



**Town of
New Marlborough**

Comprehensive Plan

Public Review Draft 12.17.09



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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This Comprehensive Plan for the Town of New Marlborough was developed from 2008-2009 to guide growth, policy, and investment decisions for the next 10 to 20 years. This chapter provides background to the planning process and describes the content of different chapters of the plan for easy reference and use.



New Marlborough celebrated its 250th Anniversary in 2009.

Welcome to New Marlborough!

New Marlborough is a small town located in the beautiful Berkshire region of Massachusetts. Located in westernmost Massachusetts, the Berkshires are renowned for their natural beauty, rich arts and culture scene, and small New England town charm. In this setting lies the town of New Marlborough, nestled in the Berkshire Hills just east of Great Barrington, one of the larger communities in the Berkshires.

As a town, New Marlborough consists of five distinct village centers with a predominantly rural landscape in between. These villages include:

- Hartsville
- New Marlborough
- Southfield
- Mill River
- Clayton (Three Hamlets)
 - Konkapot
 - North Clayton
 - Clayton

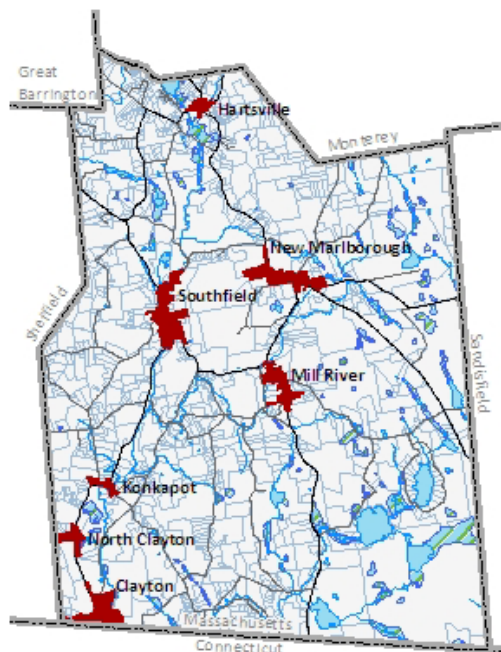


Figure 1: New Marlborough and its village centers.

New Marlborough is a town of approximately 1,520 year-round residents and a substantial number of seasonal residents (estimated at approximately an additional 40%). Originally founded as Massachusetts Bay Colony township in 1739, the town was formally incorporated into the Commonwealth in 1759. This plan marks the 250th anniversary of the town and helps plan its next 20 years.

What Does This Plan Address?

This plan addresses a wide range of issues and priorities as expressed by the town through survey responses received at the start of the planning process. Some highlights, which illustrate recurring themes in the plan and its policies, include:

Character:

Residents enjoy their small town and want it to retain its “undiscovered” and close-knit feel. While it is understood that growth is inevitable with time, residents want to see the town grow in a way that preserves the character that attracted and retained the residents of today.

Economy:

Residents like the small town feel of its businesses and villages and do not want to see any rapid change in the composition or scale of the economy. Some proactive action on the part of the town is encouraged for directing or managing economic development. Of particular interest were more food establishments, farming, and art-related businesses, as well as some essential services (auto, home improvement, etc.).

Housing:

Residents want to see housing options that remain affordable for first-time homeowners and families. Many recognize the town is a great place to raise a family and want to see that option available for their own children and others in the future.

Natural Beauty:

Residents express strong support for preserving natural habitats and features including ridgelines, meadows, river frontage, forests, vernal pools, and other water resources.

Recreation:

Residents support enhanced recreation options, particularly expanded trail and bike networks, but also a variety of water-related sports such as swimming, fishing, ice skating, and boating.

Communications:

The lack of high-speed internet and spotty cell phone service are two notable complaints among town residents. Internet service, in particular, is seen as a barrier to enhanced telecommuting or in-home business options.

Town Services and Facilities:

Residents are generally satisfied with town government and its various boards, commissions, and departments. The only area in need of notable improvement was road condition and maintenance.

About Comprehensive Plans

A comprehensive plan is a document that sets a blueprint for town decision-makers to use in their day-to-day actions as part of managing the town. It is an advisory document not a regulatory document. The purpose of this plan is to create an opportunity for the town to reflect and determine what it wants for its future and then chart out the preferred actions to achieve that vision. It is then the responsibility of the town’s elected and appointed officials to pursue the actions identified in the implementation chapter of this plan to gradually make the regulatory changes and priority investments needed to achieve the vision statement.



How Does the Comprehensive Plan Relate to Other Town Plans and Regulations?

The comprehensive plan takes precedence over other plans of the community such as transportation plans, open space and recreation plans, area plans, and other area- or topic-specific documents. The comprehensive plan is typically more general than more focused plan documents but provides overarching guidance to the content of these plans in that they should be consistent with the policies established in the comprehensive plan.

An important function of the comprehensive plan is to ensure priorities and approaches in one area such as land use relate to another, such as transportation. Because all of the topics are addressed within a single document, the policies in these different areas are developed to be consistent and supportive, thus safeguarding the potential danger of conflicting policies that can occur in a more fragmented planning approach. Other town plans can then use this framework to reach a finer level of detail in a particular subject area. For a list of the topics required by Massachusetts law to be addressed in a master or comprehensive plan, see Appendix D.

While the comprehensive plan is not a regulatory document, it does set the policy for the town to develop new bylaws to regulate land use decisions. For more on how the plan impacts land use and bylaw decisions see Chapter 3: Growth and Land Use.

What Does the Plan Contain?

Comprehensive plan guidance is provided in a number of ways, including maps of current and desired conditions, illustrations of concepts, and policy language. At the core of the plan is a vision statement of the overarching objectives the town wants to accomplish for its future. The Vision is the foundation for a number of goals and more specific policy and action statements. Together these establish the blueprint for what the town will do to achieve its vision and will serve as a guide for town policy and decision-makers for the life of the plan.

Vision

The vision is the “big picture” statement of where the town would like to be five, ten or twenty years from now.

Goals

Goal statements go into greater detail on the different pieces that the town will need to pursue in order to make the vision a reality.

Policies

These are the specific policy statements that the town will pursue to achieve the goal.

Actions

Actions are the specific tasks that individuals or groups will need to do in order to achieve specific policy statements



The Planning Process

This plan was developed through a planning process that included a few key ways of participation and feedback from the community:

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

The Planning Board invited a group of 12 people to join them as representatives of the town on the comprehensive plan committee. This group met monthly on the third Thursday of the month to review draft work products and provide direction on the vision, goals, policies, and actions identified in this plan.

Town Selectmen Meetings

The Planning Board came before the Board of Selectmen at key intervals during the course of the planning process to brief them on priorities and directions identified in the plan and seek feedback and direction.

Surveys

The planning process kicked off in 2008 with a community survey that was mailed to town property owners. Responses were gathered and summarized and served as a touchstone throughout the planning process to ensure that plan was in alignment with the priorities expressed in survey responses.

A second survey was conducted towards the end of the planning process to help shape implementation priorities for a few topics. This second survey was conducted during the 2009 Elihu Burritt Day in August.

Town Website

Throughout the planning process, draft materials were made available on the town website (www.new-marlborough.ma.us) for review and download.

Public Workshop and Poster Displays

The town held one major public workshop during the planning process. This interactive event focused on a review and discussion of potential growth management tools and the different land use patterns each would create.



Attendees at the public workshop mull over maps of potential future growth patterns.

In addition, displays at Town Hall and the Library highlighted the comprehensive planning effort to help raise awareness and gather feedback on the draft vision and plan.

Plan Overview

This plan contains nine chapters in addition to this introduction that address the following aspects of the town:

Chapter 2: Vision Statement

This chapter contains the vision statement for the town – a concise statement of what residents want their town to be like in the future.

Chapter 3: Growth and Land Use

This chapter contains a description of the current land use patterns and constraints, identifies goals and policies for future land use, and presents the future land use plan for the town.

Chapter 4: Housing

This chapter provides an overview of housing supply and needs both now and in the future and then presents town goals and policies to address future housing in the town including options for young professionals, families, and seniors.

Chapter 5: Economy

This chapter provides an overview of the key economic sectors present in the town and makes recommendations for how the town can support the retention and expansion of economic activity in the future.

Chapter 6: Natural and Cultural Resources

This chapter summarizes the rich natural and cultural resources in the town and then makes recommendations on how the town can further support and expand those options in the future.

Chapter 7: Open Space and Recreation

This chapter summarizes the scenic landscape, open space, and recreation attributes of the town and sets goals and policies for the town to pursue to safeguard and expand that system.

Chapter 8: Services and Facilities

This chapter provides an overview of the fire, police, and other services provided in the town and sets goals and policies for the town to pursue to maintain and enhance services in the future.

Chapter 9: Transportation

This chapter highlights key features and issues with the current transportation system in the town and then establishes goals and policies for the town to pursue to maintain and enhance this system in the future.

Chapter 10: Implementation

This chapter contains an overview of the different types of actions that will be needed to implement the plan and the range of entities that will be involved in that process. The second portion of this chapter contains the Implementation Strategy, which details the actions, responsible parties, relative priority, and potential funding sources for each action called for in the plan.

Appendices

- A. Maps
- B. Key issues
- C. Existing Conditions Summary
- D. MGL 41
- E. Survey Results
- F. Village Center Maps



CHAPTER 2: VISION STATEMENT

Introduction

The vision statement is a concise description of the Town's desired future. This may include both those qualities of the town that residents would like to keep and attributes the town would like to see added or changed in the future. The vision serves as the basis for the creation of goals and objectives in the plan for the Town to pursue in the future.

Vision

New Marlborough is a rural hilltown that contains a broad inventory of natural and scenic beauty, abundant recreational opportunities, working farms, and historic landscapes. New Marlborough's 5 village centers provide social activities, gathering places, religious, cultural, retail, and economic activities; a local school for our children; and essential town services.



New Marlborough Town Hall in the village center of Mill River.

The town will use a combination of regulatory tools, incentives, and programs to ensure that the following statements are true in the future:

- ① New Marlborough is a beautiful, rural, and safe community for living and raising a family.
- ② The Town's scenic features and natural resources---roadways, open meadows, ridgelines, lakes, rivers, falls, ponds, groundwater, wetlands and habitat areas---are protected and maintained through wise stewardship.
- ③ The restaurants, shops, and small businesses within the village centers provide for local gathering places and services and create a strong sense of community.
- ④ Current technologies---including high-speed Internet and cellular phone services---should be available throughout the Town for residents and businesses.
- ⑤ New Marlborough's traditional New England village settlement patterns of mixed-use development is perpetuated and enhanced through proper siting of new development.
- ⑥ The Town's roadway system is in good condition and maintained as required.
- ⑦ Residential and business development occurs near village centers and along primary roads without threat to the Town's scenic features, natural resources, and farmland.

