

1963

Hampden, Maine Summary Comprehensive Plan 1963

James W. Sewall Company

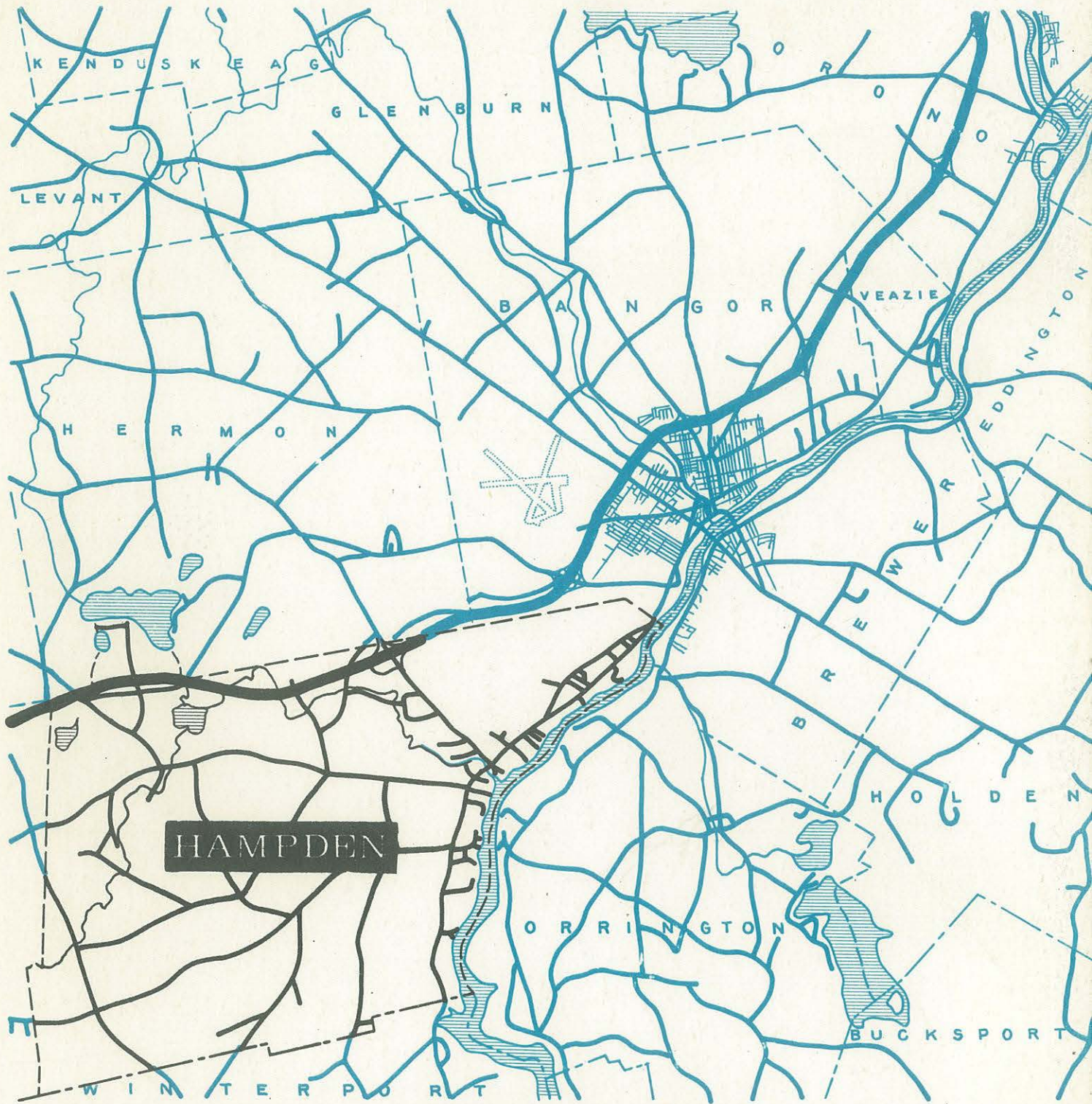
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HAMPDEN, MAINE



summary

comprehensive plan 1963

SUMMARY REPORT
OF
THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FOR
HAMPDEN, MAINE

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James W. Sewall Company
Planning Consultants
Old Town, Maine

1963

1960

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INTRODUCTION

The Planning Board is an advisory body which may prepare, adopt and, as required, amend a comprehensive plan for the development of the town. The Board also may draft ordinances related to planning, recommend their adoption by the municipality and recommend amendments to them from time to time. Town meeting action is necessary to enact or amend ordinances and to undertake improvements requiring the expenditure of public funds.

