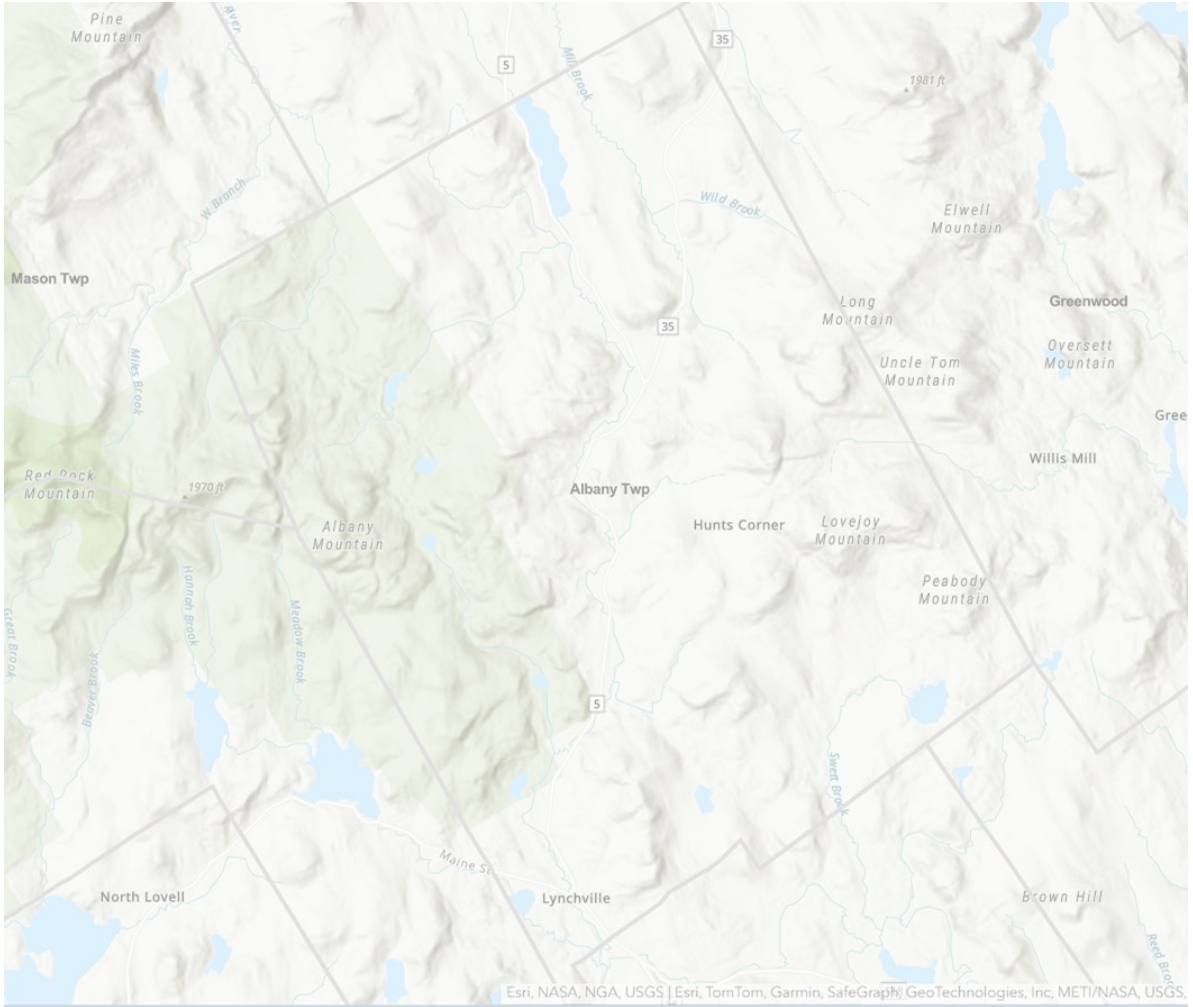


ALBANY TOWNSHIP FORUM

Draft Summary Report

February 2026



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List of Abbreviations

Commission	Land Use Planning Commission
LUPC	Land Use Planning Commission
Service Area	The Commission’s Service Area, which includes the unorganized and deorganized territories of Maine as well as certain towns and plantations.
AVCOG	Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments
DEP	Maine Department of Environmental Protection
DHHS	Maine Department of Health and Human Services
EMS	Emergency Management Services
UT	Unorganized Territory (LUPC Service Area)

An Important Note About This Report

This Report was compiled from notes taken at the Forum and materials produced during the planning of the Forum. It is not polished or intended to be a formal publication. The Report does not represent the policy of any agency or entity. Any recommendations or identified possible next steps are suggestions and non-binding to any entity. Any part of this report may be separated and used to further conversations about the topics discussed or other important topics related to service provision in Maine’s UT.

ALBANY TOWNSHIP FORUM

Background and Goals

Albany Township is part of the unincorporated territory (UT) in Maine. The Township is located in the western part of the state in Oxford County. It has experienced significant growth in recent decades and no longer fits the UT model developed decades ago, where state agencies and county governments, along with neighboring towns, provide services for sparsely populated areas of Maine¹. In recent years, there have been ongoing and growing concerns about public health and environmental safety in Albany Township. Many of the problems involve complex issues, and, unlike in a municipality, no one entity (county or state agency) provides services or has overarching jurisdiction. Cross-jurisdictional cooperation is needed to sufficiently address enforcement and public health concerns.

