

5.2 Land Use

5.2.1 Introduction

The Land Use Element is the principal element of any local comprehensive plan. Since consideration of the use and the treatment of land crosses into the purview of other elements within the comprehensive plan, it is essential that the land use element share goals, policies and certain implementation steps with those of other elements outlined in this comprehensive plan.

The development of any community is based upon a number of influencing factors. Some are physical, some are economic and some are legislative. It is the combination of these influences, along with the community's own sense of direction for its future that determines how a community grows and develops. Of particular influence are laws that govern development, those imposed by the town in the form of local zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations, and those that are imposed by state or federal laws.

The Land Use Element must consider the allocation of land of residence, business, industry, municipal facilities, public and private recreation, major institutional facilities, mixed uses, open space and natural and fragile areas. Optimum intensities and standards of development must be established for each use classification and location, based upon current development; natural land characteristics, projected municipal, regional and state services and facilities.

Allocations of land use must also consider impacts on surface and groundwater resources, wetlands, coastal features, and other sensitive and fragile natural resources. Judgments must be made on the ability of existing and future land use controls to properly protect these natural resources. (Excerpted from Handbook #16: The Handbook on the Local Comprehensive Plan, pages IV-11 through IV-13.

Development regulations, such as the town's subdivision and zoning ordinances, are primarily responsible for the nature and character of a community. Such regulations establish development standards including but not limited to, minimum lot sizes, setback requirements, parking, signage, street widths, etc. These regulatory standards can be flexible or rigid in their approach to regulating development in a community, by either enhancing or inhibiting development that is consistent with the goals of a community.

Exeter adopted its first Zoning Ordinance in 1977 some three years after the completion of its first Comprehensive Plan. The town had Subdivision Regulations in place in 1965, a full twelve years prior to zoning. These regulations have been amended several times,

most recently in July of 1999. The Zoning Ordinance has also been amended over the years to include more areas of land control and growth management.

The major thrust of the zoning ordinance, according to its preamble, was to preserve the rural character and natural resources of the town. This was accomplished primarily through large lot zoning with 2, 3, 4, and 5-acre minimum lot sizes. In 1977, that method of protection was recognized as appropriate.

5.2.2 Constraints on Land Use

5.2.2a Environmental Constraints

The Natural and Cultural Resources element of the Comprehensive Plan goes into great detail identifying these resources in the community. They represent areas of natural beauty and supply the town with its most valuable commodity, water, and they represent constraints to development that must be considered. To review the extent of these resources or constraints, the following is a summary of these natural features:

- Approximately 6,000 acres (16%) of the land in Exeter is comprised of Hydric Soils, which are those soils typically associated with wetlands.
- Almost 15% of the land in the town is designated as Prime Farmland.
- There are three ground water reservoirs located in Exeter, the most significant of which is the one associated with the Queens River.
- Most of the town is located in the Pawcatuck River Basin.
- 14.5% of the town, or approximately 5,400 acres, is covered by wetlands.
- Exeter is characterized by rolling topography with hills that run north and south.
- A large portion of the town is forest or brushland.

5.2.2b Regional Considerations

The Town of Exeter is located in Washington County, the fastest growing county in the State of Rhode Island. The Rhode Island Department of Administration anticipates that this county will outpace growth in the other four counties by a wide margin, expecting population to increase 26% for the 20-year period 1980-2000, averaging a 37% increase in population from 1960 through 1990.

There is no question that out-migration from the suburbs of Providence and Kent Counties has fueled this increase in population as individuals and families seek housing in less congested, more rural settings. Exeter, given its location with respect to major transportation systems, will continue to be an attractive alternative to those seeking such a lifestyle.

What role does the Town of Exeter play in the region? Beyond being a bedroom community to an ever-increasing number of households, the town is also host to

numerous state and private recreational facilities, including Arcadia Park, Beech Pond, Yawgoo Valley Ski Area, Exeter Country Club, and a number of private hunting and fishing clubs.

The town is also rich in natural resources including three ground water reservoirs that supply water to a great deal of the South County area, particularly South Kingstown, Richmond and Charlestown. The protection of these resources is a regional issue with Exeter playing a major role.

5.2.2c Land Use Trends 1970 to 1991 vs. Constraints

In 1991, 70.3% of all land in the town, excluding that covered by wetlands and water, remained as forest and brushlands. While this land use type can be found throughout the community, the majority of this land is found in western Exeter and is State-owned land associated with Arcadia and Beach Pond. Over the 20-year span studied, Exeter lost over 4,000 acres of land to other uses. A portion of that land was converted to residential use, as 1,124 units of housing and 2,216 people came to the town over that twenty-year period, according to the US Census Bureau.

In 1991, residential use accounted for 2,000 acres of land, or 5.4% of the total land area of the Town. Agricultural use covered some 4,729 acres or 13% of Exeter's land during the same time frame. This category suffered a net decrease of 304 acres over the 20-year period in the pasture, cropland and idle agricultural categories. An actual increase in orchards of some 290 acres was also recorded. Other significant increases in land uses in terms of their gross change in use include mining, quarries and gravel pits saw 122 acres, an 800% increase over this time frame.

5.2.3 Land Use by Defined Planning Districts

For the purpose of defining land use in the community, the town was divided into two districts. District I included all land west of the New London Turnpike (17,087 acres) and District II covers the land east of the turnpike. Land Use totals were derived by placing a grid over the individual use categories on the RIGIS Land Use map. A two-acre grid system was utilized. The New London Turnpike was used as the dividing line due to its geographic location in the physical center of the town and also due to the fact that it did not split major land use categories.

Planning District II, the eastern half of the town, experienced the most growth in terms of residential development. This district also contained the largest acreage of agricultural land - 2,330 acres or 84% of all such land in the town. The western half of the town, given the large amounts of land dedicated to state park use was more sparsely developed. This area though did contain the "lion's" share of the town's commercial development - 88% of all land in that category.

5.2.3a.1 Planning District I –Residential Uses

Residential land uses were sparse but concentrated in this designated district that contained 595 acres, or 30% of all residential land use in the town. The majority of the residential uses were classified as Medium Density (1/4-1 acre lots) at the time of the study. A concentration of residential uses can be found in the Boone Lake area, along Black Plain Road, between Arcadia Road and Bates School House Road, and along Escoheag (SP) Hill Road. A cluster of residential uses also occurs to the north and west of Arcadia Village. The highest density development occurs in the area surrounding Boone Lake, which is characterized by homes on extremely small lots surrounding this body of water. Concentrations of mobile homes can be found in the Arcadia Road area and also in the Black Plain Road/Austin Road area.