During 1961, 1962, and 1963 the Planning Board, with the assistance of the James W. Sewall Company, prepared a comprehensive plan for the future development of Hampden. The plan consists of a number of detailed studies, maps and reports dealing with population, economic base, geology, land use, transportation, community facilities, building conditions, a capital improvement program and capital budget and planning ordinances.

A comprehensive plan characteristically covers a relatively long period of time--twenty to thirty years--and deals with factors which do not yield easily to prediction. Therefore, the plan provides broad guidelines for the future development of the town rather than a detailed blueprint. A general and flexible framework of this kind can accommodate the many diverse kinds of growth and endeavor which contribute to progress in the community.

When necessary, the specific plan proposals may need to be amended to meet changing conditions. However, the policies underlying the plan should be valid for at least the next twenty years. Since the comprehensive plan is a general guide, additional planning in more depth and detail should precede certain kinds of public improvements such as purchase of land or construction of community facilities.

This pamphlet contains a brief summary of some important aspects of the comprehensive plan. The complete reports and large scale maps are available for examination at the Town Office Building.

POPULATION GROWTH PROSPECTS

In the 1940-1960 period, the Hampden population increased 75 percent, from 2,591 to 4,545. Hampden has been one of the most vigorously growing towns in the Bangor region. Dow Air Force Base probably was the single most important cause of this growth through its stimulation of population and economic expansion in Bangor. If present trends continue, the town could gain another 1,500 to 2,000 residents in the next twenty years bringing the total population to 6,000 or more. Any new growth-generating factors such as industrial and job expansion in the Bangor region could push Hampden ahead even more rapidly. In order to provide for either the minimum or the maximum growth which might reasonably be anticipated in the next twenty years, the comprehensive plan allows for sufficient land areas to accommodate five to eight thousand people or two to three thousand families in single-family dwellings on small to medium sized lots, plus land reserves for additional non-rural residential expansion in the more remote future.

EXISTING AND PROPOSED LAND USE

The Existing Pattern

Much of the post-1940 settlement in Hampden occurred on the level floor of the Penobscot River Valley, mainly along or near Route 1A, forming a highway-related ribbon 5 miles long and a half-mile wide at its broadest point. Fingers of development also have been extended out to the west along Route 9 and Kennebec Road.

This land use pattern implies some serious problems. First, the Route 1A highway location has attracted commercial and industrial uses as well as residential. The resulting mixture is unsatisfactory and has been the basic factor in the onset of blight in some areas.

A second major disadvantage of this pattern is the excessive cost of extending municipal services (sewer, water, school bussing, etc.) over a long, thinly developed service area.

A third problem is that although sewers are needed throughout the area of relatively compact settlement, this area extends over parts of several different drainage basins and therefore cannot be serviced by a single gravity flowing sewerage system and a single treatment plant.

Proposed Land Use

Residential: The comprehensive plan emphasizes the need for land development controls to achieve an urban community shape which can be sewered and served by other municipal services at a reasonable cost. The overriding factor in planning for any new residential construction is the feasibility of integrating sewers for the new development with treatment facilities already needed to serve existing neighborhoods. Existing development, spread out as it is along the river valley, will require several treatment plants or force mains to provide adequate service. Haphazard new development which might commit the town to still another such costly installation can be avoided by implementing the plan proposals through appropriate zoning regulations.

Future compact residential expansion should be limited to vacant land near existing development. The Hardy Hill area meets this requirement and satisfies other development criteria as well. Therefore, it is proposed for early residential expansion provided that there are no serious obstacles to sewerage. Areas which cannot be sewered at a reasonable cost (such as the riverfront land perhaps and outlying rural land) should be zoned for large lots which will permit safe operation of septic systems.

