

The University of Maine DigitalCommons@UMaine

Maine Town Documents

Maine Government Documents

1997

Thomaston Comprehensive Plan

Thomaston (Me.). Comprehensive Plan

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/towndocs>

Repository Citation

Thomaston (Me.). Comprehensive Plan, "Thomaston Comprehensive Plan" (1997). *Maine Town Documents*. 799.
<https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/towndocs/799>

This Plan is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine Town Documents by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.



TOWN OF THOMASTON
P.O. BOX 299
THOMASTON, MAINE 04861

TEL, (207) 354-6272

To the Citizens of Thomaston:

In April of 1988 the State legislature passed the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act establishing a local comprehensive planning process with State goals and guidelines and State and local financial assistance. The purpose of this process is to anticipate and guide the development of land.

A committee was appointed by the Selectmen to update the 1974 Comprehensive Plan. This new plan includes detailed information with respect to Thomaston's history, population, housing, economy, transportation, community facilities and services, natural resources, marine resources, recreation, fiscal capacity and land use. Nine maps and the results of a community survey are also included. The committee was very pleased that 50% of the adult citizens responded to the survey. These responses were particularly useful in guiding the committee's decisions.

The survey responses, along with the data collected by the committee, formed the basis for the committee's goals, policies and recommendations.

This plan is an expression of the community's vision of its future and a guide for making public decisions determining the future. It also provides legal support for the Town's land use ordinances.

However, the Town's Comprehensive Plan is only a starting point. The Plan's usefulness will depend on the Town's implementing the recommendations for updating the existing land use ordinances and other suggested strategies. It is the hope of the Comprehensive Planning Committee that the Plan will be reviewed every five years and that the goals, policies and recommendations be modified as the need arises. As the Plan is modified, the land use ordinances may require amendment to keep them consistent.

Sincerely,
Thomaston Comprehensive
Planning Committee

David Bowman
Jonathan Eaton
Sally Hill
Beverly Lilienthal
Lucy A. Mayo
Chris Rector
Lee-Ann M. Upham, Sec.

J.S. Creighton
Russell Grimm
Barbara Lee, Ch.
John A. Martin
Darrilyn Peters
Betty Robinson
Tim Van Campen

Assisted by: Fourtin Powell
Land Use Planning Consultant

Cover Design by: Tim Van Campen

TABLE OF CONTENTS

HISTORY	
POPULATION	9
HOUSING	19
ECONOMY	31
TRANSPORTATION	45
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES	55
NATURAL RESOURCES	71
MARINE RESOURCES	99
RECREATION	109
FISCAL CAPACITY	125
CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN	133
LAND USE INVENTORY	143
FUTURE LAND USE	149
REGIONAL COORDINATION	161
SUMMARY	169
COMMUNITY SURVEY	199
MAPS	
PLANIMETRIC	1
TOPOGRAPHIC	2
COMPOSITE PARCEL	3
COMPOSITE PARCEL INSET	3b
SOILS	4
WATER RESOURCES	S
SEWER AND WATER LINES	6
CURRENT ZONING	7
SUMMARY OF CONSTRAINTS	8
PROPOSED DISTRICTS	9

GLOSSARY

The following terms are used in the Comprehensive Plan. Resource

Protection District

A district in which land use activities are severely limited due to natural conditions of the land and the need to preserve the natural resources located on the land and/or nearby water or wetlands.

Shoreland Districts

Districts intended to protect water resources, generally within 250 feet of the shoreline of water bodies and wetlands, including wetlands, in which land uses are limited due to their location near water. Includes land along the St. George River, Mill River, Oyster River, West Meadow Brook, Branch Brook and the Weskeag River and Marshes and some inland (fresh water) wetlands. Includes Resource Protection Districts.

Rural Residential and Farmland District (R-1)

Includes Beechwood Street, Old County Road, West Meadow Road, and Thomaston Street areas.

Rural Residential District (R-2)

Includes Route One west of the village, Route 131 (north) and Cushing Road areas.

Urban Residential District (R-3)

Includes residential area in the center of town.

Commercial District

Includes businesses in the center of town, highway commercial areas on Route One east of the cement plant, at the Route One bridge over the St. George River and the Shoreland Commercial District along the harbor.

Industrial District

Includes areas east of High Street and Old County Road.

Open Space/Cluster Subdivision

Subdivision in which detached, single-family homes are located on lots no smaller than 30,000 square feet.

Open Space

Land in a subdivision which preserves fields, woodlands and scenic views. Open space may include wetlands, fields, woods, pasture or active recreational facilities for the use of residents of the subdivision.

GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

The *Guidelines for Maine's Growth Management Program* require that each municipality establish goals, policies and implementation strategies that will promote the State's goals.

The 1991 Thomaston Comprehensive Plan contains State Goals, Local Goals, and Policies, arranged by sections, recommended to be followed by the Town and Implementation Strategies to carry out those goals and policies.

Following each Implementation Strategy, the elected officers, officials or groups likely to be involved are listed in parentheses. The priority and timing of the implementation strategies or actions are indicated by the following:

A. = Within 1 Year

B. = Within 3 Years

C. = Within 4 Years

D. = Over 4 Years

Ongoing = Activity could be commenced immediately and continued
a s n e e d e d .

HISTORY

Thomaston is fourteen miles up the St. George River from Muscongus Bay and the original 1605 landing place of the English explorer, George Weymouth, on Allens Island. The St. George River, with Allens Island near its mouth, has been an important natural feature in the history of the town. Exploration of coastal rivers and streams led to the discovery of the area. A cross near the present Public Landing commemorates Weymouth's landing. Ships carried settlers into the area and carried timber, fur and mineral resources to world markets. The rivers and streams yielded fish and water power to run grist and sawmills. The wooded land provided timber for home construction and early shipbuilding. Much of the gently sloping land was eventually cleared and farmed. Lime deposits led to the development of the lime industry and included quarries, kilns, cooerage and the building and equipping of ships to carry the lime to markets.

By 1630, a trading post was established here on the east bank of the river at what is now the foot of Wadsworth Street for the purpose of trading furs. The town is situated in the heart of the Muscongus or Waldo Patent, deeded to Samuel Waldo by Sir William Phipps of Pemaquid, based on a 1694 purchase from Chief Madockawado. Unfortunately, local tribes did not recognize this purchase and continually harassed the first settlers. In 1719, two blockhouses were built and the old trading post remodeled into a fort. Thirty houses were erected nearby, following the establishment of two sawmills on Mill River. In 1735, Samuel Waldo engaged 27 people to settle here. A grist mill was erected in 1740.

Despite the efforts of the French and Indians to oust these first English settlers, Mason Wheaton established a settlement on the Mill River in 1763. From that point until the incorporation of the town in 1777, and the separation in 1848 of South Thomaston, from which Owls Head was divided, and East Thomaston, later to become Rockland, the area became very significant in the maritime history of Maine.

The first families enjoyed the fresh influx of new settlers who followed the enterprise of Major General Henry Knox. He retired from his post as the first Secretary of War in 1795 and built his great estate, called "Montpelier", facing southward on the river. These expectant entrepreneurs joined Knox in building larger vessels that carried the finished lime to cities and towns along America's east coast as far as New

orleans. Knox was extensively involved in many ventures in the region, including the canalization of the St. George River for navigation by flatboats and gundalows. Unfortunately, following his untimely accidental death in 1806, his estate fell on hard times.

Owing to the forests that yielded masts and ship's timbers and the discovery of extensive deposits of lime rock, a brisk export trade developed in newly built ships and the lime by-product used in plaster and mortar obtained from burning lime in kilns which were erected along the banks of the St. George River as early as 1734. The kilns' voracious appetite for wood soon depleted local forests and led to an extensive trade in kiln wood from Maine's coast and islands and as far away as New Brunswick's St. John River Valley.

Shipyards were first established near the mouth of the Mill River, but eventually occupied the entire shore from Fort Point to Brooklyn Heights, near the Wadsworth Street bridge. Beginning in the 1780's, the first vessels to be launched into the St. George River were sloops and schooners. The first full-rigged ship to be built was the *Holoferenes* (1807), to be followed by the *Bristol Trader* and by 1815, it was not unusual for the Thomaston builders to launch four or five large vessels each year. The earliest shipbuilders were James Stackpole, H. Rogers, J. Ulmer, Joseph Gilchrest, Joshua Morton, George Thomas, Cephas and Sanford Starrett, C. C. Morton, William J. Singer and John Robinson.

By the early 1850's, the number of shipyards had grown and vessels of increased tonnage (700 tons not being unusual) emerged as the best built in Maine. Captain Levi Gillchrest, managing partner of Morton & Lermond, built one ship each year from 1847 to 1866. Other major shipbuilders had up to fifty vessels built on their account. These include: Edward O'Brien, Samuel Watts, Chapman & Flint, Stetson & Gerry, Amos Walker, Walker-Dunn & Co., and Dunn & Elliot. The last of the great Thomaston vessels was built by Dunn & Elliot in 1919, the *Reine Marie Stewart*,

Thomaston was, for a while, the terminus for steamboat lines running to lower St. George River points, Muscongus Bay ports, and Monhegan Island.

The Knox and Lincoln Railroad entered town in 1870-1871, crossing the St. George River from South Warren, then along the high river banks below the prison, passing through the site of "Montpelier", which was razed to make room for the railroad. The original Knox servants' quarters

became the Thomaston station. The railroad was completed between Woolwich and Rockland in 1871 and was soon taken over by the then expanding Maine Central Railroad. Passenger service on the line ended in 1959, and freight service ceased in the mid 1980's. Freight service was re-established on the now State-owned railroad in October 1990.

The trolley came down New County Road from Rockland, reaching Mill River in 1893. It was extended along Main Street to Green Street in 1896 and in 1902 to Warren village via a private right of way lying east of the St. George River. The Rockland, Thomaston & Camden Street Railway Company carried passengers, mail and freight. Trolley service on all lines ended April 1, 1931, replaced by buses.

Thomaston's rich history has been chronicled by various authors. Its architectural legacy is visible along Main Street and the intersecting streets within the center of the town. Its architecture includes fine examples from the Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate and French Second Empire styles.

In 1929, as a result of fund raising by publisher Cyrus Curtis and a committee of the Daughters of the American Revolution, a museum replica of "Montpelier" was opened on the east side of the Mill River on High Street. This museum is operated during the summer seasons by the Maine Department of Parks and Recreation.

In 1972, the Thomaston Historical Society began the restoration of the original Knox servants' quarters on the site of Montpelier. Today, this fine brick building serves as the exhibit and meeting space for the Society. Monthly cultural programs are held for the townspeople and a series of publications has enhanced the cultural perspective of the town.

In 1986, dedication of the renovated Thomaston Academy building (1847) was held. The Mid-Coast center of the University of Maine at Augusta and the Thomaston Public Library occupied the building in 1985.

Thomaston's Fourth of July celebration is known as the best in the Mid-Coast area and boasts very fine fraternal and patriotic organizations which support and organize its parade and other events. Of greatest importance, however, is the appreciation that its citizens have for the quality of life and serenity of "The Town That Went to Sea". Yearly, scores of visitors visit the town to research the stories of the hundreds of seafaring men and women who once made this a significant river port for

the state and the nation.

Inventory of Historical and Archaeological Resources

The State lists the village area of Thomaston as well as specific areas, primarily along the Harbor and Mill River waterfronts, as historic and archaeological resources. The village and harbor front contain many buildings from the 19th century which are still in use, as well as ruins of early lime kilns and shipyards. The St. George River has sites of "Indian" habitation and sites where ballast was discharged from sailing vessels. The shores of the Mill River show extensive remains of wharves and some traces of a brickyard. Both the St. George and Mill Rivers show foundations of long-vanished bridges, visible at low tide.

1. Knox Building (1795) - The only remaining structure built by General Henry Knox as part of his estate, "Montpelier". Used as the servants' quarters, it was later converted for use as Thomaston's railroad station. Restored in the early 1970's, it is currently owned by the Thomaston Historical Society and used as a meeting place and museum.

2. St. John The Baptist, Episcopal Church (1868-69) - This board and batten Gothic Revival church was influenced by Richard Upjohn's designs. The bell tower was added circa 1872 by Francis H. Fassett, an architect from Portland, Maine. The building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

3. The Howard Seymour House (1830's - 1840's) - Formerly known as the Dr. Alden House, was built by William R. Keith. The Greek Revival design may have been based upon Edward Shaw's "Doric Cottage" in *Rural Architecture* which was published in 1843. The building, at 52 Main Street, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

4. The John Ruggles House (1827) - Designed in the Federal Style by John Ruggles for himself, this house stands at 29 Main Street. Ruggles was a State Senator. The building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

5. Main and Knox Streets - An Historic District was established in 1974. This includes both sides of Main Street from the State Prison to and including the replica of Montpelier on High Street, and both sides of Knox Street to and including the waterfront.

6. Maine State Prison - Built in 1823-24, fires in 1837, 1841 and 1850 destroyed much of the original buildings. With later additions, it is still in use

in 1991 as Maine's only Maximum Security Prison.

7. Montpelier - This replica of the home of General Henry Knox was built in 1929 on a site overlooking the Mill River. The original home was built by Ebenezer Dunton, from plans probably supplied by Charles Bulfinch, at a cost of \$50,000 in 1794-95. Following Knox's death, it had fallen into disrepair and was razed in 1871 to make way for the railroad.

8. Lime Kiln - The former Burgess-O'Brien kiln is located at the foot of Wadsworth Street, on the west side facing on the St. George River, on property owned by Mark Wilkinson. Kilns near the foot of Knox Street were removed after having deteriorated so that they presented a danger to trespassers.

9. Indian Sites - These lie on the east side of the St. George River for about a mile downstream of the Route One bridge.

10. Black Marble Quarry - This is close to the Mill River west of Old County Road.

11. Shipbuilding Sites - These were located on the Mill River and along the harbor front from Wadsworth Street to just eastward of the foot of Knox Street, including the south bank of the St. George River just east of Cushing Road.

12. Cross - A cross commemorating the landing of George Weymouth in 1605 is located at the Public Landing near the foot of Knox Street off Water Street. Weymouth's landing was reportedly at the bend of the St. George River.

13. Time Capsule - A time capsule was placed on The Mall in 1977 on the occasion of Thomaston's Bicentennial. The site is marked by a ground level granite monument.

Planning Implications

As noted above, there has been a great deal of work done over the years by local citizens and the Thomaston Historical Society to maintain the historic areas of the town.

Pressures on the Historic District grow more intense every year. The most endangered area is the one fronting on Main Street, U. S. Route One, which has seen some intrusion of modern architecture not in keeping with its surroundings.

Unfortunately, nothing has been done to protect this area other than listing it on the National Register of Historic Places. IT is hoped that a Historic District Commission will be appointed soon by the Selectmen and an ordinance adopted by the Town to regulate the Historic District.

Although Montpelier is owned and run by the State, many Thomaston residents are actively involved in its management. A group known as "Friends of Montpelier" runs a gift shop in the building and proceeds go towards maintenance. Montpelier is a major tourist attraction for the town. State funds have been inadequate and the building is in need of many repairs. Concern grows for its survival.

Archaeological sites need further protection. It is hoped that Resource Protection Districts along the watercourses and cooperative management of resources by Thomaston and neighboring towns will ease this problem. The Georges River Land Trust plans to hire an archaeologist in the near future to explore archaeological sites.

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission can provide matching grants up to 70% to hire an archaeologist to determine high-priority areas for National Register nomination and listing.

Goals

State Goal

"To preserve the State's historic and archaeological resources:"

Local Goal

To preserve the character of Thomaston by protecting historic structures and archaeological resources.

Policies

To prevent the threatened destruction of key historic structures, to protect threatened neighborhood areas and archaeological resources, to

prevent future incompatible alteration and destruction of historic building facades and to encourage and promote renovation of historic structures and neighborhoods.

Implementation

Establish an Historic District Commission to oversee historic sites and buildings and work with the Historical Society and Planning Board with the consent, participation and understanding of property owners and other interested citizens to develop an Historic District Ordinance. (Selectmen, Town Meeting) A.

Create a detailed inventory of historic and archaeological resources, including both prehistoric and historic sites. (Thomaston Historical Society) Ongoing.

Adopt an Historic District Ordinance to protect those areas and buildings within the Historic District established in 1974. (Planning Board, Historical Society, Town Meeting) B.

Adopt Resource Protection Districts within the Shoreland Zoning provisions to protect historic and prehistoric archaeological sites identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Subdivision and Site Plan Review Ordinances to retain important views and assure, to the extent possible, particularly for projects within and adjacent to the Historic District, that architectural and site designs are compatible with historic buildings within the Historic District. Amend the above ordinances so that subdivisions or development requiring Site Plan Review proposed for areas in which known archaeological resources exist will require professional archaeological review. The Planning Board may require site plan revision to protect these resources. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Historical Society, Town Meeting) A.

Work with the present property owner to preserve the only remaining waterfront kiln near Wadsworth Street. (Historical Society, Selectmen, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Inventory ballast stones along the waterfront. (Historical Society) Ongoing.

POPULATION

Background

Thomaston's location on a navigable river with nearby forests and limerock deposits made it an early center of shipbuilding and the lime industry, following its initial establishment as a trading post in 1630. Settlement as a town was begun in 1719, but its location near the boundary of the French and English territories periodically subjected the inhabitants to the effects of war. Permanent settlement dates from 1763.

Because of the incorporation of Rockland and South Thomaston in 1848, from what had been the eastern part of Thomaston, the 1850 U.S. Census records a sharp decline in Thomaston's population. (South Thomaston, itself, lost territory in 1921 when the Town of Owls Head was formed.) The area which now includes Thomaston, Rockland, South Thomaston and Owls Head grew very rapidly following the first U. S Census in 1790, gaining almost 600 persons (74.8%) by 1800, with an increase of over 700 by 1810. Thomaston grew by almost 550 by 1820, by over 1550 by 1830, and by over 2000 (47.6%) by 1840.

Following its reduction in territory, Thomaston continued to grow between 1850 and 1860, when the present area of Thomaston reached its peak population of 3,620. It declined by over 500 persons between 1860 and 1870, then declined very slowly through 1890, probably reflecting the continued economic strength of the lime, shipbuilding and related industries. Much of the architecture that makes Thomaston so outstanding today dates from the 1830 through 1900 period, when shipbuilding, ship owning and the lime industry brought prosperity to many of the town's inhabitants. Like most Maine shipbuilding towns, Thomaston did not make the transition from wood to iron and steel construction and shipbuilding declined rapidly in the early years of the 20th century, followed by a brief flurry of activity occasioned by World War I. The lime industry also underwent changes, becoming concentrated in Rockland before it, too, died out in the face of changes in building technology. The cement plant, which uses the same rock, opened in Thomaston in the 1920's. The lowest population in the 20th century was reached in 1920, at 2,019 persons. The population increased somewhat from 1920 through 1950, then fell during the 1950's and 1960's. The 1970's and 1980's again recorded an increase. These trends are visible in Table 1, following.

Table 1 Historic Population
Year Population

1790	799 (Includes present-day Rockland, South Thomaston and Owls Head)
1810	2,106
1820	2,653
1830	4,220
1840	6,227
1850	2,723 (Thomaston only)
1860	3,620
1870	3,092
1880	3,017
1890	3,009
1900	2,688
1910	2,205
1920	2,019
1930	2,214
1940	2,533
1950	2,810
1960	2,780
1970	2,646
1980	2,900
1990	3,306

Sources: U. S. Census summaries prepared by Joyce Benson, Richard Kelly, State Planning Office; Maine State Archives (1850, 1870).

General Population Characteristics

In common with much of coastal Maine, Thomaston experienced relatively rapid population growth in the 1970's. The 1970 population of 2,646 increased by 254 (9.6%) to 2,900 in 1980. The 1980 population of 2,900 increased by 406 (14.0%) to 3,306 in 1990, only 314 less than the peak population of 3,620 in 1860. The general population characteristics are shown below in Table 2.

Table 2 Summary of General Population Characteristics

Year/ Place	Population	Percent		Median Age	Households		Persons	
		Female	Age		Per Household	Per Family	Per Household	Per Family
1970 Thomaston	2,646	46.7	33.5	755	2.998	589	3.41	
1980 Thomaston	2,900	46.1	32.0	927	2.70	703	3.12	
Knox County	32,941	51.6	33.7	12,165	2.61	8,796	3.61	
Maine	1,124,660	51.4	30.4	395,184	2.75	293,936	3.48	

Sources: U.S. Census, Summary of General Population Characteristics: 1980 and 1970-1980 U.S. Census Comparisons, State Planning Office.

The median age of Thomaston's 1980 population had dropped since 1970, but was still higher than that of the state. However, it is lower than that of Knox County, probably because of the age of the prisoners at the Maine State Prison. The prison, which is the state's only maximum security prison and houses male prisoners only, also accounts for the reduced percentage of females, 46.1% compared with 51.4% for the state and 51.6% for Knox County. Of Thomaston's 1980 population of 2,900, 400 were in 'group quarters", with 381 being inmates of the prison. With an older population, compared with 1970, the number of single-person households increased from 166 in 1970 to 195 in 1980, 71.8% of whom were women. Both household and family size have declined since 1970, in line with national trends. As of March 1989, the national median household size was 2.62 persons, while the median family size was 3.16 persons.

When the 1970 and 1980 recorded populations are compared to the projections based on the 1980 U.S. Census, the effects of the gradual aging of Thomaston's population can be seen. All the projections, like the 1980 data from which they are derived, include the population of the Maine State Prison. According to the Maine Department of Human Services, the 1987 prison population was 480, the 1990 prison population was 491.

The prison population increased from 381 in 1980 to 491 in 1990, an
1 Bangor Daily News, December 7, 1989.

increase of 110 or 28.9%. Thomaston's non-prison population rose from 2,519 in 1980 to 2,815 in 1990, an increase of 296 or 11.8%. Therefore, of Thomaston's overall population increase of 406 (14.0%) between 1980 and 1990, over one-fourth (27.1%) were prisoners. Examination of records shows the State Prison population to have averaged about 15% of Thomaston's total population since the 1930's.

Thus, the non-prison population, which affects the need for municipal public services and housing, has increased less rapidly than would be inferred from using the total population, as shown in Table 3, below.

Table 3 Thomaston Population Projections, 1990 - 2005

Ages	Under 5	5-17	18-44	45-64	65+	Total
Year						
1970	178 (6.7%)	515 (21.7%)	954 (36.1%)	565 (21.4%)	374 (14.1%)	2,646
1980	156 (5.4%)	553 (19.1%)	1,250 (43.0%)	524 (18.1%)	417 (14.4%)	2,900
1990	210 (6.2%)	540 (15.9%)	1,500 (44.2%)	640 (18.9%)	500 (14.7%)	3,390
1995	210 (5.8%)	590 (16.2%)	1,550 (42.5%)	770 (21.1%)	550 (15.1%)	3,670
2001	210 (5.4%)	610 (15.6%)	1,550 (39.7%)	950 (24.4%)	570 (14.6%)	3,890
2005	200 (5.0%)	590 (14.8%)	1,500 (37.7%)	1,100 (27.6%)	590 (14.8%)	3,980

Note: "Totals" column derived mathematically, does not agree with tables for 1995, 2001 and 2005.

Sources: Population Projections of Maine Counties and Minor Civil Divisions, July 1, (1988-1997) and (1988-2005); 1970-1980 U. S. Census Comparisons, ,State Planning Office.

As can be seen from the percentages in the various age groups, the projected populations have slightly older median ages as they get farther from 1980. The 1990 projected median age is 34.4 years, the 2001 median age is 36.9 years, and the 2005 median age is projected to be 38.6 years.

Public School enrollments are shown in Table 4, below.

Table 4 Students Educated at Public Expense

Year	Elem. Grades Special, 1-8 Kinder- garten, Pre-1st.	Elem. Grades 1-8 Total	Elem. Grades 9-12 Total	Secondary Total*	Grand Total	
1980	33	328	361	168	169	530
1981	35	334	369	164	164	533
1982	26	324	350	171	175	525
1983	31	329	360	161	161	521
1984	44	307	351	175	178	529
1985	45	290	335	165	166	501
1986	37	309	346	161	163	509
1987	50	281	331	151	152	483
1988	61	276	337	155	156	493
1989	45	306	351	150	151	502
1990	65	310	375	148	149	524
1991	67	334	401	157	159	560
10/1991	-		399	142	144	543

*** Includes secondary level Special Education students and Postgraduate students**

Sources: 1980-1984, 1986- 1988, April 1 Census of ,Students Educated at Public Expense, Me. Dept. of Education and Cultural Services; 1985, 1989, 1990, 1991 (April 1, October 1), S.A.D. 50, Superintendent's Office.

The grand total of students educated at public expense from Thomaston has varied only slightly from 1980 through the beginning of the 1991-1992 school year, ranging from a low of 483 in 1987 to a high of 560 in April 1991. The overall totals of elementary and secondary school students have also been relatively constant, while the growth of kindergarten and ungraded programs for the pre-school and entering school ages has increased markedly as new programs have been implemented. Enrollment in these classes has varied from a low of 26 in 1982 to a high of 67 in April 1991.

Data from U. S. Census Table 3, Summary of Social and Employment Characteristics: 1980, shows, for Thomaston residents 25 year and over, 69.5% had graduated from high school. This compared with 71.5% for Knox County and 68.7% for the State of Maine. It is highly likely that the educational level of the inmates at the State Prison lowered the

percentage for Thomaston. Data from Table 48, Years of School Completed for Persons 25 Years Old and Over, shows 37.5% of Thomaston residents had completed high school, 16.0 % had completed 1 to 3 years of college, and 13.4% had completed 4 or more years of college, for a total of 66.7% with high school or further schooling.

Seasonal Population

The number of seasonal residents, unlike the seasonal visitor or tourist, can be estimated from the number of seasonal dwellings, in 1980, of the total of 1,007 dwelling units in Thomaston, only three were seasonal. Therefore, at the average of 3.5 persons per seasonal dwelling, as determined by a 1984 study for the Maine Department of Human Services by the Arthur D. Little organization, Thomaston's seasonal population would only have increased by 10 to 11 persons, or 0.3% of the 1980 population of 2,900. In 1980, Thomaston had four establishments offering rooms for rent to the public, with a total of 14 year-round rooms and 3 seasonal rooms. At that date, no camping sites were available. Therefore, while Thomaston undoubtedly experiences some increases in business due to the summer tourist trade, the actual increase in population is minimal.

Economic Characteristics

A comparison among residents of Thomaston, Knox County and the State is shown in Table 5, below.

Table 5 Summary of Social and Economic Characteristics: 1980

	Per Median Capita Income	Median Household Income	Median Family Income	1979 Poverty Level (% of Total)	1979 Income Below Poverty Level All 65yrs. Under Ages and over 18 yrs.	Income Below 125% of 1979 Poverty Level	
Thomaston	\$4,865	\$13,170	\$14,988	10.5	3.0	2.8	16.9
Knox Cty.	\$5,659	\$12,113	\$14,312	14.4	2.7	4.7	23.0
Maine	\$5,768	\$13,816	\$16,167	13.0	2.0	4.6	19.3

Source: U.S. Census, Summary of Social and Economic Characteristics: 1980, Table 4.

While the per capita income level of Thomaston residents was below the Knox County and State levels in 1980, the State Prison population is included in that figure. The household and family incomes, in contrast, were closely comparable to the County and State levels, with Thomaston exceeding the County levels and being slightly below the State levels. The most recent per capita income information now available is that for 1985. This is shown on Table 6.

Table 6 Per Capita Income, 1979-1985

	1979	1985	% Change 1979-1985
State of Maine	\$5,766	\$9,042	+56.8
Knox County	\$5,659	\$8,353	+47.6
Thomaston	\$4,865	\$6,929	+42.4
Cushing	\$5,904	\$8,418	+42.6
So. Thomaston	\$5,929	\$8,220	+38.6
Rockland	\$5,389	\$7,830	+45.3
Warren	\$4,651	\$7,136	+53.4

Source: U.S. Census, Population, Migration. Per Capita Income, Maine, Selected Years, 1979-1986.

The per capita income statistics, unfortunately, reflect mostly the presence or absence of significant numbers of State Prison inmates. Therefore, both Thomaston and Warren (Warren had 197 of its total 1980

population of 2,566 [7.7%] listed as in "group quarters", many of whom would have been in the prison farm in South Warren) show per capita incomes substantially below either the County or the State. It is also highly likely that residents of group homes for the elderly and mentally retarded have below average incomes.

In order to make meaningful comparisons of incomes in Table 6, above, the Consumer Price Indexes (CPI) may be used. The increase in CPI for the December 1979-December 1985 period for U. S. urban wage earners and clerical workers was 40.7%; for all U. S. urban consumers, the increase in CPI was 42.5%. Thus, the increase for Thomaston residents was essentially equal to that of all U. S. urban consumers over that period.

The CPI's for the 1979-1989 period show continued rises in the prices of consumer goods, being 61.4% for wage earners and clerical workers and 64.4% for all urban consumers. In other words, the consumer in 1989 would have to earn over 60% more than in 1979 to have the same purchasing power. ²

Of those Thomaston residents reporting their place of work in the 1980 U. S. Census, 97.2% worked in Knox County (42.3% worked in Rockland, 37.9% worked in Thomaston). Therefore, Thomaston residents, if the 1980 trend has continued, will continue to be affected by wage levels paid in Knox County. Between 1979 and 1985, per capita income in Knox County increased at a slower rate than for the State as a whole. Thus incomes in Thomaston may not have increased as fast as the State average. ³

Community Survey

The community survey was given to all Thomaston residents 18 years of age and over. Of these, 1,066 responded. However, those in the older age groups were more responsive to the survey, 56% of respondents were 45 and over, with 27% aged 65 and over. Thirty percent of respondents were retired. Homeowners were in the majority, with 84% reporting they owned their homes. Similarly, 83% lived in single-family homes, with only 4% in mobile homes. In answer to the question, "Which of the items that you checked in question #1 are most important to you?", 87% listed

² Census Data Center, Maine Dept. of Labor, January, 1990.

³ U. S. Census, Documentation Supplement, Tabulation P-B 34, Place of Work, 1980.

"Small town atmosphere" as first, second or third most important. Similarly, 52% listed "Mid-coast location", while 32% listed "Historic character of the town". As might be expected with the large proportion of homeowners, only 12% listed "Affordable housing" among their three most important concerns. In a similarly worded pair of questions concerning "dislikes", 56% of respondents listed "taxes" among the three most disliked factors in Thomaston, with 48% listing "inadequate sewage treatment facility", and 40% listing "traffic problems". "Not enough shopping facilities" came in a close fourth, with 38%.

Planning Implications

Thomaston has been largely a town of homeowners, with 77.5% of occupied housing being owner-occupied in 1970, and 74.0% owner-occupied in 1980. It is evident that the older, more home-owning portion of the population responded more frequently to the questionnaire. This is, quite likely, a reflection of political involvement and, ultimately, political power in the town.

Thomaston has a rich architectural legacy from its period of prosperity related to the lime industry and the shipbuilding, owning and servicing industries. Whether this housing will continue to be mostly single-family, or whether it becomes more divided into apartments will depend on regional, and national, economic conditions over which Thomaston residents have little control. While about three-quarters of Thomaston's 1980 residents were homeowners, it is not certain that those who would work in or near Thomaston and own homes in the town can afford current prices. Of those responding to the questionnaire, 58% had lived in Thomaston for 11 or more years, with 10% having lived in town over 50 years. Clearly, many have owned their homes since well before the increase in prices experienced in the 1980's. Over one-half placed taxes among their strongest dislikes, a result of increasing assessed valuations and tax bills which have risen faster than incomes, whether retirement or working incomes. Eventually, those now living in town will pass their homes on to others.

Thomaston's future population may well be determined by who can afford to live in the town, by what becomes of the legacy of historic architecture, and by what forms residential development takes in the future. This, in turn, will determine the level of investment in schools,

recreational facilities and services, additional businesses, and cultural resources offered to future residents.

HOUSING

introduction

Thomaston has a rich variety of housing ranging from late 18th century Capes through Federal and Victorian to modern ranches and manufactured homes. Many of the older homes are within Thomaston's Historic District and three are in the National Register of Historic Places. These early homes dominate Main Street within the compact area, establish the town's historic character and give it a strong sense of identity.

Characteristics

As mentioned in the 1974 Comprehensive Plan, and still true today, the most prevalent form of housing in Thomaston is single-family residences. Out of a total of 1,001 housing units listed in the 1980 Census, 741 (74%), including mobile homes, were single-family residences. This preference for single-family homes existed in other Knox County communities as well. In fact, except for Rockland, with 59.6% and Camden with 73.3%, all other Knox County communities had an even higher percentage of single-family residences than Thomaston. Of a total of 13,594 housing units in Knox County in 1980, 76.6% were single-family homes. As of December 1989, Thomaston still had 74.9% or 855 single-family residences out of a total of 1,141 housing units. This is an increase of 114 single-family residences since 1980. These single-family homes have been predominantly owner-occupied. The 1980 Census showed only 62 (8.8%) out of 706 single-family homes were renter-occupied. In both the 1974 and 1989 community surveys, single-family homes were preferred by respondents.

Thomaston's residential mix also includes two boarding homes, one with 18 boarders and one with 7, a transitional group home for the mentally handicapped, and three bed and breakfast establishments. Except for the bed and breakfasts, there has been little increase in the seasonally occupied housing units. In addition, Thomaston's housing includes 96 subsidized apartments; 53 low income elderly and 43 family units.

As of December 1989, Thomaston had six apartment buildings with a total of 92 units and an additional 201 units in approximately 62 homes that have been converted to multi-family use. It should be noted that an

undetermined number of units in these converted homes are owner-occupied. This total of 293 multi-family homes and apartments is an increase of 33 housing units since 1980. This gives Thomaston a total of 147 new housing units since 1980, or a 12.8% increase.

This 12.8% increase in housing units indicates a slower growth rate than that of most other Knox County municipalities, according to data prepared by the Human Services Department of the Maine State Planning Office. Between 1980 and 1987, Thomaston's percentage of units added was 8.6%. Rockland and Warren were the only other municipalities with lower percentage increases. South Thomaston, St. George, Camden, Cushing and Hope were all in the 18% to 24% range. Knox County, as a whole, had an increase of 10.8%.

Table I Number of New Housing Units in Thomaston, 1981-1989

Year	One Mobile Family Home Home	Two Family Home	Three or Four Family	Five or More Family	Fire Losses	Total Net Units	
1980	706	3-5	121	67	72	1,001	
1981	2	1			1	2	
1982	3	1			2	2	
1983	9				2	7	
1984	4					4	
1985	13	15			1	27	
1986	10		3			13	
1987	8	2	12			22	
1988	18	1	15		1	33	
1989	14	3				17	
4/89- 12/89	9	1	3			13	
Total 12/89	796	59	121	100	72	1,141	
Change 1/80- 12/89	+90	+24	0	+33	0	-7	+140

Source: Maine Bureau of Taxation. Year runs from April 1 to March 31.

During the above nine year period, conventional single-family homes increased at a average rate of 10 per year, while mobile homes increased at an average rate of 2.67 per year. There were no reported increases in two family residences or five or more unit apartments, but three to four unit apartments increased at an average rate of 3.67 per year. Among the

147 units constructed, 61.2% were conventional single-family homes, 16.3% were mobile homes (for a total of 77.5% single-family units) and 22.5% were multi-family units, constructed in three or four unit buildings. Despite the addition of 33 multi-family units, the percentage of single-family homes increased from 74.0% in 1980 to 74.9% in 1989. However, conventional single-family homes declined slightly from 70.5% to 69.8% over the period, while mobile homes rose from 3.5% to 5.2% of total housing units.

Condition of Housing

According to 1980 Census figures, Maine's housing Stock was the oldest in the Nation and Knox County has the second oldest housing stock in Maine. Of Thomaston's total of 1,001 housing units in 1980, 669 (66.8%) were built before 1940. This was a higher percentage than the State's 41% and Knox County's 61.3%. Despite the age of Thomaston's housing stock, it is still in, "remarkably good condition" as described in the 1974 Comprehensive Plan. In fact, it is in even better condition today due to an increased interest in rehabilitation and renovation and a booming economy during the 1980's. A windshield survey conducted in September 1990 showed few houses in poor external physical condition. We will not know until the 1990 Census results are published how many homes are considered substandard inside. This is determined by the condition of the kitchens, bathrooms and heating systems. In Knox County in 1980, out of 13,594 housing units, there were 521 (3.8%) with incomplete kitchens, 1,079 (7.9%) with incomplete bathrooms and 116 (0.9%) with no central heating system.

Vacancy Rates

Almost all houses in Thomaston are occupied year round. Only a few would be considered seasonal homes. The 1980 Census showed 66 vacant housing units (6.6%), 28 of which were single-family homes. Preliminary 1990 Census data show 116 vacant units out of a total of 1,212 units, or 9.6%. Thomaston's subsidized housing is, in general, fully occupied. It is probable that the increase in the apparent vacancy rate is due to the presence of homes for sale and a possible decrease in occupancy of non-subsidized rental units. By early 1990, the real estate boom of the 1980's had already showed signs of weakening but many sellers in the Mid-Coast area were still holding out for high prices, resulting in longer average selling times. With declines in regional employment, fewer renters were able to afford to stay in un-subsidized quarters.

Affordable Housing

There are many indications that Knox County has a population in need of affordable housing. The County has the highest proportion of elderly in the State of Maine, with 24% of its population over 60. With a median income of \$26,100, 18% of the population over 65 live in poverty and 10% of all families live below the poverty level. For female-headed households, 34% live below the poverty level and saddest of all, 36%, or 2,024 of Knox County children live below the poverty line. It is difficult to extrapolate these statistics from the county to a municipality since the poverty statistics are unavailable for the smaller communities. However, there are a few figures which give an indication of families living on low incomes.

