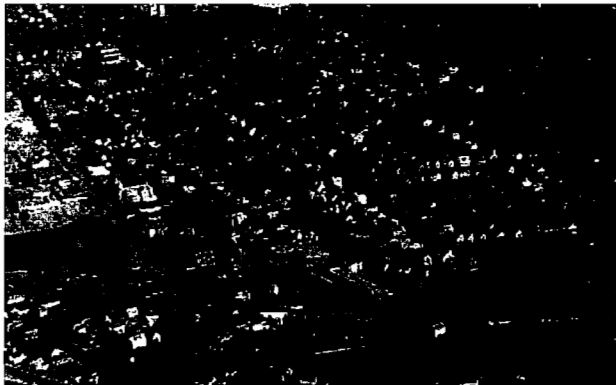


obtained on
12/9/11

Windham Connecticut

2007 Plan of Conservation and Development



Acknowledgments

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Claire Lary, Vice Chair
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Cover Photos:

Top Left: Willimantic, aerial photograph by G.Leslie Sweetnam
Top Right: Alex Caisse Park, photo by Mark Paquette
Bottom Left: Willimantic River behind ArtSpace, photo by Mark Paquette
Bottom Right: Windham Center, aerial photograph by G.Leslie Sweetnam

Interior photos:

All aerial photographs are courtesy of G. Leslie Sweetman, visit his site at www.glsweetnam.com
All FrogFest photographs are courtesy of Peter Polomski of the Lily Pad, FrogFest was a cooperative event by WAAC and United Way. Section 12 identifies each Frog and its artist.
Historic photographs are either courtesy of Windham Textile Museum or Thread City.com

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Town of Windham

Planning Commission
979 Main Street Willimantic CT 06226

August 24, 2007

To all Windham Residents,

The Planning Commission has worked over the past two years to develop this Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Windham. Our goals were to encourage smart growth, develop and promote business, and protect our resources while fiscally benefiting our town. We focused on ways to improve and maintain the overall quality of life in Windham, and to preserve the unique urban and rural resources and assets of the town. We also considered the State and Regional plans of Conservation and Development while writing this document.

The Planning Commission sought public input throughout the process, and once a draft POCD was completed, schedule a public hearing. Members of all Windham boards and commissions were provided with a copy of the proposed POCD, copies were also available in the Town Hall and in all 4 libraries, as well as on the Town website. On May 31, 2007 the Planning Commission held a public hearing which was continued to June 28, 2007 when the hearing was closed. The Commission then discussed all the comment that were received and incorporated many of those comments and recommendations into the final plan.

Windham Area Council of Government's advised the Planning Commission that the proposed POCD was not consistent with the Regional Plan of Development (see A2-v). To address those concerns the Commission revised the Plan to include transit oriented development (see 6-6) and illustrated how overlay districts could be used to guide development along our major waterways (see 12-2).

With these revisions, we feel that The Windham Plan of Conservation and Development is consistent with both the State Plan of Conservation and Development and the Regional Plan of Development.

On August 23, 2007 the Planning Commission adopted this plan as the Windham Plan of Conservation and Development.

Sincerely,

Matthew Vertefeuille, Chairman
Windham Planning Commission

Glossary

Aquifer: A water-bearing layer of sand, gravel or permeable rock beneath the ground surface. Significant aquifers: Deep aquifer areas capable of containing substantial water for use as public water supply.

B-1 District: The Windham zoning district for downtown Willimantic. Primarily the rectangle formed by Main and Valley Streets and High and Jackson Streets

BMP-Best Management Practices: A method of storm water management that has a lower impact on the environment than a traditional system

ConnDOT: Connecticut Department of Transportation: The state agency that regulates and controls activity on state roadways. In Windham, Rtes 6, 14, 32, 66, 195, 203 and 289 are state roads.

CTI-Connecticut Transportation Institute: A project of the University of Connecticut's Engineering Department that provides research, information and guidance on transportation and parking issues

A Design Review Committee or Board is an advisory board that makes recommendations to the Zoning Commission on commercial architecture and signs. Generally one or more members are architects, landscape architects or from a related design field, as well as other townspeople.

ECSU: Eastern Connecticut State University: One of the four Connecticut state universities, located in Windham, offering 31 undergraduate degree programs, and 3 graduate degree programs; student body exceeds 5,000

Gateways: Visual breaks that indicate an entry into a new area. Gateways into a more developed area send cues for a motorist to slow down. Generally the roadway is visually pinched with trees, or buildings with curbside parking that tells the driver there is change ahead.

Housing Types:

Affordable housing is a dwelling where the total housing costs are affordable to those living in that housing unit. In the United States and Canada, a commonly accepted guideline for housing affordability is a housing cost that does not exceed 30% of a household's gross income

Market rate housing is a dwelling where the price is set by the demand for that dwelling.

Supportive housing is a form of co-housing designed to support individuals, not just socially but with basic life skills. Housing is coupled with social services such as job training, alcohol and drug abuse programs and case management. Often targeted at low-income workers and populations in need of assistance such as the homeless, those suffering from mental illness or substance abuse problems, and the elderly or medically frail.

In-fill Development: Development that ‘fills in’ between other development

LEED - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

National Main Street Program is service of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For 25 years it has honed its pioneering Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization: an innovative methodology to revitalize downtowns and create economic growth. It has created a network of more than 1,200 active Main Street programs nationally.

National Register of Historic Places is the Nation’s official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Park Service administers the National Register.

Overlay Districts are a way to simplify zoning regulations for unique situations that cross multiple zoning districts. The base zoning district regulations still apply, but areas that fall within the overlay zone could have additional development or use restrictions

PILOP- Payment in Lieu of Parking: A system of that would permit commercial development in an area with municipal parking to make a payment to the town instead of providing on-site parking

POCD- Plan of Conservation and Development: Connecticut State Statutes requires that each municipality adopt a plan of conservation and development at least every 10 years

Smart Growth: Planned pattern of development that balances development opportunities with community needs and the demand for future services

Thoroughfares: Main highways and byways that form impression and image of town.

Traffic Calming: Combining visual and physical techniques to slow traffic for a safer environment

Viewshed: An area that is viewed from a public area, generally a roadway

WRTD: Windham Regional Transit District

Executive Summary



At least once every ten years, the [planning] commission shall prepare or amend and shall adopt a plan of conservation and development for the municipality.

- Chapter 126 Sec. 8-23. Preparation, amendment or adoption of plan of conservation and development.

This document serves to capture a vision for the Windham community. It is a living document that will evolve over time. However, we also believe that it should serve as a set of benchmarks against which future development efforts are to be measured. Thus, we find it important to be both 'bold and visionary' as well as 'pragmatic and realistic'.

Guiding Philosophy:

We believe this document demonstrates consistency with several previous visions for the town, outlined in Section 2. We capture in these pages an exploration of opportunities and obstacles to development that to a great extent have remained unchanged over the years.

We believe the opportunity to make that vision a reality is much greater at this point than any other point in this town's history. We truly find Windham at the proverbial crossroads faced with many options regarding our future. The document highlights our thinking on some of these key concerns.

In short, our vision is to promote economic development through smart growth and forward thinking while meeting the needs of multiple stakeholders and interested parties.

This vision certainly requires community involvement and commitment from town leadership. We find it paramount that multiple stakeholders engage in the processes we outline to help shape Windham's future. Local businesses, municipal government, the University, and many nonprofit community-focused organizations in town all serve vital roles in achieving this vision.

The planned hearings and public commentary period regarding this document represent an important step toward achieving such active civic engagement. Continued support from some of our town's organizations like Thread City Development, the Chamber of Commerce, the Northeast Alliance for Economic Development, to name just a few, will also serve to bolster progress. These groups, in many ways, have already helped the Commission develop this plan. Through public meetings, hearings, interactions with other town agencies, commissions and departments, and meetings with local stakeholders, we believe we have taken the initial step towards achieving a common vision for the future.

Following through with the positive vision outlined below requires not just the desire to change, but the capacity to change. The community has the desire and political will to make this happen. We firmly believe the stakeholders have the capacity to make this happen. It is our collective responsibility to now make it happen. To create in the Town of Windham a future grounded in smart growth and forward thinking, maintaining respect for the historic and rural character of our town is our vision. It is bold and visionary. It is pragmatic and realistic. Below, and in the following Sections, we outline this vision in greater detail.

Community Goals:

Improve Community Image

One of the most important goals of this document is to help guide development and growth in a way that enhances the image of our community and recognizes who we are. Windham has many positive assets and tremendous potential, and we are improving the image that some others have of our community. We believe that by taking the proactive steps outlined in this Plan, we will be able to demonstrate a positive image.



Maintain Rural Character in the Windhams and Urban Character in Willimantic

We recognize that our “community” is not one homogenous area. Rather, it is made up of several interconnected parts. The distinctiveness of both the Windhams and Willimantic must not only be maintained, but celebrated. Our economy and politics, our history and future are embedded within each other. At the same time, we recognize the need to pursue different policies as paths to growth, change and development in the various regions. We seek to find common elements for all, while maintaining the distinctiveness of the each.



Expand, Diversify and Improve the Town of Windham’s Economic and Employment Base

With the closing of the mills, and indeed the closing of the mill-economy as an era, we recognize the need to diversify our job base. While traditional notions of diversification are to be considered, we are also aware that a large portion of that diversification flows from the collective future we identify. Therefore we advocate not only diversification in terms of industries and job types, but diversification in terms of change over time, as we move through different stages in our community’s growth.



Maintain, Improve and Develop Aspects of the Community which Enhance Quality of Life

Quality of life is a subjective term, depending on the perspective of various stakeholders. However, some commonalities across multiple stakeholders exist, and indeed are tapped in this plan of development. Opportunity, safety, prosperity, health, etc. serve as common baseline expectations within the community. We seek to promote activities that satisfy multiple needs and desires. For example, it is not enough to simply create a park: we seek to complement the environmental and recreational benefits of a park and recognize new parks can encourage economic activity, improve the beauty of our town, promote walking, biking and healthy activities.



2007 Windham POCD

Protect the General Health, Safety, Welfare and Prosperity of Windham Residents

Certainly, we need to secure basic, fundamental rights of residents by taking steps to lock in gains made and indeed raise standards for the future regarding health, safety, welfare and prosperity. While a planning document does not achieve such lofty goals, it does set in place a culture of high expectations that our residents deserve.

Provide Balance in Growth

Growth will take place across various sectors, geographic regions, income brackets and industries or clusters of business activity. As a town, we need to work together to find a balance across these dimensions that helps diversify our economic base, while tapping opportunities that emerge serendipitously. By indicating our desires in a balanced way, we can more thoughtfully address opportunities that might pull too heavily on our resources in one direction or another. At the same time, we recognize that the future cannot be predicted, and thus investment opportunities might arise in unexpected ways, and we need to have a fluid vision that allows us to aggressively tap potential when it reveals itself.

Protect Windham's Natural and Man-made Resources

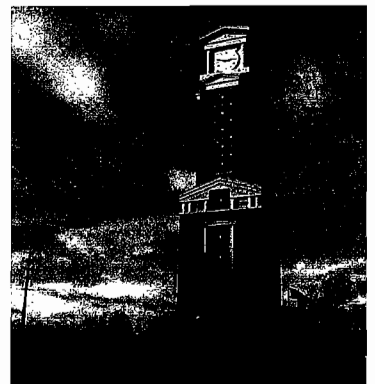
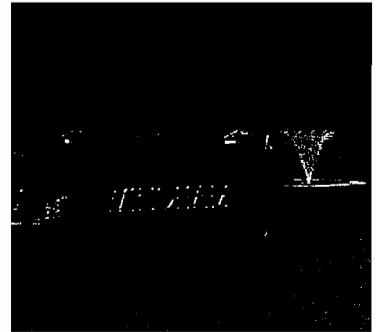
Our nature and history serve as anchors to our future success. We must take steps now to preserve these vital endowments. As responsible stewards of our land, infrastructure, main streets, parks and buildings, we need to set a tone of respect and honor in the planning decisions we make. These resources are finite and we cannot abuse or waste them in search of short-term gains.

Plan For and Celebrate Diversity

One of the most important aspects of our community is the diversity of people who live here. While some towns allude to this concern out of social responsibility and political correctness, we find it strikes at the core of who we are. Our diversity of peoples, cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds can become our core competency as a community. We need to not only honor and respect difference, we need to embrace it and plan to encourage it.

Promote Energy Efficiency

Finally, we need to be wise in our use of resources. Fiscal prudence demands we do so. By encouraging investment and innovation by the town and its residents in alternative energy sources, conservation, and innovative new technologies we can leap frog over conventional states of growth and become a leader in the region.



Priority Areas:

In order to meet the goals described in brief above, we identified eight priority areas. Sections 3 through 10 of the Plan details our vision and goals for each.

Our first and foremost priority is to increase and enhance **Business and Economic Development** in the community. We recognize that many of the goals outlined above require the engine of economic growth to become sustainable.

Towards that end, we recognize that perception and image prove critical to prospective businesses and as such, we place a high priority on **Gateways and Thoroughfares** that provide access and project a vision of change, growth, maturity and perspective on who we are and where we want to be in the future.

We also recognize that we can not be all things in all areas and therefore stress the need to focus on specific **Business Centers** that serve as focal points for growth and change. These centers might evolve differently over time, depending on the specific needs, capacities and resources of different areas. We do not want to become dominated by sprawl. We prefer instead to focus our energies in various ways to balance the competing needs of various stakeholders, while preserving the variation in our community that makes us so unique.

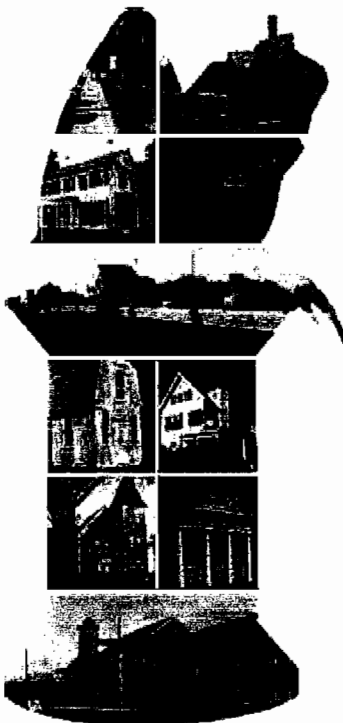
The same logic applies to our priority area of **Neighborhoods and New Housing Development**. We want to plan for change and growth in ways that respect current land uses and protects the urban and rural fabric. Doing so requires wise use of **Natural Resources and Open Spaces** while maintaining

our overt focus on the preservation of **History and Cultural Resources** as stewards for future generations.

We believe much good can come of tapping our **Community Spaces** throughout the town: these spaces can demonstrate the community's vision for the future. Effective use of such space reiterates our desire to grow and change in a positive direction that enhances our community by making use of land in creative and innovative ways. By setting aside community spaces, we believe we will increase our commitment to quality of life and smart growth that respects the human need for space to gather, recreate and celebrate all our town has to offer.

Finally, we realize that all of the priority areas and goals require investment in **Municipal Infrastructure**. By maintaining current elements, enhancing them, and investing in the future, we can design an infrastructure that provides synergies between our multiple goals.

These priority areas are embedded in the action steps described in this plan. They are each expanded upon throughout the rest of this document. Planning that addresses each of these areas will help us achieve our goals. Solutions and change will not be found overnight. However, through smart growth in incremental steps, we can realize the positive vision our town and community desires and indeed deserves.

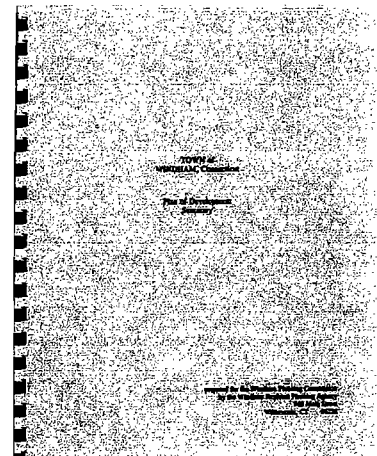


Overview of Previous Plans and Role of this 2007 Plan



The 1994 plan of conservation and development was a strong document, outlining the possibilities and goals for the community. The plan emphasized the importance of preservation of our Villages and the historic gems of town. It valued our diversity and expressed the desire to create a vibrant City Center. It very successfully predicted many things, but looking ten years into the future is not an easy vision. Technology has changed greatly. With computers in every home, online shopping, and working, has become common. Cell phones have also changed how we do business and communicate. We use satellites to receive our radio and TV. The expansion and impact of these technologies would have been impossible to predict.

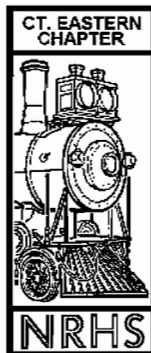
In the past twelve years, we have seen two of the largest casinos in the world built in our region. The impact of these is far reaching. We have lost long term businesses in town and welcomed newcomers. The Windham Mills was transformed into an industrial complex and has attracted new life to Windham. We created festivals, an arts magnet school, and a performance theater on Main Street. We added to our parks and trails with projects such as the Garden on the Bridge and the Veteran's Memorial Trail. All have had an impact on the community.



1994 Plan

This 2007 Plan
replaces the

Town of Windham Connecticut,
Plan of Development
adopted June 27, 1994



There has been a spirit of change in Windham in the past 12 years. We have become very proactive in the pursuit of the vibrant, diverse community. In the past ten years we have grown to have festivals, theater, recreation, education and more. Many of these have been accomplished by grassroots support and efforts of citizens who care about and want to improve the place they live. The list is impressive:

- Thread City Crossing also known as Frog Bridge
- 3rdThursday Street Festival and Willimantic Renaissance Inc.
- Willimantic Whitewater Partnership
- New Middle school
- Expansion of Eastern CT State University
- Retail development in North Windham
- Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum
- Restoration of our Footbridge
- Restoration and reuse of Windham Mills
- Shetucket Plains Park
- Acquired Noznick Property for future recreation use
- Artspace rehabilitation and reuse of abandoned Mill
- Windham Garden on the Bridge
- Willimantic Victorian Neighborhood Association
- Victorian Days Festival and home tour held annually
- Windham Area Arts Collaborative
- Thread City Development Inc.
- Windham Hospital expansion
- Chocolate Festival
- Burton Leavitt Theater
- Arts Magnet School
- Boom Box parade
- Design standards for our City Center
- Historic Main Street Signs
- Gateway signs
- Frogfest
- Riverfest
- Covenant Soup Kitchen Frog race
- Willimantic and Natchaug Rivers Greenway designation

2007 Windham POCD

Downtown Development

Windham is on the verge of a development that will shape the future of our Town and Region. Not since the redevelopment of the 1970s has the area seen a similar effort to re-energize our Downtown Business district. The town has named a preferred developer for a project involving three historic buildings in the center of our downtown. The town and developer will now need to work to balance the project's economic viability with the restoration of the historic buildings or their replication. The development will address not only the commercial and residential opportunities in the area, it will also address retail, restaurants, traffic, parking and commercial space.

Re-emphasis on River and Bridges

There has been a reaffirmation of the great value of the Rivers that flow through our City as well. Willimantic Whitewater Partnership was formed in 2002 with the goal of reconnecting the town with the Willimantic River; it has found support locally, as well as at the State and Federal level. The Partnership, a non-profit organization, sees the river as an economic engine for the community, and is seeking to attract people through parks, trail and whitewater kayaking and rafting. They have already acquired a key parcel on the eastern side of Bridge Street, which they plan to develop into a park and trailhead. The Partnership was instrumental in the town receiving \$2 million in federal funds for over a mile of trails along the river from the Columbia town line to Bridge Street.

They are working to acquire recreational easements or purchase additional land on both sides of the river for more trails and parks. Several communities in western states have seen a very positive economic benefit from urban parks, especially when combined with a whitewater course. By reconfiguring dams created by the former mill industry, the town can once again use the power of the river. In 2012, migratory fish will once again be able to reach the Willimantic River when the Scotland Dam's fish passage ladder is complete. The reconfiguring of the Willimantic dams will enable these fish to then travel up stream as far as the Eagleville dam in Mansfield. The whitewater park, the only one planned in New England, will attract people, business and commerce. For four years the Chamber of Commerce has held Riverfest which has been well attended and will surely dovetail into the schedule of monthly events in town.

We have re-embraced our river with The Thread City Crossing Bridge, which connects our Downtown to the Pleasant Street Neighborhood, and beyond. The Bridge features four twenty-foot tall bronze Frogs sitting upon spools of thread to remind us from where we have come. The unique structure has become a tourist attraction and a point of reference for direction throughout the area.

We have taken back the 100+ year old stone arch Bridge, which was retired as the southern roadway to the downtown area, and developed it into the pedestrian Windham Garden on the Bridge. The gardens will not only beautify the lower Main Street area but it will add park space and enhance the quality of life for Windhamites and become a tourist destination.



Willimantic Victorian Neighborhood Association meetinghouse on Main St.



Willimantic River - Riverfest 2005

Meetings, Plans and Ideas

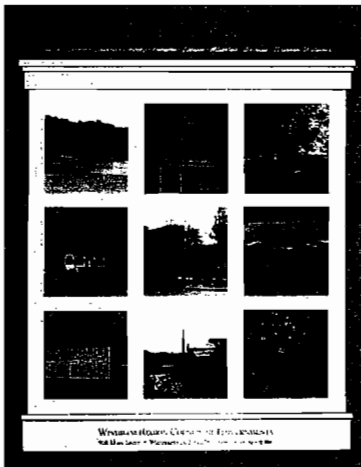
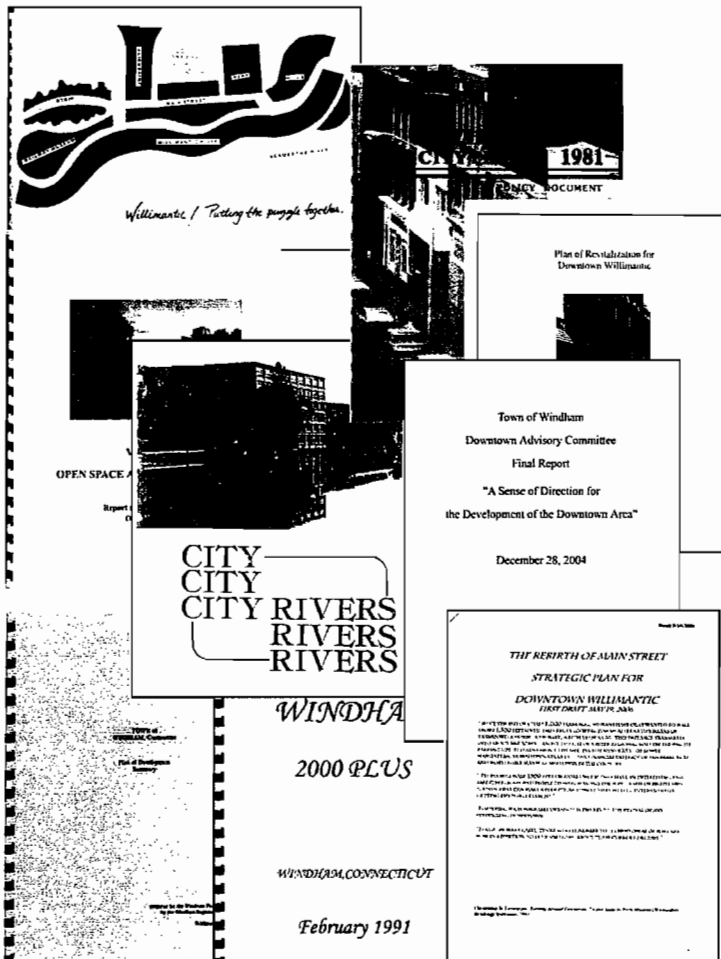
The Planning Commission read and took into consideration many plans including the Windham Regional Plan of Development, the State of Connecticut Plan of Development, the Downtown Advisory Committee Plan for Downtown Willimantic, and the 1994 Windham Plan of Development. There have been many well attended forums sponsored by Thread City Development, Windham Arts Collective, Windham Open Space Committee, University of Connecticut Landscape Architecture Classes, and Willimantic Whitewater Partnership to name a few. Each group focused on the betterment of Windham as a goal and, although each group adds different flavor to the overall plan, we all agree on similar goals.

Downtown, our city center has been a focus of many groups. The plan for creating a pedestrian-friendly, arts and entertainment district has been a common thread. The desire for restaurants, theater and unique shopping has been determined to be the goal. These groups have also stressed the consideration of green construction and environmental sensitivity. The emphasis on protecting our architecturally historic buildings has also been highlighted as a priority.

Economic development and smart growth are the economic engines which will shape the town's demographics, determine the amount of taxes we pay and ultimately change, or maintain, the quality of life. Attracting businesses which add to our employment levels and bring added taxes to Windham will always be a priority. A careful approach to the addition of "Big Box" development needs to be made. A study of impact on employment, taxes and the impact on existing business should be looked at. The support of local business should be a priority.

We should embrace the University community and weave their needs into our plans. The safety of our community needs to be better communicated to the students and faculty of the Universities. We need to break down the barriers and attract people to patronize businesses in town. We should work to create ways to make students want to stay in Windham, creating business and raising families.

Open space has been made a priority as well as the protection and access to our water. Subdivisions and residential development should be limited to in-fill areas with services. Development in areas outside the services area should be limited in size and impact. Open space to preserve natural resources, with or without public access, should also be acquired.



Business & Economic Development



Economic Development in the form of retail, office and industrial development is important to Windham. The town should work towards retaining existing businesses, encouraging their expansion, and seeking appropriate new development. The focus should be on businesses that provide:

- job opportunities at fair wages,
- goods and services for residents and regional patrons,
- a positive fiscal effect for future years,
- encourage a strong city center, and
- development in keeping with Windham's rural character
- opportunity for local ownership
- locally produced goods and services
- environmental sustainability



Ribbon Cutting for Flowers ABK



Windham Airport



Smart Growth is Smart Money

Smart Growth:

Planned pattern of development that balances development opportunities with community needs and the demand for future services.

Smart Growth is Smart Money because it does not focus on the immediate tax gain but rather on the long term benefit of a positive fiscal impact.

"..an area's quality of life is generally a notable factor in a company's site selection process"

Business Facilities,
a leader in business
site selection
May 23, 2007

Windham Labor Force (2003)

Total	10,694
Employed	9,924
Unemployed	770 7.2%

Windham Employment (2003)

Total jobs	10,342
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Windham Residents

working in town	4,247
working elsewhere	6,099

Connecticut Economic Resource Center
Town Profiles July 2005

The Value of Local Business:

For every \$1 spent at a local business,
45 cents is reinvested locally.

For every \$1 spent at a corporate
chain, 15 cents is reinvested locally.

Yes! Magazine Winter '07

Architectural design guidelines for commercial buildings are a component of zoning regulations that ensure new commercial development or renovations fit in contextually with the unique character of Windham that townspeople value.

Design Guidelines provide assurance to new developers that surrounding development will continue to enhance his/her investment. Design Guidelines will ensure a strong future assessed value for Windham's Grand List.

A **Design Review** Committee or Board is an advisory board that makes recommendations to the Zoning Commission on commercial architecture and signs. Generally one or more members are architects, landscape architects or from a related design field, as well as other townspeople.

Economic Development

- Use community's assets to attract new businesses
- Seek businesses that create jobs with good wages
- Partner with ECSU and UConn for research and technology centers
- Promote the available technology of Windham's proximity to high-speed fiber-optic internet connections
- Seek businesses that have long-term positive fiscal impact; require a fiscal impact analysis on all development in excess of 50,000 sq. ft.
- New development that will increase the demand for services should provide the revenue to support those services; proactively seek businesses that will have a long term positive fiscal effect
- Seek economic development that will be an asset to the town for generations
- Become 'business friendly' by proactively providing regulatory information and assisting businesses through the development process

Town-wide

- Architectural design guidelines should be developed and implemented for all commercial zones so those areas become visual assets of the town and encourage repeat out-of-town shoppers and a thriving retail atmosphere
- Design guidelines reassure a new businesses that future new businesses will not detract from their business
- A Design Review Committee should be established to review all commercial development and renovations and make recommendations to the zoning commission
- Once adopted, the architectural design guidelines should be adhered to as a way to strengthen future commercial property grand list. Commercial property neither designed nor constructed well, generally does not appreciate as quickly as residential property values and may decline in value, thereby adversely impacting future grand lists by shifting the tax burden onto residential property.
- New and existing development should be made visually connected through a coordinated program of landscaping, vehicular and pedestrian access, signage and under-ground utilities
- On major thoroughfares, access management should be implemented to reduce the number and width of access points (curb cuts) from high traffic streets

- Corner lots should be designed to eliminate vehicular short-cuts that pass through without accessing the business. For example, limit curb cut to only one roadway or require a site layout with no direct/easy access to another street
- Access between adjoining parking lots should be required
- Buffer commercial zones that are adjacent to residential uses with greater setbacks and require permanent visual and noise screening
- Revise current parking requirements for suburban commercial development, use 2005 University of Connecticut Transportation Institute study on parking as a guide

Existing Businesses and Existing Commercial Buildings

- Work to retain existing businesses and encourage their growth and expansion
- Encourage re-use of existing buildings over development of vacant land

Strategic Planning, Smart Growth and New Commercial Areas

- Only with strategic planning and smart growth can Windham maximize the fiscal potential of new commercial development
- Build upon existing infrastructure by focusing growth in city center
- Create areas for small neighborhood businesses in a village setting in appropriate locations throughout town
- Focus General Business only in concentrated areas at appropriate locations; transition between those areas with lighter-use businesses such as professional services
- Revise zoning requirements to encourage in-fill at appropriate locations
- Focus new development in small areas along major roadways, retain rural character between these areas
- Multi-tenant developments and areas of concentrated development should be pedestrian friendly
- Mixed use/village businesses, with retail on first floor and housing and offices on upper floors, should be encouraged in certain areas
- Development must be compatible with the character, scale and architecture of the surrounding area

Development Types

Traditional City Center - retail and service businesses in multi-storied buildings with offices and housing on upper level. Focus is toward the sidewalk and pedestrian access - generally with little or no setback, nor on-site parking requirements.

Village Business - small scale businesses (such as retail shops, small restaurants, office and personal service uses) in buildings that enhance the village centers.

General Business - larger scale business uses (such as shopping center, retail, restaurant, gas service stations, light industrial, and similar uses) intended to serve community and regional needs.

Business Park - larger scale business uses (such as office, warehouse, light manufacturing, assembly, research and development, and similar uses). Such uses could be organized in a park-type setting or occur in areas of pre-existing uses.

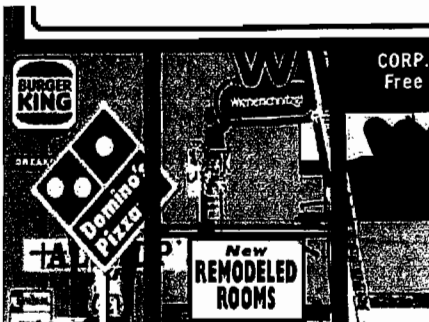
Transitional Area - areas adjacent to commercial areas where lower intensity uses (such as lodging facilities, small scale offices, day care centers, institutional uses) would provide for an orderly transition to less intensive residential uses.

A good sign code is pro-business because an attractive business district will attract more customers than an ugly one. Moreover, when signs are controlled, all businesses benefit from the 'even playing field' as customers can easily find their business.

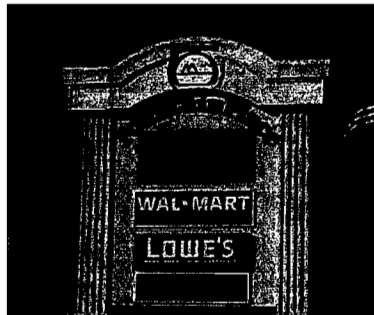
Commercial and Municipal/State Signage

Signs are important for direction and information, but signs out of scale or poorly placed add confusion and clutter rather than inform.

- Develop sign standards for commercial zones that will enhance the area, provide a business identifier and reduce visual clutter
- Free standing, road-side signs should only identify the business
- Advertising signs and displays should only be permitted in/on windows
- Temporary readerboards should not be permitted



Sign Frenzy is created if standards are not consistent and upheld.



Well designed, well placed signs increase a business' visibility from roadways, while reducing visual roadway clutter



Zoning

- Include the maximum percentage of impervious surface permitted in zoning regulations for all non-residential development
- Encourage site designs to have less impact on the environment by using techniques such as Best Management Practices (BMP) methods of treating runoff and water detention
- Re-evaluate and modify existing commercial, business, manufacturing and industrial zones to better reflect current goals and opportunities
- Make provisions in the regulations for existing businesses that could become non-conforming with future zone changes

Gateways & Main Thoroughfares

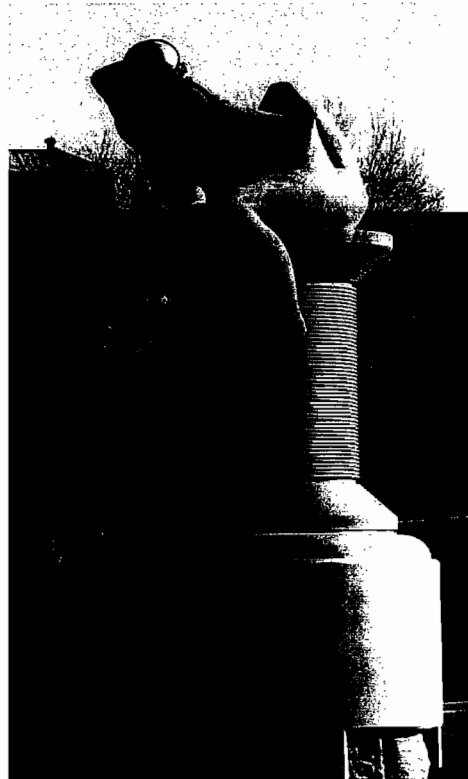


The roads we travel every day set the tone for how we feel about Windham. Many of our main roadways are a wide expanse of asphalt, lined with parking lots and sign clutter. The visual message we receive is to hurry along; there is nothing to encourage us to enjoy the view.

Unplanned strip development along our streets and roadway isn't just unattractive, it's unsafe and environmentally unsound.

*You never get a
second chance
to make a
first impression.*

Will Rogers



Gateways: Visual breaks that indicate an entry into a new area. Gateways into a more developed area send cues for a motorist to slow down. Generally the roadway is visually pinched with trees, or buildings with curb-side parking that tells the driver there is change ahead.

Thoroughfares: Main highways and byways that form impress/image of town.

Commercial Development has a tremendous impact on the perception of our community because -

It's located on major roads that we travel daily,

The buildings are frequently large in scale,

There are large open areas of parking and few trees,

Signs litter the landscape,

There is heavy vehicular traffic and frequent curb cuts, and

You can't see the fields for the gas stations

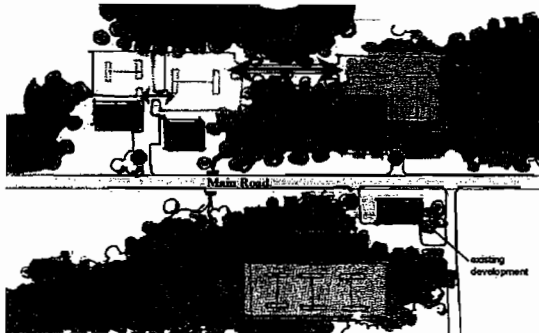
Windham has become a town attractive to businesses looking to expand; it appears that we will have significant development in the near future. It is important to plan for this development so that it will provide a long-term fiscal benefit to Windham as well as enhance the streets and roadways we travel every day:

- Commercial design standards and accompanying guidelines, used by many Connecticut communities, result in attractive buildings that continue to have positive fiscal benefits well into the future
- Buffering the street edge with a wide landscape area provides a pleasant roadway and enhances nearby businesses
- In certain areas it may be appropriate to reduce setbacks so buildings are at the street edge with parking behind
- Vehicular access to businesses needs to be designed to reduce the number and/or width of curb cuts

These two illustrations have the same amount of building development, and the same amount of parking, but result in two very different streets



Without access management and planning, haphazard development results in many curb cuts (vehicular entrances/exits as indicated by ●). Unplanned development can become an inefficient use of land and result in sprawl. Multiple curb cuts can create an area with frequent accidents. Without access management, patrons must exit one business via the roadway, then travel a short distance to enter another.



Through planning for a commercial area, curb cuts for vehicular access can be greatly reduced, making for a safer and more attractive roadway. Shared parking with access off the main road, and pedestrian connections, reduces traffic on the road. By grouping the buildings, open areas can be preserved.

Existing Condition

Proposed

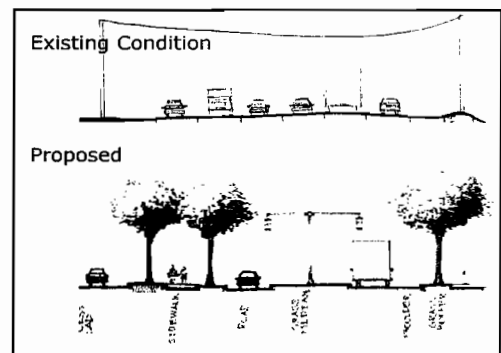
VALEWAY

ANGLED PARKING

BIKEWAY

NORTH WINDHAM BOULEVARD "ROUTE 6"

SIDE WALK



Use architectural design standards to promote development that will enhance our thoroughfares.

