

3

Economic Development

Economic health is vital to a community – it suffers without it. A healthy Goffstown allows more residents to work and shop in Goffstown, thereby supporting local businesses and keeping dollars within the community. It also acts as a magnet for non-residents to work and shop in the community, contributing to an economy and a tax base that funds quality schools, parks, roads, and town services. A healthy Goffstown is more in control of its own future. As a result, it is less affected by, and less dependent on, the economies and policies of surrounding cities and towns.

In contrast, the scenario of an economically unhealthy Goffstown could be one in which the town has fewer businesses and less employment opportunities. This could create a financial drain on the community as workers and consumers alike travel to spend money elsewhere. With commercial and industrial property making up a smaller percentage of the tax base there would be more of a tax burden on residential property owners. Higher taxes may force owners of large land tracts to sell their property which could result in the development of more housing. This new housing would in turn increase school enrollment and the demand for other municipal services. Rising tax rates may force municipal fiscal constraints resulting in reduced services and deferred capital expenditures. It is very possible that at some point home ownership will become increasingly unattainable for people who have grown up in Goffstown, forcing them to look elsewhere to raise their families. In short, an economically unhealthy Goffstown runs the risk of becoming a town divided; an exclusive bedroom community for those who can afford it, and a high density rental unit community for those who cannot. An unhealthy Goffstown is no more than an economic satellite of its neighbors with no power or vitality to grow or affect change from within.



The recommendations which follow in this chapter are intended to help place Goffstown in a position to achieve economic health and vitality over the next 10 years and beyond. It should be emphasized that a key element in preparing these recommendations was the preservation of what is valued most by Goffstown residents: rural character; affordability; sense of community; and diversity.

1 Economic Development - Historical Context

Economic activity in Goffstown's early days was almost exclusively agricultural, serving a predominantly self-sufficient economy. Lumbering and fishing were the main businesses of early inhabitants drawing on valuable timber and bountiful fishing of the Piscataquog and Merrimack Rivers. The Grasmere area initially served as the commercial and political center of Goffstown. By the late 19th century, the political center had shifted to the Village, where a commercial and residential center had also developed. The proximity of woodlands and water power spawned several manufacturing mills in the Village area along the Piscataquog River. Pinardville developed at the turn of the 20th century with the prosperity of the Manchester textile mills. Agriculture, including orchards, poultry and dairy operations were prominent in the early part of the 20th century, but had declined in economic significance by the 1980s. Forestry declined with the cutting of the most valuable timber and the conversion of land to more economically attractive uses including residential development. During the past several decades Goffstown's commercial activity has mainly centered on Route 114A in Pinardville, Main Street in the Village and a small center in Grasmere. Distinctions among these areas remain, requiring tailored responses to the challenge of economic development.

In the 1967 master plan the town is described as a suburban and residential community which had a projected need for retail and service establishments to serve the growing population. The plan also noted that a lack of industrially zoned land dampened the prospects for attracting industry to Goffstown thereby precluding the associated benefits of tax revenue and higher paying jobs. In 1967, there were 67 acres of industrially zoned land. This increased to 94 acres by 1976 which represented less than one percent of the town's total land area. In the mid-1970s the land between Daniel Plummer and Route 114 was zoned industrial, along with small areas on Route 114 abutting the railroad.

By 1981, there were several small industries in Goffstown but no concentrated industrial growth. This was attributed, at least in part, to the lack of municipal sewer and water. The thrust of the 1981 Master Plan was to strengthen and diversify the economic base of the community by encouraging the establishment of new industries at specific sites. This had to be accomplished without unreasonable impacts upon the environment, as well as without incurring excessive community facilities costs. Protection against further commercial strip development in Pinardville and along South Mast Road was also desired. The 1981 Master Plan also contained statements and

policies, based on a survey of town residents, that supported additional economic development.

In general, the 1980s provided Goffstown with additional commercial and industrial businesses serving local needs and broader markets. For the most part, the majority of new businesses were of small scale, reflecting the desires of town residents. However, economic development in Goffstown occurred at a much slower pace than some neighboring communities, while at the same time, the town was also experiencing rapid residential growth. There has been additional economic development since the previous master plan was prepared in 1987, however, many local businesses suffered during the recent recessionary period.

Several important actions have been taken in recent years in response to the many local economic development challenges. The Industrial Council, originally established in 1966, was renamed the Economic Development Council (EDC) and charged with assisting in the broader area of economic development of both commerce and industry. With its revitalization the EDC began its new role by conducting an assessment of the Goffstown business climate. The EDC also serves as an advocate for local businesses and for new businesses considering locating in Goffstown. The town has also expanded the responsibilities of the Town Planner to include facilitating economic development.

In 1982 the Industrial Corporation was formed for the purpose of fostering the town's growth and prosperity through the provision of industrial, commercial, manufacturing and warehouse facilities. Although this Corporation is a private entity, it can and has served economic development in Goffstown by facilitating the transfer of several properties.

