

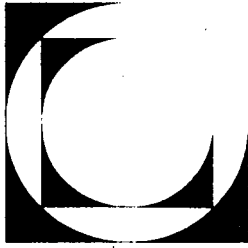
STURBRIDGE MASSACHUSETTS



MASTER PLAN 1988

PREPARED BY: LORD-WOOD, LARSON ASSOCIATES, INC.

PREPARED FOR: THE STURBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD



**Lord-Wood/Larson
Associates Incorporated**

February 15, 1989

Sturbridge Planning Board
Sturbridge Town Hall
P. O. Box 227
Sturbridge, Massachusetts 01566

Attention: Mr. Norman Blais, Chairman

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We take pleasure in submitting this Master Plan Report which is part of the updating of your 1971 Master Plan, and which accompanies the Master Plan Map.

The information and data contained herein we hope will serve as a useful reference in reviewing the Town's past growth and present resources, and this data should provide a factual basis upon which future projections, recommendations and action programs can be based as Sturbridge moves into its second 250 years.

Yours very truly,

Everett H. Lord-Wood

Richard S. Eigen, AICP

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CHARTS

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Chart B	Dist. of Land Which Develop. May Occur	Follows Page 8

NOTE

As part of the Master Plan program, supplementary reports and maps were prepared that are not incorporated in this text. The following is a list of Basic Study Reports and Maps that were submitted to the Planning Board at various stages during the course of this planning process.

BASIC STUDIES REPORTS:

- Background, Mapping and Questionnaire
- Population
- Housing
- Existing Land Use, Land Use
- Utilities
- Transportation
- Community Facilities
- Economic Environment
- Zoning
- Alternate Plans

MAPS:

- Base Map (1" = 1000')
- Base Map (1" = 400')
- Existing Land Use (1" = 1000' - Town)
- Existing Land Use (1" = 400' - Route 20)
- Existing Land Use (1" = 400' - Route 131)
- Master Plan Map

OVERLAYS:

- Zoning
- Proposed Zoning
- Land Classification
- Alternate Master Plan
- Master Plan
- Soils and Slopes

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The preparation of this update of the Sturbridge Master Plan of 1971 required close contact between the Consultant and many individuals and agencies in the community over a period of many months. Their cooperation has been of great benefit and is sincerely appreciated.

It would be impossible to list of all those persons who have been of assistance in this planning process. However, we would specifically like to thank Mr. Gary Reschke, Town Planner; Mr. Norman Blais, Chairman; and the members of the Planning Board, the Board of Selectmen, and other Town agencies.

Mr. Sam Puckett, whose experience has spanned the last two Master Plan programs, has contributed immeasurably to this current program, having answers to just about every question the Consultants had about roads, drainage, etc. We wish to thank him especially for his time and attention.

Mr. William Scanlan of the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission has provided invaluable help in our research. We would especially like to extend out gratitude to all of those people on the Advisory Committees who have provided such valuable and unique contributions to the development of these documents, and given freely of their time, knowledge and energy.

INTRODUCTION

STURBRIDGE - THE MASTER PLAN - 1988

INTRODUCTION

In October of 1986, Lord-Wood, Larson Associates, Inc., entered into an agreement with the Town of Sturbridge, Massachusetts to update the 1971 Master Plan. Lord-Wood, Larson Associates, Inc., is a Planning/Engineering firm which has provided services to a wide range of public and private clients for over twenty-five years. Much of their planning work has involved the preparation and updating of Master Plans for cities and towns throughout the New England area, and included the previous Master Plan for Sturbridge.

In the initial stages of the planning process, it is important to determine the needs and concerns of the people of the community. This involves ongoing communication with the Town Planner, the Planning Board, other Town agencies and service workers, industrialists, and other citizens of Sturbridge.

One method of gaining input from the community is by means of a Citizens' Attitude Questionnaire. Such a questionnaire was distributed to all households in December of 1986. Of those disseminated, 1,537 were returned and later tabulated. The results (See Table I and Exhibit "B") represent the responses of approximately 4,551 people, or about 67% of the total population of Sturbridge.

In accordance with the Contract, the Scope of Services has three major components: Basic Studies, The Master Plan, and Implementation. As the category implies, Basic Studies deals with gathering current data on existing population, housing, education, community facilities, transportation, and utilities. Once this information is obtained, the next phase of the planning process involves formulating future trends, and, in light of this, determining how best to plan for the next few decades in terms of expanded services to meet demands of growth potential. The Implementation phase offers specific direction and commentary on ways to carry out the Master Plan. The following pages will give a more detailed account of the Master Plan itself.

TABLE I

CITIZENS' ATTITUDE SURVEY (HIGHLIGHTS)

Respondents:

- ° 4,551 residents, or 67% of Town population
- ° Represents 1,548 households

Should Town Restrict Growth?

Yes - 85% No - 10% Don't Know - 5%

If Yes, How?

- 35% Restrict multi-family housing
- 26% More restrictive zoning
- 17% Limit industrial development
- 12% Limit water/sewer hookups
- 10% Limit single family housing

What is Considered Good in the Town? *

- 56% Location
- 56% Old Sturbridge Village
- 40% Restaurants
- 35% Burgess Elementary School
- 31% Size of Town

What is Considered Bad in Town? *

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------------|-----|--------------------------|
| 77% | Traffic | 41% | Outdoor Recreation |
| 59% | Indoor Recreation | 35% | Employment Opportunities |
| 43% | Transportation | | |

* Note: Respondents could check more than one answer to each of these.

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A special element of this Master Plan update is in the organization of a totally volunteer Citizens' Advisory Committee, consisting of 32 Townspeople and Town officials who have offered to work with the Planning Board and the Consultant providing their special knowledge about the Town as an important ingredient in updating the Plan. This Advisory committee (See Exhibit "A") was organized into eight sub-committees to deal with the following plan elements:

Sub-Committees of the Citizens' Advisory Committee

- Education
- Environmental
- Financial
- Housing
- Industrial Development
- Recreation
- Tourism and Commercial Development
- Traffic, Transportation and Utilities

These sub-committees have met extensively during the planning program and have contributed a substantial amount of data and information to each of these reports. Initially, all of these sub-committees were asked to investigate and report back to the Board on six elements of the plan which related to their specific concern:

1. What are the major problems in Sturbridge?
2. What are Sturbridge's assets and liabilities?
3. What resources are available to deal with these problems?
4. Develop a list of goals and objectives for the Master Plan for that sub-committee.
5. Review applicable Citizens' Attitude Questionnaire responses.
6. Identify (if appropriate) significant areas on the map.

STURBRIDGE - THE MASTER PLAN - 1988

WHAT IS THE MASTER PLAN?

One of the most vital factors for orderly community growth, whether it be a rural, suburban or urban community, is the preparation and use of the Master Plan.

The development of a Master Plan is a process whereby a community seeks to understand where it is today -- its assets and its problems, and where it is going -- the extent of its future needs. It then develops a program which is sufficiently comprehensive to seek solutions for these problems and to provide for future needs through the full utilization of its assets, both human and material, over a period of 10 to 20 years.

It is important to understand that a Master Plan is not a legally binding document such as a regulation, ordinance or by-law, nor is it a zoning by-law or zoning map. Most of all, it is not a panacea for all municipal problems -- it is only a guide or tool which has been designed to be used in attacking these problems. If the plan is not understood by the community, or if it is not properly used, it is worthless.

Considering what the Master Plan is not, let us consider what it is:

- ° The Master Plan is a collection of plans, maps, studies, and reports, which, together, attempt to visualize the long range growth of the community. It will consider past trends and future potentials, major problems which seek solutions and directions or objectives as guides to new growth. (See Exhibits and References at end of this report).
- ° The Master Plan, therefore, is a framework or guide for the community as a whole to use in shaping its future course over a period of many years. As such, it must be sufficiently general to permit the filling in of such changes and trends as may arise in future years.
- ° To serve over an extended period of time, the Master Plan must be flexible. It must permit modifications and adjustment to all of its parts without unduly damaging its basic structure.

STURBRIDGE - THE MASTER PLAN - 1988

- ° The Master Plan must be, as its name implies, comprehensive. It must deal with all aspects of the community's growth, not just one small area. The guiding principle for the plan decisions should be -- "What is in the best interests of the community as a whole, not just one area or one small group?"

To be specific relative to its content, the Master Plan for Massachusetts's towns shall show the following (as applicable per Chapter 41, Section 81-D, M.G.L.)

- a. Public ways, street grades, public places
- b. Bridges, tunnels and viaducts
- c. Playgrounds, parks and structures
- e. Building and zoning districts
- f. Pierhead and bulkhead lines
- g. Waterways
- h. Routes of railroads, buses and ferries
- i. Locations of sewers, water conduits and other public utilities
- j. Pertinent existing private ways
- k. Conservation, rehabilitation and redevelopment areas for the purpose of guiding residential protection, neighborhood improvement, and urban renewal programs. Such areas SHALL only be shown after the Planning Board consults the municipal agencies charged with enforcing housing laws, ordinances, by-laws or regulations, and with the local housing or redevelopment authority, if any.

(NOTE: The master plan should show existing as well as desirable proposed features).

As the population of the community grows, we must realize what such expansion means in terms of land inventories and natural resources. The conversion of hundreds of acres to residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and agricultural land to service a growing population, and provide for the expansion of road networks is only one aspect of the problem. Thus, through careful re-apportionment of the land to the important land use categories, protected by sound zoning to maintain the highest and best use of the land, we can hope to continue to support an expanding population. In addition, the increasing demand for more services is reflected in mounting tax bills facing every community across the country.

STURBRIDGE - THE MASTER PLAN - 1988

These problems are common to the nation as a whole, and taken individually they affect each community, and Sturbridge is no exception. With an increasing population, concern about the industrial and commercial expansion, the improvement and extension of the highway network, and other major influences on the growth of the Town, it is evident that comprehensive planning will be of as much local interest as regional or national.

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Every plan should have a purpose, and the following statement reflects that purpose for this Master Plan based on discussions with the Planning Board and Selectmen:

"To retain the general 'quality of life' of Sturbridge -- its rural residential character, historic heritage, its awareness of the natural environment, and preservation of its ponds, lakes and waterways. At the same time, to recognize the need for modest, balanced growth at a pace and quality which doesn't upset this balance, while seeking to resolve significant problems, such as traffic on Route 20, which are incompatible with that quality of life".

A firm foundation on which Sturbridge can plan for future growth includes realistic planning objectives, but the Town must recognize its responsibility to implement these goals. Each generation should respect and preserve the heritage it has received, passing it on with new contributions that assure a better environment in which to live, work, play, and raise a family -- blending the heritage of the past with the promise of the future.

BAGKGROUND

STURBRIDGE - THE MASTER PLAN - 1988

BACKGROUND

In the seventeen years since the last Master Plan, many changes have taken place in Sturbridge, yet many other things have changed very little . . . and it may be that this relative stability, the ties with the past that carry into the present (Old Sturbridge Village, the Publick House, and the Common) are the significant elements of this plan. In this year, the 250th anniversary of the settling of Sturbridge, there will be a major year-long celebration of this historic heritage. The important role that history has played is reflected in this plan.

Starting with the Citizens' Attitude Questionnaire (See Exhibit "B") distributed at the beginning of the planning program, then through the seven Basic Studies reports, and finally in the reports of the Sub-Committees of the Citizens' Advisory Committee, there has been an accumulation of data identifying a wide range of potentials, problems and opportunities, which should be considered in developing the 1988 Master Plan, in addition to an evaluation of the previous Master Plan of 1971. Out of all this data has come a list of problems, trends, and opportunities which have provided the ingredients for the new Master Plan.

Sturbridge represents a cohesive, caring community where most residents are truly interested in preserving the historical flavor and charm of the Town. Basically residential in nature, 88% of the residents are homeowners. Sturbridge also has some fine older homes that have been well preserved through the generations. Besides attracting many tourists, places such as Old Sturbridge Village, the Publick House, Wells State Park, and a variety of lakes and ponds provide educational and recreational resources to those who live in Sturbridge as well. Additionally, the Town Park and Recreation Commission offers a wide range of recreational programs.

Located at the intersection of I-84 and I-90, Sturbridge provides easy access to major urban centers. Bradley Field Airport in Hartford, Connecticut, and Logan Airport in Boston, Massachusetts are each within 1½ hour's drive from Sturbridge. For businesses and organizations, the Sheraton Conference Center offers a convenient location for meetings and accommodations.

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Several major employers provide jobs, goods and services to workers from Sturbridge and surrounding areas. Existing industry maintains a good rapport with Town government and police and fire services, a characteristic that further emphasizes the strength of the Sturbridge community. Tourism is an important element in the economic environment of the Town, and Old Sturbridge Village is the main tourist attraction, averaging about a half a million tourists annually. (Eleven companies in Sturbridge employ 100 or more employees).

One of the key characteristics of Sturbridge is that it has a large land area (nearly 24,000 acres) of which only about 1/3 (8,200 acres) is presently developed, and another 1/3 is considered unsuitable for development, which still leaves about 1/3 (7,200 acres) of undeveloped land suitable for development (See Table II). The type, density, and extent of development on these 7,200 acres will, to a significant degree, affect the future character of Sturbridge and the lifestyle of its citizens.

Although Sturbridge has many resources to draw upon, there are, nevertheless, problems that must be addressed, especially in terms of planning for the future. One of the major problems that Sturbridge faces, originally pointed out in the 1971 Master Plan, and identified in almost every later study as perhaps the Town's most serious problem, is that of traffic, particularly on Routes 20 and 131. Traffic volumes on Route 20 reach those of Interstate level, but the road is not constructed to Interstate design standards. Due to the high density commercial development, there are excessive curb cuts and other factors that disrupt the flow of traffic, and there is a high potential for accidents along this corridor. State plans for reconstruction of a section of Route 20 between Cedar Street and Route 131 will be an important first step in correcting these problems -- but only a first step.

The bulk of commercial activities in Sturbridge cater to the transient market. While this brings in welcome outside dollars, it also adds to the unwelcome traffic congestion, since most commercial establishments are located along Route 20. In terms of Sturbridge residents, however, many of their shopping dollars are going out of Town -- to Southbridge, Auburn and Worcester, primarily.

Only limited areas of Town are currently served by public sanitary sewers and water, and the capital costs of expansion would be high, with little or no funding available from federal or state sources. Electric power is felt to be almost at the limit of meeting the demand, and increased growth would probably mean improvements to the system. The bulk of land suitable for industrial development is not served by public water or sewer.