Without commercial design guidelines



With commercial design guidelines



Examples of three McDonald's in communities that have commercial design guidelines



Windham thoroughfare improvements to consider:

West Main Street



At Rte 6 Interchange

- Create a gateway that defines entry into town
- Feature the welcome sign

From Rte 6 to Bridge Street

- Plant trees along road side, if no power lines nearby, tree at maturity should be 50'; if power lines nearby, trees at maturity should be 30'
- Reduce curb cuts through an access management plan
- Limit increased vehicular activity through permitted uses (i.e. limit gas stations or quick stop stores)

Route 32 (South)



Within Willimantic District

- Enhance entry into city and to the Garden on the Bridge
- Maintain residential zoning

In South Windham

- Create gateway at Rte 203, include welcome sign
- Enhance the view of the river
- Limit curb cuts
- Maintain existing trees; add trees to create tree-lined roadway

Route 14

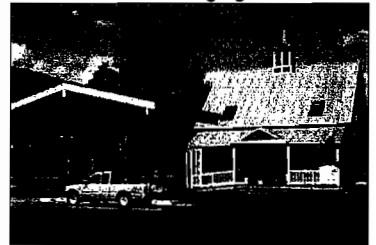


- Create gateway and welcome sign near Frog Pond
- Maintain rural view as entering Windham Center Village
- Reduce the paved area at the intersection of Rte 203 at Windham Center Post Office; create safe pedestrian access and crossing
- Use Rec Park as gateway to city by enhancing visual impact of park from the street

Without commercial design guidelines



With commercial design guidelines



Rte 6 / North Windham

North of Commercial Area

- Enhance Rte 203 intersection
- Begin tree-lined median



At Commercial Area

- Create visual gateway to town at Home Depot driveway
- Work with DOT to reduce lanes and pavement width
- Continue tree-lined median, add trees at road edge
- Reduce curb cuts
- Create visual gateway at Rte 6 highway



At Rte 6 Bypass

- Signage viewed by South-bound traffic should indicate straight for scenic downtown Willimantic and right turn (on to highway) to Hartford. Additional signs are needed to direct travelers to Historic Districts, Frog Bridge and the Garden on the Bridge

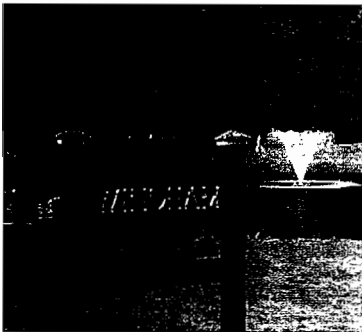


Boston Post Road to Main Street



- Plant trees along road sides
- Reduce width of existing driveways and curb cuts; limit additional cuts
- Limit additional gas stations
- Enhance intersection with Rte 14

Rte 195 and Jackson Street



- Redesign Lauter Park entrance and visually connect to Alex Caisse Park to become a gateway to town
- On-street parking on Jackson should be limited to one side
- Trees should line the street
- When feasible, Jackson Street should be reconfigured between Moulton Court and Maple Avenue

Main Street Downtown



Portsmouth, NH



- Create a safe environment for pedestrians with clearly defined crosswalks and prompt demand-activated crossing signals
- Decrease traffic speed to increase visibility of storefronts
- Secure funding for a major streetscape improvement project

Business Centers



City Center

Once the regional shopping center, downtown Willimantic can again become a regional center, albeit in a different form. Third Thursday Street Fests, with up to 10,000 attending each of the summer evening festivals, have shown that people will indeed come downtown. Other initiatives such as Willimantic Whitewater Partnership, the Garden on the Bridge and the completion of the EastCoast Greenway will serve to increase activity downtown.

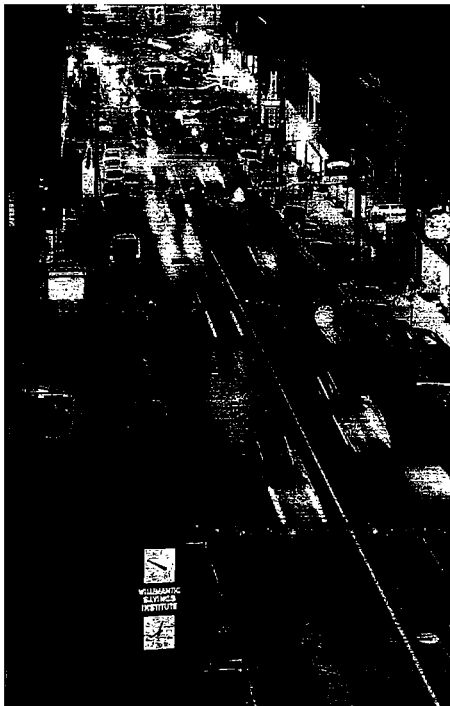
To capitalize on these initiatives, the town needs to continue its work to create a pedestrian-friendly environment downtown. Development of market-rate housing and office space on upper levels is needed to increase pedestrian activity. Street-level retail shops, including areas for small start-up retail businesses, restaurants and galleries will provide activities for those pedestrians.

"Willimantic: A Small American city
with a vivid history."

Willimantic! Putting the puzzle together
11/94

"..... a downtown is the most visible
indicator of community pride
it is what will separate successful
communities from declining ones."

—National Main Street Center



1950s Willimantic



Willimantic River flows
behind downtown

3rd Thursday Street Fest



Focus Social and Economic Activity Downtown

The **National Main Street Program** is service of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For 25 years it has honed its pioneering Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization: an innovative methodology to revitalize downtowns and create economic growth. It has created a network of more than 1,200 active Main Street programs nationally.

The **Main Street Approach** advocates a return to community self-reliance, local empowerment, and the rebuilding of traditional commercial districts based on their unique assets: distinctive architecture, a pedestrian-friendly environment, personal service, local ownership, and a sense of community.

Strong Economic Base

Collectively the downtown properties in the B-1 district are by far the largest tax payer in Windham, 2.5 times more than the largest single taxpayer.

Working to strengthen the city center will create an even stronger economic base and a major center of employment.

- Use the experience and resources of the National Main Street Program by becoming a member
- Hire a Main Street co-ordinator to work with businesses and the arts, and as university liaison
- Market downtown's unique character to shoppers, investors, new businesses and visitors
- Encourage tourism by promoting our Victorian architecture, our four unique bridges (Thread City Crossing, Footbridge, arch bridge on Bridge St, and the Garden on the Bridge) and our walkable community
- Develop a civic park at Jillson Square
- Provide services for tourists such as bathrooms and visitor information
- Locate events/cultural center in town center
- Continue to support community events focused downtown such as 3rd Thursday Street Fest and the Boom Box Parade
- Facilitate Willimantic Whitewater Partnership's plans to develop a whitewater in-river park with parklands along the river
- Complete and maintain the Garden on the Bridge

Create a Pedestrian-Friendly Environment

- Reduce the impact of the vehicular traffic on Main Street
- Reduce through truck traffic by directing it to the Rte 6 limited-access highway
- Consider changing traffic to one-way eastward on Main St and westward on Valley; reduce each street to one lane of traffic
- Create angled parking on South side of Main Street, maintain parallel parking on the North side
- Use traffic calming methods such as brick or cobblestone crosswalks and narrowed lanes
- Re-configure demand-activated pedestrian walk signals downtown to be quickly responsive to pedestrian requests for walk signal



Enhance Pedestrian Experience

- Use sidewalk bump-outs to reduce the length of crosswalks; add mid-block crosswalks between Church and Bank Streets, and between Bank and Walnut Streets
- Place 'Traffic Must Stop for Pedestrian' signs in center of all crosswalks
- Widen the sidewalks on Main Street for outdoor dining seating areas
- Encourage non-retail street level businesses to include gallery space or display space visible from sidewalk
- Adhere to design guidelines for all business signs; seek grants for existing business to improve signage
- Resolve street light illumination concerns on Main Street; extend similar lamp pole design on High, Walnut, Bank, North, Church, Meadow, Valley and Spring Streets and the Footbridge
- Maintain cleanliness of streets and sidewalks
- Reduce curbside garbage/trash pickup on Main Street by either relocating pickup or requiring dumpsters
- Develop a unique municipal sign design for the city center and use for all traffic and directional signage
- Find solution to the pedestrian/bike conflict on sidewalks
- Visually and physically connect Main Street to the Willimantic River

Preserve and Enhance the Willimantic Main Street Historic District (Shown on Map 15)

- Maintain designation of the National Register of Historic Places
- Adhere to design guidelines; form a design review committee and follow its recommendations so new development and renovation is compatible with existing buildings
- Conduct structural analysis of historic assets
- Assist building owners with façade and major building maintenance through grant programs, no-interest revolving loans and tax credits
- Preserve all buildings in the Historic District that are listed as a contributing element where economically feasible. Where not feasible, period replication of what was there should be required

Why Revitalize?

Your downtown or traditional commercial district is the most visible indicator of community pride, along with its economic and social health. It is either an asset or a liability in the effort to recruit new residents, new businesses and industries, retirees, tourists, and others to your community and to keep those you already have. Quality of life is what separates successful cities and towns from declining communities in the new millennium. Finally, your downtown or neighborhood commercial district is the visual representation for your community's heritage. The architecture of your commercial district is a physical expression of your community's history.

- Main Street Program



Illustration from *Willimantic: Putting the Puzzle Together* 1994

The National Register of Historic Places

is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Occupied Space in the city center:**Residential -**

Main St	63,173 sq ft
Church St	1,606
Bank St	-
North St	6,768
Walnut St	5,513
High St	2,404
Schoolhse	3,430
Meadow St	4,600
Valley St	26,003
Total	113,497 sq ft

Commercial -

Main St	369,607 sq ft
Church St	19,099
Bank St	30,618
North St	18,554
Walnut St	2,269
High St	23,394
Schoolhse	-
Meadow St	17,542
Valley St	81,421
Total	563,204 sq ft

Vacant space (adj for Chapman Block)
was 142,083 sq ft.

*2001 Plan of Revitalization for
Downtown Willimantic*

Increase Population Density

- Encourage the development of market rate housing on upper floors; limit each unit to 1-2 bedrooms to encourage students, young professionals and seniors to live downtown
- Encourage offices to be located only on upper level floors
- Reduce the amount of required on-site parking to be compatible with city development strategies; impose a Payment in lieu of Parking (PILOP) fee to defray the cost of municipal parking
- Require all renovation/new development to provide retail (sale of goods), restaurants, arts and entertainment businesses on Main Street level in the city center
- Encourage development of incubator retail spaces (300-500 sq.ft.)
- Work to increase downtown building mass by relocating existing parking lots that are currently between Main and Valley Streets to the edges of the district

Economic Development

- Seek, or help start up, restaurants and unique shops that fit within the arts and entertainment market niche. Look to other successful communities such as Keene, Littleton, Portsmouth and Plymouth NH, Bellow Falls and Burlington VT, Shelbourne Falls and North Adams MA for guidance
- Improve the Riverside Drive area to encourage development of additional commercial space
- Economic Development Director should welcome each new business and provide information on grant programs and design guidelines for any/all exterior work including signs
- Work with existing businesses to enhance their success
- Co-ordinate the activities of Main Street businesses with the arts community
- Provide incentives to small businesses

Provide Shopper/Visitor Parking Near Center

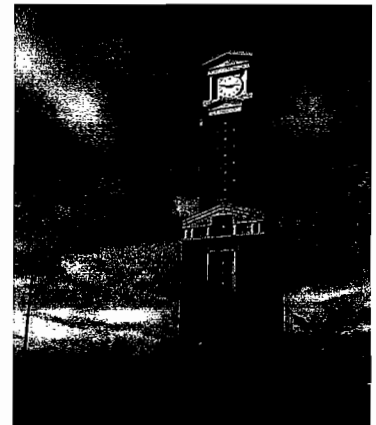
- Move all long-term parking to Jillson Square
- Publicize the amount of spaces available; enforce parking regulations
- Locate any new parking lots/garages only at edges of downtown in places less suitable for economic development

2007 Windham POCD

- Work with downtown businesses in developing a plan for their employee parking
- Encourage post office to reconfigure mail processing and eliminate the need for the unused parking area behind the building; use that area as municipal parking with a connection to High Street

Capitalize on Our Assets

- The Willimantic River is an under utilized resource; future development and renovation should include visual and pedestrian access from Main Street to the River
- Find ways for ECSU to become involved downtown, perhaps by co-sponsoring arts events or locating its bookstore downtown
- To the maximum extent possible, the existing historic structures in all their varied scale and diversity should be maintained. New structures and renovations must fit in contextually in a unique manner and reflect historic buildings that once stood downtown
- The East Coast Greenway is a long-distance trail from Key West, Florida to Calais, Maine that passes through Willimantic and will connect hikers/bikers to Main Street providing additional customers for nearby businesses (Map 18)
- Develop programs and events that focus on arts and entertainment
- Support the efforts of the Garden Club activities in the city center



Zoning

- Zoning regulations should be designed to enhance pedestrian experience and to encourage pedestrian activity
- All new developments and/or all renovations should be subject to site plan review
- Undeveloped and vacant lands along the Willimantic River should be designated as recreational (Map 13)
- Zoning map should be realigned in a way that both sides of a street along a block are zoned equally
- Consider expanding the B-1 district's eastern boundary to the CT Textile and History (Mill) Museum, and the western boundary to Memorial Park
- Review setback and other regulations for the areas abutting the B-1 to ensure a smooth transition between zones



North Windham Retail Area

Effect on Mill Rate

When Manchester and other Connecticut towns began to seek 'big box' stores it was believed to be a good way to help with the tax burden. However, across the country, communities have discovered that just the opposite occurs.

Manchester, CT

2000	23.59 mills
2001	24.79
2002	27.41
2003	28.98
2004	30.33
2005	36.07
2006	40.14
	16.55 mill increase in 6 yr
	70% increase in taxes

Lisbon, CT has recently turned to 'big box' stores, their mill rate has also begun to increase:

2000	16.50 mills
2001	18.00
2002	18.00
2003	16.50
2004	18.00
2005	21.00
2006	21.50
	5.0 mill increase in 6 yr
	30% increase

Windham has seen significantly less in tax increases:

2000	23.69 mills
2006	27.87
	4.18 mill increase in 6 yr
	18% increase

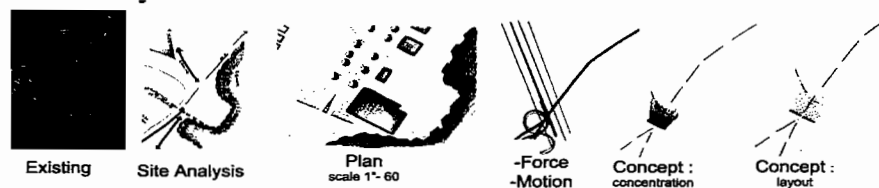
Many Connecticut communities are encouraging the development of 'big box' stores as a source of tax revenue. Unfortunately most are finding that over time the demand for services (roads, sewers, maintenance, staff, additional traffic, etc) combined with the slower appreciation of assessed values result in a fiscal deficit to the town. By encouraging smart growth in this area of town, Windham can lessen future negative fiscal impact.

Create Master Plan for Future Development that will

- Address vehicular traffic problems
- Provide for pedestrian safety
- Reduce the total amount of required parking
- Increase aesthetics
- Increase capacity for additional development

Draw on the work by the University of Connecticut Landscape Architecture students who developed five different master plans for the area. The drawings of analysis and concepts shown here are excerpts from their Spring 2005 project

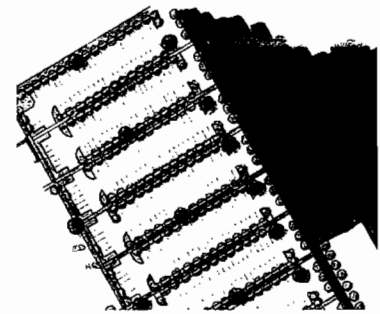
Create an Identity with Gateways



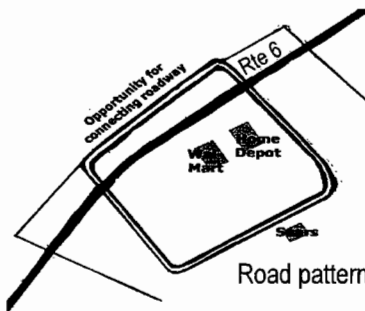
Analysis for Gateway on Rte 6 near Airport Road by 2005 UConn Landscape Architecture students

Create Safer Vehicular Traffic Patterns for Shoppers and Pedestrians

- Design all vehicular patterns with the pedestrian in mind
- Zoning regulations should require parking lots with pedestrian sidewalks that lead to building entrances from all areas of the parking lot. (see illustration at right)
- Connect parking areas to each other and to side streets to eliminate the need to use Route 6 as sole connection to neighboring businesses
- Develop new roads on west side of Rte 6 that align with both ends of Northridge Road (see illustration below)



Tree-line sidewalks within parking lot lead to store entry



Road pattern for improved circulation

Implement Traffic Calming Measures

- Work with ConnDOT to create a safer environment by the use of:
 - Landscaped and tree-lined median
 - Additional traffic signals
 - Decrease the visual and physical width of the roadway

Traffic calming:

Combining visual and physical techniques to slow traffic for a safer environment

wide areas tend to increase speed



trees or buildings at edge of road
tend to slow drivers

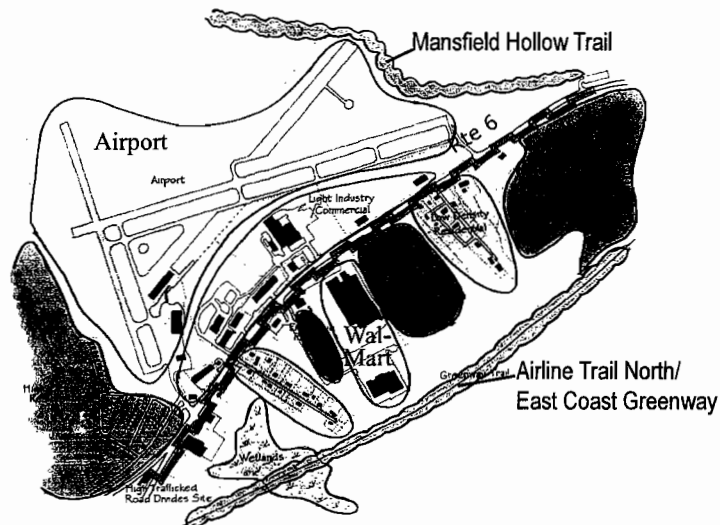


median with turning lanes creates a
pedestrian 'safe' area for crossing



Use Adjacent Greenways and Trails to Enhance Area and Create Additional Usage

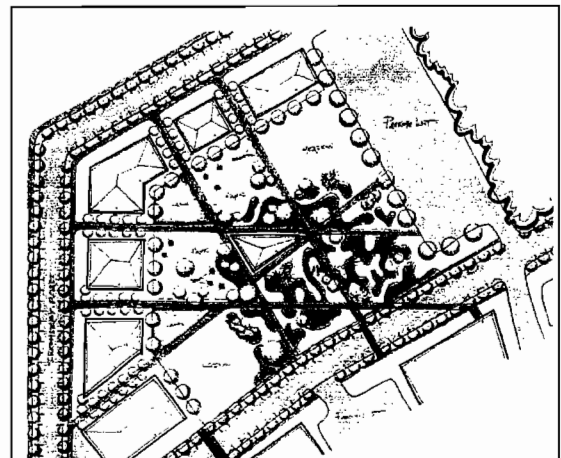
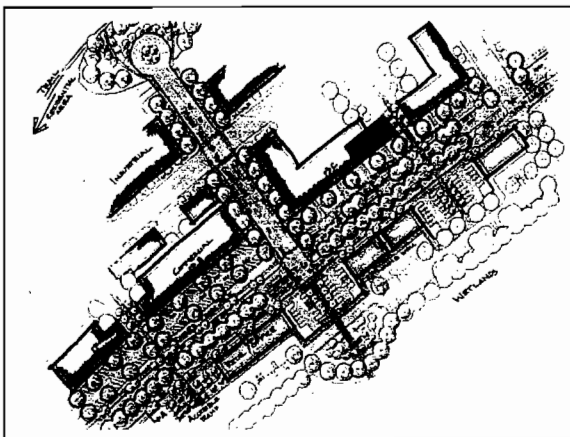
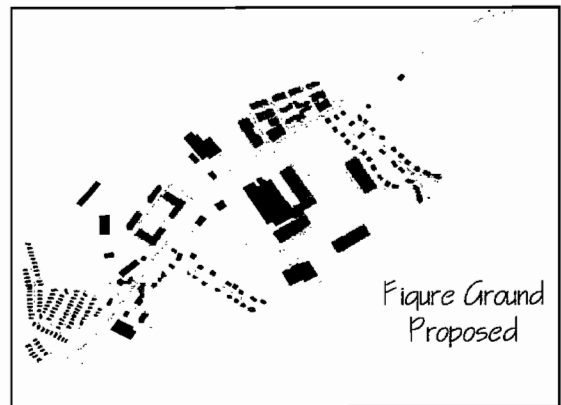
- Create prominent access to greenways and trails on both sides of Rte 6 to both the Airline Trail North/East Coast Greenway and the trails at Mansfield Hollow including the dike walk
- Encourage the development of appropriate businesses (some may be seasonal) to serve hikers, bikers and other travelers along the greenways
- Create trail that connects Mansfield Hollow Trail and Airline Trail North



Other

- After crafting new Master Plan for development, change zoning regulations to increase development potential through in-fill.
- Encourage and assist the US Postal Service to move its mail distribution center from Willimantic to North Windham (north of Rte 6)

All examples create additional development that would not be possible under current zoning regulations



Neighborhoods and New Housing Development



The character of Windham is derived in large part from the sections of town and neighborhoods that make up our community. Previous plans have recognized eight “neighborhoods” including Willimantic’s five: the Central Business District, the Hill Section, the East and West Ends and Over-the-River sections. The Windhams were divided into three: Windham Center, and North and South Windham. Within each are smaller areas or neighborhoods.

Surveys and public hearings have shown that our residents feel it’s important to maintain our existing neighborhoods as they define our community’s uniqueness and sense of place.



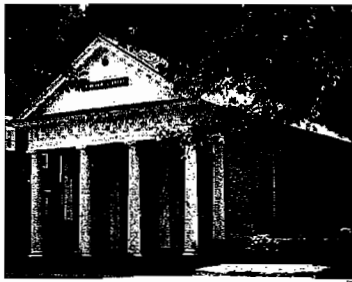
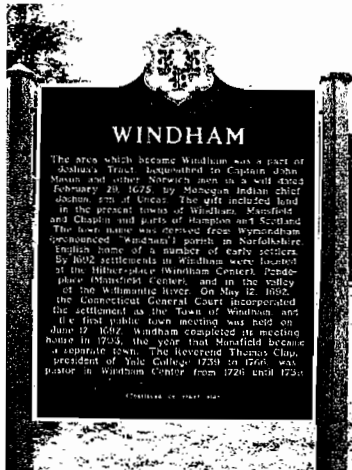
Windham Center

Willimantic’s Prospect Hill

photos courtesy of
© G.L Sweetnam



Historic Village Centers (Shown on Map 13)



Windham Free Library,
Windham Center



Guilford Smith Library,
South Windham

Windham Center. The village is centered around the historic Windham village green, the site of Windham's earliest Colonial settlement at what are now the intersections of Routes 14 (North Rd.) and 203 (Scotland Rd.) and Plains Road. The larger "neighborhood" area is the town's largest, extending to the Scotland and Franklin town lines and the Shetucket and Natchaug Rivers. The dividing line separating North Windham from Windham Center is not particularly clear from either physical features or social characteristics. This area is primarily developed in low density residential and agricultural uses, with a great deal of undeveloped land remaining.

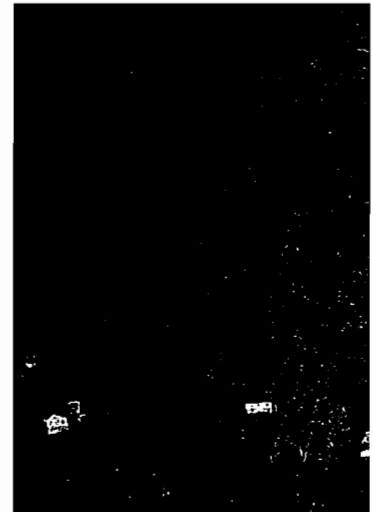
North Windham. This area is named after the village which exists at the junction of Routes 6 and 203 in the corner of Windham adjacent to Mansfield and Chaplin. The neighborhood extends east to the Scotland town line, south to the adjacent Windham Center neighborhood, and west to the Natchaug River and Willimantic Reservoir. It also includes the state-owned Windham Airport, commercial and industrial areas along Routes 6 and 66, the Willimantic Country Club and Golf Course, and low-density residential and agricultural uses on its few but aptly named roads, Beaver Hill, Back and Bass Roads.

South Windham. This area is named after the small industrial village settlement which developed off the Norwich Road along Machine Shop and Babcock Hill Roads. The larger neighborhood of South Windham includes RT 32 (Norwich Road) that runs the length of this area, and is bounded by the Shetucket River and the Windham Center area, the town lines of Lebanon and Franklin, and the former City of Willimantic's Over-the-River neighborhood. A mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses exists along RT 32. Adjacent to Willimantic there is some high density residential development, including the primarily-seasonal Willimantic Camp Meeting Association neighborhood area. Low density residential and agricultural uses exist elsewhere. Public water supply was extended along RT 32 into South Windham in the early 1980's.

Planning for Our Windham Villages

- It is important to protect and preserve the existing rural character of the town outside of the Willimantic business district and the North Windham commercial corridor, keeping intact and reinforcing the historic villages in Windham Center and North and South Windham.

- Preservation and improvement of neighborhoods of special historic and architectural character also is essential for maintaining the value and character of the whole town
- These rural villages should be recognized as special development areas due to their unique pattern
- Efforts should be made to encourage neighboring properties to be developed in a pattern to emulate the existing development patterns of these villages, and to enhance their influences on the quality of surrounding neighborhoods
- Preserve and enhance these villages by:
 - Promote, where possible, development that allows people to walk, on sidewalks or pathways, from home to schools, shops, libraries, post office, church and work, rather than depend on an automobile
 - Promote, where possible, bikeways and walking paths that are physically separated from roadways
 - Publicize Windham's historic resources as a step to help protect, preserve, retain, and enhance existing historic structures and sites as well as to promote tourism
 - Allow low density development compatible with the unique character that already exists within each village or neighborhood
 - Encourage neighboring properties to be developed in a clustered pattern to follow the existing development patterns and to enhance their influences on the quality of surrounding neighborhoods
 - Require that any new commercial or office development in the village and neighborhood districts is limited to uses and structures compatible with the character, scale, and architecture of each
 - Investigate alternatives for reducing commercial traffic through the Windham Center intersection at Route 14 and 203-a special study should be made of traffic circulation in order to determine whether a new road could be developed to bypass the historic center
 - Protect villages from noise, smell, dust and vibrations from traffic
 - Encourage development of small, neighborhood open spaces or parks with appropriate with pedestrian amenities and play space for children
 - Support the preservation of and access to the private and historic Windham Free Library and Guilford Smith Library



West of Windham Center Green

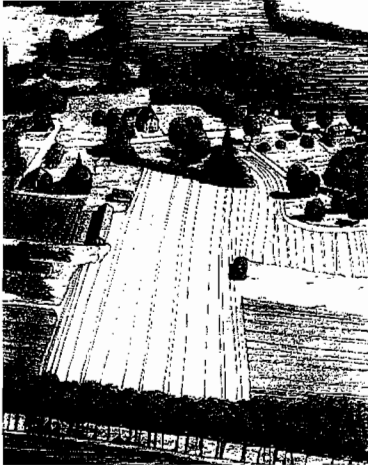


Windham Center Green



South Windham

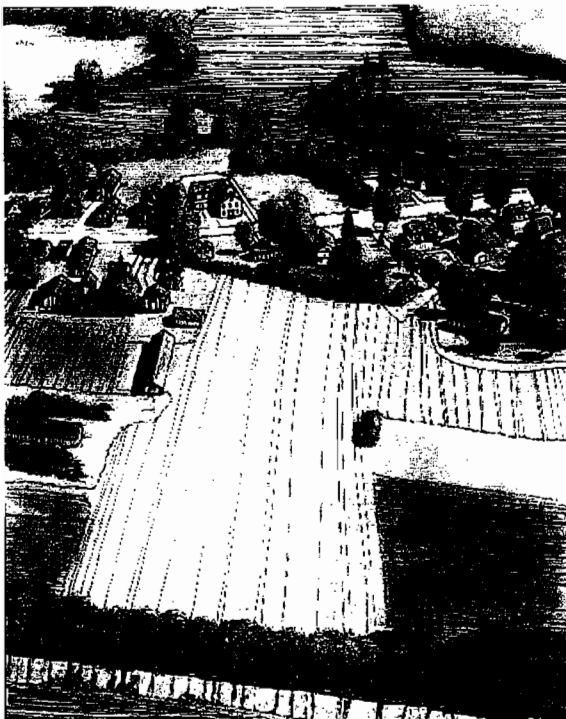
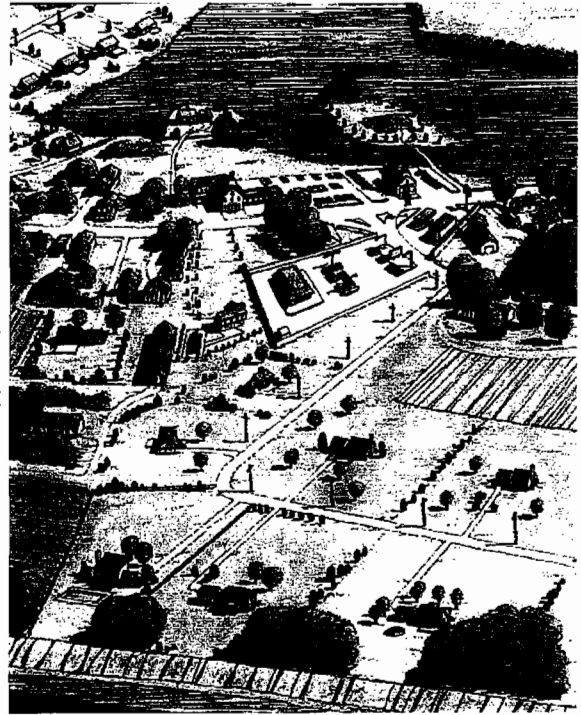
Creative development techniques can help Windham and its villages grow while maintaining its rural character.



Windham has farm land and small villages similar to this illustration; recent surveys show that townspeople value our rural landscapes and would like to preserve it while we grow

Our current zoning regulations encourage development that results in our loss of rural character.

Farms become "cookie-cutter" residential development or asphalt surrounding a gas station or a bank as shown in this illustration.



This illustration shows the same area developed creatively resulting in an equal amount of development but one that enhances the rural character.

Examples from *Rural by Design*
- Randall Arendt

Willimantic's Distinctive Neighborhoods

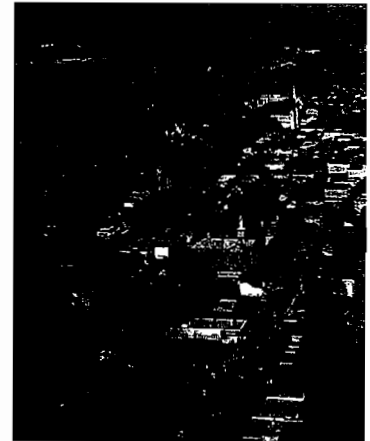
East End. This neighborhood, a mixture of residential, commercial and small manufacturing uses, contains the Windham Mills and associated former mill-worker housing, a variety of commercial development, the Windham Mills State Heritage Park, Windham Garden on the Bridge and Recreation Park.

Central Business District. The pedestrian-oriented historic downtown area at the center of Willimantic contains high-density urban retail, office, government, arts and entertainment uses. This classic turn of the century downtown, which extends from the Windham Mills to Bridge Street between the Willimantic River and Valley Street, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

North Willimantic Hill Section. This neighborhood is predominantly residential containing single and multi-family residences along with educational uses at ECSU, Windham Technical School, Windham High and Middle Schools. It rises steeply up from Valley Street and is served by water and sewer. It contains the Prospect Hill National Register of Historic Places District consisting mostly of Victorian era residences built mainly between 1870 and 1910. At 40 city blocks, it is one of the largest historic districts in the state with 88% of the existing buildings listed as "contributing" to its overall historic architectural character.

West End. This area to the west of the Central Business District and the Hill Section along Routes 66 and 32 contains automobile oriented commercial development, manufacturing, Windham Hospital and medical offices along with some scattered residential uses, apartment complexes and small neighborhoods.

Over-the River/South Side. This area is made up of a mixture of mostly residential neighborhoods along with small commercial and office uses and still includes some undeveloped land. It is only partially served by water and sewer. It contains the historic residential neighborhoods of Jillson Hill, The Oaks, Quercus Avenue, Crescent Street and Fairview Avenue developed as model worker housing by the American Thread Company at the turn of the 19th century.



Central Business District



South Side

Land Zoned Residential:

NPR 1	45 acres
NPR 2	259 acres
R - 1	7,326 acres
R - 2	1,093 acres
R - 3	3,243 acres
R - 4	972 acres
R - 5	87 acres
Total	13,026 acres

Vacant Parcels greater than minimum lot size:

R-1	150	2,512 acres
R-3	98	1,032 acres

Developed Parcels greater than 4 acres that could be subdivided:

R-1	142	2,953 acres
R-3	78	1,085 acres

Total Potentially developable
7,582 acres

Above based on Windham
Assessor's data on 6/06

Preserve These Existing Neighborhoods

- Increase in housing densities within existing residential neighborhoods should be avoided
- Multi-family homes in existing areas that are predominately single family should be discouraged
- Designs for development on vacant land in existing neighborhoods should reflect the scale and density that is compatible with its surroundings
- Housing rehabilitation programs should be supported. Explore creative grant programs that fully fund restoration with payment only at time of sale or remortgage
- New multi-family housing densities should be limited to areas where on-site parking can be accommodated, or parking is available in a near-by facility
- Support local initiatives such as the Willimantic Victorian Neighborhood Association and the Spring Street neighborhood group that work toward improving our neighborhoods
- Create pocket parks in densely developed areas
- Actively enforce housing and zoning codes and other Town ordinances to ensure that all apartments/homes meet regulatory standards.
- Limit signage in residential districts to for sale, for rent or lease, or contractor information during permitted work. Require all multi-family properties to affix to the building a 1' square sign with property manager's name and phone number for emergency contact

New Residential Development Should Create Neighborhoods

- Integrate new residential development into the context of the existing neighborhood
- Create additional village centers in, or adjacent to, subdivision with some compatible commercial uses (small eatery, small grocery) in the design and scale appropriate to neighborhood
- Incorporate transit-oriented development when feasible
- Seek ways to encourage developments that include a representative cross section of the Windham population, i.e. a mix of income levels, ages and ethnicity

Seek ways to encourage home ownership for Windham residents

- Enhance opportunities for home ownership for residents struggling to transition from public housing and rental apartments to a reasonably priced home by:
 - Allow for owner occupied mobile home to be positioned on an approved building lot in conjunction with the actual construction or renovation via sweat equity, of an unoccupied traditional home on the same lot, which will be occupied by the same owner when completed. Zoning Board should adopt special legislation that would grant a time sensitive permit requiring the removal of said mobile within a limited time.
 - Subdivision proposals should have a percentage of units designed and built having a sales price not to exceed 3 times Windham's family median income as defined in the latest census report, adjusted by the Consumer Price Index for each successive year following the last report.
 - Lessen restrictions on In-Law apartments to increase opportunities for family members to be together but live independently. Examples include: Aging parents, Disabled adult children or children acquiring higher education in one of the local colleges as well as family members gradually transitioning to their own home such as a childless couple.

Home Ownership for Windham residents is significantly lower than many other towns.

Owner (2000)	Occupied dwellings
Windham	- 45%
County	- 63%
State	- 63%

Existing Housing Units	
Windham	- 8,968
% single family	46.6%
County wide	
% single family	67.4%
State wide	
% single family	64.4%

Affordable and Supported Housing for Residents with Inadequate Resources

- Support Housing Authority's efforts to maintain existing affordable housing stock
- Houses for residents with special needs should be provided and addressed in zoning regulations:
 - single room occupancy units
 - supportive housing
 - homeless shelter for single adults as well as for families
 - life care and congregate housing for the elderly and disabled
 - no-freeze shelter
- Seek a viable long-term solution to homelessness and support practical efforts by others to combat homelessness regionally

Density

A detailed Build-Out Analysis for Windham was conducted in 2006 and indicates that, based on current regulations and existing site limitations, more than 4,000 additional single-family homes could be built in the R-1 and R-3 zones of Windham, greater than a 200% population increase for those areas. The full analysis can be found in the Appendix A2.

Density Definition

Residential density is another way to define maximum development. For example 20 homes on 20 acres is at a greater density than 10 homes on that same 20 acres.

Density Patterns

Currently in Windham homes are not being built at the maximum density. For instance in R-1 the minimum lot size is 60,000 (1.38 ac) however, the average size for developed lots are

if < 5 acres - 2.3 average lot

if > 5 acres - 27.5 average lot

Above based on Windham Assessor's data on 9/05

- Employ growth management strategies that will keep population growth at a level consistent with the town's ability to provide services to new residents
- Support the community character established by prior development patterns:
 - higher densities and diverse housing types should only be located in areas where water and sewer are available (Map 22),
 - new housing development in outlying areas should be predominately single family,
 - density should be reduced as the distance from the city increases
- To maintain the sense of place of our villages, density should be substantially lower outside of the immediate village center
- Any multi-level development should be designed to blend effectively with nearby single family residential areas, and be limited in height accordingly
- Development needing vehicular access on an existing town road may need to be required to upgrade the road to safely and conveniently handle traffic generated by the development
- The site should be of suitable size and terrain to establish an attractive and functional layout of buildings and site improvements
- Zoning regulations are necessary for residential growth to be in a pattern and at a pace appropriate for Windham and should be strictly adhered to, including the zoning regulations for frontage and minimum lot size

The Pattern of Residential Development

Concerns:

The current pattern of residential development in the Windhams will, over time, detract from the rural character that our residents value

Subdivision layout frequently places homes strung out along our roadways, with little attempt to blend in with the ruralness of the area

Current subdivision regulations seem to create “cookie-cutter” parcels and homes

Current density requirements could have significant fiscal implications when full build-out is achieved

Solution:

Promote a Pattern of Residential Development that will

- Maintain our rural character
 - Protect valued views (Map 13)
 - Preserve farm land (Map 11)
 - Protect natural and cultural resources (Map 13)
 - Be compatible with open space plan (Section 7-6)
 - Provide housing that current Windham residents and their children can afford
 - Provide for mixed income development
-
- Subdivision regulations should require conservation subdivisions for all parcels over 10 acres in our rural zones
 - Require proposed subdivisions to site, where practical, the location of living quarters with the maximum use of passive solar energy
 - Garages should be placed on the north or west side of the structure so as to allow for easterly morning light to be accessed and used rather than artificial lighting. Western and or northern locations of garages assist in reducing the amount of energy needed for heat as these locations provide additional protection from heat loss.
 - Daytime living space should be situated so as to benefit from the southern exposure of longer lasting sunlight especially in the winter months.



