

*State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*  
Certificate of Approval  
Comprehensive Community Plan  
**HOPKINTON**

*BE IT HEREBY KNOWN* that in accordance with Chapter 45 - 22.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island entitled 'Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act', the comprehensive community plan submitted by the above named community has been approved.

*BE IT FURTHER KNOWN* that this approval shall be in effect for a five year period commencing on

**February 13, 2004** and ending on **February 12, 2009**

*HENCEFORTH* said plan shall serve to guide all of the municipality's land use decisions and shall be used to conform those decisions to state law, the State Guide Plan and the goals and policies of state agencies.

*IN CONFIRMATION OF SAID APPROVAL I HERETO SET MY HAND FOR THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS THIS*

*13th DAY OF February 2004*

*Beverly E. Ryan*

Director Department of Administration



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Department of Administration  
STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM  
One Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908 - 5872

TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT LINDA DIORIO AND  
HONORABLE TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS, PLANNING  
BOARD CHAIRPERSON ALFRED DIORIO AND  
MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING BOARD, TOWN  
OFFICIALS, AND RESIDENTS OF HOPKINTON.

I AM HERE TONIGHT ON BEHALF OF JOHN O'BRIEN,  
CHIEF OF THE STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM,  
BEVERLY NAJARIAN, DIRECTOR OF  
ADMINISTRATION, AND THE STATE OF RHODE  
ISLAND, TO PRESENT YOU THE CERTIFICATE OF  
APPROVAL FOR THE TOWN OF HOPKINTON'S  
COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN.

THIS IS AN ACCOMPLISHMENT IN WHICH THE TOWN  
OF HOPKINTON CAN TAKE GREAT PRIDE. THIS  
APPROVAL IS NOT SOMETHING THAT WE GRANT  
LIGHTLY. THE QUALITY OF THE PLAN REFLECTS  
HOPKINTON'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE  
IMPORTANCE OF COMMITTING ITS VISION FOR THE  
FUTURE INTO POLICIES THAT WILL GUIDE YOU  
ALONG THE COURSE YOU HAVE SET. THE QUALITY  
AND SENSE OF PLACE THAT THE PLAN STRIVES TO  
MAINTAIN AND THAT HOPKINTON REPRESENTS  
ATTEST TO YOUR COMMITMENT.

THANKS AND RECOGNITION GO TO THE MANY WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND REFINEMENT OF THIS PLAN. THEY INCLUDE TOWN PLANNER JASON PEZZULLO, PRIOR TOWN PLANNERS HESS, LOMBARDO AND MAXWELL, THE MEMBERS OF THE HOPKINTON CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE, PLANNING CONSULTANT DEMIAN SORRENTINO, AS WELL AS THE MAGUIRE GROUP AND WINSOR & ASSOCIATES - THE TOWN'S PRIMARY PLANNING CONSULTANTS. ALL PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN GETTING THE PLAN APPROVED AND WILL CONTINUE TO USE THE PLAN AS THEIR PRINCIPAL MEANS OF ATTAINING THE OBJECTIVES SET FORTH THEREIN.

CONGRATULATIONS TO HOPKINTON ON ITS ACCOMPLISHMENT. THE STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THE TOWN ON ITS FUTURE ENDEAVORS.

MICHAEL K AHN RUD, SUPERVISING PLANNER  
MARCH 15, 2004

# **TOWN OF HOPKINTON**

## **COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN**

TOWN ADOPTION, SEPTEMBER 1992  
STATEWIDE PLANNING APPROVAL. JANUARY 2004



**PREPARED FOR:  
THE HOPKINTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**PREPARED BY:  
HOPKINTON PLANNING BOARD  
HOPKINTON CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
HOPKINTON TOWN PLANNER  
THE MAGUIRE GROUP, INC.  
DAVID WINSOR & ASSOC.**



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Department of Administration  
STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM  
One Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908 - 5872

22 December 2003

Mr. Jason Pezullo  
Town Planner  
One Town House Road  
Hopkinton, RI 02833-0038

Dear Mr. Pezullo,

Let me commend you, your colleagues, and the Town of Hopkinton on your efforts to complete the revisions to Hopkinton's Comprehensive Community Plan that were necessary to receive State approval. My staff has informed me that all outstanding concerns have been resolved and the Planning Board has endorsed the revised Plan.

In order to finalize State approval, we will need one full copy of the Plan reflecting the agreed upon revisions. Our staff will conduct one final read-through, and presuming there are no problems, we will forward a recommendation to the Director of Administration to issue a certificate of approval. The certificate will be presented to the Town upon our receipt of five copies of the approved Plan.

Once again, congratulations, and we look forward to continue working with you and the Town in achieving the laudable vision presented in your Comprehensive Plan.

Yours truly,

George W. Johnson  
Assistant Chief

# TOWN COUNCIL RESOLUTION

*WHEREAS*, the Hopkinton Planning Board was directed to complete the Hopkinton Comprehensive Community Plan pursuant to RI. General Laws Chapter 45-22.2 entitled Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act,

*WHEREAS*, In order to encourage citizen participation In the comprehensive plan process, a Citizens Advisory Committee was formed to assist the Hopkinton Planning Board to prepare the Comprehensive Community Plan,

*WHEREAS*, on December 18,1991 the Hopkinton Planning Board adopted the Comprehensive Community Plan and forwarded It to the Town Council with a recommendation for approval,

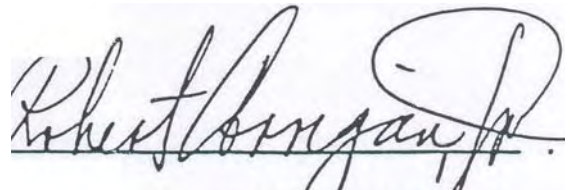
*WHEREAS*, on August 18, 1992, the Town Council held an Informational public meeting to present the draft Comprehensive Community Plan,

*WHEREAS*, on September 14,1992, the Town Council held a public hearing to solicit final comments from the citizens of the Town of Hopkinton, and on that same date, September 14,1992, the Town Council did close the public hearing,

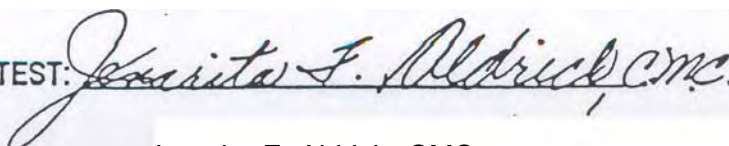
*NOW, therefore*, be It resolved that the Town Council of the Town of Hopkinton adopts the Comprehensive Community Plan, final draft dated September 1992, along with all maps.

The Town Clerk Is hereby authorized to forward the final draft of the Comprehensive Community Plan to the State of Rhode Island - Division of Planning for review and approval.

This Comprehensive Community Plan shall not become effective until It has been approved by the State of Rhode Island pursuant to the methods set forth In Chapter 45-22.2 It Is however, an expression Of town policy towards future development in Hopkinton.



E. Robert Corrigan, Jr.  
Town Council President

ATTEST: 

Jenarita F. Aldrich, CMC  
Town Clerk

TOWN OF HOPKINTON

RHODE ISLAND

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Hopkinton Town Council hereby gives notice that the COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN for the Town of Hopkinton is available for PUBLIC REVIEW, and both an INFORMATIONAL PUBLIC MEETING and a PUBLIC HEARING for the formal adoption of the COMPREHENSIVE PLAN have been scheduled.

The COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW at the following locations during their normal hours of operation:

LANGWORTHY PUBLIC LIBRARY - SPRING STREET, HOPE VALLEY  
ASHAWAY FREE LIBRARY - HIGH STREET, ASHAWAY TOWN HALL - TOWN HOUSE ROAD, HOPKINTON

The following MEETINGS have been scheduled:

INFORMATIONAL PUBLIC MEETING - TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 1992, 7:00 P.M. - ASHAWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PUBLIC HEARING/ADOPTION - MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1992, HOPE VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 7:00 P.M.

Per Order: Hopkinton Town Council

Jenarita F. Aldrich, CMC  
Town/Council Clerk

PUBLISH: Block Ad - Chariho Page  
Wednesday, July 29, 1992

TOWN OF HOPKINTON

RHODE ISLAND

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VALLEY  
ASHAWAY FREE LIBRARY - HIGH STREET, ASHAWAY  
TOWN HALL - TOWN HOUSE ROAD, HOPKINTON

The following MEETING has been scheduled:

PUBLIC HEARING/ADOPTION - MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14,  
1992, HOPE VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Per Order: Hopkinton Town Council

Jenarita F. Aldrich, CMC  
Town/Council Clerk

PUBLISH: Block Ad - Chariho Page  
Friday August 28, 1992





TOWN OF HOPKINTON

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN

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ELEMENT VI - HOUSING

ELEMENT VII - LAND USE

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The process of preparing the Hopkinton Comprehensive Community Plan began several years ago and is the work of many who were committed to planning for the future of the Town of Hopkinton. Major contributors are as follows:

Ted Sundin, Local Assistance Planner,  
R. I. Statewide Planning, 1986/1988

Blanche Higgins, Local Assistance Planner,  
R. I. Statewide Planning, 1988/1990

Michael Ahnrud, Local Assistance Planner,  
R. I. Statewide Planning, 1990/1991

Nancy Hess, Town Planner, 1988/1990

Joseph D. Lombardo, AICP, Town Planner,

Edward Spinard, The Maguire Group, Providence, R. I.

David Winsor, Winsor & Assoc., Providence, R. I.

In addition, a special thanks to:

### Hopkinton Town Council

E. Robert Corrigan, Jr., President  
Sylvia Thompson, Vice President  
Carl E. Devin  
Thomas Brusseau  
Linda Perra

### Hopkinton Planning Board

Alfred DiOrio, Chairman  
Thomas Holberton  
Stephen Morgan  
Robert Brunelle  
Richard Anderson

Also,

David Pugh, Planning Board Member, 1978/1988  
Peter Conopask, Planning Board Member, 1979/1991

The members of the Hopkinton Citizens Advisory Committee:

Lois Chappell	Brenda Pukas
Christine Anderson	Charlene Small
Sandra Johanson	Paul Toracinta
Jeffrey Gilman	Sarah Porter
Sophia E. Kenney	J. D. Rider
Sam Pierson	Philip Friend
Arthur Bernasconi, Jr.	Norman Brunelle
Muriel L. Conklin	Thurman Silks

---

Finally, thanks to:

Laurie Fisher, Recreation Director

Charles Niles, Highway Supervisor

Jenarita Aldrich, Town Clerk

Joyce Smith, Deputy Town Clerk

Steven Turano, Tax Assessor

Marsha Mott, Planning Board Clerk



**TOWN OF HOPKINTON  
RHODE ISLAND**

**RECREATION, CONSERVATION, &  
OPEN SPACE PLAN**

**ADOPTED BY THE HOPKINTON PLANNING BOARD: JANUARY 16. 1991**

**ADOPTED BY THE HOPKINTON CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE –  
OPEN SPACE / RECREATION SUB-COMMITTEE: JANUARY 16. 1991**

**ADOPTED BY THE HOPKINTON TOWN COUNCIL: MARCH 4.1991**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### PLANNING BOARD

Joseph D. Lombardo, Chairman  
Thomas Holberton  
Alfred DiOrio  
Stephen Morgan  
Peter Conopask

### RECREATION COMMISSION

Judith Sposato, Chairwoman  
Mark Hammond  
Edward Haik  
Christine Anderson

### CONSERVATION COMMISSION

John Cronan, Chairman  
Robert Lawrence  
Carol McGinnis  
Kenneth Mott  
Cheryn Lever  
Sarah Porter  
Norman Brunelle

### TOWN COUNCIL

E. Robert Corrigan, Jr., President  
Carl E. Devin  
Linda Perra  
Sylvia Thompson  
Thomas Brusseau

### TOWN STAFF

Nancy Hess, Town Planner  
Joseph D. Lombardo, Town Planner  
Laurie Fisher, Recreation Director

## PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE

Thomas Holberton, Planning Board Sara  
Porter, Conservation Commission Judith  
Sposato, Recreation Commission

This Plan has been prepared by the:

Rhode Island Department of Administration, Division  
of Planning Local Planning Assistance Program

Principal Planner:	Blanche Higgins, AICP
Senior Planner:	Michael C. Moan
Clerk Typist:	Diana Costa
Senior ClerkTypist:	Shirley Almeida



# **I -RECREATION, CONSERVATION, & OPEN SPACE**

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CERTIFICATION

Resolution by the Hopkinton Town Council

This resolution by the Town Council attests to the adoption of this plan as Hopkinton's official Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Plan.

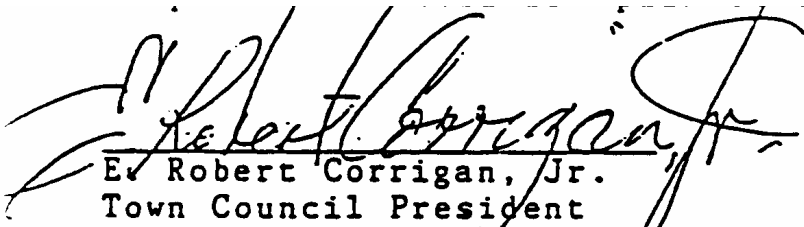
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

TOWN OF HOPKINTON


RESOLUTION

The Hopkinton Town Council hereby resolves that providing land for public recreation and protecting and managing natural resources promotes the public health and general welfare and is the proper responsibility of the Hopkinton Town Council.

Therefore, the Town Council of Hopkinton, Rhode Island hereby resolves that the plan entitled "Town of Hopkinton, Rhode Island Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Plan" is hereby Adopted as an official plan of the town.

  
Robert Corrigan, Jr.  
Town Council President

I, the undersigned Jenarita F. Aldrich, Town Clerk of the Town of Hopkinton, Rhode Island hereby certify that the above resolution was duly adopted by the Hopkinton Town Council at a meeting held on March 4, 1991.

  
Jenarita F. Aldrich, CMC  
Town Clerk

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY**

### **1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this plan is to establish a new long-range guide for community actions to promote recreation, open space preservation and conservation of natural resources in Hopkinton.

This plan updates and expands on the present official Hopkinton Recreation Plan of 1972 and the Conservation and Development Plan of 1980, which is the town's existing master plan.

Furthermore, this plan meets the requirements of dual State of Rhode Island programs. The plan has been prepared within the standards for Local Outdoor Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Plans, as administered by the Rhode Island Recreation Resources Review Committee for purposes of establishing municipal eligibility for financial assistance in land acquisition and recreational facility development.

The plan also meets the standards of the Open Space and Recreation element of the Local Comprehensive Plan as required of communities by the State in the Comprehensive and Land Use Regulation Act of 1988.

### **1.2 Local Agency Responsible for the Plan**

#### *Preparation*

The Hopkinton Planning Board is the town agency designated by the Town Council, and required by state law to prepare the Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Plan as an essential element of the Comprehensive Community Plan.

In addition, other local officials and commissions, most notably the Recreation Commission and the Conservation Commission as well as the Town Council, actively participate in the plan's preparation and revisions.

#### *Maintenance*

The Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Plan as an element of the town's Comprehensive Plan, will be reviewed and revised on a regular basis as required by state law. The Planning Board is responsible for updating the Comprehensive Plan every five years. As with the preparation of this original plan, the Planning Board will work in close association with the Recreation Commission and the Conservation Commission in maintaining and amending the Recreation, Conservation and Open Space portions of the Comprehensive Community Plan.

### **1.3 The Planning Process**

In fall 1989, the Planning Board directed the town planners and the consulting planners from the State's Local Planning Assistance Program to begin preparation of a new Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Plan. At the same time the Board notified the Recreation and

Conservation Commissions of the project and requested their active participation and their nomination of a member to serve on a subcommittee to help oversee the plan's preparation. This subcommittee and the town's recreation director assisted the planners in organizing the project, inspecting sites and reviewing drafts of the final report. Input from this subcommittee and the three full commissions as well as the Town Council, other community and recreation leaders and the public-at-large has been sought at each stage of the plan's evolution over a year-long project period.

### Public Participation

The planning process included a substantial amount of public participation. At the beginning of the project a list of approximately 35 community and recreation leaders was prepared (Listed in Appendix A). In spring 1990 these people were polled for information and opinions on the present local recreation and conservation activities and on the community's needs in these regards. This group of community leaders was also notified prior to all public workshops on the plan.

The following Public workshops and hearings were held by the Planning Board specifically on the Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Plan, on the following dates.

July 19, 1989  
November 8, 1989  
April 25, 1990  
June 20, 1990  
December 7, 1990  
January 16, 1991

### Coordination with Adjacent Towns

As part of the Comprehensive Community Plan process, the town planner and the state consultants have met repeatedly with planners from adjacent towns to coordinate aspects of the Comprehensive Plans. Drafts of town plans have also been submitted to adjacent towns for their review and comment.

The Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association (WPWA) has sponsored several meetings and a canoe trip specifically on comprehensive planning for planners, planning boards and conservation boards of the nine Rhode Island and two Connecticut towns within the watershed. The Hopkinton town planners and the state consultants have participated in these. The executive director of WPWA also spoke at a Hopkinton Plan workshop and suggested a number of regional watershed-wide guidelines for river corridor and groundwater protection, which WPWA is advocating to all the eleven watershed towns.

### Formal Adoption of the Plan

The planning process for the Hopkinton Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Plan continued through fall of 1990 and was approved by the Planning Board on January 16, 1991

and adopted by the Town Council on March 4, 1991.

#### **1.4 Background and Context of the Plan: The Context for the Planning**

In a series of reports, public opinion polls and plans prepared over the past twenty years, preservation of Hopkinton's rural character is probably the most consistently mentioned local priority. Although the last decade, in particular, has brought much more typical suburban trends to the town. Hopkinton today remains primarily rural and heavily wooded. Community life is still somewhat focused around several historical villages especially the two centers of town, Ashaway and Hope Valley.

The Town of Hopkinton encompasses 44 square miles of land and has a population of approximately 6,000, most of whom are settled in villages: 50% in Hope Valley to the northeast and in Ashaway to the southwest, the remaining half in the smaller villages and in the countryside.

The landscape is woodland, predominately hardwood with soft wood appearing along the rivers on sandy soils and in the lakes district to the northwest on shallow, stony soils. Open land cleared for agriculture and village settlement appears in the valleys close to streams and rivers.

The town is bounded on two sides by major streams. The Wood River forms the eastern border, flowing down into the Pawcatuck River below the village of Alton. The Pawcatuck continues south to the Westerly-Charlestown town line and then swings in a westerly direction, forming the southern boundary of Hopkinton. The Pawcatuck flows north to the village of Ashaway and then moves westerly by Potter Hill in its route to Long Island Sound. These rivers and the lesser streams draining into them are an integral part of each village's identity, both as dominant physical features and historic reminder of the village's origin as a mill community dependent on water power.

Similar to other Rhode Island cities and towns, the early settlements in Hopkinton were centered around its rivers. On Wood River were Barberville, Hope Valley and Woodville; on Brushy Brook and its tributaries were Rockville, Centerville, Moscow and Locustville; on Canonchet Brook was Ashville; on the Ashawog River were Bethel and Ashaway; and on the Pawcatuck River was Burdickville.

The strong historical pattern of concentrated human activity in the valleys and wild life dominating the forested uplands has begun to blur with the type and extent of development of the past twenty years. Scattered large-lot residential development on road front and typical subdivision lots and, to a lesser extent commercial and industrial development, has occurred throughout the eastern and southern parts of town. As would be expected, the recent development has generally utilized the lands with the better topography and ground water resources and has been built along the town's major roads.

For some time the Hope Valley and Ashaway villages areas have been mostly developed (particularly since the 1976 zoning which requires two acre minimum lots and prohibits the mixed uses traditional in the villages). This has left South Hopkinton as a center for intensive

growth as well as other outlying areas of the village zones: Skunk Hill Pond and Fenner Hill Road in Hope Valley, Woodville by the golf course and the highway exit, North Road and Route 3 in Hopkinton City, and Diamond Hill Road and overlooking Tomaqua Valley.

Yet, in spite of the constraints of land characteristics, a considerable number of developments were proposed in the last decade for more and more difficult land, an inevitable trend as most of the easier terrain is already built on. The conservation of the northern sections of town in their natural state in coming years may well prove to be much more the result of major landholdings in state parks and conservation organizations and in the town's decision not to maintain the roads in order to discourage residential development.

During the last decade Hopkinton did not experience the rate of growth as some of Rhode Island's other rural towns and some of the neighboring South County Communities. However, Hopkinton has had a Significant population increase since 1960 and the amount of land approved and proposed for development in the past ten years was a significant percentage of Hopkinton's good, developable land.

Hopkinton had the lowest percentage of population increase of any of the Washington County towns according to a U.S. Census report of 1989. A partial explanation for this may be Hopkinton's further distance from the urbanized centers of New London on to the west and the Providence metropolitan area to the north and its inland position away from either the Atlantic or the Narragansett Bay coastline.

Demographic statistics from the 1980 census, which may be pertinent as background to this plan, include the following:

The civilian labor force numbered 3,046 and was 61.3% male and 38.7% female. The total number of workers had increased 44% since 1970

Of the 2,065 dwelling units in town, 1662 (80.5%) were owner-occupied, 403 were rented.

There were an average of 3.10 persons per household (in 1965 it had been 3.4) and 2,065 households

Racial background was as follows 6323 white, 10 black, 49 American Indian, 9 Asian and Pacific Islander, 15 Other and 37 of Spanish origin.

Among persons age 25 or older, 1,386 (64.1) were high school graduates and 508 (14.1%) were college graduates.

Hopkinton households that reported 1979 income below the poverty level included 108 families and 80 unrelated individuals for a total of 502 persons or 7.9% of the population.

A total of 51 % of the Town's residents are in the 19-60 age group.

During the decade 1980-1990, sixteen new subdivisions were recorded in Hopkinton. They comprised 620 acres and 265 new subdivisions or units. Thirteen percent of the land, or 79.59 acres, were reserved as permanent recreation or open space. (75.6 acres to be privately owned, 3.99 acres were dedicated to the town.)

It appears from a comparison of town and state records that 500 to 600 building permits for new dwelling units were issued in Hopkinton from 1980-1990, including those for elderly housing and condominiums.

Perhaps more than in most Rhode Island communities, a recognition of Hopkinton's regional context is essential to an understanding of the role of recreation and open space in the lives of Hopkinton's residents.

### Regional Opportunities

Hopkinton's position on the Connecticut-Rhode Island border on Route 95 and only ten miles inland from the Atlantic offers residents some exceptional opportunities for recreation and open space experiences with 20 to 30 minutes traveling time from home. This means Hopkinton residents can both live in a small rural town setting and still enjoy a variety of excellent recreational choices.

The three Chariho towns have traditionally joined in organized sports leagues, such as Little League, Girl's Softball, etc. These organizations use fields in all the participating towns owned by the leagues themselves, the towns, or the Chariho School Department.

Such regional cooperation is more essential now than ever for those relatively small towns in order to insure a variety of adequate facilities and to prevent duplication of efforts at a time of increasingly scarce funding and rising costs. Coordination of recreation and conservation projects should be a focal point in the interaction of the adjacent towns as part of the state-required comprehensive community plans.

It is very fortunate for Hopkinton, a large town with a small population, to have easy access to a fairly wide variety of regional, recreational and conservation facilities. It is becoming increasingly important for the town to work within the framework of regional organizations to maximize the value of precious funds, staffing and volunteer efforts.

### Regional Provider

Hopkinton also plays a much larger role than most communities in providing recreation and open space facilities to other Rhode Islanders and to a considerable extent, to people from other states.

The recently approved Brae Bern development of golf course, 200 condominium units, hotel and conference center anticipates just this kind of resort and retirement home growth.

At present the hundreds of campsites in Hopkinton's four local commercial campgrounds have a



high percentage of use by out-of-state campers, both for short-term and full-season stays. Hopkinton's rivers and ponds provide excellent areas for canoeing and fishing, mostly for local residents and those from nearby towns. The Superintendent of Arcadia (State) Management Area reported that he believes most of the increase in use of the state management lands is due to the general increase in population in the southern area of the state, not to a significant influx of new users from the northern urban centers.

Hopkinton's most well-known and extensive recreational facility, the 50-year-old Camp Yawgoog, is one of the largest, most active and popular boy scout camps in the entire northeast. During the past summers boys and leaders camped at Yawgoog. Half of them came from out-of-state.

### **1.5 Plan Goals and Objectives**

There are three major goals presented in the Plan for the Town, they being:

**Objective A** - Focus town recreation efforts on priority projects in order to maximize local resources, and to increase recreational facilities.

**Objective B** - Promote conservation of Hopkinton's natural resources, particularly protection of ground and surface waters.

**Objective C** - Promote conservation of Hopkinton's major natural features and its' traditional rural character.

### **1.6 Plan Summary**

The Plan presents a series of Actions under each goal in order to accomplish these stated goals. For example, under the first goal, the major actions center on developing and upgrading existing properties already in Town ownership. It was concluded that the town had good properties in its' inventory, but needed to maximize their potential for recreational facilities. Just as important, will be a Capital Improvement Program and Maintenance Plan for these facilities.

Under the goals to promote Conservation and Open Space, the Plan's major thrust is to utilize Ordinances, which work towards the protection of important natural resources. This includes adoption of an Aquifer Protection Ordinance, currently in Draft form, a recommendation to include a 300-foot river bank buffer zone into Development Ordinances, and utilization of Town Ordinances to achieve maximum results.

### **1.7 Implementation Program**

The final step to the Plan process is a series of specific steps to implement the desired actions. These implementation recommendations are targeted to not only specific Town Staff and Boards, but local groups and organizations, and State Agencies as well. It is however incumbent upon the Town to initiate the steps necessary to carry out this process.

## **2.0 THE CONTEXT FOR THE PLAN**

### **2.1 Hopkinton's Physical Character**

In a series of reports, public opinion polls and plans prepared over the past twenty years, preservation of Hopkinton's rural character is probably the most consistently mentioned local priority. Although the last decade, in particular, has brought much more typical suburban trends to town, Hopkinton remains today primarily rural and heavily wooded. Community life is still somewhat focused around several historical villages especially the two centers of town, Ashaway and Hope Valley.

The following description of Hopkinton's physical character is contained in the 1980 Conservation and Development Plan and is still accurate despite a population increase of 700-1000 inhabitants since then:

The Town of Hopkinton encompasses 43 square miles of land and has a population of approximately 6,000 most of whom are settled in villages: 50% in Hope Valley to the northeast and in Ashaway to the southwest; the remaining half in the smaller villages and in the countryside.

The landscape is woodland, predominately hard wood with soft wood appearing along the rivers on sandy soils and in the lakes district to the northwest on shallow, stony soils. Open land cleared for agriculture and village settlement appears in the valleys close to streams and rivers.

The Town is bounded on two sides by major streams. The Wood River forms the eastern border, flowing down into the Pawcatuck River below the village of Alton. The Pawcatuck continues south to the Westerly-Charlestown town line and then swings in a westerly direction, forming the southern boundary of Hopkinton. The Pawcatuck flows north to the village of Ashaway and then moves westerly by Potter Hill in its route to Long Island Sound. These rivers and the lesser streams draining into them are an integral part of each village's identity, both as dominant physical feature and historic reminder of the village's origin as a mill community dependent on water power.

The topography of Hopkinton can be traced by examining the road network and pattern of settlement. Villages and farming are located in stream valleys or on plateaus between hill and valley. Roads on the east-west axis cut across the ridges and offer dramatic evidence of the varied topography of the town. Panoramic views are created by contrast of hill and valley, cleared land and woodland.

A swath of rough, stony land crosses the town diagonally from the northwest corner at Voluntown to the southeast effectively dividing the developable area of Town into a Hope Valley section and an Ashaway section. This rough, stony land to the north encompasses three large natural lakes: Yawgoog, Winchek and Blue Ponds, and three small ponds which have been inventoried by the Nature Conservancy as unique natural areas (Grassy Pond waterfowl habitat,

and the Ell Pond-Long area, plant communities usual to the region, with rock outcrops of geologic significance and trail systems). The rough, stony land crosses the middle of the town by Brightman Hill on Route 3 and continues south along the eastern slope of Tomaquag Valley, the only self-contained stream valley in Hopkinton.

Similar to other Rhode Island cities and towns, the early settlements in Hopkinton were centered around its rivers. On Wood River were Barberville, Hope Valley and Woodville; on Brushy Brook and its tributaries were Rockville, Centerville, Moscow and Locustville; on Canonchet Brook was Ashville; on the Ashaway River were Bethel and Ashaway; and on the Pawcatuck River was Burdickville.

The strong historical pattern of concentrated human activity in the valleys and wildlife dominating the forested uplands has begun to blur with the type and extent of development of the past twenty years. Scattered large-lot residential development on road front and typical subdivision lots and, to a lesser extent, commercial and industrial development, has occurred throughout the eastern and southern parts of town. As would be expected, the recent development has generally utilized the lands with the better topography and groundwater resources and has been built along the town's major roads.

For some time the Hope Valley and Ashaway village zones have been almost completely developed, particularly since the 1976 zoning which requires two acre minimum lots and prohibits the mixed uses traditional in the villages. This has left South Hopkinton as a center for intensive growth as well as other out lying areas of the village zones: Skunk Hill Pond and Fenner Hill Road in Hope Valley, Woodville by the golf course and the highway exit, North Road and Route 3 in Hopkinton City, and Diamond Hill Road and overlooking Tomaquag Valley.

Although there have been a number of recent housing development proposals, mostly in the form of residential compounds, in some of the more remote and difficult terrain areas of town (especially adjacent to state parkland and waterfront areas), the prime areas for subdivision activity have been the town's more accessible areas, those with gentler topography and well-drained soils.

In contrast, in the northwest section of Hopkinton extreme variations of slope and heavy concentrations of rock outcroppings have until now been severe limitations to extensive development. These land characteristics spread from this area southwest through the central portion of town. The town's fairly extensive system of ponds, rivers, streams and assorted wetlands is another major physical limitation to building. In fact, wetlands and rockiness are common development constraints throughout Hopkinton.

Yet, in spite of the constraints of land characteristics, a considerable number of developments have been proposed in the last decade for more and more difficult land, an inevitable trend as most of the easier terrain is already built on. In coming years the conservation of the northern sections of town in their natural state may well prove to be primarily the result of major landholdings in state parks and conservation organizations and in the town's decision not to maintain the roads in order to discourage residential development.

The natural and cultural aspects of Hopkinton have been the subject of many studies and conservation efforts. Regional attention has focused on the whole Pawcatuck River Basin, which has the best overall recreation opportunities in Rhode Island, according to the New England River Basins Commission. Hopkinton is surrounded by large state parks: Arcadia Management Area to the north, the Carolina Management Area to the east, the Indian Cedar Swamp Management Area and Burlingame State Park to the south and the Pachaug State Forest just west across the Connecticut border. Specific attributes of the Hopkinton landscape which have been cited repeatedly as of regional significance include:

- a. The Wood and Pawcatuck River System, the most natural and scenic river of canoeable size in southeastern New England.
- b. The northwest lakes district, with unique natural areas of unusual topography and vegetation.
- c. The Tomaquag Valley, a highly scenic, self-contained farmland valley.
- d. The historic village centers of Hopkinton, including two Hopkinton City and Wyoming, both on the National Register of Historic Places, and Ashaway and Hope Valley both recommended as eligible for the Register.

## **2.2 Community Characteristics and Trends**

During the last decade Hopkinton did not experience the rate of growth of some of Rhode Island's other rural towns and some of the neighboring Washington County communities. However, Hopkinton has had a significant population increase since 1960 and the amount of land approved and proposed for development in the past ten years is a significant percentage of Hopkinton's easily developable land.

Table I-1 reports the town's population change from 1900 to 1990. Hopkinton's growth rate between 1960 and 1970 was more than twice the historic rate. Despite this dramatic increase however the percentage of population increase in Hopkinton between 1950 and 1970 was ninth out of the ten "completely rural" towns in Rhode Island and between 1960 and 1970 Washington County's overall population increase was 45%.

**Table I-1. Hopkinton's Total Population Change 1900-1990**

	<b>Population</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
1900	2,602		
1910	2,324	-278	-11.0
1920	2,316	-8	-0.3
1930	2,823	+507	+22.0
1940	3,320	+497	+17.0
1950	3,676	+456	+14.0
1960	4,174	+498	+14.0
1970	5,392	+ 1 ,218	+29.0
1980	6,406	+1,014	+19.0
1990	6,810	+404	+6.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table I-2 indicates that Hopkinton had the lowest percentage of population increase of any of the Washington County towns according to the U.S. Census report. A partial explanation for this may be Hopkinton's further distance from the urbanized centers of New London to the west and the Providence metropolitan area to the north and its inland position away from either the Atlantic or the Narragansett Bay coastline.

**Table I-2. Population Change in South County  
Towns 1980 - 1988**

<b>Town</b>	<b>% Increase</b>
Charlestown	49.5
Exeter	10.8
Hopkinton	5.0
Narragansett	6.7
New Shoreham	29.0
North Kingstown	9.6
Richmond	29.8
South Kingstown	8.8
Westerly	7.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

It should be noted that final reports of the 1990 U.S. Census are not completed and that many communities are claiming their population was seriously undercounted. Current Census estimates for Hopkinton show only a seven percent increase, that is 467 persons more than 1980. It may be that the estimated figure will be adjusted upward somewhat. However, barring some unusual and large-scale local developments or major changes in local infrastructure and regulations, the population projections prepared recently by the State's Division of Planning appear realistic and will be used as the basis of analysis in this plan. These projections predict a

seven percent increase in the decade 1980-1990, and five percent each of the three decades thereafter, as reported in Table I-3.

**Table I-3. Hopkinton's Population Projections**

Year	Population
1990	6,856
1995	6,913
2000	7,184
2005	7,368
2010	7,543
2015	7,715
2020	7,886

Source: State of Rhode Island,  
Division of Planning, 1989.

Table I-4 summarizes the age distribution of Hopkinton's population as reported in the 1980 census.

**Table I-4. Hopkinton: 1980 Age Distribution**

A2e	Population	Other Statistics	
0- 4	465	Median Age	29.0
5- 9	557	Median Age Male	27.6
10- 14	714	Median Age Female	30.4
15- 19	646	9% pre-school	(0-5)
20- 24	427	27% school age	(6-18)
25- 29	489	51 % adults working	(19-60)
30- 34	515	13 % seniors	(60+)
35- 44	874		
45- 54	596		
55- 59	308		
60- 64	241		
65- 74	362		
75- 84	164		
85+	48		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table I-5 reports the 1986 estimates of Hopkinton's population, households, median household income and household income distribution from a report of a major Rhode Island marketing firm.

**Table I-5. Hopkinton: Estimated Population. Households. Median Household Income and Household Income Distribution. 1986**

Population	6,757
Households	2,250
Median Household Income	\$28,035
<b>Household Income Distribution:</b>	
Under \$7,500	199
\$7,500 - 14,999	245
\$15,000 - 24,999	532
\$25,000 - 34,999	491
\$35,000 - 49,999	482
\$50,000 - 74,999	249
over \$75,000	52
% over \$25,000	57
% over \$35,000	35
% over \$50,000	15

Source: Urban Decisions Inc. 1986

Hopkinton compares in income with other Rhode Island towns as follows according to the U.S. Bureau of the Census:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Hopkinton Per Capita Income</u>	<u>Rank in State</u>
1969	2,737	34
1977	5,202	29
1979	6,174	34
1981	7,476	32
1985	10,024	31
1987	11,060	34

Other demographic statistics from the 1980 census, which may be pertinent as background to this plan, include the following:

The civilian labor force numbered 3,046 and was 61.3% male and 38.7% female. The total number of workers had increased 44% since 1970.

Of the 2,065 dwelling units in town, 1662 (80.5%) were owner-occupied, 403 were rented.

There were an average of 3.10 persons per household (in 1965 it had been 3.4) and 2,065 households.

Racial background was as follows: 6323 white, 10 black, 49 American Indian, 9 Asian and Pacific Islander, 15 Other and 37 of Spanish origin.

Among persons age 25 or older, 1,386 (64.1 %) were high school graduates and 508 (14.1%) were college graduates.

Of the 5,884 persons age five or older, 3711 (63%) had lived in the same house five years before while 2163 (37%) had lived elsewhere.

The mean travel time to work was 20.8 minutes.

Hopkinton households that reported 1979 income below the poverty level included 108 families and 80 unrelated individuals for a total of 502 persons or 7.9% of the population.

65 (3%) of the households had no vehicle available to them, 703 (32%) had one vehicle, 841 had two, and 456 (20%) had three or more.

The median rent in town was \$245.00.

### Land Use and Housing Trends

Statistics reporting development and particularly housing trends of the last decade are somewhat conflicting and probably will be inconclusive until more of the 1990 Census information is available.

At present the dramatic building boom of the late 1980's has died and, while the average house prices have not fallen but a small percentage of what they gained in the period 1986-88, they have generally leveled and declined somewhat.

There is a general perception that Rhode Island saw a tremendous amount of new housing and skyrocketing real estate prices during the boom and this was true, to some extent, in every town. In Hopkinton, however, the amount of new development, i.e. houses and subdivisions completed, may not be as large as some perceive.

Following are some statistics compiled from a variety of town and state records:

During the decade 1980-1990 sixteen new subdivisions were recorded in Hopkinton. They comprised 620 acres and 265 new housing units. Thirteen percent of the land, or 79.59 acres, were reserved as permanent recreation or open space (75.6 acres to be privately owned, 3.99 acres were dedicated to the town)

Since 1987 there have been an additional nineteen subdivisions proposed but not yet



approved. These proposals involve 1,650 acres and +- 475 new units or lots. Many of these applicants have apparently given up their efforts for the time being.

It appears from a comparison of town and state records that 500 to 600 building permits for new dwelling units were issued in Hopkinton from 1980-1989, including those for elderly housing and condominiums.

If the number of permits issued correctly represents the number of new dwelling units built, then there was an increase of 25% in the number of dwelling units in Hopkinton between 1980 and 1990 (Note: between 1970 and 1980 the U.S. Census reported a 33.7% increase in the dwelling units in town). It is highly likely that a relatively large number of these permits were not used as the speculative housing market declined.

A more conservative estimate of newly developed houses and lots is seen in the report of taxable parcels 1980-1988 in Table 6. This indicates 510 new parcels, a 16% increase, and 249 new single-family units, a 13% increase in nine years. At 2.8 persons per unit, 249 new units would add approximately 700 persons to the population. Note: this table reports total parcels, both from subdivisions and new other (roadfront) lots. With a total of 510 new parcels, it seems there were approximately 250 new lots cut along the public roads.

Of the sixteen subdivisions recorded 1980-1990, five were conventional, two-acre subdivisions, seven were cluster designs and four were residential compounds. Of the nineteen subdivisions proposed since 1987 (and not yet approved), two are conventional designs, five are clusters, eight are residential compounds and four are undecided.

**Table I-6. Hopkinton: Taxable Parcels 1980-1988**

<b>Year</b>	<b>One Family</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Vacant Residential</b>	<b>Total Parcels</b>
1980	1,873	59.7	735	3,231
1981	1,881	58.3	705	3,322
1982	1,876	66.9	656	3,245
1983	1,874	66.4	645	3,267
1984	1,900	65.8	636	3,307
1985	1,913	65.0	636	3,375
1986	1,979	64.6	670	3,507
1987	2,070	64.2	672	3,617
1988	2,122	62.9	671	3,741

Source: Rhode Island Department of Administration

As happened throughout Rhode Island, home prices in Hopkinton skyrocketed from 1986-1988 as reported in Table 1-7. While information on 1989-1990 is not yet available, it is likely that the prices peaked in 1988 and declined somewhat since then.

**Table I-7. Hopkinton: Average Home Price 1981-1990**

Year	Average Home Price	% Change
1981	77,430	
1982	47,290	6
1983	53,290	13
1984	60,247	13
1985	68,000	13
1986	85,744	26
1987	104,291	22
1988	138,936	33
1989	?	?
1990	?	estimated

Sources: 1981-1987: Real Estate Transfers for Rhode Island, Rhode Island Dept. of Administration  
 1988: State-Wide Multiple Listing Service to 9/30/88

### **2.3 Regional Context**

Perhaps more than in most Rhode Island communities, recognition of Hopkinton's regional context is essential to an understanding of the role of recreation and open space in the lives of Hopkinton's residents.

#### *Regional Opportunities*

Hopkinton's position on the Connecticut-Rhode Island border, on Route 95 and only ten miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean offers the town's residents some exceptional opportunities for recreation and open space experiences within 20 to 30 minutes traveling time from home. This means Hopkinton residents can both live in a small rural town setting and still enjoy a variety of excellent recreational choices.

For example, swimming opportunities within a 15 to 20 minute travel radius include some of the finest oceanfront beaches in the region, three state-maintained freshwater beach and picnicking complexes (Arcadia, Burlingame and Beach Pond) and the Westerly-Pawcatuck YMCA pool facilities. Two of the best-known museums in the northeast, Mystic Seaport and the Mystic Marinelife Aquarium, are located 20 to 30 minutes south of Hopkinton on Route 95. The Westerly-Pawcatuck YMCA is a regional facility located in the center of Westerly. It serves a multi-town area of approximately 60,000 people, 20 percent of whom use the facility on a regular basis. The YMCA reports that 8.1 % of their full-time members, approximately 300 individuals, are from Hopkinton. YMCA surveys indicate that last year approximately 950 Hopkinton residents used YMCA programs (as members or non-members), that is 14% of Hopkinton's population. Also in the area of active recreation, the three Chariho towns joined in organized sports leagues, such as little league, girl's softball, as well as all the programs offered by the regionalized Chariho school system. These organizations use fields in all the participating towns - owned by the leagues themselves, the towns or the Chariho School Department.

Such regional cooperation is more essential now than ever for these small towns in order to insure a variety of facilities and to prevent duplication at a time of increasingly scarce funding and rising costs. Coordination of recreation and conservation projects should be a focal point in the interactions of the adjacent towns as part of the state-required comprehensive community plans.

Besides the state conservation land within the town, Hopkinton lies in the midst of some of the largest state-owned forest management areas and shoreline conservation areas in the region. Parts of the Arcadia and Beach Pond preserves are located in northern Hopkinton. The surrounding forest network of thousands of conservation acres includes Beach Pond, Arcadia and Carolina in Exeter and Richmond, Burlingame, Indian Cedar Swamp and Ninigret in Charlestown, and the Pachaug State Forest in Connecticut. In recent years the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management has been very active in acquiring key parcels to add to this conservation inventory including, particularly, land adjacent to existing state preserves, and waterfront land on the rivers, ponds, or ocean. Because of state and federal conservation activities that date back to the 1930's, the southwestern corner of Rhode Island should continue to have the state's most extensive network of permanent open space in forest and beaches.

An important regional conservation entity is the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association (WPW A), which works with the nine Rhode Island and two Connecticut towns in the watershed. Established in the early 1980's, the WPW A has become an important force in educating the public, lobbying for improvements, and very importantly for bringing the communities together to develop plans for river corridor and water quality protection.

It is very fortunate for Hopkinton, a large town with a small population, to have easy access to a fairly wide variety of regional, recreational and conservation facilities. It is becoming increasingly important for the town to work within the framework of regional organizations to maximize the value of precious funds, staffing and volunteer efforts.

### Regional Provider

Hopkinton also plays a much larger role than most communities in providing recreation and open space facilities to other Rhode Islanders and, to a considerable extent, to people from other states.

On the ocean and on Route 95, with small villages and thousands of still-rural upland acres, the southwest corner of the state has long been a favorite vacation and recreation spot. Although Hopkinton has never been a resort in the way waterfront towns like Westerly, Charlestown and Narragansett have, it has been part of the upland country backdrop to the shoreline towns. The town may, in the future, see more retired people and summer people settling in Hopkinton as has happened in North Stonington and Stonington, CT", immediately to the west. The recently approved Brae Bern development of golf course, 200 condominium units, hotel and conference center anticipates just this kind of resort and retirement home growth.

At present the hundreds of campsites in Hopkinton's four local commercial campgrounds have a

high percentage of use by out-of-state campers both for short-term and full-season stays. Hopkinton's rivers and ponds provide excellent areas for canoeing and fishing, mostly for local residents and those from nearby towns. The Superintendent of Arcadia Management Area reported that he believes most of the increase in use of the state management lands is due to the general increase in population in the southern area of the state, not to a significant influx of new users from the northern urban centers.

Hopkinton's most well-known and extensive recreational facility, the 50-year-old Camp Yawgoog, is one of the largest, most active and popular boy scout camps in the entire northeast United States. During the past summer, 6000 boys and leaders camped at Yawgoog. Half of them came from out-of-state.

#### **2.4 History of Local Recreation and Conservation Recreation**

The following information on early recreation in Hopkinton, from the 18th through the mid 20th centuries, was given by local historian Gladys Palmer in 1973.

The earliest organized recreation activities in Hopkinton, dating back to the 18th and 19th centuries, were provided by the churches in pot luck suppers, prayer meetings, hymn sessions and picnics. This tradition of church-oriented socializing and recreation is quite strong in Hopkinton today.

With the coming of industry to Hopkinton, more organized recreation was established by the mill owners and workers in the town. In 1850, the Ashaway Library was founded by wealthy individuals and mill owners who sponsored local lectures there. In 1887, the Manton Union Reading Room, now known as the Langworthy Public Library, was established in Hope valley.

At the turn of the century, baseball was a popular sporting pastime and each mill had its own team with the mill as its sponsor. At this time, people lived in a mill village, worked at the mill and used the mill store. Recreation was one of the many services provided by the mill for its employees. Mill owners in both Hope Valley and Ashaway had parties and holiday celebrations at their estates where workers gathered for such events as clam bakes, picnics, and Christmas parties. Aldrich Grove located on High Street, Hope Valley, was such a gathering place. The generosity over decades of the Crandall family, owners of Ashaway Line and Twine, to Hopkinton residents in many aspects of recreation is the most outstanding example of this tradition.

In the beginning of this century, increased leisure time encouraged more organized recreation and improved facilities. Early recreational facilities included: croquet courts, owned by wealthy individuals but used by all residents in both Ashaway and Hope Valley; Barber's Hall, used for fairs, dancing and to show movies in the Hope Valley area (presently a bank); Masonic Hall (Hope Valley); Odd Fellows Hall (Hope Valley); Boy Scout Club Room located on Spring Street, Hope Valley; Grange Hall, used for fairs and dances; Band Stand for concerts on Mechanic Street, Hope Valley; and numerous groves, rivers, streams, and woods for hunting, fishing, hiking, boating and picnicking.

In 1946 the Chariho Athletic Association, still a major organizer of local sports teams, began to provide basketball and baseball programs for the area. In 1952, Lloyd Robert Crandall, President of Ashaway Line and Twine, founded the Ashaway Recreation Center, a private organization housed in a large building on Laurel Street, which was part of the mill complex. The Center, which had its own gym, offered a variety of activities for all ages and was actively used for many years by members and by town-sponsored programs. In 1971 the Ashaway Athletic Association was reactivated and began programs, in Pee Wee Football, skiing and girls' softball.

In June 1972 the Town Council appointed the town's first Recreation Commission. According to Georgia Ure, the town's first recreation director, the impetus behind the establishment of the Commission came from several sources. The town's first zoning had been adopted in 1971, additional recreational issues were developing, requests for grant monies were coming from private recreational groups, the population was growing quite rapidly as were its needs and demands. Therefore, the Town Council recognized the necessity of allocating more time and money toward recreational endeavors.

Chapter 29 of the Town Ordinances describes the powers and duties of the "Board of Recreation" as follows (Section 4):

*"The Board is hereby authorized to establish, construct, equip, control and maintain public playgrounds, athletic fields, swimming pools, bathing places and other community recreation centers and to conduct and promote recreation, play, sport and physical training for which admission or other fees may be charged. "*

Over the next six years, 1972 to 1978, the new Recreation Department was very active and very successful in establishing a department with professional director, in acquiring and developing local recreation sites funded by private donations and federal grants, and in developing many programs to address the local recreation demands which were identified in a number of studies they conducted. The recreation director prepared a Recreation Master Plan in 1973 and, in fact, over the next few years accomplished development of all four of the plan's priority sites, i.e. land adjacent to Ashaway School, Crandall House and Field, Langworthy Field and Ashville Pond. Since 1978, however, none of the six future neighborhood park sites identified in the plan have been developed.

Table 8, A Chronology of Local Recreation and Conservation Efforts, describes in more detail some of the major programs and events from 1965 to the present. However, the highlight of this period was certainly the town's acquisition of Crandall House and Field with 60 acres of land and tennis courts, meadows and ponds already suitable and partially developed for recreation. The property is the center of Hopkinton's recreation and seniors' program and is, by terms of the original federal grants, restricted to such use. Since acquisition, the barn has been converted to a two story activity center, two rough ballfields and two parking lots have been created and the ho use and tennis courts have received repairs. Crandall House and Field offer the best potential in town for development of most of the currently needed recreation facilities.

### Conservation

Conservation of undeveloped land was begun in Hopkinton and neighboring communities on a large scale in the 1930's by the federal government. Many of the existing large management areas, Arcadia, Carolina, Beach Pond, Burlingame and Pachaug started as large federal landholdings from this period. At the time there was a plan to create a north-south greenbelt of undeveloped forest land generally following the Connecticut-Rhode Island border. The north-south hiking trail proposed in the 1974 plan of the state's Trail Advisory Commission followed on this concept.

Hopkinton's local Conservation Commission was developed in 1969 and charged with the following responsibilities:

To promote and develop the natural resources, to protect the watershed resources, and to preserve natural aesthetic areas within the town.

It may recommend to the Town Council a program for better promotion, development, utilization, or preservation of open space areas, streams, shores, wooded areas, roadsides, swamps, marshlands and natural aesthetic areas, which shall also include areas for recreational facilities for the town.

Two major, interrelated issues that have been the focus of conservation efforts in Hopkinton, have been river corridor conservation and groundwater quality protection.

### River Corridor Protection

The Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers Management Plan: Strategies and Priorities for the Acquisition of Recreational Access Sites and Protection of Significant Natural Areas, prepared by the Department Of Environmental Management, Division of Planning and Development, May 1987 reported the following:

In 1984 the National Park Service, R.I. Department of Environmental Management, and towns of West Greenwich, Exeter, Hopkinton, Charlestown, Richmond, Westerly, South Kingstown and North Stonington, CT and the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association (WPWA) undertook a cooperative study of the rivers and their resources.

The major finding of that study was that the features and characteristics of the Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers are "unique, irreplaceable, high quality resources and are limited in number in the eastern United States." Many of these "unique and irreplaceable resources" have been recognized possessing values of state, regional and national significance. The outstanding values attributed to the region are the result of the high individual quality of many of the resources, and their occurrence together.

The combined length of the two rivers is 53 miles, major portions of which have been included in the Nationwide Rivers Inventory of natural and undeveloped rivers throughout the country identified for protection under the National Field and Scenic Rivers Act.

In Hopkinton a five mile stretch of Pawcatuck River from Bradford to Nooseneck Hill Road in Ashaway and the section of the Wood River from I-95 south of Hope Valley to Alton are included in the national inventory. "These segments represent areas that are among the least developed in southern New England, and as such are becoming an increasingly valuable natural resource as the state becomes more developed."

The undisturbed nature of the river corridor lands in many ways contributes to its high water quality, abundant fisheries and extensive wildlife habitat. The vast majority of the 310 square mile watershed, 23% of the State of Rhode Island, remains in forested, rural or other non-urban land uses. The wetland areas of the basin are exemplary... The Pawcatuck River Basin is the most pristine area in the State of Rhode Island. Approximately 10% of the land in the entire basin is committed to conservation and recreation uses.

#### Groundwater Quality Protection

As is true throughout this region of Rhode Island, protection of the very high quality of groundwater is a priority for all the conservation and planning agencies.

Hopkinton's Conservation Commission has conducted aquifer and land use studies and is preparing an aquifer protection ordinance for the town. The Ordinance would establish overlay districts and restrict the types of uses within the district and prohibit others, such as gas stations.

#### Conservation Acquisitions

In the past five years a considerable amount of conservation land has been acquired by the Forestry and the Fish and Wildlife Divisions of R.I.D.E.M. and by conservation groups such as the Audubon Society and the Nature Conservancy. Most of the purchases have been concentrated around the lakes and ponds in the northwest section of town. The recent purchase of the 245 acre Black Farm on the Wood River is the first Hopkinton state purchase south of Rte. 95 and in the most rapidly developing section of town. Black Farm is a very important riverfront parcel, which will protect a wildlife corridor along the Canonchet Brook and across the Wood River to the Carolina Management Area in Richmond.

#### **Table I-8. Chronology of Local Recreation and Conservation Efforts 1962-1990**

- 1962 Hopkinton Planning Board established.
- 1967 First Hopkinton Master Plan prepared.
- 1971 Zoning first established, including a Flood Plain and Water Course Protection Zone.
- 1972 Recreation Commission established.

- 1973 Subdivision regulations adopted with recreation/conservation requirements of 2000, sq. ft. lot.
- 1973 Town's Historic District Commission established.
- 1973 First town planner hired, part-time
- 1973 First recreation director hired, part-time
- 1973 First Recreation Plan for the town prepared by Recreation Director Georgia Ure (also her master's thesis)
- 1974 Andrew McKeon, (town planner) interviewed 20% of all Hopkinton residents for a public opinion survey of land use and rural character.
- 1975 Andrew McKeon completed "Possibilities for Rural Planning. A Case Study of Hopkinton, Rhode Island" as his master's thesis. This study provided much of the data for the town's Master Plan of 1980.
- 1975 Pond on Laurel Street, adjacent to Ashaway School, excavated (with help from federal funds, to build a conservation and recreation area.
- 1975 Ashville Pond's proposed beach area is leased from the state, developed with help from the state's Department of Resources and the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, opened July 1, 1976
- 1976 L. Robert Crandall property acquired, house and three outbuilding, tennis courts, two ponds, on 60 acres, with matching funds from the Crandall family and the U.S. Bureau of Outdoor Recreation for a total of \$197,200, with \$29,650 of town funds.
- 1976 Three acre abandoned gravel bank adjoining the Hope valley School acquired by town for \$10,000 by matching funds from the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and Ashaway Line and Twine. The Soil Conservation Service and the University of Rhode Island gave technical assistance in site development.
- 1976 Polish-American Club, a c.1850 structure at High and Mechanic Streets, Hope Valley, former hotel, community center, post office, courthouse and performance hall, acquired by the town for failure to pay taxes and razed. Replaced by shrubs and a few benches as a little neighborhood park-Polish Park.
- 1976 Town subdivision regulations revised to include a mandatory dedication to the town of recreation land or payment in lieu of land.
- 1976 Ashville Pond Beach opened July 1st, with parking for 20 cars, picnic area and bathing beach with two finger piers.



- 1976 Election day, Recreation Department conducted a survey at the polls of 419 families.
- 1977 Langworthy Field tennis courts developed with a Bureau of Outdoor Recreation grant of \$15,000 matched by CDBG funds.
- 1978 Crandall Field's barn renovated into activity center with \$70,000 from the town's Economic Development Agency grant. Planned as a drop-in center for teenagers and to contain bathroom facilities for users of Crandall Field.
- 1978 Fitness trail laid out through the woods at Crandall Field, work done by the Youth Conservation Corps.
- 1978 Planning Board recommended purchase of a 96-acre parcel next to Crandall Field as a woodland preserve for \$100,000, but Town Council took no action.
- 1978 Landowners proposed donation of 200 acres in Canonchet to the town (off Lawton Foster Road and south of the landfill) near the Long Pond-Ell Pond Conservation District.
- 1978 Hopkinton Taxpayers Committee called for a "moratorium on further spending for recreation." The group strongly objected to the towns accelerating spending for all types of recreational facilities.
- 1979 Street tree survey and planting study conducted by town planner's office.
- 1980 Hopkinton's existing master plan, Conservation and Development Plan. Land Use Guide to Community Growth, adopted by Town Council.
- 1980 Zoning amendments proposed based on master plan recommendations of concentrating development in village center and discouraging development in more rural parts of town. Proposed regulations. The Plan was not adopted by the Town Council.
- 1984 Cooperative study of Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers by the National Park Service, R.I. Department of Environmental Management, eight communities in the watershed (including Hopkinton) and Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association.
- 1985 Planning Board conducted a community attitudes about public opinion on community attitudes about quality of life in Hopkinton, received 616 returned questionnaires out of 1917 for 32% response.
- 1987 Local subdivision regulations revised with pro-provisions for residential cluster and residential compound developments, both intended to ensure permanent open space in subdivisions.
- 1987 RIDEM prepared The Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers Management Plan.

1987 A local referendum approved the issuing of \$500,000 in local bond for the purpose of acquiring and preserving open space and acquiring, preserving, restoring or improving recreational areas.

1989 RIDEM closed Asheville Pond due to Hopkinton's failure to renew the lease, subsequently deciding to keep it closed permanently as an inappropriate use of RIDEM Fish and Wildlife property.

### Planning

The role of the Hopkinton Planning Board and the Planning Department in recreation and conservation activities has been one of major supporter through master plans and development regulations.

The present official master plan of the town, the 1980 Conservation and Development Plan. Land Use Guide to Community Growth is a strongly written, conservation-minded, growth management document intended to preserve the traditional land use pattern of concentrated villages surrounded by rural land. Unfortunately, the revised zoning ordinance, based upon the master plan concepts, was rejected by the Town Council in 1981. Instead blanket two acre zoning was adopted for the entire town, reportedly as a temporary measure pending further study and recommendations for a plan with a variety of zones. This zoning refinement has not been achieved to date but the Planning Board has been working on a new Land Use Plan for several years. On a town-wide basis, this rezoning and revision of development regulations is perhaps the most critical local mechanism for counteracting the effects of scattered, mundane suburban development.

The Subdivision Regulations for each permitted residential subdivision type- conventional (two acre), cluster and residential compound attempt to address recreation and conservation concerns. However, the regulations for all of this need to be scrutinized and the end products, the subdivisions themselves, need to be inspected to determine better ways to achieve the intent of the regulations.

Conventional two-acre subdivisions have dwindled in number in recent years in relation to clusters and compounds. However in the period 1980-90, 16 conventional subdivisions were approved. Town records indicate that approximately four acres have been dedicated to the town as part of there recorded subdivisions. However, none of these town-owned lots have been developed for any kind of recreational use. In fact, most seem inappropriate for active recreation use because of their size, configuration, location or topographic conditions. Many of these lots (the requirement is 2000 square feet per dwelling unit) have simply become drainage ways or the neighborhood place to dump grass and brush. Present subdivision regulations allow a payment-in-lieu-of-land option with these monies earmarked for special recreation funds. The town's experience and procedures for this payment alternative are not known.

Since their adoption in 1987, both cluster and residential compounds have been the preferred subdivision types. A major intent of both of these is to preserve open space on a permanent albeit privately owned basis. Residential cluster developments require at least 20 percent of the

total area (exclusive of roads and "natural features") to be set aside for open space. The Planning Board is required to review the configuration and plans for the open space as well as the legal documents that establish the rules for its ownership, use and maintenance.

Of the 165 acres in the seven cluster subdivisions approved since 1987, 75 acres have been dedicated to open space. These subdivisions need to be inspected to see how successful these areas are as conservation lands or buffers or whatever they were intended to be. Common problems with open space in clusters include open space areas which are barren, unattractive or waste areas, often used for drainage structures or disposal of rocks and tree stumps. Sometimes open space land is cleared without reclamation, other times small, scattered patches of strips of open space easily merge into private yards and are not distinguishable or furthermore accessible. Open space within a subdivision which has not been configured to complement and connect with surrounding greenways, parks and buffers is a mixed opportunity.

Residential compound regulation require:

*"Any land within the compound not designated as a building lot or street is designated as open space. Such land may only be used for; conservation outdoor recreation facilities of a noncommercial nature; agriculture; preservation of a scenic or historic sites or structures"*

Whether developers tend to actually leave significant areas as privately owned open space within the compounds or whether they just incorporate all the land into very large lots has not been studied. In any case, since every compound lot is a minimum of five acres and compounds have a maximum of seven lots, generally a high percentage of the compound is left in an undeveloped state.

Access to the open space within both clusters and compounds is generally restricted to the owners of properties within those developments and the homeowners' associations are responsible for all maintenance and for abiding by the open space agreements made with the town at the time of subdivision approval.

The Planning Board is the local agency designated, by state law, to prepare master plans for the entire town as well as specialized studies and to recommend ordinances and other implementation mechanisms to accomplish the plans' goals and strategies. This planning mandate is particularly applicable to recreation and conservation in the areas of land use, regulations and review of new developments, plans for revitalizing existing districts and capital improvement planning.

Land use regulations (zoning) establish the permitted uses within areas of town, the dimensional regulations for lots, buildings and setbacks and other requirements or restrictions such as landscaping, types of buffers etc. Thus the land use/zoning regulations prescribe the overall development pattern of the town. Zoning overlay districts are often established to provide extra protection to either natural or built districts, as in the use of the proposed Aquifer Protection Zone in Hopkinton.

Revitalization of other districts is well within the purview of the Board's master planning

mandate and is a role that should be reactivated for improving the existing villages in town. Neighborhood recreation areas in Hope Valley need upgrading. Zoning regulations for the village must proceed from an analysis of what the existing character is and try to fit new developments appropriately into the existing context. Regulations should recognize the importance of streetscape amenities as well as density and bulk of the existing and proposed buildings.

In 1979 the town planners proposed a street tree planting program which should be revived. Sidewalks and street trees should be considered essential for all the villages and some of the subdivisions for safety, recreational and aesthetic reasons. Landscaping and effective vegetative buffers should be required in all parking lots for aesthetic and health reasons. Various mechanisms should be sought to maintain rural character by keeping Hopkinton green, especially along major frequently traveled roads. These might include public tree planting and replacement programs, coordination with the state on design plans for state road reconstruction, landscape requirements for major developments, and establishment of a town tree farm.

A necessary step in implementing the town's comprehensive plan in an orderly fashion, (and for local financial management in general), is the adoption of a five to ten year Capital Improvement Program. In some communities the Planning Board has considerable responsibility in coordinating this, often in association with a local finance board.

## **2.5 Local Programs and Providers of Recreation and Open Space**

Following are the major categories of ownership or jurisdiction of the more than 5000 acres of recreation and conservation land in Hopkinton. The inventory summary in section 3.0 and the inventory forms in Appendix E provide more detail about individual properties.

State Of Rhode Island, Department of Environmental Management both the Forestry and the Fish and Wildlife Divisions

Town of Hopkinton, Recreation Commission

Private, non-profit organizations

Commercial recreational properties

Properties registered under the Farm, Forest, and Open Space Tax Program.

## **2.6 Current Trends Likely to Impact Recreation / Open Space Use**

Finally, to be effective local planning for recreation and open space, particularly for upgrading facilities, must be done with an understanding, of major trends-national, regional and local. Recreation providers, especially small town governments need to be very' practical about the short and long-term responsibilities involved with such facilities. In the next few years the general economic situation will require the careful planning and coordination of all local providers in order to maximize the effects of the time, effort and money put into activities and

facilities.

Among the trends likely to effect recreation and open space use are the following:

Recreation

In the last decade there have been major changes, in the demands for recreation - in the hours of use, types of recreation and places of recreation. Much of this is related to family economics, the increasing number of working women, widespread use of daycare centers, the number of people commuting longer distances to work all resulting in generally less time for recreation, especially unstructured recreation.

Recreation providers, especially those who schedule use of the ballfields, report that usually all the leagues want to use the facilities during the same hours-late afternoon and evenings, and weekend mornings.

There has been tremendous growth in organized league sports for girls and women, a phenomenon, which alone could contribute at least a third more to the facilities demand of 15 years ago.

Many more children participate in all kinds of structured after school recreation programs, from softball and swimming to ballet and art classes, increasing the demand for certain facilities and properly trained staff. Most of these programs charge fees and local governments and school departments are likely to be pressured to provide more after school programs which are publicly subsidized and to provide for children who cannot afford other programs.

While facilities are over-extended during peak hours, they are typically very underutilized the rest of the time. Some facilities such as the school playgrounds and the tot lots seem to be generally unused at all.

Although Rhode Island has matching state grant funding for recreation facility acquisition and development, which will probably be available for the next three years, federal and state assistance after that is not assured. As in all government programs, the years of massive federal funding are over and responsibility of financing programs is falling, increasingly, to the state and local governments.

Conservation

Increasing concern and support for environmental protection and other somewhat hard-to-define issues such as "rural character" and "aesthetics of design," and reaction against the type and amount of construction.

Increasing local awareness during the past few decades of the importance of the Wood-Pawcatuck watershed and of groundwater protection in particular.

Continued activity by the State of Rhode Island, with strong voter support, to purchase key conservation lands. In Hopkinton they are generally adjacent to other state land or water bodies.

More and stricter environmental regulations in the areas of wetland, groundwater and air quality protection at all levels of government.

Stricter regulations for the review of proposed developments. As yet, Rhode Island has no environmental impact statement requirements for local projects (as do many states) but local governments are rapidly establishing stronger local regulations and review procedures.

### **3.0 INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT OF OUTDOOR RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES**

#### **3.1 Inventory of Existing Facilities and Areas in Hopkinton**

This section of the Plan presents a list of Hopkinton sites which are either actively used for recreation or conservation or are dedicated or legally restricted or classified for tax purposes for recreation or conservation use. Also reported on, but not included in the inventoried acreage or on the systems map, are several types of property which certainly are key elements of Hopkinton's open space but are not easily inventoried or quantified. Among these are the regulated wetlands and flood plains, cemeteries and miscellaneous town properties.

Although today nearly 25% of Hopkinton's land has some official recreation or conservation status, the majority of this land is not restricted to those uses in perpetuity. Land under the jurisdiction of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, the Audubon Society, the Nature Conservancy, the Hopkinton Recreation Department and the land dedicated to open space in conventional and cluster subdivisions can reasonably be considered permanent recreation and conservation land. However, the large private landholdings, whether non-profit organizations, commercial enterprises or participants in the Farm own them, Forest, and Open Space Tax Program cannot be assumed to remain forever as recreation or conservation land.

#### **State of Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management**

##### **1. Alton Pond Fishing Access**

A.P. 6/129, +/-0.5 acres

This is an open, graveled lot at the southwestern end of Alton Pond, just above the dam and just north of Route 91. The waterfront is sand and open, without ramps. There is on-site parking for at least ten vehicles and road front parking for another ten. There is a good canoe access point to the Wood River just across Route 91.

2. Arcadia Management Area

AP. 20/24, 21/2, 21/11 21/13, 1035 acres

Part of a large state management area, which extends into Richmond and Exeter. In Hopkinton, Arcadia is mostly forest, conservation land, crossed by several streams and hiking trails. The more developed recreation areas, the pond, beach, and picnic groves are just east of the Hopkinton town line, in Richmond, around Arcadia Pond.

3. Black Farm

AP. 9/2,245 Acres

Black Farm was purchased by the state in 1990. The property has been identified as a very significant wildlife area on a pristine stretch of the Wood River where the Canonchet Brook meets the river. It also contains a farmhouse listed on the National Register meadows and wetlands along the riverfront and a kettle hole pond. An abandoned railroad right-of-way runs parallel to the river, through the eastern edge of the property. The Rhode Island DEM has not yet announced any development plans for Black Farm.

4. Blue Pond Management Area

AP. 16/42A 17/28,483 Acres

5. Ell Pond Management Area

AP. 13/11, 13/17,243 Acres

6. Hope Valley Fishing Area

AP. 28/144, +-0.5 Acres

Small fishing area on the Wood River in Hope valley, located off Route 3, behind Dow Field, appears to share parking with baseball fields and tot lot. No developed facilities along the shore but the playing fields have restrooms and concessions, during their hours of use. Appears to be a canoe access point also.

7. Locustville Pond Access Area

AP. 28/25, 1.83 Acres

Lot on the east side of Locustville Pond, Sunset Drive off Fairview Avenue.

8. Beach Pond Management Area

AP. 19/11, 151.5 Acres

This property, formerly owned by the Lymanville Rod and Gun Club, is now the southernmost section of the Beach Pond Management Area. In Hopkinton the land is conservation area.

9. Moscow Pond Fishing Area

AP. 30/21, 19.5 Acres

10. Rockville Management Area AP. 14/24, 14/21,204.5 Acres

Management Area nearly surrounding Ashville Pond. On the south side of the pond is the beach area developed by the town in 1976 and closed by the state in 1989. At the east end of the pond adjacent to Canonchet Road is a fishing and small roadside rest/picnicking spot.

11. Tomaguag Rock

AP. 4/21C, 8.2 Acres

Eight Acre parcel on the east side of the former Nathaniel Lewis Road, crossed by a tributary of Tomaguag Brook. The property was a gift to the state in 1982 by Nathan Kaye.

12. Wood River Access

AP. 27/184, .5 Acres

Fishing access area on Mechanic Street in Hope Valley around dam and old mill site on the Wood River. The area has been redeveloped in 1989-1990 and the parkland extends along the dam and bridge on both the Hopkinton and Richmond side of the river.

13. Wood River Access

AP. 29/26, .2 Acres

Small lot in the north side of the Wood River Dam at the intersection of Bridge and Main Streets. The lot provides access to pond above the dam and to the river below. The east end of the dam is also owned by the DEM has a parking lot and provides access to the pond for canoes or small boats. The Town of Hopkinton owns 5 acres immediately downstream across Bridge Street.

Total state-owned RIDEM acreage: 2.392 acres + 2400 acres

Town of Hopkinton

14. Briggs Memorial Park

AP. 25/136, 4.65 acres

Briggs Park in Ashaway occupies four and one-half acres between High Street (Route 216) and the Wood River, with approximately 1000 feet of riverfront. The Briggs family gave the area to the town, with deed restrictions restricting its use and sale. The park is overgrown, underutilized and vandalized. All the picnicking features have been repeatedly destroyed. Trash and debris is often dumped along the road, which runs through the upland section and down to the water. Large depressions limit the uses of the upland section. A steep slope parallels the river's edge making the waterfront not visible from the street or upland section. A road leads down to the riverfront where there are three small cleared sections, which appear to be used for fishing, swimming and maybe canoe access. The entire park needs to



be opened up by selective cutting and clearing. The demand for such a park is questionable since there are many other river access points in town and in the neighborhood and other more attractive public and private areas.

15. Crandall Field

AP. 24/3A, +-60 acres

Crandall Field is a 60-acre site on Rtes. 3 and 216, surrounding the Crandall House (#16) which serves as the center of activities for the Recreation Commission and the sole major recreation area for Hopkinton. The site has an open meadow of approximately 25 acres and another 35 acres of woodlands and wetlands. The meadow contains three small ponds, one poorly outfitted baseball field, two tennis courts and a few pieces of toddler's playground equipment. There are two adjacent parking areas. The field is well used for many activities but unevenness of the grass surface and poor drainage in the low areas restricts its use, especially in the spring and fall.

