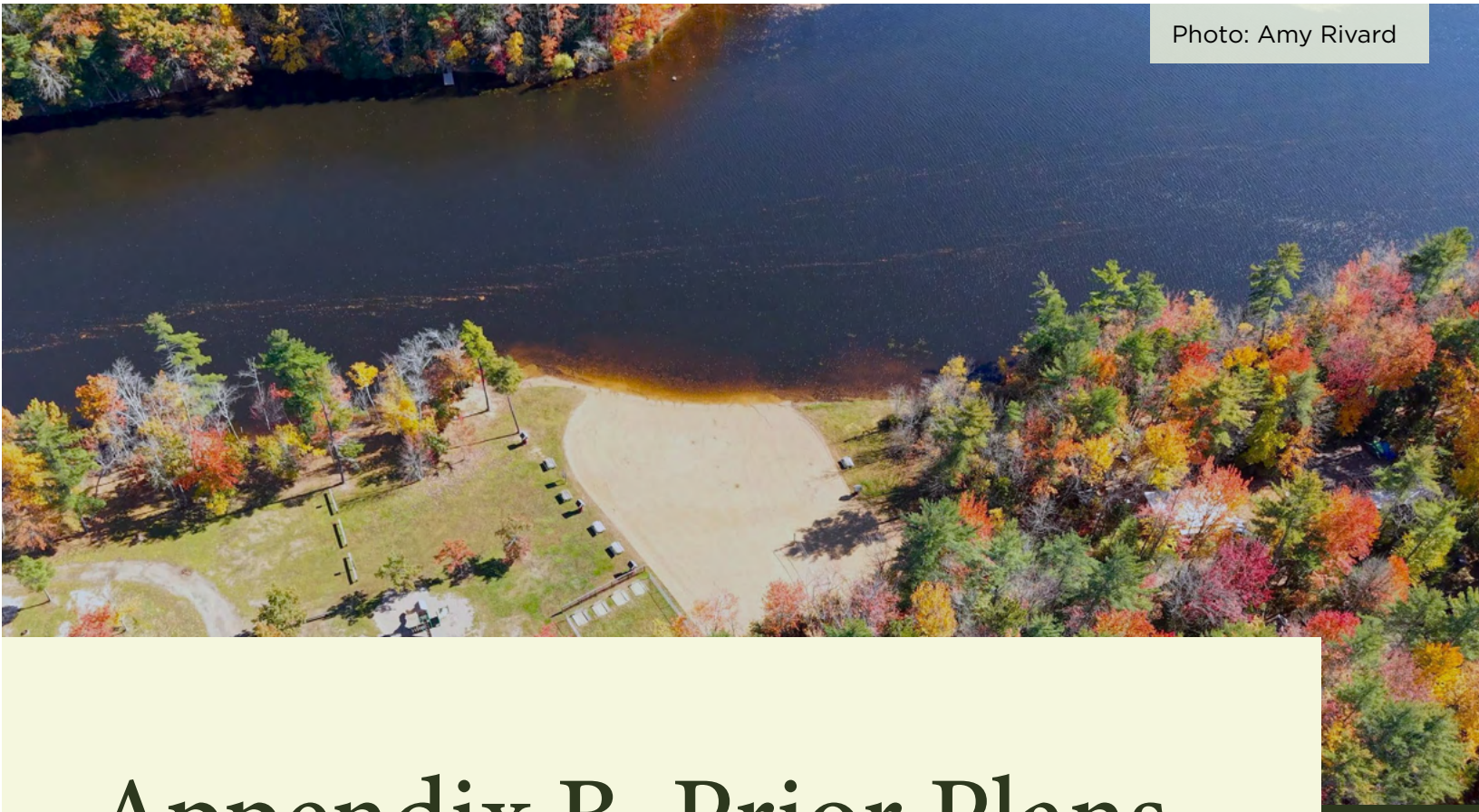


Photo: Amy Rivard

Appendix B. Prior Plans

City Plans, Studies, and Policies

- 2005 Amended Comprehensive Plan
- City of Sanford Zoning Ordinance
- City of Sanford Shoreland Zoning Ordinance
- City of Sanford Floodplain Management Ordinance
- City of Sanford Stormwater Management Ordinance
- City Technical Manual
- Public Road Acceptance Standards
- 2025 Sanford Market Analysis & Economic Development Action Plan
- Downtown Sanford Village Partnership Initiative
- Sanford Downtown Improvement/RAISE Grant Project
- 2017 Sanford Parks & Recreation Facilities Master Plan
- 2020 Sanford Trails Master Plan
- 2025 South Sanford Multi-Modal Transportation Study
- 2024 Safe Street and Roads for All Safety Action Plan
- 2025 Sanford Seacoast Regional Airport Master Plan
- Goodall Brook Watershed Based Management Plan
- Collaborative Conservation Plan for the Town of Sanford
- Community Heart & Soul Visioning Effort

Regional Plans

- York County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation System Transportation Improvement Program
- Three Rivers Land Trust Comprehensive Plan 2019 – 2021
- Climate Change Impacts in Southern Maine: A Regional Summary

State Plans and Policies

- Maine Won't Wait Climate Action Plan
- State of Maine Housing Production Needs Study
- Maine Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan 2025 – 2029
- Maine Impervious Cover Total Maximum Daily Load Assessment for Impaired Streams
- Maine Strategic Highway Safety Plan
- Maine State Active Transportation Plan
- MaineDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan
- MaineDOT Complete Streets Policy
- Maine Forest Service Best Management Practices for Forestry
- WoodsWISE/Woodland Resource Action Plan Framework



Appendix C: Community Engagement Summary



Appendix D: Inventory and Analysis

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