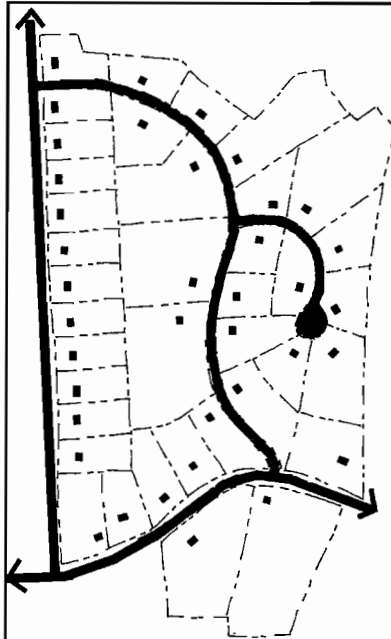
Examples of a Traditional Subdivision



Examples of Conservation Subdivisions

Development Pattern in Subdivisions:

A **traditional subdivision** carves the entire parcel into individual house lots, sometimes a small portion of the parcel is set aside as open space.



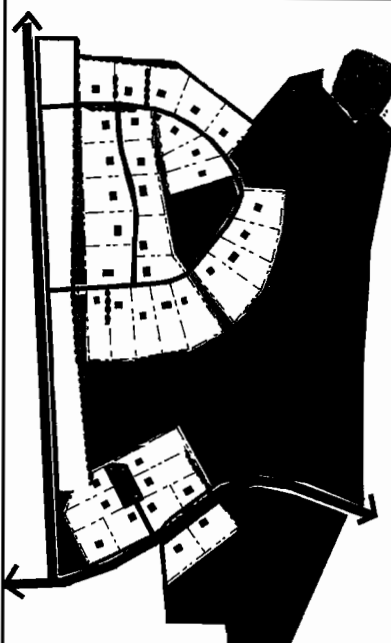
Example of a 112 acre parcel developed with a Traditional Subdivision

Traditional subdivisions develop an entire parcel into individual house lots. Because the initial design phase does not take into consideration the surrounding land, it generally does not fit in contextually with its environment.

Development costs are high as the entire parcel is developed with long wide roads usually with an extensive drainage system. The house lots are not laid out *with* the land and many of the unique attributes and character of the land are lost.

In a **conservation subdivision**, the site's context and its unique attributes are the first priorities. This type of design analysis recognizes that a parcel does not stand alone, but is part of a much larger environmental and cultural system. The parcel is divided into the same number of lots as it would be in a traditional subdivision, but the lots are smaller and a significant portion of the land is protected open space.

Conservation subdivisions are also sometimes called Open Space or Cluster subdivisions.



The same parcel developed *with the land* in a Conservation Subdivision

By designing *with the land*, the unique attributes of the site and the surrounding land define the layout. Wildlife corridors and sensitive natural resources are on 3 sides of this parcel. Farm fields line the road, an historic village is nearby. By designing with the land, the same number of lots are created, the rural character is preserved, 65 acres of open space with hiking trails is preserved.

All involved are winners:

Environment Wins - 65 acres preserved and wildlife corridors maintained

Developer Wins - less costs and higher sales prices can make it more profitable

Townpeople Win - keeps the rural character; increases tax revenue

New Residents Win - choice of house sites: wooded or village setting; each purchase 1 acre and get an additional 65 acres as a bonus

Natural Resources and Open Space



Over the years, many surveys of Windham residents have clearly shown that we take pride in our rural character. We have a rich history along our rivers and in our farm fields; and enjoy our roadways lined with stone walls and mature trees. However, once these areas are indiscriminately developed we will forever lose this visible connection to our rural character. There are tools and techniques that will enable the town to continue developing while maintaining its rural character. It's important that we address the regulation changes now before there is little rural character to protect.

Protection of natural resources and the environment continues to be an important issue. The quality of ground and surface water supplies, wetlands, prime agricultural soils, wildlife habitats, and unfragmented forest land are necessary for the health of our entire ecosystem. It is in our best long-term interest to work toward preserving and protecting our natural resources. (Shown on Maps 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12)

Studies across the country have shown that the best strategy for maintaining a stable mill rate is to acquire open space. Less developed towns have far lower taxes than their more developed counterparts.

Windham should strive for the good planning practice that balances development and conservation and encourages 'green living'.

Of the Respondents to the Fall
2001 Survey:

93% advocate protecting
aquifers and water quality

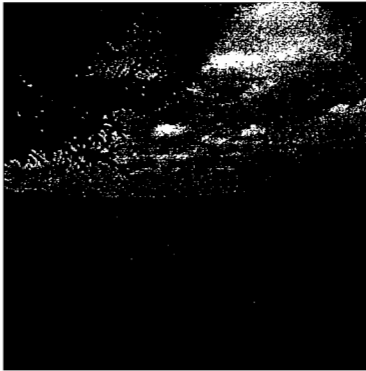
88% advocate protecting forests
and wildlife

82% advocate protecting scenic
or unique natural areas

71% advocate protecting
farmland

Windham Open Space
Advisory Committee

Natural & Cultural Resources



Resource	Category	Why important
Water	Streams, rivers, ponds	Water quality, habitat, flood protection
	Flood Plains	Areas that periodically flood
	Surface & Ground	drinking water sources, prevent pollution
Land	Wetland soils	habitat, water quality, flood protection
	Unfragmented forest	habitat, water quality
	Hardpan, shallow, rocky soils	septic system concerns
	Sandy soils	susceptible to contamination
Air	Air quality	promotes healthy environment
Biological	Plants/Animals	diversity, habitats
Cultural	Historic	connection to past, irreplaceable
	Views / viewsheds	rural character
	significant mature trees	rural character
	stone walls	rural character

Protect Natural Resources

Streams, Rivers, Ponds:

- Strive to preserve the undeveloped areas around and along our streams, rivers and ponds in their natural state (Maps 4, 12, 13)
- Continue to require appropriate buffer zones for important water resources; extend upland review area to 200'

Water Quality:

- Review current aquifer protection zone regulations on a regular basis to ensure the highest degree of water quality protection for designated aquifers (Map 7)
- Protect public water supply by permitting only appropriate land uses within public water supply watersheds. Support the town purchasing land, or conservation easements on the land surrounding public water supply (Map 13)
- Protect future public water supply areas by permitting only appropriate land uses in areas that could be a future significant water source (Map 7)
- Continue to protect the major aquifers and public water supply watershed from impacts of development
- Work to increase water quality by educating public about non-point pollution, such as lawn fertilizer, septic system maintenance and similar sources
- Maintain public catch basins with frequent cleaning, add filtration systems at major collections points prior to discharge into rivers and streams
- Revise parking lot regulations to include Best Management Practices (BMP) for all development where environmentally feasible

Aquifer:

A water-bearing layer of sand, gravel or permeable rock.

Significant aquifers:

Deep aquifer areas capable of containing substantial water for use as public water supply.



Examples of Best Management Practices (BMP):



Permeable pavement allows water infiltration, reduces run-off



Vegetative swale serves as natural and attractive detention basin



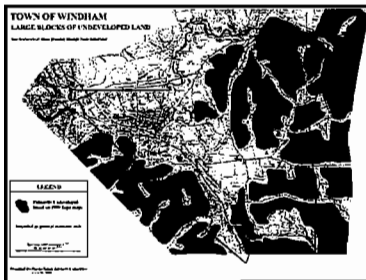
Parking lot using BMP for stormwater management

Wetland Soils

- Continue to protect our wetland areas (Map 5) as they are a key component of our ecosystem
- In addition to providing a habitat for a wide array of plants and animals, they are a prime source for recharging our drinking water sources

Other Natural Resources

- Unfragmented forest and wildlife corridors are vital in maintaining habitats for the plants and animals that keep our ecosystem in balance. Development should be planned to keep these corridors open and to maintain as much unfragmented forest land as possible
- Prime farm soils (Map 11) could become an important source for local food products. The town should strive to preserve agricultural uses and large areas of prime farm soils. Information on State and Federal incentive programs established so landowners can voluntarily participate in natural resource conservation programs should be made available to landowners
- Work to maintain existing and potential wildlife corridors and habitats whenever possible
- Discourage building and road development on steep slopes
- Seek recommendation and guidance from the Conservation Commission for all development proposals
- Review the Town of Windham Natural and Cultural Resource mapset when considering all development proposals (Maps 3 - 22)
- Become a Connecticut ReLeaf community
- Support the Connecticut designated River Greenways within Windham, Willimantic River and Natchaug River Greenways, by continuing to:
 - monitor, maintain and improve surface and groundwater quality,
 - develop and enact best management practices (BMP) for road and storm drain maintenance
 - fill in gaps in protected open space areas
 - support community conservation education and promotion of greenway resources
 - link and extend existing trails (Map 18)
 - examine for potential support other greenway designations that may be proposed in our area



Large Blocks of Undeveloped Land
(shown in dark green)
map prepared by Windham Open Space
Advisory Committee in 2002

Connecticut ReLeaf is a program that acknowledges and rewards quality urban and community forestry efforts, through the recognition of those cities, towns, neighborhoods and institutions that practice exemplary urban and community forestry.

Connecticut ReLeaf fosters long-term and sustainable urban and community forestry programs throughout Connecticut. It relies on standards known to promote the long-term care and maintenance of the trees in our communities. Connecticut ReLeaf is designed uniquely for the state, its communities, heritage, government, people, ecology, and future needs.

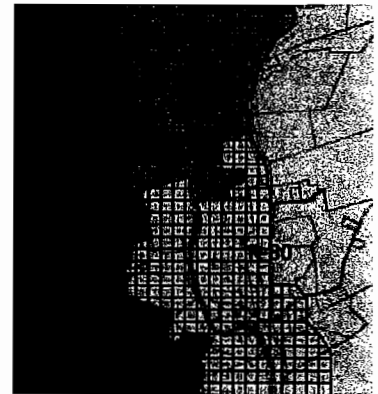
Zoning & Subdivision Regulations

- Review/revise current zoning patterns that are incompatible with preserving and protecting undeveloped areas along our streams, rivers and ponds and in other areas of significant and important natural resources. Revise zoning regulations to protect these resources, consider using overlay districts where appropriate
- The town should review current density requirements and consider reducing the maximum density as a means of protecting our valuable non-renewal natural resources
- Institute Conservation Subdivisions (also know as Open Space or Cluster Subdivisions) as a way to protect rural character, natural and cultural resources of Windham
- Strongly encourage a sketch plan preview for all commercial development and subdivisions prior to formal submission so developer can avoid costly re-designs if initial sketch isn't in concert with town's goals of development sensitive to rural character, natural and cultural resources and other regulations
- Require mining and gravel businesses, as each phase of the operation is completed, to reclaim that area sufficiently to support growth of native trees and shrubs and to replant with native species. Limit scope of work to the extent possible.
- Review parking requirements for suburban commercial development to ensure regulations are both economically sound and promote environmental sustainability
- Encourage energy conservation and alternative energy sources as a way to reduce Windham's carbon footprint

Balance Development with Conservation

- Work with Conservation Commission to identify significant and important conservation areas; use conservation subdivision as one technique to protect those areas (see Conservation Commission's Priority Resource Analysis in Appendix 2; and Map 12 in Appendix 2 for their Co-occurring Resources Map.)
- Encourage environmentally sound planning that finds the appropriate balance between conservation and development to improve the quality of life for existing and future generations

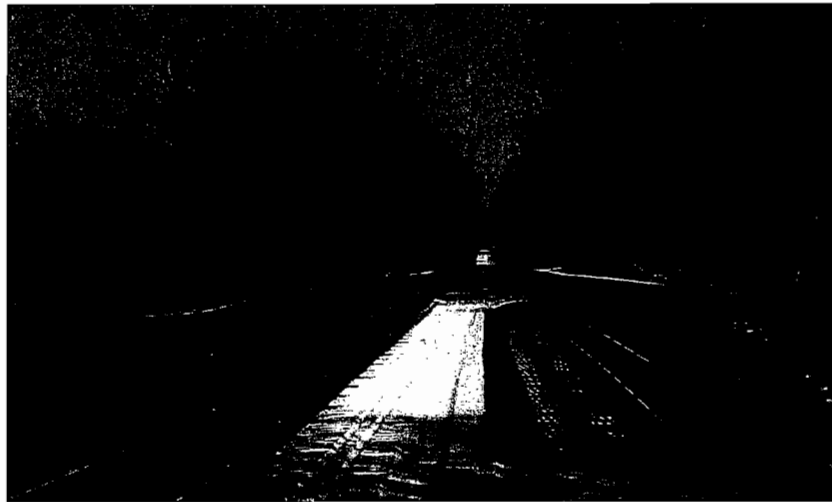
Overlay Districts are a way to simplify zoning regulations for unique situations that cross multiple zoning districts. The base zoning district regulations still apply, but areas that fall within the overlay zone could have additional development or use restrictions. An illustration used in the Green Valley Institute's Fact Sheet #6 shows an Overlay Zone along a river as it passes multiple zones.



In this example, the River corridor Overlay District is shown as a blue grid over the underlying zones (Commercial, R-15, R-40 and R-80).

2001 Open Space Plan

as adopted by the Board of Selectmen on 10/15/2002



In the Fall of 2001, the Town of Windham created an Open Space Advisory Committee to conduct a natural resource and land use inventory, to develop a draft open space plan, and to make recommendations for implementation of the plan. The Open Space Advisory Committee had representatives from a range of boards and commissions in town, as well as interested residents with tremendous expertise and enthusiasm.

The Open Space Advisory Committee, in developing this proposed plan, has collected a huge amount of information and opinions about what is important to the Town. From all of that collected knowledge, the Committee extracted the six highest priorities. The priorities then evolved into criteria by which any piece of property might be assessed in terms of its importance to open space. Those priority criteria are as follows:

1. Protects and improves water quality (ground and surface water), water habitats and/or increases recreational access to water;
2. Creates connections between existing open space, recreational space, trails or greenways;
3. Preserves and protects habitats that support special plant or animal life, especially those identified as endangered, threatened or of special concern;
4. Protects cultural resources of the Town, including educational, archeological, historical and other sites that distinguish our Town's character;
5. Preserves farmland, forest land, other agricultural lands and the rural character of the Windham villages; and
6. Develops neighborhood parks, active recreational or educational opportunities.



2007 Windham POCD

After completing its work, the Open Space Advisory Committee has developed the following recommendations, which it presented to the Board of Selectmen at its October 15, 2002 meeting. First, the Open Space Advisory Committee unanimously voted to recommend that the Town of Windham establish a permanent Open Space Committee. An Open Space Committee can take the steps outlined here to implement the Policy Statement and the components of this proposed Plan. It can also serve as the group to review any potential available property and make a recommendation whether the Town should take steps to preserve it as open space, and how to do so. The Open Space Committee can also serve an educational role, providing technical support to residents and town boards and commissions.

Second, the Open Space Advisory Committee unanimously voted to recommend that the Town adopt this document as its Open Space Plan. Citizens across the town have expressed to the Committee their interest in preserving the unique character of Windham, and balancing that conservation goal with an equally important goal of growth that improves the Town's tax base and quality of life for all residents. The Open Space Advisory Committee believes that this Plan achieves that balance and will result in many benefits for the Town and its citizens.

The Open Space Advisory Committee sees the role of the Town in protecting open space as having multiple components. As is noted in the Plan, there are numerous ways to protect open space, including smart development through zoning changes, sale of development rights to the state, donation to land trusts, conservation easements, state acquisition or town acquisition. The Committee emphasizes that only one of these possible protection methods is having the Town purchase the land, while the other examples involve maintaining private ownership while preserving the qualities of open space important to the Town. Windham can educate residents, and perhaps create incentives, to encourage private open space protection without outright acquisition. The Committee recommends that the Town only purchase land that is available for sale, where the sales price is reasonable and does not exceed the appraised value and if the property meets one or more of the priority criteria.

Windham, by adopting this Open Space Plan and implementing its recommendations, will choose to be a community that balances economic development with protecting our environment and enhancing our quality of life. Recognizing that "the number one deciding factor in business relocation is quality of life and open space," Windham can take advantage of its existing strengths and build wisely upon them for a better future. We can create a community that has a vibrant economy, vital urban center, is affordable to live in, has clean rivers and streams, and preserves the rural character that is inherent in small New England towns. We hope this Open Space Plan accomplishes these goals, and that the other boards and commissions in Town will consider and adopt the necessary regulatory changes, ordinances and other steps to make these recommendations a reality.

The Board of Selectmen appointed eleven members of the Open Space Advisory Committee, with representation from the Boards of Selectmen and Finance, and the Planning, Conservation, Water and Zoning Commissions, as well as six citizens. The appointees were:

Edgar D. Albuja, Citizen
Martin Brogie, Inland/Wetland Comm
Jean De Smet, Citizen
Rebecca C. Grillo, Citizen
Robert Horrocks, Zoning Comm
Jerry Iazzetta, Finance
Claire Lary, Citizen
Leslie Lewis, Citizen
Barbara S. McGrath, Selectmen
Larry Rivers, Planning
Edmund Smith, Water
Paula Stahl, Citizen

POLICY STATEMENT

A. POLICY STATEMENT WITH CRITERIA:

Based on all of the work described above, the Open Space Advisory Committee has developed and recommended the following Policy Statement for adoption by the Town:

"It shall be the policy of the Town of Windham to adopt the necessary ordinances and regulations to assure proactive development of the Town while recognizing the importance of protecting our cultural, agricultural, architectural and natural resources. Through planned conservation and economic development, the Town can encourage and create opportunities for all Windham citizens to enjoy passive and active outdoor activities. To pursue this policy, the Town shall encourage the commitment of open space through various means, including considering the acquisition and holding of any open space parcel of land within the town, if the parcel is of value to the Town and its residents and meets one or more of the priority criteria set forth below:

1. Protects and improves water quality (ground and surface water), water habitats and/or increases recreational access to water;
2. Creates connections between existing open space, recreational space, trails or greenways;
3. Preserves and protects habitats that support special plant or animal life, especially those identified as endangered, threatened or of special concern;
4. Protects cultural resources of the Town, including educational, archeological, historical and other sites that distinguish our Town's character;
5. Preserves farmland, forest land, other agricultural lands and the rural character of the Windham villages;
6. Develops neighborhood parks, active recreational or educational opportunities."

B. PRIORITY GOALS AND CRITERIA DETAIL AND RATIONALE:

- 1. WATER:** Protects and improves water quality (ground and surface water), water habitats and/or improves recreational access to surface water;

The number one priority voiced in several venues has been to protect the quality of Windham/Willimantic's drinking water, to protect the watershed areas, and to increase access by residents to our area waterways. Windham is blessed with three rivers, multiple streams and ponds, all of which contribute to the quality of life in this area. Residents' interest in recreational access to water for swimming, boating and fishing is strong; Windham has one of the few endangered cedar bogs left in the state; and the flood plains provide extremely attractive soil and drainage for agricultural use. Therefore, a priority in reviewing any potential property for acquisition as part of the Town's permanent Open Space would be its proximity to water and/or its use as a buffer to protect and enhance adjacent waterways, marshes, wetlands or watersheds.



- 2. CONNECTIONS:** Creates connections between existing open space, recreational space, trails or greenways;

Open spaces within a town are more likely to achieve their potential range of objectives if they can build upon existing open spaces and preserved areas. Larger unbroken tracts of undeveloped land are more likely to support a larger number and diversity of plants and animals, provide more accessible and satisfying recreational experiences, and increase the value of nearby development. For example, Windham is a link on the Airline Trail, the Quinebaug and Shetucket National Heritage Corridor, Rochambeau Route and the Willimantic River Alliance initiatives to create and extend connections.



- 3. SPECIAL HABITATS:** Preserves and protects habitats that support special plant or animal life, especially those identified as endangered, threatened or of special concern;

Windham possesses numerous state and federally-listed special habitats and plant/animal species. These areas/species present the opportunity to make a lasting contribution to wildlife protection, and may also offer Windham unique educational and recreational enhancement opportunities.





- 4. CULTURAL RESOURCES:** Protects cultural resources of the Town, including educational, archeological, historic and other sites that distinguish our Town's character;

Windham's natural and cultural diversity and history offer us a unique opportunity to promote tourism and economic development, accentuate our Town's aesthetic qualities, and promote pride and a sense of community. By identifying, protecting and accessing these resources we secure our identity and create a more meaningful place to live.

- 5. FARMLAND:** Preserve farmland, forest land, other agricultural lands and the rural character of the Windham villages;

Windham's active and historic farmland, although part of our cultural resources, was called out as a separate category due to the large quantity of farmland areas and the significant contribution these areas have on our rural character, both economically and visually (the unique viewsheds agricultural fields offer).

- 6. ACTIVE RECREATION AND EDUCATION:** Develop neighborhood parks, active recreational and/or educational opportunities;

The Town will develop and adopt a recreation plan to address the growing need for active recreational areas for residents, and it is likely that the Town will then need to consider acquiring properties to implement the growth aspects of such a plan. In addition, the richness of Windham's culture and natural resources may provide a wonderful opportunity for education for residents of all ages, a priority that may overlap other priorities but may enhance the importance of a specific property under consideration. And while urban areas are not likely to have large new open spaces available, small neighborhood parks can provide welcome areas for neighbors to gather and safe places for children to play while improving the look of densely built urban settings.



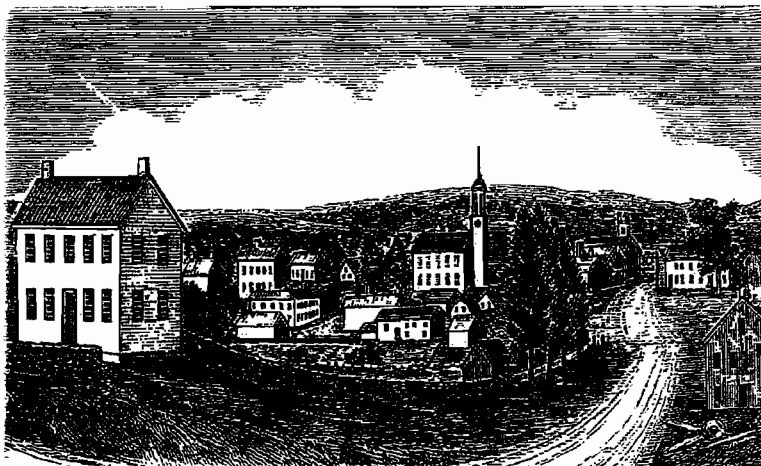
History and Cultural Resources



A Brief History

The town of Windham was incorporated on May 12, 1692. Mohican Sachem Chief Joshua willed the land to 16 men, most of whom resided in Norwich. The land called Windham consisted of what is now the towns of Windham (which includes Willimantic), Mansfield, Scotland, Chaplin, and Hampton. The town was named after Wyndham, England.

On December 4, 1700 Windham's first Minister, Reverend Samuel Whiting, was ordained. The church was a Congregational Church, stemming from the Puritans. The first church building was erected shortly after on the Windham Green. Early settlers were farmers that grew crops such as wheat, rye, corn, barley, flax, and hemp, as well as raising livestock. Early industry in Windham consisted of sawmills, gristmills, and blacksmith's shops taking advantage of the water power from streams and rivers.



John Warner Barber, c. 1835 view of Windham
Courtesy: *Images of America Windham and Willimantic*

In 1823 Windham, along with Lebanon, Columbia, Chaplin, and Mansfield petitioned the General Assembly to become their own county. Tolland County, the last county formed in Connecticut, had just been formed a few years earlier, taking towns away from Hartford and Windham counties. The town of Windham was no longer the center of Windham County. The courts and other government offices had been moved to Brooklyn, which was more centralized and easier to travel to. All transportation was difficult due to the poor quality of the roads. The General Assembly denied the petition.

One year later, Lebanon petitioned the General Assembly to be returned to New London County, which they had originally been part of before the creation of Windham County. The General Assembly granted their petition. That same year, Mansfield and Columbia petitioned the General Assembly to join Tolland County. The General Assembly denied both petitions. Mansfield tried again in 1826, and Columbia tried again in 1827. This time the General Assembly granted both towns their petitions.

The town of Windham is made up of four parts; North Windham, Windham Center, South Windham, and Willimantic. As with many towns with abundant river water-power, mills are a very large part of the history of



Windham Center Green c 1910



Windham Library on the Windham Center Green 2005

the town. The mills sprang up around the Willimantic River in the borough of Willimantic, while Windham remained a farming community. North and South Windham had limited industry. The populated area of town in the colonial period was Windham Center. When the industrial revolution came to the United States, the mills grew and Willimantic became the more populated area.

In 1877 The Willimantic Enterprise newspaper started serving the citizens of Windham and surrounding towns. The newspaper grew, and became the Willimantic Chronicle, and later The Chronicle. The newspaper has been published by the same family for 5 generations. In 1889 the Willimantic State Normal School opened its doors. (A "normal school" was a school of higher education which women went to after High School to become teachers.) The course of study was two years long. Women signed a contract stating they would only teach in Connecticut and received free tuition and books. Room and board was \$3.50 a week. The school became Willimantic State College in 1959, and in 1967 Eastern Connecticut State College. Then in 1983 the college received university status and afterwards became part of the state university system as Eastern Connecticut State University. In 1907 the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady Mother Mercy established a small hospital across from Saint Joseph's Church. This was Windham's first hospital building.

The hospital vowed to treat all patients no matter how little money they had, their race, or their background. Many of the patients were mill workers who were victims of machinery accidents. By 1929 the hospital was having a problem with too little space and had to start turning people away. In 1930, during the height of the depression, \$500,000.00 was raised, the Vanderman family donated 12 acres of land, and Windham Memorial Community Hospital (now known as Windham Hospital) was established.



Windham Town Hall c 1925

Willimantic

The word Willimantic is the Algonquin Indian term for "land of the swift running water". Prior to 1821, the village was known as Willimantic Falls and was a single school district where about 20 families resided. In 1822, Charles Lee erected a factory on Main Street made of stone quarried from the Willimantic River. Small shops and manufacturers had been built on the banks of the

Willimantic before, but this was the beginning of Willimantic as we know it. In 1825, the three Jillson brothers built a factory along the Willimantic, and in 1827, they built a second building. By 1828, there were six cotton factories in Willimantic, all of them were built within a seven year span.

By 1849, railroads were adding to the growth of Willimantic. The first three railroads to go through Willimantic were the New London Northern Railroad, the Willimantic Railroad, and the Palmer Railroad.



Footbridge c 1910

It was not long before others followed. Railroads were not the only form of transportation. Trolleys were common from 1902 to 1932. Trolleys regularly ran from Willimantic to Coventry, where they continued into Hartford.

From the end of the Civil War to the outbreak of World War II Willimantic was the center for the production of silk and cotton thread. This was the Victorian era and the height of Willimantic's grandeur. Many of the interesting buildings in Willimantic, as well as many of the mansions in the Victorian Hill section, were built during this time. Many hotels were built to accommodate the

travelers coming into the area, including the Hooker House Hotel, and the Windham Hotel. Traveling salesmen would visit the area regularly to sell their goods. The grand Capital Theater opened downtown in 1926. It was during this time that immigrants from Europe came to Willimantic. Irish, Italians, Polish, Germans, and French Canadians came to work in the mills. The young ladies who did not wish to work in the mills could be domestic help to the wealthier families in town. Later, Estonian, Ukraine, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Puerto Rican immigrants came looking for jobs in the mills. Willimantic grew to be a very culturally rich town.



Jillson House, now owned by the Windham Historic Society

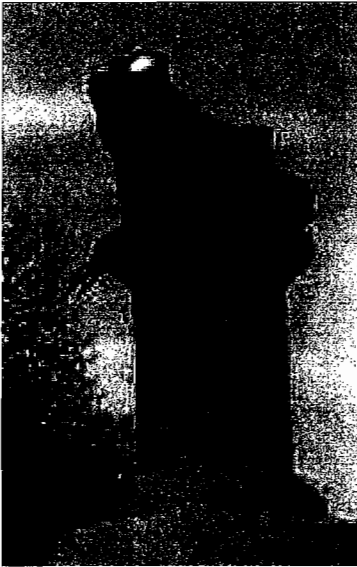


Windham Mills Complex built from granite quarried from the Willimantic River

In 1833 Willimantic was a borough of Windham. In 1893 it became a city. In 1983, the City and the Town consolidated and became one town again. A Board of Selectmen was set up to run the town. Selectmen were voted into office from each of the districts of town. Before the consolidation Windham was governed by a town council, and Willimantic by a City Hall.

By the 1970s, New England was not the prosperous industrial area it had once been. Factories were closing their doors or relocating to the South. The American Thread Company, the largest employer in town, left the area in 1985. It was a devastating blow to the area financially. Today, Willimantic is being revitalized and being recognized as an area with much history to offer.

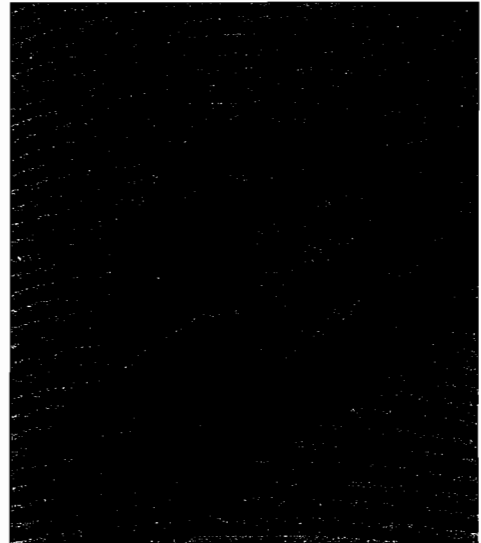
Provided by Bev York, Director Windham History & Textile Museum



Frogs & Threads

It all started in June of 1754. The villagers of Windham were awakened in the middle of the night by terrible sounds coming from up the road. The settlers prepared for battle fearing it was an Indian attack. When morning came the villagers grabbed their guns and marched towards the direction of the noise. When they arrived at the nearby pond the villagers were shocked to find the bodies of hundreds of dead bullfrogs. Those frogs that were still alive were heading towards the Willimantic River. The reason for the Bullfrog Battle was unclear. Some say there had been a drought, and the Bullfrogs were fighting for territory. Others say it was not a particularly dry summer, and there had been no drought. Another version is that the Miller had opened the dam's gate leaving the water level quite low. The pond was named Frog Pond from then on. The villagers took the frogs on as their mascot. To this day, you can see frogs all over Windham.

Now about thread. Many towns in Connecticut have nicknames according to what their factories produced, or what the town was or is famous for. Norwich is the self proclaimed "Rose of New England" because the town was once a very wealthy community, and is nicknamed the "Rose City". New Britain is the "Hardware City" because of its large hardware industry. Meriden is the "Silver City". Manchester is "Silk City". Willimantic is the "Thread City" because of the American Thread Company, which was the largest employer in town.



And that is why we have a bridge with giant frogs sitting on spools of thread.

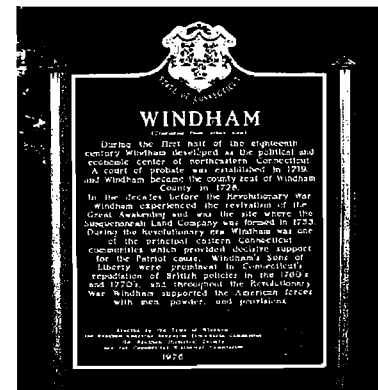
Protect Cultural Resources

Historic Resources

- Conduct full inventory documenting Windham's historic assets. Add data to the Windham Natural and Cultural Resource mapset
- Promote the protection, preservation and enhancement of historic structures and sites; encourage efforts for other listings on the National Register of Historic Places, such as South Side
- Publicize Windham's historic resources to enhance public awareness of the value of preservation
- Promote our three districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Main Street, Windham Center and Prospect Hill Historic Districts) by listing on the town's web site and promoting walking tours
- Incorporate archeological review by the Connecticut State Archeologist in the town's regulations for site development
- Encourage rehabilitation programs and grants to assist home/business owners with historic buildings upgrade and maintain their properties with the best standards of historic restoration and rehabilitation
- Public improvements in historic districts should complement and be compatible with the historic period of the buildings. Lighting, landscaping, sidewalks, bus shelters, benches and other improvements should be carefully selected
- Encourage adaptive reuse of existing historic structures
- Encourage economic development projects that take advantage of historic resources



One of the homes in the Prospect Hill Historic District



Windham Center Green

Rural Character

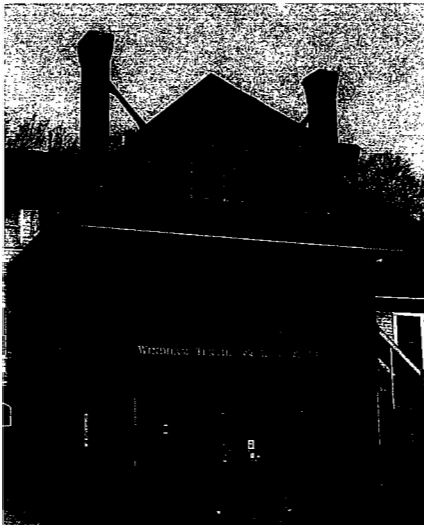
- Identify important views, viewsheds and vistas; incorporate their protection into regulations
- Adopt a scenic road ordinance and designate scenic roadways
- Create a program for maintaining roadside mature trees with planned maintenance and replenishment. Become a Connecticut ReLeaf Community
- Encourage preserving, rebuilding or relocating roadside stonewalls
- Commercial development along our roadways has a tremendous impact on rural character. Promote the establishment of a Design Review Board and incorporate design review into the approval process for all commercial development
- Institute Conservation Subdivisions (also known as Open Space or Cluster Subdivisions) as a way to protect the rural character, natural and cultural resources of Windham



Community Spaces



This section deals with the public facilities provided by the town for the use of its citizens. How well these facilities meet our needs and their cost to us as taxpayers greatly affects the quality of life, and this in turn may help to determine the attractiveness of our community to current and potential residents and businesses. A balance must be struck between these impacts with an emphasis on funding those projects that are the best investments in Windham's future. The differing needs of the rural and urban areas of town continue to present challenges as do the confusing funding mechanisms of the general and service district budgets.



