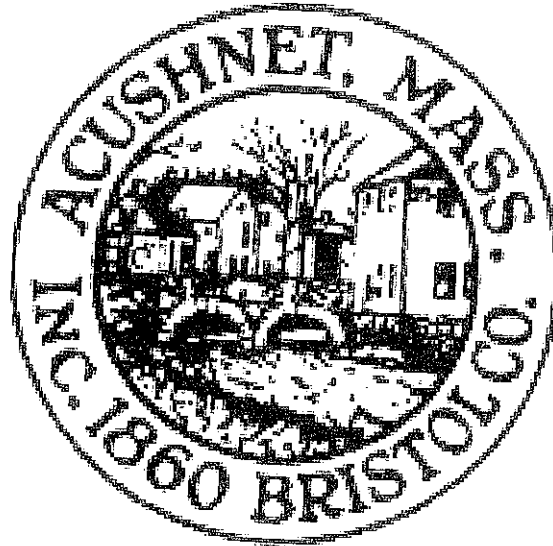


Town of Acushnet Master Plan



2008

**A future worth pursuing...A past worth
protecting**

Executive Summary

Like any community, Acushnet will change from what it is today. Since European settlers arrived in the colonial period, the landscape of Acushnet has been in a constant state of flux. The trend continues. Yet, survey's conducted as part of this Master Plan process, opinions rendered in workshops, committee meetings and random conversations with local citizens reveal that, "We like Acushnet just the way it is and we don't ever want it to change!" Nevertheless, like any community, Acushnet will change. Our population will grow, our demographics will shift, new businesses will locate (or leave) Town, and changes in local, state and federal governments will have an influence upon the metamorphosis of Acushnet. As the old cliché goes, the only constant is change.

The real issue to confront then is not *will* Acushnet change, but *how* it will change. The best way to preserve and protect those characteristics which we as a community value is to develop a plan to manage growth. The tool which municipalities, big and small, use to manage growth is a Master Plan.

The community Master Plan process is based on the premise that cities and towns do not randomly grow and develop. Rather, the housing developments, commercial districts and natural landscapes of Acushnet which we view are directly tied to our community's unique zoning districts, by-laws and related policies. These policies collectively form a "blueprint" for a community's future. Master planning should not be a static process. Master Plans should be periodically reviewed to ensure currency and relevance. Occasionally, social, economic and cultural changes will necessitate modifications to goals, objectives and implementation plans. Acushnet's last Master Plan was prepared in 1964. Forty-four years later, the unmodified document was found to be woefully inadequate; certainly not a document which provided any semblance of guidance for town leaders.

A [Master Plan] shall be a statement, through text, maps, illustrations or other forms of communication, that is designed to provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality.

MGL 41, Section 81D

Public participation was a key aspect to the development of this document. Through a series of workshops, surveys and numerous meetings of various committees, a plan emerged. For this reason, the Acushnet Master Plan is both a record of the public deliberations that led to a comprehensive blueprint for Acushnet's future growth, and a series of recommendations and actionable tasks that will allow the Town to achieve the goals identified during the planning process. The process by which the master plan was developed is summarized below.

Inventory and Analysis

The first step of the planning process was to examine Acushnet's existing conditions, trends, needs, issues and opportunities, and to evaluate how Acushnet is likely to develop in the future given its current zoning and regulatory policies. The overwhelming majority of land in Acushnet (over 95%) is currently zoned to allow low-density residential development. Limited commercial development is permitted on its main thoroughfare (i.e., business-village area). Numerous other land uses have been incorporated into the residentially zoned areas over time. Land uses, not addressed by current zoning are considered on a case-by-case basis (i.e., spot zoning). Unless modified, this type of growth will eventually transform Acushnet into an unmanaged, fully suburban community, with significant impacts in terms of open space, traffic, community character, water supply, and Town facilities and services.

Several significant needs and issues were identified as a result of this work. These include a more focused effort toward the protection of Acushnet's open space, a strategy to provide senior and affordable housing, re-evaluating the Town's commercial zoning and economic development plans, and refurbishing/reutilization of existing Town facilities. Major capital improvements such as a combined police, fire and emergency medical service facility, construction of new roads, and the need to evaluate sewer expansion were examined as well.

Planning Framework

The Planning Framework is a statement of goals that encapsulates Acushnet's desired future in general terms based on substantial community-wide consensus. These goals were developed based on a community-wide visioning workshop, a town survey, as well as input from the Master Plan Steering Committee and Subcommittees. The vision statement provides the basis for the more specific recommendations that comprise the Comprehensive Plan, and is intended to help guide future decision making by Acushnet's leaders. A common theme in the goals statement is to maintain Acushnet's existing semi-rural character and



Acushnet Master Plan

Master Plan Vision Statement

Our VISION for the future of Acushnet is a community, which achieves a balance between the need for growth and the responsibility to preserve character and natural resources of Acushnet for future generations. To realize this vision, we must strive toward a set of interrelated goals that provide direction to the Town's leadership in the crafting and implementation of policies, laws and fiscal plans. These goals include:

- Provide of a meaningful land use/growth plan and appropriate policies that reflect current and future land utilization.
- Maintain the town-&-country character of Acushnet
- Create sufficient housing for Acushnet's diverse population.
- Create a business-friendly environment that encourages new business growth and helps to sustain the viability of existing businesses.
- Provision of a transportation infrastructure which safely and efficiently services both vehicles and pedestrian traffic.
- Plan, create and/or maintain a broad offering of affordable public services which meet the physical needs of our growing community as well as the requirements of regulating agencies.
- Protect and preserve land (from development) where the highest value is agriculture, open space, recreation or a natural resource.
- Identify, obtain and provide stewardship of historic and cultural resources which are worthy of preservation as a legacy for future generations to inherit.
- Attract younger people to public service

*Acushnet Master Plan Steering Committee
Acushnet, Massachusetts
April 2006*

Figure I.1, The Acushnet Master Plan Vision Statement

land use pattern by preserving open space and ensuring that new development is compatible with the Town's existing character.

Master Plan

The Master Plan expands Acushnet's general long-term goals into specific future plans relating to each of the seven master plan elements. The centerpiece of the Comprehensive Plan is the Land Use plan, a generalized townwide map that identifies five different future land use areas. These areas include Village Mixed-Use, Very Low Density Residential, Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and Business/Commercial. (including light industrial). Within each area, a generalized set of land uses are recommended. Overall, the Land Use component attempts to direct new development toward areas of the Town best suited to accommodate it, depending on the land's physical, environmental, aesthetic, geographic, and socioeconomic characteristics. Areas less suited for development are designated for conservation or low-intensity development. The Master Plan identifies recommendations for natural and cultural resources, open space and recreation, economic development, housing, public facilities and services, and transportation. These include recommendations for new regulations, capital investment mechanisms, incentives, and other policies. Major recommendations include a comprehensive rezoning and rewriting of zoning by-laws, providing a Town-driven 40B strategy, modernizing select Town facilities for new uses, providing additional protection for natural resources, creation of a downtown bypass, and promoting economic development in appropriate sections of the Town.

Implementation Program

The implementation program outlines specific measures that will be required to put the Master Plan into action. Each section of the Master Plan concludes with a specific set of objectives and tasks. Each set of recommendations tracks back to the original "Vision Statement" prepared subsequent to the communities Master Plan Visioning Workshop. The implementation program is also intended to function as a technical resource for Acushnet's leaders to use in drafting, explaining and defending specific zoning regulations and other tools that grow out of the Master Plan.

Participants

The Master Plan was a tremendous team effort by people who graciously volunteered their valuable time in a variety of capacities. Attendance at venues such as the Town-wide master plan workshop, A.C.T.I.O.N. sponsored meetings,

and Planning Department open houses provided an opportunity for people to weigh in on the process. Assistance from state and regional agencies such as the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD), the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program, and the Fairhaven – Acushnet Land Protection Trust were essential in developing a regional context for our community plan. Those agencies were also an invaluable source of data and mapping information. The random, unsolicited opinions offered up in informal settings provided some of the most clear and concise feedback in the entire plan development period.

The backbone of the Master Plan process, was undoubtedly the Subcommittees which were formed from volunteer residents who saw fit to sacrifice their own personal time to attend day-time, night-time and weekend meetings. There were seven committees in all, one for each chapter of the Master Plan. This document simply could not have been prepared without their contributions. The members of these subcommittees are listed below.

Randy Amarello
Ray Barlow
Lori Bates
Joanne Bertrand
Kara Brown
Roger Cabral
Nelson Cardoso
Joe Castello
Marc Cenerizio
William Contois
Leo Coons
Charlotte Coutinho
Walter Dalton
Ed Dufrense
Laurel Farinon
Jeanne Gatonska
Ellen Hardy
Steven Horsfall
Ed Issac
Michael Poitros
Jim Reger
Joyce Reynolds
Bob Rocha
Robert St. Jean
Shawn Samanica
Paul Sylvia
Pauline Texeira
Mark White

Acushnet Master Plan

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Inventory and Analysis

1. LAND USE	
1.1 Regional Context	
1.2 Existing Land Use Inventory and Analysis	
1.2.1 Land Use Patterns	
1.2.2 Land Use Trends Since 1971	
1.3 Existing Land Use Laws.....	
1.3.1 Base Zoning Districts	
1.3.2 Overlay Districts	
1.3.3 Other Provisions	
1.4 Build-Out Implications	
1.5 Land Use Strategy	
1.5.1 Land Use Goals and Objectives	

Chapter 2: Natural and Cultural Resources

2.1 Introduction	
2.2 Soils, Geology, Topography and Mineral Resources	
2.2.1 Soils	
2.3 Surface Water Resources	
2.3.1 Ponds, Streams and Watersheds	
2.3.2 Wetlands	
2.3.3 Groundwater Resources	

2.3.4	Water Supply
2.3.5	Existing Protection for Water Resources
2.4	Habitats and Ecosystems
2.4.1	Vegetation
2.4.2	Native Fish and Wildlife Species
2.4.3	Rare and Endangered Species and Habitats
2.5	Historic Resources
2.5.1	Town History
2.5.2	Historic Sites and Structures
2.5.3	Existing Historic/Cultural Resource Protections.....
2.6	Natural and Cultural Resource Strategy
2.6.1	Natural and Cultural Resource Goals and Objectives

Chapter 3: Open Space and Recreation

3.1	Current Open Space Conditions
3.2	Mechanisms to Protect Open Space
3.2.1	Unprotected (Limited Protection) Mechanisms
3.2.1.1	MGL, Chapter 61
3.2.1.2	MGL, Chapter 61A
3.2.1.3	MGL, Chapter 61B
3.3	Permanent Protection Mechanisms.....
3.3.1	Conservation Restrictions
3.3.2	Agricultural Preservation Restrictions
3.4	Permanently Protected Open Space Inventory

3.5	Unprotected (Limited Protected) Open Space Inventory
3.6	Current Recreational Land Conditions
3.7	Open Space Preservation Organizations
3.7.1	Fairhaven-Acushnet Land Preservation Trust (FALPT)
3.7.2	Community Preservation Committee
3.7.3	Town of Acushnet
3.8	Open Space and Recreation Strategy
3.8.1	Open Space and Recreational Land Goals and Objectives

Chapter 4: Economic Development

4.1	Economic Development History of Acushnet
4.2	Economic Indicators and Trends
4.2.1	Unemployment
4.2.2	Median Household Income
4.2.3	Household Income Trends
4.2.4	Sources of Household Income
4.2.5	Poverty Rate
4.2.6	Educational Levels
4.3	Economic Development Resources and Institutions
4.3.1	Educational Institutions
4.3.2	Business Development Resources
4.4	Attitudes Regarding Economic Development
4.5	Economic Development Strategy

4.5.1 Economic Development Goals and Objectives**Chapter 5: Housing****5.1 Summary of Existing Conditions****5.1.1 Existing Housing****5.1.2 Availability****5.1.3 Cost of Home Ownership****5.1.4 Cost of Rental Housing****5.1.5 Affordability****5.2 Demographics****5.3 Senior Housing****5.4 Low and Moderate Income Housing Law****5.5 Residential Zoning****5.6 Housing Policy****5.7 Housing Strategy****5.7.1 Housing Goals and Objectives****Chapter 6: Facilities and Public Services****6.1 Facilities/Services Overview****6.2 Inventory of Town Facilities and Services****6.2.1 Town Hall/Annex (Parting Ways Building)****6.2.1.1 Town Hall Annex/Police Station****6.2.1.2 Town Hall Annex/Health Department****6.2.2 Fire Department Buildings**

6.2.3	Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Building
6.2.4	Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Building
6.2.5	Department of Public Works (DPW) Facilities
6.2.6	Council On Aging (COA)
6.2.7	Russell Free Public Library
6.2.8	Community Center
6.2.9	Park and Recreational Facilities
6.2.10	Acushnet River Golf Course
6.2.11	Historical Commission Buildings
6.3	School Facilities
6.4	Energy Management
6.4.1	Current Energy Sources
6.4.2	Wind/Alternative Energy Committee
6.5	Facilities Strategy
6.5.1	Facilities Goals and Objectives

Chapter 7: Transportation

7.1	The Regional Transportation System
7.2	Existing Street System in Acushnet
7.2.1	Jurisdictional Classification of Acushnet Streets
7.2.2	Functional Classification of Acushnet Streets
7.2.3	Traffic Conditions on Acushnet Streets
7.2.4	Safety on Acushnet Streets
7.2.5	Pavement Widths on Acushnet Streets

7.2.6	Pavement Conditions on Acushnet Streets
7.3	Existing Transit Service in Acushnet
7.4	Bicycle and Pedestrian Access in Acushnet
7.5	Transportation Strategy
7.5.1	Transportation /Circulation Goals and Objectives

1. Land Use

Land use refers to the pattern of residential, commercial, industrial and public development, as well as agriculture, forest and other open lands in a community. Land use establishes the framework for comprehensive planning and largely determines the need for transportation infrastructure, public facilities, and environmental protection. This section provides an overview of Acushnet's existing land use, as well as an assessment of how land use is likely to change in the future under the town's current zoning.

1.1. Regional Context

Acushnet is a semi-rural community located in Bristol County in southeastern Massachusetts. From a regional land use perspective it is a border community which facilitates the transition from urban medium/high density communities of Fairhaven and New Bedford, to the rural towns of Rochester and Freetown. Subsequently, town-wide land use planning must, at the outset, acknowledge Acushnet's historic and future relationships to its neighboring municipalities.

Acushnet began as a farming community in the late 1600s and later diversified to include manufacturing enterprises, particularly cotton mills. Acushnet was also home of the famed Acushnet Titleist golf balls. Manufacturing operations were transferred over time to locations in adjacent New Bedford. More recently, the town has functioned as a bedroom community for surrounding urban areas, as well as a center for recreational activities such as golf, community sports leagues and the annual Apple-Peach Festival.

Linkages to Acushnet's past are quite evident to the casual observer. Narrow, winding roadways, orchards, cemeteries hundreds of years old; the historic Long Plain area; are all remnants of Acushnet's ancient agricultural landscape. Acushnet has several locally important natural resources, including potentially productive groundwater aquifers, the entire Acushnet River Watershed (also referred to as the Inner New Bedford Harbor Watershed), a portion of the Mattapoissett River Watershed (also referred to as the Mattapoissett Harbor Watershed), several large, intact wooded coniferous and deciduous swamps, and marshes. In addition, the town's landscape of forests, open fields, and wetlands provides a diversity of wildlife habitats for numerous species. Acushnet's natural beauty combined with its historical elements results in a unique distinctive town-&-country character. This semi-rural/village atmosphere, combined with Acushnet's proximity to major metropolitan areas, has made the town increasingly attractive as a bedroom community for commuters.

Geographically, the town is located 51 miles south of Boston, 35 miles east of Providence, 21 miles south of downtown Taunton and borders the City of New Bedford. Transportation infrastructures including I-195, Route 140 and, more recently, the extension of MBTA commuter rail services to Lakeville have

facilitated commuting to and from Acushnet. The proposed extension of the MBTA to New Bedford would substantially enhance transportation services for the residents of Acushnet. Figure 1-1 shows Acushnet's regional context and the regional highway network. Acushnet's population has more than doubled since World War II, reflecting the trend of many suburban areas in southeastern Massachusetts. Recent population trends are shown in Table 1-1.

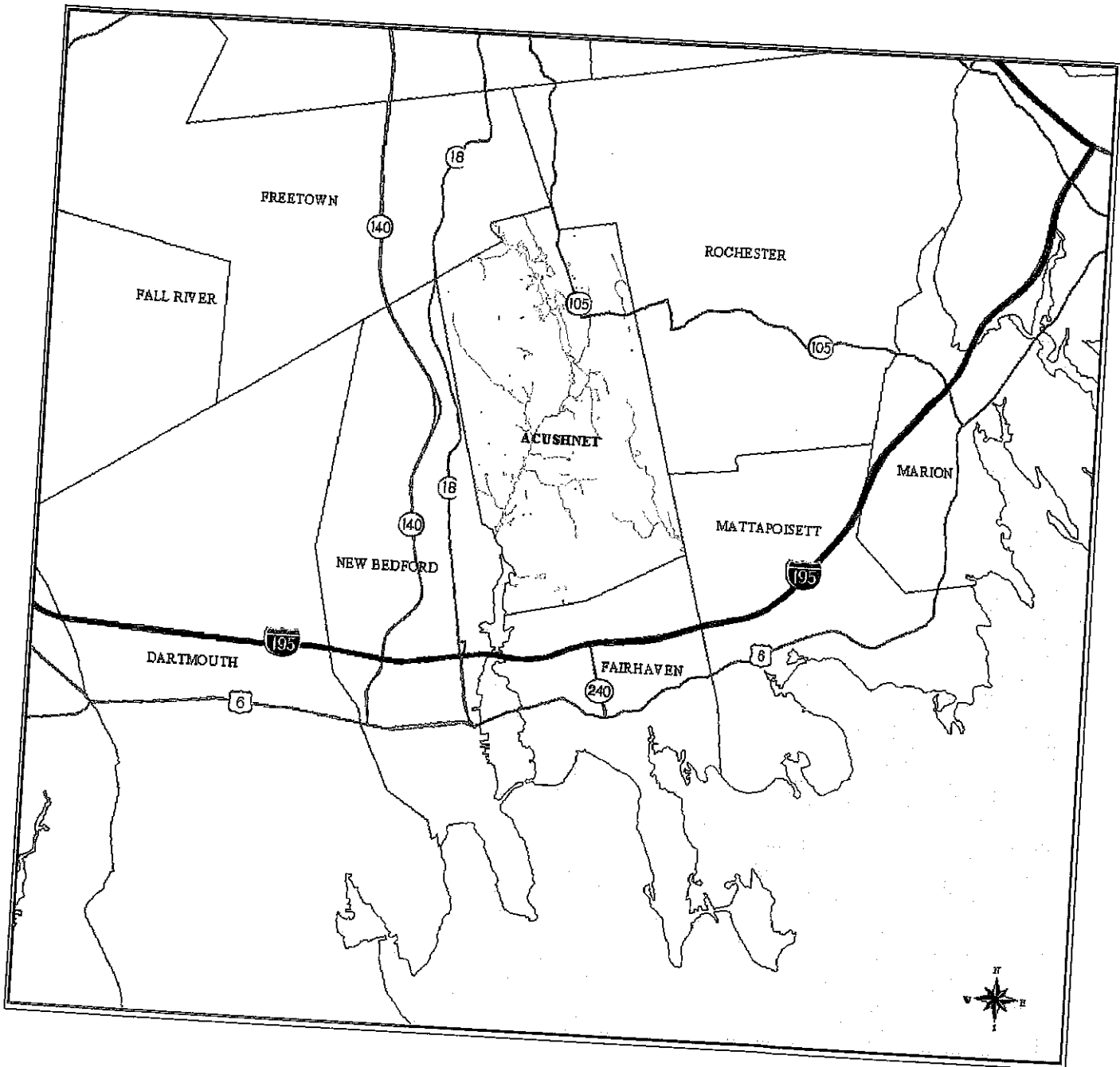


Figure 1.1, Regional Highway Network
Source: SRPEDD

HISTORIC and PROJECTED POPULATION			
YEAR	POPULATION	POPULATION CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR	% POPULATION CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
1940	4,145	53	1%
1950	4,401	256	6%
1960	5,755	1354	31%
1970	7,767	2012	35%
1980	8,704	937	12%
1990	9,554	850	10%
2000	10,161	607	6%
2010*	10,933	379	8%
2020*	11,705	772	7%
* Estimated			

Table 1.1, Historical and projected population growth in Acushnet
Source: U.S. Census, Town of Acushnet, SRPEDD

In recent years, Acushnet has faced several issues related to its growing population and the new development required to accommodate it. Primarily, new development has resulted in the loss of open space, and is gradually transforming Acushnet from a rural community dominated by farm fields, woodlands and passive open fields to a more suburban one. Second, new development has raised concerns over the protection of sensitive natural resources, such as the groundwater aquifers underlying Acushnet and the Acushnet River and Mattapoissett River watersheds. Finally, the town's population growth has placed an increased demand on town services and facilities, and may eventually result in the need to increase residential tax rates, reflecting a trend of other suburbanizing communities in Massachusetts. For these reasons, growth management is a central concern in Acushnet and is a cornerstone of this Master Plan. Beyond these growth-related concerns, Acushnet faces other issues related to the appropriate mix of different residential, commercial and industrial uses in the town. All of these issues are discussed in detail in the sections that follow.

As part of the Master Plan development process, a survey was conducted to determine attitudes of Acushnet citizens with respect to further development in Town. The results of the survey which mirror the qualitative feedback of the initial Master Plan public workshop are shown below in Figure 1.2. There is a general feeling that sufficient residential development exists, but it is noted that a large portion of the population is cognizant of a need for additional affordable housing. The survey would indicate that there is tolerance for an increase in industrial, commercial and agricultural use. Finally, there is a substantial recognized need for additional recreational and open space (preservation) in Acushnet.

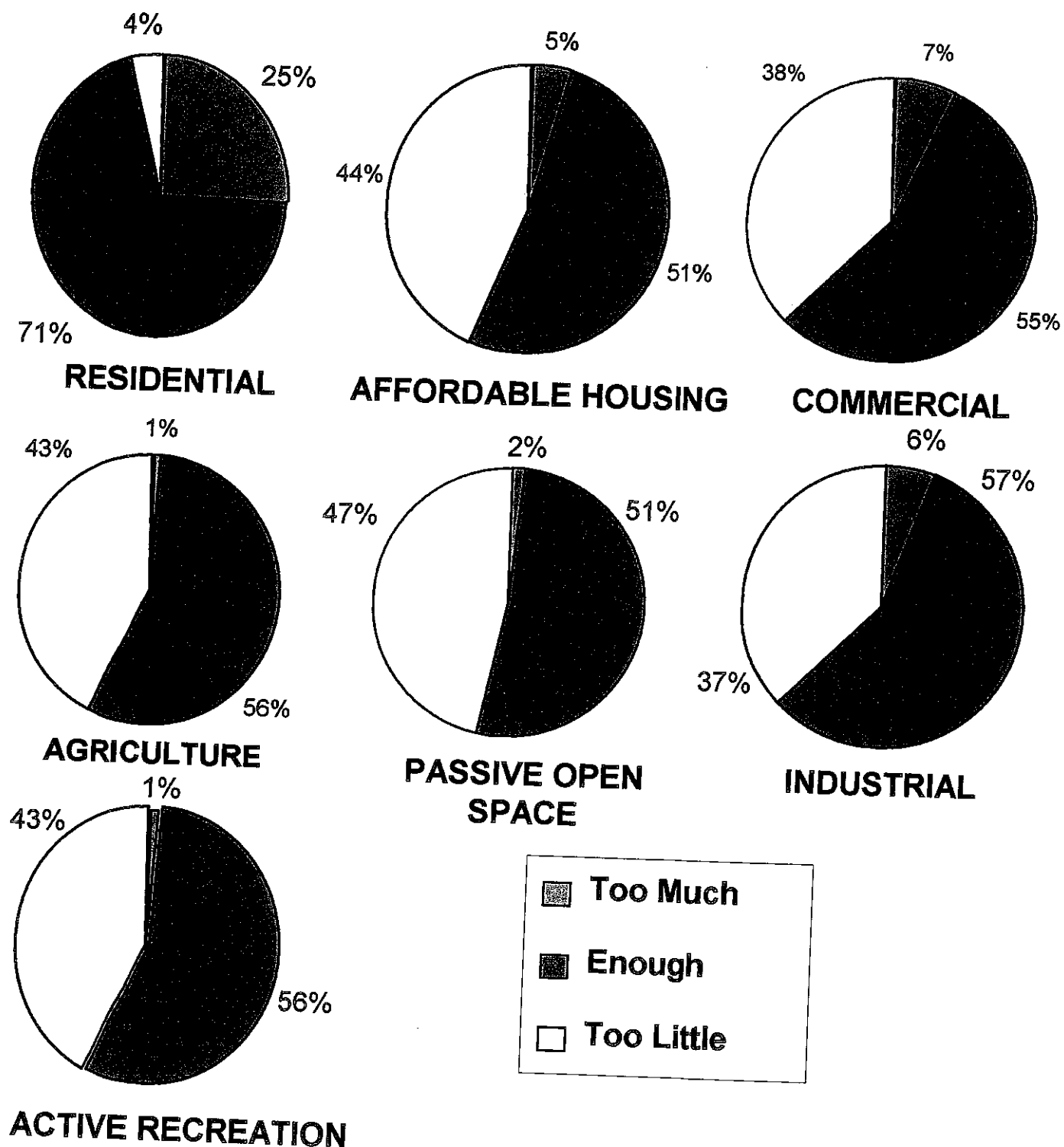


Figure 1.2, Survey responses to questions on the desired amount of various land uses in Acushnet.
Source: Acushnet Planning Department Survey, 2006.

In the same survey, residents were asked to describe where they live. The feedback, shown in Figure 1.3, shows that only a quarter of the respondents considered themselves living in an agrarian or "country" (i.e., category of "sparsely populated") setting. The other 75% described themselves living in urban, village, subdivision, or "other" settings.

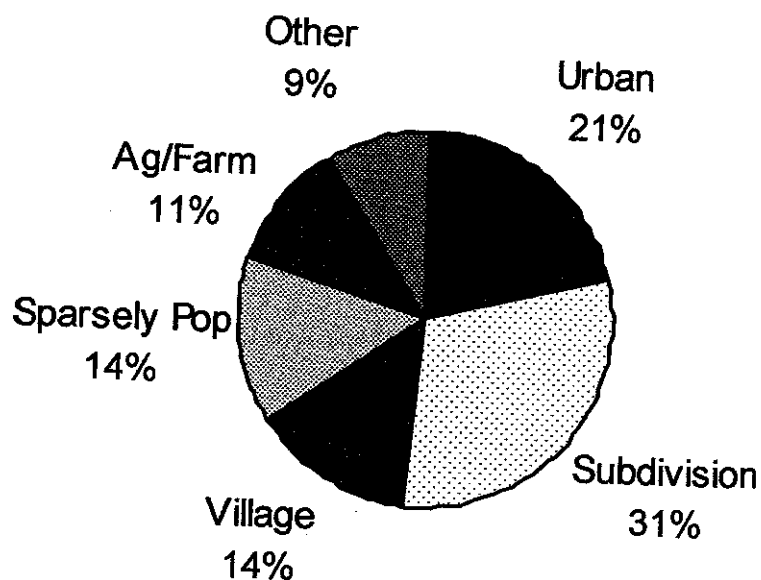


Figure 1.3, Survey responses which asked participants to describe where they live
Source: Acushnet Planning Department Survey, 2006.

When juxtaposed, these results demonstrate an attitude of residents who don't necessarily live in the countryside, but place a high value on the preservation of agriculture, open space and recreational areas for future generations. This "Town & Country" characteristic of Acushnet, was noted as one of Acushnet's most valuable assets during public workshops, in various meetings and discussion groups. At the same time, respondents also acknowledge the need for future economic development through commercial and industrial development. However, the caveat of that desire is that it occur within a scale appropriate for Acushnet.

1.2. Existing Land Use Inventory and Analysis

Land use information utilized in this master plan is derived from several sources. MassGIS, the state agency responsible for producing and distributing geographic data, determined land use for Acushnet based on 1985 aerial photographs of the town. This compilation of data was updated by SPREDD in 1999, on the basis of field surveys and town records, to include all new development since 1985. Existing land use is shown in Figures 1-4 a and b, and Table 1-2.

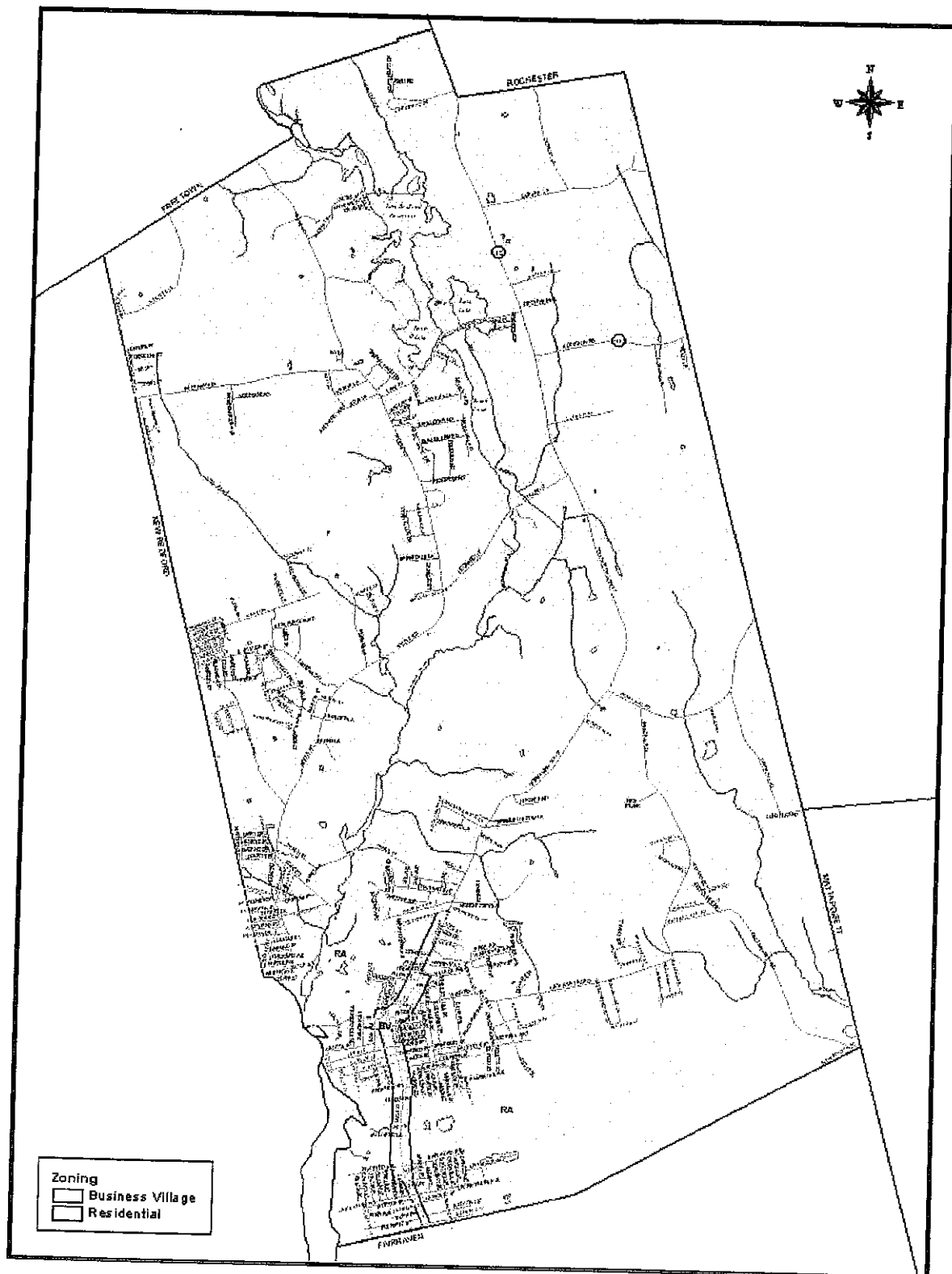
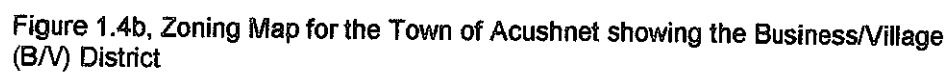


Figure 1.4a, Zoning Map for the Town of Acushnet

January 2008



January 2008

ACUSHNET LAND USE BY CATEGORY, 1951-1999								
LAND USE	LAND USE IN ACRES							
	1951	%	1971	%	1985	%	1999	%
FOREST	7,800	66	7,432	66	7,046	63	6,685	61
URBAN	1101	9	1598	14	1988	18	2443	22
WETLAND	437	4	456	4	455	4	453	4
AGRICULTURAL OR OPEN LAND	2,468	21	1,719	16	1,700	15	1,444	13
Sources: MassGIS, MacConnell & Mueller, 1973								

Table 1.2, Change in percentage land use in Acushnet from 1951 to 1999.
Sources: MassGIS, MacConnell & Mueller, 1973

1.2.1 Land Use Patterns

Each of the major land uses in Acushnet is described and analyzed below:
Developed Land Uses

- **Forest:** Forested lands represent the largest category of Acushnet's land area, comprising over 60% of the town. Much of Acushnet's historical agricultural lands have reverted to forest with the decline in regional farming. However, despite the reversion of farmland to forest, Acushnet's total forested area has been slowly decreasing as a result of new residential development. In 1999, Acushnet's forests totaled 6,685 acres.
- **Urban:** This category includes all residential, commercial, industrial and municipal park lands. The category also includes transportation infrastructure and landfills. Acushnet has experienced significant residential growth in the last 15 years, and urban land uses (primarily residential land) now account for 22% of the town's land area. Historically, housing was developed on single lots along the town's roadsides. More recently, numerous subdivisions have been developed in Acushnet which will cause the percentage of urban lands to grow. An examination of supporting data reveals what is obvious to long time residents of Acushnet; the land for residential development is predominately being taken away from agricultural or open land, with some coming from deforestation.

A breakdown of single family residential lot sizes, shown in Figure 1.5 (1999 data) reveals that half of the residential lots are in excess of $\frac{1}{2}$ acre. The percentage of lots in excess of $\frac{1}{2}$ acres will continue to grow, while the other lot sizes remain relatively flat unless zoning changes minimum lot sizes.

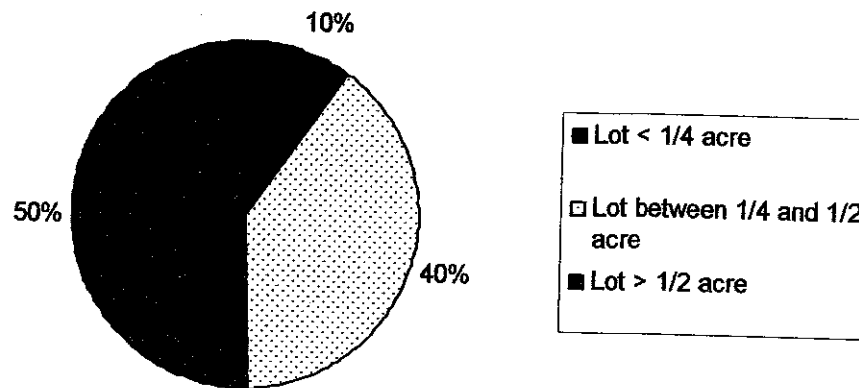


Figure 1.5, Distribution of Acushnet's single family home lot sizes in 1999.
Sources: MassGIS, MaConnell & Mueller, 1973

Commercial and industrial land uses, fall into the "urban" category and occupy less than 1.5% of Acushnet's land area. Commercial land use is primarily located in Acushnet Village adjacent to South Main Street.. Industrial land consists primarily of a few businesses located at the southwesterly intersection of Middle Road and Nye's Lane, the P.J. Keating plant on South Main Street and Titleist Ball Plant on Slocum Road. A number of businesses are scattered along Middle Road and Main Streets

Municipal Parks, Cemeteries and vacant lands surrounding urban neighborhoods comprise approximately 102 total acres in Town

Transportation land use which includes (which does not include locally owned roads) consume only 14 acres.

- **Agriculture and Open Land:** This category includes cropland, pasture, orchards, nurseries and cranberry bogs. Of the 1444 acres identified as agriculture, a much smaller area of land is actively farmed. Much of Acushnet's former agricultural land is mowed for hay, or is unmanaged and

has begun to revert to forest. Acushnet's farmland is located primarily in the north central and north eastern portions of the town.

- **Wetlands:** The 453 acres of wetlands identified in Table 1-2 includes only unforested wetlands bordering streams, marshes and ponds and occupying isolated pockets of land throughout the town. The Town contains large tracts of forested wetlands and large swamps. Subsequently, the total amount of wetland in Acushnet, according to the 1990 Open Space Plan, is estimated to be between 6,000 and 8,000 acres.

1.2.2 Land Use Trends Since 1971

Following the trend of many Southeastern Massachusetts communities, Acushnet continues to develop at a rapid rate. A closer examination of this growth reveals several trends that are important to note when planning for future growth. Specifically:

- **Low-density residential development predominates.** Consistent with the town's 60,000 square foot minimum lot size for single-family homes, almost all new residential development in Acushnet is low density. Since 1951, the increase in acreage for residential development has doubled while agricultural land was almost halved by 2000. This trend will continue to increase, most likely exponentially. With restrictions on developments near wetlands, in the habitats of endangered species, and in flood plains, the pressure to develop will be placed squarely upon lands whose current use is agriculture and to a lesser degree forest.
- **Commercial and industrial uses are a small and relatively stable land use.** Between 1971 and 1999, the amount of commercial and industrial land grew by only 17% (or 21 acres). Considering that commercial and industrial land only accounts for 1.5% of Acushnet's land, this trend suggests that the local regulations (i.e., zoning by-laws), infrastructure and market conditions in Acushnet over the last three decades have been unfavorable to large-scale business growth. Acushnet's lack of direct accessibility to expressways, compared to surrounding towns, has probably also contributed to the slow growth of commercial and industrial development as well.
- **Other Land uses remain relatively stable.** Regulations governing land development in Massachusetts, have stabilized reductions of wetlands and forested land (much of which is wet or a habitat of endangered species).

1.3 Existing Land Use Laws

Zoning, By-Laws and local land use regulations create a framework for future development in Acushnet. As population and development pressure grows, a Town “builds out” within the various zoning districts until there are no longer any more parcels left for development. The 1964 Master Plan envisioned a future community that was dominated by agriculture and small populations. The zoning which established during that time was reflective of this belief. As economies and demographics changed, Acushnet’s zoning failed to keep pace. Land use controls were not in place to protect the agrarian or “small town” culture and community fabric which had been inherited by succeeding generations of residents for centuries.

In 2008, we must envision future land uses which balance competing pressures for residential and commercial development with the need to preserve the finite natural resources and open spaces which are extraordinary assets of the Town. We must also understand that zoning is a blueprint for future development and that zoning laws and regulations governing land use/development are important tools to *manage* growth.

Acushnet actually has three base zoning districts, although only two have been formally adopted. Acushnet has no locally derived overlay districts, although State and Federal regulations create *de facto* overlay districts which govern development activity within Town.

The base zoning districts define the allowed uses and dimensional requirements in all parts of the town, while the “overlay districts” provide for additional restrictions in certain areas. These districts discussed below.

1.3.1 Zoning Districts

Residence A (RA) District: This district covers more than 95% of Acushnet’s land area. Allowed uses include:

- single-family dwelling
- church
- municipal building
- home occupations
- agriculture
- aquaculture
- garages
- utility buildings
- hobby kennels
- golf courses

Acushnet's RA district is more permissive through the issuance of special permits. RA uses by special permit include:

- Accessory apartments
- Two-Family Homes (conversion)
- Multi-Family Housing/Hospitals/Nursing Homes for elderly
- Boat Liveries
- Cemeteries
- Children's Camps
- Golf Courses
- Private Clubs
- Riding Stables
- Private Schools
- Professional Offices and Banks
- Retail Stores
- Automotive Service Stations
- Light Manufacturing
- Warehouses
- Testing Ranges

Business Village (BV) District: This district contains land within 300 feet of several of Acushnet's major roadways, including South Main Street, North Main Street and Main Street (See Figure 1-4b.). Allowed uses include all uses allowed in the RA district plus a variety of more intensive commercial uses including:

- Hotels
- Restaurants
- Clinics
- Light Manufacturing
- Commercial Recreation Facilities
- Sale/Storage of Fuel, Lumber, Building Materials and Equipment

The permitted uses in the Business Village District are limited in size to 3,000 square feet of structure on a single lot.

Special permits are considered in the Business Village District for:

- (1) Allowed uses in the BV District in excess of 3,000 square feet
- (2) Allowed uses in the RA District (including those by special permit) in excess of 3,000 square feet

Because residential uses are allowed in the business district, much of Acushnet's business district is already developed with residential land uses.

Business/Commercial (BC) District: The BC district contains 21 acres of land and fronts on the southwest corner of Middle Road and Nye's Lane. The noted tract of land was scheduled for rezoning in 2003 by Town Meeting vote. The language of Article 28, at the 2003 Town Meeting reads as follows:

"To see if the Town will vote to accept and amend the Acushnet Bylaw, Zoning Article VIII, Section 2.1, Districts Enumerated, and Section 2.2, Zoning Map, in the General By-Laws of the Town of Acushnet, changing the zoning of the property located at 211 Middle Road, containing 21 acres more or less, fronting upon Middle Road for a distance of 770 feet and fronting upon Nye's Lane for a distance of 963 feet, otherwise being identified as Plot 23, westerly of Nye's Lane, from Residential Zoning to Business/Commercial Zoning, (this action is intended to include Quality Oil Property on Nye's Lane), or to take any other action relative thereto."

Article 28 passed by a 2/3 majority and development on the site proceeded. Currently light industrial uses are occurring on the site. It should be noted that the Acushnet General By-Laws and Zoning Map were never altered to reflect this vote and establish restrictions on the action taken in 2003. No mention of a Business/Commercial (BC) district is found on or within either document.

1.3.2 Overlay Districts

Acushnet has no formal local overlay districts prescribed in zoning maps and by-laws. However, Federal and State law have created de facto overlay districts which developers must abide by. Cooperation with local officials is a normal course of action when preparing and seeking approval for building applications.

Flood Plain District: This district is defined by the Federal government to include all 100-year flood hazard areas designated on the Acushnet Flood Insurance Rate Maps (Zones A). The maps are prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in support of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Acushnet's land areas are provided on FEMA maps (#250048 0001 – 0008). Owners seeking to develop land or modify structures within the flood plain are subject to certain restrictions on construction. Currently these maps are being revised by FEMA and should be published in the latter part of 2008. A consolidated map of Acushnet's flood plains is shown in Figure 1.6.