5.2.3a.2 Planning District I –Commercial /Industrial Uses

Commercial uses were concentrated along and adjacent to Route 3, Nooseneck Hill Road. The most concentrated retail/service activity occurred between Austin Farm Road and Route 165. Further south on Route 3 a number of heavy commercial uses dedicated to automotive use on the road itself and on Industrial Drive in the southern extreme of the town.

The major institutional use in this district was the Metcalf Middle School, located on the east side of Route 3 at the Exeter/West Greenwich town line.

5.2.3a.3 Planning District I –Agricultural Land

There were 430 acres of agricultural land identified in this designated district in 1991. Concentrations of agricultural land were found north of Austin Farm Road and adjacent to the west side of I-95. Other areas of concentration included Victory Highway, Route 102, between Route 3 and the New London Turnpike, and adjacent to the Beaver River, near the Richmond Border. West of I-95, agricultural uses were dispersed throughout the remaining portion of the district.

Forest and brushland dominated land cover at the time of the study conducted by Beta Engineering, and accounted for 13,545 acres or 79% of the planning district's total land area. The majority of this land is under state ownership in association with the state park system, but there were large expanses of forestland throughout the district.

5.2.3b.1 Planning District II – Residential

This district contained 70% of all the acreage dedicated to residential use in the town in 1991, representing approximately 1,412 acres or 7% of this district. New residential subdivision development has been concentrated in this district, particularly north of Ten Rod Road and east of Route 2, between Liberty Road and Yawgoo Valley Road. Town records indicated that nineteen subdivisions were approved in district during the study time frame, representing 311 lots.

Three areas of high-density development were identified. They included the Cedar Grove subdivision, Split Rock Mobile Home Park and the Yawgoo Valley Apartments. The Cedar Grove Area was developed prior to the adoption of a Town Zoning Ordinance. High-density residential development is characterized by a lot of less than a ¼-acre in size. As mentioned previously, Medium Density development dominates this district.

5.2.3b.2 Planning District II -Commercial and Industrial Uses

At the time Beta Engineering concluded its study of land use in Exeter, retail and service uses were concentrated along the southern end of Route 2, South County Trail between the South Kingstown town line and Yawgoo Valley Road. A second area of retail/service uses existed at the intersection of Exeter Road and Route 2. In total, only ten acres of commercial uses were identified in this district.

Twelve acres of industrial uses were identified in this district. They were the former Harborside Shellfish site, Carbon Technologies (across from Yawgoo Valley Road) and the Dorset Mill.

5.2.3b.3 Planning District II -Institutional

Eighty-five acres of institutional uses were identified, representing the developed portion of the Ladd Center. The second institutional site was the Wawaloam School near the western border of the district on the south side of Route 2.

5.2.3b.4 Planning District II -Recreation and Agriculture

Exeter's two major areas of developed recreational land are the Yawgoo Valley Ski Area on the east end of Yawgoo Valley Road and the Exeter Country Club on Route 102, just west of South Road are located in this designated district. These uses cover approximately 215 acres of land in this district.

Agricultural land represents the largest use of land in this district. Agricultural accounted for approximately 2,330 acres, or 11.5% of the land in this district in 1991. The heaviest concentration of farming activity occurs along the eastern border of the town, from Route 102 south to below Exeter Road. Other large areas of agricultural uses exist in the southeast corner of the town, to the west of Glenrock and Liberty Church Roads.

As in Planning District I, a significant amount of land is forest and brushland. In Planning District II, 12,830 acres or 63% of the land was in an undeveloped state when the study was concluded.

5.2.3b.5 Planning District II -Mines, Quarries and Gravel Pits

In 1991, 121 acres of land were dedicated to these uses in this district, including the Concrete Ready Mix facility on Route 2, several sites on the west end of Route 102, and

several sites to the west of Route 2, south and west of the Ladd Center. Included in this group is the site of the former town landfill and its existing transfer station.

5.2.4 The Ladd Center

5.2.4a Overview

The future disposition of the Ladd Center is critically important to the Town of Exeter for two very different and potentially contrasting reasons. From an environmental standpoint, the Ladd Center is located directly above the Queens River Aquifer, designated by the federal government GAA, as a Sole Source Aquifer and by the State (RIDEM) as GAA, the highest groundwater classification available. In addition to this valuable groundwater resource there are three public wellheads that provide water for the Ladd Center itself. The area also has a variety of other wetland systems that include associated floodway and floodplain areas. There is no question that this area is extremely sensitive as both an environmental and water resource, and the future use of this sensitive clearly requires a real and full understanding of the sensitive nature of this area.

The conflict arises when one looks at the potential re-use of this property. Over the past several years the State has suggested and studied to some degree the potential for converting this site to a research and corporate park. While no actual marketing analysis of the potential for such a conversion was accomplished, according to the Port Authority, an analysis of the physical capacity of the Center to accommodate this new facility was made in support of this effort.

Given the interest the Town has in this property, the following information is presented concerning the "Ladd Center which reflects a summary of the data included in the Ladd Center Reuse Study - Exeter Research and Corporate Park." In addition to this information, comments submitted to the R.I. Port Authority by the RIDEM illustrating their concerns regarding the future disposition of the Ladd Center are included.

5.2.4b Ladd Center: Potential Re-Use as a Corporate/Research Park

With the closing of the Ladd Center anticipated in the years to come, the State of Rhode Island, through its University of RI and the RI Port Authority commissioned a study for the potential conversion of this site to a Corporate/Research Park. The basic questions this analysis was to answer included the following:

1. What buildings in the complex could be used for this purpose?
2. Can the Town use any of a select number of buildings for its purposes such as for a new Town Hall (town center), school, and fire station?
3. What improvements must be made to the facility's infrastructure (roads, drainage, sewer system, water, steam, etc.)?
4. How this potential re-use will effect the sensitive environment that exists at this site, particularly the impact upon the groundwater aquifer.

The development of the site envisioned the creation of an Incubator Park in the southern part of the center that would provide space and common services to start-up companies who would work with the University of Rhode Island. The northern part of the center would be dedicated to the development of a Corporate Office park.

The center of the facility would function as an amenities center for the two park elements. This would include dormitories, recreational facilities, new town offices, etc.

5.2.4c The Ladd Center -The Complex

The center itself is located entirely within Town of Exeter. The site contains approximately 330 acres and is located to the west of South Road, generally covering the area between Exeter and William Reynolds Roads and extends to the Queen River. The area being considered for the park contains 160 acres in what is described as the north and south campuses. The facility contains thirty-four buildings which include an administration center, recreational facilities, housing, classroom space, medical facilities, a power plant, sewage treatment plant and a self-contained water supply for domestic and fire fighting purposes. As is typical with facilities of this type, they were designed to be self sufficient, in that they could generate their own power and heat, provide facilities to prepare food, provide recreational opportunities, housing, medical services and education to its residents.