2 Employment Trends and Projections

A. Current Employment and Wages

Goffstown is currently home to nearly 300 business establishments, representing approximately 2.7% of all establishments in Hillsborough County. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of business establishments by industrial classification for the town and for Hillsborough County as a whole. Many Goffstown businesses, including retail, service and construction companies, serve local needs and are referred to as non-basic establishments. Businesses which capture sales dollars from outside of the town are basic establishments and are desirable in an economy for two reasons. First, a balance between basic and non-basic industries stabilizes an economy by diversifying the sources of funds upon which that economy relies to operate. Second, growth in basic businesses can stimulate growth in other local, supporting businesses. Industries which can secure regional or international sales include manufacturing businesses and certain non-manufacturing businesses, such as financial services, insurance services, health services, business services, distribution facilities and tourism related firms.

Table 1
1995 Private Establishments by SIC Code with Average Annual Covered Employment
Town of Goffstown and Hillsborough County

| SIC | Industry | No. of Establishments | | % Total Establishments | | Avg. Annual Employment | | % Total Employment | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------|
| | | Town | County | Town | County | Town | County | Town | County |
| 01-09 | Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing | 19 | 170 | 6.8 | 1.7 | 83 | 1,084 | 3.7 | 0.7 |
| 10-14 | Mining | 0 | 11 | 0 | 0.1 | 0 | 119 | 0 | 0.1 |
| 15-17 | Construction | 42 | 825 | 15.1 | 8.1 | 313 | 5,356 | 13.9 | 3.5 |
| 20-39 | Manufacturing | | | | | | | | |
| | Durable Goods | 14 | 498 | 5 | 4.9 | 211 | 27,507 | 9.4 | 18.1 |
| | Non-Durable Goods | 4 | 316 | 1.4 | 3.1 | 55 | 11,753 | 2.4 | 7.8 |
| 40-49 | Transportation, Comms. and Utilities | 8 | 320 | 2.8 | 3.2 | 124 | 6,524 | 5.5 | 4.3 |
| 50-51 | Wholesale Trade | 27 | 1,288 | 9.7 | 12.7 | 101 | 8,746 | 4.5 | 5.8 |
| 52-59 | Retail Trade | 54 | 2,022 | 19.4 | 20 | 818 | 33,696 | 36.4 | 22.2 |
| 60-67 | Finance, Insurance, Real Estate | 24 | 840 | 8.6 | 8.3 | 87 | 10,079 | 3.9 | 6.7 |
| 70-89 | Services | 87 | 3,869 | 31.2 | 38.1 | 454 | 46,787 | 20.2 | 30.9 |
| | Total | 279 | 10,159 | 100% | 100% | 2,246 | 151,651 | 100% | 100% |

Source: Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, NH Dept. of Employment Security

As Table 1 illustrates, private covered employment in Goffstown totaled 2,246 in 1995. Covered employment represents all jobs for which unemployment compensation is collected. In addition to private businesses, Goffstown also has a significant number of government jobs, estimated at 1,138 in 1995. There is also estimated to be an additional 10% of Goffstown's total employment in home-based type jobs. As a result, it is estimated that the total number of jobs in town as of 1995 was 3,683.

As Table 2 illustrates, most New Hampshire towns with population similar to Goffstown have many more establishments, and all have more employment. Despite the tremendous percentage growth in the number of businesses between 1990 and 1995, Goffstown still has a relatively low number of businesses in proportion to its population.

Table 2
Number of Establishments and Private Covered Employment
for Selected Communities and Goffstown

| Community | 1994 Population | Number of Establishments 1990 | Number of Establishments 1995 | % Change 90-95 | Number of Employees 1995 |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Amherst | 9,275 | 357 | 422 | 18.2% | 3,254 |
| Bedford | 13,630 | 558 | 810 | 45.2% | 10,413 |
| Exeter | 12,811 | 429 | 503 | 17.2% | 6,888 |
| Goffstown | 15,191 | 212 | 281 | 32.5% | 2,247 |
| Lebanon | 12,518 | 546 | 704 | 28.9% | 12,629 |
| Londonderry | 20,662 | 511 | 653 | 27.8% | 7,567 |
| Milford | 12,287 | 326 | 389 | 19.3% | 5,544 |
| Somersworth | 11,453 | 197 | 235 | 19.2% | 4,384 |

Source: Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, NH Dept. of Employment Security

Most businesses in Goffstown are small in terms of the number of people employed. The average size of private covered business establishments is eight employees. Approximately 3% of the businesses employ more than 30 persons. Most of the larger employers have been in existence for at least 20 years, the majority of which were established in Goffstown. This higher

preponderance of small businesses is consistent with the policies of the town as enunciated in earlier master plans.

In terms of the distribution of establishments and employment, Goffstown has some clear differences from that of the county. The greatest disparity is found within the agricultural and construction sectors. Within these two areas, Goffstown has more than twice as many firms and over four times the employment levels, when compared to the county on a percentage basis. Another significant difference occurs within the manufacturing sector (durable and non-durable goods) of the economy. As the data in Table 1 reveals, Goffstown has roughly the same percentage of firms in these two areas as does the county (6.4% vs. 8%). However, more than twice as many people are employed in the county in these sectors (25.9% vs. 11.8%) than in Goffstown.