Income maintenance figures for Thomaston show that, as of July 22, 1990, 52 families (2 or more persons) or households (one or more persons) received Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits. This included 144 individuals, 90 of whom were children. One hundred three families or households totaling 223 individuals received Food Stamps. The number of children is not known. There are 109 families or households with 237 individuals receiving either AFDC or Food Stamps or both. The 53 elderly and 43 family subsidized housing units in Thomaston are another indication of the need for affordable housing.

Table 2 Thomaston Subsidized Housing

Project	Total Low Income Units		Subsidy Runs Out
	Elderly	Family	
Chapman Apartments	8		July 12, 1994
Pine Street Apartments		16	May 6, 1996 - 2026
Water Street Apartments		12	November 3, 2001
Greenfield Apartments		12	December 1, 2006-2036
Knox Hotel Apartments	29		June 24, 2020
Beechwood Street Apts.	15		
Scattered Sites	1	3	
Total	53	43	

Source: Maine State Housing Authority

A January 1990 Maine State Housing Authority study entitled, *Housing Needs in Maine. A Preliminary Assessment*, based on 1988 data, analyzes

the local housing conditions of the Federally classified Labor Market Areas (LMA). Thomaston is within the Rockland LMA which includes all of Knox County and Waldoboro in Lincoln County. Because of the age of its housing stock and the low level of income, the Rockland LMA is one of the areas in need of rehabilitation funding for owner-occupied housing units. And, according to this study, because of the gap between income levels and the cost of housing units, the Rockland LMA is in greater need of mortgage subsidy. The study also indicates that this area has a moderate need for rent subsidy, construction of new homes and rehabilitation of rental units. It has a low need for construction of new rental units.

In order to decide if Knox County and Thomaston have housing that is considered affordable, we must first look at income levels.

Table 3 Median Incomes for Thomaston and Knox County Residents

<u>1980</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1989</u>	
Thomaston			
Family	\$14,988	\$19,126	\$23,264
Household	13,170	17,308	21,446
Knox County			
Family	\$14,312	\$19,200	\$26,100
Household	12,113	17,500	

Source: Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)

Using figures extrapolated from the DECD's 1985 median household income figure of \$17,308, we see that Thomaston had a 1989 median family income of \$23,264 and Knox County had a median income of \$26,100. From these median income figures, we can determine the income for Very Low Income (50% of the median), Low Income (80% of the median) and Moderate Income (up to 150% of the median) families. These are shown on Table 4.

Table 4 1989 Income Levels for Thomaston and Knox County *

	<u>Median</u>	<u>Very Low</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Moderate</u>
Thomaston		up to	up to	up to
	\$23,264	\$11,632	\$18,611	\$34,896
Knox County	\$26,100	\$13,050	\$20,080	\$39,150

* = Family of Four Source: DECD

TO meet the requirements of the Growth Management Law,

Thomaston's Comprehensive Plan must have housing policies that will, in the future, provide housing for the three groups, Very Low, Low and Moderate income families. Table 5 gives recent median resale prices of existing houses in Thomaston and Knox County.

Table 5 Median Prices for Single-family Residential Resale's in Thomaston and Knox County

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>
Thomaston			
Number of Sales	26	17	12
Price	\$65,100	\$88,000	\$73,500 (Through 9/90)
Knox County			
Number of Sales	336	261	75
Price	\$85,000	\$95,000	\$85,000 (Through 6/90)

Source: University of Southern Maine, Institute for Real Estate Education

Of the 261 homes sold through MLS realtors in Knox County in 1989, 130 houses sold for under \$95,000 and of the 17 homes sold in Thomaston that year, 8 houses were available for under \$88,000, For Knox County we can compare the income levels with the median resale prices and determine by looking at Table 6 how many houses sold in 1989 were affordable to each income group.

Table 6 Affordable Housing Rents and Selling Prices, Knox County, 1989'

Annual Family Income Ranges	Percent of Total Families	Percent of Lower & Moderate income Families	Gross Monthly Rent	Affordable Selling Price
Very Low Income				
Less than \$10,000	10.1		Up to \$250	Up to \$22,300
\$10,000 to \$14,200	9.8	19.9	Up to \$360	Up to \$31,800
Low Income				
\$14,200 to \$22,700	22.0	30.0	Up to \$570	Up to \$51,200
Moderate Income				
\$22,700 to \$39,150	31.5	42.9	Up to \$980	Up to \$88,600
Above Moderate Income				
\$39,150 to over \$60,000	26.7	N/A	Up to \$1,500	Up to \$136,100
Median Family Income				
\$26,100			Up to \$650	Up to \$58,900

* = Family of Four. Affordable price assumes spending no more than 28% of gross monthly income on mortgage, insurance and property taxes. Does not include utilities.

Source: Office of Comprehensive Planning, DECO

If the too price that Moderate Income families in Knox County can pay for houses is \$88,600, approximately half of the houses sold in 1989 were available to Moderate Income families and, of course, fewer than one half to Low and Very Low income families. Since these three income groups include 73.3% of all families residing in Knox County, obviously Knox County has a shortage of affordable housing.

The percentage of families in the Very Low, Low and Moderate income groups is not available for Thomaston, but we know that the highest priced home affordable by Moderate Income families (those with incomes up to \$34,896) would be approximately \$77,000 (see Tables 6 and 7) and that only six houses sold for \$77,000 or under (see Table 8). In 1989, Low Income families, those with incomes under \$18,611, were not able to buy any house in Thomaston.

Table 7 Affordable Housing Rents and Selling Prices, Thomaston, 1989'

Income Range	Affordable Gross Monthly Rent	Affordable Selling Price
Very Low Income		
Up to \$11,632	Up to \$290	Up to \$25,000
Low Income		
\$11,632 to \$18,611	Up to \$480	Up to \$42,000
Moderate Income		
\$18,611 to \$34,896	Up to \$860	Up to \$77,000
Median Income = \$23,264		
* = Family of Four		

Source: Calculated from DECD figures, Table 6.

The median price home sold in Thomaston through September 30, 1990, was \$73,500. Only three of the homes were available to the half of Thomaston's population living below median income. The recession is lowering home prices but wages are falling and people are losing their jobs.

Table 8 Prices for Single-family Residential Resale's, Thomaston, 1989-1990 (through September 30)

1989	1990
\$65,000	\$28,000
67,000	29,000
70,000	32,000
73,500	69,500
76,150	70,000
77,000	72,000
85,000	75,200
85,000	80,300
88,000	85,500
88,000	g 1,000
89,000	120,000
89,900	135,000
95,000	
109,000	
120,000	
126,000	
152,000	

Source: University of ,Southern Maine, Institute for Real Estate Education.

Two bedroom apartments in Thomaston rent for approximately \$300 to \$450 plus utilities, which would add another \$80 to \$100 monthly. Low Income families (\$15,000 to \$22,500) would be able to afford these rents. Subsidized apartments are the only rental housing available to Very Low income families but it is likely that many of these apartments will be converting to market rents within the next ten years.

Planning Implications

In 1990 Thomaston's proportional makeup of housing units is strikingly similar to what it was in 1980. If left to the decision of the present residents of Thomaston, the same rate of growth would continue. Of the respondents to the 1990 community survey (50% of the residents over 18 years of age responded), 24% favored a slow increase in the rate of growth for single-family housing and 61% a moderate rate of growth. For multi-family housing, 42% favored a slow rate of growth and 23% a moderate rate of growth. One factor that has affected the number of housing units is residents' concern about the maintenance and heating costs for the large, older homes. In 1985, this concern resulted in a lowering of restrictions on converting single-family homes to multi-family homes. A slowing economy and rising heating oil prices may result in more applications for apartment units in existing homes. At the same time, there has been a growing resistance by some neighbors to homes being converted to multi-family use.

Thomaston's population projections show an increase of 445 (this figure is derived by removing the Maine State Prison population from the State's projection and using the State's percentage increase for the "town" population) in the next ten years. If a family is considered to consist of 3 persons, this would indicate a need for 148 new housing units in the next ten years, or about 15 units per year. The five-year historical average of residential construction in Thomaston is 25 housing units per year. If this trend continues, Thomaston should have no difficulty meeting the housing demands of the projected future population. However, with the economy presently in a recession, the next couple of years will probably see fewer new homes being built. The trend will continue toward smaller homes being built by developers and manufactured homes by individuals. Thomaston has one waterfront area in which larger homes have been built and, because of the cost of waterfront property in nearby towns, will probably continue to be developed. If and when the economy improves, more of the older, larger homes may be sold and updated as single-family residences.

It is evident from the preceding charts that affordable housing is needed in Thomaston. If the sewer lines are extended, the recommended growth area on lower Beechwood Street is also the most likely location for new affordable single-family housing. In the past, land in this area has sold for less than in the present Urban Residential District. A reduction in required land area per dwelling unit is recommended in this area for designated affordable housing projects.

Affordable apartments will be needed in Thomaston, especially two and three bedroom units, as subsidized apartments convert to market rents. Affordable apartments may be more acceptable to present residents of the Urban Residential District if they are allowed in the older homes that need rehabilitation and are managed by a local housing committee.

Goals

State Goals

"To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl and

To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens."

The Growth Management Law requires that Thomaston's Comprehensive Plan address the State goal of promoting affordable housing. To implement this goal, the State has mandated that, "the municipality shall seek to achieve a level of 10% of new residential development based on a 5-year historical average of residential development in the municipality meeting the definition of affordable housing. Affordable housing is housing available to households at or below 80% of the median household income." The 5-year historical average for new housing units in Thomaston is 25. To meet this mandate, 2 to 3 affordable housing units will need to be added to Thomaston's housing inventory each year.

Local Goals

To protect the residential quality of Thomaston while allowing for orderly growth.

To encourage a diversified community by providing affordable housing for all income groups.

Policies

To enhance the residential quality and character of Thomaston.

To ensure that new development will be attractive and compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.

To preserve and improve the condition of existing housing.

To achieve an adequate supply of affordable, decent housing for all of Thomaston's citizens.

Implementation

Enforce parking standards relating to conversion of single-family residences to multi-family residences. (Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer) Ongoing.

Within the present Urban Residential District and the proposed TR-3 District, encourage a traditional village neighborhood block design. Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to discourage subdivisions in cul-de-sacs in these districts. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Subdivision and Site Plan Review Ordinances to include minimal landscaping requirements, primarily street trees. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Appoint an Affordable Housing Committee to: Conduct a survey to further determine the range of affordable housing needed by Thomaston citizens, decide on affordable housing projects to meet these needs, and work with the Mid-Coast Housing Alliance to obtain State funding: (Selectmen) A.

Seek State and Federal funding for rehabilitation programs. (Planning Board, Selectmen, Affordable Housing Committee, Town Manager) Ongoing

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to require that 10% of housing be affordable to low and moderate income households. Devise means to assure long-term

affordability. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Affordable Housing Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to include a reduction in land area required per dwelling unit and frontage and side yard setbacks for designated affordable housing in the Growth Areas. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Affordable Housing Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Establish priority processing by the Planning Board for affordable housing projects.(Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer) A.

Consider donating any tax-acquired land to affordable housing projects undertaken by a non-profit organization. (Affordable Housing Committee, Town Meeting, Selectmen) Ongoing.

Apply for membership in the Mid-Coast Housing Alliance in order for the Town to qualify for State funding for affordable land and housing projects.(Selectmen) A.

Be aware of subsidized units converting to the market economy, in order to have the possibility of a non-profit housing corporation acquiring these units to keep them affordable. (Affordable Housing Committee) Ongoing.

ECONOMY

Introduction

Thomaston's 127 businesses operate in three major locations; the historic Downtown Business Block on Main Street (U. S. Route 1), the Harbor area along Water Street and Route One east of the Cement Plant flats to the Rockland line, including Buttermilk Lane and Dexter Street Extension.

The majority of these businesses are small with the owner operating the business with one to five employees at an average wage of between \$5.00 and \$7.00 per hour.

Table 1 Thomaston Business Inventory, 1990

Antique Shops	5	Gift Shops	2
Attorney	1	Grocery	1
Auto Dealers	4	Hardware	1
Auto/Electric	1	Home Furnishings	1
Auto Mufflers	1	Ice Cream Sales	1
Auto Salvage	1	Insurance Agents	4
Bakery Distribution	1	Kennel/Grooming	1
Banks	3	Kitchens/Custom	1
Beauty Academy	t	Laundry	1
Beauty Salons	2	Lawn Mower Repair	1
Bed & Breakfasts	3	Marine Equipment	2
Boarding Homes	2	Miniature Shop	1
Boatbuilders	6	Monogramming	1
Bookbinding	1	Motorcycle Sales	1
Book Dealers	2	Musician	1
Bookkeeping Service	1	Party Supplies	1
Brake Service	1	Paving Contractors	2
Cafe/Bakery	1	Photo Processing Lab.	1
Carpenter	1	Plumbing Contractor	1
Carpet Cleaning	1	Produce	1
Caterer	1	Redemption Center	1
Cement Manufacturer	1	Real Estate Dealers	4
Cemetery Monuments	1	Rentals (Equipment)	1
Charters (Yacht)	1	Rentals (Trucks)	1
Composting	2	Restaurants	1
Contractors/General	4	Rubbish Removal	1

INVENTORY (continued)

Concrete Foundations	2	Saw Mill	1
Convenience Stores	3	Seafood	1
Dentists	2	Service Stations	3
Draperies/Curtains	1	Sheetmetal	1
Drug Store	1	Storage	2
Editorial Service	1	Tax Return Prep.	1
Electricians	2	Taxi Service	1
Excavating/Septic	1	Telephone Service	1
Fences	1	Television Repair	1
Felt Products	1	Tire Service	1
Filtering Materials	1	Tools/New & Used	1
Fireplace Equipment	1	Trucking	1
Floor Covering	1	Variety Store	1
Florists	2	Video Rentals	1
Framing	1	Video Taping	1
Funeral Home	1	Wastewater Systems	1

Total: 127 Businesses.

Source: Lee-Ann Upham, 1990.

Of these 127 businesses, 25 have been started within the last five years (1985-1990), 17 of those in the last year (1989- 1990). There were seven Building Permits issued in 1989 under the heading "Stores and Other Mercantile Buildings". Most have occupied existing structures.

The "Boom of the Eighties" arrived rather late in Thomaston and with the current economic situation amounting to a recession, we can expect a period of adjustment. We may lose one or two businesses but most feel secure enough to wait it out.

Thomaston businesses are more dependent on regular, year-round trade than on tourism, although most report the usual seasonal increase that comes from people staying in the area. This is more a "drive through" community. Though beautiful, Thomaston has little to attract the casual tourist.

Tourism was certainly not the prime reason for Thomaston's recent economic growth though it is very important for Knox County as part of the Mid-Coast Region. The reasons for starting or expanding a business seem to be, according to business owners polled, more intangible. That is, "The

time was right, the area is growing and they felt sound enough financially to start a business."

Consumer Sales

Thomaston's Taxable Consumer Sales rose to \$27,460,000 in 1989, an increase of 61.3% over 1988, the highest increase in Knox County. During the same period, seven other communities such as Camden, Rockland and Rockport reported a decrease in sales. Thomaston also showed the largest increase in 1988, 28.2% over 1987, which reflects the growth for the last two years seen in the inventory of Thomaston businesses.

Table 2 Total Consumer Sales In Thousands By Town, Knox County

Town	1987	1988	1989	88/87	89/88
Camden	\$36280	\$39230	\$38830	108. t	99.0
Cushing	520	740	770	143.2	103.8
Friendship	850	950	910	111.5	95.6
North Haven	1250	t 520	1450	121.6	95.6
Owls Head	B	B	540	97.9	110.8
Rockland	88020	96760	96700	109.9	99.9
Rockport	17020	19780	19800	116.2	100.1
St. George	1510	1530	1520	101.1	99.3
So. Thomaston	960	1170	1270	121.6	108.7
THOMASTON	13270	17020	27460	128.2	161.3
Union	3350	3260	3610	97.0	110.9
Vinalhaven	3010	3350	3110	111.4	92.7
Warren	17512	20710	19590	118.3	94.6
Washington	. 2190	2600	2900	119.1	111.5
Rest of County	1080	11 00	1160	101.6	105.6
Totals	\$187320	\$210190	\$219610	112.2	104.5

B=Sales of \$350,000 to \$500,000.

Source: Maine Bureau of Taxation.

From these figures, it would not be unreasonable to assume that people will shop in Thomaston rather than make the trip to Rockland or Camden if we can provide what they need at a reasonable or comparable price, and, in fact, the majority of businesses polled indicated that they try to shop in Thomaston for their needs. This strong sense of loyalty was seen in Thomaston from both the businesses themselves and the community at large.

Major Employers and Other Contributors

The Maine State Prison is Thomaston's largest employer. With

approximately 272 employees at an average base wage of \$18,000, this translates to around \$5,000,000 annually in wages, some of which goes back to the local economy. Several State Prison employees own homes in Thomaston and so contribute further through their property taxes.

Though the Prison does not pay property tax, they began paying a sewer user fee on January 1, 1991. The Prison also contracts with the Town for ambulance service at a rate of \$150.00 per trip.

Dragon Products currently (1991) employs 128 people at an average hourly rate of \$8.00 or an annual payroll of approximately \$3,000,000. Of the 128 employees, 32 or 25% live in Thomaston.

The cement plant was recently appraised at \$40,800,000, or 49.1% of Thomaston's 1989 valuation of \$83,112,000. Their taxes for 1990 were \$860,000, almost double their 1989 taxes of \$467,000.

Dragon Products continues to acquire land in Thomaston, owning at present 1,000 of the total 7,247 acres (13.8%), or 1.56 square miles of the 11.32 square miles that make up Thomaston. Most of this land is in areas vital to the economic growth of the town:

723 acres zoned Industrial (I)	
210	Rural Residential & Farming (R-1)
63	Resource Protection (RP)
2.5	Urban Residential (R-3)
1.5	Commercial (C)
Total 1000 acres	

Source: Thomaston Assessor's Agent

Thomaston manufacturing firms, not including the production of cement, accounted for \$23,068,956 in value of product and \$3,985,606 in wages for 162 persons according to the "1985 Census of Maine Manufacturers, by County, Major Industries & Minor Civil Divisions".

Taken collectively, Thomaston's waterfront marine businesses employ another 75 people, contributing roughly \$936,000 in annual wages.

In 1988, 1,096 jobs were available in Thomaston according to the *U. S Route One Corridor Study - A Socio-Economic and Land Use Analysis of the Route 1 Corridor, Bath to Prospect*, prepared by the Eastern Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission for the Maine Department of Transportation. Projected 2005 figures were for approximately 1,963 jobs

in Thomaston.

Civilian Labor Force

The Civilian Labor Force in Thomaston has grown since 1980 from 1,000 to 1,194 in 1989, an increase of 194 jobs (19.4%).

Table 3 Civilian Labor Force

	1980	1988	1989
Total	1,000	1,151	1,194
Employed	902	1,108	1,137
Unemployed	98	43	57
Unemployment Rate (%)	9.8	3.73	4.77

Source: U. S. Census.

Thomaston's unemployment rate results, in part, from the problems experienced in Rockland with the slow down and closure of various manufacturing concerns, particularly those related to the fishing industry (finfish landings on the East Coast are currently in decline). Also, it is impossible to tell how much these figures are affected by the dependents of inmates of the Maine State Prison who may reside in Thomaston.

Table 4 Labor Force Estimates: Knox County, 1989

Town	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate (%)
Appleton	363	354	9	2.47
Camden	2517	2437	80	3.17
Cushing	519	511	8	1.54
Friendship	433	414	19	4.38
Hope	512	500	12	2.34
Isle Au Haut	47	47	0	0.00
Matinicus	47	47	0	0.00
North Haven	147	145	2	1.36
Owls Head	749	728	21	2.80
Rockland	3653	3371	282	7.71
Rockport	1782	1742	40	2.24
St. George	928	905	23	2.47
South Thomaston	661	629	32	4.84
THOMASTON	1194	1137	57	4.77

Table 4 (continued)

Town	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate (%)
Union	924	865	59	6.38
Vinalhaven	406	381	25	6.15
Warren	1362	1303	59	4.33
Washington	530	508	22	4.15

Source: Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Security, Division of Economic Analysis and Research.

In 1989, the Civilian Labor Force In Maine numbered 616,000, with 590,000 employed and 25,000 unemployed, for an overall unemployment rate of 4.1%. The unemployment rate for Knox County was 4.5%. Cumberland County had the lowest rate of 2.4%, while Washington County had the highest unemployment rate of 8.5%.

Labor Force Characteristics for the Town of Thomaston are available from the 1980 U. S. Census. These are shown below in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5 Labor Force Characteristics, Town Of Thomaston, 1979

Industry Group	Number	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Mining	29	3.2
Construction	17	1.9
Manufacturing	273	30.3
Transportation	14	1.6
Communications and Other Public Utilities	9	1.0
Wholesale Trade	52	5.8
Retail Trade	146	16.2
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	32	3.5
Business and Repair Services	11	1.2
Personal, Entertainment and Recreation Services	42	4.6
Professional and Related Services	199	22.1
Public Administration	78	8.6
Total	902	100.0

Source: U. S. Census, Table 65, 1980.

Table 6 Employed Persons, 16 Years And Over, By Occupation, 1979

Occupation	Number	Percent
Managerial and Professional	221	24.5
Technical, Sales and Administrative Support	208	23.1
Service	121	13.4
Farming, Forestry and Fishing	38	4.2
Precision Production, Craft and Repair	105	11.6
Operators, Fabricators and Laborers	<u>209</u>	<u>23.2</u>
Totals	902	100.0

Source: U. S. Census, Table 66, 1980.

Thomaston's 1979 workforce was heavily concentrated in the Manufacturing Industry Group, with Manufacturing and Professional accounting for over one-half of the workforce. Retail and Wholesale Trade together accounted for over one-fifth of the workforce. Among Occupational Groups, Managerial and Professional; Technical, Sales and Administrative Support; and Operators, Fabricators and Laborers each accounted for slightly over one-fifth of the 1979 labor force. This pattern reflects the fact that Thomaston was then, and still is, a town with many small businesses.

For the Rockland Labor Market Area (LMA), which includes all of Knox County plus the Lincoln County town of Waldoboro, more recent statistics are available. Non-farm Wage and Salary Employment for the Rockland LMA for 1989 indicated that Manufacturing accounted for only about one-fifth (19.4%) of employment, with that being almost evenly split between Durable Goods (48.5%) and Nondurable Goods (51.5%). Non-manufacturing employment accounted for just over four-fifths (80.6%) of employment, with Services and Mining totaling 33.5%, followed by Retail Trade with 27.8% and Government with 18.5%. Construction accounted for 8.1% of Non-manufacturing employment.

Table 7 Covered Employment And Wages, Knox County, 1989

Industry Group	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wage
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Mining	196	\$188.82
Construction	966	337.50
Manufacturing	2654	388.81
Transportation, Communications and Other Public Utilities	486	310.05
Wholesale Trade	527	313.47
Retail Trade	3136	201.38
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	406	394.04
Services	3581	294.65
State Government	585	460.37
Local Government	<u>1325</u>	<u>330.03</u>
Totals	13,862	\$307.61

Source: Maine Department of Labor

The 1985 Census of Maine Manufacturers provides information, by town, for Knox County, on value of product and gross and average wages. Unfortunately, due to the fact that Dragon Products is the only operating cement plant in Maine (and in New England, for that matter), the value of product for the cement plant is suppressed, giving Thomaston a reported annual value of product of \$23,068,956, comparable to that of Camden, \$23,470,248. Excluding the cement plant, there were an average of 162 persons employed in Thomaston in 1985 at an average annual wage of \$24,602. This substantially exceeds all other Knox County towns reported, with the next highest, Camden, having an average annual wage of \$15,171 in 1985. Rockland, with an average employment of 1,596 persons, had an average annual wage of \$15,023, slightly below that of Camden. Average annual 1985 wages in Warren were \$14,556; in Union, \$14,159; in Rockport, \$ 12,957; and in St. George, \$8,464.

Where the workforce is employed also affects the character of economic activity in a community. In 1980, Rockland and Thomaston accounted for almost four-fifths (78.8%) of Thomaston's employment. Therefore, the great majority of Thomaston residents were employed relatively close to their homes. Table 8, below, shows some of the commuting patterns in 1980.

Table 8 Place Of Work, Workers 16 Years And Over, 1980

Place	Number	Percentage
Thomaston	355	37.2
Rockland	396	41.6
Worked Elsewhere	185	19.4
Place Not Reported	<u>17</u>	<u>1.8</u>
Total	953	100.0

Source: U.S. Census, Documentation Supplement, Tabulation P-B 34, 1980.

Table 9 Major Knox County Employers, 1990,1991

Firm	Number Of Employees		
	1990	1991	Change (%)
1. Ames Department Store	70	70	0.0
2. Bicknell Manufacturing Co.	50	50	0.0
3. Courier-Gazette	80	72	- 10.0
4. Crowe Rope Company	350	400	14.3
5. Dragon Products Company	135	135	0.0
6. Fisher Engineering	150	102	-32.0
7. Hurricane Island Outward Bound	200	200	0.0
8. Marine Colloids	186	200	7.5
9. Marriners, Inc.	50	50	0.0
10. North End Marine and Fiberglass	60	52	- 13.3
11. F.J. O'Hara and Sons, Inc.	150	35	-85.2
12. Penobscot Bay Medical Center	600	709	18.2
t 3. Port Clyde Canning Co.	175	130	-25.7
14. Rockland Convalescent Center	63	63	0.0
15. Samoset Resort	300	300	0.0
16. Schoolhouse Tog Corporation	50	50	0.0
17. Shaw's Supermarket	135	135	0.0
18. Shop 'N Save	100	240	140.0
19. Stinson Seafood	95	0	-100.0
20. Tibbetts Industries, Inc.	130	112	-13.8
21. Trade Winds Motor Inn	65	75	15.4
22. Van Baalen Pacific Corporation	280	130	-53.6
23. Maine State Prison	<u>272</u>	<u>272</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Totals:	3,746	3,612	-3.6

Source: Rockland-Thomaston Area Chamber of Commerce Survey, 1990, update, 1991, Lee-Ann Upham, Fourtin Powell.

Two of the three largest employers in Knox County are located in Rockport (Penobscot Bay Medical Center and Samoset Resort) while the second largest employer (Crowe Rope) has its largest plant in Warren. Of the top 23, only 2 (Maine State Prison, Dragon Products) are located in Thomaston. Tibbetts Industries is located in Camden. The remaining 17 are located in Rockland.

Although Chemrock is not one of Knox County's major employers in terms of number of employees (in 1991, it's processing plant on Buttermilk Lane employees nine) it has played an important role in the revitalization of the former Rockland Branch of the Maine Central Railroad. Chemrock is receiving seven to eight cars per month of perlite, a volcanic rock shipped by rail from New Mexico and Colorado. They expand the material in a kiln and grind it to specifications of their customers, who use it as a filter aid in industrial processes. Their major customers include FMC (Marine Colloids) in Rockland and Pfizer Chemical in Groton, Connecticut, both of which receive the product by truck.

There is also a siding in Thomaston, near the old railroad station (Thomaston Historical Society), which was formerly used for loading pulpwood.

The Maine Coast Railroad, a short line operator over State-owned track, delivered its first revenue carloads to Chemrock in October 1990. The Maine Coast Railroad connects with the Springfield Terminal (Maine Central) at Brunswick, and has plans to deliver coal to Dragon Products and transport their cement and other products to a barge loading/unloading facility in Wiscasset. However, the October 12, 1991 *Courier-Gazette* contained the announcement by Dragon Products that the marine terminal has been postponed, "until there are strong indications that the economy in the Northeast is improving."

The railroad also anticipates intermodal (container on flatcar) service to FMC and has delivered cars of plastic pellets to Rockland for Crowe Rope. In 1991, the Maine Coast R.R. intends to submit its operating plans for commuter service on portions of the Rockland Branch and other lines it will operate out of Brunswick to the Maine DOT. Future plans include use of the engine facilities at Rockland and possible tourist trains out of Rockland.

Planning Implications

The survey of Thomaston businesses and various statistical sources

reveal much about Thomaston's economy. These are presented below as Positive and Negative factors.

Positive Aspects Concerning Business in Thomaston

Majority Support of Retail Growth: The majority of residents surveyed wanted to see moderate growth in retail business and some light industry in Thomaston. The community understands the need to expand its tax base to insure its economic well-being.

Community Development and Chamber of Commerce: The Thomaston Business Council, part of the recently expanded Chamber of Commerce (Rockland-Thomaston Area Chamber of Commerce) oversees the Community Development Committee and the Merchants' Council. The President and another member of the newly reorganized Mid-Coast Development Corporation sit on the Thomaston Business Council. The Community Development Committee has several community image projects being worked up to present to the Thomaston Board of Selectmen. Major advertising is planned in various publications such as *Down East Magazine* and 65,000 copies of a brochure were distributed in 1991.

Area Growth and Labor Availability: Businesses located in Thomaston can expect to serve a larger market as the area continues to grow. Any business that opens in Thomaston that does not require or that is prepared to teach a specific skill to a worker, has access to persons from the community and surrounding area as evidenced in the labor statistics previously reported.

Easy Access to Protective Support Services: Thomaston is a small community with a very good network of support services. Police, Fire and Ambulance services are readily available. Moderate growth should pose no unreasonable problems to the continued availability and high quality of these services.

Atmosphere and Attitude: In the past five years, 25 new businesses have opened in Thomaston. This type of growth attracts more business. Also, there has been several "face lifts" to the downtown business section that help create an atmosphere of positive change. The majority of businesses try to purchase their needs in town and the community, as a whole is very supportive. Small town atmosphere plays a major role for both community and business. Businesses enjoy being part of a community where most people are acquainted.

Not Dependent on Tourism: Tourism is not a solid foundation on which to start a business and those opening in Thomaston know they must develop their customers from the community and surrounding area. Once this is done, they have a regular clientele making them less vulnerable to losses resulting from tourist whims.

Business Support of Ordinances to Enhance, Protect and Maintain the Character and Beauty of Thomaston: The majority of businesses surveyed in Thomaston show a desire to maintain the historic and small town character of Thomaston and will support reasonable ordinances to that effect. What is good for the community is good for business.

Availability of Rail Service: Thomaston has two industries, which are directly served by the Maine Coast Railroad, Chemrock and Dragon Products. A siding near the old railroad station (Thomaston Historical Society) was formerly used for loading pulpwood. Use of railroad freight service can reduce truck traffic on Thomaston's Main Street, Route One. It can also provide an economic advantage to some industries due to lower shipping costs.

Negative Aspects Concerning Business in Thomaston

Land Availability for Commercial and Industrial Businesses: The most pressing problem for Thomaston's future economic growth is the lack of available land. Because a large portion of undeveloped land is currently owned by Dragon Products and they continue to acquire more, we are forced to examine very carefully new areas that might be used for other businesses that would not harm the downtown business district. While present estimates for continued production extend many years beyond the ten-year "horizon" toward which this Plan is oriented, the cement plant, if it continues to operate, will eventually deplete its local mineral resources. While it may be possible to operate the plant without its immediately adjacent quarries, this would imply relatively low cost transportation of raw materials, probably by sea and rail. If the plant eventually closes, in addition to the reduction in property taxes, Thomaston will also need replacement Jobs.

There are about 30 acres, a former airport, (held privately) now available for development. Various other small parcels are also available in the same area, currently zoned for industrial use. Residential properties surrounding the downtown business district severely limit expansion of the business district without encroaching on the residential area, much of which is included in the historic district.

Goals

State Goal

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

Local Goal

To Encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of Thomaston that will result in a broadening of the tax base and the economic well being of the community.

Policies

To encourage the expansion of business in Thomaston.

To protect and enhance the small town and historic character of Thomaston, including improvements to the visual quality of its highway "entrances".

To protect the downtown business district from outlying commercial strip development and otherwise strengthen the downtown business district.

To plan for the long-term re-use of the land areas now occupied by the cement plant and its quarries.

To take full advantage of the presence of reactivated railroad facilities for Thomaston's businesses and residents.

Implementation

Research grants and loans through the Mid-Coast Development Corporation and various State agencies. Provide information for Thomaston businesses on the Small Business Administration loan programs.(Thomaston Community Development Committee) Ongoing.

Locate those properties available in commercial and industrially zoned areas and promote them to interested parties - "match making". (Thomaston Community Development Committee) Ongoing.

Change part of the Commercial District on Route One near the St.

George River to Residential 2. Place all commercial land uses wholly or partially within the Shoreland District along the St. George River in the Shoreland Commercial District. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Include in the Historic District Ordinance requirements that any changes made by businesses in the downtown commercial district be compatible with the existing architecture in the town, including beautification and measures to afford effective visual screening where necessary and landscaping to create more pleasing surroundings. (Planning Board, Historical Society, Town Meeting) B.

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance to give preference to highway-oriented businesses in the area east of the "cement plant flats", so that businesses in this area do not compete directly with the downtown businesses. Require appropriate parking and landscaping to create a pleasant environment. (Thomaston Community Development Committee, Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Rezone to Highway Commercial some of the land with frontage on the south side of Route One from the vicinity of Dexter Street Extension to the Rockland town line now within the Industrial Zone. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Consider directing future expansion of the downtown business district into areas immediately north ("outback") of the block of stores on Main Street. (Thomaston Community Development Committee, Planning Board, Town Meeting) D.

Repair, widen and extend sidewalks to serve the downtown and the school campus. Connect the downtown and waterfront business districts with sidewalks (these could also connect with proposed hiking trails in Thomaston's waterfront and wooded areas). (Selectmen, Public Works Director, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Work with the management of the cement plant to create an environment that is eventually reusable, both for the quarries and the area now occupied by the cement plant. (Thomaston Community Development Committee, Planning Board) Ongoing.

Retain industrially zoned land adjacent to and accessible to the railroad east of High Street, to permit additional industries, which could use rail service to locate there. (Planning Board, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

Thomaston's transportation systems are chronicled in various histories of the town. The first road to be laid out in Thomaston was accepted by the Town on March 29, 1779. It extended from the Warren line at the Oyster River Bridge to the Camden line on Juniper Hill, the present Rockland-Rockport line. In 1818 a toll bridge was built at the foot of Wadsworth Street, replacing a ferry, and in 1836 the upper toll bridge was constructed to South Warren and Main Street was extended from Walkers Corner to the bridge. Later, a road was constructed from the Mill River east to Rockland, first known as the New County Road, later as Atlantic Highway, and now U. S. Route One. An 1857 map of Thomaston Village by C. M. Hopkins shows a road network much the same as today's. In general, the town's roads can be described as typical of New England, with roads laid out on the most direct routes afforded by higher, well-drained ground between Thomaston's Main Street and adjacent towns, while the Village area has a relatively regular grid pattern, primarily south of Main Street, which passes through the village in an East North East - West South West direction.

Records are lacking for the original construction details of the Town's roads, but the Director of Public Works believes much of the work was done during the Depression of the 1930's. According to Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) records, Old County Road was paved in 1926, and Route One in Thomaston was paved between 1928 and 1930.

The Knox and Lincoln Railroad were constructed through Thomaston in 1870-71, and used the former Knox farmhouse as the passenger station. Passenger service ended April 4, 1959. The electric trolleys of the Rockland, Thomaston & Camden Street Railway arrived at Mill River in 1893, extended up Main Street to Green Street in 1896, and continued on to Warren in 1902. Buses replaced the electric cars in 1931. Steamboats once served Thomaston from such points as Monhegan, Port Clyde, Friendship and Round Pond; all were gone by the Depression.

Roads

According to records of the Thomaston Public Works and Police

Departments, the town has 31.36 miles of roadways. Of this, 6.46 miles are maintained by the State, 24.65 miles by the Town, and 0.25 miles by SAD 50. There are 3.24 miles of privately maintained roads, most of which are on the grounds of the cement plant.

Functional Classification

The Maine DOT classifies roads by the role they serve in the highway network. The three principal functional classifications are:

Arterials - The most important travel routes in the State. They carry high speed, long distance, high volume traffic and attract a significant amount of Federal funding. They usually carry interstate or U. S. route number designations.

Collectors - These routes collect and distribute traffic to and from the arterial routes; serving places of lower population density which are somewhat removed from main travel routes.

Local - These are the roads, which primarily provide local access and serve traffic to and from adjacent land areas and usually carry low volumes of traffic.

Maine DOT records show Thomaston has 4.74 miles of arterials, 5.10 miles of collectors, and 18.84 miles of local roads, for a total of 28.68 miles. Town and State mileage records do not fully agree. Only Route One, which combines with Route 131 on Main Street, is classed as an arterial. Collectors include Old County Road, High Street (Rte. 131 south) and West Main Street (Rte. 131 north).

Old County Road forms a bypass around the built-up portions of Rockland to rejoin Rte. One in Rockport. Route 131, which runs between Port Clyde and Swanville, offers the most direct route to St. George and Warren for Thomaston residents. Important local roads include Wadsworth Street and Cushing Road leading to Cushing, and Beechwood Street, angling northwesterly to its intersection with Rte. 90 in Warren. Water, Thatcher and Fish Streets are increasingly used as a bypass of Route One for Cushing and Friendship residents.

