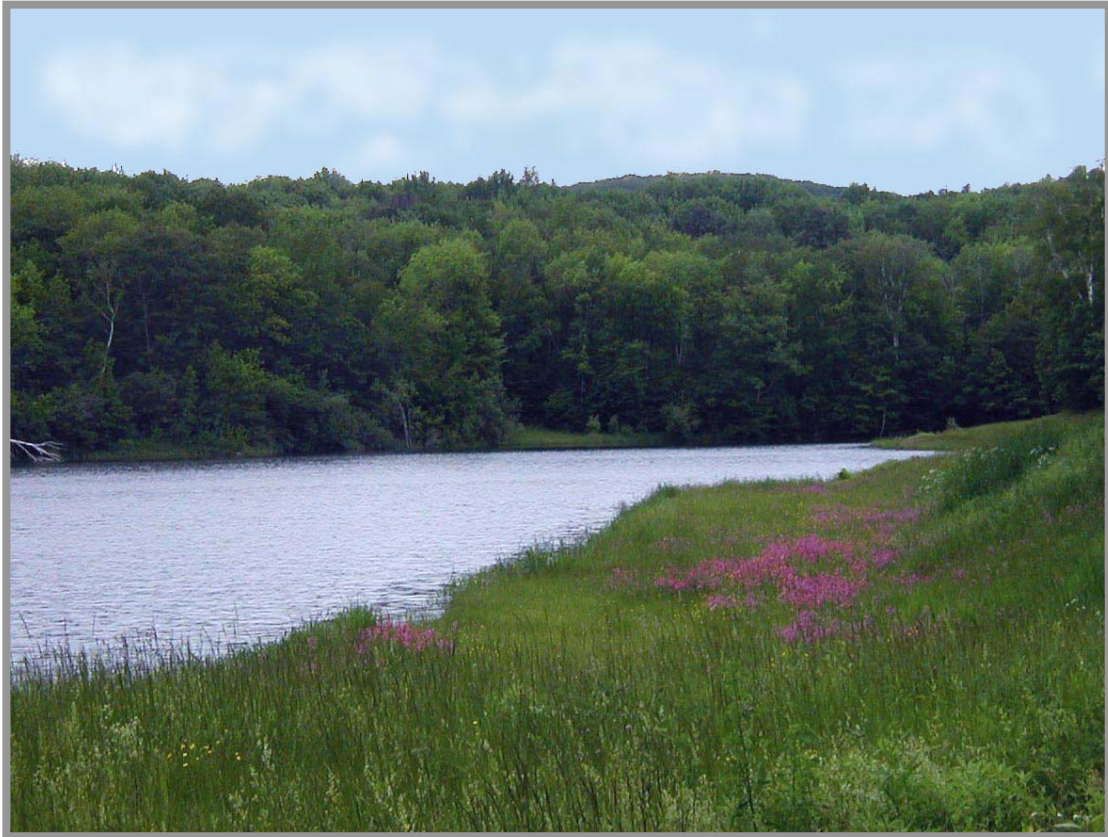


# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

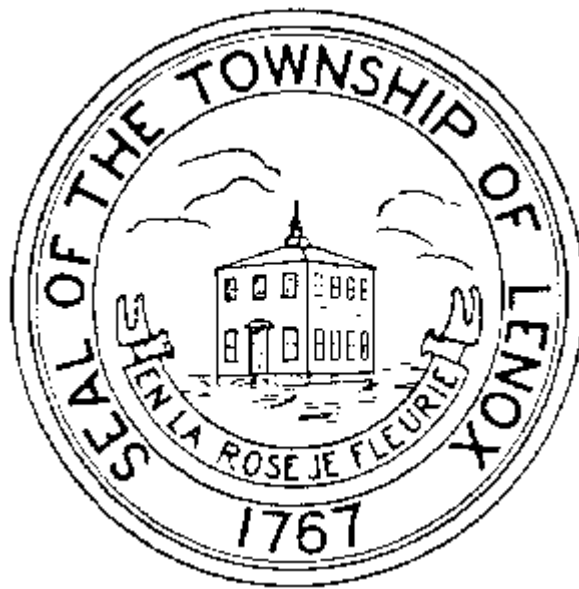
## Town of Lenox

2004



*This document was prepared with funding from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, Department of Housing and Community Development, and Department of Economic Development.*

# Town of Lenox Community Development Plan 2004



Prepared By



*This document was prepared with funding from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, Department of Housing and Community Development, and Department of Economic Development.*



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# Introduction to the Community Development Plan Program



1

## Introduction

Introduction to the CDP Program  
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## **Introduction to the Community Development Plan Program**

On January 21, 2000, then Governor Paul Cellucci issued Executive Order 418, a measure designed to help communities plan for new opportunities while balancing economic development, transportation infrastructure improvements, and open space preservation.

Technical assistance and grants of up to \$30,000 were made available to assist communities in producing Community Development Plans. Community Development Plans are intended to provide guidance as cities and towns consider options and avenues for future development. The plans will focus on housing, economic and community development, transportation, and open space. The plan must also include strategies for how the community will develop housing that is affordable to families and individuals across a broad range of incomes.

Following the completion of the Lenox Master Plan and Lenox Open Space Plan, the Town began the process of undertaking a Community Development Plan in 2002 as a means to move the plans toward implementation. Volunteer residents and Town Officials formed the Community Development Plan Advisory Committee. The Committee and its sub-committees met continually since April 2002 to offer community input to guide the development of a Community Development Plan for the Town.

Lenox is poised to undertake many great actions due in large part to the many years of planning and volunteer support shown in the community. The CDP Plan folds together the findings and recommendations of the Master Plan and Open Space Plan with concrete outcomes and further recommendations as to how best to address the community's challenges in a manner consistent with the desired character of the community. The Community Development Plan is based on the most accurate and detailed information available by Federal, State, local and private resources, and is based on a vision set forth through community consensus.

## Executive Summary

The Community Development Plan outlines the Town of Lenox's concerns for growth and development into the future. The Lenox CDP was developed as a result of an extensive community-based planning process to identify and document community development-related issues, needs and opportunities as it relates to the elements of the Lenox Community Development Plan: housing, open space, economic development and transportation. The Lenox CDP blends the town's most current planning documents with its on-going community outreach activities. The town's Master Plan (1999) and Open Space Plan (1999) form the backbone of the CDP, supported by the recently completed Lenox Gateway Plan, Southern Berkshire Housing Strategy (2002), the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Berkshire County, the Regional Plan for the Berkshires, and other regional planning documents. The elements of each of these plans are inter-related and define Lenox's vision and community priorities to be pursued over a 3-5 year period.

### Community Vision

A survey conducted as part of the Master Plan, which generated a 30% town-wide return rate, indicated that residents are genuinely concerned about the future for their children and grandchildren, over-development within the town, finding a balance between social and economic requirements, as well as environmental and aesthetic protection. Residents also indicated that development should minimize impacts to the environment and balance all community needs and potential impacts. In short Lenox residents' vision (*Master Plan, 1999*) for the future is that the community should work together to:

*Guide the development, enhancement and conservation of the town to create a more diverse yet tightly woven community that pridefully sustains its rich cultural base and excellent amenities as it meets the economic and social needs of present and future residents.*

Fulfillment of the town's vision is dependent on sustainability through the provision of quality services, affordable housing, a robust local economy and preservation of its natural assets. A more sustainable community includes a variety of housing options; a diversity of businesses, industries and institutions that are environmentally sound; financially viable; provide training, education and other forms of assistance to adjust to future needs.

### Community Findings

The Lenox CDP serves to highlight four key areas: Housing, Open Space, Economic Development and Transportation.

#### **Open Space:**

The Town of Lenox has a range of open space resources and recreational areas that add to the quality of life enjoyed by its residents. The fields and farms of the valley are complimented nicely by the hiking trails and scenic vistas over the mountain forests. These areas are under both public and private ownership, and they hold various levels of protection and various amounts of exposure to the possibility of future development, which may limit the current level of public enjoyment offered.



In 1999, the town completed an Open Space Plan prepared by the Lenox Master and Open Space/Recreation Task Force, Conservation Commission and Planning Board with the assistance of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. This Plan was developed with funding from the Town of Lenox and the state Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. The Plan defines those elements of Lenox's open space areas and recreation programs and facilities that contribute to its quality of life, and attempts to determine whether the benefits of these are accessible to all of Lenox's residents.

As development pressure continues, there is a great need for continued strong conservation policies to protect the quality of life of the community. An appropriate balance between conservation and development remains necessary. It is this balancing act that poses the greatest challenge for the community, and underlines the importance of planning.

The town has developed the following goals and objectives as the base of its open space strategy:

- All water resource areas that relate to public health and safety are preserved and protected.
- The valuable diversity of plant and wildlife habitat and other ecologically sensitive areas are protected.
- Agricultural lands are preserved.
- Lenox's outstanding historical, cultural, and visual resources are preserved.

### **Housing:**

The town of Lenox seeks to provide a variety of housing choices for its current and future residents. The town of Lenox is committed to working to increase its supply of affordable housing, recognizing that many of its children cannot afford to live where they grew up. It recognizes the need to have a diverse housing stock in order to have a healthy community. It realizes that market forces will continue to make it very difficult for affordable housing to be built and is taking an active role with potential developers to make it happen.

The total number of housing units increased between 1990 and 2000 by 303 units, or 12%, and most were homes built for the upscale market. The town averaged 30 new homes a year during the 1990's, including 21 units in 1999, 23 in 2000 and 30 in 2001 (Lenox Building Inspector and Lenox Assessor). In addition, the value of the new homes continues to rise. In 2001, 24 of the 30 new homes that came on the market were valued over \$381,000. The average median sales price also reflects the increasing cost of new housing. In 1997, the median sales price was \$153,500. In 2000, the median sales price jumped to \$220,000 (The Warren Group).

Of the total number of housing units, 67.4% are owner-occupied and 32.6% are renter occupied (U.S. Census). An estimated 13.2% of the housing units are used on a seasonal basis, a percentage that is increasing each year. This reflects a growing trend in south Berkshire County where people build vacation homes, use them more as they age and often move permanently here upon retirement. Much of the affordable housing is located in Lenoxdale, in two mobile home parks containing 75 units, and in rental units in the town center.

Based on income trends and the fact that very little new starter or mid-range single family housing is being built in Lenox and surrounding towns, the demand for affordable single family homes is likely to outpace market supply. Part of the reason for this is that the availability of suitable land for residential development is becoming increasingly scarce and such land is becoming increasingly expensive.

Two of the 30 homes built in 2001 were considered affordable by EO 418 guidelines. The town will expect to produce at least that number of affordable homes each year for the next few years. The town also participated in the South Berkshire Housing Study and agreed with its findings and recommendations. It will continue to work with other towns in the region on affordable housing issues.

The town has developed the following goals and objectives as the base of its housing strategy:

- Guide development toward more efficient forms in appropriate places near existing settlement centers/services.
- Continue to work with the new owners of the Lenox House Country Shops to implement an affordable housing plan on that site. Currently, up to 30 units of housing are being proposed. Of the units proposed, up to 25% will be affordable.
- Continue to seek out funds for housing rehabilitation programs for its low and moderate-income homeowners.
- Work to increase the number of contractors in the area to combat rising building costs that drive up the cost of housing.
- Continue to study ways to refine its zoning bylaws to ensure that affordable housing is encouraged.
- Continue to support housing production, both rental and for sale housing, for households across a broad range of incomes.
- Promote homeownership opportunities for low and moderate- income persons.

### **Economic Development:**

Lenox's strong historic and cultural assets remain an important defining characteristic for the town. Lenox continues to enjoy unique opportunities in cultural tourism and recreation services, commercial and professional development mainly based on the town's reputation for excellence, highway locational factors, and significant and attractive parcels of land with the potential for reuse. Revenue generated from the tourism industry plays an important role in the town's tax base.

Lenox has three areas best suited for new economic development: Route 7&20; Lenox Village; and, Lenox Dale. Each of these areas are very distinct in character and support very different commercial uses. This plan recognizes the need to promote economic diversification, redevelopment and reuse, and support for business clusters within these three areas.

In conjunction with the traffic and parking study this plan examines the economic viability of the Village. Lenox Village is an historic attraction treasured by residents and visitors alike.

The Village plan seeks to define ways to improve the economic stability of the village while encouraging the continued preservation of its historic fabric. The study highlights the need for the long-term preservation of these local resources as well as provides for greater enhancements, such as the creation of specific design guidelines, parking improvements, pedestrian amenities and improved traffic flow. Overall the study strives to ensure that the Lenox Village will continue to be aesthetically pleasing, functionally sound, and economically viable.

The town has developed the following goals and objectives as the base of its economic strategy:

- Appropriate reuse within the priority development areas is preferable.
- Provide for community needs while promoting cultural tourism as a vital part of the economy.
- Carefully guide the location and form of new commercial and business clusters.

**Transportation:**

Transportation in Lenox is tied to issues of economic development, housing, land use, and community development. The CDP study looked at current conditions for traffic flow and parking in the village, paying particular attention to seasonal influxes and peak transportation demand in response to regional attractions located within close proximity to the Lenox Village. The study also outlined parking standards and improved site design and streetscaping mechanisms for the safety, convenience and attractiveness of the Village while encouraging compatibility with the town's historic context. Overall the study strives to ensure that the Lenox Village will continue to be aesthetically pleasing and functionally sound.

In August 2002, Clough Harbour and Associates conducted traffic volume studies and parking lot inventories in and around the Village area. This information was then formulated into a transportation management plan. Following the creation of the draft report in March 2003, the Town participated in a process to build consensus related to the needs and recommended actions for the Village area. The Town further developed recommendations aimed to help alleviate growing traffic congestion, encourage improved usage of parking amenities, and create a uniform design for the preservation of the historic village.

# Community Setting



## Community Setting

Community Setting



## Community Setting



The Town of Lenox is a small, unique residential town in the center of the Berkshires of Western Massachusetts. The town is positioned between Pittsfield and the only nearby interstate highway, I-90 (MassPike), which can be accessed from the neighboring town of Lee. The MassPike links the Berkshires with the rest of Massachusetts to the east and with New York's Capital region to the west.

Historical, cultural and tourist oriented attractions continue to provide a source of income for many residents of Lenox and surrounding towns. Historic Lenox Village is truly a showcase of interesting architecture, public buildings such as the Town Hall and Library, both of which received complete renovations in the last three years, social points as prominent churches and the Lenox Community Center, and various offices and personal services establishments. Restaurants, inns and shops are particularly attractive to the seasonal population and the many visitors who frequent town to enjoy cultural opportunities such as the world-renowned Tanglewood music center. Resorts and guest accommodations also contribute to the financial well-being of the town, providing substantial public funds to maintain a high level of quality public services.

To help maintain an overall high quality of life, it will be necessary to jointly accommodate both socio-economic and environmentally beneficial land uses. Fulfillment of Lenox's residents' future vision for the town is dependent on sustainability through the provision of quality services, affordable housing, a robust local economy, and preservation of its natural assets (Master Plan, 1999). Over the long term, the community will need to maintain and

renew itself. This can best be accomplished through a strategy of sustainable growth management.

A more sustainable community involves a variety of housing options for all residents, businesses, industries, and institutions that are environmentally sound; fiscally responsible; and, adjust to future needs. A more sustainable community recognizes and support people's sense of well-being, which includes a sense of belonging, a sense of worth, a sense of safety, and a sense of connection with nature.

# Open Space and Resource Protection



## Open Space and Resource Protection

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## **Introduction to the Open Space Element**



The Town of Lenox has a range of open space resources and recreational areas that add to the quality of life enjoyed by its residents. The fields and farms of the valley are complimented nicely by the hiking trails and scenic vistas over the mountain forests. These areas are under both public and private ownership, and they hold various levels of protection and various amounts of exposure to the possibility of future development, which may limit the current level of public enjoyment offered.

In 1999, the town completed an Open Space Plan prepared by the Lenox Master and Open Space/Recreation Task Force, Conservation Commission and Planning Board with the assistance of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. This Plan was developed with funding from the Town of Lenox and the state Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. The Plan defines those elements of Lenox's open space areas and recreation programs and facilities that contribute to its quality of life, and attempts to determine whether the benefits of these are accessible to all of Lenox's residents.

The purpose of this CDP section is to demonstrate progress in the effort to protect natural resources through the identification of significant natural resources and regulations to protect them.



## **I. Lenox Open Space Strategy**

### **Background**

The Town of Lenox is a small, unique residential town in the center of the Berkshires of Western Massachusetts. The town is positioned between Pittsfield and the only nearby interstate highway, I-90 (MassPike), which can be accessed from the neighboring town of Lee. The MassPike links the Berkshires with the rest of Massachusetts to the east and with New York's Capital region to the west.

The town is relatively affluent thanks to a thriving tourism industry that allows residents to enjoy high quality services. The town's position and desirability as a visitor destination point, as well as for retirees and vacation home owners, also necessitates dealing with intense demands placed on the land, economy, transportation system and year-round residents. In order to preserve both its tremendous beauty, high quality of life, and cherished small town feel, Lenox residents will find it increasingly necessary to reach outwards to other towns and inwards to its own neighborhoods to face these challenges and maintain the town's resources without jeopardizing its economic well-being.

In Lenox's case, the all-important location factor frequently referred to by real estate agents is only one piece of the Town's success; its natural beauty and cultural attractions are among the most impressive offered within the Berkshires and the sub-region. The southern Berkshires are framed by picturesque mountains and rolling hills, with the bulk of settlement centering around the Housatonic River valley. Mountains rise up to the east (October Mountain) and west (the Lenox-Stockbridge range), enhancing the splendor of the landscape. Cultural attractions such as Tanglewood, Shakespeare and Company at the Mount (Edith Wharton's estate) place Lenox at the heart of the South County culture belt, which also includes the Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge and an assortment of venues for the performing arts. This setting makes Lenox an extremely attractive place in which to live and visit.

In this sense, Lenox fits in quite well with the Berkshires as a whole. The region is at once synonymous with theater and musical performances, striking art collections, beautiful scenery and rugged landscape. The region presents many opportunities for exercising both mind and body through both cultural experiences and more physical ones such as skiing, boating and hiking. The Appalachian Trail and numerous smaller trails pass through the Berkshires, and the area is blessed with numerous lakes and rivers, such as the Housatonic River, which runs from Pittsfield through several South County towns into Connecticut. Other resources that transcend town boundaries include Woods Pond (shared with Lee) and the vast High Lawn Farm, which crosses into both Lee and Stockbridge. In addition, most of Tanglewood's grounds stretch beyond the town line into Stockbridge, even though the entrance is in Lenox. Like many Berkshire towns, Lenox takes pride in its pastoral heritage, which it is struggling to preserve even while simultaneously trying to adapt to a changing world.

The town is generally more affluent than other Berkshire towns, and its economic dependence on seasonal tourism/visitors is somewhat more marked and long-standing when

compared to other towns in the County, save perhaps for neighboring Stockbridge. In addition, industrial development—a mainstay of the economies in adjacent Lee and Pittsfield, never really took off in Lenox. Instead, Lenox's economy depended on attracting wealthy socialites, investors, and industrialists to the area for second homes, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. As a result, numerous so-called "Great Estates" dot the landscape of Lenox and Stockbridge. These massive, sprawling estates covered about half of Lenox's territory, and have had an impact on the landscape that lasts until today. Once the summer homes for business tycoons and socialites, the Great Estates present both a promise and a challenge to residents, who have needed to find creative ways to convert these behemoths into alternative uses. This heritage makes Lenox's challenges a bit more complicated for Open Space and Recreational Planning, for these estates are intricately tied into an economy which—without proper and well-conceived planning—could destroy the same aesthetic resources held dear by visitors and residents alike. Today's visitors, second home owners, and retirees demand less space individually than the Great Estates denizens required, but as a whole their demands are in many ways more intense given their larger numbers.

There is tremendous potential for cooperation between Lenox, the surrounding communities, and state agencies to preserve natural resources and ecologically and aesthetically valuable lands for future generations, as well as to meet the recreational needs of the town's population. A collaborative approach to identifying and preserving areas important to promoting open spaces and natural resources, as well as determining which sites are actually suitable for development, will be much more effective than uncoordinated, haphazard approaches by individual towns.

## **Summary of Resource Protection Needs**

Many of the resource protection needs identified in the former Open Space Plan remain just as valid today as they were in 1984. In fact, with development pressures continuing, there is a great need for continued strong conservation policies to protect the quality of life of the community. An appropriate balance between conservation and development remains necessary. It is this balancing act that poses the greatest challenge for the community, and underlines the importance of planning.

Identified as the area of greatest concern, the East Street Corridor garnered a significant attention under the Community Planning process. Currently, BRPC estimates that there is potentially 1,570 acres of developable land within the East Street Corridor. This developable land area accounts for nearly 50% of the total available land in town. An estimated 2,100 new homes could be developed if this area were to be completely built out at 30,000 square feet per lot (EOEA Build Out).

Left purely to chance, with minimum regulatory controls, the most attractive, easily, legally and profitable land will likely be developed. While land and building costs continue to rise development is still occurring in Lenox. Continued conversion of traditional farmlands and forested areas to low density residential development may threaten the rural landscape and scenic views which could radically alter the character of the community.

Besides the East Street area, there is currently little buildable land left in the community that is not subject to some form of development constraint. As a result, much of the growth that will take place in the future will occur on marginal lands. The development of marginal lands will further increase the cost of housing in Lenox, and/or place increasing pressure on the environmentally sensitive areas, as well as those features that contribute to the character and identity of the Town. Some of the resources that may be endangered are:

- the quality of the drinking water and water that the community relies on for recreation;
- the mountain areas and the diverse habitat for wildlife (such as the continued viability needs of special environments), including those that support rare or endangered species of plants;
- the natural scenic character of the community as experienced and viewed from roads, hilltops and hillsides and the incredibly rich cultural assets, and
- the pastoral agricultural assets of the community.

In order to protect the rural residential nature of the Town the community must consider growth management strategies. These management techniques may include bringing local zoning controls into compliance with state requirements, amending local zoning codes to better clarify and define appropriate uses, updating subdivision controls, instituting design guidelines, updating stormwater management regulations, designating roads as Scenic Road, and carefully guiding infrastructure improvements and extensions.

## **II. Open Space Goals and Objectives**

The 1999 Open Space and Recreation Plan reflects Lenox's intent to protect, preserve, and enhance its open space holdings and recreational facilities. The goals and objectives from the Open Space and Recreational Plan are still valid today. *Goals express the general expression of desired outcomes. Objectives aim to achieve the general goals that are connected to general actions.*

### **Conservation and Open Space Goals and Objectives**

All water resource areas that relate to public health and safety are preserved and protected.

- An adequate supply of safe, high quality drinking water is maintained over time through enforcement of appropriate regulations covering all areas in and around reservoirs, community wellheads, and potentially productive high yield aquifers of quality.
- Water resources are augmented where necessary or prudent through acquisition.
- All wetland and floodplain areas are protected and well managed under the direction of the Conservation Commission and other agencies. Riparian buffer zones provide a means to minimize the negative impacts of future development.
- Woods Pond is a quality wildlife habitat as clean up occurs.
- Erosion in areas of sedimentation is reduced through implemented stormwater management techniques and guidelines.
- Weeds and excess nutrients are under control at Laurel Lake as nonpoint source pollution is minimized.

The valuable diversity of plant and wildlife habitat and other ecologically sensitive areas are protected.

- Native flora and fauna is protected, particularly in high value areas for rare or endangered species, and in regulated wetland and floodplain areas.
- Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary's spectacular scenery and unique ecology is sustained.
- A wildlife corridor, protected through regulation and acquired deed restrictions, follows Yokun Brook to the Housatonic River in an east-west direction.
- Public and private woodlands are preserved through active stewardship and initiatives such as the Forest Legacy program.

Agricultural lands are preserved.

- Agricultural lands, particularly lands off New Lenox Road and High Lawn Farm (in Lee and Stockbridge), are assisted with efforts to place them into the APR program if the owners so desire.
- Cooperative efforts of state and local preservation organizations and agencies continue to provide the means and ways to permanently farm appropriate parcels.

Lenox's outstanding historical, cultural, and visual resources are preserved.

- Important, high quality, pastoral lands, ridges and viewsheds continue to be assets as development is limited and key permanent acquisitions occur.
- Corridor lands, such as those near Brushwood Farms, remain scenic and undeveloped through protective mechanisms.
- Under the watchful eyes of local boards and commissions, historic sites are well preserved and utilized without being compromised by unsuitable or inappropriate development.
- A high level of public & private participation and cooperation is evident in sustaining conservation and cultural endeavors.
- A Great Estates Scenic Byway is designated, linking cultural and historical sites.

### **III. Current and On-going Efforts**

As part of the development of the CDP plan the town of Lenox has been working to implement elements of their Master Plan. Under this plan the town sought to revise and update their zoning and subdivision controls to better shape development patterns. As part of these efforts the following actions were completed:

- On May 2, 2003, Lenox voters adopted the Open Space Residential Development Bylaw that provides incentives such as housing density bonuses for developers who include affordable housing units as part of the overall cluster development plan (see Appendix A.1). The intent of an OSRD is to provide for a development method that is flexible in nature and allows for modification of lot size, bulk or type of dwelling, density, intensity of development, or required open space in the regulations of the district(s) established by this Zoning Bylaw, so as to result in patterns of land use that are more compact and more efficiently laid out on a smaller area of a site, while preserving more open space and other natural and cultural features elsewhere.

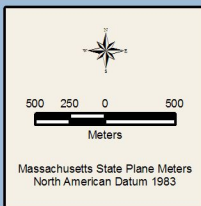


- Originally adopted in 1966 and amended in 1973, Lenox is not unlike many Berkshire communities who have struggled with antiquated rules and regulations for the subdivision of land. Following several all-boards working meetings and a public hearing on March 1, 2004, the Planning Board voted to adopt updated language of their subdivision controls (see Appendix A.2). These new regulations provide better alternatives for road design and layout, improved landscape and overall site design.
- Updating the 1999 EOEA Build Out Analysis in order to examine the impact of new and infill residential development and its impacts of the community. Using the same methodology as the previous Build Out, this study seeks to project the total number of lots, dwelling units, water usage, municipal solid waste, additional students, and new subdivision roads based on the total buildable acres in each zoning district (see Appendix A.3).

#### **IV. Recommendations**

The Town of Lenox should work to complete the following tasks over the next 3 to 5 years:

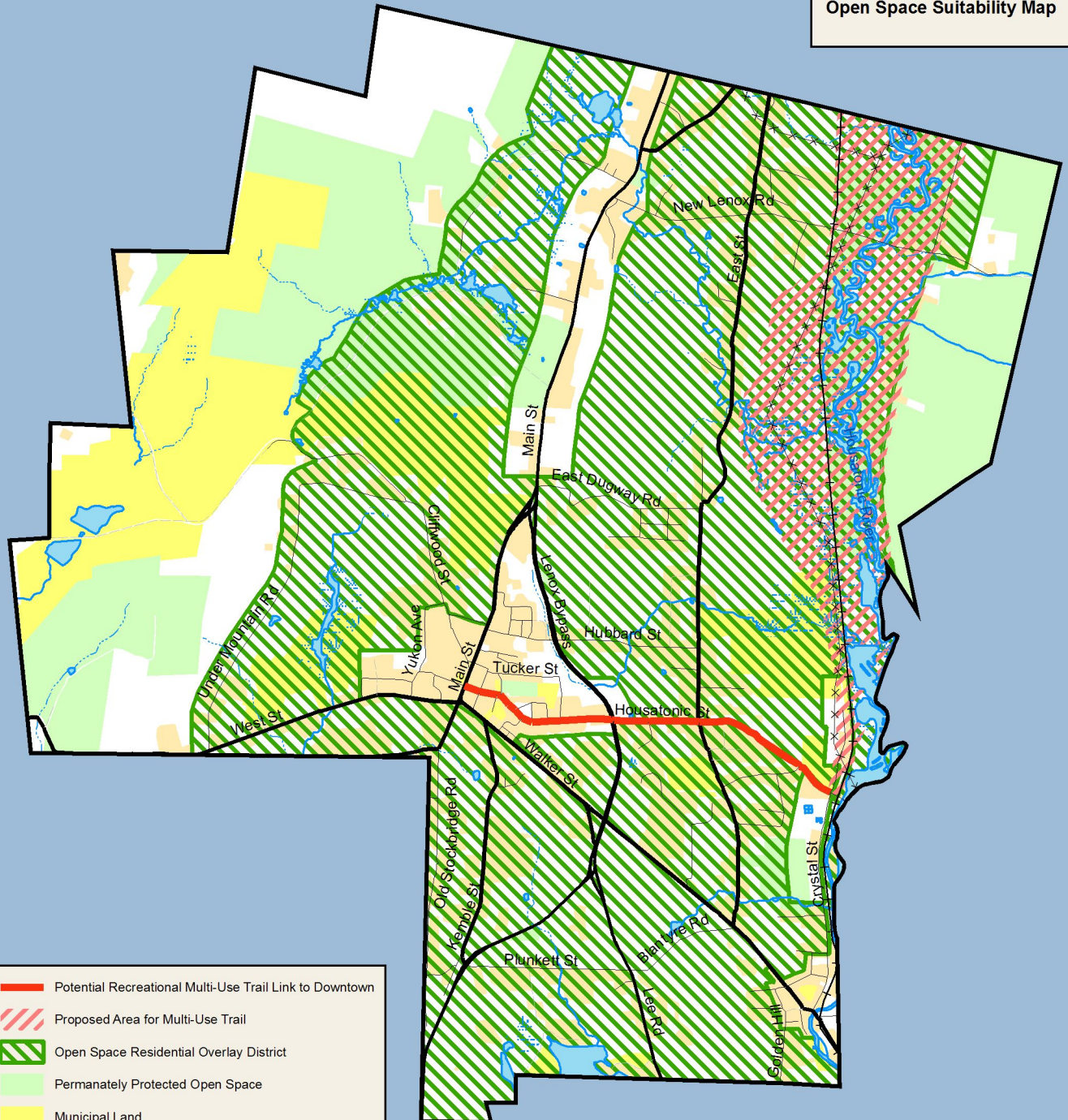
- Pursue a comprehensive update of the Lenox Zoning Bylaw in order to protect natural resources, expand housing opportunities, and encourage greater economic development opportunities.
- Pursue public and private initiatives such as environmentally sensitive trail sections and other improvements to make the lakes, reservoirs and remote woodlands more accessible for canoeists, wildlife observers, walkers and bikers.
- Seek Funds to Help Advance Voluntary Land Protection Efforts in Town, such as the Community Preservation Act or other state and local programs (See Appendix A.4).
- Continue to conduct an update to the Build Out analysis to better assess the impacts of new development on natural resources.
- Implement elements of the Open Space and Recreational Plan.



## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Open Space Suitability Map

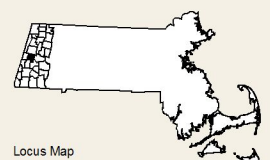


-  Potential Recreational Multi-Use Trail Link to Downtown
-  Proposed Area for Multi-Use Trail
-  Open Space Residential Overlay District
-  Permanently Protected Open Space
-  Municipal Land
-  Developed Land

This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, BRPC or the town provided all of the data layers used to create this map.

This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

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June 28, 2004





# Housing



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## **Introduction to the Housing Element**



Based on income trends and the fact that very little new starter or mid-range single family housing is being built in Lenox and surrounding towns, the demand for affordable single family homes is likely to outpace market supply. Part of the reason for this is that the availability of suitable land for residential development is becoming increasingly scarce and such land is becoming increasingly expensive.

Due to several factors, many of these same families and individuals may also find it difficult to purchase such housing in Lenox. Local families and employees at or well above the median income level who may need to upgrade their housing often cannot find suitable, available, existing homes to purchase or sites to build on. There is little doubt that if no new construction of affordable housing is pursued in the future, there will be a shrinking supply of affordable or medium-priced rental and owner occupied housing.

This section examines the socio-economic trends in Lenox and in the surrounding area of Berkshire County, which affect housing supply and demand. Planning to maintain an adequate supply of affordable housing while balancing concerns related to open space, natural resources, transportation, infrastructure, and community services is a challenging task. This section presents a strategy based on information and analysis on potential factors that may indicate areas of need and demand for affordable housing in town. The section concludes with a list of several actions that may address the town's specific concerns for housing that have been identified.

## **I. Lenox Housing Strategy**

### **Introduction**

Lenox is a quaint town of 5,077 year round residents located in central/south Berkshire County just south of Pittsfield. Lenox has been a tourist destination for more than hundred years and has a lively attractive town center with upscale shops and restaurants aimed at the tourist market. Lenox is known for its culture offerings and is home to Tanglewood, the summer residence of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Its popularity as a vacation home destination places constant stress on its housing market, making affordable housing difficult to find.

### **Lenox Housing Profile**

There are a total of 2,713 housing units in Lenox, of which 1,457, or 53.7%, are single-family homes and 1,180, or 43.5%, are multifamily units including rental apartments and condominiums. The single-family homes include large old gracious homes on big lots as well as newer large upscale vacation homes developed over the past 15 years. There are also a number of very modest single-family homes located near the town center and in Lenoxdale, a village of the town. The multifamily rental units are largely concentrated on the upper floors of downtown mixed-use buildings, in several apartment complexes and in two retirement communities.

Lenox is also known for its many former mansions that were developed in the late 1800's by wealthy industrialists. These properties provided much of the employment for town residents at that time and dominated life in the community. Over the past 30 years, most of these large properties have been converted to other uses including condominiums, retirement communities, health spas, and resorts, and once again provide many jobs to town and County residents. Anticipating development pressure to subdivide these estates, the town in the 1980's, passed the Great Estates Zoning Bylaw that tightly regulated how these properties could be redeveloped. As a result, most of these properties now have new uses but their original integrity and appearance have been retained. The town is therefore still noted for its large open spaces, gracious old homes and little offensive development.

The total number of housing units increased between 1990 and 2000 by 303 units, or 12%, and most were homes built for the upscale market. The town averaged 30 new homes a year during the 1990's, including 21 units in 1999, 23 in 2000 and 30 in 2001 (Lenox Building Inspector and Lenox Assessor). In addition, the value of the new homes continues to rise. In 2001, 24 of the 30 new homes that came on the market were valued over \$381,000. The average median sales price also reflects the increasing cost of new housing. In 1997, the median sales price was \$153,500. In 2000, the median sales price jumped to \$220,000 (The Warren Group).

Of the total number of housing units, 67.4% are owner-occupied and 32.6% are renter occupied (U.S. Census). An estimated 13.2% of the housing units are used on a seasonal basis, a percentage that is increasing each year. This reflects a growing trend in south Berkshire County where people build vacation homes, use them more as they age and often

move permanently here upon retirement. Much of the affordable housing is located in Lenoxdale, in two mobile home parks containing 75 units, and in rental units in the town center.

The Town with its zoning bylaws has been fairly receptive to development over the last 20 years and as a result, has seen the development of more condominium complexes and retirement communities than any other community in Berkshire County. In the 1980's it approved a new Retirement Community zoning bylaw that led to the development of Kimball Farms Retirement Community. In 1998, the town approved the sale of a vacant school building for re-use as affordable assisted living and the 44 unit project, Cameron House, opened in August 2000.

The town is home to two upscale retirement/assisted living complexes, one affordable assisted living development, one state subsidized senior housing complex, one subsidized senior/family housing complex, two nursing facilities and a number of condominium complexes.

## **Population and Income**

In 2000, Lenox's population was 5,077. From 1990 to 2000 the population decreased over 13%. Despite the loss in population nearly 300 new homes built during the period and developed land has increased by nearly 16 acres annually over the last three decades. This reflects both the increasing age of the population, a shrinking household size, and the fact that most of the new homes are being built as seasonal homes. The average age of residents of Lenox continues to rise. In 2000, the median age rose to 45.9, compared to a statewide median age of 36.5. Of the population, 27.4 % are over age 62, a dramatic increase of 35.6% since 1990.

Of the 2,368 persons in the labor force, 1,147, or 48%, are employed in management, professional and related occupations. An additional 317 people are employed in service sector jobs and 550 in sales and office occupations. Many of the residents work in Pittsfield, the center of the job market for Berkshire County.

The median household income in Lenox in 2000 was \$45,581, higher than the average Berkshire County household income of \$39,047. Approximately 33% of the town's households were low or moderate income in 2000 earning less than 80% of the median household income of \$40,800. There were 74 families, or 5.6% living in poverty. An additional 435 individuals had incomes under the poverty level. Many of these are elderly persons living in subsidized apartments and nursing facilities.

## **Local Housing Needs**

Lenox's housing needs are similar to those of the rest of south Berkshire County and other resort areas where the demand for vacation homes has dramatically impacted the year round housing market and thus driven up prices. Low and moderate-income households face growing pressures in both the ownership and rental markets. Many of these families currently own their own homes but cannot afford to move up to another house and most renters cannot afford to buy their own homes today. In certain parts of town, the home prices have been



driven so high that when homes are sold they are often purchased by second home owners and the affordable houses are lost to the market. In fact the assessed value for homes have nearly doubled in Lenox since 2000 (see Table 1).

There is a need in town for both lower cost rental and for sale housing affordable to low and moderate-income families. While the number of renter occupied units has increased from 496 in 1990 to 721 in 2000, most of the increase has been housing built for seniors and little for families. There are currently 21 people on the Lenox Housing Authority waiting list for elderly housing and 9 for family housing.

The high cost of land and development and the scarcity of state resources have discouraged such development and land prices are continuing to escalate. The town has room to build more housing, but is caught in this market that makes it nearly impossible for a developer to produce affordable housing. A family earning the median income of \$45,581 could afford to buy a \$152,000 house. But the typical house in Lenox is now valued over \$225,000. This equates to a gap of over \$73,000 thus making home buying not affordable to the average household. There is rarely a home for sale under \$150,000. As a result, more and more households are finding it impossible to move into the town. This also makes it extremely difficult for government employees (i.e. police and fire) and service workers, who typically earn a lower wage, to stay in the community.

Lenox has 166 units that qualify as affordable under Chapter 40B regulations, representing 7.05% of the housing stock. The percentage of low- and moderate-income housing units is measured by dividing the number of qualifying 40B units (i.e. subsidized units) by the total number of year-round housing units as recorded in the most recent decennial census. The 40B formula exempts seasonal homes. If a community in which less than 10% of its total year-round housing stock is subsidized low- or moderate-income housing, denies a comprehensive permit application, or imposes conditions that make a project uneconomic, the developer may appeal to the state Housing Appeals Committee for review of the local action.

Lower income families in Lenox will continue to feel the pressures of the strong housing market in south Berkshire County. With low incomes and high prices, most are stuck in their current homes and a number of them struggle to maintain them properly. The South Berkshire Housing Study identified a number of households with housing rehabilitation needs and people needing financial assistance to make repairs. This is especially true among low income elderly homeowners who are house rich and cash poor. The Study emphasized the preservation of the existing housing stock as the most cost effective way of maintaining a supply of affordable housing. As a result, the town is participating in a regional housing rehabilitation program administered by Berkshire Housing and funded through the Small Cities Program. This will enable 8 families to make needed repairs and remain in their homes.

**Table 1 – Comparison of Assessed Values, 2000-2004**

	<b>2000 As. Value</b>	<b>2001 As. Value</b>	<b>2002 As. Value</b>	<b>2003 As. Value</b>	<b>2004 As. Value</b>	<b>Difference from 2000-2004</b>	<b>Increase from 2000-2004</b>
<b>Single Family</b>	\$ 275,222,200	\$ 300,289,900	\$ 352,363,600	\$ 385,585,200	\$ 470,750,300	71%	1.4
<b>Multi Family</b>	\$ 10,740,900	\$ 11,332,500	\$ 13,253,300	\$ 14,017,200	\$ 15,253,600	42%	1.3
<b>Condos</b>	\$ 45,702,500	\$ 52,850,700	\$ 66,566,800	\$ 80,443,100	\$ 107,939,200	136%	1.8
<b>Mobile Homes</b>	\$ 901,300	\$ 1,049,600	\$ 1,227,700	\$ 1,291,300	\$ 1,442,200	60%	1.4
<b>Apt</b>	\$ 15,619,800	\$ 16,012,600	\$ 11,141,100	\$ 12,486,500	\$ 11,707,900	-25%	0.8
<b>Misc. Residential</b>	\$ 2,146,100	\$ 2,534,800	\$ 2,945,400	\$ 3,209,700	\$ 4,501,800	110%	1.5
<b>Commercial</b>	\$ 93,794,496	\$ 100,900,400	\$ 134,050,696	\$ 140,656,000	\$ 149,424,600	59%	1.5
<b>Industrial</b>	\$ 7,264,400	\$ 7,637,600	\$ 8,444,900	\$ 9,128,600	\$ 10,074,500	39%	1.3
<b>Personal Property</b>	\$ 20,184,230	\$ 23,760,670	\$ 25,736,400	\$ 24,718,400	\$ 26,096,900	29%	1.2

Source: DOR Assessed Values, 2000-2004

## **II. Housing Goals and Objectives**

The town of Lenox is committed to working to increase its supply of affordable housing, recognizing that many of its children cannot afford to live where they grew up. It recognizes the need to have a diverse housing stock in order to have a healthy community. It realizes that market forces will continue to make it very difficult for affordable housing to be built and is taking an active role with potential developers to make it happen.

Two of the 30 homes built in 2001 were considered affordable by EO 418 guidelines. The town will expect to produce at least that number of affordable homes each year for the next few years. The town also participated in the South Berkshire Housing Study and agreed with its findings and recommendations. It will continue to work with other towns in the region on affordable housing issues.

The town has developed the following goals and objectives as the base of its housing strategy:

- It will guide development toward more efficient forms in appropriate places near existing settlement centers/services.
- It will continue to work with the new owners of the Lenox House Country Shops to implement an affordable housing plan on that site. Currently, up to 30 units of housing are being proposed. Of the units proposed, up to 25% will be affordable.
- It will continue to seek out funds for housing rehabilitation programs for its low and moderate-income homeowners.
- It will work to increase the number of contractors in the area to combat rising building costs that drive up the cost of housing.
- It will continue to study ways to refine its zoning bylaws to ensure that affordable housing is encouraged.
- It will continue to support housing production, both rental and for sale housing, for households across a broad range of incomes.
- It will continue to promote homeownership opportunities for low and moderate-income persons.

## **III. Current and Ongoing Efforts**

As mentioned above, Lenox is very active in the pursuit of increasing the supply of affordable housing for its residents and will continue those efforts.

- Lenox voters adopted the Open Space Residential Development Bylaw that provides incentives such as housing density bonuses for developers who include affordable housing units as part of the overall cluster development plan (see Appendix A.1).

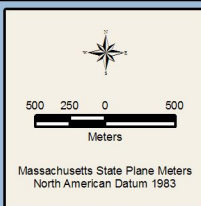
- Lenox adopted an amended version of their Subdivision Controls. The revised regulations provide greater flexibility in road and utility design.
- On May 6, 2004 Lenox voters adopted a bylaw to allow for greater flexibility in the creation, expansion or extension of upper story apartments in the village core (see Appendix A.5).
- Lenox is actively assisting in the development of new affordable housing. The Town applied for and received planning funds from the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and the Massachusetts Housing Partnership Fund to study the re-use of a mostly vacant commercial shopping complex, the Lenox House Country Shops into a mixed-use development including affordable housing units. It has been praised for the leadership role it has taken on this project and is optimistic that some new affordable housing will be developed as a result.
- The Town is also working with interested developers on the reuse of the Hashim property, which is across the street to the Lenox House County Shops and was part of the Lenox Gateway Plan. It is estimated that a portion of the retail element will have upper story apartment units.
- Lenox is actively promoting the rehabilitation of the existing housing stock by participating in a regional housing rehabilitation program funded by DHCD Small Cities Program and administered by Berkshire Housing. Eight Lenox homeowners have received rehabilitation assistance. Currently, Berkshire Housing is working on one additional unit to be completed by December 2004. The Town will continue to seek out other sources of funding for this purpose.
- Working with Berkshire Housing, Lenox is participating in a program funded by a Ready Resource Grant from DHCD that will offer business assistance and training to small contractors in a 16 town region. The goal is to help existing contractors improve their business administrative skills, strengthen their businesses and make them more profitable. This will increase the number of available contractors and workers, now in short supply, and hopefully bring down building costs.

#### **IV. Recommendations**

Lenox intends to continue its efforts to develop and rehabilitate affordable housing to meet the needs of the community. In addition, the Town will take the following steps to improve its supply of quality housing supply and reduce the effects of sprawling development patterns that may threaten community sustainability:

- Continue to support homeownership opportunities for first time buyers through the Good Samaritan Homeownership Program, the Soft Second Program and the MassHousing First time Buyer Program.
- Continue to work with BHCD or other local agencies to develop mixed-use rental housing. Working with nonprofit partners will assist the community in securing the grant resources needed to make the development affordable at no cost to the Town. Possible sources include:
  - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Programs: Section 202 Elderly Housing Program, Section 811 Housing for Persons with Disabilities
  - U.S Department of Agriculture Rural Housing Service Program

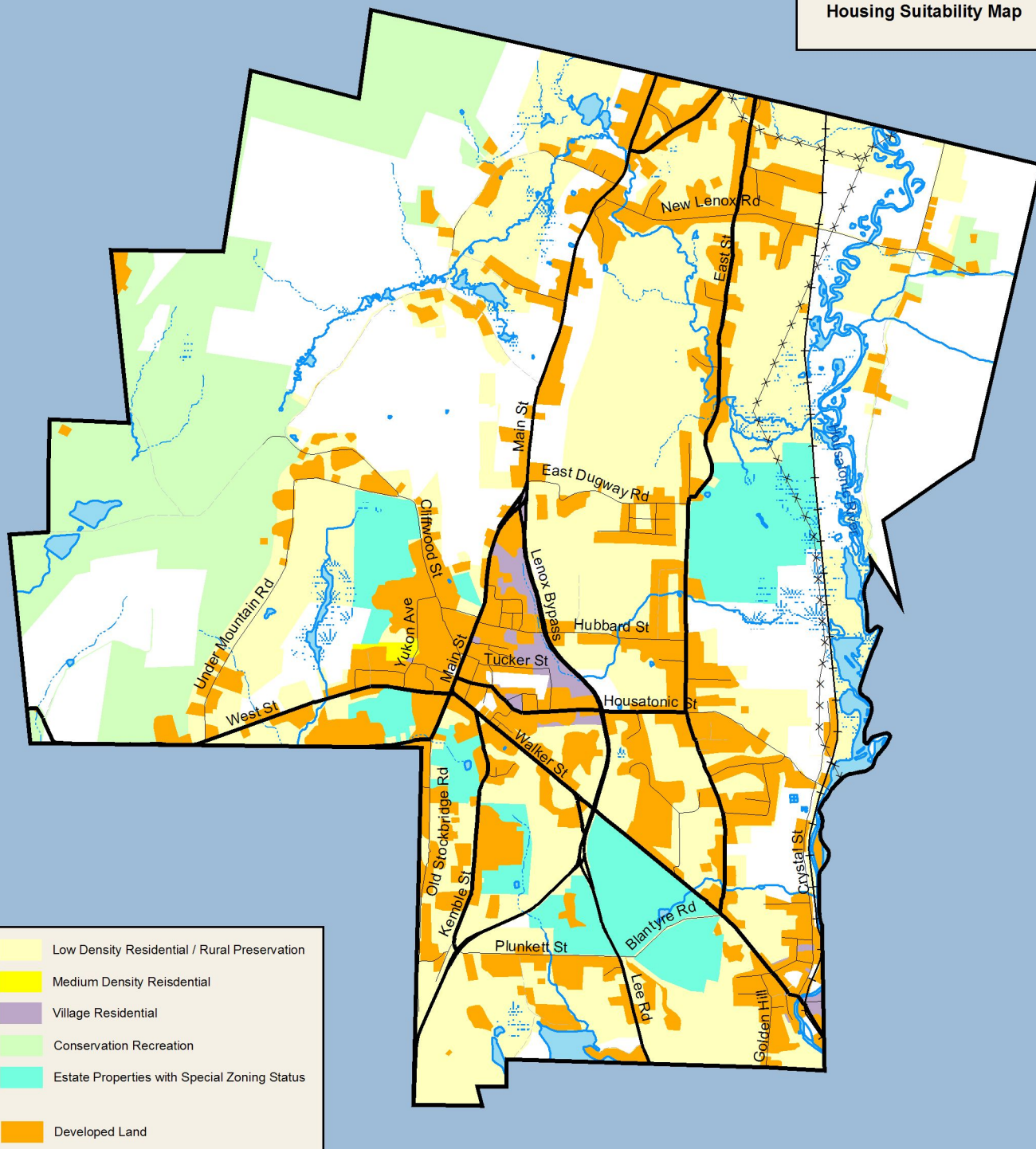
- Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development Programs: Affordable Housing Trust Fund (with MassHousing), HOME, Housing Stabilization Fund, Housing Development Support Program, Local Initiative Program and Section 8 Housing Voucher Program.
  - Massachusetts Housing Partnership loan programs
  - Federal Home Loan Bank's Affordable Housing Program
- Pursue the Development of Affordable Housing as part of a Local Housing Initiative Program. The local initiative program enables local officials to receive technical and other non-financial assistance from the state, while maintaining the right to make decisions of approval on financing, design, & construction of affordable housing. The program also enables all low and moderate income units to count towards the community's affordable housing stock according to M.G.L. Chapter 40B. The local initiative program would group together and formalize local efforts of redevelopment and housing construction under a common framework of affordability requirements set forth by the state and its efforts to increase housing considered affordable according to M.G.L. Chapter 40B.



## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

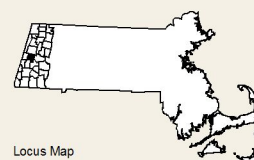
Housing Suitability Map



This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, BRPC or the town provided all of the data layers used to create this map.

This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

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June 28, 2004





# Economic Development



## Economic Development

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## **Introduction to the Economic Development Element**



Economic Development in Lenox is closely tied to the town's desire to maintain an adequate supply of businesses while balancing concerns related to open space, natural resources, housing, transportation, infrastructure, and community services. Lenox's strong historic and cultural assets remain an important defining characteristic for the town and its economic condition. Revenue generated from the tourism industry plays an important role in the town's tax base.

Economic growth in town has been shaped by traditional development patterns. While the town has three distinct economic development areas: Route 7&20; Lenox Village; and, Lenox Dale, this plan focuses on the village area. In conjunction with the transportation element, this section seeks to promote ways to improve the economic stability of the village while encouraging the continued preservation of its historic fabric. Overall the study strives to ensure that the Lenox Village will continue to be aesthetically pleasing, functionally sound, and economically viable.

## **I. Economic Strategy**

### **Introduction**

The town is generally more affluent than other Berkshire towns, and its economic dependence on seasonal tourism/visitors is somewhat more marked and long-standing when compared to other towns in the County, save perhaps for neighboring Stockbridge. In addition, industrial development—a mainstay of the economies in adjacent Lee and Pittsfield, never really took off in Lenox. Instead, Lenox's economy depended on attracting wealthy socialites, investors, and industrialists to the area for second homes, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century.

Lenox's very strong cultural connections appear to be self-sustaining for the most part. Tanglewood, the Edith Wharton estate, and Shakespeare & Company are immensely popular attractions, the town's resorts have achieved national fame, and the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Sanctuary provides a valuable opportunity for protection and appreciation of natural habitat. The Berkshire Scenic Railway continues to draw visitors looking to ride in a refurbished train car into Stockbridge. The Ventfort Hall Association is also continuing to work fully restore Ventfort Hall, a National Registry property.

Historical, cultural and tourist oriented attractions continue to provide a source of income for many residents of Lenox and surrounding towns. Historic Lenox Village is truly a showcase of interesting architecture, public buildings such as the Town Hall and Library, both of which received complete renovations in the last three years, social points as prominent churches and the Lenox Community Center, and various offices and personal services establishments. Restaurants, inns and shops are particularly attractive to the seasonal population and the many visitors who frequent town to enjoy cultural opportunities such as the world-renowned Tanglewood music center. Resorts and guest accommodations also contribute to the financial well-being of the town, providing substantial public funds to maintain a high level of quality public services.

### **Background**

In 2000, Lenox's population was 5,077. From 1990 to 2000 the population decreased over 13%. The Town experienced a dramatic population decline in the 1980's due to the exodus of the Bible Speaks organization. Lenox's population is also somewhat related to economic conditions in the greater Pittsfield area. Berkshire county's population reached its height of nearly 150,000 persons in 1970, and has experienced a slow but steady decline since then. Each decade has seen a continued loss of manufacturing jobs that have been slightly offset by other employment sectors. This pattern created an overall effect of out migration of residents seeking employment elsewhere, thus decreasing County populations.

Today, Lenox has 2,368 persons in the labor force, 1,147, or 48%, are employed in management, professional and related occupations. An additional 317 people are employed in service sector jobs and 550 in sales and office occupations. Many of the residents work in Pittsfield, the center of the job market for Berkshire County. Lenox is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest

employment center in the region. The median household income in Lenox in 2000 was \$45,581, higher than the average Berkshire County household income of \$39,047. Approximately 33% of the town's households were low or moderate income in 2000 earning less than 80% of the median household income of \$40,800. There were 74 families, or 5.6% living in poverty. An additional 435 individuals had incomes under the poverty level. Many of these are elderly persons living in subsidized apartments and nursing facilities.

Employment in Lenox is heavily dependent upon services. There are approximately 240 Service Employers in Lenox employing over 2,898 persons. The Service Industry accounts for over 92% of the total employment in Lenox (MA Division of Employment and Training, 2001). Total employment exceeds the number of service related employees living in Lenox. Thus, much of the service employers draw from areas surrounding Lenox, particularly in Pittsfield.

### **Priority Economic Development Areas**

Lenox's strong historic and cultural assets remain an important defining characteristic for the town. Lenox continues to enjoy unique opportunities in cultural tourism and recreation services, commercial and professional development mainly based on the town's reputation for excellence, highway locational factors, and significant and attractive parcels of land with the potential for reuse. Revenue generated from the tourism industry plays an important role in the town's tax base. The town will seek to continue to work collaboratively with each of the area resorts, estates and other cultural attractions to encourage and promote them as strong local and regional tourism assets.

However, there are also drawbacks to relying too much on a service-based economy. The town must consider alternate mechanisms to nurture varied economic development. The town's position and desirability as a visitor destination point, as well as for retirees and vacation homes owners, also necessitates dealing with intense demand place on the land, economy, transportation system and year-round residents.

Lenox has three areas best suited for new economic development: Route 7&20; Lenox Village; and, Lenox Dale. Each of these areas are very distinct in character and support very different commercial uses. A more detailed description follows:

#### **Route 7&20 Corridor**

For the Route 7 and 20 commercial area, it is necessary to maintain the tourist and regional retail market areas. The corridor can be split into two district areas based on the commercial density and character. The upper corridor, approximately from Holmes Road north the Pittsfield town line, offers a more distinct retail and office mix of uses.

This district has evolved into a traditional retail and commercial center. Grocery stores, gas stations, hotels, fast food restaurants, and other similar uses have continued to development along this stretch of road. While these intense retail and commercial uses will continue is this area the town seeks to control the overall visual, traffic, and fiscal impact of the area. Lenox has expressed a desire to apply corridor access management guidelines to encourage better design and traffic conditions within this area.

The second district runs south from Holmes road to the turn off to the Lenox Village (Route 7A). In 1996, Lenox changed its commercial zoning to restrict use of some commercial areas for intense retail use, and to instead encourage future office use.

In 2002, the town conducted a comprehensive planning process to determine the reuse potential of the former Lenox Country Shops and abutting parcels (intersection of Routes 7&20 and 7A). This area, referred to as the Lenox Gateway Area, has the potential to be redeveloped into a mixed-use commercial center. Of significant interest to the town is finding ways to incorporate housing, particularly affordable housing, into the overall reuse of the parcels. In order to meet the desired vision for the Gateway the town must consider rezoning the area to allow for appropriately scaled retail, office and residential uses.

### **Lenox Village Area**

The Lenox Village is a true mixed-use village highlighted by its unique historic attributes. Historic Lenox Village is truly a showcase of interesting architecture, public buildings such as the Town Hall and Library, both of which received complete renovations in the last three years, social points as prominent churches and the Lenox Community Center, and various offices and personal services establishments.

Lenox Village is the center of focus for many residents and visitors. In 1975, Main and Walker Streets were designated as a National Historic District in order to “promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant in the history of Lenox” (Section 1.1, Lenox Historic District Bylaw).

Based on the goals and strategies of the 1999 Lenox Master Plan, the CDP conducted a study to aid in the long-term preservation of these local resources as well as provide for greater enhancements, such as the creation of specific design guidelines, parking improvements, pedestrian amenities and improved traffic flow (see Appendix A.6). Overall the study strives to ensure that the Lenox Village will continue to be aesthetically pleasing, functionally sound, and economically viable.

### **Lenox Dale Area**

The Village of Lenox Dale retains much of its character, continues to be a place where families can afford to live, and provides a link to key industrial and river recreation points. The existing base of industry in Lenox Dale provides a significant employment base for the town.

Lenox Dale residents and business leaders have banded together to develop and access funding for the Crystal Street reconstruction project. The Crystal Street reconstruction project and other initiatives are critical to upgrade this area and keep it economically viable.

Utilizing and developing this area for recreational purposes can also serve to bolster the economic development potential of the village. Pedestrian based opportunities need to be enhanced in order to contribute to community interaction and quality of life. Walking and biking improvements within the village, between the Berkshire Scenic Railway Museum and Lenox Historic Village should also be pursued.

Other recreational amenities surrounding Woods Pond, the Housatonic River, and October Mountain State Park can also provide a balance between natural resources and tourism.

### **Future Growth Areas Regionally**

Berkshire County's future base is very much tied to its strong past manufacturing base industries – though with substantially fewer employees, but unprecedented output value as measured by Gross Regional Product

Economic forecasts provided by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission using the REMI model indicate that while the service sector will continue its upward trajectory in numbers of employees, high technology and high productivity manufacturing will continue to be the structural and economic base of the region's economy.

Job growth within the major sectors of the regional economy is slated to continue and remain roughly the same proportionally out to 2025.

Regionally, services are expected to continue to climb in employment to almost 50% of total employment by 2025, with healthcare services being the leading employer regionally within this sector. Increasing numbers of service jobs can be expected to affect overall wages and income in this region.

Technology Enterprise is also expected to continue to increase its substantial impact on Berkshire County's economy. According to an anonymous survey by the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute, companies associated with this sector reported a positive business outlook, with 75% expecting increased revenues over the next three years and 96% reporting they are likely to remain in Berkshire County for the next 5 years.

### **Employment Outlook**

Concerns have been raised both by the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board and the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training's publication on regional workforce trends that much of the job growth taking place in the Berkshires is in low wage segments of the service and retail sectors. At the same time, businesses throughout the region have experienced a difficulty in recruiting qualified employees with job skills and technical abilities matching employer needs.

The number of higher paying small or "micro" businesses has been growing in the area. The role of small or "micro" businesses is of interest in Town and in the surrounding region for its importance in economic development – especially because of changes in where and how people work. Advances in telecommunications technology and the growth of personal computers in the home have meant many more people can – and do – work at home as self-employed contractors and consultants. Results of the Donahue Institute study on Technology Enterprise found that Berkshire County was home to 1,500 Technology Enterprise sole proprietorships, as well as 154 employer firms with an average of eight employees. This contrasts with the 39 per firm average in manufacturing businesses, and the 15 per firm in the average services industry business in Berkshire County.



Self-employment has been increasing at a faster rate than wage and salary employment both regionally and on a national level. Data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis for 1998 for the Berkshire region indicate that proprietorships (both farm and non-farm) represent about 18% of total regional employment, and have increased in number about 2.8% from 1994.

## **II. Goals and Objectives**

In 1998, the Lenox Selectmen adopted the following policy statement:

*A prime objective of the Town of Lenox is the protection and appreciation of the businesses now existing in Lenox. Fostering the growth of Lenox's current businesses is a primary concern of the town, including efforts to remove the seasonality from Lenox's tourist season.*

*In addition, Lenox seeks to attract businesses and concerns to the town which are in keeping with the historic, cultural, rural, and artistic characteristics of the town. Toward this end, the town is committed to implement procedures and policies which will facilitate the establishment of such new businesses and will ease their location or relocation process.*

Few residents wish to see radical changes in Lenox. Specifically, residents generally favor minimizing environmental impact and balancing community needs when considering and planning new developments. The town will seek to take proactive steps in meeting these goals:

- Appropriate reuse within the priority development areas is preferable.
- Provide for community needs while promoting cultural tourism as a vital part of the economy.
- Carefully guide the location and form of new commercial and business clusters.

## **III. Current and On-going Activities**

Lenox intends to continue its efforts to encourage appropriate economic development efforts to meet the needs of the community. Under the CDP process the town worked to promote the reuse of the Lenox Gateway and the Lenox Village as priority economic target areas for future economic growth.

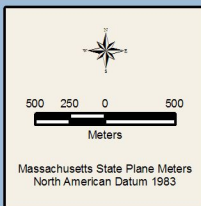
- Lenox continues to work with interested developers to seek ways to encourage the reuse and redevelopment of the land within the Lenox Gateway area. This area consists of appropriately 150 acres of underutilized and vacant land along Route 7&20. Further zoning considerations should be considered to allow for more flexible uses and development patterns.
- Following the creation of the Transportation Management Study in March 2003 (see Transportation Element), the Planning Board, working with members of the Historic District Commission, Select Board, Department of Public Works, Lenox Chamber of Commerce, and Tree Warden participated in a process to build consensus related to the needs and recommended actions for the Village area. The Steering Committee was further divided into two groups in order to work more in depth on two main topic areas. These two sub-categories are:
  1. Traffic and Parking

2. Streetscape design and amenities
  3. Design Review
  4. Economic Development Opportunities
- Based on the work on the sub-committees, the Village Steering Committee developed recommendations aimed to help alleviate growing traffic congestion, encourage improved usage of parking amenities, and create a uniform design for the preservation of the historic village (see Appendix A.6). Also included in this report was a preliminary lighting plan for the installation of historic lamps within the village. Currently, a Sub-Committee of the original Village Steering Committee has been formed to continue forward with the implementation elements identified in this plan. It will be their responsibility to further research and make recommendations to the Select Board, acting through the Town Manager's office, before any action on the implementation elements are conducted.

## **IV. Recommendations**

The Town of Lenox should work to complete the following tasks over the next 3 to 5 years:

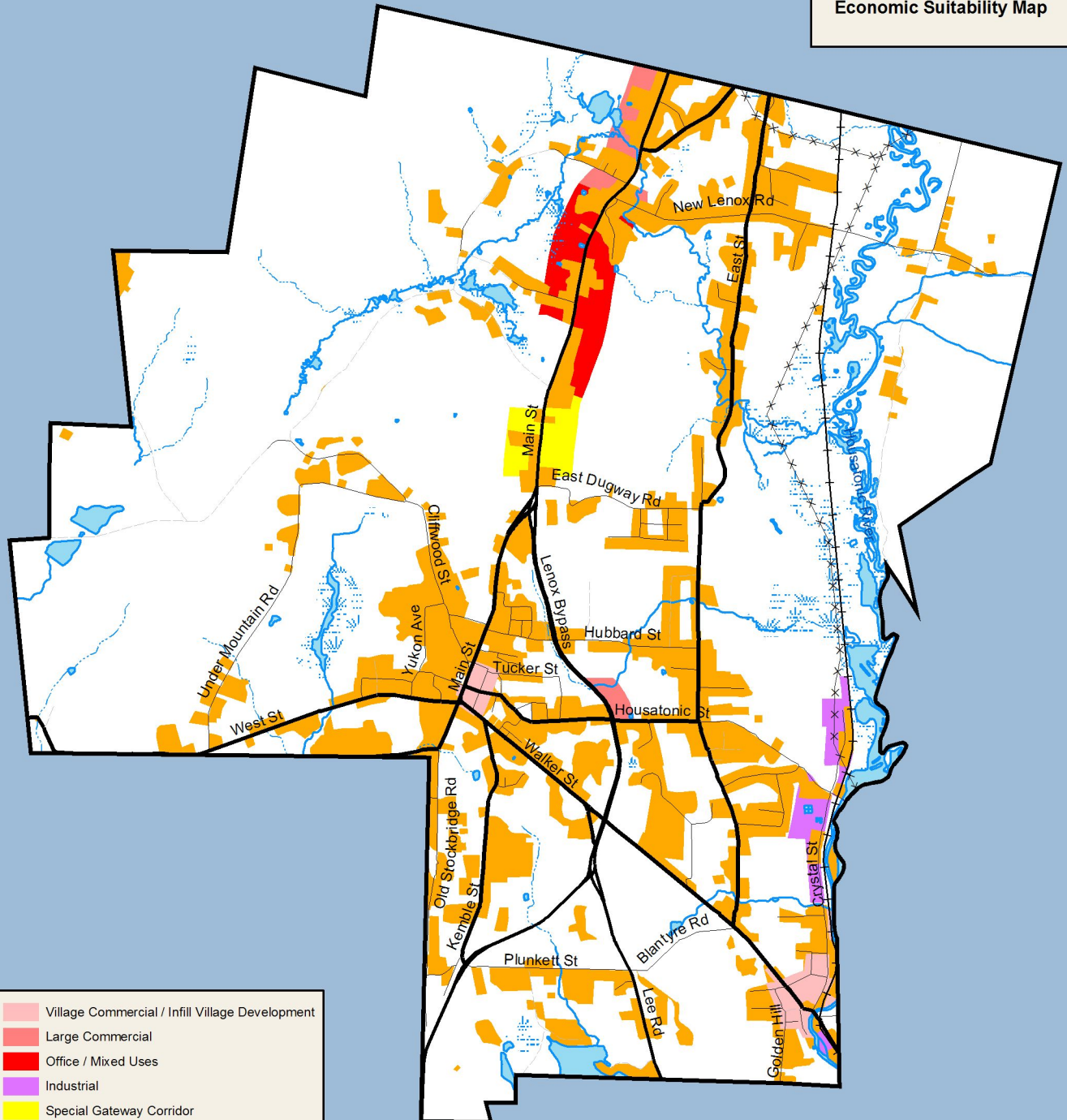
- Implement Village Improvement Plan.  
Continue to work with residents and business owners in the Village to protect and preserve the historic elements of the area as well as provide incentives for continued economic growth to meet the needs of residents and visitors alike.
- Pursue the development of a mixed-use zoning district along the lower district of Routes 7&20 with capacity for additional growth.  
Redevelopment of the area should be consistent with the Lenox Gateway Redevelopment Plan (2002).
- Update zoning and employ corridor access methods to improve overall composition and design of the Route 7&20 upper district area.
- Encourage the reuse and redevelopment of existing commercial and industrial locations in Lenox Dale. Provide adequate resources to continue overall redevelopment of the area.



# Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Economic Suitability Map

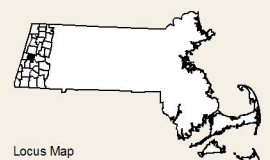


- Village Commercial / Infill Village Development
- Large Commercial
- Office / Mixed Uses
- Industrial
- Special Gateway Corridor
- Developed Land

This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, BRPC or the town provided all of the data layers used to create this map.

This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

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June 28, 2004



# Transportation



## Transportation

Introduction to the Transportation Element  
Downtown Transportation Management Study  
Transportation Action Map

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## **Introduction to the Transportation Element**



Transportation in Lenox is tied to issues of economic development, housing, land use, and community development. Based on the survey and community visioning session held in connection with the development of the Master Plan (2000), residents and business owners' greatest concerns were to maintain a safe flow of traffic throughout town and maintain adequate parking downtown.

The CDP study looked at current conditions for traffic flow and parking in the village, paying particular attention to seasonal influxes and peak transportation demand in response to regional attractions located within close proximity to the Lenox Village. The study also outlined parking standards, improved site design and streetscaping mechanisms for the safety, convenience and attractiveness of the Village while encouraging compatibility with the town's historic context. Overall the study strives to ensure that the Lenox Village will continue to be aesthetically pleasing and functionally sound.

In order to better investigate these issues the town contracted with Clough Harbough and Associates to prepare data and technical analysis for the study area. In the Summer of 2002, Clough Harbour and Associates conducted field observations, data collection and analysis in order to document existing characteristics of the transportation system.



# ***DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT STUDY***

Town of Lenox, Massachusetts

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prepared for:



**Town of Lenox, Massachusetts**  
Board of Selectmen

and

**Berkshire Regional Planning Commission**  
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prepared by:

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CHA Project No. 11439.1001

March 2003



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Clough, Harbour and Associates LLP (CHA) conducted a Downtown Transportation Management Study for the Town of Lenox, Massachusetts under the auspices of the State's Community Development Plan administered by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. This study was conducted to address issues relating to the community's transportation concerns within the downtown area, particularly relating to parking, traffic circulation and pedestrian traffic. The roadways included in this study are Massachusetts State Route 7A (Main Street/Walker Street), Church Street, MA Route 183 (West Street), Sunset Avenue, Franklin Street, Stockbridge Street, Cliffwood Street, and Housatonic Street. This study area is illustrated on Figure 1.

Field observations, data collection and analyses were conducted to document existing characteristics of the transportation system within the Town and included the following information.

- Roadway Features
- Traffic Volumes and Classification
- Speed Limits and Travel Speeds
- Operating Conditions
- Parking Conditions

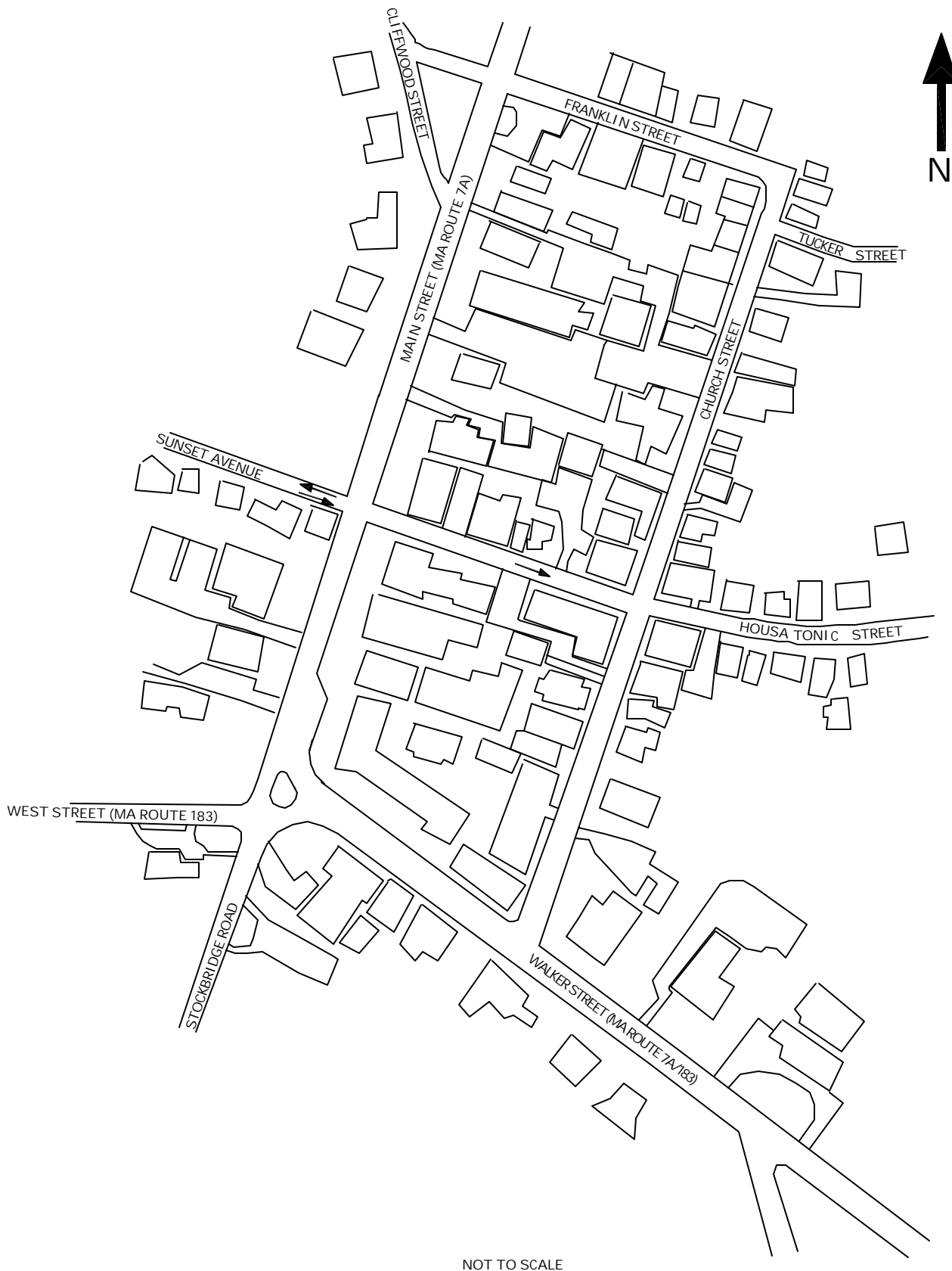
This Technical Memorandum documents the data collected for this study and provides recommendations for improvements to the conditions of the existing transportation system identified during this study.

## 2.0 ROADWAY FEATURES

Field surveys were conducted to identify the general physical characteristics of the roadways, including pavement widths, shoulder width and notable alignment features. This data is summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Roadway Characteristics**

Roadway	Ownership	Pavement Width	Parking Width	Curb Parking	Features
MA Route 7A (Walker Street)	State Highway	24 ft.	8-10 ft.	Both sides	
Church Street	Local Road	22 ft.	8-10 ft.	One side	
Housatonic Street	Local Road	20 ft.	8-10 ft.	Both sides	
MA Route 7A (Main Street)	State Highway	24 ft.	8-10 ft.	Both sides	
MA Route 183 (West Street)	State Highway	24 ft.	---	None	
Sunset Avenue	Local Road	22 ft.	8-10 ft.	Both sides	One way street (east section)
Stockbridge Street	Local Road	24 ft.	---	None	
Cliffwood Street	Local Road	22 ft.	8-10 ft.	One side	
Franklin Street	Local Road	22 ft.	8-10 ft.	One side	



## Downtown Transportation Management Study

Town of Lenox, Massachusetts  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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STUDY AREA

# Figure 1



**CLOUGH, HARBOUR  
& ASSOCIATES LLP**  
ENGINEERS, PLANNERS  
& ARCHITECTS

The street system in the project area is a typical grid layout of two-way streets, with one lane of traffic moving in each direction. Sunset Avenue, however, is a designated one way street (eastbound) between Main Street and Church Street. As shown in Table 1, the travel lanes of the State routes are 12-feet wide, and 10- or 11-feet wide for the local streets. The intersections within the project area are unsignalized, with STOP sign control on the minor streets. The four-way intersection of Church Street, Housatonic Street and Sunset Avenue is controlled by an All-Way STOP condition.

Monument circle is a prominent area landmark located in an island at the junction of Route 7A, Route 183 and Stockbridge Road. Traffic movement around this feature involves numerous points of conflict for vehicle and pedestrian navigation.

### 3.0 TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Traffic count data was collected to identify average daily traffic (ADT), vehicle classification, peak periods of traffic flow, and intersection turning movements in the project area.

#### 3.1 Roadway Traffic Volumes

Traffic volume and classification data was collected on the following streets for a one-week period in August 2002 using Automated Traffic Recorders (ATR): Main Street, Walker Street and Housatonic Street. The locations of the ATR installations are shown on Figure 2. The existing volumes, directional distribution and percent trucks on study area roadways are summarized in Table 2.

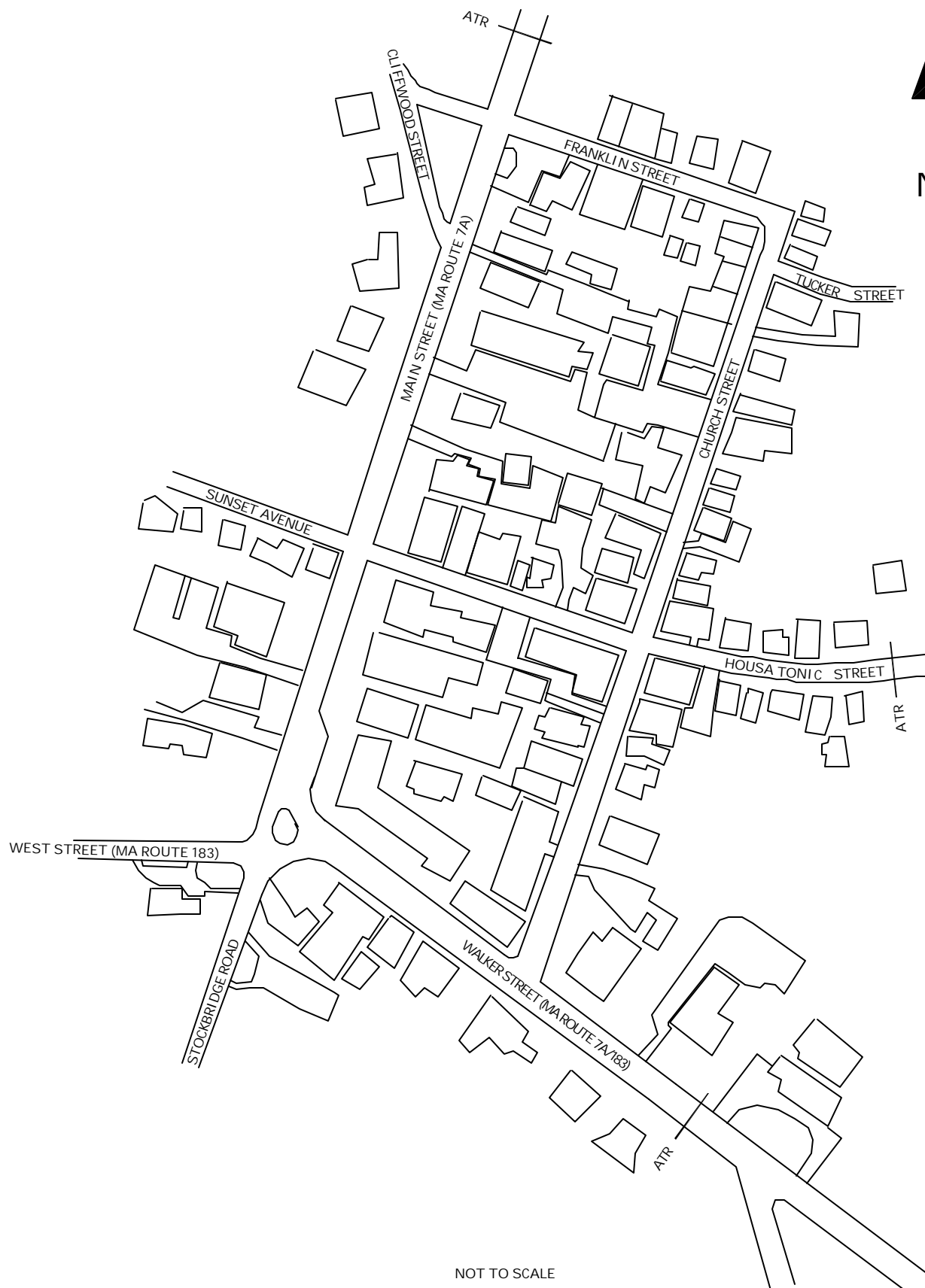
**Table 2**  
**Traffic Volume & Classification**

Roadway	Weekday Average Volume		AM Peak Hour Volume		PM Peak Hour Volume	
	Volume	% Trucks	Volume	Directional Distribution (%)	Volume	Directional Distribution (%)
Main Street (Rte. 7A)	10,680	5%	815	50/50	865	55/45
Walker Street (Rte. 7A)	8,890	6%	670	50/50	695	50/50
Housatonic Street	2,275	3%	210	55/45	180	55/45

#### 3.2 Intersection Traffic Volumes

Manual turning movement counts were conducted during periods of peak traffic flow at the following intersections to document traffic circulation patterns:

- MA Route 7A (Main Street/Walker Street), Stockbridge Street & MA Route 183 (West Street)
- Church Street & MA Route 7A (Walker Street)
- Church Street, Sunset Avenue & Housatonic Street
- MA Route 7A (Main Street), Cliffwood Street & Franklin Street



NOT TO SCALE

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## ATR LOCATIONS

## Figure 2

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The peak periods of traffic flow for this count program were identified from the ATR traffic volume data and in consultation with BRPC staff. This effort identified that the representative periods for study were the weekday midday peak period (11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) and weekday p.m. peak period (3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.). The intersection turning movements were counted in August 2002 during these weekday peak periods. These data indicate that the midday peak hour occurred from noon to 1:00 p.m. and that the p.m. peak hour occurred from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. These peak hour traffic volumes are illustrated on Figure 3.

## 4.0 SPEED LIMITS & TRAVEL SPEEDS

The posted speed limit conditions within the project area were documented from the field review of the project area. These speed limits are summarized in Table 3. Vehicle travel speed data was also collected from the installed ATR devices, in conjunction with the volume data. Statistical summaries of this travel speed data are also included in Table 3.

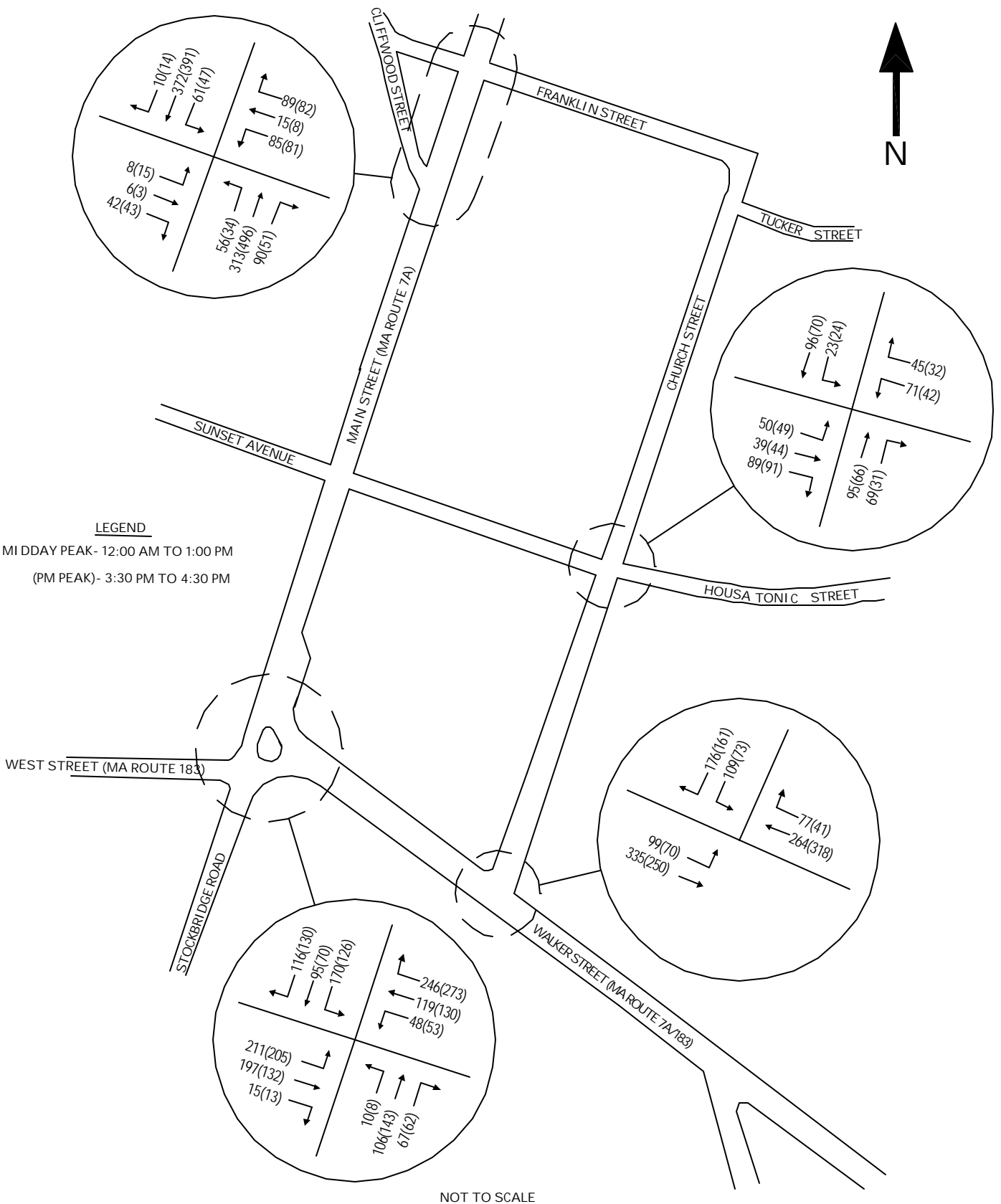
**Table 3**  
**Speed Limits & Travel Speed**

Roadway	Posted Speed Limit	Average Speed	85th Percentile Speed
Main Street	30 mph	31 mph	37 mph
Walker Street	30 mph	23 mph	28 mph
Housatonic Street	30 mph	33 mph	38 mph

As this data indicates, average travel speeds on the study roadways are generally at the posted speed limit. The 85th percentile speeds represent the speed that 85% of the recorded traffic travels at or below, which is the basis for speed limits. The 85th percentile speed ranges from 2 mph below to 8 mph above the posted speed.

## 5.0 OPERATING CONDITIONS

The operating conditions of transportation facilities are evaluated based on the relationship of traffic volumes to the theoretical capacity of the facility. Various factors affect capacity, including traffic composition, travel speed, roadway geometry, parking and intersection control. The current standards for evaluating capacity and operating conditions are contained in the *Highway Capacity Manual*, which is published by the Transportation Research Board. These procedures provide a qualitative characterization of traffic operations, expressed as Level of Service (LOS). Level of Service designations range from “A” to “F”, with LOS “A” representing an unrestricted, free-flow operating condition and LOS “F” representing congested operations.



## Downtown Transportation Management Study

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## PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUMES EXISTING CONDITIONS

## Figure 3

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The HCM methodologies for analyzing unsignalized intersections are based on the principle that the major street through and right-turn vehicles do not normally experience delay as they travel through the intersection, as these movements are not in conflict with other vehicular movements. Capacity and delay determinations are therefore focused on the operations of conflicting vehicle movements at the intersection (i.e., the movements from the minor street approaches or the left-turns from the major street to the minor street).

Capacity analyses were conducted using the methodologies of the *2000 Highway Capacity Manual* for the following intersections to identify the operating conditions of the street network during the weekday midday and p.m. peak hours:

- MA Route 7A, MA Route 183 & Stockbridge Street
- MA Route 7A (Walker Street) & Church Street
- Church Street, Sunset Avenue & Housatonic Street
- MA Route 7A (Main Street), Franklin Street & Cliffwood Street

The geometric and traffic control conditions and level of service analyses at each of these locations are described in the following subsections. The level of service analyses are also summarized in Table 3 at the end of this section.

### ***5.1 MA Route 7A, MA Route 183 & Stockbridge Street Intersection***

The configuration of this intersection around the Town Monument creates multiple conflict areas for traffic circulating through it. All road sections around the monument allow two-way travel. The Stockbridge Street approach is controlled by STOP signs at several locations within the intersection as it intersects Route 183 and also at Route 7A. The sequential stop conditions required of traffic moving through this intersection contributes to increased motorist delay and an additional risk potential for vehicle crashes.



*Intersection view from Stockbridge Street approach.*

Crosswalks are located across the West Street and Walker Street approaches with accessible sidewalk ramps. There are no designated provisions for pedestrians to cross Stockbridge Street.

Analyses of the weekday peak hour intersection operations indicate that the intersection approaches operate at level of service D or better during both midday and p.m. peak hours, with the exception of the northbound approach of Stockbridge Street to Main Street (approach with queue in the above photo).



This approach operates at level of service F during both peak hours.

During the field data collection, it was observed that vehicles entering the intersection from West Street, and destined to Route 7A northbound, often passed to the right of the monument and then made a left turn onto Main Street. This is an indication that the current intersection may be perceived by some motorists to be a traffic circle or roundabout.



*Intersection view from West Street Approach*

## **5.2 MA Route 7A (Walker Street) & Church Street Intersection**

This intersection is currently controlled by a STOP sign for the Church Street (southbound) approach. The geometry and features at this location are shown in the adjacent photo.

Results of the analysis of the weekday midday and p.m. peak hours indicate that the Church Street approach operates at level of service D during the midday peak hour and level of service C during the p.m. peak hour.



*View of Church Street & Walker Street Intersection looking east*

### 5.3 Church Street, Sunset Avenue & Housatonic Street Intersection

This intersection is currently controlled with stop signs on all four approaches. Sunset Avenue is an eastbound one way street with parking on both sides. Church Street runs north and south and has parking on the southbound side.

Housatonic Street has a mix of parking on both sides and completes the final leg of this intersection. Crosswalks are located on every approach with accessible sidewalk ramp connections.

This intersection currently operates at a level of service A during the weekday midday and p.m. peak hours. This operating condition indicates little impedance to traffic flow through the intersection.

However, there were periods noted during the data collection when delivery trucks would park within the restricted no parking zone along the east side of Church Street for extended periods of time. This practice reduces the available pavement width for moving traffic, creating an alternating one-way movement between northbound and southbound traffic and impeding traffic movement in the area.



*View of Church Street & Sunset Avenue from Housatonic Street*

### 5.4 MA Route 7A, Franklin Street & Cliffwood Street Intersection

Franklin Street and Cliffwood Street are controlled with stop signs at this four-leg intersection. Intersection geometry and features are shown in the photograph at right.

Analysis of the operating conditions at this location indicate that the left-turn movements from Route 7A (Main Street) onto the intersecting streets operate at a level of service A during both the midday and p.m. peak hours.



*View of Franklin Street/Cliffwood Street from Southbound approach of Main Street*

The operating conditions for traffic entering Route 7A from Cliffwood Street operates at level of service C during both these peak hours. The operating conditions for traffic entering Route 7A from Franklin Street operates at a level of service F during both the midday and p.m. peak hours.

**Table 3**  
**Level of Service Summary**

Intersection & Approach	2002 Existing Condition			
	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay
Route 7A (Walker St) & Church St				
Eastbound (Left Turn)	A	8.4	A	8.3
Southbound	D	32.5	C	19.2
Church St, Sunset Ave & Housatonic St				
Eastbound	A	9.2	A	8.6
Westbound	A	8.9	A	8.0
Northbound	A	9.1	A	8.2
Southbound	A	9.1	A	8.5
Rte 7A, Rte 183 & Stockbridge St				
<i>Stockbridge St at Route 183</i>				
Eastbound (Left Turn)	A	8.0	A	8.0
Westbound (Left Turn)	A	7.8	A	7.6
Northbound	F	53.9	F	58.4
Southbound	D	32.0	C	21.0
<i>Stockbridge St at Route 7A</i>				
Northbound (Left Turn)	D	30.3	D	33.1
<i>Route 183 at Route 7A</i>				
Westbound (Left Turn)	A	8.0	A	7.9
Northbound (Right Turn)	B	11.4	B	10.2
Route 7A (Main St), Franklin St & Cliffwood St				
Eastbound	C	17.2	C	22.8
Westbound	F	71.3	F	90.9
Northbound (Left Turn)	A	8.4	A	8.3
Southbound (Left Turn)	A	8.5	A	8.9

LOS = "Level of Service"

Delay = Average Control Delay (seconds per vehicle)

## 6.0 PARKING CONDITIONS

Parking facilities within the project study area were inventoried to determine the characteristics of the available on-street and off-street parking supply. From this inventory, 290 on-street parking spaces were identified, including 9 designated ADA spaces. Of this total, 181 spaces have a two-hour parking limitation from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and 3 spaces have a 15-minute limit. These parking spaces are located at the core of the commercial area. The on-street parking along Cliffwood Street, Main Street north of Franklin, and Housatonic Street east of Church Street do not have time limitations. These general parking conditions are illustrated on Figure 4, found at the end of Section 6.1.

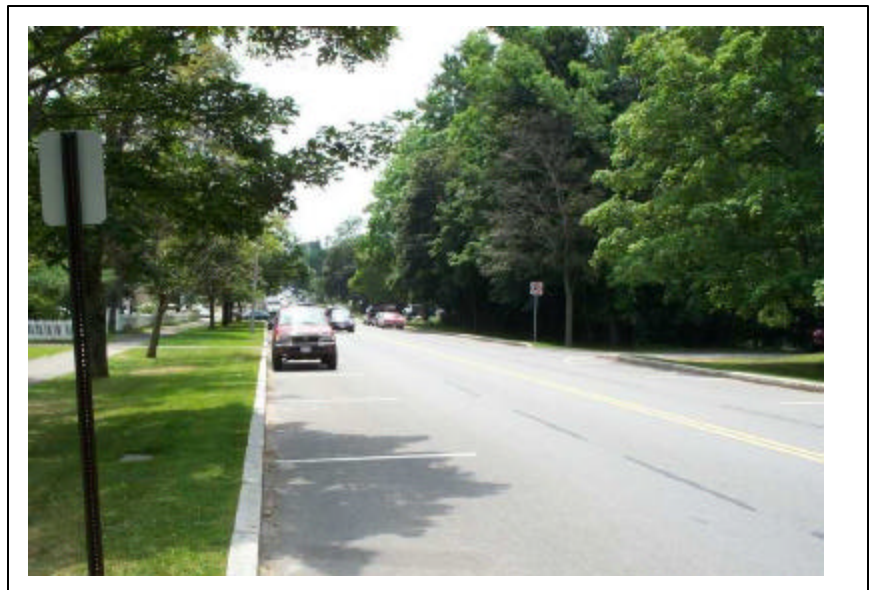
A review of the public and private off-street parking facilities indicates that 496 parking spaces are located within the project area, including 10 ADA spaces. There are three public parking lots within this area, having a combined capacity of 88 spaces (including 3 ADA spaces). These public facilities are located around the periphery of the study area. The remainder of the parking is privately owned for patron and/or tenant use. The locations of the off-street parking facilities are shown on Figure 5, found at the end of Section 6.2.

A parking utilization study was conducted of the on-street and off-street parking to document the hourly parking utilization characteristics in each area. This study was conducted during a seasonal peak (August) weekday condition, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. During this time period, parking occupancies were sampled at approximate one-hour intervals.

### 6.1 On-Street Parking

On-street parking consists primarily of parallel parking within marked spaces along one or both sides of each street. Angle parking is provided for 9 spaces along the east side of Route 7A at the monument circle and three perpendicular spaces with a 15-minute limitation exist along the east side Route 7A south of Franklin Street.

The survey of parking utilization characteristics within the project area indicates an overall peak occupancy rate of 75 percent, which occurred between noon and 1 p.m. A summary of the parking regulations and occupancy of the on-street spaces are summarized in Table 4. Table 4 also provides a location reference to the parking locations shown previously on Figure 4.