TABLE II

LAND AREA SUMMARY

(POPULATION DATA)

(CHART A)*

TOTAL AREA OF STURBRIDGE	23,930 ACRES
DEVELOPED AREA - (1988)	8,377 ACRES
AREA CONSIDERED TO BE UNSUITABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT	8,560 ACRES
REMAINING AREA IN WHICH DEVELOPMENT COULD OCCUR	6,993 ACRES

DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN WHICH DEVELOPMENT COULD OCCUR

(EXISTING ZONING)

(CHART B)*

RURAL RESIDENTIAL ZONING	74%
SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL ZONING	23%
OTHER	3%

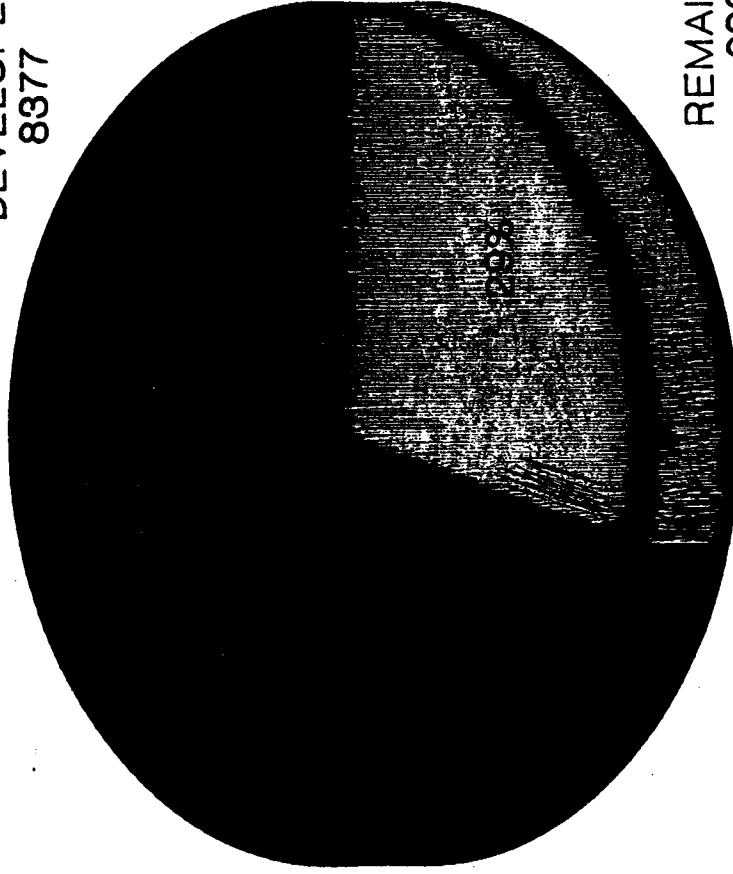
MAXIMUM POTENTIAL POPULATION IF THE LAND WERE DEVELOPED TO THE FULL
DENSITY ALLOWED BY CURRENT ZONING - 28,000

ESTIMATED POPULATION (BASED ON CURRENT TRENDS)
TO 2010 13,810

*Chart A and Chart B can be found following this page.

MASTER PLAN LAND AREA SUMMARY

DEVELOPED
8377



UNSUITABLE
8560

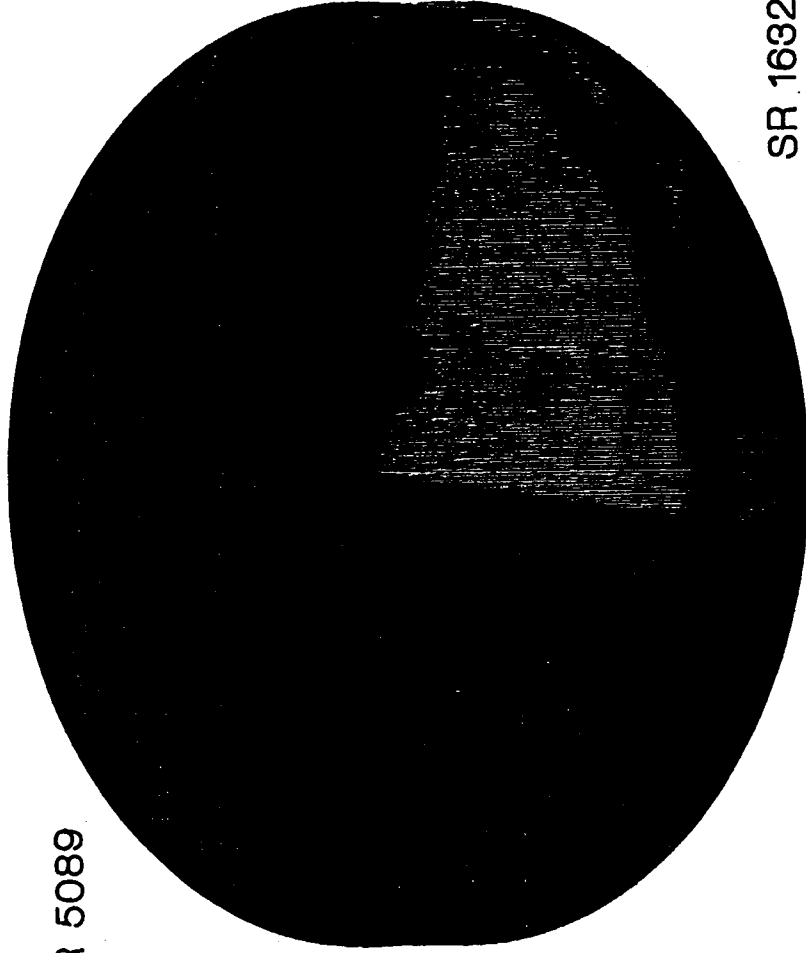
REMAINING
6993

TOTAL AREA OF STURBRIDGE - 23,930 ACRES

MASTER PLAN

DIST.OF LAND WHICH DEVELOPMENT CAN OCCUR

RR 5089



IP 184
GI 54

SR 1632

C 34

MAX POTENTIAL POP. - 28,000

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

STURBRIDGE - THE MASTER PLAN - 1988

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The population segment of the Basic Studies reports for this new Master Plan points out that: "The purpose of a Master Plan of Development is to serve as a framework to guide the orderly growth of a community over a period of years. The program should be flexible enough to take into account all of the various influences on the community and yet strong enough to order the development of the whole. One of the vital elements in such a study is the population itself -- its characteristics and its distribution, for the population trends of a community will affect many aspects of a community life and will, in general, shape the perspective of its future".

Sturbridge has an area of 37.39 square miles, or 23,930 acres, of which only 35%, or approximately 8,375 acres, is developed (an increase of 56.9% over the developed area reported in the previous Master Plan Study). Of the remaining land, 8,560 acres are not suited to developing, indicating a total of approximately 7,000 acres of land considered to be suitable for supporting all future growth (this does not mean available, only suitable; see Table II).

Sturbridge's population in 1988 was 7,600. The majority of those representing recent population increases have moved into Town, although in-migration accounted for only 22.5% of the population increase in the last decade compared to 35.3% prior to the previous plan.

From 1920 to 1970, the Town grew at a regularly-increasing rate -- from 12.6% per decade in 1920 to 30-35.5% in 1960-1970. In 1980 this rate dropped to 14.4%, and between 1975 and 1980, the rate had declined to only 1.4%. The rate of growth (persons per 1000 per year) declined from 10.5 persons/1000/year in the 1950-1960 decade to 4.9 persons/1000/year in the five year period of 1980-1985, and between 1970 and 1980, the average household size dropped from 3.1 to 2.94 persons per household.

The previous data is based primarily on U.S. Census data, which will be updated in the 1990 census. Meanwhile, other data (such as building permits and school enrollment) suggest an increasing population trend with a possible turn-down by the end of the 1980's.

STURBRIDGE - THE MASTER PLAN - 1988

While the total number of residential building permits increased from 27 annually in 1981 to 112 in 1985, the number of single family residential home permits then dropped to 107 in 1986. Only 75 were reported for 1987 according to the Building Inspector's figures, and 1988 figures from January to September show only 35.

Sound planning must be based on the growth of the community as reflected in the needs of the people. Population growth, both past trends and future projections, is a basic yardstick for measuring the dynamics of community growth and for estimating the future demand for schools, housing and other forms of land use.

In this current report, the growth of the Town's population is traced from 1920 to 1988, and points out a number of significant highlights when this whole pattern of growth over more than half a century is examined as outlined in the following pages.

One purpose of the Master Plan is to prepare an outline of the facilities required to service a population of approximately 13,810 by the year 2010 (See Figure # 1). However, since this figure is based on certain assumptions, it is imperative that the Planning Board review these figures at least every five years in order to check actual population against the projections for that period.

If this estimate proves to be too high for a certain date, the effect is merely that of extending the period of time in which to accomplish the required improvements. If, on the other hand, this estimate is too conservative, then it will shorten the time available for meeting these growth requirements. The following Table indicates what only one hundred new households could mean to the Town of Sturbridge, recognizing that the projected population figure represents approximately 4697 new households.

TABLE IIIESTIMATED IMPACT OF 100 NEW FAMILIES ON THE ECONOMY OF STURBRIDGE*

- ° 100 new families = 294 people (1986 estimated household size = 2.94 persons).
- ° 1988 population of Sturbridge = 7600, thus 100 new families represent a population increase of 3.9%.
- ° In 1988 there were 1,369 Sturbridge students in school (776 in elementary grades, 550 in junior and senior high school and 43 in vocational courses--per Superintendent of Schools).
- ° Therefore, 18% of the Town's 1988 population were school students, 10.2% in elementary school, and 7.8% in junior high, senior high, and vocational classes. If we apply this 18% figure to the 294 new people we get 53 school children.
- ° Cost of education - 53 new students (capital costs, if required). For example, the new school building (500 students - \$9 million) @ 8% x 20 years = \$1,170,000/year or \$2,340 per student x 53 new students = \$124,020.
- ° Cost of education - 53 new students (operating costs): 1986 Education Budget (salaries, supplies, etc.) was \$3,664,868, or approximately \$2,700 per student x 53 students = \$143,100.
- ° Additional costs of 100 new families (approximately)
 Police, fire, public works (exclude capital costs) estimated at approximately \$110 per capita x 294 new people = \$32,340.

In summary, therefore, the rough estimate of Town costs generated by 100 new families could be as follows:

° Schools (capital costs)	\$124,020
° Schools (operating costs)	143,100
° Police/fire/public works)	32,340
	<u>\$299,460</u>

The above data suggests that the annual costs of education and public services for 100 new families could average about \$3,000 per family, if a new school would be necessitated by the additional students. For comparison, in 1987, 74% of the tax revenue was paid by residential property owners, and with total expenditures of \$6.8 million and 2,600 families, this equals about \$2,000 per family in tax revenue. Thus it would appear that residential development in general pays considerably less in taxes than it requires in services -- about 1/3 less (or \$1,000 per family per year).

This is of course based on the above cost assumptions and the further assumption that the Town will receive no financial aid for new schools.

STURBRIDGE - THE MASTER PLAN - 1988

POPULATION GROWTH AND PROJECTIONS (1988 PLAN)

- ° The Town's rate of growth, which was at a high of 35.3% in the 1960-70 decade, dropped to 14.4% between 1970 and 1980 and between 1975 and 1980, averaged only 1.4%.
- ° The rate of growth (in terms of persons per 1000 per year) declined from 10.5 in the 1950 - 60 decade to 4.9 in the five year period 1980-85.
- ° Between 1970 and 1980 the average household size dropped from 3.1 persons to 2.94 persons per household.

The above data has a bearing on the estimates of population growth in this 1988 plan (which is to be projected to the year 2010). Some other factors that are considered in this projection:

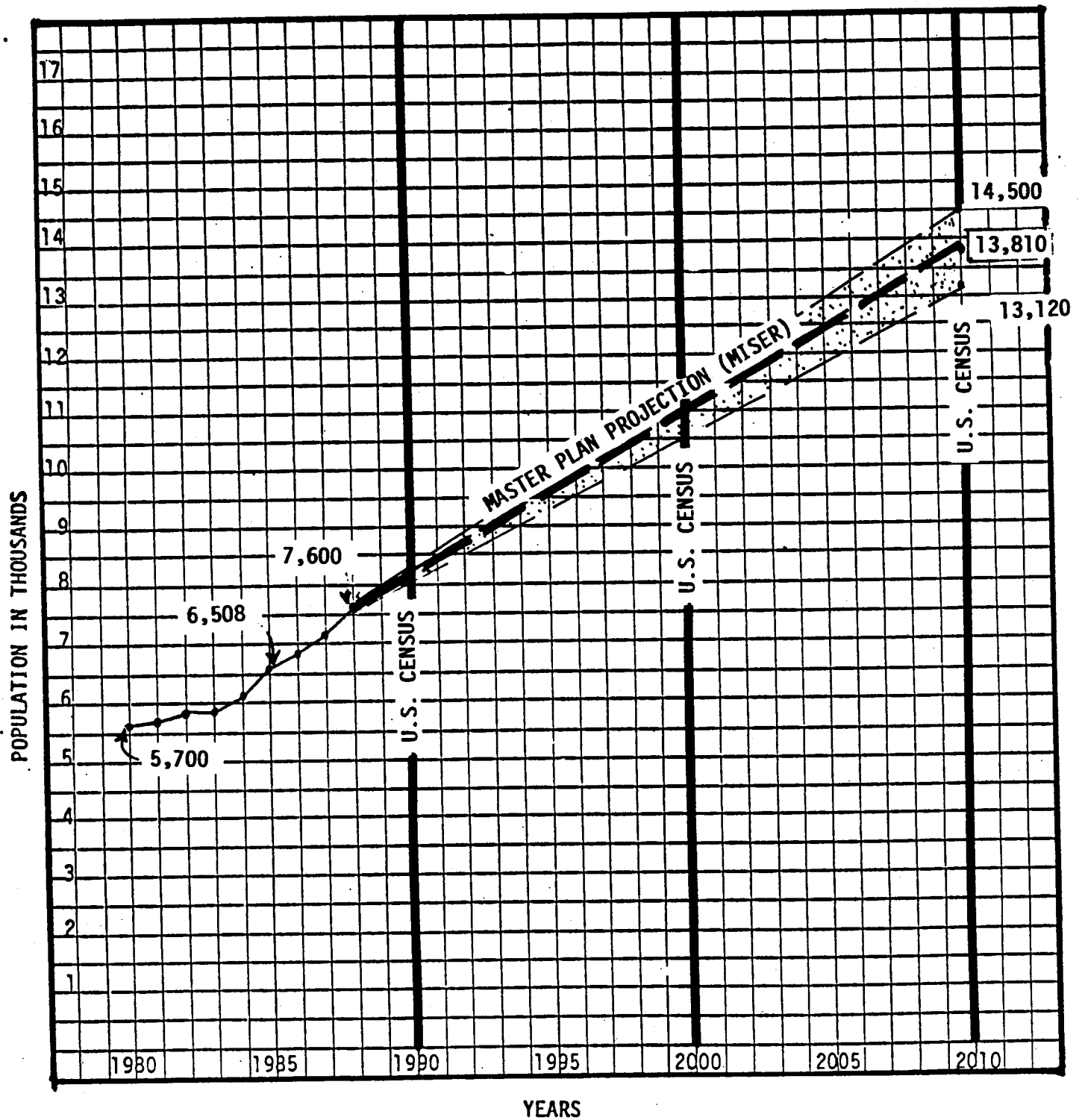
- ° The average number of dwelling units built (1970-80) was 67 units/year, in 1986 this was up to 116 units, but in 1987, this figure dropped back to 75 units.
- ° Unless there is an extension of the public sewer and water systems, most residential development over the next 20 years will probably be in areas not served by public sewer or water (suggesting larger lots, few multi-family dwelling projects).
- ° The Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research has projected Sturbridge's growth to 1990 @ 8,250 and to 1995 @ 9,639.

After evaluating alternate projections such as straight-line extension of previous population trends/number of residential building permits per year/and annual excess of births over deaths, the consensus is that the MISER projection (extended to 2010) is probably the best estimate. If we modify this projection by a $\pm 5\%$ margin of error, we derive the growth pattern shown in Figure #1 -- the MISER projection to 13,810 with an upper range (+5%) of 14,500, a lower range (-5%) of 13,120.

The upper trend closely approximates the 1983-87 population growth curve extended to 2010 (14,675), while the lower range is close to the residential building permit projection (13,367).

This estimate of 13,810, based on the MISER projection, is therefore the "future population" for this Plan. We strongly recommend, however, that the Planning Board check this at regular intervals -- especially since we will have three U.S. Census figures (1990, 2000 and 2010) during the "life" of this Plan.