Thomaston would not have been directly affected by construction of a bypass from Route 90 northerly to rejoin Route One in Belfast, but might

have benefited from some minor reduction in through traffic on Route One. However, a well-attended public meeting in Hope on May 9, 1990, and a follow-up meeting in Wiscasset on May 14, 1990, let Maine DOT officials know that there was considerable citizen opposition to such a highway. On July 6, 1990, Dana Connors, MDOT Commissioner, announced that plans for bypasses around Camden and Wiscasset had been dropped. However, the MDOT is still considering a second Route One bridge across the Kennebec River at Bath and there is considerable citizen support for some sort of bypass around Wiscasset. Construction of either of these proposals could increase traffic on Route One east of Wiscasset. An 18 month study of Route One is currently underway for the MDOT, with results expected in October 1992.

Traffic Volumes

Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) was measured yearly in Thomaston by the MDOT from 1984 through 1988. Route One west of the West Main Street intersection had an AADT of 5995 in 1984 and 8110 in 1988, a 35.3% increase. Route One just east of Old County Road increased from 9730 in 1984 to 11,730 in 1987, a gain of 20.6%. The busiest part of Main Street within the "village" in 1984 was just east of Pine Street, with an AADT of 11,115. Route 131, West Main Street, went from an AADT of 1345 in 1984 to 1880 in 1988, an increase of 39.8%. Route 131, High Street, just south of Route One went from an AADT of 3455 in 1984 to 3950 in 1987, an increase of 14.3%. Old County Road went from 2470 in 1984 to 2760 in 1987, an increase of 11.7%. In 1984, the AADT on Wadsworth Street at the "Iron Bridge" was 2105. Beechwood Street had an AADT of 815 just north of Erin Street that same year (more recent counts are not yet available).

Safety

The MDOT defines a "High Accident Location" as an intersection (node) or length (link) of highway with 8 or more accidents in a three-year period and a "Critical Rate Factor" in excess of 1.00. The Critical Rate Factor is a measure of the actual number of accidents compared with the theoretical accident experience, which would be expected in that situation. The MDOT considers locations with more than 4 accidents in a three-year period and a Critical Rate Factor greater than 1.00 as "Problem Areas". From 1966 through 1988, Thomaston had no High Accident Locations or Problem Areas as defined by MDOT.

Route One had a total of 128 reported accidents during the 1986-88 period. Only the area near the Post Office, with 2 accidents, had a critical Rate Factor in excess of 1.00 (1.14). However, the "Cement Plant Flats" between Old County Road and Buttermilk Lane had the most accidents, 16. Route 131 had a total of 10 accidents, with only the intersection of West Main Street and Studley Lane having a 1.16 Critical Rate Factor. A total of 57 accidents were reported for the remainder of Thomaston's roads. The intersection of Wadsworth and Water Streets had 6 accidents and a Critical Rate Factor of 2.29. Dexter Street, between Old County Road and Route One, had 1 accident but a Critical Rate Factor of 2.97. Beechwood Street, Old County Road, Buttermilk Lane and Thomaston Street all had Critical Rate Factors in excess of 1.00. There were three fatal accidents during the period, one on Route One near the St. George River Bridge, one on Route One near Old County Road, and one on Thomaston Street.

Accident data compiled by the Police Department for 1986-1989 show Main Street is, by far, the most dangerous street in Thomaston in terms of number of accidents. It accounted for 164 out of 305 accidents resulting in property damage, 35 out of 64 personal injury accidents, and all 3 of the fatal accidents recorded during the period.

Parking

There are two major off-street parking lots in Thomaston. Lighting was installed in 1990 at the recently surfaced lot behind the Main Street commercial block, and its parking stalls were measured and painted. The upper and lower Town Landing parking lots were recently hot-topped but do not have marked spaces. There would appear to be about 30 spaces, some for vehicles and boat trailers.

Bridges

There are three highway bridges in Thomaston, in addition to many culverts. Two are on Wadsworth Street. One, on which minor maintenance work was completed in December 1990, is an overpass above the railroad. The "Iron Bridge", a former drawbridge over the St. George River, had its deck rebuilt and a sidewalk added in 1991. The bridge on Route One at the St. George River was opened to traffic in December 1990, replacing the 1929 truss bridge. The new bridge is 44 feet wide, with two travel lanes plus breakdown lanes. Its construction cost is expected to be \$1.9 million. Final surfacing of the approaches was completed in June 1991.

Sidewalks

Thomaston has sidewalks along one or both sides of many of the residential streets in the village, as well as much of the length of Main Street. The 1989 survey indicated interest by residents of Beechwood Street in having sidewalks from Beechwood Street to Watts Lane (formerly known as Park Avenue) north of Starr Street. This sidewalk would be used by school children, as are many of the others in town. Wadsworth and Water Streets and Cushing Road need sidewalks, in part to connect with the newly constructed sidewalk across the bridge

Regional Public Transportation

Railroad

Freight service on the Rockland Branch of the Maine Central Railroad ended in 1985, the State purchased it in 1987, and a new short line operator, the Maine Coast Railroad, began freight operations in October 1990. An inaugural passenger train for local officials and potential shippers was run on October 31, 1990, 119 years after the original beginning of service on the line. Initial service is to Chemrock in Thomaston, with the cement plant anticipated to be the major shipper. As a result of the bond issue approved by Maine voters on November 6, 1990, interchange with the Maine Central (Guilford Transportation, Inc.) will be made in Brunswick in the future. There is an ongoing track improvement program, costing about \$500,000 to rehabilitate 52 miles of track, which will be repaid to the State by the Maine Coast Railroad. The railroad is actively seeking additional traffic and anticipates having both commuter and tourist passenger operations. Seventy percent or 749 of 1,070 respondents to the 1989 survey supported reactivation of the railroad.

The Town should work with the Maine DOT and the Maine Coast Railroad to assure that the public becomes informed of the increased use of the railroad, especially regarding grade crossing safety. In the event that the Maine Coast Railroad begins operation of passenger service, some thought should be given to location of a passenger station, with sufficient parking to serve the needs of potential commuters.

Bus

There is no longer any privately owned bus service in the Mid-Coast

area. Greyhound, which formerly served Thomaston on its route between Brunswick and Bangor, was struck in March 1990 and service on the coastal route ceased. In August 1990, Greyhound officials confirmed that the coastal route would not be resumed (service to Bangor via Waterville resumed in April).

Coastal Transportation, with a local office in Rockland (596-6605), operates a fleet of vans, many with wheelchair lifts, to various destinations in and outside of Knox, Lincoln and Sagadahoc Counties. They have service from Cushing, Friendship and Thomaston to Rockland on Tuesdays, with approximate pick-up times of 9:00 A M and drop-off around 11:30 AM. On Wednesdays, they run from Thomaston to Rockland at the same hours. For other service, a call must be placed with their dispatcher 24 hours in advance. Coastal Trans is a non-profit organization. Fares are charged for the general public, but other arrangements are available in cases of need.

Air Service

Thomaston's former airfield was located east of Dexter Street and north of Route One. Scheduled air service to Boston and Trenton, Maine (Bar Harbor) is available at Knox County Airport in Owls Head. This service is provided, as of August 27, 1990, by Continental Express under the United States Department of Transportation's Essential Air Service Program. The subsidy for the year beginning October 1, 1990 is \$407,866, or \$28.23 per passenger. Current fares from Owls Head to Boston (one-way) are about \$85.00. (Source: Order No. 90-8-43, August 27, 1990, USDOT, Washington, D. C.) Air taxi service is also available at Owls Head.

Ferry Service. Ports

The Maine DOT operates ferries for both vehicles and passengers to Vinalhaven, North Haven and Matinicus from its terminal in Rockland. Ferries to Islesboro use a terminal at Lincolnville Beach. A privately operated service, for passengers and freight, runs from Port Clyde to Monhegan. All services run year-round. Seasonal charter and excursion boat services operate out of Tenants Harbor, Rockland and Camden, in addition to the schooner cruises out of Rockland, Rockport and Camden. There is currently no scheduled boat service using Thomaston Harbor. Rockland's commercial traffic, other than ferries, consists of fishing vessels, oil tankers and occasional barge loads of stone. There is

also a Coast Guard base.

Other Transportation Services

Thomaston is served by limousines to the Portland Jetport and by taxis from Thomaston and Rockland. Various trucking companies, United Parcel Service and Federal Express also serve the area.

Planning Implications

Although traffic through Thomaston has not yet reached the critical levels of Route One in Wiscasset, where traffic effectively cuts that town in two during much of each summer day, summer congestion is a serious concern of the town's residents. In the 1989 survey, 706 of 1070 respondents believed summer congestion was a problem for the town. A bypass was favored by 588 (55%). The Townspeople are divided in their opinions regarding traffic, with the business owners generally favoring existing traffic levels and residents complaining about congestion.

In order to serve a proposed Transitional Residential District on lower Beechwood Street, a new road would be constructed in three stages, approximately parallel to Route One. The first stage would extend from Booker Street to Beechwood Street, a second stage would run from Route 131 (near Route One) to Booker Street and a third stage would go between Beechwood Street and Old County Road near Route One, crossing over the Mill River. The primary purpose of this street would be to serve new residential development close to the present "village" area of Thomaston. It could also relieve traffic on Route One just as the other streets in the "grid" of Thomaston's village do now. It is anticipated that developers would construct this road as the area became developed.

There appears to be an unmet demand for public transportation for all ages and for short and long distance purposes. Employment-related trips may become more important if fuel prices increase. Rail passenger service, whether in the form of commuter service, tourist trains, or through service connecting with Amtrak's national network, could also be advantageous to Thomaston residents. To gain maximum benefit from any future passenger service, the Town may wish to establish contact with the management of the Maine Coast Railroad.

Much of the built-up area of Thomaston has sidewalks, an appropriate

amenity and significant contributor to pedestrian safety. However they need to be upgraded and extended to increase pedestrian safety and access to downtown businesses.

In the past, some record keeping and maps for the Town related to roads and sidewalks were inadequate. These records would be useful not only for on-going maintenance but for major rebuilding projects which will be part of the Capital Improvements Program. Steps have been taken recently to improve this situation.

Goals

State Goal

"To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl."

Local Goal

To maintain and extend transportation facilities and services that are vital to maintaining and improving the quality of life in Thomaston.

Policies

To work with the State and other municipalities and agencies to create and maintain a network of roads and sidewalks and a system of public transportation services which meets the needs of Thomaston's residents and businesses.

Implementation

Research the ownership of sidewalks along Main Street and major side streets in Thomaston and clear title, by whatever means are appropriate, so that the Town can legally repair, widen and extend sidewalks to serve the downtown, the waterfront and the school campus. Install sidewalks where needed in the "village" area. (Public Works Department) B.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance and the Site Plan Review Ordinance to limit curb cuts and otherwise improve access and egress to parking

areas in order to improve traffic safety and retain the traffic carrying ability of major routes in Thomaston, especially Route One. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Review "paper streets" and determine the status of these streets. They may be needed for future development or could provide open space for recreational needs.(Planning Board) Ongoing.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to require that subdivisions in the proposed Transitional Residential District incorporate in their design roads which would, individually or in coordination with other subdivisions, create an extension of Thomaston's grid pattern of streets. This extension would include a road north of, and approximately parallel to, Main Street, connecting Booker and Beechwood Streets, and others as appropriate.(Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Continue financial support to regional transportation agencies, where such support would adequately benefit Thomaston residents. Consideration should be given to increasing the amount of regional public transportation available. This would involve cooperation with other, nearby towns. (Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Inventory

Water Supply

Thomaston is served by the Camden and Rockland Water Company. In areas outside the compact village, private wells are used. The Company uses water from several area ponds and lakes, with recent approval for expanded sources. Water quality is excellent. Fluoride and chlorine are added prior to delivery to Thomaston. Capacity is adequate to serve the current needs of Thomaston. Water pressure in excess of one hundred pounds per square inch is maintained in many areas of town.

Water is supplied to Thomaston through a 12 inch main, installed in 1963, extending from near the reservoir in Rockland to U. S. Route One, and a 10-inch main installed in 1887 running along Route One to Thomaston. The town is served by a 300,000-gallon water tower approximately opposite the Maine State Prison. The condition of the tower is excellent and no replacement will be needed in the foreseeable future.

Expansion of the distribution system continues. A 12-inch main has been installed on the new Route One Bridge to serve the new state prison in South Warren and the water main is now (November 1991) being laid to the bridge. Depending on demand, the Company may eventually extend this line to join their system serving Warren village.

Through the expansion of sources and continued infrastructure development, the Water Company feels they can meet the expanding demands. The need for general conservation is constant, however, and the orderly control of expanded use is necessary to preserve the present high quality of service, where there is a water main installed, the Company charges \$400 to hook up to a customer on the same side of a road as the water main and \$600 for a hook up on the opposite side (April 1991), with the water line from the property boundary to the building being the responsibility of the owner. Extensions of water mains are paid for by the person or organization desiring the extension.

Planning Implications

The Camden and Rockland Water Company owns major land holdings

within the watersheds of Grassy Pond and Mirror Lake, its primary water sources. Permission has been received to draw water from the Megunticook River, thereby providing a significant potential additional source of water. However, the watershed of Chickawaukie Lake in Rockport and Rockland is substantially developed and water quality has deteriorated. The Water Company is cooperating with the lake association, including financial assistance, in efforts to improve water quality. Attempts to develop water sources from Fish and Hobbs Ponds in Hope have been stopped by opposition of Hope residents. Thus, while water supplies are plentiful for the period covered by this plan, population is expected to continue to increase within the area served by the Company. Future decades may see some developmental constraints imposed by the quantity of water and/or the costs of achieving desired or required quality standards. Water conservation could be encouraged by requiring replacement toilets to be "low-flow".

While the Water Company seems unconcerned with the age of its main serving Thomaston, 104 years old in 1991, even cast iron pipe eventually requires replacement.

Waste Treatment Facilities

The village area of Thomaston, including the Maine State Prison, is served by sewers, which flow, to the Thomaston Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). Typical of older systems, these are largely "combined" sewers which carry storm water runoff, water from sump pumps and roof drains, groundwater and sanitary wastes. Because of the rapid changes in volume inherent in combined sewers, major storms cause overflows to bypass the WWTP when its capacity is exceeded. This has led to periodic pollution of the St. George River.

The eastern portion of Thomaston, from Buttermilk Lane along Route One to the town line, and outer Pleasant Street, is served by the Rockland WWTP. Rockland bills the Town of Thomaston, based on water volumes of individual users, and the Town then collects from those using the sewers. The Thomaston Public Works Dept. maintains sewers in public rights of way.

The Town of Thomaston is repairing and upgrading some of the sewer lines and the WWTP on Thomaston Harbor under an April 1990 consent agreement with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Under this agreement, the Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO's) must be

eliminated by October t, 1992. However, State-funding problems may delay completion of the work. (*The Courier-Gazette*, June 27, 1991.) The ongoing changes should then provide Thomaston with an effective, odor reduced, secondary treatment facility.

A Capital Improvement Plan and Budget for the plant, built in 1969, and sewer lines was never implemented. Pumps and other plant equipment require substantial overhaul to bring the WWTP back to operational standard. The major initial thrust of the \$7.0 million project involves the separation of storm water from the sanitary wastewater lines. A \$1.5 million grant has been received from the DEP's Combined Sewer Overflow Fund. The State, to serve the Prison, is anticipated to pay about \$2.0 million. This will be part of the Town's debt but the Town will receive the payments from the State. An additional grant of approximately \$1.25 million is expected from the DEP. About \$2.25 million in bonds, issued through the Maine Bond Bank on March 4, 1991, will be paid off by Thomaston's general property taxes over the next 20 years. However, the amount paid on this bond is approximately equal to the operations and maintenance charges for the WWTP and the sewer system which were formerly paid by the entire town through their property taxes, not just by the sewer users. This project, addressed as the major problem in the 1974 Comprehensive Plan, continues to be the most significant problem at the present time.

In 1990, following mapping of some sewer lines, the Town began installing new sewer lines, rebuilding three pump stations and eliminating one pump station. The tightening up of the sewer lines will eliminate overflows into the river and enable the WWTP to operate as designed. In many cases, the existing sewer lines will remain in use as storm drains. Upgrading of equipment at the WWTP will also take place. The final step will be the installation of a sludge press to remove water from the treatment plant sludge and make it compost able. The project is now being monitored by the DEP to assure that standards are met. A sewer ordinance was adopted at a Special Town Meeting on October 29, 1990.

Planning Implications

Completion of the upgrading of the WWTP and the separation of some storm water and sanitary sewers should result in upgraded water quality in the St. George River. Depending on the results of Department of Marine Resources testing, this may allow clam-flats to be reopened north of the line between Hospital Point in South Thomaston and the Cushing

Thomaston Town line. Water quality is anticipated to be maintained even with the effluent from the proposed WWTP in South Warren to serve the new State Prison and Warren village, which will have its outfall, located in the river near the Prison Farm. Construction of this plant began on October 30, 1991. The requirement to meet water quality standards in the receiving water body, which now marginally meets water quality standards, may limit the Thomaston WWTP to its currently licensed capacity of 460,000 gpd.

In the recent questionnaire, Thomaston residents expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the operation of the WWTP, citing odors as one of their major objections.

Removal of the ground and surface water from the sanitary sewer lines is anticipated to bring the WWTP within its designed limits of peak, daily and monthly flows, thus permitting the elimination of the CSO. Even then, wet weather flows may exceed the capacity of the WWTP, possibly requiring relicensing of the WWTP to a larger capacity or further replacement of sewer lines. The goal is an average daily flow of 372,000 gpd including infiltration and inflow after the upgrade of the sewer system is completed. This would allow over 300 new homes to be added to the system. On September 9, 1991 it was announced to the Selectmen that the DEP had authorized an additional 1,000 gpd, or about 5 houses, to be connected to the sewer system, reflecting work done to date. Wright-Pierce Engineers have estimated that an additional 14 to 15 homes may be connected in 1992 and in subsequent years an additional 4 homes per year for about 20 years.

Municipal attention must remain on the WWTP and its maintenance must not be allowed to be neglected in the future. Similarly, the sewer lines must be kept in good condition or infiltration and inflow from groundwater could eventually overload the plant.

Additional development, both within and outside the limits of the sewered area, may have to depend upon on-site wastewater disposal. For close-in areas, easily reached by extensions of existing sewers, two densities should be provided for in any ordinance changes: one for areas "with sewer and water" and one "without water and sewer".

In December 1990, Thomaston signed a contract with Interstate Septic Systems, Inc. on Beechwood Street to compost the town's WWTP sludge. Interstate is handling the marketing of the finished compost.

Regulations are being developed to require that heavy metals be kept out of the sewer system, permitting a broader range of uses for the composted WWTP sludge. Interstate also provides disposal for septage from Thomaston residents.

Solid Waste Facilities

The solid waste facility for Thomaston is a transfer station located in Thomaston on Buttermilk Lane, operated by a three-town cooperative. It also serves South Thomaston and Owls Head, each of which has representatives on the board of directors. The transfer station is open to the public on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Waste from the station is sent to the waste to energy plant operated by the Penobscot Energy Recovery Company (PERC) in Orrington. Due to unanticipated levels of operational expense, the PERC owners negotiated a tipping fee of about \$46 per ton, plus transportation costs, with the approximately 90 municipalities they serve, including Thomaston. These new fees were effective in April 1991. On July 12, 1991, PERC announced a reduced tipping fee of \$36.07 per ton.

The Mid-Coast Solid Waste Cooperative obtained grants from the Maine Waste Management Agency to install additional waste processing equipment at the Rockport and Rockland transfer stations, which is also intended to serve the Buttermilk Lane facility. This is to assist the increased recycling effort required by State law. Thomaston, South Thomaston and Owls Head have a Recycling Committee, which has applied for a grant. A grand opening of the recycling program was held at the Transfer Station on September 14, 1991.

The Town operated a stump dump off Erin Street until it was closed by the DEP on December 26, 1990. Demolition and construction debris were then collected in a 50 cubic yard container for transport to the Sawyer landfill in Hampden. A 1990 engineering study indicated a development cost of about \$100,000 to prepare a new site in Thomaston, if one could be found. The Rockland City Council voted September 23, 1991 to open their stump dump to Thomaston at a cost of \$275 per 50 cubic yard load. This contract will be renegotiated at the end of 1991. The Town is working to establish a "permanent" means of disposing of demolition debris. Perhaps a "tub grinder" would allow grinding of stumps, masonry, sheetrock, etc.

Planning Implications

It may be necessary to increase the rate of participation in recycling at the Buttermilk Lane transfer station in order to meet State goals.

Due to the closing of the stump dump and limitations on burning of demolition debris, some other means of disposal will have to be found to comply with State law. At least one private operator (Fuel Technologies, Inc. in Lewiston) processes "clean demolition waste" (not including asphalt shingles, etc.) for burning in waste to energy plants at a 1990 cost of \$23 per ton, delivered to their plant.

If Thomaston, along with South Thomaston and Owls Head, adopted mandatory recycling ordinances similar to those adopted by Camden, Rockport, Hope and Lincolnville which share the transfer station in Rockport, this would not only save money by reducing the volume of material transported to PERC but may place the cooperative in a more competitive position for any future grants from the Maine Waste Management Agency.

The Town may wish to consider "curbside" pickup of residential solid waste in conjunction with an expanded recycling effort. This could be done by private haulers. The experience of the Town of Brunswick may be instructive in this regard.

Home composting of garden and lawn wastes would reduce the volume of these low energy value (due to high water content) wastes going to PERC. Those organic materials not composted at home could be collected and co-composted with the sewage sludge.

Public Safety

The Police Department, located on the second floor of the Watts Block, serves the community with a full-time Chief, Sergeant and two Officers. There are also three, part-time Reserve Officers. There are no women on the force. Cooperation with the Knox County Sheriff's Department and the State Police (Troop D is headquartered in Thomaston, just west of the State Prison) completes the necessary coverage for police, providing a high level of local safety and protection. The present facility is somewhat small for the needs of a modern department.

The Fire Department is a 29 member, including 5 junior members, paid

volunteer department. The fire station is in a building on Knox Street built in 1953. The 90 foot by 110 foot building has one empty bay and is adequate for current needs. It houses the fire engines and dispatcher's office in addition to providing a meeting room and two bedrooms. A capital expenditure plan, in place for many years, allows replacement of a fire truck every ten years. This system has helped to provide the Department with up to date equipment to serve the community. A network of fire hydrants provides a high level of protection in those areas served by water mains. Any expansion of the area served by public water will assist in maintaining the current low fire insurance rating. A shortage of volunteers (who are paid for runs, drills and training), particularly those in town during regular business hours, is a present and continuing problem.

The Dispatcher covers police, fire and ambulance dispatching for Thomaston and fire and ambulance dispatching for South Thomaston, Owls Head, Cushing and St. George. The three Dispatchers are Town employees and serve a rotating schedule of one day on, two days off. Calls for the police are handled by the Thomaston Dispatcher on 24-hour duty. To facilitate calling, the "911" emergency service was begun on June 1, 1990 for the 354 (Thomaston-Cushing) exchange. Emergency and business lines enable the Dispatchers to handle over 10,000 calls per year. The Dispatcher is able to contact other police and fire departments by radio.

The Thomaston Ambulance Service is a paid 20 member volunteer Emergency Medical Squad, which staffs the ambulance in response to medical emergencies. The ambulance and related equipment are located in a 1974 addition with a separate entrance at the back of the Knox Street fire station. The 1986 ambulance is maintained in excellent condition. The Emergency Medical Squad works to regularly upgrade their knowledge by continuing education in many phases of emergency care delivery. As with the Fire Department, volunteers, particularly those available near downtown during working hours, are in short supply. Through the dedication of the current squad and mutual aid from Rockland, the immediate needs of the town are being met. In the long term, however, the shortage of volunteers and mandated State requirements may require some full-time paid positions in addition to volunteers (who are paid for runs, drills and training).

Planning Implications

As the population of Thomaston expands, additional police officers,

including women, may be needed. The reduced number of volunteers may continue to be a problem for Thomaston's fire and ambulance services. Limited employment opportunities in town, the need for many families to have more than one wage earner and increased legal and insurance requirements regarding the training levels of volunteers all make reliance solely on volunteers more difficult. Alternatives, such as paid, full-time staffing or outside contracted services, may be needed so as to retain the present high level of performance of fire and ambulance personnel in the event that sufficient volunteers are no longer available.

Electric Power

The region is served by the Central Maine Power Company, which provides electric service throughout Thomaston. There is a substation located at the corner of Old County Road and Route One. Three-phase power, often used for heavy electric motors, is available in many areas of town including Route One to Buttermilk Lane and Old County Road, Thatcher Street, Water Street, Wadsworth Street and the High School. Chemrock, the cement plant and the transfer station have three-phase power. Three phase power also extends along Route One west of the Prison, crossing into South Warren to serve the Prison Farm. Route 131 north used to have three phase when that served as the main feeder to Warren, the wires are still in place. Route 131 south to St. George also has three-phase power? The Regional Manager for Central Maine Power stated that the current and future ability of the Company to provide power for the growth in Thomaston is estimated to be totally adequate. Because statistics of the Company are done on a regional basis, none relate specifically to the town.

1. Personal communication, Ernest Benner, Line Supervisor, Central Maine Power, October 16, 1990.

Communication

Telephone service to the area, except for Warren, is provided by the New England Telephone, a NYNEX Company. Long Distance telephone service is provided through a host of long distance carriers using the local lines of New England Telephone.

Several area newspapers serve Thomaston. Dailies include the *Portland Press Herald* and the *Bangor Daily News*, which has a bureau in Rockland. These papers also print Sunday and weekend editions,

respectively. A thrice-weekly publication featuring in depth local news is *The Courier-Gazette* published in Rockland. Two free weekly publications serve the area with features and advertising, *The Weekly Courier* and *The Free Press*.

Radio stations providing local coverage in the area include WQSS in Camden and WMCM (FM) and WRKD in Rockland. A local entrepreneur has Federal Communications Commission permission to establish an FM station in Thomaston, proposed for operation in 1993. The Portland and Orono stations of the Maine Public Broadcasting Network can also be received in Thomaston.

Thomaston is served by United Video Cable Company of Rockland, providing cable television service with basic Maine originated channels in addition to a wide range of television and specialty networks. Stations originate in both the Portland and Bangor market areas and serve Thomaston with all three major networks. The area is also served by Maine Public Television. The cable provider, operating under an exclusive contract at present, permits access to a local programming station as well. CATV is provided to all of Thomaston's built up area.

Planning Implications

Thomaston is well provided with energy and communications facilities. These should not prove to be limiting factors for future growth and development. It may be advantageous for the Town to seek competition when current CATV contracts are renewed.

Health Care

There are three dentists and one eye doctor practicing in Thomaston. Though numerous doctors reside in town, their practices are located in closer proximity to the Penobscot Bay Medical Center in Rockport. The spectrum of care available is excellent for a region with the population of the Mid-Coast. In addition to the critical care provided by Pen Bay, long term care is offered by the Knox Center for Long Term Care in Rockland, the Camden Health Care Center and five other private nursing homes in the area. Home nursing care is provided by Kno-Wal-Lin Home Health Care and the Rockland District Nursing Association. The State of Maine also assists in health arrangements and monitors illness and communicable disease through the Department of Human Services and the Public Health Nurses.

The Thomaston Ambulance Service provides emergency medical transportation while Coastal Transportation provides handicapped accessible vans for routine medical visits both within and outside the Mid-Coast area.

Planning Implications

Thomaston has comprehensive medical services available close by and both emergency and routine transportation to medical care sites.

Culture and Education

Thomaston's public schools are under Maine School Administrative District 50 (SAD 50), which also includes elementary schools in Cushing and St. George. There are three schools located in Thomaston.

The Lura Libby School was constructed about 1950 and expanded in 1963-4. An addition of about 8,000 square feet is under construction with completion planned before the start of the 1991-92 school year. The brick building is in excellent condition. Its present capacity, before completion of the addition, is 225 students in grades K-3. The addition will include a multi-purpose room.

The Thomaston Grammar School was constructed in 1982 as an energy-efficient building with solar retention and is used by 300 students in grades 4-8. The school's multi-purpose room is large enough for a basketball court and has a small stage. An increase in the lower grades arrived at the Grammar School in 1990-91, at which time the two mobile classrooms formerly located at the Lura Libby School were used for grade 4 and, the following year, will be for grade 5. At present, no addition is planned for the Grammar School, which is in excellent condition.

The Georges Valley High School was constructed in 1962 and had an addition completed in 1988. The addition contains rooms for art, music and Special Education, the latter serving the Mid-Coast area. It is in very good condition and is not expected to need any addition in the next ten years. It has a capacity of 350 students.

An office for the Superintendent of SAD 50 may be built in the near future, probably on the Present school grounds in Thomaston.

SAD 50 projects a gradual enrollment increase from 1,104 in 1990 to

about 1,300 in 1999, including all five schools in the District.

The Public Library has been located since early 1986 in the former Thomaston Academy building. The library has a seven person Board of Trustees, which oversees the library's endowment. It has been operating four days per week, with a Saturday morning reading program for children. However, in 1991 a six month experiment added 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM Tuesday hours to accommodate senior citizens and a pre-school reading program. With 23,651-catalogued volumes in 1990, the library had a circulation of 42,051. The Public Library is one of the most highly endowed public libraries in Maine and one of the few to operate without Town funds. Before 1983, when an improved rate of return on their endowment made it unnecessary to request money from the Town, the library received some support at Town Meeting. More recently, the library has had to use some of its endowment (capital) for operating expenses. The library is covered by the Town's insurance policies. Full and part-time staff were assisted by 329 hours of volunteer efforts in 1990.

Montpelier, a replica of the home of Major General Henry Knox, is an impressive structure on the east end of town. This museum offers a glimpse of life in the late eighteenth century at the home of one of Maine's most honored leaders. Owned by the State, operation is overseen by a town group, the Friends of Montpelier. They supervise the activities at the museum, which is open from Memorial Day until Labor Day. The Friends of Montpelier receive part of their funding from the Town. Montpelier is a major cultural attraction in Thomaston. The State has not adequately maintained the building; bond issues to provide funds for such maintenance were defeated by the voters in November 1990 and 1991. Additional funding, public and private, will have to be found to prevent further deterioration of this building.

Near the waterfront off Knox Street is the Thomaston Historical Society. The Society is located in a 1789 brick building which was part of the original Knox estate and later served as Thomaston's railroad station. In 1990, a handicapped access ramp was constructed and the Society cooperated with the Maine Maritime Museum in Bath to create an exhibit on Edward O'Brien, a Thomaston shipbuilder. The Society opens the building as a museum during summer months and holds meetings there throughout the year. The building has been restored and various exhibits related to the town are shown. A private non-profit organization, the Society depends on gifts, donations and an annual grant from the Town for its operational support.

Planning Implications

Thomaston is well situated with respect to cultural activities, both within and outside the town.

Some means should be found to enable the Public Library endowment to earn more income or augment its operating funds to provide sufficient revenues without reducing its capital.

The continued deterioration of Montpelier will deprive Thomaston, and the Mid-Coast region, of a major cultural and tourist attraction.

Cemeteries

The Town operates a cemetery on Erin Street. The facility is attractive and well maintained. There is a Cemetery Board consisting of the Selectmen, Town Clerk, Town Treasurer and five other citizens. The Sexton and his assistant supervise the maintenance crew. At current usage rates, there is adequate undeveloped area for burials for many years to come. The cemetery is supported by perpetual care funds. The Elm Grove Cemetery is privately owned and the Catholic Cemetery is operated by the Catholic Church.

General Administration and Services

The Town Office is staffed by the Town Manager, Town Clerk, Code Enforcement Officer, Bookkeeper, and Secretary. The Assessor's Agent is usually there on Fridays. The Office is located in the Watts Block, a building owned and maintained by the Town at the west corner of Main and Knox Streets. Renovations are underway, in large part by volunteer labor (1600 hours were donated in 1990), to make it more usable. The 1991 Town Meeting voted to make the second floor accessible to the handicapped. The Town Office has been expanded into former rental space. However, space available in the Watts Block may be inadequate for the future needs of the Town Office and the Police Department. There are still three rental spaces at the front of the building. Parking near the Watts Block is extremely limited.

The municipal garage and public works yard are located off Erin Street, including a box car used for sand and salt storage. Staff includes the Director and three other employees. The buildings were built in the mid 1970's and are generally adequate for the present Town needs.

However, State law will require a building to enclose sand and salt storage by 1996. A salt shed reserve fund was approved at the 1991 Town Meeting. Additional garage space may become necessary if additional equipment is purchased; at present the space is fully utilized.

The Town also owns the former Thomaston Academy building (1847) on Main Street. In 1983, the Selectmen established the Trustees of Thomaston Academy, a volunteer group which obtained the University of Maine and the Thomaston Public Library as prospective tenants following an investigation of many other alternatives, including razing the building and using the lot for parking. The building was upgraded in 1984 through 1986, funded by \$150,000 in borrowing voted by Town Meeting in July 1984 and private fund-raising in excess of \$5,000. Volunteers and men from the Minimum Security Unit of the Maine State Prison performed much of the labor. Facilities include classrooms, offices, a small gymnasium and the library. The building contains the Mid-Coast Community College, with a 1990 enrollment of about 700 students, a part of the University of Maine at Augusta, and the Thomaston Public Library. The building is operating with a small infusion of Town funds; the goal of the Trustees is to have it be self sustaining when the debt is retired in June 1993. The Community College is a regional focus for post-secondary education in the Mid-Coast area.

Planning Implications

The Town Office is well located with respect to the citizens it serves. However, the Town Office and Police Department personnel have been occupying cramped quarters and were working in circumstances which reduced their effectiveness. The Town had not maintained an adequate record of Town properties and equipment but inventories for Police and Public Works were completed in 1990 and the Fire Department and Ambulance Service inventories are underway in 1991. The Pollution Control Department will have an inventory upon completion of the current improvements. There has not been an adequate capital improvement process. Storage space for records and other purposes was inadequate until improved during the Watts Block renovations.

The Public Works Department barely has space for its own vehicles and also garages the police cars when the officers are off duty. A sand and salt shed will be needed by 1996. The March 1991 Town Meeting voted money towards a reserve fund for this project. The future needs of the Public Works Department should be carefully considered, in case additional

garage or other covered space is needed. Additional savings might result if such a building were constructed simultaneously with the sand and salt shed.

Property immediately adjacent to the Watts Block, fronting on Knox Street, has been for sale for some time. While the building may not be economically reusable for Town Office or Police Department use, the land could be used to construct an addition on the rear of the Watts Block, thereby retaining its present Main Street facade. This would permit really adequate space for the Town Offices and Police Department. With an addition, some commercial rental space could be retained on the Main Street frontage, if desired. Additional parking, sorely needed, could also be provided. The Town should seriously consider eventually acquiring this property to make the Watts Block a truly adequate Town Office.

Goals

State Goal

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

Local Goal

To continue to improve the present system of public services and facilities.

Policies

To use provision of public services, including water and sewer, to help shape the future development of the town and retain its character.

To encourage, where appropriate, increased densities of development within the areas already served by utilities,

To minimize, to the extent possible, the suburbanization of Thomaston. Maintain a visual distinction between the outer limits of the compact village area and the surrounding more rural area. This can be reinforced by requiring larger lots beyond the limits of water and sewer lines, by land use controls which preserve open land in open space/clustered subdivisions and by public purchase of open land for parks, recreation and wildlife preserves.

To continue cooperation with neighboring municipalities in the provision of public services such as water, sewer, protective and emergency services, and public transportation. (Thomaston is one of the three original towns in the Knox County Mutual Aid Pact.)

To encourage recycling of solid waste.

To provide adequate space for Town government functions, including the Town Office, Police, Pollution Control and Public Works Departments.

To continue municipal support of cultural activities of benefit to Thomaston citizens, including the Town's outstanding Public Library.

Implementation

Water Supply. All extensions and hook-ups to the water system are controlled by the Camden and Rockland Water Company.

Waste Treatment Facilities. At this time, the nature and extent of any future implementation needed regarding the sewer system and WWTP are unknown, pending the outcome of steps currently underway to improve the sewer system. (Pollution Control Department) Ongoing.

Solid Waste Facilities. Continue Town support of the activities of the three town Recycling Committee. A mandatory recycling ordinance may be needed in the future to meet State recycling goals. (Recycling Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Investigate, and implement if feasible, "curbside" pickup by private haulers. (Recycling Committee, Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) B.

Encourage home composting of garden and lawn wastes. Those organic materials not composted at home could be collected for co-composting with WWTP sludge. (Recycling Committee) Ongoing.

Maintain close contact with the fire and ambulance personnel so that the present high level of performance of these services can be continued. (Selectmen) Ongoing.

Continue to support regional medical services of assistance to Thomaston residents, including those providing transportation for medical

patients. (Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Continue Town support of the Friends of Montpelier and work closely with the State to stop the deterioration of Montpelier. (Friends of Montpelier, Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Construct a sand and salt shed by 1996. (Selectmen, Director of Public Works, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) B.

NATURAL RESOURCES

General Introduction

Natural features play a major role in determining the character and direction of a community's development. They may present a nearly impregnable obstruction to development at one extreme or an exploitable resource to fuel rapid development at the other. Generally, they represent the basic resources which allow a community to exist and function.

The natural resources prevalent in and around Thomaston have had a significant effect upon the development of the town's social and economic character. Exploration of coastal rivers and streams led to discovery of the area. Along the water courses, ships carried settlers into the area and carried timber, fur and mineral resources out to markets. The waters yielded fish for replenishing food supplies and power to run saw and grist mills. The wooded land provided timber for both coastal and deep-sea ship building, as well as home construction. The gently sloping land was cleared and farmed. Lime deposits were discovered. The working of these deposits strengthened early settlement and has stimulated continued development in Thomaston.

The town's natural features continue to affect social and economic activity. An understanding of the town's topography, drainage patterns, soil conditions, mineral deposits and climate is a necessary first step toward developing a program of desirable land use and future community development.