*Looking south along Main Street towards the Lenox Town Center*

#### 6.1.1 Main Street

Parking along this corridor extends from St. Anns Avenue south to the intersection with West Street (MA Route 183). Parking is allowed along both sides of the corridor with a total of 82 parking spaces, comprised of 24 non-restricted spaces, 5 ADA spaces and 53 time-limited spaces.



Results of the utilization study show that parking spaces along this street were generally available throughout the duration of the study. The overall average observed occupancy rate was 65 percent. However, higher utilizations were recorded in the parking nearest the commercial core, particularly on the east side of the street. As indicated by the data in Table 4, the average hourly occupancy on the east side of Main Street, between Walker Street and Franklin Street, ranged from 70% to 90%. Occupancy on the west side of the street in the same blocks ranged from 35% to 55% (with one period at 80%). This preference may be attributed to difficulty or reluctance to cross Main Street as a pedestrian.

While not quantified by this study, general observations of parking turnover indicate that parking violation of the posted time limits is also a factor. Some local business-owners conveyed a concern that these spaces were being utilized inappropriately by employees of establishments in the project area.

### 6.1.2 Franklin Street

There are 13 designated parking spaces on the north side of Franklin Street, which are posted with a two-hour time limit. Parking is prohibited along the south side of the street.

Results of the utilization study show that parking occupancy ranged from 50% to 90% of the available capacity. Occupancy greater than 75% was recorded for 3 of the 7 sample hours.



*Looking east down Franklin Street.*

General observations made during the study indicate that vehicles parked near Main Street remained there for the duration of the study period, in violation of the two-hour limit. Vehicle turnover on the east end of Franklin Street generally occurred within the two-hour regulation.

### 6.1.3 Cliffwood Street

There are approximately 27 parking spaces provided on the north side and 10 spaces on the south side of this street. The sections of Cliffwood Street that are adjacent to the park are posted with No Parking Anytime signs. The land use in this area is primarily residential

Parking utilization on Cliffwood Street ranged from 45% to 60% during the duration



*Looking northwest down Cliffwood Street.*

of the study. Vehicle turnover was also minimal, which is likely to be attributed to the residential character of this section of the study area.

#### **6.1.4 Church Street**

Parking on Church Street is provided on the west side, with a two-hour time limit. Parking is not permitted on the east side of the street. There are 38 designated parking spaces on this street.

The properties along Church Street are primarily commercial, consisting of restaurants and specialty retail shops. Parking utilization was generally high throughout the study period, with full occupancy occurring during the period from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.



*Looking south on Church Street*

Vehicle turnover appeared to occur within a two-hour limit with the exception of a few vehicles.

#### **6.1.5 Housatonic Street**

Parking is allowed on both sides of the street with no delineation or regulatory signs. There are approximately 28 spaces provided along this street in the study area.

Parking was generally available on Housatonic Street throughout the study period, with average utilization around 50%. However, during the peak hour of demand, utilization of these spaces exceeded 90% of the supply. Vehicle turnover was not significant, since there are no time limit regulations for parking in this area.



*Looking east toward Housatonic Street.*



### 6.1.6 Walker Street

Parking is provided on both sides of Walker Street (Routes 7A & 183), with 25 spaces designated on each side of the street. These spaces are posted for the two-hour time limit common to the commercial area.

The overall parking utilization generally ranged from 60% to 80% of the available supply. Parking tended to be more utilized on the north side of the street than the south side.



*Looking west on Walker Street.*

### 6.1.7 Sunset Avenue

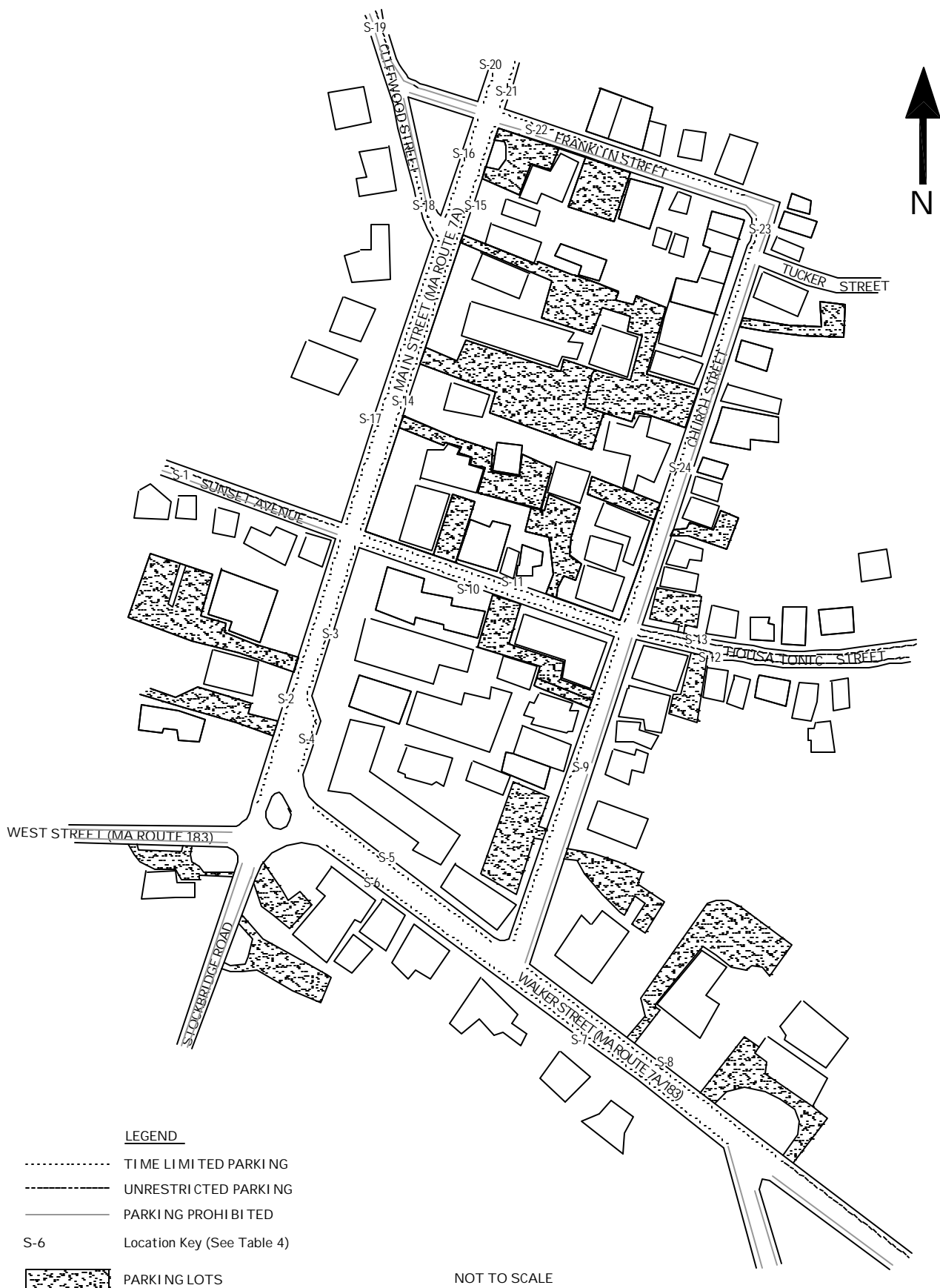
Sunset Avenue extends west from Church Street to Main Street then continues west. This street is designated for one-way traffic in an eastbound direction from Main Street to Church Street; west of Main Street, it is two-way. Parking is provided on both sides of the one-way section and restricted to the north side only west of Main Street.

Parking on the one-way section provides 34 spaces that are regulated by the two-hour parking limit. This section of Sunset Avenue was between 90% and 100% of the capacity during the midday period, and the average overall occupancy was near 80% throughout the study period.



*Eastern section of Sunset Avenue*

Parking on the two-way section west of Main Street has 8 parking spaces. Utilization of these spaces was typically 65% or less throughout the period.



## Downtown Transportation Management Study

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## ON-STREET PARKING LOCATIONS EXISTING CONDITIONS

## Figure 4

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**Table 4**  
**On-Street Parking Hourly Utilization- 10:00 am to 4:00 pm**  
**Town of Lenox, Massachusetts**  
**July 18, 2002**

	STREET	SEGMENT(STREET SIDE)	LOCATION KEY*	PARKING CAPACITY	HOURLY PARKING UTILIZATION						
					10:00am	11:00am	12:00pm	1:00pm	2:00pm	3:00pm	4:00pm
On-Street Parking	Church Street	Sunset Ave to Walker St (West Side)	S-9	17	15	15	15	17	17	18	16
	Church Street	Franklin St to Tucker St (West Side)	S-23	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1
	Church Street	Tucker St to Sunset Ave (West Side)	S-24	19	11	14	20	19	19	13	15
	Cliffwood Street	South of Franklin St (West Side)	S-18	10	5	6	6	7	5	6	6
	Cliffwood Street	North of Franklin St (East Side)	S-19	27	15	15	15	16	11	15	16
	Franklin Street	Main Street to Church Street	S-22	13	7	10	7	10	12	8	6
	Housatonic Street	East of Church St (South Side)	S-12	17	4	9	8	12	14	7	7
	Housatonic Street	East of Church St (North Side)	S-13	11	4	5	5	10	12	7	6
	Main Street (MA Route 7A)	Housatonic St to Walker St (West Side)	S-2								
				7+1 ADA	4	3	5	3	0	1	2
	Main Street (MA Route 7A)	Housatonic St to Walker St (East Side)	S-3	7+1 ADA	6	4	5	6	6	7	6
	Main Street (MA Route 7A)	By Curtis Hotel (Angled, East Side)	S-4	8+1 ADA	8	8	7+1	8	6	8	7
	Main Street (MA Route 7A)	Sunset Ave to Franklin St (East Side)	S-14	11	9+2 illegal	11	11	11	10	10	10
	Main Street (MA Route 7A)	East Side (Angled, 15 minute)	S-15	3	2	1	3	2	1	4	3
	Main Street (MA Route 7A)	Franklin St to Cliffwood St (West Side)	S-16	5+1 ADA	2+1	4	4	3	4	2	3+1 illegal
	Main Street (MA Route 7A)	Sunset Ave to Franklin St. (West Side)	S-17	14+1 ADA	3	6	8	10	8	7	5
	Main Street (MA Route 7A)	North of Franklin St (West Side)	S-20	13	4	6	5	6	6	5	4
	Main Street (MA Route 7A)	North of Franklin St (East Side)	S-21	11	5	7	7	10	7	5	5
	Sunset Avenue	West of Route 7A	S-1	8	5	2	4	5	4	4	4
	Sunset Avenue	Route 7A to Church St (South Side)	S-10	14	10	14	14	10	13	14	11
	Sunset Avenue	Route 7A to Church St (North Side)	S-11	17	10	14	17	14	13	12	10
	Walker Street (MA Route 7A/183)	Main Street to Church St (North Side)	S-5	10	6	5	9	5	8	9	6
	Walker Street (MA Route 7A/183)	Stockbridge Rd to Church St (South Side)	S-6	7+1 ADA	6+1 illegal	5	4	6	4	6	6
	Walker Street (MA Route 7A/183)	East of Church St (South Side)	S-7	17	9	13	8	12	16	11	12
	Walker Street (MA Route 7A/183)	East of Church St (North Side)	S-8	15	9	10	6	10	10	8	9

\* See Figure 4



CHA Proj No. 11439.1001.1303

## **6.2     *Off-Street Parking***

Off street parking is comprised of 21 private lots associated with adjacent businesses, three public lots as well as the Community Center and Police Station lots. The private lots collectively have 386 spaces, including 7 designated ADA spaces; the public lots contain 88 spaces, with 3 of those spaces designated for ADA. The Community Center has 9 spaces and the Police Station has 13 spaces. It is noted that the public lot located in the northwest quadrant of the Church Street & Housatonic Street intersection (25 spaces) is privately owned, with the owner currently allowing general public access.

In general, the off-street parking facilities approached or reached full utilization between the hours of 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. but had reserve capacity during the other hours of the study period. In some instances during the peak accumulation, the parking occupancy exceeded the estimated lot capacity by one or two vehicles. This condition was temporary, with a duration estimated to be between 1 and 2 hours. A summary of the parking capacities and occupancy of the public and private off-street lots are summarized in Table 5. This table also provides location references to the parking locations shown previously on Figure 5.

Vehicle turnover was varied among the lots, largely a result of the types of business conducted. The lots for the specialty retail shops typically had a shorter duration and a higher turnover of spaces (1 hour or less), whereas the typical duration at lots serving dining establishments was typically around 2 hours. The few vehicles that were parked in one location for the duration of the day were attributed to employees of the adjacent establishments.

Exceptions to the general high parking utilization characteristics were associated with parking lots that were either non-retail and or were at the periphery of the project area. Of particular note is the low utilization of the municipal lot located adjacent to the Legacy Bank on the west side of Main Street.

The parking characteristics of this lot and the other public lots are described in the following subsections.

### 6.2.1 Main Street Municipal Lot (at Legacy Bank)

This parking lot is accessed from Main Street through the parking facilities of the Legacy Bank. Throughout the study period from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., this municipal lot never had more than 10 vehicles parked. This lot has a capacity of 38 vehicles, experiencing an average utilization rate of 20%. The peak accumulation of 10 parked vehicles constitutes approximately 25% of the facility's capacity. This was the least utilized of the off-street facilities in the study area.



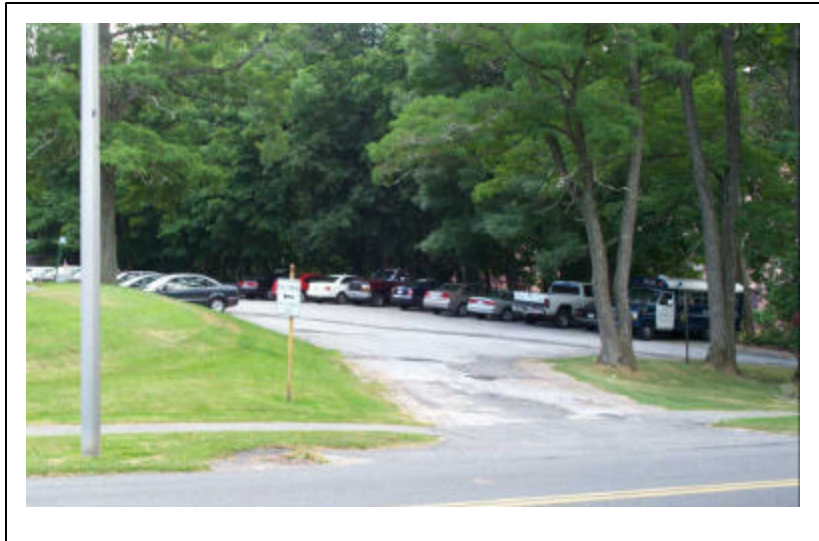
*Municipal Lot Access*



*Municipal Lot Interior View*



### 6.2.2 Stockbridge Street Public Lot (adjacent to Police Station)



*Public Lot next to Police Station*

This 25-space parking lot is located next to the Lenox Police Station and is accessed from Stockbridge Street. This lot is also located at the periphery of the study area. However, unlike the Main Street (Legacy) lot, this facility has a much greater use. The average occupancy of this facility exceeded 90%, with peak occupancy at full capacity.

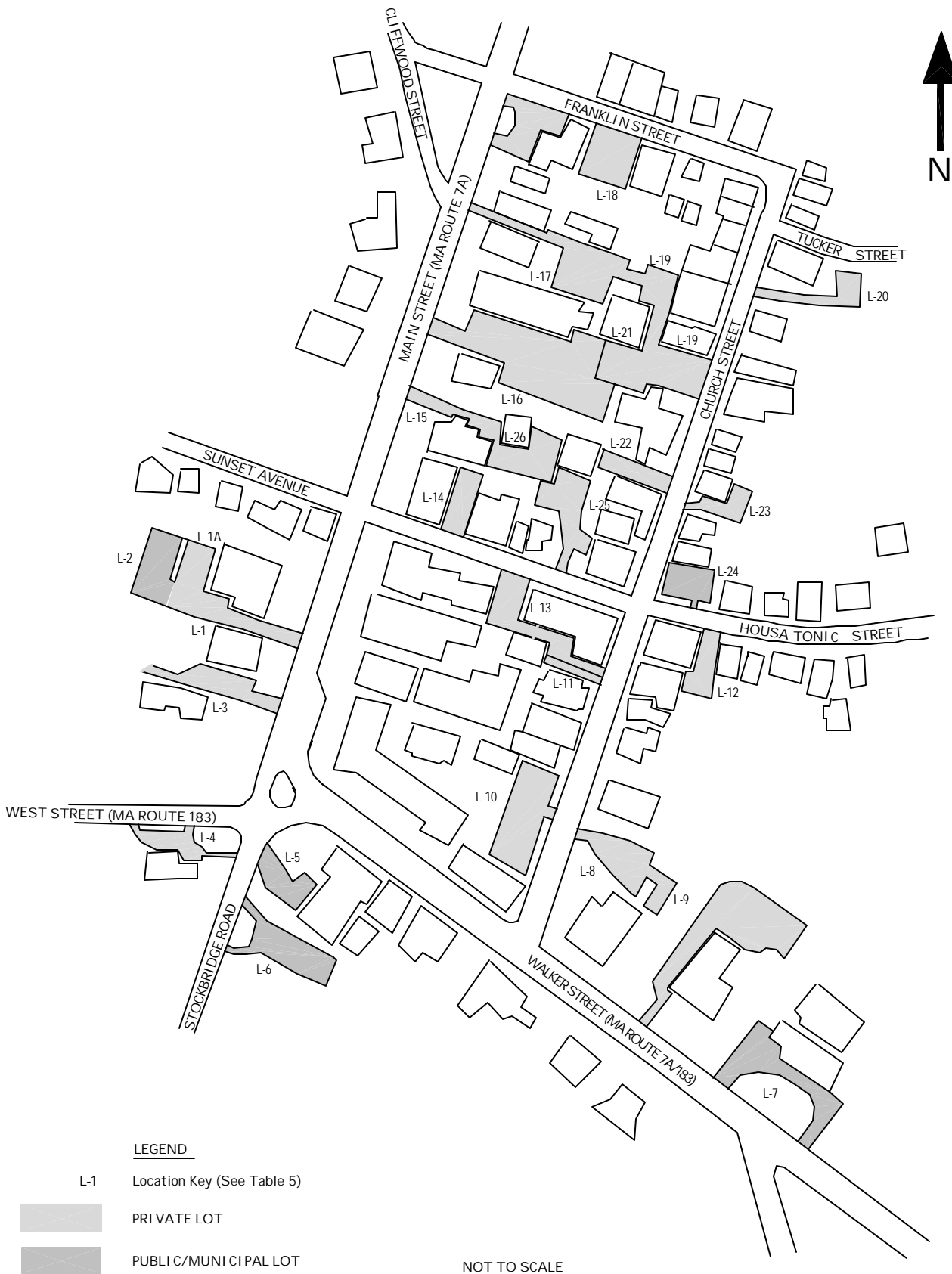
### 6.2.3 Housatonic Street Public Lot (Private Ownership)

This lot is located in the northeast quadrant of the Church Street and Housatonic Street intersection and has a parking capacity of 25 vehicles. Access to the parking lot is located on Housatonic Street. This lot is located strategically adjacent to the core of the commercial area, and had an average utilization rate of approximately 90%. The peak occupancy exceeded the lot's capacity by two vehicles.



*Public Lot Northeast corner of Church & Housatonic Streets.*





## Downtown Transportation Management Study

Town of Lenox, Massachusetts  
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## OFF-STREET PARKING LOT LOCATIONS EXISTING CONDITIONS

# Figure 5

**CHA** GLOUGH, HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES LLP  
PLANNING ENGINEERING & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

**Table 5**  
**Off-Street Parking Hourly Utilization- 10:00 am to 4:00 pm**  
**Town of Lenox, Massachusetts**  
**July 18, 2002**

	LOCATION	LOCATION KEY*	PARKING CAPACITY	HOURLY PARKING UTILIZATION						
				10:00am	11:00am	12:00pm	1:00pm	2:00pm	3:00pm	4:00pm
Off-Street Parking Lots	Legacy Bank Employees (Across from Library)	L-1	7+1 ADA	3	5	5	1	3	2	1
	Legacy Bank Customers	L-1A	18	14	14	12	13	12	12	10
	Municipal Lot (Behind Legacy Bank)	L-2	36+2 ADA	5	6	5	7	9	9	10
	Lenox National Bank (Across from Curtis Hotel)	L-3	8	2	2	4	3	1	5	2
	Offices (SW corner West and Stockbridge Streets)	L-4	12	4	2	5	5	6	3	3
	Police Station	L-5	13	5	4	4	4	6	9	10
	Public Lot (Next to Police Station)	L-6	24+1 ADA	23	23	22	19	22	24	22
	Community Center	L-7	9	9	9	5	5	4	4	3
	Candlelight Inn and Restaurant	L-8	15+1 ADA	5	6	5	6	6	6	9
	Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic	L-9	12	9	7	9	8	10	10	9
	Curtis Hotel Tenant Parking	L-10	26+3 ADA	15+2	16+2	15+3	13+2	15+2	18+2	15+2
	Gallery	L-11	7	5	7	4	6	6	5	5
	Apartments	L-12	12	9	13	14	14	13	14	14
	Ice Cream Shop Lot	L-13	20	12	12	15	16	18	19	18
	Loeb's Food Town	L-14	12	6	8+1 delivery	9	9	10	8	8
	Lenox Coffee Lot	L-15	6	8	7	4	8	6	8	7
	Village Center Lot	L-16	65+1 ADA	49	56+1	60+1 illegal	65	61	47	54
	Sienna Gallery Lot	L-17	19	10	12	13	20+1 illegal	20	13	14
	Berkshire Bagel Lot	L-18	21	11	18	17	20	13	4	5
	69 Church St. Lot	L-19	18	6	8	16	18	16	16	14
	Café Lucia	L-20	17	0	2	2	8	10	4	5
	Café	L-21	19	5	6	17	19	15	7	8
	Wood Shop Lot	L-22	9	5	7	8	7	8	3	6
	Zinc Bistro	L-23	27+1 ADA	9	8	18	25	21	11	7
	Public Lot (NE corner Housatonic & Church Streets)	L-24	25	16	19	24	27	27	17	22
	Matilda's Lot	L-25	13	10	12	11	10	11	7	9
	Gallery	L-26	16	17	17	12	16	12	12	11

\* See Figure 5

## 7.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was conducted to examine issues relating to parking, traffic circulation and operations in the downtown area of the Town of Lenox. Activity in this resort community is at its peak during the summer tourist season. The data collected for this study was conducted in August 2002 in order to evaluate the transportation issues during these peak conditions.

A review of traffic circulation and operations in the study area identified three locations where improvements are recommended to improve traffic conditions and pedestrian accessibility. These locations are as follows:

- MA Route 7A, MA Route 183 and Stockbridge Street intersection
- Church Street and Housatonic Street intersection
- MA Route 7A and Franklin Street intersection

A review of the on-street and off-street parking conditions included a study of on-street and off-street parking supply and utilization. The existing parking supply in the study area includes 290 on-street spaces and 386 off-street spaces. The off-street parking supply includes privately-controlled commercial, restricted and public spaces.

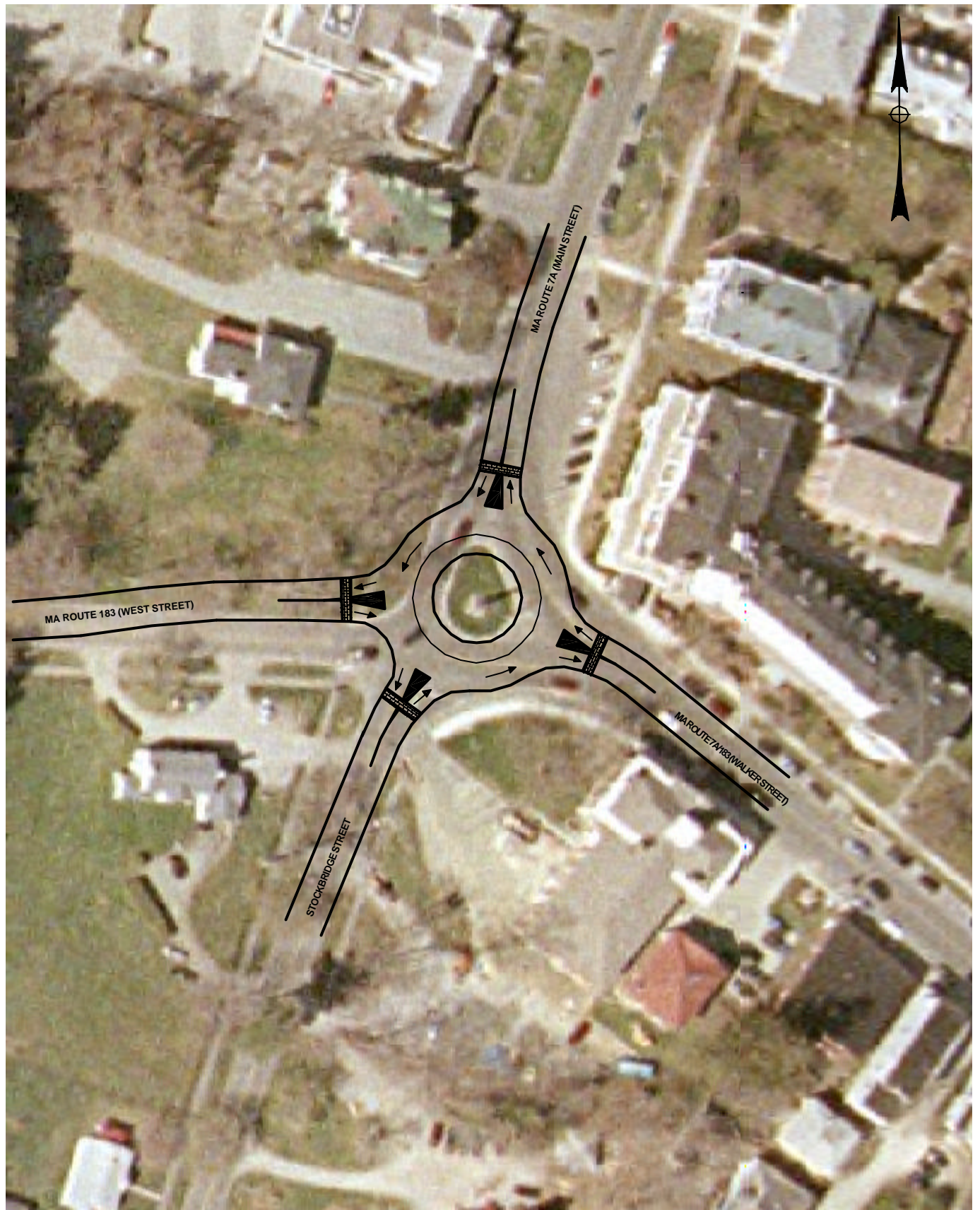
Parking utilization surveys indicated an overall average on-street parking occupancy of 65%. Occupancies of 90% were recorded nearest the core area of activity. There was also a significant difference in utilization around the external boundaries of the study area. While parking occupancy on the east side of Main Street, nearest the commercial uses, was 90%, parking on the other side of Main Street ranged from 35% to 55%.

Parking utilization surveys of the off-street facilities recorded similar characteristics, where the facilities located within the core retail area were at or above capacity while the public lot located adjacent to the Legacy Bank (across Main Street from the retail core) had less than 25% occupancy.

Recommendations to address the identified traffic, pedestrian and parking circulation issues within the study area are described below.

- **Route 7A, Route 183 and Stockbridge Street:** Operations at this complex intersection could be improved by converting this intersection to a modern roundabout. The geometry and operations of a roundabout would significantly reduce the number of vehicle conflict points, which would improve the safety of this intersection. The simplified configuration of the roundabout would also improve operations by reducing vehicle delay. Pedestrian crossings would also be better accommodated with this improvement. This facility can also provide aesthetic enhancement of the monument circle. A concept for creating a roundabout at this location is shown on Figure 6.
- **Church Street and Housatonic Street:** Recognizing the significant pedestrian activity at this intersection, it is recommended that the pedestrian bulb-outs be constructed. The benefits of this improvement include improving pedestrian visibility, reducing pedestrian crossing distance and traffic calming effects produced by the perception by motorists of reduced pavement width. These bulb-outs also maintain sight lines for motorists and pedestrians by defining the limits of on-street parking at the intersection. Figure 7 illustrates a bulb-out treatment at this location.

- **Main Street and Franklin Street:** Traffic delays at this intersection are primarily associated with the left-turn movement of traffic exiting Franklin Street onto Main Street. Because right-turn traffic and left-turn traffic is executed from a shared lane, the right-turn traffic is also subject to this delay. Conditions at this intersection do not warrant the installation of a traffic signal. However, the operations could be improved by restricting on-street parking on the north side of Franklin Street to allow right-turn traffic to move independently of left-turn traffic.
- **On-Street Parking:** It is suggested that existing time limitations of on-street parking be enforced to improve compliance. The recommended goal of this program is to encourage day-long parkers, such as employees, to park in spaces peripheral to the downtown area rather than in premium spaces that could otherwise be used by customers.
- **Municipal Lot Improvements:** It is recommended that the wayfinding signage for this parking facility be improved to guide visitors to its location. This signage should be introduced at key entry areas to the downtown prior to Franklin Street and Church Street. It is also recommended that pedestrian circulation and accessibility between the parking lot and downtown be improved. These recommended improvements include providing a clear pedestrian walkway from the parking lot with signs or other visual cues connecting the municipal lot with the downtown. Pedestrian crossings of Main Street could also be treated with enhanced, textured crosswalks and bulbouts similar to the concept presented in Figure 7 to enhance the pedestrian environment.
- **Private Lot Improvements:** It is recommended that off-street parking lots owned by private commercial establishments be configured to operate as an integrated facility. These improvements would promote improved traffic circulation and increased space utilization. Pedestrian access and circulation can also be enhanced with this improvement. An example of this concept for integrating parking is shown on Figure 8 for the Sienna Gallery, 69 Church Street and Cafe parking areas.



# **Downtown Transportation Management Study**

Town of Lenox, Massachusetts  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

CHA File: 11439.1001.1303

## **ROUNDAABOUT CONCEPT**

ROUTE 7A/ROUTE 183/STOCKBRIDGE ST.

## **Figure 6**



**CLOUGH, HARBOUR  
& ASSOCIATES LLP**  
ENGINEERS, PLANNERS  
& LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS





# **Downtown Transportation Management Study**

Town of Lenox, Massachusetts  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

CHA File: 11439.1001.1303

RECOMMENDED STREETSCAPE  
IMPROVEMENT  
SUNSET AVENUE,  
CHURCH & HOUSATONIC STREETS

## Figure 7

**CHA** BLOUGH, HARBOUR  
& ASSOCIATES LLP  
ENGINEERS, PLANNERS  
& LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS



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**Downtown Transportation  
Management Study**

Town of Lenox, Massachusetts  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

CHA File: 11439.1001.1303

**INTEGRATED OFF-STREET  
PARKING CONCEPT**

69 CHURCH ST./CAFE/SIENNA GALLERY

**Figure 8**

**CHA** BLOUGH, HARBOUR  
& ASSOCIATES LLP  
ENGINEERS, PLANNERS  
& LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

# GIS Mapping

## GIS Mapping

Introduction to GIS Mapping

Introduction to Development Suitability Maps

Base Maps

57

58

## **Introduction to GIS Mapping**

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are quickly becoming a staple of our times. Defined broadly, GIS is a computer-based system “for capture, retrieval, analysis, and display of spatial (locationally defined) data.” The essential elements in this definition for local governments are “spatial” and “analysis”: where are things, why do we want to know about them, and how can our community use this information to make better decisions?

GIS is a system of computer software, hardware, data, and personnel to help manipulate, analyze and present information that is tied to a specific location on the earth. Aspects of GIS include:

***spatial location*** – usually a geographic location

***information*** – visualization of analysis of data

***system*** – linking software, hardware, data

***personnel*** –the key to the power of GIS

GIS applies modern computer graphics and database technology to the efficient, cost-effective management and planning of the local government’s assets. It provides enhanced capabilities for data storage, retrieval, and analysis. GIS does this by linking (1) maps and (2) databases. This marriage lets us easily explore the relationship between (1) location and (2) information.

The real key for small city governments is that GIS quickly integrates *information with location*. Through its use of computer technology, GIS provides a better, faster, easier way for local officials to find answers to questions and carry out analyses based on spatial relationships.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission uses GIS in projects covering almost all aspects of planning. This includes environmental, land use, community development, transportation, economic and housing projects. BRPC uses our GIS for map creation, data development and spatial analysis.

Throughout the Community Development Plan, GIS has been used to create a series of base maps illustrating what is in each community and has allowed community officials to determine where the most suitable locations are for various types of development / preservation. Some communities also used suitability maps to assist them in determine where the best locations for development / preservation were. These suitability maps were created by evaluating the importance of various environmental, housing, economic, and transportation items and plotting the best and worst locations based on the combination of all these factors. The final maps presented throughout the report show the decisions that were arrived at by the community. In this section, the base maps are presented as reference to show what is currently in the town. The descriptions of the mapped items that you will find within these base maps are listed below.

## **Introduction to Development Suitability Maps**

### **Description of Map Attributes:**

#### **Environmental Resources**

##### **Drinking Water**

*Aquifers* – shows medium and high yield aquifers as delineated by USGS Water Resource Division. The original data is from the USGS 1:48,000 hydrologic atlas series on groundwater favorability.

*Interim Wellhead Protection areas* – shows the primary, protected area for PWS groundwater sources in the absence of an approved Zone II. The radius around the well is determined by the pumping rate in GPM of the well. Wellhead protection areas are important for protecting the recharge area around public water supply (PWS) wells.

*Lakes/Ponds Resource Area* – shows a 100 ft. buffer around the lakes and ponds that are on the USGS topographical maps. This buffer shows the area that has an immediate impact of the lakes and ponds.

*Outstanding Resource Water* – shows waters which constitute an outstanding resource as determined by their outstanding socioeconomic, recreational, ecological, and / or aesthetic values and which shall be protected and maintained as determined under Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards of 1995

*Wellhead Protection Zone I* – shows a 400 ft. buffer around public water supply points.

*Wellhead Protection Area Zone II* – shows the primary, protected area for PWS groundwater sources based upon the area of an aquifer which contributes to a well under the most severe pumping and recharge conditions that can realistically be anticipated. Wellhead protection areas are important for protecting the recharge area around public water supply (PWS) wells.

##### *Water Bodies and Protection Areas*

*FEMA 100yr. Floodplain* – shows areas of possible risk associated with flooding. This layer was created by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) from the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM)

*Lakes / Ponds Resource Areas – 100 ft* - shows a 100-foot buffer around lakes and ponds that defines the resource area that contributes to the lake/pond. The lakes and ponds are derived from USGS topo maps.

*River Protection Area – 200 ft.* – Shows a 200-foot buffer delineating the resource area of perennial streams. These areas were created as an addition to the long-standing Wetlands Protection Act. The law establishes protected riverfront areas that extend 200 feet from the mean annual high-water line.

*Surface Water Protection Area Zone A* – shows land between the surface water source and the upper boundary of the bank, the land within a 400 foot lateral distance from the upper boundary of the bank of a Class A surface water source and the land within a 200 foot lateral distance from the upper boundary of the bank of a tributary or associated surface water body. These areas are included in the Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations as Surface Water Supply Protection Zones.

*Surface Water Protection Area Zone B* – shows the land within one-half mile of the upper boundary of the bank of a Class A surface water source or the edge of the watershed, whichever is less. Zone B always included the land area within a 400 ft lateral distance from the upper boundary of the bank of the Class A surface water source. These areas are included in the Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations as Surface Water Supply Protection Zones.

*Wetland Resource Areas* – shows a 100-foot buffer around wetlands that defines the resource area that contributes to the wetland. The wetlands are derived from USGS topographical maps.

*Wetlands* – shows wetlands derived from USGS topographical maps.

### **Soils / Geology**

*Excessively Drained Soils*– shows soils that have too much or too rapid loss of water, either by percolation or by surface flow. The occurrence of internal free water is very rare or very deep. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

*Highly Erodible Soils* – shows soils that are highly susceptible to erosion from wind and/or water. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

*Hydric Soils* – Soils that are wet long enough to periodically produce anaerobic conditions, thereby influencing the growth of plants. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

*Poorly Drained soils*– shows soils that do not lose water very rapidly. The occurrence of free water is common. This layer was derived from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database.

*Scenic Landscapes* – shows areas identified as having distinctive or noteworthy scenic landscapes as part of the Massachusetts Landscape Inventory Project, Department of Environmental Management, 1981.

*Slopes Greater than 15%* - shows slopes that are greater than 15% based on slope information derived from either 3 or 10-meter contours generated by MassGIS

## **Biological**

*Areas of Critical Environmental Concern* – shows the location of areas that have been designated ACECs by the Secretary of Environmental Affairs. This designation requires greater environmental review of certain kinds of proposed development under state agency jurisdiction with the boundary.

*Contiguous Natural Lands* – shows large, contiguous tracts of natural land. “Contiguous” lands are defined to be at least 250 contiguous acres and “Natural” lands are defined based on the land use codes for water, forest, shrubland, pasture and wetland. The data is part of the Massachusetts Resource Identification Project (MRIP).

*Natural Land Riparian Corridors* – shows contiguous natural lands within a 100-meter corridor encompassing perennial streams and river features. These areas within the riparian corridor remain in a “natural state”, potentially functioning as a corridor for select species movement, as well as additional ecological purposes. These data is part of the Massachusetts Resource Identification Project (MRIP).

*NHESP BioMap Core Habitat* - Depicts the most viable habitat for rare species and natural communities. The polygons may consist of many individual species or natural communities.

*NHESP BioMap Supporting Natural Landscapes* – buffers and connects the Core Habitat polygons and identifies large, naturally vegetated blocks that are relatively free from the impact of roads and other development. The quality of undeveloped land considered in the landscape analysis was evaluated based on four major components: natural vegetation patch characteristics, size of relatively road less areas, sub watershed integrity, and contribution to buffering Bore Habitat for plants and exemplary communities.

*NHESP Estimated Habitats of Rare Wildlife* – shows estimations of the habitats of state-protected rare wildlife populations that occur in Resource areas. These habitats are based on rare species records maintained in the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program’s (NHESP) database.

*NHESP Priority Habitats of Rare Species* – shows areas that represent estimations of important state-listed rare species habitats in Massachusetts. These habitats are based in rare species population records maintained in the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program’s (NHESP) database.

*Riparian Corridors* – shows a 100-meter corridor, which encompasses perennial streams and river features. The 100 meter buffer distance is a subjective value derived from existing conservation plans, as well as current literature. The data is part of the Massachusetts Resource Identification Project (MRIP).

*Vernal Pools* – shows a 100-foot buffer around NHESP Certified Vernal Pools. Certified Vernal Pools are protected if they fall under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act Regulations. They also are afforded protection under the state Water Quality



Certification regulations, the state Title 5 regulations, and the Forest Cutting Practices Act regulations.

## **Community**

### **Developed Land**

*Commercial Land* – shows land that is classified as commercial in the most recent land use update.

*Gravel Pits / Mining* - shows land that is classified as Gravel / Mining in the most recent land use update.

*Industrial Land* – shows land that is classified as industrial in the most recent land use update. Industrial land is defined as Industrial, Mining, and Waste Disposal.

*Multi-Family Residential* - shows land that is classified as Multi-Family residential in the most recent land use update.

*Residential Land* – shows land that is classified as residential in the most recent land use update. Residential land is defined as lots smaller than ¼ acre lots, ¼ to ½ acre lots, lots larger than ½ acre, and multi-family lots.

*State Registered Historic Resources* – shows land that is listed with the State Register of Historic Places as being of historical interest.

*Village / Commercial Centers* – an area defined by the community as representing the village or community center.

### **Non-Developed Land**

*Agriculture Land* – shows land classified as agriculture in the most recent land use update. Land that is defined as agriculture is composed of cropland, pasture, and woody perennial.

*Agricultural Preservation Restriction Land* – shows land that is permanently protected as agricultural land due to an APR designation

*Buildable Land* – shows land that was determined to be buildable based upon existing development, protection, and restricted land during the 1999/2000 Buildout Analysis

*Forested Land* – shows land that is classified as forest in the most recent land use update.

*Non-Protected Open Space* – shows land that is classified as open space, but is not permanently protected.

*Partial Constraints* – shows land that is buildable but is limited based on land characteristics, such as slope, wetlands, and proximity to water.

*Protected Open Space* – shows land that is classified as open space and is permanently protected.

*Recreational Resources* – shows land that is classified as recreational in the most recent land use update. Recreational land is defined as Participation Recreation, Spectator Recreation and Water based Recreation.

### **Housing and Population Densities**

*Owner Housing Density* – The percentage of housing that is owned by the resident on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

*Population Density* - The population of the census block on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

*Rental Housing Density* - The percentage of housing that is rented by the resident on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

*Seasonal Housing Density* - The percentage of housing that is seasonal on a per acre basis. The values are derived from the Census 2000 data.

## **Infrastructure**

### **Roads**

*Dirt / Unpaved Roads* – roads that are considered dirt or unpaved based on the latest MassHighway inventory.

*Local Roads* – roads that are considered local roads based on the latest MassHighway inventory.

*Minor Roads* – roads that are considered collectors based on the latest MassHighway inventory.

*Major Roads / Highway Access* – roads that are considered arterials or interstate on the latest MassHighway inventory.

### **Other Transportation**

*Para Transit* – This data layer is only useful for regional analysis. A town that is a member of BRTA receives para transit

*Transit access* – Roads that have existing BRTA bus service.

*Rail Access* – Existing rail lines that are currently used.

Air Access – The area surrounding the airports that are considered part of the airport complex.

Bike Trails –The Ashuwillticook bike trail from Lanesborough/Pittsfield line to downtown Adams.

### **Utilities**

*Public Water* – a line approximating the location of the public water lines. This data was verified by DPW staff during summer of 2001.

*Sewer* – a line approximating the location of the sewer lines. This data was verified by DPW staff during summer of 2001.

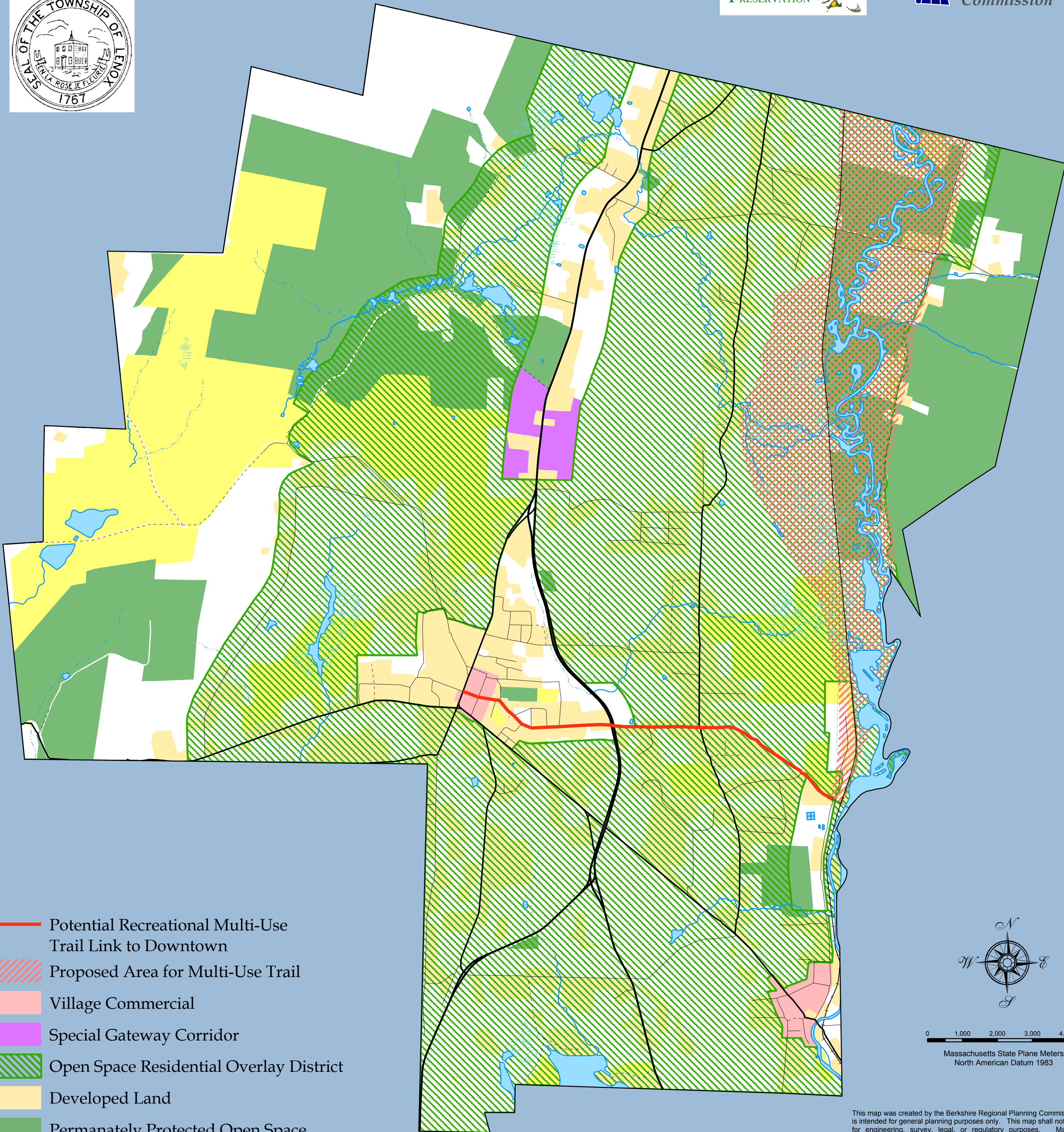
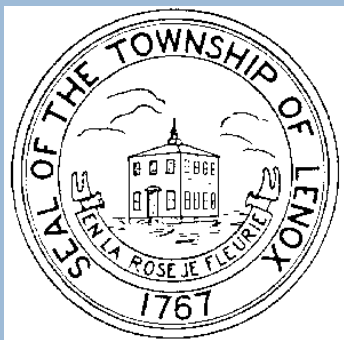
*Solid Waste Facilities* – Compiled by DEP to track the locations of landfills, transfer stations, and combustion facilities.

Bureau of Waste Prevention - Major Facilities – facilities that are regulated by the DEP. These are considered to have the greatest environmental significance. Facilities included are:

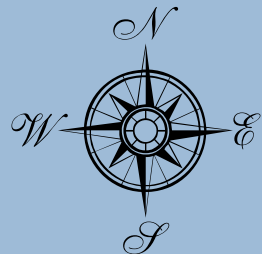
- Large Quantity Generators of Hazardous Waste
- Large Quantity Toxic Users
- Hazardous Waste Recyclers
- Hazardous Waste Treatment, Storage and / or Disposal Facilities
- Facilities with Air Operating Permits
- Facilities with Groundwater Discharge Permits



Community Development Plan  
Land Use Suitability  
Action Map  
*Town of Lenox, Massachusetts*



- Potential Recreational Multi-Use Trail Link to Downtown
- Proposed Area for Multi-Use Trail
- Village Commercial
- Special Gateway Corridor
- Open Space Residential Overlay District
- Developed Land
- Permanately Protected Open Space
- Municipal Land



0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet

Massachusetts State Plane Meters  
North American Datum 1983

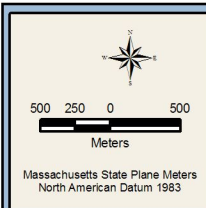
This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, Massachusetts Highway Department, BRPC or the town may have supplied portions of this data.