Crandall Field should be improved to maximize its potential but should continue to be a multi-use field with most of the field maintained as the beautiful open grassy expanse that it is. Suggested improvements include drainage improvement, especially on the north end and central portions, upgrading of the north side of the field (along Rte. 216) for two usable playing fields, for baseball, and soccer, installation of a basketball court behind the activity center (construction of a tot lot with lots of seating in the vicinity of the tennis courts and activity center, development of a picnic grove along the southeast property edge.

16. Crandall House

AP. 24/5, 17 acres

The Crandall House is a two and one half story Victorian structure on a 1.7 acre lot which also contains two tennis courts, a large barn which has been renovated into an activity center and maintenance center and a parking area for 50 cars. The House and Field (#15) were acquired by the town in 1976 as a gift from the Crandall Family, matched by a federal grant. The House and Barn are the town center for indoor recreation activities and house the recreation director's office and also the Seniors program, meals site and a meals-on-wheels program which serves this portion of the state.

17. Historical Society Building

AP. 26/52, .2 Acres

Small triangular lot at a key site in the Hopkinton City Historic District that contains a historic church, which serves as the historical society's headquarters. The small front yard has a memorial and flagpole and the rear is a little yard with stonewalls. The site is directly across from the Town Hall and owned by the Historic Society.

18. Langworthy Field

AP. 27/133, 2.8 Acres

Langworthy Field was a gravel bank, reclaimed in 1976 with a donation by Ashaway Line and Twine and a matching federal grant. It contains a softball field, which needs upgrading and tennis courts which were improved in summer 1990. The ballfield is periodically vandalized by cars driving onto it and needs some vehicle barriers along the south and west sides. The banks to the north and east are a favorite local sledding spot but the top of the north bank needs to be screened from adjacent private properties. The playing field surface needs reconditioning and a program of regular maintenance. Benches and backstop need replacement. The field is adjacent to the Hope Valley School (#26).

19. Laurel Street Nature Area

AP. 24/105A, 24/10SB, 24/106, 6.6 Acres

This natural area surrounds a small pond and a finger of the Pawcatuck River. It is adjacent to the Ashaway Elementary School to the south and several local industries to the northeast. In 1978 the pond was cleared of debris; with the help of some federal agencies, for ice skating and fishing. A rough trail runs around the pond. Picnic tables are sometimes put in the park in summer and are mostly used by the workers in the area.

20. Polish Park

A.P.27/207, .1 Acre

Small pocket neighborhood park on triangular site at the intersection of Mechanic and High Streets in the village of Hope Valley. Situated above the street, the park contains a few benches and some landscaping. The town built this park on the site of an old community hall, which they demolished in 1976.

21. Town Hall Property

AP. 26/47, +-25 Acres

This twenty-five acres of undeveloped land which was acquired with the Thayer House, wraps around the Town Hall lot and has frontage on both Townhouse and Woodville Roads. Except for a small horseshoe playing area on Townhouse Road, and Thayer House, the lot is undeveloped. It is, however, mostly wooded and quite wet. It appears that only the area fronting on Woodville Road may offer possibilities for any kind of construction or development. Nature trails and picnic areas may be the only allowable active recreation use.

22. Subdivision lot, Fern and Pine Roads

AP. 10/34,3.1 Acres

Undeveloped subdivision lot dedicated to the town as required by the subdivision regulations. Located between cul-de-sacs at the foot of a fairly steep hill. Lot is heavily wooded and it appears some drainage from the subdivision enters it.

23. Subdivision lot, Pinewoods Estate  
AP. 12/53, 2.32 Acres

Undeveloped subdivision lot dedicated to the town as required by the subdivision regulations.

24. Subdivision lot, Country Lands  
AP. 18/72, 1.67 Acres

Total town-owned acreage: 108.14 acres + 110.0

### Chariho School Department

25. Ashaway School Playfields  
AP. 24/110, 5.3 Acres

The Ashaway Elementary School has a playground for young children in the front yard and a multi-purpose grassed playing field (often used for soccer) to the rear. The town owned Laurel Street Nature Area abuts the school property to the west. The playfield is in good condition. The playground has two swing sets, a jungle gym and little else. The playground needs some landscaping for shade and buffering and refurbishing of equipment.

26. Hope Valley School Playground  
AP. 27/132, .5 Acres

Elementary school playground with some simple equipment and two basketball boards. No landscaping around play area. Adjacent to town-owned Langworthy Field (#18).

Total Chariho School Acreage: 5.8 acres + 6

### Privately Owned Land

27. Ashaway Sportmen's Club  
AP. 13/3, 10/14A, 83 Acres
28. Camp Yawgoog  
AP. 16/27, 16/27A, 16/28, 1070 Acres

Camp Yawgoog, established 50 years ago, is among the largest and most heavily used Boy Scout camps in the northeast region. The most actively used portion of the camp is approximately 1100 land acres surrounding Yawgoog Pond and also abutting the west half of Wincheck Pond. The Boy Scouts of America also own approximately 680 nearby acres of undeveloped land (contiguous and non-contiguous to the camp), which is presently open

space (see Land Registered as Farm, Forest and Open Space).

The camp contains 32 major structures and dozens of shelters, cabins, boat docks etc. In the 1990 eight week season 5300 boys and 800 adults attended camp and there was a full-time resident staff of 167 for ten full weeks. From October through May the camp is extensively used on weekends with 120 boys and leaders in cabins and 100-150 campers in tents. Approximately one-half of all campers come from outside Rhode Island as Yawgoog has become a popular regional camp and significant numbers come regularly from Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York (particularly Long Island).

29. Dow Field

AP. 28/144, 8.0 Acres

Dow Field, located on Main Street in Hope Valley (is located in the middle of an eight acre parcel which it shares with a playground, the Hope Valley Fishing Area (#6) and the Chariho Little League field.

The Chariho Athletic Association (CAA) has one softball field with bleachers, a pressbox and lights and one ballfield without any of these.

The Chariho Little League has a ballfield with bleachers and benches (both ill poor condition) and a pressbox.

The playground contains a tot lot with swings, jungle bars and some other simple equipment, a basketball court and two tennis courts, all in need of renovation.

30. Ell Pond-Long Pond Conservation Area

AP. 13/13, 13/18, 13/19, 198 Acres

Conservation area owned by the Audubon Society in an area that has been identified as having significant topographical and plant features.

31. Enchanted Forest

AP. 15/5, 27 Acres

The Enchanted Forest, on Rte. 3, is a theme park for small children established nearly 20 years ago and expanded recently to include a small amusement park for older children and adults. The theme park has more than 20 small buildings for children to go into (pirate ship, lighthouse, pig house etc). There is also a playground with swings, slides, a ferris wheel, airplane ride, boat ride, etc. The park also contains batting cages and an 18-hole mini golf course, a gift shop, a sandwich shop and maintenance buildings.

32. Frontier Campground

AP. 7/51, 30 Acres

This privately run campground on Diamond Hill Road has approximately 60 campsites in

use, but permits for several times that. The campground has a pool, commercial building and approximately five acres of open space.

33. Greenwood Hill Campground

AP. 30/24,40 Acres

Located on Newberry Lane, off Main Street in Rockville, in the vicinity of, but not abutting (Moscow Pond, the campground has approximately 40 sites.

34. Holly Tree Campground

AP. 2/42A, 20 Acres

This site is located on the Ashaway Road (Rte. 216) in the vicinity of, but not abutting, Tomaguag Brook. It has 138 sites and a commercial building and some playfields.

35. Lindhbrook Golf Course

AP. 11151,34 Acres

Established in 1978 as Springhaven Golf Course, Lindhbrook Golf Course is the required open space for the surrounding condominium development of +- 70 units (44) built. The 18 hole, par three golf course occupies approximately 34 of the total 40 acres. The course, which is located on the Woodville Alton Road, also has a restaurant/clubhouse.

36. Nature Conservancy Land

AP. 13/16, 50 Acres

Conservation land in the vicinity of Ell Pond-Long Pond and adjacent to Audubon-owned property.

37. Popeolek Park

AP. 28, 3 Acres

Part of Dow Field.

38. Whispering Pines Campground

AP. 17/20,45 Acres

Privately owned campground on Saw Mill Road has a swimming area on Brushy Brook, playground, multi-purpose field, recreation building and approximately 150 campsites.

39. Cluster Subdivision Open Space, Carol Park

A.P. 17/2A, 17/2B, 9 Acres

40. Cluster Subdivision Open Space, Belforest

A.P. 18/26, 4 Acres

- 41. Cluster Subdivision Open Space, Beech Hill Estates  
AP. 5/99, 8 Acres
- 42. Cluster Subdivision Open Space, Greenfield  
AP. 18/26, 4.4 Acres
- 43. Cluster Subdivision Open Space, Laurel Glen Estates  
AP. 3/26, 3/26B, 8.1 Acres
- 44. Cluster Subdivision Open Space, Fenner Hill  
AP. 14/74A, 12 Acres

Total private Iv owned recreation and conservation land: 1.650.5 + 1.650

Land Registered Under the Farm. Forest and Open Space Tax Act (as of 11/89)

- 45. Open Space  
AP. 20/8, 20/9, 137 Acres
- 46. Open Space  
AP. 17/10, 28/3, 37.5 Acres
- 47. Open Space  
AP. 30/59, 18.3 Acres
- 48. Open Space  
AP. 5/71, 146.0 Acres
- 49. Open Space  
AP. 14/IA, 14/46, 34.0 Acres
- 50. Open Space  
AP. 8/10, 128 Acres
- 51. Open Space  
AP. 4/121E, 5/15, 82.2 Acres
- 52. Open Space  
AP. 4/137, 4/137A, 4/138, 5/111, 103.8 Acres
- 53. Open Space  
AP. 20/7, 33.1 Acres
- 54. Open Space  
AP. 20/7A, 15.4 Acres

- 55. Open Space  
AP. 21/1, 40.0 Acres
- 56. Open Space  
AP. 8/28,64.0 Acres
- 57. Open Space AP. 8/21,49.0 Acres
- 58. Open Space  
AP. 8/14A, 8/39A 27.6 Acres
- 59. Open Space  
AP. 16/27A, 16/32, 16/40, 19/3A, 19/12, 19/28,30/3,682.3,682.3 Acres
- 60. Open Space  
AP. 11/57, 169.5 Acres
- 61. Open Space  
AP. 14/18,27.0 Acres
- 62. Forest  
AP. 11/8,23.8 acres
- 63. Forest  
AP. 6/34A, 14.9 Acres
- 64. Farm  
AP. 7/48, 199.5 Acres
- 65. Farm  
AP. 4/61N, 15.0 Acres
- 66. Farm  
AP. 17/26,53 Acres
- 67. Farm  
AP. 4/61-0,49 Acres
- 68. Farm  
AP. 4/61-P, 20.0 Acres
- 69. Farm  
AP. 11/26, 11/27, 11/36, 11/53, 109-Acres

70. Farm

A.P. 4/61-M, 17.9 Acres

*Total Farm, Forest and Open Space acreage:* 2296.8 + 2300.0

**Table I-9. Summary Of Land Designated As Open Space Or Recreation Areas**

	<b>Acreage</b>
<b>Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management</b> Management Areas	2,400.0
<b>Town of Hopkinton</b> Developed or dedicated areas	110.0
<b>Chariho School Department</b> Elementary School Playgrounds	6.0
<b>Privately owned Land</b>	
Commercial	190.0
Non-profit	1,415.0
Cluster Subdivisions Forest, Farm or Open Space	45.0 2,300.0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>3,950.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,460.0</b>

There are several other types of land, which although not individually significant as conservation areas or easily surveyed, contribute to the open space area and to the rural character of the town. These sites are not necessarily appropriate as actively used, publicly accessible sites due to their size, inaccessibility or fragility. Among these are some dozen or so town-owned parcels, twenty-eight cemeteries, as well as a vast network of regulated wetlands and flood plains.

The properties listed in Table 10 are all town-owned and undeveloped and therefore, presently open space. With the exception of the six acre Bridge Street Lot (A.P. 29/46) on the Wood River in Hope valley, none of these sites appear particularly suitable for development as the kind of active recreation areas which the community needs. The history of the town's acquisition of these sites should be clarified prior to any use since there may be encumbrances on the use of the land. Sale of some of these lots should be investigated. Proceeds could then be earmarked for some particular public use such as recreation acquisition and development.



**Table I-10. Miscellaneous Town-Owned Land**

Site	Acreage
Clarks Falls Road AP. 7/24	5.1
North Road AP. 13/27 (or 8)	0.5
Bridge Street AP. 29/46	6.0
Bridge Street AP. 29/43	0.32
Tomaquag Road AP. 5/108	0.9
Chase Hill Road AP. 2/64	0.03
Clark Falls Road AP. 7/31	0.4
North Road AP. 10/42	0.5
Longbridge AP. 13/8	0.34
High Street AP. 27/16	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.19</b>

Hopkinton has twenty-eight identified local cemeteries, many of them small and historic, and others larger and pleasantly landscaped. They all certainly contribute to the open space and the historic and aesthetic character of the town.

**Table I-11. Hopkinton Cemeteries**

Cemetery	Plat	Cemetery	Plat
Barber Lot	21	Spicer Lot	26
Larkin Lot	20	Champlain Lot	7
Smith Lot	18	Thurston Lot	26
Pine Grove Cemetery	28	Oak Grove Cemetery	25
Fenner Lot	31	Lewis Lot	5
Rockville	30	Noyes Lot	5
Kenvon Collins Lot	14	Babrock	5
Fenner Lot		1 <sup>st</sup> Hopkinton Cemetery	2
Nichols Lot		Burdick Lot	23
Hoxie Lot	11	Hoxie Lot	6
Foster-Spencer Lot	11	Wills Lot	4
Brightman-Brown Lot	11	Eliza Babrock Lot	18
Palmer Lot	11	Babcock Lot	5
Collins Lot	11	Braman Lot (Wheeler Farm)	4

### **3.2 Summary of Current Recreation and Conservation Activities in Hopkinton**

#### *Hopkinton Recreation Department*

The recreation department has a full-time director and one maintenance staff person and they are responsible for programs and upkeep of all the town's recreational areas, under the direction of the five-member Recreation Commission.

Current year-long or annual activities organized by the recreation director include the following:

#### **Ongoing programs:**

Summer twelve-week playground, 20 children/week

Aerobics, four ten-week sessions, 20 persons each

Yoga, four 10-week sessions, 10 persons each

Youth basketball program, Dec.- April, 150 youths

Women's volleyball, fall and spring, 25-30 women each session

Ceramic classes, three six-week sessions, 10 children each session

Tennis lessons, five weeks in summer

Swimming lesson, summer, two sessions, children and adults, 10 people each session

Scuba diving lessons, 10 people each session

Seniors bingo, whist, bridge, weekly 10-15 people

#### **Annual Events**

Haunted House, Halloween, 2 nights, 2000 people

Pumpkin Festival, 65-70 people

Colonial Craft Fair, 2 days, 6000 people

Santa's visit, 30 people

Ski trip, 35-40 people

Easter egg hunt, 300-400 children

Fishing derby, fishing season, and banquet, 125 people

Hopkinton Rec. Run, spring 40-45 people

The director is also responsible for coordinating use of town recreation properties by other individuals and groups. None of the town-owned fields, (neither Langworthy nor Crandall ballfields) are used by local teams for regular games because of their poor condition. However the fields are scheduled for use by many groups for practice sessions.

### *Chariho Little League*

Chariho Little League provides the following programs to males and females ages 8 to 15:

T -Ball, 8 years old, approximately 50/year

Major/minor league program, 9-12 year olds, approximately 225/year

Senior league program, 13-15 year olds, approximately 75 per year

Games are played on three fields owned by the Chariho Athletic Association. The League strongly states the need for more fields (baseball, softball and soccer) for the Hopkinton area. In recent years Chariho Little League has grown at the rate of one and one-half teams (20 children) per year and their facilities are already used to capacity. The League must turn away children each year due to lack of baseball fields.

### *Chariho Girls' Summer Softball League*

The Girls' Softball league provides programs for approximately 200 girls ages 8 to 16 in the three Chariho towns. The League sponsors an average of 150 recreational, and 50 competitive softball games each summer. At present they use four sites: the Richmond School Field, the Chariho Yo-Tech Field, the Wicklund Field in Charlestown and the Chariho Athletic League Fields in Hopkinton.

### *Girl Scouts*

Approximately 120 girls ages 5 through 18 and 16-20 women are active in girl scouting in Hopkinton. Each troop plans their own outdoor activities usually several times a year. The scouts use no particular facilities in Hopkinton and go to camps in Westerly and South Kingstown.

### *Chariho Future Farmers of America*

The F.F.A. is an organization for high school students enrolled in agricultural organization. Approximately 37 teenagers in Hopkinton, both male and female, are members. The group volunteers to help in community projects and, has offered to help in recreation and conservation projects in Hopkinton.

Crandall Senior Citizens Meal Site

The local seniors organization uses Crandall House primarily as a meals-on-wheels and general socializing site. Participating seniors number eight to forty on special occasions. Regular recreational programs include:

Bingo, Thursday after lunch  
Whist, Friday after lunch  
Ceramics, Monday after lunch  
Bridge Monday night Annual  
penny social

Babcock Presbyterian Church

The church sponsors social times that are attended by 70-90 people of all ages. They have an annual cookout and four to five pot luck suppers per year. They also have weekly youth nights for 10-24 church youth and monthly sessions open to anyone.

Trinity Lutheran Church

Approximately 60 people, of all ages, are active participants in church-sponsored recreation including: horseshoe league (4 months), 20 people, four summer picnics, 40 people each, youth group, 10 people, pre-school closing 300. The Church has 6.5 acres on their property in Hope Valley used by the congregation and the preschool outdoor recreation activities.

**3.3 Potential Open Space and Recreational Resources of Community Interest**

Publicly Owned Properties

The following four properties are either already owned by the town of Hopkinton or in a quasi-public jurisdiction. Their use as conservation or recreational land should be explored.

- a. Fogarty Farm  
A.P. 20/18, 20/19, 29/18B. 295 Acres

This large, mostly undeveloped tract in the fairly remote northern part of Hopkinton was seized by the federal government as part of an illegal drug case and federal jurisdiction is still being contested. The property abuts the Arcadia Management Area along most of its eastern border and appears a logical extension of that preserve. At one time, the property was proposed as a federal prison site. The town and state should cooperate with federal authorities and investigate conservation possibilities for this land.

b. Bridge Street Property  
AP. 29/46, 6.0 Acres

Located just south of Bridge Street and the Wood River dam in Hope Valley, this six-acre parcel has a very pretty and wide stretch of riverfront popular with fishermen and also used by canoeists. The major part of the property that has waterfront is an island. What appears to be an old dam or foundation site would be easily bridged to provide access to the island. This could make a fine fishing, picnicking and canoe access point, located directly behind Main Street in Hope Valley and just across the street from the RIDEM parking area and access point to the pond.

c. Town Landfill  
AP. 13/27, 52.0 Acres

In town plans from the 1970's the landfill site was slated for future redevelopment as a recreation site and, in fact, many communities in the past used landfill sites as such. Today towns should make an extremely careful investigation of potential environmental dangers and practical problems of constructing on former landfills. However, the Hopkinton landfill is located very near some important conservation lands and is on the Narragansett Trail, a popular regional hiking path. The landfill site should be revegetated and it would make an excellent site for a town tree farm.

d. Langworthy Library  
AP. 27/96, .2 Acres

Although the library's lot is very small, its location on Locustville Pond suggests that it should be investigated for possibilities of some kind of access to the Pond.

e. Town Garage Property  
AP.7/45 18 Acres

In the early 1970's before Crandall Field was acquired, this property on Woodville Road was proposed in plans for the town's central recreation area. The town's highway and police departments now occupy the roadfront area but the rear acreage should be investigated as a potential site for recreational facilities.

Unique Natural Areas and Open Space of Special Value Requiring Protection

Recommendations of Conservation Commission:

**Assessment of Open Space & Recreational Resources of Community Interest**

1. Public & Private Land and Water Resources, which represent important potential for providing outdoor recreation opportunities:

a. Wood River Corridor:

The Wood River currently provides important outdoor recreation (fishing, canoeing, hunting, etc.). The river will continue to provide Hopkinton with these recreation opportunities in the future provided the water quality and habitat values are protected.

The Wood River is recognized statewide for its recreation values and relatively pristine conditions.

Most of the property adjacent to the Wood River is privately owned and therefore it is recommended that a 300' Buffer Zone be left in open space if development occurs on those private parcels adjacent to the river. The buffer zone would begin at the River's edge and extend landward on either side of the River. The open space must consist of "natural" or indigenous habitat. This recommended buffer zone is consistent with the recommendations of the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association. The WPW A is encouraging all towns bordering the Wood River to incorporate this measure.

b. Trout Stream Corridor:

A trout stream corridor is recommended for protection of Canonchet, Tomaguag, & Brushy Brooks & the Ashaway River.

These waterways provide important recreational fishing opportunities now and in the future.

The water quality must be preserved in these brooks to provide future generations with the same fishing opportunities. Maintaining the current water quality in these waterways will also protect the Wood River, which receives the waters from all of these Trout Steams.

It is recommended that no new development occur within 200' of Canonchet, Tomaguag, & Brushy Brooks & the Ashaway River. A 200' Buffer Zone extending landward from the stream banks on both sides will serve several functions:

- a. Overland runoff will be filtered through natural vegetation before entering the waterways;
- b. The streams will remain shaded which will maintain the cool water temperatures needed by trout; and
- c. The aesthetic character of the waterways will be preserved to make fishing an enjoyable outdoor experience.

2. Unique Natural Areas and Open Space of Special Value Requiring Protection:

In accordance with Report No. 52 cited below, the Town of Hopkinton will "preserve its diverse heritage of natural resources by working to save the best representatives of the ecosystem types found in Rhode Island, and protecting rare and endangered plants, animals, and unique geologic or other features". \*

The Town of Hopkinton "recognizes the many values provided by its abundant wildlife resources, and will work to preserve and enhance species diversity and stability through continued research, management and education efforts, habitat protection and enhancement, and preservation or mitigation of adverse impacts of human activities."

\* Report No. 52 State Guide Plan element 152 Ocean State Outdoors Recreation and Conservation Strategies for Rhode Island. September 1986

a. Unique natural areas containing rare species and ecologically significant areas have been highlighted by the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program (RI NHP) (letter 3/16/90) and consist of:

Ell Pond/Blue Pond Yawgoog Complex  
Grassy Pond  
Areas west of Wood River & south of Route 95 (see map)  
Areas bounded by the Railroad tracks and Pawcatuck River ( see map) RI DEM properties (see map)

The map showing the exact location of these areas is available at the Town Planners' office or from the Conservation Commission.

The mapping designating the location of rare species and ecologically significant areas is subject to continual updating by the RINHP. The updated material will be incorporated into this Plan as it is made available.

The Town of Hopkinton will request recommendations from the RI NHP any time a proposed development is located on or near a site harboring rare species or areas of ecological significance to determine how best to protect these areas. The Town will incorporate the RI NHP recommendations into their approval of a proposed development when the RI NHP determines that a potential threat exists to a rare species or ecologically significant community.

b. The Northwest Pond Complex:

The Northwest Pond Complex consists of Yawgoog, Grassy, Wine heck, Blue, Ashville, Long & Ell Ponds.

Within roughly three square miles, Hopkinton has 7 beautiful ponds each of which provides, to one degree or another, recreational fishing, hunting, swimming, boating, and

areas just for wildlife observations. These ponds have outstanding habitat values and some contain rare species.

Several of the ponds are already partially or wholly protected. For those ponds not currently protected, the property bordering the ponds should be given the highest priority for acquisition by the State, Town, Nature Conservancy etc. for preservation as open space. In particular, private property bordering Blue and Ashville Ponds should be targeted due to current development pressures in that area. Key parcels in that area are the Ledges, AMR property, Godbout property & Brennan property.

If it is not possible to acquire the private property, then a 300' buffer zone shall extend from the pond shore landward on any parcel being developed. This buffer zone will be maintained in its natural condition to preserve the scenic integrity of the areas and protect the important fisheries and wildlife habitats.

#### c. Public Open Space Management Areas

Currently the Town of Hopkinton has several organizations that own property and permit public access. The State of RI (DEM), the Audubon Society and the Nature Conservancy all manage property for recreational purposes to varying degrees (Audubon & Nature Conservancy promote passive recreation ie: no hunting). These areas also provide high value wildlife and fisheries habitats including rare species in some instances. It is recommended that the private property abutting these lands be targeted for acquisition to promote continued expansion of these areas, which is consistent with the current DEM philosophy concerning land acquisition.

If private property cannot be acquired, no development shall be permitted within 200' of the property boundaries of the designated open space areas mentioned above. This will serve to buffer our open space lands while development continues in the surrounding areas.

#### d. Farmland as Open Space with a Special Value

Farmland is recognized as open space with a special value in Hopkinton. Few active farms remain and those that do provide scenic values with their pastures! fields providing "open land versus the current predominately forested land in the town. Also several of our farms do harbor rare species according to the RI NHP data. Therefore the Town of Hopkinton should target acquisition of the development rights of these farms. Programs are available which permit farmers to sell the development value of their property with the stipulation that the land must stay in agricultural use or other open space for perpetuity. Tax benefits are available as well.

Of particular interest is the Wheeler Farm and the Reynolds farm which provide high scenic value as well as harboring rare species.



The small family farm is disappearing rapidly throughout the United States and it is up to the local government to help our farmers survive if we are to continue to enjoy the quality of life they bring to our communities.

### 3. Open Space Which Supports Community Conservation and Development Objectives

#### a. Briggs Park

This park bordering the Ashaway River provides a pocket of open space for nearby residents. Although the banks are steep leading to the river's edge, a winding path could be developed to improve fishing access. Also the area at the top of the hill is relatively flat and suitable for a picnic area. Suitable lighting and selective thinning of the trees and underbrush could alleviate problems with loitering or vandalism.

#### b. Ashville Pond Swimming Area

The Town of Hopkinton is in need of a Town Swimming facility. Ideally, the Ashville Pond Swimming area would be preferred because the beach already exists and other than minor improvements it would not be costly to reopen the area. If it is not feasible to make arrangements with DEM to reopen Ashville then it would be a high priority to find another suitable swimming area for our residents.

#### c. Landscaping Hope Valley School, Langworthy Field, Ashaway Elementary and Laurel Street Property.

The schools and Langworthy Field could benefit substantially from conservation plantings, which would improve the aesthetics of the areas. Additionally, by landscaping with native trees and shrubs (or those available from the Soil Conservation Service) we could make this an educational program by involving the students in some of the plantings. Finally, landscaping with conservation plantings always improve the habitat for wildlife which can also be educational benefit.

The Laurel Street property could, with little expense, be developed into a picnic area. The area is fairly open and may already be used by workers in the neighborhood as an area to have lunch during good weather.

#### d. Bridge Street

This area provides Town-owned access to the Wood River for fishing and canoeing. The only improvement recommended is the possibility of developing a small gravel parking area.

## **4.0 ANALYSIS OF LOCAL RECREATIONAL NEEDS**

### **4.1 National and State Standards**

The following quantitative national standards have been adopted for planning purposes by the Rhode Island Recreation Resources Review Committee. The RIRRC encourages communities to plan recreation and open space systems that exceed these minimum standards. According to this classification of the National Recreation and Park Association, local demand or needs is analyzed on a per capita basis. The NRP A suggests that a park system, at a minimum, be composed of a "core" system of parks with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population.

However, beyond the listed recreational activities and needs found in these national standards are recreation conditions that vary from one community to another. Some of the conditions are not easily quantifiable and must be assessed by the quality of the open space and recreation they provide.

**Table I-12. Minimum Standards for Local Recreation as Set by the Town of Hopkinton**

**Playgrounds Neighborhood Parks**

3.75 Acres per 1,000 population

**Playfields and Major Parks**

6.25 Acres per 1,000 population

**State Parks**

5.5 Acres per 1,000 population

**Camping Areas**

Camping sites for .5% of the population

Four persons per camp site

**Beach Areas**

Capacity for 6% of the population.

75 square feet of beach area per swimmer.

100-200 square feet of swimmable water per swimmer.

Comfort station with one lavatory and toilet per 50-80 swimmers.

Bath houses to accommodate 5% of the design capacity of the beach.

**Picnicking Areas**

Capacity for 2% of the population.

6-12 units per acre.

One parking space per unit.

8-16 units per acre for picnic groves or wayside areas.

One comfort station for each 30 units.

**Boat Launches**

Capacity for 1 % of the population.  
 Average boat occupancy of 3 persons  
 40 boat capacity per launch, per day; typical usage 20 boats per day

The following population projection for the next 30 years, prepared by the R.I. Division of Planning, will be used for the needs analysis. Although the 1990 initial census results may be contested by the town, as low, these figures, prepared separately, are close to the census figures. These projections predict a seven percent increase in the next decade and five percent for the following two decades.

**Table I-13. Town of Hopkinton Population Projection 1990-2020**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population Projection</b>
1990	6,856
1995	6,913
2000	7,184
2005	7,368
2010	7,543
2015	7,715
2020	7,886

Source: State of Rhode Island, Division of Planning. January, 1989.

The following needs analysis has been done considering 1995 needs for a population of 7000.

**4.2 Summary of Hopkinton's Developed Recreation and Open Space by Type and Compared to National Standards**

a. Fishing

Alton	0.5
Hope Valley	0.5
Moscow Pond	19.5
Wood River	0.5
Wood River	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.5 acres</b>

*Note:* All are also canoe access points. There is no state standard for fishing areas.

b. Camping

Yawgoog	1,100
Frontier	30
Greenwood	40
Holly Tree	20
Whispering Pines	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,235 acres</b>

*Need in 1995: 8.75  
acres*

c. Minor Parks

Briggs	4.7
Ashaway School	2.3
Hope Valley School	.5
Popiolek	.5
Polish	.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.1 acres</b>

*Need in 1995: 26.25 acres*

This analysis would indicate a need for three times the present facilities. However, our inventory survey found that these small playgrounds and neighborhood parks were invariably empty and obviously little used. The standard for needs may be less relevant in Hopkinton for small parks because of the following factors: large residential lots often with play-ground equipment, number of children and daycare facilities which often have their own private playgrounds, and the use of parts of the multi-purpose fields in the major parks for play or recreation.

d. Major Parks and Playfields

Crandall	60.0
Langworthy	2.8
Dow	8.0
Popeolek	2.5
Ashaway School	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>76.30 acres</b>

*Need in 1995: 43.75 acres*

e. Boat Launch Areas

Locustville Pond	1.83
Moscow Pond	19.5
Alton Pond	.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>21.83 acres</b>

*Need in 1995: 5.8 launches*

Almost all the waterfront sites in Hopkinton are appropriate for canoe access at multiple points. Few have launch areas for trailered boats, but then, motorized boats are discouraged or forbidden on many of the local waterways. Also, Camp Yawgoog has more than one hundred boat slips and multiple access points but it is not publicly accessible.

f. Beaches

Camp Yawgoog	900 L.F.
Whispering Pines Camp	250 L.F.
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,150 L.F.</b>

*Needs in 1995: 0.7 acres of beach area, 1-2 acres of swimmable water*

Neither of the above-named beaches are publicly accessible and the Ashville Pond site, a 200 L.F. beach developed on RIDEM land and leased to town, was permanently closed last year.

g. State Parks/Management Areas

Arcadia	1,035.0
Black Farm	245.0
Blue Pond	483.0
Ell Pond	243.0
Beach Pond	151.5
Rockville	204.5
Tomaquag Rock	8.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,370.2 acres</b>

*Needs in 1995: 38.5 acres*

None of the above are developed as recreation areas, all are conservation lands. Arcadia and Beach Pond have developed active recreation facilities, but these are not located in Hopkinton.

### **4.3 Local Needs Assessment**

This section identifies recreation, open space and natural resource conservation needs which are being inadequately addressed by current facilities, policies and programs in the Town of Hopkinton. The needs assessment is based on the findings of several surveys and plans prepared over the past twenty years as well as multiple committee meetings and public workshops held in the course of this particular study and the site-inspection and research done by the planners who prepared the report. Four public opinion surveys have polled Hopkinton residents on many of the issues regarding recreation and open space:

1974, survey on Land Use and Rural Character by the Town Planners who interviewed 20% of the households in town.

1976, Recreation Survey by the Recreation Director who polled 419 voters on election day.

1985, Quality of Life Questionnaire, compiled by the Planning Board, which received 616 returns of 1917 questionnaires.

1990, Recreation and Conservation Needs Survey, by the Planning Board who targeted 35 community leaders who were also invited to all public workshops

#### **1976 Recreation Poll**

The 1976 poll by the Recreation Department questioned 419 voters, representing families containing approximately 1900 persons, or nearly one-third of the town. Swimming areas, a Bowling alley and bike paths were facilities most needed in the town, according to the poll. The facilities being used the most were rivers and streams, the Ashaway Free Library and Crandall Field (in that order).

The poll asked for priority needs in certain categories with the following results:

Sports: swimming, bicycling and ice-skating  
Arts and crafts: ceramics, drawing and painting  
Musical activities: music appreciation, dancing, and social dancing  
Dramatics: plays, social activities, dances  
Hobbies: fishing, boating, camping  
Special activities: sightseeing tours, trips

In response to the questions of what recreational facilities families now have, the answer was fishing equipment, backyard picnic area and backyard play equipment. The survey also found that most Hopkinton residents remain at home during their vacations. Thirty-three percent of those polled said they would be willing to pay a tax increase to help pay for new recreational facilities. This survey was taken just prior to the development of town facilities at Crandall Field, Langworthy Field and Ashville Pond.

1990 Recreation and Conservation Survey

In spring 1990 thirty-five community leaders (see list in Appendix A) were invited to participate in preparation of this plan and were sent a needs questionnaire (see copy in Appendix B). Fifteen responses were received from the following organizations:

Babcock Presbyterian Church  
Chariho Future Farmers of America  
Chariho Girls' Summer Softball League  
Chariho Little League  
Conservation Commission  
Crandall Senior Citizens  
Economic Development Commission  
Girl Scouts  
H.O.P.E.  
Hopkinton Historical Society  
Hopkinton Recreation Department  
Principal, Hope Valley School  
Recreation Commission  
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association

By far the top priority need cited by all the recreation groups was for ballfields for organized (league) play. The remaining needs were cited by two or three respondents: a meeting place for teenagers, picnic grounds for family outings, a public beach, and playgrounds as socializing spots for toddlers and their mothers. Two youth groups cited the need for river cleanup to improve the recreational conditions on the river and both groups offered to help with such a project.

A needs analysis based on the national standards focuses only on quantitative measurements of publicly controlled active, outdoor recreation. The full range of recreation and conservation activities and needs is much more complex. For a more comprehensive view one must consider such things as the regional context, facilities shared with other communities, the quality as well as the quantity of facilities, indoor as well as outdoor recreation opportunities, the role of private and commercial recreation providers and the extent of non-organized recreation which does not require actual facilities such as walking, jogging, bicycling and fishing.

Predicted Community Trends which May Effect Recreation and Open space

The overall demographic profile of Hopkinton is unlikely to change dramatically in the foreseeable future. For the past 10 to 20 years Hopkinton has ranked between 30 and 35 among Rhode Island Town's in per capita income. There is no reason to expect a major change in the economic status, the age or the racial makeup of the community.

Even through the recent economic boom years Hopkinton's rate of population increase was a fairly modest seven percent. Statewide Planning's projection of seven percent for

the next decade seems reasonable.

If the present pattern of subdivision building continues most new developments will be roadfront lots and small (4 to 20) subdivisions of fairly large lots (two to five acres) scattered throughout town. Unless several of these small subdivisions abut, none alone will have enough mass to really constitute a neighborhood in the traditional sense.

At this point the sole large-scale project slated for Hopkinton is Brae Bern, a recently approved golf course and hotel complex with 200 residential condominiums units. The developers say it would be marketed more to upper-middle class retirees and would contain its own private sports facilities. If this marketing scenario is successful Brae Bern is unlikely to place major demands on Hopkinton's recreational facilities.

The growth in the number of participants in girls' and women's sports is likely to continue and will place more and more demand on facilities which may up to now have been used mostly by men's and boys' groups.

Demand for ballfields will probably continue to be concentrated to late afternoons, evenings and weekday mornings and the trend toward more organized sports and recreational activities is likely to continue.

The major demand in new and upgraded facilities will be for complexes with multi-purpose fields rather than neighborhood parks. It seems that people in Hopkinton use private yards for toddlers' playgrounds and small picnics rather than neighborhood parks. The greater demand is for places for team sports and larger social gatherings

The growth in youth soccer is likely to continue, adding to demand for another type of field or multi-purpose fields easily converted for use for several sports.

The popularity of walking, biking and jogging will probably continue particularly as the population ages and as the more and more people begin to do moderate non-team exercise for health reasons.

Interest in canoeing and fishing, traditionally popular locally are likely to grow, again, because of such factors as an aging population less interested in organized sports, increasing interest in activities in the natural environment, and increasing appreciation for the special qualities of the Wood-Pawcatuck watershed.

Interest is generally growing throughout the state for complexes of fields with facilities for a number of sports and activities in one place. Crandall House and Field is an excellent example of such, with room for redevelopment of certain areas for a variety of uses to maximize the potential of the site. Multi-purpose, or general use funds are practical because they continue to be used as the vogue in certain sports or the local demographic changes and they are used in all seasons. It has been found that active public places attract even more activity. Crandall House and Field offer such potential as well as the opportunity of mixing of different age groups, the potential of babysitting



while parents play, spectator areas for seniors and others, picnic facilities' with sport fields nearby etc. Such multipurpose complexes are also easier for towns to maintain and protect from vandalism than smaller, scattered, less used sites.

It is the general conclusion of this study that the present amount of dedicated recreational and conservation land in the Hopkinton is adequate for the current population and for the foreseeable future. However, the quality, concentration and maintenance of the existing facilities are very much in need of improvement. Thus the goals, recommended actions and implementation outlined in Section 5.0 suggest a limited acquisition program and many actions aimed at reorganizing town efforts and developing or redeveloping existing facilities.

The following needs have been identified as local priorities for recreation and conservation in Hopkinton:

1. Development of several more ballfields suitable for organized league play.
2. Concentration of town recreation facilities and funds to maximize the efforts of a small staff and limited budget.
3. Programs to maintain the quality of rivers and streams and to promote public access.
4. Programs to further protect groundwater quality and programs to promote public access.
5. Revision and enforcement of local development regulations to maximize the public benefits from the requirements for recreation and open space land.
6. Better coordination with state authorities and the owners of large conservation tracts to increase the use of their facilities and preserves by Hopkinton residents.
7. Integration of the Recreation and Conservation Plan implementation schedule into a Capital Improvement Program for the town.
8. Adoption of new sidewalk and landscaping standards for designated public and private areas.
9. Increased coordination with neighboring towns to share recreational facilities so as to expand local opportunities and avoid duplication and under-utilization.
10. Increased awareness

## 5.0 IMPLEMENTATION / ACTION PROGRAM

### 5.1 Recreation Projects

**GOAL:** Focus town recreation efforts on priority projects in order to maximize local resources and to increase/improve recreational facilities and access for all of Hopkinton's residents.

**Policy:**

- Redevelopment of Crandall Field to incorporate several more areas of active and passive use: a soccer field, a baseball/softball field, a basketball court, a tot lot and a picnic area.

**Recommendations:** Conduct appropriate studies of wetlands and drainage conditions on site.

Prepare conceptual and schematic plans for proposed redevelopment and cost estimates of these.

Apply for federal or state recreation grants as available to match approved local bond money.

Establish a program for regular maintenance.

**Responsibility:** Recreation Director / Recreation Commission / Town Planner

**Policy:**

- Redevelopment of Langworthy Field to make it usable for regulation play and to protect it from vandalism problems.

**Recommendations:** Install necessary equipment.

Upgrade field surface.

Install barriers from street and parking lot to prevent vehicle driving onto the field

Plant landscaping to screen field from adjacent private property.

Establish a program for regular maintenance.

**Responsibility:** Recreation Director / Recreation Commission

**Policy:**

- Identification and town acquisition of one additional site for future development of two or three ball fields.

**Recommendations:** Investigate the possible use of land presently owned by town

Acquire appropriate site

**Responsibility:** Recreation Director / Town Planner

**Policy:**

- Development of the town-owned land on the Wood River and Bridge Street for better access to the river for fishermen and canoeists and as a possible picnic site.

**Recommendations:** Investigate legal status and history of the town's acquisition.

Investigate possible RIDEM restrictions on improvements to the site.

Prepare conceptual plans for submission to review agencies.

Solicit support of the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association for projects

Solicit help in physical improvements from the area's youth groups  
(Girls Scouts and Future Farmers of America have offered such help)

Establish a program for regular maintenance.

**Responsibility:** Tax Assessor / Recreation Director / Recreation Commission / Conservation Commission / Town Planner

**Policy:**

- Investigation of the town selling some of the unusable or underutilized land dedicated to town recreation, including subdivision lots. Proceeds from all sales should be earmarked for local recreation acquisition and development.

**Recommendations:** Inspect the sites in question and prepare a report of findings as to utilization and usefulness for public recreation.

Research the acquisition history of each property, particularly with regard to restrictions placed on use and space at time of acquisition/dedication.

Consult on legal ramifications of divestiture with town attorney.

Earmark all sale proceeds for use in public recreation activities (specify whether that is acquisition, development, maintenance or the general program).

**Responsibility:** Tax Assessor / Town Solicitor / Recreation Director / Town Planner / Town Council

**Policy:**

- Adoption of a Capital Improvement Plan and a plan and budget ensuring well-considered development and proper upkeep of town recreation facilities.

**Recommendations:** Prepare a site-specific operations and maintenance plan with tasks and schedule for all town-owned recreational facilities.

Prepare cost estimates for short and long-term maintenance plan items.

Insure that the maintenance plan is integrated into the appropriate town budget plans.

**Responsibility:** Recreation Director / Town Planner

**Policy:**

- Revision of the town's subdivision regulations for the conventional developments where dedication of public recreation land is required.

**Recommendations:** Establish better standards for determining the acceptability of proposed land for dedication.

Encourage payment-in-lieu of on-site dedication except when the proposed site is very well suited to development and maintenance or a use identified in town plans or by the town 's Recreation Commission.

Establish clear procedures for the use of in-lieu of funds (what uses can the money be put to?)

**Responsibility:** Planning Board / Town Planner / Recreation Commission

**Policy:**

- Coordinate recreation planning with surrounding communities to increase opportunities for local residents and to avoid duplication of facilities and/or under-utilization.

**Recommendations:** Work to continue and expand on the regional Chariho programs approach for league play.

Coordinate efforts for large or unusual facilities which would serve several communities (i.e. skating rink, swimming 0001, bike path).

**Responsibility:** Recreation Director / Recreation Commission / Town Planner

**Policy:**

- Establish a regional summer learn to swim program at Arcadia Pond, or Ashville Pond, if an agreement with DEM is possible.

**Recommendation:** Coordinate with adjacent towns and DEM

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Recreation Director

**Policy:**

- Establish an overall plan for a network of biking and hiking trails throughout Hopkinton and connected with adjacent communities.

**Recommendations:** Identify existing publicly -used trails or routes such as the Narragansett Trail and trails in Arcadia, Yawgoog, the Audubon and Nature Conserving lands etc., also preferred biking routes of local clubs.

Identify good potential routes and connections, such as the old railroad right-of-way along the Wood River on the Black farm, paths along the river and stream corridors, etc.

Research the legal aspects of established trails across private properties and on conservative easements or buffer areas. Add as checklist item for all subdivisions, Site Plan Reviews and Planned Unit Developments, to insure that these be protected.

Under R.I. General Law Title 32, chapter 6, encourage the use existing public access easements by Public Education Program to inform landowners that liability has been removed by this State Law

Organize local volunteer groups to help maintain trails, riverbank areas and greenways.

Coordinate with RIDEM in efforts to acquire key tracts which will connect existing protected parcels for the combined purposes of hiking, biking, greenways and wildlife corridor.

**Responsibility:** Town Solicitor / Town Planner / Recreation Commission / Recreation Director

**Policy:**

- Evaluate the possible planned development of the Ashville Pond site, currently owned by the State of Rhode Island.

**Recommendations:** Review past lease agreements between State and Town.

Examine the potential purchase of the property from the State, including terms and costs.

Determine development and maintenance costs for a public beach area

**Responsibility:** Recreation Director / Recreation Commission / Town Planner / Town Council

**Policy:**

- Charge Recreation Commission with ensuring sufficient access to recreational facilities and programs for Hopkinton's special needs populations.

**Recommendations:** Assess access to recreational facilities and programs as it pertains to the special needs population

Coordinate efforts with Chariho school system

Acquire additional or improved existing recreational facilities and program for the special needs population based on the above assessment

**Responsibility:** Recreation Director / Recreation Commission / Chariho School System

## **5.2 Conservation Projects**

**GOAL: Promote conservation of Hopkinton's natural resources, particularly protection of the ground and surface waters**

**Policy:**

- Promote 300 foot wide buffer zones along all river and stream banks to be "non-clear" zones restricted by conservation easements. (Note: exceeds current RIDEM wetlands regulation).

**Recommendations:** Revise zoning regulations to require said buffer zones.

Revise subdivision. Planned Unit Development and Site Plan Review regulations and standards to incorporate said buffer zones.

**Responsibility:** Planning Board / Conservation Commission / Town Planner / Town Solicitor

**Policy:**

- Adoption of a Town-Wide Aquifer Protection Ordinance to restrict potential polluting land uses from areas over groundwater reservoirs. Uses such as solid waste landfills, storage, dumping or application of harmful chemicals (including gasoline stations) highway salt storage, wastewater treatment plants and intensive development.

**Recommendations:** Adopt Town-Wide Aquifer Protection Ordinance.

Revise Zoning Regulations regarding permitted uses

Revise local ordinances as needed

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Planning Board / Town Planner / Town Solicitor

**Policy:**

- Promote proper wastewater management throughout the town.

**Recommendation:** Consider establishment of additional wastewater management districts (established in part of Hope Valley), where wastewater and water quality problems have been identified

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / WWMD Study Committee

**GOAL: Promote Conservation of Hopkinton's major natural features and of its traditional rural character**

**Policy:**

- Concentrate major development and community facilities in the established villages, primarily Ashaway and Hope Valley.

**Recommendations:** Revise zoning and subdivision regulations with new development standards appropriate within the context of existing villages and the rural areas with regard to lot sizes, dimensional requirements, public amenities, relationships to surrounding properties, etc.

**Responsibility:** Planning Board / Town Planner / Town Solicitor

**Policy:**

- Coordinate with the state, private and non-profit conservation organizations and landowners to establish a greenway network connecting the major development and natural areas of the town.

**Recommendations:** This Greenway Plan will be proposed for incorporating into the Comprehensive Plan Recreation/Open Space Element in 1996.

Using the Recreation Systems Map as a base, identify and map all public or privately-owned open space, including regulated wetlands and floodplains.

Identify key properties for acquisition either for unique qualities or as connector parcels.

Require (through established guidelines) open space and vegetated buffer areas in cluster and residential compound subdivisions and in planned unit development to be configured to contribute to a connecting greenway program.

Establish a local sidewalk and street tree policy and program to insure these amenities for new development in the villages and on main roads through development regulations, and to install or replace them along important public rights-of-way by the town, state, or private groups as a local civic improvement project.



Require effective landscaping in all parking areas other than those of single and two family residences. Landscaping should fulfill needs for both shade and buffer areas along property lines and the public rights-of-way.

Consider designation of certain roads as scenic highways and establish appropriate front-yard setbacks (zoning) and cluster subdivisions configurations to protect the natural and built features of the road edge. Also, carefully review with state agencies proposed improvements to these roads, which might disrupt the scenic character.

Establish or revise town's guidelines for open space in cluster subdivisions and planned unit developments. Insure the regulations achieve the maximum desired effects (i.e. buffering, relationship to adjacent properties, adding to overall greenways system, insuring land is maintained as real open space—not used primarily as a drainage or dumping area, configuring open space for most effective use in substantial, usable parcels, etc.)

Foster the continuation of working farms, and preservation of existing, privately owned forests and open space through the existing tax programs and through acquisition of development rights by state and private agencies.

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Planning Board / Town Planner / Town Solicitor  
Town Council

### **5.3 Implementation Program and Schedule Summary**

The implementation of this plan will depend upon the initiation of actions and programs of several types. Leadership must be provided by the Hopkinton Town Council, with close coordination and assistance of the Planning Board, Recreation Commission and Conservation Commission in matters of policy, program planning and new regulations. Town staff most involved in implementation will be the Town Planner, Recreation Director, and staff of the Town Public Works Department. Coordination with appropriate state agencies, conservationists, local civic groups and private landowner and developers is essential, and will be the responsibility of designated town agents.

**Table I-14. Project Implementation**

<b>PROJECT/ITEMS</b>	<b>COST</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
<b>Crandall Field</b>			
Master Plan	20,000	1991-1992	State Grants, Local Funds & In-Kind
Engineering Studies	25,000	1991-1992	"
Drainage Improvements	30,000	1992-1993	"
Soccer Field	25,000	1993-1994	"
Baseball/Softball Field	25,000	1994-1995	"
Tot Lot	5,000	1991-1992	"
Basketball Court	15,000	1992-1993	"
Picnic Grove	8,000	1991-1992	"
Other Improvements	10,000	1992-1993	"
<b>Total</b>	<b>163,000</b>		
<b>Langworthy Field</b>			
Master Plan	5,000	1991-1992	"
Landscaping	15,000	1991-1992	"
Field Improvements	15,000	1992-1993	"
Parking Barrier	5,000	1991-1992	"
Equipment	10,000	1992-1993	"
<b>Total</b>	<b>50,000</b>		
<b>Bridge Street</b>			
Master Plan	10,000	1991-1992	"
River Access	5,000	1993-1994	"
Picnic Area	8,000	1992-1993	"
Bridge	5,000	1992-1993	"
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,000</b>		
<b>Briggs Park</b>			
Master Plan	10,000	1992-1993	"
Trails	5,000	1993-1994	"
Picnic Grove	5,000	1994-1995	"
River Access	5,000	1993-1994	"
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,000</b>		
<b>Biking and Hiking Trails</b>			
Master Plan	15,000	1993-1994	"
<b>Greenways Study Plan</b>			
Master Plan	15,000	1993-1994	"

(Cost estimates in 1991 dollars)

**Project:** Land Acquisition

Purchase of desirable parcels of land to accomplish:

1. Linkage between existing recreation, conservation and open space properties (see appendix D)
2. New recreation, conservation and open space properties, which may become available during 1991-1995
3. Potential purchase of Ashville Pond site from the State for use as a town owned public recreation area.

Due to the speculative nature of this "project", no specific costs or fiscal years are presented.

**Table I-15. Project Funding Summary, Capital Development  
Action Program, 1991-1995**

<b>Project</b>	<b>1991-92</b>	<b>1992-93</b>	<b>1993-94</b>	<b>1994-95</b>
Crandall Field	58,000	55,000	25,000	25,000
Langworthy Field	25,000	25,000		
Bridge Street	10,000	13,000	5,000	
Briggs Park		10,000	10,000	5,000
Biking & Hiking Trails			15,000	
Greenways Plan			15,000	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>93,000</b>	<b>103,000</b>	<b>70,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>

## 6.0 INFORMATION SOURCES

### 6.1 Reports Consulted

Community Planning and Area Development, University of Rhode Island prepared by Howard H. Foster, Jr. Rural Centers as Development Modes. 1981

Kramer, Bruce M. and Mertes, James D. "The Pros and Cons of Mandatory Dedication" Urban Land (December 1979) :3-14

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management, Center for Rural Massachusetts. Dealing with Change in the Connecticut River Valley: A Design Manual for Conservation and Development. Lincoln Institute of Land, Environmental Law Foundation, 1989 (3rd Policy Printing.)

McKean, Andrew J. "Possibilities for Rural Planning, A Case Study of Hopkinton, Rhode Island." Master's Thesis, University of Rhode Island, 1975

National Park Service Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association. Wood Pawcatuck Rivers Study. 1984

Project for Public Spaces, Inc. National Park Service. User Analysis: An Approach to Park Planning and Management. Washington, D.C.: American Society of Landscape Architects, 1982

Rhode Island Department of Administration, Division of Planning. Ocean State Outdoors: Rhode Island Outdoor Recreation. Conservation and Open Space Inventory. 1989

Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. Protecting Rhode Island's River Resources: The Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers Management Plan. 1987

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. Preliminary Survey Report: Town of Hopkinton. Providence, RI., 1976

Rhode Island Trail Advisory Committee, Report of the Trail Advisory Committee Statewide Planning Program Report. November 21, 1974.

Town of Hopkinton, RI. Comprehensive Community Plan 1967 (adopted by Town Council)

Town of Hopkinton, RI. Planning Board. Conservation and Development Plan. Land Use Guide to Community Growth 1980

Searle, Cecelia Everett, Michael and Doherty, Joanna. A Rural Land Use Primer for Rhode Island. Providence, RI.; LAND/RISD, 1976

Ure, Georgia J., "A Recreation Plan for the Town of Hopkinton, Rhode Island". Master's Thesis, University of Rhode Island, 1973

Weber, Ken. Walks and Rambles in Rhode Island. Woodstock Vt.: Back Country Publications, 1988

## 6.2 Persons Consulted

Burbine, Janet, Chariho School Department  
Coduri, John, Director, Westerly-Pawcatuck YMCA  
Crout, Donald, Program Director, Narragansett Council of Boy Scouts  
Dodge, Ellen, Executive Director, Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association  
Fisher, Laurie, Hopkinton Recreation Director  
Monahan, Brad, Superintendent, Arcadia Management Area  
Turano, Steve, Hopkinton Tax Assessor

## Appendix A

The following list of community leaders was compiled by the Plan Subcommittee in consultation with their Boards, the town planner and the recreation director. These persons, all active on town commissions, recreation, conservation, or other community activities were sent a two page questionnaire (see Appendix B) on activities sponsored by their organizations and on Hopkinton's overall recreation and conservation needs. These persons were also contacted by mail and invited to participate in each public workshop and public hearing on the plan.

Sandra Johansen, President, Town Council  
Robert Corrigan, Town Council  
Carl Devin, Town Council  
Edward McGiveney, Town Council  
David Henson, Town Council  
Judith Sposato, Chairwoman, Recreation Commission  
Edward Haik, Recreation Commission  
Mark Hammond, Recreation Commission  
Alexandra Rajpal Arulpragasam, Recreation Commission  
Christine Anderson, Recreation Commission  
John Cronin, Chairman, Conservation Commission  
Sara Porter, Conservation Commission  
Ronald Kennedy, Chairman, Zoning Board  
Laurie Fisher, Recreation Director  
James DeLuca, Chariho regional High School  
Bonnie Ursello, Principal, Ashaway School  
Ivan Sadler, Principal, Hope Valley School  
William Lindsay,  
George Mayhew, Troop 21, Boy Scouts  
Linda Gamble, Girl Scouts  
Elaine Headley, Campfire Girls  
John Del Dreo, Future Farmers of America  
Susan Capalbo, Women's Softball  
Cheryl Lever, Hopkinton Historical Society  
Michael Noury, Little League  
Wayne Olado  
Linda Dube  
Sylvia Stanley, Canonchet Cliffs  
Ellen Dodge, Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed, H.O.P.E., Economic Development Commission,  
Seventh Day Baptist Church  
Rev. Paul Schweinber, Trinity Lutheran Church  
Rev. Bobby Barnett, Chariho Southern Baptist Church  
Pamela Gentile, Trinity Lutheran Pre-School

## Appendix B

### Questionnaire and Cover Letter

Hopkinton Planning Board  
One Town House Road  
Hopkinton, Rhode Island 02803

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

The Hopkinton Planning Board, in association with the Conservation Commission and the Recreation Commission, is beginning work on a new Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Plan for the town. This new plan will be prepared according to state guidelines in order to comply with requirements for the Comprehensive Community Plan as well as for a state approved Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Plan. The former is a state - mandated plan that must be completed by the town within the next eighteen months. The latter is a specialized plan, which would make Hopkinton eligible for state and federal grants-in-aid for recreation and open space projects.

Besides complying with state planning requirements, the Planning Board and Commissions see this as a valuable opportunity to focus planning efforts on many of the issues that are essential to Hopkinton's quality of life. From the beginning of this effort we want to include as many local people and organizations as we can as participants in the process. We are hereby informing you and your organization of this project and inviting you to become involved first, by answering the attached questionnaire and secondly, by attending some of the public workshop sessions which will be held throughout the project. We are sending this questionnaire to community leaders who will also be put on a mailing list to inform them of upcoming workshops.

We welcome your comments, your support and your enthusiasm for the project and hope to see or hear from you in the near future. A special subcommittee of the three town boards has been established. Members include Thomas Holberton of the Planning Board, Judith Sposato, Recreation Commission, and Sara Porter, Conservation Commission. Town Planner Nancy Hess, and Blanche Higgins and Michael Moan, planners from the state's Office of Local Planning Assistance will also be working on preparation of the plan. Please contact any of us for more information. Kindly return the questionnaire to the Town Planner's office by February 15th.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph Lombardo  
Chairman, Hopkinton Planning Board  
TOWN OF HOPKINTON

## RECREATION, CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE QUESTIONNAIRE

January, 1990

Name

Organization

Position

1. Description of your organization or position and the extent to which recreation and conservation are part of your program.
2. Description of the membership of your organization (ages, sex, special characteristics, etc.) and estimates of the numbers of people who participate in your recreation and conservation programs (if appropriate).
3. Recreation or conservation activities (indoor and outdoor) sponsored by your organization, including frequency of activities and number of participants.
4. Recreation or conservation facilities owned, operated or used by your organization.
5. What town or state-sponsored projects would be of most benefit to your organization's programs?

6. In your opinion, what are the greatest needs of the Town of Hopkinton, in general with regard to recreation and conservation?

7. What projects do you believe would be of the most benefit to the Town of Hopkinton's recreation and conservation programs?

8. Does your organization have any resources (materials or expertise) which you might share with the subcommittee for this project?

9. Would you like to offer any other comments to the subcommittee?

PLEASE EXPAND UPON THE FORMAT OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IN ANY WAY YOU FIND CONVENIENT.



## Appendix C

### Text of Local Referendum Approving Open Space and Recreational Area Bonds

Local Referenda

Open Space and Recreational Area Bonds

Not more than \$500,000

Chapter 616 - Public Laws of 1987

" Shall the Town of Hopkinton issue General Obligation Bonds and Notes in an amount not to exceed \$500,000 for the purpose of acquiring, preserving, restoring or improving recreational areas (provided, however, that said general obligation bonds and notes shall only be issued if the state is authorized to issue Bonds and notes pursuant to an act authorizing the State of Rhode Island to issue general obligation bonds and' notes in an amount not to exceed \$65,200.00 for the purpose of acquiring and preserving open spaces and recreational areas.

Approve 270

Reject 092

November 1987

## **Appendix D**

### **Parcels Targeted for Purchase by the Town of Hopkinton**

Open Space Acquisition List for the Preservation of Unique Natural Areas and Open Space of Special Value Requiring Protection in Hopkinton, Rhode Island.

<b>Plat</b>	<b>Lot(s)</b>	<b>Location</b>
14	25,26,26	Bordering Blue Pond
14	70	Bordering Blue Pond
16	41	Bordering Blue Pond
19	3A	Grassy Plain
15	9, 11	West of Wood River/South of 95 (Wheeler Farm)
20	9	Woody Hill Rd. (adjacent to DEM land)
20	18	Dye Hill Rd. (adjacent to DEM land)
14	20	Ashville Pond

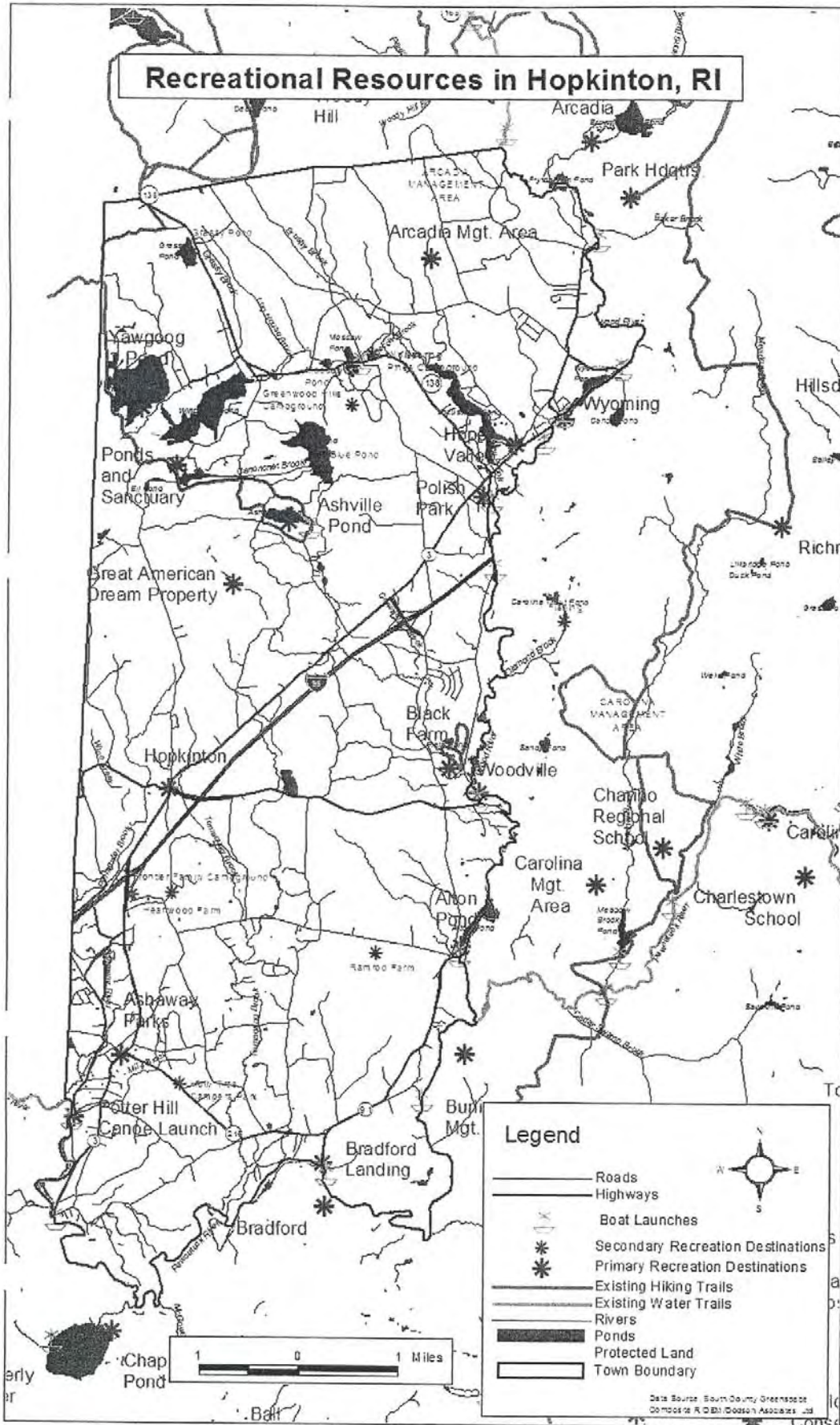
**Appendix E**

State of Rhode Island Outdoor Recreation, Conservation, and Open Space Inventory Forms and  
Corresponding Comments

## **Appendix F**

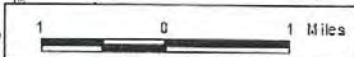
Map of Recreational Resources in Hopkinton, RI

# Recreational Resources in Hopkinton, RI



## Legend

- Roads
- Highways
- Boat Launches
- Secondary Recreation Destinations
- Primary Recreation Destinations
- Existing Hiking Trails
- Existing Water Trails
- Rivers
- Ponds
- Protected Land
- Town Boundary



Map Source: South County GreenSpace  
 Compiled by R. D. B. Design Associates, LLC



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## II - NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

### **PART I - NATURAL RESOURCES**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Town of Hopkinton can be characterized as a rural community, with a rich medley of natural and cultural resources, which constitutes an attractive place to live. In its early history, it was the agricultural activities and later the development of the mill villages along the rivers that ultimately shaped the pattern of development seen today.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulation Act requires that the Natural and Cultural Resources Element of the Comprehensive Plan:

"Shall provide an inventory of the significant natural resources areas such as water, soils, prime agricultural lands, natural vegetation Systems, wildlife, wetlands, aquifers, coastal features, flood plains, and other natural resources and the policies for their protection and of management of such areas. The Element shall include policies for the protection of historic and cultural resources of the municipality and the state. The policies and the implementation techniques must be identified for inclusion in the Implementation program element."

The Comprehensive Plan Act requires that this element be consistent with the State Guide Plan and related elements (Numbers: 152- Outdoors, 121- Land Use 2010, 161 - Forest Resources, 710 to 715 - Water Resources, and 721 - Water Supply Policies). Also, consistency with the following is required:

Programs and Regulations of the RIDEM

Protection Goals of the R.I. Heritage Program

Goals & Policies of the R.I. Historic Preservation Commission

Goals 1,4,5, &6 of the ACT

Finally this Element must be consistent with the other elements of the Hopkinton Comprehensive Plan and those of contiguous communities.

#### **B. SIGNIFICANCE OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

The Town of Hopkinton has significant open space and natural resources within its borders. There are several major areas, to be described below.

These major areas are: the Wood-Pawcatuck River System; the ponds complex in the northerly sector of town; the Tomaquag Valley region; State owned Arcadia Management Area; and, Camp Yawgoog owned by the Boy Scouts of America. These areas comprise the major significant open space and natural resources that the Town of Hopkinton must work to protect. The fact that these areas are large also makes them noticeable, prominent, accessible and thus, heavily used by the public. They are significant for the range of values which they contain. For example, the Wood-Pawcatuck River System provides recreational value for fishing, swimming and canoeing, wetland value as habitat for wildlife and as a flood regulator, water supply value as a water resource, and scenic value as an open space and wild un-touched area.

The ponds complex offers a variety of values to both human and wildlife populations. The land ownership of the property surrounding the ponds has, and will continue to serve as a means of permanent protection. It also serves as permanent open space and natural resources, which will be enjoyed as open space and recreational areas for Hopkinton as well as all State residents.

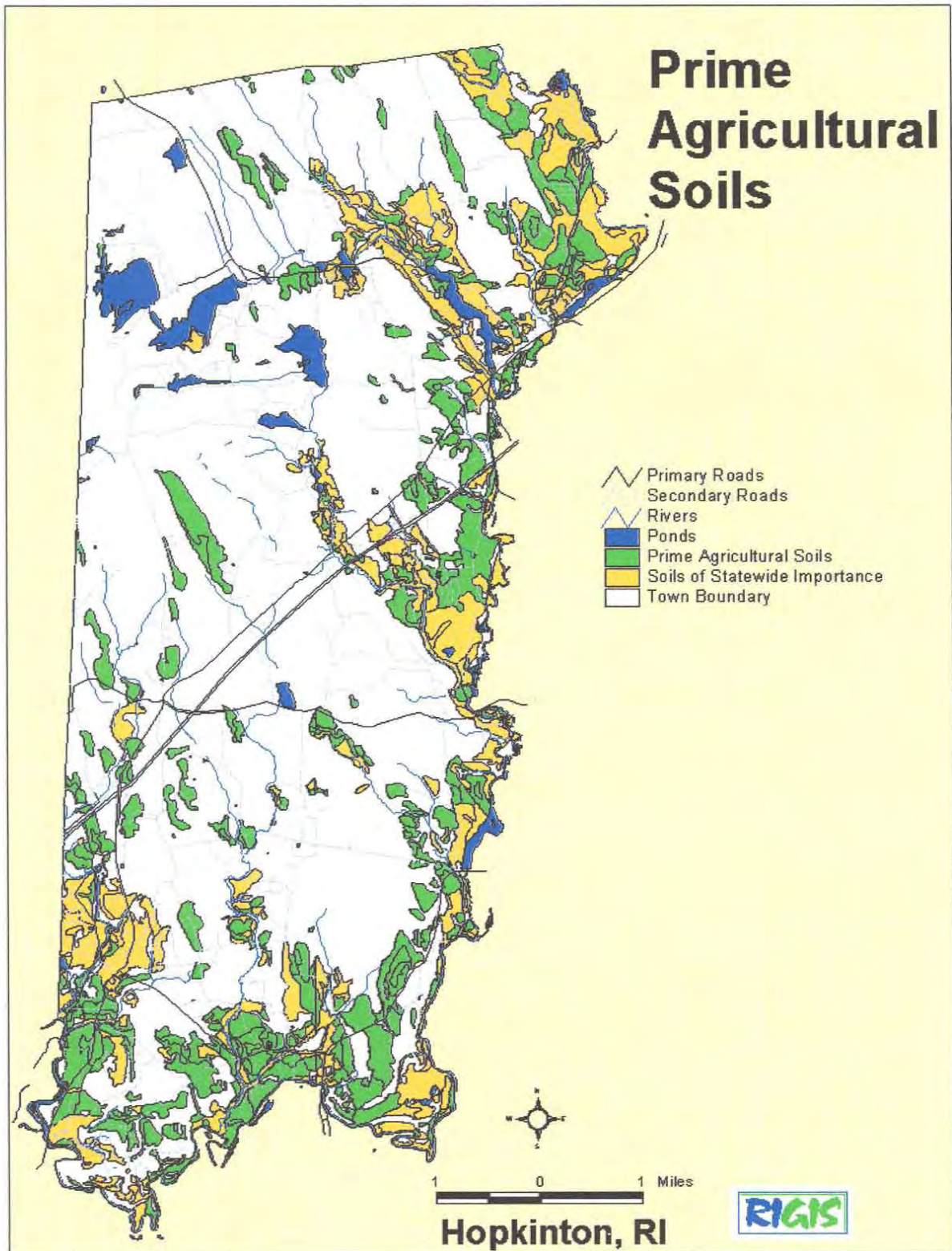
Similarly, Arcadia Management Area will continue as a large open space/natural resource area that protects these values while providing recreational usage to large groups of the population. Also, Camp Yawgoog is controlled by the Boy Scouts of America, who plan and maintain specific areas for human usage, while retailing and protecting those areas for natural resources and conservation purposes.

There are numerous smaller public and private land holdings, which provide not only open space and natural resource protection, but provide access to these areas in town, as well. For example, state owned boat launches allow public access to the Wood-Pawcatuck River System. Also, areas like the Crandall House and Field blend open space, conservation and recreation in the population center of Ashaway. Dow Memorial Field provides Hope Valley residents with similar uses, as does Langworthy Park adjacent to the Hope Valley Elementary School.

In addition, there are several large privately owned farms in Hopkinton, which presently provide open space and some protection of natural resources. However, there exists the strong possibility that development pressures may ultimately affect these properties if no community safeguards or open space programs are in place.