Topography

Topography is the physical shape of the landscape and consists of three interrelated elements: land form, elevation above sea level and slope. Topography is a basic natural element influencing land use and the structural framework for community planning. Topography imposes a natural order on the landscape which, in turn, influences the pattern of development.

The most significant aspect of topography is slope. Slope is the angle of steepness. The rise in elevation in 100 feet of horizontal distance is commonly expressed as a percentage rise. Thus, a rise of four feet in one hundred feet is expressed as a 4% slope. Slope influences the economic

and physical feasibility of most land uses.

A community's landform is the product of particular geologic materials and processes including combinations of bedrock types, surface deposits and their resistance to erosion.

Thomaston's topography is illustrated on Map 2. Thomaston is characterized by gently sloping terrain. Notable exceptions include the steep banks along the St. George, Oyster and Mill Rivers; the steep hills above Meadow and Branch Brooks; and the (man made) quarry excavations in the eastern section of town.

The Mill River divides the town into two distinct areas. The land west of the river is generally higher than that to the east. Dominant features east of the river are easily visible from the higher land along Beechwood Street. Two dramatic features stand out, the cement plant and the quarries. High land just east of the tidal portion of the river, however, forms a natural visual buffer between the village and the cement plant.

The highest elevation in Thomaston is in the northernmost part west of Branch Brook and is just 360 feet above sea level. Other significant heights of land over 200 feet in elevation are at least one mile north of the generally east-west Route One. This area is very sparsely populated. Most of Main Street within the village is at or above 100 foot elevation, with extensive almost level land north of Main Street and west of the southerly portion of Beechwood Street. The land slopes gently toward the south from Main Street to the harbor.

Many of the water courses have cut deeply into the land, forming steep banks, some of which are actively eroding. The banks of the Mill River have slopes ranging from 10% to 30%. The lower levels are still stabilized by the remains of cribwork wharves from the days when ships loaded and discharged cargoes there, resting on the bottom at low tide. The St. George River has banks ranging from 10% to 35% slopes, with particularly steep slopes from the Wadsworth Street (Iron) bridge upstream to the bend above the Prison.

Planning Implications

Future growth and development will continue to be greatest in those areas above flood hazard zones and on slopes ranging from 0% (level) to 20%. Areas of steeper slopes, above 20%, are difficult to develop. Not

only are they more susceptible to erosion, but subsurface (on-site) sewage disposal is not allowed without a variance on slopes over 20%. Development should be carefully regulated in such areas.

The town's rivers are its primary topographic features. They are clearly of great economic and aesthetic importance to the town since they convey a feeling of being "by the shore" from so many vantage points both from the water and from the main roads and byways.

Climate

Thomaston's climate is typical of coastal Maine. The temperature ranges from a summer mean of 64^o F. to a winter mean of about 26^o F. and its precipitation ranges from a summer mean of about 3.2 inches monthly to a winter mean of about 4.1 inches monthly. ¹

With regard to wind patterns, existing data indicate that prevailing winds within the Rockland-Thomaston area are southwesterly and northwesterly nearly 57% of the time, being southwesterly in the summer and northwesterly in the winter. ² These winds carry particulate matter generated by the cement plant east of Thomaston's compact area over the town's eastern rural land and over land in Rockland and South Thomaston.

Winds carry particulates over a portion of Thomaston village only 28% of the time. However, these easterly winds are generally weaker than the westerly winds. Winds are calm nearly 15% of the time. Generally, winds are a benefit to the compact area of Thomaston.

1. Weather Bureau, "Climate of the States: Maine", 1959.

2. From wind records, Knox County Airport, Owls Head, 1954-1959.

Soils

A knowledge of soils has become a valuable tool in planning wise land use. Soil surveys prepared by the Soil Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture, are widely used to avoid the mistakes that arise when an ill suited soil is chosen for any type of development. Perhaps no other natural resource is as important to community planning as soils.

These soil surveys include maps locating soil types; keys which describe soil types in terms of many important factors such as depth to

groundwater, depth to bedrock, susceptibility to frost action, soil pH and many other factors. Soil Potential Ratings address soil limitations and corrective measures to overcome long-term limitations of each soil type.

Map 4, depicts the soil types found in Thomaston. The boundaries between soil types are not distinct but blend into each other over a distance of 50 to 200 feet. The soil types are listed in the legend.

It is important to keep in mind that the local Soil Conservation District should be contacted when a land use alteration is proposed. They can prepare special interpretive maps for any specified use on the land in question and can determine more accurately the soil types on the land.

Soil is the combination of organic and mineral material composing the uppermost six feet of the earth's surface. There are many different types of soils. They differ from one another for a variety of reasons including: 1) The different kinds of materials from which they have been formed, 2) Drainage conditions, 3) The kinds and numbers of (mostly microscopic) plants and animals that live in or on them, and 4) Length of time they have been exposed to weathering and erosion processes.

Therefore, one would expect the soils deposited by a glacier to be different from those soils which originated as marine deposits in shallow, quiet waters. In a similar manner, soils that have been wholly or partly formed by the accumulation of decomposed plant remains would be different from the two soils described above.

Soils are best considered living entities, since all soils have in their upper layers a host of plants and animals that are a vital part of their functioning. The organisms in soils form an essential link in the processes upon which a community depends: plant production, wildlife, septic system absorption and the like.

Even though there are no identical soils, soils that were formed from similar materials by similar processes are classified together as the same soil type within a soil series if they behave and respond alike.

Thomaston has the approximate percentages of the following parent soil material groups:

Water Deposited Soil	60%
Glacial Till Soil	32%
Alluvial Soil	4%
Glacial Outwash Soil	4%

Projects involving on-site subsurface sewage disposal (septic tank and leach field) require on-site soils investigation and interpretation of available soil information by qualified persons.

A detailed description of Thomaston's soils may be found in the *Soil Survey of Knox and Lincoln Counties, Maine* published by the Soil Conservation Service in 1987, which should be consulted for further information. Thomaston's 37 soil types as well as their suitability for agriculture, forestry, wildlife and building construction activities are on a Soil Suitability Map which shows on a relative scale the difficulty or ease which owners might face in using their property for on-site subsurface sewage disposal.

Finally, it should be emphasized that the soils maps give only a general guide to potential users of certain areas of Thomaston. There is no substitute for detailed soil maps and soil tests which might be required in considering development proposals. Nor do the soil maps or soil suitability descriptions preclude the possibility that the limitations of certain soils can be mitigated by a variety of engineering techniques which might alter a site's physical characteristics.

Planning Implications

Because the available soils information is too broad for site-specific planning, detailed on-site soils investigations and analysis should be required. Such investigations and analyses should focus on depth to bedrock, depth to seasonal high water table, frequency of flooding, erosion potential and drainage characteristics. For large structures, the bearing strength (ability to support weight) of soils may also be important.

Forest Resources

Thomaston's forest resources supplied much material for its wooden shipbuilding industry, as well as the usual timber for building

construction and domestic firewood. As the lime industry developed, additional pressure was placed on the woodlands to supply wood for the wood-fired kilns which burned the lime, and to make the barrels in which the lime was shipped. As a result, most of the town's forests disappeared by the late 19th. century, some replaced by farm fields and pastures and some left to natural regeneration. Now, about 80% of Thomaston's land area is estimated to be wooded. Stands include soft, hard and mixed wood. A total of 423 acres is included in Tree Growth Tax. However, some woods were cut hard in the last decade and some have been uncut for over a century. Most currently forested land is located north of the built up "village" area of Thomaston, with some additional woodland along the rivers.

Until recently there were two sawmills, one at the Newbert & Wallace shipyard and one off Beechwood Street operated by Carl Brooks. Both large sawmills are now inactive, but the Brooks Trap Mill and Branch Brook Farm are still sawing out oak runners and some laths for lobster traps, demand for the latter having dropped off considerably since the widespread adoption of wire traps by Maine's lobster fishery. Wooden vessels are still built and repaired in town, though most of the material for the yachts is imported hardwoods. A wooden commercial vessel (sardine carrier) is currently (1991) under construction at the Wallace Marine Services yard, using mostly Maine woods.

There has been little management of woodland in Thomaston. There are no known registered tree farms. However, a variety of technical assistance is available to the woodland owner. This includes assistance from the State Forester, located in Augusta; Federal cost sharing programs, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service programs from an office located in Warren; free assistance of professional foresters from International Paper and Champion International; educational programs of the Time & Tide Resource Conservation and Development office in Waldoboro and the Cooperative Extension Service in Rockland; and assistance from the Small Woodland Owners Association of **Maine**.

Land Cover Types

Land Cover, a combination of vegetative cover and land uses, is contained in the appendix to the Natural Resources section of this Plan.

Vegetation

Information regarding vegetation in Thomaston may be found in the appendix to the Natural Resources section of this Plan.

Agricultural Lands

There are only three moderate sized active farms in Thomaston, located on West Meadow Road, Cushing Road and Thomaston Street. It is important to preserve these lands. Some acreage is devoted to small part-time farming. The land cover inventory indicates that agricultural lands are found along Beechwood Street, West Meadow Road, Old County Road, Route 131 south, Studley Lane, Cushing Road, Thomaston Street and the southern part of Buttermilk Lane.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) indicates that there is "Prime Farmland" in Thomaston. "Prime Farmland" means the best land, nationwide, for producing food, feed, fiber, forage and oilseed crops. The criteria is tied directly to soil properties and not land use, except that if the land is urban or built-up, it cannot be prime farmland. Prime farmlands can be land in cultivation, forest, pasture or idle land and it can be remote or inaccessible.

In Thomaston, based on a measured area of 7247 acres, the following acreage is defined as Prime Farmland:

Acres	Symbol	Name
667	BoB	Boothbay silt loam, 3-8% slope
3	EgB	Elmwood fine sandy loam, 3-8% slope
1	Le	Lovewell very fine sandy loam
10	MaB	Madawaska fine sandy loam, 3-8% slope
19	MrB	Marlow fine sandy loam, 3-8% slope
<u>501</u>	PaB	Peru fine sandy loam, 3-8% slope
1201		(About 16.6 % of Thomaston's area)

Another category defined by USDA is "Additional Farmlands of Statewide Importance". This is land that is not prime or unique farmland but it is important for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage and oilseed crops. Criteria for defining and delineating this land were determined at the state level in February, 1976 by the SCS, state agricultural agencies and others.

The following acreage is defined as "Additional Farmlands of Statewide Importance":

Acres	Symbol	Name
100	BoC	Boothbay silt loam, 8-15% slope
<u>46</u>	MrC	Marlow fine sandy loam, 8-15% slope
146		(About 2.0% of Thomaston's area)

Farming locally has followed the national trend of the decline of small farms. Markets and supplies are readily available but most of the produce is used by the grower or sold at roadside stands. The number of farmers in Thomaston has declined from the past, but acreage currently farmed has stabilized or increased slightly through use of leased land, primarily for hay. The social contribution of agriculture to the town is a positive one, but historically it has not been of prime importance in shaping the character of the community.

Three farms are taxed under the Farm and Open Space Tax Law, a total of 200 acres. An additional 137 acres of non-farm Open Space are classified under the Open Space Tax Law. Under Tree Growth Tax are 423 acres, including woodland on farms. (The Town receives reimbursement from the State for land in Tree Growth, unlike that classified under the Farm and Open Space Tax Laws.) Some farmland is under pressure to become developed because of the rapid rise in land prices.

Planning Implications

The vast majority of Thomaston's vegetation is forest, which, particularly in interior sections away from the village, represents a potentially valuable but unmanaged natural resource. While forestry is unlikely to assume the economic importance it held when the town was a leading wooden shipbuilding center, management of the resource could assure that it would continue to serve local needs for wood, wildlife, water resources and open space.

Fields and pastures, remnants of Thomaston's agricultural past, are rare today. Farming is no longer economically important in Thomaston. However, its very rarity makes the remaining farms more valuable, in part as open space to separate other land uses.

One rare plant but no rare growth stands of timber are known to exist

in Thomaston. However, no inventory of these features has been made.

Geology

Bedrock Geology

The bedrock of Thomaston is composed entirely of seven types of metamorphosed sedimentary rocks. Sedimentary rocks are formed, as the name implies, from sediments of various origins such as the deposits of weathering processes or the calcareous remains of certain organisms. Nearly 400 million years ago, stresses within the earth's crust caused the layers of rocks to fold and sometimes rupture, forming faults. Rocks pushed deep into the earth were metamorphosed or changed by great heat and pressure. Details on the rocks found in Thomaston are in the appendix to the Natural Resources section.

Thomaston's bedrock geology has long been economically important. Of particular significance is a geologic trough of limestone and siltstone, which runs northeasterly from High Street. Quarries, evidence of exploration and extraction, are visible in much of the town's eastern area. Tapped deposits now supply the recently modernized multi-million dollar cement plant and its recently expanded aggregate producing operation. Still untapped deposits have been probed and assessed to be of equal if not greater richness.

The quarry is expanding toward Dexter Street in the direction of the trough. The rock crushing operation is working both previously idle quarries and unexcavated deposits east of Dexter Street. It is expected that the land between Route One and Old County Road will be quarried for a number of decades.

Planning Implications

Sand and gravel pits, and most especially the cement plant and its quarries, have been important to the economy of Thomaston for many years. However, the Land Use and Development Ordinance is inadequate to give either the pit and quarry operators or the Town sufficient guidelines regarding the operation and closure of pits and quarries. Eventual reuse of these disturbed areas is in the long-term best interests of both the Town and the owners of the pits and quarries.

Surface Geology

Surface deposits are the unconsolidated materials that overlies bedrock. This indicates that some process has altered the upper layers of bedrock. Glaciers have significantly altered the topography of Maine. The last glacier covered the state over 10,000 years ago. It flowed to the south-southeast from a point of origin believed to be near Hudson Bay. Its overall thickness is unknown, but it covered, entirely, all of Maine's mountains.

While the ice moved it scraped away both the previous glacier's surface deposits and also a few meters of bedrock. This loosened material still exists in the area today in two forms: marine deposits of the Presumpscot Formation composed of silt, clay and fine sand, and end moraines composed of various sizes of rock fragments.

End moraines formed as the glacier began to retreat some 13,200 years ago. In warmer years the glacier would retreat nearly three hundred yards. Some years, however, the glacier moved very little, if at all. Successive years of little movement would result in the deposition of the rock fragments, ranging in size from microns to meters, along the border of the glacier. These resulted in end moraines.

The Presumpscot Formation formed in an interesting manner. The amount of water in the earth is finite and much of this water was locked up in glacial ice. While we would expect the glacial period sea levels to be found below present levels, they were as much as 400 feet above today's sea levels because the tremendous weight of glacial ice depressed the earth's crust by as much as 700 feet. Melt water from the retreating glacier carried the very small particles of scoured rock great distances, depositing them far out to sea. As the glacier receded from Maine, 12,500 years ago, the current coastline emerged from the sea, buried in marine sediments. These are the famous "cat clays" or "blue clays" found throughout the coastal area. They are generally poorly drained, sticky when wet and "rock hard" when dry.

The thinly covered bedrock, found along the river bottoms, resulted as the streams cut down through the newly exposed marine sediments.

These unconsolidated deposits are important for many reasons. They are often mined for such materials as sand, gravel and clay for bricks. On the east side of the Mill River, just north of the railroad tracks, one can

still see the remains of an old brickwork's. The surface deposits also form much of the soil found in the area as weathering processes continue.

Planning Implications

The surface geology of Thomaston has created conditions of general suitability for, or constraints on, various land uses as described below. For a more detailed look at suitability characteristics of different areas of Thomaston, however, the section on Soils should be consulted. Thomaston's soils provide a source of truck able material for landscape fill or cover. This is evidenced by the number and size of pits set back from the town's rural roads, notably Beechwood Street and West Meadow Road.

The usefulness of areas generally characterized as bedrock (having patches of a thin covering of soil) is limited for sewage disposal, agriculture or forest production. Other natural factors permitting, they would be suitable for development if sewage could be disposed of in other areas. Bedrock areas could be investigated for pasture land, other agricultural and forest uses, and perhaps widely scattered dwellings. However, boulders on or near the surface may present problems for agricultural use.

Glacial marine deposits have generally poor drainage and relatively low bearing capacity. Heavy structures will slip and shift, especially in the areas of steep slopes. Agriculture, forest production and sewage disposal are all severely limited. These areas may be developed for small structures subject to detailed on-site investigation.

Water Resources and Wetlands

Drainage Patterns

Thomaston's natural drainage patterns are defined by six watercourses: the St. George, Oyster and Mill Rivers and Marsh, Meadow and Branch Brooks. These flow in a generally southerly direction.

Thomaston's major estuary is the St. George River. After leaving its headwaters at St. George Lake in Liberty, the river flows through seven ponds and receives waters from several tributaries before reaching Thomaston. Throughout Thomaston, the river is tidal and is generally bounded by steep shorelines (see Map 2). Notable exceptions are the shoreline of the extreme westerly portion of town south of Route One and

parts of the northerly shore of the harbor. After passing under the Wadsworth Street bridge, the river widens into a protected harbor. After receiving the waters of the Mill River, the St. George turns towards the southwest and flows nearly twelve miles as a navigable and deepening estuary before opening into Muscongus Bay.

The Oyster River has its headwaters at Mirror Lake, collects a number of tributaries originating from the Rockland Bog and several ponds and lakes in West Rockport and enters the St. George River just north of Route One. The part which forms part of Thomaston's westerly boundary is nearly all tidal and is generally bounded by steep embankments varying from 10 to 20 feet in height. These help to restrain possible flooding of adjacent properties.

The Mill River is formed at the junction of Branch Brook, which drains the tow land just west of Benner Hill in Rockland and Meadow Brook, which runs from Chickawaukie Lake through lowlands west of Old County Road in Rockland and Thomaston. It is tidal below Route One.

Marsh Brook forms a short southeasterly segment of Thomaston's town line and drains a large tidal wetland area that includes portions of Rockland, Thomaston, South Thomaston and Owls Head before flowing into the Weskeag River.

Water Quality Classifications

The State Legislature completed its revision of the water quality classifications for rivers in 1990. These included the St. George River and its tributaries. From Route 90 to tidewater, in Warren, the river is Class "B". Tributaries entering downstream of Route 90 are Class "B". These include the Oyster River and the Mill River. The Department of Environmental Protection has the role of enforcing the water quality standards set by the Legislature. However, the State's 1991 budget problems may reduce State enforcement of environmental laws.

Title 38, MRSA, Section 465 defines the water quality "Standards for classification of fresh surface waters". Class "B" waters are the third highest classification. Discharges and additional uses are permitted, but discharges, "shall not cause adverse impact to aquatic life in that the receiving waters shall be of sufficient quality to support all aquatic species indigenous to the receiving water without detrimental changes in the resident biological community." The amount of dissolved oxygen, an

important indicator of the ability of the water to support fish and other aquatic life, gradually declines from "AA" through "C".

Similar standards for classification of lakes and ponds are contained in Title 38, MRSA, Section 465-A. All salt water in Thomaston is Class "SB." Salt water quality standards in Title 38, Section 465-B note that Class "SB" waters, "... are suitable for the designated uses of recreation in and on the water, fishing, aquaculture, propagation and harvesting of shellfish, industrial process and cooling water supply, hydroelectric power generation and navigation and as a habitat for fish and other estuarine and marine life. The habitat shall be characterized as unimpaired."

Water Quality Concerns

The recent re-classification of the St. George River and its tributaries has raised the classification and better defined the permissible amounts of fecal coliform bacteria and dissolved oxygen levels which the water will have and, more particularly, the standards which any future discharges into those waters will have to meet.

Since the mid 1960's, at least three significant events have occurred to reduce the amount of pollutants dumped into the St. George River: (1) The construction and operation of Thomaston's wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), (2) the closure of a woolen textile mill in Warren which used to discharge wastes from wool washing into the river, and (3) the prevention of manure dumping on land immediately adjacent to the river. Although all three events should have improved the water quality, the frequent overflows of combined sanitary wastewater and storm water from Thomaston's WWTP have forced closures of clam flats which were previously opened as a result of the plant being placed in operation. Construction of a WWTP to serve the village area of Warren and the new State Prison in South Warren started October 30, 1991. Some of Thomaston's sewers are being replaced and storm water will be separated from the sanitary sewage. This should allow re-opening of some closed clam-flats in addition to generally improving the water quality in the lower St. George River. It is important that Thomaston continue to work with other communities in the watershed to maintain the water quality.

Runoff and Storm water

All surface water begins as atmospheric moisture or precipitation,

which then flows on and percolates into the surface of the ground. Surface water, as it moves toward the ocean, carries with it large and small particles of soil and debris, the amount and distance carried varying with the size of the particles and the velocity of the water. The areas from which material is carried are subject to erosion, while areas of deposition occur when water velocity slows below the speed at which it can carry particles of a given size and density. Water courses leading from actively eroding areas carry significant volumes of material and can decrease water quality by reducing light for photosynthesis of aquatic plants, burying bottom dwelling organisms, and carrying excess chemicals such as fertilizers and pesticides into water bodies.

Planning Implications

While some erosion is entirely natural and desirable, man-made disturbances in a watershed can lead to excessive rates of erosion. Most critical are the areas where water enters a watercourse and where a watercourse enters a larger body of slower moving water. Vegetative cover adjacent to watercourses forms an effective filter for surface water runoff, trapping small particles of soil and debris. Protection of aquatic vegetation in water bodies is similarly important, as it slows water flows and prevents suspended particles from flowing farther. Eventually a marsh forms, nourished by the retained soil particles. Both shore land vegetation and marshes are important wildlife habitats, in addition to their beneficial effects on water quality.

Control of erosion can be achieved by practices described in *Erosion and Sedimentation Control for Developing Areas in Maine*, 1986, published by the Maine Soil and Water Conservation Commission, Maine Department of Agriculture; and the *Engineering Field Manual* by the Soil Conservation Service.

Salt Marshes

In Thomaston, salt marshes are found along 80% of the riverbank terrain. The width of the marsh on the St. George River runs between 5-60 feet with the exception of two spots on the east shore, where the marsh runs inland along smaller creeks. Wider marshes are found along the Weskeag River. The Oyster River and Weskeag River salt marshes are rated as "High Value" by the Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

Salt marshes form in areas subject to the flow of tidal water. No

trees are found on northern salt marshes as only deeply rooted grasses can survive the planing action of the river ice in winter.

The low salt marsh is a portion of the intertidal (between mean low-water and mean high-water) area most often covered by salt water. This happens twice daily and only *Spartina alterniflora* or salt marsh cordgrass can withstand this much flooding. Above the low marsh is the high marsh, which is subject to flooding only a few times a month (when the moon is new or full and during stormy periods). Several species inhabit this region.

Salt marshes and estuaries are very productive because waste products are removed and nutrients are circulated by the daily tidal flow.

The detritus eaters such as clams, oysters, certain insect larvae, mussels, salt marsh snails and periwinkles are, in turn, eaten by such predators as mummichogs, killifish, sticklebacks, flounder, striped bass, menhaden and humans. It is generally believed that fully two-thirds of the species important to East Coast fisheries spend part or all of their lives in the salt marsh.

Salt marshes are also important hydrologically because they can absorb as much as 300,000 gallons of water per acre for every one-foot rise in water level. For this reason, they make excellent buffer zones in times of coastal flooding. Thomaston's location on an estuary makes it somewhat more vulnerable to coastal storms but less likely to suffer from ice jamming which causes periodic river flooding in inland Maine. Because flooding is not a frequent occurrence, flood prone areas often appear attractive for development. However, due to the damaging effects of flooding, development should be restricted to open space uses such as agriculture and recreational areas with minimal facilities. Flood plains are best left undeveloped, thereby serving as areas to accommodate floodwaters and provide relatively undisturbed habitat for wildlife.

In Thomaston, most residential and commercial development has occurred on higher ground, possibly subject only to flooding from minor streams. Most of Thomaston's vulnerable development is adjacent to the harbor, a location dictated by its former or present marine oriented use.

The Town has a Flood Hazard Building Permit Ordinance, amended in April 1987, which sets standards for construction where flooding may be a hazard.

Fresh Water Wetlands

Wetlands exist where the water table is at, near or above the surface during enough of the growing season to create hydric soils or support hydrophilic (water loving) vegetation. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service classifies wetlands into five different systems: palustrine (swamps), lacustrine (lakes and ponds), riverine (flowing waters), estuarine (estuaries) and marine (salt water).

Wetlands perform many beneficial functions. These include:

- 1) Groundwater recharge and discharge
- 2) Flood protection
- 3) Shoreline stabilization (by plants)
- 4) Sediment trapping (largely by plants)
- 5) Nutrient retention and removal (by plants)
- 6) Food chain support
- 7) Habitat for many species
- 8) Fire control
- 9) Recreation and nature study

The largest wetlands are in the northeast and northerly areas of Thomaston, in the valleys of Meadow and Branch Brooks. Additional wetlands are east of the cement plant, drained by Marsh Brook. Due to their general unsuitability for development, they have not been significantly altered. However, due to their value for both terrestrial and marine organisms, they should be protected from development or threats to their integrity posed by pollution flowing from nearby developed areas.

Soils generally associated with wetlands often display "hydric" conditions. Hydric conditions exist when the soil in its natural undrained state is saturated at or near the surface during much of the growing season. Features frequently associated with hydric conditions include: 1) Aquatic moisture levels, 2) A deficiency of oxygen at or near the surface during much of the growing season, or 3) Flooding or ponding of long duration during the growing season.

Soils on the list marked with an "X" are those consistently displaying hydric conditions, unless artificially drained or otherwise altered so they no longer support a predominance of hydrophilic vegetation, as determined by on-site investigation. Other soils in the list have one or more of the features associated with hydric conditions; but these soils always require

on-site investigations for classification as wetlands.

The U.S.D.A., in its report of November 1985, identified the following wetland soils out of the total acreage of 7441 in Thomaston.

Acres	Wetland Type Soil
34	X Biddeford
72	Brayton
31	Charles
3	X Medomak
45	Naumberg
1,439	Swanville*
61	X Searsport
<u>130</u>	Swanville

Total 1,815 (23.4% of the area of Thomaston)

* modified in accordance with *Soil Survey of Knox and Lincoln Counties, Maine*, January 1987.

A number of laws protect various wetlands. These include the Freshwater Wetlands Act, the Alteration of Coastal Wetlands Act, the Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Law, and the Site Location of Development Act. The recent amendments to the Mandatory Shoreland Zoning Act will provide expanded protection for wetlands, water bodies and watercourses.

Planning Implications

Coastal and freshwater wetlands are valuable natural resources, which provide multiple economic, recreational, environmental and public safety benefits. These include: 1) income from commercial fisheries for soft-shell clams and marine worms; 2) habitat to support recreational fisheries for smelt, striped bass and other finfish; 3) protection from coastal and river flooding; 4) wildlife habitat; 5) open space and 6) reducing the volume of pollutants in storm water runoff. Surveys of wetlands in Thomaston by Maine DEP and IF&W have found that many wetlands in the town have high values. Coastal wetlands with High Value ratings include the Upper Bay, Mill River, Oyster River, Marsh Brook and the St. George River above the "Iron Bridge". Large freshwater wetlands (10 acres or more) adjacent to or drained by the Oyster River and Meadow Brook have high and moderate values, respectively.

To insure that these wetland's values, functions and benefits are not lost, it is essential to restrict activities in the wetlands and the upland area immediately adjacent to them. Shoreland Zoning *Guidelines require*

that the wetland and the 250 foot wide upland area surrounding High and Moderate Value wetlands be placed in Resource Protection Districts. Also, freshwater wetlands of 10 acres or more and a 75-foot wide upland area surrounding them must also be placed in a Shoreland District. At least 16 wetland areas of 10 acres or more exist in Thomaston. Dredging and filling of wetlands, regardless of size, is restricted under the Federal Clean Water Act.

Restrictions on activities which impair the hydrological functioning of smaller wetlands are particularly necessary to avoid the cost and maintenance associated with storm water drainage systems and to prevent flooding of downstream properties. Small freshwater wetlands (if not overloaded by excessive runoff, clogged by uncontrolled erosion or filled) have the capacity to control runoff by slowing the flow, absorbing some of the volume and filtering some of the pollutants out of storm water. The storm water control functions are particularly important in the developed areas of Thomaston. Freshwater wetlands between Beechwood and Erin Streets, Gleason and Fluker Streets, Fluker and Thatcher Streets, and Valley and Main Streets already serve as major segments of the town's storm water drainage system. Several of these wetlands are also the major open spaces in the east side of the village area. Protection, perhaps in the form of setbacks for building construction and filling, is also needed along some of the town's major drainage ditches.

Groundwater

Groundwater is the layer of water beneath the surface, whose upper surface is usually called the "water table" The water table elevation rises in response to recharge by precipitation and falls due to pumping or other changes in subsurface conditions (such as opening a quarry or gravel pit). In Thomaston, groundwater is used by virtually all activities outside the built-up area of town served by the Camden and Rockland Water Company. According to Maine Geological Survey maps, there are no important gravel aquifers within Thomaston. Therefore, most drilled wells are in fractured bedrock. The yields depend upon the well intersecting "veins" of water.

Relationship of Thomaston's Bedrock and Surface Geology to Groundwater Resources

About one third of Thomaston's surface geology is composed of glacial deposits. Permeable glacial till allows recharge of groundwater. The extent of the permeable soils that developed in till deposits is shown

on Map 4, Soils. Major areas west of the Mill River are of glacial till. Because of the extent of the area served by the Camden and Rockland Water Company and the probable tuck of high yield aquifers, no studies are recommended for establishment of high yield wells and their recharge areas.

Potential Water Quality Problems

Water quality is degraded by Chemical, biological and physical impurities. Within the area of Thomaston where groundwater is the major resource, threats may exist due to hazardous materials contamination, sanitary landfills or biological pollution from malfunctioning septic tank leach fields. Five facilities in Thomaston are listed in the Department of Environmental Protection's "Inventory of Injection Wells". However, all but one discharge into the municipal sewer system.

The Department of Environmental Protection monitors underground tanks, which contain hazardous materials such as petroleum products: As of August 25, 1989, the DEP listed 36 locations in Thomaston having underground tanks. While not all of these are necessarily in immediate danger of polluting ground and/or surface waters, they will need timely replacement by safer tanks of modern construction to avoid pollution.

Planning Implications

Due to limitations in Wastewater Treatment Plant capacity and the costs of extending sewers, much of Thomaston's future growth may not be served by sewer lines. Therefore, such development must be carefully sited with regard for the on-site disposal of sanitary sewage. Similarly, due to the costs of extending water lines and/or potential future limitations on water supply, groundwater resources in areas distant from the existing built-up area of Thomaston should be protected from contamination so they can be future sources of potable water.

Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat

Maps prepared by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W) and the Department of Marine Resources (DMR) show two deer wintering areas within Thomaston, one lying north and east of Wiley Corner on Beechwood Street and the second east of the Oyster River south of Beechwood Street. The rivers and streams in town are very important for such species as alewives, striped bass, and eels. The tidal flats along

the St. George River, which extend into South Thomaston on the east side, are rated as having high habitat value, as are the wetlands adjacent to the Oyster River and Marsh Brook. The channel of the St. George River is rated as a "Class A Coastal Concentration Area" for fisheries. Wetlands important for waterfowl include those adjacent to Marsh Brook and the St. George River. Meadow Brook is rated as moderate habitat value. Some of the abandoned, water-filled quarries are shown as potential aquaculture sites.

Wildlife resources of a community are sensitive biological indicators of land use changes. Mammals commonly inhabiting the town range in size from moose and black bear, occasional visitors from the Rockland Bog, down to moles, voles, bats, mice and shrews. Deer, squirrels, chipmunk, woodchuck, porcupine, raccoon, skunk, weasel, fox and coyote are common, while bobcat, fisher, otter and harbor seals are occasional visitors.

Birds are found in great variety in Thomaston, where habitats include coniferous and deciduous forests, woodland borders, cleared areas and fields, marshes, tidal flats and open salt water. Many species summer here, some pass through on seasonal migrations, and a few also winter here. Many threatened raptors such as ospreys and bald eagles, wading birds, and varieties of ducks have been observed in and over the rivers.

Human intervention has been responsible for many of the terrestrial habitats now found in Thomaston, many of which allow a greater variety of wildlife to exist. Care should be taken to see that a variety of habitats is retained and that crucial "corridors" for wildlife to move between feeding and resting areas are retained in a condition usable for wildlife. All species have minimum areas of specific habitat(s) necessary to sustain them. While some species have adapted well to development, most residential development creates habitats of little use to most wildlife.

At present, the burden of protecting wildlife habitats and natural resources in general is placed on the Planning Board in its review of development proposals. A Conservation Commission could conduct research and give advice to the Planning Board regarding natural resources, could assist in the periodic updating of the Comprehensive Plan and could, as open land is acquired by the Town, assist in the management of such land.

Unique Natural Areas

Thomaston's natural features, as a whole, contribute significantly to the town's quality of life. The value of such features has been recognized by the State's, Critical Areas Program, which lists areas of statewide significance such as bird nesting sites, botanical and geological features. The program, administered by the State Planning Office, lists critical and natural areas submitted by landowners and interested citizens. The program is entirely voluntary and non-regulatory, depending upon the cooperation of landowners to protect the natural features. Only the Site Location of Development Law offers specific regulatory protection to such features, and it is limited to large developments of 20 acres or more.

Thomaston has one site registered under the Critical Areas Program, a location where fossil remains of brachiopods are found. This is in the northeastern portion of the town. Two candidate sites would protect the Purple Clematis near the St. George River and a coastal bedrock outcrop.

Views and Scenic Resources

Thomaston's history has left us with many important and interesting buildings. It has also left much open land, now somewhat grown up from its formerly largely cleared state. The bridge over the St. George River on Route One is one of the nicer river crossings in Mid-Coast Maine, with the confluence of the Oyster and St. George Rivers just upstream of the bridge and the railroad bridge and the foundations of the old road bridge, visible only at low tide, downstream of the railroad bridge. The banks of the river are relatively undeveloped, particularly upstream, with houses along the road to the old bridge and the State Prison Farm in the distance on the Warren side, downstream. From a boat or canoe, the river between the railroad bridge and the Wadsworth Street bridge is surprisingly rural in appearance, with occasional glimpses of farms and houses and the State Prison visible on the northern horizon.

The Camden Hills are visible from portions of Studley Lane and from outer Beechwood Street, about three miles from Main Street, as well as from West Meadow Road and Old County Road. Dexter Street offers views over Rockland out to the islands of Penobscot Bay, as do the higher portions of West Meadow Road.

Views of the harbor and river are available from some of Thomaston's village area, which slopes gently southward with steeper ground nearer

the harbor front. The harbor can be seen down Knox Street from Main Street. Water and Thatcher Streets offer particularly nice views. Mill River can be seen from where Route One crosses it and distant views down the St. George River can be seen from Route 131 south, High Street, near the South Thomaston town line.

Topography and vegetation also limit views, sometimes to advantage. The Mill River effectively separates the village from the heavily industrial section where the cement plant and quarries are located. Due to their height, the cement plant and its waste rock piles are visible from some residential areas, especially so from High Street. However, a screen planting of Scotch Pine and other evergreen trees is rapidly reducing the visibility of the cement plant and its quarries from Old County Road. The western end of Main Street is dominated by the Maine State Prison, readily visible from Route One.

Thomaston residents rated scenic quality as "highly important" in the recent opinion survey. While there have been many attempts to quantify scenic quality, they are all somewhat arbitrary since some aspects of any given scene or view are "in the eye of the beholder". However, the Site Location of Development Law requires that development be designed to minimize adverse and incompatible visual effects on the surrounding landscape. In 1986, the State Planning Office commissioned an analysis of Maine's coastal scenic resources. Criteria used in rating scenic quality included:

- a. Topography - elevation, slope, variety of landforms, etc.;
- b. Open space - agricultural land and views to water;
- c. Shoreline configuration;
- d. Special scenic and cultural features; and
- e. Water views from major roads.

Whether or not one quantifies a view, it is obvious that Thomaston has many views, which include one or more aspects seen as desirable in the 1986 study.

Goals

State Goals

"To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas;

To protect the State's other critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas and unique natural areas; and

To safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from development which threatens those resources."

Local Goal

To protect Thomaston's land and water resources, including critical natural resources.

Policies

To restrict growth and development on slopes greater than 20%, including control of erosion, sedimentation and surface water runoff.

To use Thomaston's rivers and watercourses for the uses for which their depths, water quality and topography best suit them; with particular emphasis on retention of marine-oriented uses along developed portions of the shoreline and on preservation of natural resources along undeveloped portions.

To regulate future growth and development on soils which have severe limitations for the proposed use(s).

To protect vegetative resources from adverse impacts of incompatible development and to promote the wise use of timber resources. To encourage the continuation of agriculture and the preservation and management of forest resources.

To appoint a Conservation Commission to conduct research and give advice concerning the protection, development and use of the town's natural resources and to assist the Planning Board in reviewing development proposals which may affect natural resources.

To preserve and protect from adverse impact groundwater resources in all areas not currently served by sewer and/or water lines and to require detailed geologic stability assessments prior to the construction of major public and private facilities.

To prohibit and/or restrict future development on all wetlands

outside of the Shoreland Commercial District.

To assure that operations and closure of sand and gravel pits and rock quarries are done so as to minimize safety hazards and disturbance to ground and surface water resources and maximize the eventual reuse of these disturbed areas.

To preserve and protect from adverse impact, in accordance with present State water classifications, all surface waters in the town.

To work with the Department of Environmental Protection to minimize hazards from underground storage tanks.

To reduce the potential of flood damage and maintain the National Flood Insurance Program to insure public facilities against flood damage and make flood insurance available to private property owners.

To protect wildlife habitats from adverse effects of development.

