

Town of Milford, Massachusetts

Comprehensive Plan

2003



Milford Comprehensive Plan 2003

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PLANNING BOARD OF MILFORD, MASS.

TOWN HALL, 52 MAIN STREET
634-2317

Joseph Calagione
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June 15, 2004

To Milford Residents,

This document is the 2003 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Milford. It is the product of many meetings and discussions among Milford residents, the Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee, the Planning Board, and the Plan Consultants.

As we have all worked together to develop the Plan, many recommendations have been included that are designed to:

- Develop a vision for the future
- Establish goals and policies
- Guide future growth and development
- Promote the general welfare in Milford

It is the Planning Board's belief that this Comprehensive Plan establishes a working blueprint for the future of Milford.

Respectfully,

James D. Griffith, Chairman
Milford Planning Board

Executive Summary



A Comprehensive Plan for Milford

Milford is a highly developed town with a strong sense of its past, a town that has always occupied a position of regional importance in south-central Massachusetts. This Comprehensive Plan, the first since 1965, is meant to guide future growth and development in a way that respects Milford's history and sense of community while taking advantage of the resources available in the 21st century. Just as Milford redefined itself after the collapse of the shoe industry, Milford must continue to redefine its role in the region.

The comprehensive planning process began in January 2003. Many individuals, Town committees, boards and departments, have contributed to the effort. Residents were invited to share their knowledge and opinions of Milford through a series of focus groups and public forums, as well as through an extensive survey.

There are several major issues that affect Milford today, which were identified by residents, Town officials, and consultants. These issues can be viewed as themes that helped direct the plan:

- Focus future planning on redevelopment and infill opportunities
- Be proactive in protecting water resources and open spaces
- Maintain housing affordability for Milford residents
- Protect the limited land remaining for industrial business development from other uses
- Remedy traffic congestion in downtown and key intersections
- Milfordians appreciate the public services and facilities available in Town and have a strong sense of community

After assessing all of the citizen input and the data collected about Milford, the committee and consultants developed goals, objectives, and action steps for each Comprehensive Plan element. While these goals are expected to serve the Town for the next twenty years, long-term planning is a continuous process, subject to the community's changing needs and conditions.

Community Services, Facilities and Infrastructure (Chapter 2)

Milford takes great pride in its facilities and public buildings. Many have been recently renovated or even newly built, such as the Main Street fire station and the new Milford Senior Center. While residents tend to be satisfied with the services provided by the Town, they have noted some concern about deferred maintenance.

Goal 1: Continue to ensure that all public buildings, facilities, and infrastructure are properly maintained and meet the demands of the community.

Natural and Cultural Resources (Chapter 3)

The Town of Milford is highly developed, and demand for undeveloped areas is strong. While residential and commercial development can provide support for cultural resources such as historic preservation and theater, it also threatens the health of the Town's natural resources, especially its water resources. Two main issues -- quality and quantity -- currently affect the water resources in Milford.

Goal 1: Manage water resources and land vital to the protection of water quality and quantity to ensure the health and welfare of residents and the continued economic prosperity of Milford.

Many of the historic resources in Milford have been protected. However, it is important that the Town takes stock of those properties with historic or cultural significance and identifies priorities for protection. It is also important that future development, especially downtown, contributes to, rather than detracts from, the community character of Milford.

Goal 2: Promote and encourage the protection of cultural resources in Milford to ensure that residents have access to the history and the arts and culture of the Town and the region.



Figure 1 - Milford's recently dedicated Senior Center will serve Milford for many years to come and may be near another hub of activity.



Figure 2 - Milford's abandoned quarries are part of its cultural history and are a resource worthy of protection.



Figure 3 - The parks in Milford are popular and highly valued by residents.

Open Space and Recreation (Chapter 4)

The most significant open space issue facing Milford today is development pressure on the few remaining undeveloped parcels of land. This is placing demands on the water supply and recreation facilities. In addition, the open spaces that do exist today are isolated and lack permanent protection.

Goal 1: Provide a high quality, quantity, and variety of recreation facilities and activities for all Milford residents while protecting limited natural resources.

Goal 2: Protect open spaces that have high conservation or recreational value and ensure a network of connected lands both within the Town and with surrounding communities.

Housing (Chapter 5)



Figure 4 - There are many housing options in Milford with a wide range of affordability.

There are several housing issues that Milford must contend with in the coming years. Milford must work to ensure affordability for low, moderate and middle-income individuals and families. While the majority of residents are currently paying 30 percent of their household income or less for their housing needs, the rising costs of housing in the town, the region and the Commonwealth means that affordable housing is becoming a more significant issue. Populations expected to encounter barriers to affordable, appropriate housing are seniors, new homeowners, renters, and low to moderate-income families.

Goal 1: Ensure that individuals and families in Milford have a full range of housing opportunities that include adequate ownership and rental options for low, moderate, and middle-income households and residents with and without disabilities.

Goal 2: Focus on the existing housing stock and its revitalization as a means to continue to attract new homeowners.

Economic Development (Chapter 6)



Figure 5 - There are two main industrial parks in Milford. Unfortunately, commercial uses and housing are filling up this industrial land.

Milford has a good diversity of economic activity, and has a stable business tax base. However, recent downturns in the State and National economies have affected the local economy. In addition, dwindling industrial land is threatened by residential and commercial development, which tends to provide low-wage jobs, increase traffic congestion, and use land inefficiently. The downtown center has received increased attention in recent years, and is beginning to become a pedestrian friendly environment. The Town has done little to encourage more entertainment and retail-oriented businesses to populate downtown, though. While there is nothing wrong with the service-oriented businesses that currently line Main Street, Milford residents have voiced a

desire to see the downtown revitalized, with a lively streetscape.

Goal 1: Build on the strong, well-developed economic development engines in Milford to increase employment opportunities for Town residents.

Goal 2: Revitalize and enhance Milford's downtown.

Goal 3: Revitalize the old industrial core in Milford to provide a targeted receiving area for a variety of uses while simultaneously protecting natural resources and providing open space.

Traffic and Circulation (Chapter 7)

Congestion remains the most significant transportation issue in Milford. For example, residents have reported travel times in excess of 25 minutes through the downtown corridor. Other roadways also experience a great deal of traffic, especially during peak travel hours. Additional issues include a lack of alternative transportation options and poor roadway maintenance.

Goal 1: Maintain and develop a safe and efficient multi-modal network.

Goal 2: Improve vehicle circulation in Milford.

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Introduction



1.1 A Vision for Milford's Future

Milford has always occupied a position of regional importance in south-central Massachusetts, providing jobs, goods, and housing opportunities for surrounding communities as well as its own residents. This Comprehensive Plan is intended to aid the Town in transforming its identity by embracing important aspects of its past and reinventing them with an eye towards the future. Because much of Milford is already highly developed, this plan focuses on management of existing resources and redevelopment. The Comprehensive Plan is also concerned with taking advantage of opportunities to protect the dwindling open spaces and natural resources that remain in Town. It provides strategies that will allow Milford to make the most of its existing strengths, while proactively addressing its weaknesses.

This Plan is a guide for directing future growth and development; it is not a regulation or law. As such, it is up to the Board of Selectman, Planning Board and Town Meeting to ensure that these recommendations are sensibly incorporated into Milford's bylaws and policies.

Vision

- Milford of the 21st Century must remain connected to the roots that made it a strong and vibrant community. New industries continue to replace those that are no longer viable because the town demonstrates the flexibility to work with business and industry and to take advantage of its strategic location and excellent transportation links.
- Milford remains a diverse community, welcoming and assimilating families from many ethnic backgrounds and providing a full range of jobs and services that ensure its future. Because it is a healthy reflection of the world around it, Milford attracts local and regional residents to its wide range of shopping and entertainment opportunities. In its revitalized downtown, residents enjoy a pedestrian friendly environment of shops, restaurants, parks, sports and cultural attractions.

-
- Because Milford has adopted a strategy of inclusion, its housing opportunities remain suitable for meeting a wide range of needs and integrating those households into mixed and dynamic neighborhoods. Older, long-time residents, their children, and newcomers seeking affordable, moderately priced and high-end housing continue to find in Milford options that allow them to live and remain participants and contributors in a community they recognize as home. Milford's timely recognition of the need for elderly housing, close to its vital downtown, has allowed it to become a safe and highly desirable haven for its older residents.
 - Milford has re-invented its old industrial core and taken advantage of its unique position at the headwaters of the Charles River. The core of the community has been re-opened to welcome natural, park-like settings that remain the pride not only of residents but of the business community that helped to build and maintain them. Pride in the community remains strong based on its family friendly attitude that values good schools, social services, parks, excellent municipal management and a well-maintained infrastructure. While many of the surrounding communities are exclusively suburban in nature, Milford has managed its evolution in a manner that has allowed it to remain a community, not merely a place to live.

1.2 The Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

Milford's last Comprehensive Plan was completed in 1965, and the data and goals are significantly out of date. The purpose of this Plan is to re-examine the conditions and trends experienced by the Town and to establish long-term goals and policies that will guide Milford's future growth and development. These policies address the more integrative element of land use, as well as the individual elements that contribute to the overall health of a community and its operations, including facilities, natural and cultural resources, open space and recreation, housing, economic development, and transportation.

It is important to consider the question, "what will happen if we do nothing?" Although Milford is already highly developed, it has many opportunities to engage in redevelopment. In addition, the Town is faced with a number of decisions that must be made now, or else the opportunity to take action will likely be lost. One example is open space in Milford. Should the Town fail to prioritize lands for acquisition or protection soon, those lands that are available will almost certainly be developed in the near future. This is also true for other municipal needs, such as finding land for schools and protecting historic properties.

This Comprehensive Plan should be used as a master document that relates to other studies and plans that have already been created, as well as a guide to suggest future research. It is an attempt to set goals for the next 20 years, but it is open to revision as necessary. Long-term

"A comprehensive plan is intended to provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term physical development of a community."

Comprehensive Plan Elements

- Land Use
 - Population
 - Services & Facilities
 - Infrastructure
 - Natural & Cultural Resources
 - Open Space & Recreation
 - Housing
 - Economic Development
 - Traffic & Circulation
-

The Comprehensive Planning Process

- Establish a vision for the Town
- Survey public opinion on many issues
- Hold public participation sessions
- Establish Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities and Constraints
- Foster public education and debate
- Gather information and assess conditions
- Formulate planning goals and objectives
- Identify implementation options

planning is a continuous process, subject to the changing needs and requirements of the community.

1.3 The Planning Process

The comprehensive planning process began in December 2002, when the Planning Board established a 7-person Comprehensive Plan Sub-Committee. The sub-committee was composed of the following members:

Joseph Calagione	Planning Board
Lena McCarthy	Planning Board
James Griffith	Planning Board
Dino DeBatomleis	Board of Selectmen
Michael Giampietro	Conservation Commission
Charles Miklosovich	Finance Committee
Louis Celozzi	Town Administrator

The Environmental Institute at the University of Massachusetts Amherst was hired to assist in the preparation of the Plan. The consultants used numerous research methods in order to understand the issues that affect the community of Milford, including: data collection; reviewing existing reports; conducting a resident survey; holding a variety of focus groups and public forums; interviewing key informants; and meetings/interviews with Town Boards, Commissions and agencies. Each method is described in more detail below.

Public Opinion Research

Public input is a critical part of the comprehensive planning process. Public participation was designed to maximize both citizen awareness and involvement in the visioning process. A variety of methods were used to engage the public.

A 12-page survey was mailed to a random sample of 1,200 households in March 2003 to determine resident's views about Milford and what they want the town to look like in the future. Over 700 households responded.

Survey Respondents' Background

• Average Age:	48
• Average Years living in Milford:	27
• Own house:	82%
• Rent:	18%
• Male:	44%
• Female:	56%
• Have children at home:	47%
• Married:	69%
• Single:	17%
• Divorced/Widowed:	14%

Seven focus groups were conducted with local civic groups, precinct captains, the Comprehensive Plan sub-committee, open space and recreation, downtown businesses, industrial business parks, and members of the Brazilian community. Key informant interviews were held with individuals from the community which included: local realtors, developers, and representatives from all six hotels and the Milford Regional Hospital.

Several public forums and presentations were conducted by the consultants, each focusing on specific elements of the plan. These forums were intended to both present data as well as to gather public opinions and information about what data might still be missing.

May 13, 2003	Public Forum - Plan process, current trends, SWOC analysis, alternative scenarios
September 30, 2003	Public Forum - Housing, Transportation
October 28, 2003	Public Forum - Economic Development, Natural Resources, Open Space & Recreation
January 10, 2004	Summary presentation to the Board of Selectmen
February 24, 2004	Summary findings to Planning Board

Elected and Appointed Officials

As representatives of the community, elected and appointed officials were included in many stages of the planning process, from visioning, to data collection, to goal setting. Input was solicited through interviews from a wide range of Town Boards, Commissions and agencies, including:

- Planning Board
- Board of Selectmen
- School Committee
- Board of Sewer Commissioners
- Housing Authority
- Finance Committee
- Conservation Commission
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Industrial Development Commission
- Zoning Board of Appeals
- Historic District Commission
- Milford Water Company
- Downtown Partnership
- Town Administrator
- Town Engineer
- Fire Chief
- Police Chief
- Town Counsel
- Town Planner

Existing Conditions & Current Trends Report

The first product of Milford's Comprehensive Plan process was an Existing Conditions and Current Trends Report. A SWOC analysis was developed in order to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints that have affected Milford's development to date, and which should be addressed when planning the Town's future. The report was based on data collected from Town documents, MassGIS data, interviews and focus groups, and firsthand observations.

At the May 13, 2004 public forum, three alternative scenarios were developed as a way to begin the visioning process for the Comprehensive Plan. These provided the community with some imaginative ideas about what Milford may look like in the future and provided residents an opportunity to select the one they felt was most appropriate.

Alternative Scenarios

Milford: An Athletic Community -

Building on the town's rich sports history, Milford invests in more athletic facilities and becomes a regional center for athletics - filling hotels and restaurants to capacity.

Milford: A Return to the Traditional -

A community that revives a sense of vibrancy and connectedness through the reinvention of its traditional neighborhoods and downtown.

Milford: Tech Town - The town becomes a regional leader for innovation in technical, medical and professional knowledge, thus ensuring Milford's economic vitality.

Participants at the May 13 public forum selected Tech Town as the best vision for Milford.

Draft Plan

A draft of the Comprehensive Plan was submitted to the Planning Board in February 2004 and presented at a Public Hearing March 23, 2004.

1.4 Geography and Regional Context

The Town of Milford is located in Worcester County in south-central Massachusetts, with a land area of 14.79 square miles. Milford lies 18 miles southeast of Worcester, 25 miles southwest of Boston, and 25 miles north of Providence, RI - all three cities can be reached within 40-minutes. While many of its approximately 27,000 residents still consider it to have a small town community character, the Town is highly developed and experiencing many of the issues that affect more urban areas such as potentially insufficient infrastructure for residential and commercial use, industrial and downtown redevelopment, and a high demand for cultural amenities.

Much of Milford's growth occurred early in the 20th century, as the Draper Mills and other factories boomed, which established the location of the town's major infrastructure. The Town's location along the busy I-495 corridor suggests that development pressures will continue to affect Milford in the future. Milford belongs to the Southwest sub-region of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. Because it lies near the junction of three counties, Milford does not have a strong affinity with any one particular region, and Milfordians tend to think of their community as a more independent entity.

Milford can be better understood by examining its relationship with three distinct regions in which it resides: 1) the six surrounding communities; 2) the I-495 corridor, and 3) the Charles River watershed. Each of these regions provides a different context in which to understand Milford. The watershed region gives us insight into environmental issues, the I-495 corridor shifts our focus to economic development,

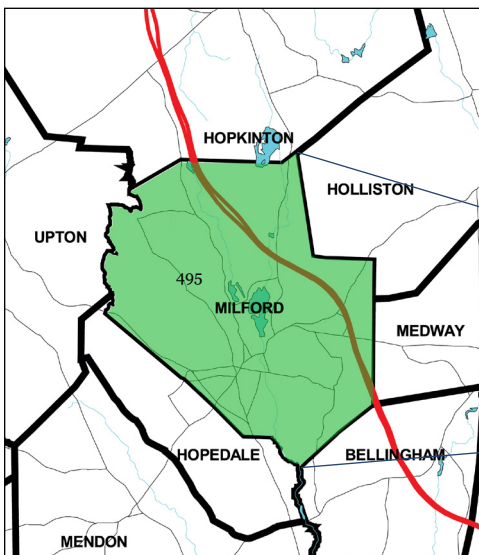
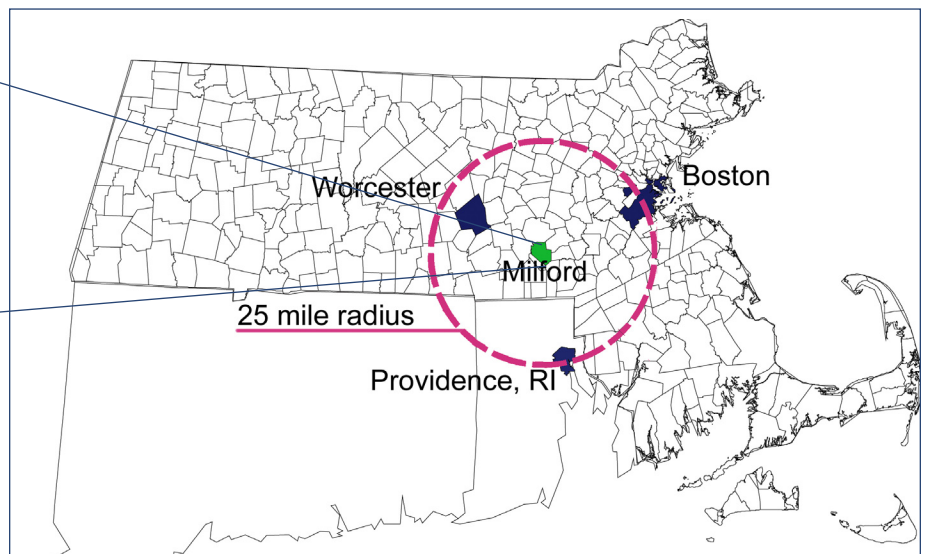


Figure 1-1 - Milford is located within a 25 mile radius of Worcester, Boston and Providence and is bordered by six towns.



and the surrounding communities provides a broad picture of population and housing characteristics.

Surrounding Communities

Overall, Milford is a highly developed community surrounded by more rural and suburban communities, which include Upton, Hopedale, Bellingham, Medway, Holliston, and Hopkinton. Milford has nearly twice the population of the next largest town, Bellingham. These communities are growing, though, with increasing amounts of residential and business development every year. This growth has caused a sharp increase in housing values and selling prices, as shown in the chart below.

Town	Average House Prices			10 year change '93-'03	5 year change '98-'03
	1993	1998	2003		
Milford	\$133,000	\$157,000	\$298,000	124%	90%
Hopkinton	\$195,000	\$277,085	\$455,050	133%	64%
Bellingham	\$114,000	\$144,000	\$260,000	128%	81%
Holliston	\$165,000	\$219,000	\$351,750	113%	61%
Medway	\$165,000	\$222,000	\$345,000	109%	55%
Upton	\$152,900	\$204,500	\$355,500	133%	74%
Hopedale	\$142,450	\$177,500	\$315,000	121%	77%

Housing Prices

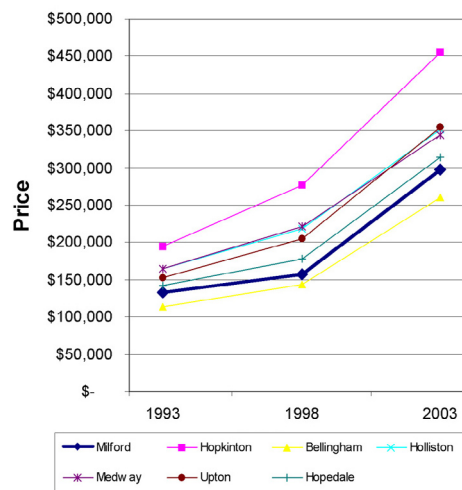


Table 1-1 / Figure 1-2 . Comparison of average house prices in Milford and its six neighboring towns

I-495 Corridor

Overall, Milford is one of a total of 27 communities that form the I-495 corridor. In particular, Milford is part of the Southern I-495 region, which is comprised of nine municipalities with direct access to the highway: Milford, Wrentham, Franklin, Foxborough, Marlborough, Bellingham, Westborough, Holliston, and Hopkinton. While many of the cities and towns surrounding I-495 can attribute much of their growth and development to this roadway, communities with direct access to the interstate have been especially transformed by the changes brought on by its construction.

The number of people with an Associate's degree or higher is greater for the I-495 region than for both that of Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Nation. The region also has a higher median household income (between \$50,856 and \$84,281) than the Commonwealth (\$50,502) and the Nation (\$41,994). The Town of Milford has the lowest median household income in the region. Education and health services provide the most employment in all of the municipalities in this region except for Milford and Hopkinton, for which manufacturing is the largest sector. According to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), the percent job gain from 1990 to 2000 in most communities along I-495 is 20% or more. In 2000, the unemployment rate in these communities ranged from 1.5% to 2.99%, all less than the unemployment rate of Massachusetts of 3.0%.

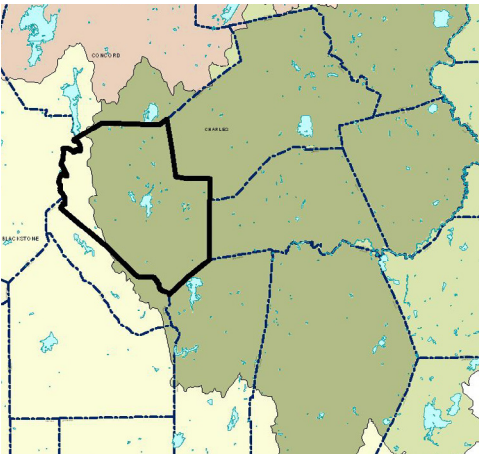


Figure 1-3 - Milford lies primarily within the Charles River watershed (dark area) with the western edge in the Blackstone Valley watershed.

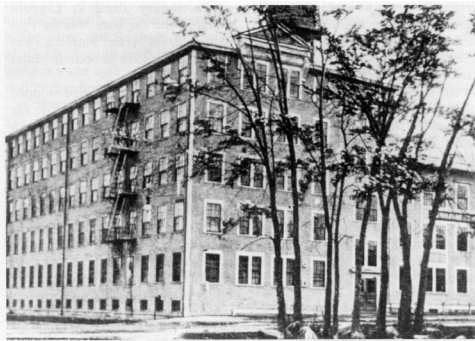


Figure 1-4 . Milford Shoe Company once stood at the corner of Central and Depot Streets.



Figure 1-5 . Milford Pink Granite Quarry with the largest pillar ever quarried in Milford. It was for the Citizens Bank in Cleveland, Ohio.

Charles River Watershed

Milford lies within two separate watersheds, the Blackstone River watershed and the Charles River watershed (figure 3-3,). Only a small portion of the town, the northwest corner beyond the Mill River, lies within the Blackstone watershed. The majority of land area in Milford lies within the Charles River watershed, with the Charles River and related aquifers providing the Town's water supply.

The watershed drains northward and is divided into three distinct regions, which include the rural, forested upper watershed, the suburban lakes or middle watershed, and the urban lower watershed, which drains through the Boston metropolitan area. Altogether, there are 35 cities and towns that lie within the watershed. In general, the upper and middle watersheds are characterized by forest cover and residential land use, while the lower watershed is characterized by commercial land use. Echo Lake, the reservoir that forms the headwaters of the Charles River, lies along the town boundary between Milford and Hopkinton, and thus the Town is considered to be part of the upper basin.

Since 1995, the water quality of the Charles River has improved dramatically, and is now clean enough for boating and swimming for the greater part of each year, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The greatest source of pollution to the river is non-point source pollution, especially from stormwater runoff and Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs). The quantity of water available for residential and commercial use is also threatened by overuse, which has lowered groundwater levels and decreased stream flow.

1.5 History

Puritan and Presbyterian immigrants originally settled Milford in the mid 1600s. Founded as a colonial outpost, the settlement's inhabitants practiced subsistence farming and traded animal pelts with the larger colonial settlements along the coast. Settlements at this time were sparse, until the late 1600s when large numbers of settlers begin arriving at the headwaters of the Charles River. Constrained by rocky soil and hilly terrain, the settlement of Milford was not suitable for large scale farming activities. Faced with this reality, many of Milford's residents built gristmills on the banks of the swift flowing Charles and Blackstone Rivers to grind corn and wheat from surrounding agricultural communities. In fact "Millford" gets its name from the many mills that once dotted its riverbanks. The Town was officially incorporated in 1780.

With many of the town's mills concentrated around a few rapids, groups of farmers could often be found concentrated in and around these gristmills. Entrepreneurs hoping to take advantage of this foot traffic built many commercial stores around Milford's mill districts. This was the start of downtown Milford. As these mills were transformed from small cottage industries into industrial age factories, many workers arrived

in Milford to work in the shoe and textile plants. Waves of immigrants arrived to take advantage of these opportunities from many different countries, including Italy, Portugal, Ireland and Poland. Many of today's lifelong Milford residents still identify with the local ethnic communities established by their ancestors. Scores of these employees lived in the tenement housing surrounding the mills and downtown commercial district. As the town's workforce grew, so did the downtown business district. By the 1930's, Milford's downtown was the region's shopping center. On any given day throngs of visitors, town residents, and mill employees patronized the hundreds of business located in Milford's downtown.

With the construction of interstate 495 and the arrival of "big box" retailers in the mid- 1960s, downtown Milford was no longer the place to gather for shopping or entertainment. During this time, many of the downtown factories and mills either left for the southern United States or relocated to the spacious new industrial parks on the fringes of town. Increased car ownership along with more advanced construction technology gave impetus to many residents to move out of the downtown area and into Milford's new subdivisions in the eastern and northern sections of town.

Over the past decade, downtown Milford has begun to experience many improvements. While it is no longer the regional shopping and entertainment center it once was, downtown is now home to a variety of service-oriented businesses such as lawyers, insurance agencies, and banks. Tree-planting efforts and other improvements to the streetscape have made downtown a more pleasant place to walk. Many historic buildings line the main streets, proving a character the town can be proud of. Memorial Hall, for example, was recently renovated and is now home to a cultural center, public meeting spaces, and a local museum.

At the same time, industrial and residential development has been pushing toward the Town's periphery, creating housing and employment opportunities for old and new residents alike. Undeveloped land is becoming scarce. The town's economy has become more diversified, moving beyond the traditional manufacturing core to include high technology, health care, and accommodation sectors. The past decade has also seen a diversification in the community's population, as a wave of Brazilian immigrants have moved into Milford and established businesses in the downtown area, adding to the wide range of ethnic communities already present in town.

Today, Milford is a well-developed community in the midst of suburban and rural towns. The Town should take advantage of its past as well as its evolving identity as it moves into the 21st century.



Figure 1-6 . Main Street, Milford, MA.
Circa 1900.



Figure 1-7. Ted's Diner (lower right),
now the site of the new Milford Fire
Station.

2

Community Profile



In order to plan for the future growth and development of Milford, it is first necessary to understand the existing conditions within the Town, taking the opportunity to analyze patterns and anticipate future circumstances. The examination of current trends allows the Town to recognize the implications of its existing regulatory framework, and to make changes as is deemed necessary by the goals and policies presented in this document, as well as those that may arise in the future.

2.1 Land Use Inventory

Land use is most dense in and surrounding the downtown area, and becomes less dense moving out towards the periphery of town. Requirements for residential zones (RA, RB, RC and RD) range from 0.25 to 2 acres per dwelling unit and comprise 76 percent of Milford's total area. Twenty four (24) percent of the land in Milford is divided among various industrial and commercial zoning districts.