STURBRIDGE POPULATION PROJECTIONS
(1980 - 2010)



POPULATION PROJECTIONS

FIG. 1

STURBRIDGE - THE MASTER PLAN - 1988

ULTIMATE POPULATION (HOLDING CAPACITY)

One of the considerations in evaluating future population trends of a community is what the ultimate population would be if all of the currently undeveloped land suitable for development were actually developed in accordance with existing zoning densities. The following table shows the acreage of land "suitable" for development in each zoning district, and the statistics on what the effect would be on the Town's population if the residential areas were all fully developed in accordance with the specified zoning densities.

TABLE IV
LAND "SUITABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT" BY ZONING DISTRICT*

<u>Zoning District</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>	<u>Land Suitable for Devel.</u>		<u>% of Total</u>
		<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
Rural Residential (RR)	18,383	5,289	73.5%	28.8%
Suburban Residential (SR)	4,306	1,632	22.7%	37.9%
Commercial (C)	687	34	.5%	5.0%
General Industrial (GI)	136	54	.7%	39.7%
Industrial Park (IP)	418	184	2.6%	44.0%
	<u>23,930</u>	<u>7,193</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>30.1%</u>

* Based on existing zoning.

On the basis of the preceding data, and assuming that the 7200 ± acres identified as "suitable for development" is actually all utilized for development in accordance with the densities prescribed in existing zoning, (i.e., for Rural Residential (1) acre, and for Suburban Residential assume 1/2 of the land @ 3/4 acre, 1/2 @ 1/2 acre), this could result in the following additional dwelling units:

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TABLE V
ULTIMATE POPULATION BASED ON EXISTING ZONING

A. Total area suitable in RR zone	5,289 Acres
Deduct 15% for roads, etc.	793 Acres
Net area for development (RR)	4,496 Acres
Potential dwelling units = 4,496 Acres x 1 unit/acre =	4,496 Units
B. Total area suitable in SR zone	1,632 Acres
Deduct 15% for roads, etc.	245 Acres
Net area for development (SR)	1,387 Acres
Potential Dwelling Units (3/4 A.) = $\frac{1}{2} \times 1,387 \times 1 \text{ unit}/.75 \text{ A.}$ =	925 units
Potential Dwelling Units (1/2 A.) = $\frac{1}{2} \times 1,387 \times 1 \text{ unit}/.5 \text{ A.}$ =	1,387 units
C. Total Dwelling Units (max).	6,808 units
D. Total new population = 6,808 D.U. x 2.94 persons/ unit =	20,016
E. Therefore, potential <u>ultimate population</u> , based on (a) no change in zoning, and (b) full use of developable land = 20,016 + 7600 =	27,616 (round to 28,000)

The above table shows that ultimate potential population could be 28,000 based on existing zoning. This plan recommends that much of the RR Residential zone be designated RR-2 with a 2-acre minimum lot area. The following table compares the ultimate potential population based on this revised zoning, showing a reduction in ultimate potential population of about 5000.

STURBRIDGE - THE MASTER PLAN - 1988**TABLE VI****ULTIMATE POPULATION BASED ON 2 ACRE ZONING IN RR-2**

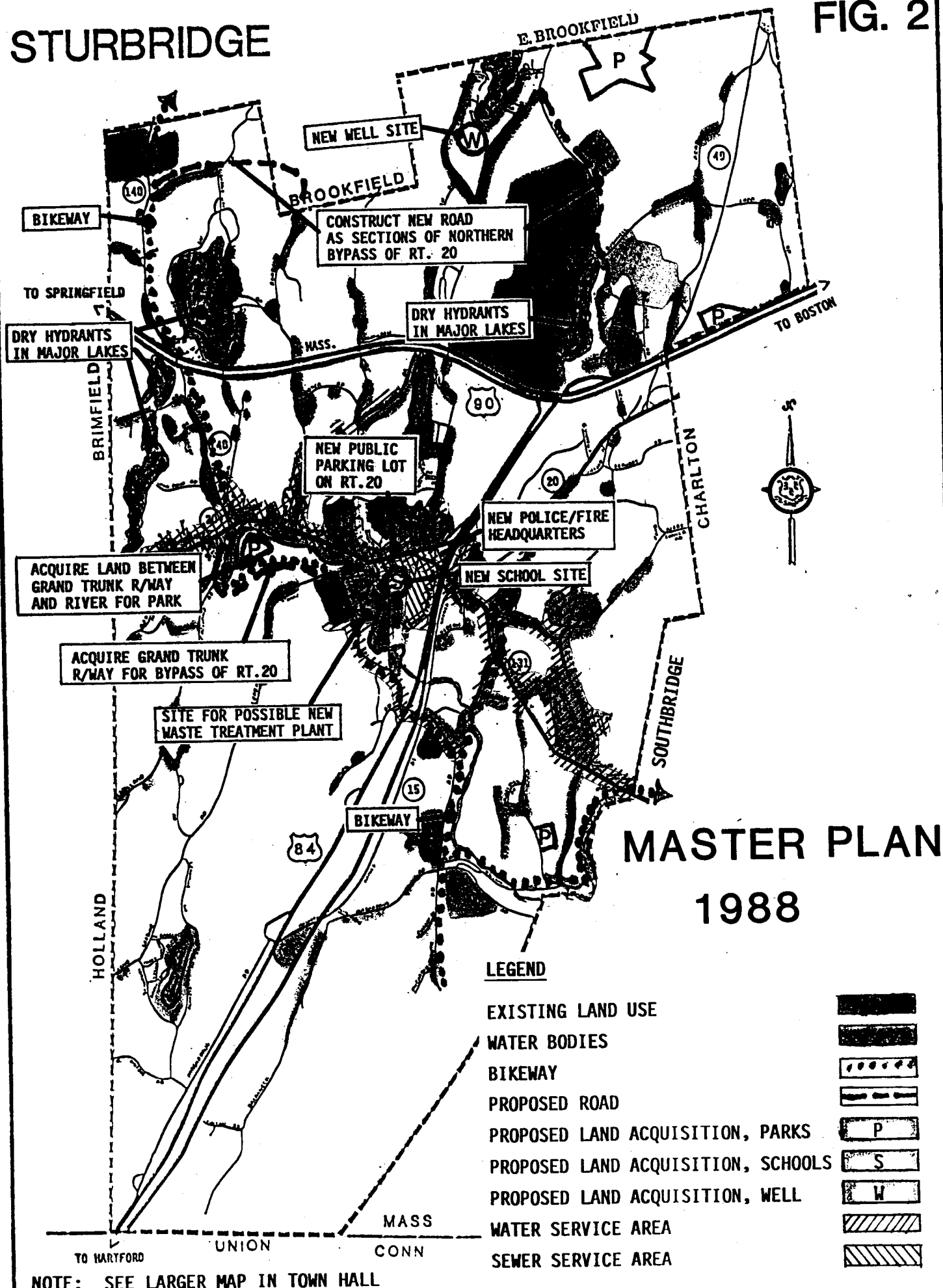
A.	Total Area Suitable for Development (RR-2)*	=	3584 A.	
	Deduct 15% for roads, etc.	=	538 A.	
	Net area for development (RR-2)	=	3046 A.	
	Potential dwelling units	3046 A. x 1 unit/2 A.	=	<u>1523 units</u>
B.	Total Area Suitable in RR-1 zone	=	1705 A.	
	Deduct 15% for roads, etc.	=	256 A.	
	Net area for development (RR-1)	=	1449 A.	
	Potential dwelling units	1449 A. x 1 unit/A.	=	<u>1449 units</u>
C.	Total Area Suitable in SR zone	=	1632 A.	
	Deduct 15% for roads, etc.	=	245 A.	
	Net area for development (SR)	=	1387 A.	
	Potential dwelling units (3/4 A.)	$= \frac{1}{2} \times 1387 \times 1 \text{ unit}/.75$	=	<u>925 Units</u>
	Potential dwelling units (1/2 A.)	$= \frac{1}{2} \times 1387 \times 1 \text{ unit}/.5A$	=	<u>1387 Units</u>
D.	Total Dwelling Units (max.)	=		<u>5284 units</u>
E.	Total new population	= 5284 D.U. x 2.94 persons/Dwg. Unit	=	15,535
F.	Therefore, potential ultimate population, based on (a) RR-2 (2 Acre) zoning, and (b) full use of developable land	= 15,535 + 7600	=	23,135 (round to 23,000)

* Estimated total acreage in RR - 2 = 12,360 A.
 Estimated total acreage in RR - 1 = 6,023 A.

MASTER PLAN

STURBRIDGE

FIG. 2



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THE 1988 MASTER PLAN -- STRATEGIES FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**GOALS**

The previous data outlining problems, opportunities and population growth provide some insight into what has been developing in Sturbridge since the 1971 Master Plan, and when compared with what was projected in that plan can suggest certain strategies or directions for the 1988 Master Plan. In the following section, we outline the goals of this Master Plan. In general, the Master Plan should reasonably guide future development to promote the general health, safety, community pride, prosperity, convenience and general welfare; and its goals include:

HOUSING

Assure the availability of decent, safe, sanitary, and comfortable housing for all citizens of Sturbridge, and recognize the necessity to create an atmosphere for construction of housing that Town residents, both young and old, the affluent as well as those with moderate incomes, can afford.

Permit a greater diversity and flexibility of residential development throughout the Town.

Other than to meet the above goals, limited multi-family housing should be permitted only in areas which meet specified locational and design criteria. Low and moderate income housing if and when permitted should be located conveniently near shopping, transportation, and community facilities.

EDUCATION

Provide the best possible opportunity for education for all students in the Town of Sturbridge.

Provide facilities and equipment for the educational program that will insure the continuing high quality of public education in the Town of Sturbridge.

Provide for the maximum utilization of the Town's school grounds for appropriate recreational purposes when not in use for the school program.

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RECREATION

Provide recreational facilities in Sturbridge to meet the needs of all age groups and make them available to all citizens.

Encourage maximum use of all available recreation resources, including more use of school facilities for recreation, especially on weekends and during the summer, and explore recreational use of public utility lands, where such use would be compatible with utility requirements.

Promote the acquisition of sufficient land to meet existing and future recreational needs for both active and passive recreation, adding at the same time to available open space.

Lands currently serving important open space and recreational purposes, regardless of present ownership should be identified, and plans formulated to preserve them permanently, through town purchase or other suitable arrangement.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

Seek improvements to Routes 20 and 131 as required to improve current traffic problems.

Provide for safe and efficient movement of persons, goods and services within Sturbridge.

Cooperate with state and regional agencies in the transportation planning process, including identifying highway deficiencies, programming road improvements, and formulating policy documents.

Explore alternate forms of transport -- mini-bus service/off-street parking areas/bikeway, etc.

Improve compatibility of land uses and the transportation network serving them.

Undertake a continuing program to widen and improve any roads in Town which may be substandard, but without substantially affecting the essentially rural character of the Town.

Resist trends or development which do not substantially benefit the Town, but which might result in measurable increases of traffic on local roads.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Consider the potential effect on the Town if residential development is continued at the present rate without a "balanced" development policy that includes appropriate provisions for commercial and industrial uses and for new residential concepts such as "affordable housing".

Enhance local employment opportunities within the framework of this Master Plan, by reserving sufficient space in convenient locations, properly zoned for appropriate businesses and industries.

Sound economic growth should be sought by providing for sufficient jobs for the "labor force" segment of the Sturbridge population, supplying broad employment opportunities and a diversified economic base.

Promote economy and efficiency in the process of community development, and in the provision of transportation, schools, public safety services, recreation, water, sewage and other public requirements.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Provide a program to assure that properties in Sturbridge will be served by safe and adequate water and sewer systems, public or private.

Encourage the placement of power and telephone lines underground wherever possible.

LAND USE

Conserve the Town's historic features, attractiveness, and natural resources, including soils, forests and water, and identify local or regional significant historical or architectural properties or sites and encourage their protection and preservation.

Prevent or minimize the adverse impact of one land use upon another, and protect the value of the Townspeople's investments in their properties.

Commercial development policies should focus on encouraging those uses and activities which serve and support the shopping and commercial needs of the local residential community, discouraging commercial and shopping facilities (malls, etc.), which are largely designed to draw from a population outside of the Town of Sturbridge.

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For commercial districts, maintain scale of development and character of use compatible with surrounding residential areas.

Locate industrial development in areas currently zoned for such use and with consideration given to the reasonable demand for such land, to the environmental suitability of the land, to the availability of adequate access and public services, and to the compatibility of surrounding land uses.

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STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES**FUTURE LAND USE (GENERAL)****PRESSURES AND POTENTIALS:**

Although only about 8,200 acres of the Town's approximate 24,000 acres are presently developed, this does not mean that Sturbridge has 15,800 acres available for future growth. Actually, about 8,600 acres are not suitable for development due to swamps, flood plains and slopes in excess of 20%, leaving a net area of approximately 7,200 acres to support all future development. All land developed to date serves a population of about 7600. The Future Land Use Plan projects a population of 13,810 by 2010, and must reflect not only increases in residential land, but to a lesser extent, commercial, industrial, public and semi-public lands to support this growth.

Residential uses will continue to occupy an increasingly large portion of developed land as in the past. Although there will be some increases in multi-family use, the acreage of single family residential use is expected to nearly double during this period. Commercial and industrial uses may increase slightly, primarily as expansion of existing areas, in order to provide some balance to projected residential growth.

Due to a substantial acreage of public and semi-public land (such as Wells State Park, Old Sturbridge Village, and Federal flood control lands) as well as extensive areas of unbuildable land, Sturbridge gives to the casual visitor an impression of a rural community, although density of development in some areas, such as along Route 20, for example, is much more suburban.