Albany Township is not the only place in the UT struggling with these challenges, and the idea of a Forum was developed to broaden everyone's understanding of who provides what services, what the issues are, and what is needed to address some of the most pressing issues.

The goals of the Forum were to:

1. Improve public safety and natural resource protection in Albany Township by bringing the various agencies that have jurisdiction in the unorganized townships in Oxford County to the same table;
2. Confirm jurisdiction, discuss issues, and problem-solve;
3. Identify points of contact for specific issues; and
4. Create a shared roadmap for going forward that describes how public service groups will work together to solve the most pressing issues.

Planning the Forum

The idea of a cross-jurisdictional forum emerged after the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC or Commission) staff met with Oxford County officials to discuss issues related to updating the Commission's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. County officials expressed concerns about the costs and challenges of providing municipal services in the UT, particularly in Albany Township, as well as frustration with the complex web of state agencies that have jurisdiction over various other public services. In particular, issues with junkyards, roads, and dwellings without adequate plumbing were identified.

After the meeting, LUPC and County staff approached the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG) to explore a possible collaboration between the LUPC, Oxford County, and AVCOG to set up a cross-jurisdictional forum to bring together the public agencies and service providers to discuss the most pressing issues, who has jurisdiction and resources, and develop a plan to start addressing the issues. A planning team was identified and met over several months to develop an agenda and detailed plans for the Forum.

¹ Population estimates range from over 300 to over 600. Accurate population estimates are difficult to ascertain because it is an unorganized township and not a Census designated place, and has a high seasonal population, .

The original structure of the Forum was to bring together the service providers to share information and resources. Early in the planning process, Oxford County officials expressed the importance of including Albany Township residents in the event being planned. Potential participants were identified and sent invitations to the event (see *Appendix A for the list of invited participants and attendees*). Additionally, the County placed notices in local newspapers to help disseminate information about the Forum. Terry Hayes was approached and agreed to be the moderator for the Forum.

The Forum agenda included:

- Opening remarks by Zane Loper, Oxford County Administrator
- An overview of the agenda and Forum structure by Terry Hayes, Moderator
- Introductions of those present
- A brief presentation on the cross-Jurisdictional Issues by Stacy Benjamin, LUPC
- Breakout into topical Working Groups, including:
 - Junkyards
 - Resources and Funding
 - Roads
 - Emergency Services
 - Housing and Public Health
- An opportunity for participants to circulate and respond to Group Notes
- Reports from Groups – including identification of next steps
- Final Thoughts

This report is structured to include the information presented at the forum and capture the questions and discussion in each topic group.

Forum Outcomes

Attendance

Over 70 people attended the Albany Township Forum, and more than half were Albany Township residents or landowners. Three Oxford County officials were present, including Sawin Millett, Commissioner; Zane Loper, Administrator; and Tony Carter, UT Manager. Three representatives from the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments also attended and assisted with the topic sessions.

In addition, representatives from neighboring communities attended, including:

- A Bethel Resident
- The Bethel Code Enforcement Officer
- A representative from the Bethel Emergency Ambulance Rescue Service
- The Greenwood Code Enforcement Officer

Six Maine state agencies were represented: the Maine Forest Service, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Health and Human Services Center for Disease Control, the Attorney General's Office, the Secretary of State's Bureau of Motor Vehicles, the State Auditor's office, and the Land Use Planning Commission. Two of the state officials who attended are also residents of Albany Township. One representative from the U.S. Forest Service also attended.

The topics discussed, major issues identified, and possible next steps are summarized below.

Topic Area Highlights

For each topic area discussed at the Forum, the information shared, issues identified, and questions asked are summarized below. A more detailed report on each topic is provided in Appendix B.

Junkyards

Major Issues/Topics

- Who regulates junkyards? Is it the county commissioners, LUPC, or BMV?
- Where does a property owner go for information or to log a complaint?
- Concern about impacts to environmentally sensitive areas
- Not enough enforcement, and fines and penalties are not high enough to be a deterrent
- Trash is a major grey area because different entities regulate different kinds

Possible Next Steps

- Clarify that Oxford County works with the LUPC to evaluate junk yards in the UT on a case-by-case basis and involves the BMV or DEP as needed. If there is a complaint or concern, residents should contact the County UT Administrator.
- A summary information sheet available on the County website and relevant state agency websites would be helpful
- Make sure people are aware of AVCOG's [Disposal Resource Guide](#)

Housing and Public Health

Major Issues/Topics

- The permitting process is confusing in the UT, which allows for slipping through the cracks
- Trailers/housing/structures (including RVs and campers) used as housing without addressing wastewater (permits or systems)
- People do not know what to do if they have a concern or who to speak with to report it
- Many residents do not want to become a town, and any process to change the town needs to be slow

Possible Next Steps

- Create guidance information for new residents/visitors
- Identify resources to help pay for new septic or other infrastructure
- LUPC should provide more assistance in navigating permitting
- Provide better ways for residents to communicate concerns
- Local forum to discuss the future of Albany Township

Emergency Services

Major Issues/Topics

- Several street names in Albany Twp are identical to Bethel, and share the same zip code, so it can be very confusing for responders
- Contracted emergency departments have a lack of resources – they are not getting enough money for reimbursement and have trouble finding and retaining volunteers/personnel

- Three different emergency response departments (Bethel, Stoneham, Waterford) serve the township), and when one can't respond, Bethel has to step up.
- Who do residents call to discuss issues?
- Taxes have increased, but services have not changed – where can residents find information about how taxes break down?

