

**Plan of
Conservation and Development**

**Town of Manchester, Connecticut
September 18, 1998**

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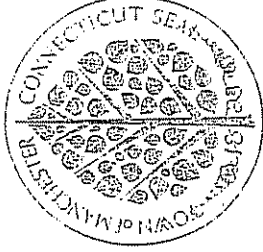
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COVER PHOTOGRAPHS: DONALD COUTURE

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
THE PAVILIONS AT BUCKLAND HILLS MALL;
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Special thanks to the over 400 Manchester residents who participated in the neighborhood planning process.

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Introduction

Plan of Conservation and Development

In 1986 the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) adopted a Plan of Development, setting policy for Manchester's growth and development for the next ten years. In 1992 the PZC embarked on a major effort to update and revise that Plan. The planning department staff, supported by a planning consulting firm, worked with five subcommittees to develop plans and policies for housing, transportation, open space, the economy and community facilities in light of recent changes and expected trends affecting the community. This broad perspective looks at Manchester as a whole.

To complement this traditional approach to a plan of development, the PZC and the department developed 11 neighborhood plans. Generally following elementary school district boundaries, the neighborhood plans provided detailed information on conditions in each neighborhood and actively involved neighborhood residents. The PZC adopted the neighborhood plans as they were completed and incorporated them as amendments to the 1986 Plan of Development. This allowed the PZC and the town to pursue plan recommendations as quickly as possible.

The planning process involved 55 people who served on subcommittees and 410 residents who participated in neighborhood planning meetings. All of the town departments, the school administration and many community agencies also participated or were sources of information and feedback which went into this Plan. We thank all of them for their time, insight, and interest and look forward to carrying out this Plan's recommendations with their continued involvement and support.

Throughout the planning process, the neighborhood plans and the broader analyses of the subcommittees were compared to each other. As a result, this Plan of Conservation and Development is able to identify strategic issues, goals and objectives that recognize the relationship between our many distinctive neighborhoods and the issues and trends affecting Manchester community-wide. This document is a summation of the 11 neighborhood plans and the housing, economic development, open space and recreation, community facilities and transportation plans which, taken together, are the 1998 Plan of Conservation and Development (Plan) for the Town of Manchester.

INTRODUCTION

Vision and Guiding Principles

This Plan of Conservation and Development comes out of an appreciation and awareness of what has happened in Manchester since the 1986 Plan of Development was adopted and takes into consideration major changes which have occurred and trends which will continue to influence Manchester's development over the next ten years. Comparing these changes and trends to our current issues and opportunities, we have developed a set of strategic directions. It is from these strategic directions that specific goals, objectives and actions are proposed for the town to pursue in this Plan.

The most important lessons to be learned from the neighborhoods are contained in the vision statements of what the neighborhoods should be, and to a great extent already are, as articulated by neighborhood residents who attended the planning workshops. We have taken our direction from this neighborhood work to create a vision for Manchester and develop a set of guiding principles for this Plan. The Plan's goals, objectives, and recommended actions are intended to achieve the vision and those principles for the next ten-year planning period.

Mission

Manchester will be a genuine community whose residents enjoy an excellent quality of life built around families and neighbors living and working in a safe and beautiful physical environment.

Guiding Principles

The goals and recommendations of the Plan and the decisions made by town government and administrative agencies over the next ten years should further the following principles:

Manchester will be a safe community.

- Residents will be able to move about freely and safely in their neighborhoods and be secure in their homes. Residents will enjoy safe streets, homes, schools, business areas and public spaces.

Manchester will be a family-oriented community.

- Manchester's Board of Directors, Board of Education and their respective administrations and other boards and commissions will endeavor to provide, maintain and protect education, open space and recreation, historic and cultural resources, and community facilities to enrich the health and welfare of Manchester residents.
- Manchester residents will be full partners with town government, maintaining private property and being good neighbors, active in the community in a way appropriate to their lifestyles and situations.
- Opportunities for socialization and community building will be provided by connecting neighborhoods to one another with streets, sidewalks,

bikeways and hiking trails. These physical connections will lead to parks, schools, libraries, shopping areas and other neighborhoods. Programmed activities through the schools, park and recreation department, and private organizations will add to the opportunities for participating in a rich and rewarding community life.

Manchester will be an attractive community.

- Manchester's Board of Directors, Board of Education and respective administrations will build new facilities and maintain existing buildings, grounds and open spaces to high aesthetic standards.
- The Board of Directors and administration will adopt and enforce ordinances to help ensure that private property is well-maintained, and will provide financial or other incentives to revitalize selected older properties and neighborhoods as appropriate.

- Manchester residents will maintain their homes, yards and other buildings in the spirit of being good neighbors, and will create attractive neighborhoods for their own and fellow residents' enjoyment.

Manchester will be a diverse community.

- Residents will include and be tolerant of people of all ages, races and ethnicities. The town will have a variety of neighborhood settings, housing styles, commercial and industrial areas, and natural settings.

The Past Ten Years: Prologue to the Plan

The Boom Years

When the 1986 Plan was adopted, Manchester, the capitol region and the nation were in the midst of very strong economic growth. Federal government spending on defense and major interstate highway construction combined with a growing financial and service sector created high employment and wage growth during this period. The housing, retail, office and industrial real estate sectors were thriving. New nonresidential development was occurring both in the City of Hartford and in the inner-ring suburban communities around Hartford.

Manchester was in a particularly advantageous position to benefit and grow from the strong economy. Major improvements to I-84 were nearing completion, greatly expanding highway capacity and creating new interchanges in an area of Manchester which had considerable amounts of vacant land available for development. Interstate 291 was under construction and would soon connect Manchester and other east-of-the-river communities to I-91 and the northern and near-west sections of the region. The 1986 Plan sought to capitalize on this locational advantage by promoting higher intensity mixed-use development along the I-291/I-84 corridor.

to the benefit of the serving community and the growing housing industry market was the opportunity to add to the housing stock and new housing units to the Manchester community, the downside was decreasing affordability.

Housing

The strong economy and demographic changes led to strong housing growth. Young people just starting careers created a healthy market for rental housing. The first-time home buyer age group now had the income and opportunity to purchase their first home. This in turn made it possible for existing homeowners to move up to a larger home. The elderly were also a growing market segment, and the 1986 Plan focused on the need for elderly housing which provided services to that population.

If the benefit of the strong economy and the growing housing market was the opportunity to add to the housing stock and accommodate new households to the Manchester community, the downside was decreasing affordability. Because of rapid development throughout the region, land prices, construction costs and financing costs rose to the point where by the late 1980s an affordable housing crisis emerged throughout the region and state. This affordability problem moved beyond the low-income households (which traditionally face this problem) to affect moderate- and middle-income households whose savings and incomes were not able to keep up with the increasing costs of housing.

Lifestyle Changes

Meanwhile, other societal changes were taking place. There were more two-income households, more women entering the workforce and smaller household sizes. This trend would increase the demand for services such as child care and put time pressure on households, giving rise to a demand for more convenience retail and services. Take-out restaurants, drive-thru banks, dry cleaners, lawn services and house-cleaning service businesses in a sense replaced the domestic servants of the early part of the century. Technology — including computers, cell phones and facsimile machines — speeded the pace of daily living. Families gravitated toward more organized activities for their children: preschool, soccer leagues, scouting, swimming lessons, dance classes and summer camps were among the activities which became popular and necessary. All of these activities required more non-work-related automobile trips, adding traffic to local streets. While technology connected individuals with the nation and the world, time and opportunity for interpersonal and direct social contact seemed to be diminishing. Changing lifestyles and rapid physical growth would impact residents' perception of the community's image.

The Center City

While the mid-1980s were a period of prosperity for most residents of the region and most communities experienced growth and development, a counter trend was occurring in the City of Hartford. Here the cen-

tral business district was enjoying new office buildings and employment growth, but the city bore an increasing share of the burden of housing and caring for the poor. Very low incomes, high poverty rates, concentrations of racial minorities in older neighborhoods and high unemployment plagued the city even during the boom years. High crime rates and well-publicized gang activities made the city seem ominous and threatening to many in the region.

Individual housing choices and public policy initiatives developed in the late 1980s to address some of these conditions impacted the inner-ring suburbs, including Manchester. Within a few years in the early 1990s, a sudden immigration of low/moderate-income households with rental housing subsidies concentrated in certain residential neighborhoods in Manchester. This population included African Americans and Hispanics, changing the racial composition of the neighborhoods. Often, these residents had special social service needs and children had special education needs which put pressure on the community to develop appropriate responses to meet these needs.

Community Facilities

In the mid-1980s, the town's community facility needs appeared to be well-served. A new water treatment plant was dedicated and the new sanitary sewer treatment plant was under construction. Both would improve water quality and increase capacity to serve the community well into the future. The Manchester landfill had recently received an extension of its permit

INTRODUCTION

and would continue to accept the town's municipal solid waste. The municipal facilities for administrative offices, the police department and the fire department were believed to be adequate for the workforce and staffing levels envisioned at that time. The Manchester school system had been experiencing declining enrollments and had closed several schools in the ten years preceding the adoption of the 1986 Plan, and hoped to focus on the repair and rehabilitation of existing buildings in the near future.

Park facilities, especially ball fields, were coming under increasing pressure and plans for improved management of existing facilities were developed. The Hockanum River Linear Park was identified as the major expansion for the town's open space system. The Plan also recommended that as new development occurred in areas not served by playgrounds or tot lots that the town make provisions to acquire land for that purpose.

A Changing Population

The dynamic changes to the economy, housing market and personal lifestyles are reflected in the town's changing population. For the past 30 years Manchester has experienced a steady increase in both total population and housing stock (see table at right). Generally, the housing supply has increased faster than the population. This reflects the age distribution of residents and the prolonged effects of the fabled baby boom and baby boom echo. More people in the adult

age groups, more single-parent households, more unmarried couples in households, and other lifestyle changes translate into fewer people in each housing unit (see chart on facing page). This trend may slow but should continue because of demands for new housing types for the growing senior population, gradual population increases in the younger age groups into adulthood, and in migration resulting from an improving economy.

POPULATION & HOUSING GROWTH

| Year | Population* | % Change |
|------|----------------------------|----------|
| 1960 | 42,102 | — |
| 1970 | 47,994 | +14.0% |
| 1980 | 49,761 | +3.7% |
| 1990 | 51,618 | +3.7% |
| 1996 | 51,666 ¹ | +0.1% |
| Year | Housing Units ² | % Change |
| 1960 | 12,853 | — |
| 1970 | 15,906 | +19.0% |
| 1980 | 18,805 | +15.0% |
| 1990 | 21,704 | +13.4% |
| 1997 | 22,717 ² | +4.7% |

* U.S. Census

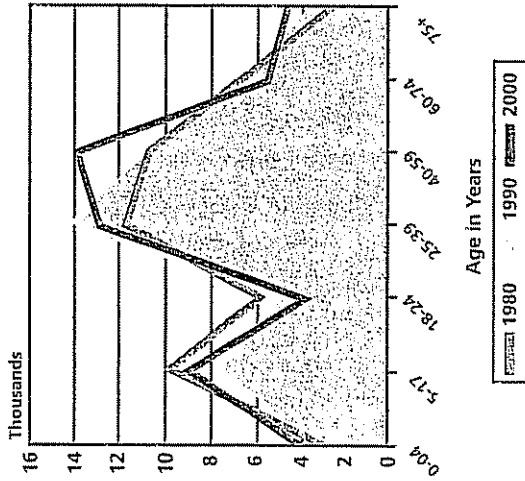
1. Census Bureau Estimate

2. CT DECD & Town Building Department data; based upon permits issued.

The racial composition undoubtedly has changed since the 1990 Census with an increase in percentage of non-white residents in Manchester. One indication of this change is school enrollment. In 1991 the Manchester school system reported a total minority enrollment of 17 percent. In 1997 minority enrollment increased to almost 30 percent.

Manchester residents also have generally enjoyed steady growth in per capita income. Between 1980 and 1990 Manchester's per capita income almost doubled. Between 1990 and 1996 the per capita income increased by almost 50 percent. On the other hand, Manchester's average per capita income compared to the average per capita income in the state declined from approximately 92 percent of the state average in 1990 to 88 percent in 1996. Per capita income reflects the general employment wages of the larger economy and the increase in the town's working age population. The decline in Manchester's percentage of per capita income compared to the state may be the result of several factors including a stronger recovery and higher wages in other parts of the state, a larger senior population on fixed incomes, an increase in lower- and moderate-income individuals or households coming into the community, and the movement of workers from high wage to lower wage jobs as a result of the restructuring of the economy.

AGE AND RACE DISTRIBUTION



In both the 1980 and 1990 U.S. Census, the town's population was overwhelmingly white. In 1990 the white population was about 94 percent and the non-white population about six percent. The largest non-white group was African American at four percent. The 1990 Census missed two important developments which likely affected the town's population. One was the increase in both rental and owner-occupied housing, with significant rental property increases in 1990 and 1991. The other was the general movement of population from the center of the region outward.