CT History and Textile Museum with proposed color scheme



3rd Thursday Street Fest



Windham Town Hall

Windham High School

Windham Middle School

Elementary Schools:

Natchaug School

North Windham School

Sweeney School

Windham Center Schools.

see appendix for enrollment and
other information on our schools

Town Hall

Kramer Building & Gymnasium

Willimantic Public Library

Windham Textile & History Museum

Willimantic Police/Fire Complex

Public Works Buildings

Transfer Station

Willimantic Water Works

Sewage Treatment Plant



All Municipal Buildings

- Become a 'Green' town with all new construction; partner with ECSU's Center for Sustainability to determine best way to retrofit existing town buildings to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards

School Buildings

- Maintain, renovate and upgrade all buildings while planning for future growth in school age population
- Support proposed magnet school focusing on environmental education
- Establish committee to plan for the replacement of Natchaug School, and simultaneously plan for the re-use of the existing school building
- Support continuing education

Other Civic Buildings

- Provide for the physical expansion of town libraries, upgrade technology and support collection acquisition
- Plan for expanded senior center to meet needs of growing senior population
- Upgrade Town Hall and explore expansion/renovation for office and meeting space on the third floor
- Seek appropriate alternative, centrally located, site or sites for town garage, recycling center and animal shelter while also developing a Master Plan for North Windham
- Increase energy efficiency in all town buildings where analysis shows long term cost benefit is evident

Recreational Facilities

- Protect, preserve, maintain and improve existing recreation fields and playgrounds (Map 18)
- Provide all town residents opportunity for active recreation
- Study current and future active recreational needs; plan for efficient use of current fields and prepare for future needs
- Reconfigure existing recreation fields as needs change
- Provide appropriate facilities at all town parks and school playgrounds
- Begin a program of using only environmentally friendly products on fields
- Seek additional recreational fields as demand grows

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- Encourage the transfer of private recreation facilities to permanent public use (not necessarily public ownership)
- Support public use of school recreational facilities during non-school hours

Parklands

- Preserve, maintain and improve existing parks to maximize their usage (Map 18)
- Use parks on main thoroughfares to enhance the town's image
- Create an urban park at Jillson Square as a gateway for visitors and central community space
- Create small neighborhood pocket parks in urban areas similar to Julia deBurgos Park
- Promote our parks within our community, create signage system with unique Windham park logo
- Work with Willimantic Whitewater Partnership in their efforts to create access, trails and parklands along the Willimantic River

Cultural Facilities

- Consider creating a cultural center as way to bring community together, consider combining with an events center
- Support local museums, theaters, festivals and arts and entertainment related events
- Support efforts to maintain the Garden on the Bridge, seek maintenance funding from sources such as rental for weddings

Trails

- Support efforts by Willimantic Whitewater Partnership to provide downtown trails along the Willimantic River, and to connect the missing links of existing long-distance through trails:
 - East Coast Greenway, between the eastern end of the Hop River Trail in Columbia and the Veteran's Memorial Trail Willimantic
 - Airline Trail South at the CT Eastern Rail Road Museum
- Promote bridge walks as tourism destination
- Work with surrounding towns to build a regional trail system
- Plan for a trail system that connects existing and proposed recreational areas in Windham as a method of transportation as well as another source of recreational opportunities
- Plan for a system of safe off-road bicycle routes

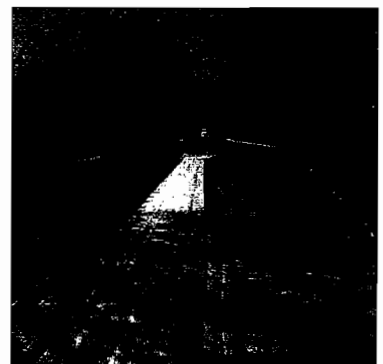
Town Parks

acres

Burdick Park(RR Musuem)	36.9
Noznick Property	36.0
Recreation Park	22.3
Lauter Park	17.4
Shetucket Park	10.6
Jillson Square	8.0
Alex Caisse Park	5.8
Guild Field	5.0
Memorial Park	3.2
Young's Field	2.3
State Heritage Park	1.0
Garden on the Bridge	0.5
Julia de Burgos Park	0.2
Donovan Park	0.2

and,

Veterans Memorial Greenway - 2 miles

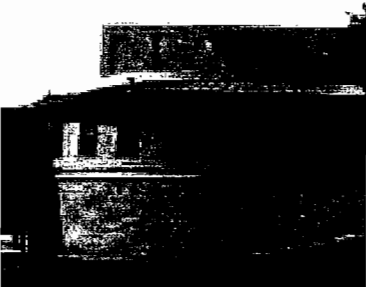




Windham Center Cemetery

Cemeteries (Map 17)

- Consider adding additional land adjacent to existing cemeteries, especially in the North Windham Cemetery
- Establish schedule for resurfacing and maintenance of roadways within cemeteries
- Rehabilitate the Old Willimantic Cemetery's historic cast iron fence or replace it with a historically correct replica
- Work toward preservation of historic grave sites
- Maintain tree plantings at cemeteries; replace as needed



Betty Dunnack Commons
Willimantic Housing Authority

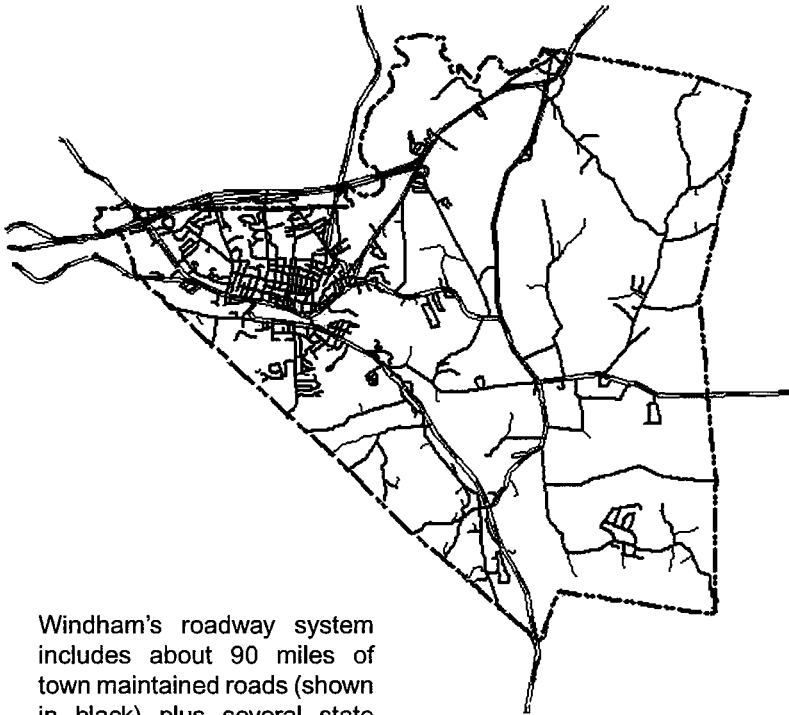
Public Housing

- Maintain and upgrade existing publicly owned housing
- Seek solution for transitional, low-income, single room housing
- Seek public/private partnerships for appropriately located supportive housing
- Balance need for supportive/low income housing with overall housing goals
- Seek public/private partnerships to ensure that affordable housing sustains an appropriate balance of assorted housing stock for future generations



Municipal Infrastructure

Windham's transportation, parking and utilities are the framework that will support the town's growth. The town needs to provide a safe and efficient way for people to move about Windham, whether in cars, buses, on bikes or on foot.



Windham's roadway system includes about 90 miles of town maintained roads (shown in black) plus several state highways (shown in red)

Transportation

Promote for safe and efficient movement of vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians through a network of roads, sidewalks and bikeways

• Pedestrian Areas

- Make downtown more pedestrian friendly and encourage through traffic to use alternate routes
- Re-configure demand activated pedestrian walk signals downtown to be quickly responsive to pedestrian requests for walk signal and with sufficient time to cross street. Add new demand activated crosswalks in areas where pedestrians frequently need to cross busy streets (i.e. mid block in front of ArtSpace)
- Maintain existing sidewalks and accessibility
- Use stanchions at the centerline of crosswalks in busy roadways to remind drivers to stop for pedestrians
- Use clearly defined, well-painted crosswalks
- Continue to maintain footbridge and seek period lighting to enhance this historic site

• Bikeways

- Create bikeways along rural roads and Main Street
- Support multi-modal pathways (separate and protected where practical) to accommodate bicyclists, joggers and pedestrians; encourage the incorporation of these provisions in new streets or streets undergoing major improvements
- Develop bikeways to accommodate riders for recreation, school and work trips particularly along dangerous highway corridors

• Mass Transit

- Provide for appropriate mass transit systems and support facilities
- Support Windham Regional Transit District to maintain and expand existing bus service and support new service to neighboring towns
- Consider using pull-off bus stops along busy roads
- Seek alternative area for Main Street bus stops that would not affect on-street parking

- **Commercial Areas**

- Work toward rerouting truck traffic from Main Street in the downtown area
- Add sidewalks in areas that are frequently used by pedestrians (such as North Windham shopping areas)
- Evaluate and redesign the traffic circulation pattern for town roads in the area of Route 6 and Northridge Drive in North Windham

- **Residential Areas**

- Encourage traffic calming in neighborhoods and all areas of pedestrian activity
- Provide for adequate parking near Kramer building shared with ECSU as indicated in parking study
- Consider reducing street width in certain new developments on non-through streets with few houses

- **Town-wide: Sidewalks & Roads**

- Use painted stripes at all stop signs to alert drivers
- Maintain and enhance current roadway system
- Adhere to replacement schedule for roads and sidewalks within designed lifetime
- Extend sidewalks in areas where students are required to walk to/from school, such as Walnut, North and Bolivia Streets.
- Use best management practices (BMP's) to reduce negative environmental impacts. Review road standards in subdivision regulations to ensure that they include BMP's
- Encourage the addition of an additional exit ramp from the Route 6 expressway at Mansfield Avenue to improve access to Windham Hospital by emergency vehicles

• **Municipal Parking**

- Enforce the stated parking limits
- Relocate permit parking lots at edge of downtown to free up center lots for customer parking
- Reconfigure the on-street parking in downtown, remove bus and delivery parking to other locations
- Use University of Connecticut Transportation Center to study and recommend revisions to parking rules

• **Airport**

- Support improvements to Windham Airport, encourage air shows and other events
- Be mindful of the need for compatible land uses near the airport; consider an airport overlay zone.

• **Railroad**

- Encourage the use of rail service, and support the return of passenger service
- Encourage owners of railroad switch-yard to relocate to area away from downtown, and to maintain a clean area;
- Require all at-grade road crossings be protected with a safety gate

Green Infrastructure

- Plan for and build a green infrastructure of trails and wildlife corridors

Public Safety

- Ensure that adequate public safety services are provided to all areas of town
- Support Windham's legislative body's recommendations that meet the needs of the fire departments, police department, Fire Marshal, emergency management professionals or other public safety concerns.

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- Consider ways to provide the increased public safety needs in the North Windham retail area
- Examine the consequences of the demand for emergency support in specific land use/ zoning decisions
- Revise zoning regulations weighing full build-out potential against available infrastructure and support services (Appendix A2-i)
- Continue to work with ECSU to cooperatively address public safety impacts
- Provide for ongoing, effective housing code enforcement

Utility Needs

- Maintain and upgrade the town's sewer lines and sewage treatment facilities
- Limit extension of sewer lines to maintain adequate capacity in the current facilities (Map 22)
- Support infrastructure plans developed by Windham Water Commission
- Study the feasibility and impact of expanding water lines for added fire protection
- Implement recommendations contained in the Town of Windham's Water Supply Plan (updated in 2004)
- Work toward alleviating the problem of dead ends in underground water lines
- Protect surface and groundwater within the Willimantic Reservoir watershed area (Map 13)
- Maintain the spring at Park Springs for community use
- Replace underground utilities at time of re-paving; place 1-year moratorium on all rework after paving
- Maintain and clean-out storm water catch basins to limit the amount of road pollutants entering Willimantic River

Implementation Plan



A plan is just a plan until it is implemented. Just accepting this plan as a blueprint for the next 10 years isn't enough, Windham needs to implement it!

Many of the Plan's recommendations will require our boards and commissions to work cooperatively toward this common goal. The implementation process is a gradual and continual process. While some recommendations can be carried out in a relatively short period of time, others may take several years, and still others may be long-term in nature.

The charts on the following pages identify strategies to accomplish the plan and identifies the primary and secondary board, commission or department that should take the lead in addressing the recommendation.

In the near future, the Planning and Zoning Commissions should undertake a comprehensive review of the zoning regulations, zoning map, and subdivision regulations and make whatever revisions are necessary to:

- make the regulations more user-friendly
- implement the Plan recommendations
- promote consistency between the Plan and the regulations

Business & Economic Development Strategies

S Strategy: long-term policy
T Task: specific action

BOS Board of Selectmen
BOE Board of Education
BOF Board of Finance
CC Conservation Commission
EDC Economic Development
subcommittee of BOS
IWC Inland Wetland Commission
PC Planning Commission
PRC Parks & Rec Committee
PW Public Works Dept
ZC Zoning Commission
ZBA Zoning Board of Appeals

New Economic Development Town Wide

Responsibility:

S	Recognize the unique strengths of Windham; such as the Willimantic River, historic buildings, ECSU and UConn technology centers, high-speed fiber optic internet, and workforce	
T	Become business friendly by establishing a committee comprised of members of Zoning, Planning, Conservation and Inland/Wetlands to assist developers with process.	BOS
T	Begin marketing campaign that targets businesses that will be economically beneficial to Windham	EDC, BOS
T	Establish procedures and policies that result in attracting and retaining quality businesses	EDC, BOS
T	Work with neighboring towns on collaborative development projects	EDC, BOS
S	Reduce environmental impact of commercial development by requiring adherence to Best Management Practices (BMP) for storm water management; reduce the amount of impervious pavement whenever possible.	

Existing Businesses and Existing Commercial Buildings

T	Develop detailed inventory list of vacant commercial buildings; market their availability	EDC
S	Focus on retaining valuable businesses (retail, industrial and manufacturing) by proactively working to meet their needs.	

Strategic Planning, Smart Growth and New Commercial Areas

T	Review zoning to ensure regulations and map reflect current goals for industrial and commercial zones	PC, ZC
T	Develop, and adhere to, building standards for all commercial businesses	ZC, ZBA, BOS
T	Develop, and adhere to, sign standards for all commercial, municipal, and state signage	ZC, ZBA, BOS

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Gateways and Main Thoroughfares Strategies

Create Welcoming, Attractive and Safe Thoroughfares

Responsibility:

S	Take pride in our community and demonstrate that pride visually town-wide	
T	Work with Connecticut Department of Transportation on streetscape improvement especially along Routes 6, 66 and Route 32	BOS, PC, PW
T	Identify, preserve and enhance the scenic views along our roadways	CC, ZC
T	Consider incorporating gateway and thoroughfare overlay zones to simplify zoning districts	PC, ZC
T	Develop and adhere to sign standards for all commercial property especially along our thoroughfares	ZC, ZBA
T	Develop design standards for all commercial buildings, incorporate into zoning regulations.	PC, ZC
T	Create a design review committee to assist Zoning Commission	BOS
T	Increase the landscaped front setback for commercial properties and require shade trees in that setback; require parking to be located at the side or rear of buildings	ZC, ZBA
T	Form a committee to inventory trees, recommend planting and maintenance program. Incorporate funding into budget for replacement of removed existing street trees and for additional street trees.	BOS, BOF

S Strategy: long-term policy

T Task: specific action

BOS Board of Selectmen

BOE Board of Education

BOF Board of Finance

CC Conservation Commission

EDC Economic Development
subcommittee of BOS

IWC Inland Wetland Commission

PC Planning Commission

PRC Parks & Rec Committee

PW Public Works Dept

ZC Zoning Commission

ZBA Zoning Board of Appeals

Business Centers: City Center Strategies

S Strategy: long-term policy

T Task: specific action

BOS Board of Selectmen

BOE Board of Education

BOF Board of Finance

CC Conservation Commission

EDC Economic Development
subcommittee of BOS

IWC Inland Wetland Commission

PC Planning Commission

PRC Parks & Rec Committee

PW Public Works Dept

ZC Zoning Commission

ZBA Zoning Board of Appeals

Focus Social and Economic Activity Downtown

Responsibility:

T	Become a Main Street Community by joining the National Trust Main Street Center	BOS, BOF
T	Create and fill the position of downtown coordinator and university liaison	BOS, BOF
S	Support grass root efforts such as Garden Club of Windham, 3rd Thursday, Willimantic Whitewater Partnership, Windham Area Arts Collaborative, Victorian Neighborhood Association and others that focus on social activity downtown	

Create and Enhance the Pedestrian Friendly Environment

T	Maintain and enhance City Center; keep streets clean, well lit and safe	BOS, PW
T	Work with Connecticut Department of Transportation to make Main Street more pedestrian friendly; or remove Rte 66 designation from Main Street to alternative route	BOS, PW

Preserve and Enhance Main Street Historic District

S	Encourage the preservation of historic assets, especially those that contribute to the Main Street Historic District designation	
T	Seek funding for major streetscape improvement to enhance the City Center	BOS, BOF

Increase Population Density

S	Encourage mixed-use with retail and restaurants on street level and offices and residential on upper floors.	
T	Conduct study to follow up on UConn Landscape Architecture student presentation on potential building in-fill in downtown	PC, BOS

Economic Development

T	Proactively search for appropriate retail, restaurants and service businesses to occupy downtown buildings	EDC, BOS
T	Become proactive with all businesses and building owners; be responsive to their needs	EDC, BOS
T	Form a Design Review Committee to assist business with the process of following regulations	BOS

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Shopper/Visitor/ Resident Parking		Responsibility:	S Strategy: long-term policy
T	Work to secure funding (public or private) for a two-level parking garage on Riverside Dr. with access from Main St.	EDC, BOS	T Task: specific action
T	Maximize the number of on-street parking spots, reduce the time limit to 30 minutes and enforce. Consider metering on-street parking.	BOS	BOS Board of Selectmen
T	Locate all non-shopper/visitor parking in lots at edge of downtown	BOS	BOE Board of Education
Zoning			BOF Board of Finance
T	Consider expanding the B-1 district to include the Garden on The Bridge and Memorial Park	ZC, PC	CC Conservation Commission
T	Rezone area between Riverside Drive and the river to permit recreational and park use	ZC, PC	EDC Economic Development subcommittee of BOS
T	Review regulations to ensure they meet the goals and objectives as outlined in the 2007 POCD	PC, ZC	IWC Inland Wetland Commission
			PC Planning Commission
			PRC Parks & Rec Committee
			PW Public Works Dept
			ZC Zoning Commission
			ZBA Zoning Board of Appeals

Business Center - North Windham Strategies

Future Development		Responsibility:
T	Create and implement master plan for future development to create opportunities for in-fill and safer vehicular patterns	PC, ZC
T	Plan for appropriate and fiscally beneficial use of town garage parcel before it is vacant	BOS, PW, PC
T	Pro-actively seek new businesses that could benefit from airport	EDC
Traffic Patterns and Pedestrian		
T	Work with Department of Transportation to create a safer and more attractive Rte 6 corridor	BOS, PW
T	Work with DEP to create trail connection between Mansfield Hollow Park and Airline Trail North	PRC, CC
T	Review zoning regulations and modify to enhance pedestrian experience and safety	ZC, PC

Neighborhood and New Housing Strategies

S Strategy: long-term policy
T Task: specific action

BOS Board of Selectmen
BOE Board of Education
BOF Board of Finance
CC Conservation Commission
EDC Economic Development
subcommittee of BOS
IWC Inland Wetland Commission
PC Planning Commission
PRC Parks & Rec Committee
PW Public Works Dept
ZC Zoning Commission
ZBA Zoning Board of Appeals

Preserve and Enhance Our Villages

Responsibility:

T	Create a village zone district for the villages of North Windham and South Windham to protect and enhance the villages. Consider other locations where this new district would be appropriate	PC, ZC
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Preserve and Enhance Neighborhoods

T	Review current regulations for higher density zones; revise to require new development be compatible in scale and density	PC, ZC
T	Develop and follow plan of sidewalk in-fill, paths and bikeways in all our neighborhoods	BOS
T	Commit sufficient funding to support staff of enforcement officials	BOS, BOF

Encourage Home Ownership

T	Seek ways to encourage home ownership	BOS, PC
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Provide for Residents with Inadequate Resources

T	Provide affordable and supportive housing for residents with inadequate resources; work to resolve homelessness	BOS, PC
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Density

T	In light of build-out analysis, review current density requirements for residential zones	PC, ZC
T	Modify residential zoning regulations where applicable to protect water quality and water supply	PC, ZC

Pattern of Future Development

T	Revise subdivision regulations to require conservation subdivisions in appropriate residential zones	PC
T	Consider increasing lot area and frontage requirements in rural areas to maintain community character	PC, ZC
T	Discourage rear lots (also know as flag or interior lots); revise regulations to limit the number of such lots	PC, ZC
T	Consider incorporatin transit-oriented development in appropriate locations	PC, ZC

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Natural Resources and Open Space Strategies

Protect Natural Resources

Responsibility:

T	Establish education programs to promote knowledge and understanding of the value of cultural and natural resources	CC, PC
T	Develop regulations that will protect natural resources while Windham develops. Support development that protects our natural resources	PC, ZC
T	Protect major aquifers and public water supply areas (i.e. Mansfield Hollow) from impacts from inappropriate development; consider overlay zone	PC, ZC
T	Consider increasing the upland review area to 200'; continue to require appropriate buffer zones for important water resources	IWC, PC
T	Continue to protect important water resources to maintain water quality, water supply, habitats, and ecological balance; consider a river overlay zone for the three major rivers.	IWC, ZC, PC

Protect Other Resources

T	Identify scenic views and include their protection as a limited valuable resource. Consider the impact on valuable rural viewsheds in site plan review for development	CC, ZC, PC
T	Adopt a scenic road ordinance, designate scenic roadways	BOS
T	Where appropriate retain stone walls, significant trees and other cultural and natural resources in new development	ZC, PC
T	Establish a strong recycling effort to minimize amount of refuse	BOS, PW

Zoning and Subdivision Regulations

T	Review parking regulations in light of UConn study and reduce requirements if possible; include Best Management Practice requirements where appropriate	PC, BOS
S	Continue to increase open space by: increasing the amount of open space required in subdivisions, seeking grants to acquire valuable open space; budget funds annually	

Balance Development with Conservation

T	Review zoning regulations and zoning map and modify to promote development in areas that would have the least impact on our natural and cultural resources	PC, ZC, CC
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S Strategy: long-term policy

T Task: specific action

BOS Board of Selectmen

BOE Board of Education

BOF Board of Finance

CC Conservation Commission

EDC Economic Development
subcommittee of BOS

IWC Inland Wetland Commission

PC Planning Commission

PRC Parks & Rec Committee

PW Public Works Dept

ZC Zoning Commission

ZBA Zoning Board of Appeals

History and Cultural Strategies

S Strategy: long-term policy

T Task: specific action

BOS Board of Selectmen

BOE Board of Education

BOF Board of Finance

CC Conservation Commission

EDC Economic Development
subcommittee of BOS

IWC Inland Wetland Commission

PC Planning Commission

PRC Parks & Rec Committee

PW Public Works Dept

ZC Zoning Commission

ZBA Zoning Board of Appeals

Protect and Enhance Our Historic Resources

Responsibility:

T	Encourage preservation, renovation and reuse of historically significant structures through zoning and subdivision regulations	PC, ZC
T	Establish an Ad Hoc Committee to conduct/update inventory of historic structures of Windham	BOS, CC
T	Establish education programs to promote awareness of historical and cultural resources; begin program of appropriate signs and displays at historic sites and districts	CC, BOS
S	Embrace our historic structures and seek ways to preserve and enhance them	
T	Establish a demolition delay ordinance to allow time for the identification and preservation of historic structures	BOS, PC, ZC
T	Consider requiring an archaeological review in areas with conditions that indicate a high probability of artifacts	PC, ZC
T	Install period lighting and signage in historic districts and on footbridge	BOS, PW

Protect and Enhance Our Rural Character

T	Identify scenic views and include their protection as a limited valuable resource. Consider the impact on valuable rural viewsheds in site plan review for development	ZC, PC
T	Adopt a scenic road ordinance, designate scenic roadways	BOS
T	Where appropriate retain stone walls, significant trees and other cultural and natural resources in new development	ZC, PC
T	Maintain and enhance tree-lined roadways	BOS, PW

2007 Windham POCD

Community Spaces Strategies

School and Other Civic Buildings		Responsibility:
T	Continue to refurbish the Town Hall ballroom in historically sensitive manner; establish committee to work toward reuse of 3rd floor office space, seek funding for renovation	BOS
T	Work toward becoming a 'Green' city; partner with ECSU's Center for Sustainability to determine best way to retrofit existing town buildings to LEEDs standards	BOS
T	Work toward unifying the town with a centrally located multi-use building that is a combined cultural center, senior center and meeting and event space	BOS
T	Work toward expanding the Willimantic Library	BOS
Recreational Facilities, Parks and Trails		
T	Develop a master plan for parklands revitalization as a tool to meet Windham's future needs	PRC, BOS
T	Provide additional fields and outdoor recreation areas as needs change; evaluate the distribution of facilities	BOS
T	Seek locations for small pocket parks in densely populated areas	BOS
T	Tie existing and new open space and recreation areas together into a green infrastructure to buffer natural areas and to provide a community trail system	PRC, CC
T	Promote parks within community: create signage system with unique Windham park logo, develop brochure adapted from UConn Landscape Architecture student template and distribute.	PRC
Cultural Facilities and Cemeteries		
T	Maintain and enhance our cemeteries as needed, when appropriate seek additional adjacent land	PW, BOS
S	Continue to support grassroots efforts such as 3rd Thursday Street Fest, Windham Garden Club, Willimantic Whitewater Partnership, Victorian Homeowners Association, and other groups working to better our community	
Public Housing		
S	Support Willimantic Housing Authority efforts to maintain and upgrade their properties	

S Strategy: long-term policy
T Task: specific action

BOS Board of Selectmen
BOE Board of Education
BOF Board of Finance
CC Conservation Commission
EDC Economic Development subcommittee of BOS
IWC Inland Wetland Commission
PC Planning Commission
PRC Parks & Rec Committee
PW Public Works Dept
ZC Zoning Commission
ZBA Zoning Board of Appeals

Municipal Infrastructure Strategies

S Strategy: long-term policy
T Task: specific action

BOS Board of Selectmen
BOE Board of Education
BOF Board of Finance
CC Conservation Commission
EDC Economic Development
subcommittee of BOS
IWC Inland Wetland Commission
PC Planning Commission
PRC Parks & Rec Committee
PW Public Works Dept
ZC Zoning Commission
ZBA Zoning Board of Appeals

Transportation

Responsibility:

T	Accelerate time frame for road and sidewalk repair/ replacement to be more consistent with true life expectancy	BOS, BOF
T	Fund Public Works Department so they can efficiently maintain our streets, sidewalks, trees, and parks.	BOS, BOF
T	Refocus circulation pattern in favor of pedestrian with clearly visible crosswalks and raised cobblestone walks where appropriate	BOS, PW
T	Establish bikeways and trails for people to use as alternatives to cars and roadways	BOS, PW
S	Encourage WRTD to acquire buses that use alternative fuel source; seek 'trolley' style bus; encourage routes throughout community	
T	Develop a plan of future roadways to facilitate future development	PC

Green Infrastructure

T	Plan for and build a green infrastructure of hiking trails and wildlife corridors	CC, PRC, PC
---	---	-------------

Public Safety

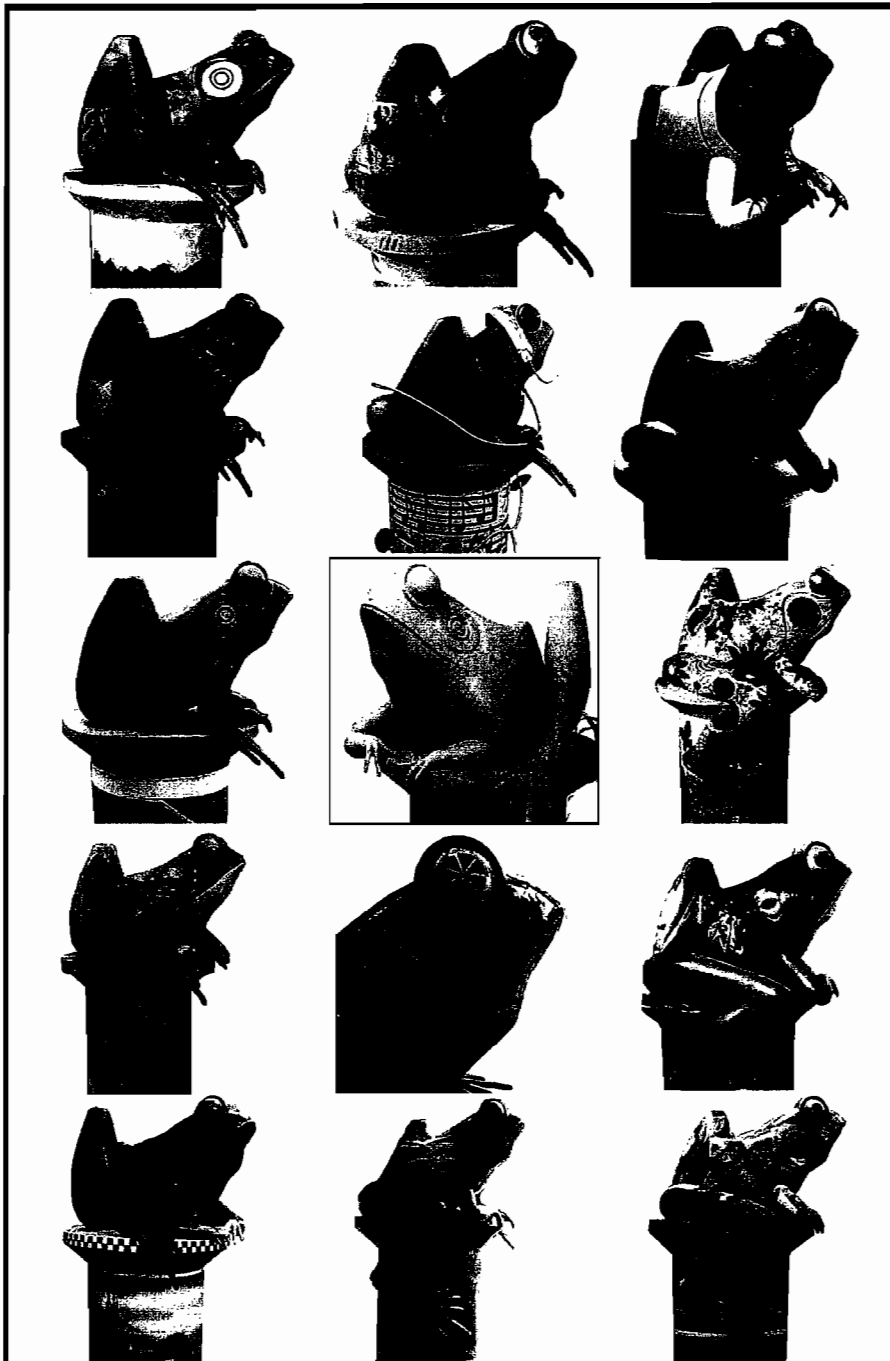
S	Ensure that adequate public safety services are provided to all areas of town and for all residents of town.	
---	--	--

Utility Needs and Other Concerns

S	Support both the Sewer Commission and Willimantic Water Control's needs for maintaining and upgrading as necessary	
S	Support needs of Fire and Police Chiefs and Fire Marshals in their efforts to ensure the safety of our townspeople	
T	Review current zoning regulations and zone district map and revise to encourage future development is in locations with infrastructure in place	PC, ZC
T	Fund in-house Graphic Information System (GIS) to facilitate future land use planning decisions	BOS, BOF
T	Use website as informational tool, update daily with meeting notices, agendas and minutes	BOS

12

Future Land Use



The stars of FrogFest 2005
(left to right)

Outer Peace Frog - Andrea Davis
Found Frog - Rebecca Maloney
Dr Ribbit - Diane Olsen

Precious Prince Willi
- Jill Mordasky
Frogcaster Wili
- Angela Cornelle Delgado
Lao Zi Frog - Nancy Shay

Home Nature Frog - David Wilson
Raw Frog - the 'before'
La Grenouille de Jardin
- Thomas Salter

Crazy Quilt Frog - Annie Wandell
Sam - Julie Manso
A Town's Story - Robert Nagy

Frogsong, Fable & Fairytales
- Sally Sargent Markey
Fireog - Jeffrey Kraentzle
Esmerelda - Margaret Young and
Ann Rosebrooks

The Conceptual Future Land Use Map, shown on the opposite page, incorporates the goals and objectives outlined in the town plan and provides a general, broad-stroke look at potential future land use. Although certainly not definitive, nor a recommended zoning map, it illustrates how this plan could be implemented. Over the next few years, as regulations are revised and the zoning map reviewed, any changes to current zoning regulations or districts will only take place after public input.

General Description of Land Use Categories Used in this Map:

Residential - Apartments: Densely developed areas, some with multi-story apartment buildings

Residential - Neighborhood: Existing neighborhoods within Willimantic Service District with water and sewer service

Residential - with Services: Other areas of town where sewer service is available

Residential - Village: North and South Windham and Windham Center

Residential - Rural: Areas where sewer service is not available

Residential - Mobile Home Park: Existing parklands

Residential - Planned Development District: Existing densely developed area

City Center: Pedestrian focused mixed-use development with the 1st floor primarily businesses selling goods or restaurants and with professional offices and residential units on the floors above.

Professional/Commercial/Clubs: Businesses, professional services and social clubs that typically would not create heavy volumes of traffic

Commercial - Vehicular: Areas with larger businesses, primarily retail, that generate vehicular traffic

Village Mixed Use: Pedestrian focused area with 2-story buildings near the street edge, small restaurants, bakeries and services on the first floor and residential above. Parking behind the buildings.

Light Manufacturing: Employment centers appropriate for area with existing dense development

Manufacturing/Industrial: Employment centers in less densely developed areas

Special: Area that the best use is undetermined. Former site of Mill #4 could be residential, light manufacturing, or a site to relocate railroad switchyard. Extreme southern area along Shetucket River may be best as conservation land depending upon future use of contiguous land in Franklin.

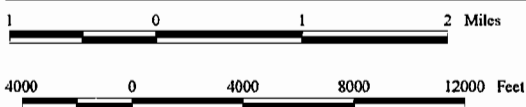
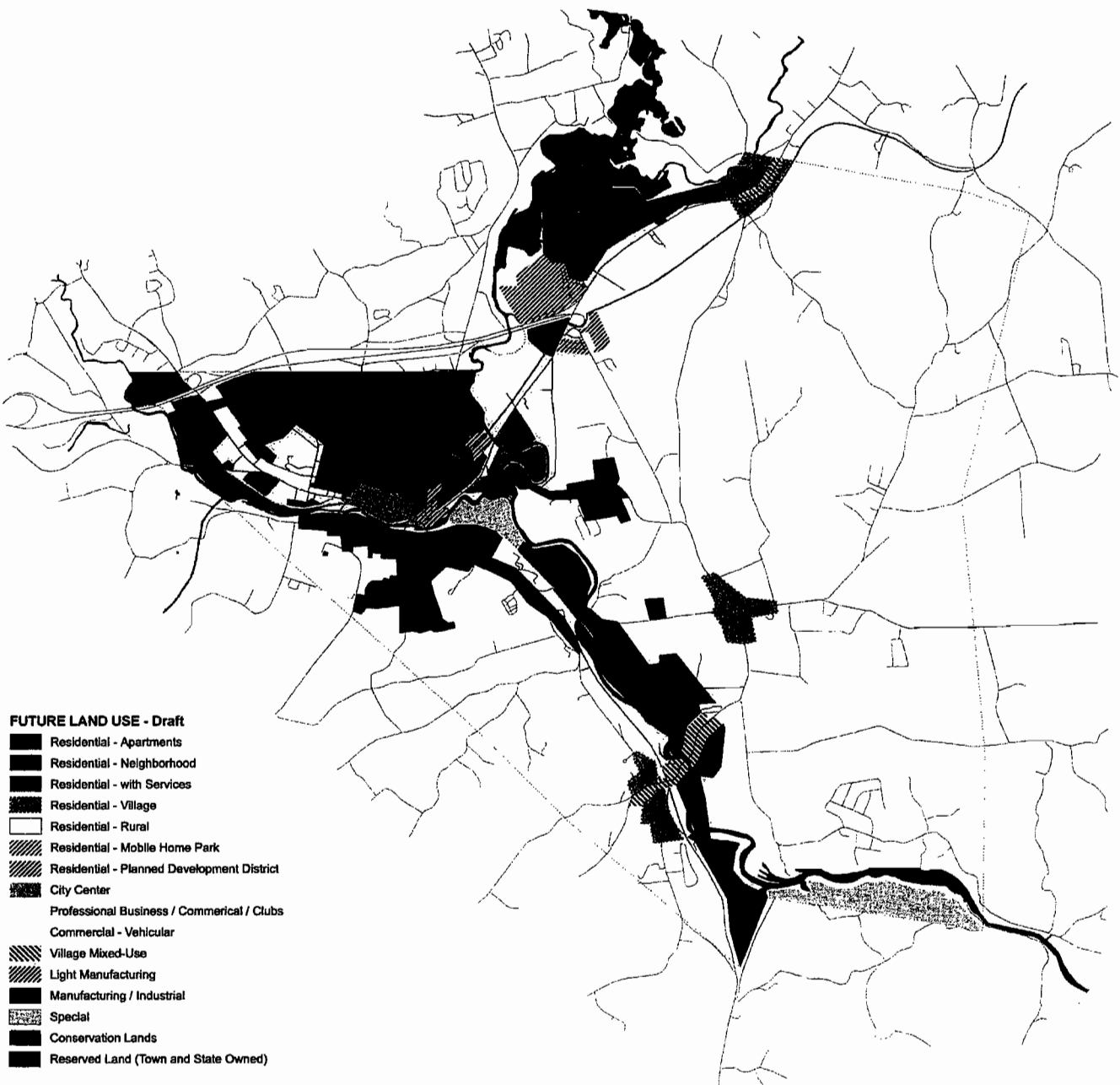
Conservation Land: Areas that may not be appropriate for development

Town/State Owned Reserved Land: Certain parks and state lands where development not possible

The clear film map depicts how different overlay districts could be used to define Thoroughfares and Gateways, and could also be a way to define Windham's important water resources

Town of Windham, Connecticut

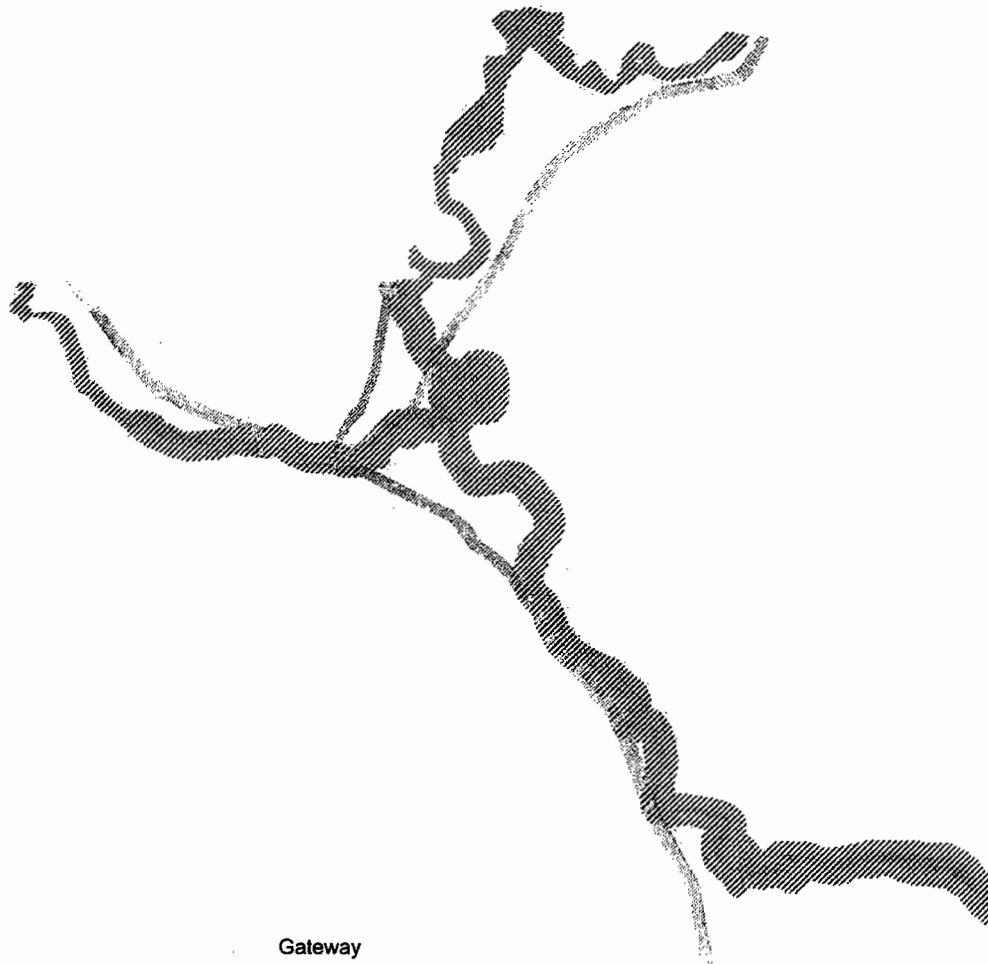
Conceptual Future Land Use



This map is intended for planning purposes only and contains no authoritative positional information.