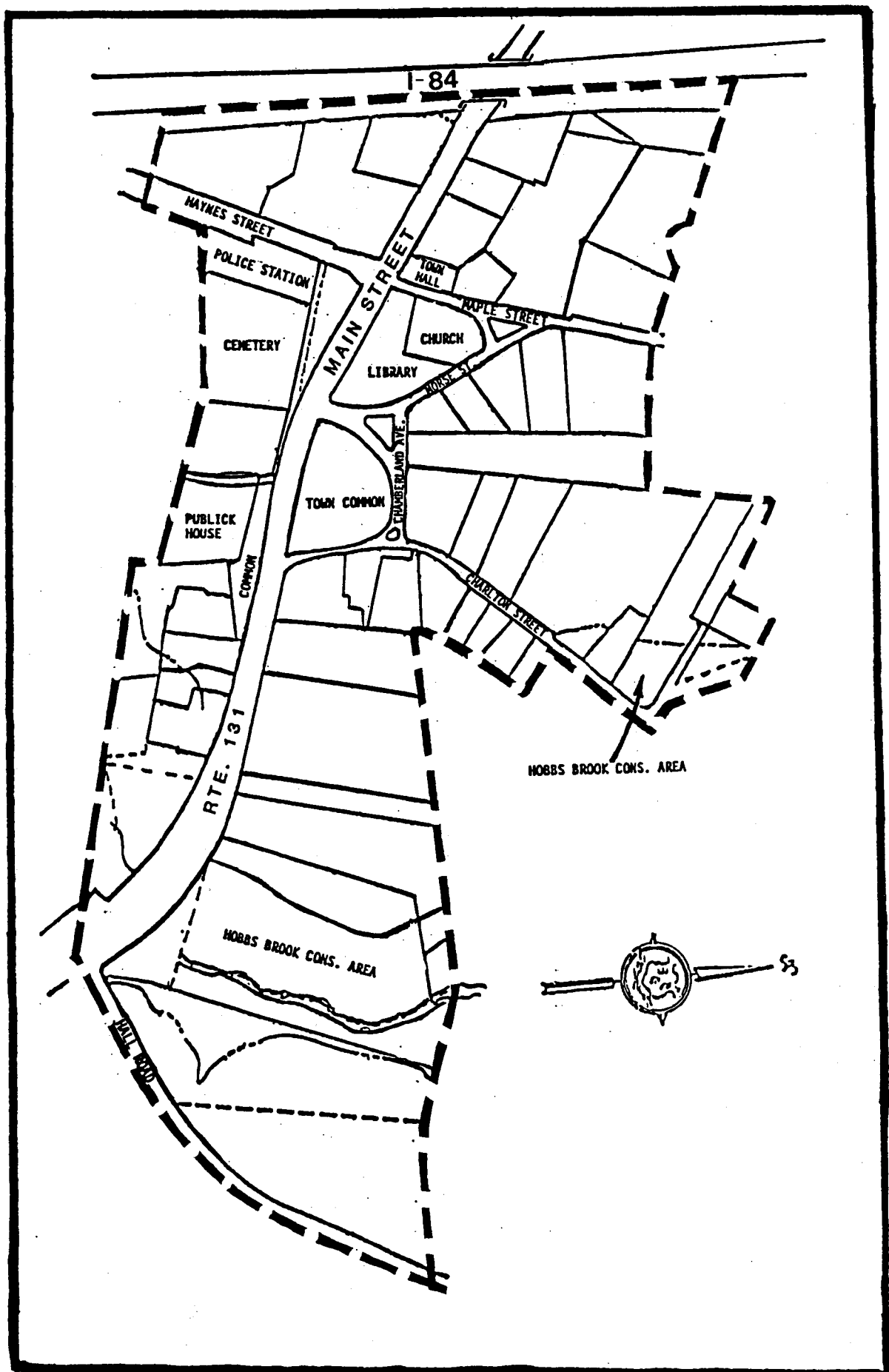
Based on the above conditions, the following objectives are presented for land use and development considerations under this Plan.

OBJECTIVES:

- ° Maintain a balance between the use of land and the need to preserve, conserve and protect the area's natural resources and open space. Explore techniques to preserve open space land through the Land Bank concept and latest legislation and resources available to preserve key environmental areas.

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- ° Continue to explore the concept and practice of soil-based zoning in the larger rural residential areas - especially RR-2 with its proposed 2A. lot area.
- ° Explore possibility of architectural design review in industrial zone.
- ° Encourage development of the Historic District as generally mapped by the Historic Commission (See Figure # 3).



HISTORIC DISTRICT

FIG. 3

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**PRESSURES AND POTENTIALS:**

One objective of this Master Plan is to determine ways in which Sturbridge's population growth can be slowed down in the coming years. According to the results of the Citizens' Attitude Questionnaire, 85% of the respondents felt that growth should be controlled.

The subject of housing (especially "affordable" housing) is also an area which needs careful study. With escalating costs of real estate, and the fact that housing costs in the Sturbridge area are generally higher than other areas in the region, young families, or entry-level workers may find it impossible to settle here. Sturbridge has no town-sponsored housing, and currently there are about 130± families who are in need of accommodations.

Also in terms of population, recent data show a significant increase in the over 65 age group. This may indicate a need to augment the number of housing units for the elderly.

The need to control growth, yet provide "affordable" housing are therefore important goals in this master planning process.

If the major goal of this plan is to develop a program of growth management, several kinds of actions are possible to achieve this. One would be to increase lot sizes in order to lower the density in residential areas. Limiting the extension of utilities such as sewer and water will also serve to curtail development, as will the restriction of areas for multi-family dwellings. Another possibility would be limiting extension of Town roads. In areas already fully, or almost fully developed, adjustment of zoning boundary lines and/or standards may be desired to better reflect existing development, and to reduce pressure for new development.

According to legal authorities, both the Supreme Court and the Supreme Judicial Court have recognized the right of municipalities to preserve desirable features in order to provide the general populace with better towns in which to live, work and raise a family. These strategies include design and architectural controls (upheld in historic preservation and aesthetics cases), large lot zoning, (upheld where used to further the general welfare), and regulation of uses and development in town centers (upheld in a long line of zoning cases which allow regulations for the purpose of preserving community character), per Edith Netter, Land Use Attorney.

Based on the above factors, the following objectives are presented for residential development under this Plan:

OBJECTIVES:

- ° Establish a program of controlled growth in order to assure that public services and facilities will be adequate for the level of population.
- ° Increase lot sizes from 1 to 2 acres in those portions of the Rural Residential areas where difficult building conditions such as steep slopes, wetlands, rock and poor soils may limit use of on-site sewage disposal and where public sewers are not feasible. (See Zoning Recommendations).
- ° Recognize the possibility of continued modest growth, and provide for affordable housing to all of Sturbridge's citizens.
- ° Maintain sufficient open space and recreation areas to serve the needs of the Town's population, and encourage non-intensive development in select areas, in order to preserve the Town's rural residential atmosphere.

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NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

PRESSURES AND POTENTIALS:

TOURISM AND COMMERCIAL:

Tourism is an important element in the economic environment of the Town of Sturbridge, and Old Sturbridge Village is the major tourist attraction, averaging about a half a million visitors annually. There is currently a proposal for a possible development of Old Sturbridge Village property, which might include a golf course and an accompanying conference center.

Another important concern that should be addressed in the near future is the rezoning of the Publick House area with stringent controls on rebuilding in case of fire or other form of destruction.

The bulk of commercial activities in Sturbridge caters to the transient market, adding to the traffic congestion, since most commercial establishments are located along either Route 20 or 131. In terms of Sturbridge residents, however, many of their shopping dollars are going out of Town. The following excerpt indicates responses to the Citizens' Attitude Questionnaire:

Question: WHERE DO YOU AND YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY SHOP FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS: GROCERIES/DAILY NEEDS, FURNITURE AND APPLIANCES/CLOTHING? (More detailed data in rear of report).

GROCERIES

30% - Southbridge

FURNITURE AND APPLIANCES

38% - Worcester
15% - Southbridge
11% - Auburn

CLOTHING

28% - Worcester
18% - Auburn
8% - Southbridge

A developing concern of many citizens of Sturbridge is that the extensive commercial development along Route 20 caters primarily to tourists and out-of-towners, while many residents have to go out of Town to purchase items they need. The development of two commercial zones (one primarily tourist-oriented on Route 20, and the other general commercial on Route 131) could encourage more general commercial uses to develop along Route 131 in response to this locally-expressed need. To alleviate some of the problems with

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traffic congestion, it was suggested that a central parking area (or areas) with possible shuttle bus service should be provided somewhere along Route 20. The problem most often expressed relative to commercial development is the concern that Sturbridge is experiencing "strip commercial" development along Route 20 and the real worry that there is not much that can be done to correct it. One possibility, even though limited, is through selected areas where development "in depth" could be permitted greater than the 300' existing setback, balanced by decreasing setback in other areas.

INDUSTRIAL

Industrialists are concerned about a number of problems relating to the industrial sector of Sturbridge. To begin with, commercial and industrial development together occupy less than 3.5% of the Town land, (although they pay 21.8% of the taxes), and there is little room left for expansion within existing zones. This condition is aggravated by the fact that the bulk of land presently suitable for industrial development (and so zoned) is not currently served by either public sewer or water. In addition, a basic policy of the Town, expressed in this plan, is a general limitation on any future commercial or industrial expansion.

Besides the fact that the size of the labor force has grown only minimally in the past 17 years, there are also problems finding skilled workers for the types of industry that exist in Sturbridge. The lack of affordable housing also contributes to the deficit of available workers. Due to this tight labor market, some industries in Sturbridge are reluctant to expand. If industrial growth is curtailed, as it appears it will be, then an increased tax load on residential uses may well result as overall costs of Town government expand.

In terms of industrial development, clean, non-polluting industries should be encouraged, along with the possibility of including offices in Industrial Park zoning. In this way, new industry could broaden the tax base without creating environmental or ecological problems.

Respondents to the Questionnaire expressed diverse views on tourism and the commercial and industrial development of their Town. While the majority rated Old Sturbridge Village, the Publick House and other tourist attractions as "excellent", opinion was divided as to increases in commercial and industrial development. Those who were in favor of new industry did specify that it be "clean" and "non-polluting".

A prime objective of this plan is to alleviate expressed concern relative to commercial and industrial development, but at the same time to recognize the possibility of limited future expansion. While substantially retaining the present zoning boundaries, it is possible to control future development in several ways.

One critical concern, however, is that to the extent there is a de-emphasis on attracting new industries to Sturbridge, it becomes more important to preserve those local industries already established in Town.

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Based on the above data, the following objectives are presented for non-residential development under this plan:

OBJECTIVES:

- Limit any future commercial and industrial development essentially to existing zoning areas.
- Develop more restrictive controls in commercial and industrial zoning districts including architectural controls in both districts.
- Modify uses in commercial and industrial zones, and provide for two commercial zones, one along Route 20, oriented to tourist traffic, and one along Route 131 for general commercial.
- Improve the appearance of Route 20 (plus other commercial areas) including consideration of the need to:
 - Expand street shade tree and landscaping to offset intense development in this area (especially in proposed off-street parking areas).
 - Include expanded requirements for landscaping in new "Commercial, Tourist" zone.
 - Continue to explore ways in which utilities can be placed underground -- as a long-range objective tied to any future road construction or improvement projects.
 - Explore on a lot-by-lot basis the possibility of reducing curb cuts through more shared curb cuts, access from other roads, etc.
 - Explore increased use of sidewalks as a long-term objective to improve pedestrian safety and mobility.
- Review of street lighting standards, including type of fixtures as well as location.

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ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**PROBLEMS AND POTENTIALS:**

Of significance to Sturbridge and its future is the preservation and conservation of natural resources and open space. Given the Town's rural and historic character, care must be taken to preserve its unique scenic features and enduring heritage. Therefore, special emphasis should be placed on environmental factors such as around lakes and ponds and along the Quinebaug River, and the protection of significant wetlands, flood hazard areas, water courses, water bodies and aquifers.

It should also be noted that areas characterized by open space, deemed of value to the community, may require some adjustment of zoning standards in order to retain their environmental value.

The Quinebaug Greenway Plan includes many good suggestions in terms of preserving the environment and utilizing open space. Other suggestions from the Citizens' Attitude Questionnaire focus on improving the looks of the main streets, better landscaping and more trees. There were also requests for more sidewalks with benches.

Certain areas within Sturbridge are poorly suited for development, and may present limitations because of environmental characteristics, location or high potential social costs if misused. Once developed these areas may entail high maintenance costs, the burden of which could fall upon the Town. Following is a description of these factors.

Slopes greater than 20% present serious constraints to development, and associated with shallow soils make development more difficult and more expensive. Such development may also be at the expense of the Town in the form of road and drainage maintenance, and school bus and fire service may be difficult. Environmental problems may arise from development on steep slopes, which will increase runoff and erosion. Septic tank disposal fields located on slopes greater than 15% may result in health hazards due to well and/or ground water pollution.

Some areas of Town have groundwater at or near the ground's surface for part or all of the year, are subject to pollution by nutrients from septic tanks or other sources, and represent potential hazards to human life, health, or property.

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Public water supplies should be carefully guarded from contamination, and no development should be permitted in a watershed which may contaminate an existing or potential source of public water supply.

Areas with prime agricultural soils, although limited in Sturbridge, also represent irreplaceable resources in event of a need for increased food production. The potential importance of these lands to the economy and culture of Sturbridge, combined with State and National trends toward farmland conversion, mandate that they be identified and preserved.

Streams, ponds and the Quinebaug River provide the citizens of Sturbridge with water for wildlife, ground water replenishment, scenic amenities and recreational opportunities. Therefore, it is important to protect these resources from disruption, pollution and sedimentation.

Wetlands are of crucial importance since these areas store large quantities of water during periods of high runoff and gradually release water during low flow periods. Wetlands are also important for the maintenance of water quality because they enable the absorption and assimilation of nutrients and thus purify to some extent the discharged water.

Natural areas are undisturbed land areas other than those noted above, which may have educational, scenic, recreational or historic value to present and future populations, especially as a balance to areas of intense development. Sturbridge has many such areas, and many structures which have architectural and historical significance. For example, the Sturbridge Common is made up of 43 buildings on 138.5 acres, and is designated a National Register Historic District. Prominent on the Common are the Publick House (1722), Joshua Hyde Library (1896), Town Hall (1838), Center School Building (1855), the Franklin House (1790), and the earliest residence on the Common, that of Samuel Hobbs, (1780).

An important natural area, of course, includes the shores of the Quinebaug River. The river's central location in the Town offers a location around which many of the Town's recreation and open space patterns could be focused. The river played an important role in the past historical development of Sturbridge, and could play a role in the Town's future growth, providing opportunities for recreation and open space to balance intense commercial development on Route 20.

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Based on the above data, the following objectives are presented for environment and natural resources under this Plan:

OBJECTIVES:

- ° Identify on a base map of the Town as prepared by S.C.S., and protect significant aquifers, wetlands and other important environmental resources.
- ° To carry out the above objective, devise protective measures, including zoning and development controls and coordination with measures to limit extension of public sewer system so as not to encourage development in such areas.
- ° Retain country-like atmosphere wherever possible by preserving open space and environmentally sensitive areas through increasing lot sizes to 2 acres in much of RR zones; encourage acquisition of Chap. 61 parcels.
- ° Emphasize environmental factors along the Quinebaug River -- stress open space/residential/rural/historic elements, consider acquisition of key parcels, such as between the River and the Grand Trunk right-of-way.
- ° Preserve selected natural areas due to their educational, scientific, aesthetic and recreational value. The Advisory Committee on the Environment might undertake an in-depth study to identify key areas for such action.
- ° Protect vegetation along streams, rivers, lakes and ponds; preserve and enhance visual and physical access to these resources and explore how this can be done through existing land use controls - zoning, subdivision, etc.
- ° Restrict development too close to waterways to prevent erosion along streambanks and shoreline or pollution from subsurface sewage disposal systems; explore techniques to accomplish this through zoning and subdivision controls.
- ° Discourage development of slopes greater than 20% and or steep slopes with shallow soil cover; carefully control development on slopes between 15 and 20%.
- ° Prohibit all new development other than parking areas, and those essential to the operation of agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation and wildlife protection from location in flood hazard areas.

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PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES (EDUCATION, RECREATION, PUBLIC SAFETY)**PRESSURES AND POTENTIALS: (EDUCATION)**

Schools are a primary concern in the planning process. Due to a recent upward trend of the population, the number of school age children is on the rise. This, of course, brings up the question of a new school to house these additional students, since the Burgess School is nearing capacity. In addition, Tantasqua Regional High School is not equipped to handle a large number of additional students, since its 150 acre \pm site includes large areas of unuseable land due to wetlands, ledge, etc. In addition, renovations are probably going to be necessary to improve the building which is 34 years old. Fortunately, the Junior High School has adequate room for increased enrollment, so it can at least provide temporary relief for overcrowding at the other two schools. A main obstacle in regard to expansion of schools is that there are very few appropriate pieces of land for school sites that would provide adequate acreage, good access, and utility services.

At present, a new school is being proposed to house grades 4, 5 and 6. Construction should be completed in the 1990's, at an estimated cost of \$9 million. State funding for the school won't be available until 1991 or later according to current estimates.