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Analysis, Goals and Objectives

Manchester experienced a period of significant growth and change since the adoption of the 1986 Plan of Development. Manchester's housing stock expanded and there was rapid growth in the retail and industrial sectors. This new development captured the public's attention and put great demands on the town administration and elected officials to process, manage and maintain this new development and growth activity.

This 1998 Plan of Conservation and Development considers the implications of the past ten years and looks at trends expected for the next ten years. What follows is a summary of the analysis, strategic direction and goals and objectives for Manchester.

Housing

Residential Development

The 1986 Plan established the preferred residential pattern for Manchester. Generally, lower-density single-family housing was called for in the southern and eastern sections of Manchester, new medium- to high-density housing was proposed along I-84 in the northern section of Manchester, and medium densities were set for the central portion of Manchester generally between the interstates.

In the ten years since the Plan was adopted, the housing market throughout the region went through a boom/bust/slow recovery cycle. The 1980s saw development activity in virtually all housing market segments. New subdivisions for single family homes were approved primarily in the southern and eastern sections of Manchester. Between 1982 and April 1997 1,800 subdivision lots were approved and 1,200 of those lots had houses built on them. These new subdivision developments tended to create lots ranging from 12,000 to 30,000 square feet with homes ranging from 1,800 to over 2,200 square feet, and were especially attractive to second-time homebuyers.

Manchester also became the hub of new rental housing for the eastern Hartford market area. The conversion of the historic Cheney Mill buildings in the late 1980s

and early 1990s to over 800 apartments and the development of 950 market rate luxury units in Buckland Hills provided the bulk of new rental housing for the population between 18 and 24 who were leaving home and entering the work force. An additional 700 units are presently under construction. Manchester's rental housing is approaching 45 percent of all dwelling units. The next ten years should focus on increasing the amount of owner-occupied housing, both through new development and the purchase of existing two unit rental properties in older neighborhoods by owner-occupants.

In the late 1980s changing consumer preferences and rising home prices made townhouse-type condominium developments a strong market segment. Again, between 1982 and April 1997 Manchester approved 2,689 multi-family units. Of these approximately 677 have not been built. These new multi-family developments tended to be proposed in the northern section of town or on infill sites in the central area of town. However, many of the units approved as condominiums were not constructed when the housing market collapsed in the early 1990s. As prices for existing homes fell, the desirability of the condominium units compared to a freestanding, fee-simple home left condominium units at a severe market disadvantage. Financing new condominium projects, and

in the years since the 1986 Plan was adopted, Manchester has become the hub of new rental housing for the eastern Hartford market area.

even the sale of existing units in some projects, became difficult because the number of investor owners relative to owner-occupants was increasing. Condominium projects either stopped in mid-development or never started.

Since the 1986 Plan there were two rental properties legally declared condominium/individual unit ownership: Fountain Village (314 units) and Brook Haven (183 units). However, because of the real estate fall, most of the units are still owned by individual investors rather than owner-occupants. This creates a situation with multiple owners owning multiple units managing common areas through an association. These two residential communities can still be considered part of the town's rental housing stock.

Aggressive mortgage financing for first-time home buyers and the initiation of mobility and affordability programs for especially funded tenant-based sections of rental assistance added significantly to the supply of affordable housing.

Housing affordability depends upon income and lifestyle choices. Manchester generally has a good supply of affordable housing, priced at or below regional median values. Public policy is focused on low- and moderate-income persons most likely to need assistance and less likely to have many options for decent housing. The target market for affordable housing is households earning less than 80 percent of the median income of the region and who would not pay more than 30 percent of their income toward housing costs. Units available to this income group are referred to as "assisted units" because they are subsidized in some way.

In 1997 Manchester's assisted housing supply was just under 11 percent of the total housing stock. The Manchester Housing Authority focused on adding to the supply of family housing through scattered site acquisition or development of new family or elderly congregate housing. Efforts during the ten years were modest, adding 73 family units and 37 elderly units to Manchester's affordable housing supply. The Town of Manchester, through such initiatives as the North Elm Street elderly housing project and the acquisition and conversion of former military housing at the Nike site (with Manchester Interfaith Corporation) contributed to owner-occupied affordable units.

Aggressive mortgage financing for first-time home buyers by the Connecticut Housing Finance Agency (CHFA) and the initiation of mobility and portability programs for federally funded tenant-based Sec-

The Affordable Housing Crisis and the Central Neighborhoods

The frenzied housing market of the 1980s raised housing values dramatically. At the height of the market public policy focused on the affordability "crisis." This led to the Capitol Region Fair Housing Compact, which encouraged municipalities to take steps appropriate to their individual situations to provide affordable housing, at least to their own residents.

tion 8 rental assistance added significantly to the supply of affordable housing. These public policies, coinciding with declining property values, provided the great majority of affordable housing opportunities in Manchester and in the region.

During the five years (1990-1995) of the housing compact, 388 CHFA mortgages were issued in Manchester for single-family housing, reflecting the town's large supply of affordable first-time homes in the central neighborhoods. The more dramatic effect came from changes to the Section 8 certificate program, which allowed City of Hartford certificates to be used anywhere in the region. The number of Section 8 certificates in Manchester went from 280 in 1989 to 506 in 1997. Section 8 certificates peaked in 1996 at 591. These new certificates tended to be concentrated in the oldest neighborhoods which had the largest amounts of rental units with rents at or below HUD Section 8 limits.

This movement of rent-subsidized families coincided with yet another trend: the number of small investors who purchased two- to four-unit buildings in Manchester's central neighborhoods increased. During the recession of the early 1990s fixed costs continued to rise and the number of tenants looking for apartments fell. As a result rental rates remained steady. Because housing values fell precipitously, many new investors owned properties with market values below mortgage amounts. Investors, landlords, and the financial community were increasingly anxious over such issues as lead-based paint and asbestos.

tos. A trend toward significant property deterioration combined with some problem tenants began to encourage flight from the central neighborhoods and threatened a downward spiral.

The town reacted quickly with a combination of planning, public service and housing actions meant to stabilize affected neighborhoods. These included instituting housing rehabilitation and lead paint abatement programs; community policing; after-school programs; neighborhood-based social service outreach; concentrated housing code enforcement; and infrastructure improvements. These efforts, coupled with the active participation and involvement of residents, have improved and stabilized conditions in the central neighborhoods.

Over half of Manchester's housing is greater than 50 years old. Much of this older housing is concentrated in the central part of Manchester around the downtown and in small neighborhoods in the north end. These older homes require considerable modernization of structural and mechanical systems and interior spaces. To keep these neighborhoods healthy and attractive for residents and prospective buyers, and to encourage owner-occupancy, financial incentives in the form of grants or loans for purchase or repairs are needed to compensate for the age and condition of these older homes.

The senior or elderly housing market continues to be a growing market. Not only are people age 55 and over growing in number but their housing pref-

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erences and needs change over time, creating demands for a variety of housing types and associated services. Providing opportunities for new elderly housing types to be built will be an important and necessary near-term objective of the Plan.

Manchester is a desirable community because of its location, proximity to the highway system, and its full range of municipal and private services. Its variety of neighborhood settings and diversity of housing types, styles, and prices is a distinct advantage for the town.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Encourage the revitalization and stabilization of the older neighborhoods in Manchester, with an emphasis on increasing owner occupancy and improving property conditions in the central areas.
- Encourage development of the full range of housing types for the senior population (age 55 and older).
- Hold growth in new multi-family rental housing (except for elderly housing) to a minimum over the planning period.
- Encourage single-family detached development which provides for new development from the middle- to upper-price ranges of the housing market.
- Preserve the current assisted-housing supply and add modestly to it as overall housing growth continues. Maintain 10 percent to 11 percent of the town's housing stock as assisted housing, but avoid the concentration of such housing in any neighborhood.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal: Preserve and enhance the quality of existing neighborhoods.

Objectives:

Identify as "revitalization areas" those neighborhoods with concentrations of older homes (over 50 years old), high renter-to-owner ratios, and low housing costs. Identify as "preservation areas" those neighborhoods which are developed with medium density with old housing stock (30-50 years).

1) Encourage owner occupancy and property improvements in identified revitalization areas and property improvements in identified preservation areas by:

a) Using federal or state funds to aid in the acquisition, rehabilitation, and resale of homes to owner-occupants, in conjunction with the Manchester Housing Authority or local nonprofits.

b) Issuing local municipal bond funds, or bonds in conjunction with the Manchester Housing Authority, for the acquisition and rehabilitation of homes in the revitalization and preservation neighborhoods by owner-occupants.

c) Continuing to pursue concentrated code enforcement activities in the revitalization neighborhoods and spot enforcement in preservation neighborhoods.

d) Preserving historic exterior architectural characteristics of older houses to preserve neighborhood character in revitalization areas.

2) Maintain existing housing units in safe, sanitary and sound structural condition. Pursue funds to support housing rehabilitation activities to eliminate housing and property code violations, to eliminate or control lead-based paint and asbestos hazards, to upgrade the conditions of older housing units, and to improve the overall aesthetics and character of existing neighborhoods.

3) Develop criteria for capital improvement planning and programming which consider the improvement of existing public facilities in areas with a concentration of old housing stock, in particular street and sidewalk conditions and public open space maintenance and beautification.

HOUSING

Goal: Maintain and retain the existing assisted-housing units in Manchester for low- and moderate-income housing affordability.

Objectives:

- 1) Continue to use Community Development Block Grant funds for the renovation of units occupied by low- and moderate-income families, with stipulations to preserve the affordability of the units.
- 2) Use state and federal rental assistance programs, as available, to subsidize the rents of low-income families in existing dwelling units.
- 3) Support the acquisition of existing affordable units by private nonprofit housing corporations or the Manchester Housing Authority to preserve them as affordable units.
- 4) Avoid the concentration of assisted rental housing units in any particular neighborhood where the level of poverty or minority concentration would exceed townwide levels.

Goal: Provide opportunities for an adequate supply of a variety of housing types for a diverse population in healthful and aesthetic environments.

Objectives:

- 1) Provide or maintain zoning districts for residential use areas with a range of housing densities including:
 - a) **Very low density** — (one unit per acre).
Areas with poor soils for septic systems, with or without public water, without public sewers or areas with steep slopes. These areas shall consist of single-family houses only.
 - b) **Low density** — (up to three units per acre).
Areas with public water and public sewer. These areas shall consist of single-family detached houses only.
 - c) **Medium density single-family detached** — (four to six dwelling units per acre). Areas with public water and public sewer, located with access to collector roads.
 - d) **Medium density** — (up to six units per acre).
Areas with public water and public sewer, located with access to collector roads.

e) **Medium high density** — (up to ten units per acre). Areas with public water and public sewer, with direct access to an arterial or collector street, and within close proximity to commercial/service areas.

f) **High density** — (up to 20 units per acre). Areas identified as special mixed-use districts with public water and public sewer, direct access to a major arterial street and in close proximity to an interstate highway, or close to a major commercial/service area, or in the Cheney Historic District or central business district.

2) Revise the zoning regulation provisions for elderly housing to respond to changes in that population. Zoning for elderly housing should allow for a diversity and mix of housing types and uses.

3) Develop regulations to encourage innovative site design and building practices to protect important environmental features of sites yet provide for reasonable development costs and standards, including:

a) Revising zoning and subdivision provisions to incorporate development principles which preserve important natural features and assure preservation and public access to land in support of the town's open space goals, especially in conservation development areas.

b) Encouraging small- to medium-size lot single-family detached development to provide new ownership opportunities in areas with medium-density housing.

c) Providing opportunities for a variety of single-family housing lot sizes and styles in appropriate areas of town.

d) Revising parking requirements to provide adequate off-street parking for various housing types in conjunction with reduced widths on local streets.

e) Allowing curbs of pre-cast concrete or slope granite.

f) Allowing bituminous curbs and alternatives to the present storm drainage system in low- and very low-density development areas in conjunction with open space development or to minimize negative impacts to environmentally sensitive sites.

Economy

The Industrial Sector

During the 1980s Manchester's non-retail economy saw strong growth in manufacturing businesses associated with the aircraft and defense industries located in Manchester's new industrial parks and subdivisions. Warehouse and distribution facilities took advantage of the town's regional highway access. Business services such as insurance, real estate, banking and the educational and government sectors all saw continued employment growth. During the recession of the 1990s, this growth slowed or stopped, and employment in many sectors was reduced.

The town works closely with local businesses to promote location and expansion in Manchester, has been successful in helping its residents as a manufacturing and warehouse distribution location during the recessionary period of the 1990s, and is poised to capture its share of growth now.

bution uses and business service establishments which need large sites.

