Town of Pittston

Comprehensive Plan

ADOPTED MARCH 21, 1998

Ann M. Chadwick
Town Clerk

Prepared by the Pittston Comprehensive Plan Committee
Laura Walentine, Chair

(current and former members of the committee)

Wanda Burns-Macomber
Roberta Schacht
Harold "Butch" Norton
Silas Lawrence
Sharon Gleason
Christine Holzinger
Maxine Heath
Louise Kruk
Vincent Werber
Steve Baker
Ivy Norton

with assistance from Kennebec Valley Council of Governments

Pittston Comprehensive Plan 1998

Table of Contents

March, 1998

Dear Friends and Neighbors;

You hold in your hand a copy of the new Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Pittston. This plan is actually a revision of the town plan from 1974 -- about 25 years ago -- prepared to conform to the requirements of the state's Comprehensive Planning Law.

Preparation of this plan has been a community-wide effort. Here are some of the stages we went through in developing this report:

- The selectmen appointed an official comprehensive planning committee in 1994, and we have been meeting nearly every month for almost four years now. The original committee had 11 members; Since then some have dropped off and others have joined.
- In 1995, we requested a grant from the State Planning Office. While waiting for the grant, we conducted a townwide public opinion survey. Town meeting had already voted to raise nearly $6,000 as the local match for the grant.
- In 1996, we finally received the grant, and set to work in earnest. We took out a membership in Kennebec Valley Council of Governments and used the grant money to hire them as consultants. Since then, a KVCOG planner has attended every one of our monthly meetings.
- Every year at town meeting time, we have prepared a report on our activities so far, and issued an open invitation for new members. Also, several times we have invited town boards and officials to meet with us, with the result that we have met with the selectmen, fire chief, road commissioner, code enforcement officer, and others.
- In early 1997, we sent out another questionnaire, this time with some specific questions about what to put in the plan. We received answers back from about 200 households, and have relied heavily on your responses to shape our final recommendations.
- In late 1997, we finished our draft of the plan. After running it past the selectmen (and making a few last-minute changes), we submitted it for review by the state.
- A public hearing has been held, in conformance with state law, prior to the adoption of the plan at Town Meeting.

The most important element of this plan are its recommendations: They are found in the form of policies, at the end of each chapter, and action steps, collected into Chapter 8. They have came about as a unified effort of the planning committee, our town officials, and the hundreds of people who returned our questionnaires. We urge you to assist us in carrying out these recommendations which, we feel, will lead to a better future for Pittston.

Laura Walentine, Chair
and the members of the Pittston Comprehensive Planning Committee

As Table 1 shows, Pittston is growing at a fairly healthy rate, both in percentage and total numbers. It's not fast enough to be either impressive or scary, but it is enough to affect our planning for the future. For example, there are population thresholds under state law, which place additional burdens on the town as it grows. And for planning purposes, the town could be classified as a "growing suburb" of Bath, Augusta, and Gardiner.

Many Maine towns that are now growing, have in the past followed the same pattern of development: one of abandonment of small farm society in the late 1800's, followed by new suburban growth beginning in the 1950's. The graph below shows that this is the history of in Pittston, too, although the unique event of separating from Randolph makes it harder to visualize. The town's population in 1890 was 1,281, and showed gradual decline until a low in 1920 of 816. The town is still growing, but its big spurt was in the 1960's and 70's.

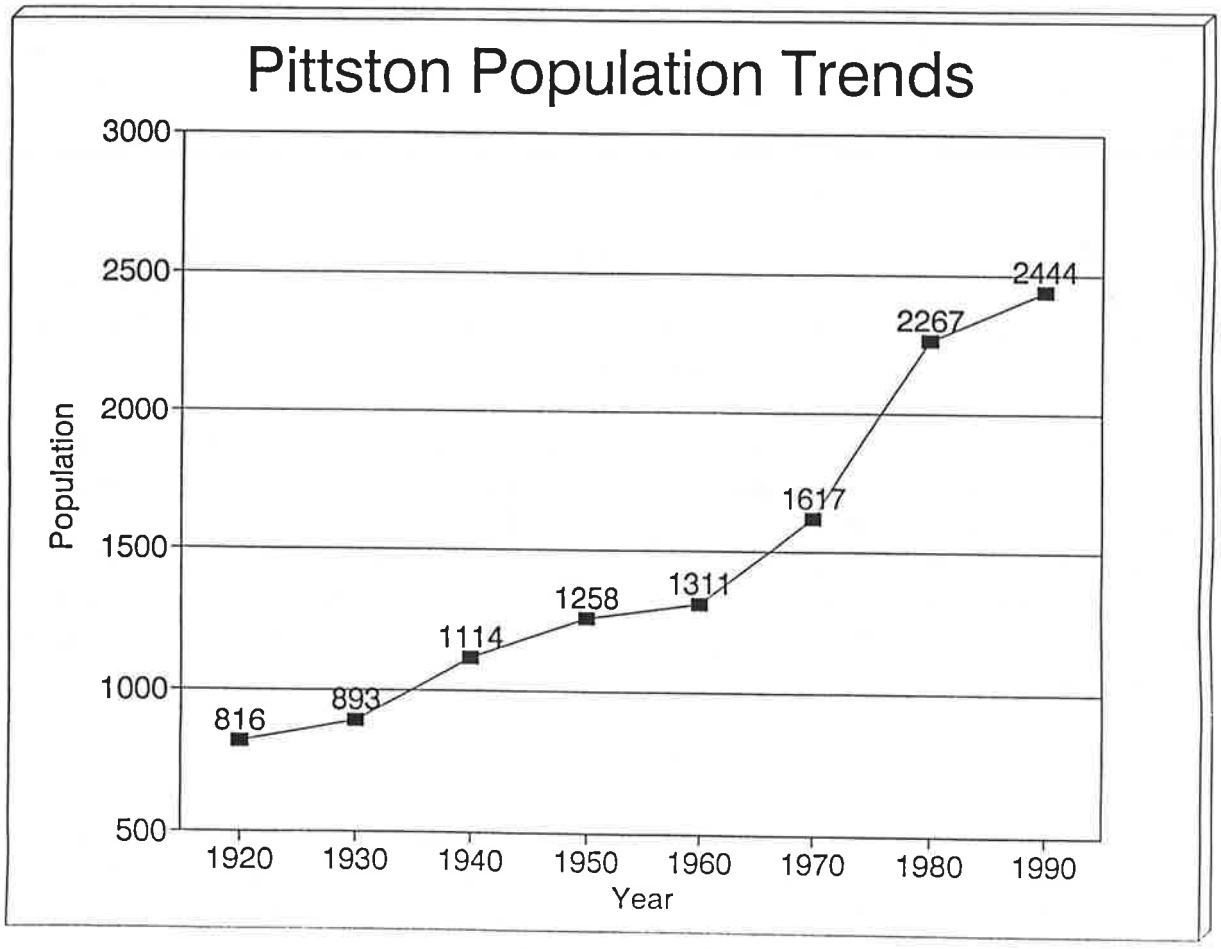

Figure 1

The Present:

Pittston's population grew by 23 percent in the 60's and 40 percent in the 70's. Between

1980 and 1990, it slowed to only 8 percent. What about since then? Are we following the same trend? The town's annual reports to the state Bureau of Taxation indicate that even in these recession years, we've picked up the pace of new housing construction. Between 1991 and 1996, 133 new housing units have been added to the tax rolls. Based on these numbers, Kennebec Valley Council of Governments estimated **a 1997 population of 2,709.** That is a gain of over 250 people, or about 10 percent, in six years. So, contrary to what our expectations would be with a poor economy, our growth rate in the 1990's seems to be more closely approaching that of the 1970's.

Future Growth:

The reason for examining trends of the past is so we can predict the future. We can make population projections, based on our past growth rates. But projections are not simply for guessing at future population levels. Projections force us to *choose a future*, or at least to understand what the impact will be of our present-day choices. If we encourage more economic development, for example, or limit home-building, we would be managing the growth trends that make up the projections.

For this reason, we need to look at more than one population projection. Each projection, below, represents different *assumptions*, that is, different ideas about how population trends might change in response to legal, economic, or social trends. We can choose our own future, so to speak, and see what the town can do to achieve it.

Low Projection is the most conservative number. For this purpose, we will assume, rather naively, that there will be no net migration into or out of town. This doesn't mean nobody at all moves; It means people moving in are exactly balanced by those moving out. But there will still be a population increase from natural growth: more people are being born in town than dying. In the 1980's, there were 62 more births than deaths. Therefore, if the town wanted to adopt a policy of only providing for the natural growth of local families, population estimates for the next 15 years would look like this:

Low Projection: 2000: 2,736 2010: 2,800

The moderate Projection looks at our historical growth from another perspective. How many new houses have been built in the past fifteen years, and what will happen if the same number are built in the next fifteen? This is not as simple as just adding up the population growth and turning it around. Complex social trends are affecting the numbers of people per household, as explained below. Factoring those trends into the equation, a town policy limiting new housing to the current rate would yield the following population numbers:

Moderate Projection: 2000: 2,820 2010: 3,160

The High Projection examines a third possibility: that we would keep growing at about the

same rate as we have in the past. This rate is basically reflective of suburban small towns without any growth management. For Pittston, this could be thought of as the "do nothing" projection. In order to get the most accurate estimate, we need to go further into the past, to where the trend toward suburbanization began. Between 1960 and 1995, our average growth rate was 2.1 percent per year. (In the past five "recession" years, it has averaged 2 percent.) If we use that to calculate future population, the numbers look like this:

High Projection: 2000: 3,000 2010: 3,700

Which of these projections is most likely? Based on past performance and current policies, the high projection is the best guess. But if the economy picks up, or more land becomes available for development in town, the number could easily go higher.

The purpose of the projections is not to try to hit the nail on the head, but to demonstrate how different factors influence population. They illustrate, in our case, how population growth is more dependent on the availability of land for development than regional economic trends. The fact that the population estimate for 1997 shows as much growth than the reputed "high-growth" 80's, indicates just how important local development decisions are.

Components of Change:

As mentioned above, growth of our town's population can be attributed to two factors: migration and natural change. *Natural Change,* as the difference between births and deaths, tends to remain roughly in proportion to the population.

The number of births will rise or lower, depending on the number of women of child-bearing age (births in the 70's and 80's increased, as the "baby boomer" generation had kids).

The number of deaths has generally been creeping down as we make gains in health care, although the death rate is actually going up in rural towns. This is because there are more elderly people able to remain independent, compared to years ago when they had to move in with their children or into urban apartments or nursing homes. In Pittston, the death rate is just holding steady, at about 19 per year. Births have been gradually decreasing, from about 30 per year in the early 80's, to closer to 25 per year now. But that means there is still a net increase.

Net Migration is the number of people entering or leaving the town. When more people move out than move in, the net is a negative number. When more move in than out, it is positive. Migration is erratic, because it depends both on economic trends and housing availability. When the economy is good, people move into the area, and vice versa.

In Pittston, most of the 1980's growth was attributed to migration. And since there is no great fluctuation in the natural increase numbers, it's safe to assume that most of the 1990's growth comes from migration as well. Since this migration came at a time of poor regional

economy, it's probably being generated by an active local housing market rather than outside factors. This is the "If you build it, they will come" approach to growth.

Migrations, births, and deaths make up the population changes. And we can use them to adjust projections depending on how we think the town is going. But the changing size of the average household also plays an important role.

Household size is the average number of people in a house (or trailer, or apartment). It seems a small and harmless number, but really is the result of all the major social trends in the country these days. Families are having fewer children, but that's not all of it. When an elderly person can live on their own instead of moving in with the kids, it creates an extra household. The same happens when a couple get divorced. Young people are waiting longer to get married. Unfortunately, nearly all the social trends are leading to the same result: fewer people per household.

Can we see the impact of these trends in a town as small as Pittston? Table 2 shows that, while Pittston's households started out larger (typical of a rural town), their average size is decreasing at least as rapidly as the state and national averages (typical of an urbanizing town).

Table 2
Household Size Changes: 1970-1990

Area	1970	1980	% change	1990	% change
Pittston	3.47	3.04	- 12.6 %	2.76	- 9.2 %
Kennebec County	3.16	2.74	- 13.3 %	2.55	- 7.0 %
Maine	3.16	2.75	- 13.0 %	2.56	- 7.0 %
United States	3.20	2.82	- 11.9 %	2.63	- 6.7 %

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990

We have to assume that the trend will continue, though perhaps it is slowing. KVCOG predicts that household size will decrease another five to seven percent during the decade of the 1990's. Our questionnaire -- answered by a good 20 percent of the town -- gave us a 1997 estimate of 2.63 persons per household (a 4.7 percent decrease in seven years). The question is, how does that affect our population and households?

The short answer is, you can't have a household without a house, and the fewer persons per household, the more houses the population fills up. To illustrate:

Pittston population in 1970: 1,617;
1970 household size: 3.47;

= occupied housing units: 466

If Pittston's population was the same in 1990 as it was 20 years earlier, but with the new household numbers? 1990's household size was: 2.76. That would have resulted in 586 occupied housing units.

Translation: Even if Pittston had absolutely no population growth in twenty years, we would still have built 120 more homes over that period. That works out to about six housing units per year. To carry that forward: of the 133 new homes added in Pittston between 1990 and 1997, 44 went to compensating for the decreasing household size and the other 89 added to the population. The implications for growth are that as long as household sizes continue to shrink, new houses will be necessary even to maintain a stable population.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

In order to understand our community better, it would also be nice to know something more about individual characteristics -- items like the personal history, age, and educational level of our citizens.

Nativity: As of the 1990 census, 85.4 percent of Pittston residents were "natives" born in Maine. Only six percent of the 1990 population had moved here from outside of Kennebec County. Over 70 percent of the population (1,752 persons) had lived in the same Pittston residence for more than five years.

As Pittston becomes "suburbanized", these figures will begin to change. We can measure whether people are moving in from out-of-town or out-of-state. Interestingly, in the 1997 questionnaire, even though 71 percent of the respondents have lived in town more than 10 years, 12 percent have lived here less than five.

Gender: In 1990, the population included 1,240, or 50.7 percent, females. For what it's worth, this is a reversal from 1980, when the proportion of females was only 48.1 percent.

Age Groups: Understanding how many older or younger people live here can help us to understand what our needs are (or will be). For example, if we know there are many children, we can identify recreation and education as important needs, if there are many young adults, we know we need more jobs -- and that we can expect even more children in a few years; If there are more older people, we should be planning for better senior services.

Also, over time, the percentage of the population in each age group changes. In 1970, 38.5 percent of the population was under 18 years old. These would be the tail end of the baby boom. In 1990, the percentage of "under 18" dropped to 26.4.

At the other end of the spectrum are the "elderly" population: persons over 65. Though

between 1970 and 1990, the percentage in this group went only from 11.5 to 11.8 percent, you can bet on it jumping up in 15 to 20 years, when the baby boom starts retiring. Right now, the baby boom "bulge" is at 30-50 years old. As the leading edge of the boom hits retirement, fifteen years from now, there will be a sudden surge in demand for things like elderly housing, medical services, and public transportation.

However, it might end up being earlier than that. Pittston is unique among our neighbors in that an unusually large proportion of our population is in the 45-65 age bracket. In 1980, there were 430 people in this age bracket. In 1990, there were 522 -- an increase of 21 percent (overall, population increased only 8 percent). This jump affected the overall median age. As the box at right shows, Pittston's median age jumped dramatically in one decade. Since we know that the percentage of natives and long-time residents in town is so high (from the previous page), it must be that quite a few of them are nearing retirement age. This means we really do have to start thinking about senior services and other accommodations for older folks sooner rather than later.