Goffstown's economy is strongest in the retail and service sectors, which account for over 50% of the town's total businesses. These two sectors also account for over 56% of the town's total employment. These figures are very comparable to those of the county which has 58% of its establishments in these sectors supporting 53% of its total employment. Recent trends indicate that the retail and service sectors have been the fastest growing sectors at most geographic levels of analysis.

The town has a slightly smaller percentage of total firms in the transportation/utilities and wholesale sectors when compared to the county, although it does employ a higher percentage of people in the former category. Finally, while the town has an equivalent percentage of firms in the Finance, Insurance and Real Estate sector, those firms employ slightly more than half as many people as do the same sector firms at the county level (3.9% vs. 6.7%)

An assessment of average weekly wages by industry reveals that those sectors (Agriculture, Construction, Retail Trade) with larger shares of employment when compared to the county, are those that pay low to average wages.

Table 3
Average Weekly Wages by SIC Code 1995
Hillsborough County

| SIC | Industry | Average Weekly Wage |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 01-09 | Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing | \$330.36 |
| 10-14 | Mining | 716.77 |
| 15-17 | Construction | 577.14 |
| 20-39 | Manufacturing | 771.14 |
| | Durable Goods | 803.20 |
| | Non-Durable Goods | 692.61 |
| 40-49 | Transportation, Communications, and Utilities | 644.44 |
| 50-51 | Wholesale Trade | 741.71 |
| 52-59 | Retail Trade | 303.78 |
| 60-67 | Finance, Insurance, Real Estate | 648.18 |
| 70-89 | Services | 518.71 |
| | Private Industry | \$563.89 |

Source: Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, NH Dept. of Employment Security

Conversely, industries that are less represented in town (Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Finance Insurance and Real Estate) are those that offer higher weekly wages. Goffstown's average weekly wage for private industries (\$378) is nearly \$200 less than the county average of \$563. Weekly wages for manufacturing in town are also lower than the county average, but only by 4.4%. Goffstown ranks 5th lowest in the county in terms of average weekly wages for private establishments. The four towns with lower wages are Antrim, Deering, Mont Vernon, and New Boston, all of which have fewer than 60 business establishments.

B. Occupational Characteristics and Unemployment Rates

Goffstown has resident labor force participation rates of 77% for men and 64% for women. Approximately 82% of residents have at least a high school diploma and 20% have a Bachelor's Degree or higher level of educational attainment. Table 4 illustrates the breakdown of employment by occupation for Goffstown residents in 1990.

| Occupational Group | 1990 Employment |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Executive/Administrative/Managerial | 986 |
| Professional Specialty | 1,162 |
| Technical/Related Support | 392 |
| Sales Workers | 948 |
| Administrative Support/Clerical | 1,480 |
| Protective Service | 127 |
| Services, Other | 768 |
| Farming/Forestry/Fishing | 79 |
| Precision Production/Craft/Repair | 873 |
| Machine Operators/Assemblers | 425 |
| Transportation/Material Moving | 194 |
| Handlers/Helpers/Laborers | 241 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

Over 7,600 Goffstown residents were employed in 1990 and the average resident traveled approximately 23 minutes to work. Nearly 20% of those employed, worked in Goffstown and occupied over 40% of the available jobs in town.

Table 5 illustrates the unemployment rates for the State, the Manchester Labor Market Area (LMA), and Goffstown between 1989 and 1996. The data shows that after more than doubling between 1989 and 1992, the unemployment rate of the Manchester Labor Market Area has recovered to pre-recession levels and currently stands at 3.7%. Between 1989 and 1996, Goffstown unemployment rates have remained consistently lower than rates of the State and the LMA. This may be at least partially attributable to the town's industrial mix and employer sizes. In general, jobs lost during the recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s have been replaced, however, wage levels have been lowered or remained stagnant for many people.

Table 5
Average Annual Unemployment Rate
State, Manchester LMA, Goffstown
1989-1996

| Year | State | Manchester | Goffstown |
|-------|-------|------------|-----------|
| 1989 | 3.5 | 3.2 | 2.2 |
| 1990 | 5.7 | 5.8 | 4.6 |
| 1991 | 7.2 | 7.4 | 5.8 |
| 1992 | 7.5 | 7.6 | 5.3 |
| 1993 | 6.6 | 6.2 | 4.3 |
| 1994 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 3.0 |
| 1995 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 2.7 |
| 1996* | 4.0 | 3.7 | 3.1 |

*Monthly Average for June, 1996

Source: NH Department of Employment Security

C. Future Employment Trends and Projections

The Manchester planning area (Southern NH RPC Region) is expected to experience employment growth averaging approximately 1.7% per year for the period 1994-2000. These projections are illustrated in Table 6. An important assumption reflected in these projections (which were prepared by an independent planning consultant) is that the increase in the number of new jobs located outside the City of Manchester would be limited by infrastructure constraints. If additional upgrading of the infrastructure system is undertaken, then projected job growth is likely to be higher.