- 8 A vital part of the Town is its home-based businesses, working farms, a community public school, small retail, art studios and galleries, and other services compatible with its character.
- 9 New Marlborough's outdoor recreation opportunities---hiking and walking trails, swimming and boating areas, community playground, and ball field---are valued and used by residents and visitors. New recreation facilities are pursued by the Town as opportunities are available.
- 10 New Marlborough is a welcoming community with a variety of housing types that provides choices for families, the elderly, individuals, and first-time homebuyers of all social and economic lifestyles.
- 11 The Town is financially sound and provides excellent local services that meet the needs of all its residents.
- 12 New Marlborough maintains a healthy blend of year-round, seasonal, and second-home residents.
- 13 Residents are well-informed of local news and events through newsletters and websites and are actively involved with local government and volunteer efforts.



CHAPTER 3: GROWTH AND LAND USE

This chapter contains the future land use plan for the town: the future land use plan map and text and graphic descriptions of the land use categories shown on the map. The land use plan shows the desired future land use patterns as selected by town residents through the scenario evaluation process.

Future Land Use Plan

A future land use plan is a map that serves as a guide to future zoning changes and development decisions. The town is currently zoned under one zone district, Town Residential. This plan calls for a number of new land use and growth management tools to be added to the town's bylaws. The future land use plan map illustrates the general geographical locations of new land use districts to be applied. As the town adopts and applies new bylaws, the future land use plan will serve as a guide for where new bylaws should apply. Because of this guidance role, the future land use plan is often referred to as a blueprint or a roadmap for the town's future growth and development.

Trends and Conditions

The notable trend of land use in the town is the recent shift away from the development pattern that dominated for more than 200 years – that of distinct village centers surrounded by predominantly open rural land. This change can be observed through tracking the location of new development from 1987-

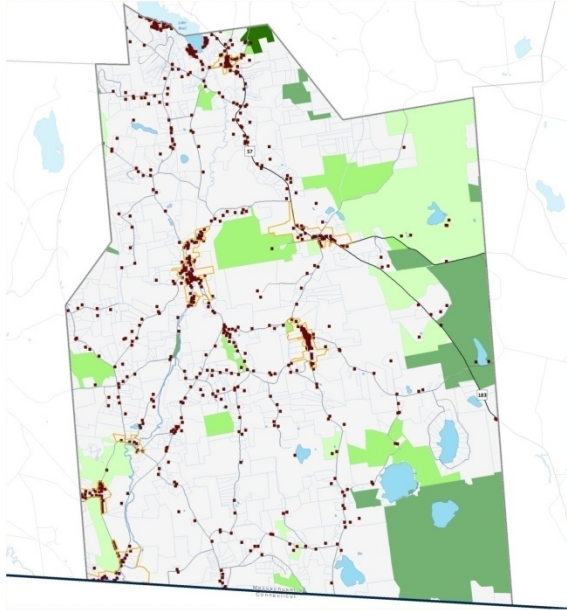


LAND USE AT A GLANCE

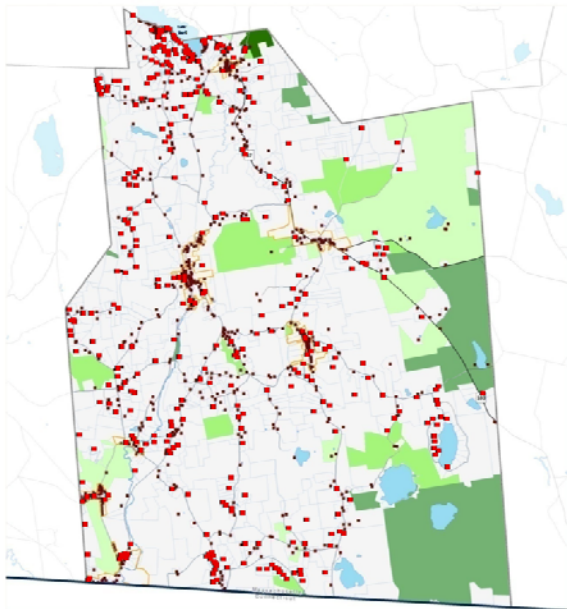
- ☑ **Area** – The town is 32,656 acres.
- ☑ **Use** – The majority of development in the town is single-family residential development.
- ☑ **Pattern** – The traditional development pattern of the town was to concentrate development in one of the village centers while outlying areas between villages remain rural. This pattern still exists today but the distinction between rural and village is starting to be compromised by increased rural development.
- ☑ **Density** – All development in the town is relatively low-density but development in village centers has a more compact pattern than rural areas. Villages average one home per acre compared to one home per 5 acres in rural areas.

Additional discussion of land use may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

1999 (when the state took aerial photos of the town). In 1987, 25% of all structures were located within one of the five village centers; by 1999 this had fallen to 20%. This shift was due to the fact that 83% of new development between 1987 and 1999 occurred in rural areas



Development in 1987 was still focused in village centers.



By 1999, development had noticeably shifted to rural areas.

During the same time period, the average lot size for residential development in rural areas increased by over 100%. In 1987, the average lot size of developed parcels was two acres. The average lot size of new homes developed between 1987 and 1999 more than doubled to nearly five acres per residence.

Key Growth and Land Use Issues

The future land use plan map, and the associated land use tools and categories described in this chapter, address a number of growth and land use “key issues” identified at the beginning of the planning process.

Issue 1: Village-Rural Edges Blurring

New low-density residential development along roadways at the outskirts of village areas is blurring the edge between the villages and surrounding rural areas. This development pattern represents a fundamental shift from a sharper historic village-rural settlement pattern that residents wish to retain.

Issue 2: Business Growth and Diversity

The five village center areas in the town are key locations for goods and services. The Town would like to encourage development in these village centers but current zoning does not support continuation of the existing development patterns in village centers. It also does not have any provision that would safeguard the character of the village centers.

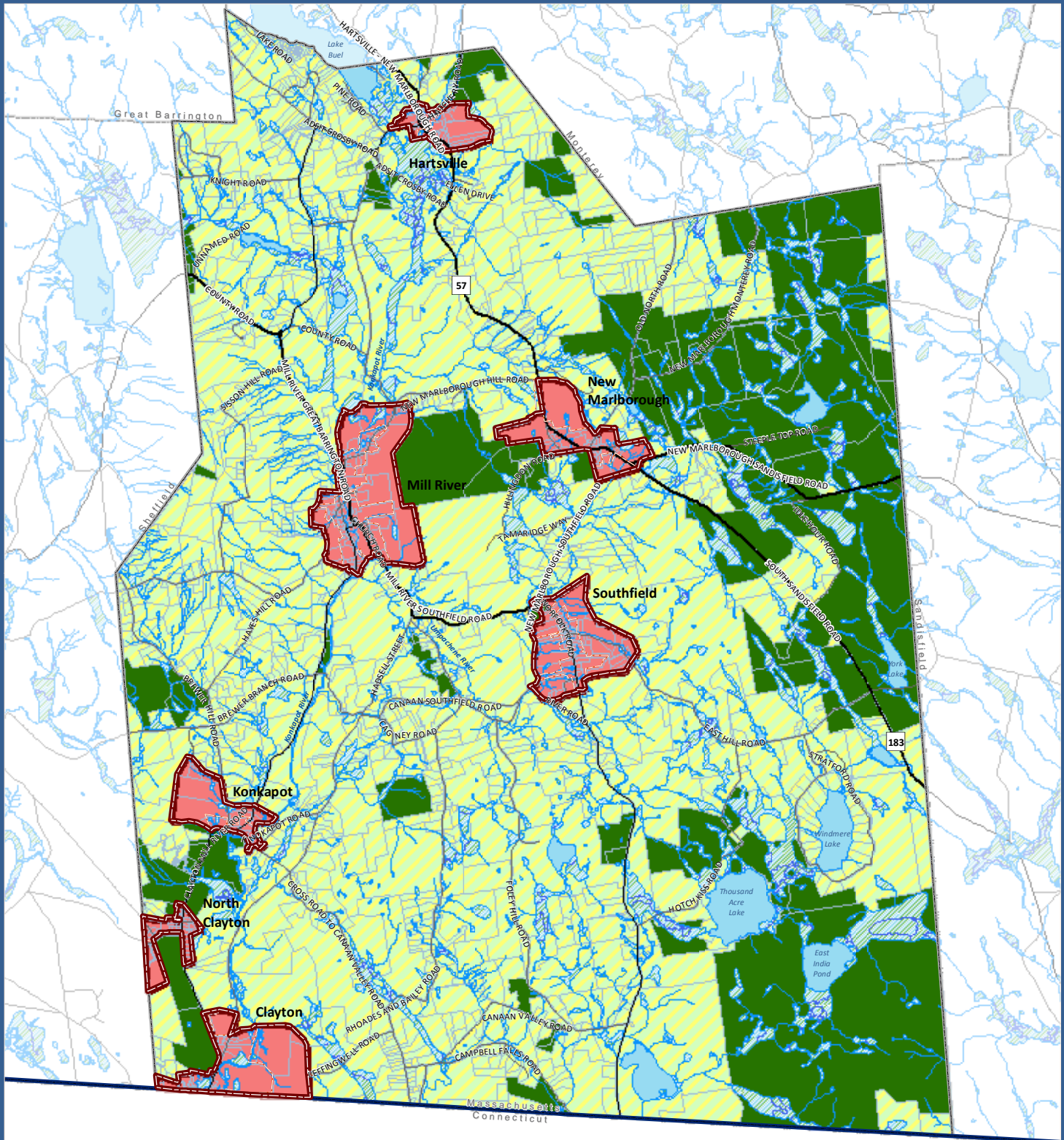
Issue 3: Agricultural Land Loss

New Marlborough lost almost 12% of its farmland between 1990 and 2000. Rural development trends promise to continue this pattern of agricultural land consumption unless growth management measures are implemented.



DRAFT FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

New Marlborough Comprehensive Plan



Draft Future Land Use Plan

LEGEND

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Village Center | Conservation Land |
| Rural Residential | Wetlands |
| Open Space Residential Subdivision | |



Date Modified: June 15, 2009

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, the Town or BRPC may have supplied portions of this data.



Land Use Categories



Conservation

Density: N/A - Land is permanently conserved by a conservation restriction or direct purchase by a public or non-profit entity.

Uses: Recreation activities such as hunting, hiking, and camping.

Where does it apply?

All current and future permanently conserved lands in the town, whether they are purchased out right or placed under a permanent conservation restriction.

How does it work?

These lands are owned by public entities or protected through a permanent conservation restriction as open space for habitat and recreation purposes.

What does it accomplish?

Conservation land, made possible through charitable donation or direct purchase of private lands, permanently protects open space in the town. Typically, lands with notable scenic or environmental values are given priority for conservation. Interested readers may view the town's current Open Space and Recreation Plan for current conservation priorities.



Town Residential

Density: Minimum frontage of 150 feet. Average lot size is 5 acres. Minimum lot size of one acre.

Uses: Agriculture, residential, and in-home businesses.

Where does it apply?

To rural areas outside of village centers as defined by the new village center district.