National Heritage Corridor: The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) is the Division of the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Wildlife responsible for tracking and monitoring the appearance and health of the native plant and animals in the state, especially those in danger of disappearing due to overdevelopment or other threats to their homes. For this reason, when an

endangered species is sighted, NHESP places the undeveloped property around the sighting within an area of Estimated or Priority Habitat. A map of these Estimated or Priority Habit areas in Acushnet is shown in Figure 1.7. Development/building projects within these areas are required to be reviewed by NHESP before any work begins on the site. Typically NHESP requires that a certain portion of the site remain undisturbed, so as to allow the threatened species some space for breeding and normal activity. A larger project, or one requiring a wetland crossing, may require that more complex accommodations be made.

Procedurally, those engaged in the development of land in an area of Estimated or Priority Habitat are required to file for Massachusetts Endangered Species Act review (even if no work is to be conducted within a wetland) with the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (a division of Massachusetts Department of Fish and Wildlife).

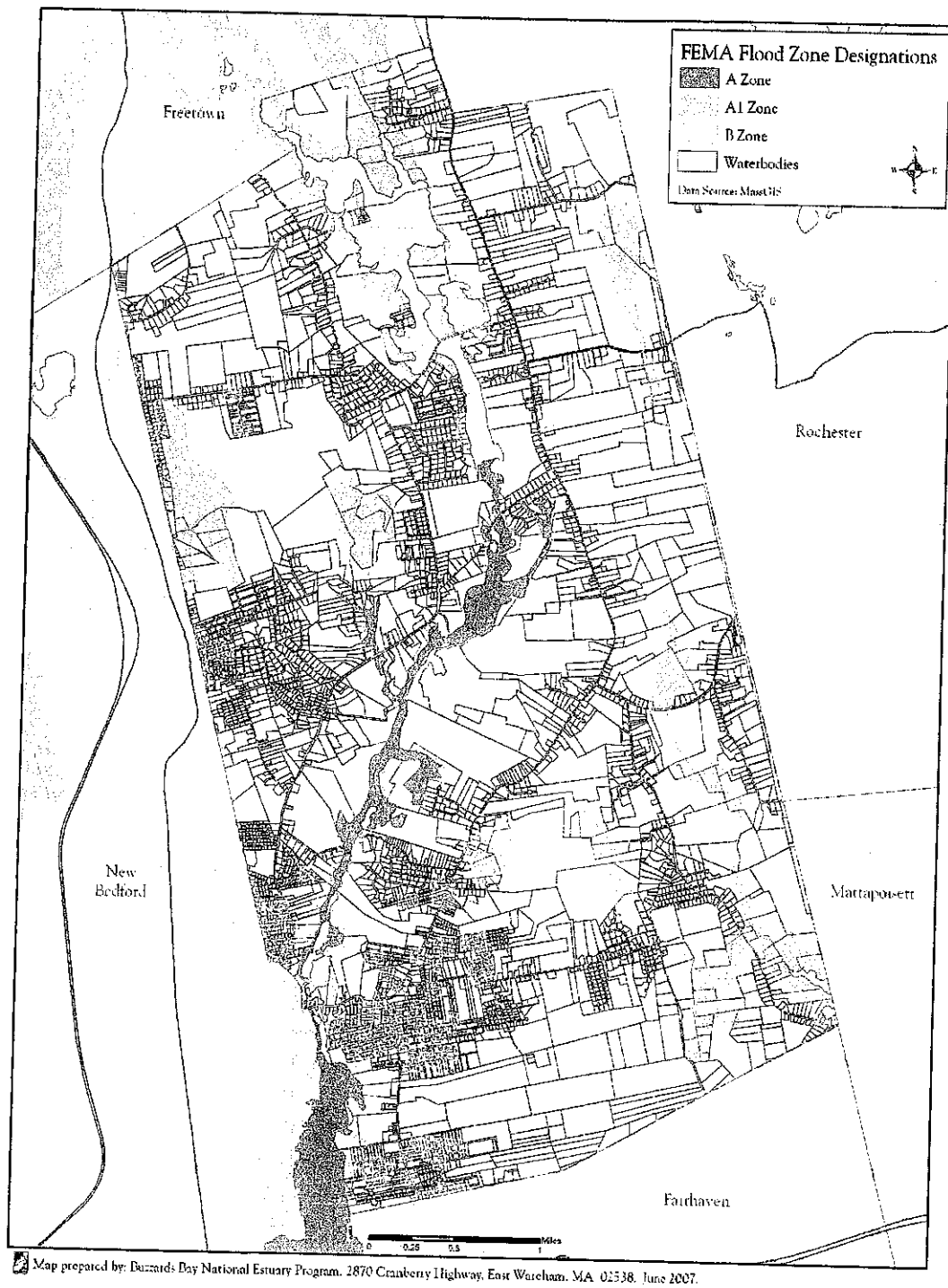


Figure 1.6, Map of Flood Plains in Acushnet
Source: Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program

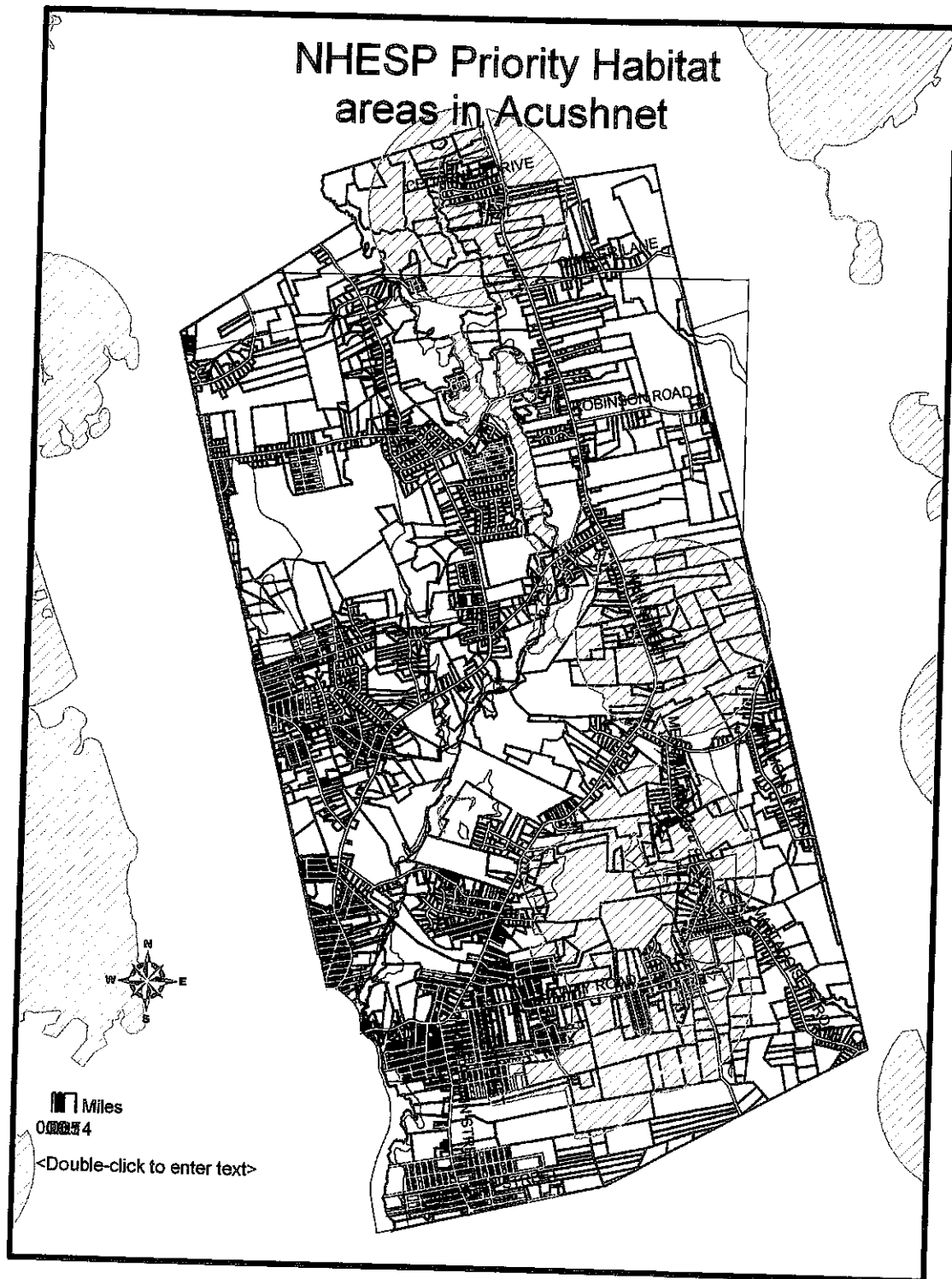


Figure 1.7, Map of NHESP Priority Habitat Areas in Acushnet
Source: Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program

1.3.3 Other Provisions

Site Plan Approval: Site plan review procedures are prescribed in Section 3.5 of the Acushnet By-Laws and govern nonresidential development that:

- increase the on –site parking by more than 30 spaces, or
- increase the gross floor area more than 5,000 square feet, or
- increase the impervious coverage more than 12,000 square feet

Site plan review is conducted by the Planning Board. The purpose of site plan review is to encourage a desirable and compatible character of development within the Town and assure safety, promote logic, imagination and innovation in the design process, while complying with all zoning requirements.

A broad range of features are examined in a site plan review including road, street and sidewalk dimensions, interface with municipal infrastructure and exterior landscaping and improvements. The Planning Board is required to act on all applications within 60 days. Failure to act within this period constitutes an approval of an application.

Scheduled of Use (Rate of Development) By-Law: Acushnet's current By-Laws include language to regulate the rate of development within subdivisions. Section 3.5 of the Zoning By-Law stipulates two categories of developments and their respective rate of construction during a 12 month period. One category is for subdivisions in excess of twenty-five lots, while the other category is for subdivisions of less than 25 lots. The maximum growth rates are shown below in Table 1.3. These prescribed growth rates begin on the date of endorsement of the Subdivision Approval by the Planning Commission

ACUSHNET SUBDIVISION MAXIMUM GROWTH RATE	
NUMBER OF LOTS	MAXIMUM RATE of DEVELOPMENT
> or = 25 Lots	20% per year rounded to the next highest whole number
< 25 Lots	5 lots per year

Table 1.3, Maximum subdivision growth rates as prescribed in Section 3.5 of the Acushnet Zoning By-Law.

Generally, growth rates stipulated in By-Laws are used to distribute growth over many years, thereby minimizing the impact on local public infrastructure and services.

1.4 Build-Out Implications

In 2000, the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD), the regional planning agency for Southeastern Massachusetts conducted build-out analysis for the municipalities within its jurisdiction. The build-out analysis of Acushnet was a part of this effort and is the basis for the following discussion.

The build-out analysis first provides an objective look at what Acushnet could become if all land capable of being developed, is developed, according to current zoning. Constraints such as wetland restrictions are considered in the analysis. Generally speaking, the impacts of a "built-out" Acushnet were modeled based on accepted planning principles.

The quality of a build-out analysis is always questionable. It is difficult to ascertain exactly how much land is developable given a rather broad approach to the topic. Impacts, as mentioned above, are based on models which reflect current trends on issues ranging from zoning to water consumption. The parameters of these models change with technological improvements, the health of national, state and local economies, etc. Finally, the build-out analysis does not predict the rate of growth, which arguably can have the greatest overall impact on a community to absorb change. Notwithstanding these inherent faults, build out analysis are useful in providing a glimpse at our future within a reasonable tolerance. In that sense, the build-out analysis is an important tool for government leaders to understand potential problems and begin to address them now; a proactive government rather than a reactive one.

The results of the 2000 SRPEDD build-out analysis are shown in Table 1.4.

Acushnet Build-Out					
	Land Area (sq. ft.)	Land Area (acre)	Single- fam (DU)	Multi- fam (DU)	Total (DU)
RA Residence A District					
Wetland Area	58,754,842	1,349	280	5	285
Total Upland Area	260,685,752	5,985			
1 Family	182,480,027	4,189	2,561		2,561
1 family (retreat lot)	36,496,005	838	241		241
2 Family (SP)	13,034,288	299		337	337
Elderly Housing (SP)	2,606,858	60		137	137
Retail (Accessory)	2,606,858	60			
Office (Accessory)	5,213,715	120			
Manufacturing (Accessory)	2,606,858	60			
<i>Note: the above total upland area includes 22,712,715 square feet of land subject to the regulations of the 100' and 200' buffer zone of the Rivers Protection Act.</i>					
BV Business Village District					
Total Upland Area	1,292,795	30			
1 Family	323,199	7	25		25
2 Family (SP)	64,640	1		2	2
Elderly Housing (SP)	12,928	0		3	3
Retail	387,839	9			
Office	245,631	6			
Warehouse	129,280	3			
Manufacturing	129,280	3			
<i>Note: the above total upland area includes 77,482 square feet of land subject to the regulations of the 100' and 200' buffer zone of the Rivers Protection Act.</i>					
Approved subdivision lots not yet constructed					
			337		337
Grandfathered unsized lots (estimate)					
			300		300
TOTAL AREA	321,121,229	7,372	3,744	484	4,228

Table 1.4, Acushnet Build-Out Analysis results.
Source: SRPEDD

Based upon the findings of the Acushnet build-out analysis, SRPEDD quantified the impacts of such growth. The estimated impacts and related statistics are shown below in Table 1.5.

Summary of Build-Out Impacts & Statistics	
Developable Land Area Excluding Wetlands (Sq. Ft.)	321,121,229
Developable Land Area Excluding Wetlands (acre)	7,372
Total Additional Dwelling Units	4,228
Commercial/Industrial Buildable Floor Area	1,383,483
Additional Residential Water Use (GPD)	804,341
Commercial/Industrial Water Use (GPD)	103,761
Additional Municipal Solid Waste	5,502
Additional Non-Recyclable Solid Waste	5,502
Additional Students	2,085
Additional Population	10,725
New Roads (Miles)	60

Table 1.5, Acushnet Build-Out Analysis Impacts & Statistics.
Source: SRPEDD

It is important to reiterate that there are arguable discrepancies in SRPEDD's modeling methodology and accompanying outcomes. It is also important to note that the above listed impacts would likely occur over several decades. However, if we do nothing to change our zoning and begin to proactively manage growth, we will in some measure begin to approach the conditions described in coming generations.

1.5 Land Use Strategy

The Land Use Committee met on four separate occasions between June and October of 2006. The Committee conducted a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis of land use issues relevant to the Town, followed by discussions on specific objectives which would address the SWOT findings. The members of the Committee included:

Marc Cenerizio, Chairman
Leo Coons, Planning Board
Steven Horsfall, Conservation Commission
Robert Bichel, Engineer
Henry Young, Planning

The starting point of the Committee's work was to review and accept the basic premise of the Master Plan Vision Statement as it pertained to land use. The Land Use Goals, as expressed by the Vision Statement is,

"Provide a meaningful land use/growth plan and appropriate policies that reflect current and future land utilization"

"Maintain the town-&-country character of Acushnet"

The next step was to conduct a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat analysis within the context of economic sustainability/growth within Acushnet. Guiding principles which emerged as a pretext to this analysis included:

- Current zoning (map and by-laws) is obsolete and dysfunctional.
- Current zoning will transform Acushnet into a suburb comprised of adjoining land development projects
- Current zoning does not allow high density housing where it is most practical (i.e., in areas supported by sewer and water, such as the Village area)
- Acushnet is vulnerable to 40B development
- Acushnet is a "border" community between urban New Bedford/Fairhaven and rural Rochester. The Town's future zoning should reflect that transition (i.e., require lower density development toward the Northeast of Town and allow higher density development in the Southwest and

Western portions of Town. In other words, the land density should be in concert with the development patterns of surrounding communities.

- Density should reflect the availability (current and projected future expansion) of utilities
- Specific areas should be zoned for commercial and industrial development but on a scale appropriate for Acushnet
- Zoning should acknowledge that there will be a population growth within the municipality, but that growth should be managed (i.e., where and when it happens)
- The town-&-country character of Acushnet is an "asset" to be protected
- Uncontrolled growth will overload the facilities and public services within Town.

Subsequent to the SWOT analysis, the Land Use Committee developed a general map outlining where land development was not probable or possible (Phase I). As an example, the wetland areas of the Acushnet River, Hathaway Swamp, Acushnet River Golf Course, Pope Park, etc. are areas not suitable or likely for development. Then areas which "shouldn't" be developed were subjectively identified. These are areas which are high value open spaces/agricultural lands or cultural icons. Keith's Farm is an example of a high value agricultural land. The two facing orchard/farms, Peters and Flying Cloud, are important symbols of our agricultural past. As these various areas were mapped out, the Town became segmented into "villages" within the Town, separated by areas to be (ideally) preserved as open space, forest, or agricultural lands. Those areas not so identified were thus, areas to be developed in the future. Also incorporated into the overall discussion of land development was the potential extension of Route 240 into Acushnet. The considered route would swing from the south, around the quarry and intersect South Main Street just north of the quarry property. The extension would continue across South Main Street to form a "by-pass" around the village and connect at the Titleist Plant property at Slocum Street. The result of Phase I is shown in the preservation-development map, Figure 1.8.

The next step (Phase II) was to determine the appropriate density (i.e., Very Low, Low, or Medium) for each "village". Once this was accomplished, a second map tied the like density village together, transforming the product of Phase I into a recommended rezoning map for the Town. The map is general in nature and does not follow property lines. In broadly sketching the lines of demarcation between recommended land densities several contributing characteristics were taken into account which included: availability of sewerage (now and projecting

forward), availability of municipal water, general/traditional growth trends over the past 20 years (i.e., predominating growth along and west of Middle Road), preservation of open space, and impact on transportation infrastructure.

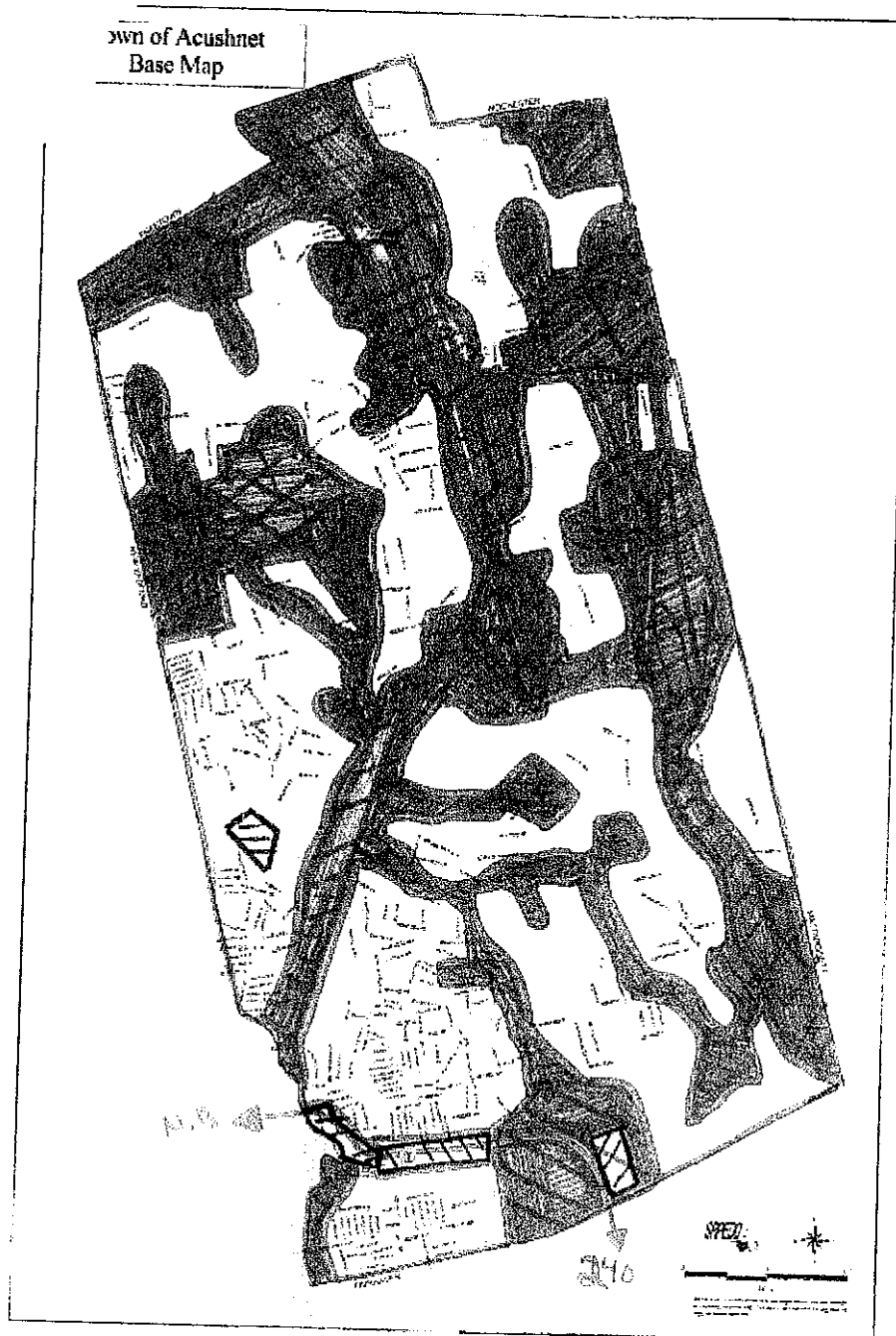


Figure 1.8, Preservation-Development Map. Shaded areas are those considered for preservation, while unshaded areas are considered developable (with appropriate constraints).

Then areas appropriate for commercial and industrial development were determined. This process was driven by understanding where commercial and industrial development had traditionally occurred and where industrial infrastructure (i.e., sewer, water, electrical, roads) exists or would most likely be extended in the future. These areas were annotated on the above referenced map. Finally, it was recommended that each "village" area defined in the initial phase of the process have its own cross-roads commercial district for traditional "mom-and-pop" services and conveniences. These areas were placed at strategic intersections within most of the prescribed "villages". In some areas, such micro commercial zoning would simply be formalizing what already exists (i.e., at the intersection of Perry Hill Road and North Main Street). In other areas, this type of zoning would be preemptively established in advance of land development to ensure that an opportunity exists for rational commercial development.

The result of the second phase (Phase II) is shown in Figure 1.9. It should be understood that this is a starting point for the actual rezoning of Town. The recommendations made via the Phase II map seek to proactively steer Acushnet in a managed or "smart growth" direction. The eventual refinement of the map and corollary by-laws will be an important pos-Master Plan objective.

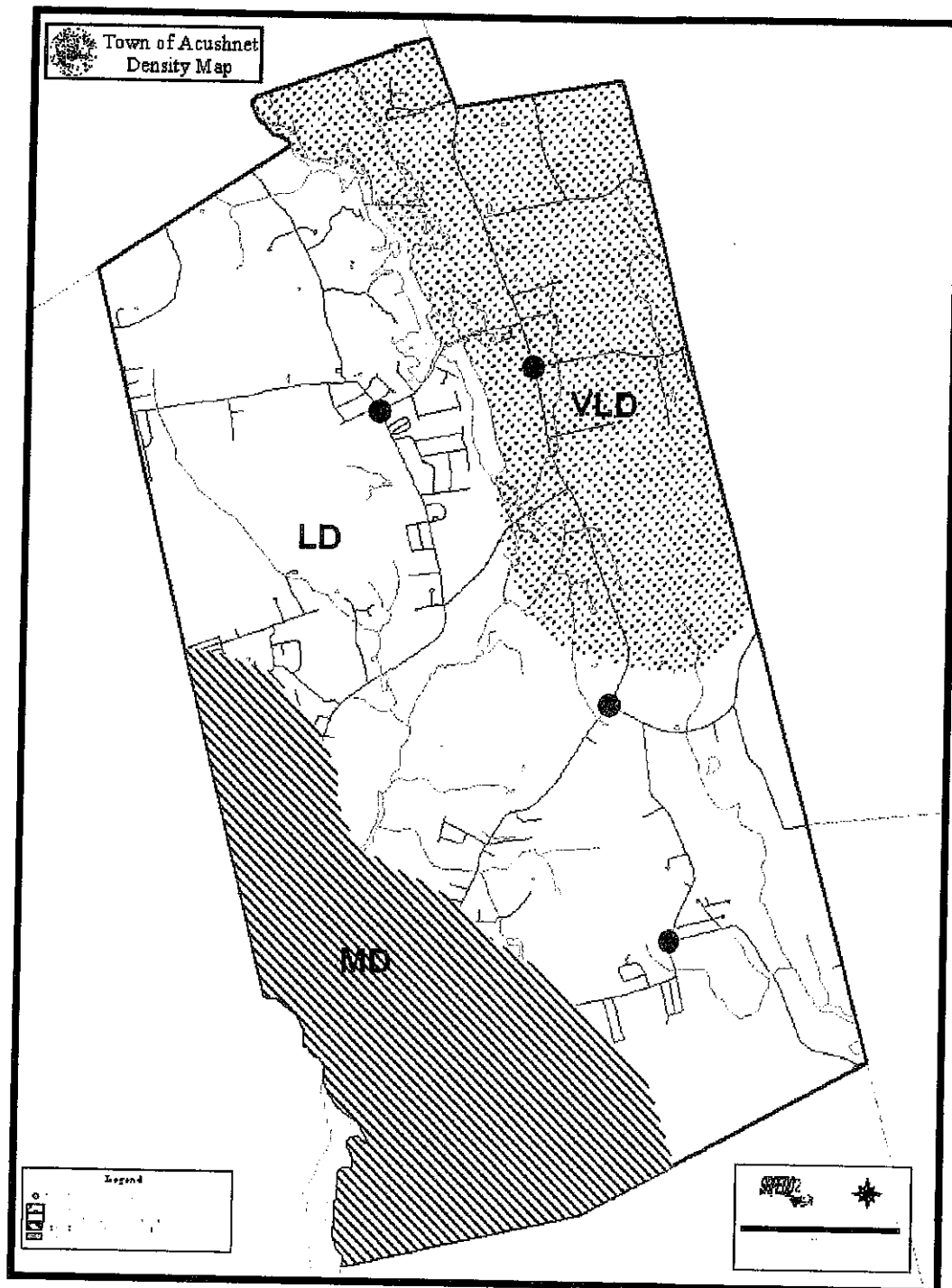


Figure 1.9, Map of recommended land densities as a result of Phase II.
Source: Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program

1.5.1 Land Use Goals and Objectives

Reference attached spreadsheet.

ZONING	OBJECTIVES	TASKS
	<p>Revise Acushnet's zoning to reflect a desirable growth pattern which balances the need for both development and preservation. In some locations zoning will enable new land uses. In other areas, zoning will catch-up to (now) historic land uses. (REFERENCE MAP AT END OF THIS SECTION)</p>	<p>Form a Land Use Committee to develop a plan to rezone Acushnet.</p> <p>Create zoning for higher density residential development in areas of Town where natural features and manmade improvements support such growth</p> <p>Create zoning for lower density residential development in outlying areas to preserve historic agricultural land uses and open space for future generations</p> <p>Investigate the practicality of cluster development in Acushnet and if appropriate create zoning to support it.</p> <p>Incorporate specific accommodations for multi-family development in medium density areas where infrastructure supports this type of development</p> <p>Create conservation overlay districts to protect aquifers</p> <p>Create local flood plain districts which are consistent with Federal and State laws governing development in FEMA designated 100-year flood hazard area</p> <p>Create zoning for commercial/retail nodes within current and future residential areas outside the village.</p> <p>Create zoning for commercial and industrial operations in areas where infrastructure supports this type of development</p> <p>Upon completion of rezoning plan and drafting of new land use by-laws conduct educational campaign and the forward plan to Town Meeting for vote</p>

LAND USE POLICY	<p>Revise land use policies (i.e., by-laws, subdivision regulations, etc.) to reflect and define modifications to Acushnet's rezoning plan</p>	<p>Members of the Land Use Committee and By-Law Committee cooperatively revise land use policies (i.e., by-laws, subdivision regulations, etc.) to reflect and define modifications to Acushnet's rezoning plan</p> <p>Inventory regional Best Management Practices utilized in municipal zoning by-laws.</p> <p>Prescribe land uses which may occur within each zoning district</p> <p>Prescribe flexible standards for development within each zoning district</p> <p>Provide flexibility to accommodate improvements to shared sewerage system technology, sewerage and water extensions, etc.</p>
GROWTH MANAGEMENT	<p>Create a land development policy to manage the land development growth rate (and thereby mitigate correlary impacts on the Town's infrastructure and public services)</p>	<p>Establish a cap for single-family household unit growth which limits the number of units built per year</p> <p>Provide a priority to multi-family housing complexes/developments that meet 40B and senior housing goals</p> <p>Create and institute development fees which offset both the short and long-term financial impacts to the Town's infrastructure and public services as a result of residential growth.</p> <p>Provide incentives for smart growth Best Management Practices (BMSs) such as cluster development</p>

MUNICIPAL LAND ACQUISITION	Proactively acquire municipal amenities which support a full build out.	Identify, prioritize and acquire rights-of-way and/or purchase properties for utility easements, municipal facilities, recreation, open space, water supply, etc.
		Inventory Town-owned land (including potential tax title properties) suitable for future municipal uses.
		Develop/enhance/Implement innovative funding strategies for municipal land purchases

2. Natural and Cultural Resources

2.1 Introduction

Acushnet has a wealth of natural and cultural resources that have served residents well for hundreds of years. Among these resources is a diverse natural environment including large tracts of undeveloped woodlands, the Acushnet River valley and a substantial amount of land currently utilized for agriculture. Acushnet contains virtually all of the Acushnet River basin and a portion of the Mattapoissett River basin. Productive groundwater aquifers provide domestic water for outlying areas.

The community has maintained a small town character which evokes memories of a bygone era. The town's rich agricultural history is still evidenced by numerous working farms, orchards and numerous roadside vegetable stands. The annual Apple-Peach festival is a significant tie and celebration of the Town's agricultural heritage. Acushnet contains numerous sites and buildings, many of which date from the 1800's or earlier.

This section of the Master Plan examines Acushnet's existing natural and cultural resources, as well as the current status of their protection. Resources were identified using information from a variety of entities including residents, MassGIS, Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Historical Commission and a number of previous studies.

2.2. Soils, Geology, Topography, and Mineral Resources

Soils are a primary determinant of the most suitable uses for a particular piece of land. For example, soils composition affects the land's suitability for farming, forestry, recreation, construction and wastewater disposal. For this reason, soils information is very useful in land use, conservation, and recreation planning.

Acushnet's soils and geology are reflective of its location within the area of central New England that were covered by glaciers during the most recent ice age. About 12,000 years ago the earth experienced a cooling which resulted in the Pleistocene Ice Age, a period of continental glaciation. It was during this Period that most of the land features of Acushnet were either carved or deposited by the moving ice. The surface drainage, groundwater, geological resources and vegetation are all interrelated with this period of glaciation and its subsequent melting.

Unconsolidated sand and gravel, ground up or pushed by moving ice were deposited and deformed on the surface, forming drumlins: Perry Hill, Mendall Hill, Coury Heights and the bony moraine that separates the glacial outwash plain

from the glaciated uplands. The many erratic boulders found in the northeast part of the town were picked up hundreds of miles away and during the melting process were deposited where they are now. The Long Plain area of town, noted for rich soils and stratified sands and gravels is the result of meltwater outwash. This is a deposit of smaller particles deposited in layers, fairly flat, which lends itself to farming and residential land uses.

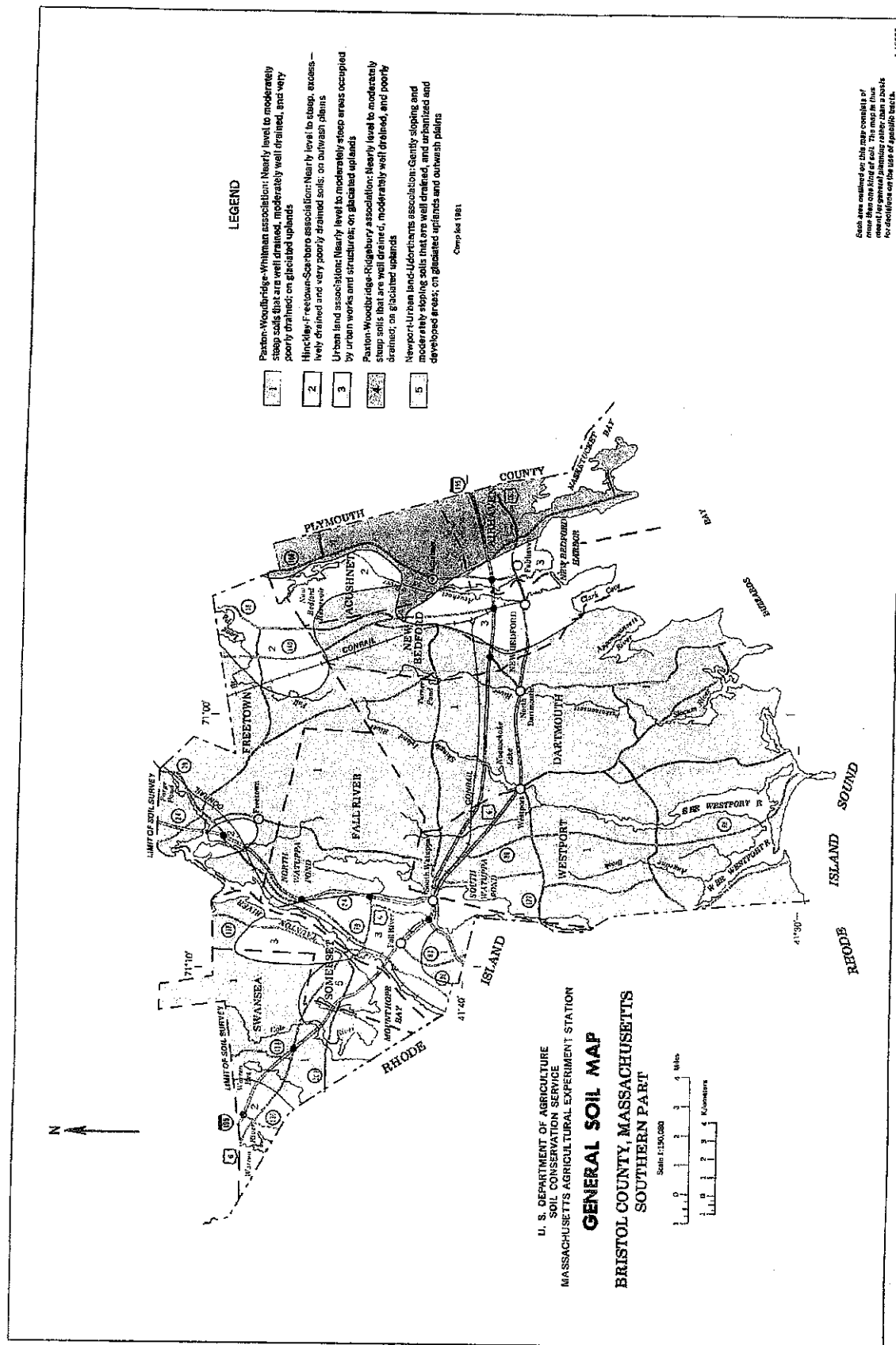
Efforts to commercially mine these stratified layers of sand and gravel have been successful in the many sand and gravel pits that have operated from time to time. Brick yards have mined clay deposits located in town at the bottom of ancient meltwater ponds and lakes. The large bluestone gneiss formation in the south end of town, mined by P.J. Keating, is not a glacial deposit, but rather a metamorphic deformation of older sediments, which are commercially valuable as a building material.

2.2.1 Soils

Acushnet's land use is limited by its wet soils and steep slopes. Geologically located on a narrow outwash plain bordered by kettle and drum moraine, much of the town lies in proximity to wetlands. According to the Soil Survey of Bristol County, Massachusetts issued by the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service in 1979, about 48 percent of the soils in Acushnet are poorly drained with the water table near or at the surface nine months of the year. These soils have severe limitations for septic tank disposal and therefore homesite development is discouraged.

The predominant soil types, shown in Figure 2.1, are Paxton-Woodbridge-Whitman Association in the northwest and Paxton-Woodbridge-Ridgebury Association in the east. Both of these soil types are characterized by upland hills and ridges dissected by many small drainageways with stones and boulders covering more than 3% of the surface in many places. The Paxton soils are on hills and ridges and are nearly level to moderately steep, well drained and have a firm substratum (hardpan) at a depth of about 22 inches that restricts the movement of water. The Woodbridge soils are nearly level and gently sloping; they are moderately well-drained and have a firm substratum at about 27 inches. Whitman soils are nearly level, located in depressions and low-lying areas adjacent to streams and surface water. They are poorly drained with a very firm substratum at about 15 inches and a seasonal high water table. The Ridgebury soils are also adjacent to waterways and are poorly drained with a firm substratum at about 29 inches. The limitations of both these soils are wetness, low permeability, stones on the surface and slopes where they occur.

The outwash plain of the upper Acushnet River Basin area is made up of soils that are predominantly of the Hinckley-Freetown-Scarboro Association. These are characteristically sandy, gravelly soils and organic soils with a slope range of 0 to 25 percent. The Hinckley soils are excessively drained and very permeable with a loosely consolidated substratum. They are droughty in most years. The



Freetown soils are made up of organic deposits more than 51 inches thick and are poorly drained, level or depressional. The Scarboro soils are also level or depressional, poorly drained, but have a sandy subsoil. Several large sand and gravel pits are located in this soil region.

The southwest corner of Acushnet, consisting of about 19% of the surface area, is made up of soils on upland hills and ridges so altered by the urban uses (covered with buildings and paved surfaces) that identification of the soils is not practical.

2.3 Surface Water Resources

2.3.1.1 Ponds, Streams and Watersheds

In 1869 the City of New Bedford purchased the land over which the New Bedford Reservoir now lies, and dammed the Acushnet River creating water storage of about 400 million gallons. This 219-acre artificial impoundment, owned by the New Bedford Water Works, is fed by Roaring Brook, Squam Brook, cranberry bogs, and swampland. It is generally shallow with an average depth of 4 feet and a maximum depth of 14 feet. The reservoir consists of two main sections divided by Lake Street. Another pond, sometimes called East Pond, lies slightly east of the two main sections and a small lily pond, referred to as Tom Davis Pond, lies south of Lake Street.

The first water from out of the City of New Bedford to be brought in for domestic use came from this reservoir through a conduit west of Long Plain. While New Bedford still owns this water supply, it remains unused for drinking water purposes, as water for its domestic use now comes from sources in Rochester, Middleborough, Freetown, and Lakeville.

In July 1959 the reservoir was opened for public fishing under an agreement between the New Bedford Water Works and the then Division of Fisheries and Game (now the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife). It is accessible from Lake Street, where parking is available on the north side of the road. Unimproved boat ramps are also located in this area.

The Town of Acushnet lies within the Buzzards Bay watershed or drainage basin. A watershed is an area of land where all sources of water, including streams, rivers, groundwater, and rain, drain to a common waterbody; in this case Buzzards Bay. The larger Buzzards Bay watershed is broken down into several smaller areas called subwatersheds which drain to various harbors and coves around the bay. The Acushnet River provides drainage for almost the entire town, with the exception of the far eastern side of the town. The Acushnet River Valley is referred to as the Inner New Bedford Harbor (Sub) Watershed. The eastern part of the town drains to Mattapoissett Harbor through the Mattapoissett

River. This river valley is referred to as the Mattapoissett Harbor (Sub) Watershed. The two watersheds of Acushnet are shown in Figure 2.2.

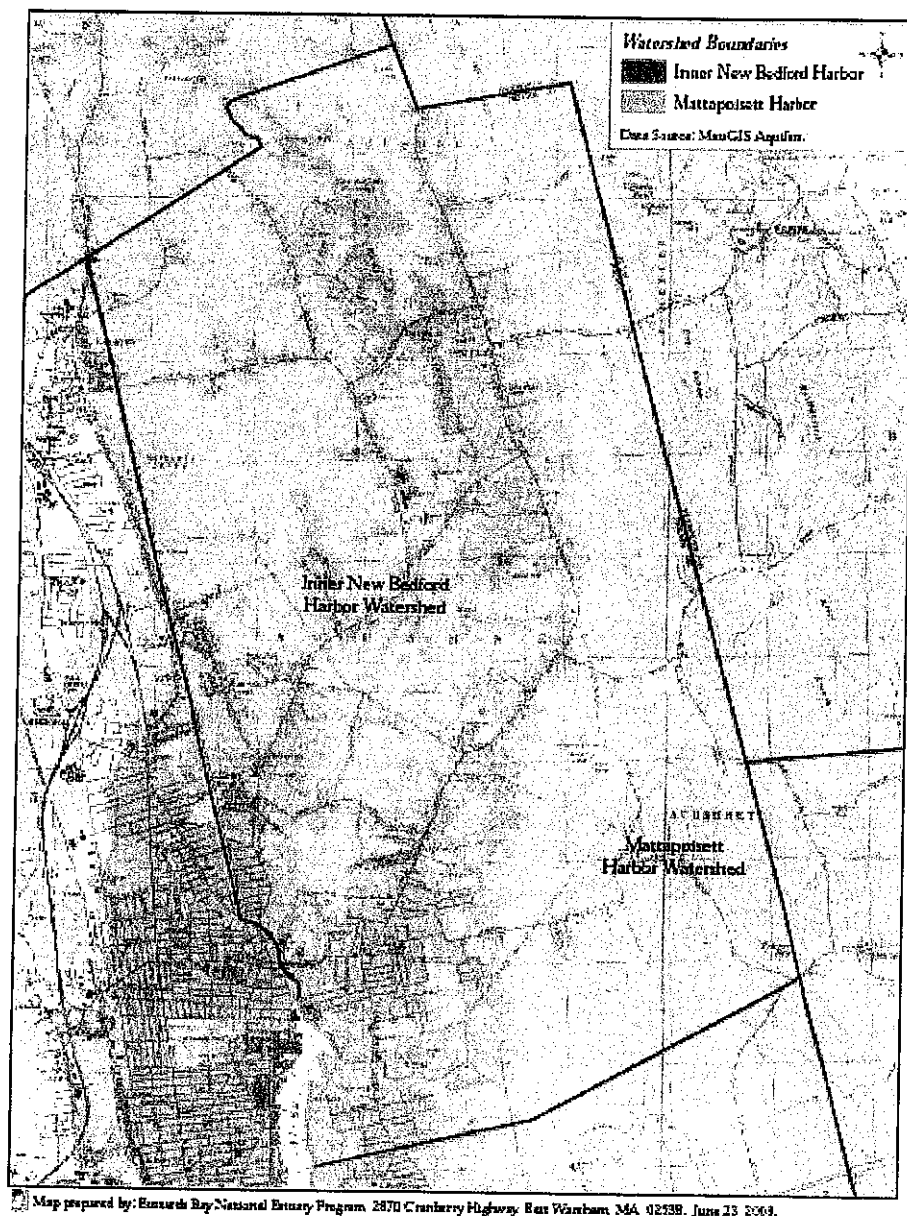


Figure 2.2, Watershed delineation within the Town of Acushnet

Average stream flows are highest in winter and early spring when snow melt occurs. Flows are lowest in the fall as a result of low water tables. Low water tables are caused by somewhat less precipitation and evaporation. The average water budget for Acushnet is shown in Table 3 below. It should be remembered that figures in the table reflect long term monthly averages. Approximately half

the years will have high values and half will have low values. Occasionally, a series of dry years occur in succession (as in the 1980s) This lowered the water table and the base flow of streams. At such times the stream flows are below normal and many small streams cease to flow.