To protect, to the extent feasible, Thomaston's natural and scenic resources from adverse effects of development.

Implementation

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance to restrict land uses and activities on slopes greater than 20% and consider the effect of slope on all development proposals (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance to require that applicants having existing incompatible uses and activities located on slopes steeper than 20% take appropriate steps to minimize any known and/or likely adverse environmental impacts as a condition of approval for permits to expand, relocate, or change land use. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Where soil suitability is in doubt, request analysis and review of development proposals by the Soil Conservation Service (Planning Board) Ongoing.

Review, and amend as necessary, land use ordinances to consider soils which have severe limitations for development and to require that

applicants take appropriate steps to minimize any known and/or likely adverse environmental impacts as a condition of approval for permits to expand, relocate, or change land use (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Require by ordinance that all future land uses and activities be located on soils suitable for such uses, and that such uses and activities be designed, constructed and maintained in such a manner as to minimize any adverse environmental effects.(Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Treat any publicly identified rare, unique and exemplary plant communities as "Environmentally Sensitive Areas" and, where possible, place them in land use districts which will prohibit land uses and activities which would be likely to have an adverse impact on such areas. (Planning Board, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Continue to encourage the placement of agricultural lands actively in use and other open land in the Farm and Open Space Tax program. Support conservation easements and other means of preserving forest and agricultural lands through local land trusts. (Assessors) Ongoing.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to encourage the preservation of Prime and Important Farmland Soils and significant forest parcels as open space as part of the subdivision approval process. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Request further mapping and quantitative and qualitative analysis of the town's bedrock geology by the Maine Geological Survey. (Selectmen, Planning Board) A.

Encourage activities which enhance the educational use of Thomaston's unique geologic resources.(SAD 50)Ongoing.

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance to provide more specific guidelines for operation and closure of sand and gravel pits and rock quarries. Develop performance standards for the mining of sand, gravel, topsoil and related surface materials including standards regarding safety, erosion and sedimentation control, operations, landscaping and the timely revegetation of excavated areas. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Work with owners of inactive pits and quarries to achieve reuse of these areas which is beneficial to the Town and the owners. (Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer) Ongoing.

Encourage the further mapping and quantitative and qualitative analysis of the town's surf/c/at geology by the Maine Geological Survey. (Planning Board, Selectmen) A.

Amend land use ordinances to require that the applicants for all future large-scale, over 20 acre, developments submit appropriate hydro-geologic information and impact assessments as part of their application. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Identify the boundaries of all significant fresh water and coastal wetlands through existing inventories, aerial photographs, and on-site investigation. Place land adjoining significant water bodies and wetlands within the Shoreland District in accordance with 1990 State mandates and any additional locally-adopted requirements. (Planning Board, Town Meeting) A.

Adopt Best Management Practices for storm water control to ensure that all municipal storm water drainage systems be kept in good repair so as not to obstruct drainage or, in the case of ditch maintenance, so as not to increase erosion. (Selectmen, Town Manager, Public Works Director) Ongoing.

Amend the Flood Hazard Building Permit Ordinance as necessary to meet Federal standards so as to continue coverage of public and private properties under the National Flood Insurance Program. (Planning Board, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Amend the Shoreland Zoning provisions of the Land Use and Development Ordinance to bring it into conformance with the March 24, 1990 *State of Maine Guidelines for Municipal Shoreland Zoning Ordinances*. Include all significant wetlands (including all tidal wetlands outside of the present and proposed Shoreland Commercial Districts and all freshwater wetlands of 10 or more acres in area having High or Moderate Value ratings from the IF&W and DMR) in Resource Protection Districts. Include all other (freshwater) wetlands of 10 acres or more in Resource Protection Districts and include their uplands within 75 feet in a less restrictive Shoreland District. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Review and amend, as needed, the Land Use and Development Ordinance to avoid development of wetlands of 2 to 10 acres in area and require that any alterations of such wetlands have no effect on the storm water flow of such wetlands and their associated watercourses. Provide protection for major storm drains by requiring 25-foot setbacks for buildings and restricting filling. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to institute Best Management Practices for storm water management during and after construction, require construction of detention basins and restrict the rate of flow off the premises of the subdivision to levels existing prior to development. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Establish a local Conservation Commission in accordance with Title 30, MRSA, Section 5851 and have the Commission rate open spaces and scenic vistas. (Selectmen, Town Meeting) A.

Following a survey, develop a program to acquire and protect wetlands, as funds permit, by public agencies and appropriate non-profit organizations. (Conservation Commission, Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to incorporate density requirements recommended by the Division of Health Engineering to adequately protect groundwater resources in subdivisions where the cumulative impact of numerous on-site wastewater disposal systems may be significant. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Work with the Department of Environmental Protection to assure replacement of older, underground tanks to protect ground and surface water resources. (Code Enforcement Officer) Ongoing.

To minimize interference with wildlife, it is recommended that Deer Yards be included in the land reserved as permanent open space in subdivisions. (Planning Board, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to require environmental impact assessments in applications for subdivisions over 20 acres in the R-1 and R-2 Districts. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Work with the Critical Areas Program to better define Thomaston's critical natural areas. (Conservation Commission) Ongoing.

Work with land owners and land trusts to preserve and protect identified critical natural areas and farmland. Create and maintain a record of such areas (in addition to land already under the Farm and Open Space Law or under Tree Growth). (Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Assessor's Agent) Ongoing.

Consider amending the Subdivision Ordinance to include such scenic factors as are contained in the Site Location of Development Law for the review of subdivision proposals. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

MARINE RESOURCES

Introduction

Thomaston's marine, or estuarine waters, include the Weskeag River and its associated salt marshes and streams in the southeastern portion of town, the Mill River up to Route One, all of the St. George River within the town, and the Oyster River for all its length within Thomaston, where it forms part of the Town Line with Warren. Only the St. George River is now used by vessels larger than small powerboats, rowboats, canoes and kayaks. The "non-navigable" portions of Thomaston's estuaries are discussed in the Natural Resources section of this Plan.

Thomaston Harbor

Description

Thomaston Harbor is situated at the bend in the St. George River when approaching the Town of Thomaston from seaward: The harbor consists of a narrow channel at low tide which measures 19.3 acres between the fixed beacon and the Wadsworth Street Bridge. At normal high water, the water surface measures 96.9 acres. Project depths are 10 feet for the main channel, which has a width as narrow as 15 feet in some places, and a "layout channel" for moorings with a 90-foot width and a depth at Mean Low Water of 5 feet. The navigation project was completed in 1903 to a project depth of 16 feet below Mean Low Water. Maintenance dredging was performed in 1919 and 1934, with the most recent dredging in 1977. The reduced project depth reflects the decrease in the size and draft of vessels using Thomaston Harbor. Federal funds for such projects are limited. According to the Thomaston Harbor Committee, dredging may be a few years away.

The harbor channel is buoyed for navigation by the U. S. Coast Guard, The damaged granite monument at the bend in the channel was repaired in May 1990. The navigational marker was replaced later that summer,

During northerly winds the harbor is sheltered. During southerly to southwest winds the harbor is sheltered from the Wadsworth Street Bridge to the vicinity of Brown's Point. Southeast winds provide the only direction from which wind and waves create a problem for a majority of the harbor. During incoming tides, the average current is 2 to 3 knots.

During outgoing tides, the current averages 3 to 4 knots. A current of 6 knots has been measured.

Presently the harbor sees maximum activity in the spring from April through June when boats are launched, and in the fall during September and October when boats are hauled. Summer activity, both recreational and commercial, is quite heavy. Clamming continues at a somewhat reduced level through the winter, as the river channel downstream of the harbor normally remains open, although the Mill River is traditionally the site of a seasonal ice fishery for smelt.

Studies

In July 1987, a boundary survey was completed by Kimball Chase Company, Inc. of land owned by the Town between the Renaissance Yacht Company property and the Edward T. Gamage property on Water Street. The property, with about 100 feet of frontage on the Harbor, had been the site of an informal (undeveloped) Town Beach. The land was previously thought to be owned by Renaissance Yacht Co. Assessor's records now show the land to be owned by the Town. It remains unimproved.

Studies undertaken by Barry S. Timson, Consulting Geologist, in 1979 considered several alternatives for increasing the mooring capacity of the harbor. The most promising alternative included a mooring basin on the southerly side of the project channel about opposite the wastewater treatment plant, perhaps in conjunction with a floating tire breakwater extending shoreward from the vicinity of the Beacon. Dredging to maintain existing project depths was anticipated to be needed every 6 to 7 years, with more frequent intervals for some of the mooring basins proposed. No action has been taken to date on any of these proposals.

Ordinances

On April 28, 1987, Town Meeting adopted a Harbor Ordinance outlining the duties and powers of the Harbor Committee and Harbor Master, establishing standards for many marine activities and setting penalties for violation of rules and regulations. The Committee was expanded to nine members by the Selectmen in June 1988.

Most of the southerly shore of the Harbor is in a Resource Protection District, as are the shores of the Mill River above the railroad bridge. Higher land south of the Harbor is in the Rural Residential R-2 District,

while most of the land north of the Harbor is in the Urban Residential R-3 District. Low-lying land is also covered by the Flood Plain Ordinance, which has been amended to require that any substantial expansion of non water-dependent uses in the Flood Hazard Areas be elevated above the level of anticipated flooding.

The Shoreland Commercial District, adopted at Town Meeting on April 28, 1987, includes the northerly shore of Thomaston Harbor from Ferry Avenue, upstream of Wadsworth Street (the "Iron Bridge"), up to Water Street, land east of Knox Street and south of the railroad to the Mill River. On the south side of the harbor, only the property occupied by Jeff's Marine is included in this District. It includes that part of the waterfront most suited for marine oriented activities. Within this District, Permitted land uses are limited to those requiring or benefiting from a waterfront location, additional uses are allowed as Conditional Uses. New residential uses are limited to quarters for security personnel and their **families**.

Other Areas on the St. George River

A small portion of St. George River frontage southerly of the Route One bridge is in a Commercial District. The only presently active (1991) commercial user is a marine construction firm, which maintains a ramp and float for tidal access to the river.

Grading and other preparation for a small boat and canoe launching ramp at the approach to the recently removed Route One bridge on the Thomaston side of the St. George River was carried out during the preparation of this Plan. The idea, proposed by Russell Grimm of the Comprehensive Planning Committee, was implemented at no additional cost following removal of the old bridge, with the cooperation of the Town and the Maine Department of Transportation. It is hoped that this new canoe launching area will divert some canoes, kayaks and other light weight craft away from the Town Landing, thereby reducing overcrowding.

Water Quality and Marine Resources

Water flowing through Thomaston originates in and passes through many other communities. The water quality in Thomaston will continue to depend upon measures taken by all upstream communities as well as those taken in Thomaston. It is essential that Thomaston cooperate and work closely with other communities within the watershed, in order to retain

desirable water quality. These include: Appleton, Union, Rockport, Rockland and Warren. Water quality issues are discussed in the Public Facilities and Natural Resources sections of this Plan.

The Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) tests the Thomaston Harbor water monthly. There are four testing sites on the main stem of the St. George River in Thomaston, two along the Mill River, two in Cushing, six along the South Thomaston portion of the St. George River opposite Thomaston and Cushing, and one in Cushing on a tributary stream. To date, the results have been below standards to allow shellfishing other than "deputation digging" in the harbor area. upstream of a line between Hospital Point and the Cushing-Thomaston town line on the west shore of the river. This is primarily due to the discharge (Combined Sewer Overflow) of excess combined sanitary and storm water before it reaches the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and inadequate sewer lines connecting to the plant. Not only the shellfishing is seriously affected, but the finfishing and recreational use has been retarded in the Thomaston area. This situation should be corrected by completion of the on-going \$7.0 million separation of storm water and sanitary wastes, replacement of the sewer lines and repairs to the WWTP. However, the DMR will have to test and evaluate the situation once the new sewers are on-tine and the improvements at the WWTP are completed.

Although there is only "deputation digging" in Thomaston Harbor, in which the clams have to be taken to deputation plants in Searsport or Scarborough to make the clams clean enough for human consumption, access is available to open clamming areas from the Thomaston launching ramp. When the tide is right, there are approximately 10 to 12 boats involved, requiring parking for the vehicles and trailers. Therefore, there can be congestion when recreational boaters attempt to use the ramp during the clamming hours, for there are about 15 adequate spaces, including both levels, for boat and trailer parking. Because of data suppression requirements, since there are so few deputation plants, the DMR has no recent records of clams harvested within Thomaston's waters, Earlier records are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Shellfish Harvests and Value, Thomaston

Year	Bushels Landed	Value (current \$ paid to diggers by wholesale dealers)
1988	4,694	\$239,016
1987	2,669	\$121,706
1986	3,924	\$174,219
1985	6,108	\$233,631
1984	4,114	\$137,613
1983	<u>6,411</u>	<u>\$168,288</u>
Total	28, 190	\$1,074,473
Average	4,653	\$179,079

Source: Maine Department of Marine Resources.

During the 1983-1988 period, clams harvested from the flats of the St. George estuary, including the towns of Thomaston, South Thomaston, Cushing and St. George averaged about 30,000 bushels annually with an annual wholesale value of about \$1.2 million.

While it should be understood that not all clams landed at Thomaston were harvested within its estuarine area, the Public Landing provides the clambers access to a significant resource and probably contributes to the economy of the town. No other species of shellfish were reported to be landed at Thomaston during the above years.

Access to Water

Thomaston Harbor has the only public launching ramp on the upper salt water portion of the estuary. There is also a public ramp at Port Clyde, near the mouth of the St. George River. The Thomaston ramp accommodates neighboring communities such as Warren, Cushing, Friendship, and South Thomaston and is a short distance from Route One. There is a wharf and float at the Public Landing. Two commercial launching facilities are operated by marinas.

The Thomaston Harbor Committee is looking forward to using floats to handle the increasing need for moorings in a limited deep water area and is working to better the waterfront in accordance with the present Land Use and Development Ordinance.

Dragon Products (the cement plant) purchased a parcel of waterfront

land from Lyman Morse Boat Building Co. as a prospective site for shipping and receiving products by barge. Since this purchase was made, Dragon Products has applied for and received approval of improvements to the wharf at the Central Maine Power Company's Mason Station in Wiscasset for a barge loading/unloading facility. Rail haul by the Maine Coast Railroad is to be used between Thomaston and Wiscasset. Dragon Products plans no industrial use of this Thomaston waterfront land at present. (Peter Cianchette, Vice President, Operations, Dragon Products, February 12, 1991) The regional economy has caused Dragon Products to indefinitely postpone construction of the Wiscasset facility.

Economic Effects

The water-dependent businesses at the Harbor are very important and have a significant impact on Thomaston. Approximately 75 people are employed year-round by businesses adjacent to Thomaston Harbor, with annual wages in 1989 of about \$936,000. At present there are six boatbuilding and repair businesses handling approximately sixty Vessels varying in size from 30 feet to 100 feet or more during the boating season. Off season, the shops are busy constructing new vessels and making repairs.

In addition to the boatbuilding shops, there are two marinas and one harborside restaurant. One marina handles and stores over 200 boats, approximately 12 feet to 30 feet in length. It has docking facilities and moorings plus sales and services for boating accessories. The other marina has docking and mooring for approximately 20 boats, with fueling facilities and supplies for visitors. The Harbor View Tavern is located adjacent to the Public Landing and is open for lunches and dinners year round. A recent change of ownership included purchase of the adjacent marina.

Planning Implications

Thomaston voters took action in 1987 which was intended to preserve their working waterfront against the type of harborside residential and non marine-oriented commercial development which had occupied formerly working parts of the waterfronts in other nearby harbors, such as Boothbay Harbor and Camden. It is important to retain the protections against inappropriate land uses which do not require or benefit greatly from a waterfront location, such as high-density residential uses. The success of this action is reflected in the two major buildings, and the

expansion of another boat building shed, erected by marine-oriented businesses since the enactment of the ordinance amendments. A long-unused building, supported on piling, has been improved to serve as a boatbuilding shop. A storage building was completed in the winter of 1990-91. The restaurant also expanded in 1990 and 1991.

Access to the harbor is inadequate for peak demands when the launching ramp is used simultaneously by commercial and recreational boaters. Land (Map 25/Lot 122) immediately above the WWTP had been for sale and could have extended the park and parking area above the Town Landing. However, acquisition of this parcel was disapproved by the voters at a Special Town Meeting on September 11, 1989. The purchase price would have been \$175,000.

Due to the often steep banks and the lack of access for larger boats above the Wadsworth Street bridge, shore land suitable for an additional launching ramp, other than for light car-topped boats and canoes, is extremely limited. While adequate water area exists north of the dredged channel for a substantial number of additional slips and floats, depths are inadequate for other than near high tide use without dredging. To date, no substantial dredging has been done by private marinas. Recent Corps of Engineers' policy has been to require some municipal financial participation in dredging and other harbor improvements. Private and/or municipal funding would be needed if any expansion of the mooring area is accomplished by dredging. Dredged materials have to be tested before disposal, and may or may not be able to be used as fill or dumped at disposal areas at sea. (Spoil from the 1977 dredging was used to raise the level of the "old dump" just upstream of the railroad bridge on the Mill River.)

Goals

State Goals

"To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas."

"To protect the State's marine resources industry, ports and harbors, from incompatible development and to promote access to the shore for commercial fishermen and the public."

"To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters."

In addition, the State Legislature has adopted nine Coastal Management Policies in Title 38, MRSA, Section 1801. These are summarized as follows:

1. Promote maintenance, development and revitalization of harbors for fishing, transportation and recreation.

2. Manage the marine environment to promote ecological integrity and diversity and enhance the value of the State's renewable resources.

3. Give preference to water-dependent uses on the shoreline, promote public access while being aware of the cumulative effects of development on marine resources.

4. Discourage development in hazardous areas.

5. Encourage State and local cooperation in resource management.

6. Protect critical habitat and preserve natural beauty even in developed areas.

7. Expand outdoor recreation and appropriate coastal tourism opportunities.

8. Restore and maintain water quality.

9. Restore and maintain coastal air quality.

Local Goals

To improve and protect the environmental quality of the Harbor.

To balance commercial needs with needs for visual and recreational access to water.

Policies

To place undeveloped portions of Thomaston's shorelands in districts which will limit development and protect marine and other natural resources.

To retain a "working waterfront" on Thomaston Harbor.

To retain and enhance public access to Thomaston's river and marine resources.

To improve water quality in the St. George River and its tributaries.

To encourage Town support of the Harbor Committee's efforts to increase mooring capacity by commercial interests in Thomaston Harbor and support efforts to maintain and improve existing public waterfront facilities.

To work with the U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers, Federal and State representatives, and the Thomaston Harbor Committee to assure continued maintenance of the dredged channel of the St. George River and mooring areas of Thomaston Harbor.

Implementation

Include the entire St. George River waterfront and the Oyster and Mill Rivers, except for the present and proposed Shoreland Commercial Districts, in Resource Protection Districts. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Shoreland Commercial District to reduce the number of non-marine-oriented Conditional Uses and/or more specifically restrict them to marine-oriented uses. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Harbor Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Place all commercial land uses wholly or partially within the Shoreland District along the St. George River in the Shoreland Commercial District. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Establish a reserve fund for acquisition of available waterfront properties for public use and access to water, (Harbor Committee, Conservation Commission, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) C.

RECREATION

Introduction

In the *Guidelines for Maine's Growth Management Program* the suggested outline for the recreation section emphasizes only outdoor recreation and yet it requires a description of programs and facilities. Thomaston has an indoor winter recreation program. Therefore, this section, of necessity, will deal with both indoor and outdoor aspects of recreation in Thomaston. Also, because Thomaston is a small town with limited available land and a limited recreation budget, this section will describe some of the recreational opportunities, facilities and programs in the area about a fifteen to twenty mile radius around Thomaston. A more complete list will be found in the Appendix.

For the purposes of this section, "recreation" is defined as those "leisure time" activities which take place outside of the workplace, school hours, the home, or in the case of senior citizens, are brought into their living complex. These activities may be athletic, team or individual; art centered - music, fine arts, dance, theatre, etc. They may consist of a variety of educational programs from nature walks, local history, archaeology, photography, water-safety, hunting-safety, etc. They may encompass pre-school play programs and senior citizen events. In fact, the only limit on recreation programs is that which is imposed by the community and its government by economics, land availability, manpower, and most important, by commitment and interest of its citizens.

The term "Recreational Resources" includes *physical facilities*: land and water areas, buildings, equipment, institutions, resorts, designed sport areas (golf, tennis, etc.) and *programs*, past, present or projected. Programs involve Town government, population size and character, and expressed needs. Programs and facilities involve budgets, the interests of the private and public sectors, of commerce and the environment. In some cases, Thomaston has both a facility and a program, in others there is a facility but no program (i. e., the harbor and no water program, waterfront and undeveloped land but no hiking, ski or nature programs); in others, the Town has or had a program but no facility (skating and no rink, a community orchestra but no auditorium). This section will address both physical aspects and programs.

Thomaston Recreational Programs and Facilities

The Recreation Program This program, with a part-time director, is primarily an athletic one serving school age children in Thomaston and Cushing. It is operated almost entirely using the facilities and land (34 acres) of SAD 50. A portion of these facilities is on adjacent Town-owned land. These include athletic fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, track, and a ballfield developed in 1980 and 1982 using the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Facilities also include playground equipment, classrooms and gyms. The use and availability of these facilities depend on the demands of school activities and on the Recreational Department's ability to meet the cost of a director (coaches are unpaid), and other personnel including a supervising janitor in the building during non-school hours. Recreation programs that use or have used these school facilities include Pee Wee soccer, basketball, baseball and softball for girls and boys eight to twelve years. Basketball includes an All-Star Tournament. The baseball program includes Babe Ruth and Little League teams and a T-ball program for first time players. In addition a field hockey program, a men's basketball group, a tennis, basketball and soccer clinic and a track program are offered.

Swimming A two week Red Cross swimming program has been offered during the summer, Monday through Friday, at Sandy Shores Camping and Beach area on South Pond in Warren, off U. S. Route One. However, in June 1990 this area changed from a private area offering public access to a closed private area to be used only by those persons leasing camp sites. A new swimming facility must be found.

Senior Citizens Senior citizens are offered a foliage viewing and a Christmas shopping chartered bus tour in the fall. An art course has been offered in the past using the Knox Hotel facilities.

Thomaston Facilities, Opportunities and/or Programs which are Recreational but are not in the Town Recreation Program

Library The Thomaston Public Library, located in the Thomaston Academy building, offers, besides the usual lending and research facilities, a vacation reading program for children and a story time read-aloud program. Occasionally, puppet shows, magicians and parties are put on for the community children. Art and crafts and science programs have been offered in vacation periods.

Community College The University of Maine at Augusta extension, situated in the Thomaston Academy building, makes their facilities available to the community at time periods when their own students and faculty do not need them.

Youth Groups Girl and Boy Scouts, 4-H organizations, and other such groups meet and use the facilities of various churches (which often charge a fee for such use), private homes or farms and Watts Hall.

Preschool Activities Preschool children make use of school playground equipment of SAD 50 (Lura Libby School).

Band The Midcoast Community Band offers an opportunity for musicians to play and give concerts. This is a self-supporting group which holds weekly rehearsals and gives regular concerts in the Midcoast area. They meet in a room at the George's Valley High School (unless the school pre-empts the room); concerts are given in local churches, other town halls, Watts Hall (once acoustical panels are installed) or outdoors.

Museums Two local museums provide programs, tours and exhibits. Montpelier, a state-owned replica of the home of General Henry Knox on Route 131, is open to the public in summer. The Thomaston Historical Society owns the former servants' quarters of the Knox Mansion on Knox Street (later the Thomaston railroad station) and has a permanent collection of books, pictures and artifacts of historical interest. They hold regular meetings and present lectures.

Watts Hall The newly renovated Watts Hall is located on Main Street in the center of town. In the past year, a community Christmas party, plays, concerts, the Senior Prom and a children's art show have been among the activities held in the hall.

Other in-town sports opportunities Skating: Thomaston has a long history of a community skating rink and there is a real need for its return. Since the elimination of the Town rink, skating takes place on whatever piece of water, stretch of river, small pond or frozen marsh is available. Skiing, snowmobiling and snowshoeing: Cross-country skiers and snowshoers can use land between the parking lot and the SAD 50 school buildings or the fields behind the high school. Wooded acreage behind the high school has many Wide and interconnecting trails and has been used by skiers, snowmobilers, snowshoers and hikers for some time with the tolerance of the land owner(s).

Out of Town Recreation Facilities and/or Programs within reasonable reach of Thomaston Residents ¹

The Area Around The Town of Thomaston At is beyond the scope of this report to examine in any detail the regional recreational resources and their condition. Some are mentioned because Thomaston does not have such a program (e. g., swimming), some because Thomaston need not duplicate them (e. g., golf courses, downhill skiing) and others are to show that there are nearby small towns similar to Thomaston in size and economic resources which have facilities and programs (e. g., skating, cross-country skiing, swimming, boating and nature programs, community buildings) and that it might be possible for Thomaston to emulate these for the sake of citizens who cannot use other town's facilities.

Summary of Out-of-Town Facilities

TOD facilities and programs The Camden Snow Bowl; the Samoset and Rockland Golf Courses; the State Parks with their ponds, beaches and camping facilities; charter boat cruises; nature trips; canoe trips sponsored by wildlife organizations; the Farnsworth Museum and its art, music and cinema programs; the Bay Chamber concerts; the Waldo Theatre; the Maine Photographic Workshop; the Owls Head Transportation Museum and its programs; the Samoset Resort sports complex; and National Audubon's Hog Island Ecology Camp.

Smaller or less developed facilities Boat launching ramps and access. All towns surrounding Thomaston except Cushing have some public access for boating and Rockland and St. George each have two. Public beaches for coastal swimming are another matter. Only 6.4% of Maine's shoreline is held by the public, only 27% (about 20 miles) of Maine's beaches are publicly owned and coastal water access points in the Midcoast area reflect this lack. Fresh water swimming. There are many municipal and commercial beaches in the area and Thomaston's swimming program (since the loss of the Town Beach) depends on them and, of course, as in the case of the recent Sandy Shores and Beaver Lodge arrangements, the Town must pay for their use. Outside of public parks and private resorts, swimmers must depend upon private facilities, finding easements to beaches or

¹ " Reasonable reach is taken here to be a drive of 20 to 30 minutes or of 15 to 20 miles and extends roughly to Lincolnville in the northeast; Liberty, Washington and Appleton to the north; and Friendship, Waldoboro and Nobleboro to the southwest. Reference will also be made occasionally to recreation possibilities beyond these distances and to the islands of Muscongus and Penobscot Bays.

permission from beach owners. Hikers, skiers, hunters, snowmobilers and nature lovers must arrange access through private lands or from public highways and roads. There is only one riding trail on public land near Thomaston; for the most part riders must depend on private riding stables, their own property or permission from private landowners or commercially held land (logging roads, power line easements). Rockland, Camden and Damariscotta have movie houses showing commercial movies. Many town historical societies put on programs and give tours, chiefly in the summer months. Camden, Rockport, Union, Friendship, Waldoboro and Damariscotta have theatres and/or community buildings to support bands, orchestras and choral groups. These buildings are adequate for these communities' needs but it is questionable if they would be available for Thomaston programs. Parking is a problem at many of these; all have toilet facilities.

Family Camping and /or Picnicking There are a number of areas available to Thomaston residents beyond the town limits. Municipal and state parks include: Camden Hills State Park, Camden; Lake St. George State Park, Liberty; Payson Park in Warren; Owls Head Light in Owls Head; and Warren Island in Islesboro. Many towns maintain small picnic areas in conjunction with town beaches (e. g. Ayer Park in Union). There are also some private campgrounds near Thomaston, some of which, in addition to tent and RV sites, offer boat rental and beach activities.

Children's and Youth Camps Summer camps are a well-known Maine industry and there are many public and private camps - day and overnight scattered throughout the state. The focus of these may be religious or non-sectarian, local or international. There are specialty camps (music/soccer/tennis/computer/tutoring/special needs, etc.). Girl and Boy Scout, 4-H and Y camps are less costly than the private camps. Within Thomaston, a number of churches maintain summer Bible day camps. Other camps, day and overnight, are within easy driving distance of Thomaston.

Public Open Space Areas

Town Parks The Mall. The Town maintains a mall on Main Street just west of the business district. This one acre park contains the Town war memorials and four picnic tables. There is room for about eight or ten cars to park along the south side of the mall in front of the houses. The Public Landing. The public landing is over an acre in size and has a small picnic area that overlooks the St. George River. Parking is available at the Public Landing by the launching ramp. From the harbor the boat owner can

head toward the open ocean or follow the river toward its headwaters. Thomaston had, for a number of years, maintained a Town Beach with added sand between Renaissance Yachts and E. T. Gamage, Inc. on Water Street. However, loss of sand, mud flats at low tide, and sewage contamination make this site unusable as a beach at present.

Other Town-owned Open Space The Town has waterfront land along the Mill River but no walks are developed and shoreline hiking is difficult. The Town also owns approximately 35 acres beyond the Town Cemetery. Some of the land is used for the Public Works building but the rest is undeveloped. Although the cemetery, which is currently being expanded, cannot be considered a park, its paths offer pleasant walks and an opportunity to read a great deal of the history of Thomaston citizens on the gravestones.

State Open Space The State-owned Waldo Tyler Wildlife Refuge off Buttermilk Lane in Thomaston and South Thomaston is a 1/field wildlife area centered on the Weskeag River.

Summary of Public Facilities Thomaston is a "sandwich" or "bookend" town. To the west land is occupied by the State Prison facilities and to the east and northeast an even larger section is owned by the cement plant. About 36 acres of publicly-owned land with recreational facilities includes: the Public Landing (1 acre), the Mall (1 acre) and the SAD 50 complex of schools and fields (34.2 acres). Undeveloped Town-owned land beyond the Town Cemetery (about 35 acres) and the open space by the banks of the Mill River (S acres) total about 40 acres. Most of the improved recreational land in Thomaston is owned by SAD SO.

Private Open Space Areas in Thomaston suitable for Recreation

There are a number of undeveloped tracts of largely forested land which contain fields and swales along Beechwood Street and Ridgeview Drive. As these are privately owned, they may be developed. A sizable tract of private land behind the high school has been used informally by cross-country skiers. The trails, often kept clear by snowmobile use, are wide and extensive, crossing over the town line into Warren. These undeveloped lands, if ever available or if formal permission for public use could be obtained, are ideal for hiking, skiing, riding, snowshoeing, nature programs, etc. or any activity that would not harm the environment. Use of the St. George River's banks and river marshes, except at the Town Landing and old Town Beach areas, depends on the permission of private

landowners and established rights of way. There are, at present, no skiing, hiking, skating, snowshoeing or nature activities in the Thomaston Recreation program.

There are other significant wildlife areas, many along the St. George River, some protected, some privately owned with private access, some which combine recreation and nature programs. The Georges River Land Trust is actively engaged in identifying and protecting this area.

Important Hunting and Fishing Areas

Hunting The Town Landing allows duck hunters access to the St. George River and open ocean areas. Thomaston has no hunting program although from time to time National Rifle Association hunter safety programs are given through the schools. Large deer wintering areas are located on both sides of Upper Beechwood Street. The Rockland (Oyster River) Bog is located just north of the Thomaston town line and offers opportunities for various types of hunting.

Fishing Immediate access to the St. George River, Oyster River, Mill River and ocean fishing grounds, as well as ponds, creeks and other tributary streams, is available from the Town Landing. Some ice fishing takes place on the Mill River and on the Oyster River. There is no program in Thomaston that is devoted to the sport of fishing.

Access to Water Bodies - Facilities

Thomaston Town Waterfront Thomaston maintains a Town Landing (wharf, float, ramp and parking) which covers 1.66 acres on the easterly end of Water Street next to the wastewater treatment plant. Parking can accommodate a maximum of 32 vehicles or 16 vehicles with trailers. The facility is used in the summer by fishermen and recreational boaters and year round by clammers and wormers. A picnic area overlooks the launching ramp and provides a nice view of the harbor.

A limited number of moorings (about 15 of either the single-point or float type) are in the harbor and permission for the use of one must be obtained from the Harbormaster and the Harbor Committee. Additional space is provided by a network of floats attached to the shore for recreational boats with approximately 20 available at Jeff's Marine and 20 at Thomaston Marina.

Other facilities offering marine sales, repair, docking, hauling and storage include Jeff's Marine on the Cushing Road, Renaissance Yachts, Edward T. Gamage and George L. Emery on Water Street, Thomaston Marina adjacent to the Town Landing, Lyman-Morse Boatbuilding Co. off Knox Street, and Wallace Marine Services (Guy Scarpino) at the foot of Knox Street.

The restricted vertical clearance of the Wadsworth Street Bridge and the shoal depths upstream of the bridge prevent use by boats other than small craft and canoes. Sailing out of the harbor to windward (into the prevailing southerly and southwesterly summer Winds) is made difficult by the narrow channel, strong currents and shoals. At this time, there is no Town recreational program for instruction in boat handling, water safety or navigation.

Analysis of Recreational Resources

Physical Resources

SAD 50 buildings, land and recreation fields and playgrounds. These are adequate for school use. There are swings and other play equipment at the Lura Libby School and these may be used by town children when the school is not using them. There is usually sufficient parking and toilet facilities are available inside the schools.

However, the demands of a Town recreation program, even with the addition of a General Purpose room at the Grammar School, increase problems of maintenance for the School District, which maintains the facilities in very good condition. At times, school needs pre-empt recreation programs. During school holidays and vacations, the buildings are closed, denying use of indoor facilities when it might seem that the need for recreation is the greatest. After all, working parents do not have the vacation time off given to children, and the local day-care facilities have no room or programs for older children and teens.

Watts Hall, which has an auditorium and stage, is currently (June 1991) being improved, largely by volunteers, and handicapped access is planned for the near future (funds were voted at the March 1991 Town Meeting). Volunteers have worked more than 1600 hours to redecorate and rehabilitate the interior. Additional use can be made of the Hall for after school arts and crafts, senior citizen activities and weekend programs for families. The auditorium and stage would accommodate

middle sized groups (e. g., band and orchestra concerts) but considerable acoustic improvements are needed. However, there are some daytime activities that would not be possible since the Town Office and shops are directly below. A community building that would allow for multiple programs (preschool, senior citizens, family, daycare, art and crafts, teens) has been considered desirable in the past but a "budget breaker". The Thomaston Recreation Committee has, however, gone on record in a letter of September 11, 1989 to the Comprehensive Planning Committee from Jean Jacques, Director of the Thomaston Recreation Board, and the board members.

"We are all in agreement that for the future of our recreation program, the only logical solution to many problems in the town would be to have a Community Center. The number of activities possible are endless as well as the solution to the availability of space for the many meetings this town holds. We, as a board, don't foresee any more being added to the recreation program unless more space becomes available to us."

Although a larger, recreation-oriented community center would be a great asset to the Town, this is probably not feasible during the ten-year planning period. However, additional outdoor programs should be implemented and the Watts Block further utilized.

The University of Maine at Augusta complex within the Academy building has a number of classrooms and a small gymnasium, but is not generally available to the public on a regular basis. Toilets and parking are adequate.

The Thomaston Historical Society keeps a well-maintained building off Knox Street. Occasional public programs are held there. It is not open on a daily basis. Meeting space and parking are limited.

Montpelier, the state-owned replica of General Knox's mansion, has fallen into disrepair and a group, the Friends of Montpelier, is working to restore the building. Because of its run-down condition, only part of the building is open to the public in the summer for guided tours. Limited parking is available.

Thomaston is fortunate to have a working harbor complete with boat and marine supply facilities as well as a launching ramp for access to the St. George River and Muscongus Bay. The Town Landing and picnic area are

functional but the summer demand exceeds space. Parking is a problem and the overflow from the nearby restaurant causes crowding so that cars sometimes are parked on Water Street. Purchase of a small parcel of land to add to the picnic area above the Town Landing was voted down in 1989. The Town Beach is not usable. Because of water quality problems, harbor use is restricted to boating activity and sightseeing. Clamming in the harbor is restricted to commercial "deputation digging" because of pollution. Moorings and float space are limited and summer boaters are not assured of finding either a mooring or a slip. Boat repair, boat sales, hauling and storage for large and small boats are available from the nearby boatyards. There is no public toilet anywhere on the waterfront (and for that matter, anywhere in town). Residents and visitors alike must depend on the kindness of restaurants and stores for these facilities.

The Mall picnic area has only four picnic tables, two benches and limited parking in front of nearby residences. The Mall is not large enough to accommodate more than the facilities now there. It could not be used for active recreation.

Mill River. Town-owned Land on the shore of the Mill River and the "old dump" is brush and refuse covered and the shoreline is not easily walkable, the banks being steep. The former Town Dump is somewhat hazardous because of large exposed chunks of building material, concrete, etc. The river dries out to mudflats and a shallow channel at low tide.

Walking, hiking and trails. From time to time walks are sponsored by the Town around its streets for the purpose of pointing out architectural and historic features. We have recommended construction of additional sidewalks. There are no "natural" trails marked out for hiking, cross-country skiing or riding either along the shore or within town limits. There are no bicycle paths or marked routes. Trail and path use in Thomaston largely depends upon access to private land or the willingness of the recreation seeker to make his way through the cemetery and the land beyond or to take his chances along the shore. No waterfront hiking path now exists but some might be developed with the advice of knowledgeable natural resources personnel.

Waste disposal baskets are placed in most of the public areas mentioned above, although judging from the build-up of throwaway material, particularly in the summer, a more active system of clean-up might be considered.