This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

/cdp/len/projects/actionmap.mxd

June 30, 2004

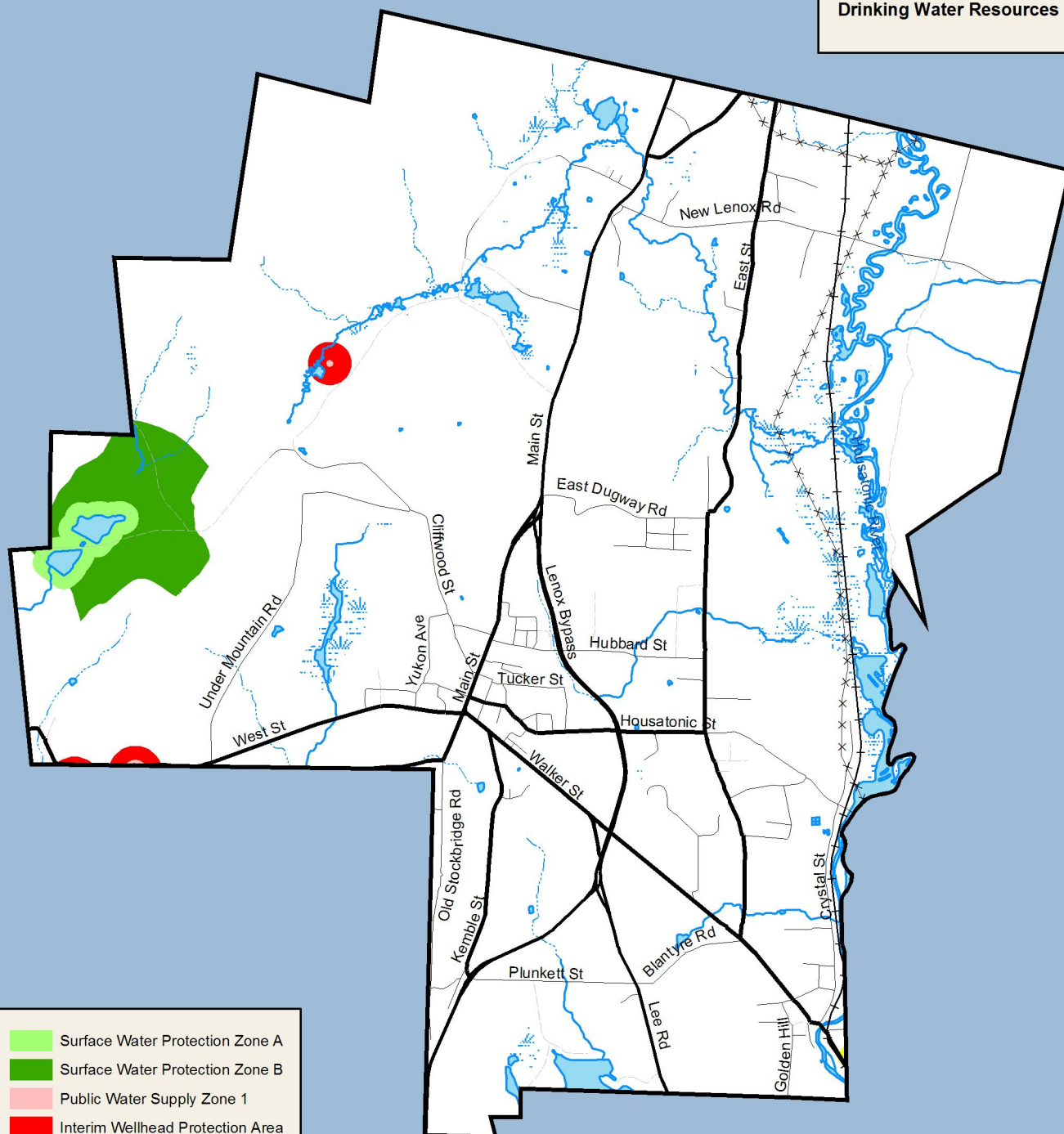




# Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Drinking Water Resources

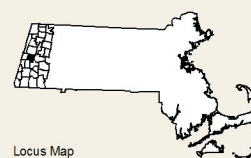


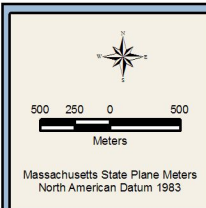
- Surface Water Protection Zone A
- Surface Water Protection Zone B
- Public Water Supply Zone 1
- Interim Wellhead Protection Area
- Medium Yield Aquifer

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/len/projects/drinkingwater.mxd  
January 10, 2002

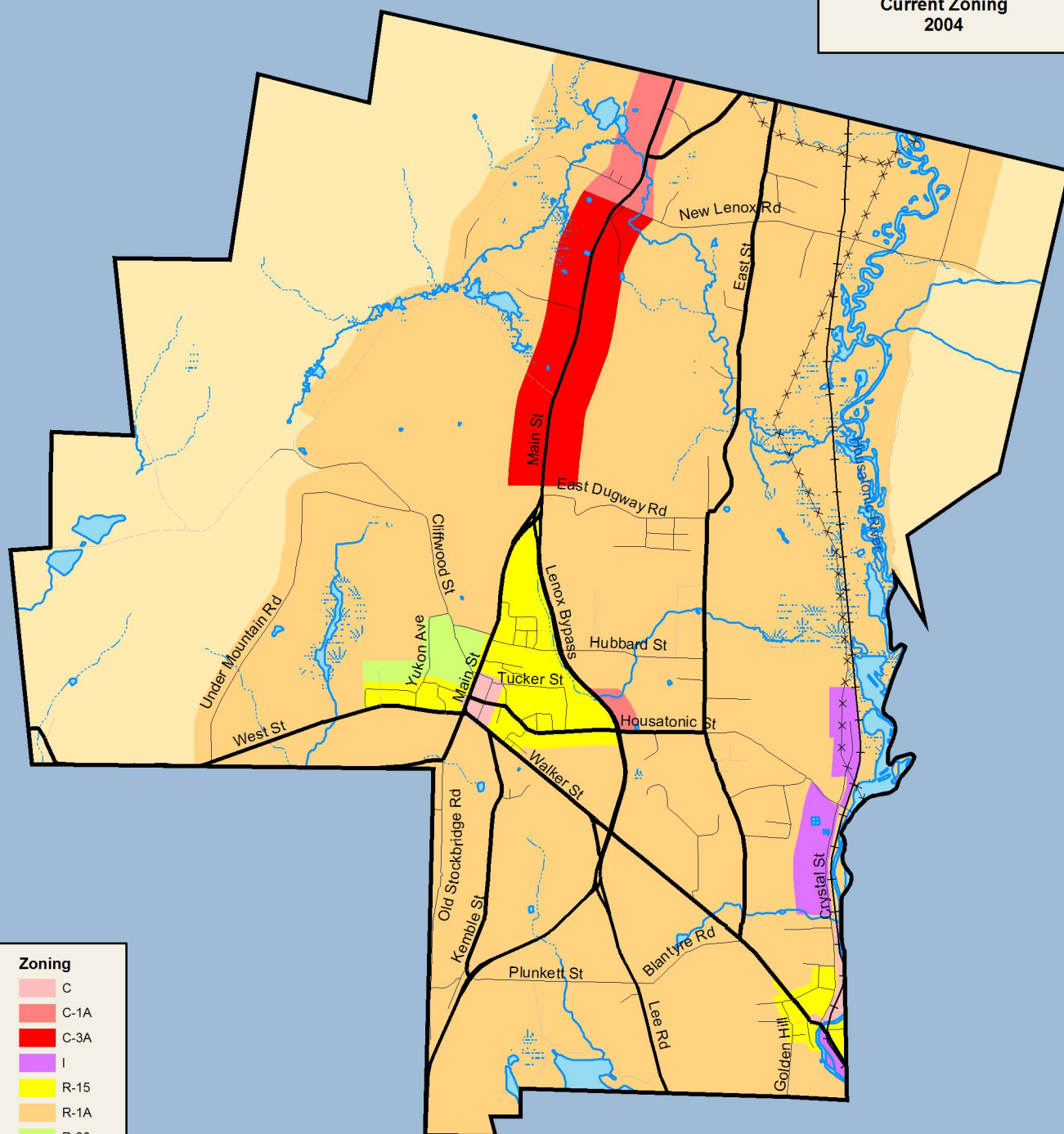




# Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Current Zoning  
2004



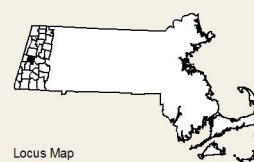
## Zoning

- C
- C-1A
- C-3A
- I
- R-15
- R-1A
- R-30
- R-3A

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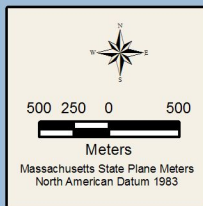
This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

/len/projects/CurrentZoning.mxd  
January 10, 2002



Locus Map

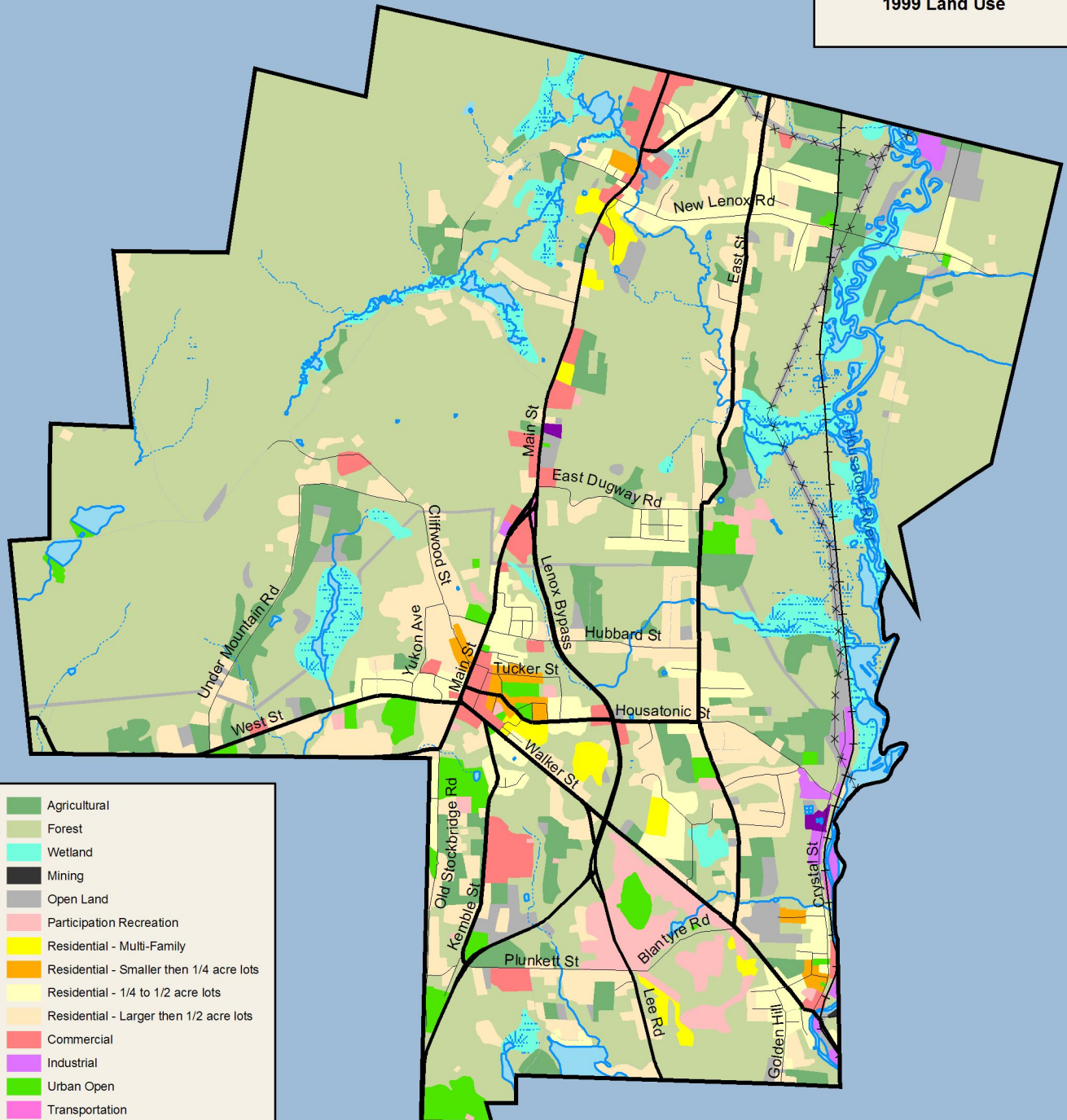




# Town of Lenox

## Community Development Plan

### 1999 Land Use

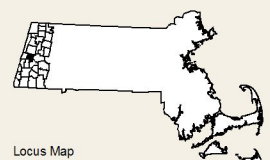


- Agricultural
- Forest
- Wetland
- Mining
- Open Land
- Participation Recreation
- Residential - Multi-Family
- Residential - Smaller than 1/4 acre lots
- Residential - 1/4 to 1/2 acre lots
- Residential - Larger than 1/2 acre lots
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Urban Open
- Transportation
- Waste Disposal
- Water

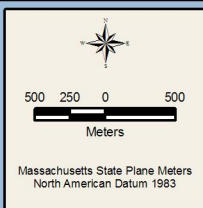
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len/projects/currentlanduse.mxd  
January 10, 2002



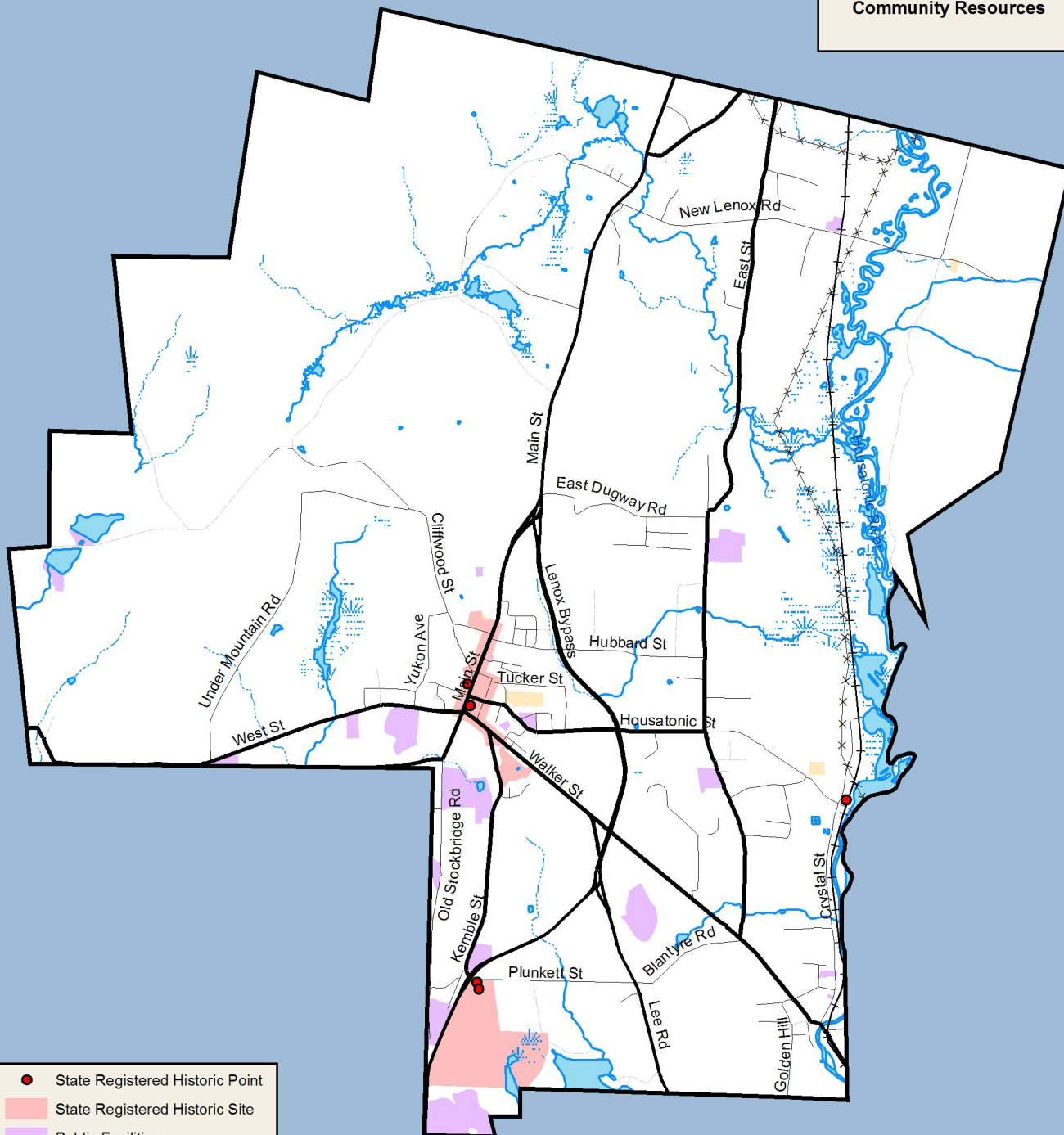
Locus Map



## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Community Resources

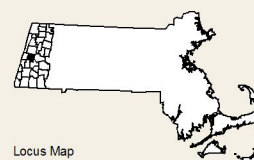


- State Registered Historic Point
- State Registered Historic Site
- Public Facilities
- Cemetaries

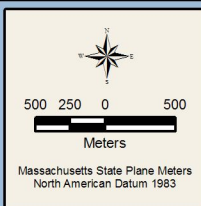
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/len/projects/town.mxd  
January 10, 2002



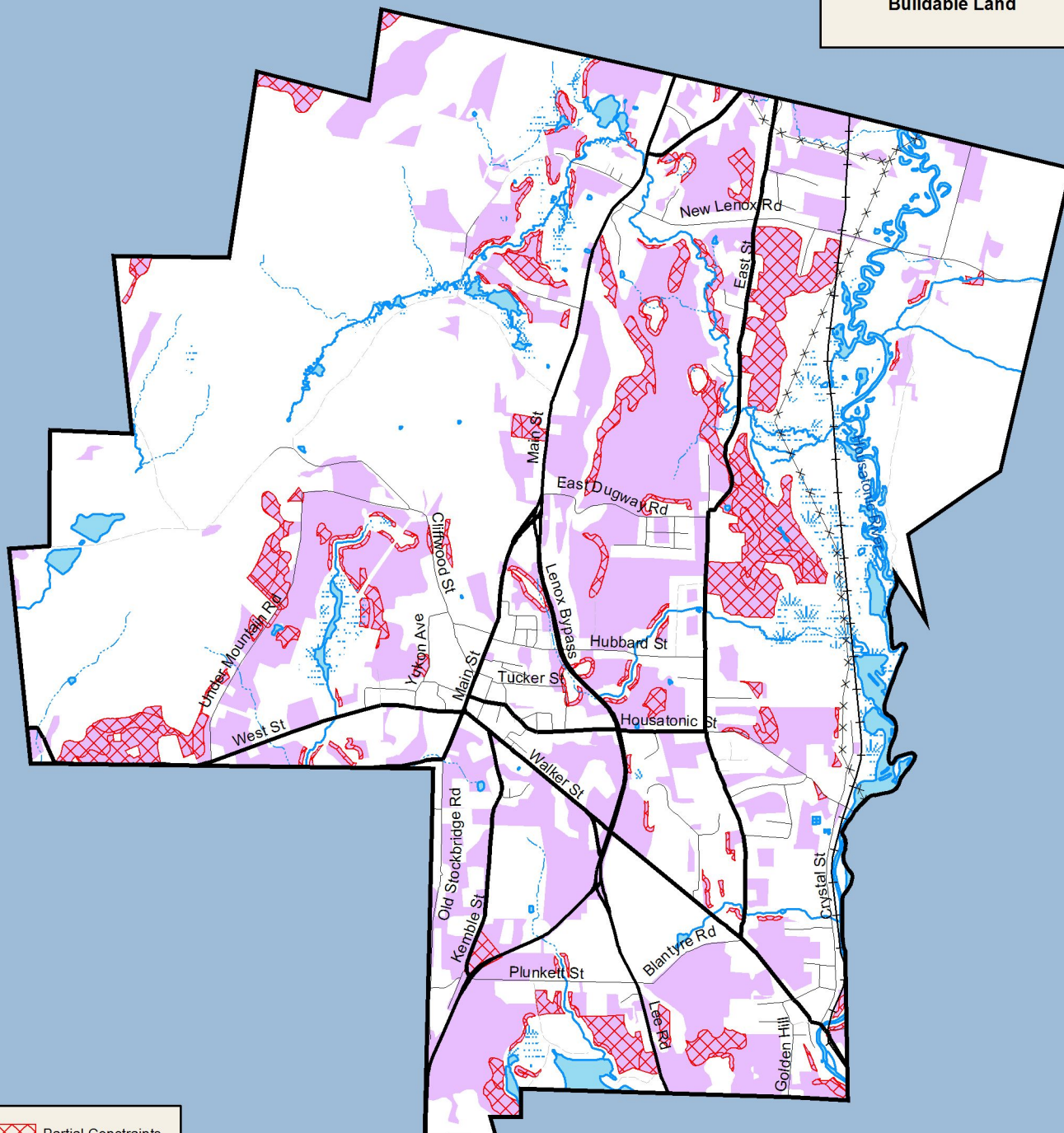




## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

**Buildable Land**

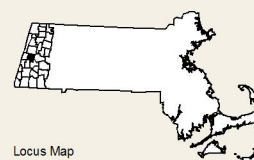


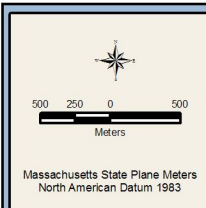
- Partial Constraints
- Buildable Land

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/len/projects/BuildableLand.mxd  
January 10, 2002

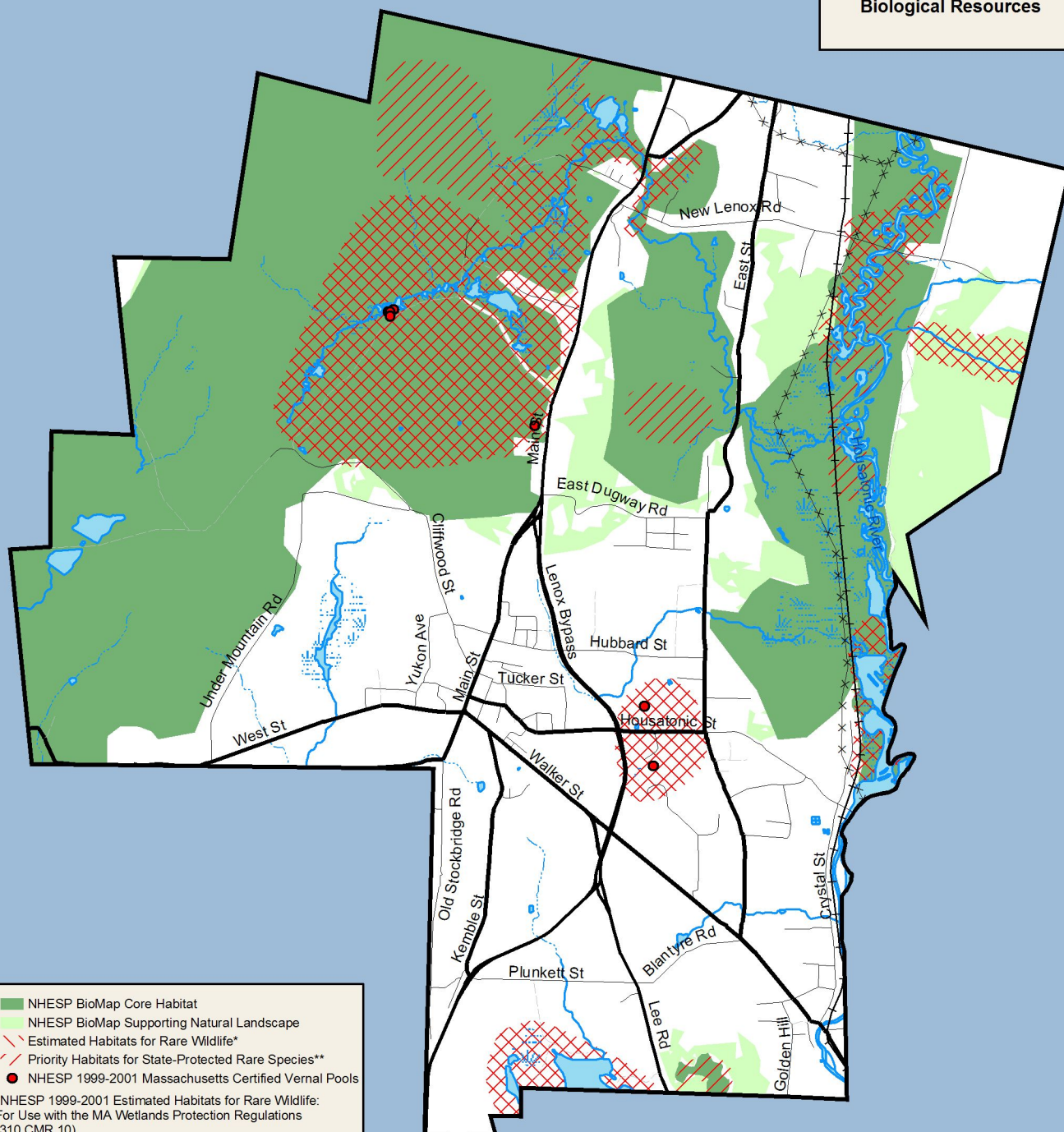




## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Biological Resources



- NHESP BioMap Core Habitat
- NHESP BioMap Supporting Natural Landscape
- ▨ Estimated Habitats for Rare Wildlife\*
- ▨ Priority Habitats for State-Protected Rare Species\*\*
- NHESP 1999-2001 Massachusetts Certified Vernal Pools

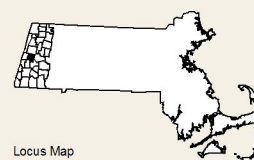
\*NHESP 1999-2001 Estimated Habitats for Rare Wildlife:  
For Use with the MA Wetlands Protection Regulations  
(310 CMR 10).

\*\* NHESP 1999-2001 Priority Habitats for State-Protected  
Rare Species: NOT equivalent to 'Significant Habitat' as  
designated under Massachusetts Endangered Species Act.

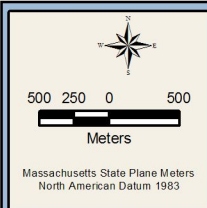
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/len/projects/biological.mxd  
January 10, 2002



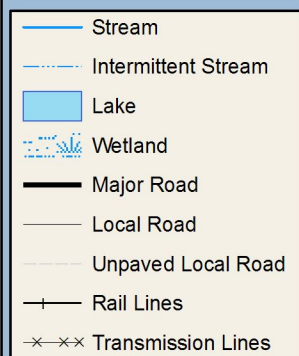
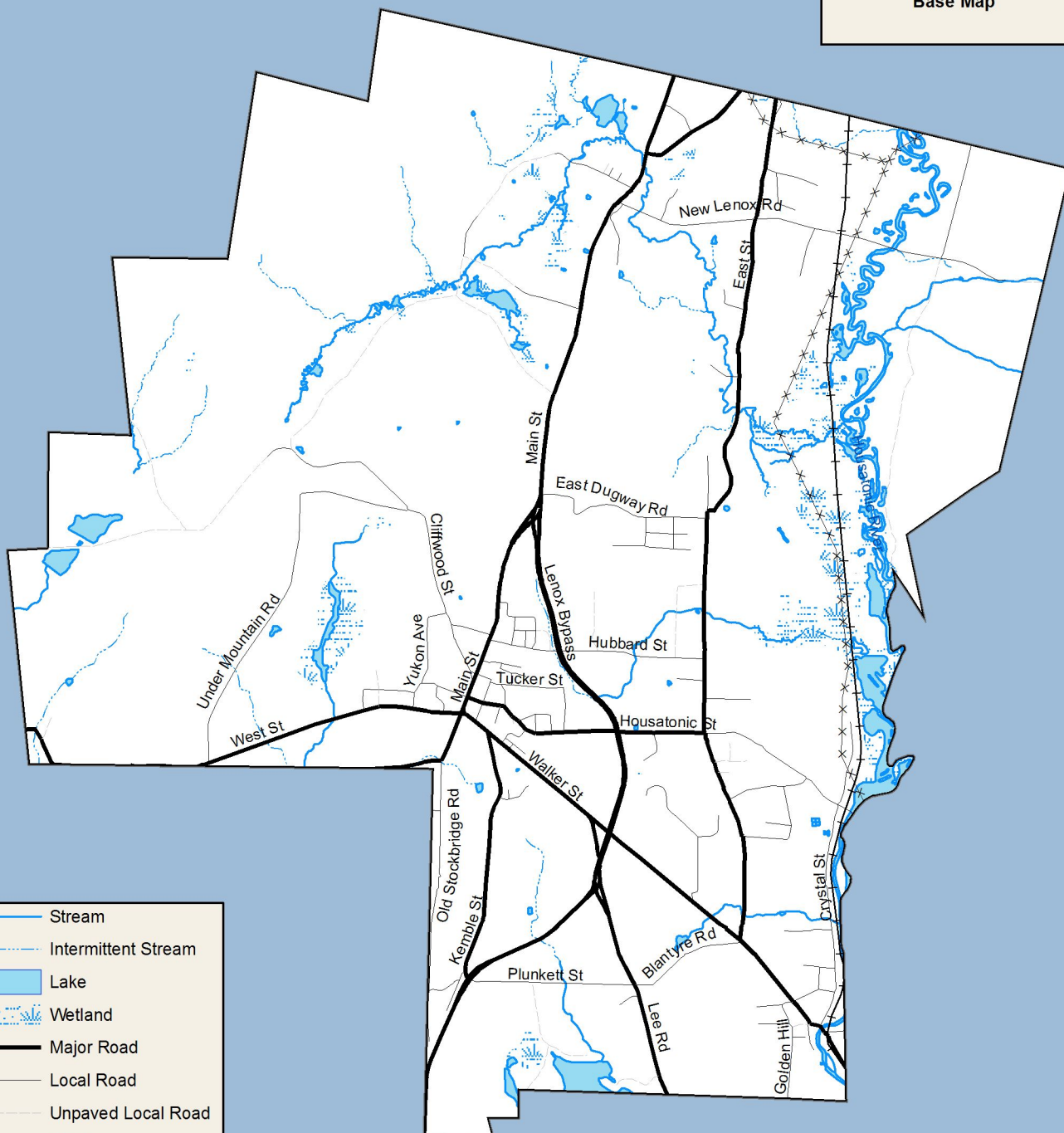




# Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

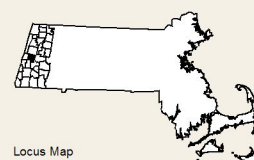
Base Map

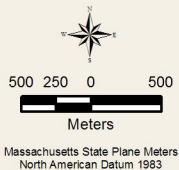


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/len/projects/basemap.mxd  
January 10, 2002

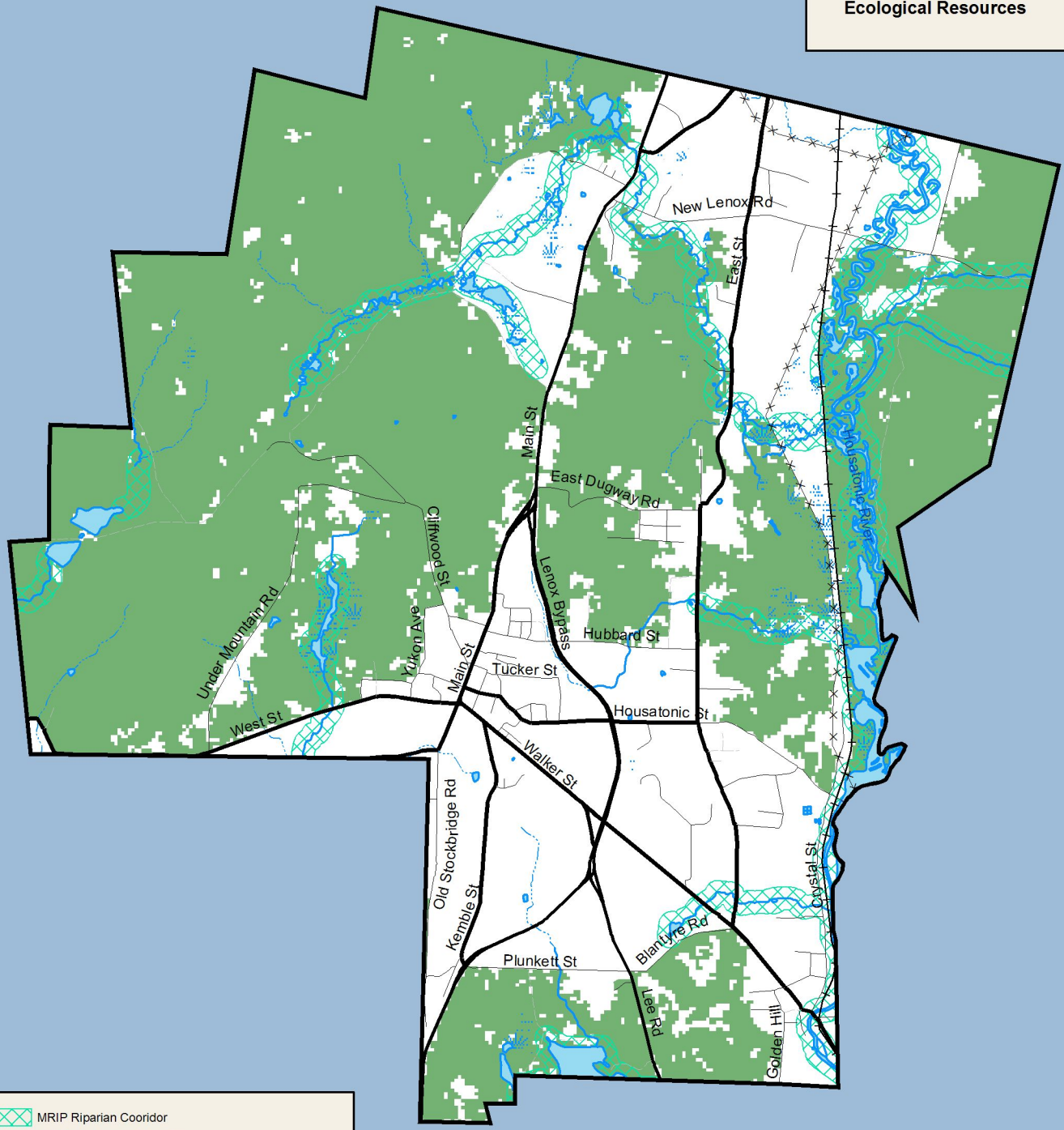






# Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Ecological Resources

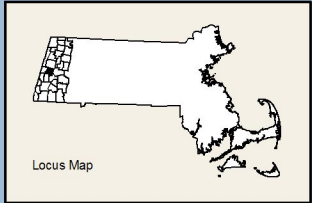


 MRIP Riparian Corridor  
 MRIP Contiguous Natural Land  
MRIP - Massachusetts Resource Identification Program

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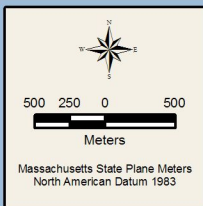
This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

/len/projects/ecological.mxd  
January 10, 2002



Locus Map

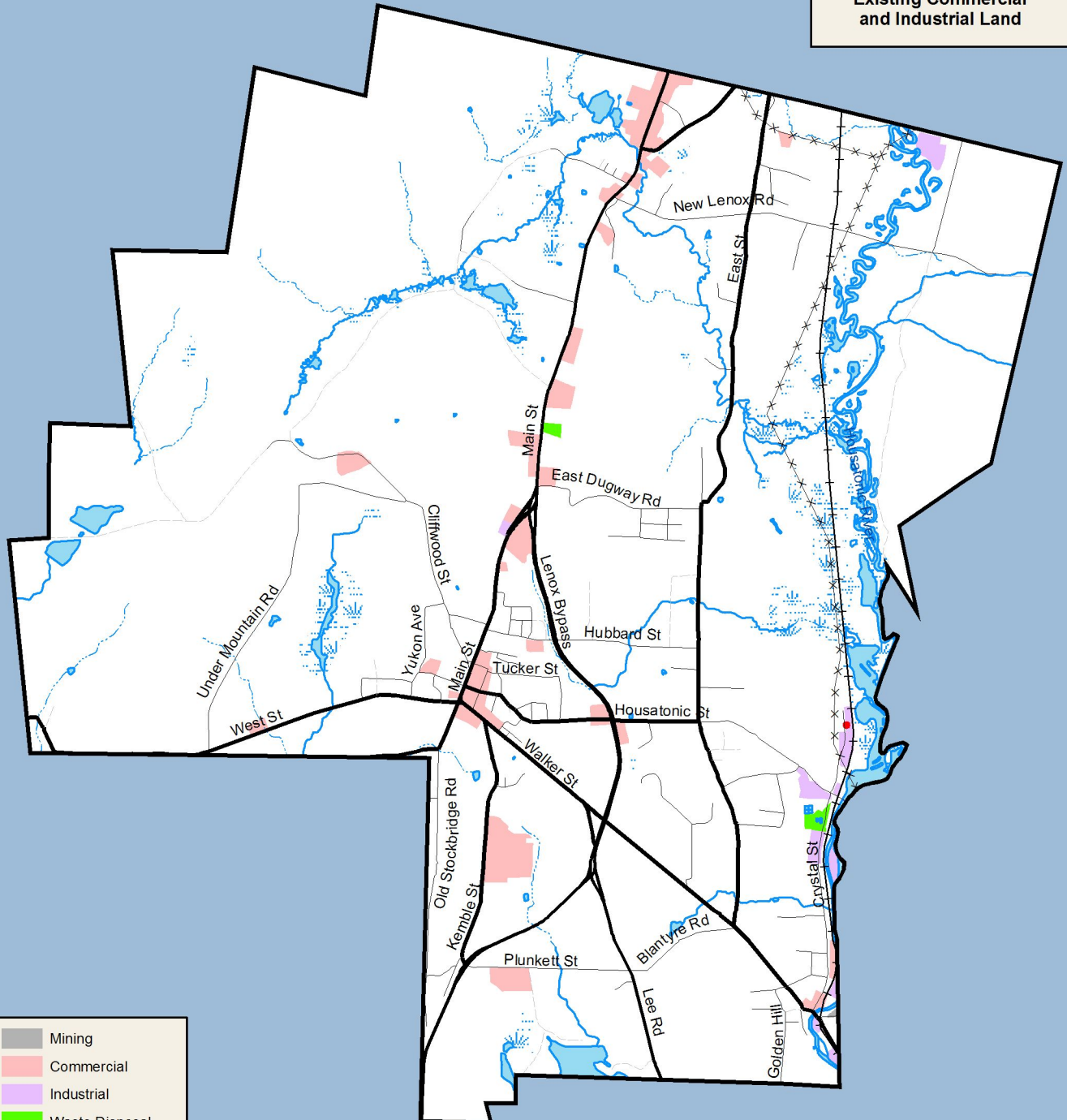




## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Existing Commercial  
and Industrial Land

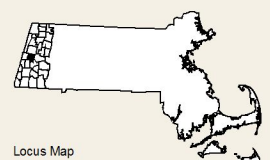


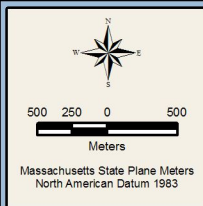
- Mining
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Waste Disposal
- Solid Waste Facility

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./len/projects/existingcommind.mxd  
January 10, 2002

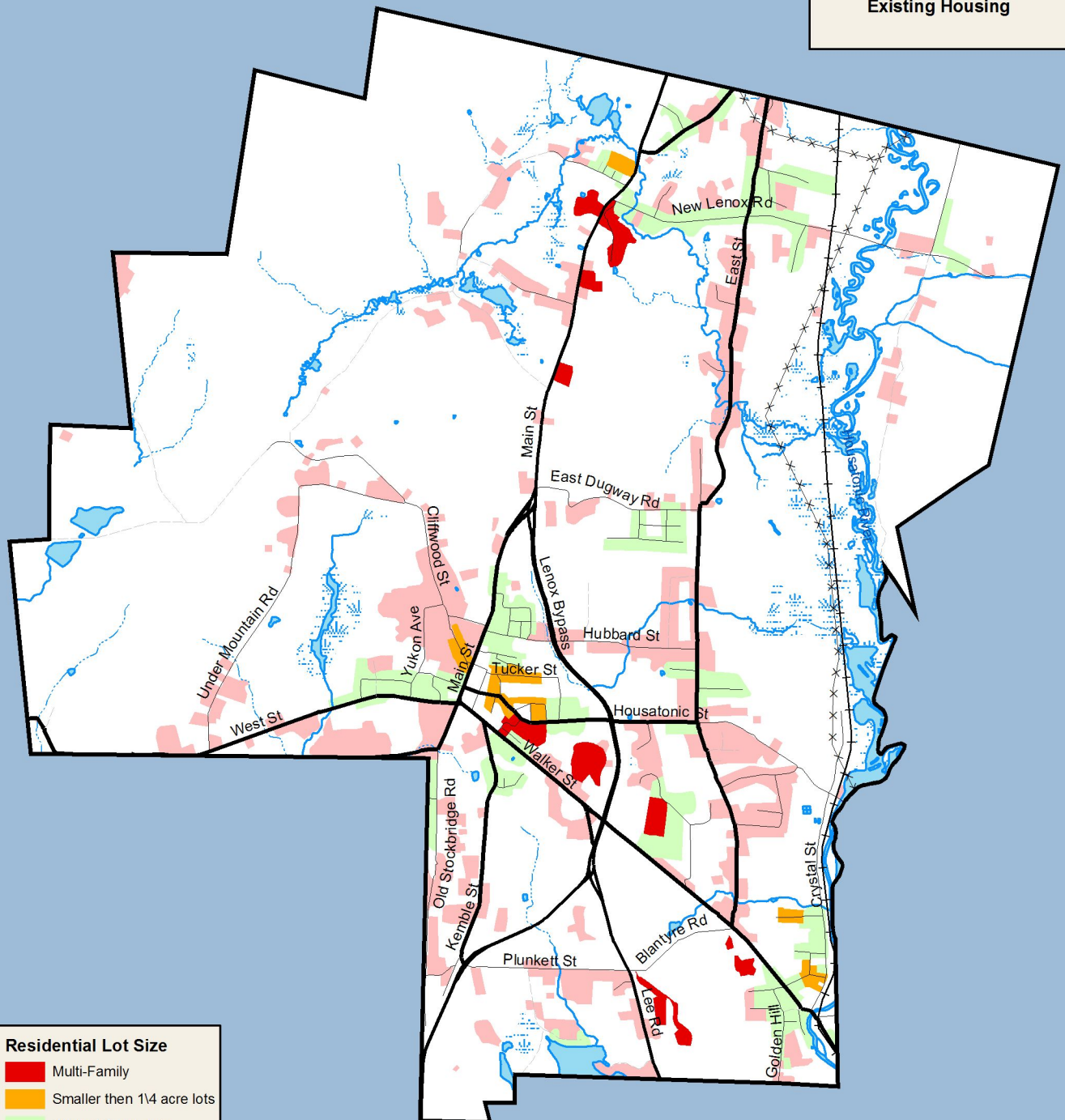




## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Existing Housing



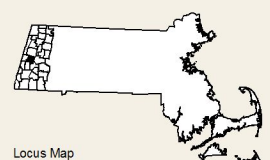
### Residential Lot Size

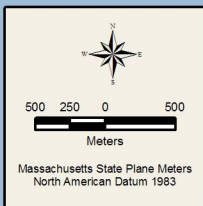
- Multi-Family
- Smaller than 1/4 acre lots
- 1/4 to 1/2 acre lots
- Larger than 1/2 acre lots

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/len/projects/ExistingHousing.mxd  
January 10, 2002

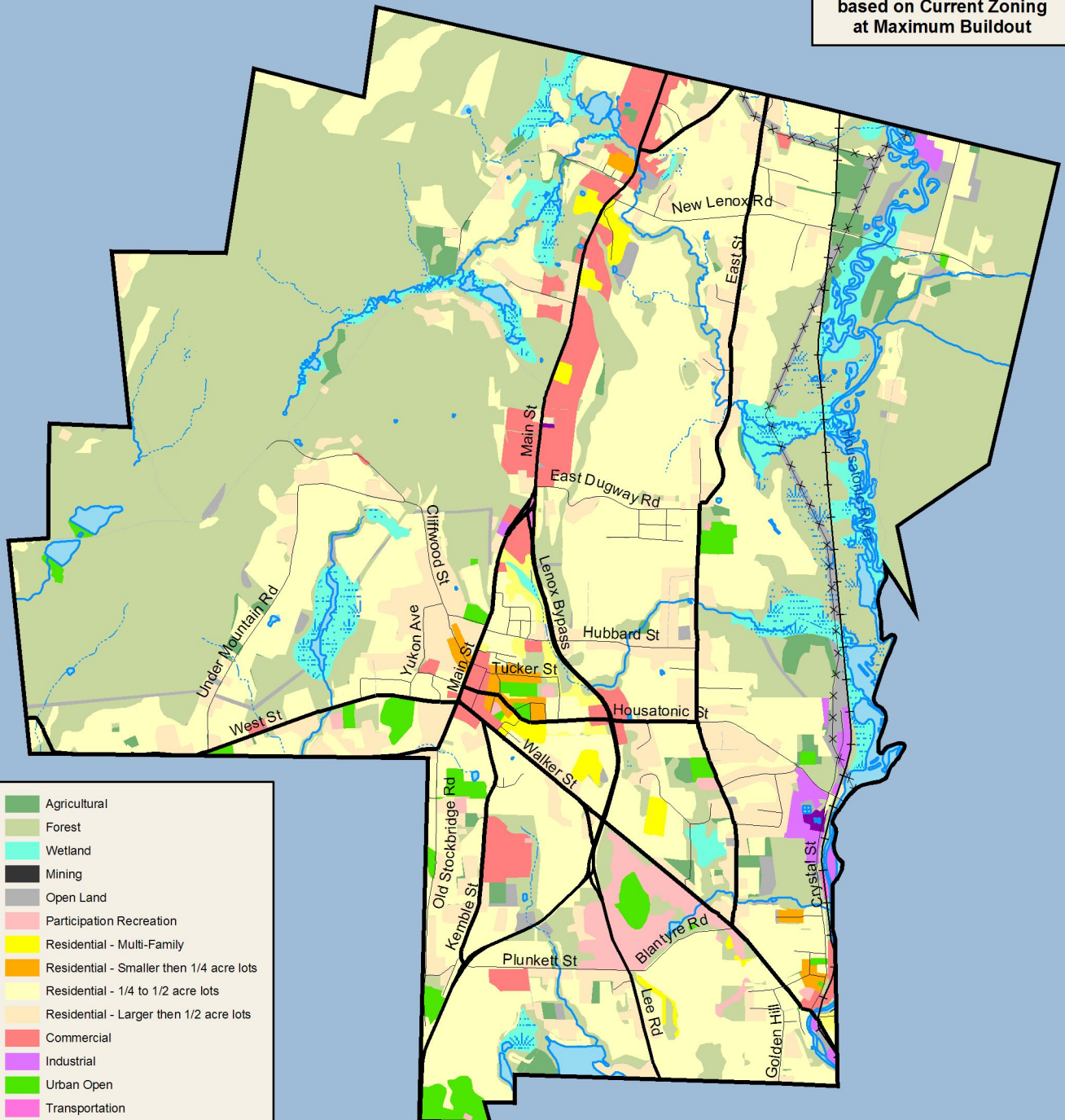




## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Future Land Use  
based on Current Zoning  
at Maximum Buildout