The Acushnet River is relatively clean north of the Head of the River Bridge. South of that point and into New Bedford Harbor it is one of the most polluted bodies of water on the east coast, having been exposed to industrial dumping from the many textile mills, plastics and metal factories in the city over a prolonged period of time. Signs warn children and adults alike not to swim, fish, or even walk on the tidal flats in this lower basin area. Chain-link fences also block the entrance into this tidal area.

Acushnet bears an ugly scar as a result of environmental mistakes in New Bedford. As part of the Superfund program, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has developed a final restoration plan for New Bedford Harbor and the Acushnet River which will include the cleanup of contaminated sediment. Between 1994 and 1995, the EPA and the US Army Corp of Engineers began dredging the most contaminated sediments from the harbor. Cleanup of the harbor and river will be very difficult and the remediation project is expected to take at least 15 years, until about 2011.

Eighty ponds and reservoirs dot the Acushnet landscape; most are unnamed. There are about 11 mill ponds along the river, and several impoundment ponds. There are also several ponds resulting from mining pits reaching below the water table. It's safe to say that most of the surface water in ponds in the town is the direct result of man's activities. The naturally occurring ponds are kettle hole ponds formed as the glacier melted back. Very large chunks of ice were left behind on the surface, were surrounded by deposited sands, gravels and clays, and slowly melted. The depression the ice made on the surface caused the local drainage to favor continued refilling.

2.3.2 Wetlands

Acushnet supports an abundance and diversity of wetlands, ranging from wet meadows to widespread areas of forested wetlands that comprise approximately 50% of the town's landscape. Each type of wetland has its own hydrology, vegetation and soil type. The majority of Acushnet's wetlands can be broadly defined as palustrine, which are non-tidal wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, and persistent emergent vegetation. Tidal action is confined basically to the area south of the Acushnet Saw Mill

Before development can take place on a particular parcel of land, wetlands are reviewed in the field and classified by the Conservation Commission on a case by case basis. Additional tools for wetland assessment are available to the

Commission for reference in the form of National Wetlands Inventory Maps and Wetlands Conservancy Maps.

The National Wetlands Inventory Maps, published in 1974 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service included Acushnet and surrounding towns. Broad areas of wetlands were identified, classified and overlaid onto USGS Topographic Maps. Wetlands Conservancy Maps were published by the Department of Environmental Protection in February 1993. Utilizing color infrared aerial photos at a 1"=1,000' scale, wetlands were photo interpreted and displayed on black and white orthophoto maps at a 1"=417' scale. The maps illustrate natural and manmade features of the landscape. These maps are a valuable planning tool maintained by the Conservation Commission and available to all of the town boards. They are now also available in a convenient digital format that can be used with a Geographic Information System (GIS).

2.3.3 Groundwater Resources

An aquifer is a geologic formation capable of yielding significant quantities of potable water. Aquifers are generally found in sand and gravel deposits where pores in the soil allow water to collect. Groundwater enters the aquifer through sand and gravel soils, wetlands, and surface water bodies, and slowly percolates through the ground in a down-gradient direction

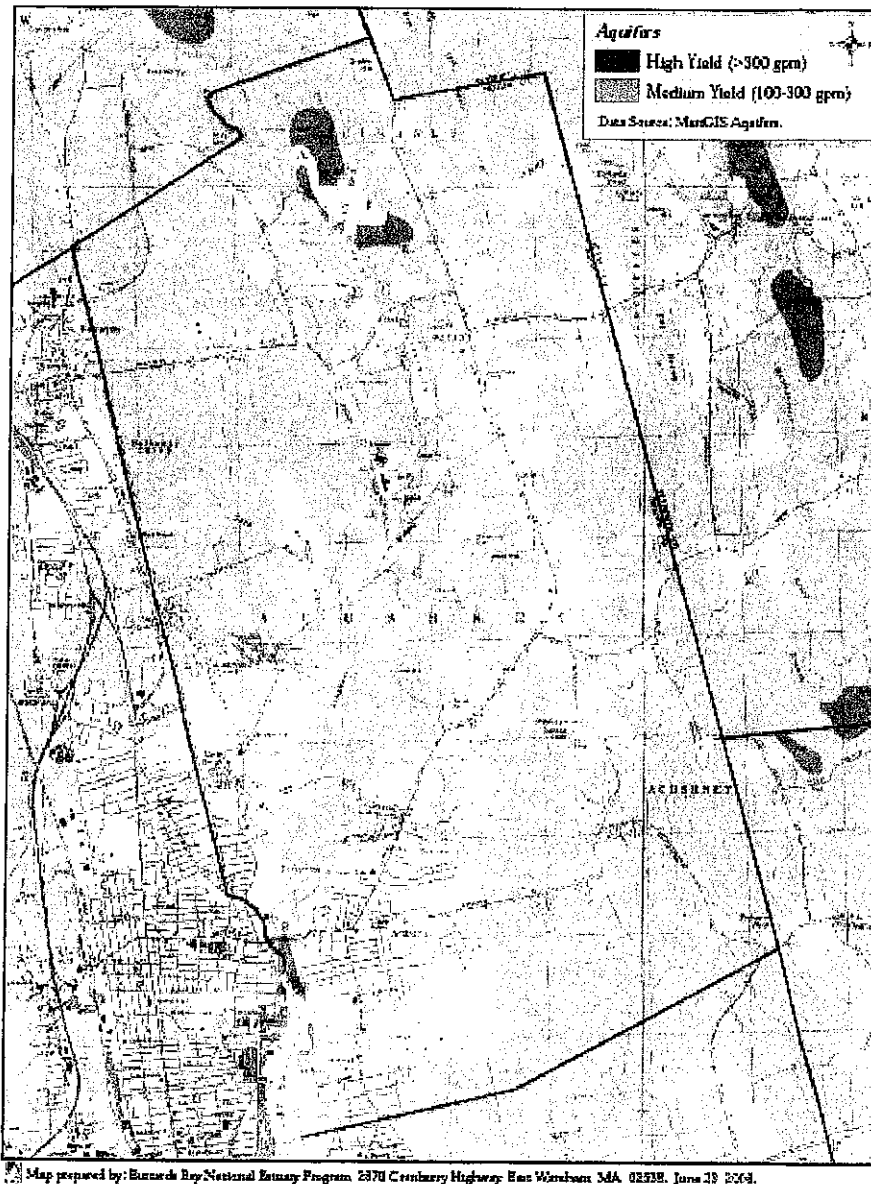
The Town of Acushnet is fortunate to have a significant aquifer within its borders. Figure 2.3 shows the location of Acushnet's aquifer which runs along a bent north-south axis from the New Bedford Reservoir, Acushnet River Valley to the Head of River at the southern end of Town. The ground water resources of this area are almost entirely derived from the saturated layer of unconsolidated glacial material deposited over the underlying bedrock. The availability of ground water is a function of two factors:

- The thickness of this saturated layer (equal to the depth of the bedrock below the water table), and
- The rate of recharge balanced against the rate of drawdown.

The thickness of this aquifer is greatest in pre-glacial valleys eroded into the bedrock surface and later buried by glacial deposits. In Acushnet these deposits are located in the Acushnet River Valley below Leonard Street and under the New Bedford Reservoir to the north. Homes in the Long Plain area depend on this aquifer which is tapped with residential wells. Groundwater has the advantage of being higher in quality, less likely to be polluted and suffers no loss from evaporation.

2.3.4 Water Supply

In Acushnet, approximately 40% of the population obtains drinking water from wells. The remaining 60% of the population receives municipal drinking water from the City of New Bedford. Figure 2.4, shows the municipal water supply



Map prepared by: Bureau of Regional Estuary Program, 2370 Century Highway, East Woburn, MA 02538, June 19 2003.

Figure 2.3, Map of aquifers within the Town of Acushnet

system within Acushnet. The village in the southwest corner of Acushnet is dominated by urban land uses that restrict infiltration and recharge and generally cause rapid runoff. Precipitation is quickly lost here so this area is dependent on town water provided by the city of New Bedford. From a planning perspective, it

is important to note this connection between land development and its impact on aquifer recharging and quality.

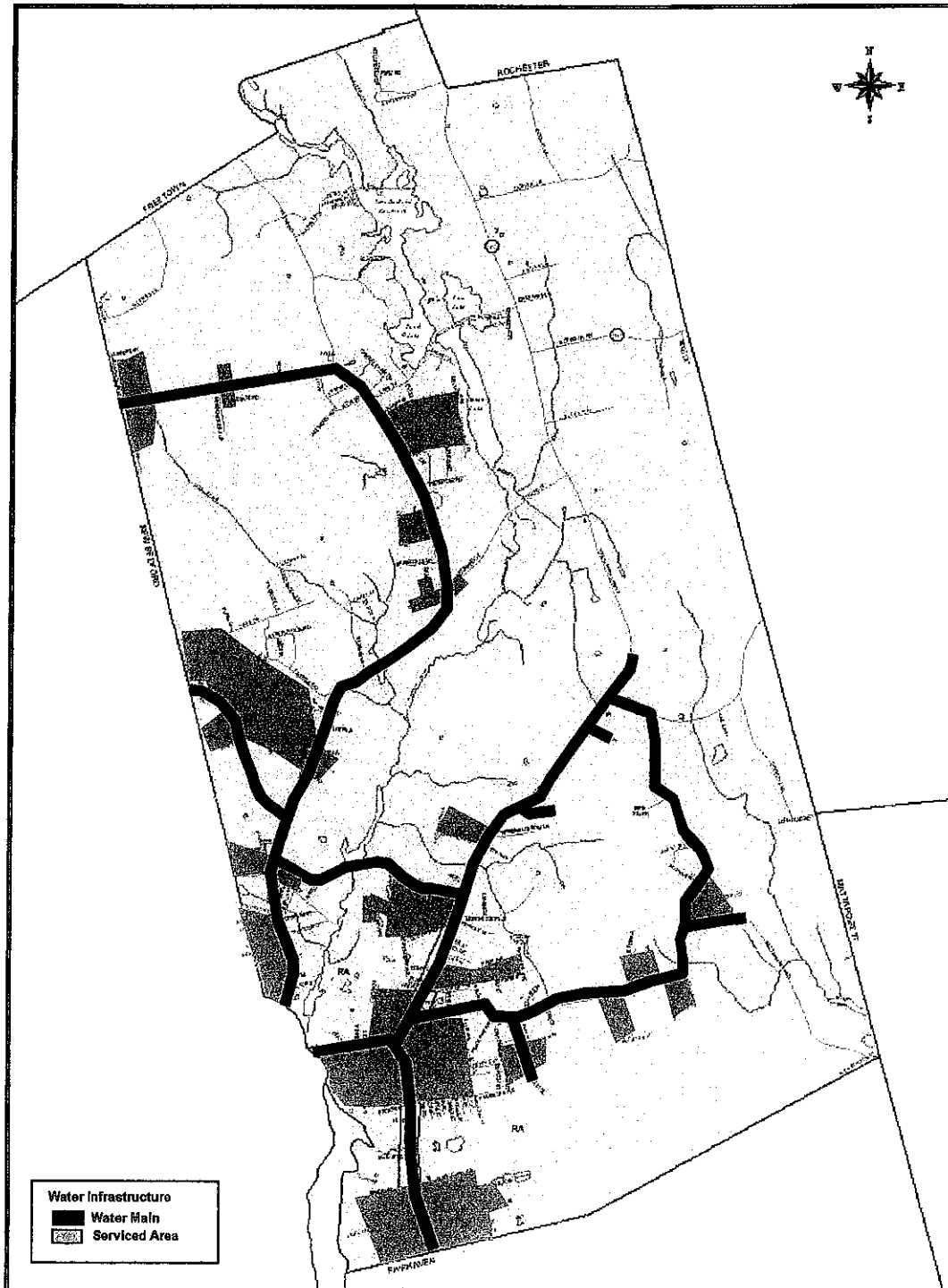


Figure 2.4, Map of areas currently serviced by the municipal water system

The Town has considered creating its own municipal drinking water system. In the 1960s, 43 borings were made in the aquifer near Leonard Street. Six sites were determined to be good possibilities with three designated as potential sources for ground water supply for the Town of Acushnet. The flow was excellent and a proposal to install town wells and a standpipe was made at town meeting. The voters rejected the proposal due primarily to the cost. When the Acushnet River Valley Golf Course was constructed in the same area, all of these potential well sites were lost.

In 1996, the town began testing other potential drinking water sources. The Morrison property on Hamlin Street and the Rivet property adjacent to the reservoir were both considered. Tests indicated that each site could provide roughly 300 gallons per minute of quality drinking water. Actual draw rates from wells would be established by State permit (i.e., draw rates could be less than maximum production rates to mitigate localized groundwater impact). In 1999, Acushnet purchased the Quaker Wells parcel (formerly the Rivet property), which is now under the jurisdiction of both the Water and Sewer Department and the Conservation Commission. The back half of the parcel facing the reservoir is reserved for future well site purposes while the front half is conservation land. The Morrison property was given preliminary approval for a well site by the Department of Environmental Protection but was never purchased by the town. Until the town develops its own drinking water supply, Acushnet will continue be dependent on New Bedford for the majority of its drinking water.

In addition to wells, the New Bedford Reservoir also offers a significant source of fresh water in Acushnet. The reservoir which physically lies in Acushnet is owned by the City of New Bedford. Within the past decade, the City of New Bedford has indicated a willingness to convey the reservoir to the Town of Acushnet. The reservoir has potentially significant cost issues ranging from water quality improvement to dam/road maintenance. The unknown comprehensive cost of accepting ownership of the reservoir has, to date, prevented any inter-municipality conveyance. If Acushnet is to achieve water independence, the reservoir and its tremendous volume of fresh water will likely be part of the formula.

2.3.5 Existing Protection for Water Resources

Several federal, state and local environmental regulations protect freshwater resources against filling, inappropriate development, and other forms of alteration. The following are some of the most important environmental regulations that have jurisdiction within Acushnet.

Wetlands Protection

Wetlands have both human and ecological importance for pollution control, flood control, storm damage protection, wildlife habitat, fisheries and groundwater supply. Wetlands in Massachusetts are regulated under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (310 CMR 10.00). The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act applies to activity within 100 feet of bordering wetlands (wetlands bordering ponds, streams, the ocean, and other water features) and within certain isolated wetlands. The Acushnet Conservation Commission administers this law, and considers applications for activities in wetlands and buffer zones. Generally wetland alteration is allowed only in small areas when there are no feasible alternatives, and is subject to the condition that an equivalent amount of wetland must be replicated elsewhere. In wetland buffer zones, work is often allowed subject to an Order of Conditions from the Conservation Commission. Although the Conservation Commission has some discretion in deciding how much development to allow in wetlands and buffer zones, the MA Department of Environmental Protection has the authority to override any Conservation Commission decision. The Wetlands Protection Act does *not* provide protection for many small isolated wetlands, or for vernal pools. Many Massachusetts communities have adopted local wetlands protection by-laws or ordinances to supplement the state act. The purpose of these regulations is to provide additional protection for isolated wetlands not included in the state act, to allow greater control over proposed projects in the buffer zone, and to give greater review authority to the local Conservation Commission.

Rivers Protection Act

According to recent studies in the scientific literature, the area within 200 feet of the riverbank can play an important ecological role by serving as the recharge area for rivers, by providing a complementary habitat for riparian species requiring upland resources, and by allowing riparian corridors to serve as effective migration corridors for species requiring larger habitat areas. The Massachusetts Rivers Protection Act, incorporated into the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act in 1996, regulates development within 200 feet of perennial rivers and streams (defined provisionally as those streams which appear as solid blue lines on USGS topographic maps). The Acushnet Conservation Commission administers this Act. Typically, development is allowed within 100 feet of rivers only under extraordinary circumstances, but certain types of development are sometimes allowed between 100 feet and 200 feet of streams.

Groundwater Protection District

Recognizing the importance of the town's aquifers for both natural systems and human water supply, many towns have created Groundwater Protection By-laws creating a Groundwater Protection District. The Groundwater Protection District functions as an overlay district and prohibits or requires a special permit for certain uses that potentially pose a threat to groundwater aquifers. These uses include solid waste disposal facilities; storage of petroleum products; storage of road salt or de-icing chemicals; dumping snow which contains de-icing chemicals from outside the district; manufacture, use, storage or disposal of toxic or hazardous materials or wastes; discharge of industrial process liquids; certain automotive and other potentially noxious uses; and mining of land. In order to prevent groundwater pollution from nitrates, fecal coliform, and other contaminants, limits are placed on the disposal of liquid or leachable wastes. Additional requirements on new development may also include retention of at least 5 feet of soil cover above the high groundwater level in order to provide adequate soil filtering capacity for liquids percolating downward toward the water table.

Septic System Management

Many homes in Acushnet rely on septic systems for sewage disposal. According to local health officials, these systems function fairly well. Because of the nature of the Town's development pattern, which is predominantly residential, low density and fairly evenly dispersed throughout town, there are no major problem areas regarding septic system failure. Malfunctioning septic systems can contaminate groundwater aquifers with nitrates, fecal coliform, and other pollutants. For this reason, the Board of Health has been very active in promoting homeowner awareness of septic system maintenance through the presentation and distribution of various public education materials. In addition, the board has also adopted a local septage tracking system (to ensure timely pumping and proper disposal practices), as well as adopting stringent amendments to Title V (State Sanitary Code) on the local level.

2.4 Habitats and Ecosystems

2.4.1 Vegetation

Vegetation not only provides aesthetically pleasing views and landscape diversity, but is also a critical natural resource that forms the basis for habitats and ecosystems that support natural and human communities. In addition, vegetation helps to stabilize soils and prevent erosion, contributes to groundwater infiltration, serves as a visual and noise buffer between land uses, and improves local air quality.

Occupying over 50% of the town's total land area, Acushnet's forest lands are its most abundant vegetative resource, providing valuable habitat for many plant and animal species as well as invaluable recreational areas for its residents.

The forested areas of Acushnet are not generally composed of large unbroken tracts, but rather of scattered woodland interspersed with residential areas and open fields. These woodlands consist of mixed stands of softwood and hardwood. The hardwood being the dominant of the two types, it consists mainly of white and black oak and red maple. The dominant softwood species are Eastern white pine and white cedar.

Some of the more frequently sighted vegetative species in Acushnet are listed below in Table 2.1.

Trees		Shrubs and Vines	
Oak	Ash	Swamp Azalea	Ironwood
Pine	Holly	Pepper Bush	Shrub Willows
Birch	Maple	Sumac	Vibernums
Locust	Buttonwood	Bayberry	Woodbine
Cedar	Hickory	Wild Grape	Sheep Laurel
Beech	Hemlock	Bittersweet	Bull Brier
Sassafras	Willow	Blueberry	Spicebush
Tupelo	Dogwood	Black Alder	Serviceberry
Cherry	Basswood	Ossiers	Autumn Olive
Wildflowers and Herbs			
Ladyslipper	Chicory	Ferns	Meadow Rue
Wintergreen	Pond Lilies	Quail Berry	Mosses
Cardinal Flower	Jack-In-The-Pulpit	Tansy Ragwort	Pink Tick Weed
Jewel Weed	Marsh Marigold	Evening Primrose	Asters
Queen Ann's Lace	Joe Pyeweed	Violets	Black-Eyed Susan

Table 2.1, Common vegetative species in Acushnet

Proper forest management can also be important in and around identified recharge and water supply areas. A healthy canopy and understory can help to control stormwater runoff, erosion and sedimentation. Trees can also take in airborne and waterborne pollutants through the leaves and root systems so that they do not enter bodies of surface water and groundwater. Periodic harvesting of mature timber allows important sunlight, water and air to reach the younger understory, promoting healthy growth. This practice also allows for increased infiltration of rainwater to the ground because less water is intercepted by the tree canopy. On the other hand, unmanaged forests will often eventually succeed to old-growth forests, which are quite rare in Massachusetts and provide excellent habitat value for many species. For these reasons, Acushnet should encourage participation in forestry management programs on many, but not all, sites in the town.

2.4.2 Native Fish and Wildlife Species

The occurrence and abundance of wildlife in Acushnet is influenced by land use, land cover type, topography and availability of water. There are three major types of wildlife habitat in Acushnet: hardwood forests, open or agricultural lands, and wetlands. These areas provide good to excellent habitat for numerous wildlife and vegetative species.

Wildlife associated with hardwood forest land cover type include white tail deer, eastern cottontail, grey fox, short tail weasel, short tail shrew, opossum, raccoon, striped skunk, grey squirrel, red squirrel, eastern chipmunk, coyote, and several species of mole, mouse, and rat. Common birds include the ruffed grouse, screech owl, red-tailed hawk, hairy and downy woodpecker, yellow bellied sapsucker, blue jay, chickadee, American crow, white and red breasted nuthatch, scarlet tanager, turkey vulture, robin, and cardinal. Several species of reptiles, including the common garter snake, and eastern milk snake, and several species of turtles, as well as amphibians such as the American toad and various species of salamanders are also present.

Wildlife in the open and agricultural land habitat is generally less abundant and diverse. Common species of mammal include whitetail deer, red fox, short tail shrew, eastern chipmunk, eastern cottontail, woodchuck, meadow mole, striped skunk and opossum. Bird species include bobwhite, ring-necked pheasant, red-winged blackbird, cowbird, mourning dove, bluebird, common goldfinch, starling, turkey vulture, wild turkey, bluebird, killdeer and barn swallow.

Wildlife commonly associated with the wetland land cover include muskrat, mink, raccoon, woodcock, catbird, cedar waxwing, osprey, goshawk, Canada geese, kestrel, several species of heron, wood duck, mallard, marbled salamander, spotted salamander, red spotted newt, spring peeper, green frog, wood frog, pickerel frog, spotted turtle, snapping turtle, and several species of snake.

In addition to these wetland areas, Acushnet also has numerous vernal pools. Definition of vernal pools and their importance to the maintenance of a variety of wildlife species is discussed below in Section 2.4.3.

Past surveys (1956 and 1975) by the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife have identified the following species of fish as occurring in the Acushnet River: brook trout, yellow perch, white perch, chain pickerel, redbfin pickerel, pumpkinseed sunfish, banded sunfish, bluegill sunfish, creek chubsuckers, brown bullheads, golden shiners, bridle shiners, American eels, tessellated darters, and at times, large mouth bass. The lower section of the river is also known to contain an alewife and smelt run. The Acushnet River is stocked annually with brook trout at Hamlin Street, Pine Hill Pavilion (off Middle Street) and at Leonard Street.

In 1987, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife designated the New Bedford Reservoir as the number two bass producer in the state. The reservoir has a reputation for largemouth bass and regularly produces some of trophy size. Within Acushnet's fresh water ponds can be found species such as small and large mouth bass, catfish, sunfish, perch, and shiners.

Anadromous species, such as alewives (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) and blueback herring (*Alosa aestivalis*), together known as river herring, have declined dramatically in rivers around Buzzards Bay during the past couple of centuries. Annually, these fish leave the open ocean to return to the freshwater rivers they were born in to spawn. Herring runs enable this migration. Historically, these fish were an important human food fishery. Today they are not heavily used for human consumption but are still an important food species for many larger fish, whales, and coastal birds. Currently, the primary human use of herring harvested from Buzzards Bay tributaries is lobster bait.

Most herring runs in Buzzards Bay are not supporting their historical maximum number of fish. One of the primary reasons is that obstructions to migration are stopping or inhibiting the passage of fish upstream to their spawning areas. Other possible reasons certain runs are not producing fish at their historic level are over-fishing or poor water quality. In Acushnet, two dams along the Acushnet River and one at the New Bedford Reservoir have historically impeded herring migration. The two 200 year old dams along the river once served power and cotton mills, and are located at the southern ends of Hamlin Mill Pond and Saw Mill Pond.

In 1998, the New Bedford Harbor Trustee Council awarded \$600,000 to the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) to construct fish ladders at all three dams to aid herring migration. After a year of designing systems for each dam, the Division of Marine Fisheries recently decided that complete removal of both mill pond dams might be the best solution. A state-of-the-art fish ladder is still planned for the reservoir.

Several factors must be looked at when dam removal is considered. The Hamlin Street fishway is currently not efficient, and at this time, DMF could only hope to construct a temporary ladder since the Massachusetts Highway Department may redesign the road and underlying culverts in the near future. The Saw Mill dam, which is privately owned, has several leaks and would be very costly to repair. If a new fish ladder were installed with the dam in its current condition, adequate water levels could not be maintained in the ladder to ensure proper fish passage. Breaching of both dams would restore natural river flow and improve water quality by eliminating the stagnant, warm pools that form behind the dams. Another benefit to dam removal is that freely flowing water will remain cooler and hold a greater amount of oxygen. A temperature reduction may mean that cold water species such as trout will be able to thrive. The free flow of water may also

encourage the return of species such as shad, which have not been seen in the upper section of the river since the dams were built in the 1700s.

However, breaching of the dams is not without consequence. If the dams are removed the mills ponds above the dams will narrow or disappear completely, resulting in the loss of adjacent wetlands and recreational fishing areas. The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife is recommending a feasibility study be completed before any action is taken to remove the dams. State officials are concerned that there is potential for contaminated sediment to be located behind the dams. Release of this material, if it exists, could harm fish and wildlife downstream.

There is little historical data relating to the number of river herring migrating up the Acushnet River. As part of DMF's plan to improve fish passage in the river, a fish counter has been installed in the Saw Mill Pond to assess herring populations.

In a general way, the town itself serves as a stop on the migratory route for many species of waterfowl and birds. Wetlands, fields, and even the golf course provide food and habitat. As previously mentioned, the Acushnet River provides a migratory route for herring to spawning ponds. Whitetail deer move in small herds throughout all areas of the town. During the rut season in the fall, deer movement conflicts with vehicular traffic to the detriment of both people and animals. The rural character of the town, along with large wetland areas, provides ample food, foraging areas and travel routes for small mammals.

If Acushnet's lands of conservation interest are damaged or fragmented through development, many of their functions could be irreparably harmed. Acushnet must focus its efforts on the aspects of land protection that the town can influence, control, or direct through its planning, policies and administrative powers. Specific goals and objectives of this Master Plan address the need to protect the important functions and values Acushnet's wildlife habitats.

2.4.3 Rare and Endangered Species and Habitats

According to the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, the large number of somewhat connected swamps in Acushnet may provide acceptable habitat for rare and common reptiles and amphibians. Unfortunately, no rare species have been documented in these areas because surveys of the swamps have never been done. Efforts should be made to document the species utilizing this habitat so future plans can be made to protect these critical habitat areas.

Another area of importance to wildlife is the Acushnet River corridor. The wetlands adjacent to the river provide habitat for many plant and animal species.

The idea of creating an Acushnet River valley greenway was supported by 67% of the respondents to a scientific survey conducted by the Open Space and Recreation Committee.

The most recent documented observation of a species monitored by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program was an eastern box turtle seen in 1996. In 1968 there was an observation of a spotted turtle and in 1979 Eastern pond mussels were observed in this area. These species are not considered endangered but are of special concern. The Natural Heritage Program database is constantly being expanded and updated. Acushnet should make a concerted effort to help document rare species in town. Vertebrate and invertebrate species listed in the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas as occurring in Acushnet 2000-2001 is shown below in Table 2.2.

Scientific Name	Common Name	State Status	Year of Last Observation	Year of First Observation
<i>Clemmys Guttata</i>	Spotted Turtle	SC	1968	1968
<i>Viola Brittoniana</i>	Eastern Box Turtle	SC	1996	1996
<i>Ligumia Nasuta</i>	Eastern Pondmussel	SC	1979	1979

Table 2.2, Vertebrate and Invertebrate Species Listed in the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Atlas as occurring in Acushnet

Key to State Status:

E = Endangered. Any reproductively viable native species of wildlife or wild plant which has been documented by biological research and inventory to be in danger of extirpation from the Commonwealth.

T = Threatened. Any reproductively viable native species of wildlife or wild plant which has been documented by biological research and inventory to be rare or declining within the Commonwealth and which is likely to become endangered in the Commonwealth in the foreseeable future.

SC = Special Concern. Any native wildlife or wild plant species which has been documented by biological research and inventory to be suffering a decline that could threaten the species in the Commonwealth if allowed to continue unchecked, or that occurs in such small numbers or with such restricted distribution or specialized habitat requirements that it could easily become threatened.

In addition to the Acushnet River corridor wetland areas, Acushnet also has numerous vernal pools. Vernal pools consist of small, shallow temporary pools that are most evident in the springtime and fall (i.e., autumnal pools). These pools often dry up in the summer and are therefore unable to support fish communities. However, vernal pools are critical to the survival of a variety of wildlife species, including some salamanders that breed exclusively in these pools. These salamanders travel in mass migrations during the spring to return

and breed in the vernal pool they were born in. A few organisms, such as fairy shrimp, spend their entire life cycle within a single vernal pool. They lay drought-resistant eggs, which hatch when the pool fills with water in the spring. Other wildlife species are attracted to vernal pools because of the abundant prey available. Some of these species include spotted turtles, Blanding's turtles, great blue heron, green heron, and garter snakes.

The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP), a division of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, documents and certifies vernal pools. Certified vernal pools are provided protection under several state and federal laws, such as the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, Title 5, Section 401 of the Federal Clean Water Act, and the Massachusetts Forest Cutting Practices Act. In an effort to increase the number of certified vernal pools, the NHESP recently released data on potential vernal pools sites in Southeastern Massachusetts. Using color infra-red photos, the NHESP identified areas with the highest potential for supporting vernal pools (see Potential Vernal Pool Sites map). All of these sites must now be field checked to determine the exact location vernal pool(s). Due to the large land area that must be covered, the NHESP will be relying heavily on volunteer efforts to help identify vernal pools and begin the certification process. To date, no vernal pools in Acushnet have been certified.

2.5 Historic Resources

2.5.1 Town History

The Cushenas, a subtribe of the Wampanoag Federation, inhabited both sides of the Acushnet River at the time of the Pilgrims' landing. As early as 1639, the enterprising folks from the Plimoth Plantation were negotiating with the Indians to purchase the Cushena plantations of which Acushnet was a part. The Wampanoags were inexperienced in the real estate business; the idea of land ownership was alien to their nature. A deal was finally struck in 1652 when a tract of land encompassing modern-day Fairhaven, New Bedford, Dartmouth, Westport and Acushnet was "deeded" to the white settlers by the venerated old sachem Massasoit and his son Wamsutta for the hefty price of:

"30 yards of cloth, 8 moose skins, 15 axes, 15 hoes,

15 pairs of breeches, 8 blankets, 2 kettles, 1 cloak

2£ in wampum, 8 pairs of stockings, 8 pairs of shoes,

1 iron pot and 10 shillings in another commoditie¹."

Famed Pilgrims, Governor William Bradford, Captain Myles Standish and John Alden were among the 36 buyers.

The land that is now Acushnet has been known as "the Dartmouth Plantations", "Cushena Plantations", "Cushnet Country" and almost 50 other variations. Only one of the 36 land speculators is believed to have settled in Acushnet, namely John Cooke. Early settlers included Arthur Hathaway, Samuel Jenney, Joseph Taber and John Spooner. Many of the early names are still common in the area. The first settler believed to have come to Acushnet, and indeed the first to have settled in the entire old Dartmouth purchase, was John Howard, a lieutenant of Capt. Myles Standish.

On June 8, 1664, the township of Dartmouth was established by order of the Plymouth Court, with the same basic boundaries as the purchase.

Massasoit's younger son, Metacom or Pometacom, also known as King Philip, was not as taken in by the white settlers as his father had been. Increased settlement encroached on Indian hunting rights and the Wampanoags soon regretted the sale. Hostilities on both sides escalated. The ensuing King Phillip War devastated the Dartmouth plantations (including Acushnet) and it took the settlers over 25 years to recover.

The First Precinct Church of Dartmouth, organized under the court of Plymouth, was in Acushnet. It was supported by taxes with a town minister elected at town meeting as prescribed by the Plymouth charter. This system was doomed from the start as diversified worship was the cornerstone of the settlement in Acushnet; members of the Society of Friends (Quakers) farmed throughout this area. The Long Plain Friends Meetinghouse was built in 1759; it still stands. In 1724 when the selectmen refused to collect the taxes to support the Precinct minister, they were imprisoned. An embassy to the King and Council in England won a grievance against the tax and an order in 1729 exempted Quakers and Baptists from paying taxes for town churches. By 1747 church matters were eliminated from town meeting altogether and the long controversy was put to rest by an act of the General Court dividing the town into two precincts each with the power to tax its inhabitants for religious needs. All the land around the Acushnet River, including the present town of Acushnet, was included in Precinct Two. This splitting of the church precincts planted the seed of separation that was later to result in the incorporation of the new and separate Town of Acushnet.

The town warrant of Dartmouth, July 18, 1774, included a prohibition of British tea and called for a general boycott of all articles from England and Ireland. During the early days of the American Revolution minutemen volunteers met at the Head of the River bridge and marched up the post road through Long Plain to the rendezvous of American forces at Rosburghii. Later, on September 5, 1778, British forces debarked at Clark's Cove in New Bedford where a handful of untrained volunteers met 4,000 troops. As the British moved north toward

Acushnet, volunteers from Long Plain joined in the valiant but futile effort at the Head of the River bridge. The British burned Acushnet Village. For the second time in its brief history, Acushnet lay in ashes.

Throughout the 18th century, economic growth in the Acushnet tract of Dartmouth continued to be centered on the water power generated on the Acushnet River and its tributaries. As early as 1707, wooden pump parts and blocks for ships' rigging were fabricated in a factory near the River's End bridge. This was probably the first factory in Acushnet. Later, bog iron was excavated and forged in the Mill Road area and many saw mills and grist mills dotted the river valley. Acushnet textile mills, predating the New Bedford mills, that produced cotton and woolens came a short time later. Remnants of two of these mills still stand off Whelden Lane and Hamlin Street.

Whaling and maritime trades called the able young men of Acushnet to the port of New Bedford. Many sea captains born elsewhere moved their families to Acushnet to farm in their absence and to be near New Bedford. Acushnet is said to have furnished more masters of whaling vessels in proportion to its population than any other town in the United States². Later, the Leonard whaleboat, designed and built on Leonard Street in Acushnet, became famous as one of the finest whaleboats in the industry. It is interesting to note that so much of Acushnet's economy was based on the sea, although the town has no harbor.

In 1787, the Township of Dartmouth was divided into three parts: 1.) Westport, 2.) Dartmouth, and 3.) what is now New Bedford, Fairhaven and Acushnet. In 1812, the Town of New Bedford was further divided along the natural boundary of the Acushnet River into New Bedford on the west and Fairhaven (including Acushnet) on the east. Fairhaven celebrated incorporation on July 4, 1812. The rapidly increasing population in the south end (Fairhaven) and the more rural but vocal north end (Acushnet) clashed and polarized over civic matters including, but not exclusively, the argument of where the town meeting should be held. This polarization increased until 1859 when a petition was filed for separation. On February 13, 1860, the Town of Acushnet was incorporated.

1. Howland, Franklyn "A History of the Town of Acushnet", New Bedford: 1907 Pg. 10

2. Ibid. Pg. 14

As the textile mills of New Bedford flourished in the 19th century and into the 20th century, immigrants moved into the area to find factory work. A wave of English and Irish mill workers, followed by French Canadian and Polish immigrants and still later by Portuguese, made homes in Acushnet. Although interrupted twice by world wars and once by depression, a continuous stream of settlers has chosen to make Acushnet their hometown.

Originally settled as an agrarian community, Acushnet still reflects its farming background. Apple and peach orchards, tree farms, rolling meadows once used

by White's Dairy and other smaller farms, and many fruit and vegetable stands provide a link between the past and the present. Landscape farming, horse farming, strawberry and blueberry production and cranberry bogs have cropped up in modern times to carry on the rural tradition.

The colonial mills along the upper Acushnet River gave way to the great textile mills of New Bedford long ago. Today there are a few small industries and shops that have endured the test of time. Notable among the industries of the Town is the Tilcon-Capaldi bluestone quarry located in the southern end of town. From the quarry comes a distinctive blue-grey gneiss which is extracted and crushed for a variety of building uses. The predominant use of this stone is in highway and railbed building. A recent addition to the light industrial landscape of Acushnet is a plastic extrusion company located at the intersection of Nye's Lane and Middle Road.

As with the rest of the region, Acushnet has experienced a building boom of residential houses as more and more people seek out a rural quality of life. Now there is a sizeable area of newer homes along Middle Road and also in the north end of town both to the west and to the northeast of the New Bedford Reservoir. Keene Road on the west side of the reservoir, is latest to show considerable development. Responses to a survey performed by the Planning Department in support of this Master Plan revealed that residents are extremely concerned about the amount of growth that has taken place over the last few years. It will be important for the town to carefully plan for future growth if we wish to retain open and rural qualities.

2.5.2 Historic Sites and Structures

As stated above, Acushnet is an ancient community within the context modern American history (i.e., colonial period to the present). Here in this Town are found direct connections to various important era's of our nation's history. Home and buildings dating to the colonial period, post-revolution, the infancy of the industrial revolution and the Great Depression are scattered about the landscape, mixing with residences and commercial enterprises of the late 20th century. There are too many significant structures to list and discuss each building individually, although a few structures which are truly icons of Acushnet are described below. The sheer number of historically significant structures whose condition ranges from ruins to well preserved buildings are a testament to Acushnet's role in early America. A History of the Town of Acushnet, by Franklyn Howland (1907) is an invaluable resource for those seeking further information on Acushnet's rich cultural history.

Acushnet Saw Mill

The Acushnet Saw Mill site was located on a spot where, "Being at a point in the river where there is a natural fall just before the [Acushnet River] widens". This natural fall enabled an efficient harnessing of water power. Early on, the mill utilized the energy of the river to power grist mills, saw mills and wool carding operations and finally a saw mill. The founder of the mills was Jonathan Lund who sold his ownership in the corporation to N. Harvey Wilbur and Jonathan Hawes, a retired whaling captain, in 1867. Capitalizing on its location to the New Bedford shipping industry, the Acushnet Saw Mill concern produced box board (for packing) and lumber suitable for ship construction. Successive ownership carried on the tradition and expanded its product line to include cedar shingles, lumber for home and industrial building construction. The Sawmill Dam and fishway were recently significantly improved through a large project funded by the New Bedford Harbor Trustee Council.

Acushnet Process Company (Titleist)

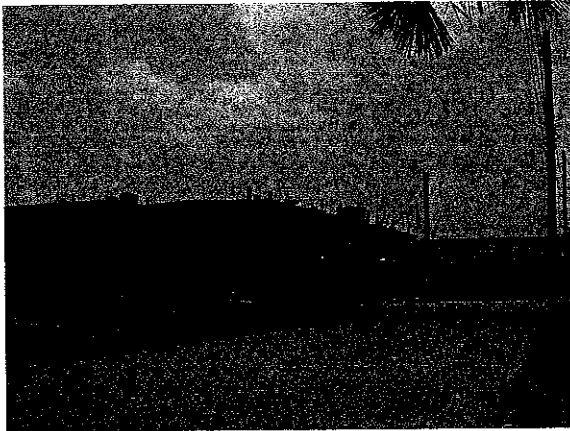


Figure 2.5, Titleist Ball Plant #1

The Acushnet Process Company dates to 1910 when Phillip E. Young created the company here in Acushnet, operating out of a simple shed. Economic challenges confronted the fledgling company, but weathered each handily. The products of the Acushnet Process Company were generally rubber based. Product lines included rubber for aircraft, automobiles, home goods and numerous others. However, the significant business product breakthrough for the Acushnet Process Company was the golf ball named "Titleist". The performance of the Titleist golf ball placed the Acushnet Process Company and Acushnet itself on the map. Even today, Titleist and Acushnet are synonymous terms in the golfing industry. The first Titleist golf balls were produced in Ball Plan #1 on Slocum Street, shown in Figure 2.5. The old structure still stands today although operations have been transferred to the New Bedford Industrial Park.

Wheldon Cotton Factory

The Whelden Cotton Factory was completed around 1815 to compete with the William White Cotton Factory, both on the Acushnet River. The owner of the mill was Captain Whelden a retired whaling master with partners Job Gray, Jr., Jireh

and Jonathan Swift and Loum Snow. These are still evident architectural features in the ruins today. The Whelden Cotton Factory was an important business enterprise in its day as one of the earliest cotton producing factories in the United States.

White's Factory

The White's Factory on Hamlin Street (formerly known as White's Factory Road) was built in 1799 by William White on a site where a sawmill formerly stood. In 1778, a dam had been built to provide unlimited waterpower. The mill was one of the earliest cotton mills in the country, manufacturing both cotton and woolen goods. It soon developed into a busy, thriving place. One of the men who had an interest in the mill was Captain Wheldon, who later went on to build his own mill.

The original mill is believed to have burned in 1830 and was rebuilt in 1831. The business continued until 1844 when it was sold and converted to steam. The White Family donated the property to the Fairhaven-Acushnet Land Preservation Trust (FALPT) in 1998. Thanks to local volunteers, the historic mill ruin and archways have been cleared of invasive vegetation that has hidden the view of the handsome ruin for many years (Figure 2.17). It is expected that a Historic Preservation Restriction will be granted to the Town of Acushnet by FALPT in order to ensure the long term protection of the historic mill ruin.

Acushnet-Wesley United Methodist Church

The current Acushnet-Wesley United Methodist Church on Main Street in Acushnet sits on the foundation of the first Methodist Episcopal Church which burned in 1904. The resident Methodist Episcopal society is the oldest in Bristol County. The Acushnet Methodist Church (and the Friend's Society) were the two principal religions which broke away from the Puritan Church and took root in New England. There are actually two Methodist Churches in Acushnet, one in the village and one on Long Plain. The focus here is on the village church, primarily because of its influential architecture. The present structure was dedicated on December 1, 1905. The impressive field stone foundation became an important architectural stylistic element which was later reflected in the Russell Library and the Acushnet Town Hall.



Figure 2.6, Acushnet-Wesley United Methodist Church in Acushnet Village

Friend's Society Meeting House at Long Plain



Figure 2.7, Long Plain Friends Meeting House

During the colonial period, there was a large population of Friends, also known as Quakers, living in Acushnet. The first meeting house was located at Parting Ways. As the population of Friends grew in the Long Plain, a second meeting house was constructed, around 1759. Only the second structure remains today, but serves as one of the most visible cultural links to early Acushnet. The architectural style of the two story wood frame building is of traditional New England colonial vernacular.

The Meeting House serves as an important linkage to Acushnet's past, and is listed on the National Historic Register.

Perry Hill Christian Church

The Perry Hill Christian Church was built around 1851. No record of its actual dedication date is known. Sitting atop Perry Hill the mid 19th century structure is a visible way point for those traveling on Perry Hill Road. The wood clapboard structure with a simple steeple is a good example of New England churches built during this period. Currently, the structure is in a state of decay.



Figure 2.8, Perry Hill Christian Church

Saint Francis – Xavier Roman Catholic Church

The Romanesque architecture of the St. Francis–Xavier Roman Catholic Church sits opposite the Parting Ways on North Main Street. Established in 1906, this red brick structure received status of Parish of the Diocese of Fall River in 1915.