Only 22 percent of the Town's land area remains undeveloped today, and of that 80 percent is in residential zones. This only includes privately owned vacant parcels, not land used for recreation or open

Table 2-1 - Distribution of land area in Milford by Zoning District

Zone	Purpose	Area		Minimum Lot Size	Percent of Total Land Area
		sq ft	Acres		
BP	Business Park	3,740,671	86	N/A	0.9%
CA	Central Commercial	1,672,662	38	N/A	0.4%
CB	Neighborhood Commercial	3,854,772	88	N/A	0.9%
CC	Highway Commercial	10,367,244	238	N/A	2.5%
H	Highway	14,342,688	329	N/A	3.4%
IA	Central Industrial	8,203,392	188	N/A	2.0%
IB	Highway Industrial	57,135,373	1,312	80,000 sq ft	13.7%
IC	Highway and Neighborhood Industrial	2,180,218	50	N/A	0.5%
RA	Residential A	42,887,607	985	8,000 sq ft	10.3%
RB	Residential B	105,496,176	2,422	15,000 sq ft	25.3%
RC	Residential C	121,608,179	2,792	45,000 sq ft	29.1%
RD	Residential D	46,297,957	1,063	87,000 sq ft	11.0%
Total		417,786,939	9,591		100%

space, or undeveloped municipal lands. This is the reverse situation as that in 1965, when the last Comprehensive Plan was written. At that time, 22% of the land in Milford was developed, and 78% remained undeveloped.

According to the updated buildout analysis, there are 2,096 acres of developable land in Milford. This number is different than the 2116.7 acres of vacant land listed by the town assessor's office for several reasons. First, the developable land total excludes wetlands that cannot be developed under Massachusetts law. Second, the 2,096 acres includes several parcels not listed by the town as vacant but that are underutilized and have major additional development capacity. Finally, of the 778 vacant parcels in Milford, 211 parcels totaling 19.3 acres are less than the minimum 8,000 s.f. needed to build on (average 3,980 s.f.).

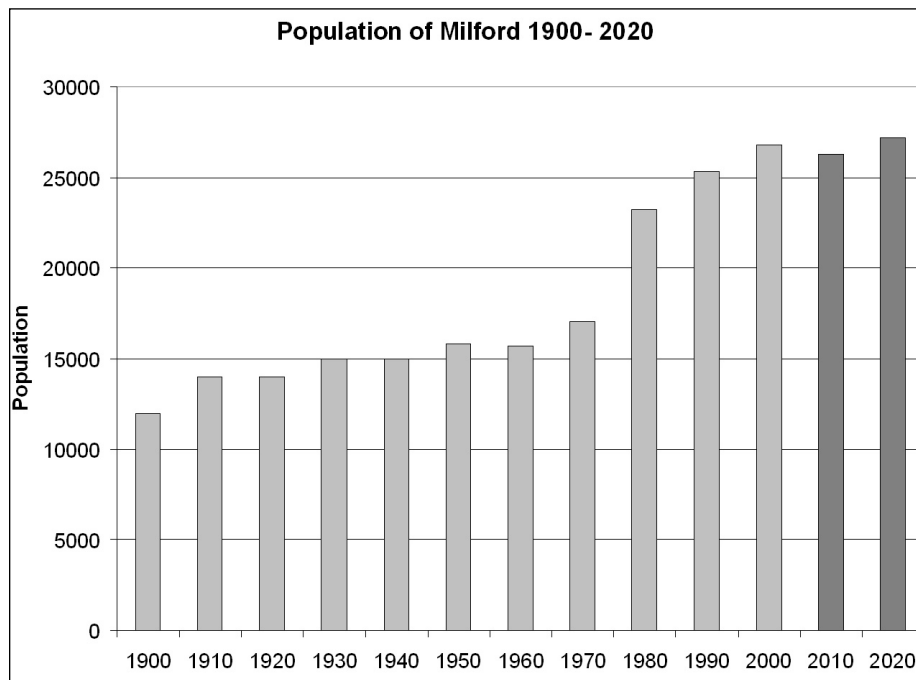
2.2 Population

Historic Trends

According to the 2000 Census, the current population of Milford is 26,720. The Town experienced rapid growth prior to 1910, as the granite and manufacturing industries became established, and again during the 1960s, when I-495 was constructed. While the population continued to grow, the growth rate started to slow during the 1980s and this rate has been decreasing each decade. Projections show that this trend will likely continue through the year 2020, when the population is expected to be just 2 percent greater than it is today.

Population Density

The average population density in Milford is 2.87 people per acre. The density varies widely by census tract and zoning district, however, with



Size of Parcel	No. of Parcels	Total Acres
100+	2	296.8
10.0 - 99.9	38	938.7
5.0 - 9.9	43	302.7
2.0 - 4.9	98	286.7
1.0 - 1.9	142	176.2
below 1.0	455	115.7
Totals	778	2116.7

Table 2-2 - There are only 40 vacant parcels in Milford over 10 acres, which is the minimum size for the town's Planned Residential By-law. There are only 16 parcels over 20 acres, the size needed for a new school.

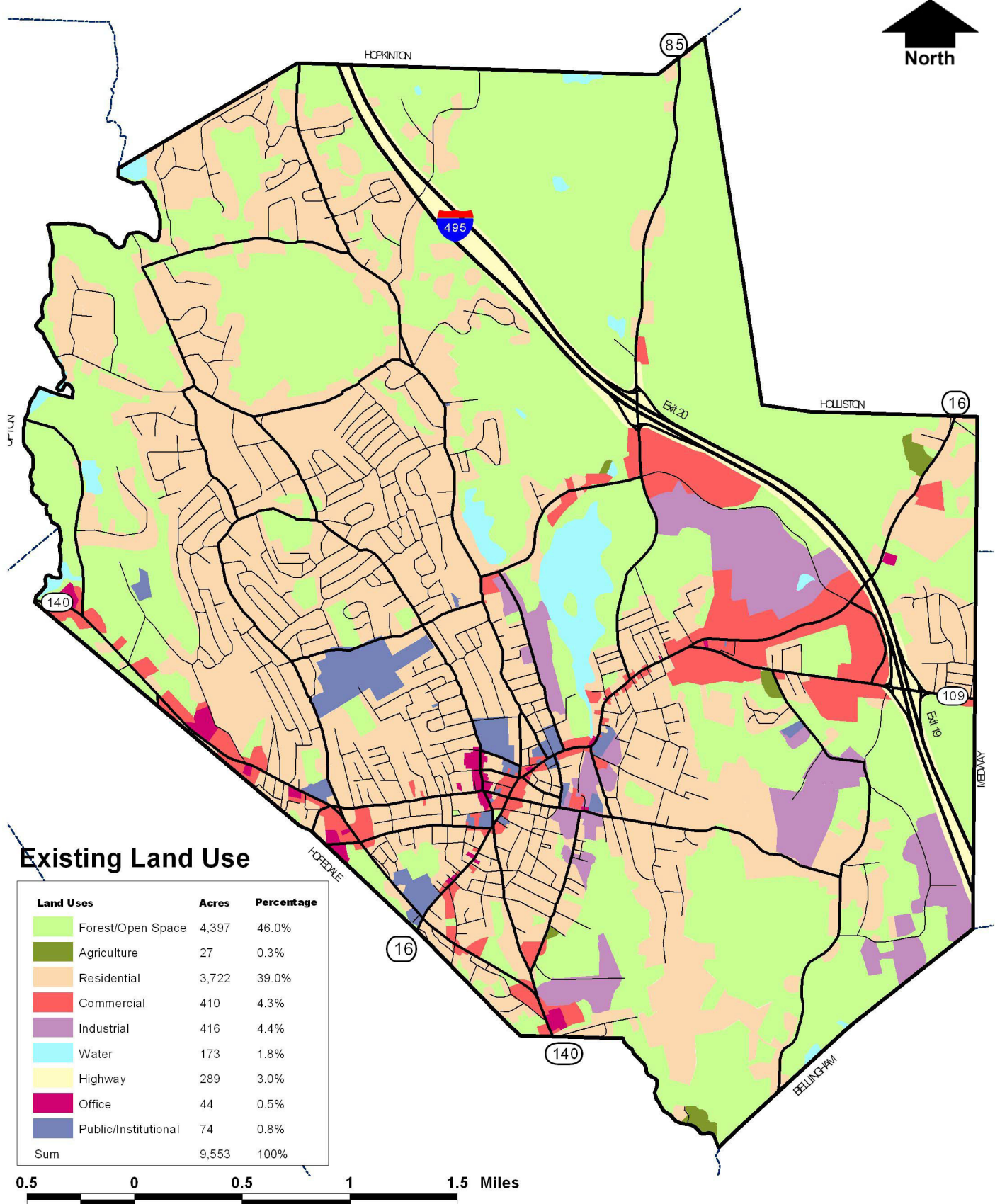
Source: Milford Assessor's Office

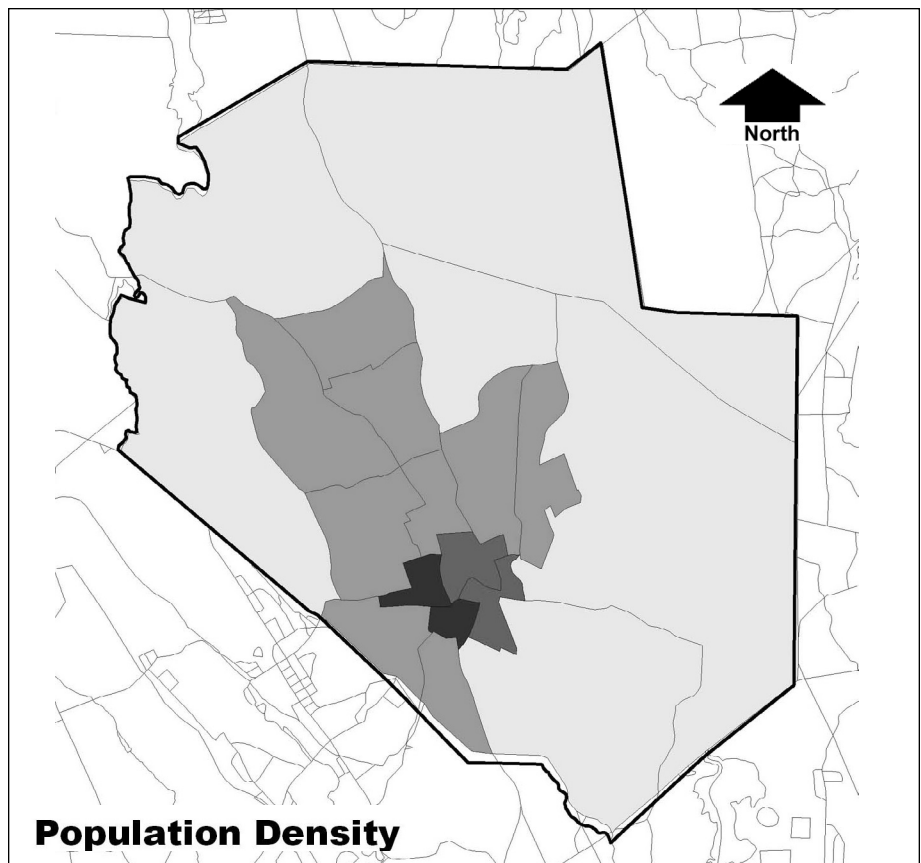
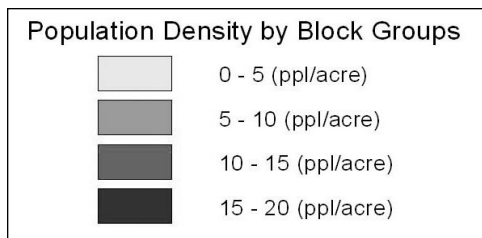
Map 2-1 Existing Land Use in Milford.

A surprisingly large amount of Milford is forest and open space land, though only a small amount is protected and the remainder is divided among many owners.

Figure 2-1 - Milford is expected to experience a slow growth rate over the next 20 years.

Source: MAPC





Map 2-2 - The older downtown Milford area has the highest population density.

the greatest population density in and surrounding the downtown area. Density is significantly lower in the northern areas of town, where required house lot sizes are much larger.

Households

The US Census Bureau reported in 2000 that there are 10,420 households in Milford, and the average household size in is 2.54 persons. Nationally, there is a trend towards decreasing household size, and this holds true at the local, regional, and state levels in Massachusetts. However, during the period of 1990 to 2000, household size declined at a greater rate in Town (-5.2%) than in Worcester County (-2.3%), the Boston Metropolitan Statistical Area (-1.6%), and Massachusetts (-2.7%). There are several possible reasons for this decline, such as a decrease in the number of children per family and an increase in the number of single-parent households. Another factor is that more adults, such as young professionals and seniors, now live by themselves.

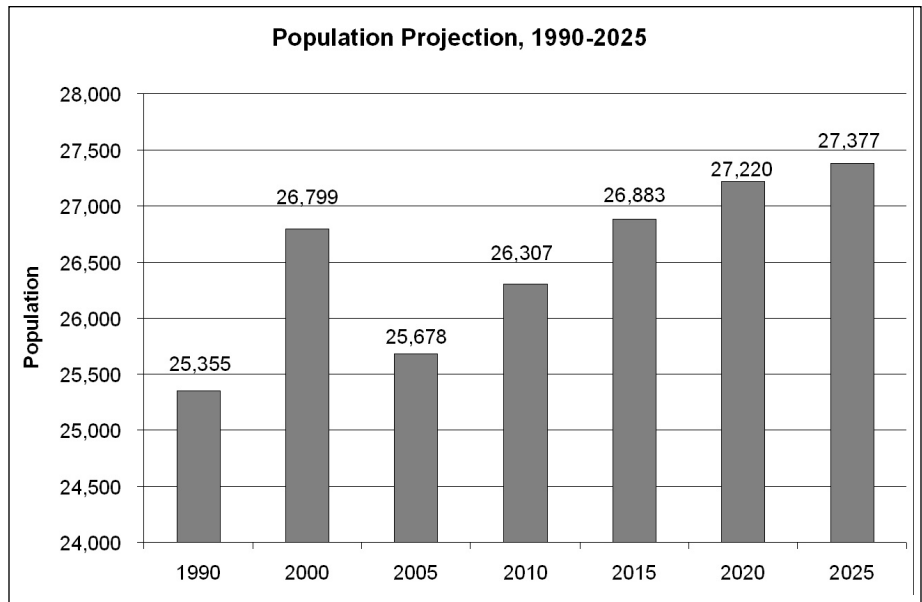
Race and Minority Trends

Over 90 percent of Milford residents identify themselves as being Caucasian. However, African American, Asian, and other races have all increased in population since 1990. In addition, there is a growing Hispanic population in Milford, composed mainly of Brazilians. The 2000 Census reports that 4.4 % of Milford's population identifies itself as Hispanic or Latino; it is possible that this is actually a low estimate

due to the fact that many individuals in this group are thought to have not participated in the Census. Many Brazilian residents are becoming business owners in Town, and this continues to attract new residents that identify with this group.

Figure 2-3 - The bulk of the population in Milford is between the ages of 25 and 54 years.

Source: U.S. Census Data



Age

The median age in Milford is 36.6 years, and the bulk of the population is between the ages of 25 and 54 years old. Population projections through the year 2025 show an expected increase in the number of residents aged 45 to 64 (20%) and 65 to 84 (25%), and a decline among residents younger than 45 years old. This suggests that it will become more necessary to plan carefully for the needs of Milford's elderly residents.

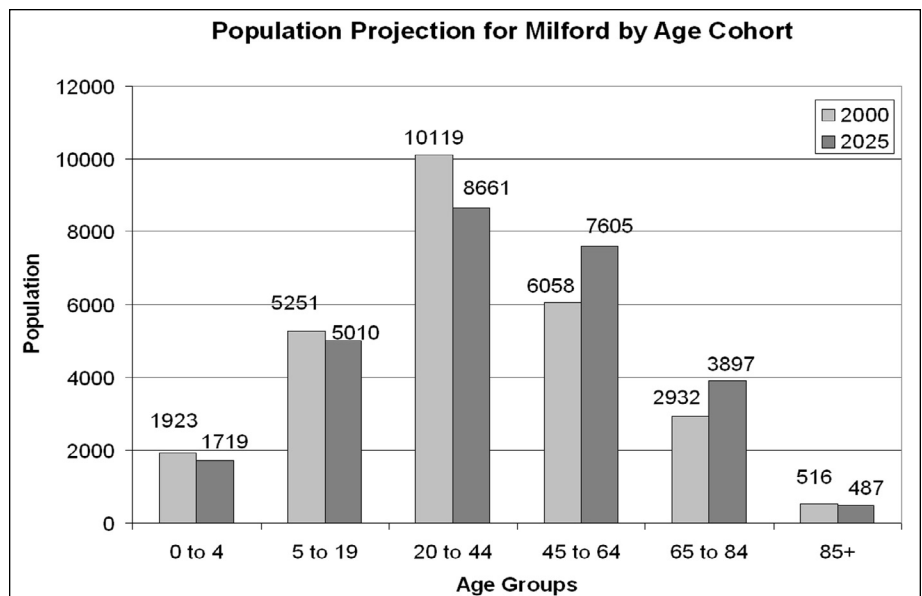


Figure 2-4 - The elderly population is expected to increase over the next twenty years, while all other age groups are expected to decline. The dark bars are 20 year population projections.

Source: MAPC

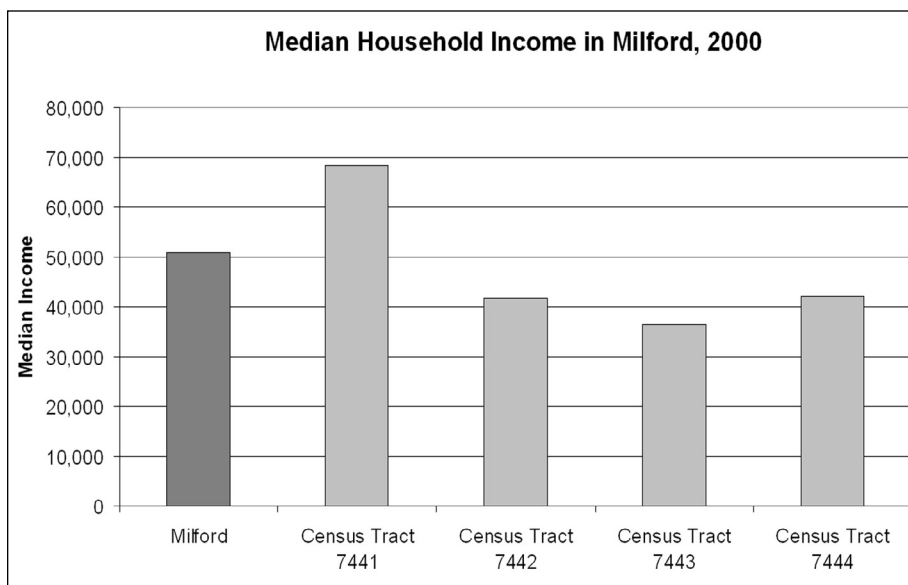
	1990	2000	% change
Massachusetts	\$36,952	\$50,502	26.83%
Worcester County	\$35,774	\$47,874	25.27%
Milford	\$38,180	\$50,856	24.93%

Table 2-3 - The median income in Milford is similar to that of both Worcester County and Massachusetts

Income Trends

The median household income in Milford is \$50,856. This is higher than the median income in Worcester County (\$47,874), but similar to the Massachusetts median income (\$50,502). Figure 2-7 shows that the median household income increased at similar rates at all three geographic levels from 1990 to 2000, though Milford lagged slightly behind both the county and the Commonwealth.

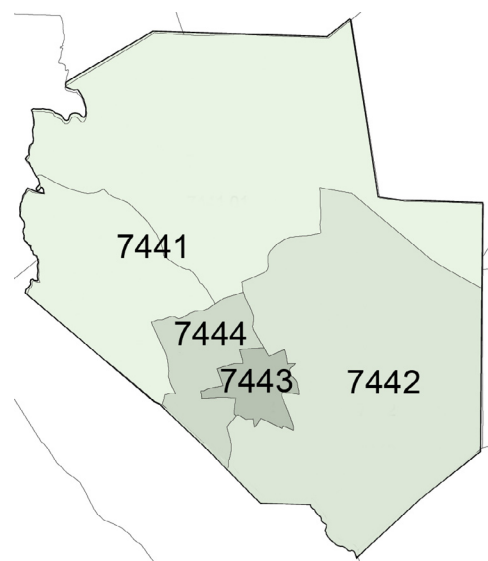
There are significant differences in income among census tracts in Mil-



ford, however. Households in tract 7441, in the northern area of Town, have median incomes that are as much as 47 percent greater than that of other tracts. Households in tract 7443, in the downtown area, have the lowest median income of \$36,455.

Taxes

Milford has a dual-tax rate which shifts a portion of the tax burden from residential property to commercial, industrial, and personal (CIP) property. Approximately 100 Massachusetts municipalities have a dual tax rate today, including two of Milford's neighbors. Massachusetts law allows communities to shift a maximum of 175% of the tax burden to CIP property, based on special conditions. This has been a topic of debate in Milford since the tax was first implemented.



Map 2-3 - Map of census tracts referred to in Figure 2-4

Figure 2-4 - There is a great disparity in median income among census tracts.

Town	Dual Rate	Residential	Business
Milford	yes	\$11.94	\$22.28
Hopkinton	no	\$12.90	\$12.90
Bellingham	yes	\$10.40	\$14.54
Holliston	no	\$14.83	\$14.83
Medway	no	\$13.96	\$13.96
Upton	no	\$14.77	\$14.77
Hopedale	yes	\$11.62	\$19.88

Table 2-4 - Comparison of the tax rates between Milford and surrounding towns.



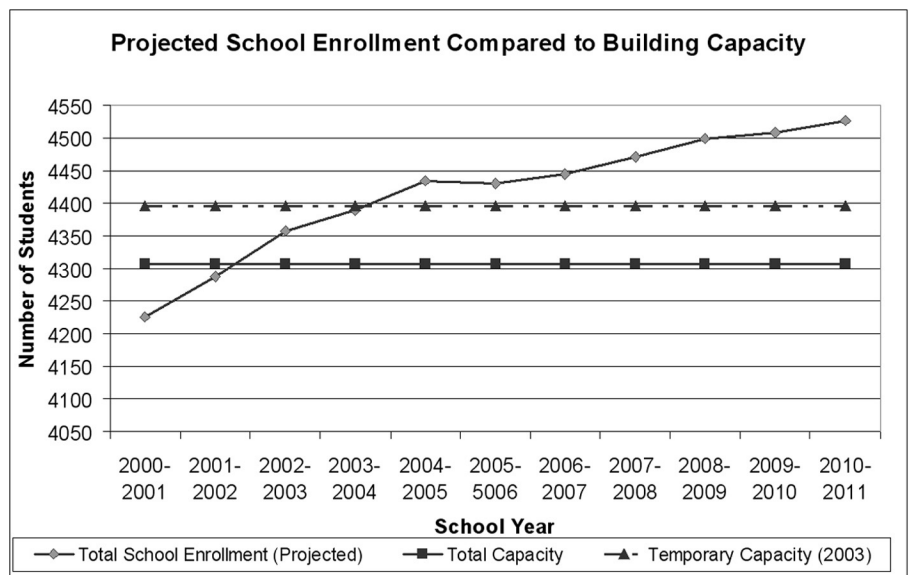
Figure 2-5 - Stacy Middle School was expanded and renovated in 1995.

Figure 2-6 - Over-enrollment in the Milford school system is expected to increase to 5% by the 2010-2011 school year

2.3 Services and Facilities

Schools

There are seven public schools located in Milford, housing preschool through 12th grade. The Town uses buildings along with six modular units to accommodate current enrollments. Woodland Elementary and Brookside Elementary Schools are the most overenrolled, though the other schools are also expected to reach or exceed capacity in the near future. Total enrollment was 4,100 during the 2002-2003 school year. The number of children and youth increased from 1990 to 2000 - ages 0 to 4 increased 1% and ages 5 to 19 increased 6% - so the Town can expect an increase demand in school services in the near future. Excluding the Early Childhood Learning Center, enrollment is expected to exceed building capacity by 5 percent during the school year 2010-2011.



The major issues affecting public schools in Milford are over-enrollment, maintenance, budget, and grade configuration. Over-enrollment is expected to continue to be a problem if the schools remain configured as they are today. While the school budget typically increases 4 to 7 percent annually, it decreased by \$2.8 million for the 2003-2004 school year, to \$32 million. The Milford School Committee is currently developing an update of the 1997 School Master Plan, which will address these issues in much more detail.

The Massachusetts Department of Education reports that Milford spend \$7,570 per pupil in FY 2002, compared to the Commonwealth average of \$8,005. During FY 2002, Milford employed 333 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers, who made an average of \$47,119, approximately 5 percent less than the Commonwealth average teachers' salary of \$49,242.

The Town makes excellent use of its schools throughout the entire year when the buildings are not in regular school use through the Milford Community School Use (MCS) program. MCS provides continuous

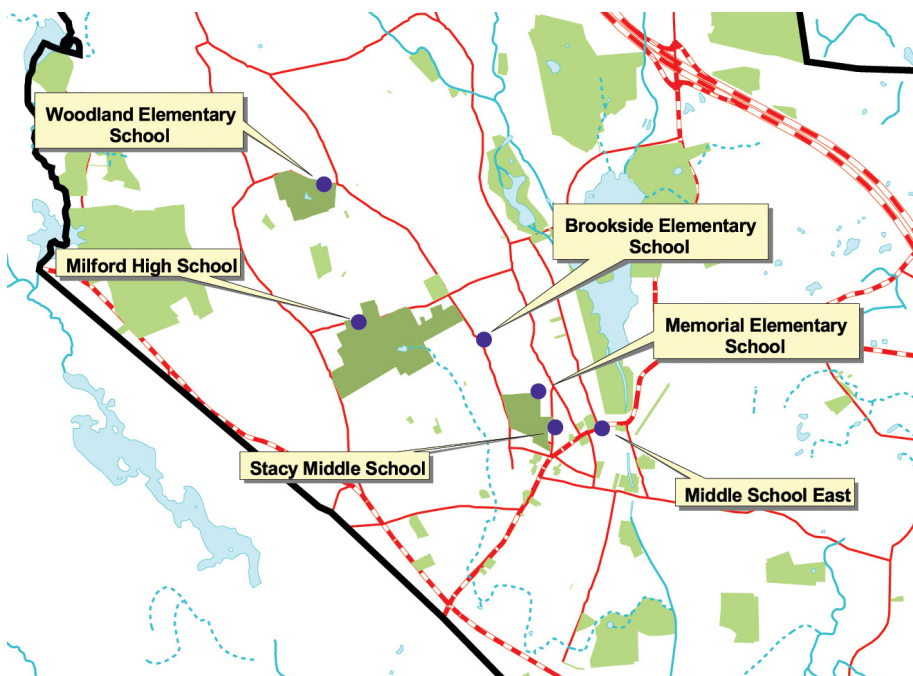
School	Grade Levels	Address	Maximum Capacity*	Current Enrollment	Percent of 2002-2003 Capacity
Early Childhood Center (at Milford High School)	Preschool	31 West Fountain Street	**180	**87	48%
Brookside Elementary	K-2	110 Congress Street	460	475	113%
Memorial Elementary	K-2	12 Walnut Street	484	517	107%
Woodland Elementary	3-4	10 North Vine Street	484	613	127%
Stacy Middle School	5-7	66 School Street	984	969	98%
Middle School East	8	45 Main Street	511	318	62%
Milford High School	9-12	31 West Fountain Street	1384	1121	81%
TOTAL			4,307	4,013	93%

*not including Modular units
 ** The Early Childhood Center enrollment capacity is not included in the total calculations.

educational activities for children, youth, adults, and elderly residents of Milford. These include before and after school childcare, school vacation camps, athletic clubs and lessons, and computer, language, crafting and other adult education classes. MCS provides both English as a Second Language (ESL) and General Equivalency Degree (GED) preparation classes for a fee. The MCS budget is completely self-supported.