The site, in terms of its regional context, is located approximately thirty-five miles from Providence, one hundred miles from Boston and eight miles from the University of Rhode Island. It is no more than a five minute drive from the newly constructed Rt. 4 interchange located to the north and east of the center in North Kingstown,

5.2.4d The Present Disposition of the Ladd Center

There are approximately two hundred clients still residing at the facility who are expecting to be relocated to Group Home facilities as Ladd is phased out. The former Governor of the State of Rhode Island has indicated in his budget that he intended to pursue the sale of the facility (actually 160 acres) and had included the revenue from such a sale in a previous budget. The Town of Exeter had been given approval by the RI General Assembly and included in its November, 1990 general election ballot a question to local residents as to whether they would authorize the purchase of this facility. The amount of the referendum question was \$10,000,000, the purchase price mentioned by the Suite as the current value of the site and its associated improvements. The referendum was approved.

The decision, by the Town to seek the approval for a vote was a response to the Governor's decision to sell the property. The Town and a number of other groups including the Conservation Commission, the Environmental Council of RI, Citizens Campaign for a Sound Water Policy and the Audubon Society were identified as being

opposed to the sale of the property in a June 15, 1990, Providence Journal article. The same article went on to describe the various other uses that have been mentioned for this property upon its closure; they included a State Training School, a Fire-fighting Academy and Multi-Family Housing.

Other interests in the property include the abutting Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery who wishes to add 57 acres to their holdings. A recent transfer involved the sale of the Evergreen building and seven acres of land to Marathon House, a drug-rehab center.

5.2.4e Ladd Investment Assumptions

The Ladd Center Re-use study evaluated the present condition of the buildings at Ladd center, in addition to presenting an overview of the existing infrastructure with respect to its potential to accommodate this re-use scenario. Cost estimates were developed for the rehabilitation of the facility in addition to costs associated with the development of new and expanded facilities. In developing these costs, several assumptions were made. First and most important to the Town of Exeter was the assumption that the Town would be willing to invest approximately \$5,000,000 at Ladd. This would include the development of a new Town Hall and a school, plus investments in other items which were not clearly indicated in the report. The State would invest \$11,179,000, with private investment estimated at \$38,463,000. The total cost of the project was pegged at \$55,073,000, a figure that did not include the purchase price of the land. A summary of these cost estimates and the assumed cost allocation of the project are presented in the following section.

5.2.4f The Physical Setting

5.2.4f.1 Wetlands

The majority of the wetlands systems in the Center are associated with the Queen River, which is a primary tributary to the Usquepaug River. Associated wetlands include Bear Swamp, which extends north, south, and west of Ladd. The lower portions of the site are associated with the Queen's Fort Brook, a tributary to the Queen River.

In addition to these running water bodies there are a number of wooded swamps, shrub swamp, wet meadow and emergent marsh areas and bogs.

Given the existence of these wetland systems, there are flood plains and flood ways associated with the wetlands. The coverage of these flood plain areas can be determined using the Flood Hazard Maps produced by the Federal Emergency Management Area (FEMA) or the flood plain maps being used by the State through the RIGIS system.

5.2.4f.2 The Pawcatuck Basin Aquifer

The entire area of Ladd Center is located over this aquifer, which is part of the Queen River system. The EPA classified the aquifer as a Sole Source in 1983. It is evident that

the protection of this aquifer is extremely important to the Town as it provides the drinking water for many Exeter and other South County residents. The State is currently promulgating regulations in support of its Groundwater Protection Act (RI GL 46-131) to regulate discharges to subsurface water systems. These regulations are now available. In addition to these regulations the State has developed mapping which clearly define the aquifer limits and its recharge areas.

5.2.4f.3 Buildings

A general review of all of the buildings in Ladd was conducted. The report provided information on the age, physical condition, type of construction, re-uses potential, and the estimated cost to rehabilitate the buildings. There are several buildings with historic significance. They are located in the North Campus Area. As one might expect, the buildings that have been vacant or underutilized for some time and are in a general state of disrepair. The most severe damage has resulted from roof leaks. In general most of the structures are structurally sound with the exception of two buildings that were suggested for demolition. Others that were found to be in the worst condition included the Education/Recreation, Service, Mann, Ranger and Doyle buildings. These buildings have suffered severe water damage. The total cost associated with the rehabilitation of the buildings was estimated at \$16,964,000.

5.2.4f.4 Roads

The circulation system within the center was described to be inadequate. The roads themselves are in poor condition, and there is little or no drainage associated with them. In addition, there is only one access road to the site. Signage within the Facility from a traffic safety standpoint is also below modern standards. The same applies to the existing parking facilities which require rehabilitation, and expansion, to accommodate the use of this site as an office park, which would require greatly increased amenities for it to function properly. The lack of an adequate drainage system is a problem because of its potential impact upon wetland resources to which it discharges directly. Improvements to the system would include the use of improved technologies that minimize the impacts of such discharges by using oil separators, level spreaders, etc. The total cost associated with these improvements was estimated at \$4,186,500.

5.2.4f.5 Waste Water Treatment

The Ladd Center has a sewage treatment plant located on site. The plant, built in the 1950's, has a design capacity of 230,000 gallons per day (.23MGD) and provides secondary treatment. The plant has approximately 10,000 linear feet of sewer lines associated with the system. No detailed information exists regarding tile lines themselves, but the plant appears to be in good working order according to the survey. At present the system is operating at approximately 10% of its capacity due to the limited population at the center. The real concern associated with this facility is that it discharges to the Queens Rivet. A report which was in the Appendix of the re-use study indicated that such discharges in an aquifer area was not recommended given the

potential impact upon groundwater resources. This was particularly true for facilities that provided primary or secondary treatment such as this plant does.

The fear is not only limited to the groundwater supply for area residents but also for the wells that exist in this complex. Well pumping, particularly during low flow periods, could draw wastewater from the receiving waters into the well. A second potential problem relates to leaks in the existing lilies. Infiltration due to cracks or weakened joints could introduce untreated waste into the groundwater system.

5.2.4f.6 Potable Water

The center has its own water system that has a capacity of 300,000 gallons. The system can provide 800 gallons of water per minute. The system includes three wells, 2 pump stations and 2 tanks. Major improvements were made to the system in 1976, which included the installation of the second 200,000-gallon storage tank. The report indicates that the system should have more than enough capacity to serve the proposed development.