Possible Next Steps

- Coordinate with realtors so they can let potential buyers know what to expect living in the UT (EMS, services, etc.)
- Create a map of service coverage
- Improve communication and clarity over taxes and other important information

Roads

Major Issues/Topics

- Residents have growing expectations for road maintenance, like paving and plowing
- Better enforcement of speed limits and posted road limits is needed
- Traffic is increasing and expected to continue to increase
- Ditches to be cleaned out more frequently
- The LUPC Wilton office is an hour's drive from Albany Township
- LUPC's Chapter 10 is a bear (document is difficult to navigate to find road standards)
- Inadequate culverts are an issue and can lead to expensive damage to roads.
- Driveways and culverts are being installed without permits
- Costs to maintain current services are rising and increasing significantly

Possible Next Steps

- Share the “Road Bible” maintained by the County (*See Appendix C*)
- Create a guide “How to be an Albany Township Resident”
- LUPC should come to speak to residents re: building permits and roads at a resident forum and training, and the Forest Service should also be involved

Resources and Funding

Major Issues/Topics

- The recent tax increase has raised the temperature on some issues
- The tax increase could have been phased in and communicated better
- Residents have questions about tax values, the amount collected, and what it pays for
- Residents do not know how to participate in the County budget process
- People who move here need to know what they're getting into
- The LUPC takes a long time to respond, the staff are far away, and their materials aren't easy to read
- Ambulance services are shutting down, so costs increase because the service area for remaining providers expands - Costs have increased more than nine times in 10 years
- Concerns that the character of the area will be lost

Possible Next Steps

- Residents want a conversation to designate funding for UT roads, especially for high accident locations
- Residents want better communication from MRS, Oxford County officials, and others about taxes; for example, a letter to explain increases and a breakdown of who pays for what
- The County could put information on county websites, hold more public hearings, and post things in more public areas
- Develop a flow chart for service provision
- Create centralized communication through a single UT website
- Post county and state information at town offices and voting locations

Common Themes

1. It is confusing to have so many different entities responsible for different aspects of running the township. There is no central place to go for information or to talk with someone about a problem. This problem is tied to many of the other problems identified by residents.
2. Residents would like more ways to participate in decision-making for the township. Decisions are made at the County or State level.
3. The recent hike in taxes for UT residents has raised questions and concerns about the services provided. Many residents commented that taxes have increased, but services have not increased. Service providers explained that the costs have increased significantly for the level of services currently provided, and that increasing services would require even higher costs.
4. Residents want to better understand where taxes go.
5. Service provision to the township is complicated. For example, three different emergency response departments are contracted for different regions of the township, and residents vote and register their cars in three different towns. Additionally, residents are concerned that emergency responders providing services do not always know the area very well, and there are road names that are identical to road names in the organized towns providing the service. This leads to confusion and can result in delays in emergency response.
6. More communication in general is desired by the residents, and a central place to get information would be helpful. Some communication avenues suggested include:
 - a. Realtors (new residents/landowners)
 - b. Town offices where residents go
 - c. County website
 - d. New website geared just for UT residents
 - e. State website
 - f. Mailings
 - g. Flow chart of whom to talk to for different questions/concerns
 - h. Maps of service provisions (roads, fire, EMS, voting, etc.)

Next Steps

LUPC

1. Work with the UT Fiscal Administrator, MRS, and other state agencies to develop a central information website for the UT.
2. Make informational brochures about LUPC permitting available locally in town offices, stores, and the Albany community building.
3. Take additional steps to make people aware of the new online inquiry and complaint reporting options (GovDelivery, press releases, public events).

Oxford County

1. Share information about roads in the UT maintained by Oxford County (*provided in Appendix C*)
2. Continue to work with the LUPC, BMV, and DEP to respond to issues related to junkyards.
3. Participate in any follow-up forums or meetings.

AVCOG

1. Discuss with LUPC and Oxford County to determine how AVCOG may be able to assist in the next steps.
2. Potential for AVCOG to build a UT section on the website to provide direct links to appropriate resources.

State Auditor's UT Fiscal Administrator

1. Work with the LUPC, MRS, and other state agencies to develop a central information website for the UT.

Albany Township Residents

1. Foster conversation about local issues and the best course forward for the community. Identify local goals for the Township for the coming decade.
2. Convene a follow-up forum if desired to further these conversations.