Commercial: Hampden's shopping facilities, consisting of local convenience stores, are also strung out along Route 1A and intermixed with other commercial types such as service stations. There is no organized, convenient shopping area with adequate parking. As a result, Hampden families buy most of their convenience goods, even groceries, in Bangor. Furthermore, there is no part of Hampden which is recognized as the town center by local

residents. A town center, or "village", where civic, social, recreational and commercial functions are centrally and compactly located, has important psychological as well as economic value. The concept gives residents a feeling of belonging and generates community loyalty the effects of which are felt in all aspects of community life.

As the urban center of the town shifts to Hardy Hill, there probably will be a commercial potential there. Ten to twenty acres of land on Hardy Hill are earmarked for commercial use and a new town civic center is planned in the same area. Ultimately, this should become the nucleus of community functions, thus meeting a long standing need for a town center.

The land fronting on Route 1A which is now in predominantly commercial use, at Kennebec Road and at Route 9, should be zoned commercial. These areas are expected to gradually shift from highway traffic service to neighborhood convenience uses following the relocation of Route 1A.

There probably will be some pressure to commercialize land along roads intersecting the new controlled access Route 1A, also along Coldbrook Road. The plan does not advocate such development because it would detract from the success of the proposed Hardy Hill commercial center. Also, it would reduce the traffic-carrying capacity of the highway and these streets. The commercial potential of the land around the expressway exit is latent and should not be acknowledged in the plan or the zoning ordinance until there is tangible promise of a major development. There will be ample time, when that happens, for the town to plan for the extension of suitable municipal services for the area.

Industrial: Of the several areas in Hampden which are suitable for industrial use, the land at the Hampden-Bangor boundary north of the Maine Central Railroad spur has the greatest potential. It has good rail and highway access and could be sewerred with a gravity line flowing toward one of the alternative sites for a sewage treatment plant.

A second area near the Coldbrook Road-Interstate 95 interchange may also be suitable for industrial development depending on whether it can be sewerred at a reasonable cost, a question which can only be answered by a detailed sewer study.

Other smaller areas proposed for industry are the land on the easterly side of Route 1A in East Hampden, already in industrial use, and land surrounding the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad crossing at Route 9.

SEWERS

A public sewer system collects sanitary wastes from most of the more compactly built-up parts of town. However, most of these existing lines are too small to permit extending them to serve new development. Sewage is discharged without treatment into the Penobscot River. State law will eventually require that Hampden, as well as other communities on the Penobscot River, construct treatment facilities. This will be an expensive

undertaking for Hampden because of the excessive length of the sewer area and the fact that it is divided into numerous separate drainage basins. This means either that more than one treatment plant will be needed, or that pumping will be required to bring the sewage to a single plant. Extension of sewers to Route 9, the Kennebec Road and Mayo Road probably will not be feasible. Nor is it likely to be feasible to sewer Coldbrook Road in the Interstate 95 exit area. If a major development (such as a shopping center or industrial complex) could be obtained at the expressway interchange, the town should attempt to furnish sewers. This probably would require still another treatment plant, situated on Souadabscook Stream.

A detailed sewer engineering study will be needed in order to determine where and how many treatment plants are needed, which of the existing lines must be replaced, where interceptors should be laid, and to which area sewers should next be extended to accommodate new residential growth. Although the Hardy Hill sector is designated in the comprehensive plan as the first expansion area, this proposal will have to be reviewed in the light of the recommendations of the sanitary engineering study.

All natural drainage ways, especially streams and brooks, should be protected from development which could interfere with their function of conducting storm runoff to the river. This may be accomplished by means of drainage easements, special use provisions in the zoning ordinance or outright acquisition of strips of land along the streams.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

As in other respects, Hampden's long thin string of development raises problems with respect to community facilities. The achievement of more compact development in the future, as recommended in the comprehensive plan, should permit fuller, more intensive, and therefore better utilization of community facilities and should also check the growth of demand for new services in isolated parts of town.