Recreation Programs

Town Sponsored Recreational Programs. The bulk of recreational programs now in place are for children between the ages of seven and fourteen. These are all athletic and many involve team competition. There are no family oriented programs, few sports activities for adults, no activities centering on art/music/drama/dance/ or movies. There are no nature programs or programs aimed at social service or citizenship (historic preservation, outreach, etc.) There are no programs for the pre-school child or care-centers that allow the parent to participate in a program. There is a modest trip program for senior citizens and occasionally an art program. The sports program using SAD 50 facilities fills a great need for children between seven and fourteen, but there is also a need for a greater variety of programs, ones that serve younger children, those interested in non-team sports (skiing, skating, hiking, bicycling) and the non-athletic teenagers, those interested in nature, photography or the fine arts.

Other In-Town Programs. The Public Library, the Thomaston Historical Society, Montpelier, the Fourth of July Committee, Scouts, church groups, the Midcoast Community Band, and many others offer a number of programs and events, but none of these can possibly take care of the multiple town needs.

There is a need for adult and pre-school programs that can run simultaneously with the sports programs so that the whole family can be occupied at the same time.

There are no programs using the harbor. However, there is no reason that instructional and comprehensive marine programs (water safety, small boat handling, navigation, marine biology, etc.) should not be developed for Thomaston citizens using the Town-owned shoreline. It is possible that some marina owners might cooperate by loaning or renting their facilities.

Out of Town Recreational Resources. As can be seen in the Appendix, the out of town recreational possibilities are many and comprehensive. Rockland, Camden and Rockport in particular offer a variety of after school, after work and summer programs and activities. However, the use of these programs and facilities depends on a participant or family member having private transportation to drive to these towns or areas, to have the travel time available and to have the money to pay another town,

facility, resort or club for the use of that facility.

Planning Implications

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) reports that from 1980 to 1988 Knox County showed a 9.4% population increase and projections for recreational needs in the 1990's are based on these growth rates.

The Midcoast region was cited for present recreational deficiencies in public recreation availability in the following areas: freshwater swimming, saltwater swimming, primitive camping, pleasure boating and fishing access, canoeing access, recreational bicycling, trail biking and horseback trail riding. Alpine (downhill) skiing will be deficient by 1993. A deficiency was noted in outdoor ice rinks - shared by 57% of towns with 2,500 residents.

Of those who responded to the 1974 Survey, 82% said Thomaston needed more and/or improved recreational facilities and programs. Of these, 71% named community sponsored recreation for youth, 60% park areas for picnicking and swimming, 56% community sponsored recreation programs for adults and senior citizens, 54% a community center with a gym and other indoor multipurpose facilities, 32% waterfront and boating activities and 24% playing fields for football, baseball and other group games. Recommendations included: greater use of school facilities for public activities, year-round programs for youth and adults, sports, physical activities, art classes, drama, music, dances and movies. Facilities to be developed or improved included: ball field, skating rink, playground equipment, bicycle path, and tennis courts. Respondents recommended acquisition of more land at Knox and Water Streets for additional parking, buying land or easements along the St. George and Oyster Rivers to keep them in their natural state and applying for Federal and State assistance.

In the fifteen years since the 1974 Plan, few of the recommendations have been followed. Although a youth sports program is using school facilities developed in the early 1980's, there are almost no non-athletic programs, few adult or older teen programs, no pre-teen programs, no family programs, no purchase of land or easements to the riverfront. Furthermore, the Town Beach is unusable and the skating rink lost.

The 1989 Survey produced these answers to questions concerning

recreation. Forty-six percent said Thomaston should acquire land for recreation. To what, if any, recreational facilities and programs should be developed over the next 10 years the results were: community center, 48%; skating rink, 47%; senior citizens activities and programs, 47%; playground with climbing and play equipment, 35%; waterfront activities, 28%; nature programs and sports programs for adults, both 22%; and none of the above, 8%. Municipal Recreation Programs were rated Excellent by 6% of responders, Good by 23%, Fair by 23% and Poor by 21%.

Under a question asking which is the most important failing, lack of recreation facilities and programs were mentioned often enough to rank after inadequate sewage, taxes, insufficient shopping facilities and traffic problems.

Comparing the responses of the 1974 and 1989 surveys, a general statement could be made that although the youth programs have improved in number and the school outdoor recreation facilities have expanded, there is still some distance to go to fulfill town recreation needs.

Among the recommendations that follow will be those for expanded and more comprehensive Town recreation programs and the development of facilities to accommodate these programs. Today more than 68% of women with children under 18 work; 50% of marriages end in divorce, and single parents of necessity are usually working parents. Children after school come home to empty houses or they hang around if there are no recreation facilities and/or programs available. If parents are home, they often have younger children and find it difficult to get their older children to these programs without taking along the baby, the sick child, or the pre-school child. The library can take in after-school children, but the library is not open every day and their programs, space and personnel are limited. Younger children can go to neighborhood daycare centers or sitters, but there is no place for the older child who does not fit into the schools' after school activities or into the athletic recreation program.

Recreation is not limited to athletics, vital as these may be. Recreation can mean safety programs, citizenship, volunteer service, historic preservation, the arts, the development of individual interests, adult education classes, learning about our environment through nature programs and, most important, giving families a chance to engage in an organized activity together.

Goals

State Goals

"To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services...

To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources,...

To protect the State's other critical natural resources, ...

To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters."

Local Goal

To enhance individual and family well-being, both physical and cultural, through provision of year-round, broad-based, comprehensive recreation programs for all age groups.

Policies

To expand the recreation program by establishing a Community Activities Committee.

To explore maximum use of Town owned properties and buildings for chosen programs.

To involve the Recreation Committee and other appropriate committees in the creation and promotion of both outdoor and indoor sports and cultural programs. Involve the Conservation Commission in the acquisition, layout, and design of programs that are natural resource oriented.

To be aware of opportunities to acquire land as needed for recreational activities and building sites (Selectmen, Recreation Committee and Conservation Commission to "screen" tax-acquired and other Town-owned land for suitability for recreational uses).

To continue the Fourth of July Celebration, known for years as one of the finest in the Mid-Coast area.

Implementation

Acquire land for recreational activities and access to water. (Conservation Commission, Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Expand the Recreation Program by appointing a "Community Activities Committee" which would coordinate with and complement the activities of the Recreation Committee (which is largely focused on team sports), the Watts Block Committee and other groups in town. It would be appropriate to appoint students to this committee. This committee would coordinate such activities as clearing cross country trails, small boat programs and trips, nature programs, art/music/theatre productions and trips to distant facilities, wildlife preserves, museums, shows, etc. (Selectmen, Recreation Committee, Community Activities Committee, Watts Block Committee) A.

Create an expanded Waterfront Program for all ages, including programs in water safety, navigation, small boat handling, marine biology and seashore habitats. (Harbor Committee, Community Activities Committee, Conservation Commission) B.

Re-establish a centrally located Community Skating Rink arranged for hockey and general use. An outdoor skating rink, using natural ice, is a very low cost item (water, hoses, help from the Fire Department) and a rink serves all ages - a true family facility. (Community Activities Committee, Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) B.

Construct a Playground Complex for Young Children, with picnic facilities. A playground similar to those in Rockland, Damariscotta and Yarmouth can be built through private community fundraising and the participation of adults in putting the complex together. Including picnic facilities would encourage the adult supervision that makes such a playground work well. (Community Activities Committee, Selectmen, Town Meeting) C.

Complete renovation of the Watts Block to allow it to serve as a Community Center. The renovation of the second floor of the building for community use will meet a long standing need. (Watts Block Committee) Ongoing.

Re-establish the Town swimming program. Explore new locations for

swimming. Thomaston had no swimming program in 1991. (Recreation Committee, Community Activities Committee, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Develop a hiking trail starting at Route One at the Mill River and continuing along the river where possible to the Wadsworth Street Bridge. The Town may receive gifts of land or easements where the trail would cross private property. Volunteer labor and private funding are anticipated for developing the trail. (Conservation Commission, Selectmen, Town Meeting) C.

Cooperate with the Town of Warren in acquisition and development of the former Rockland, Thomaston & Camden Street Railway right of way as a hiking and ski trail along the St. George River from Thomaston to Warren village. Footbridges would be required over the Oyster River and other smaller streams entering the St. George River within Warren. The land within Thomaston is all privately owned but is still open land. (Conservation Commission, Selectmen, Town Meeting) D.

Improve the Town-owned right of way along Dunbar Road for use as a hiking, bicycle or bridle trail. It is anticipated that much volunteer labor would be involved. Add a small parking area near the end of the paved section of the road. (Conservation Commission, Selectmen) C.

Continue Town financial support of the Fourth of July Committee. (Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

FISCAL CAPACITY

Introduction

Planning for Thomaston's future requires careful consideration of its fiscal capacity. Just as a family must operate within its budget, so must a town balance its income, largely derived from taxes and intergovernmental transfers (revenue sharing) against its expenditures. The fiscal capacity provides a measure of the ability of Thomaston to fund future municipal expenditures.

Revenues

Taxes constitute the largest portion of overall revenue, accounting for 84.4% of all revenues in 1989, the latest year for which there is a completed State audit. Intergovernmental revenues constituted 9.7% in 1989. Therefore, all other sources of revenues, including licenses and permits; charges for services; interest income and other revenues constituted 5.9% of total revenues. The 1988 revenues were similar, though intergovernmental revenues constituted 11.5% that year. Of the total taxes collected in 1989, \$1,911,577 (89.9%) were property taxes, with \$198,634 in motor vehicle excise taxes (9.4%). The remainder consisted of supplemental taxes, \$4,552; interest and penalties, \$9,697 and watercraft excise taxes, \$2,436.

In 1989, intergovernmental revenues included State revenue sharing, \$203,146 (83.3%) and the highway block grant, \$38,259 (15.7%). All other intergovernmental revenues to the general fund including tree growth tax, snowmobile refunds, veteran's tax exemptions amounted to 1.0%. Special revenue funds included \$20,206 in education tax relief and Federal revenue sharing of \$8,387.

Since property taxes, on real and personal property, constitute almost 90% of Thomaston's revenue, the assessment and collection of these taxes is of vital importance to the Town's fiscal health. Assessment is the responsibility of the Assessors, who are elected for staggered three year terms. They hire the Assessor's Agent. All properties are assessed in order to determine their "ad valorem" (to the value of) taxes. As real estate values have changed, the value of properties has changed. This requires periodic reevaluations in order to keep assessed

values in line with fair market prices. Thomaston's most recent complete revaluation was done in the mid 1970's. Ail land was revalued in 1989 and the cement plant was revalued in 1990. Property values have been adjusted quarterly to account for inflation. However, this procedure falls short of what is required by State law. Each property is required to be evaluated once every four years. This means, for developed properties, that an Assessor or Assessor's Agent actually inspects the property, inside and outside. Among other things, this procedure limits the amount of time improvements to a property, which may have been done without Building Permits (Permits are not required for non-structural work other than "major" improvements), would not be reflected in the value of that property.

The State also establishes a valuation for each municipality. The State valuations are comparable to the local valuations two years earlier, and reflect 100% valuations. The local taxes in any year are based on the local valuations (which are required by State law to be within 70% of the State valuation) then in effect. The local and State valuations for the municipal tax years indicated and the resulting tax rates are shown on Table 1.

Table I State and Local Valuations and Tax Rates, Thomaston

Year	Valuations		Tax Rates/\$1,000 valuation	
	State	Local	State	Local
1985	\$64,000,000	\$55,799,880	\$20.49	\$23.50
1986	\$69,500,000	\$64,763,500	\$19.10	\$20.50
1987	\$82,450,000	\$68,773,800	\$15.20	\$22.00
1988	\$99,550,000	\$71,281,700	\$15.75	\$22.00
1989	\$118,750,000	\$83,112,000	\$16.10	\$23.00

Source: Maine Bureau of Taxation

In the notes that are part of the 1989 State audit, the following concern is raised:

"The Town of Thomaston is dependent on the Dragon Products Company for tax revenues. At December 31, 1989, the total taxes paid and percentage of total taxes paid were as follows:

	Amount Paid	Percentage
Dragon Products Co.	\$464,823	24%"

This was written before the 1990 revaluation of the Dragon Products facility. In 1990, Dragon Products Co. properties, 1,041 acres plus all improvements, were valued at \$27,516,200, or 30% of Thomaston's valuation of \$91,760,000.

The local real estate and personal property tax commitment, the amount of money needed to be raised from property taxation to operate Town government, has increased from \$1,311,297 in 1985 to \$1,972,840 in 1990, an increase of \$661,543 (50.48%) over six years. Taxes uncollected at the end of a given tax year ranged from a low of 6.2% in 1987 to a high of 12.0% in 1989, with 7.3% in 1990. The computerized tax records and receipt printer have assisted in the collection of taxes, and substantial amounts of back taxes have been collected as of the first quarter of 1991.

Thomaston's Tax Exempt Properties had a value, in 1990, of \$18,300,900. Of these, the larger amounts include \$7,159,700 in State property (87 acres), \$6,882,000 by SAD 50 (46 acres), \$1,759,000 by the Town of Thomaston (208 acres), and \$1,510,400 (15 acres) by various churches. Veteran's Exemptions total \$576,000 with the remaining categories under \$500,000. Of Thomaston's land area of 6,880 acres, 371 acres are Tax Exempt (5.4%).

Federal Revenue Sharing for general purposes ended with the 1987 tax year. It had declined from \$104,353 in 1985, to \$85,240 in 1986 and finally \$22,822 in 1987. However, according to the 1989 State audit, \$8,387 was received that year from Federal revenue sharing for special revenue funds.

State Revenue Sharing, according to unaudited information from various Town Reports and other sources, has increased from \$125,365 in 1985 to \$235,576 in 1989, in increase of \$110,211 (87.9%) over the five years. However, a drop to \$203,187 was recorded in 1990.

Town records indicate the trend in Excise Taxes, particularly for motor vehicles, had been upward through 1989 but fell to \$189,583 in 1990; an apparent result of fewer new vehicles being purchased by Thomaston residents. Excise Taxes on boats, though a much smaller amount, continued to increase through 1990, reaching \$2,793.

Other Town revenues, though small in comparison to property taxes, include rental income from the Watts Block, decreased to \$8,751 in 1990

due to the conversion of some former rental space to Town Office space, and rent of the Academy Building, \$35,010 in 1990,

Expenditures

According to the State audit, expenditures in 1989 (\$2,522,075) exceeded revenues by \$1,903 (0.08%). However, the 1988 State audit recorded an excess of revenue over expenditures of \$87,407 (4.14%). Over the last five years, revenues and expenditures have been essentially equal, with Town Meeting votes to carry over some funds from year to year or to take from surplus to meet current expenditures without increasing that year's tax commitment.

Education was the largest single category of expenditures listed in the State audit, amounting to \$1,071,169 (42.5%) in 1989. The second largest expenditure was for public works, \$269,364 (10.7%). Three items, general government administration, buildings and employee benefits combined to total \$453,230 (18.0%) of 1989 expenditures. Fire protection cost \$148,450 (5.9%) and police protection cost \$156,075 (6.2%). The treatment plant operation cost \$141,151 (5.6%) in 1989. Capital improvements totaled \$14,370 (0.6%) in 1989.

Town Reports (unaudited) indicate an increase in school expenditures to SAD 50 from \$811,896 in 1985 to \$1,071,169 in 1989, an increase of \$259,273 (31.9%) over five years. Thomaston's share of the Knox County budget increased from \$67,980 in 1985 to \$124,252 in 1989, an increase of \$56,272 (82.8%) over five years. State funding formulas and mandates limit local control over most of the school spending and there has been no county-wide equivalent of a town budget committee reviewing Knox County's budgets, so there appears to be little that Thomaston residents can do to control these items of expenditure.

Fixed Assets

The Town has a variety of fixed assets, consisting mostly of equipment (as opposed to "consumables"), including such items as office calculators, pumps installed in the sewer system, ambulances, fire trucks, police cars and highway equipment. While not all of these assets are of sufficient value or last long enough to be considered in a capital improvement plan, major items should certainly be valued and their life cycles calculated so as to be able to plan for their timely replacement.

The Police and Public Works Departments completed inventories in late 1990. The Fire and Ambulance Departments are compiling inventories in 1991. The Pollution Control Department will have an inventory once the current program of upgrading and replacing sewers is completed in 1992. The Sexton has not done an inventory of the equipment associated with the operation and maintenance of the cemeteries.

Trust Funds

Thomaston has trust funds used for such municipal purposes as maintaining cemeteries and operating the public library. The library and cemetery accounts are now entered in the computerized bookkeeping system by the Town bookkeeper as recommended in the 1989 Auditors Report. Management of the funds is under the control of Boards of Trustees, performed by banks. However, the State Auditor, in his report on the year ending December 31, 1989, noted that the Thomaston Public Library trustees were not elected as required by Town Meeting on March 8, 1898. This has not yet been done.

Fund Balances

Fund balances, the amount of money left in the Town's accounts at the end of each fiscal year, have been slightly below \$1,000,000 in recent years. On December 31, 1989, the fund balance was \$972,333. This slightly exceeds three month's cash flow, which averages about \$300,000 per month. The existence of this "healthy" level of fund balances has enabled Thomaston to establish a line-of-credit for borrowing as needed, in lieu of larger Tax Anticipation Notes.

Long-Term Debt

The ability of a municipality to incur long-term debt is limited by the provisions of Title 30, Section 5061, MRSA, Chapter 241, Subsection 2, Article I-A, "Municipal Debt".. All limits are related to the most recent State Valuation, adjusted to 100%, as certified by the State Tax Assessor. For all debts, regardless of purpose, no town may incur more than 15% of its adjusted State Valuation. For school purposes, debt is limited to 10% of State Valuation; for storm and/or sanitary sewer, to 7.5% of Valuation; and other limits for specific purposes. As of December 31, 1989, the State audit indicated a total outstanding debt of \$96,000, consisting of the Academy Building and "Capital Improvement", having been reduced from \$260,000. Payments, including principal and interest, varied from

\$30,006 in 1990 to \$24,858 in 1993, when all long-term debt current at that time would be retired. Total interest owed on those debts was \$13,728. As of 1989, Thomaston had a debt limit of 15% of \$118,750,000 or \$17,812,500. In other words, the Town could have legally incurred \$17,716,500 in additional debt in 1989.

As stated in the 1989 State audit, Thomaston was also, "liable for its proportional share of any defaulted debt issued by entities of which it is a member." That liability included \$1,274,478 of SAD 50 bonded debt and \$12,240 of Knox County bonded debt. It should be understood that this liability for "Overlapping Debt" would only apply if SAD 50 and Knox County were to default on their bonds.

In 1989, Thomaston had expended \$52,000 for the Wadsworth Bridge Sewer Project, leaving a capital project fund deficit of \$35,647.

In general, Thomaston has chosen to pay for many major items of equipment through establishing reserve accounts into which money is placed each year, being drawn down when the purchase of the equipment is made. These accounts are interest bearing accounts which serve to reduce the cost of major borrowing in the future. As an example, warrant articles for Capital Improvement Reserve Accounts are shown below:

Table 2 Warrants for Capital Improvement Reserve Accounts

Item	Amount Recommended for Town Meeting			
	1988	1989	1990	1991
CIP-1 Police Cruiser	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
CIP-2 Ambulance	5,000	5,000	5,000	10,000
CIP-3 Fire Engine	10,000	15,000	15,000	20,000
CIP-4 Dump Truck	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
CIP-5 Sewer Eqpt.	15,000	5,000		
CIP-6 Backhoe	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>
Totals:	\$50,000	\$45,000	\$40,000	\$50,000

Source: Town Reports, 1987, 1988, 1989 and 1990.

Development Trends

Thomaston's population increased by 406 persons from 2,900 in 1980 to 3,306 in 1990, a 14.0% increase. There were 140 housing units added during the 1980's. In 1990, 14 new conventional homes and 6 mobile

homes were added to the tax rolls, for an increase in valuation of \$749,500. In 1990, Building Permits indicating a value of about \$2.7 million were issued for new construction, additions and improvements to Thomaston's residential, commercial and industrial properties. Some substantial improvements were made by Thomaston's waterfront businesses. However, the major increase in the tax base during this decade resulted from the 1990 \$7,200,000 increase in valuation of the Dragon Products Company cement plant, reflecting both its sale and the major capital improvements made to the plant during the recent past.

Recent capital improvements to various, public facilities in Thomaston, though not necessarily owned by the Town, include an addition to the Georges Valley High School (SAD 50) in 1988 and an addition begun in 1990 at the Lura Libby School which opened for the 1991-1992 school year. The Wadsworth Street Bridge, and its sewer line, were rebuilt during 1991 with a combination of Town and State funds. The Town is now replacing some of its combined sanitary/storm sewers and improving the Wastewater Treatment Plant, a project anticipated to be completed in October 1992 using Town and State funding. The former Thomaston Academy Building was rehabilitated, in part, with a \$150,000 bond issued in April 1988.

Summary

Thomaston's location, with the State Prison west of the business district and the cement plant to the east, along with the industries of Rockland within easy commuting distance, has made it an attractive place to live and work. However, due to the high level of services provided by the Town and the increases in the SAD 50 education budget, there has been a substantial increase in expenditures and revenues. While some of this potential burden on residential taxpayers has been offset by the major revaluation of the cement plant, this places the Town in the position of having a substantial part of its tax base dependent upon the economic health of one firm. Thomaston's "full value" tax rate is the second highest in the Mid-Coast area, after Rockland, which has seen declines in employment in the garment, leather and fishing industries during 1990 and 1991.

In 1990, the Town converted to a "Gross Budgeting" method of showing all projected revenues and expenditures. This is seen in the format of the 1990 Town Report, which, in the 1991 Budget Summary, shows sources of funds for each budget item as "Revenues", "Surplus",

"Excise Tax, Carried Balance" or Raised By Taxation, Thus, the sources of all money raised or appropriated are shown and can be better understood by the voters,

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN

Background

The purpose of a capital investment plan is to establish a procedure for the Town to follow in order to finance needed capital improvements. Capital improvements are distinguished from operating expenses by three criteria: cost, frequency of purchase and length of useful life. Capital improvements are relatively costly, usually having a cost of \$5,000 or more, per item. They usually don't need to be purchased annually. They usually have a service life of three years or more (in the case of purchase of land, the "service life" is indefinite) and they are physical assets.

Thomaston has an active Budget Committee. They normally meet twice weekly during January and February following presentation of the annual budget to the Selectmen by the Town Manager. The Committee usually makes recommendations on capital expenditures, as do the Selectmen. When they differ, the Selectmen and Committee may make separate recommendations on articles on the Town Meeting warrant.

Thomaston has limited its capital financing primarily to such items as fire trucks, the ambulance, police vehicles and public works equipment. This is paid for by a combination of setting aside reserve funds and voting the amount necessary at Town Meeting at the time of purchase, with the balance from general fund revenues, surplus, other funds or borrowing. The Town has also borrowed from time to time for building purchases or construction. The Thomaston Academy Building rehabilitation was paid for, in part, by a bond issued in 1985. At the March 1991 Town Meeting, a new reserve fund was established with \$5,000 for the Salt Shed. The procedure for deciding on capital improvements has been relatively informal as there is no Town Charter or ordinance describing the duties of the Budget Committee.

The procedure, as established through the capital investment plan, will result in a capital Improvement plan.

Thomaston's population growth (which may have recently slowed due to regional economic conditions) may eventually create added demands for community services and facilities. Some needs exist now. A continued reduction in Federal funding for domestic purposes seems likely. State funding is also facing austerity measures in response to declining tax

revenues. The Town may have to finance most of its capital improvements from its own tax base. However, having a capital investment plan and an on-going capital improvement plan in place may increase eligibility for any future State or Federal grants or assistance programs. It may also assist the Town in charging "impact fees" for improvements necessary to serve new subdivisions, since costs of some anticipated needs will have been estimated. Regardless of the source of the funding, having a capital improvement plan can accomplish needed improvements with smaller fluctuations in the tax rate, less borrowing cost, and fewer unanticipated major expenditures.

Capital Investment Plan

The capital investment plan is the procedure to be followed to create a capital improvement plan. The procedure is as follows:

1) A "department head", such as the Public Works Director, the Fire Chief, the Police Chief, the Ambulance Director, or the Superintendent of Pollution Control would make an estimate of the needed capital improvements or purchases for the coming budget year. Longer term, up to five year, estimates would also be made for on-going improvements (such as a long-term replacement program for culverts and repaving or rebuilding certain portions of Town roads and/or sidewalks) and anticipated major purchases (such as replacement of fire trucks, construction of a salt shed, purchase of a replacement ambulance, or extension of a sewer line). These estimates would be in addition to, and separate from, the normal operating expenses anticipated by each "department" for the coming budget year. Both the operating and capital improvements parts of these budgets would be submitted to the Selectmen.

Similarly, other groups such as the Watts Block Committee or the Harbor Committee would submit estimates for funding improvements (such as handicapped access to Watts Hall or a new boat launching ramp). If purchase of land for a Town park, or other public improvements not usually included in the departmental budgets are desired, the group(s) desiring such improvements would also submit estimates to the Selectmen. Estimates of any increases in, or savings anticipated from, operational budgets resulting from the proposed capital expenditures should also be submitted to the Selectmen, where available.

2) The Selectmen, after receiving all requests for any budget year,

would meet with department heads or spokespersons from other groups making the requests and with the Budget Committee.

3) The Budget Committee would analyze both the operating and capital improvement requests for the budget year and, to the extent possible, estimate capital expenditures in subsequent years - up to five years in the future. The Committee, or a subcommittee of the Budget Committee, would confer with department heads and spokespersons of any groups submitting capital improvement requests in order to achieve the best estimates of those costs, agree on priorities and schedules, etc.

4) The Budget Committee would make its recommendations to the Selectmen on both the on-going operating budgets presented to them and the capital improvements. Recommendations would include preferred methods of financing the capital improvements and their scheduling (the year such a purchase or expenditure would be made).

5) Once the Selectmen and Budget Committee have agreed on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), it would appear in the Town Report. The CIP would include the estimated amount of the expenditure, the methods of paying for the improvements and the schedule of both the purchases and the retirement of debt (if any), showing total annual (principal and interest) payments. The anticipated changes in operational budgets (such as savings on repairs by replacing a worn-out piece of equipment) should also be shown. (Capital improvements can be funded by annually setting aside reserve funds, from tax increases, from short-term borrowing, by issuing bonds, through grants or gifts, from income or principal of certain trust funds, from State or Federal funds, from private fund-raising or some combination of the above methods as voted at Town Meeting.)

6) Once in place, the CIP would be refined and updated annually, whether or not a capital expenditure was made each year. As purchase dates approach, more detailed cost estimates, perhaps involving engineering or other studies, would be made by the Town to better estimate final costs of scheduled capital improvements for presentation to Town Meeting.

Capital Improvement Plan

Some items in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will originate within the Comprehensive Plan. Others will arise from needs not now foreseen. Whatever their origin, they must be placed in priority rankings

in order to be assigned an implementation schedule. Priorities are generally assigned as follows:

1) Priority A - IMMEDIATE NEED. A capital improvement rated "A" would typically remedy a danger to public health and safety. This priority may include replacement of capital equipment damaged in service or repair of damage to existing public facilities (more extensive than that allowed for in the operating budget). Borrowing would probably be necessary for some Priority "A" items.

2) Priority B - NECESSARY WITHIN THREE YEARS. A capital improvement rated "B" would typically correct (or reduce) a deficiency in an existing facility or service. A combination of reserve funds and borrowing, perhaps with appropriation of taxes in the year of purchase, could be used to pay for such improvements.

3) Priority C - FUTURE IMPROVEMENT (4-6 years). A capital improvement rated "C" would be desirable, but funding and scheduling would be flexible. There would be no immediate problem associated with such an improvement. Such improvements could, typically, be at least partially funded from reserve funds placed in interest-bearing accounts until the purchase date.

4) Priority D - DESIRABLE (more than 6 years in the future, eventually). A capital improvement rated "D" would be desirable, but its timing would be subject to delay due to more urgent needs. Reserve funds may be useful as part of the financing of Priority "D" improvements.

Priority "A" improvements would typically be made before Priority "B" improvements, which would typically be made before Priority "C" improvements. However, lower priority items may be funded ahead of schedule if higher priority items have already been funded or are prohibitively expensive at that time, or if funding or other resources (such as donated property or equipment) became available. While the hoped for improvements in Priority "D" may have only a remote chance of being implemented, they should be kept on the list in the event that funds become available at some future date. In any case, regardless of the priorities assigned or the funding sources obtained, each item will have to be voted on at Town Meeting in order to commit the Town to appropriate funds for reserve accounts or to purchase any capital improvement.

Recurring Non-Capital Expenditures

Some recurring non-capital expenditures are mentioned, or implied as results of actions recommended in the Comprehensive Plan. These would include maintenance of Town buildings, roads and facilities such as the Town Landing and the Mall. Replacement of road signs, updating of parcel maps on an annual basis, amendment of various ordinances and many other items would be placed in the operational budgets of the Fire Department, Code Enforcement Officer, Planning Board, Assessor's Agent, etc. These expenses would be considered by the Budget Committee and Selectmen as they prepare the annual budget for Town Meeting.

Initial Capital Improvement Schedule

For example, using the above Priority Ratings, one item would be given Priority "A". This means that the expenditure would be made next year. This would be purchase of a backhoe for the Public Works Department to replace one which is requiring major repairs just to keep it operating. As there is a reserve fund established, it is anticipated that the entire cost would be covered by the reserve fund.

Priority "B" would be for expenditures to be made in the following three years, 1993-1995. The items suggested for this Priority are purchase of police cruisers (1993 and 1995), recommended to be paid for from the reserve fund; a truck for public works (1994), recommended to be paid for from the reserve fund; sidewalk improvements (1993, 1994), recommended to be paid for from a reserve fund and borrowing; and purchase of a fire truck (1995), recommended to be paid for from the reserve fund and borrowing.

Priority "C", for expenditures to be made in four to six years, 1996-1998, would include a Salt Shed and an addition to the Public Works Garage (1996), recommended to be paid for from reserve funds and Revenue Sharing (If Priority 5 sand/salt sheds are funded by the Legislature, Thomaston is eligible for 43% reimbursement of its costs, assuming the plans are submitted to the Maine Department of Transportation by January 1993 and are approved by them. Construction would have to start by 1996.) The addition to the Public Works Garage, recommended to be constructed at the same time as the Salt Shed (perhaps to be in the same structure) to save money, would be paid for from the recommended reserve fund. A police cruiser and new Town Landing (1997) could be paid for from reserve funds and borrowing. Ambulance

replacement and possible purchase of recreation/park land (1998), would be paid for from reserve funds. The reserve funds referred to above have not necessarily been established, and are suggested to spread out the payments and reduce interest payments (the expenditure dates would determine how much was to be appropriated or borrowed and how much would be taken from the accumulated reserve funds). It is recommended that new reserve accounts be started and that existing reserve funds be continued, as shown on Table 2.

The voters would, of course, have the ability at any Annual Town Meeting to agree to spend funds accumulated in these reserve accounts for their intended purposes, or to hold the accounts at whatever level they choose.

It should be understood that the estimates in the following tables do not commit the Town to the level of expenditures shown (The Town is already committed to paying off the Academy Bond). No detailed estimates have been obtained. The costs are intended to provide a realistic illustration of how a Capital Improvement Plan can work.

Table 1 Possible Capital Expenditures (In \$Thousands)

Item	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	Thomaston
Academy Building (Bond issued 1986)								
Salt Shed				-	-	75		-
Public Works Garage Addition*			-	-	-	50		-
Fire Truck Replacement				-	200	-		-
Ambulance Replacement				-	-	-		75
Police Cruiser			15	-	15		15	-
Public Works Truck				-	35	-		-
Public Works Backhoe	32						
Sidewalk Improvements*			10	10	-			-
Waterfront Land*			-	-	-		100	-
Recreation/Park Land*			-	-	-			75
Annual Total Expenditures	32		25	45	45	215	125	115
								150

* = Recommendation of Comprehensive Plan Committee

Table 2 Possible Capital Payment Schedule (In \$Thousands)

Item	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Thomaston Academy Building	26.6	24.9				
Salt Shed Reserve Fund	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Public Works Garage Addition* S	5	5	5	5	5	6	5
Fire Truck Reserve Fund	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
Ambulance Replacement Fund	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Police Cruiser Replacement	5	10	5	10	5	10	5
Public Works Truck Reserve	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Public Works Backhoe Reserve	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Sidewalk Reserve Fund*	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Waterfront Land Reserve Fund*	-	20	20	20	20	20	20
Recreation/Park Land Reserve*	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Annual Totals Appropriated	111.6	114.9	105	110	105	110	105

* = Recommendation of Comprehensive Plan Committee

While neither table shows completely "level" funding, in terms of amounts to be expended and appropriated, the use of reserve funds and borrowing makes the annual totals in Table 2 substantially more even than the totals of expenditures in Table 1.

As the above tables illustrate, by spreading out the funding of capital improvements, they affect the tax rate less than if they were paid for out of one year's property taxes. Using Thomaston's local 1990 valuation of about \$92,000,000, each \$1.00 on the tax rate (per \$1,000 valuation) raises \$92,000. If no increase in assessed valuation is assumed, the amounts per \$1,000 of assessed valuation devoted to capital expenditures (as shown in Table 2) would be approximately \$1.21 in 1992, \$1.25 in 1993, \$1.14 in 1994, \$1.20 in 1995, \$1.14 in 1996, \$1.20 in 1997 and \$1.14 in 1998. About \$83,300 or \$.91/\$1,000 valuation was voted for capital expenditures in 1991.

Looked at another way, at Thomaston's 1990 tax rate of \$21.62/\$1,000 assessed valuation, a \$100,000 property (house and land, for example) would generate \$2,162 in taxes. It would take an increase in assessed valuation of \$1,308,973 to generate the increase of \$28,300 above the 1991 level of \$83,300 to meet Table 2's 1992 appropriation of \$111,600 from tax revenues ($\$1,308 \times \$21.62 = \$28,300$) with no tax rate increase.

During 1990, residential construction added \$749,500 to Thomaston's valuation and commercial buildings accounted for an additional \$510,900, for a total from these improvements of \$1,260,400. Revaluation of the cement plant added \$7,200,000 to the Town's valuation, for an overall increase of \$8,460,400. If the 1991 construction rate approaches that of 1990, the increase in valuation could be anticipated to cover most of the cost of the proposed 1992 increases in capital expenditures with no increase in the tax rate.

Summary

a capital improvement process or plan, once established, provides a means of anticipating future funding requirements to meet public needs. By involving the Town Manager, Selectmen, Department Heads and the Budget Committee in the process, the capital portion of each annual budget can be considered along with the operating expenditures. Similarly, because estimates are updated annually, including known obligations for any capital projects paid for either partly or wholly with bonds or short-term loans, the system is "self-correcting".

At each Town Meeting, the voters can decide whether to vote to spend the proposed amounts or to delay spending until economic conditions are more favorable. By including tables, as shown above, in the Town Report, each voter can see what Town capital obligations are anticipated for the next six years and be better informed when voting at Town Meeting.

Goals

State Goal

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

To plan ahead for financing major capital improvements or equipment purchases consistent with Thomaston's long range goals and needs.

To anticipate the need for replacing capital equipment.

To assess the Town's ability to pay for capital expenditures.

To avoid major increases in property taxes and reduce the amounts of borrowing in the years when capital expenditures are made.

To support Thomaston's anticipated development.

Policy

To institute a more formal and consistent Capital Improvement Plan and Process to assist the town in meeting its future capital needs.

Implementation

Adopt the above outlined Capital Investment Plan procedure, leading to an on-going Capital Improvement Plan. (Selectmen, Budget Committee) A.

Adopt the above Priority Rating System, to be used in the Capital Improvement Plan. (Selectmen, Budget Committee) A.

LAND USE INVENTORY

Background

Thomaston contains 7,247 acres or 11.32 square miles. Of this total, approximately 5,402 acres are zoned residential, 130 acres commercial, 900 acres industrial and 180 acres of roads. The remainder includes waterways, Resource Protection Districts and the railroad.

The earliest land use pattern dating back to the late 1700's and early 1800's was "along a path having the shape of an inverted U". By the 1820's the town was well established, having extended across the Mill River and along High Street. Limestone quarrying (and its attendant lime burning) and ship building were the basis for the early economy and remain vital parts of it. As the town expanded it spread out along Main Street, Old County Road, up Beechwood Street and across the St. George River toward Cushing.

Resource Protection

This category of land use, including mostly wooded land in a relatively undisturbed environment, is found today mostly in the Resource Protection Districts of the town. The amount of land in Resource Protection is difficult to determine, but with three rivers surrounding the residential areas of Thomaston, Resource Protection is a very important land use for the town. The Mill River, Branch Brook, Meadow Brook, Marsh Brook and part of the St. George River are presently included in the Resource Protection District. It is anticipated that revisions to the Shoreland Zoning will include much of the remaining shore land of the St. George River, except the Shoreland Commercial Districts, all of the Oyster River, and freshwater wetlands of 10 acres or more. Development on wetlands in the Booker Street area has already caused flooding problems "downstream". Resource Protection areas are discussed in more detail in the Natural Resources section of the Plan.

Residential

Residential land uses in Thomaston occur in three patterns. First is the more densely developed original "U" that has expanded across Route One and about a mile up Beechwood Street and other side streets. This is

the compact "urban" area of town consisting of about 880 acres. It is the area of highest population density with a minimum requirement of 10,000 square feet per dwelling unit. This high density area is served by public water and sewers. Although single-family residences prevail, this area includes about 62 multi-family residences and six subsidized apartment buildings along with schools, Public Library, college, cemeteries, Historic District and the Maine State Prison.

