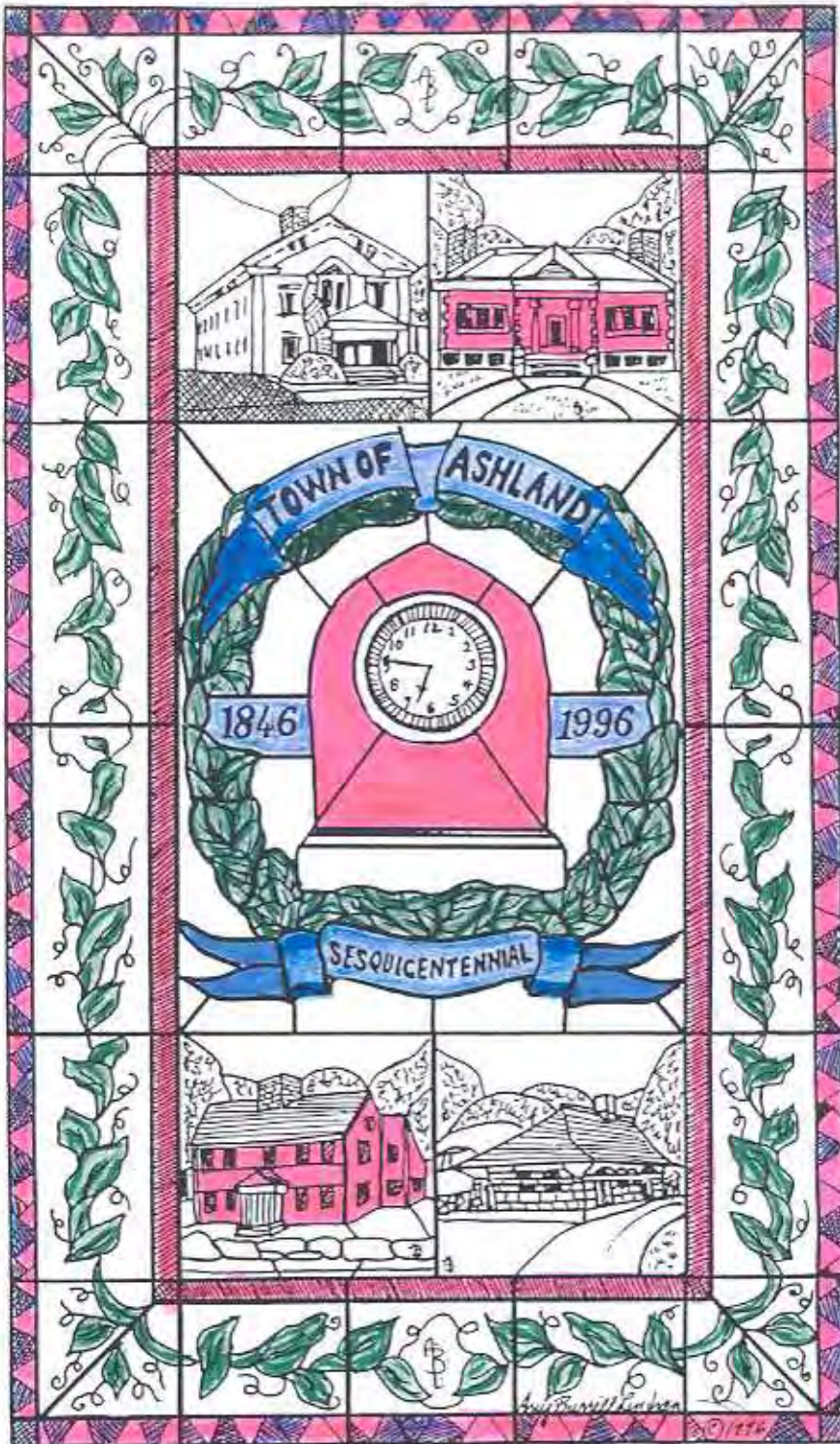


2003 Comprehensive Plan



Town of Ashland, Massachusetts

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2003 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview of the Plan

The 2003 Comprehensive Plan is a guide for the future growth of Ashland. It addresses what Ashland should preserve from its past, as well as the work that is needed to enhance the town and guide its physical and social development. *The Comprehensive Plan serves as the basis for redevelopment and master planning within the community.* It is a tool to be used by the officials, residents and builders of Ashland to shape the community in the years to come. Ashland, as all communities, faces a choice; it can either plan for itself, or be planned for by others.

Ashland is a great town. It has an excellent school system; it's an active community with neighborhoods that provide residents with a sense of community. Even with all of its recent growth, it still retains a small town atmosphere. There is urgency behind this plan: as the amount of open land dwindles and the population continues to increase, there will be fewer chances to influence development. The town must act now on a variety of fronts if it is to shape the character of Ashland in the future.

Build out

Ashland is entering the final phase of its build out*, and this plan is designed to guide the town through that period. This final phase of Ashland's growth will be the development of the small amount of remaining privately owned, buildable open areas within the town. Possibly this land will be built on in the next five to ten years, resulting in a 5% increase in the population. From that point on, infill will continue on dispersed parcels but large development projects will probably come to an end. The population, therefore, could increase as much as 30% during the next 10 to 20 years from the town's current population level of 14,500 and reach an estimated population of 20,000 to 22,000.

This plan is designed to sort out the questions that Ashland must answer if the town is to reach its future population level with adequate recreation land, water resources, school sites, adequate town services and a traffic circulation pattern that will serve the next phase of the town's existence.

It would appear that the Town of Ashland will continue to develop in a positive way, but there are problems associated with each favorable prospect the town faces. For example:

- There is currently land held in public ownership, yet some neighborhoods don't have good access to recreation land. If the remaining open land in these areas is developed there will never be public recreation land near these residents.
- The town has provided some affordable housing, but still there is a need. Many Ashland residents cannot afford to buy a home or rent an apartment in town.
- The center of town may be at the point of losing its commercial importance. We need a program that generates interest in our center. *It is time to re-energize the downtown area and the adjacent rail transit district.*
- Ashland would like to have more business development to offset the residential tax level. We need a program that encourages business development.

By protecting the past and enhancing the future, Ashland can keep what has made the town such a well rounded community and build from there to make Ashland an even better place to live and work. The key to this effort, however, is a commitment to the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan.

** Build out refers to new development under the current zoning which is generally on vacant land.*

RESIDENTS' ATTITUDES

During the year 2000 a survey which was mailed to 6510 resident addresses. The committee also conducted a focus group during 2001. The participants discussed the things they liked and disliked about the community. Basically both of these surveys showed that residents enjoyed living in a small town, thought it was important to promote a sense of community, and enjoyed participating in the community. Following is a summary of some of the major comments.

Sample items "strongly and somewhat strongly" supported

- Promote a sense of community
- Insure that neighborhoods are well buffered from commercial areas Have sidewalks on major streets
- Protect critical natural resources and wildlife habitat
- Increase permanent open space
- Maintain Ashland's historical character
- Increase commuter rail service
- Provide services and facilities for the elderly and handicapped
- Encourage developers to improve Ashland's natural resources
- Spend local tax dollars to preserve open and undeveloped land

The survey showed that generally people liked Ashland because of its location and the fact that it is family oriented. The things survey respondents least liked about Ashland were high taxes, its rapid rate of growth and traffic. With respect to economic development within Ashland, it was interesting to find that 67% of the residents supported spending tax dollars to attract business.

About 79% of the respondents agreed that the amount of permanent open space should be expanded and 84% strongly support or somewhat support spending tax dollars to purchase land.

OVERVIEW OF 2002 PLAN

Ashland now is in a period of numerous growth activities and changes and we will be for years to come. A community such as Ashland is never totally built out. There will be efforts in the future to raze structures and start anew. This plan must prepare us for our future growth. Following is a list of some of the activities and concerns that the town must now deal with and consider in the implementation of the plan:

- Completion of new railroad station/Megunko area development
- *Revitalize downtown*
- Need for new schools Growth in tax rate
- Traffic congestion/delays
- *Redevelopment of critical areas*

- Traffic congestion/delays
- Rapid development of subdivisions Shortage of affordable housing
- Improvements to Pond Street
- Shortage of recreational fields
- Trimount open space Housing needs
- Chestnut Street development
- Shortage of sewer capacity
- Improvements to town facilities
- *Opportunities for industrial and commercial uses*
- *Sector planning and zoning revisions*

Basic Approach

A basic objective of this plan is to assist town boards and officials to plan and coordinate activities to minimize negative impacts.

1. Keeping Ashland as a Desirable Place to Live

Each action taken has consequences. In the survey conducted as part of the plan participants offered comments that they liked Ashland. For example:

"Ashland. ...

is a pleasant place to live,

is a neighborly place to live I like Ashland

Ashland provides good schools and activities for its youth Ashland residents volunteer to help out and provide services"

When developing and implementing actions, officials and residents must think about how the action makes ASHLAND A MORE DESIRABLE COMMUNITY IN WHICH TO LIVE.

2. Working With What We Have

The objectives of the 2002 Plan are presented in the maps entitled "2002 Comprehensive Plan -Major Planning Objectives" and "2002 Comprehensive Plan- Future Land Use Plan". The major theme is one of working within the existing zoning/land use planning that has already occurred. The focus on specific actions that will continue to make the community a desirable place to live. The plan points out the need to address available affordable housing and economic development to aid in supplementing the residential tax rate, without increasing the area for this type of development.

The specific goals, policies and actions for this Plan are presented in the full report. The following points summarize the major concepts of the plan.

1. Pond Street Upgrade

The Pond Street corridor is the one remaining area that can provide for future commercial and industrial growth. This corridor provides the town with a number of challenging opportunities. It has been recommended in the past that the Town work with the Mass. Highway Department to design improvements to the roadway that would be paid for by the state and, as a result, the town would take over ownership. The objective of this approach is to provide roadway improvements including left turn lanes, curb cuts, granite curbs, sidewalks and plantings to improve the area. It is anticipated that these improvements will encourage economic development and growth in the corridor. In addition the town is now planning sewer improvements in the area that will also encourage development. The CPC has also discussed the possibility of creating a Renewal District or Tax Increment Finance District to encourage future development.

2. Protect Downtown

The downtown area is the center of the community and actions should be developed to protect the present downtown atmosphere and to encourage *further revitalization* improvements that are in keeping with a *dynamic* town center. A proposal that is being considered in this plan is the development of a mixed-use zone that would encourage more affordable housing in the downtown area and would encourage additional commercial development close to the very center of town. A draft of a new downtown mixed use zone can be found in section 5.9.

3. Route 135 Management

Route 135 is one of the major traffic facilities in the community, accommodating traffic between the eastern side of town and the western side of town. This plan recommends improvements along 135 to manage its future growth and to improve its aesthetics and environment. Route 135 in effect can be divided into three parts: the eastern most piece from the Framingham town line to Chestnut Street, the second section from Chestnut Street to Cherry Street, and the third section from Cherry Street to the Hopkinton town line.

4. Open Space and Environmental Actions

The first action should be the cataloging of all conservation restrictions and then work with the major institutions in town to develop new conservation restrictions that would preserve the open lands in perpetuity.

5. Chestnut/East Union Development

Concurrent with the development of this plan is a special master plan effort for the development of this area. The area being studied includes land that could serve the towns' additional school needs, an extension of the cemetery, and commercial development and/or housing.

6. Megunko Hill Area

Work with the developers to insure that good/direct access will be provided to directly connect the new apartments to downtown. This must be done with the initial development of the apartments and not be delayed until a later phase of the development.

Efforts should be made to work with the property owners on Megunko Road to develop an improvement plan that will complement the growth in the area and downtown.

7. Oak Street Apartments

Perpendicular parking in front of the apartments prevents the existence of a sidewalk for the area residents and creates a problem for autos backing up into Oak Street. The town should work with the owner to develop off street parking, preferably behind the apartments.

8. Raymond Marchetti Street Apartments

The rental apartments on the east side of the street are in need of repair and/or *redevelopment*. The town should investigate alternative solutions and act to resolve the problems.

9. Institutional Land

There are large amounts of land in town that are owned by institutions, and a large amount of the land is open. The town should work with these owners to develop a program that would leave the land open in perpetuity.

10. Protection of the Remaining: Rural Character

The policies recommended for the remaining areas of Ashland focus on the protection of the existing and emerging residential neighborhoods and the provision of open space and recreation land. Emphasis is also placed on careful road improvement planning.

11. Keep on Planning

A theme that runs throughout this plan is the need to continue the town's planning efforts *with particular emphasis on new thrust of redevelopment and renaissance initiatives to improve upon the current fabric of the town*. In order to reach these objectives, the town will need responsible committees, boards and staff to take on the task of implementing the action recommendations.

What's Next?

How can you help bring this plan to completion? First, join a town board or committee. Give your name to the Town manager for the type of work you are interested in. All Ashland committees are made up of volunteers with busy lives. The more people who participate, the more we can accomplish.

Second, make sure that local officials are working with the plan. Plans can be revised, but they should not be ignored. Are local boards using the plan's guidelines to direct their day-to-day decisions? Go to some meetings. Watch the local cable TV shows. Read the paper.

Help us make this Vision a reality for a better community tomorrow.

1.1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Ashland Planning Board and the Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC) gratefully acknowledge the time and energy that was given by town officials and town residents during the course of this project. The cooperative effort that produced this plan is a good example of the direction that Ashland is taking in its planning and management of the future. The following boards, officials and committees were helpful in providing information and ideas for the plan;

Board of Assessors
Board of Health
Board of Selectmen
Affordable Housing Committee
Conservation Commission
Finance Committee
Historical Commission
Zoning Board of Appeals
Cemetery, Park and Tree Department
Department of Public Works
Recreation Department
School Superintendent
Town Clerk
Town Manager

The Planning Board and the CPC are also grateful to the many town residents who attended the public meetings, project meetings or filled out one of our questionnaires. A word of thanks also goes to the residents and local business people who agreed to be interviewed during the course of the project. All of these people were instrumental in making comprehensive plan a success.

Thank you

The Ashland Planning Board

Gena Blinderman
Mary L. Hoch
Lawrence P. Hunt
Christopher J. Iarussi
Haig Merguerian

Planning Director: Steve Kerlin
Planning Department Assistance: Katherine Slater

And the

Ashland Comprehensive Plan Committee (members listed by assignment category)

General Goals - Ed Bates

Housing - Steve Kerlin

Open Space and Recreation - David Foster

Environment- Judith Sallet

Economic Development - Joanne Fahy

Transportation - Jacquelyn Starer

Town Facilities- Sara Hines

Historic Preservation- Curtiss Hoffman

Downtown- Scott Weiss

Outlying Areas - Nancy Lynch

Barry Bresnick - Representing the Board of Selectmen

Haig Merguerian - Representing the Planning Board

Lynne Fielding - GIS Specialist

A special thanks to the folks that assisted in the analysis of the Residents' Survey:

Barbara Barlow, Sally Larnis and Lucy Simonetti

The cover is a copy of the stained glass window located in the School Department, constructed by Amy Burrill Lingham, Artist: the design commissioned by the Massachusetts and Ashland Cultural Councils - 1996

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Ashland Comprehensive Plan is a guide for the future growth of Ashland. It expresses what Ashland should preserve from its past, as well as the work that is needed to enhance the town and guide its physical and social development. It is a tool to be used by the officials, residents and builders of Ashland to shape their community in the years to come. Ashland, as all communities, faces a choice; it can either plan for itself, or be planned for by others.

Ashland is a great town, with an excellent school system and neighborhoods that provide residents with safety and a sense of community. Even with all of its recent growth it still has a small town atmosphere. Ashland has one of the best mixtures of housing options in all the MetroWest region. All of these things make the town a good place to live, work and raise a family.

There is an urgency behind this scenario: as the amount of open land dwindles and the population continues to increase, there will be fewer chances to influence development. The town must act now on a variety of fronts if it is to shape the character of Ashland in the future.

Ashland is entering the final phase of its buildout, and this plan is designed to guide the town through that period. This final phase of Ashland's growth will be the development of the small amount of remaining privately owned, buildable open areas within the town. Possibly this land will be built on in the next five to ten years, resulting in a 25% increase in the population. From that point on, infill will continue on dispersed parcels but large development projects will probably come to an end. The population, therefore, could increase as much as 30% during the next 10 to 20 years from the town's current population level of 14,500 and reach an estimated population of 20,000 to 22,000.

This plan is designed to sort out the questions that Ashland must answer if the town is to reach its future population level with adequate recreation land, water resources, school sites, adequate town services and a traffic circulation pattern that will serve the next phase of the town's existence.

It would appear that the Town of Ashland will continue to develop in a positive way, but there are problems associated with each favorable prospect the town faces. For example:

- There is currently land held in public ownership for the future, yet some neighborhoods don't have good access to recreation land. If the remaining open land in these areas is developed there will never be public recreation land near these residents.
-
- The town has provided some affordable housing, but still there is a need. Many Ashland residents cannot afford to buy a home or rent a apartment in town.
-
- The center of town may be at the point of losing it commercial importance. We need a program that generates interest in our center.
- Ashland would like to have more business development to offset the residential tax level. We need a program that encourages business development.

By protecting the past and enhancing the future, Ashland can keep what has made the town such a well rounded community and build from there to make Ashland an even better place to live and work. The key to this effort, however, is a commitment to the implementation of a Comprehensive Plan that is adopted by the town and updated as necessary.

What if we don't plan?

Planning does not mean controlling what happens on every parcel of land, but it does mean considering what kind of coordinated effort between the public and private sectors is needed for the long-term benefit of the town as a whole. Perhaps most importantly, it means that the town should think today about its future needs. There will be clear negative impacts if we do not make the effort to plan for our future.

-
- Housing will continue to be out of the reach of many of Ashland residents. Young people will move away. Older people and town employees will not be able to find smaller, affordable units.
-
- The amount of available open land in Ashland is disappearing rapidly. The MAPC buildout shows that 1653 acres were available in May 2001. There will be a need for additional town land for parks, fields, schools and buildings. If the town continues to wait, its options will become more and more limited and costs will continue to rise. The remaining open land, something that people take for granted, will be built on.
-
- Traffic congestion will grow worse if the number of businesses increases without coordinated plans for public investments in turning lanes and encouraging the sharing of driveways. Efforts to improve traffic flow must be balanced, however, with avoiding solutions that turn Ashland into a “thruway“, a place that people just pass through on their way to somewhere else.
-
- Without government leadership and responsiveness, public transportation will continue to be a last resort means of movement for most people. Hopefully the new rail station will encourage increased transit usage.
-
- There will be a mixture of reinvestment along Route 126, but there will be no coordinated effort and there will continue to be a large number of curb cuts that will interfere with traffic flow. Route 126 must not become a miniature version of
- Route 9.

This Comprehensive Plan pulls all of these concerns together into a coordinated set of goals, policies and actions for the future. The Town of Ashland has the opportunity to guide critical land use and development decisions in a manner that will ensure solid property values, safe traffic flow, a mixture of places to live and do business and an environment that is clean and accessible to all residents. The opportunity is there to improve on what Ashland is today. Complacency will allow that opportunity to slip away.

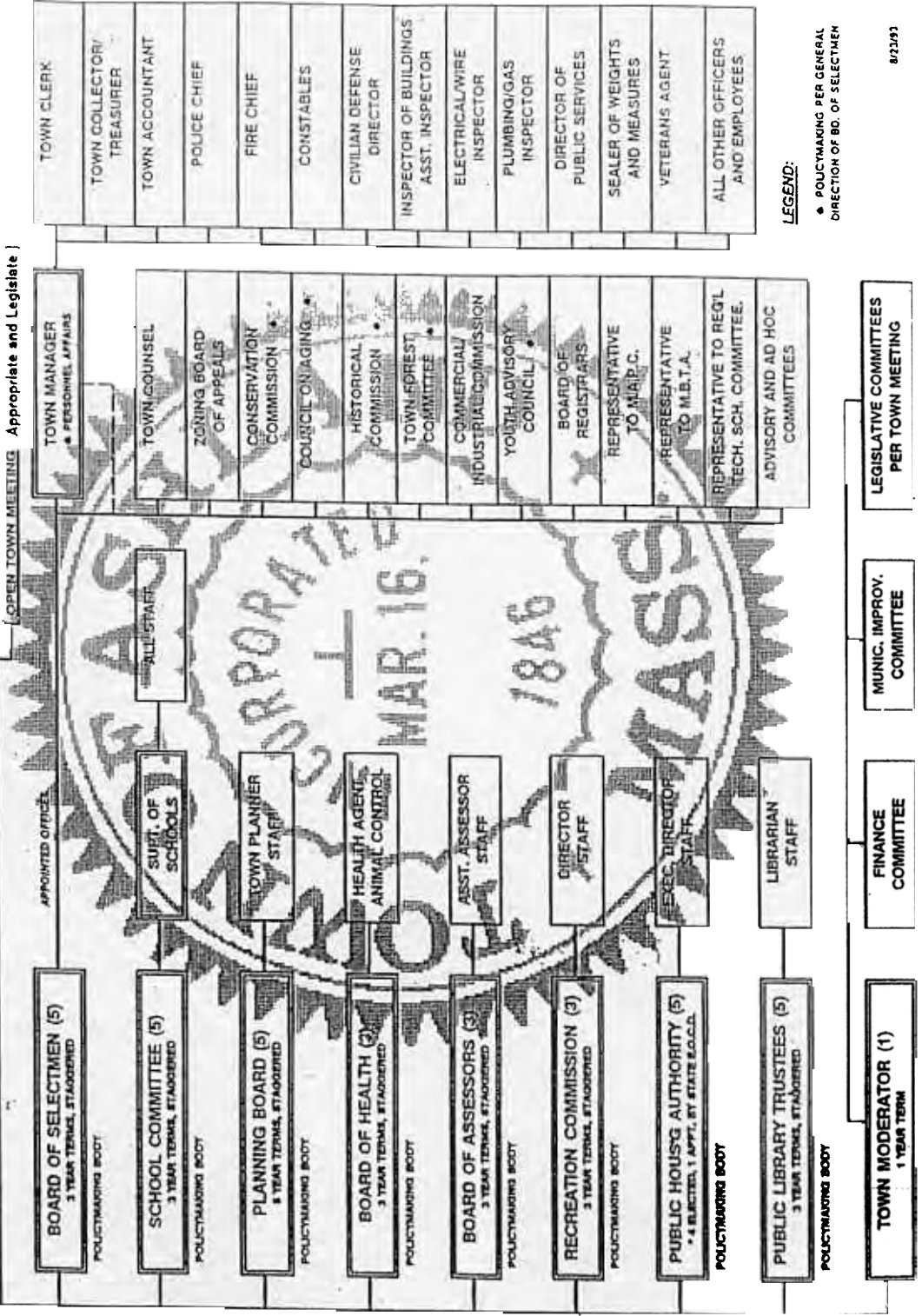
TOWN GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

The following figure describes the structure of Ashland's government. In addition to the committees shown, there are a number of others that are appointed by the Board of Selectmen, including the Comprehensive Plan Committee, the Quarry Closure Committee and the Affordable Housing Committee. The Town Meeting that is shown at the top of the chart meets regularly twice a year in October and May.

Figure 1.3 Town Structure

GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

TOWN OF ASHLAND, MA



1.4 APPROVAL OF PLAN

According to state law, the Planning Board of a community is responsible for the approval of a town's master plan. Because this is more than a master plan but is also an action plan, recommending projects and actions that should be taken and indicating those committees, boards or groups responsible, this Plan should also receive the endorsement of the Board of Selectmen. Town Meeting will be requested to approve a summary of the Plan.

1.5 PLAN UPDATE PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This plan should be considered a dynamic working guide that can be updated at any time by the Planning Board. It will be the responsibility of the CPC to propose and draft updates to the plan. These updates will be forwarded to the Planning Board for review and comment. The updates will then be formalized by the CPC and presented to the Planning Board for its approval, then to the Board of Selectmen for inclusion into the plan.

It will be the responsibility of the CPC to meet with and work with the various departments, boards and committees to determine the status of projects and the need for updates and to encourage the ongoing implementation of the action items. Updates or revisions will be documented and distributed to each person who has a copy of the complete plan.

Annually, the CPC will report in writing to the Planning Board, the Board of Selectmen and to Town Meeting then to all boards on the status of activities included in the Plan.

Every five years there will be a major review and update of the Plan.

The Plan will be produced in notebook style so that it can easily be updated. Copies will be distributed to all boards and town officials. The Plan utilizes a decimal numbering system for chapters and pages, similar to the Town Code, making it relatively easy to include updates.

1.6 GIS

(discuss the status of the Ashland GIS, what has to be completed, how much funds are required, etc.)

1.7 RELATED PLANNING

There are a number of organizations involved in regional growth planning that includes the Town of Ashland. It is important that these planning organizations communicate with each other and that the town use their plans to supplement its own planning efforts. These groups meet on a regular basis, maintain professional planning staffs and are willing to provide assistance to communities within their area.

1. Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is made up of 101 communities in the Boston regional (Map --- shows the area covered by MAPC). This group provides planning services to its member communities and is responsible for participating in federal planning programs on behalf of the communities. In addition the MAPC has developed a regional growth strategy referred to as MetroPlan.

2. MetroWest Growth Management Committee (MWGMC). MetroWest is a subregion of the MAPC made up of the nine towns that are shown on the MAPC map. Ashland is a member of MetroWest and provides funding for the maintenance of its staff and office space.

3. SuAsCo Watershed Community Coalition (Sudbury, Assabet and Concord rivers) The purpose of this organization is to explore the problems of rapid development and to foster creative partnerships between local and state government, private industry, and citizens in the local communities to preserve as much as possible of the remaining rural character of the watershed.

4. I-495 Metrowest Technology Corridor Initiative This work encompasses 13 towns in the I-495/Mass Turnpike area, including Ashland, and coordinated by the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative and the MAPC. Its objective is to improve the economy of the area and to address traffic improvements that develop as a result of increased activities in the area.

1.8 STATE PROGRAMS

Following is a summary of state programs that affect town planning, growth and development. As new programs are developed they will be added to this section. This section will also include internet and e-mail addresses as they are appropriate.

1.Executive Order 385. This program initiated by the Governor's Office, requires that each town and city in the Commonwealth develop a comprehensive plan that is in concert with the regional growth plan, in our case MetroPlan produced by MAPC.

2.Executive Order 418. This program provides a community with \$30,000 of state funded consultant services through the MAPC. The funds can be used to address open space and land preservation, affordable housing, economic development and transportation. The program requires making application to the state through MAPC.

3. Community Preservation Act. This program of state matching funds allows a community to take action through Town Meeting which would increase the residential and commercial industrial property tax by up to 3%. The funds are earmarked for open space/recreation, affordable housing and historic preservation.