The rapid growth of the past twenty years presents Hampden with a backlog of needs for community facilities, especially for new recreation facilities-- parks, playgrounds, ball fields, swimming, boating and fishing places, hiking and bridle trails, nature study areas, skating and sliding places, etc. To meet these needs, the comprehensive plan proposes a system of neighborhood parks and playgrounds, a regional riverfront park with marina and swimming facilities, and a second riverfront park with horse trails and show ring. Also, it is suggested that the town explore the possibility of developing a townwide interconnected network of paths for walking and riding. A system of this kind would be a unique community asset and Hampden is well adapted for it physiographically. Reservation of the proposed natural drainage strips, which should be part of the system, could be considered the initial step in development.

Other community facilities which will be needed within the next twenty years are a library, a new town office, and an additional fire station. It is proposed that these be built on the site selected for a town center in the Hardy Hill area.

A public works garage which was one of the more immediate needs of the community was constructed in 1963 on a site recommended in the comprehensive plan. Also needed soon is a new sanitary fill dump, for which the plan suggests several alternative sites. This proposal is presently under consideration by the Planning Board and town officials.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

Hampden's major circulation problem is the fast, heavy traffic carried through the most thickly settled parts of town on Route 1A and 9-202. The 1960 average daily traffic volume on 1A was 10,000 vehicles. The inadequacy of the road and the land use traffic conflicts arising from the lack of access control results in a high degree of safety hazard and inefficient traffic movement. Plans are well formulated for the relocation of Route 1A to alleviate this situation, and a new controlled access by-pass is expected to be in use by summer, 1965. At this stage of planning, it appears that three interchanges in Hampden would be acceptable to the State Highway Commission. The three points which would have maximum benefit for Hampden, indicated in the comprehensive plan, are: 1) just north of the Maine Central Railroad to serve the proposed "East Hampden Industrial Park; 2) in the Hardy Hill area to serve the proposed future urban center of town; and 3) a third location between the other two.

ORDINANCES

The "planning ordinances", zoning and subdivision regulations, housing, building and sanitary codes, are a logical extension of the comprehensive plan. When standards implementing appropriate plan elements are incorporated in legislation enacted by the people, the plan becomes an enforceable instrument of community policy.

Committing the provisions of the plan to law is not the only way of insuring its effectiveness, nor could this alone make the plan work. Public understanding and support of the principles and goals of the plan are indispensable, as is the unflagging interest and effort of public officials. However, without a certain minimum amount of statutory support, a plan would be difficult if not impossible to effectuate.