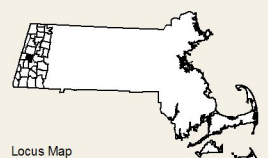


- Agricultural
- Forest
- Wetland
- Mining
- Open Land
- Participation Recreation
- Residential - Multi-Family
- Residential - Smaller than 1/4 acre lots
- Residential - 1/4 to 1/2 acre lots
- Residential - Larger than 1/2 acre lots
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Urban Open
- Transportation
- Waste Disposal
- Water

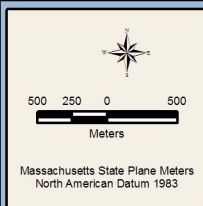
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/len/projects/futurelanduse.mxd  
January 10, 2002



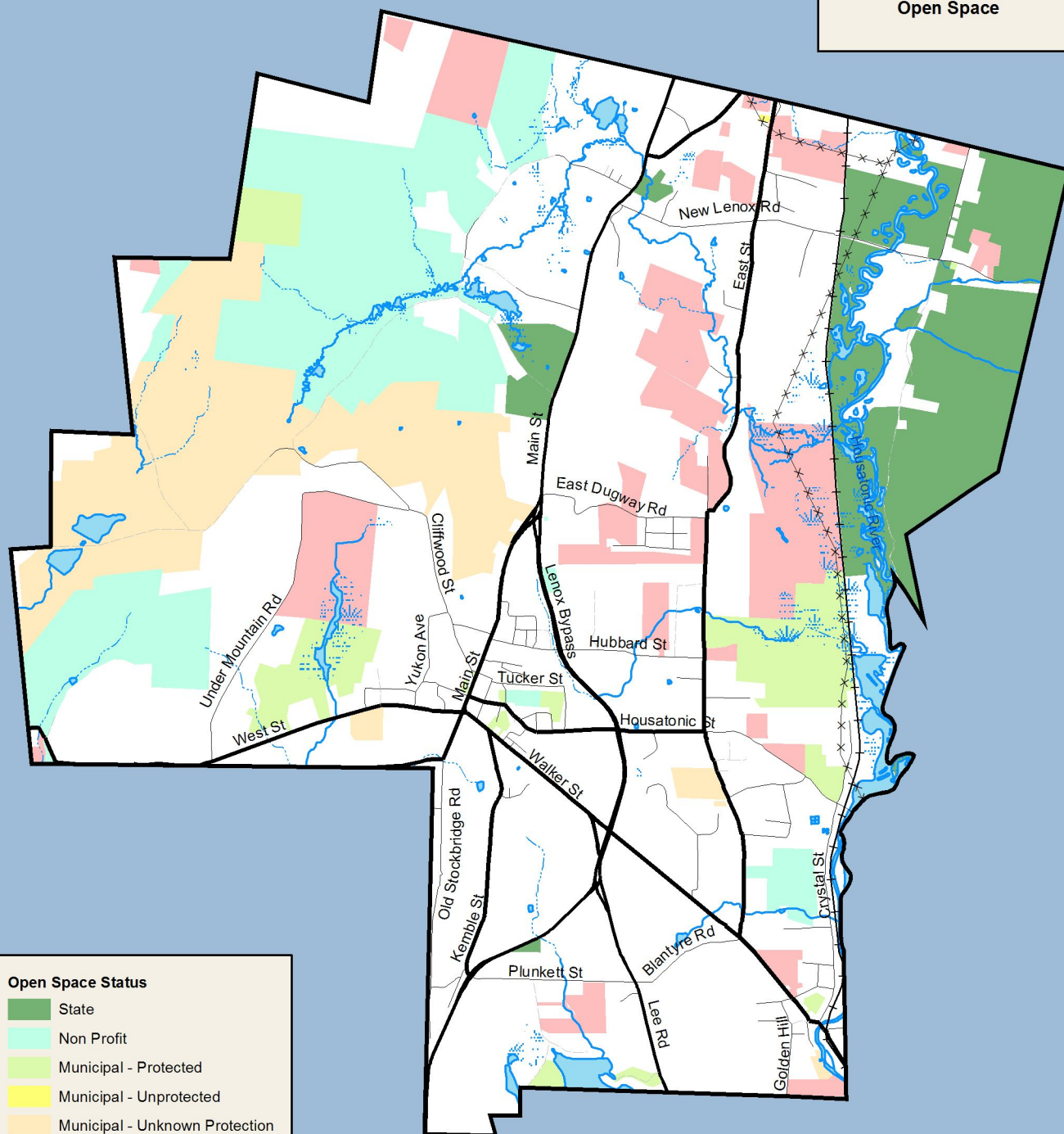




# Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Open Space



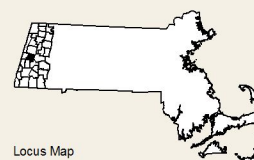
## Open Space Status

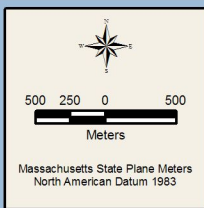
- State
- Non Profit
- Municipal - Protected
- Municipal - Unprotected
- Municipal - Unknown Protection
- Chapter 61

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/len/projects/openspace.mxd  
January 10, 2002

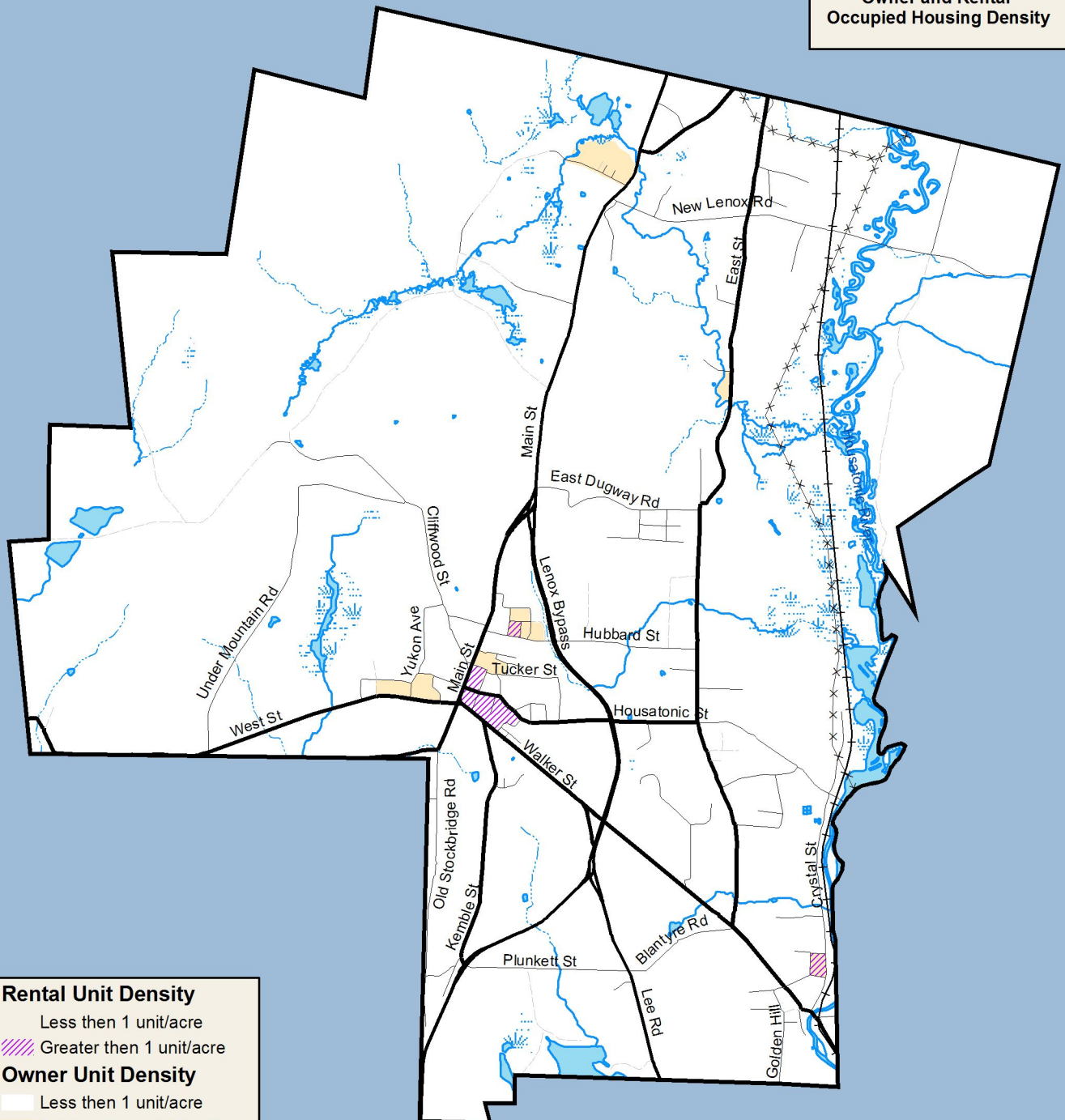




## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Owner and Rental  
Occupied Housing Density



### Rental Unit Density

Less than 1 unit/acre

Greater than 1 unit/acre

### Owner Unit Density

Less than 1 unit/acre

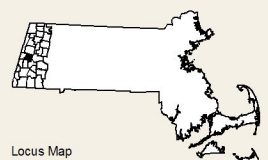
Between 1 and 2 units/acre

Greater than 2 units/acre

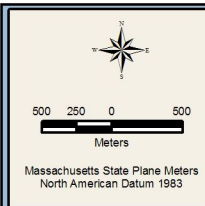
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len/projects/ownerrental.mxd  
January 10, 2002



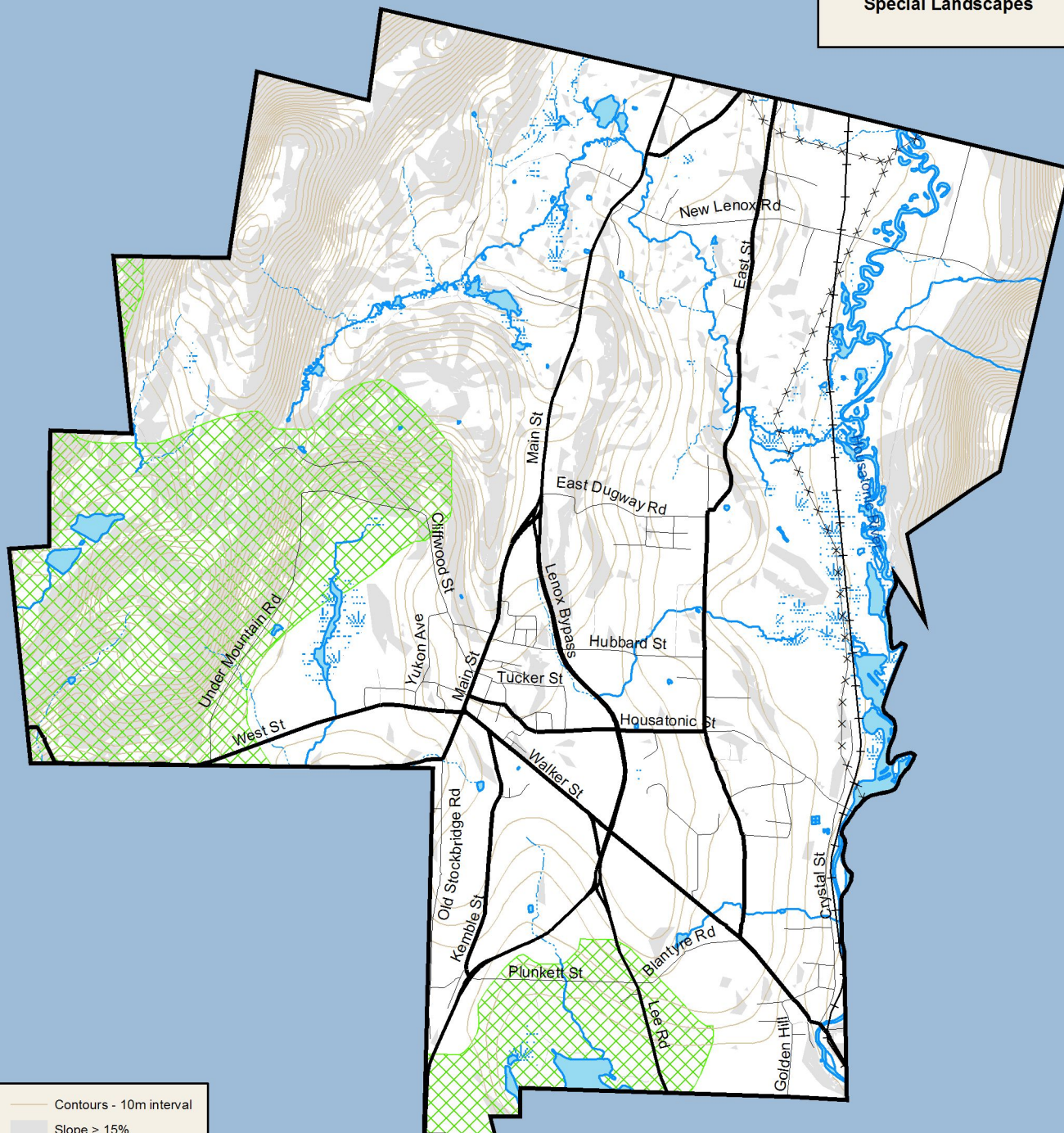




## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

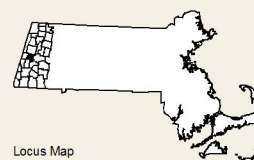
Special Landscapes



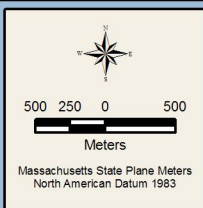
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/len/projects/SpecialLandscapes.mxd  
January 10, 2002



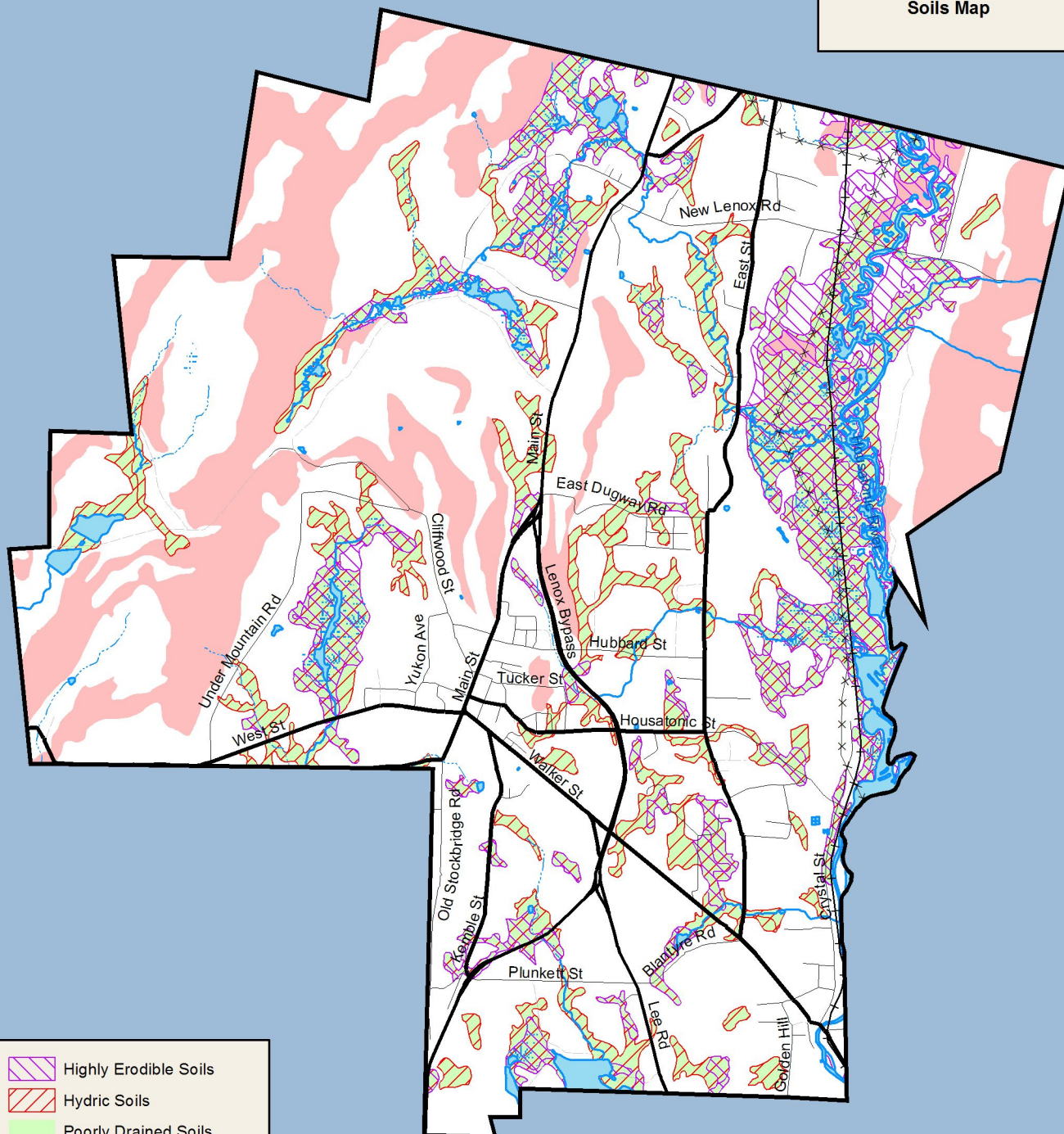








# Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

## Soils Map

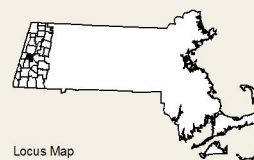


-  Highly Erodible Soils
-  Hydric Soils
-  Poorly Drained Soils
-  Excessively Drained Soils

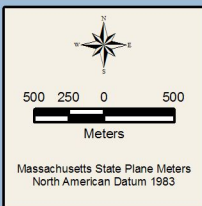
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/len/projects/soils.mxd  
January 10, 2002



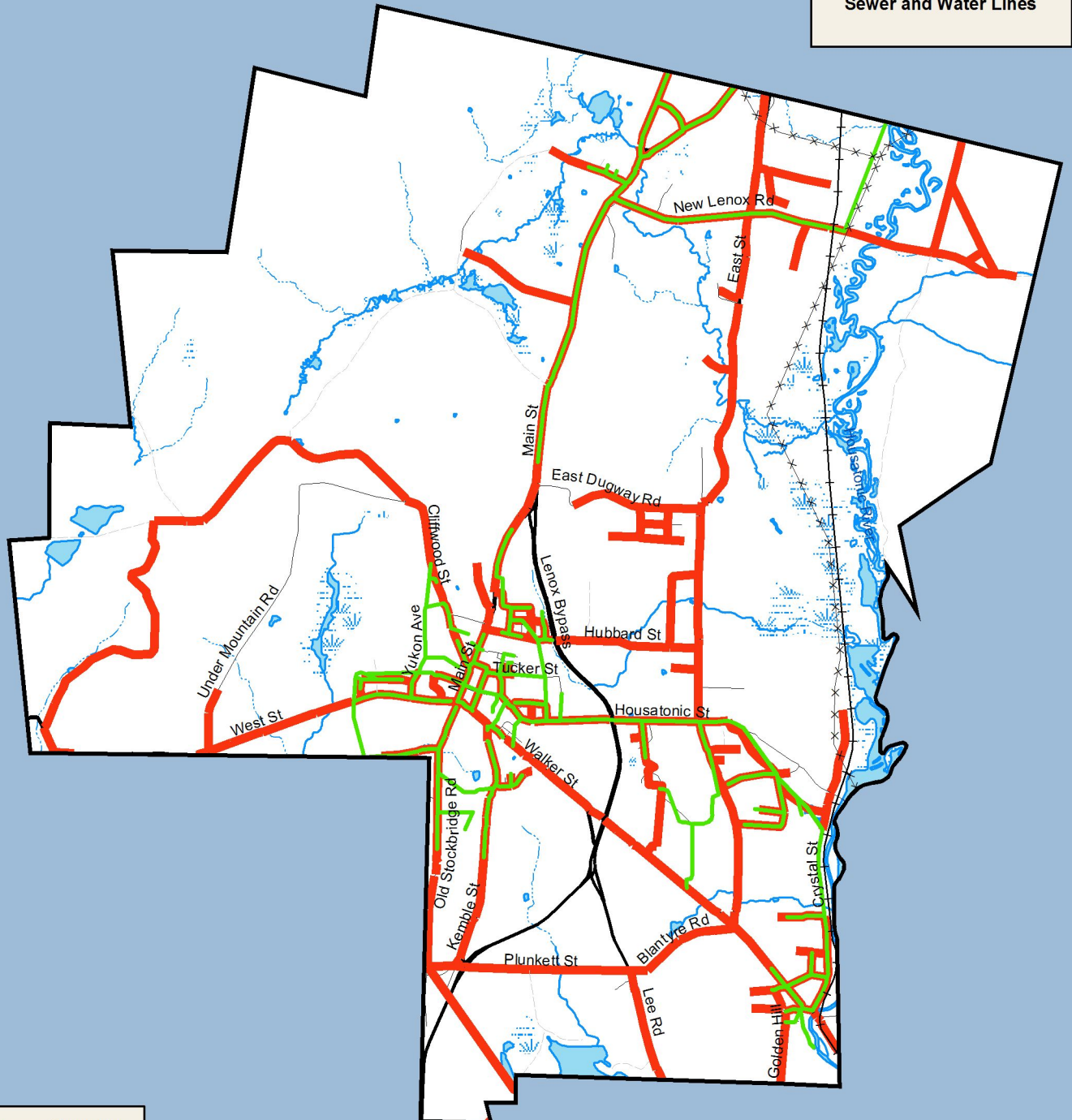
Locus Map



## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Sewer and Water Lines

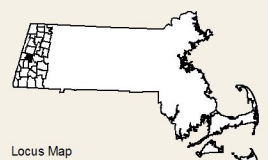


- Sewer Line
- Water Line

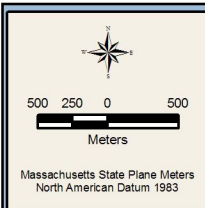
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/len/projects/sewerwater.mxd  
January 10, 2002



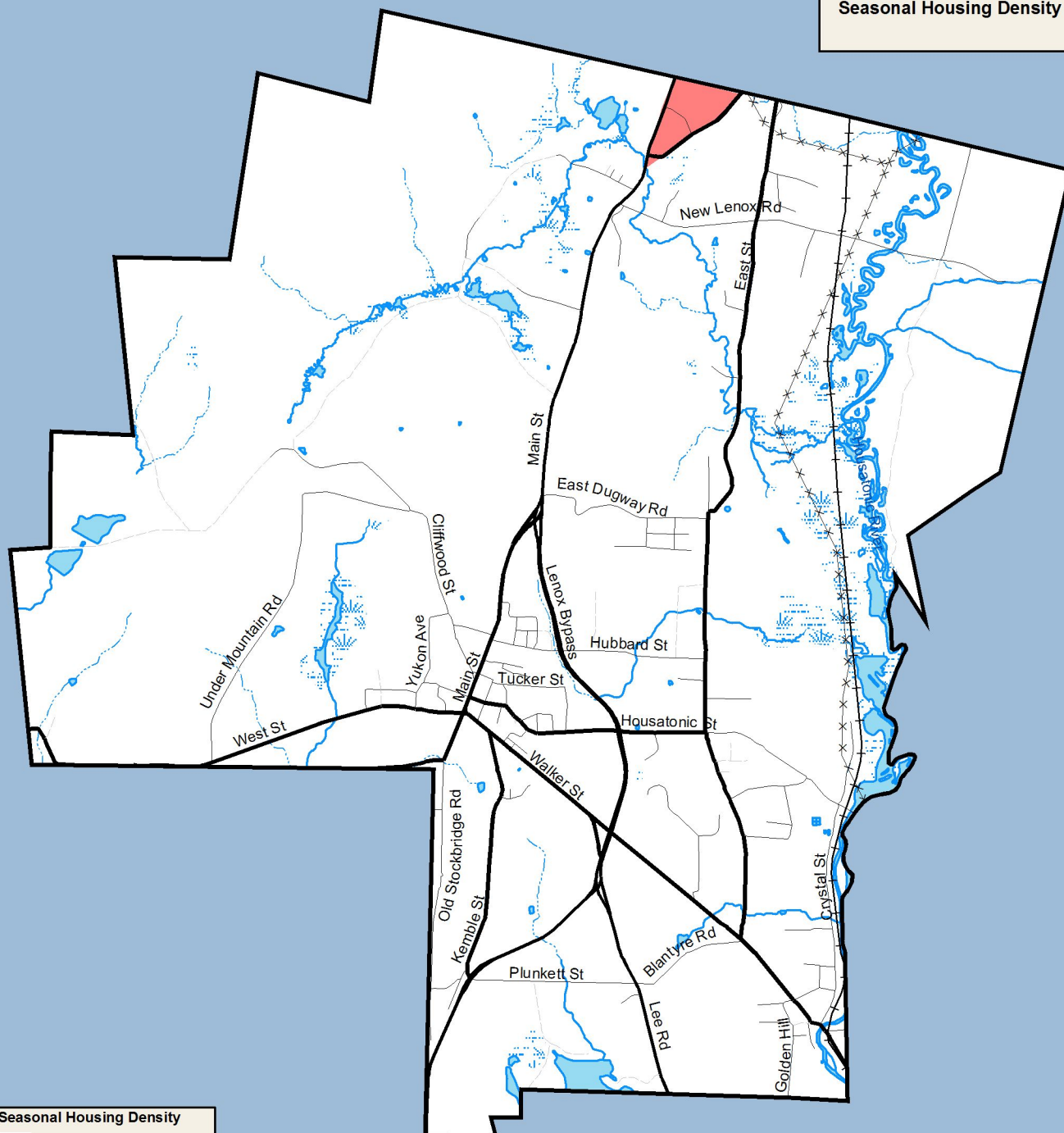




## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Seasonal Housing Density



### Seasonal Housing Density

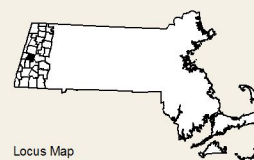
Less than 1 unit/2 acres

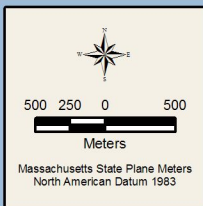
Greater than 1 unit/2 acres

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/len/projects/seasonaldensity.mxd  
January 10, 2002

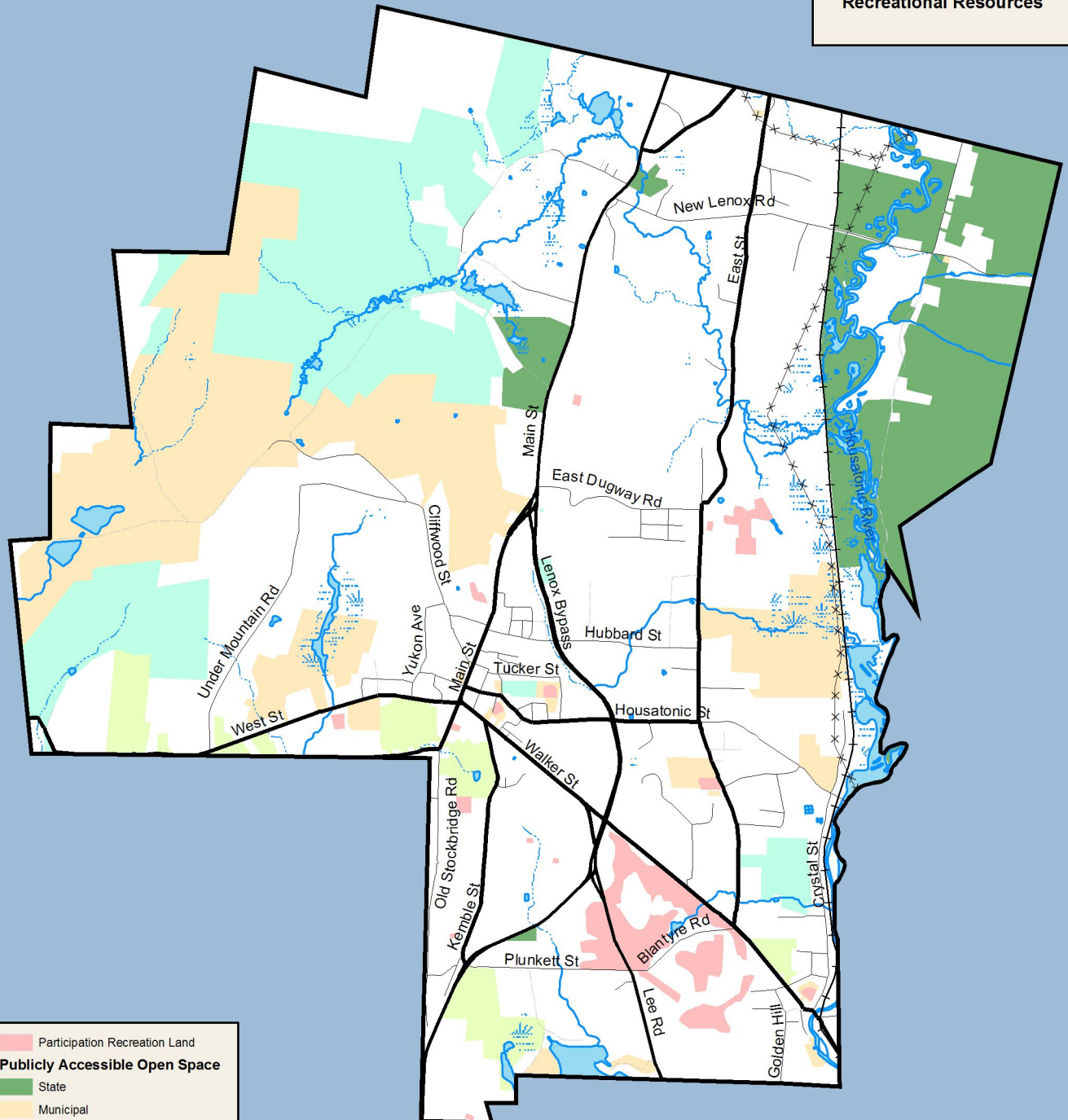




# Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Recreational Resources

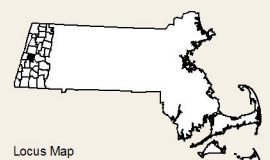


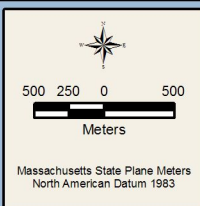
- Participation Recreation Land
- Publicly Accessible Open Space**
- State
  - Municipal
  - Non-Profit
  - Private

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January 10, 2002

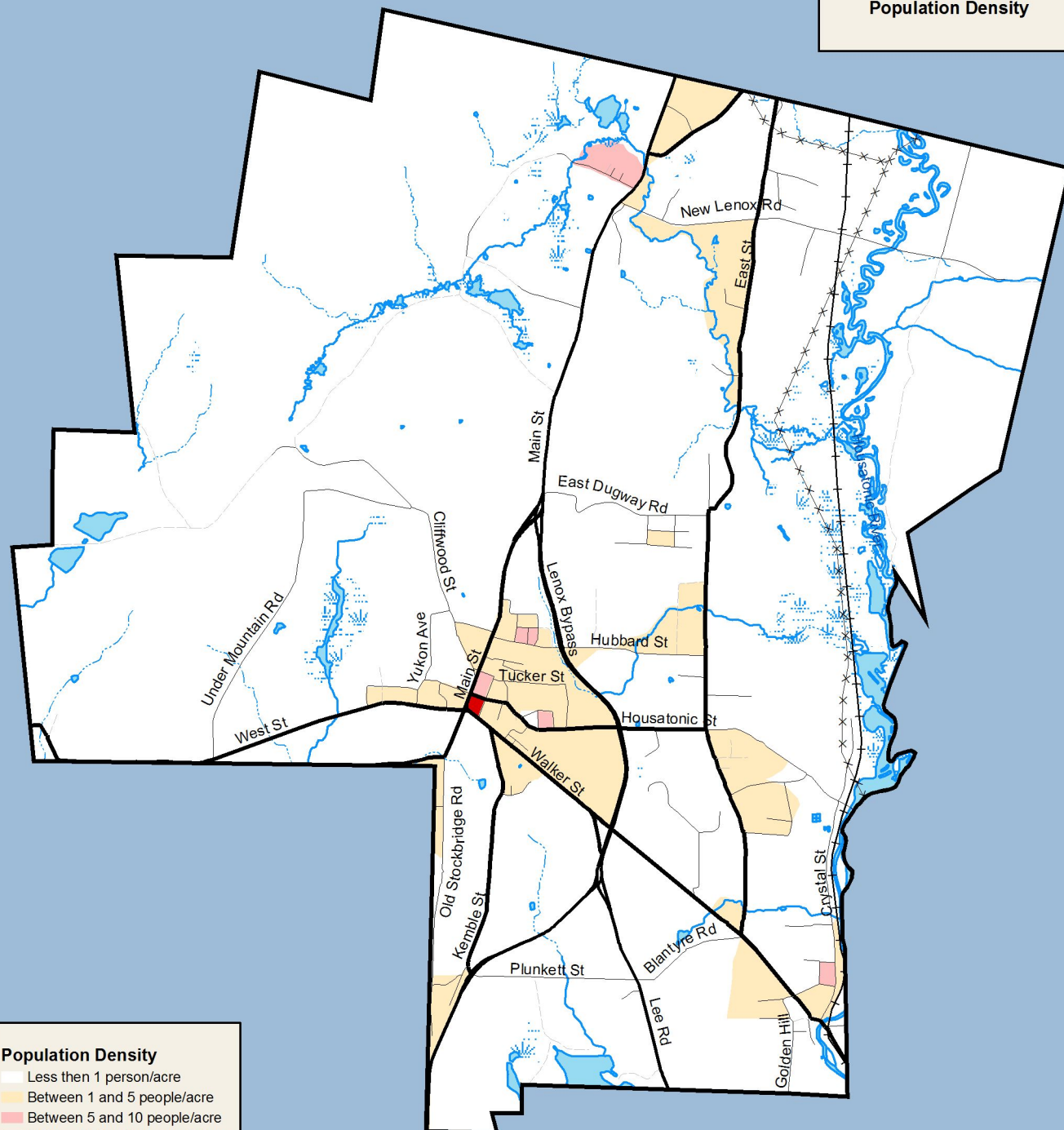




## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Population Density



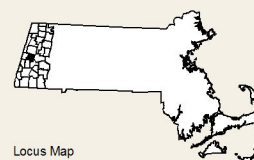
### Population Density

- Less than 1 person/acre
- Between 1 and 5 people/acre
- Between 5 and 10 people/acre
- Between 10 and 15 people/acre
- Greater than 15 people/acre

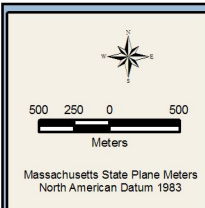
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/len/projects/populationdensity.mxd  
January 10, 2002



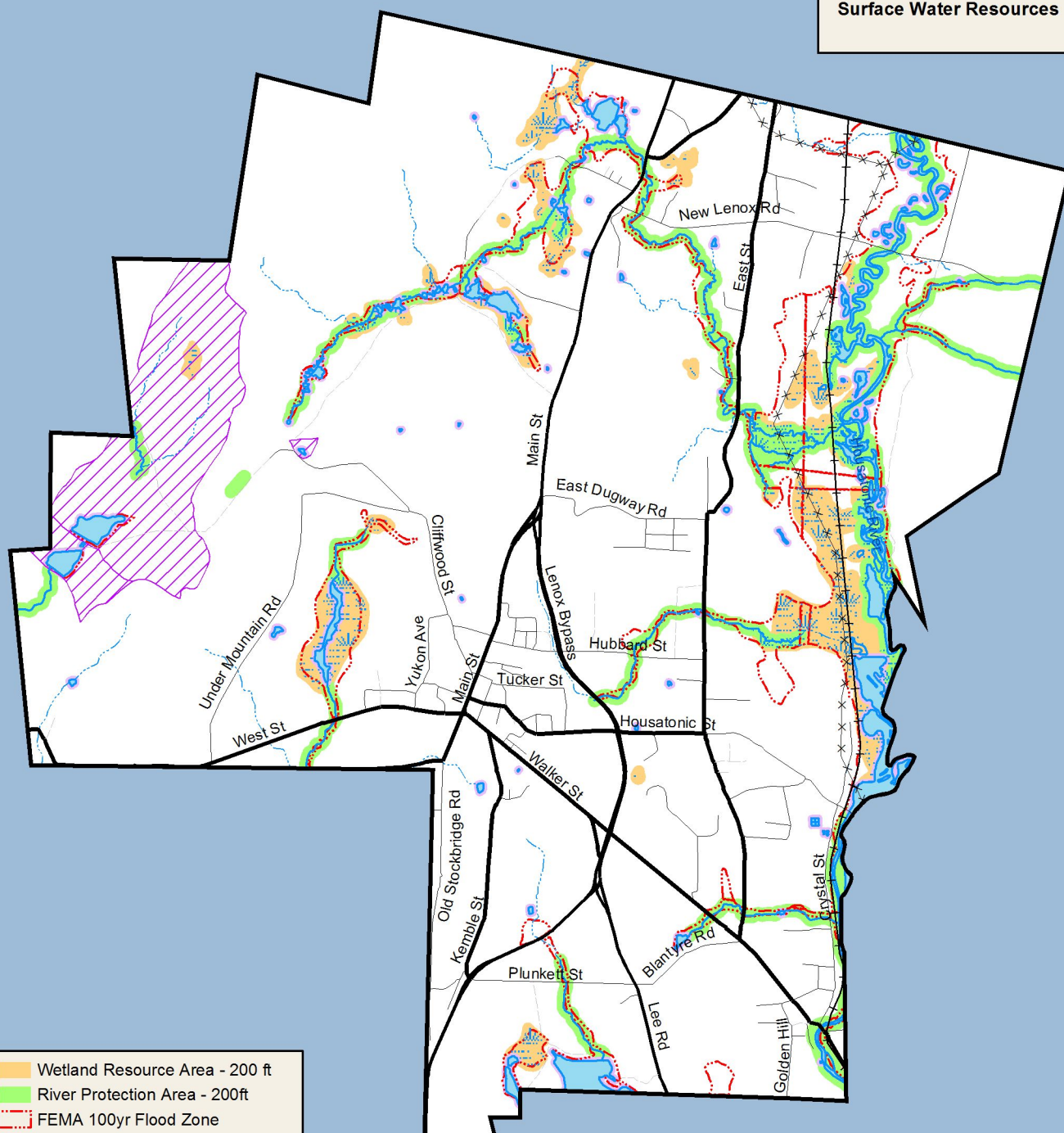




## Town of Lenox

Community Development  
Plan

Surface Water Resources

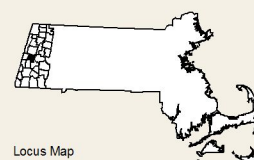


- Wetland Resource Area - 200 ft
- River Protection Area - 200ft
- FEMA 100yr Flood Zone
- Lake / Pond Resource Area - 100ft
- Outstanding Resource Water

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/len/projects/surfacewater.mxd  
August 16, 2002



# Appendix

## Appendices

OSRD Bylaw and Defense Material  
Subdivision Public Notice  
Updated Buildout Analysis  
Community Preservation Act Toolbox  
Bylaw Amendment – Upper Apartments  
Village Improvement Plan

A.1  
A.2  
A.3  
A.4  
A.5  
A.6

# **Appendix A.1**

## **OSRD Bylaw and Defense Material**

## **SECTION 14: OPEN SPACE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT**

### **14.1 Purpose and Intent**

The purposes of the Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) District are:

1. To preserve and enhance community character through greater flexibility and creativity in the design of residential developments and through the encouragement of a. less sprawling and more efficient form of development that consumes less open land, conforms to existing topography and natural features, and reduces overall visual impacts;
2. To minimize the total amount of disturbance on the site and encourage the permanent preservation of contiguous open space, forestry land, wildlife habitat, and other natural resources including aquifers, waterbodies and wetlands in a manner that is consistent with the Lenox Comprehensive Master Plan and Open Space Plan;
3. To facilitate the construction, maintenance and provision of housing, streets, utilities, and public services in a more economical and efficient manner.

### **14.2. Overlay District Applicability**

1. Parcels located in the R-1A District shall be eligible for consideration as an OSRD. The OSRD district is an overlay mapped over the other district. It modifies and, where there is inconsistency, it supercedes the regulations of the underlying district. Except as modified or superceded, the regulations of the underlying district applies.
2. Any proposed development within the district that is not an Approval Not Required project and involves 5 acres or more shall submit an application for consideration as an OSRD to the Planning Board as the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA)
3. To be eligible for consideration as an OSRD, the parcel for which an OSRD is proposed shall be in single ownership or control at the time of application and may be developed as a subdivision or a division of land pursuant to M.G.L Ch. 41, §81P, and may be permitted where intended as a condominium. on land not so divided or subdivided

### **14.3 Permitted Uses:.**

1. Uses or other lawful accessory buildings currently allowed in the existing underlying district.
2. Two-family dwelling units (attached and/or detached), not to exceed more than 20% of the total number of building lots, may be constructed on certain lots in an OSRD.



#### **14.4. Special Permit Submission Requirements and Procedures:**

An OSRD may be allowed by Special Permit by the Planning Board within the OSRD overlay district in compliance with this section and upon satisfactory completion of the Special Permit Process, including compliance with the Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land, Lenox, MA. Proposals must be found to satisfy the purposes of this section as detailed in 14.1.

1. An application for a special permit for an OSRD shall be submitted to the Planning Board in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Town of Lenox Zoning Bylaws. Applicants are encouraged to submit conceptual materials for informal review by the Planning Board prior to a formal application for a special permit
2. Relationship between OSRD Plan and Definitive Subdivision Plan: Planning Board approval for a special permit for an OSRD under this article Shall not constitute compliance with the Subdivision Control Law (MGL c. 41, §81K to §81GG) nor oblige the Planning Board to approve any related definitive plan for subdivision. The applicant may submit a Preliminary or Definitive Subdivision Plan at the same time as the application for a special permit, however, two separate public hearings, one for the special permit: and one for the definitive plan must be held.

#### **14.5 Design Standards:**

1. A proposed OSRD shall strive not disturb more than 50% of the total tract as well as minimize tree and soil removal; be located in such a manner as to maintain and preserve natural topography; reduce the removal or disruption of historic; traditional or significant uses, structures, or architectural elements; incorporate the use of drainage techniques that reduce impervious surface and enable infiltration where appropriate; and link open space and recreational uses to adjacent land uses where appropriate.
2. Unless otherwise provided in this section, the OSRD shall be consistent with the design standard requirements of the Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land, Lenox, MA.

#### **14.6 Dimensional Requirements:**

1. Density: The maximum number of lots in the development shall not exceed that which is allowed in the underlying zone.
2. Open Space: A minimum of 30% of the parcel shall be restricted to open space and subject to the provisions set forth in section 14.7 of this bylaw.
3. Lot Size: Individual lot area within the proposed OSRD shall not be less than 30,000 square feet. The Planning Board may authorize a reduction in lot size for the inclusion of an additional 15% of permanently protected open space. In no instance shall the minimum lot-size be less than 20,000 square feet.

4. Affordable Housing Density Bonus: The Planning Board may authorize the increase of the maximum number of lots by up to twenty percent (20%) where the OSRD reserves greater than 1.0% of the total number of lots for affordable housing as defined by the Department of Housing and Community Development for low and moderate median income households. Those units designated as affordable shall be evenly distributed throughout the development and be consistent with the design standards of this bylaw and the Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land, Lenox, MA. These units shall be designated on the plan and in restrictions in the deeds of each separate property.
5. Lot frontage and setbacks: Frontage and setbacks shall not be less than 50% of the minimum requirements of the district. Lots shall not have reduced frontage on a street other than a street created by the subdivision involved.

#### **14.7 Open Space Requirements:**

1. Open space is defined as lands that are restricted from development and shall be naturally vegetated areas, open fields, or parks. Where possible, proposed open space shall be linked to existing open spaces to form green corridors. Open space shall not be utilized for rights of way, buildings, pools, tennis courts, motorized biking or other recreational uses that require ground disturbance. Setbacks, disconnected parcels, and left over space including but not limited to areas between buildings shall not be considered as open space. Any proposed open space, unless conveyed to the Town upon approval, shall be subject to a recorded restriction enforceable by the Town, providing that such land shall be perpetually kept in an open state, that it shall be preserved exclusively for the purposes set forth herein, and that it shall be maintained in a manner which will ensure its suitability for its intended purposes.
  - a. No more than fifty percent (50%) of the dedicated open space shall constitute wetlands, and lands subject to seasonal flooding. The term "wetland" shall be limited to the definition of wetland as specified under MGL c. 131, Section 40, the Wetlands Protection Act, as amended.
  - b. The open space shall be used for wildlife habitat, conservation, historic preservation, outdoor education, passive recreation, park purposes, or any combination of these uses. Additional uses may be permitted upon approval of the Planning Board, provided that such uses are in harmony with the promotion and retention of open space.
  - c. The Planning Board may permit storm water management systems serving the OSRD to be located within the open space.
2. Ownership of the Open Space. The open space shall be conveyed to:
  - a. The Town or its Conservation Commission; or,
  - b. A nonprofit organization, the principal purpose of which is the conservation of open space and any of the purposes for such open space set forth above; or,

- c. A corporation or trust owned jointly or in common by the owners of lots within the OSRD. If such corporation or trust is utilized, ownership thereof shall pass with conveyance of the lots in perpetuity. Documents creating such trust corporation shall be submitted to the Planning Board for approval, and shall thereafter be recorded:
  - i. Maintenance of such open space and facilities shall be permanently guaranteed by such corporation or trust, which shall provide for mandatory assessments for maintenance expenses to each lot. Each such trust or corporation shall be deemed to have assented to allow the Town to perform maintenance of such open space and facilities, if the trust or corporation fails to provide adequate maintenance; and shall grant the Town an easement for this purpose. In such event, the Town shall first provide fourteen (14) days written notice to the trust or corporation as to the inadequate maintenance, and, if the trust or corporation fails to complete such maintenance, the Town may perform it, at the expense of the trust or corporation.