The proposed site is in the center of Town, near the Wastewater Treatment plant, and is owned by the Town. This site is the former Nichols Nursery property, consists of 38 acres, and has an existing access road from Route 131.

The new school site has been selected, but given the growing population, the Superintendent of Sturbridge Schools has recently stated: "We should be looking for one additional school site right now."

The majority of respondents to the Citizens' Attitude Questionnaire rated the schools as "good" or "excellent", although there was a variety of suggested improvements in regard to specific facilities, teachers' pay, the tenure system and controlling drug abuse.

Based on the above data, the following objectives are presented for educational development under this Plan:

OBJECTIVES:

- ° Obtain more accurate and timely population figures relative to impact on changing enrollment on an annual basis (building inspector's records, subdivision approvals, birth and death records, etc.) Also coordinate with those public agencies which maintain such records (such as the Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research).
- ° Provide for the maximum utilization of all elements of the Town's educational plant for appropriate purposes (such as recreation) when not in use for the school program. Provide for coordination between School Department and the Parks and Recreation Committee in these programs.
- ° Undertake a continuing program of maintenance, renovation and upgrading of existing school buildings and grounds.
- ° Locate a site for a future school in addition to the new school now in the planning stage. Option or acquire it at the earliest possible time.
- ° Confirm current new school site selection process - if site currently identified turns out to be not suitable, an alternate site should immediately be available for study as replacement.
- ° Realistically evaluate problem of financing new school construction - solution to be taken if "crisis" occurs prior to date of new school completion. Consider interim action such as annual limitation on number of residential building permits, etc.

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PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES: (RECREATION)**PRESSURES AND POTENTIALS:**

Both major and minor improvements are considered necessary to the existing recreational areas, and these improvements range from better upkeep to significant renovations, according to citizens' comments.

Residents of Sturbridge had two opportunities recently to voice their opinions on the recreational facilities in their Town. The Sturbridge Open Space and Recreation Committee distributed a survey in January of 1987 that dealt solely with recreational matters, while Lord-Wood, Larson Associates, Inc. circulated a Citizens' Attitude Questionnaire in December of 1986 which included several queries relating to recreation.

A majority of respondents to both surveys appeared to be disappointed with recreational facilities in Sturbridge. Many felt that there should be more open space areas set aside for recreation. A lack of both indoor and outdoor facilities was cited by a large number of citizens. Existing facilities such as playgrounds, ballfields and swimming areas were said to need attention in order to meet the needs of the Town. There is apparently a prime interest in the outdoors among respondents to the surveys, so there were a considerable number of requests for walking paths, jogging paths, ski trails, bike paths and a golf course. The creation of more swimming areas and public beaches rated high among suggested improvements. Requested indoor facilities included a Teen Center and a movie theater.

Many residents also felt that there was a significant lack of open space/conservation areas, even though opinions varied considerably as to just where this open space was that should be preserved.

Based on the above data, the following objectives are presented for recreational development under this Plan:

OBJECTIVES:

- ° Provide for adequate community facilities to meet the needs of current and prospective residents.
- ° Acquire land to allow for necessary expansion of public facilities as the future needs may arise, before such parcels may become impossible or impractical to acquire due to cost or development factors.

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- Provide more recreational areas in Sturbridge.
 - Improve and maintain existing facilities, such as ballfields and playgrounds.
 - Set aside more areas for conservation, and acquire open space lands for active and passive recreation, such as parcels shown on public lands map, noted "unknown".
 - Plan school sites to provide year-round recreation resources; increase parks and playgrounds.
 - Provide adequate swimming facilities (fresh water beach).
 - Emphasize the common ties between recreation (generally organized) and open space (generally unorganized).
 - New recreational areas should be planned to ensure that sound environmental and ecological principles are employed. The density of housing, (seasonal or full-time) and proximity to shoreline must be carefully controlled in areas surrounding water bodies to control pollution and accompanying health hazards.
 - Formalize a program to better evaluate "options" for recreation/open space lands provided by Sub-Division "set-asides" (Title 61 availabilities, etc.)
 - Consider a Waterways Commission to coordinate work between the Conservation Commission and the Board of Health.
 - Protect land around the Breakneck Stream, through state aquisition, "Adopt-a-Stream", Self Help funds or other methods.
 - Create an extension of the Mid State Trail from Spencer to Wells State Park.
 - Obtain the protection of the area around Breakneck Stream (Division of Fisheries and Wildlife).
 - With the cooperation of the Towns of Charlton and Southbridge, obtain protection of the land around McKinley Brook.
 - Explore protection of important open land in Sturbridge.
 - (1) Land on Hillside St. near the Quinebaug River (possible public park).
 - (2) 160 acres on McGillpen Road.
 - (3) OSV land on Route 84 and Leadmine Road.
 - (4) Encourage the Trustees of Reservations to obtain Tantasqua's Leadmine.
 - Improve maintenance and water quality at the Town Beach.
-

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PUBLIC SERVICES: (UTILITIES)**PRESSURES AND POTENTIALS:****WATER SYSTEM:**

Public water and sewers serve the highest density of development -- primarily along the Route 20 corridor. The capacity of the present well system at 1.5 M.G.D. (million gallons per day) is adequate for the needs of the Town based on current demand and short-range projections, according to the Superintendent of the Water and Sewer Department. Water pressure at the west end of the system, however, at 50 - 55 psig, is not adequate. Also, the Town's source of water is in wells all located in one area; should there be any contamination of this aquifer, the result could cripple the entire system. Thus, a new well located in a different area is important. In 1986, Water Department revenues covered all operating expenses, plus offset interest on loans, so the ability to extend service certainly exists, since the Water Plant has capacity for twice the current demand.

SEWER SYSTEM:

The present wastewater treatment plant is limited in its ability to accept any increase in sewage flow, primarily due to septage trucked in from septic tanks. A study to determine the limits of the present plant has just been completed. According to this study, the plant has a "permitted capacity" of 0.505 m.g.d. average daily flow and is expected to meet or exceed that by 1990. To quote this study, "Septage appears to be the main problem at the Sturbridge Wastewater Treatment Plant". In 1987 the average flow at the plant was 14,300 gallons per day, while in the summer of 1988, peak septage quantities were as high as 34 - 40,000 gallons per day.

Combined with potential increases from sewer extension permits already approved, flows by 1990 could be 10% above design capacity. Recommendations included reducing the amount of septage received by the plant, plus an agreement with the Upper Blackstone Wastewater Treatment Plant to handle up to 24,000 gallons/day. An interim agreement has been negotiated and was expected to be complete by late 1988. Other recommendations included negotiating a permanent agreement with Upper Blackstone.

As a result of concerns brought out by this study, the State Division of Water Pollution Control agreed to prepare a Waste Land Allocation Study of the Quinebaug River in the vicinity of the plant to be completed in the Spring of 1989. Upon completion of this study, the Town should immediately prepare a detailed facilities planning report on upgrading the existing treatment plant (which would also assess the need for a new site). It is possible that expansion of

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the treatment plant may require additions of a tertiary treatment capacity, which will require a much larger site and greater cost than simple plant expansion. The sewer system is paying for itself like the water system although in neither case can excess revenue be accumulated to be used toward extension of the present system. Although 90% of the past sewer improvements have been made using Federal and State grants, currently no Federal funds are available, and state funding is highly questionable at this time.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL:

Current (1988) plans are for the Board of Health to close up the last cell in the current landfill area at an estimated cost of \$300,000. An engineering firm has been retained to set up the new program, including a new cell, which, when opened, will cost approximately \$800,000. The total cost of the entire program, therefore, is estimated to be about \$1,100,000. The new cell should have a life span of about 10-15 years, and will be used in combination with a rigorous recycling program now being developed by the Board of Health, which will include the separating of various types of trash and a fee structure to encourage such separation.

Next to traffic, the most serious and urgent problem likely to have the greatest fiscal impact on the Town in future years is public utility services (essentially sewer, water, and solid waste). Of these, sewage, (or wastewater) treatment is most serious and may be aggravated by a possible requirement to relocate as well as upgrade the plant. In addition, the need, at some time in the future, to expand the system due to population growth or to correct public health hazards, may very likely compound that problem and increase the cost. At least four steps are needed in the immediate future to properly plan for such an eventuality:

1. An in-depth Engineering study of the plant's opportunity to expand where it is, as well as an alternative plan for relocation if necessary (including site acquisition);
2. Realistic plans for expansion of both sewer and water systems to serve areas of most likely emergency need.
3. Serious discussion with the Regional Planning Agency as well as adjacent towns, relative to a multi-town (or regional) approach to all three of these concerns.
4. Immediate studies to establish a realistic program for setting aside funds annually for future use in public utility expansion through an Enterprise Fund or some other acceptable method.
5. Studies leading to either reducing the quantity or increasing the quality of septage from commercial establishments.

TELEPHONE AND ELECTRIC

There is telephone and electric service offered to all Sturbridge residents. However, Sturbridge industries are facing real problems with public utilities. Electric power is felt to be almost at the limit of meeting the demand, and increased growth could mean the need for extensive improvements to the system.

OBJECTIVES:

- ° Provide dry hydrants at Cedar Lake, Big Alum Pond, Walker Pond and Leadmine Pond where possible.
- ° Develop better techniques for increasing sewage treatment plant capacity, for dealing with septage, and for solid waste disposal.
- ° Work closer with New England Telephone to improve capacity and technology of telephone system.
- ° Limit extension of services in the short range. Future expenditures should be limited to maintenance, upgrading of existing lines, and extension of service to limited areas if necessary for public health reasons.
- ° Develop long-term plan for future expansion of water and sewer systems as may be required to carry out the Master Plan, improving water pressure, and upgrading water and sewer lines, when funding becomes available.
- ° Develop contingency plan to serve lake development if possible health hazard may be developing.
- ° Recommend that the septic failures map be regularly updated by the Health Department and data made available to the Planning Board.
- ° Acquire a secondary well site at South Pond.
- ° Develop a plan to implement water system improvements when major road construction projects are proposed (as in the proposed Route 20 reconstruction).
- ° Work closer with Massachusetts Electric Company to insure adequate electric power and improve its reliability.
- ° Establish an "Enterprise Fund" (or similar mechanism) to allow annual build-up of funds for future capital expenditures.

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TRANSPORTATION**PRESSURES AND POTENTIALS:**

Perhaps the Town's most serious problem is that of traffic, particularly on Routes 20 and 131. Traffic volumes on Route 20 reach those of Interstate level, but the road is not constructed to Interstate design standards. Most recent surveys show Route 20 and 131 traffic to be in the 25,000 - 30,000/vehicle/day category. Due to the high density commercial development, there are excessive curb cuts and other factors that disrupt the flow of traffic. Therefore, there is a high potential for accidents along this corridor.

Tourists to Old Sturbridge Village and those attending the Brimfield Flea Market also contribute to the overcrowded conditions on this roadway. Another area of traffic congestion is the Truck Stop on Route 20, and the Colonial House. A high number of residents who responded to the Questionnaire were overwhelmingly concerned with traffic problems both in these specific areas and in general.

Road conditions posed another major concern of the respondents. Several primary and secondary roads need repair or paving, and better snow removal was suggested by several residents. Seventy-seven percent of those responding stated that traffic was the most serious problem in Sturbridge today. (See tabulation of questionnaire at end of report).

Route 20 reconstruction, now in the preliminary stages, will somewhat relieve traffic problems in the Route 131 to Cedar Street stretch, but it will not help the problem west of Cedar Street to the Brimfield line, (the Fiskdale area).

Widening or otherwise modifying the Fiskdale stretch does not appear to be a practical approach to relieving the problem, because of narrow right-of-way and minimum setbacks for existing structures.

The ultimate solution will probably require some sort of bypassing of through traffic around Sturbridge -- north, south, or both. The most practical bypass (to the south) appears to be shown first on an old state plan utilizing the Grand Trunk right-of-way from Leadmine Road to the vicinity of Brimstur.

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An accident on the Route 49 bridge crossing the Massachusetts Turnpike could prevent access for emergency vehicles to the Walker Pond area. Alternate routes of access should be explored.

OBJECTIVES:**ROUTE 20:**

- ° Recommend studies leading to extension of such Route 20 improvements to the Brimfield Town line as may be feasible.
- ° Recommend that Route 20 reconstruction include placing telephone and electric lines underground, or otherwise improving the aesthetics of these services.
- ° Establish a municipal parking lot on Town land behind the Tourist Center, if possible; check state funding for commuter parking adjacent to state highways.
- ° Check feasibility of acquiring the Grand Trunk right-of-way while the area is still in an undeveloped state as a southern bypass to Route 20; this could also tie in with the bikeway plan if adequate right-of-way width is available. (Right-of-way estimated at 100' width).
- ° Utilize subdivision process to help establish an East-West road on the north side of Route 20 as a bypass connecting Glendale, Arnold, Cooper and Allen Roads, using existing roads until the subdivision(s) are completed.
- ° Study possibility of changing the Old Sturbridge Village private way to a public way, as an additional route to bypass Route 20 for traffic from the southeast and I - 84.
- ° Undertake a study of the steps necessary to allow a mini-bus service along Route 20 to be reestablished, including study of schedules, service areas, relationships to parking areas and extent of support from commercial properties within the service area, sources of funding.

ROUTE 131:

- ° Establish a Route 131 Committee (similar to the Route 20 Study Committee) to determine whether the best solution is widening, bypassing, or a combination of both in order to widen Route 131 to four lanes.

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OTHER:

- ° Recommend improvement of Walker Pond Road to minimum standards required to assure all weather emergency access to Walker Pond area from New Boston Road (Wells State Park may be willing to cooperate).
- ° Study the feasibility of sidewalks along Route 20 and other roads in high density areas.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL

PRESSURES AND POTENTIALS:

The role of municipal government will be to seek a balance between the apparently continuing rise in costs of goods and services and the relative stability of revenue from those non-residential land uses that historically have borne a substantial share of such costs. In effect, can this condition prevail without resulting in continued increases in residential property taxes?

Population estimates indicate that by the year 2010, Sturbridge could be a community of approximately 13,810 people. While this is an estimate, it is interesting to see the impact that only 100 new families would have on the economics of Sturbridge (See Table III).

Within the limits of currently zoned commercial and industrial areas there should be an attempt, therefore, to attract uses which will provide maximum increases in the tax base, combined with low demand on Town services.

OBJECTIVES:

- ° Seek to attract uses within the currently zoned commercial and industrial areas which will provide maximum increases in the tax base, without offsetting costs to the environment.
- ° Attract commercial and industrial uses which will place a low demand on Town services.
- ° Encourage the efficient use of public funds, and maintain a sound fiscal balance.
- ° Explore all potential sources of grants for infrastructure expansion and improvement; examine all fees for public services, including sewer and water use to check possibility of increases.
- ° Acquire land for essential public facilities (such as schools, parks, etc.) as early as possible so as to obtain best possible purchase price. Some examples would be sewage treatment plant relocation, new school, park and recreation areas, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION

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IMPLEMENTATION - ZONING:

GENERAL

Sturbridge has an area of approximately 37.39 square miles or 23,930 acres, of which only 35%, or approximately 8,177 acres, is developed (an increase of 53.2% over the developed area reported in the previous Master Plan Study). Of the remaining land, 8,560 acres are not suited for developing, indicating a total of approximately 7,193 acres of land considered to be suitable for supporting all future growth (this does not mean available, only suitable). See following Table:

TABLE IV
LAND "SUITABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT" BY ZONING DISTRICT*

<u>Zoning District</u>	<u>Total Acres</u>	<u>Land Suitable for Devel.</u>		<u>% of Total</u>
		<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>	
Rural Residential (RR)	18,383	5,289	73.5%	28.8%
Suburban Residential (SR)	4,306	1,632	22.7%	37.9%
Commercial (C)	687	34	.5%	5.0%
General Industrial (GI)	136	54	.7%	39.7%
Industrial Park (IP)	418	184	2.6%	44.0%
	<u>23,930</u>	<u>7,193</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>30.1%</u>

* Based on existing zoning.