APPENDIX A

List of Attendees and Invited Participants²

Name	Affiliation
Erica Bufkins	AVCOG
Shelley Kruszewski	AVCOG
Kathryn Oak	AVCOG
David Hanscom	Bethel Rescue
Rose Lincoln	Bethel Resident and <i>Lewiston Sun Journal</i>
Zane Loper	County Gov. - Oxford Administrator
Sawin Millett	County Gov. - Oxford Commissioner
Tony Carter	County Gov. - Oxford UT Manager
Josh Sjostrom	Fed Gov. - White Mountain National Forest
John Kwoka	Greenwood Planning Board
Scott Hamilton	Landowner
Lynda Hamilton	Landowner
Robert Folsom Sr.	Landowner
Nathan Lister	Landowner
Terry Hayes	Moderator
Sandie Dion	Resident
Dick Dion	Resident
Dean Abby	Resident
Nancy Trotter	Resident
Vernina Gray	Resident
Bob O'Brien	Resident
Alison Aloisio	Resident
Joe Aloisio	Resident
Art Marshall	Resident
Tony Bennett	Resident
Jeremy Head	Resident
Shannan Thielbar	Resident
Zachary O'Donnell	Resident
Jack O'Donnell	Resident
Lauren Olson	Resident
Stephen Smith	Resident
Frank Terry	Resident
Chris Howard	Resident
Jane Wardwell	Resident
Joan Kimball	Resident
John Kimball	Resident
Linda Champagne	Resident

² Includes only those who signed in at the event.

Name	Affiliation
Jim Champagne	Resident
Riley Kern	Resident
Roberta White	Resident
Richard Burrile	Resident
Lorraine Tanguay	Resident
Gene Tanguay	Resident
Guy Hill	Resident
Wendy Green	Resident
Jordan Rowell	Resident
Roger Leidel	Resident
Sue Gardner	Resident
Paul Hausman	Resident
Emma Day Branch	Resident
Jeff Rosenblatt	Resident
Allision Rosenblatt	Resident
Mac Davis	Resident
Caleb Elwell	State Gov. - AG
Lauren Gauthier	State Gov. - CDC
Randee McDonald	State Gov. - DEP
Chip Jones	State Gov. - Fiscal Administrator for UT
Jennifer Larson	State Gov. - LUPC
Megan Lamb	State Gov. - LUPC
Ruby Goodmen	State Gov. - LUPC
Ben Godsoe	State Gov. - LUPC
Audie Arbo	State Gov. - LUPC
Stacy Benjamin	State Gov. - LUPC
Lee Smith	State Gov. - LUPC; Resident
Brian Holland	State Gov. - MFS
Mike Richard	State Gov. - MFS; Resident
Ronald McGowen and others	State Gov. - BMV
Courtney McPherson	Town Gov. - Bethel CEO
Anne Kwoka	Town Gov. - Greenwood CEO

Invited but Unable to Attend:

Pete Coughlan	State Gov. - MaineDOT - Local Roads Center
Tim Cusick	State Gov. - MaineDOT - Western Region
Amy Lachance	State Gov. - DHHS - Drinking Water
Alex Pugh	State Gov. - DHHS - Subsurface Wastewater
Brent Lawson	State Gov. - DHHS - Subsurface Wastewater
Town of Waterford	Local Health Officer
Town of Stoneham	Local Health Officer

APPENDIX B

Detailed Report on Topic Area Sessions

Junkyards

Forum Topic Outline

- **Scope of the Problem** – What is a junkyard, and who has jurisdiction?
- **Permitting** – What permits are required from whom?
- **Enforcement** – How can entities work together to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and rules?
- **Clean up** – Are there sites that need outside resources to be cleaned up?

What is a Junkyard and Who Regulates Them?

There are multiple state laws and rules that apply to junk and salvage yards. These are administered by several different state agencies, and also by the county where they are located. A summary of the regulations and jurisdiction is provided below.

Title 30-A §3752. Definitions

"Junkyard" means a yard, field or other outside area used to store, dismantle or otherwise handle:

- A. Discarded, worn-out or junked plumbing, heating supplies, electronic or industrial equipment, household appliances or furniture;
- B. Discarded, scrap and junked lumber; and
- C. Old or scrap copper, brass, rope, rags, batteries, paper trash, rubber debris, waste and all scrap iron, steel and other scrap ferrous or nonferrous material.

"Automobile graveyard" means a yard, field or other outdoor area used to store 3 or more unregistered or uninspected motor vehicles, as defined in [Title 29-A, section 101, subsection 42](#), or parts of the vehicles. "Automobile graveyard" includes an area used for automobile dismantling, salvage and recycling operations.

"Automobile recycling business" means the business premises of a dealer or a recycler licensed under [Title 29-A, sections 851 to 1112](#) who purchases or acquires salvage vehicles for the purpose of reselling the vehicles or component parts of the vehicles or rebuilding or repairing salvage vehicles for the purpose of resale or for selling the basic materials in the salvage vehicles, as long as 80% of the business premises specified in the site plan in [section 3755-A, subsection 1, paragraph C](#) is used for automobile recycling operations.