	Median Age 1980	Median Age 1990
Randolph	31.3	34.4
Gardiner	30.9	33.5
Chelsea	32.6	35.3
Pittston	31.5	35.0

Educational Attainment: In 1990, 187, or 11.8 percent of Pittston's over-25 population, had attained a college degree. This is somewhat lower than the average for other towns in the region. However, 80 percent of the group had a high school diploma, which is above the average for the region. So the conclusion could be that Pittston is a fairly well-educated but not particularly professional town. Figures from the next census could tell us whether that aspect of the town is changing.

Two: Pittston's History

Pittston's past is another major factor in what the town is today and what it will be like tomorrow. The character of a town is defined by the influences of history. In order to deal with this character, we need to know, first of all, how that history has come to influence our present-day community, and, secondly, what historical artifacts there are that we may choose to save as reminders to future generations.

Local History:

Pittston's settlement history draws from the overall trend of settlement along the Kennebec River. Though the Kennebec had been identified for possible settlement as early as 1607, there were only scattered attempts to do so through the 1600's and early 1700's. The establishment of Fort Western in 1754 supported the first serious attempts at town-building and development along the river. Pittston's first "commercial" area was known as "Smithtown," at the location of the current marina.

Pittston had a role in the American Revolution, as a stopover of General Benedict Arnold on his way up the Kennebec for the assault on Quebec in September of 1775. His 1,100 men were outfitted with 220 boats by Pittston resident Major Reuben Colburn. The boats were perhaps a bit hastily-prepared and not of the best quality, but just as well; Tradition has it that the descendants of Major Colburn are still waiting to be paid for them.

The present-day towns of Pittston, Gardiner, West Gardiner, and Randolph were at one time referred to as "Gardinerstown", after the land grantee, Dr. Sylvester Gardiner. But upon incorporation in 1779, the town was named Pittston, by John Pitt who introduced the Articles of Incorporation into the Massachusetts Legislature.

In 1803, the area to the west of the river split off to become Gardiner. In 1887, residents of rural Pittston had a falling out with those in the village of West Pittston, the town's commercial center, over whether the village should hook onto Gardiner's town water supply. The village split off to become the Town of West Pittston, shortly thereafter renamed Randolph. Since 1887, Pittston's boundaries have remained essentially unchanged.

Like many rural Maine towns, Pittston during the Revolutionary era was a thriving and

populous farm town. It's population at the time of incorporation was almost 1,400. The combined population of Pittston and Randolph just after they split was just under 2,500. However, the population at that time was already on the decline in rural areas; By 1920, it had dropped to 816.

The earliest industries in Pittston were lumbering, fishing and agriculture. Supporting those enterprises were sawmills and grist mills on the waterways. Other industries recorded were a potash plant in North Pittston, a pail factory, box factory, and sleigh & carriage works in East Pittston. There was also a tannery on Nehumkeag Stream. In the early 1800's, Kennebec River ice became popular as a refrigerant in city-dwellers' ice boxes, and for almost a century, ice-cutting was the dominant commercial enterprise in Pittston.

During the "ice boom," vast warehouses for ice were constructed along the Kennebec River, together with wharves, equipment buildings, and dormitories for the workers. At least eight icehouses were located in the Town of Pittston alone. But the business was fated to be wiped out, first by increased pollution of the river, then by electricity and modern refrigeration in the cities. 1917 proved to be the last year for ice harvesting. The warehouses were abandoned or moved, and subsequent fires or floods have taken care of any remnants.

The most significant influence on Pittston's 20th Century history has been the automobile. Pittston is located within easy commuting distance of Augusta, Gardiner, and Bath, and has grown into its role as a bedroom suburb. Population has grown from 1,311 in 1960 to over 2,700 today. While there are perhaps fewer locally-employed people, and definitely fewer local farms, the town today looks much busier (and more crowded) than at any other time in history.

Historical Assets:

Preserving the artifacts of our history for future generations is one of the objectives of this plan, and, in a recent town wide survey, was rated as "important" by 3/4 of the respondents. The most visible artifacts of the past are buildings or historical sites.

Pittston has two buildings currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They are:

- Major Reuben Colburn House (1765), on Route 27. The house is owned by the State and operated by the Arnold Expedition Historic Society. It is open to the public on a limited basis, and the grounds include walking access to the Kennebec River.

- The former Pittston Congregational Church, intersection of Route 27 and 194. The church was constructed in 1836, and served until 1894, when the "new" Congregational Church was built. It was subsequently sold to the Episcopalians and used by them for several decades. It is no longer in service, and the property is owned and used by a private party.

Many other standing buildings are of an historic nature:

- The Captain Nathaniel Bailey House is perhaps the oldest structure in town still in good condition. It was built in 1763. It's located at the corner of Route 27 and Kelley Road. It is still in private hands.

- The East Pittston Methodist Church, in East Pittston Village, was built in 1838, at a cost of $2,400.

- The Moody Mansion, located in East Pittston. Built in 1880 by wealthy Pittston-native-turned-New-Yorker, Leonard Moody, the mansion included accommodations for thirty guests, porches, recreation rooms, and even a 200-seat theater above the stable. It is still in good condition, in private ownership.

- The current Congregational Church, built in 1894 and located at the intersection of Route 27 and the Arnold Road. It still hosts an active congregation.

- The Colburn School house (date uncertain) is one of five former schools still standing. While the other four are now privately owned, Colburn School is the headquarters of the Arnold Expedition Historic Society, and houses various artifacts.

Of additional interest is the Tut-Hill Housing development located just north of the former Congregational Church on School Street. In developing the property, Kenneth Tuttle purchased and relocated several 19th Century buildings to the site, and has developed an essentially historical village.

There are two sites of historic interest, where the buildings no longer stand. One, reported by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, is noted as the "Nehumkeag Trading Post Site." It dates from ca. 1649. Information is not available on the location of the site. The other, known by local reputation only, is the cellar hole of Henry Smith's Tavern and house in Smithtown. This was the location of the first Pittston Town Meeting.

Predating European Settlement, Indian encampments were common along the Kennebec River, Eastern River, and Togus Stream. There is also the likelihood that encampments were located at Nehumkeag Pond. However, the few flat spots along the river that were likely to contain Indian artifacts were heavily developed during the Ice House Era, reducing the chances of discovering any significant sites. The only site on record with the MHPC is referred to as "Agry's Point," located at the outlet of Morton Brook.

Much of the information in this section was taken from Pittston, the local town history, self-published by Arlene Ireland.

Findings and Recommendations:

Pittston is an old river-and-farm town, that has evolved into a residential suburb.

Nevertheless, we can boast of more than our share of historical assets, and an active local historical society. Townspeople consider historic preservation activities to be an important priority in the effort to retain our sense of community.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION GOAL: Preserve local historic and archeological resources:

POLICIES:

1. Establish shoreland zoning and development standards to require analysis of development sites for archeological significance (high probability areas only).

2. Seek funding from grant programs that will pay for professional evaluation of potential historic sites and buildings in Pittston and follow up with initiatives to list identified candidates on Federal Register.

3. Appropriate money at town meeting for historic society to establish marker plaques on historic local homes.

Three: The Local Economy

This chapter addresses some of the characteristics and trends of Pittston from an economic perspective. While we all know there is little in the way of local employment or business, we know, too, that we are heavily dependant on economic trends within the region. The pressure of commercial development of our small-town character is not there, but the tradeoff is that most of us must commute to out-of-town jobs.

As we look back over the past few years, most of us can say we are making better money than we used to. But then, we have to deal with inflation, along with housing prices, taxes, and the increased cost of nearly everything. For each of us, the bottom line is whether we are better off than we used to be. A similar question can be posed for the community at large. Has our local economy and the welfare of our citizens gone up, down, or stayed just about the same? And if we are not satisfied with the answer, is there anything the town can do to help?

If there is anything the government has good numbers on, it is income and employment statistics. We can analyze them to determine the answers to these and other questions. For example, what is the level of town services we can afford, versus what we want? Another question might be, are higher income numbers only because wages are going up? Or, do changes in income and other measures indicate a basic change in either the types of jobs people in town are getting, or the educational level of residents, or just our earning power? Or, are there a whole different class of people moving into town?

Trends in Economic Well-being:

Table 3, on the following page, shows the history of income growth during the 1980's, both in per capita and household incomes. Because we are so tied into the economy of the region, it looks at Pittston in relation to nearby towns. "Per capita income" is the total income of the town divided by the total number of people; "Household income" is the total divided by the number of households. They use the same numbers, but they grow at a different rate, because households have fewer people now than in the past, and other factors. During the period of this table, total inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, was 59.8 percent (Base Year: 1980), so a difference (% change) above 60 percent is a gain in real income.

Table 3
Growth in Household and Per Capita Incomes, 1979 to 1989

	1979		1989		Change (%)	
Community:	HHI	Per Cap.	HHI	Per Cap.	HHI	Per Cap.
Pittston	**$14,272**	**$5,140**	**$36,250**	**$12,823**	**154**	**149**
Randolph	$13,987	$5,556	$28,389	$11,804	103	112
Chelsea	$13,824	$4,934	$26,271	$ 9,771	90	98
Whitefield	$13,969	$4,782	$28,272	$10,560	102	121
Kennebec Co.	$14,690	$5,966	$28,616	$12,885	95	116

Source: U.S. Census

This table demonstrates that Pittston is relatively well-to-do. Pittston's median household income grew by 154 percent during the 80's, which is 94 percent *after inflation* which means in real purchasing power. The town's current household income and rate of growth are both considerably higher than all of its neighbors and Kennebec County. Pittston, Randolph, and Whitefield have seen household incomes *more than double*, which is better than the average for Kennebec County.

These figures do not, however, measure the average income per worker, nor are they even the same households from one census to the next. It is possible that the dramatic change is due to either more two-worker families, or more higher-income households moving in to replace lower-income ones moving out. As we will see later, the number and occupation of the workers and the percent of the population working are important considerations.

Incomes seem to be keeping ahead of inflation in Pittston. But what about relative expenses, such as housing costs and taxes? The table at right shows some comparisons. It shows that income growth, on average, is running well ahead of housing prices and almost four times as fast as property taxes. The fact that Pittston's property taxes have actually not gone up as fast as inflation will be discussed in chapter seven. This calculation is based on the town's

	1980	1990	change
Household Income	$14,272	$36,250	+ 154 %
CPI (inflation)	82.4	131.7	+ 60 %
Home Value	$35,600	$75,800	+ 113 %
Property Tax on average home	$493	$696	+ 41 %

mill rates in 1980 and 1990, which could have had one-time fluctuations. But as far as our financial ability to afford homes and town services, it seems as if we were a lot better off in 1990 than in 1980.

Labor Force Characteristics:

The term "labor force" refers to the portion of the town's population who are either working or actively looking for work. According to the 1990 census, the labor force consisted of 1,234 workers, 49 unemployed for a rate of 4 percent. Ten years earlier, there were 1,036 workers, 48 unemployed, for a rate of 4.6 percent.

These figures run a little above those of the Maine Department of Labor shown below. DOL generally has more accurate figures, because they take an annual average rather than one-time count. DOL's annual figures show consistently low unemployment throughout the period. Even though 1991 marked the beginning of Maine's statewide recession, Pittston showed few ill-effects. This is typical of small rural towns that depend primarily on resource-based jobs. Though Pittston is no longer like that, the newcomers, at least seem to have relatively stable employment. The unemployment rate in Kennebec County, and in the more urban towns, has averaged above 5 percent during the 1990's. Part of this is attributable to the type of jobs residents are employed in, profiled below.

Pittston's Employment Trends in the 90's						
1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
1.34%	1.39%	2.20%	1.80%	2.10%	1.8 %	2.0%

Pittston gained workers between 1980 and 1990. That is not surprising. We would expect to see the number of workers increase when the population does. But in what proportion? Are there more workers per family? The conventional wisdom is that there are more and more families where both husband and wife have to work to make ends meet. But the trend in Pittston is shown in the table below.

Table 4

Pittston Labor Force Changes: 1980-1990

		Working Age Population			In Labor Force		
Year	Population	Total (%)	Male	Female	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
1980	2,267	1,631 (72%)	815	816	1,036 (63.5)	574 (70.4)	462 (56.6)
1990	2,444	1,901 (78%)	959	942	1,234 (65)	694 (72.4)	540 (57.3)

Source: U.S. Census

Pittston's working age population (16 and 0ver) has increased, but so has the percentage of that population that are in the labor force. Even though the town's population only grew by 177 in ten years, we added nearly 200 workers. Therefore, one of the conclusions we can draw is that household incomes grew in part because the labor force grew by 20 percent. Another conclusion is that, if current trends continue, there needs to be more than one new job available for every addition to town!

More important than the ratio of workers to population may be the ratio of workers to households. As explained in the housing report, a major factor in housing demand is because households are decreasing in size and increasing in number. The same is true with jobs. In 1980, Pittston had 1.39 workers per household. In 1990, it had 1.47. That means basically that every other family has a two-worker base, or, from the historical perspective, in 1990 there were five two-income families in every ten, compared to four in ten in 1980.

This is not necessarily because there are more wives working, however. Note the far right column in Table 4. Between 1980 and 1990, the percentage of women in the workforce rose by only 0.7 percent. In contrast, the percentage of men rose by 2 percent.

Future Employment Growth:

The labor force grows or shrinks, and takes the population with it. While the unemployment rate is low, now, in order to avoid it rising, past history shows we might have to add jobs at the same rate as we add population. Because jobs are tied to households more than population, table 5 illustrates how many jobs would be added to our 2000 and 2010 scenarios from page 5, using households as a guide. Remember that at least through 1996, we seem to be traveling along the "high projection."

Table 5

Job Demand as a result of Population Growth

	Number of Jobs to be added:	
	2000	2010
Low Projection	397	558
Moderate Projection	447	788
High Projection	554	1,134

1,100 jobs seems like a lot. It is almost twice what existed in 1990. But it is less than one for one with the expected population rise, so it won't be as dramatic as what went on in the 1980's. And new jobs are being created all the time. That is why, even with all the job losses and unemployment in the Augusta area, the raw number of jobs has risen steadily.

If we had to stay within the borders of Pittston to create all of these jobs, we would be in trouble. Fortunately, only one out of every twelve Pittston workers work within the town. Most

of the new jobs will be elsewhere in the region, likely Augusta or Gardiner. (see inset below.) That means that growth in Pittston is eleven times as dependent on regional economic development as on local.

Another factor affecting the demand for jobs is the age of the population. The table above assumed a constant proportion of working-age residents. But in about twenty years, baby boomers will begin retiring, and nationwide there is expected to be a shortage of workers to fill the vacant positions.

Our immediate concern is the present and near future. In 1990, there were 447 children between 5 and 17, i.e. entering the work force in the next ten years. There were only 133 adults 55 to 65, or headed for retirement this decade. Keeping the unemployment rate steady with those numbers means we need three new jobs for every one opening created by retirement. That means that every year, we need another 31 jobs to support people coming into the work force, with no population increase at all.

Commuter Patterns:

The census records what it terms "travel to work" data. We would call it commuter patterns. In 1980, 86 Pittston residents actually worked in town. In 1990, the figure stood at 98, which is still only 8 percent of Pittston's work force. Of those, 73 worked at home. (Another 69 people work in Pittston but live elsewhere.)

As can be seen from the inset, the lion's share (40 percent) of Pittston's workers work in Augusta, with 22 percent going to Gardiner, another 7 percent going to Hallowell or Farmingdale, and only 5 percent going to Bath. This is physically evident in the travel patterns, where we see the heaviest traffic headed north out of town in the morning and coming from the north in the evening. The average travel time to work was 23 minutes (in 1990).