As shown in Table 6, the wholesale trade and service sectors are expected to incur the fastest annual employment growth with rates of 4.0% and 2.3% respectively. The Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Manufacturing sectors are expected to grow at one-half of one percent or less annually. It is anticipated that the number of persons working in their own home will increase by over 40% between 1995 and 2000. Self-employment in non-financial Services, Construction (including Forestry and Agriculture) and Wholesale Trade sectors are also likely to increase.

Table 6
Annual Rate of Employment Change by Industry
(Southern NH Planning Area)

| SIC | Industry | 1994-2000 (%) | 2000- 2005 (%) | 2005-2010 (%) | 2010- 2015 (%) |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 01-17 | Agriculture, Mining & Construction | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 0.9 |
| 20-39 | Manufacturing | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| 40-49 | Transportation, Communications & Public Utilities | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.8 |
| 50-51 | Wholesale Trade | 4.0 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.6 |
| 52-59 | Retail Trade | 1.9 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.5 |
| 60-67 | Fin, Ins & Real Estate | 0.2 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 0.7 |
| 70-89 | Services | 2.3 | 2.1 | 2 | 1.8 |
| 90-95 | Government | 0.8 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| Average | | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 1.2 |

Source: *Employment Projections for the SNHPC Area, Northern Econ. Plan*

Although Goffstown is expected to share in the anticipated growth of the region, it is projected that growth in town will be at or below average rates for the region. Within the Southern NH Planning Region, employment is anticipated to increase a total of 8.5% between 1995 and 2000. Goffstown's growth rate is projected to be 7.7%. Furthermore, the town is anticipated to have below average employment growth in all industrial sectors between 1994 and 2015. Although these projected levels of growth are not expected to overwhelm the town's infrastructure, it will still be important to guide this development with appropriate planning and zoning regulations that accommodate development while protecting the town's neighborhoods and natural resources.

Table 7
Estimated Employment by Sector - 2000 and 2015
Town of Goffstown

| Sector | Year 2000 | Year 2015 |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Agriculture, Mining, Construction | 117 | 147 |
| Manufacturing | 154 | 166 |
| Trans., Comm., Public Utilities | 109 | 142 |
| Wholesale Trade | 100 | 279 |
| Retail Trade | 953 | 1,162 |
| F.I.R.E. | 158 | 181 |
| Services | 1,099 | 1,443 |
| Government | 1,178 | 1,237 |
| At Home | 459 | 829 |
| Total Private | 2,790 | 3,520 |
| Total All | 3,967 | 4,757 |

Source: *Employment Projections for the SNHPC Area, Northern Econ. Plan.*

Recent research by David Birch, formerly of MIT, indicates that the average size of a typical business, in terms of employment and use of space, has decreased. According to Birch's research, the majority of new employment to the year 2000 is expected to be generated by firms employing less than 100 persons. Birch also predicts increasing demand for more flexible work space replacing the use of more traditional office space configurations. This demand is expected among both industrial and non-industrial users. In addition to changing demands in building space, new businesses will also require good highway access, telecommunications infrastructure and services, and visibility.

Projected trends for reduced business size may offer opportunities for economic development in Goffstown that are most consistent with its character, topography and existing development patterns. Actions to encourage investment, economic development and relocation (perhaps with small amounts of public investment) may also positively influence Goffstown's prospects to secure a larger share of the region's growth over the next two decades.

3 Commercial/Industrial Zoning and Development

Property which has been developed for commercial and industrial uses represents approximately 11% of the town's property tax base as shown in Table 8. Compared to other New Hampshire communities of similar size, Goffstown has a lower percentage of assessed property value in commercial and industrial uses, and a higher full-value property tax rate. If the town were able to expand its current commercial and industrial base while holding expenditure levels constant, the property tax rate would be lower.

| | % of Commercial/Industrial Property Valuation | Full Value Tax Rate |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Amherst | 11.86% | \$27.07 |
| Bedford | 20.84% | \$20.42 |
| Exeter | 17.95% | \$28.73 |
| Goffstown | 10.68% | \$32.68 |
| Lebanon | 36.21% | \$31.15 |
| Londonderry | 22.66% | \$34.85 |
| Milford | 32.43% | \$32.43 |
| Somersworth | 24.02% | \$33.61 |

Source: NH Department of Revenue Administration

There are two main areas of commercial and industrial activity in Goffstown – the Village area and Pinardville. Various factors have resulted in a somewhat different mix of businesses within these areas. At the core of the Village is a small downtown which is predominantly comprised of retail and office space along with a few industrial businesses as well. The character of this area can be classified as “small town main street”. Most businesses are small and many cater to residents of the western part of Goffstown, as well as traffic passing through from Dunbarton, New Boston and Weare. There are a few pockets of property that are zoned for industrial or commercial use that are presently undeveloped. These areas are located along East Union Street, and the area between Depot Street and the Piscataquog River. The Main Street commercial area is generally in decline with several vacant storefronts. Opportunities may exist for revitalization of Main Street with new business tenants and building improvements. Additional opportunities for economic development lie with undeveloped and underdeveloped parcels currently zoned for commercial or industrial use. Municipal improvements such as intersection upgrades, parking, traffic flow improvements and pedestrian pathways would foster this development.