4. Chapter 40B of MGL. This state statute requires that each community in the Commonwealth include 10 % of its housing as affordable according to certain definitions promulgated by the Commonwealth. If a community has not reached the 10 %, a developer can propose a development with 25 % affordable units without Planning Board approval. Approval is only required of the Zoning Board of Appeals and, if not granted, the developer can appeal to the state.

2.1 PAST PLANS

Review of the 1962, 1972, and 1988 Master Plans

One of the most striking transitions that occurred within the Town of Ashland between 1962 and 1988 was the shift from an industrial town to a suburban town. The 1962 Master Plan emphasized the concept of Ashland as an industrial town. The 1962 Master Plan map zoned all of the Eliot and Pond Street intersection as industrial and in the years that followed, industrial zoning was placed along the entire length of Route 126. This was in addition to industrial zoning in the center of town and along Pleasant Street. (See 1962 Master Plan map on page 2.1.2)

Future land use plans from the 1972 Master Plan (page 2.1.3) demonstrate the changing attitudes referred to above. The 1972 plan changed the zoning of the Pond Street and Eliot Street intersection to commercial and multifamily. The 1962 plan envisioned single family residential development across the entire town. As shown on the 1962 Master Plan Map, three zoning districts were recommended: lot sizes of 20,000 square feet, 30,000 square feet and 40,000 square feet. The concept of 20,000 and 30,000 square feet lots was eventually adopted by the town and carries to the present with the Residential A and B districts. Multifamily housing was not an element in the 1962 plan, whereas by 1972, several areas had specifically been designated for multifamily development on the Master Plan Map. This was a major shift in policy for the town, and the results of that shift can be seen today in the mixture of single-family developments with clusters of condominium development in the Route 126 corridor.

Other planning directions that were presented by the earlier plan include the introduction of commercial development on Route 135 at the Summer Street/Cherry Street/Route 135 intersection, and a clear policy in the 1972 Plan to extend sewers to whatever degree possible. The 1972 Plan summarized the goals of the town as follows: maintain low taxes, provide high-quality services, maintain the town's suburban/rural character, encourage the homogeneity of the population, protect the environment, manage growth carefully, and finally act at a regional level on important issues.

The 1972 plan provides clear evidence that times do change. One of the most important aspects of that plan was the prospect of a major national airport to be placed in Hopkinton. That plan has long since faded from view. The 1972 plan also predicted major changes in the local property tax system. This prediction was borne out in the Proposition 2 1/2 legislation that occurred later in the decade. During the seventies, the town was also faced with the prospect of increased state open space acquisitions, whereby it was feared that major acreages in the northern part of Ashland would be purchased by the state. This, too, never came to pass.

In summary, both the 1962 and the 1972 plans were dealing with an Ashland that was very different than the Ashland of today. Both plans faced a town with large areas of land still remaining to be developed and each plan presented concepts for shaping those large amounts of open land, initially as industrial development and then as commercial and multifamily

development. The 1988 Plan addressed a new Ashland where the majority of the land of Ashland had either been developed or plans had been prepared for the residential development of the land. It recognized that the town is no longer a “blank slate,” but rather its development pattern was clearly defined and planning efforts from here on must act within the constraints and opportunities of that development pattern. The major objectives and concepts of this plan reflected the Ashland of 1988 and directed it toward the Ashland of the year 2003 and beyond.

The major theme in the 1988 Master Plan (presented in the maps entitled, “1988 Comprehensive Plan -Major Planning Objectives and 1988 Comprehensive Plan -Future Land Use Plans”) was to work within the existing zoning land use planning that had already occurred. The plan focused on public action on specific land acquisition needs for the future and specific tasks to strengthen and upgrade the existing land use pattern. The plan recommends that industrial development occur within the areas currently zoned for commerce. A critical recommendation from that plan was that these areas not be expanded in the future. The residential areas in the Town of Ashland surrounded most of the existing industrial areas and expansion of industrial or commercial development could cause deterioration in the surrounding residential neighborhoods unless planned for with the utmost care. The 1988 Plan recognized that increasing traffic problems from through-travelers would only be exacerbated by increased commercial development.

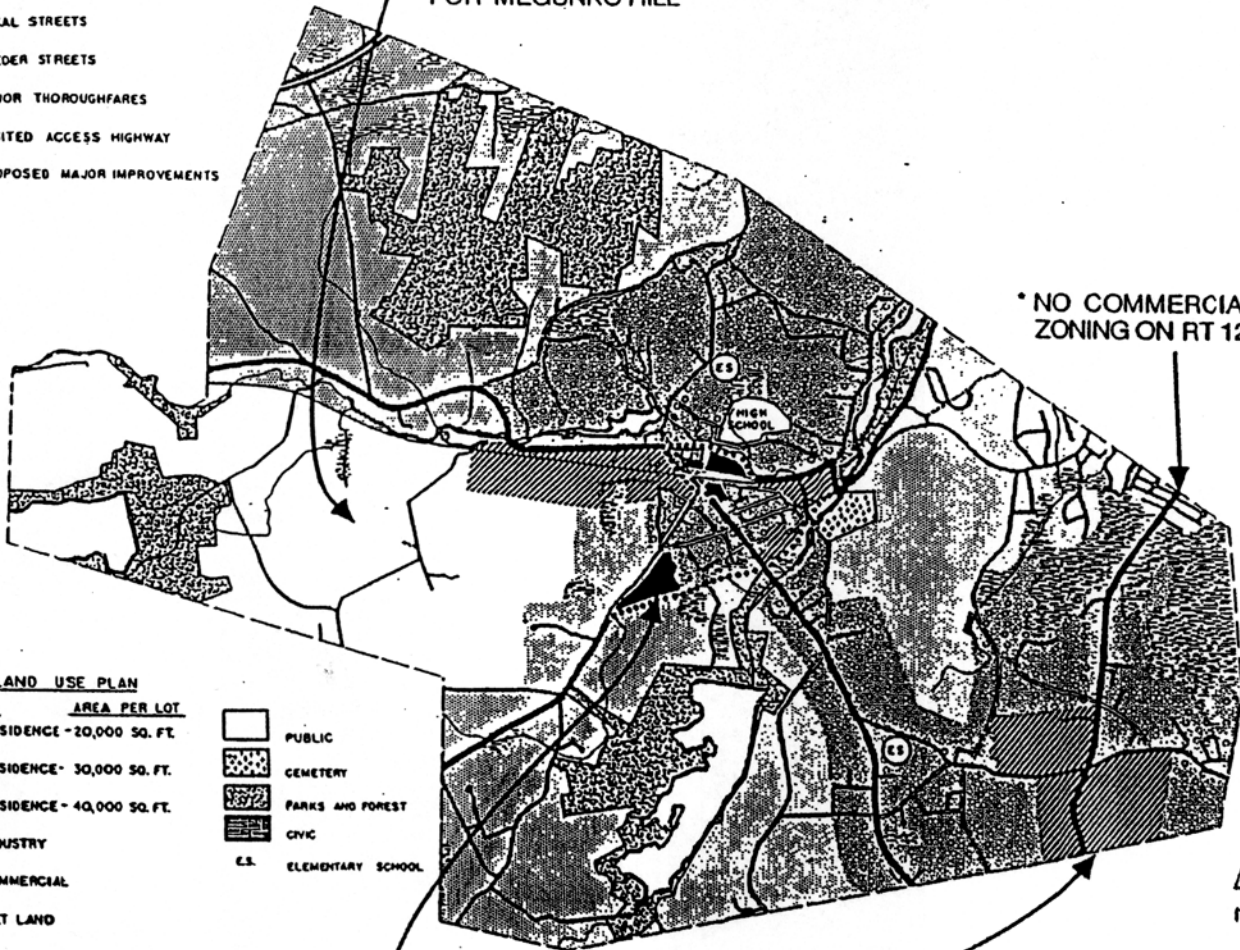
The 2003 plan recognizes the wisdom of the 1988 Plan and, in effect, has become an update seeking to build upon it. In this way we continue to move toward the broad goals envisioned for that plan.

LEGEND - CIRCULATION PLAN

- LOCAL STREETS
- FEEDER STREETS
- MAJOR THOROUGHFARES
- LIMITED ACCESS HIGHWAY
- PROPOSED MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS

* LARGE LOT SIZE
RECOMMENDED
FOR MEGUNKO HILL

* NO COMMERCIAL
ZONING ON RT 126



LEGEND - LAND USE PLAN

- | AREA PER LOT | | | |
|--------------|----------------------------|-----------|------------------------|
| [Pattern] | RESIDENCE - 20,000 SQ. FT. | [Pattern] | PUBLIC |
| [Pattern] | RESIDENCE - 30,000 SQ. FT. | [Pattern] | CEMETERY |
| [Pattern] | RESIDENCE - 40,000 SQ. FT. | [Pattern] | PARKS AND FOREST |
| [Pattern] | INDUSTRY | [Pattern] | CIVIC |
| [Pattern] | COMMERCIAL | [Symbol] | E.S. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL |
| [Pattern] | WET LAND | | |

* BYPASS
RECOMMENDED

* INDUSTRIAL
ZONING
AT ELIOT &
RT 126

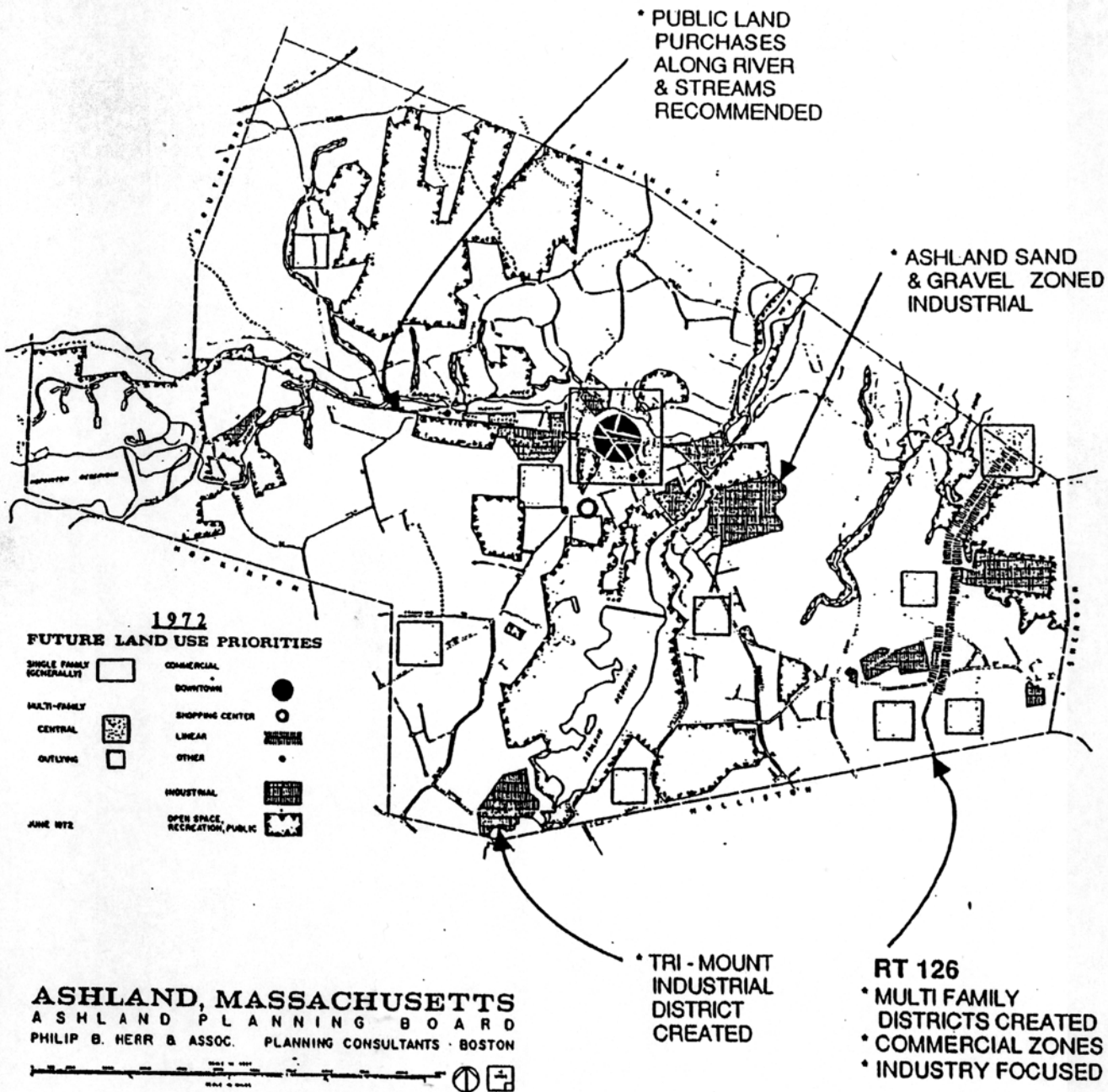
SCALE OF FEET
0 200 400 600 800 1000

4
Z

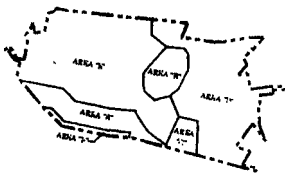
ILAND, Ma.

LandUse, Inc.

1962 MASTER PLAN



DETAIL - RAIL TRANSIT



SOUTHBOROUGH

HOPKINTON

FRAMINGHAM

HOLLISTON

TOWN OF ASHLAND ZONING MAP





SCALE: 1 INCH IS APPROXIMATELY 1000 FEET

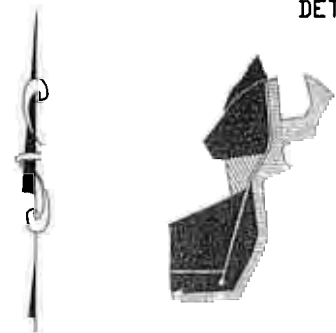
Effective Date: 9/1/72
 Revised Date: 7/29/98
 Revised Date: 5/4/01
 EFFECTIVE MAY 15, 2002, SO VOTED UNDER
 ARTICLE 20, ANNUAL TOWN MEETING.

NOTE:














THIS MAP IS INTENDED FOR ZONING PURPOSES ONLY. IT IS NOT TO BE CONSTRUED AS AN INSTRUMENT OF OFFICIAL STREET DESIGNATION. THIS MAP DEPICTS BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC STREETS AS WELL AS PROPOSED AND ACCEPTED STREETS.
 ZONE LINES ARE BASED ON BEST AVAILABLE DATA AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS EXACT DIMENSIONS FOR ENGINEERING PURPOSES.

DETAIL MUSD

-  DEVELOPMENT AREAS
-  GREENBELT BUFFER
-  PROPOSED ROADS
-  CEMETERY EXPANSION



DISTRICTS

-  INDUSTRIAL
-  RESIDENTIAL A
-  RESIDENTIAL B
-  COMMERCIAL A
-  COMMERCIAL B
-  VILLAGE COMMERCIAL
126
-  NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
135
-  MULTI-FAMILY
-  QUARRY REMEDIATION
-  RAIL TRANSIT
-  MUSD (SEE DETAIL)
-  ADULT ENTERTAINMENT
-  GROUND WATER PROTECTION
(SEE DETAIL ON WATER ZONING MAP DATED MAY 1998)

EXPLAIN DISTRICT
 REFER TO ASHLAND FIRN AND ASHLAND FIRN
 DATED JULY 16, 1981.

REFER TO CHAPTER 20B, SECTION 46 OF THE
 CODE OF THE TOWN OF ASHLAND.

TOWN FOREST

- PREPARE PLAN FOR FUTURE
- WILDLIFE AREA
- LOW IMPACT RECREATION AREA

DOWNTOWN

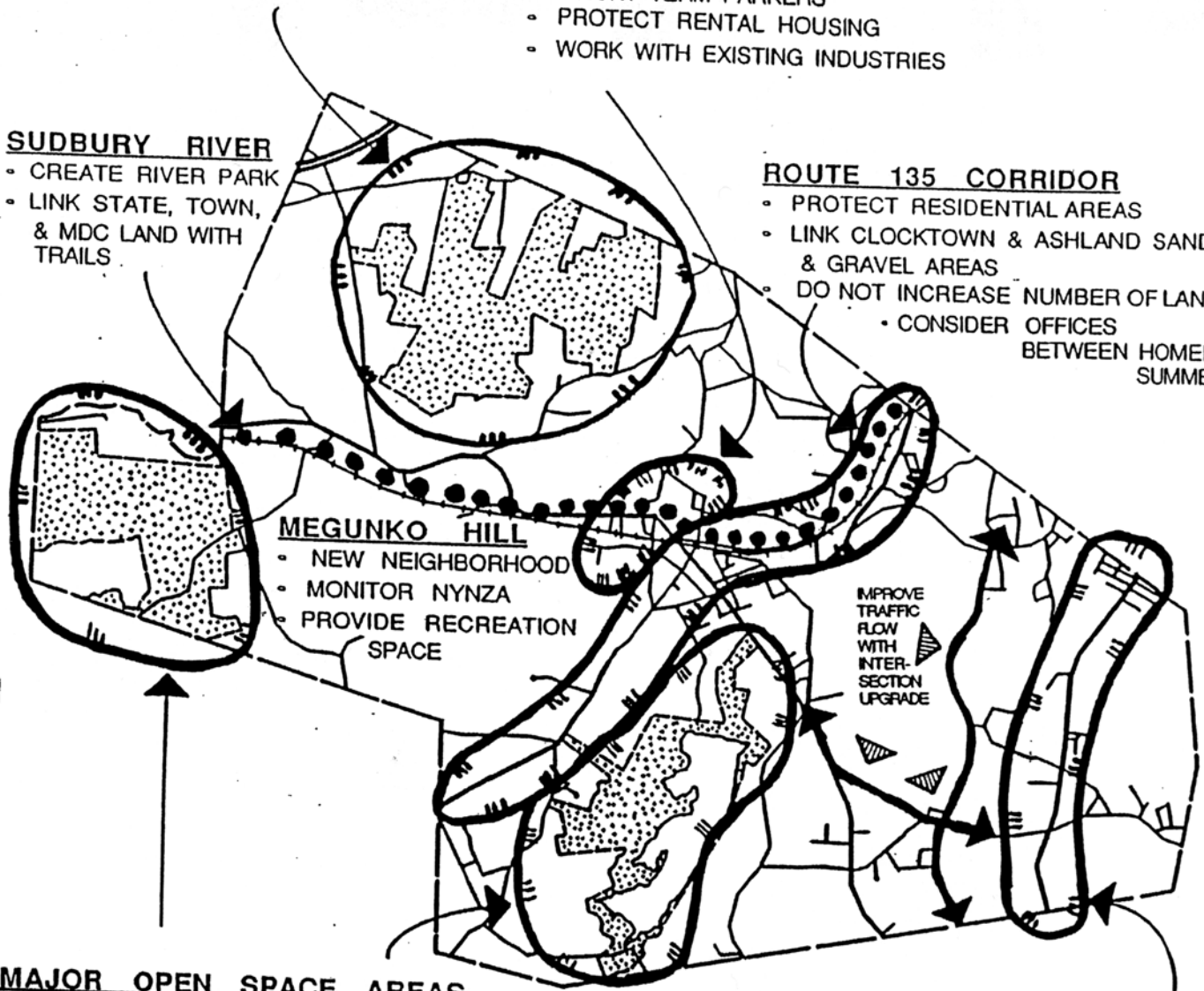
- ENCOURAGE MORE SMALL SHOPS
- CREATE PARKING FOR BOTH LONG & SHORT TERM PARKERS
- PROTECT RENTAL HOUSING
- WORK WITH EXISTING INDUSTRIES

SUDBURY RIVER

- CREATE RIVER PARK
- LINK STATE, TOWN, & MDC LAND WITH TRAILS

ROUTE 135 CORRIDOR

- PROTECT RESIDENTIAL AREAS
- LINK CLOCKTOWN & ASHLAND SAND & GRAVEL AREAS
- DO NOT INCREASE NUMBER OF LANES
 - CONSIDER OFFICES BETWEEN HOMER & SUMMER



MEGUNKO HILL

- NEW NEIGHBORHOOD
- MONITOR NYNZA
- PROVIDE RECREATION SPACE

IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW WITH INTER-SECTION UPGRADE

MAJOR OPEN SPACE AREAS

- WORK WITH STATE PARKS TO PROTECT LOCAL PROPERTY RIGHTS, PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES, & HELP PARKS ENHANCE THE TOWN
- WORK WITH NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY AND 4-H TO KEEP LAND OPEN

ROUTE 126 CORRIDOR

- UPGRADE APPEARANCE
- MAKE THIS AREA PART OF ASHLAND
- PROVIDE RECREATION SPACE
- WORK WITH COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

ASHLAND, Massachusetts

MAJOR PLANNING OBJECTIVES

1988 PLAN

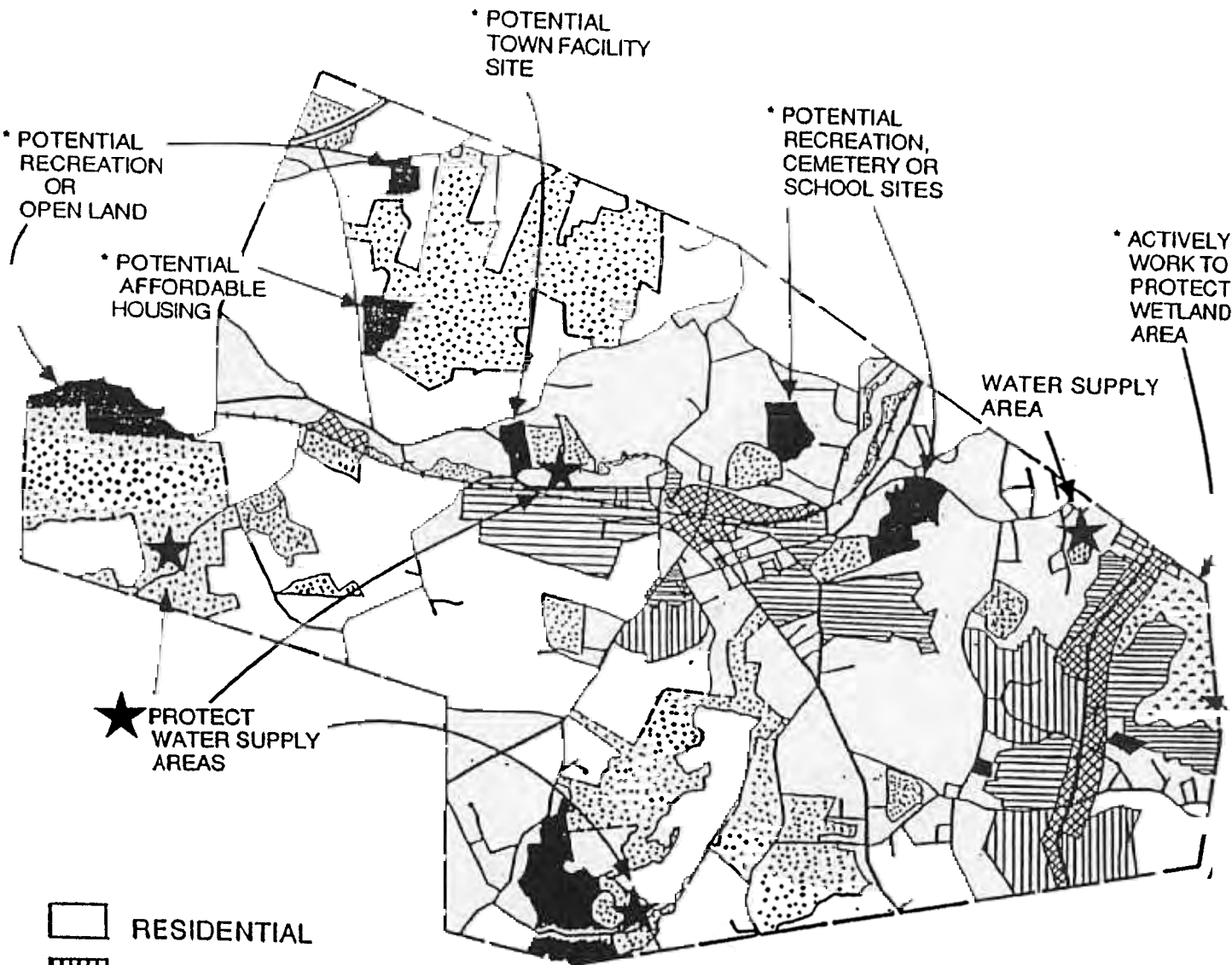
LandUse, Inc.








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TOWN WIDE ACTIONS

- * MAINTAIN INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS
- * MAINTAIN MULTI FAMILY DISTRICTS
- * MAINTAIN LOT SIZES



-  RESIDENTIAL
-  MULTI - FAMILY
-  COMMERCIAL
-  INDUSTRIAL
-  EXISTING PUBLIC OR INSTITUTIONAL OPEN SPACE OR PUBLIC FACILITIES
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC LAND AQUISITIONS
-  ROUTE 126 WETLANDS

* PROVIDE RECREATION LAND IN RT 126 CORRIDOR

ASHLAND, Massachusetts

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

2.2 EXISTING ZONING

Ashland zoning is primarily residential with approximately 84 % of the town either residence A, B or Multifamily. In addition there are four categories of commercial, one industrial and one mixed-use and there are six rail transit overlay districts, plus a quarry remediation district. Figure 2.2 is a map of the zoning districts and table 2.2 summarizes the amount of area in each of the zoning districts. Zoning ordinances are enacted at town meeting requiring a two-thirds vote. The requirements of each zoning district are included in the town by-laws available in the Town Clerk's Office and the Planning Office.