Many Sturbridge residents are concerned about the results of increasing population and new commercial and industrial development in their Town. In fact, 85% of those responding to the Citizens' Attitude Questionnaire felt that Sturbridge should limit future growth. When asked how this should be done, 34% suggested the restriction of multi-family housing, 26% wanted more restrictive zoning in general, and 17% felt that industrial development should be limited.

All these responses indicate the need to carefully study the present zoning regulations and determine what zoning changes would be appropriate in terms of future development.

Lord-Wood, Larson Associates, Inc.
Richard S. Eigen, AICP

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Through judicious use of zoning laws, it is possible to enhance present conditions, control future development, and protect the environment, since zoning controls land use. In Sturbridge, since most intensive land use (residential, commercial and industrial) has been developed along the frontage of existing Town roads, one possibility would be to limit the extension of Town roads. In areas already fully, or almost fully developed, adjustment of zoning boundary lines and/or standards may be desired to better reflect existing development, and reduce pressure for new development.

It should be noted that areas characterized by scenic open space or other natural features deemed of value to the community, may require some adjustment of zoning standards in order to retain their environmental worth, since development of these areas as one acre lots could destroy much of their natural character.

The following items might be considered in the formulation of revisions to the zoning bylaws, based on comments from the Advisory Committees:

- ° Limit commercial and industrial development essentially to existing zoning areas.
- ° Modify uses in commercial and industrial zones, develop two commercial zones, one along the west end of Route 20, one along Route 131.
- ° Seek to attract uses within the currently zoned commercial and industrial areas which will provide maximum net contribution to tax base.
- ° Develop a special zone for an Historic District.

Zoning considerations for residential, commercial, industrial and other uses will be discussed individually in the following pages.

- ° Flood plain district to be shaded on zoning map (or separate map) to alert the potential developers to the existence and extent of Federal flood plain areas.

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RESIDENTIAL ZONING

According to legal authorities, both the Supreme Court and the Supreme Judicial Court have recognized the right of municipalities to preserve desirable features in order to provide the general populace with better towns in which to live, work and raise a family. These strategies include design and architectural controls (upheld where used to further the general welfare), and regulation of uses and development in town centers (upheld in a long line of zoning cases which allow regulations for the purpose of preserving community character).

To accommodate affordable housing, it will be necessary to have special provisions for affordable housing, under special controls, permitted in each residential district. Provisions for affordable housing should be incorporated in Residential Zoning Districts to the extent deemed necessary by Chapter 774 (the "Anti-Snob Zoning Act") to meet the Town's legal responsibilities for promotion of its "fair share" of such housing.

COMMERCIAL ZONING

There is much concern in Sturbridge about the high concentration of commercial development along Routes 20 and 131. Due to excessive curb cuts, these heavily trafficked areas are even more congested. Besides the problems of transportation along these corridors, consideration should be given to the aesthetics of the areas involved.

Since many of the commercial uses on Route 20 are oriented toward the tourist trade, it is recommended that two commercial districts be established, one primarily tourist-oriented on Route 20 west of I-86, (called CT or Commercial, Tourist), the other CG or Commercial, General on Route 22. In this way, more general commercial uses could be encouraged along Route 131, such as grocery stores, theatres and indoor recreation places, all of which seem to be lacking in the Town of Sturbridge (based on responses to the recent Planning Questionnaire). Also along Route 131, there may be parcels that can be accessed from behind the current frontage, which might alleviate traffic along the main road by reducing curb cuts and access points.

Besides landscaping and architectural controls, there are other means of improving the appearance of Route 20 and Route 131 through zoning changes. Zoning regulations can restrict the development of certain inappropriate uses such as truck stops, fast food places, and auto businesses. A new very restricted commercial zone might be set up to accommodate these uses elsewhere, or special permits can be issued in certain cases in existing zones with greater control than current regulations.

SIGNS

In addition to the above, strict enforcement of sign regulations can be an important element in improving the appearance of Route 20, as well as other commercial areas, such as Route 131.

INDUSTRIAL ZONING

Commercial and industrial zoning together occupy less than 3.5% of the Town's land, although they pay 21.8% of the taxes, and there is little room left for expansion within existing zones for new commercial or industrial uses. At the same time, the policy of limiting commercial and industrial development will contradict such expansion.

Zoning bylaws could be modified to allow for certain "desirable" types of industrial uses while discouraging those types that contribute to pollution, increased traffic or other negative factors. One suggested alternative is to encourage light industry in the form of office development, possibly rezoning the Route 20 Industrial Park to an office park with 30,000 square foot minimums. The inclusion of offices and other types of "light" industry would satisfy those who seek more industry, while not threatening the environment, and also serve to broaden the tax base, keeping the Town's economy balanced.

The main objective of zoning for industry should be to locate industrial development in areas currently zoned for such land use (or carefully planned extensions thereof), based on the environmental suitability of the land, on the availability of adequate access and public services, and the compatibility with surrounding land uses.

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It is recommended that the Zoning Bylaws be thoroughly reviewed and revised incorporating the changes outlined in this plan as well as updating in terms of current State and Federal requirements (especially as relates to affordable housing). Some of the specific recommendations in this Plan relative to Zoning Bylaws:

1. Divide the current area zoned "RR" (Rural Residential) into two zones, (RR-1) with 1 acre minimum lot provision (essentially the same as "RR"); and (RR-2) with 2 acre minimum lot provision.

- ° RR-2 (two acre zoning) based on delineation of areas "difficult to develop"* due to:

- (a) Shallow to bedrock soils
- (b) Wetlands
- (c) Slopes over 25%

* Based on studies by USDA, SCS maps done for Town of Sturbridge.

- ° Delineate large* areas with recognizable boundaries (such as roads, rivers, highways, etc.) which appear to have a large proportion of "difficult to develop" land, and compute actual percentage of developable land. These areas will be designated RR-2.

- * RR-2 areas should be at least 100 A., be all within the present RR zone, and have at least 51% of the area classified as "difficult to develop"; this could also include lands not available for development such as certain state park or Federal flood hazard lands. (See Figure #4).

- ° Areas to be excluded:

- (a) Existing developed areas
- (b) Areas zoned other than RR
- (c) Areas potentially accessible to sewer service

2. Divide the current area zoned "C" (Commercial) into two zones - - C.T. (Commercial, Tourist), and "C.G.", (Commercial, General). The uses in the "C.T." zone should be most appropriate for tourist areas (i.e., motel, restaurant, service station, etc., while the "C.G." zone would largely remain the same as current "C" zoning. In terms of location, the "C.T." area would be on both sides of Route 20 from Brookfield Road on the west to New Boston Road on the east. (See Figure # 4).

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

STURBRIDGE

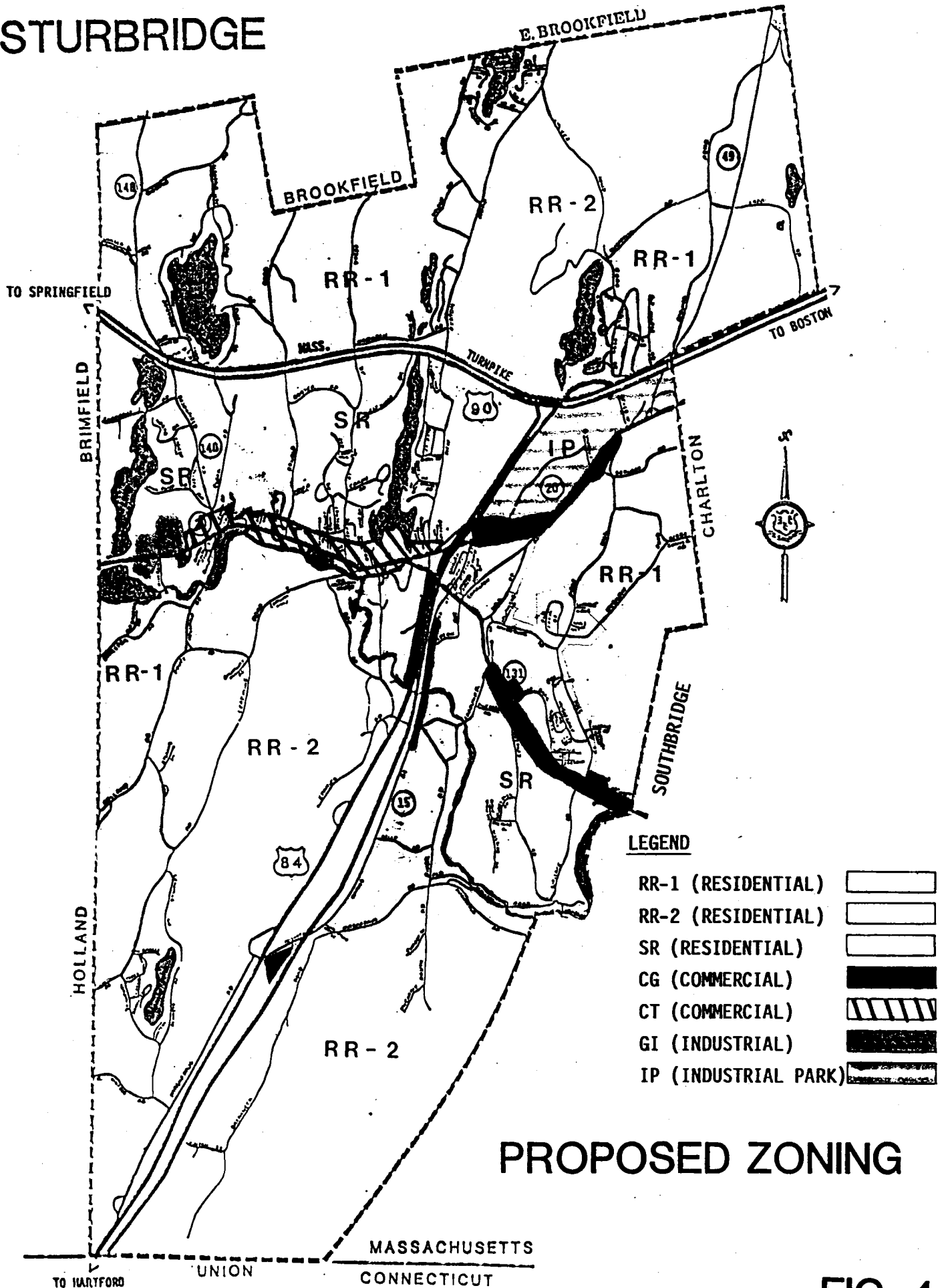


FIG. 4

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3. It is recommended that the Zoning Bylaws, as revised and updated also include provision for "cluster" developments, at least in the RR-2 zone. As an example, if a parcel was over 25 acres (to use a figure), the developer could "cluster" his lots with minimum lot sizes being (1) acre, but overall density for the 25 acre subdivision would not exceed 2 A. per dwelling unit (Chapter 40 A, Massachusetts General Laws, Section 9 provides for cluster development and provides guidelines for ownership of the resulting "open land".)
4. Provide for inclusion of "corporate offices, research and development facilities" as a permitted use in the GI (General Industrial) and IP (Industrial Park) zones.
5. More detailed recommendations have been prepared and will be submitted in the form of a separate report to the Board.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

The preparation of an annual Capital Improvements Budget is one of the important financial/planning functions of municipal development. The utilization of the Capital Budget is an important means by which the community can give direction to its future growth and development along a desired course as outlined in the Master Plan.

Generally, the Capital Improvements Budget will cover a five or six year period. It is essential that this budget and its financial details be reviewed annually in order to reflect the best estimates of the changing needs of the community.

The development of a Capital Improvements Budget is a combined planning/financial operation which spells out how and when certain capital expenditures may be made for needed civic improvements. The Capital Budget is that part of the total Town budget which provides for non-recurring expenditures, the rest of the budget is principally an operating budget which provides for recurring expenses for the regular operation of municipal administration and services.

Financial Planning, such as the Capital Improvements Budget, is one of the positive and constructive ways in which a community can regulate its expenditures, maintain its credit rating, work toward a stable tax rate, maximize the tax dollar returns, establish a balance between pay-as-you-go and borrowing, and get needed improvements completed.

The following objectives of a Capital Improvements Budget are the principal elements of such a program:

- ° To anticipate and schedule capital improvements over a period of years according to priority of need, consistent with the Town's fiscal policy and ability to pay;
- ° To forecast necessary borrowing, the probable impact of the capital improvements on the operating budget and the tax rate, and provide a stabilizing influence on present investments;
- ° To build and maintain a sound capital program as the basis for municipal growth.

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A Capital Improvements Program has the following major characteristics:

- ° It does not commit the Town or its officials, but merely provides factual information and an authoritative recommendation as a guide for the decision-making process of government;
- ° It is prepared for the current year, and the following five year period, which is considered practical for such forecasting and programming.
- ° It covers capital improvement needs arranged in a suggested order of relative priority, based on the financial structure of the Town and its Master Plan proposals.
- ° It is sufficiently flexible to permit annual revisions to adjust to changes in project needs, financial conditions and community attitudes and desires.

A Capital Improvements Project is generally defined as a physical betterment or an item of equipment having a substantial, useful life and a total cost in excess of \$10,000. For example, a capital project might be:

- ° The construction, reconstruction, replacement, major repair or extension of a public building, highway, sidewalk, storm drain, sewerage system, bridge, playground, park, or similar public works, or for a facility, structure or utility appurtenant to any of them, whether financed in whole or in part by Town funds, or;
- ° An expenditure, similarly financed, for the purchase of land, and items of equipment, buildings or structures.

The Capital Improvements Program is usually prepared annually from a list of Capital Improvements, prepared by community officials, department heads, committees and other municipal agencies. All pertinent information should be recorded on forms with explanations of when and why each project is needed. (See Figure #6).

A forecast of estimated receipts, expenditures, and other fiscal data should be prepared from a historical summary of the community's previous financial transactions to accompany this list.

A recommended schedule of projects is then established, and financial requirements are analyzed and related to the forecast of the community's ability to pay. By a process of study and analysis of project schedules and financial forecastings, a Capital Budget Program is then prepared for submission to the community and its legislative body for action. (See Figure #5).

The forecast might also include estimates for operating as well as capital expenses. Estimates of revenue other than local tax sources are also made. Subtracting revenues from expenses, the sums needed from local sources can be computed. Finally, estimates of valuations are prepared and the resulting tax rates computed, thus giving a picture of future tax loads. In this manner, the financial effect of a Capital Budget Program can be determined and adjusted to meet community needs and ability to pay.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

The following capital improvements are listed here to provide the Capital Improvements Program Committee with an outline of those elements of the Master Plan which may come up for funding during the period covered by this Plan and so that proper planning can be given to integrating these projects within an ongoing Capital Improvements Program. It is also suggested that the Town's Planner meet with the Capital Improvements Program Committee to advise on projects referred to in the Master Plan.

1. Outstanding Debt - \$3 million
 2. Current Projects (funded)
 - ° Police/Fire Department Building, plus library expansion (\$4.5 million).
 - ° Recycling/Landfill (\$1.1 million).
 3. Current Projects (not yet funded)
 - ° New school - * (\$9 million less available grants).
- TOTAL - 17.6 million +

*Current financial conditions at the State level are so volatile that no clear estimate can be made on contributions (if any) from this source. Based on recent (1985-86) data, there was hope that the state might contribute up to \$7 million, suggesting a resultant availability of \$5-6 million (which is now highly questionable).