How does it work?

The entire town is currently zoned under this one zoning district. In addition, development occurs through small Approval Not Required (ANR) subdivisions along qualifying roads when the minimum requirements of 150 feet of road frontage and one acre total lot size are met.

What does it accomplish?

Town residential development allows for low-density development that has typified the rural development pattern in the town. To some degree, in practice, Title V regulations for septic systems increase the minimum lot size of this type of development.



Village Center

Density: Maximum frontage of 100 feet and minimum lot size of a half acre. Average lot sizes of current vacant lots the developed areas of villages are approximately 0.8 acres.

Uses: Residences, apartments, offices, small-scale commercial, schools, civic uses, and mixed-use development to support live-work opportunities.

Where does it apply?

Village Center Zoning would apply to the existing five villages of the town. The future land use map delineates draft village boundaries. Village-by-village maps of these draft boundaries are provided in Appendix F. Ultimately, the boundaries will be finalized through the process of bylaw drafting and adoption and the zoning map amendment process. The boundaries for this district should include the current village area and a reasonable additional growth area immediately around the existing village.

How does it work?

This zone district would allow for smaller minimum lot sizes and a wider range of uses. Village center zoning tailors the development requirements to match the patterns and style of existing town centers.

What does it accomplish?

This zone district will help retain the character of the villages and enhance their role as centers of economic and civic activity for the town.

- Preserves architectural compatibility and character
- Facilitates infill development on existing village lots
- Enhances pedestrian environment
- Allows for a mix of uses



Vacant Lot in Village



Rural-style Infill in Village: This house has a large up-front garage, prominent and long driveway, a deep setback, and a more modern feel than other homes in the village.



Compatible Infill in Village: This house fits the architectural style and setbacks of the surrounding homes.



Open Space Residential Subdivision

Density: Allows minimum lot dimensions that are less than those available under Town Residential zoning.

Requires at least 50% of the total site be conserved as open space – also requires that the majority of open space be contiguous.

Uses: Agriculture, single-family attached and detached residential, trails and recreation.

Where does it apply?

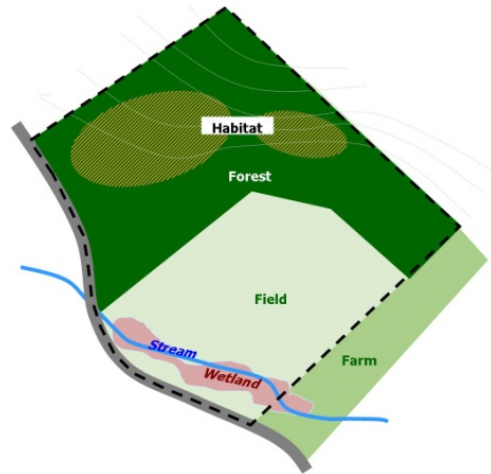
Applies to larger developments (5 + potential homes) outside of village center areas.

How does it work?

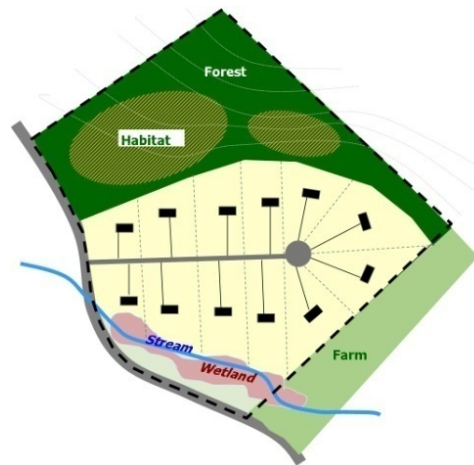
OSRD allows smaller lot sizes in exchange for the developer providing a minimum percent of the total site as permanently protected contiguous open space (can include agricultural lands). A density bonus is typically offered as an incentive to the developer to select this option.

What does it accomplish?

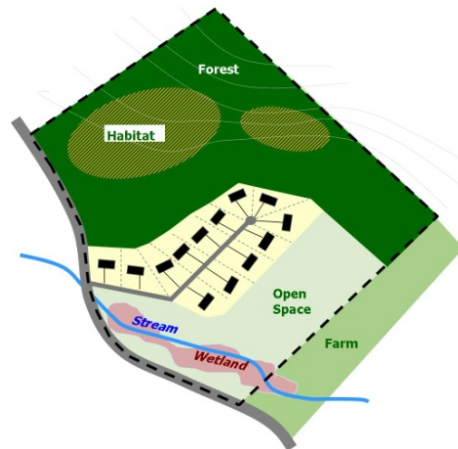
- Preserves connected open space
- Retains connected habitat areas
- Conserves open space
- Less roadway = less impervious surface (stormwater and water quality benefits)



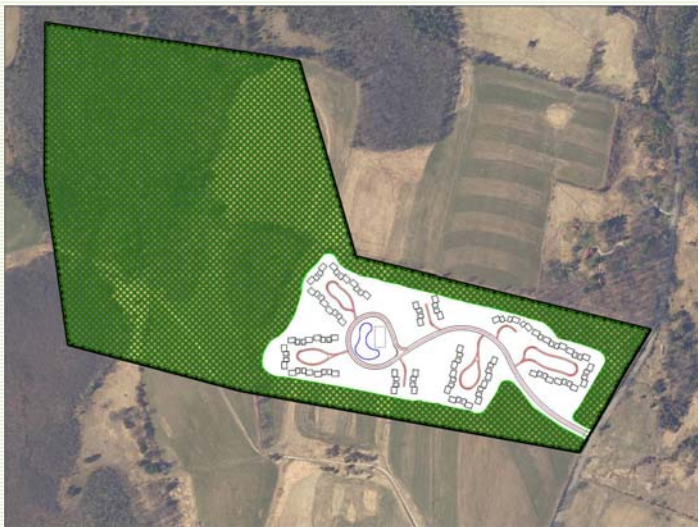
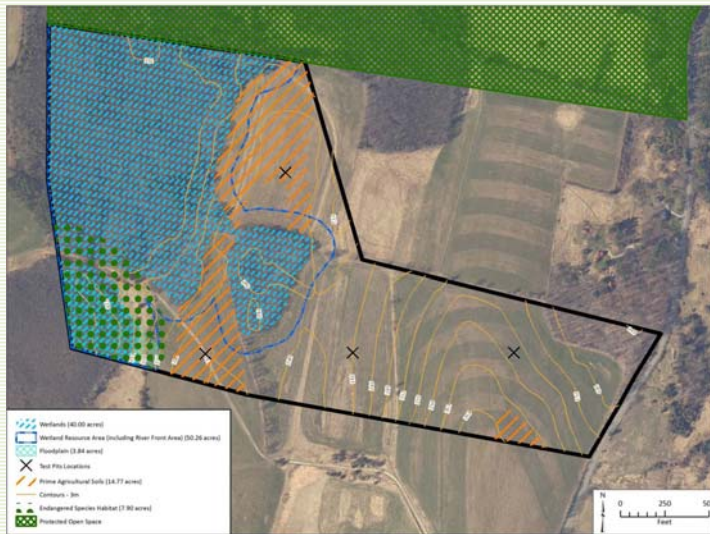
Development site with constraints.



Development footprint for 12 homes under traditional subdivision.



Development footprint for 13 homes as an OSRD.



Bylaw Considerations

1. Protect Natural Features and Emphasize Connectivity

When crafting the bylaw it is important to stress the connectivity of protected features in addition to the minimum percent of the total site to be protected. This is important so that the developer does not attempt to list “leftover” fragments as their open space - such as utility or roadway right-of-ways. While these may be eligible, the site design should consider the natural features *first* not as an afterthought.

2. Provide the Right Incentives

If the OSRD option is going to be used by a developer, it needs to have the right incentives attached to it. This is typically done through a density bonus, whereby the developer earns an additional number of units onto the maximum units per acre allowed by zoning in relation to the percent of open space preserved.

3. Think Through Desired Accessibility of Open Space

The town will need to consider whether the land that is conserved should accommodate any public access such as trail connections, stream access, or casual use. If this is not negotiated up front, it is likely the developer will simply hold the land as private open space only for use by those residing in the development, particularly due to liability concerns. Expanded public access may require the land, or the portion of the land to be accessed, to be donated to the town or some land trust entity to relieve the developer of liability concern.

Scenic Mountain Act

Where would it apply?

The Scenic Mountain Act is applied to predefined areas as selected by the town. At a minimum or default level, the act applies to elevations over 1,500 feet but the town can tailor this to select the appropriate areas and elevation as it relates to watershed protection for the town.

How does it work?

The town designates a scenic mountains area and then creates site design/development criteria that will apply to that area. These areas include upland areas that serve as watersheds for surface water bodies and also viewshed areas. The act enables the town to regulate such things as grading and tree removal to reduce the impacts of runoff on the surface waters.

What does this tool accomplish?

This tool protects specific water resources of the town as well as the views of the surrounding mountains from those water bodies.

Heritage Tree Protection Bylaw

Where would it apply?

The tree protection bylaw would focus on heritage trees in public rights-of-way and on public property. Heritage trees would be defined in the bylaw, typically by some combination of tree type and caliper (diameter).

How does it work?

Once a tree inventory has been completed, eligible trees are given special protections in the development process. For example, if a public facility were to expand, the expansion would work to orient away from any heritage trees on site so they are not damaged or removed during

the construction. In cases where removal is the only option, the bylaw can specify a fee in-lieu of protection, whereby the developer pays into a fund that can be used for tree maintenance, or a tree replacement provision whereby the developer plants a specified number of trees, preferably on site, to offset the loss of the heritage tree. This is usually not a one-for-one replacement to honor the size and maturity of the tree lost. These trade-off provisions need to be established up-front in the language of the new bylaw.

What does this tool accomplish?

This tool will help the town retain mature tree cover that helps define the scenic and historic nature of its landscape.



Growth and Land Use Goals, Policies and Actions

The following are the goals, policies, and actions the town will pursue to achieve desired growth and land use patterns for its future.

Goal LU1: Make Predictable Land Use Development Decisions

The town will use this plan as a guide for land use and policy decisions to offer current and future residents a predictable and transparent government.

Policy LU1.1: Decision-Making Consistent with This Plan

Make land use development decisions that support the land use plan, goals, and objectives of this plan.

ACTION 1: IMPLEMENT THE LAND USE PLAN IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Town Planning Board will employ the land use plan and design principles in addition to adopted zoning bylaws when reviewing development proposals to ensure day-to-day decisions are consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan.

Policy LU 1.2: Annual Implementation Report

The town will track implementation of this plan on an annual basis and report past accomplishments and upcoming implementation priorities to the public at the Town Meeting. This will help frame any regulatory changes proposed for adoption as well as the basis for expenditures in the town budget.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP A PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION TRACKING AND REPORTING

The town will develop a procedure and forms for various elected and appointed officials as well as volunteer associations working on behalf of the town for recording and reporting their progress in implementing applicable goals and policies of this plan.