Equally as important are the prime agricultural soils that comprise some part of these farms. This too is a dwindling resource, which Hopkinton has only in small quantities, and therefore must attempt to protect these sites. Obviously, the best way to accomplish that is to retain these prime agricultural soils as open space areas. Figure II-I, Prime Agricultural Soils in Hopkinton, shows the location of these important natural resources.

Use of sound soil erosion, sedimentation controls and enforcement techniques will protect not only these soils in Hopkinton, but also the streams and rivers that have caused deposits of large quantities of runoff laden with sediments.



**Figure II-1. Prime Agricultural Soils in Hopkinton (Source: RIGIS)**

In summary, the key components that highlight the significance of open space and natural resources and will be reflected in the goals and implementation section of the element are:

- Water Supply and Quality
- Drainage Systems
- Flood Plain Protection
- Habitat for Rare Plant and Animal Species
- Prime Agricultural Soils
- Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Controls
- Use and Protection of the Ponds Complex
- Protection of Forest Land
- Wood-Pawcatuck River System
- Farmland Use and Protection
- Private Ownership of Open Space/Natural Resources ./
- Publicly Owned Open Space/Natural Resources

## **C. INVENTORY OF SIGNIFICANT NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **1. Topography**

The Town of Hopkinton encompasses 44 square miles, most of which is woodland. The woodlands are predominately deciduous, with conifers appearing along the rivers on sandy soils and in the lakes district to the northwest on shallow, stony soils. Open land that has been cleared for agriculture and village settlements, appears on the valleys and streams close to the rivers. The town is bordered on two sides by major rivers. The Wood River forms the eastern border, as it flows down into the Pawcatuck River below the village of Alton. The Pawcatuck River continues flowing to the south forming the Westerly-Charlestown town line and then turns in a westerly direction, forming the southern boundary of Hopkinton. The river then flows north to the village of Ashaway and moves westerly by Potter Hill on route to its ultimate destination, the Long Island Sound.

These rivers comprise the major drainage watershed for the town. They are an integral part of several villages' identities, both as a dominant environmental factor and a historical reminder of each mill village's dependence upon waterpower for survival. The topography of Hopkinton can be traced by examining the road network and pattern of land development. Village and farming uses are located in stream valleys or on plateaus between hills and valleys. Roads aligned on a north-south axis are uphill climbs from the south, dipping only at intersections with brooks. Roads on the east-west axis cut across the ridges and offer dramatic evidence of the varied topography of the town. Scenic views are created by the contrast of hills, valleys, cleared lands, and woodlands. Such views are major landmarks in Hopkinton's rural landscape and define the development pattern of the town. Care will have to be taken in the future to open up scenic views and complement the shape and character of the land rather than destroying it. Once the hills and valleys lose their definition, Hopkinton loses its rural character.

## **2. Surficial Geology**

The hills and valleys of Hopkinton reflect bedrock topography that was created hundreds of millions of years ago by the uplifting of metamorphic rock and granite rock into high mountains. It also reflects the subsequent erosion by stream drainage to a gentle topography of hills and valleys with few flat plains. The highest point in Hopkinton reaches 431 feet above its river valley. The geology of the land derives from original soils of weathered bedrock and chunks of bedrock picked up and deposited by the advance and retreat of the ice sheet that covered New England during the Pleistocene period 10-12,000 years ago.

The deposits left on bedrock hills by melting ice are known as glacial till. Glacial till is an unconsolidated mixture of boulders and clay, and may reach a depth of 3 feet or more. Well drilling west of Skunk Hill penetrated 80 feet of till before reaching bedrock. In some areas, bedrock is exposed as ledge. The depth of material over the bedrock and the structure of the soils are important determinants in how water drains off the soils.

Drainage characteristics of soils, in turn, determine limitations for development that utilize on-site sewage disposal systems. In contrast to the direct deposits of material on hills by moving ice, the soils deposited in the valleys are the result of the melting or retreating of the ice sheet. As the ice thinned, hills projected through, isolating the ice in the valleys. Melting water formed streams, which sorted out the layers in the stream valleys. Glacial streams and lake deposits are known as outwash soils.

The swamp deposits of muck or peat are of recent age, a result of sedimentation of organic materials from vegetation.

The upland-valley delineation of the surficial geology of Hopkinton is reflected in its resource and land use patterns. The valleys contain thick layers of sand and gravel saturated with water stored from the rainfall and water running off the uplands, creating groundwater reservoirs. The hills are formed of sand and gravel deposits. Sand and gravel subsoils overlain with thick layers of rich topsoil on flat valley floors created well-drained farmland. New residential development is being located over well-drained soils like the earlier village settlements.

Situated on the Wood River are the villages of Wyoming, Hope Valley, Woodville, and Alton. Situated on the Pawcatuck River are the villages of Bradford, Burdickville, and Ashaway. Of the five inland settlements, Canonchet and Centerville are situated on valley outwash soils and Rockville and Moscow are located along stream channels of upland plateaus. Only one village, Hopkinton City, was settled for its location as a major crossroad.

Upland areas are least populated and contain the most dramatic natural features of the Hopkinton landscape. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Survey of Rhode Island of 1976 identifies a swath of rough, stony land, which crosses the town diagonally from the northwest corner at Voluntown to the southeast, effectively dividing the developable area of town into a Hope Valley section and an Ashaway section. This rough, stony land to the north encompasses three large natural lakes: Yawgoog, Winchek, and Blue Ponds, and three small ponds which have been inventoried by the Nature Conservancy as unique natural areas.

Grassy Pond has a unique waterfowl habitat with El Pond / Long Pond area being a plant community unusual to the region. Both are surrounded by rock outcrops of geological significance and by trail systems. The swath of rough stony soil crosses the middle of town by Brightman Hill on Route 3 and continues along the eastern slope of Tomaquag Valley. Tomaquag is the only self-contained stream valley in Hopkinton.

### **3. Soils**

Each type of soil has different properties, which affect its suitability for different types of development. Physical properties of soils and their suitability for development can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Agriculture 1977 Rhode Island Soil Survey. This soil survey examines soil properties in terms of their abilities to sustain septic systems, roads, parking lots, lawns, and different building loads without damaging their natural functions. Since soils must accommodate the land use in Hopkinton, it is important to understand the limits of soils for urban uses.

Three major properties of soil determine its suitability for development: depth to bedrock, depth to seasonal high water table, and soil texture. Depth to bedrock affects locational decisions for road construction since excavation or fill adds to construction costs. It also affects sewage disposal and the quality of groundwater since shallow soil cover cannot absorb and clean water as efficiently as deep soils. Finally, it affects the type and number of structures that can be built on a site. Buildings must be sized according to the loads they place on the bedrock and the structural strength of the bedrock itself. The Soil Conservation Service classifies any land which has less than twenty inches of soil over bedrock to have severe limitations for all construction.

Depth to the seasonal high water table determines the flooding hazards of various types of development and the efficiency of septic disposal systems. Soils are classified according to the depth to seasonal high water table. A three-foot depth ranks as excessively drained or well-drained depending upon other soils properties like slope. A fifteen to twenty inch depth ranks as moderately well drained. A zero to six-inch depth ranks as poorly drained, and ponding on the soils surface for significant periods of time ranks as very poorly drained. The poorly and very poorly drained soils have severe limitations for development. (See Figure II-2. Pp. II-8)

The Town of Hopkinton has the following soils constraints by acre as compiled by RIGIS (Rhode Island Geographical Information System):

**Table II-I. Soil Constraints by Acreage for Hopkinton. R.I.**

<b>Soil Analysis Category</b>	<b>Acres*</b>
Moderate Constraints to Development	12,603
Seasonal High Water Table (19-42" depth)	4,733
Bedrock & Slope Constraints (> 15%)	4,190
Hydric Soils- Severe Constraints (0-18" depth)	5,822
All Other Severe Constraints (rock, sand, etc.)	27
Prime Agricultural Soils	4,142

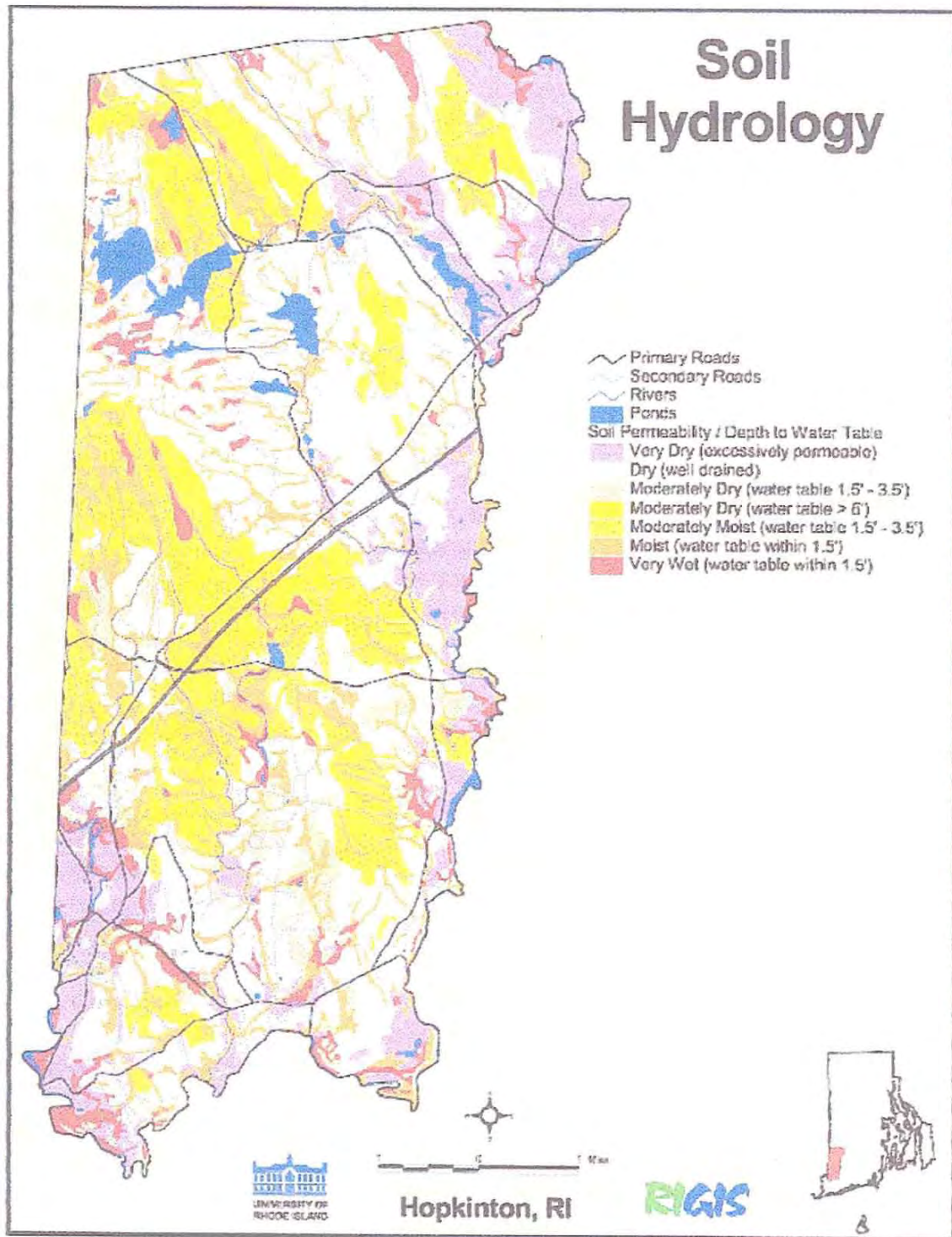
\* Not cumulative acreage

Soil texture is judged by the relative abundance of soil grains ranging in size from less than .002 mm. in clay to .002 to .05 mm. in silt, up to 2.0 mm. in sand. Soil texture affects the ability of water to move through the soil, the available water in soils for plant use, or the water capacity, and the stability of soils for support of foundations, culverts, asphalt, and landscaping. Permeability of soils is determined by the size, shape and continuity of soil pores and is measured in inches of water drained per hour from a test boring in the ground. A slow rate of percolation, or .01 to .20 inches of water drained per hour places severe limitation on development depending on individual sewage disposal systems.

The water holding capacity of a soil is determined by soil texture, the amount of organic matter (muck or peat), and the amount and distribution of soil pore sizes. This in turn determines the soil limitations for building site landscaping and development of recreation areas. The water capacity of soils is measured by inches of water per inch of soil; a low rate of .08 - .12 or a very low rate of .04 to .08 inches of water per inch of soil will place severe limitations on sites for buildings and landscaping.

Further properties of soil that may limit its suitability for urban use are stoniness, depth to hardpan, slope of the land, and flooding hazard. The presence of rocks greater than ten inches in diameter on the soil surface presents economic limitations to development not only for clearing the site, but also for probable excavation in bedrock. Such stony areas will generally have severe limitations for septic systems and for drainage of water runoff from the paved areas of the site.

Depth to hardpan affects the permeability of the soil and the height of the water table, which in turn influences the success of landscaping, septic systems, and road and foundation construction. Hardpan is a compact layer of soil, which is almost impermeable by water. Hardpan restricts the downward movement of water and can force the water to move laterally.



**Figure II-2. Soil Hydrology in Hopkinton, RI.**  
(Source: R.I. Critical Resources Atlas: [www.edc.uri.edu/riatlas](http://www.edc.uri.edu/riatlas))



This lateral movement can cause unexpected cuts in the soil and temporary or permanently perched water tables. Hardpan lying twenty to thirty-six inches below the surface of the ground may produce severe limitations to urban development.

The slope of the land affects construction or excavation both in underground drainage and surface drainage. Destruction of ground cover and other vegetation on slopes greater than ten percent frees topsoils, which are picked up by water runoff. This could cause erosion of hillsides as well as sedimentation of streams. When the ground cover on a steep slope is removed, the land becomes highly susceptible to soil erosion. Terracing or leveling such slopes for development purposes increases the potential for flood damage and destroys the natural topography. Some soil erosion occurs naturally, but excessive erosion is a source of sedimentation in waterways. Topsoil lost to erosion can never be replaced. Both construction and agriculture can contribute to soil erosion if proper management practices are not followed. Soil loss from agriculture can be prevented through good farming practices such as contour farming, cover crops, and crop rotation.

The most serious source of erosion in Hopkinton is construction activity. The Soil Conservation Service has identified the soil loss from construction activity is three times greater than that from untreated cultivated land. The variety of soil conditions and their possible combinations which severely limit the urban use of land would seem to leave little land suitable for development if those conditions were independent of each other.

All soil properties are related however, so that land with severe limitations of permeability is likely to suffer limitations of a seasonally high water table and of flooding hazards. Similarly, extremely stony land is likely to have little soil cover over bedrock, and be excessively well-drained and therefore subject to erosion. An analysis of the town's soils fills in the outline set by the town's surficial geology. Soils information is invaluable in directing future growth of the town. For this plan, the soils of Hopkinton have been grouped by the soil limitations identified for the construction of individual sewage disposal systems, as no central sewage facilities exist in Hopkinton.

The soil groupings are as follows:

**1. Well-Drained Upland:**

Soils which are generally well drained, moderate to no limitations.

**2. Excessively + Well Drained Outwash:**

Soils overlying groundwater aquifers and recharge areas which are so porous that their use for septic Systems has a potential for pollution of the groundwater, depending upon the depth to the water table and proximity to surface water.

**3. Steep Slopes, Rough and Stony:**

Soils which pose special problems in building construction and may be subject to severe erosion.

**4. Imperfectly Drained:**

Soils which have periodic or constant high water table, very slow permeability, severe hardpan, severe stoniness, or shallow depths to bedrock, severe limitations.

**5. Wet:**

Soils which have very high water table, and constitute peat and muck, or flood hazard area, very severe limitations.

The Soil Survey refines the geologic outline of well-drained soils in the valleys and poorly drained uplands. Wet, organic soils of muck and peat are identified along streams. Excessively well-drained soils are located over groundwater reserves. The map of soils together with the patterns of Hopkinton's topography, watersheds and drainage will dictate the future pattern of Hopkinton's land use. The existence of soil limitations does not necessarily mean that a particular parcel of land cannot be developed, but some soils clearly are more suited to one type of use than another. Where severe limitations exist, development costs will be higher. In cases of development on unsuitable soils, the development may lead to permanent loss of an aesthetic or natural resource, and increased flood hazards. Good agricultural land may be lost to roads, commercial uses, and housing developments. The use of soils information in the comprehensive planning process can help guide development to suitable areas and preserve natural resources.

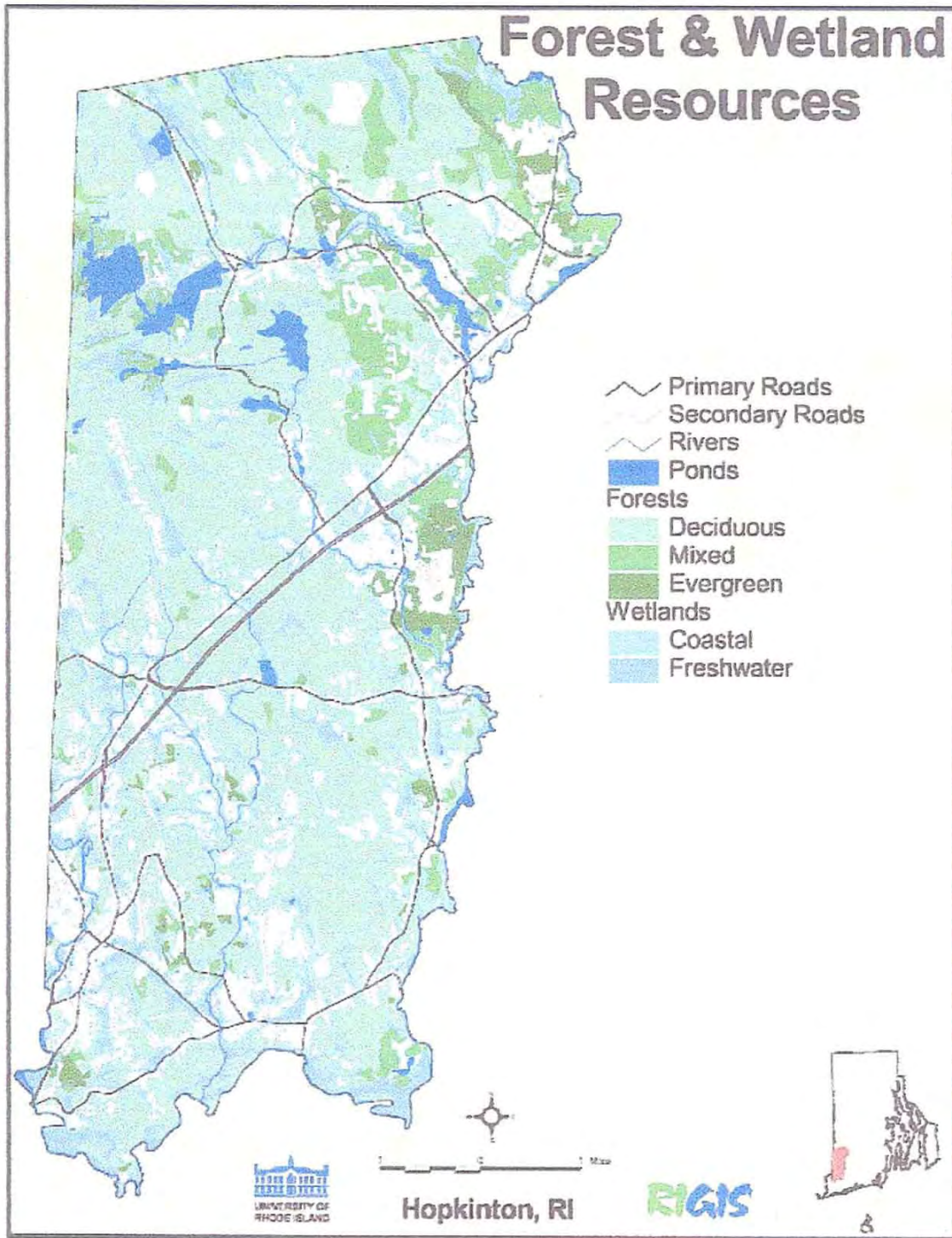
**4. Wetlands**

The natural drainage system is made up of streams, wetlands, floodplains, and ponds. There is a purpose to the meandering course of streams, the springtime wetness of lands adjacent to them, and the perennially wet bogs, wetlands, marshes, and swamps. This is the natural system of flood control and streamflow monitoring. Storms and spring thaws produce more water runoff than the stream channels can carry without flooding adjacent lands. Wetlands and floodplains act as temporary holding ponds. They absorb many times their area in water. Water that runs off of steep slopes and impermeable soils is held by wetlands and released at a very slow rate.

The holding capacity of the wetlands and natural depressions at times may replenish the groundwater supply. This drainage system supplies, purifies, and regulates water efficiently and at no cost. It will continue to function only as long as its processes of water catching, holding, absorbing, and releasing, are not disrupted by man. In the past, wetlands were considered wastelands. It was not until substantial disruption of the holding capacity of these areas by fill created unexpected flooding downstream was their value realized. (see Figure II-3. Pp.II-11)

The Town of Hopkinton must seek to prevent disruptions of the natural drainage system and protect it as a community resource. It has become apparent that wetlands and streams comprise elaborate drainage and pollution control systems, which control, at no cost to the community, the volume, quality and rate of water flow downstream.

The Town of Hopkinton is part of the Pawcatuck River Basin. All rainfall and melting snow that is not lost to evaporation, will find its way into the Pawcatuck River. Land along the Connecticut border is drained by the Green Falls River, which flows through Connecticut into the Ashaway River. The Ashaway River joins the Pawcatuck River at Potter Hill.



**Figure II-3. Forest & Wetland Resources in Hopkinton, RI.**  
(Source: R.I. Critical Resources Atlas: [www.edc.uri.edu/riatlas](http://www.edc.uri.edu/riatlas))

The eastern and southern sections of the Town drain directly into the Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers. Inland sections are drained by stream systems that ultimately drain into the two rivers mentioned above. The drainage pattern of the river valley sub-basins has a recognizable profile:

**Hill or ridgeline, broad plateaus gently sloping to the river and abrupt changes in topography appearing at only the stream channel.**

Minor brooks and associated wetlands are found in upland sections draining into the rivers adjacent to Skunk Hill Road and Woodville-Alton Road above the junction of the Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers, the Ashaway Road, Chase Hill Road and the Mile Brook sub-basin, draining the southern half of the Ashaway village.

The Ashaway River basin drains western sections of Hopkinton from Yawgoog Pond to Ashaway Village. Two major wetlands occur in this watershed: an upland wetland along Parmenter Brook in Hopkinton City and a valley wetland by Route 95 and Wellstown Road.

The interior section of Hopkinton is divided into three major watersheds: Locustville Pond, Canonchet Brook, and Tomaquag Brook. All three watersheds are made up of several narrow upland valleys contained by steep rolling hillsides, which drain together in the outwash soils of the valleys. Wetlands are conspicuous in the Tomaquag Brook watershed in comparison to the other drainage basins. The Tomaquag Brook meanders downstream, whereas Bushy Brook and Log House Brook flow straight downhill. There is a large wetland at their confluence above Locustville Pond. The slower pace of Tomaquag Brook is due to its wider, flatter, valley floor, which can absorb more water running off the surrounding ridges than the northern stream valleys.

### **Wetland Protection**

The Freshwater Wetlands Act (FWA) was passed in Rhode Island in 1971 to protect wetlands from destructive filling and other disturbances. The FWA determined that wetlands should be saved because of their value for flood protection, wildlife habitat, recreation, and water quality. Freshwater wetlands as determined by the act include but are not limited to:

Marshes, swamps, bogs, ponds, rivers, streams, and their associated banks, floodplains, areas subject to flooding or storm flowage, emergent and submergent plant communities in any body of fresh water, and that area of land within fifty feet of the edge of any bog, marsh, swamp, or pond.

The following are descriptions of freshwater wetlands as defined by the FWA:

**Bogs** are places of standing or slowly running water at or near the surface of the ground during normal growing seasons. A bog has fifty percent or more of its water surface covered with sphagnum moss and / or other plant species noted in the FWA. There are no size limitations on bogs covered by the FWA. Bogs are sensitive and the FWA

requires a minimum fifty-foot buffer within which there is no disturbance of existing land or vegetation.

**Ponds** are places of greater than 1/4 acre that are covered with open standing water or slowly running water at least six months a year. Ponds require a minimum of a fifty-foot buffer by the FWA within which there can be no disturbance of existing land or vegetation, without the approval of the R.I. Department of Environmental Management - Freshwater Wetlands Section.

**Marshes** are places of greater than one acre where a vegetational community exists in standing or running water during the growing season and / or which may include one or more of the groups of plants listed in the FWA. Marshes require by the FWA a minimum of a fifty-foot buffer within which there can be no disturbance, without the approval of the R.I. Department of Environmental Management - Freshwater Wetlands Section.

**Swamps** are places greater than three acres where groundwater is near or at the surface of the ground for a significant part of the growing season or where runoff shall collect frequently or which may include the plant species listed in the FWA. The FWA requires a minimum of a fifty-foot buffer.

A **river or stream** is a body of water designated as a perennial stream by the U.S. Department of Interior Geological Survey (USGS). If a river or stream flows throughout the year, even if it is not so designated by the USGS, it falls under the provisions of the FWA.

A **riverbank** is that land within two hundred feet of the edge of any flowing body of water having a width often feet or more and that area of land within one hundred feet of the edge of any flowing body of water having a width of less than ten feet during normal flow. Buffer areas required by the FWA for rivers ten feet or less wide are a minimum of one hundred feet on each side of the river. For rivers greater than ten feet wide, the buffer zone is a minimum of two hundred feet from each bank.

A **floodplain** is land area adjacent to a river or stream or other body of flowing water, which is on the average covered with floodwaters resulting from a one hundred year frequency storm. Filling in the flood plain is not permitted by the FWA unless an equal amount of material is removed from the same floodplain area.

**Areas subject to storm flowage** are those channel areas, intermittent streams, and water courses other than those areas classified as a river by the FWA which carry storm, surface, groundwater discharge or drainage waters, out of, into, and/or connect freshwater wetlands. Such areas can be identified by evidence of scouring or changes in vegetation types and densities.

**Areas subject to flooding** includes depressions flooded by areas subject to storm flowage that collect, hold or meter out storm and floodwater.

Most wetlands in Hopkinton are wooded or shrub swamps. Two upland, isolated wetlands in the northwest section have been listed as Unique Natural Areas by the Nature Conservancy. One of these areas is the EI Pond wetland system. The EI Pond wetlands contain a quaking bog, a white cedar swamp, rhododendron and laurel, open water, and emergent vegetation.

Another unique natural area is the wetland system of Grassy Pond. Grassy Pond is a large, shallow pond (75 acres), which has a great deal of grass and sedges growing out of it. There are patches of exposed land and some open water. The site is a good habitat for waterfowl and other bird species.

Very flat land surrounds the whole area and it is heavily forested. The pond is separated from a state highway by only 100 to 150 feet, but still remains quite isolated and remote. This area is of significant wildlife value and is totally undeveloped.

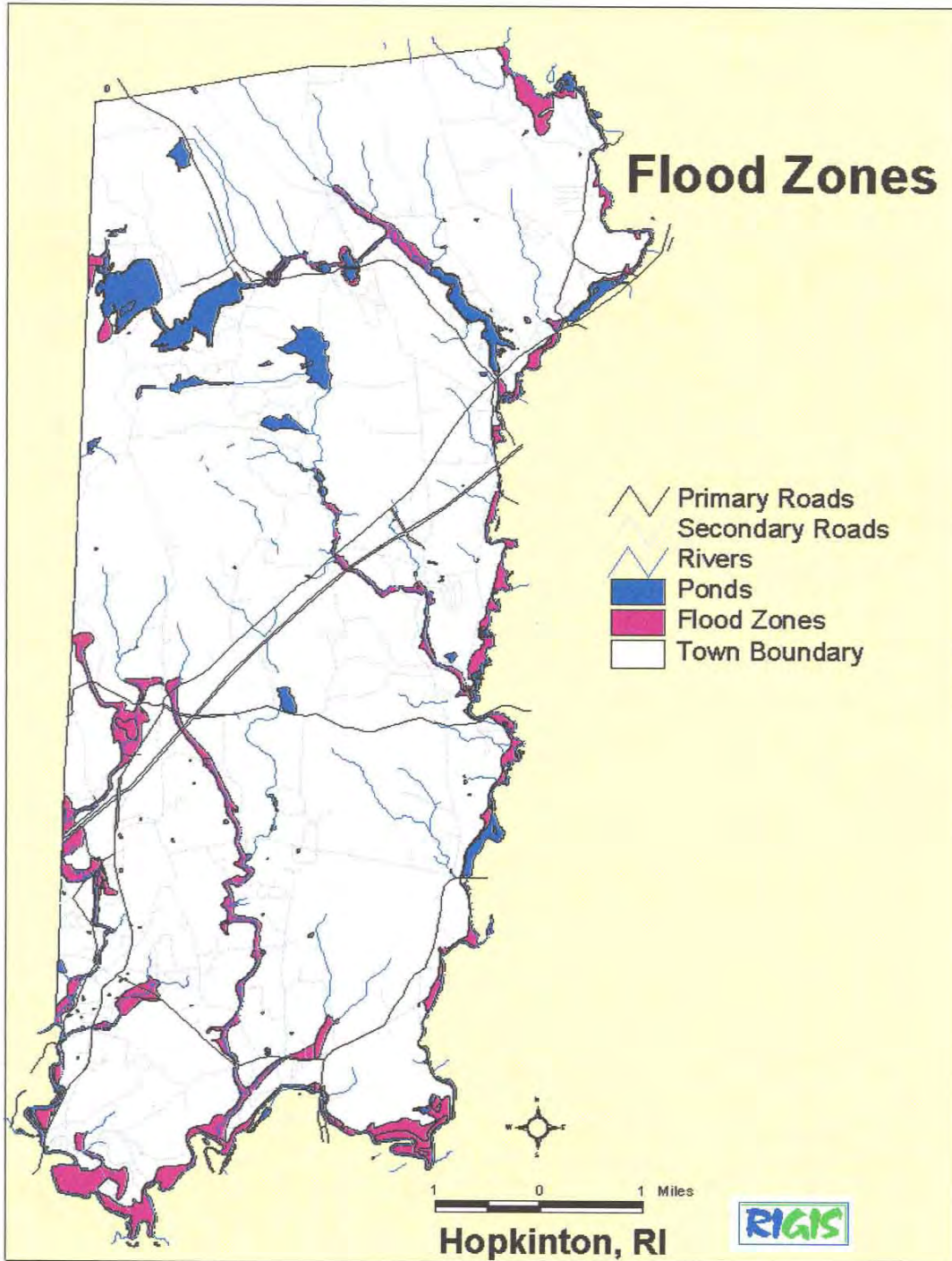
The other large wetland area in Hopkinton containing this diversity of vegetation is equally remote. It is located on the southern border of town, south of the railroad line on the Pawcatuck River and Hopkinton / Charlestown municipal border. This wetland is large in size and buffered by the railroad to the north and Burlingame State Park to the southeast. In addition to the river and its wooded banks, this wetland includes deepwater and shallow water marshes and shrub swamp surrounded by hardwood and softwood forest with a dense understory.

Two smaller river wetlands of wildlife value are located above and below Woodville, and around Route 3 by the Meeting House Bridge in Ashaway. Deep and shallow water marshes and shrub swamp are interspersed with open water and hardwood forest between Potter Hill and the utility station off Chase Hill road along the Pawcatuck River. Marsh, shrub swamp and meadow align the Wood River at Woodville. The wildlife value of this section is enhanced by adjacent open fields.

Several large wetlands in Hopkinton's stream valleys abut farmland: above Locustville Pond, throughout the Tomaquag Valley, and between Ashaway and South Hopkinton along the Ashaway Road. The wetland system along Tomaquag Brook provides unusually diverse habitats for wildlife. A large wooded wetland located west of Hopkinton City has a border of open fields along Kuehn Road and on its southern edge just above Interstate 95.

The location and shape of these wetlands and associated lands determine their vulnerability. Wetlands containing 3,719 acres are protected by municipal, state or conservation ownership.

Figure II-4 on Pp. II-15 shows the floodplains for the Town of Hopkinton.



**Figure II-4. Floodplains Map for Hopkinton, R.I. (Source: RIGIS)**

## **5. Surface Water Resources**

The very nature of surface water supplies, aquatic ecosystems and their many possible uses contribute to the problems of water quality maintenance. In aquatic ecosystems, water is seldom perfectly pure. In some instances natural factors can cause water pollution and affect water quality but the most significant of these problems usually arise as a result of human activities.

A water quality standard defines the water quality goals of a water body by designating the use or uses to be made of the water. The water quality standard sets criteria necessary to protect the desired uses. The purposes of water quality standards are to protect water, to provide recreation connected with water bodies, to protect and provide fish and wildlife dependent on water, to protect public water supplies from pollution, and allow agricultural, industrial, navigation, and other uses of water.

All of the surface waters of Hopkinton have been categorized and classified by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) Division of Water Resources. The DEM standards define water quality classifications by the uses permitted of the water.

The criteria which have been taken into consideration are:

**General aquatic life, aesthetics, dissolved oxygen, suspended solids, color, turbidity, coliform bacteria, taste, odor, pH level, thermal changes, chemical constituents, and phosphorus levels.**

Each class of water has been defined by RIDEM to be limited by the most sensitive use. The following is a descriptive list of the classes of surface water:

- Class A:** drinking water supply, primary and secondary contact recreation, fish and wildlife habitat
- Class B:** primary and secondary contact recreation, fish and wildlife habitat
- Class BI:** primary and secondary contact recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, recognizes potential for impacts to primary contact due to approved wastewater discharges
- Class SA:** shellfish harvesting for direct human consumption, primary and secondary contact recreation, fish and wildlife habitat
- Class SB:** shellfish harvesting for controlled relay and depuration, primary and secondary contact recreation, fish and wildlife habitat
- Class SBI:** primary and secondary contact recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, recognizes potential for impacts to primary contact due to approved wastewater discharges
- (a):** denotes partial use of classification due to impacts from combined sewer overflows



- (b): denotes partial use of classification due to potential impacts from concentration of vessels *as* may be found at marinas or mooring fields

**The following surface waters in Hopkinton are Class A:**

Tomaquag Brook to its confluence with the Pawcatuck River

Ashaway River from headwaters south to the Ashaway Road highway bridge

Wood River and tributaries including Breakheart Brook, Acid Factory Brook, Flat River, Fall River, and Parris Brook and Breakheart, Tillinghast, Hazard, Wickaboxet and Tippecansett Ponds to the confluence with Roaring Brook

Brushy Brook from headwaters to Sawmill Road

Grassy Pond and Grassy Brook to its entrance into Winchek Pond.

Yawgoog Pond

**The following surface waters in Hopkinton are Class B:**

Ashaway River from the Ashaway Road highway bridge to its confluence with the Pawcatuck River

Pawcatuck River from the Route 3 highway bridge to the dam at White Rock

Roaring Brook, including Boon Lake and Browning Mill Pond, to its confluence with the Wood River

Wood River from the confluence with Roaring Brook to the dam at Wyoming

Wood River from the dam at Wyoming to 3/4 mile downstream from the confluence with Moscow Brook

Wood River from 3/4 mile downstream of the confluence with Moscow Brook to its confluence with the Pawcatuck River

Moscow Brook, including Yawgoog, Winchek and Locustville Ponds, to the confluence with the Wood River

Canonchet Brook, from and including Ashville and Blue Pond to the confluence with the Wood River

Long Pond, Ashville Pond, Wyoming Pond, Alton Pond, Blue Pond, Stump Pond, Locustville Pond, and Moscow Pond.

## **6. Groundwater Resources**

Groundwater is comprised of the portion of rainfall that does not run off streams and rivers and that does not evaporate or transpire from plants. The water percolates down through the soil until it reaches the saturated zone of an aquifer. This process is called aquifer recharge. Percolating water may reach the aquifer at any point, but aquifer recharge takes place principally in defined areas called recharge areas. These areas occur where the aquifer is overlain by highly permeable material.

Groundwater is found in saturated rock and soil formations. Water is stored in void spaces within the rock or soil. Aquifers occur where such formations will yield substantial amounts of water. Each aquifer has unique characteristics that determine its productivity and susceptibility to contamination. These characteristics will determine the amount and rate of recharge, the rate of flow, the degree of filtering, and the natural groundwater quality of the aquifer.

There are two major classifications for aquifers: unconfined and confined. Hopkinton contains unconfined aquifers. These aquifers occur where unsaturated porous material overlies the saturated formation. Unconfined aquifers appear as formations of sand and gravel deposited by glacial ice and water. These deposits can be extremely complex, with many layers of clay, silt, sand, and gravel overlying one another, and their yields may vary greatly. Unconfined aquifers generally contain water of excellent quality. Because the aquifers are highly permeable, water readily and rapidly moves through them. This characteristic makes these aquifers highly susceptible to contamination because contaminants will also move quickly into and through them.

The greatest threats to groundwater resources are created by land development activities. The duration, type, and intensity of the activities will determine the degree of risk that is posed to both ground water quality and quantity. These activities may introduce pollutants either intentionally or unintentionally. The result of these activities may be long lasting and irreversible. Good siting and engineering design review will be needed to reduce potential groundwater hazards.

The slow movement and minimal attenuation of contaminants in groundwater, the expense involved for remediation, and the high cost of water treatment make prevention of contamination the only real effective means of protecting groundwater quality. Common contaminants consist of bacteria, minerals, and inorganic or organic chemicals that are present in aquifer or introduced to it at or near the ground surface. Problems arise when contaminated groundwater reaches points of natural discharge or is withdrawn for human use.

These problems will depend on the nature of the contaminant, its concentration, and the degree to which it can be removed by water treatment. Groundwater contaminants may also pollute surface water bodies as well. It should be noted that groundwater always contains small quantities of naturally occurring dissolved materials. The exact nature and concentration of these dissolved materials will vary based upon the geochemistry of the aquifer, the character of the recharge water, and the flow rate of the water through the aquifer.

Human activities can add contaminants to groundwater which may release naturally occurring materials within the aquifer, adversely affecting water quality. Contaminants can be introduced to the groundwater at the land surface, in the unsaturated zone above the aquifer, or directly into the aquifer itself. Prevention is critical in Hopkinton where untreated groundwater is tapped by private wells for consumption by the Town's residents. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the jurisdiction of the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act has classified Hopkinton a sole source aquifer community. A sole source aquifer is an aquifer that provides the principal or sole source of drinking water to an area.

All stream valleys of Hopkinton serve as recharge areas for the groundwater aquifers. The well-sorted layers of sand and gravel soils quickly absorb water from rainfall, streamflow, and upland water runoff. Where water drains off steep slopes into outwash recharge areas, wetlands serve to slow the water flow, purify, and store the water while it settles into the subsurface reservoir. The irregular bedrock topography along the Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers effectively divides the entire aquifer into separate groundwater reservoirs connected by streams. (see Figure 11-5. Pp. 11-21)

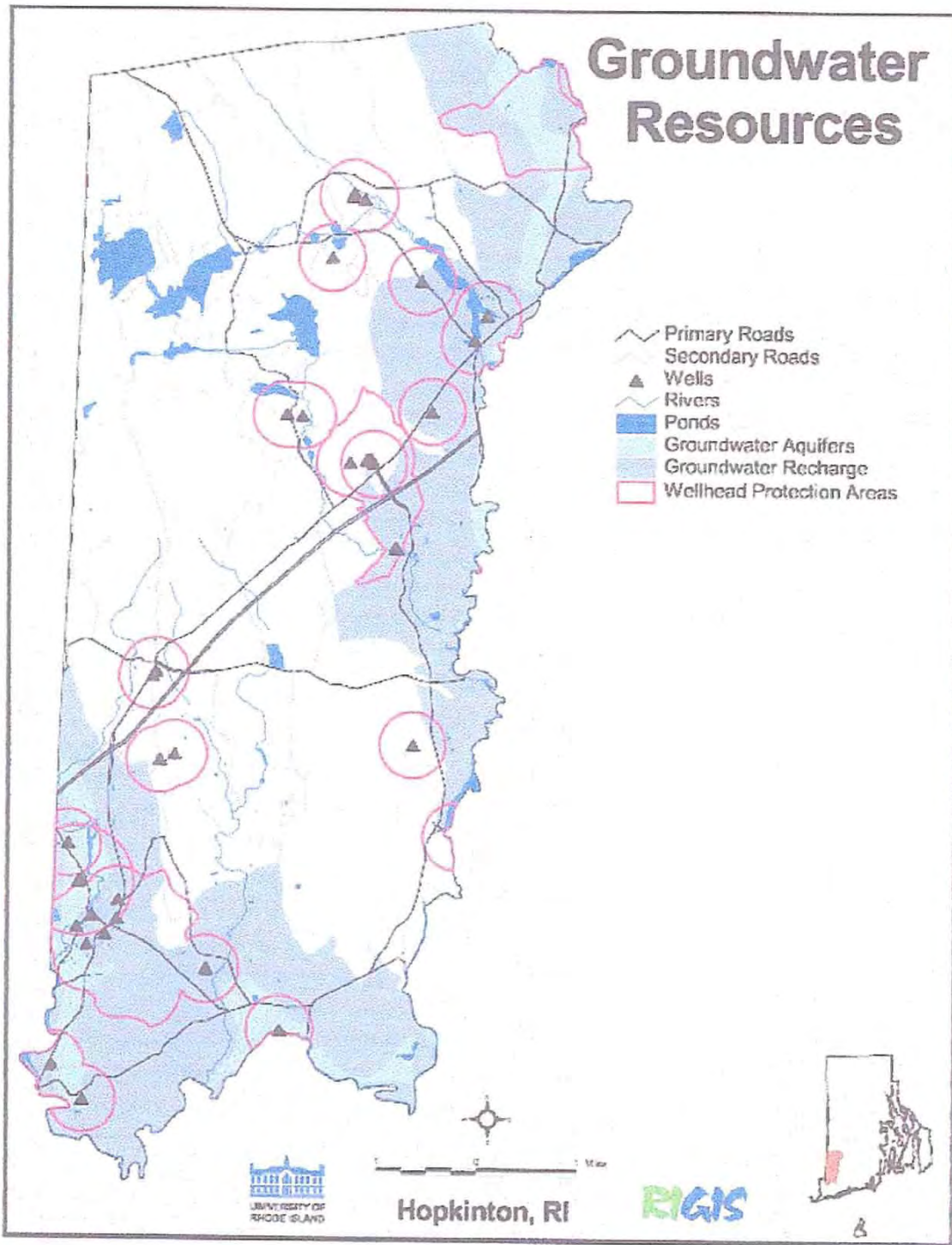
Three major groundwater reservoirs have been identified in Hopkinton:

- 1) The Upper Wood River**
- 2) The Bradford Reservoir**
- 3) The Ashaway-Pawcatuck River Reservoir.**

The groundwater reservoirs in Hopkinton fall into two separate categories, which set different limits for well development and for land development. Small-volume reservoirs are dependent on streamflow. Moderate to large volume reservoirs draw water from recharge areas as well as streamflow. The Ashaway-Pawcatuck reservoir and the Bradford reservoir are both small-volume reservoirs. The yield is mainly determined by the rate at which streamflow can be induced in them. The Ashaway-Pawcatuck reservoir has been computed to yield 10.3 million gallons/day (mgd). This level of withdrawal could dry up the Ashaway River during an extended summer drought.

The Bradford Reservoir has a smaller potential yield of 1.3 mgd. The upper Wood River is a moderate to high yield reservoir and will bear a sustained withdrawal of 9.6 mgd, which could dry up the river near the pumping stations during a prolonged drought.

The best groundwater strategy for the town is protection rather than remedial action. Protection, in the long run, is less costly and is the most practical approach. Figure II-5 identifies the important groundwater resources in Hopkinton.



**Figure II-5. Groundwater Resources in Hopkinton, RI.**  
(Source: R.I. Critical Resources Atlas: [www.edc.uri.edu/riatlas](http://www.edc.uri.edu/riatlas))

## **7. Wood-Pawcatuck Rivers Watershed**

The Wood and Pawcatuck River basin is recognized for its high quality resource values. The river basin also includes portions of Stonington, North Stonington and Voluntown in Connecticut. In Rhode Island, the basin covers 260 square miles and includes portions of the Towns of Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown, West Greenwich, all of Richmond, Exeter, as well as Hopkinton. The basin covers nearly 23 percent of the total land area in Rhode Island and 100 percent of the land area of Hopkinton.

The Wood River is a major tributary to the Pawcatuck River. It is twenty miles long from its headwaters in Connecticut and West Greenwich, Rhode Island to its confluence with the Pawcatuck River at the Hopkinton/Charlestown town boundary. This riverine drainage system was formed as the glaciers retreated from southern New England thousands of years ago.

Open waters account for a large portion of the total basin area in Hopkinton. Most of this open water occurs as natural lakes, ponds, streams, and rivers. There are also man-made farm ponds and fish ponds in the town as well. Most of the wetland habitat provided by the rivers in Hopkinton is scrub/shrub wetlands. This type of wetlands provides high quality wildlife habitat due to the diversity of plants types provided. There are about 2,400 acres of State public lands within Hopkinton.

Fishing, canoeing, and hunting are the three major forms of recreation associated with the rivers in Hopkinton. The nationally significant corridor within the basin is a one-quarter mile stretch of land on either side of the rivers and includes valuable wetlands, floodplains, and prime agricultural soils that extend beyond the quarter-mile section.

State and national assessments have classified the major features and characteristics of the Wood River as unique, irreplaceable, high quantity resources, which are limited in number in the eastern United States. The National Park Service and the Rhode Island DEM have surveyed and studied the two rivers intensively.

The Rhode Island DEM published a river management plan on the two rivers in 1987. In this plan, the DEM concluded the Wood-Pawcatuck River system represents an invaluable example of natural beauty, cultural history, and recreational opportunities that form an integral element in the quality of life in Rhode Island.

The river management plan also identified the Wood River as the most natural and undeveloped river in Rhode Island. The Wood River basin has the highest overall water quality in Rhode Island. There is considerable concern over point and non-point pollution within the basin and it impacts on river activities.

The diversity of recreational activities taking place along the two rivers is increasing and is therefore creating a demand for more river access and conflicts among users. Because of this, there is a need for coordination between the state and Hopkinton, Hopkinton and other towns, Hopkinton and private agencies, and Hopkinton and landowners.

The continuing trend of residential development in rural Hopkinton will increase pressures exerted on the river corridor. This is the reason that riverfront lands and the adjacent natural resources must be considered in determining the management of existing and future land uses in Hopkinton.

Past, present, and future land uses will directly affect the quality of the rivers. Careful planning is needed to retain the rural character and high quality of the Wood and Pawcatuck rivers in Hopkinton. The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (Ocean State Outdoors) establishes as state policy the protection of river corridors and the creation of open space corridors connecting existing conservation areas. The state recreation plan specifically identifies the Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers as areas of special concern.

The RIDEM regulates the effects of development through the various environmental permitting programs. The primary regulatory tool the State uses in protecting the river corridors is its powers under the Freshwater Wetlands Act that is enforced through the DEM.

The Rhode Island Freshwater Wetlands Act regulates the use of and protects the rivers themselves and their associated wetlands complexes. Additionally, a two hundred foot zone along the river channel is protected under the act, and is considered a legal wetland. A riverbank wetland may include other wetlands, for instance swamps, marshes, or bogs. The riverbank may also be comprised of substantially upland habitat along the flowing channel.

Critically important wildlife habitat, setbacks for the protection and preservation of recreational environments, and recharge areas for ground and surface waters are provided for within this area.

The Freshwater Wetland Section of DEM considers strict regulation and protection of the two hundred foot riverbank along the Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers and their tributaries to be of the highest priority. The DEM has several leading roles when it comes to the protection of river corridors. It is charged with acquiring and managing land to provide recreational areas, to preserve fish and wildlife habitat, and to protect natural resources.

RIDEM is the state agency that administers funds for open space acquisition and natural area protection, and provides assistance to towns and non-profit groups in the efforts to preserve such areas. RIDEM acquires both fee simple title to properties as well as easements or interests in land. The use of easements and the purchase of development rights are commonly used when a restricted feature or function is to be managed, and the site will not be heavily utilized by the general public. RIDEM uses fee simple title acquisition of property if the site is expected to be heavily used by the public and intensive management will be required.

Hopkinton should encourage such use of easements by DEM to supplement the requirements of the state regulatory programs, and increase buffers and open space near the rivers. DEM will be pursuing river access sites, passive and active recreation areas, and wildlife sites along the river corridors in the whole river basin. At this time there is very little public access to the rivers in Hopkinton.

The DEM managed properties and access areas are concentrated along the upper portion of the

Wood River, in the Arcadia Management Area. Access along the more scenic lower Wood River and the Pawcatuck River is limited. Limited access to the rivers restricts the recreational and educational opportunities of the residents of Hopkinton.

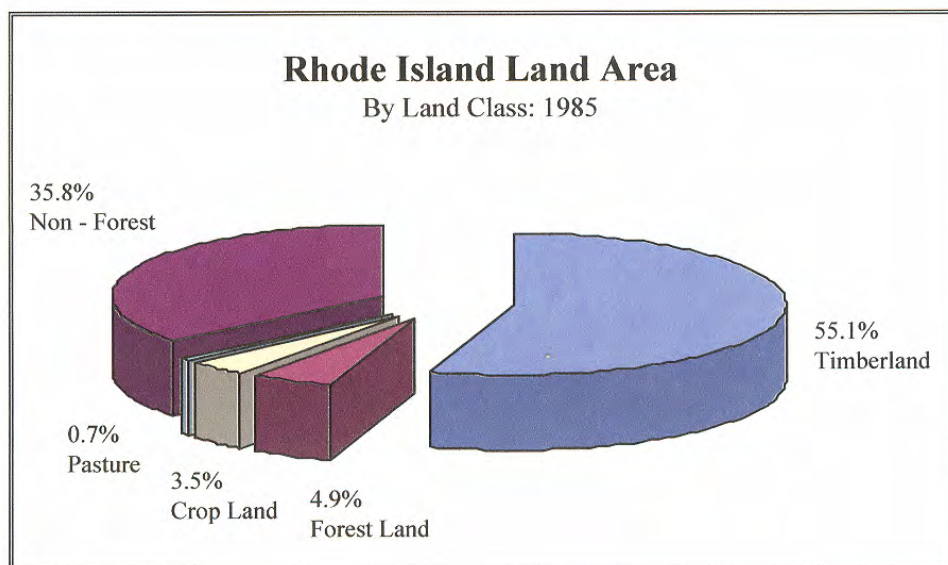
An increase in the use of existing accesses can be expected in the future. Hopkinton must seek to work with the DEM to provide adequate public access to its most valuable resource. Local canoeing and fishing groups must work in conjunction with the town to make this possible. The Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers are the major resources that Hopkinton possesses, which few other communities in the state can match. It is Rhode Island's least developed river system with the highest water quality available in the state. The river system offers recreational opportunities unparalleled by any other river in the state. Because the rivers are of such high quality, it is essential that development be considered with preservation of this resource in mind.

## 8. Forest Resources

### a. Statewide Picture

In 1985, the State of Rhode Island had approximately 400,000 acres of forestland, representing 60% of total land area. Surprisingly, nearly 92% of this forested area is classified as timberland, down 7% from 1972. The vast majority of this property, 88%, is owned by private individuals. The following figure illustrates the percentage of ground cover in Rhode Island which graphically depicts the 60% value stated above:

**Figure II-6. Land Area by Land Class: 1985**



Source: Rhode Island Landscape Inventory

Red Oak species continue to be the dominant tree, closely followed by Red Maple, as the top volume sawtimber stock in Rhode Island. White Pine continues as the top softwood species in the state. Wild Blueberry species are the major understory species found in the state. These three species types provide abundant food and cover for wildlife species, particularly the acorns and blueberries for food, and cavities in live maple trees and dead oak trees for shelter. Finally, production of forest products makes a valuable contribution to the state and local economies by providing jobs in primary and secondary wood products industry.

b. Local Picture

The Town of Hopkinton mirrors the statewide situation as confirmed by the statistics from the RIOIS Land Use Inventory, which is based on 1988 aerial photography. Under the categories of Forest & Brushland, the state inventory compiles a total of 17,687 acres of land. With 44 square miles of land area in Hopkinton, translating into over 28,000 acres, this represents slightly more than 60% of the land area in town as forest. The same survey indicates an additional 9% land cover as agricultural land. The balance is developed property, wetland, water bodies and other vacant property.

The major sawmill located in Hopkinton is Thompson Native Lumber, off Woodville Road, producing a variety of wood products including; grade lumber, post & beam, pallet stock and fuel wood.

## **9. Rare and Endangered Species**

The Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program in cooperation with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management has cataloged rare and endangered species as well as the range of their habitat. (see Figure II-6. Pp. II-26) The Rhode Island Natural Heritage program has shared that information for incorporation within the Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Hopkinton. As an appendix to this section, the state law is quoted, as well as a brief description of the Heritage program. The Appendix provides a definition section, and a listing of State of Rhode Island endangered species. The Heritage program has illustrated those sites, graphically, where these species physically appear, and are as follows:

**A. Ell Pond / Blue Pond / Yawgoog Pond Complex**

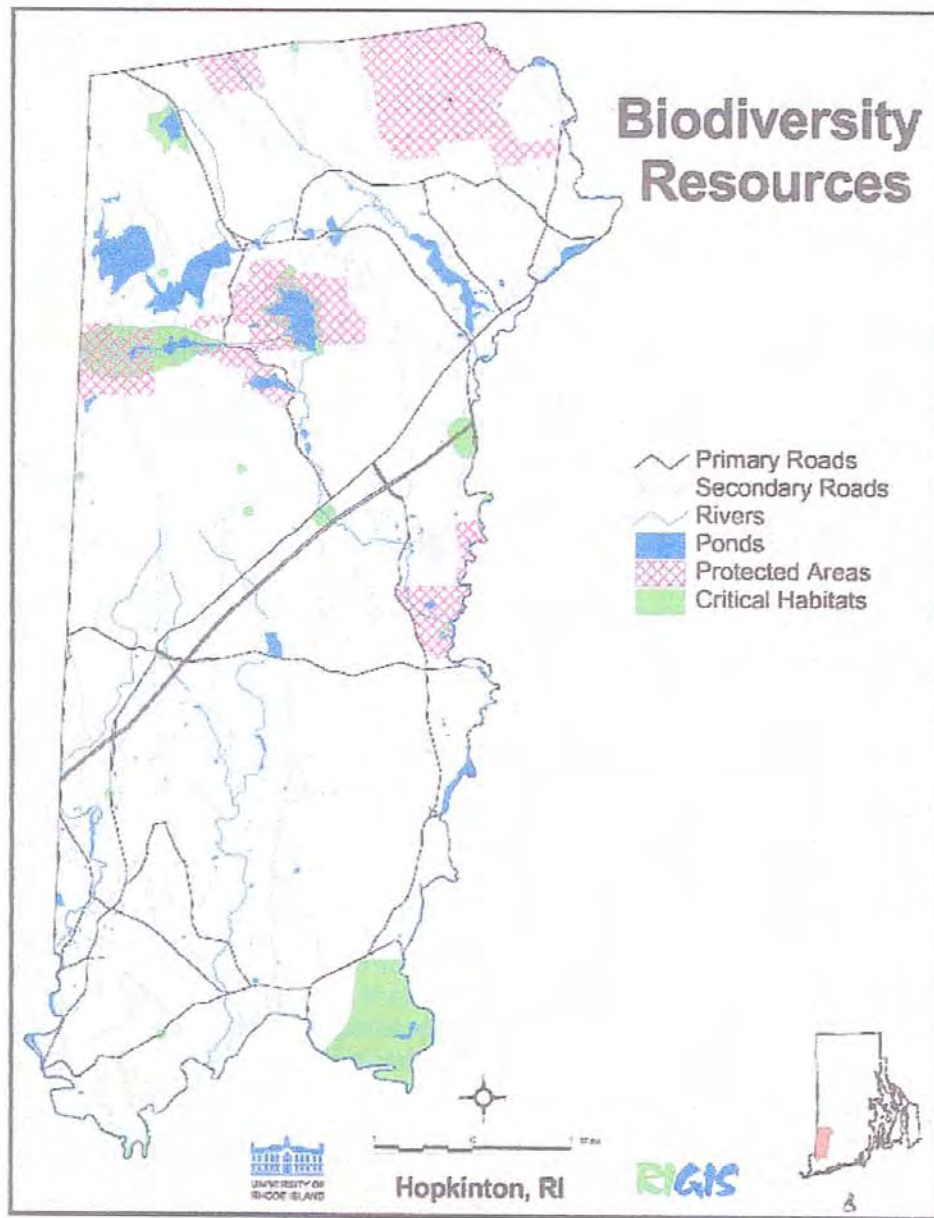
**B. Pawcatuck River / Bradford Dam / Railroad R.O.W.**

**C. Grassy Pond**

**D. Wood River / I-95**

Special considerations for future land use and zoning for these sites are incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.





**Figure II-7. Biodiversity Resources in Hopkinton, RI.**  
(Source: R.I. Critical Resources Atlas: [www.edc.uri.edu/riatlas](http://www.edc.uri.edu/riatlas))

## **D. AIR QUALITY**

The Ambient Air Quality has been monitored in Rhode Island since 1968 in a variety of locations on either a continuous or intermittent basis. This data is collected to provide data for both the State and the U.S. EPA to be used for the following:

To judge compliance with progress made toward meeting both national and state standards

To judge maintenance of air quality from which the state is currently attaining

To activate emergency control measures if necessary

To determine pollution patterns

To assess health and welfare effects, land use and transportation planning, abatement strategies, enforcement and for validation of mathematical models

The following air quality parameters are monitored in Rhode Island:

**SULFUR DIOXIDE**  
**CARBON MONOXIDE**  
**LEAD**  
**GROSS BETA**

**TOTAL SUSPENDED PARTICULATES**  
**OZONE**  
**PH (RAINFALL)**

The state as a whole has achieved attainment for all parameters except Ozone. This is due to the importation of materials outside of the state borders and unusually high temperatures.

Since the Town of Hopkinton has no large air emissions other than from transportation, its air quality is mostly affected by outside sources.

## **E. EXISTING AND POTENTIAL THREATS TO NATURAL RESOURCES**

There are several existing and potential threats to Hopkinton's rich inventory of natural resources. They may be generally grouped into categories of CERCLA sites, non-point source pollution, and hazardous materials handling and storage. These all represent real threats to the environment in Hopkinton, and possibly even its neighboring municipalities.

### **1. CERCLA Sites**

Consultation with the RIDEM - Division of Air and Hazardous Materials revealed that only one site appears on the **CERCLA** (Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980) Federal EP A list of sites in Hopkinton. That site is the recently closed Town Landfill on Stubtown Road. This designation indicates that there is sufficient evidence to suspect that hazardous materials have been disposed of at the landfill in the past, and represent a

threat to the environment. The Federal EP A has made this designation under authority of the CERCLA. At this time there are no other known sites in Hopkinton with this classification.

## **2. Non-Point Source Pollution**

### **a. ISDS**

Individual sewage disposal systems are the primary method of waste disposal for the Town of Hopkinton. These are underground storage, treatment, and disposal systems that have traditionally been proven quite effective at treating human and household wastes. They do, however, pose a threat to the environment when they are not designed, installed, operated, and maintained correctly, as wastes may pass through soils and enter the groundwater untreated. Cesspool systems have been outlawed in Rhode Island, and can no longer be installed. New technologies are being developed to improve on-site wastewater treatment and offer innovative answers to site restriction problems. A Wastewater Management District Study Committee has been convened and appointed by the Town Council to formulate a Wastewater Management Facilities Plan for Hopkinton.

### **b. Storage Tanks**

There are numerous potential locations where the land and water can be degraded due to leaking underground and aboveground storage tanks. This can range from gasoline filling stations to small fuel oil tanks buried on individual homesites. Industrial, manufacturing, and commercial facilities may store a variety of potentially hazardous materials in storage tanks, as well. The larger commercial situations are regulated by RIDEM under authority of the Underground Storage Facilities Act. The town is considering additional regulations with the formulation and adoption of an Aquifer Protection Ordinance.

### **c. Surface Water Runoff**

Aboveground movement of stormwater is another possible source of non-point source pollution. If stormwater is not managed, collected, stored, treated (if necessary) and released in an effective manner, pollutants may be carried off-site and into surface or ground waters where contamination can occur. This issue will be addressed by the Hopkinton Subdivision Regulations or as an amendment to the Hopkinton Zoning Ordinance.

### **d. Soil Erosion**

Sediment loading (siltation) can be detrimental to surface waters and drainage systems if not properly managed. This could be a common occurrence where the earth is being disturbed through site development, or sand and gravel extraction operations. The use of silt fences, hydro-seeding, and other on-site remediation practices, greatly reduces the opportunity for sediment loading to occur on smaller-scale site development projects. Sand and gravel excavation operations require standards for the best management of soil

erosion.

Hopkinton will develop standards for managing soil erosion in sand and gravel operations through a Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance, and/or an Earth Removal Ordinance, which would regulate excavation and restoration of these sites. Hopkinton also participates in the regional soil erosion and stormwater control inspection program.

**e. Junkyards & Abandoned Vehicles**

Automobile junkyards and abandoned vehicles pose a serious threat to the environment through release of petrochemicals from degrading fuel systems and engine components. The release of motor oils and fluids, gasoline, and ethylene glycol (anti-freeze) could cause considerable damage to soils, wild flora and fauna, surface waters and groundwater. There is only one licensed, operating automobile junkyard in Hopkinton; Perry Motors. Licensing is done by the town, while inspection and compliance with the laws of Rhode Island are enforced by RIDEM.

**f. Salt Storage Areas**

Highway salt storage areas pose a significant threat to a range of natural resources in Hopkinton. The improper storage and application of road de-icing materials may cause the salinization of soils, ground and surface waters. Action to reduce or prevent salt contamination include: covering salt storage piles, placing salt piles on impervious surfaces, containing and treating salt laden runoff, and careful application by application crews. Careful management of salt storage areas is particularly important where the groundwater is the sole source of drinking water for the town.

**g. Other Non-Point Sources**

Households and small businesses may contribute to environmental pollution as well. Improper disposal of paints, household cleaning chemicals, solvents and waste oil can lead to soil and water pollution. Also, improper application of herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers can alter the ecological viability of impacted areas. Education on the effects of improper disposal, and the availability of non-toxic substitutes would greatly diminish the risk of contamination from these sources.

**3. Hazardous Materials Handline / Storage**

Hazardous materials should always be handled, transported, and stored properly to avoid personal and/or environmental injury. The regulations set forth for handling by the Federal Government through OSHA and NIOSH, for transportation through the Transportation Safety Act of 1974 and the Hazardous Materials Uniform Safety Act of 1990, as well as by the State through RIDEM and the RI State Police should always be followed. The town follows all state and federal guidelines for handling, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous and toxic materials used or generated by the town.

materials used or generated by the town.

Finally, unanticipated hazards can occur on an accidental basis from spills of materials in mobile storage tanks passing over the state and local road network, or from on-site storage facilities. Timely response from emergency hazardous materials spill teams can mitigate and reduce the effects of such an unfortunate event, if one occurs.

## **PART II - CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The 1976 report compiled by the State Historic Preservation Commission concludes that, "all properties are worthy of preservation and enhancement, and future planning decisions affecting these properties should take into consideration their cultural significance". With this as a backdrop, it is incumbent upon the community to take affirmative action to preserve its historic places as development occurs. Once a property is altered, it may never be able to be restored or replaced.

This portion of the Element will attempt to describe these places and recommend future actions for their preservation. Much of what remains today is the town's heritage, not to be lost.

### **B. SIGNIFICANCE OF CULTURAL RESOURCES**

The identification, description, and preservation of a town's cultural resources has great significance as a means to portray who and what the Town of Hopkinton was and is all about. Although some may view a dilapidated old mill complex as an eyesore and potential hazard, others see the same complex as a reminder of the past, as the economic forces that shaped the landscape, and what attracted the population to Hopkinton. Our remaining cultural resources are our only physical evidence of this rich past.

With the notable exception of the crossroad village of Hopkinton City, the majority of the cultural resources remaining today are a result of mill site development along Hopkinton's watercourses and include the villages of:

<b>Alton</b>	<b>Bradford</b>	<b>Hope Valley</b>	<b>Rockville</b>
<b>Ashaway</b>	<b>Burdickville</b>	<b>Locustville</b>	<b>Woodville</b>
<b>Barberville</b>	<b>Canonchet</b>	<b>Mocsow</b>	<b>Wyoming</b>
<b>Bethel</b>	<b>Centerville</b>	<b>Potter Hill</b>	

As the mill complexes sprung up along the water bodies, next came the housing and churches associated with their employees, many of which remain today. However, in many locations the only remainders of the mills themselves are the dams on the watercourses and stone foundations at the riverbanks.

Along with developments, Hopkinton's other cultural resources include its agricultural properties and family farms. Today there are still several large family farms, which continue to illustrate the past activity of farming in town. Their open fields, long stone walls, and old farm homes typify the rural use of the land, which also identifies Hopkinton's Cultural Resources.

In the following sections, the Town's Historic Places and Archeological sites will be described as derived from the State Historic Preservation Commission Report of 1976.

### **C. NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places are under the authority of the U.S. Department of the Interior. This is the official list of properties deemed worthy of protection as historic places. Concurrent with designation to the National Register, is listing with the State Register of Historic Places.

The Rhode Island Historic Preservation Commission (RIHPC) is charged with the responsibility of cataloging and preserving Rhode Island's cultural heritage. In this role, the RIHPC conducted a preliminary review of the Town of Hopkinton in 1976. The purpose of this study was to inventory, identify and record the presence of historic resources in the town. All properties deemed significant were placed into one of three categories:

1. Properties Already in or Approved for Nomination
2. Properties Recommended for Nomination
3. Other Significant Properties Warranting Further Study

Unfortunately, the HPC has had neither the dollars nor the staff to complete or update this study. Several properties have been added to the National Historic Register since this inventory was completed and they are included in this section.

The actual nomination process involves the completion of a Nomination Application following a preliminary review by HPC staff. The application package is submitted to the Rhode Island Review Board for consideration. If the Review Board concurs that the site is significant, they will forward the application to the National Register for their action. Typically, if the State Review Board approves the site for nomination, the National Register usually affirms that decision.

### **D. IMPORTANT TOWN SITES**

The following summarizes the results of the 1976 study:

1. Currently On Or Approved For Nomination To The National Register Of Historic Places
  - a. Hopkinton City Historic District

Approximately twenty (20) structures located in the South-Central portion of town, including a post office, town hall, church, theater and war memorial. Notable buildings in the district include:

Thomas Wells House, Circa 1789

Thurston-Wells House, Circa 1848

Former First Baptist Church, Circa 1836

Second Seventh Day Baptist Church, Circa 1789

b. Wyoming Village Historic District

This Village District straddles the two towns, Hopkinton and Richmond, at the Wood River. Only the remains of the mill structure and the mill houses remain today. Thus this area includes:

Dam, waterfall, mill pond, and mill ruins

Houses along Prospect Square - 18 Residences in total, 13 built between 1830-1860 in the Greek Revival style

c. Tomaquag Valley Rock Shelters

Located off of Diamond Hill Road, this series of granite rock outcroppings form shelters in the Tomaquag Valley portion of town that were probably utilized as temporary campsites in the late Archaic Period. Many artifacts have been found here. This site includes:

Several granite rock formations & crevices

2. Recommended For Nomination To The National Register

a. Ashaway Village Historic District

As the second largest village in town, Ashaway contains several manufacturing facilities, commercial establishments, a church, schools, a library, and many dwellings dating from 1800 to present. The Ashaway River bisects the village and spurred the development in the area. The district is approximately 1.5 miles by .5 miles in size located in the southwesterly portion of town at the Connecticut border. Notable in this district are the following, by street location:

**HIGH STREET:**

Bethel Factory - Circa 1850

Cundall House - Circa 1799

Ashaway Woolen Mills - Circa~ 1846

Jacob D. Babcock House - Circa 1778

**KNIGHT STREET:**

Mill Houses - Late Victorian

**LAUREL STREET:**

Ashaway Line & Twine - Circa 1903

**MAIN STREET: (N/F)**

House - Late Victorian

**HILLSIDE AVENUE:**

Ashaway School

**CHURCH STREET:**

First Seventh Day Baptist Church - Circa 1835

Hopkinton Academy - Circa 1858

b. Hope Valley Village Historic District

The largest village in Hopkinton, Hope Valley contains a variety of structures, including a post office, a school, bank, churches, and numerous residences, along with an assortment of commercial businesses. The district actually encompasses the former mill sites at Hope Valley along the Wood River and Locustville, adjacent to Brushy Brook.

Important structures include:

**MAIN STREET:**

Barber's Hall (Washington Trust) - Circa 1864

Prudence Crandall marker - Circa 1833

First Baptist Church - Circa 1845



Odd Fellow's Hall (H.C. Woodmansee) - Circa 1874

Hiscox House - Circa 1825

E.L. Crandall House - Late Victorian

Carpenter House - Circa 1770

**MECHANIC STREET:**

Joseph Langworthy House - Circa 1841

Nichols & Langworthy Machine Co. - Circa 1868

**HIGHVIEW AVENUE: (N/F)**

Aldrich House - Circa 1859

Maple Street Numerous Houses - Circa 1870 +

**SIDE HILL ROAD:**

Mill Housing, Four Double Mill Houses - Late Victorian

**NICHOLS LANE:**

Nichols House - Late Victorian

c. Rockville Village Historic District

The small village of Rockville contains several buildings, including a church, post office, and mill structures. Two large dams supplied water to power two sawmills, a gristmill, an oil mill, a shingle mill, and a carding and fulling mill. The village is located in the west-central portion of town, and retains most of its original character and charm. Significant structures include:

House - Circa 1792

House - Late Victorian

Seventh Day Baptist Church - Circa 1847

Rockville Mill - Circa 1844 (?)

**LAWTON FOSTER ROAD:**

House - Circa 1870

**WOODVILLE-ALTON ROAD: (N/F)**

Isaac Collins House - Circa 1870

3. Other Districts. Buildings. And Sites Of Architectural / Historic Significance

a. Canonchet Village Historic District

A small village district along a one mile stretch of Canonchet Road in the central, part of Hopkinton, including a church, several houses and a mill (known earlier as Ashville).

b. Woodville Historic District

A small settlement along the Wood River which straddles both Richmond and Hopkinton, Woodville comprises a group of five residences and remains of a mill structure.

c. Other Notable Sites

This includes the Old Rockville Road Natural Area terminating at Winchek Pond, Tomaquag Road Rural Landscape, and Yawgoog Scout Camp. There are 44 structures listed in the 1976 report which may be referenced for further information.