WHERE Pittston WORKS	
Town	**Number (1990)**
Augusta	474
Winthrop	31
Farmingdale	21
Gardiner	261
Hallowell	66
Pittston	98
Whitefield	21
Bath	55
All other	158

Industry and Occupation:

Another aspect of Pittston's workers are the type of jobs they are employed in. The census reports data in general categories, but nevertheless we can see some pretty drastic changes in job types between 1980 and 1990. Table 6, on the following page, indicates that the sector we have always looked to carry the economy -- Manufacturing -- is shrinking. The "growth industries" are wholesale/retail trade and public administration.

Table 6

Changes in Industry Jobs, 1980 - 1990

	1980		1990		
Industry	Employed	%	Employed	%	Ten year change
Agriculture, Forestry	34	4 %	35	3 %	3 %
Construction	74	8	100	8	35 %
Manufacturing	188	21	133	11	- 30 %
Transportation/Communication	64	7	82	7	28 %
Wholesale/Retail Trade	141	15	289	24	105 %
Services	282	31	354	30	26 %
Public Sector/Education	113	13	192	16	70 %

Source: U.S. Census, 1980, 1990

Since the total number of workers increased by 32 percent in ten years, anything less than a 32 percent gain is also a "losing" sector. In other words, service-type jobs, even though gaining 72 actual jobs, is a smaller part of the work force than it was in 1980. There is, by the way, nothing in this table to explain Pittston's increased incomes or low unemployment rate. The shift of jobs from manufacturing to sales and public administration should have led to a wage decrease, and reliance on those two sectors could lead to future fluctuations in employment levels.

On a national scale, service sector and transportation/communication jobs are the hot growth industries, which is in contrast to Pittston's track record. We could look at this in two ways. Either we can expect things to even out, with the next census showing a big increase in local residents with service and T/C jobs, or for some reason, Pittston residents aren't trained or equipped for the type of economic growth likely to happen.

Local Business Profile:

Of the estimated 167 jobs in Pittston at the 1990 census, 73 of them were persons working at home, leaving 94 working at non-home jobs. That is not a large employment base by any standard. And in fact, other than Verhille's Hardware, a couple of variety stores and a few contractors, there are no employers in Pittston. McKee Construction is the largest contractor, and probably the largest single employer. The employment is seasonal, but they probably average less than two dozen jobs.

The number of home workers, though, constitutes an economic base all by itself. However, there are three general categories of home worker. The first are farmers. Table 6 indicated 35 persons employed in farming and forestry in Pittston, but probably half or less of them are actually owner-farmers. This group is not likely to grow significantly over the near

future. The second category are what we might call home occupations. This would encompass everyone from the home hairdresser and day care owner, to accountant and handyman. This probably made up the majority of home workers in 1990. This group is likely to grow at least as fast as overall employment in the future. In fact, the numbers in this group tend to grow faster in times of bad economy, and decrease in good economic conditions.

The third group is what we call "telecommuters." These are persons who work out of their house, even though their employer is located somewhere else. In 1990, this probably described only a small fraction of the home worker crowd. But, strange as it seems, 1990 was before the era of faxes, modems, and the Internet. It was also before the big surge in telemarketing, much of which is done out of the home. Especially in the area of technology workers, we can expect the number of telecommuters to expand way out of proportion to the rest of the economy in 2000 and beyond. Those people, and the workers necessary to service them, are probably the best promise of job growth that Pittston has.

Findings and Recommendations:

Pittston's economy and employment are almost entirely dependant on outside job centers. Only about 7 percent of residents work in town, and that includes the 4 percent that work in their farms or woodlands. About half of all workers commute to Augusta, Gardiner, or Togus. Therefore, local economic development efforts are not likely to be very productive.

Findings of the townwide public opinion survey more or less reflected this. People *disagreed,* by more than 2 to 1, with the suggestion that we encourage industrial development, or (by a smaller margin) commercial development. Only 37 percent think we should "actively promote" economic development, though only 7 percent think we should "actively discourage" it. Far more people think we should regulate it (see below). Though residents were less than enthusiastic about promoting local development, the most-favored were restaurant (43%), small retail (38%), small manufacturing (38%), and home offices (33%). Less than 10 percent of residents want to see large retail stores, large manufacturing, or an industrial park in Pittston.

Equally important is the need to retain the town's rural character in the face of unexpected commercial development. Many towns have been surprised by a sudden development which promises to create lots of jobs and tax base, but equally surprised when the business creates additional traffic, pollution, noise, or other, less desirable effects. We need an ordinance to ensure that any *major* new commercial development will fit in with the town's character.

In short, we should be looking for opportunities to build the economy on a regional basis, while not necessarily locally, and protecting ourselves from potentially harmful effects of new commercial development.

LOCAL ECONOMY GOAL: To promote an economic climate that provides job opportunities for residents while maintaining the town's rural character.

POLICIES:

4. Provide for local review and permitting of major commercial development. Consider especially development rules that will protect rural areas from the impact of development, while allowing residents the flexibility to develop home businesses.

5. Support regional economic development efforts.

6. Make information available at the town office on counseling and loan fund assistance to local small businesses.

Four: Local Housing Trends

Introduction:

Housing is the most visible statement we can make about our community character. The character of our homes-- appearance, location, quantity, even price -- make our town what it is. We can choose to encourage the type of houses that will promote our idea of what Pittston should be, or allow the random workings of the housing market to shape our character. To date, the market has functioned without interruption, resulting in the trends cited below.

Quantity and Occupancy:

The number and type of houses in Pittston is a measure of population and growth. Houses are directly related to population -- if one increases, so does the other. There is no population growth without more homes, though some new homes are necessary in any event.

Table 7
Housing Changes, 1960-1990

	1960		1970		1980		1990	
Tenancy	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
Total housing units	403	100	485	100	741	100	933	100
Year-round Occupied	340	84	440	91	712	96	877	94
Owner-	306	76	395	81	650	88	817	88
Renter-	34	8	45	10	62	8	60	8
Year-round Vacant	12	3	21	4	20	3	48	5
Seasonal	51	13	24	5	9	1	8	1

Source: U.S. Census

The basic figures on housing numbers appear in Table 7, above. The number of houses rose from 403 in 1960 to 933 in 1990, more than doubling in 30 years, and equaling 17 2/3 per year. This table shows a breakdown by "Tenancy" -- owner, renter or vacant -- since 1960. It

shows that, since 1970, the vast majority of new housing has been of the owner-occupied type. There was a jump in the vacancy rate from 3 percent to 5 percent during the 1980's, but the latter figure is closer to average for the area.

Table 8 shows how Pittston compares to some of the neighbors (Gardiner and Randolph are not included because they are distinctly more "urban" than Pittston). Like all rural towns, most of Pittston is owner-occupied, single-family homes. Pittston has the highest percentage of these among its neighbors. But, it has the lowest percentage of "stick-built" homes, made up for by the highest percentage of mobile homes.

Table 8

1990 Tenancy and Structural Characteristics: Pittston and neighboring towns

Tenancy	Pittston	Dresden	Chelsea	Whitefield
Owner-occupied	88 %	83 %	87 %	77 %
Renter-occupied	6	9	9	12
Year-round vacant **	5	2	3	5
Stick-built, SF homes	72	74	78	73
Multi-family Units	2	1	3	5
Mobile Homes	26	25	19	22

Source: U.S. Census

Table 9 updates the 1990 census with numbers from the town's Municipal Valuation Returns.

Table 9

New Houses Built in Pittston, 1991-1996

Year	Total	Single-family	Mobile Home	Multi-unit
1991	27	21	6	0
1992	20	15	5	0
1993	37	31	6	0
1994	18	6	12	0
1995	23	16	7	0
1996	14	8	6	0

Source: Municipal Valuation Returns

Note that new construction during the recession years of the early 90's has remained fairly steady, *averaging more houses per year than occurred during the 80's*. Housing-wise, Pittston is growing even faster now than it was back then.

Housing growth either too slow or too fast could be a problem for the town. Town services and the schools are keyed to the number of people served. If the population increases or decreases, those services might become inadequate or inefficient. Also, housing growth without a corresponding growth in jobs could create unemployment if the homes are occupied, and vacancies, with a corresponding drop in housing values, if they are not.

Pittston's town government can do little to control the rate of home-building. A quota or moratorium on building permits or multi-family conversions is legal only when it's a crisis situation, which it is not in Pittston. Subdivision and building regulations, by being either lenient or strict, might affect a builder's motivation for building in Pittston. Ironically, it's not so much what Pittston does, as what our neighbors do. For example, some towns have become final resting places for older mobile homes because other towns have banned them.

The Condition and Quality of Houses:

The quality of Pittston's housing can define the town as well. No one will dispute that a town mostly made up of historic mansions has a different character than a town full of mobile homes. Which is more desirable?. In 1990, Pittston had 673 single-family, 15 multi-family and 245 mobile homes. While multi-family and mobile homes are often thought of as lower-quality than single-family homes, this is not always the case. Contemporary mobile homes are on a par with economical stick-built ones. Many of the mobile homes in Pittston are sturdier and tighter than some of the older houses in town.

Some people think that mobile homes or apartments tend to produce more children and demand on schools, but on average, in Maine, there are fewer children per apartment or mobile home than per stick-built house. One reason for that is that stick-built homes tend to be larger, have more bedrooms, and generally accommodate larger families. Another is the perception that results from higher densities: a mobile home park, permitted with lots of 20,000 square feet, will almost always have more children than a subdivision with 2 acre lots.

We can get a better idea of our housing by looking at details from the census. For example, homes in Pittston average three bedrooms: 56 have only one bedroom and 67 have five or more. The average home has oil heat, though a good 1/3 have wood as their primary source. Four percent of homes have no telephone.

More important are health and safety considerations, for example the condition of the plumbing. One out of twenty homes in Pittston *do not have* complete plumbing facilities (indoor bathroom and kitchen sink). The same percentage (perhaps the same homes) use some "other means" of disposing of sewage than a septic tank or public sewer. 88 homes (roughly 10 percent)

are on a public water supply; The rest get their water from ground water, either a drilled (81 percent) or dug (19 percent) well.

Age of Housing:

Another quality measure is age. The box at right shows a breakdown of the age of houses in Pittston as of the 1990 census (another 140 or so have been added since 1990). It shows that 45 percent of the houses in town were built between 1970 and 1990. In Kennebec County, the average is 42 percent, indicating that Pittston's growth is just about average.

It also shows that over 1/4 of the houses in town are over 50 years old. While this may seem like a considerable number, it is below the average for Kennebec County of 32 percent and of Lincoln County's 39 percent. That means Pittston, in housing at least, is a rather newer town than average for the area.

1990: Age of Houses in Pittston

Age (years)	Number	Percent of total
0 - 5	66	7 %
6 - 10	76	8
11 - 20	268	30
21 - 30	128	14
31 - 40	70	8
41 - 50	54	6
over 50	227	26

Housing Costs:

Housing costs are another indicator of quality. If the housing that is built in town is of high value, it follows that it will also be of high quality. On the other hand, if the town experiences too much pricey housing, it could force lower income citizens (including our own grown children and elderly) to leave town. Local regulations can influence the price and quality of housing in many ways; for example, limiting mobile homes or requiring larger lot sizes tends to raise housing prices.

How much a house costs, either to buy or rent, is certainly an issue. Table 10, below, shows how Pittston compares to our neighbors in home value and changes during the 1980's. (Any estimates for the 1990's would only be anecdotal, but seems to indicate that housing prices have, if anything, risen no more than inflation.)

This table is from the U.S. Census, which means that the numbers are only the homeowners estimate of value, not an actual sales price. Also, to make the numbers comparable, the census counts only stick-built, single-family houses on ten acres or less.

Table 10

Regional Median* Housing Prices, 1980-1990

Town	1980	1990	% increase (after inflation)
Pittston	**$35,600**	**$75,800**	**53 %**
Dresden	$37,800	$87,900	72 %
Chelsea	$35,000	$72,900	48 %
Randolph	$33,600	$69,800	48 %
Whitefield	$34,700	$76,300	60 %
Kennebec Co.	$38,500	$79,300	46 %

* "Median" means exactly half of homes are above and half below stated value

Source: U.S. Census

This table shows that, while Pittston has not had the dramatic increase in values that Dresden has, it is just about in the middle of the neighborhood, both in housing prices, and rate of inflation. The higher priced and faster-rising houses are in Lincoln County; Pittston is tops among our Kennebec County neighbors.

But a more important issue is whether the prices are rising faster than incomes. If so, that would mean that our own residents are becoming less able to afford local homes. That is a real issue for young people who grew up in Pittston and want to stay here, for older people who want to get out of the big house but stay in town, and for all the others who have to pay taxes based on the value of their homes.

According to Table 10, average home prices in Pittston rose by 53 percent in the 80's. "Owner-occupied housing costs" rose 78 percent (from $277 in 1980 to $660 in 1990). However, Pittston's median household incomes rose by 94 percent (see information on incomes in Chapter three). Rents rose from $218 per month in 1980 to $314 in 1990, but that was a 20 percent drop, after adjusting for inflation. Both increases are considerably behind income gains. The indication is that Pittston's housing was more affordable in 1990 than in 1980, especially for renters.

We cannot, however, automatically assume that there is no affordability problem in Pittston. In 1990, thirty three renters (2/3 of the total number) used more than 30 percent of their income to pay their rent. Apparently, the overall increases in household income have not been felt among the town's renters. But also, five percent of homeowners are paying over 30 percent of their income for mortgage and other housing costs. So even though the statistics show housing in Pittston becoming more affordable, there are still many families in town who clearly are having trouble affording their homes.

The State has given towns the responsibility to provide an "opportunity" for housing for residents of all income levels. That generally means that the town cannot legislate against

"economy" housing, like mobile homes or apartments. For towns that have a more visible need, or stronger interest, there are positive measures such as recruiting or initiating an elderly housing project or housing authority.

"Affordable housing" has the impression of providing for slum dwellers, but that is not the reality. In small towns, it is seldom the hard-core welfare types who need affordable housing; it is the young families just starting out, or life-long residents that can no longer afford to keep up the family home. Starter homes and senior citizen housing are two of the fastest-growing housing types in Maine. Pittston should be thinking not of what low-income types may move from out-of-town, but what our own citizens might be needing in a few years. From the numbers, it appears that the rental housing market is the most strained.

Future Housing Growth:

We have drawn a statistical picture of our housing. But what does the future hold? We know that population growth implies more housing. And the trend towards smaller households means that we will need more houses regardless of growth.

Actually, it is houses and jobs that govern the growth of a town, not population. "If you build it, they will come." A town that encourages housing development will inevitably see a population boom. Conversely, controlling home-building also controls population growth.

To illustrate this better, we can project the need for housing units using the three scenarios for population growth we started with in Chapter One. Table 11 converts population projections to housing projections.

Table 11
Housing Projections for Pittston: 2000 and 2010

	1990	2000		2010	
Assumption:	Pop.	Pop.	New Houses	Pop.	New Houses
Low Projection	2444	2736	123	2800	68
Moderate Projection	2444	2820	156	3160	180
High Projection	2444	3000	225	3700	328

Source: Kennebec Valley Council of Governments

This table helps us to visualize the growth projections. 225 -- the highest estimate -- seems like a lot of new houses. It is, after all, 1/4 of the total number of houses in town right now. However, we have actual reports of 140 new houses between 1990 and 1996, so, despite the recession, we are if anything ahead of our highest projections for growth.

Findings and Recommendations:

Pittston has a relatively new housing stock, in part because of its emerging role as a suburb. It also has a relatively high (among neighboring towns) percentage of mobile homes. Though there are always exceptions, the quality of homes in Pittston is fairly high. Any exceptions tend to be either older mobile homes or makeshift, owner-built homes.