Process for Obtaining a License for a Junkyard, Automobile Graveyard, or Automobile Recycling Business in Albany Township

- Apply for a permit for establishment with the county commissioners
- Obtain a license for the business through SOS BMV

- If there are issues in regard to a potential unpermitted junkyard, automobile recycling business, or automobile graveyard, a complaint can be made with SOS BMV

Title 30-A §3753. Permit required

A person may not establish, operate or maintain an automobile graveyard, automobile recycling business or junkyard without first obtaining a nontransferable permit from the county commissioners of the county of any unorganized territory in which the automobile graveyard, automobile recycling business or junkyard is to be located.

- Permits issued to an automobile graveyard or junkyard under this section are valid until the first day of the following year;
 - Except that, beginning in calendar year 2004, permits issued to an automobile graveyard or junkyard under this section are valid until the first day of October of the following year.
- Permits issued to an automobile recycling business under this section are valid for 5 years from the date of issuance and are renewable provided that the permit holder furnishes a sworn statement, annually, on the anniversary date of the granting of the permit, that the facility complies with the standards of operation applicable at the time of issuance of the permit.
 - A person operating a business that involves the recycling of automobiles may operate under a permit for an automobile graveyard or a permit for an automobile recycling business.

Title 30-A §3754. Hearings

The county commissioners, as provided for in section 3753, shall hold a public hearing before granting a permit to establish a new automobile graveyard, automobile recycling business or junkyard and may hold public hearings annually regarding the relicensing of these facilities.

- The county commissioners shall require an applicant to provide proof of mailing the notice of the application to all abutting property owners.
- The county commissioners shall also post a notice of the hearing at least 7 and not more than 14 days before the hearing in at least 2 public places in the unorganized territory and publish a notice in one newspaper having general circulation in the unorganized territory in which the automobile graveyard, automobile recycling business or junkyard is to be located.
- The county commissioners shall give written or electronic notice of the application to establish a new automobile graveyard or automobile recycling business to the automobile dealer licensing section of the Department of the Secretary of State, Bureau of Motor Vehicles by mailing a copy of the application at least 7 and not more than 30 days before the hearing.
- The county commissioners shall give written notice of the application to the public water supplier if the application is for an automobile graveyard, automobile recycling business or junkyard located within the supplier's source water supply area. The notice may be given by mailing a copy of the application at least 7 and not more than 14 days before the hearing.

Who cleans up a junkyard?

- The County Commissioners will work with a legal entity to require the property owner to clean up a junkyard.

What about properties with a lot of trash?

- There are no provisions enforceable by LUPC that regulate trash.
 - If someone is burying trash, LUPC and DEP have jurisdiction to step in for remediation if it's within an environmentally sensitive area.
 - LUPC has a complaint form that residents can utilize.
- Trash is predominantly a civil matter, though there are cases where LUPC, DMV Enforcement, and the County can step in (typically if the land is within an environmentally sensitive area)
 - Can't tell property owners to clean up their properties if there are no regulations to provide a standard, it becomes a matter of opinion rather than enforcement of regulations.
- If the subject parcel is within the shoreland, or a sensitive watershed, DEP can be contacted to act under **Title 38 Section 347-A Violations**.
 - Whenever it appears to the commissioner, after investigation, that there is or has been a violation of this Title, of rules adopted under this Title or of the terms or conditions of a license, permit or order issued by the board or the commissioner, the commissioner may initiate an enforcement action by taking one or more of the following steps:
 1. Resolving the violation through an administrative consent agreement pursuant to subsection 4, signed by the violator and approved by the board and the Attorney General;
 2. Referring the violation to the Attorney General for civil or criminal prosecution;
 3. Scheduling and holding an enforcement hearing on the alleged violation pursuant to subsection 2; or
 4. With the prior approval of the Attorney General, commencing a civil action pursuant to section 342, subsection 7 and the Maine Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 3.

Secretary of State Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV) Enforcement

- There are four detectives who handle licensed recycling facilities
- A business license cannot be obtained from the BMV unless a permit is first obtained from the county commissioners
 - If an abandoned car is located on a property, the property owner would be reached out to, as well as the last title owner of the vehicle.

Top Concerns of Residents

- Little understanding of who to reach out to in regulating junkyard sites, or logging a complaint
- Degradation of water resources as a result of facilities being located in environmentally sensitive areas
 - BMV discussed the retention of fluids within the vehicle. Leaking of substances from a junked car happens far less than most assumed. They have tested cars that have been out on site and in many cases, they do not need remediation.

- There is little recourse for those who do not comply with the regulation of junkyards. Violation fees are unsubstantial, which leads to repeat offenders who see it as a “slap on the wrist”.
- Legal costs associated with violations make the cost outweigh the benefit of requiring a property owner to clean up a property
- Residents think that there is no regulation as they are unsure where the regulations come from. Is it the county commissioners, LUPC, or BMV?
 - Clarity around this would assist both residents and the agencies involved.
- Trash is a major grey area as different entities regulate different pieces.

Housing and Public Health

Forum Topic Outline

- **Scope of the Problem** – How to identify situations where people are living without sewer and water
- **Possible Actions** – What steps would need to happen to help address these situations?
- **Resources** – What resources are available to help people invest in adequate water and septic disposal, or find alternative housing?
- **Coordination** – How can entities work together to resolve these situations?