# Town of Lenox Open Space Residential Fact Sheet

## TOWN-WIDE ESTIMATED BUILD-OUT SCENARIO

*Under existing zoning*

Developable Land Area  
3,768 Acres

Number of New Lots  
4,040 Lots

Estimated New Households  
4,426 Dwellings

Estimated New Residents  
15,553 Persons

Estimated New Students  
1,327 children <18

Estimated New Roads  
42.4 miles

*Source: EOEa Building Out Study*



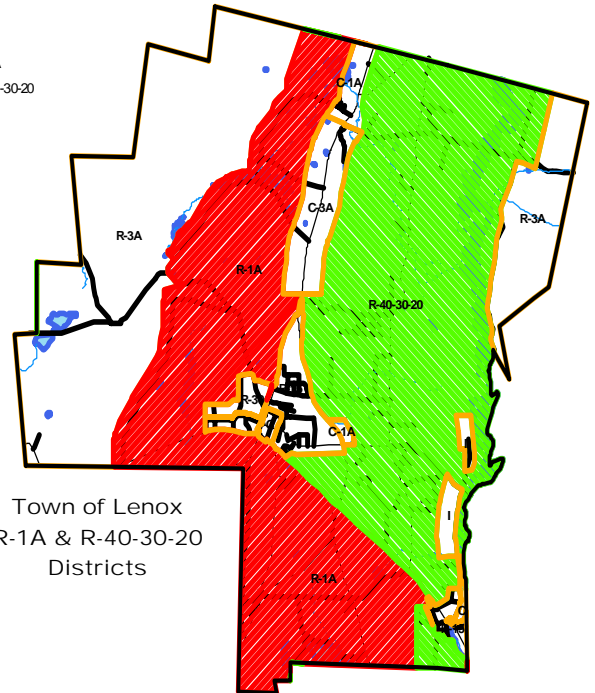
Town of Lenox  
6 Walker Street  
Lenox, MA 01240  
(413) 637-5500

## Open Space Residential Design: A Community Choice

As new full and part-time residents are drawn to the character and beauty of Lenox, more homes and subdivisions are being built to accommodate them, and more open space is being lost. The areas posing the greatest development pressures include the East Street Corridor and land west of Lenox Village, north and south of Route 183 (see map). The Town seeks to improve the existing zoning regulations in order to better protect the rural character of the area while still allowing for moderate growth. Improvements focus on better site design

of new subdivisions involving 5 acres or more, increased open space protection and a decrease of the visual and fiscal impacts. Other benefits of the new Overlay District include a streamlined permitting process, a development pattern more consistent with town-wide conservation values and plans, and greater flexibility in lot layouts to encourage innovative designs.

R-1A  
R-40-30-20



Town of Lenox  
R-1A & R-40-30-20  
Districts

## Proposed Zoning Amendments: Summary

The Town proposes to expand the R-1A to the R-40-30-20 zone. The proposed amendments would eliminate the R-40-30-20 district, and the ability to reduce lot size to 30,000 and 20,000 square foot lots as determined by access to water and sewer. The total allowed lot size in the R-1A District is one acre. Secondly, the proposed Open Space Residential Development Overlay District is proposed to replace the existing Section 14 – cluster development Zoning Bylaw. The overlay district will require that all subdivision proposals for 5 acres or more apply for a special permit under the OSRD Overlay District. A minimum of 30% of the parcel must remain as open space and lot size may be 30,000 sq.ft. or larger. If 45% or more of the parcel is preserved as open space then lots may be 20,000 sq.ft. or larger. An additional density bonuses may be granted for the inclusion of 10% or more of units as affordable.

The proposed zoning changes would continue to allow development to occur in this area, however, new design standards, open space requirements and better lot layout would provide for improved development that would protect open space and habitat areas as well as preserve the scenic and rural character of the area.

## Specific Amendment Actions

- Amend the R-1A District to include the former R-40,30,20 District Area. .
- Amend Section 14 of the Town of Lenox's Zoning Bylaw to **The Open Space Residential Development Overlay District**.
- Amend the **Subdivision Controls** to improve the street layout guidelines and detailed design standards.



# Summary of the proposed Open Space Residential Development Overlay

## Purpose

- Preserve community character
- Allow for flexibility & creativity in the design of residential developments
- Encourage less sprawling and more efficient form of development

## Applicability

- Only those parcels in the proposed R-1A District (also includes the former R-40,30,20 District)
- Any development greater than 5 acres in area

## Permitted Uses and Standards

- Uses currently allowed in the underlying district
- Single-Family residences
- Two-Family residences (not more than 20% of total development)

## Dimensional Requirements

- The maximum number of lots shall not exceed 1 unit per acre
- The total number of lots may be increased by 20% where 10% of the homes are designated as affordable (as defined by the Dept. of Housing and Community Development).

## Flexible Area and Frontage

- At 30% protected open space lot size may be reduced to 30,000 square feet
- At 45% or more protected open space lot size may be reduced to 20,000 square feet
- Frontage and setback requirements may not be less than 50% of the R-1A zone requirements

## Open Space Requirements

- A minimum of 30% of the tract shall be open space

## Ownership of the Open Space

The open space land shall be conveyed to, one of the following:

- The Town or its Conservation Commission;
- A nonprofit organization; or,
- A corporation or trust owned jointly or in common by the owners of the lots

## Design Standards

- The development shall be designed according to the design standards in the Subdivision Controls for the town of Lenox

## Administration

- The Planning Board shall be the special permit granting authority
- Each OSRD application shall conform to the submission requirements and standards of the Subdivision Controls for the Town of Lenox

This document serves only as a summary of the proposed amendments for the Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) Overlay District. The full text of the proposed amendments is available in the Town Hall's Land Use office or by calling the Town Manager at (413) 637-5500.

# OPEN SPACE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT

TOWN OF LENOX

PREPARED BY THE BERKSHIRE  
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



# GOAL

Guide the development, enhancement and conservation of the town to create a more diverse yet tightly woven community that pridefully sustains its rich cultural base and excellent amenities as it meets the economic and social needs of present and future residents.

# OBJECTIVE

Modify zoning to limit residential development in areas where it would not be in keeping with the character of the community or negatively impact the environment.

# EAST STREET CORRIDOR

R40,30,20 District

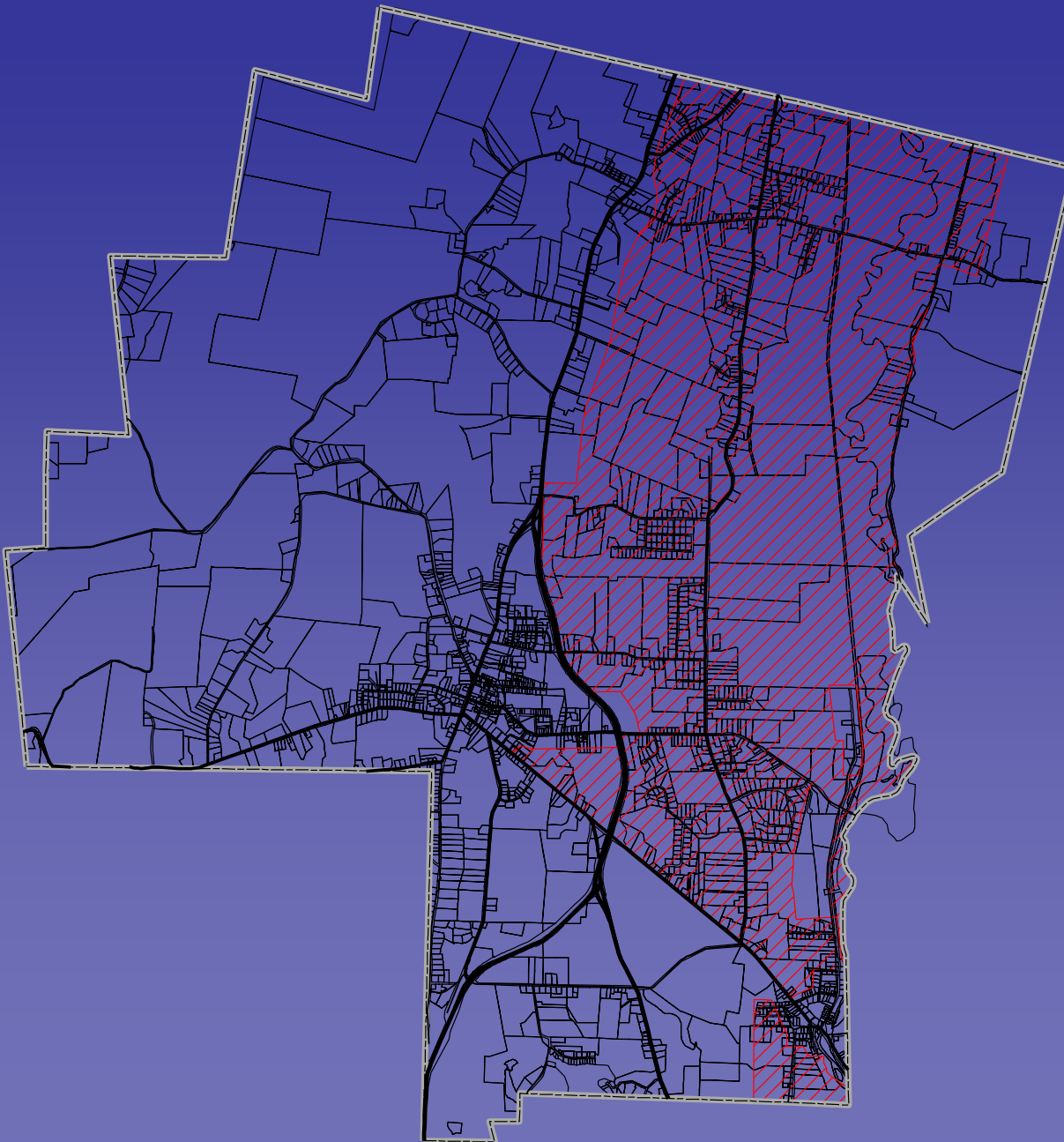
1,434 Buildable Acres

---

If Developed under  
current zoning:

Approximately  
3,124 new lots

Approximately  
7,841 New Residents



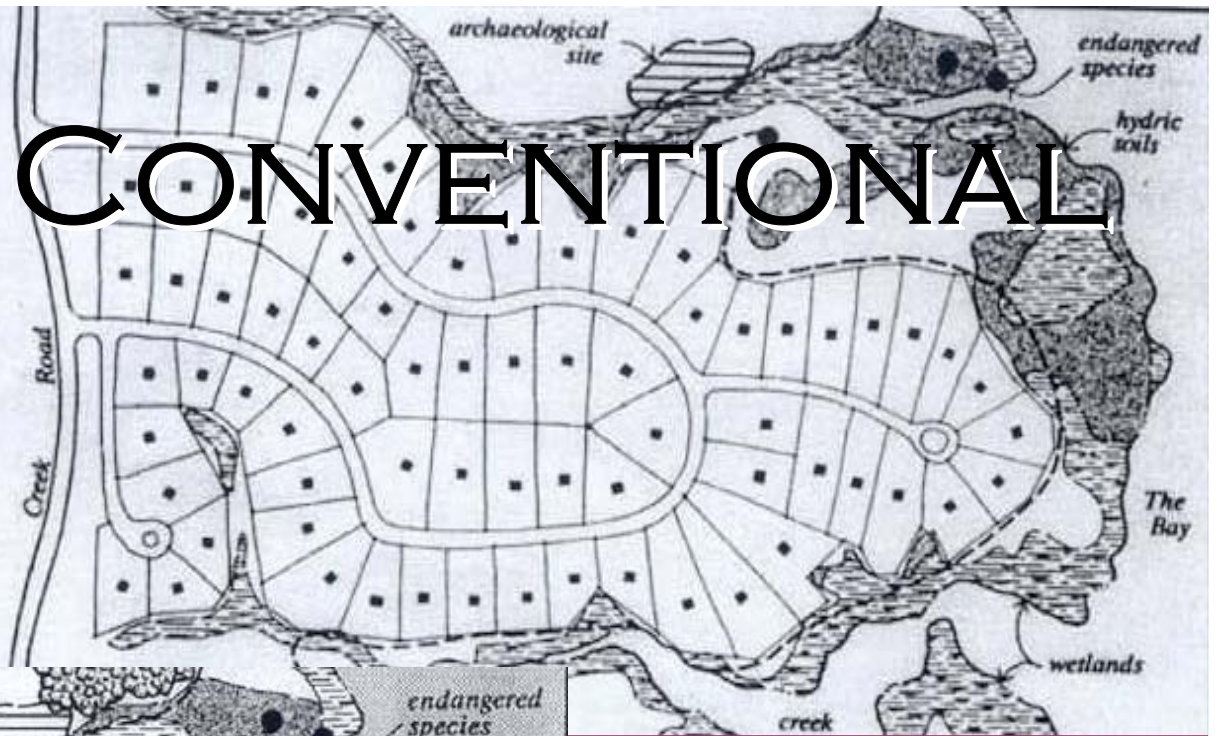


# TRADITIONAL CONSUMPTIVE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

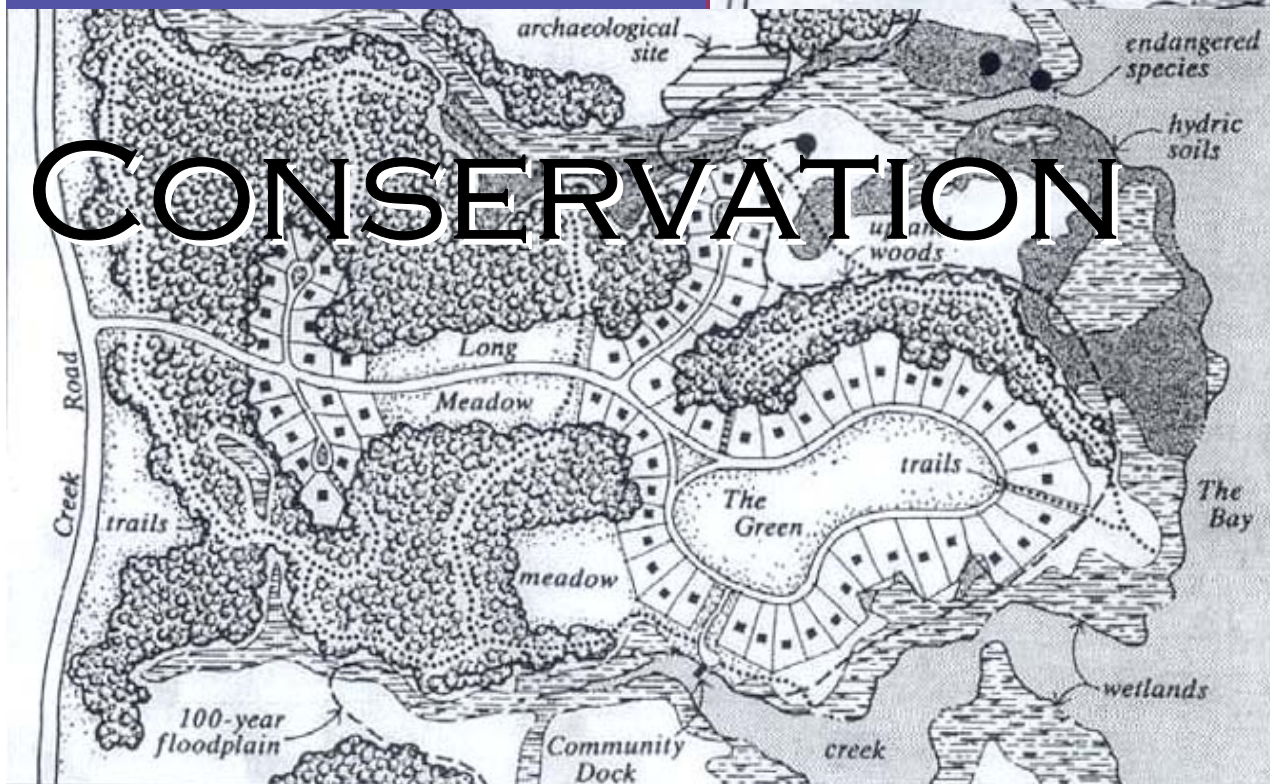




CONVENTIONAL



CONSERVATION















# EAST STREET CORRIDOR PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENTS

- Amend the existing R-40,30,20 Zoning District to allow 40,000 square feet lots as a right.
- Amend Section 14 of the Zoning Bylaw to be the Open Space Residential Development Overlay District.
- Modify the Subdivision Controls to improve the street layout guidelines and design standards.
- Include a provision in the Zoning Bylaws for “Common Driveways” in all zoning districts.



# OPEN SPACE RESIDENTIAL DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Early stakeholder involvement
- Streamlined process
- Be consistent with town-wide conservation values
- Creative incentives for more flexible design
- Locate house sites on smaller lots while protecting the housing values
- Align roads & trails in a more efficient manner

# ENVIRONMENTAL ADVANTAGES

- Protect and link habitat
- Reduce stormwater runoff
- Protects most important conservation values (i.e. uplands, wetlands, soils, scenic vistas, etc)



# SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Preserve community character
- Reduce isolation & sprawl
- Provide shared passive and active recreational amenities
- Provide mixed housing types



# ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Reduce infrastructure costs
- Use land efficiently
- Create opportunities to meet housing needs
- Fills market niche
- Increase real estate value



# DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS

<40% protected:

Conventional Development ~ 40,000 sq.ft. lots

>40% protected:

30,000 sq. ft. lot size

75 feet of frontage

20 feet front setback

15 feet side setback

25% lot coverage

>60% protected

20,000 sq.ft. lot size

50 feet of frontage

20 feet front setback

15 feet side setback

25% lot coverage

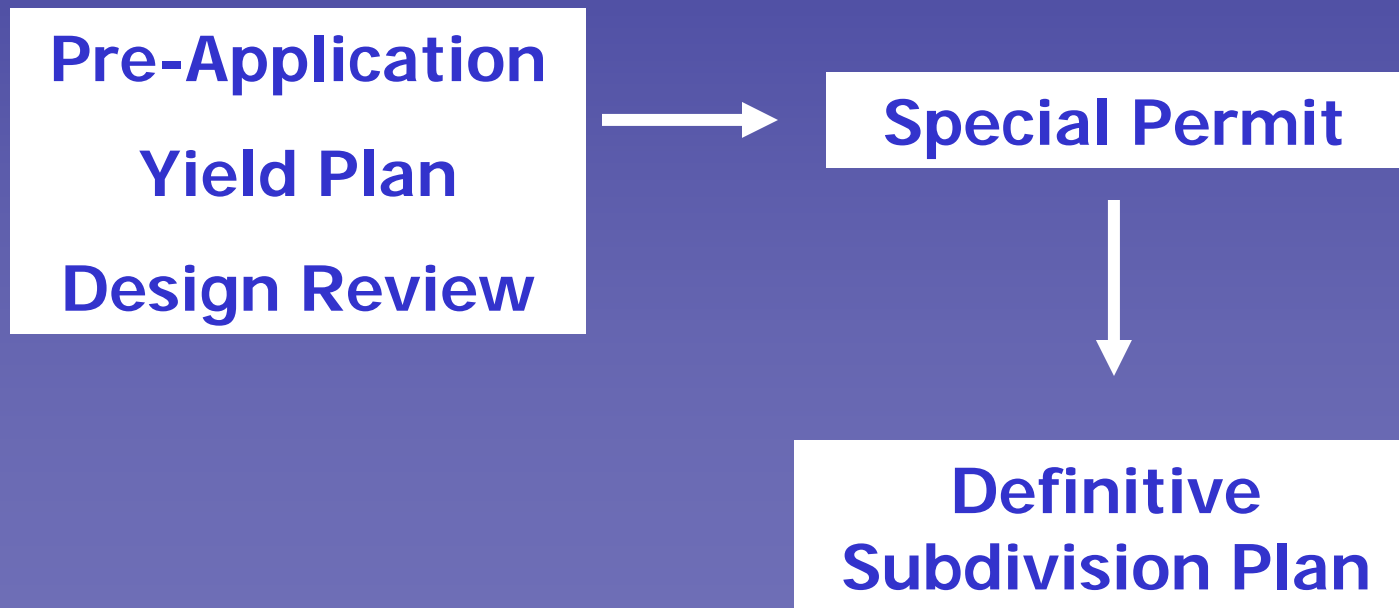
## **Determination of Yield**

Total Area of Tract - Marginal Land

40,000 Square Feet

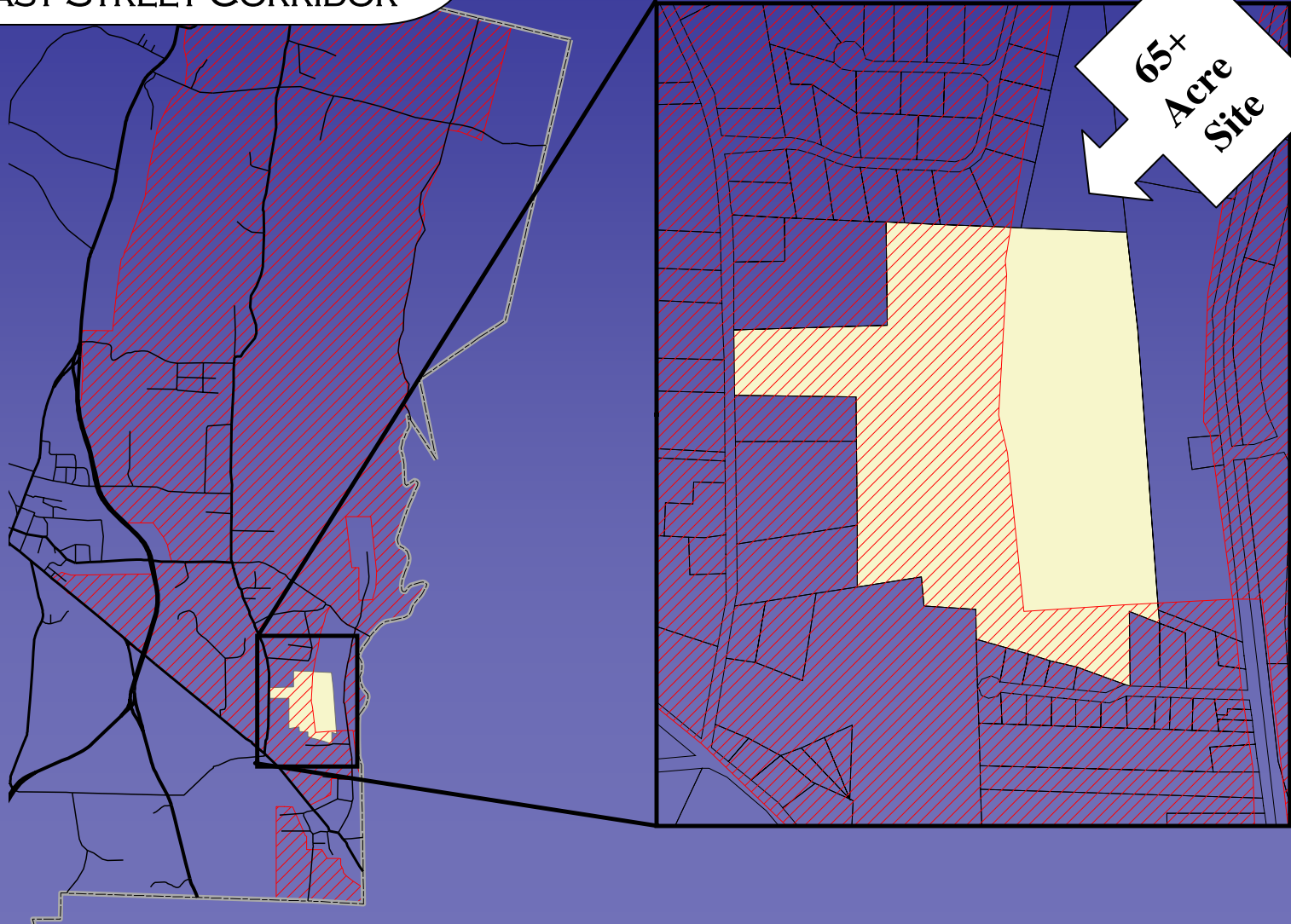


# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE OSRD AND THE DEFINITIVE PLAN

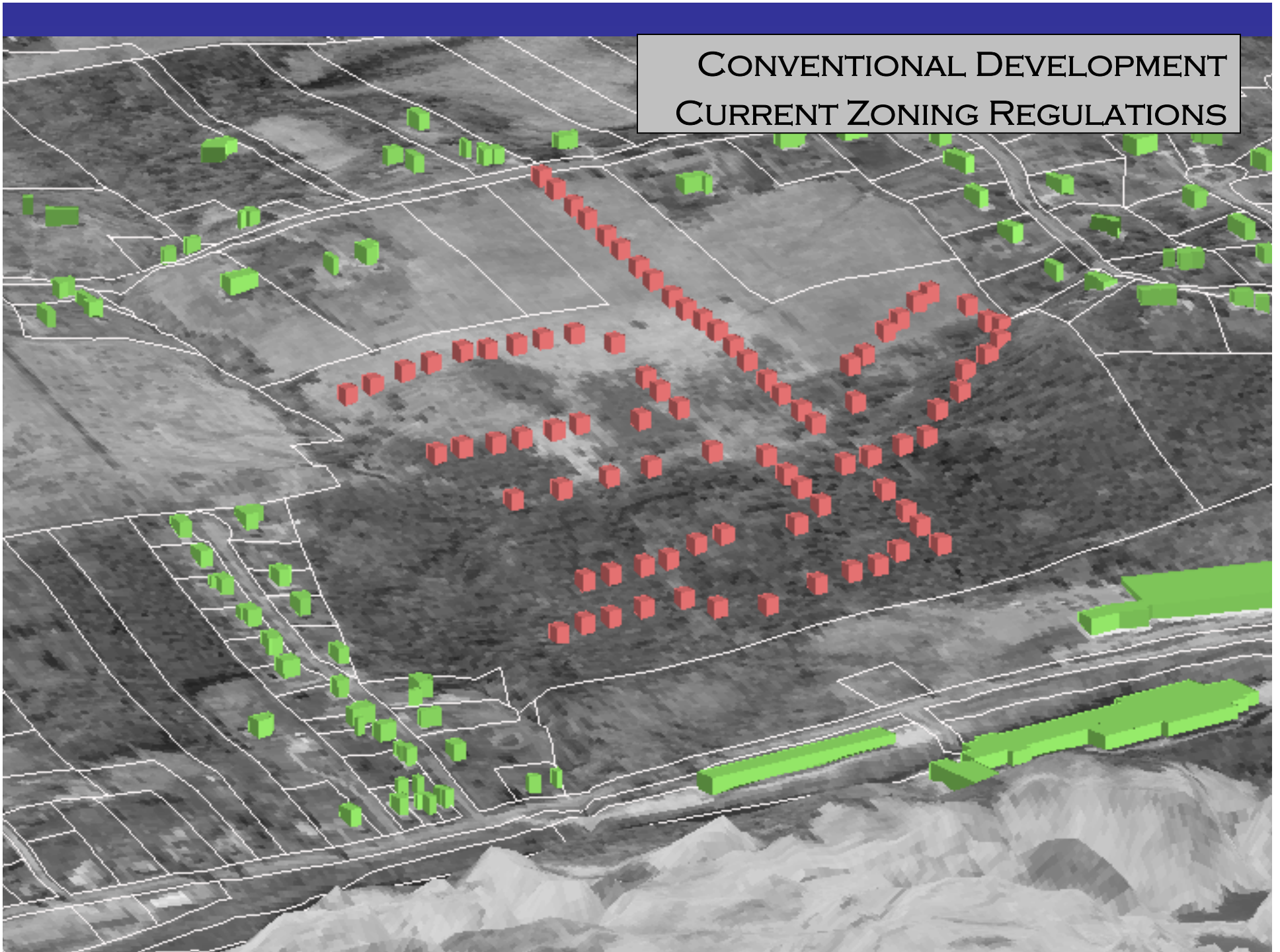


# TOWN OF LENOX CASE STUDY

STUDY AREA:  
EAST STREET CORRIDOR

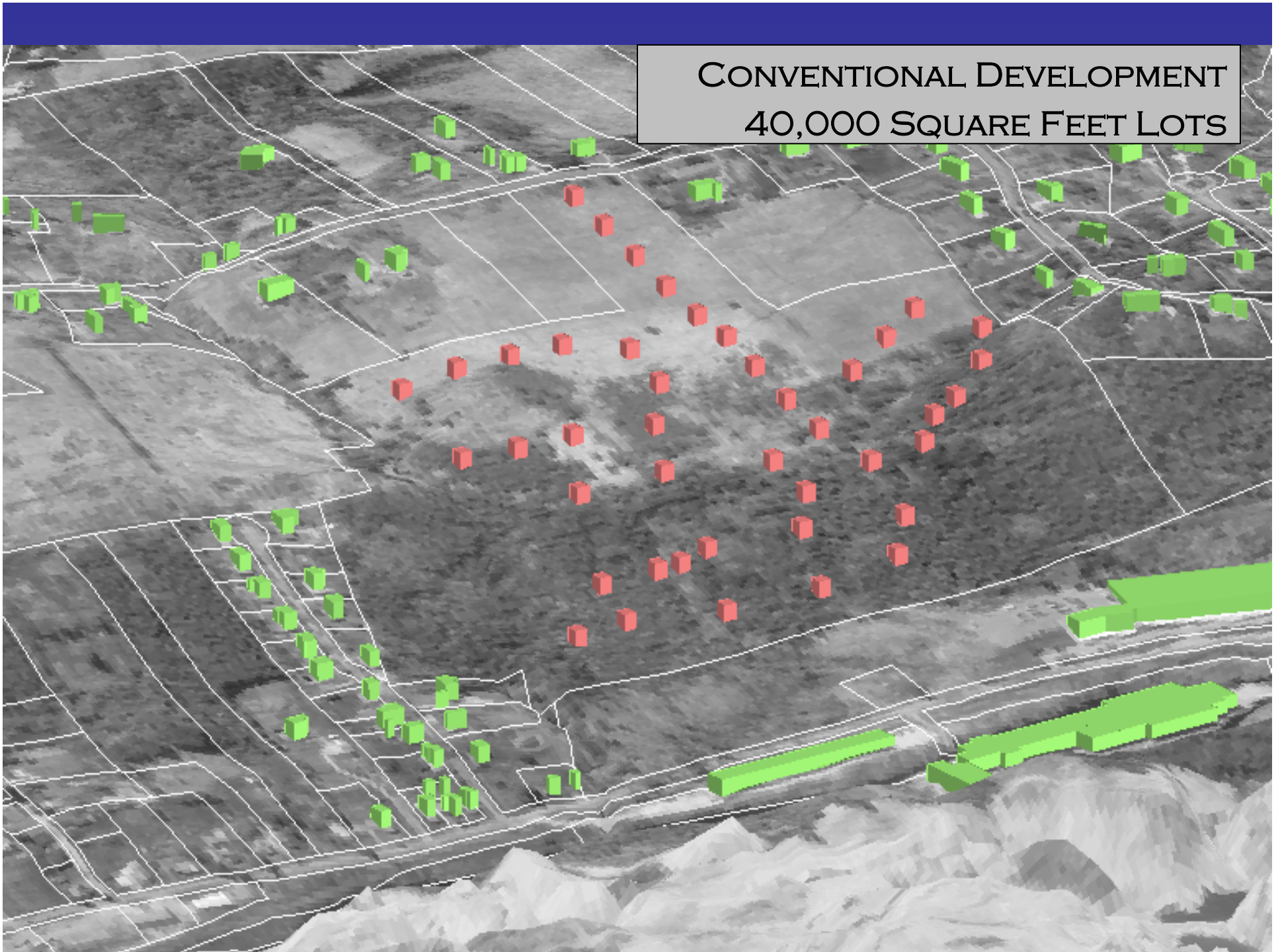


## CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT CURRENT ZONING REGULATIONS



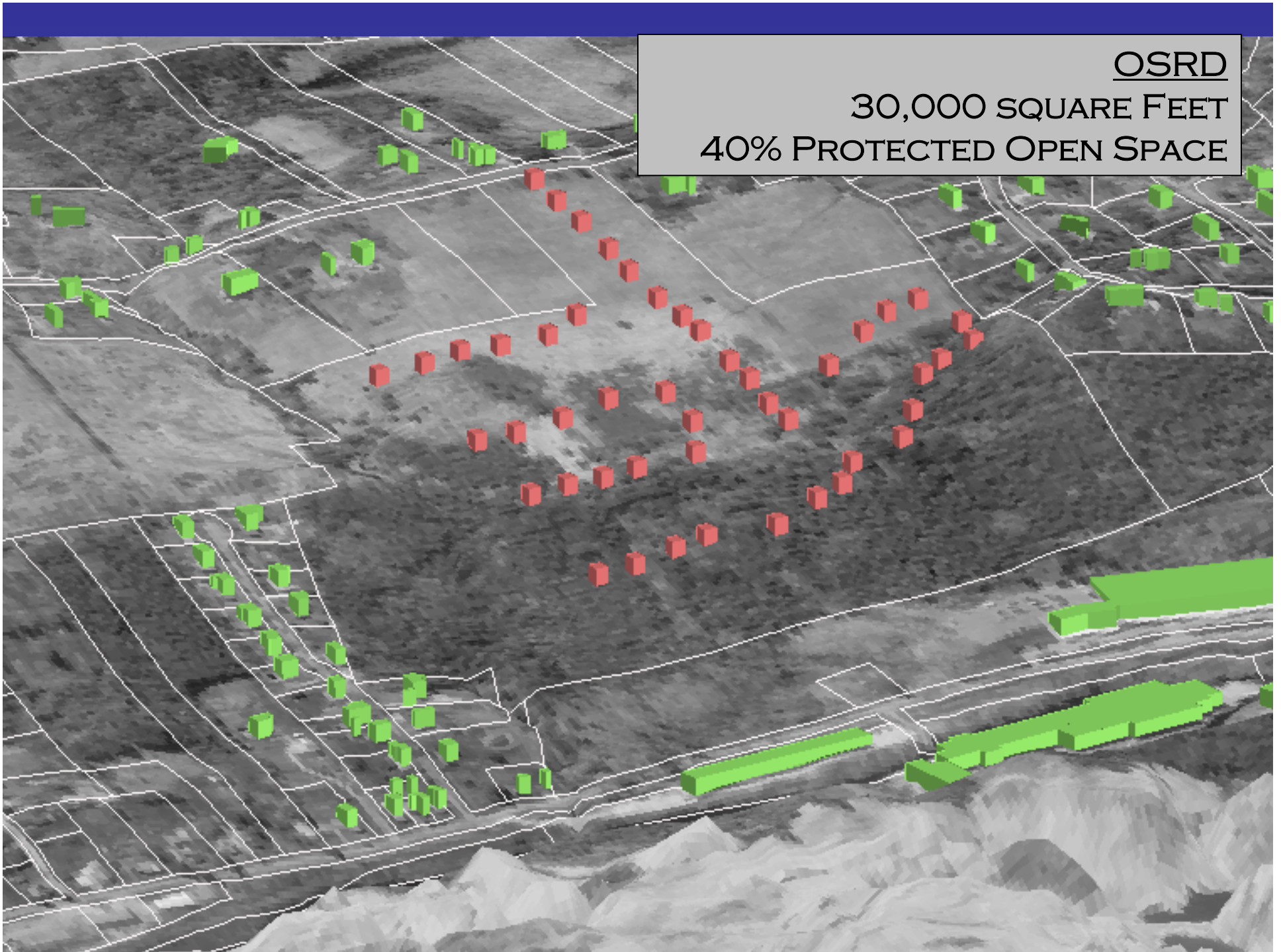


CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
40,000 SQUARE FEET LOTS



OSRD

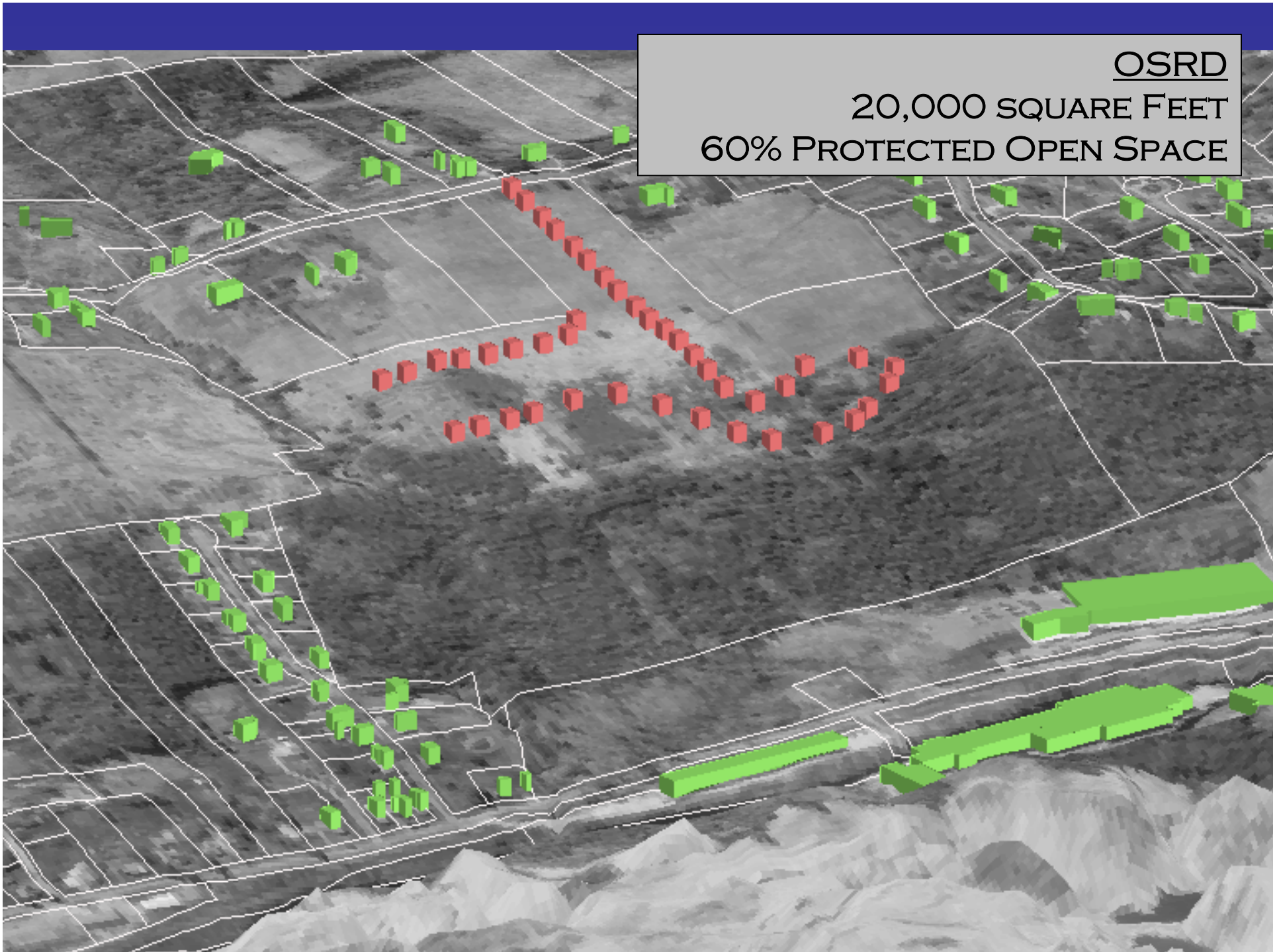
30,000 SQUARE FEET  
40% PROTECTED OPEN SPACE





OSRD

20,000 SQUARE FEET  
60% PROTECTED OPEN SPACE



# OSRD ADOPTION PLANNING PROCESS

- Develop language and hold community meetings
- Upon Planning Board request, the Selectboard initiates adoption process
- Planning Board holds a public hearing on the proposed bylaw changes
- Planning Board files bylaw for Town Meeting warrant
- Town Meeting vote



## **Appendix A.2**

### **Subdivision Public Notice**

**TOWN OF LENOX, MASSACHUSETTS  
PLANNING BOARD  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The Lenox Planning Board will hold a public hearing pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 41, Section 81Q on Monday, March 1, 2004 at 8:00 PM at the Lenox Town Hall, 6 Walker Street, Lenox, MA. The purpose of the public hearing is to provide interested parties with an opportunity to comment on proposed amendments to the Lenox Subdivision Regulations.

A copy of the proposed changes is on file and may be inspected in the Town Clerk's office. Any person interested, or wishing to be heard, should appear at the time and place designated. If unable to attend please submit comments in writing to the Planning Board, 6 Walker Street, Lenox, MA 01240.

Linda Messina  
Chairman

## **Appendix A.3**

### **Updated Buildout Analysis**



## **DRAFT BUILD OUT UPDATE**

### **Introduction**

The Town of Lenox is experiencing a growth in the number of new residential units even as the total population is on the decline. This growth can be explained by the increase in the number of second homes, townhouses and condos being built. In fact, many of these new units cannot be built fast enough and have an average price tag of over \$450,000 per unit.

According to BRPC's 1999 land use information 3,162 acres or 23% of total land area in Lenox could be classified as developed, including institutional/recreational lands. Seventy-one percent (71%) of the developed land in 1999 was classified as residential. From 1985 to 1999, new residential land use grew by nearly 16 acres per year. Residential multi-family land use jumped 87% in this same 14 year period. Commercial and industrial land use has a modest increase. Agricultural, pasture, forest, and open lands decreased by approximately 278 acres.

### **Buildout Update**

This study is intended to update the Build Out projections completed in 1999. A build-out analysis quantifies the potential amount of future development based upon environmental constraints, existing land use, and land use controls. The analysis is a useful planning tool to estimate potential future development in a municipality from a supply standpoint.

Specifically, this study examines the impact of new and infill residential development and its impacts of the community. Using the same methodology as the previous Build Out, this study seeks to project the total number of lots, dwelling units, water usage, municipal solid waste, additional students, and new subdivision roads based on the total buildable acres in each zoning district.

In areas that are not already completely built out, a full build-out analysis will usually show the final and complete amount of potential growth. This study, breaks these figures down further to determine the annual impact of new development based on the average trend in new building permits issued over the last ten years. This trend provides a basis for determining the annual low, medium, and high development patterns as the town expands to reach ultimate buildout. The buildout results should be used with caution as we are employing a limited number of variable factors in a limited way. There are many factors which constrain actual high levels of build-out in particular locations.

### **Methodology**

The main focus of this build-out is undeveloped land. Using BRPC's GIS datalayers, the build out analysis was begun by organizing the land use categories to represent actual locations of developed land as shown on the 2001 orthophotos. Once the land use was organized it was joined with the parcel boundaries to indicate which parcels were developed. Constrained land was then determined by combining the FEMA 100yr floodplains, wetlands, river protection areas and slopes greater than 25%. These areas were then removed from the parcels. The developed areas were also removed from the parcels. This resulted in buildable land for each parcel. This layer was combined with the zoning data to determine what zone each parcel was in. If the

parcel was too small to be further developed or subdivided, it was removed from the buildable land. This created the final result of parcels that had buildable land and were large enough based on their zoning to be further developed.

#### Assumptions and Buildout Calculation

For each zoning district, residential lots are calculated according to zoning densities with several qualifying factors. To account for roads, odd shaped lots, etc., residential lot calculation is 85% of density for R-3A, 80% for R-1A, 81% for R-30, and 78% for R-15. The residential R1-A area has the potential to develop at higher rate due to the zoning change to allow for smaller lots per unit under the Open Space Residential Development overlay district. Multi-family, apartments and townhouses are treated separately in this buildout since the unit calculation is based on required square footage per unit.

In non-residential districts, total building area is determined by zoning intensity with some basic qualifying factors. An effective Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for each district can be calculated using the maximum building coverage area multiplied by allowed floors. In the C-1A the resulting .60 FAR could not be supported by parking. For instance, if the standard 420 square feet per parking space were multiplied by the standard local parking space requirement per square foot (1 space per 300 SF), the resulting effective FAR would be slightly less than .42. This might be a reasonable standard to account for physical parking and driveway intangibles including landscaping but would not account for the restrictive parking setback requirements. It is difficult to imagine exceeding .4 FAR in any zone in Lenox except in the village district which has no minimum zoning intensity. In the industrial zone it is assumed that the trend of 1 story structures would continue. This assumption does not greatly reduce the total building area in that zone. The story limitation essentially overrides height restrictions. Parking can be a relevant factor in determining non-residential density.

The student population in Lenox has continued to decline. However, for the purposes of calculating a multiplier for new students this study bases its ratio on the number of students per household in 2000. Currently, there are 820 students and 2,713 households. Assumptions for total additional school children are lower in Lenox than for the state or nation reflecting a lower existing ratio of students to households. Since households for apartments and townhouses are typically smaller in Lenox the ratio is decreased by half.

Future additional water and sewer demand is also calculated on the estimated household size multiplied 75 gallons per person per day. This method is consistent with actual metered usage for residences per data from the Lenox DPW.

There is still the potential for development along existing roads and also the real possibility that new homes would be accessed by private roads. For potential new roads it is assumed that 70% of new units would be served by new subdivision roads. A general ratio of 60% of frontage requirements in each district was multiplied by the number of potential lots to project a volume of potential new subdivision roads. The ratio for apartments and townhouses is split by half since many will use shared driveways and entrances.

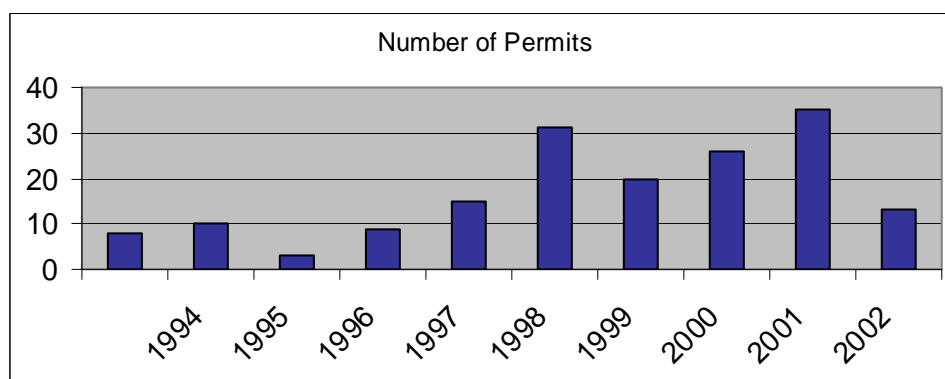
## Summary Results

Additional Residents	8,050
Additional Residential Units	
District R-15	210
District R-1A	3,355
District R-30	40
District R-3A	87
Total	3,693
Additional School Children	1,108
Additional Developable Land Area (sq.ft.)	168,168,179
Additional Commercial/Industrial Buildable Floor Area (sq.ft.)	2,453,961
Additional Water Demand (gallons/day)	
Residential	596,665
Commercial/Industrial	184,047
Additional Solid Waste (tons/yr)	3,220

## Impact of Development

Using the revised Build Out figures above, this study seeks to estimate the annual impact of development in order to better understand how to plan for these additions. To set a trend of development the number of building permits were tracked over a ten year period (see chart). Over the last ten years, the town has averaged 17 residential building permits per year. The highest peak occurred in 2002 with 35 permits issued in that year.

**Chart 1 – Number of Permits**



Based on 17 permits per year, this study has determined that it would take 217 years to reach absolute buildout. However, it has been proven that the number of permits issues annually will not stay stagnant and many town officials believe they will actually begin to rise. Based on this assumption, this study looks at three development scenarios to reach buildout:

- Low      Add an additional 1 permit per year to the previous year total for ten years
- Medium    Add an additional 3 permits per year to the previous year total for ten years
- High      Add an additional 6 permits per year to the previous year total for ten years

The growth rates are based on a conservative assumption that each year the town will issue an increase of one, three or six additional permits from the previous year. These rates are derived

from the rate of occurrence of additional permits issued since 1994. While the town believes that residential growth will continue town representatives believe that the number of permits will hit an average permit rate in ten years and continue at that rate to absolute buildout (Chart 2).