Milford also participates in the Blackstone Valley Collaborative. Students from Town may attend the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School if they pass the placement test. In addition, approximately 130 students from Milford participate in the Interdistrict Public Schools program.

Table 2-5 - There are 7 public schools located in Milford, several of which are currently over-enrolled.



Map 2-4 - A map showing the location of Milford's public schools.



Figure 2-7 - Recommended as part of the 1965 Master Plan, the library is in need of many improvements.

Library

The Milford Town Library is located at 80 Spruce Street. During the year 2002, 169,000 patrons visited the library. The building is 18 years old, though, and getting cramped. It will be eligible for renovation/expansion grants in 5 to 7 years. Because Milford Town Library is the largest library in the area and 35 to 40 percent of patrons do not live in Milford, it can be considered a regional library. The Library's electronic resources were used over one million times in the year 2002. The Milford Room holds the Library's special historical collection, and is one of the only temperature-controlled rooms to be found in a local library in Massachusetts.

The Library provides free drop-in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes three nights per week, catering to adults at a variety of skill levels. There are also opportunities for one-on-one and small group tutoring sessions. Tutors are trained volunteers, and funding for the program is generated in part by the Library budget and also by private donors. The Library also maintains a collection of audio-visual and printed literacy materials that is available for circulation.

The Library has experienced reduced budgets over the past several years. It foresees, however, a variety of needs over the next ten years. These include:

- Repairing the roof (immediate)
- Upgrading the computer system for public and staff use (immediate)
- Replacing the security system (within 3-5 years)
- Replacing the energy management system (within 4-5 years)
- Repaving the parking lot (within 5 years)
- Replacing the boiler, burner, and chiller (within 10 years)

Additional Public Buildings and Facilities

Many of Milford's public buildings are centrally located in the downtown area. In addition to the public buildings describe in more detail in this chapter, Milford is also very proud of its Town Hall and Memorial Hall. The Town Hall has occupied the same building since 1854, having undergone significant renovations in late 1990s. Town offices are located on the first two floors, while the original public meeting room is located on the third floor. The Upper Town Hall is used for Town Meeting as well as concerts and other festivities. Memorial Hall was built in 1884, with renovations completed in 2002. This building now houses a cultural center, local museum, and public meeting spaces. Many of the public buildings in Town are historically significant, such as the Town Hall (1854), Memorial Hall (1884), Milford Police Station (1914) and Stacy Middle School (1916). Those that are newly constructed, such as the Fire Station on Main Street, have been built using local pink granite to contribute to the Town's historic character.

The new Milford Senior Center, located on North Bow Street, was com-

pleted in late 2003. The old senior center, located at 15 Winter Street, will be demolished. The Center provides many resources to the elder residents of Milford, such as medical transportation, nutritious meals, and educational, recreational, cultural and physical fitness activities.

Fire Protection

The Milford Fire Department has recently expanded to two new stations, one located on Main Street directly across the street from Town Hall, and the other located at 21 Birch Street. The Spruce Street station has also been undergoing renovations. The department has four trucks, and is budgeted to purchase a new truck every six years. There are 41 full-time firefighters divided into four work groups. Each group has one officer and eight firefighters; they rely on off-duty response and mutual aid. All but the northern sections of Town can be reached in four minutes, the first unit response time. Significant traffic issues traveling East - West through town can slow response time, especially along Route 16 and Dilla Street.

Police Protection

The Milford Police Department, located at 250 Main Street, consists of 45 sworn personnel. According to the police chief, this is less than the 52 sworn personnel needed by the department; in fact, sworn police personnel have decreased by 10 percent over the past three years. Recently, the Department has hired a dispatcher who speaks Portuguese and Spanish in addition to English in order to serve the Town's growing Latino population. Residents can also report crime using e-mail directed to the police chief, who receives 12 to 15 such e-mails daily.

The most common crimes in the downtown area are commercial property damage, drugs, and domestic violence, which is also the most prevalent type of crime that occurs in the more rural areas of town. Drug use seems to have increased in Town in recent years, but with little of the related violence seen in other communities. Neighborhood watch programs have been established in several areas with community volunteers.

While the existing police station is expected to meet the needs of the department over the next decade, there are some upgrades that would improve the service provided by the police. These include:

- Developing a Dispatch Communication Center to centralize police and fire dispatch
- Improving the responsiveness of the radio system
- Upgrading phone systems

Cemeteries

Milford has five major cemeteries, two of which are under Town ownership, Vernon Grove and North Purchase Street. There are two church-owned and operated cemeteries, St. Mary's and Sacred Heart. In addition there is the Pine Grove Cemetery which functions under a corporate structure.



Figure 2-8 - The new Main Street Fire Station

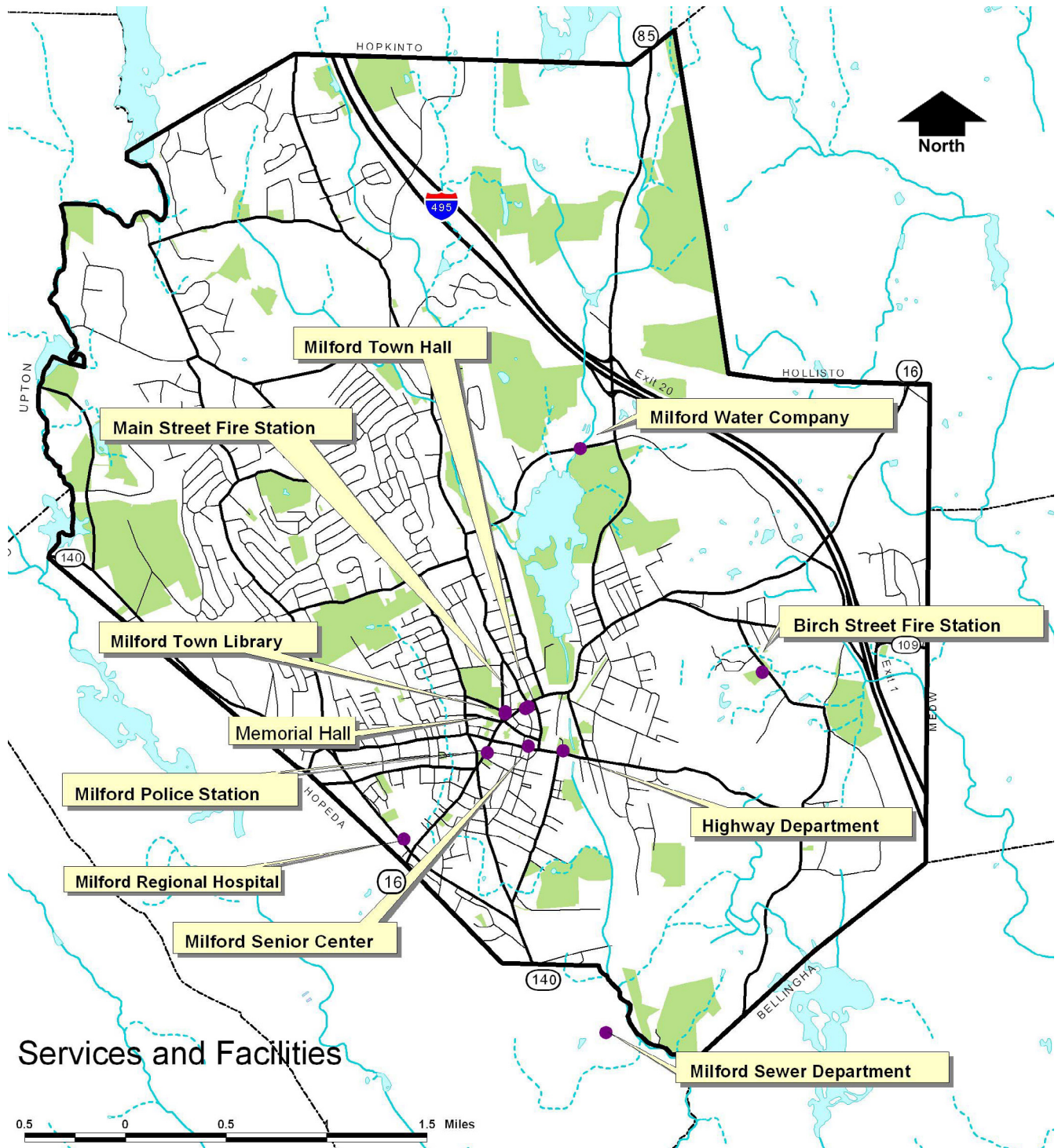


Figure 2-9 - The Milford Police Station, built 1914

Of the two town owned cemeteries, only Vernon Grove has a significant number of plots available. The Town's decision to build a columbarium will extend the lifespan of the cemetery. Cremation is now about 50% of all burials in Milford, and the number is continuing to grow.

The Pine Grove Cemetery, with over 4000 plots available, is estimated to have space enough for over 100 years. If the trend toward cremation continues, the time frame will be extended.

Map 2-5 Milford's major public services and facilities.

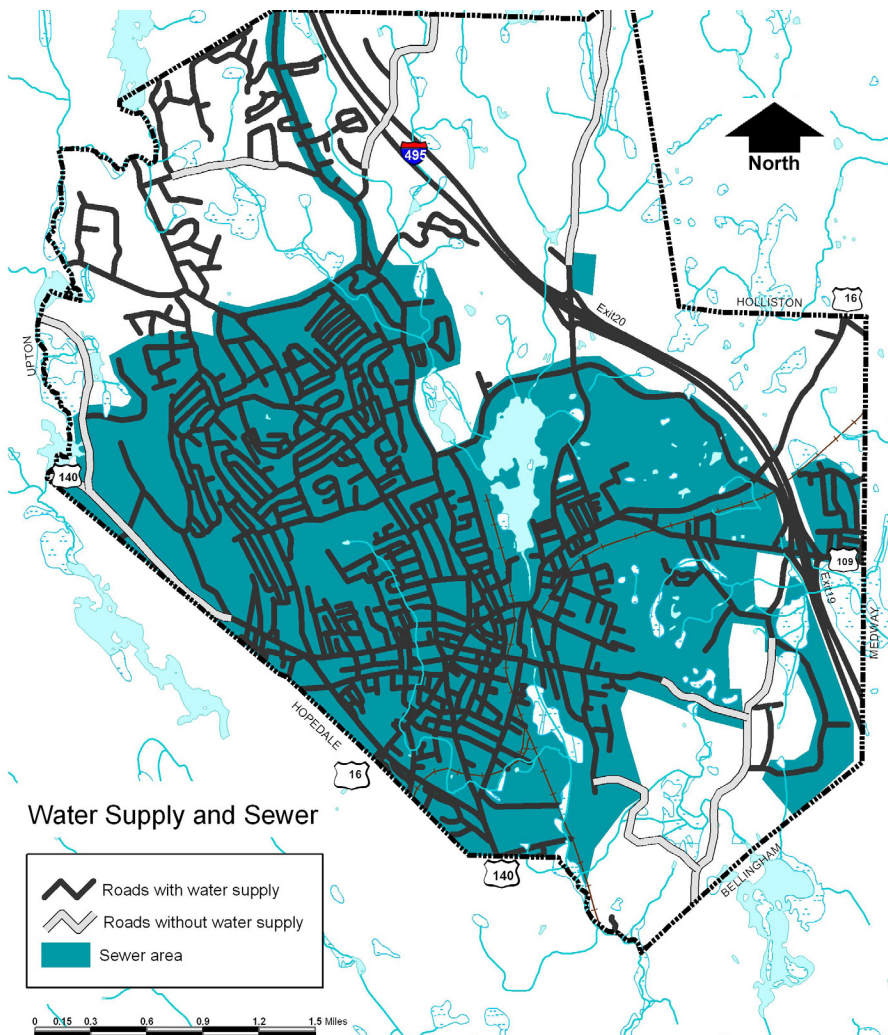


2.4 Infrastructure

Sewer System and Stormwater Management

Public sewer services 95 percent of Milford's residences and business. Disposal and treatment occurs at the Milford Wastewater Treatment Plant, located in the adjacent community of Hopedale. The Milford Sewer Commission manages all aspects of public sewerage, such as issuing permits for connection, inspecting installations and maintaining building and permit records. The Sewer Commission recently hired Tata & Howard, Inc. to conduct a Comprehensive Waste Management Survey.

When the treatment plant was built in 1902, it was a combined sewer/storm-water system. Since 1986, when the plant was upgraded, storm-water has been treated separately. However, over 50 percent of the existing sewer pipes were laid pre-1950 and are made of clay, which is now deteriorating. Infiltration is a significant problems during storm events when water volume increases from approximately 3.3 million gallons per day (mgpd) to 12 mgpd. Currently the plant is certified to treat 4.3 mgpd. Tata & Howard is conducting an Infiltration Study to



Map 2-6 - Over 90% of Milford's residents and businesses are served by the public water supply and sewer service.

address the problem and to have the plant certified to treat 6 mgpd, its original design capacity. In addition, the Milford Highway Department is developing a formal stormwater management plan.

Water Supply

Milford obtains its public water supply from the Milford Water Company (MWC), an investor-owned company headquartered in town. Over 90 percent of all Milford residents and businesses are served by this public water supply. Residential water use is approximately 50 percent of the total supply, while commercial and industrial sectors each use approximately 12-16 percent, other public water supplies purchase 3-5 percent and the remainder is unaccounted for.

Approximately 60 percent of the MWC's water supply is collected from surface water sources at Echo Lake reservoir, which lies mostly in Hopkinton but whose southern tip is in Milford, and the Charles River. The remaining 40 percent is drawn from three groundwater wells. Increasing development is moving MWC towards a greater reliance on surface water supplies.

Streets

Milford has an extensive street network consisting of approximately 140 centerline miles of roadway. Interstate 495 runs northeast-southwest through Milford, and two exits lead into the Town at routes 85 and 109. There are four State routes that pass through Town, including routes 16, 85, 109, and 140. Additionally, the roadway network currently has 18 signalized intersections. Both routes 16 and 109 are zoned commercial along almost their entire lengths, while route 85 remains more residential. Milford experiences significant congestion during peak hours of travel, especially on streets that pass through or near the downtown. In addition, results of the survey showed that residents are not satisfied with the quality of roads in Milford -- 86% responded that they believe it is very or extremely important that the Town improve its roads.

Solid Waste

The Milford Landfill was capped in 1997, and the site is now home to Plains Park. The Board of Health maintains the Transfer Station on Cedar St. for certain residential solid waste disposal, and it contracts with Browning-Ferris Industries (BFI) for curbside rubbish removal and recycling. Milford's waste is taken to Wheelabrator Millbury, a waste-to energy facility (incinerator) that collects waste from 35 Massachusetts communities and sells energy in the form of electric power to the New England Power Company.

BFI collects household trash on a weekly basis; this service is only available to residential dwellings of five or fewer units. Milford requires that each unit limits its trash to four items, each of which may weigh up to 50 pounds or 35 gallons. Recyclables are collected every other week. Milford recycles the following materials: paper, metal, glass, and plastic. The transfer station, located on Cedar Street, is accessible to residents

who have purchased a permit to dump yard waste, large crushed boxes, oil tanks, heaters, and metal items such as appliances. The transfer station does not accept automotive parts, construction waste, or toxic waste. Other services available to residents include a Surplus Paint Products Recycling Center at the transfer station, and a Leaf Removal Program, which is conducted by the Milford Highway Department in the fall.

2.5 The SWOC Analysis

A SWOC analysis, which identifies the **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **C**onstraints of a community, was conducted at the May 2003 forum to gain the residents' perspective on what they like-or do not like-about their town. The SWOC analysis was then used by the consultants to guide data collection as well as the development of the future vision and recommendations for Milford. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints that were voted for by at least 50% of the residents in attendance at the May forum are reported here.

Table 2-6 - The (S)trengths, (W)eaknesses, (O)pportunities, and (C)onstraints of Milford, voted on at the May 2003 public forum

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	CONSTRAINTS
Proximity to major highways and metropolitan areas	Traffic congestion and circulation issues	Protecting open space	Traffic congestion
Active recreation space	Deferred maintenance issues	Allowing mixed uses downtown	Available land is difficult to develop
Strong public safety department	Downtown in need of revitalization	Regulation of growth rate	Limited water resources
Excellent water and sewer facilities -- good water quality	Inadequate protection of natural resources	Leader in redevelopment and reuse	Limited public transportation
Good mix of business and residential tax base	Inadequate protection of water supply	Mass transit -- bring back the train	Competition with other towns for businesses (tax rate)
Hospital -- excellent medical facilities			Transportation network is established
Mix of housing types and prices			
Current planning efforts			
Good educational system			
Strong religious community and "infrastructure"			

2.6 Recommendations

Milford takes great pride in its facilities and public buildings. Many have been recently renovated or even newly built, such as the Main Street fire station and the new Milford Senior Center. While residents tend to be satisfied with the services provided by the Town, they have noted some concern about deferred maintenance. The Town should recognize that these services greatly contribute to the quality of life of its residents and the successful operation of businesses and other organizations.

Goal 1: To continue to ensure that all public buildings, facilities, and infrastructure are properly maintained and meet the demands of the community.

Recommendations:

1. **Schools** - Update the master plan, giving especial attention to the pressing issues of overcrowding, maintenance, and grade configuration.
2. **Library** - Pursue renovation/expansion grants as they become available and develop a schedule to attend to all maintenance needs.
3. **Fire Department** - Continue to work with the Capital Improvement Committee to upgrade equipment.
4. **Police Department** - Continue to work with the Capital Improvement Committee to upgrade equipment.
5. **Roads** - Continue to improve the condition of roadways, sidewalks, and roadsides in a timely manner.
6. **Water** - Continue to work closely with the Milford Water Company to encourage conservation and maintain a high quality public water supply.
7. **Sewer** - Continue upgrading the sewer system to minimize infiltration and overflow.
8. **Solid Waste** - Consider instituting a Pay-As-You-Throw pro-

3

Natural and
Cultural
Resources

The Town of Milford is highly developed, and demand for undeveloped land is strong. While residential and commercial development can provide support for cultural resources such as historic preservation and the theater, it also threatens the health of the Town's natural resources, especially its water resources. For this reason, it is important that the Town focus on protecting its remaining natural resources while the opportunity still exists, as well as the historical and cultural resources that have contributed to Milford's identity and community character.

3.1 Existing Conditions

Water Resources

Milford lies within two separate watersheds, the Charles River watershed and the Blackstone River watershed. Only a small portion of the town's western edge lies within the Blackstone watershed, and the town is not a part of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. Therefore, this Plan will focus on the Charles River watershed, which contains the majority of land area in Milford and contributes to the Town's water supply.

The Charles River is 80 miles in length, and represents the longest river with its entire length in Massachusetts. The Charles River Watershed is generally divided into three distinct regions, which include the rural upper basin, the suburban lakes or middle region, and the urban lower basin. Echo Lake, the reservoir that forms the headwaters of the Charles River, lies along the northerly town boundary between Milford and Hopkinton, and thus the Town is considered to be part of the upper basin. Other significant water bodies within Milford include Louisa Lake and Milford Pond. A complete inventory of the water resources within Milford can be found in the 2002 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

There are two main types of wetland found in Milford, both of which are important components of the hydrological system within the watershed. The first type of wetland falls within the Hinckley-Muck-Scar-

From the survey -

In your opinion, how important is it that Milford:

Percent that responded Very or
Extremely Important

Protect its environmental
(air/water) quality 94%

Protect its natural environment
(forests, wildlife, fish) 89%

boro soils association, and is significant to the quantity and quality of groundwater recharge for public water supply. The second type falls within the Hollis-Scituate soils association, and is important for surface water quality and flood control. It must be noted that within the Charles River Watershed, flooding within the lower watershed (Boston metro area) is controlled with dams and channelization, while the upper and middle watersheds, wetlands and other natural storage areas are relied upon to protect the area from flooding.

Milford obtains its public water supply from the Milford Water Company (MWC), an investor-owned company headquartered in town. MWC was recently ranked 6th out of 741 public water systems in Massachusetts by the Department of Environmental Protection for providing safe, clean drinking water to its customers. Approximately 90% of all Milford residents and businesses are served by this public water supply. The distribution of the water supply is shown in Table 3-1.

Over the past 5 years, the percentage of water that remains unaccounted for has ranged from 6-17%, leaks and meter calibration are the most prevalent causes of lost water. MWC tracks the largest individual water users as well. American National Power, the third largest user (Table 3-2), requires up to 1 million gallons of water per day to cool its towers. MWC was not able to meet this demand and so they helped arrange with the Milford Sewer Department the recycling of water from the water treatment plant. During dry periods, however, ANP must truck in water for this purpose to prevent the Charles River from going too low. Due to this inconsistent supply of recycled water, ANP is building its own rock wells, which will be able to withdraw up to 100,000 gallons of water/day. These wells will not interfere with MWC’s supply.

Milford currently obtains its water supply from a combination of groundwater and surface water sources, which include the Godfrey Brook wells, Clark Island well fields, Dilla Street wells, the Charles River, and Echo Lake. The Milford Water Company was recently approved by the Commonwealth to skim the spring floodwaters from Louisa Lake. However, this new source is only expected to supply enough water to meet demand through the year 2010. Potential long-term solutions may include raising the dam at Echo Lake, though no formal proposal has yet been made.

Categories of Water Use	Percent of Total Water Supply
Residential	50%
Commercial	12-16%
Industrial	12-16%
Other Communities	3-5%
Unaccounted	6-17%

Table 3-1 - Distribution of the public water supply

Name	Amount of Water Used Annually (mg - millions of gallons)
Saint Gobain Container	33.4 mg
Town of Hopedale	24.2 mg
American National Power	19.9 mg
Town of Mendon	17.4 mg
Milford Hospital	9 mg

Table 3-2 - The top 5 water users in 2001 (excluding Milford residential use).
Source: Milford Water Company

A variety of bylaws and regulations are enforced in Milford to protect the town's water resources. The *Water Resource Protection District*, created in 1992, is a zoning overlay district that protects aquifers and aquifer recharge areas in Town. Two districts exist: WR1 and WR2. Both districts prohibit hazardous uses such as landfills, underground chemical storage tanks, road salt storage, and automotive repair shops. The boundaries of WR1 are roughly outlined by the State-regulated Zone II (aquifer recharge) area, and precisely defined by the street grid. WR2 is defined by the floodplain boundaries of several water bodies, including Deer Brook, Charles River, Huckleberry Brook, and

Auto Related Uses

- * Auto uses
- Dense auto use area
- Wells
- Wetlands
- Water resource Protection I
- Water resource Protection II

Scale: 0 to 1.5 Miles

North



Ivy Brook. Unfortunately, there are a variety of incompatible uses currently located within or near the WR1 District, such as gas stations and even the Highway Department garage.

The Milford Board of Health enacted the *Surface Water Protection Regulation* in January 2001 as a response to development pressures in environmentally sensitive areas of town, which would particularly affect the quality of the public water supply. This regulation places restrictions on the Echo Lake watershed and the Charles River upgradient of the MWC Dilla Street Treatment and Pumping Station. These regulations have since been extended to include development in any area in Milford that may adversely affect the public water supply, as determined by the Milford Water Company and Board of Health. These regulations ensure that the Board of Health is involved in the development review process whenever the public water supply may be threatened. Hopkinton also has a *Water Resource Protection Overlay District* in place to protect the area around Echo Lake.

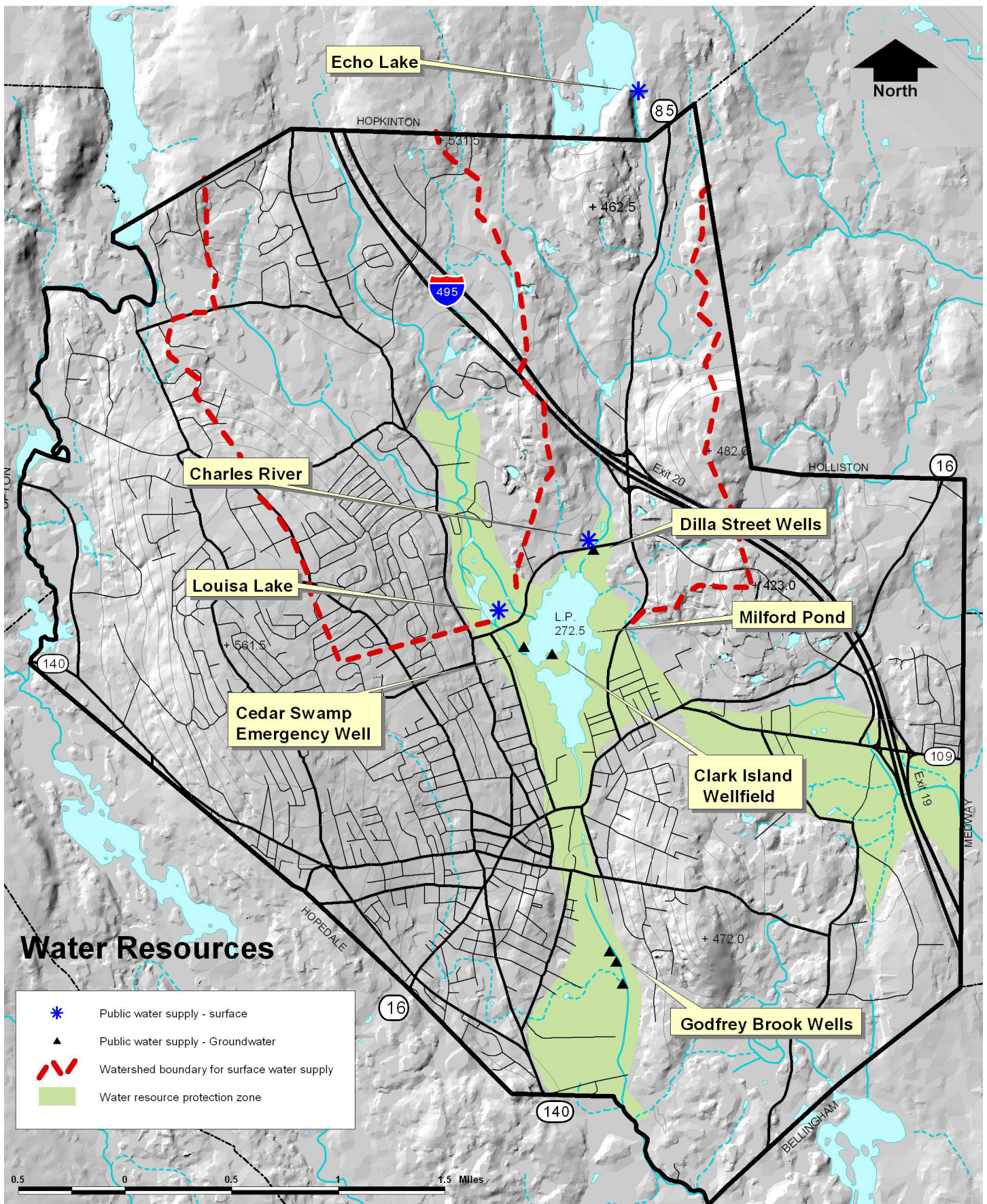
Cultural Resources

Milford has a rich history, and has preserved many of the buildings and monuments that have contributed to the Town's cultural heritage. The newly renovated Memorial Hall, for example, acts as a cultural center, historical museum and stage for musical and theatrical productions. Over 400 buildings in Milford are registered with the Massachusetts State Register of Historic Places, including homes, public buildings, churches and monuments (Map 3-3). Several buildings, most of which are downtown, are on the National Register of Historic Places, and there is one National Historic District, the Prospect Heights neighborhood. Unfortunately, the Town has also lost many historic buildings, such as Ted's Diner and the Ideal and State movie theaters, due to lack of foresight and planning.

Milford has a strong music and theater community that appeals to residents and visitors alike. Residents have noted a desire for more entertainment opportunities in Town. Town Hall, Memorial Hall, and the Gazebo at Town Park all provide concert and theater performance space, but there are no other live venues or movie theaters in Town.