Table 2.2

Zonecode	Zoning Districts	Sq Ft	Percentage
RA	Residence A	278,631,276	77.64%
RB	Residence B	12,645,560	3.52%
RM	Residence Multi-Family	13,914,415	3.88%
CA	Highway Commerce	12,817,094	3.57%
CB	Downtown Commerce	2,155,540	0.60%
CC	Village Commerce	727,429	0.20%
CD	Neighborhood Commerce	720,197	0.20%
I	Industrial	20,211,852	5.63%
MUSD	Mixed Use Special	5,581,061	1.56%
Overlay Districts			
RTD-A	Rail Transit-A	923,425	0.26%
RTD-B	Rail Transit-B	670,357	0.19%
RTD-C	Rail Transit-C	366,394	0.10%
RTD-D	Rail Transit-D	2,969,029	0.83%
RTD-E	Rail Transit-E	3,882,980	1.08%
RTD-F	Rail Transit-F	118,102	0.03%
QR	Quarry Remediation	2,548,506	0.71%
TOTAL		358,883,216	100%

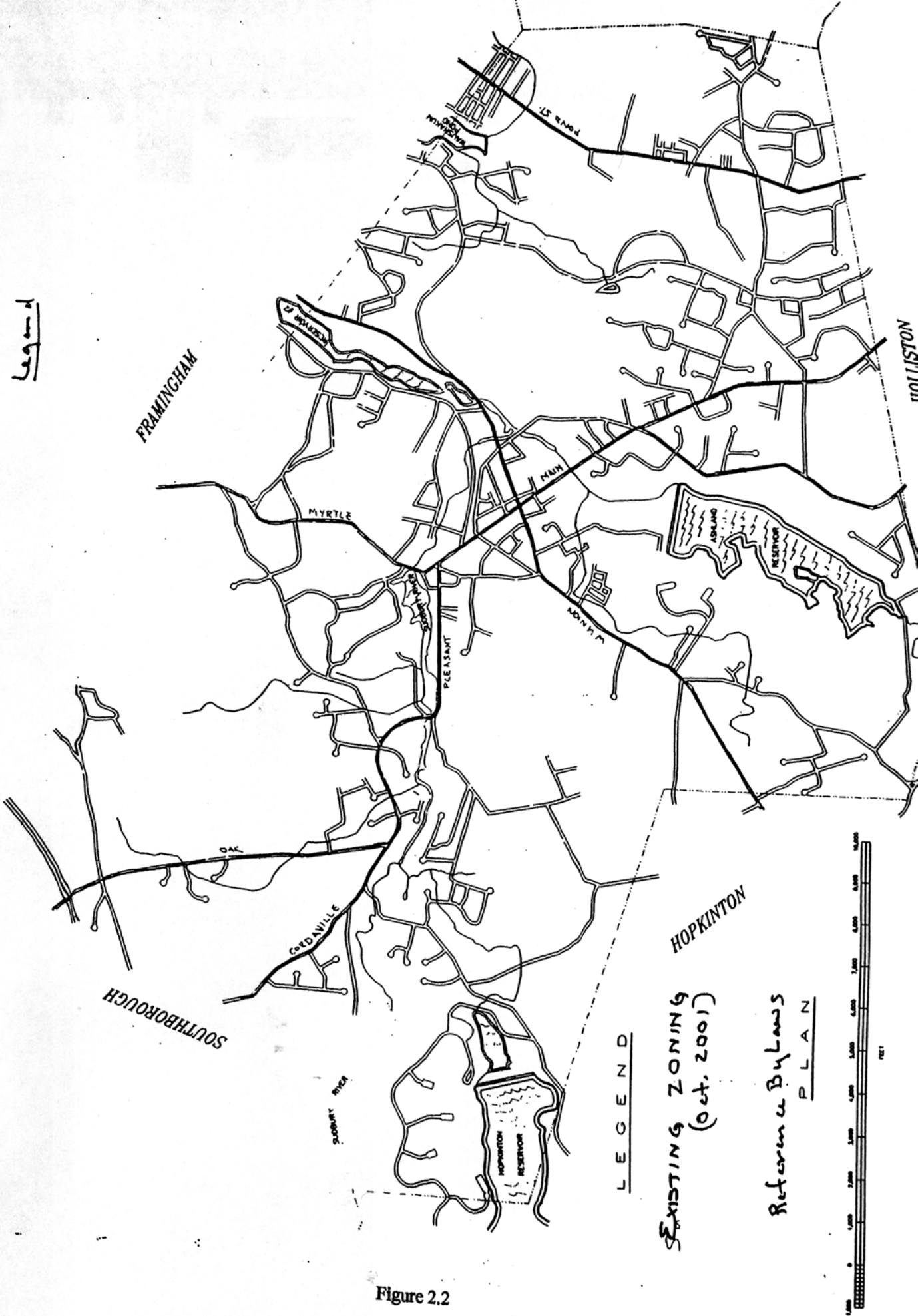


Figure 2.2

2.3 BUILDOUTS

Buildout is a calculation that determines the amount of growth that can take place within an area based on the existing zoning. A buildout takes into account that land which is vacant and buildable, but excludes wetlands or land having such topography that it will not allow for future growth.

There have been two buildouts calculated for Ashland; one by the Comprehensive Planning Committee and another by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, both of which are included in this discussion.

.1 Comprehensive Plan Committee

This calculation was made in October 1999. The calculation was made using assessors' maps that showed those properties that had structures on them, those properties that were wet, publicly owned land, water, etc.. The calculation was made by measuring those privately owned properties that were vacant and privately owned properties that were vacant and wet. The measurements of parcels were made manually and subtracted from the total amount of land in the town. Also included is a measurement of the land developed or under development since 1988 which was available to the committee. Table 2.3.1 is a summary of that calculation. It shows that approximately 907 acres or 10.7 percent of the town was vacant and buildable. It's important to note that this is based on existing zoning and does not include any estimate of existing structures being razed and facilities constructed that in effect would increase the future population and/or employment beyond these calculations.

.2 Metropolitan Area Planning Council

This agency made their calculations using a sophisticated GIS system. The town provided information concerning recent developments, open space, and other related data. The MAPC and Executive Office of Environmental Affairs staff made a presentation of their buildout to the Board of Selectmen on May 2, 2001. The specific methods and data that were used are included in appendix 2.3.2. The appendix also includes the assumptions that were made. Table 2.3.2 is a summary of the potential buildout in Ashland based on existing zoning and information provided by the town and various state agencies. This table shows that there is a potential buildout of 1422 building lots which would result in 2980 dwelling units and additional population of 6852, making Ashland's total population 20,028. A description of the process and related information can be found in appendix 2.3.

After detailed review of this method, data and assumptions by the CPC, it was decided that an adjustment was necessary. Physically the Committee thought that the number of new residents estimated for the Rail Transit District was too high and reduced that number by 1028 making the new additional residents estimate 5324 and reduced the additional school children from 903 to 624. Further explanation can be found at the bottom of page 2.3.3.

Table 2.3
ASHLAND BUILDOUT
 (based on “1999 Developable Lands” provided
 by Town Planning Department - October 1999”)

Ashland is 13.2 sq. mi. or 8,448 acres

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>%</u>
Developed or under development since 1988	924	10.9
Vacant - Privately Owned	907	10.7
Vacant - Privately Owned - Wet	250	3.0
Open Space (not buildable)		
Town Forest, Hopkinton res.,		
State	1,225	
Other	<u>707</u>	
Subtotal	1,932	22.9
Water (excludes rivers)		
(Res., State, MDC, Mill Pond)	<u>275</u>	<u>3.3</u>
Subtotal	4,288	50.8
Remainder of town		
Developed	3,590	42.5
Roads - (94 mi. x 50 ft = 570 ac.)	<u>570</u>	<u>6.7</u>
Town Total	8,448	100.0

This analysis was completed by manually measuring the “Vacant-Privately Owned” parcels. The 907 acres is equivalent to a future buildout of about 3000 persons using 3.3 persons per acre, which is the average for Ashland.

Town of Ashland Buildout Summary Information

Current Demographics and Buildout Projections

Population

1990 Residents	12,066
1998 Residents	13,276
Residents at Buildout	20,228

Students

1990 Students	1,559
1998/1999 Students	2,120
Number of Students at Buildout	3,023

Households

1990 Households	4,607
1998 Households	5,206
Households at Buildout	8,186

Water Use

1998 MGD	1.383
MGD at Buildout	2.186

Summary of Buildout Impacts

Totals

Additional Residents	6,952*
Additional School Children	903*
Additional Dwelling Units	2,980
Additional Lots	1,422
Additional Developable Land Area (sq. ft.)	71,987,914
Additional Developable Land Area (acres)	1,653
Additional Commercial/Industrial Buildable Floor Area (sq. ft.)	4,398,965
Additional Water Demand (gallons/day)	803,999
<i>Residential Water Use (gallons/day)</i>	474,076
<i>Comm./Ind. Water Use (gallons/day)</i>	329,922
Additional Municipal Solid Waste (tons/year)	3,243
<i>Non-Recycled Solid Waste (tons/year)</i>	2,306
<i>Recyclable Solid Waste (tons/year)</i>	937
New Roads (miles)	24.18

* After a detailed analysis of the MAPC buildout numbers the CPC adjusted the "Additional Residents" and "Additional School Children" estimates. The adjustments were made in the Rail Transit District because it was determined that there was double counting, and that the persons per apartment unit was too high. Following are the new estimates:

Additional Residents	5324
Additional School Children	624

2.4 DATA AND FORECASTS

This section includes information about the Town of Ashland that is useful and necessary in the development and implementation of the comprehensive plan, and this section will include as much relevant information as is available and will be expanded in the future. Additional categories will be added in the future as information becomes available.

.1 Population

Table 2.4.1 is a summary of the year 2000 population and housing information developed by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and formatted and distributed by MAPC. The population data basically is in five-year increments and includes race information and housing type and occupancy. Population forecasts by age groups for a number of towns in the MAPC region is included in appendix 7.2. The table shows a population forecast of 19,367 for Ashland in the year 2025. In other words this projection shows that Ashland will not quite reach buildout by 2025.

.2 Housing

Table 2.4.3 is a yearly summary of housing units that are included in the calculations that are required as part of chapter 40B “subsidized housing”. The information that is provided in this table is through September 1997 and will be updated when new information becomes available. According to the Ashland Affordable Housing Committee, in January 2001 there were 1900 residents 60 years or older, 2998 residents 55 years and older. These groups pay 30 % of the town taxes. This information has been used to point out the need for more senior affordable housing units.

.3 Tax Rates

Table 2.4.4 is a summary of the residential and commercial tax rates for Ashland. Notice that the tax rate for residential and commercial properties were the same up to 1988. In 1989 the Ashland Board of Selectmen separated the residential and commercial rates. There has been an effort in recent years to make these rates more similar in an effort to encourage business development. In 1989 the commercial rate was 31% higher than residential and in 2002 the difference is 7 %.

.4 Transportation

Commuter Railroad Station.

The new commuter railroad station on the west side of the downtown area opened in the summer of 2002. The station includes 700 parking spaces half on the south side of the tracks and half on the north side. The CPC has spent considerable time discussing methods of making the station and the new Jefferson apartment complex an active part of the downtown area.

Bus Service

Ashland does have some bus service. The Lift program provided by the Town of Framingham does travel through Ashland from Framingham to Hopkinton. The maps of these routes are included in appendix. The Lift Bus that travels Route 135 will not go into the new rail station for potential commuters.

E. Scenic Roads

There are seven scenic roads in Ashland. The roads are shown on the map on page 2.4.7. Scenic roads are governed by MGL Chapter 249 Section 15. Basically the law requires that the Planning Board hold a public hearing before a tree is cut down or a rock wall is disturbed. Consideration should be given to expanding these regulations and adding additional roads to the program.



Ashland 2000 Census (U.S.)

	1990	2000	% Change
Total Population	12,066	14,674	21.6%
SEX AND AGE			
Males (All)	5,886	7,100	20.6%
Females (All)	6,180	7,574	22.6%
Under 5 years	940	1,153	22.7%
5 to 9 years	769	1,092	42.0%
10 to 14 years	588	944	60.5%
15 to 19 years	627	719	14.7%
20 to 24 years	784	533	-32.0%
25 to 34 years	2,721	2,145	-21.2%
35 to 44 years	2,316	3,060	32.1%
45 to 54 years	1,206	2,372	96.7%
55 to 59 years	489	729	49.1%
60 to 64 years	467	495	6.0%
65 to 74 years	776	856	10.3%
75 to 84 years	300	483	61.0%
85 years and over	83	93	12.0%
Median age (years)	33.7	37.4	11.1%
10 years and over	9,409	10,967	16.6%
15 years and over	1,159	1,432	23.6%
RACE*			
One race		14,371	21.6%
White	11,499	13,482	17.2%
Black or African American	229	262	14.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native	11	15	36.4%
Asian	248	363	46.4%
Asian Indian	74	157	112.2%
Chinese	90	117	30.0%
Filipino	22	25	13.6%
Japanese	11	16	45.5%
Korean	31	24	-22.6%
Vietnamese	8	11	37.5%
Other Asian	12	13	8.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1	4	300.0%
Native Hawaiian	1	1	0.0%
Guamanian or Chamorro	0	0	
Samoa	0	0	
Other Pacific Islander	0	3	
Some other race	78	245	214.1%
Two or more races		303	

	1990	2000	% Change
HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE			
Total Population	12,066	14,674	21.6%
Hispanic	238	428	79.0%
Mexican	32	34	6.3%
Puerto Rican	82	132	61.0%
Cuban	10	16	60.0%
Other Hispanic or Latino	114	246	115.0%
Not Hispanic	11,828	14,246	20.0%
White alone (NH)	11,339	13,226	16.7%
RELATIONSHIP			
Total population	12,066	14,674	21.6%
In household	11,929	14,642	22.3%
Householder	4,607	5,720	24.1%
Spouse	2,688	3,386	25.6%
Child	3,579	4,373	22.0%
Other relative	439	450	2.3%
Nonrelatives	616	713	15.0%
In group quarters	137	32	-76.0%
Institutionalized population	125	26	-79.0%
Noninstitutionalized population	12	6	-50.0%
HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE			
Total households	4,607	5,720	24.1%
Family households (families)	3,248	4,023	23.9%
Married-couple family	2,688	3,386	25.6%
Female householder, no husband pres	435	465	6.7%
Nonfamily households	1,359	1,697	24.2%
Householder living alone	996	1,296	30.0%
Householder Living Alone 65 years and over	287	404	40.8%
Average household size	2.59	2.56	-1.2%
Average family size	3.06	3.04	-0.7%
HOUSING OCCUPANCY			
Total housing units	4,821	5,794	20.1%
Occupied housing units	4,607	5,720	24.1%
Vacant housing units	214	74	-65.4%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	12	13	8.3%
Homeowner vacancy rate (percent)	1.5	0.3	-80.0%
Rental vacancy rate (percent)	7.5	3	-60.0%
HOUSING TENURE			
Occupied housing units	4,607	5,720	24.1%
Owner-occupied housing units:	3,409	4,556	33.0%
Renter-occupied housing units	1,198	1,164	-2.8%
Average household size of owner-occupied	2.7	2.17	-19.3%
Average household size of renter-occupied	2.2	2.66	20.9%

*Two or more races was an option only for the 2000 census, and doesn't apply to 1990.

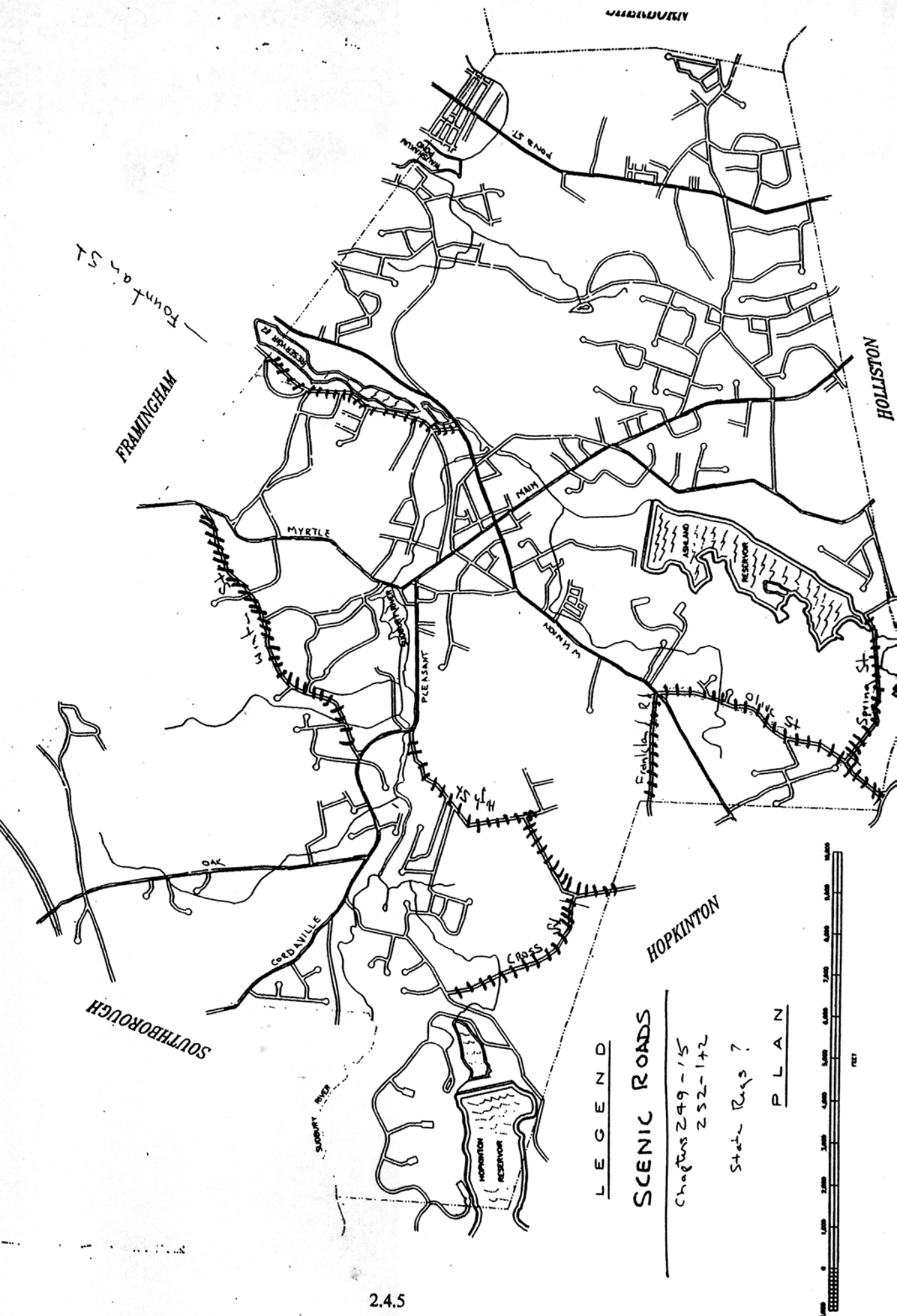
Table 2.4.2

**FISCAL YEAR
TAX RATES**

SOURCE:

TOWN OF ASHLAND
BOARD OF ASSESSORS

1982	- 21.80
1983	- 21.40
1984	- 21.08
1985	- 18.40
1986	- 21.00
1987	- 22.20
1988	- R. 12.18 C. 15.92
1989	- R. 12.82 C. 16.70
1990	- R. 13.31 C. 17.39
1991	- R. 13.14 C. 17.35
1992	- R. 13.82 C. 17.31
1993	- R. 16.01 C. 20.17
1994	- R. 17.11 C. 21.53
1995	- R. 17.67 C. 22.14
1996	- R. 17.42 C. 21.09
1997	- R. 17.14 C. 20.84
1998	- R. 17.91 C. 21.29
1999	- R. 18.32 C. 21.31
2000	- R. 16.19 C. 18.04
2001	- R. 16.07 C. 17.89
2002	- R. 16.79 C. 17.92



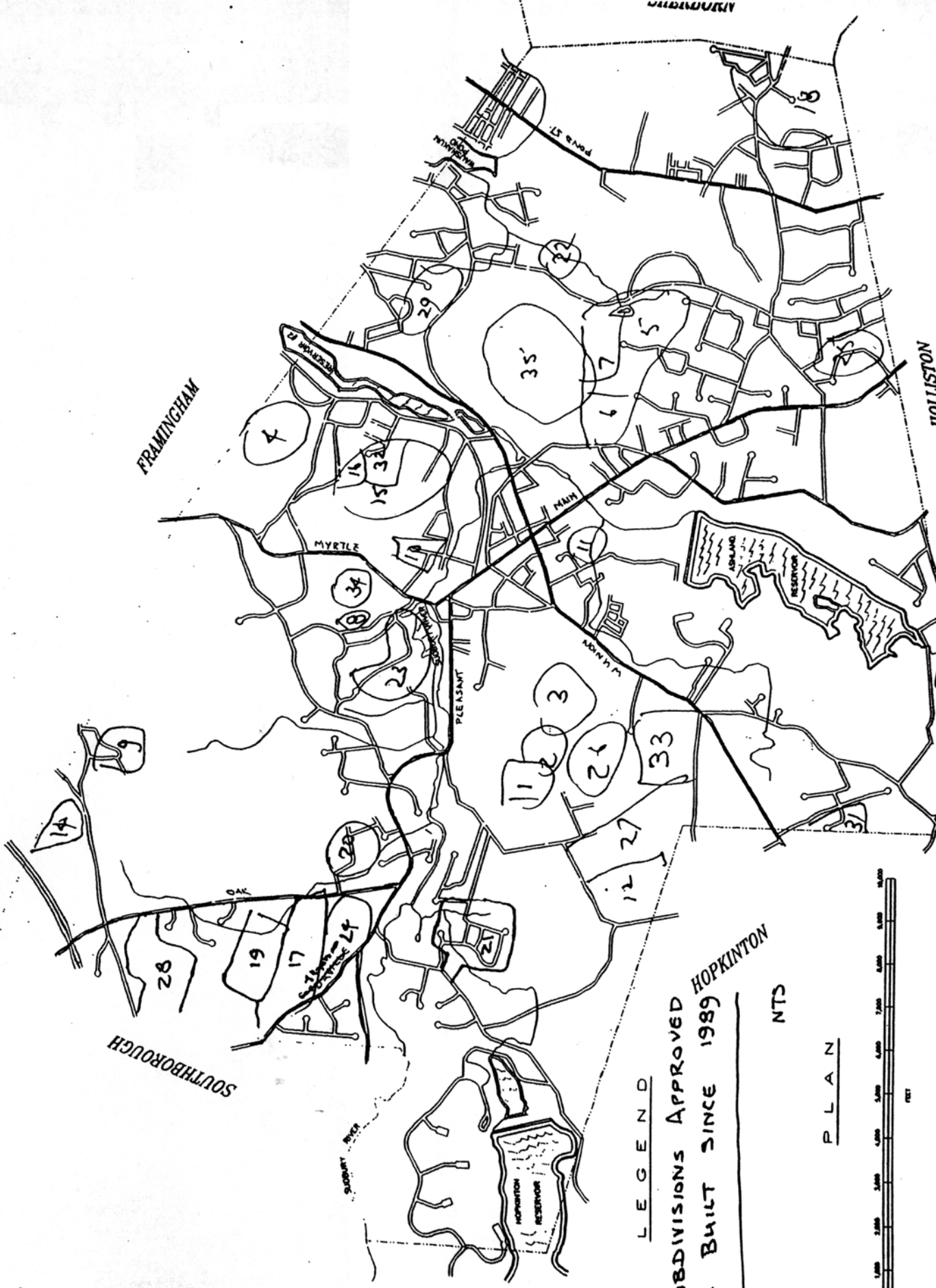
2.5. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Since 1989 there have been 35 subdivisions approved in Ashland. These subdivisions include a total of 809 acres and as of May 2001 620 units were built out of 895 units approved. Table 2.4.5 which follows is a summary of the subdivisions and map 2.4.5 shows location of each of the subdivisions.

Subdivisions Approved or Built Since 1989

ID	Name	Total Acres	Date Appr	Units Built	Total Uni
1	Apple Ridge I	31.6	11/25/1994	50	50
2	Apple Ridge II	3.9	9/1/1994	6	6
3	Apple Ridge III	62.3	1/18/1996	42	52
4	Ballard Hill Estates	27.4	10/2/1992	33	34
5	Blossom Estates I	51.3	1/18/1989	51	57
6	Blossom Estates II	6.0	6/12/1995	7	8
7	Blossom Estates III	1.6	2/4/1999	2	2
8	Blueberry Estates	5.4	7/25/1996	12	20
9	Camelot Village	11.8	4/29/1999	11	20
10	Castle Hill Village I and II	10.1	1/20/1987	11	11
11	Christy Lane Extension	4.3	5/24/1988	3	3
12	Cookingham Greene	41.2	5/20/2000	0	65
13	Deer Run	25.3	11/5/1997	18	21
14	Fayville Farms	11.8	11/14/1989	0	11
15	Fiske Hill Estates	30.3	9/19/1996	12	33
16	Hayden Village	3.4	7/27/2000	0	4
17	Heritage Estates	57.5	8/24/1990	60	65
18	Hillside Farms	38.0	11/22/1988	33	34
19	Howard Estates	57.0	12/4/1997	40	40
20	Hunters Village	9.0	9/2/1986	7	10
21	Indian Brook Estates	55.5	4/9/1987	35	53
22	Marina Estates	3.3	2/10/1995	4	4
23	Mill Pond Estates	29.1	3/12/1985	25	29
24	Oak View Estates	15.7	8/15/1996	17	17
25	Oak Woods Estates	12.6	2/2/1989	22	26
26	Orchard Hill I	22.2	11/20/1997	20	24
27	Orchard Hill II	42.9	11/5/1998	25	37
28	Oregon Heights	37.5	12/4/1997	15	45
29	Parkhurst Acres I and II	12.7	8/17/1995	11	18
30	Signature Estates	18.0	7/13/1998	10	19
31	Town Line Village	8.6	4/28/1987	7	7
32	Upland Road Extension	2.8	12/13/1988	3	4
33	Walkup Estates	12.5	4/19/1994	5	6
34	West Mountain Estates	7.3	4/28/1987	6	6
35	Wildwood Estates	39.1	4/22/1986	53	64
		<u>809.1</u>		<u>620</u>	<u>895</u>

as of 1/25/2002



LEGEND
 SUBDIVISIONS APPROVED
 OR BUILT SINCE 1989

NTS

PLAN



2.6 HAZARDOUS SITES

Fifteen remaining hazardous waste sites have been identified in town. Table 2.4.5 is a listing of those sites with their location and a definition of the problem. Map 2.6 shows the actual locations of the sites. The CPC with the assistance of a town resident is familiar with changing state and federal laws and funding dealing with the remediation of hazardous sites and will update the Plan in the future as legislative actions are taken.