In some cases there are environmental concerns around contaminated or "brownfield" sites. The term brownfield refers to commercial or industrial sites which are vacant, usually deteriorated, and where some environmental contamination of the soil or groundwater has been identified or is suspected. The costs associated with identifying any contamination, cleaning up the sites, and liability for lawsuits make these sites risky and unattractive to new buyers.

The town must work on assisting the private sector in identifying and resolving brownfield issues. Public assistance in identifying brownfield problems, suggesting solutions, and working with the regulating authorities and other participants to agree on remediation plans would help redevelop these sites and maintain the economic viability of an industrial area, while also reducing environmental hazards. Meanwhile the town works closely with local businesses to promote location and expansion in Manchester, has been successful in holding its ground as a manufacturing and warehouse distribution location during the recessionary period, and is poised to capture its share of growth now.

Hartford Development

For many Manchester residents and for most people outside of Manchester the big story over the past ten years has been the development of Buckland Hills from a small golf course and abandoned agricultural fields to one of the largest and strongest concentrations of retail in the northeast. The combination of high incomes, low unemployment, low supply of retail space, aggressive national and regional retailers moving into New England, completion of major interstate highway improvements, and residential growth in the eastern section of the Hartford market led to this development.

The Buckland Hills area was a highly desirable location with superb regional highway access, available land, proper zoning and proximity to utilities. At the same time the retail industry recognized the Hartford area as being "under stored." Furthermore, the retail industry itself was changing dramatically, moving beyond the traditional regional malls and community shopping centers to buyers' clubs, value discounters and increasingly larger stores dedicated to specific product lines such as books and music, electronics, sporting goods, and hardware and home improvement.

Between 1990 and 1995 more than 2.5 million square feet of retail and service establishments were built. This growth added approximately \$94,098,000 to the town's grand list, representing \$2,257,500 of tax revenue to the town (exclusive of the fire district

taxes), created thousands of full-time and part-time jobs and made Buckland Hills a regional destination. The Buckland Hills area serves a total market area of almost 20 miles to the north, east and south. With land remaining in Manchester and South Windsor, Buckland Hills promises to continue to be a major attraction for retail, business and service establishments.

Growth is expected to continue during the next ten years until the area is fully developed. Development along Tolland Turnpike from Exit 63 towards Vernon Plaza is becoming a second preferred location. The Big Y location. The most attractive development area for retail and services will continue to be the area from Buckland Street to Deming Street north of I-84. The properties with direct frontage on Deming Street and Buckland Street south of I-84 are one problematic aspect of this location. On these streets are the vestiges of relatively small residentially zoned or used lots with relatively small frontages located directly on very high volume arterial streets and facing large commercial businesses or business districts. These locations are no longer suitable for single-family detached residential use. On the other hand, any commercial development should be of a size, type and design which neither creates severe traffic problems (relative to volumes or movements) nor is designed to be obtrusive to residential development, either existing or anticipated, on abutting land. Zoning regulations which regulate types and intensities of use, site and building design, and site access should

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1. ECONOMIC

be developed to deal with these unique circumstances. In both locations, access should be limited to the main arterial street, and site plan review and special exception provisions should ensure that any development in these locations will come before the Planning and Zoning Commission for review and action.

Creation of the Downtown Special Services District (SSD), acquisition of parking lots, hiring of a downtown manager, facade improvement grants, aggressive recruiting and marketing and promotional events have made downtown Manchester one of the most successful small city downtowns in the state.

ings and encourage new development, building on the successes of the revitalization effort.

The major negative impact of the Buckland Hills development was felt at the Manchester Parkade which, until the construction of the mall, was the major regional shopping center in Manchester. Many anchor tenants, including Sears, D&L, and Channel, either relocated to the mall or went out of business. This loss of tenants led to physical deterioration of the center and very high vacancy rates. This trend began to change with the acquisition of the Middle Turnpike section of the Parkade by new owners, and the location of new tenants anchored by an expanded Stop & Shop and national chains like Blockbuster Video, Home Goods and Old Navy. Unfortunately, the portion of the Parkade on Broad Street continues to suffer very high vacancies. New developments such as Shaw's Supermarket, and gradual infill of smaller individual storefronts or parcels continue to occur in the Broad Street area.

Another commercial area going through a transition is the community shopping district at Spencer Street. This area is scheduled for road improvements and Manchester Community Technical College is embarking on a major expansion of its campus. The town should facilitate efforts in both the Parkade and Spencer Street shopping districts to identify policies and strategies that will help keep these centers healthy.

Another impact of changing market forces and business location preferences has been a shift away from

local arterial streets. In particular, Center Street, Main Street between Center Street and Middle Turnpike, and sections of Middle Turnpike have either not reached full development as commercial strips (e.g., Center Street), or have recently been abandoned for other commercial locations (Main Street between Middle Turnpike and Center Street). These are highly visible locations but in most cases the development pattern of small lots and older buildings limits their attractiveness for retail and service use.

These locations are similar in some ways to Buckland and Deming Streets in that they are mostly small lots with structures on them located on relatively high volume streets. These arterial strips are often zoned commercial but actual land use is a mixture of residential and commercial, reflecting the evolutionary nature of land use changes in established neighborhoods after zoning districts have been changed. New commercial establishments tend to need more parking, rely on drive-thru windows, and need more distinct visibility than may be allowed on the existing lot configurations. Further, multiple commercial drive-ways could cause or aggravate traffic problems in these locations. Most importantly the parcels fronting these arterial streets directly abut medium density, small to medium lot residential neighborhoods making buffering and screening all the more important.

Here again, zoning regulations which control uses, site and building design, and vehicle access are needed to encourage appropriate developments suitable for both business needs and compatibility with the par-

ticular location characteristics. Developing strategies which encourage the redevelopment of these strips for appropriate uses will be a work item for the next ten years.

The Office Sector

National trends being observed in the office sector will affect demand in the future. Primary among these is the availability of high-speed voice and data communications which allow companies to locate virtually anywhere and to effectively conduct their office operations. It may be that the driving force in office locations could become more the wage structure for the labor force working in the offices than the actual cost of office space. There is also a trend for smaller numbers of employees in offices, relying more on data technology and the desire to be located closer to the customer. Because technology is being used more and more in all aspects of the workplace, space needs may diminish since fewer employees can do more with existing technology. On the other hand, office buildings must be built or refitted to accommodate the communication, power and air conditioning needs of this equipment.

Regionally in the Hartford market area office vacancy trends have shifted over the past few years indicating demand for new office space in the near future may outstrip supply, or at least justify new construction. For much of 1995 City of Hartford vacancy rates fluctuated between 20-25 percent for class A office

Zoning regulations which control uses, site and building design, and vehicle access (to arterial strips) are needed to encourage appropriate developments suitable for both business needs and compatibility with the particular location characteristics.

ECONOMY

space and between 35-50 percent for class B and C space. In the Manchester market area in 1995, the vacancy rate had been approximately 22 percent for class A office space and 20 percent for all office space. At the end of 1997 Hartford's class A vacancy rate declined to 15.5 percent, but stayed in the 35-50 percent range for class B and C. In the Manchester market area vacancy rates declined to 13.8 percent for class A space and 15.9 percent for all office space.

The Manchester office market is primarily made up of small, freestanding office buildings. Many of these are older historic homes on major arterial streets which have been converted to office use, notably along Center Street and Main Street. There are some freestanding buildings located in or near community shopping areas such as Broad Street, North Main Street and Buckland Street. Other freestanding office building locations can be found on the northern end of Main Street and around Manchester Memorial Hospital. Primary office tenants tend to be in the medical, legal, design, real estate and financial services professions. Most of these firms serve Manchester and the neighboring communities, although some have regional and even statewide client bases.

Manchester has been and can continue to be successful in this section of the office market. There is demand for small office users in the 10,000-15,000 square foot range as well, which cannot be easily accommodated given the existing stock in Manchester. Some current areas of opportunity are in the central business district which has very good regional highway

access off of I-384. Here, the conversion of upper floors to class B office space could be successful if investments in elevators, new mechanical/electrical/heating/plumbing systems and interior renovations were linked to the facade improvement program and other marketing efforts as part of the downtown revitalization activity. The availability of tax assessment agreements in conjunction with substantial rehabilitation and modernization could be offered as an incentive for such work. The possibility of using the town's fiber optic cables and Internet connections to provide superior access and technical support in the data communications area could be an effective marketing tool for many small office or professional establishments which could capitalize on access to the Internet.

In the long term, the gradual improvements taking place in major commercial centers such as the Parkade/Broad Street will make these areas more attractive for office users. It is also possible to retrofit and market industrial buildings for use as office operations in some of the town's industrial park areas, although additional parking may be needed. The zoning regulations currently allow a range of business services to locate in the industrial zones and if improvements to industrial areas mentioned earlier occur, these sites may become more attractive for business uses.

The possibility of using the town's fiber optic cables and Internet connections to provide superior access and technical support in the data communications area could be an effective marketing tool for many small office or professional establishments.

Impact of Technology

Improvements in telecommunications and computer technology have created vast opportunities for people to work out of their homes. These advances coincided with layoffs of skilled professionals who find

they can market their skills directly or work on a contract basis from their homes. This opportunity may be limited by current zoning regulations which limit home-conducted occupations. We should ensure that the regulations allow for this type of business in the future.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Continue to pursue the retention and expansion of existing industrial firms in Manchester through appropriate combinations of incentives, development policies and practices.
- Develop strategies which allow for both the full mixed-use development of the Buckland Hills area and the revitalization of existing shopping districts in Manchester.
- Continue activities which support the revitalization of the central business district.
- Develop zoning and development regulations which allow for appropriate mix of business areas providing services, shopping and entertainment to Manchester residents in a variety of settings.
- Take actions to position the town to take advantage of emerging business opportunities, including new technology, redevelopment of contaminated sites, and home occupations.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal: Encourage and support the attraction and expansion of a diverse industrial and service base.

Objectives:

1) Develop and implement an industrial park improvement plan for the Parker Street area. This plan would involve improved public and private landscaping and a new directional sign program to improve the aesthetic appeal and identity of the area.

2) Extend the business park identification program developed in the Parker Street area to the Buckland Industrial Park area.

3) Support the expansion of the Buckland Industrial Park to the East Hartford town line by providing proper zoning; pursue the extension of Batson Drive south of Tolland Turnpike; and pursue road access from Batson Drive west to vacant land.

4) Revise the industrial zone regulations to allow for a mix of manufacturing, distribution, business service, recreation and other appropriate uses leading to the development of "business" parks. Also, revise the regulations to eliminate unne-

cessary procedural requirements for selected uses which could be permitted as of right.

5) Revise the zoning regulations or zoning districts in the Buckland Hills area to encourage the adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized commercial properties for business service, light industrial, or distribution type uses which can be compatible with commercial land uses.

6) Make road improvements in the Parker Street area and the Buckland Industrial Park area including:

- Resurface Colonial Road
- Resurface Progress Drive
- Resurface Chapel Road

Goal: Provide an appropriate mix of regional, community and neighborhood business areas.

Objectives:

1) Revise the business zone regulations to eliminate the cumulative zoning structure. New zoning districts should relate to the types and intensity of uses appropriate to the functional classification of the business zone; better define permitted and special exception uses by type and function; and

provide effective buffering, screening and design requirements to ensure compatibility with adjacent non-commercial uses.

2) Support downtown Manchester's revitalization effort in conjunction with the Downtown Special Services District by:

a) Continuing to fund the Facade Improvement Program.

b) Revising the zoning regulations to incorporate design review and development standards for both renovations and new construction, and adopting new sign regulations as suggested in the 1991 *Concept Plan and Strategy for Downtown Manchester*.

c) Offering financial incentives, particularly real estate tax agreements, to encourage the rehabilitation and modernization of downtown buildings, and to encourage upper floor office, service and residential uses.

d) Investigating the feasibility of offering access and technical support to the town's fiber optic system to businesses to encourage office, financial and business service establishments which could benefit from high-speed Internet access.

e) Exploring the desirability and feasibility of developing the Forest Street parking lot to increase available commercial space and tax base in the district.

3) Conduct a joint development/planning exercise involving the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Economic Development Commission, the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, and representatives of property owners and businesses for both the Parkade/Broad Street and Spencer Street areas. The exercise should investigate improving the aesthetic appearance of the area; adoption of new sign regulations appropriate to these types of establishments; the possibility of creating physical improvements to public spaces to present a more unified district; investigating alternatives for various uses which would be appropriate for the area; and encouraging the formation of a business association.

4) Monitor changing conditions on strip business areas, in particular Center Street and Main Street, and develop regulations or incentives to keep these areas attractive and viable parts of the community.

ECONOMY

Goal: Provide an organizational structure responsive to new economic opportunities, which provides opportunities incentives and opportunities for growth and promotes the community as an economic destination.