Figure 3-1 The Town's Highway Department Garage and gas pumps lie in close proximity to the Charles River. Although new, planning should begin for finding a new home for this facility in the long term - once the new road and train station make this a desirable business location.

Map 3-2 - The Milford Water Company has several surface water and groundwater sources. The Godfrey Brook Wells are the major year-round supply. The surface water supplies are seasonal.



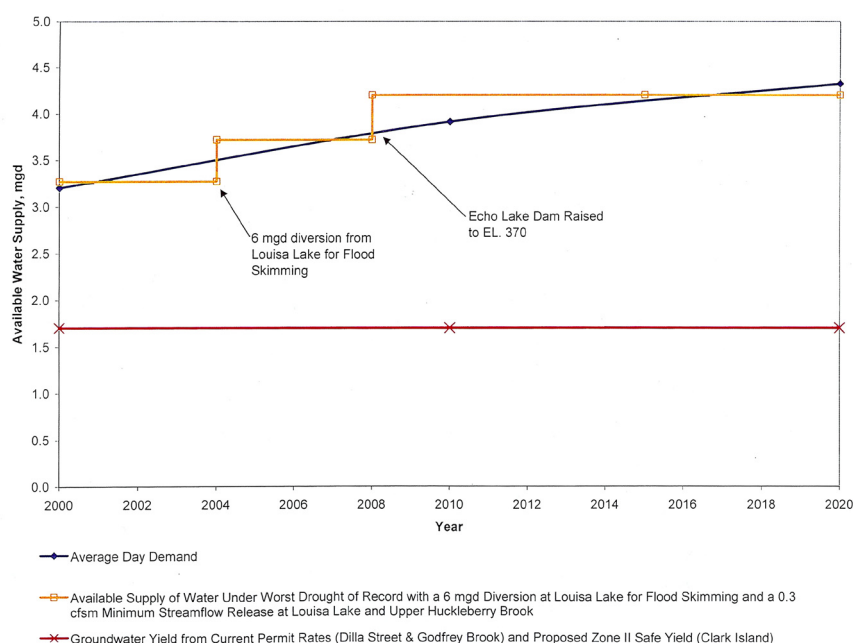


Figure 3-2 - Comparison of water Supply versus project demand for two projects being proposed by the Milford Water Company. The diversion project from Lake Louisa for Flood Skimming has been approved by the state.

Source: Final Environmental Impact Review for the Utilization of Louisa Lake Overflow for Public Water Supply, completed in 2001 by Metcalf & Eddy.

3.2 Issues

Water Resources

Milford's water resources are currently affected by two main issues - water quantity and quality. First, water quantity is a concern held by MWC since the 1960s. In some years, MWC does not meet its maximum daily demand and the company does not expect to be able to meet its 5-year projected demand if MWC continues to only draw from currently approved sources.

Second, some of the water resources in Milford, especially the Godfrey Brook wells, are threatened by contamination. The MWC is currently capable of treating the water for contaminants, but is concerned that it will not be able to do so in the future without incurring great costs.

- **Quantity of Drinking Water** - water is and will continue to be a limiting condition for development in Milford. It is important, therefore, that the Town attempts to concentrate development and ensures that all new construction is tied into the water and sewer lines, rather than on individual septic systems.
- **Contamination** - Non-point source pollution, especially from storm-water overflow and sewer pipe infiltration, is threatening the quality of Milford's drinking water. There are also many incompatible uses, such as gas stations, within or near the WR1 Protection District.
- **Wetlands** - Protective measures in Town are weak, and allow land 15 feet away from wetlands to be disturbed by development.
- **Open Space** - In order to protect water resources and ensure groundwater recharge, open space must be protected. The Town currently does not prioritize land acquisition or protection for this purpose.

Table 3-3. The water budget for the town of Milford.

INFLOWS AND OUTFLOWS	Current	Build-out	Plan
Town of Milford--Charles River Watershed	(mgd)	(mgd)	(mgd)
Area: 11.61 square miles			
INFLOW			
Septic recharge (if on public water system)	0	0	0
Wastewater discharges (include groundwater and surface water discharges)	0	0	0
Inflow Subtotal	0	0	0
OUTFLOW			
Water withdrawals (include both surface diversions and groundwater withdrawals – use an average day demand)	0.63	0.85	0.81
Sewer flows leaving basin (use an average day demand)	3.06	3.30	3.14
Other consumptive water uses (cooling water not returned to watershed, etc.)	0.31	0.53	0.50
Outflow Subtotal			
Net Flow Subwatershed A (subtract outflow from inflow)(negative numbers represent a water deficit)	-4.00	-4.68	-4.45
COMPARISON OF NET DEFICIT TO STREAMFLOW			
Convert deficit to cubic feet/second/square mile	(cfsm)	(cfsm)	(cfsm)
(see Appendix 1)	0.533	0.624	0.593
Calculate Streamflows for Subwatershed A			
7-day/10-year drought (7Q10)	0.03	0.03	0.03
Estimated median 30-day low flow	1	1	1
50% of August media flow	0.17	0.17	0.17
Adjust Streamflow for Impervious Surface			
Calculate effective impervious rate based on land use (see appendix 1)	18.1%	25%	22%
Adjusted 7-day/10-year drought (7Q10)	0.025	0.023	0.023
Adjusted estimated median 30-day low flow	0.82	0.75	0.78
Adjusted 50% of August media flow	0.14	0.13	0.13
Deficit as percent of flows			
Adjusted 7-day/10-year drought (7Q10)	2170%	2770%	2533%
Adjusted estimated median 30-day low flow	65%	83%	76%
Adjusted 50% of August media flow	383%	489%	447%

Water Budget

A water budget is intended to measure the balance between water withdrawals and wastewater discharges. The purpose is to determine whether there is a current deficit or excess and what the impact of future growth

The water budget for Town land located within the Charles River watershed (Table 3-3), indicates that water use in Milford is highly unsustainable. Large volumes of water are being taken from Echo Lake, Milford Pond, Lake Louisa and the Godfrey Brook wells. There is virtually no recharge occurring within Town boundaries, because the sewer system carries most wastewater from households, businesses and industry to the treatment plant in neighboring Hopedale, discharging treated water into the Charles River downstream of Milford. The few sources of recharge include untreated stormwater that discharges directly into Louisa Lake and a small number of households that remain on septic systems in the northern reaches of Town.

The unsustainable nature of this system is evidenced by the fact that the Charles River in Milford often dries up completely in summer months. In addition, in recent years the Milford Water Company (MWC) has had to purchase water from other communities in order to meet demand. Despite these shortages, up to 5% of the water distributed by MWC is sold to the communities of Hopedale, Mendon and Medway (see Table 3-3). The two largest buyers of MWC water, Hopedale and Mendon, lie outside of the Charles River Watershed. This means that this water is not put back into the Charles River. If Milford expects to continue to experience both residential and commercial growth, all interested parties must coordinate efforts to protect the water resources in Town.

Cultural Resources

Many of the historic resources in Milford have been protected. However, it is important that the Town takes stock of those properties with historic or cultural significance and identifies priorities for protection. It is also important that future development, especially downtown, contributes to rather than detracts from the community character of Milford.

- **Preservation Priorities** - A number of historic properties have been razed in the recent past, as the Town does not have a formal system of prioritization or protection.
- **Downtown Appearance** - There is a considerable amount of visual clutter due to non-standard signs and storefront facades.
- **Downtown Historic District** - There is some interest in creating a Historic District downtown, but concerns remain about the effect this would have on small business owners.

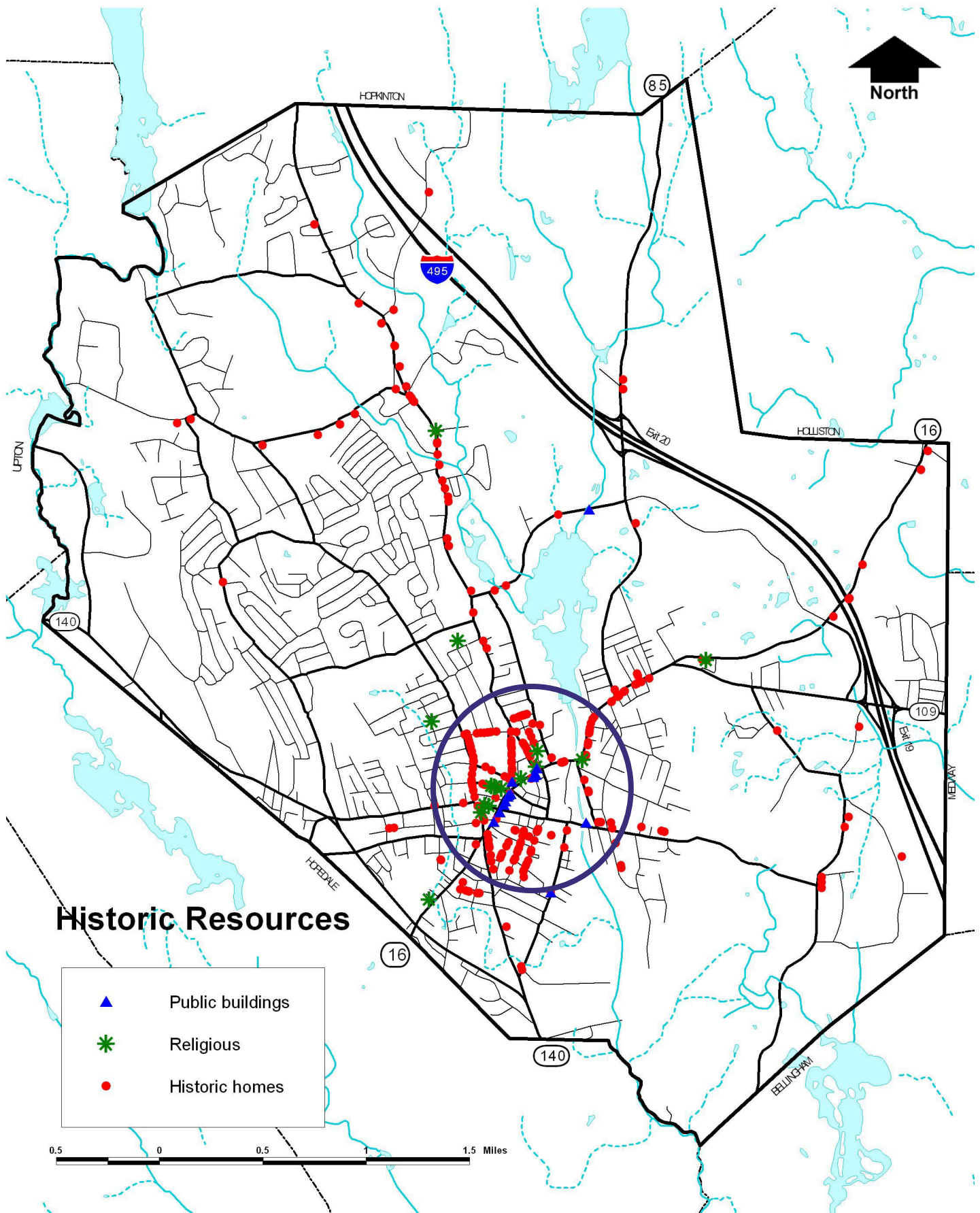
Year	Amount of Water Sold Annually (mg - millions of gallons)
1998	35.5 mg
1999	57.7 mg
2000	43.7 mg
2001	42.3 mg
2002	50.7 mg
2003	47.3 mg

Table 3-4 - The Milford Water Company sells water to three communities, Hopedale, Mendon and Medway. Only Medway (less than 1 mg) is within the Charles River Watershed along with Milford.

Map 3-3 - Many of the historic homes, churches and public buildings in Milford are located in or near downtown. This highlights the opportunity for a historic overlay district. (circle)



Figure 3-3 - There are many historic buildings in downtown Milford including the Opera Building located on Main Street



Consequences of Inaction

Milford occupies an important and strategic location at the headwaters of the Charles River. Should the Town fail to protect that resource, grave environmental and economic impacts are likely to occur. The Town should not rely on the Milford Water Company alone to protect the health of the watershed. Instead, Milford should recognize the regional implications of its location as a headwater community and strive to protect the river (and its watershed) both for its ecological functions and as a public water supply. Failure to protect the water supply for increasing residential and industrial demand will continue to affect both the quantity and quality of the region's water resources. Without adequate precautions, water could easily become the limiting factor for development.

In terms of cultural resources, Milford has already lost a number of important buildings, and stands to potentially lose more structures if the community does not act now. Should future development, especially in the downtown, proceed without acknowledgement of Milford's history, little will be left for future generations. Milford may well lose its identity and become yet another indistinguishable town along Route 495.

3.3 Recommendations

GOAL 1: Manage water resources and land vital to the protection of water quality and quantity to ensure the health and welfare of residents and the continued economic prosperity of Milford.

Objective 1 - Provide greater protection of the water resources at the headwaters of the Charles River.

Action Steps:

1. Modify the Water Resource Protection District to include all Zone II areas within the Town, including those areas that contribute to the water supply of surrounding communities.
2. Identify the zones of contribution in order to refine the WR1 boundaries.
3. Combine the Water Resource Protection District and zoning boundaries onto one map.
4. Reconsider the limits to development set forth in the Water Resource Protection bylaw and modify the definition of appropriate uses to provide greater protection to water resources.

Objective 2 - Continue to address the on-going issue of non-point source pollution to protect the drinking water supply.

Action Steps:

1. Minimize pollutant loads by detaining and filtering stormwater runoff before it is discharged into Louisa Lake or other water bodies.
2. Continue working on a comprehensive stormwater management plan.
3. Continue to repair degraded storm water and sewer infrastructure.

Objective 3 - Enhance wetland protection in Town.

Action Steps:

1. Amend the zoning bylaw to exclude wetlands from the density calculation.
2. Develop a bylaw that protects a 35-foot “no disturbance” buffer around all wetlands that prohibits grading, building and all other construction activities. Consider exempting repairs to existing structures to ensure that this action is not cost-prohibitive to owners.

GOAL 2: Promote and encourage the protection of cultural resources in Milford to ensure that residents have access to the history and the arts and culture of the town and the region.

Objective 1 - Identify priorities for preservation or protection of cultural resources in order to retain Milford's cultural history.

Action Steps:

1. Update the existing Milford Historic Resources GIS Database by adding new local State Historic Places as they are registered.
2. Identify priority properties that should apply for the National Register of Historic Places and encourage owners by providing technical support in the application process.
3. Encourage private owners to acquire and invest in historic homes and other historic properties in Milford.

Objective 2 - Ensure that redevelopment in the downtown is consistent with existing buildings and the Town's cultural character.

Action Steps:

1. Establish a demolition delay ordinance to protect existing historic buildings and encourage reuse.
2. Conduct a study that addresses the effect establishing a local historic district would have on maintaining viable local businesses.
3. Formally adopt the sign and façade standards used for grants as a local bylaw to encourage appropriate improvements to all downtown buildings.
4. Continue to pursue CDBG grants and other funding sources to ensure that conformity with the local design guidelines does not cause economic hardship for local business owners.

4

Open Space and Recreation



Protecting open space for active and passive recreation opportunities is essential in maintaining a high quality of life in any community. While Milfordians are very proud of their athletic heritage and the active recreation facilities that exist today, there continually exists a need to provide such opportunities for all residents, regardless of age or ability, while also protecting the limited natural resources that remain.

4.1 Existing Conditions

There are a variety of reasons for a Town to protect open space. One obvious reason is to provide recreation opportunities for its residents, thereby improving their quality of life. These opportunities can be either active as in baseball or soccer fields or passive, such as walking trails or nature observation centers. A second, equally important reason to protect open space is to protect natural resources such as wildlife habitat or water resources. This is particularly important in Milford, as there is so little open space remaining in Town, and much of the focus has been placed on acquiring and maintaining active recreation facilities.



Figure 4-1 - A trail cut through undeveloped land in the northeastern area of Milford

The *2002 Milford Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)* considers the natural and recreational resources of the Town through the year 2007. It was developed to serve as the agenda for the permanent Open Space & Recreation Advisory Committee for the next five years, and to fulfill the planning requirements of the Division of Conservation Services so the Town will maintain eligibility for grants administered by that office. As noted in its introduction, “The 2002 plan is an update of the *1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan* taking into account the continued growth of the town, and the resulting physical and social changes. The plan inventories these changes, and through a public process of analysis and synthesis, defines community goals, needs and desires.” The complete *2002 OSRP* can be found as a supplement to this Comprehensive Plan and its main goals are listed on page 48.

The *2002 OSRP* provides an environmental inventory and analysis of natural factors within the Town such as geology and topography,

vegetation, water resources, and wildlife. The dominant landscape character of Milford is one of rolling, wooded hills surrounding flat valleys. There is much competition for the remaining dry, level land in Milford, as much of the remaining undeveloped land is stony and steep. While this may make it difficult to find land to develop new facilities such as playing fields or golf courses, this type of terrain could be used for hiking or other trail-based activities, including nature observation.

Nine endangered, threatened, or species of special concern have been identified in Milford, making habitat protection, especially of contiguous land, particularly important. There is a significant amount of sensitive land and water resources in Milford -- especially in the northeastern area of Town -- including Biocore Core and Supporting Natural Landscape, Estimated Habitat of Rare Wildlife, and Outstanding Resource Waters. Much of the significant habitat in Town centers around lakes, streams, and wetlands, as these provide breeding and migratory habitat for a variety of birds, amphibians, and small reptiles.

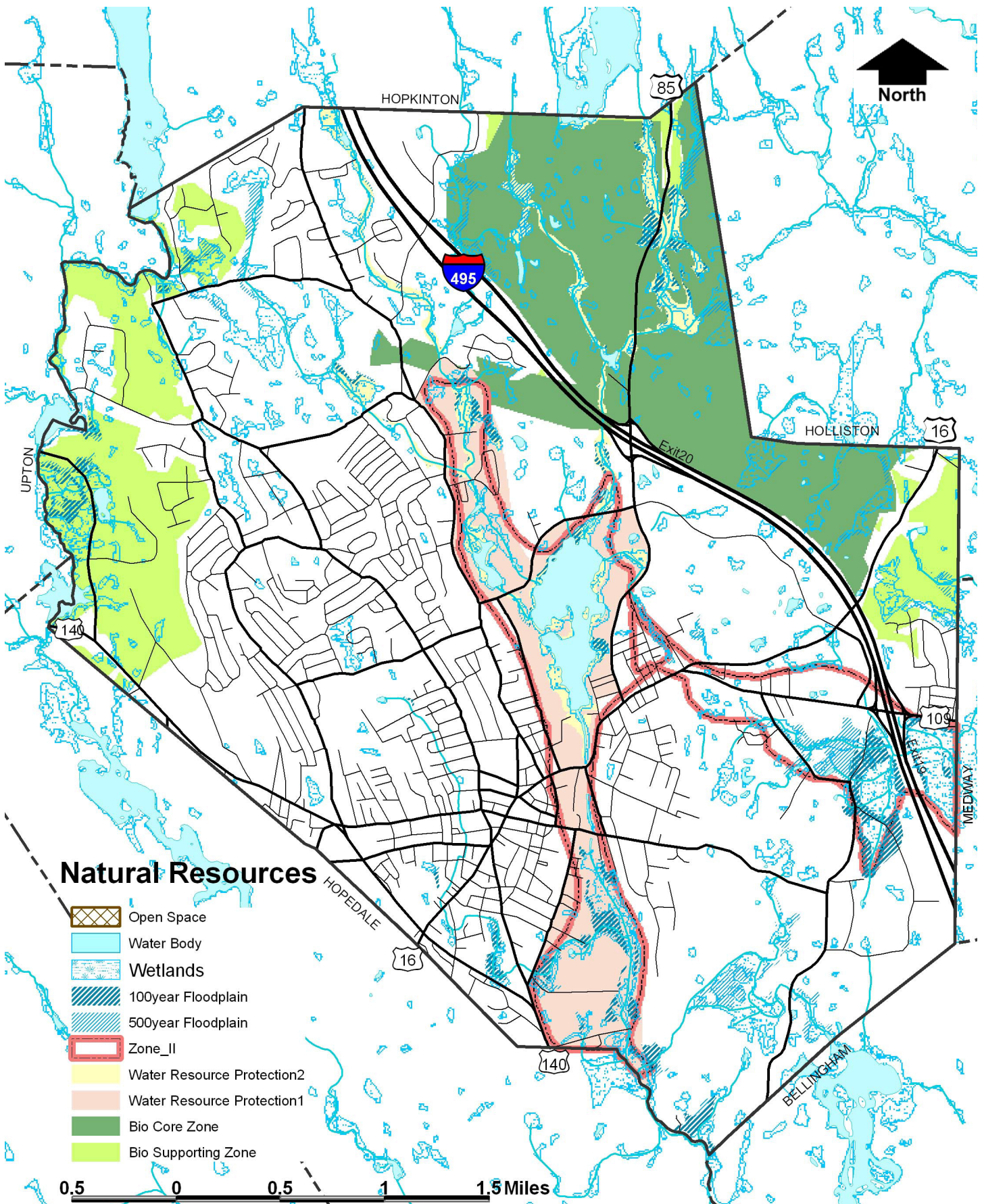
According to the last State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), completed in 2000 by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Milford has 416 acres of publicly held open space and recreation land, which is equal to approximately 4% of the Town's area. This figure does not include more recent acquisitions such as the Consigli parcel or the Upper Charles Trail, which has been completed through phase I. These parcels and other recent acquisitions are included in figure 4-2, which shows the amount of town-owned open space and recreation land. There have also been recent acquisitions by private or non-profit organizations, such as the 47-acre parcel purchased in 2003 by the New England Mountain Bike Association in the Upper Charles River headwaters.

The 2002 OSRP contains an update of the 1996 inventory of lands of conservation and recreation interest in Milford. Both public recreation lands and undeveloped private lands of open space or recreation interest are included in the inventory. It should be noted that very few publicly-owned open space parcels in Milford are permanently protected, and as such they are vulnerable to future development. No private lands in Town are currently protected by way of conservation easement or deeds, though the Planned Residential Development zoning bylaw requires all future PRD's to deed a portion of the site to the Town for open space.

	Population	Acres	Acres/capita
Town of Milford	26,799	822.53	0.03
Census Tract 7441.01	6,875	356.82	0.05
Census Tract 7441.02	5,462	192.69	0.04
Census Tract 7442	6,868	176.67	0.03
Census Tract 7443	3,828	22.27	0.01
Census Tract 7444	3,766	74.08	0.02

Map 4-1 The major natural resources in Milford. The Zone II area that follows Route 109 contributes to the water supply for Medway and is not yet protected by the Water Resource Protection District.

Table 4-1 Acres of town owned open space and recreation land, by census tract, 2003



Milford residents continue to be very supportive of open space and recreation issues. In the survey conducted for this plan, there was overwhelming support for town parks, lakes, rivers and streams, and wooded areas. Over 70% placed a high value on town parks as a reason for living in Milford.

Likewise, a survey completed for the 2002 OSRP found that 96% of those surveyed believe it is important to preserve open space for water or conservation needs and 82% believe it is important or very important to preserve open space for recreation needs. However, this survey also found that residents have some concerns with the current state of open space and recreation, especially regarding facilities available to adults. The top five recreational facilities needed in Milford were voted to be biking/hiking/ski trails, conservation areas, local neighborhood parks, children’s play areas (playgrounds), and family picnic areas.

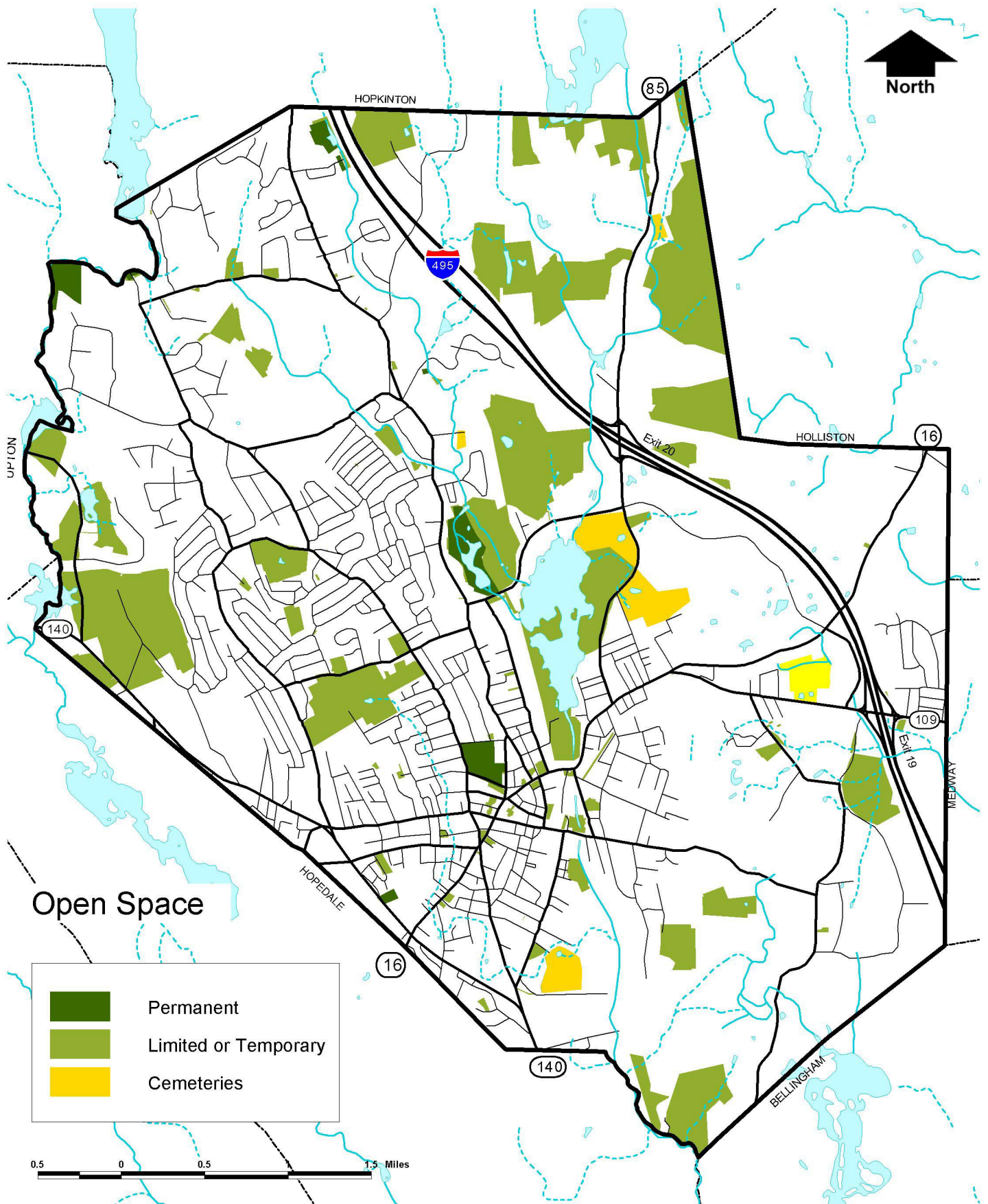
4.2 Issues

The most significant open space issue facing Milford today is development pressure, which is eating away at remaining undeveloped lands, threatening the health of wetlands and other natural resources, and placing great demands on the water supply and recreation facilities. The Town must act now if it expects to continue to provide active and passive recreation opportunities for all residents as demand continues to increase.

- Protection - Few publicly owned or private parcels in Town are permanently protected (including the Town Forest), leaving them vulnerable to development. The greatest opportunity to protect open space lies within the Upper Charles River headwaters area.
- Connectivity - There are a variety of small open space or recreation facilities scattered throughout Town, with no linkages between them or a clear pattern of land use.
- Acquisition - It has been very difficult for the Town to fund land acquisitions simply for the sake of protecting open space or providing recreational facilities.
- Field Demand - Many of the existing fields are operating at maximum capacity, so that regular field rotations are nearly impossible, as is scheduling all interested users. Adult users have virtually no access to field space at this time due to the demands of youth sports.
- Passive Recreation - There are few passive recreation opportunities available in Milford, such as walking, jogging, or nature observation areas. The Upper Charles Trail is one step in the right direction. Passive recreation facilities are especially in demand by elderly residents.