Table 2.6.1

Listing of 21-E Hazardous Waste Sites in Ashland
Dates: Jan. 1987 thru Oct. 2000
Total Sites - 51 Sites Remaining -15

Site #	ID #	Address	Site name/Location	Date	Status
1	3-0000215	11 Munhall Dr	Property	1/15/87	DEF1B
2	3-0000216	Megunko Rd	Nyanza Chemical	1/15/87	1A Ph. 4
3	3-0000221	409 Elliot St	Cadillac Paint	7/15/87	1A Ph. 4
4	3-0000519	71 Spring St	Trimont Bituminous	1/15/87	1A Ph 5
5	3-0001365	11 Cordaville Rd	Perini Corp	1/15/90	Tier 2
6	3-0001812	119 Pond St/RT 126	Pel's Sunoco	1/15/89	Tier 2
7	3-0002459	Pond St/Kings Plaza	Gas Station(fmr)	1/15/90	DEF 1B
8	3-0003617	230 Elliot St	Commercial Prop.	7/15/91	DEF 1B
9	3-0004354	68-72 Union St	Commercial Prop.	7/15/93	Tier 1B
10	3-0004669	2 Megunko Rd.	Middlesex Equip.	10/1/93	Tier 2
11	3-0010908	Nickerson Rd	No Location Aid	10/1/93	DEF 1B
12	3-0012610	280-330 Pleasant St	FMR/3C Electric	6/22/95	DEF 1B
13	3-0015667	Megunko Rd	Nyanza NPL	10/29/97	DEF 1B
14	3-0015868	205 Main St	U.S. Post Office	12/26/97	Tier 2
15	3-0018035	205 Main St	No location aid ?	2/23/99	DEF 1B

Source: Mass DEP Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup Site List Search 2/8/01

Definitions: Compliance Status- Tier 1A; requires a permit and response action is under direct DEP supervision. Tier 1B; requires a permit but response action is under supervision of a Licensed Site Professional (LSP) without prior DEP approval. Tier 2; no permits required and response action is under supervision of LSP without prior DEP approval. Default 1B: The responsible party fails to provide a required submittal to DEP by a specific deadline. DEF

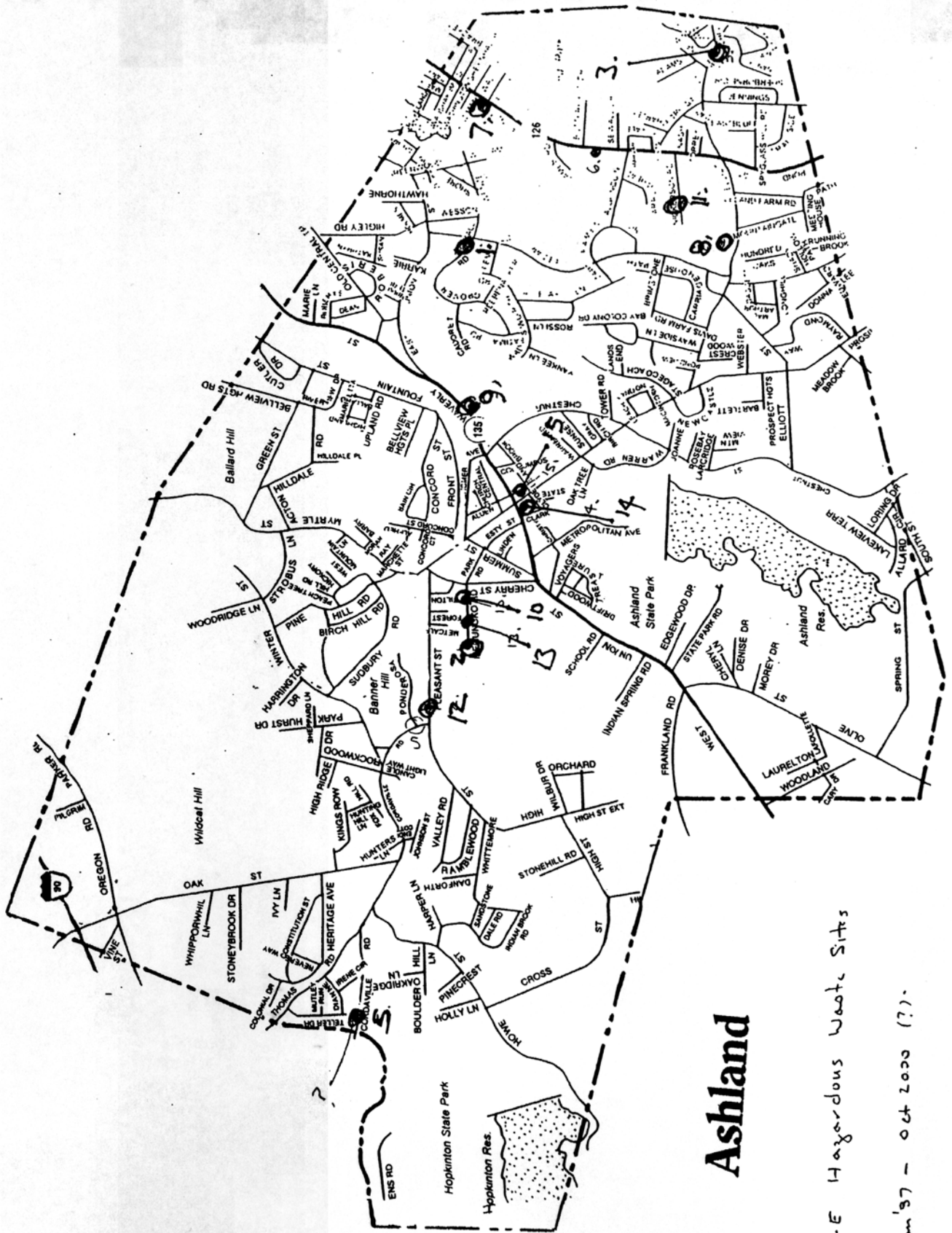
Date: Usually is date when site was reported to DEP.

NFA:No Further Action-Response actions were conducted and DEP determined NFA needed at the site.

ROA: Response Action Outcome-Asserts that response actions were sufficient to achieve level of no significant risk or all substantial hazards were eliminated

PHASE: Indicates site stage of cleanup, from stage 1-initial, to stage 5-long term treatment processes implemented and monitored to track cleanup progress.

The other 36 registered Ashland sites have been classified as ROA, NFA or Closed by DEP



Ashland

21-E Hazardous Waste Sites

Jan '97 - Oct 2000 (?)

3.1 RESIDENTS' ATTITUDES

During May and June of 2000 the CPC and the Planning Board developed a four-page residents attitude survey which was mailed to 6510 resident addresses. There were 2125 surveys returned. This resulted in a return rate of 34.5 % which was considered to be extremely high, showing a high degree of interest in the future of the town. The result of the survey is found in appendix 3.1.

In addition to the mail survey the committee conducted a focus group during February 2001. The focus group was made up of 12 community residents, CPC members who discussed the things they liked and disliked about the community. Basically both of these surveys showed that residents enjoyed living in a small town, thought it was important to promote a sense of community, and enjoyed participating in the community. Following is a summary of some of the major comments. The committee has used the results of the survey in the development of the plan and will continue to use the survey in the future to refine recommendations.

Sample items “strongly and somewhat strongly” supported

- Promote sense of community
- Insure that neighborhoods are well buffered from commercial areas
- Have sidewalks on major streets
- Protect critical natural resources and wildlife habitat
- Increase permanent open space
- Maintain Ashland’s historical character
- Increase commuter rail service
- Provide services and facilities for the elderly and handicapped
- Encourage developers to improve Ashland’s natural resources
- Spend local tax dollars to preserve open and undeveloped land

In the survey results found in the appendix one can refer to those items that residents generally were opposed to or did not support as strongly as those mentioned above. In addition the survey showed that generally people liked Ashland because of its location and the fact that it is family oriented. The things survey respondents least liked about Ashland were high taxes, its rapid rate of growth and traffic.

With respect to economic development within Ashland, it was interesting to find that 67% of the residents supported spending tax dollars to attract business.

About 79% of the respondents agreed that the amount of permanent open space should be expanded and 84% strongly support or somewhat support spending tax dollars to purchase land.

Focus group summary

The summary of the focus group can also be found in the appendix. Basically people participating in the focus group discussion liked Ashland because of its school system, its programs for the youth, effective town government, and its location. Negative comments were made concerning the cost of housing, sewer capacity, traffic and insufficient means to attract commercial growth and lack of coordinated planning.

The group also discussed priorities that they should focus on, which included the following:

- Stabilize taxes with commercial and industrial growth
- Encourage apartments and condos
- Better planning
- Develop innovative solutions for traffic problems

When asked to rank town challenges, growing traffic problems was first, lack of commercial/industrial uses, which relates to taxes, was second; and loss of open space and wetlands was third.

In summary the survey and focus group resulted in the conclusion that residents enjoy living in Ashland, clearly believe there is room for improvement and have a sincere interest in the future of community.

3.2 OVERVIEW OF 2003 PLAN

This 2003 Comprehensive Plan has been designed to build on the earlier 1962, 1972 and 1988 Plans. It is especially important to understand that the 2003 Plan was intended to be an update of the 1988 Plan, primarily because that provided a basis for instituting improvements in the town and for measuring progress. However, a few years after the approval of the 1988 Plan, the town set the document aside, and as a result did not pursue and update many of the projects that were recommended. Even with this inactivity nearly 50% of the recommendations were acted upon.

With the current plan there is a renewed effort on the part of the town to update the 1988 action recommendations and to implement new strategies. Ashland now is in a period of numerous growth activities and changes and we will be for years to come. A community such as Ashland is never totally built out. There will be efforts in the future to raze structures and start anew. This plan must prepare us for our future growth.

Following is a list of some of the activities and concerns that the town must now deal with and consider in the implementation of the plan:

- Completion of new railroad station
- Megunko area development
- Need for new schools
- Growth in tax rate
- Traffic congestion/delays
- Rapid development of subdivisions
- Shortage of affordable housing
- Improvements to Pond Street
- Shortage of recreational fields
- Trimount open space
- Housing needs
- Chestnut Street development
- Shortage of sewer capacity
- Improvements to town facilities
- *Redevelopment*
- *Opportunities for industrial and commercial uses*
- *Sector Planning and zoning revisions*

This plan should direct future town growth and protect appropriate vacant land. The town must make a strong commitment to keep this plan alive and current in the years ahead.

Basic Approach

There are both positive and negative impacts for each action that is taken. Sometimes we plan, schedule and take actions that are affected, often negatively, by later actions. A basic objective of this plan is to assist town boards and officials to plan and coordinate activities to minimize negative impacts.

1. Keeping Ashland as a Desirable Place to Live

As noted earlier, each action taken has consequences. In the survey conducted as part of the plan update and in discussions and meetings that took place, participants offered comments that they liked Ashland. For example:

“Ashland. . . .

is a pleasant place to live,
is a neighborly place to live
I like Ashland
Ashland provides good schools and activities for its youth
Ashland residents volunteer to help out and provide services”

When developing and implementing actions, officials and residents must think about how the action makes ASHLAND A MORE DESIRABLE COMMUNITY IN WHICH TO LIVE.

2. A Smart Growth Community

Public agencies, including federal and state government and regional planning agencies are encouraging communities and other agencies such as the MBTA to take actions that encourage concentrated development and discourage sprawl.

Because:

- Infrastructure can be provided more efficiently
- Concentrating development will preserve our open land
- People will be less dependent on the auto
- Transit can be more effective
- People can walk to necessary services
- Federal and state governments are now sponsoring programs that support this type of growth...“Smart Growth”

But how does a community implement “Smart Growth” or, for that matter the MAPC regional growth plan, “MetroPlan”? The following are the guiding principles of “MetroPlan”:

Promote development patterns that:

- Make efficient use of existing and planned infrastructure
- Limit sprawl and concentrate development in appropriate areas
- Blend a mix of land uses
- Reduce reliance on single-occupant auto travel
- Expand the choices for travel and support increased mobility for all
- Encourage housing which meets needs of diverse populations near jobs and services

- Provide jobs with sustainable wages and a broad range of skill levels
- Ensure water quality and a healthy water balance
- Protect open space, environmental resources, and cultural heritage
- Ensure that no community receives a disproportionate share of environmental burden or less than an equitable share of benefit
- Encourage regional collaboration between municipalities and between cities/towns and other stakeholders

Here's what's needed to implement "Smart Growth"

1. To reduce sprawl a town may, purchase more of its vacant land, especially in the outlying areas--The problem is that land cost money, which Ashland doesn't have much of...- further, to buy vacant land in a community is to stop growth. Is stopping growth ethical? Does a town have the responsibility to allow housing opportunities at least for some portion of the population growth that takes place within the community?
2. Transfer Development Rights from outlying fringe areas to downtown areas. This sounds like a good idea, but how do we make it work? There are no good examples in the Metropolitan area. Do we need state legislation?
3. Buy the development rights of vacant lands such as church owned property. Does the town have the funds and are the owners willing?
4. Implement zoning changes such as mixed use zoning, and higher floor area ratios (f.a.r.) in growth areas

Philosophically Smart Growth seems like a good idea and we should work toward its implementation in the future. But without federal, state and regional incentives and legislation it can not be fully implemented. Figures 3.1 is a display of the Smart Growth strategy.

3. Working With What We Have

The objectives of the 2002 Plan are presented in the maps entitled "2002 Comprehensive Plan - Major Planning Objectives" (Figure 3.2) and "2002 Comprehensive plan- Future Land Use Plan" (Figure 3.3). As in the 1988 Plan, the major theme is one of working within the existing zoning/land use planning that has already occurred. The focus on specific actions that will continue to make the community a desirable place to live. The plan points out the need to address available affordable housing and economic development to aid in supplementing the residential tax rate, without increasing the area for this type of development.

The specific goals, policies and actions for this Plan are presented in the remainder of this report. The following points summarize the major concepts of the plan.

1. Pond Street Upgrade

The Pond Street corridor is the one remaining area that can provide for future commercial and industrial growth. This corridor provides the town with a number of challenging opportunities. It has been recommended in the past that the town work with the Mass. Highway Department to design improvements to the roadway that would be paid for by the state and, as a result, the town would take over ownership. The objective of this approach is to provide roadway improvements including left turn lanes, curb cuts, granite curbs, sidewalks and plantings to improve the area. It is anticipated that these improvements will encourage economic development and growth in the corridor. In addition the town is now planning sewer improvements in the area that will also encourage development.

The CPC has also discussed the possibility of creating a Renewal District or Tax Increment Finance District to encourage future development.

2. Protect Downtown

The downtown area is the center of the community and actions should be developed to protect the present downtown atmosphere and to encourage improvements that are in keeping with a *reinvigorated* town center. A proposal that is being considered in this plan is the development of a mixed-use zone that would encourage more affordable housing in the downtown area and would encourage additional commercial development close to the very center of town. A draft of a new downtown mixed use zone can be found in section 5.9.

3. Route 135 Management

Route 135 is one of the major traffic facilities in the community, accommodating traffic between the eastern side of town and the western side of town. This plan recommends improvements along 135 to manage its future growth and to improve its aesthetics and environment. Route 135 in effect can be divided into three parts: the eastern most piece from the Framingham town line to Chestnut Street, the second section from Chestnut Street to Cherry Street, and the third section from Cherry Street to the Hopkinton town line.

First section

This section should be dramatically improved with the continuation of granite curbstones and sidewalks from Framingham, improved curb cuts, and general improvements to the aesthetics of this part of the roadway. This section of 135 probably will lend itself to more commercial development in the future. The intersection of East Union Street and Route 135 should be closed and relocated farther east.

Second section

This is primarily a residential area. This section would probably be within the downtown mixed-use zone and could probably lend itself to housing and aesthetic improvements in concert with the downtown zoning.

Third section

The third section from Cherry Street to the Hopkinton town line starts off more densely populated, including some businesses, and as it approaches Hopkinton it becomes somewhat less dense. Some parts of the roadway probably should continue to exist primarily as a residential area and those areas zoned commercial especially near Cherry Street should be encouraged to grow commercially.

4. Open Space and Environmental Actions

The first action is the ongoing process of categorizing all conservation restrictions and then work with the major institutions in town to develop new conservation restrictions that would preserve the open lands in perpetuity.

5. Chestnut/East Union Development

Concurrent with the development of this plan is a special master plan effort for the development of this area. The area being studied includes land that could serve the towns' additional school needs, an extension of the cemetery, and commercial development and/or housing.

6. Megunko Hill Area

Work with the developers to insure that good/direct access will be provided to directly connect the new apartments to downtown. This must be done with the initial development of the apartments and not be delayed until a later phase of the development.

Efforts should be made to work with the property owners on Megunko Road to develop an improvement plan that will complement the growth in the area and downtown.

7. Oak Street Apartments

Perpendicular parking in front of the apartments prevents the existence of a sidewalk for the area residents and creates a problem for autos backing up into Oak Street. The town should work with the owner to develop off street parking, preferably behind the apartments.

8. Raymond Marchetti Road Apartments

The rental apartments on the east side of the street are in need of repair and/or major improvement. The town should investigate alternative solutions and act to resolve the problems.

9. Institutional Land

There are large amounts of land in town that are owned by institutions, and a large amount of the land is open. The town should work with these owners to develop a program that would leave the land open in perpetuity.

10. Protection of the Remaining Rural Character

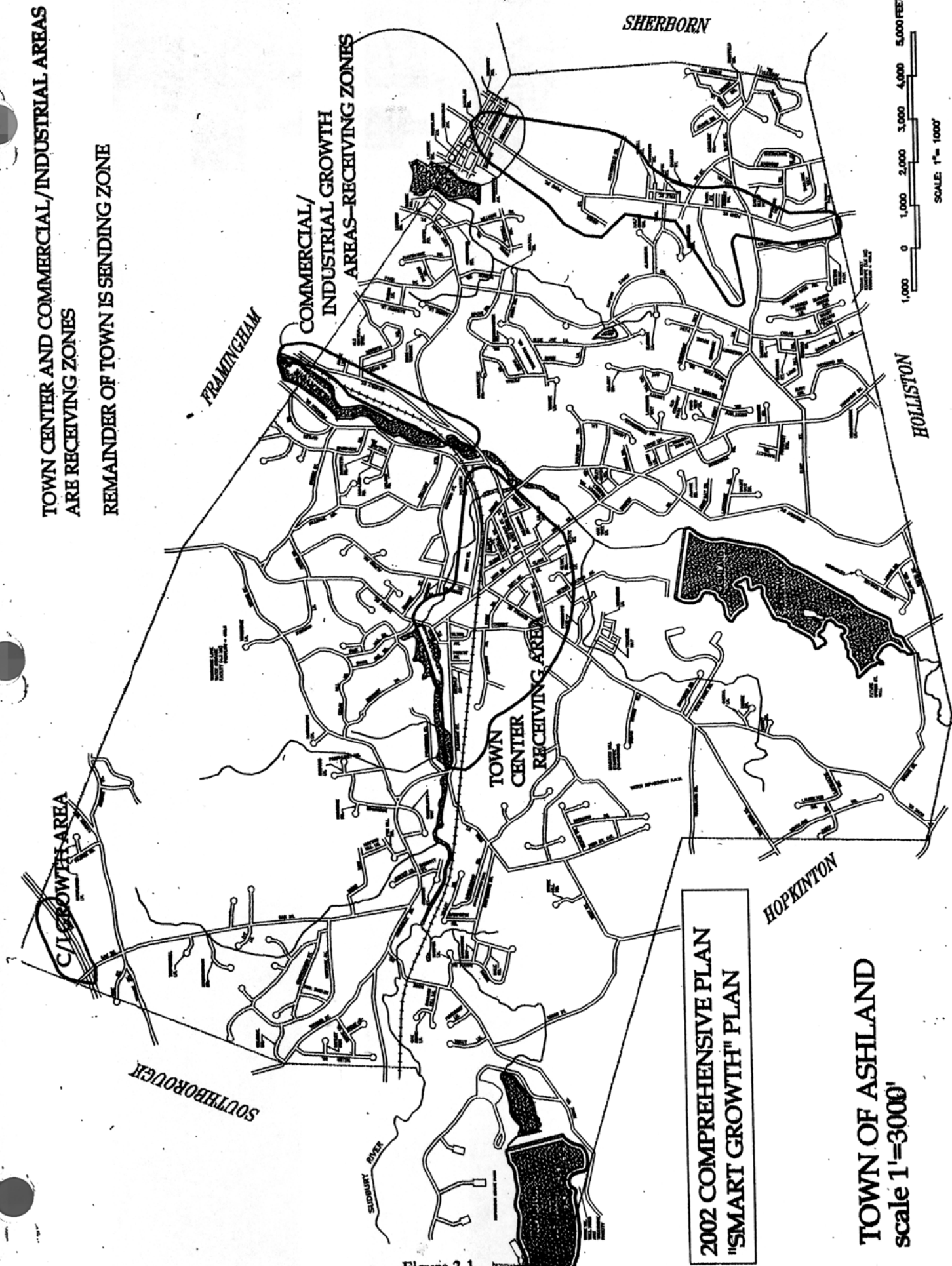
The policies recommended for the remaining areas of Ashland focus on the protection of the existing and emerging residential neighborhoods and the provision of open space and recreation land. Emphasis is also placed on careful road improvement planning.

11. Keep on Planning

A theme that runs throughout this plan is the need to continue the town's planning efforts. In order to reach these objectives, the town will need responsible committees, boards and staff to take on the task of implementing the action recommendations.

TOWN CENTER AND COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL AREAS
ARE RECEIVING ZONES

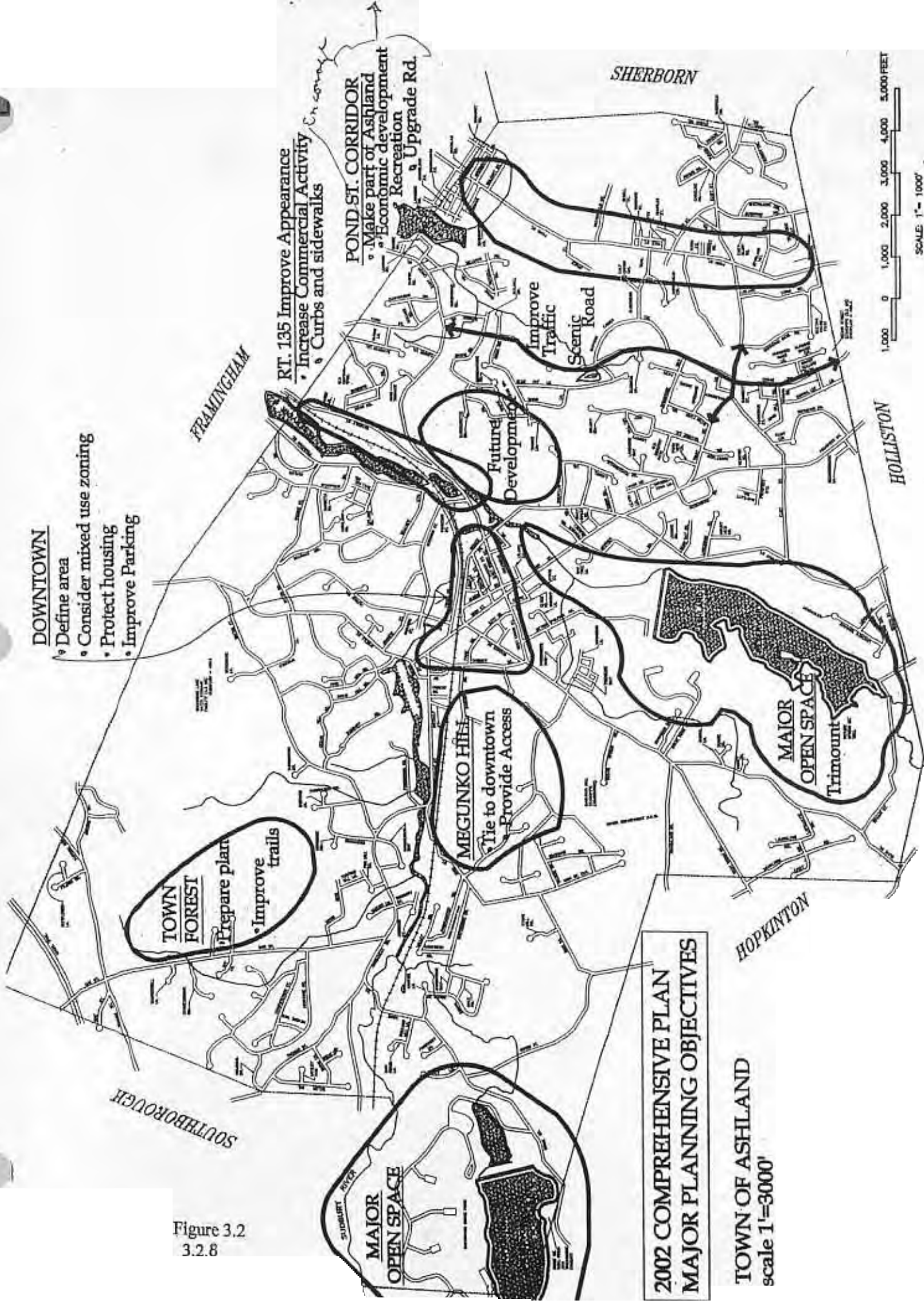
REMAINDER OF TOWN IS SENDING ZONE



2002 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
"SMART GROWTH" PLAN

TOWN OF ASHLAND
scale 1"=3000'

Figure 3.1
3.2.3



DOWNTOWN

- Define area
- Consider mixed use zoning
- Protect housing
- Improve Parking

TOWN FOREST

- Prepare plan
- Improve trails

MEGUNKO HILL

- Tie to downtown
- Provide Access

POND ST. CORRIDOR

- Improve Appearance
- Increase Commercial Activity
- Curbs and sidewalks
- Economic development
- Recreation
- Upgrade Rd.