Affordability is not a problem among homeowners in the town, as much as among renters. About 2/3 of the renters are paying more in housing costs than they can afford to. There are no significant multi-family buildings in town, so it is not an issue of slumlords. It is probably more an issue of lack of economical housing for lower-income groups.

Affordable housing, as an issue, is low on the local list of priorities, if the questionnaire result is any indication. Townspeople are two to one in favor of a building code, which would improve the *quality* of houses. But "providing affordable housing" was ranked as "important" by only 43 percent of the responses, and the only two affordable housing ideas with more than 1/3 support are applying for low-income housing assistance grants and accessing Maine State Housing programs.

LOCAL HOUSING GOAL: Maintain the quality and affordability of housing for all residents.

POLICIES:

7. Work towards the adoption of a local building code, using state or national models but which is appropriate to local conditions and practices.

8. Improve the availability of information on Maine State Housing Programs.

9. Restructure funding for code enforcement and plumbing inspection to provide more incentive for follow ups and enforcement.

10. Support regional efforts at siting subsidized housing in urban areas.

Five: Public Services and Facilities

One of the main purposes of the comprehensive is to evaluate and plan for the services and facilities provided by the town (or other government unit) and paid for and used by the citizens. Are we getting the type and quantity of services we need, at the best price possible? Are there big changes lurking in the future, for which we may need to prepare and budget? These questions will be addressed in this chapter.

The following public services are offered to some or all residents of Pittston: fire protection, ambulance, transportation, solid waste, Public water (Gardiner Water District, Pittston Water District), public sewer (Gardiner Sanitary Treatment District), schools (SAD 11), library (Gardiner), harbor master, police (Kennebec County Sheriff) and town office services. These services are evaluated below.

Public Water:

Public water supply in the northwest corner of town is provided by the Gardiner Water District and paid for through user fees. Water distribution lines serve a short portion of Route 27 and areas near the school and town office, including several fire hydrants. The general condition of the distribution system is good, and total demand on Gardiner's supply is less than half of the 2,000,000 GPD capacity. The source of water is a well field in Gardiner.

The village of East Pittston is served by the Pittston Water District. The District serves a total of 18 connections with fairly new 4" Ductile Iron distribution line. The source of water is two wells located near the village. Though one is rated at 100 gpm, and the second at 27 gpm, their actual production (and any added hookups) are regulated by DEP because of the existence of a nearby gas plume (contamination). The district expanded to serve users who were affected by the pollution, and developed a Wellhead Protection Plan to deal with any future threats.

The remainder of the town is served by individual wells.

Public Sewer:

Sewer service is supplied to Pittston residents only in the northwest corner of town -- the school and approximately a dozen households. The sewer system is a very old one, though in

1982 the original collection system, which discharged directly into the Kennebec River, was rerouted into the Gardiner Sanitary Treatment District with an 8" line coming down from Randolph. The line runs down Route 27 for a short ways (about 300' south of Verhille's), with capacity available to allow for future expansion.

The remainder of town utilizes individual sewage disposal systems.

Education:

Public school education in Pittston is provided by School Administrative District 11. The Pittston Elementary School is located is located on old Route 27, between Routes 194 and 126. Junior High and High School are located in Gardiner.

Table 12 below shows enrollment trends of Pittston students over 15 years. While elementary enrollments have bounced around -- losing some in the early 80's, hitting a high in 1991, then again a gradual decline -- secondary enrollment has been on a slide for many years, accounting for an overall 12 percent enrollment decline over 15 years. There is evidence that secondary enrollments are rising again, as the primary bump of the early 90's reaches high school age. But it also looks as if the primary enrollments are sinking again.

Table 12
Pittston Enrollment Trends

	1995	1993	1991	1989	1987	1985	1980
Elementary	342	361	365	354	330	298	355
Secondary	110	88	112	132	137	155	160
Total	452	449	477	486	467	453	515

Source: Maine Dept. Of Education

This trend is not unique to Pittston. Though our enrollment is only 17 percent of the SAD 11 total, the SAD as a whole has similar figures, dropping about 10 percent in enrollment between 1980 and 1995, with secondary showing a large decline and elementary a much smaller one.

It needs to be noted that at the same time as our school enrollment was dropping by 12 percent, Pittston's overall population grew by 19 percent. This may be caused in part by families having fewer children, and part by older persons moving to town. But it is evident, for the moment at least, that our population growth is not driving and need for increased school capacity.

Operating and capital investment decisions are made by the SAD, with little input from the town. Townspeople have expressed concern over the quality of the educational product in relation to its cost. Between 1991 and 1996, SAD 11's assessment rose from $555,000 to over

$1,000,000 (and as a proportion of Pittston's total assessment from 67 percent to 76 percent). Satisfaction with the school system has not risen proportionately.

Public Safety:

Police protection is formally provided by the Kennebec County Sheriff and State Police. One state trooper resides in town. Two other officers of neighboring (municipal) police forces also reside in town. Coverage is considered to be adequate.

The town also employs a harbor master, although it does not have any public landings or moorings, and an Animal Control Officer.

Emergency Services:

The Pittston Fire Department provides fire protection throughout Pittston. The department functions with volunteers, though since 1991, volunteers have been compensated for on-site and training time. We have mutual aid agreements with Gardiner and Randolph. The department responded to 45 calls in 1996, a little less than one per week. That is a three-year low.

The effectiveness of fire protection is rated by the Insurance Standards Organization (ISO) on a scale of 1 to 10, one being the best. A town with no local department rates a 10; A city like Gardiner rates a 4. Local homeowner's premiums are set according to this rating. Our department rates an ISO rating of 8 in most of the town, and 7 in the areas accessible from fire hydrants.

The primary fire station is located in the northwest corner of town, adjacent to the Town office. It is a large structure, with three bays housing four trucks, and built around 1970. It is adequate for current use, though if the department has to replace an older truck with new, larger units, it could require some reshuffling to fit. The department also maintains a branch station in East Pittston Village. This is a much older structure, housing two vehicles behind one door. It is still structurally sound.

The department operates several vehicles. The newest is a 1994 Ford Tanker, acquired new for $138,000. Other vehicles include a 1987 GMC Tanker, a 1978 Ford Pumper, and a 1975 Ford Pumper. Although all in good condition, it is expected that the latter vehicle will require replacement in a 5 to 10 year plan. The department also owns a 1951 Dodge 4x4, used as a Forestry truck, and has recently purchased a 1989 Ford Ambulance body, for use as a utility/support truck.

Fire and Ambulance (Gardiner) respond through Gardiner 911 Dispatch Service. The Town pays Gardiner for the service. A recent dramatic rise in service fee from the City has prompted selectmen to look for alternatives. Several alternatives may be available once the statewide E911 system becomes operational. The Town is currently reviewing local information

and preparing for E911 implementation.

In addition to the prospect of a new truck within ten years, the primary concern of emergency services is the prospect of the natural gas pipeline being routed through town. This will prompt unanticipated special equipment and training needs.

The fire department functions on an annual appropriation of $17,900, plus donations through various fund-raising activities. That amount in 1997 was the same as 1996, and up just $2,150 from 1991. Additional appropriations include $8,000 per year into the reserve for future fire equipment (balance of $20,423 on December 31, 1996), and $10,000 per year for compensation for fire fighters (training and fire calls). In 1997, the cost of dispatching operations from Gardiner jumped from $3,500 to $13,000. The cost of ambulance from Gardiner jumped from $20,000 ($17,000 actually spent), to $25,000, with another jump anticipated in 1998.

Highways:

The primary transportation system in Pittston is its road network, of which there is a total of 52 miles in Pittston. The town is responsible for all the local roads, accounting for approximately 34.7 miles. About 9.4 miles of that is unpaved. The state maintains Routes 27, 194, and 126, accounting for 17.3 miles.

Table 13, covering the next few pages, is an itemized list of the state and town roads, including their length, surface type, and general condition. The list was created by the comprehensive planning committee, with the assistance of a selectman and road commissioner. If this list were to be fleshed out, with more specific details of problems, remedies, costs, and priorities, it could form the basis of a multi-year priority list of road projects, allowing us to budget ahead instead of react year-to-year. It has been shown that such a strategy saves money in the long run.

Table 13
Pittston Road Inventory

Road Name	Mileage	Surface	Condition
Route 27	6.13	Paved	very good
Route 27/126	0.08	Paved	good
Route 126	4.91	Paved	good
Route 194	6.23	Paved	fair
Pinkham Road	1.08	paved	good w/some poor

Blodgett Road	2.68	½ paved/gravel	Fair/poor
Old County Road	2.11	Gravel	fair/poor
Blinn Hill Road	1.95	Paved	fair
Nash/Alna Road	2.02	Paved	good
Mast Road	1.20	Paved	good
Warren Road	1.10	Paved	very good
Beech Hill Road	2.71	Paved exc. Gravel 0.5 mi.	Fair
Jewett Road	1.88	Gravel/dirt	poor/xpoor
Hunts Meadow Road	1.31	Paved	good
Patterson Road	0.42	Gravel	poor
Nelson Road	0.66	Paved	good
Old Cedar Grove Rd.	1.88	½ paved/gravel	good/fair
Crocker Road	0.50	½ paved/gravel	good/poor
Moulton Road	0.51	Paved	good
Town Farm Road	0.50	Gravel	fair
Ripley Ct.	0.04	Gravel	fair
Peaslee Road	0.18	½ paved/gravel	fair
Lancaster Road	0.69	Paved	good
Kelly Road	3.34	Paved	good
Caston Road	0.42	Gravel	fair, needs culvert
Ledge Hill Road	0.52	Gravel	Fair
Parker Road	0.55	Gravel	xpoor
Palmer Road	1.25	gravel	fair
Hanley Road	0.58	½ paved/gravel	fair

School Street	0.49	Paved	fair (improve for school)
Smithtown Road	0.81	Paved	fair/poor
Webb Road	1.06	Paved/gravel	fair
Arnold Road	0.62	Paved	fair
Ripley Road	0.24	Paved	fair
Stage Road	0.48	Gravel	fair
Stoney Acres Road	0.31	Paved	good
Troop Road	0.66	paved/dirt	fair
Country Lane	unk.	Gravel	not accepted

A discussion of roads in town must include an examination of the use of those roads, in terms of traffic. DOT places roads into three categories, called "functional classifications," based on the type and volume of traffic they are designed to hold. "Arterial" roads are those designed to move large volumes of traffic and commerce from town to town; In Pittston, no roads are classified as Arterials. "Collectors" are roads which funnel traffic from arterials onto residential access and also perform a minor arterial function; All three state-numbered highways are in that classification. All other roads are considered "minor", or residential access.

The classification of a road dictates how well it must be built for a certain traffic capacity and load. We can then measure the traffic load and determine how well the street is functioning. The number of vehicles per day is called "Average Daily Traffic."(ADT). DOT measures traffic volumes in Pittston, on the state roads. Table 14, below, shows traffic volumes and growth rates over ten years(a 3.5 percent per year growth rate equates to traffic doubling in 20 years).

Table 14

Local Traffic, as measured by Maine DOT

Location	1993 ADT	Annual Growth Rate
Route 27 at Togus Stream Bridge	10,720	4.1 %
Route 27 north of Route 194	8,290	4.3 %
Route 126 at Town Office	4,090	6.9 %
Route 126 at North Pittston	1,600	2.1 %
Route 194 east of Route 27	2,480	4.2 %
Route 194 at East Pittston	1,430	3.4 %
Route 194 at Whitefield town line	810	6.6 %

The increase in traffic is as much a community character concern as a public facilities one. While a road deteriorates faster the more vehicles are on it, anything under 5,000 cars per day really doesn't make much difference. However, more traffic leads to more congestion, delays, and accidents on what we still think of as "rural" roads. At the rates cited in the table above, most of the roads in Pittston will carry twice as many cars 20 years from now; Parts of the road network will carry twice as many in ten!

More traffic results from people living farther away from activities, more so than growth. Note that population growth in Pittston is a little under 1 percent, so traffic is increasing about four times as fast. Even Whitefield's booming population can't really be blamed for the increase. On Route 194, there are about 400 more cars per day coming out of Whitefield since 1980. That accounts for almost all of the increase through East Pittston, but less than ½ the increase where it meets up with Route 27.

On most roads in Pittston, twice as much traffic really won't be noticeable. But at the point where the major roads come together, it might be. At current growth rates, in ten years the intersection of Routes 27 and 126 will handle more traffic than now goes through the intersection of Route 27 and Windsor Street, just north of us in Randolph. That town has been lobbying for a stop light for several years.

DOT also tracks accident rates as a means of determining which intersections or road segments may be hazardous. Statistically, the most hazardous intersection in Pittston is the corner of Blinn Hill and Nash Roads, with 3 accidents in the three-year period 1992-4. The intersection should be re-aligned. Several non-intersection points have higher accident rates, though. Route 126, between Webb Road and Pinkham Road, had 13 accidents in the same time period, and Route 27, between Trott Road and Caston Road, had nine.

There are three points of local concern. They are: the junction of Route 194 and Kelley Road (no stop sign), the junction of Route 126 and Jewett Road (lack of sight distance), and Haskell Hill on Route 194 (bad curve).

The town's only bridge concern is replacement of the Hunt's Meadow Road Bridge. The town has been appropriating money into a Reserve, which after the 1997 Town Meeting stands at about $68,000, enough to pay the local share of reconstruction. However, the most recent inspection by DOT indicated that the bridge will be serviceable for several more years.

Opportunities for other forms of transportation in Pittston are very limited. Kennebec Valley Community Action Program (KVCAP) runs a demand-response service for disabled persons, and there are some taxi services that serve Pittston. There are no air, rail, bus or other local connections.

The Town elects a Road Commissioner and employs him to oversee all maintenance and road improvement jobs. The Town contracts separately with an independent operator to perform

Winter Maintenance. In general, this arrangement is satisfactory, though at times in the past, the Town has had some problems in shifting from one contractor to another. This situation could be improved by developing a more specific and clearly-worded contract, particularly with reference to options for renegotiating on multi-year contracts.

Solid Waste:

Solid waste disposal in Pittston is the responsibility of the individual. Local waste is either picked up by contract or taken by the homeowner to Hatch Hill Landfill in Augusta. The town pays $30,000 a year for this privilege, with residents paying tipping fees through their haulers. There is no longer a convenient recycling center.

The town has had an on-again-off-again recycling program. While there is still a local recycling committee, it has been inactive for some time, only just showing signs of life again. Attempts at establishing a local recycling drop off have failed in the past. The Town would like to re-establish a recycling program, to improve our recycling rate. Currently, most recycling is done at the discretion of local haulers. Pittston is the only town among the Hatch Hill users that failed to report a recycling rate in 1996. Local figures, however, indicate that we are meeting the recycling rates established by state law.

Recreation:

Despite its ideal location, many natural assets, and growing population, Pittston has relatively little organized recreation. There are only two publicly-funded recreation sites. One is Colburn House, a State Historic Site, consisting of the house and 7.4 acres. Although the property includes over 500 feet of Kennebec River Shoreline, the bank is not easily accessible and has not been developed for recreational uses. The other is the facility at the elementary school, consisting of a playground and small basketball court.

There are quite a few privately-owned recreational sites in town. A 1989 survey by Ivy Norton recorded 21 private access sites, boat ramps, and beaches on Kennebec River, Eastern River, and Nehumkeag Pond. These are available to the public in varying degrees, some not at all.

The major recreational facility in Pittston is the Pittston Fairgrounds. Owned by the Pittston Fair Association, it is the site every June of the Pittston Fair and of other community events throughout the year. The site is developed and well-maintained. The Town contributes $1,500 per year to the fair.

There is a network of snowmobile trails within the town, though not all of them have full public access rights. They are maintained by the Pittston Prowlers Snowmobile Club, with the cost covered by local registration fees.