From the survey -	
<i>To what extent do you support or oppose the Town of Milford preserving/protecting the following types of open space (natural areas)?</i>	
	Very or Extremely Important
Town parks	97%
Town Lakes	95%
Rivers and streams	93%
Wooded Areas	92%
Scenic Views	87%
Wetlands	80%

Map 4-2 The major protected open spaces in Milford. Very few of these parcels have permanent protection meaning that they can be developed in the future. The town should focus on imposing permanent protection to many of these important open spaces.



Consequences of Inaction

Milford must seriously address the dwindling availability of land in Town and the lack of permanent protection for existing open spaces if they expect such spaces to continue to provide recreational opportunities and important ecological functions. Should the Town fail to protect the open space that exists currently or to proactively pursue the acquisition of other significant parcels, there will be fewer and fewer open space parcels available or worth protecting. This will have many negative effects, such as diminished quality of life for Milford residents, a declining amount of healthy wildlife habitat, impaired water quality and reduced water quantity.

4.3 Recommendations

The *2002 Open Space and Recreation Plan* developed a set of goals and objectives based on an analysis of community needs. A 5-Year Action Plan provides an implementation schedule for achieving each goal and associated objectives. The major goals and objectives that were identified are presented at the end of this chapter.

This plan supports the goals and objectives set forth in the *2002 Open Space and Recreation Plan*, but due to the long-term nature of a comprehensive plan, additional goals, objectives and action steps are recommended.

GOAL 1: Provide a high quality, quantity and variety of recreational facilities and activities for all residents of Milford while protecting the limited natural resources.

Objective 1 - Support the goals and Objectives and Action Steps set forth in the 2002 Milford Open Space and Recreation Plan that are not explicitly addressed in other parts of this plan.

Action Steps:

1. Explore all possible funding sources to preserve open space and enhance recreation areas.
2. Continue work on the Upper Charles River Trail and identify other opportunities for trail development in Town.
3. Increase public accessibility to all town-owned open space that is available for passive or active recreation, especially the Town Forest.
4. Establish a standard signage system for all town-managed recreation facilities and conservation areas.

Objective 2 - Ensure there are an adequate number of properly maintained parks to provide recreation opportunities for all residents of Milford, regardless of age or ability.

Action Steps:

1. Adopt a Comprehensive Maintenance Plan for all recreational facilities managed by the Town that includes budget, field rotation schedules, staff responsibilities and grounds maintenance, in order to manage facilities and activities in a more efficient manner.
2. Continue to develop additional recreation facilities and use this as one criteria for prioritizing the acquisition of available land.
3. Schedule active recreation programs for all age groups, including seniors and other adults, by identifying peak and off-peak use times of fields and other facilities.

-
4. Encourage the development of a sports league partnership to help defray the costs of field maintenance and acquisition.

GOAL 2: Protect open spaces that have high conservation or recreational values and ensure a network of connected lands both within the town and with surrounding communities.

Objective 1 - Identify all public and private land with high natural resource or recreation value, and create a prioritization system for protection

Action Steps:

1. Designate clearly significant parcels as permanently protected open space.
2. Designate the Consigli parcel as permanently protected open space to retain a greenway corridor connecting to the Town Forest and Louisa Lake recreation area.
3. Build upon the GIS database of vacant and developed parcels to identify lands of open space/recreation interest.
4. Continue to develop criteria to prioritize lands for protection and find ways to acquire those lands or the development rights.
5. Develop partnerships with private landowners or pursue easements to protect sensitive open space or recreation lands where land acquisition is not an option.

Objective 2 - Create a “Headwaters of the Charles” greenway that runs from Echo Lake through the center of town to the southern tip of Milford along the Charles River.

Action Steps:

1. Redefine the IA zone to allow for mixed uses that minimize environmental impact.
2. No longer allow the expansion or transfer of ownership for non-conforming uses that may negatively affect water quality.
3. Identify tax delinquent properties within the corridor for open space designation.
4. Form partnerships with businesses located in this zone to provide public access to privately held open space.
5. Pass the Community Preservation Act to help fund the acquisition of open space, especially in the greenway.

Objective 3 - Continue to work with surrounding towns to create a contiguous open space system.

Action Steps:

1. Identify priority lands that will contribute to a regional system of open space.
2. Work with non-profit organizations to purchase land or development rights from private owners.

The 2002 Open Space and Recreation Plan Goals and Objectives

Goal I. Protect The Town's Water Supply

- Implement creation of an Upper Charles Water Conservation area to preserve aquifer recharge and surface water quality as part of the tri-town Headwaters of the Charles conservation effort
- Protect the Consigli parcel
- Increase regulatory protection of sensitive areas within the watershed

Goal II. Protect The Natural Resources Of The Town

- Restore water-quality of Milford Pond & Lower Charles River
- Maintain a permanent Open Space Committee & current Master Plan
- Increase protection of resources through adoption of stricter local bylaws
- Manage conservation lands to enrich wildlife habitat & maintain biodiversity
- Fund a conservation agent position through the Town budget
- Acquire additional conservation land to develop conservation areas centered around the Town's natural resource areas (Charles River, Mill River, Ivy Brook Headlands, Bear Hill and Charles River uplands)
- Develop permanent funding sources for open space acquisitions
- Coordinate Open Space Committee efforts with other Town Boards & Committees

Goal III. Manage Current Conservation Lands For Passive Recreation

- Identify Conservation Commission parcels with signage
- Create a use/management program for each conservation parcel based on the unique site resources matched with public passive recreational needs
- Develop a comprehensive recreation plan for conservation lands within the Town Forest/Louisa Lake/ Milford Pond Recreation Corridor, to including a proposal for recreation/conservation use of the newly purchased Consigli Parcel
- Evaluate/implement appropriate sites for picnic areas & nature education

Goal IV. Increase Public Usage Of Existing Open Space

- Provide physical identification & site access to facilities
- Inform the public concerning existing opportunities
- Involve community in open space efforts by creating volunteer opportunities
- Open Space Committee to form working partnerships with community groups with open space needs to provide improvements and programs well-matched to needs
- Increase accessibility through universal design and ADA compliance

Goal V. Provide Safe Pedestrian Ways

- Complete Upper Charles Bike path
- Acquire/obtain easements to link recreational facilities
- Where Greenway linkages are infeasible, provide sidewalks as linkages

Goal VI. Provide Additional Active Recreation Facilities For The Diverse Needs Of The Town

- Provide additional hiking, biking and skiing trails
- Provide additional local neighborhood parks with children's play areas
- Provide for additional outdoor skating opportunities
- Provide more facilities for older age youths (10-19 yrs)
- Increase access of persons with disabilities to recreational & open space facilities
- Investigate public/private partnerships for the development of costly specialized facilities such as a golf course and indoor skating facility
- Determine ways to include specialized users with the general public in all open space areas

Goal VII. Preserve Historic Resources & Special Landscape Features

- Preserve wooded hilltops & significant natural ledges (Bear Hill, Rocky Woods, Upper Charles)
- Preserve open marshes along the Southern Charles
- Preserve quarry history

5

Housing



Providing a variety of options, including single-family homes, apartments, condominiums, and elderly and low-income housing will ensure that residents will be able to live in Milford at any or all stages of their lives. While many residents currently have adequate, affordable housing, the Town recognizes that some residents have housing costs that are unaffordable or other unmet housing needs, and that these problems may escalate in the future as prices continue to rise and the existing housing stock deteriorates. Through this Comprehensive Plan and other planning endeavors, the Town is proactively working to address such issues.

5.1 Existing Conditions

Milford has experienced sizeable housing growth during the past decade, greater than both Worcester County and the Commonwealth. The total number of housing units increased 9 percent from 1990 to 2000 with the number of single-family units alone increasing 16.4 percent over the same time period. More than half of all housing units in Milford are single-family homes. Demand for housing in Milford is high because of the small town character and many amenities that the Town offers, including a wide range of parks and recreational activities, a good school system, low residential tax rate, and close proximity to major highways and urban centers such as Boston and Providence.

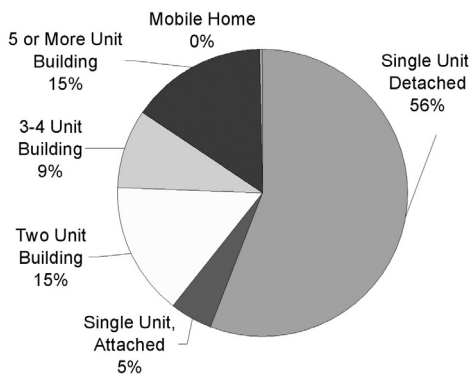


Figure 5-1 / Table 5-1 - Breakdown of housing units by type. Even though apartment units have not been permitted since 1972, over 15% of Milford's housing units are in complexes of five units or more.

Structure Type	Number of Units	Percent of Total	Percent Change 1990-2000
Single Unit, Detached	5,957	55.6%	19.9%
Single Unit, Attached	506	4.7%	-13.2%
Single Unit, Total	6,463	60.5%	16.4%
Two Unit Building	1,616	15.1%	9.8%
3-4 Unit Building	948	8.8%	-0.1%
5 or More Unit Building	1,643	15.4%	-5.4%
Mobile Home	16	0.2%	unknown
Total Units	10,686	100.0%	9.1%

Source: 2000 US Census

Town	Population		Total Housing		Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied		Public Housing		Rental Assistance	
	# of Population	% of Region	# of Units	% of Region	# of Units	% of Region	# of Units	% of Region	# of Units	% of Region	# of Units	% of Region
Milford	26,799	29%	10,420	31%	6744	25%	3676	51%	353	36%	350	74%
Hopkinton	13,346	14%	4,444	13%	4009	15%	435	6%	98	10%	5	1%
Bellingham	15,314	16%	5,557	16%	4658	18%	899	13%	123	12%	54	11%
Holliston	13,801	15%	4,795	14%	4140	16%	655	9%	78	8%	48	10%
Medway	12,448	13%	4,182	12%	3519	13%	663	9%	202	20%	8	2%
Upton	5,642	6%	2,042	6%	1683	6%	359	5%	40	4%	9	2%
Hopedale	5,907	6%	2,242	7%	1747	7%	493	7%	98	10%	2	0%
TOTALS	93,257	100%	33,682	100%	26500	100%	7180	100%	992	100%	476	100%

Approximately 75 percent of the land in Milford is zoned residential. Minimum lot requirements range from 8,000 square feet to 87,000 square feet. Single-family homes are allowed in all four residential zones, and duplexes are allowed in zone RA. In 1985, Milford amended the zoning by-law to include Planned Residential Developments (PRD) by special permit in zones RB and RC.

The purpose of this incentive zoning provision is to preserve open space in perpetuity; promote maximum protection of water resources; encourage efficient growth patterns, especially in terms of extending utilities and services; and to promote a greater variety of housing styles that are consistent with the Town's growth policies. The incentives were added in 2002 and allow up to 50 percent density bonuses to be achieved if the developer provides additional public benefit such as dedicating 25 percent of the units to affordable or elderly housing. PRD allows up to four attached units, making it the only type of new residential construction that may be greater than 2 units.

Since 1972, Milford has prohibited the construction of residential buildings with more than two units, except in PRD's since 1985. Historically, Milford provided nearly all the multi-family housing among surrounding communities. Concerned about this unbalanced distribution of apartments, Milford amended the zoning bylaw to no longer allow for multi-unit buildings. While Milford still provides much of the rental housing in this region today, the units are deteriorating with age. It is reasonable to assume that some of these units may be no longer marketable or safe in the near future, thereby reducing the total number of apartments available to renters in Milford.

The demand for housing in Milford is expected to increase at a slow to moderate rate over the next 20 years, based on population projections that indicate a slow to moderate increase (figure 5-2). Milford's population is expected to increasing at a slower rate (2.2%) than its adjacent communities of Hopkinton (57.4%), Hopedale (46.5%), and Medway (18.4 %) from 2000 to 2025. This is because Milford is already greatly developed, while the adjacent communities are more rural or suburban in character.

Table 5-2 - Compared to its neighbors, Milford has significantly larger numbers of renter occupied and rental assistance units.

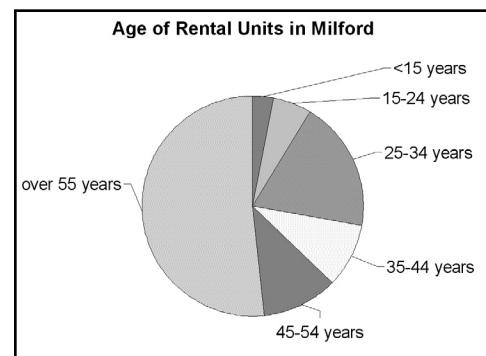


Figure 5-2 - Approximately half of Milford's rental units were built prior to 1950.

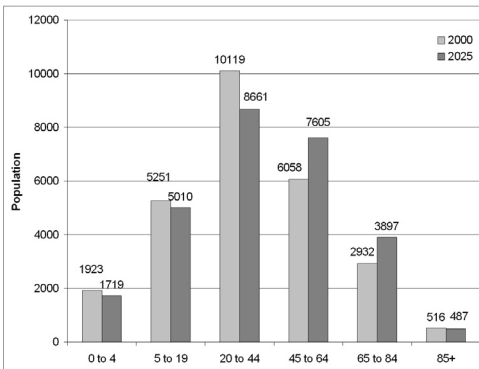


Figure 5-3 - The number of residents aged 45-64 and 65-84 are expected to increase as much as 25% over the next 20 years.

Population projections for the years 2000 to 2025 forecast population growth only among the elderly in Milford (figure 5-3), indicating a need to plan for a variety of elder housing options. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as of March 2003, there are no subsidized housing units in Milford for elderly householders. There are also no subsidized assisted living facilities, retirement communities, nursing homes, or Alzheimer's care facilities in the Town. However, there are two subsidized adult family homes located within Milford.

Over the five-year period from 1996-2001, 611 building permits were issued in Milford. Of those, 541 were issued for new single family units, while 70 were issued for new multifamily units. Housing is becoming more and more expensive in Milford, as it is throughout eastern Massachusetts. Figure 5-5 shows that the price of home ownership has steadily increased since 1992; condo sales, while less consistent, have also increased significantly.

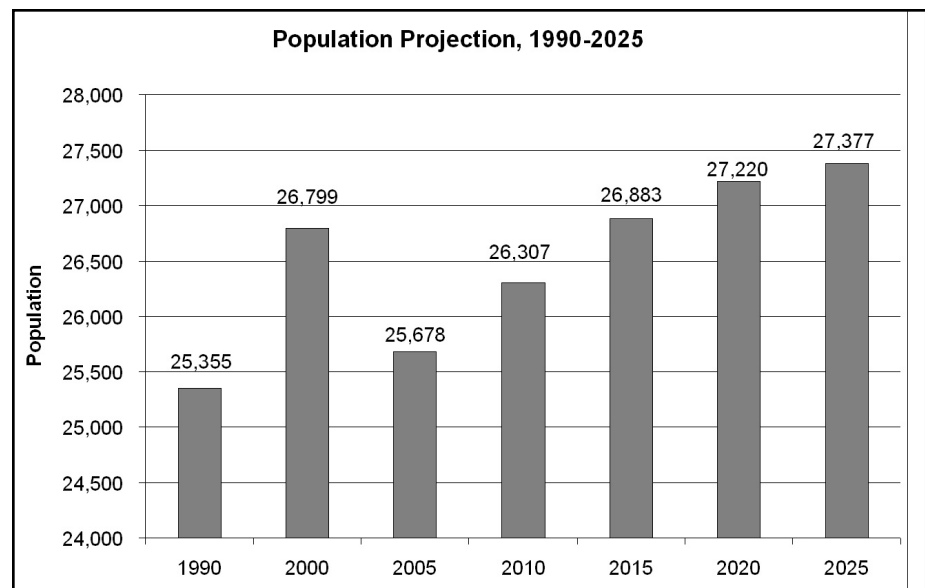
Table 5-3 - Number of building permits issued 1996-2001.

Year	New Single Family Residential Units	New Multi-Family Residential Units	Total New Housing Units
2001	61	0	61
2000	64	8	72
1999	79	30	109
1998	129	10	139
1997	126	16	142
1996	82	6	88

Source: Mass Stats, Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training

The development of additional housing units, whether affordable or market-rate, is constrained by a variety of factors in Milford. The physical factors that limit development are wetlands, steep slopes, and the shallow depth to bedrock in many locations. There are legal protections for some of these constraints, such as the land protected by the Rivers Protection Act, which are shown in the Housing Opportunities

Figure 5-4 - The population of Milford is expected to grow at a low to moderate pace over the next 20 years, which suggests a slow to moderate increase in housing demand. *Source: MAPC*



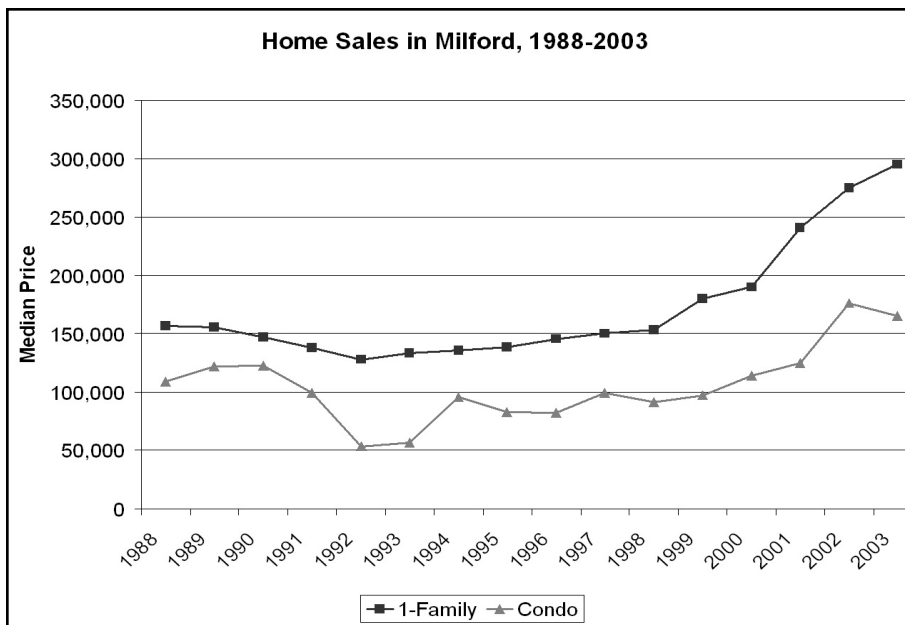


Figure 5-5 - Single-family home prices in Milford have steadily increased over the past decade.
Source: The Warren Group

map. Much of the remaining undeveloped land in Milford is affected by the presence of wetlands. While steep slopes used to be considered a significant constraint to home building, today the high cost of land coupled with improved site preparation technology has made it possible to develop land with up to 25% slopes (and beyond in some Milford examples).

The capacity of Town infrastructure can constrain residential development. The most significant constraints are school, water and sewer capacity. The Milford School system is expected to be able to serve a total of 4,307 students in grades K through 12 (this does not include temporary structures). Projections indicate that the schools will exceed total capacity by at least 5% by the 2010-2011 school year. The School Committee is currently revising the School's Master Plan, and through this document will suggest measures that deal with capacity limitations, such as reconfiguring the grades at each location. There is currently a new school planning committee that is looking for a parcel of land as the site for a new school. If this project is completed, school capacity will not be a constraint on new housing.

The capacity of water and sewer infrastructure can also constrain development. The Milford Water Company projects that it will be able to meet demand only through the year 2010 based on current supply. This includes the newly approved surface water source at Louisa Lake. The water issue can be mitigated by more efficient use of water resources, and a commitment to conservation by everyone in Town or the approval of the MWC's plans for additional capacity at Echo Lake. Water supply may constrain future development if these plans are not approved.

The Sewer Authority is in the process of an infiltration study. Currently the plant is authorized to handle 4.3 million gallons per day (mgpd) and gets about 3.3 mgpd during normal working periods. However,



Figure 5-6 - The number of large, single-family homes has increased in Milford over the past decade.

Calculations	Massachusetts	Milford
A Total households, 2000 Census	2,443,580	10,420
B Total households, 1990 Census	2,247,110	9,362
C Total household growth, 1990 - 2000 $C=(A/B)-1*100$	8.7 %	11.3%
D Average annual household growth, 1990 - 2000 $D=C/10$	0.9%	1.1%
E Total housing units, 2000 Census	2,621,989	10,713
F Total housing units, 1990 Census	2,472,711	9,819
G Total housing unit growth, 1990 - 2000 $G=(E/F)-1*100$	6.0%	9.1%
H Average annual housing unit growth, 1990 - 2000 $H=G/10$	0.6%	0.9%
I Total occupied year-round ownership units, 2000 Census	1,508,052	6,744
J Total occupied year-round ownership units, 1990 Census	1,331,493	5,813
K Growth in year round ownership units, 1990-2000 $K=(I/J)-1*100$	13.3%	16%
L Total occupied year-round rental units, 2000 Census	935,528	3,676
M Total occupied year-round rental units, 1990 Census	915,617	3,549
N Growth in year round rental units, 1990-2000 $N=(L/M)-1*100$	2.2%	3.6%
O Vacancy rate for year-round ownership units, 2000 Census	0.7%	0.4%
P Vacancy rate for year-round rental units, 2000 Census	3.5%	2.9%
Q Vacancy rate for year-round ownership units, 1990 Census	1.7%	1.2%
R Vacancy rate for year-round rental units, 1990 Census	6.9%	6.6%

Table 5-4 - Data required by Executive Order 418 for housing certification.

during intense rainstorms, the volume increases to over 12 mgpd due to infiltration. Because over 50% of the system was built before 1950, there is a great deal of clay pipe which must be replaced. A study is underway to determine the extent of the problem and outline a strategy for improvement. The Authority's consultant is pursuing approval for 6 mgpd treatment capacity, which was the original design capacity. If the sewer plan is approved, sewer capacity will not be a constraint for future residential development.

Housing affordability is a significant concern for all residents, especially to those who are elderly or have low to moderate income. Generally, housing is considered to be affordable when households spend no more than 30 percent of their gross income on all housing costs, including utilities. Using this common standard, 76 percent of Milford homeowners have affordable housing, while only 60 percent of renters do. Based on the 2000 US Census, low-income households have the highest rates of burdensome housing costs.

Under the definition of M.G.L. Chapter 40B, which provides more stringent standards for affordability, only 6.28 percent of all housing in Milford is considered affordable. This is well below the required 10 percent affordable housing. While this particular law is undergoing reform and its definition of affordability may change in the future, it is important for towns to aim to achieve the standards set by Chapter 40B in order to remain eligible for state funds. Based on the number of existing housing units, Milford needs to build almost 400 more units of affordable housing to reach the 10 percent goal.

To comply with MGL 40B, Milford needs approximately 400 additional units of affordable housing to reach the 10% threshold (based on the number of existing units).

Issued in 2000, Executive Order 418 continues the Commonwealth's commitment to encouraging the creation of affordable housing. EO418 establishes a new affordable housing certification process. Municipalities must obtain housing certification to be eligible to receive funds through certain discretionary rolling grant programs, and to receive bonus rating points for other grant programs.

5.2 Issues

There are several housing issues that Milford must contend with in the coming years. Milford must work to ensure affordability for low, moderate and middle-income individuals and families. While the majority of residents are currently paying 30 percent household income or less for their housing needs, the rising costs of housing in the town, the region and the Commonwealth means that affordable housing is becoming a more significant issue. More specific issues include:

- **Affordable Housing** - M.G.L. Chapter 40B is aimed at encouraging communities to attain the goal of 10 percent affordable housing based on very specific standards. If a community reaches this goal they are not subject to mandatory comprehensive permits from developers which override local zoning bylaws and other regulations. Milford currently has 6.28 percent affordable housing according to State standards, and is facing several "unfriendly" 40B proposals in non-residential zones. The town currently needs to build an additional 397 affordable units to reach the 10 percent level. This number will increase if traditional single family units continue to be built without the addition of affordable units.
- **Multifamily Housing** - While the Town still provides much of the multi-family housing for the surrounding communities in the area, the inability to build more has created a situation in which most of the apartments available are experiencing varying levels of deterioration associated with age.
- **Senior (elder) Housing** - The senior population is growing, and as such there is a growing need for a variety of appropriate elder housing options, such as smaller homes, accessory apartments, apartment buildings, or senior living developments.
- **Limited Land Availability** - Residential development is pushing out towards the periphery of Town, leaving only a small amount of remaining undeveloped land.
- **Zoning** - Under the current zoning, much of the existing housing stock, especially in the RA zone, could not be rebuilt as it currently exists.

Estimated number of new housing units, 2003-2008:

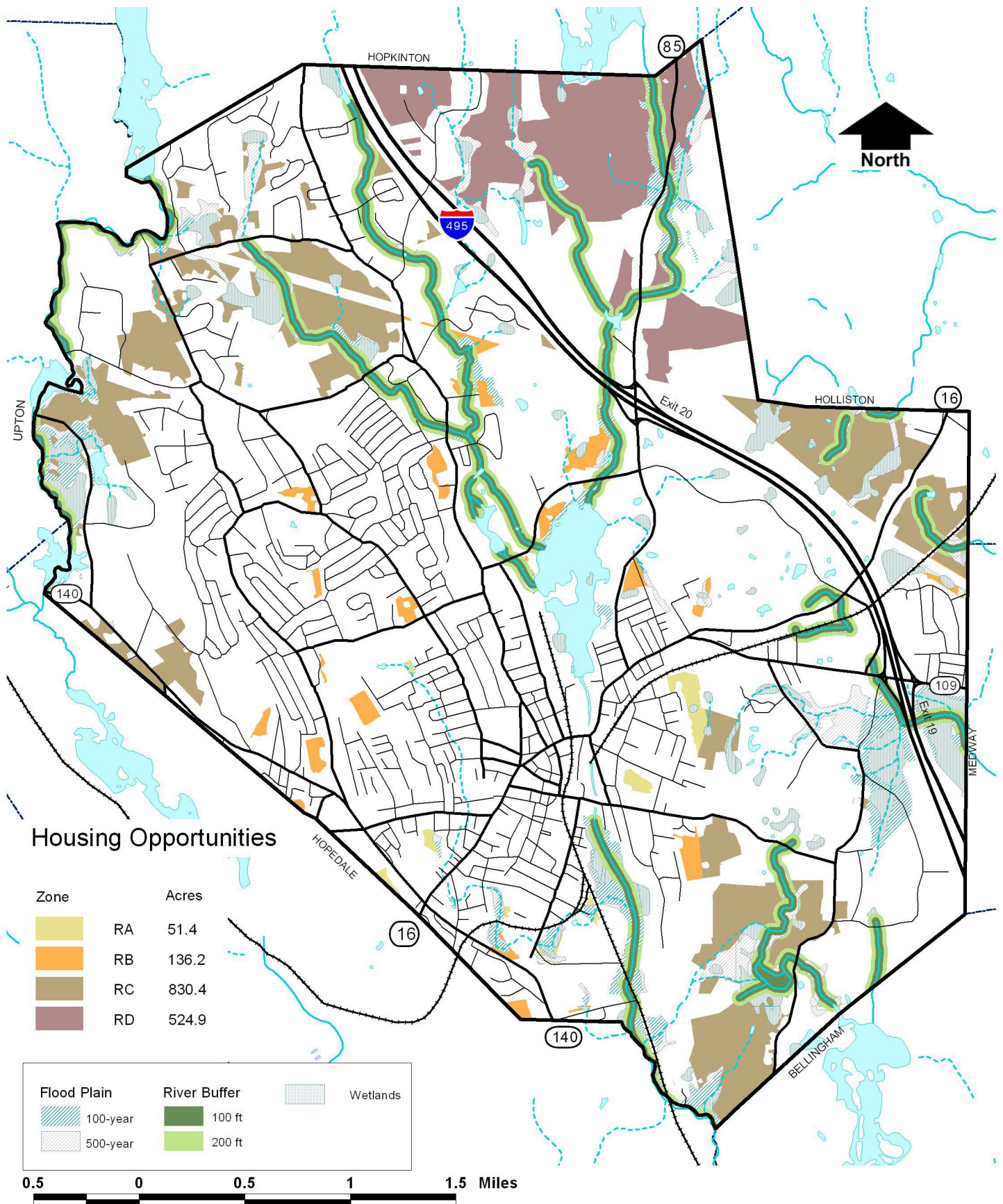
200 Total Units Built

100 condo or other market-rate ownership units

50 units of rental housing

50 units of affordable housing (ownership units)

Map 5-1 The number of acres of developable land remaining in Milford for each of the residential zones based on the existing zoning.