(Based on 5% x \$328 million tax base = approximate \$16 million current limit).

4. Items to be included in the Master Plan recommendations (no costs available at this point):
 - ° Site for additional school (beyond that currently being planned) - location in central part of Town near Route 20.
 - ° Site for new sewage treatment plant (based on final study as to site requirements) - probably along Quinebaug River close to present plant site.
 - ° Site for new well at South Pond.
 - ° Dry hydrants at each of the major lakes in Town, exact location to be selected by Fire Chief.
 - ° New road construction (bypass roads - as previously discussed).

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- ° Road and bridge maintenance, town roads (as required)
- ° Acquisition of Grand Trunk R/way from Quinebaug River south to Leadmine Road.
- ° Acquisition of land between above R/way and River for park/recreation purposes.
- ° Develop public parking lot or lots in CT Commercial District on Route 20.
- ° Bikeway (check source of funds).
- ° Upgrade Walker Pond for emergency access purposes on year-round basis.

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The following are typical project forms and a summary schedule of proposed projects to be submitted by each department or agency.

TOWN OF STURBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS**CAPITAL BUDGET PROGRAM****PERIOD 1989 - 1994****SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED PROJECTS****SUBMITTED BY****DEPT.****DATE**

Capital Proj.	Est. Total Cost	Source of Funds	Suggested Schedule of Project Cost by Year						
			1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Later

FIG. 5

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TOWN OF STURBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

CAPITAL BUDGET WORKSHEET

PERIOD _____

PROPOSED CAPITAL PROJECT REPORT

(To Accompany Schedule of Proposed Capital Project Improvements)

1. Title And Description of Project
2. Location
3. Need for Project (Explain Fully):

4. Estimated Cost:

- A. Engineering and Surveys
- B. Acquisition of Land
- C. Site Development
- D. Construction
- E. Equipment Purchase
- F. Other

TOTAL

5. Method of Financing: Budget Appropriation _____ Bond Issue _____
State Aid _____ Federal Aid _____ Assessment _____
Other _____

6. Will Project be Revenue Producing? Yes () No ()
If Yes, Estimate of Annual Revenue \$

7. Estimated Annual Cost of Operation and Maintenance:

- A. Salaries and Wages
- B. Expenses

Estimated Useful Life _____ Years.

9. Will Project Remove Taxable Property From List? Yes () No ()
Land _____ Buildings _____

10. Remarks:

11. Submitted By _____ Department _____
Date _____

FIG. 6

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS
PLANNING ADMINISTRATION/
PROCEDURES FOR PLAN UPDATE

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SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Consideration should be given to binding together all of the bylaws and regulations that deal with land use and development so that a developer of a proposed project has all of the regulations together (i.e., zoning, subdivision, signs, etc.)

The Planning Board should contact the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to see if they will provide a review of all subdivisions which take place in the RR-1 or RR-2 zones in terms of soil conditions/limitations.

In order to facilitate evaluation of a proposed subdivision plan, it is suggested that the Board require the Subdivider to provide a 1" = 1000' scale layout of the subdivision on mylar so it could be laid over the soils map, zoning map, topo map, or other Town maps to check conformity to regulations, and compatability of roads with other roads in the vicinity.

It is recommended that a detailed review of the existing Subdivision Regulations be undertaken to bring up-to-date requirements for road and utility construction, design provisions and fee structure. Some particular points that should be checked:

- ° Sec. 6.03 - It is desirable to have a standard form appear on all subdivision plans for approval/endorsement by the Board and the Town Engineer.
- ° Sec. 9.11 - Right-of-way width for major streets should be set at 60'. (Note that a major street with a pavement width of 38', 4' sidewalks on both sides with a 3' divider from the edge of the street cannot be accommodated within a 50' r/way . . . (See Sec. 9.22).

PLANNING ADMINISTRATION/PROCEDURES FOR PLAN UPDATE

The following items are suggested for the Planning Board's consideration relative to the general subject of Planning Administration, and specifically relative to procedures designed to update this Master Plan.

1. It is recommended that the Citizen's Advisory Committee, which has provided valuable and substantial input to the plan, be established on a permanent/continuing basis. This group could provide valuable future input in the form of special studies such as:
 - Widening and improvement of Route 131.
 - Possible future extension of sewer service.
 - Possibility of soil-based zoning.
 - New recreation areas and facilities.
2. It is suggested that the Planning Board consider having joint meetings with other Town agencies (i.e., Selectmen, finance, housing, water and sewer, building officials, etc.) at least once a year, perhaps quarterly, to assure coordination of programs of concern to the Board.
3. It is recommended that an annual population report be prepared based on all available data so that the Planning Board can continually keep abreast of growth trends.
4. In 1979, the Planning Board prepared a check list of all permits required by the Town for the construction and repair of a residence or improvement of land including who to see for each type of permit, applicable regulations, and required fees. It is suggested that this check list be updated and made available to all Townspeople.
5. The Town of Sturbridge is a member of the Central Massachusetts Planning Region, and can benefit from such membership. It is recommended that the Planning Board attend meetings and conferences of the CMRCP as well as to invite a member of that agency to meet with the Planning Board at least once per year to review programs of interest.

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6. Since many of Sturbridge's problems (such as sewer, solid waste, open space, etc.) are common to the general area, it is recommended that every effort be made to set up regular annual meetings with Sturbridge's neighboring towns to discuss and coordinate such matters as road construction, sewer and water systems, proposed major developments such as shopping centers, industrial parks, etc.
7. The Planning Questionnaire distributed at the beginning of this program should be re-distributed at regular intervals (e.g., every five years) to develop trends and identify shifts in public opinion which might assist in evaluating the continuing role of the Master Plan.
8. The existing Land Use Map should be updated annually to reflect new development, which when coordinated with the population trends, will give the Planning Board a clear indication of the direction the Town's growth is taking. New subdivisions could be added as approved.
9. All vacant parcels of Town-owned land, plus Chapter 61 parcels, and areas designated as "unclassified", should be checked out to see if they might provide sites for needed facilities such as recreational areas, etc.
10. Septic system failures map, originally prepared by the S.C.S. for the Town of Sturbridge, should be updated regularly right now, although this might also be one element of a study relative to possible future soil-based zoning.
11. Architectural controls should be extended to cover industrial zones. It is recommended, therefore, that the Town's General By-laws be amended as follows:
 - (a) Section 1.4.

Expand this section to include the new "Tourist Commercial" zone, plus "General Industrial" and "Industrial Park" zones.
 - (b) Section 1.44

Consideration should be given to having a member of the Planning Board serve "ex-officio" as a member of the Design Review Committee.
 - (c) Section 1.46

This section should specifically state that any and all plans shall conform to the provisions of the zoning by-law as relative to building setbacks, off-street parking and signage.

EXHIBIT "A"

STURBRIDGE MASTER PLAN
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

4/13/87

Environmental

Chairperson: Ed Rotty

K. Barnes
C. Goodwin
P. Goodwin
L. Herbert
K. McConnell
M. Manners
W. Morse
L. Murawski
D. Montross

P. Simpson
D. Szumilas
A. Wilson

Tourism and Commercial Development

Chairperson: Stan Ropiak

K. Boland
V. Belforte
K. McConnell
C. Kuhn
C. Goodwin
L. Murawski
M. Papaz
B. Adler

Education

Chairperson: Roland Wilson

L. Herbert
R. Joseph
L. Murawski
K. Walsh
A. Wilson

Financial

Chairperson: Ken Barnes

K. Boland
T. Chamberland
G. Hammond
S. Ropiak
K. Walsh
A. Wilson

Housing

Chairperson: Lorraine Herbert

V. Belforte
D. Corriveau
N. Keeney
M. Lev
K. MacConnell
P. Simpson

Industrial Development

Chairperson: Joe Rokus

V. Belforte
G. Hammond
M. Papaz

Recreation

Chairperson: Kevin MacConnell

M. Manners
L. Murawski
M. Papaz
P. Simpson
D. Szumilas
R. Wilson
C. Wood

Traffic, Transportation & Utilities

Chairperson: Paul Simpson

T. Chamberland
K. Fitzgibbons
W. Morse
S. Ropiak
E. Rotty
L. Senecal
D. Szumilas
A. Wilson
K. Barnes
K. Nauman
A. Zukowski

STURBRIDGE CITIZENS' ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

MARCH, 1987

PREPARED BY: LORD-WOOD, LARSON ASSOCIATES, INC.

PREPARED FOR: STURBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD

STURBRIDGE - CITIZENS' ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

MARCH, 1987

The Sturbridge Citizens' Attitude questionnaire was distributed to the residents of the Town in December, 1986, as part of the planning study. One thousand five hundred and thirty seven (1,537) were returned and have been tabulated by Lord-Wood, Larson Associates. Based on one questionnaire per household, this represents approximately 4,551 people, or about 63% of the total population.

The following text explains the results of the questionnaire. A sample of the questionnaire itself with statistical data may be found at the end of this report.

PART I

1. "ON WHAT STREET IS YOUR HOME/APARTMENT LOCATED?"

See map attached.

2. "DO YOU OWN OR RENT YOUR RESIDENCE?"

Of those responding to the survey, 79% own their own home, while 21% are renters.

3. "HOW MANY PEOPLE OCCUPY YOUR HOME/APARTMENT?"

Of the 1,537 households responding to this question, 7% of the occupants were under five years old, 20% were 5 to 18 years of age, 17% were from 19 to 30, 18% from 31 to 40, 27% from 41 to 64, and 11% were 65 and over.

4. "WHERE DO YOU AND YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY SHOP FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS? (GROCERIES/DAILY NEEDS, FURNITURE AND APPLIANCES, CLOTHING?)"

As can be expected, 60% of Sturbridge residents responding said they shopped in Sturbridge for their groceries and daily needs, and 30% had bought groceries in Southbridge. Two percent or less did grocery shopping in Auburn, Worcester, Springfield, Spencer and Webster, Fiskdale, Shrewsbury, Palmer, Wilbraham, Brookfield, Enfield, CT, Charlton and West Springfield.

Most of the respondents bought furniture and appliances in Worcester (38%). Fifteen percent (15%) shopped in Southbridge, 12% in Sturbridge and 11% in Auburn. Five percent (5%) shopped for furniture in Springfield, and 2% or less bought furniture and appliances in Framingham, West Springfield, Westboro, Brookfield, Shrewsbury, Wilbraham, Natick, Eastfield, Palmer, Ludlow, Holyoke, Webster and New York City.

Clothing purchases were made primarily in Sturbridge — 36% of the respondents shopped locally. Worcester was second, with 27% of the residents shopping there. Eighteen percent (18%) bought their clothes in Auburn, 8% in Southbridge, 6% in Springfield, 3% in Boston, and 1% or less in Holyoke, Spencer, Eastfield, Framingham, Webster, Hartford, West Hartford and Enfield, Ct., Shrewsbury, Natick, Westboro, New York City, West Springfield, and Maine.

5. "WHERE DO YOU WORK?"

Slightly less than half (626 or 40%) of the respondents list themselves as being employed, and of those the great majority (456 or about 73%) work in Sturbridge, Southbridge or Worcester. The remaining workers spread out over a wide area of southern New England: 18 in Connecticut, 3 in Rhode Island, 1 in Maine and the rest throughout Massachusetts.

One hundred seventy-nine (179) of the respondents said they worked in the Town of Sturbridge. One hundred forty-eight (148) worked in the neighboring Town of Southbridge. Worcester employed 129 of the residents of Sturbridge. Fourteen (14) residents worked in Charlton, and 13 in both Auburn and Springfield. Hartford, Connecticut employs 11 of the respondents, Spencer and Shrewsbury 10 each. Eight (8) Sturbridge residents said they worked in Auburn, and seven (7) worked in Boston and in Westboro. Five (5) worked in Brookfield, four (4) in Brimfield, and (3) each worked in Waltham, Wilbraham, Palmer, Fiskdale, Warren, Palmer and Holland. Two (2) each worked in Chicopee, Holyoke, Northboro, Natick, Bedford, Holden, Oxford and Rhode Island. One (1) of each of the respondents worked in Ware, Worcester County, Sterling, Seekonk, RI, Westfield, Pomfret, CT, Millbury, Galileo, Hopkinton, Blanford, Barre, Braintree, Westfield, Chestnut Hill, Monson, Longmeadow, Westwood, Wayland, Winooski, Agawam, S. Hadley, Glastonbury, CT, Leominster, Providence, RI, North Reading, Enfield, CT, Douglas, Sutton, North Brookfield, Hopedale, Thompson, CT, Lee, Killingly, Andover, Plainville and Pittsfield.

6. "HOW LONG HAVE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY LIVED IN STURBRIDGE?"

Thirty-two percent (32%) of the respondents have lived in Sturbridge for 5 years or less, 17% from 5 to 10 years, whereas 51% had made their home in Sturbridge for 10 years or more.

PART II

1. "SHOULD THE TOWN TAKE ANY MEASURES TO CONTROL THE GROWTH IN STURBRIDGE?"

In response to this question, a very substantial number of people (85%) felt that growth should be controlled. Only 10% said it shouldn't, and 5% didn't know.

2. "IF YOU CHECKED "YES", PLEASE INDICATE HOW THE TOWN SHOULD CONTROL OR REGULATE THE GROWTH".

Of those who replied "yes" to the previous question, 34% felt that the number of multi-family units to be built should be restricted. Twenty-six percent (26%) thought that more restrictive zoning regulations should be adopted. Seventeen percent (17%) wanted the Town to restrict industrial development. Limiting water and sewer system hook-ups was cited by 12% of the respondents, and finally, 11% were in favor of restricting the number of single family houses that could be built.

Other Suggestions

The following are suggestions made by the residents. Next to the suggestion will be the number of people that made that particular request.

Industrial Parks on Route 84 (5)
Enforce existing by-laws (1)
Traffic light at entrance of Heritage and Rt. 20 (1)
Multi-family units allowed on sewer lines only (5)
200' frontage on single family homes (1)
1 - 3 acre minimum building lots (5)
Stop giving variances (5)
Total ban on building until Town can handle present load (1)
Find balance between tourism and industry (1)
Too many restrictions already (1)
Town meetings should be held before any large-scale development takes place (1)
No restrictions on housing (1)
Maintain and improve private roads (1)
Encourage agriculture (1)
Change zoning laws to allow specified or lesser use (1)
Better relations between Building Inspector and residents 91)
Increase multi-family use of commercially zoned property to 12 units/acre (2)
Access to Mass Pike at Rt. 148 at westend of Town to bypass Fiskdale (1)
Have new industry foot a percentage of the cost of sewer hook-ups for private residences (1)
Route 20 should be a "Historic District"
Be more considerate when long-time residents require non-conforming zoning permits (1)
Should have controlled growth 25 years ago — now it's too late (1)
More builder responsibility for maintaining conditions of roads and surrounding areas of the jobsite (1)
A new pumping station (1)

PART III

A. "THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE INTENDED TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU LIKE AND DISLIKE ABOUT STURBRIDGE. PLEASE RATE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:"

There were 22 items listed in this question, along with a space for "other". Complete responses can be found at the end of this report.