Town residents have access to Gardiner's Summer Youth Recreation Program, but they must pay their own way. The Town has the opportunity to contribute on behalf of residents, but has chosen not to.

Library:

Pittston has no local library, but utilizes the Gardiner Public. The library and grounds are owned and operated by the Gardiner Library Association. The library itself contains a collection of over 35,000 books, plus other materials. Pittston pays an annual sum based on the prior year's usage by local residents. Over the past few years, this has averaged around $16,000 per year.

Town Office:

Pittston's town office is located on Route 126 just east of the intersection with Route 27 in the northwest corner of town. The structure was built in 1984 at a cost of $42,000 and houses the general office functions and selectmen/board meetings.

An expansion to the town office has been anticipated for several years, and in 1997 the Town Meeting appropriated $30,000 to set aside for construction. The expansion would expand meeting and office space, but no final design has been set. A committee appointed to make recommendations has decided on a design and will be presenting their findings to Town Meeting in 1998. Additional funds will be required over what is now available.

Fiscal Capacity:

Beyond the physical provision and planning for public facilities, we need to determine whether we are financially prepared for the needs of our public services. Needs are generated by growth -- both of the population and of new or expanded programs mandated by the voters or state/federal levels of government. But our budget is generated by our tax base. "Fiscal capacity" is the ability of our tax base to keep up with the demands on the local budget.

The best way to do that is to look at our past and current situations and extrapolate into the future. Fortunately, we have a lot of good numbers on the town's tax base. Table 15, on the next page, illustrates how our "bottom line" compares to the other towns in our region.

Pittston has shown a significant annual growth rate in its tax base, of 10.6 percent per year. That would include both new construction and adjustments for inflation. Pittston and Whitefield have almost identical tax bases. Whitefield's assessment is over $100,000 less, which is more than a point on their mill rate, but because they have fewer people, the actual tax per capita is higher. In fact, except for Randolph, Pittston has the lowest tax assessment per capita of any of the towns listed and, except for Whitefield, the lowest mill rate.

Table 15

Regional Valuation, Mill Rate and Assessment Figures

Town	Valuation (in millions $) 1985	1995	Annual growth (%)	1993 Full Value Mill	Assessment 1993	per capita
Randolph	19.35	49.5	9.8 %	12.49	618,507	$ 318
Gardiner	86.45	201.0	8.8	20.11	4,043,797	602
Whitefield	25.75	78.85	11.8	9.81	773,725	387
Chelsea	21.85	68.85	12.2	15.01	1,033,941	404
Pittston	**28.25**	**79.9**	**10.6**	**11.11**	**888,456**	**335**
Dresden	18.65	52.45	10.9	13.78	723,222	482

Source: Municipal Valuation Return, Statistical Summary; Bureau of Taxation

These figures are from 1995, because it takes a long time for towns to report to the state and the state to compile all the figures into a statewide report. More recent figures for Pittston alone indicate that, because inflation and development have slowed, our tax base is only growing by $2.5 million (about 3 percent) per year. Nevertheless, that annual growth means about $35,000 per year in new tax revenue (keeping the tax rate steady). In other words, if we can keep tax assessment increase to less than $35,000 per year, we will be just maintaining our existing *fiscal capacity*.

Findings and Recommendations:

Although now with a population over 2,700, we still view ourselves as a "rural" town, with a level of public services suited for one. But because of our location and amount of developable land, we may more accurately be classified as a "growing suburb," and we will soon (if we have not already) be experiencing demands from new residents for better roads, schools, police protection, recreation, and other services. Judging from the experience of other towns with similar population and growth rate, we can expect a lot more pressure on our tax rate in the next decade.

This makes it doubly important that we not only manage the year-to-year budget effectively, but that we plan ahead to avoid major, one-time expenditures. That means doing a good job of anticipating state mandates and local needs for capital purchases, pursuing grants and other outside funding sources where available, and choosing funding strategies that will spread major expenditures over several years.

Our survey found that residents are generally satisfied with the current level of public services. The exceptions to that statement are recreation and solid waste. And, while there were clear majorities that favored such things as starting (restarting) a recycling program, obtaining a recreation site on the Kennebec River, and maintaining the school, there was overwhelming sentiment to limit expenditures on town facilities as a means of keeping the tax rate down.

PUBLIC SERVICE GOAL: To make the most economical use of tax dollars in providing the desired facilities and services to the residents of Pittston.

POLICIES:

11. Complete planning and raise remainder of funding for expansion of the Town Office.

12. Seek grant opportunities to acquire and develop recreational property, especially along the Kennebec River.

13. Improve solid waste disposal options through regional cooperation, but including a local recycling program.

14. Seek the most efficient local solution to regional provision and delivery of emergency dispatching and ambulance services.

15. Establish a Road Management Plan, which will inventory the current needs of town roads and prioritize them for maintenance, paving, or reconstruction.

16. Establish a program to construct turnarounds at the terminus of dead end roads, and require that new roads be constructed accordingly.

17. Encourage the DOT to move replacement of the Hunt's Meadow Bridge and reconstruction of Route 194 up on its priority list.

18. Seek ways to provide more effective overall administration for the Town, including, if warranted, professional services.

19. Establish a Capital Improvements Plan, along the lines of the Capital Investment Plan, described below:

A Capital Investment Plan is an outline for a program of capital purchases. The actual program is updated each year and contains a lot more information about prospective purchases, particularly as to whether the purchase is necessary, mandated, or an upgrade, and the relative merits of alternative sources of funding. Although its primary purpose is to plan ahead for major costs, its secondary purpose is to demonstrate to townspeople that all the individual and competing items on the list have been fairly and equally prioritized, and that even the lowest priorities have some chance of being funded.

The program will enable us to identify which "wish list" items may be eligible for grant applications, so we may be better prepared. Most grant programs require that you provide evidence that your request has been planned out locally and is the highest priority the town has.

Also on the table below is an entry for "road system improvements." This is to be coordinated with Policy #15, above. Once the road management plan is established, we will be able to forecast several years in advance the location and cost of improvements, and that can be included in the Program. The $50,000 figure included below is just an estimate, based roughly on past expenditures. The goal is to be able to raise the same amount year after year, without each year debating which road jobs can be shoehorned into the budget.

Capital Investment Plan			
Project	**Target Year**	**Cost**	**Source of Funding**
Town Office Expansion	1999	$60,000	Appropriations
Pumper Truck	2005	$180,000	Reserve @ 14,000/yr
Hunt's Meadow Bridge	2001	$50,000	in Reserve
Road system improvements	Annual	$50,000	Local Roads Funds
Hatch Hill Closure (regional decision)	unknown	proportion of total cost	reserve established

Six: Pittston's Natural Resources

The Town of Pittston covers more than 32 square miles of land area, the vast majority of it open space, rolling hills, and forest. The natural resources of Pittston act as both an invitation and a constraint to planning and development. Many of us live here because we appreciate the quality of the rural environment. For some, our livelihood and lifestyles depend on the existence of the natural resources around us.

The issue we face is whether future development will result in a deterioration of these resources. Development could create impacts on water quality, open space, and the scenic and recreational assets that we value. But its effects could be minimized, if we are willing to plan accordingly. Some parts of town will be more suitable for development than others, and some forms of development have minimal impact. We need to plan for building or development that will complement rather than disrupt our natural resources and in the context of what we, as individuals, feel we should be able to do with our property.

This chapter contains information on our water and land-based resources, including how they benefit us, how we use them, and what we can do to protect them.

Surface Waters:

Pittston's surface waters consist of the Kennebec River, Eastern River, Nehumkeag Pond, Joy's Pond, and various tributaries. Analyses of most of these waters by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and by the Maine Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife (MDIFW) indicate that Pittston has a wide range of water quality and fisheries habitat.

The *Kennebec River* forms the town's western boundary, and is a major scenic, recreational, and commercial resource. The river flows out into Merrymeeting Bay some distance below Pittston, and is tidal along Pittston's shore. Some of the shoreline is fairly flat at river's edge, yielding to tidal flats below the high-water mark. But most of the shoreline slopes steeply up.

There are no developed public access points along the river, though there are several points at which landowners will allow access. There is one commercial marina along the shore. In addition to boating and scenic value, the river provides fishing, particularly smelt during the ice fishing season. Though Kennebec River ice used to be famous for its clarity during the

commercial ice-shipping era, the river itself is fairly polluted (though improving), and would not make a suitable source of drinking water.

The *Eastern River* flows through East Pittston and drains the southeastern portion of town. It, too, is tidal, and drains into Merrymeeting Bay. The Eastern and Kennebec Rivers together form Pittston's only coastal resource. The Eastern River is much smaller than the Kennebec, and does not allow for navigation at low tide. It does, however, provide a significant spawning ground for anadromous fish, and some good fishing opportunity.

Nehumkeag Pond lies at just about the geographic center of Pittston. It is a roughly oval body of water of about 200 acres in size, draining into the Kennebec River by way of Morton Brook. There is a large wetland associated with the outlet, at the northwest end of the pond, and a smaller one to the south. The remaining shoreline of the pond tends to be a little steep. Development, as well as recreational access, is minimal.

The pond's water quality is rated as "Moderate" by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and "Sensitive" to potential phosphorous pollution. (Phosphorous pollution is responsible for algae blooms -- the most prominent form of pollution on Maine's Lakes.) Phosphorous enters the lake in the form of eroded soil, entering streams that feed into the lake. This watershed covers 1,559 acres, or about eight percent of Pittston's land area. (See *Natural Resources Map*.) This is a relatively small area, considering the size of the pond, which means that development which does not use good erosion control measures is especially likely to have a large impact on lake water quality. Since this drainage area includes land along Kelly Road, Warren Road, and Route 194, the Town should be alert to new development in those areas.

Considering its location, Nehumkeag Pond has surprisingly little development along its immediate shoreline. The sloping banks may be partially responsible, as is the fact that much of the shoreline is owned by a few large landowners.

In the extreme northeast corner of Pittston lies *Joys Pond*. A much smaller pond than Nehumkeag, Joys Pond is mostly surrounded by wetland and peaty soil. Because Route 126 sweeps right along the southern shore, there is a little bit of development in the immediate vicinity, but not much. DEP rates this lake also as "Moderate" and "Sensitive." However, in the case of Joys Pond, only 40 percent of the 325 acre drainage area is in Pittston, with the remainder in Whitefield. Watersheds of both Nehumkeag and Joys Ponds are delineated on the *Natural Resources Map*.

Land use controls that attempt to protect Pittston's surface waters include the Town's shoreland zoning ordinance as well as Maine's Natural Resource Protection Act. The shoreland zoning ordinance regulates the type and extent of development within setbacks from surface waters. The Natural Resource Protection Act simply regulates activities that disturb soil within or adjacent to these waters and establishes certain criteria to prevent runoff from acceptable activities.

Groundwater:

Residents of Pittston rely on one of three sources of drinking water. Some residents in the northwestern part of town get water from the Gardiner Water District, which has wells located in Gardiner. Residents of East Pittston village get their water from the Pittston Water District, which extracts from groundwater at the edge of the village. Most residents get their water from their own wells, tapping into groundwater directly beneath their property.

With few exceptions, Pittston's groundwater aquifer provides enough drinking water for routine domestic consumption, but would not yield quantity sufficient for a large volume of users. Only two locations in Pittston are regarded by the state as "Significant Sand and Gravel Aquifers" (yielding more than 10 gallons per minute). One is a very small location south of Palmer Road, in the southeast corner of town; The other is a small band along the edge of the Kennebec River at the southwestern edge of town, in the vicinity of Old Cedar Grove Road. Neither of these are likely to serve as public water supplies in the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, since many residents throughout town get their drinking water from underground, we should be sensitive to the type of development we get, and whether it has the potential for harming the groundwater.

Groundwater sources can be contaminated by a number of activities including sand and gravel mining, salt storage, waste disposal, underground storage tanks, industrial/commercial activity, junkyards, agriculture, and failing septic systems.

The threat is apparent in East Pittston, where several homes recently were added to the public water system after their own groundwater was found to be contaminated. The contamination came from leaking underground gasoline tanks. Even the water district has to be careful not to draw too heavily on their wells (rated at 100 gpm and 27 gpm) for fear of drawing the contamination plume into the wellfield. This should be enough to have local residents thinking of potential new commercial development utilizing hazardous substances, and the need to regulate its use and storage.

Soils:

One of the most significant guiding factors for any area's future growth and development is its soils. Pittston is no exception. No matter how desperately a landowner may want to build on his lot, if it's covered with wetlands, he will be prevented from doing so by the simple fact that the soil will not hold a septic system or support a foundation. Or the landowner with beautiful views from his steeply sloping land will not be able to build on it because the soils are too erodible and will not support development. Developing on poor soils is costly to a landowner as well as the environment. Common sense usually stops us from building on poor soils, but it does occur from time to time.

Pittston's poor soils are primarily associated with bogs, wetlands, or stream corridors, with some on steep slopes. The most common wetland, or "hydric" soils in Pittston, according to the

U.S. Soil Conservation Service Classification System, are Biddeford mucky peat, Ridgebury fine sandy loam, Scantic silt loam and Togus fibrous peat. The most common soils on steep slopes are Hollis fine sandy loam, over 15 percent slope, and Paxton-Charlton very stony fine sandy loam, over 15 percent. All of these soil groups have been mapped, and are together labeled "Soils Unsuitable for Development" on the *Soils Map*.

While all combined, these soils may make up perhaps 10 percent of the town, they are concentrated in some locations: a broad band along the Eastern River, south of Nehumkeag Pond, the bog along Stony Meadow Brook, and the southeast slopes of Beech Hill (steepness). These are mostly out-of-the-way locations; There are only two significant areas along major roads where the soils are poor. One is along Route 27, south of the intersection with Route 194 as far as Amity Lane. This is the site of several trailer parks but not much new in the past few years. The Gardiner Sewer line could be extended to this location if necessary. The other is on Route 194 a few thousand feet east and west of the intersection with Peaslee Road. This is a built-up area with several new houses in the past few years. Part of it is also in the Nehumkeag Pond watershed. This neighborhood could be a cost and a concern to the town in a few years.

Just like there are poor soils, there are also prime soils for development. These are well-drained, gently-sloping soils where is it cheap and easy to put in septic systems and foundations. The most common of these in Pittston are Paxton-Charlton very stony fine sandy loam, 3-8 percent slope, and Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 3-8 percent slope. These soils cover slightly less than the extent of the poor soils, and are labeled "Prime Soils for Development" on the *Soils Map*.

Ironically, the largest extent of prime soils for development in Pittston are right next to the poor soils, and no closer to major roads. The major block of prime soils lies along Lancaster Road and the discontinued portions of Town Farm and Beech Hill Roads. Soils are generally prime or very good on Route 126, for 3/4 of a mile or so on either side of North Pittston and along some portions of the Alna Road. Other areas of prime soil are scattered widely.

It would be a good thing if we were able to offer legal, as well as financial, incentives for people to build on better soils (the financial incentive is that the construction costs are less.) The most logical way to do this would be to offer developers the chance to build more homes on good sites, for instance by reducing subdivision lot sizes or permitting clustering of lots on good soils. However, most of the house-building in town is not in subdivisions but on individual lots, so people have to work with what they've got. Another possible incentive could be improving roads though areas of good soils. Experience has shown that improving roads results in a house-building spurt along the road.

We can also use soil evaluation to rank a plot of ground for potential for farmland or timber production. To the extent that we want to preserve farming and forestry as part of Pittston's local economy, we should discourage development on the most productive soils. This is often difficult because the best soils for growing crops are quite often also the best for growing houses.