Consequences of Inaction

There are significant costs associated with maintaining the status quo in terms of housing in Milford. Existing zoning regulations limit multi-family housing, infill development, and redevelopment that is consistent with historic neighborhood patterns. Failure to amend existing zoning will continue to encourage growth outwards to the periphery of town, impacting the Town's remaining natural resources, especially the water supply, while also requiring costly infrastructure extensions. By not complying with the state affordable housing laws, Milford is currently facing "unfriendly" 40B proposals in industrial zoning districts, developments that, when built, will remove more land from the already dwindling inventory of industrial land, a trend that is likely to continue. Yet Milford has a definite need for additional affordable housing units, especially for young families and the growing elderly population. Rising housing costs, deteriorating apartments, and limited subsidized housing make affordability a growing difficulty for all residents.

5.3 Recommendations

GOAL 1: Ensure that individuals and families in Milford have a full range of housing opportunities that include adequate ownership and rental options for low-, moderate-, and middle-income households and residents with and without disabilities.

Objective 1- Increase the amount of affordable housing in Milford, both under general affordability standards and Chapter 40B.

Action Steps:

1. Create an inclusionary zoning bylaw that requires all new residential developments to have 25 percent affordable units, or participate in a buyout option to help renovate existing units, which will be limited as affordable housing.
2. Create a Milford Housing Trust that will use CDBG funds and buy-out fees to purchase and renovate existing housing units that will be protected as affordable in perpetuity.
3. Continue to maintain a receiving area for affordable, multifamily units to direct residential growth to appropriate locations in mixed-use, mixed-income settings.
4. Create a linkage bylaw that establishes a fee for all new non-residential development to provide funds for new affordable housing.
5. Pass the Community Preservation Act to help fund the acquisition of affordable housing units.

Objective 2- Increase the variety of housing opportunities for low, moderate, and middle-income individuals and families.

Action Steps:

1. Continue to facilitate the creation of additional elderly housing that meets the needs of aging residents. As elder homeowners move out of their existing units, this strategy will make these units available for new homeowners.
2. Continue to allow for accessory housing and encourage smaller homes to ensure opportunities for households supportive of reduced resource consumption, elderly, disabled, and empty nester households in appropriate zoning districts.
3. Allow for multi-family housing in Milford's zoning bylaws in appropriate areas. Consider creating a multi-family overlay district in the RA zone.
4. Continue preference of Milford residents in new affordable developments.

GOAL 2: Focus on the existing housing stock and its revitalization as a means to continue to attract new homeowners.

Objective 1 - Encourage future infill development in a way that complements the existing character of neighborhoods.

Action Steps:

1. Encourage the development of housing on suitable vacant properties and promote infill development where appropriate.
2. Zone areas adjacent to the downtown for mixed-use to allow for small office and residential development, encouraging people to live near or where they work while preserving older homes.
3. Revise the dimensional requirements in the zoning by-law to allow infill units to meet the prevailing setbacks.
4. Expand areas for housing in proximity to the new senior center by rezoning appropriate areas of the IA zone for residential or mixed uses.

Objective 2 - Work with private developers who can gain access to State and Federal programs that will allow Milford to address gaps in housing availability as identified in this study.

Action Steps:

1. Increase the number of single-family housing units participating in the Homeowner Rehabilitation (HOR) program.
2. Continue to encourage reinvestment in homes rather than relocating by providing technical assistance and incentives for those who cannot afford to maintain their homes on their own.
3. Offer incentives to landlords to improve their properties, including multi-family units.

6

Economic Development



Economic development helps sustain the quality of life in our communities by ensuring prosperity and jobs for all residents. As cities and towns become even more integrated into the national and international economies, a planned approach for future economic development helps ensure the long-term viability of our local economy. Moreover, economic growth is increasingly interrelated with housing, land use, transportation, and open space and natural protection.

6.1 Existing Conditions

The Town of Milford was once a prosperous New England mill community. The swiftly flowing Blackstone and Charles Rivers powered the town's shoe and textile mills. Milford's rocky soils, unsuitable for farming, produced exquisite pink granite, which was used to construct many of the buildings in town. But today, most of the town's quarries and mills have closed and Milford has been transformed into a high-tech node along the I-495 corridor. Presently health care, high tech manufacturing, and accommodation are Milford's three main industrial clusters. Unfortunately, not all of these clusters are thriving. Increased competition and a recessionary economy have cut into the bottom lines of many of Milford's businesses. However, the Town does have many assets it can draw from to create new economic opportunities.

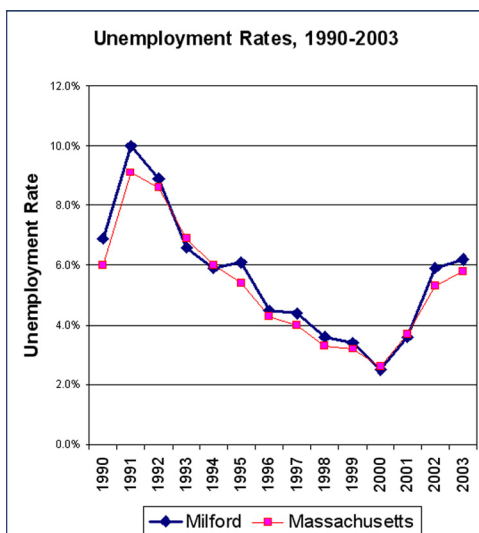


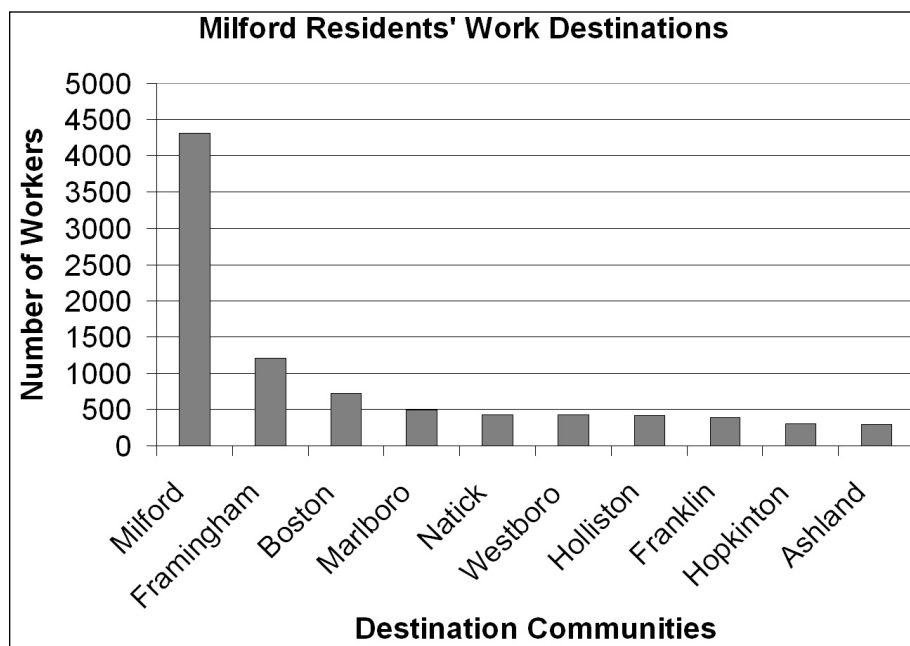
Figure 6-1 - Unemployment rates of Milford and the Commonwealth.
Source: DCS/DUA

Employment

In 2001 Milford had a labor force of 14,025 workers. The number of people employed in Milford is slightly below that of the total available labor force for the town. After almost a decade-long national trend of decreasing unemployment rates, the percentage of the total labor force that is unemployed has now begun an upward climb. In 2000 Milford's unemployment rate was at an unprecedented low of 2.5 percent. Since then it has risen to the current 2003 rate of 7.1 percent, exceeding the State's rate of 5.7 percent. The rise in unemployment can be attributed to the recent downturn in the U.S. economy, in which the technology sector was particularly affected.

The education attainment levels in Milford are slightly higher than that of the Commonwealth, with the exception of people with bachelor's and graduate or professional degrees. About 84 percent of Milford residents have attained a high school degree or higher and 27 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher. However, their attainment of graduate or professional degrees is only half of the state average. This does not put existing Milford residents in a good position for the higher wage high tech jobs.

Many people who live in Milford also work in Milford. In terms of commuting, Framingham and Boston are the most popular destinations. Milford draws much of its workforce from neighboring communities.



Economic Statistical Profile

A location quotient analysis, which in this study compares the ratio of an industry's share of Milford's economy to the industry's share of the state economy, was conducted to identify the basic industries in Milford. Industries with location quotients greater than 1.0 have local employment shares which are larger than their state shares and are therefore considered basic industries – meaning that the good or service is being exported to areas outside of Milford.

The most notable industries that have a quotient greater than one in Milford are health services, stone, clay and glass products, Instruments and related products, and Industrial machinery and equipment.

There are a wide variety of businesses located in Milford, totaling 537 establishments in 1997 and 760 establishments in 2001. Employment by industrial sector using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code is shown in Table 6-1.

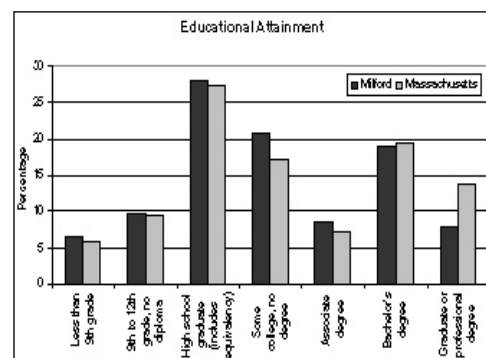


Figure 6-2 - The overall level of educational attainment is quite high for Milford residents, though lower than the state average for graduate or professional degrees.

Figure 6-3 - The work destinations of Milford residents.

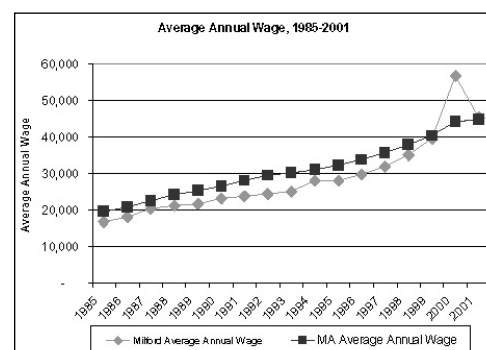


Figure 6-4 - After years of being below the Massachusetts average annual wage (dark line), Milford is now on par with the rest of the Commonwealth.

Table 6-1 - Employment by industrial sector using NAICS code sorted by number of employees.

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, 1997

Industry	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees	Annual Payroll (\$1,000)	Revenue (\$1,000)
Manufacturing	42	3,116	\$141,132	\$739,050
Retail trade	119	1,900	\$29,787	\$288,119
Accommodation & food services	65	1,084	11,043	42,723
Health care & social assistance	84	952	\$26,618	\$61,907
Wholesale trade	34	751	\$26,825	\$587,588
Admin. & support, waste management & remediation services	34	596	\$11,928	\$25,060
Professional, scientific & technical services	75	376	\$15,939	\$46,766
Other services (except public administration)	51	263	8,484	42,450
Arts, entertainment & recreation	6	86	\$454	\$1,326
Real estate, rental & leasing	22	72	\$1,474	\$10,951
Educational services	5	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	537	9,196		

Recent Economic Growth Trends

The projected job growth in Milford was computed using the shift-share projection approach, which accounts for differences between both the local and reference region growth rates that cause an industry's employment to shift into or out of a region. The projected employment is based on past trends in Milford's economy and the economy in Massachusetts.

Between 1990 and 2000, Milford's communications, business and professional services experienced growth rates of over 70 percent. Moreover, employment in health and educational services increased by almost 40 percent during this time. In contrast, Milford's manufacturing sector declined by 24 percent, and this trend is projected to continue. The decline in manufacturing as well as wholesale trade (21% decline) should be of concern to Milford since these are key industries for the Town. Nearly 35 percent of the workforce is employed in Milford's manufacturing sector. Milford's top manufacturing employers include Waters, EMC, and Ball-Foster Forbes Glass Co.

Industrial Businesses

There are two major industrial parks in Milford: Granite Park and the Bear Hill Industrial Area. Existing businesses in Granite Park include Bostomatic, Photofabrication Engineering Inc., A.J. Knott

	Jobs per Industry		Projected Jobs per Industry		
Industry	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
Private wage and salary workers	9,905	10,494	11,118	11,779	12,480
Health and education services	1,839	2,552	3,541	4,914	6,820
Business and professional services	607	1,073	1,897	3,353	5,927
Other professional and related services	904	1,168	1,509	1,950	2,519
Manufacturing	3,232	2,469	1,886	1,441	1,101
Communications & other public utilities	269	459	783	1,336	2,208
Retail trade	1,814	1,627	1,459	1,309	1,174
Construction	485	653	879	1,184	1,594
Finance, insurance and real estate	1,000	1,047	1,096	1,148	1,202
Government workers	1,431	1,265	1,118	999	874
Self-employed workers	501	573	655	750	857
Transportation	469	421	378	339	305
Wholesale trade	626	494	390	308	243
Public administration	387	283	207	151	111
Entertainment and recreation	93	96	99	102	106
Unpaid family workers	18	29	47	75	121
Agriculture, forestry & fisheries	118	19	3	0	0

Table 6-2 - Projected jobs per industry based on NAISC code sorted by projected jobs in the year 2030.

Tool and Manufacturing, ViaSystem, Southworth-Milton and several warehouse/distribution facilities. Existing businesses in the Bear Hill Industrial Area include EMC, Waters Corp., Holmes Products Corp., and numerous offices in the Birchwood Business Park. Other major employers include Foster Forbes and the Benjamin Moore Company. Industrial businesses in Milford that employ at least 100 people are shown in Table 6-3.

Not far from the industrial areas lie Milford's six hotels: The Radisson, The Marriot Courtyard, The Day's Inn, the Tage Inn, Baymont Inns & Suites, and the Fairfield Inns & Suites, for a total of 673 rooms and suites. An extended stay hotel has been approved. Other retail/commercial enterprises have also moved into the industrial areas in Milford, including a shopping plaza anchored by Stop & Shop Supermarket at the entrance to Granite Park, and a new Target in the same area.

Business Name	Address	# Employees	Nature of Business
Waters Corp.	34 Maple Street	970	Manufacture liquid
EMC	5 Technology Drive	400	Manufacture information
Ball-Foster Forbes Glass Company	1 National Street	290	Manufacture glass
ViaSystem Corp.	425 Fortune Blvd	180	Manufacture circuit boards
Southworth-Milton, Inc.	100 Quarry Drive	178	Distributor of Caterpillar products
Holmes Products Corp.	Industrial Road	150	Headquarters and distribution
Chase Printing	49 Maple Street	130	Print shop
Boston Digital Corp.	125 Fortune Blvd.	103	Manufacture computer software products
Avecia Corp	155 Fortune Blvd	100-150	Biotech development
Benjamin Moore	49 Summer Street	100	Manufacture paint

Table 6-3 - Industrial businesses in Milford that have 100 or more employees

Health care

The health care cluster is perhaps the most vibrant and active hope for future employment and economic development in Milford. Major health care facilities in Milford include the Milford Regional Hospital, Fallon Medical Center, two walk-in clinics, three nursing homes, and one assisted living facility.



Figure 6-5 - A rendering of the Milford Regional Hospital after expansion

The Milford Regional Hospital (MRH), a 125-bed full service community hospital, is the largest employer in Milford with approximately 1,600 employees. Since 1991, MRH has been an established teaching site for the University of Massachusetts Medical Center's Internal Medicine Program. The hospital is important to the residents in the region because the next closest facilities, Worcester and Norwood Hospitals, are about thirty miles away. Today the hospital continues to flourish and expand its facilities and services.

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 1997 there were 84 health care and social assistance establishments in Milford. These establishments include physicians and dentists offices, ambulatory services, nursing care services, an outpatient care centers. This sector experienced an almost 40 percent employment growth rate between the years 1990 and 2000. This employment sector is projected to continue to increase in the future.

Survey

In downtown Milford, to what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the availability of each of the following?

	% Dissatisfied
Movie theaters	76%
Retail stores	66%
Live theater	55%
Book stores	54%
Restaurants	53%

Downtown

Milford's downtown was once the shopping and entertainment destination for the surrounding region. Since the development of I-495 and recent growth along the corridor, the downtown has suffered and continues to experience obstacles to redevelopment. However, there is great character to be found downtown, with many historically and architecturally significant buildings, and opportunities and interest in revitalizing the area are significant.

While downtown is no longer the shopping district it once was, it has seen some success with service-oriented companies such as insurance brokers and banking firms. A downtown partnership has been formed and several grants have been used to beautify Main Street. Not content to let its downtown become a strip of vacant buildings, the town has set up a Community Development Office specifically tasked to revitalize Milford’s central business district. Using several grants, the Community Development Office has instituted a series of streetscape, parking, and facade improvements throughout the downtown in an attempt to encourage shoppers and businesses to come there. While the improvements have done much to beautify Main Street, they have not greatly increased the amount of pedestrian traffic in this area largely because most businesses are services rather than retail.

A variety of small retail establishments that cater to specific needs have been successful downtown. In addition, newly arrived Brazilians residents have been drawn to the downtown area from nearby Framingham. Many of these newcomers have moved into several of the older residential buildings surrounding the commercial business district. Many Brazilian shops have opened up in downtown Milford to provide goods and services to this new community, and are bringing shoppers back to the Town’s commercial center.

6.2 Issues

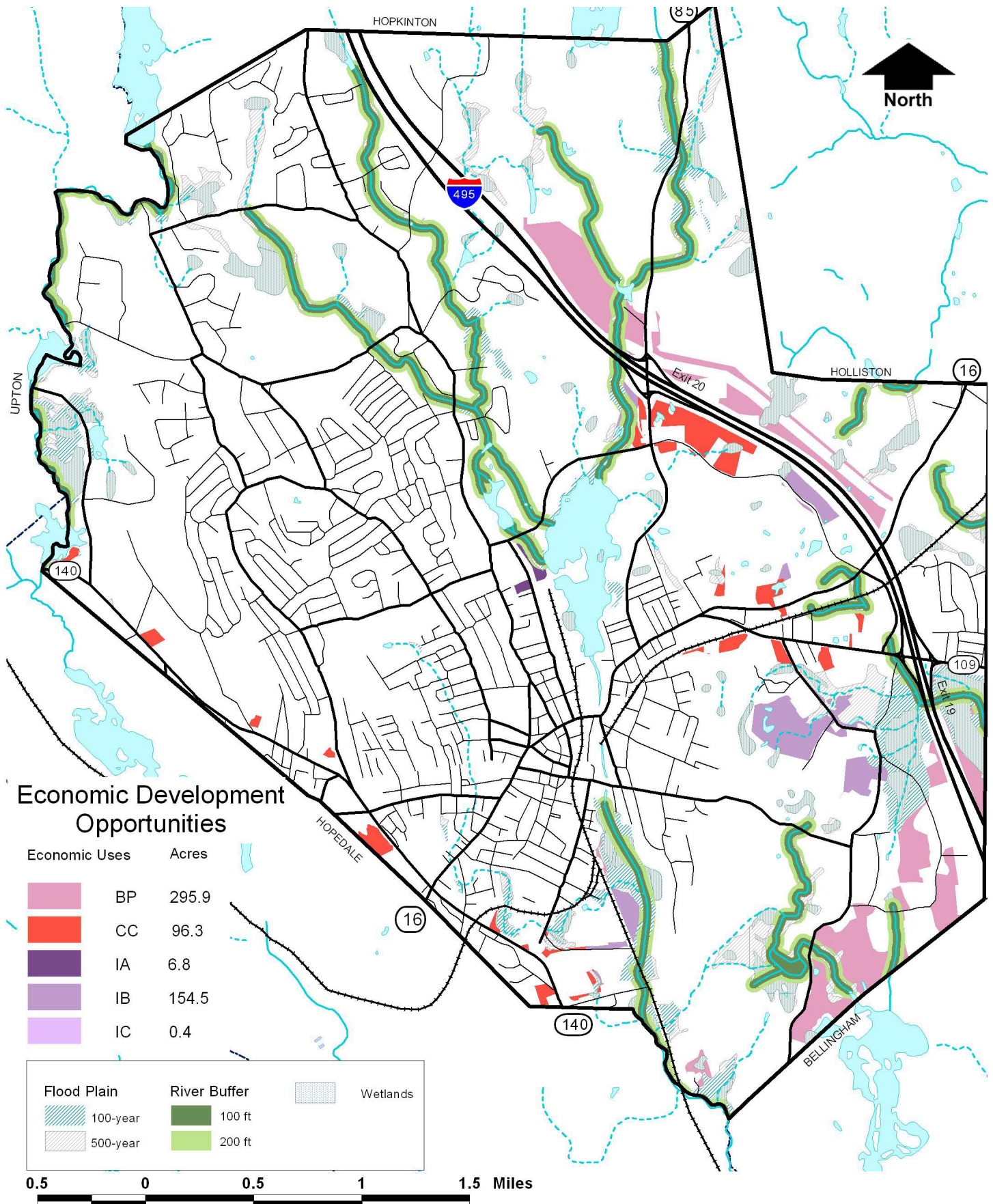
- “Catch-all” Zoning - The IB zoning district allows a wide range of commercial retail and industrial uses. This has lead to an unorganized pattern of growth, and potentially inefficient use of what little industrial-zoned land remains.
- Gateways - While Milford has the benefit of two exits off I-495, neither provides a clear and enticing gateway that distinguishes the entry into Town. This is also true for local highways entering from surrounding communities such as Rte. 116 and 140.
- Downtown - While this area of town was once a thriving regional center, today it attracts few customers and little pedestrian traffic due to the composition of its businesses -- mainly offices for attorneys, insurance agencies and the like -- as well as a perceived parking problem and vehicular traffic congestion.
- The Milford Regional Hospital - The hospital has been engaged in a long-term, successful partnership with the Town. However, there is no formal process for cooperative planning and approving expansion. Additionally, there is no institutional zone in Town, which requires all changes to the hospital to occur by special permit, and provides no applicable design guidelines.
- The Old Industrial Core - The IA zoning district aligned north - south through the center of Town is dilapidated and ripe for redevelopment.



Figure 6-6 - Downtown Milford has recently undergone streetscape improvements

Map 6-1 The number of acres of developable land remaining in Milford for each of the economic development zones based on the existing zoning.

Survey	
To what extent do you support or oppose the following forms of economic development	
Top 4 responses	% Support
Restaurants	83%
Small retail shops	81%
High-tech Industry	65%
Professional office space	63%



ment. Abandoned buildings give this area a run-down appearance that lowers surrounding property values. In addition, current uses do not provide the tax-base that is potentially available to the Town were the land used for more economically viable enterprises.

Consequences of Inaction

Milford has a good diversity of economic activity, and has a stable business tax base. However, recent downturns in the state and national economies have affected the local economy. In addition, dwindling available industrial land is threatened by residential and commercial development, which tends to provide low-wage jobs and heighten traffic congestion. In order for Milford to thrive economically in the future, it needs to promote and support industries that are not only growing but also have the potential to provide good paying jobs. If the Town fails to replace its current short-term approach with a more long-term strategy, land will become further fragmented and residents and others will begin to look elsewhere for jobs.

The downtown center has received increased attention in recent years, and is beginning to become a pedestrian friendly environment. The Town has done little to encourage more entertainment and retail-oriented businesses to populate downtown, though. While there is nothing wrong with the service-oriented businesses that currently line Main Street, Milford residents have voiced a desire to see the downtown revitalized, with a lively streetscape. Without proactively creating a retail-friendly environment, it is unlikely that the Town will attract a new mix of businesses.

The hospital, too, has not suffered too much from the informal way in which it interacts with the Town. However, if Milford does not institute a more formal relationship with the hospital, providing it with zoning guidelines, the Town may find that the process of expansion proceeds in an unexpected direction.

6.3 Recommendations

GOAL 1: Build on the strong, well-established economic development engines in Milford to increase employment opportunities for low-, moderate-, and middle-income Town residents.

Objective 1 - Encourage clustering of commercial and industrial uses as a way to organize development and encourage a clear pattern of land use.

Action Steps:

1. Redefine allowable uses in the IB zone to prohibit commercial uses, especially retail, by modifying the zoning by-laws.
2. Identify clear zoning districts for retail and industrial uses in Town.

Objective 2 - Ensure that the industrial opportunities in town are marketed to their full potential.

Action Steps:

1. Convert static Economic Opportunity Areas (EOAs) to site-specific EOAs.
2. Continue the Town's use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) agreements to attract industrial businesses.

Objective 3 - Create a clear identity by improving the "gateways" at the entries to Milford.

Action Step:

1. Develop design guidelines for the Highway Commercial Zone (CC), the Highway Industrial Zone (IB), and the Highway and Neighborhood Industrial Zone (IC) to enhance the appearance of these entry points.

Objective 4 - Plan for the future growth of the Milford Regional Hospital.

Action Steps:

1. Work with the hospital to develop a strategic plan for future expansions.
2. Create an institutional zone for the hospital. Consider including some or all of the residential land surrounding the hospital in this zone.
3. Encourage the hospital to continue plans to build a parking structure to minimize the parking lot footprints and maximize land available for open space or expansion.
4. Extend Veterans Memorial Drive to provide greater access for emergency vehicles en route to the hospital, allowing them to avoid traffic in the downtown area.

Objective 5 - Ensure that workers in Milford are well-educated and possess the skills necessary to participate in the workforce.

Action Steps

1. Enhance and publicize opportunities provided by local agencies for workforce development in Milford.
2. Encourage local businesses to provide on-site skills training to new and established employees.
3. Partner with businesses that employ non-native English speakers to provide information about available ESL assistance.

GOAL 2: Revitalize and enhance Milford's downtown.

Objective 1 - Revise zoning to reflect established uses and create a better transition between commercial and residential areas.

Action Steps:

1. Modify the downtown commercial area by shrinking the CA zone to reflect the current land use pattern of the downtown commercial district.
2. Require that only retail uses locate on the first floor of buildings in the CA district that use Town funds for improvement.
3. Expand the CB zone to include land removed from the CA zone.
4. Create an office residential (OR) zone to allow mixed-use development in areas that do not attract retail business, and which are especially rich in historic resources on the outskirts of downtown.

Objective 2 - Take advantage of infill opportunities and encourage investment in the use/reuse of existing commercial buildings in the downtown area.

Action Steps:

1. Develop a strategic plan for this area, which identifies parcels for 40B proposals, multi-family development, new office and retail development, retained industrial uses, and potential parking garage.
2. Encourage the creation of a small business incubator to support the development of local enterprises.
3. Change zoning to reflect the existing uses and encourage redevelopment.
4. Create an alternate route for traffic by acquiring the rail bed right-of-way and extending Veteran's Memorial Drive to ease vehicular congestion through downtown.

5. Conduct a feasibility study for additional parking facilities to facilitate future downtown use and development.
6. Preserve the historic buildings downtown and ensure that future developments are consistent with existing architecture and downtown character.