Objectives:

- 1) Continue the judicious use of tax assessment agreements to encourage the location of new firms or the expansion of existing firms in Manchester.
- 2) Pursue the possibility of providing connections to the town government's fiber optic cables and Internet access as a development incentive in selected business and industrial locations to attract services and manufacturers who could benefit from that technology.
- 3) Consider developing and adopting a tax incentive program focused on personal property taxes which would work in conjunction with the state's Manufacturers Assistance Act.
- 4) Stay actively involved in regional economic planning and development activities, and consider creating an economic alliance with adjoining communities to ensure complementary development strategies. Special attention to development in Buckland Hills and along the I-291 corridor and complementary municipal development goals are important here.
- 5) Revise the zoning regulations governing home occupations to respond to the changing nature of the types of home occupations given new business opportunities and communications technologies, allowing increased opportunities for self-employment at home while maintaining the character of residential neighborhoods.
- 6) Make increased use of the Internet to promote Manchester as a desirable location, to communicate business opportunities in Manchester, and to provide other appropriate information about economic development in Manchester.
- 7) The town administration and Economic Development Commission should closely monitor changes to environmental laws which affect the acquisition and reuse of sites which have been or may be listed as contaminated, and develop policies and practices which will help put these properties into productive use.

Development Designations



Development Areas

(growth areas following proposed land use plan)



Preservation Areas

(property improvement, infrastructure repair)



Revitalization Areas

(concentrated efforts to increase owner occupancy, and property improvement & infrastructure repair)



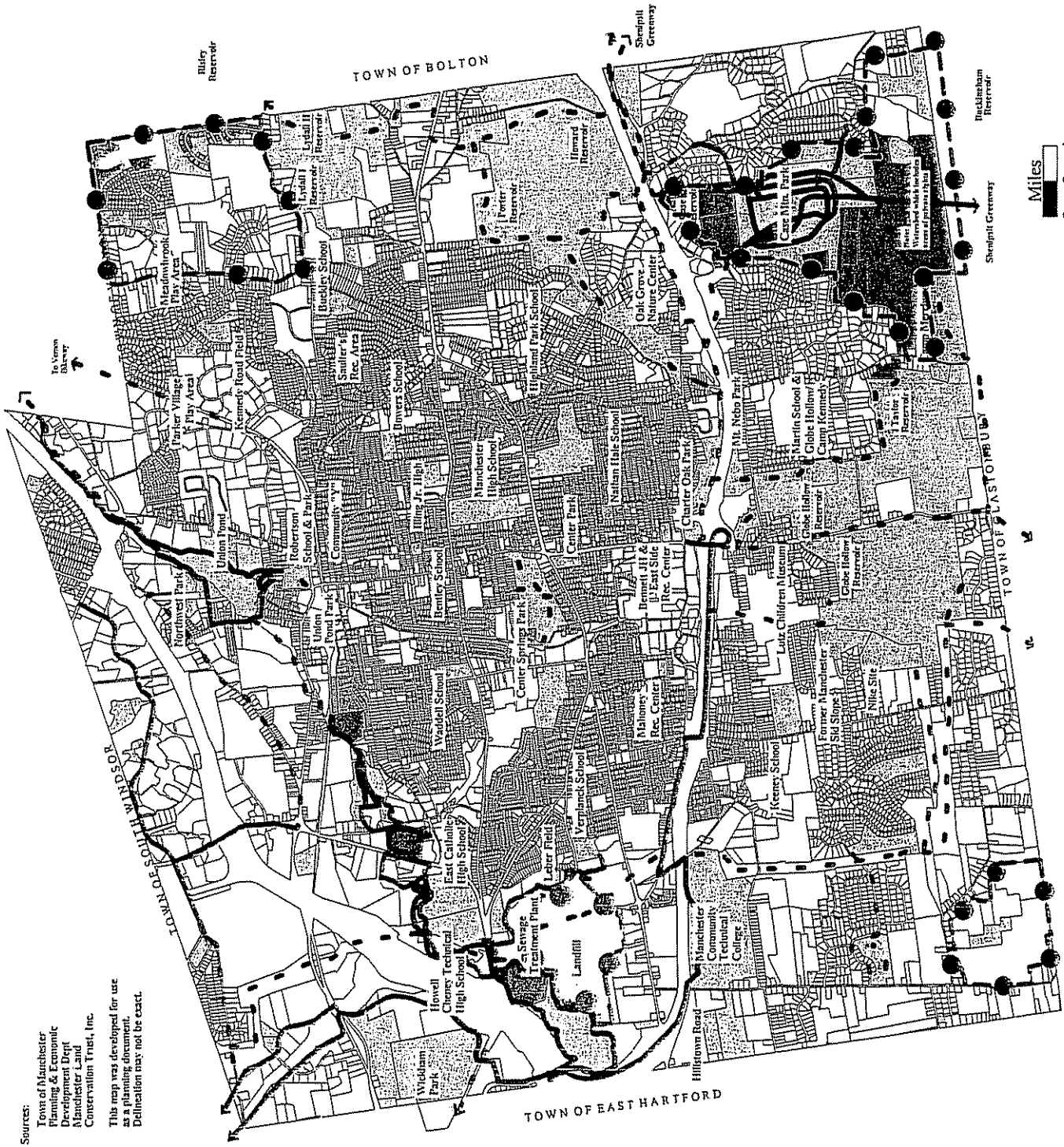
Conservation Areas

(development sensitive to environment and open space resources)










Prepared by the Manchester Planning & Economic Development Department.

Sources:
 Town of Manchester
 Planning & Economic
 Development Dept.
 Manchester Dept.
 of Conservation
 Conservation Trust, Inc.
 This map was developed for use
 as a planning document.
 Delineation may not be exact.



LEGEND

-  Existing Recreation & Open Space
-  Acquire Open Space
-  Future Potential Recreation
-  Conservation Overlay Zone Development Area
-  Proposed Trail
-  Proposed Bikeway
-  Existing Trail System

Future Recreation & Open Space System Planning and Zoning Commission Town of Manchester, Connecticut Plan of Conservation and Development



HARRALL-NICHALOWSKI
 ASSOCIATES
 Incorporated
 Hamden, Connecticut
 June 1987



Roadway Classifications Manchester, CT



— Interstate Highway

— Major Arterial

— Minor Arterial

— Collector Street

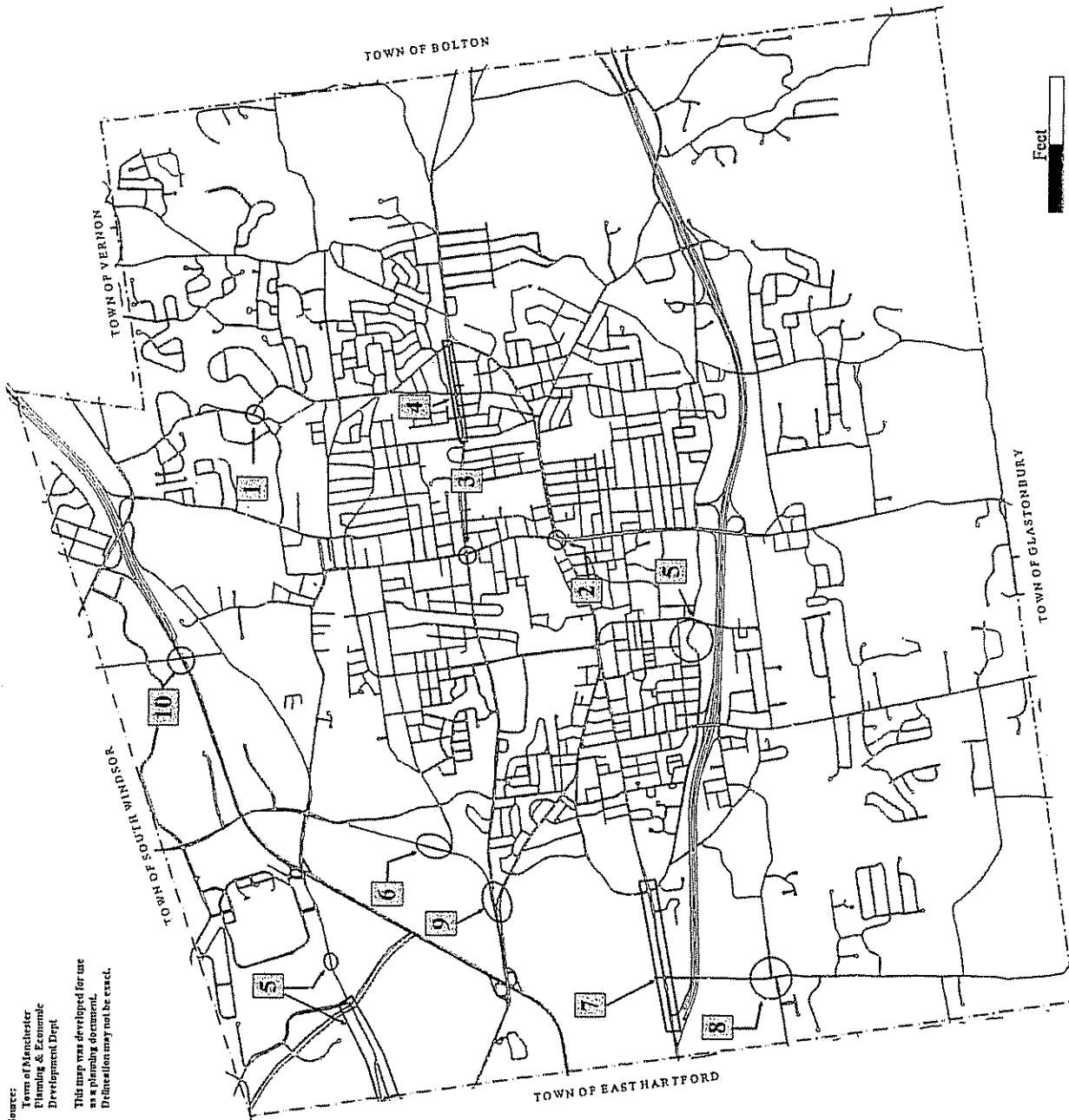
— Local Road



Prepared by the Manchester Planning
& Economic Development Department,
August 1998

Source:
Town of Manchester
Planning & Economic
Development Dept.

This map was developed for use
as a planning document.
Detail may not be exact.



LEGEND

- 1) Colonial Rd & Sheldon Rd
- 2) Center St & Main St
- 3) Main St & Middle Tpke
- 4) East Middle Tpke from Walker to Woodbridge
- 5) Hartford Rd Realignment & Tollard Tpke Widening
- 6) New State Rd Over Hockanum River
- 7) Spencer St & Hillstown Rd
- 8) Hillstown Rd & Wetherall St
- 9) Middle Tpke @ Center St
- 10) Widen Slater St. under I-84