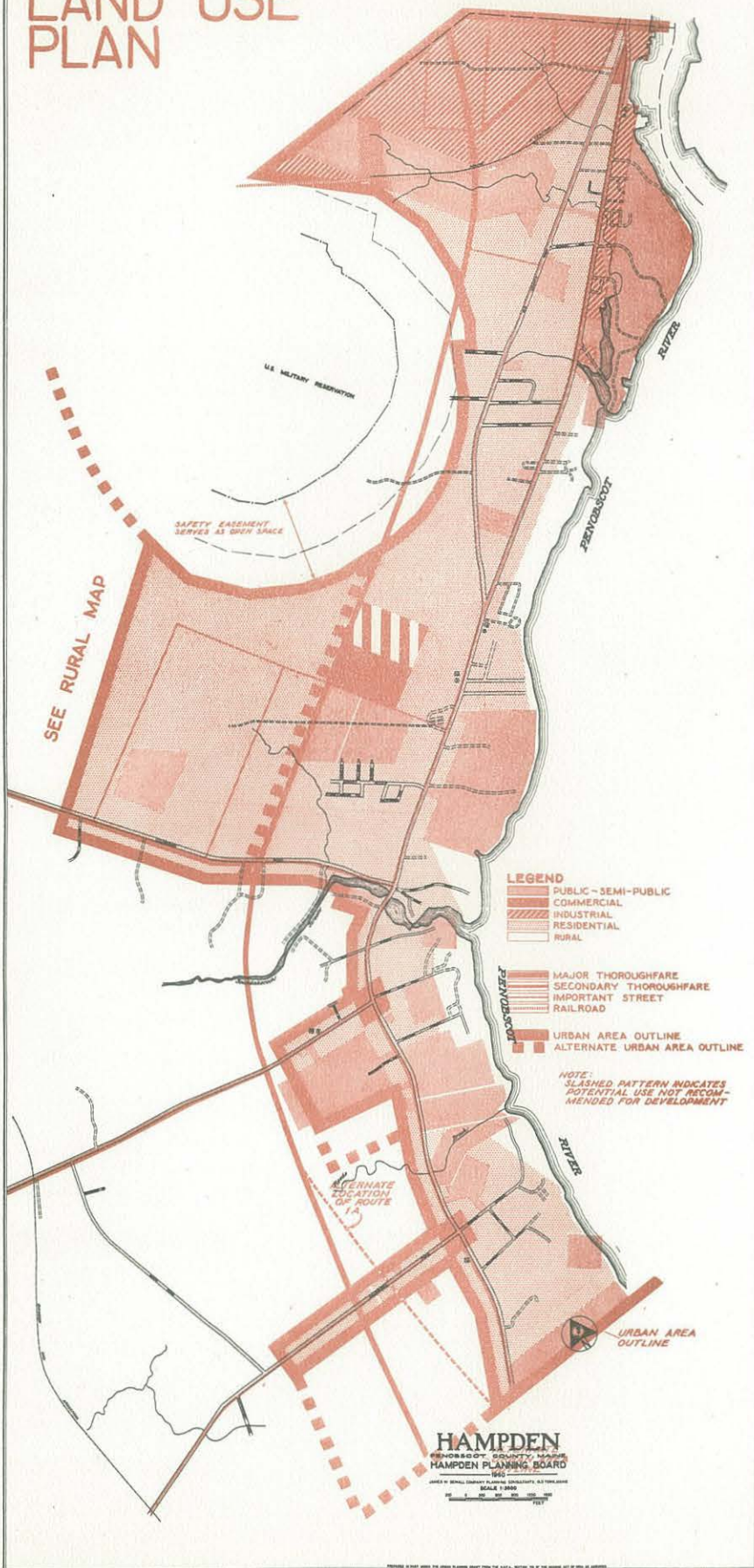
The zoning ordinance now in effect in Hampden is out of date. A new ordinance is needed to reflect the contemporary needs and goals of the community. An ordinance, incorporating contemporary development standards for commercial, industrial and residential districts, was drafted as part of the planning program to implement the land use proposals of the plan. One of the most important functions of zoning in Hampden is to control the direction and spread of future residential development and to channel compact development into planned areas. Zoning is the only means of control available to the town to prevent continued scattered settlement in the future.

Subdivision regulations and a mobile home park ordinance also were drafted as part of the comprehensive plan.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND CAPITAL BUDGET

The comprehensive plan is a set of recommendations based on facts, figures, conclusions and observations which are translated into actual performance in various ways. One of these is the appropriation of money for capital improvements proposed in the plan. To facilitate the orderly allocation of funds for this purpose, a capital improvement program and a six-year capital budget suggest financing and timing of expenditures for community facilities and streets. These documents serve as guides for the Planning Board in making its annual recommendations to the town. The final authority for implementing the Board's proposals rests with Town Meeting.

PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN



SEE RURAL MAP

U.S. MILITARY RESERVATION

SAFETY EASEMENT SERVES AS OPEN SPACE

- LEGEND**
- PUBLIC - SEMI-PUBLIC
 - COMMERCIAL
 - INDUSTRIAL
 - RESIDENTIAL
 - RURAL
 - MAJOR THOROUGHFARE
 - SECONDARY THOROUGHFARE
 - IMPORTANT STREET
 - RAILROAD
 - URBAN AREA OUTLINE
 - ALTERNATE URBAN AREA OUTLINE