For example, in Pittston, the most common prime development soils, Woodbridge fine sandy loam and Buxton silt loam, are also excellent farmland soils, and Hadley and Winooksi, both floodplain soils mainly found along the Kennebec shoreline, are considered prime forest soils.

As a final note, it should be stressed that the soils maps accompanying this plan are somewhat general and only give a rough idea of where good and poor soils are located. They should not be construed to prohibit development on the shaded areas of poor soils. It will, however, be a lot harder to find building sites, which would be pockets of buildable soils.

Wetlands:

Wetlands are the link between Pittston's land resources and its water resources. Their principal resource value is as habitat to many forms of plants and animals. But they also contribute to the recharge of groundwater, reduce the impacts of seasonal flooding, and improve the water quality of Pittston's streams and lakes. They even influence the value of streamside and shoreline properties.

Wetlands benefit waterfowl, amphibians, fish, and many mammals by providing an environment for breeding, forage, and protection. Many unique plants thrive only in wetlands. Wetlands act like sponges, soaking up excess waters to keep flood levels down. This sponge effect is particularly important to property owners in low land or near surface waters. Wetlands enhance water quality as well, by performing as sinks or traps, filtering and reusing harmful runoff from agricultural fields and other types of development. Aquifers are protected by wetlands that filter pollutants from their recharge areas.

Some of Pittston's wetlands are protected through the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance and Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act. The Town's Shoreland Zoning Ordinance regulates activity within 250' of wetlands that are 10 or more acres in size or wetlands that are contiguous with a water body. The Natural Resources Protection Act applies to these same wetlands, but it requires that anyone disturbing soils in or around them to obtain a permit from the Department of Environmental Protection.

Significant wetlands are shown on the *Natural Resources Map* at the end of this report. Pittston's Shoreland Zoning Map also illustrates the locations of protected wetlands. The federal government has released a series of maps titled "National Wetlands Inventory," which show more detailed locations and boundaries of smaller wetlands. However, it is a characteristic of wetlands that their boundaries change over time, so that the best approach to protecting wetlands is to perform a case-by-case evaluation of wetland boundaries whenever there is a question.

Critical Natural Areas:

Maine's Natural Area's Program has listed the Broad Beech Fern as the only rare plant species in the Town of Pittston. It was reported in Pittston as one of less than a dozen

occurrences in Maine. There are no rare animal species or endangered ecosystems reported in Pittston.

The Natural Areas Program has no record of any systematic inventories of unique and rare plants in Pittston. The Program is available for technical assistance to conservation commissions or like-minded volunteers that want to survey their town for these features. The Program encourages individual landowners with rare plant habitats to enlist in the Register of Critical Areas. This is a register of landowners who voluntarily agree to conserve or protect the rare or unusual areas on their land. There are no legal or mandated restrictions on the land, however.

Wildlife Habitat:

The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife has three basic classifications of wildlife habitat for towns such as Pittston: habitat that supports endangered species; habitat that supports waterfowl and wading birds; and habitat that acts as deer wintering areas (or deer "yards"). The Department has observed no habitat for endangered species in Pittston, but has determined there are 16 locations that provide habitat for waterfowl and wading birds and 7 locations that are potential deer wintering areas.

The waterfowl and wading bird habitats serve a number of important functions for ducks, geese, and wading birds like herons and egrets. They provide a place for these birds to feed, breed, winter over, rest during migration, and raise young. In Pittston, these habitats are generally wetlands. Of the 16 wetlands identified, 12 have not been evaluated. Four of them -- north of Nehumkeag Pond, south of Togus Stream, Stony Meadow Brook, and Palmer Brook, have been rated "High" for habitat value. These have been marked on the *Natural Resources Map*.

The deer wintering areas are dense, evergreen stands that protect whitetail deer during the coldest winter months by blocking wind, reducing snow depth, and holding in radiant heat. They are particularly important in colder states like Maine where a bad winter can kill as much as 35 % of the deer population. Deer yards in Pittston tend to be coniferous areas not already cleared for farmland or development. They are sketched out on the *Natural Resources Map*. IFW has not yet studied to determine whether any of the mapped areas are indeed deeryards. IFW is willing to work with landowners to design timber-cutting and development in such a way as to preserve the value of the deeryard.

The IFW also notes Sand Island in the Kennebec as an area of "Coastal Wildlife Concentration." According to IFW, this does not necessarily mean that there are habitats worthy of protection.

Other than critical habitat, there are certainly plenty of opportunities for wildlife in Pittston. Deer, bear, and moose are common, and there have been reported sightings of turkeys, coyotes, and even a mountain lion.

Scenic Areas:

Pittston is located in a scenic and relatively undeveloped part of the state. The principal scenic feature is the Kennebec River. Though it can be viewed only rarely from Route 27, there are several side roads that lead down to river's edge and provide good views.

Beech Hill and Nehumkeag Pond are also considered to be scenic resources. But much of the scenic asset is attributable to just the mix of fields and woods along such roads as Route 194 and the Kelly Road. More than 1/3 of the people answering the questionnaire answered that "scenic beauty" was one of their strongest reasons for living in town.

Floodplain:

Several of the rivers and streams in Pittston have identifiable 100 year floodplain areas. According to the federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps, which were based on the 1987 flood, several lowland areas would be inundated by a flood. Included would be most of the flat land adjacent to the Kennebec River and Eastern River, and wide bands along Morton Brook, Stony Meadow Brook and one of the tributaries into Joys Pond. While most of the developed areas would be free from flooding, Route 27, from the Togus Bridge to the junction with 126, would be flooded, as would a little stretch of Route 126 near Joys Pond, and some areas east of East Pittston village. The extent of the 100 year floodplain is shown on the *Natural Resources Map*.

Coastal Resources:

Pittston's coastal identification comes solely from the tidal influences of the Kennebec and Eastern Rivers. Features of these rivers have been discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Limited numbers of marine fish and wildlife are evident in Pittston, not enough to have a significant impact on the town's environment or economy. Sand Island, in the Kennebec, is a tidal flat and listed by IFW as an "area of coastal wildlife concentration."

As mentioned in Chapter Three, there are no developed facilities to take advantage of the coastal assets of the town. The one commercial marina, Smithtown Marina, services boats and also provides a jumping-off area for smelt fishermen in Winter. There are a small number of moorings along the Kennebec River in Pittston, managed by the town's harbor master.

Findings and Recommendations:

As a rural town, Pittston has more than our share of natural resources. Not only do natural resources such as soils and water support farming and forestry, they enable all of us to have a very enjoyable lifestyle. But resources such as the rivers, ponds, open space, and scenic vistas also make us an attractive place for non-residents. Our very quality of natural resources makes us a target for development which threatens those resources.

The town's objective with regard to natural resources should be to protect them from degradation as a result of human activity, which could include development, overuse, or even some farming and forest practices. In the 1997 survey, 81 percent of our fellow residents rated "protecting the town's natural resources" as "important" or "very important." Some of the specific strategies supported by respondents to the questionnaire included: encouraging a land trust to buy conservation easements from local landowners, keeping town property when valuable for open space, identifying resource areas to limit new development, and encouraging open space in the design of new subdivisions.

Pittston's coastal resource consists of tidal portions of the Kennebec and Eastern Rivers. While there is neither significant public ownerships nor access, nor commercial fishing opportunity in Pittston, there are opportunities in nearby towns. Access to the coastal resource consists of a commercial marina at Smithtown, and several informal access points.

NATURAL RESOURCE GOAL: To protect Pittston's critical natural resources, including land-based resources, such as wetlands, wildlife habitat, and unique natural areas, and water-based resources, such as the Kennebec and Eastern Rivers, and our many streams and ponds. To protect Pittston's coastal resource, including promoting access to the shore for commercial fishermen and the public.

POLICIES:

20. Protect local groundwater resources, especially the area recharging the wellhead of the East Pittston Water District.

21. Review and revise the Town's Shoreland Protection Ordinance to protect more wetland and wildlife habitat areas.

22. Encourage open space design and use of the best land for development in new subdivisions.

23. Adopt a commercial development review ordinance containing design rules to protect air and water quality, wildlife habitat, and other natural resources.

24. Encourage local farm and forestry operations to follow best management practices.

25. Use a Land Trust approach to preserving open space, through conservation easements, and evaluate tax-acquired property for open space benefits.

26. Assess resource lands (wetland, floodplain, etc.) At less than full development rates.

27. Abide by state coastal management policies, as follows:

    Manage the marine environment to preserve and improve the ecological integrity and diversity

of marine communities and habitats, and enhance the economic value of the state's renewable marine resources.

Support shoreline management that gives preference to water-dependent uses over other uses, that promotes public access to the shoreline, and that considers the cumulative effect of development.

Discourage growth and new development in coastal areas where, because of coastal storms, flooding, landslides or sea level rise, it is hazardous to human safety.

Encourage cooperative state and local management of coastal resources.

Protect and manage critical habitat and natural areas of state and national significance and maintain the scenic beauty and character of the coast even in areas where development occurs.

Expand opportunities for outdoor recreation and encourage appropriate coastal tourist activities and development.

Restore and maintain the quality of our fresh, marine, and estuarine waters to allow for the broadest possible diversity of public and private uses.

Restore and maintain coastal air quality and protect enjoyment of the natural beauty and maritime characteristics of the Maine coast.

Seven:Land Use and Development in Pittston

Patterns of development define the character of a town. Some towns are all open and undeveloped; Some have village centers; Some are suburbs; Some are urban and commercial centers. How a town "feels," whether it feels like a small-town, a bustling suburb or an urban center, is as much a function of development patterns as overall population.

Historic Development Patterns and Current Trends:

Pittston still "feels" like a small town. That is because our historic land use pattern is rural. Settlement generally flowed inland from the shores of the Kennebec and Eastern Rivers. The prime motivator was farmland, and the 19th Century residents were mostly family farmers. Even though the population was over 1,500 at one time, it was widely dispersed throughout town.

Many of the farms were abandoned, and the population cut in half, between 1860 and 1920. The chief commercial village area of West Pittston broke away. Much of the farmland reverted to forest, while nearby industrial centers boomed. Pittston remained this way for quite some time. In the early 20th Century, only the northwestern part of town, closest to Gardiner and Augusta, grew.

Then, beginning in the 1960's, the whole town started growing. The immediate cause was improved roads and cheap gas. So, rather than being dispersed throughout the countryside, the development has seemed dispersed along the roadsides. The suburb had come to Pittston. Since then, development in Pittston has been typical of many other towns: miles and miles of road frontage in housing, very little local business, and the majority of residents commuting daily to jobs outside of town.

Rural Areas:

The current rural development trend is well-established. Because a large proportion of rural land has lost its value for farming or timber, it is relatively cheap and plentiful. Because transportation is so easy, rural land, compared to land near commercial and employment centers, looks like a bargain. And, as our public opinion survey showed, people still have a powerful attraction to small town, rural lifestyles.

The catch is that all of this rural development is only economical where the state or town has already paid for the roads. Nowadays, every house needs a road. Though Pittston does have its share of private subdivision roads, the majority of new housing in town is along the frontage of existing state highways. This trend not only creates more of a feeling of suburban clutter than there actually is; It makes it more expensive to develop land on "back lots,: which will have to happen if Pittston is to continue growing.

As the frontage of rural roads becomes developed, it will become harder to find building lots. We will begin to see more "roaded" subdivisions, like the few we have had recently. This results in more expensive housing, because the developer has to pay for the road, and more local roads to maintain when the town accepts it.

The Pittston Conservation Commission had commissioned a townwide map of housing in 1980. We were fortunate to have that map as a base because, when we remapped the housing for this plan, we were able to capture only the house-building of the past 16 years. The map titled *Development Map* is the result. While new development is certainly spread generously throughout town, the northern part still seems to attract the most development activity. Some of the other observations:

- Roads with a lot of new development activity are Route 126, Beech Hill Road, and Blodgett Road.

- Although the majority of new homes are on (or nearby) state highways, some of Pittston's few graveled roads are seeing development activity as well. Examples are Town Farm Road, Ledge Hill Road, the southern half of Blodgett Road, and Country Lane (not a town road). Increased maintenance demands and/or paving are the inevitable result.

- About 1/4 of the new homes are mobile homes. There is one new mobile home park; The rest of them are spread throughout town on individual lots.

- About one out of six new homes are in subdivisions, including the 13 in the mobile home park and 31 on house lots. Conversely, 5 out of 6 are on individual lots.

- Almost 2/3 of all development since 1980 are stick built homes on single lots.

Settlement Areas:

By contrast, Pittston has an odd assortment of settlement areas. The town's historic first settlement, known locally as "Smithtown," no longer really exists, except for a marina and some seasonal homes. The initial commercial settlement, West Pittston, seceded over 100 years ago to form the Town of Randolph. That left the town with no commercial center.

There are two other historically-recognized village areas in town. East Pittston is the

major one. Located on the Eastern River, East Pittston has a store, church and fire station, and is served by its own water district. There are 31 homes within a half mile of the village center (designated as the intersection of Route 194 and the Kelley Road), five of which have been built since 1980.

North Pittston is more of a crossroads than a village, there being no commercial or public buildings in this area. There are a total of 41 homes within one half mile of the intersection of Route 126 and the Nelson Road, but that is more because it is located in the more densely-developed northern portion of town. Fifteen of those 41 have been built since 1980.

The most concentrated settlement area, not even thought of locally as a village, is in the extreme northwest corner of town. Located within one half mile of the junction of Route 126 and old Route 27 are the Town Office, Fire Station, Elementary school, a hardware store, and a diner. There are also 72 homes within the portion of the half mile radius that falls within Pittston, including a 15-unit mobile home park and the Tut Hill Development. But development in this area has pretty much used up all the available frontage. Only eight houses in this area have been built since 1980, five of which are in Tut Hill.

Forestry and Agriculture:

Forest and farmlands are essential elements of Pittston's landscape and need to be preserved to a certain degree in order to maintain Pittston's quiet, rural character. Ensuring the continuation of farming and forestry is one important way of protecting the woods and fields that Pittston residents feel is such an important part of the Town's heritage. It should be noted that the public opinion survey found that over 3/4 of the residents think that preserving agriculture and forestry in town is either "important" or "very important."

Agriculture and forestry contribute to the region's economy by providing raw materials and production for local and regional markets. These activities also support a number of jobs on a seasonal, part-time, or full-time basis. The woods and fields maintained by farming and forestry provide for outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling, and cross-county skiing.

A significant amount of land in Pittston is currently in forest. Pittston has about 2/3 of its area covered by forest land. However, there are no industrial forest owners, and most of the tracts are used for recreation as well as timber production. Because of this, restrictions in the State Tree Growth Law, and local assessment practices, than 10 percent of the total acreage of Pittston is enrolled as Tree Growth. According to 1997 figures, there are 1,651 acres registered under the Tree Growth Tax Law, primarily by one family in the area of the Kelley Road. See the *Development Map* for locations.

Using the enrolled tracts as a guide, approximately 1/8 of the forest is hardwood, 1/4 is softwood, and the remainder is mixed. Information about the quality of the forested land,

management and cutting, and its future use is not available. However, it should be noted that, with more than 20 new houses being built in Pittston each year, there are probably more forest acres lost to development annually than to commercial timber harvesting.

As for agriculture, it is no secret that small farms are barely viable and their future uncertain. Local farmers face many hardships including high maintenance costs, regulatory demands, consistently low prices, high costs, and fluctuating markets. They also have a hard time competing with producers in other parts of the country who have lower production costs. The decline in agriculture has been occurring independently of economic trends. When the economy is strong, farmers find subdividing their land a good option, while during poor economic times, farmers can sometimes find that selling is their only option. For these and other reasons. Pittston has seen a general decline in agricultural activity.