The challenge that exists with the revitalization of Main Street, is to preserve the charm and character of the village area while encouraging economic development. Older homes in the village, especially those visible along the major corridors (Route 114, Route 13 and Elm Street), define the area's charm. Therefore, long-term preservation of this architectural style is important in maintaining the Village's character. Several of these homes have been converted to multi-family and/or have accessory uses. The preservation of

these buildings (many in residentially zoned areas) may best be served by providing additional, low impact commercial opportunities within them, through implementation of a carefully crafted residential preservation/small business zone.

Pinardville, which is located on the eastern side of town, has larger areas zoned for commercial and industrial development, as well as many more existing businesses. While retail establishments are obvious along Route 114A, there are many industrial businesses and professional offices in this area which are less visible from the highway. The industrially zoned area between Daniel Plummer and Route 114 has a mix of businesses and has been a site of successful economic development. There is, however, room for additional and more intense development of this area. Other undeveloped or underdeveloped areas in Pinardville include industrially and commercially zoned parcels on the west and east sides of Route 114, and the site of the former town landfill. Challenges to future economic development in Pinardville include: mitigating traffic levels and curb cuts; improving pedestrian pathways and access; improving the consistency of architectural styles; improving consistency and placement of signage; filling gaps in sewer and water service lines; and delineating and protecting existing neighborhoods.

There are significant sections of commercial and industrial zoning along Mast Road between the Village and Pinardville, that offer potential for additional development that would not directly impact either the Village or Pinardville areas. These are presently undeveloped or underdeveloped and include the area between Henry Bridge Road and Nickerson Corner. A fourth site, which could be a critical location for future commercial/industrial development, is the area adjacent to the State Prison presently owned by Hillsborough County. The current underdeveloped nature of this approximately 250 acre parcel (combined with its proximity to Routes 101, 293 and 3 via Route 114, and accessibility to municipal water and sewer) makes it a very desirable and marketable location for a flexible, multi-use business park.

There are a number of other possible locations within the town that could offer additional opportunities for economic development. Land in the vicinity of the Transfer Station, as well as other low density residential areas along Goffstown Back Road, have the potential for commercial or industrial uses. Rezoning of agricultural parcels contiguous to existing commercial/industrial zoned parcels could help to reserve additional areas for economic development with reasonable access to Routes 93 and 293. Center Grasmere could also support additional business expansion.

4 Summary and Recommendations

Business development and growth in Goffstown provides an important source of tax revenue which helps to decrease the percentage of local revenues required from residential properties. Individual business facilities generally have higher values than residential properties and thus pay more property taxes. In addition, property taxes paid by businesses help to finance the town's education costs while not directly contributing to school

enrollment. Currently, approximately 11% of local revenues generated are from commercial and industrial taxpayers. This is lower than many towns of similar size.

Goffstown's economy depends heavily on the economic activity within the Greater Manchester area. Its location and highway access places it in a position to benefit from healthy levels of growth expected to occur in the Manchester region. Goffstown's proximity to Manchester and Bedford presents opportunities for attracting new businesses that may desire a more suburban setting. In addition, residential growth in the towns of Dunbarton, Weare and New Boston may support the development of additional retail and consumer services in Goffstown.

Goffstown's distribution of industry and employment, relative to the county, has areas of both economic strengths and weaknesses. Goffstown's smaller share of higher wage paying industries warrants further attention and decisive action. In order to maintain the fiscal health of the local economy Goffstown clearly needs to improve its ability to foster and attract establishments in industries with higher average wages.

From an infrastructure standpoint, the town is fairly well positioned to attract this new development. Businesses need infrastructure such as municipal water and sewer, access to major transportation routes, and communication facilities. Goffstown has significant areas with water and sewer and has plans to continue to improve these services. Commercial and industrially zoned areas off Route 114 and Goffstown Back Road, provide access to Routes 293, 93, 101 and 3 for destinations north, south, east and west. Proximity to Manchester also offers access to a selection of cellular, internet, and cable providers.

In addition to these infrastructure needs, a community's quality of life characteristics can also be a precursor to successful, integrated economic development. Goffstown has many positive aspects that make it attractive from this respect. The Uncanoonuc Mountains and Piscataquog River provide recreation, attractive views and enhance the small town feel. In addition, some of the town's natural features and locational aspects could contribute to the attraction of new businesses. However, new development must also be carried out in a manner which is sensitive to Goffstown's natural features. The town's topography will affect the type, scale, and potential location of new commercial and industrial development. In addition, smaller businesses are considered to be more appropriate for Goffstown's landscape and community character.