The five items that were cited as "excellent", in order of preference are as follows: Old Sturbridge Village and location, both 56%; Restaurants, 40%; Burgess Grade School, 35%, and size of Town, (31%). As far as the things that residents disliked about Sturbridge, the majority (77%) cited traffic conditions as the major problem. Fifty-nine percent (59%) were dissatisfied with indoor recreational/entertainment facilities. Forty-three percent (43%) were most displeased with transportation facilities. Outdoor recreational/entertainment facilities were listed as "poor" by 41% of the residents. Finally, 35% expressed displeasure with the employment opportunities.

Items that residents themselves listed in write-ins as being "excellent" included medical services, the Senior Center, the Library, the Federal Church, the quality of the Town government, and the quality of the Town residents ! However, some respondents reiterated their dissatisfaction with items such as traffic conditions, elderly housing, the crime rate, mass transit, water service, street lights, cable T.V., teen facilities and mail delivery.

III. B. "IF MONEY WERE NO OBJECT, I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE FOLLOWING IMPROVEMENTS IN STURBRIDGE".

This question drew the greatest response from the residents of Sturbridge. Their suggestions ranged from the very practical to fanciful.

There was an overwhelming response by the residents (561) concerning the traffic problem in Town. Of those, many asked that something be done about Route 20 (301) and Route 131 (161). Others (99) were upset with the traffic conditions in general. Several (23) suggested widening Route 20 and Route 131, or a Route 20 bypass (20). Many (48) thought that more traffic lights would help the situation. Others would like to see the speed limits lowered and strictly enforced. One person suggested a one-way Main Street from the Fire Station to Friendly's. Another asked for a light at Arnold Road and Route 20. There was also one request for a change at the intersection of Cedar Street and Route 20. Others (5) would like to have trucks rerouted from Route 20. Some residents (5) feel that removing the New England Truck Stop would improve traffic conditions.

Road conditions were another major concern, with sixty-five residents asking for improvement. The secondary roads were also thought to need help in this area. Several requests were made for repair or paving; Old Farm Road, North Library Road, South Shore Drive, and New Boston Road. A few asked for better snow removal.

Some residents would like to see the look of the main streets improved. Two people asked to have billboard advertising outlawed. A few would like to see better landscaping, with more trees (3) and more sidewalks with benches (34). Two asked for more public restrooms conveniently located in Town. One person suggested overhead walks for people crossing Route 20 near MacDonald's and Friendly's. Many (31) would like to have more street lights in their town.

Better recreational facilities is an improvement many (116) asked for. Nineteen people asked for an indoor Teen Center. Others (39) would like to have a new Town park, complete with pool (16), walk and bike paths, outdoor grills, and a playground (19). One resident asked to have the local golf course expanded to eighteen holes. Others (25) asked that more entertainment be available in their Town. Some requests were: concerts, symphonies, opera, live summer theater, a family theater, and more cultural activities. Eight people requested cable T.V. for the whole Town. A few people would like to have better access to ponds and lakes with clean water to swim in. Two people asked to have Cedar Lake dredged and the water level maintained. There was also one request for a small zoo.

Many residents would like to have an increase in the number of services they receive. Improved water (66) and sewer service (115) provided to the whole Town was requested most often. Others (11) would prefer underground utilities. Eight people asked for a new, larger library. Trash pick-up was requested by twelve residents. There was one request for better electrical service and three (3) for improved telephone service. Three people suggested a resource recovery plant. Two residents would like to have better medical services available. There were five calls for public transit. One person would like to have a train station in Town. One resident suggested street cars on every street guided by laser beams. Three (3) residents asked for more free transportation for the elderly. One resident would like to have the Town monitor the rust and sodium levels in the water. There were three requests for strictly enforced leash laws.

Many residents would like to see the police (38) and fire (42) departments improved. A few residents would like to see a new centrally located building built for both. They would like to have an increase in both staff and equipment. There was also one request for a new ambulance.

The educational system in Town was a concern of some residents. Eighteen (18) people want the quality of the schools improved. There was one call for a K-12 regionalization of schools. Six (6) residents asked for a high school in Town. Three (3) residents expressed concern about the drug problems in the junior and senior schools. One resident felt that the athletic fields need improvement and better outdoor activities provided. One person felt that teachers deserved more pay, and another thought that more teachers were needed. One resident would do away with the tenure system and hire competent teachers.

Several residents (23) would like to see more commercial development in their Town. One resident would prefer more industry and less housing, while another would stop industrial growth now. Concern was expressed that any new industry coming into the area be "clean" with no threat to the population. Two residents asked for an overall plan for the businesses on Route 20.

Thirteen (13) people asked for more shopping or malls, with one request for a giant mall complete with movie theater and more casual family type restaurants. Two (2) people would like to have better quality clothing stores. Three (3) people asked for better grocery stores, or a food warehouse. There were two requests for a new drug store in town.

Four (4) residents would like to see an improvement in Town government. Three people asked for more Town sponsored activities. Two (2) suggested a large Fourth of July event. Three (3) residents would like to see laws and zoning that would keep their Town quaint and small. Seven (7) residents suggested an appearance code for buildings that would preserve the colonial look of the Town. There were two (2) calls for the Town to buy open land to save and open a nature sanctuary. Two (2) people asked that zoning regulations be strictly enforced. Six (6) residents asked to keep the Town just as it is and preserve the quaint, small Town image. Ten (10) people would like to see the Town develop a Master Plan and slow down the growth. There were three (3) requests for lower taxes. One resident felt that the Town should be moved to a larger parcel of land. Seven (7) residents requested that the Town make sure the environment is protected.

One resident suggested a central parking area for tourists with shuttle bus service provided. One resident suggested a separate area for tourists. One resident felt that tourists should pay for the services they receive. Another resident would like to see Sturbridge become a "class tourist Town".

There were four requests for more affordable housing. One call for low income housing. Five (5) people would like to have more elderly housing.

One person asked for a new office for Nancy Kenney, the director of the Sturbridge - Fiskdale Senior Center.

One person requested that the Curboy Auto Junkyard be removed.

C. "WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE NEEDED IN STURBRIDGE? (RETAIL DEVELOPMENTS, RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS).

In terms of retail developments, 337 people felt that a supermarket was needed. Two hundred eighty-six (286) wanted a general discount store, while 271 saw the need for a hardware and home improvement establishment. Two hundred seven (207) wanted a shopping center, and another 211 desired an appliance and furniture store. A dry cleaner/laundry establishment was mentioned by 127 of the residents, a hairdresser/barber by 90, a drugstore by 93, a bank by 59, gift shop by 18 and hotel/motel by 19.

As far as recreational developments, a movie theatre was the most popular request — 706 of those responding felt a need for one. Bicycle paths also rated high among desired items — they were cited as needed by 583 of the residents. Four hundred seventeen (417) of the respondents wanted to see playgrounds developed. Ice skating facilities were mentioned by 401 people, a bowling alley by 383. Other sports enthusiasts suggested the development of athletic fields (217), tennis racquet courts (202), and a golf course by 146 respondents.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

RETAIL

Medium priced clothing store
Dunkin Donuts
More Industry
More Manufacturers
Larger Post Office
Post Office in a shopping mall
drive-in movie theater
Walk-in Medical Center
Fitness salon
Appliance repair shop
Public transportation to Worcester
Self-serve car wash
A Mall
More outlet stores
Major retail clothing store
Good department store
Stationery/book store
Natural food store
Improved laundromat

RECREATIONAL

Roller skating rink
Walking/jogging paths
Town pool
Youth/teen center
More public beaches
Live summer theater
Public park
Ski trails
More live entertainment
Pool hall
Horseback riding trails
Basketball courts
Nature preserve
Children's museum
Evening and winter recreation
Snowmobile trails
Better access to Cedar Lake
Boat rentals
Football stadium
Dancing
Longer hours at the dump
Free fishing license at 65, not 70

PART IV

"WHAT OTHER SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS DO YOU HAVE REGARDING THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF STURBRIDGE?"

Many people (101) expressed concern over traffic problems on Route 20, as did others (99) about Route 131. Other residents are concerned (36) with the traffic flow problems on all the roads in town, not just the main arteries. Many feel that enforcing traffic laws would help. The New England Truck Stop is a problem many (14) would like to see solved. It was suggested that the truck stop should be closed, and then relocated at Sturbridge Isle. Some residents asked for better road maintenance and more parking.

A number of residents (17) would like to see Sturbridge develop a Master Plan that would include "controlled intelligent growth" (45). Some people want stricter zoning laws (13), with a one to two acre minimum building lot for single family homes. Many residents (31) want to retain the quaint, small town image that Sturbridge now has. Some would like to see condos outlawed in their Town. Others would like to make sure that no more fast food places be allowed. While some (13) would like to have more malls or shopping centers, an equal number (11) would like to place a ban on construction of new shops and malls. A number of residents (8) would like to see more clean industry attracted to the area.

Many residents seem to be concerned about the services they receive. Some feel (13) that more emphasis should be on townpeople rather than on the visiting tourists. The request for town water and sewer service for all homes was mentioned (8). Several mentioned (8) that they would like more street lights, and more sidewalks with benches. Television viewers frequently requested Cable T.V. for the Town. More family type entertainment for both indoors and outdoors was also mentioned. Several people asked for a good public transit system.

Requests were made for improvements in the library. Other suggestions included a better telephone system, trash pick up, larger police and fire departments with more equipment, and strongly enforced leash laws.

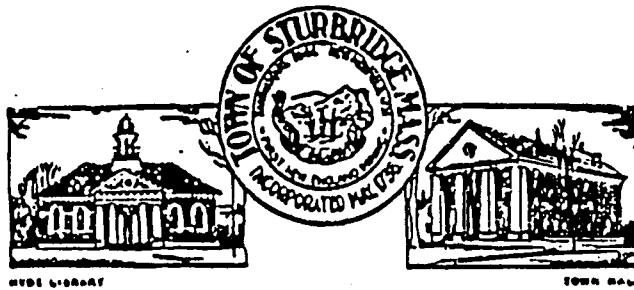
Several residents (12) would like to see the present school system improved. A few are concerned that if population is not controlled, new schools will have to be built. These people would like to see taxes held at the present level, or better, yet, lowered!

Eleven (11) residents want improvements in the town government. While they are satisfied with the Selectmen, they would like to have a Town Manager. Others would like to find a way to get more people involved with their Town government.

The elderly in Town wanted more elderly housing, transportation, and a good nursing home in the area. In regard to Sturbridge Village, some felt that the Village should pay taxes like any other business, and should try to attract more tourists. It was also suggested that the Town protect all historical sites. Preserving undeveloped land for nature reserves, preserving Big Alum Lake, and developing a Town park were other items requested by residents. A couple of respondents would like to have more affordable housing of good quality be built.

Individual requests are as follows:

- Have businesses pay their share of taxes.
- Have longer hours at the dump.
- Remove tolls on the Mass. Pike
- Make Fiskdale part of Sturbridge
- Resurrect the Quinnebaug Greenway Plan.
- Encourage more residential growth.
- Build an industrial park in town.
- Develop a plan for the disposal of hazardous waste.
- See to it that Real Estate tax bills go out on time.
- Develop a two tiered property assessment, one for business, one for residential.



PLANNING BOARD

STURBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Dear Sturbridge Resident:

The Town of Sturbridge is in the process of writing a Master Plan which will be used to set the direction for the Town for the next few years. Your answers to this survey will be used by the Town Planners and the Consultant the Town has hired to prepare this Master Plan. The survey gives you an opportunity to express your views on the type of town you want Sturbridge to be. It will only take you a few minutes and you don't have to sign your name. Please return the completed questionnaire in the return envelope along with your census form. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Sturbridge Planning Board

I. The following questions are intended to get some background on the people responding to this survey.

1. On what street is your home/apartment located: _____

Name of Street

2. Do you own or rent your residence? Check one: Own 79% Rent 21%

3. How many people occupy your home/apartment? Indicate the number of people in your family (including yourself) and their ages under the categories listed below:

Under 5 yrs	5-18 yrs	19-30 yrs	31-40 yrs	41-64 yrs	65 & over	Total
<u>7%</u>	<u>20%</u>	<u>17%</u>	<u>18%</u>	<u>27%</u>	<u>11%</u>	<u>4,551</u>

4. Where do you and your immediate family shop for the following items:

Groceries/Daily Needs

Furniture & Appliances

Clothing

(Name, city/town)

(Name, city/town)

(Name, city/town)

5. Where do you work? _____

(Name of Town)

0-5	5-10	Over 10
<u>32%</u>	<u>17%</u>	<u>51%</u>

6. How long have you and your family lived in Sturbridge?

Number of Years

II. The Town Planners believe that dealing with the growth in Sturbridge will be an important issue for the next several years. Please indicate your opinion on this issue.

1. Should the Town take any measures to control the growth in Sturbridge? (Check One)

Yes 85%

No 10%

Don't Know 5%

2. If you checked "Yes", please complete the following:

The Town should control or regulate growth by (Check all statements you agree with):

- 11% Restricting the number of single family homes which can be built.
- 34% Restricting the number of multi-family units (apartments, condominiums, etc.) to be built.
- 17% Restricting industrial development.
- 26% Adopting more restrictive zoning regulations.
- 12% Limiting water and sewer system hook-ups.

Other Suggestions: _____

III. The following questions are intended to find out what you like and dislike about Sturbridge.

A. Please rate the following items about Sturbridge:

No Answer	Excellent	Good	Poor	
3%	31%	64%	2%	1. Size of town
2%	56%	41%	1%	2. Location
5%	16%	74%	5%	3. Climate
25%	35%	38%	2%	4. Grade School (Burgess)
28%	19%	44%	9%	5. Jr. & Sr. High Schools (Tantasqua)
16%	7%	56%	21%	6. Housing opportunity (type, cost, etc.)
13%	6%	46%	35%	7. Employment opportunities
12%	9%	38%	41%	8. Outdoor recreational/entertainment facilities
13%	4%	24%	59%	9. Indoor recreational/entertainment facilities
9%	8%	40%	43%	10. Transportation facilities (highways, bus, air)
19%	2%	20%	77%	11. Traffic conditions
4%	11%	64%	21%	12. Shopping facilities
3%	40%	53%	4%	13. Restaurants
8%	5%	74%	13%	14. Cost of living
11%	4%	69%	16%	15. Taxes
7%	27%	63%	7%	16. Fire protection
6%	21%	63%	10%	17. Police protection
5%	13%	61%	21%	18. Road maintenance
32%	12%	43%	13%	19. Water service
40%	7%	33%	20%	20. Sewer service
13%	6%	50%	31%	21. Parking
10%	56%	32%	2%	22. Old Sturbridge Village
				23. Other _____

B. Please complete the following:

If money were no object, I would like to see the following improvement(s) in Sturbridge. Describe briefly: _____

C. Which of the following are needed in Sturbridge? Check as many as apply.

 Retail Developments

207 Shopping center

337 Supermarket

211 Appliance & furniture

271 Hardware & home improvement

286 General discount

90 Hairdresser/barber

59 Bank

127 Dry cleaner/laundry.

69 Restaurant

93 Drug store

18 Gift shop

19 Hotel/motel

 Other: _____

 Recreational Developments

706 Movie theater

383 Bowling alley

417 Playgrounds

146 Golf course

202 Tennis/racquet courts

217 Athletic fields

401 Ice skating

583 Bicycle paths

 Other: _____

IV. What other suggestions or comments do you have regarding the future development of Sturbridge? _____

THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR HELP!

STURBRIDGE MASTER PLANLIST OF REFERENCES

The following is a list of references used by the Consultant during the course of the Master Plan. Sources range from town reports to state data, and other information from miscellaneous towns, individuals and organizations. Whenever possible, dates of publication have been cited.

Upon completion of the program, the material will be turned over to the Planning Board for use by the Town.

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