Conceptual Overlay Districts



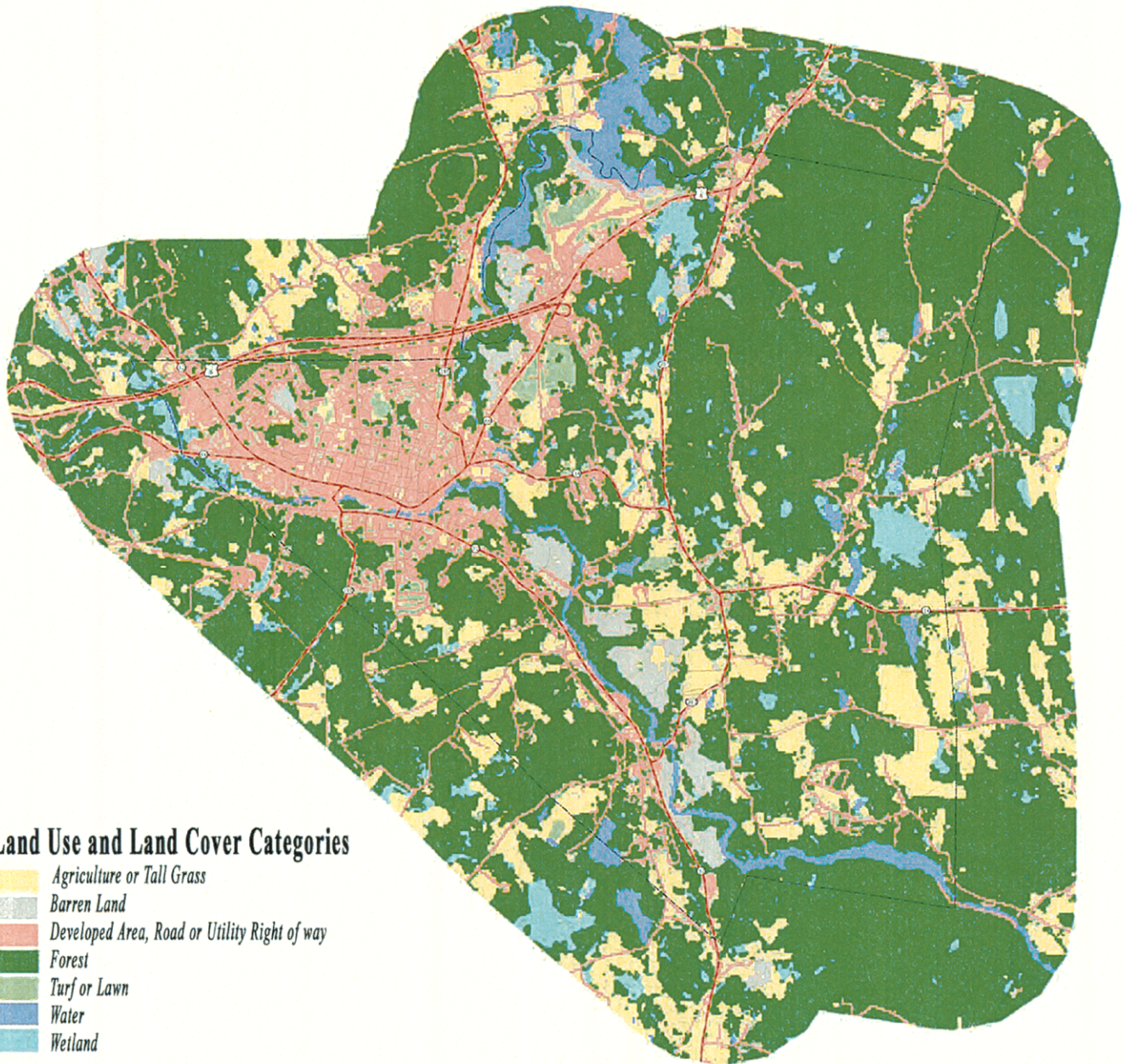
Gateway

River

Thoroughfare

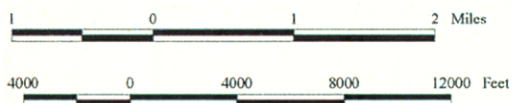
Appendix

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Town and State Property:	
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Land Use and Land Cover Categories

- Agriculture or Tall Grass
- Barren Land
- Developed Area, Road or Utility Right of way
- Forest
- Turf or Lawn
- Water
- Wetland
- Town Boundary
- Highway



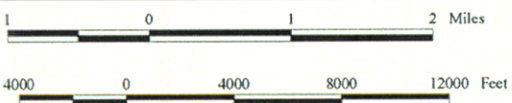
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Orthophotography Legend

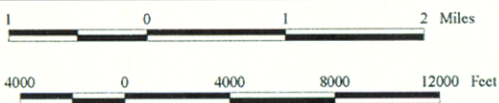
- Town Boundary
- Highway



Orthophotography data shown on this map were processed from aerial photography taken on March 31 and April 12, 1991.

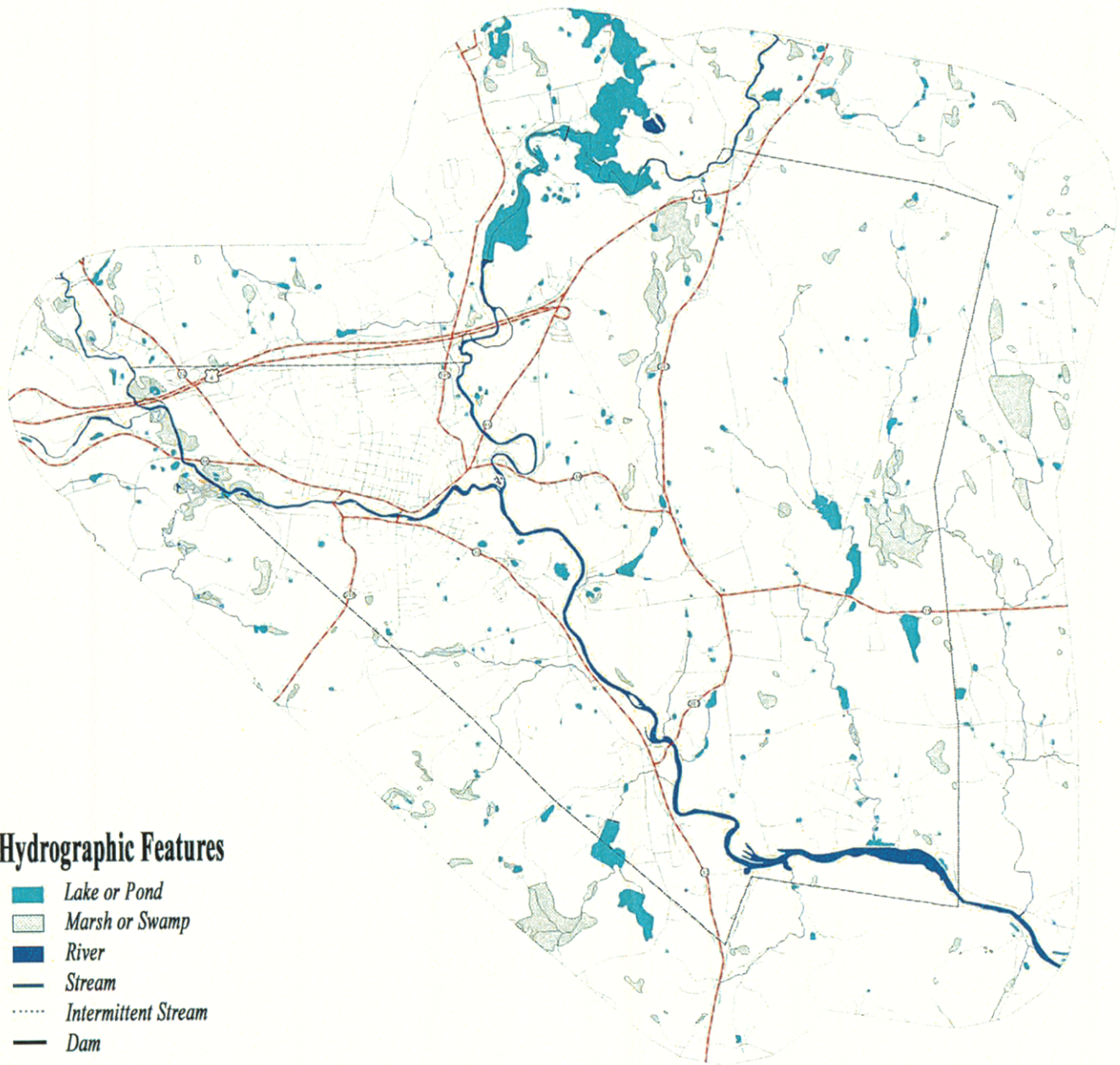
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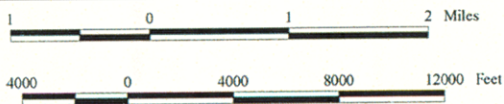
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Hydrographic Features

- Lake or Pond
- Marsh or Swamp
- River
- Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Dam
- Town Boundary



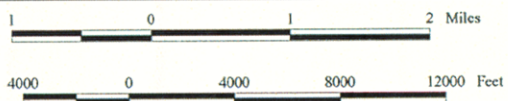
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Wetland Soils

- Wetland Soils
- Town Boundary

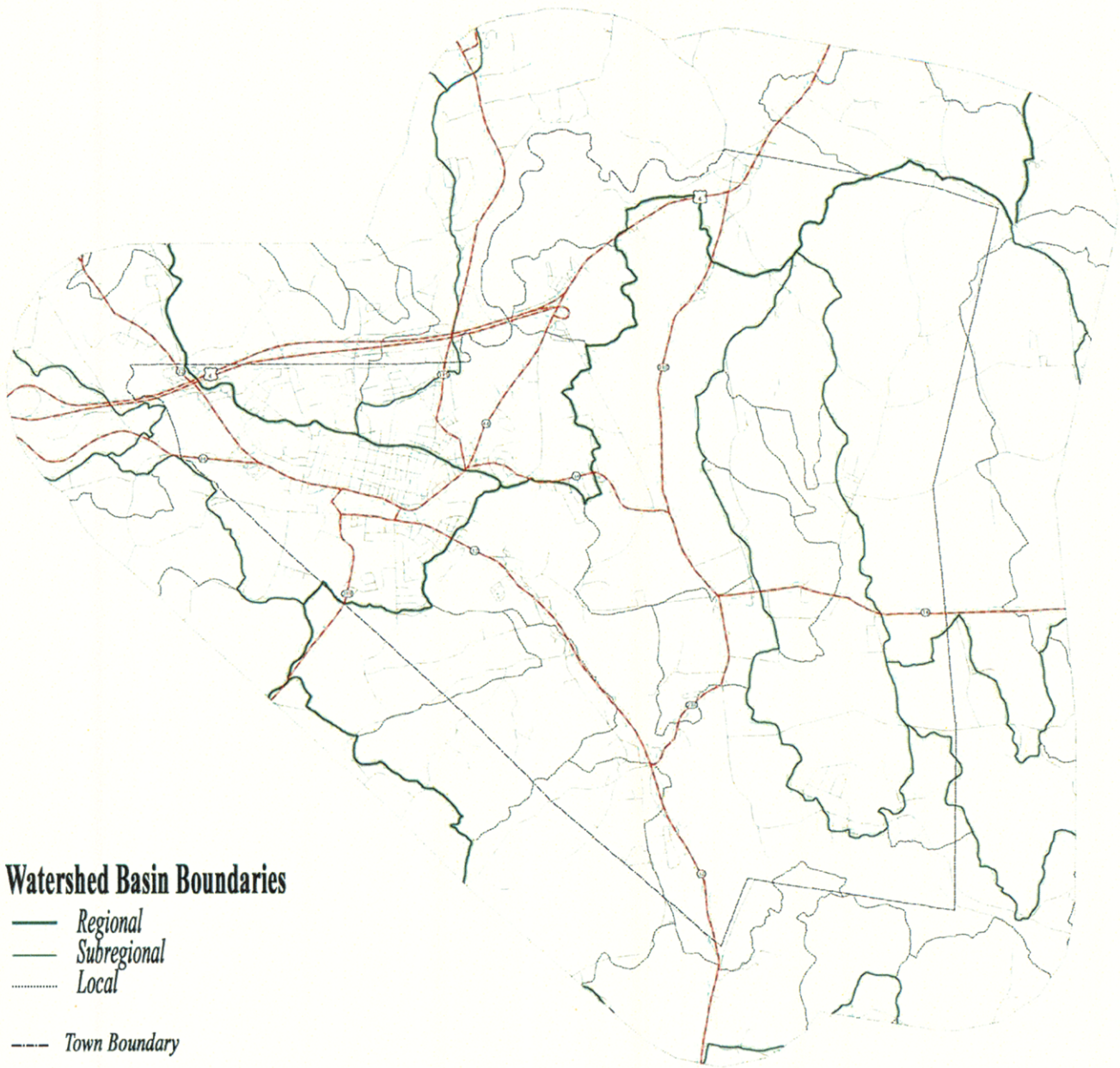


Features shown on this map extend up to one mile outside of the town boundary shown on this map. Some features shown on this map may be clipped and not fully represented.

This map is intended for planning purposes only, and contains no authoritative positional information.

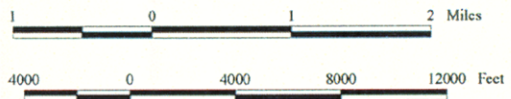
Prepared by the Green Valley Institute, September 2004





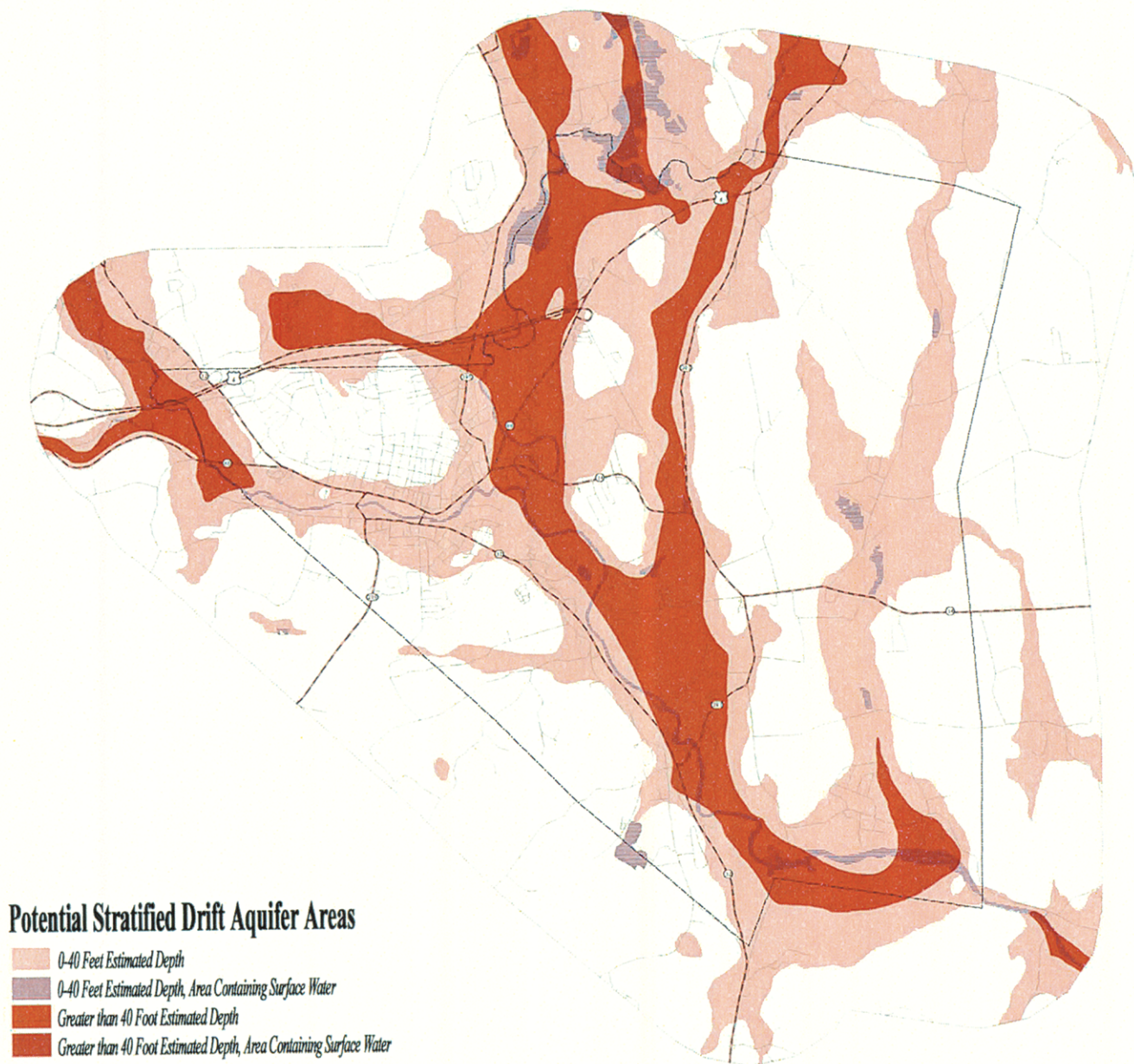
Watershed Basin Boundaries

- Regional
- Subregional
- Local
- - - Town Boundary

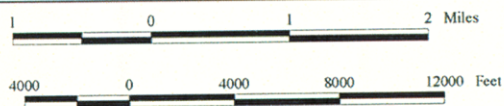


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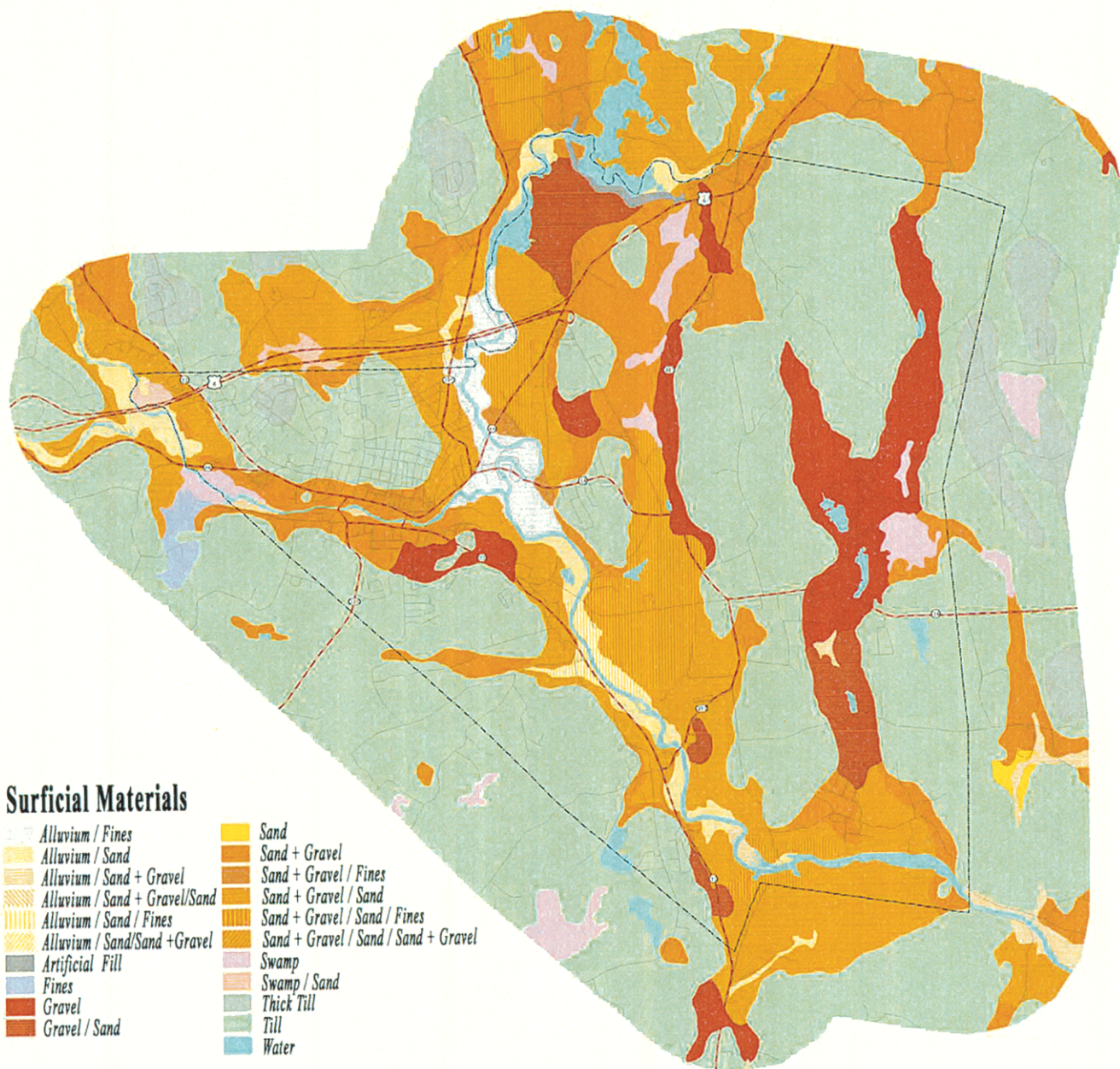


NOTE: The term "Estimated Depth" in the map legend refers to the estimated depth of stratified drift deposits.



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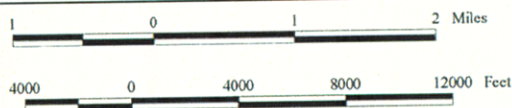




Surficial Materials

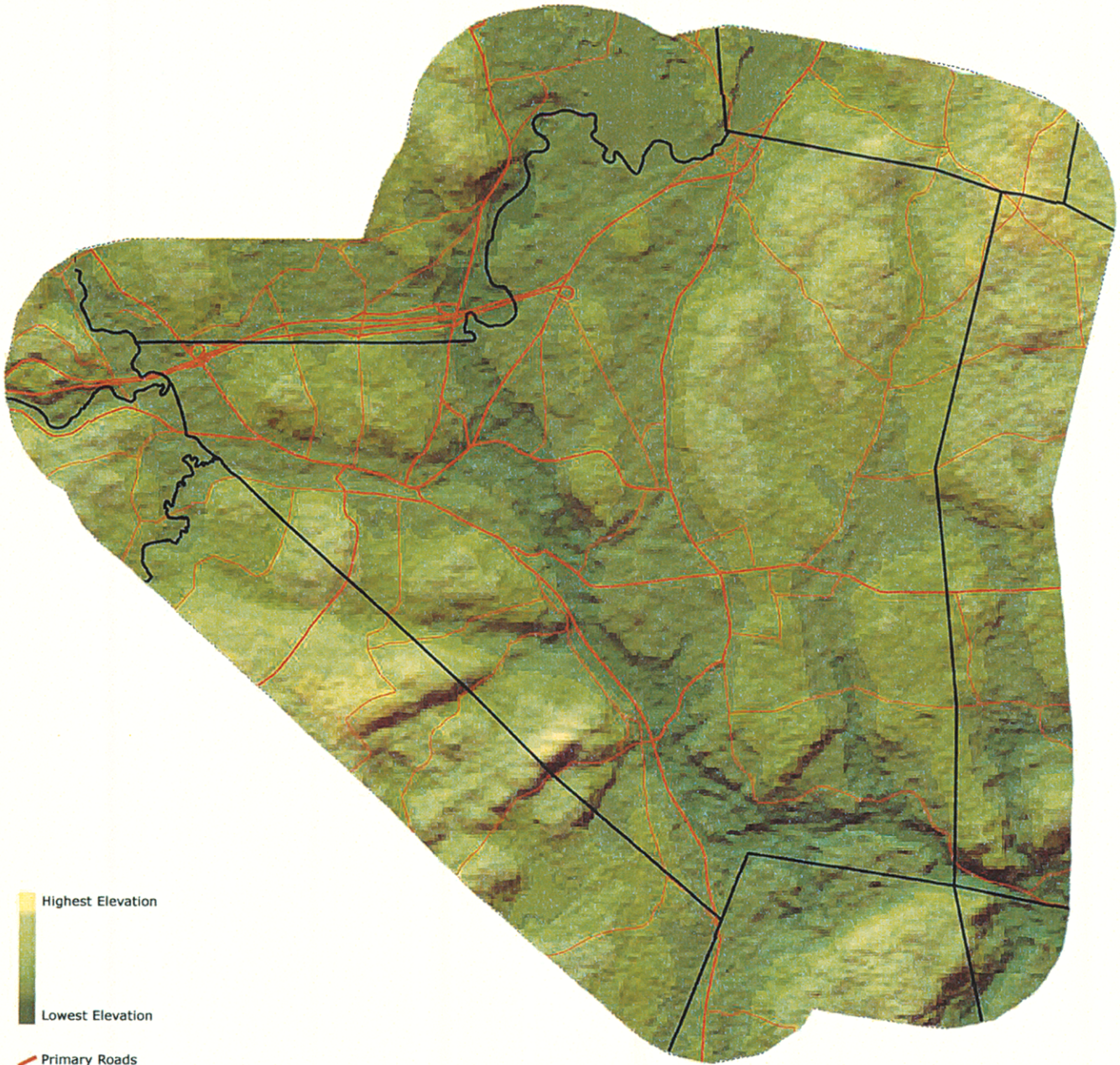
- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Alluvium / Fines | Sand |
| Alluvium / Sand | Sand + Gravel |
| Alluvium / Sand + Gravel | Sand + Gravel / Fines |
| Alluvium / Sand + Gravel/Sand | Sand + Gravel / Sand |
| Alluvium / Sand / Fines | Sand + Gravel / Sand / Fines |
| Alluvium / Sand/Sand + Gravel | Sand + Gravel / Sand / Sand + Gravel |
| Artificial Fill | Swamp |
| Fines | Swamp / Sand |
| Gravel | Thick Till |
| Gravel / Sand | Till |
| | Water |

- Town Boundary
 --- Highway



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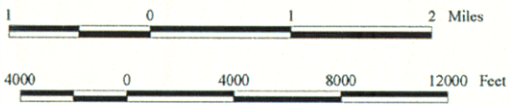




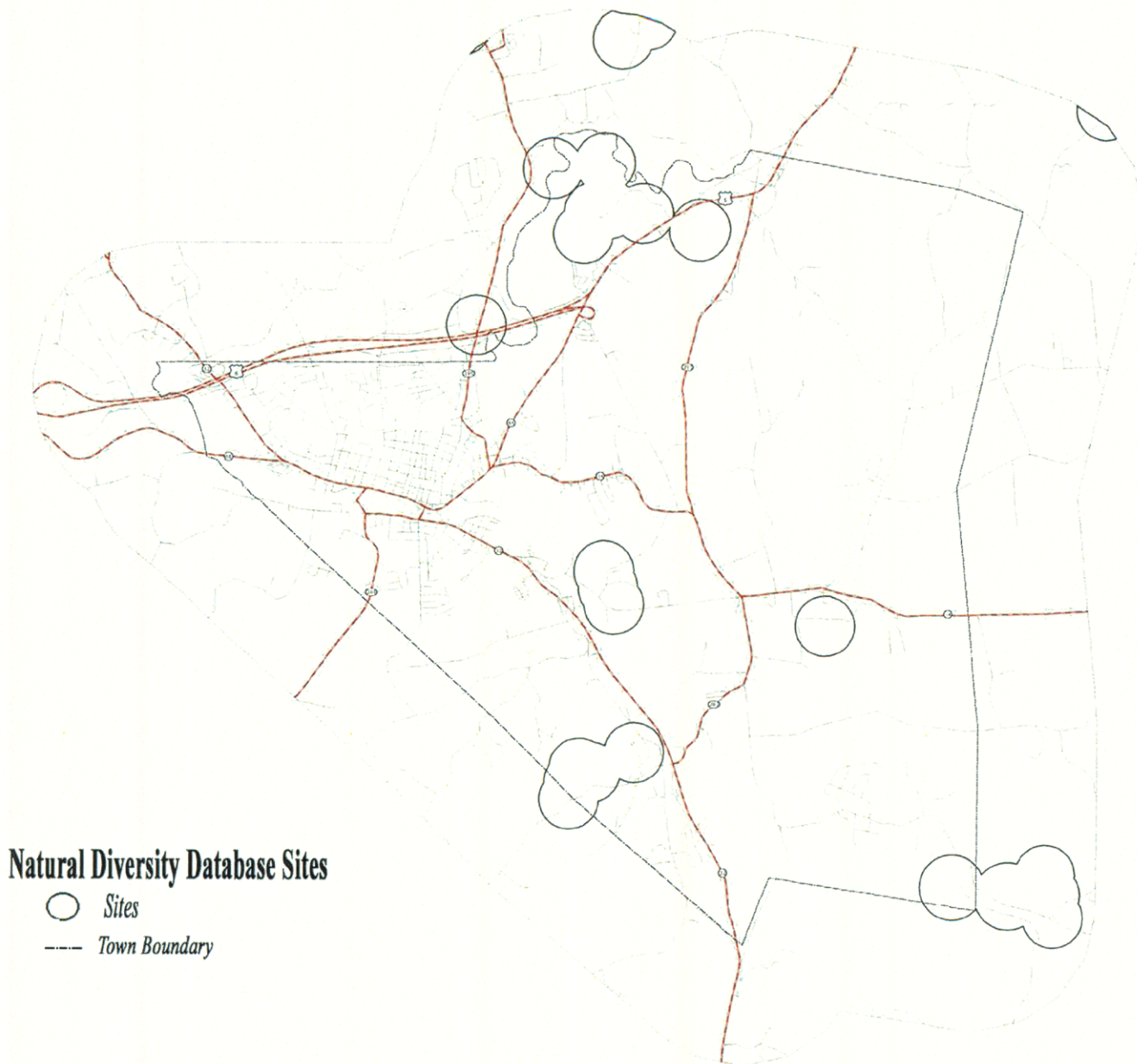
Highest Elevation

Lowest Elevation

Primary Roads

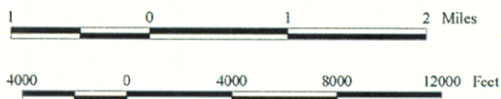


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 Prepared by the Green Valley Institute January 2007
 from a map provided by clear.uconn.edu/projects/cr



Natural Diversity Database Sites

- Sites
- Town Boundary



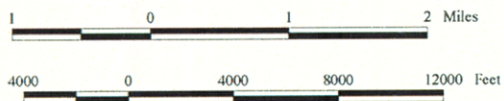
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Farmland Soils

- Prime Farmland Soils
- Additional Statewide Important Farmland Soils



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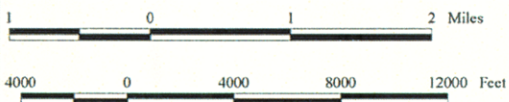


Natural Resource Priority

- 5 (Highest Priority Ranking)
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 (Lowest Priority Ranking)

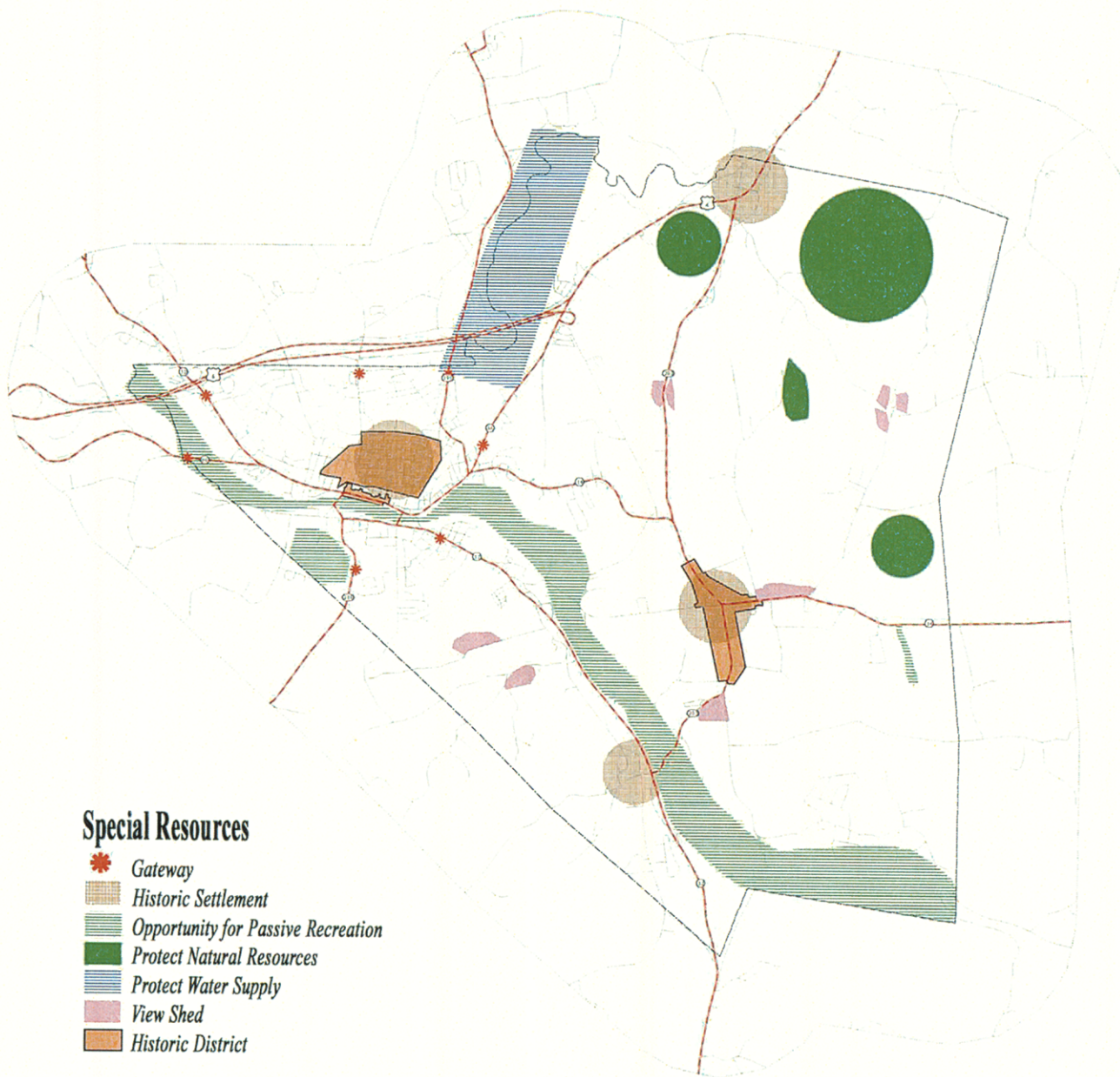
Other Information

- Existing Open Space
- Developed Areas



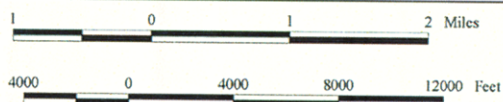
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Compiled by the Green Valley Institute January 2006