Short-Term Improvements 0 - 5 Years

Planning and Zoning Commission
Town of Manchester, Connecticut

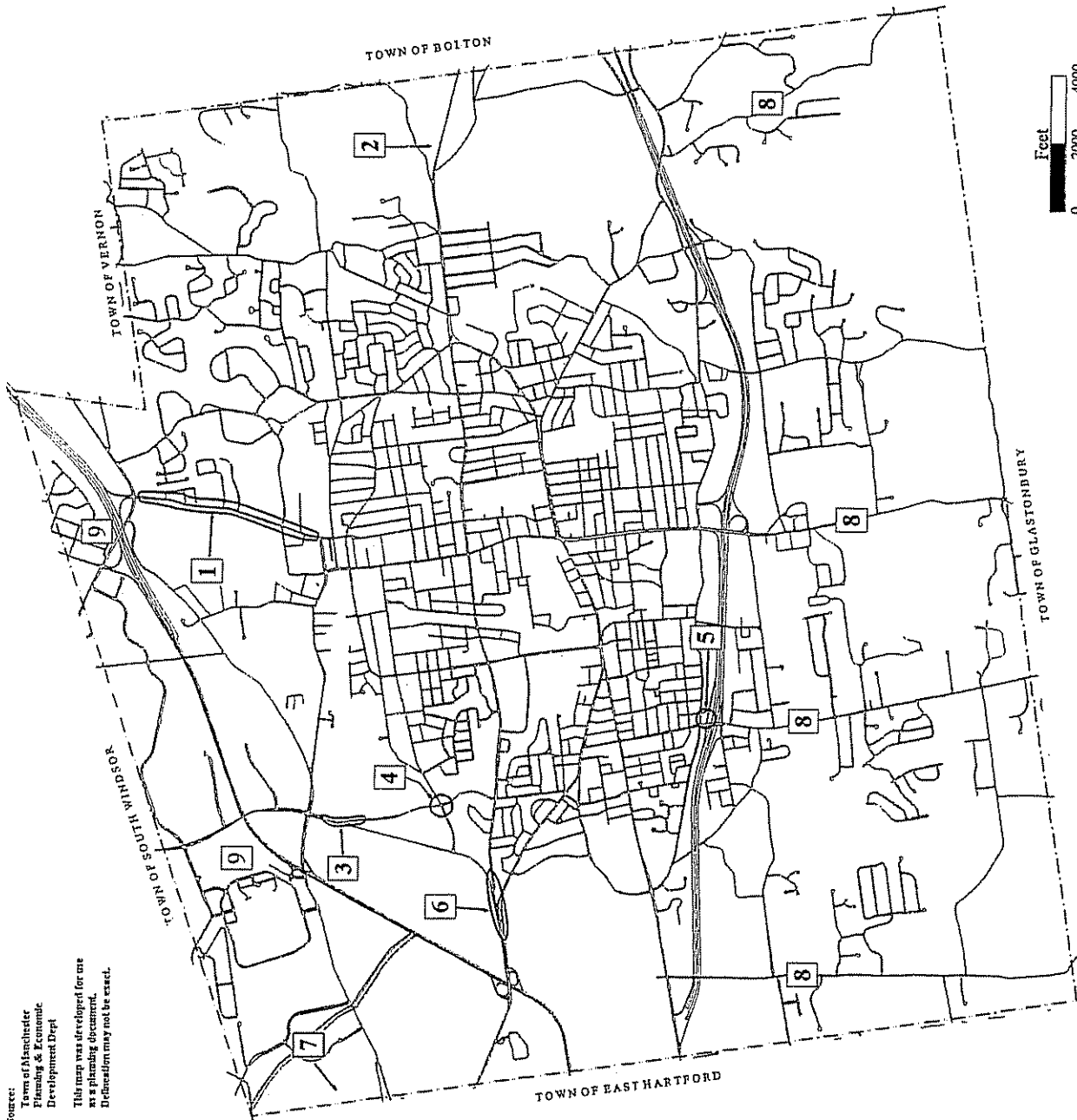
Plan of Conservation
and Development



HARRALL MICHALOWSKI
ASSOCIATES,
INCORPORATED
Hartford, Connecticut
July 1987

Source:
Town of Manchester
Planning & Economic
Development Dept

This map was developed for use
as a planning document.
Definition may not be exact.



LEGEND

- 1) Widen Oakland St
to Four Lanes
- 2) Middle Tpke East &
New Bolton Road
- 3) Widen Adams Street
- 4) Hilliard St & Adams St
- 5) I-384, Keeney St &
Hartford Rd
- 6) New State Rd, Middle
Tpke West & West
Center St
- 7) Improve Industrial Access
- 8) Hillstown Rd, Keeney St,
South Main St & Birch
Mountain Rd.
- 9) I-84 exits 62 & 63

Long-Term
Improvements
5 - 10 Years

Planning and Zoning Commission
Town of Manchester, Connecticut

Plan of Conservation
and Development



HARBALL MICHALOWSKI
A. ASSOCIATES, Incorporated
Hartford, Connecticut
July 1987



Critical Pedesrian Connections



Note: While specific sidewalks in the central neighborhoods are not identified here, systematic infill of deteriorated sections of existing walks in these areas is necessary to maintain safe pedestrian connections.



Source: Manchester Planning & Economic Development Department
Neighborhood Plans

Open Space/Recreation

Parks and Open Space

Lifestyle changes, population growth and physical development created new demands on the town's recreation and open space system. These demands were met in a variety of ways during the years since the 1986 Plan. Maintenance and management of the town's existing facilities underwent a comprehensive analysis and organizational realignment. Maintenance schedules, capital improvements, sign programs and increased use of outside contractors were coordinated, resulting in improved physical conditions at the town's existing park and recreational facilities.

Almost 630 acres of public open space land were added to the Manchester inventory over the past ten years. Developers were required to provide open space or land for neighborhood parks in new residential developments on Keeney Street, Parker Street and Vernon Street where facilities did not exist for those residential populations. The Manchester Land Conservation Trust acquired or accepted 100 acres of land which will be kept in its natural state and remain accessible to the public. New recreational facility development included the construction of three new soccer fields on Hillstown Road; acquisition of land and construction of trails and park facilities on the

Hockanum River; and a new lodge building and pond improvements in Center Springs Park.

Recreational activities for young people tend towards organized programs such as soccer, Little League, T-ball, softball, basketball and summer camp programs. This has increased the demand on existing fields, with the exception of soccer which has seen substantial increase in playing facilities. At the neighborhood level, Manchester's town government, Board of Education, neighborhood residents and parents' organizations combined to make improvements to playgrounds and play fields at the town's elementary schools.

Interest in health and fitness coupled with environmental appreciation and awareness led to a dramatic increase in informal recreation activities like walking, jogging, hiking, bicycling and mountain biking. The surge in popularity of these forms of recreation has been accommodated in Manchester by an ever expanding trail system. Major public investments included the construction of the Charter Oak Greenway by the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation, running from the East Hartford town line to Charter Oak Park. The Conservation Commission's development and maintenance of the Case Mountain hiking trails has allowed for and accom-

Almost 630 acres of public open space land were added to the Manchester inventory over the past ten years.

OPEN SPACE/RECREATION

modated the increased use of this unique asset. The Hockanum River Linear Park was developed by the Conservation Commission, which organized volunteers who built and maintained trails along the river. The town administered a \$1.4 million state grant which funded the construction of the Laurel Marsh hiking trail and Union Pond Park, as well as the acquisition of 34 acres of land along the river at Adams Street.

Manchester's park and recreation sites, watershed lands (which are increasingly used for hiking), elementary and secondary school sites, and the trail systems provide an extensive recreation and open space system. The growth of this system over the years presents the town with the opportunity to connect individual spaces into an open space and recreation network for the entire community.

Manchester's park and recreation sites, watershed lands (which are increasingly used for hiking), elementary and secondary school sites, and the trail systems provide an extensive recreation and open space system.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Concentrate on developing an open space network: the connection of the town's parks, open space areas and elementary school sites by a network of greenways, bikeways, sidewalks and hiking trails.
- Acquire (or otherwise secure and preserve as open space) land which is environmentally sensitive or valuable, or contains prominent natural features, or provides significant wildlife habitat, or protects public water supply, or will lead to the expansion of or connections to the town's open space network.
- Improve the maintenance and management of all municipal open space and recreational facilities through increased coordination and cooperation between the Board of Education and Board of Directors and their respective administrations.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal: Develop an integrated open space network consisting of parks, school sites, open spaces, greenways, bikeways and sidewalks that are adequate in extent, strategic in location and equitable in distribution in order to meet the unique active and passive recreation needs of the town's residents.

Objectives:

- 1) Parks:
 - a) Continue to support and follow park and recreation department policies to upgrade the quality of existing active recreation facilities and maintain them to a high standard.
 - b) Develop a master plan for increased utilization of the Nike site for recreational activities identified through an assessment of both community-wide and neighborhood recreation needs.

- c) Consider improvements at the following parks:

Center Springs Park

- Review park access from Center Street, Main Street and Valley Street to address public safety concerns and improve visibility of the park.
- Review facility and equipment location and usage including adding picnic tables and improving playgrounds, and increasing programmed activities at the park.

Charter Oak Park

- Provide a roof over the skating rink.
- Consider development of a pre-school and young children's area.
- Provide a bike path from the main Charter Oak greenway into Charter Oak Park as part of the greenway's extension.

Case Mountain

- Develop a master plan for the future use and improvement of the Case Mountain area, including acquiring additional parking areas to support increased use of the trail system, providing more access points into the Case Mountain area, and developing and enforcing rules for the use of trails by hikers and mountain bikers to ensure the integrity of the trail system and joint use for these different activities.

Hockanum River Linear Park

- Pursue the recommendations of the 1993 Hockanum River Linear Park Master Plan with the goals of preserving — by town purchase, license or easement — as much open space land as possible to protect the streambelt, wetlands, floodplains and forest habitat along the Hockanum River; and improving trail continuity along both sides of the river from the Vernon and East Hartford town lines to eventually connect with trails in the adjoining towns (see appendix A).

Northwest Park

- Develop Northwest Park based on the master plan contained in the Hockanum River Linear Park Master Plan.
- Acquire the abutting five-acre parcel to provide additional land for recreation and support facilities.

Mahoney Recreation Center

- Consider using the center for activities such as bingo night, casino night or a coffee house for adults in conjunction with the ideas of residents of the West Side neighborhood.

Union Pond Park

- Consider installing trash cans near the wall and the benches.
 - Continue working with the Commission for Disabled Persons to create a fully accessible nature trail within the park.
- Other Considerations
- Seek out suitable locations for community gardens.
 - Explore development of a recreation area on land on Elm Street under the Park Street bridge.

2) School Sites:

- a) Create more park-like settings in Manchester's neighborhoods by implementing park development programs on school properties — in particular Waddell, Robertson, Verplank, Bowers and Martin Elementary Schools and Illing Middle School. The Board of Education, park and recreation department, planning department and Advisory Park and Recreation Commission should all be involved in this process. A concept plan for each school site should be developed with school administrators, students and neighborhood residents.
- b) Promote increased use of schools and school grounds for after-school recreational and social activities.

OPEN SPACE/RECREATION

- c) Increase coordination and allocation of maintenance resources and responsibilities between the town and the Board of Education. A system which streamlines the joint operational and maintenance responsibilities of the Board of Education and town departments and eliminates confusion for residents should be established. Develop a single point of contact for resident calls in order to generate prompt and action-oriented responses regarding the maintenance and scheduling of facilities at school properties.
- d) The Board of Directors and the Board of Education should develop a capital improvement plan and maintenance management plan for recreational facilities and grounds at school sites.
- e) In addition to the above, pursue specific improvements at all elementary school sites as recommended in the neighborhood plans (see appendix B).
- 3) Open Space:
- a) Initiate a program to acquire the properties shown on the Future Recreation and Open Space System map either through direct purchase or conservation development practices to add the properties to the town's watershed lands for source protection or to Case Mountain Park for open space and passive recreation, or for the preservation of important natural features or agricultural lands.
- b) In the Conservation Overlay areas in the northeast, southwest and southeast quadrants of Manchester as shown on the Future Recreation and Open Space System map, new residential development should be subject to conservation development regulations to preserve the rural character of the area, add to the open space system and greenway network, protect significant natural features and habitat, and preserve agricultural land as appropriate.
- c) Investigate and pursue the use of possible recreation and open space funding sources such as:
- Municipal bond issues or an annual allocation of general fund revenues established for open space acquisition.
 - An endowment fund for acquiring open space and recreational land.
 - Fees in lieu of open space provisions in subdivision regulations as a funding source for acquisition of strategically located parcels.
 - State and federal funds, which should be aggressively pursued for local projects, where applicable.

OPEN SPACE/RECREATION

- A recreation fund to buy easements along the Hockanum River and other environmentally sensitive parcels.
 - Fiscal techniques such as lease-purchase arrangements, installment sales and exchanges to acquire open space parcels.
- 4) Greenways:
- a) Connect existing park and open space areas into an open space network. Supplement the existing system of trails, bikeways and sidewalks with additional corridors connecting to town parks, open space, school sites and neighborhoods.
 - b) Study the feasibility of using selected portions of town-owned watershed land for recreation use including hiking, biking, cross-country skiing and jogging trails or other uses which minimize negative impacts on the physical environment and the water supply. Concentrate initially on Class III lands which do not directly contribute to the drinking water supply. A mapping program to identify locations and relationships to other recreation and open space resources should be conducted.
 - c) Review the type and intensity of use of existing trails, and types of activity permitted, and develop a policy for a sustainable level of trail use taking into consideration the unique characteristics of particular trails and the potential conflicts between hikers and mountain bikers.
- d) Develop a mechanism to coordinate volunteer efforts and gradually increase town maintenance of selected areas of open space and trail systems, especially at Case Mountain and Hockanum River Linear Park, as these systems are extended and their use increases.
- 5) Bikeways and Sidewalks:
- a) Concentrate on developing a framework of bike trails linking to adjoining towns and major bikeway routes. Extend the bikeway system along main routes such as I-384 to Bolton Notch, through the Parker Street industrial park area to Vernon, and through the watershed lands toward Glastonbury.
- This Plan does not consider the Cheney Corridor a priority section of the bikeway system for this next planning period. However, community discussion of the merits of this issue may again occur over the Plan period as circumstances change and opportunities arise.
- b) Sidewalks should be considered a component of the trail and bikeway system linking town park and open space resources to neighborhood residents. A sidewalk extension program

should be developed with this particular function as a development criteria.

- c) Amend zoning and subdivision regulations to provide a mechanism to extend trail/bikeway corridors and to increase connections between subdivisions, neighborhoods, parks and shopping areas in accordance with the plans and the proposed facilities shown on the Future Recreation and Open Space System map.

to foster communication among stakeholders and responsible parties.