GOAL 3: Revitalize the old industrial core of Milford to provide a targeted receiving area for a variety of uses while simultaneously protecting natural resources and providing open space.

Objective 1 - Improve the old industrial core by encouraging higher and better uses of key parcels that can lead to the redevelopment of the entire area.

Action Steps:

1. Hire a consultant to create a comprehensive redevelopment plan for this area.
2. Authorize the IDC to oversee the transition from existing uses to business park uses. They can assist in acquiring priority properties in the district for resale.

Objective 2 - Preserve and improve the environmental quality of the old IA zone along the Charles River corridor to protect water quality and link new and existing open space parcels.

Action Steps:

1. Identify and cleanup any brownfields that exist due to previous uses.
2. Encourage private/public partnerships with businesses in the new zone to protect open spaces within the greenway corridor and provide appropriate public access.

Objective 3 - Revitalize the social mix and character of downtown Milford.

Action Steps:

1. Maintain affordable, multi-family units near the Senior Center and downtown.
2. Link the commercial downtown, multifamily residential area, Senior Center and new industrial zone by creating a pedestrian friendly environment with improved sidewalks and trails that conform to Universal Design Standards.

Milford Workforce Development Programs

Local

Employment Directions: Job placement services provided, free of charge, to local residents of low to moderate income. Courses offered in basic work skills training.

Workforce Central/Milford: Offers career counseling, job search workshops, networking groups, access to resources, unemployment insurance information, and testing services. A One-Stop Career Center.

Regional

Worcester County Action Council, Inc: Umbrella agency for 25 educational and social service programs. Specific services include GED preparatory courses and literacy programs.

Central Massachusetts Regional Employment Board: Responsible for dispersing \$50 million in funds for financing programs and setting workforce development policy for the region. Funds the Workforce Central programs.

State-Wide

Massachusetts Small Business Development Center (Regional office out of Clark Univ.): Provides training seminars, workshops, conferences addressing a range of concerns for start up and existing businesses. Free management counseling services are also provided.

MassNet: A statewide workforce training resource for business and industry. Develops partnerships between businesses/industries and resources available at 15 state community colleges.

Massachusetts Department of Labor and Workforce Development: Two grant programs are offered through the state to provide funding for employers, employer organizations, labor organizations, and training providers in order to train current and newly hired employees.

Table 6-4 - A list of existing workforce development programs available to Milford residents.

7

Traffic and Circulation



One of the most important resources in a community is a transportation network. In Milford, the transportation network is a significant resource, providing for the efficient and safe movement of people and goods, while maintaining an expected quality of life. Ongoing efforts and those proposed by this Plan attempt to address problems of congestion currently affecting the Town, with the hopes of minimizing such problems in the future.

7.1 Existing Conditions

Milford has an extensive roadway network consisting of nearly 140 centerline miles of roadway with approximately 256 total lane miles of roadway. Five miles of interstate 495 (I-495) run through the eastern portion of Town, with two exits providing direct access from Milford roadways to the greater region. In addition to I-495, portions of four State Routes (16, 85, 109, and 140) pass through Milford. The Town's roadway network currently has 18 signalized intersections, which attempt to maintain an orderly flow of traffic.

Additional features of the Milford transportation network include:

- A downtown area with a high level of access to retailers
- Free public parking in the downtown area
- Proposed bike plan for the Upper Charles Trail, already under construction
- Access to Bear Hill and Granite Industrial parks
- Located within 75 miles of five passenger airports
- MBTA commuter rail service in the neighboring Town of Franklin
- Daily commuter travel assistance, to and from Milford

From the survey -

There were more comments made about traffic and circulation issues (134) than any other topic. The second most popular topic was downtown, with 91 comments.

The central location and proximity to the Interstate system provide the Town of Milford with tremendous access to transportation infrastructure. Milford residents are within a short driving distance of several major cities, including Worcester (35 minutes), Boston (45 minutes), and Providence (40 minutes). While Milford does not have its own

public transit stop, MBTA service is easily reached in the nearby town of Franklin.

The network has had to accommodate additional traffic volumes over the last few years, on a system that has remained relatively static for the same amount of time. Continued growth coupled with demand for access to I-495 from surrounding towns has placed increased levels of demand on Milford's transportation system. As a result, increased levels of congestion have become a town wide concern. Ongoing efforts and proposed future efforts, such as a coordination study of the signalized intersection through downtown, will attempt to alleviate some of these concerns.

Milford officials have considered the construction of an alternate route through the downtown area to alleviate congestion. The proposed roadway would link Route 109 with Route 140 by connecting the already constructed portion of Veteran's Memorial Drive with Depot Street on the east side of Main Street. The proposed roadway construction would require the purchase of several parcels of land to assure the required right of way. There are significant tangible benefits associated with the extension of Veteran's Memorial Drive, including traffic alleviation (especially through downtown), improved access to underutilized land that is ripe for redevelopment just southeast of downtown, and better emergency response times.

The Southwest Area Planning Committee (SWAP), a sub-regional organization of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), is currently conducting a regional transportation study and plan that addresses issues faced by the eleven communities it serves. This plan should be completed soon.

7.2 Issues

Congestion remains the most significant transportation issue Milford. For example, residents have reported travel times in excess of 25 minutes through the downtown corridor. Other roadways also experience a great deal of traffic, especially during peak travel hours. Additional issues of concern include:

- Auto Dependency - The Milford transportation network provides few alternatives to independent auto use.
- Maintenance - Potholes plague many roads in Milford, and in general roadway and sidewalk maintenance is a concern for residents
- Traffic Impact - While large development projects are informally expected to take responsibility for the additional traffic they will draw, the Town does not employ a formal site plan review process for all new development.

- Parking - Lack of parking in the downtown area is a real or perceived problem, on which there is little agreement. There is little definition between long-term (employee) and short-term (customer) parking.

Consequences of Inaction

Milford's transportation network is already established, limiting roadway development. However, the Town can do something to relieve the traffic congestion that affects residents and travelers every day by extending Veteran's Memorial Drive. If Milford chooses not to address both traffic congestion and roadway maintenance soon, it may find that businesses chose to go elsewhere, so they are more easily reached by customers and employees. Safety could become compromised as emergency vehicles have more difficulty reaching the hospital or the scene of an accident. Residents may chose to avoid downtown altogether, placing stress on secondary roads and eliminating hopes of revitalizing downtown.

Map 7-1 - The proposed extension of Veteran's Memorial Drive will provide an alternative route for traffic to alleviate congestion downtown.

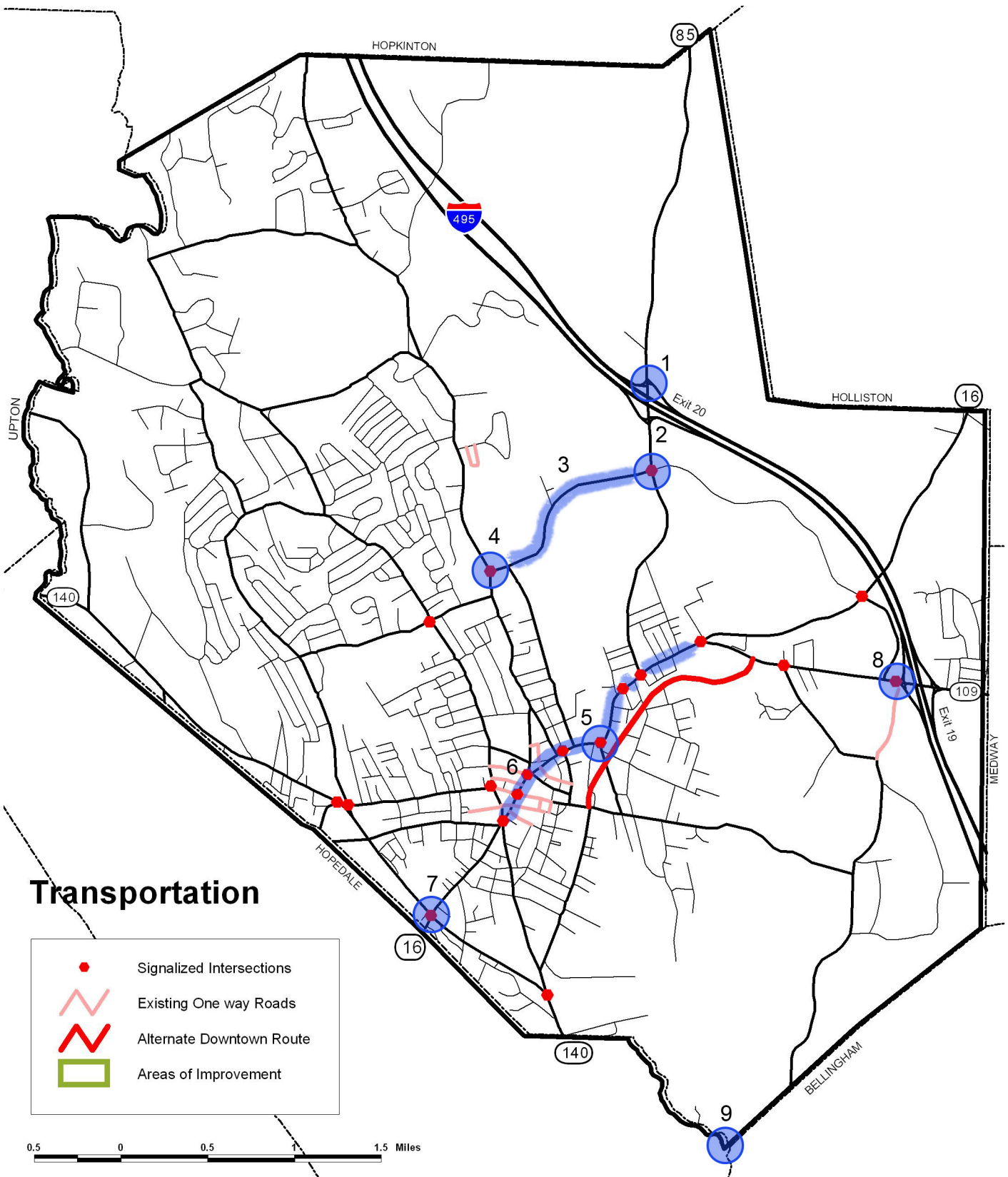


Areas in Need of Improvement

There are a number of traffic and circulation issues in Milford that should be addressed. The most important of these, as identified by the UMass traffic engineers, are:

- 1. Exit 20, Route 495**—Exit 20 currently operates as an unsignalized intersection with varying levels of Stop or Yield control on all exit ramps. A current plan will provide a signalized intersection for the traffic exiting from I-495 northbound. This improvement, being funded by the Target Corporation, will allow for left-turn vehicles (those traveling into Milford) to be accommodated via the signalized intersection. The Town should consider providing a signal for southbound traffic as well.
- 2. Intersection of Dilla Street and Cedar Street**—This is a busy intersection that will continue to see increases in traffic as the surrounding area is further developed. The intersection is in close proximity to the nearby entrance/exit to Interstate 495, the emerging retail area, including both Lowes and Target, and serves as an outlet for Dilla Street a major travel way to residential areas in Milford. Increasing traffic demand will require continued monitoring and will likely require frequent changes in signal timing to reflect changing demand volumes.
- 3. Dilla Street**—Dilla Street serves as a primary route to much of the residential development in Milford. The town should evaluate alternatives for residents accessing this part of Town because of the high levels of current delay. An origin/destination study should be undertaken to help define mobility improvements to the residential area.
- 4. Intersection of Dilla Street and Purchase Street**—During the afternoon peak, the signal timing functions opposite of traffic needs. Although the westbound traffic volume is often double the northbound or southbound volume, the signal timing provided to the westbound movement is approximately half of that provided for the north/south movement. Additionally, many northbound vehicles take a right onto Dilla Street but the current pavement markings make them share a lane with through traffic which increases vehicle delay on all approaches. One recommendation is the re-striping of the northbound approach to provide a dedicated right turn lane and through lane.
- 5. Intersection of Cedar Street and Main Street**—This intersection is often gridlocked as vehicles try to take a left turn onto Main Street. There are a number of relatively small improvements that, collectively, would greatly improve traffic flow. Pavement markings should be improved and signage should be added to clearly delineate turn requirements. Signal timing should be better coordinated with the nearby Plain Street signal (a pedestrian activated signal adjacent to Senior Center) such that Cedar Street traffic receives green while Main Street traffic is required to stop at Plain Street.

Map 7-2 - Roadway intersections and areas in need of improvement.



- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Exit 20 signalization | 4. Dilla and Purchase signal timing | 7. Main and Prospect turn lanes |
| 2. Dilla and Cedar signal timing | 5. Cedar and Main improvements | 8. Beaver Street entrance |
| 3. Dilla Street Study | 6. Downtown improvements | 9. Mellen Street Bridge repair |

Ultimately, the Town should explore the possibility of widening Cedar Street (Route 85) at the intersection to provide both a left and right turn lane.

- 6. Downtown**—Traffic congestion through downtown can slow travel to a crawl, especially at the morning and afternoon peaks. Currently, seven intersections are being evaluated for potential upgrading by the Town. Upgrades in the timing, hardware, and software should be considered, as well as the potential coordination of some signals, including the signal at Hayward with the crosswalk. Downtown could also benefit from clearer road markings, fewer curb cuts, and improved markings for crosswalks to enhance pedestrian safety.
- 7. Intersection of Main Street and Prospect Street**—This intersection, at the Milford Regional Hospital, would benefit from having left-turn bays from Prospect Street onto Main Street, ideally in both directions. The signal timing should also be revised to reflect traffic demands.
- 8. Beaver Street**—MassHighway is currently conducting a feasibility study of improvements to Beaver Street. Currently the northern end of Beaver Street is restricted to one-way movement exiting the industrial area. Drivers accessing the area from points north, east, and west must travel along Route 109, and use a connecting street to access Beaver Street. Considering the proximity of the intersection of Beaver Street and Interstate Route 495, it may improve operational efficiency if the northern end of Beaver Street were converted to two-way traffic, thereby taking advantage of the signalized intersection and removing some of the volume from Route 109. The Town should consider exploring alternatives, such as other routes or land acquisitions that may reduce the peak loading on some of the surrounding roadways and intersections.
- 9. Mellen Street Bridge**—The Mellen Street Bridge, located in three communities, Milford, Hopedale, and Bellingham, has been out of service for several years. Prior to closing, the bridge was believed to be a common route used by residents of Hopedale traveling to nearby Interstate 495. The closure of the bridge now forces these same residents to traverse through interior streets of Milford, adding to the existing levels of congestion in these areas. An origin/destination study will provide valuable insight as to the level of this problem on the Milford roadway network. Pending the outcome, the Town of Milford may want to work towards a multi-jurisdictional effort that would reduce some of the detouring traffic from Milford's roadway network.

Figure 7-1 -Potential location for a parking deck or garage off Jefferson Street.



7.3 Recommendations

GOAL 1: Maintain and develop a safe and efficient multi-modal network.

Objective 1 - Ensure that the transportation network continues to operate safely and efficiently through a continuous process of frequent evaluation.

Action Steps:

1. Maintain GIS transportation database (inventory infrastructure, roadway widths, pavement markings, signage, intersections).
2. Identify traffic volumes, speeds, vehicle classification, origins and destinations where applicable.
3. Conduct traffic studies at intersections, including turning movement counts for all signalized intersections and those warranting further evaluation. Congested intersections should be monitored more frequently.
4. Generate and update a traffic simulation model of the entire Town, to model overall system and analyze problem areas.
5. Review all data on a regular basis; prioritize deficient “project areas” based on pre-defined criteria.

Objective 2 - Continue to work towards a multi-modal transportation plan that includes trains, buses, pedestrians and bicycles.

Action Steps:

1. Inventory and map (add to GIS inventory) existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure network
2. Expand network to address deficient modes.
3. Create an implementation plan to achieve multi-modal objectives.
4. Continue work on the Upper Charles Trail.
5. Consider the potential expansion of the MBTA’s commuter rail service from Franklin to Milford.



GOAL 2: Improve vehicular circulation in Milford.

Objective 1 - Address specific problems that will reduce congestion and improve efficiency.

Action Steps:

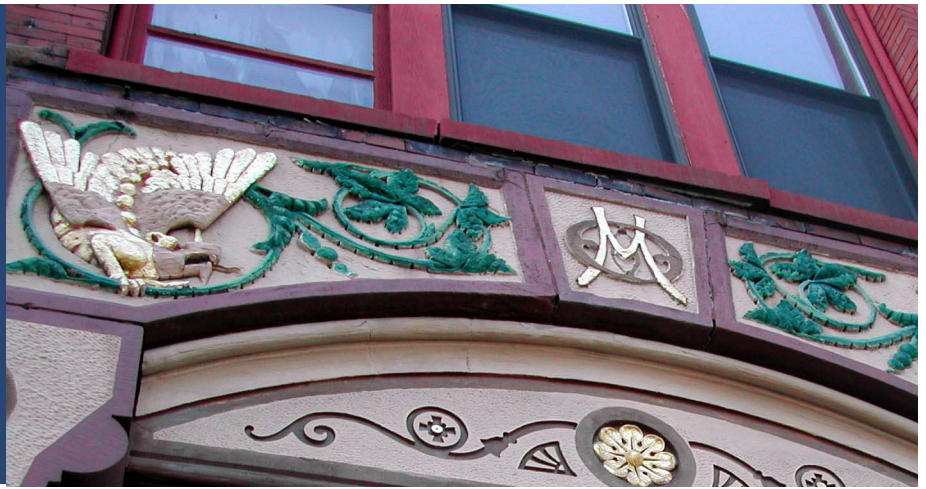
1. Prioritize deficient “project areas” based on pre-defined criteria.
2. Evaluate the downtown corridor, considering overall corridor coordination.
3. Evaluate the Dilla Street corridor and generate low-cost alternative improvements.
4. Upgrade the Mellen Street Bridge and associated infrastructure to improve access from surrounding communities to the industrial area and Interstate 495.
5. Pursue Veteran’s Memorial Drive extension to Depot Street over former rail right-of-way to alleviate traffic congestion on Main Street. Ensure that zoning decisions complement the proposed roadway functionality.

Objective 2 - Adhere to policies that maximize efficient traffic circulation.

Action Steps:

1. Educate the public about existing policies for citizen input and inquiry.
2. Formalize a Traffic Impact Study policy for site plan review by the Planning Board.

8

Future Land
Use Policies

Unlike its neighbors, Milford is already a highly developed community. While 22% of the land remains undeveloped at the periphery of Town, most of this has severe development constraints. Milford has an architecturally established downtown core with many of the adjacent areas ripe for redevelopment. By focusing on infill development, Milford will take advantage of existing infrastructure, facilities, and amenities.

The central recommendation of this plan is to focus future planning efforts on the following five key initiatives that will allow Milford to remain a unique and attractive community in which residents and businesses are excited to settle and stay. The five initiatives are:

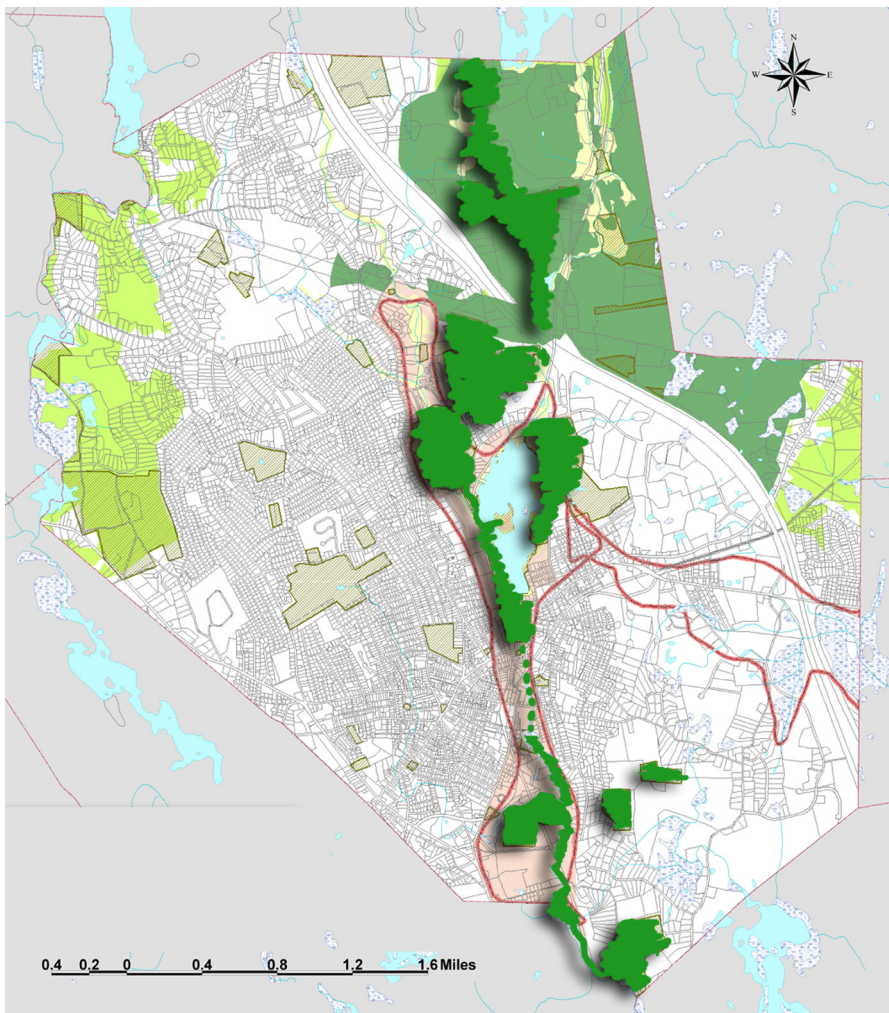
1. Establish a Head of the Charles Greenway to address issues of water quality, liveability and open space.
2. Extend Veteran's Memorial Drive to Depot Street to ease traffic congestion in the downtown.
3. Establish a Downtown Retail Incubator to help revitalize downtown.
4. Focus on Affordable Housing for all Milford residents.
5. Update the town's zoning to clarify the pattern of land use.

These major initiatives are seen as an umbrella that encompass most of the action steps outlined in this plan. By moving forward on these larger ideas Milford can set the stage for a bright future.

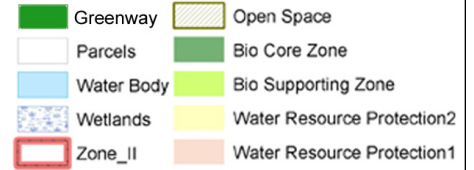
8.1 Head of the Charles Greenway

Water is one of Milford's central issues. Protecting the quality of that water must be a priority to allow for future economic development, housing and the health of residents. Milford has an important opportunity to achieve both natural resource protection and recreation goals by linking the many smaller parcels of open space that run north to south through the Town's center to create a greenway.

Milford occupies a strategic regional location at the head of the Charles



Headwater of the Charles Greenway

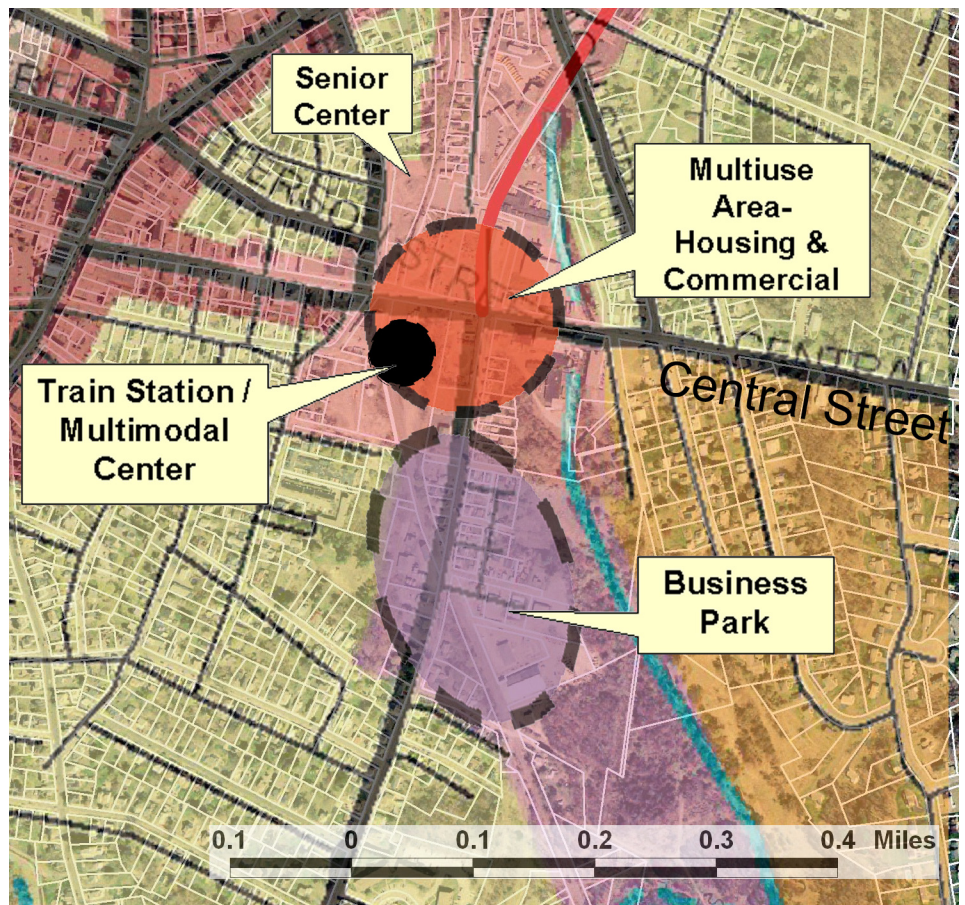


Map 8-1 - A proposed Headwaters of the Charles Greenway would run from Echo lake to the southern end of Milford.

River, and should take care to appreciate this great resource, which also runs through the center of town. The Town has very few open spaces remaining due to increasing development pressures. By creating a “central park” through Milford, in the tradition of urban parks everywhere, the Town can make a statement both to its residents and neighbors that it values open space.

The Town should create both active and passive recreation areas and conservation lands. It should also aim to develop partnerships both with private landowners and non-profit organizations, encouraging actions such as the recent purchase of land by the New England Mountain Bike Association. All efforts should be made to permanently protect sensitive conservation or recreation lands as open space-including the newly purchased Consigli property and the Town Forest.

Map 8-2 - The nexus of the proposed Veteran's Memorial Drive and Central Street will become an area prime for redevelopment. This becomes especially true if the MBTA line comes into Milford. A station with parking for commuters would make this area a hub of activity.



8.2 Veteran's Memorial Drive

Pursuing the acquisition of the right of way for the extension of Veteran's Memorial Drive should be a priority for Milford. The construction of this road will provide the following benefits.

1. Alleviate traffic congestion in downtown. By diverting through traffic from downtown, economic opportunities will improve as the commercial center will become more attract to pedestrians.
2. The extension will terminate in an area of Milford that is ripe for economic redevelopment. Veteran's Memorial Drive could provide access to a business park, new opportunities for retail, multifamily housing, and an MBTA station.
3. Better access to the Milford Regional Hospital from Route 495 should improve emergency vehicles' response time.

This route has been studied for several decades. It is time for the community to take action.

8.3 Downtown Retail Incubator

This plan recommends that Milford initiate its revitalization efforts with the development of a retail incubator. The purpose of such a facility is to provide low-risk opportunities for entrepreneurs to test out retail ideas and for the incubator to eventually act as the anchor to a more retail-oriented downtown center.

Business incubation is a method used to help small businesses survive their start-up period, which is typically a costly and vulnerable period of development. By providing affordable rents, technical support, equipment, and other services, incubators can help small businesses become successful “graduates” who then move their businesses out to larger storefronts, populating the street with a wider variety of businesses that provide jobs, economic diversity, and an expanded tax base. According to the National Business Incubator Association, 87% of businesses that are hatched in an incubator become successful, compared with only a 20% success rate for those that start without such support.