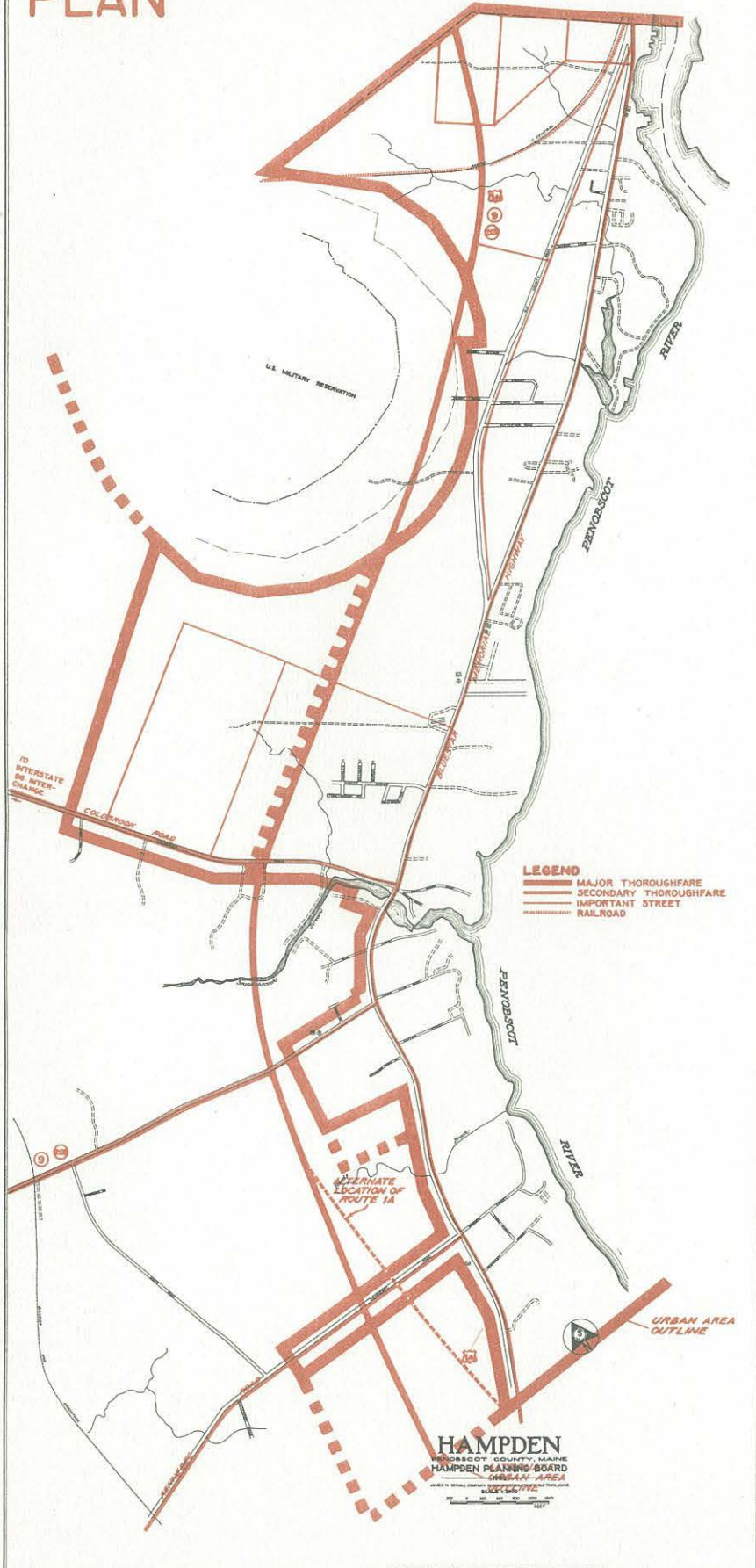
NOTE: SLASHED PATTERN INDICATES POTENTIAL USE NOT RECOMMENDED FOR DEVELOPMENT

ALTERNATE LOCATION OF ROUTE 1A

URBAN AREA OUTLINE

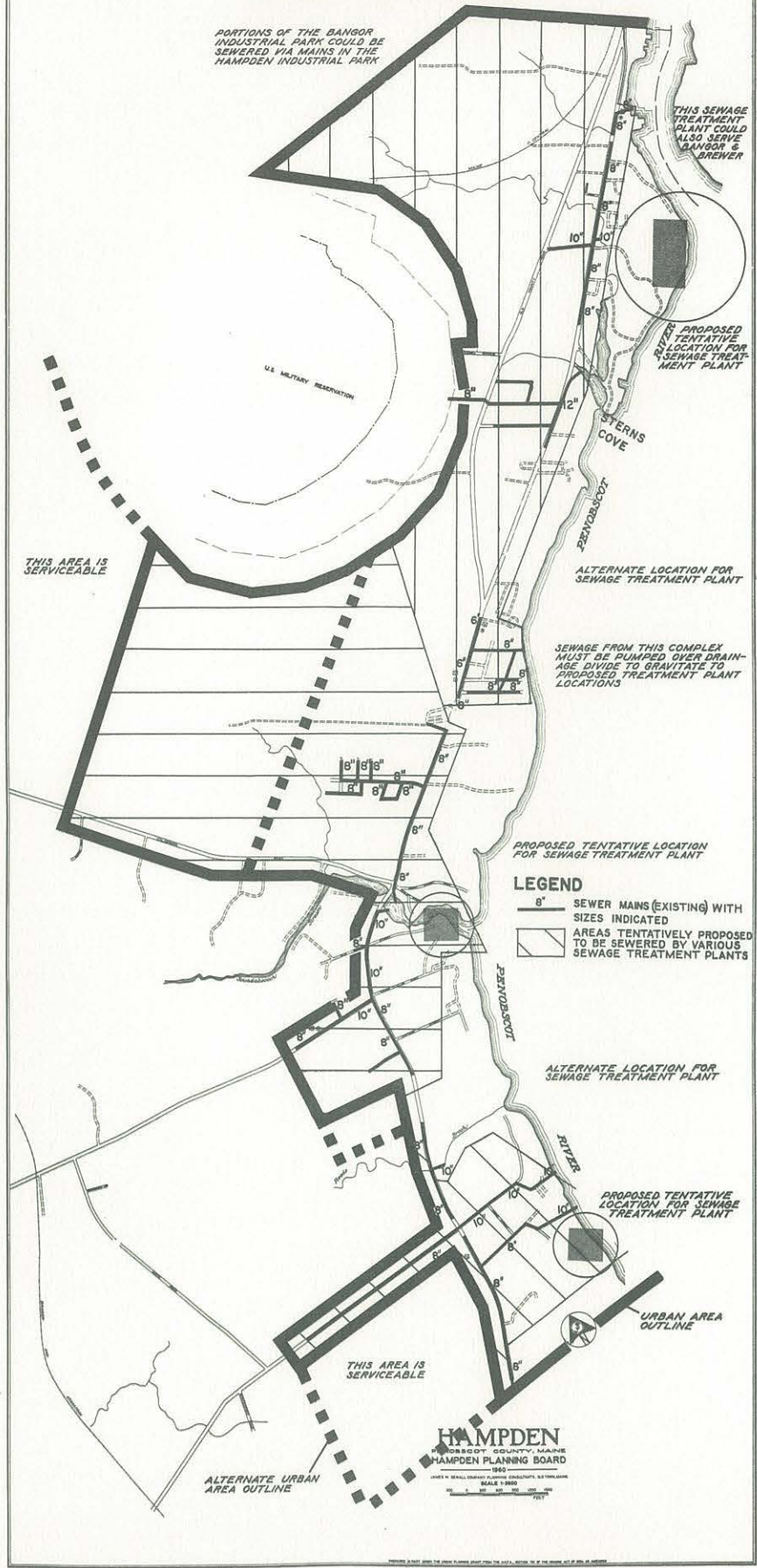
HAMPDEN
HAMPDEN COUNTY, MASS.
HAMPDEN PLANNING BOARD
SCALE 1:10,000

THOROUGHFARE PLAN



SEWER

PORTIONS OF THE BANGOR INDUSTRIAL PARK COULD BE SEWERED VIA MAINS IN THE HAMPDEN INDUSTRIAL PARK



HAMPDEN
 HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS
 HAMPDEN PLANNING BOARD
 1960
 SCALE 1"=200'