- 2) Offer programs and services that are responsive to individual, group and neighborhood needs, make more efficient use of facilities, and expand recreation opportunities for all citizens by:
 - a) Exploring the possibilities of establishing new policies and programs that could generate funds to defray the cost of recreational programming.
 - b) Implementing a program in which users or volunteer groups assist with park maintenance, security, litter control and program support, such as an "adopt-a-park" program.
 - c) Developing a recreation services coordinating council of Manchester service providers to act as a centralized information clearinghouse for recreation-related programs.
 - d) Conducting periodic assessments of the recreation needs of the town.
 - e) Making town-owned vacant land available to neighborhoods or residents for development of trails, community gardens or landscaped areas where appropriate. Maintenance of these areas by the neighborhood or residents would be a condition of use.

Goal: Provide a range of opportunities for recreational activities for the benefit of Manchester residents and to reinforce the spirit of community among residents.

Objectives:

- 1) Improve coordination of all stakeholders in the open space and recreation arena and increase communication between the different grassroots, nonprofit, and official government agencies operating within the town. Consider annual park and open space planning sessions before the municipal budget process begins, and the establishment of a coordinating council which would meet quarterly to review program progress and future plans

Transportation

The private automobile is by far the preferred means of transportation for Manchester residents and for the entire region. Over 90 percent of employment-related trips occur in single-occupancy passenger cars. Daily, about 15,800 people commute into Manchester and 16,800 people commute out of Manchester for work. The majority of this work-related travel is using Interstate 84, with 45 percent of inbound traffic coming from the west and 70 percent of outbound traffic going to the west.

Non-work-related trips have been growing as a percentage of trips on the street system. Automobile travel for shopping, services, education, day care and recreation have all added to vehicle trips on town roads.

Most major employment centers in Manchester are located within one mile of the interstate highways and most work-related traffic is served by the major arterial streets feeding the interstate system. However, non-work-related trips have been growing as a percentage of trips on the street system. Automobile travel for shopping, services, education, day care and recreation have all added to vehicle trips on town roads. A combination of new interstate highway construction, new development, changing lifestyles and more drivers has led to changes in the way the town's street system is used.

Traffic volumes for major streets were compared for the period between 1985 and 1995. Predictably, greater traffic volumes are occurring on streets nearest the interstates, in particular in the Buckland Hills area,

which is a major shopping area and major portal to Interstate 84 for commuters from Manchester, South Windsor and Vernon. Interstate 384 has replaced Middle Turnpike and Center Street as the major east/west route, leading to a significant reduction of traffic on local east/west streets.

Unexpectedly, traffic volumes at the intersection of Main Street and Center Street have nearly doubled. This may be accounted for in part because of the convenience of Interstate 384 to residents in the southern section of town, in part because of the personal, professional and government services operating in the downtown area, and in part because the number of non-work trips is increasing. This intersection is still the major crossroads for Manchester residents.

Manchester has never been particularly well served by north/south routes. Main Street/Route 83 is a two-lane road throughout most of its length, with congestion occurring at Center Street, Middle Turnpike, and to an extent North Main Street, due to either (or a combination of) roadway width, tight street intersection geometry or on-street parking conditions which limit roadway capacity. Keeney Street/McKee Street, Adams Street, Autumn Street/Parker Street, and Pine Street/Broad Street are also two-lane streets which cross major east/west arterials and zigzag north to south.

In the absence of any major physical changes to accommodate north/south traffic, motorists have chosen more convenient routes. Unfortunately, these alternative routes often use streets primarily lined with houses. For instance, Spruce Street and Summit Street provide more convenient north/south travel for motorists than Main Street. Woodland Street and Hilliard Street are examples of local streets accommodating more east/west traffic as alternatives to Middle Turnpike or North Main Street. While these streets may have enough capacity to move larger volumes of cars, in many cases they are basically residential streets, creating a traffic/land use conflict which has proven to be a point of concern in many neighborhoods. In the developed central portion of Manchester altering the use of local streets is a significant challenge.

To the south and east, increasing residential development is adding traffic to the few major available north/south routes. In particular Keeney Street, Main Street, Birch Mountain Road and Hillstown Road will face other pressures which may cause or aggravate traffic operations and safety problems. One source of pressure will come from the residential development of now vacant land. Another source is the increasing use of these roads by commuters from Glastonbury, Hebron, Bolton and Marlborough traveling to I-384 and other Manchester destinations.

Further aggravating these conditions is the fact that many of the large residential subdivisions in the south and east have only one or two access points to only

one north/south street. For instance, the large Manchester West subdivision has its access to Keeney Street from Nutmeg Drive and Briarwood Drive. Creating bypass lanes, eliminating geometric problems such as curves and humps, creating uniform pavement widths on these roads, eliminating drainage problems and providing interconnections between subdivisions to disburse traffic over a wider street system are all strategies which could be pursued over the planning period.

Over the past few years, in spite of Manchester's growth and increased traffic volumes, the town's overall roadway system has been improved or maintained to where the streets serve the town with an acceptable level of service. Requiring major road improvements of large new developments, securing state and federal funds for local road and bridge repairs and improvements, and a consistently funded local maintenance program have accounted for this achievement.

Sidewalks

Our neighborhood planning sessions revealed that sidewalks are a valued neighborhood asset. They provide safety for pedestrians and opportunities for fitness and recreation. Sidewalks also become the major social spaces in many neighborhoods, creating opportunities for residents to interact on an informal and spontaneous basis. There is interest in extending sidewalks on primary routes, as well as interest in the repair of sidewalks in poor condition.

Our neighborhood planning sessions revealed that sidewalks are a valued neighborhood asset.

Manchester's current public policy on sidewalks creates a tremendous financial burden on the town merely to maintain its existing system. The local government has assumed all responsibility for the maintenance of sidewalks (except for snow removal), and assumed liability for any injuries related to poor sidewalk conditions. Over the past five years the town has paid a total of \$94,785 in insurance claims for sidewalk trip and fall-related injuries. It has also spent \$1,669,618 for sidewalk replacement over the past five years, and it is estimated that for the town to replace all sidewalks which are in poor or very poor condition, an additional \$12 to \$15 million would be required. These figures relate only to the repair/replacement of existing sidewalks. It is estimated that building new sidewalks would require an additional \$35 million.

Over the years the town's priority sidewalk repair system has been focused on repair, replacement and elimination of hazards and not on sidewalk extension. The public works department developed a rating system to prioritize sidewalks in terms of need and condition. It is worth considering whether the priority system needs to be changed and whether the town's public policy on ownership, liability and maintenance needs to be changed to speed up both the repair of sidewalks and the extension of sidewalk systems to meet Manchester's present and future sidewalk needs. Re-examination of current policies on repair, and requirements for new construction related to development (including the policy on developments) is also warranted as part of this discussion.

Through the development of the neighborhood plans, priority sidewalk extension locations have been identified. They tend to be located on collector or arterial streets and would create the "main" sidewalk system. By installing sidewalks in these priority locations, the town would provide increased safety for school children and other pedestrians on routes used increasingly for recreation and socialization purposes. Extensions in many cases, in particular in the north end, would also provide connections among residential neighborhoods, encouraging a greater sense of community.

Public Transit

Manchester's commercial and industrial areas, and a significant part of our residential areas, are served by CTRANNSIT bus routes. CTRANNSIT has recently revised routes, mostly in response to demands for shopping and work trips to Buckland Hills. Still, ridership is low and heavily subsidized and there is little the town can do to increase the frequency of bus trips. However, public transit is vital to many residents — those without personal vehicles and those physically unable to drive. What Manchester can do is make this experience more enjoyable, and improve the aesthetics of the town, by working with CTRANNSIT on a shelter and sign program. Areas of priority importance are Spruce Street, Buckland Hills and the Parker Street/ Progress Drive industrial area.

Public transit is vital to many residents — those without personal vehicles and those physically unable to drive. What Manchester can do is make this experience more enjoyable, and improve the aesthetics of the town, by working with CTRANNSIT on a shelter and sign program.

Transportation for people with special needs, such as the elderly or disabled and for those who need transportation for employment, is not likely to be provided by CTRANSIT or not provided at times

which meet their demands. These trips must go to specific destinations at specific times. Paratransit models and taxi service are likely to be the primary ways to address this segment of the population.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Focus on traffic efficiency and public safety on local streets and, secondarily, on increasing capacity on local roadway systems.
- Encourage motorists to use the main arterial streets and not alternate routes through residential neighborhoods by eliminating obstacles to efficient traffic operations on arterial streets, such as poor intersections or on-street parking, through construction of bypass and turning lanes to improve the efficiency and level of service.
- Focus on traffic-calming measures to minimize the conflicts between residential properties and vehicle traffic using residential streets beyond their functional classification, and enhance the real and perceived sense of safety and separation between residential properties and vehicle traffic on identified streets.
- Focus on developing pedestrian connections through sidewalks and bikeways/greenways to build the main pedestrian network connecting all residential neighborhoods to schools, recreation areas and other community facilities.
- Pursue public and mass transit options to expand or enhance public transit service in Manchester.

TRANSPORTATION

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal: Pursue programs and policies to protect the character and safety of the town's residential neighborhoods.

Objectives:

1) Improve the operational efficiency of major streets, especially north/south arterial streets, to encourage motorists to use these major streets instead of residential streets. Priority streets would be the subject of design and construction solutions including:

- a) Short-term improvements (zero to five years):
 - Restripe pavement markings and revise signal timing to better accommodate the northbound to westbound and southbound to eastbound left turn movements at the Main Street and Center Street intersection.
 - Evaluate signal timing and lane changes at Main Street and Middle Turnpike for north/south left turns.
 - Realign Hartford Road between Prospect Street and Goslee Drive.

- Make improvements to the New State Road bridge over the Hockanum River.
- Make improvements at the Spencer Street/Hillstown Road intersection, widen Spencer Street from I-384 to beyond the Hillstown Road intersection, and resurface Spencer Street and West Center Street.
- Design and pursue construction funding for realignment of the Hillstown Road/Wetherell Street/Woodside Street intersection.
- Make improvements to the New State Road/Middle Turnpike/West Center Street intersection near East Catholic High School.
- Monitor traffic operations and evaluate the need for traffic signalization at the Colburn Road/Sheldon Road/Parker Street intersection.
- Widen Slater Street under I-84 to four lanes.
- Plan and schedule improvements to the Hilliard Street/Adams Street intersection to provide for improved traffic operations, exclusive turn lanes, and new traffic-responsive signalization
- Resurface and make geometric improvements to Middle Turnpike East from Walker Street to Woodbridge Street.
- Design geometric and traffic control improve-

ments to and from I-384 at the Keeney Street/Hartford Road intersection.

- Design and pursue funding for geometric improvements which eliminate poor horizontal and vertical geometry, eliminate sight distance restrictions, improve pavement, eliminate drainage problems and provide bypass lanes at key intersections on Keeney Street between Bush Hill Road and Hackmatack Street.

b) Long-term improvements (five to ten years):

- Schedule the improvement of the Hilliard Street and Adams Street intersection to provide for improved operations, exclusive turn lanes and new traffic-responsive signalization.
- Evaluate the need for geometric and traffic control improvements to/from I-384 at Keeney Street and Hartford Road.
- Consider the long-term need for geometric and traffic control improvements at the New State Road, Middle Turnpike West and West Center Street intersection.
- Enhance the access to industrial land in the Buckland Industrial Park with new streets, an east-west road for Batson Drive and a north-south road either as part of a new subdivision street or an extension of Batson Drive from its cul-de-sac to Tolland Turnpike.

- Widen Oakland Street to four lanes with additional turning lanes at the key intersections.

- Make improvements to the Middle Turnpike East/Bolton Road corridor to accommodate growing traffic volumes.

- Evaluate the need to widen Adams Street to four lanes under the existing railroad bridge near Tolland Turnpike.

- Monitor conditions and evaluate the need for roadway improvements which eliminate poor horizontal and vertical geometry, eliminate drainage problems, eliminate sight distance restrictions, and add bypass lanes as needed to Main Street, Birch Mountain Road and Hillstown Road.

- Initiate discussions with the Town of South Windsor, Capitol Region Council of Governments and the State Department of Transportation to begin the process of evaluating the need for and feasibility of reconfiguring the interstate ramp system at Exits 62 and 63 in order to provide a reasonable level of traffic service and safety, taking into account the longer-range transportation growth associated with the development of Buckland Hills and additional commercial and residential development in the town of South Windsor which will impact these critical locations.

TRANSPORTATION

Goal: Implement a sidewalk policy that provides for enhanced pedestrian mobility and reduces liability exposure to the town.

Objectives:

1) Re-evaluate and revise the existing town sidewalk plan and priority system. The new policy should identify the main sidewalk routes in the town with an emphasis on providing a continuous sidewalk network along major streets connecting residential neighborhoods to transportation, business, and recreational and educational destinations.

2) Consider dividing the town into urban and rural areas for the purposes of sidewalk installation, allowing bituminous sidewalks or bikeways/greenways trails in rural locations, with concrete sidewalks in more urban locations.