Future Development

- Improve Traffic

SHERBORN

FRAMINGHAM

HOLLISTON

HOPKINTON

SOUTHBOROUGH

**2002 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
MAJOR PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

TOWN OF ASHLAND
scale 1"=3000'

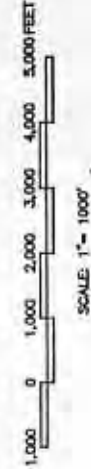
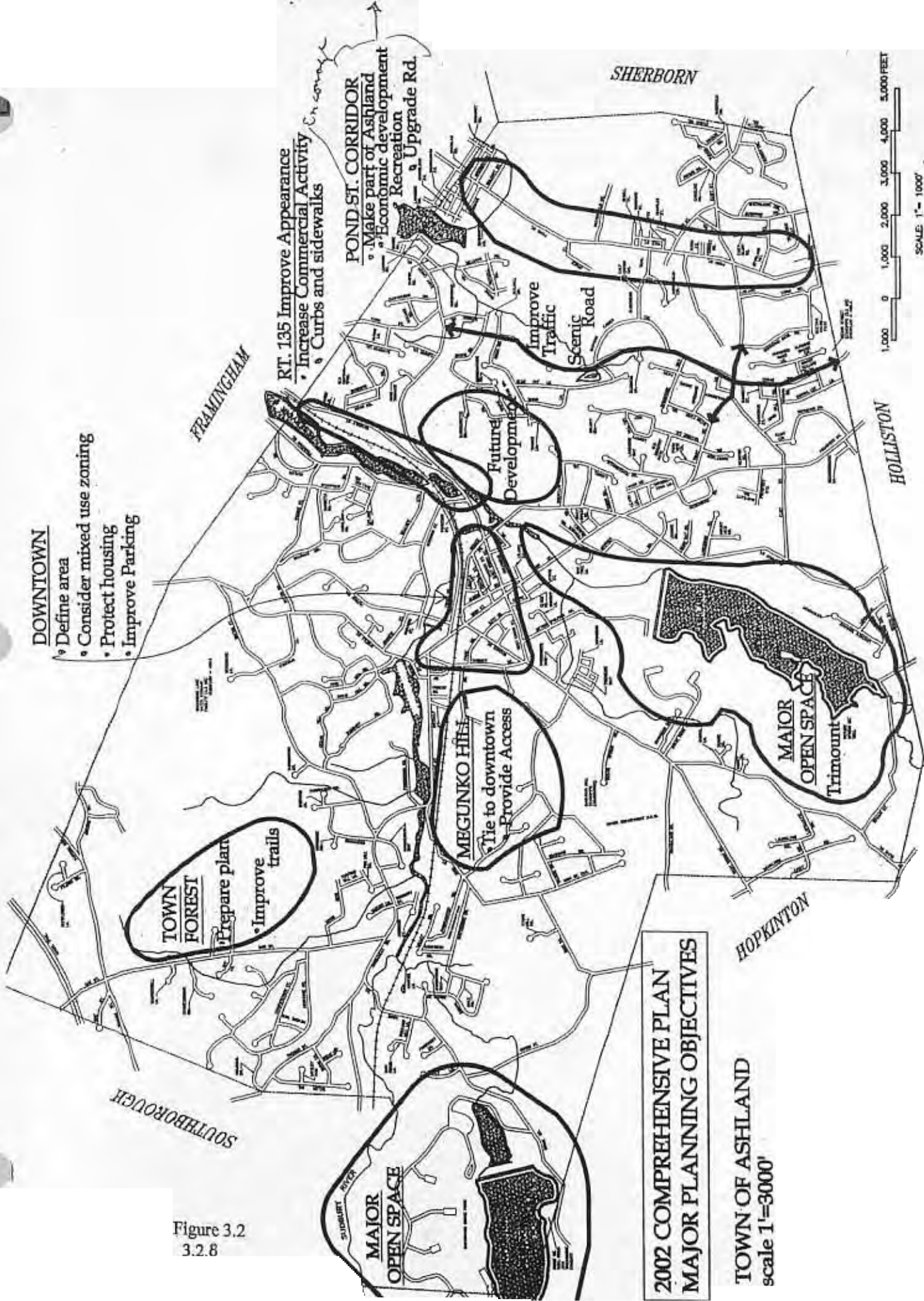


Figure 3.2
3.2.8



DOWNTOWN

- Define area
- Consider mixed use zoning
- Protect housing
- Improve Parking

RT. 135 Improve Appearance

- Increase Commercial Activity
- Curbs and sidewalks

POND ST. CORRIDOR

- Make part of Ashland
- Economic development
- Recreation
- Upgrade Rd.

TOWN FOREST

- Prepare plan
- Improve trails

MEGUNKO HILL

- Tie to downtown
- Provide Access

Future Development

- Improve Traffic

SHERBORN

FRAMINGHAM

HOLLISTON

HOPKINTON

SOUTHBOROUGH

**2002 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
MAJOR PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

**TOWN OF ASHLAND
scale 1"=3000'**

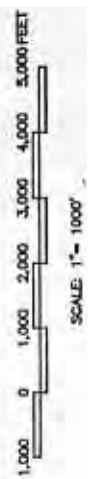


Figure 3.2
3.2.8

○ INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT
 — SIDEWALKS
 — SCENIC ROADS

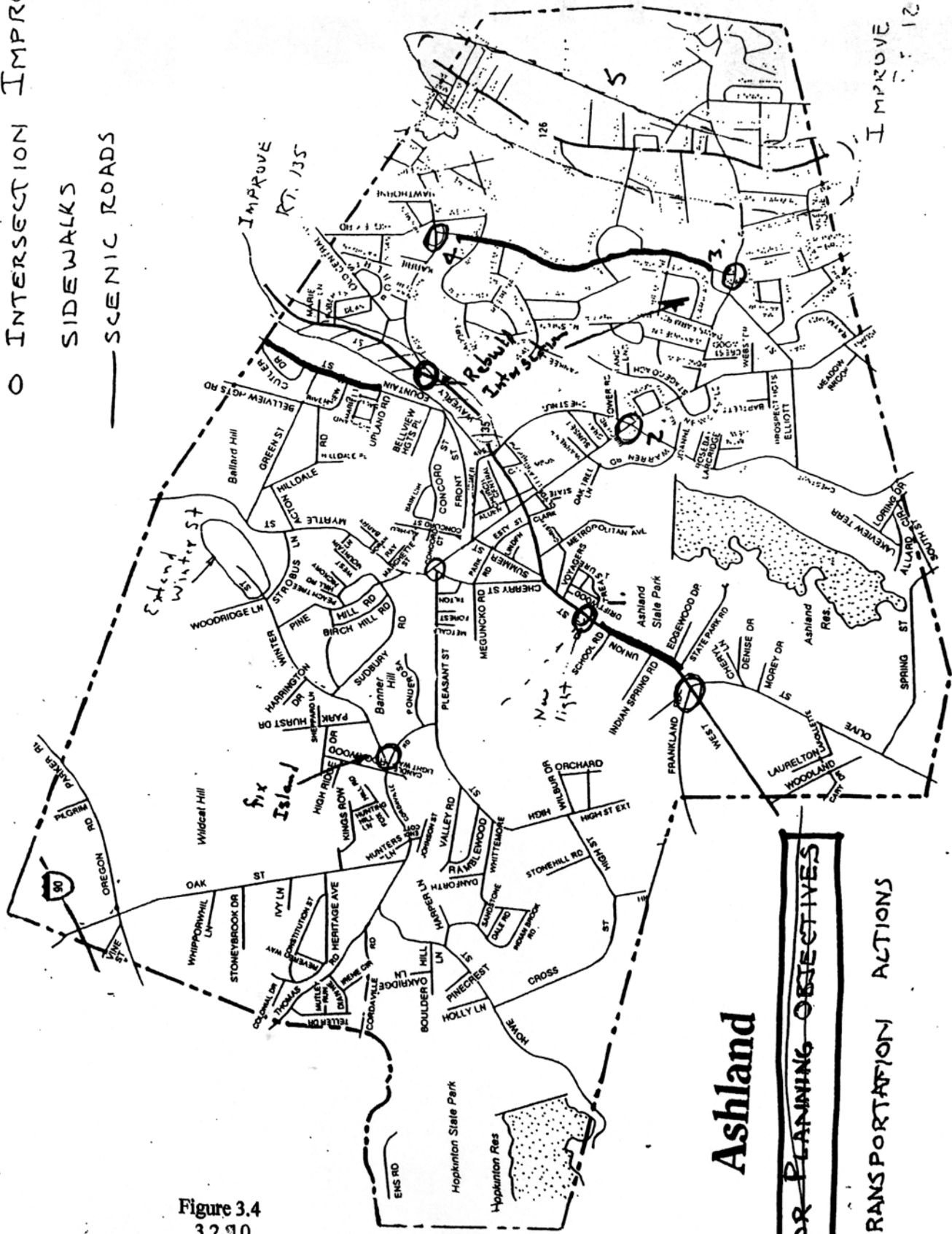


Figure 3.4
 3.2.10

MAJOR PLANNING OBJECTIVES

TRANSPORTATION ACTIONS

IMPROVE

4.0 DIRECTION FOR THE FUTURE: GOALS AND POLICIES

The following goals and policies describe the parameters or guidelines which the Town of Ashland will consider in making land planning decisions. These goals and policies define what the Town wants to be and the key elements that must be present to reach that vision. The order of these goals and policies does not imply priorities.

4.1 GENERAL PLANNING GOALS – The following general goals should be should be used to guide the overall planning and development of Ashland now and into the future:

1. To define a positive image for Ashland and to promote that image to residents and others.

- There are large amounts of protected open space due to the state parks, the Town Forest and institutional land holders such as Northeastern University and the Metropolitan District Commission.
- The major natural physical features shaping the landscape are the Sudbury River, the MDC Reservoir, the Ashland Reservoir, and areas of forested land.
- The major built features that define Ashland are residential streets lined with trees, the downtown with its mixture of late 19th century and 20th century buildings, the train depot and John Stone's, the railroad, the commercial areas along Route 135, the Telechron building, the industrial buildings along Pleasant Street, the condominium developments in the Route 126 corridor and the commercial development that lines Route 126.
- Compared to its abutting towns, Ashland is defined by a large percentage of multifamily homes within its borders; both from new development and from conversion of larger, older homes.
- Ashland is defined by its lack of a traditional town common or other significant signs of a colonial New England. Ashland was settled later and it reflects that fact. Its nineteenth century heritage should be emphasized.
- Ashland is a small town and should strive to retain that feeling. Its streets are small town scale. Its commercial areas are small in size. The height of buildings is low to the ground. It has large amounts of open land and many trees. There is space between most buildings.

It is the goal of this plan to protect and improve each of these aspects of Ashland's character, for it is these features that define the physical environment of our town. It is critical that we stay within the limits of these definitions where possible, for significant changes in these defining factors will change the character of our town.

2. To unite the town for common purposes and coordinate the sections of officials, boards and other groups.

Town policies and attitudes of town leaders (both business and political) must encourage the idea of a physically and psychologically unified Ashland. Ashland is continually in the midst of change and while the divisions and attitudes are not unusual, they are important nonetheless. There is no better sign of the renewed sense of community spirit and cooperation that exists in this town than Ashland Day. It is this spirit that must prevail, not the negative attitudes that have held us back in the past.

3. To commit the resources and the will to make Ashland a better community for tomorrow.

There should be acceptance by the leaders and residents of Ashland that there will be recommendations from this plan that cannot be put off until the future when the foreseen need finally arrives. This goal is not recommended in a naïve manner, however, for it is clear that the realities of democratic government and limited financial resources make it difficult to do everything in our plan. Despite this, there must be a commitment to finding creative ways to prioritize and reach planning objectives in a step by step manner. Without that, planning is wasted.

4. To coordinate expansions in town services and investments with the planned growth of the town.

This plan defines the long-term growth potential of the Town of Ashland. Town management should work with this potential and make day to day decisions with long term objectives in mind. Land is a finite resource and, therefore, future needs should be anticipated today. This is especially true in a town like Ashland where the amount of available land is dwindling.

5. To create and keep current an inventory of developments.

Related to current growth and local activities, it is now important that the town implement updated inventories of development activities including traffic counts.

4.2 HOUSING GOALS – With a significant aging population, there is an essential need for housing choice for those over the age of fifty-five. In addition, there is a need for reasonably priced first-time home buying opportunities for the younger population and families. The following general goals should serve as a guide:

1. **To provide a range of housing options and encourage creative designs that further develops neighborhoods that are good places for people to live. Said developments will enhance the long-term social, environmental, economic and political health of the community.**

The foundation upon which a town such as Ashland rests is the degree to which it provides neighborhoods and a general environment that attracts people to move, invest and remain in the community. Ashland has a wide range of housing types.

2. **To work for the continuance of housing that spans the spectrum of costs including ownership and rental.**

The town needs a broad range of housing choice to provide for people's housing needs. If such housing is not available, residents will leave the town and the town will become a more transient place.

HOUSING POLICIES

1. Protect Ashland's suburban character.
2. Encourage increased numbers of dwelling units for older residents of Ashland, including smaller units for those who are selling their larger homes and affordable units for those who have few assets and are on limited incomes.
3. Maintain dwelling units that are affordable to first-time buyers.
4. Maintain the town's existing stock of rental housing. Protect the current rental housing stock within the downtown area.
5. Maintain the town's current level of multifamily developments and work with owners to upgrade those that are substandard.
6. Maintain environmental protection standards for housing developments.

7. Give preference to town employees, senior Ashland residents and other Ashland residents in housing developments financially supported with public funds.
8. Encourage housing designs that accommodate empty nesters and seniors units (i.e. accessory apartments).
9. Support local industry by maintaining housing that is affordable to local workers. Proximity to workplace is becoming increasingly important to all employees.
10. Protect those developments with expiring use.
11. Adopt policies and bylaws that clarify property tax assessment and liability procedures.
12. Work to maintain and improve existing housing units that are categorized as affordable by Chapter 774 of the Massachusetts General Laws.
13. Develop programs to meet the requirements of MGL Chapter 40B.

4.3 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS – As noted in the '88 Plan, undeveloped land in town is rapidly disappearing. The next several years provide what may be our last opportunity to preserve key elements of the natural landscape for present and future generations. Ashland's goals and policies for open space and recreation are:

1. To provide within adequate proximity to all residents of Ashland a natural environment that offers open areas without development where passive, active and visual recreation and appreciation of nature can take place, along with built facilities that provide recreation opportunities.

The theme of the need for distributed recreation land was stated in the 1972 and 1988 Plan, as well as this plan. Ashland needs to continue to work toward providing neighborhood recreation land in some areas of town and toward using more efficiently the open land it now owns or to which it has access. The area of town most lacking in recreation land is the Route 126 corridor.

2. Continue a program of open space protection for one or more of the following purposes:

- Preservation of scenic, natural and aesthetic values,
- Protection of wildlife habitat,
- Protection of aquifers and watersheds,
- Provision of outdoor recreational opportunities,
- Protection of areas of historic and cultural significance, and
- Preservation of remaining agricultural activities.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION POLICIES

1. Link together the large open areas of town to encourage use of and movement between the areas. Use paths and land acquisitions to accomplish this.
2. Plan for and acquire adequate land for future town needs, such as conservation and recreation land and water protection.
3. In order to protect open fields, acquire options or development rights to key parcels that preserve a sense of the agricultural history of the town and provide variation in the landscape.
4. Work with state and private land preservation organizations to acquire lands that provide critical regional environmental or open space resources.
5. Work with institutional land holders in Ashland to ensure that their open lands remain open for the future.

6. Prepare a long-term strategy to finance acquisition of key parcels.
7. Encourage large landowners in town to protect, donate or sell their open land to ensure future greenways.
8. Oversee and maintain existing open space parcels for passive and non-intrusive recreation.
9. Provide access for Ashland residents to recreational water resources within the Town of Ashland.
10. Invest in maintaining or restoring natural landscape features that will increase the town's beauty and value as a desirable place to live.
11. Make optimal use of existing town-owned land.
12. Balance the desire to provide active recreation areas for the town's residents with the objective of protecting natural areas that provide habitats for wildlife.
13. Distribute public open space land so that all areas of town receive benefits from such investments.
14. Emphasize the importance of incorporating open space within new developments for its visual, density and recreational benefits.
15. Educate Ashland residents on open space issues.
16. Advocate "greenway policies" wherever needed.
17. Ongoing interaction with residents through sponsorship of open space awareness progress.

4.4 ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS – Given that Ashland has directly experienced and will continue to experience, the long-lasting and dangerous effects of environmental pollution, and that the town recognizes the importance of currently providing and passing on a healthy environment to future residents, the following goals and policies should direct the Town of Ashland’s efforts to protect and conserve the environment.

- 1. To protect and enhance a high quality environment which can accommodate an attractively built community with minimal impact on air, land, water quality and natural habits.**

Ashland has a rural character with many natural resources that benefit both residents and wildlife. The difference between Ashland and the negative stereotype of the rapidly growing suburb of the post war period is the degree to which Ashland’s natural environment has been preserved and built around, rather than built over. Protecting Ashland’s natural environment (forests, wetlands, and water bodies) into the future will be a key ingredient in passing the character of Ashland on to future generations.

- 2. To restore and improve those parts of our environment that have been damaged in the past.**

Ashland has experienced the effects of carelessness and ignorance in regard to the impacts of human activities on the environment. Our water has been polluted (Spring Street well and Nyanza) and natural environments have been damaged (Chemical Brook). It is our responsibility to see that these mistakes are corrected and to see that they never occur again.

- 3. To establish an ongoing education program to make Ashland’s residents aware of the impact of human activities on the environment.**

Ashland citizens can improve and maintain the environment if they understand the relationship between it and their activities through such experiences as guided bird walks, vernal pool certifications and learning how to make their own compost piles.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

1. Protect current and future groundwater supplies.
2. Protect all surface waters and wetland areas in the town.
3. Restore polluted wetlands, water bodies, and habitats.
4. Provide areas of natural habitat for wildlife and plants.

5. Establish and protect green space and greenways
6. Continue to rigorously apply and administer the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act in the review of all development and projects in or within 100 feet of wetlands and waterways or water bodies.
7. Identify, with the help of conservation restrictions, land areas containing important natural resources and habitats and develop plans to acquire or protect the land.
8. Ensure that all mining activities either develop their sites and provide adequate environmental control within the projects or that quarried sites be returned to a state of natural balance and leave the site as an asset for the town.
9. Strengthen the program for local recycling of solid wastes and composting.
10. Continue to monitor and manage the cleanup and long-term use of the Nyanza pollution site's contiguous and/or down-gradient properties.
11. Protect and expand Ashland's scenic roads. (See also "Outlying Areas")
12. Control soil erosion in development projects.
13. Use zoning bylaws and/or other mechanisms to control land uses that pose potential hazards to Ashland's natural resources from over development or unwise development.
14. Foster a strong awareness on the part of Ashland's residents of the impact of human activity on the environment.

4.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS – Since Ashland realizes that a strong local economy is a necessary ingredient to a healthy community, the following goal and policies should guide the town’s economic future.

Ashland once had a balanced local economy based on the historic presence of industry, and available industrially zoned land. Due to the overwhelming residential growth, there are few areas that can be rezoned to accommodate any new industrial sites without having a negative impact on the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Clearly, there is an interest in encouraging business growth that will help to control the tax burden of residents.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

1. Stimulate a healthy local economy.
2. Expand business area only if the expansion will benefit the town and the negative impacts will be minimal.
3. Support existing industry and commerce by maintaining high quality and responsive town services.
4. Encourage attractively planned commercial and industrial projects.
5. Ensure that the economic development will not pollute or otherwise damage the town’s water supply or environmentally sensitive areas.
6. Monitor zoning policies to ensure that current zoning bylaws support current economic development policies.
7. Maintain the viability of downtown.
8. Incorporate Route 126 within the planning strategies of the town.
9. Encourage creative development of commercial and industrial land.
10. Discourage any conversion of commercial or industrial land or buildings to housing.
11. Discourage strip commercial development; encourage well-sited, clustered businesses, where possible.
12. Make a strong commitment within town hall government to monitor and work with the business community as a whole.

4.6 TRANSPORTATION GOALS - The following goals and policies should guide Ashland's future transportation improvement.

- 1. To promote an infrastructure in Ashland that recognizes the needs of the commuting public and commercial interests in a manner that allows Ashland to create and preserve itself as a livable community accessible to residents of all ages and abilities.**
- 2. To achieve a consensus that proper design and planning can benefit the mobility and safety of the entire community.**
- 3. To accommodate the automobile as the major suburban mode of transportation but to do so in a manner that maintains the integrity and viability of other modes in a safe and enjoyable environment.**

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

1. Work with surrounding communities and organizations to address the regional nature of transportation issues and solutions.
2. Consider transportation as a multimodal system, accommodating the needs of private and public transportation, including pedestrian and bicycle access and safety. This requires long-term planning in the design and development of infrastructure.
3. Identify major commuter routes through the Town of Ashland and develop efficient and safe flow of traffic along these routes while maintaining the character of the town along these roads.
4. Develop safe, convenient, neighborhood friendly alternative routes for local traffic within the town.
5. Develop a transportation system that will promote the development of local businesses and a commercial tax base while developing a village character in these zones.
6. Design facilities to the best currently available standards and guidelines for all public and private projects. This would include Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, traffic calming features, and US Department of Transportation recommendations regarding the integration of non-motorized traffic into a transportation system.
7. Improve the visual character of Ashland's transportation routes and roadways.
8. Recognize Routes 126 and 135 as the major thoroughfares through Ashland and create specific development plans for these corridors.
9. Maximize funding resources to achieve Ashland's transportation goals.

4.7 TOWN FACILITIES GOALS - In order to adequately and efficiently provide future public services within the constraints of limited available land and limited tax dollars, the following goals and policies should direct Ashland's facility site decisions.

1. To maximize the benefits of public facility investments to the town and to the area surrounding a facility and to minimize the public resources spent in the process of locating and developing such facilities. Consider life-cycle value (e.g. maintenance requirements, lifetime of building). Work toward optimizing value to maintain affordable town facilities by purchasing new facilities wisely, maintaining facilities regularly to insure maximum service.
2. To site public facilities so as to provide equitable service provision to all of Ashland's residents.
3. To plan in the present for the needs of the future.
4. To maximize communication and cooperation between different town departments (e.g. phone systems, computer systems, overlap of usage, emergency services).
5. To coordinate and achieve a holistic view point of all town facilities needs so that there is an organized interrelationship between new, abandoned, and renovated structures and land use.
6. To normalize funding on an annual basis for maintenance of buildings and replacement of large scale equipment.

TOWN FACILITY POLICIES

1. Plan now for the long term public land requirements of the town.
2. Coordinate the efficient use of existing public lands and buildings with selected land purchases and reuse or adaptation of existing buildings.
3. Plan now for long-term public service requirements based on growth and evolution of services.
4. Coordinate and achieve a holistic viewpoint of all town facilities needs so that there is an organized interrelationship between new, abandoned, and renovated structures and land use.
5. Normalize funding on an annual basis for maintenance of buildings and replacement of large scale equipment.

4.8 HISTORIC PRESERVATION GOALS – In order to protect and learn from Ashland’s history, the following goals should guide Ashland’s historic preservation efforts:

- 1. To understand the past from which Ashland developed.**
- 2. To identify and protect the important human-made and natural features of Ashland that represent the town’s past.**
- 3. To raise Ashland residents’ awareness of the town’s past.**

HISTORIC PRESERVATION POLICIES:

1. Provide ongoing financial support at Town Meeting for the Ashland Historical Commission to effectively act as the keeper of the town’s history.
2. Designate and maintain National Register sites and districts to enhance the awareness of the townspeople of our town’s historic past.
3. Seek to involve local, state, and federal resources and agencies in the protection of archaeological and built historic resources in town.
4. Cooperate with surrounding towns to identify and protect historic and archaeological sites and districts which may overlap town boundaries.
5. Cooperate with regional and state non-profit and governmental bodies concerned with the protection of cultural resources in the town.
6. Encourage the incorporation of hands-on education of Ashland’s history by the school system at all levels.
7. Encourage the Ashland Historical Society’s efforts to educate the public about Ashland’s past.

4.9 DOWNTOWN GOAL - Provide a place that is the recognized civic center of Ashland that differs from other commercial areas of town, reflects and incorporates the town history, includes a variety of land uses (governmental, commercial, residential) promotes pedestrian activity, and generates pride from residents.

The downtown area – the center of Ashland – should be a place for residents to gather for shopping, recreation or to participate in civic affairs. The downtown area should be pedestrian oriented and have pedestrian connections to adjacent areas of town. The downtown area also needs to adequately accommodate vehicles and bicycles. The downtown business and civic attractions should focus on serving local rather than regional needs and should be planned and designed to connect the area to Ashland’s historical character.

DOWNTOWN POLICIES

1. Maintain the downtown area as the civic center of Ashland.
2. Maintain the core business center of the downtown and encourage ways to enhance the attractiveness for businesses and town residents.
3. Maintain a mix of land use within the downtown area and allow more dense, pedestrian-oriented development.
4. Seek opportunities to expand and connect the downtown area to adjacent areas of town, especially the rail station and the Rail Transit District.
5. Accentuate Ashland’s history in the downtown area and highlight historical properties.
6. Develop a program to encourage more affordable housing downtown through mixed use zoning.

4.10 OUTLYING AREAS GOAL - To include the farthest parts of town in the dynamics of Ashland life. To protect the town's overall rural wooded character by honoring the noteworthy water and rock areas while connecting individual neighborhoods by a system of maintained tree and stone edged roads and walking or biking paths with resting stops and community use spots.

OUTLYING AREAS POLICY

1. Encourage and support Ashland's residential and rural character.
2. Purchase, respect and maintenance of natural areas.
3. Identify and promote local historical sites in town as highlights of walking and biking paths.
4. Retain the small town flavor of Ashland for future generations by caring for local attractions found in our outlying areas.
5. Encourage beautification of areas adjacent to town roads.

5.0 THE WORK THAT HAS TO BE DONE

This section gives the detailed actions recommended by the Plan. Each set of actions is preceded by the goals from which those actions flow. In each case the board, department or other group primarily responsible for the action is cited. The Comprehensive Plan Committee will periodically prepare a status report for the Planning Board. The following are abbreviations for the names of the groups responsible for the implementation of the actions. Each action is coded with a letter and number combination (i.e. H-1 for Housing #1 or ED-5 for Economic Development #5). These codes are used in the remainder of the Plan to identify the actions. The order of actions does not imply priorities.