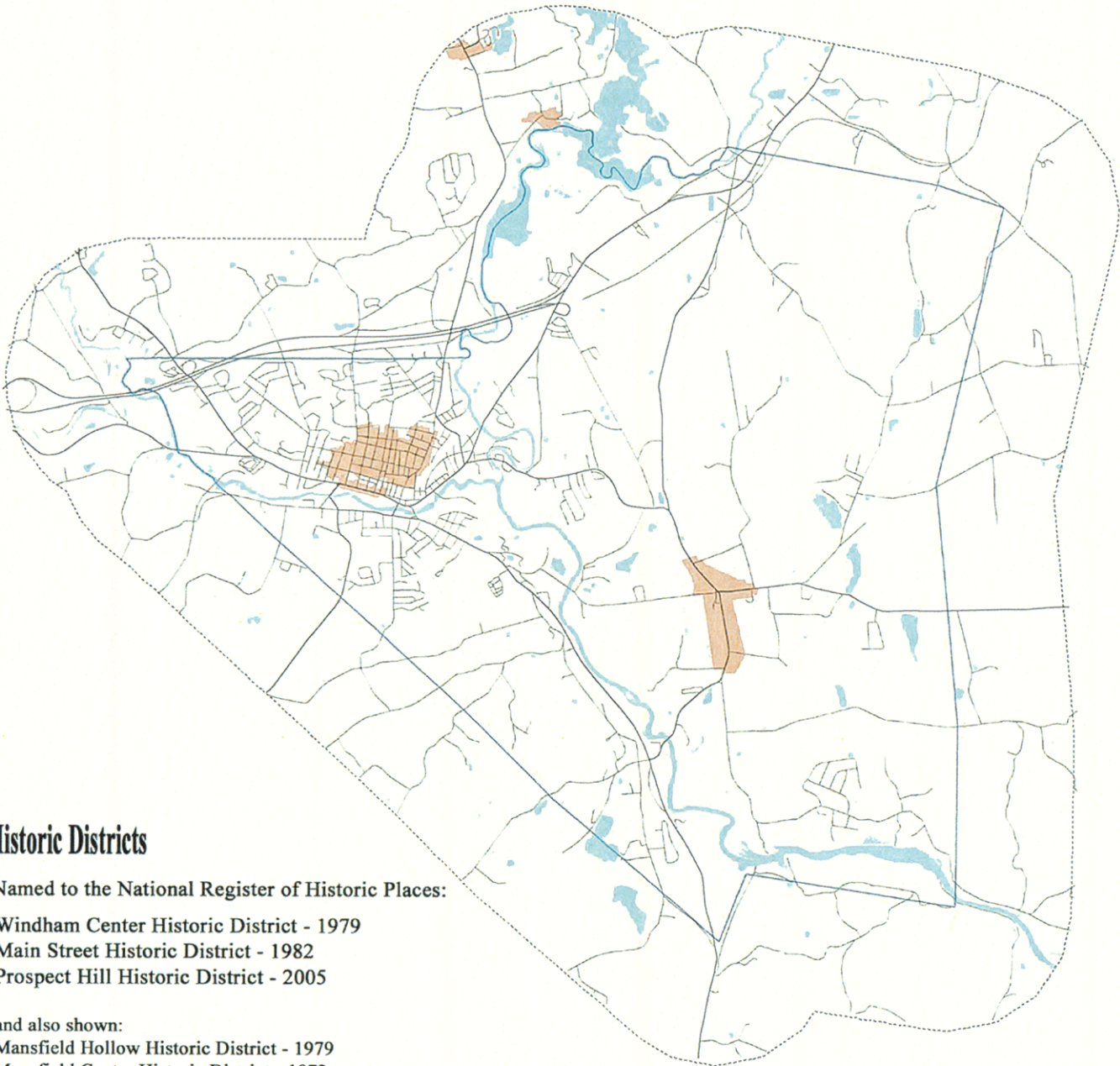
Special Resources

-  Gateway
-  Historic Settlement
-  Opportunity for Passive Recreation
-  Protect Natural Resources
-  Protect Water Supply
-  View Shed
-  Historic District



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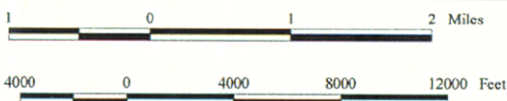
Historic Districts

Named to the National Register of Historic Places:

Windham Center Historic District - 1979
Main Street Historic District - 1982
Prospect Hill Historic District - 2005

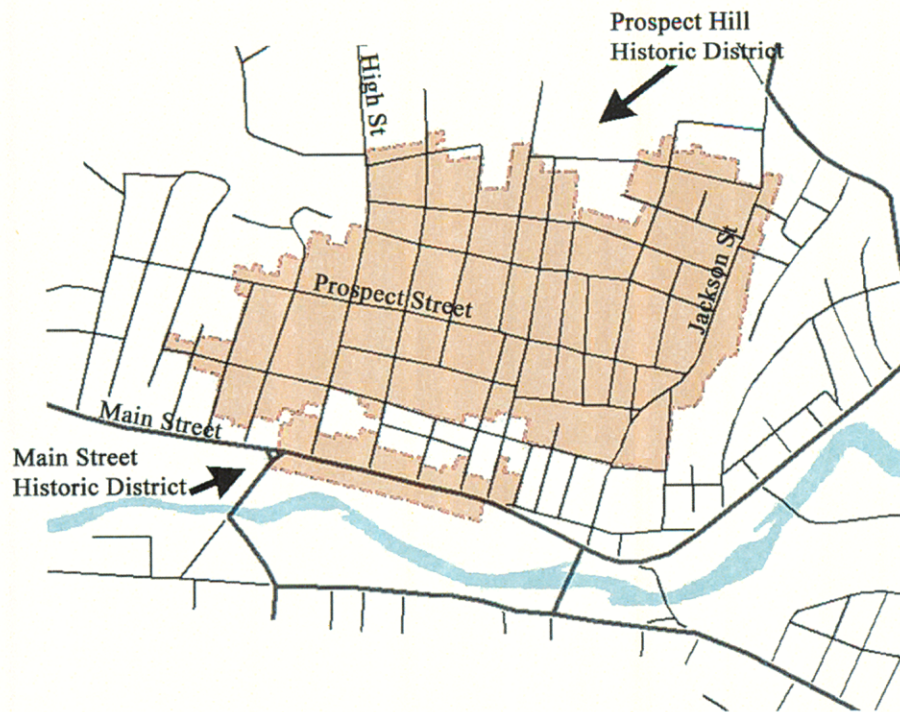
and also shown:

Mansfield Hollow Historic District - 1979
Mansfield Center Historic District - 1972



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Windham Center
Historic Distirct

Plains Rd

Rte 14

Rte 203

Historic Districts

Named to the National Register of Historic Places:

Windham Center Historic District - 1979

Main Street Historic District - 1982

Prospect Hill Historic District - 2005

Not to scale



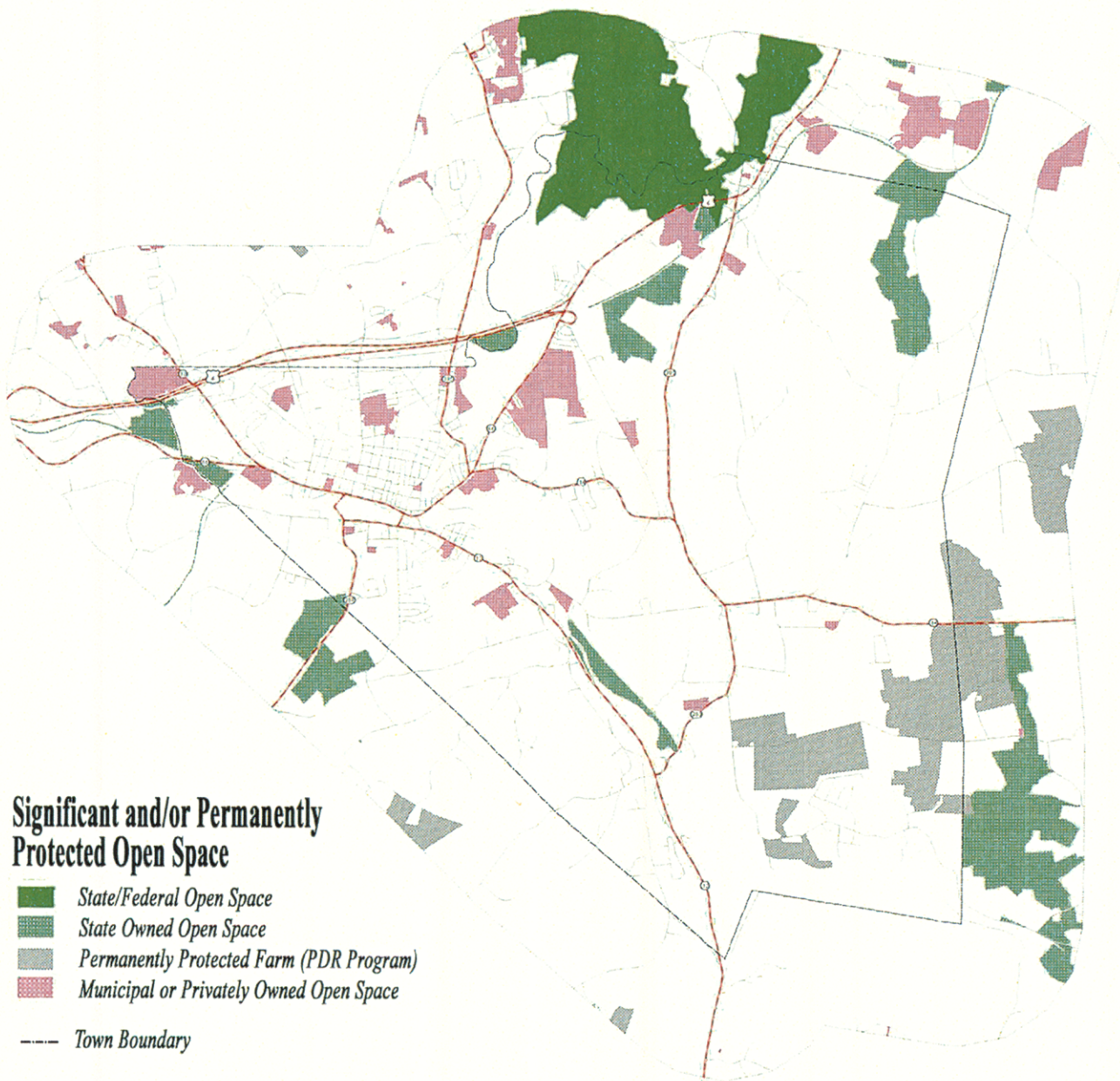
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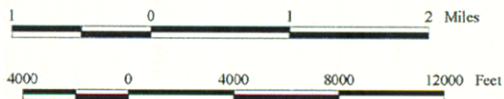
Town of Windham, Connecticut

Significant and Permanently Protected Open Space



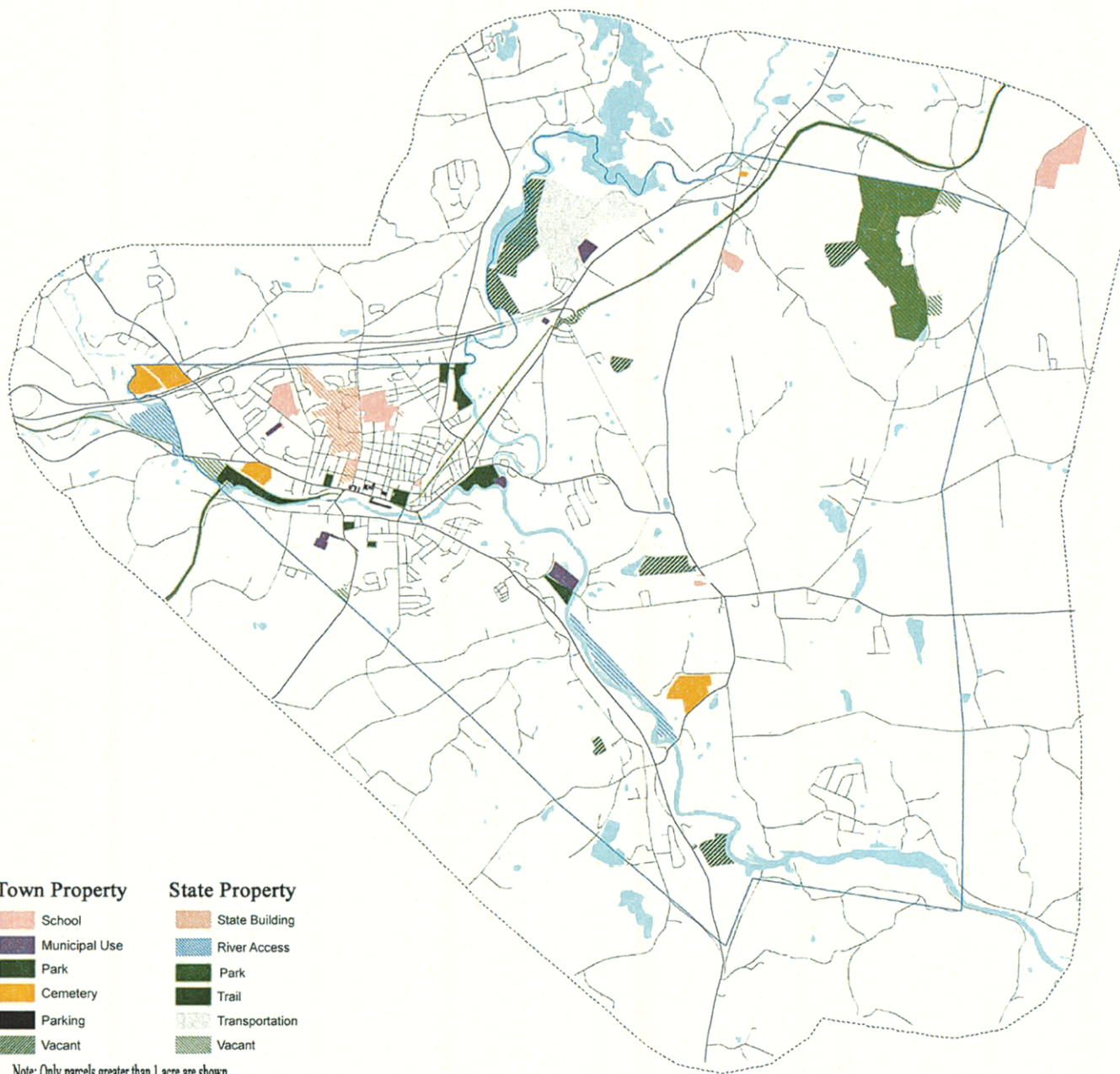
Significant and/or Permanently Protected Open Space

- State/Federal Open Space
- State Owned Open Space
- Permanently Protected Farm (PDR Program)
- Municipal or Privately Owned Open Space
- Town Boundary



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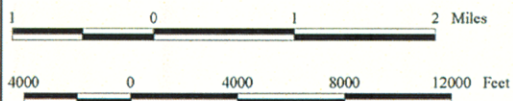
Town Property

- School
- Municipal Use
- Park
- Cemetery
- Parking
- Vacant

State Property

- State Building
- River Access
- Park
- Trail
- Transportation
- Vacant

Note: Only parcels greater than 1 acre are shown

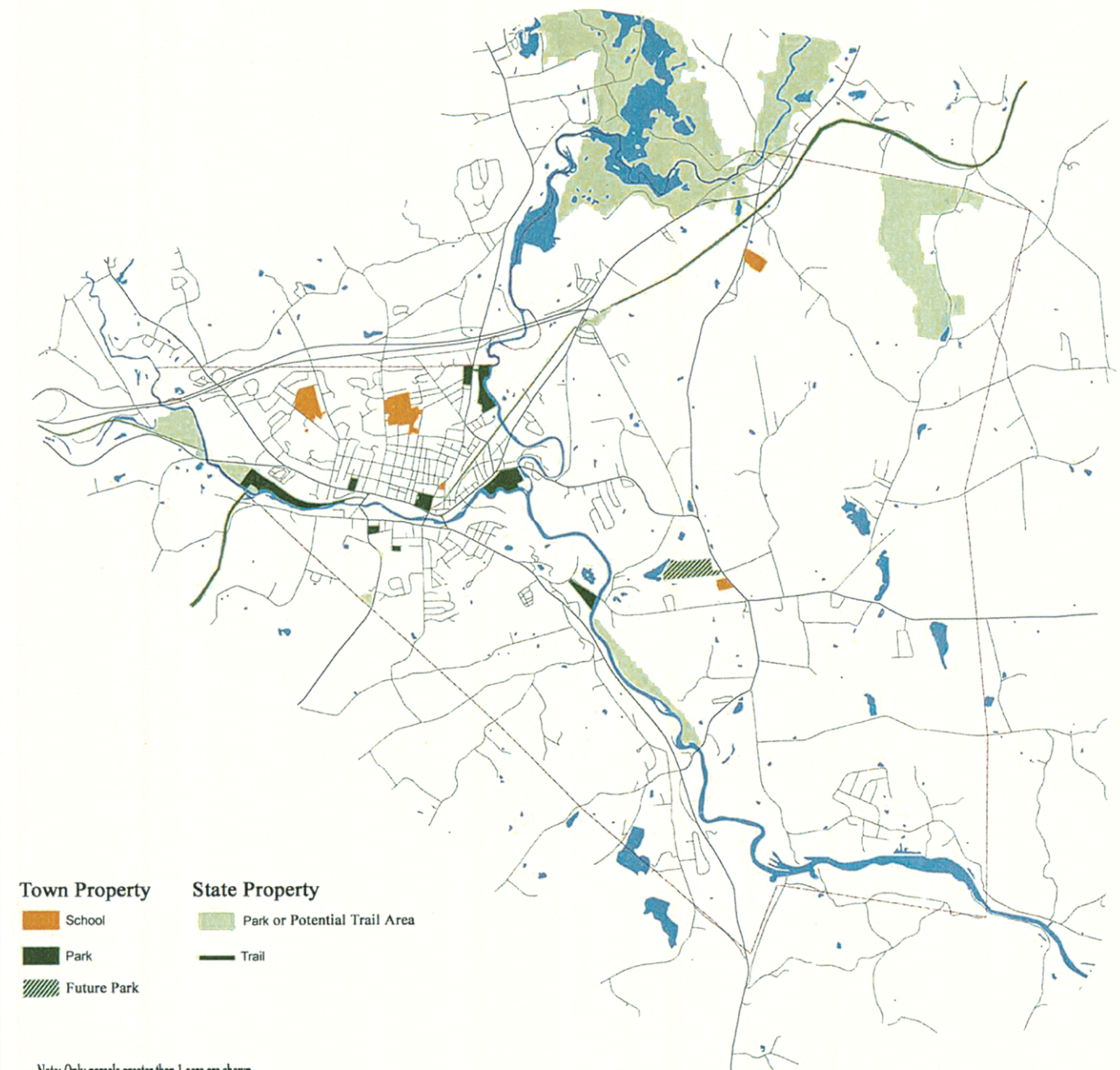


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Prepared by the Green Valley Institute, August 2006

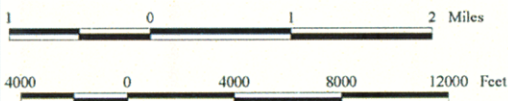


Town of Windham, Connecticut

Town and State Property Parks, Trails and Local Schools

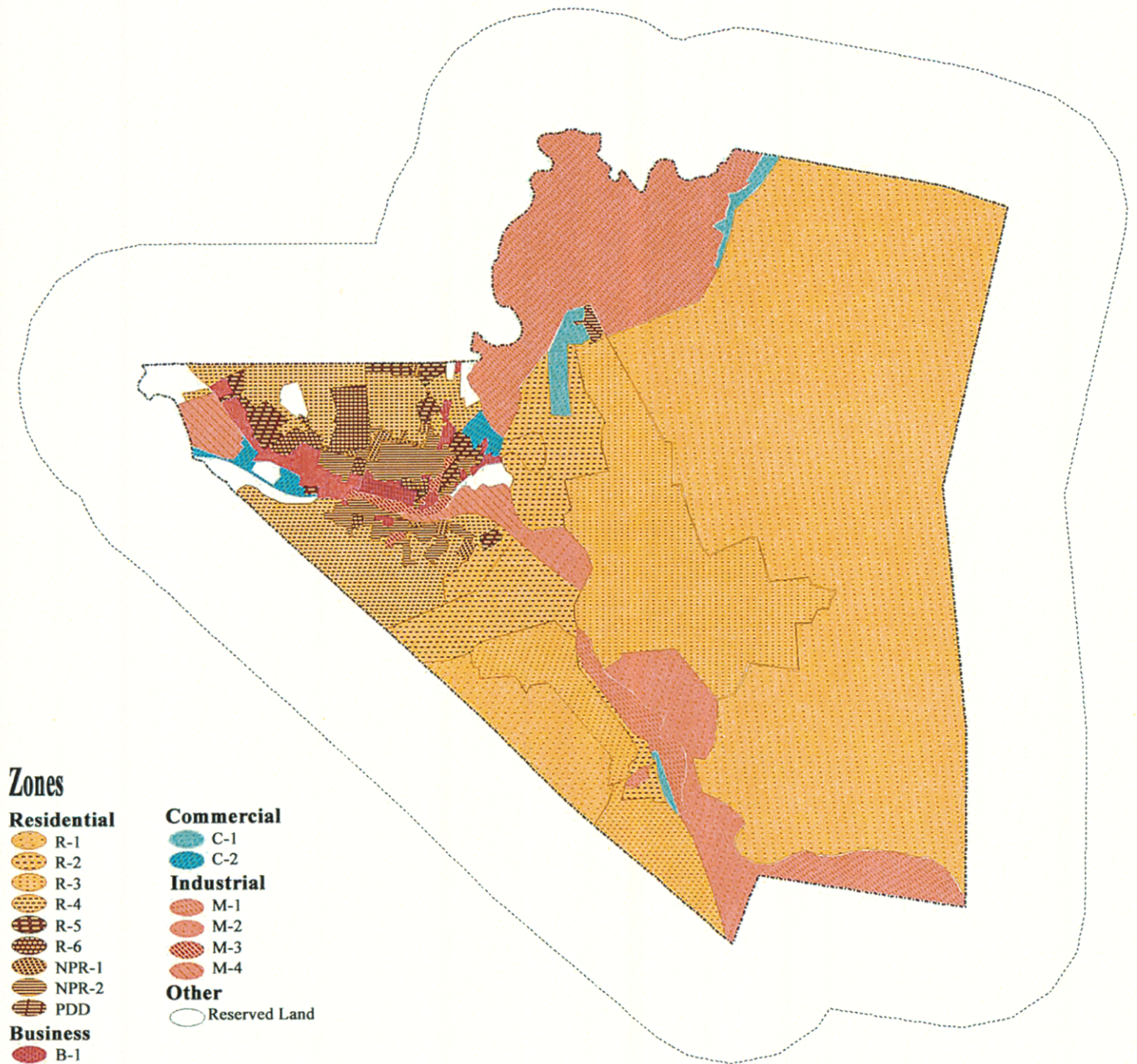


Note: Only parcels greater than 1 acre are shown



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Prepared by the Green Valley Institute, August 2006





Zones

Residential

- R-1
- R-2
- R-3
- R-4
- R-5
- R-6
- NPR-1
- NPR-2
- PDD

Business

- B-1
- B-2
- B-3

Commercial

- C-1
- C-2

Industrial

- M-1
- M-2
- M-3
- M-4

Other

- Reserved Land

1 0 1 2 Miles

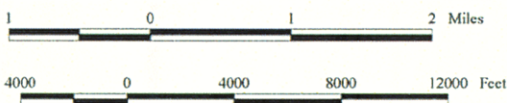
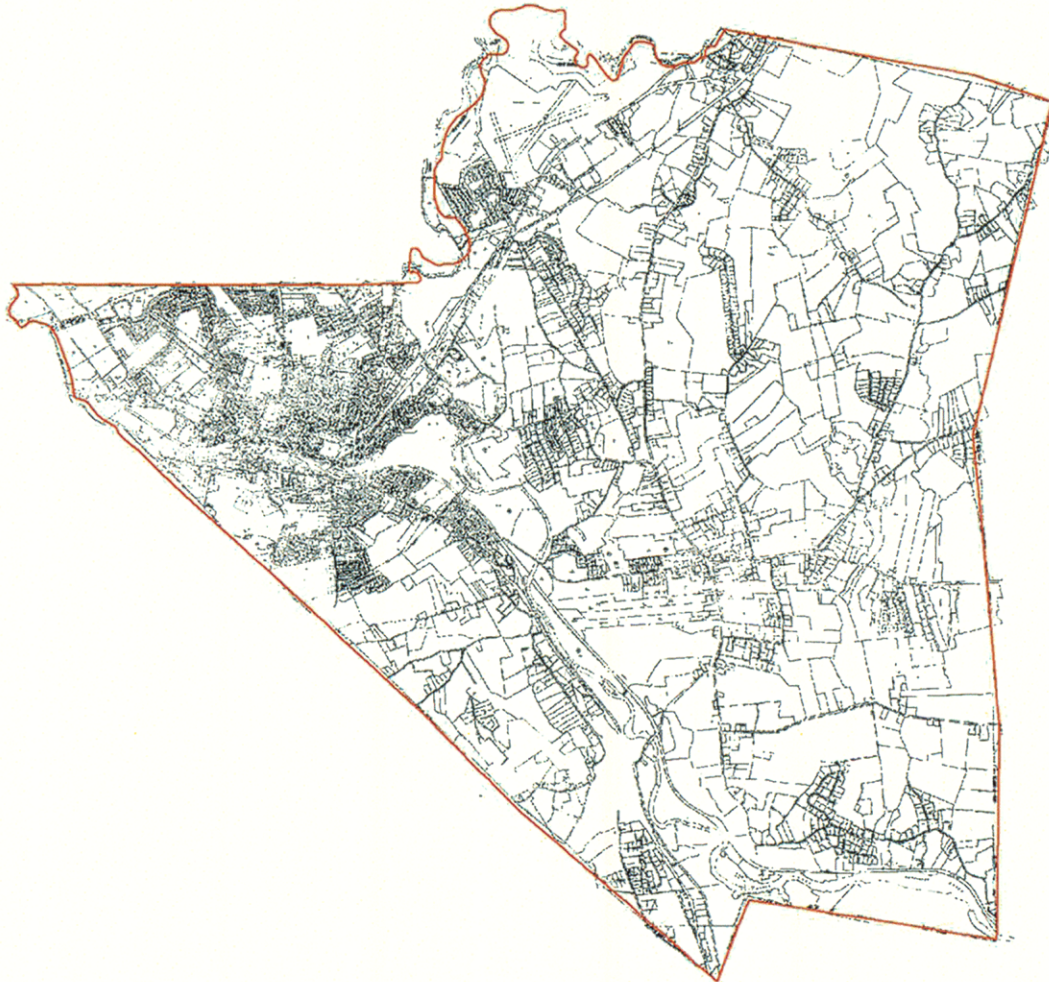
4000 0 4000 8000 12000 Feet



This map is intended for planning purposes only
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Prepared by the Green Valley Institute, May 2005

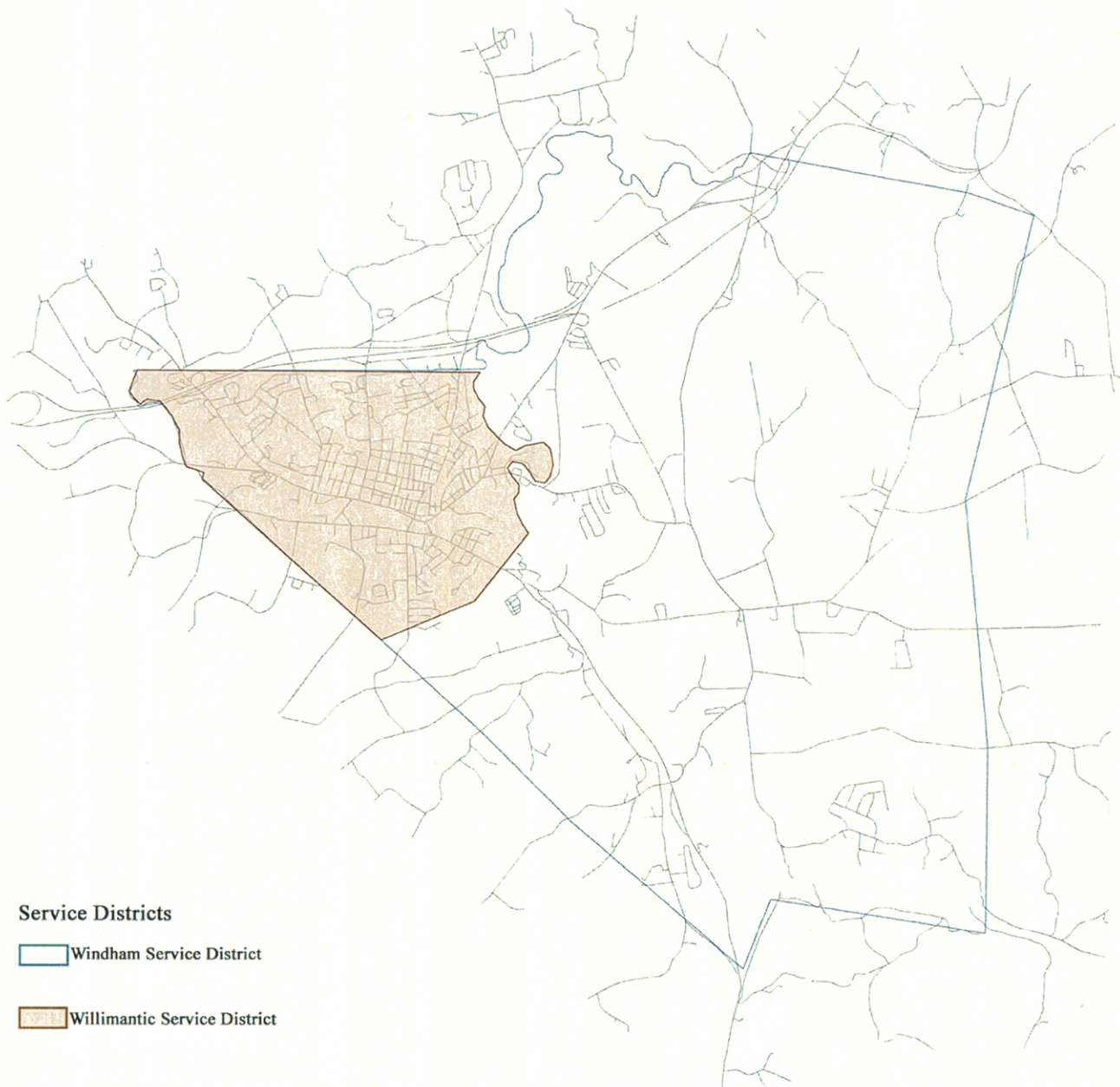




This map is a composite of paper maps provided by the Windham Assessor. The nature of combining many individual maps, generated at different times by different individuals can cause inaccuracies. This map is provided for general planning purposes only.

This map is intended for planning purposes only and contains no authoritative positional information.
Prepared by the Green Valley Institute, August 2006

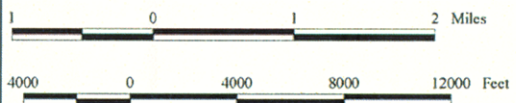




Service Districts

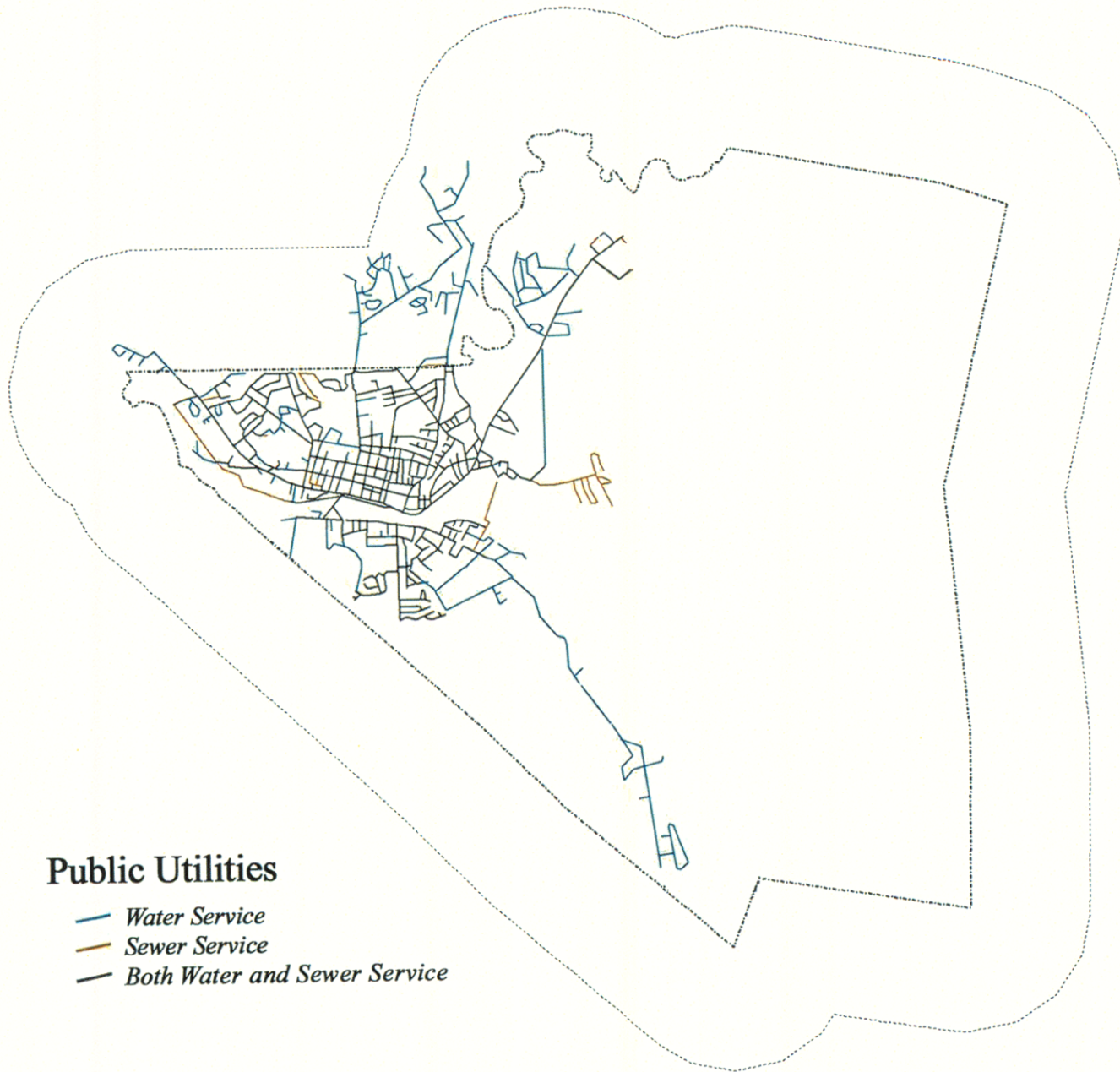
 Windham Service District

 Willimantic Service District



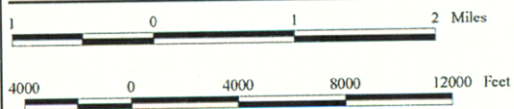
This map is intended for planning purposes only
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Prepared by the Green Valley Institute, August 2006





Public Utilities

- Water Service
- Sewer Service
- Both Water and Sewer Service



This map is intended for planning purposes only and contains no authoritative positional information.

Prepared by the Green Valley Institute, August 2006



Topography**Data Source:**

Topography data shown on this map were derived from topography data generated originally by the United States Geological Survey, reprocessed by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, and distributed by the Map and Geographic Information Center, University of Connecticut.

Town boundary data shown on this map were subset and processed from Connecticut statewide town boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information.

The accuracy of data shown on this map cannot be guaranteed. These data may not be complete and/or up to date.

All measurements represented on this map are approximations.

Hydrology**Data Source:**

Hydrographic features data shown on this map were a subset from hydrography data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information Center.

Town boundary data shown on this map were subset and processed from Connecticut statewide town boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information.

The accuracy of data shown on this map cannot be guaranteed. These data may not be complete and/or up to date.

All measurements represented on this map are approximations.

Wetland Soils**Data Source:**

Wetland soils data shown on this map were subset and extracted from soils data courtesy of the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information Center.

Town boundary data shown on this map were subset and processed from Connecticut statewide town boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information.

The accuracy of data shown on this map cannot be guaranteed. These data may not be complete and/or up to date.

All measurements represented on this map are approximations.

Watershed Basin Boundaries**Data Source:**

Watershed basin boundaries data shown on this map were subset from Connecticut statewide watershed boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information Center.

Town boundary data shown on this map were subset and processed from Connecticut statewide town boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information.

The accuracy of data shown on this map cannot be guaranteed. These data may not be complete and/or up to date.

All measurements represented on this map are approximations.

Potential Stratified Drift Aquifer Areas

Data Source:

Potential stratified drift aquifer areas shown on this map were generated by the Green Valley Institute, and were derived from surficial materials data courtesy of the United States Geological Survey, and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information Center. Estimated depths of stratified drift data included in this data layer were based on hydrogeologic maps generated by the United States Geological Survey and the Connecticut Water Resource Commission.

Surficial Materials

Data Source:

Surficial materials data shown on this map were a subset from Connecticut statewide surficial materials data courtesy of the United States Geological Survey and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information Center.

Town boundary data shown on this map were subset and processed from Connecticut statewide town boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information.

Highway data shown on this map were generated by the Green Valley Institute.

The accuracy of data shown on this map cannot be guaranteed. These data may not be complete and/or up to date. All measurements represented on this map are approximations.

Natural Diversity Data Base

Data Source:

Natural diversity data base sites data shown on this map were subset from Connecticut statewide natural diversity data base site data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information Center.

Town boundary data shown on this map were subset and processed from Connecticut statewide town boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information.

The accuracy of data shown on this map cannot be guaranteed. These data may not be complete and/or up to date. All measurements represented on this map are approximations.

Farmland Soils

Data Source:

Farm land soils data shown on this map were subset and extracted from soils data courtesy of the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information Center.

Town boundary data shown on this map were subset and processed from Connecticut statewide town boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information.

The accuracy of data shown on this map cannot be guaranteed. These data may not be complete and/or up to date. All measurements represented on this map are approximations.

Co-occurring Natural Resources

Data Source:

Co-occurring resource data was derived as a compilation of other maps in the Windham map data set based on algorithms as determined by priorities established by the Windham Conservation Commission for proximity to: 1) rivers, streams, ponds, lakes or wetlands, 2) significant unfragmented forestland, 3) proximity to other protected open space, 4) aquifer areas, and 5) other priorities.

Developed land data shown on this map were derived from land use and land cover data generated by the Center for Land Use Education and Research, Department of Natural Resources Management and Engineering, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Connecticut. Open space data shown on this map were subset and derived from open space data courtesy of the following organizations: Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information Center, Connecticut Office of Planning and Management, United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Additional open space parcels data were generated by the Green Valley Institute.

Town boundary data shown on this map were subset and processed from Connecticut statewide town boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information.

Highway data shown on this map were generated by the Green Valley Institute.