3) Review the current town ordinance and policy implementation regarding the deferment of sidewalks, and consider whether or not the deferment policy should be eliminated or modified to better provide for the installation, or resources for installation, of sidewalks in conjunction with new development.

Goal: Provide interconnections between existing subdivisions, and develop a policy which encourages interconnected street systems to improve overall traffic operations, disperse traffic over the street network, improve and enhance emergency response conditions and improve the efficiency of and reduce the cost for snow removal.

Objectives:

1) Conduct preliminary design analysis and cost estimates to provide interconnections between existing subdivisions in the following locations:

- Rachel Road to Tudor Lane
- Griffin Road to North Main Street
- Bayberry Road to Wetherell Street
- Redwood Road to Briarwood Drive
- Round Hill Road to Briarwood Drive/Longview Drive
- West Gerald Drive to Gerald Drive
- Connect the east and west ends of Hercules Drive
- Plymouth Lane to Cook Street
- Somerset Drive to Highwood Drive
- Tonica Springs Trail to Kimberly Drive

Goal: Provide for enhanced public transportation.

Goal: Improve the organizational capacity to plan for and manage transportation operations and improvements.

Objectives:

1) Develop and maintain working relationships with the Connecticut Department of Transportation and CTRANSPORT to evaluate the existing bus system and routing and ensure that the best possible system is provided to the town.

2) Evaluate bus routes and bus stop locations, and design and implement a program of improved bus stop locations. This would include providing minimal shelter, uniform signage, and seating areas which make ridership a more pleasant experience and enhance the appearance of bus stop locations. In addition to designing the architectural and signage features, a study should be done to implement this program initially on those sections of the bus routes which experience the highest ridership levels.

Objectives:

1) Conduct a comprehensive traffic signal system inventory and organizational study which addresses the evaluation, design, operation, and maintenance of traffic signals and associated control equipment in the town.

2) Subsequent to the analysis of the traffic control equipment of the town, develop a short-term and long-term capital plan dealing with control equipment upgrades, control management systems and related issues.

3) Provide the capacity, either through hiring staff or providing funds for consultation, for a town traffic engineer to evaluate traffic conditions; design solutions to traffic problems; evaluate and review traffic analyses and reports associated with new development in Manchester; and help design and implement regulations for operational development controls incorporating transportation and traffic enhancements into town operations and development approvals.

TRANSPORTATION

4) Conduct traffic management analysis to improve traffic operations and level of service at key streets, including Main Street, North Main Street, McKee Street, Adams Street, Parker Street, Broad Street and Spencer Street. Managing curb cuts, access points, and lane markings, intersection improvements and on-street parking may help to improve capacity without significant roadway widening or major capital expenses.

Goal: Improve the design and aesthetic appearance of town roadways.

Objectives:

- 1) As a matter of policy and practice include landscape features into all town roadway reconstruction or realignment projects with the goal of highway and street beautification and identification and development of gateway features on town roadway systems.
- 2) Develop and pursue landscape improvements at the major entrances and gateways into Manchester including:
 - McKee Street/Hartford Road
 - Exit 61/Rt. 44
 - Manchester Green
 - East Center Street median
 - Exit 62/Buckland Street
 - Spencer Street/I-384 Exit 1

Community Facilities

Manchester prides itself in being a full-service community. Public and private community facilities provide for the convenience, health and welfare of residents and add to the town's quality of life. Maintaining an adequate array and supply of community facilities in good condition to meet changing needs is an important aspect of local government. Over the past ten years some facilities have been significantly upgraded while others have seen an increased demand for services.

Schools

The school system is a key indicator of quality of life to current residents and prospective residents. While the educational attainment of students is a primary benchmark for people looking at a school system, the condition and capacity of the physical plant is also an important indicator.

Manchester's school system went from a period of declining enrollments to one of increasing enrollment. Currently, all of Manchester's school buildings are operating at or very near capacity, and no school building has any significant space which would allow the addition of classrooms. Also, the age of most of the buildings requires what could be an extensive reha-

ilitation and renovation program whether or not space is added to the buildings. The school system's physical plant faces challenges not only from maintenance and enrollment requirements, but also must respond to changing educational demands and opportunities for students and teachers in terms of workforce needs, demands for extended school days, and to accommodate new technology. A comprehensive facilities study is currently underway and should lead to a capital improvements plan for the school system.

Libraries

Manchester's public libraries consistently rank very high in terms of resident satisfaction with town services and are recognized as a community asset. The Mary Cheney and Whiton Libraries have experienced double-digit growth in patronage over the past five years. This increase in demand, plus the changing nature of library resources in addition to books — such as CD-ROM computer software, video and audio recordings, audio books, Internet access, online resources and educational and enrichment programming — have been accommodated within existing library space. Increasing patronage and changing media and consumer demands will challenge existing facilities both in terms of building space, park-

Manchester's public libraries consistently rank very high in terms of resident satisfaction with town services and are recognized as a community asset.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

ing space and technological capacity over the planning period.

Sanitary Landfill

Over the years Manchester's sanitary landfill has saved town residents millions of dollars in landfill tipping fees and is a great convenience. However, changing regulatory requirements and a desire to halt the use of landfills for solid waste disposal in favor of resource recovery mean that the landfill may be closed for municipal solid waste during this planning period.

State aquifer protection regulations are being monitored and will likely affect Manchester's groundwater sources. Surface water protection may require prudent acquisition of land inside watershed as well as watershed management and forestry activity.

Manchester's landfill has been identified as a location which can serve certain regional solid waste disposal or recycling needs. It is a major recycling center, the site of a regional hazardous waste collection center, has a major composting area, and is well-suited to become a bulky waste landfill. These advantages are offset by the requirements to close and cap the landfill to meet federal and state regulations, the need to burn off methane gas, and the need to find other ways to dispose of municipal solid waste. These disadvantages could result in significant increases in waste disposal costs to Manchester and its residents within the planning period.

Water and Sanitary Sewer

The town's drinking water and sanitary sewer infrastructure is in good condition. New water and sewage

treatment plants have been built and are operating and have enough capacity to serve Manchester well beyond the ten-year planning period. Improvements to the sanitary sewer collection lines and water distribution lines will be pursued on an ongoing basis. As a heavily regulated enterprise, the water and sewer department must closely monitor proposed changes to federal and state regulatory standards which may impact these utilities. Source protection is also an important issue. Manchester's water supply is a combination of surface water reservoirs and groundwater wells. State aquifer protection regulations are being monitored and will likely affect Manchester's groundwater sources. Surface water protection may require prudent acquisition of land inside water supply watershed as well as watershed management and forestry activity.

Stormwater Management

Stormwater management for both flood control and water quality control is another area which receives ongoing attention. Manchester has an extensive stormwater system in place. Improvements in maintenance of catch basins, curbs and gutters, storm drain pipes and discharge points are pursued on a routine basis and practices are evaluated in order to have an efficient system. Recently adopted stormwater management requirements are meant to ensure that new development does not adversely affect water quality and system capacity. Specific drainage problems have been identified and funds for correction should be included in the town's capital improvement budget.

Administrative Offices

Over the past five years the office space needs of the municipal government operations have been accommodated through the acquisition and conversion of the former United States Post Office on Main Street to office use; the rehabilitation of the Lincoln Center for more efficient office use; and the renovation and expansion of the Manchester Town Hall. As a result of this work approximately 58,000 square feet of office and community meeting space in the three-building campus is expected to meet the needs through the planning period.

The Manchester Police Department recently moved into a new 44,000 square-foot headquarters building and a 7,000 square-foot maintenance building which will meet the department's space needs beyond the planning period.

Manchester's fire and emergency service needs are met by the Town and the Eighth Utilities District Fire Departments. The town's five stations and the District's three stations provide adequate protection for Manchester. One exception is the lack of a fire station in the southwestern quadrant of town to serve this growing residential area, an issue which may need to be addressed during this planning period. Maintenance and modernization will be a priority for existing, older town fire stations. A new headquarter's station is currently being built in the Eighth District.

Cemeteries

There are six cemeteries in Manchester, four of which are owned and maintained by the town. The town's projected requirement for burial plots is accommodated by these facilities through the planning period and beyond.

Buckland Cemetery is approaching its capacity. An adjoining 14-acre parcel in state ownership has been identified as a logical extension to the Buckland Cemetery, and efforts to obtain the parcel are underway at this time.

Highway Garage

Maintenance of town roads, and maintenance of storm drainage systems, and leaf and snow removal all require a large and well-maintained vehicle fleet. The highway department's maintenance garage on Olcott Street has for some time failed to meet the current demand within its available space, and now space needs for the highway garage have reached a critical point. A study to determine the space needs and preferred recommendations to accommodate them is currently underway and this issue will likely need to be dealt with during the planning period.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Senior Center

Manchester's Senior Citizen Center provides services and programs to residents age 60 and over. This growing, active and vibrant population is increasing the demands on the senior center. The building will soon receive improvements to the roof and mechanical systems. There may need to be continued analysis over the next planning period as to whether or not the building itself needs to be expanded to provide additional space for senior center activities.

The Eastern Connecticut Health Network is developing a strategy to respond to changing demands of medical patients, insurance providers and regulatory agencies.

Manchester Memorial Hospital

Manchester Memorial Hospital has long been a prominent institution in the community. This full-service health care facility not only provides medical care for residents, but is one of the town's major employers. The hospital itself has over the years continued to expand its facility on Haynes Street. Significant changes are taking place in the health and medical industries. Manchester Memorial Hospital recently joined with Rockville General Hospital as a part of the Eastern Connecticut Health Network Incorporated. The health network is developing a strategy to respond to changing demands of medical patients, insurance providers and regulatory agencies. It is possible that the types of services offered by the hospital or its facilities' needs will change over the planning period. On the other hand, Manchester may be

seen as a desirable location for other health care providers resulting in additional health care services in Manchester.

Manchester Community Technical College

Manchester Community Technical College is a state-run institution which serves as a public regional center for education, recreation and community involvement. Increasing enrollment has led the college to develop a Master Plan to guide it in meeting the demands of the community.

A 150,000-square-foot building which was under construction at the time the previous plan was being written has been completed. Another new 110,000-square-foot building is planned and will be under construction shortly. The completion of this new building will conclude Phase I of the MCTC Master Plan and begin Phase II, which to date still lacks sufficient funding. The temporary buildings which were erected in 1971 will eventually be torn down to make way for a possible formal recreational area which will be used by students and residents. With the continued implementation of the Master Plan, Manchester Community Technical College is expected to be able to meet the needs of the community for the next 50 years.

Other Community Facilities

This discussion has covered the major community facilities inventory in Manchester. There are other institutions of a cultural or service nature either public

or quasi-public which are located in and serve the town. Manchester has always been supportive of these partners in providing community service and looks forward to continued partnerships in the future.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Continue to develop and maintain a network of community facilities which add to the quality of life and create opportunities for entertainment, enjoyment, education and socialization for the health and welfare of Manchester residents

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal: To provide and maintain adequate community facilities which preserve and enhance the health, safety and welfare of the residents of Manchester.

Objectives:

- 1) Encourage and support the continued maintenance and renovation of existing public school buildings and grounds to provide adequate space for

a quality learning environment; and enhance the quality of life in Manchester's neighborhoods through implementation of the comprehensive facilities improvement plan to be developed by the Manchester Board of Education.

- 2) Develop cost-effective alternatives for continued safe disposal of solid waste for the town before the landfill stormwater discharge permit expires in 1999, and plan for the changing role the landfill will have in the community and for its impact on the general fund.
- 3) Encourage the expansion of the Mary Cheney Library through improvement of underutilized

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

space and provision of additional parking facilities.

- 4) Evaluate the facility needs for programs serving senior citizens for the next ten years, and develop an expansion plan if required.
- 5) Find and implement a solution to storage of town maintenance vehicles and equipment, salt, sand, pesticides and herbicides as a replacement for the Olcott Street garage.
- 6) Identify and take appropriate steps to acquire a site for a fire station to serve the southwest quadrant of town.

Goal: Ensure an effective and efficient wastewater collection system for the Town of Manchester.

Objectives:

- 1) Support funding for construction of modifications to the wastewater treatment plant in order to meet more stringent water-quality treatment standards if required.

2) Encourage extension of the wastewater collection system to future development areas, especially the Folly Brook/Salmon Brook/Southwest (southern-western tier) service area.

3) Support a continuing, systematic program to locate and eliminate sources of infiltration/inflow into the town and Eighth Utilities District-owned sewer systems. A joint townwide interceptor infiltration study by Eighth Utilities District and town staff should be developed and implemented.

4) Support the replacement or improvement of trunk sewer lines — including the Folly Brook, Salmon Brook and southwest quadrant service areas — and evaluate impacts of proposed developments on these lines.