Goal LU2: Foster Vibrant Village Centers

The town recognizes that its villages are important centers of social, economic, and community activity for the town. It will support a balanced mix of residential, business, and civic activities within its village centers.

Policy LU2.1: Encourage a Mix of Uses in Village Centers

The town will support the diversification of uses and promote infill development in its defined village centers as illustrated on the future land use plan and map.

ACTION 1: IMPLEMENT A NEW VILLAGE CENTER DISTRICT WITHIN EXISTING VILLAGES

The town will work to develop new village center districts that address a broader range of uses. The intent of these districts is to remove barriers to allow compatible village infill development while still meeting minimum standards for placement of well and septic.

Policy LU 2.2: Safeguard and Enhance the Appearance and Character of Village Centers

The town will provide clear guidance to those wishing to develop within village centers as to how new development or significant modifications can be designed to best retain the character of the center while still allowing for new development and change over time.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP VILLAGE CENTER DESIGN GUIDELINES

The town will set design guidelines for village center development to ensure that the placement, scale, and design of new structures be compatible with the existing character of village centers and hamlets.

Goal LU3: Retain a Rural-Village Distinction

The distinction between the village and hamlet areas and the surrounding rural landscape is a traditional and valued land use pattern that contributes greatly to the identity of the individual villages and the town as a whole. The town will work to retain the pattern by preserving open space and agricultural lands in its rural areas outside of village centers.

Policy 3.1: Retain Scenic Views Along Rural Roads

Open views along roadways contribute to the rural character and scenery of the town and help visually distinguish village areas from rural ones. The town will work to retain this sense of openness by providing tools to create alternatives to Approval Not Required development along roadways.

ACTION 1: BACK-LOT PROTECTIVE BYLAW

Develop a back-lot protective bylaw to apply to the current town residential district to allow for a back-lot development alternative to traditional Approval Not Required subdivisions. The intent of this bylaw is to retain the rural character of the town by preserving open land along roadways.

Policy LU 3.2: Maximize Contiguous Open Space

The town will work to retain contiguous agricultural and open space lands through land trust negotiated conservation easements and development site planning decisions on the part of the Planning Board.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP AN OPEN SPACE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (OSRD) BYLAW

Develop an open space residential development bylaw to achieve land use objectives related to connecting open space, maintaining rural character, supporting local agriculture, and minimizing impacts of development on sensitive natural features. This bylaw should provide sufficient guidance as to how open space areas should be identified and oriented to maximize the contiguity of open space and agricultural use areas from one parcel to the next.

Policy LU 3.3: Support Land Conservation Efforts for Agriculture and Open Space

Town residents value the rural landscape yet property rights and land values mean that agricultural and other open lands remain vulnerable to development where market demand exists. The town will support efforts of land trusts and state agencies to continue to secure permanent protections on key agricultural lands. The town will work to coordinate with active conservation groups in the area to preserve important natural areas.

ACTION 1: INFORMATION-SHARING TO SUPPORT LAND CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Assist land trusts in their preservation efforts by sharing mapping and land use data as needed to assist their efforts to prioritize lands for protection. This includes information on existing easements, various natural resource and environmental data, soil data, and current protected open space areas and public lands.

ACTION 2: IMPROVE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH ON CONSERVATION TOOLS

Coordinate with Berkshire Natural Resources Council, the Highland Communities Initiative of the Trustees of Reservations, and the New Marlborough Land Preservation Trust to educate town property owners on land conservation options. The town's role in this may include scheduling, advertising, and hosting a workshop, posting material to the town website, and providing set public locations for relevant brochures to be left for pick-up by interested parties.



CHAPTER 4: HOUSING

New Marlborough's vision for housing includes a range of housing options to meet the needs of the community. This chapter describes key trends and issues in the area of housing. It also establishes the town's work plan for goals, policies, and actions to achieve its vision for its housing and community

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Housing Mix

In 2006, 94.5% of the town's 1,057 residential units were single-family residences. The multi-family housing that does exist (5.5% of all housing) are two to four units per dwelling. These multi-family units tend to blend with the single-family residences in that they are typically older homes that have been divided into apartments.

Home Prices

Since 2000, New Marlborough has seen its median home sale price increase by 79.3%. While there have been fluctuations in the median sales price during the past eight years, the average annual price has increased by 7.6%. This is particularly notable given the national housing crisis which has stagnated or reversed home value trends in other portions of the country and state in the past few years.

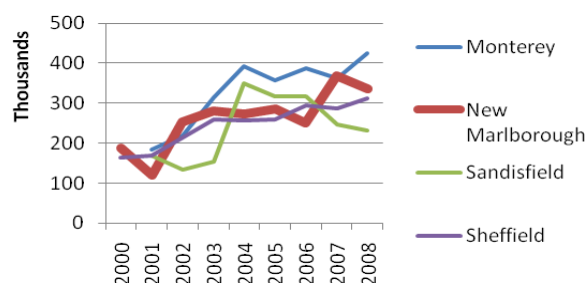


HOUSING AT A GLANCE

- ☑ **Mix** – Nearly 95% of all housing in the town is single-family residences.
- ☑ **Cost** – town median home sales prices increased an average of 7.6% each year from 2000 to 2008.
- ☑ **Location** – All new housing since 2000 was developed in rural areas outside of village centers.

Additional discussion of housing may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

Figure 7: Single-Family Median Sales Price (2000-September 2008)



Source: Banker and Tradesman Online, 2008

KEY HOUSING ISSUES

This plan and the goals, policies and actions outlined in this chapter work to foster housing variety and options in the town and to particularly address the following issues:

Issue 1: Housing for All Life Stages

The town has a relatively older population and homogenous (single-family) housing stock. The town may wish to consider expanding building types to increase housing options and choice that will allow individuals and families to move to or remain in the town as well as downsize their living spaces.

Issue 2: Housing Affordability

In 2000, the median home sales price in New Marlborough was \$187,500 and the median household income was \$46,875. More than 30% of the town's homes were seasonal at that time. By 2007, the median home sales price had increased 94% to \$367,500 while the median household income rose only 26% to \$56,800.



HOUSING GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

Goal H1: Supply Housing For All Life's Stages

The town will offer varying housing options to meet the needs of the complete age range of its residents – from starter homes, cottages, studios, bungalows, lofts, live/work units, and low-maintenance multi-family options such as patio homes or townhomes. This range will ensure the long-term viability of a healthy year-round population and diverse demographic in the town to retain the sense of community and support local businesses.

Policy H1.1: Proactively Address Current and Future Housing Needs

The town will work to identify current and anticipated housing needs for existing and potential residents

ACTION 1: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN

Develop a housing production plan to identify housing needs and specific strategies for the town to implement to address those needs.

ACTION 2: COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT

Assign a committee to conduct a community outreach and education campaign on the Community Preservation Act in the months before the town meeting at which it will be brought forward for vote.

Policy H1.2: Increase Housing Variety

Support the development of single-family attached and small multi-family unit options to meet housing needs of the young and aging.



Community Preservation Act

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) (MGL44B) was signed into law in 2000 to provide towns an additional funding source to support three primary activities:

1. The acquisition and preservation of open space
2. The creation and support of affordable housing
3. Acquisition and preservation of historic buildings and landscapes

How does it work?

The CPA enables municipalities to enact a surcharge on the property tax bill of not more than three percent. The revenues from this surcharge are placed into a fund for the town Select Board to distribute for one of the three approved activities. A Community Preservation Committee of town residents develops a strategy and priorities for how CPA monies should be spent and makes recommendations to the Select Board to officially approve. In this way, the CPA creates a pool of money to support public benefit activities that are typically both costly and lack dedicated funding in a municipal budget.

For more information visit:

<http://www.communitypreservation.org>

ACTION 1: ENCOURAGE HOUSING DIVERSITY IN VILLAGE CENTERS

Allow up to four-unit structures by right in the village center districts to increase housing diversity of type and price and to support local businesses in those locations.

Goal H2: Offer A Range of Home Prices

The town recognizes the challenges municipalities face when essential members of the community like teachers, contractors, police, and fire fighters struggle to afford to live in the communities they serve. The town will work to monitor and to address housing affordability needs to ensure citizens, who desire to, can live and work in the town.

Policy H2.1: Track Housing Mix and Affordability

Work with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) to track housing mix, price and income trends to determine the status of housing affordability in the town.

ACTION 1: COORDINATE WITH BERKSHIRE BENCHMARKS ON MUNICIPAL DATA NEEDS

Coordinate with the Berkshire Benchmarks program of the BRCP to identify the key statistics the town will need on an annual basis. These statistics can help shape the community profiles that will be created and made available on the Berkshire Benchmarks projectⁱ website on an annual basis.

ⁱ Berkshire Benchmarks is a regional data and indicator program of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission.



CHAPTER 5: ECONOMY

While founded as a mill town, the New Marlborough economy now consists of local farms and businesses. This chapter reviews the composition of economic activity in the town and then details the goals, policies, and actions for the town to take to achieve its vision for a small and sustainable local economy.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Small local businesses dominate the business activity in New Marlborough. Tax records indicate that there are over 95 local and in-home businesses. Over half of all businesses fall within one of four sectors: construction (26.3%), Retail Trade (16.8%), Professional and Business Services (10.5%), and Other Services (e.g., auto repair, home maintenance)(10.5%). Agriculture is also a significant component of the economy, with 1,300 acres in active production. These farms tend to be smaller and offer more specialized crops.

The town also has a number of youth camps and educational facilities including Flying Cloud Institute which offers year-round programming in arts and science; YMCA Camp Segowea, which reopened its doors in 2009 after a brief closure; and Kolburne School, a private school for challenged youth.



ECONOMY AT A GLANCE

- ☑ **Composition** – New Marlborough has a strong local and in-home business base.
- ☑ **Location** – the majority of commercial goods and service storefronts are in one of the town's village centers
- ☑ **Agriculture** – New Marlborough lost almost 12% of its farmland between 1990 and 2000.

Additional discussion of the local economy may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

KEY ECONOMY ISSUES

This plan and the goals, policies and actions in this chapter work to strengthen the local economy and to particularly address the following issues:

1. Business Growth and Diversity

The five village center areas in the town are key locations for goods and services. Residents have expressed a desire for more restaurants, farm stands, and art options in the village centers. Currently the town has a single residential zone which makes no distinction between village and rural contexts in terms of encouraging a broader mix of uses and concentrating development near businesses to help them be more viable.

2. Agricultural Land Loss

Rural development trends promise to continue a pattern of agricultural land consumption unless growth management measures are implemented. The town needs to consider how to identify and prioritize areas for land conservation as well as residential and commercial/employment uses.

Issue 3: Communication Infrastructure

Current cell phone service is very limited and there are significant areas of the town that do not have broadband internet service. Residents have indicated that improved communications infrastructure for the town is a high priority. The town will need to consider potential strategies for addressing communication needs.