Pittston is fortunate to have several commercial farms remaining, with a variety of product: the Webb Family Farm, a dairy farm on Webb Road, Kelley Farm, raising beef cattle on Kelley Road, Sparrows on Route 26 (vegetables and cranberries), and Greenledge Farm, with vegetables and bedding plants on Route 27. However, there are many other small, part-time farm operations. Among just the 20 percent of residents that answered the public opinion survey, there were 15 that had some sort of livestock, 11 that had a commercial garden, 14 that had an orchard or Christmas Tree Farm, and several other that realized some form of income off their land. This seems to be the future of farming in this part of the country -- small holdings, labor-intensive, yielding specialized products for local or regional markets.

In connection with agriculture, it should be mentioned that Pittston continues to host its traditional agricultural fair each year in June. This is an opportunity for visitors to interact with farmers, and for agriculture to get an economic and publicity boost. The fairgrounds are located on Route 194, just northwest of East Pittston.

Land Use Regulation:

Under Home Rule authority and various state mandates, the Town has the right and the responsibility to control land use patterns so that they do not harm the residents of town, nor raise the cost of public services. Pittston has exercised that authority with restraint and discretion over the years.

In addition to the state-mandated Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, Pittston's major control is our subdivision ordinance -- a good, basic ordinance which nonetheless could be streamlined and bought up to date. A Site Review (commercial development review) Ordinance was proposed several years ago, but never adopted.

The Town also has a Minimum Lot Size Ordinance. It sets a townwide minimum lot size of two acres, with a minimum road frontage of 200 feet.

The town's public opinion survey contained some interesting findings on people's perception of development and land use controls. The overall amount and lack of control over growth seems to concern townspeople. People would "prefer to see" us grow at a slower pace than we have been. And, by a 10 to 1 margin, respondents *agreed* with the statements that "New development should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis", and "we should have standards to assure that residential areas are protected from commercial and industrial use." A similar statement, "adopt ordinances to manage the type and location of development," was endorsed by four people for every one opposed.

A local ordinance to review commercial development (similar to subdivision review) seems to be worthy of another attempt. People favor regulating all aspects of commercial development, especially industrial odors, erosion control, use of chemicals and noise. Although we clearly favor some kind of land use regulation, we do not favor zoning (applying different standards in different geographical areas). Equal numbers of respondents are on both sides of the question whether people should build wherever they want. And about 2/3 *oppose* the idea that commercial development be limited to either village areas or state-numbered highways.

Findings and Recommendations:

The Land Use Element of this plan has more than one aspect, and therefore more than one approach is required. We are dealing with two, almost opposite, concepts of land use. The first is use of land in its "natural" state, for forestry, agriculture, and open space. The second is its use for development. This section is therefore divided into two parts, with two sets of goals and policies, with recognition that what we do to achieve our vision in one area may easily affect our ability to reach our goal in the other.

Forestry and Agriculture:

Part of our appreciation of the rural character, as well as part of the local economy, stems from forest and farmland in Pittston. About 2/3 of Pittston is woodland. Only a small percentage is managed for timber production, so much of it is essentially wild land. It continues to produce wood, however, as well as wildlife habitat and watershed protection, at least until it is cleared for development.

Pittston has a variety of farms, with no one type of farm dominant. We have dairy, beef, orchards, vegetables, even cranberries, and a large number of residents earn at least a partial income off of pasture or hay land. Perhaps the era of full-time farm operations is over, but there is unused land and a growing market for locally-grown produce, so there is potential for growing the farm economy. Each year, the Pittston Fair provides an opportunity to advertise local farms.

Residents continue to see value in maintaining a working landscape, according to our recent survey. Residents use their land for everything from beekeeping to commercial gardening, and some 4 percent of the town derives their principal income from the land. More than three out of every four

residents feel that supporting local agriculture and forestry is "important."

FOREST/AGRICULTURE GOAL: To maintain Pittston's agricultural and forest resources and protect them from development pressures.

POLICIES:

28 Increase the number of forest tracts with Forest Management Plans and Tree Growth Classification.

29. Encourage legislative action to reduce valuation of productive, undeveloped land, and review assessment practices for opportunities to reduce the tax burden on small farms and wood lands.

30. Support local farms economically.

31. Provide incentives and language for conservation easements and open space set-asides to allow land to continue to be used for farming and forestry (under a management plan).

32. Amend subdivision ordinance to require buffers and/or setbacks from forestry and agriculture which have potentially nuisance -creating practices.

33. Encourage good conservation and management practices.

Development:

During its early development history, Pittston was characterized by two development patterns: commercial villages and widely-distributed, small farms. Some residents and businesses were also associated with the river. Those patterns have changed dramatically: There are very few businesses or farms left in town; And except for one commercial marina, there is almost no association between the town and the river. Suburban-style homes have gradually taken over most of the road frontage in town. The results are increasing traffic, increasing taxes, and the gradual loss of the rural "feel" of the town.

The trend continues. In the past five years, there have been over 120 new homes built in town. Assuming each one used just the town-mandated minimum of 2 acres and 200' of street frontage, overall, development has eaten up another 4.5 miles of roadside and 240 acres of countryside. And that is another 120 families that demand fire and police protection, send children to school, vote, and otherwise use town services.

But it is the future we are most concerned with. We have been presented with three population projections, ranging from 191 new homes by 2010, to 553 by 2010. Trends since 1990

point us towards the high side of that range. Although sentiment from the survey is that it would be nice if we could grow slower, there is just not the support (or political tools) to force us to do so.

Therefore, we have to make a choice and plan to grow by 550 new homes between 1990 and 2010 (140 of which are already on the ground). At the ordinance minimums, that means another 1.7 square miles of land and 10.4 miles of road frontage (both sides) -- but many new lots are three to five acres or more. It also means approximately 1,200 new residents, 700 new commuters on the roads, and 300 new school children. On the positive side, however, it means about $380,000 in property tax revenue (less the corresponding reduction in state aid to SAD 11.)

While the prospect of an overall population of 3,700 is not too intimidating, it does raise the question of adequacy of public services. Our survey showed that even the level of town services we provide now is not satisfactory to a large segment of the residents. What changes will we have to make by 2010? We cannot slide by on the prospect of additional tax base to support changes. Overwhelming evidence is that larger towns have higher tax rates, not lower. And if we are not willing to control future development, it becomes even more important that we ensure that town services are delivered efficiently.

Of additional concern is the potential for commercial development. As it stands, there is neither the infrastructure nor the demand to support economic development. We know that the most likely scenario for small business is the growth of cottage industry, which depends for location entirely on where the entrepreneur's home is. But we have seen the experiences of other small towns, who thought they were safely in the backwater, suddenly faced with anything from a new supermarket to a pig farm -- angry neighbors and no local regulation to protect them. We need a form of local protection, though not one that places a burden on the type of cottage industries that thrive in Pittston without burdening the town or the neighbors.

DEVELOPMENT GOAL: Encourage orderly growth and development in locations within Pittston that allow for the protection of the town's rural character, the efficient provision of town services, and minimal sprawl.

Identification of Growth Areas: The identification of areas for preferred growth and development in Pittston is a state requirement. Of primary concern to the state is the fact of *Sprawl* -- new development spread out at random throughout the area, with no regard for the costs of public services. It is in the state's (and town's) economic best interest to promote development which is more compact and easier to serve with roads, sewer and water, emergency services, and school busses, among other things. It is also to a developer's economic benefit to be steered away from lands with wetland or soil problems, for example, and toward areas with public water supply. And the homeowner benefits from lower insurance rates for living near a fire station, for example, and lower taxes resulting from more efficient public services or living on a state-maintained highway. In Pittston, two areas seem to work as growth areas:

The first is the *Northwestern portion of the Town.* There are several advantages to this area:

the junction of three state highways, existence of quite a bit of relatively-new development, location of the town office and fire station, access to public sewer and water from Gardiner, and proximity to the employment centers of Gardiner and Augusta. While there is some commercial activity in the area, it also is very close to Randolph's commercial downtown.

The other is *East Pittston Village*, primarily because of its historical role as a commercial and service center. It is serviced by a state highway, branch fire station, and the water district. However, the total amount of new development is limited in some respects, by the DEP-imposed limitation on pumping rate of the district wells, and by the floodplain and wetlands associated with the Eastern River.

These two areas have been indicated on the *Future Development Map* at the end of this report. The boundaries drawn are for reference purposes as part of our recommendations, and are not "cast in stone." The area in the northwestern part of town is broken down into two, based on the access to the state highways. On Route 126, the area is intended to go as far east as Pinkham Road and be wide enough to include the mobile home parks. On Route 27, the area is intended to go as far south as Arnold Road.

More important than the designation of growth areas is what we can do to encourage people to develop in them. Zoning is out of the question, and these areas should not be interpreted as zoning districts. As mentioned above (page 54), zoning is not politically feasible in Pittston. In addition, zoning has not proven to be effective in rural areas with relatively low land prices and demand. The alternative is the Art of Persuasion. There are a few things we can do to show developers, particularly commercial enterprises, that it would be cheaper to locate in the commercial areas. These are listed among the policies, below, and the Action Steps in Chapter Eight.

POLICIES:

34. Provide for planning board review and approval of new and expanded commercial development, with special attention to reducing impact on rural character and economic incentives for developing in growth areas.

35. Protect by ordinance the groundwater in the vicinity of the East Pittston well.

36. Amend the minimum lot size ordinance to provide two exceptions: lots on public water and/or sewer, and lots that are part of a subdivision where the access is onto a private road.

37. Provide better customer service and processing for people needing plumbing/building or planning board permits.

38. Encourage commercial development and subdivision in growth areas. Control mobile home parks in rural areas.

39. Preserve rights-of-way for Lancaster, Beech Hill, Town Farm, and Webb Roads, so that on a long-range basis, we can re-establish and improve the discontinued portions to access prime development land and provide additional cross-connection between 126 and 194. (Official map, impact fees).

40. Record locations of new building permits for assessor and planning board use.

41. Establish an ordinance for driveway permits on town roads, similar to the requirements for state highways.

Eight: Plan Implementation

The preceding chapters in this report have concluded with a set of policies designed to bring about the goals of this plan, and the policies together constitute the heart of this plan. But a plan is only as good as the results it brings about. If no one does anything about it, it has been a waste of the time and money of many Pittston residents. It is important, then, that we develop a set of actions and responsibilities to implement the recommendations in this plan.

The table below represents a series of action steps which, if completed, will set us on the road to realizing our goals for the town. For each recommended action, we have suggested a deadline or time period, and a committee or persons responsible to see that it is done. We understand that changing priorities and politics will result in amendments to these suggestions, delays in the timing, even new committees being formed to assume some of the work load. For now, however, we are recommending no new local committees, and no major changes in the way the Town does business.

It should be noted that, despite who is listed as "responsible party," in all cases where Town Meeting or administrative action is required, the Board of Selectmen bears final responsibility.

ACTION STEP	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	SCHEDULE
FOR PUBLIC SERVICES . . .		
Expand the town office	Building Committee	1999
Re-establish, support and publicize local recycling site.	Recycling Committee	1998
Re-evaluate the need for town manager or other professional administration.	Selectmen/Budget Committee	2000
Develop and keep up to date a Capital Improvements Plan	Selectmen/Budget Committee	for budget year 2000

Fund code enforcement duties (follow up, etc) over-and-above permit fees.	Budget Committee	1999 Town Meeting
Develop a Road Management Plan	Road Commissioner	1999
Develop a Driveway Permit Ordinance for town roads modeled after DOT requirements	Selectmen	2000 Town Meeting
Prepare job descriptions (list of duties and responsibilities) for town, including staff, elected officials, and town committees.	Selectmen	2001
FOR HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT . . .		
Develop a Directory of local farm outlets	Selectmen	1999
Obtain and distribute information on assistance for local small businesses (loans and counseling)	Selectmen	1998 (display in town office)
Adopt a municipal building and housing code	Planning Board, CEO	2002 Town Meeting
Obtain and distribute information on Maine State Housing Assistance Programs	Selectmen	1998 (display in town office)
FOR NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION . . .		
Adopt a Groundwater Protection Ordinance to protect the East Pittston water supply.	Conservation Commission (CC), Planning Board	1999 Town Meeting
Revise shoreland zoning to provide more protection for wetland and wildlife habitat.	Planning Board, Harbor Master, CC	1999 Town Meeting
Obtain and provide information on good conservation practices in logging and farming	CC	1998 (display in town office)
Sponsor workshop on small tract forest management planning.	CC	1999

FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION . . .		
Amend Shoreland Zoning to protect potential archeological sites.	Planning Board	1999 Town Meeting
Seek grants to evaluate potential additions to National Register	Historical Society	beginning 1998
Establish an historic marker system in town.	Historical Society	1999
FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION . . .		
Establish system for evaluating tax-acquired properties for recreation potential.	Selectmen	2000
Participate in grant applications for open space, recreation, or coastal access funds.	Conservation Commission	ongoing
Document the fact that the fairgrounds will revert to the Town if the Association folds.	Selectmen	2000
Encourage landowners to participate in the Open Space tax classification.	Assessor	ongoing
FOR LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT . .		
Amend Subdivision Ordinance: encourage open space, provide buffers or setbacks from resource-related activities limit mobile home parks in rural areas generally revise and update	Planning Board	1999 Town Meeting
Adopt an ordinance for planning board review of significant new commercial development review only buildings over 5,000 sq.ft. Provide buffers or setbacks, and noise limits in rural areas Exempt resource-based business	Planning Board	2000 Town Meeting
Amend the Minimum Lot Size Ordinance: exempt lots in growth areas and in subdivisions where access is onto private road provide a sliding scale of lot sizes for multi-family units (#acres per dwelling unit)	Planning Board	1999 Town Meeting

Prepare a simple brochure explaining permit requirements and process for applicants.	Planning Board, CEO	2001
Develop a system for recording and monitoring locations of new construction	Planning Board, Assessor, CEO	2000
FOR REGIONAL COORDINATION . . .		
Participate in regional economic development efforts	Selectmen	ongoing
Participate in regional initiatives to develop subsidized housing in service centers.	Selectmen	ongoing
Cooperate with neighboring towns on access and management of the Kennebec River.	Selectmen/Conservation Commission, Harbor Master	ongoing
Participate in region-wide evaluation of 911 and emergency services.	Selectmen	1998-9
Participate in long-term evaluation of quality of education through SAD facilities.	Selectmen	ongoing

APPENDIX:

Public Opinion Survey: Results and Analysis

Topographic Map

Soils Map

Natural Resource Map

Recent Development Map

Future Development (Land Use) Map

RESULTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING QUESTIONNAIRE

During January, the Comprehensive Planning Committee mailed out a six-page questionnaire to every household in Pittston. This is a summary of the results. Detailed results are available from committee members. These results, along with other citizen input, will be used to draft the recommendations to be included with the plan which, we hope, will be voted on next March.

Who answered the survey?

193 households returned their surveys, which is 20.2 percent of what was sent out. In general, more older, long-time residents answered the survey than young newcomers. 21 percent of those who answered are retired (compared to the 1990 census count of 12 percent); almost 3/4 have lived here more than ten years, and they had fewer children than the town average. About 1/3 of the respondents own more than 10 acres, and slightly less than the town average of mobile home residents responded. More than half of those who responded live on one of the state-numbered highways.

Overall Impressions:

People like the small town atmosphere of Pittston. That comes as no surprise -- virtually everyone checked that box. A distant second in the "what we like" category was scenic beauty, followed by distance to work. This showed up later in the survey again, as 77 percent of people ranked "preserving rural character" as important and 81 percent thought "protecting our natural resources" was.

Another non-surprise: most people (about 60 percent) would change the tax rate as their first priority. 85 percent of people cited "reducing the tax rate" as important. Second place in "what would you change" was local recreational opportunity. The Kennebec River was listed as the resource people most want to preserve.