**Chart 2 – Permit Projection**

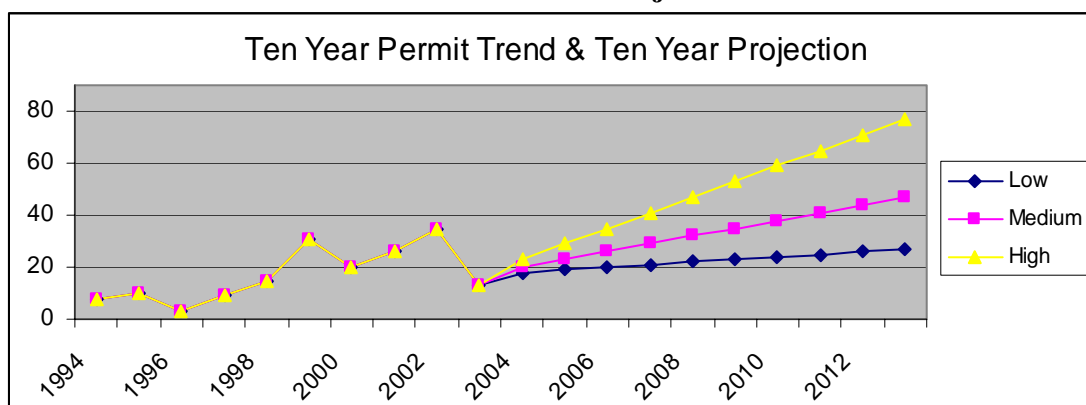


Table 1 illustrates the revised prediction for reaching absolute buildout. According to the Table buildout will occur between 51 and 138 years. During that time period the town can expect between 27 and 77 residential permits per year. Again these calculations do not take into account the addition of apartments or townhouses.

**Table 1 – Build Out at Low, Medium & High Projections**

Build Out	3,693 New Residential Units		
	<b>Years to reach absolute Build Out</b>	<b>Average # of permits per year</b>	
Low	138	27	
Medium	81	47	
High	51	77	

For each of the growth rates the annual number of new water usage, new students and new roads. These figures are calculated based on the ratio of annual permits to total buildout. The annual average (see Table 3) is determined by dividing the total buildout by the number of years to reach absolute buildout as listed in Table 1. These figures in Table 3 demonstrate the cumulative annual burden for all new households.

**Table 2 – Low, Medium High Annual Projections**  
**Annual Averages**                      **Low**                      **Medium**                      **High**

Water Use (GPD)	4,310	7,326	11,595
Solid Waste (Tons)	23	40	63
Additional Students	8	14	22
New Roads (miles)	0.24	0.41	0.65

BRPC population projections indicate that while the population for Lenox has been declining in the last few decades a recovering will begin.

**Table 3 – Population Projections, 2000-2030**

BRPC Population Projections					
	2000	2010	2020	2030	2000-2030
Lenox	5,077	5,235	5,746	6,519	28%

### Summary and Commentary

It is not known how much development will actually occur before the undeveloped, potentially developable, land supply is effectively exhausted. Using the revised Build Out and the calculations for annual analysis burden, the town can expect to add between 225 (low) and 500 (high) new residential units in ten years. The impacts on these new units should be further evaluated based on the location of the buildable land related to the location and condition of roads, sewer lines, transit service, and school capacity. According Table 4 the assessed values of land categories has continued to rise.

The largest amount of developable land is located in the R-1A district. In fact, this study has determined that there is a potential for approximately 3,355 new residential units to be located in this district. The OSRD bylaw allows for greatest density provided project sets aside a portion of the lot as permanently protected land.

The large route 7/20 Commercial zone has a large amount of potentially developable land. Zoning has been adjusted for this area to reduce high traffic generating retail/service uses. This area needs to be monitored carefully. If build-out were to occur, among other things, traffic would be a definite problem. However, it would be difficult to image that the special permit requirements could continue to be met leading to a point of buildout without very significant regional transportation improvements (contrary to the history and nature of the Berkshires). Also, if this zone was further restricted at this point, it might have negative economic consequences.

Lastly, the development of apartments and townhouses in the R-15, C-3A, and C-1A districts will have a profound impact on the town's community character and ability to provide adequate services. However, these types of developments may be the only feasible mechanism for providing affordable housing types in the future. Thus, great care should be taken when considering amending regulations to provide for this type of development.



	Existing Buildable Land Area (Sq. Ft.)	Yield Acres	Lots	Dwell. Units/ Lot	Dwell. Units	Building Coverage	Comm./Ind. Total Area (Sq. Ft.)	Water Use (GPD)	Municipal Solid Waste (tons)	Additional Students	New Res. Subdivision Roads (miles)
<b><u>RESIDENTIAL</u></b>											
District R-15 Developable Area:											
Total Including Partially Constrained Areas	4,046,895	93	210	1.00	210			34,407	235.3	63	1.42
District R-1A Developable Area:											
Total Including Partially Constrained Areas	138,390,111	3,177	2,542	1.32	3,355			548,528	2,842.4	1,006	30.33
District R-30 Developable Area:											
Total Including Partially Constrained Areas	1,492,896	34	40	1.00	40			6,590	45.1	12	0.40
District R-3A Developable Area:											
Total Including Partially Constrained Areas	13,426,541	308	87	1.00	87			7,139	97.7	26	1.39
<b>TOTAL RESIDENTIAL</b>	<b>157,356,443</b>	<b>3,612</b>	<b>2,880</b>		<b>3,693</b>			<b>596,665</b>	<b>3,220.5</b>	<b>1,108</b>	<b>33.54</b>
<b><u>NON-RESIDENTIAL</u></b>											
District C-3A Developable Area:											
Total Including Partially Constrained Areas	6,604,597	51				0.40	2,377,655	178,324			
District C-1A Developable Area:											
Total Including Partially Constrained Areas	2,078,704	48				0.40	748,333	56,125			
District C Developable Area:											
Total Including Partially Constrained Areas	57,140	1				0.90	51,426	3,857			
District I Developable Area:											
Total Including Partially Constrained Areas	2,071,295	24				0.35	652,458	48,934			
<b>TOTAL NON-RESIDENTIAL</b>	<b>10,811,736</b>	<b>123</b>					<b>3,829,872</b>	<b>287,240</b>			
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>168,168,179</b>	<b>3,736</b>	<b>2,880</b>		<b>3,693</b>		<b>3,829,872</b>	<b>883,905</b>	<b>3,220</b>	<b>1,108</b>	<b>33.54</b>

<b><u>ALTERNATE RESIDENTIAL</u></b>	<b>Existing Buildable Land Area (Sq. Ft.)</b>	<b>Yield Acres</b>	<b>Lots</b>	<b>Dwell. Units/ Lot</b>	<b>Townhouse/A part units</b>	<b>Floor Area Ratio</b>	<b>Comm./Ind. Total Area (Sq. Ft.)</b>	<b>Water Use (GPD)</b>	<b>Municipal Solid Waste (tons)</b>	<b>Additional Students</b>	<b>New Res. Subdivision Roads (miles)</b>
District R-15 Developable Area:											
Alternate Scenario - Townhouses	4,046,895	93	210	1.00	210.00			31,500	215.46	32	0.71
Alternate Scenario - Apartments	4,046,895	93	210	1.50	315.00			47,250	323.19	47	0.71
District C-3A Developable Area:											
Alternate Scenario - Townhouses	6,604,597	51	43	8.00	343.99			6,450	352.93	52	0.34
Alternate Scenario - Apartments	6,604,597	51	43	12.00	515.98			6,450	529.40	77	0.34
District C-1A Developable Area:											
Alternate Scenario - Townhouses	2,078,704	48	38	2.67	101.80			15,271	104.45	15	0.23
Alternate Scenario - Apartments	2,078,704	48	38	4.00	152.71			22,906	156.68	23	0.23

Notes: (see narrative and attachments for further explanation)

Residential dwelling units/lot ratio calculated as 32% higher than SF density in R-1A using 30,000 SF/unit.

To account for roads, odd shaped lots, etc., residential lot calculation is 85% of density for R-3A, 80% for R-1A, 81% for R-30, and 78% for R-15.

To account for roads, commercial/industrial areas (shown in Total Square Footage column) are calculated at 90% (with the exception of District C - no reduction).

Potential res. water use calculation 75 GPD/per person multiplied by projected household size (estimated at 2.18 in 2010); commercial/industrial calculation 75 GPD/per 1000 SF building area.

Potential res. water use calculation reduced by 50% for R-3 Area (much land unlikely to be serviced by public water).

Potential additional students calculated at .3 per residential unit.

New res. subdivision road calculation uses zoning frontage rqmt. multiplied by # of lots multiplied at a reduced ratio (42%) for double loading, use of existing roads, and private roads.

Alternative Scenarios - These include more intense residential uses in the R-15, C-1A & C-3A districts

Residential dwelling units/lots calculated at a minimum of 15,000 sqft of land area for townhouses and 10,000 sqft of land area for apartments

To account for roads, odd shaped lots, etc., residential lot calculation is 85% of density for C-3A, 80% for C-1A, and 78% for R-15.

Water and Solid waste estimates calculated on a smaller projected household size (2.00).

Potential res. water use calculation 75 GPD/per person multiplied by projected household size; commercial/industrial calculation 75 GPD/per 1000 SF building area.

Potential additional students calculated at .15 per residential unit.

New res. sub road calc uses zoning frontage rqmt. multiplied by # of lots multiplied at a reduced ratio (42%) for double loading, use of existing roads, and private roads times .5 to account for density.

# **Appendix A.4**

## **Community Preservation Act**

### **Toolbox**

# ***Community Preservation Act Answers To Frequently Asked Questions***

On September 14, 2000, former Governor Paul Cellucci and Lieutenant Governor Jane Swift signed the Community Preservation Act into law. This landmark statute, now codified in the Massachusetts General Laws as Chapter 44B, provides Massachusetts cities and towns with an additional tool to conserve open space, preserve historic buildings and sites, and provide affordable housing. The following are some commonly asked questions and answers on the Community Preservation Act.



## **What is the Community Preservation Act?**

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is an enabling statute that provides the authority for communities to establish a local Community Preservation Fund that derives its revenue primarily from a surcharge on the community's local property tax. The Act allows communities to create, by local referendum, a local CP Fund financed by a surcharge of up to 3% of the local property tax. Monies accrued in the local CP Fund are to be spent on open space, historic preservation, and low and moderate income housing, with at least 10% of the annual receipts going to each category and the remaining 70% for one or more of these three purposes in accordance with local priorities. The Act also establishes a state matching fund to provide matching funds to communities and increase the dollars that can be spent on Community Preservation. The state matching fund is expected to raise approximately \$26 million annually.

## ***Local implementation***

### **How does my community authorize a referendum to establish a local CP Fund?**

There are two methods: First, the local legislative body (City Council, Board of Aldermen, Town Council, Town Meeting, etc.) can vote to place the question of adopting the Community Preservation Act before the voters as a referendum at least 35 days before the next city or town election or at least 60 days before the next state election;

Second, if the legislative body does not adopt the CPA language at least 90 days before a city or town's regular election or 120 days before a state election, then a petition signed by 5% of the registered voters in the community can be filed with the registrars to place the question before the voters.

Certification of the signatures must occur "more than 35 days" before the next regular city or town election or "more than 60 days" before the state election. Since the law allows the registrar to have 7 days, "after receipt of such petition," to review the petition and certify its signatures, petitions must be submitted to registrars between 44 and 89 days before the next city or town election and between 69 and 119 days before the next state election.



*The timeline to the right outlines these critical dates for filing a petition. Even if the petition process is underway, the legislative body may vote to place the CPA on the ballot up to 35 days in advance of a local election and up to 60 days in advance of a state election.*

Regardless of which method the community utilizes to authorize the referendum, the Community Preservation Act will be adopted if the referendum passes by a majority vote.

### **What does the referendum question look like?**

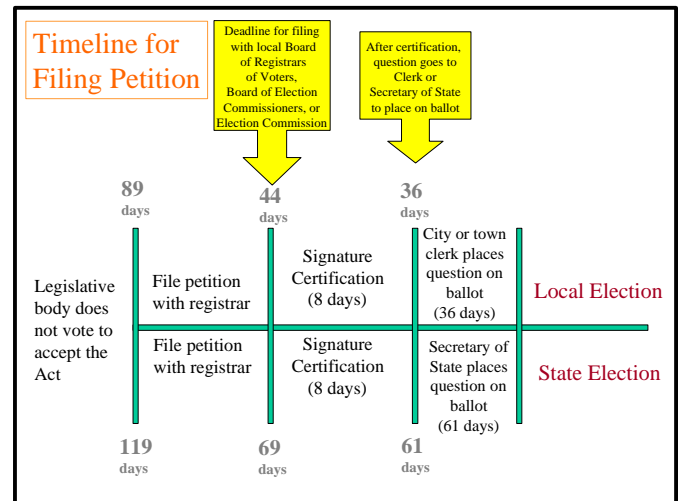
If approved by the legislative body the question shall read:

*Shall (city or town) accept sections 3 to 7 inclusive of Chapter 44B of the General Laws, as approved by its legislative body, a summary of which appears below?*

If placed on the ballot by petition, the question shall read:

*Shall (city or town) accept sections 3 to 7, inclusive of chapter 44B of the General Laws, as proposed by a petition signed by at least 5% of the registered voters of this city or town, a summary of which appears below?*

In either case, the question shall be followed by a fair and concise summary and purpose of the Community Preservation Act, the percentage amount of the surcharge and the exemptions as allowed by law. The Secretary of State's Office and the Department of Revenue have created various draft versions of this language, which are located on the world wide web. Look for links to these documents in the Web Resources section of this CPA Tool Kit.



## **Surcharges, Exemptions, and Funding Estimations**

### **Do funds raised through the CPA in a community stay in my community?**

Yes. Funds collected by one community will be set aside in a local CP Fund, and expended as determined by each community. Matching funds from the state matching fund will also be distributed to participating communities and set aside in their local CP Fund for expenditure based on local decisions.

### **How much money would my community receive for Community Preservation if we adopted the Community Preservation Act locally?**

For an estimate of how much money your community would receive if it passed a local referendum to establish a CP Fund (with no exemptions), please refer to the *Estimated Annual Funding for Community Preservation Efforts* document later in this publication. The community would also receive a state match ranging from a minimum of 5%\* to a maximum of 100% of the monies received through the surcharge for the fiscal year ending each June 30. If the community adopts the maximum 3% surcharge, it becomes eligible for the Equity Distribution and the

Surplus Distribution (discussed below) that will increase the total match received by a community unless or until the total amount from the state match reaches 100% of the funds raised by a community through the surcharge.

### **How much will the surcharge be on my property tax?**

The law allows a community to adopt a surcharge greater than zero and up to 3% of the local property tax. This surcharge may vary in each community depending upon its needs and goals.

### **What does this mean for the taxpayer?**

If a taxpayer's property is assessed at \$200,000 and the municipal tax rate is \$16.00 per \$1,000, then \$3,200 is owed in taxes. If the community adopts the Community Preservation Act without any exemptions ...

...at a 3% surcharge, the taxpayer would pay an additional \$96 ( $3200 * .03$ )

...at a 2% surcharge, the taxpayer would pay an additional \$64 ( $3200 * .02$ )

...at a 1% surcharge, the taxpayer would pay an additional \$32 ( $3200 * .01$ ) toward the local CP Fund.

### **Are there any exemptions to this surcharge?**

Yes. All exemptions and abatements of real property authorized under M.G.L. c. 59 or any other law (such as those for the blind, disabled, veterans, or the elderly) shall not be affected by the Community Preservation Act. Therefore, taxpayers who receive an exemption of real property tax pursuant to M.G.L. c. 59 or any other law will also be exempt from the surcharge. If a taxpayer receives an abatement pursuant to M.G.L. c. 59 or any other law, the surcharge shall be reduced in proportion to the amount of the abatement. In addition, a community may choose to exempt the following: \$100,000 of the value of each taxable residential parcel, property owned and occupied by persons who qualify for low income, or low or moderate income senior housing, and commercial or industrial properties in cities or towns with classified tax rates.

### **Can you illustrate the impact of the \$100,000 residential property exemption on the taxpayer?**

In the case of a community that adopts this exemption if a house were valued at \$200,000, then the surcharge would be collected based on \$100,000 of the value of this parcel (See calculation to the right). If a house were valued at \$80,000, no surcharge would be collected.

### **Could a community offer a residential exemption of less than \$100,000?**

No. The exemptions must be implemented as indicated in the Act and cannot be modified. In other words, communities can offer a \$100,000 exemption on residential parcels, but not a \$75,000 exemption.

#### What does that mean for the taxpayer?

Assessed Housing Value	\$200,000
* <u>With \$100,000 exemption</u>	\$100,000
Net House Value Surcharged	\$100,000
Municipal Tax Rate	\$16.00
<hr/>	
Amount Subject to Surcharge	\$1,600
CPA Surcharge	.03%
<hr/>	
Amount paid toward CPA Fund	\$48

Based on this scenario, \$48 would be paid into the Community Preservation Trust Fund

### **Can a community exempt businesses in part, such as the first \$100,000 in value?**

A community with a classified tax rate can exempt commercial/industrial parcels completely, but not in part. Likewise, a community may offer a low and moderate income exemption, but cannot offer an exemption solely to low income residents. While the exemptions cannot be amended, a

community can adopt or repeal an exemption at any time after passage of the Act as long as the repeal or adoption follows the same procedures as for the adoption of the Act.

## ***Community Preservation Committee***

### **What is the composition of the Community Preservation Committee?**

The Community Preservation Committee will consist of between 5 and 9 members as determined by each municipality through the passage of a local bylaw or ordinance creating the Committee. The Committee must include one member (designated by the Board, Commission, or Authority) from each of the following:

Conservation Commission, Historic Commission, Planning Board, Board of Park Commissioners, and Housing Authority. The local ordinance or bylaw that creates the Committee should specify the number of members, method of selection for optional members (elected, appointed or combination), length of term, and the names of parties “acting in the capacity of” or “performing like duties” of the boards designated should these entities not exist in the community. A representative may be appointed to “perform like duties” only in the absence of one of the boards or committees stated by the Act.



### **What are the duties of the Community Preservation Committee?**

The Committee is required to conduct, in consultation with local boards and commissions, a study of the city or town’s Community Preservation needs. It must hold at least one public hearing.

The Committee will make recommendations to the local legislative body for use of monies in the local CP Fund. At least 10% of the monies must be used for each of the categories: open space, historic preservation, and affordable housing, allowing the community flexibility to spend the remaining 70% within any or all of these 3 categories. The Committee may make recommendations about the acquisition, creation, and preservation of open space and/or land for recreational use; the acquisition and preservation of historic resources; and the creation, preservation and support of community housing. The Committee shall also make recommendations about the rehabilitation or restoration of such open space, historic resources, land for residential use, and affordable housing that is acquired or created pursuant to the Act.

The Act also requires the Committee to recommend, whenever possible, the use of existing buildings or construction of new buildings on previously developed sites for affordable housing.

Finally, the Committee is responsible for keeping accurate records of the Committee’s recommendations and actions by the legislative body, as well as how and where the CPA funds are spent. The Act also allows communities to spend up to 5% of the local CP Fund on the administration and operation costs of the Committee.

### **Can our community establish a Community Preservation Committee before we adopt the CPA?**

A community may establish a Community Preservation Committee as it establishes other committees within the community. However, the established committee cannot act as the

committee referenced in the Act until the Act is adopted locally and the community adopts a bylaw or ordinance, as referenced in the CPA, establishing the committee, its membership, and its terms. The community may wish, when adopting the initial committee by bylaw or ordinance, to put in that bylaw or ordinance language which indicates that upon adoption of the CPA, the committee being established shall be known as the Community Preservation Committee pursuant to the CPA.

**If the referendum is considered at a local election, could a municipality create the Community Preservation Committee at the same time?**

The Committee cannot be created by ballot but must be passed through a bylaw or ordinance by Town Meeting or City Council respectively. Passage of the bylaw or ordinance can be either before or after the referendum vote. See the previous question for establishing the committee before the vote.

***Local Administrative Procedures***

**Can the administrative funds provided for in the Act be used to cover assessor and tax collector costs associated with implementing the Act?**

The Act indicates that the 5% administrative costs provision is for the activities of the Community Preservation Committee only. Thus, CPA funds cannot pay for software, staff, or other costs, even those related to CPA implementation, accrued by other local government entities.



**What is the relationship between the Community Preservation Committee and the local legislative body?**

The Community Preservation Committee is charged with making recommendations to the local legislative body for the use of CPA funds. The local legislative body may reduce or eliminate the amount of funds recommended by the Committee for a specific project. However, the local legislative body may not determine their own projects and apply CPA funds to those projects. All expenditures of the CPA funds must first be recommended by the Community Preservation Committee and then approved by the local legislative body.

A community can appropriate funds for programs or activities without requiring the local legislative body to approve individual expenditures if the Community Preservation Committee recommends and the legislative body approves the allocation of funds to a local preservation revolving fund, housing program or for certain specified kinds of projects.

**What happens if the local legislative body does not approve projects recommended by the Community Preservation Committee?**

The money that would have gone to these projects would revert to the local CP Fund pending another recommendation by the Community Preservation Committee for the use of the funds. Recognize that if these funds were used to meet the 10% requirement for one of the three required uses, then the funds would need to be allocated again for that purpose.



**If Town Meeting (or City Council) must approve every expenditure, and town meetings are held one or two times per year, how do we handle allowable costs such as ongoing rental assistance to low or moderate income residents?**

This situation would have to be handled the way all other expenditures in the town are handled. Most likely the community would approve the use of funds for a program and authorize a local governing body (such as a Housing Authority) to handle the selection of eligible parties and the allocation of funds, avoiding the necessity to have a Town Meeting vote on every rental agreement. Note that the CPA committee itself does not need to administer these types of programs.

**What can the administrative monies (up to 5% of the local CP Fund) be used for?**

The Act allows up to 5% of the annual CPA funds to be spent on “administration and operation” of the Community Preservation Committee. Neither the Community Preservation Act nor the DOR guidance provides further instruction on the use of the administrative money. Therefore, the use of this funding is subject to interpretation by the community. Recognize that many responsibilities of the Community Preservation Committee, such as assessing housing needs, inventorying historic properties and open space sites for acquisition, or maintaining a list of properties acquired with local CP Fund dollars will need to be the primary focus of administrative funding available to the local Community Preservation Committee. Note also that the fund is not automatic and is subject to annual approval by the local legislative body.

## ***Community Preservation Fund***

**What can be deposited in the local CP Fund?**

The following may be deposited into the local CP Fund:

- Funds collected from the property tax surcharge;
- Funds received from the Commonwealth or any other source for Community Preservation purposes;
- Proceeds from bonds issued in anticipation of the local CP Fund revenue;
- Proceeds from the disposal of property acquired with funds from the local CP Fund;
- Damages, penalties, costs, or interest recovered by the city or town for damage to real property purchased with community preservation funds.



**If a town receives property for nonpayment of taxes and it is auctioned off, can the obtained funds be put in the local CP Fund?**

No. Established procedures indicate where funds will go for nonpayment of taxes. [Note that Massachusetts General law requires that such proceeds from nonpayment of taxes shall be applied towards those delinquent taxes. If there is money remaining after the payment of taxes, it is possible that the community may direct surplus funds to the local CP Fund. The local CP Fund can accept funds received from the Commonwealth or any other source (such as the general funds of a community) for Community Preservation purposes.]

**What effect will the CPA have on appropriations to the Massachusetts Historic Preservation Projects Fund, Self help, etc?**

It should have no effect.



## ***Spending the Local CP Fund***

### **How can my community use its community preservation dollars?**

The Act specifies that 10% of the monies must be spent in each of the three following categories: open space, historic preservation, and affordable housing (see below for specifics). The remaining 70% of funds can be spent in any or all of the three categories in accordance with a community's particular priorities. The community may also "bank" money raised in one year to be spent in a later year or bond against the revenue stream of the CPA. Up to 5% of the monies can be spent on the administration and operation of the Community Preservation Committee.

### **Are there any restrictions on the use of the local CP Fund?**

- At least 10% of the funds must be spent on each of three categories (open space, historic preservation, and affordable housing).
- Monies cannot be spent on maintenance.
- Monies cannot replace existing operating funds.
- Monies from the Fund may be expended anywhere in Massachusetts. For example, the community may wish to purchase watershed land to protect their water supply that resides in a neighboring town.
- The local legislative body may authorize no more than 5% of the annual Fund revenues for administration and operation of the Community Preservation Committee.

### **Does the 10% minimum in each of the categories include only the funds raised through the local surcharge or do the state matching funds also need to be expended based on these minimum requirements?**

All money that goes into the town's local CP Fund must be spent according to the 10% minimum requirements for each of the three categories.

### **Can CPA funds be used to pay for properties acquired prior to the passage of the CPA at the local level?**

No. To do so would be to replace existing operating funding, which is prohibited under the Act. Fund revenues must be used to pay debt service only on borrowing that was specifically authorized under the CPA.

### **Once a community acquires property through the local CP Fund, does the community have to own and manage it?**

Real property interests acquired through the local CP Fund must be owned by a city or town. Property may be managed by the city or town itself through the Conservation Commission, Historical Commission, Board of Park Commissioners, Housing Authority, Water District, Fire District or other local authority, board, or commission. Property management may also be delegated to a non-profit organization.

### **Can CPA funds be used on properties already owned by a community?**

Yes. Creation and preservation of open space and land for recreational use; preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of historic resources; and creation, preservation and support of community housing are permissible on properties already owned by a community. However, contrary to prior advice provided to communities (based on guidance from the Department of Revenue) recent correspondence (March 28, 2002) from the Department of Revenue indicates that restoration or renovation of properties already owned by a community is **NOT** permissible.

Pending legislation would amend the CPA to allow the restoration and/or renovation of properties that were not acquired or created with CPA funds.

### **Can communities issue bonds in anticipation of future monies projected for the local CP Fund?**

Yes. Communities may issue bonds in anticipation of local CP Fund receipts. Communities are encouraged to work together to issue bonds to limit administrative costs through retention of common bond counsel and insurance and other means. A community may not pay for debt servicing of previous bonds or debts regardless of whether that bond or debt meets the requirements of CPA expenditures.

### **What is a community's debt obligation if it uses the local CP Fund to pay for debt service under a loan?**

The Act stipulates that the surcharge must remain in place until all "obligations are discharged." This means that unless the town obligates alternative funding to pay the debt, the surcharge must remain in place. A town may use any variety of options to pay down the debt, but until that obligation is discharged, the surcharge must remain in place. New appropriations of CPA funds must not interfere with existing debt servicing payments. If the town finds a way to remove debt obligations from the local CP Fund, then the Committee is free to recommend alternative projects to the Town Meeting.

### **What is the difference between maintenance and preservation?**

While preservation is defined in the Act there are no clear guidelines on the distinction. It helps to think of maintenance costs as those expenditures that are usually considered operating expenses; and to think of restoration or preservation costs as those that are typically capital expenses. Note: Communities cannot replace existing operating funds with CPA dollars.

### **Can brownfield sites or other already developed sites be remediated or otherwise converted from a developed use to another use with CPA funds?**

Since the Act specifically addresses "restoration" and "creation," CPA funds can be used for brownfields redevelopment or conversion of other previously developed sites as long as the final result is an open space or recreational use, community housing, or historic preservation consistent with the CPA.

## ***Meeting the Act's Spending Requirements***

### ***Open Space***

CPA funds may be used to purchase land, easements, or restrictions to protect existing and future water supply areas, agricultural and forest land, coastal lands, frontage to inland water bodies, wildlife habitat, nature preserves, and scenic vistas. The Act requires that 10% of the CPA funds must be spent on these open space categories.

### ***Recreational Use***

Land for recreational use falls under the open space component of the Act. Land can be purchased for active and passive recreational uses, including land for community gardens, trails, non-commercial youth and adult sports, parks, playgrounds, or



athletic fields. Funds cannot be used for land used for horse or dog racing, a stadium, a gymnasium or a similar structure such as a pool or ice rink. If the community is only spending 10% of its funds on open space, then the funds cannot be used for recreation.

**In the event the town has an ongoing financial commitment at the time it adopts the CPA, such as an installment purchase of open space, can the community subsequently approve appropriations of CPA funds to that commitment, e.g., finish paying the installments on the land?**

No, the Act specifies that a municipality cannot supplant existing operating funds or obligated project funds with CPA funds whether they are on debt service, operating budgets, or previously approved and obligated capital improvement projects. The spirit of the CPA is to create a fund for new projects.

**If a community already owns land upon which it wishes to build a new playground or park, can it use money from the local CP Fund?**

If the playground or park is brand new construction, yes (creation of a recreational use). (Note that the mandatory 10% of the funds that must be spent in the open space category cannot be used for recreational purposes.) However, maintenance, restoration, or renovation of an existing playground, park, or other recreational parcel is not permitted using CPA money.

**To what extent can CPA funds be used to develop lands which are presently undeveloped but already owned by the community?**

As long as the funds are used for an approved purpose, and the land in question is not restricted to another use, funds can be used to develop parcels already owned by a municipality. For example, if the town owns land that is not held for conservation purposes then it could use CPA funds to develop the land for affordable housing or active recreational use.

**Does land acquired with CPA funds need to be permanently protected or can it be developed in the future?**

Real property interests acquired through the Act must be permanently deed restricted to the purpose for which they were acquired.



### ***Historic Preservation***

CPA funds may be used to purchase, restore and rehabilitate historic structures and landscapes that have been determined by the local historic preservation commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of a city or town or that are listed or eligible for listing on the state register of historic places.

**Does a property have to be in a historic district to qualify for the use of CPA funds?**

Rehabilitation of private structures is possible and is a matter for consideration by each local Community Preservation Committee. It is strongly suggested that communities require a deed restriction on privately held historic properties as a condition of receiving public funding



assistance to ensure that the property is maintained in its historic status and to ensure that projects that make use of CPA funds have sufficient public benefit.

**Can CPA money be used to restore privately owned historic properties?**

If recognized as historically significant by the local Historic Commission (or listed or eligible for listing on the state register of historic places), nominated by the local Community Preservation Committee for funding, and approved by the local legislative body, a privately owned historic structure can be restored with CPA funds as long as sufficient public benefit is realized, such as through the acquisition of a deed restriction.

**Does the Act require that rehabilitation or restoration of historic resources meet a certain standard?**

With respect to historic resources, rehabilitation shall have the additional meaning of work to comply with the Standards for Rehabilitation stated in the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties codified in 36 C.F.R. Part 68. It is recommended that communities use the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, which is available from the National Parks Service web site:

[http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/standguide/overview/choose\\_treat.htm](http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/standguide/overview/choose_treat.htm)

**Can CPA funds be used for projects that combine historic preservation with providing affordable housing or protecting open space?**

Yes, conversion of historic structures, such as mills or schools, to affordable housing is a potential use of CPA funds.

**What is the process for funding a Community Preservation project?**

Those interested in seeing CPA funds used on particular projects must bring them to the attention of the local Community Preservation Committee, which would weigh its options and prioritize projects for funding.

**Can we use CPA funds for properties that are not eligible for the State Register of Historic Places?**

Yes. In the event that the local Historic Commission determines that a property is significant to the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of a city or town, then CPA funds can also be used for that site.



**What are the criteria for listing on the State Register of Historic Places?**

Properties are included on the State Register if they are: listed in or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; within local historic districts; local, state, or national landmarks; state archeological landmarks; or properties with preservation restrictions.

Criteria for the listing of culture districts, sites, buildings, objects, and structures under the National Register of Historic Places include:

- Quality of significance in American history, architecture, engineering, or culture

- Possession of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association
- Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
- Association with the lives of persons significant in our past
- Embodiment of distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction
- Likelihood of yielding information significant in history or prehistory

Generally speaking, properties must be 50 years old to be eligible, although exceptions are made for properties that have achieved significance within the last 50 years. More information on the State and National Registers of Historic Properties is available from the Massachusetts Historic Commission or your local historic commission.



### **Affordable Housing**

CPA funds may be used to create, preserve and support community housing defined as housing for low and moderate income individuals and families, including low or moderate income senior housing. The Act requires the Committee to recommend, wherever possible, the adaptive reuse of existing buildings or construction of new buildings on previously developed sites.

*Note: Individual and family incomes shall be based on the area wide median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Low income is defined as an annual income of less than 80% of the area wide median income. Moderate income is defined as less than 100% of the area wide median income. Low or moderate senior income is defined as low or moderate income for persons over 60.*

**If the town purchases property for development of affordable housing ( or preservation of open space or protection of historic resources) can the property be sold in the future or does the town always need to be owner/landlord?**

If the town purchases land or properties for the purpose of providing affordable housing (or protecting open space or preserving historic resources) these properties can later be sold as long as they are deed restricted to "the purpose for which they were acquired." This will enable the use of the local CP Fund as a revolving fund rather than a "one-time-use" funding source.

Communities acquiring property that they wish to dispose of in the future should authorize this disposal at the time of acquisition. See EOEA's deed restriction guidance for further information.

**How do communities determine the low and moderate income limits that apply to the provision of housing using CPA funds?**

Individual and family incomes are to be based on the area wide median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

- Low income is defined as an annual income of less than 80% of the area wide median income.

- Moderate income is defined as less than 100% of the area wide median income.
- Low or moderate senior income is defined as low or moderate income for persons over 60.

A spreadsheet of the HUD limits that apply to each community is contained in this Community Preservation Act Tool Kit and available on EOEA's Community Preservation web site.

Note: These income limits are different from existing program income guidelines such as Section 8, CDBG and HOME.

## ***The State Matching Fund***

### **Are state matching funds available?**

State matching funds are available to all communities that adopt the CPA locally. Distributions will be made to communities on October 15 of each year based upon the monies available in the state matching fund by June 30 of that same calendar year. Matching funds are distributed in three rounds: Match Distribution, Equity Distribution, and Surplus Distribution (explained below). The first distribution round was held on October 15, 2002 and included all monies accrued by the state from 12/13/00 to 6/30/02 and collected by communities in Fiscal Year 2002.



### **How much money will the state match be on an annual basis?**

Approximately twenty-six million per year. However, for the first round because fees had accumulated over a longer period of time, having been collected since 12/13/2000, the total funding accumulated for distribution on October 15, 2002 was larger than in subsequent years when the funding is collected over only one fiscal year. In the event more money is available for distribution than is necessary to provide eligible communities a full match, then unexpended funds will accumulate (earning interest) for distribution in the next round. Thus, approximately \$26 million will accumulate annually for distribution, but under some circumstances the actual amount of money distributed may be greater or smaller.

### **Can the Department of Revenue use 5% of the state matching fund dollars for administrative purposes and if so what portion of its grant rounds would it take the money from?**

Yes, the Department of Revenue may use up to 5%. This money would be taken off the top of all of the state matching fund money before any of the grant rounds are made.

### **How is the first round Match Distribution calculated?**

The Match Distribution is the first round of state matching fund distribution. In this round, 80% of the monies in the state matching fund are distributed proportionally among the communities that have locally adopted the Act. The actual amount will vary depending on the number of communities drawing from the Fund. All communities will receive the same percentage, although the total dollars will vary depending on the amount raised by the community. If the first round Match Distribution equals 100% of funds raised through the surcharge by each community, there will be no additional rounds of distribution.

### **How is the second round Equity Distribution, calculated?**

Only communities that have adopted the maximum 3% surcharge will be eligible for the Equity Distribution. Distributions will be made in accordance with a Community Preservation Rank assigned to each community. (See below).

### **How is the Community Preservation Rank calculated?**

Determining the Equity Distribution Round is a six-step process.

Step one: Communities participating in the Equity Distribution Round are ranked from highest to lowest according to their equalized property valuation per capita ranking.

Step two: Communities are ranked by population from largest to smallest.

Step three: The community's rank in step one is added to the community's rank in step two. The sum is divided by 2 to receive the Community Preservation Raw Score.

Step four: Communities are ranked by the Community Preservation Raw Score from lowest to highest and are assigned a Community Preservation Rank from 1 to 351 (if all communities participate). If more than one community has the same Raw Score, the community with the higher equalized property value rank will receive the higher rank.

Step five: Communities are divided into deciles with approximately an equal number in each decile. Communities with the highest rank (i.e., largest number) shall be in the lowest decile category starting with decile 10. For example, Town A has a Community Preservation Rank of 1. Town B has a Community Preservation Rank of 351. Town B would be placed in the 10<sup>th</sup> decile.

Step six (Final Equity Round Match Calculation): Multiply the percentage assigned to the decile (see below) by the base figure. The base figure is determined by evenly dividing the total Equity Round funding by the number of eligible communities. For example, if \$5 million were available in the Equity Round and 20 communities passed the CPA at 3%, then the base figure would be \$250,000 ( $\$5,000,000 / 20 = \$250,000$ ). If your community is in Decile 3, your community would receive 120% of \$250,000 or \$300,000. By the same token, if your community is in Decile 9, it would receive 60% of \$250,000 or \$150,000. *The maximum state match (from all rounds) a community may receive is 100% of the funds raised locally through the surcharge.*





### Equity Distribution Deciles:

<u>Decile</u>	<u>% of the base figure</u>
Decile 1	140%
Decile 2	130%
Decile 3	120%
Decile 4	110%
Decile 5	100%
Decile 6	90%
Decile 7	80%
Decile 8	70%
Decile 9	60%
Decile 10	50%

#### **What is the third round Surplus Round?**

If funds remain after the Match Distribution, Equity Distribution and administrative expenses have been paid (up to 5% of the state matching fund), the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue may disperse a third round. Only those communities that have adopted the maximum 3% surcharge are eligible. Funds will be distributed according to the Equity Distribution formula.

#### **Does a community have to be in the program for the entire fiscal year to be eligible for matching fund distribution at the end of that year?**

No. The community does not have to be in the program for the entire fiscal year to be eligible for the match. However, the match is based on the monies collected from the surcharge, and the surcharge can only be imposed for a fiscal year already in progress if the tax commitment has not yet been set for that fiscal year. For example, if a town adopts the Act in the Spring it will be able to assess the surcharge at the beginning of the next fiscal year in July. In the case of Act approval at a November election the surcharge can be applied to the fiscal year in progress (through the remaining tax bills) if the tax commitment has not yet been made for the fiscal year, or it can be deferred until the beginning of the next fiscal year.

#### **How are the monies in the State Match Fund generated?**

The Community Preservation Act, M.G.L. c. 44B, created a state matching fund. The state matching fund contains the following: Community Preservation surcharge fees of approximately \$20 on each recording fee and \$10 on the recording of a municipal lien certificate, collected by the Registrar of Deeds and Assistant Recorders. Funds also come from public and private gifts, grants and donations, damages, penalties, costs or interest received on account of litigation or settlement for violation of Section 15 of the CPA or other monies credited or transferred to the state matching fund from any other fund or source.

## ***Relationship to other Community Preservation and EOEI Programs***

### **Is the CPA connected to any other funding opportunities from the state?**

If a community passes the CPA, then it will receive 10 bonus points in its application evaluation in EOEI's Self-Help and Urban Self-Help funding programs. These programs match community monies at 50% - 70% for open space and recreation acquisitions. CPA funds can also be used for the community match for state and federal matching programs.



**Appendix A.5**  
**Bylaw Amendment –**  
**Upper Apartments/Mixed Use**

## **Upper Story Apartments – Mixed Use Regulation**

Adopted ATM May 6, 2004

**Article A:** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Lenox Zoning Bylaw by making the following changes:

*Item 1:* Amend Section 6.6 Table of Use Regulations – A. Residential Uses by inserting a new use to be allowed by special permit in the R-15 and C districts, as follows:

	<u>R-15</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>S. Provisions</u>
12. Dwelling units located above the first story of a non-residential use	XA	XA	9.24 10.11

*Item 2:* Amend Section 9 Special Provisions by inserting a new section 9.24 Mixed Use Development, as follows:

### 9. 24 Mixed Use Development

Dwelling units may be located on premises which also include non-residential use, provided that all residential living areas are above the first story of a structure. If the gross floor area in residential exceeds that in non-residential use, lot area shall equal not less than 3,500 square feet per dwelling unit (no additional area required for the non-residential use). The minimum gross floor area for each dwelling unit shall be seven hundred (700) square feet.

or what it will do in relation thereto.



## **Appendix A.6**

# **Village Improvement Plan**

# VILLAGE TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AND STREETSCAPE DESIGN REPORT

Town of Lenox, Massachusetts

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**prepared for:**

**Town of Lenox, Massachusetts  
6 Walker Street  
Lenox, MA 01240**

**prepared by:**

**Berkshire Regional Planning Commission  
One Fenn Street, Suite 201  
Pittsfield, MA 01201**

**November 2003**

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## ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A – Lenox Transportation Management Study, Clough Harbour and Associates
- Attachment B – “Roundabouts: An Informational Guide” Summary, U.S. Dept. of Transportation
- Attachment C – Preliminary Lenox Village Lighting Plan, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
- Attachment D – Sample Information on Design Guidelines, Miscellaneous
- Attachment E – Sample Information on Signage Guidelines, Miscellaneous

## 1.0 Introduction

As part of the transportation and economic development elements of the Town of Lenox's Community Development Plan (CDP), the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), in conjunction with Clough Harbour and Associates (CHA), conducted a study of the village traffic flow, parking and streetscape design in the Village center. The Lenox Village area is defined as the area along Main Street (Route 7A) between Cliffwood Street and West Street, Walker Street to Kemble Street, Church Street to the end of Franklin Street. The study area is illustrated in Figure 1.

Lenox Village is the center of focus for many residents and visitors. In 1975, Main and Walker Streets were designated as a National Historic District in order to "promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places significant in the history of Lenox" (Section 1.1, Lenox Historic District Bylaw). Based on the goals and strategies of the 1999 Lenox Master Plan, this study seeks to aid in the long-term preservation of these local resources as well as provide for greater enhancements, such as the creation of specific design guidelines, parking improvements, pedestrian amenities and improved traffic flow.

The CDP study looked at current conditions for traffic flow and parking in the village, paying particular attention to seasonal influxes and peak transportation demand in response to regional attractions located within close proximity to the Lenox Village. The study also outlined parking standards and improved site design and streetscaping mechanisms for the safety, convenience and attractiveness of the Village while encouraging compatibility with the town's historic context. Overall the study strives to ensure that the Lenox Village will continue to be aesthetically pleasing and functionally sound.

In August 2002, Clough Harbour and Associates conducted traffic volume studies and parking lot inventories in and around the Village area. This information was then formulated into a transportation management plan. Following the creation of the draft report in March 2003, the Planning Board, working with members of the Historic District Commission, Select Board, Department of Public Works, Lenox Chamber of Commerce, and Tree Warden participated in a process to build consensus related to the needs and recommended actions for the Village area. The Steering Committee was further divided into two groups in order to work more in depth on two main topic areas. These two sub-categories are:

1. Traffic and Parking
2. Streetscape design and amenities

Based on the work on the sub-committees, the Village Steering Committee developed recommendations aimed to help alleviate growing traffic congestion, encourage improved usage of parking amenities, and create a uniform design for the preservation of the historic village. Currently, a Sub-Committee of the original Village Steering Committee has been formed to continue forward with the implementation elements identified in this plan. It will be their responsibility to further research and make recommendations to the Select Board, acting through the Town Manager's office, before any action on the implementation elements are conducted.





Figure 1 – Lenox Village Study Area



## 2.0 Traffic and Parking

Based on the survey and community visioning session held in connection with the development of the Master Plan, residents and business owners' greatest concerns were to maintain a safe flow of traffic throughout town and maintain adequate parking downtown. In order to better investigate these issues the town contracted with Clough Harbough and Associates to prepare data and technical analysis for the study area. In the Summer of 2002, Clough Harbour and Associates conducted field observations, data collection and analysis in order to document existing characteristics of the transportation system (See Attachment A). Information related to the following elements were collected:

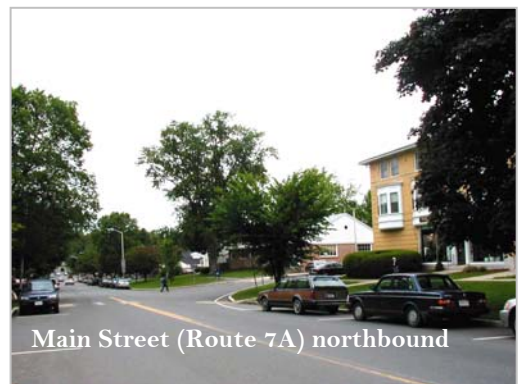
- Roadway Features
- Traffic Volumes and Classification
- Speed Limits and Travel Speeds
- Operating Conditions
- Parking Conditions

### 2.1 Traffic

CHA placed traffic counters at four intersections in the Village. These intersections included Franklin and Main Street; Church and Housatonic Streets; Walker and Church Streets; and West, Old Stockbridge Road, Main and Walker Streets. CHA determined that the intersections at Main and Franklin Streets; Church and Housatonic Streets; and Old Stockbridge Road, West, Main and Walker Streets, required improvements since these intersections operating at a Level of Service of C or less (see detailed analysis in the full report in Attachment A). Additionally, the Village Steering Committee is concerned about traffic flow at the intersection on Main Street with the Post Office entrance since they believe that similar conditions related to the Franklin Street intersection exist.

The Committee discussed options for alleviating congestion and traffic hazards at these intersections. The primary objective is to improve sight distances and traffic patterns in the core retail area. Specifically, it was suggested that the Housatonic (between Main and Church Streets), Franklin and Church Street undergo a more thorough investigation including a study on redirection, restricted turning movements and one way configurations.

The largest project discussed was the realignment of the Monument intersection at Main, Old Stockbridge Road, West, and Walker Streets. At a minimum the Committee agreed that



improved signage directing traffic is needed. A possible long-term solution proposed by CHA is the introduction of a roundabout at the monument intersection. Roundabouts can be considered for a variety of reasons of which the most important is safety. The modern roundabout is a type of circular intersection which follows a “yield-at-entry” rule, controlled access and low speeds (see Attachment B).

**Existing Conditions:**

The picture above demonstrates the existing stop and go intersection at the Monument Intersection.



**Long-term Option:**

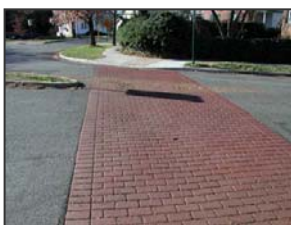
The picture to the right demonstrates a true roundabout configuration used to control traffic movements and speed.



Additionally, the Village Steering Committee is concerned with pedestrian access and transit access. Specifically, the Committee believes that linkages between parking areas, retail and other destinations should be developed and that protections or enhancements for pedestrians should be created. The following pedestrian protections have been identified:



- ✓ The use of Bulb-Outs” provide a safe area for pedestrians to wait to cross as well as chokes traffic lanes to reduce auto speed. Bulb-outs may not work at every intersection, however, considerations should be made for those that generate the greatest conflicts between pedestrians and motorists.



- ✓ The use of alternative materials, such as brick, concrete, or “stampcrete” at crosswalks can also alert drivers to the existence of pedestrians. This same material should be incorporated in the sidewalk to road transition area.



- ✓ The installation of designated bike lanes for the safe maneuvering of bicyclists and motorists. These lanes should also be considered for installation in outlying areas in order to provide access to the Village.

Lastly, the Committee is interested in working out details for a transit route that would run during the summer for events. The Lenox Chamber of Commerce has begun conversations with representatives from Tanglewood and the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority to determine if it would be feasible to run a shuttle between Tanglewood, the village and out laying parking lots. In time it might be possible to link this service to the Lenox Shops redevelopment project.

## 2.2 Parking



A parking inventory and utilization study were conducted for the on-street and off-street parking in order to classify the characteristics of the type of hourly utilization. Based on this study, it was determine by CHA that on-street and off-street parking facilities located within the core retail district were at or above capacity while off-street parking facilities, such as the municipal lot, were less than 25% of capacity. Based on the number and utilization survey conducted it seems that there is not a parking need but rather a need for better identification, coordination and management.