**E. ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES**

Archeological sites are found throughout the entire state. Their importance is the wealth of information they contain regarding the earliest area history, beginning 10-12,000 years ago with the Native Americans, followed by European exploration and colonization, and then 19th century industrialization. Archeological sites have been mapped and are on record with the R.I. Historic Preservation Commission, although the information is somewhat masked to protect the exact location of these sites.

The RIHPC categorizes site information in three general classifications: Sites on the National Register, Sites Potentially Eligible for the Register, and Areas Considered Sensitive for Significant Resources, based on predictive models.

The following sites are on file at the RIHPC:

- #716 - Prehistoric-off Skunk Hill Road
- #243 - Prehistoric - near Camp Yawgoog

- #1276 - Prehistoric - near Blue Pond
- #244 - Prehistoric - near Switch Road
- #75 - Prehistoric - near Rt. 3 at Rt. 1-95 & Canonchet
- #226 - Prehistoric - near Diamond Hill Road & Tomaquag Rd
- #406 - Historic - near Wellstown Road
- #302 - Historic - near Laurel Street
- #305 - Historic - near Chase Hill Road & Rt. 3

## **F. EXISTING AND POTENTIAL THREATS TO CULTURAL RESOURCES**

There are several existing and potential threats to the future integrity of Hopkinton's historic and archaeological resources. Among the identified potential threats are:

Lack of public knowledge: Lack of established common knowledge regarding the value of historic and archaeological resources is an important threat that exists currently. This lack of knowledge has the potential to continue to threaten historic and cultural resources into the future without further public education efforts. There may also exist a lack of appreciation for the town's cultural resources, as well as differing levels of interest between the citizens of Hopkinton on historical and archaeological resource preservation issues.

Incomplete knowledge about the location of historical and archaeological resources: Knowledge regarding the location of important historical and archaeological resources is limited, and is incomplete overall. Resources of importance may be located in remote areas, or even underground where they may not be recorded until unearthed. With the prevalence of Native American activity in the area, sites of potential importance are undeniably numerous.

Private property upkeep and maintenance: For those historic and archaeological resources located on private lands, or those consisting of private property, it is often difficult to encourage upkeep and maintenance that may sometimes be very costly and time consuming.

Continuing development: New growth patterns and infrastructural designs may be dissimilar to historic patterns and designs, creating a potential threat to historical resources, the integrity of historical areas, as well as archaeological resources in the town. Also, the unearthing of underground archaeological artifacts may be associated with continuing development.

## **G. PRESERVATION EFFORTS**

### 1. Past and Current Preservation Activities in Hopkinton

Past and current preservation activities in Hopkinton have been accomplished by three main citizen-led historical preservation organizations. These organizations are the Hopkinton Historical Association, the Hopkinton Historic District Commission, and a three-member group of town employees who volunteered their time to locate and record information about Hopkinton's historic cemeteries. A brief description of these three organizations, and their activities is presented below:

The Hopkinton Historical Association was founded by a group of concerned citizens interested in the preservation of the town's historic sites and buildings. The association was established in the 1950's, with the intention of "promoting interest in historical research, to stimulate study of history of Hopkinton and the surrounding area, to encourage the collection and preservation of manuscripts, pamphlets, relics, and to aid and encourage the maintenance, support, and preservation of historical properties". During the 1970's, the association purchased the Town Meeting House/ Baptist Church building adjacent to the Town Hall for one dollar, with the condition that it be restored and maintained by the association thereafter. To date the building has undergone structural, functional and aesthetic renovations, and now serves as the association's meeting house. In addition to direct maintenance and restoration of historic properties, the association also meets nearly bi-monthly, and often invites speakers from varied organizations to speak and educate the members and citizens on conservation,

The Hopkinton Historic District Commission was originally chartered in the mid-seventies to promote the appointment of historic districts and historic preservation practices. The commission fell into disuse in the early eighties, but devoted members worked for years to have the commission re-established when the Hopkinton Code of Ordinances was adopted March 20, 1989. Chapter seven established this commission to carry out the purposes of the chapter (historic preservation), and outlines the guidelines for member appointment, organization and operating procedures. The commission consists of five members, who are appointed by the Town Council president, with the consent of the council. The commission is primarily responsible for the establishment of historic districts in Hopkinton, such as the Hopkinton City Historic District (Hopkinton's only legally established historic district), and enforcement of the aforementioned chapter seven of the town ordinances. The Hopkinton Historic District Commission maintains the status of a Locally Certified Government by the State Historic Preservation Office.

In the early 1990's, a group of three individuals located and investigated all of the known burial grounds within the Town of Hopkinton. Using existing resources and volunteered time, they researched and recorded very useful information about these historic sites. There now exists a VHS video and book package on Hopkinton's historic cemeteries which was published as a result of these volunteer's efforts.

At the present time, the Hopkinton Historical Association and the Hopkinton Historic District Commission continue their commitment to the protection, maintenance and restoration of historic properties within the town.

## 2. Listing Properties on the Historic Register

The single most important reason for listing a property on either the State and/or National Register is the increased appreciation by the community of its significance as a piece of the town's history. Unfortunately this status provides only a limited amount of protection, as only federal projects require RIHPC review and comment in regards to potential damage to a property. With the exception of projects in the Coastal Zone, most private projects are not subject to this review.

However, the main advantage to the individual property owner choosing to list with the register is tax incentives and low interest loans available for restoration and repairs. The matching grant program of the early 1980's has yet to be restored. Nevertheless, federal tax benefits do include a 20% tax credit for all certifiable rehabilitation and repair on income producing property.

There are two programs available: **Historic Preservation Loan Fund** and **Heritage Bond Issue**. Funds from these programs are currently available for work on properties listed on the State Register either as individual structures or as a portion of a historic district. Recently passed legislation provides tax credits for owner occupied properties and income tax credit for approved rehabilitation / repair of those structures on the State Register.

### 3. Additional Preservation Methods

The following options are available to the Town of Hopkinton for the implementation of the various Natural/Cultural Resources Goals & Policies specified in this element:

**A. Historic District Commission (HDC)** - Charge the town's HDC to study and coordinate the enactment of Historic District Zoning for specific areas in town warranting such a designation.

**B. Design Standards** - Develop design standards which would be utilized within designated areas of Hopkinton.

**C. Update Inventory** - Complete and maintain an inventory of historic properties and archeological resources in Hopkinton.

**D. Education Program** - Promote an awareness of the town's valuable resources; natural historic and archeological

**E. Town Ordinance Revision & Drafting** - Prepare specific ordinances that address particular areas of concern, such as: Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Control Groundwater Protection, Unique & Natural Areas, and Subdivision of Land.

## **PART III - GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION / ACTION PROGRAM**

### **A. GOALS**

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulation Act specifies that the Comprehensive Plan, "shall provide an inventory of the significant natural resource areas such as water, soils, prime agricultural lands, natural vegetation systems, wildlife, wetlands, aquifers, coastal features, flood plains and other natural resources and the policies for the protection and management of such areas. The element shall include policies for the protection of historic and

cultural resources of the municipality and the state. The policies and implementation techniques must be identified for inclusion in the implementation program element".

Further, along with being consistent with the goals and policies of contiguous communities and with the other elements of the Hopkinton Comprehensive Plan, programs and regulations of R.I. Department of Environmental Management, the R.I. Natural Heritage Program, and the R.I. Historical Preservation Commission, this element must address four stated goals of the act:

1. "To promote orderly growth and development that recognizes the natural characteristics of the land, its suitability for use and the availability of existing and proposed public and/or private services and facilities".
2. "To promote the protection of the natural, historic, and cultural resources of each municipality and the state".
3. "To promote the preservation of the open space and recreational resources of each municipality and the state".
4. "To the use of innovative development regulations and techniques that promote the development of land suitable for development while protecting our natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources and achieving a balanced pattern" of land uses.

In order to prepare this section of the element, various sources have been utilized. First, the input from the Planning Board and the Natural/Cultural Resources Sub-Committee was considered. Next, information from the State Department of Environmental Management was of great assistance, along with the R.I. Heritage Program staff and the R.I. Historic Preservation Commission. Finally, town officials were consulted for their direction on the future of natural and cultural resources in Hopkinton.

The following are the **GOALS** for:

#### **NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

- 1. GOAL:** To preserve, conserve, and protect the significant natural/cultural resources of Hopkinton as an endowment for the future of the town.
- 2. GOAL:** To preserve surface and ground water resources to ensure adequate drinking water supplies.
- 3. GOAL:** To protect natural resources in Hopkinton by developing and implementing the proper local regulations and ordinances.
- 4. GOAL:** To preserve and protect wetland systems in harmony with state laws and regulations.

- 5. GOAL:** To continue efforts to preserve local agricultural operations and prime agricultural soils.
- 6. GOAL:** To expand the local school programs and better utilize the town's resources for educational purposes.
- 7. GOAL:** To preserve and protect valuable wildlife habitat, including rare and endangered species.
- 8. GOAL:** To preserve, protect and maintain the town's historic and archaeological resources so as not to lose the past character of Hopkinton.
- 9. GOAL:** To continue the work of the Historical Preservation Commission by updating the listing of historic properties for possible designation in the National Registry.
- 10. GOAL:** To prepare an active program for maintenance of historical cemeteries in Hopkinton.
- 11. GOAL:** Establish Historic District Zoning.
- 12. GOAL:** Prepare a plan for the preservation of "Scenic Roadways" in Hopkinton.
- 13. GOAL:** Organize a public education program for residents of all ages of Hopkinton to inform the town's people of its historic and cultural history.

## **B. IMPLEMENTATION / ACTION PROGRAM**

As Stated in The Act, the Implementation! Action Program; "Defines and schedules for a period of (5) five years or more the specific public actions to be undertaken in order to achieve the goals and objectives of each element of the Comprehensive Plan. Scheduled expansion or replacement of public facilities and the anticipated costs and revenue sources proposed to meet those costs reflected in a municipality's Capital Improvement Program shall be included in the implementation program. The Implementation! Action Program shall identify the public actions necessary to implement the objectives and standards of each element of the Comprehensive Plan that require the adoption or amendment of codes and ordinances by the governing body of the municipality".

These Public actions include:

- 1. Legislative and Regulatory Actions**
- 2. New or Improved Public Services**
- 3. Capital Improvements Program**
- 4. Administrative or Management Actions**

**1. GOAL: To preserve, conserve, and protect the significant natural/cultural resources of Hopkinton as an endowment for the future of the town.**

**Policy:**

- Recognize the natural/cultural resources of the town and take appropriate actions to preserve and protect them.

**Recommendations:** *Review inventory of all natural/cultural features in Hopkinton*

*Categorize resources by type*

*Prepare specific strategies for preservation & protection*

*Implement actions to carry out the strategies*

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Council / Historic District Commission / Assistance from State Agencies (Le. DEM, HPC)

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**2. GOAL: To preserve surface and ground water resources to ensure safe and adequate drinking water supplies.**

**Policy:**

- Identify and protect present and future surface and ground water supplies.

**Recommendations:** *By consulting accurate ground water reservoir mapping, determine boundary lines*

*Inventory existing surface water resources*

*Convene a working group to study the adoption of Town-Wide Aquifer Protection Ordinance.*

*Review current ordinances. re: Drainage, Soil and Erosion Contro, and Wetland setbacks as they relate to surface water bodies in town*

*Review RIDEM regulations and policies as they apply to water resources in Hopkinton*

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Solicitor / Town Council/Town Public Works Director / Assistance from RIDEM

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)



**3. GOAL: To protect natural resources in Hopkinton by developing and implementing the proper local regulations and ordinances on a town-wide basis.**

**Policies:**

- Formulate and Implement a Town-Wide Aquifer Protection Ordinance, as consistent with goal 2, above
- Formulate and implement a Town-Wide Wastewater Management Facilities Plan
- Formulate and implement a Town-Wide Stormwater Management Ordinance
- Formulate and implement a Town-Wide Non-Point Source Management Plan
- Formulate and implement a Town-Wide Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance and/or Earth Removal Ordinance

**Recommendations:** *Review existing regulation and note deficiencies*

*Formulate and implement new regulations and ordinances, and/or improve existing regulations to incorporate enforceable standards*

*Include hazardous materials handling / storage requirements, and siting requirements for automobile junk yards in the Town-Wide Aquifer Protection Ordinance*

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Solicitor / Town Council / Town Public Works Director / Assistance from RIDEM

**Time Frame:** Long-term (5+ Years)

**4. GOAL: To preserve and protect wetland systems in harmony with state laws and regulations.**

**Policy:**

- Inventory and protect remaining valuable wetland Systems in Hopkinton.

**Recommendations:** *Complete review of mapped inventory of existing wetland systems in town*

*Categorize wetlands by size and type*

*Rank the most important wetlands*

*Review current town ordinances for measure of protection*

*Review current state regulations affecting wetlands*

Prepare amendments to local ordinances that will enhance the protection of valuable wetland Systems

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Solicitor / Town Council/Assistance from RIDEM

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**5. GOAL:** To continue efforts to preserve local agricultural operations and prime agricultural soils.

**Policy:**

- Identify key agricultural operations remaining in town and areas where prime agricultural soils are present and take necessary steps to preserve them.

**Recommendations:** Inventory existing agricultural operations in Hopkinton

Identify prime agricultural soils in town

In concert with Economic Development Goals and Policies, prepare programs to assist the agricultural operations that are viable businesses

Amend current ordinances to include soil erosion and sedimentation controls on development and on agricultural operations

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Solicitor / Town Council /Assistance from regional office of U.S. Soil Conservation Service

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**6. GOAL:** To expand the local school programs and better utilize the town's resources for educational purposes.

**Policy:**

- Evaluate the local school programs and incorporate the town's natural/cultural resources as part of the educational experience.

**Recommendations:** Examine the current school curriculum

Identify areas where a good match between program and resources would benefit the programs

Implement changes w the school curriculum

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Historic District Commission / Chariho School Department / Recreation Department / Assistance from RIDEM / Town Clerk

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

**7. GOAL:** To preserve and protect valuable wildlife habitat, including rare and endangered species.

**Policy:**

- Identify the key parcels of land where valuable wildlife habitat remains, as well as rare and endangered species, and take appropriate measures to preserve and protect.

**Recommendations:** Utilize state inventory mapping to identify important and valuable parcels of land which provide wildlife habitat for a variety of species

Examine the R.I. Heritage Program to identify any locations for occurrences of rare and endangered species, both plant and animal

Identify programs, grants, and alternative methods of purchasing properties

Evaluate options for preservation and protection without purchases, i.e. zoning changes

Work with state agencies and statewide organizations to further their efforts in the Town of Hopkinton

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years) & On-going

**8. GOAL:** To preserve, protect and maintain the town's historic and archaeological resources so as not to lose the past character of Hopkinton.

**Policy:**

- To recognize the significant historic and archaeological resources of Hopkinton and prepare actions to preserve and protect.

**Recommendations:** Identify key historic and archaeological places

Identify key historic and archaeological areas

Catalog past characteristics and features of historic and archaeological resources

Consult with the State Historic Preservation Office regarding development proposals and important cultural site locations which may require review by Native American Organizations, such as the NITHPO.

Review possible methods of preservation and protection

Implement actions

**Responsibility:** Historic District Commission / Town Council / Town Planner / Assistance from R.I. Historic Preservation Commission

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years) & On-going

**9. GOAL:** To continue the work of the R.I. Historical Preservation Commission by updating the listing of historic properties for possible designation in the National Registry.

**Policy:**

- Review current RIHPC report for Hopkinton and prepare updated listing of properties for consideration by the HPC and National Registry.

**Recommendations:** Review Preliminary Survey Report for the Town of Hopkinton, prepared by the RIHPC in 1976

Contact the HPC to determine if any properties have either been added to the list, or lost due to demolition

Study the possible inclusion of new "districts" in Hopkinton for nomination

Prepare revised listing to forward to the State HPC

**Responsibility:** Historic District Commission / Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Council / Assistance from the R.I. HPC

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**10. GOAL:** To prepare an active program for maintenance of historical cemeteries in Hopkinton.

**Policy:**

- To maintain and improve the condition of historical cemeteries in town.

**Recommendations:** *Review and update list of all historical cemeteries in Hopkinton*

*Review additional cemeteries which should be included*

*Prepare a condition survey of each cemetery*

*Prepare a maintenance and improvement program*

**Responsibility:** Tax Assessors Office / RIHPC / Town Historic District Commission / Town Public Works Department

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years) & On-going

**11. GOAL: Establish Historic District Zoning.**

**Policy:**

- Evaluate the merits of establishing a Historic District Zoning Ordinance in Hopkinton as a means of effectuating the goals and policies of this element.

**Recommendations:** *Investigate the role and duties of the Historic District Commission for Hopkinton*

*Investigate the possible format for a Historic District Zoning Ordinance*

*If acceptable, adopt a new Historic District Zoning Ordinance*

**Responsibility:** Historic District Commission / Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Solicitor / Town Council / Assistance from RIHPC

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

**12. GOAL: Prepare a plan for the preservation of "Scenic Roadways" in Hopkinton.**

**Policy:**

- Identify the roadways in Hopkinton that are scenic in nature and prepare a methodology for their preservation.

**Recommendations:** *Examine the roadway network in Hopkinton based on a set of criteria which determines whether it is "scenic" in nature*

*Rank these roadways according to a priority of scenic value*

*Determine a range of alternative methods for preservation of roadway characteristics*

*Implement roadway preservation based on priority, feasibility and impact*

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Planning Board / Historic District Commission / Town Highway Department / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years) & On-going

**13. GOAL:** Organize a public education program for residents of all ages of Hopkinton to inform the town's people of its history and culture.

**Policy:**

- Prepare an education program for all town residents that will continue to encourage its citizens that historic structures, artifacts and documents are worthy of preservation, that preservation requires public tax dollar and private financial support, and that the Town Hall can be utilized as a "classroom".

**Recommendations:** *Insure that existing and additional historic records are preserved in a proper manner and in a suitable location*

*Prepare education program*

*Develop plan to utilize Town Hall as a "classroom" facility*

*Seek funding for preservation efforts and education program*

**Responsibility:** Historic Preservation Commission / Town Council / Town Clerk / Assistance from RIHPC

**Time Frame:** Ongoing

## **C. SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- 1. Conservation and Development Plan - Town of Hopkinton - 1980**  
Land Use Guide - Planning Board
- 2. Rhode Island Forest Resources management Plan - April 1984**  
RI. Office of State Planning & R.I. Division of Forest Environment
- 3. R.I. Landscape Inventory - January 1990**  
RI. Department of Environmental Management
- 4. Rhode Island Primary Wood Producers Directory - May 1990**  
Rhode Island Division of Forest Environment
- 5. Preliminary Survey Report - Town of Hopkinton - June 1975**  
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission
- 6. Rhode Island National Heritage Program**  
Rhode Island DEM - Division of Planning & Development
- 7. Rhode Island Geographical Information System (RIGIS)**
- 8. Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission**
- 9. The State of the State's Waters- Rhode Island. A Report to Congress (pL94-500, 305b)**  
Rhode Island DEM
- 10. URI Environmental Data Center, Rhode Island Atlas**  
<http://www.edc.uri/riatlas>

# APPENDIX A





STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Department of Environmental Management  
DIVISION OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT 83  
Park Street  
Providence, R.I. 02903 - 1037

March 16, 1990

Sarah Porter  
PO Box 371  
West Kingston, RI 02892

RE: Rare Species in Hopkinton

Dear Ms. Porter,

Thank you for contacting the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program regarding rare species and ecologically significant natural communities in Hopkinton, for use in the town's comprehensive planning efforts.

Attached please find a list of rare species occurring, either presently or historically, in Hopkinton. Scientific name, common name, taxonomic family, and date of last observation listed; the fields SRANK, MARG, and EORANK are for in-house storage and interpretation. The field SPROT indicates the Department of Environmental Management's official state protection status for each species - please see the attached rare species lists for an explanation of these ranks. The fields PREC and CONF code for the precision with which we know the location of the element, and the status of confirmation by Heritage staff, respectively - any occurrence with an "S" precision and confirmation status of "Y" is assumed to be extant.

Also enclosed are copies of topographic maps showing the approximate boundaries of rare species habitat areas. Please feel free to make these maps available to the appropriate town officials for general environmental review purposes; if there is a proposal for alteration within or adjacent to any of the areas outlined in red, please contact this office as soon as possible for more information.

Of particular interest in Hopkinton are the following sites:

Ell Pond is the state's only National Natural Landmark. Owned by the Nature Conservancy, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, the R.I. Department of Environmental Management, and private individuals, this area offers a significant level bog community, several types of deciduous wetland, dense hemlock and rhododendron stands, and unusual bedrock ledges. The only known threat to this site is destruction of the fragile bog vegetation caused by careless hikers. Nearby Blue Pond provides valuable

March 16, 1990  
Sarah Porter  
Page Two

habitat for invertebrates of interest. These properties combine with the Boy Scout's Yawgoog Reservation to protect a significant amount of land in Hopkinton. Additional acquisitions or protection through other means of adjacent parcels would add to the viability of the Ell Pond/Blue Pond/Yawgoog complex.

The-isolated parcel of land bounded by the railroad and the Pawcatuck River, just upstream from the Bradford dam, contains an assemblage of communities practically unrivalled in the state. The quagmire, bog, floodplain swamp, and pitch pine barren habitats found in this area support at least 17 occurrences of rare plants and animals. The Nature Conservancy has approached the landowner regarding possible protection activities; negotiations are pending at this time.

Grassy Pond is a unique natural community with rare coastal plain flora. This area is targeted for further fieldwork to verify and quantify rare species occurrences.

The area just west of the Wood River and south of Route 95 appears to be one of the most viable sites in the state for the state Threatened Spade foot Toad (Scaphiopus holbrookii) and other amphibians. The actual extent of the Spade foot population is unknown but it certainly includes wetlands used for breeding as well as adjacent upland areas used during other stages of its life cycle. Any alteration of the land use in this area should be critically reviewed by this office.

Please contact us for further details if the town wishes to consider options such as protective zoning or acquisition of buffer areas for these significant sites.

I hope this information will be of use to you in your conservation efforts. As our inventory is ongoing, more data may become available in the future; please contact me at a later date for updates.

Sincerely,

Joanne Michaud  
Data Manager/Environmental Planner  
Natural Heritage Program

JM/jm  
Encl.  
cc: Randy Tate



Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program  
 300 West Street  
 Providence, Rhode Island 02903 (401) 277-2776

are Species and Exemplary Natural Communities in Hopkinton as of 16 FEB 1990: Page 2

SCIENTIFIC NAME.....	COMMON NAME.....	FAMILY.....	SRANK: SPROT	LASTOBS.....	PREC	CONF	MARG	EO RANK
NEW ENGLAND PITCH PINE-SCRUB OAK BARREN	NEW ENGLAND PITCH PINE/SCRUB OAK BARREN		S1	1987-10-02	S	Y	49	A
SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND LEVEL BOG	SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND LEVEL BOG		S3	1987	S	Y	20	C
SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND LEVEL BOG	SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND LEVEL BOG		S3	1987-10-02	S	Y	46	A
ESHNA MUTATA		AESHNIDAE	S17	1986	S	Y	66	
PELIS TRUNCATARIA	A GEOMETRID MOTH	GEOMETRIDAE	S2S3	1986-SUMM	S	Y	67	A
UFIDONIA DISCOPIIATA		GEOMETRIDAE	S3	1986-05-14	S	Y	77	
ITHOPHANE VIRIDIPALLENS	A PINION MOTH	NOCTUIDAE	S2S3	1985-10-10	S	Y	50	
ANNOTHEMIS BELLA		LIBELLULIDAE	S7	1986-SUMM	S	Y	65	B?
EHALENNIA IRENE		COENAGRIONIDAE	S7	1986-05-14	S	Y	51	
YLOTYPE CAPAX		NOCTUIDAE	S2S4	1985-10	S	Y	78	

STATE ENDANGERED SPECIES IN RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program

and

Rhode Island Endangered Species Program



May, 1989

Introduction:

Title 20 of the General Laws of the state of Rhode Island allows the Director of the Department of Environmental Management to declare any species of plant or animal as "endangered" in the state. This law states, in part (20-37-3):

"No person shall buy, sell, offer for sale, store, transport, import, export, or otherwise traffic in any animal or plant or any part of any animal or plant whether living, dead, processed, manufactured, preserved or raw (if) such animal or plant has been declared to be an endangered species by either the United States secretaries of the Interior or Commerce or the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management."

For the past ten years, the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program has been reviewing the historical and current status of those species of plants and animals initially suspected of being rare or declining in this state. Research has included consultation with local and regional experts, examination of herbarium and museum specimens, review of literature, and field surveys to augment existing knowledge. The species presented as endangered in this document are those for which a long-term decline is demonstrable, or those which exist in so few localities that they could easily become extirpated from Rhode Island in the near future.

Federally Listed Species:

There are currently eight species of animals and two plant species listed as endangered or threatened species by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1972, which are known to occur in Rhode Island. Six of these (four species of sea turtles, the Peregrine Falcon, and the Bald Eagle) occur in this state only as transients or migrants. Federally listed species are not assigned additional state status because they have already been given the highest level of protection available by the federal government.

## State Endangered Species:

It is the purpose of the state endangered species list to give formal protection to those species which, although not listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, have nonetheless markedly declined or currently occur in such low numbers statewide that extirpation is imminent in the foreseeable future.

A. Plants: Of the approximately 1400 native plant species documented as occurring in Rhode Island, 54 (3%) are considered to be endangered. These species meet one or more of the following criteria:

- 1). Species currently under review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for potential inclusion as federally endangered/threatened.
- 2). Species known or estimated to occur at 1 or 2 localities in Rhode Island.
- 3). Species known to occur at 3 or more localities in Rhode Island, but which exist at 100 or less sites throughout their entire global ranges.

B. Invertebrate Animals: Censusing of priority invertebrate species has only begun within the past three years, and is incomplete at this time. At a future date, more species will be added to the state endangered list according to criteria similar to those for plants (see above). At the present time, only those species currently under review for federal status by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service which are known to occur in Rhode Island are included on the state list.

C. Vertebrate Animals: Species considered to be state endangered are those which are native and viable (i.e., for birds this means nesting species) and for which a long-term decline in Rhode Island can be clearly demonstrated. All of the species included are also declining as breeding species in the region (southern New England and New York). These species are currently known to occur in less than two sites state-wide or have very low population levels in Rhode Island, and are in danger of extirpation in the foreseeable future.

Extirpated Species: There are approximately 50 species of plants, 2 species of invertebrate animals, and 10 species of vertebrates which are known to have been well-established in Rhode Island historically, but for which no current site is known. These taxa are considered to be extirpated from the state. Rediscovery of viable populations of these species would prompt an assessment for state endangered status.

State Endangered Plant Species in Rhode Island

Scientific Name	Common Name	Number of Extant Species
<u>Lycopodium annotinum</u>	Stiff Clubmoss	1
<u>Lycopodium inundatum</u> var. <u>robustum</u>	Northern Bog Clubmoss	1
<u>Asplenium montanum</u>	Mountain Spleenwort	1
<u>Asplenium rhizophyllum</u>	Walking Fern	1
<u>Pellaea atropurpurea</u>	Purple Cliff-brake	1
<u>Scheuchzeria palustris</u>	Pod Grass	1
<u>Sagittaria teres</u>	Slender Arrowhead	3
<u>Carex collinsii</u>	Collins' Sedge	1
<u>Carex polymorpha</u>	Variable Sedge	1
<u>Carex walteriana</u> var. <u>brevis</u>	Walter's Sedge	1
<u>Eleocharis melanocarpa</u>	Black-fruited Spike-rush	1
<u>Eleocharis tricostata</u>	Three-angled Spike-rush	1
<u>Fuirena pumila</u>	Umbrella Grass	2
<u>Psilocarya scirpoides</u>	Long-beaked Bald Rush	2
<u>Scirpus etuberculatus</u>	Untubercled Bulrush	1
<u>Scirpus longii</u>	Long's Bulrush	1
<u>Rhynchospora inundata</u>	Inundated Horned Rush	4
<u>Rhynchospora torreyana</u>	Torrey's Beaked Rush	2
<u>Scleria pauciflora</u>	Few Flowered Nut-rush	2
<u>Scleria triquemerata</u>	Tall Nut-rush	1
<u>Orontium aquaticum</u>	Golden Club	1
<u>Orchis spectabilis</u>	Showy Orchid	1
<u>Malaxis unifolia</u>	Green Adder's Mouth	2
<u>Platanthera ciliaris</u>	Yellow Fringed Orchid	1
<u>Platanthera flava</u> var. <u>herbiola</u>	Pale Green Orchid	3
<u>Platanthera hookeri</u>	Hooker's Orchid	1
<u>Spiranthes tuberosa</u> var. <u>grayi</u>	Little Ladies'-tresses	1
<u>Saururus cernuus</u>	Lizard's Tail	1
<u>Arceuthobium pusillum</u>	Dwarf Mistletoe	1
<u>Polypogonum puritanorum</u>	Pondshore Knotweed	1
<u>Minuartia glabra</u>	Smooth Sandwort	2
<u>Minuartia stricta</u>	Rock Sandwort	2
<u>Clematis occidentalis</u>	Purple Clematis	1
<u>Caulophyllum thalictroides</u>	Blue Cohosh	1
<u>Adlumia fungosa</u>	Climbing Fumitory	2
<u>Cardamine longii</u>	Long's Bitter Cress	1
<u>Drosera filiformis</u>	Thread-leaved Sundew	1
<u>Dalibarda repens</u>	Dewdrop	1
<u>Sanguisorba canadensis</u>	Canadian Burnet	1
<u>Linum intercursum</u>	Sandplain Flax	1
<u>Linum sulcatum</u>	Grooved Flax	1
<u>Helianthemum dumosum</u>	Bushy Rockrose	4
<u>Rotala ramosior</u>	Toothcup	1
<u>Ludwigia sphaerocarpa</u>	Round-fruited False Loosestrife	1
<u>Aralia racemosa</u>	Spikenard	1
<u>Hydrocotyle verticillata</u>	Saltpond Pennywort	1

State Endangered Plants of Rhode Island (continued)

Scientific Name	Common Name	Number of Extant Species
<u>Andromeda polifolia</u>	Bog Rosemary	1
<u>Kalmia polifolia</u>	Pale Laurel	1
<u>Sabatia kennedyana</u>	Plymouth Gentian	3
<u>Stachys hyssopifolia</u>	Hyssop-leaf Hedge-nettle	2
<u>Houstonia longifolia</u>	Long-leaved Bluets	1
<u>Eupatorium leucolepis</u> var. <u>novae-anqliae</u>	New England Boneset	5
<u>Liatris borealis</u>	Northern Blazing Star	4
<u>Sclerolepis uniflora</u>	Sclerolepis	1

State Endangered Invertebrate Animals

Scientific Name	Common Name
<u>Enallagma recurvatum</u>	Barrens Bluet Damselfly
<u>Williamsonia lintneri</u>	Banded Bog Skimmer Dragonfly
<u>Nicrophorus americanus</u>	American Burying Beetle
<u>Speyeria idalia</u>	Regal Fritillary Butterfly

State Endangered Vertebrate Animals

Scientific Name	Common Name
<u>Botaurus lentiginosus</u>	American Bittern
<u>Circus cyaneus</u>	Northern Harrier
<u>Icteria virens</u>	Yellow-breasted Chat
<u>Poocetes gramineus</u>	Vesper Sparrow

Federally Listed Species

In addition to those species shown above, the following Rhode Island species are listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

Scientific Name	Common Name
<u>Isotria medeoloides</u>	Small Whorled Pogonia
<u>Aqalinis acuta</u>	Sandplain Gerardia
<u>Caretta c. caretta</u>	Atlantic Loggerhead
<u>Chelonia m. mydas</u>	Atlantic Green Turtle
<u>Dermochelys c. coriacea</u>	Atlantic Leatherback
<u>Lepidochelys kempfi</u>	Atlantic Ridley
<u>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</u>	Bald Eagle
<u>Falco peregrinus</u>	Peregrine Falcon
<u>Charadrius melodus</u>	Piping Plover
<u>Sterna dougallii</u>	Roseate Tern



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## **A. INTRODUCTION**

**Purpose:** The ability of public facilities and services to meet the needs of the population is directly related to rate of growth and population change. Furthermore, the demand for specific services is dependent on the impact of change on a variety of functional areas of the community. The comprehensive planning process, therefore, must respect this relationship by providing the framework within which to forecast and anticipate the future demands that the community must meet. Similarly, it is necessary to assess the community's ability to supply services at a level that is consistent with the stated goals of the community both now and in the future.

### **State Planning Act Requirements:**

According to the R.I. Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, the Services and Facilities Element shall:

"Provide an inventory of existing and forecasted needs for facilities and services used by the public such as, but not limited to, educational facilities, public safety, water, sanitary sewers, libraries and community facilities. The Policies and implementation techniques must be identified for inclusion in the implementation program element."

The Act also requires consistency with:

State Guide Plan Elements

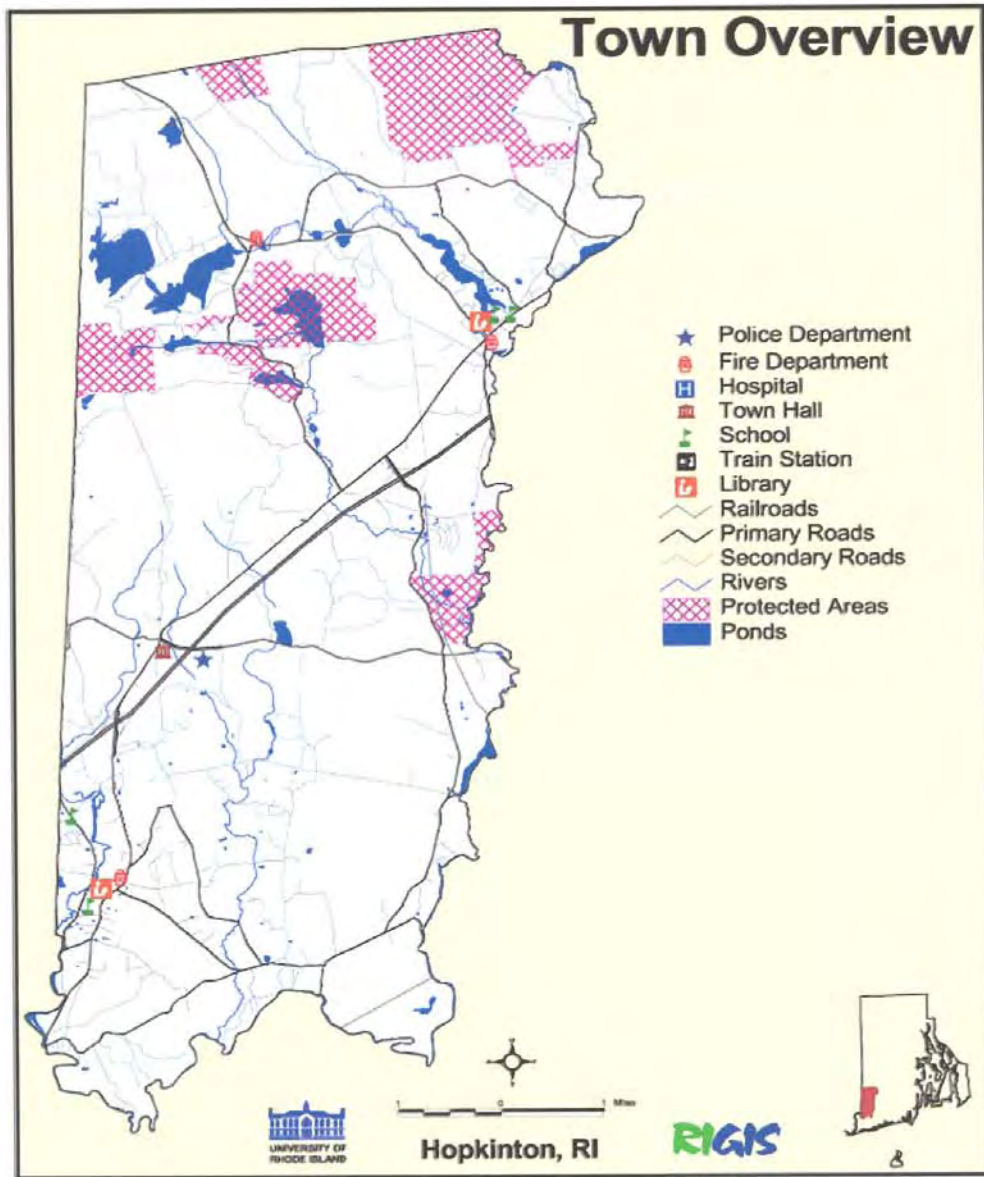
110 - Goals and Policies

121 - Land Use 2010; State Land Use Policies and Plan

## **B. INVENTORY**

This section contains a description of the service/facility, personnel, and equipment for each of Hopkinton's services and facilities. The inventory is followed by a discussion of issues related to the facility or service. Figure III-1 illustrates the locations of the major community facilities within the town.

The information for this section was obtained from interviews with town officials and from technical research. In 1991, department representatives and/or commission members were interviewed concerning their respective public service activities. Technical publications concerning Hopkinton's public services were reviewed. Pertinent information from these studies was summarized and included as part of this report.



**Figure III-1. General Facilities Map for Hopkinton, RI.**  
(Source: R.I. Critical Resources Atlas: [www.edc.uri.edu/riatlas](http://www.edc.uri.edu/riatlas))

## **1. Public Safety**

### **Police Department**

#### **Inventory**

The Hopkinton Police Department is located on Woodville Road. The department currently has a staff of sixteen personnel. The staff includes eight patrolmen, one sergeant, one lieutenant, and the Chief of Police. There are also four dispatchers and a clerk / secretary. The department operates six patrol cars, which are being replaced at a rate of two per year.

#### **Issues**

According to Chief George Weeden, the department is adequately staffed and is able to provide a high level of service to the community. With the assistance of the reserve officers the staff is adequate to meet the town's needs.

The Police Department is located in the Public Works Building. The space conditions for the Police Department are inadequate in that facility. The Police Department should be located within its own facility to provide optimum space and security conditions.

### **Fire Protection**

Hopkinton's fire protection is divided into two separate fire districts, each operated through state-chartered corporations with individual taxing powers. The districts include Hope Valley / Wyoming, which also services part of the Town of Richmond, and the Ashaway Fire District. The town is served primarily by volunteer call personnel.

#### **Hope Valley / Wyoming Fire District**

#### **Inventory**

The Hope Valley / Wyoming Fire District operates three fire stations located in Hope Valley, Alton, and Yawgoog. The stations in these areas are located as follows:

Hope Valley: Main Street

Alton: Church Street

Yawgoog: Sub-Station at Camp Yawgoog off Camp Yawgoog Road, Rockville. Station is owned by the R.I. Boy Scouts.

Combined the stations operate fourteen vehicles; eight pumper trucks, two 4-wheel drive brush units, two tankers, one six-wheel drive brush unit and one heavy rescue unit.

#### **Issues**

District Chief Frederick Stanley feels that the greatest challenge facing the district will be the recruitment of sufficient volunteer personnel. In particular he feels there is a shortage of personnel able to respond during the day, as most of the day volunteers are currently housewives. He attributes this shortage to a change in demographics, namely an increasing number of residents that have moved to Hopkinton from the city who commute to work and are therefore

unavailable during the day. The chief also noted that the physical standards and training requirements for call personnel are now equal to the stringent requirements for full-time personnel. He feels that although these are good requirements, they add to the difficulty of recruiting sufficient numbers of personnel.

In order to keep pace with future development in Hopkinton, a ladder truck and hazardous material vehicle may be needed.

### Ashaway Fire District

#### **Inventory**

The Ashaway Fire Station operates two pumper trucks, one tanker, three brush trucks and a rescue truck. The station is staffed by call (volunteer) personnel.

#### **Issues**

Michael Williams, Assistant Fire Chief for the Ashaway Fire District, feels that the town should consider fire safety when reviewing new subdivisions. Supplementary water sources and construction on dead end or cul-de-sac streets should be considered when examining subdivisions. The access to dead end and cul-de-sac streets for fire equipment is limited.

### Rescue Services

#### **Inventory**

The town has two rescue companies. One is located in Ashaway and the other in Hope Valley.

#### **Issues**

Since the rescue service is dependent on call personnel, it is important to maintain an adequate number of volunteers with the proper training. Similar to the fire district on call personnel, most of the volunteers work outside of town and there is a need for personnel during the day.

## **2. Recreation**

The Hopkinton Recreation Department is located in the Crandall House on a 60-acre site on Main Street in the Ashaway section of town. The department offers year round activities for residents of all ages. These include aerobics, arts and crafts, tennis, volleyball, swimming lessons and town-wide day trips. In addition, the Recreation Department organizes and sponsors social events throughout the year, including; Colonial Craft Festival, Fishing Contest, Christmas House Decorating Contest, Five Mile Road Race, and an Easter Egg Hunt.

#### **Issues**

Ms. Laurie Fisher, Recreation Director, was interviewed regarding recreation issues in the town. The following information was derived from these discussions.

Purchase of a transportation van to assist in transporting elderly residents and special needs populations.

Paving of the parking lot at the Crandall Field.

Ongoing improvements are needed in the parks. The following areas are in need of improvements:

1. New basketball courts at Crandall Field, and repairs to clay tennis courts.
2. Fields at Crandall House need re-grading for proper drainage.
3. Playing fields need improving including new backstops and re-grading.

Continued acquisition of Open Space in Hopkinton

### **3. Municipal Offices**

The municipal offices are located in Town Hall at Town House Road which is directly off Route 3. Steven Turano, Tax Assessor and Jenarita Aldrich, Town Clerk were interviewed regarding municipal issues. The following information was derived from these discussions.

#### **Inventory**

The town has recognized the need for improving work space at the Town Hall and has made several improvements to provide adequate office space and address special requirements. The overall goal appears to be to keep the municipal offices within the existing area, maintain a central public service area, and continue the convenience of the current location. A study committee was organized to examine the feasibility of moving some of the town's offices to the Thayer House, which is adjacent to the Town Hall. The Committee decided it was a feasible project. Rehabilitation has begun on the Thayer House to make it suitable for town offices.

No handicap access to the restrooms.

Lack of adequate working space.

Town Hall is lacking some modern support service space such as mail/copy room, and conference rooms.

### **4. Library**

#### **Inventory**

Hopkinton has two public libraries, the Ashaway and Langworthy. Each library has its own Board of Directors and receives budgeted monies from the town and the state. The Ashaway Library houses approximately 16,000 volumes with program emphasis on adult informational, recreational and juvenile developmental materials. The Langworthy has 22,000 volumes. In addition to providing material for adults and juveniles, the Langworthy Library also has several special collections. It contains a local history archive, a reference section and a large print collection.

#### **Issues**

Ms. Lynn Thompson, Director of the Langworthy Library, feels that additional space will be

needed over the next five to ten years to accommodate library growth. Ms. Thompson noted that the basement of the library building was recently renovated to support the children's collection.

## **5. Public Works Facilities / Services**

### **Inventory**

The Public Works Facility is located on Woodville Road in the same building as the Police Station. The department's staff consists of a director (highway surveyor), foreman and six workers. The department's primary responsibility is local road maintenance and maintenance of the town's public buildings.

### **Issues**

The discussion with Mr. Lawrence Webber, Highway Supervisor, identified a concern with the reliability of aged equipment. Reliability is decreased when using aged equipment and spare parts are often difficult to acquire. When the equipment needs to be replaced, trade-in value is lower and therefore, the immediate cost of replacement is sometimes greater. The supervisor identified a need for the following new pieces of equipment:

Fail Mower	Street Sweeper	Case 450-D Backhoe / Loader
Road Sanding Unit	Tractor	Snowplow Unit
Aerial lift	Case W-14 Loader	

## **6. Social Services**

### **Senior Citizens, Youths & Special Need Individuals**

Hopkinton has an elderly population that is expected to increase moderately over the next five years. Currently, people over 60 years of age make up 11.5% of the town's population. By 1995 it is projected that people over 60 years of age will make up approximately 13% of the town's population. This increasing number of seniors creates a need for activities, transportation, housing, and other services relating to this age group. Hopkinton also has a large percentage of its population below the age of seventeen (17) years of age. This age group currently accounts for 26.6% of the town's population. In 1995 it is projected to account for 26.2% of the town's population.

Ms. Laurie Fisher, the Recreational Director, for Hopkinton was interviewed regarding elderly and youth issues. The following information was derived from these discussions.

### **Inventory**

The Crandall House serves as a Senior Center. Hot meals and recreation activities are offered to the seniors at the Crandall House daily. An adjoining building functions as a Community Center. Youth organization such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts utilize this building to hold their meetings. There may be a need for improvements to these facilities in the future to accommodate the growing number of seniors.



**Issues**

There appears to be a need for van services to assist senior transportation to the center. A van transportation program is currently offered by South County Intra-Rural Transportation System (SCIRTS) but this program could be supplemented with a van operated by the Recreation Department. The van should also be equipped with a handicap lift. There may also be a need to expand the range of social services offered by the Town to accommodate any growth in a special needs population in the future, in order to assure equality of access for all Hopkinton Residents.

**7. Water Supply**

**Inventory**

There is no public/municipal water supply system in the Town of Hopkinton at this time. Most current users rely on individual or community wells for their water supply. The community wells are for multi-family housing units and are not available for town-wide use. Table III-1 identifies the community wells in Hopkinton.

**Table III-1. Community Wells in Hopkinton**

<b>NAME OF WELLS</b>	<b>DWELLING UNITS SERVED (TOTAL)</b>
Canonchet Cliffs Elderly Housing #1 & #2	137
Lindbrook Green #1 & #2	74
Bethel Village #1 & #2	50

Other individual groundwater wells in Hopkinton, also referred to as "non-community" wells, draw water from the aquifers for use in schools, churches, factories, restaurants, as well as for a variety of other uses.

The source of drinking water for the majority of Hopkinton residents is the Lower Wood River / Pawcatuck River aquifer. The Wood River forms the town's easterly border with Richmond and the Pawcatuck River forms the town's southerly boundary with Charlestown.

The adequacy of a water supply source is determined by its ability to satisfy average daily demand. Average daily demand is usually estimated by determining the average daily consumption of water per person per day and multiplying that number by the total population of residents to be serviced. Average daily consumption per resident is expressed in gallons per capita per day (OPCD). For household use, the per capita requirements for water range between 20 and 90 gallons per day, with a reasonable average of 75 gallons per day. Municipal water use should, however, also include commercial use, small industrial use, public use, and losses in the system. A typical distribution for an average town is given in Table III-2. Table III-2 also identifies the average OPCD for a town as 165 OPCD.

**Table III-2. Typical Water Distribution**

<b>USER</b>	<b>USE GPCD</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL</b>
Household	75	46
Commercial	20	12
Industrial	45	27
Public	15	9
Loss	10	6
Total	165	100

To determine the adequacy of the water supply, it is necessary to determine the population to be serviced by the Hopkinton water supply, for the planning period 1990 - 2010.

Table III-3 illustrates the projected water demand for the planning period 1990 - 2010. This demand is based on the population forecast detailed in other elements of this Plan.

**Table III-3. Anticipated Future Water Demand**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>POPULATION</b>	<b>DEMAND (GPD)</b>
1990	6,873	1,134,045
1995	6,909	1,139,985
2000	7,167	1,182,555
2005	7,360	1,214,400
2010	7,533	1,242,945

The primary source of water for the town is the ground water from the Lower Wood River / Pawcatuck River aquifer. An aquifer is a formation of soils or rock with the capability to store large volumes of water. An aquifer can be composed of consolidated material such as limestone rock or unconsolidated material such as sand and gravel. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) mapped and evaluated aquifer deposits within the town. The USGS report "*Hydrogeology, Water Quality, and Groundwater Development Alternatives in the Lower Wood River Groundwater Reservoir, RI*" was used to identify aquifers within the study area.

Groundwater is present beneath the surface of the earth in voids created by the openings in rock fractures or openings between soil particles. Aquifers are evaluated on the basis of amount of void spaces. The more important aquifers are those that have the most void space. These are the aquifers that can store and produce the largest volumes of water. The type of soil material and the depth of soil material directly determine the amount of void space.

Deposits, which consist of layers of sand, gravel, silt and clays, are termed stratified drift deposits. The shape, arrangement and uniformity of soil particles within unconsolidated deposits influence the quantity of water that can be stored. Material deposits consisting of uniformly sized particles are termed well sorted and usually provide the greater amount of void space for water storage.

The depth of the material is also important. In aquifers, the depth of material below the water table is referred to as saturated thickness. Saturated thickness is defined as the distance between the water table and the base of the aquifer. The base of the aquifer, in most cases, is an impermeable material such as bedrock or till. The deeper the depth of the material, the more space in the material to store water.

The type of the material and the depth of the material are the primary determinants used in evaluating aquifers. Transmissivity is also used to characterize aquifer deposits. Transmissivity is the unit of measurement for assessing an aquifer's potential water yield. It is expressed in units of feet squared per day and indicates the permeability of soil deposits. Generally, the more permeable the deposits the greater the potential water storage and water yield of the aquifer.

The main aquifer deposits are along the Lower Wood River, Canonchet Brook, and Brushy Brook / Locustville Pond. (Note: the Brushy Brook / Locustville Pond Area is not within the aforementioned USGS report study area)

The predominant geological cover in Hopkinton is till with stratified drift in the lowlands adjoining streams and brooks (See Natural Resources Element). Most of Hopkinton's current domestic wells are located within the bedrock and till surface cover. Till wells are only capable of yielding small quantities of water. The USGS report indicates that "wells in till range from 1 to 10 gallons per minute with a median yield of 4 gallons per minute". Till wells are suitable for individual domestic water production but usually cannot yield sufficient water for a community's needs. The stratified drift deposits are the primary source for wells with sufficient yield for community requirements.

The saturated thickness of the stratified-drift aquifer along the eastern bank of the Wood River in Hopkinton averages 70 feet, with an average transmissivity of 8,600 square feet/day. These stratified-drift deposits are therefore potentially capable of producing well yields of 350 gallons per minute or greater. Studies conducted by the USGS have estimated that the Lower Wood River aquifer is capable of a maximum safe yield of 6 million gallons per day (MGPD). The study of Wood River aquifer concluded, "that the Lower Wood River ground water reservoir can sustain an average daily yield of 6 MGPD to 10 MGPD with minimal effect on streamflow, pond levels, and ground water levels under long-term hydrological conditions." Therefore, the lower Wood River aquifer is capable of meeting the water demands of Hopkinton and its neighboring towns.

### **Issues**

The town has received state and federal funds to bring public water into the Village of Hope Valley, from the Richmond Water System. Hope Valley is a densely populated area of the town that relies upon well water and individual on-site waste disposal system. Because of the highly permeable sand and gravel outwash soils, contaminants from the septic systems can move into the water wells. A recent well testing program conducted by Pare Engineering found high coliform counts.

In 1979, a water supply study recommended that in order to provide public water to Hope Valley, the Town of Hopkinton should develop a community well in the Wood River aquifer

capable of supplying 400 GPM. This well and a corresponding distribution and storage system could provide an adequate community water supply, should the demand be demonstrated in the future.

The gasoline contaminated water in the Canob Park area of Richmond required two oil companies to share in the cost of developing a public water system to provide water to that area. The system, which was developed in Richmond includes a well, a storage facility, and distribution mains. This system has surplus capacity and is in close proximity to Hope Valley and is therefore capable of providing limited service to Hope Valley.

The water line extension of 4000 linear feet as designed, will service the Village of Hope Valley from the Hopkinton Town Line to Spring Street. At present, there are no plans to extend the water lines beyond this area of Hope Valley in the future.

## **8. Wastewater Disposal**

### **Inventory**

There are no regional or local wastewater facilities servicing the Town of Hopkinton. Existing development relies on individual on-site subsurface sewage disposal systems (ISDS). On-site wastewater disposal systems are generally an effective and acceptable means for domestic wastewater disposal. For an individual sewage disposal system to operate effectively, it must be properly maintained. If the system is not properly designed and maintained, contaminants could enter the groundwater causing water quality degradation and potential health problems.

### **Issues**

Wastewater disposal is important in Hopkinton since most of its land area contributes to the Wood River and Pawcatuck River watershed and aquifers. Both of these watersheds have been identified as having the potential of providing a source for municipal water supply. An individual wastewater disposal system requires maintenance, which means cleaning or pumping out the system generally every three years. Failure of the system can occur when the system is improperly designed, poorly constructed, or poorly maintained; such as when solids accumulate in the Septic tank and spill out into the leaching field. This causes the filtration media in the leach field to become compromised, and therefore allows minimally treated wastewater to enter the soil and adjacent groundwater. The town should consider septic system management and water conservation when formulating regulations as consistent with Goals 2 and 3 of the Natural/Cultural Resources Element of this Plan. These alternatives are management strategies which individuals may use to remedy or minimize wastewater problems in the future.

## **9. Public Schools**

### **Inventory**

The Town of Hopkinton is part of the Chariho Regional School District, which also includes the Towns of Chariest own and Richmond. The district operates four elementary schools; Ashaway, Charlestown, Hope Valley, and Richmond. A high school (grades 9-12), and a new middle school (grades 5-8) are also operated by the district for the three towns.

Table III-4 illustrates the historical enrollment by school for the years 1988-1990. The enrollment data was provided by the School District. As illustrated on Table III-4, the school total enrollment has increased slightly between the years 1989 and 1990. The increase represents a slight increase in the middle school from high school. The large increase in middle school enrollment and the large decrease in elementary school enrollment between the years 1988 and 1989 does not represent a change in enrollment. It reflects the opening of the new middle school. Students in grades 5-6 were shifted from the elementary schools to the middle school.

**Table III-4. School Enrollment Data 1988-1990**

<b>SCHOOLS</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1990</b>
Ashaway	395	272	266
Charlestown	593	471	455
Hope Valley	328	249	252
Richmond	698	508	519
Middle School	421	1000	1032
High School	994	927	957
<b>Total</b>	<b>3429</b>	<b>3427</b>	<b>3481</b>

The percentages of students from each of the three towns are illustrated in Table III-5. Over the three-year period, the percentages have remained fairly constant. Richmond's proportional share increased by one percentage point while Hopkinton's decreased by a percentage point.

**Table III-5. Enrollment Percentage by Town**

<b>TOWN</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1990</b>
Charlestown	27.6%	28.3%	28.36%
Richmond	33.89%	33.6%	34.06%
Hopkinton	38.51 %	38.1%	37.58%

The school enrollment projections were provided by the School District. Enrollment forecasts are a function of population growth primarily related to resident births and in- migration. The projections are most reliable for future years closer to the base year. Therefore, it is important to update enrollment forecasts by using each new years actual enrollment. Table III-6 illustrates the enrollment projections for the years 1992-1996, for the elementary, middle, and high school grade levels.

**Table III-6. Enrollment Projections 1992-1996**

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>
Elementary	1494	1499	1506	1469	1483
Middle	1066	1102	1131	1180	1174
High	988	1044	1091	1115	1191
Total	3548	3645	3728	3764	3848

As illustrated in Table III-4 and III-6, the School District is forecasting a total increase of 367 students over the 1990 school enrollment of 3,481 during the time period 1992 - 1996. This represents approximately a 10 percent increase over current (1990) school enrollment. The largest percentage increase is expected to occur in the high school, with a percentage increase of approximately 24 percent. Elementary schools are projected to actually lose enrollment, with a percentage decrease of one-half of one percent.

**Issues**

The physical plants of Hopkinton's Elementary Schools are in need of improvements. Some of these school buildings have deteriorating conditions, which are less than an ideal setting for learning.

**10. Solid Waste**

**Inventory**

The town's landfill on Stubtown Road has been closed. The town is currently under contract with the Town of Westerly to utilize the Westerly transfer station. Residents in the Town of Hopkinton choosing to bring their non-recyclable waste to the Westerly landfill, pay a yearly tipping fee. The Comprehensive Plan survey showed that residents are concerned about solid waste disposal, and rated it as the community service most in need of improvement. In the survey, it was also identified as an issue that represents an existing or growing problem. The town has recently begun to participate in the state recycling program.

**Issues**

The town has an agreement with Westerly to utilize its transfer facility. While this arrangement provides for current solid waste disposal needs, it may not be the long term solution. The Department of Environmental Management, working with the town, examined the feasibility of Hopkinton operating their own facility for recycling. It was determined that Hopkinton could not generate enough annual tonnage to economically support such a facility. A collaborative venture with neighboring towns seems to be the most economical solution.

## **11. Emergency Management**

### **Inventory**

The Town of Hopkinton currently has an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), that was adopted by the Town in May of 1992. The Local Emergency Planning Committee is charged with the formulation and implementation of Hopkinton's Emergency Operations Plan, which may be found in the following locations:

- In the Town Hall vault
- With various Town department heads
- With the Town Council President
- With emergency response offices, such as fire and police

Hopkinton's Emergency Management Director/Civil Defense Director is Michael Octeau.  
Hopkinton's Primary Command and Control Center (PC&CC) in Hopkinton Police Headquarters.  
Hopkinton's regional Red Cross evacuation shelter is Chariho Middle School.

### **Issues**

The Emergency Operations Plan should be amended to include the proper policies regarding the handling, transportation and storage of hazardous materials in the Town.

## **C. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

The Public Employee Needs Assessment is a procedure for determining the impact of population growth on the need for additional public service personnel. The method determines the potential number of new municipal employees, by functional area, using national averages from the U.S. Census of Governments. These averages are based on municipalities of similar size and geographic location as Hopkinton.

It should be noted that this method indicates the potential level of impact for new municipal employees *as* a result of Hopkinton's projected twenty-year population growth. Actual local conditions can differ from the average due to variances in local economics, labor rules or public service priorities. Therefore, the projection can be over-estimated or under-estimated. However, it is useful for estimating the general level of impact of population growth on local government staffing needs for comprehensive planning purposes.

Table III-7 illustrates the potential increase in municipal employment by municipal function for the projected twenty year population increase of approximately 800 persons. The ratios are the national average for the function per 1000 people. According to this method, most of the municipal functions will need one additional employee.

**Table III-7. Projected Additional Public Service Employees for 2010**

MUNICIPAL FUNCTIONS	PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES (Per thousand population)	ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL EMPLOYEES (2010)
<b>General Govt.</b>		
Finance Administration	0.43	0.34
General Control	0.77	1.0
<b>Public Safety</b>		
Police	2.14	2.0
<b>Public Works</b>		
Highways	1.25	1.0
Sanitation	1.51	1.0
<b>Recreation &amp; Culture</b>		
Parks & Rec.	0.37	0.30
Libraries*	0.08	0.06

\*Library employees are not municipal employees in the Town of Hopkinton

**D. FINDINGS**

**1. Public Safety**

There is sufficient equipment to meet existing safety needs. Some additional equipment may be needed to meet future growth requirements.

Some concerns were expressed with the ability to maintain adequate personnel levels.

**2. Recreation**

Hopkinton's Recreation Program can be improved with the addition of a van to assist ill transportation needs for seniors and youth recreation programs.

General improvements are needed in most of the recreation fields.

Continued Open Space acquisition is necessary to insure future recreational and environmental needs will be met.



### **3. Municipal Offices**

Town Hall has insufficient space to meet Hopkinton's current and growing needs. Town Hall should be completely accessible to the physically handicapped including the rest room facilities.

### **4. Library**

The Langworthy Library has identified a need for space expansion to accommodate future growth in volumes and programs.

### **5. Public Works Facilities / Services**

Some of the equipment is aged which makes spare parts difficult to obtain. Repairs are time consuming thereby increasing down time of the equipment.

New equipment is deemed necessary to accommodate the present and future demand of the Public Works Department.

### **6. Social Services**

Hopkinton needs a van to support and make more accessible the programs offered at the town's senior citizen's center.

Some improvements may be needed at the town's community center to support new programs.

Future cooperation with local and regional social services organizations, such as South County Community Action, is necessary to ensure that individuals and families receive the programs and services that they need.

### **7. Water Supply**

Public water service is needed in sections of Hope Valley because of water quality problems in that area.

Long term water planning for the town may require the town to develop a municipal system or work with neighboring communities on securing a future water source.

Protection of groundwater resources is essential to ensure safe drinking water for Hopkinton.

### **8. Wastewater Disposal**

Development in the town is dependent on individual sewage disposal systems. The town may need to examine the feasibility of regulating wastewater maintenance, and implementation of new ISDS technologies to protect its groundwater supply.

**9. Public Schools**

Some of the regional school buildings need to be improved to maintain a high quality educational environment.

**10. Solid Waste**

Since disposal of solid waste is becoming increasingly more difficult and expensive due to the closing of the town's landfill, the town shall continue to take aggressive actions in order to reduce solid waste generation.

**11. Emergency Management**

The importance of hazardous materials handling and operations should be considered as part of the Town's Emergency Operations Plan.

**E. GOALS**

Goals and policies for services and facilities have been formulated based upon the inventory and analysis of the previous sections. The State Planning Act goal for services and facilities is as follows:

"To promote orderly growth and development that recognizes the natural characteristics of the land, its suitability for use, and the availability of existing and proposed public and/or private services and facilities."

The following are the **GOALS** for:

**PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

**1. Public Safety**

**GOAL:** To maintain the high level of public safety and existing high level of public satisfaction with public safety services.

**2. Recreation**

**GOAL:** To maintain and improve the quality and accessibility of recreational programs and facilities for the town.

**3. Municipal Offices**

**GOAL:** To maintain the high level of municipal services, and the high level of public satisfaction with municipal services.

**4. Library**

**GOAL:** To maintain and improve Hopkinton's library services as a valuable resource.

**5. Public Works Facilities / Services**

**GOAL:** To maintain and improve the Public Works function so that it continues to maintain its high level of public satisfaction.

**6. Social Services**

**GOAL:** To maintain and improve the quality and delivery of social services.

**7. Water Supply**

**GOAL:** Provide a sufficient drinking water supply to the town, which is of high quality, and is safe for all uses.

**8. Wastewater Disposal**

**GOAL:** Provide for effective wastewater management, which is sensitive to environmental concerns and growth management.

**9. Public Schools**

**GOAL:** To maintain and improve the high quality of public education.

**10. Solid Waste**

**GOAL:** To ensure the proper disposal of solid waste and the incorporation of solid waste reduction practices.

## **11. Emergency Management**

**GOAL:** To ensure the proper planning for all aspects of emergency management operation.

### **F. IMPLEMENTATION / ACTION PLAN**

The purpose of this section is to identify and evaluate existing community services and facilities, identify current community needs, and determine what public facilities will be needed for future community growth. This element allows the community to anticipate the type of public services and facilities that may be required and therefore establishes the basis for long-term capital financing. This Action Plan will identify recommendations which, in concert with the Capital Improvement Program, establish a means for systematically providing public services and facilities.

**1. GOAL: To maintain the high level of public safety and existing high level of public satisfaction with public safety services.**

**Policies:**

- Encourage continued volunteerism to meet the personnel requirements for adequate manning of the Fire Districts
- Maintain the proper level of personnel and equipment in pace with the town's growth
- Improve space and security conditions for the Police Department

**Recommendation:** *Relate municipal personnel needs of the community to population growth*

**Purpose:** As the town's population continues to grow, more police, fire and municipal employees will be needed in order to maintain the existing high level of service. The various municipal departments, in conjunction with the town council, should use the information in this plan to anticipate and plan for their future requirements.

**Responsibility:** Town Departments / Boards / Commissions / Town Council

**Time Frame:** On-going

**Recommendation:** *Examine creating positive incentives for encouraging volunteers for the Fire and Ambulance Service.*

**Purpose:** Discussions with each of the Fire District Chiefs indicate that generally the equipment is good but the chiefs expressed concerns for keeping and attracting good volunteer

personnel. The town could assist the Fire Chiefs in assessing such benefits as pension plans, life and casualty insurance or other positive incentives for encouraging volunteers.

**Responsibility:** Fire Chiefs/Town Council

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**Recommendation:** *The town should examine the need for a new police station.*

**Purpose:** Police stations represent one of the municipal functions which require careful planning. The two main objectives which should be considered when examining the police department building is the adequacy of facilities for handling and processing prisoners and providing services to the public. The facility should allow for prisoners to be handled within the facility but without allowing the prisoners to be in contact with the general public. The Bureau of Government Research and Services in their publication, "*Police Stations, Planning and Specifications*", recommends a police station of approximately 4,300 square feet for a town the size of Hopkinton. The town should examine the need for a new police station by comparing their existing station with national recognized standards.

**Responsibility:** Police Department/Town Planner/Finance Board/Town Council

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**2. GOAL:** To maintain and improve the quality and accessibility of recreational programs and facilities for the town.

**Policies:**

- Develop a recreational Capital Improvement Program for identifying and scheduling future recreational projects
- Organize existing resources such as DEM, The Nature Conservancy, and The Hopkinton Land Trust around the issue of Open Space acquisition

**Recommendation:** *The town should develop a systematic program for recreational improvements and open space acquisition.*

**Purpose:** The town should develop a Capital Improvement Program, which should include major recreational expenses such as recreational site improvements. Also, working with other formalized organizations to acquire open spaces will catalyze the existing process, and improve the overall quality and quantity of open spaces in Hopkinton in the future.

**Responsibility:** Recreational Commission / Recreational Director / Town Council / DEM / Nature Conservancy / Hopkinton Land Trust

**Time Frame:** Annually

**3. GOAL: To maintain the high level of municipal services, and the high level of public satisfaction with municipal services.**

**Policies:**

- Develop new municipal facilities consistent with the town's need and financial ability
- The town is aware that expansion and upgrading of Town Hall office space and meeting facilities is necessary in order to continue to provide quality municipal services. Develop additional municipal building space which is sensitive to the existing location and historical setting of the existing Town Hall and the adjacent Thayer House

**Recommendation:** *The town should develop additional municipal office space to relieve overcrowding and address special requirements.*

**Purpose:** The town has recognized the need to provide additional municipal office space. In 1988 it completed a space needs study. Each department was requested to outline municipal space needs for the next ten to fifteen years. Utilizing the results of this study the town established a Town Hall Expansion Committee. The committee decided that the future space needs of municipal government could be accommodate by rehabilitating the Thayer House. The town should continue to rehabilitate the Thayer House for municipal office space.

**Responsibility:** Capital Improvement Committee / Town Council.

**Time Frame:** Long-Term (5+ Years)

**4. GOAL: To maintain and improve Hopkinton's library services as a valuable cultural resource.**

**Policy:**

- The town should strive to continue the high quality of services and to meet the current and projected library needs.

**Recommendation:** *Continue to expand library services in relation to population growth and service needs.*

**Purpose:** Library services are a valuable cultural resource for the town which should be maintained and improved as population grows and service demands diversify.

**Responsibility:** Library Board of Directors / Town Council

**Time Frame:** On-Going

**5. GOAL: To maintain and improve the Public Works function so it continues to maintain its high level of public satisfaction.**

**Policies:**

- Develop a Public Works Capital Improvement Program for identifying and scheduling equipment needs.

**Recommendation:** *The town should develop a systematic program of public building improvements and capital equipment acquisition*

**Purpose:** Public buildings, especially the Police Station and Town Hall, require improvements to meet Hopkinton's growing municipal needs. In addition, as the community grows, other municipal departments may require equipment to meet the increasing demands. One of the best techniques for major capital expenditures is to program these costs over a period of time. The town should develop a Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP will schedule projects, over time, ensuring that the various steps in the development of an area logically follow one another. It also gives an advance picture of future needs and development activities.

**Responsibility:** Municipal Departments / Capital Improvement Study Committee / Planning Board / Town Planner / Town Council.

**Time Frame:** Annually

**6. GOAL: To maintain and improve the quality and delivery of social services.**

**Policies:**

- Determine the transportation needs of the senior citizens and youth in order to assist in their participation in the recreational programs
- Partner with South County Community Action and other social service organizations to formulate and implement the necessary social service programs in Hopkinton

**Recommendation:** *The town should consider operating a van to support the activities of the Recreation Department.*

**Purpose:** Hopkinton has a large elderly population and population forecasts for the town show that this population will be increasing. The town offers seniors and youths a wide variety of services and programs. The van could assist seniors and youths to take advantage of the town's programs.

**Responsibility:** Recreation Commission / Recreation Director / Town Council.

**Time Frame:** Short-Term (1-2 years)

**Recommendation:** The Town should coordinate efforts with other local and regional social service organizations

**Purpose:** Local and regional planning for social services can be improved by involving more social service organizations in the formulation and implementation of programs. This will create a cooperative environment for social service application within the town and throughout the region.

**Responsibility:** Recreation Commission / Town Planner / Local & Regional Organizations

**Time Frame:** Short-Term (1-2 Years)

## **7. GOAL Provide a safe, high quality and sufficient drinking water supply to the town.**

### **Policies:**

- Protect the surface water bodies and aquifer that contribute to the town's water supply.
- Coordinate water supply planning protection with the Town of Richmond.

**Recommendation:** The town should formulate and implement a Town-wide Aquifer Protection Ordinance as consistent with Goal 2 of the Natural/Cultural Resources Element of this Plan.

**Purpose:** Water quality is directly affected by land use. The more developed and intense land use becomes, the more likely it is that water quality will be adversely affected. Watershed areas collect and carry water that falls or flows within its topographic boundaries to surface water or groundwater. These waters are used in Hopkinton for drinking water supplies. A Town-wide Aquifer Protection Ordinance can be used to regulate the impact of potential land uses that can contaminate drinking water supply.

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Planning Board / Town Council.

**Time Frame:** On-Going



**8. GOAL: Provide for effective wastewater management which is sensitive to environmental concerns and growth management.**

**Policies:**

- Develop a town-wide individual on-site disposal system maintenance educational program to identify maintenance needs and encourage proper usage.
- Formulate and implement the proper sections of Town-wide Wastewater Management Facilities Plan, and Non-Point Source Management Plan, as consistent with Goal 3 in the Natural/Cultural Resources Element of this Plan, as well as Goal 7, above.
- Assist owners of individual on-site disposal systems in maintaining and reconstructing these systems, including implementing innovative technologies where appropriate.

**Recommendation:** *The town should formulate and implement those relevant Ordinances and Plans stated above, including corresponding educational programs as they are deemed necessary*

**Purpose:** Large sections of the Town of Hopkinton are within the watershed of the Wood River aquifer and are not served by sanitary sewers but septic systems. Proper maintenance and eventual reconstruction are essential for the effective and efficient operation. If septic systems are not properly maintained, they can fail to operate effectively, thereby contributing to water quality contamination. When failure occurs on a system not properly constructed, they can endanger public health, contaminate surface and ground water and cause noxious odors. A Waste Water Management District has been designed to monitor and to regulate septic system maintenance. Implementation of further regulation is a proper means to amend past damage, and ensure the future protection of our water resources.

**Responsibility:** Hopkinton Waste Water Management District Commission / Hopkinton Planning Board / Town Council / Conservation Commission.