Other Goffstown amenities include proximity to a variety of educational institutions and training centers, a skilled labor force within reasonable commuting distance, and a community with many dedicated civic organizations and individual volunteers.

Economic development should be planned and governed with the related goals of: minimizing detrimental changes in residential property values; minimizing detrimental impacts to neighborhoods; mitigating traffic impacts; protecting and improving aesthetics; and improving the number and quality

of jobs available to residents. The community has in place many of the tools for enhancing economic development including a full-time planning and economic development coordinator, an economic development council, and a private industrial corporation.

In summary, Goffstown's approach to economic development should be a multifaceted strategy. A strategy that seeks to retain existing businesses, foster new business growth and development, and attract businesses from outside of the town. The town should also try to secure a balance of business types, including those which service regional, national and international markets. The strategy should consider the unique qualities and characters of the distinct sub-areas of the town, as well as the common characteristics and needs of the greater community.

The following recommendations are designed to help Goffstown achieve the goals which have been identified throughout this chapter, as well as in the General Statement chapter. Some will require active participation and promotion over a number of years, others involve fine-tuning existing codes and policies to create a climate which encourages economic vitality and planned growth.

A. Zoning Ordinance Revisions

Proper utilization of a carefully constructed zoning ordinance is one of the most powerful tools Goffstown can use to create a climate for economic health, while simultaneously managing the impact of a growing population and maintaining the town's rural character. The following zoning recommendations are designed to help town officials meet growth challenges of the next decade.

1) Residential/Small Business Office District (RSBOD)

The "buffer" concept in the RSBOD definition, which presently limits useful application of this ordinance, should be removed. The RSBOD currently functions as a buffer zone between Residential and Commercial districts, but there is an opportunity for wider use of this concept throughout the town. Because structures in this district must maintain architectural compatibility with surrounding properties, RSBOD could be a powerful tool for preserving the character of Goffstown while allowing the lowest level of business use along main corridors. Modifications should be made to the RSBOD ordinance, as well as the Site Plan Review Regulations, in order to tighten architectural requirements, address parking and traffic issues, and establish appropriate site plan/impact study processes when property is converted from a residential to a business use.

2) Village District Design Guidelines

Create a new district classification in the Village area (generally defined as Route 114 from the Villa Augustina School to the cemetery on North Mast Road, and including adjacent streets and neighborhoods commonly considered as part of the "Village"). The Planning Board should draft this ordinance to address the unique characteristics and objectives for preserving

and presenting the Village as a quintessential New England town, while simultaneously enhancing its commercial appeal. Issues to consider include commercial architecture, bridges, signage, parking, sidewalks, utilities (lighting, telephone poles, etc.), and traffic flow (see Village Revitalization discussion later in this chapter). The Planning Board must pay special attention so that zoning provisions enhance, rather than hinder or discourage, the development of low-level commercial activity within the District, especially along Mast Road, where such growth is likely to occur and is most desirable.

3) Neighborhood Commercial District

Create a new district classification which has the same uses and architectural restrictions as RSBOD, but which also allows small, neighborhood-oriented retail businesses. These businesses are considered a convenience to area residents, thereby enhancing neighborhood employment and reducing traffic along major thoroughfares. Examples of such businesses are dry cleaners, convenience stores, video rental stores and banks.

4) Commercial/Industrial “Flex Zone” District

Create a new district classification which allows a combination of commercial and/or industrial uses on parcels of a designated minimum size. On lots of adequate size, commercial would be allowed along road frontage where it is most desirable, while lower profile industrial would be allowed on the back land. In addition to serving the general public, the commercial portion could serve industrial neighbors (example: industrial employees eat at an adjacent restaurant thereby reducing traffic). In this way commercial/industrial land could be used more efficiently in order to maximize its contribution to the town’s tax base as well as the value to property owners.

B. Commercial/Industrial Development Initiatives

In conjunction with proposed revisions to the zoning ordinance, the following zoning changes are recommended to meet the challenges and opportunities of economic development, while preserving the small town, rural character of Goffstown.

1) Rezone Mast Road and the Elm Street/Center Street/Back Road Corridors

Goffstown’s two main travel corridors, Mast Road on the south side of the Piscataquog River, and the Elm Street/Center Street/Back Road corridor on the north, will see the greatest demand for commercial development over the next decade. In order to meet the need for business use, while preserving the historic nature of homes and buildings and minimizing traffic problems, property along Mast Road currently zoned Residential should be rezoned to Residential/Small Business Office District (RSBOD), from the Manchester city line to Normand Road/Villa Augustina (where it will border the proposed Village District). In the Pinardville area, this would enhance the value of property by allowing the lowest intensity business use for properties which may no longer be desirable residential locations. On Mast Road, near the Village, this rezoning would help preserve current architecture and

compatibility with residential neighborhoods, and it would be a preemptive measure against future pressure for more intensive commercial use.