Long Plain School House (Museum)

The Long Plain School House was constructed in 1875. The two story wood structure of classic Italianate architecture provides over 7500 square feet of functional area. The structure no longer serves as a school and now serves as Acushnet's museum of natural and cultural history. The building is Town owned and managed by the Acushnet Historical Commission. It is the centerpiece of the Apple-Peach Festival, Acushnet's annual celebration of its agricultural past and present. The Long Plain Museum was recently repainted and all windows were repaired. Renovations to stairs and the front porch have significantly improved safe and efficient access to the building. A new furnace was installed in 2005.

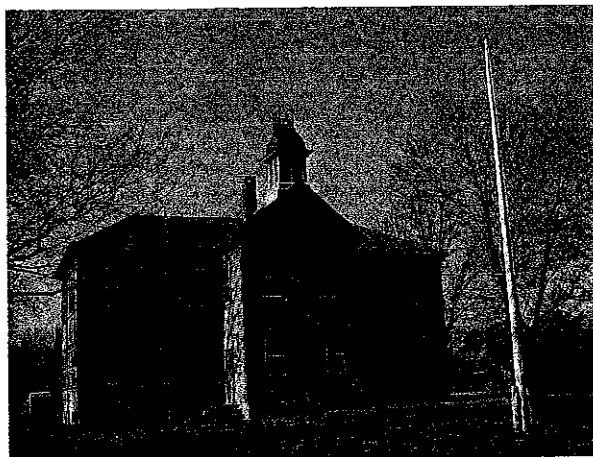


Figure 2.9, Long Plain School House (Museum)

Parting Ways School House



Figure 2.10, Parting Ways Schoolhouse (now Town Hall Annex)

At the turn of the last century, a growing Acushnet was suffering for space in its school house in the village. Town meeting passed funding for a new school at Parting Ways based on an architectural sketch presented by Franklyn Howland. The original structure was built in 1874 with a major addition and renovation in 1903. Additional funds were provided by Henry Rogers of Fairhaven (but a native of Acushnet) to complete 1903 construction. The attractive wood

clapboard structure of Italianate style features a prominent belfry. Today it is utilized part of the Town Hall complex at Parting Ways and houses various Town service offices including the Department of Public Works, Planning Department, Board of Health on the second floor. The entire first floor houses the Acushnet Police Department.

Acushnet River Stone Bridge

The location of the Acushnet River Stone Bridge is likely the location of the old Indian path which traversed this area and crossed the Acushnet River at a point where the river narrowed enough to make crossing a routinely easy matter. For a century and a half, the Acushnet River Stone Bridge was the only crossing for early settlers. Destroyed by nature and war (i.e., the bridge was destroyed during the Revolutionary War), the bridge was rebuilt. The bridge is the site of a Revolutionary War skirmish between the British Redcoats under the command of Major-General Charles Grey and Acushnet revolutionaries.

The current stone structure was built by James Sherman of Acushnet in 1828. Aside from its functional use, it is an icon of the Town and part of the Acushnet's official Seal. Today, the bridge is structurally deficient and barely discernable underneath a century of repairs and retrofitting. Recently the bridge was deemed incapable of supporting modern loads. Reconstruction of the bridge for modern truck traffic while maintaining the aesthetic character of the river crossing will be a challenge in the near future.

Russell Free Public Library

The Russell Free Public Library is located at 88 Main Street. The 6000 square foot stone building was constructed in 1930 with funding from George Russell. The six-member Board of Trustees maintains custody and management of the library and all related property. The Library is staffed with a full-time director and part-time staff.

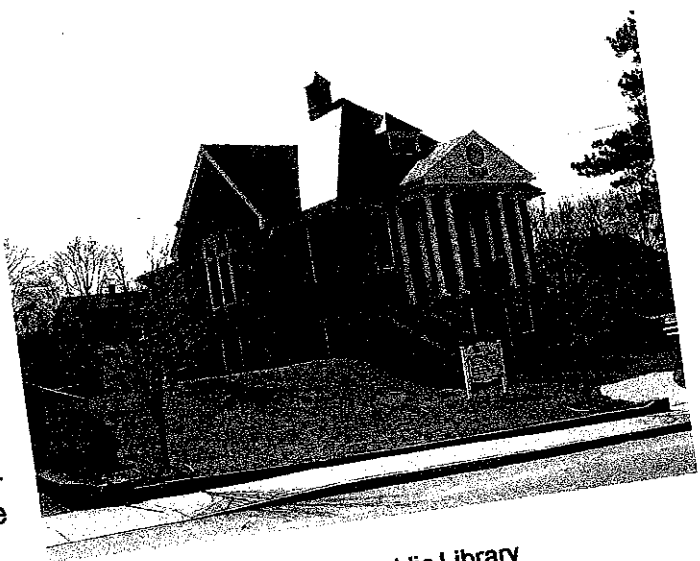


Figure 2.11, Russell Free Public Library

The structures exterior surface mimics the stonework on the Acushnet Wesley United Methodist Church on the opposite side of Main Street in Acushnet Village and the Town Hall building two blocks away. The three structures (i.e., Methodist Episcopal Church, Russell Free Public Library and Town Hall) have created an architectural style which is distinctive to Acushnet.

Acushnet Town Hall

The Town's seat of government resides in the Acushnet Town Hall, located at 122 Main Street. Town Hall is home to the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, Town Clerk, Treasurer, Finance Department, Assessor, Building Inspector, Conservation Commission and the Veterans Affairs Office. Structurally, the Acushnet Town Hall is a stone and masonry building of 14,400 square feet. Constructed in 1900 and extensively renovated as a Works Projects Administration (WPA) project between 1937 and 1938. The building was most recently renovated in 1997.



Figure 2.12, Acushnet Town Hall

Historic Homes



Figure 2.13, Early Colonial Homestead in Acushnet

There could (and should) be a study of made of the historic homes of Acushnet. Certainly, there are too many residences of significant architecture, historical importance or uniqueness to list in this Master Plan. It bears repeating that the text, *A History of the Town of Acushnet*, by Franklyn Howland (1907), is an invaluable resource for those seeking further information on Acushnet's residential homes. As a collection, the historic homes of Acushnet are an important cultural asset of the community. They allow all of the

citizens of Acushnet and neighboring communities to live among some of the best examples of American building style in existence. Moreover, pride of ownership and good stewardship, an Acushnet hallmark, has kept the great majority of historic homes in fine condition. Subsequently, future generations will be able to experience these homes either as owner, tenants or admirers.

A few houses are shown below to illustrate the wide range of architectural style which was prevalent from the colonial period through the industrial revolution. The predominant Architectural styles found in Acushnet are Early (English) Colonial, Federal and Carpenter Gothic.

The oldest of Acushnet's homes date to the colonial period when Acushnet was part of Old Dartmouth. The corresponding architectural style in this region, from this period is called Early (English) Colonial. In New England, the availability of timber enabled large structures of hewn lumber with clapboard or shingle siding. The central chimney and salt box lean-tos are notable characteristics of this style. Figure 2.13 shows a traditional wooden frame home from the colonial period. Again, the center chimney is a tell tale signs of an American colonial homestead. Figure 2.14 is an example of an early country home, which we would commonly refer to as a "Cape" today. The large center chimney and decorative trim around the door, place this structure in the late 1700's.



Figure 2.14, The Issac Vincent House, circa 1781

The next architectural style to appear on the Acushnet landscape is referred to as Federal. The Federal Style of architecture was popular after the American Revolution as the new nation (i.e., a "Federation" of States) began to flourish. This style traces to the English Architect Robert Adam who had explored the architecture of ancient Rome and applied it to "modern" residences and government buildings of his time. Characteristics of the Federal style include low hipped roofs atop rectangular three story buildings. Exterior décor was usually incorporated into the front entrances, often with fans over the door. In New England wood or brick material was utilized in construction. A sign of affluence, these homes were generally constructed by only the wealthiest citizens of a community. Figure 2.15 is a quintessential New England Federal Style home located on Main Street in Acushnet.



Figure 2.15, Gray shingled home on Main Street, just east of the Acushnet River. This home is a classic example of Federal Style Architecture.

The era of Victorian Architecture which peaked in the mid to late 1800's left an indelible mark on Acushnet. Subcategories of Victorian Architecture include Italianate, Queen Anne and Gothic Revival. Although examples of each exist in



Figure 2.16, Carpenter Gothic home on North Main Street, a common mid nineteenth century architectural style in Acushnet

Acushnet, it is the Gothic Revival style that seemed to gain the most popularity around the time the "new" Town of Acushnet was incorporated in 1860. The Gothic Revival style is the architectural component of the Romantic Movement which gripped Europe and the United States in the late 1800's and early 1900's. At its core, the Romantic Movement drew from the Christian medieval past. The religious aspect of this movement collided with architecture in the construction of churches with high pitched roofs and tall narrow spires. This style also became a popular form for the country homes of Europe's aristocracy. In the United States, primarily on the Eastern

Seaboard, the style was popular for cottages in the country. Not quite as fanciful as the European style, the American adaptation of Gothic Revival is commonly referred to as Carpenter Gothic. Some of the finest examples of Gothic Revival architecture are found in New Bedford. The William Rotch House, built in 1846, remains one of, if not the, finest example of this style in America. The influence of the Rotch House on new home construction in Acushnet is very likely during this era. The industrial revolution which created important home building tools enabled the fabrication of distinctive Gothic features such as steeply pitched roofs, bargeboards (i.e., gingerbread trim around the roof line), bay windows, drip molding and elaborate porch column work. Figure 2.16 shows a well known architectural icon of Acushnet. This wooden structure of Carpenter Gothic architectural style dates to the mid 1800's.

2.5.3 Existing Historic/Cultural Resource Protections

Currently there are no local historic and/or cultural protections incorporated into the by-laws of Acushnet. With the exception of buildings listed on the State or National Register of Historical Places, historic sites are not protected from modification or demolition. Buildings listed on the State and National Register of Historical Places have strict protections against modifications of site and structure.

The Acushnet Historical Commission and Historical Society have worked hard to identify historical sites and raise awareness of these important assets in the community. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is also emerging as an important advocate for historic preservation. The volunteers and appointed officials who comprise these organizations will continue to be vital in the stewardship and preservation of Acushnet's historical and cultural gems and leaders in the development of any municipal policies on preservation/protection.

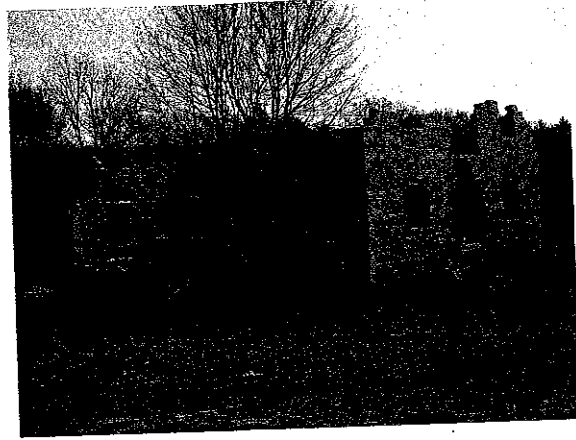


Figure 2.17, White's Factory is a potential target for National Historic Register Status

2.6 Natural and Cultural Resource Strategy

The Natural and Cultural Resource Committee met on six separate occasions between November 2006 and June 2007. The Committee conducted a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis of natural and cultural resource issues relevant to the Town, followed by discussions on specific objectives which would address the SWOT findings. The members of the Committee included:

Laurell Farinon, Chairman
Charlotte Coutinho
Pauline Texeira
Walter Dalton
Lori Bates

The starting point of the Committee's work was to review and accept the basic premise of the Master Plan Vision Statement as it pertained to natural and cultural resource management. The Natural and Cultural Resource Goal, as expressed by the Vision Statement is,

"Identify, obtain and provide stewardship of historic and cultural resources which are worthy of preservation as a legacy for future generations to inherit."

The next step was to conduct a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat analysis within the context of economic sustainability/growth within Acushnet. Guiding principles which emerged as a pretext to this analysis included:

- The Long Plain Museum is the focal point of all historic preservation activities in Acushnet, centerpiece for the annual Apple Peach Festival, and a cultural icon of Town. The building and grounds have recently been upgraded through the hard work of the Historical Commission and Society.
- The Town (through the Historical Commission/Society) should pursue State and National Historic Register status for more buildings. This will raise awareness and provide greater opportunity for grant funding
- Marketing of Acushnet and its historic sites is an opportunity to increase tourism.
- Raising local awareness of our historic heritage and Acushnet's specific role in early America is an opportunity to enhance school children's education and raise civic pride.
- Acushnet was at the forefront of mill building construction. Our historic mills are only ruins now. Restoration is a possibility. Access to these sites is marginal.
- The Perry Hill Church is threatened, but, worthy of restoration and preservation effort. Currently, it is in a state of increasing decay due to neglect of the current owner.
- Acushnet has a unique architectural style which the Committee deemed "Acushnet Stone Style". The use of fieldstone in construction of several important structures in Town (i.e., Town Hall, Russell Library, Methodist Church) is worthy of replicating (at least to a minimum degree) in future municipal construction projects.
- The Stone Bridge at Rivers End is failing. The bridge is functionally obsolete (weight limit posted). As a symbol of Town (a colonial battle was fought at the site) it should be protected or closely replicated in an eventual reconstruction of the river crossing.
- Acushnet has a rich heritage in terms of past and present citizens who have accomplished much locally, regional, statewide and nationally. Their histories should be preserved and taught (in school).
- Perhaps the greatest natural resource in Acushnet is the New Bedford Reservoir. The water body, however, is owned by New Bedford. The reservoir has been mismanaged and its ecology has been degraded substantially over several decades. New Bedford has attempted to convey ownership back to Acushnet (unsuccessfully). If feasible, acquisition of the reservoir should be pursued to secure a valuable natural resource, provide recreational opportunities and improve the local ecology.

- The Parting Ways Green is currently the hub of municipal activity. The design to extend the green (eliminate much of the asphalt driveways/parking) should be finalized and implemented. A greener Green will showcase the Town in a positive manner and serve as a site for civic events.
- Acushnet has several important wetlands and natural habitats which are often out of view of our citizens. They are extremely important to the local environment which we enjoy. They should be protected to the maximum extent possible for future generations.
- Acushnet sits atop two watersheds (i.e., Acushnet River/New Bedford Harbor and Mattapoisett River/Harbor). Both will require protection in the face of development pressures.
- Current Town policies do not provide strong incentives for agricultural operations and preservation of open space. Creating/strengthening incentives will preserve more open space, keep more land in agriculture and reduce the tax burden associated with residential land development.
- Although we do not currently operate municipal wells, we may need them in the future. Well head sites should be protected against encroaching development.
- The Acushnet River Valley Golf Course provides an excellent expanse of open space to extend through further purchases of abutting property.

2.6.1 Natural and Cultural Resource Goals and Objectives

	Objectives	Tasks	
		Develop synergy between Long Plain Museum and Friends Meeting House	House
Historic Structures	Enhance the sustainability of the Friends Meeting House	Improve site security	
		Provide handicapped accessibility	
		Improve access to site through overgrowth removal, signage, etc.	
		Increase awareness of site through larger, encompassing marketing program of Acushnet heritage.	
		Work with the Fairhaven Acushnet Land Preservation Trust to place a historic preservation restriction on the mill ruin	
		Pursue State and National Historic Register status for the mill	
	Long Plain School (Museum)	Improve safety (structural, access, etc.)	
		Develop 5-Year Plan for necessary renovation projects (with budget).	
		Recruit younger members to Historical Society to ensure smooth transition of stewardship to succeeding generations.	
		Place on State and Federal Historic Register	
		Improve handicapped accessibility	
		Pursue Town (or other responsible steward) ownership as a first step toward preservation	
Town Structures	Institutionalize the distinctive "Stone Style" into future Town Building construction	Develop a design specification that incorporates this architectural element in new municipal buildings	
		Proactively ensure that the Rivers End and Hamlin Street bridges are replaced with modern structures that architecturally replicate (to a practical extent) the original bridge aesthetic.	
	Reconstruct the Rivers End and Hamlin Street stone arch bridges, in an architecturally sensitive manner.	Collaborate with the City of New Bedford to 1.) replace the River's End Bridge, 2.) Ensure replacement structures historically replicate the original structures (aesthetically, not structurally)	

	Objectives	Tasks
Cultural Heritage	C	Identify and preserve native american historical sites
		Solicit any privately held native american collections for inclusion in the Long Plain Museum collection.
	C	Aggressively pursue personal recollections of recent history and biographical information from Acushnet's aging population.
		Document Acushnet's history, biographies, geneologies as a cultural asset. Exploit Acushnet's rich heritage through educational and tourism venues.
	C	Identify and record (electronically) historical cemetery information/data
		Continue previous documentary initiative performed on Ancient Cemetery (extensive compilation of history/data) on other cemeteries.
	C	Enhance sustainability and value of Acushnet's Cemeteries (Ancient Long Plain, Quaker, Ancient Acushnet)
		Enhance stewardship and security of cemeteries as they are increasingly becoming the target of vandalism.

Objectives		Tasks	
Regulated Resources	N	Acushnet should pursue membership on the Mattapoisett River Watership (MRW) Water Supply Advisory Committee since a portion of the MRW is located within Acushnet.	
	N	Provide review/comment on new development requirements within the Mattapoisett River Watershed.	
	N	Ensure development requirements on parcels within the Mattapoisett River Watershed are being followed and enforced within Acushnet (to protect groundwater quality, etc.)	
	N	Identify and preserve properties around future well head sites	
	N	Implement the Harbor Trustees Council Herring Run Improvement Projects	
	N	Utilize Herring runs as an educational opportunity to create/build respect for water resources of Acushnet	
	N		

	Objectives	Tasks
Town Natural and Cultural Resources	N	Support investment in expansion of land holdings as additional protection of land from residential development
	N	Support a clubhouse expansion which includes a "museum" to Acushnet's golf ball production fame. Exploitation of Acushnet's "brand" as a golf town which is good for business, good for the golf course and ultimately good for the preservation of open space.
	C	
	N	Conduct feasibility study to determine the long term cost vs. benefit of municipal ownership of the New Bedford Reservoir.
	N	Pursue a legal mechanism which provides a significantly greater level of local control over the long neglected New Bedford Reservoir
	C	Restore town beaches as a passive recreational/educational venue
Natural Habitats	C	Implement the Downtown Revitalization Committee's approved redesign of the Town Green/Municipal Building complex
	N	Support cluster zoning as a means to preserve natural habitats
	N	Support Open Space preservation and protection initiatives (see Open Space Section), especially in riparian natural habitats and other high value habitats which are home to endangered species

Objectives	Tasks
Revisit tax structure/policy to see if there are additional tax advantages that can be more of agri-business owners (i.e., beyond MGL Chapter 61A)	
Encourage formation of a local Agricultural Commission in the Town of Acushnet	
Consider adoption of the right-to-farm By Law	
Create and promote local educational programs to encourage agri-business	
Investigate potential Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) opportunities to extract value from agricultural lands	
Develop improved parking and traffic plan to relieve traffic congestion during the festival	
Improve septic system to keep pace with increasing attendance.	
Revisit legal protection mechanisms against potential liabilities	

3. Open Space & Recreation

3.1 Current Open Space Conditions

One of Acushnet's most prized assets is its collection of open space and recreational lands. Acushnet was primarily an agricultural community through the 1960's. With vast amounts of land in agriculture, open space preservation was not a high priority. Since that time, however, population growth, urban sprawl and a downturn in large scale farming in Southern New England has substantially eroded the agrarian culture and its associated landscape. A strong market for new homes in Acushnet has transformed the landscape to a more hardened, suburban setting in many areas of town.

Nevertheless, Acushnet still retains tangible ties to its agricultural heritage. Large tracts of land such as Keith's Farm are still active as crop lands, orchards, nurseries or livestock farms. A drive northward on Main Street from the Acushnet village is, in 2007, still a trip into the Long Plain countryside. Acushnet's landscape is still marked by stone walls, barns, fields, crops, cows, cranberry bogs, and farm stands. The pace of life is occasionally slowed when cars share the road with tractors.



Figure 3.1, View of high value open space in the northern section of Acushnet

Acushnet citizens place a high value on open space preservation. Residents have an awareness of their disappearing landscape. They understand that action must be taken to counter threats to the Town's remaining open space. A public workshop and follow-on survey conducted as part of the Master Plan quantified local attitudes toward open space preservation. The results shown in Figure 3.2,

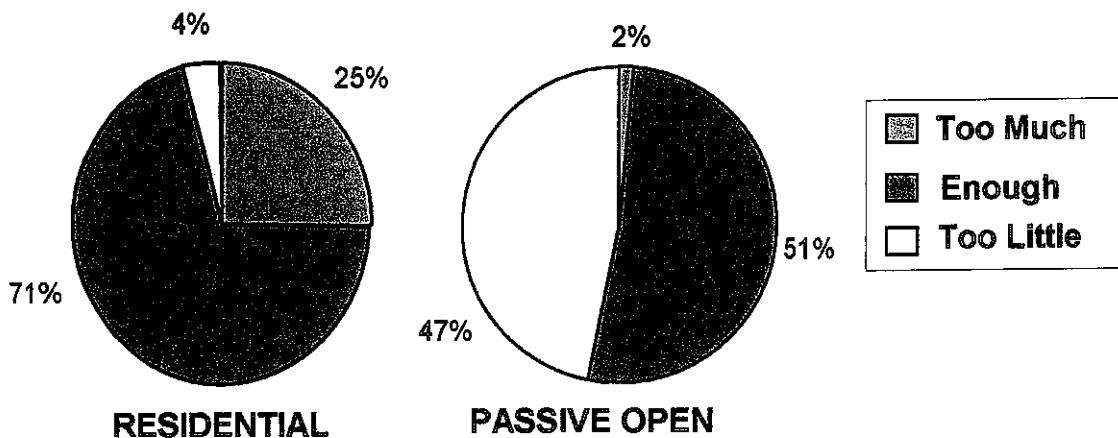


Figure 3.2, Opinion of Acushnet citizens toward current land development
 Source: Town of Acushnet Planning Department, Master Plan Survey

clearly convey residents' overwhelming feelings that there is *enough* residential development in Town. A full 25% of respondents indicated that there was *too much* residential development. In the same survey, roughly half (47%) said there was too little passive open space. A theme which emerged in the master plan development process was the desire to retain a "town & country" character to Acushnet. In essence, the "town" exists and it is the "country" which needs protection through continued stewardship by both the public and private sectors.

By definition, open space is any undeveloped land area that has the potential to be used for conservation or recreational purposes. These land areas may be in the form of watershed protection areas, recreational land, conservation areas, agricultural lands, and other undeveloped privately held parcels. In the quest to preserve open space for future generations, legal mechanisms exist to provide either limited or permanent protections against development.

3.2 Mechanisms to Protect Open Space

3.2.1 Unprotected (Limited Protection) Mechanisms

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 61, 61A and 61B are all means to effect a tax reduction to a land owner in exchange for non-development of that parcel. A property owner entering into an agreement with a Town (via the Tax Assessors Office) commits his or her parcel to forestry, agriculture or recreation as specified in the governing statute. All three of the MGL, Chapter 61 statutes allow landowners to withdraw their property from classification at the end of the 10-year period. If during the ten year period, the land is not maintained as it was classified, the landowner must either pay a conveyance tax or a rollback tax for that time period, whichever is higher. It also grants the towns the right of first refusal on lands being sold for residential, commercial, or industrial purposes. The municipality must match a legitimate offer for conversion of the property from

its forest, agricultural, or recreational use. Ultimately, the MGL, Chapter 61 statutes offer limited or temporary protection against development. MGL, Chapter 61 properties are, therefore, generally considered "unprotected" open space.

Currently, there are 2626 acres of land in Acushnet which are considered Chapter 61, 61A or 61B lands. These lands constitute approximately 22% of Acushnet's total land mass. The land use categories and acreages are shown in Table 3.1. A further definition of these categories is described in the following Sections.

CHAPTER 61 CATEGORY	LAND USE	ACRES
CH 61	Forestry	391
CH 61A	Agriculture	1633
CH 61B	Recreation	602
	TOTAL =	2626

Table 3.1, Chapter 61, 61A and 61B lands in Acushnet
Source: Acushnet Assessors Office

3.2.1.1 MGL, Chapter 61

MGL, Chapter 61 (Forest Land Taxation Act) is administered by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) for properties of contiguous forest land ten acres or more. It is designed to give favorable tax treatment to a land owner interested in keeping forest land undeveloped and in wood production. Land which is certified under MGL, Chapter 61 is assessed at 5% of fair market value or at \$10 per acres, whichever is greater. MGL, Chapter 61 defers payment of a portion of the property taxes until timber is cut and income is realized. Landowners wishing to qualify for the program must have a 10 year DEM approved forestry management plan, which may include activities such as harvesting or timber stand improvements. The Town of Acushnet currently has 391 acres of land enrolled in MGL, Chapter 61.

3.2.1.2 MGL, Chapter 61 A

Also known as the Farmland Assessment Act, MGL, Chapter 61A is designed primarily for lands used for agricultural or horticultural purposes, and can cover both farmlands and woodlands of a single farmer. The property owner must have at least 5 acres of land in farm use, and must demonstrate a minimum yearly gross income from the sale of farm products, based on the number of acres requested for application. Required annual sales must be \$500, for the first 5

acres, and for each acre above the first five, \$5 for farmland and \$0.50 for woodland. There is usually an 80% reduction in assessed value under the MGL, Chapter 61A program. Presently, there are 1633 acres enrolled in the MGL, Chapter 61A program.

3.2.1.3 MGL, Chapter 61 B

Also known as the Open Space/Recreation Act, MGL, Chapter 61B is designed to preserve open space and promote recreational uses, such as golf courses and hunting clubs. Property owners must have at least 5 contiguous acres to qualify and the land must be maintained in one of the following ways: 1.) the land must be kept in a natural, wild or open condition and does not have to be open to the public; 2.) the land must be used for recreational purposes and must be open to the public or to members of a nonprofit organization. The tax on the land is based on the commercial tax rate for that fiscal year applied to the value of the land for recreational purposes, rather than its fair market value. Parcels open to the public may be used for hiking, camping, or nature study. Currently, Acushnet has 602 acres enrolled in MGL, Chapter 61B

3.3 Permanent Protection Mechanisms

Land is considered to be permanently protected if it falls into one or more of the following categories:

- State land purchased with the use of federal funds, therefore covered by PL 88-578
- State land owned by a state conservation agency, therefore covered by Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution
- Town land owned by or under the jurisdiction of
 - Conservation Commission
 - Water Department
 - Any Town Department if dedicated to open space/conservation by a permanent deed restriction
- Private land if:
 - Owned by a nonprofit organization dedicated to land conservation
 - Protected in perpetuity by a conservation or deed restriction
 - Protected by the Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program
 - Protected by a conservation restriction under the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Wetland Restriction Program

Within Acushnet, the permanent protection mechanisms which are usually employed are conservation and agricultural preservation restrictions. They are discussed in the sections below.

3.3.1 Conservation Restrictions

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 184, Section 31-3, establishes conservation restrictions as a legal method for preserving open space. A conservation restriction is an enforceable agreement between the landowner and a conservation organization that limits development and/or specified uses and protects the natural and scenic features of a property for a stated time period (or for perpetuity). The restriction runs with the land, binding current and future landowners to the conditions of the restriction. These constraints remain in place for the duration specified in the original restriction. The conservation restriction does not alter the title to the property and provides no right of public access. Conservation restrictions are administered by either the municipality or a nonprofit conservation organization who has secured the restriction. In Acushnet, both the Town and the Fairhaven-Acushnet Land Preservation Trust act in this capacity.

3.3.2 Agricultural Preservation Restriction

The Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program (APR) is a voluntary program which is intended to offer a non-development alternative to farmers and other owners of "prime" and "state important" agricultural land who are faced with a decision regarding future use and disposition of their farms. In general, the program pays a farmer the difference between the fair market value and the agricultural value of their farmland. In exchange, the farmer accepts a permanent deed restriction which



Figure 3.3, Cattle grazing in an Acushnet pasture.

precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability. As with a Conservation Restriction the restriction runs with the land, binding current and future landowners to the conditions of the restriction.

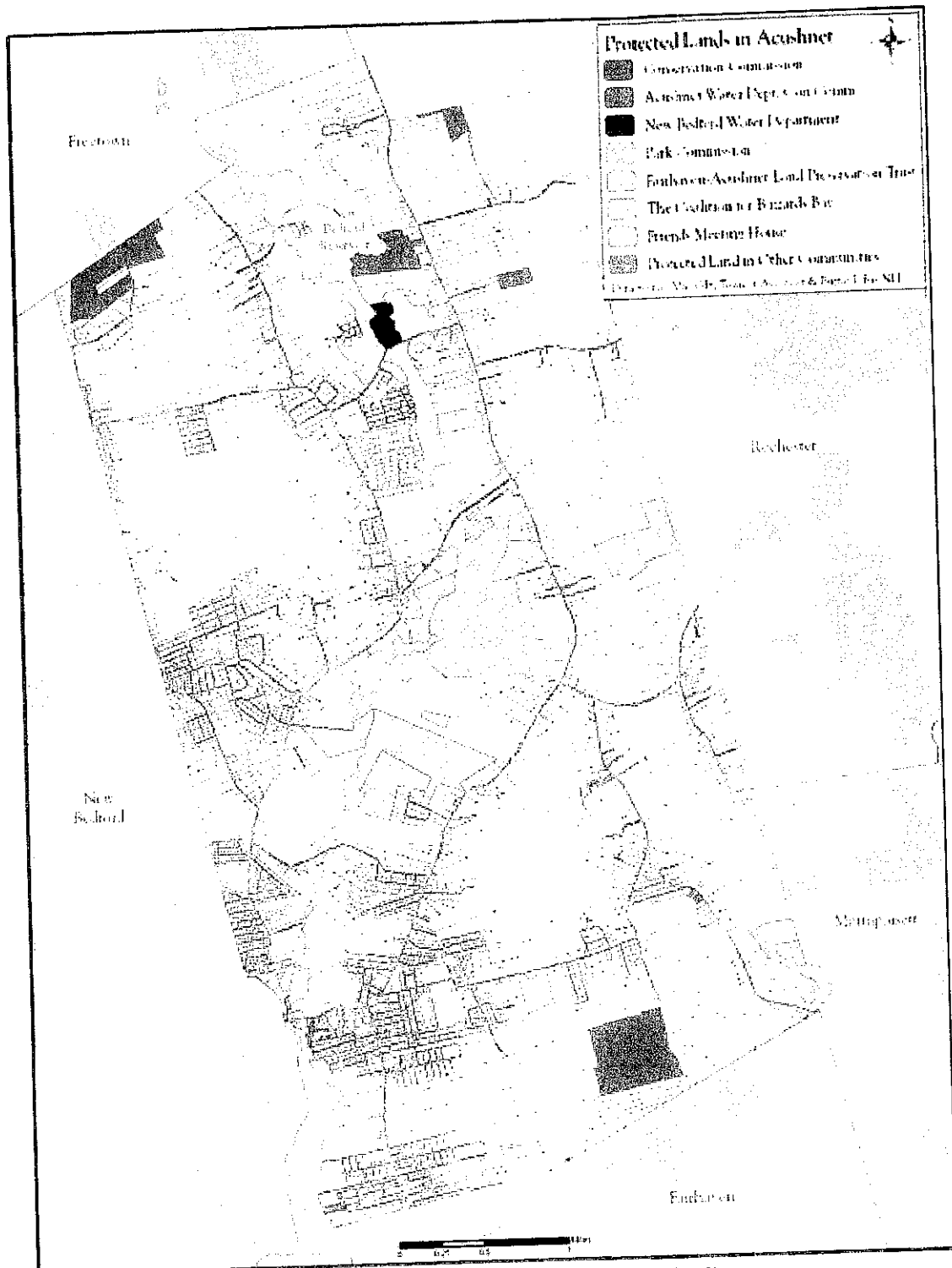
3.4 Permanently Protected Open Space Inventory

Table 3.2 summarizes the amount of permanently protected open space in Acushnet. This data is graphically illustrated in Figure 3.4. The 700.5 acres of permanently protected open space constitutes approximately 7 % of Acushnet's land mass. Open space which is considered to be permanently protected, are those parcels which are either owned by the Town or a nonprofit and are subject to a restriction (i.e., conservation or agricultural preservation restrictions).

Parcel Name	Ownership/Managing Agency	Acres	Location
Town Forest - Morton Lane	Town of Acushnet/ConComm	121.1	Off Morton Lane
Davis Park	Town of Acushnet/ConComm	10.0	End of Lantern Land
Acushnet River Conservation Land	Town of Acushnet/ConComm	3.3	Foot of Porter Street
Mattapoisett Road Conservation Area	Town of Acushnet/ConComm	2.1	Mattapoisett Road
Buttonwood Meadows	Town of Acushnet/ConComm	4.5	Abuts Acushnet River
Perkins Lane Conservation Area	Town of Acushnet/ConComm	12.6	Perkins Lane
Nestle's Lane Conservation Area	Town of Acushnet/ConComm	82.8	Nestle's Lane
Quaker Wells	Town of Acushnet/Water Dept	42.0	N. Main Street (Long Plain)
City of New Bedford Water Dept. Land	City of New Bedford	19.9	Lake Street
Municipal Golf Course and Valley View	Town of Acushnet/Park Comm	268.5	N. Main Street
Whelden Lane/Acushnet River Land	Town of Acushnet/Park Comm	24.2	Off Middle Road
Hamlin Street Land	Town of Acushnet/Park Comm	5.0	Hamlin Street
Hathaway Forest	FALPT/FALPT	22.5	Hathaway Road
White's Factory	FALPT/FALPT	1.6	Hamlin Street
Whelden Woods	FALPT/FALPT	25.6	Off Middle Road
Acushnet River Valley	FALPT/FALPT	50.0	Balsam Brook Lane
Wing Lane Woods	FALPT/FALPT	2.2	West of Wing Lane
Aunt Bea's Hollow	FALPT/FALPT/MA DivF&W	30.2	Along Acushnet River
Long Plain Lot (Keith's Farm)	FALPT/FALPT	19.8	N. Main Street (Long Plain)
Kelleher Property	FALPT/FALPT	70.0	
Long Plain Friends Meetinghouse	Town of Acushnet/Hist Comm	2.6	N. Main Street (Long Plain)
	TOTAL =	820.5	
	FALPT = Fairhaven - Acushnet Land Preservation Trust		

Table 3.2, Permanently protected land in Acushnet.

Source: Acushnet Conservation Commission, Fairhaven – Acushnet Land Preservation Trust



Map of Acushnet, Massachusetts, showing the location of the town relative to other towns in the area. The map is dated 2008 and is a reproduction of a map from the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program.

Figure 3.4, Permanently protected land in Acushnet
Source: Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program

Not listed, but certainly a prominent "open space" within Acushnet is the New Bedford Reservoir, itself. The New Bedford Water Works is the owner of the New Bedford Reservoir which comprises over 200 acres of fresh water bodies and surrounding wetlands and forest. Although the reservoir is not currently utilized as a public water source by the City of New Bedford, restrictions on recreational use are in place. Only passive recreational use is permitted (i.e., fishing, canoeing, etc.) on the water. The City of New Bedford has pursued transfer of ownership back to the Town of Acushnet in the past. Complications over the condition of related facilities, responsibility for repairs, etc. prevented this conveyance from moving forward.

i

3.5 Unprotected (Limited Protected) Open Space Inventory

Land is considered to be unprotected (or has limited protection) if it falls into one or more of the following categories:

- Unrestricted federal land
- Unrestricted state land
- Town land, that:
 - Not owned by the Conservation Commission or otherwise restricted
 - Tax title properties
 - MGL Chapter 61, 61A and 61B lands
 - Selected unrestricted privately owned open space
- Selected unrestricted privately-owned open space

The aggregated quantities of unprotected open space are shown in Table 3. 3.

CATEGORY OF UNPROTECTED OPEN SPACE	ACRES
Chapter 61	391
Chapter 61 A	1633
Chapter 61 B	602
Municipal Lands	64.9
Park Commission	23.6
School Department	66.7
Cemeteries	30.1
White's Family Fun Center	56.4
Green Briar Girl Scout Camp	98.2
Riding Stables	114.5
Long Plain Museum	1.1
Tilcon-Capaldi (now P.J. Keating)	383.3
Acushnet Company (Titleist)	149.5
Landfills/Dumps	27.3
Unknown Owners	42.9
TOTAL =	3684.5

Table 3.3. Acreages of Unprotected Open Space in Acushnet
Source: Acushnet Assessors Office, Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program.

In total there are 3,684.5 acres which fall into the category of unprotected (limited protection) open space. Figure 3.5 graphically illustrates this data.

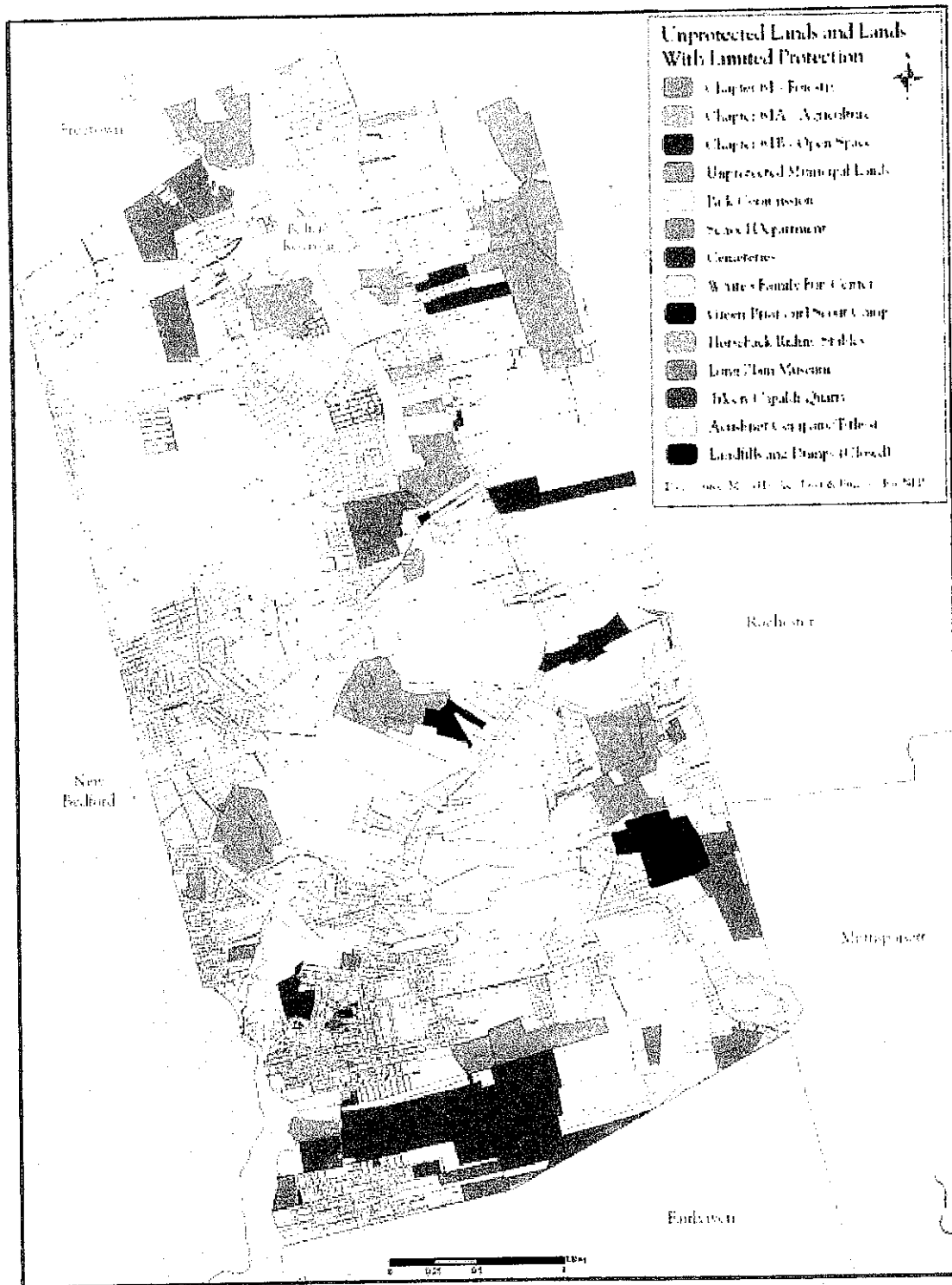


Figure 3.5, Unprotected and Limited Protected lands in Acushnet
Source: Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program

3.6 Current Recreational Land Conditions

Land dedicated to recreation is also a focus of this section. Lands used for recreation can be complimentary to the preservation of open space. MGL Chapter 61B, discussed above, was created for that purpose. Recreational areas are traditionally broken down into either passive or active use categories. An active recreational area is one in which the landscape is modified from its natural state to accommodate people actively engaged in some sport or other form of exercise. Examples of this would include the Pope Park baseball field complex. Passive recreational lands do not require substantial modification (i.e., paths) to enable recreational use. On passive recreational lands, enjoying the natural state of one's environment is usually the attraction. An example of such passive recreational land use would include Riverview Park. Hybrid active-passive land use is characterized by constrained modification of the land to preserve much of the natural state of the environment. An fine example of this type of land use is the Acushnet River Valley Golf Course.

In the same public workshop and survey discussed above, residents were asked to express their attitude toward the current state of recreational lands in Acushnet. The results shown in Figure 3.5 indicate that over half of the populace feel there is *enough* active recreational land. While 43% feel there is *too little*.

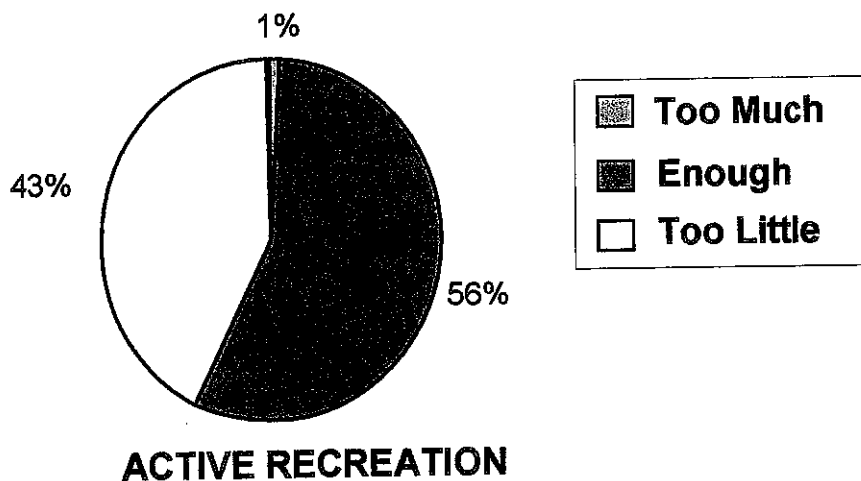


Figure 3.5, Opinion of Acushnet citizens toward current land development
Source: Town of Acushnet Planning Department, Master Plan Survey

Thus in 2007, even with a generous amount of land dedicated to recreational use at Pope Park, school playing fields, and a golf course, there is a sizeable population, almost half, which feel there is not enough recreational land. It follows that as the population increases, more not less, of a demand will be placed upon recreational land use development.