Second is the "strip" residential pattern along upper Beechwood Street, West Main Street, Cushing Road, Old County Road, West Meadow Road, High Street and Thomaston Street. The lack of sewer and water lines and lack of access to back lots has influenced this type of land use. Many of these are mobile homes along upper Beechwood Street, where the greatest increase in development has taken place in recent years.

Seven subdivisions make up the third pattern of residential development. All but one are located in rural areas and vary in size and extent of development. The largest consists of about 50 homes and 5 undeveloped lots.

There are a few residential uses in the Commercial District, apartments above the stores on Main Street and in the renovated Knox Hotel, two residences in the Shoreland Commercial District and a number of homes on Pleasant Street in the Commercial and Industrial Districts.

The major residential land use changes in the past ten years have been the conversion of large, old homes into apartments; the addition of small apartment buildings and the increase in "strip" residential development.

A little over 4,000 acres of undeveloped land remains in residential districts. This includes parcels of five acres or more. Most of this land lies north of the urban area of town along Beechwood Street west to the Oyster River and east to Old County Road. All of this area is unscrewed and, except for the water line out West Main Street, is not likely to receive these utilities in the near future. Within the Urban Residential District there are approximately 100 acres of vacant land for potential development and this acreage could accommodate anticipated growth needs for the next ten years if land becomes available for sale. Its higher density of one dwelling unit per 10,000 square feet and its allowance for conversion of existing single-family residences to apartments should encourage compatible development.

Commercial

Thomaston's commercial land uses are concentrated in three areas: the waterfront, the small retail shops on Main Street and the highway strip on Route One east of the main business district. Waterfront businesses are primarily boat shops and other marine-oriented activities. The seven boatshops and two marinas carry on a long Thomaston tradition. A restaurant, convenience store, two homes and the wastewater treatment plant are the only non-marine-oriented land uses. This Shoreland Commercial area consists of only 25 acres with very little land available for expansion. However, this is not a major concern of the Harbor Committee.

The shops and businesses located on Main Street are easily accessible to the pedestrian and by car. This two block area contains a grocery store, banks, hardware store, drug store, book stores, restaurant and other small businesses. Although some of these stores and businesses have changed ownership's and uses in the last ten years, the area and variety of businesses has remained essentially the same. Present needs seem to be met but there is limited land for expansion. Renovation of existing buildings could provide some additional space.

Highway commercial land use is located on both sides of Route One east of the center of town, separated from it by the Mill River and the cement plant and its quarries. Uses in this area are primarily automobile sales and related businesses. The demand for commercial land has been greater than for industrial land and, consequently, the commercial uses have expanded into the Industrial District south of Route One. The 1974 Plan points out that, "all activities fronting Rt. 1 have their own individual drives connecting directly with the highway. This situation is undesirable and potentially hazardous." This situation still exists and, to add to the problem, many businesses have no designated driveways. This makes it difficult for drivers on the highway to know where to expect vehicles to enter the road, The 84 acres available for additional commercial uses should be sufficient for foreseeable needs.

Home Occupations

In addition to those established commercial areas, home occupations are scattered throughout the town. Some of the locations are obvious but many are not and, with an increasingly computerized society, these activities will, no doubt, increase. They are an accepted part of the town's

economy and especially so in a town with limited space for small businesses. However, the Town should insure that home occupations, in both size and type, do not detract from the residential neighborhoods in which they are located.

Industrial

Industrial uses are concentrated east of the center of town on both sides of Route One and are dominated by the cement plant and its quarries. The plant occupies about 723 acres within the Industrial area. Dragon Products also owns 212 acres in residential areas and 1.5 acres in a commercial zone. It will continue buying up adjoining properties as they become available, as the Plant Manager explained, to increase the plant's distance from developed residential areas and thus reduce the number of complaints when blasting occurs. The older quarries were generally long, narrow and very deep. The current quarry north of Route One is enormous and will continue to expand in a northeasterly direction. At one time, waste rock removed by the operation was piled high and as a result "Dragon Mountain" still exists on Old County Road. At present, the aggregate is processed and sold for other uses. Consequently, no means exist for filling the quarries. Berms and fencing have been installed and screen plantings of evergreen trees have been planted around the current operations. Other smaller uses are located in the industrial area and, hopefully, with not only a major highway available but also a reactivated railroad, this area will attract more industry. About 50 acres remain for future development.

Institutional

The total amount of land used for Federal, State and municipal facilities is about 150 acres. Except for the Town Landing, Transfer Station and two State agencies, all of these facilities: Post Office, Town Office, Police Station, Fire Station, Ambulance Building, Watts Block, Academy, Cemetery and State Prison are located in the center of town. Of this 150 acres, the Prison occupies about 26 acres and the three schools with their playing fields about 47 acres. Keeping these various public facilities in the center of town along with the small shops is important for the town's identity and vitality.

Resource Production

The cement plant is the only resource production land use that

significantly affects Thomaston's and the region's economy. Until recently, forested land out Beechwood Street was being harvested by a forest products company but it is no longer in operation. Agricultural land in Thomaston includes three farms totaling about 200 acres and smaller separate parcels. They are located on Thomaston Street, West Meadow Road and Cushing Road. Although this farmland is important to the town's rural environment, it does not significantly affect the town's or region's economy. Although not a land use, the estuary of the St. George River remains an important source of shellfish and adds significantly to the region's soft-shell clam supply.

Open Space/Recreation

Much of Thomaston's present charm and attractiveness results from the fact that from many locations in town, open space, whether fields, the St. George River, distant views or woodlands, is visible. These open spaces include about 590 acres registered under the Farm and Open Space and Tree Growth Tax Programs.

The Town owns very little land suitable for recreation. The 1974 Plan refers to nine wood lots held by the Town totaling nearly 190 acres,

which can provide a wide variety of outdoor recreational opportunities "Unfortunately, this land is no longer available. A very small area on the harbor served as a Town Beach in past years but sand had to be imported to make it usable. In recent years, because of polluted water, little use has been made of the beach. The Town also owns a few landlocked parcels which, even if accessible, would not be appropriate for outdoor activities, and a narrow strip of land including the old dump along the Mill River. Most publicly owned land is on the SAD 50 school campus.

Planning Implications

The results of the Community Survey should be a guiding factor in making land use decisions. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents to the survey (50% of all Thomaston adult residents) chose "small town atmosphere" as their answer to the question, "What do you like about living in Thomaston?" Another major concern regarding land use facing Thomaston is the lack of publicly owned land whether it be shore land allowing more access to the water, parkland along rivers, or land for various recreational uses. These lands will eventually be developed and the Town needs to decide whether or not it wishes to acquire any of these open spaces while they still exist. It has been 17 years since the 1974

Comprehensive Plan recommended that the Town, "consider obtaining ownership to or easements on undeveloped property fronting on St. George and Oyster Rivers to allow the natural setting to be enjoyed by the public for picnicking and trail hiking."

In order to preserve its rural, small town atmosphere and its natural resources, conservation of significant amounts of open space will be needed. Revisions of land use ordinances should balance the need to conserve open space with the need for responsible residential and other development. Also, it should be remembered that land that remains undeveloped saves townspeople tax dollars by requiring fewer services than land that is residentially developed. Costs to a town of paying for the additional educational burden, disposing of solid waste, additional fire and police services and road maintenance are not always met by additional property tax revenues.

Two additional issues are the continued strip residential development resulting from lack of access to back lots and its effect on the desire expressed in the Community Survey to retain Thomaston's small town atmosphere and the possibility of strip commercial development along Route One west of the town center and its possible effects on traffic congestion.

The cement plant's continued acquisition of land and expansion of its operations along with the realization that the time will eventually come when the plant will close and the Town may acquire about 1,000 acres of undevelopable land are all causes for considerable apprehension.

The Town also needs to consider solutions to the problems caused by construction on unsuitable soils, filling of "minor" wetlands and the resultant flooding "downstream".

FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Map is a graphic representation of where growth should occur and where it should be limited. It is not a zoning map. Thomaston has had reasonably successful town-wide zoning for many years, and therefore, no drastic changes to the zoning ordinance are being recommended.

This accompanying narrative gives the rationale for the proposed changes and describes the character of development to be Included in each district. It is intended to guide the Land Use Ordinance Committee, which is to be appointed by the Selectmen to prepare the recommended amendments for action by Town Meeting. It is anticipated that the Land Use Ordinance Committee would be closely coordinated with the Planning Board.

The designation of these districts has been guided by the following concerns:

the need to protect the town's natural resources and open spaces; a desire to retain a small town, rural atmosphere; a realization that future extensions of the sewer system may be limited; a recognition that uncontrolled development is often the most expensive form of development in terms of public cost and a desire to promote affordable housing.

Maine's Growth Management Act requires that municipalities designate growth and rural areas. Rural areas, as defined by the State, are:

... large areas of contiguous open space, farmland, or forestland...; areas [where] the level and type of development will be compatible with the maintenance of rural character and will not constitute or encourage development sprawl or strip development; areas containing natural resources and scenic open spaces that are Intended to be protected."

Growth areas are defined as:

"areas within which public facilities and services are efficiently provided or can be efficiently provided...; areas.., that are physically suitable for development...; enough land area suitable for development to accommodate all growth

and development planned to occur during the planning period... [but] should encourage compact, efficient development and discourage development sprawl and strip developments."

Rural Areas

Using the above definition, rural areas in Thomaston should include all Resource Protection Districts and rural residential areas including the scenic and open spaces within them. The purpose of a Resource Protection District, as stated in Thomaston's Land Use and Development Ordinance, is, "To further the maintenance of safe and healthful conditions; prevent and control water pollution; protect spawning grounds of fish, aquatic life, bird and wildlife habitat; [control building sites, placement of structures and land uses]; and conserve shore cover, visual as well as actual points of access to inland and coastal wetlands and natural beauty."

The Resource Protection District is being expanded as recommended in the Natural Resources section to give additional protection to waterbodies and wetlands. For the same reason, a less restrictive Shoreland District around some of the wetlands and increased building setbacks along small streams and drainageways are being recommended. No development would be allowed in the Resource Protection Districts. These additional safeguards are important not only for the purposes given above but also to prevent additional downstream flooding which has become a considerable problem in recent years.

The intent of Thomaston's rural residential districts as stated in the preface in the Land Use and Development Ordinance (Amended 1987) has always been, "to protect this natural rural quality from development sprawl by prescribing the most appropriate uses and standards." This is also the intent of this Comprehensive Plan and its recommendations.

Rural Residential Districts

These districts extend a greater distance from the town's center than the other residential areas and provide a "greenbelt" around most of the town. Many open fields are found here, with two farms in the (R-1) District and one in the (R-2) District. Although these farmlands are not essential to the local economy and for that reason are not more strictly protected, they do contribute greatly to the environment and to the human need for open space. Their continued existence is to be strongly encouraged. Open space is also provided by other parcels registered under

the Farm and Open Space Tax Program.

Route One's entrance into Thomaston over the St. George River provides an outstanding scenic approach. It is important to preserve this scenic gateway into town. Route One in Warren is becoming more commercialized and if this area of Route One in Thomaston were to allow strip commercial or dense residential development the visual separation of Thomaston from Warren would become as blurred as that of Thomaston from Rockland. A traveler's perception of Thomaston would begin with the Prison and end with Montpelier. Distinct green borders and rural countryside are as important to the town's identity as the sea captains' homes. Summertime traffic congestion is also becoming a problem for this area and would only increase if additional businesses and service establishments are allowed. Conditional uses should be reviewed to be certain they are compatible with rural residential areas.

To further enhance the rural atmosphere, clustered/open space residential subdivisions are strongly recommended. By reducing minimum lot sizes to 30,000 square feet, the same number of houses can be accommodated on a typical parcel of land as would result if the land were fully developed with 40,000 square foot lots, the current minimum size for unscrewed lots in (R-1) and (R-2). However, the clustered/open space subdivisions will retain 25% of the land in permanent open space.

Reserve funds for land acquisition have been recommended for future purchase of public open space, both inland and shoreline. A smallcraft launching ramp has been constructed near the new Route One bridge over the St. George River to gain improved access to the river.

Growth Areas

Thomaston's Growth Areas will include two residential districts, three commercial districts and one industrial district. The existing Urban Residential District (R-3) will remain generally the same except for the addition of the sewered area of High Street and Old County Road, outer Pleasant Street and a few parcels added at the other terminal points of the sewer lines. A traditional grid pattern of development will be encouraged and setbacks for houses reduced so that new development will fit in with the predominantly traditional design of this area. This area is served by public water and a sewer system that is presently being updated. Stricter adherence to parking standards should lessen the impact of automobiles on residential neighborhoods.

The proposed residential growth district, Transitional Residential (TR-3) District, will extend (exact boundaries will be established by the Land Use Ordinance Committee) approximately one mile along Beechwood Street beyond the northern boundary of the existing Urban Residential (R-3) District. At this point on Beechwood Street it will extend east almost to Mill River and west to a western boundary that will approximate an extension of Shibles Lane.

Although anticipated housing needs for the next ten years can be accommodated in the present Urban Residential, District, residential development in the last ten years has been primarily out Beechwood Street. This new district is being established in order to concentrate development closer to the more compact areas of town and to preserve upper Beechwood Street as a more rural area. If utilities are extended, sewer and water lines to the proposed (TR-3) District should be given priority. Services such as police, fire, public works and school buses will be easily accessible and less costly than in more rural areas of the town. Uses would be the same as those in the (R-3) District. Minimum lot size is proposed as one dwelling unit per 20,000 square feet, being reduced to 10,000 square feet if sewer and water are available, as in the present (R-3) District. Other changes are recommended, such as reduced setbacks for buildings not on a main road such as Beechwood Street and reduced road widths in subdivisions (to more closely match the existing built up area of Thomaston). To extend the grid pattern of development and to open up this growth area, provision should be made for a street extending west from Beechwood and connecting with an extension of Booker Street.

Although the harbor was zoned as a separate district in 1987, it remains an integral and vital part of the compact area of Thomaston. Water dependent and marine-oriented uses have always predominated in this area and the Shoreland Commercial District was established to ensure it would remain so. Visual and physical access to the harbor is important. The 1987 ordinance remedied this concern in part, but additional visual access can be achieved by lower density standards and physical access only by Town acquisition of waterfront property. A small parcel just south of Route One near the new bridge is being recommended for inclusion In this district.

The existing Commercial District is recommended to be amended to separate the Main Street shops and business uses from those of the primarily highway commercial district east of the cement plant. The present allowable uses of small businesses, municipal buildings, social

organizations, churches, Post Office and apartments should be retained in the new district. The area consists of approximately two blocks on either side of Main Street and is surrounded by the urban residential district. It is part of Thomaston's Historic District with architecture that is, on the whole, compatible with the earlier homes of that area. Any new or renovated buildings should continue the pattern of architecture. There is limited space for growth though some does exist if buildings are renovated. If pressures for growth occur in the future, the possibility of a row of small shops "outback" of the business block should be considered.

Highway commercial uses have increased faster than industrial uses and, therefore, an additional highway commercial area needs to be added across from the existing district on Route One at the eastern end of town. This area is presently zoned Industrial. It should be approximately the same size as the present Commercial District. Uses and densities would be the same as the present Commercial District with emphasis on highway oriented businesses. Changes in landscaping requirements will be necessary to improve the appearance of commercial development and to provide for safer entrance and egress to parking areas. In excess of 30 undeveloped acres are currently available in this proposed district.

Few changes have been recommended for the Industrial District. However, if the town wishes to encourage additional development of the industrial area, it may be necessary to utilize established mechanisms to assist developers with utility extensions. Densities should remain the same but a "change of use" category should be added to the land use and site plan review ordinances to permit Planning Board review of proposed changes in use. A portion of this district now used largely by highway oriented commercial activities has been proposed for inclusion in the new Highway Commercial District. Similarly, an area south of the railroad, but too high to be directly served by the railroad, and already used for non-industrial purposes, has been proposed for inclusion in the Rural Residential and Farming District (R- 1).

Goals

State Goal

"To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl" etc.

Local Goals

To achieve a pattern of land use that retains Thomaston's small town character and protects its rural surroundings from over development.

To prevent commercial and residential development sprawl.

Policies

To protect and encourage the traditional residential and historic character of the town.

To encourage affordable housing for all residents of the town.

To increase safety and lessen traffic congestion in residential and commercial areas.

Implementation:

It is recommended that a Land Use Ordinance Committee appointed by the Selectmen will have the primary responsibility for writing new ordinances or revising existing ordinances based on the following recommendations and for preparing proposals concerning other recommendations listed below. This is not a complete list of all possible recommendations. The Land Use Ordinance Committee is free to make further additions and changes that are consistent with this Comprehensive Plan. These ordinances and amendments will be voted on at Town Meeting.

The present zoning map is vague and inaccurate. The Land Use Ordinance Committee must prepare an official zoning map to be signed by the Town Clerk. This new zoning map and its district requirements should reflect the Future Land Use Map and its land use classifications. The Future Land Use Map gives only the general boundaries. It is up to the Land Use Ordinance Committee to decide specific boundaries, the names of zoning districts, and uses and space standards that are consistent with the ideas expressed by this Future Land Use Map and its land use classifications.

It is recommended that all the proposed amendments to the Land Use and Development Ordinance, to the Subdivision Ordinance and to the Site Plan Review Ordinance be prepared by the Land Use Ordinance Committee for presentation to the voters at a Town Meeting within one year of the

adoption of this Comprehensive Plan. in summary, these would be shown as follows:

Land Use and Development Ordinance Amendments (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Subdivision Ordinance Amendments (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Site Plan Review Ordinance (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Shoreland Zoning Provisions

Resource Protection District (RPD)

Update and amend the RPD in accordance with the current State Shoreland Zoning *Guidelines*, including new districts and requirements. The following areas should be added to this district: St. George River, Oyster River, flood plains, slopes of 20% or steeper, wetlands and some upland surrounding wetlands, and intermittent streams as shown on the Water Resources Map.

Review and revise as necessary the General Standards of Performance as they relate to the RPD.

Shoreland Commercial District (SCD)

Amend the Shoreland Commercial provisions of the Land Use and Development Ordinance, if necessary, in accordance with the State Shoreland Zoning *Guidelines*.

Place all commercial land uses in the Commercial District on Route One at the St. George River in the Shoreland Commercial District.

Review the land uses and densities for compatibility with marine related/water dependent businesses and with visual access to the harbor and river and amend the ordinance in accordance with the implementation actions proposed in the Marine Resources section of this Plan.

Town-wide Zoning Provisions

Rural Residential And Farming District (R-1)

Lot Size. The density will be one dwelling unit per net residential acre, with a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet. Open space/ clustered subdivisions will allow a minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet.

For subdivisions over six acres, applicants will be required to submit a plan for an open space/clustered design and may Submit one for a traditional design. The Planning Board will decide, based on criteria to be a part of the Subdivision Ordinance, which design best fits the land to be developed. Dwelling units in the open space/clustered subdivision design shall be placed on individual lots sized as indicated above. The area of permanent open space, farmland or woodland not included in individual building lots shall be at least 25% of the total subdivision area. Within the open space, an area equal to at least 10% of the combined area of the building lots shall be suitable for active recreational use. The requirements for open space will also apply to a traditional subdivision design in the R-1 District.

Lots in the open space/clustered and traditional subdivisions shall be laid out, to the greatest extent feasible, to achieve the following objectives:

The most suitable soils shall be used for septic systems and their leach fields.

Houses shall be placed on the least suitable soils for agriculture.

Buildings shall be placed in a manner which enhances the usability of the remaining land.

Buildings shall be placed near the edges of fields, adjacent to woodland.

Buildings shall be placed in locations least likely to block scenic views as seen from public roads.

Land reserved for open space shall be contiguous.

To enhance the rural environment, retention of a vegetative buffer should be encouraged where it already exists. All driveways from lots in subdivisions shall exit onto the subdivision roads.

Require the developer of a subdivision in excess of 20 acres in this District to submit an environmental impact statement to be reviewed by

the Knox-Lincoln County Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

District land uses and performance standards should be carefully reviewed keeping in mind the goal of promoting a rural atmosphere. Commercial uses and other incompatible uses should not be permitted in this district.

Relocate the southern boundary of the R-t District on Beechwood Street as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

The railroad right of way is recommended to be the northern boundary of the R- 1 area on Thomaston Street.

Rural District (R-2)

Retain the density requirement of one unit per net residential acre and the minimum lot area of 40,000 square feet since this district is to remain unscrewed and rural. For the same reason, eliminate the requirements for sewerred lots. Open space/ clustered subdivisions will allow a minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet.

For subdivisions over six acres, applicants will be required to submit a plan for an open space/clustered design and may submit one for a traditional design. The Planning Board will decide, based on criteria to be a part of the Subdivision Ordinance, which design best fits the land to be developed. Dwelling units in the open space/clustered subdivision design shall be placed on individual lots sized as indicated above. The area of permanent open space, farmland or woodland not included in individual building lots shall be at least 25% of the total subdivision area. Within the open space, an area equal to at least 10% of the combined area of the building lots shall be suitable for active recreational use. The requirements for open space will also apply to a traditional subdivision design in the R-2 District.

Lots in the open space/clustered and traditional subdivisions shall be laid out, to the greatest extent feasible, to achieve the following objectives:

The most suitable soils shall be used for septic systems and their leach fields.

Houses shall be placed on the least suitable soils for agriculture.

Buildings shall be placed in a manner which enhances the usability of the remaining land.

Buildings shall be placed near the edges of fields, adjacent to woodland.

Buildings shall be placed in locations least likely to block scenic views as seen from public roads.

Land reserved for open space shall be contiguous.

Require the developer of a subdivision in excess of 20 acres in this District to submit an environmental impact statement to be reviewed by the Knox-Lincoln County Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

Review and revise district land uses and Performance Standards.

Place remaining land in the Commercial District on Route One at the St. George River, including all non-commercial land uses, in Residential 2.

The building setback along Route One from the St. George River to Route 131 (north) should remain at 60 feet (from the centerline of the road). A vegetative buffer should be retained where it already exists and should be encouraged to be planted under the Site Plan Review Ordinance when a change of use occurs. All driveways from lots in subdivisions shall exit onto the subdivision roads.

Urban Residential District (R-3)

The space standards should remain as set forth in the current Land Use and Development Ordinance. Review land uses to accommodate any appropriate changes. Include nursing homes, congregate housing, schools and hospitals.

Revise the District boundary lines to include parcels at the terminal points of the sewer lines that can be served by the sewer system.

Review and revise the Performance Standards to include any measures that would protect the traditional residential character and Historic District while encouraging greater residential growth. The front building setback of new construction should be compatible with existing nearby buildings. For this reason, the minimum setback should be reduced from 60 feet to 40 feet. A traditional grid type of development pattern should be encouraged.

For safety reasons and to encourage a pedestrian environment,

sidewalks should be extended within R-3 out Beechwood Street, down Wadsworth Street and across the south side of Water Street to connect with the sidewalk on Knox Street.

Transitional Residential District (TR-3) (proposed new district)

A transitional growth district, TR-3, is to be established in the area north of the existing R-3 District, as shown on the Future Land Use Map. This new district should be included in the Land Use and Development Ordinance with permitted uses, conditional uses and space standards similar to those in the current R-3 District.

The Performance Standards and any revised or additional standards that apply to R-3 would be applicable to this district also. If the sewer system is to be extended beyond the R-3 District, this new district should be given first priority. The minimum residential lot for land without water and sewer is 20,000 square feet. The minimum lot size will be reduced to 10,000 square feet if water and sewer are available.

Any further measures that will ensure compatibility with the existing R-3 District should be included. It is anticipated that a new road, approximately parallel to Main Street, (forming part of a grid similar to that south of Main Street) would be constructed by subdividers, the first section to connect Booker Street with Beechwood Street.

All Residential Districts

Home Occupations will continue to be allowed in all residential districts. To insure that they are compatible with residential neighborhoods, it is recommended that they be made Conditional Uses so that each will be reviewed by the Planning Board.

Commercial District (C)

Business District (Downtown)

Adjust boundary lines to follow property lines and to include all of the Masonic Hall property.

Establish the downtown business area as a separate district from other commercial areas. Highway Commercial Districts

Change the area of commercial business east of the cement plant and south of Route One, directly across from the existing Commercial District, from Industrial to Commercial. Its size should be approximately the same as that of the existing Commercial District.

Strengthen the requirements for landscaping of buildings and parking lots, taking into account business need for "exposure".

A "change of use" regulation is recommended (see Site Plan Review).

Industrial District (I)

A "change of use" regulation is recommended (see Site Plan Review).

Site Plan Review Ordinance (changes to apply in all districts)

Require Planning Board review of all non-residential uses requiring structures or additions over 500 square feet in floor area, including schools, municipal buildings, churches, etc.

Require the Planning Board to review any "change of use" on vacant or undeveloped land, even if not involving any structures (such as outside storage, filling, etc.).

Require a designated ingress and egress with a vegetative buffer between them for all uses in the Highway Commercial and Industrial Districts.

Subdivision Ordinance (changes to apply in all districts)

Strengthen the landscaping provisions of the Subdivision Ordinance to require that a reasonable number of shade trees be planted along new streets or that a certain percentage of existing trees be retained.

Add a definition of open space/clustered subdivisions, including requirements for submission of plans and provide criteria for the Planning Board to use when deciding between "open space" and "conventional" subdivision design proposals.

Require construction of large subdivisions, of over 20 lots, to be phased over more than one year.

REGIONAL COORDINATION

Introduction

Thomaston shares with its neighboring communities such things as rivers and streams, roads, school children and staff, emergency services, solid waste facilities, water system and such factors as employment of residents, sharing of County expenses and air quality. Coordination and cooperation are required if the activities in and of one town are not to harm the citizens of another town.

Land Use Ordinances

Rockland

Thomaston is bounded on the north and east by the City of Rockland. The northerly boundary with Rockland is rather irregular, running somewhat south of east from the point where the corporate boundaries of Warren, Thomaston and Rockland meet east of the Oyster River to Branch Brook, then southerly by Branch Brook, then easterly to Meadow Brook, southerly by Meadow Brook, then easterly across Old County Road, northerly just east of Old County Road, then southeasterly along outer Pleasant Street, then generally southerly to the vicinity of Marsh Brook, then southwesterly by Marsh Brook, which then becomes part of the boundary with South Thomaston.

Rockland has city-wide zoning which is amended frequently by the City Council. The following description was current as of May 30, 1991.

All land adjacent to the Thomaston line from the western limit of Rockland to the vicinity of Old County Road is in the Residential B District. This district allows, as a matter of right, single, two-family and multi-family dwellings, trailer parks, nurseries and greenhouses, farming, truck gardening, and many public and semi-public uses including parks, golf courses and other recreational uses. Special Exceptions include boarding houses, lodging houses and hotels. One and two-family dwellings are limited to a height of 35 feet, while no building may exceed 55 feet or four stories in height. Minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet for dwellings, with two and multi-family dwellings requiring 5,000 square feet per dwelling unit. Maximum lot coverage by buildings is 60%.

The area west of Branch Brook is uninhabited except in the immediate vicinity of Bog Road. The Residential B District extends northerly only to the New England Telephone Co. right of way, being in the Woodland/Wildlife G District north of the telephone line. In the unscrewed areas (no sewers extend west of the vicinity of Old County Road and Pleasant Street, except along Route One), the State minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet would apply to any developed properties in this district.

Residential B also includes some of the land in Rockland adjacent to the Thomaston line along Pleasant Street between Park Street and Payne Avenue (Route One), land in the "Pleasant Gardens" subdivision and land adjacent to Thomaston Street.

Land along Old County Road and between Pleasant Gardens and Thomaston Street is in the Industrial E District. Industrial E prohibits residential uses except for security personnel and their families but permits a wide variety of commercial and industrial uses. Interestingly, the manufacture of cement is prohibited. There is no minimum lot size, building height is limited to 5 stories or 65 feet, and lot coverage by buildings is limited to 33%. Much of this district in the vicinity of Thomaston includes the old, worked out limerock quarries along Old County Road, the Rockland Transfer Station, demolition debris area, the closed landfill and some industrial uses. Uses in this district have had negative effects on nearby residential uses in both Rockland and Thomaston.

The area adjacent to Route One is in the Central Commercial C District, which allows continuation of existing residential uses but prohibits new residential uses except where 75% of the street floor is devoted to non-residential purposes. Offices and a wide variety of commercial activities are permitted by right. Maximum building height is 65 feet or 5 stories. There is no minimum lot size but maximum residential density is one dwelling unit per 2,500 square feet for one and two-family dwellings and one dwelling unit per 1,200 square feet for multi-family dwellings. Lot coverage for dwellings is limited to 60%, with no limit for non-residential uses. In general, this district forms a continuation of the highway-oriented commercial district east of the cement plant in Thomaston with no discernible differences on either side of the corporate boundary.

Rockland also has a Shoreland Zone which applies, near the Thomaston line, to areas within 250 feet of Meadow Brook and, "the wetland portion

only of the Rockland Bog area". Curiously, this district is not shown on the Zoning Map. It does not meet current State standards and will have to be upgraded. Then, it should include land along Branch Brook at least as far upstream as the vicinity of Bog Road and the wetlands surrounding Marsh Brook. The district excludes the Central Commercial C District and Industrial Districts E and F (the latter being the Rockland Industrial Park, visible from Thomaston across the wetlands of Marsh Brook).

South Thomaston

South Thomaston lies south of Thomaston, entirely to the east of the St. George River. The boundary consists of Marsh Brook westerly from the Rockland line to the vicinity of Buttermilk Lane, then north a short distance along Buttermilk Lane, then generally westerly in a straight line eventually on or near the right of way of the former Maine Central Railroad to the shore of the St. George River at the mouth of the Mill River.

South Thomaston has town-wide zoning adopted March 21, 1989. Their Shoreland Zoning Ordinance was adopted June 30, 1974 and most recently amended March 17, 1987.

The South Thomaston Shoreland Zone applies to a wide area around the Marsh Brook and Weskeag River marshes and to a strip 250 feet wide along the shore of the St. George River near the Thomaston line. While the standards will have to be amended to comply with current State standards, the areas included in the district appear to be fully adequate.

From the edge of the Shoreland District around the Weskeag River/Marsh Brook area westerly to the vicinity of Route 131, land along the Thomaston line is in the Rural-1 District. This district is the least restrictive, allowing single and two-family dwellings by right and multi-family dwellings, community living uses and elderly congregate housing as Special Exceptions. A variety of non-residential uses are allowed as Special Exceptions, including campgrounds, commercial activities, junkyards, offices and public and private schools. Minimum lot size or area per dwelling unit is one acre for residential uses, with three acres being required for industrial uses and campgrounds. All other uses require one acre. There are no lot coverage restrictions. Building heights are limited to 34 feet for residential uses and 50 feet for non-residential uses. As there are no roads in South Thomaston north of Westbrook Street, the land along the Thomaston line is undeveloped.

Land along Route 131 is in the Rural-2 District. Uses are identical to Rural-1 except that junkyards and industrial uses are prohibited. Land along Route 131 is occupied by scattered dwellings, many now or formerly associated with the farms; a church and a (now closed) general store. Much land near the road is cleared, offering wide views of the St. George River and, from some areas, of the Camden Hills and other distant high points. There are no conflicts with adjacent land uses in Thomaston.

Cushing

Cushing adjoins Thomaston to the south, with the town line running approximately east-west between two points on the shore of the St. George River. Cushing has no town-wide zoning ordinance, but does have a Subdivision Regulation adopted by their Planning Board on August 6, 1986. Lots in subdivisions are required to have a minimum area of 40,000 square feet exclusive of any land classified as a wetland or in the Flood Hazard Zone. There are no building height or lot coverage limitations.

Cushing's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance was most recently amended in 1985. All areas adjacent to the Thomaston line are in the Limited Residential-Recreational District. In talking with the Code Enforcement Officer and Planning Board Chair, it was indicated that, when the ordinance is upgraded to meet current State standards, it was their intention to place the shore land on the St. George River near the sharp bend in the river upstream of the Wadsworth Street Bridge in Resource Protection as the banks are quite steep and there is no nearby development. Most land in Cushing near the Thomaston line is undeveloped, only that area near Wadsworth Street has any major concentration of houses and some small businesses. There appear to be no conflicts with any land uses in nearby Thomaston.

Warren

Warren lies west of Thomaston, with the St. George and Oyster Rivers forming much of the town line. From a point on the Oyster River below the falls, the town line angles slightly east of north to the point north of Beechwood Street where Warren, Rockland and Thomaston meet.

Warren has a Shoreland Zoning Ordinance adopted July 14, 1975 and most recently amended March 15, 1988. Much of the shore south of the Route One bridge is in Resource Protection. The entire shore of the Oyster River is in the Residential/Recreational District, as is the stream entering

the St. George River near the Prison Farm. While some amendments will have to be made to conform to the current State standards, many areas along the shore of the St. George River above the confluence of the Oyster River are in Resource Protection and the ordinance appears well designed to achieve protection of waters adjoining Thomaston.

Warren's current Land Use Ordinance is a town-wide zoning ordinance adopted August 17, 1989, replacing an ordinance adopted March 14, 1983. All areas of Warren adjacent to the Thomaston line, other than those covered by Shoreland Zoning, are in the Rural District. The Rural District allows a wide variety of uses including residential, agricultural, campgrounds, commercial and industrial activities, many requiring Planning Board review. Minimum lot size is 40,000 square feet, with an additional 10,000 square feet for each additional dwelling unit. Maximum building height is 35 feet for residential, 50 feet for non-residential uses. Maximum lot coverage is 20%. Performance standards in the ordinance are intended to minimize any adverse effects on abutting uses. Other than adjacent to Routes 1, 97 and 131, there is little development in Warren near the Thomaston line and no significant land use conflicts.

Regional Policies and Issues

The following issues are arranged according to the sections of the Comprehensive Plan in which they appear.

Transportation

This section has a number of regional issues. At the beginning of the preparation of this plan, the Coastal Route One Bypass was an important local and regional concern. However, Maine DOT plans for a bypass using Route 90 and a new highway north to the vicinity of Belfast were set aside or dropped on July 6, 1990. There remain plans for a possible second highway bridge across the Kennebec River between Bath and Woolwich. This could increase traffic on Route One east of Wiscasset. As neither of these would directly involve any changes to the highway network within Thomaston, no local action has been proposed at this time.

Local opinion remains split regarding increased traffic through town on Route One, with merchants generally favoring an increase and local residents opposed, since summer season traffic in the downtown (Main Street is U. S. Route One) results in some inconvenience and delays. Recommended road construction north of Route One would, if completed,

create another element of the "grid" of roads making up the village area of Thomaston. While it would not function as a "bypass", it would offer the chance for local traffic to avoid Main Street, as do the roads paralleling Main Street to the south.

Regional public transportation now functions at a minimal level due primarily to limited public funding of Coastal Transportation, the regional non-profit bus and van service. There is apparent support for increasing the level of service, possibly to include scheduled bus service to and from nearby towns usable by commuters and those seeking to use regional recreational facilities (after schools, on weekends). Since such an increase would involve funding from more than just Thomaston, regional cooperation would be a necessity to achieve this action.

Support was also shown for the reactivation of the railroad through Thomaston, which began operating in October 1990. The first customer of the Maine Coast Railroad was Chemrock, located in Thomaston. Crowe Rope, with its main factory in Warren, is also receiving materials by rail at Rockland. In the future, major freight shipments are anticipated by the Dragon Products cement plant in Thomaston. Maine Coast is also considering a passenger service, primarily to serve commuters to the Bath Iron Works, but has also indicated interest in possible future tourist or other regional rail passenger services. As there is no local financial participation anticipated in the rail revival, suggested local actions have been confined to educational efforts regarding safety on the rail line, which was not operated from mid 1985 through late 1990. Some land in Thomaston which is accessible by rail remains industrially zoned.

Community Facilities and Services

Water supply is a regional issue. However, it is largely within the control of the Camden and Rockland Water Company which supplies water to the built-up sections of Thomaston. Concerns include the age of the water line supplying Thomaston, 104 years in 1991; regional population growth in the water company's service area; and coordination of replacement and repairs if the water line is extended to serve Warren (much of the line is within the right of way of Route One). Water conservation measures (low-flow toilets) are suggested as a local response to this regional problem.

Water quality in the St. George River is a regional issue. Thomaston is under a DEP Consent Agreement to eliminate a Combined Sewage

Overflow by October 1992. Warren village will also be connected to a planned wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) serving the now under-construction Maximum Security Prison, to be located adjacent to the State Prison farm in South Warren. Thomaston is spending about \$7,000,000 in State and Town funds to replace combined sewers and reduce groundwater infiltration into the sanitary sewer lines, with some refitting of the WWTP. Changes in Shoreland Zoning to better protect the watercourses in the town from non-point source pollution have also been suggested, and should have a beneficial effect on water quality in the estuary.

Solid waste management is another regional issue. Thomaston operates a transfer station on Buttermilk Lane with the towns of South Thomaston and Owls Head. Thomaston's solid waste, along with that of the other towns and the State Prison, is hauled to Orrington for disposal at the PERC waste to energy plant. Thomaston has decided to continue to haul to PERC. Recycling efforts have recently received more attention and all three towns are cooperating in these activities. Passage of a mandatory recycling ordinance has been suggested. Replacement of the recently closed stump dump may well also require regional cooperation, perhaps with Rockland.

Thomaston has police, fire and ambulance services. All cooperate through mutual aid with other nearby towns. They also provide dispatching service for Cushing, South Thomaston, Owls Head and St. George. No major changes are anticipated, but implementation of a regional 911 emergency number has been suggested.

Thomaston has educational facilities of regional importance, including the Georges Valley High School (SAD 50) which serves Thomaston, Cushing and St. George. Also, the University of Maine at Augusta has a regional center located in the old Thomaston Academy building, a facility it shares with the Public Library. No major changes are anticipated for either facility.