**Time Frame:** On-Going

**9. GOAL: To maintain and improve the high quality of public education.**

**Policies:**

- Conduct periodic assessments of needs for capital facilities related to education
- Provide a formal organizational structure for regional education issue resolution

**Recommendation:** *Involve Richmond and Charlestown in planning for the future of the CHARIHO regional school district*

**Purpose:** Accordant with the nature of the regional school district, issues regarding education in Hopkinton should be resolved in a regional setting. Organization between the three towns in the district is imperative to the continuation of quality public education at present, and into the future.

**Responsibility:** Town Council (of Charlestown, Richmond & Hopkinton) / Finance Board  
(of Charlestown, Richmond & Hopkinton) / School Board

**Time Frame:** On-Going.

**10. GOAL: To ensure the proper disposal of solid waste and solid waste reduction.**

**Policies:**

- The town should encourage solid waste reduction through source reduction, reuse and recycling.

**Recommendation:** *Encourage the recycling of solid waste.*

**Purpose:** Education is crucial to establishing an effective recycling program. In cooperation with the RI Department of Environmental Management, the town should develop a strong educational program for recycling.

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Conservation Commission / Highway Supervisor

**Time Frame:** On-Going

**11. GOAL: To ensure the proper planning for emergency management operation.**

**Policies:**

- The town should continue to plan for emergency management operations

**Recommendation:** *Develop a Haz-Mat Plan*

**Purpose:** The town, working with its Local Emergency Planning Committee, should prepare a Haz-Mat Plan as part of their Emergency Operations Plan. The Haz-Mat Plan will identify the issue of hazardous materials in the workplace and on the roadways, and the need to have specific plans to deal with hazardous waste issues.

**Responsibility:** Local Emergency Planning Committee / Highway Supervisor

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years) and On-going

## **G. Sources of Information**

### **1. Hydrogeology, Water Quality, and Ground Water Development Alternatives In the Lower Wood River Ground Water Reservoir, Rhode Island**

U.S. Geological Survey

### **2. Hope Valley I Wyoming Fire District Needs Assessment Report**

District Chief Frederick Stanley

### **3. Annual Report Hopkinton Police Department (1990,1989)**

Police Chief George Weeden

### **4. Hopkinton Water Line Extension**

Pare Engineering Corporation

### **5. Fiscal Impact Analysis**

Center for Urban Policy Research

### **6. Police Stations, Planning and Specifications**

The Bureau of Government Research and Services

### **7. Rhode Island Digital Critical Resources Atlas**

at: <http://www.edc.uri.edu/riatlasITown/Hopkinton.html>

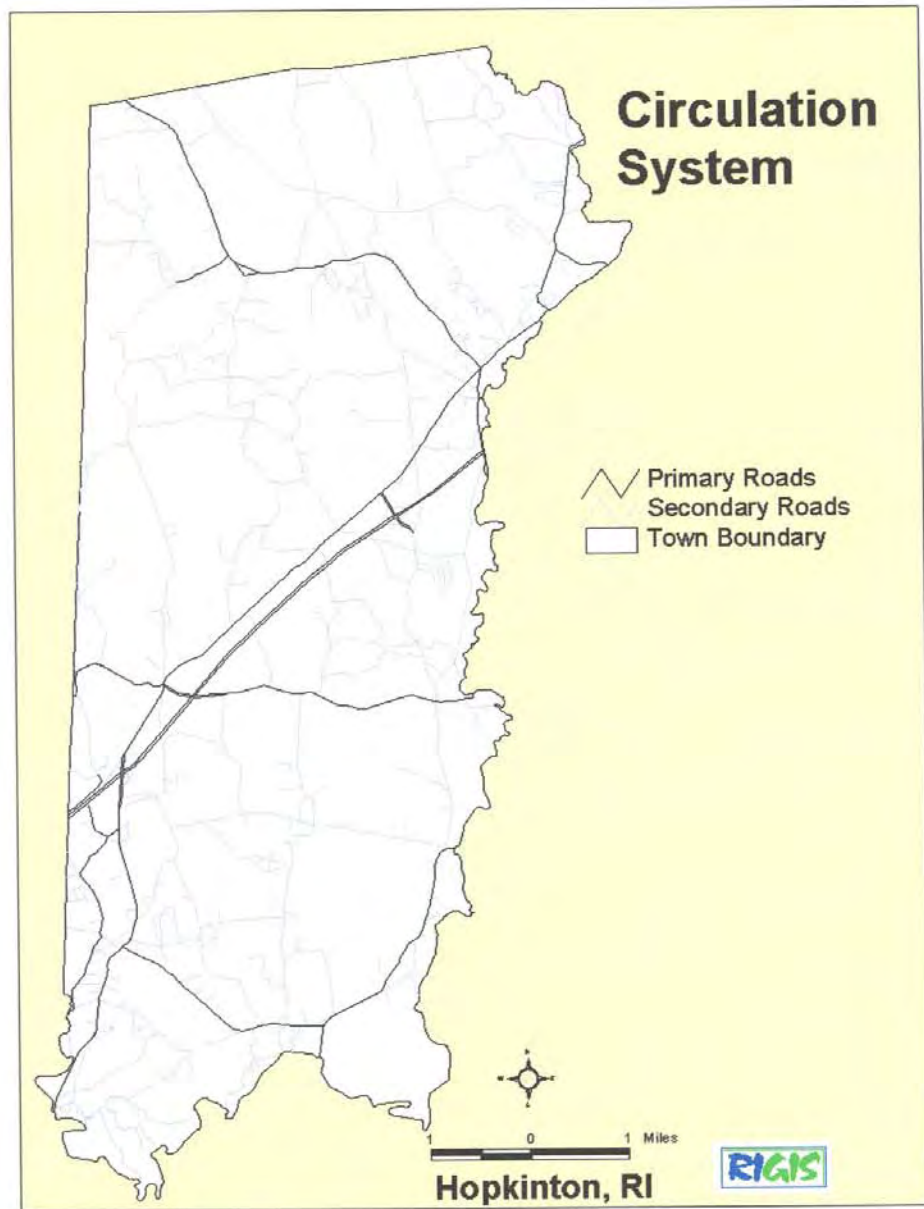
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**Figure IV-1. Map of Roads for Hopkinton, RI (Source: RIGIS)**

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Circulation Element provides a link among the other elements of Hopkinton's Comprehensive Plan. It provides direction for Hopkinton's evolving circulation system and its relationship to the present and future land uses. The general objective of local transportation service is to provide access to employment, shopping, and community facilities in a safe and efficient manner. This element of the plan will analyze existing and proposed transportation systems, including roads, mass transit, and other methods of circulation.

## **B. BACKGROUND**

Hopkinton's natural geography and historical development have influenced the layout of the present circulation system. Its first major road, the New London Turnpike, was privately built as a stagecoach route, which travels in a north/south direction through the middle of Hopkinton, and as a result, formed the principle circulation route for the town. Local roads from the mill villages such as Wyoming, Hope Valley, Woodville, and Ashaway developed in the 18th and early 19th centuries along the New London Turnpike. The town's present highway system was strongly influenced by this eighteenth century road network. With the advent of automobile travel, State Route 3 was constructed in 1907 and 1922. This roadway largely incorporates the original route of the New London Turnpike.

The completion of Interstate Route 95 in the early 1970's increased the accessibility and desirability of property in Hopkinton. The increase in residential development in the town has accompanied increased traffic pressure on the town's arterial roads.

Most of the residents of the town live in Hope Valley and Ashaway; these two areas are along Main Street (Rt. 3) and Interstate Highway 95, the major transportation arteries of the town. Increased residential and commercial development along Route 3 attracts additional traffic. Turning, stopping, exiting, and entering automobile and truck traffic impedes normal through traffic flow. Highway improvements can bring temporary relief to traffic congestion; however, improving a road frequently increases the desirability and accessibility of adjacent property, which only serves to attract more traffic in the long run.

The following examination of traffic circulation in Hopkinton will focus on three circulation modes; highway, rail, and bike/pedestrian. The section on highways includes the functional classification of roads, changes in traffic volumes, the location of high concentrations of accidents, and planned improvements. The highway section also includes a description of highway oriented public transportation routes and availability. The rail section includes a discussion of commuter oriented rail services. The third section includes a discussion of bike/pedestrian circulation routes.

**C. INVENTORY**

**1. Functional Classification**

Roads and highways throughout the state are grouped into classes or systems that are based upon the road's intended character of service. The four major classifications of roads are expressway, arterial, collector, and local. The method of classification assumes that all roads serve two basic functions; direct access to property and travel mobility. Distinctions are made as to the varying degrees that a road accomplishes these basic functions. For example, local roads provide a greater proportion of direct property access, while collectors and arterial provide a greater proportion of travel mobility.

Another important factor in assigning functional classification is the type of area that the road will serve. There are two types of areas: urban areas and rural areas. Urban areas are defined using the U.S. Census definition as, "an area consisting of a central city or cities and surrounding closely settled territory". Rural areas are defined as, "the areas outside the boundaries of urbanized areas".

Figure IV -1 shows the functional classification of roads and highways in Hopkinton according to the Rhode Island Statewide Planning's Highway Functional Classification System for the State of Rhode Island, 1995-2005. The relationship between functional classification and highway jurisdiction is shown in Table IV-I. Table IV -2 details the specific road segments and their classifications in Hopkinton. There are 51.95 miles of roads under state jurisdiction in Hopkinton, including the interstate, minor arterial, and major collectors. Jurisdiction of the town's roads includes the 19.90 miles of collector roads and nearly 100 miles of local roads.

**Table IV-1. Relationship of Functional Classification to Federal-Aid System and Highway Jurisdiction in Hopkinton, RI**

<b>Functional Classification</b>	<b>Federal-Aid Funding Category</b>	<b>Proposed Jurisdiction</b>
Interstate	Interstate	State
Minor Arterial Rural	Primary	State
Major Collector Rural	Secondary	State
Minor Collector rural	Secondary	Municipal
Local	-	Municipal

Source: Technical Paper 100; RI Dept. of Administration, Division of Planning



The road classification system and the primary function of each type of road in Hopkinton is as follows:

**Expressway-** An expressway's only function is to carry traffic and is designed specifically for high speed travel mobility. Since an expressway has controlled access, no at-grade intersections, and no parking, it functions as a highly efficient carrier. The interstate highway provides the highest level of travel mobility and no direct property access. Interstate Route 95 in Hopkinton is a limited access interstate highway with interchanges at Main Street (Route 3)(Exit 1) and Woodville-Alton Road (Exit 2). The interstate crosses through central Hopkinton from the Connecticut State Line to the Richmond Town Line, a distance of approximately 5.7 miles.

**Minor Arterial-** The minor arterial street's function is primarily to carry large volumes of traffic through the community. It is designed for trips of moderate length, slower speed and more land access than principal arterial. However, like the principal arterial, a minor arterial provides access between the interstate and residential and commercial areas in the community. Such facilities may carry local bus routes and include connections to local collector roads. The segment of Main Street (Route 3) from the Westerly Town Line to Interstate Route 95 is the only road in Hopkinton classified as a minor arterial.

**Collector-** The collector street system's primary function is to conduct traffic from the local residential roads to the arterial. Land access is a secondary function of the collector street but is generally less restrictive than on arterial. Collector streets pass through residential areas collecting traffic from local streets and distributing the traffic to its ultimate destination. A minor amount of through traffic can be carried by a collector street and this type of collector is classified as a major collector. Minor collectors most often provide movement of local traffic within residential areas. There are 22.80 miles of streets classified as major collectors and 19.90 miles of streets classified as minor collectors in Hopkinton. Table IV -2 identifies these streets.

**Local-** There are approximately 100 miles of local roads in Hopkinton. These local roads provide direct access to property and also serve to provide low levels of travel mobility to and from the collectors and arterial.

**Table IV -2. Functional Classification of Roads: Hopkinton. RI**

SEGMENT NAME	FROM	TO	MILES
<b><u>Interstate (urban)</u></b>			
I-95	Connecticut SL	Richmond TL	5.70
<b><u>Minor Arterial (rural)</u></b>			
Main St.	Westerly TL	1-95	3.55
<b><u>Major Collectors (rural)</u></b>			
Alton Bradford Rd.	Westerly TL	Richmond TL	2.70
Woodville Alton Rd.	Alton Bradford Rd.	Main St.	4.45
Ashaway Rd.	Main St.	Alton Bradford Rd.	2.25
Spring St.	Exeter TL	Main St.	5.05
High St.	Main St.	Connecticut SL	.90
Mechanic St.	Main St.	Richmond TL	1.00
Main St.	1-95	Richmond TL	6.45
		<b>Total</b>	<b>22.80</b>
<b><u>Minor Collectors (rural)</u></b>			
Burdickville Rd.	Alton Bradford Rd.	Charlestown TL	.55
Fenner Hill	Spring St.	Main St.	3.00
Chase hill Rd.	Main St.	Ashaway Rd.	2.10
Clarks Falls Rd.	Connecticut SL	Main St.	1.75
Diamond Hill Rd.	Maxson Hill Rd.	Tomaquag Valley	1.10
Dye Hill Rd.	Spring St.	Richmond TL	3.85
Fairview Ave.	Dye Hill Rd.	Bank St.	1.50
Grantville Ext.	Dead End	Mechanic St.	.15
Laurel St.	High St.	Maxson St.	.90
Maxson Hill Rd.	Main St.	Diamond Hill Rd.	.75
Maxson St.	River Rd.	Main St.	.30
Diamond Hill Rd.	To Valley	Ashaway Rd.	.85
Woodville Rd.	Main St.	Richmond TL	3.10
		<b>Total</b>	<b>19.90</b>

Source: RI Dept. of Administration, Division of Planning

**2. Traffic Volumes**

Long term traffic count data for Hopkinton is available for very few locations. A six year time series data is available from Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) for a location on Main Street 2500 feet north of Interstate 95 that shows traffic increasing at the rate of approximately one percent a year, compounded. This represents a 14% total increase over the six-year period. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) increased approximately 350 vehicles over the six-year period. Table IV-3 shows the 24 Hour AADT by year from 1981 to 1986.

**Table IV-3. Traffic Volume 1981-1986. Main Street (Route 3) 2,500' North of I-95**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b># OF AUTOMOBILES (thousands)</b>
1981	2.45
1982	2.50
1983	2.70
1984	2.45
1985	2.75
1986	2.80

Source: RIDOT

Traffic along Interstate Route 95 has risen dramatically from 1981 to 1989 according to available traffic counts. Table IV-4 shows the 24 hour AADT for both the northbound and southbound lanes.

**Table IV-4. Traffic Volume 1981-1989 Route 95 through Hopkinton**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b># OF AUTOMOBILES</b>
1981	18,000
1982	20,000
1983	20,600
1984	21,100
1985	22,500
1986	25,200
1987	31,000
1988	24,500
1989	24,600

Source: RIDOT

Traffic volumes on major roads are shown in Table IV -5. The figures represent the 1988 annual 24-hour average daily traffic counts according to the Rhode Island Department of Transportation.

**Table IV -5. 1988 24 Hour AADT for Hopkinton, RI**

<b>ROAD WHERE MEASURE TAKEN</b>	<b># OF AUTOMOBILES</b>
I-95	24,500
Rt. 3 2500 ft. North of I-95	25,000
Clarke Falls Rd.	470
Rt. 138 (Rockville Rd.) Hope Valley	2200
Rt. 138 (Rockville Rd.) Centerville	1750
Dye Hill Rd. (E. of Skunk Hill Rd.)	520
Dye Hill Rd. (W. of Skunk Hill Rd.)	300
Woodville Rd. (W. of Bradford- Woodville)	1650
Woodville Rd. (E. of Bradford- Woodville)	560
Rt. 91 (Alton Bradford Rd.) Burdickville	4750
Rt. 3 Ashaway Center	18400
Rt. 3 North of Westerly TL	9450
Maxson Hill Rd.	1050

Source: RIDOT

### **3. Traffic Accidents**

The five-year summary of accident data for Hopkinton and the State were obtained from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation Planning Division to identify accident problem areas and trends. The five-year data were compiled from RIDOT's Accident Location and Reporting System (ALRS). The ALRS is an accident reporting system in which accidents reported to the Registry of Motor Vehicles by the motor vehicle operator and/or the police are recorded and geographically identified. The data provides a reasonable representative sample of accident types and locations.

Table IV -6 shows the total number of accidents and fatal accidents for Hopkinton and the State. Hopkinton's accident rate has held relatively steady over the five-year period. The number of fatal accidents has also remained relatively constant during the time period 1985-1989.

**Table IV -6. Total Accidents and Fatal Accidents Rhode Island and Hopkinton 1985-89**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>TOTAL ACCIDENTS</b>			<b>FATAL ACCIDENTS</b>		
	<b>RI</b>	<b>HOPKINTON</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>RI</b>	<b>HOPKINTON</b>	<b>%</b>
1985	20930	109	0.50%	99	3	2.00%
1986	25645	120	0.50%	115	2	1.70%
1987	24375	129	0.50%	108	0	0.00%
1988	24888	129	0.50%	118	1	0.80%
1989	24221	134	0.60%	97	2	2.00%

Source: RIDOT

The ALRS data were used to identify intersections with significant numbers of accidents. Intersections with greater than 5 accidents in the three year period from 1987 to 1989 are shown in Table IV -7. Two intersections stand out as having the highest incidence of traffic accidents. The intersections of Route 3 and Route 216 (11) and the intersection of Route 3 and Route 138 (10) comprise a high number of accidents.

Table IV-7 lists the ten highest intersections based upon the number of reported accidents between 1987 and 1989. The table also shows accident types for each of the intersections. A predominance of certain accident types may indicate a particular flaw or problem with an intersection's design. Further study may be warranted for these intersections.

**Table IV-7. Worst Accident Intersections. Hopkinton, RI: 1987-89**

Intersection	Total	Head	Broad	Rear	Side	Angle	Other
		On	Side	End	Swipe		
Rt.3 / Rt. 216	11	3	0	2	4	1	1
Rt.3 / Rt. 138	10	0	3	1	1	4	1
Rt. 3 / Woodville Rd.	8	0	1	2	1	2	2
Main St. / I-95 Int.	8	0	1	5	0	2	0
Rt. 3 / Nichols Ln.	8	1	0	4	1	1	1
Fairview Ave. / Bank St.	7	2	1	1	0	2	1
Rt. 3 / River Rd.	7	0	0	5	1	0	1
I-95 / Woodville Rd. *	7	1	0	4	1	1	0
Rt. 91 / Rt. 216	6	0	3	1	1	1	0
Rt. 3 / Canonchet Rd.	5	1	0	1	1	1	1

\* Not an intersection; Represents accidents reported in the vicinity of these two roads  
Source: RIDOT

#### **4. Proposed Road Improvements**

The Rhode Island State Planning Council publishes the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for proposed road improvement projects. The TIP includes a six-year plan that indicates the priority and anticipated completion dates of proposed projects. Several projects are currently programmed for completion in Hopkinton. Table IV -8 summarizes the projects for Hopkinton published in the latest Transportation Improvement Program. The TIP lists those projects that the state intends to work on during a six-year period. The projects are shown in two year phases. The first phase, or, "Biennial Element" includes projects which are listed to be made eligible for federal funding. The TIP is prepared in conjunction with RIDOT, Rhode Island Public Transportation Authority, and the cities and towns of Rhode Island.

**Table IV -8. Proposed Transportation Improvements, Hopkinton RI**

<b>TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM OCT. 1,1989 TO SEP. 30, 1995 (COST IN THOUSANDS)</b>			
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>1990-1991</b>	<b>1992-1993</b>	<b>1994-1995</b>
Woodville Alton Rd.- Rt.3 to Rt. 91	RC7500	None	None
First Barberville Bridge #41	RC500	None	None

P=planning R= purchase right of way C= construction

SOURCE: Transportation Improvement Program for the State of Rhode Island. October 1, 1989 to September 30, 1995 State Planning Council

In addition, several other projects have been listed in the 1987 Highway Improvement Plan (HIP), published by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation. These projects are beyond the time frame established by the TIP and will be designed and built when funds become available, but after 1995. These projects are listed in Table IV -9.

The proposed projects in some cases coincide with the ten high accident incidence intersections in town. Completion of the proposed roadway construction projects could significantly improve the accident records of the identified problem intersections.

**Table IV-9. Highway Improvement Plan Proposed Projects, Hopkinton, RI**

<b>1987 HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>
ROUTE 3 (WOODVILLE ROAD TO I-95 EXIT)
I-95 PAVEMENT AND ROUTE 3 BRIDGE REHABILITATION

Source: RIDOT

Survey results of Hopkinton residents, conducted by the Hopkinton Citizens Advisory Committee, did not identify roads or bridges as an existing or growing problem in the town. They also felt that the existing road maintenance program was adequate.

Maguire Group conducted a workshop with the Citizens Advisory Committee on transportation issues. As a result of this workshop important issues, which the Comprehensive Plan should address were identified. These issues included; preserving rural roads, providing for adequate capacity on roadways and establishing a system of bike trails.

## **5. Bridges**

The State Department of Transportation has posted weight limits at various bridges. The weight limits restrict certain types of vehicles from using the bridges. School buses and emergency

vehicles require bridges to be rated to at least 12 tons. Several bridges in Hopkinton have been recently posted with weight limits below 12 tons. This has caused school buses and emergency vehicles to change their travel routes to avoid these bridges.

6. Municipal Traffic Control Devices

There are two active traffic control devices in the town of Hopkinton. This inventory consists of two flashing yellow/red traffic lights at the intersections of Rt. 3 and Rt. 138 in the Hope Valley Village Center, and Rt. 3 and Woodville Road at the Hopkinton City crossroads.

7. Public Parking Areas

The inventory of public parking areas in Hopkinton consists of the Commuter parking area at the intersection of Rt. 3 and 1-95. This is the only public parking area that is not associated with a recreational facility.

D. PUBLIC TRANSPORTION

1. Bus Service

The Rhode Island Public Transportation Authority (RIPTA) provides regular service on the Park & Ride 90 Route, weekdays between Kennedy Plaza in Providence and the Hopkinton commuter lot in Ashaway. There is only one daily trip each way; the departure and arrival times are '-' designated in Table IV-10, below. RIPTA only had ridership data regarding the return trips on this route for two different days. On one of the days 5 people departed the bus at Ashaway, and on the other day 7 people.

Table IV-10. RIPTA Bus Service for the Park & Ride 90 Route

Depart Hopkinton Lot (Ashaway)	7:10 am
Arrive at Kenned Plaza Providence	8:10 am
De art Kenned Plaza Providence	5: 15 pm
Arrive Hopkinton Lot (Ashaway)	6:20 pm

Source: RIPTA 2000

School bus transportation is provided by the CHARIHO school district. The Hopkinton Chief of Police indicated that student pick-up and delivery programs are designed to utilize the safest routes available, and hazards such as snow and ice are evaluated by the police and public works department prior to school bus departure. If hazardous conditions are evident, school is delayed or postponed until the transportation routes are deemed safe.

Para-Transit bus service is provided by the management of Canonchet Cliffs to transport elderly residents to local shopping facilities.

## **2. Rail Transportation**

There are no active rail lines within Hopkinton. Commuter rail service to Boston and New York is available within a short driving distance in Westerly and Kingston, R.I. AMTRAK scheduled service is also available with direct connections to locations along the northeast corridor such as Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C.

### **E. PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS / BIKE PATHS**

While there are currently no formal pedestrian walkways or bike paths in Hopkinton, the town plans to undertake a trail and bike path master plan as part of the recreation program. The purpose of this plan will be to identify opportunities for creating a system of hiking and bike paths. An opportunity for a bikeway/pedestrian path could be planned along the abandoned railroad right of way from Hope Valley, along the Wood River, terminating near Woodville at the Richmond Town line.

### **F. FINDINGS**

Hopkinton's circulation system consists of major through roads running north-south and major collector roads running east-west. The major routes provide access throughout the town.

Traffic volumes along Hopkinton's principal arterial, Route 3 (Main Street), has increased over the past ten years.

Many of Hopkinton's local roads are unpaved. These roads are generally narrow, which is in keeping with the rural character of Hopkinton but this condition restricts traffic flow.

Seven out of the ten worst accident locations within the town occur at intersections along Main Street (Route 3).

The RIDOT Transportation Improvement Plan projects and the Highway Improvement Plan projects involve traffic improvement to two intersections identified as the worst locations for accidents within the town.

There are currently no pedestrian walkways or bike paths in Hopkinton. The town plans to develop a comprehensive plan for bicycling and hiking trails.

The Community Survey indicated that the majority of the respondents did not perceive the condition of the roads or traffic congestion to be an existing or growing priority problem in Hopkinton.

Maguire's issue identification workshop identified the goals of the participants as focusing on maintaining the scenic rural quality of the roads, while having adequate capacity and safe design, as well as establishing a system of walking and biking trails.



The recent posting of revised weight limits by the RI Department of Transportation on many of the bridges in Hopkinton has caused emergency vehicles and school buses to change their travel routes.

Development at the major highway interchanges is light, and exists at a rural scale consistent with the character of the town.

Traffic regulation through signalization is managed by the police, town council, and public works department for Hopkinton's municipal roads, and by the RIDOT for state roads.

## **G. GOALS**

Goals and policies for circulation were formulated based upon the inventory and analysis of the previous sections. The goals are a broad statement, which represents a desired future condition. Policies are action statements that are designed to achieve the attainment of specific goals.

For formulating the circulation goals for the Town of Hopkinton, it is important to recognize the mutually compatible interests of the state and of the town. The state has formulated goals, which local plans should consider. Because of the mutual interest of both the state and the town in recognizing the provision of adequate transportation facilities, the following state goals are recommended to be part of this element's goals:

1. To promote orderly growth and development that recognizes the natural characteristics of the land, its suitability for use and the availability of existing and proposed public and/or private services and facilities.
2. To promote an economic climate which increases quality job opportunities and the overall economic well being of each municipality.
3. To encourage the use of innovative development regulations and techniques that promote the development of land suitable for development while protecting our natural, cultural, historical and recreational resources and achieving a balanced pattern of land uses.

The following are **GOALS** for:

### **CIRCULATION**

- 1. GOAL:** Improve and maintain a safe, convenient and efficient traffic circulation system throughout the town.
- 2. GOAL:** Correct existing road deficiencies to improve safety and traffic flow.
- 3. GOAL:** Encourage the development of linear recreational transportation facilities that provide an alternative to automobile travel.
- 4. GOAL:** The town should preserve its rural character by preserving its scenic roads.

## H. IMPLEMENTATION / ACTION PROGRAM

The purpose of this element is to inventory and evaluate existing and proposed transportation facilities in Hopkinton. The overall objective of local transportation services is to provide a safe and efficient transportation network, while working towards policies that support energy conservation and air pollution reduction. It is with these objectives in mind that the specific recommendations contained in this implementation plan are formulated.

Although separate implementation plans are formulated for each element, there is clearly an interrelationship and interdependency between all the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, the actions identified for this element will inherently relate to other elements so that recommendations for this element will be similar or complimentary to other element recommendations.

### 1. GOAL: Improve and maintain a safe, convenient and efficient traffic circulation system throughout the town.

#### **Policies:**

- Continue to encourage and cooperate with the State Department of Transportation to maintain and improve the state roads system in Hopkinton.
- Provide for the orderly and adequate integration of roads within existing and proposed subdivisions.

**Recommendation:** *Work with the RI Department of Transportation (RIDOT) in improving the transportation system in Hopkinton*

**Purpose:** The state roads and bridges that require improvements have been included on various state improvement funding programs. The town should work with DOT to ensure that these improvements occur in a manner that increases traffic flow and minimizes community disruption. Town input to state projects is critical. The town's staff should regularly correspond with the DOT by referring projects to them; reviewing projects that are proposed but not yet funded to make sure they are still being considered; and reviewing on-going projects which are in the process of being designed. The town should also maintain a list of improvements needed to state roads in order to be able to respond to state requests for projects or to convey road improvement priorities to the state.

**Responsibility:** Public Works / Town Planner / Town Council.

**Time Frame:** On-going

**Recommendation:** *The town should modify subdivision relations to require connections of adjacent subdivisions wherever possible*

**Purpose:** A regulation, which requires streets in a proposed subdivision to provide for a continuation of existing or parallel streets to abutting property should be added. This regulation could also provide that if the abutting property is not subdivided, the street within the plat being subdivided must be constructed to the property line of the abutting land or a right-of-way granted to the town.

**Responsibility:** Public Works / Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Council.

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

## **2. GOAL: Correcting existing road deficiencies to improve safety and traffic flow.**

### **Policies:**

- Develop a formal program for road maintenance, new road construction, and accompanying drainage facilities.
- Maintain the functional integrity of the existing road system by regulating the appropriate land use controls and design review standards.

**Recommendation:** *The town should modify its subdivision regulation and zoning ordinance to require off-site transportation improvements where new development places additional burden on the existing circulation system*

**Purpose:** The provision of off-site improvements helps to insure that existing roadways are not overwhelmed by the traffic that new development brings. Circulation improvements, where necessary, are required for orderly development and public safety.

**Responsibility:** Public Works / Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Council.

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

**Recommendation:** *The town should adopt standards for new road construction, and an organized system for periodic improvements to existing roads.*

**Purpose:** New road construction and periodic improvements should be instituted on a formalized basis. In order to assist the town in identifying and scheduling preventative road maintenance, a program should be established. This program will prioritize road maintenance based on the age of the roadway, existing condition, type and volume of traffic, and repair history. To assist this program, an annual budget should be established for road maintenance. The University of Rhode Island, in cooperation with the R.I. Department of Transportation, has developed a Road Maintenance Program. This program could be the basis of a similar program for Hopkinton. Based on the money available and the need priority, a systematic and comprehensive program of preventative road maintenance could be established.

**Responsibility:** Highway Supervisor / Town Planner.

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years) & On-going

**3. GOAL: Encourage the development of linear recreational transportation facilities that provide an alternative to automobile travel.**

**Policy:**

- Plan and integrate a trail system linking major areas by pedestrian and bicycle trails as proposed by the Department of Environmental Management.

**Recommendation:** *Develop a pedestrian and bicycle trail in conjunction with the RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM)*

**Purpose:** Alternative transportation systems should be explored. A bicycle and pedestrian trail connecting Hopkinton and its neighboring communities, as proposed by DEM, will provide for recreational opportunities and can also serve as a major north/south alternative transportation corridor.

**Responsibility:** Planning Board / Recreational Commission.

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

**4. GOAL: The town should preserve its rural character by preserving its scenic roads.**

**Policy:**

- The town should designate certain roads as scenic and use appropriate design standards for maintaining the scenic quality of the road.

**Recommendation:** *The town should identify and nominate certain roads as scenic roads.*

**Purpose:** Roads rich in history, cultural and natural resources are part of Hopkinton's landscape. By identifying and designating these roads as scenic roads, proposed activities of state, local or private parties can be focused towards the shared objectives of recognizing and preserving the scenic value of the road.

**Responsibility:** Planning Board / Historic Preservation Commission.

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

## **I. SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

### **Technical Paper No. 100, Highway Functional Classification System for the State of Rhode Island.**

RI. Department of Administration, Division of Planning.

### **State Guide Plan Overview, Report No. 48.**

RI. Statewide Planning Program.

### **Transportation Improvement Program for the State of Rhode Island.**

RI. Department of Administration, Division of Planning.

### **Highway Improvement Program and Plan.**

RI. Department of Transportation.

### **Motor Vehicle Accident Report Details for the Town of Hopkinton.**

RI. Department of Transportation.

### **Traffic Counts for the Town of Hopkinton.**

R.I. Department of Transportation

### **Rhode Island Public Transportation Authority**

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**A. INTRODUCTION:**

According to the Rhode Island Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulation Act the Economic Development Element "Shall include the identification of economic development policies and strategies, either existing or proposed by the municipality, in coordination with the Land Use Element. Such policies should reflect local, regional, and statewide concerns for the expansion and stabilization of the economic base and promotion of quality employment opportunities. The policies and implementation techniques must be identified for inclusion in the implementation program element."

The Town of Hopkinton will be shaped in the future by a series of external and internal forces. This element will describe in detail these forces, which translate into development and ultimately affect the town's tax base, its labor force, and the quality of life within its borders. It is incumbent upon the decision-makers to prepare a blueprint for economic development that considers the natural and cultural resources and attempts to balance those environmental concerns with a plan for orderly, progressive and financially sound development.

In an ideal situation, each city and town would possess all the necessary ingredients for a complete and successful economic development strategy, however, that rarely exists, and Hopkinton is not an exception. The prime ingredients for development must be inventoried and assessed, resulting in an analysis of the opportunities and constraints to development. From this analysis, an implementation program will employ planning principles to guide the future growth of the Town of Hopkinton in order to achieve the stated goals for economic development.

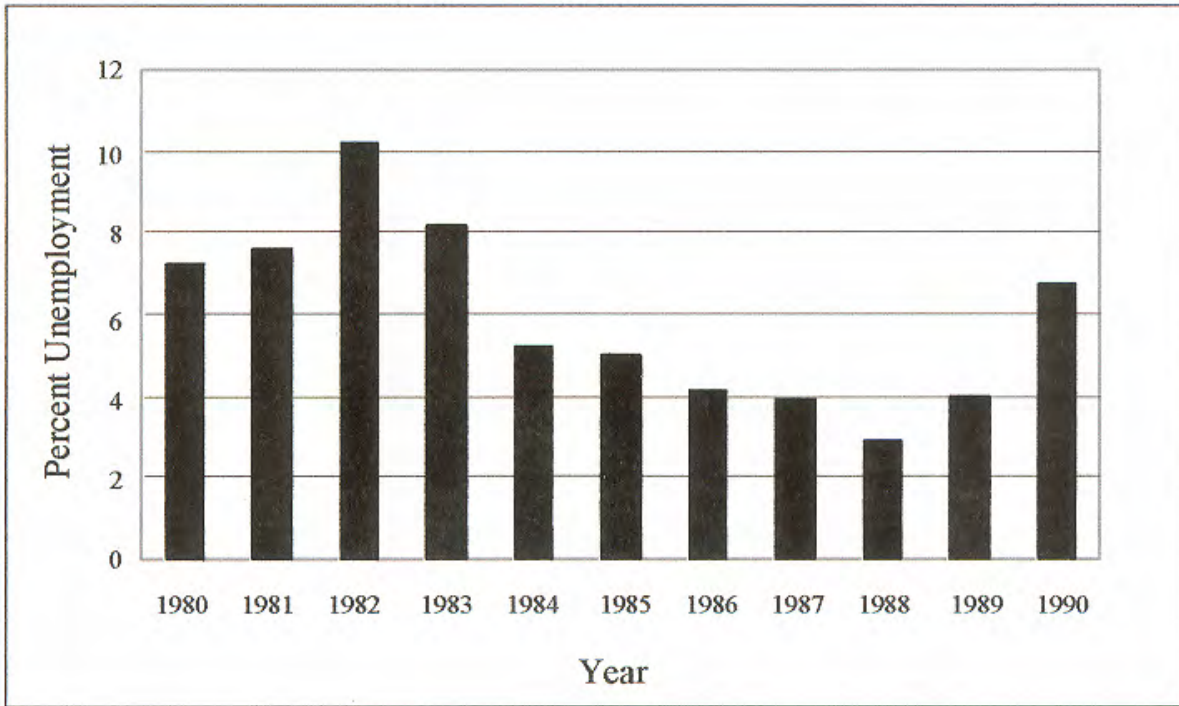
Finally, the Comprehensive Plan Act requires that this element be consistent with the State Guide Plan and related elements as well as being consistent with the other elements of the Hopkinton Comprehensive Plan and the plans of contiguous communities.

**B. REGIONAL ECONOMIC TRENDS:**

The decade of the 1980's experienced a wide variety of mini-trends. For example, the decade began with an average of 7.2% unemployment rate, and ended in 1990 at a 6.7% average. The following figure depicts the rise and fall of the unemployment rate for the decade in Rhode Island:

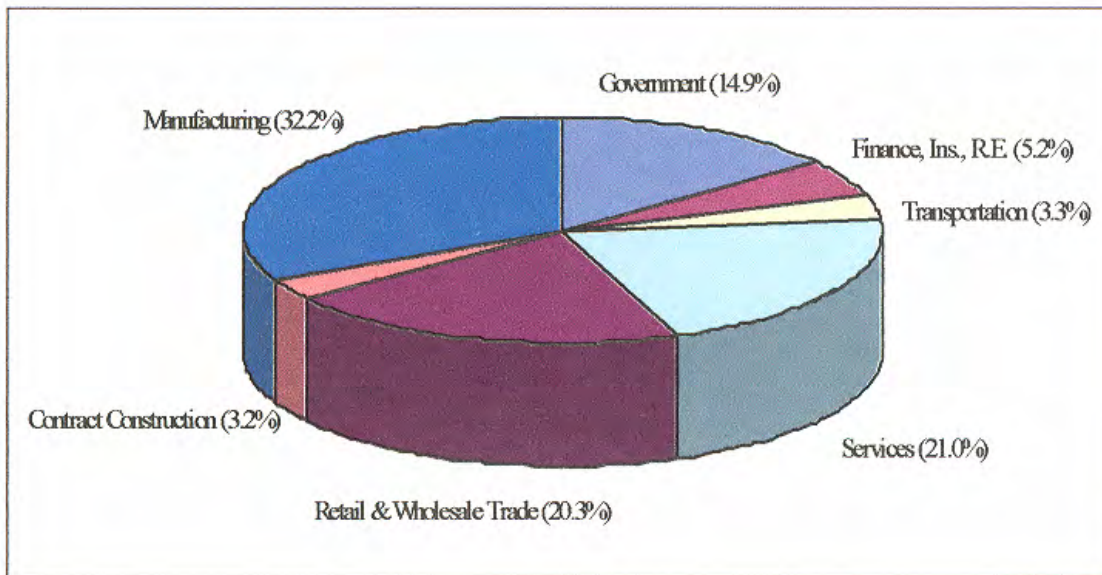


**Figure V-1. RI Unemployment 1980-1990**

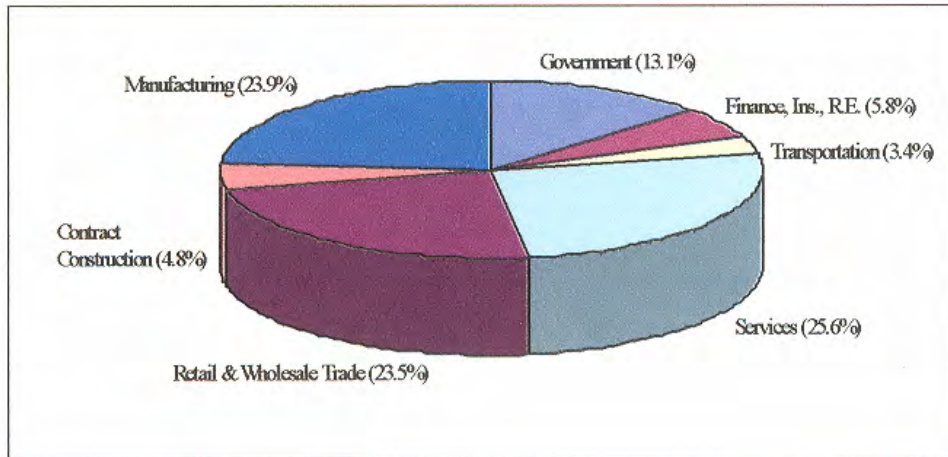


Employment statistics reveal a definite growth trend, as well as a shift in the employment sectors in the State. First, in the manufacturing sector, the following trend indicates a decline in the overall employment as shown in the following two figures:

**Figure V-2. RI Employment 1980**



**Figure V -3. RI Employment 1989**

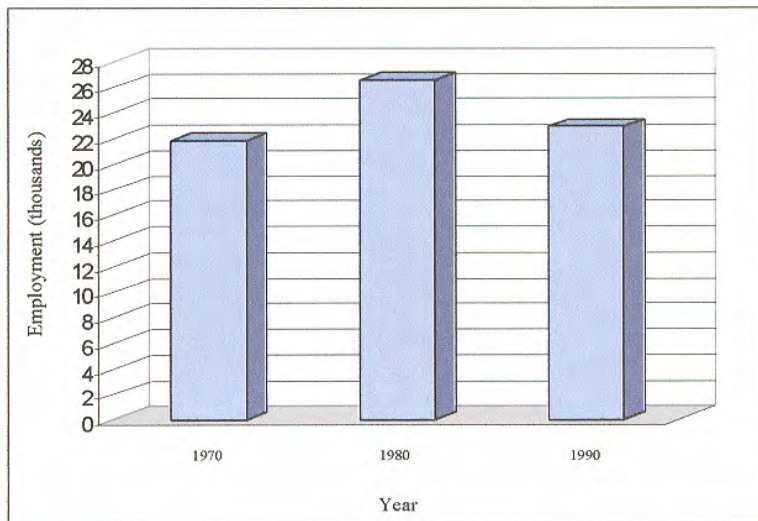


As can be evidenced by these figures, the service sector has now taken the lead from manufacturing as the largest employment sector in the state.

Manufacturing as a whole fell nearly 8% from 32.2% in 1980 to 23.9% in 1989. Also worth noting, is the slight increase in the Wholesale/Retail Sector to 23.5%, nearly matching the manufacturing numbers. Thus, it can be concluded that the state, as well as the region, is becoming more aligned to the service and wholesale/retail sectors and away from manufacturing.

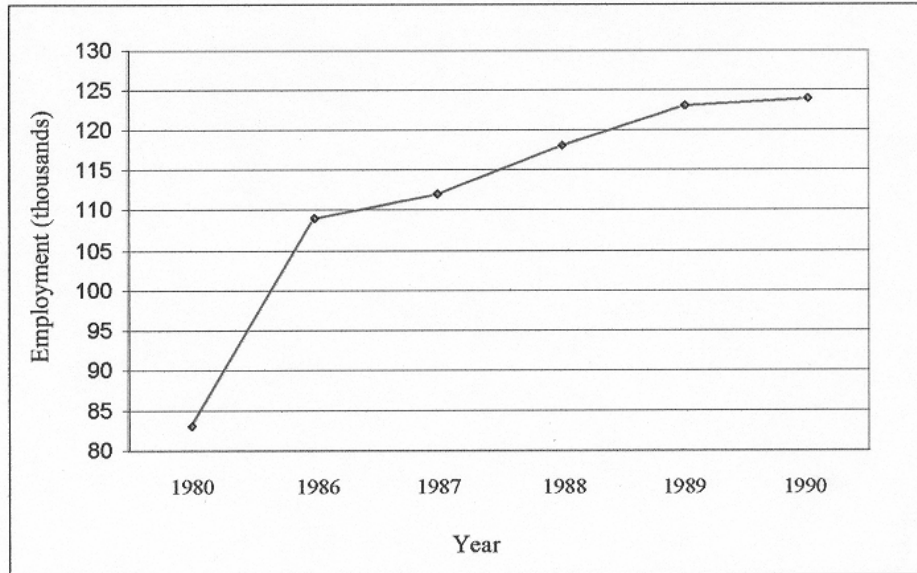
Further evaluation within the manufacturing sector reveals a sharp decline in the jewelry and silverware group over the past two decades. This was a mainstay of employment in Rhode Island for many years, and is now on the decline as illustrated in the following figure:

**Figure V-4. RI Jewelry and Silverware Employment 1970-1990**



Conversely, the service industry sector has exhibited a constant growth throughout the decade, as the following figure will indicate:

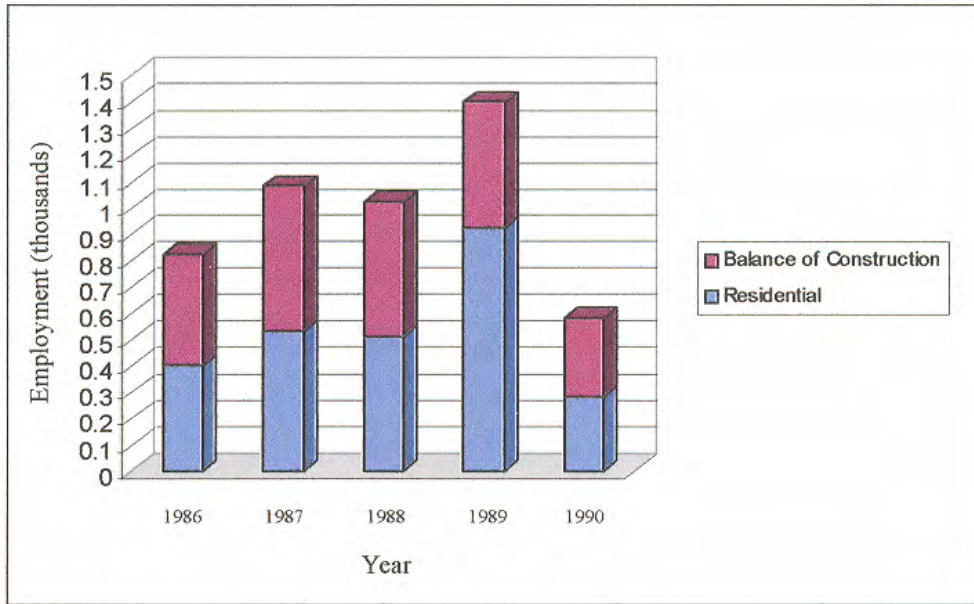
**Figure V -5. RI Service Industry**



The State of Rhode Island has always been characterized as a "Small Business State", as over 95% of the businesses in the state employ less than 50 people, and nearly 60% employ less than 5 people. This is perhaps why the state's business population fluctuates in the course of a year. The number of firms may or may not change to a great degree, but the actual firms and their location will. Thus, local employment by small businesses can have a wide variation, whereas on a statewide basis, it may not be perceived as a changing situation.

One final trend to analyze involves the construction contract awards in total for the state, and as a subset, the residential portion during the past five years. The trend indicates a steady growth pattern, but with a severe drop off in 1990. Also, the residential portion remains at a relatively constant 50% of the total construction dollars. The following figure displays the trends as described above:

**Figure V-6. RI Construction 1986-1990**

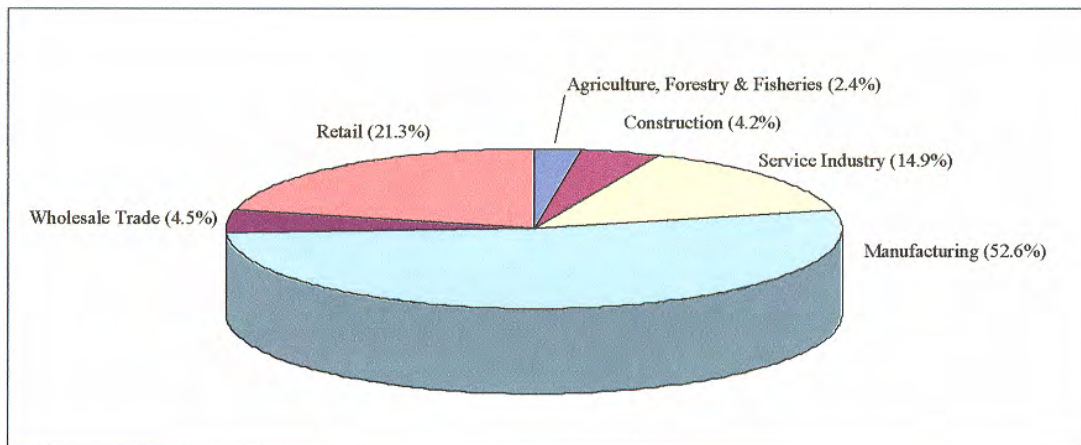


**C. LOCAL ECONOMIC TRENDS ANALYSIS**

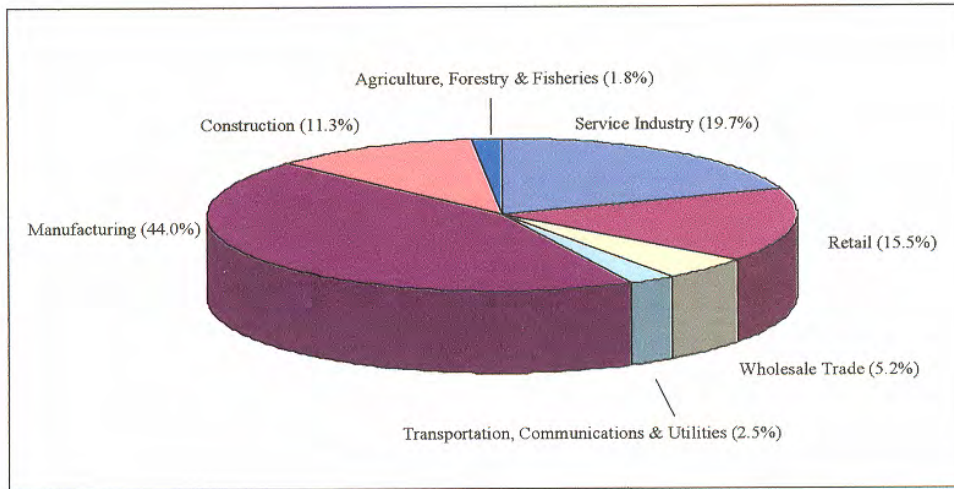
In 1990 the Town of Hopkinton had a total employment of 3,294, down from the all time high of 3,458 in 1989. Still, the 1990 figure represents a 14% increase over the 1980 employment of 2,894. In order to evaluate the sectors of employment, the major industry groups will be presented for the time period of 1980 through 1989.

Figure V -7 indicates distinct changes to the employment structure in Hopkinton.

**Figure V-7a. Hopkinton Employment by Sector 1980**



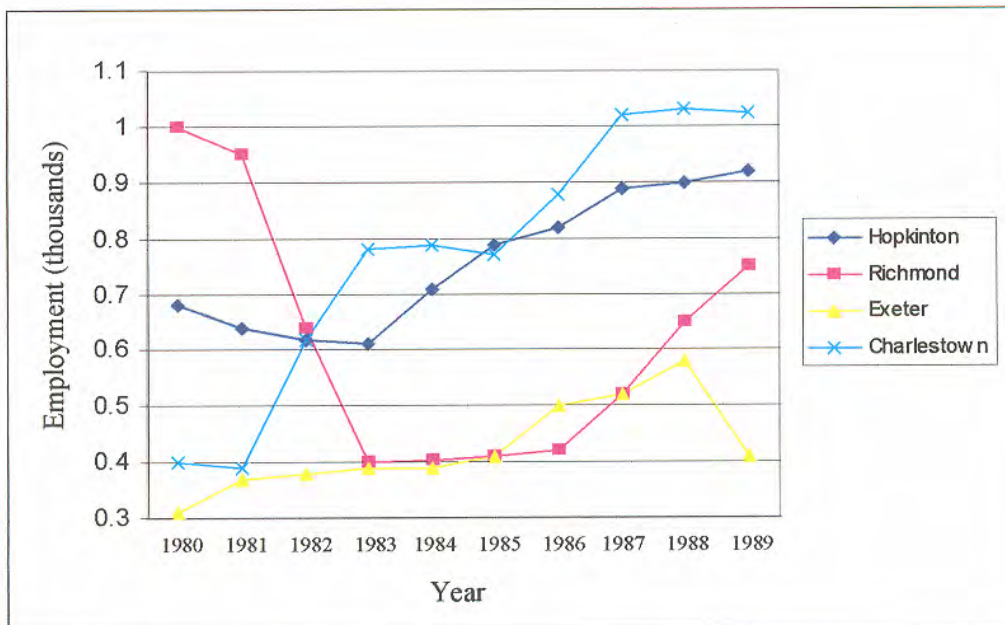
**Figure V -7b. Hopkinton Employment by Sector 1989**



First, the manufacturing employment, although increasing by 57 people, now represents 44 of tile workforce versus 52% in 1980. Taking up this slack are the service industry with an 83% increase and the construction sector, at a 271% overall increase. These trends mirror the trends described previously in this section for the State of Rhode Island as a whole. These include the move towards a service industry and a lessening of the manufacturing base.

Regarding actual employment in Hopkinton and how it compares with its neighboring communities, the following graph in Figure V -8 will show the trend for the years 1980 through 1989 in Hopkinton, Richmond, Exeter and Charlestown.

**Figure V-8. Total Employment by Town 1980-1989**



With regards to unemployment in Hopkinton, Table V-I shows how the town stacks up versus the state and the United States for the time period of 1980-1990.

**Table V-1. Unemployment in Hopkinton, Rhode Island & The United States 1980-1990**

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
<b>Hop</b>	6.3%	6.9%	7.5%	5.8%	3.5%	3.3%	3.2%	2.9%	2.2%	2.9%	4.7%
<b>R.I.</b>	7.2%	7.6%	10.3%	8.2%	5.3%	5.0%	4.1%	3.8%	3.0%	4.0%	6.7%
<b>U.S.</b>	7.1%	7.6%	9.7%	9.6%	7.5%	7.2%	7.0%	6.2%	5.5%	na	na

As can be seen, the Town of Hopkinton followed the general downward trend of falling unemployment just as Rhode Island and the country as a whole did. However, the town did so at a rate 1-2 percentage points below the state's average and nearly 3-4 percentage points below the U.S. average unemployment. The number of unemployed reported for 1990 in Hopkinton of 162 is by far the highest number of individuals unemployed in Hopkinton ever. This trend has continued into 1992, and the rate may actually begin to return to the 6% rate seen at the beginning of the 1980's.

1. Major Employers

The Town of Hopkinton has six firms with employment over 50, with the single largest employer being Imperial Wallpaper at 225 employees. The following table lists the six major employers:

**Table V-2. The Major Employers of Hopkinton**

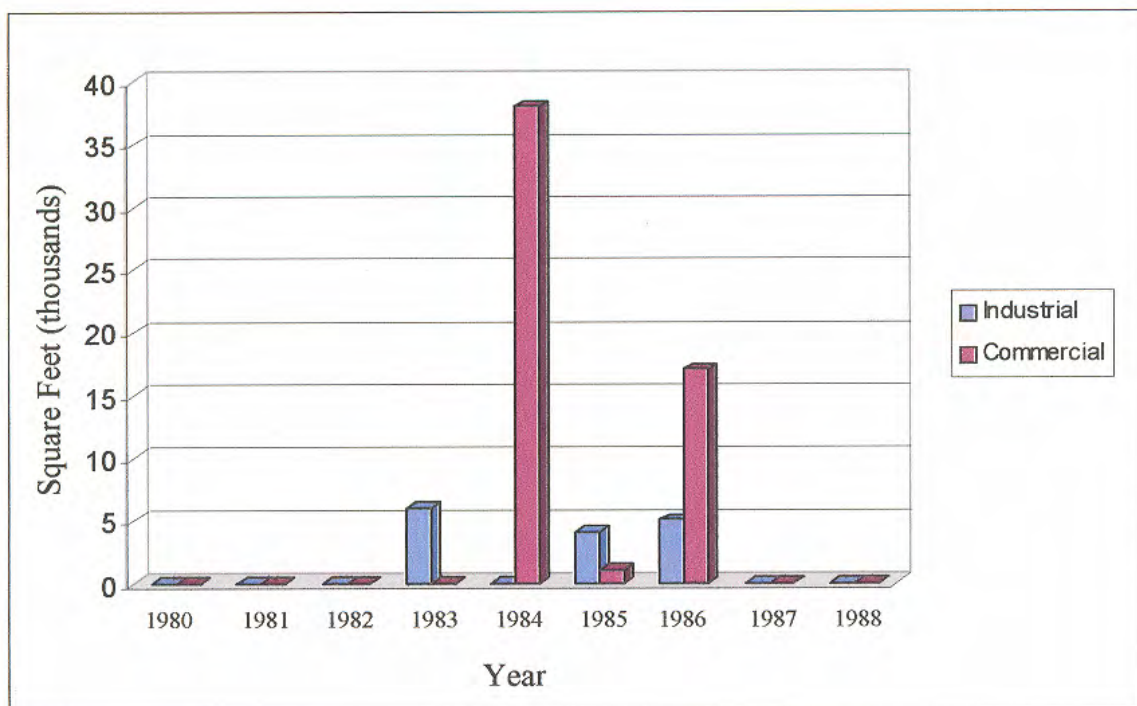
<b>Company</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>SIC</b>
Ashaway line & Twine Mfg.	Laurel St.	Fish Line, Racket Strings & Cords	70	2298
Chickadee Farms	Woodville-Alton Road	Chicken & Egg Processing	100	2015
Greene Plastics	Canochet Road	Injection & Compression Molded Plastics & Beads	150	3089
Kay Dee Handiprints	Skunk Hill Road	Screen Printing of Textiles	65	2394
Wood River Health Center	Main Street	Medical & Dental Care	50	8082
Imperial Wallpaper	Chase Hill Road	Wallcoverings	225	2649

The total employment for these six firms totals 660 *persons*. With an employment level of 932 for the within the town as a whole in 1990, clearly the remaining employment of 272 or 29% are employed by small businesses of less than 50 employees, and half of those companies have less than five employees.

## 2. Commercial and Industrial Development Trends

The following figure depicts the New Construction for Hopkinton during 1980-1988 interval for Commercial and Industrial Development:

**Figure V-9. Industrial & Commercial Development 1980-1988**



As can be seen quite graphically, Hopkinton has not experienced a tremendous amount of growth in the past decade, as has the state and region in general. However, the growth did occur in the years 1984-1986, when most construction took place in Rhode Island in the industrial and commercial sectors.

## D. OCCUPATION BY EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

One final area to examine is the occupation of employed persons in Hopkinton that are age 16 and over. The following information is taken from the 1980 Census, as 1990 data is not yet available. However, this information will illustrate the breakdown of occupations in town and how this compares with the county and the state.

**Table V-3. Occupations: Hopkinton, Washington County & RI**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Hopkinton</b>	<b>Wash. County</b>	<b>State</b>
Exec. Mgr. & Admin	191 (7%)	4,220 (10%)"	39,891 (9%)
Professional & Tech.	402 (14%)	8,128 (19%)	62,589 (15%)
Sales	232 (8%)	3,834 (9%)	38,520 (9%)
Clerical	354 (13%)	6,224 (15%)	71,857 (17%)
Protective & Other Services	295 (10%)	6,173 (15.5%)	56,816 (13%)
Crafts	532 (19%)	5,932 (14%)	58,012 (13%)
Machine Operators & Assemblers	467 (17%)	4,054 (9.5%)	62,759 (15%)
Material Movers	112 (4%)	1,248 (3%)	15,011 (4%)
Laborers	127 (5%)	1,413 (3%)	16,413 (4%)
Other	94 (3%)	1,121 (2%)	4,944 (1%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,806</b>	<b>42,343</b>	<b>426,812</b>

With the exception of crafts and clerical, Hopkinton's occupations mirror those of the state as a whole. However, in comparison to the county, Hopkinton differs in several areas, notably professional & technical where the county employs 19% and Hopkinton 14%.

Also, protective & other services show a 15.5% rate for the county and only 10% for Hopkinton. Finally, in the machine operators and assemblers category, Hopkinton residents are employed at 17% rate versus 9.5% for the county. These facts indicate that in 1980 the town's residents were employed in more "Blue Collar" jobs than in "White Collar" jobs.

## **E. LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

There are four basic economic development issues that are pertinent to the Town of Hopkinton: Tourism, Industry, Tax Base, and Services. The following discussion will address each of these topics separately.

### 1. Tourism

The tourism industry has become one of the largest revenue generators in the State of Rhode Island and continues to grow. The South County towns, Hopkinton included, receive a fair share of that revenue. As such, there is an opportunity to take advantage of that industry in Hopkinton to increase spending of tourist's dollars and provide local employment. For example, by first encouraging the protection of historic, cultural and natural resources, these can be promoted as landmarks of the community and become a component of the tourist economy. However, it is vital that tourism be managed in a sound manner so as not to overwhelm or overuse the town's resources.



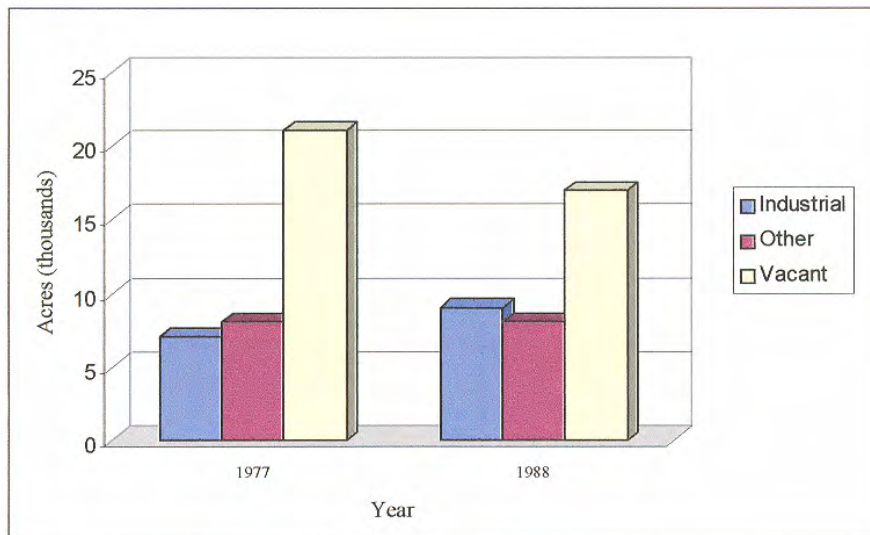
The Town's Economic Development Commission has determined that the tourism industry is the number one sector of the economy in which the commission is attempting to stimulate growth. In order to accomplish this, the town needs to support tourism by improvement to support facilities and services provided. This might include more public rest rooms and motel accommodations. Finally, the tourist season could be extended by promotion of special events past Labor Day.

## 2. Industry

As a state, Rhode Island has limited land available for industrial development. That fact makes the task of finding an "ideal" industrial property – that being one with no constraints to development and possessing a complete set of site amenities; sewer, water, gas, rail, access and power, a difficult one. Therefore, in order to attract or retain a company to a Rhode Island community, a redefined "ideal" parcel needs to be tailored to each community's strengths by highlighting the attributes of the parcels in the individual town and targeting industry ~~which~~ *that* can fit those requirements. Obviously, one of the true assets most Rhode Island communities have to offer is "quality of life" to potential employees.

Central to the success of industrial development is a statewide strategy aimed at providing a vigorous economy by supplying adequate employment opportunities, new industrial facilities, and a sound business climate. In order to be in a position to accomplish the goal of a vigorous economy, vacant and industrially zoned property must be available in the state's communities. The state was inventoried back in 1977 and again in 1988. The following figure portrays the results of those inventories.

**Figure V-10. Use of Industrially Zoned Land in RI: 1977,1988**



Although the total acreage did not change from 1977 to 1988, the number of sites comprising the total from 283 to 328 did. However, industrial use increased from 19% of the total, to 28% of the total in that time period.

A further evaluation, of the 17,582 acres listed as vacant and zoned for industry in 1988, revealed that only 1,948 acres were considered vacant, prime and construction ready. The balance was characterized as having a lack of services, poor access to rail and air transportation, in a flood hazard area, or with major site limitations.

The Town of Hopkinton is within the Sub-state Employment Growth Area #6, along with Charlestown, Exeter, Richmond and Westerly. The growth area had a combined 1985 population of 41,100 and total employment of 11,997. A full 71 % of the 11,997 employed in the area were in three sectors, they being; (#1) government, colleges & hospitals, (#2) wholesale & retail, and (#3) manufacturing.

The following table illustrates the current use of industrially zoned property in Hopkinton as compared with the other communities in the growth area.

**Table V-4. Current Use of Industrially Zoned Property in Sub-state Employment Growth Area #6**

<b>Town</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Industrial</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
Charlestown	1306	74	7	1225
Exeter	642	19	65	558
Hopkinton	691	29	197	465
Richmond	1071	24	198	849
Westerly	1597	231	497	869
<b>Total</b>	<b>5307</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>964</b>	<b>3966</b>

While the town has a fair amount of property zoned for industry, the majority is comprised of three sites, all of which are nearly 200 acres in size, and have already been developed in other uses. Also, floodplain, aquifer protection and soil conditions will limit the balance of these three sites for industrial use.

The remaining sites and land are either fully developed or isolated with development limitations due to soil conditions. As is evident from the above figure, Hopkinton has only 8% of the developed industrial property in the Sub-state Region, while Westerly contains 61 %.

3. Tax Base

Tourism and industry are important to any municipality, as they affect the fiscal well-being and ultimately the tax rate charged to its residents. This next section will analyze the tax rate trends in Hopkinton, and compare the town to the region and state to indicate just how important the tax base is to a community.

First, the actual tax rate in Hopkinton as it compares to its neighboring communities and the state during the time period of 1981 - 1988.

**Table V -5. Tax Base for Hopkinton and the Surrounding Municipalities: 1981-1988**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>1987</b>	<b>1986</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>1982</b>	<b>1981</b>
Hopkinton	\$29.7	\$31.2	\$30.1	\$31.4	\$30.9	\$28.8	\$65.0	\$56.1
Richmond	\$38.0	\$42.9	\$41.0	\$41.2	\$36.2	\$35.2	\$28.6	\$56.1
Charlestown	\$11.3	\$10.8	\$10.1	\$9.9	\$33.6	\$34.5	\$28.9	\$30.0
Exeter	\$34.8	\$32.5	\$30.1	\$32.7	\$24.6	\$29.9	\$64.5	\$65.6
Westerly	\$20.0	\$19.1	\$16.7	\$16.3	\$16.0	\$16.0	\$15.5	\$15.5
State Average	\$27.6	\$30.9	\$29.5	\$29.6	\$30.3	\$40.6	\$52.2	\$54.5

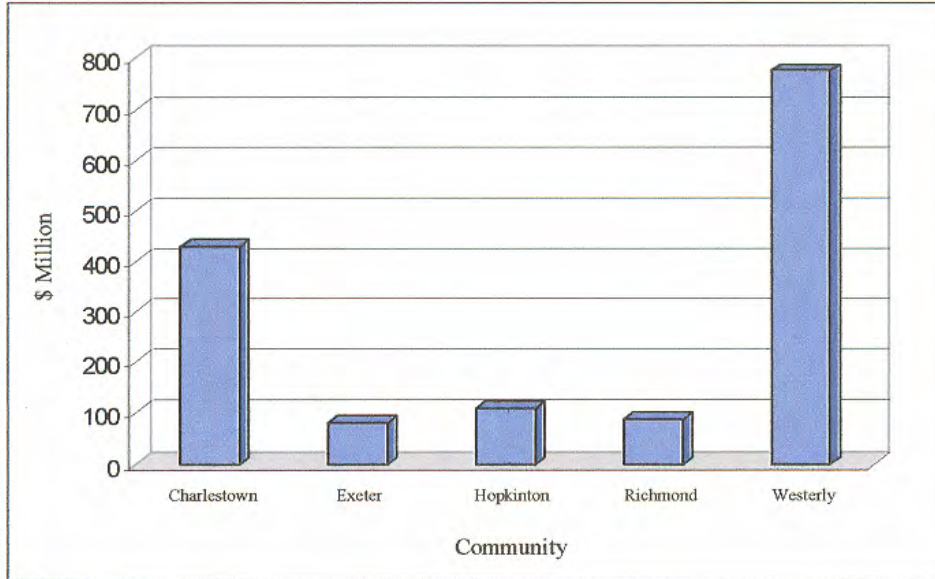
Note: Rates are per \$1000 Valuation

The first trend to mention is the drop in rates during 1981 thru 1988. This occurred as all communities completed re-evaluation, which in turn lowered the rate, but not necessarily the effective rate in these communities. The effective rate is determined by dividing the actual market value of all listed property in each town by the total tax levy in that year. As such, individual taxpayers may either pay more or less depending on their specific property value, regardless of the fact that the rate dropped significantly.

The second most revealing trend indicates that Hopkinton most closely resembled the state average tax rate of the five communities listed in the table above. While neighboring Richmond was higher, both Charlestown and Westerly were considerably lower due to much higher "Grand Lists" of all property within those towns.

The following figure illustrates the distinct differences between the communities compared above in relation to their Tax Base.

**Figure V-11. Total Assessed Value for Properties in Hopkinton and Surrounding Municipalities**



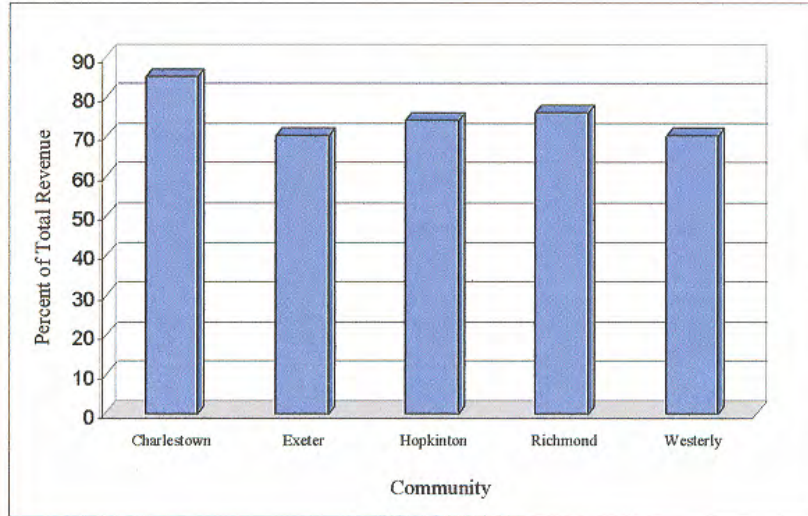
Another area worth describing is the actual composition of the tax revenue collected in Hopkinton. As can be shown, the town relies heavily on the residential sector for revenue.

**Table V-6. Analysis of Tax Revenue for Hopkinton 1987**

Residential	75.96%
Commercial	5.68%
Industrial	5.09%
Utilities	1.81%
Motor Vehicles	11.12%
Other	0.34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Again, a comparison of Hopkinton to its neighboring communities for indicates the following:

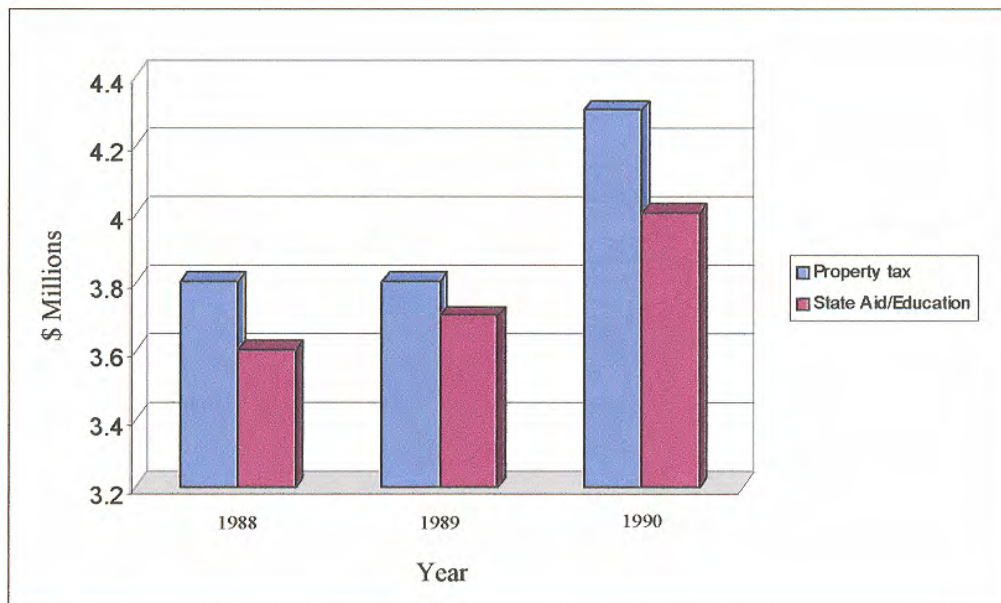
**Figure V -12. Residential Tax Revenue**



Hopkinton, as well as all of these communities, relies on the residential sector to provide over 70% of the revenue necessary to operate town services each year.