5.2.4f.7 Open Space

The RIDEM has expressed interest in acquiring a portion of the Ladd Center property for open space purposes. The land would act as a buffer to the Queen River system and provide for light recreational opportunities. The Veterans Cemetery is also interested in acquiring land for its purposes.

5.2.4g Preliminary Cost Estimates -Re-Use Scenario

The following tables provide a summary of the preliminary costs estimated in the Ladd Center Re-use Study for each of the main elements of the project. Note that the cost estimates include figures for new construction as well as that for rehabilitation. The table below provides a breakdown by phase of the assumed cost allocation by funding agency.

ROADS	\$1,747,500.00
PARKING	
Rehab	1,214,000.00
New	1,225,000.00
BUILDING REHAB AND DEMOLITION	
Rehab/Demo	16,964,000.00
New Construction	21,760,000.00
UTILITIES	1,448,575.00
TOTAL	<u>\$44,058,075.00</u>

Table 5.2.A Cont

X1.25 Design & Contingency

\$55,072,594.00

Source: Ladd Center Reuse Study - Exeter Research and Corporate Park. RI Port Authority

Table 5.2.B - Cost Allocation by Funding Agency

PHASE: SOURCE	I	II	III	IV	TOTAL
Public (State)	\$5,471,000	1,003,000	548,000	4,157,000	11,179,000
Public (Local)	\$ 921,000	1,349,000	3,161,000	--	5,431,000
Private	\$--	5,865,000	7,865,000	24,720,000	38,463,000
TOTALS	\$6,392,000	8,230,000	11,574,000	28,877,000	55,073,000

Source: Ladd Center Reuse Study - Exeter Research and Corporate Park. RI Port Authority

Table 5.2.3 - Public Investment Assumed By Phase

Phase I -	\$737,000 (Town Hall/Fire)
Phase II -	1,079,000 (Town Hall)
Phase III-	2,529,000 (School)
TOTAL	\$4,345,000
	X1.25 (Contingency)
	\$5,431,250

Source: Ladd Center Reuse Study - Exeter Research and Corporate Park RI Port Authority

5.2.4.h The Potential for the Redevelopment of Ladd and its Impact on the Town of Exeter

In general terms the development of Ladd School as a Research/Office Technical Park could have a variety of potential impacts upon the Town, which would include:

- Tax base expansion
- Employment opportunities
- Other spin-off impacts
- New residential development
- Other industrial and commercial growth
- Potential environmental impacts

- Traffic

From an economic standpoint the Town could, depending on the ownership scenario (private or public ownership), receive substantial tax revenues from the redevelopment of this property. This would take the form of property tax revenue directly generated by new Ladd Center tenants and also the potential for support services and industries that could develop as the Center becomes more mature.

Commercial and possibly other industrial development would be attracted to this area in response to the development of this site. This could include retail/service establishments and industry with close relationships to the Center. The emphasis would probably be on service type establishments either within the facility itself or out on Route 2 (South County Trail).

Employment opportunities would also be available to area residents. The majority of these opportunities would more than likely be in the "white collar" segment with the strongest emphasis (in terms or numbers) in the clerical area. The number of potential employment opportunities could range from 880 to 1,200 jobs depending on the mix of research/office. The more research-oriented the development, the fewer employees (2.2/1,000 square feet of floor area), per the Institute of Traffic Engineers Trip Generation Manual. At present there are a total of 510 people employed in the Town of Exeter. With full build-out from the Ladd Center, that figure would increase by 172% to 235% to close to 1,500 people.

The next potential impact would be the demand for housing. Employees working at the Center would potentially search for housing in the surrounding area (North Kingstown, South Kingstown, Exeter). The demand could be for a variety of housing types from high-end sales to rental or more inexpensive housing opportunities.

From an environmental standpoint, the most critical concern is the protection of the Town's groundwater resource and the other sensitive areas on this site. Close control of the types of industry allowed, what they are allowed to discharge and the performance of the existing wastewater facility are critical to the protection of these resources.

Other infrastructure improvements (roads, drainage, sewer lines) are also critical to the function of this site and the mitigation of adverse impacts from run-off and infiltration.

Traffic generated from the site at build-out would range from 2,156 to 2,940 trips per day (one-way movement, in or out). This traffic would be added to Route 2, South County Trail, which currently (1989) handles average daily traffic (ADT) of 9,300 vehicles.

5.2.5 Build-out Analysis for Future Development

The Build-out Analysis is utilized to determine how much development can be anticipated in the future, based upon environmental constraints, recent development trends and existing zoning. Exeter, like many of the other South County communities, exhibits a capacity for future development. Build-out results when every buildable lot is developed based upon existing zoning controls. The likelihood of Exeter or any community reaching total build-out is quite unlikely, due to the fact that buildable land will remain in agricultural, open space or other passive recreational uses.

These projections are crucial for a town that is in the process of making long term planning decisions. The results of the build-out analysis can be related to the effect growth will have upon the delivering of services while projecting its impact with respect to the need for new or expanded facilities. Build-out can also be helpful with respect to projecting impacts upon existing infrastructure such as roadways and drainage systems. It can also point out threats to sensitive natural systems. Knowledge of future population trends based upon buildout can be developed as well and can help the town make budget decisions based upon a clearer understanding of the future.

In developing the build-out for Exeter it was assumed that:

- Development was based upon current zoning as shown in the following:

<u>Zoning District</u>	<u>Minimum Lot Size</u>
RE-2	2 Acres
RU-3	3 Acres
RU-4	4 Acres
CR-5	5 Acres
Business	N/A
Industrial	N/A

* RE - Residential RU - Rural CR - Conservation/Recreation

- Developable land was reduced by 10% to account for new roads to serve these developed areas. Wetlands and hydric soils were removed from consideration as developable.
- A household size of 2.88 persons per household was assumed based upon the 1990 Census.
- Agricultural land was considered to be undeveloped land for the purpose of projecting build-out.

The build-out analysis identified existing developed, buildable, and unbuildable land (due to environmental constraints), current zoning requirements and the land's natural

capacity to support development. The number of potential dwelling units can be estimated through the number of available buildable land that was identified.

5.2.5a Residential Build-out Results and Trends

The potential development, in units, when calculated for each zoning district, indicates 5,508 units could be developed within the Town boundaries. This potential increase in units would result in an increase in population of 15,865 people. This increase would represent a 200% or more gain in population over the 1990 Census figure of 5,461 to a build-out population of 21,326.