The significant recreational lands in Town are listed and described below.

Pope Park

Pope Park is located at 256 Main Street, approximately one mile north of the Parting of the Ways. This recreational facility includes 7.5 acres of land, upon which 4 baseball fields are arranged. In addition to the fields, there are outbuildings, including a storage garage and barn, bathroom facilities, concession, scorer's booths, and electrical buildings. A children's playground is located on the northern portion of the park, near the entrance from Main Street. Because of its close proximity to Acushnet's town center, it is a visible, prominent and well utilized facility. Adequate parking is an important convenience which enables any resident to take advantage of this facility.

Acushnet River Valley Golf Course

The Acushnet River Valley Golf Course encompasses approximately 269 acres and comprises one of the largest open spaces in Acushnet. It is one of the most impressive publicly funded projects ever undertaken in Acushnet offering revenue generating recreation and the preservation of a significant amount of open space.

Riverview Park

The Town of Acushnet owns just over one acre of land along the upper reaches of the New Bedford harbor at its confluence with the Acushnet River. This property has been cleared to some degree and plans for future passive recreation were developed as part of the 2000 Acushnet Downtown Revitalization Project. An environmental cleanup of the Acushnet river by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) improved the environment around the immediate riverfront area. An opportunity for the further development of this facility in conjunction with the City of New Bedford's similar efforts on the opposite side of the river will exist as the EPA completes its work.

Acushnet School Playing Fields

Immediately behind the Acushnet Elementary and Albert F. Ford Middle Schools are generous playing fields and play grounds which are utilized almost exclusively by students. They comprise approximately 8 acres.

3.7 Open Space Preservation Organizations

3.7.1 Fairhaven-Acushnet Land Preservation Trust

The Fairhaven-Acushnet Land Preservation Trust (FALPT) is a private, nonprofit, member supported organization founded in 1992 for the acquisition and management of natural areas in Fairhaven and Acushnet. The Trust is managed by a six member all-volunteer Board of Directors comprised of citizens from both towns.

Since its inception, the FALPT has protected hundreds of acres in Acushnet from development. Generally, the FALPT works to acquire key parcels of land through gift, purchase or conservation restriction for permanent protection of the land's natural, scenic, agricultural or historic value. Forests, wetlands, meadows, farmland, coastal lands or other significant habitats are of primary interest. Within Acushnet the FALPT has historically focused on protection of lands within the Acushnet River Valley Corridor. Parcels which the FALPT has protected include those shown in Table 3.2. In total, the FALPT has protected over 440 acres of open space within the Town.

3.7.2 Community Preservation Committee

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) administers the Community Preservation Act program at the community level. MGL, Chapter 44B, The Community Preservation Act (CPA), enables the generation of funds through property taxation which can be utilized for the following purposes:

- Acquire and preserve open space
- Create and support affordable housing
- Acquisition and preservation of historic buildings and landscapes

Matching state funds are usually available to "CPA communities". The CPC is, therefore, one of the few entities in Town with a dedicated budget for open space protection. The CPC relies on advocates representing the three core areas of the CPA to submit proposals for funding. The CPC assesses each proposal and forwards recommendations for approval at Town Meeting.

3.7.3 Town of Acushnet

The Town's municipal government is an open space preservation organization. The Town government exercises the right of property ownership and holding of conservation and agricultural restrictions primarily through the following entities:

- Conservation Commission

- Parks Commission
- Historic Commission
- Board of Selectmen
- Water Department

3.8 Open Space and Recreation Strategy

The Open Space and Recreation Committee met on several occasions between November 2006 and June, 2007. The members of the Committee included:

Merilee Woodworth, Co-Chairwoman
Joyce Reynolds, Co-Chairwoman
Bob Rocha
Ellen Hardy
Henry Young, Planning

In February of 2006, a Visioning Workshop was conducted at the Ford Middle School. A comprehensive set of goals for Acushnet's future were derived. These goals were echoed in a survey of property owners conducted in June 2006. As refined by the Master Plan Open Space and Recreation Subcommittee, the overarching open space and recreational goal is to

"Protect and preserve land (from development) where the highest value is agriculture, open space, recreation or a natural resource."

To achieve this overarching goal the committee conducted a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis of the current climate toward open space preservation and recreational lands creation/maintenance. Objectives were discussed which would address the challenges raised by the SWOT analysis. The conclusions of these discussions are represented below.

Open space is perhaps the most valued characteristic of our Town. Open space and recreational space provide an environment which promotes respect for nature, conservation, agrarian lifestyle and sports. Large open spaces are a historical landscape in Acushnet and, therefore, a tangible linkage to our past. The pressure to develop open space has over time diminished the "Town & Country" feel of Acushnet to the point where development of the few remaining large tracts of undeveloped space will forever change the nature of Acushnet. Aggressive action must be taken to inventory remaining open space parcels, prioritize those parcels worthy of protection, and develop strategies to preserve them for future generations.

Specific issues relating to the strengths and weaknesses of open space and recreational land management in Town discussed by the Open Space and Recreation Committee included:

- Relative to other communities in Southeastern Massachusetts, Acushnet still has substantial amounts of undeveloped land, which is well distributed through Town.
- Town government needs to identify and prioritize private properties for conservation
- A well defined policy needs to be developed and advertised to private property owners who may desire to move their property into conservation
- Little funding exists for survey, appraisal, legal work, etc., connected with the acquisition of conservation/recreational properties
- Currently, there are two options for land owners wishing to preserve their property as open space: 1.) Work with the Conservation Commission, 2.) Work with the Fairhaven – Acushnet Land Preservation Trust (FALPT). It is perceived that working with/conveying land to the Conservation Commission (a “Town” entity) does not provide permanent protection, as the Town retains its prerogative to “develop” any property for municipal purposes, via the 97th Amendment to the State Constitution. In contrast, the FALPT’s mission is to protect and preserve properties in perpetuity.
- Shifting ownership from the Town to FALPT is an opportunity to ensure open space protection and preservation in perpetuity
- A defined “greenbelt” roughly lying between Middle Road and North Main Street (encompassing the Acushnet River Valley) with spurs to high value environmental lands (Ref: Figure 3.6) is a means to prioritize expenditures of time and funding toward the protection of open space.
- Aggressive communication and education of “greenbelt” property owners on property protection mechanisms is a means to begin the process of a focused open space protection plan
- Pond maintenance is entirely lacking in the New Bedford Reservoir
- Future sites of parks, bike paths, etc. should be developed simultaneously with land growth projections (i.e., rezoning)
- Acushnet used to have a Town Beach. Revitalization of this recreational venue should be considered
- Enforcement of cease and desist orders needs strengthening
- Acushnet (via the FALPT) has been successful in obtaining New Bedford Harbor Trustee Council funds for open space protection

- FALPT is a successful non-profit serving the Town at no cost.

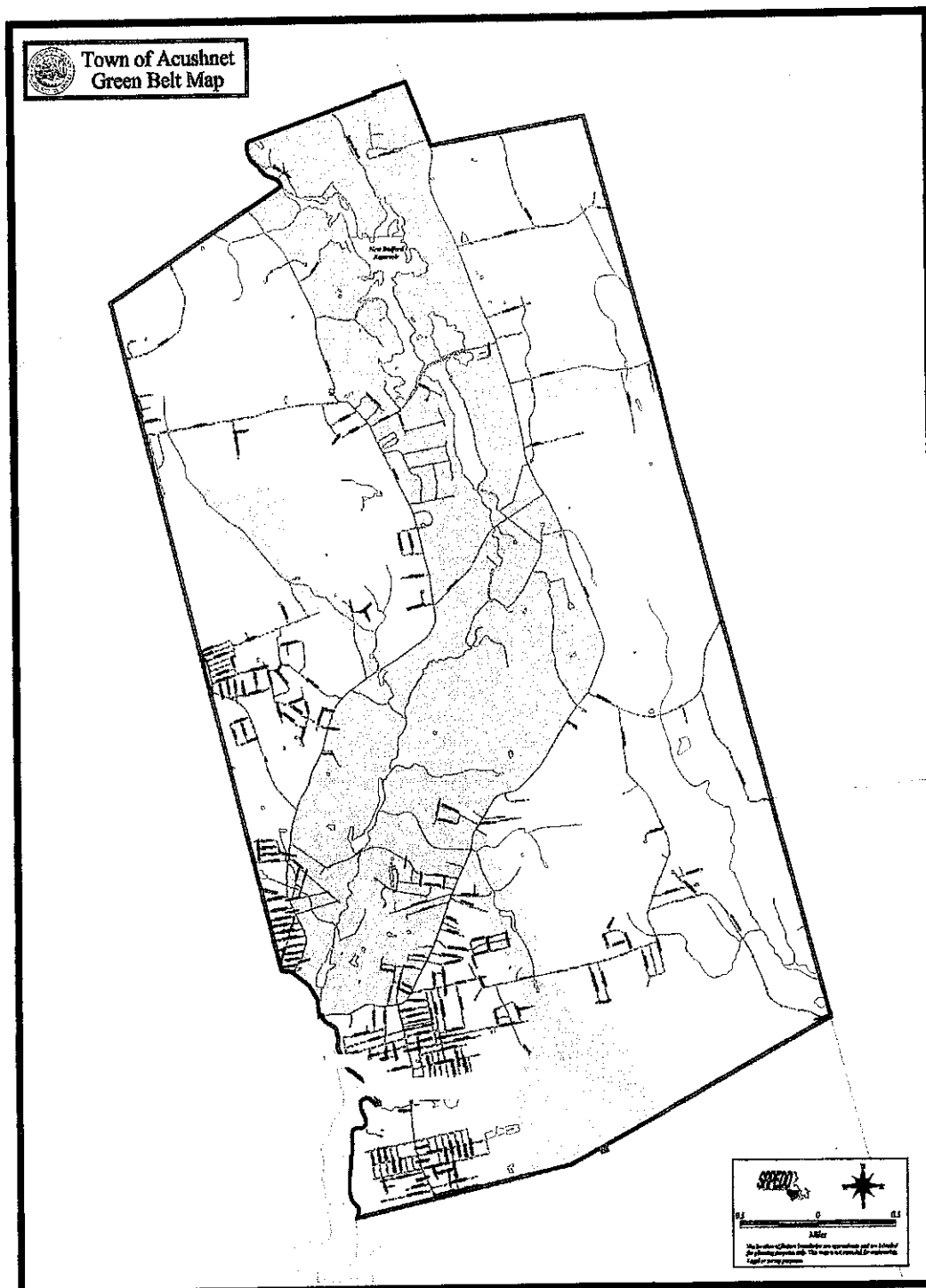


Figure 3.6, Proposed Acushnet Greenbelt

The following section of the Master Plan recommends several strategies for addressing the Town's need for protecting and preserving undeveloped lands for open space and recreational opportunities.

3.8.1 Open Space and Recreational Land Goals and Objectives

Reference attached spreadsheet.

	Objectives	Tasks
Preserve Open Space	Establish / Formalize Acushnet Greenbelt	1.) Delineate boundaries of Greenbelt 2.) Formalize status with Planning Department 3.) Develop acquisition/stewardship strategy to preserve, protect, or manage development within Greenbelt 3.) Incorporate Greenbelt into Open Space Plan
	Identify / Prioritize properties for conservation and/or preservation	1.) Identify highest priority parcels within Greenbelt for conservation/preservation 2.) Direct mail property homeowners to educate them on the Greenbelt concept and options for donating/selling land to Town or Land Trust 3.) Hold educational seminars on the Greenbelt
Open Space Policy	Increase amount of protected open space	1.) Establish educational programs aimed at educating populace on the value of open space, how to donate land, etc. 2.) Develop coordinated Town and/or Land Trust strategy for acquisition of prime parcels 3.) Complete revision of Acushnet Open Space Plan as the key guidance document on Open Space (in sync with Master Plan vision)
	Support creation of cluster zoning	1.) Conduct benchmark study of cluster zoning by-laws for various Towns within the region 2.) Institute new cluster zoning by-law
	Strengthen enforcement/compliance of development related requirements and restrictions	1.) Increase enforcement of cease and desist orders 2.) Closely monitor violators for corrective action, etc.
Future Recreational Parks	Create a bike path system within Acushnet	1.) Develop design-construction strategy to build a multi-phase bikepath system within Acushnet (connecting parks, Greenbelt, schools, etc.) 2.) Present to SRPEDD 3.) Compete for Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) funding for construction (via SRPEDD)
	Mandate creation of community parks as a required amenity for developments exceeding 20 lots	1.) Create by-law requiring creation of small park (i.e., tot-lot) when development exceeds a threshold number of units or acreage developed.
	Identify sites for future parks within reasonable travel distance from residential areas	1.) Establish a Town priority of creating minimum park requirements for each of the MD or LD "village" districts within the Town 2.) Prioritize acquisition and/or development of land into community parks 3.) Establish criteria for suitable park land (i.e., acreage, access, parking, site features, etc.)

Funding	Internal (Town) Funding	1.) Ensure existing funding sources (i.e., CPA) are aware of priority lands to acquire 2.) Identify and request funds for one parcel acquisition per year from Town Meeting 3.) Coordinate Town infrastructure development with open space protection (i.e., golf course)
	External Funding	1.) Aggressively seek State and Federal funding for land purchase 2.) Develop relationships with private sector land preservation entities as a potential source of funding for acquisition
Ponds/Reservoirs	Return ownership of Reservoir to the Town of Acushnet. Undertake maintenance program to improve the environmental quality and public access.	1.) Conduct feasibility study to determine benefits and cost associated with reversion of New Bedford Reservoir to the Town of Acushnet. 2.) Develop dialogue with potential stakeholders (i.e., New Bedford, Acushnet, DEP, ACOE, etc. 3.) Communicate plan with State/Federal officials 4.) Develop legal framework to execute conveyance. 5.) Develop Long Term Reservoir Strategy
	Improve Management of Ponds	1.) Conduct study to quantify and qualify the extent of pond deterioration 2.) Pursue grants for pond management 3.) Create full time position to manage Town water quality (ponds, reservoirs, aquifers, etc.)

4. Economic Development

The following section provides a profile of the economic characteristics of Acushnet, including the labor force, employers and types of businesses in Town. The statistics provided here are primarily based on the most recent available data from the 2000 U.S. Census and the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD), which is the regional planning agency for Southeastern Massachusetts.

4.1 Economic Development History of Acushnet

Acushnet is located in Bristol County in Southeastern Massachusetts, or as of late referred to as the "SouthCoast" region of Massachusetts. Acushnet is bordered by the City of New Bedford on the west, Freetown on the north, Rochester on the northeast, Mattapoisett on the southeast, and Fairhaven on the south. Acushnet has a population of 10,613 and a low population density of 561 persons per square mile. The Town is roughly seven miles long and three miles across from east to west. In total there are 12,215 acres of land in Acushnet. Acushnet borders New Bedford Harbor at the mouth of the Acushnet River. Seagoing access to the open ocean is inhibited by the low bridges between Fairhaven and New Bedford which prevents the passage of large vessels from the Bay into the Acushnet River.

Incorporated in February 1860, Acushnet was originally settled as part of the Dartmouth Plantations and later operated as a separate precinct of Fairhaven. The town operates with a three member Board of Selectmen and an open town meeting form of government. Selectmen serve as the Executive Officers of the Town. The Selectmen have a Town Manager to manage day-to-day operations, as well as a number of full and part-time staff operating departments such as public works, police, fire and emergency management services. Acushnet has the usual complement of boards and commissions including a Finance Committee, Planning Board, Board of Appeals, Recreation Committee, School Committee, Council on Aging, Housing Partnership, Housing Authority and various other part-time groups. Acushnet does not have an organization or staff assigned the responsibility of economic development within the Town.

Acushnet's economic base is rooted in the service industry, with the Acushnet School System being the largest single in-Town employer. Small businesses make an important contribution to the local economy. Restaurants, salons, real estate agencies, car dealerships, and small professional offices dot the village district. These local institutions are well patronized by residents from Town and neighboring communities. Limited light industry is scattered throughout the town (discussed further below). Acushnet is home to a large mining operation on South Main Street (i.e., P.J. Keating) which supplies the region with high-quality

blue stone. Although not a large employer, agriculture is still an occupation for some Town residents. Keith's Farm on North Main Street (Long Plain area) is the largest working farm producing a wide variety of crops and plant species for landscaping.

Acushnet has two zoning districts. The great majority of land (over 95%) is zoned for residential development. Any changes in commercial or industrial land uses are accomplished by special permit from the Board of Appeals. In 2003 a new zoning district, Business Village (BV), was created to allow for commercial and light industrial growth primarily along South Main Street. In the same year another district, Business Commercial (BC) was created out of 21 acres of land fronting the southwest corner of Middle Road and Nye's Lane. The noted tract of land was rezoned in 2003 by Town Meeting vote and allows for limited light industry. This precedent is a good model for future rezoning in Acushnet, creating a scale of industry appropriate for the Town's size and supportive infrastructure. Currently, however, the overall lack of defined commercial and industrial zones creates significant barriers to economic activity.

Acushnet has no well defined economic development goals. Without an entity in Town government tasked to create and manage economic development initiatives, business opportunities have been handled outside the context of any overall plan. It can be presumed that many business opportunities have been lost due to the lack of a coordinating economic development arm within Town government.

4.2 Economic Indicators and Trends

Acushnet's economic trends traditionally follow that of the regional area, or Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The economic outlook for South Coast, Massachusetts over the next 10-15 years is mixed, but overall it is positive. State and national trends will continue to be reflected in this region. Most significantly, the South Coast region will continue to lose manufacturing jobs to global trends, while these jobs are replaced with new jobs in the retail and service sector.

Encouraging trends in the region include the growing medical device manufacturing sector, New Bedford's continuing prominence in fishing and seafood processing, and the promise of commuter rail service by the year 2016. While the South Coast has historically lagged behind the state in most economic indicators, the gap has been closing and the long term outlook will see the South Coast reaching parity with the balance of the state.

4.2.1 Unemployment

Acushnet citizens are industrious, hard working people. Subsequently, the Town's work force has generally fared better than Bristol County or the metropolitan New Bedford area. In recent history, the highest unemployment rate in the region occurred during the 1982 and 1992 recessions when Acushnet unemployment reached 12.2% and 10.5%, respectively. During the same periods, Bristol County saw unemployment levels of 12.6 and 11.5%. In the 2000 census, Acushnet unemployment rate was at an impressive low of 3.3%.

4.2.2 Median Household Income

During the period from 1990 to 2000 the increase in median household income was higher than either Bristol County or the State as a whole. In 1990 the median family household income in Acushnet was \$35,734 and grew to \$51,500 in 2000, an actual increase of almost 44%, while the Bristol County grew by 38%. The State's median household income levels grew from \$36,952 to \$50,502, a rate of 36%.

Notwithstanding the rates of increase, the comparative household income of Acushnet remains strong among neighboring communities. The table below lists neighboring communities and their 2000 census reported median incomes:

Town	2000 Median Household Income
Freetown	\$64,576
Rochester	\$63,289
Acushnet	\$51,500
Dartmouth	\$50,742
Fairhaven	\$41,696
New Bedford	\$27,569

Table 4.1, Acushnet Median Household Income
Source: 2000 U.S. Census

4.2.3 Household Income Trends

Household incomes are derived from all members of a household earning a wage. Acushnet and the New Bedford MSA continue to experience an upward shift in household incomes, however the trend may reflect an increase in household size (i.e., a trend toward multiple generations living together longer).

Nevertheless, the majority of households in Acushnet in the 1990's made between \$25,000 and \$49,999, slightly exceeding those who earned between \$0 and \$24,999. According to the 2000 census, the majority of households in Acushnet earned between \$59,000 and \$74,999 (27.9%).

Households By Income		
Income Range	Year	
	1990	2000
\$0 - \$24,999	1212	826
\$25,000 - \$49,999	1315	995
\$50,000 - \$74,999	617	1058
\$75,000 - \$124,000	219	764
\$124,000 +	63	180

Table 4.2, Acushnet Households by Income
Source: 2000 U.S. Census

4.2.4 Sources of Household Income

Over 80% of the households in Acushnet receive their income from wages and salaries. Eleven percent are government workers and only 5.6% receive income from self employment. A significant number of residents in Acushnet receive Social Security (33%), which is indicative of an aging population. Farm derived income dropped from 1.4% to 0.4% between 1990 and 2000. The majority of Acushnet workers derived income from working in education/health/social services (21%), manufacturing (20%) and retail trade (14%).

4.2.5 Poverty Rate

According to the 2000 census, the individual poverty rate in Acushnet was 3.8%, or 386 residents. Of the 2832 families in the Town, 54 (1.9)% were at or below the poverty rate. During the same period, the individual poverty rate in Bristol County was 4.9%, and 6.7% within the Commonwealth. Since 1980, the individual poverty rate in Acushnet has steadily dropped 2%. Poverty rates have direct implications upon the need for job training, education, day care needs, human services, etc. While the poverty rates have dropped, indeed significantly, there is still a need for attending to the betterment of a significant population within the Town.

4.2.6 Educational Levels

According to the 2000 census, 72% of Acushnet citizens have completed their high school education. This is roughly on par with both Bristol County (73%) and the State (74%). However, only 13% of Acushnet residents have completed a bachelor degree (or higher) as compared to Bristol County (20%) and the State (33%). It is important to note that the college educational level has shown a steady progression upward since 1980.

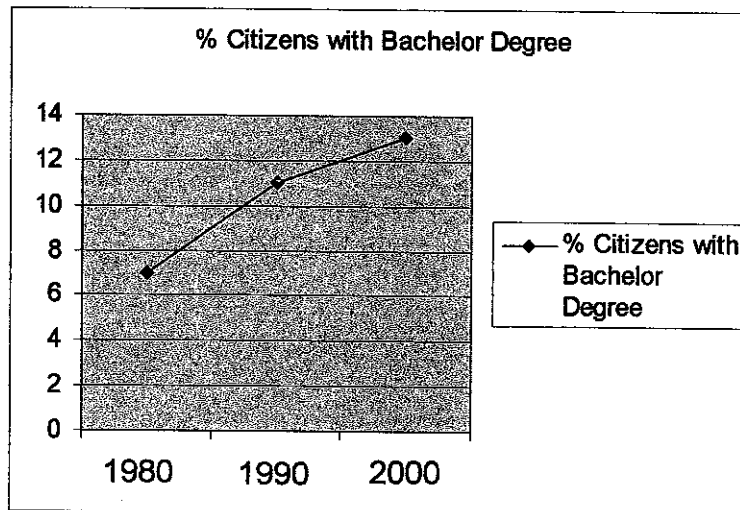


Figure 4.1, Trends in the education of Acushnet's residents
Source: 2000 U.S. Census

4.3 Economic Development Resources and Insitutions

4.3.1 Educational Institutions

Access to quality vocational and higher education is essential to the long term business development of Acushnet. Within the SouthCoast region, there are a variety of higher education institutions which can be utilized by the local populace to raise the overall educational level of the community. Below is a description of the major institutions of high learning within reasonable driving distance for an Acushnet citizen:

Bristol Community College

Bristol Community College (BCC) is located in Fall River and offers a broad range of educational programs and provides services to meet the economic development needs of Southeastern Massachusetts. BCC prepares students to enter the workforce with marketable skills in fields ranging from engineering and

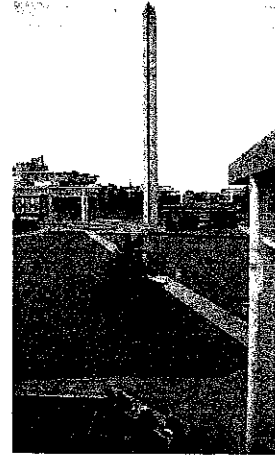


computer science to criminal justice and nursing. BCC has grown considerably over the past decade and is a recognized supplier of trained labor. BCC has satellite branches in New Bedford and Taunton. Students attending BCC can opt for an associates

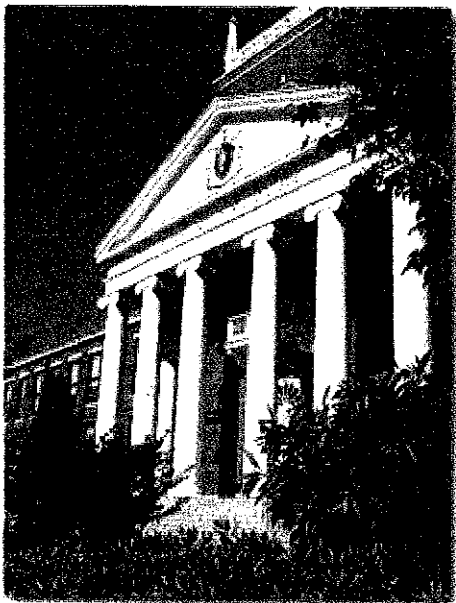
degree or a transfer program to other University of Massachusetts campuses for a bachelor degree.

University of Massachusetts (Dartmouth)

Located in nearby Dartmouth, the University of Massachusetts (Dartmouth) is one of the five University of Massachusetts campuses. The University offers bachelor, master and doctoral degrees in the liberal arts, sciences and business. The university accepts students directly at the freshman level or transfer students from the Community College system. The University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth has made a strong commitment to collaborate with area companies in job creation, research, and job training. Many of the resources are contained within the Center for Advanced Technology (CAT) and the Center for Marine Science and Technology (CMAST).



Bridgewater State College



Bridgewater State College, located in Bridgewater, Massachusetts is one of the oldest public colleges in the country. Originally a "teachers college", Bridgewater State College now offers a broad based education in the liberal arts, science and business. Bridgewater State College has become involved in regional economic development programs and assists the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization in focused economic development initiatives and broad based planning efforts.

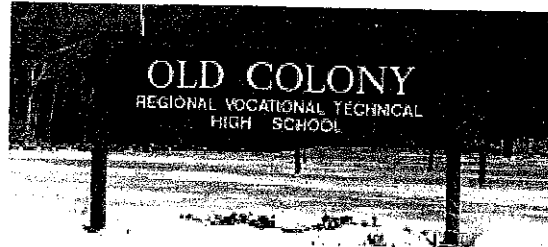
Presently, Bridgewater's graduate and undergraduate program population numbers over 8,300 students. Bridgewater offers over 100 graduate and undergraduate academic

programs in the social and physical sciences, arts, management and education. The Center for Southeastern Massachusetts was established to coordinate all of the economic development activity on campus and interface in a more user-friendly fashion with regional communities and businesses.

Bridgewater provides a number of important resources to the region such as training in geographic information systems (GIS), and assistance in work on groundwater contamination. They also have departments of economics, management and computer science that can provide direct assistance to companies in the development of products and business strategies.

Old Colony Vocational High School

The Old Colony Vocational High School provides vocational training for both youths and adults. Old Colony provides traditional training which have direct application in the trades. Programs include Automotive, computer, electrical, and plumbing. Continuing education programs are also offered to provide courses for adults and companies in the region.

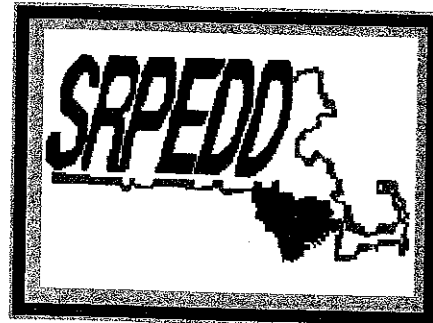


4.3.2 Business Development Resources

A number of organizations in the SouthCoast region have staff and programs geared toward economic development and can provide general or targeted assistance to communities like Acushnet.

Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD)

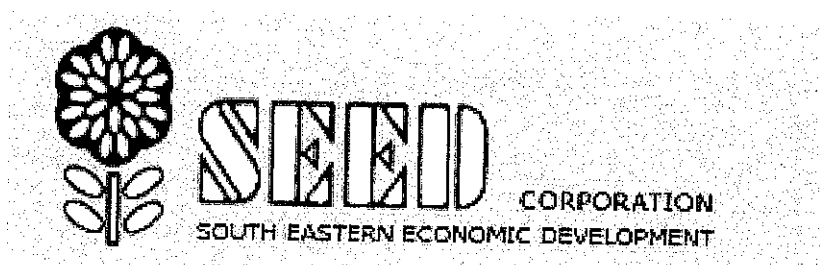
SRPEDD, located in Taunton, is the regional planning agency for the member communities of Southeastern Massachusetts including Acushnet. The organization is certified as a planning district by the US Economic Development Administration, a division of the Department of Commerce.



SRPEDD is involved in a wide range of activities of relevance to economic development, including publication of the Overall Economic Development Plan

(OEDP) for the region. It also maintains a comprehensive economic development data base for communities in the region. Along with the Center for Economic Development at the University of Massachusetts (Amherst), it provides economic development training for communities. Furthermore, it can provide technical assistance in planning, community economic development, and GIS services.

Southeastern Economic Development Corporation (SEED)



SEED is a non-profit corporation certified by the United States Small Business Administration (SBA). SEED was set up in 1982 to

improve the economy of southeastern Massachusetts by helping small businesses get started, grow and create jobs. Today, SEED serves small businesses in all of Massachusetts and most of Rhode Island, making an average of 125 loans, and providing technical assistance to over 750 existing and prospective entrepreneurs, annually.

With a 25-year history of meeting the region's small business community's needs, SEED continues to serve in two primary roles:

1. Assisting and supporting small businesses during their start-up phase to help secure traditional financing; and
2. Promoting the expansion of existing businesses by working with lending institutions and the SBA to provide the best possible financing package.

Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The SBDC is a statewide business assistance organization, funded through the Small Business Administration and affiliated with institutions of higher education. There are currently four SBDC sites in Massachusetts, with the local office located at the University of Massachusetts (Dartmouth). Outreach and marketing of their services is managed through local chambers of commerce. The SBDC provides counseling, training and applied research. SBDC is an important resource for one-on-one basis in finance, marketing, planning, accounting and operations.

4.4 Attitudes Regarding Economic Development

As an early part of the Master Planning Process, a public workshop was held to discuss overall goals and objectives for the master plan, as well as obtain opinions toward a variety of issues including economic development. An overwhelming number of participants indicated that economic development was important. Acushnet is primarily a residential or "bedroom" community. Without a substantial business base, the tax burden is shouldered primarily by residents. Moreover, as the population and demographics of the Town have changed, greater demands for public services are being called for with a consequential increase in cost. Residents, therefore, view economic growth as a means to relieve themselves of a growing tax burden. Additionally, residents see a need for economic growth so that their children will have the opportunity to live, work and raise families in Acushnet.

A survey was conducted in 2007 to obtain further input on issues, which again, included economic development. The findings mirrored the outcome of the public workshop, and provided additional statistical evidence supporting economic development.

When asked what policy for business and industrial growth was favored in Acushnet, the response signaled a willingness for commercial and industrial growth. Over 83% of the respondents favored development in areas already developed and/or in areas not yet developed.

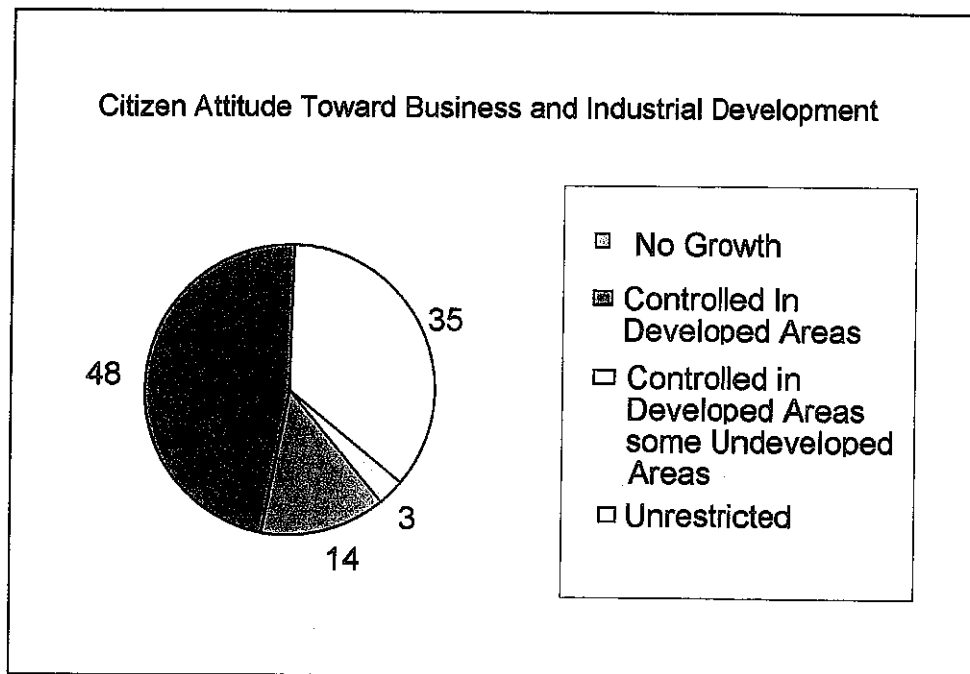


Figure 4.2, Acushnet resident attitude toward business and industrial development
Source: 2006 Acushnet Master Plan Public Survey

Survey respondents were also asked to rank general categories of businesses as the platform for economic development in Acushnet. The results are shown in the Table below. The top three categories which citizens felt were either "very important" or "important" to encourage in Acushnet were Agriculture, Office/Professional, and Light Industry.

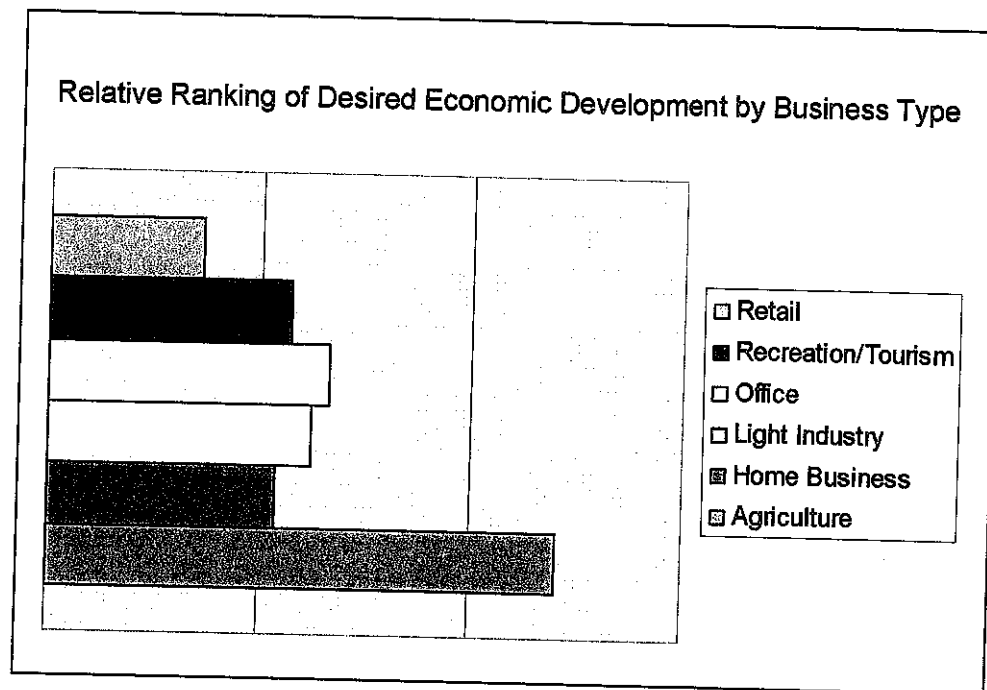


Figure 4.3, Acushnet resident ranking of desired economic development type
Source: 2006 Acushnet Master Plan Public Survey

It is important to note that although there is broad based support for economic development, it is felt that this should not come at a cost to the overall "Town & Country" quality of Acushnet. Indeed, preservation of the small town and rural nature of Acushnet is considered one of its strongest economic attributes.

4.5 Economic Development Strategy

The Economic Development Committee met on five separate occasions between January 2007 and May 2007. The Committee conducted a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis of economic issues relevant to the

Town, followed by discussions on specific objectives which would address the SWOT findings. The Members of the Committee included:

Ed Issac, Chairman, Former Titleist Executive
Roger Cabral, Chairman of the Acushnet Finance Committee
Randy Amarello, Founder, J&R Plastics
Mark White, President, White Construction
Henry Young, Town of Acushnet, Planning Department

The starting point of the Committee's work was to review and accept the basic premise of the Master Plan Vision Statement as it pertained to economic development. The Economic Development Goal, as expressed by the Vision Statement is,

"Create a business-friendly environment that encourages new business growth and helps sustain the viability of existing businesses."

The next step was to conduct a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat analysis within the context of economic sustainability/growth within Acushnet. Guiding principles which emerged as a pretext to this analysis included:

- Acushnet is strongly tied to the economic conditions of the New Bedford metropolitan area. As such, discussions should not place Acushnet in a vacuum, ignoring the linkages to existing businesses in New Bedford, Fairhaven, Dartmouth, etc.
- Not all growth is good growth. One of Acushnet's strengths is its "Town and Country" atmosphere, which should be protected. In general, new businesses should be located within the Town in areas with a tradition of commercial or industrial use, and where municipal infrastructure would logically support growth.

A synopsis of the SWOT analysis is as follows.

Strengths

1. Acushnet is a "quality" community. The quality of people, life, and general socio-economic conditions in Acushnet make it an extremely desirable Town to live in. A primary criterion which businesses use in determining whether to/not to locate in a specific municipality is precisely this quality (i.e., low crime, good schools, community pride, access to recreational areas, etc.).
2. Small businesses still enjoy local loyalty with Acushnet. These strong bonds between citizen and local business are a competitive advantage enjoyed by "mom & pop" commercial and retail establishments.

3. Acushnet offers convenient local transportation. Acushnet is an automobile-centric community. Low population density combined with a majority of the community lying off major regional arterial roadways makes for a general absence of traffic congestion (with the exception of South Main Street during peak periods).
4. Competitive Tax Rate (Statewide). In comparison to other Town's within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the business tax is moderately low (ranked 125 of 351) with a rate of 10.69%.
5. Association with "Acushnet-Titleist". While citizens of Acushnet may take their "brand name" association with the Acushnet Rubber Company/Titleist for granted, there is an intrinsic value to Acushnet's linkage to the golfing industry which is untapped.
6. Acushnet enjoys a strategic regional location. Acushnet is centrally located within the SouthCoast region of Massachusetts. Proximity to SouthCoast cities, commuter rail, and the nearby interstate highway system, provides a competitive geographic business advantage.
7. Acushnet is rich in Natural Resources. Acushnet is host to one of the largest reservoirs (i.e., New Bedford Reservoir) in the region, and sits atop a productive blue-stone deposit.
8. Good public school choices. Although Acushnet does not have a high school, the elementary and middle schools enjoy outstanding reputations. At the high school level, Acushnet citizens have multiple options for education (i.e., New Bedford, Fairhaven, Old Colony, New Bedford Vocational School, Bristol County Agricultural School).

Weaknesses

1. The Town of Acushnet has no access point to the Interstate Highway (I-195). Direct highway access is typically a prerequisite for new businesses looking to locate in a community.
2. Unfriendly business practices in Town Government. Some businesses, either potential or existing, perceive Acushnet's government as a hindrance to new or expanded growth. The lack of a clear path for permitting, zoning regulations, etc. causes business to redirect efforts to communities with streamlined permitting and well established policies and procedures which facilitate business development.

3. Lack of an industrial truck route. The non-existence of a truck route places inter and intra community heavy truck traffic on Acushnet's local street system. This situation places undue stress on local pavements (reducing life cycle) and creates frequent safety hazards.
4. Improper zoning to facilitate commercial/industrial development. Acushnet has one primary zoning classification (RA) which governs residential development. Although businesses can locate in an RA zoned area it is by exception (i.e., spot zoning). This leads to a haphazard land development pattern and is a vague policy to present to new businesses seeking to location, at best. Those areas zoned Business Village (BV) are primarily directed at small storefront development along South Main Street. The Nye's Lane business district has been approved as a Business Commercial (BC) zone at Town Meeting. However, steps have not been taken to formalize the BC zone within the current zoning map and By-Laws. In general, Acushnet's zoning is inadequate to properly attract and/or direct where and what type of business development will occur within the Town.
5. Growth stymied by low population. Comparatively low population growth has not generated a need for new businesses.
6. No incentives to invest/stay/grow. Businesses have much more flexibility to relocate than ever before. Acushnet must become more business friendly (i.e., develop policies, procedures, tax incentives, etc.) if it hopes to retain existing businesses or attract new ones.
7. Limited sewerage and uncertainty with respect to future expansion. Many commercial or industrial businesses have high sewerage requirements. There are limited locations in Town which could support industry and future expansion cannot occur until the Town has conducted a Wastewater Management Plan. The inability of the Town to support this Department of Public Works initiative impairs future planning or solicitation of sizeable businesses to locate in Acushnet.
8. Lack of a High School. Quality businesses prefer to locate in communities that offer good K-12 public education for their employees. The lack of an "Acushnet" high school could be viewed as a negative characteristic of the Town.
9. Aging population. Acushnet's aging population directly translates into a growing portion of Acushnet retiring and, therefore, not participating/contributing to local economic growth.
10. No coordinated effort to recruit business. Acushnet does not maintain a component of government that actively recruits/markets the Town as a place to locate/grow business.

11. High utility costs. Endemic of South Coast communities, Acushnet is not immune to the high cost of utilities in the Northeast Corridor.

12. Little enforcement of business practices. The Town provides minimal policing of local business practices. Subsequently, good businesses practicing best management practices (i.e., compliance with local by-laws, etc.) are competing against other businesses who generally ignore business regulations (and do not incur costs associated with regulation compliance).