One final category to examine involves the total revenues collected in Hopkinton and the percent from both property tax and state aid over the past three years, 1988 - 1990.

**Figure V-13. Property Tax and State Aid for Hopkinton 1988-1990**



Hopkinton relies equally on Property Tax collections and State Aid for over 90% of the revenue it requires to operate as a municipality. As the 1990 bar lines indicates, the State Aid number is decreasing, and more reliance on property tax has occurred. This trend may continue as the states fiscal situation deepens.

#### 4. Services

The fourth major issue is Services, or the general lack of particular services. While the town has basic provisions such as police and public works, Hopkinton relies on two volunteer fire departments for fire protection, and on private non-profit ambulance companies. The more important services as regards to economic development, such as public water and sewer are not currently available in Hopkinton. There is a water line project expected to be complete in 1992, which would serve a limited number of customers in Hope Valley, but they are primarily residential customers. Public sewers are probably not feasible in the future of the town for a variety of reasons, including; cost, density, discharge and regulations. A public water system for additional portions of the town is a distinct possibility, as there are several high yield aquifers located within Hopkinton that could be tapped for a source of good quality water.

Therefore, as a means of enhancing the possibility of economic development, public or perhaps private water Systems must be considered. The location of potential systems must be matched with the Goals and Policies of the Land Use Element, as well as the Natural / Cultural Element.

### **F. LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS**

In order to assess the Labor Market for the town, the report, "*Rhode Island Occupational Projections to 1995*" was consulted. This publication evaluates the possible employment growth for the state as a whole in a variety of sectors.

Again, supporting the conclusion that Rhode Island is shifting from a manufacturing based economy to one service oriented, the top three job categories projected for the most employment gains are:

Service Workers at **25.4%**  
Sales at **24.7%**  
Professional, Technical & Kindred jobs at **23.8%**.

One important ramification of this trend away from the manufacturing base has produced an employment wage level below the statewide average, which in 1988 was \$19,446. So, while the three sectors listed above continue to grow, and manufacturing declines, our state average wage rate will actually diminish, even though the number of jobs increases.

There are two sectors which are expected to decline worth mentioning. They are Crafts and Kindred Workers, and Semiskilled Textile Operatives, declining at **15.1%** and **12.3%** respectively.

Since these are two sectors where Hopkinton exceeds the county and state average employment, this is of particular concern to the town (see page #11). However, the report does indicate an overall 9.1% increase in jobs classified as "Blue Collar".

The report also lists the top thirty (30) occupations statewide projected to have the most annual openings between the years 1985 - 1995. These total 10,250 job openings on an annual basis. Nearly 25% of those jobs require a College degree and almost 60% a High School diploma.

The following table lists the thirty occupations as presented in the report.

**Table V-7.State of RI Average Annual Job Openings by Occupation 1985-1995**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Average Openings</b>
Sales Clerks	750
Secretaries	695
General Office Clerks	660
Cashiers	590
Nurses	585
Nurses Aides	540
Guards & Doorkeepers	540
Waiter/Waitress	525
Teachers, Elementary	445
Kitchen Helpers	435
Bookkeepers, Store	375
Managers, Store	320
Carpenters	310
Accountants & Auditors	295
Fast Food Workers	270
Sales Representatives, Technical	260
Child Care Workers	260
Bartenders	230
Truck Driving Occupations	225
Accounting Clerks	210
Licensed Practical Nurses	210
Assemblers	185
Teachers, Secondary	185
Receptionists	185
Managers, Restaurant & Coffee Shop	180
Lawyers	160
Automotive Mechanics	160
Production Packages	155
Gardeners & Groundkeepers	155
Typists	155
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,250</b>

## **G. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS**

A review of the material presented so far demonstrates the trends, issues and analysis necessary to develop a set of opportunities and constraints for Hopkinton.

First, to classify the constraints:

- Skills, training & Occupational Characteristics
- Change in Employment Structure
- Decrease in Average Wage Rates
- Decreasing State Aid Revenue
- Drop in Construction
- Lack of Major Services
- Lack of Ideal Industrial Sites
- Reliance on Residential Property for Revenue
- Rising Unemployment
- Rising Tax Rate
- Small Business
- Small Number of Large Employers

The following are considered opportunities:

- Encourage Expansion of Existing Industry
- Expand Commercial & Industrial Tax Revenue
- Expand Employment
- Expand Tax Base
- Identify Ideal Industrial Sites
- Increase Service Sector
- Increase Manufacturing Base
- Promote Public Water Service
- Promote Tourism – Local and Regional Re-
- Zone Land for Industry
- Target Industries According to Occupations

What will follow is a brief discussion of these topical areas:

The constraints listed above can be grouped into several categories: Work Force characteristics, Tax Revenue & Rates, Industrial Site Criteria, and State Aid. First, Work Force Characteristics combined with a change in the employment structure, demonstrates the difficulty the town might have in attracting the so-called, "High Tech" industry. A noted Professor at Northwestern University, Mark Satterthwaithe, has stated, "Fast growing high tech firms must be able to recruit specialized, experienced, and skilled professionals who can meet specific requirements. Being a part of a large, local intra-industry pool makes this far easier." In order for Hopkinton residents to fully take advantage of the potential for new high tech jobs, some training and retraining of our workforce may be necessary. This can be accomplished through such programs as Job Training and Partnership Act and Workforce 2000, as well as Adult Education programs



offered through Chariho.

Since the town relies so heavily on the residential sector for raising tax revenue, combined with a reduction of the State Aid received by Hopkinton, this has led to an escalating Tax Rate. A high tax rate places the town at a competitive disadvantage when compared to neighboring Westerly or Charlestown, which have two of the lowest rates in the state.

Even with a good inventory of ideal Industrial Sites, a community may not realize tax revenue benefits of industrial development. Both expansion of existing firms and attraction of new companies to a community is a long-term process, and thus, saturation of sites can sometimes take many years. Since Hopkinton does not presently have an inventory of ideal sites, the possibility of incasing the industrial base is not likely.

The municipalities in Rhode Island have relied heavily on the State Aid apportioned on an annual basis to balance their budgets. In a time of huge budget deficits at the state level, competition for a smaller cache of dollars has and will continue to diminish the funds Hopkinton can expect from State Government. Therefore, the town will have to become more resourceful in order to maintain fiscal balance between services and budgets.

A couple of minor constraints that are directly related to the above include: a rising unemployment rate, and a sharp decrease in construction contracts.

Finally, the "small business" state and lack of large employers in Hopkinton places employees in a more volatile work environment affecting job stability.

With respect to opportunities, they can be grouped as: Expansion of Commercial & Industrial Development, Expansion of Tax Base, Increase Employment, Promote Tourism, and Increase Available Industrial Sites.

These opportunities are, in essence, all intertwined. Expansion of commercial & industrial development and promotion of tourism will naturally increase employment. In order to accomplish an increase in industrial development, additional industrial sites are required.

First, Increase in Industrial & Commercial Development involves an evaluation of existing properties zoned for industrial and commercial development. It has been determined that there is a shortage of these properties in Hopkinton. Thus, the town must ascertain both the most advantageous locations and the quantity of new sites for industrial & commercial activity to take place.

Therefore, available industrial sites become a most important task for the town to accomplish. This begins with the establishment of a set of criteria that best suites the town without compromising the ability to attract new industry. The town must be realistic regarding its positive and negative selling points, and incorporate the positive aspects into a site selection process.

It has been previously stated that tourism is an important component of our economy. To Promote Tourism at the local and regional level will benefit the local tourism industry by pumping dollars into the economy. Support for organizations such as the South County Tourism Council will enhance the town's ability to attract new tourist dollars. Careful planning for new tourist activities in town will be required so as not to degrade the natural and cultural environment that serves to attract people.

All of these opportunities serve to Increase Employment in Hopkinton. Hopefully, the effort to accomplish the above stated opportunities will provide more long term, higher paying, and stable jobs for Hopkinton residents.

## **H. GOALS**

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Plan and Land Use regulation Act specifies that the Comprehensive Plan "Shall include the identification of economic development policies and strategies, either existing or proposed by the municipality, in coordination with the land use plan element. Such policies should reflect local, regional, and statewide concerns for the expansion and stabilization of the economic base and the promotion of quality employment opportunities. The policies and implementation techniques must be identified for inclusion in the implementation program element". Further, along with being consistent with the goals and policies of contiguous communities and with other Hopkinton Comprehensive Plan Elements, this element must address the two stated goals of the act:

1. To promote the orderly growth and development that recognizes the natural characteristics of the land, its suitability for use and the availability of existing and proposed public and/or private services and facilities.
2. To promote an economic climate which increases quality job opportunities and overall economic well being of each municipality and the state.

In order to prepare this section of the element, various sources have been utilized. One source was public opinion surveys, the first completed by the Planning Board in 1985, and the second, by the Citizens Advisory Committee in 1991. Also, the input from the Town's Economic Development Commission and a Sub-Committee of the Citizens Advisory Committee was considered. Finally, Town Officials were consulted for their direction on future economic development.

Therefore, the goals presented will in essence, portray the consensus of the community as a whole and direct the town officials by the actions presented in the implementation section.

The following are the **GOALS** for:

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- 1. GOAL:** Provide for new light and/or heavy industrial locations in Hopkinton by identification and evaluation of new sites.
- 2. GOAL:** Provide for the expansion of the town's tax base by encouraging development of new and existing light industrial & office/commercial businesses.
- 3. GOAL:** Support and promote the local tourism industry through provision of services & facilities and programs directed to assist the industry.
- 4. GOAL:** Promote the development of public and/or private water service to supply economic development sites.
- 5. GOAL:** Improve employment opportunities within the town.
- 6. GOAL:** Target specific types of business based on Hopkinton's quality of life and locational advantages, balanced with business requirements and impacts to the environment.

**I. IMPLEMENTATION / ACTION PROGRAM**

As Stated in The Act, the Implementation! Action Program "defines and schedules for a period of (5) five years or more the specific public actions to be undertaken in order to achieve the goals and objectives of each element of the Comprehensive Plan. Scheduled expansion or replacement of public facilities and the anticipated costs and revenue sources proposed to meet those costs reflected in a municipality's Capital Improvement Program shall be included in the implementation program. The Implementation! Action Program shall identify the public actions necessary to implement the objectives and standards of each element of the Comprehensive Plan that require the adoption or amendment of codes and ordinances by the governing body of the municipality. "

These Public actions include:

- A. Legislative and Regulatory Actions
- B. New or Improved Public Services
- C. Capital Improvements Program
- D. Administrative or Management Actions

**1. GOAL: Provide for new light and/or heavy industrial locations in Hopkinton by identification and evaluation of new sites.**

**Policy:**

- Determine the most advantageous locations for new Manufacturing sites.

**Recommendations:** *Develop site criteria*

*Assess services possibilities*

*Examine environmental constraints*

*Examine surrounding land uses*

*Review current town regulations*

*Determine number of acres required for absorption over a 1–20 year period*

*Select best location(s)*

*Recommend zoning changes where necessary*

**Responsibility:** Economic Development Commission / Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

**2. GOAL: Provide for the expansion of the town's tax base by encouraging development of new and existing light industrial & office/commercial business.**

**Policy:**

- Direct and support the efforts of the Town's Economic Development Commission (EDC).

**Recommendations:** *Restore active membership in the EDC*

*Revisit EDC charge and revise if necessary*

*Support activities of the EDC by adequate funding*

*Direct EDC to prepare marketing brochure*

*Conduct initial Hopkinton business condition survey and update yearly*

Review existing town regulations

Recommend changes to Zoning Ordinances. if necessary

**Responsibility:** Economic Development Commission / Town Planner / Town Council /  
Assistance from R.I. Department of Economic Development

**Time Frame:** On-going

**Policy:**

- Explore opportunities for new office, commercial, industrial and mixed uses at Exits 1 and 2 off of I-95 as well as in existing village areas.

**Recommendations:** Perform an in-depth inventory and analysis of development potential in the aforementioned areas including impact analysis, market analysis and related infrastructure requirements

Include analysis of existing structures that could be re-used for economic development purposes

Remain consistent with related elements of this plan with regards to potential development opportunities

**Responsibility:** Economic Development Commission / Town Planner / Town Council /  
Assistance from R.I. Department of Economic Development

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years) and On-going

**3. GOAL: Support and promote the local tourism industry through provision of services & facilities programs directed to assist the industry**

**Policy:**

- Promote and steer tourists towards the town's historic, cultural, scenic, and natural resources, as well as the town's commercial enterprises that support this activity.

**Recommendations:** Assist with the preparation of promotional brochures

Develop signage program directing tourists to town attractions

Provide necessary services such as trash & debris removal and public restrooms

Work with local chamber and business associations to further support their efforts

Cultivate relationship with the South County Tourism Council

**Responsibility:** Economic Development Commission / Local business associations / South County Tourism Council / Town Council

**Time Frame:** On-going

**4. GOAL: Promote the development of public and/or private water service to supply economic development sites.**

**Policy:**

- Where feasible, support the establishment of water supply systems that have the potential of serving future economic development sites.

**Recommendations:** Evaluate the ground water potential of the ground water reservoir in town by consulting existing mapping

Highlight on Land Use Map the potential sites for small community wells

Assist with the identification and application for grant/loan funds to develop public/private water systems

Support the establishment of an Aquifer Protection Ordinance and a Waste Water Management District

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Planning Board / Town Planner / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

**5. GOAL: Improve employment opportunities within the town.**

**Policy:**

- Provide the key ingredients to enhance the business climate in town to provide more employment opportunities to town residents.

**Recommendations:** Identify and zone new areas for manufacturing & commercial sites

Provide and support the necessary services required to entice businesses to Hopkinton

Work with existing local businesses to strengthen their position and solve problems

Work with RIDED and JTPA as well as Workforce 2000 to train and re-train portions of the workforce

Work with Chariho Adult Education Program to provide necessary training to meet the demand of high tech industry

**Responsibility:** Planning Board / Town Planner / Economic Development Commission / Town Council / Chariho Adult Education Program

**Time Frame:** On-going

**6. GOAL:** Target specific types of business based on Hopkinton's quality of life and locational advantages, balanced with business requirements and impacts to the environment.

**Policy:**

- Develop a target industry list for the Town of Hopkinton.

**Recommendations:** Develop a set of manufacturing criteria for the town

Establish a set of locational advantages

Review sites identified as new manufacturing zones

Review natural and environmental constraints

Review local ordinances

Work with State Department of Economic Development to direct these industries to Hopkinton

Work with R.LDED. JPTA. Workforce 2000. and Chariho Adult Education Program to address specific needs of the workforce

**Responsibility:** Economic Development Commission / Town Planner / Planning Board / Conservation Commission / Town Council / Chariho Adult Education Program

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years) and On-going

**J. SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

**Rhode Island basic Employment Statistics - 1989/1990**

Rhode Island Department of Economic Development

**Housing Data Base -December 1990**

Division of Planning, RI Department of Administration

**Industrial Land Use Plan - State Guide Plan Element #212**

Division of Planning, RI Department of Administration

**Handbook on the Local Comprehensive Plan - June 1989**

Division of Planning, RI Department of Administration



## VI. HOUSING

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## A. INTRODUCTION

### 1. Purpose

The housing element of the comprehensive plan consists of the identification and analysis of the community's housing needs both now and in the future. The plan's research component examines existing preservation, improvement and development programs and compares those programs to the scope and extent of community need. The implementation portion of the plan recommends local policies and implementation techniques to provide a balance of housing choices for all residents over the 20-year life of the plan.

### 2. Background

Historically, housing has not been an issue of serious concern in the Town of Hopkinton. The rural quality of the town, its seemingly vast amounts of undeveloped land and its relative isolation from major urban housing markets, had been a source of protection from speculation and escalating costs. Traditionally those who grew up in the town could find housing if they chose to remain. More recently, however, improved access and the town's scenic and environmental quality have increased Hopkinton's desirability to the regional residential and vacation home market. The 1990's will continue to present challenges to the Town of Hopkinton as it tries to balance the environmental issues with the needs of its residents in a housing market that is increasingly regional in scope.

The dynamics of the regional housing market have had significant impacts on the supply of and demand for housing in southern Rhode Island communities. In the 1980's, this demand produced a surge in housing development and cost escalation that has altered the affordability and occupancy of housing in Rhode Island. More recently the market experienced a recession that stagnated sales and new construction in Hopkinton. To what extent this condition is expected to continue will be of major concern as the town develops land use and housing policies to guide growth into the 21st century. These questions must be addressed in a rational research and planning process and will become an integral element of the 1991 Comprehensive plan.

The objectives of the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan are as follows:

**Objective A** - To present an inventory of housing in Hopkinton, emphasizing changing patterns of supply and demand, the impacts of market shifts on housing affordability, availability and accessibility, and both existing and planned housing programs and policies.

**Objective B** - To identify the most pressing housing issues and concerns which will confront Hopkinton during the next 20 years.

**Objective C** - To prepare recommendations for housing policies and strategies which the town might adopt in order to promote improved access to housing for current and potential residents.

## **B. METHODS**

The research phase of the housing element includes the collection and analysis of quantitative data and qualitative data collected through participatory research. The analysis is organized into four sections, each focusing on specific aspects of past, current and future housing information as follows:

### **1. Housing Supply**

The analysis of housing supply emphasizes the prevailing housing stock, its past trends, recent growth and costs: This is accomplished through a discussion of residential development as measured by the type, quantity and location of residential construction; an assessment of the effects of the housing boom of the mid to late 1980's; a comparison of housing prices in Hopkinton and three neighboring towns; a description of the supply of public and subsidized housing in Hopkinton; and a discussion of the physical condition of the housing stock.

### **2. Housing Demand**

The assessment of housing demand centers around a review of historic and current patterns of occupancy, ability to pay for housing and the socio-demographic characteristics unique to Hopkinton. This process includes an analysis of housing tenure characteristics; an assessment of household income; an analysis of affordability in the owner-occupied and residential rental market sectors; and an assessment of the current and future demographic demand for housing.

### **3. Housing Issues and Implications**

The synthesis of the data collection process is designed to produce a conceptual framework for the development of policy recommendations. This process is based on three primary sources of information: an identification of issues as they have emerged from the quantitative research; an analysis of the responses given by local housing experts and town officials to a series of key informant interviews; and an analysis of responses given by a sample of town residents to housing-related questions asked in the Comprehensive Community Survey that was circulated during the summer of 1990.

### **4. Recommendations**

The final step in the comprehensive planning process is the development of programmatic and policy responses to the needs as addressed and stated by the identification of housing issues. The most pressing and important issues were translated into community goals. Through a collaborative process, the community and the consultants have developed specific policies and strategies for promoting improved access to Hopkinton's current and future housing stock.

## **C. INVENTORY - HOUSING SUPPLY**

### **1. Hopkinton's Housing Stock**

The ability of a community to provide for the housing needs of its residents is largely dependent on the availability, affordability and accessibility of the current and future supply of housing. The analysis of the supply of housing in Hopkinton is based on several fundamental assumptions concerning the relationship between housing supply and community housing needs:

Long-term housing construction trends are important indicators of the future of a community's housing supply and, as such, are necessary in defining the availability of housing.

The affordability of a community's housing stock is controlled by regional market forces. Therefore, the study of the impact of the regional market on resale and rental costs is essential to understanding the issue of affordability.

The ability of a community to provide a variety of housing choices to all members of the community is related to the development of housing that is accessible to those residents who are unable to compete within the traditional real estate market.

It is presently estimated that there are 2,879 housing units in Hopkinton (estimate based on Hopkinton building records combined with 1980 U.S. Census reports). It is further estimated that 2,265 units, or 79 percent, are single-family detached units. The housing stock consists of relatively old structures. In 1980 it was reported that 45.8 percent of the housing stock was built before 1940 (1980 U.S. Census, Table 91a).

Table IV-1 demonstrates some of the characteristics of Hopkinton's housing stock. The total number of housing units, the year the structure was built, unit size, water source, and type of sewage disposal, along with others.

**Table VI-1. General Characteristics of Hopkinton's Housing Stock, 1990**

Total Housing Units	2,662
Built 1980-1990	652
Built 1970-1979	378
Built 1960-1969	377
Built 1950-1959	301
Built 1940-1949	248
Built Before 1939	706
No bedroom	7
1-2 bedroom	855
3-4 bedrooms	1,721
5+ bedrooms	79
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	25
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	14
Public/private water system or company	221
Individual well	2,413
Other source	28
Public sewer	123
Septic/cesspool	2,506
Other disposal	33

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990*

## **2. Trends in Residential Development**

Between 1960 and 1990 Hopkinton's housing stock increased by over 100 percent, with the greatest increases occurring in the 1970's and 1980's. Between 1980 and 1990, the rate of growth in Hopkinton surpassed that of Washington County and the state as a whole. As shown in Table VI-2, between 1970 and 1980 the housing stock grew by 571 units for a 33.72 percent increase. Most of the units added during this time period were single-family homes with a median size of 6.3 rooms, slightly larger than the median unit size of 5.4 rooms which existed at the time of the 1970 U.S. Census. Between 1980 and 1989, Hopkinton added an estimated 615 new housing units to its housing stock, bringing the total supply to 2,879 housing units. 457 of the new units were single-family dwellings with 158 units constructed in multi-unit structures as apartments and condominiums. During 1990, 50 single-family units were built in Hopkinton, with no multi-unit structures. As of the first quarter of 1991, only 8 single-family building permits had been issued. Between 1980 and 1990, Washington County saw a housing increase of over 9,000 units, while the state added over 40,000 units to its inventory. The total growth in Hopkinton's housing supply represented a proportional increase of 27 percent, which was over two and one halftimes the state's housing increase. This statistic is typical of the growth trend of the 1980's throughout all of southern Rhode Island, as evidenced by the proportional increase in housing units of 22 percent for Washington County between 1980 and 1990.

**Table VI-2. Local and Regional Housing Production**

	<b>Census 1970</b>	<b>Census 1980</b>	<b>1970-1980 % Change</b>	<b>Total Change 1980-1989</b>	<b>1980-1989 % Change</b>
<b>Hopkinton</b>	1,693	2,264	33.72%	615	27.16%
<b>Washington Co.</b>	30,951	40,899	32.14%	9,001	22.0%
<b>State of RI</b>	317,718	372,672	17.29%	40,168	10.77%

Sources: 1970, 1980 U.S. Census, Washington County and RI Preliminary census results, Hopkinton Town Planner's Office

Comparing Hopkinton's housing production of the last decade with that of neighboring towns, it was found that the level of new housing construction, while significant, was somewhat lower in Hopkinton. As shown in Table VI-3, the proportional increase of 27.16 percent was surpassed by housing stock increases in Richmond, Exeter and Charlestown of 34.75 percent, 36.33 percent and 38.38 percent, respectively.

**Table VI-3. Comparative Housing Production Data**

	<b>1980 Stock</b>	<b>80-89 Production</b>	<b>1990 Est. Stock</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Hopkinton</b>	2,264	615	2,879	27.16%
<b>Richmond</b>	1,384	481	1,865	34.75%
<b>Exeter</b>	1,390	505	1,895	36.33%
<b>Charlestown</b>	3,064	1176	4,240	38.38%
<b>Westerly</b>	8,250	2204	10,454	26.71%

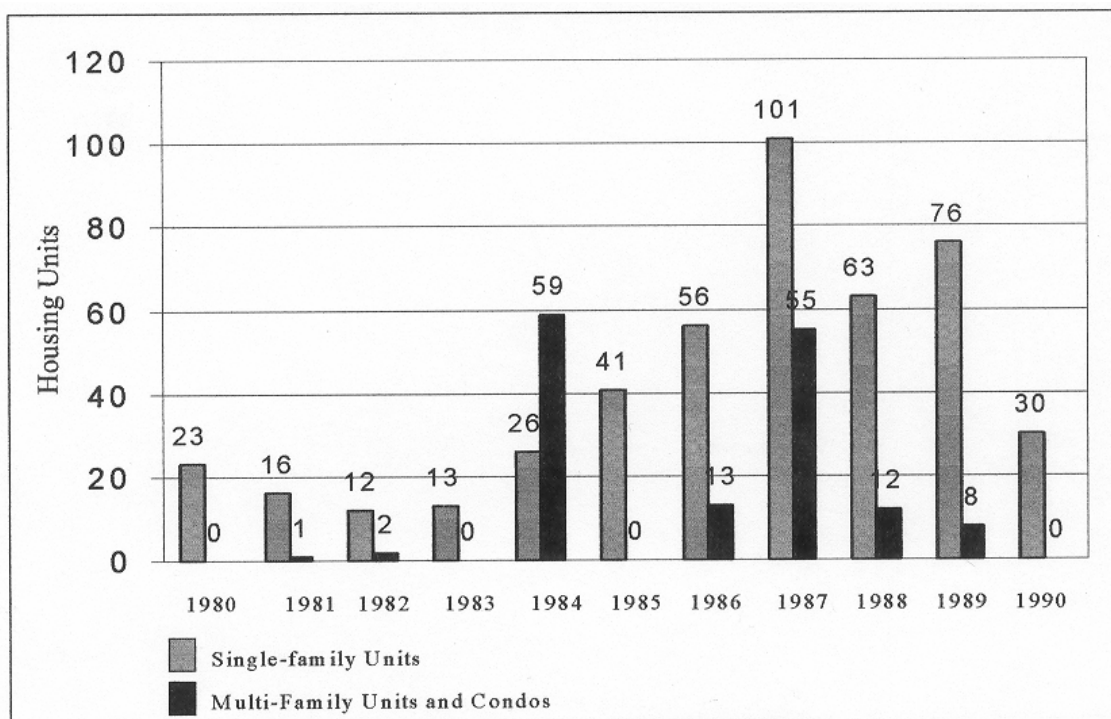
Sources: 1980 U.S. Census, Town of Hopkinton, Preliminary 1990 U.S. Census; R.I. Department of Economic Development

In 1980, 1,808 units, or almost 80 percent of the housing inventory was of single-family design. In the last decade the trend reversed slightly with the addition of 158 condominiums and apartments for which building permits were issued in 1980 and 1990. Additional condominium and apartment units are planned and will probably account for a major portion of housing construction over the near term (three to five years). The historic preference for single-family residences is partly a reflection of the lack of utilities and infrastructure. In 1980, nearly 96 percent of all residences had on-site water supplies (the highest proportion in the state), while 98 percent of all residents had on-site septic disposal systems. Current residential zoning practice is designed to continue the reliance on on-site water and sewer Systems. As a result, very few small lot subdivisions have been developed, except in those areas served by private water districts.

During the last ten years the pattern of housing production in Hopkinton has mirrored the regional building boom of the 1980's. As shown in Figure VI-I, the surge in construction is clearly visible in the years 1984 through 1989. This figure is based on approved building permits that were filed with the town's office of building inspection. The annual construction levels during that time period are quite typical of all Rhode Island communities as they reacted to

the restructuring of the housing market. The production of multi-family projects saw a corresponding increase, but is not believed to be directly related to shifts in market demand. Specifically, the 59 units and 55 units of multi-family housing that were produced in 1984 and 1987, respectively, reflect the construction of the Canonchet Cliffs I & II, a subsidized elderly housing complex.

**Figure VI-1. Annual Housing Production**



Source: Hopkinton Town Planner's Office

### **3. The Location of Housing Production**

Historically, the settlement of Hopkinton took place in and around its principal villages of Hope Valley, Ashaway, Bradford and several smaller village centers. In 1970, 76.3 percent of all households and 78 percent of the population resided in the villages of Ashaway, Hope Valley and Bradford. By 1980 growth was becoming less focused. The proportion of all households located in the principal villages had declined to 69.8 percent. However, the preference for development within the village areas was still evident, as almost 49 percent of all new households that were formed between 1970 and 1980 were located in the three principal villages. The 1980's witnessed a different pattern of development. New housing construction was more scattered throughout the town. With the exception of approximately 180 units that were built in developments ranging in size from 6 to 100 units, the bulk of development was in the form of individual unit frontage development. The Woodville area saw the largest projects, with a combined development of approximately 140 single-family homes and condominiums built in Sweet Valley Estates and the Lindbrook development.



**4. The Cost of Housing**

The ability of the residents of a town to afford the housing available within its borders is becoming a concern for all communities. Given that the local real estate market is subordinate to a regional demand for homes, there is a high probability that the local price structure for housing will be dictated by the regional population's ability to pay rather than the financial capacity of the local population. The cost of housing is described by a number of indicators and data sources which include: The resale market, the subsidized resale market, the rental market and inventory, the subsidized rental inventory, land costs and property tax policy. Residential Resale Market: The residential construction boom illustrated in Figure VI-I, was precipitated by a rapid escalation in housing prices. There are conflicting opinions as to the origin of the price escalation, but one theory suggests that home prices throughout Rhode Island during the 1980's were substantially lower than those in surrounding metropolitan housing markets. This condition was perceived as an undervalued housing market leading to speculative buying. To some extent, speculative investment triggered a spiraling increase that impacted both, the resale and rental marketplaces.

**Table VI-4. Comparative Housing Costs: Median Sale Price of Existing Single Family Homes**

	<b>1979</b>	<b>1982</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Hopkinton</b>	\$44,250	\$49,900	\$65,900	\$135,000	205.1 %
<b>Richmond</b>	\$44,250	\$49,900	\$65,900	\$124,650	181. 7%
<b>Exeter</b>	\$44,250	\$49,900	\$65,900	\$145,000	227.1%
<b>Charlestown</b>	\$47,500	\$53,250	\$72,000	\$157,000	230.5%
<b>Westerly</b>	\$47,500	\$53,250	\$72,000	\$131,650	177.2%

Source: RI Association of Realtors/Statewide Multiple Listing Service, Inc. 1990

As shown in Table VI-4, the median price for single-family homes rose significantly in the southern part of Rhode Island, with the greatest increases occurring between 1985 and 1988. Hopkinton's position in this market was somewhat more moderate than in Exeter and Charlestown, which saw increases in the 230 percent range between 1979 and 1988. The median price in Hopkinton in 1988 was six percent higher than the state median. By the first quarter of 1990, the median selling price for single-family homes in Hopkinton had declined to \$115,000. This represents a 14 percent decrease in the value of single-family homes from the first quarter of 1989.

According to a report published by the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHMFC), the 1989 median purchase price of a home in Hopkinton was \$122,000, while the median household income was \$37,319. RIHMFC estimated that the income needed to purchase a home at the median price was \$49,618 representing a \$12,299 shortfall. The 1989 median income, therefore, accounted for approximately 75 percent of the income needed to purchase the median priced home. It must be noted that home prices in Hopkinton remain relatively

affordable when compared with surrounding towns. For example, in 1989 the Town of Hopkinton ranked 12 out of 39 in terms of the ratio of income necessary to purchase the median priced home, meaning that the income discrepancy was greater in 27 of the 39 cities and towns in Rhode Island.

Another measure of affordability is the degree to which first-time buyers are able to purchase a home. The 1990 RIHMFC report estimated that 8.5 percent of all households were occupied by first-time buyers, whereas 10 percent of all owners occupied homes were purchased by first-time buyers statewide. The difference between these two figures is not believed to be significant and does not imply any additional or unique localized market obstacles to first-time buyers. It should be noted, however, that it is not possible to identify the degree to which local residents are able to become first-time buyers within the town.

**Table VI-5. RIHMFC Loan Eligibility Criteria: Max Gross Income \$37,500**

<b>Unit Type</b>	<b>Maximum Allowable Price</b>
Single Family (new)	\$130,266
Single Family (exist)	\$124,875
Two family	\$141,178
Three family	\$170,893
Four family	\$198,727

Source: RIHMFC

**Subsidized Resale Market:** The subsidized resale market is defined as the size and characteristics of the housing inventory that is eligible for low cost mortgages. The principal mechanism available to the residents of Hopkinton is the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation low interest loans. The availability of properties that are eligible for discounted financing is determined by RIHMFC which applies income and home price parameters to determine the eligibility of a mortgage applicant and the candidate property for a low interest home mortgage. As shown in Table VI-5, the current maximum gross household income is \$37,500 and the maximum purchase price, which is indexed according to the type of property, ranges from \$124,875 to \$198,727. During the first two weeks of May 1991, there were 85 single-family homes listed for sale in Hopkinton of which 28 were within the RIHMFC price guidelines. This represents 31 percent of all properties listed for sale.

**Residential Rental Market:** The escalation in the price of homes has had a similar impact on rental costs. In 1980 the U.S. Census reported that the median contract rent paid for an apartment in Hopkinton was \$158.00. A December 1990 RIHMFC report stated that the average 1990 rent was \$612 in Hopkinton and \$562 for the state. A survey of rental advertisements for Hopkinton apartments listed between March 17, 1991 and May 12, 1991 found that the average asking rent was \$460.

**Rental Assisted Housing:** The current inventory of rental-assisted housing is 144 units, 114 of which are occupied by the elderly or handicapped. 5.4 percent of all housing units in Hopkinton

are rental assisted compared with .4 percent in Charlestown, 3.5 percent in South Kingstown, .6 percent in Richmond, 4.8 percent in Westerly, and 3.4 percent in Narragansett.

**Property Tax:** Property tax policy is viewed as an affordability concern to the extent that local property taxes impact ownership costs. According to reports published by the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council, in 1988 Hopkinton ranked 27 out of the 39 cities and towns, meaning that 26 communities had higher tax rates for equivalent property. In 1990 Hopkinton's rank had changed to 17. This ranking is based on the comparison of equalized tax rates, i.e. those that are adjusted for inconsistencies between assessed value and market value. The ranking of Hopkinton in 17th place was calculated on the basis of a ratio of assessment equal to 45.49 percent. An informal survey of second quarter sales information produced an average ratio of assessment of 37.4 percent. A lower ratio of assessment produces a lower overall equalized tax rate. It is possible that the perception of expensive property taxes is in part due to a reduction in the property tax rate in 1988 and relatively significant increases in subsequent years, in general.

**Land Cost:** Land cost has been identified as a key factor in the ultimate affordability of housing in Hopkinton. A survey of vacant property listed for sale in July 1990 identified 40 parcels ranging in size from 32,670 square feet to 64 acres with costs ranging from \$37,000 to \$375,000. The median cost for a building lot was \$49,900. The median asking price of a vacant building lot was \$62,900 in Richmond, \$80,000 in Charlestown and \$79,500 in Exeter.

## **5. Condition of the Housing Stock**

In the 1960's and 1970's the physical condition of the housing stock was a serious concern for the town. In September 1977, a draft of the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan discussed several problems related to the issue of condition, including overcrowding and inadequate plumbing facilities. Most indications are that these problems were significantly improved during the 1970's. For example, in 1970 the U.S. Census reported that 156 housing units, or 9.3 percent of all year round units, lacked complete bathroom facilities. By 1980 this figure had decreased to 64 units or 2.9 percent of the total year round units. As for the condition of crowding, the 1970 Census reported 144 units with more than 1.01 persons per room, or 9.1 percent of all year round units. By 1980, this number had reduced to 71 units, or 3.4 percent. While there are no detailed occupancy data yet available from the 1990 Census, it would appear that crowding is not a serious issue, as the median household size has decreased from 3.10 in 1980 to 2.86 in 1990.

The current physical condition of the housing stock has been assessed through field surveys and review of secondary data. Windshield surveys were conducted in search of locations where the physical appearance indicated justification for concern. In most cases, the condition of residential properties appears to be good. There are only isolated instances of properties that show neglect or abandonment. However, the exterior physical appearance of the housing stock is not the only indicator of the issue of housing condition. Probably of more immediate significance is the potential for condition problems resulting from the age of the housing stock. In 1980, approximately 46 percent of all housing in Hopkinton had been built prior to 1940. This proportion was the third highest in the state. The proportion of older structures is not meant

to imply that the condition of individual units is likely to be below standard. However, it is indicative of a potential issue concerning the ability of the owners of such properties to maintain and preserve their condition. In discussions with the town's Building Inspector, it was learned that there have been frequent reports of obsolete electrical systems, which were not designed to accommodate the higher demands of modern kitchen appliances. This condition is endemic to older homes that predate electrical wiring or were built at a time when ungrounded, low capacity systems were accepted practice. A second concern associated with the older housing stock is the energy efficiency of the heating systems and building envelope. Typically, homes built before 1940 were constructed without insulation or thermally efficient windows. In addition, the heating systems of these units are not up to date and many units still lack central heating. There is also a concern that the older segment of the housing stock is occupied by elderly residents who lack the resources to update and modernize their homes.

## **6. Potential Conversion Sites**

Several opportunities for conversion of existing properties and structures to residential housing exist within the town of Hopkinton. These properties have the potential capacity to increase the housing stock in Hopkinton (especially in the low to moderate-income range), and preserve culturally significant structures in the process.

The rich industrial heritage of Hopkinton has left many industrial buildings underutilized and/or unutilized within the town of Hopkinton. These have the potential for conversion to multi-unit housing. The mill buildings present the greatest potential for low to moderate-income housing development, as they are often located close to the village centers, thus limiting the need for transportation to commercial resources. The Rockville Mill is a good example of an underutilized structure that holds great potential for conversion. Also, large, single family structures also have the potential for conversion to multi-family housing in the future.

## **7. Existing Policies and Programs That Impact Supply**

Existing housing policy is largely manifested by existing programs designed to correct a condition or guide future change. In that regard, existing housing policy in Hopkinton is limited to three general areas that have impacts on the supply of and demand for housing. These are land use policy, property tax exemptions and public support for nonprofit housing development.

Land use policy - The prevailing policy toward residential land use is dictated by a concern for the environmental impacts of development. It would appear that the reliance on ground water (wells) and on-site septic disposal have had the greatest influence on the town's zoning and subdivision regulations. These ordinances are now characterized by two-acre minimum lot size and large minimum road frontage. Opinion relative to the impacts of these regulations is mixed. Some residents feel that they have helped to maintain the rural character of the town, while others believe that the minimum standards are unnecessarily high and have impacted housing affordability.

Property tax exemptions – Hopkinton maintains exemptions for homeowners who are elderly, disabled or in financial difficulty. Elderly homeowners who have been residents for more than five years are entitled to exemptions in the assessed value of their property of up to \$14,000, depending on the size of their household income. Similar exemptions are offered to disabled veterans, the blind, "gold star" mothers and those who qualify for a special poverty exemption.

Public support for nonprofit housing development – All financial support for existing nonprofit housing has been obtained through federal and state sources. The 114 units of elderly housing at Canonchet I and II were developed through HUD Section 202 funds. Phase III of the Canonchet complex will be developed through a subsidized low interest mortgage provided by Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation. The town has had no direct role in the development of the Canonchet project other than to allow the development of this multi-family complex in an area that was zoned for single-family residences.

## **D. INVENTORY - HOUSING DEMAND**

The principal measures of housing demand are a combination of demographic, market and occupancy indicators describing the past, present and future patterns of housing consumption. Of principal concern is the demand for housing by specific subgroups within the population and the ability of those subgroups to compete within a regional housing market for local housing opportunities. The analysis of housing demand focuses on changes in the resident population. The study examines a number of indicators of local and regional housing demand.

### **1. Housing: Occupancy**

The first set of demand indicators are those associated with the occupancy patterns of the housing stock. Table VI-6 shows that, in 1980, over 80 percent of all units were owner occupied, substantially higher than the state ratio of 58.8 percent. Vacancy rates for both owner and renter units were slightly higher than for the state as a whole. Table VI-6 also shows that households in Hopkinton, both owner and renter, are larger than their statewide counterparts.

Table VI-7 provides a time series comparison of several key occupancy statistics for Hopkinton. Overall occupancy patterns have changed and will apparently continue to change. One such phenomenon is the decrease in the size of both households and families. The 1990 average household size of 2.86 persons is 15 percent smaller than the 1970 average household size. The average household size is expected to decrease by an additional four percent to 2.74 person by 1995. Similarly, the average 1990 family size of 3.32 persons represents an 11 percent decrease from 1970. This figure is estimated to become 3.23 persons by 1995 for an additional decrease of three percent. Another trend relates to the composition of households. As shown in Table VI-6, the number of households that can be described as family households is decreasing as a proportion of the total number of households. In 1970, 86 percent of all households were occupied by families, i.e. related individuals and married couples. In 1990, this ratio was estimated to have decreased to less than 79 percent of all households. By 1995, families are expected to account for only 76 percent of all households. The third trend is the change in the overall vacancy rate, which increased significantly between 1970 and 1980 and is estimated to

have increased slightly between 1980 and 1990. One possible explanation for this increase is the popularity of Hopkinton as a location for summer homes which the Census may count as unoccupied units.

**Table VI-6. Indicators of Housing: Occupancy**

Indicator	Hopkinton	State of RI
<b>Total Occupied Housing Units</b>	2,065	338,590
<b>Owner Occupied Units</b>	1,662	21,293
% Owner occupied	80.5%	58.8%
White owners	1,646	194,299
Black owners	*	2,544
Hispanic owners	8	1,841
<b>Renter Occupied Units</b>	403	139,515
White renters	397	128,528
Black renters	*	6,759
Hispanic renters	4	4,080
<b>Vacancy Status</b>	148	24,043
Vacant housing units	28	2,160
For sale only	39	11,341
For rent	1.6%	1.1%
Homeowner vacancy rate	8.8%	7.5%
<b>Household Statistics</b>		
Median size owner occ. household	2.79	2.76
Median size renter occ. household	2.39	1.87

Source: 1980 U.S. Census (\*indicates suppressed data)

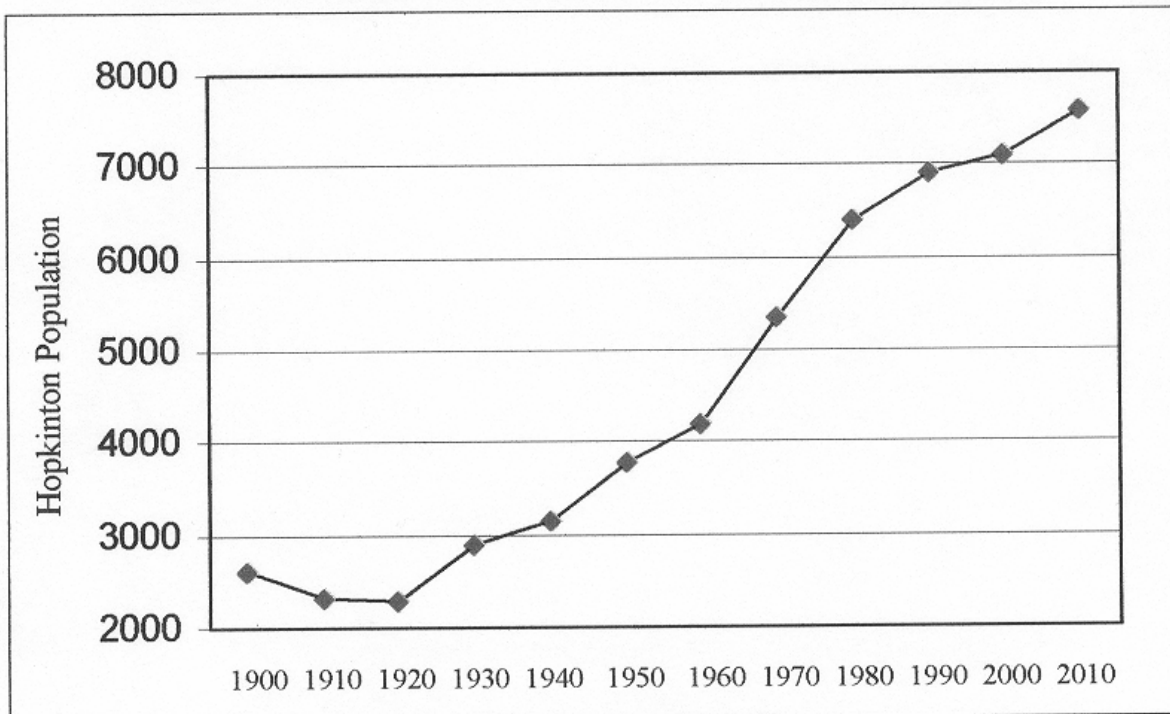
**Table VI-7. Occupancy Trends, Hopkinton 1970 to 1995**

	1970	1980	1990	1995
<b>Households</b>	1584	2065	2579	2821
<b>Families</b>	1364	1708	2029	2162
<b>Avg. Household Size</b>	3.38	3.10	2.86	2.74
<b>Avg. Family Size</b>	3.74	3.5	3.32	3.23
<b>Vacancy Rate</b>	5.0%	8.0%	9.0%	

Sources: 1970 & 1980 U.S. Census, 1990 & 1995 estimates from Demographic and Economic Forecast Report, 3/91, CACI, Inc. Fairfax, VA.

**2. Long- Term Population Trends**

The long-term population change and forecasts are shown in Figure VI-2. Between 1900 and 1920 Hopkinton's population decreased from 2,602 to 2,316, in contrast to substantial population growth occurring elsewhere in the state. By 1930 the town had gained back the earlier population loss and begun a growth trend that has continued to the present. Between 1930 and 1960 the rate of growth was fairly constant, averaging approximately 14 percent per decade. Between 1960 and 1980, a surge in growth occurred which increased Hopkinton's population by 53 percent. During this period, Washington County also experienced population growth, as its total population increased by over 58 percent. Future long-term population estimates provided by the State of Rhode Island Planning Division show continued growth for the town. That projection series predicts that the total population in Hopkinton will reach 7,537 persons by 2010. This represents an increase of 978 persons over the 1990 estimated population base of 6,559. As compared with most recent U.S. Census estimates of the town's population, 6,873, the state figures are lower, perhaps because the census methodology is less conservative. However, it is the amount of projected change which is important rather than the beginning and ending values of the forecast. For example, at the present housing occupancy rate of 2.86 persons per household, the projected increase of 978 persons will necessitate an additional 342 housing units by the year 2010. This, of course, is only a hypothetical estimate of future housing demand. When annualized, the housing forecast would require construction of fewer than 18 units per year. Average annual housing production over the last 20 years was 59 units per year. The annual average excluding the years of the construction boom was 40 units per year.



Source: RI Dept. of Economic Development

### **3. Family Housing Demand**

The demand for family housing has traditionally accounted for the vast majority of the town's housing needs. Historically, a significant portion of the demand for family housing came from within the community, as the children of Hopkinton residents sought to remain in the town. More recently, the accessibility of the town to major employment centers has made Hopkinton attractive to a more regional population base that is seeking housing choices outside the traditional commuting range of their place of employment. In addition, towns such as Hopkinton, Charlestown and Westerly, have become attractive sites for vacation homes for a population base that is well outside the regional housing market. All of these forces have combined to create a market demand and competition for existing and new homes that are suitable and desirable for family occupancy.

### **4. Local Family Housing Demand**

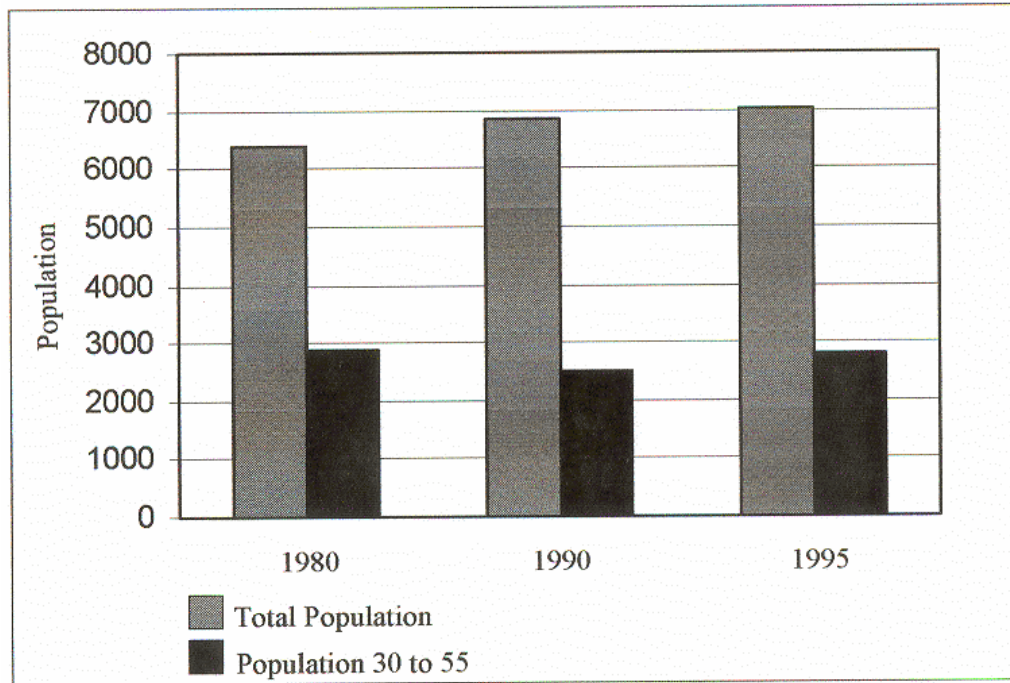
Probably the most important market sector includes the demand for family housing that originates from within the existing population base. This group contains two key subgroups, those capable of financially competing with potential buyers from outside the community and those who are likely to have difficulty competing at the market level. Taken together, these groups constitute an indigenous housing demand which is believed to be related to changes in specific demographic characteristics. Short-term estimates of population change indicate a slight increase in the total population of approximately two percent between 1990 and 1995. These estimates also show that the average household size is expected to decrease from 2.86 persons to 2.74 persons. In 1980 the average household size was 3.10 persons indicating a continuous reduction in household size. Also, during the 1990 to 1995 time period, the number of families is expected to increase by 133. During the same period the estimates predict the creation of an addition 242 households or a ratio of 1.81:100, or 1.81 new households for each new family. Between 1970 and 1980, Hopkinton saw the addition of 481 new households, of which 344 were occupied by families for a ratio of 1.39: 1 00. This highlights the gradual but significant impact of changing demographic patterns in Hopkinton and the region on the occupancy patterns of the housing stock. Over the short term, this shift may indicate that the demand for family housing will moderate, a trend which has been observed in other communities throughout the state.

The dimensions of the demand for housing among local residents who cannot compete for family housing is harder to determine. There are several useful indicators which suggest that a level of financial stress exists among a significant portion of both current renters and homeowner families. For example, South County Community Action (SCCA) recently produced a needs assessment for the towns of Washington County, based on the changing demands for the agency's various services and financial assistance programs. SCCA estimates that in Hopkinton, 74 families received AFDC funds in 1990, 124 families received food stamps in 1990, and 114 families applied for heating assistance. SCCA calculated that 16.66 percent of Hopkinton's households were "very poor" by RIHMFC's definition. While none of these indicators is a definitive measure of demand for affordable housing, they do suggest that many current residents would find purchasing or maintaining a home in town difficult. In an interview at SCCA, Mr. John Glasheen, Executive Director, estimated that



approximately one-sixth of the town's population was experiencing some form of "financial distress" .

**Figure VI-3. Family Housing Demand**

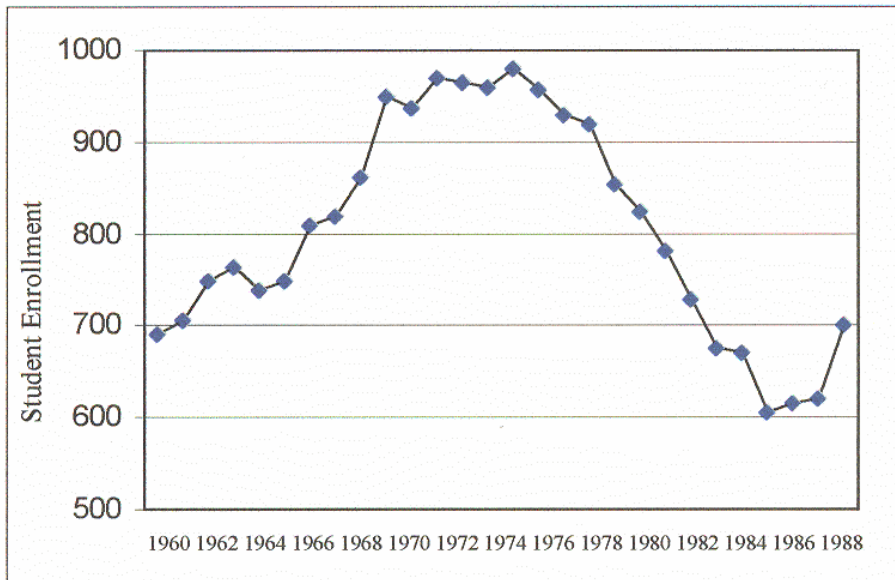


Sources: 1980 U.S. Census, National Planning Data Corp. 1990, 1995

Local demand is also defined by demographic changes in specific cohorts of the local population. Two groups are believed to be closely related to family housing demand: persons between the ages of 30 and 55 (the age group most frequently associated with family formation and family housing demand), and children under the age of 18 (the group most directly associated with the consumption of family housing). As shown in Figure VI-3, the historic and projected size of the 30 to 55 year old population has shown a slight decline in absolute numbers as well as in its proportion of total population. It has been estimated that the size of the group in 1990 was nearly 350 persons or 13 percent smaller than the size of the group in 1980's. The estimated size of this group for 1995 is 2,796 persons, a three percent decrease since 1980.

Two sources are used to quantify the number of children within the local population: U.S. Census data, enumerating the population younger than 18 years, and enrollment statistics from the public school system. In 1980 the size of the population below the age of 18 was 3,187. By 1990 the number had declined to 1,839, a decrease of 42 percent. Near term estimates of this cohort indicate little or no change by 1995. The second method of tracking the size of the youngest age groups in the population is to plot the pattern of local public school enrollment. Figure VI-4 shows the long-term public school enrollment trends in Hopkinton. The pattern of enrollment decline, which followed the enrollment peak of the early 1970's, is typical of most Rhode Island communities. The resurgence in enrollment in the 1980's seems to correspond with the housing development boom. The question remains as to whether the growth in enrollment will continue or stabilize now that housing development has abated.

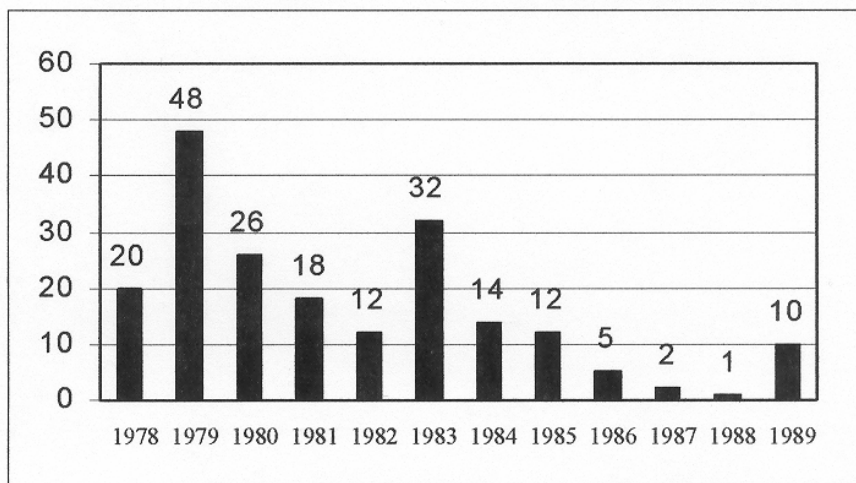
**Figure VI-4. Public Elementary School Enrollment 1960 to 1987**



Source: RI Department of Education

The implications of the demographic changes on demand for housing that is priced below market levels are less clear. This is caused by the lack of a direct indicator of future low-income demand necessitating the use of surrogate measures which can only provide indirect estimate of future needs. One such surrogate measure is the historic use of subsidized low interest mortgages within Hopkinton. As shown in Figure VI-5, the number of loans has declined since the early 1980's. This cannot be taken as direct proof of declining demand in that the availability of low interest funding has a significant impact on the number of loans generated.

**Figure VI-5. Number of RIHMFC Mortgages 1978 to 1989**



Source: RIHMFC Mortgage Disclosure Report, 1989

Another indirect measure of the below market housing demand is the financial characteristics of the population. Using family income as an index of the relative financial capability of the local population it is evident that Hopkinton has experienced some improvement over the last 20 years. The 1970 U.S. Census reported that 9.3 percent or 127 families had incomes below the poverty level. By 1980, the proportion had decreased to 6.3 percent, or 107 families. The 16 percent decrease in the number of families in poverty during this period was accompanied by an overall improvement in the town's income ranking relative to the state. In 1970, the median family income in Hopkinton was three percent less than that of the state. By 1980, Hopkinton's median family income exceeded that of the state by 1.6 percent. In 1990, Hopkinton's median family income was estimated at \$38, 132, which is 1.7 percent higher than the estimated median family income for the state as a whole.

### **5. Regional Competition for Family Housing**

Competition for family housing in Hopkinton has been identified with two main sources: the vacation home market and the emerging economic centers in eastern Connecticut and the I-95 corridor between Providence and Hopkinton. The best and only assessment of the current condition of these market sectors has come from the real estate community. There is a general consensus that the economic recession has had a profound impact on the vacation home market.

This market sector, which originated from New York and eastern Connecticut, was once responsible for a substantial proportion of real estate Sales. Today, this market is virtually nonexistent. The other source of regional demand originating from eastern Connecticut and the I-95 corridor has been impacted by a combination of economic factors. Rhode Island's financial instability is seen as a temporary inhibitor to out of state demand, while stagnant economic conditions have reduced in-state demand. The long term impacts and prognosis of this condition are not known, but there is speculation that the market is beginning to show signs of recovery (though unlikely to return to pre 1990 levels). The out-of-state demand may take much longer to recover and the future of the out-of-state vacation market is questionable at best.

### **6. Housing Demand for the Elderly & Other Special Needs Groups**

The demand for housing that will be occupied by the older population groups is a multi-faceted issue. Two questions occur in connection with the housing needs of the town's older residents: affordability and security. Many residents of retirement age on fixed incomes have difficulty maintaining the properties they own or cannot afford the housing costs in the rental sector. The size of the elderly component of housing demand is described by several demographic indicators. According to the short-term population estimates, the demand for housing by the town's older residents is likely to increase. One indicator of this trend is the apparent increase in the median age of the population: 29 years in 1980, 30.8 years in 1990, and estimated to be 33.1 years by 1995. The other indicator of elderly demand is the size of the population in the older cohorts, namely older than 65 years. In 1980 the population over the age of 65 was 574 persons, accounting for 8.9 percent of the population. By 1990 it was estimated that this group had grown to 793 persons or 11.5 percent of the population. By 1995, the 65 and older population is

expected to increase to nearly 900 persons, or almost 13 percent of the population. There is some evidence that the majority of older residents presently own and live in their homes. In 1980, 18 percent of all owner occupied units were occupied by persons over the age of 65.

Although the elderly are the largest special needs population in Hopkinton, particular attention should be given to the other special needs groups in town, as well as to the elderly. Included in the special needs populations could be individuals or families that are homeless, single-parent households, low and moderate-income households, or those citizens that are physically and mentally disabled, or households with disabled individuals. These Hopkinton residents may require additional programs and policies to meet the present and/or future demand they will have for housing. The town will work to identify particular housing needs of these special populations and respond to their needs as the town's resources permit. The town will also work with local, state, federal private and non-profit organizations, as well as work with developers on incentive programs for affordable and special needs housing.

Table VI-8 demonstrates some general statistics on population size, housing status, and other data that further clarifies the relationship between Hopkinton's residents (including special needs populations) and housing.

**Table VI-8. Housing and Population Characteristics for Potential Special Needs Populations. 1990**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Statistic</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>6,873</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Child Population &lt;18 yrs)</b>	<b>1,839</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Elderly Population (&gt;65 yrs)</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>2,465</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Family Households</b>	<b>1,916</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Married Couple Families</b>	<b>1,644</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>Other family, Male Headed</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Other Family, Female Headed</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Non-family Households</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Householder over 65 yrs.</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Occupied Housing Units</b>	<b>2,456</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Owner-Occupied Units</b>	<b>1,933</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Renter-Occupied Units</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>White Householders</b>	<b>2,428</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Non-White (inc. Black, American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut, Asian or Pacific Islander, and other races)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>Total Persons for whom Poverty status is determined</b>	<b>6,862</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>(table VI-8 cont'd.)</b>		
<b>Total Below Poverty Level</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>4</b>

<b>Persons &gt;65 yrs. Below Poverty Level</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Female Householder, No Husband Present</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>FHNHP (above) Below Poverty Level</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Persons 16-64 yrs. With a mobility or self-care limitation</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Persons 65+ yrs. With a mobility or self-care limitation</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>12.5</b>
<b>Owners spending &gt; 30% of household income on housing (of total specified 1,560)</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Renters spending &gt; 30% of household income on housing (of total specified 478)</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Households receiving Section 8 Certificates/Vouchers</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Elderly Households receiving Section 8 assistance (including 1 Hispanic household)</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Family Households receiving Section 8 assistance (including 1 Hispanic household)</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Large-family households receiving Section 8 assistance</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Small-family households receiving Section 8 assistance</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>MHRH group home beds for special needs individuals (three homes)</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>-</b>

*Source; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990*

There does appear to be some need for improving housing conditions in Hopkinton for special needs groups, especially for low and moderate-income families and individuals, female headed households with no husband present, and for the elderly with mobility or self care limitations. As stated above, the town must work to improve these conditions, and make a fair proportion of Hopkinton's housing stock available and accessible to the special populations of citizens. Town planning and building staff should attend educational seminars and workshops to stay abreast of current housing news, and build relationships with other involved organizations.

## **E. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS**

The purpose of the key informant interviews is to elicit responses based on concrete experiences and personal impressions, from members of the community who are knowledgeable in the fields of residential policy, planning, development, construction and sales. Recognized experts and community leaders in these fields were contacted during April and May 1991. Interviews were

conducted with politicians, planners, private and non-profit developers, bankers, builders and realtors. The interviewees were asked to describe their perceptions of the town's housing problems, issues and concerns facing the town currently and, potentially, prospects for the next ten years. In order to determine the most significant issues for the town to prioritize in respect to residential development, the following professionals were interviewed:

Lois Chappelle, Non-profit housing corporation staff member/Comprehensive Plan Housing Subcommittee member  
Frank Cofone, Realtor  
Nadine Dipaolo, Realtor  
Philip Friend, Banker  
Jeff Gilman, Comprehensive Plan Housing Subcommittee member  
John Gilman, Blasting company president  
John Glasheen, Nonprofit executive director  
Hal Henry, Condominium and golf course developer  
Brian Kennedy, State Representative  
Joseph Moretti, Realtor  
Brenda Pukas, Realtor/Non-profit housing developer  
Albert Russo, State Senator  
Georgia Ure, Realtor/Retailer

Additional information was received from the following local and state officials:

Mr. Robert Andreotti, CHARIHO Superintendent of Schools  
Robert Fontaine, R.I. Office of Municipal Affairs  
Joseph Lombardo, Hopkinton Town Planner  
Steven Turano, Hopkinton Tax Assessor  
Bart Fraser, Hopkinton Building Inspector

The following list represents the principal findings from the key informant interviews. The statements represent a synopsis of the opinions expressed by the interviewees and are not intended to be interpreted as the conclusions of the planning team.

The property tax rate has increased in recent years due to the town's dependence on residential property particularly on single family homes) for municipal revenues.

There is a perceived tension between life-long residents of the town (particularly those whose families have been in Hopkinton for generations) and more recent arrivals, relating to the desirability of new development: long-term residents want to see the town permit commercial or light industrial development to diversify the tax base and lessen the burden on residents, while the "newcomers" are more willing to pay the high price of life in a country town and to prohibit many forms of new development.

Like other towns in Washington County, Hopkinton is experiencing a recession in its housing market. While not as depressed as some other parts of the state, Hopkinton has seen a rapid

decline in the number of homes sold and a slight decrease in the median value of single family homes since 1989.

Any medium to large scale residential development within the next ten years is likely to be limited to the townhouses and condominiums proposed for the Brae Burn golfing community, contiguous with the existing Lindbrook Country Club near to Exit 2 off-95. Current plans call for 165 units, depending on future patterns of demand, to be phased in between 1993 and 1999.

A major shift in the housing market during the period 1989-1991 has resulted in the absence of out of state purchasers from the list of buyers. Rhode Island's budget deficits, high taxes, weak employment base and banking crisis have all impacted the state's and, by implication, the town's image within New England.

In the long-term, Hopkinton will be impacted by the southerly movement of population within the state, along such growth corridors as Routes 1-95 and 3. Just as Cranston and Warwick grew during the 1950s and 1960s, East Greenwich, North Kingstown, South Kingstown and Narragansett grew in the 1970's and 1980's, so Exeter, Hopkinton, Richmond and Charlestown are likely to experience growth in the 1990s and into the twenty-first century.

Hopkinton's rate of residential growth is likely to be impacted as much by the economy of eastern Connecticut as by the economy of the rest of Rhode Island. Residents of Hopkinton have traditionally commuted to the Mystic-Groton-New London region as well as to the Providence metropolitan area. Hopkinton's housing market is depressed because both eastern Connecticut's and Rhode Island's economies are in recession, particularly in the fields of high technology, defense and banking. The State, The University of Rhode Island, Electric Boat, G-Tech, Pfizer, Harris Graphics, and United Nuclear, all significant local employers, have been affected. The middle class consumer of single family, rural and suburban homes is suffering most in the economic climate of the 1990s and, as a result, demand for housing in Hopkinton is low.

House prices began to fall most noticeably in the coastal villages in Charlestown and Westerly, where residences fell in price by as much as 50 percent in just a few months during 1989. The effects were then felt in the more rural, hinterland areas of Richmond and Hopkinton during late 1989, but the decreases in value were much less dramatic.

The collapse of the Rhode Island Share and Deposit Indemnity Corporation (RISDIC), and locally, the closure of the Chariho-Exeter Credit Union on January 1, 1991, greatly impacted the Hopkinton housing market. Banks are reluctant to lend money for residential development. Money for condominium construction, at least from northeastern banks, is unavailable. Similarly, it has become increasingly difficult for individuals, particularly first-time buyers, to qualify for mortgages at a time when favorable interest rates might otherwise stimulate home buying. Coupled with the depressed economy, cautious bank lending policy has contributed to a flat housing market.

Hopkinton's appeal has always been that it is a "country town". People do not select the town primarily for its commercial or municipal services. Life in a country town is a trade-off: access to convenient goods and services is exchanged for a quiet, clean environment, open spaces and

comfortable single family homes on large residential lots. The small size of the town, and the historic development of unique villages, has created an atmosphere where, as one respondent described it, "the center of all knowledge is still the local bakery". There is considerable concern, even among those who wish to see some commercial growth, that development be carefully managed so as to preserve the rural flavor of Hopkinton and maintain its residential character.

Hopkinton is likely to remain a bedroom community. Its access to I-95 (via Exits 1, 2 and 3) means that a commute to Providence and northern Rhode Island or to Groton-New London and eastern Connecticut is feasible on a daily basis.

The current zoning scheme, which emphasizes two-acre residential lots, has successfully preserved the rural atmosphere of the town. Concerns were expressed however, that the zoning prohibits appropriate, denser development in the village areas (where houses are already fairly close together), yet permits residential development in open areas away from the settlements. It was felt that these open spaces might best be left in their natural state.

The absence of sewer and water districts in the most densely settled village areas is a major problem, particularly as some contamination of wells has already occurred in the Hope Valley section of town. Future contamination is considered probable if water and/or sewer districts are not established.

The provision of water and/or sewer infrastructure has proponents and opponents in equal measure. Many feel that a safe water supply is a necessity of modern life. Others feel that providing water and sewer systems will promote rapid residential development of the areas serviced. Some respondents argue that water and sewer systems can be provided without undue risk of over-development, as long as appropriate growth management regulations are put in place.

The residents of Hopkinton might be reassured about the benefits of water and sewer provision if the town, and perhaps even individual villages within the town, were given control over the infrastructure through water and/or sewer districts. Such districts might impose a levy only on those residents hooked up to the systems, while participants would vote on the type and level of service provision and maintenance, as well as the rates charged.

The issue of affordable housing in Hopkinton is not considered a major one, yet neither has it been adequately addressed. There is some concern about the inability of residents' children being able to remain in the town as adults. Since the housing "boom" of the mid-1980s, driven largely by newcomers buying into the town, few units are considered affordable.

An "affordable" home in Hopkinton is priced over \$100,000. There is very little rental housing available as an alternative. Several residents have seen their children leave town in search of more affordable housing options. There is agreement that non-profit, state and federal programs could be tapped to provide subsidized owner-occupied and rental housing in the town. Programs offered through HUD, the FHA and RIHMFC might be appropriate.



As in other communities, the affordability problem in the owner occupied market primarily affects first-time buyers. Families who already owned their homes during the 1984-1988 Rhode Island housing boom benefited from enhanced equity. People who did not own property found themselves less and less likely to be able to afford a starter home.

The current two-acre zoning scheme was felt to be appropriate for most of the town and to have been largely successful at preserving the appropriate balance between developed and undeveloped land. Further, the absence of sewer and water infrastructure prohibits the closer proximity of homes in most cases. Several respondents felt that affordable housing could be promoted by allowing denser residential development in certain carefully specified areas, perhaps in the existing villages, where homes have already been built closer together. Denser development means lower per unit land costs and, therefore, lower production costs. The issue of potential contamination of wells might prohibit widespread application of such a policy.

Affordability has had to be redefined yet again during the early-1990s. During the housing boom of the mid-1980s, house prices increased dramatically, driven, in part, by the availability of loans to both developers and buyers. Incomes were also increasing during this period. While the late 1980s and early-1990s have seen a stabilization in house prices, and even slight declines in Hopkinton, incomes have stabilized as well. Wage freezes, pay cuts and layoffs characterize the current labor market; so few people are able to take advantage of the reduced real estate prices.

The elderly sector of the affordable housing market has been well addressed within the town. Hopkinton Housing, Inc. and Hopkinton Village, Inc. have yielded two significant developments for low-income elderly citizens: Canonchet Cliffs I and Canonchet Cliffs II, respectively. Together, these developments provide 114 units for low-income individuals aged 62 and over. A third phase of Canonchet Cliffs III, is about to be developed, adding 23 units. The short waiting lists for these HUD-subsidized rental units indicate that demand for this form of housing is probably being adequately addressed as of this writing.