Initial steps identified by the Village Committee include improved signage to direct out-of-town traffic to public lots. Specially, the Committee feels that the international “P” symbol should be incorporated in the signage design to improve universal identification. All efforts should be made to ensure that any parking or directional signage be in keeping with the Historic District Commission’s signage design guidelines. Further, the Committee believes that the Town should work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop a map of the Village that would locate parking locations as well as other attractions. Additionally, the Committee encourages the Town to work with the Chamber of Commerce in educating and instructing business owners and employees of businesses located in the Village to park in municipal lots as a means to free up lots and on-street spaces in the core.



Lastly, the Committee suggests that the Town consider long-term parking solutions be investigated through the coordination and negotiation with abutting property owners and developers. Public parking, at least for event and seasonal attractions, provided signage and enforcement is made clear, could be made available within close proximity to the Village core. Parking solutions should be implemented progressively or step by step in order to monitor progress and impact. Longer term capital improvements to improve parking issues should be carefully studied through the development of feasibility and cost-evaluation studies.



### 3.0 Streetscape Design and Street Amenities

#### 3.1 Lighting

The first element of streetscape amenities is the system of streetlight poles and fixtures. While the current lighting system in Lenox Village is adequate the goal of this study is to propose additions that would aid in better defining the area as an historic and quaint New England downtown. In doing this, it is the recommendation of the Committee that historic light poles and appropriate fixtures be used along Main, Church and Walker Streets. A more complete preliminary lighting plan is identified in Attachment C. Any work to install historic lighting fixtures would be require a more detailed engineering study and be consistent with the efficient use of capital expenditures. Considerations may be made to pursue sponsorships or donations for the upfront purchase and installation capital costs.



#### 3.2 Street Amenities

After conducting a survey of the amenities that are located in the Village it was determined that there is a multitude of different styles of benches, trash receptacles, and planters. The Committee agrees that based on their goal to create a uniform and historic image for the Village it is necessary to develop a plan for the orderly installation and replacement of these amenities in one predetermined style.

##### 3.2.1 Trash Receptacles

There are at least three different designs for the trash bins in the Village area. While trash receptacles are not critical to the success of the Village they do provide a utilitarian role. Members of the Committee believe that the existence of trash receptacles in strategic locations could improve the overall cleanliness of the village.



At a minimum the Committee agrees that the removal of outdated trash receptacles with the preferred design should occur immediately. Additionally, new trash receptacles should be planned for placement over the next two to three years along Main, Church and Walker Streets. The continued care and maintenance of these amenities should be with the Lenox Department of Public Works.

##### 3.2.2. Benches

Bench styles are also extremely varied throughout the Village. Again the provision of benches within the Village provides utilitarian purpose for visitors and residents alike. The overall

design should be consistent in order to succeed in creating an image of a quaint, historic New England Village.



At a minimum those benches that are extremely outdated and are in disrepair should be replaced with either of the designs shown to the left here.



Preferred Bench Style

Currently, benches in Lilac Park are paid for through donations with plaques on the bench that identifies the sponsor. It seems logical to believe that fundraising through sponsorships for additional benches and trash bins could assist the Town in the placement of these amenities. In addition, the Committee feels that property and business owners should be made aware of these

bench options so that they can choose to purchase them on their own to install on their property within the Village.

#### Outdated Bench Designs



### 3.2.3 Informational Kiosk



The Committee members discussed a new feature to consider as part of the overall utility of the Village for visitors and residents. The introduction of an informational kiosk (see sample designs to right) should be created and installed in at least one prime location in order to display a map of the Village, parking areas, services, and events. The Committee feels that this kiosk should be made of a material that would withstand the elements, such as rain and snow, and be versatile enough to be

updated on a regular basis. This project could be funded and managed as a joint effort with the Lenox Chamber of Commerce.

### 3.3 Landscaping



Church Street Retailers

In general most business and property owners in the Village take great care in the presentation of their storefronts, which often include flowers and other plantings. Additionally, the Lenox Garden Clubs are active in the installation and maintenance of flowers and plants throughout the village, including Lilac Park.

In general, the Committee agrees that a concerted effort to improve the landscaping in and around the Village could be



better coordinated. Specifically, the Town should consider installing planters, in one determined style, in prime locations along Main, Church, and Walker Streets. In addition, the installation of flower beds at the base or attached to a hanging post on the new light posts once installed should be considered. The Town should take the lead in determining which group or groups could provide oversight in the coordination of plantings and enhancements at retail locations, Lilac park and other public spaces. Any improvements at Lilac Park should conform to the planting plan currently in place.



Lastly, the Committee identified the need to develop a long-term tree planting and replacement plan along with a tree care and maintenance plan. These plans would follow on the heels of the recently completed inventory and analysis of the Village trees as directed by the Tree Warden. It was also suggested that the Town consider flowering trees that would stagger in bloom during the spring and summer seasons in order to create more visual interest in the Village.

### **3.4 Design Guidelines**



One of the most highly visible aspects of the commercial district is the overall design of its buildings and accompanying architectural elements. The Lenox Village consists primarily of historic styles with a spattering of more contemporary buildings. Based on the historic composition of the Village the Committee feels that it is important to encourage the continued preservation and conservation of these resources.

Much of the activities related to preservation and development in the Village are under the jurisdiction of the Lenox Historic District Commission. However, it has been determined that their current Bylaws limit their capacity to direct the use of specific materials or preservation practices which could enhance the longevity of the Village. In order to remedy this situation, the Committee recommends that a concerted effort be made by the Town, working through the Lenox Historic

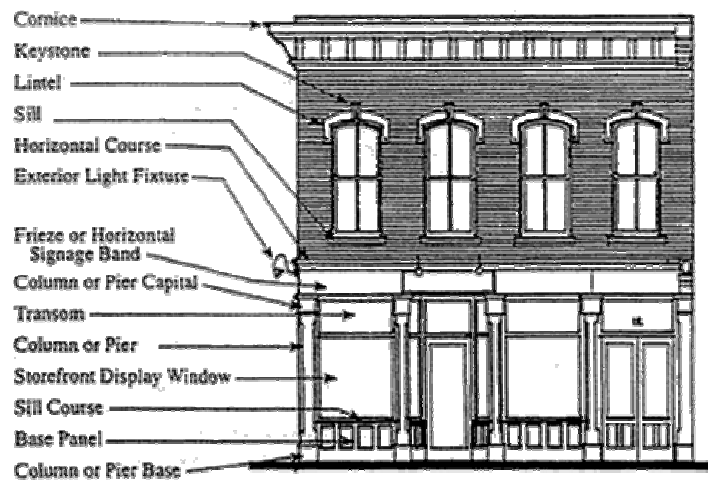
District Commission, to prepare specific design guidelines that illustrate the treatment of new construction, infill and redevelopment, façade and signage details.

#### **3.4.1 Buildings**

Buildings and facades create the street presence in the Village that helps to define the overall character of the Village. As such, the creation of the Village Design Guidelines should emphasize the vision of the Town to preserve and enhance the historically and architecturally significant features of existing buildings. In order to successfully compose Village Design Guidelines it is necessary to undergo an assessment of the building stock in relation to its structure, design and character. In addition, the assessment should include information related to

the type of construction materials, design features, and overall physical condition (see sample Guidelines in Attachment D).

In considering new construction, the District Guidelines are not intended to require the reproduction or recreation of earlier buildings, but rather to recognize their qualities of scale, proportion, size and material as demonstrated by contributing buildings in the District. In considering restoration and renovation of existing buildings, what is critical is the stabilization of significant historic detailing, respect for the original architectural style, compatibility of scale and materials. The rehabilitation standards established by the Secretary of the Interior shall serve as guidelines. The intent of the Standards is to assist the long-term preservation of a property's significance through the preservation of historic materials and features.

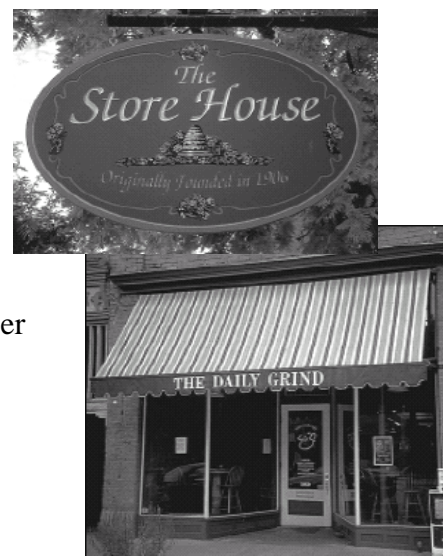


In many instances, it may be acceptable to consider the diversity of styles and how they contribute to the overall character of the Village. In contrast, those structures that do not (or detract) from the historic and community character of the Village should be identified for redevelopment either with the assistance of the Town, private property owner, state financial assistance, and/or design competitions. In the end, Design Guidelines can assist property owners in knowing exactly what is expected as they pursue the development or redevelopment of structures in the Village. In addition, the Committee seeks to put the Guidelines to practice through interactive programs with school-aged children and design professionals for the redesign of problem areas.

### 3.4.2 Signage

Shoppers use signs mainly to identify the names and locations of businesses. However, signs can also convey an image in addition to conveying a direct message. Restrained and tasteful signs suggest high-quality business and project an overall image for the location. As expressed above, the goal of Committee's work is to create the image of an historic and quaint New England Village. Hence, it is imperative to consider the proper treatment for signage as part of the development of overall Village Design Guidelines.

Signage plays an important part in defining the character and can contribute to the vitality of the Village through



color, design and details. Similar to the images shown here, signs in Lenox Village are artistically unique and are designed to be oriented to the pedestrian.

The creation of Sign Guidelines (see sample Guidelines in Attachment E) can be developed to address such issues as sign placement, color, shape, materials, design and texture. Clear and precise guidelines which outline a process and related requirements can assist property and business owners in better understanding the Town's expectations as well as allow for creative and innovative approaches to signage within an established framework. In the end, each of these elements identified in Design Guidelines should:

- Ensure that commercial signs are designed for the purpose of identifying a business in an attractive and functional manner, rather than to serve primarily as general advertising for business.
- Ensure signs on the façade of buildings reinforce the existing character and are integrated into the architectural scheme of the building.
- Promote a quality visual environment by allowing signs that are compatible with their surroundings and which effectively communicate their message.

## **4 Implementation**

An integral part of the successful achievement of the goals and actions outlined in this report is the involvement of business owners, government officials, residents and other interested stakeholders. Active and on-going participation by these groups will ensure that the implementation items listed here will provide the greatest impacts for enhancement and long-term preservation of the Village. Continued organization and work on these implementation items is the responsibility of the Village Streetscape Sub-Committee, in cooperation with the groups listed above. As stated earlier, all actions and suggestions listed herein must be directed through the Town Manager's office and receive approval from the Selectboard.

Topic	Suggested Action	Leadership	Time	Comments
<b>Parking</b>				
	Improve directional signage and lighting at public parking lots (Legacy Bank & Town Hall) and possibly private lots (Schultz) utilizing international "P" symbol	DPW	Short	Pursue historic signage similar to City of Saratoga, NY
	Initiate campaign with local businesses to have employees park in peripheral locations around the Village (Ore Bed, Old School Street, Legacy Bank, etc.)	Chamber of Commerce	Short	Police Dept should be instructed to enforce the two hour parking limit
	Secure an agreement with St. Ann's for the use of the church's parking lot (will need signs that specify hours when lots is available and means of closing off for special events)	Selectboard and Town Manager	Short	Jeff Vincent to initiate discussions with church. Project should be coordinated with Winstanley's future development plans. Maintenance and event parking to be monitored
	Update Lenox Village map with noted parking, public buildings, etc. .; distribute to shops and restaurants	Chamber and Selectboard	Short	Planning Board to prepare initial design. Chamber should distribute.
	Create integrated off-street parking linking individual lots between Main and Church with thru connections.	DPW, Town Manager, Planning Board	Medium	Conduct meetings with property owners to discuss options. Main goal is to reduce traffic on Church St.
	If roads are converted to one way, consider changes to on-street parking	DPW, Selectboard and Planning Board	Medium	Multiple planning meetings needed.
	Explore acquisition of old Brooke land as an addition to Lilac Park with possible parking via Kimball Farms (Edgecomb) nursing home.	Selectboard and Town Manager	Long	Initiate discussions with property owners and family. Contact Kimball Farms.
	Determine feasibility of widening Main Street to allow for diagonal parking on east side (7' into grass)	DPW and Selectboard	Extra Long	Need a lot of public process to determine if appropriate.
	Determine feasibility of a parking deck to double capacity at municipal lot behind Legacy Bank	DPW, Town Manager, Planning Board	Extra Long	Need a lot of public process to determine if appropriate.
<b>Traffic Flow</b>				
	Improve sight distance and create turning lanes at Church & Walker St, Franklin & Main St, and Post Office & Main St.	DPW, Town Manager, Planning Board	Short	Coordinate with any improvements to one way street changes or other traffic flow improvements.
	Seek consensus on one way traffic on Franklin, Church and Housatonic Streets	Selectboard and Town Manager	Medium	
	Explore trolley shuttle running weekends between Tanglewood, Lenox Shops and around Village.	Chamber and Town Manager	Medium	Work with BRTA to coordinate.
	Coordinate any road or infrastructure improvements with overall design guidelines.	DPW, Planning Board and LHDC	Long	
	Determine feasibility of designing and building a "round about" at the Monument (requires realigning West Street)	DPW, Town Manager, Planning Board	Long	Interim step should include the installation of directional signage. Get public feedback. Develop a sample or model to illustrate.
<b>Pedestrian Access</b>				
	Pursue pedestrian connection to Winstanley's project to access parking and improved ties to St. Ann's parking.	DPW, Town Manager, Planning Board	Medium	
	Better define curb cuts, sidewalks at Hoff's and O'Briens.	DPW, Town Manager, Planning Board	Medium	Priority location for improvements.
	Construct "build-outs" for pedestrians and landscaping at Housatonic and Church Streets	DPW, Town Manager, Planning Board	Long	

Topic	Suggested Action	Leadership	Time	Comments
Lighting				
	Create an historic lighting design and installation plan	Planning Board, LHDC, DPW	Short	Lights should resemble or be similar in design to Gilded Age fixture located on Walker St.
	Pursue funding or sponsorship resources for the installation of historic streetlights on Main, Church, Walker and Kemble Streets.	Planning Board, Town Manager, Chamber	Medium	
	Continue to pursue the installation of historic street lights.	DPW, Town Manager, Planning Board	Long	
Amenities				
	Request property and business owners to refrain from installing new benches, planters or trash bins until final designs are made available	LHDC and Town Manager	Short	Letters and notices should be published to help educate residents, property owners, and business owners located in the Village
	Determine type and style of trash receptacle, planter and bench for Village	Planning Board, LHDC, DPW	Short	
	Purchase trash receptacles, planters and benches. Possibly include pet waste containers in overall design.	DPW and Town Manager	Short	
	Install trash bins along Main, Church and Walker Streets.	DPW	Short	
	Install benches in predetermined locations	DPW	Short	
	Determine the feasibility of constructing or installing information booths or kiosks at key locations in the Village to disseminate tourist information and maps.	Planning Board, Town Manager, Chamber and LHDC	Medium	
Landscaping				
	Determine type and style of planters for Village	Planning Board, Historic, DPW	Short	
	Work with the Garden Clubs or other community groups to install and maintain planters along Main, Church and Walker Streets.	Lenox Historic District Commission	Short	
	Develop a tree planting plan in conjunction with Tree Warden's on-going study.	DPW, Town Manager, Planning Board	Short	
	Initiate the planting of ornamental and flowering trees in the Village.	DPW and Tree Warden	Short	
	Refurbish Lilac Park with plantings, fountains, benches, etc. in conjunction with Garden Clubs.	LHDC, Selectboard, Planning Board	Medium	
	Develop a standard tree maintenance guideline for care, removal and installation.	DPW and Tree Warden	Long	
Signage/Design Guidelines				
	Pursue the development of Village Design Guidelines for building, sign and streetscape design as part of the Historic District Guidelines.	LHDC and Planning Board	Medium	
	Conduct a design competition for the redesign of a major building or intersection at Housatonic and Church Streets. Assemble sponsorships to fund	Selectboard, Planning Board and Town Manager	Medium	Assemble funds to award as part of the design competition.
	Explore applying to the Boston Foundation for Architecture for youth programs designed to investigate the benefits of public design, architecture and place making in the village. Work with Lenox Schools to determine scope of work. (August deadline)	Selectboard, Planning Board and Town Manager	Medium	Coordinate with Lenox Schools before the end of the school year.
	Install or replace Town's directional signage to be consistent with overall design guidelines (I.e. parking, street names, Town of Lenox, etc.)	DPW, Town Manager and LHDC	Long	Institutionalize overall design in Village Design Guidebook. Historic District should take lead on development of design guidebook.



**ATTACHMENT A**

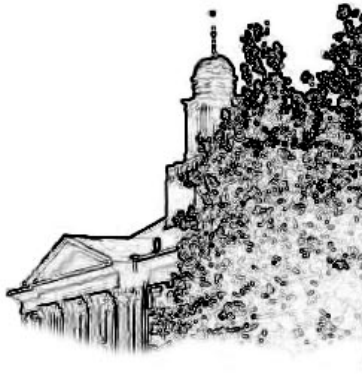
**Full Report in  
Transportation Element**

# ***DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT STUDY***

Town of Lenox, Massachusetts

---

prepared for:



**Town of Lenox, Massachusetts**  
Board of Selectmen

and

**Berkshire Regional Planning Commission**  
One Fenn Street, Suite 201  
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CHA Project No. 11439.1001

March 2003



Even though Monday isn't the busiest day of the week in downtown Lenox, parking places were still hard to come by yesterday. The photographer is looking north on Church Street. Ben Garver / Berkshire Eagle Staff

## Parking spaces are at a premium as summer visitors flock to Lenox

By Tony Dobrowolski  
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LENOX — Longtime residents remember that, until the 1980s, Lenox's downtown historic district was largely residential.

That area bordered by Church, Franklin, Main and Walker streets has changed dramatically in the last 20 years. Now, it's a thriving commercial district filled with trendy restaurants and small boutique-style shops.

More people now visit Lenox, but this transformation has come at a price. During the summer months, when the tourist season is at its peak, there's no place to park.

Town officials are concerned about the problem. There has been talk of schedul-

ing a joint meeting among members of the Select Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Planning Board and the Chamber of Commerce to find a solution.

### 'At a crisis point'

"We're at a crisis point," Selectmen Chairman William "Smitty" Pignatelli said. "The Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals have been very receptive to this. We need to get the Chamber of Commerce involved."

The lack of off-street parking facilities in Lenox has been the subject of two recent decisions by the Zoning Board of Appeals. The owners of Antonio's Ristorante on Franklin Street recently sued the ZBA in Berkshire Superior Court partly because the board denied their request for a variance from off-

street parking requirements that they needed to create a second restaurant on property that abuts its current business.

The ZBA approved a special permit application that allowed a Lenox woman relief from the town's off-street parking requirements to open a combination art/boutique/exercise facility at the former Barclays' Restaurant on Housatonic Street.

However, as a condition of her special permit, Bethann Shannon can only conduct exercise classes at her new business in the evening hours. The board also awarded the special permit to Shannon business only, which means if she moves her permit expires.

ZBA Chairman Susan E. Lyman said

**PARKING, continued on E**

## Parking spaces are at a premium in Lenox

### PARKING from B1

the requirements for a special permit and a variance differ. Special permit applications are based on the board's interpretation of the town's zoning bylaws, while variances rely on state law, she said. To receive a parking variance from the board, Lyman said the petitioner is also required to show a hardship has resulted based on the property's terrain.

"It's not just a matter of dotting the 'i's and crossing the 't's," Lyman said. "They're not given out like candy."

The town's zoning bylaws require a different number of parking spaces depending on each building's principal use. Restaurants, theaters and other places of assembly require one parking space for each three seats. Retail businesses require one parking space for each 300 square service establishment feet of gross floor area.

There are at least 13 restaurants located in the compact downtown historic district. Four restaurants and a bagel shop are located on

Franklin Street alone, which consists of a single block connecting Main and Church streets.

"The growth has been tremendous," Lyman said. "I can remember when on Church Street the only business was a quilting shop ... You can't throw a stone in Lenox now without hitting a restaurant."

Pignatelli said he is in favor of opening up parking areas in the downtown area that are underutilized. The parking lot behind Lenox Savings Bank on Main Street and a small parking area located at Town Hall near the police station entrance on Old Stockbridge Road are not often used, he said.

"I'll bet we could free up 30 or 40 spaces in the downtown area that would help area businesses," Pignatelli said.

If a solution to the off-street parking problem can be reached, it would have to come through the Planning Board, which writes the legislation that the Zoning Board of Appeals enforces.

Planning Board member Lois

Lenehan, who is also a member of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, said there are several ideas that could be considered in a joint board meeting. But Lenehan said any changes should be designated as seasonal, because the volume of cars drops off when the tourist season ebbs.

"The first thing you can look at is how to make better what you already have," Lenehan said. "The parking lot behind Lenox Savings Bank is underutilized. It could be something as simple as better directional [signs]. We could have businesses require their employees to park there. That would free up spaces for others."

Lenehan said historic towns in other communities have frequently closed one street to traffic, then provided shuttle bus service from another area into town.

Possible parking solutions should include "the whole gamut from minor to major," Lenehan said, "with the intention that what we've got to come up with are some creative ideas."

Town officials are currently planning to develop other areas of town through a process known as "smart growth," in which officials compile their own ideas for development, then present them to developers. This strategy allows towns to both retain their character and prevent urban sprawl.

In keeping with the smart growth concept, Lenehan said the town should avoid building a parking lot near the downtown area.

"The last thing you want to do is create sections of asphalt," Lenehan said. "Asphalt separates people from each other and just doesn't make the town walkable."

Lenehan said a parking garage is a possibility, but only if it was constructed in a special manner.

"It's not an impossibility," she said. "I think it would have to be something very creative because huge parking garages don't work. They're more suited to businesses where people absolutely have to go there."

"If people have enough spaces so they don't have to use a parking garage, they don't," she said.

Tony Dobrowolski can be reached by e-mail at [tdobrowolski@berkshireeagle.com](mailto:tdobrowolski@berkshireeagle.com).

*'The municipal lot is underutilized. It would be good to get employees to park there.'*

## Lenox officials mull steps to curb parking problems

By Tony Dobrowolski

Berkshire Eagle Staff

6/29/02

LENOX — Officials are considering the use of lots operated by private businesses as a way of solving parking problems in the downtown historic district.

Town Manager Gregory T. Federspiel said representatives of the Select Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and the Chamber of Commerce met to discuss the issue earlier this week.

The downtown historic district, bordered by Church, Franklin, Main and Walker streets, has become a trendy commercial area that contains 13 restaurants and several boutique-

style shops.

During the summer months, when the tourist season is at its peak, parking spaces are hard to find.

The lack of downtown parking is more of a seasonal than permanent issue, but it still has town officials concerned.

"There's a general consensus that we need to take some action that will improve the overall parking situation," Federspiel said. "There's probably a bit more that's not expensive or complicated [the town can do] that will help."

One of the issues discussed was

LENOX, continued on B4

## Lenox seeks parking answers

LENOX from B1

having employees of town businesses park in the lot behind the Lenox Savings Bank on Main Street.

"The municipal lot is underutilized," Federspiel said. "It would be good to get employees to park there."

Also mentioned as parking alternatives was the parking lot adjacent to St. Ann's Church on Main Street, the tennis courts at the Community Center on Walker Street and the possibility of off-street parking on Orebed Road.

### Summer patrols to start

In another effort to ease the lack of parking, Federspiel said traffic officers attached to the Police Department will soon begin "summer patrols" in which cars will be ticketed in the historic district if they remain there "for more than a couple of hours."

"There's sort of increasing levels of complexity in making parking changes," Federspiel said. "Getting employers to use existing lots, that ought to start now. The summer patrols will happen. Zoning changes take a higher level of complexity and require voter approval."

"We did talk about the need to

look at new zoning language that would provide greater flexibility in the granting of permits," he added.

Petitioners find greater flexibility in the town's off-street parking requirements if they apply for a special permit instead of a variance, Federspiel said. Special permits refer to the town's zoning by-laws, while variances rely on the Zoning Board of Appeals interpretation of state law.

"A variance is a higher bar," Federspiel said.

Federspiel said it's possible the town could make a two-way street one-way.

"We may consider somewhere down the line making a road an additional one-way street to allow parking on both sides," Federspiel said. "That's something we're going to have to look at a little more to flesh out."

"How aggressively we tend to pursue the more involved actions, that's still up for debate," Federspiel said. "One of the key points is we need to get a better sense of where we want our village to be 10 or 15 years from now."

"Once we do that, we'll get a sense of how to realize that vision," Federspiel said.



# ATTACHMENT B

## Materials Provided to Town:

1. Table of Contents and Summary of *Roundabouts: An Informational Guide*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.

# **ATTACHMENT C**

## PRELIMINARY LIGHTING PLAN FOR LENOX

### Current Conditions

Lenox currently has quite soft lighting in the historic, central part of town which is something they would like to maintain to keep the atmosphere of a small New England town in tact. However, at the same time they would like to improve the lighting for pedestrians and drivers, both from a safety and aesthetic stand point.

The current lighting fixtures are standard cobras that use High Pressure Sodium (HPS) lamps. The wattages are mixed:

- Walker between Main and Church there are 3 x 250w (27,00 lumens)
- Walker beyond Church to Kemble there are 4 x 100w (9600 lumens)
- Heading west along Church the first 3 lights are 100w
- The light at the intersection of Church and Housatonic is 250w
- The next light is 100w
- Beyond that they are 50w (4,000 lumens)
- Main Street are all 250w except for the light in the island which is 400w
- Housatonic lights are 100w

Being approximately 30 to 35 feet tall means the cobras can be quite spread out and still light a significant area. The drop-lens style can produce glare (dangerous for drivers) and light pollution (lighting upward into the sky) that results in wasted energy. While HPS lamps are lumen efficient (lot of light per watt), and energy efficient (long lasting), they have a poor color rendering abilities (CRI: Color Rendering Index) which can detract from the aesthetic qualities of the historic district by casting an orange/brown light over everything. Cobras are commonly used for highways where good color rendering is not high priority.



*Existing Cobra Light  
Fixtures throughout the  
Lenox Village.*



## Lamp/Bulb options

Lamp Type Color Type	Common Wattages	Mean Lumens	Lumens per Watt efficiency	Avg Life in Hours	CRI (Col rendering)
Incandescent	100	1200	12	1000	2900
Warm white	150	2000	19	1000	2775
Mercury Vapor	175	7200	47	24000	3900
Cool green-white					
Metal Halide	70	3400	78	1200	3200
Icy white	175	12000	94	15000	4000
	250	15000	100	15000	3600
High Press. Sod.	70	5050	85	24000	1900
Yellow-orange	175	13500	100	24000	2000
	250	23400	110	24000	2100

**Lumens:** The more lumens the brighter the light  
**CRI:** The higher the number the more accurate the color

### Examples: Lee and N. Adams

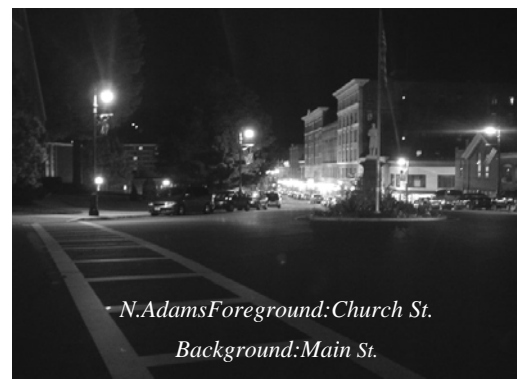
The Town of Lee and the City of North Adams have recently installed historic downtown lighting as part of their efforts to improve the downtown areas. Many options of lamps exist; the best for a good combination of color rendering, lumen per watt efficiency and average life expectancy are the MH bulbs being used by Lee, North Adams and other towns across the country.

Looking at these examples provides a better understanding of how poles, fixtures, and lamp can impact the area in which they are located.



In the center of the town of Lee period style lamp posts are approximately 10-12 feet high, spaced approx 35' apart, opposite placement on a 40' wide street with 175 watt Metal Halide (MH) lamp. The open style lamp disseminates light in every direction, rather than directing it to the street. Although the fixtures are different to the crook style light desired by Lenox, Lee acts as an example of a light level that is brighter than Lenox wants to achieve. Close placement along the sidewalk, combined with the opposite arrangement on both sides of the street, and the 360° lens design result in this bright effect.

North Adams uses a crook style light, not dissimilar to the one Lenox is looking at, as well as an open globe fixture in the town center that lights 360°. While the town center is exceptionally bright, (*see background of picture*), the side streets where these lights are



spaced more generously (approx 80' apart, 25' high) are more in keeping with the ambience of a small town such as Lenox (*see foreground*). They use 250 watt MH bulbs.

## **New Lighting for Lenox**

Figure 1 shows the current placement of the cobra lights throughout Lenox Village. The proposed new lighting for Lenox would imitate the historic lights seen on Walker, Cliffwood, Kemble and other streets around town. The new lights will use semi cutoff fixtures to direct the light downward onto the desired area reducing glare and light pollution and increasing energy efficiency. Glass refractors also help direct and spread the light over a wider area. Figure 2 shows the location of the proposed new light fixtures.

On the wider streets (Main and Walker) the lights are 24/25' tall, use a 250watt lamp and are staggered alternately across the road from each other at approximately 75' intervals with a setback of 5'. On Housatonic the lights remain on one side of the street only, also placed at 150' intervals. (It may be preferred to keep Housatonic lower lit than Main in which case a similar arrangement to that of Church Street may be used) The shorter height of pole requires the new lights to be placed more closely together than the taller, current cobras in order to achieve an even/level distribution of light for drivers and pedestrians.



*Historic Light Fixture,  
Walker Street, Lenox*

On the narrower streets (Church and Franklin) the 100watt bulbs reflect the current drop in light levels from Main/Walker to Church/Franklin. The softer lamp uses a shorter pole of approximately 16' to distribute the light better, otherwise the lamp style remains the same. These will be placed at 70-75' intervals along one side of the road with a setback of 7' where possible, to achieve the preferred level distribution of light.

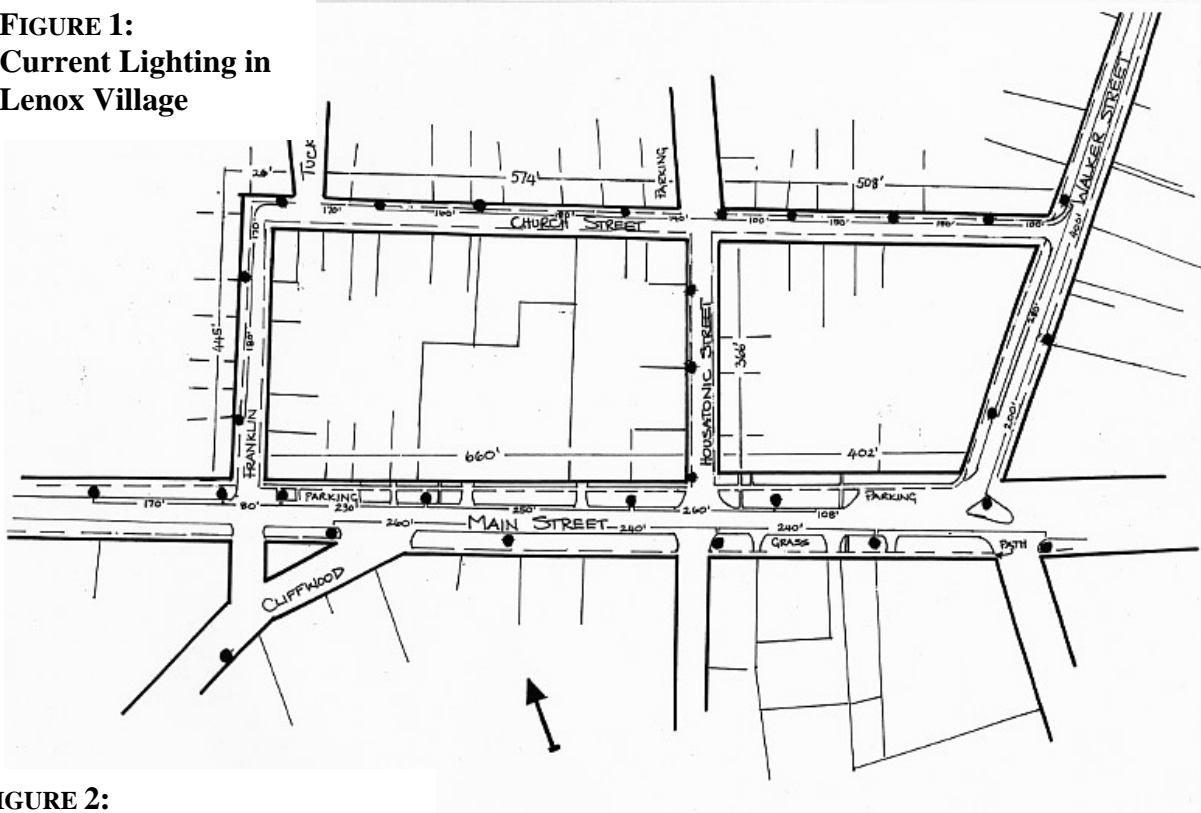
The above arrangements will result in a total of 31 x 250watt, 24' high fixtures and 24 x 100watt, 16' high fixtures.

According to Edco Lighting Company of Connecticut this configuration will create a very similar light level, with improved distribution, to the one that exists in Lenox today. Edco can customize standard crook lighting to appear to be the same as the original historic light found in Lenox.

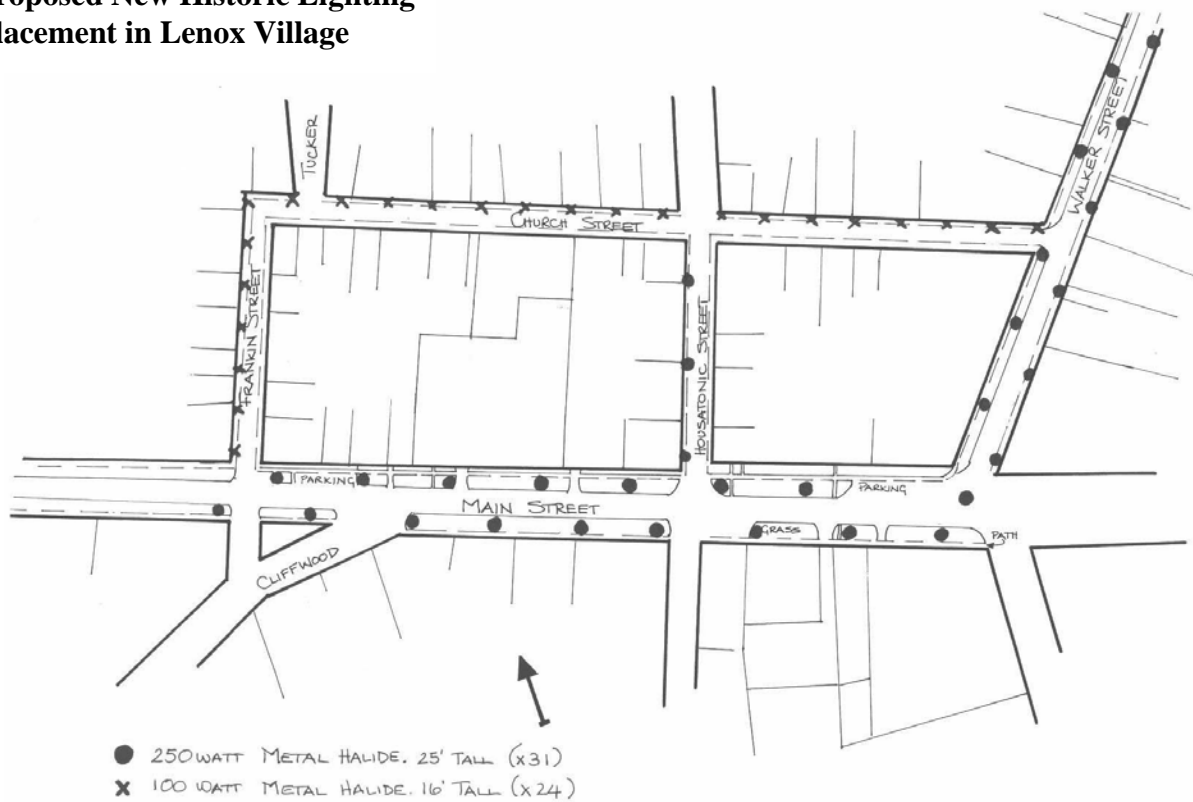
Edco contact: Jim Bartollotta or John Patton @ ( 203)238-634-8041



**FIGURE 1:  
Current Lighting in  
Lenox Village**



**FIGURE 2:  
Proposed New Historic Lighting  
Placement in Lenox Village**



## **Other Considerations**

### *Ownership & Installation:*

Currently Mass. Electric is responsible for the lighting in Lenox, they installed the lights and Lenox rents them from Mass. Electric who is also responsible for their maintenance. If Lenox decides to implement these period lighting fixtures they will need to work with Mass. Electric to remove and replace the current fixtures. Once the new lights have been installed the town of Lenox will be responsible for their maintenance and upkeep.

### *Maintenance:*

Currently in this area of town there are four different bulb wattages used for apparently obvious reasons – 250w and 400w on the heaviest used roads of Main and Walker, and softer 50w and 100w are used on the quieter streets of Franklin, Church and Housatonic. Using varying wattages creates atmosphere and a hierarchy of lighting districts in the town and is aesthetically preferable. However, using multiple bulb types can be an issue for maintenance crews when it comes to having both lamps available and replacing them accordingly. This suggested light plan reflects the light hierarchy currently in place in Lenox by using two different bulb types.

Until the town appoints and works with an electrical engineer it is not possible to know if the new fixtures can utilize some, or none of the current bases' anchor bolts that fix the poles to the ground. If it is possible, major disturbance of the surrounding sidewalk can be avoided. However, if it is not possible, or if the underground wiring needs replacing, the added expense and upheaval of tearing up the sidewalk, and replacing it, may be incurred.

## **Purchasing New Period Style Lighting**

Edco Patton Inc. of Connecticut have experience with customizing standard lighting fixtures and will be able to create a fixture that resembles the historic lights in Lenox very closely.

They have visited Lenox in the past and are relatively familiar with the proposed project. For more information and pricing contact:

John Patton or Jim Bartollotta @ (203)630-1113 or (203)238-1965.

# ATTACHMENT D

## Materials Provided to Town:

1. Design Guidelines, MA Division of Municipal Development, MA Downtown Initiative, website narrative
2. Preserving & Enhancing Downtown Character – Why Downtown Character is Important , MA Division of Municipal Development, MA Downtown Initiative, website narrative
3. Preserving & Enhancing Downtown Character – Historic Preservation, MA Division of Municipal Development, MA Downtown Initiative, website narrative
4. Table of Contents from the *Design Guidelines for Manchester's Commercial & Historic Districts*, Manchester, VT, 2001.
5. Ripon Main Street – Design Guidelines, Ripon, WI, website.
6. Marion Main Street – Façade Guidelines, Marion, IL, website.

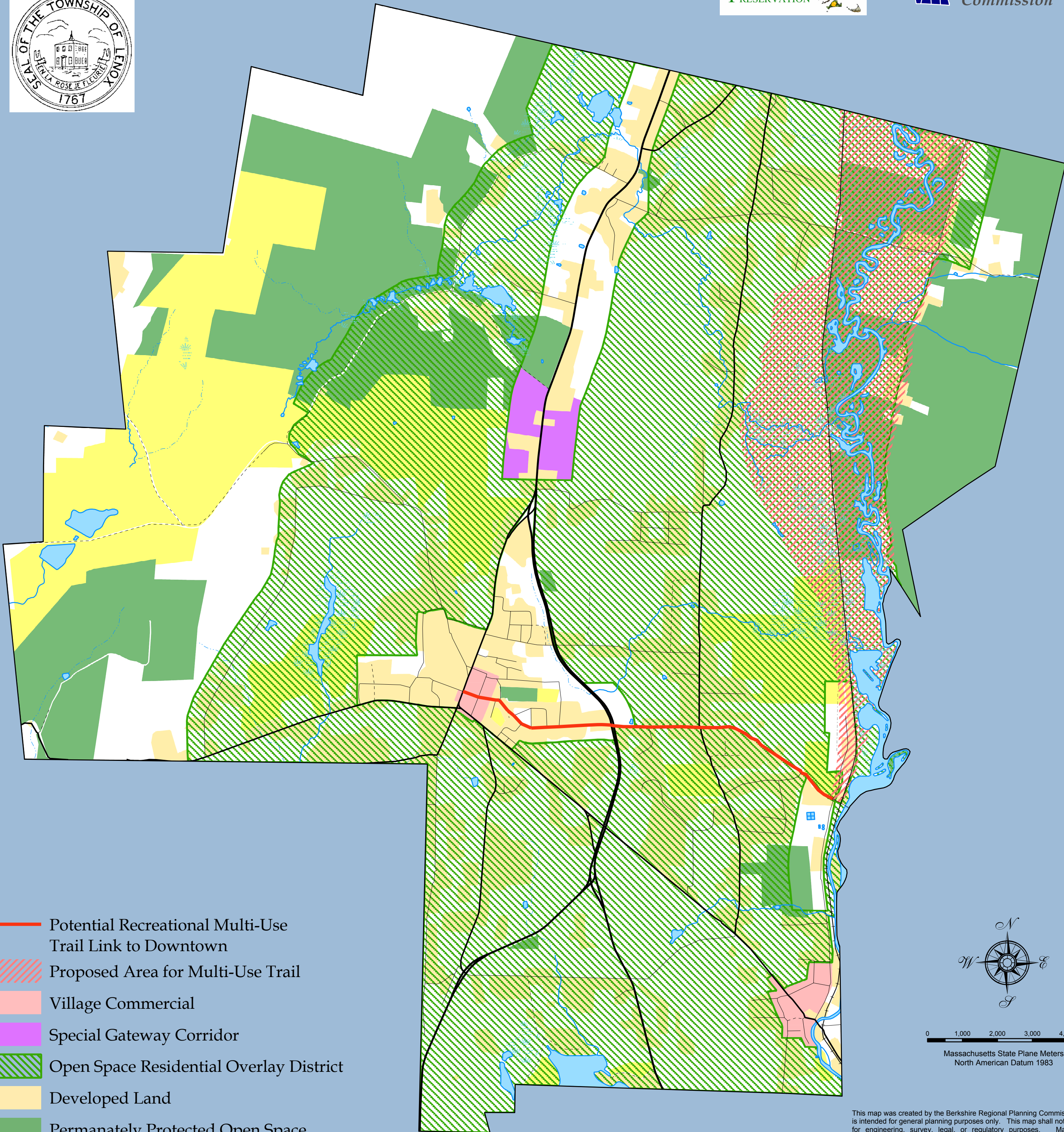
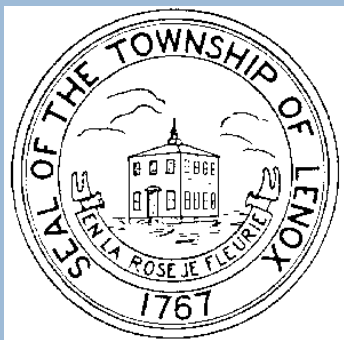
# ATTACHMENT E

## Materials Provided to Town:

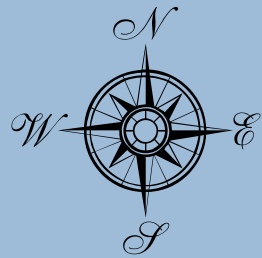
1. Preserving & Enhancing Downtown Character – Facades and Signage, MA  
Division of Municipal Development, MA Downtown Initiative, website narrative
2. Main Street Blue Island – Sign Guidelines, Blue Island, FL, brochure.
3. Signs & Awnings for Downtown – A Workbook for Business and Property  
Owners, Salt Lake City, UT, May 1999.
4. Downtown Precise Plan Sign Guidelines, Mountain View, CA, 2001.



Community Development Plan  
Land Use Suitability  
Action Map  
*Town of Lenox, Massachusetts*



- Potential Recreational Multi-Use Trail Link to Downtown
- Proposed Area for Multi-Use Trail
- Village Commercial
- Special Gateway Corridor
- Open Space Residential Overlay District
- Developed Land
- Permanately Protected Open Space
- Municipal Land



0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet  
Massachusetts State Plane Meters  
North American Datum 1983

This map was created by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and is intended for general planning purposes only. This map shall not be used for engineering, survey, legal, or regulatory purposes. MassGIS, Massachusetts Highway Department, BRPC or the town may have supplied portions of this data.

This project was funded through a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction.

/cdp/len/projects/actionmap.mxd

June 30, 2004



# Lenox, Massachusetts



## Open Space

### Areas of Concern:

- All water resource areas that relate to public health and safety are preserved and protected.
- The valuable diversity of plant and wildlife habitat and other ecologically sensitive areas are protected.
- Agricultural lands are preserved.
- Lenox's outstanding historical, cultural and visual resources are preserved.

### Vision for Future Open Space and Resource Protection:

*Thoughtfully guide and manage growth to ensure Lenox preserves its present combination of exceptional natural assets and rural character that make the Town desirable.*

### Recommended Actions:

- Adopted the OSRD Bylaw and revised Subdivision Controls.
- Conducting an update of the Build Out Analysis.
- Pursue regulatory controls to promote continued open space protection.
- Pursue public and private initiatives to provide greater access to recreational lands.
- Seeks funds, such as the Community Preservation Act, to support open space protection.
- Implement elements of the Lenox Open Space and Recreational Plan.

## Transportation

### Areas of Concern:

- Current conditions for traffic flow and parking in the village
- Improved site design and streetscaping mechanisms for the safety, convenience and attractiveness of the village
- Preserving the historic context of the village

### Vision for Future Transportation:

*Maintain and improve the safety and utility of the Lenox Village so that it will continue to be aesthetically pleasing and functionally sound.*

### Recommended Actions:

- Improve pedestrian safety at Church and Housatonic Streets.
- Improve turning conditions at intersection of Franklin and Main Street.
- Enforce time limitations for on-street parking and improve access to and condition of alternative municipal parking areas.
- Encourage improvements at privately owned parking areas.
- Continue to investigate the concept for creating a roundabout at the intersection of Route 7A, Route 183 and Stockbridge Road.
- Integrate parking and traffic flow improvements with the Village Improvement Plan.



## Economic Development



### Areas of Concern:

- Retaining and Expanding existing businesses
- Attracting business and other concerns to the town which are in keeping with the historic, cultural, rural, and artistic characteristics of the town.

### Vision for Future Economic Development:

*Work collaboratively to promote the preservation and utilization of developed areas to keep them healthy and vibrant and further promote coordination between land use, regulatory, and infrastructure decisions.*

### Recommended Actions:

- Developed a Village Improvement Plan. Steering Committee should continue to implement plan recommendations.
- Continue to investigate zoning options to encourage the reuse and redevelopment of the Lenox Gateway area.
- Carefully guide development along Route 7&20, Lenox Dale, and the Village.

## Housing

### Areas of Concern:

- Availability of affordable housing
- The ability of singles, young families and moderate-income retirees to afford quality housing while environmentally sensitive lands are protected from development.
- Concentrating development near areas that are already served by water and sewer.

### Vision for Future Housing:

*Provide a variety of housing choices for its current and future residents.*

### Recommended Actions:

- Adopted the OSRD Bylaw to allow for cluster development.
- Adopted new Subdivision Controls.
- Adopted a bylaw to allow for greater flexibility for allowing upper story apartments in the village.
- Working with developers to include affordable housing options.