ACC	Ashland Cultural Council
ACO	Animal Control Officer
AHC	Affordable Housing Committee
BI	Building Inspector
BOH	Board of Health
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CA	Conservation Agent
CC	Conservation Commission
CPT	Cemetery, Park and Trees
CPC	Comprehensive Plan Committee
DDA	Downtown Design Authority
DPW	Department of Public Works
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection
EDC	Economic Development Committee
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FC	Finance Committee
FD	Fire Department
HC	Historical Commission
LEPC	Local Emergency Planning Committee
OEA	Office of Elderly Affairs
OSC	Open Space Committee
PB	Planning Board
PD	Police Department
QCC	Quarry Closure Committee
RA	Redevelopment Authority and/or Economic Development Committee
RD	Recreation Department
SC	School Committee
SD	School Department
TC	Town Clerk
TFC	Town Forest Committee
TM	Town Manager
TP	Town Planner

5.1 GENERAL PLANNING

GOALS

- 1. To define a positive image for Ashland and to promote that image to residents and others.**
- 2. To unite the town for common purposes and coordinate the actions of officials, boards and other groups.**
- 3. To commit the resources and the will to make Ashland a better community for tomorrow.**
- 4. To coordinate expansions in town services and investments with the planned growth of the town.**

ACTIONS

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Cost</u>		
2	Neg	GP-1	Expand/improve the town web site and make it current on a daily basis. Post agendas and meeting schedules. TM
2	Neg	GP-2	Work with town boards and departments on a regular basis to keep this plan current. CPC
1		GP-3	CPC meet with the Planning Board at least quarterly to report status and distribute to all boards quarterly by written report. CPC
3		GP-4	Develop a town beautification plan. Garden Club and others. PB and CPC
2	\$\$	GP-5	Continue to expand GIS. TP
2	Neg	GP-6	Investigate the feasibility of applying Transfer of Development Rights strategies in Ashland. PB
3	Neg	GP-7	Review and modify current by-laws for commercial landscaping to create a uniform, attractive village character. PB
2	\$\$	GP-8	Actively seek grant funding and hire a grant writer.
1		GP-9	Encourage adoption of Mixed Use Zoning Districts. PB

5.2 HOUSING GOALS – With a significant aging population, there is an essential need for housing choice for those over the age of fifty-five. In addition, there is a need for first-time home buying opportunities for the younger population. The following general goals should serve as a guide:

ACTIONS

Priority Cost

2	Neg	H-1	Create an Affordable Housing Plan that sets specific objectives and a clear timetable for action. Meet the requirements of EO418 and new requirements of Chapter 40B. AHC
OG	NA	H-2	Do not rezone any more land for multifamily, unless it is associated with senior affordable housing with priority given to Ashland residents and family members. AHC
OG	NA	H-3	Carefully consider any proposals to increase lot sizes in Ashland as a means of either decreasing overall density or avoiding future problems with septic systems. Ongoing policy. PB and BOH
OG	NA	H-4	Preserve the present residential character of Route 135 from High School to the Hopkinton border. PB
1	Neg	H-5	Identify town owned parcels that might be used for affordable housing. TP & AHC
1	Neg	H-6	Consider the development of a zoning bylaw that would require an affordable housing unit for a predetermined number of housing units in a proposed subdivision. CPC and AHC
2	Neg	H-7	Examine the usefulness of an Ashland Affordable Housing Trust. AHC
3	Neg	H-8	Investigate the relationship between potential mixed use zoning in the downtown area and the increased availability of affordable housing. CPC.
2	Neg	H-9	Investigate the availability of state and/or federal funds to rehabilitate rented units. AHC and TP
3	Neg	H-10	Encourage the Transfer of Development Rights to provide opportunities for new affordable housing. CPC
2	\$\$\$	H-11	Pursue a program to improve the rental units on Raymond Marchetti Road. Program should address new improvement design standards. AHC
1	Neg	H-12	Investigate the feasibility of using the town-owned parcel off Oregon Road/Oak Street for senior affordable housing with recreational facilities. AHC

5.3 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

GOALS

- 1. To provide within adequate proximity of all residents of Ashland a natural environment that offers open areas without development where passive, active and visual recreation and appreciation of nature can take place, along with built facilities that provide recreation opportunities.**
- 2. To embark on a program of open space protection for one or more of the following purposes:**
 - Preservation of scenic, natural and aesthetic values,
 - Protection of wildlife habitat,
 - Protection of aquifers and watersheds,
 - Provision of outdoor recreational opportunities,
 - Protection of areas of historic and cultural significance, and
 - Preservation of remaining agricultural activities.

ACTIONS

Priority Cost

3	\$	OSR-1	Continue development of a riverfront park along the Sudbury River from the Hopkinton border to the MDC Reservoir #2. OSC
1	\$	OSR-2	Update the Open Space and Recreation Plan to meet state and EO418 requirements. OSC
2	Neg	OSR-3	Update the Pathways Plan. Identify existing sidewalks and pathways and recommend new pathways and sidewalks where appropriate. OSC
2	Neg	OSR-4	Link the state parks and town forest with clearly signed and mapped bicycle and walking paths. These need not be new paths, but rather safer and more enjoyable pathways between the areas. OSC and DPW
3	\$\$	OSR-5	Plan for neighborhood recreation areas in neighborhoods where access to recreational areas is limited. Specifically the Route 126 neighborhood. Incorporate town recreation needs within new schools that are in the planning process. RD and SC
1	Neg	OSR-6	Prepare a plan for the conservation of the Town Forest. Should be a part of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. TFC

Priority Cost

3	Neg	OSR-7	Investigate the feasibility of the old landfill on Howe Street for recreational purposes. RD
2	Neg	OSR-8	Continue communications with Northeastern University concerning the importance that the town places on the open lands owned by the University. Begin to establish a program in the event that the property is ever put up for sale. BOS
3	Neg	OSR- 9	Encourage Northeastern University to rebuild the stone wall along Chestnut Street. DPW
1	\$	OSR-10	Publicize and promote the options for landowners to donate land or conservation restrictions to town. CC and OSC
1	Neg	OSR-11	Prepare long term land acquisition strategy in conjunction with Finance Committee to implement Open Space Plan. Look at detailed financial implications. OSC and FC
Done		OSR-12	Review the potential benefits and costs of adopting Community Preservation Act to generate funds for open space acquisition. OSC and BOS
Done/w/CPA		OSR-13	Create a special capitalization fund to help finance the eventual purchase of key open space parcels. OSC, BOS and FC
2	Neg	OSR-14	Encourage the State Department of Environmental Management to purchase land adjoining the state parks and town wells and turn excess land over to town. CPC and BOS
OG		OSR-15	Continue to participate in the Bay Circuit open space program. Include concept within Open Space and Recreation Plan. OSC
2	\$\$	OSR-16	Consider the use of recreation betterment districts in areas of substantial new development that do not have adequate open space. Specifically, examine these districts in the Route 126 and Megunko Hill areas to begin assessing fees for partial cost of future recreation lands. BOS
OG		OSR-17	Work with the Sudbury Valley Trustees to protect open space in Ashland. OSC
3	\$\$	OSR-18	Place Chemical Brook on the list of potential acquisitions. Create a linear park along the old railroad bed from the High School to Megunko Road. OSC, CA

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Cost</u>		
2	Neg	OSR-19	Continue efforts to gain recreation access to land adjoining Captain Eames Circle. Ongoing. DPW
?		OSR-20	Continue efforts to develop land next to Cedar Street fire station for passive recreation. CPT
2	\$	OSR-21	Print and circulate attractive maps of town's open space, forest, etc. OSC
2	\$	OSR-22	Continue effort by Nutting & Dziubeck to secure access to wetland area east of Pond Street. OSC
2	Neg	OSR-23	Investigate the need and feasibility for the creation of a town land trust. OSC

5.4. ENVIRONMENT

GOALS

- 1. To protect and enhance a high quality environment which can accommodate an attractively built community with minimal impact on air, land, water quality and natural habitats.**
- 2. To restore those parts of our environment that have been damaged in the past.**
- 3. To establish an ongoing, multigenerational, educational program to make Ashland citizens aware of the impact of human activity on the environment.**

5.4.1 GENERAL

ACTIONS

Priority Cost

1	Neg	ENV-1	Continue to work with Hopkinton to ensure protection of ground water and water recharge areas. BOH and DPW
1	Neg	ENV-2	Strengthen and expand the town's Wetlands Protection Bylaw to address and protect all areas of wetland and surface waters. CC
OG		ENV-3	Continually monitor down gradient of Nyanza Site to ensure public health and safety is protected. DEP, BOH, LEPC and EPA
OG		ENV-4	Maintain the Town Forest as a natural habitat. Ongoing Policy. TFC
2	Neg	ENV-5	Establish natural wildlife corridors linking important habitats throughout town and in coordination with adjoining towns. OSC and CC
1	\$?	ENV-6	Complete Open Space Plan to guide environmental and open space policy and planning. OSC
1	Neg	ENV-7	Work through conservation easements, donations, and acquisition by interested third parties to maintain open space within the town as natural habitats. Ongoing policy. OSC
2	?	ENV-8	Obtain conservation restrictions on properties containing wetlands or undisturbed natural resources as a form of mitigation of environmental impact as the result of development. PB and CC
OG		ENV-9	Require comprehensive erosion control and stormwater management measures on all new development projects. PB, CC and DPW

Priority Cost

3	\$	ENV-10	Create an ongoing, multi-generational educational program at appropriate levels to make Ashland residents aware of the impacts of human activities on the environment. OSC, SD, COA, BOH and RD
OG		ENV-11	Continue monitoring negotiated quarry remediation. QCC
3	?	ENV-12	Develop a program to cleanup the Sudbury River within Ashland. CC and OSC
OG		ENV-13	Periodically sample town water from across town to monitor water quality. Ongoing Policy. BOH and DPW
1	\$?	ENV-14	Either consider creating a stricter wetlands district along Route 126, or maintain the industrial zoning around the Route 126 wetlands as a means of preventing residential development and having maximum control over any projects that might be proposed for the area. Re-emphasize wetland area east of Route 126. Ongoing policy. PB and CC
1	Neg	ENV-15	Examine feasibility of using part of Route 126 wetlands for public open space. OSC and CC
2	Neg	ENV-16	Work with Framingham to develop a clear set of policies and a general plan for Washakum Pond. Ongoing. DPW and CC
OG		ENV-17	Establish a wetland, stream, and vernal pool mapping program to locate, identify, record and protect wetland habitats. Conservation Commission use Stream Teams to perform shoreline surveys of major stream systems. CC
OG		ENV-18	Identify and certify all vernal pools in town. CC
2	?	ENV-19	Make plans for accommodating higher traffic flows on scenic roads while still maintaining the historic landscape features of these roads. PB and DPW
OG		ENV-20	Monitor and manage the cleanup of the Nyanza plume. BOH, EPA and DEP
2	?	ENV-21	Remediate Brownfield and 21E Hazardous Waste Sites. Monitor and manage both types of sites. BOH
2	?	ENV-22	Seek local bylaws to strengthen State hazardous waste regulations based on scientific information. BOH
3	Neg	ENV-23	Develop alternatives to outdoor burning to reduce air pollution within Ashland. FD

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Cost</u>		
1	Neg	ENV-24	Develop plans for continuous collection of household hazardous waste (oil paints, pesticides, mercury containing products, etc.) BOH
2	Neg	ENV-25	Appoint an Environmental Compliance Officer to ensure that town complies with state mandates regarding environmental protection. BOS
2	Neg	ENV-26	Label all storm drains with notice that it is connected to river. CC and DPW
1	\$	ENV-27	Complete the inventory and cataloging of conservation restrictions. CC and CA

5.4.2 SUDBURY RIVER

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Cost</u>		
1	\$	SR-1	Within the Open Space Plan, identify the parcels lying along the Sudbury River that lend themselves for inclusion within a River Park. Rate the parcels by priority for action. Ongoing. OSC and CC
2	Neg	SR-2	Monitor land sales and establish communications with landowners of key parcels. Work with other organizations to determine whether any of the parcels could be acquired. OSC
3	Neg	SR-3	Extend the river park along the town owned land on High Street. Link the land running from Cordaville Road to the Mill Pond to create a cohesive linear park along the Sudbury River. OSC, CC and DPW
3	Neg	SR-4	Organize a "Clean the River Campaign." Bring people together on a regular, periodic basis to clean up the banks of the river and pull debris from the brush. OSC, CC and DPW
1	\$	SR-5	Work to link the Sudbury River land with the Hopkinton State Park and Ashland State Park. OSC
1	\$	SR-6	Identify areas along the river that have a heavy concentration of wildlife. Protect these areas through cooperative efforts with owners or through public ownership on conservation restrictions. Review State regulations. OSC
3	?	SR-7	Work with the Metropolitan District Commission to open canoeing access to Reservoir #2. Currently, there is no access to the water. Ongoing. OSC and DPW
2	Neg	SR-8	Cooperate with SuAsCo Watershed Community Coalition's "Greenprint for Growth" with regard to habitat conservation along the Sudbury River. CC

5.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL

To work with and strengthen the existing base of business and industrial land so as to encourage a healthy local economy that provides jobs, tax revenues and business opportunities while protecting the residential character of the majority of the town.

ACTIONS

Priority Cost

OG	Neg	ED-1	Create an Economic Development Committee to be a liaison between the public sector and the town boards. (Ashland has a serious problem attracting knowledgeable interested parties wishing to do business with the town.) BOS
1	\$\$	ED-2	Widen and make improvements in curbing, sidewalks, guard rails and landscaping along Route 126 to set stage for current and future economic development of that area. Take steps to provide sewers to encourage new development. Consider town taking over ownership in exchange for state making improvements. DPW and CPC to work with state on this project.
2	?	ED-3	Increase commercial district in downtown to include the new train station and related surroundings to encourage an increased tax base. PB and CC
3	\$	ED-4	Subject to traffic study of impact, create a professional office district with greater height requirements along Route 135 from Homer Avenue to Summer Street. PB
1	Neg	ED-5	Develop work program and acquire Economic Development consultant through EO 418. BOS
1	?	ED-6	Work with Ashland Business Association and MetroWest Chamber of Commerce to develop actions to encourage economic development. EDC
2	Neg	ED-7	Review property tax rate split and discuss possible shifts to attract development. BOS
3	Neg	ED-8	Consider zoning changes to commercial/industrial areas along Waverly Street. PB
2	Neg	ED-9	Establish a Downtown Design Board to review all developments within the downtown. CPC (work with Ashland Business Association)

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Cost</u>		
3	\$	ED-10	Adopt a set of town graphics standards to be used as an underlying theme in all public signs and in private business signs, where applicable. Incorporate with Design Review Board. CPC and AAC
2	\$	ED-11	Identify areas for potential public parking in the downtown within a downtown plan. TP (and proposed Downtown Design Board)
NA	Neg	ED-12	Maintain the current prohibition of housing within the industrial district. Ongoing policy. PB
2	Neg	ED-13	Formalize the Technical Review Committee's guidelines. PB and BI
3	?	ED-14	Evaluate the costs and benefits of selling or leasing the old fire station for retail/office use. See Town Facilities actions. BOS (and proposed Downtown Design Board)
4	Neg	ED-15	Hold an infrastructure workshop with local industries to define areas for improvement. BOS
2	Neg	ED-16	Review Ashland's potential involvement in MetroWest Economic target area. EDC
2	Neg	ED-17	Consider the application of Tax Increment Financing to attract new industries to town. EDC

5.6 TRANSPORTATION

GOALS: The following goals should guide Ashland's future transportation improvements.

1. To promote an infrastructure in Ashland that recognizes the needs of the commuting public and commercial interests in a manner that allows Ashland to create and preserve itself as a livable community accessible to residents of all ages and abilities.
2. To achieve a consensus that proper design and planning can benefit the mobility and safety of the entire community.
3. To accommodate the automobile as the major suburban mode of transportation but to do so in a manner that maintains the integrity and viability of other modes in a safe and enjoyable environment.

ACTIONS

Priority Cost

NA	Neg	T-1	Review Executive Order 418 – Work with surrounding towns to develop locally funded public transportation systems. CPC and TP
OG		T-2	Develop and maintain communication network with appropriate MBTA officials regarding ongoing issues pertaining to the commuter rail station. TM
2	\$	T-3	Study alternate traffic routes for better traffic flow on Route 126 and Route 135, coordinate with Framingham officials. DPW
2	?	T-4	The following pedestrian system improvements should be made: DPW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct crosswalks wherever sidewalk jumps to opposite side of the street • Make crosswalk improvements where signal lights exist • Construct pedestrian islands at major intersections • Develop bylaw to address responsibility for cleaning sidewalks
3	?	T-5	The following bicycle system improvements should be made: DPW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a bike rack plan • Create bicycle lanes where possible • Provide road markings and signage for bike lanes or paths
2	?	T-6	The following school zones improvements should be made: SD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a timeframe and funding plan to assure adequate pedestrian and bicycle safety and access around current school zones and integrate into ongoing school improvement, expansion, or new construction plans • Increase crossing guards for all grades, K-12, where necessary

Priority Cost

1	?	T-7	The following rail improvements should be made: PB <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assure appropriate, shortest route access to rail station for pedestrian and other non-motorized traffic.• Assure aesthetic landscaping on and around rail station.• Provide direct access (probably parallel to tracks) from new rail station to downtown.
2	\$	T-8	The following bus system improvements should be made: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publicize currently available bus routes (the Lift): TM• Improve signage and bus stop seating and shelter: DPW• Improve access to bus stops via adequate crosswalks, ramps, bike racks: DPW
2	Neg	T-9	Establish a traffic count file of all major commuter intersections and entry points to town at peak commuter flow and during school day traffic times and week-end counts in shopping areas. File should include both current and historical counts. TP
3	\$	T-10	Improve road signage in and out of town – entering and leaving Ashland, town center, rail station, and other specific sites. DPW (and proposed Downtown Design Board)
3	\$\$\$	T-11	Improve traffic control on commuter feeder routes. Ongoing. DPW
3	\$	T-12	Develop new curb cut regulations and turning lane guidelines for commuters. DPW
2	Neg	T-13	Develop ordinance and procedure that require developers to investigate alternative traffic flows so as to eliminate the need for cul-de-sacs and gated streets. TP
3	Neg	T-14	Adopt roadway and traffic calming design standards specific and suitable to neighborhoods before implementing roadway expansions. DPW
3	?	T-15	Redesign current cul-de-sac roads to relieve congestion on major roads and offer alternate routes to local traffic while discouraging commuter cut-through by application of appropriate design standards. DPW
2	Neg	T-16	Develop a list of potential local routes between existing subdivisions and cul-de-sac streets. DPW and TP
3	Neg	T-17	Consider local traffic routes through proposed and future subdivisions and developments. PB
2	?	T-18	Evaluate traffic patterns in school zones and construct adequate sidewalks and intersections within a quarter mile radius of the schools. DPW

Priority Cost

3	Neg	T-19	Develop town by-law and procedures for naming new subdivision streets and re-naming existing streets. PB, BOS and HC
3	?	T-20	Include transportation improvements in all public and private capital improvements plans. PB
1	Neg	T-21	Ensure compliance with landscaping by-laws for all existing and planned parking areas in commercial districts. BI and TP
3	?	T-22	Develop street parking areas where appropriate. DPW
4	?	T-23	Encourage business development which have limited traffic impact on the town via appropriate zoning. EDC and PB
2	\$	T-24	Promote use of public transport services to major employers in the town and surrounding areas. TP
2	\$	T-25	Develop plan and procedure for removing perpendicular street parking throughout town, including adjacent to the Oak Street Apartments. TP and CPC
2	Neg	T-26	Establish a process to ensure compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act regulations for all facilities open to the public, both publicly and privately owned, including, for example, ramp and crosswalk access. PB and TP
3	\$	T-27	Establish a process to ensure compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act regulations for all facilities, public and private, which are linked to public transportation; to include, for example, handicap rams and crosswalk/sidewalk access to existing bus and rail links. TP and PB
4	Neg	T-28	Require traffic calming features to be included in all new road improvements and construction where deemed appropriate by site design standards. DPW and TP
2	?	T-29	Develop public transportation for special needs groups and non-motorized traffic. OEA
4	\$	T-30	Review current by-laws for commercial signage and modify to create uniform village character via size and materials standards. AAC and proposed Down- town Design Board
4	?	T-31	Establish a public works schedule to create finished shoulders on all major roadways. DPW
4	?	T-32	Install consistent guardrails to established standards throughout the town. DPW

Priority Cost

3	\$\$\$	T-33	Develop a plan to upgrade existing asphalt curbs to granite curbstones (where appropriate). DPW
3	\$	T-34	Identify funding and sources for beautification programs for public roadways, for example, town budget itemization, grants, local clubs, adopt-a-road programs, school projects. CPC
1	?	T-35	Review draft of Town of Ashland proposal for owning and maintaining Route 126. Continue negotiations with the State on upgrades, road ownership, and maintenance. Request that route 126 be placed on the Massachusetts Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). BOS
2	\$	T-36	Develop a schedule for sidewalk construction along routes 126 and 135. Include pedestrian signals at all traffic lights along these corridors. DPW
2	\$	T-37	Review and modify zoning and zoning compliance regarding signage, curb cuts, and landscaping of commercial developments along routes 126 and 135. CPC and PB
3	Neg	T-38	Evaluate zoning on Route 135 to limit further development to existing commercial centers. TP
4	\$	T-39	Actively enforce and monitor traffic related requirements as established by code or by-laws on properties maintained by private development and businesses. Consider establishing a volunteer town authority empowered to ticket and fine violators. PD
2	\$	T-40	Develop a by-law requiring developers of new construction to provide sidewalks along frontage. PB

5.7 TOWN FACILITIES: There is an immediate need to comprehensively review all the current capital improvement programs proposed, including school and town facilities and reach an organized consensus on how land and assets are to be appropriated. Currently, there is simple piecemeal with agencies vying for the best site. There is little consideration for future use of decommissioned facilities or an organized vision for the future.

GOALS

1. To maximize the benefits of public facility investments to the town and to the area surrounding a facility and to minimize the public resources spent in the process of site and developing such facilities. Consider life-cycle value (e.g. maintenance requirements, lifetime of building). Work toward optimizing value to maintain affordable town facilities by purchasing new facilities wisely, maintaining facilities regularly to insure maximum service.
2. To site public facility to provide equitable service provision to all of Ashland's residents.
3. To plan in the present for the needs of the future.
4. To maximize communication and cooperation between different town departments (e.g. phone systems, computer systems, overlap of usage, emergency services).
5. To coordinate and achieve a holistic viewpoint of all town facilities needs so that there is an organized interrelationship between new, abandoned, and renovated structures and land use.
6. To normalize funding on an annual basis for maintenance of buildings and replacement of large scale equipment.

ACTIONS

Priority Cost

2	\$	F-1	Prepare a comprehensive inventory of town facilities. This inventory should include existing facilities and projected needs. TM
3	\$	F-2	Prepare a comprehensive inventory of town land and use organized to show current status of land and potential for expansion of current use. Integrate this with open space inventory. Open land which requires maintenance or development or will require this should be considered as a town facility in that it may require capital improvements. TP and OSC
2	\$	F-3	Update long-term Public Facility and Land Use Inventory and Plan each year, by having Departments and/or appropriate committees review and make recommendations. Ongoing. TP and CPC

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Cost</u>		
3	?	F-4	Establish a method to keep an annual update of conditions of facilities within each town department leading to establishment of an annually budgeted maintenance and replacement of equipment basis. TM
1	?	F-5	Explore the availability of grants, etc. to assist the town. TP and department heads
3	?	F-6	Study all the projected capital (construction) projects that are being planned and explore options for relocation of some facilities, so that a sound approach to meeting facility needs with adaptive reuse of existing structures, and well thought through study of new facilities. Enlarge these projects so that they are not piecemeal but consider all town capital improvements to see if there are advantageous ways to merge projects, reuse space, and plan for future growth. TP

PROJECTED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

These are projects which have been studied and are expected to become projects in the immediate future.

1. Renovate, repair or replace Town Hall.
2. Expand or replace Police Station.
3. Substantially renovate or replace downtown Fire Station.
4. Renovate and/or expand Department of Public Services to meet ADA and functional requirements.
5. Provide additional school space, possibly one new high school and one new middle school. Organize and coordinate these needs with existing facilities.
6. Build new Senior Center.
7. Library expansion.
8. Recreational field development.
9. Cemetery expansion. 10 acres have been proposed for expansion. This should be reconsidered. If the current policy is that any former resident of Ashland can be buried in the cemetery, then this policy should be revised. In a town that is physically quite small and with many demands for capital improvements on limited town land, alternatives should be studied.

These are projects that should be considered in the next 5 years:

10. In-town recycling center for composting, larger scale recycling needs than currently served by blue boxes such as larger boxes, construction waste, household hazardous waste.
11. Skate/gravity park.
12. New sewer project.
13. Town Kennel.
14. New sewer pumping station building at Brackett Road.
15. Completion of Marathon Park.
16. Plan for MBTA land at railroad in town center.

Town of Ashland Buildout Summary Information

Current Demographics and Buildout Projections

Population

1990 Residents	12,066
1998 Residents	13,276
Residents at Buildout	20,228

Students

1990 Students	1,559
1998/1999 Students	2,120
Number of Students at Buildout	3,023

Households

1990 Households	4,607
1998 Households	5,206
Households at Buildout	8,186

Water Use

1998 MGD	1.383
MGD at Buildout	2.186

Summary of Buildout Impacts

Totals

Additional Residents	6,952*
Additional School Children	903*
Additional Dwelling Units	2,980
Additional Lots	1,422
Additional Developable Land Area (sq. ft.)	71,987,914
Additional Developable Land Area (acres)	1,653
Additional Commercial/Industrial Buildable Floor Area (sq. ft.)	4,398,965
Additional Water Demand (gallons/day)	803,999
<i>Residential Water Use (gallons/day)</i>	474,076
<i>Comm./Ind. Water Use (gallons/day)</i>	329,922
Additional Municipal Solid Waste (tons/year)	3,243
<i>Non-Recycled Solid Waste (tons/year)</i>	2,306
<i>Recyclable Solid Waste (tons/year)</i>	937
New Roads (miles)	24.18

* After a detailed analysis of the MAPC buildout numbers the CPC adjusted the "Additional Residents" and "Additional School Children" estimates. The adjustments were made in the Rail Transit District because it was determined that there was double counting, and that the persons per apartment unit was too high. Following are the new estimates:

Additional Residents	5324
Additional School Children	624

5.8 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

GOAL

- 1. To understand the past from which Ashland developed.**
- 2. To identify and protect the important human-made and natural features of Ashland that represent the town's past.**
- 3. To raise Ashland residents' awareness of the town's past.**

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACTION ITEMS:

Priority Cost

OG	Neg	HP-1	Pass by ballot the Community Preservation Act, and create a town committee including at least one member of the Ashland Historical Commission to make recommendations for the use of the funds collected under the act for the purposes of historic preservation. BOS and PB
3	Neg	HP-2	Pass at Town Meeting a historic preservation by-law exempting the Ashland Historical Commission from the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, so that it can serve as a repository for site-sensitive documents deriving from cultural resource management studies that have been undertaken or may in the future be undertaken with Ashland. HC
3	Neg	HP-3	Amend at Town Meeting the Earth Removal By-law to allow the Ashland Historical Commission to require archaeological locational surveys in locations considered likely to contain significant prehistoric or historic buried sites or standing structures, where a project proponent plans for removal or alteration deeper than 8" of more than 5000 square feet of area. HC
2	\$	HP-4	Fund and complete a town-wide inventory of historic and archaeological sites, and place these documents on file with the Massachusetts Historical Commission. HC
3	\$\$	HP-5	Create and maintain a National Register Historic District in the center of Ashland, to include significant historic properties such as Town Hall, John Stone's Inn, the General Store, the fire station, the church, the library and the railroad station. HC (and proposed Downtown Design Board)
4	\$\$	HP-6	Consider creating a Marathon Park National Register Historic District at the west end of the Mill Pond, to commemorate the original starting place for the Boston Marathon. HC and OSC
4	\$\$	HP-7	Investigate creating other historic districts around areas that contain historically significant buildings and/or buried sites. HC
4	Neg	HP-8	Provide assistance to private and public landowners who seek to have their properties nominated to the National Register. HC

5.9 DOWNTOWN

GOAL

Provide a place that is the recognized civic center of Ashland that differs from other commercial areas of town, reflects and incorporates the town history, includes a variety of land uses (governmental, commercial, residential), promotes pedestrian activity, and generates pride from residents.