For the same reasons stated above, residential property along the Elm/Center/Back Road corridor should also be rezoned to RSBOD, from Tirrell Hill Road to the Manchester city line. In addition, the portion of Center Street from Tibbets Hill Road to Tirrell Hill Road, should be re-zoned to the proposed Neighborhood Commercial District, which would provide Grasmere area residents with limited retail services, thereby helping to alleviate traffic in Pinardville and the Village.

2) Daniel Plummer Road Industrial Park (Area 1 in Figure 1)

This industrially zoned area is substantially developed. A sewer line constructed along the full length of Daniel Plummer Road would make a substantial amount of land available for development which is now used for septic systems. This would be a much more efficient use of an existing industrial zone. Also, with the availability of municipal sewer, adjoining land could also be rezoned for commercial or industrial use.

3) Route 114 and Shirley Hill Road (Area 2 in Figure 1)

This area along Route 114, between the Bedford town line and Shirley Hill Road, has a depth of 500 to 700 feet and is currently zoned industrial. Although this is one of Goffstown's most desirable areas in terms of visibility and highway access, without sewer and water service this site is less likely to be developed in the near future. If a sewer line was constructed along Daniel Plummer Road (as discussed above) an extension of this line down St. Anselm Drive and across Route 114 to serve this area would be feasible.

4) Hillsborough County Property (Area 3 in Figure 1)

This 243 acre area owned by Hillsborough County has development on only some 40 of those acres. This is one of the most desirable locations in Goffstown to develop and the town should intensify efforts to establish a partnership with the county to help meet Goffstown's economic development needs.

5) Goffstown Back Road (Area 4 in Figure 1)

This area is located along Goffstown Back Road and extends from the Manchester border to the Radio Towers and the river. Much of this area is currently zoned Industrial, with water service available near the Manchester city line. Sewer service could be extended from Riverview/Allard Park to this area.

Cut and paste Figure 1 here

6) Mast Road (Area 5 in Figure 1)

Much of this contiguous area south of Mast Road, beginning to the east of the Villa Augustina ball fields and extending approximately one mile easterly to the west end of the county land, is currently zoned industrial or commercial. This area is served by town water and sewer and is an immediate candidate for rezoning and development under the "Flex Zone" concept discussed earlier in this chapter. Commercial or industrial land already for sale consists of plots owned by Crotched Mountain Development (82.2 acres), Verres Financial (13.8 acres), and Thomas King (32.5 acres). To minimize traffic impact and curb cuts on Mast Road, a service road for this area should be constructed along the discontinued railroad bed, beginning at the point where the railroad crosses Mast Road near the Villa ball fields, proceeding easterly to the undeveloped area across from the Animal Rescue League, with the ultimate termination point being the traffic light at the intersection of Mast Road and Henry Bridge Road. Construction of such a service road should be integrated with a "Rails to Trails" biking and hiking program.

7) Depot Street (Town Garage)

The town Highway Department's garage on Depot Street is situated on one of the few areas in Goffstown currently zoned industrial. This facility should be relocated from this site, possibly to the transfer station, so that this valuable industrial area can be converted into tax-generating property.

8) Paré Farm

This 20-30 acre property, adjacent to the town transfer station, has potential as a flex-zone industrial site. The boundaries of this site are Henry Bridge Road, Harry Brook, Elm Street, the transfer station property, and the Piscataquog River. The soil and slope are conducive to an industrial park setting and the site has access to town water from the Grasmere Water District. There are significant power line rights-of-way currently dissecting the property. Access could be obtained by the construction of a roadway through the transfer station entry way and also through construction of an access road from Henry Bridge Road. This would discourage additional traffic from using Center Street.

C. Economic Marketing Initiatives

1) Assistant to the Economic Development Coordinator

In order to reach the goal of 20% taxable, non-residential valuation, Goffstown must take pro-active measures. While making appropriate zoning adjustments and infrastructure improvements are prerequisites, the town cannot realistically expect success with a "build it and they will come" outlook. Therefore, Goffstown needs to take the lead by investing in a pilot program for a new town position. This part-time position would be responsible for assisting in various economic development and support activities as follows.

- soliciting economic development grants, sponsorships, etc
- public relations and promotion of local business
- developing and maintaining local market and resource databases
- developing and maintaining a Goffstown World Wide Web site
- assisting in formation of a Village Merchants Association
- assisting with coordination and packaging of proposed business development
- participation and membership on the Economic Development Council
- coordinating activities with the Economic Development Corporation (where appropriate)
- acting as an ex-officio member of the Planning Board
- preparing a report through the Economic Development Council for the annual town report

During a two-year pilot program this position would report to the town Planning Coordinator. If approved in future years, the Board of Selectmen should consider whether to expand this position and/or have this individual report directly to the Board. It is anticipated that this part-time position would require approximately 24 hours per week and would require \$15,000-\$25,000 in funding for the first year.