Problems (subsurface wastewater)

- Rules need to apply to everyone the same
- What happens in Albany Township affects water for Portland
- Trailers/housing/structures without wastewater (permits or systems)
- RVs & campers - make sure these aren't permanent (issue for public safety)
- Every use needs to be permitted – process is confusing in the UT, which allows for slipping through the cracks
- Who does someone talk to about the problem?
- What does someone do?

Solutions

- Small committee that's local & can make the process more efficient
- Centralized tracking and greater transparency & communication
- Need information geared for new residents – it can't just be web-based
- Need resources for people who can't afford septic or other infrastructure – establish route to compliance

Problems (campers and campsites)

- Devalues surrounding land/abutting properties
- Unpermitted structures
- Lack of enforcement
- Many different agencies, county & towns provide services
- Lack of transparency of enforcement and response/permit status, sometimes no response, which results in environmental effects and feeling powerless
- Mix of new residents and old residents

Solutions

- Info for new residents/visitors
- Need resources to help pay for new septic or other infrastructure
- Assistance navigating permitting
- Better ways to communicate concerns
- Don't want to be a town
- Process of changing the town needs to be slow

Emergency Services

Forum Topic Outline

- **Scope of the Problem** – How has the number of emergency calls in Albany Township changed in recent years? How much are the costs increasing?
- **Funding and Resources** – How can the rising costs be addressed? Are there new ideas for emergency service provision that can be applied here?
- **Coordination** – How can entities work together to resolve these issues?

Who Provides Emergency Services in Albany Township?

Oxford County provides emergency response services in the UT areas in the county through contracts with nearby town services and the county sheriff's department.

Problems

- Address issues - Several street names are identical to Bethel, and share the same zip code, so it can get very confusing for responders
- Some roads are not maintained by Oxford County – residents were not aware of this and it was particularly concerning for residents
- Contracted emergency departments have a lack of resources – they are not getting enough money for reimbursement and have trouble finding and retaining volunteers/personnel
- Three different emergency response departments (Bethel, Stoneham, Waterford) serve the township (service ends at different roads), and when one can't respond, Bethel has to step up.
- Who do residents call to discuss issues?
- Taxes have increased, but services have not changed – where can residents find information about how taxes break down?

Solutions

- Realtors need to let potential buyers know of the situation (EMS, services etc.)
- Maps of service coverage
- More communication and clarity over taxes and other important information

Roads

Forum Topic Outline

- **Scope of the Problem** – What are the issues related to roads, culverts, and winter maintenance?

- **Funding** – How can the rising costs be addressed?
- **Resident Expectations** – What mechanisms or communication tools are available to help manage local expectations?
- **Coordination** – How can entities work together to resolve these issues?

Maintenance

- Residents have growing expectations for road maintenance, like paving and plowing
 - One challenge is people building on roads that are not currently maintained and then expecting maintenance
 - Are summer roads becoming year-round roads?
 - How to manage roads that were previously County roads, and may still be seen as county roads by residents, but may not be recognized by County?
 - Oxford County maintains many roads in Albany Township, including general maintenance, paving, and snow plowing
- How to determine who maintains a road? (private, DOT or County)
 - There is a “Road Bible” maintained by the County (*see Appendix C*)
 - Shift from camps/summer roads to year round when would a road be added to the bible and be re-classified?
 - Road maintenance is determined/prioritized to respond to the highest need for assistance by Maine DOT
 - At what point does MaineDOT designate a request for re-classification?
- LUPC handles permitting of new roads and if environmental damage (through enforcement)
- If County-maintained road issue, call Oxford County
- Hunts Corner road is posted in the spring for weight limits but this is not enforced
- Increased traffic
 - Skiing/commuters passing through is increasing, a lot more traffic than just residents
 - Route 5 and Hunts Corner have commercial vehicles passing through and a high volume of traffic. What if a large truck is incapacitated? Are there other access roads to get around?
 - Roads being used by lots of motorcycles/recreation “back country discovery route finder” app
 - Challenges of mixed uses, trucks, recreation, resident
 - Expect traffic to increase, including larger trucks
 - Challenges if looking to upgrade for increased capacity needed
 - Residents talked about need for ditches to be cleaned out more frequently
 - Idea - If threshold of people interested in new road with maintenance, it could function similar to a utility like electricity poles

Communication

- Create a guide “How to be an Albany Township Resident”
- What mechanisms or communication tools are available to help manage local expectations for road maintenance?
- LUPC could communicate re: road maintenance expectations during the permitting process.