The greatest potential for growth exists in District II in the RU-4 Zone bordered by Ten Rod Road to the north and Mail Road to the south. Two other zones in District II also have a high capacity for growth, they include the RE-2 Zone in the southwest corner of the district and the remainder of the RU-4 Zone previously mentioned (north of Ten Rod Road). These three areas combined represent 25% of the total buildable acres, as well as 27% of the total build-out units.

One area of note in Planning District I is the RU-4 Zone, north of Ten Rod Road. This area has the potential for 413 more units or 25% of the District I total. Other areas with significant potential include the RU-3 Zone south of Ten Rod Road in Planning District I and the CR-5 Zone also south of Ten Rod Road in District II.

5.2.5b Commercial/Industrial Build-out

The second aspect of build-out relates to the potential development of commercial and industrial properties. Consistent with the methodology used in the residential buildout analysis, Beta Engineering determined the total zoned acreage for commercial and industrial land. From that total the land in use or constrained from development due to soil conditions, wetlands, etc. was subtracted leaving 127 acres of available commercial land and 402 acres of industrial land.

To estimate build-out, Beta Engineering utilized the historic development trends represented by the land uses for development over the past twenty years for commercial and industrial uses. During that time frame, an average of 1.6 acres per year was developed for commercial uses, with 1.25 acres per year being developed for industrial purposes. This trend will result in commercial by the year 2070 and industrial build-out by 2313.

5.2.6 Findings and Issues

5.2.6a Findings

1. A large portion of the total land area in Exeter is Forest and Brushland.

2. Agricultural land makes up the single largest land use category covering 7.4% or 2,760 acres of Exeter's total area of 37,375 acres. The second largest use category is Residential at 2007 acres or 5.4% of all lands.
3. There was a net loss of 193 acres in the agricultural land use category from 1970 to 1991, however there was a gain of 290 acres in the Orchards subcategory.
4. Four thousand four hundred seventy six (4,476) acres of Forest/Brushland was lost between 1970 and 1990. Residential development accounted for a great majority of this lost land as 1124 units of housing and 2216 people came to Exeter from 1970 to 1990.
5. The majority of residential development in Exeter can be characterized as Medium Density Residential, according to RIGIS.
6. The Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, and zoning map have been amended on several occasions and may need revisions to comply with this Comprehensive Plan in order to better serve the needs of the community and enhance its character.
7. The character of most of the existing commercial development is unattractive and detracts from the image of the town.
8. Dense residential developments in Cedar Grove, Boone Lake, and areas where mobile homes are concentrated, could potentially have a negative impact on the natural environment.
9. The Ladd Center is a facility in transition. The facility's future development is critically important to the community given its location.
10. State recreational facilities cover close to 5,000 acres or 13% of the Town's acreage. An additional 2,000 acres is dedicated to private recreational use. Combined, these uses account for approximately 7,000 or a full 19% of all town lands
11. Public and private recreational use and open space land is a dominant feature in the Town of Exeter.
12. Washington County is the fastest growing county in the state, and Exeter's population growth outpaced that for Washington County as a whole between 1980 and 1990.

5.2.6b Issues

1. Impending pressures of growth demand that the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations be strengthened, therefore comprehensive revisions to include innovative zoning techniques and updated standards across the board are needed to control growth. One such technique is the use of a Growth Management Ordinance as described in the Growth Management Report in Appendix A of this plan.
2. It is important to support and enforce an ordinance that affords the town adequate Development Plan Review criteria, establishes performance standards, soil erosion control mechanisms, increased wetlands protection, design review or historic preservation powers.
3. Reliance on outdated codes will result in the loss of open space and valuable prime farmlands, while promoting residential and commercial development that is inconsistent with the rural character of the town.
4. The town must support and enforce an Aquifer Overlay protection ordinance.
5. The future disposition of the Ladd Center can have potential beneficial and/or negative impacts on the community.
6. The industrial zoned land in the southeast corner of the town lies over the Chipuxet aquifer.
7. Increased pressure will be applied to large property owners to sell their land to potential developers due to the ever-increasing tax burden and the lack of any tax relief programs.
8. The lack of public water and sewer service requires strict development controls with respect to land use densities and the siting of commercial and industrial uses.
9. Residential development that occurred prior to zoning or on existing lots of record in places like Cedar Grove and Boone Lake can have a negative impact on adjacent natural resources.
10. Conventional subdivision development does not provide the potential for the creation of open space corridors, the preservation of prime farmland or increased protection for sensitive natural features.
11. Direct access from frontage residential lots on major roads presents aesthetic and traffic safety problems.

12. Commercial and industrial development that is sensitive to the rural character of Exeter and sensitive to the natural environment can be positive for the community.
13. The lack of a town center or established village areas can tend to result in scattered growth patterns.
14. The lack of adequate enforcement of local ordinances can result in development that is inconsistent with local zoning laws.
15. The Town has continued to explore ways to promote conservation of open space and natural resources, and to preserve its rural character. There is however, a danger that large-lot zoning and rural residential compounds may not be entirely effective in creating and preserving major community-wide open spaces, promoting a network of greenways and implementing key open space goals of the Plan. The use of conservation subdivision design techniques is recommended in order to preserve open space and important natural and cultural features on a site proposed for residential development, and to permit reasonable use of the land for residential purposes.

5.2.7 Goal and Policies

5.2.7a Goals

To allow development that is consistent with the natural constraints of the land can be effectively supported by town services without placing an undue burden on the residential taxpayer, and to ensure the development of planned rural village centers and industrial uses that are consistent with rural development, while contributing to positive tax base diversification.

5.2.7b Policies

1. Allow future residential development at a scale and density that is consistent with the character of western Exeter and relates to the constraints presented to such development in eastern Exeter. When necessary, change zoning designations that may be inconsistent with this policy. Adopt a Growth Management Ordinance based on the report in Appendix A of this plan.
2. Consider the development of Planned Village Centers that cluster services and other ancillary uses in locations convenient to the general population of the town. Such centers would be developed in accordance with a master plan that provides details concerning building layout, site design, circulation, environmental constraints, etc.