What do people think about the future? 30 percent of the town think we are growing too fast, versus only 8 percent that think we are too slow. About the same proportion want us to grow at a slower pace in the future, although 80 percent of the population *expects* we will grow as fast or faster.

Public Services:

We asked people to rate current town services on a scale from poor to excellent. The highest-rated services, in order, were: town office, fire protection, paved road maintenance, and snow plowing. The lowest-rated services were public land for recreation, recycling, and recreation programs (an average rating below "fair"). Residents seem to know what it will take to improve poor services; Those three, plus elderly services, were the only ones that a majority of persons want to see improvements, even if it means paying more.

The committee had already identified recreation and recycling as two problem areas for the town, so we had included additional questions on them. Regarding recreation, 55 percent of residents think we should pursue public access to the river. It was the number one priority on the list of potential recreational improvements, though 1/3 of the people thought that it was "not important." Way down on the list of recreational improvements were the fairgrounds, ice skating, and parks/playgrounds. As for solid waste, the majority are "satisfied" with the current method of trash disposal. But 59 percent want the town to establish a local recycling program, and more than 2/3 say they would use it if we did.

Economic Development:

Even though creating local jobs was ranked least important of local priorities by townspeople, it is a high priority for the state, so we felt it necessary to ask several questions about it. People *disagreed,* by more than 2 to 1, with the proposition that we should encourage industrial development, or (by a much smaller margin) commercial development. Only 37 percent think we should "actively promote" economic development, though only 7 percent think we should "actively discourage" it. Far more people think we should regulate it (see below). Though no one was all that enthusiastic about saying what kind of development they would like to see, the most-checked boxes were restaurant (43%), small retail (38%), small manufacturing (38%), and home offices (33%). Less than 10 percent of residents want to see large retail stores, large manufacturing, or an industrial park in Pittston.

Housing:

Housing, as in affordable housing, is also low on the local list of priorities compared to the state's. Townspeople are two to one in favor of a building code, which would improve the *quality* of houses. But the only two affordable housing ideas with more than 1/3 support are applying for low-income housing assistance grants and accessing Maine State Housing programs.

Development and Land Use Regulation:

The overall amount and lack of control over growth and development seems to concern townspeople. People would "prefer to see" us grow at a slower pace than we have been. And, by a 10 to 1 margin, people *agree* with the statements that "New development should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis", and "we should have standards to assure that residential areas are protected from commercial and industrial use." A similar statement, "adopt ordinances to manage the type and location of development," was endorsed by four people for every one opposed.

A local ordinance to review commercial development (similar to subdivision review) seems to be the solution. People favor regulating all aspects of commercial development, especially industrial odors, erosion control, use of chemicals and noise. Although we clearly favor some kind of land use regulation, we do not favor zoning (applying different standards in different geographical areas). Equal numbers of respondents are on both sides of the question whether people should build wherever they want. And about 2/3 oppose the idea that commercial development be limited to either village areas or state-numbered highways.

Agriculture, Forests, and Open Space:

Since the rural flavor of town is what people so strongly want to preserve, we were interested in seeing what people had to say about preservation of these assets. We were pleased to see that almost 2/3 of the people who returned questionnaires indicated that they gain some form of economic benefit from their property. Maybe that is why the returns placed such a high priority on supporting local agriculture (78% "important") and forestry (75%).

When given a choice whether and how to preserve undeveloped land, three out of four *disagreed* with the statement that we should "do nothing." Favorite suggestions were identification of Resource Protection Areas (65% favor, 12 percent oppose, the rest no opinion), open space development design (57% favor vs. 18), and keeping tax-acquired property as open space (55% favor, vs. 21). We had a specific question on open space development: 21 percent of residents think open space design should be mandatory, 28 percent think we should have incentives to encourage it, and only 8 percent think it should not be allowed.

193 Returns
.2 percent

PITTSTON CITIZEN SURVEY : RESULTS

1. In which part of town do you live (circle one)?

17%	East Pittston	34%	on Routes 194 or 126
22	on or West of Route 27	3	Nelson, Pinkham, or Webb Roads
10	Kelley, Blodgett Roads	6	someplace else
7	Nash, Alna, or Blinn Hill Roads		

2. What is it about Pittston that you particularly like? (Circle all that apply.)

86%	Small town/rural atmosphere	35	Scenic beauty
31	Family connections	22	Cost of housing/property
33	Distance to work	6	Other _____
28	Distance to services		
11	School system		

3. What about Pittston would you change if you could? (Circle all that apply)

2%	Small town/rural atmosphere	18	Local economic opportunity
60	Tax rate	14	Quality of town services
23	Quality of school system	11	Other _____
28	Local recreational opportunity		

4. Are there any particular recreational, scenic, cultural, historic or natural resources in Pittston that you would like to see preserved or improved? (circle all that apply)

33%	Historic Homes	49	Kennebec River
38	Local ponds	12	Other _____
34	Fairgrounds		

5. **RECREATION:** Do you think the Town of Pittston should spend money to develop or improve any of the following recreational facilities? (Circle all that apply.)

41%	Kennebec River access points	24	Ice Skating
24	Parks and playgrounds	30	Fairgrounds
16	Ball fields	22	Bike paths
8	Tennis court	8	Basketball court
17	Snowmobile/ATV trails	8	Other _____

6. Do you think the Town should pursue opportunities to acquire public access to the River?

55% Yes 29% No ____ No opinion

7. Do you think the Town should have a system of assigned moorings on the river, under the jurisdiction of the Harbor Master?

28% Yes 40% No ____ No opinion

8. **TOWN SERVICES:** Please rate the following local facilities and services according to your perception of their quality and efficiency. In the last column, indicate any of these you feel must be improved, even if means increasing taxes to raise the funding.

	Facility/Service		HOW GOOD? Exclnt	Good	Fair	Poor	Worth Improving? Yes	No
a.	Gravel road maintenance	2.64	4	3	2	1	Y=29%	
b.	Paved road maintenance	2.77	4	3	2	1	Y=25	
c.	Road plowing and sanding	2.71	4	3	2	1	Y=30	
d.	Harbor Master	2.45	4	3	2	1	Y=7	
e.	Cemetery maintenance	2.69	4	3	2	1	Y=20	
f.	Planning Board	2.61	4	3	2	1	Y=18	
g.	Recreation programs	1.88	4	3	2	1	Y=29+	
h.	Public land for recreation	1.72	4	3	2	1	Y=33+	
i.	Town office services	3.23	4	3	2	1	Y=15	
j.	Code enforcement	2.65	4	3	2	1	Y=16	
k.	Appeals process	2.49	4	3	2	1	Y=12	
l.	Recycling	1.80	4	3	2	1	Y=34+	
m.	Police protection	2.45	4	3	2	1	Y=23	
n.	Fire protection	3.22	4	3	2	1	Y=21	
o.	Services for the elderly	2.24	4	3	2	1	Y=32+	

9. Do you think the Town should establish a local (in-town) recycling program?
59% Yes 22% No ____ No opinion

10. Would you use it if we did? 69% Yes 23% No

11. Are you satisfied with the current method of trash disposal in Pittston?
59% Yes 28% No ____ No opinion

12. Please rate the following, according to how important you think they are:
(If no opinion, leave blank.)

		Very Important	Important	Not Important
a.	Reducing the tax rate	60 %	24 %	8 %
b.	Protecting the town's natural resources	46	35	6
c.	Increasing recreational opportunity	26	32	26
d.	Limiting expenditures on town facilities	29	47	7
e.	Maintaining school facilities	37	44	5
f.	Increasing services available in town	18	33	32
g.	Preserving the town's rural character	46	31	12
h.	Providing affordable housing	14	29	35
i.	Creating local jobs	22	33	37
k.	Supporting local agriculture	34	44	9
l.	Supporting local forestry	36	39	10
m.	Obtaining a Kennebec River recreation site	18	36	32
n.	Recruiting new business development	24	33	29
o.	Preserving historic sites and buildings	24	51	12

One: Pittston's People Profile

A community is made up of people. As the population changes, so does the community. This first chapter will focus on the changing population of Pittston.. For those who want to plan for the future of Pittston, how and why the population changes is just as important as the trend itself, because what happens in the future is based on what happened in the past.

This chapter is all about what has happened to our population in the past and how that will influence our future. Most of the information is taken from the decennial U.S. Census, which is by now eight years out of date; However, everything we have seen indicates that the trends are still continuing.

Population History:

The most common measure of a town's level of development and prosperity is its population. Pittston's population and growth rate are representative of a small, rural town growing into a suburb. Table 1 illustrates Pittston's population and growth in relation to neighboring towns.

Table 1
Pittston's Population and Neighboring Towns

Town	1990 Population	1980 Population	% change	Number Change
Pittston	**2,444**	**2,267**	**+ 8 %**	**177**
Randolph	1,949	1,834	+ 6 %	115
Gardiner	6,746	6,485	+ 4 %	261
Chelsea	2,497	2,522	- 1 %	- 25
Whitefield	1,931	1,606	+ 20 %	325
Dresden	1,332	998	+ 33 %	335

Source: U.S. Census, 1980, 1990

13. **LAND USE:** State law requires that towns develop a *Land Use Plan* to guide development within their boundaries. The following statements all have to do with this important subject. Some are intentionally conflicting or controversial. Please circle the number on the scale that best describes how you feel:

		← Agree ---------- Disagree → 1 2 3 4 5
a.	The Town should adopt ordinances to manage the type and location of development.	2.25 (58/16)
b.	The Town should establish a building construction code	2.58 (46/21)
c.	The Town should encourage industrial development.	3.54 (22/53)
d.	The Town should encourage commercial development.	3.26 (29/42)
e.	The Town should have standards to assure that residential areas are protected from conflicting commercial and industrial use	1.84 (69/8)
f.	No commercial or industrial development should be allowed outside the existing village areas.	3.39 (25/45)
g.	The Town should NOT limit the location of new commercial or industrial development.	3.69 (24/58)
h.	New commercial and industrial should be limited to land adjoining state-numbered highways.	3.35 (23/39)
i.	New development should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and permitted wherever it will not adversely affect property values, the environment, or town services.	1.85 (70/7)

14. It is the state's policy that towns should define "growth" and "rural" areas in order to discourage development sprawl. Circle the statement with which you most closely agree.

48% People should be allowed to build wherever they want.
45% People should be encouraged to build in specific "growth" areas identified by the Town

DEVELOPMENT: The first of the following questions asks how much growth you expect Pittston to have in the next 20 years. The second one asks how much you would prefer to see.

15. Expect we'll have: 32% faster 53% about the same 6% slower 3% lose population
16. Prefer to see: 9% faster 54% about the same 23% slower 8% lose population

17. How do you feel about Pittston's population growth and development the past twenty years?
3% Much too slow 5% too slow 55% about right 21% too fast 8% much too fast

18. Should town government have anything to do with promoting local economic development?
37% Actively promote 7% Actively discourage 30% Do nothing 26% No opinion

19. Currently, the vast majority of Pittston is undeveloped. The following questions seek your opinion on whether and how the Town should encourage the preservation of agricultural land, woodland, and undeveloped property in the rural area.

	Agree 1	No Opinion 2	Disagree 3
a. The Town should do nothing, letting the real estate market decide the highest and best use of undeveloped land	20/57		
b. The Town should help the State or a land trust to purchase conservation easements from landowners so that the land will remain in open space and owners will be fairly compensated.	50/25		
c. The Town should encourage developers to set aside a portion of the land in new developments as permanent open space.	57/18		
d. The Town should consider keeping property acquired through tax liens if the land can serve a public purpose such as providing open space.	55/21		
e. The Town should identify Resource Protection Areas, where new development would be limited.	65/12		

20. Some communities preserve open space permanently by innovative subdivision design. Such designs also reduce the cost of services such as roads, wells and septic systems. However, this is done at th expense of large individual lots. In the illustrations below, the developments have the same number o houses.

What is your opinion of the development alternatives as explained above? (circle one)

21% Open space design should be mandatory in some areas of town
28 Open space option should be encouraged, through incentives
24 Either design should be permitted by the town, without preference.
8 The open space option should not be allowed
21 No opinion.

21. The following is a generic list of possible areas in which new commercial development could be regulated by a local ordinance. Please tell us whether or not you think the town should regulate these areas (If no opinion, leave blank)

a.	Parking	38%	Yes	34%	No
b.	Access (driveway entrances)	44	Yes	33	No
c.	Noise	65	Yes	16	No
d.	Glare from lighting	53	Yes	23	No
e.	Use/storage of chemicals	74	Yes	11	No
f.	Signs(size and location)	54	Yes	24	No
g.	Erosion and runoff	75	Yes	8	No
h.	Outside storage of materials	62	Yes	18	No
i.	industrial odors	78	Yes	8	No

22. What type of new commercial development would you like to see in Pittston?

38%	Small Retail stores	8	Large Retail Stores
26	Professional offices	33	Home offices (cottage industry)
19	Business park	8	Industrial park
38	small manufacturing	5	Large manufacturing
21	construction-related businesses	43	restaurant
28	motel, B&B's	30	marina, golf course
11	none of the above	12	NO OPINION

23. **HOUSING:** State law requires local plans to adopt policies to make local housing safe, sanitary and affordable. Which of the following steps to promote this goal should the Town undertake?

17%	Keep minimum lot sizes(in all or part of town) as small as possible
10	Encourage rental housing units/apartments
26	Encourage well-designed mobile home parks
35	Encourage use of Maine State Housing Assistance Programs
20	Require developers to include a percentage of affordable lots/units in proposals
46	Apply for grants to assist low income families in upgrading substandard housing
23	The town should not promote affordable housing
10	No opinion

24. Please indicate if you use your land for any of the following purposes: (ACTUAL NUMBERS)

2	Commercial recreation site	13	Rent pastures/sell hay
1	Sand/gravel pit	8	Commercial woodlot
11	Commercial garden/farmstand	36	Non-commercial woodlot
15	Livestock or dairy	5	Nursery stock/greenhouse
7	Cultivated fruit/orchard crops	6	Beekeeping
7	Christmas trees/balsam tips	17	Other: _____
7	Maple syrup production		

25. How long have you lived in Pittston?

2 %	Less than 1 year	14	6-10 years	38	life-long resident
10	1-5 years	33	11-20 years		

26. In what type of home do you live?

81%	Single-family house	12	Mobile home on individual parcel
1	Multi-family house/apartment	4	Mobile home in park

27. Do you own or rent your home? 95 % Own 4% Rent

28. How many adults (over 18) in your household? 1.98/HH, 39w/1, 36w/3+
How many children? 0.65/HH, 121w/0, 10w/3+

29. If you own property in Pittston, how much?

14% (28#)	Less than 2 acres	26 (50)	11-100 acres
44 (85#)	2-10 acres	6 (12)	Over 100 acres

30. Please circle the number of your approximate annual household income:

7 %	Under $10,000	31	$30,000 - $50,000
12	$10,000 - $ 20,000	20	$50,000 or over
17	$20,000 - $ 30,000	Rough average: $35,786	

31. From the list below, please circle the number(s) of the occupational categories which best describes your principal income:

4 %	Farming and Forestry
21	Retirement
21	Skilled blue collar (e.g. welder, carpenter, electrician, foreman, machinist, painter)
11	Other blue collar (e.g. laborer, assembly worker, food service, maintenance)
33	Professional/administrator (e.g. lawyer, teacher, engineer, accountant, businessman)
4	Sales
7	Clerical
3	Other:

32. Please indicate which way you leave town to commute to work (for up to two workers):

1.	In town 8%	North 58%	South 25%	East 9%	of 147 workers
2.	In town 5%	North 62%	South 16%	East 16%	of 79 workers