ECONOMY GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Goal E1: Promote Local Farms and Businesses

The town values the contribution of local farms, storefronts, and in-home businesses to the economic and social community dynamic. Residents wish to see local farms and businesses increase and expand to meet a wider array of food and dining, goods and services, and entertainment needs. The town will support efforts to promote its local farm and business base.

Policy E1.1: Strengthen and Expand Local Business Base

The town is home to many local businesses, both within its village centers and home-based businesses.

ACTION 1: ENCOURAGE LOCAL FARMS AND BUSINESSES TO PARTICIPATE IN REGIONAL NETWORKS

Encourage local farms and businesses to participate in economic networks to increase visibility and patronage of town businesses.

ACTION 2: SUPPORT BROADBAND EXPANSION

Continue to support the efforts of the Southern Berkshire Technology Collaborative goal to expand broadband services to underserved areas in South County, emphasizing the need to address service needs in the town. This could include direct outreach to state representatives, grant writing, and other activities to organize support and resources to facilitate expansion.

Policy E1.2: Support Local Agriculture

The town will support community-based efforts to organize a farmers market by providing assistance with advertising and permitting public spaces such as the Town Hall parking lot as a possible location.



ACTION 1: IDENTIFY A FARMERS MARKET CHAMPION

Identify an individual or group to champion the organization of a farmers market in the town during summer months. This person or group will be responsible for soliciting and booking vendors, securing a set location, and promoting the market. The champion should make use of the capacity and advice of Berkshire Grown to assist and inform their farmers market planning and outreach.

Policy E1.3: Increase Participation and Support of Local Events and Businesses

The town has a number of events and destinations including local restaurants, lodging, gallery and stores that would benefit from increased participation of residents and non-residents alike. The town will work to increase awareness of the town's historic, cultural, and other resources.

ACTION 1: STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND TOWN EVENTS

The town will work with the Cultural Council and others to build on existing events such as Elihu Burritt Day to help increase attendance and visitation to the town and its businesses.

ACTION 2: MARKET TOWN EVENTS AND DESTINATIONS

The town will work with the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, Berkshire Visitors Bureau, and the BRPC, among others, to increase awareness of the town's attractions and destinations. This can include ensuring events are listed on regional marketing materials and events calendars as well as developing a brochure specific to the town and ensuring events are posted on the New Marlborough Village Association website's calendar.



CHAPTER 6: NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

2009 marked the 250th anniversary of the town and shone a light on its many historic and cultural resources. The natural resources of the town have long been recognized and valued by residents. This chapter establishes the town's goals, policies, and actions to further protect and highlight its many natural and cultural resources for the appreciation of future generations.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Natural Resources

There are many natural resources in the town including surface water, wetlands, important habitat areas, and slopes/ridgelines. Although nearly three-fourths of the land area of the town is forested, the town contains numerous surface water bodies – both natural and man-made – as well as rivers and wetlands. The town's rich and varied habitats are home to 32 species (24 plants and 8 animals) that are either threatened, endangered or of special concern.

Cultural Resources

Historic preservation in the town is conducted principally through the efforts of the local Historical Society and Historical Commission, who work with the New Marlborough Land Trust and the Cultural Council. These groups operate in tandem to identify resources, respond to property-owner and resident requests for information on town history, and pursue grants to support projects to highlight and protect town historic resources. The



NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES AT A GLANCE

- ✓ **Protected Species**– 32 species that are either threatened, endangered, or of special concern reside in the town.
- ✓ **Vernal Pools** – 64 potential vernal pools, important wetland habitats, have been identified but none have been certified for protection.
- ✓ **Historic Districts**– there are two historic districts in the town, the villages of Mill River and New Marlborough.
- ✓ **Cultural Resources** – organized tours of historic mill sites and the town's 13 historic cemeteries have helped call attention to these historic and cultural resources.

Additional discussion of natural and cultural resources may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

designation of the Upper Housatonic River National Heritage Area, of which the town is a part, created an important new vehicle to organize and implement heritage projects in the town. To date, the town has two designated historic districts in the village centers of New Marlborough and Mill River, generated a walking tour of old mill sites along the Konkapot River, and highlighted the thirteen cemeteries of the town with informational walking tours.

The New Marlborough Cultural Council is an active group that organizes annual celebrations such as Elihu Burritt Day. The New Marlborough Village Association hosts a website highlighting local activities and organizes music, art, and literary events at the Meeting House including the Meeting House Gallery, Music and More series and Winter House Concerts. The Senior Citizens Group is another important social group within the community.

acres¹) remain available for development. Numerous threatened and endangered species have habitat within the town limits, including birds, fish, plants, and terrestrial animals. As the town has expressed a strong interest and commitment to retaining its natural features, it will need to consider development patterns and potential partnerships to achieve these objectives.

KEY NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCE ISSUE

This plan and the goals, policies and actions in this chapter work to protect and enhance the town's natural and cultural resources and to particularly address the following issues:

Issue 1: Protect Natural and Scenic Resources

The town is fortunate to have many scenic resources on both private and public lands. While nearly 25% of the town's land is under permanent private or non-profit protection or under state or federal ownership, other privately owned lands (10,315 unconstrained

¹ Unconstrained acres are derived from state aerial photography analysis of the town development footprint, adjusted to remove acres impacted by development constraints such as wetlands, steep slopes, or critical habitat.



NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Goal NR1: Retain a Rural Landscape

The town will work to protect its rural landscape as a valuable asset for the natural, economic, recreational, scenic, and community character.

Policy NR 1.1: Preserve Scenic Views

The town will work to retain key scenic views and scenic rural landscape values through both development and conservation practices.

ACTION 1: ADOPT THE SCENIC MOUNTAIN ACT

The town will work independently or in collaboration with BRPC to educate the community regarding the intent of the Scenic Mountain Act to protect mountain scenery and surface water quality and to conduct outreach to residents prior to bringing the Act forward for vote at a Town Meeting.

Policy NR 1.2: Retain Heritage Trees

The town will protect heritage trees through the development of a heritage tree protection bylaw for town owned lands and public rights-of-way.

ACTION 1: HERITAGE TREE INVENTORY

Conduct a heritage tree inventory on town-owned lands and along public rights-of-way to identify the species, dimensions, ages, and locations of healthy heritage trees to be protected by the new bylaw.

ACTION 2: HERITAGE TREE PROTECTION BYLAW

Develop a bylaw to govern the protection of heritage trees as defined by the Heritage Tree Inventory. This bylaw should seek to protect heritage trees along public rights of way as well as those that may be impacted through new development or significant renovations.

Goal NR2: Protect Critical Habitat Areas

The town will work to safeguard critical habitat and natural areas.

Policy NR 2.1: Consider Habitat Protection in Land Use Decisions

The town will ensure that habitat protection is incorporated into day-to-day development decisions to ensure that the cumulative impact of development over time is minimized.

ACTION 1: ENSURE CONNECTIVE OPEN SPACE THROUGH OSRD BYLAW

Ensure the new OSRD bylaw calls for open space set asides that prioritize connections to adjacent public lands/open space, critical habitat areas, and riparian areas.

RELATED ACTIONS

LU 3.2.1

Policy NR 2.2: Support Efforts to Address Invasive Species

The Highland Communities Initiative (HCI) has collaborated with the University of Connecticut on developing an invasive plant species inventory for the region. The town will work to support volunteer events by HCI in the town to ensure the entire town is inventoried. Remediation efforts should also be supported as they emerge.

ACTION 1: INVENTORY INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

Coordinate with the HCI, Berkshire Natural Resources Council, BRCP and others to train and conduct volunteer inventories of plants in the town.

ACTION 2: DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO ADDRESS INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

Once the inventory is complete, the town will work with the same regional partners to develop a regional or town-specific strategy to address invasive plants.

Goal NR3: Protect the Health of Surface Water Bodies

The town values its rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, and ponds and intends to preserve and protect them for use and enjoyment today and in the future. The town will explore regulatory and voluntary methods for protecting the health of surface waters from both point and non-point sources of pollution.

Policy NR3.1: Protect Wetland Areas

Wetland provide critical habitat as well as serving as natural water filtration systems for surface and ground water. The town will work to further minimize impacts on these resources so they will function to the best extent possible.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP A LOCAL WETLANDS BYLAW

Work with the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions to develop a local wetlands bylaw to create protections that go above and beyond the general statewide laws to appropriately protect the wetland resources in the town.

ACTION 2: PROTECT VERNAL POOLS

Work to inspect potential vernal pools as identified by the state or local knowledge to confirm their presence. Certify all known vernal pools to protect them from adverse impacts from development.

ACTION 3: SALT REDUCTION IN WETLANDS

Restrict the use of salt on roads through wetlands to safeguard these important water quality and habitat-supporting areas from salt runoff.

Policy NR3.2: Implement Best Practices to Reduce Sedimentation of Surface Water Bodies

Sediment from site construction activities or specific use-related activities (e.g., agricultural runoff) can have detrimental impacts on surface water bodies and aquatic life through sedimentation. The town

will create protections to reduce the impacts of sediment loads entering surface water bodies.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP AND ADOPT A BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE GUIDE FOR EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL

The town will develop a best practice manual to inform those in the town about recommended best practices for minimizing and controlling erosion and sedimentation in the town.

RELATED ACTIONS

NR 1.1.1

Policy NR 3.3: Safeguard Against Aquatic Invasive Species

Zebra Mussels and other aquatic invasive species are a recent threat to Berkshire surface water bodies. The town will work on proactive education and other measures to ensure that the Zebra Mussels do not spread to water bodies within the town.

ACTION 1: COORDINATE WITH BRPC AND DEP ON MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

The BRCP and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection recently completed an education and outreach effort as to the threats posed by invasive aquatic species and the best practices for managing those threats. These practices should be implemented quickly to prevent the spread of Zebra Mussels or other invasive species to surface water bodies in the town.

ACTION 2: COLLABORATE WITH MONTEREY AND GREAT BARRINGTON ON LAKE BUEL PROTECTION MEASURES

Given that Lake Buel crosses municipal boundaries, a coordinated approach will be necessary to prevent invasion of this water body. The town will take the lead to develop and implement a protection strategy with Monterey and Great Barrington.



Goal NR4: Honor and Highlight Town Historic and Cultural Resources

The town is home to numerous historic structures, cemeteries, and artifacts that add significantly to the character and interest of the town.

Policy NR4.1: Identify and Survey Key Historic Resources

The New Marlborough Historical Commission and the New Marlborough Historical Society will work together to identify key resources and to survey sites, districts, and landscapes, as appropriate and according to importance and property owner interest.

ACTION 1: CONDUCT HISTORIC SURVEYS

The town will work with appropriate local and regional partners to identify and pursue historic survey opportunities in the town to further the inventory of historic properties, sites, and landscapes.

Policy NR 4.2: Pursue National Register Listing of Selected Sites or Districts

The New Marlborough Historical Commission and the New Marlborough Historical Society will work together to nominate individual sites, districts, or thematic collections of historic sites and landscapes.