Montpelier, a state-owned replica of General Henry Knox's mansion, is a major regional tourist attraction. Under-funding by the State has resulted in deterioration over the years. Some Town funding is provided to the "Friends of Montpelier", a local non-profit group which raises funds and operates a gift shop at Montpelier. Control of this structure rests with the State and Thomaston can do little to change the situation,

Housing

Affordable housing is a regional issue. It has been recommended that the Town of Thomaston participate in a regional affordable housing alliance, modify its Land Use and Development Ordinance to encourage affordable housing, and work with the legislature to pass a real estate transfer tax and a real estate speculation tax to create funds for affordable housing. A new residential district and road improvements have been recommended to open additional land relatively near the center of the village area for residential use, which could be served by sewers if sufficient treatment plant capacity is available.

Natural Resources/Marine Resources

Both sections contain recommendations to improve water quality and protect various land resources which would have beneficial regional effects. Most of these involve expansion of the Shoreland Zoning districts and adoption of current State standards to better protect natural resources adjacent to the town's watercourses. Thomaston is important as a regional access point for clammers working in the St. George estuary. Present launching facilities are inadequate during peak usage by both commercial and recreational boaters. An alternative launching ramp site has been suggested. The on-going improvements to the Thomaston sewer system and WWTP may also result in benefits to clammers and recreational boaters.

Recreation

Thomaston's residents use many regional facilities, some of which provide activities unavailable in Thomaston, such as golf, salt water swimming and downhill skiing. Provision of a canoe launching facility at the St. George River bridge, on the site of the old bridge approach, was suggested during this planning process and carried out, at no extra cost, by the contractor in cooperation with the Town and the Maine DOT. This makes the river more accessible to canoeists. Also, cooperation with the Town of Warren has been suggested in order to use the old trolley right of way along the St. George River as a hiking trail. As Thomaston has no large parks or recreational facilities other than those of SAD 50, purchase of recreational land has been recommended. If these facilities are purchased and improved, Thomaston residents' reliance on other towns' recreational facilities would be reduced.

THOMASTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUMMARY

GLOSSARY

The following terms are used in the Comprehensive Plan. Resource

Protection District

A district in which land use activities are severely limited due to natural conditions of the land and the need to preserve the natural resources located on the land and/or nearby water or wetlands.

Shoreland Districts

Districts intended to protect water resources, generally within 250 feet of the shoreline of water bodies and wetlands, including wetlands, in which land uses are limited due to their location near water. Includes land along the St. George River, Mill River, Oyster River, West Meadow Brook, Branch Brook and the Weskeag River and Marshes and some inland (fresh water) wetlands. Includes Resource Protection Districts.

Rural Residential and Farmland District (R-1)

Includes Beechwood Street, Old County Road, West Meadow Road, and Thomaston Street areas.

Rural Residential District (R-2)

Includes Route One west of the village, Route 131 (north) and Cushing Road areas.

Urban Residential District (R-3)

Includes residential area in the center of town.

Commercial District

Includes businesses in the center of town, highway commercial areas on Route One east of the cement plant, at the Route One bridge over the St. George River and the Shoreland Commercial District along the harbor.

Industrial District

Includes areas east of High Street and Old County Road.

Open Space/Cluster Subdivision

Subdivision in which detached, single-family homes are located on lots no smaller than 30,000 square feet.

Open Space

Land in a subdivision which preserves fields, woodlands and scenic views. Open space may include wetlands, fields, woods, pasture or active recreational facilities for the use of residents of the subdivision.

GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

The *Guidelines for Maine's Growth Management Program* require that each municipality establish goals, policies and implementation strategies that will promote the State's goals.

This summary of the 1991 Thomaston Comprehensive Plan contains State Goals, Local Goals, and Policies, arranged by sections, recommended to be followed by the Town and Implementation Strategies to carry out those goals and policies. The reader is directed to the complete plan for the inventory.

Following each Implementation Strategy, the elected officers, officials or groups likely to be involved are listed in parentheses. The priority and timing of the implementation strategies or actions are indicated by the following:

A. = Within 1 Year

B. = Within 3 Years

C. = Within 4 Years

D. = Over 4 Years

Ongoing = Activity could be commenced immediately and continued as needed.

HISTORY

Goals

State Goal

"To preserve the State's historic and archaeological resources:"

Local Goal

To preserve the character of Thomaston by protecting historic structures and archaeological resources.

Policies

To prevent the threatened destruction of key historic structures, to protect threatened neighborhood areas and archaeological resources, to prevent future incompatible alteration and destruction of historic building facades, to encourage and promote renovation of historic structures and neighborhoods.

Implementation

Establish an Historic District Commission to oversee historic sites and buildings and work with the Historical Society and Planning Board with the consent, participation and understanding of property owners and other interested citizens to develop an Historic District Ordinance. (Selectmen, Town Meeting) A.

Create a detailed inventory of historic and archaeological resources, including both prehistoric and historic sites. (Thomaston Historical Society) Ongoing.

Adopt an Historic District Ordinance to protect those areas and buildings within the Historic District established in 1974. (Planning Board, Historical Society, Town Meeting) B.

Adopt Resource Protection Districts within the Shoreland Zoning provisions to protect historic and prehistoric archaeological sites identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Subdivision and Site Plan Review Ordinances to retain important views and assure, to the extent possible, particularly for

projects within and adjacent to the Historic District, that architectural and site designs are compatible with historic buildings within the Historic District. Amend the above ordinances so that subdivisions or development requiring Site Plan Review proposed for areas in which known archaeological resources exist will require professional archaeological review. The Planning Board may require site plan revision to protect these resources. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Historical Society, Town Meeting) A.

Work with the present property owner to preserve the only remaining waterfront kiln near Wadsworth Street. (Historical Society, Selectmen, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Inventory ballast stones along the waterfront. (Historical Society) Ongoing.

HOUSING

Goals

State Goals

"To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl and

To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens."

Local Goals

To protect the residential quality of Thomaston while allowing for orderly growth.

To encourage a diversified community by providing affordable housing for all income groups.

Policies

To enhance the residential quality and character of Thomaston.

To ensure that new development will be attractive and compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.

To preserve and improve the condition of existing housing.

To achieve an adequate supply of affordable, decent housing for all of Thomaston's citizens.

Implementation

Enforce parking standards relating to conversion of single-family residences to multi-family residences. (Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer) Ongoing.

Within the present Urban Residential District and the proposed TR-3 District, encourage a traditional village neighborhood block design. Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to discourage subdivisions in cul-de-sacs in these districts. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Subdivision and Site Plan Review Ordinances to include minimal landscaping requirements, primarily street trees. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Appoint an Affordable Housing Committee to: Conduct a survey to further determine the range of affordable housing needed by Thomaston citizens, decide on affordable housing projects to meet these needs, and work with the Mid-Coast Housing Alliance to obtain State funding. (Selectmen) A.

Seek State and Federal funding for rehabilitation programs. (Planning Board, Selectmen, Affordable Housing Committee, Town Manager) Ongoing.

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to require that 10% of housing be affordable to low and moderate income households. Devise means to assure long-term affordability. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Affordable Housing Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to include a reduction in land area required per dwelling unit and frontage and side yard setbacks for designated affordable housing in the Growth Areas. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Affordable Housing Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Establish priority processing by the Planning Board for affordable housing projects. (Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer) A.

Consider donating any tax-acquired land to affordable housing projects undertaken by a non-profit organization. (Affordable Housing Committee, Town Meeting, Selectmen) Ongoing.

Apply for membership in the Mid-Coast Housing Alliance in order for the Town to qualify for State funding for affordable land and housing projects. (Selectmen) A.

Be aware of subsidized units converting to the market economy, in order to have the possibility of a non-profit housing corporation acquiring these units to keep them affordable. (Affordable Housing Committee) Ongoing.

ECONOMY

Goals

State Goal

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

Local Goal

To Encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of Thomaston that will result in a broadening of the tax base and the economic well-being of the community.

Policies

To encourage the expansion of business in Thomaston.

To protect and enhance the small town and historic character of Thomaston, including improvements to the visual quality of its highway "entrances".

To protect the downtown business district from outlying commercial strip development and otherwise strengthen the downtown business district.

To plan for the long-term re-use of the land areas now occupied by the cement plant and its quarries.

To take full advantage of the reactivated railroad for Thomaston's

businesses and residents.

Implementation

Research grants and loans through the Mid-Coast Development Corporation and various State agencies. Provide information for Thomaston businesses on Small Business Administration loan programs. (Thomaston Community Development Committee) Ongoing.

Locate those properties available in commercial and industrially zoned areas and promote them to interested parties - "match making". (Thomaston Community Development Committee) Ongoing.

Change part of the Commercial District on Route One near the St. George River to Residential 2. Place all commercial land uses wholly or partially within the Shoreland District along the St. George River in the Shoreland Commercial District. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Include in the Historic District Ordinance requirements that any changes made by businesses in the downtown commercial district be compatible with the existing architecture in the town, including beautification and measures to afford effective visual screening where necessary and landscaping to create more pleasing surroundings. (Planning Board, Historical Society, Town Meeting) B.

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance to give preference to highway-oriented businesses in the area east of the "cement plant flats", so that businesses in this area do not compete directly with the downtown businesses. Require appropriate parking and landscaping to create a pleasant environment. (Thomaston Community Development Committee, Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Rezone to Highway Commercial some of the land with frontage on the south side of Route One from the vicinity of Dexter Street Extension to the Rockland town line now within the Industrial Zone. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Consider directing future expansion of the downtown business district into the area immediately north ("outback") of the block of stores on Main Street. (Thomaston Community Development Committee, Planning Board, Town Meeting) D.

Repair, widen and extend sidewalks to serve the downtown and the school campus. Connect the downtown and waterfront business districts with sidewalks (these could also connect with proposed hiking trails in Thomaston's waterfront and wooded areas). (Selectmen, Public Works Director, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Work with the management of the cement plant to create an environment that is eventually reusable, both for the quarries and the area now occupied by the cement plant. (Thomaston Community Development Committee, Planning Board) Ongoing.

Retain industrially zoned land adjacent and accessible to the railroad east of High Street, to permit additional industries which could use rail service to locate there. (Planning Board, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

TRANSPORTATION

Goals

State Goal

"To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl."

Local Goal

To maintain and extend transportation facilities and services that are vital to maintaining and improving the quality of life in Thomaston.

Policies

To work with the State and other municipalities and agencies to create and maintain a network of roads and sidewalks and a system of public transportation services which meets the needs of Thomaston's residents and businesses.

To continue financial support to regional transportation agencies, where such support would adequately benefit Thomaston residents. Consideration should be given to increasing the amount of regional public transportation available. This would involve cooperation with other, nearby towns.

Implementation

Research the ownership of sidewalks along Main Street and major side streets and clear title, by whatever means are appropriate, so that the Town can legally repair, widen and extend sidewalks. Install sidewalks where needed in the "village" area to serve schools, Main Street and waterfront businesses, and residents. (Public Works Department) B.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance and the Site Plan Review Ordinance to limit curb cuts and otherwise improve access and egress to parking areas in order to improve traffic safety and retain the traffic carrying ability of major routes in Thomaston, especially Route One. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Review "paper streets" and determine the status of these streets. They may be needed for future development or could provide open space for recreational needs.(Planning Board) Ongoing.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to require that subdivisions in the proposed Transitional Residential District incorporate in their design roads which would, individually or in coordination with other subdivisions, create an extension of Thomaston's grid pattern of streets. This extension would include a road north of, and approximately parallel to, Main Street, connecting Booker and Beechwood Streets, and others as appropriate.(Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Continue financial support of regional transportation agencies, where such support would adequately benefit Thomaston residents. Consideration should be given to increasing the amount of regional public transportation available. This would involve the cooperation of other, nearby towns. (Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goals

State Goal

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

Local Goal

To continue to improve the present system of public services and facilities.

Policies

To use provision of public services, including water and sewer, to help shape the future development of the town and retain its character.

To encourage, where appropriate, increased densities of development within the areas now served or proposed to be served by utilities.

To minimize, to the extent possible, the suburbanization of Thomaston. Maintain a visual distinction between the outer limits of the compact village area and the surrounding more rural area. This can be reinforced by requiring larger lots beyond the limits of water and sewer lines, by land use controls which preserve open land in open space/clustered subdivisions and by public purchase of open land for parks, recreation and wildlife preserves.

To continue cooperation with neighboring municipalities in the provision of public services such as water, sewer, protective and emergency services, and public transportation. (Thomaston is one of the three original towns in the Knox County Mutual Aid Pact.)

To encourage recycling of solid waste.

To provide adequate space for Town government functions, including the Town Office, Police, Pollution Control and Public Works Departments.

To continue municipal support of cultural activities of benefit to Thomaston citizens, including the Town's outstanding Public Library.

Implementation

Water Supply. All extensions and hook-ups to the water system are controlled by the Camden and Rockland Water Company.

Waste Treatment Facilities. At this time, the nature and extent of any future implementation needed is unknown, pending the outcome of steps currently underway to improve the sewer system. (Pollution Control Department) Ongoing.

Solid Waste Facilities. Continue Town support of the activities of the three town Recycling Committee. A mandatory recycling ordinance may be needed in the future to meet State recycling goals. (Selectmen, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Investigate, and implement if feasible, "curbside" pickup of residential solid waste and recyclable materials by private haulers. (Recycling Committee, Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) B.

Encourage home composting of garden and lawn wastes. Those organic materials not composted at home could be collected for co-composting with WWTP sludge. (Recycling Committee) Ongoing.

Maintain close contact with the fire and ambulance personnel so that the present high level of performance of these services can be continued. (Selectmen) Ongoing.

Continue to support regional medical services of assistance to Thomaston residents, including those providing transportation for medical patients. (Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Continue Town support of the Friends of Montpelier and work closely with the State to stop the deterioration of Montpelier. (Friends of Montpelier, Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Construct a sand and salt shed by 1996. (Selectmen, Director of Public Works, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) B.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Goals

State Goals

"To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas;

To protect the State's other critical natural resources, including without limitation, wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shorelands, scenic vistas and unique natural areas; and

To safeguard the State's agricultural and forest resources from

development which threatens those resources."

Local Goal

To protect Thomaston's land and water resources, including critical natural resources.

Policies

To restrict growth and development on slopes greater than 20%, including control of erosion, sedimentation and surface water runoff.

To use Thomaston's rivers and watercourses for the uses for which their depths, water quality and topography best suit them; with particular emphasis on retention of marine-oriented uses along developed portions of the shoreline and on preservation of natural resources along undeveloped portions.

To regulate future growth and development on soils which have severe limitations for the proposed use(s).

To protect vegetative resources from adverse impacts of incompatible development and to promote the wise use of timber resources. To encourage the continuation of agriculture and the preservation and management of forest resources.

To appoint a Conservation Commission to conduct research and give advice concerning the protection, development and use of the town's natural resources and to assist the Planning Board in reviewing development proposals which may affect natural resources.

To preserve and protect from adverse impact groundwater resources in all areas not currently served by sewer and/or water lines and to require detailed geologic stability assessments prior to the construction of major public and private facilities.

To prohibit and/or restrict future development on all wetlands outside of the Shoreland Commercial District.

To assure that operations and closure of sand and gravel pits and rock quarries are done so as to minimize safety hazards and disturbance to ground and surface water resources and maximize the eventual reuse of these disturbed areas.

To preserve and protect from adverse impact, in accordance with present State water classifications, all surface waters in the town.

To work with the Department of Environmental Protection to minimize hazards from underground storage tanks.

To reduce the potential of flood damage and maintain the National Flood Insurance Program to insure public facilities against flood damage and make flood insurance available to private property owners.

To protect, to the extent feasible, Thomaston's wildlife habitats, natural and scenic resources from adverse effects of development.

Implementation

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance to restrict land uses and activities on slopes greater than 20% and consider the effect of slope on all development proposals (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance to require that applicants having existing incompatible uses and activities located on slopes steeper than 20% take appropriate steps to minimize any known and/or likely adverse environmental impacts as a condition of approval for permits to expand, relocate, or change land use. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Where soil suitability is in doubt, request analysis and review of development proposals by the Soil Conservation Service (Planning Board) Ongoing.

Review, and amend as necessary, land use ordinances to consider soils which have severe limitations for development and to require that applicants take appropriate steps to minimize any known and/or likely adverse environmental impacts as a condition of approval for permits to expand, relocate, or change land use (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Require by ordinance that all future land uses and activities be located on soils suitable for such uses, and that such uses and activities be designed, constructed and maintained in such a manner as to minimize any adverse environmental effects.(Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Treat any publicly identified rare, unique and exemplary plant communities as "Environmentally Sensitive Areas" and, where possible, place them in land use districts which will prohibit land uses and activities which would be likely to have an adverse impact on such areas. (Planning Board, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Continue to encourage the placement of agricultural lands actively in use and other open land in the Farm and Open Space Tax program. Support conservation easements and other means of preserving forest and agricultural lands through local land trusts. (Assessors) Ongoing.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to encourage the preservation of Prime and Important Farmland Soils and significant forest parcels as open space as part of the subdivision approval process. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Request further mapping and quantitative and qualitative analysis of the town's bedrock geology by the Maine Geological Survey. (Selectmen, Planning Board) A.

Encourage activities which enhance the educational use of Thomaston's unique geologic resources. (SAD 50) Ongoing.

Amend the Land Use and Development Ordinance to provide more specific guidelines for operation and closure of sand and gravel pits and rock quarries. Develop performance standards for the mining of sand, gravel, topsoil and related surface materials including standards regarding safety, erosion and sedimentation control, and the timely revegetation of excavated areas. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Work with owners of inactive pits and quarries to achieve reuse of these areas which is beneficial to the Town and the owners. (Planning Board, Code Enforcement Officer) Ongoing.

Encourage the further mapping and quantitative and qualitative analysis of the town's surface geology by the Maine Geological Survey. (Planning Board, Selectmen) A.

Amend land use ordinances to require that the applicants for all future large-scale, over 20 acre, developments submit appropriate hydro-geologic information and impact assessments as part of their application. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Identify the boundaries of all significant fresh water and coastal wetlands through existing inventories, aerial photographs, and on-site investigation. Place land adjoining significant water bodies and wetlands within the Shoreland District in accordance with 1990 State mandates and any additional locally-adopted requirements. (Planning Board, Town Meeting) A.

Adopt Best Management Practices for storm water control to ensure that all municipal storm water drainage systems be kept in good repair so as not to obstruct drainage or, in the case of ditch maintenance, so as not to increase erosion. (Selectmen, Town Manager, Public Works Director) Ongoing.

Amend the Flood Hazard Building Permit Ordinance as necessary to meet Federal standards so as to continue coverage of public and private properties under the National Flood Insurance Program. (Planning Board, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Amend the Shoreland Zoning provisions of the Land Use and Development Ordinance to bring it into conformance with the March 24, 1990 *State of Maine Guidelines for Municipal Shoreland Zoning Ordinances*. Include all Significant Wetlands (including all tidal wetlands outside of the present and proposed Shoreland Commercial Districts and all freshwater wetlands of 10 or more acres in area having High or Moderate Value ratings from the IF&W and DMR) in Resource Protection Districts. Include all other (freshwater) wetlands of 10 acres or more in Resource Protection Districts and include their uplands within 75 feet in a less restrictive Shoreland District. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Review and amend, as needed, the Land Use and Development Ordinance to avoid development of wetlands of 2 to 10 acres in area and require that any alterations of such wetlands have no effect on the storm water flow of such wetlands and their associated watercourses. Provide protection for major storm drains by requiring 25 foot setbacks for buildings and restricting filling. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to institute Best Management Practices for storm water management during and after construction, require construction of detention basins and restrict the rate of flow off the premises of the subdivision to levels existing prior to development. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Establish a local Conservation Commission in accordance with Title 30, MRSA, Section 3851 and have the Commission rate open spaces and scenic vistas. (Selectmen, Town Meeting) A.

Following a survey, develop a program to acquire and protect wetlands, as funds permit, by public agencies and appropriate non-profit organizations. (Conservation Commission, Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to incorporate density requirements recommended by the Division of Health Engineering to adequately protect groundwater resources, in subdivisions where the cumulative impact of numerous on-site wastewater disposal systems may be significant. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Work with the Department of Environmental Protection to assure replacement of older, underground tanks to protect ground and surface water resources. (Code Enforcement Officer) Ongoing.

To minimize interference with wildlife, it is recommended that Deer Yards be included in the land reserved as permanent open space in subdivisions. (Planning Board, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to require environmental impact assessments in applications for subdivisions over 20 acres in the R-1 and R-2 Districts. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Work with the Critical Areas Program to better define Thomaston's critical natural areas. (Conservation Commission) Ongoing.

Work with land owners and land trusts to preserve and protect identified critical natural areas and farmland. Create and maintain a record of such areas (in addition to land already under the Farm and Open Space Law or under Tree Growth). (Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Assessor's Agent) Ongoing.

Consider amending the Subdivision Ordinance to include such scenic factors as are contained in the Site Location of Development Law for the review of subdivision proposals. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

MARINE RESOURCES

Goals

State Goals

"To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources, including lakes, aquifers, great ponds, estuaries, rivers and coastal areas."

"To protect the State's marine resources industry, ports and harbors, from incompatible development and to promote access to the shore for commercial fishermen and the public."

"To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters."

In addition, the State Legislature has adopted nine Coastal Management Policies in Title 38, MRSA, Section 1801. These are summarized as follows:

1. Promote maintenance, development and revitalization of harbors for fishing, transportation and recreation.

2. Manage the marine environment to promote ecological integrity and diversity and enhance the value of the State's renewable resources.

3. Give preference to water-dependent uses on the shoreline, promote public access while being aware of the cumulative effects of development on marine resources.

4. Discourage development in hazardous areas.

5. Encourage State and local cooperation in resource management.

6. Protect critical habitat and preserve natural beauty even in developed areas.

7. Expand outdoor recreation and appropriate coastal tourism opportunities.

8. Restore and maintain water quality.

9. Restore and maintain coastal air quality.

Local Goals

To improve and protect the environmental quality of the harbor.

To balance commercial needs with needs for visual and recreational access to water.

Policies

To place undeveloped portions of Thomaston's shorelands in districts which will limit development and protect marine and other natural resources.

To retain a "working waterfront" on Thomaston Harbor.

To retain and enhance public access to Thomaston's river and marine resources.

To improve water quality in the St. George River and its tributaries,

To encourage Town support of the Harbor Committee's efforts to increase mooring capacity by commercial interests in Thomaston Harbor and support efforts to maintain and improve existing public waterfront facilities.

To work with the U. S. Army, Corps of Engineers, Federal and State representatives, and the Thomaston Harbor Committee to assure continued maintenance of the dredged channel of the St. George River and mooring areas of Thomaston Harbor.

Implementation

Include the entire St. George River waterfront and the Oyster and Mill Rivers, except for the present and proposed Shoreland Commercial Districts, in Resource Protection Districts. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Amend the Shoreland Commercial District to reduce the number of non-marine-oriented Conditional Uses and/or more specifically restrict them to marine-oriented uses. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Harbor Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Place all commercial land uses wholly or partially within the Shoreland District along the St. George River in the Shoreland Commercial District. (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Establish a reserve fund for acquisition of available waterfront properties for public use and access to water. (Harbor Committee, Conservation Commission, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) C.

RECREATION

Goals

State Goals

"To plan for, finance and develop an efficient system of public facilities and services ...

To protect the quality and manage the quantity of the State's water resources,...

To protect the State's other critical natural resources,...

To promote and protect the availability of outdoor recreation opportunities for all Maine citizens, including access to surface waters."

Local Goat

To enhance individual and family well-being, both physical and cultural, through provision of year-round, broad-based, comprehensive recreation programs for all age groups.

Policies

To expand the recreation program by establishing a Community Activities Committee.

To explore maximum use of Town owned properties and buildings for chosen programs.

To involve the Recreation Committee and other appropriate committees in the creation and promotion of both outdoor and indoor sports and cultural programs. Involve the Conservation Commission in the acquisition, layout, and design of programs that are natural resource oriented.

To be aware of opportunities to acquire land as needed for recreational activities and building sites (Selectmen, Recreation Committee and Conservation Commission to "screen" tax-acquired and other Town-owned land for suitability for recreational uses).

To continue the Fourth of July Celebration, known for years as one of

the finest in the Mid-Coast area.

Implementation

Acquire land for recreational activities and access to water. (Conservation Commission, Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

Expand the Recreation Program by appointing a "Community Activities Committee" which would coordinate with and complement the activities of the Recreation Committee (which is largely focused on team sports), the Watts Block Committee and other groups in town. It would be appropriate to appoint students to this committee. This committee would coordinate such activities as clearing cross country trails, small boat programs and trips, nature programs, art/music/theatre productions and trips to distant facilities, wildlife preserves, museums, shows, etc. (Selectmen, Recreation Committee, Community Activities Committee, Watts Block Committee) A.

Create an expanded Waterfront Program for All Ages. It is recommended that programs be initiated in water safety, navigation, small boat handling, marine biology and seashore habitats. (Harbor Committee, Community Activities Committee, Conservation Commission) B.

Re-establish a centrally located Community Skating Rink arranged for hockey and general use. An outdoor skating rink, using natural ice, is a very low cost item (water, hoses, help from the Fire Department) and a rink serves all ages - a true family facility. (Community Activities Committee, Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) B.

Construct a Playground Complex for Young Children, with picnic facilities. A playground similar to those in Rockland, Damariscotta and Yarmouth can be built through private community fundraising and the participation of adults in putting the complex together. Including picnic facilities would encourage the adult supervision that makes such a playground work well. (Community Activities Committee, Selectmen, Town Meeting) C.

Complete renovation of the Watts Block to allow it to serve as a Community Center. The renovation of the second floor of the building for community use will meet a long standing need. (Watts Block Committee) Ongoing.

Re-establish the Town swimming program. Explore new locations for swimming. Thomaston had no swimming program in 1991. (Recreation Committee, Community Activities Committee, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Develop a hiking trail starting at Route One at the Mill River and continuing along the river where possible to the Wadsworth Street Bridge. The Town may receive gifts of land or easements where the trail would cross private property. Volunteer labor and private funding are anticipated for developing the trail. (Conservation Commission, Selectmen, Town Meeting) C.

Cooperate with the Town of Warren in acquisition and development of the former Rockland, Thomaston & Camden Street Railway right of way as a hiking and ski trail along the St. George River from Thomaston to Warren village. Footbridges would be required over the Oyster River and other smaller streams entering the St. George River within Warren. The land within Thomaston is all privately owned but is still open land. (Conservation Commission, Selectmen, Town Meeting) D.

Improve the Town-owned right of way along Dunbar Road for use as a hiking, bicycle or bridle trail. It is anticipated that much volunteer labor would be involved. Add a small parking area near the end of the paved section of the road. (Conservation Commission, Selectmen) C.

Continue Town financial support of the Fourth of July Committee. (Selectmen, Budget Committee, Town Meeting) Ongoing.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN

Goals

State Goal

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

Local Goals

To plan ahead for financing major capital improvements or equipment purchases consistent with Thomaston's long range goals and needs.

To anticipate the need for replacing capital equipment.

To assess the Town's ability to pay for capital expenditures.

To avoid major increases in property taxes and reduce the amounts of borrowing in the years when capital expenditures are made.

To support Thomaston's anticipated development.

Policy

To institute a more formal and consistent Capital Improvement Plan and Process to assist the Town in meeting its future capital needs.

Implementation

Adopt the Capital Investment Plan procedure, leading to an on-going Capital Improvement Plan. (Selectmen, Budget Committee) A.

Adopt the Priority Rating System, to be used in the Capital Improvement Plan. (Selectmen, Budget Committee) A.

Establish reserve funds for the following projects and amounts:

Public Works Garage addition - \$5,000 per year

Sidewalks - \$5,000 per year

Waterfront Land -\$20,000 per year

Recreation/Park Land -\$10,000 per year.

LAND USE POLICIES

Goals

State Goal

"To encourage orderly growth and development in appropriate areas of each community, while protecting the State's rural character, making efficient use of public services and preventing development sprawl" etc.

Local Goals

To achieve a pattern of land use that retains Thomaston's small town character and protects its rural surroundings from over development.

To prevent commercial and residential development sprawl. **Policies**

To protect and encourage the traditional residential and historic character of the town.

To encourage affordable housing for all residents of the town.

To increase safety and lessen traffic congestion in residential and commercial areas.

Implementation:

It is recommended that a Land Use Ordinance Committee appointed by the Selectmen will have the primary responsibility for writing new ordinances or revising existing ordinances based on the following recommendations and for preparing proposals concerning other recommendations listed below. This is not a complete list of all possible recommendations. The Land Use Ordinance Committee is free to make further additions and changes that are consistent with this Comprehensive Plan. These ordinances and amendments will be voted on at Town Meeting.

The present zoning map is vague and inaccurate. The Land Use Ordinance Committee must prepare an official zoning map to be signed by the Town Clerk. This new zoning map and its district requirements should reflect the Future Land Use Map and its land use classifications. The Future Land Use Map gives only the general boundaries. It is up to the Land Use Ordinance Committee to decide specific boundaries, the names of zoning districts, and uses and space standards that are consistent with the ideas expressed by this Future Land Use Map and its land use classifications.

It is recommended that all the proposed amendments to the Land Use and Development Ordinance, to the Subdivision Ordinance and to the Site Plan Review Ordinance be prepared by the Land Use Ordinance Committee for presentation to the voters at a Town Meeting within one year of the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan. In summary, these would be shown as follows:

Land Use and Development Ordinance Amendments (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Subdivision Ordinance Amendments (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Site Plan Review Ordinance (Land Use Ordinance Committee, Town Meeting) A.

Shoreland Zoning Provisions

Resource Protection District (RPD)

Update and amend the RPD in accordance With the current State Shoreland Zoning *Guidelines*, including new districts and requirements. The following areas should be added to this district: St. George River, Oyster River, flood plains, slopes of 20% or steeper, wetlands and some upland surrounding wetlands, and intermittent streams as shown on the Water Resources Map.

Review and revise as necessary the General Standards of Performance as they relate to the RPD.

Shoreland Commercial District (SCD)

Amend the Shoreland Commercial provisions of the Land Use and Development Ordinance, if necessary, in accordance with the State Shoreland Zoning *Guidelines*,

Place all commercial land uses in the Commercial District on Route One at the St. George River in the Shoreland Commercial District.

Review the land uses and densities for compatibility with marine related/water dependent businesses and with visual access to the harbor and river and amend the ordinance in accordance with the implementation actions proposed in the Marine Resources section of this Plan.

Town-wide Zoning Provisions

Rural Residential And Farming District (R-1)

Lot Size. The density will be one dwelling unit per net residential acre, with a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet. Open space/ clustered subdivisions will allow a minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet.

For subdivisions over six acres, applicants will be required to submit a plan for an open space/clustered design and may submit one for a traditional design. The Planning Board will decide, based on criteria to be a part of the Subdivision Ordinance, which design best fits the land to be developed. Dwelling units in the open space/clustered subdivision design shall be placed on individual lots sized as indicated above. The area of permanent open space, farmland or woodland not included in individual building lots shall be at least 25% of the total subdivision area. Within the open space, an area equal to at least 10% of the combined area of the building lots shall be suitable for active recreational use. The requirements for open space will also apply to a traditional subdivision design in the R-t District.

Lots in the open space/clustered and traditional subdivisions shall be laid out, to the greatest extent feasible, to achieve the following objectives:

The most suitable soils shall be used for septic systems and their leach fields.

Houses shall be placed on the least suitable soils for agriculture.

Buildings shall be placed in a manner which enhances the usability of the remaining land.

Buildings shall be placed near the edges of fields, adjacent to woodland.

Buildings shall be placed in locations least likely to block scenic views as seen from public roads.

Land reserved for open space shall be contiguous.

To enhance the rural environment, retention of a vegetative buffer should be encouraged where it already exists. Allow reduction of street frontage to 100 feet if driveways are shared. All driveways from lots in subdivisions shall exit onto the subdivision roads.

Require the developer of a subdivision in excess of 20 acres in this District to submit an environmental impact statement to be reviewed by the Knox-Lincoln County Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

District land uses and performance standards should be carefully reviewed keeping in mind the goal of promoting a rural atmosphere. Commercial uses and other incompatible uses should not be permitted in this district.

Relocate the southern boundary of the R-t District on Beechwood Street as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

The railroad right of way is recommended to be the northern boundary of the R-t area on Thomaston Street.

Rural District (R-2)

Retain the density requirement of one unit per net residential acre and the minimum lot area of 40,000 square feet since this district is to remain unscrewed and rural. For the same reason, eliminate the requirements for sewered lots. Open space/clustered subdivisions will allow a minimum tot size of 30,000 square feet.

For subdivisions over six acres, applicants will be required to submit a plan for an open space/clustered design and may submit one for a traditional design. The Planning Board will decide, based on criteria to be a part of the Subdivision Ordinance, which design best fits the land to be developed. Dwelling units in the open space/clustered subdivision design shall be placed on individual lots sized as indicated above. The area of permanent open space, farmland or woodland not included in individual building lots shall be at least 25% of the total subdivision area. Within the open space, an area equal to at least 10% of the combined area of the building lots shall be suitable for active recreational use. The requirements for open space will also apply to a traditional subdivision design in the R-2 District.

Lots in the open space/clustered and traditional subdivisions shall be laid out, to the greatest extent feasible, to achieve the following objectives:

The most suitable soils shall be used for septic systems and their leach fields.

Houses shall be placed on the least suitable soils for agriculture.

Buildings shall be placed in a manner which enhances the usability of the remaining land.

Buildings shall be placed near the edges of fields, adjacent to woodland.

Buildings shall be placed in locations least likely to block scenic views as seen from public roads.

Land reserved for open space shall be contiguous.

Require the developer of a subdivision in excess of 20 acres in this District to submit an environmental impact statement to be reviewed by the Knox-Lincoln county Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

Review and revise district land uses and Performance Standards.

Place remaining land in the Commercial District on Route One at the St. George River, including all non-commercial land uses, in Residential 2.

The building setback along Route One from the St. George River to Route 131 (north) should remain at 60 feet (from the centerline of the road). A vegetative buffer should be retained where it already exists and should be encouraged to be planted under the Site Plan Review Ordinance when a change of use occurs. All driveways from lots in subdivisions shall exit onto the subdivision roads.

Urban Residential District (R-3)

The space standards should remain as set forth in the current Land Use and Development Ordinance. Review land uses to accommodate any appropriate changes. Include nursing homes, congregate housing, schools and hospitals.

Revise the District boundary lines to include parcels at the terminal points of the sewer lines that can be served by the sewer system.

Review and revise the Performance Standards to include any measures that would protect the traditional residential character and Historic District while encouraging greater residential growth. The front building setback of new construction should be compatible with existing nearby buildings. For this reason, the minimum setback should be reduced from 60 feet to 40 feet. A traditional grid type of development pattern should be encouraged.

For safety reasons and to encourage a pedestrian environment, sidewalks should be extended within R-3 out Beechwood Street, down Wadsworth Street and across the south side of Water Street to connect with the sidewalk on Knox Street.

Transitional Residential District (TR-3) (proposed new district)

A transitional growth district, TR-3, is to be established in the area north of the existing R-3 District, as shown on the Future Land Use Map. This new district should be included in the Land Use and Development Ordinance with permitted uses, conditional uses and space standards similar to those in the current R-3 District.

The Performance Standards and any revised or additional standards that apply to R-3 would be applicable to this district also. If the sewer system is to be extended beyond the R-3 District, this new district should be given first priority. The minimum residential lot for land without water and sewer is 20,000 square feet. The minimum lot size will be reduced to 10,000 square feet if water and sewer are available.

Any further measures that will ensure compatibility with the existing R-3 District should be included. It is anticipated that a new road, approximately parallel to Main Street, (forming part of a grid similar to that south of Main Street) would be constructed by subdividers, the first section to connect Booker Street with Beechwood Street.

All Residential Districts

Home Occupations will continue to be allowed in all residential districts. To insure that they are compatible with residential neighborhoods, it is recommended that they be made Conditional Uses So that each will be reviewed by the Planning Board.

Commercial District (C)

Business District (Downtown)

Adjust boundary lines to follow property lines and to include all of the Masonic Hall property.

Establish the downtown business area as a separate district from other commercial areas.

Highway Commercial Districts

Change the area of commercial business east of the cement plant and south of Route One, directly across from the existing Commercial District, from Industrial to Commercial. Its size should be approximately the same as that of the existing Commercial District

Strengthen the requirements for landscaping of buildings and parking lots, taking into account business need for "exposure".

A "change of use" regulation is recommended (see Site Plan Review).

Industrial District (1)

A "change of use" regulation is recommended (see Site Plan Review).

Site Plan Review Ordinance (changes to apply in alt districts)

Require Planning Board review of all non-residential uses requiring structures or additions over 500 square feet in floor area, including schools, municipal buildings, churches, etc.

Require the Planning Board to review any "change of use" on vacant or undeveloped land, even if not involving any structures (such as outside storage, filling, etc.).

Require a designated ingress and egress with a vegetative buffer between them for all uses in the Highway Commercial and Industrial Districts.

Subdivision Ordinance (changes to apply in all districts)

Strengthen the landscaping provisions of the Subdivision Ordinance to require that a reasonable number of shade trees be planted along new streets or that a certain percentage of existing trees be retained.

Add a definition of open space/clustered subdivisions, including requirements for submission of plans and provide criteria for the Planning Board to use when deciding between "open space" and "conventional" subdivision design proposals.

Require construction of large subdivisions, of over 20 lots, to be phased over more than one year.