ACTIONS

Priority Cost

- | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|--|
| 2 | ? | D-1 | Prepare and follow a Downtown Plan that identifies opportunities and strategies to revitalize, maintain, and expand the downtown area. PB |
| 4 | ? | D-2 | Create a Historic District in the downtown area, define the boundaries and inventory and specify historic structures and places. HC |
| 3 | ? | D-3 | Consider revisions to the zoning by-laws for the downtown area and seek ways to encourage and allow for increased density, pedestrian-oriented design, and mixed land uses. Consider creating an overlay district for zoning purposes and transfer of development rights for the downtown area. PB |
| 1 | \$ | D-4 | Seek ways to expand and connect the downtown area to the west toward Stone Park (the recognized central outdoor town meeting place) and toward the train station. Focus on centralized parking locations and convenient pedestrian connections. PB |
| 2 | ? | D-5 | Form a Downtown Business Association and consider the creation of a Downtown Improvement District. Work with existing businesses, town officials, and the Historical Commission to create a design review guidelines for the downtown to create a consistent and coordinated design within the downtown area. TP |
| 3 | ? | D-6 | Enhance and expand pedestrian facilities and connectivity throughout the downtown and to neighboring areas. Consider streetscaping elements such as street furniture and lighting. PB |
| 3 | ? | D-7 | Seek opportunities to provide for centralized off-street parking to serve a variety of land uses and to maximize on-street parking where possible. BOS and CPC |
| 3 | Neg | D-8 | Consult with Post Office officials to determine the need for future expansion and develop proposals for accommodating potential expansion at the existing location. TM |

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Cost</u>		
3	\$	D-9	Improve off-street parking and sign regulations that guide future development in the downtown (as well as in other commercial areas). PB and DPW (and proposed Downtown Design Board)
4	\$	D-10	Develop a set of architectural standards or guidelines for downtown building rehabilitation or conversion. These would not be regulations, but rather a set of suggestions for downtown rehabilitation and construction. Local regulations can strongly suggest that such guidelines be considered in all projects operating under a special permit. PB and CPC
4	?	D-11	Plan for street lights that fit the historic period of the downtown. BOS and DPW
3	\$	D-12	Apply for designation with the "Main Street" program at the Executive Office of Communities and Development for access to technical assistance and grant monies. PB

5.10 OUTLYING AREAS

To include the farthest parts of town in the dynamics of Ashland life. To protect the town's overall rural wooded character by honoring the noteworthy water and rock areas while connecting individual neighborhoods by a system of maintained tree and stone edged roads and walking or biking paths with resting stops and community use spots.

ACTIONS

Priority Cost

- | | | |
|---|-----|---|
| 2 | ? | O-1 Investigate potential purchase or conservation easement by town of wooded lots along town perimeters or tracts not abutting routes 135 or 126. CPC |
| 3 | ? | O-2 Consider purchase by town of any property abutting water or park land. OSC and CPC |
| 4 | ? | O-3 Maintain attractive appearance of tree, water and natural rock enhanced properties owned by town. OSC and DPW |
| 3 | ? | O-4 Improve and beautify the look of our present roads in Ashland by consistent tree planting, stonewall repair, scenic road status maintenance and sidewalk/bike ways. Consider adding additional roads to the scenic road program. PB and CPC |
| 4 | ? | O-5 Utilize trolley track beds for walk/bike ways with rest pause/stops. OSC |
| 2 | Neg | O-6 Preserve and maintain rural quality of South Street, Spring Street, and Olive Street. PB |
| 2 | Neg | O-7 Expand and sustain good neighbor relationships with Trimount quarry, Northeastern University, the former 4H Conference Center and State Park to improve and continue attractive wooded outdoor areas in Ashland. BOS |
| 3 | ? | O-8 Encourage local garden club to implement "Tree USA" program. CPC |
| 4 | ? | O-9 Look for opportunities for better long term use and/or protection of the following: |

Pilgrim Day Camp	(Myrtle Street)
Bethany Home	(E. Union Street)
Ashland/Hopkinton State Park	(State Park Road)
4H Center	(Chestnut Street)
Northeastern University	(Chestnut Street)

Priority Cost

O-9 continued

Trimount Quarry	(Spring Street)
Boat Access	(Spring Street)
Glean Maura Farm	(Olive Street)
Town Forest	
Witch Caves	
Devil's Den	
Waseeka Farm	

- | | | | |
|---|-----|------|---|
| ? | ? | O-10 | Include residents of outlying areas in town gatherings by posting notice on sign boards visible from main roads. TM |
| 2 | Neg | O-11 | Consider development and adoption of new Scenic Roads By-law that regulates activities and changes in the roadway right of way along scenic roads. PB |

6.0 ACTION STRATEGIES BY BOARD/AGENCY/DEPARTMENT

This section gives the detailed actions recommended by the Plan, organized by boards, departments or other groups primarily responsible for the action. Each action item is preceded by the abbreviation corresponding to its place in Chapter 5. Please see Chapter 5 for Action Items which need to be coordinated with other committees.

- Ashland Cultural Council
- Animal Control Officer
- 6.1 Affordable Housing Committee
- 6.2 Building Inspector
- 6.3 Board of Health
- 6.4 Board of Selectmen
- 6.5 Conservation Agent
- 6.6 Conservation Commission
- 6.7 Cemetery, Park and Trees
- 6.8 Comprehensive Plan Committee
- 6.9 Department of Public Works
- 6.10 Department of Environmental Protection
- Environmental Protection Agency
- 6.11 Finance Committee
- Fire Department
- 6.12 Historical Commission
- 6.13 Local Emergency Planning Committee
- 6.14 Office of Elderly Affairs
- 6.15 Open Space Committee
- 6.16 Planning Board
- 6.17 Police Department
- 6.18 Quarry Closure Committee
- 6.19 Redevelopment Authority and/or Economic Development
Committee
- Recreation Department
- 6.20 School Committee
- School Department
- Town Clerk
- 6.21 Town Forest Committee
- 6.22 Town Manager
- 6.23 Town Planner

6.1 AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

- H-1 Create an Affordable Housing Plan that sets specific objectives and a clear timetable for action. Meet the requirements of EO418 and new requirements of Chapter 40B.
- H-2 Do not rezone any more land for multifamily, unless it is associated with senior affordable housing with priority given to Ashland residents and family members.
- H-5 Identify town owned parcels that might be used for affordable housing
- H-6 Consider the development of a zoning bylaw that would require an affordable housing unit for a predetermined number of housing units in a proposed subdivision.
- H-7 Examine the usefulness of an Ashland Affordable Housing Trust
- H-9 Investigate the availability of state and/or federal funds to rehabilitate rented units.
- H-11 Pursue a program to improve the rental units on Raymond Marchetti Road. Program should address new improvement design standards
- H-12 Investigate the feasibility of using the town-owned parcel off Oregon Road/Oak Street for senior affordable housing with recreational facilities

6.2 **BUILDING INSPECTOR**

ED-13 Formalize the Technical Review Committee's guidelines

T-21 Ensure compliance with landscaping by-laws for all existing and planned parking areas in commercial districts

6.3 BOARD OF HEALTH

- H-3 Carefully consider any proposals to increase lot sizes in Ashland as a means of either decreasing overall density or avoiding future problems with septic systems.

- ENV-1 Continue to work with Hopkinton to ensure protection of ground water and water recharge areas

- ENV-3 Continually monitor down gradient of Nyanza Site to ensure public health and safety is protected.

- ENV-10 Create an ongoing, multi-generational educational program at appropriate levels to make Ashland residents aware of the impacts of human activities on the environment.

- ENV-13 Periodically sample town water from across town to monitor water quality.

- ENV-20 Monitor and manage the cleanup of the Nyanza plume

- ENV-22 Seek local bylaws to strengthen State hazardous waste regulations based on scientific information

- ENV-24 Develop plans for continuous collection of household hazardous waste (oil paints, pesticides, mercury containing products, etc.)

6.4 BOARD OF SELECTMEN

- OSR-8 Continue communications with Northeastern University concerning the importance that the town places on the open lands owned by the University. Begin to establish a program in the event that the property is ever put up for sale.

- OSR-12 Review the potential benefits and costs of adopting Community Preservation Act to generate funds for open space acquisition.

- OSR-13 Create a special capitalization fund to help finance the eventual purchase of key open space parcels.

- OSR-14 Encourage the State Department of Environmental Management to purchase land adjoining the state parks and town wells and turn excess land over to town.

- OSR-16 Consider the use of recreation betterment districts in areas of substantial new development that do not have adequate open space. Specifically, examine these districts in the Route 126 and Megunko Hill areas to begin assessing fees for partial cost of future recreation lands.

- ENV-25 Appoint an Environmental Compliance Officer to ensure that town complies with state mandates regarding environmental protection.

- ED-1 Create an Economic Development Committee to be a liaison between the public sector and the town boards. (Ashland has a serious problem attracting knowledgeable interested parties wishing to do business with the town.)

- ED-5 Develop work program and acquire Economic Development consultant through EO 418.

- ED-7 Review property tax rate split and discuss possible shifts to attract development.

- ED-14 Evaluate the costs and benefits of selling or leasing the old fire station for retail/office use. See Town Facilities actions.

- ED-15 Hold an infrastructure workshop with local industries to define areas for improvement.

- T-19 Develop town by-law and procedures for naming new subdivision streets and re-naming existing streets.

- T-35 Review draft of Town of Ashland proposal for owning and maintaining Route 126. Continue negotiations with the State on upgrades, road ownership, and maintenance. Request that route 126 be placed on the Massachusetts Transportation Improvement Program.
- HP-1 Pass by ballot the Community Preservation Act, and create a town committee including at least one member of the Ashland Historical Commission to make recommendations for the use of the funds collected under the act for the purposes of historic preservation.
- HP-6 Consider creating a Marathon Park National Register Historic District at the west end of the Mill Pond, to commemorate the original starting place for the Boston Marathon.
- D-7 Seek opportunities to provide for centralized off-street parking to serve a variety of land uses and to maximize on-street parking where possible.
- D-11 Plan for street lights that fit the historic period of the downtown.
- O-7 Expand and sustain good neighbor relationships with Trimount quarry, Northeastern University, the former 4H Conference Center and State Park to improve and continue attractive wooded outdoor areas in Ashland.

6.5 CONSERVATION AGENT

- OSR-18 Place Chemical Brook on the list of potential acquisitions. Create a linear park along the old railroad bed from the High School to Megunko Road.

- OSR-24 Emphasize the importance of incorporating open space and natural resources within new development and/or redevelopment.

- ENV-27 Complete the inventory and cataloging of conservation restrictions.

6.6 CONSERVATION COMMISSION

- OSR-10 Publicize and promote the options for landowners to donate land or conservation restrictions to town.
- OSR-24 Emphasize the importance of incorporating open space and natural resources within new development and/or redevelopment.
- ENV-2 Strengthen and expand the town’s Wetlands Protection Bylaw to address and protect all areas of wetland and surface waters.
- ENV-5 Establish natural wildlife corridors linking important habitats throughout town and in coordination with adjoining towns.
- ENV-8 Obtain conservation restrictions on properties containing wetlands or undisturbed natural resources as a form of mitigation of environmental impact as the result of development.
- ENV-9 Require comprehensive erosion control and stormwater management measures on all new development projects.
- ENV-12 Develop a program to cleanup the Sudbury River within Ashland.
- ENV-16 Work with Framingham to develop a clear set of policies and a general plan for Washakum Pond.
- ENV-17 Establish a wetland, stream, and vernal pool mapping program to locate, identify, record and protect wetland habitats. Conservation Commission use Stream Teams to perform shoreline surveys of major stream systems.
- ENV-18 Identify and certify all vernal pools in town.
- ENV-27 Complete the inventory and cataloging of conservation restrictions.
- SR-1 Within the Open Space Plan, identify the parcels lying along the Sudbury River that lend themselves for inclusion within a River Park. Rate the parcels by priority for action.
- SR-3 Extend the river park along the town owned land on High Street. Link the land running from Cordaville Road to the Mill Pond to create a cohesive linear park along the Sudbury River.
- SR-4 Organize a “Clean the River Campaign.” Bring people together on a regular, periodic basis to clean up the banks of the river and pull debris from the brush.

- SR-8 Cooperate with SuAsCo Watershed Community Coalition’s “Greenprint for Growth” with regard to habitat conservation along the Sudbury River.
- ED-3 Increase commercial district in downtown to include the new train station and related surroundings to encourage an increased tax base.

6.7 **CEMETERY, PARK AND TREES**

OSR-20 Continue efforts to develop land next to Cedar Street fire station for passive recreation.

6.8 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE

- GP-2 Work with town boards and departments on a regular basis to keep this plan current.
- GP-3 CPC meet with the Planning Board at least quarterly to report status and distribute to all boards quarterly by written report.
- GP-4 Develop a town beautification plan.
- H-6 Consider the development of a zoning bylaw that would require an affordable housing unit for a predetermined number of housing units in a proposed subdivision.
- H-8 Investigate the relationship between potential mixed use zoning in the downtown area and the increased availability of affordable housing.
- H-10 Encourage the Transfer of Development Rights to provide opportunities for new affordable housing.
- OSR-14 Encourage the State Department of Environmental Management to purchase land adjoining the state parks and town wells and turn excess land over to town.
- OSR-24 Emphasize the importance of incorporating open space and natural resources within new development and/or redevelopment.
- ED-2 Widen and make improvements in curbing, sidewalks, guard rails and landscaping along Route 126 to set stage for current and future economic development of that area. Take steps to provide sewers to encourage new development. Consider town taking over ownership in exchange for state making improvements.

6.9 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

- OSR-4 Link the state parks and town forest with clearly signed and mapped bicycle and walking paths. These need not be new paths, but rather safer and more enjoyable pathways between the areas.
- OSR-9 Encourage Northeastern University to rebuild the stone wall along Chestnut Street.
- OSR-19 Continue efforts to gain recreation access to land adjoining Captain Eames Circle.
- ENV-1 Continue to work with Hopkinton to ensure protection of ground water and water recharge areas.
- ENV-9 Require comprehensive erosion control and storm water management measures on all new development projects.
- ENV-13 Periodically sample town water from across town to monitor water quality.
- ENV-19 Make plans for accommodating higher traffic flows on scenic roads while still maintaining the historic landscape features of these roads.
- SR-3 Extend the river park along the town owned land on High Street. Link the land running from Cordaville Road to the Mill Pond to create a cohesive linear park along the Sudbury River.
- SR-4 Organize a “Clean the River Campaign.” Bring people together on a regular, periodic basis to clean up the banks of the river and pull debris from the brush.
- SR-7 Work with the Metropolitan District Commission to open canoeing access to Reservoir #2. Currently, there is no access to the water.
- ED-2 Widen and make improvements in curbing, sidewalks, guard rails and landscaping along Route 126 to set stage for current and future economic development of that area. Take steps to provide sewers to encourage new development. Consider town taking over ownership in exchange for state making improvements.
- T-3 Study alternate traffic routes for better traffic flow on Route 126 and Route 135, coordinate with Framingham officials.
- T-4 The following pedestrian system improvements should be made:
- Construct crosswalks wherever sidewalk jumps to opposite side of the street
 - Make crosswalk improvements where signal lights exist
 - Construct pedestrian islands at major intersections
 - Develop by-law to address responsibility for cleaning sidewalks

- T-5 The following bicycle system improvements should be made:
- Develop a bike rack plan
 - Create bicycle lanes where possible
 - Provide road markings and signage for bike lanes or paths
- T-8 The following bus system improvements should be made:
- Publicize currently available bus routes (the Lift)
 - Improve signage and bus stop seating and shelter
 - Improve access to bus stops via adequate crosswalks, ramps, bike racks
- T-10 Improve road signage in and out of town – entering and leaving Ashland, town center, rail station, and other specific sites.
- T-11 Improve traffic control on commuter feeder routes.
- T-12 Develop new curb cut regulations and turning lane guidelines for commuters.
- T-14 Adopt roadway and traffic calming design standards specific and suitable to neighborhoods before implementing roadways expansions.
- T-15 Redesign current cul-de-sac roads to relieve congestion on major roads and offer alternate routes to local traffic while discouraging commuter cut-through by application of appropriate design standards.
- T-16 Develop a list of potential local routes between existing subdivisions and cul-de-sac streets.
- T-18 Evaluate traffic patterns in school zones and construct adequate sidewalks and intersections within a quarter mile radius of the schools.
- T-22 Develop street parking areas where appropriate.
- T-28 Require traffic calming features to be included in all new road improvements and construction where deemed appropriate by site design standards.
- T-31 Establish a public works schedule to create finished shoulders on all major roadways.
- T-32 Install consistent guardrails to established standards throughout the town.
- T-33 Develop a plan to upgrade existing asphalt curbs to granite curbstones
- T-36 Develop a schedule for sidewalk construction along routes 126 and 135. Include pedestrian signals at all traffic lights along these corridors.

- D-9 Improve off-street parking and sign regulations that guide future development in the downtown (as well as in other commercial areas).
- D-11 Plan for street lights that fit the historic period of the downtown.
- O-3 Maintain attractive appearance of tree, water and natural rock enhanced properties owned by town.

6.10 **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

ENV-3 Continually monitor down gradient of Nyanza Site to ensure public health and safety is protected.

ENV-20 Monitor and manage the cleanup of the Nyanza plume.

6.11 **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

OSR-11 Prepare long term land acquisition strategy in conjunction with Finance Committee to implement Open Space Plan. Look at detailed financial implications.

OSR-13 Create a special capitalization fund to help finance the eventual purchase of key open space parcels

6.12 HISTORICAL COMMISSION

- T-19 Develop town by-law and procedures for naming new subdivision streets and re-naming existing streets.

- HP-3 Amend at Town Meeting the Earth Removal By-law to allow the Ashland Historical Commission to require archaeological location surveys in locations considered likely to contain significant prehistoric or historic buried sites or standing structures, where a project proponent plans for removal or alteration deeper than 8” of more than 5000 square feet of area.

- HP-4 Fund and complete a town-wide inventory of historic and archaeological sites, and place these documents on file with the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

- HP-5 Create and maintain a National Register Historic District in the center of Ashland, to include significant historic properties such as Town Hall, John Stone’s Inn, the General Store, the fire station, the church, the library and the railroad station.

- HP-6 Consider creating a Marathon Park National Register Historic District at the west end of the Mill Pond, to commemorate the original starting place for the Boston Marathon.

- HP-7 Investigate creating other historic districts around areas that contain historically significant buildings and/or buried sites.

- HP-8 Provide assistance to private and public landowners who seek to have their properties nominated to the National Register.

- D-2 Create an Historic District in the downtown area, define the boundaries and inventory and specify historic structures and places.

6.13 **LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE**

ENV-3 Continually monitor down gradient of Nyanza Site to ensure public health and safety is protected.

6.14 **OFFICE OF ELDERLY AFFAIRS**

T-29 Develop public transportation for special needs groups and non-motorized traffic.

6.15 **OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE**

- OSR-1 Continue development of a riverfront park along the Sudbury River from the Hopkinton border to the MDC Reservoir #2

- OSR-2 Update the Open Space and Recreation Plan to meet state and EO418 requirements.

- OSR-4 Link the state parks and town forest with clearly signed and mapped bicycle and walking paths. These need not be new paths, but rather safer and more enjoyable pathways between the areas.

- OSR-24 Emphasize the importance of incorporating open space and natural resources within new development and/or redevelopment.

6.16 PLANNING BOARD

- GP-4 Develop a town beautification plan.
- GP-6 Investigate the feasibility of applying Transfer of Development Rights strategies in Ashland.
- GP-7 Review and modify current by-laws for commercial landscaping to create a uniform, attractive village character.
- GP-9 Encourage adoption of Mixed Use Zoning Districts.
- H-3 Carefully consider any proposals to increase lot sizes in Ashland as a means of either decreasing overall density or avoiding future problems with septic systems.
- H-4 Preserve the present residential character of Route 135 from High School to the Hopkinton border.
- ENV-8 Obtain conservation restrictions on properties containing wetlands or undisturbed natural resources as a form of mitigation of environmental impact as the result of development.
- ENV-9 Require comprehensive erosion control and stormwater management measures on all new development projects.
- ENV-19 Make plans for accommodating higher traffic flows on scenic roads while still maintaining the historic landscape features of these roads.
- ED-3 Increase commercial district in downtown to include the new train station and related surroundings to encourage an increased tax base.
- ED-4 Subject to traffic study of impact, create a professional office district with greater height requirements along Route 135 from Homer Avenue to Summer Street.
- ED-8 Consider zoning changes to commercial/industrial areas along Waverly Street.
- ED-12 Maintain the current prohibition of housing within the industrial district.
- ED-13 Formalize the Technical Review Committee's guidelines.

6.17 **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

T-39 Actively enforce and monitor traffic related requirements as established by code or by-laws on properties maintained by private development and businesses. Consider establishing a volunteer town authority empowered to ticket and fine violators.

6.18 QUARRY CLOSURE COMMITTEE

ENV-11 Continue monitoring negotiated quarry remediation.

6.19 REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND/OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ED-3 Increase commercial district in downtown to include the new train station and related surroundings to encourage an increased tax base.
- ED-6 Work with Ashland Business Association and MetroWest Chamber of Commerce to develop actions to encourage economic development.
- ED-16 Review Ashland’s potential involvement in MetroWest Economic target area.
- ED-17 Consider the application of Tax Increment Financing to attract new industries to town.
- T-23 Encourage business development which have limited traffic impact on the town via appropriate zoning.
- HP-5 Create and maintain a National Register Historic District in the center of Ashland to include significant historic properties such as Town Hall, John Stone’s Inn, the General Store, the fire station, the church, the library and the railroad station.
- OSR-24 Emphasize the importance of incorporating open space and natural resources within new development and/or redevelopment.

6.20 **SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

ENV-10 Create an ongoing, multi-generational educational program at appropriate levels to make Ashland residents aware of the impacts of human activities on the environment.

T-6 The following school zones improvements should be made:

- Develop a timeframe and funding plan to assure adequate pedestrian and bicycle safety and access around current school zones and integrate into ongoing school improvement, expansion, or new construction plans

- Increase crossing guards for all grades, K-12, where necessary

6.21 TOWN FOREST COMMITTEE

- OSR-6 Prepare a plan for the conservation of the Town Forest. Should be a part of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- ENV-4 Maintain the Town Forest as a natural habitat.

6.22 TOWN MANAGER

- GP-1 Expand/improve the town web site and make it current on a daily basis. Post agendas and meeting schedules.
- T-2 Develop and maintain communication network with appropriate MBTA officials regarding ongoing issues pertaining to the commuter rail station.
- T-8 The following bus system improvements should be made:
- Publicize currently available bus routes (the Lift)
- F-1 Prepare a comprehensive inventory of town facilities. This inventory should include existing facilities and projected needs.
- F-4 Establish a method to keep an annual update of conditions of facilities within each town department leading to establishment of an annually budgeted maintenance and replacement of equipment basis.
- D-8 Consult with Post Office officials to determine the need for future expansion and develop proposals for accommodating potential expansion at the existing location.
- O-10 Include residents of outlying areas in town gatherings by posting notice on sign boards visible from main roads.

6.23 TOWN PLANNER

GP-5 Continue to expand GIS.

CHAPTER 7.0 ACTION STRATEGIES BY PRIORITY

This Chapter is a listing of the “Action” items included in Chapter 7 (Priorities and Costs) and sorted according to their priority. Following is a discussion of priority definitions and costs.

Timing for implementation of action items

Scheduling of an action item is a function of the priority or need for the action, the assumed cost as related to funds that may be available, and how the action relates to other actions (if appropriate).

The system of prioritizing is divided into four (4) categories as follows:

1. Very high priority – A clear need for immediate action
2. High priority – schedule action soon hopefully within the next year.
3. Medium priority – within the next couple of years, depending on costs.
4. Low priority – it would be nice to have, but not so necessary.

Cost

Determining the cost of an action item is difficult. To some extent the estimated cost will depend on the amount of work that has been accomplished with respect to the item. There is some cost associated with each action. Some are direct, others are indirect, e.g., a staff person or volunteer may be able to accomplish the work without a specific appropriation. These task cost estimates will be considered negligible and labeled, “neg.”