ACTION 1: SUPPORT NOMINATION OF HISTORIC SITES, LANDSCAPES AND DISTRICTS

The town will support efforts of the Historical Society and Historical Commission to nominate historically significant sites for listing on the National Register of the National Parks Service.

Policy NR4.3: Highlight Key Resources With Informational Signs and Tours

The town will continue to work to build a system of historic plaques and tours to highlight and inform visitors and residents about the history of the area.

ACTION 1: PURSUE GRANTS TO SUPPORT SIGNAGE

The town will support efforts of the Historical Society or others to pursue grants for the purpose of adding or enhancing interpretive signage or tours (including self-guided tours) of historic sites of the town.

ACTION 2: MARKET HERITAGE RESOURCES

Work with the Berkshire Visitors Bureau and others to highlight the historic resources and tours of the town to facilitate knowledge and appreciation of the town's heritage. This could include regional outreach, advertising, and packaging through the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area.



CHAPTER 7: OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

The town values its scenic rural landscape and many recreational opportunities available just outside the door. The town's vision includes continued preservation and enjoyment of this beautiful landscape. This chapter highlights some of the open space and recreation amenities and then establishes the town goals, policies, and actions for retaining and enhancing these options and resources over time.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Town Parks and Recreation Options

Umpachene Park, a six-acre park at the confluence of the Konkapot and Umpachene Rivers, is the only town park. In addition, school facilities, such as the ball field, are used by town residents for organized and group sports.

Public and Private Open Space

The town has a rich supply of park and recreation amenities due to active land trusts and the presence of state parks and forests. Cumulatively, these holdings represent nearly one quarter of the land area of the town.

The Trustees of Reservations is an active land trust in the town with two large reserves open for public recreation: Questing and Dry Hill.



OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION AT A GLANCE

- ☑ **Conserved Lands** – Approximately 25% of the town land is under permanent conservation.
- ☑ **Recreation** – recreation amenities center on the use of the open space, enjoyment of the town's lakes, ponds, and streams, and the diverse wildlife supported by the diverse habitat areas.

Additional discussion of open space and recreation resources may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

*Table 1: Land Trust Land Holdings Summary**

Land Trust	Acres
Berkshire Natural Resources Council	291.5
New Marlborough Land Trust	349.4
The Trustees of Reservations	617.4

Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, 2008

* This illustrates acres that have been directly purchased; it does not reflect easement acres held by these entities.

State lands in the town limits include:

- Beartown State Forest
- Campbell Falls State Park
- Cookson State Forest
- East Mountain State Forest
- Sandisfield State Forest (York Lake)

Table 2: State Parks and Forests

State Park or Forest	Acres
Beartown State Forest	126
Campbell Falls State Park	138
Cookson State Forest	2,274
East Mountain State Forest	165
Sandisfield State Forest (York Lake)	1,067
Total	3,770

Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission GIS, 2009

Recreation Options

The town boasts year-round outdoor activities including:

- Boating,
- Swimming,
- Fishing,
- Bird watching,
- Hiking,
- Cross-Country Skiing/Snowshoeing,
- ATV/Snowmobile,
- Hunting,
- Camping, and
- Picnicking.

KEY OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ISSUES

This plan and the goals, policies and actions in this chapter work to enhance and expand open space and recreation options in the town and to particularly address the following issue:

Issue1: Multi-modal Options

While there are wonderful recreational opportunities available through the various state parks and forests, trails for walking and biking within the villages centers are quite limited. Residents have expressed a desire for increased trail options and walking and biking connectivity between the villages.

Issue 2: Recreational Trail Network Accessibility

There are some limited Class 1 trails in the town. By definition, Class 1 trails provide a wider and well-groomed surface to accommodate older, younger, or disabled individuals with ease and safety. Increasing the trail options for universal access is desired in the town.



OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Goal OS1: Offer A High-Quality System of Recreation Amenities

The town will continue to offer a high-quality system of parks and open space in collaboration with active land trusts, state and federal agencies, individual property owners, and others.

Policy OS 1.1: New Town Park

Park expansion in the town will be opportunity driven. The town will ensure it is prepared to receive and take action on park creation if and when resident(s) or a group donates land to the town for that purpose. Future park land should include a clearing with relatively even slopes on all or a good portion of the site and be easily accessed from existing public roads.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP PROCEDURES FOR RECEIPT OF LAND

Proactively develop and communicate the process by which a property owner can donate land to the town for use as a park. This should clearly communicate the qualities desired in a parcel, anticipated benefits to the community, potential benefits to the property owner, and appropriate contact information.

Policy OS1.2: Recreation Options for All Physical Abilities

The town will work to offer universal access to recreation options so that all ages and abilities can enjoy the natural and cultural resources of the town.

ACTION 1: IDENTIFY POTENTIAL ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS ON TOWN RECREATIONAL LAND

Examine town trail and park amenities to identify barriers to universal access to key features and then develop a strategy for addressing those barriers where feasible.

ACTION 2: WORK WITH OTHER PUBLIC LAND HOLDERS TO ENHANCE ACCESS

Work with other public and non-profit entities with public lands in the town to identify opportunities for improving accessibility for universal use.

ACTION 3: PURSUE FUNDING FOR IDENTIFIED ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

Actively pursue funding opportunities for park and recreation improvements for universal access improvements

Policy OS1.3: Retain Public Access to Open Space and Water Bodies

The town will work to retain public access points to public lands and waterways so that future residents and visitors can enjoy the recreational options enjoyed today.

ACTION 1: RETAIN PUBLIC ACCESS THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Work with developers to negotiate public access rights to key recreational features through the development review process.

ACTION 2: WORK WITH PROPERTY OWNERS TO SECURE PUBLIC ACCESS

Work with property owners to overcome liability concerns or transfer portions of land that are used to access waterways or public lands to the town or other entity to ensure future recreation access.



CHAPTER 8: SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The town seeks to efficiently offer high quality services to its residents now and in the future. This chapter provides an overview of the services offered through the town and the goals, policies and actions the town will take to efficiently and effectively serve residents in the future.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

The town operates a small police force out of Town Hall with a time chief and part-time officers. Fire protection and EMT service is provided principally by a volunteer fire department of the town. The town has been an active participant in regional homeland security and disaster preparedness planning.

During the planning process, the opportunity arose for the town to pursue Green Community status as part of the Massachusetts Green Communities Act. The Select Board made the decision to move forward with this process which holds the potential for cost savings through energy efficiency upgrades and would make the town eligible for a green community grant fund.



SERVICES AND FACILITIES AT A GLANCE

- ☑ **Police** – Public safety services are provided through the New Marlborough police department.
- ☑ **Fire and EMT** – is a volunteer service, however facilities and equipment are supported by the town.
- ☑ **Water Supply** – the majority of the town is on well and septic. Protection of water supply, including surface water bodies that can lead to groundwater contamination, is a priority.
- ☑ **Energy Efficiency** – including both efficiency upgrades and the incorporation of renewable energy where feasible is an avenue the town will pursue as it works to become a Green Community.

Additional discussion of services and facilities may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions

KEY SERVICES AND FACILITIES ISSUES

Issue 1: Limited Budget

The town has a very limited budget from which to operate its services. This makes efficiency all the more important so that resources can be directed to service provision to the greatest extent feasible. This section of the plan identifies a number of opportunities the town can pursue to reduce operating expenses and improve organization.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Goal SF1: Efficient and Fiscally-Responsible Infrastructure and Services

The town will work individually and regionally to plan and provide infrastructure and services including police, fire, roads, schools, parks, and others in an efficient and fiscally-responsible manner.

Policy SF 1.1: Efficient, Well-Planned and Maintained Transportation System

The town will work to strategically identify and address road system maintenance needs to ensure constant progress and enhancement of the road network while maximizing federal and state grants to assist with project financing.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP A SIMPLE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)

The town will develop a simple capital improvement program to identify needed and anticipated improvements, estimated costs, potential funding sources, and relative timing and priorities for an approximate 5-year timeframe. The CIP should address any planned needs such as additional staffing needs, machine or vehicle additions or replacements, improvements to public facilities, road repair projects, park additions or improvements, and other town-funded expenditures. The format for this should be simple with the intent of serving as an organizing tool rather than a bureaucratic burden. Strong emphasis should be placed on ensuring a geographic distribution of projects and exploring grants or partnerships that can help town dollars go farther.



Policy SF 1.2: Streamline Cost While Maintaining or Enhancing Levels of Service

The town will work on all levels to provide the highest level of service as efficiently as possible.

ACTION 1: EXPLORE POTENTIAL SHARED SERVICE DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS

The town will explore the possibility and potential benefits of shared service delivery with adjacent communities as a means of streamlining spending by using resources more efficiently.

ACTION 2: INCREASE USE OF REGIONAL GROUP PURCHASING PROGRAM

Work to improve knowledge and use of the regional group purchasing program to maximize the potential cost savings to the town available through this network.

Goal SF2: Protect Town Water Supply

Town residents and businesses rely on wells for their water supply. The town will work to support a continued supply of clean groundwater to meet the needs of its current and future residents, businesses, and farms through its land use development and policy decisions.

SEE SCENIC MOUNTAIN ACT, CHAPTER 3

Goal SF3: Support A Safe and Healthy Community

The town will continue to work individually and regionally to ensure residents are safe from natural and human-initiated hazards and emergencies through a Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Policy SF 3.1: Continue to Participate in Regional Emergency Preparedness Planning

The town has been and will continue to be an active and supportive participant in regional emergency preparedness planning efforts. This effort addresses response needs for fire, police, and flood events, among others.

ACTION 1: PARTICIPATE IN HOMELAND SECURITY PLANS AND ACTIONS FOR THE REGION

Continue to participate in Homeland Security meetings for the region and to support and implement policies and practices as recommended by that effort.

ACTION 2: ENSURE APPROPRIATE STAFF AND RESOURCES FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS

Ensure that the town is well-served by fully staffed and equipped emergency response teams (police and fire/EMS) through a combination of town resources and participation in the regional joint response agreement.

Policy SF 3.2: Institute Measures to Control Speeding Throughout the Town

The town will work to support police efforts to control speeding through increased enforcement as well as a variety of traffic-calming strategies.

ACTION 1: INCREASE POLICE PRESENCE

Increase police presence in higher volume locations and times of day to help raise awareness of speeds and public safety. This can include the use of speed monitoring signs as well as patrols.

ACTION 2: EMPLOY TRAFFIC-CALMING MEASURES IN VILLAGE CENTERS

Controlling traffic speed is a vital step in promoting a safe pedestrian environment in the village centers. The town will explore a variety of traffic-calming options and pursue implementing preferred options based on the individual village context

Goal SF4: Quality Public Facilities

The town values its public facilities, including the Town Hall and Library, and will ensure vital public buildings are well-maintained and improved over time to meet residents' needs.

Policy SF4.1: Offer Well-Maintained Facilities

Ensure that public facilities are well maintained through public investment decisions, pursuing grants, engaging in public-private arrangements, and/or supporting community volunteerism for grounds maintenance and beautification.