2) Village Revitalization

Preserving the traditional character of the Village, while simultaneously expanding and promoting it as a commercial/retail destination, is key to Goffstown's economy, quality of life, and self-image. As discussed earlier, the town should create the Goffstown Village District as an overlay to existing zoning. In addition, area businesses should form a Village Merchants Association to promote businesses and to advise the town on standards for architectural design, signage, traffic, parking, sidewalks, lighting, etc. (the first job might be finding a way to minimize negative economic impact while working on the Main Street bridge). The prosperity of this area should depend not only on retail expansion but also on professional services such as lawyers, doctors, dentists, engineers, realtors and bankers.

A focal point of Village revitalization should be the construction of a traditional wooden covered bridge across the Piscataquog River on Main Street. Where Goffstown once had both vehicular and railroad covered bridges, both are now gone. Whether vehicular, pedestrian, or both, a covered bridge is typically a defining feature of most communities which have one. Furthermore, it is characteristic of the traditional New England feel that residents desire for the Village. A covered bridge would attract people and economic activity to the Village area. In addition, the fundraising and construction process is a way to fully involve the community in a tangible manifestation of commitment to Goffstown's vitality.

3) Join the New Hampshire Main Street Program

The town should join the New Hampshire Main Streets Program, an organization established to help towns specifically with the revitalization of

downtown areas. The program assists towns with economic restructuring, organizing support, promotion and marketing, and design of a town center. The beginning of this process would involve the creation a downtown profile, information for which could be gathered from the Business Visitation Program. There is a need for local civic groups to become involved with moving this project forward. The end result will be: an upgraded area with increased services for town residents and other surrounding towns; an upgrade of the tax base; a reversal of the decline in business presently leaving town; and an overall presentation of the town as an architecturally defined New England village.

4) St. Anselm College

Goffstown's St. Anselm College is a four-year catholic liberal arts college, offering majors in 32 fields of study. It has been ranked among America's Best Colleges in annual ratings published by *U.S. News and World Report* for the past eight years. It includes 40 buildings situated on over 300 acres and has more than 400 employees, most of whom are local residents. The College is a potential resource that could assist Goffstown in gaining a competitive advantage for local businesses. The town, through the Board of Selectmen and the Economic Development Council, should explore all possibilities for expanding its relationship with the College, ranging from simple activities such as renting facilities for meetings, presentations, etc., to facilitating programs such as student internships, business scholarships, "real-life" business case studies, and incubating and implementing newly developed theories and technologies.

D. Natural Resources Considerations

Goffstown is fortunate to have two major natural resources which define its physical landscape; the Uncanoonuc Mountains and the Piscataquog River. While the preservation and ecological health of these treasures override all other considerations, there are also ways in which these natural resources could contribute to the overall economy of Goffstown.

1) The Uncanoonucs

The twin peaks of the Uncanoonuc Mountains are Goffstown's most distinguishing feature and are visible from many miles away. Fortunately, North Uncanoonuc remains unspoiled. Most property on and around the peak is owned by the Goffstown Conservation Commission, which insures that it will remain in a natural state and be available for recreational use by the community.

The majority of the property on the South Mountain is privately held and has been used for both residential and commercial purposes for many years. At one time, South Uncanoonuc was a significant tourist attraction featuring a summit hotel, as well as an incline railway. After the hotel burned, new highway expansions improved the accessibility to other destinations, such as the White Mountains. As a result, the reconstruction of the summit hotel was no longer economically feasible. The summit is now home to numerous broadcast and microwave towers. Barring some unforeseen technological

advancement that renders them obsolete, the towers are here to stay. They provide the town with substantial tax revenue without increasing traffic or demands for services. Since the aesthetics of the South Mountain are already compromised the town should encourage maximizing the use of this historically commercial area.

2) Piscataquog River

Waterways are among the most beautiful and environmentally sensitive natural resources, and Goffstown is fortunate to have the Piscataquog River and its tributaries. In the 19th century the river was put to work providing employment in several now defunct mills and manufacturing enterprises. Today, two dams on the river in Goffstown provide electrical power generation and the development of Glen Lake. The town, through the Conservation Commission, the Economic Development Council, and interested citizens, should form a group to explore ways Goffstown's river and lakes might contribute to the community's economy. At a minimum, wherever possible, bridges and roads along rivers and brooks should allow scenic views which would promote Goffstown as an attractive and desirable community.

E. Develop Community Consensus

The entire Goffstown community must philosophically embrace the concept that a healthy economy and our traditional character and values are mutually compatible. In the past, too many residents have felt that Goffstown could only be preserved by blocking or limiting business growth, while at the same time lamenting steady increases in property taxes. In fact, if residential growth continues to outpace non-residential property as a percentage of the tax base, the increasing demand for schools and municipal services will drive up taxes at an even faster rate.

In order for Goffstown to have a healthy, viable economy and a balanced tax base, there must be full support from the community and it must be a "top down" process. If not championed by the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board, success is doubtful. Town officials are in the best position to recognize the needs and challenges to achieve economic health and to lead efforts to educate, promote, and implement policy. In order to achieve the goals stated in this master plan (including reaching 20% taxable, non-residential valuation within five years), town officials should take proactive steps now to improve economic health by implementing the recommendations outlined in this chapter.