## **F. ISSUES IDENTIFICATION**

The identification of issues is a process of interpreting trends from the quantitative data, as well as from opinions expressed during the key informant interviews. In most cases, it was evident that Hopkinton is not facing any immediate crises in terms of housing. There are, however, a number of emerging trends which are believed to be of importance to the town and, while long range in scope, are considered appropriate and necessary issues for discussion within the context of the comprehensive planning process.

### **1. Housing Supply**

Increases in the purchase price of the typical entry level home have increased the regional demand for rental units by families. Between 1980 and 1990, there was no significant increase in the size of the rental housing stock in Hopkinton other than those units built as subsidized units for the elderly. The lack of rental opportunities in Hopkinton could

compound the problem for young families and adults who wish to remain in the town and for whom home ownership is not financially feasible.

The median contract rent for an apartment in Hopkinton increased by 287.3 % between 1980 and 1990. This increase is believed to be driven, in part, by families and others remaining as rental occupants when they would, in a different market environment, become entry-level homeowners. This delay in shifting from the rental market to the resale market, on a regional basis, causes a shortage of rental inventory. Similarly, the stagnation in the resale market has created a surplus of properties in the mid to upper price range, as existing homeowners are delaying "trading-up".

While there is a substantial stock of subsidized rental units within the town, 114 of the 144 such units are designated for elderly occupancy. This could create a potential shortage of affordable "assisted rent" units for the other special needs populations in town.

Opportunities for the purchase of entry-level homes have become increasingly scarce. The median price of a single-family home has increased by 205 percent between 1979 and 1988.

Historically, young families who desired to buy a home in Hopkinton found that building a new house was a more affordable option than purchasing a resale property. Today, the price of the average building lot is seen as a major obstacle to this option.

The recession in the real estate market is believed to be significant in Hopkinton because of the collapse in the demand for vacation homes. The depth and duration of the real estate market recession will impact the availability of entry-level properties as the "trade-up" market cycle is interrupted.

## **2. Housing Demand**

Near term demographic projections have estimated the creation of approximately 240 new households in Hopkinton between 1990 and 1995. It is also estimated that the town will gain an additional 133 families. While the accuracy of these estimates is heavily dependent on an uncertain housing market, it is evident that family occupancy is declining in proportion to total households.

Families that are formed from within the existing population base must compete within a regional market for new and resale housing. During the period of market recession, the competition from outside the town and from outside the region is minimized. A resurgence in the market will likely renew the regional competition for family housing within the town.

The demand for housing by Hopkinton's elderly residents is expected to increase over the near term. The size of the population that is 65 years and older is projected to increase by

15 percent between 1990 and 1995. It is believed, however, that the majority of the increase in elderly demand is attributable to the aging of existing residents rather than to the in-migration of persons in that age group.

The relatively small supply of rental housing limits the housing choices of the town's elderly and special needs residents. When the most affordable housing option for an elderly resident is to remain as the head of an owner occupied household additional issues emerge as to the ability of the resident to maintain the property in a safe, secure, and sound condition.

### **3. Environmental Concerns**

Topography, wetlands and aquifers have emerged as significant impediments to residential development in many areas of the town. This has had direct impact on the practical and permissible densities of development.

The village of Hope Valley is currently experiencing problems with the contamination of wells due to septic system failures.

There is concern that the rural character of Hopkinton will be jeopardized by uncontrolled growth.

There is an opposing view that the town's efforts to protect its rural character have, and will, directly result in increases in the cost of housing. This opinion is based on the concern that current minimum lot sizes are not environmentally essential and serve only to increase housing cost.

### **4. Growth Management**

The historic pattern of growth in and around the village centers is being replaced by development which is scattered throughout the town.

The town's tax base consists predominantly of residential real estate which is perceived to contribute to a general vulnerability to property tax increases.

### **5. Enhancing Affordability**

The town will remain sensitive to the ratio between low and moderate-income housing and total housing units in the town, as related to Title 45, Chapter 53, RI Laws, entitled "Low and Moderate Income Housing Act". The town will continue to provide opportunities for the provision of low and moderate income housing in accordance with local needs, including, but not limited to the following objectives:

1. Establishing a residential compound concept in land use regulations to allow children of families on large properties to remain on such properties
2. Explore the possibility of allowing a higher residential density for affordable housing in existing village areas
3. Establish support for or alliance with a qualified non-profit sponsor of new or rehabilitated owner occupied housing for town residents
4. Develop ordinance to permit construction of accessory family dwelling units, which would enable elderly and special needs individuals to live in close proximity to family in safe structures

## **G. GOALS**

Goals for the housing element have been developed on the basis of the empirical data inventory, projections and participatory research. The goals are broad statements of the community's long-range housing objectives. Policies are action-oriented strategies intended to achieve the stated goals. The State Planning Act Goal for housing is as follows:

To promote a balance of housing choices, for all income levels and age groups, which recognizes the affordability of housing and the responsibility of each municipality and the state.

The following are **GOALS** for:

### **HOUSING**

- 1. GOAL:** To promote controlled residential growth that serves the needs of the community while preserving Hopkinton 's environmental and historic assets and rural quality
- 2. GOAL:** To promote safe, secure and attractive residential neighborhoods
- 3. GOAL:** To maintain sufficient levels and proportions of the housing stock which is affordable and accessible to all residents.
- 4. GOAL:** To protect the elderly and other special needs residents of the town from financially forced dislocation to other communities

## **H. IMPLEMENTATION / ACTION PROGRAM**

The purpose of this section is to develop specific recommendations and implementation actions necessary to achieve the stated planning objectives. The emphasis is on establishing regulatory and administrative environments, guided by fiscal restraint, which will positively influence residential development in a manner compatible with the community's overall goals.

**1. GOAL: To promote controlled residential growth that serves the needs of the community, while preserving Hopkinton's environmental and historic assets and rural quality.**

**Policies:**

- The consideration of new large-scale development should include local screening for immediate as well as indirect environmental impacts.
- .Promote the preservation and rehabilitation of historic properties and general site improvements.

**Recommendation:** *Implement a residential site plan review process that requires evaluation of environmental impacts of large-scale residential projects.*

**Purpose:** To mitigate the negative environmental impacts of large-scale residential development, the town should utilize its subdivision regulations to require minimum environmental performance criteria and impact statements, including written reports and analysis for the town's review, to be provided by the developer of each new project.

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Planning Board / Zoning Board

**Time Frame:** On-going

**Recommendation:** *Large-scale market level residential projects should be required to provide all necessary infrastructure improvements, including off site drainage septic and water provision.*

**Purpose:** By requiring developers to share the costs of servicing their developments, the town will place less burden on the property tax base and require developers to contribute to the broader costs of development.

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Planning Board / Zoning Board

**Time Frame:** On-going

**Recommendation:** *Undertake a review of existing areas of mixed use to determine their ability to absorb additional development and where possible, allow limited development of mixed-use structures.*

**Purpose:** The combination of rental occupancy residential units with commercial activity is seen as a way to reduce housing costs. In areas where square foot commercial rental rates are significantly higher than residential rental rates the differential can be

used to offset housing costs when both uses occupy a single structure.

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Planning Board / Zoning Board

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

**2. GOAL: To promote safe, secure and attractive residential neighborhoods.**

**Policies:**

- The special security and accessibility needs of elderly and other special needs residents should be considered and supported.
- Preserve the integrity and character of Hopkinton's residential villages.
- Promote creative land planning for new large-scale residential development.

**Recommendation:** *Develop and enforce buffers and transition zones to prevent future commercial intrusion into residential neighborhoods.*

**Purpose:** The preservation of the town's rural and suburban atmosphere and the integrity of existing residential areas was a high priority for town residents, expressed in both the Community Survey and through key informant interviews. The use of buffers and transition zones would be innovative ways for Hopkinton to prevent the intrusion of any new economic development on the residential areas of town.

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Planning Board / Zoning Board / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

**Recommendation:** *Develop land use controls that encourage creative land planning concepts to reduce development costs while preserving open space and environmentally sensitive areas not otherwise protected by local, state, and federal law.*

**Purpose:** The town's inherent environmental sensitivity might be jeopardized by future unplanned residential growth. In addition, the long term needs for affordable housing indicate that the reduction of site development costs should be an objective of an overall affordable housing strategy. The use of innovative site development techniques has, elsewhere, been demonstrated to be effective means of balancing the demand for housing with community goals to preserve rural character. Creative land planning can reduce the overall cost of development through more efficient use of land. For this reason, the town should encourage the use of existing regulations that permit cluster and P.D.D. development when such development is a practical

alternative to traditional subdivision design.

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Planning Board / Zoning Board / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**Recommendation:** *The town should expand the current modernization programs, which would direct federal and state funding to interior, access and safe improvements for residential units occupied by tenants and owners.*

**Purpose:** Hopkinton currently utilizes Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to specifically target housing improvements through the enforcement of building and safety code violations. CDBG program funds are utilized to fund two related programs: a homeowner improvement and modernization program, and a rental property improvement and modernization program, both of which are publicized through newspapers, brochures, local social service agencies, and the Hopkinton planning and building offices. These programs make low interest loans and grants available to homeowners and rental property owners that serve low and moderate-income families. Common improvements include on-site sewage disposal systems, roofing, furnaces, and storm windows, among others. These programs could potentially be expanded by: investigating additional sources of funding, contacting additional cooperating agencies, and expanding program benefits to further improve housing opportunities in Hopkinton.

**Responsibility:** Tax Assessor / Building Inspector / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Long-term (5+ Years)

**3. GOAL:** **To maintain sufficient levels and proportions of the housing stock which is affordable and accessible to all residents.**

**Policies:**

- To encourage the preservation of existing housing which is affordable and the development of new low cost housing which is affordable to low income and/or first time buyers.
- Encourage residential development which can be marketed as cost effective rental projects for moderate-income residents.
- Promote and encourage affordable housing programs initiated through the private sector.
- Expand and target public funding to increase the availability of affordable housing.
- Promote affordability through diversification of the tax base.

**Recommendation:** *The town should consider the approval of limited occupancy accessory apartments as a special use exception within designated districts*

**Purpose:** The housing needs of elderly and special needs family members could be accommodated through the provision of accessory in-law apartments. This program could be expanded to include family members who are starting a household but who are unable to compete in the entry-level resale market.

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Planning Board / Zoning Board / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 years)

**Recommendation:** *The town should consider the approval of the structural subdivision of large residential and/or underutilized factory and commercial buildings into affordable housing units.*

**Purpose:** In locations where it is technically feasible and environmentally sound, the town should consider permitting the conversion of large single-family homes, as well as underutilized factory and commercial buildings into multi-unit residential structures as one means of reducing the per-unit cost of housing. The practical use of this recommendation should be limited to those sites of sufficient size to meet all state and engineering requirements for the location of both an ISDS and a water well on the same site. With the use of non-traditional ordinances such as the PUD (or planned unit development), coupled with technological advancements in the field of on-site wastewater disposal, this recommendation has the potential to significantly increase the housing stock for low and moderate-income families of Hopkinton. Additional modification of the zoning ordinance may be undertaken once an inventory of suitable conversion sites is conducted.

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Building Inspector / Planning Board / Zoning Board / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Long-term (5+ Years)

**Recommendation:** *The town should consider inclusion of density bonuses in the subdivision regulations in exchange for a developer's commitment to set aside a proportion of the proposed development as affordable units.*

**Purpose:** This recommendation recognizes the long-term need to maintain an adequate supply of affordable housing. Density bonuses are believed to provide developers with an incentive to produce housing units at below market cost. The bonuses could be offered to developers who agree to set aside a proportion of the proposed development as low cost units. Bonuses would permit density increases in areas where it has been proven to be technically feasible. The size of the "set aside



proportion" and the maximum density increase can be controlled through technical standards included in the subdivision and zoning regulations.

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Building Inspector / Planning Board / Zoning Board

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2Years)

**Recommendation:** *The town should consider the use of local discretionary funds for affordable housing programs.*

**Purpose:** Nontraditional uses of CDBG and UDAG grants are seen as a potential funding source for affordable housing programs. Monies could be targeted at the housing needs of local residents. Some possible program examples are: rental deposit funds, financial assistance for first time home buyers, housing rehabilitation programs and a funding pool for land acquisition for the purpose of residential land banking. (At the current time there is no active local housing corporation, community development group, or housing agency with the capacity to implement this recommendation. Hopkinton town government will seek the opportunity to partner and actively participate in implementation, should such a housing agency be formed.)

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Town Council/Independent Housing Agency

**Time Frame:** Long-term (5+ Years)

**Recommendation:** *Local banks should be encouraged to participate in affordable housing programs within the community.*

**Purpose:** In meeting their community obligations under the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977, local banks frequently take on a partnership role with the community to contribute to housing programs such as: community land trusts, favorable terms for affordable housing projects and contribution to the organizational and operating costs of private nonprofit housing activities.

**Responsibility:** Town Council/Independent Housing Agency

**Time Frame:** On-going

**Recommendation:** *The town should contract with a private non-profit housing organization to provide local housing referral, assistance and coordination.*

**Purpose:** One of the most important aspects of affordable housing at the community level is the coordination, management and control of housing programs. In smaller communities it is not practical to perform these functions as an internal function of town

government. Local non-profit organizations, on the other hand, can fulfill this need by operating in more than one community.

**Responsibility:** Town Council / Independent Housing Agency

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**Recommendation:** *The town should support the establishment and operation of a community land trust dedicated to acquiring and developing land for affordable housing.*

**Purpose:** The cost of land is known to be a contributing factor in the escalation of local housing costs. Reduction of this component of the development cost makes possible the subsequent ownership or rental cost to low income occupants. The community land trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to acquiring and developing land for affordable housing. The land trust has the additional administrative advantage of maintaining ownership and control of the land on which the housing is developed thus ensuring its long-term availability at below market cost. The town's support for this concept can include contribution of town owned land, financial support for land acquisitions by the trust and property tax exemptions.

**Responsibility:** Town Council

**Time Frame:** Long-term (5+ Years)

**Recommendation** *The town should explore methods of increasing the supply of housing for rental occupancy.*

**Purpose:** The data inventory indicated a trend of increasing regional demand for rental housing which is brought on by long term fundamental changes in the housing market. There is growing evidence that owner occupied housing will be increasingly beyond the reach of newly formed households thereby increasing the demand for rental occupancy units. It is felt that the non-profit housing organization, referenced in Recommendation No.13, would be an appropriate point of contact for information and research associated with the development of planning and design strategies to reduce housing cost and increase rental supply. One possible strategy to accommodate the emerging occupancy trends is to supplement the traditional zoning standards which control the density of residential development with residential performance standards. For example, residential performance standards could specify the maximum allowable bedrooms for a given lot size rather than the number of residential units for a given lot size.

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Planning Board / Zoning Board / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

**4. GOAL:** To protect the elderly, and other special needs residents of the town from financially forced dislocation to other communities.

**Policies:**

- Ensure that the supply of public and subsidized housing for the elderly and other special needs groups is sufficient to meet the future demands.
- Protect elderly and other special needs renters on fixed incomes from price escalations caused by regional market changes by giving them a high priority in the development of housing strategies.
- The continuation and adjustment of property tax exemptions to elderly homeowners is seen as an important benefit that promotes personal as well as neighborhood stability.

**Recommendation:** *Continue the property tax exemption for the elderly and other special needs population of Hopkinton.*

**Purpose:** Individual, family and neighborhood stability are paramount in preventing high property turnover and significant shifts in the occupancy of a town's housing stock. By ensuring a sharing of the fiscal burden of the property tax through direct deductions to the elderly homeowner, the plan's goals and objectives for housing affordability are partially met.

**Responsibility:** Tax Assessor / Town Council

**Time Frame:** On-going

**Recommendation:** *Extend eligibility for elderly and special needs property tax relief to include qualified landlords who provide rental units that are occupied by elderly and special needs tenants and that are certified as meeting the unique physical and lifestyle needs of those tenant groups.*

**Purpose:** By extending the elderly property tax reduction to landlords who rent to special needs individuals, the town could provide incentives for the creation and or conversion of residential structures for special needs use, including consideration for the physical needs of these populations in terms of access and interior design.

**Responsibility:** Tax Assessor / Building Inspector / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

**Recommendation:** *The town, in conjunction with an independent housing coordinator, should research and maintain active files on federal, state and local housing subsidy programs in order to effectively refer residents and potential developers to the appropriate agencies for assistance.*

**Purpose:** Low-income families, the elderly, the frail-elderly, and low-income housing developers all share an interest in accessing subsidies for affordable housing. In order to promote the implementation of the plan's goals for affordable housing provision, the Planning Director should remain current in all pertinent governmental programs with a view to referring interested parties, both town residents in need and potential low income housing developers, to the relevant agencies.

**Responsibility:** Town Council / Independent Housing Agency

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**Recommendation:** *The town should enhance its grant writing capabilities to develop local housing subsidy programs for low income and elderly individuals.*

**Purpose:** By aggressively pursuing federal and state funds for affordable housing programs at the local level, the town would be able to expand the base of support for current residents in need of assistance with retaining ownership of their property or with paying residential rents.

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Town Council / Independent Housing Agency

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years) & On-going

## **L. SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

### **1. Reports**

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**Appendix A**  
**Housing & Affordable Housing Strategy**

**ADOPTED BY THE HOPKINTON TOWN COUNCIL**  
**DECEMBER 2004**

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## Chapter One. INTRODUCTION

This amendment to the housing element of the Comprehensive Plan was prepared in accordance with the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Act (R.I.G.L. 45-22.2) and the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (R.I.G.L. 45-53). The Low and Moderate Income Housing Act promotes the development of low and moderate income housing. This plan will ensure that at least 10% of Hopkinton's housing units are affordable to residents earning  $\leq 80\%$  area median income (AMI). Hopkinton's Planning Board held a public hearing and approved the plan on November 29, 2004, and the Hopkinton Town Council adopted the plan as part of the Housing Element of its Comprehensive Plan after a public hearing on December 6, 2004.

The town seeks to use this amendment to its housing element to:

- Present an inventory of housing in Hopkinton, emphasizing changing patterns of supply and demand, the impact of market shifts on housing affordability, availability and accessibility and both existing and planned housing programs and policies;
- To identify the most pressing housing issues and concerns which will confront Hopkinton during the next 20 years;
- To prepare recommendations for housing policies and strategies which the town might adopt in order to promote improved access to housing for current and potential residents.

### **About the Town of Hopkinton<sup>1</sup>**

Hopkinton was established in 1669 as a part of the Town of Westerly. However, after the people petitioned the General Assembly to divide it, the town of Hopkinton was incorporated on March 14, 1757. Hopkinton was named in honor of Stephen Hopkins, who was then Governor of Rhode Island, and also a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Consisting of approximately 44 square miles, Hopkinton is bounded on the west by Connecticut, the Pawcatuck River and Westerly on the south, the Wood River on the east, and on the north by Exeter.

The early settlements in Hopkinton were centered around its rivers. On Wood River were Barbersville, Hope Valley and Woodville; on Brushy Brook and its tributaries were Rockville, Centerville, Moscow, and Locustville; on the Canonchet River was Ashville; on the Ashawog River were Bethel and Ashaway; and on the Pawcatuck River was Burdickville. There are fourteen (14) major villages all centered around historic mill uses.

Today, Hopkinton is still a rural town. Recreation is highlighted in Hopkinton with fresh water fishing facilities, parks and numerous campgrounds. Hopkinton is one of the popular vacation areas of southern Rhode Island and convenient to miles of ocean front beaches. Camp

<sup>1</sup>Material excerpted selectively from: [www.riedc.com/mcdslrimcdrame.html](http://www.riedc.com/mcdslrimcdrame.html). Accessed: 12 December 2003.

Yawgoog, operated by the Narragansett Council, Boy Scouts of America, and located in Rockville, is one of the largest Boy Scout camps in the United States.

Data provided by the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (Rhode Island Housing) show that as of October 2004, the Town has 3,098 units of housing and 5.20 percent (161) of those units meet the statutory definition of affordable housing. Public officials and residents of Hopkinton face a major challenge if they are to meet or exceed the state-mandated requirement that 10 percent of the housing units (310 total if achieved today) be affordable to low and moderate income households.

### **Rhode Island Law Concerning Land Use Planning and Affordable Housing**

The Rhode Island legislature passed the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act of 1988 (R.I.G.L. 45-22.2) which requires-among other things-that every town and city include a Housing Element as one of the eight elements<sup>2</sup> in its comprehensive plan. The Act describes the Housing Element in the following manner:

Housing Element. Consists of identification and analysis of existing and forecasted housing needs and objectives including programs for the preservation, including, but not limited to, the preservation of federally insured or assisted housing, improvement and development of housing for all citizens. The Housing Element enumerates local policies and implementation techniques to provide a balance of housing choices, recognizing local, regional and statewide needs for all income levels and for all age groups, including but not limited to, the affordability of housing and the preservation of federally insured or assisted housing. The element identifies the specific programs and policies for inclusion in the implementation program, necessary to accomplish this purpose.

Subsequently, the State Planning Council adopted the *Handbook on the Local Comprehensive Plan* (Handbook Number 16)<sup>3</sup> to provide guidance to municipalities in complying with the requirements of the Comprehensive Plan Act.

In 1991, the legislature passed the Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (R.I.G.L. 45-53), which requires that a municipality's Housing Element provide for low and moderate income housing in excess of 10 percent of the housing units planned in the most recent

<sup>2</sup> The statute lists eight areas: a statement on goals and policies, plus seven other elements -land use plan, housing, economic development, natural and cultural resources, services and facilities, open space and recreation, and circulation. One could argue that there are actually nine elements because of the requirement for an implementation plan. Many towns, however, address the implementation plan as part of the individual elements as this Plan will do for the Housing Element.

<sup>3</sup> Handbook 16 was initially issued in June 1989 and was most recently updated in 2003.

census. In furtherance of that goal, the Housing Act sets forth a process whereby any public agency or nonprofit organization proposing to build low or moderate income housing may submit a single application for a comprehensive permit, in lieu of separate applications, to build affordable housing as defined in the Act. If denied at the local level, the proposing entity may appeal to the State Housing Appeals Board (SHAB). The law requires the SHAB to consider a number of factors in its decision-making process, including the extent to which the community meets or plans to meet the 10 percent standard for existing low and moderate income housing units as defined in the Act. Effective in 2003, the legislature extended the comprehensive permit privilege to private developers, with the proviso that the affordable housing in the proposal remains so for not less than thirty years from initial occupancy.<sup>4</sup>

By way of a 2003 update, Handbook 16 now provides more detailed guidance to those communities that choose to include an affordable housing plan in the Housing Elements of their comprehensive plans. In addition to the three primary components already required in the Housing Element (inventory and analysis; goals and policies; implementation and monitoring), the updated guidelines specify what constitutes an acceptable affordable housing plan. The plan shall include steps that identify the number of affordable units needed to meet the 10 percent affordability requirement,<sup>5</sup> specific strategies for attaining the threshold over a reasonable period of time, and how each strategy contributes to reaching the threshold.

The Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program also issues policy guidance in the form of the State Guide Plan Element 421 (*State Housing Plan*), most recently approved by the State Planning Council on March 9, 2000, and updated as of June 2002. Taken together, Handbook 16 and Element 421 provide the policy framework for developing sound affordable housing plans at the local level. The BCSA/BAE consulting Team met and corresponded with staff of Rhode Island Housing on several occasions to help insure that the Team's approach to the nine individual town Housing Elements/affordable housing plans would be consistent with state officials' expectations. This affordable housing plan for Hopkinton has been crafted to comply

<sup>4</sup>The Act does not require that affordable housing produced by public and nonprofit agencies adhere to the 30-year affordability restriction. According to staff of the Rhode Island Housing Mortgage and Financing Corporation (Rhode Island Housing), it was apparent that such housing would be "permanently" affordable, or as nearly so as consistency with state and federal regulations allow them to be.

<sup>5</sup>The Act provides two thresholds: (A) in the case of an urban city or town which has at least 5,000 occupied rental units and the units, as reported in the latest decennial census of the city or town, comprise twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the housing units, is in excess of fifteen percent (15%) of the total occupied rental units; or (B) in the case of all other cities or towns, is in excess of the percent (10%) of the housing units reported in the census. Hopkinton is subject to the 10 percent threshold.

with the fundamental requirements of the policy guidelines as further explained by Rhode Island Housing staff.

### **Methodology for this Plan**

The consulting Team used four primary data collection and analysis techniques in this plan: (1) demographic data analysis, drawing primarily but not exclusively from census data; (2) extensive review of policies, regulations, plans, studies, and other documents; (3) interviews and meetings; and (4) an informal survey-questionnaire administered to Task Force members and other knowledgeable persons.

The demographic plan is based upon an extensive survey and analysis of available public and private data sources. The most important data source is the 2000 U.S. Census. The Census forms the basis for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) database; CHAS data provides detailed information regarding the composition of low-income households. In addition, information was gleaned from Rhode Island Housing, the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, Grow Smart Rhode Island, town documents and regional newspapers.

The Team reviewed all relevant laws, regulations, and policy documents, including but not limited to: R.I.G.L. 45-22.2; R.I.G.L. 45-53; *Handbook on the Local Comprehensive Plan for the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act* (Handbook Number 16 - updated 2003); *State Guide Plan - 421: State Housing Plan*; and training materials developed by Grow Smart Rhode Island, Rhode Island Housing, and Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program. The Team also conducted extensive research into the state-of-the-art in affordable housing strategies, including materials developed by the American Planning Association and the Brookings Institution, innovative approaches in cities and towns across the nation, as well as affordable housing plans commissioned by other Rhode Island towns. Information available through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Rhode Island Statewide Planning, and Rhode Island Housing was also reviewed and, where appropriate, included in the analysis of town needs.

In addition, the consulting Team requested and reviewed extensive documentation from Hopkinton staff, including the most recent Comprehensive Plan Housing Element, zoning ordinances, and projects at various points in the planning pipeline.

In-person interviews and numerous telephone and e-mail conversations also enhanced the Team's ability to identify the Town's affordable housing needs. Where appropriate, we reference telephone and electronic communications throughout the plan.

The Town Task Forces also played an important role in identifying affordable housing challenges, needs, and strategies. Part of the process of understanding the unique profile of the Town entailed administering a survey-questionnaire. The results of the survey will be discussed at various points in Chapter 5 (Affordable Housing Needed to Achieve 10 Percent) and Chapter 6 (Recommendations: Goals, Policies, Strategies).

Throughout the plan, the consulting Team debriefed for the regional Steering Committee of the status of the research, analysis, and plan development. The Steering Committee and the Task Force members were accorded ample opportunity to review drafts of this plan and to work with the consulting Team to develop the affordable housing strategies and implementation plan.

### **Executive Summary**

Legislative action in 2002 extended the comprehensive permit privilege to private developers who propose to build homeownership units, as long as 25 percent of those units will remain affordable for at least 30 years. The subsequent flurry of large development filings has caused great concern, particularly among municipalities who have not met the 10 percent threshold for affordable housing and are thus open to developers who seek to override local land use controls using the provision of the Low/Mod Housing Act.

In recognition of the potential threat to suburban, semi-rural, and rural communities in Rhode Island as well as the genuine need for affordable housing, the Washington County Regional Planning Council (WCRPC) hired a consulting team to work with town Task Forces to develop updated Housing Elements/affordable housing plans for nine towns that elected to participate: Charlestown, East Greenwich, Exeter, **Hopkinton**, Narragansett, North Kingstown, Richmond, West Greenwich, and Westerly. WCRPC also hired the consulting team to develop a regional affordable housing strategy covering all of Washington County.

The final draft plan provides a detailed demographic profile and describes how Hopkinton stacks up in comparison to the plan region, as well as the state as a whole. This information provides

the core of the Housing Element update. Key points from the data gathering and analysis appear on the next page.

At the heart of the draft plan, however, resides the framework for a strategic plan to assist Hopkinton officials in addressing the growing affordable housing needs of the town and to help ensure that they retain local control over land use decisions in keeping with the unique character of the community. Highlights of the recommendations include the following:

- . Implement mandatory inclusionary zoning provisions that cover any multi family development of five or more units.
- . Consider implementation of an affordable housing overlay district component of the Town's zoning ordinances. This overlay would provide an alternative to the need for a developer to submit a comprehensive permit in that it would provide for a one stop approach to obtaining appropriate relief from aspects of local zoning that impede cost effective development. Density bonuses would be directly tied to production of affordable units with an overall cap on density at some ratio of buildable acreage to unit that is yet to be determined. This type of overlay district would provide a framework within which the Town and prospective developers could negotiate and key development issues.
- . Take a more proactive role in targeting development by assembling development parcels and issuing developer's RFPs. Using this approach, the Town can define specific parameters including maximum density, design requirements and affordability mix. It will also enable the Town to impose the necessary affordability restrictions to meet any current definition under State Law regarding what counts as a low/mod unit.
- . Explore rehab/reuse/infill and mixed-use strategies by encouraging innovative design ranging from creating historic districts, to creative uses of existing structures, to encouraging village center models that construct street level retail, some professional office space and affordable apartments on the higher floors.
- . Participate actively in regional strategies, including establishing a regional HOME consortium, an Affordable Housing Trust Fund and/or a Housing and Redevelopment Agency that will leverage state and federal funds and draw on the strengths of each town.
- . Create a permanent Affordable Housing Commission or Housing Resource Board that provides planning and tracking systems to ensure consistent attention to and action on affordable housing issues.



**Summary - Key Data Elements**  
**Information below is drawn from 2000 data unless otherwise noted**

Population: 7,836 (a 14.0% increase over 1990 population of 6,873)

Housing Units: 3,098 (October 2004)

Households: 3,143 in 2003, an average 2.0% annual growth rate

Low/Mod Households: 1,110

Cost-burdened Households: 597

Affordable Units: 161 - 5.20% (October 2004)

Shortfall: 149 to meet 10% state standard today; 196 in 2013 (at projected rate of growth under current growth cap)

Median Household Income: \$58,987 in 2003

Median Sales Price: \$129,848 (\$205,000 in 2003, an average annual increase of 21% since 2000)

Homeowners: 80.5% of households (an increase of 2.3% since 1990)

Other key points:

- Number of households grew roughly in equal proportion between 1990 and 2000 compared to the rest of Washington County (1.9% annually compared to 1.8% annually).
- Over 1/3 of households consist of two members, which is slightly below the county percentage and the percentage of households with three or four member is on average about 15 higher, which suggests that Hopkinton's demographics are skewed slightly towards families with children under 18 when compared to the County as a whole.
- Strong moderate to middle income households unlike some of the other towns (>53 households with incomes between \$25,000 - \$75,000).
- In 2000, the median age was 37.6 years old. This is slightly above the State's median of 36.7.
- Teachers and nurses earning the region's median salary of -\$50,000 could afford, at most, a \$175,000 home; a recent search of Multiple-Listing Service (MLS) real estate listings found no condominiums or single-family homes publicly listed for sale for less than \$200,000 in Hopkinton.

## Chapter Two: INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS OF EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

### *Demographic Background*

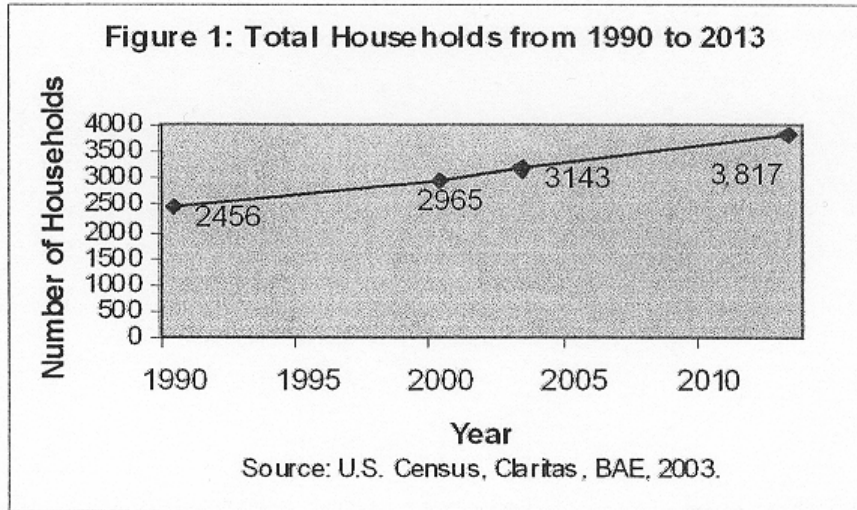
#### **Population and Household Trends**

The town of Hopkinton is located in the southeastern corner of the state of Rhode Island. Hopkinton along with Westerly, is a part of the New London MSA. Though Hopkinton is not located on the coast, the town is known as a popular vacation destination near the ocean, with camps and lakes. Among the 11 communities in the Plan Region, Hopkinton has the fifth lowest population density. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Hopkinton has 182 persons per square-mile.

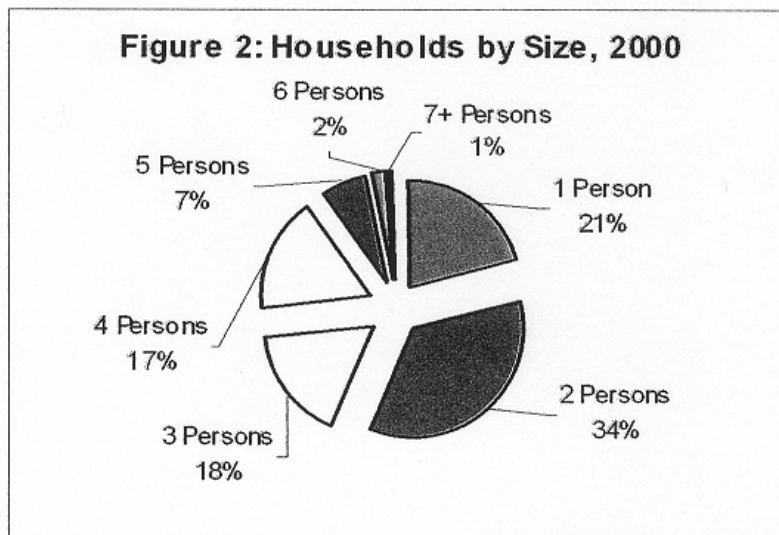
Residential growth in Hopkinton between 1990 and 2000 closely mirrors that of Washington County and the Plan Region as a whole. The population of Hopkinton grew 1.3 percent annually between 1990 and 2000, compared to 1.2 percent annually for the Plan Region.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the number of households in Hopkinton grew 1.9 percent annually in the 1990s, compared to 1.8 percent annually in the Plan Region. In 2000, Hopkinton had a population of 7,836 residents in 2,965 households. Despite its location in the New London MSA, Hopkinton's steady growth during the 1990s diverged sharply from the experience of southeastern Connecticut towns and its Rhode Island neighbor Westerly. Westerly's population grew at a 0.6 percent annual rate during the 1990s; while the New London MSA lost population, with a 0.3percent annual reduction in population.<sup>7</sup> If the development pace of the last three years were to continue over the next 10 years, the number of Hopkinton households would grow to 3,817, a 21 percent increase over the current level. Figure 1, as follows, presents the current household trends in Hopkinton, with projections to 2013.

<sup>6</sup>The plan region includes every town in Washington County and the towns of East Greenwich and West Greenwich in Kent County.

<sup>7</sup>The New London MSA lost population between the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census despite adding two towns to its geography.



Demographic changes in Hopkinton and many towns in the Plan Region far exceeded state expectations during the 1990s. In 1999, Rhode Island Planning projected a 2015 population in Hopkinton of 7,759. As noted above, in 2000 Hopkinton already exceeded statewide projections for 2015 by 77 residents. The variance between state projections and local growth in Hopkinton during the 1990s underscores the unique demographic and housing pressures faced in Hopkinton compared to communities outside the Plan Region (overall, Rhode Island's statewide population remained relatively flat from 1990 to 2000).

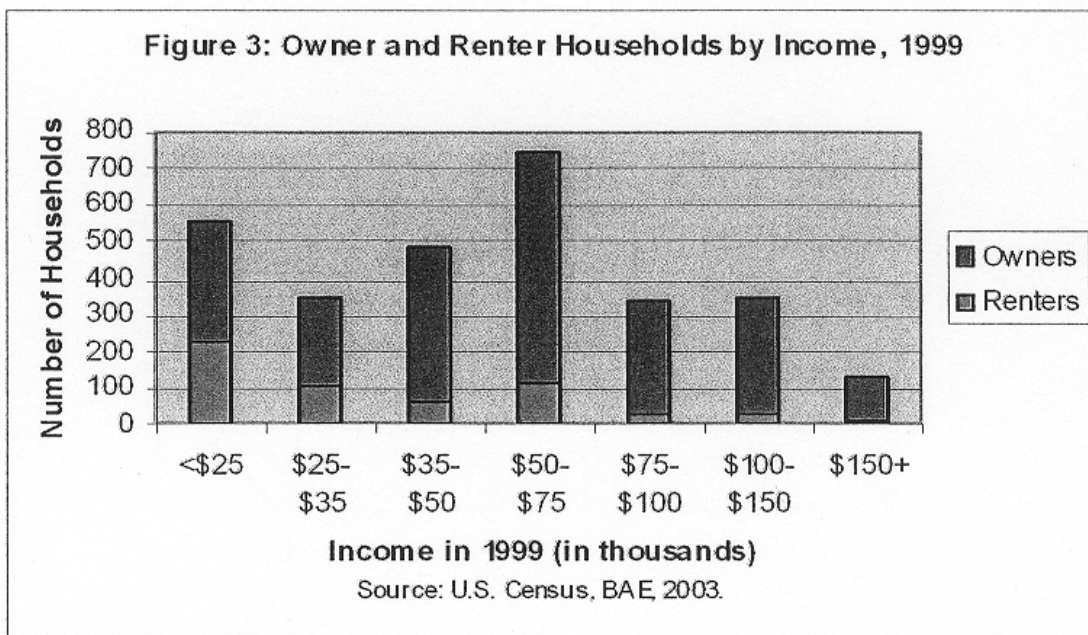


Hopkinton is largely composed of family households and is similar to many other towns in the Plan Region in the high proportion of homeowners compared to the state. In 2000, 81 percent of households in Hopkinton owned their own home, compared to 60 percent of households in Rhode Island. According to the U.S. Census, there were 579 renter households in Hopkinton in 2000. In 2000, almost half of all family households in Hopkinton included children under the age

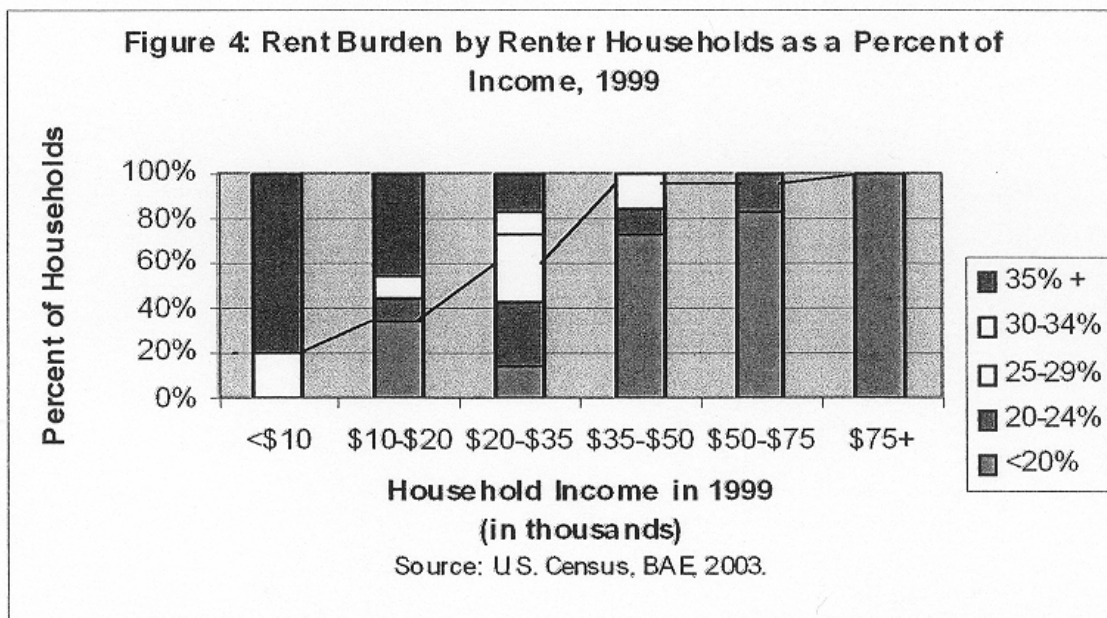
of 18 years (1,043 households or 48 percent). Hopkinton has the same proportion of elderly households as the Plan Region (21 percent); however, the town has a slightly higher percentage of households headed by residents aged 25 to 34 years old (16 percent in Hopkinton compared to 13 percent region wide). Figure 2, above, presents the average size of Hopkinton households in 2000. Overall, Hopkinton is a growing community of family homeowners, headed by residents predominantly within child-bearing years.

**Income**

Hopkinton is a middle-class community, with median household incomes slightly below that of the plan region. In 2003, Hopkinton had a median household income of \$58,987 compared to a statewide median household income of \$46,159. Hopkinton has the same proportion of low income households as the remainder of Washington County and the Plan Region, with 18 percent of households below \$25,000 and 10 percent below \$15,000. However, Hopkinton does not have as many high income households as other fast growing communities in the Plan Region. The towns of North and South Kingstown, Richmond, East and West Greenwich all have populations with at least 40 percent of households earning in excess of \$75,000 per year. In 2003, approximately one-third of households in Hopkinton earned more than \$75,000. One-quarter of households in Hopkinton earned between \$50,000 and \$75,000, a percentage similar to that of Hopkinton's neighboring towns of Charlestown and Richmond.



The predominance of middle class homeowners in Hopkinton masks a starkly different income profile among Hopkinton's renters. Figure 3, above, presents the 1999 household income of owners and renters in Hopkinton. In 2000, 31 percent of renter households earned less than \$20,000 compared to 11 percent of homeowners. Almost 70 percent of renters in Hopkinton earned less than \$50,000; while nearly 60 percent of homeowners earned \$50,000 or more. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends that renters pay no more than 30 percent of their income for rental costs. Figure 4, as follows, presents the rent burden of Hopkinton renter households in 1999. According to the U.S. Census, 26 percent of renter households in Hopkinton paid more than 30 percent of household income for gross rent in 1999. Hopkinton had 131 renter households who paid more than 30 percent of household income for rent in 1999. According to the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) database, in 2000 Hopkinton had a total of 1,110 households (37 percent) that earned less than 80 percent of median household income in 2000.



The Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) database provides another means of analyzing the housing cost-burden of Hopkinton's low and moderate income households (up to 80 percent of median income). As shown in Table 1, as follows, Hopkinton had 597 households at or below 80 percent of median income with significant housing cost burdens in 2000. Of those 597 households, 32 percent were elderly households, 55 percent were of families and 12 percent were single-person households and other non-family households ("Other"). As Table 1 shows, 191 of the low and moderate income households were renters, and 406 of the households were homeowners. Given the state's current 10 percent afford ability

threshold, Hopkinton is needs 153 new units of low and moderate income housing to meet the threshold as of 2002. Based on the CHAS data, Hopkinton has significant housing needs among its family households. A majority of low and moderate income households with housing needs are renter or homeowner families. However, Hopkinton also has significant need among its renter and owner elderly households. The housing strategy will no doubt need to accommodate the housing burdens across household types and tenure patterns.

**Table 1: Housing Needs for Households at or below 80 percent of Median Income, 2002**

<u>Type of Household</u>	<u>Cost Burdened Households (a)</u>			<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Current State Housing Gap (c)</u>
	<u>Renter</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Total</u>		
<b>Elderly</b>	49	144	193	32%	
<b>Family</b>	112	218	330	55%	
<b>Other (b)</b>	30	44	74	12%	
<b>Total</b>	191	406	597	100%	-153

Note: (a) Households at or below 80 percent of median income with housing needs, including rent burdens in excess of 30 percent of income. Almost all plan excessive cost.  
 (b) Other households include single-occupant households and households with unrelated members.  
 (c) Low/Mod housing unit need based on the state's 10 percent afford ability threshold.  
 Source: CHAS Database, 2003; BAE, 2003.

### Housing Stock

The housing stock of Hopkinton is overwhelmingly composed of single-family homes. In 2000, nearly 84 percent of all housing units were either attached or detached single-family homes. Hopkinton has a low percentage of multi-family housing units (13 percent); however, its percentage of multi-family units is more than double that of the neighboring towns of Exeter, Richmond or Charlestown. In 2000, Hopkinton had 416 multi-family housing units out of a total of 3,112 housing units. Hopkinton also had 78 mobile homes, which represented 2.5 percent of all housing units in the town.

The age of Hopkinton's housing stock is evenly divided between housing units constructed prior to 1970 and those constructed since 1970. Next to Westery, Hopkinton has the highest percentage of homes built prior to 1940 in the Plan Region (nearly 24 percent). According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 18 percent of Hopkinton's housing stock was constructed between 1990 and 2000. Since 1996, Hopkinton has issued building permits for 221 single-family homes and 4 two-family homes.

**Table 2: Housing Needs for Households with Incomes at or Below 80 Percent of Median Income**

Towns	Low/Mod Housing Needs by Type of Household (a)						All Low/Mod Households		
	Elderly		Families		Other	r (b)	Total with Housing Needs	Total Households	Housing Needs as Percent of Total
	Households	Percent	Households	Percent	Households	Percent			
Study Region	5,274	29.0%	7,361	40%	5,564	31%	16,219	33,191	55%
<i>Owners</i>	1,938	37.0%	2,431	46%	939	18%	5,308	9,680	55%
<i>Renters</i>	1,126	23.0%	1,626	34%	2,066	43%	4,817	9,029	53%
East Greenwich	267	37.0%	241	33%	215	30%	723	1,323	55%
<i>Owners</i>	137	43.0%	144	45%	40	12%	321	536	60%
<i>Renters</i>	130	32.0%	97	24%	175	44%	402	787	51%
West Greenwich	54	21.0%	137	53%	67	26%	256	452	67%
<i>Owners</i>	30	16.0%	118	63%	38	20%	186	346	54%
<i>Renters</i>	24	33.0%	19	26%	29	40%	72	106	68%
Charlestown	163	25.0%	312	49%	167	26%	642	1,112	68%
<i>Owners</i>	139	31.0%	231	51%	85	19%	455	862	53%
<i>Renters</i>	24	13.0%	81	43%	82	44%	187	250	75%
Exeter	50	19.0%	119	44%	100	37%	269	562	49%
<i>Owners</i>	50	29.0%	89	51%	35	20%	174	313	56%
<i>Renters</i>	0	0.0%	30	32%	65	68%	95	239	40%
Hopkinton	193	32.0%	330	55%	74	12%	597	1,110	54%
<i>Owners</i>	144	35.0%	218	54%	44	11%	406	746	54%
<i>Renters</i>	49	26.0%	112	59%	30	16%	191	364	52%
Narragansett	350	19.0%	509	28%	968	63%	1,828	2,837	64%
<i>Owners</i>	180	32.0%	226	40%	155	28%	561	1,025	55%
<i>Renters</i>	170	13.0%	283	22%	813	64%	1,266	1,812	70%
New Shoreham	66	42.0%	40	30%	38	28%	134	231	68%
<i>Owners</i>	40	41.0%	32	33%	26	27%	98	145	68%
<i>Renters</i>	16	44.0%	8	22%	12	33%	36	86	42%
North Kingstown	410	26.0%	810	60%	397	25%	1,617	2,960	55%
<i>Owners</i>	238	27.0%	443	51%	185	21%	866	1,406	62%
<i>Renters</i>	172	23.0%	367	49%	212	28%	751	1,554	48%
Richmond	106	33.0%	130	41%	79	25%	314	744	42%
<i>Owners</i>	105	37.0%	110	39%	69	24%	284	624	46%
<i>Renters</i>	0	0.0%	20	67%	10	33%	30	120	25%
South Kingstown	562	33.0%	676	39%	475	28%	1,713	3,161	64%
<i>Owners</i>	343	36.0%	493	52%	119	12%	955	1,637	58%
<i>Renters</i>	219	29.0%	183	24%	356	47%	758	1,524	50%
Westerly	853	42.0%	763	37%	425	21%	2,031	4,227	48%
<i>Owners</i>	531	53.0%	327	33%	143	14%	1,002	2,040	49%
<i>Renters</i>	322	31.0%	426	41%	282	27%	1,030	2,187	47%

Note: (a) Low and moderate income households are households with incomes less than or equal to 80 percent of median income. Households with housing needs are defined as those households that pay more than 30 percent of household income for shelter or households that live in substandard conditions. Almost all households included above reported excessive housing costs. (b) Other households include single-occupant households and households composed of non-relatives. Source: CHAS database, 2003; BAE, 2003.

Hopkinton has half of the number of affordable housing units required to meet the state's 10 percent affordability threshold. Of Hopkinton's 3,098 housing units, 161 units (5.20 percent) are certified as affordable under the current state definition. Hopkinton has issued building permits for an average of 39 units of housing from 1997 to 2001. If Hopkinton continues to build an average of 39 units per year from 2003 to 2013, a total of 51 percent of all net new housing units (182 units) would need to be designated as affordable.<sup>8</sup> Hopkinton has adopted a growth management plan that limits new construction to 56 housing units per year. If Hopkinton develops new housing at a pace that reaches the construction limit (56 units per year or 560 units in 10 years), then 45 percent of all new construction in Hopkinton would have to be certified as affordable to meet the state threshold in 2013.

### **Sales and Affordability**

Home sales prices in Hopkinton have increased substantially over the past three years and threaten to become out of reach of many working families who provide essential public services. From 2000 to 2003, median home sales prices in Hopkinton increased annually by 17 percent. The median price of a home in 2000 was \$129,848 compared to \$205,000 in 2003 (The Warren Group, 2003). For the most recent 12-month period available, 76 percent of homes in Hopkinton were sold for \$150,000 or more. Given that vacant land in Hopkinton often sells for \$80,000 to \$150,000 per acre, it is likely that many of the real estate transactions recorded below \$200,000 were for vacant properties. A recent search of current Multiple-Listing Service (MLS) real estate listings did not find any homes priced under \$200,000 in Hopkinton. The MLS listings showed a single two-bedroom mobile home for sale for \$129,000.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, rents in Hopkinton remain affordable compared to the plan region. In Hopkinton, 70 percent of monthly rents in 2000 were between \$200 and \$750. However, the Census also showed that 25 percent of renters in Hopkinton paid more than 30 percent in income for gross rent. In 2000, 15 percent of renter households paid more than 50 percent of household income in rent. Hopkinton's limited supply of multi-family homes and high percentage of homeowners suggests that Hopkinton's supply of rental housing may be too limited to meet overall demand. A recent search of newspaper rental listings did not reveal a single year-round rental

<sup>8</sup>The number of new affordable units required to meet the 10 percent requirement in 2013 is based on the number of units required to meet the 10 percent threshold in 2002, plus 10 percent of the new units constructed from 2003 to 2013 (with an average of 39 units per year or 390 total units). The required number of new affordable units is a low estimate, given that the overall projections do not exclude units removed from the affordable supply due to expiring use, dilapidation or demolition from 2003 to 2013



vacancy in Hopkinton. Hopkinton does not have a significant number of publicly-subsidized housing units. Hopkinton is home to 114 units of Sections 202 and 811 elderly housing and hosts 53 Section 8 vouchers (Rhode Island Housing, 2003).

### **Chapter Three. UNMET HOUSING NEEDS; CONTRIBUTING FACTORS**

Hopkinton faces significant challenges to meeting the affordable housing needs in its community. Hopkinton is located between housing markets in New London and Greater Boston (which includes most of Rhode Island). Steady increases in regional housing prices have increased demand for housing in Hopkinton, as have market forces including low-interest rates and rising incomes among professional workers. The median sales price of homes in Hopkinton increased by 17 percent annually from 2000 to August 2003. However, Hopkinton does benefit from lower vacant land prices than most other communities in the Plan Region. A recent survey of land prices in Hopkinton found more than a dozen properties with an average price per acre of \$30,000 to \$40,000. Other communities in the Plan Region face land prices exceeding \$150,000 to \$200,000 per acre. However, due to the rural quality of Hopkinton, affordable housing developers will incur additional expense due to the absence of town water or sewerage. Communities throughout the Plan Region of Washington and Kent Counties struggle to balance concerns for quality of life, community preservation and the fiscal costs of housing growth (particularly on schools), with the result that many communities do not support sufficient new residential construction to meet current needs. The Town of Hopkinton is no exception to either local or regional affordable housing trends.

#### **Unmet Housing Needs**

As of June 2004, Hopkinton has 161 certified low and moderate income housing units. Based on the State's threshold of 10 percent affordability, Hopkinton has the need for 159 additional units of affordable housing. Based on the annual average of 39 new units permitted between 1997 and 2001, Hopkinton will need an average of 4 net new affordable units per year to maintain even its current affordable housing deficit. Overall, 51 percent of Hopkinton's net new housing stock over the next 10 years must be affordable (under current state definitions) if the town is to meet the 10 percent affordability requirement by 2013. If Hopkinton is able to produce new construction at a pace that reaches the annual growth plan's limit of 56 units per year, then 38 percent of new construction during the next 10 years would need to be certified as affordable to meet the state's affordability thresholds in 2013.

As noted in Chapter 2, in 2000 Hopkinton had 131 renter households that paid more than the recommended 30 percent in gross income for shelter. Assuming those 131 households

continue to live in Hopkinton, they constitute a baseline for unmet need in the town. The rent burdened households in Hopkinton constituted 26 percent of all renter households in 2000. Based on current demographic and household trends, it is possible to create a rough projection of the additional need that will be present in 10 years. As presented in Chapter 2, Hopkinton will have 674 additional households in 2013, based on current trends. Assuming that the percentage of renter households in the town remains unchanged, there will be 132 additional renter households. If 26 percent of those net new renter households are burdened by excessive rents (pay in excess of 30 percent of annual income for shelter), Hopkinton will have 34 new households with an unmet need for affordable housing. As a rough calculation, Hopkinton is likely to need a minimum of 165 new affordable housing units to meet the total demand for affordable rental housing in 2013.

The CHAS data in Chapter 2 describes the housing need among Hopkinton's low and moderate income households in 2000. Approximately one-third of Hopkinton's 597 Low/Mod households with acute housing needs (housing costs in excess of 30 percent of income) were elderly. 55 percent of the households with housing needs were families (330 households). Over two-thirds (68 percent) of the Low/Mod households with housing needs were homeowners. Overall, any housing strategy that attempts to meet the identifiable needs of the Low/Mod population will have to strike a balance between programs that meet the needs of families and the elderly; homeowners and renters.

### **Homeownership**

Homeownership opportunities in Hopkinton have rapidly diminished during the past three years. The median sales price of homes in Hopkinton increased from \$129,848 in 2000 to \$205,000 in 2003. Over 76 percent of recorded home sales in Hopkinton in the most recent year were for \$150,000 or more. Sales plans undoubtedly understate Hopkinton's affordability gap by recording sales of vacant land, as well as arms-length transactions. A recent search of Multiple-Listing Service (MLS) real estate listings for Hopkinton did not identify a single home for-sale for less than \$165,000. The only housing unit priced under \$200,000 was a \$129,000 two-bedroom mobile home.

Even at \$200,000, a family buying its first home would need an annual income of at least \$55,000 with a six-percent mortgage interest rate and a five-percent down payment. If interest rates increase to seven percent, the homebuyer would need an income of at least \$60,000.

According to the CHAS database, 1,110 households in Hopkinton (37 percent) have incomes below 80 percent of median household income and could not afford currently to purchase a home in Hopkinton. Of the town's 578 renter households in 2000, 70 percent could not afford to buy a \$200,000 home.

The lack of available affordable housing has a direct impact on the ability of public and service workers who serve Hopkinton to live in the community. According to State data provided by Grow Smart Rhode Island, the greatest job growth in Rhode Island is occurring within occupations with salaries too low to afford the purchase of a home in Hopkinton. It may be unsurprising that low-wage employees such as cashiers, waitresses and fast food workers would not be able to purchase a home in Hopkinton; however, the list also includes school teachers, registered nurses, office clerks and accountants.

A school teacher or nurse working in Hopkinton could not afford to purchase a condominium or home. For example, a school teacher earning \$38,920 per year (the 25th percentile of school salaries in the New London MSA) could afford to pay no more than \$131,000 for a home. A registered nurse earning a salary of \$43,470 (the 25th percentile for nurses in the New London MSA) could afford to pay no more than \$146,127 for a house. Teachers and nurses earning the region's median salary of approximately \$52,000 could afford, at most, a \$175,000 home. There are currently no homes or condominiums available in Hopkinton for less than \$200,000.

### **Rental Housing**

The town of Hopkinton does not have a significant number of rental housing units. Over 80 percent of households in Hopkinton own their own homes. Unlike the neighboring communities of Charlestown and Westerly, Hopkinton does not have a significant number of seasonal vacation homes. A recent survey of southeastern Rhode Island newspapers did not reveal any vacancies in Hopkinton. As noted above, 25 percent of renter households pay more than 30 percent of their income for rent, and 15 percent of renters pay more than 50 percent of household income for rent. Apart from 114 units of affordable elderly housing, Hopkinton does not have additional publicly-subsidized elderly or family housing. It is reasonable to conclude that Hopkinton has the need for additional affordable rental units.

## **Barriers to Affordable Housing Development**

Barriers to the construction of affordable housing in Hopkinton are similar to those of neighboring communities in Kent and Washington Counties. Issues include, apart from regional factors, the cost of land, difficulty providing infrastructure (such as water or sewerage), local zoning and community opposition.

### ***Cost of Land***

Hopkinton is in a far more favorable position to secure affordable vacant land than other communities in the Plan Region. Waterfront properties command a premium for *affluent* retirees, vacationers and professionals. Hopkinton's generally rural character and inland location result in vacant land costs one-third or less the cost of other towns in the Plan Region. Hopkinton's per acre cost of \$30,000 to \$40,000 is principally associated with the sale of multiple acres of land for prices ranging from \$120,000 to \$250,000. Affordable housing is most likely to be feasible in multi-family developments or as a percentage of total housing units in a new subdivision.

### ***Septic/Sewerage Costs***

In 1990, 94 percent of all existing homes in Hopkinton utilized septic tanks for the disposal of waste (Rhode Island Planning, 2003). Based on MLS listings, most land currently available in Hopkinton is without in-town sewerage systems. According to local developers, the construction of septic systems increases the cost of new housing by \$5,000 to \$30,000 per unit. The cost of septic systems depends upon the suitability of the land given the water table, drainage, natural features and adjoining properties (particularly access points to the region's watershed). The cost of septic systems can be minimized through the use of multi-unit septic systems in new subdivisions. Multi-unit systems can lower the per-unit cost of sewage disposal systems by up to 30 percent. Though septic systems increase the up-front cost of development, the systems are inexpensive to maintain, reliable and, given new technologies, open up opportunities for infill construction and development of previously unbuildable sites.

### ***Zoning***

Zoning requirements can often be an impediment to the construction of affordable housing units. Given the high cost of land, large minimum lot sizes (even as small as one acre) can add significantly to the per unit cost of construction in Hopkinton. The adoption of cluster subdivisions and smaller minimum lot sizes would add to the efficiency of land use. However, given the prevalence of septic systems and cesspools on lands not well-suited to septic

systems, developers may face increased costs and longer certification periods when constructing multi-unit septic systems at a density of more than one unit per acre.

***Community Opposition/Fiscal Constraints***

Hopkinton is similar to many communities in Rhode Island in the relative strength of local opposition to new affordable housing units. Some opponents of affordable housing harbor a misunderstanding about the design and quality of most affordable housing currently constructed or are unaware of the broad range of fellow townspeople who need affordable housing. Other opponents of affordable housing have more concrete concerns. Some residents fear that the creation of higher density housing developments will alter the design and feel of the community. The addition of new low-income families with children into the community will create a fiscal burden on town budgets. Public concern over new housing developments, whether affordable or not, can create real concerns that must be mitigated through a process of public planning and discussion. However, it is essential to note that affordable housing benefits not only new residents, but current residents who pay a disproportionate percentage of their income for shelter. Those low and moderate income residents are typically families who work full-time and contribute to communities in a variety of roles, as described above.

**Summary**

Hopkinton faces a series of typical barriers to the provision of affordable housing including lack of substantial infrastructure in the form of town water and sewer, substantial wetlands, a variety of soil conditions and geological features that do not lend themselves to development (at least 14,772 acres according the inventory of soil conditions in the Town's Comprehensive Plan) and large amounts of the available land (25% of the Town's acreage) set-aside for recreational. open space or uses not compatible with housing or under Town control.

Based on a projection of current demographic trends and need for affordable rental housing, Hopkinton will need a minimum of 153 additional affordable housing units by 2113. While the number of building permits issued per year by the town could accommodate reaching the 10% goal in the next ten years. With a building cap in place that limits production to 56 units per annum, more than 56% of all units permitted in the next ten years would have to fall into the affordable category (the 433 plus an additional 6 units per year to provide the 10% for the 60 units of production above the 433. Double the production period to twenty years, and the Town would still need to see in almost 3 out of every 5 new units fall into the affordable category.

Beyond rental housing, housing prices in Hopkinton are increasing at a rate that may make homeownership possibilities for low- and moderate-income workers in the community more limited. There are fewer and fewer housing units available in the community for less than \$200,000 and year round rental stock is becoming increasingly home-ownership stock as families with greater resources relocate to the Town. Hopkinton must find ways to increase production of affordable housing to meet the State requirement in the context of local concerns about growth management including school system impact, the increasing cost of development, and steady upward regional pressure on the price of housing.

## **Chapter Four. STATUS OF EXISTING HOUSING ELEMENT AND MEASURES TO INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

### **Comprehensive Plan Update Submitted**

In June of 1994, the Town Council transmitted the Town of Hopkinton's *Comprehensive Plan* to the Chief of the RI Statewide Planning Program. The Plan, which largely relies upon 1990 Census data and a 1994 community input process, was approved in February, 2004.

### **Goals in the Current Approved Plan and the Plan Update**

Although there is a stated Goal in the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan, it is best understood in the context of the "issues" that it is intended to address.

Chapters Six and Seven of this plan describe strategies to meet this Goal and its related issues. These strategies reflect the changes in the Town and the regional economy using tools to promote affordable housing and local housing economies that have been developed and refined since the mid 1990s.

The current Housing Goals for the Town of Hopkinton as stated in the baseline Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan are the following:

*"To promote controlled residential growth that services the needs of the community while preserving Hopkinton's environmental and historic assets and rural quality"*

*"To promote safe, secure and attractive residential neighborhoods"*

*"To maintain sufficient levels of and proportions of the housing stock which are affordable and accessible to all residents".*

*"To protect the elderly and other special needs residents of the Town from financially forced dislocation to other communities. "*

Among the key ideas related to affordable housing in the baseline Housing Element were fourteen (14) major strategies of which four (4) have been accomplished and ten (10) remain subject to implementation actions.



These original baselines strategies are:

**Accomplished**

1. Develop creative land use controls which encourage alternatives to traditional subdivision design
2. Approve limited occupancy accessory apartments as a special use exception within designated areas
3. Remain up to date in all pertinent government programs involving housing assistance and increase the town's capacity to assist residents
4. Enhance grant writing capabilities to develop local housing subsidy programs for low income and elderly individuals

**To be Accomplished**

1. Review mixed-use areas in the town and mixed-use structures to determine where additional housing can be located
2. Approve the structural subdivision of large residential and/or underutilized factory and commercial buildings into affordable units
3. Amend the subdivision regulations to allow the granting of density bonuses to developers whenever a portion of a proposed development includes affordable units
4. Create an Affordable Housing Foundation
5. Establish a Community Land Trust dedicated to acquiring and developing land for affordable housing
6. Use local discretionary funds for affordable housing programs
7. Encourage local banks to participate in affordable housing programs within the community in the form of low interest loans, retaining non conforming mortgages in their portfolio, or providing grants to entities like a Community Land Trust for acquisition and predevelopment activities.
8. Contract with a non-profit housing organization to provide local housing referral, assistance and coordination
9. Provide greater incentive for the creation and conservation of residential structures for elderly and those with special needs by extending the tax credit available to elderly and disabled home-owners to landlords who rent units to these populations.
10. Adopt residential performance standards that could specify the maximum allowable bedrooms for a given lot size rather than the number of residential units. This is intended to maximize the number

of units that can be supported by site and encourage smaller bedroom size units (e.g. under this approach instead of a three bedroom unit, a developer would be able to develop either three (3) one bedroom units or a one bedroom and a two bedroom unit).

### **Affordable Units Included in Rhode Island Housing's Count**

Rhode Island Housing staff is in the midst of updating their inventory of affordable housing units in each community that qualify under the current statutory definition (R.I.G.L 45-53-3):

(5) "Low or moderate income housing" means any housing subsidized by the federal or state government under any program to assist the construction or rehabilitation of low or moderate income housing, as defined in the applicable federal or state statute, whether built or operated by any public agency or any nonprofit organization, or by any limited equity housing cooperative or any private developer.

**Table 3. Low and Moderate-Income Housing in Hopkinton (RI Housing Inventory)**

<i>Type of Housing</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Street Address/Location</i>	<i>Source of Subsidy</i>	<i># Units</i>	<i>Remaining Tenure of Subsidy</i>	<i>Total units by Category</i>
<b>Elderly Rental</b>						<b>137</b>
	Canonchet Cliffs I	825 Main Street	HUD 202	<b>59</b>		
	Canonchet Cliffs II	825 Main Street	HUD 202	<b>55</b>		
	Canonchet Cliffs III	Nooseneck Hill Road	LIHTC	<b>23</b>		
<b>Elderly Home-ownership</b>						<b>0</b>
<b>Family Rental</b>						<b>0</b>
<b>Family Home-ownership</b>						<b>4</b>
	South County Habitat for Humanity	Lawton Foster Road	RIH HOME	<b>1</b>		
<b>Special Needs</b>						<b>0</b>
<b>Group Home Beds</b>						<b>20</b>
					<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>161</b>

## **Chapter Five. AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEEDED TO ACHIEVE 10 PERCENT**

Previous chapters have provided a tremendous amount of data and analysis. Before heading into a discussion of Hopkinton's challenges and opportunities, a quick summary of key facts may be helpful.

### **Overview of Need**

According to the most current data available, Hopkinton neighborhoods provide 3,098 units of housing for a population of 7,836. At present, only 5.20 percent (161) of those units meet the statutory definition of affordable housing. Today, the Town would need 149 additional units of affordable housing to meet the 10 percent threshold.

But it does not stop there. According to information provided, even though the Town is issuing permits on a cap that allows 56 permits per year (all of which have been granted for single family homes), the assumption that at least this level of construction will be maintained for at least ten years, then another 56 affordable units will be required. THIS MEANS THAT ALMOST 45% OF ALL UNITS PRODUCED UNDER CAP NEED TO BE AFFORDABLE. It is true that exceptions to the cap for elderly units or certain types of special need units are permitted (see Chapter 159 of the Town's Ordinances), but given the age profile of the community, a proportional allocation of affordable units by type of household need means that at least 1/2 of the units that need to be produced are for households with children or of child rearing age. If the current supply of affordable elderly units is taken into as part of the overall ratio that the Town has come close to meeting that subcomponent of need with the 137 elderly units already in the ground.

The table on the following page provides a thought-provoking projection of new construction for towns in the plan region based on current trends.<sup>9</sup> The projections present high and low projections based on the range of permits issued between 1997 and 2002. The projections do not account for the rate of absorption of vacant lands or variations in local zoning that might inhibit future growth.

<sup>9</sup> The table on the following page does not incorporate units for which permits have been issued in 2003 but not yet completed. One could argue that those units are offset by the units which, in 2013 have permits but have not been built and therefore do not count toward the unit base against which the 10 percent would be applied.

**Table 4: Projection of Building Permits, 2003-2013**

<u>Town</u>	<u>Projection of Total Building Permits (per Unit)</u>			<u>Current Low/Mod Gap (Units)</u>	<u>Total Low/Moderate Income Units Required in 2013 (a)</u>	
	<u>Low</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>High</u>		<u>Units</u>	<u>Percent of Average Projection</u>
Plan Region	6,880	7,860	9,280	3,542	4,328	55.1%
East Greenwich	430	570	760	305	362	63.5%
West Greenwich (b)(c)	210	210	210	130	151	71.9%
Charlestown (b)	600	600	600	433	493	82.5%
Exeter (b)	220	220	220	183	205	93.2%
<b>Hopkinton</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>45.4%</b>
Narragansett	730	1,070	1,390	584	691	64.6%
New Shoreham	130	160	330	134	150	93.8%
North Kingstown	1,000	1,210	1,600	225	346	28.6%
Richmond (b)	470	470	470	209	256	54.5%
South Kingstown	1,600	1,600	1,600	535	695	43.4%
Westerly	1,050	1,310	1,660	612	743	56.7%

Notes: (a) The projected requirement for 2013 is based on the total need in 2002 plus 10 percent of the projected housing units constructed in the "Average" projection above. (b) West Greenwich, Exeter, Hopkinton, Richmond, South Kingstown and Charlestown all have growth management plans that limit annual construction. (c) West Greenwich numbers have been changed to reflect new estimates; however, those new estimates are not currently reflected in the plan region totals.

Based on the average number of units constructed per year, Table 4 presents the total number of building permits issued between 2003 and 2013 that must be devoted to the construction of affordable units. At its current rate of growth, Hopkinton would need to devote almost roughly half the new units to affordable housing over the next ten years just to make up the current shortfall of 153 plus the 10% (440 units) of projected growth for a projected target of 203 affordable units in 2013.

Clearly decisive action is needed if Hopkinton is to catch up and then maintain a 10 percent affordability level over time.

### Population with Disabilities

The U.S. Census added questions to the 2000 Census that allow a better estimate of the number of persons with physical impairments than has been possible in the past. The Census provides data on the number of people self-reporting sensory, physical, mental, self-care, go-outside-home and employment disabilities. Physical disability is defined as a "condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities, such as walking, climbing stairs,

reaching, lifting or carrying." As such, the number of residents with physical disabilities is significantly larger than the number dependent on wheelchairs and should not be mistaken for the actual need for wheelchair accessible units.

Not all of the households with persons who have physical disabilities require wheelchair-accessible units. Some have physical disabilities that limit their ability to walk a quarter mile without resting, which is the Census Bureau's definition of a mobility impairment, but are ambulatory and do not require wheelchairs or walkers. Others may have physical disabilities that do not involve walking, such as needing assistance in dressing. Based on national statistics, BAE estimates that one-tenth of persons with physical disabilities require wheelchairs in order to be mobile. This estimate does not consider individuals who choose to use wheelchairs although not medically required.

Overall, Hopkinton had 699 reported disabilities in 2000. Among residents aged 16 to 64 years, there were 482 residents with employment disabilities, 32 with physical disabilities, 53 residents with mental disabilities and 111 people with sensory disabilities. Among senior citizens, 38 residents planed physical disabilities, 32 residents planed difficulty going outside the home and 70 seniors planed sensory disabilities.