Historical and Cultural Resources

Data Source:

Gateway and special cultural resources data shown on this map were generated by the Green Valley Institute based on input from Windham townspeople at a meeting held on March 9, 2002.

Historic district data shown on this map were generated by the Green Valley Institute, based on data generated by David Poirier, State Archeologist, SHPO.

Town boundary data shown on this map were subset and processed from Connecticut statewide town boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information.

The accuracy of data shown on this map cannot be guaranteed. These data may not be complete and/or up to date.

All measurements represented on this map are approximations

National Historic Districts

Data Source:

Historic district data shown on this map were generated by the Green Valley Institute, based on data generated by David Poirier, State Archeologist, SHPO.

Significant and-or Protected Open Space

Data Source:

Significant and permanently protected open space data shown on this map were subset and derived from open space data courtesy of the following organizations: Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information Center, Connecticut Office of Planning and Management, United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Additional open space parcels data were generated by the Green Valley Institute.

Town boundary data shown on this map were subset and processed from Connecticut statewide town boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information.

The accuracy of data shown on this map cannot be guaranteed. These data may not be complete and/or up to date.

All measurements represented on this map are approximations.

Town and State Property

Data Source:

Town and State property data shown on this map were derived from open space data courtesy of the following organizations: Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information Center,

Connecticut Office of Planning and Management, United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Additional town and state parcels data were generated by the Green Valley Institute. Town boundary data shown on this map were subset and processed from Connecticut statewide town boundary data courtesy of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information. The accuracy of data shown on this map cannot be guaranteed. These data may not be complete and/or up to date. All measurements represented on this map are approximations.

Town and State Property, Parks, Trails and Local Schools

Data Source:

Parks trails and local schools data shown on this map were derived from open space data courtesy of the following organizations: Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental and Geographic Information Center, Connecticut Office of Planning and Management, United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Additional parks, trails and local school parcels data were generated by the Green Valley Institute.

Zoning Map

Data Source:

Zoning data shown on this map were generated by the Green Valley Institute based on paper maps provided by the Town of Windham.

Property Boundaries

Data Source:

Property boundary data shown on this map was generated by the Green Valley Institute by scanning the Windham Assessor's paper parcel maps.

Service Districts

Data Source:

District boundary line data shown on this map were generated by the Green Valley Institute based on paper maps provided by the Town of Windham.

Public Utilities: Water and Sewer

Data Source:

Water and sewer data shown on this map were generated by the Green Valley Institute based on paper maps provided by the Town of Windham.

Appendix cont.

Other Information

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Town of Windham

Build-Out Analysis and Cost of Community Services Study

A **build-out analysis** is a valuable tool to help a community understand the impacts of development based on current regulations. Once a community understands these implications and has a clear vision for its future, it can determine if current regulations meet their needs or if alternatives should be investigated.

The **Cost of Community Services Study** is a tool used to demonstrate the cost to provide town services on a land use basis. The American Farm Land Trust developed the model 15 years ago, and it has been used across the country to evaluate the differences between revenue generated and services required by specific land uses.

BUILD-OUT

The Build-Out Analysis is based on current zoning regulations that stipulate site conditions prohibiting development (such as wetland soils or steep slopes) and minimum lot size or minimum building envelope size. The analysis isn't an attempt to forecast what will happen, but rather what is possible under current zoning regulations.

Process:

The first step was to determine, by zone, the number of current parcels, the individual lot size and whether or not it meets current size regulations. Table A summarizes Windham's primary residential districts. In most zones, no significant development could occur. However, in R-1 and R-3 there is significant potential for residential growth: 248 undeveloped parcels totaling 3,544 acres have the potential to be developed. In addition many parcels containing some development could be subdivided for additional development: 220 parcels, totaling 4,038 acres, are each greater than 4 acres and could support additional development.

The next step was to look at site limitation based on current zoning and wetland regulations that place restrictions for development. Building is not permitted on wetland soils, flood plain soils, within a 100-year flood plain, or slopes greater than 25%; and approval is required within a 100' buffer of a stream or waterbody. Using GIS information from The University of Connecticut Map and Geographic Information Center (MAGIC) and the Green Valley Institute, data was gathered for the zones with potential for development (R-1 and R-3). The result of the analysis is that 32.8% of the land in R-1 and 26.2% of the land in R-3 has site limitation for development based on current regulations. (see Table B).

Site Limitation Summary		Table B	
R-1	Total Acres	8,181	acres
	slope greater than maximum	689	acres
	wetland and flood plain soils plus 50' buffer	<u>1,998</u>	acres
	Total Limitation	2,687	acres
	Limitation Percentage	32.8%	
R-3	Total Acres	2,524	acres
	slope greater than maximum	196	acres
	wetland and flood plain soils plus 50' buffer	<u>465</u>	acres
	Total Limitation	661	acres
	Limitation Percentage	26.2%	

Residential Parcel Summary

Table A

Zones	Total Parcels	Total Acres	Parcel Average	Potential for additional development
NPR-1				
Fully Developed / less than 4 acre	84	41.36	0.49	no additional development possible
Undeveloped	9	2.60	0.29	no significant development possible
Town, State or Protected	5	1.04	0.21	no additional development possible
NPR-2				
Fully Developed / less than 4 acre	1,016	228.57	0.22	no additional development possible
Undeveloped	81	18.95	0.23	no significant development possible
Town, State or Protected	39	11.59	0.30	no additional development possible
R-1				
Fully Developed / less than 4 acre	241	517.49	2.15	no additional development possible
Developed greater than 4 acres	142	2,952.70	20.79	<u>development possible</u>
Undeveloped greater than 1.38 (min) acres	150	2,512.28	16.75	<u>development possible</u>
Undeveloped less than 1.38 (min) acres	392	346.87	0.88	no additional development possible
Town, State or Protected	23	996.74	43.34	nodevelopment possible
R-2				
Fully Developed / less than 4 acre	301	214.16	0.71	no development possible
Developed greater than 4 acres	23	343.34	14.93	no significant development possible
Undeveloped greater than .46 (min) acres	52	333.19	6.41	no significant development possible
Undeveloped less than .46 (min) acres	52	11.94	0.23	no development possible
Town, State or Protected	37	190.53	5.15	no development possible
R-3				
Fully Developed / less than 4 acre	713	737.26	1.03	no additional development possible
Developed greater than 4 acres	78	1,084.55	13.90	<u>development possible</u>
Undeveloped greater than .92 (min) acres	98	1,031.77	10.53	<u>development possible</u>
Undeveloped less than .92 (min) acres	47	18.30	0.39	no additional development possible
Town, State or Protected	19	371.28	19.54	no development possible
R-4				
Fully Developed / less than 4 acre	1,311	485.72	0.37	no development possible
Developed greater than 4 acres	6	38.95	6.49	no significant development possible
Undeveloped greater than .92 (min) acres	25	277.85	11.11	no significant development possible
Undeveloped less than .92 (min) acres	80	22.27	0.28	no significant development possible
Town, State or Protected	49	147.68	3.01	no development possible
R-5				
Fully Developed / less than 4 acre	253	56.36	0.22	no development possible
Undeveloped greater than .21 (min) acres	5	3.51	0.70	no significant development possible
Undeveloped less than .21 (min) acres	9	1.06	0.12	no significant development possible
Town, State or Protected	17	25.77	1.52	no development possible
Total				
Fully Developed / less than 4 acre	3,919	2,280.92	0.58	
Developed greater than 4 acres	249	4,420.00	17.75	
Undeveloped greater than minimum size	330	4,158.60	46.00	
Undeveloped less than minimum size	670	421.99	0.63	
Town, State or Protected	189	1,744.63	9.23	
	5,357	13,025.68		

The final step was to calculate the potential mathematical buildout based on the above analysis. The undeveloped land in each zone was reduced by the average amount of site limitations, the developed land greater than 4 acres was also reduced by minimum lot size. Because subdivisions require road ways, a 10% reduction was taken for future roads. After statistically accounting for site constraints and the land needed for future roads, the amount of land available for development is 4,540 acres. The minimum required lot size in each zone includes the potential for areas of site limitations, to equate the minimum for build-out analysis, it was assumed that each potential lot would contain the average site limitations for that zone.

Results:

Based on this analysis, if the additional development occurred on minimum lot sizes, 5,438 new single-family (or two-family in R-3) residences could be built. If the additional development occurred on current average lot sizes, 4,076 could be built. Those two zones currently have only 1,903 developed parcels, the growth rate could be 214% to 286%. Because a conservative approach was taken throughout the study, the potential maximum development could be higher. (see Table C)

With the added housing pressures Eastern Connecticut will be facing in the future, a 10% growth rate per decade is likely, if so, build-out could be reached in 80 years.

Build-Out Analysis									Table C	
	Number of Parcels	Total Acres	Average Size	Land for Existing Res	Avg Site Limitations	Avg Buildable	Less 10% for Future Roads	Total Acres Potentially Buildable	If Built on Minimum Building Envelope	If Built on Average Envelope
R-1					32.8%				0.93	1.44
Undeveloped parcels greater than minimum lot size	150	2,512	16.75		5.49	11.25	10.13	1,519	1,634	1,055
Developed greater than 4 acres	142	2,953	20.80	2.00	6.17	12.63	11.37	1,614	1,736	1,121
R-3					26.2%				0.68	0.74
Undeveloped parcels greater than minimum lot size	98	1,032	10.53		2.76	7.77	6.99	685	1,008	926
Developed greater than 4 acres	78	1,085	13.91	1.35	3.64	10.27	9.24	721	1,060	974
Total Potentially Buildable Acres								4,540		
Additional residential development possible									5,438	4,076
Current developed parcels in R-1 and R-3 zones									1,903	1,903
Growth									286%	214%

COST OF COMMUNITY SERVICES STUDY (COCS)

The Green Valley Institute conducted a COCS study for Windham based on the 2002 FY budget. Budget documents, bonding structure and financial statements were analyzed, and each budget revenue and expenditure was allocated to one of three land use categories: Residential, Commercial/ Industrial or Open Space/Farm/Vacant.

For that fiscal year, the study showed that tax revenues from residential properties are not sufficient to support the cost of services provided to them; for each dollar paid in town taxes \$1.15 was used in services. The other two land use categories each paid more in taxes than were used in services.

Windham Cost of Community Services Study
The dollar cost of services for every dollar paid in local taxes

	Residential	Commercial Industrial	Open Space Farm/Vacant
Windham 2002/03	1.15	.24	.19

Table 1. Cost of Community Services Study shows the amount of services provided to each land use category for every \$1.00 paid in local taxes. These results indicate that as land use shifts from undeveloped to residential use, the demand for services increases. This increased demand will result in an increased mill rate.

Although counterintuitive, development over time does not bring lower taxes. There is an immediate increase in tax revenue, but gradually the demand for increased services, and the need to upgrade infrastructure increases expenditures to an amount that exceeds the increased revenue, and the mill rate must be increased. Even new commercial and industrial development can cause an increase in residential development, require additional infrastructure, increase traffic, and have other impacts that can contribute to an increased cost of services.

Other Connecticut COCS Studies

The dollar cost of services for every dollar paid in local taxes

	Residential	Commercial Industrial	Open Space Farm/Vacant
Bolton (1)	1.05	.23	.50
Brooklyn (3)	1.09	.17	.30
Durham (2)	1.07	.27	.23
Farmington (2)	1.33	.32	.31
Litchfield (2)	1.11	.34	.34
Pomfret (2)	1.06	.27	.86

(1) Geisler 1998; (2) SoNEForest Consort 1995; (3) GVI 2002

Table 2. Cost of Community Services Studies for other Connecticut towns parallels the Windham results and shows that the more developed towns have increased demand for services from residential properties.

STRATEGIC SCHOOL PROFILE 2003-04

Windham School District
PAUL PERZANOSKI, Superintendent

Telephone: 860-465-2310



This profile was produced by the Connecticut State Department of Education in accordance with CT General Statutes 10-220(c).

COMMUNITY DATA

County: Windham	Public School Enrollment as a Percent of Town Population: 14.8%
2000 Population: 22,857	Public School Enrollment as % of Total Student Population: 93.1%
1990-2000 Population Growth: 3.7%	Percent of Adults without a High School Diploma in 2000: 24.4%
2000 Per Capita Income: \$16,978	Adult Education Enrollment in 2002-03 School Year: 422
Number of Public Schools: 8	Number of Adults Receiving Diplomas in 2002-03 School Yr.: 27
Number of Nonpublic Schools: 4	

Education Reference Group (ERG): I ERG is a classification of districts whose students' families are similar in education, income, occupation, and need, and that have roughly similar enrollment.

DISTRICT NEED

Current and Past District Need	Year	District	ERG	State
% of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals	2003-04	64.6	74.1	26.6
	2002-03	58.5	71.5	25.4
% of K-12 Students with Non-English Home Language	2003-04	26.1	34.5	12.4
	1998-99	17.0	39.1	12.3
% of Elementary and Middle School Students above Entry Gr. who Attended this School the Previous Yr.	2003-04	80.5	81.2	88.9
	1998-99	77.5	72.4	86.0
% of Kindergarten Students who Attended Preschool, Nursery School, or Headstart	2003-04	75.2	56.3	76.4
	1998-99	69.2	52.8	72.0
% of Juniors and Seniors Working More Than 16 Hours Per Week	2003-04	25.2	16.8	23.0
	1998-99	36.8	28.2	31.3

STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND RACE/ETHNICITY

Enrollment		Race/Ethnicity (Jan.)	Number	Percent
Grade Range	PK-12	American Indian	19	0.5
Total January Enrollment	3,344	Asian American	38	1.1
5-Year Oct. Enrollment Change	7.2%	Black	188	5.2
Projected Oct. 2008 Enrollment		Hispanic	1,949	54.1
Elementary	1,424	White	1,394	38.7
Middle School	1,064	Other	14	0.4
High School	1,095	Total Minority 2003-04	2,208	61.3
Prekindergarten, Other	182	Total Minority 1998-99	1,711	51.2

DISTRICT RESOURCES, continued

Total Hours of Instruction Per Yr.*	Dist	ERG	State
Elementary	980	974	984
Middle School	1,022	968	1,014
High School	970	975	1,000

*State law requires at least 900 hours for gr. 1-12 and full-day kindergarten, and 450 hours for half-day kindergarten.

Resource Ratios	District	ERG	State
Students Per Academic Computer	6.6	3.9	3.7
Students Per Teacher	12.1	14.3	13.8
Teachers Per Administrator	14.7	14.7	14.0

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Physical Fitness	District	ERG	State
% Passing All 4 Tests	28.3	26.3	34.6

Connecticut Mastery Test, Third Generation, % Meeting State Goal: The state goal was established with the advice and assistance of a cross section of Connecticut educators. The Goal level is more demanding than the state Proficient level, but not as high as the Advanced level, reported in the No Child Left Behind Report Cards.

Connecticut Mastery Test, 3 rd Gen. % Meeting State Goal	District 2000-01	District 2003-04	ERG 2003-04	State 2003-04
Grade 4 Reading	24	28.9	23.4	54.3
Writing	25	43.1	41.2	65.8
Mathematics	29	36.5	29.4	57.6
All Three Tests	12.7	18.9	14.5	42.3
Grade 6 Reading	26	33.2	27.9	61.9
Writing	29	36.6	34.7	62.2
Mathematics	25	38.9	31.1	62.0
All Three Tests	15.7	21.1	16.0	46.4
Grade 8 Reading	33	37.1	35.1	66.7
Writing	32	31.7	35.0	61.8
Mathematics	25	28.7	20.9	56.3
All Three Tests	15.9	16.9	14.0	45.7
Participation Rate	88.2	92.3	95.1	97.4



The figures above were calculated differently than those reported in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Report Cards. Unlike NCLB figures, these results reflect the performance of students with scoreable tests who were enrolled in the district at the time of testing, regardless of the length of time they were enrolled in the district.

DISTRICT REVENUES/EXPENDITURES 2002-03

Expenditures may be supported by local tax revenues, state grants, federal grants, municipal in-kind services, tuition and other sources. ERG and state figures will not be comparable to the district if the school district does not teach both elementary and secondary students.

Expenditures All figures are unaudited.	Total (in 1000s)	Expenditures Per Pupil			
		District	PK-12 Districts	ERG	State
Instructional Staff and Services	\$24,189	\$6,797	\$6,046	\$6,788	\$6,036
Instructional Supplies and Equipment	\$915	\$257	\$249	\$295	\$252
Improvement of Instruction and Educational Media Services	\$2,541	\$714	\$386	\$548	\$376
Student Support Services	\$3,265	\$917	\$583	\$508	\$580
Administration and Support Services	\$3,256	\$915	\$1,051	\$1,168	\$1,061
Plant Operation and Maintenance	\$3,891	\$1,093	\$998	\$1,102	\$992
Transportation	\$1,827	\$455	\$468	\$503	\$470
Costs for Students Tuitioned Out	\$1,724	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other	\$420	\$118	\$120	\$119	\$117
Total	\$42,028	\$11,578	\$10,129	\$11,369	\$10,096
Additional Expenditures					
Land, Buildings, and Debt Service	\$2,772	\$779	\$1,132	\$1,415	\$1,177
Adult Education	\$274	\$648	N/A	\$1,200	\$996

Revenue Sources, % from Source. Revenue sources do not include state funded Teachers' Retirement Board contributions, vocational-technical school operations, SDE budgeted costs for salaries and leadership activities and other state-funded school districts (e.g., Dept. of Children and Families and Dept. of Corrections).

District Expenditures	Local Revenue	State Revenue	Federal Revenue	Tuition & Other
With School Construction	25.9	57.5	13.1	3.5
Without School Construction	25.7	56.6	14.0	3.8

Selected Regular Education Expenditures, Amount Per Pupil and Percent Change from Prior Year. Selected regular education expenditures exclude costs of special education and land, building, and debt service.

Expenditures by Grade Level	District		ERG		State	
	Per Pupil	% Change	Per Pupil	% Change	Per Pupil	% Change
Elementary and Middle						
Total	\$9,723	7.8	\$9,467	0.5	\$8,306	3.6
Salaries and Benefits	\$7,877	7.3	\$7,648	0.0	\$6,848	3.9
Supplies	\$428	-11.8	\$514	-8.5	\$431	1.4
Equipment	\$141	60.2	\$130	26.2	\$125	-3.8
High School						
Total	\$10,637	-2.3	\$9,741	4.9	\$9,192	3.3
Salaries and Benefits	\$8,062	-0.4	\$7,601	5.0	\$7,406	3.7
Supplies	\$474	-39.5	\$545	-0.7	\$504	1.8
Equipment	\$167	27.5	\$157	-7.6	\$153	-11.6

WINDHAM ENROLLMENT PROJECTED TO 2015

School Year	Births	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	PK	K-4	5-8	9-12	Total
1995-96	355	293	269	301	279	250	245	251	243	259	276	249	201	208	122	1392	998	934	3446
1996-97	345	249	284	276	304	268	241	258	262	253	264	235	197	162	125	1381	1014	858	3378
1997-98	351	266	231	286	257	290	265	232	257	247	297	219	203	198	111	1310	1001	917	3339
1998-99	340	253	272	236	252	242	284	271	226	259	305	242	206	192	101	1255	1040	945	3341
1999-00	319	257	262	277	236	263	243	282	271	241	291	243	224	168	103	1295	1037	926	3361
2000-01	339	258	275	275	283	228	265	248	274	264	290	232	245	202	116	1319	1051	969	3455
2001-02	286	251	269	253	267	284	240	249	248	271	313	239	229	222	215	1324	1008	1003	3550
2002-03	299	252	251	240	258	280	291	246	268	251	304	268	220	216	215	1281	1056	1008	3560
2003-04	322	274	270	241	254	248	275	289	249	283	308	277	235	197	182	1287	1096	1017	3582
2004-05	293	280	269	257	231	233	258	268	291	249	332	257	243	208	256	1270	1066	1040	3632
2005-06	358	303	281	273	259	229	238	262	269	287	304	254	239	218	251	1345	1056	1015	3667
Projected																			
2006-07	316	281	307	271	274	252	234	237	266	271	343	252	231	215	251	1385	1008	1041	3685
2007-08	344	301	285	296	272	267	257	233	241	268	324	284	229	208	251	1421	999	1045	3716
2008-09	345	304	305	275	297	285	273	256	237	243	320	269	258	206	251	1446	1009	1053	3759
2009-10	337	298	308	294	276	289	271	272	260	239	290	265	244	232	251	1465	1042	1031	3789
2010-11	343	302	302	297	295	269	295	270	276	262	285	240	241	220	251	1465	1103	986	3805
2011-12	342	302	306	291	298	287	275	294	274	278	313	236	218	217	251	1484	1121	984	3840
2012-13	345	304	306	295	292	290	293	274	299	276	332	259	214	196	251	1487	1142	1001	3881
2013-14	346	305	308	295	296	284	296	292	278	301	329	275	235	193	251	1488	1167	1032	3938
2014-15	348	307	309	297	296	288	290	285	297	280	359	273	250	212	251	1497	1182	1094	4004
2015-16	349	308	311	298	298	286	294	289	300	299	334	298	248	225	251	1503	1182	1105	4041
Change Coefficients			1.013	0.964	1.004	0.974	1.021	0.996	1.016	1.007	1.194	0.829	0.908	0.900		0.985			
Ten-Year Persistence History																			
			##													Average		Estimated Migration	
1996		0.722	0.969	1.026	1.010	0.961	0.964	1.053	1.044	1.041	1.019	0.851	0.791	0.806		0.961		1.08%	
1997		0.758	0.928	0.937	0.931	0.954	0.989	0.963	0.996	0.943	1.174	0.830	0.864	1.005		0.959		-3.79%	
1998		0.744	1.023	1.022	0.947	0.942	0.979	1.023	0.974	1.008	1.235	0.815	0.941	0.946		0.988		-2.11%	
1999		0.806	1.036	1.018	1.000	1.044	1.004	0.993	1.000	1.066	1.124	0.797	0.926	0.816		0.985		1.65%	
2000		0.761	1.070	1.050	1.022	0.966	1.008	1.021	0.972	0.974	1.203	0.797	1.008	0.902		0.999		-0.64%	
2001		0.878	1.043	0.920	0.971	1.004	1.053	0.940	1.000	0.989	1.186	0.824	0.987	0.906		0.985		-0.89%	
2002		0.843	1.000	0.892	1.020	1.049	1.025	1.025	1.076	1.012	1.122	0.856	0.921	0.943		0.995		3.44%	
2003		0.851	1.071	0.960	1.058	0.961	0.982	0.993	1.012	1.056	1.227	0.911	0.877	0.895		1.000		0.95%	
2004		0.956	0.982	0.952	0.959	0.917	1.040	0.975	1.007	1.000	1.173	0.834	0.877	0.885		0.967		-1.67%	
2005		0.846	1.004	1.015	1.008	0.991	1.021	1.016	1.004	0.986	1.221	0.765	0.930	0.897		0.988		0.39%	
5 Year Ave.		0.875	1.020	0.948	1.003	0.984	1.024	0.990	1.020	1.009	1.186	0.838	0.918	0.905		0.987			
3 Year Ave.		0.884	1.019	0.976	1.008	0.957	1.015	0.994	1.008	1.014	1.207	0.837	0.895	0.893		0.985			
Weighted 5 year		0.878	1.013	0.984	1.004	0.974	1.021	0.996	1.016	1.007	1.194	0.829	0.908	0.900		0.986			
Median, Past 10 Years		0.824	1.013	0.988	1.004	0.964	1.006	1.004	1.002	1.004	1.180	0.827	0.923	0.899		0.984			

* Births estimated as 2-year moving average of the revised expected growth rate in the towns of ERG I. # Provisional births from Department of Public Health. ## Based on weighted 5-year averages from "Analysis of Kindergarten Enrollment."

The MIGRATION RATE is estimated by comparing enrollment in grades 3-8 one year with enrollment in grades 2-7 the prior year with an adjustment for changes in ungraded enrollments.

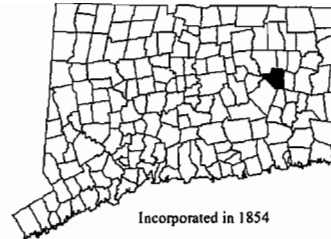
☐ = Based on students already enrolled.
☐ = Based on children already born.

Windham, Connecticut

CERC Town Profile 2007

Town Hall
979 Main Street
Windham, CT 06226
(860) 465-3006

Belongs to
Windham County
Hartford Labor Market Area
Northeast Economic Dev. Region
Windham Planning Area



Demographics

Population (2006)	Town	County	State	Race/Ethnicity (2006)	Town	County	State
1990	22,039	102,525	3,287,116	White	17,618	106,871	2,817,144
2000	22,857	109,091	3,405,565	Black	1,317	2,504	336,250
2006	24,757	119,091	3,551,413	Asian Pacific	445	1,422	117,614
2011	26,325	127,346	3,667,369	Native American	77	324	5,713
'06-'11 Growth / Yr	1.2%	1.3%	0.6%	Other/Multi-Race	5,300	7,970	274,692
				Hispanic (any race)	7,378	9,413	403,194
Land Area (sq. miles)	27	513	5,009	Poverty Rate (1999)	17.5%	8.5%	7.9%
Pop./ Sq. Mile (2006)	915	232	709	Educational Attainment (2000)			
Median Age (2006)	32	38	39	Persons Age 25 or Older	Town	%	State
Households (2006)	8,647	43,128	1,343,258	High School Graduate	4,649	35%	653,300
Med HH Inc. (2006)	\$39,119	\$51,331	\$61,879	Some College	2,742	20%	553,667
				Bachelors or More	2,550	19%	720,994
Age Distribution (2006)							
	0-4	5-17	18-24	25-49	50-64	65+	Total
Male	706 3%	1,869 8%	2,376 10%	3,994 16%	1,851 7%	1,147 5%	11,943
Female	775 3%	1,719 7%	2,508 10%	3,926 16%	2,012 8%	1,874 8%	12,814
County Total	6,851 6%	20,156 17%	12,476 10%	43,401 36%	21,837 18%	14,370 12%	119,091
State Total	212,473 6%	615,114 17%	327,812 9%	1,240,233 35%	666,797 19%	488,984 14%	3,551,413

Economics

Business Profile (2005)	% of Total	Top Five Grand List (2004)	Amount	% of Net
Sector	Firms	Employment		
Agriculture	2.2%	0.9%	Connecticut Light & Power Co.	\$10,352,820 1.6%
Const. and Mining	9.9%	2.3%	Walmart Stores Inc.	\$6,438,450 1.0%
Manufacturing	5.5%	17.3%	United Abrasives Inc.	\$6,115,710 0.9%
Trans. and Utilities	3.9%	7.4%	General Cable Industries Inc.	\$5,797,190 0.9%
Trade	25.2%	25.9%	Vesta Windham LLC	\$5,452,430 0.8%
Finance, Ins. and Real Estate	4.8%	2.8%	Net Grand List (2004)	\$659,259,480
Services	44.3%	29.6%	Top Five Major Employers (2006)	
Government	4.3%	13.8%	Town of Windham	Wal-Mart Stores Inc.
			Eastern Connecticut State Univ	BICC General Cable Corp.
			Windham Community Memorial	
			Town	State
			Retail Sales (2002)	\$195,610,299 \$105,014,859,890
			All Outlets	

Education

2004-2005 School Year	Town	State	Connecticut Mastery Test Percent Above Goal
Total Town School Enrollment	3,550	563,216	Grade 4 Grade 6 Grade 8
Most public school students in Windham attend Windham School District, which has 3,635 students.			Town State Town State Town State
			Reading 30 53 27 60 37 65
			Math 39 57 31 61 28 56
			Writing 43 63 27 61 35 61
For more education data please see: http://www.state.ct.us/sde/	Students per Computer	Town State	Average Class Size
	Elementary:	5.0 4.0	Grade K 20.0 Grade 2 16.0
	Middle:	5.0 3.0	Grade 5 24.0 Grade 7 22.0
	Secondary:	7.3 3.2	High School 19.3
			Average SAT Score
			Town State
			Verbal 469 508
			Math 481 508

Windham

Connecticut



Government

Government Form: Selectman-Town Meeting				Annual Debt Service (2005)	\$3,284,542
				As % of Expenditures	6.0%
Total Revenue (2005)	\$55,474,263	Total Expenditures (2005)	\$55,098,539	Eq. Net Grand List (2003)	\$1,199,138,959
Tax Revenue	\$23,311,900	Education	\$36,405,389	Per Capita	\$50,884
Non-tax Revenue	\$32,162,363	Other	\$18,693,150	As % of State Average	35%
Intergovernmental	\$28,425,277	Total Indebtness (2005)	\$23,712,993	Date of Last Revaluation (2005)	2005
Per Capita Tax (2005)	\$981	As % of Expenditures	43.0%	Moody's Bond Rating (2005)	A2
As % of State Average	49.4%	Per Capita	\$998	Actual Mill Rate (2005)	27.84
				Equalized Mill Rate (2005)	19.31
				% of Grand List Com/Ind (2003)	18.5%
				As % of State Average	51.7%

Housing/Real Estate

<i>Housing Stock (2005)</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>State</i>	Owner Occupied Dwellings (2000)	4,040	27,738	869,742
Existing Units (total)	9,053	46,491	1,431,569	As % Total Dwellings	45%	63%	63%
% Single Unit	47.1%	68.5%	64.7%	Subsidize Housing (2001)	2,022	5,189	148,930
New Permits Auth. (2005)	66	593	11,885	<i>Distribution of House Sales (2006)</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>State</i>
As % Existing Units	0.73%	1.28%	0.83%	Number of Sales			
Demolitions (2005)	3	23	1,386	Less than \$100,000	9	69	1,332
House Sales (2006)	177	1,260	37,483	\$100,000-\$199,999	115	448	7,461
Median Price	\$172,900	\$210,000	\$275,000	\$200,000-\$299,999	41	569	11,804
Built Pre 1950 share (2000)	41.3%	35.1%	31.5%	\$300,000-\$399,999	11	130	6,393
				\$400,000 or More	1	44	10,493

Labor Force

<i>Place of Residence (2005)</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Commuters (2000)</i>			
Labor Force	11,427	61,235	1,817,032	Commuters into Town from:	Town Residents Commuting to:		
Employed	10,685	57,912	1,727,934	Windham	4,247	Windham	4,247
Unemployed	742	3,323	89,098	Mansfield	889	Mansfield	1,316
Unemployment Rate	6.5%	5.4%	4.9%	Lebanon	349	Manchester	309
<i>Place of Work (2005)</i>				Coventry	298	Norwich	261
Total Employment	10,178	37,843	1,643,963	Columbia	287	Hartford	248
'92-'05 Growth	0.7%	1.2%	0.6%	Norwich	279	Ledyard	239
AAGR				Chaplin	269	Franklin	228
Manufacturing	954	n.a.	195,400	Killingly	229	Lebanon	155
				Plainfield	214	Groton	154
				Willington	196	Plainfield	138

Quality of Life

					Residential Utilities
	<i>Town</i>	<i>State</i>	Library (2001)	<i>Town</i>	Electric Provider
Banks (2003)	7	1,226	Total Volumes	78,317	Connecticut Light & Power
Lodging (1998)	2	756	Circulation Per Capita	3.6	(800) 286-2000
Day Care Facilities (1999)	7	1,721			Gas Provider
Infant Mortality Rate			<i>Distance to Major Cities</i>	<i>Miles</i>	Yankee Gas Company
Per 1,000 births (2001)	no calc	4.5	Hartford	26	(800) 989-0900
Crime Rate (1999)			Boston	74	Water Provider
Per 1,000 Residents	50	33	New York City	117	Municipal Provider
% Open Land (1990)	68.9%	68.7%	Providence	40	local Contact
	<i>Town</i>	<i>County</i>			Cable Provider
Hospitals (1999)	1	2			Charter Communications of Northeastern CT
Total Beds	130	233			800-872-7229

GENERAL STATUTES
OF
CONNECTICUT
Revised to January 1, 2005



(Prepared under the direction of the Legislative Commissioners' Office)

CHAPTER 126

Sec. 8-23. Preparation, amendment or adoption of plan of conservation and development. (a)(1) At least once every ten years, the commission shall prepare or amend and shall adopt a plan of conservation and development for the municipality. Following adoption, the commission shall regularly review and maintain such plan. The commission may adopt such geographical, functional or other amendments to the plan or parts of the plan, in accordance with the provisions of this section, as it deems necessary. The commission may, at any time, prepare, amend and adopt plans for the redevelopment and improvement of districts or neighborhoods which, in its judgment, contain special problems or opportunities or show a trend toward lower land values.

(2) If a plan is not amended decennially, the chief elected official of the municipality shall submit a letter to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and the Commissioners of Transportation, Environmental Protection and Economic and Community Development that explains why such plan was not amended. Until the plan is amended in accordance with this subsection, a copy of such letter shall be included in each application by the municipality for funding for the conservation or development of real property submitted to said secretary or commissioners.

(b) In the preparation of such plan, the commission may appoint one or more special committees to develop and make recommendations for the plan. The membership of any special committee may include: Residents of the municipality and representatives of local boards dealing with zoning, inland wetlands, conservation, recreation, education, public works, finance, redevelopment, general government and other municipal functions. In performing its duties under this section, the commission or any special committee may accept information from any source or solicit input from any organization or individual. The commission or any special committee may hold public informational meetings or organize other activities to inform residents about the process of preparing the plan.

(c) In preparing such plan, the commission or any special committee shall consider the following: (1) The community development action plan of the municipality, if any, (2) the need for affordable housing, (3) the need for protection of existing and potential public surface and ground drinking water supplies, (4) the use of cluster development and other development patterns to the extent consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity within the municipality, (5) the state plan of conservation and development adopted pursuant to chapter 297, (6) the regional plan of development adopted pursuant to section 8-35a, (7) physical, social, economic and governmental conditions and trends, (8) the needs of the municipality including, but not limited to, human resources, education, health, housing, recreation, social services, public utilities, public protection, transportation and circulation and cultural and interpersonal communications, and (9) the objectives of energy-efficient patterns of development, the use of solar and other renewable forms of energy and energy conservation.

(d) (1) Such plan of conservation and development shall (A) be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality, (B) be designed to promote, with the greatest efficiency and economy, the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people, (C) recommend the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation and other purposes, (D) recommend the most desirable density of population in the several parts of the municipality, (E) note any inconsistencies it may have with the state plan of conservation and development adopted pursuant to chapter 297, (F) make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region in which the municipality

is located, as designated by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management under section 16a-4a, (G) promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households, and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs identified in the housing plan prepared pursuant to section 8-37t and in the housing component and the other components of the state plan of conservation and development prepared pursuant to chapter 297.

(2) For any municipality that is contiguous to Long Island Sound, such plan shall be (A) consistent with the municipal coastal program requirements of sections 22a-101 to 22a-104, inclusive, (B) made with reasonable consideration for restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound, and (C) designed to reduce hypoxia, pathogens, toxic contaminants and floatable debris in Long Island Sound.

(e) Such plan may show the commission's and any special committee's recommendation for (1) conservation and preservation of traprock and other ridgelines, (2) a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets and other public ways, (3) airports, parks, playgrounds and other public grounds, (4) the general location, relocation and improvement of public buildings, (5) the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned, for water, sewerage, light, power, transit and other purposes, (6) the extent and location of public housing projects, (7) programs for the implementation of the plan, including (A) a schedule, (B) a budget for public capital projects, (C) a program for enactment and enforcement of zoning and subdivision controls, building and housing codes and safety regulations, (D) plans for implementation of affordable housing, and (E) plans for open space acquisition and greenways protection and development, and (8) any other recommendations as will, in the commission's or any special committee's judgment, be beneficial to the municipality. The plan may include any necessary and related maps, explanatory material, photographs, charts or other pertinent data and information relative to the past, present and future trends of the municipality.

(f) A plan of conservation and development or any part thereof or amendment thereto prepared by the commission or any special committee shall be reviewed, and may be amended, by the commission prior to scheduling at least one public hearing on adoption. At least sixty-five days prior to the public hearing on adoption, the commission shall submit a copy of such plan or part thereof or amendment thereto for review and comment to the legislative body. Such body may hold one or more hearings on the proposed plan and shall submit any comments to the commission prior to the public hearing on adoption. The failure of such body to report prior to or at the public hearing shall be taken as approval of the plan. At least sixty-five days prior to the public hearing on adoption, the commission shall submit a copy of such plan to the regional planning agency for review and comment. The regional planning agency shall report its comments to the commission at or before the hearing. The failure of the regional planning agency to report at or before the hearing shall be taken as approval of the plan. The report of the regional planning agency shall be advisory. Prior to the public hearing on adoption, the commission shall file in the office of the town clerk a copy of such plan or part thereof or amendment thereto but, in the case of a district commission, such commission shall file such information in the offices of both the district clerk and the town clerk. The commission shall cause to be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality, at least twice at intervals of not less than two days, the first not more than fifteen days or less than ten days, and the last not less than two days prior to the date of each such hearing, notice of the time and place of any such public hearing. Such notice shall make reference to the filing of such plan in the office of the town clerk, or both the district clerk and the town clerk, as the case may be.

(g) The commission may adopt the plan or any part thereof or amendment thereto by a single resolution or may, by successive resolutions, adopt parts of the plan and amendments thereto. Any plan, section of a plan or recommendation in the plan, not endorsed by the legislative body of the municipality may be adopted by the commission by a vote of not less than two-thirds of all the members of the commission. Upon adoption by the commission, any plan or part thereof or amendment thereto shall become effective at a time established by the commission, provided notice thereof shall be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality prior to such effective date. Any plan or part thereof or amendment thereto shall be filed in the office of the town clerk, except that, if it is a district plan or amendment, it shall be filed in the offices of both the district and town clerks.

(h) Following adoption of a new plan by the commission, the legislative body of any municipality may hold one or more hearings on the proposed plan and, by resolution, may endorse the plan for the municipality.