3. Recognize environmental constraints and reduce the potential for strip commercial development by establishing a new district called Light Business/Residential and eliminating depth restrictions along Route 2 and 3.
4. Promote the development of environmentally appropriate light industrial uses along the I-95 corridor area where access is convenient and available, and environmental constraints are minimum. Support the re-zoning of industrial land over the Chipuxet Aquifer to low-density residential use.
5. Promote the establishment of Planned Development Districts; for village centers, larger industrial developments, where developments would be subject to review and approval based upon issues, such as traffic and pedestrian circulation, environmental concerns, wastewater disposal, site layout, drainage, etc.
6. Petition the RIDOT to have Route 165 designated as a Scenic Highway.
7. Establish a number of environmental protection ordinances to protect the town's aquifer system, high water table areas, prime farmlands, historic resources, and prevent soil erosion associated with land removal or development, while preserving as many natural features as possible.
8. Zone open space areas, such as state parks and lands held by the Audubon Society, private organizations and other lands under open space easements as Open Space, to prevent their reuse for some other purpose.
9. Assert priority considerations concerning reuse of The Ladd Center. The policies contained within this Comprehensive Plan are applicable to the Ladd Center property.
10. Update and make universally applicable development plan review requirements and adopt them as a part of the Zoning Ordinance.
11. Update and amend the Exeter Zoning Ordinance as necessary to implement the land use strategies of the Exeter Affordable Housing Plan in Appendix C of this document.

5.2.8 Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan is the centerpiece of the Land Use Element. It lays out how a community envisions it will look in the future, based upon the goals and objectives of

its residents. It defines what types of activities will be allowed, where they will occur, and at what densities. Map 5.2.A The Future land Use map, delineates these areas.

There are several key elements to the future land use plan. They include:

- A closer relationship between future residential land use densities and the environmental constraints that exist
- More control over the type, location and appearance of future commercial and industrial development
- The use of modern land use mechanisms to achieve land preservation goals and the creation of open space linkages
- The focus of future commercial development within village districts as opposed to strip development
- Increased protection of the natural systems in the town through the adoption of several overlay zoning districts and other regulatory controls

With respect to future commercial development, a goal of the plan is to consider the creation of village centers where retail and service activities would be concentrated in a village setting as opposed to in a strip development mode.

Industrial development in the future will be geared toward utilizing the I-95 corridor as an attraction to potential investors. One area of existing Industrial land is recommended for rezoning. It lies in the southeast corner of the town over the Chipuxet Aquifer.

Open Space lands such as Arcadia Park and Beach Pond as well as the Audubon property will be identified as Open Space to ensure their future use as such, while providing a designation for other lands acquired in the future for such purposes.

Numerous environmental, and one cultural overlay district, are recommended to prevent the degradation of the town's natural systems. They include the following:

- Aquifer Overlay
- High Water Table Overlay
- Prime Farmlands
- Steep Slope
- Historic Resource Overlay

5.2.8a Proposed Future Land Use By Type

The following will provide a more detailed presentation of the recommendations for future land use in Exeter. Each category of land use will be presented and discussed including recommendations for new zoning districts.

It should be noted that at the time the writing of this comprehensive plan was begun, several recommendations were made to improve land use controls in Exeter, many of which addressed inconsistencies between existing zoning and the proposed Future

Land Use Plan. By and large, these recommendations have been addressed over the intervening years. Such changes include:

- Creation of a Ground Water Protection Overlay District
- Re-zoning of formerly industrially zoned land over the Chipuxet Aquifer to low density residential
- Creation of a Light Business/Residential zone along parts of Route 2 and Route 3
- Creation of a new Open Space and Public Land zone for State Parks and other protected lands

5.2.8a.1 Residential Land Use

Given the desire to maintain the existing character and quality of life that presently exists in Exeter, no major changes in residential density are recommended. Table 5. 2.C provides the four residential categories for the town.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Average Density</u>	<u>Lot Size</u>
Rural/Environmental	One D.U./5 acres	5 acres
Low Density/Environmental	One D.U./4 acres	4 acres
Medium Low	One D.U./3 acres	3 acres
Medium Density	One D.U./2 acres	2 acres

5.2.8a.2 Rural/Environmental (RE) 5 Acres

The purpose of this land use category is twofold; one, it is established to protect groundwater aquifers within the town; second, it is utilized to maintain the rural character of the lands adjacent to Arcadia Park and Beach Pond. The five-acre or Rural/Environmental Category is located directly above the aquifers themselves that are not either included in state property such as the Upper Wood River system or are already protected from future development because they are included in land owned by the Audubon Society (Queens River). The portions of the areas not covered in this way are indicated as Rural/Environmental.

5.2.8a.3 Low Density/Environmental (LD/E) 4 Acres

This four-acre minimum lot size category dominates the eastern half of the town that is home to an extensive Aquifer Recharge area associated with the Queens River, as well as having numerous tributary brooks and their associated hydric soils. In general, soil constraints and the presence of this extensive recharge area associated with this regional water supply demand that development be limited and responsive to the potential

impacts it may have on these high quality resources. As a result all areas within the recharge areas are now indicated for low-density residential use.

5.2.8a.4 Medium Low Density (MLD) 3 Acres

This district is found in those areas of reduced environmental constraints to the east of the New London Turnpike. These areas lie outside of the aquifer and its recharge areas dominating that area adjacent to the Richmond border with a second area in the northeast portion of the town adjacent to the Towns of East Greenwich and North Kingstown.

5.2.8a.5 Medium Density (MD) 2 Acres

There are five areas of Medium Density identified in the town. Including; the area around Boone Lake; the area between I-95 and Route 3 to the rear of the current business zone (Black Plain Road); three distinct areas in the southeast portion of town, extending outside the Queens River Aquifer, one between Yawgoo Valley Road and Liberty Road; one off Wolf Rocks Road just back of the business zone along Route 2; and finally in the corner of town between Wolf Rocks Road and Slocum Road. The proposed land use designation does not match existing land use in all cases, notably Boone Lake and Black Plain Road. Such inconsistencies are the result of pre-existing small lots and will likely continue, requiring specific measures (such as policy #3 of section 5.5.6.e-2) to assure future water quality protection.

5.2.8a.6 Commercial Development

Two commercial land uses are recommended. They are Business (B) and Light Business/Residential (LB/R). In designating these areas, it is the intent of the Land Use Element to steer new business development to sites along the major roadway network, including Route 2, Route 3 and Route 102 in the vicinity of Route I-95. The expansion of the Business District along Route 2 will allow for more creative commercial development and discourage the need to build "Strip Development." The depth added to the properties zoned for Business will enable developers to set back and screen new commercial structures at a much greater distance than the narrow 600-foot existing business zone.

The Light Business/Residential District was chosen for those areas along Route 2 and Route 3 that were determined to have considerable environmental constraints to development. Also, these properties were generally very narrow in depth and small in overall size. The designation as LB/R will allow for small-scale, light business development along these two major roadways, while discouraging strip development of larger scale commercial development.