The findings of the Acushnet Master Plan Economic Development Subcommittee, listed above, generated a set of objectives and tasks to be undertaken in direct response to these issues. These objectives and tasks are outlined following section. The objectives listed in this table have been categorized in terms of:

- Master Plan Implementation
- Improving Business Conditions & Perceptions
- Quarry Operations
- Transportation Network
- New Bedford Reservoir
- "Acushnet" Brand
- Better Business
- Public Infrastructure
- Titleist Property
- Energy
- Schools

4.5.1 Economic Development Goals and Objectives

(Reference Tables)

MASTER PLAN	Objectives	Tasks
	<p>The Town should actively support Master Plan elements initiatives which enhance the quality of Acushnet</p> <p>Conceptually support Land Use rezoning plan and rewriting of By-Laws to reflect new zoning plan</p>	<p>Planning Department Will: 1.) Educate elected and appointed leadership of the Town on the elements of the completed master plan in a well coordinated educational process 2.) Schedule public educational seminars on Master Plan 3.) Schedule and provide briefing to entities including Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD), New Bedford Economic Development Council (NBEDC), New Bedford Industrial Foundation (NBIF), New Bedford Chamber of Commerce (NBCoC), etc. on the Master Plan and its Objectives. 4.) Begin implementation of Master Plan objectives</p>
IMPROVE BUSINESS CONDITIONS & PERCEPTIONS	<p>Improve marketing of Town as a good place to start/grow businesses. A member of the Planning Department should become an active member of the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) Economic Development Committee, New Bedford Economic Development Council (NBEDC), New Bedford Industrial Foundation (NBIF), New Bedford Chamber of Commerce (NBCoC), etc. to better facilitate new business growth.</p> <p>Develop policies (i.e., tax) which create an environment for continued economic success within the Town.</p> <p>Revisit tax policies to ensure that Acushnet's tax policies are conducive to retention of existing businesses and attracting new business.</p>	<p>Planning Department designates Planning Board Member and Planning Department Employee to: 1.) develop "Doing Business in Acushnet" guidelines, 2.) Establish relationship with Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD), New Bedford Economic Development Council (NBEDC), New Bedford Industrial Foundation (NBIF), New Bedford Chamber of Commerce (NBCoC), etc. and educate members on business advantages and opportunities in Town. 3.) Meet regularly with NBIF and NBEDC to stay abreast of business opportunities that might be directed to Acushnet</p> <p>1.) Establish a standing committee to review/update business policies in Town to include such topics as: Tax Structure, Tax Incentive Financing (TIF) Opportunities, Proper enforcement of business regulations, etc. Membership includes reps from: Board of Selectmen, Planning Department, Town Administrator, Building Inspector, ConComm Agent, At-Large citizen 2.) Aggressively pursue grants which serve as a catalyst for business growth (i.e., Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Public Works and Economic Development (PWED), etc.)</p>
KEATING	<p>Strengthen relations with Keating.</p>	<p>1.) Create/Restructure committee to coordinate with Keating on behalf of Town. 2.) Establish a Long Term Quarry Strategy by 4th Qtr 08 with specific objectives and performance measures. 3.) Identify potential support for construction of 240 Extension/Bypass.</p>

	Objectives	Tasks
ROADS	<p>Department of Public Works (DPW) should perform Townwide road analysis to determine Level of Service (LOS) of major collectors and arterials. Traffic impact analysis for development projects should be mandatory.</p>	<p>1. Coordinate with Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) and the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) to develop Level of Service (LOS) analysis and mapping for arterials and major intersections. 2.) Establish baseline conditions (Average Daily Traffic (ADT) vs. LOS) and create criteria for traffic impact fees, thresholds by laws, etc. 2.) benchmark against other progressive communities of similar size to Acushnet. 3.) SRPEDD Municipal Assistance Grant opportunity.</p>
	<p>Support Route 240 Extension and Bypass Feasibility Study which will investigate the potential means to move quarry traffic off of South Main Street, improve safety, diminish wear/tear on S. Main Street and provide a direct connection to I-195.</p>	<p>1.) Pursue tri-city dialogue regarding Route 240 Extension Project analysis, 2.) Obtain Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) and Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) cooperation for feasibility study 3.) Obtain funding for studies (public and private) 4.) Conduct wetlands study 5.) Conduct Feasibility Study</p>
RESERVOIR	<p>Return ownership of Reservoir to the Town of Acushnet. Undertake maintenance program to improve the environmental quality and public access.</p>	<p>1.) Conduct feasibility study to determine benefits and cost associated with reversion of New Bedford Reservoir to the Town of Acushnet. 2.) Develop dialogue with potential stakeholders (i.e., New Bedford, Acushnet, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP), Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), etc. 3.) Communicate plan with State/Federal officials 4.) Develop legal framework to execute conveyance. 5.) Develop Long Term Reservoir Strategy.</p>
ACUSHNET BRAND	<p>Leverage the "Acushnet" brand name which comes from our historic links to Titleist.</p>	<p>1. Golf Committee marketing opportunity 2.) Create Town Hall Banners 3.) Secure Ball Plant #1 relics, photos, etc. 4.) Establish display case at Golf Course, Senior Center, Town Hall, Library, School, etc. 5.) Benchmark against other Municipalities who have successfully undertaken such endeavors 6.) Coordinate with Titleist. 7.) Coordinate with New Bedford Tourism, etc. to market the "Acushnet" Golf Course.</p>

BETTER BUSINESS	Objectives	Tasks
INFRASTRUCTURE	Establish a Town-to-Business liaison within Town Government	<p>Planning Department designates Planning Board Member and Planning Department Employee to: 1.) develop "Doing Business in Acushnet" guidelines, 2.) Establish relationship with SRPEDD (Econ Development), NBEDC, NBIF, NBCoC, etc. and educate members on business advantages and opportunities in Town. 3.) Meet regularly with NBIF and NBEDC to stay abreast of business opportunities that might be directed to Acushnet 4.) Create TIF and/or grant opportunities, etc. 5.) Be a single POC for answering new business questions 5.) Consider expedited permitting.</p>
	Develop a "New Business Guide" to assist businesses seeking to operate in Acushnet (step-by-step instructions on how to start a business in Town)	
	Agressively assist local businesses	
	Town of Acushnet should become an active with organizations such as the NBIF, NBEDC, SRPEDD (Economic Development), NB CoC, etc. to better facilitate new business growth.	
	Support Sewer Expansion Study	<p>1.) DPW and Planning Dept take lead in educating public/agencies, etc. on importance of Sewer Study. 2.) Solicit speakers at Town Meeting, etc. to better inform public on pro's/cons of sewer study. 3.) Place sewer study funding on warrant of Town Meeting. Planning and Public Works Department speak on behalf of study at Town Meeting</p>
	Guarantee Sewer and Water Cost Stability	<p>1.) Develop long term water and sewer agreements with the City of New Bedford</p>

	Objectives	Tasks
TITLEIST PROPERTY	Develop senior health and housing facilities to better service aging community and develop health related jobs in Acushnet. Consider Titleist property as a Senior Housing Facility/Health Complex.	1.) Ensure Titleist Ball Plant #1 Property is zoned so as not to exclude development as a senior housing, medical care or health-based facility.
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY	Investigate alternative energy sources for public facilities (i.e., schools, town government complex, etc.)	1.) Determine potential for wind and solar power systems in Town. 2.) Solicit feasibility study (cost, Return on Investment (ROI), impact, etc.) from private sector providers 3.) Construct sustainable energy systems if financially feasible.
SCHOOLS	Develop a long term educational strategy which enables predictable stability in high school choices for school age children/families	1.) Enhance long term Agreements for sending Acushnet school children to local and regional educational institutions.

5. Housing

Adequate housing to service the full spectrum of Acushnet's citizenry has become a major issue within the Town. Rent and property values in the Metropolitan Boston, Providence and Cape Cod have increased to record levels. Simultaneously, availability of affordable housing in these locals is at historically low levels. This situation increases pressure on the housing markets in suburban areas like Acushnet as people move outward from high-cost communities in search of an affordable place to live. Compounding this problem are Acushnet's current zoning regulations which favor the development of large single-family homes on large lots. The results of these conditions include:

- Creation of developments consisting of relatively expensive large single family homes which are not within the historical development patterns of Acushnet
- Low and moderate income families are priced out of the housing market
- Inadequate housing options for the existent population of young adults, senior citizens and empty nesters who require smaller and denser housing communities
- Inability to satisfy Chapter 40B requirements and therefore, *de facto* loss of control over land development within the Town.
- Conversion of valuable agricultural land or open space into residential use.

Acushnet is not unique in addressing these issues, but part of a regional "crisis" affecting nearly every community in the SouthCoast area. The following analysis examines the existing housing conditions in the Town of Acushnet and highlights some important housing needs.

5.1 Summary of Existing Conditions

Housing conditions are generally assessed through a consideration of current housing stock, socio-economic/demographic shifts which pressurize the housing market, and underlying policies which influence housing. The housing condition in Acushnet is examined within the context of the following:

- Existing housing age
- Existing housing condition
- Existing housing costs
- Availability of housing
- Demographic trends
- Criteria for senior and affordable housing
- Zoning

The recommendations developed through the master planning process will provide a strategy to address the housing needs of Acushnet residents thereby ensuring the quality of residential development and neighborhood environments.

5.1.1 Existing Housing

Housing data collected for the Master Plan is based on 2000 Census Data with adjustments made where information is available. As of 2006, there were approximately 4037 housing units in Acushnet. This is an increase of approximately 148 units since the 2000 census and an increase of 511 units since the 1990 census.

The age of housing stock in Acushnet is shown in Table 5-1. Approximately 60% of Acushnet's housing was constructed prior to 1960.

Year Built	Total Units	Percent
1939 or Earlier	909	23%
1940-1949	755	19%
1950-1959	669	17%
1960-1969	665	17%
1970-1979	412	11%
1980-1989	191	5%
1990-1999	249	6%
2000	39	1%
Total =	3889	100%

Table 5.1, Age of Acushnet housing stock
Source: U.S. Census

The types of housing structures in Acushnet in 2006 are displayed in Table 5-2. In 2006, over 78% of the housing in Acushnet is single-family, while buildings with two or more units comprised approximately 22% of housing. There is also a significant presence of mobile homes in Acushnet.

Structure Type	Year			
	2006	2000	1990	1980
Single Family	3162	3046	2680	2314
2-9 units	509	489	479	430
>10 units	54	58	45	97
Mobile Homes	312	296	322	211
Total =	4037	3889	3526	3052

Table 5.2, Number of housing units by type and structure
Source: U.S. Census, Town of Acushnet Assessor's Office

According to the 2000 census, approximately 84% of housing units in Acushnet were owner-occupied. A total of 607 units were renter-occupied. Since 1980, homeownership rates have remained around 84% to 85%. Subsequently, the rate of homeownership is not expected to have changed significantly since the last census was taken.



Figure 5.1, Attractive single family homes along Slocum Street. The single family home on small lots is the traditional development pattern in the historic village of Acushnet.

Overall, the condition of Acushnet homes is very good. This quality of housing stock is, without doubt, a reflection on the quality of residents in Town. Acushnet is demographically a community of hard working, law abiding and non-transient people. The vast majority of families own their own homes. These conditions yield a Town which enjoys an outward demonstration of pride of property. There are no blighted areas in Town. Well kept properties are the rule in Acushnet.

5.1.2 Availability

Vacancy rates are an indicator of the availability of housing units. A generally accepted vacancy rate threshold is 5%. Vacancy rates in excess of 5% are considered favorable for potential owners and/or tenants to move freely in the marketplace. A vacancy rate below 5% is considered a "tight" housing marketplace, and indicative of a strong demand for additional rental housing. Table 5.3 shows a historical record of vacancy rates for owner occupied and rental housing units.

Year	Home	Rental
1980	0.3%	3.7%
1990	0.8%	2.6%
2000	0.3%	2.4%

Table 5.3, Acushnet historical vacancy rates
Source: U.S. Census

The vacancy rate for rental units in Acushnet in 2000 was 2.4%. According to local realtors, there is a strong demand for apartments and rental rates are continuing to climb. The upward price point and strong demand indicates that the supply of apartments is not keeping pace with the demand.

Vacancy rates for single and two-family homes have been consistently low in Acushnet. In 2000 the vacancy rate was 0.3% for all owner-occupied homes. This is an extraordinarily low value. The first few years of the new millennium was characterized by a strong market for single family homes. According to local realtors, these housing trends are reflected in the surrounding communities as well. The recent downturn in the housing and credit market has muted these conditions. However, It is expected that upon correction of these markets the tendencies of the early 2000's will return.

5.1.3 Cost of Home Ownership

There were 124 homes sold in Acushnet in 2005. The median sales price for a single-family home in 2005 was nearly \$277,500., which represents a 98% increase in home values since 2000. When compared against other bordering communities, Acushnet slightly outpaced our neighbors. The 2005 median sales price (and the percent increase since 2000) for single-family residences were:

Fairhaven = \$274,000 (89.6%)
Rochester = \$379,000 (89.0%)
New Bedford = \$232,000 (79.8%)
Freetown = \$345,000 (81.6%)

* Source, Boston.Com Business (The Warren Group), April 7, 2006

Over the past 10 years the housing market has considerably tightened, according to local realtors. The recent downturn in the housing industry has not necessarily improved the affordability of housing. A concurrent tightening of the credit market has made it more difficult to borrow money for new home purchases, disabling potential home buyers from entering the marketplace.



5.1.4 Cost of Rental Housing

As shown in Table 5.4, the rate of increase for rents in the SouthCoast area has been relatively high in recent

Figure 5.2, Modern single family home in the Long Plain section of Town. The single family home on large lot (60,000 sf minimum) zoning requirement has established a suburban like development pattern throughout town.

years. Although rents in outlying, suburban areas have generally risen more slowly in the past, there has been pressure on rental markets in desirable SouthCoast communities such as Acushnet. In 2000 the median gross rent was \$521 per month. By 2005, two bedroom apartments in the area were renting on average near \$800 per month, up about \$300 in five years. Increasing population, low vacancy rates, and the lack of affordable homes in Acushnet, will likely drive rental costs continually upward.

Year	Home	Rental
1980	\$37,400	\$144
1990	\$129,700	\$378
2000	\$139,800	\$521
2005	\$277,500	\$800

Table 5.4, Cost of home ownership and rent in Acushnet
Source: U.S. Census, SRPEDD, Town of Acushnet Planning Department

5.1.5 Affordability

Affordability of housing is measured not only in terms of the price of housing, but also in terms of the household living in it. Since 1980, median family incomes have not kept pace with housing prices. As shown in Figure 5.3, an ever widening gap between family income and median house prices have taken a substantial portion of the town population out of the housing market. Even with recent downturns, this trend is expected to continue as the underlying factors creating demand for Acushnet housing remain unchanged.

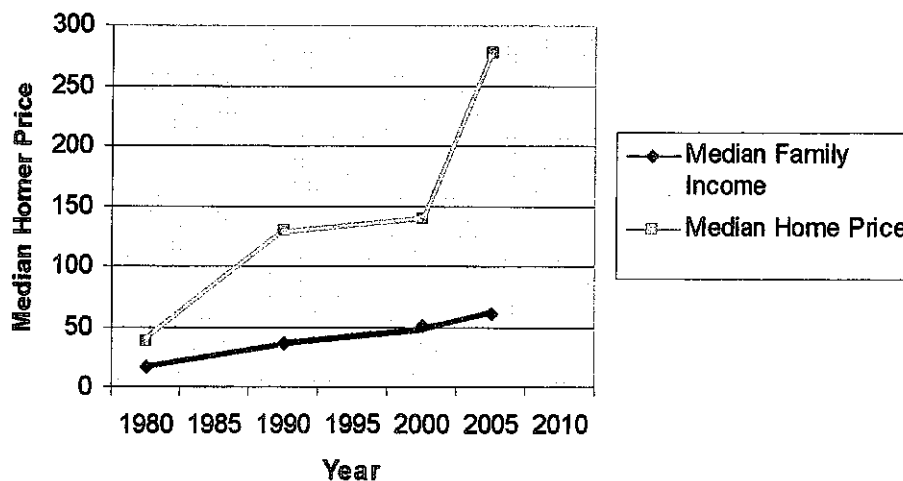


Figure 5.3, Graph showing the departure between median family income and median home price in Acushnet

Source: U.S. Census, SRPEDD

A guideline used by banks when evaluating home mortgage applications is that monthly payments do not exceed 30%-33% of household income. Using the 30%-33% guideline as a rule, the following scenario illustrates the affordable housing crisis in Acushnet.

Based on 2005 figures, a family earning the 2005 median income of 60,500 per year, qualifying for a 30 year mortgage, at 7% interest, with a 20% down payment would be eligible to borrow approximately \$175,000. The median home price in 2005 was \$277,500. Compounding this problem is the obstacle of raising a down payment which is usually 20% of the purchase price. Therefore, the median priced home is not affordable to the median income (i.e., solid middle class) family.

5.2 Demographics

Acushnet's median age in the 2000 census was 39.7 years, as compared to 33.9 years old in 1980. Projecting from the population trends between 1990 and 2000, shown in Figure 5.4, the greatest growth is expected to take place among persons 45 and older.

In the same 2000 census, the distribution of residents by age is shown in Figure 5.5. Approximately 55 percent of the Town's population is younger than 44 years of age. However, those over the age of 45 comprise approximately 41 percent.

As the population shifts to an older demographic makeup, the pressure for affordable senior housing will become more pronounced. Without adequate senior housing, aging Acushnet residents on relatively fixed incomes will be forced to make an unpleasant decision; remain in their home while the cost of living, taxes, etc. are increasing and endure an ever decreasing quality of life, or leave Acushnet for another community where other, better living options are available.

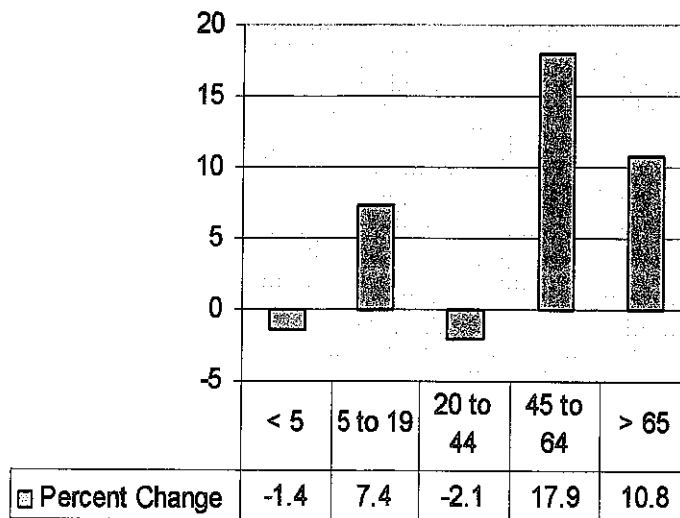


Figure 5.4, Population trends by age between 1990 and 2000.

Source: U.S. Census, *SRPEDD Factbook*

5.3 Senior Housing

Acushnet currently has insufficient housing specifically for senior citizens. Presidential Terrace has 60 units (56 regular and 4 handicapped units), but maintains a significant waiting list. Senior citizens can expect to wait over 2 years for a unit to become available. Given the demographic conditions described above (i.e., increasing population of aging citizens), conditions are not likely to improve.

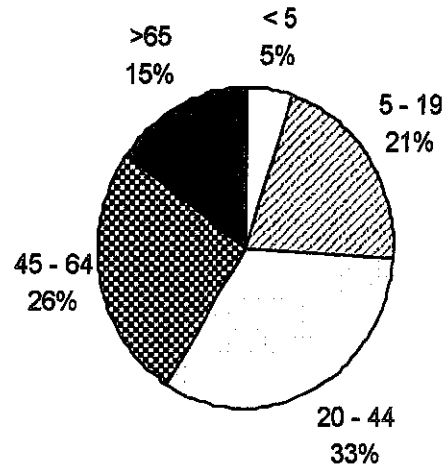


Figure 5.5, 2000 Population Distribution by Age in the Town of Acushnet
Source: U.S. Census

To confront the looming, or arguably current, senior housing shortage, substantially more senior residences will be required. The order of magnitude of need will likely require construction of multiple unit facilities akin to Presidential Terrace. As with any multi-unit development, any proposal for senior housing should fit the constraints of the town's infrastructure and be amenable to the character of surrounding neighborhoods. Specific criteria recommended for the location and development of senior housing included:

- Reasonable access to public transportation
- Located within the village
- Availability of utilities (i.e., sewer, water, etc.)
- Close proximity to amenities (i.e., Library, COA, etc.)
- Multi-unit
- Affordable
- Sufficient units created to meet current and projected needs

The Acushnet Planning Board, Acushnet Housing Authority and other town departments will need to work together with nonprofit organizations and private housing developers in order to make the best use of all available fiscal resources and not duplicate efforts in addressing senior housing needs.

5.4 Low and Moderate Income Housing Law

There is a statewide shortage of affordable housing in Massachusetts. Spiraling home prices have created a situation where young people cannot afford to stay in the community in which they were raised. Subsequently, they are forced to

relocate to lower cost municipalities, even moving to other states with a lower cost of living. In parallel, cities and towns have enacted various land use restrictions in the form of zoning, by-laws, etc. which directly or indirectly prevent the creation of lower cost housing. The State of Massachusetts' response to this crisis, is Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40B.

The intent of Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40B is to enable (or force) local Zoning Boards of Appeals to approve affordable housing developments under lenient conditions, so long as a minimum of 20-25% of the units have long-term affordability restrictions. Also known as the Comprehensive Permit Law, and the "Anti-Snob Zoning Law", Chapter 40B was enacted in 1969 to help address the shortage of affordable housing statewide by reducing unnecessary barriers created by local approval processes, local zoning, and other restrictions. Its goal is to encourage the production of affordable housing in all communities throughout Massachusetts.

The overarching theory of Chapter 40B is that the production of the market rate units will subsidize the reduced prices of the affordable units. Chapter 40B encourages the production of affordable housing units at little or no cost to the state or federal government.

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40B mandates that municipalities have 10% of their total housing dedicated to subsidized households with low and moderate incomes. The Town of Acushnet presently has 92 housing units (2.37%) that meet Chapter 40B requirements. The ramification of noncompliance is the lawful allowance of private developers constructing affordable housing to circumvent local zoning and subdivision control regulations through the Comprehensive Permit process. This process allows developers to submit a single application to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Applications can only be rejected if they are determined to create a serious health or safety risk. Furthermore, other State regulations such as Title 5, Wetlands Permits, building codes, etc. are not negated by Chapter 40B.

Based on 2006 data, examples of affordable housing in Acushnet would be characterized as shown in Table 5.5.

Type of Housing	Number of Occupants	Number of Bedrooms	Price
Single Family	5	4	\$170,000
Condominium	3	2	\$127,000

Table 5.5, Examples of what would constitute Affordable Housing Units in the Town of Acushnet. Based on 2006 data, assuming 6.92% interest rate.
Source: Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development

Although there have been presentation made by developers regarding the construction of hundred-plus unit affordable housing developments in Acushnet, there are currently no comprehensive permit proposals currently under negotiation.

5.5 Residential Zoning

The Town of Acushnet has one residential zoning district, Residential A (RA). Single-family residences are allowed within this district. The minimum lot size is 60,000 square feet for single-family housing. Acushnet's RA district is more permissive through the issuance of special permits. RA uses by special permit include:

- Accessory apartments
- Two-Family Homes (conversion)
- Multi-Family Housing/Hospitals/Nursing Homes for elderly

The minimum lot size for two-family homes is 60,000 square feet as well (i.e., there is no density requirement). Additionally, there is no density requirement for multi-family housing/hospitals/nursing homes for the elderly.

The same type of residential uses are also permitted in the Business Village (BV) district which contains land within 300 feet of several of Acushnet's major roadways, including South Main Street, North Main Street and Main Street. Allowed housing uses include all uses allowed in the RA district.

5.6 Housing Policy

Despite the best intent of many government leaders in Acushnet, little headway has been made addressing the need for affordable housing. As with most communities in Massachusetts, Acushnet has traditionally been content to allow the market place to define and create what housing was considered necessary to meet the local housing demands. The trends of median house price outpacing median income levels, an aging population in need of alternative low-cost housing and the threat of 40B developers has caused a rethinking on this issue.

Currently, there are no local government policies or programs which either encourage or mandate the creation of affordable housing. To provide financial incentives for private sector developers, communities may tap into numerous and substantial sources of funding to assist in the subsidization of affordable housing. State programs like the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Community Preservation Act (CPA) and federal subsidy programs primarily administered by the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) office are

opportunities for Acushnet to take advantage of. Tax Incentives, development fees on non 40B developments to fund 40B development, etc. are other potential mechanisms utilized by other communities.

Another tact which many communities have adopted to generate affordable housing is the creation and utilization of inclusionary zoning. Inclusionary zoning requires developers to provide an affordable housing component within an overall development plan.

5.7 Housing Strategy

The Housing Committee met on six separate occasions between May and October, 2006. The Committee conducted a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis of housing issues relevant to the Town, followed by discussions on specific objectives which would address the SWOT findings. The members of the Committee included:

Joe Castelo, Chairman
Bill Contois, Council on Aging
Jeanne Gatonska, Banking Executive
Marc Cenerizio, Planning
Larry Mulvey, Housing Partnership
Henry Young, Planning

In February of 2006, a Visioning Workshop was conducted at the Ford Middle School. A comprehensive set of goals for Acushnet's future were derived. These goals were echoed in a survey of property owners conducted in June 2006. As refined by the Master Plan Housing Subcommittee, the overarching housing goal is to

"Create sufficient housing for Acushnet's diverse population."

To achieve this overarching goal the committee conducted a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat analysis within the context of economic sustainability/growth within Acushnet. An overview of this assessment is provided below.

Acushnet has traditionally been a town of detached single-family homes with little provision for other types of housing. In recent years, however, the Town's fairly limited choice in housing has resulted in several potential problems that are likely to be exacerbated in the future if they are not addressed. In particular:

- There is little housing in Acushnet that is designed for the needs and budgets of senior citizens. For this reason, some individuals that have

lived in Acushnet for much or all of their life are finding that, as they age, it is difficult to find suitable housing within the Town.

- Home prices in Acushnet have escalated in recent years as a result of a very strong regional real estate market as well as Acushnet's particularly desirable location within commuting distance of major metropolitan areas. Sale prices for new homes are well beyond the means of many of Acushnet's citizens. The Town's existing housing stock has also appreciated significantly in value, making it difficult for many people who grew up in Acushnet to afford a home in the Town.
- The Town is concerned about the potential for so-called Comprehensive Permit applications being filed within the Town. Comprehensive Permits for low- and moderate-income housing projects strip the Town of much of its ability to regulate the density and design of new development.
- Recent changes in state policy dictated by Executive Order 418 (January 2000) require Massachusetts municipalities to demonstrate that they have established an effective program for creating affordable housing in order for the municipality to be eligible for certain state grant programs.

The following section of the Master Plan recommends several strategies for addressing the Town's need for additional housing while also retaining Acushnet's rural character.

5.7.1 Housing Goals and Objectives

Reference attached spreadsheet.

Objectives	Tasks
<p>Develop a proactive Housing Policy which addresses development of senior and affordable housing (DHCD/40B compliant).</p>	<p>Acushnet Planning Commission facilitates the writing of a new Housing Policy. Policy will include recommendations for high density housing zoning in certain areas of Town to accommodate higher density/multi unit development, cooperative protocols with 40B developers, a program/program goals (i.e., number of units, timeframes, standards, etc.), creation of an "Acushnet Housing Corporation", etc.</p> <p>Submit Housing Policy to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development for approval</p> <p>Provide approved Housing Policy to Acushnet Planning Commission and Acushnet Housing Corporation for implementation.</p>
<p>Create additional legal housing units on parcels already developed</p>	<p>Modify zoning to enable creation of "in-law" apartments, mixed use (i.e., 1st floor business, 2nd floor apartments), etc. to generate additional housing units where it can be supported by existing infrastructure (i.e., sewer and water).</p>
<p>Create Cluster Zoning</p>	<p>Modify zoning to enable cluster zoning developments. This "Smart Growth" development pattern allows small lot sizes in exchange for preservation of open space. Such developments provide and incentive to developers and help support open space/conservation goals.</p>
<p>Senior Housing</p>	<p>Inventory Town-owned land (including tax title properties) in areas suitable for multiunit housing for senior citizens.</p>
	<p>Obtain ownership of and/or designate land adequate for creation of multi-unit senior housing complex(s).</p>
	<p>Prepare conceptual design for senior housing complex to include: number of units, style, materials, access, utility connections, etc.)</p>
	<p>Issue Request For Qualifications & Proposals (RFQP) for senior housing complex development (design-build contract)</p>
	<p>Support zoning changes and housing standards necessary to create multi-unit housing complexes which allow a range of housing types while exhibiting sensitivity to the semi-rural character of Acushnet.</p>

Affordable Housing (40B)	Create 300 new affordable housing units to meet current/projected demand within five years	<p>Inventory Town-owned land (including tax title properties) in areas suitable for multiunit housing for affordable housing</p> <p>Obtain ownership of and/or designate land adequate for creation of multi-unit affordable housing complex(s).</p> <p>Prepare conceptual design for senior housing complex to include: number of units, style, materials, access, utility connections, etc.)</p> <p>Issue Request For Qualifications & Proposals (RFQP) for affordable housing complex development (design-build contract)</p> <p>Support zoning changes and housing standards necessary to create multi-unit housing complexes which allow a range of housing types while exhibiting sensitivity to the semi-rural character of Acushnet.</p> <p>Modify zoning to enable creation of "in-law" apartments, mixed use (i.e., 1st floor business, 2nd floor apartments), etc. to generate additional housing units where it can be supported by existing infrastructure (i.e., sewer and water).</p>
Funding	Seek funding sources for purchase of property, design, construction etc. of affordable and senior housing	<p>Acushnet Planning Commission becomes active in regional housing partnerships</p> <p>Acushnet Planning Commission develops relationships with state and federal officials in support of attainment of grants and earmarks.</p> <p>Write and submit grants to state, federal and private sector entities in support of housing objectives</p> <p>Examine potential to bond for creation of a revolving fund to purchase (then sell) properties for affordable and/or senior housing. Reference: Acushnet Housing Authority section below.</p>
Acushnet Housing Authority	Create a non-profit Acushnet Housing Corporation whose primary function is the creation of affordable and senior housing. This Corporation will carry out housing management/administrative functions which are beyond the current scope of any Town Department	<p>Acushnet Planning Commission facilitates the writing of the Acushnet Housing Corporation which will provide focus, leadership, management, administration and accountability for the creation of senior and affordable housing</p> <p>Appoint Board of Directors/staffing for the Acushnet Housing Corporation</p> <p>Establish and implement transparent administrative processes (i.e., televised meetings of the Board of Directors) to convey progress on housing development to Town citizens</p>

6. Facilities and Public Services

6.1 Facilities/Services Overview

The Town of Acushnet offers a wide spectrum of services and facilities to its citizens including police, fire, rescue squad (EMS), municipal roads/infrastructure services. Traditional services and facilities such as a library, schools and council-on-aging building are also hallmarks of the community. In total the Town owns 20 buildings. Responsibility for the management of these facilities falls upon the Town via the Board of Selectmen. The building stock varies widely in age, material condition and functionality. Table 6.1 provides a snapshot of municipal buildings in 2007. The buildings are further described in Section 6.2.

There are over 75 separate boards, committees, or offices operating out of the 23 buildings listed in Table 6.1. Utilization of the buildings vary by organization. The Acushnet Police Department occupies the basement and first floor of the Town Hall Annex. Whereas, the Emergency Medical Service has its own building. The Department of Public Works maintains its executive offices on the second floor of the Town Hall Annex, while its operational arm is based out of the Middle Road DPW complex.

There are approximately 200 full time employees of the Town of Acushnet (the Town's largest employer). The largest of the Town's service providers is the Acushnet School System with 132 employees. Full time employees of the Town are supplemented by part-time employees, volunteers and contract labor.

A major challenge for the Town is the management of its facilities in the future. With over 290,000 square feet of space spread over 23 buildings/facilities, the average age of the Town's facilities is approximately 45 years old. Overall, the condition of the buildings is very good with a few notable exceptions, discussed below. However, many facilities are stretched in terms of capacity. Departments are crowded which impacts operational efficiency, safety and overall quality of service. Because of the "make-do" attitude and commendable work ethic of Acushnet's employees, the relationship and/or impact upon facilities upon service has been masked. This condition will likely reveal itself in the coming decade. The Russell Free Public Library being one of the first facilities to experience degradation of service as a result of substandard facility conditions.

Acushnet has recently invested significantly in its public educational infrastructure. Between the Acushnet Elementary and Ford Middle School, there is adequate space to accommodate normal population growth in the coming decade. Schools buildings represent nearly seventy percent of the Town's municipal facilities on a square foot basis. Hence, with school infrastructure well

Facility	Address	Area (sf)	Year Built	Value (\$)
Burt Elementary School	59 -1/2 S. Main St.	15000	1930/97	1,800,000
Town Hall Annex - Police	130 Main St.	12000	1930/2003	1,373,137
Acushnet Howard School	232 Middle Road	10000	1930	1,400,274
Long Plain Museum	1230 Main St.	7500	1875	850,000
Acushnet Library	88 Main St.	6000	1930	750,000
Town Hall	122 Main St.	14400	1900/97	1,750,000
EMA Building	14 Thomas St.	1875	1960	210,000
Fire Station #2	1138 Main St.	1800	1920	292,008
Town Garage	700 Middle Road	5000	1960/90	600,000
Albert F. Ford Jr. High	708 Middle Road	109100	1960/2003	18,000,000
Town Hall Garage	122 Main St. (rear)	800	1970	127,322
Acushnet Elementary	800 Middle Road	93680	1970	14,000,000
Pope Park Garage	Main St.	500	1970	65,257
Fire Station #1	Russel St.	600	1970	660,000
Pope Park Bath Building	Main St.	625	1970	96,290
Friends Meeting House	700 Middle Road	1500	1800	278,025
Salt Shed	Middle Road	250	1970	119,690
Gazebo	130 Main St. (rear)	150	1980	20,000
EMS Facility	60 Middle Road	3750	1997	607,994
Golf Course Steel Bldg	685 North Main St.	3200	1999	250,000
Golf Course Gazebo	685 North Main St.	250	1999	20,000
Golf Course Clubhouse	685 North Main St.	1875	1999	150,000
Golf Course Maint. Bldg	685 North Main St.	4000	1999	325,000
TOTAL =		293855		43,744,997

Table 6.1 Listing of Acushnet's Municipal Buildings.

in hand, the Town is in a position to focus on the second tier facilities which will require investment in the coming years. Likely, space requirements for municipal services will be met through a combination of new facility construction, relocation of services from one building to another, and prolonged "making due" as the realities of fiscal constraints weigh in on decision making. For the first time since 1964, a broad look at Acushnet's facilities has been undertaken.

Acushnet Wood Project Committee	Old Colony Technical Committee
Animal Control	Open Space Committee
Animal Inspector	Park Commission
Beautification Committee	Parking Clerk
Board of Appeals	Parting Ways Building Committee
Board of Assessors	Phase II Stormwater Committee
Board of Health	Planning Commission
Board of Public Works	Police Commission
Board of Selectmen	Police Department
BOS Enforcement Agent	Portable Sign Committee
	PPWG-Harbor Trustee Council Member
Building Inspector	Public Safety Coordinator
By-Law Review Committee	Public Safety Needs Committee
Cable TV Advisory Committee	Registrar of Voters
Cemetery Board	Safety Committee
Committee of Trust Funds	School Committee
Community Preservation Committee	School Department
Conservation Commission	Sealer of Weights and Measures
Constables	Shellfish Warden
Council on Aging	Skate Board Park Committee
Cultural Council	Soil Conservation Board
Department Bldg Inspector	Special Police (NB Water Works)
Downtown Steering Committee	SRTA Advisory Committee
Election Officers	SRTA Representative
EMA	Street Name Committee
Finance Committee	Tax Shift Study Committee
Forest Warden	
Golf Management & Operations Committee	Tax Title Custodian
Growth Management Study Committee	Tilcon Capaldi - Weigher
Herring Warden	Tilcon Capaldi Plan Committee
Historical Commission	Town Clerk
Housing Authority	Town Meeting Tellers
Housing Partnership Committee	Town Moderator
Inspector of Garages	Tree Warden
Insurance Advisory Committee	Trustees of Free Public Library
Library Building Committee	Veterans Agent
Moth Super/Inspector of Pest Control	Wind Study Committee
Old Colony Technical Committee	Wire Inspector

Table 6.2 Listing of Acushnet Departments, Boards, Committees and miscellaneous service providers

A survey of citizens in 2006 was conducted to assess the level of satisfaction with Acushnet's major public service providers. The results of this survey are shown below in Figure 6.1.

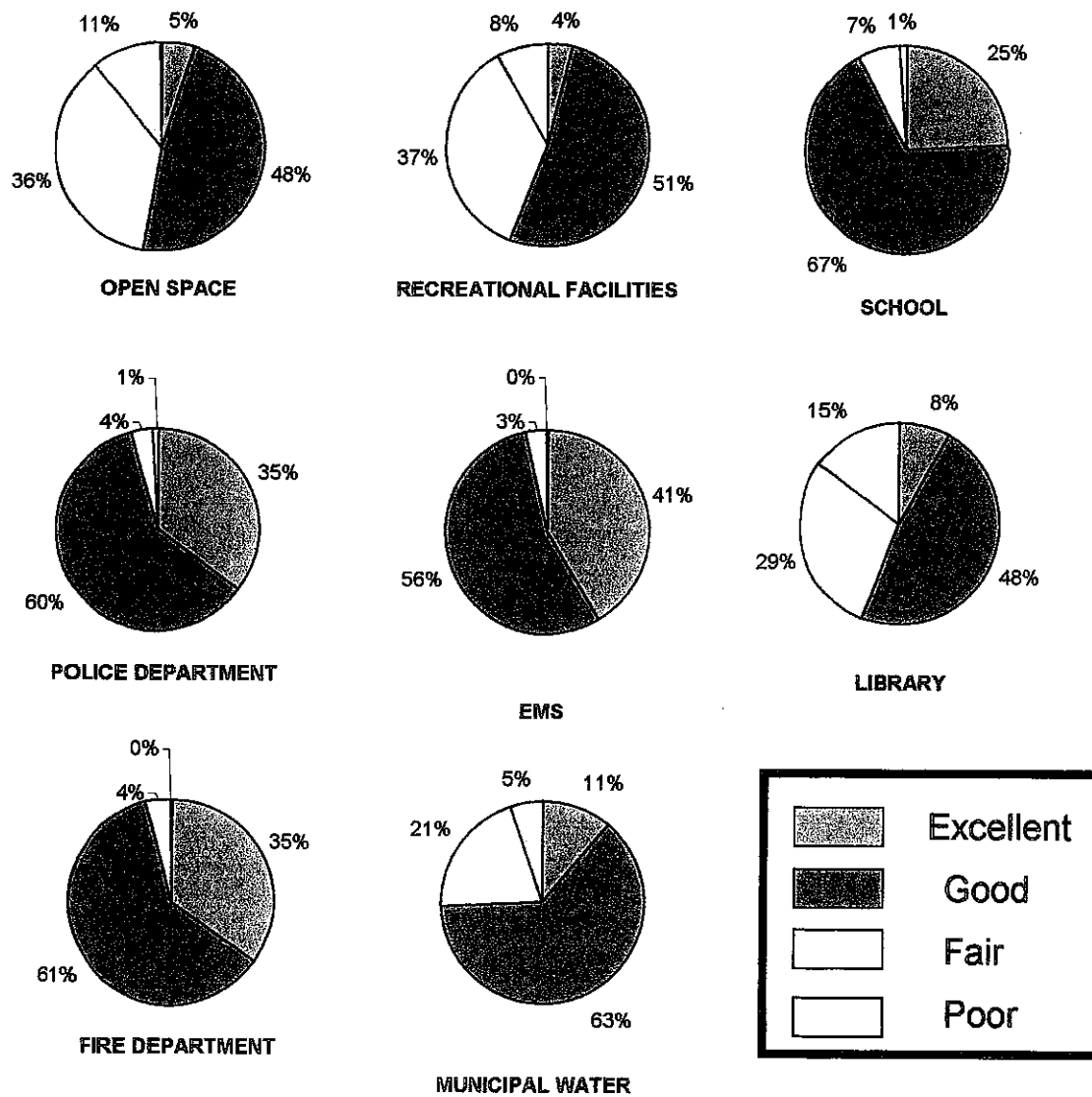


Figure 6.1 Master Plan survey response indicating level of satisfaction with Acushnet's major public service providers.

6.2.1.1 Town Hall Annex/Police Station

The major tenant of the Town Hall Annex is the Acushnet Police Department. The Police Department utilizes all of the first floor and basement. The Town's law enforcement agency currently has 18 full-time police officers. Headed up by the Chief of Police, the Department has five Sergeants and 12 Officers. While the State average is 2.4 full-time police officers per 1,000 residents, Acushnet averages approximately 1.6. Helping to fill the gap, are part-time police officers. The numbers of which vary due to migration of part-timers taking on full-time positions in other municipalities.

Although it is commendable that the Police Department has "made do" with this location, substantial problems exist from an operational and safety perspective. In its current configuration, the multiple building entrances present challenges to securing access. Civilians often (accidentally) walk into restricted areas. All door entrances are of wood construction, electronic locks are faulty, there is no bullet proof protection for desk personnel, etc. The holding cell is in the center of the building near the dispatch area which is disruptive and dangerous for civilian personnel. In March 2006, the Massachusetts Department of Health inspected the police station facilities and found the station in violation of 105 CMR 470.000: Maintenance and Construction of Lockup Facilities. Specifically, the juvenile



Figure 6.3, Town Hall Annex (Parting of the Ways Building)

lockups are insufficient, and there is no separation for men and women. Power supply to the Police Station is also problematic. The quality of power coming into the building causes problems with computer operations. The emergency generator (located outside the building) originally designed as a back-up to the 911 system, now supplies power to the entire building and its reliability to service the 911 system is questionable. Finally, due to lack of space, storage of

voluminous police records are stored in the basement of the Town Hall Annex which is a non-environmentally controlled space.

6.2.1.2 Town Hall Annex/Health Department

The Health Department is located on the second floor of the Town Hall Annex. The Director, who reports to the Acushnet Board of Health, is supported by two full time staff members. The Board of Health conducts septic system inspections,

Title V certifications, soil evaluations, perc tests, health clinics, mobile home inspections and food service inspections. In the post 9/11 environment, the Health Department is assuming an emerging role in the coordination of emergency responses such as natural disaster, terrorism and pandemics.

The condition of the spaces inhabited by the Health Department is very good. Functionally, the employees operate in relatively crowded spaces. Storage of the Departments documents is becoming problematic.

6.2.2 Fire Department Buildings

The Acushnet Fire Department is headed by a Fire Chief who is appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The Chief administers all aspects of the Department in accordance with State Law. The Department is manned 24/7 by a combination of five full-time and 28 on-call firefighters. The Department is organized and managed by 1 Chief, 1 Deputy Chief, 2 Captains and 3 Lieutenants. The Chief is the only full-time member of the management team. The number of calls which

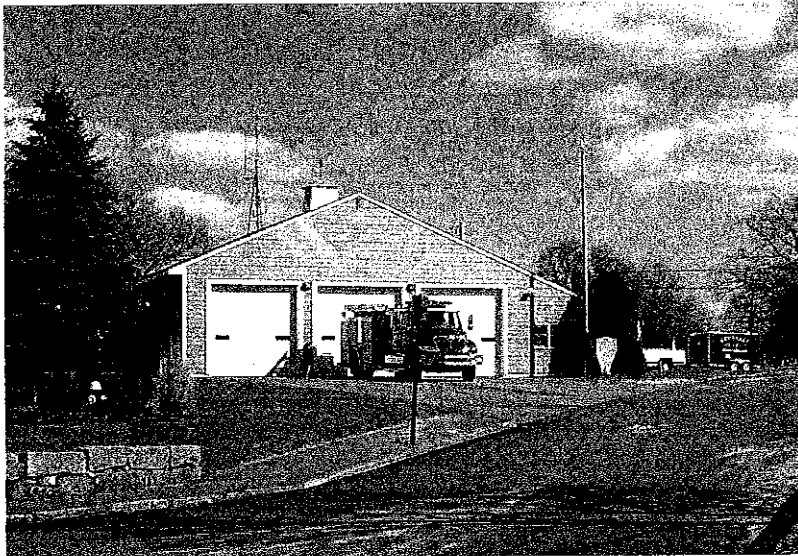


Figure 6.4, Fire Station #1

the Fire Department responded to over the past 5 years is shown in Table 6.3. Fire Department dispatch operations are provided around the clock by a full time fireman. In the event of a service call (requiring the departure of the dispatch operator), dispatch is taken over by a volunteer (if available) or transferred to the Police Department.