- More adequate LUPC instruction when permits happen, so problems do not land on builders.
 - Builders and homeowners need more guidance (culverts, etc.) from County and LUPC, more communication is needed
 - Real estate agents and developers also need more info
- LUPC and Albany Twp
 - The LUPC Wilton office is an hour's drive from Albany Township
- Road Associations: does the County or LUPC facilitate these?
 - LUPC subdivisions involved in road association development
- LUPC should come to speak to residents re: building permits and roads at a resident forum and training, and the Forest Service should be involved
- The Maine Forest Service can share info on their website and hold workshops, and have publications on culvert size
 - The Maine Forest Service is a resource for information on land management (non-resident) roads
 - Can assist with site visits for guidance
- Booklets on regulations (cliff notes) for residents and builders, publications
 - More instructions re: how property should interact with road
 - LUPC sent out handbill re: setbacks, that was helpful. More like this could be good
- There is a "general inquiry" button on LUPC site and "Complaint" button
 - The LUPC Comprehensive Land Use Plan update in process
 - Public input part of this process
 - LUPC: Chapter 10 is a bear
 - Is there a need for new rules?
 - Challenge with changes to standards over the years
- Are there standards that address issues we are talking about today, more similar to CEO regs?
- If people have questions in general, don't hesitate to call or email LUPC and/or the County
- Vernon Road used to be Route 35, when roads change like that, can cause issues

Driveways and Culverts

- Inadequate culverts are an issue re: road maintenance. If not adequate size, can lead to expensive damage to roads.
- Driveways and culverts are being installed without permits
- Public vs Private-may not require driveway permit
 - DOT has driveway entrance permit requirement on their roads
 - There are driveway exemptions
- How to facilitate solid infrastructure from the beginning
- Rules that specify driveway entrances in general do not require permit but rather are subject to standards. This needs to be communicated to people getting permits in order to assist the County

- When the LUPC communicates with residents re: building permits, include a condition that people understand information provided prior to permitting
 - A check box “I read driveway conditions...” etc

Costs

- Costs to maintain current services are rising and increasing significantly
- No one is sure how to solve the issue of the increasing cost to maintain roads
- Oxford County is responsible for maintaining many of the roads in Albany Township, and there is local interest in increasing the number of roads that the County maintains
 - Funding, how can rising costs be addressed?
 - Talk with State Auditor’s Office about this?
- Emergency services are required to be provided
- Oxford County UT budget is regulated by the State, and needs to be distributed across UTs

Coordination

- Recognized need for more enforcement
- Aim to be proactive so not need to be reactive to issues
- Link on website LUPC to direct to County when applicable and vice versa
- More coordination building permits and road bible on Oxford County website

Resources and Funding

Forum Topic Outline

- **Scope of the Problem** – What are the public service costs in Albany Township, and who covers them?
- **Possible Actions** – Are there different funding models that could be implemented?
- **Resources** – Is legislation needed to address the funding challenges?
- **Coordination** – How can entities work together to resolve these situations?

Public Services in the UT By the Numbers

Oxford County provides many public services in the UT areas in the county. The Oxford County Unorganized Territories Budget (2026) included:

Costs:

- Roads and Bridges \$400,000
- Snow Removal \$500,000
- Solid Waste \$150,000
- Fire/EMS \$360,000
- Community Support/Rec \$20,000
- Other \$12,000
- Capital Reserve \$1,200,000

Revenues: (\$286,350)

County UT Amount

to be Raised Total: \$2,475,650

The State of Maine also covers some of the public service costs in Albany Township. Below is the Maine State Auditor’s Office Municipal Cost Component Data for 2026.

State Agencies

- **Fiscal Administrator** \$ 286,996
- **Education** \$16,289,568
- **Forest Fire Protection** \$120,000
- **DHHS - General Assistance** \$55,000
- **Maine Revenue Service** \$1,389,510
- **LUPC - Operations** \$799,806
- **Subtotal of State Agency** \$18,940,880 (3.6% increase over 2025)

Municipal Cost Share Portion of Oxford County Budget for UT: \$326,550

The Maine Revenue Service (MRS) collects property taxes in the UT. The 2025 Taxpayer Valuation Data Totals for Albany Township are:

- 31,706.24 acres
- \$96,854,975.00 Land Value
- \$59,064,590.00 Building Value
- \$161,139.00 Personal Property
- \$12,745,080.00 Total Exemptions
- \$143,335,624.00 Taxable Value
- Tax or Mill rate = Oxford County 0.00854 (down from 0.00959 in 2024)
- \$1,224,086 Tax

Issues

- Taxes
 - State Unorganized Territory (UT) budget uses the entire County UT for mill rate calculation – UTs share cost of services
 - State statute mandates tax structures
 - Tax increase has raised the temperature on some issues
 - Residents still have to pay for services beyond what their taxes provide
 - Tax increase should have been phased in and communicated better
 - Increase in taxes is dependent on the economy (e.g. cost of gravel)
 - Schools = half of UT budget
 - 82 Students from Albany Township
 - Attend 16 different schools in 11 districts
 - Kids stay in camps for access to Gould Academy in Bethel – 5 students at Gould now - Costs state \$\$
 - Are parents on the voting list? One way to determine residency.
 - Taxes cover a portion of private tuition, parents pay the rest
 - State knows there are children of school age in the UT when students are registered at a school; parents choose which school
- Residents want to know
 - What is total value?
 - How much tax is collected in the UT today?