5) Develop zoning, subdivision and other regulations which consider planned service area expansion among the review criteria for development.

6) Establish criteria for the capital improvement planning program which address funding priorities for wastewater treatment and collection improvements.

7) Conduct a facilities plan update to determine community needs for the next 50 years and to identify any areas of the collection or treatment systems which will require modifications during that timeframe.

Goal: Ensure adequate potable water sources, supplies and distribution systems for the Town of Manchester.

Objectives:

- 1) Protect and preserve those areas necessary for providing a potable water supply through:
 - a) Identification of an Aquifer Protection Zone which designates areas as critical for ground-water supply. Also document those areas most critical to protecting the surface water supply. Consider prohibiting septic systems in critical areas by requiring sewer hookups.
 - b) Development and adoption of appropriate regulations governing permitted uses and physical development standards in aquifer protection zones.
 - c) Supporting the adoption of regulations governing the handling, storage and disposal of hazardous wastes that may negatively affect aquifers.
- 2) Encourage and support a systematic replacement or rehabilitation program for the existing water distribution system as part of the capital improvement program.

- 3) Develop zoning and subdivision regulations which consider the capacity of existing and planned water service as review criteria for development decisions.
- 4) Support the findings of the Water Quality Improvement Plan and fund the modifications necessary to improve the treatment process or distribution system to improve water quality.
- 5) Support the extension of the water system into the southwest corner, including the potential provision of service to the Redwood Farms subdivision. This will alleviate future water quality problems for property owners with private wells or those who are serviced by a small, independent private water company.
- 6) Support extension of the water system in the Keeney Street/Bush Hill Road area to provide future water service to customers currently on private wells.
- 7) Actively support the use of water conservation devices, such as low-flow toilets and aerators, which are currently available on the marketplace and, in some cases, required by building code.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Goal: To effectively manage and control stormwater drainage to minimize hazards to property and the public, and the built and natural environment in Manchester.

Objectives:

- 1) Develop subdivision, zoning and public improvement standards which consider stormwater runoff, limit the extent of impervious surfaces and control runoff as development review criteria to minimize impact on natural and man-made drainage systems.
- 2) Encourage and support a systematic improvement and rehabilitation capital improvement program.
- 3) Develop and fund an improvement plan to address stormwater drainage problems detailed in the 1996 Stormwater Management Report.

Cultural and Historic Resources

The Town of Manchester began a systematic survey of its historic architectural and cultural resources in 1993. These studies inventoried over 1,027 properties, documenting their architectural features and other relevant information. In addition, the studies identified properties or areas worthy of consideration for inclusion on the federal National Register of Historic Places.

Manchester's evolution from an agrarian to industrial and commercial center began in the early 1800s. Many examples of historic architecture and historic areas identified in the town's studies endured through various periods of development and prosperity. The recognition and preservation of the historic and cultural resources of Manchester maintains an important link to our past and helps project our heritage and values into the future. The preservation of these historic areas also helps to maintain important design and physical features which are at the heart of the community and an economic asset.

The town already has significant listings on the National Register of Historic Places: the Cheney Brothers

National Historic Landmark District, and the (downtown) Main Street historic district. Manchester has been fortunate that its older neighborhoods have survived with a very high degree of integrity. The streets, overall urban design and original architecture are, for the most part, intact. Reinvesting in these historic areas in a way that preserves this character can continue to provide a very high quality of life and a rich legacy for our residents.

Manchester also enjoys organizational support for its historic preservation activities. The Manchester Historical Society and the Cheney Brothers National Historic District Commission have dedicated their efforts to educating the community on historic resources, preserving Manchester's historical artifacts and providing a historical resource for the community. Over the upcoming planning period Manchester should work to increase activity in the area of historic preservation and education, following the recommendations contained in the historical resource surveys.

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal: To recognize, preserve and promote the historic and cultural resources of Manchester.

Objectives:

- 1) Conduct efforts to involve more members of the community in the work of the Manchester Historical Society and Cheney Brothers National Historic District Commission to document, preserve and promote Manchester's historical and cultural resources.
- 2) Pursue the nomination and recognition of the following historical and cultural aspects of the community:
 - a) Propose the East Side neighborhood north of the Cheney expansion to be considered for nomination to the National Register as a National Register Historic District. In conjunction with the National Register listing, consider creation of a local historic district commission or other local regulatory measures which would monitor and regulate exterior alterations to properties in the district.
 - b) Propose the West Side neighborhood south of Center Street, between New Street and Main

Street, and south to Park Street, for inclusion in the Cheney Brothers National Landmark Historic District or as a local historic district.

- c) Propose the area north of Center Street between Edgerton Street and Main Street for inclusion in the Cheney Brothers National Landmark Historic District.
 - d) Propose the area on the south side of West Center Street from Cooper Street to Pine Street for the Cheney National Landmark Historic District expansion or as a proposed National Register Historic District.
- 3) Propose the following properties for individual property nomination to the National Register of Historic Places:
- The Mather/Bon Ami factory complex at 65-85 Hilliard Street
 - 447 North Main Street (Methodist Episcopal Church/ First Church of Christ Scientist)
 - 390 Main Street (Manchester National Guard Armory)
 - 123 Boulder Road (Elwood Ella House)
 - 220 East Center Street (the East Cemetery)
 - 495 Middle Turnpike East (Woodbridge House)
 - 165 Adams Street (Adams Mill)
 - 828 Hartford Road (Charles Bunce House)
 - 202 South Main Street (Ernest Watkins House)
 - 214 South Main Street (Clarence Watkins House)

- 669 Tolland Turnpike (John Olds House)
 - 1210 Tolland Turnpike (Buckland Cemetery)
 - 271 Spencer Street (West Cemetery)
- 4) Propose Union Village (the neighborhood bounded by Union Street, North Street, Kerry Street and Golway Street) for nomination on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district.
- 5) Encourage the organization of interested individuals and groups to focus on the documentation and preservation of Manchester's cemeteries.
- 6) Encourage the redevelopment and reuse of the vacant and underutilized mill buildings in the Cheney Mill area, using appropriate development incentives.
- 7) Propose the following properties, which are representative of the sites suggested for inclusion within the proposed Case Brothers-Highland District:
- 40 Glen Street (Case Brothers Paper Mills)
 - 673 Spring Street (Lawrence Case House)
 - 680 Spring Street (Case House)
- 8) Propose the Buckland-North Main Street Historic District, which would encompass that portion of North Main Street within the historic village of Buckland, extending from 543 to 756 North Main Street. Significant buildings include:
- 543 North Main Street (Cheney Power House)
 - 599 North Main Street
 - 670 North Main Street
 - 706 North Main Street (Hoffman House)
 - 713 North Main Street (Dr. Jacques House)
 - 729 North Main Street (Fitzgerald House)
 - 756 North Main Street (Hackett Brother House/Office)
- 9) Propose a South Main Street Historic District, extending from Interstate 384 southward to the Manchester town line, to include properties situated on South Main Street, as well as those adjacent sites located on Arvine Place, Comstock Road, Lewis Street and Spring Street. Representative examples include:
- 26 Arvine Place
 - 31 Arvine Place
 - 33 Comstock Road
 - 67 Comstock Road
 - 33-35 Lewis Street
 - 110 South Main Street
 - 137 South Main Street
 - 143 South Main Street
 - 247 South Main Street
 - 600 South Main Street
- 10) Propose the following National Register of Historic Places multiple property (thematic) nominations:

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

- a) Surviving examples of traditional vernacular eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century residences, specifically New England Farmhouses and Cape Cods erected between 1750 and 1825. Typical examples include:
- 279 Keeney Street
 - 660 Keeney Street
 - 943 Middle Turnpike East
 - 165 Oakland Street
 - 189 South Main Street
 - 234 South Main Street

- b) Surviving structures executed in the Greek Revival style, which appeared in large numbers in Manchester between 1830 and 1850. Typical examples include:

- 375 Bidwell Street
- 285 Charter Oak Street
- 269 Hillstown Road
- 321 Keeney Street
- 97 Prospect Street
- 211 South Main Street
- 333 South Main Street
- 637 South Main Street

- c) Surviving examples of modest but distinctive tenant worker houses erected near various Manchester mills in the nineteenth century. Representative examples include:

- 149 Adams Street
- 218 Charter Oak Street
- 671 Hartford Road
- 41 Lewis Street
- 341 Lydall Street
- 113 Spring Street

Appendix A

Recommendations for Hockanum River Linear Park

The Town should pursue the recommendations of the 1993 Hockanum River Linear Park Master Plan, with the goal of preserving — by town purchase, license or easement — as much open space land as possible to protect the streambelt, wetlands, floodplains and forest habitat along the Hockanum River and improve trail continuity along both sides of the river from the Vernon to the East Hartford town lines and eventually to connect with trails in the adjoining towns.

The following recommendations add to the municipal control of the open space greenbelt and the continuity of the river trail:

1. The town should secure through ownership, easement or license the following key parcels:
 - a. The 20-acre Hackett parcel between Adams Street and New State Road from the State of Connecticut.

- b. The open space strip along the Hockanum River on Hilliard Street from Adams Street to New State Road.
- c. A 50-foot-wide strip from parcels along the river between Union Street and North Main Street.
- d. Up to a 50-foot-wide strip along the south side of the river from I-84 Exit 63 upstream to the Vernon town line to preserve open space and extend the Oakland trail to the Vernon line.
- e. The four-acre island in the river just north of Tolland Turnpike.
- f. A three-family home on the end of North Street and adjacent open land on Union Pond between North Street and Union Pond Park.
- g. A strip along the north side of the river and east of the Adams Street bridge.
- h. State open space land between I-84 and the river adjacent to Howell Cheney Regional Technical School.

- i. Obtain a formal agreement with the Eighth Utilities District to preserve their parcel off Hilliard Street to the river as open space in order to create a passive park next to the existing river trail without interference to existing District facilities on the site.
2. Pursue the following projects to provide critical trail connections:
 - a. Support restoration or replacement of the state-owned footbridge across the river north of the Deming Street (Tolland Turnpike) vehicle bridge to improve trail crossing of the river as integral links in both the Union Pond and Oakland trails.
 - b. Seek funding to build a footbridge across the river in the gorge between the Eighth Utilities District and Allied Printing properties for the purpose of improving the Adams Mill trail continuity across the river. The trail exists on both sides of the river at this location.
 - c. Seek cooperation from Amtrak to allow erection of a raised walkway under the railroad trestle along the south side of the river to improve the continuity of the Adams Mill trail to North Main Street.
 - d. Seek funding to build a footbridge across the river just upstream from Middle Turnpike West to improve trail continuity across the river without having to walk on the street.

Appendix B

Recommendations for Recreation/Open Space Improvements to School Sites

Consider specific improvements at the following school sites:

Bowers School:

- Screen the dumpsters from view of residential properties across Henry Street.

Bentley School:

- Improve lawn and fence maintenance and add playscape equipment.

Illing Middle School:

- Evaluate current parking conditions to determine if additional parking is needed to support community events.
- Consider providing additional trash receptacles on school grounds and near the walkway.

Verplanck School:

- Complete the development of a coordinated plan to improve the grounds at the Verplanck School. This could involve improvements to overall site landscaping, pavement conditions and parking.
- The environmental assets (both natural and man-made) which exist at the Verplanck School and the town property off Olcott Street and Love Lane, including Laurel Marsh and Leber Field, are considerable and should be preserved as open space and recreation areas.

- The PTA and the block watch organizations could explore the possibility of joint efforts with other groups such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to build a parklet on undeveloped land at Verplanck School or perform other neighborhood based community service activities.

Robertson School:

- Develop more evening recreational opportunities for youth 12-18 years of age.

Washington School:

- Use the building more intensively by providing opportunities for informal social interaction for both neighborhood children and adults. Neighborhood volunteers should be a component of the programming.
- Increase utilization of school grounds for block parties, cookouts, neighborhood fairs and picnics.

Highland Park School:

- Pursue environmental education opportunities, similar to those at Verplanck School. Close proximity to the town's watershed and reservoirs and Oak Grove Nature Center can be used to advantage.

Waddell School:

- Consider expanding the hours and staffing of existing recreation programs, and add new recreational programs especially for teens and adults of all ages.
- Consider installing more trash receptacles on the school grounds, and benches by the Waddell School playscape and pool area to facilitate adult supervision of children.

- Consider improving the lighting at the Bagshaw Little League field to accommodate an expanding Little League program.

- Consider, in conjunction with the Board of Education, investigating the design options for creating a more park-like setting and increasing the use of the grounds for neighborhood recreational activities.

Keeney School:

- Consider installing additional playground equipment and seating areas encouraging recreation and neighborhood socialization.

Martin School:

- Consider installing additional playground equipment and seating areas encouraging recreation and neighborhood socialization.
- Incorporate the Martin School grounds into plans for expansion of bikeways or trails planned through the neighborhood.