This plan recommends that Milford pursue a public-private partnership to establish an incubator in a redeveloped structure downtown that would have relatively easy access to parking. Potential niche markets for the incubator may include international food or other specialty boutiques. It is important to note that establishing an incubator will not automatically “fix” downtown. Instead, it will provide an economic opportunity to local residents who might not otherwise be able to start their own business while also providing a destination that brings residents and visitors downtown again. Patience and good management are key: incubators can take 5 to 7 years to become sustainable economic engines.

8.4 Focus on Affordable Housing

Milford should take a proactive stance in its efforts to achieve affordable housing. While PRD’s provide opportunities to include affordable units in exchange for a density bonus, these will not bring permanently designated housing units in Milford to the 10% level if conventional residential development continues at its current pace. This plan recommends the adoption of four major policies that will increase the amount of affordable housing in appropriate zoning districts and take advantage of the existing housing stock.

1. The town should adopt an inclusionary zoning bylaw, which we refer to as “reverse 40B”. Inclusionary zoning generally requires that a certain percentage of units in all developments are made affordable. Developers have the option (called the “buy-out” option) to provide a cash contribution to the Town in lieu of making units on site affordable. The Town would then use that money to establish affordable housing elsewhere. The specific proposal is that all housing developments in Milford be required to provide 25%

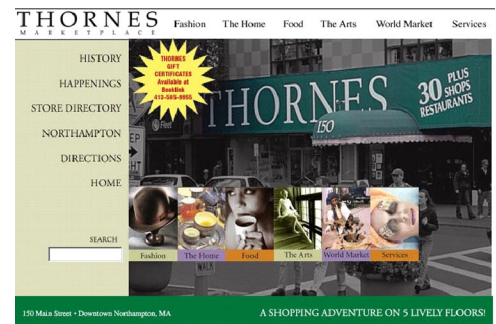


Figure 8-1 - Thornes Market in Northampton, MA helped to revitalize the downtown by providing a place for shop owners to try their ideas before moving into their own stores. (www.thornesmarketplace.com)

affordable units in perpetuity.

2. In conjunction with the “Reverse 40b” by law for new developments in residential zones, there should be a linkage (impact) fee assessed to commercial, business park and industrial developments commensurate with the level of employment that they are anticipated to bring to town. This fee will be used to acquire existing housing that can be refurbished for affordable housing. Linkage fees are intended to assure that low- and moderate-wage workers remain able to live in the community in which they work.
3. The third recommended policy focuses on the existing housing stock in Milford. There are a variety of rehabilitation funding opportunities that result in approved affordable housing units if the units are marketed to households at 80% of the Area Median Income. The most commonly used funding is Community Block Development Grants (CDBG). The housing authority or a newly established housing trust will be responsible for purchasing and rehabilitating existing units with the fees generated by the inclusionary zoning bylaw.
4. Due to the projected increase in the elderly population, it is recommended that Milford encourage developers to develop elderly housing and care facilities that provide older residents with a greater variety of appropriate housing options in town. This will allow them to move out of single family homes and free up housing stock for younger families. This housing could also be purchased with fees from 1 & 2.

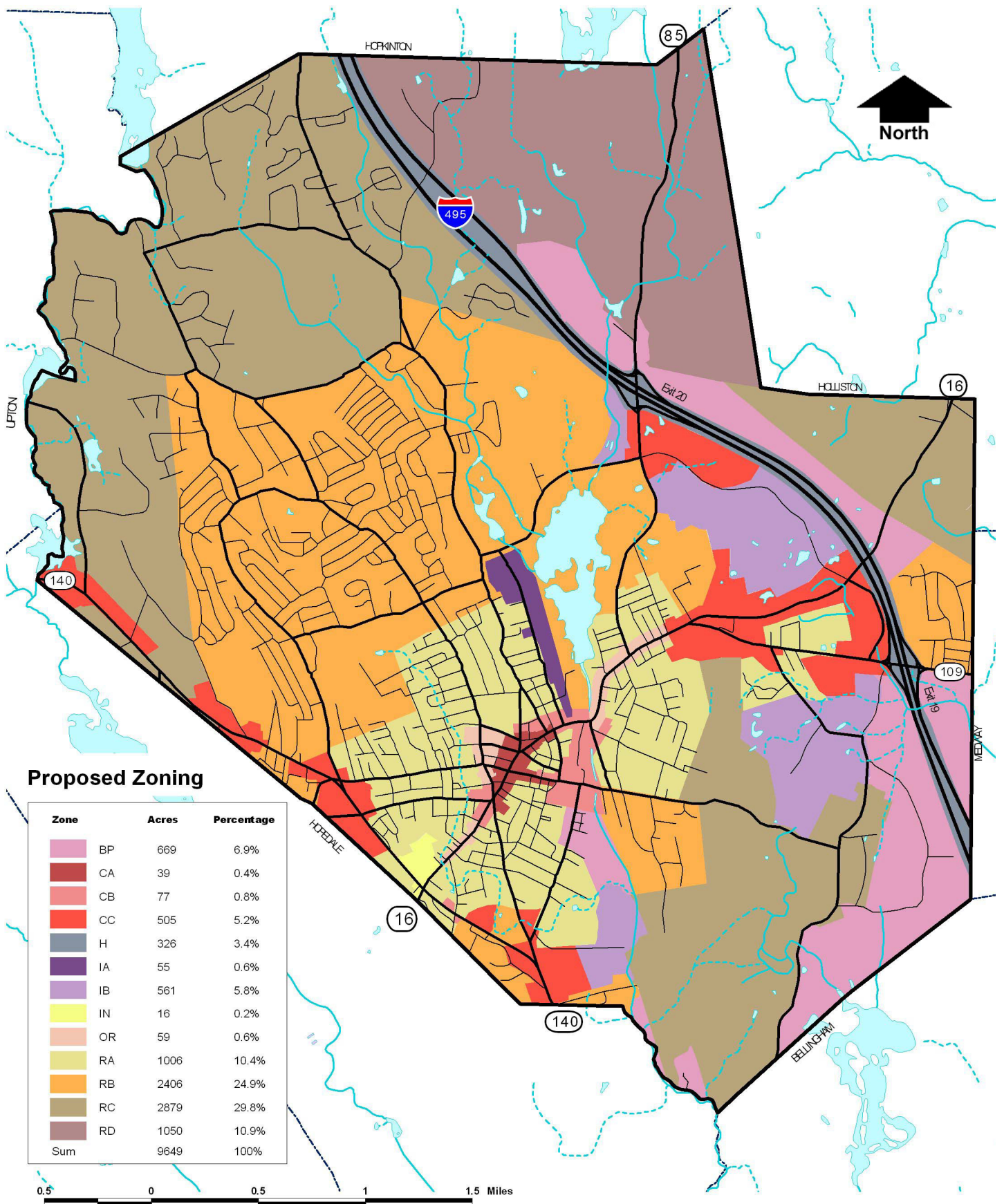
It is important to recognize that a diverse population will be served if the Town’s proactively tries to attain 10 percent affordable housing. These include, for example, elderly residents who may no longer be capable of maintaining their family homes, or first-time homeowners who are trying to start a family in the Town they grew up in.

8.5 Update Zoning

Current zoning in Milford does not encourage a clear pattern of land use, especially due to the “catch all” industrial district IB, the lack of definition in the commercial zones, and the flexible manner in which non-conforming uses are allowed to perpetuate. This plan recommends several zoning changes, which are shown in the accompanying map, that will support many of the goals and objectives. These changes will guide development to appropriate locations in Town, creating nodes of activity while taking advantage of existing infrastructure.

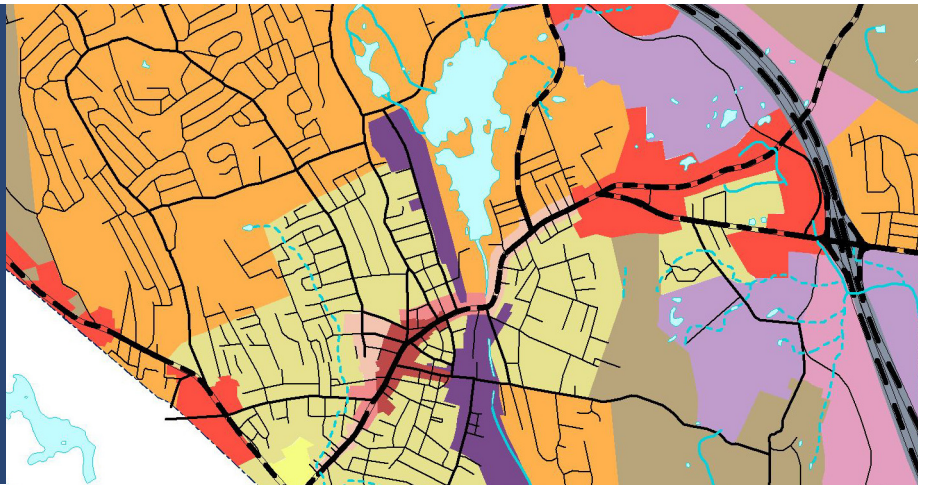
- Create a clear delineation between commercial and industrial uses by creating a specific zone for each, recognizing the current uses in those areas.
- Shrink the CA district to the core downtown area, creating a clear area for retail-oriented businesses. Expand the CB zone, which allows a greater variety of uses, into the areas that are removed from CA.
- Create an Office / Residential zone (OR) on the fringes of downtown and along Main Street to encourage mixed uses that protect historic buildings.
- Create an institutional zone for the hospital, so its expansion can proceed smoothly with clear guidelines from the Town.
- Expand the Water Resource Protection District to protect water flowing into surrounding communities.
- Expand the Business Park (BP) zone along the highway to encourage a variety of office uses.
- Change the Industrial area east of Beaver Street to Business Park which matches the existing office building use.
- Change the Residential B zone north of Route 16 and east of Route 85 that requires 15,000 square foot (sf) lots back to Residential A so that the existing 8,000 sf lots conform to the zoning.
- Alter the RA zone to allow multifamily housing greater than two units by special permit to provide for more affordable housing units.
- Amend the setbacks for the CC zone to move buildings closer to the road with parking in the rear. Getting off the exits at 20 & 19, Milford looks like any other highway community. An effort should be made to make a more compelling environment for retail activity and to enhance the visual quality of the Town.

Map 5-1 The proposed zoning with the number of acres in each zone.



9

Implementation



In order to achieve this plan's goals and objectives, many Town boards, committees, and departments must be involved. The Planning Board will be primarily responsible for implementing this plan and updating it as necessary, but general consensus must be reached among all participants and the public.

The matrix presented in this chapter identifies each action step recommended in the Plan, the board responsible for implementation, whether a town meeting (TM) vote is required, the general timeframe, the type of action and the page where further background is provided. Responsible parties should report their progress in achieving progress to the Planning Board and Board of Selectman on a regular basis.

Responsible Boards

BoH - Board of Health
 BoS - Board of Selectmen
 CC - Conservation Commission
 CDO - Community Development Office
 CIC - Capital Improvement Committee
 HA - Housing Authority
 HC - Historical Commission
 HWY - Highway Department
 IDC - Industrial Development Commission
 MWC - Milford Water Company
 OPE - Office of Planning and Engineering
 OSAC - Open Space Advisory Committee
 PB - Planning Board
 PR - Parks and Recreation Department
 ZBA - Zoning Board of Appeals

Time Frame

1 = Complete by 2006 2 = Complete by 2010 3 = Complete by 2025

Type of Action

R - Regulations
 F - Facilities and spending
 S - Study
 C - Continuing effort
 P - Partnership

2. Community Profile

Goal 1: To continue to ensure that all public buildings, facilities, and infrastructure are properly maintained and meet the demands of the community.

	Recommendations:	Responsible-Board	Town Meeting	Term	Type	Page
1	Schools - Update the master plan, giving especial attention to the pressing issues of overcrowding, maintenance, and grade configuration.	School Committee		1	F,C	19-20
2	Library - Pursue renovation/expansion grants as they become available and develop a schedule to attend to all maintenance needs.	Library Board of Trustees		2	F,S	21
3	Fire Department - Continue to work with the Capital Improvement Committee to upgrade equipment	CIC, BoS, Fire Department		2	F	22
4	Police Department - Continue to work with the Capital Improvement Committee to upgrade equipment	CIC, BoS, Police Department		2	F	22
5	Roads - Continue to improve the condition of roadways, sidewalks, and road-sides in a timely manner.	BoS, HWY	TM	1	F	25
6	Water - Continue to work closely with the Milfor Water Company to encourage conservation and maintain a high quality public water supply.	MWC, BoH		2	P	25, 29
7	Sewer - Continue upgrading the sewer system to minimize infiltration and over-flow.	CIC, Sewer Department	TM	2	F	24
8	Solid Waste - Consider instituting a Pay-As-You-Throw program and expanding the recycling program.	BoH		2	F,R	25

3. Natural & Cultural Resource Recommendations

GOAL 1: Manage water resources and land vital to the protection of water quality and quantity to ensure the health and welfare of residents and the continued economic prosperity of Milford.

Objective 1 - Provide greater protection of the water resources at the headwaters of the Charles River.

	Action Steps:	Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Modify the Water Resource Protection District to include all Zone II areas within the Town	PB	TM	1	R	29-32
2	Identify the zones of contribution in order to refine the WR1 boundaries.	OPE, MWC		2	S	29-32
3	Combine the Water Resource Protection District and zoning boundaries onto one map.	PB	TM	1	R	29-32
4	Reconsider the limits to development set forth in the Water Resource Protection bylaw and modify the definition of appropriate uses	PB, BoS	TM	2	R	29-32

Objective 2 - Continue to address the on-going issue of non-point source pollution to protect the drinking water supply.

	Action Steps:	Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Minimize pollutant loads by detaining and filtering stormwater runoff before it is discharged into Louisa Lake or other water bodies.	HWY,CC		2	F,C	34
2	Continue working on a comprehensive stormwater management plan.	HWY		1	C	34
3	Continue to repair degraded storm water and sewer infrastructure.	HWY, Sewer Department		3	F	34

Objective 3 - Enhance wetland protection in Town.

	Action Steps:	Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Amend the zoning bylaw to exclude wetlands from the density calculation.	PB	TM	2	R	29-32
2	Develop a bylaw that protects a 35-foot "no disturbance" buffer around all wetlands	PB	TM	2	R	29-32

3. Natural & Cultural Resource Recommendations

GOAL 2: Promote and encourage the protection of cultural resources in Milford to ensure that residents have access to the history and the arts and culture of the town and the region.

Objective 1 - Identify priorities for preservation or protection of cultural resources in order to retain Milford's cultural history.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Update the existing Milford Historic Resources GIS Database by adding new local State Historic Places as they are registered.	HC,OPE		3	C	36
2	Identify priority properties that should apply for the National Register of Historic Places and encourage owners by providing technical support in the application process.	HC		2	C	36
3	Encourage private owners to acquire and invest in historic homes and other historic properties in Milford.	HC		2	P	36

Objective 2 - Ensure that redevelopment in the downtown is consistent with existing buildings and the Town's cultural character.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Establish a demolition delay ordinance to protect existing historic buildings and encourage reuse.	BoS	TM	1	R	36
2	Conduct a study that addresses the effect establishing a local historic district would have on maintaining viable local businesses.	OPE, CDO, BoS		2	S	36
3	Formally adopt the sign and façade standards used for grants as a local bylaw	PB	TM	1	R	36
4	Continue to pursue CDBG grants and other funding sources to ensure that conformity with the local design guidelines does not cause economic hardship for local business owners.	CDO, BoS		2	F,S	36

4. Open Space and Recreation Recommendations

GOAL 1: Provide a high quality, quantity and variety of recreational facilities and activities for all residents of Milford while protecting the limited natural resources.

Objective 1 - Support the goals and Objectives and Action Steps set forth in the 2002 Milford Open Space and Recreation Plan that are not explicitly addressed in other parts of this plan.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Explore all possible funding sources to preserve open space and enhance recreation areas.	OSAC, CC		2	F,S	41-44
2	Continue work on the Upper Charles River Trail and identify other opportunities for trail development in Town.	CC, OSAC		2	C	41-44
3	Increase public accessibility to all town-owned open space that is available for passive or active recreation, especially the Town Forest.	CC, PR, BoS		2	C	41-44
4	Establish a standard signage system for all town-managed recreation facilities and conservation areas.	PR		1	S	41-44

Objective 2 - Ensure there are an adequate number of properly maintained parks to provide recreation opportunities for all residents of Milford, regardless of age or ability.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Adopt a Comprehensive Maintenance Plan for all recreational facilities managed by the Town	PR, BoS		1	S	41-44
2	Continue to develop additional recreation facilities and use this as one criteria for prioritizing the acquisition of available land.	PR,CIC		2	C	41-44
3	Schedule active recreation programs for all age groups	PR		1	C	41-44
4	Encourage the development of a sports league partnership to help defray the costs of field maintenance and acquisition.	PR		1	P	41-44

4. Open Space and Recreation Recommendations

GOAL 2: Protect open spaces that have high conservation or recreational values and ensure a network of connected lands both within the town and with surrounding communities.

Objective 1 - Identify all land (public and private) with high natural resource or recreation value, and create a prioritization system for protection

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Designate clearly significant parcels as permanently protected open space.	CC, OSAC	TM	3	R	41-44
2	Designate the Consigli parcel as permanently protected open space	CC, BoS	TM	1	R	41-44
3	Build upon the GIS database of vacant and developed parcels to identify lands of open space/recreation interest.	CC,PD		2	C	41-44
4	Continue to develop criteria to prioritize lands for protection and find ways to acquire those lands or the development rights.	OSAC, CC, PR, BoS	TM	2	C	41-44
5	Develop partnerships with private landowners or pursue easements to protect sensitive open space or recreation lands where land acquisition is not an option.	CC, OSAC		2	P	41-44

Objective 2 - Create a greenway through the center of town beginning at the northern border, passing through the Town Forest and continuing south through the area currently zoned IA along the Charles River.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Redefine the IA zone to allow for mixed uses that minimize environmental impact.	PB	TM	2	R	41-44
2	No longer allow the conversion of non-conforming uses	PB	TM	3	R	41-44
3	Identify tax delinquent properties within the corridor for open space acquisition.	OSAC, BoS	TM	2	F	41-44
4	Form partnerships with businesses located in this zone to provide public access to privately held open space.	OSAC, BoS		2	P	41-44
5	Pass the Community Preservation Act	BoS, PB	TM			41-44

Objective 3 - Continue to work with surrounding towns to create a contiguous open space system.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Identify priority lands that will contribute to a regional system of open space.	CC, OSAC		1	S	41-44
2	Work with non-profit organizations to purchase land or development rights from private owners.	OSAC		2	P	41-44

5. Housing Recommendations

GOAL 1: Ensure that individuals and families in Milford have a full range of housing opportunities that include adequate ownership and rental options for low, moderate-, and middle-income households and residents with and without disabilities.

Objective 1- Increase the amount of affordable housing in Milford, both under general affordability standards and Chapter 40B.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Create an inclusionary zoning bylaw	PB	TM	1	R	51
2	Create a Milford Housing Trust that will use CDBG funds and buy-out fees to purchase, renovate, and limit existing housing units as affordable.	OPE, BoS		2	S	56
3	Continue to encourage new affordable housing under Chapter 40B to have its affordability secured in perpetuity.	ZBA		3	C	51-56
4	Continue to maintain a receiving area for affordable, multifamily units	ZBA		2	C	51-56
5	Create a linkage bylaw that establishes a fee for all new non-residential development to provide funds for new affordable housing.	PB, BoS, TM		2	R	56
6	Pass the Communitiy Preservation Act	PB, BoS	TM			

Objective 2- Increase the variety of housing opportunities for low, moderate, and middle-income individuals and families.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Continue to facilitate the creation of additional elderly housing that meets the needs of aging residents	HA,PB		2	C	56
2	Continue to allow for accessory housing and encourage smaller homes	PB	TM	2	C	
3	Allow for multi-family housing in Milford's zoning bylaws in appropriate areas. Consider creating a multi-family overlay district in the RA zone.	PB	TM	2	R	56
4	Continue preference of Milford residents in new affordable developments.	ZBA, HA		2	C	

GOAL 2: Focus on the existing housing stock and its revitalization as a means to continue to attract new homeowners.

Objective 1 - Encourage future infill development in a way that complements the existing character of neighborhoods.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Encourage the development of housing on suitable vacant properties and promote infill development where appropriate.	PB	TM	2	C	52
2	Zone areas adjacent to the downtown for mixed-use to allow for small office and residential development	PB	TM	1	R	83
3	Revise the dimensional requirements in the zoning by-law to allow infill units to meet the prevailing setbacks.	PB	TM	1	R	
4	Expand areas for housing in proximity to the new senior center by rezoning appropriate areas of the IA zone for residential or mixed uses.	PB	TM	2	S,R	83

Objective 2 - Work with private developers who can gain access to State and Federal programs that will allow Milford to address gaps in housing availability as identified in this study.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Increase the number of single-family housing units participating in the Homeowner Rehabilitation (HOR) program	CDO, BoS		2	C,F	
2	Continue to encourage reinvestment in homes rather than relocating by providing technical assistance and incentives	CDO, BoS		2	C	
3	Offer incentives to landlords to improve their properties, including multi-family units.	CDO, BoS		2	P	

6.Economic Development Recommendations

GOAL 1: Build on the strong, well-established economic development engines in Milford to increase employment opportunities for Town residents.

Objective 1 - Encourage clustering of commercial and industrial uses as a way to organize development and encourage a clear pattern of land use.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Redefine allowable uses in the IB zone to prohibit commercial uses, especially retail, by modifying the zoning by-laws.	PB	TM	1	R	61
2	Identify clear zoning districts for retail and industrial uses in Town.	PB	TM	1	R	66

Objective 2 - Ensure that the industrial opportunities in town are marketed to their full potential.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Convert static Economic Opportunity Areas (EOAs) to site-specific EOAs.	BoS	TM	1	C	
2	Continue the Town's use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) agreements to attract industrial businesses.	BoS	TM	2	C	

Objective 3 - Create a clear identity by improving the "gateways" at the entries to Milford.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Develop design guidelines for the Highway Commercial Zone (CC), the Highway Industrial Zone (IB), and the Highway and Neighborhood Industrial Zone (IC)	PB	TM	1	S,R	

Objective 4 - Plan for the future growth of the Milford Regional Hospital.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Work with the hospital to develop a strategic plan for future expansions.	IDC,PB	TM	1	P	65
2	Create an institutional zone for the hospital. Consider including some or all of the residential land surrounding the hospital in this zone.	PB	TM	1	R	65
3	Encourage the hospital to continue plans to build a parking structure to minimize the parking lot footprints and maximize land available for open space or expansion.	PB	TM	2	P,C	65
4	Extend Veterans Memorial Drive to provide greater access for emergency vehicles en route to the hospital	OPE, BoS	TM	3	C,S	65

Objective 5 - Objective 5 - Ensure that workers in Milford are well-educated and possess the skills necessary to participate in the workforce.

Action Steps:		Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1	Enhance and publicize opportunities provided by local agencies for workforce development in Milford.	IDC,PB		1	P	72
2	Encourage local businesses to provide on-site skills training to new and established employees.	PB		1	R	72
3	Partner with businesses that employ non-native English speakers to provide information about available ESL assistance.	PB		1	R	66

GOAL 2: Revitalize and enhance Milford's downtown.

Objective 1 - Revise zoning to reflect established uses and create a better transition between commercial and residential areas.

Action Steps:	Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1 Modify the downtown commercial area by shrinking the CA zone to reflect the current land use pattern of the downtown commercial district.	PB	TM	1	R	65-66
2 Require that only retail uses locate on the first floor of buildings in the CA district that use Town funds for improvement.	PB	TM	2	R	65-66
3 Expand the CB zone to include land removed from the CA zone.	PB	TM	1	R	65-66
4 Create an office residential (OR) zone to allow mixed-use development in areas that do not attract retail business	PB	TM	1	R	65-66

Objective 2 - Take advantage of infill opportunities and encourage investment in the use/reuse of existing commercial buildings in the downtown area.

Action Steps:	Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1 Develop a strategic plan for the downtown.	PB, CDO, IDC		2	S	65-66
2 Encourage the creation of a small business incubator to support the development of local enterprises.	CDO, IDC		2	S	65-66
3 Change zoning to reflect the existing uses and encourage redevelopment.	PB	TM	1	R	65-66
4 Create an alternate route for traffic by acquiring the rail bed right-of-way and extending Veteran's Memorial Drive	OPE, BoS	TM	3	S,F	65-66
5 Conduct a feasibility study for additional parking facilities to facilitate future downtown use and development.	CDO, OPE		1	S	65-66
6 Preserve the historic buildings downtown and ensure that future developments are consistent with existing architecture and downtown character.	HC,CDO		2	C	32, 65-66

GOAL 3: Revitalize the old industrial core of Milford to provide a targeted receiving area for a variety of uses while simultaneously protecting natural resources and providing open space.

Objective 1 - Improve the old industrial core by encouraging higher and better uses of key parcels that can lead to the redevelopment of the entire area.

Action Steps:	Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1 Hire a consultant to create a comprehensive redevelopment plan for this area.	OPE,IDC		2	S	55
2 Oversee the transition from existing uses to business park uses.	IDC, BoS		3	C	84

Objective 2 - Revitalize the social mix and character of downtown Milford.

Action Steps:	Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1 Maintain affordable, multi-family units near the Senior Center and downtown.	HA,PB		2	C	84
2 Link the commercial downtown, multifamily residential area, Senior Center and new industrial zone by creating a pedestrian friendly environment with improved sidewalks and trails that conform to Universal Design Standards.	PB, OSAC		2	S,C	63

7. Traffic and Circulation Recommendations

GOAL 1: Maintain and develop a safe and efficient multi-modal network.

Objective 1 - Ensure that the transportation network continues to operate safely and efficiently through a continuous process of frequent evaluation.

Action Steps:	Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1 Maintain GIS transportation database	OPE		2	C	74
2 Identify traffic volumes, speeds, vehicle classification, origins and destinations where applicable.	OPE		2	C	74
3 Conduct traffic studies at intersections	OPE		1	S,C	76
4 Generate and update a traffic simulation model of the entire Town	OPE		2	C	76
5 Review all data on a regular basis; prioritize deficient “project areas” based on pre-defined criteria.	OPE		3	C	75

Objective 2 - Continue to work towards a multi-modal transportation plan that includes trains, buses, pedestrians and bicycles.

Action Steps:	Board	TM	Term	Type	Page
1 Inventory and map (add to GIS inventory) existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure network	OPE		1	C	74
2 Expand network to address deficient modes.	OPE		2	C	76
3 Create an implementation plan to achieve multi-modal objectives.	OPE		2	S	77
4 Continue work on the Upper Charles Trail.	OSAC		1	C	81
5 Consider the potential expansion of the MBTA’s commuter rail service from Franklin to Milford.	OPE	TM	3	S	83

GOAL 2: Improve vehicular circulation in Milford.

Objective 1 - Address specific problems that will reduce congestion and improve efficiency.

Action Steps:	Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1 Prioritize deficient “project areas” based on pre-defined criteria.	OPE		1	S	76
2 Evaluate the downtown corridor	OPE		2	S	76
3 Evaluate the Dilla Street corridor and generate low-cost alternative improvements.	OPE		2	S,C	76
4 Pursue funding to repair the Mellen Street Bridge and associated infrastructure	OPE, BoS		2	S,F	77
5 Pursue Veteran’s Memorial Drive extension to Depot Street	PB, OPE, BoS, TM	TM	3	S,F,R	77, 83

Objective 2 - Adhere to policies that maximize efficient traffic circulation.

Action Steps:	Board	Town	Term	Type	Page
1 Educate the public about existing policies for citizen input and inquiry.	OPE, BoS		2	C	73
2 Formalize a Traffic Impact Study policy for site plan review by the Planning Board.	PB, TM	TM	1	R	74