Cost categories:

Neg. -	\$0 - \$1,000
\$	\$1,000 to \$5,000
\$\$	\$5,000 to \$25,000
\$\$\$	\$25,000 & up

Other definitions:

NA	– Non-Action item
OG	– On-Going (Continuous Action)
C	– Completed

7.1 VERY HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS

7.1.1 GENERAL PLANNING

Cost

TBD	GP-3	CPC meet with the Planning Board at least quarterly to report status and distribute to all boards quarterly by written report. CPC
TBD	GP-9	Encourage adoption of Mixed Use Zoning Districts. PB

7.1.2 HOUSING GOALS

Cost

Neg	H-5	Identify town owned parcels that might be used for affordable housing. TP & AHC
Neg	H-6	Consider the development of a zoning bylaw that would require an affordable housing unit for a predetermined number of housing units in a proposed subdivision. CPC and AHC
Neg	H-12	Investigate the feasibility of using the town-owned parcel off Oregon Road/Oak Street for senior affordable housing with recreational facilities. AHC

7.1.3 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Cost

\$	OSR-2	Update the Open Space and Recreation Plan to meet state and EO418 requirements. OSC
Neg	OSR-6	Prepare a plan for the conservation of the Town Forest. Should be a part of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. TFC
\$	OSR-10	Publicize and promote the options for landowners to donate land or conservation restrictions to town. CC and OSC
Neg	OSR-11	Prepare long term land acquisition strategy in conjunction with Finance Committee to implement Open Space Plan. Look at detailed financial implications. OSC and FC

7.1.4 ENVIRONMENT

7.1.4.1 GENERAL

Cost

Neg	ENV-1	Continue to work with Hopkinton to ensure protection of ground water and water recharge areas. BOH and DPW
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Cost

Neg	ENV-2	Strengthen and expand the town's Wetlands Protection Bylaw to address and protect all areas of wetland and surface waters. CC
\$	ENV-14	Either consider creating a stricter wetlands district along Route 126, or maintain the industrial zoning around the Route 126 wetlands as a means of preventing residential development and having maximum control over any projects that might be proposed for the area. Re-emphasize wetland area east of Route 126. Ongoing policy. PB and CC
Neg	ENV-15	Examine feasibility of using part of Route 126 wetlands for public open space. OSC and CC
Neg	ENV-24	Develop plans for continuous collection of household hazardous waste (oil paints, pesticides, mercury containing products, etc.) BOH
\$	ENV-27	Complete the inventory and cataloging of conservation restrictions. CC and CA

7.1.4.2 SUDBURY RIVER

Cost

\$	SR-1	Within the Open Space Plan, identify the parcels lying along the Sudbury River that lend themselves for inclusion within a River Park. Rate the parcels by priority for action. Ongoing. OSC and CC
\$	SR-5	Work to link the Sudbury River land with the Hopkinton State Park and Ashland State Park. OSC
\$	SR-6	Identify areas along the river that have a heavy concentration of wildlife. Protect these areas through cooperative efforts with owners or through public ownership on conservation restrictions. Review State regulations. OSC

7.1.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Cost

\$\$	ED-2	Widen and make improvements in curbing, sidewalks, guard rails and landscaping along Route 126 to set stage for current and future economic development of that area. Take steps to provide sewers to encourage new development. Consider town taking over ownership in exchange for state making improvements. DPW and CPC to work with state on this project.
Neg	ED-5	Develop work program and acquire Economic Development consultant through EO 418. BOS
TBD	ED-6	Work with Ashland Business Association and MetroWest Chamber of Commerce to develop actions to encourage economic development. EDC

7.1.6 TRANSPORTATION

Cost

TBD	T-7	The following rail improvements should be made: PB <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assure appropriate, shortest route access to rail station for pedestrian and other non-motorized traffic.• Assure aesthetic landscaping on and around rail station.• Provide direct access (probably parallel to tracks) from new rail station to downtown.
Neg	T-21	Ensure compliance with landscaping by-laws for all existing and planned parking areas in commercial districts. BI and TP
TBD	T-35	Review draft of Town of Ashland proposal for owning and maintaining Route 126. Continue negotiations with the State on upgrades, road ownership, and maintenance. Request that route 126 be placed on the Massachusetts Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). BOS

7.1.7 TOWN FACILITIES

Cost

TBD	F-5	Explore the availability of grants, etc. to assist the town. TP and department heads
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7.1.8 DOWNTOWN

Cost

\$	D-4	Seek ways to expand and connect the downtown area to the west toward Stone Park (the recognized central outdoor town meeting place) and toward the train station. Focus on centralized parking locations and convenient pedestrian connections. PB
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7.2 HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS

7.2.1 GENERAL PLANNING

Cost

Neg	GP-1	Expand/improve the town web site and make it current on a daily basis. Post agendas and meeting schedules. TM
Neg	GP-2	Work with town boards and departments on a regular basis to keep this plan current. CPC
\$\$	GP-5	Continue to expand GIS. TP
Neg	GP-6	Investigate the feasibility of applying Transfer of Development Rights strategies in Ashland. PB
\$\$	GP-8	Actively seek grant funding and hire a grant writer.

7.2.2 HOUSING GOALS

Cost

Neg	H-1	Create an Affordable Housing Plan that sets specific objectives and a clear timetable for action. Meet the requirements of EO418 and new requirements of Chapter 40B. AHC
Neg	H-7	Examine the usefulness of an Ashland Affordable Housing Trust. AHC
\$\$\$	H-11	Pursue a program to improve the rental units on Raymond Marchetti Road. Program should address new improvement design standards. AHC

7.2.3 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Cost

Neg	OSR-3	Update the Pathways Plan. Identify existing sidewalks and pathways and recommend new pathways and sidewalks where appropriate. OSC
Neg	OSR-4	Link the state parks and town forest with clearly signed and mapped bicycle and walking paths. These need not be new paths, but rather safer and more enjoyable pathways between the areas. OSC and DPW
Neg	OSR-19	Continue efforts to gain recreation access to land adjoining Captain Eames Circle. Ongoing. DPW
TBD	OSR-20	Continue efforts to develop land next to Cedar Street fire station for passive recreation. CPT
\$	OSR-21	Print and circulate attractive maps of town's open space, forest, etc. OSC
\$	OSR-22	Continue effort by Nutting & Dziubeck to secure access to wetland area east of Pond Street. OSC
Neg	OSR-23	Investigate the need and feasibility for the creation of a town land trust. OSC
Neg	OSR-24	Emphasize the importance of incorporating open space and natural resources within new development and/or redevelopment. OSC, CC, PB, RA

7.2.4 ENVIRONMENT

7.2.4.1 GENERAL

Cost

Neg	OSR-19	Continue efforts to gain recreation access to land adjoining Captain Eames Circle. Ongoing. DPW
TBD	OSR-20	Continue efforts to develop land next to Cedar Street fire station for passive recreation. CPT
\$	OSR-21	Print and circulate attractive maps of town's open space, forest, etc. OSC
\$	OSR-22	Continue effort by Nutting & Dziubeck to secure access to wetland area east of Pond Street. OSC
Neg	OSR-23	Investigate the need and feasibility for the creation of a town land trust. OSC
Neg	OSR-24	Emphasize the importance of incorporating open space and natural resources within new development and/or redevelopment. OSC, CC, PB, RA

7.2.4 ENVIRONMENT

7.2.4.1 GENERAL

Cost

Neg	ENV-5	Establish natural wildlife corridors linking important habitats throughout town and in coordination with adjoining towns. OSC and CC
TBD	ENV-8	Obtain conservation restrictions on properties containing wetlands or undisturbed natural resources as a form of mitigation of environmental impact as the result of development. PB and CC
Neg	ENV-16	Work with Framingham to develop a clear set of policies and a general plan for Washakum Pond. Ongoing. DPW and CC
TBD	ENV-19	Make plans for accommodating higher traffic flows on scenic roads while still maintaining the historic landscape features of these roads. PB and DPW
TBD	ENV-21	Remediate Brownfield and 21E Hazardous Waste Sites. Monitor and manage both types of sites. BOH
TBD	ENV-22	Seek local bylaws to strengthen State hazardous waste regulations based on scientific information. BOH
Neg	ENV-25	Appoint an Environmental Compliance Officer to ensure that town complies with state mandates regarding environmental protection. BOS
Neg	ENV-26	Label all storm drains with notice that it is connected to river. CC and DPW

7.2.4.2 SUDBURY RIVER

Cost

Neg	SR-2	Monitor land sales and establish communications with landowners of key parcels. Work with other organizations to determine whether any of the parcels could be acquired. OSC
Neg	SR-2	Monitor land sales and establish communications with landowners of key parcels. Work with other organizations to determine whether any of the parcels could be acquired. OSC
Neg	SR-8	Cooperate with SuAsCo Watershed Community Coalition's "Greenprint for Growth" with regard to habitat conservation along the Sudbury River. CC

7.2.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Cost

TBD	ED-3	Increase commercial district in downtown to include the new train station and related surroundings to encourage an increased tax base. PB and CC
Neg	ED-7	Review property tax rate split and discuss possible shifts to attract development. BOS
Neg	ED-9	Establish a Downtown Design Board to review all developments within the downtown. CPC (work with Ashland Business Association)
\$	ED-11	Identify areas for potential public parking in the downtown within a downtown plan. TP (and proposed Downtown Design Board)
Neg	ED-13	Formalize the Technical Review Committee's guidelines. PB and BI
Neg	ED-16	Review Ashland's potential involvement in MetroWest Economic target area. EDC
Neg	ED-17	Consider the application of Tax Increment Financing to attract new industries to town. EDC

7.2.6 TRANSPORTATION

Cost

\$	T-3	Study alternate traffic routes for better traffic flow on Route 126 and Route 135, coordinate with Framingham officials. DPW
TBD	T-4	The following pedestrian system improvements should be made: DPW <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construct crosswalks wherever sidewalk jumps to opposite side of the street• Make crosswalk improvements where signal lights exist• Construct pedestrian islands at major intersections• Develop bylaw to address responsibility for cleaning sidewalks

Cost
TBD

	T-6	The following school zones improvements should be made: SD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a timeframe and funding plan to assure adequate pedestrian and bicycle safety and access around current school zones and integrate into ongoing school improvement, expansion, or new construction plans • Increase crossing guards for all grades, K-12, where necessary
\$	T-8	The following bus system improvements should be made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicize currently available bus routes (the Lift): TM • Improve signage and bus stop seating and shelter: DPW • Improve access to bus stops via adequate crosswalks, ramps, bike racks: DPW
Neg	T-9	Establish a traffic count file of all major commuter intersections and entry points to town at peak commuter flow and during school day traffic times and week-end counts in shopping areas. File should include both current and historical counts. TP
Neg	T-13	Develop ordinance and procedure that require developers to investigate alternative traffic flows so as to eliminate the need for cul-de-sacs and gated streets. TP
Neg	T-16	Develop a list of potential local routes between existing subdivisions and cul-de-sac streets. DPW and TP
TBD	T-18	Evaluate traffic patterns in school zones and construct adequate sidewalks and intersections within a quarter mile radius of the schools. DPW
\$	T-24	Promote use of public transport services to major employers in the town and surrounding areas. TP
\$	T-25	Develop plan and procedure for removing perpendicular street parking throughout town, including adjacent to the Oak Street Apartments. TP and CPC
Neg	T-26	Establish a process to ensure compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act regulations for all facilities open to the public, both publicly and privately owned, including, for example, ramp and crosswalk access. PB and TP
TBD	T-29	Develop public transportation for special needs groups and non-motorized traffic. OEA
\$	T-36	Develop a schedule for sidewalk construction along routes 126 and 135. Include pedestrian signals at all traffic lights along these corridors. DPW
\$	T-37	Review and modify zoning and zoning compliance regarding signage, curb cuts, and landscaping of commercial developments along routes 126 and 135. CPC and PB
\$	T-40	Develop a by-law requiring developers of new construction to provide sidewalks along frontage. PB

7.2.7 TOWN FACILITIES

Cost

- | | | |
|----|-----|--|
| \$ | F-1 | Prepare a comprehensive inventory of town facilities. This inventory should include existing facilities and projected needs. TM |
| \$ | F-3 | Update long-term Public Facility and Land Use Inventory and Plan each year, by having Departments and/or appropriate committees review and make recommendations. Ongoing. TP and CPC |

7.2.8 OUTLYING AREAS

Cost

- | | | |
|-----|------|--|
| TBD | O-1 | Investigate potential purchase or conservation easement by town of wooded lots along town perimeters or tracts not abutting routes 135 or 126. CPC |
| Neg | O-6 | Preserve and maintain rural quality of South Street, Spring Street, and Olive Street. PB |
| Neg | O-7 | Expand and sustain good neighbor relationships with Trimount quarry, Northeastern University, the former 4H Conference Center and State Park to improve and continue attractive wooded outdoor areas in Ashland. BOS |
| Neg | O-11 | Consider development and adoption of new Scenic Roads By-law that regulates activities and changes in the roadway right of way along scenic roads. PB |

7.3 MEDIUM PRIORITY ACTIONS

7.3.1 GENERAL PLANNING

Cost

TBD	GP-4	Develop a town beautification plan. Garden Club and others. PB and CPC
Neg	GP-7	Review and modify current by-laws for commercial landscaping to create a uniform, attractive village character. PB

7.3.2 HOUSING GOALS

Cost

Neg	H-8	Investigate the relationship between potential mixed use zoning in the downtown area and the increased availability of affordable housing. CPC.
Neg	H-10	Encourage the Transfer of Development Rights to provide opportunities for new affordable housing. CPC

7.3.3 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Cost

\$	OSR-1	Continue development of a riverfront park along the Sudbury River from the Hopkinton border to the MDC Reservoir #2. OSC
\$\$	OSR-5	Plan for neighborhood recreation areas in neighborhoods where access to recreational areas is limited. Specifically the Route 126 neighborhood. Incorporate town recreation needs within new schools that are in the planning process. RD and SC
Neg	OSR-7	Investigate the feasibility of the old landfill on Howe Street for recreational purposes. RD
Neg	OSR-9	Encourage Northeastern University to rebuild the stone wall along Chestnut Street. DPW
\$\$	OSR-18	Place Chemical Brook on the list of potential acquisitions. Create a linear park along the old railroad bed from the High School to Megunko Road. OSC, CA

7.3.4 ENVIRONMENT

Cost

\$	ENV-10	Create an ongoing, multi-generational educational program at appropriate levels to make Ashland residents aware of the impacts of human activities on the environment. OSC, SD, COA, BOH and RD
TBD	ENV-12	Develop a program to cleanup the Sudbury River within Ashland. CC and OSC
Neg	ENV-23	Develop alternatives to outdoor burning to reduce air pollution within Ashland. FD

7.3.4.1 SUDBURY RIVER

Cost

Neg	SR-3	Extend the river park along the town owned land on High Street. Link the land running from Cordaville Road to the Mill Pond to create a cohesive linear park along the Sudbury River. OSC, CC and DPW
Neg	SR-4	Organize a “Clean the River Campaign.” Bring people together on a regular, periodic basis to clean up the banks of the river and pull debris from the brush. OSC, CC and DPW
TBD	SR-7	Work with the Metropolitan District Commission to open canoeing access to Reservoir #2. Currently, there is no access to the water. Ongoing. OSC and DPW

7.3.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Cost

\$	ED-4	Subject to traffic study of impact, create a professional office district with greater height requirements along Route 135 from Homer Avenue to Summer Street. PB
Neg	ED-8	Consider zoning changes to commercial/industrial areas along Waverly Street. PB
\$	ED-10	Adopt a set of town graphics standards to be used as an underlying theme in all public signs and in private business signs, where applicable. Incorporate with Design Review Board. CPC and AAC
TBD	ED-14	Evaluate the costs and benefits of selling or leasing the old fire station for retail/office use. See Town Facilities actions. BOS (and proposed Downtown Design Board)

7.3.6 TRANSPORTATION

Cost

TBD	T-5	The following bicycle system improvements should be made: DPW <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a bike rack plan• Create bicycle lanes where possible• Provide road markings and signage for bike lanes or paths
\$	T-10	Improve road signage in and out of town – entering and leaving Ashland, town center, rail station, and other specific sites. DPW (and proposed Downtown Design Board)
\$\$\$	T-11	Improve traffic control on commuter feeder routes. Ongoing. DPW

Cost

\$	T-12	Develop new curb cut regulations and turning lane guidelines for commuters. DPW
Neg	T-14	Adopt roadway and traffic calming design standards specific and suitable to neighborhoods before implementing roadways expansions. DPW
TBD	T-15	Redesign current cul-de-sac roads to relieve congestion on major roads and offer alternate routes to local traffic while discouraging commuter cut-through by application of appropriate design standards. DPW
Neg	T-17	Consider local traffic routes through proposed and future subdivisions and developments. PB
Neg	T-19	Develop town by-law and procedures for naming new subdivision streets and re-naming existing streets. PB, BOS and HC
TBD	T-20	Include transportation improvements in all public and private capital improvements plans. PB
TBD	T-22	Develop street parking areas where appropriate. DPW
\$	T-27	Establish a process to ensure compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act regulations for all facilities, public and private, which are linked to public transportation; to include, for example, handicap rams and crosswalk/sidewalk access to existing bus and rail links. TP and PB
\$\$\$	T-33	Develop a plan to upgrade existing asphalt curbs to granite curbstones (where appropriate). DPW
\$	T-34	Identify funding and sources for beautification programs for public roadways, for example, town budget itemization, grants, local clubs, adopt-a-road programs, school projects. CPC
Neg	T-38	Evaluate zoning on Route 135 to limit further development to existing commercial centers. TP

7.3.7 TOWN FACILITIES

Cost

\$	F-2	Prepare a comprehensive inventory of town land and use organized to show current status of land and potential for expansion of current use. Integrate this with open space inventory. Open land which requires maintenance or development or will require this should be considered as a town facility in that it may require capital improvements. TP and OSC
TBD	F-4	Establish a method to keep an annual update of conditions of facilities within each town department leading to establishment of an annually budgeted maintenance and replacement of equipment basis. TM

Cost

TBD

- F-6 Study all the projected capital (construction) projects that are being planned and explore options for relocation of some facilities, so that a sound approach to meeting facility needs with adaptive reuse of existing structures, and well thought through study of new facilities. Enlarge these projects so that they are not piecemeal but consider all town capital improvements to see if there are advantageous ways to merge projects, reuse space, and plan for future growth. TP

7.3.8 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Cost

Neg

- HP-2 Pass at Town Meeting a historic preservation by-law exempting the Ashland Historical Commission from the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, so that it can serve as a repository for site-sensitive documents deriving from cultural resource management studies that have been undertaken or may in the future be undertaken with Ashland. HC

Neg

- HP-3 Amend at Town Meeting the Earth Removal By-law to allow the Ashland Historical Commission to require archaeological locational surveys in locations considered likely to contain significant prehistoric or historic buried sites or standing structures, where a project proponent plans for removal or alteration deeper than 8” of more than 5000 square feet of area. HC

\$\$

- HP-5 Create and maintain a National Register Historic District in the center of Ashland, to include significant historic properties such as Town Hall, John Stone’s Inn, the General Store, the fire station, the church, the library and the railroad station. HC (and proposed Downtown Design Board)

7.3.9 DOWNTOWN

Cost

TBD

- D-3 Consider revisions to the zoning by-laws for the downtown area and seek ways to encourage and allow for increased density, pedestrian-oriented design, and mixed land uses. Consider creating an overlay district for zoning purposes and transfer of development rights for the downtown area. PB

TBD

- D-6 Enhance and expand pedestrian facilities and connectivity throughout the downtown and to neighboring areas. Consider streetscaping elements such as street furniture and lighting. PB

TBD

- D-7 Seek opportunities to provide for centralized off-street parking to serve a variety of land uses and to maximize on-street parking where possible. BOS and CPC

Neg

- D-8 Consult with Post Office officials to determine the need for future expansion and develop proposals for accommodating potential expansion at the existing location. TM

Cost

\$	D-9	Improve off-street parking and sign regulations that guide future development in the downtown (as well as in other commercial areas). PB and DPW (and proposed Downtown Design Board)
\$	D-12	Apply for designation with the "Main Street" program at the Executive Office of Communities and Development for access to technical assistance and grant monies. PB

7.3.10 OUTLYING AREAS

Cost

TBD	O-2	Consider purchase by town of any property abutting water or park land. OSC and CPC
TBD	O-4	Improve and beautify the look of our present roads in Ashland by consistent tree planting, stonewall repair, scenic road status maintenance and sidewalk/bike ways. Consider adding additional roads to the scenic road program. PB and CPC
TBD	O-8	Encourage local garden club to implement "Tree USA" program. CPC

7.4 LOW PRIORITY ACTIONS

7.4.1 GENERAL PLANNING

7.4.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Cost

Neg	ED-15	Hold an infrastructure workshop with local industries to define areas for improvement. BOS
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7.4.6 TRANSPORTATION

Cost

TBD	T-23	Encourage business development which have limited traffic impact on the town via appropriate zoning. EDC and PB
Neg	T-28	Require traffic calming features to be included in all new road improvements and construction where deemed appropriate by site design standards. DPW and TP
\$	T-30	Review current by-laws for commercial signage and modify to create uniform village character via size and materials standards. AAC and proposed Down- town Design Board
TBD	T-31	Establish a public works schedule to create finished shoulders on all major roadways. DPW
TBD	T-32	Install consistent guardrails to established standards throughout the town. DPW
\$	T-39	Actively enforce and monitor traffic related requirements as established by code or by-laws on properties maintained by private development and businesses. Consider establishing a volunteer town authority empowered to ticket and fine violators. PD

7.4.8 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Cost

\$\$	HP-6	Consider creating a Marathon Park National Register Historic District at the west end of the Mill Pond, to commemorate the original starting place for the Boston Marathon. HC and OSC
\$\$	HP-7	Investigate creating other historic districts around areas that contain historically significant buildings and/or buried sites. HC
Neg	HP-8	Provide assistance to private and public landowners who seek to have their properties nominated to the National Register. HC

7.4.9 DOWNTOWN

Cost

TBD	D-2	Create a Historic District in the downtown area, define the boundaries and inventory and specify historic structures and places. HC
\$	D-10	Develop a set of architectural standards or guidelines for downtown building rehabilitation or conversion. These would not be regulations, but rather a set of suggestions for downtown rehabilitation and construction. Local regulations can strongly suggest that such guidelines be considered in all projects operating under a special permit. PB and CPC
TBD	D-11	Plan for street lights that fit the historic period of the downtown. BOS and DPW

7.4.10 OUTLYING AREAS

Cost

TBD	O-3	Maintain attractive appearance of tree, water and natural rock enhanced properties owned by town. OSC and DPW
TBD	O-5	Utilize trolley track beds for walk/bike ways with rest pause/stops. OSC
TBD	O-9	Look for opportunities for better long term use and/or protection of the following:

Pilgrim Day Camp	(Myrtle Street)
Bethany Home	(E. Union Street)
Ashland/Hopkinton State Park	(State Park Road)
4H Center	(Chestnut Street)
Northeastern University	(Chestnut Street)
Trimount Quarry	(Spring Street)
Boat Access	(Spring Street)
Glean Maura Farm	(Olive Street)
Town Forest	
Witch Caves	
Devil's Den	
Waseeka Farm	

7.5 ON-GOING WORK THAT HAS TO BE DONE

7.5.2 HOUSING GOALS

Cost

NA	H-2	Do not rezone any more land for multifamily, unless it is associated with senior affordable housing with priority given to Ashland residents and family members. AHC
NA	H-3	Carefully consider any proposals to increase lot sizes in Ashland as a means of either decreasing overall density or avoiding future problems with septic systems. Ongoing policy. PB and BOH
NA	H-4	Preserve the present residential character of Route 135 from High School to the Hopkinton border. PB

7.5.3 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Cost

OG	OSR-15	Continue to participate in the Bay Circuit open space program. Include concept within Open Space and Recreation Plan. OSC
OG	OSR-17	Work with the Sudbury Valley Trustees to protect open space in Ashland. OSC

7.5.4 ENVIRONMENT

Cost

TBD	ENV-3	Continually monitor down gradient of Nyanza Site to ensure public health and safety is protected. DEP, BOH, LEPC and EPA
TBD	ENV-4	Maintain the Town Forest as a natural habitat. Ongoing Policy. TFC
TBD	ENV-9	Require comprehensive erosion control and stormwater management measures on all new development projects. PB, CC and DPW
TBD	ENV-11	Continue monitoring negotiated quarry remediation. QCC
TBD	ENV-13	Periodically sample town water from across town to monitor water quality. Ongoing Policy. BOH and DPW
TBD	ENV-17	Establish a wetland, stream, and vernal pool mapping program to locate, identify, record and protect wetland habitats. Conservation Commission use Stream Teams to perform shoreline surveys of major stream systems. CC
TBD	ENV-18	Identify and certify all vernal pools in town. CC
TBD	ENV-17	Establish a wetland, stream, and vernal pool mapping program to locate, identify, record and protect wetland habitats. Conservation Commission use Stream Teams to perform shoreline surveys of major stream systems. CC
TBD	ENV-18	Identify and certify all vernal pools in town. CC

7.5.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Cost

Neg ED-1 Create an Economic Development Committee to be a liaison between the public sector and the town boards. (Ashland has a serious problem attracting knowledgeable interested parties wishing to do business with the town.) BOS

7.5.6 TRANSPORTATION

Cost

TBD T-2 Develop and maintain communication network with appropriate MBTA officials regarding ongoing issues pertaining to the commuter rail station. TM

7.5.8 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Cost

Neg HP-1 Pass by ballot the Community Preservation Act, and create a town committee including at least one member of the Ashland Historical Commission to make recommendations for the use of the funds collected under the act for the purposes of historic preservation. BOS and PB

ALL OTHER LISTINGS

7.6.1 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

ACTIONS

Cost

TBD

OSR-12 Review the potential benefits and costs of adopting Community Preservation Act to generate funds for open space acquisition. OSC and BOS

TBD

OSR-13 Create a special capitalization fund to help finance the eventual purchase of key open space parcels. OSC, BOS and FC

7.6.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Cost

Neg

ED-12 Maintain the current prohibition of housing within the industrial district. Ongoing policy. PB

7.6.2 TRANSPORTATION

Cost

Neg

T-1 Review Executive Order 418 – Work with surrounding towns to develop locally funded public transportation systems. CPC and TP

CHAPTER 8 ACTION ITEMS BY PRIORITY

This Chapter is a listing of the “Action” items included in Chapter 7 (Priorities and Costs) and sorted according to their priority. Following is a discussion of priority definitions and costs.

Timing for implementation of action items

Scheduling of an action item is a function of the priority or need for the action, the assumed cost as related to funds that may be available, and how the action relates to other actions (if appropriate).

The system of prioritizing is divided into four (4) categories as follows:

1. Very high priority – A clear need for immediate action
2. High priority – schedule action soon hopefully within the next year.
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Cost

Determining the cost of an action item is difficult. To some extent the estimated cost will depend on the amount of work that has been accomplished with respect to the item. There is some cost associated with each action. Some are direct, others are indirect, e.g., a staff person or volunteer may be able to accomplish the work without a specific appropriation. These task cost estimates will be considered negligible and labeled, “neg.”

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Other definitions:

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APPENDIX 7.1

.1 Project Maps

- .1 Floodplain
- .2 Slopes
- .3 Wetlands
- .4 Parcels
- .5 Sewer System
- .6 Water System
- .7 Natural Features
- .8 River Protection
- .9 Protected Open Space

APPENDIX 7.2

.2 Plan Data

- .1 Results of Ashland Town Survey
- .2 Focus Group Results
- .3 Meeting with Town Boards - September 30, 2002
- .4 MAPC Buildout Analysis
- .5 Fafard Corporation Condominium School enrollment Data

APPENDIX 7.3

.3 Background Information (By Goals and Action Categories)

- .1 General
- .2 Housing
- 3 Open Space and Recreation
- .4 Environment
- .5 Economic Development
 - .1 Site Selection Criteria for Business Expansion and Relocation
 - .2 Commercial/Industrial Committee Mission Statement
- .6 Transportation
- .7 Town Facilities
 - .1 Sewer Gallonage - The Situation
- .8 Historic Preservation
- .9 Downtown
- .10 Outlying Areas