To supplement local firefighting capability, the Acushnet Fire Department has executed mutual aid agreements with the Fire Departments of New Bedford, Fairhaven, Rochester and Freetown. These Departments are called upon when the additional equipment and personnel are required to respond to a wide variety of fire and rescue scenarios.

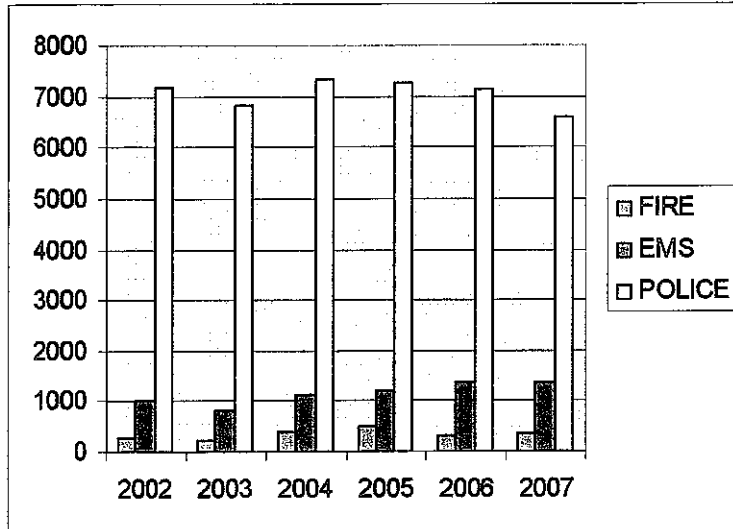


Table 6.3, Trends in First Responder Calls.

The Acushnet Fire Department Fire Station #1 shares the Parting of the Ways with Town Hall and Town Hall Annex, on the north side of Russel Street. The 1970's vintage wood frame structure is the primary firefighting facility in Acushnet. Offices for the fire chief and dispatch office are located within the building. Limited lounge/sleeping quarters are provided as the Acushnet Fire Department is staffed by on-call firefighters from the community. Three double depth bays provide space for a majority of the fire department's vehicles and equipment. Specifically, two pumper trucks, one brush truck and two ATVs with trailer are stored within Station #1. Spatially, Station #1 is at capacity and the Town's rescue trailer and 14 foot rescue boat must be stored outside in the elements.

The material condition of the building is very good. The Department routinely undertakes self-help projects to maintain the integrity and function of the facility. Fire Station #2 is a satellite facility located at 1138 Main Street in the Long Plain area of Town. Fire Station #2 was constructed in the 1920's and provides a facility for two fire (pumper) trucks and miscellaneous fire fighting and rescue equipment. The facility underwent a



Figure 6.5, Fire Station #2

minor upgrade in 2007 to widen the doors of the building to accommodate larger trucks. There is not a full time presence at this 1800 square foot facility.

The Department has no plans to purchase additional trucks/major equipment in the near term (5 years), rendering the space requirements of the Department adequate, although at capacity. In the out years, it is likely that the Department will acquire a ladder truck and that next generation fire apparatus will be dimensionally larger than current models. At that point the Department will have exceeded the threshold for space requirements.

(INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK)

6.2.3 Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Building

The Acushnet EMS is a combination full time and on-call organization providing 24/7 service to the community. The EMS Director is appointed by the Board of Selectmen and administers all aspects of the Department. There are 18 EMS personnel, of which four are full time. On any given day, there are two personnel on duty, one being a licensed paramedic. Dispatch is handled the via the Acushnet Police Department. The number of calls received annually by the EMS (over the past 5 years) is shown in Table 6.3.

To supplement local EMS capability, the Acushnet EMS has executed mutual aid agreements with the municipalities of Fairhaven, Mattapoisett, New Bedford and Rochester as well as private sector EMS vendors. These EMS services are called upon when additional equipment and/or personnel are required to respond to a wide variety of medical scenarios.

The Acushnet EMS is housed in the newest first responder facility within Town. The Acushnet EMS building located at 60 Middle Road. The wood frame building was constructed in 1997 and provides 3750 square feet of space including two double depth bays. The building contains administrative offices, dispatch office,



Figure 6.6, Emergency Medical Service Building

kitchen/lounge, training rooms, two bathrooms and a unisex sleep room. The building is ADA compliant. The building sits on approximately two acres of land. A Boston Medflight helipad is located on the undeveloped portion of this property.

EMS space requirements are currently being met. As population grows and the number of calls increases, the EMS will likely outgrow its space.

The Department projects an increase in staffing should the number of annual calls exceed 2500. Based upon a five-year trend analysis, that scenario will not occur for approximately 10 years. The material condition of the building is excellent, with the exception of the exterior concrete pad in front of the EMS bays which have settled somewhat. This appears to be an isolated condition. Given the trends of ambulances toward larger and wider vehicles, the garage doors will have to be widened. Currently, there is a six inch clearance for EMS vehicles entering and exiting the facility.

6.2.4 Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Building

The Acushnet Emergency Management Agency (EMA) maintains a wood frame building at 14 Thomas Street. The function of the EMA is to provide direct communication with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the event of a catastrophic disaster. EMA was formerly referred to as "Civil Defense" in previous decades. The EMA Director is the Town's operational and administrative link to these agencies. Coordination of manpower, equipment requisition, distribution of medical supplies and other disaster related equipment falls within the purview of this organization.

The 1875 square foot building housing EMA is not occupied except in the event of a disaster or disaster related training. Within the EMA facility the space is functionally segmented into a communications room, training room, break room, storage and garage. Although the structure has suffered from neglect for many years, the material condition has improved over the past few years with the infusion of limited funding by the town and significant self-help efforts by the volunteers who comprise the Acushnet EMA. The EMA building is complemented by a large parking lot and outdoor storage area which is partially fenced. The EMA building has an auxiliary generator. Given the infrequent use of this structure, greater investment beyond occasional maintenance does not appear warranted.

6.2.5 Department of Public Works (DPW) Facilities

The Department of Public works physically spreads out over three separate facilities; the DPW garage, yard and executive offices. The DPW executive office is located in the Town Hall Annex on 130 Main Street. The DPW Offices take up approximately one quarter of the functional space on the 2nd floor of this building (Ref: Sec 6.2.1). In this space, the Board of Public Works maintains a public meeting space to conduct its business. In addition, the DPW Director, Road Superintendent and DPW clerical assistant's office are located in this area.



Figure 6.7, Loading Salt at the Shed

The DPW Garage (also known as the Town Barn) located at 700 Middle Road is a 5000 square foot brick/masonry structure. The building was constructed in 1960 and has undergone renovations in the 1990's. Recent upgrades in the roof, doors and windows were completed

with Town Meeting funding (\$100,000). The structure comfortably accommodates the Water Department, Sewer Department and Highway Department operational offices. This building is the Town's primary storage and maintenance facility for construction and maintenance equipment/assets. According to the DPW, the DPW Garage is expected to adequately service the Town for the next 20 years. The only significant improvement required of this structure will be the reconstruction of the septic system.



Figure 6.8, Acushnet DPW facility

The DPW Salt Shed, also located at 700 Middle Road, was donated to the Town by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The 30 year old, frame structure provides storage for the Town's road salt. During a state of emergency, this structure is also designated as a temporary animal shelter, which would be administered by the Town Animal Control Officer.

The DPW Recycling Shed, also located at 700 Middle Road, is a small wood frame structure collocated with the recycling transfer station. The 8x8 structure is manned during scheduled recycling operations.

The Acushnet sewer system accommodates approximately 800 homes in Town (18%). Homes not utilizing the Town sewer system maintain individual septic systems, which are regulated by the Acushnet Board of Health. The sewer system network is shown below in Figure 6.9. There are 4 pumping stations which discharge into the New Bedford sewer system. These pumping stations are found at the following locations:

- Acushnet Elementary/Middle School
- Blueberry and Elderberry Streets (Forest Dale)
- Allen Street
- Slocum Street

Of these systems, the DPW is responsible for the operation of the Allen Street and Slocum Street facility. The Acushnet Elementary/Middle School is responsible for their pumping station, with the balance being privately operated. The Acushnet DPW has regulatory oversight and regulative authority over all pumping stations. The sewer piping ranges in size from 8" to 12" diameter and is generally constructed of PVC with some VC pipe.

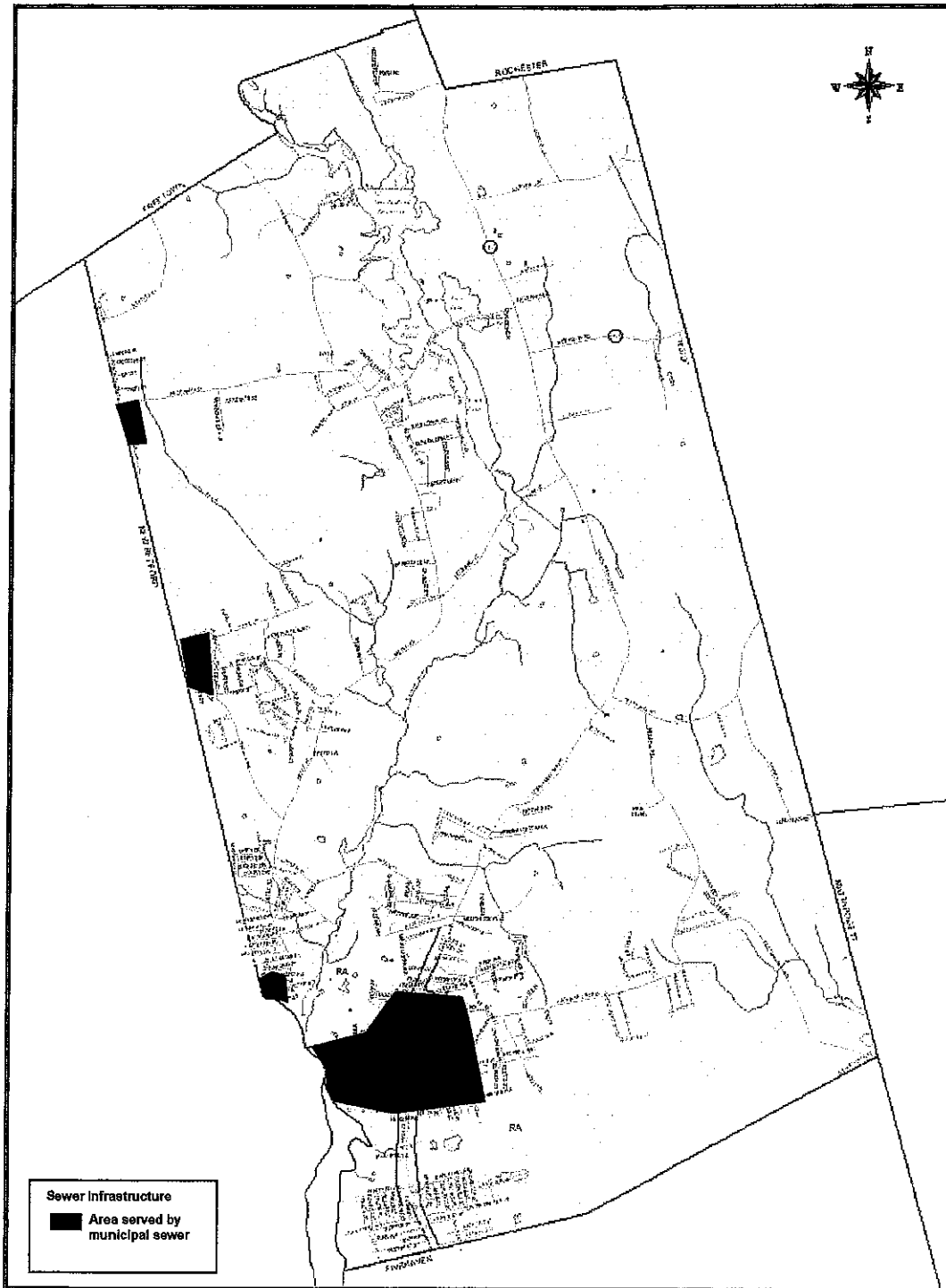


Figure 6.9, Map of areas currently serviced by the municipal sewer system

Acushnet does not have its own sewer treatment facility, but rather maintains a longstanding inter-municipal agreement with the City of New Bedford. By this agreement, the Town is connected directly to the New Bedford municipal sewer infrastructure. Sewerage from Acushnet is transferred to this system and treated at New Bedford's modern treatment facility at Fort Tabor. The New Bedford treatment facility has substantial available capacity, and it is foreseen that Acushnet will maintain this arrangement through the next 20 years, therefore not requiring the construction of a treatment facility within the Town.

There have been plans to extend portions of the Acushnet sewer system, specifically along Middle Road, south from Fairway Drive to the New Bedford Line, and north, from the Acushnet Schools to the emerging residential neighborhoods in that portion of Town. However, the Town is currently delinquent in filling a Wastewater Management Study and Environmental Impact Report with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The most recent sewer expansions in Town were permitted with the condition that this report be prepared prior to any further modifications to the sewer infrastructure. Until this report is filed with the Massachusetts DEP.

The purpose of the Wastewater Management Study and Environmental Impact Report is to

- Determine most practical and cost effective means to dispose of municipal waste
- Examine both domestic and industrial wastewater (Currently, Acushnet sewer is primarily domestic, but future build out of industrial/commercial lands could alter industrial/commercial capacity requirements)
- Investigates groundwater impacts (location and protection of well heads, water quality/condition, capacity, etc.)
- Investigates soil type (focus: soil type vs. ability to handle septic)
- Examines inter-basin transfers (i.e., transferring water from one watershed as a resource and placing it in another as a waste product)
- Will compliment the completed Acushnet Municipal Master Plan (early 2008) to validate/revise proposed sewer extensions
- Determine Town's piping/pumping capacity to dispose of wastewater:
 - Septic
 - Municipal (local)
 - Wastewater Facilities (Acushnet does not have a wastewater treatment facility)
 - Municipal (inter-municipal systems)

As noted this study is a mandated requirement prior to further sewer expansion. The Massachusetts DEP accommodated the latest expansion (by waiver) on the grounds that the Town would conduct the study soon thereafter. Failure to conduct the study and submit the report has placed a *de facto* moratorium on

sewer construction. The cost of the study was estimated at \$350,000 (2006) which was in line with studies for communities of comparable size. Furthermore, without the completion of the report that outlines the Acushnet's long term sewer strategy, the Town (government and citizens) are hindered in the following manner:

- Individual citizen homeowners are unable to make informed decisions regarding personal investment in their homes sewer infrastructure.
- The Town is unable to effectively plan for long term expenditures associated with sewer infrastructure (re)construction.
- The Town is unable to proactively pursue grant funding, low interest loans, etc. to defray the cost of sewer improvements for individual homeowners.

The Acushnet municipal water distribution system accommodates approximately 2700 homes in Town (60%). The general area of water system coverage is shown below in Figure 6.10. Homes not utilizing the Town water system maintain individual wells, which are permitted through the Acushnet Board of Health. Wells serving more than 25 persons/day (i.e., restaurants, etc.) are monitored by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

The water distribution utilizes piping ranges in size from 6", 8" 10", 12" and 16" diameter and is generally constructed of ductile iron, cast iron and AC pipe.

The Town does not maintain and produce its own drinking water, but instead purchases water from the City of New Bedford and resells this commodity to customers within Town. Town water also provides a ready source of pressurized water for firefighting (via hydrant) to those portions of Acushnet with municipal water.

Improvements to the water distribution system could include extensions to the current system and the development of wells for local use. Both have been discussed, but the DPW has not pursued a comprehensive long-term strategy to address potential needs. Rather, as is common in communities like Acushnet, extensions are addressed on a case-by-case basis, depending on need.

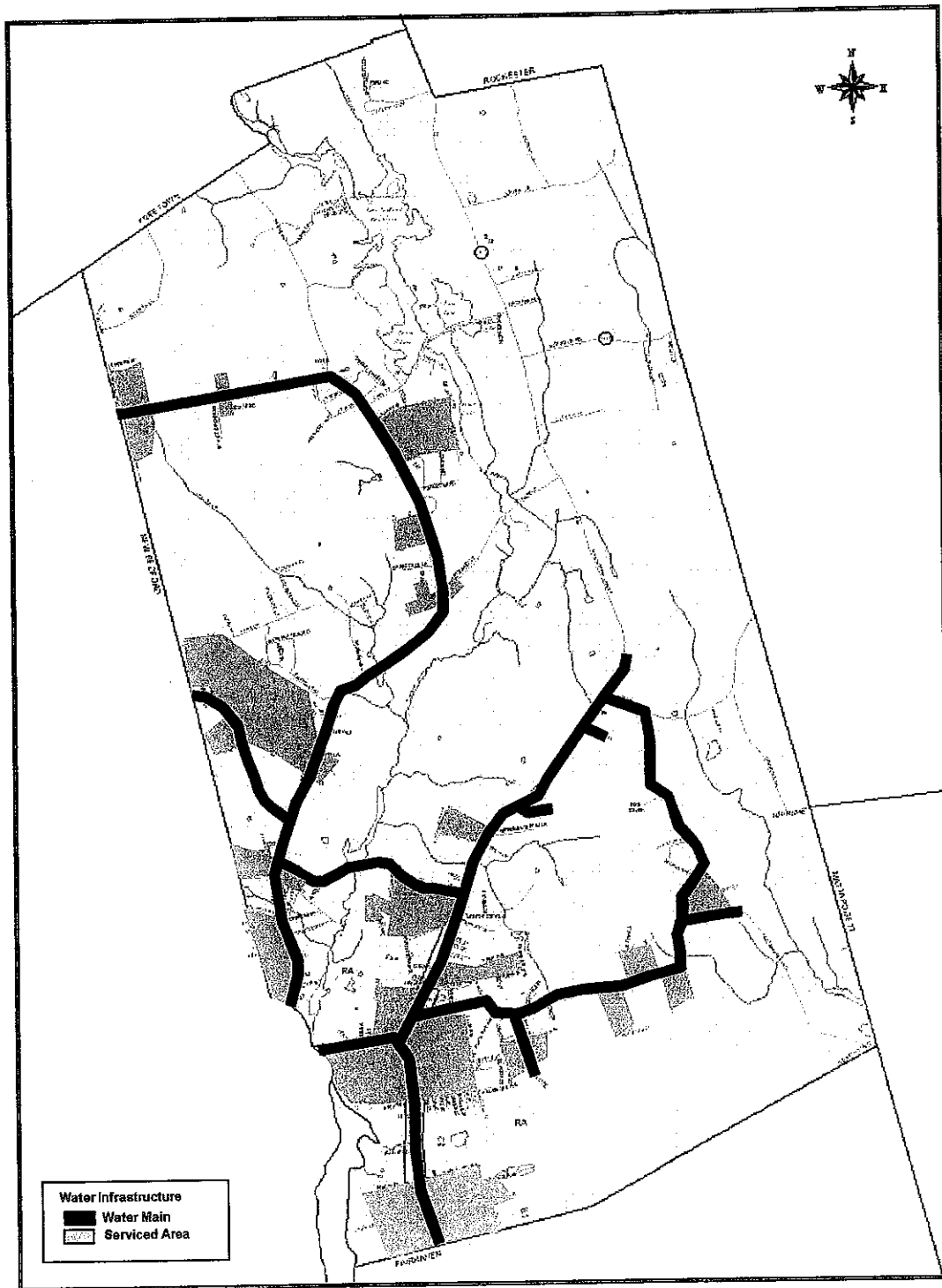


Figure 6.10, Map of areas currently serviced by the municipal water system

6.2.6 Council on Aging (COA)

The Acushnet Council on Aging is located in the former Burt Elementary School at 59-1/2 South Main Street. The 15,000 square foot brick (joisted masonry) building was originally constructed in 1930 and underwent a substantial reconstruction in 1997. The building maintains a full kitchen/dining hall, library, several offices, recreational spaces and health examination rooms. Adequate storage exists to support COA functions.

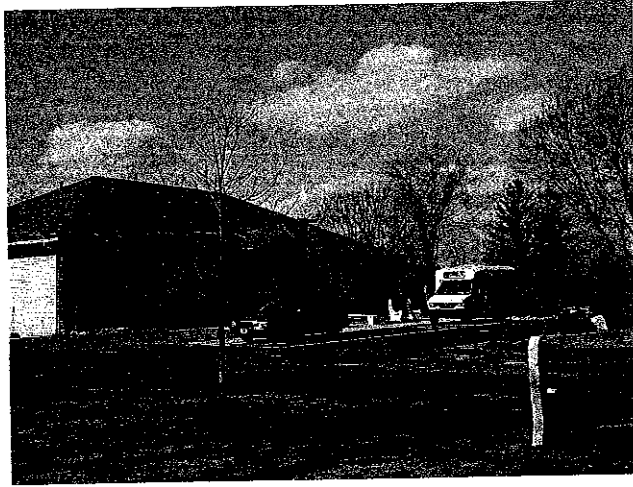


Figure 6.11, Council on Aging Building (formerly the Burt Elementary School)

Although the Council on Aging is the only tenant of the building, the former School Building is utilized as a voting location, public assembly hall, and hosts a myriad of smaller community/private functions. The spaces are clean, bright and relatively modern. A parking area surrounds the facility providing over 100 parking spots on asphalt pavement. With a long history within the community, this iconic structure is also a good local example of adaptive reuse. The ability to reutilize a building in a non traditional but effective

way and at the same time preserving important structures for future generations is a good model for any "trading of spaces" which will likely occur within Acushnet in the near future.

6.2.7 Russell Free Public Library

The Russell Free Public Library is located at 88 Main Street. The 6000 square foot stone building was constructed in 1930 with funding from George Russell. The six-member Board of Trustees maintains custody and management of the library and all related property. The Library is staffed with a full-time director and part-time staff.



Figure 6.11, Russell Free Public Library

The Library operates year round, Monday through Saturday. The Library maintains over 22,000 volumes in its collection, and offers videos, newspapers, magazines, and recorded books. There are a limited number of computers available for public use with full internet access for research and other educational pursuits. Through a regional consortium, members of the Russell Free Library have access to the resources of over 60 libraries in Massachusetts. The Library hosts both children and adult programs.

The Library has many operational and material deficiencies. Functionally, the building is not ADA compliant and provides insufficient space for a modern library services. One third of the Library's collection is in storage, inaccessible to the public. There are no designated adult and children areas within the Library, and little seating and/or quiet space for the public. Inadequate parking (10 spaces) is a severe inconvenience to patrons. The mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems are old and marginally functional to support the modern needs of customers. Materially, the condition of the Library is unsatisfactory. From leaking roofs to crumbling walls, the facility needs a major reconstruction to prevent damage to the contents of the building.

Recognizing these deficiencies, the Library Trustees have pursued the construction of a new Library. On two occasions, over the past few years, grants were secured for construction of a new library, but were not executed due to the inability of obtaining matching funds through Town Meeting.

6.2.8 Community Center

The Howard School Community Center located at 232 Middle Road. The 10,000 square foot brick structure was constructed in 1930 as a one-story school house. With the construction of the Acushnet Elementary and Ford Middle Schools, the Howard School ceased to operate as an educational institution.

For the past five years, Acushnet Community Services, Inc. has leased the building from the Town (currently in the sixth year of a ten year lease). The private non-profit organization



Figure 6.12, Acushnet Community Center (formerly Howard School)

utilizes the facility as a community center, primarily for senior citizens.

The material condition of the building is satisfactory, in large part due to the good stewardship of the current tenant in the building. The building is handicapped accessible and has a large number of parking spaces surrounding the facility. The basement is clean and dry, suitable for storage.

6.2.9 Park and Recreational Facilities

The Acushnet Park Commission is responsible for the recreational facilities located at Pope Park. The Park is located at 256 Main Street, approximately one mile north of the Parting of the Ways. This recreational facility includes 7.5 acres of land, upon which 4 baseball fields are arranged. In addition to the fields, there are outbuildings, including a storage garage and barn, bathroom facilities, concession, scorer's booths, and electrical buildings. A children's playground is located on the northern portion of the park, near the entrance from Main Street. The buildings vary in age from 40 to 50 years old. The buildings vary in condition from good to poor, and provide marginal handicapped access. Security of the buildings is a perennial issue. The concession buildings is generally one of the most vandalized structures in Town.

The Park Commission provides upkeep through seasonal part-time maintenance crews. The Park Commission has been very successful, over the years, at soliciting volunteers to assist the Town workers in maintaining and operating the Park. Baseball season is when the Park is most active. There are several leagues which accommodate players of all ages and skill levels.

6.2.10 Acushnet River Golf Course

The Acushnet River Valley Golf Course, designed by nationally renowned golf course architect Brian Silva, opened for play in 1998. This golfer-friendly layout offers two distinct golfing experiences. The front nine is cut out of tall white pines, reminding you of Carolina courses. These holes were actually carved out of an existing gravel pit which used to exist on the site. Holes 12 through 17 are open, treeless, links-style holes with rolling fairways and undulating greens.

The Acushnet River Valley Golf Course offers four sets of tees measuring 5,099 to 6,807 yards, allowing golfers of all skill levels to enjoy their rounds of golf. The course plays a par of 72, but we also offer a "championship course" with a par of 70.

The Golf Course property is approximately 269 acres and comprises one of the largest open spaces in Acushnet. It is one of the most impressive publicly funded

projects ever undertaken in Acushnet. Not only does the course serve as a revenue generating recreational facility, but provides an anchor for the Acushnet "Green Belt" which straddles the Acushnet River Valley between Middle Road and North Main Street.

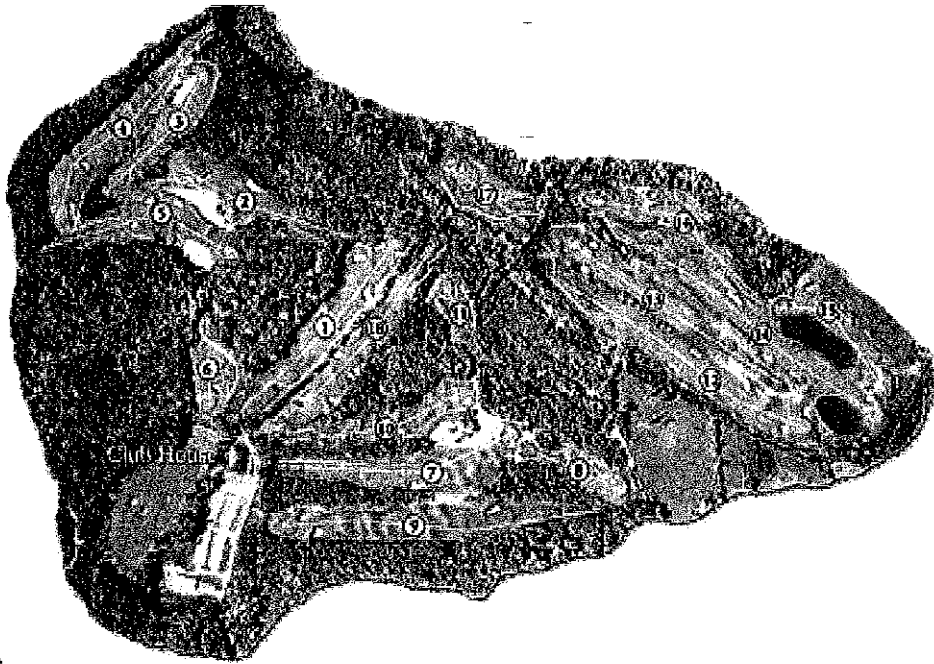


Figure 6.13, Plan view of the Acushnet River Valley Golf Course.

The Acushnet River Valley Golf Course includes four buildings. Two maintenance and grounds keeping buildings, a semi-permanent clubhouse, and a gazebo provide over 9235 square feet of multi-use space. The clubhouse offers a pro shop, small café and changing rooms for patrons of the course. The clubhouse and its outdoor seating area are popular for three season events.

The Golf Course is administered by an elected Acushnet Golf Course Committee. Day-to-day operations are managed by the Golf Pro with supplemental (seasonal) staff.

6.2.11 Historical Commission Buildings

The Historical Commission has stewardship over two of Acushnet's cultural crown jewels; The Long Plain Museum and Quaker (Friends) Meeting House. The Historical Commission is comprised of an all volunteer staff and has taken extraordinary measures to preserve these two facilities and their contents for future generations. Funding for the Historical Commissions operations come from Town Meeting obligations, grants and proceeds from the annual Apple-Peach

Festival (hosted every year on the grounds of the Long Plain Museum). The Historical Society serves a direct support role to the Historical Commission. The Society plays a key role in implementing/overseeing repairs, as well as providing docents, preparing brochures, etc. for the actual operation of the museum.



Figure 6.14, Long Plain Museum

The Long Plain Museum was constructed in 1875. The two story wood structure of classic Italianate architecture provides over 7500 square feet of functional area (Note: a full kitchen is located in the basement). The Museum is open seasonally on weekends.

The Long Plain Museum was recently repainted and all windows were repaired. Renovations to stairs and the front porch have significantly improved safe and efficient access to the building. A new furnace was installed in 2005.

The building is fully alarmed. The signature cupola of the building is scheduled for repair. The Long Plain Museum is plumbed to a septic system which is in marginal condition.

The Friends Meeting House was constructed in 1759. The architectural style of the two story wood frame building is of traditional New England colonial vernacular. The Meeting House serves as an important linkage to Acushnet's past, and is listed on the National Historic Register.

The material condition of the Meeting House is very good. The building has its own endowment which has been prudently utilized to maintain the integrity and aesthetics of the building.

6.3 School Facilities

Acushnet provides elementary (grades K-5) and junior high (grades 6-8) public education for its citizens. In lieu of its own High School (grades 9-12), Acushnet has agreements with surrounding schools to absorb a defined number of Acushnet students every year. The Town reimburses these school systems for tuition. Currently, Acushnet high school age students may attend:

- New Bedford High School
- New Bedford Vocational School
- Old Colony Vocational High School
- Bristol County Agricultural School

Although the Town is deprived of the social and cultural benefits of having its own High School, the quality educational choices available to parents is clearly a counterbalance.

Oversight of the Acushnet School System is provided by an elected five member School Committee. Day-to-day administration of the school system is executed by the Superintendent of Schools, appointed by the School Committee. Both the Acushnet Elementary and Ford Middle School have traditional organizational structures headed by Principals. The Acushnet School System is the largest employer in the municipality with over 130 full-time employees. The budget for the School System is determined at Town Meeting once a year, as are all other Departmental budgets.

The Acushnet Elementary School is located at 800 Middle Road. The 1970's vintage school provides over 93,600 square feet of space for Kindergarten through fifth grade. Structurally and functionally, the building works well for faculty, staff and students. The Ford Middle School was originally constructed in the 1960's and was reconstructed in 2003. The Ford Middle School is a modern facility with state-of-the-art classrooms and laboratories, dining hall and gymnasium. Functionally, the building provides generous and multifunctional spaces which can evolve with changes to the student population, trends in technology, etc. The Middle School hosts all Town Meetings and many other civic functions.

Enrollment statistics shown in Table 6.4, indicate a flattening of student population over the past 10 years. In fact, there has only been an increase in 43 students in the two schools between 1996 and 2007. Given the growth trend and conservative projections, it is the current belief that both the Elementary and Middle Schools have a combined capacity to absorb increased enrollments for the next 15 years.

The current infrastructure “deficiency” of the Acushnet School’s facilities is the inability to meet a Massachusetts Department of Education mandate to provide separate facilities for the School administration physically separated from the two

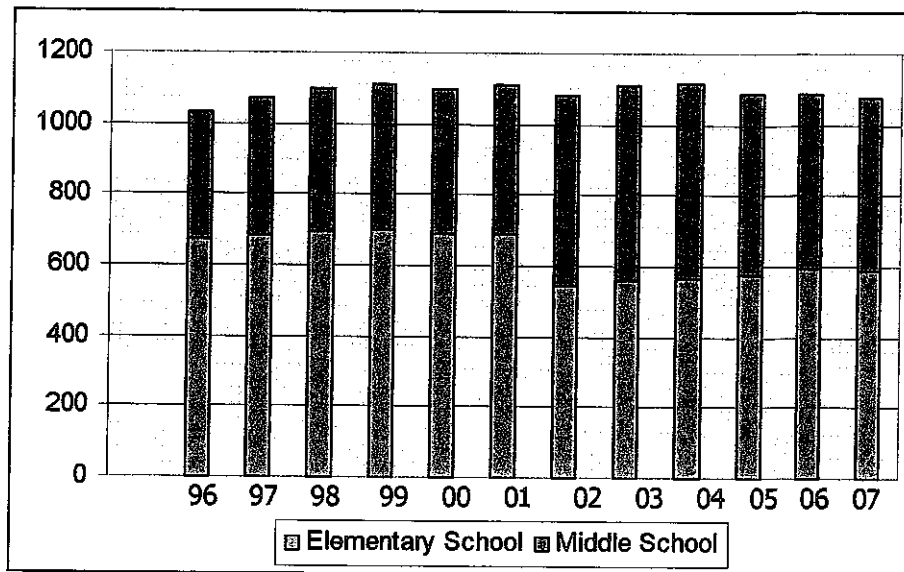


Table 6.4, Student enrollment trend at the Acushnet Elementary and Ford Middle School

schools. Currently the School Administration offices are located within Ford Middle School. As part of the funding agreement with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the physical separation was a stipulation necessary to receive full compensation for design and construction costs of the Ford Middle School. Subsequently, the Town has been investigating potential sites for the School Administration since 2004 to achieve compliance with the mandate.

6.4 Energy Management

The world around Acushnet is changing. One of the most profound external drivers which will influence the “cost of doing business” in Acushnet is the price and availability of energy. As we project into the future and observe energy cost trends over the past 30 years (ref: Table 6.5), it is apparent that fuel costs for schools and other town managed facilities will only rise, and at an exponential rate. In addition to increased cost, the actual availability of fossil fuels will be less certain as oil becomes a scarcer commodity. At this “early” stage of a very predictable crisis, we must responsibly look ahead and plan now. Developing local municipal policies and practices which diminish reliance on non renewable energy sources (i.e., oil) and look for innovative ideas in alternative energy sources (i.e., solar, wind, etc.) are directions we must act upon immediately.

Creating a “sustainable community” generally ensures that we, as a community, consume only enough energy to meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.” This prudent philosophy is not foreign to Acushnet’s citizens. Indeed, we take pride in our ingenuity, responsible stewardship of the land and management of natural resources.

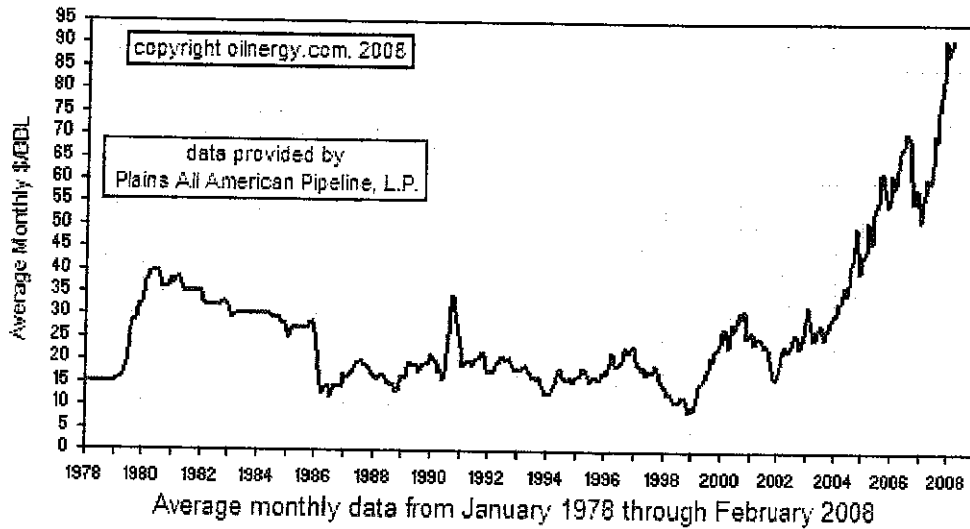


Table 6.5 Average monthly oil cost (based upon WTI Crude)
Source: Plains All American Pipeline, L.P., Oilenergy.com 2008

Hand in hand with efficient and innovative energy management is the growing trend of decreasing a “carbon footprint”. These are currently trendy terms which point individuals and communities in the direction of using non-toxic and biodegradable materials in our processes. Utilizing reusable products is also preferential.

“Going Green” is the latest expression to describe prudent energy and environmentally responsible resource management. Often, municipal government must lead the way to demonstrate best management practices, set standards and educate the public. Beyond the moniker is the realization that we must take tangible steps now to preserve our environment and be ready for a new era where fossil fuels are available in ever limited quantities.

6.4.1 Current Energy Sources

The Town of Acushnet currently receives its energy in four forms: oil, natural gas, electricity and gasoline/diesel fuel. Acushnet purchases its electricity from a private energy vendor, which is distributed by the local owner/operator of the electrical grid owner of Southeastern Massachusetts. Natural gas and oil are also supplied by private vendors. Acushnet procures energy through an open bid

process. The bid process is the only means the Town has to influence its energy costs from the supplier. In essence the Town is wholly dependent on others for the provision of energy to municipal structures. The Town does not maintain any substantial oil reserves. The Town has recently explored cooperative energy contracts with local communities to improve the competitive pricing of energy.

6.4.2 Wind/Alternative Energy Committee

The brainchild of a long-time Town Selectman, the Wind/Alternative Energy Committee was formed in 2007. This committee, which originally focused on the potential of using wind driven turbines as a source of municipal power, quickly expanded to examining other sources of power and means to decrease overall fuel consumption by the Town. This committee will likely serve as the forum for formulating municipal energy policies.

6.5 Facilities Strategy

The Facility and Services Committee met on five separate occasions between January and February of 2008. The Committee conducted a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis of facility issues relevant to the Town, followed by discussions on specific objectives which would address the SWOT findings. Primary users and custodians of the buildings (i.e., Town Administrator, Chiefs, Directors, Committee Chairman etc.) gave presentations on the functional and material condition of their facilities. The Members of the Committee included:

Michael Poitros
Robert St. Jean
Shawn Samanica
Ed Dufrense
Joanne Bertrand
Henry Young, Town of Acushnet, Planning Department

The starting point of the Committee's work was to review and accept the basic premise of the Master Plan Vision Statement as it pertained to facilities and services. The facilities and public services goal, as expressed by the Vision Statement is,

"Plan, create and/or maintain a broad offering of affordable public services which meet the physical needs of our growing community as well as the requirements of regulating agencies"

The next step was to conduct the SWOT analysis within the context of the facilities which support these broad array of public services offered to the citizens

of Acushnet. Guiding principles which emerged as a pretext to this analysis included:

- Consider the material condition of the current facility and its ability to adequately service the public
- Consider the ability of the facility to support future growth
- Be sensitive to current tenants and their long standing commitment to various facilities, yet maintain objectivity to ensure the good of the "whole" are not being diminished by the desires of a "few"
- Be cognizant of the need to distribute capital improvement costs over many years and provide long lead times for major capital expenditures
- Plan for flexible structures whose spaces may be multifunctional or feasibly modified as the tenant mix evolves

A synopsis of the SWOT analysis is as follows.

Strengths & Weaknesses

Strengths, weaknesses, issues and opportunities were discussed categorically in terms of:

- Material Condition
- Functional constraints
- Code Requirements
- Regulation Agency requirements

A brief synopsis of the committee's discussions are summarized below.

TOWN HALL and TOWN HALL ANNEX/RELATED SERVICES

- Space is at capacity within the Town Hall. Many offices (especially the Clerk's office) is overcrowded.
- The material condition of Town Hall is very good.
- The material condition of the Town Hall Annex is good considering the overall age of the structure (circa 1930). Issues such as drafty spaces, occasional seepage in the basement during heavy rains, etc. are characteristic of the building.

- The Police Department does not have sufficient space for functional, safe and efficient operations in the Town Hall Annex. Meeting regulatory requirements is a severe challenge. The Police Department should relocate to another facility (new or other).
- Despite the crowded conditions in Town Hall, future space requirements will likely be met for traditional town services through the relocation of offices to new/other facilities and reorganization of offices by functional grouping. As an example, functional grouping might suggest co-locating the offices of Building Inspector, Planning, Conservation and Assessor. This would provide user-friendly grouping for customers, and internal efficiencies in space, equipment, infrastructure and personnel.
- There is an acute shortage of space for the proper storage of documents. Neither Town Hall nor the Town Hall annex have rooms which have the environmental controls, security and structural integrity to safely and securely enable reliable document preservation/maintenance.

EMA BUILDING

- The Acushnet EMA building is in poor condition. Only minimal investment should be made in this structure to support maintenance which is necessary for structural preservation and integrity
- The Acushnet EMA has exhibited impressive self-help actions to upgrade the structure to a "functional" level.
- The communication equipment possessed by the EMA provides the only direct linkage to State and Federal emergency management agencies. In the event of a scenario warranting Town emergency response protocols to be executed (i.e., hurricane, pandemic, etc.) these important communications assets would be isolated from the Town's emergency operations center, creating substantial communication/coordination problems.

EMS BUILDING

- The EMS Building is in excellent condition and provides safe, efficient and effective spaces from which the Department can conduct its business.

- The Building has capacity to support EMS operations for the foreseeable future (at least 10 years).

FIRE DEPARTMENT FACILITIES

- Fire Station #1 is in very good condition. Although the building is at or near capacity, it should continue to function well for the foreseeable future. If the Town moves to acquire a ladder truck, or new truck dimensions increase dramatically, the building will become inadequate. However, there is not an imminent demand for such apparatus
- Fire Station #2 is in very good condition, and should continue to function well for the foreseeable future.
- Acushnet's geography is such that the town is split along the Acushnet River to the east and west. Road and bridge conditions in the Town which provide east-west movement are in poor condition, creating a negative impact upon response times for those properties lying west of the Acushnet River (Note: Fire Station #1 and #2 both lie to the east of the Acushnet River).

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS FACILITIES

- The building facilities supporting operations are adequate
- Beyond normal maintenance (i.e., septic reconstruction at the DPW Garage), and because of prudent investments by the Town/DPW, the material condition of DPW buildings is good.
- There is no long term sewer strategy in place, effecting informed financial decision making on the part of both Town Government and citizens
- There are substantial unfunded mandates (sewer and water) which negatively impact operational effectiveness and compliance with regulations (i.e., hydrant flushing, leak detection surveys, cross connection surveys, etc.)
- The Town GIS system has not merged information from the DPW water and sewer system. This information is sensitive and access protocols would be necessary.

- Location of the DPW administrative offices in the Parting of the Ways building (and not at the DPW Garage) is an inherited condition from previous administrations.
- Coordination between the Acushnet Fire Department and DPW, regarding hydrant flushing could be improved and provide opportunities to merge DPW maintenance requirements and AFD training/operational requirements.