- What do taxes pay for?
- LUPC gets 9.88% of State's UT budget
- County
 - taxes for just county components
 - No power for residents to participate in county budget
 - Storm damage grants – Oxford County would be the applicant
 - Not likely that Oxford County will take new roads
- MDOT
 - Statute
 - No funding for roads in low-use areas
 - Residents want a conversation to designate funding for UT roads, especially with high accident locations
- Transfer station through Stoneham
- Town discussed organizing 15 years ago
 - Taxes would have doubled, and services would have gone down (50%)
 - Municipal leaders would have been dealing with neighbors
 - People who move here need to know what they're getting into
- LUPC
 - Takes a long time to respond
 - The staff is far away
 - Materials aren't easy to read
- Emergency response
 - Ambulance services are shutting down, so costs increase because the service area for remaining providers expands
 - Costs have increased greater than nine times in 10 years
 - Air Bnb's in houses (basements) can create issues
- Concerns that the nature of the area will be lost
- Property value increase is due to sales
- No voting in Albany township

Solutions

- Taxes
 - Better communication from MRS, Oxford County official, and others
 - Send a letter to explain increase
 - A list of expenses and costs would be excellent – a breakdown of who pays for what
- County
 - Put information on the County website and post in public areas
 - Hold more public hearings
 - Add a UT sheriff department
- Develop a flow chart for service provision – who do you talk to?
- Centralized communication - post notices and put brochures at town offices and voting locations, create a website, draft a generalized info sheet for all service providers

APPENDIX C

County Road Information

Oxford County Unorganized Territory
Road Maintenance Mileages Adopted by the Commissioners July 31, 2012

DOT #	ROAD NAME	Year-Round Miles	Summer Maintenance	Total County	Starting Node	Ending Node
Albany TWP						
00980	Andrews Road	0.53		0.53		
00725	Baker Road	1.89		1.89		
00485	Barton Road	0.31		0.31		
03833	Birch View Road	0.27		0.27		
00734	Dresser School Road	0.21	1.41	1.62	34069	34065
03832	Garden Way	0.06		0.06		
01876	Grover Road	0.34		0.34		
00729	Hatstat Road	0.26	0.56	0.82	34887	35661
00723	Hunts Corner Road	5.31		5.31		
01952	Hutchinson Pond Road	2.21		2.21		
02026	John Grover Road Ext.	0.05		0.05		
01993	Johnson Road	0.24		0.24		
03834	Luneau Lane	0.09		0.09		
01875	Lynchville Loop	0.15		0.15		
00979	Mosquito Pond Road	0.00	0.14	0.14	35900	34978
01270	Mountain Road	0.20		0.20		
01807	Old West Bethel Road	0.67		0.67		
01239	Parsonage Hill Road	0.40		0.40		
00730	Patte Brook Road	0.76		0.76		
00731	Picnic Hill Road	0.95	0.67	1.62	35661	34009
03831	Robinson Road	0.15		0.15		
02026	Sawin Hill Road	1.99		1.99		
00981	Stearns Road	0.43		0.43		
01217	Sumner Bean Road	0.43		0.43		
02224	Thurston Hill	0.21		0.21		
00552	Vernon Street	3.59		3.59		
01241	Wardwell Road	0.86		0.86		
02224	Woodmans Loop	0.27		0.27		
Subtotal		22.83	2.78	25.61		

Oxford County Unorganized Territory
Road Maintenance Mileages Adopted by the Commissioners July 31, 2012

DOT #	ROAD NAME	Year-Round Miles	Summer Maintenance	Total County	Starting Node	Ending Node
Mason TWP						
01153	Bog Road	0.40		0.40		
00721	Flat Road	0.45		0.45		
00724	Grover Hill Road	0.52		0.52		
01181	Kings Highway	2.38		2.38		
01182	Meadow Brook Bridge Road	0.74		0.74		
01180	Smith Farm Road	0.42		0.42		
00724	Tyler Road	0.55	1.5	2.05	35648	32672
Subtotal		5.46	1.5	6.96		

Riley TWP						
00310	Sunday River Road	1.08		1.08		
01159	Coburn Fields Road (twin bridges only)		0.08		5855	792
Subtotal		1.08	0.08	1.16		

Milton TWP						
01084	Buck Road	0.22		0.22		
00432	Concord Pond Road	1.02		1.02		
03836	Dudley Road	0.10		0.10		
01718	Hemingway Road	0.27		0.27		
00429	Milton Road	3.32		3.32		
00426	Roger Farnum Road	0.63		0.63		
02334	Sierra Drive	0.22		0.22		
Subtotal		5.78		5.78		

Andover North Surplus						
00306	East B Hill Road	3.70		3.70		
01889	South Arm Road	3.54		3.54		
Subtotal		7.24		7.24		

DOT #	ROAD NAME	Year-Round Miles	Summer Maintenance	Total County	Starting Node	Ending Node
Township C						
01889	South Arm Road	3.91	3.97	7.88	35753	32605
Subtotal		3.91	3.97	7.88		

Magalloway Township						
	Pond Brook Road	2.01		2.01		
	Transfer Station Road	0.13		0.13		
	MDOT RT16 Dam Road	2.81		2.81		
Subtotal		4.95		4.95		

Oxford County Unorganized Territory
 Road Maintenance Mileages Adopted by the Commissioners July 31, 2012

C Surplus						
00306	East B Hill Road	0.68		0.68		
Subtotal		0.68		0.68		

Andover West Surplus						
00306	East B Hill Road	0.69		0.69		
Subtotal		0.69		0.69		

Total County Maintained Mileages 52.62 8.33 60.95