Unfortunately, the Census data does not provide good information about how many of these persons with disabilities are in low to moderate income households now cost-burdened with respect to housing. However, it seems reasonable to conclude that persons with disabilities experience at least the same level of need for affordable housing as non-disabled households in Hopkinton, and probably more. Indeed, the Governor's Commission on Disabilities recently published a plan that identified affordable housing as one of the top three concerns of people with disabilities and their families.<sup>10</sup> As Hopkinton pursues various strategies for increasing affordable housing production, it is essential that the housing for populations with special needs be taken into account, including but by no means limited to the needs of the elderly who may be dealing with multiple disabilities in a single household.

<sup>10</sup> *Report on the Concerns of People with Disabilities and their Families: Identified during Five Public Forums July 21 - 25, 2003.* Available at: <http://www.disabilities.ri.gov>.

### **Key Town Agencies Involved in Affordable Housing Issues**

The Town has no local entities or local capacity to produce affordable housing. However, the existing Housing Element does speak to the establishment of a Housing Partnership or similar entity. Establishment of an entity, perhaps not as formal as a Commission, would be a valuable tool in keeping the issue of affordable housing on main state and would create a vehicle for larger regional planning and participation. Housing is a regional issue as housing economies are driven by regional economies and not usually town level issues. A local entity whose mission includes monitoring and promoting reaching the 10% target in a manner consistent with Hopkinton's goal of balanced growth is necessary to the success of the Town in meeting its goal.

Currently, the Town Council and planning and zoning board members and staff are the key actors on the local affordable housing front. Only four towns in the plan region have housing authorities, and Hopkinton is not one of them.

The South County Habitat for Humanity has a small presence in Hopkinton. While Habitat's work does not add significantly to the affordable housing stock, its presence on the affordable housing front and visibility as a force for the housing needs of families contribute in important ways to community awareness of the issues.

Clearly, the Town of Hopkinton has limited capacity through its existing municipal structure to deal with producing any significant amount of affordable housing production. These issues will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

### **Town Resident Perspectives on Affordable Housing**

Most respondents favored Hopkinton's participation in a regional approach, and one individual indicated a desire for more information before responding to the question. Several respondents indicated that the definition of affordable housing should be expanded. All of the respondents favored inclusionary zoning and other approaches and only three did not mark inclusionary conservation zoning as a preferred option for meeting the 10 percent affordability requirement. It should be noted that the survey was by no means a scientific sample, but an underlying theme of concern seemed to be about a loss of local control. Many of the preferred strategies were those that addressed the issue in terms of lower impact, less direct methods such as accessory units.

### **Resources Currently Available**

For the Town of Hopkinton, its greatest resource is the willingness of the newly constituted Task Force to entertain a full range of options for increasing affordable housing in the community.

It was recognized that many of the issues and ideas that have surfaced as part of this Task Force process were similar to ideas already included in the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan. There was some consensus that a Housing Partnership or Commission established to task manage the progress towards the 10% goal would be helpful and would help to generate the initial efforts if the Town took a very proactive approach such as using developer RFPs.

### **Summary of Factors that Impede the Production of Affordable Housing in Hopkinton**

- ~ Ample land but lacking in public utility infrastructure (town water & sewer)
- ~ Highly sloped lands and permeable soil typical in southern moraine
- ~ Limited employment opportunities within Town borders and lack of inexpensive public transportation to regional job centers
- ~ Limited funds at state and federal levels to provide subsidies.
- ~ Local concerns about attracting young families and over-burdening an already stressed public school system.



## **Chapter Six. RECOMMENDATIONS: GOALS, POLICIES, STRATEGIES**

### **Introduction and Current Shortfall**

In Hopkinton, the Task Force has been considering a number of policy alternatives, including innovative zoning approaches.

Planning staff and Task Force members from a number of the towns in the plan region expressed interest in having a matrix of affordable housing strategy options and tools to assist them in their decision-making process. A number of respondents to the questionnaire in the various towns also signaled a desire for a better understanding of the fundamental concepts before they expressed an opinion on their receptivity to particular strategies. Accordingly, the consultant developed a matrix to facilitate discussion and promote understanding of how other jurisdictions have dealt with affordable-housing related challenges.

The narrative below discusses several of the "top candidates" based upon discussion and input from the Task Force beginning with the steps that will contribute directly to the actual production of housing and continuing with a discussion of the organizational and community infrastructure that will be essential to the success of the other initiatives. The underlying assumption in the following discussion is that Hopkinton is fully committed to achieving and maintaining 10 percent affordability and must therefore address this reality:

***Current shortfall: 149 affordable units (as of 10/2004) PLUS 10 percent of whatever comes on line in the coming years.***

## **Increase Direct Production of Affordable Units**

### **» Enact a Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance**

Enacting a Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance will ensure an automatic yearly increase in Hopkinton's Fair Share 10% subsidized units. Inclusionary zoning is a tool to create new affordable housing units. In exchange for development approval, developers must include affordable homes when they build a particular number of market-rate homes (for example, a simple Inclusionary zoning ordinance would mandate that in

order to get approval to build 10 units, a developer must include 2 affordable units). Often in exchange for developing a certain number or percentage of affordable units within larger, market-rate developments developers are given density bonuses, but not always (to continue the example, a developer wishing to build 10 units with a requirement that 2 be affordable is then allowed to build 2 extra market-rate homes to offset the price; thus a total of 12 units would be built). Some communities also allow developers to build the affordable units off-site or allow a pecuniary contribution to a housing fund equivalent to the housing units mandated to be created.

Hopkinton already allows up to a 10% bonus on the final value of units if applicants are willing to create affordable housing. Under inclusionary zoning that density bonus could be increased to 20% or even 25%. It should also be added to an amended ordinance that the measure of affordability be the affordability guidelines set in this plan and that all density bonus units must receive a subsidy to count toward Hopkinton's Fair Share 10%.

Both Inclusionary zoning and Comprehensive Permitting increase the number of homes in subdivisions. The advantage of Inclusionary zoning is to be found in the fact that municipalities can cap or scale the permitted density, (at, for example, 25% when market and affordable are mixed; or up to 100% for all affordable on a site that can sustain the density).

Inclusionary zoning ordinances may work in conjunction with a local Housing Trust fund administered by a municipal housing authority, a municipal housing land trust, or a local non-profit. A designated entity would monitor eligibility. Eligibility would be based on income, targeting families between 0 and 80% of medium income. Preferences are possible, but consideration to fair housing laws must be taken. Some communities give a preference to municipal employees that do not yet reside in the community.

The Hopkinton Planning Board may impose any or all of the following conditions:

- 1) the Planning Board shall be the local Board of Review;
- 2) the pre-application conferences for comprehensive permits be scheduled with the local Board of Review; and
- 3) all required local, state and federal permits must be obtained prior to the final approval.

## » Implement a Developer RFP Process

The basic premise of this approach is simple. The Town acquires and assembles parcels, prepares a master plan for the acreage and issues a developer RFP that describes the development program giving the developer a certain amount of latitude in the final design of the project but controlling the density and overall project impact. Developers would respond to the RFP, which in essence, is a bundle of development rights, with a purchase price agreeing to develop within the parameters imposed. Because the project should in essence be able to avoid a protracted permitting process and already be acceptable in a general sense to the community, developers would have an incentive to respond knowing that projects could be completed in 24 to 36 months or even shorter periods in some cases depending upon sources of financing. These development parcels should be distributed around the town spatially to avoid concentrations of lower income.

The parcels could be either already zoned for multi-family or be subject to some other zoning but rely on the overlay district mechanism described above. By using the RFP process, the Town would be able to control selection of the developer in terms of experience and willingness to work with the Town. The incentive for a professional developer is that by working with the town he or she is better able to control risk and therefore should be willing to take a reasonable fee for completing the project. This same mechanism could be used to establish or re-establish village centers, but in this context the strategy is intended to complement the village centers with purely residential development (not mixed use). This is a method to develop family housing (2 and 3 bedroom) units.

The Town could consider a Land Trust model and retain ownership of the land accepting only a modest lease payment, but this model would require that the Town commit resources to acquisition that would not be fully recouped. However, a Land Trust model would provide for permit affordability as the project would either have to be some form of cooperative home-ownership (perhaps a limited equity model) or if it were rental, could not be restructured or sold without the cooperation of the town.

» **Create Residential Incentive Zone Overlays or adopt a policy of Conditional Rezoning**

The intent of the Residential Incentive Zone is to establish a specialized zone that will, through incentives and consideration of a specific housing proposal in conjunction with a proposed zone change, facilitate construction of affordable housing.

In many ways this is like inclusionary zoning except that these "projects. would be intended to promote mixed use, mixed development on a larger scale and in ways specifically targeted by the Town. It provides a mechanism whereby existing owners of land for which the Town now has a new vision could either remain under existing zoning or be redeveloped in accordance with the newer vision.

In practical terms the town would create an overlay zone, provided a developer would build affordable housing, the underlying existing zoning would be changed. Or the town could keep the zoning as it currently exists and rezone on a project-by-project basis much the same way as a PUD process works. Both techniques are forms of "conditional rezoning."

However, like most municipalities Hopkinton already makes use of Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), and Special Permits. With the advent of the planned unit development concept and its acceptance by courts, the rejection of negotiation between municipal governments and developers became a less likely result in case of challenge. Also, any neighborhood opponent to conditional rezoning should be informed that if conditional rezoning is not allowed, developers now have the recourse of the Comprehensive Permit as provided by the Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, as amended. With conditional rezoning the town has room to negotiate density and even to provide a generous but limited cap on density. With a Comprehensive Permit, densities can be whatever the developer requests, and it requires the Town to take greater efforts and care to justify any conditions that reduce what the developer is seeking.

» **Use local discretionary funds for affordable housing programs.**

Nontraditional uses of COSG funds could be used as a potential funding source for affordable housing. Possible program examples include: rental deposit funds, financial assistance for first time buyers, housing rehabilitation programs and a funding pool for land acquisition for the purpose of residential land banking. At the current time, these strategies will in most cases not result in units that count under the RI Low/Mod Housing Act, but they will preserve existing affordability and with some effort in terms of how they are structured may be able to be made to count.

Whenever possible, the town should look for opportunities in which to create long-term, 30-year affordability restrictions (at least) wherever state or federal funds such as COSG monies are spent on housing programs in order to increase the town's Fair Share 10%.

Almost 1/4 (23.9%) of Hopkinton's housing stock was built before 1939 and subsequently many of those homes are in need of renovations and rehabilitations. Some of those owners may not be able to secure funding through traditional lenders. Properties that can qualify for subsidies and then sold as affordable housing, or homes in which an owner may be willing to allow a deed-restriction; thus ensuring permanent affordability.

» **Create a Linkage Ordinance that ties Commercial Development to Affordable Housing Development**

In linkage programs cash contributions are made to the community to serve some public purpose (i.e., open space preservation or affordable housing being the two most common examples; school expansion could be another) as a means of recognizing the impacts of large-scale projects. If the zoning regulation that enforces linkages can demonstrate and document the cost link between a development fee and a public purpose then a payment can be charged. The funds collected can be used by the town to develop housing. Typically housing is not developed on the site of the development to which it is linked.

Anywhere where a residential zone is being converted to another zone is an opportunity to apply a linkage fee to offset the loss of possible housing - especially in the case of any rezoning near Exits 1 and 2.

» **Consider the Historic Restoration Strategy for Village Infill.**

Historic Restoration Housing creates infill by rebuilding structures within villages that were once torn down. Planners examine historic maps and locate building footprints. Property owners are then contacted by the planning department and given the opportunity to apply for a Historic Restoration Housing Special Use Permit to subdivide their property and sell their land to whoever would be willing to replace the former structure in approximately the same place with approximately similar architecture.

The advantage to this approach is 1) it produces infill while not requiring area-wide rezoning which may lead to an excess of infill and 2) once built, the structures fit within the urban fabric of the village. Disadvantages are to be found in environmental concerns and neighborhood opposition. The environmental carrying capacity of the mill villages of Hope Valley, Ashaway and Bradford would need to be seriously considered.

Hopkinton should stipulate that the Historic Restoration Strategy Special Use Permit is conditional on the owner working with the Town to secure the subsidy necessary to have the unit count toward Hopkinton's Fair Share 10%. Maps from 1834, 1870 and 1895 are already available for this type of initiative.

This is not a high yield time of affordable housing strategy, but given that Hopkinton has a number of its historic villages still generally intact, this is a prudent method to expand and enhance these existing villages without major redevelopment.

» **Consider New Usage of Town Surplus Buildings**

Current school building proposals indicate two schools in Hopkinton, the Ashaway Elementary School and the Hope Valley Elementary School, will be returned to the town in the next five years. The town may be able to utilize these buildings for affordable housing, depending on the need at the time they become available.

## Secondary and Support Strategies

### » **Create an Affordable Housing Partnership.**

Hopkinton currently has a volunteer Housing Board which is inactive. An Affordable Housing Partnership would be formed with the same members as the Housing Board or as a variation of the Housing Task Force established to revise and work on the revision of the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan. It would be specifically responsible for the implementation of this plan and then continuing the task of creating affordable housing well beyond the parameters of this plan. The Partnership would report to the town annually with updates on its work to insure that affordable housing remains a priority .

As the town increases its number of subsidized units through Inclusionary zoning and other initiatives, one of the prime duties of the Partnership would be the administration of those units and the monitoring of Hopkinton's progress toward increasing its Fair Share 10%.

Ideally, the Partnership would keep a list of candidates for the affordable housing and oversee any lotteries or other mechanisms that control access to affordable units. It is possible that actual administration of waiting lists and the income verification tasks might be contracted out to a regional entity, but the Partnership would be responsible for managing any contractual relationships and seeing that Town policies as regards monitoring were followed.

Among the Partnership's many tasks would be: 1) establishing short- and long-term housing goals for the town that include those in this plan, and creating an action plan to meet them, 2) supporting and expanding the role of non-profit organizations in developing permanent affordable housing, 3) conducting a Housing Opportunities Plan to identify underutilized parcels that are zoned either residential or non-residential and are suitable for high density housing or mixed uses, 4) developing a site inventory of potentially suitable sites for adaptive reuse such as mills and vacant buildings, 5) considering the feasibility of tax abatement plans to create affordable units within existing homes, 6) advocating the creation of affordable housing for the elderly and

special needs groups, 7) researching priorities for the expansion of town sewer and water services and how new septic plant technology could be harnessed to facilitate controlled growth, 8) update the Housing Element, 9) working with the Town Building Inspector to make sure that housing in town is safe and sanitary, 10) coordinate education programs to raise awareness and remove impediments to affordable housing development, 11) keep the town apprised of changes in the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, and; 12) monitor changes in the housing industry and governmental programs by conferences and seminars such as those offered by Grow Smart Rhode Island.

» **Establish an Affordable Housing Land Trust Fund which would be administered by the Affordable Housing Partnership.**

An Affordable Housing Trust Fund would act as a local bank for affordable housing production. A local Affordable Housing Partnership or Commission could manage the fund and make recommendations to the Town Council for commitment of funds.

Some funding would come from the Town-related sources including COBG funds, sale of municipal owned property, higher building impact fees, town capital budget appropriations, the fees created by the Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance's in lieu payments, contributions from private or public sources, loans, and federal and state or regional housing funds. The money can in turn be used to acquire property suitable for development or redevelopment which would be held in trust under a ground lease model. Some funds could also be used for aspects of development or even interest rate reduction payments to reduce financing costs for affordable housing production.

» **Encourage local banks to participate in affordable housing programs within the community.**

Though described in the Comprehensive Plan such an initiative has never been carried out. In meeting their community obligations under the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 local banks frequently take on partnership roles with communities. The Washington Trust Company is one candidate of many. As an active supporter of community



programs in Washington County, the bank is a resource underutilized by communities such as Hopkinton which do not have a local branch in town.

» **Pursue Regional Strategies**

The regional strategy for the plan region constitutes an essential element in Hopkinton's affordable housing plan. There is strength and opportunity in numbers and Hopkinton should avail itself of that leverage, while proactively pursuing the opportunities afforded by its own unique profile. In brief, the regional plan recommends several viable approaches, including establishing a regional HOME consortium, a Regional Affordable Housing Trust fund, and/or a Regional Housing and Redevelopment Agency.

**Table 5: Snapshot of Estimated Affordable Units Created by Various Strategies (calculations are cumulative)**

affordable units strategy	now	1-5 years	6 years 2010 <sup>11</sup>	10 years 2014	16 years 2020	20 years 2024
Beginning number of affordable units <sup>12</sup>	161	161	161	161	161	161
Implement a Developer RFP Process		25	25	75	100	<b>120</b>
Mandatory inclusionary zoning (IZ)		10	10	30	60	<b>80</b>
Affordable Housing overlay district/conditional rezoning		10	15	20	30	<b>50</b>
Creatively structured subsidies		5	5	20	30	<b>60</b>
Subtotal estimated affordable units	161	211	216	306	381	<b>471</b>
Number of total units	3,098	3,165	3,170	3,260	3,335	<b>3,425</b>
Percent Affordability	5.20	6.5%	6.7%	9.3%	11.6%	13.6%

<sup>11</sup> RI Housing bases its calculation on the U.S. Census, which is taken every 10 years. In 2010, the next census will have kicked in, and shortly thereafter, RI Housing will use it as the new base.

<sup>12</sup> The table assumes that the affordability of units currently counted will be preserved over the next 20 years; as of January 2004, RI Housing estimated Hopkinton affordable units at 161.

**Table 6: Projection of Units to be Available in each Category by 2013**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Percentage to be Created</u>	<u>Projected # Units</u>
Elderly	60%	95
Family	10%	16
Other	30%	48

These early estimates suggest that with some political will, local commitment of resources and proactive measures, Hopkinton could reach and maintain 10 percent affordability in just over 10 years without very dramatic actions. However, it is possible that growth patterns will change when and if the growth cap is removed AND with school system expansion, which could easily occur over the next two decades, the public policy justification for the growth cap disappears, which is why it is good to see that this initial projections, which need to be reviewed and refined now and monitored each year, show the Town has the potential to get out ahead of the curve on the 10% requirement as increases in development from current cap levels or loss of affordable could result in different percentages.

## **Chapter Seven. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING ACTION PLAN**

The Town's Planning Staff has a rigorous assignment as soon as the Planning Board and the Town Council adopt the Affordable Housing Plan in concept and direct staff to integrate the updated Housing Element data into the Comprehensive Plan. With clear agreement from the governing body on the fundamental strategic direction discussed in Chapter Six, staff will then turn to the matter of translating the strategic plan into a clear, measurable, and doable action plan. To develop such a plan in advance of conceptual approval by the Town Council would not be a prudent expenditure of resources.

To assist in the process of developing the Action Plan, we have listed the key action strategies on the following pages, understanding that these items may change in the course of discussion in the months to come. A sample form has been included as a guide and town staff should certainly revise and refine the forms, numbering system, etc., as the need arises.

The strategies that are extended in the Action Plan tables have been chosen with an eye to demonstrating near-term (six to twelve months), mid-term (one to five years), and long-term (five years and beyond) actions to support the affordable housing strategies. The items included are illustrative only and town staff will no doubt identify other items that should be included. Similarly, the implementation assumptions are suggestive only and should be adjusted based on additional Task Force or Planning Board discussion to reflect a plan that is ambitious, yet doable, within the context of other high-priority demands on staff, public officials, and community participants. Although planning staff is most often listed as the responsible party, there may be other Town staff members that should take the lead or supplement planning staff efforts.

**Table 7: AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACTION PLAN SUMMARY**

*Make the following strategies 10 years to conform to the law*

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Goal or Objective of Strategy</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Implementation DURATION</i>	<i>Specific Monitoring Checkpoints</i>	<i>PROJECTED Units produced OR QUANTIFIED INCREASE IN PRODUCTION CAPACITY</i>
1) Mandatory inclusionary zoning (IZ) for major developments.	Integrate affordable housing into the community; increase availability.	Planning staff supporting zoning/planning board decision-making.	Begin immediately. Adopt new zoning ordinance(s) within one year of adopting AHP; first units available within two years of implementing IZ.	Quarterly plan to AHP (See Strategy #6).	Est: 80 units in 20 years.
2) Implement a Developer RFP Process	This strategy gives the Town the highest level of control in terms of location, density and affordability restrictions AND assures progress against specific production targets	Planning staff supporting zoning/planning board decision-making.	Begin by identification of Town controlled parcels suitable for development as housing with 6 months. First RFP issued at 12 months. First units 24 to 36 months later.		Est: 120 units in 20 year
3) Pursue proactive new construction through an affordable housing overlay district.	Provide alternative to Comprehensive Process that is attractive to developers while maintain overall local control	Planning staff supporting zoning/planning board decision-making.	Begin immediately. Adopt new zoning ordinance(s) within one year		Est: 50 units in 20 years
4) Use funds for local affordable housing programs.	Maximize effective use of existing infrastructure; provide incentives for creative approaches to increasing affordable housing.	Planning staff supporting zoning/planning board decision-making. May require technical assistance.	First 12 months required for program design and obtaining funding sources. I	Quarterly plan to AHP.	Est: 60 units in 20 years.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Goal or Objective of Strategy</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Implementation DURATION</i>	<i>Specific Monitoring Checkpoints</i>	<i>PROJECTED Units produced OR QUANTIFIED INCREASE IN PRODUCTION CAPACITY</i>
5) Create a Linkage Ordinance that ties Commercial Development to Affordable Housing Development	To provide resources in support of other initiatives and to mitigate impact of commercial development on community infrastructure	Planning staff supporting zoning/planning board decision-making.	As opportunities arise	Quarterly plan to AHP.	Enables other efforts to be successful; keeps issue on the public agenda
6) Create an Affordable Housing Partnership or establish the Housing Resource Commission.	Build organizational infrastructure for continuity and accountability for meeting and sustaining 10% afford ability.	Town Council leadership with support from planning and administrative staff.	6-12 months to full operation. Fully active for next 20 years and beyond.	Senior town administrators support Council efforts through staff plans at monthly Town meetings until AHP in full operation. Quarterly and annual planning thereafter.	Enables other efforts to be successful; keeps issue on the public agenda.
7) Consider a Historic Restoration Strategy for village infill.	A means to promote development in existing villages without loss of current character and historic structures	Planning staff supporting zoning/planning board decision-making.			Supports item #4, by creating incentive for funds that promote acceptable infill housing
8) Establish an Affordable Housing Land Trust Fund which would be administered by the Affordable Housing Partnership.	A tool to promote long term affordability and retain local control.	Town Council leadership with support from planning and administrative staff.			Enables other efforts to be successful; keeps issue on the public agenda
9) Encourage local banks to participate in affordable housing programs within the community.	A method to access financing and grants that promote affordable housing	Planning staff supporting zoning/planning board decision-making.			Enables other efforts to be successful; keeps issue on the public agenda

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Goal or Objective of Strategy</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Implementation DURATION</i>	<i>Specific Monitoring Checkpoints</i>	<i>PROJECTED Units produced OR QUANTIFIED INCREASE IN PRODUCTION CAPACITY</i>
10) Continue to pursue long-range regional opportunities in partnership with neighboring communities.	Opportunity to leverage local resources and coordinate within the region to allow for more efficient and thus cost effective affordable housing development				Enables other efforts to be successful; keeps issue on the public agenda
11)					

## SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION CHART

<b>Strategy</b>
X)
<b>Goal or Objective</b>

**Lead Entity:**  
**Support Entity:**

Activities	Implementation Period <sup>13</sup>
a.	
b.	
c.	
d.	
e.	
f.	

<b>Level of Effort\Cost of Strategy</b>	
---	--

<sup>13</sup> Implementation period estimated from time that HE/AHP adopted in concept by the Planning Board and Town Council, which should occur within a few months of the time this report has been delivered to the Town and the WCRPC.

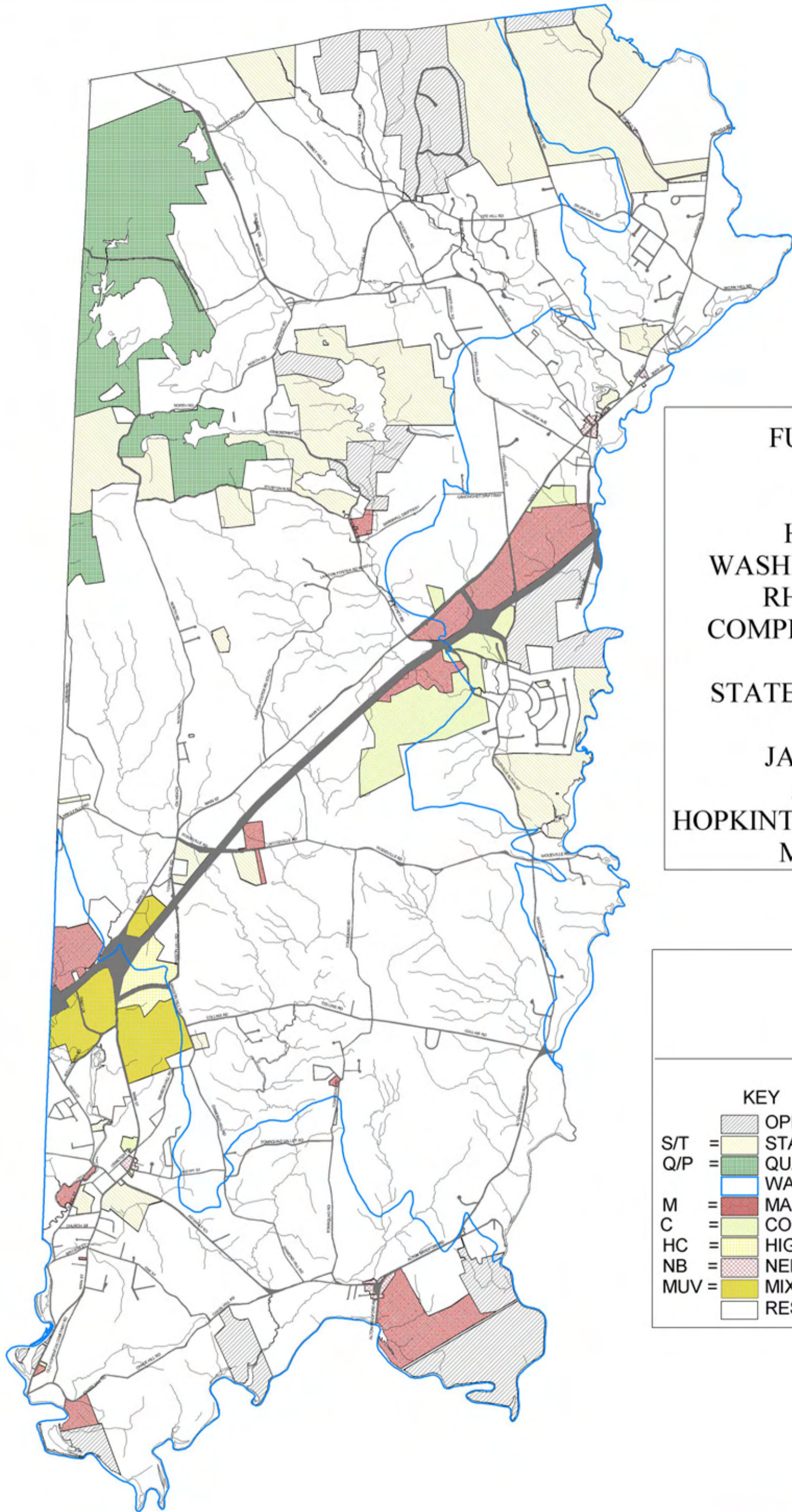
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**FUTURE LAND  
 USE PLAN  
 TOWN OF  
 HOPKINTON  
 WASHINGTON COUNTY  
 RHODE ISLAND  
 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
 1991  
 STATEWIDE PLANNING  
 ADOPTED  
 JANUARY, 2004  
 AMENDED,  
 HOPKINTON TOWN COUNCIL  
 MARCH, 2004**



**KEY**

		OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION
S/T		STATE/TOWN
Q/P		QUASI-PUBLIC
		WATERSHED BOUNDARY LINE
M		MANUFACTURING
C		COMMERCIAL
HC		HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL
NB		NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS
MUV		MIXED-USE VILLAGE
		RESIDENTIAL

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Land Use Element is a policy guide for public and private decision-makers involved in land development. The Land Use Element embodies a proposal as to how growth and development should proceed, recognizing local, regional, and state objectives and generally accepted planning principals of health, safety, convenience, and economy. The existing Land Use Plan reflects existing development, while the future Land Use Plan acknowledges the existing land uses and anticipates new development. A key element vital to the future Land Use Plan is the study, in detail, of the environmental constraints of the land, and the manner in which the land has been developed in the past. It is important to learn from the errors of past development practices, and avoid such problems in the future.

According to the R.I. Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, the Land Use Element shall:

"Designate the proposed general distribution and general location along with the interrelationship of land use for residential, commercial, industrial, open space, recreational, community facilities and other categories of public and private uses of land. The Land Use Element is based upon other elements contained in Section 45-22.2-6 (the Act) and shall relate the proposed standards of population density to the capacity of the land and available or planned facilities and services. A land use plan map, illustrating the future strategy and land use policy of the municipality as defined by the comprehensive plan is required. The land use plan must contain an analysis of the inconsistency of the existing zoning districts, if any, with the land use plan. The land use plan should specify the process by which the zoning ordinance and zoning map shall be amended to conform to the comprehensive plan."

Further, the Land Use Element must be consistent with the following:

State Guide Plan Element #121 - Land Use 2010: State Land Use Policies and Plan

Land Uses of adjacent communities, particularly along common borders

Goals 1,3,4,5,6, and 9 of the Act

All regulations of the Federal and State Government that effect or control the use and treatment of land area, water bodies, wetlands, aquifers, coastal resources and other special areas

## **B. HISTORY OF LAND DEVELOPMENT**

Rhode Island was the land of the Narragansett and Niantic Indians. The Niantic Indians inhabited the southern area of Rhode Island. Little is known of Hopkinton's Indian history, but in the Tomaquag Valley a series of granite outcroppings forming shelters and crevices, yielded artifacts indicating the site was probably used as a temporary camp during the late Archaic

Period. Their legacy remains today in the natural features which still bear their original names such as the Pawcatuck River, Tomaquag Brook, Wincheck Pond, Canonchet Brook, and Yawgoog Pond.

In 1661, the first white settlers purchased a large tract of land known as The Misquamicut Purchase. At this time, farms were scattered throughout the area. As the population grew, the trails used for transportation became paths and then developed into roads suitable for horses and oxen. In 1708, the Maxon Purchase encompassing the southwestern portion of Town took place. In October 1711, 5300 acres of land was purchased and called the Lewis purchase. This land included the southeastern section of Hopkinton.

The Town of Hopkinton was named for Stephen Hopkins, Governor of the colony, when the Town was split off from Westerly in 1757. The first major settlement of the town occurred in the Tomaquag Valley located in south central Hopkinton. With its fertile valleys and uplands, Hopkinton remained essentially agricultural into the mid-nineteenth century when farming declined and textile mill villages began to dominate the local economy.

The nineteenth century hamlets of Rockville, Centerville, Moscow and Canonchet developed as mill sites on small waterways in the Town's interior. Other mill villages, such as Bradford, Barberville, Wyoming, Locustville, Hope Valley, Woodville, Alton, Burdickville, Potter Hill, and Ashaway, straddle the Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers and are part of adjacent towns as well as being in Hopkinton.

Hopkinton City evolved alone as a highway oriented commercial center. It was established as the Town's civic center when the New London Turnpike was cut through Hopkinton in 1815.

Ashaway received its greatest economic boost during the mid-nineteenth century when Lester Crandall began the manufacture of fishing lines. He founded the Ashaway Line and Twine Manufacturing Company in 1825, incorporated it in 1883, and it continues to operate today.

The Village of Hope Valley began as Carpenter's Mills when Hezekiah Carpenter dammed the Wood River and built a sawmill and a gristmill in the 1710's. In 1824, Gardiner Nichols and Russel Thayer began the manufacture of machine tools in the Crandall Mill. A series of various types of smaller industries have continued to operate in the village to this day. In 1874 the village was serviced by the Wood River Branch Railroad. Today, the village is still a pattern of mixed land uses.

While the villages were developing into industrial and commercial centers in the nineteenth century, most of the remainder of the town was forest or farmland.

The nature of past, present, and future land development in Hopkinton is tied to the environmental assets of its physical features. The town is characterized by a variety of natural amenities that have influenced development patterns throughout the years. The original settlements in Hopkinton were placed around fertile soils, water powered mills, and around major travel routes. The early villages have grown into primarily residential neighborhoods but most of the Town's villages also contain commercial and institutional uses, many in older

buildings and currently non-conforming to the zoning. Hopkinton's villages all include historic structures and special features and retain to a considerable degree their original identity and character.

### **C. REGIONAL CONTEXT**

Hopkinton is located in the southwestern part of Rhode Island. Approximately 34 miles south of the City of Providence, it is easily accessible by the Interstate Highway Route 95. Groton, Ct. is approximately 25 miles to the south. The town is bordered by Exeter to the north, Richmond to the east, Charlestown to the southeast, Westerly to the south, and Stonington and Voluntown, Ct. to the west.

The presence of Interstate Route 95 has made the town easily accessible to both Providence and Groton. The improved interstate highway access, in combination with the town's rural heritage, has recently made Hopkinton a more desirable location for residential development. Development pressures on the town are heavily influenced by its location as the doorway to Rhode Island.

Hopkinton shares many common characteristics with its neighboring communities. These characteristics stem from the overlapping historical mill villages of each community, and shared environmental resources such as the Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers and their associated aquifers.

Beyond the common environmental resources, Hopkinton and its neighbors face many of the same social, economic, and developmental issues.

Hopkinton realizes the land use policies of one community can have effects on other neighboring communities. Likewise, Hopkinton realizes that local actions affect state decisions and state decisions affect local actions. Hopkinton must strive to maintain a good relationship with adjacent municipalities and state agencies to ensure that town officials are aware of upcoming proposals and actions outside of Hopkinton, and thus be in an informed position to respond appropriately and effectively.

### **D. PHYSICAL SETTING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Town of Hopkinton has developed according to its prominent physical features, as previously described. These features include:

A series of minor water courses, draining into two major ones, the Wood and Pawcatuck Rivers

A hilly, rugged terrain in the northern part of town with several major hills, notably, Dye, Wood, Skunk, Fenner and Champlin, and several large water bodies; Yawgoog, Wincheck, Grassy, Blue, Ashville and Locustville Ponds

A more level landscape in the southern part of town typified by large farms.

Similarly, as roadways and thoroughfares were constructed, linking settlements along the watercourses, development occurred along these traveled ways, and continues today. The vast majority of the population of Hopkinton lives in either Ashaway or Hope Valley, and the remainder along the connecting roadways. With the construction of Route I-95, twenty years ago, new development has occurred surrounding exit 2, such as the construction of a Senior Citizen Complex, a golf course condominium development and a 51-lot subdivision.

Thus, although the town has a rural density of approximately 160-persons / square mile, the two villages of Hope Valley and Ashaway are fairly densely populated, with housing constructed on small lots.

## **E. INVENTORY**

### **1. Current Land Uses**

The following briefly describes the various land uses in the Town of Hopkinton and their respective locations:

#### **a. Residential Uses**

The majority of residential development initially took place on smaller lots, less than one acre, in the two main villages of Hope Valley and Ashaway, plus at mill site settlements, such as, Rockville, Moscow and Canonchet. Later, road front development dominated the residential pattern, thus changing the rural landscape along these narrow connector roadways with housing located close to the road, leaving large tracts of undeveloped land behind.

With the adoption of Zoning and Subdivision regulations, new residential development was patterned by these regulations. The original Zoning Ordinance, in 1971, contained a single 30,000 square foot residential zone. Later, in 1974, the ordinance was changed to three zones; 30,000, 40,000, & 60,000 square foot lots, and continued through to 1986. At that juncture, Hopkinton enacted a single residential zone of 80,000 square feet town-wide, which remains in effect presently.

Most of the subdivision activity since the enactment of the 80,000 square feet zone has been Cluster Residential Development and Residential Compounds, with very few conventional subdivisions. This has resulted in retaining the rural qualities most Hopkinton residents seek to maintain. Cluster Developments retain usually 50% or better of a site as permanent open space, utilize one-acre lots that are clustered in groups, and allow the road front areas to remain undeveloped.

Also, Residential Compounds have produced similar results, with 2 - 7 lot developments, accessed off private gravel roads. Finally, the 225-foot road frontage and 60 foot front setback requirements of the 80,000 square feet Zone in Hopkinton has worked to retain the rural

character of development along roadways in town. The bulk of the multi-family development is centered in the two villages of Hope Valley and Ashaway. Most of these are 2 - 3 unit apartment buildings, dating back well before zoning took effect in Hopkinton.

The largest multi-family developments are Canonchet Cliffs I, II, & III Senior Citizen Complexes off Route 3 at Exit 2 of Route 1-95, with an eventual total of 144 units, and the Lindhbrook Golf Course/Condominium Development comprising 78 units, also located off Exit 2 of Route 1-95 on Woodville-Alton Road.

b. Commercial Uses

The commercial land uses in Hopkinton are primarily located within the main villages of Ashaway and Hope Valley, with smaller amounts at the two I-95 interchanges, and at several isolated large parcels. The commercial uses in the two villages are typified by smaller uses such as restaurants, convenience stores, gas stations, and small service businesses. Also, within the villages are a number of neighborhood business uses.

Several larger, more isolated commercial uses include campgrounds, such as Whispering Pines, and Holly Tree. Chickadee Farms poultry complex is located off Woodville-Alton Road.

c. Industrial Uses

There are relatively few industrial uses in the Town of Hopkinton. Many of the manufacturing operations of the last century have ceased, however the Town does have some manufacturing uses today, including the following:

Ashaway line and Twine MFG. - employing 70 - producing: racket strings, surgical sutures, fishing line and specialty cords

Hope Valley Rope Co. - employing 7 - producing: Crowelon Rap Rope or pot warp

Bonner Monument Co. - employing 10 - producing: granite monuments

Chickadee Farm Products - employing 100 - producing: chicken and egg processing

Coastal Plastics - employing 30 - producing: custom PVC, custom extension tubing rods, gaskets

PressTech Inc. - employing 3 - producing add-ons to the printing industry

Greene Plastics - employing 150 - producing: injection molded plastic parts, compression molded plastic parts, pre-packed beads and related products

Hope Valley Industries - employing 5 - producing: vinyl welcome mats

KayDee Handiprints, Inc. - employing 65 - producing: screen printing of textiles

Kaye Research Laboratories - employing 5 - producing: research media for dental and medical prosthetics

Thames River Tube Co, Inc. - employing 20 - producing: paper tubes

Thompson Native Lumber Co. - employing 8 - producing: oak and pine lumber and related byproducts

Young Lace Co. - employing 4 - producing: leavers lace

Imperial Wallpaper - employing 225 - producing: wall coverings

d. Government Uses – Municipal / State / Federal

Municipal land uses in Hopkinton includes properties that the Town owns for the usual types of land for municipal purposes: Schools, Highway Department, Police, Town Hall and Recreational Areas. These are distributed throughout the town and are described in detail in the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. It is not expected that the town will purchase additional properties, unless they are bought through open space/recreation funds or at tax sales.

The State of Rhode Island owns large tracts of land in Hopkinton, primarily for state parks and conservation areas. The state also owns several smaller parcels, including a storage facility for the Department of Transportation facility.

e. Conservation and Recreation Uses

Nearly 4,000 acres in the northern portion of town are currently conservation or recreation land under public and private, not-for-profit ownership. This includes major landholdings of the State of Rhode Island, and organizations such as the Nature Conservancy, RI Audubon Society, and the Boy Scouts of America.. Permanent conservation lands virtually surround the major ponds in Hopkinton, including grassy, Yawgoog, Winchek, Lon, Ell, Ashville and Blue Ponds.

This effectively preserves these valuable natural resources and habitats for all town residents to enjoy for recreation and open space uses. Also, the ownership of properties by the State and not-for-profit entities places the responsibility of maintenance with those bodies, and not with the Town. The property owned by the Narragansett Council of the Boy Scouts of America, although presently in open space use, is not protected as permanent open space. All of these properties truly are a valuable asset for the Town of Hopkinton from all perspectives.

f. Utility and Institutional Uses

Utility companies own very little property in Hopkinton. There is a main electric utility corridor that passes east/west from the Connecticut border to the Town of Charlestown in the southern portion of Hopkinton. There is also one north/south utility corridor that intersects the east-west



line in Ashaway. This property terminates at the southern end along the Pawcatuck River with a large parcel of land, and at the northern end at Egypt Street.

Institutional uses (non-government) in Hopkinton are primarily churches, cemeteries, libraries and buildings or areas owned by community organizations. These are distributed throughout the town, usually within or on the outskirts of the historic villages. The larger cemeteries are located in Ashaway and Hope Valley.

g. Vacant Land

A visual inspection of the existing land use map of Hopkinton indicates that the vast majority of the town, perhaps as much as 60%, remains as vacant land in private ownership. This is similar to the overall state average for this category of land use. This vacant land is the focus of the all-important sections addressing future land use.

## **2. Protected Natural Areas**

Several categories of natural areas in Hopkinton are protected to some extent, from negative impacts of development. They are either dedicated conservation land or subject to special regulatory controls on development. These categories include the following:

- Conservation areas owned by public, private and not-for profit agencies
- Floodplains
- Regulated wetlands
- Land subject to the Hopkinton Aquifer Protection Ordinance (proposed)
- Open Space in town-approved Cluster and Residential Compound Developments

In the first category, there are large land holdings by the State, including Arcadia State Park, not-for-profit entities, such as; The Boy Scouts of America (Yawgoog Camp), and the Ell Pond / Long Pond / Blue Pone / Grassy Pond Complex in both State and not-for-profit ownership. Finally, the Crandall House and Crandall Field in Ashaway are owned by the Town of Hopkinton.

In addition, there are numerous smaller properties owned by the state and town that serve as conservation areas. These are inventoried in the Recreation / Open Space element of the Plan.

In 1971, when the Town of Hopkinton enacted its zoning ordinance, a Floodplain and Water Course Protection Zone was included. This places a restriction on building within or near streams and ponds, and in essence protects these areas from disturbance. In addition, in the same year of 1971, the State of Rhode Island enacted the Freshwater Wetlands Act which provided for protection of all areas defined as marshes, swamps, bogs, ponds, areas subject to storm flow, and related buffer areas of 50 feet, and a buffer area of between 100-200 feet from the edge of a flowing stream or river, depending on its width. The present R.I. Department of Environmental Management presently administers this act.

The Hopkinton Conservation Commission is presently *working on a Town-Wide* Aquifer Protection Ordinance, building on the preliminary work of the Hopkinton Planning Board and an organization known as Rural New England. It is anticipated that this ordinance, once passed, will limit certain uses and prohibit underground storage tanks in any location within the defined Aquifer Protection Zone. In effect, this ordinance will function as an overlay zone or district, and affect development in all zones of the Town.

Finally, as a result of developers utilizing the Town's Residential Compound and Cluster Residential Development Ordinances, many acres of land in Hopkinton have and will be permanently set aside as open space. Usually, these areas have conservation easements limiting their use. The control and use of this property is vested with a private homeowners association for each development.

### **3. Overview of Existing and Proposed Regulations in the Town of Hopkinton**

*(Please note: the following sections pre-date the current state zoning enabling acts and Town zoning ordinances)*

#### **a. Zoning Ordinance**

In accordance with Title 45, Chapter 24 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, 1956, as amended by Chapter 83 of Public Laws of 1957, and chapter 173 of the Public Laws of 1967, the Town of Hopkinton enacted a Zoning Ordinance, effective March 23, 1971. The ordinance is divided into the following six districts:

- Rural, Farming, Residential
- Neighborhood business
- Commercial
- Industrial - Light
- Industrial - Heavy
- Flood Plain and Watercourse Protection Zone

The Hopkinton Zoning Map was revised on February 3, 1986. Of particular interest, the Rural Farming Residential, or RFR Zone, was amended to include only one density, that being one single family dwelling per 80,000 square feet.

This was intended as an interim measure by the town to reduce density, and) a study of density alternatives, particularly in the villages, is an implementation action of this plan. The remaining districts are typical of a Zoning Ordinance with the usual complement of permitted uses and uses permitted by special exception. The one anomaly is the Light Industrial Zone, which allows only the uses specified in that district. However, the Heavy Industrial Zone, by contrast, permits all uses of all zone districts.

b. Subdivision Regulations

In accordance with Title 45, Chapter 23 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, 1956, the Town of Hopkinton adopted Subdivision Regulations, effective July 22, 1969. The regulations require that an applicability checklist be filed with the Town prior to beginning the subdivision approval process. The Planning Board in a three-step process reviews the applicant's plan: Pre-application, Preliminary Plat, and Final Plat. The subdivision is presented to the Town Council for preliminary and final approval, and eventually filed and recorded with the Town Clerk.

On July 2, 1990, the Town Council enacted amendments to the Subdivision Regulations, which incorporated detailed checklists used by the Planning Board in the three-step review process, into the regulations by ordinance. Also, the Amendments revised the filing fees for each stage of the approval process by increasing them.

***\*Please note: the above section pre-dates the Land Development and Subdivision Enabling Act of 1992, and current Hopkinton land development and subdivision regulations.***

c. Residential Compound Subdivision

In order to encourage low-density development with provision for access by private roads, the Town Council adopted a Residential Compound Ordinance as part of its Subdivision Regulations on February 2, 1987. A compound is in the best interest of the town when it meets the following objectives:

1. To preserve the rural character of Hopkinton.
2. To provide for moderate development around the village centers.
3. To provide for limited development in areas of poorly drained soil, and remote sections of town, which are costly and inefficient to service.
4. To more readily permit subdivision of large family homesteads for distribution among family members.
5. At the discretion of the Town Council, any or all of the above objectives.

A Residential Compound is directed through the same three-step approval process as a conventional subdivision and requires a homeowners association to maintain the private access road and any open space within the compound.

d. Cluster Residential Subdivision

A Cluster Residential Development is allowed within the Rural Farming Residential Zone as provided for in Article II, Section 5 of the Hopkinton Zoning Ordinance, which was adopted by the Town Council on October 6, 1986.

This zoning provision was established to encourage developments that were more harmonious, efficient and sensitive to the environment. It was hoped that Cluster Residential developments would provide opportunities for alternative residential designs and site layouts and also support more affordable housing types. Clustered development promotes efficient provision of basic community services and encourages inclusion of recreation and open space within developments.

This is accomplished in a cluster by shrinking the minimum lot size per unit from the present 80,000 square foot requirement to 40,000 square feet for a single family unit, while retaining the original density of 1 unit per 80,000 square feet and preserving the balance of the property as permanent open space. The ordinance also allows for duplex, and multi-family construction within the district on 60,000 and 80,000 square feet lots respectively. This form of subdivision has been very popular in Hopkinton since its adoption.

e. Planned Unit Development Ordinance

The Hopkinton Planning Board developed an ordinance to allow for Planned Unit Development (PUD) that was adopted by the Town in November 1990. A PUD requires a unified overall site design for clustered buildings, common space, and allows for a mixture of building types and uses. This new ordinance permits the overall planning of a project and calculations of densities over the entire development, rather than on an individual lot-by-lot basis. The PUD includes provisions of both the subdivision regulations and zoning ordinances of the town, and is ultimately approved through a re-zoning action by the Town Council. The PUD is the only legal mechanism by which the town can allow a mixture of uses, such as residential and commercial, on a single site.

The site design encourages more efficient use of property, preserves natural and historic features, provides opportunities for reduced building and development costs, reduces utility and roadway construction and maintenance, integrates open space areas, and maintains the character of a area. In short, the PUD is a flexible planning tool that offers benefits to both the town and the developer. The PUD is reviewed by the Planning Board in a three-step process, similar to subdivisions, and is ultimately approved by the Town Council as are-zone of the property.

f. Site Plan Review Ordinance

In order to officially adopt a site plan review process already in use by the Planning Board, as a matter of policy and procedures, the Town Council passed a Site Plan Review Ordinance on November 1, 1990. The ordinance applies to all permitted land uses in the Hopkinton Zoning Ordinance except for single and two family dwellings.

No building permit may be issued for any building within the purview of this section, unless it is in conformance with an approved site plan. Also, a certificate of occupancy cannot be issued unless all building and site improvements are constructed in conformance with an approved site development plan.

The ordinance provides for a two level approval process. First, a pre- application conference with the Hopkinton Town Planner takes place where the project is initially evaluated, and (a staff approval may be granted by the Town Planner.

If, however, it is deemed that the project must receive full Planning Board review and approval, the Town Planner will schedule the review and provide a list of supporting documents and information that must be supplied to the Planning Board for their action. (Upon Planning Board approval, the applicant must proceed to the Town Council for final approval, prior to the issuance of a building permit.

*Please note: the above section pre-dates the current Town of Hopkinton Zoning Ordinance, adopted in 1994.*

#### **4. Population**

##### **a. Past Growth and Present Population Characteristics**

The following table illustrates the number of inhabitants for the Town of Hopkinton, beginning in the Year 1900 through 1990.

**Table VII-1. Population of Hopkinton. RI 1900-1990**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>
1900	2,602
1910	2,324
1920	2,316
1930	2,823
1940	3,230
1950	3,676
1960	4,174
1970	5,392
1980	6,406
1985	6,793
1990	6,873

Source: U.S. Census Data

Table VII-2 illustrates the age composition by sex for the Town of Hopkinton from the year 1980 and estimates through 1990:

**Table VII-2. Population by Age & Sex: Hopkinton, RI**

Age	1980			1990		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
0-4	231	234	465	<i>251</i>	<i>261</i>	<i>512</i>
5-14	699	572	1271	<i>542</i>	<i>512</i>	<i>1054</i>
15-24	559	514	1073	<i>481</i>	<i>427</i>	<i>908</i>
25-34	491	513	1004	<i>596</i>	<i>601</i>	<i>1197</i>
35-44	438	436	874	<i>567</i>	<i>601</i>	<i>1168</i>
45-54	292	304	596	<i>389</i>	<i>356</i>	<i>745</i>
55-64	268	281	549	<i>250</i>	<i>276</i>	<i>526</i>
65+	246	328	574	<i>334</i>	<i>429</i>	<i>763</i>

Source: US Bureau of the Census

Rhode Island is a very populated State. Hopkinton, in contrast, is more sparsely settled, as can be evidenced by the following tables for population density:

**Table VII-3. Population Density: Hopkinton 1980-1990**

Year	Population	Land Area	Density / Sq. Mile
1980	6,406	43 Sq. Miles	149
1985	6,793	43 Sq. Miles	158
1990	6,873	43 Sq. Miles	160

Comparison of Hopkinton, Washington County & the State of Rhode Island, for 1990:

**Table VII-4. Population Density: Town, County & State: 1990**

Region	Population	Land Area	Density / Sq. Mile
Hopkinton	6,873	43 Sq. Miles	160
Washington County	110,006	331 Sq. Miles	332
State of Rhode Island	1,003,464	1,049 Sq. Miles	957

Regarding net natural increase for the population of Hopkinton, the following table indicates the recent trend over the past ten years:

**Table VII-5. Resident Births and Deaths In Hopkinton: 1980-1990**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Births</b>	<b>Deaths</b>	<b>Natural Increase</b>
1980	99	47	52
1981	94	51	43
1982	97	48	49
1983	106	38	68
1984	108	46	62
1985	105	50	55
1986	88	60	28
1987	110	42	68
1988	108	39	69
1989	86	50	36
1990	90	63	27
<b>Total</b>	1091	534	557

**b. Population Projections**

The Rhode Island Department of Administration, Office of Municipal Affairs has completed population projections for the Town of Hopkinton through the year 2020, in five-year increments. The following table presents that data:

**Table VII-6. Population Projections for Hopkinton. RI: 1990-2020**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population Projection</b>			<b>5 Yr. Net</b>
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	
1990	3410	3463	6873	
1995	3451	3458	6909	36
2000	3573	3603	7176	267
2005	3653	3737	7360	184
2010	3727	3806	7533	173
2015	3793	3908	7701	168
2020	3859	4010	7869	168

c. Land Use Build Out Analysis

In order to assess the potential for development and the ultimate population of Hopkinton based on current residential zoning, a "build-out" analysis is presented. This process is completed by the following method:

Total number of acres in town  
Minus already developed land  
Minus wetland & water bodies  
Minus soil constraints (estimate of percentage)  
Total future developable land  
Divided by current 80,000 Sq. Ft. Zone (RFR)  
Equals total number of future lots  
Total future lots times housing size multiplier of 2.5  
Equals total potential future residents of Hopkinton  
Based on average number of building permits per year, estimate of length of time to achieve maximum population

Several assumptions were made, including:

1. A reduction of 10% of the developable land for roadway and utility use.
2. Future subdivisions conform to all requirements of current subdivision regulations.

The source of information was the RIGIS (Rhode Island Geographical Information System) mapping and statistics for land use, soils) and wetlands in Hopkinton compiled from 1988 aerial photographs and accurate to within 1/2 acre.

The Town of Hopkinton occupies a total of 44 square miles, which translates into just over 28,000 acres. This is verified by RIGIS at 28,237 acres according to their mapping. By next subtracting the total acreages of these categories:

Residential #'s 111-115	Commercial #120
Industrial #130	Cemeteries #163
Institutional #170	Mines, Quarries & Gravel Pits #740
Transportation, Communication, & Utility #'s 141-147	

The total number of developed acres is arrived at, being 3,238 acres.

Subtracting these 3,238 acres from the original 28,273 acres leaves 25,035 acres of potentially developable land.

Next, the totals for developed / undeveloped recreation and conservation/management/dedicated open space lands are subtracted from the total developable acreage. Combining the categories in Table 1-9, Page 1-37 of this plan, arrives at the total for this. The total for this being 6,460 acres.



To avoid overlapping deductions for the remainder of the development constraints, the above acreage for developed/undeveloped recreation and conservation/management/dedicated open space lands is figured as a percentage of the total remaining potentially developable land, a percentage of 25.8%. This 25.8% will be hereafter deducted from development constraint figures, because it has already been counted as part of the 6,460 acres above.

RIGIS mapping for Wetland #600 in Hopkinton indicates a total of 3,719 acres in that category, minus the 25.8% already accounted for leaves 2,759 acres to subtract.

Water Bodies #500 are tabulated by RIGIS to total 914 acres, minus 25.8% leaves 678 acres to subtract.

For the next step in the analysis, it is assumed that none of the 4,190 acres listed by RIGIS as Bedrock and Slope Constraints (> 15% slope) and the 5,822 acres listed as Hydric Soils - Severe Constraints (0-18" depth to water) have been built on to date in Hopkinton. Adjustment is made for the 25.8% already accounted for, leaving 3,109 acres and 4,320 acres to subtract, respectively.

Subtracting these acreages from the balance potentially developable of 25,035 acres leaves 7,709 acres as developable in town. Table VII-7 shows the progression of the build out analysis thus far.

**Table VII-7. Constraints for Build Out Analysis**

Explanation	RIGIS figure	After Adjustment	Total Developable
Hopkinton Total Land Area	28,273		28,273
Combined Land Use Categories	3,238	-3,238	25,035
OSR/D/C/M	6,460	-6,460	18,575
Wetlands	3,719	-2,759	15,816
Waterbodies	914	-678	15,138
Bedrock & Slope Constraints	4190	-3,109	12,029
Hydric Soils	5822	-4,320	7,709

If the 10% allowance for Roadway and Utilities is now subtracted from the remaining 7,709 acres that are potentially developable, the remainder now available for development is 6,938 acres. From this number, the analysis can be completed.

Multiplying the 6,938 acres by 43,560 will provide the number of square feet available. Then dividing that number, 302,219,280 square feet, by the RFR Zone minimum of 80,000 square feet the maximum quantity of new lots in Hopkinton totals 3,778 lots.

In the Housing element, the future household size is estimated at 2.86 persons. Thus, if the future lot number of 3,778 is multiplied by the anticipated 2.86 persons per household, the population growth at maximum development is arrived at: 10,805 persons.

The final portion of the analysis is to determine the time period required to reach that population total, 10,805 plus present population of 6,873, or 17,678.

Based on an average of the State of RI Planning Division (pp. VI-13) and RI Department of Administration; Municipal Affairs (Pp. VII-13) estimates of population growth between 1990 and 2000 of 165.5 persons per 5-year interval, it will require approximately 326 years to reach the maximum population of 17,678.

## **F. MAJOR LAND USE ISSUES**

Based on results from the Hopkinton Quality of Life Questionnaire conducted in 1985, a Hopkinton Comprehensive Plan Survey completed in 1990, and the subcommittee on Land Use, the following represents a summary of the various Major Land Use Issues in Hopkinton:

### **1. Residential**

- a. Country Living
- b. Quality of Life
- c. Single Family Homes
- d. Low / Moderate Income Housing
- e. Management of Residential Growth
- f. Revision of Zoning Ordinance and Cluster ordinance to include reduced lot sizes based on location and soil conditions

### **2. Commercial**

- a. Ability to Purchase Food, Clothes and Appliances locally
- b. More Commercial Activity
- c. Appropriate Locations for Commercial Activity

### **3. Industrial**

- a. Diversify Tax Base
- b. More Industrial Activity
- c. Research and Office Centers
- d. Industrial Park(s)
- e. Appropriate Location(s) at or near Exits # 1 & 2
- f. Local Employment Opportunities

4. Neighborhood Business

- a. Convenient Local Shopping
- b. Appropriate Location(s)
- c. Specify Permitted uses only, no special exceptions

5. Agriculture

- a. Retain Rural Character
- b. Maintain Diversity of Landscape Characteristics
- c. Provide Local Employment Opportunities
- d. Local Production of Consumer Goods

**G. GOALS**

The following are the **GOALS** for:

**LAND USE**

- 1. GOAL:** To develop land use policies to maintain the quality of life and rural character of town.
- 2. GOAL:** To encourage development of residential uses, light industry, small business and public facilities into "village areas"
- 3. GOAL:** To encourage agricultural land uses and the preservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat.
- 4. GOAL:** To preserve the smaller villages and the surrounding undeveloped areas.
- 5. GOAL:** To encourage the acquisition of open space adjacent to existing large open space parcels.
- 6. GOAL:** To insure that contiguous land uses of the town are compatible within its borders and with adjacent communities.
- 7. GOAL:** To support the goals and policies of the other *related* elements of the Hopkinton Comprehensive Plan.

**B. IMPLEMENTATION / ACTION PROGRAM**

As required by State law, the Community Comprehensive Plan's Implementation / Action Program "defines and schedules for a period of five (5) years or more the specific public actions to be undertaken in order to achieve the goals and objectives of each element of the

Comprehensive Plan. Scheduled expansion or replacement of public facilities and the anticipated costs and revenue sources proposed to meet those costs reflected in a municipality's Capital Improvement Program shall be included in the implementation program.

The Implementation / Action Program shall identify the public actions necessary to implement the objectives and standards of each element of the Comprehensive Plan that require the adoption or amendment of codes and ordinances by the governing body of the municipality.

These public actions include:

- A. Legislative and Regulatory Actions
- B. New or Improved Public Services
- C. Capital Improvements Program
- D. Administrative or Management Actions

**1. GOAL: To develop land use policies to maintain the quality of life and rural character of town.**

**Policy:**

- To establish development zones based on the environmental constraints of the land.

**Recommendations:** *To require that developers show the environmental "soundness" of projects*

*To prepare a set of project review criteria or submission to the Town Council*

*To encourage the utilization of criteria planning techniques such as Cluster Residential Developments and PUD's*

*To consider residential zoning districts that reflects the actual predominant lot size and physical character of the substantially built-out area of town.*

*To consider retaining large minimum lot sizes in the undeveloped areas of town to meet the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan pertaining to conservation of natural resources and rural character.*

**Responsibility:** Planning Board / Town Planner / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Mid-Term (3-4 Years) & On-going

**Policy:**

- To restrict potential polluting land uses from areas over ground water aquifers and ground water recharge areas.

**Recommendation:** *To support the adoption and implementation of a Town-Wide Aquifer Protection Ordinance, as consistent with Goals 2 and 3 of the Natural and Cultural Resources Elements of this plan.*

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Planning Board / Town Planner / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**Policy:**

- To preserve undeveloped areas within river corridors, along streams, around ponds and other natural features.

**Recommendation:** *To evaluate the Wood-Pawcatuck River Association's proposal to preserve river corridors.*

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Planning Board / Town Planner / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years) & On-going

**2. GOAL: To encourage development of residential uses, light industry, small business and public facilities within "village areas".**

**Policy:**

- To identify the specific village areas in town.

**Recommendation:** *To encourage the implementation of the existing Waste Water Management District and its possible expansion into other areas of town. Also, to examine the feasibility of a central collection & treatment sewage disposal system for the village areas.*

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Town Council / Planning Board

**Time Frame:** Mid-term (3-4 Years)

**Recommendation:** *Explore the development of private water systems and companies to provide quality drinking water to the village areas.*

**Responsibility:** Planning Board / Conservation Commission / Town Planner / Town Council

**Time Frame:** On-going

**Recommendation:** *Development of a Business / Professional overlay zone for the village areas.*

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**3. GOAL: To encourage agricultural land uses and the preservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat.**

**Policy:**

- To develop administrative procedures for the continuation of working farms

**Recommendation:** *Establish a Land Conservancy Trust.*

*Use of creative Planning and Zoning Techniques.*

**Responsibility:** Planning Board / Conservation Commission / Economic Development Commission / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years) & On-going

**4. GOAL: To preserve the smaller villages and the surrounding undeveloped areas.**

**Policy:**

- To develop and maintain residential areas which blend into the historic character of the villages.

**Recommendation:** *To support the establishment of a Historic District Ordinance.*

**Responsibility:** Historic District Commission / Town Council

**Time Frame:** Short-term (1-2 Years)

**5. GOAL: To encourage the acquisition of open space adjacent to existing large open space parcels.**

**Policy:**

- *To acquire open spaces that will, when linked with existing dedicated open spaces, create an open space network throughout the Town of Hopkinton*

**Recommendations:** *Utilize alternative development practices. partner with outside organizations that specialize in open space acquisition, and support the establishment of a Land Conservancy trust as mentioned in Goal 3 policy 1, above.*

**Responsibility:** Conservation Commission / Town Planner / Town Council

**Time Frame:** On-going

**6. GOAL: To insure that contiguous land uses of the town are compatible within its borders and with adjacent communities.**

**Policy:**

- To coordinate future land use directions with those of adjacent communities, and possibly share common service facilities.

**Recommendation:** *Formation of an informal Regional panel to review the implementation of the adopted comprehensive plans.*

**Responsibility:** Planning Board / Town Planner / Highway Department / Town Treasurer / Town Council

**Time Frame:** (3-4 Years) & On-going

**7. GOAL: To support the Goals and Policies of the other *related* elements of the Hopkinton Comprehensive Plan.**

**Policy:**

- *Ensure internal consistency with other goals and policies of the Hopkinton Comprehensive Plan when dealing with land use issues*

**Recommendation:** *Make a conscious effort to maintain a constant interaction with all goal and policies of the Comprehensive Plan when dealing with local land use issues*

**Responsibility:** Town Planner / Planning Board / Town Council / Zoning Board / Conservation Commission

**Time Frame:** On-going

## **I. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**

### **1. Proposed Areas for Development**

The Future Land Use Plan for the Town of Hopkinton is depicted on the Future Land Use Map (found at the end of this section). This is the culmination of all the effort to prepare a Comprehensive Plan for the town. The Future Land Use Plan takes into consideration all the goals and policies from the entire Comprehensive Plan, and specifically, those from the Land Use Element.

The major changes proposed for residential uses involve consideration of residential zoning districts, which reflect predominant existing lot size and character of the substantially built out and established areas of town, primarily in the village areas of Hope Valley and Ashaway. The boundaries of these two village areas are drawn on the Future Land Use Plan.

As a means to promote affordable housing, this plan encourages opportunities for small, infill developments, and the site design flexibility and development cost savings of cluster subdivision and residential compounds.

In the undeveloped areas of Town, outside of the villages, the town will retain the current 80,000 square foot minimum lot size consistent with the Town's goals and objectives for natural resource protection and rural character.

With regard to commercial uses, this plan directs future commercial growth to two areas surrounding the interchanges to Interstate 95, Exit 1 and Exit 2; particularly commercial growth in the form of office park development, or similar low-impact, large-scale development. The wastewater and stormwater management standards of the State and Town must be achieved by any new development proposed within these commercial zones. Performance standards to address potential significant negative impacts of the types of development to be allowed in these areas of Town will be included in any zoning amendments for these areas.

With respect to industrial land uses, this plan calls for continuation of the Town's current single manufacturing classification, and to address site specific concerns through, special use permit designation, strict site plan review, and the development of appropriate industrial performance standards. As with the commercial districts, the performance standards for the manufacturing zones will address potential significant negative impacts for the types of development to be allowed in those areas of Town.



Among other things, consideration will be paid to environmental constraints, proximity to circulation corridors, utilities and other infrastructure. Environmental constraints for development of industrial facilities include, in particular, lack of public water and wastewater systems in most areas of the Town. Individual proposed developments must achieve Town and State approval for their project's systems.

Small-scale, low impact industrial uses could be allowed in mixed-use areas such as the villages. More intense and larger-scale industrial uses would be permitted in the areas at or near I-95 Exits 1 & 2 or other large sites with good road access.

This Plan does not designate additional areas in town to be created for Neighborhood Business uses. Rather, this plan recommends that the zoning be amended to recognize existing neighborhood businesses and allow them as conforming uses, in the village areas only. Further, it is recommended that new neighborhood business uses be consistent with the surrounding lot sizes, building scale, and other dimensional characteristics of the village in which the neighborhood business is proposed. The permitted neighborhood business uses and the dimensional requirements will be set forth in the revised Zoning Ordinance. All wastewater and stormwater management systems for proposed neighborhood business sites must be meet Town and State requirements.

A Professional Overlay Zone will be created to accommodate professional (or business) uses whose scale and intensity are greater than what the current zoning allows as a home occupation. These professional uses would be permitted outside of the Town's commercial zones, but only within the areas defined as the Professional Overlay Zone. These permitted professional uses would be allowed as special permit uses and, therefore, approved by the Zoning Board based on a set of review criteria that will be contained in the revised Zoning Ordinance.

## 2. Proposed Areas for Conservation

The Future Land Use Map identifies, in the category *Open Space and Conservation*, those parcels in Hopkinton that are considered Key Acquisition Parcels for conservation purposes. The Hopkinton Conservation Commission has evaluated these areas and identified them as the most valuable natural areas to preserve. The Commission recommends a variety of methods for acquisition to insure permanent conservation of these undeveloped areas.

## 3. Description, Optimum Intention, and Standards for Future Land Use Classifications

Town of Hopkinton, Future Land Use Plan Classifications (see map following this section):

- a. Future Open Space and Conservation: This classification identifies areas of town that this plan recommends for permanent open space, recreation, and conservation. Included are areas important as open space, passive and active recreation activities, properties adjacent to large dedicated open spaces, and areas for the

conservation of important natural or cultural resources.

b. State/Town Facilities:

This classification identifies publicly owned land within the town. This includes land for the present and future municipal operations such as the Town Hall, Public Works, Schools and Town recreation areas. This classification also includes several large State of Rhode Island landholdings in Hopkinton, most, of which are conservation and recreation land such as Arcadia, but also the Department of Transportation storage area in Hope Valley.

c. Quasi-Public Conservation/Recreation: This classification identifies existing conservation areas that are owned by private, not-for-profit entities. Many of these areas are accessible to the public for specified purposes.

d. Manufacturing:

This classification identifies land in Hopkinton planned for manufacturing use. Small-scale or generally non-intrusive industrial applications, including industries that demonstrate a minimal impact on the environment, and do not require extensive land area for 1 operation may be located in several areas of town, including the villages, subject to performance standards to be developed and included in the zoning regulations.

e. Commercial:

This classification identifies areas for commercial and office development, including retail stores, restaurants, small businesses, and offices for health and legal professionals. Large-scale commercial/office development or complexes such as an office park campus or big-box retail outlet are permitted, but will be subject to detailed site plan review and performance standards.

f. Neighborhood Business:

This classification identifies areas that have existing neighborhood businesses and encourages small scale businesses appropriate for a village setting.

g. Residential:

This classification identifies the land designated for residential uses. Throughout most of the town there is a uniform minimum lot size of 80,000 square feet. The areas identified as villages contain historic structures and mixed commercial and residential

uses on small lots. These areas are appropriate for denser and more intense residential uses, single family and multi-family.

h. Highway Commercial

This classification identifies areas that are suitable for large-scale commercial uses whose building design and site layout are compatible with the rural character and ambiance of the Town. Large-scale retail and office establishments are permitted and shall be subject to detailed site review at the sole discretion of the Hopkinton Planning Board to ensure that design parameters, including but not limited to, site design, parking, building design, and landscaping are compatible with the rural heritage of the Town and protective of the environment.

i. Mixed-Use Village

This classification identifies areas for commercial, office, retail and mixed-use residential structures situated within a small-scale village context. Large-scale office developments such as office parks are permitted but will be subject to detailed site plan review and performance standards.

Future development in Hopkinton shall be guided by appropriate performance standards and development criteria for each land use category to be incorporated into the zoning and other town development regulations.

4. Consistency with Current Zoning Ordinance and Map & Subdivision Regulations

As required by State law, the inconsistencies between the Future Land Use Plan and Map and the Town's existing Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, and Subdivision Regulations will be addressed within eighteen (18) months of the plan's State certification. The changes to the Town's current land use regulations that are described in the Future Land Use section of this plan will be incorporated into the new Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map and Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.

In summary, this plan identifies several land use and zoning issues that deserve special study prior to any implementation action. The studies are the initial step and should lead to appropriate amendments to the Town's zoning regulations and other planning documents. These major land use and zoning issues are:

1. Manufacturing zones, their location, permitted uses and development of performance standards
2. Village districts as mixed-use special districts, with zoning consistent with actual uses and physical characteristics of the existing historic development

3. Commercial zones, their location and permitted uses and recognition of existing neighborhood businesses within the villages
4. Residential zones, creation of zoning with appropriate dimensional requirements within the villages and substantially built areas of Town. Consideration of both single and multi-family housing

**J. SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

**Conservation and Development Plan - Town of Hopkinton**

Land Use Guide - Planning Board - 1980

**Land Use 2010 - June 1989**

State Division of Planning

**Industrial Land Use Plan - May 1990**

State Division of Planning

**Monograph - Town of Hopkinton - August 1987**

R.I. Department of Economic Development

**State Guide Plan Overview - June 1984**

R.I. Statewide Planning

**Code of Ordinances - Town of Hopkinton**

**Directory of Manufacturers - 1990**

R.I. Department of Economic Development

**Population Projections - 1990 -2020**

State Division of Planning

**Rhode Island Geographical Information System (RIGIS)**