(1949 Rev., S. 856; 1959, P.A. 577, S. 6; 1969, P.A. 477, S. 1; 1971, P.A. 862, S. 5, 6; P.A. 78-314, S. 3; P.A. 80-327, S. 2; P.A. 85-279, S. 4; P.A. 88-13, S. 1, 3; P.A. 91-392, S. 2; 91-395, S. 3, 11; 91-398, S. 2, 7; P.A. 95-239, S. 3; 95-335, S. 9, 26; P.A. 99-117, S. 1, 2; P.A. 01-197, S. 1, 4; P.A. 03-19, S. 20.)

History: 1959 act added provisions re districts; 1969 act substituted “shall” for “may” thereby requiring that recommendation for most desirable land uses and population density be included in development plan, but did leave optional the inclusion of other recommendations re streets, bridges etc. and further clarified contents of plan re economic development, schedules, budgets, various codes and regulations and community needed and deleted requirement that report be filed annually; 1971 act changed public hearing notice requirements from publication at least seven days before hearing to publication “twice at intervals of not less than two days, the first not more than fifteen days nor less than ten days, and the last not less than two days” before hearing; P.A. 78-314 allowed consideration of energy-efficient development, renewable forms of energy and energy conservation in development plan; P.A. 80-327 allowed consideration of water supplies and their protection in development plan; P.A. 85-279 made consideration of surface and ground drinking water supplies in preparation of the plan mandatory rather than discretionary; P.A. 88-13 allowed consideration of affordable housing and open space acquisition in the plan of development and required that the plan of development be reviewed and updated at least once every ten years; P.A. 91-392 added provisions re development of housing opportunities and promotion of housing choice and economic diversity in housing; P.A. 91-395 designated existing provisions as Subsec. (a) and amended them to require that municipal plans take into account the state plan and that plans adopted under this section be reviewed for consistency with the state plan of development and added Subsec. (b) requiring municipalities to consider use of cluster development; P.A. 91-398 added provision re plans in municipalities contiguous to Long Island Sound; P.A. 95-239 amended Subsec. (a) to provide that the plan may make regulations re traprock ridgelines; P.A. 95-335 amended Subsec. (a) to change the name of the plan of development to the plan of conservation and development and authorized the plan to include provisions re greenways protection and development, effective July 1, 1995; P.A. 99-117 divided existing Subsec. (a) into (a) and (b), redesignating existing Subsec. (b) as (c), and amended Subsec. (b) by adding provision regarding explanation of failure to conduct review of the plan, effective January 1, 2000; P.A. 01-197 deleted former provisions and inserted new Subsecs. (a) to (h) which reorganized former provisions and authorized planning commissions to appoint special committees and to submit the plan to the legislative body of the town, broadened the scope of the plan to include cluster development, traprock and other ridgelines and neighborhood and district plans and made technical changes to form and content, effective July 1, 2001, and applicable to municipal plans of conservation and development adopted after that date; P.A. 03-19 made a technical change in Subsecs. (f) and (g), effective May 12, 2003.

See Sec. 7-148 re municipal powers generally.

See Sec. 8-39a for definition of “affordable housing”.

Cited. 141 C. 79. Planning commissions are empowered to prepare, adopt and amend plans of development for their respective communities. 144 C. 117. Aim of municipal planning; distinguished from zoning. 145 C. 28; 146 C. 570. Stamford charter provides for review of action of planning board by board of representatives; held that function of latter board is legislative and it may act without notice and hearing. 148 C. 44. Aim of municipal planning compared with that of zoning. 148 C. 172. Cited. 148 C. 517. Adoption of a “plan of development” pursuant to this section is not a condition precedent to the enactment of valid subdivision regulations. 153 C. 193. Master plan controlling as to municipal improvements, merely advisory as to zoning. 154 C. 202. Cited. 154 C. 472. Plan of development is of broader significance than zoning and two terms are not interchangeable. Planning connotes systematic development of municipality to promote general welfare and prosperity of its people, while zoning is concerned primarily with use of property. 155 C. 669. Recommendation in plan of development, pursuant to this section, designating appropriate uses for various areas in town is merely advisory and does not bind zoning commission. 156 C. 102. Appeals from amendments hereunder are governed by section 8-28. 159 C. 1. Cited. 160 C. 114; 295. Cited. 186 C. 466, 473, 474. Cited. 213 C. 604, 610. Cited. 217 C. 103, 106. Cited. 225 C. 731, 749.

Cited. 2 CA 49, 50. Cited. 29 CA 18, 24.

Cited. 18 CS 519. Cited. 34 CS 52, 53, 61.



WINDHAM REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Chaplin Columbia Coventry Hampton Lebanon Mansfield Scotland Windham

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Date: April 5, 2007
Referral #: 07-03-21-WM_POCD
Report on: Proposed PoCD

WINDHAM

Draft Plan of C&D

To: Town of Windham Planning Commission
C/o: James Finger, Town Planner

Commissioners;

This referral involves: A proposal to adopt a revised municipal Plan of Conservation and Development.

Receipt is hereby acknowledged of the above referral. Notice of this proposal was transmitted to the Windham Region Council of Governments under the provisions of Section 8-23(f) of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended.

Comments for Inclusion in the Public Record: At their April 5, 2007 meeting, the Regional Planning Commission of the Windham Region Council of Governments (WINCOG) reviewed Windham's proposed Plan of Conservation and Development. The Regional Planning Commission reviews municipal plans of conservation and development for consistency with the Windham Region Land Use Plan, the Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut, and the plans of conservation and development of other towns in the region. In order to promote planning that is integrated on all levels, the Regional Planning Commission may offer recommendations on how a municipal plan may be more consistent the goals and vision of other plans. The recommendations of the Regional Planning Commission are purely advisory.

- The Regional Planning Commission applauds the efforts of the Windham Planning Commission in striving to carefully plan for Windham's future. Completing a municipal plan is a long and tedious process. The Windham Planning Commission should be commended for bringing the planning process to fruition after many months of effort. The proposed plan is well-written, easy to read, and is a shining example of citizen planning in action.
- The text of the proposed Plan of Conservation and Development is largely consistent with the goals and policies outlined in the Windham Region Land Use Plan, particularly the emphasis on design review guidelines, traffic calming, and best management practices. The proposed plan is compatible with the plans of conservation and development of other municipalities in the Windham Region.
- While the Windham Planning Commission has done an admirable job in preparing the text and content of the plan, it is not immediately clear to the members of the Regional Planning Commission that the Conceptual Future Land Use Map is consistent with goals and policies outlined in the draft plan. Specifically, the areas identified as "Manufacturing/Industrial" along the Shetucket River as well as the areas identified as "Commercial - Vehicular" along Route 32 are not indicated in the text as proposed development areas.
- The aforementioned areas are not consistent with the Windham Region Land Use Plan nor the Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut 2005-2010 with the exception of the areas in the *immediate vicinity* of South Windham village.
- As per Public Act 05-205, municipal plans of conservation and development are required to address additional planning elements. Fortunately, many of these additional elements, such as the redevelopment and revitalization of commercial centers, are already admirably addressed in the

Distribution: J. Finger, Windham; G. Padick, Mansfield.
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WINCOG. 968 Main Street. Willimantic, CT 06226. Phone: (860) 456-2221. Fax: (860) 456-1235. E-mail: wincog@snet.net

proposed Windham Plan of Conservation and Development. Unfortunately, a few other required elements are not addressed in the plan. These elements include:

- The identification of areas where it is feasible and prudent for compact, transit-accessible development, and
- The conservation and restoration of existing farmlands, and
- The noting of consistency with the growth management principles of the state plan of conservation and development.
- The Regional Planning Commission will continue to review the proposed Windham Plan of Conservation and Development and may submit additional comments during the public hearing.
- The Windham Region Council of Governments looks forward to assisting the Town of Windham in implementing mutual goals in the future.

Questions concerning this referral should be directed to Jana Butts at the Windham Region Council of Governments.

Sincerely,

Kevin McDonald
RPC Vice Chair

**Town of Windham, Connecticut
PRIORITY RESOURCE ANALYSIS**

**Prepared by
Windham Conservation/Open Space Commission**

Adopted by the Commission, April 23, 2007

Introduction:

The Conservation and Open Space Commission of the Town of Windham was charged, as part of the process of revising the Town Plan of Conservation and Development, with examining the existing resources, both natural and man made, of the Town of Windham and recommending priorities for the preservation of those resources which are both most valuable and most in need of preservation for the benefit of present and future residents. To achieve this end, the Commission worked closely with the Green Valley Institute, WINCOG, Prof. Catherine Carlson and many others to identify the various important resources within the town, determine which of those are most in need of preservation, and to create a series of maps showing where these resources occurred. The final product is a map of "co-occurring resources" which shows specific areas that are of concern because of the occurrence of a number of priority resources in the same location, and also the areas which could be developed without major impacts upon Windham's most valuable natural resources.

It should be noted that the Commission's focus for the purpose of this analysis was upon "natural resources" and did not include a whole range of "man-made" features, including such things as historic buildings, cultural resources, and even entire neighborhoods that might be equally in need of preservation. It also does not include natural features the values of which are primarily aesthetic or recreational, such as beautiful scenic spots - "viewsheds" - or well used hiking trails in locations that do not rank as high priorities based on their natural resources alone. This should not be taken to mean that we believe that these resources are in any way less worthy of consideration, but only that they are outside the scope of the present analysis.

Of all the various natural resources occurring in the Town of Windham, the commission selected five as having the highest priority for preservation. This does not mean that the Commission necessarily attached more importance to these resources themselves, but felt that others were already protected by existing regulations, were covered within the five chosen categories, or were not likely to come under threat in the relatively near future. The natural resources chosen are as follows.

Natural Cover Riparian Areas
Wetlands
Stratified Drift Aquifers
Agriculture and Tall Grasses
Forests

For each of these, the Commission defined the resource, identified "important considerations" - basically the importance of the resource within the overall ecological system, listed the "concerns" that exist regarding the future use of the resource, and made recommendations regarding actions, both regulatory and non-regulatory, that should be taken by the Town of Windham to ensure the proper preservation and use of these resources.

The Co-occurring resource map is included as Map 12 in the 2007 Windham Plan of Conservation and Development. This may be used to identify the general locations of the various priority resources and the areas where these resources occur in the highest concentrations. In general it is recommended that areas with high concentrations of priority resources be seriously considered for permanent preservation, though, of course, each area must be considered individually as circumstances require.

The predecessor of the Conservation and Open Space Commission, the ad-hoc Open Space Committee, also worked with the Green Valley Institute to identify Historical and Cultural assets in Windham. Through surveys, a charrette and public forums, a map was developed. This map is another tool which will be consulted in conjunction with the Naturally Co-occurring Resource map(s) to identify and prioritize areas to be protected and preserved.

NATURAL COVER RIPARIAN AREAS

Definition: Uncultivated areas of natural vegetation in areas bordering rivers, streams, ponds, lakes, or other waterways or bodies of water. The data used in preparing the maps included in this report limits the "riparian area" to within 200 feet of a water body, but the existing conditions of each individual site, particularly the slope of the land, should also be taken into consideration in determining the limits of the area to be preserved.

Important Considerations:

- 1. Wildlife corridors.** Natural areas along watercourses provide some of the last remaining wildlife corridors in our area. As increasing urbanization fragments all of our major ecosystems, waterways, with their associated natural cover are the primary natural features in the Windham area that provide connectivity between the remaining blocks of forested or agricultural land. It is still possible for wildlife to follow any of the three river systems feeding the Willimantic Reservoir from their headwaters through Willimantic and down the Shetucket while remaining largely under natural cover on the margins of the waterways which form passages from one ecosystem fragment to another.
- 2. Protection of wetlands from pollution.** Areas of natural vegetation on the shores of water courses and water bodies provide significant protection from both airborne and ground pollution. Trees and large vegetation provide a physical barrier for dust and airborne particulate matter, while undisturbed natural areas, by their very nature provide, a buffer zone between the water and areas where pesticides and herbicides can be applied. Reducing levels of pollution in the water serve both to maintain and improve aquatic ecosystems and to reduce the level of "processing" that must be done to maintain the quality of human drinking water, which in the Willimantic area is largely drawn from surface water sources.
- 3. Nutrient Supplies.** Natural cover surrounding water courses and water bodies represent a continuing source of nutrients for the aquatic ecosystem as organic material, fresh or decaying, falls or is swept into the water.
- 4. Habitat for aquatic life.** Vegetation growing in and near the water provides habitat for a wide variety of animal life at every level of the aquatic food chain, up to and including the young of our most important native fish species.

Concerns:

- 1. Fragmentation.** Riparian areas serve as the last remaining corridors by which wildlife can pass from one block of appropriate habitat to another in an increasingly urbanized landscape. Development pressure throughout the entire area has resulted in construction of housing in places previously considered inaccessible or unsuitable and in many areas historically used as corn fields, pasture, or wood lots. If this continues, inevitably wildlife will be confined to smaller and smaller habitat blocks with no safe means of passage between them. The number of animals killed on roadways can be expected to increase as paved roads increasingly block access to food and water. Damage to human property, particularly gardens and ornamental plantings can be expected to increase as wildlife habitat is converted to human use and access limited to what natural habitat remains.
- 2. Inappropriate Land Use.** Much riparian land that is privately owned is inappropriately maintained, with natural vegetation removed or mowed right to the water's edge. This destroys the natural habitat for a wide variety of flora and fauna, removes the major source of natural nutrients from the aquatic ecosystem, and again results in fragmentation of wildlife corridors. Elimination of natural cover also leads to the increase of contact and conflict between wildlife and humans.
- 3. Physical protection from humans.** The presence of "natural areas", often with associated dense growths of briars and thickets of young trees and bushes, tends to discourage the casual physical intrusion of humans into many riparian areas. Since the intrusion of humans often results in habitat destruction, either accidental or intentional, plus litter and other signs of human presence, as well as harassment and destruction of wildlife, natural areas serve to provide a passive protection to the riparian ecosystems and as such are the most cost effective means of preserving water quality at our disposal. All that is required is that they be left alone.

4. Pesticide, Herbicide and Fertilizer Run Off. As the area becomes increasingly developed, numerous homeowners, whose land tends to drain towards watercourses, maintain very large lawn areas which are heavily treated with chemical herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers. These both seriously disrupt the aquatic ecosystem and pose great potential problems for an area which depends heavily on surface water for human consumption.

Recommendations:

Non-regulatory

1. Whenever possible riparian land should be publicly owned and protected, owned by conservation land trusts, or protected by conservation easements or other methods.
2. Low, native thickets should be utilized to protect riparian areas on publicly owned properties.
3. Human residents must be educated to recognize that they share the environment with a large number of other species whose survival is vital to the health of the ecosystem and, in a very real sense, to our own survival.
4. Owners of riparian land must be taught to recognize and control invasive, non-native plants.

Regulatory:

1. Follow the recommendations of the CT DEP Inland Fisheries Division included in "Utilization of 100-foot Buffer Zones to Protect Riparian Areas in CT", which sets a policy that a 100 foot protective buffer exist as a minimum setback along perennial streams.
2. When property is privately owned, the removal or mowing of natural riparian vegetation should be prohibited in areas immediately adjacent to water bodies and strongly discouraged within 200 feet of the shoreline.
3. If possible, the use of chemical pesticides and herbicides, for aesthetic purposes, i.e. lawns, golf courses, flower beds and the like, within riparian areas and in adjacent areas which drain to streams, rivers, and other water bodies should be prohibited and the use of chemical fertilizers strongly discouraged.
4. Create a Storm water Pollution Authority which allows a town to collect fees and invest the revenues in the most cost-effective storm water pollution reduction strategies. Develop storm water management inventory and assessment program, especially in conjunction with the proposed whitewater park, and Willimantic and Natchaug Greenways. Require filters on storm sewers which block at least 80% of the toxic pollution.
5. Adopt the latest CT DEP Storm Water Management recommendations.

WETLANDS

Definition: The term wetlands is used to describe areas which are neither fully terrestrial nor fully aquatic. Wetlands can range from cypress swamps to shallow depressions which hold water at the most a few weeks out of the year.

Important Considerations

Wetlands contribute to the social, economic and environmental health of our Town and our Nation in the following ways.

1. By filtering pollutants, nutrients, and sediments, wetlands help protect water quality in our lakes, rivers, and streams. Excessive nutrients cause increased algae growth and a subsequent reduction in dissolved oxygen and fish diversity. High levels of sediment damage the stream system by suffocating fish and aquatic insects and by filling the crevices between rocks where fish and invertebrates live and hide. Suspended sediment clouds otherwise clear stream water, reducing sunlight penetration and limiting growth of aquatic plants.
2. By filtering contaminants, wetlands are an essential component in the process of providing communities with pure drinking water from public water sources and private wells.
3. By storing runoff from heavy rains and melting snow, wetlands reduce flood damage.
4. By providing essential habitat for fish, waterfowl and a variety of other animals and birds, wetlands create passive recreational opportunities, such as hunting, fishing and hiking, for state residents and visitors.
5. By providing beautiful open spaces, wetlands enhance quality of life, property values and tourism.

Concerns

Many inland wetlands and watercourses have been destroyed or are in danger of destruction because of unregulated use, including the deposition, filling or removal of material, the diversion or obstruction of water flow, the erection of structures, and other uses, all of which have despoiled, polluted and eliminated wetlands and watercourses.

1. Draining or filling for development.
2. Nearby development can lead to intrusions on wetlands, including dumping.
3. Inappropriate land use: most wetlands are privately owned and may be inappropriately maintained, with natural vegetation removed or mowed, and may serve as "catch basins" for toxic pesticides and herbicides applied either directly in the wetlands or on adjacent lawn areas.

Recommendations:

Non-regulatory

1. Rather than draining or filling wetlands, seek compatible uses involving minimal wetland alteration, such as waterfowl production, hay and forage, and selective timber harvest.
2. Maintain wetlands and adjacent buffer strips as open space.

3. Establish ongoing education projects that inform and increase awareness of the value and function of wetlands.
4. Use natural thickets and vegetation to discourage the casual physical intrusion of humans.
5. Let community members know what they can do to preserve local wetlands:
 - a. Don't dump any materials into wetlands, including yard debris, trash, or other pollutants
 - b. Do not mow or cut vegetation in areas in or bordering wetlands.
 - c. Leave native vegetation
 - d. Allow a buffer of at least 75 feet; some buffer is better than none at all.
 - e. Control invasive, spreading non-native plant species

Regulatory

1. Zoning regulations should include wording that prohibits the building of subdivisions on wetland sites.
2. Planning and zoning regulations should include appropriate guidelines for dealing with storm water control, ordinances for sediment and erosion control; building codes, floodplain regulation and vegetation removal and mowing standards.
3. Zoning regulations should include wording that prohibits anyone to remove, fill, dredge, build upon, discharge into designated wetlands, marsh land, swamps, or vernal pools.
4. Zoning regulations should include prohibition against any project that will have an adverse effect on a vernal pool or any naturally vegetated land with 350' of a vernal pool. i.e. Storm water runoff into the vernal pool or wetland.
5. Establish Appropriate Buffer Zones. CACIWC: CT DEP Inland Fisheries Division: "Utilization of 100-foot Buffer Zones to Protect Riparian Areas in CT" sets policy that a 100 foot protective buffer is a minimum setback along perennial streams. Similar scientific evidence supports the establishment and maintenance of a minimum 100-foot vegetated buffer to protect inland wetlands from non-point source pollution impacts. Many communities in CT have extended the upland review area to 100-feet. Some have adopted larger regulatory areas around specific water bodies, such as a 200-foot regulatory area around a lake, 500-foot regulatory areas around vernal pools, and 200-foot upland review areas along rivers, with greater than 600-foot in areas with a preponderance of steep slopes and significant sources of groundwater.
6. Select upland rather than wetlands sites for development projects and avoid wetland alteration or degradation during project construction.
7. Some limited construction is permissible such as: small buildings need to support open space or wetland preservation uses; pier, dock and walkway construction; utility construction; road for farming and forestry; railroads.
8. Provide economic incentives and disincentives for private efforts to protect wetlands; for example, tax deductions for selling or donating wetlands to a qualified organization. (see the Clean Water Act) Approximately 75% of wetlands are privately owned; therefore, individual landowners are critical in protecting wetlands.
9. Encourage forestry, harvesting wild crops, pasturing livestock and some agricultural cultivation.

Stratified Drift Aquifer

Definition: Stratified drift is a geologic deposit of water-sorted sand and gravel. A stratified-drift aquifer is a stratified-drift deposit capable of yielding significant quantities of water. The Town of Windham's stratified drift aquifer is the largest potential source for high-quality public water supply that is under the control of our Town.

Important Considerations

1. **High-yield potential** Windham's stratified drift areas are unique and important assets, especially for the Town's economic future. In some areas of the United States (including the Northeast), potable water is already scarce. As water becomes increasingly scarce across the region, available water quantity and quality will become critical-Windham's stratified drift areas could supply much-needed water.

"Stratified drift is the most productive aquifer in the Shetucket River Basin. It is the only aquifer capable of yielding 100 gpm [gallons per minute] or more to individual wells. Stratified drift in the Basin consists of strata or layers of silt, sand, and gravel from the glacial ice that covered all of Connecticut during the last stages of the "Ice Age." *

The estimated practical yield from the stratified drift aquifer (above Potash Brook above Highway 14) is 5 ½ million gallons per day, which is over twice what Windham now draws from the Willimantic Reservoir. The estimated practical yield from the aquifer near the Shetucket River in South Windham is 18 ½ million gallons per day.*

*Source: Water Resources Inventory of Connecticut, Part II Shetucket River Basin. Connecticut Water Resources Bulletin Number 11, 1967.

2. **The current primary water source for Windham is not guaranteed.** Windham's drinking water watershed is the largest in Connecticut, yet approximately 99% of the watershed is located outside of Windham. This means that Windham has little control over land-use decisions within the watershed that may affect water quality and possibly even quantity.

More specifically, Mansfield Hollow Dam Recreation Area is directly upstream of the Windham Reservoir. Motorized vehicles are allowed on the lake that may leak oil, gasoline, and other toxic substances. In addition, housing construction, the use of herbicides and pesticides on lawns and landscaped areas, and roads may affect the water quality. The cost of treating poor quality surface water can be very high and will only increase as water quality decreases and demand increases.

3. **Protection of stratified drift land from pollution and harmful land uses.** Land-use changes and development in stratified drift areas must be carefully considered, since increasing the percentage of impervious cover and changing vegetation cover can severely damage both the quality and quantity of water in the aquifer.

Concerns

1. **Water quality protection** Windham has potentially high-yielding stratified drift aquifers. The water quality in these aquifers is presumably of high quality (i.e., requiring little or no treatment to produce potable water). Protecting these aquifers is critical for the health and welfare of the Town's residents as well as for the town's economic and environmental health now and in the future. At present, the source for the public water supply is B quality, requiring treatment to produce potable water.
2. **Stratified drift is an economic resource.** Stratified drift also serves as an economic resource when mining for sand and gravel. Balancing the extraction of sand and gravel and maintaining the viable aquifer(s) will require careful zoning planning and regulation.
3. **Water ownership protection** Water privatization is an increasing concern across the nation. For example, large corporations may purchase land, and thus the water rights to underlying aquifers and reservoirs, which may then be depleted to the detriment of local communities. In some cases local residents are not even allowed to draw water from their own wells. Large corporations have vast financial resources and may convince municipalities to sell their water rights for short-term financial gains, even when local opposition to doing so is strong. Windham must protect its aquifers, as well as its existing municipal water company, from privatization/ exploitation.

Recommendations:**Non-Regulatory**

1. Identify and/or designate the stratified drift areas valuable as potential public water supplies. Outline the recharge areas for these aquifers.
2. Include clear watershed protection goals in the Town Plan of Conservation and Development, developing clear zoning regulations to ensure Smart Growth for Water Resources. Adequate water supply should be a prerequisite for additional growth in the Town.
3. Acquire undeveloped areas over stratified-drift aquifers and their recharge areas where possible or develop conservation easements that will protect such areas from harm.
4. Establish an ongoing public education program that informs citizens of (1) the increasing water shortage and water privatization already affecting water supply ownership and access in the United States, including Connecticut; (2) the necessity to protect and preserve ownership of our stratified-drift aquifers and their recharge areas as well as rights to continued usage; and (3) the importance of watershed protection and water quality issues that must be addressed within Windham and shared with surrounding Connecticut towns and nearby states (i.e., Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York).
5. Work with the Windham Water Works to identify and implement effective ways and means of protecting and preserving the Town's stratified-drift aquifers and their recharge areas from privatization.

Regulatory:

1. Restrict extraction of earth materials over stratified drift aquifers and their recharge areas. Investigate whether current regulations adequately address this issue.
2. Establish overlay zones to regulate development and/or prohibit high-risk land uses above stratified drift aquifers and their recharge areas.
3. Amend Inland Wetlands Commission regulations to establish protection for stratified-drift aquifers and their recharge areas. Integrate the use of appropriate natural resource inventory maps into future permit application deliberations by the Zoning Commission.
4. Require environmental impact statements and hydrologic impact statements for land-use applications to the Wetlands Commission and the Zoning Commission that require the installation of impermeable cover in subdivisions, industrial, and commercial developments or for any project in stratified drift areas.
5. Windham should establish penalties for individuals, business entities, or others who pollute and/or otherwise damage stratified-drift aquifers and their recharge areas.
6. Incentives: Offer tax breaks to individuals/companies using the land in ways that preserve and protect stratified-drift aquifers and their recharge areas.

Agricultural Land and Tall Grasses:

Definition: Agricultural Land as defined for this Analysis is any area of land ten acres or greater which is used for the growing of crops or pasturage of animals, for dairy uses, for raising birds, either "free run" or in confinement for meat and/or eggs, raising or maintaining other birds or animals for consumption or recreational purposes, as well as the land used for buildings or facilities associated with any of the listed uses. Tall grasses, in the Windham area, usually occur in fields either currently or formerly used for the production of hay for animal feed or bedding and, more rarely, in natural meadows generally associated with the flood plains of rivers.

Important Considerations:

- 1. Agriculture Conservation** Agriculture is the basis of modern human life. The organized production and distribution of food is, without question, the single most important element that has allowed human civilization to develop into its present form. Until relatively recently, most farming of food crops was carried out regionally, with population centers surrounded by agricultural land that supplied a significant percentage of the food consumed locally. With the development of our fossil fuel based economy and improvements in air, sea and land transport, this locally based agricultural model has diminished dramatically with urban population centers often receiving the bulk of their food supplies from hundreds or thousands of miles away, sometimes even from the opposite side of the earth.

Increasingly environmentalists, and many others, are recognizing that dispersed agricultural production, as formerly practiced, is a highly desirable model. It minimizes fuel used for the transportation of food, reduces green house gas production, protects our food supply both from mass contamination (as has happened recently) and disruption by natural or man made disasters. Local agriculture also has the advantages of protecting biodiversity and reducing toxic contamination by reducing our reliance on vast agribusiness monoculture farms that rely on a very few varieties of crops grown in a landscaped drenched in herbicides and pesticides, or incorporated into the plants themselves through bioengineering. Another simple fact is that locally produced agricultural products very often taste much better and have a higher nutritional value than the varieties designed to transport well rather than taste good.

Since World War II, the loss of farmland to development has changed the face of every Connecticut town, both culturally and economically. Until relatively recently, The "Quiet Corner" had a very viable agricultural sector to its economy, with dairy farming and egg and poultry production particularly prominent. Beginning in the 1950's and 1960's, and accelerating particularly rapidly in the 1990's and 2000's, the area has experienced an ever increasing conversion of farmland, and particularly tall grass areas, to housing construction, largely to single family homes on substantially sized lots. Agricultural land, because it usually is comprised of large open areas of relatively level land, has proven particularly vulnerable to subdivision for private homes and housing developments. The ability of Windham to encourage the retention of agricultural properties and encourage their use for both traditional and innovative farming is essential both to securing at least a portion of our food supply and to retaining a major aspect of the rich history of the community. Certain areas in the Town that have been farmed for generations and that have been identified as containing high priority farmland soils should be preserved from substantial development and reserved for current or future agricultural uses.

- 2. Wildlife habitat protection** Without question, the conservation of grass-covered areas ten acres or greater provides critical habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna, especially when contiguous properties can be conserved. Farmlands, and particularly pastures and hay fields, often immediately abut wetlands, ponds, and riparian areas which provide natural wildlife habitat. Agricultural lands provide connectivity between isolated blocks of forest and provide important corridors by which wildlife can pass from one to another. Hay fields and pastures are relatively free from the use of agricultural chemicals and can provide important protection to aquatic animals by filtering rain and surface water before it reaches wetlands, ponds, or riparian areas.
- 3. Farm Support** As much existing farmland as possible should be preserved to allow for the development of increased and diversified local food sources for the community in the event of disruption of the food distribution system by international events, economic issues, or severe weather events in the distant farming and ranching areas. Currently the Windham area is almost totally dependant upon super markets and grocery stores for all its food needs. Recently, however, a certain resurgence of local agriculture has appeared in the form of free range poultry and eggs, organic vegetable production, low impact/no spray farming, and other innovative and traditional, small scale food production operations.

This area of the economy should also be encouraged as a creative way to serve the needs of the public while providing a viable livelihood or a supplement to income from other sources. Emphasis should be placed on encouraging the lowest net impact farm uses, particularly organic, no/low spray, and traditional methods, while discouraging high density, "factory farm" methods.

4. **Visual Open Space** Many of the scenic "viewsheds" throughout Windham contain fields of tall grasses and farmlands with their associated wood lots. These views give Windham its unique character and should be preserved as providing that critical sense of visual open space for members of the community.

Concerns:

1. **Fragmentation:** Agriculture and Tall Grasses are among the last remaining areas which wildlife can inhabit and through which wildlife can pass from one block of appropriate habitat to another in an increasingly urbanized landscape. Increasing development pressure throughout the entire area has resulted in construction of housing in areas previously considered inaccessible or unsuitable and in many areas historically used as corn fields and pasture. If this continues, inevitably wildlife will be confined to smaller and smaller habitat blocks with no safe means of passage between them.
2. **Loss of farms:** Economic shifts and the skyrocketing price of land (and associated tax burdens) have put significant pressure on existing farmers to abandon their agricultural way of life and sell their farms for development. This change for short term gain will have a significant long term impact on the Town and its capacity to function in the future. Conservation of farms is a complex issue involving not simply land conservation but other economic components critical to the Town.

Recommendations:

Non-regulatory

1. Existing Farmlands and Tall Grasses Areas over 10 Acres should be prioritized as areas to conserve for open space. The Conservation/Open Space Commission should identify all land currently used for agriculture and all farmland soil areas not currently in use for agriculture or developed for other uses. A catalog of such land, its status and owners should be maintained as a first step in the preservation of priority areas.
2. A program of education and communication, which includes existing owners of agricultural properties, appropriate local land use boards and officials, and other interested local parties, including those associated with the Willimantic Food Co-op, should be created to facilitate preservation of farmland through innovative and economically profitable uses. Such a program would likely accomplish conservation as well as relay back to the Town the concerns of farmers and owners of unused or under-utilized agricultural land information concerning what incentives could be provided or which needs must be addressed to help meet this priority. An additional function of the program could be matching up individuals who would like to farm or garden with owners of under-utilized agricultural land and to facilitate group rental of land for community garden/farm use.
3. The Town should recognize agriculture as a valuable form of economic development and should concentrate a reasonable percentage of its economic development efforts in this area. The potential of the agricultural sector to provide a significant number of jobs to persons lacking otherwise suitable employment should be recognized and utilized as part of a strategy to reduce the chronic poverty in the Windham/Willimantic area. Owners of farmland should be encouraged to expand operations into highly profitable specialty markets, such as organic farming and stock raising and the production of non-GMO products (free of genetically engineered material), and be provided with the necessary information to design such operations.
4. Already existing local farmers' markets should be encouraged and supported, and the ability of the Willimantic Food Co-op to market, at premium prices, virtually all organic and sustainably produced farm products that could be grown in this area should be recognized and exploited. The Food Co-op already draws health and environmentally conscious customers from two universities and a very wide

geographical area, many of whom are up-scale consumers who would not otherwise do any shopping in Willimantic. Windham should utilize this unique resource as a centerpiece in fostering the creation of "green" and socially progressive businesses in the Willimantic downtown business district.

5. Owners of agricultural land should be provided with information on preserving their land through sale of development rights to the state, through conservation easements, and use of agricultural land trusts and be encouraged by the Town to take advantage of such methods to the maximum extent possible.

Regulatory

1. Zoning Regulations should be examined and revised as necessary to reflect the priority of preserving agricultural land and tall grass areas for present and future agricultural use.
2. Property tax rates on working agricultural businesses, exclusive of high density "factory farming" operations, should be revised as necessary reflect the realities of farm economics, including the fact that relatively large areas of land are required to produce sufficient profits to support farm owners and workers. Tax rates on land actually in agricultural production should be based on the profit made from the land rather than its market value as real estate for housing or building development. Reduced tax rates for actual working property would encourage agricultural use of land, thereby preserving this vital resource and also increasing area employment.
3. The Town of Windham should be declared by ordinance to be a GMO free area where planting of genetically modified crops is strictly forbidden. Increasingly a premium is being paid for farm products certified as GMO free and the prohibition of their use would guarantee the success of Windham's farmers in the rapidly growing organic/non-GMO farm products sector.

FORESTS

Definition: Forest is a general term describing areas with a large number of trees that create a shaded ecosystem containing specific types of wildlife and plants. For the purposes of the Co-occurring Resources Inventory, forested areas of 10 acres and greater were considered, but we acknowledge the need for and value of, and will strive to protect our urban forests including city parks, roadside trees, and neighborhood landscaping as well. Our goal is to connect isolated forested areas into greenways that can serve both for passive recreation and as wildlife corridors.

Important Considerations:

Forests contribute to our social, economic and environmental health by:

- 1. Reducing Global Warming.** Trees sequester and convert the atmospheric CO₂ that contributes to global warming into O₂, which we breathe, and into plant matter. Global warming's consequences to the well-being and survival of our plants, landscapes and even ourselves, are becoming apparent. Forests can actually alter and stabilize the microclimate surrounding them.
- 2. Cleaning the air and providing oxygen.** Forests play a crucial role in filtering our air. Air pollution causes asthma in children and adults, and early death from respiratory disease. Forests catch and remove dust particles, trapping deadly particulate air pollutants while producing oxygen through photosynthesis.
- 3. Providing habitat for wildlife,** including both migratory species and internal ecosystems, from the seasonal vernal pools upon which frogs rely for reproduction, to scarlet tanagers migrating from South America and secretive bobcats seeking a non-human environment, the Forests provide nesting, food, water and shelter for a wide variety of species.
- 4. Harvesting Wood products.** Whether constructing homes, furnishings or providing heat, wood is a renewable resource which, when properly managed, can help to sustain human life.
- 5. Enhancing the Quality of Life.** What better diversion on a hot summer day than to walk in the quiet, cool forest? Children to seniors find "communing with nature" a rewarding way to rejuvenate the spirit. Regular physical exercise like hiking reduces obesity, heart disease, hypertension, colon cancer and depression. Forests brighten Spring with blossoms, provide cooling shade in Summer, add color to the Fall landscape, and provide Winter interest.
- 6. Cleaning water and preventing erosion.** Forests provide a physical barrier to pesticides and other chemicals which storm waters would otherwise wash directly into streams and waterways. Forests play a key role in filtering water. As stated in the Windham Water Works' annual report: "The Windham Water Works is fortunate to have a heavily forested watershed whereby natural processes are able to purify the surface water to a degree. These natural processes include biological activities such as the breakdown of organic contaminants as well as removal of nutrients via aquatic plant growth." Ultimately, the forests save tax dollars by preventing the water from becoming polluted.
- 7. Providing Shelter.** Windbreaks prevent soil erosion to farmlands and fields as well as sheltering wildlife, birds and people. Forests hold the vast majority of land-based species. "A significant number of woodland species that need large tracts and mature forests are declining because of fragmentation by highways and development, reducing many birds' ability to breed productively because of nearby suburban predators and nest parasites (like house cats, raccoons and Brown-headed Cowbirds)." Betty McLaughlin, CAS Director, Environmental Affairs. Even a few properly placed trees can reduce heating bills by protecting homes from winter winds.
- 8. Reducing noise pollution.** A forest is quiet, except for bird sounds, of course. Forests help prevent stress and hearing loss from noise pollution.

Concerns:

Threats to Forests: The major threat to our forests is ever increasing urban and suburban sprawl, particularly in the form of housing development, but also including the clearing of forested land for commercial development as well as for the construction and widening of roads.

Recommendations:**Non-regulatory:**

1. Produce and distribute literature explaining the importance and value of Forests to homeowners and/or businesses near forests as well as the importance of roadside trees and natural landscaping to urban homeowners.
2. Educate children and community members about the value of forests, using existing trails and creating "self-guided" nature walk areas.
3. Through literature emphasize to builders and developers the importance of preserving trees in subdivisions.
4. Plant more trees along city streets and in parks.

Regulatory

1. Pass Conservation Subdivision regulations for Windham.
2. Acquire or otherwise preserve and protect wildlife corridors and forest tracts, with particular emphasis on parcels that serve to connect existing protected land to make larger blocks of forest.
3. Prioritize zoning for housing and industry into previously "damaged" city areas.
4. Limit industry and housing in rural areas: in-fill into city and attempt to concentrate development into areas with a low concentration of priority natural resources.
5. Create regulations to protect especially sensitive forested areas along waterways and/or wildlife corridors from homeowner destruction.
6. Ensure that the state's goal of 21% open space includes all 6 major habitat groups in sufficient quantities to support biodiversity.
7. Make the Conservation Commission the appeal agent for Tree Warden decisions regarding removal of trees.
8. Encourage riverside parks and small parks in city, rather than focusing solely on big grass playing fields for organized leagues.
9. Promote narrow road widths.