ACTION 1: CONDUCT FACILITY ENHANCEMENT SURVEY

Conduct a survey of town residents to assess current satisfaction and future needs or interests for facility additions or improvements.

ACTION 2: PRIORITIZE AND IMPLEMENT FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Develop a facility improvement strategy to implement over time as resources allow that achieves the needs and reflects the priorities identified in the community survey (Action 4.1 1).

Policy SF4.2: Facilities Meet the Service Needs of Residents

Ensure that public facilities have the resources required to offer high-quality service to residents, such as ongoing library resource development. The town will also work with its public service providers to ensure that hours of operation are coordinated and consistent to maximize use of the services provided.

RELATED ACTIONS

Action 4.1.1

Action 4.1.2

Goal SF5: Reduce Town Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The town will work to achieve designation as a Green Community by implementing the steps and actions set forth in the Green Communities Act (GCA) passed in 2007. This act will improve energy efficiency and promote the development and use of renewable energy sources.

Policy SF5.1: Implement the Green Communities Strategy

The town has applied to receive technical assistance to develop a Green Communities Act implementation strategy that will detail steps needed on the part of the town to achieve Green Communities designation. Once completed, the Town will work to implement the recommended strategy.

Policy SF5.2: Responsible Energy Purchasing

The town will explore potential options for increasing the percent of its total energy consumption that is derived from renewable sources. This may include purchasing from fuel providers that either incorporate renewable products or support renewable development as well as actually including renewable technologies in town-owned buildings (e.g., solar photovoltaic panels or micro-wind).

Goal SF6: Reduce Town Resource Consumption and Waste Generation

There are many steps communities can take to become greener – from reducing waste to education on the real costs of products and individual choices. The town will work to identify the measures of interest and value to residents.

Policy SF6.1: Establish a Green Committee

The town will designate a Green Committee to help guide the town through the process of identifying and implementing needed changes to achieve Green Community designation from the state as well as other actions and priorities the Committee determines appropriate to pursue in the area of sustainable community practices.



CHAPTER 9: TRANSPORTATION

New Marlborough's vision for transportation includes a well-maintained system of roads, preserved scenery along rural roads, expanded trail network, and an enhanced pedestrian environment in village centers. This chapter describes key trends, issues, and opportunities in the area of multi-modal transportation and then established the town's work plan of goals, policies, and actions to achieve its vision for its transportation system.

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

Due to the rural development pattern of the town, the predominant form of transportation is by automobile. Nearly all of the roads within its boundaries are the responsibility of the town to maintain.

Table 3: Road Maintenance Demand by Entity

Maintenance Responsibility	Road Miles	% Total
State	1.59	1.5%
Town	89.10	84.7%
Private	14.47	13.8%
Total	105.16	100%

Source: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission GIS, 2009

Regional Bike Planning

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, in collaboration with the Berkshire Bike Path Council, recently completed the Berkshire Bike Path Implementation Plan. This plan details a proposed extension route north to Vermont and south to Connecticut from the existing constructed Ashuwillticook Trail which runs

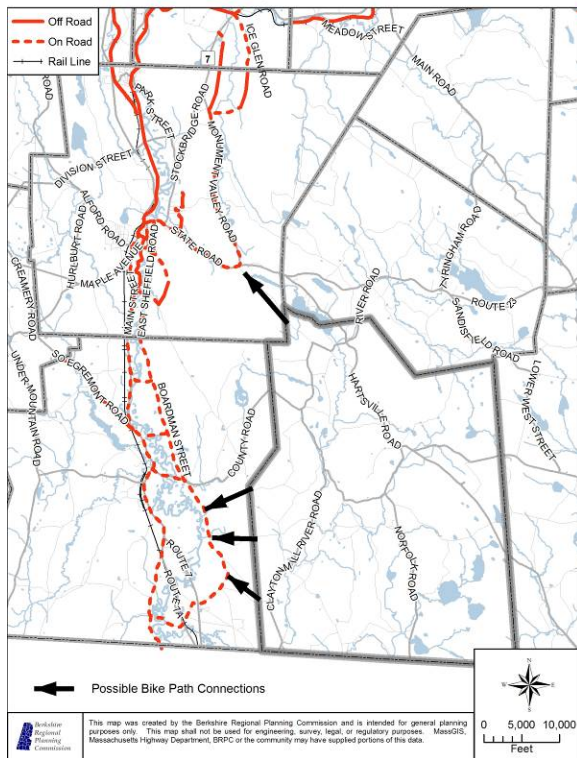
TRANSPORTATION AT A GLANCE

- ☑ **Roads** – Automobiles are the predominant mode of transportation but street/road maintenance is currently an issue.
- ☑ **Rail** – does not exist in the town; all freight and passenger service must be accessed from nearby communities.
- ☑ **Air** – regional air service provided from nearby Great Barrington; commercial flights are available via Bradley International Airport in Hartford, CT or Albany International Airport in Albany, NY.
- ☑ **Transit** –Berkshire Regional Transit Authority bus service does not serve the town, the closest bus stop is in Great Barrington. Transit is offered for the elderly through Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation out of Great Barrington.
- ☑ **Bike/Pedestrian**- trails are available through parks and public lands throughout town. Regional bike planning is underway (see discussion, left).

Additional discussion of transportation may be found in Appendix C: Existing Conditions Summary

between Lanesborough and Adams. While New Marlborough is not on the main spine of the planned trail, communities are encouraged to plan local connections into the regional trail route to increase access and use of the bike trail.

Berkshire Proposed Bike Routes



There are multiple routes the town could select to connect to the trail spine in adjacent Great Barrington and Sheffield.

KEY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

This plan and the goals, policies and actions in this chapter work to enhance and expand open space and recreation options in the town and to particularly address the following issue:

Issue 1: Road Maintenance

Road maintenance has been an issue for the town. The allocated budget for road maintenance has not kept pace with maintenance needs for the over 89 miles of

road the town must maintain. Road maintenance was the one area where residents expressed dissatisfaction with town government performance. Development in rural areas, which tends to be less dense than in village centers, means that more road surface is needed per house. For example, rural residences have an average of 17 houses per mile of roadway compared to 31 houses per mile of road in village centers. Natural events, such as frost heaves, beaver dam-related flooding, and storm-event flooding also impact road conditions on an annual basis.



TRANSPORTATION GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Goal T1: Provide a Complete and Well-Maintained System of Roads

The town will offer a complete system of roadways – from arterials to rural roads – that are safe and well-maintained.

Policy T 1.1: Plan for and Prioritize Maintenance

The town will plan for street improvements and establish priorities based, at a minimum, on intensity of road use and geographic distribution of projects. The long-term maintenance strategy should seek to provide the best road maintenance at the lowest cost to the town through appropriate selection of surfacing material and annual and seasonal maintenance practices and schedule.

Policy T 1.2: Place State Road Maintenance Needs on Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Ensure that town road maintenance needs are included in the state TIP so that they are eligible for project financing.

Policy T 1.3: Coordinate with Fire and School Districts on Road Requirements for Larger Vehicles

The town will coordinate with school bus and fire service providers to identify any potential access of safety issues and to place these at the top of the road maintenance priority list.

Goal T2: Enhance the Bicycle and Pedestrian Environment in Village Centers

The more compact development pattern in the village centers allows for bicycle and pedestrian activity between homes, shops, businesses, and

restaurants in the village centers. The town will work to make targeted improvements to make the pedestrian environment more inviting, safe, and convenient in these areas.



Policy T 2.2: Village Way-finding Signage

The Town will work to identify potential funding sources to support the development of way-finding signage in village center areas to promote increased patronage by both residents and visitors.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP A UNIFIED SIGNAGE CONCEPT FOR VILLAGE CENTERS

Develop and implement a unified system of way-finding signage that is compatible with the character of the village centers.

Policy T 2.3: Village Bike and Pedestrian Amenities

Work with property and business owners to identify and prioritize needed bike and pedestrian improvements including streetscape improvements (e.g., landscaping, lighting, etc.), benches, trash receptacles, and bike racks outside of busy locations in the village centers (e.g., general stores, inns, restaurants, etc.).

ACTION 1: TOWN BIKE-PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Develop a bike and pedestrian plan for the town with particular focus on connections to public lands or recreational amenities, circulation within village centers, and connections to regional bike paths or trails.

Goal T3: Manage Village Parking

Parking in village centers is important to the success of businesses and the convenient access to public and private goods and services for residents and visitors. The town will work to develop an inventory and strategy to address parking needs in its village centers. This will include suggestions for dealing with scarcity or excess supply, anticipating future demand, developing strategies for managing special event demand spikes, and coordinating with local businesses on ways to maximize the utility of available parking options.

Policy T 3.1: Shared Parking Arrangements

The town will identify opportunities for shared parking arrangements to extract the greatest use from the available parking lot supply. This information can be shared with local businesses to point to opportunities to meet parking needs while distributing maintenance costs. The flexibility as well as any restrictions in use (e.g., certain hours or days where use is restricted) should be conveyed through signs.

ACTION 1: CONDUCT A VILLAGE PARKING STUDY

Conduct a parking study for each village in the town to identify supply dynamics and develop strategies for meeting parking needs while minimizing the visual (e.g., buffering) or physical (e.g., shared parking arrangements) presence of parking facilities.

Policy T 3.2: Delineate On-Street Parking Areas

Where road widths are appropriate; the town will delineate areas for on-street parking in village centers. On-street parking in non-delineated locations will be prohibited to support public safety.

ACTION 1: INCORPORATE ON-STREET PARKING IN VILLAGE CENTERS

Incorporate on-street parking options on selected streets in village centers where road widths allow with a preference given to providing parking near public or commercial uses.

**Shared Parking**

Shared parking arrangements are a practice whereby two or more facilities with different hours or days of operation or peak use, share the same parking area. This has the impact of meeting their collective parking needs without creating excessive parking. A classic example of this type of arrangement is between a bank and a church, as one is open on standard weekday business hours while the other has weekend and evening parking needs.



CHAPTER 10: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

This chapter describes the types of actions that will be needed to implement this plan, who will be responsible for taking action on each item, and the relative priority for timing of implementation. It also describes the procedure for amending and updating the plan over time.

Implementation Actions

This plan will be implemented primarily through five types of actions:

- 1) Day-to-Day Policy Decisions
- 2) Regulatory changes
- 3) Plans and Programs
- 4) Regional Coordination
- 5) Collaborative Action

Each of these actions will likely involve more than one group or individual in the town and region. Specific responsibilities will be detailed for each action in the next sections of this chapter.

Day-to-Day Policy Decisions

The town administration, boards, commissions, and departments will be responsible for many of the day-to-day decisions that will cumulatively help implement this plan. Many of these decisions will be made by the Select Board in the form of policy creation and support and the Planning Board in the form of development review decisions that comply with

the land use objectives expressed in the future land use plan.