The following provides an overview of each proposed district and recommended uses:

Business

The Business zone is intended to support general retail and service activities along Routes 2, 3 and 102 near I-95. The general character of use would be more intensive than that allowed in the LB/R zone.

Light Business/Residential District (LB/R)

Limited to both the Route 3 and Route 2 areas, this district would allow the development of low intensity commercial uses such as residences, home occupations, medical/professional offices, veterinary services, real estate offices, antique shops, farm stands and "sit-down" restaurants. The overall intent is to provide a buffer to the existing general business uses that exist by allowing the development of rural type uses that are more rural and residential in appearance and developed under specific Development Plan review criteria. As with all future commercial development, performance standards will be required with respect to site design, drainage, signage, landscaping, screening, facade treatment, circulation, access, noise and glare, etc. Over time, it is expected that these new uses will dominate the existing retail uses on Rt. 3.

5.2.8a.7 Industrial Development (I)

One change is suggested with respect to future industrial land use: rezone the industrial land in the southeast part of town to residential as it lies over the Chipuxet Aquifer and its potential use for industry could have a negative impact on this groundwater reservoir. The remaining areas that are presently zoned for industry would remain as is.

The intended uses to be allowed in these industrial areas are intended to be light as opposed to heavy in nature, the kind of industry that does not require processing waters or that generate obnoxious fumes or other detrimental omissions or dangerous byproducts. In general they are to be consistent with the rural character of the town and be governed by strong site and development standards.

5.2.8a.8 Institutional/Public Uses (I/P)

The purpose of identifying institutional type-uses as a separate category is to identify the fact that they exist as such and will likely remain institutional for the foreseeable future. The institutional properties include: the Town Clerk's Office; the fire, communications and rescue stations, including the new site on Route 2; the school properties; and the large state-owned cemetery properties. The one remaining institutional property that is not identified is the Ladd Center, due to its indeterminate future and the fact that it is treated in separately in Section 5.2.4.

5.2.8a.9 Open Space (OS)

The open space designation identifies state lands and other lands held for recreation and conservation purposes, such as those owned by the Audubon Society. The purpose of this designation is to protect against the conversion of these lands to another use inconsistent with that now in existence. Other lands that are purchased or controlled by the town or others (i.e., Land Trust or other conservation group) can be added to this category over time. The town should continue to identify important lands for acquisition in the future that result in the protection of valuable natural resources, the preservation of prime farmlands, provide public access or support the creation of a town-wide open space system. Mechanisms available include Fee Simple Purchase, the acquisition of easements, outright donation, preferred taxing, or the Transfer or Purchase of Development Rights.

5.2.8b Planned Districts

Four planned districts are recommended. They include:

1. Village Center Districts
2. Industrial Planned Development
 - General
 - Ladd Center Development District
3. Commercial Planned Development
4. Special Use Districts

These four districts have been identified because of the unique opportunity they present with respect to the future development of village centers in the community, in addition to promoting planned development of future industry, commerce and the Ladd Center itself. In defining these districts, the intent is to foster development that is both consistent with the rural character of the community and sensitive to the constraints of the natural environment. Also, included is the realization that quality commercial, industrial, and institutional uses can help to reduce the tax burden being felt by the local taxpayer in the town.

The Ladd Center has been included in this section because of the importance its future development has to the community from an economic and environmental standpoint. The center has the potential to provide economic opportunity for the town that is consistent with its interest to protect its valuable natural resources while at the same time providing potential tax base diversification. The potential for a public water system also exists should the state wish to dispose of this facility.

5.2.8b.1 Planned Village Center Districts (PVD)

Planned Village Districts create locations where a mixture of activities can take place that are typical of rural development. These locations are intended to house a wide variety of uses, such as public administrative, open space and recreational areas, retail and service establishments, office uses, residences and other support activities. The village center should have a scale that is human and attractive. These village centers

need to be planned to provide for pedestrian and vehicular traffic circulation. Their size and scale must match the setting in which they exist and the constraints that are present. The purpose of PVDs is to offer an alternative to strip development. Village centers also provide a living environment for individuals and families while allowing for employment opportunities.

Village centers should be convenient to the public in terms of the delivery of public and private services. They should be located on major roadways and accessible to the population centers of the town. Their additional purpose is to provide services in centralized locations as opposed to having strip commercial type development that create more traffic as people are forced to make stops at various locations to purchase required goods and services.

The ultimate size, design and mix of uses associated with these districts must be the subject of further study, as a comprehensive analysis must be made of the village settings themselves to determine the extent of the development constraints that exist in their particular micro setting. Beyond the physical or environmental constraints, there is the question of the type of mix of uses that should be located at any of the districts

Village Districts can potentially involve multiple property owners who should to be brought into the process if the establishment of these districts is to become a reality. The town may wish to take an active part by offering incentives to potential property owners in such districts or by contributing land or offering some other level of assistance.

5.2.8b.2 Planned Industrial Development

Development of planned light industrial facilities, subject to specific design and performance standards and Development Plan Review, should be encouraged. Such districts would allow for a mixture of uses including light industry, utility, offices, miscellaneous services, agricultural uses, institutional uses, public uses, medical facilities, etc. Application for a Planned District of this type may be the subject of a “change of zone” approval granted via the Town Council.

Once the District is established, specific design standards would have to be established with respect to property access, landscaping, parking and buffer requirements. Performance standards would also apply, as they would for any industrial uses, and include provisions for lighting, noise, vibration, air and water pollution, odors, hazardous materials production and storage, solid waste, and waste-water management, erosion control, public safety, etc. The Planning Board under the Land Development Project section, of the Zoning Enabling Act, should perform this review.

5.2.8b.3 Planned Business Developments

This district is recommended to provide control over the development of large parcels for commercial purposes. It provides the town with ability to require master

development plans for circulation, site layout, environmental control, fire protection, etc. Specific performance standards can be applied to the development.

5.2.8b.4 Special Use Districts

Given the unique nature of the Ladd Center and the Dorset Mill as sites for future mixed-use development and the relationship of such future uses to the natural environment, it is recommended that special regulations be promulgated for these sites.

These regulations would recognize the sensitive environmental constraints that exist, while addressing the past history of these facilities in determining future use requirements.

Ladd Center District

The purpose in establishing such a district as a stand alone district in the zoning ordinance and on the future land use map is to indicate the town's position and concern with respect to the future development of this site by the state or others. The town is also preparing for the potential that the property may be sold by the state to private parties. While the district regulations would be similar in nature to those established for general industrial planned development, there are other important considerations, particularly with respect to the Queens River and its associated Class GAA Aquifer (EPA Designation).