Regulatory Changes

A number of significant recommendations of this plan are directly or indirectly related to the development of new regulations to govern growth and land use in the town. The Planning Board will be responsible for the initiation of the efforts to draft new bylaw language but it will take a united effort on the part of the town to conduct appropriate outreach to achieve a successful and appropriate bylaw product that meets the needs of the town.

Plans and Programs

The goals, policies, and actions of this plan impact other plans and programs of the town in a few ways. Future updates to other plans, such as the Open Space and Recreation Plan, will need to be in compliance with this plan. New programs called for in this plan will need to be systematically pursued and implemented by the responsible entity as resources allow – such as historic inventory or invasive species management.

Regional Governmental Coordination

In many cases, the implementation of this plan can and should involve other municipalities, the state, or the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. The town will need to take the first step of starting a dialogue on items where collaborative planning or action is needed or where technical assistance is needed or desired.

Collaborative Action

At a very basic level, successful implementation of this plan will require collaborative action outside of the realm of formal government. Residents, the Historical Society, the Village Association, the New Marlborough Land Trust,

business owners, farmers, and others will need to actively engage in the implementation of this plan – through both direct action and through support and participation with town-led implementations actions. This plan is working to achieve a shared vision of the town’s future – achieving that will take a whol- town effort.

Who Will Implement the Plan?

This plan will be implemented through the collaborative and individual effort of a number of organizations, agencies, and individuals. The action plan uses the abbreviations listed on the table below to identify the parties that will likely be involved in the achievement of the corresponding action. These are organized by geography: town, Southern Berkshire (sub-region), Berkshire County, and the State/other (e.g., western Massachusetts, bioregion, etc.).



Parties Involved in Plan Implementation

Town		Southern Berkshire		Berkshire County		State/ Other	
BOS	Board of Selectmen	SBCoC	Southern Berkshire	BRPC	Berkshire Regional	ToR	Trustees of Reservations
PB	Planning Board		Chamber of Commerce		Planning Commission	HCI	Highland Communities
BOA	Board of Appeals	SBCDC	Southern Berkshire	CoC	Chamber of Commerce		Initiative
PW	Public Works		Community	BVB	Berkshire Visitors	UHVNHA	Upper Housatonic Valley
STAFF	Town Staff		Development		Bureau		National Heritage Area
NMHS	New Marlborough		Corporation	BNRC	Berkshire Natural	DEP	Department of
	Historical Society	SBTC	Southern Berkshire		Resources Council		Environmental Protection
HC	Historical Commission		Technology	BG	Berkshire Grown	NC	The Nature Conservancy
VA	Village Association		Collaborative				
NMLT	New Marlborough Land						
	Trust						
R	Residents						
CC	Conservation						
	Commission						

ACTION PLAN

The action plan below details each implementation action contained within the prior chapters of this plan, the relative priority and timing for the action to be taken, who is responsible for implementing the action, and any potential funding sources that may be available.

Action		Priority					Responsible Parties (Bold indicates lead party responsible for initiating action)
		Ongoing	0-1 years	1-3 years	3-5 years	5+ years	
Growth and Land Use							
LU 1.1.1	Implement the Land Use Plan in The Development Process	✓					PB, BOA
LU 1.2.1	Develop a Procedure for Implementation Tracking and Reporting		✓				PB, BOS
LU 2.1.1	Implement a New Village Center District Within Existing Villages			✓			PB, BOS, BRPC, R
LU 2.2.1	Develop Village Center Design Guidelines			✓			PB, BRPC, R
LU 3.1.1	Back-lot Protective Bylaw		✓				PB, BRPC, R
LU 3.2.1	Develop an Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) Bylaw			✓			PB, BRPC, R
LU 3.3.1	Information-Sharing to Support Land Conservation Efforts	✓					CC, PB, BRPC, NC, ToR, NMLT, BNRC
LU 3.3.2	Improve Education and Outreach on Conservation Tools		✓	✓	✓		PB, BRPC, HCI
Housing							
H 1.1.1	Develop and Implement a Housing Production Plan		✓				BOS, PB, BRPC
H 1.1.2	Community Preservation Act		✓				BOS, PB, BRPC
H 1.2.1	Encourage Housing Diversity in Village Centers	✓					BOS, PB, BRPC
H 2.1.1	Coordinate with Berkshire Benchmarks on Municipal Data Needs	✓	✓				BOS, PB, BRPC, STAFF



		Ongoing	0-1 years	1-3 years	3-5 years	5+ years	(Bold indicates lead party responsible for initiating action)
Economy							
E 1.1.1	Encourage Local Farms and Businesses to Participate in Regional Networks	✓					BG, R, CoC, VA , SBCoC
E 1.1.2	Support Broadband Expansion	✓					SBTC, BOS , STAFF, R
E 1.2.1	Identify a Farmers Market Champion		✓				R, VA
E 1.3.1	Strengthen and Expand Town Events	✓					BOS, R, VA, NMHS
E 1.3.2	Market Town Events and Destinations	✓					BOS, R, VA, NMHS CoC, SBCoC
Natural Resources, Open Space and Recreation							
NR 1.1.1	Adopt the Scenic Mountain Act			✓			BOS, PB , BRPC, HCI, R, CC
NR 1.2.1	Heritage Tree Inventory				✓		BOS, PB , BRPC
NR 1.2.2	Heritage Tree Protection Bylaw				✓		BOS, PB , BRPC, R
NR 2.1.1	Ensure Connective Open Space Through OSRD Bylaw	✓					PB , CC
NR 2.2.1	Inventory Invasive Plant Species				✓		CC , R, BRNC
NR 2.2.2	Develop a Strategy to Address Invasive Plant Species				✓		CC , R, BRNC
NR 3.1.1	Develop a Local Wetlands Bylaw						PB, CC , BOS
NR 3.1.2	Protect Vernal Pools						BOS, CC , BRPC
NR 3.1.3	Salt Reduction in Wetlands		✓				BOS , PW, BRPC
NR 3.2.1	Develop and Adopt a Best Management Practice Guide for Erosion Control						PB, CC , STAFF
NR 3.3.1	Coordinate with BRPC and DEP on Management Best Practices	✓	✓				BOS, CC, PB , BRPC
NR 3.3.2	Collaborate with Monterey and Great Barrington on Lake Buel Protection Measures	✓	✓				BOS , CC
NR 4.1.1	Conduct Historic Surveys	✓					NMHS , HC
NR 4.2.1	Support Nomination of Historic District Sites, Landscapes and	✓					NMHS , HC, BOS

		Ongoing	0-1 years	1-3 years	3-5 years	5+ years	(Bold indicates lead party responsible for initiating action)
	Districts						
NR 4.3.1	Pursue Grants to Support Signage	✓					BOS, PW, NMHS, HC
NR 4.3.2	Market Heritage Resources	✓					NMHS, HC, BVB
Open Space and Recreation							
OS 1.1.1	Develop Procedures for Receipt of Land		✓				BOS, PB, CC , STAFF
OS 1.2.1	Identify Potential Access Improvements on Town Recreational Land				✓		CC , PB, BRPC
OS 1.2.2	Work with Other Public Land Holders to Enhance Access					✓	STAFF, CC , PB, ToR, BNRC, NMLT, DEP
OS 1.2.3	Pursue Funding For Identified Access Improvements					✓	CC , BOS, STAFF
OS 1.3.1	Retain Public Access Through The Development Process	✓					PB, CC
OS 1.3.2	Work With Property Owners to Secure Public Access	✓					PB, NMLT , STAFF
Services and Facilities							
SF 1.1.1	Develop a Simple Capital Improvement Program (CIP)		✓				BOS , PW, STAFF
SF 1.2.1	Explore Potential Shared Service Delivery Arrangements				✓	✓	BOS , BRPC, STAFF
SF 1.2.2	Increase Use of Regional Group Purchasing Program			✓			BOS , STAFF
SF 3.1.1	Participate in Homeland Security Plans and Actions for The Region	✓					BOS, STAFF
SF 3.1.2	Ensure Appropriate Staff Resources for Emergency Response Teams	✓					BOS , STAFF
SF 3.2.1	Increase Police Presence		✓				STAFF
SF 3.2.2	Employ Traffic-Calming Measures in Village Centers			✓	✓		BOS , PB, STAFF, PW, BRPC



		Ongoing	0-1 years	1-3 years	3-5 years	5+ years	(Bold indicates lead party responsible for initiating action)
SF 4.1.1	Conduct Facility Enhancement Survey					✓	BOS, STAFF
SF 4.1.2	Prioritize and Implement Facility Improvements					✓	BOS, STAFF
SF 5.1	Implement the Green Communities Strategy		✓				BOS, PB, STAFF
SF 5.2	Responsible Energy Purchasing	✓					BOS, STAFF
SF 6.1	Establish a Green Committee		✓				BOS
Transportation							
T 1.1	Plan for and Prioritize Maintenance	✓					BOS, PW, STAFF
T 1.2	Place State Road Maintenance Needs on Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	✓					BOS, PW, STAFF
T 1.3	Coordinate with Fire and School Districts on Road Requirements for Larger Vehicles	✓					BOS, PW, STAFF
T 2.2.1	Develop Unified Signage Concept for Village Centers				✓		BOS, PB, VA, NMHS
T 2.2.2	Support Resident-Initiated Efforts to Restore Signage Posts in Rural Areas		✓	✓			BOS, PB, NMHS, VA, PW, R
T 2.3.1	Town Bike-Pedestrian Plan					✓	BOS, PB, PW
T 3.1.1	Conduct A Village Parking Study					✓	BOS, PB, PW
T 3.2.1	Incorporate On-Street Parking in Village Centers					✓	BOS, PB, PW



UPDATING THE PLAN

A comprehensive plan looks far into the future and establishes a roadmap of goals, policies, and actions for the town to implement over time. In order for the plan to remain a relevant document, however, periodic updates will be necessary. Updates can occur in two general ways: plan amendments and a full plan update.

Plan Amendments

The town may, from time to time, encounter changing conditions, new laws or programs, or other circumstances that it wishes to reflect or respond to through the comprehensive plan document. The plan amendment process is fairly simple (see below) and allows the planning board to make small but important changes to the document over time to keep pace with changing circumstances.

Plan Update

Eventually, conditions will shift to a degree that a minor amendment is insufficient to achieve a document that provides meaningful and forward-thinking guidance to the town. At this time, typically 10-15 years from initial adoption of a new or fully updated plan, municipalities can go through a plan update process. At this time, the community initiates a full new planning process to rethink or reaffirm the vision and chart out new policy directions and carry forward any relevant directions from the prior document.

Amendment and Update Procedure

MGL 41 S81D (Appendix D) describes the practice and procedure for amending and updating an adopted comprehensive plan.

Vote:

An amendment of the comprehensive plan may be made through a formal majority vote of the planning board and recorded for public record.

Filing:

The planning board must supply a copy of the amended or updated plan to the Department of Housing and Community Development. In the case of an amendment, a good practice would be to include a cover memo highlighting the amendment that was made.