The town's position with respect to the level of treatment required on this site must be clearly enunciated in the zoning ordinance as well as its position with respect to the location of on-site wastewater disposal systems. In addition to this concern, special attention must be given to the stormwater system that exists and its potential impact upon the receiving waters.

While it is anticipated that the site could support a wide variety of uses, uses that could produce hazardous byproducts or require the storage of potentially dangerous materials that could infiltrate the groundwater reservoir must not be allowed.

In general institutional uses, research and development facilities, educational facilities, office uses, light manufacturing and others of a similar nature would be appropriate. It would appear appropriate that any future development of this center would be subject to review under the Environmental Impact Requirements presented further on in this element.

Dorset Mill District

This property is presently zoned RE-2 (Residential/2 acre minimum lot size). It has been in industrial use for many years and has been identified as a potential site for an industrial incubator for the town. In designating the site Special Use, it

would be subject to expanded performance standards to be established specifically for this site while also being subject to the Development Plan Review Process.

Future use of the site would be controlled to prevent the type of uses that may have an adverse impact on the Chipuxet Aquifer. The site lies in its recharge area. In addition to this recommendation, it is also suggested that the town promote this site for Planned Industrial Use, which could contain a mixture of uses including office and support services that would have less of a potential impact on the environment. This site is recommended for light industry only. The protection of the historic character of the mill would be a second major consideration.

5.2.8c Other Regulatory Initiatives

5.2.8c.1 Development Plan Review

To control impact from development the Town should adopt the Development Plan Review requirements and process (RIGL 45-24-49) as a part of the Exeter Zoning Ordinance. Town's Land Development and Subdivision Regulations would then contain the process for the Planning Board to review all projects in accordance with the process set out in the Zoning Enabling Act Specific information will be required of the developer, including site layout, proposed topographic changes, parking and loading layout, signage, landscaping, etc. During the Development Plan Review the Planning Board will determine whether other regulations come into play.

5.2.8c.2 Performance Standards

Performance Standards controlling noise, odor, light, vibration, hazardous materials (either produced or stored), stormwater and wastewater disposal are recommended for future commercial and industrial development with respect to impact a development may have on adjacent properties or on the natural and cultural environment of the town.

5.2.8c.3 Environmental Impact Requirements

It is recommended that the town establish environmental review criteria for large residential, commercial, mixed use or industrial projects. The developer will provide an analysis of the impact a development will have on the natural environment, town services, social and economic environment, farmlands, open space and recreation, construction impacts, visual impacts etc. This requirement is meant to supplement the general requirements of new performance standards established.

5.2.8c.4 General Improvements to the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development and Subdivision Regulations

It is recommended that the Zoning Ordinance and the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations be revised to incorporate the specific changes recommended in this Comprehensive Plan. Specific areas of concentration should address revising the current parking, loading, and signage regulations while including provisions for Planned Development, Performance Standards, Development Plan Review, Overlay Districts, Historic District Zoning, and other recommendations made in this document.

5.2.8.c.5 Conservation Subdivision Design

In many rural and suburban communities, cluster developments have proven to be popular with landowners and developers. Cluster zoning has not been adopted as a zoning technique in Exeter, but has been suggested in the Comprehensive Plan as one possible way to address future residential development. This type of development actually does little to give form to a town-wide system of conservation lands. Improvements can be made to the amount, design and use of open space created in typical clusters, and how open space set aside within these developments can contribute to implementing the open space goals of this Plan.

As a means of implementing the conservation and open space policies contained within this Plan, the Town supports the concept of Conservation Subdivision Design. This term describes a relatively new type of residential development, referred to as Conservation Developments, in which, in addition to wetlands and other types of land unsuitable for development, the majority of flat, dry and otherwise buildable land is protected from clearing, grading, and construction by reducing lot sizes in order to achieve full-yield density. Conservation design differs from clustering in three important ways:

1. First, it sets much higher standards for the quantity, quality and configuration of the resulting open space. Many cluster ordinances in Rhode Island typically require 30 to 40 percent of the gross area of the subdivision to be set aside as open space, and as much as fifty percent of that total can be land unsuitable for development, such as wetlands. In contrast, conservation subdivisions require 50 to 75 percent or more of the land to be permanent, undivided open space. Unlike most cluster provisions, this percentage is based only on the acreage that is high, dry, flood-free and otherwise buildable.
2. Second, the Town can exercise greater influence on the design of new conservation subdivisions. Rather than leave the outcome purely to chance, this flexible approach can be strongly encouraged or even required (mandatory) where the Plan has identified the type and location of noteworthy resources.
3. Third, the protected land is also configured so that it will, wherever practical, contribute to creating an interconnected network of open space throughout the community, linking resources areas in adjoining subdivisions and/or providing

buffers between new development and pre-existing sensitive lands or developed neighborhoods.

This technique is an important tool that should be used to preserve the rural character of the Town, a goal that was expressed very strongly by residents of the Town during the preparation of this Plan. By preserving large areas of open space, and by situating development in compact areas, the Town can create viable neighborhoods while at the same time avoiding sprawling, land-wasting suburban-type subdivisions.

5.2.9 Implementation Program

5.2.9a Overview

The implementation of the recommendations included in the Land Use Element will require a series of actions to accomplish the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. The following provides the structure for what would be required to accomplish the necessary revisions to the zoning ordinance, the zoning map and the creation of supplemental ordinances to support the future land use plan. The key groups involved in this action program include:

1. The Town Council
2. The Planning Board
3. The Zoning Board
4. Conservation Commission

5.2.9b Amendment to Zoning Ordinance and Map

To comply with state legislation, the Town should undertake a comprehensive revision of the zoning ordinance and zoning map as necessary:

Zoning Ordinance Revisions

The Planning Board, working with the Town's legal staff and potentially with a zoning consultant, will prepare amendments to the zoning ordinance as necessary. Other individuals who may provide assistance would include the Building Inspector, the Conservation Commission and the Zoning Board.

Zoning Map Revisions

At the same time or shortly after the process has begun to revise the zoning ordinance, revisions to the map should begin. Updating the map will be the responsibility of the Planning Board and Town Council. Final approval lies with the Town Council.

5.2.9c Planning Board Responsibilities

The Planning Board will be responsible for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. This would involve constant coordination with all local officials to determine the course of action required to either implement the recommendations as presented, or

delay action because of changing circumstances. The Planning Board would be responsible for making suggested changes on a yearly basis to the plan and its implementation. By keeping track of necessary changes to the plan on a regular basis, the plan can be easily updated without an extensive effort by any one individual or committee. The Planning Board should also prepare a written annual review in preparation for Comprehensive Plan updates.