COUNCIL ON AGING (formerly Burt Elementary School Building)

- The Council on Aging Building is in very good condition and has sufficient space to support its primary function and collateral functions (i.e., voting location). The COA Building is expected to serve its constituents well into the foreseeable future.
- The Council on Aging Building has the capacity to absorb additional functions and uses (i.e., via excess space and multifunctional space use)

LIBRARY

- The Library Building is functionally obsolete.
- The material condition of the building presents immediate challenges to the integrity of the collection.
- The Library is not ADA compliant
- Insufficient parking at the Library
- The Russell Free Public Library Building is an icon of the Town and is worthy of preservation and reuse by an appropriate municipal entity with less space requirements, etc.

HOWARD SCHOOL COMMUNITY CENTER

- The building is in good structural condition
- The building has approximately 10,000 square feet of space including a dry basement which would be suitable for document storage
- The building is currently leased by a non-profit

- The building has substantial parking which could feasibly be made ADA compliant at low cost
- The location of the building is central to Acushnet's higher population growth area (i.e., west of the Acushnet River Valley along the Middle Road corridor).
- The building has good vehicular access (i.e., located on Middle Road)

ACUSHNET RIVER GOLF COURSE

- The Golf Course is valuable to the community because it is revenue generating, a source of local pride, a major recreational venue and provides significant active and passive open space
- The Course facilities are subject to recurring vandalism
- The current clubhouse is not a viable long term solution. Its character is inconsistent with the quality of the course and inhibits growth in usage as a sports venue and event venue
- A new clubhouse should be small with the ability to "add on" as funding permits. Minimum requirements would be: pro shop, prep kitchen, bar, function hall, veranda, storage space.

POPE PARK FACILITIES

- The main outbuildings (i.e., Garage, Concession Stand and Bathrooms) are in marginal condition. Specifically, the roofs of these buildings require replacement.
- Grant funding appears to be an untapped opportunity (as of late) to fund (re)construction projects
- Security is a serious problem
- The bathroom facilities recently received an upgrade in their plumbing systems
- A walking path is currently desired which would connect Pope Park and Scout's Pond (land acquisition required)

- Notwithstanding its poor condition, the "Old Stone" garage at the northern end of the Park is "historic" and destruction of this facility is currently not permitted.
- Electrical (substation) buildings are not secure and pose a real safety hazard to kids entering these structures.

HISTORICAL COMMISSION BUILDINGS

- Both the Long Plain Museum and Friends Meeting House are in good condition considering their age and function.
- The Historical Commission and Society have taken remarkable steps to restore and preserve both buildings (especially the Long Plain Museum as of late).
- There are no structural/material surveys of either building which would establish priorities for maintenance and repairs
- The sewer/septic system is in marginal condition
- The Long Plain Museum is not on the National or State Historical Record.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

- The Acushnet Elementary and Ford Middle School are in excellent condition
- School enrollment trends indicate that adequate space exists for the next 10 to 15 years
- The School Administrative offices should be relocated per agreement with the Commonwealth. However, that move should be made when sufficient functional space has been created

ENERGY MANAGEMENT

- Like most Towns, Acushnet has no energy independence
- Acushnet has taken some initial steps toward addressing alternative/sustainable energy sources through the Wind/Alternative Energy Committee

- The Wind/Alternative Energy Committee is an appropriate forum to discuss municipal energy strategies.
- Utilizing the resources of external agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Mass Development, etc. are opportunities to be explored/pursued.

6.5.1 Facility Goals and Objectives

Reference attached spreadsheet.

LIBRARY	Convert Russel Free Public Library to School Department Office	Develop program , design and funding strategy for a conversion and reconstruction of the Russell Free Public Library into the Offices of the Acushnet School Department.
		Pursue State and/or National Historic Record Status to improve grant opportunities
		Via the Board of Selectmen: bid, award and oversee construction and occupation of new Russell School Department Facility
POPE PARK	Reconstruct outbuildings at Pope Park	Conduct survey of material condition, safety issues, accessibility issues and security risks. Prioritize required improvements
		Research available local, state and federal funding sources for identified improvements. Solicit and secure funding to implelement improvements.
		Via the Board of Selectmen: bid, award and oversee reconstruction/improvements to Pope Park facilities

OBJECTIVES		TASKS
TOWN HALL	Relocate Conservation Commission, Building Inspector to Town Hall Annex	Convene meeting of Selectmen, Town Administrator, Respective Department Heads to discuss movement, relocation of functions, etc. Approve plan. Authorize Town Administrator to implement movement plan.
	Expand Town Clerk, Finance, etc. to spaces vacated through relocation of Conservation Commission and Building Inspector to Town Hall Annex	Self help move to transfer equipment, materials, etc. to new space.
TOWN	Move Conservation Commission and Building Inspector to Town Hall Annex	Self help move to transfer equipment, materials, etc. to new space on second floor of the Town Hall Annex
	Conduct assessment of minimum required improvements to Police Headquarters to improve safety and efficiency (for the next five years. Prepare cost estimate. Solicit funds from various grant sources, legislative earmarks, and Town Meeting.	Implement, in priority order, those improvements which are funded as funds become available.
TOWN HALL - ANNEX	POLICE	Planning Department facilitates series of program and design development meetings with EMA, EMS, FIRE, POLICE, Board of Selectmen and other stakeholders. Coordinate and utilize services of local colleges and vocational schools to advance ideas to conceptual plan level.
		Planning Department develops funding strategy and identifies/secures sources of funds.
		Via the Board of Selectment bid, award and oversee construction and occupation of new Joint Services Public Safety Building

EMA	Preserve structural integrity of EMA Building (minimal investment)	Conduct normal preventative maintenance
	Co-Develop program , design and funding strategy for a Joint Service Public Safety Building	Planning Department facilitates series of program and design development meetings with EMA, EMS, FIRE, POLICE, Board of Selectmen and other stakeholders. Coordinate and utilize services of local colleges and vocational schools to advance ideas to conceptual plan level.
	Relocate to EMS Building upon completion of new Joint Service Public Safety Building.	Self help move to transfer equipment, materials, etc. to EMS Building
	Current EMA Building demolished once vacated./site remedied	Conduct 21E on Thomas Street property and develop simple capping plan to remedy any environmental issues on former dump site. Demolish building. Remove tanks, debris, etc. Cap/pave sight to create municipal parking lot.
		Planning Department develops funding strategy and identifies/secures sources of funds.
DPW	Conduct Sewer Study	As a joint effort between the Planning Department and DPW: Educate public on importance of the sewer study and present finding to FINCOM and Town Meeting (seek approval)
		Planning Department and Department of Public Works jointly administer Sewer Study (bid, award, oversight). Outcome of study will determine what/where sewer improvements should be made
	Incrementally implement sewer improvements (focus on Middle Road expansion)	Lobby State and Federal Agencies, legislators, etc. for funding opportunities. Develop capital improvement plan for incremental sewer expansion. Coordination between DPW, Planning, FINCOM and Board of Selectmen required to achieve general consensus on capital [sewer] improvement program.

COA	Preserve structural integrity of COA Building	Conduct normal preventative maintenance
SCHOOLS	Move School Department Administrative Offices to the Russell Free Public Library (see LIBRARY section above)	Occupy Russel Free Public Library upon completion of building renovation (see LIBRARY section above)
GOLF COURSE	Improve security	Develop security plan with Acushnet Police Department. Purchase and install enhanced security systems
	Build new clubhouse	Develop conceptual plan for a new permanent clubhouse. Clubhouse will provide for phased, economically feasible growth
		Research available local, state and private sector funding for construction. Solicit and secure funding to implement construction
LONG PLAIN MUSEUM	Develop a long term preservation strategy for the Long Plain Museum	Via the Board of Selectmen: bid, award and oversee construction of new clubhouse
		Pursue State and/or National Historic Record Status to improve grant opportunities
		Conduct survey of material condition, safety issues, accessibility issues and security risks. Prioritize required improvements
		Research available local, state and federal funding sources for capital improvements as well as routine maintenance
ENERGY MANAGEMENT	Decrease energy consumption and cost	Develop a townwide energy policy aimed at implementing innovations and best management practices which decrease energy consumption 25% over five years
	Develop alternative energy sources (likely wind)	Enable the Wind/Alternative Energy Committee to develop proposals for wind energy which can provide power to select municipal buildings. Research available local, state and federal funding sources as well as public-private opportunities for wind turbine construction, operation and maintenance. Solicit and secure funding to implement improvements.

DPW (CONTINUED)	Incrementally implement sewer improvements (focus on Middle Road expansion)	DPW bids, awards and oversees all improvements to the municipal sewer system per capital improvement program. Phasing of implementation as funding levels permit.
	Comply with water system maintenance/quality mandates	Research best management practices utilized by other communities to overcome the burden of unfunded mandates facing small towns with financial constraints (e.g., Coordinate with Acushnet Fire Department to systematically flush water system at hydrants).
	Improve availability of potable water in areas of Town to support multifamily units, affordable housing units, general increase in housing density, etc.	Develop and incrementally implement a Water System Expansion Plan to provide increased water coverage in areas slated for Medium Development Density (see Master Plan Land Use Maps). Coordinate, to extent feasible/practical, with sewer upgrades to gain cost efficiencies.
HOWARD SCHOOL	Convert Howard School into a new Library Facility	Develop program, design and funding strategy for a conversion and reconstruction of the Howard School into the Acushnet Library. Library Building will also maintain multifunctional space for community functions, etc.
		Via the Board of Selectmen: bid, award and oversee construction and occupation of new Howard Library

7. Transportation

Throughout history, the relationship between transportation and land development have been inextricably linked. The intersection of superior lines of communication and transport (i.e., roads, rivers, harbors, railroads, airports), have always been the genesis for settlement. As municipalities and development mature, land use activities in turn affect the demand for additional transportation facilities. Today, transportation services are a major factor in siting development projects and shaping the form of a community. As a result, a strong, well-conceived community master plan is necessary to ensure that residents of a community are afforded reasonable accessibility, and that existing and projected land use locations and intensities do not overwhelm the community's transportation system.

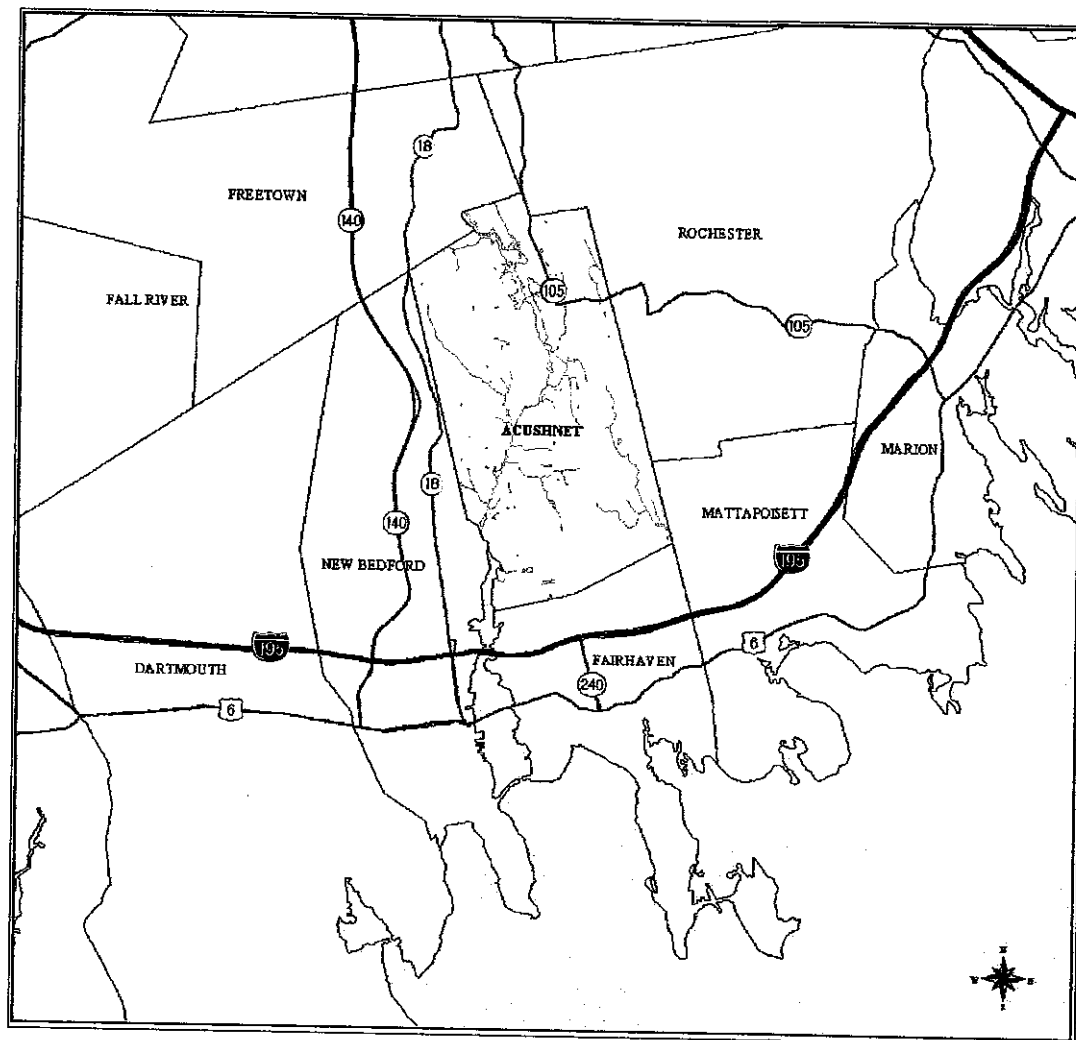
Acushnet's accessibility is defined by its location in Southeastern Massachusetts and the existence and availability of a variety of access modes. The following sections contain descriptions of:

- The design and extent of the local street network in Acushnet and its connections with the regional transportation system
- The availability and frequency of public transportation services including commuter rail and bus
- The existence of any defined pedestrian and bicycle links (sidewalks and trails) within and between major activity centers in the community
- A strategy to enhance the transportation system and eliminate or mitigate undesirable aspects of Acushnet's future transportation system

7.1 The Regional Transportation System

The regional highway system is one of the most important infrastructure elements influencing the pattern of development in a community. Regional highway systems provide access to markets and movement of people between communities. Good highway access can stimulate economic development and increase the catchment area of local retailers and commercial enterprises.

As shown in Figure 7.0, Acushnet has no direct linkage to a regional limited-access highway. Access to I-195 is obtained by traveling 2.3 miles south (from the Town Line along South Main Street) into Fairhaven. Once on I-195 Acushnet residents can travel unhindered to Fall River and Providence to the west, and Cape Cod to the east. Access to Route 140 (a four lane limited access highway) is obtained by traveling approximately 1.2 miles west from the Acushnet Town Center into New Bedford (Main Street to Tarkiln Hill Road). Route 140 offers uninterrupted automobile travel to Taunton.



Mode of Transportation to Work	1990	2000	Change
	%	%	%
Drove Alone	80	86.2	19.1
Carpooled	12	8.1	-25.2
Public Transportation	1.7	0.5	-65.4
Bicycle/Walking	2.3	2.2	-4.6
Motorcycle	0.8	0.2	-63.9
Worked at Home	3.3	2.8	-7.7

Table 7.0, Home-to-Work mode of transportation

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1990 and 2000 long form sample data

With reasonable access to Interstate Highway 195 and Route 140, Acushnet residents can take advantage of the economic, cultural and institutional resources of Providence (Rhode Island), New Bedford/Fall River and Cape Cod. Conversely, the nonexistence of high-speed, divided highways in Acushnet has historically limited the number of travelers from adjacent communities traveling through Acushnet to reach these same destinations. In recent years the number of automobiles transiting Acushnet from Fairhaven and/or New Bedford has begun to diminish the level of service of the roadway system in the central business district of Acushnet (i.e., along South Main, Main and Slocum Streets). The increase in automobile traffic has also been supplemented with frequent truck traffic from the gravel quarry on South Main Street. Both conditions have led to a decrease in the safety and efficiency of Acushnet's important thoroughfares.

7.2 Existing Street System in Acushnet

The road and street network in Acushnet is a manifestation of the Town's rural heritage. Historically, Acushnet was an agricultural community split into eastern and western halves by the north-south flowing Acushnet River. Servicing the farm-to-market needs, Middle Road and Main Street provided an important connection with the "village" of Acushnet to the south where the Acushnet River met the upper reaches of present day New Bedford Harbor. Eventually, streets (e.g., Hamlin Street) provided east-west cross connections. Ancient roads like Quaker Lane linked Acushnet to adjoining communities such as Rochester. Others, often following property lines, creeks and cow paths are seen today in the severe bends of Wing Road and the forks of the Parting Ways.

As the automobile took hold, Acushnet's road network was modernized. Macadam surfaces were placed to provide hard and smooth riding surfaces, bridges were (re)built and in some locations lighting was provided. As the roads were further improved over time, the geometry of the infrastructure was little changed. Today, many of Acushnet's roads are narrow, winding and have little if any shoulders. Trees and rock walls lie close to the edge of pavement which would defy current design standards. The roadway network described above is viewed by many to be an important aesthetic characteristic of the Town and an obstacle to urban sprawl. Interestingly, there is only one State numbered road in the Town, Route 105, which clips the Northeast corner of Acushnet and is only 2.6 miles in length.

As post World War II developments were constructed in Acushnet, the supporting road infrastructure has been decidedly more in keeping with prescribed roadway geometry common to urban areas.

According to the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD), there are 67.33 miles of accepted and unaccepted road in Acushnet. The jurisdiction over these roads is almost entirely assumed by the Town. Route 105, mentioned above, and South Main Street are the only two "State" roads within the Town. A greater discussion of the roadway inventory is offered in the following Section.

7.2.1 Jurisdictional Classification of Acushnet Streets

The jurisdictional and functional classification of streets in the Town of Acushnet are important to understanding how the streets relate to one another, who travels them, and who exercises control over changes that may be necessary on them. Jurisdiction over the use and maintenance of streets in Acushnet is divided among the following administrative bodies:

Jurisdictional Classification of Acushnet Streets		
Controlling Agency	Mileage	Location
Town of Acushnet	58.64	Throughout Town
Mass Highway Dept	4.09	South Main Street, Rt105
Other	0.00	
Unaccepted Roads	4.60	Throughout Town
TOTAL =	67.33¹	

Table 7.1, Jurisdictional Classification of Acushnet Streets

Source: *MassHighway Road Inventory File*. ¹ The MassHighway Road Inventory File is updated periodically, but does not always include the most recent roadway information. Acushnet DPW states this figure significantly understates actual road mileage within Acushnet.

Table 7.1 identifies the location of the streets in Acushnet controlled by each administrative agency. As shown, the vast majority of the streets are Town-controlled. Within the geographical boundaries of Acushnet, there are 4.09 miles of state roads that fall under MassHighway's jurisdiction (Route 105 and South Main Street,). All other streets and roads within the Town borders, a total of about 63 miles, are Town accepted roads or privately-controlled.

7.2.2 Functional Classification of Acushnet Streets

All streets in Acushnet are also classified on the basis of their functional use. A street can serve two basic functions: it can provide *access* to individual parcels of land, or it can facilitate *movements* between various origins and destinations. A high level of access implies the existence of multiple driveways connecting the street with private property and making available part of the street for parking and loading. In contrast, a street that facilitates movement provides the capacity to move large quantities of vehicles and to do so at a reasonably high speed. These functions make competing demands on the street and thereby require that tradeoffs be made as to their relative importance. The functional classification identifies the degree to which the street provides access to individual parcels of land, or the degree to which it discourages local access in favor of efficient movement of vehicles.

It is important that a community have a street system that includes a hierarchy of street types designed to accommodate through traffic, yet is connected to residential areas and neighborhoods by a coordinated system of collector and local streets. Local streets should connect with collector streets, which in turn should carry traffic to arterial streets. When local or residential streets are properly linked to the larger traffic-carrying streets (collectors and minor arterials), local safety is enhanced and the chances of a street's use by through traffic as a short-cut is minimized.

The standard functional classification of streets is described as follows:

Interstate Highway: Facilities that provide service to substantial statewide and interstate travel. An interstate highway is designed to offer motorists the highest degree of mobility by providing very limited access, by eliminating all grade intersections, and by providing wide cross-sections and horizontal/vertical alignments that are conducive to high speeds.

Example: I-195.

Principal Arterial: Major divided highways that serve corridor movements having trip lengths and travel densities characteristic of interstates. A principal arterial is intended to provide a high degree of mobility and a low degree of land access. High capacity is obtained by providing wide cross-sections and/or by eliminating intersections by grade separation. Principal arterials interconnect major

municipalities and other large activity centers within the urbanized area.
Example: Route 140.

Minor Arterial: Roadways with statewide significance that link cities and large towns, forming an integrated network on the county level. The minor arterial system interconnects with and augments the major arterial system. It accommodates trips of somewhat shorter length and at lower operating speeds. Minor arterials may carry local bus routes and provide intracommunity continuity.
Example: Middle Road, South Main Street

Collectors: Major collectors are streets that penetrate residential neighborhoods, commercial districts and industrial areas. Collector streets “collect” traffic from local streets and channel vehicles into the arterial systems. A significant amount of through traffic and/or bus routes may be carried on a major collector street.
Example: Hamlin Street

Local Streets: Roads that provide access to adjacent land, and roads that provide service for relatively short distances. Service to through traffic is undesirable and deliberately discouraged.
Example: Club Avenue

Source: SRPEDD, *Traffic Count File*; U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, *Highway Functional Classification: Concepts, Criteria and Procedures*, revised March 1989.

As described above there are five functional classifications or street categories: Interstate highway, principal arterial streets, minor arterial streets, collector streets and local streets. A map of the major streets in each functional category is provided in Figure 7.1. Despite the Town’s proximity to numerous Interstate highways, no interstate highways actually traverse the Town. I-195, the closest interstate highway, provides high speed access between Acushnet and points west (Fall River, Providence) as well as east (Cape Cod).

The majority of streets in Acushnet (48.1) miles or roughly 71% of its total roadway mileage, function as local or residential streets designed to provide access to individual residential parcels or neighborhoods. There are 4.8 miles of principal arterial streets; 14.4 miles of minor arterial and collector streets.

Closely tied to functional classification is eligibility for Federal (and State matching funds) for roadway reconstruction and/or repair. Those functional classifications eligible for such funding include interstate highways, arterials and collectors. Acushnet’s “Federal-Aid” eligible roads include those in Table 7.2.

Federal Aid Roads in Acushnet		
Functional Classification	Street Name	Mileage
Arterial (only)	Nye's Lane	1.0
	Hamlin Street	1.2
	Slocum Street	0.4
	Wing/Hathaway/Mattapoisett Rds	3.2
Minor Arterial & Collector (dual function)	Middle Road	4.0
	Peckham Road	1.3
	Main Street	6.6
	Perry Hill Road	1.3
	South Main Street	1.2

Table 7.2, Federal-Aid roads in Acushnet.

Source: SRPEDD, *Traffic Count File*; Field Verification conducted by Acushnet Planning Department, Jan 2008.

Acushnet is host to one scenic road, Route 105. Located in the northeastern section of Town, the "Scenic Road" status of this facility restricts the extent of road repair, utility construction, removal of trees and removal and/or modification of stone walls. The basic intent of a Scenic Road is to maintain its historic character as a cultural asset to the community. Construction activities in or around a Scenic Road are governed under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40, Section 15C.

7.2.3 Traffic Conditions on Acushnet Streets

The average daily volumes of vehicular traffic on Acushnet's streets are shown in Table 7.3. These traffic volumes were taken at the locations listed over the course of ten years. They represent 24-hour average daily traffic volumes, adjusted to reflect monthly variations.

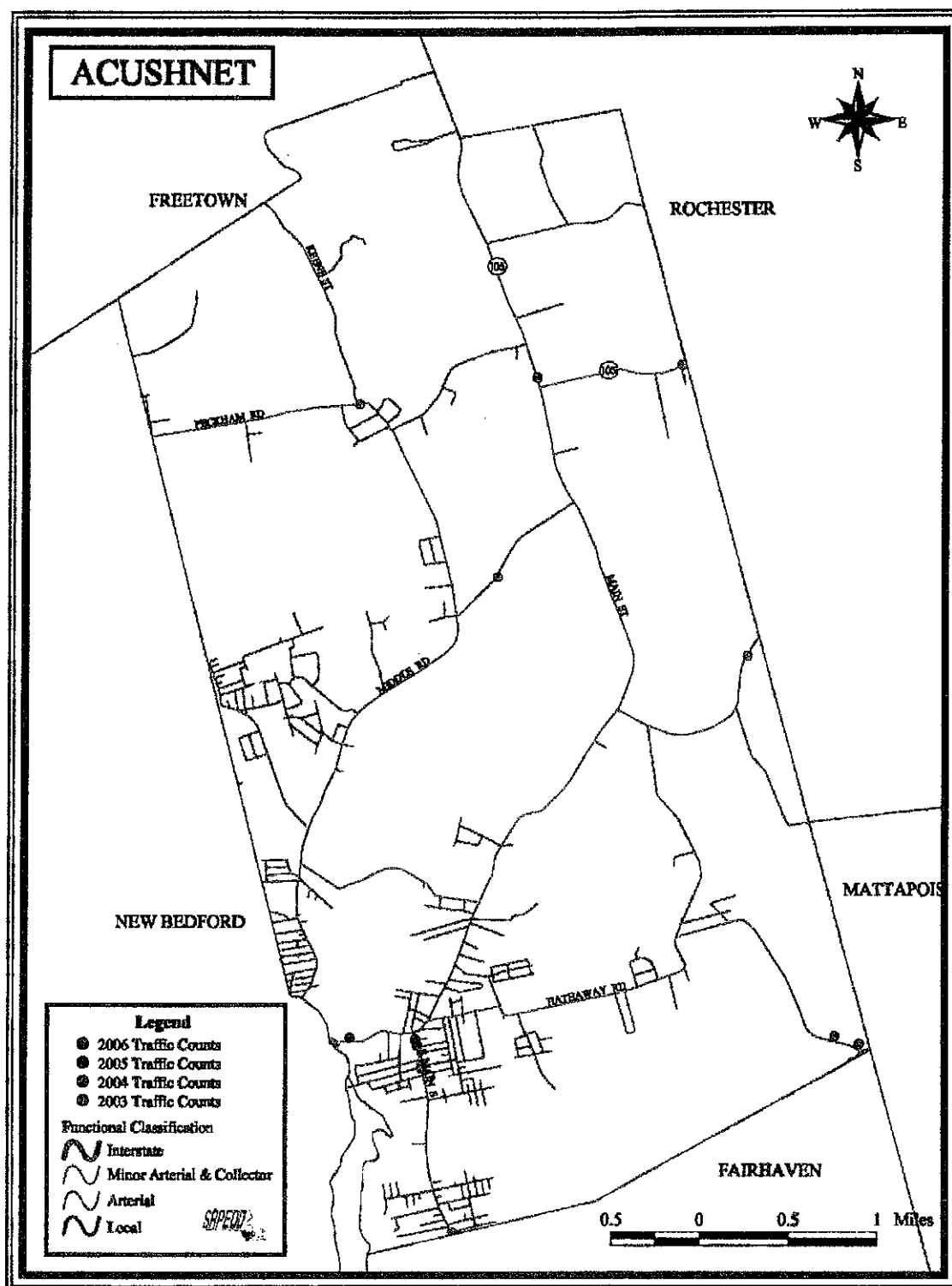


Figure 7.1 , Functional classification of the Acushnet road network

Source: SRPEDD, Traffic Count File

7.2.4 Safety on Acushnet Streets

Generally, streets and roads with higher relative traffic volumes experience a greater frequency of traffic accidents. This assumption holds true in Acushnet. The Town's highest volume thoroughfares, South Main Street, Middle Road and Main Streets account for over 56% of all traffic accidents in Acushnet. These roads share common characteristics which degrade roadway safety including: high speed traffic, long stretches of unfettered movement transitioning into developed areas, poor road geometry, minimal night lighting, varying drainage conditions, trees and utility poles in close proximity to the edge of road and marginal road markings. These conditions are not unusual for communities on the fringe of urban development where high volume, high speed traffic are superimposed onto rural roads of obsolete design.

An analysis of traffic accidents within the Town provides a ranking of the most dangerous roads in Town. The top five most dangerous roads on the basis of number of traffic accidents are:

1. South Main Street
2. Main Street
3. Middle Road
4. Wing/Hathaway/Mattapoisett Road (combined)
5. Nye's Lane

Of these roads South Main Street and Main Street have specific safety issues which have contributed to unusually high frequency of accidents, including accidents resulting in fatalities. Within the past ten years South Main Street, the primary thoroughfare through the village of Acushnet, has been the site of three pedestrian-vehicular fatalities. Contributing factors to these accidents were likely poor sight distance (unseen pedestrians emerging from parked cars), high traffic volume/speed in an urban area, disrespect and disregard for crosswalks by automobile drivers.

Main Street, a major north-south vehicular corridor, runs 6.3 miles between New Bedford and Rochester. Main street is a mixture of thickly settled residential units and commercially developed parcels with approximately 40 intersecting roadways. Throughout Acushnet, Main Street is a two-lane bidirectional roadway with varying lane and shoulder widths. Although there are only a few slight vertical changes throughout Main Street, there are several horizontal curves, including a high crash location known as "Diggle's Curve".

This heavily traveled roadway has one of the highest lane-departure crash incidents in Southeastern Massachusetts. Between 2003 and 2006 there were 28 lane departure accidents including three fatalities. Of those 28 crashes, twenty involved striking a tree or utility pole. A study conducted by the University of Massachusetts and the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic

Development District (SRPEDD) found the major contributing factors to these crashes included excessive speed, fatigue/inattention, failure to keep in proper lane, and weather.

7.2.5 Pavement Widths on Acushnet Streets

Street design standards are an effective and important tool available to communities to control the type and speed of vehicles on their street system and to promote a desired character. Acushnet does not currently maintain a comprehensive, up-to-date inventory of street geometry in Acushnet. However, a general observation of the roadway network indicates that Middle Road, South Main Street, Main Street and Slocum Street have typical geometry for their function. Roads such as Hamlin Street and Perry Hill Roads are relatively narrow reflecting their historical nature of Acushnet as an agrarian society.

7.2.6 Pavement Conditions on Acushnet Streets

The Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District's (SRPEDD), in collaboration with the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD), provide periodic evaluation of pavement conditions for federal-aid eligible roadways in SRPEDD communities. The statewide Pavement Management System (PMS) examines roads which are functionally classified as interstate highways, arterials and collectors. Physical evaluation of these roadways leads to the categorization of pavement condition shown in Table 7.4

PMS Repair Category	General Condition	Recommended Corrective Action
Reconstruction	Poor	Recommended action may include removal and replacement of pavement, roadway widening and realignment, safety improvements and runoff enhancements.
Rehabilitation	Fair	Patching, crack sealing, seal coating, scarification and overlays
Preventative Maintenance	Good	Crack and chip sealing, and overlays
Routine Maintenance		Crack sealing and pothole patching
No Maintenance Action Required	Excellent	n/a

Figure 7.4, Pavement Management System (PMS) repair categories and recommended corrective actions

Utilization of Chapter 90 funding for road surface improvement and road improvements in conjunction with sewer upgrades has substantially improved the condition of the Town's federal aid streets. Based upon a local update of SRPEDD's 2004 Preventative Maintenance System road data base for Acushnet, the condition of the Town's federal aid roads is shown in Figure 7.2. Approximately 49 percent of Acushnet's roads are in Excellent to Good condition, 32 percent are in fair condition, while 19 percent are in poor condition. It is important to recognize that this categorization only pertains to federal aid roads which comprise approximately 20 road-miles (i.e., about 1/3 of all roads) within the municipality. The remaining "local" roads are not represented here. The Acushnet DPW does not have a current inventory of local road pavement conditions.

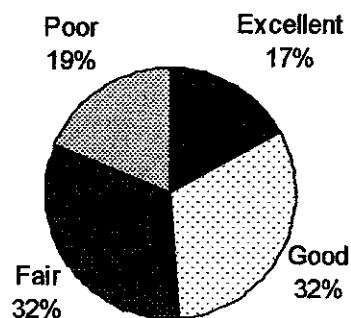


Figure 7.2, Condition classification of Acushnet federal-aid roads.
Source: SRPEDD, Town of Acushnet

7.3 Existing Transit Services in Acushnet

Acushnet residents, like those of many other suburban "bedroom communities," are heavily dependent on private automobiles for transportation. Efforts to encourage residents and workers to use alternative transportation modes have met with limited success. As shown in Table 7.0, only 8% of those who reside in Acushnet and work elsewhere participate in some form of ridesharing to and from their workplaces. With residential and employment densities unable to support transit services, the use of commuter bus or commuter rail services requires that residents travel in their automobiles to specific locations or connecting stations outside of the Town.

The transit services that are presently accessible by Acushnet residents is summarized below.

- **MBTA Commuter Rail:** There are no MBTA commuter rail stations located in Acushnet. However, Acushnet commuters can access the MBTA commuter rail system by driving to Lakeville. Daily service is provided from this station to employment centers in metropolitan Boston.

- **SRTA Bus Service Between Taunton and Providence:** The Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA) provides daily bus service throughout communities in Southeastern Massachusetts. Although no service is available in Acushnet, the closest bus stop is 3/10 miles from Town center along Belleville Avenue. Connecting to the regional transit bus hub in downtown New Bedford, riders may transfer to busses traveling throughout the region. In addition, commercial bus service may be accessed here with service to Boston, Providence and Cape Cod.

7.4 Bicycle and Pedestrian Access in Acushnet

While the capacity of the street system, and the availability of alternative transit modes are important components of a master plan, so too are the special needs of bicyclists, joggers and pedestrians. As the public's interest in health and physical fitness grows, the needs of this growing segment of the population must also be considered. In keeping with the rural nature of the community, there are very few streets outside of the Town center which currently have a sidewalk along one or both sides of the travelway. This is not surprising in light of the very low residential densities and limited recreational destinations that might warrant pedestrian access. However, there are also no public multi-use or other paths available for recreational use by cyclists or walkers/joggers in Town. As a result, many joggers and bikers now share the street right-of-way with motor vehicles and thereby create hazardous conditions for themselves and the traveling public.

7.5 Transportation Strategy

The Transportation Committee met on five separate occasions between September and November of 2007. The Committee conducted a SWOT analysis of transportation issues relevant to the Town, followed by discussions on specific objectives which would address the SWOT findings. The Members of the Committee included:

Mark White, Chairman
Jim Reger, President, PJ Keating Co.
Kara Brown, Esq.
Paul Sylvia, Department of Public Works
Ray Barlow, Department of Public Works
Henry Young, Town of Acushnet, Planning Department

The starting point of the Committee's work was to review and accept the basic premise of the Master Plan Vision Statement as it pertained to transportation. The Transportation Goal, as expressed by the Vision Statement is,

"Provision of a transportation infrastructure which safely and efficiently services both vehicular and pedestrian traffic"

The next step was to conduct a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat analysis within the context of multiple modes of transportation and circulation within Acushnet. Guiding principles which emerged as a pretext to this analysis included:

- Acushnet's roadways are an important component of the "Town-&-Country" character.
- Acushnet's streets and roads are "stressed" as a growing Town population and increased "through traffic" (especially on South Main Street) is increasing traffic congestion, and impacting safety
- A communities transportation network is the backbone for residential and business development

A synopsis of the SWOT analysis is as follows.

Strengths & Weaknesses

Strengths, weaknesses, issues and opportunities were discussed categorically in terms of:

- Safety
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Access
- Road and Bridge Maintenance
- Transit
- Scenic Roads
- Funding
- Agency Coordination
- New Roads
- Parking

A brief synopsis of the committee's discussions are summarized below.

SAFETY

- Acushnet's country roads are often curvy and have no sidewalks. Automobiles drive fast on these roads creating a dangerous situation for pedestrians on the roadside. Examples include Wing/Hathway/Mattapoisett Road.
- There are no sidewalks leading to the Skate-Park on Nye's Lane. Teens walk up and down the road often creating a dangerous situation for drivers and pedestrians.
- Drivers who utilize South Main have issues negotiating the Slocum Street intersection. Placing a light at this intersection apparently has met with mixed reviews (via informal conversations). Past studies conducted by SRPEDD have indicated that a light does not meet minimum warrants for placement.
- Poor sight distance is a problem at the intersection of Main Street and Wing Road.
- South Main Street (vicinity of Pop Casey's), pedestrian crossing is dangerous. Fatalities have occurred at this location.
- Main Street in Acushnet has one of the highest incidents of lane departure crashes (i.e., crashes resulting from a car leaving the roadway) in Southeastern Massachusetts. The Town is participating in a study with the University of Massachusetts and SRPEDD to identify causes and potential remedies.
- Middle Road/Peckham Road requires straightening. ROW has already been purchased by DPW.
- Truck traffic on South Main Street is dangerous. An alternate truck route could improve safety, but would likely require construction of a new road.

PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE ACCESS

- There are no sidewalks/trails - any means of walking or biking on most of Main Street, beginning right after Hamlin Street and traveling all the way down towards Rochester/Lakeville. It is generally felt that there is not roadway width (currently) for a bike lane.

- Lake Street (as it crosses the reservoir) serves as a recreational location. Many fisherman park along the roadside which makes the street even more narrow for drivers and dangerous for the fishermen/boaters/families.
- During the Apple-Peach Festival, the lack of sidewalks between Leonard Street and Lake Street - especially towards the Country Whip creates a dangerous situation for pedestrians walking along the roadside.
- There is general support for bike and walking paths in Town. Opportunities may exist for leveraging Golf Course property as a potential walking area. Also, as the New Bedford bike path corridor is extended to the north, there may be potential to tie into that system.

ROAD and BRIDGE MAINTENANCE

- Lake Street (as it crosses the reservoir) serves as a recreational location. Many fisherman park along the roadside which makes the street even more narrow for drivers and dangerous for the fishermen/boaters/families. Guard rails should be examined as a potential means to improve safety.
- The Town does not have a current Pavement Management System (PMS) database for all roads in Town (Note: SRPEDD maintains a PMS database for Federal-Aid roads), but that is not updated annually.
- The Town has not fully developed/utilize a future-years road maintenance/repair plan. A 5-Year DPW Plan exists but it is not managed/utilized.
- There has been no identification of new road requirements
- The Town relies on the Massachusetts Highway Department for bridge condition assessment. However, there are many bridges/culverts in Town which are not inspected by MHD. Their condition is essentially unknown.
- Structurally deficient bridges in Town (i.e., Hamlin Street, Main Street, etc.) require detours by buses, trucks and emergency response vehicles.
- The Acushnet Planning Department enjoys a good, long-standing relationship with SRPEDD. Better Coordination between the Planning Department and DPW could yield substantial opportunities in aid and assistance from SRPEDD, Mass Highway and State/Federal Legislators

TRANSIT

- Acushnet has lost public transportation services from the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA).
- The impact on Acushnet from any commuter rail expansion (to New Bedford) will be higher traffic volumes leading to the nearest station (likely Tarklin Hill Road)

SCENIC ROADS/AESHTTEICS

- It is a general perception that citizens of Town like the roads as they are, and would not favor a major road widening effort. The "country roads" are an important element in the "town & country" look of Acushnet.
- Route 105 is a Scenic Route
- Official scenic roads status imposes a significant constraint on future road improvements. Pursuit of scenic road status for Acushnet's streets must weigh the pro's and con's.

FUNDING

- Road maintenance is provided via State Chapter 90 funds with local match. As of 2007, the Chapter 90 funding was \$90,000 and the local match was provided in an \$80,000 Town line item. Chapter 90 funding can accumulate in an escrow account to be saved and expended on major projects, if desired. Currently the town has \$440,000 in escrow.
- An increase in Chapter 90 funding is projected
- The DPW does not maintain exact records of how road funding is distributed over the following categories:
 - Bridges
 - Roads
 - Intersection Improvements
 - Signage
 - Lights
 - Safety / Guardrail

- Maintenance
 - Facilities
 - Equipment
- There is no clear and consistent policy (i.e., impact fee) governing developer expenditures on roadway infrastructure when new construction occurs.

AGENCY COORDINATION

- The Planning Department has a strong relationship with SRPEDD and MHD District Five
- The Town currently has one project, Hamlin Street Bridge Repair, in the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).
- The Town should submit at least one project every year for consideration in the TIP

NEW ROADS

- The extension of Route 240 into Fairhaven and Acushnet would provide a direct interstate high connection to the Town. We currently have none.
- A direct connection would improve the competitiveness of Acushnet in attracting businesses to Town.
- The proposed route would be difficult to construct as it would pass through several wetland areas.
- To be successful, this must be a joint effort of Fairhaven, Acushnet and New Bedford. Neither Fairhaven nor New Bedford have shown any interest in the concept yet.
- Building the component of the proposed route which crosses South Main Street (at the quarry) and connecting to Slocum Street would take truck traffic off South Main Street and provide the opportunity for creating a new commercial-industrial zone. This is henceforth referred to as the South Main Street – Slocum Street bypass.
- The South Main Street – Slocum Street bypass would affect only a few properties in an area accustomed to industrial/commercial land use (i.e., quarry and Tilcon Ball Plant #1)

PARKING

- South Main Street parking is unresolved. The State does not permit parking and the Town does not enforce this restriction
- No downtown parking lots exist. This forces on-street parking and has an impact upon business growth

The findings of the Acushnet Master Plan Economic Development Subcommittee, listed above, generated a set of objectives and tasks to be undertaken in direct response to these issues. These objectives and tasks are outlined following section.

7.5.1 Transportation/Circulation Goals and Objectives

Reference attached spreadsheet.

ACU.	6200	U-5	ALDEN RD.	6,700			
ACU.		U-0	GARFIELD ST.				
ACU.	6197	U-6	HATHAWAY RD.		2,900		
ACU.	6162	R-0	KEENE RD.	280			
ACU.		R-0	LEONARD ST.				
ACU.	6194	U-5	MAIN ST.	6,800		7,200	
ACU.		U-5	MAIN ST.				
ACU.	6293	U-5	MAIN ST.		12,200		
ACU.		U-5	MAIN ST.				
ACU.		U-5	MAIN ST.				
ACU.		U-5	MAIN ST.				
ACU.		U-5	MAIN ST.				
ACU.	6649	R-5	MATTAPOISETT RD	930		750	700
ACU.	6196	U-5	MIDDLE RD.	6,300			6,000
ACU.		U-6	NYES LANE		2,440		
ACU.		U-5	PECKHAM RD.				
ACU.	S601	R-5	PERRY HILL RD.			2,630	
ACU.		U-0	RIVER ST.		550		
ACU.		R-5	ROBINSON RD.	1,800			
ACU.	6195	U-5	S. MAIN ST.	11,900	14,500	11,000	12,300
ACU.		U-5	S. MAIN ST.				
ACU.		U-5	S. MAIN ST.		14,500		
ACU.		U-5	S. MAIN ST.				
ACU.		U-5	S. MAIN ST.		14,370		
ACU.	6198	U-6	SLOCUM ST.		8,100	8,060	
ACU.		U-6	SLOCUM ST.		8,100		
ACU.		U-6	SLOCUM ST.		6,600		
ACU.		U-6	SLOCUM ST.		7,320		
ACU.		U-0	TITLEIST DR.		2,000		

data for arterials, collectors and other select roads

SAFETY	OBJECTIVE	TASKS
	Improve road safety on Acushnet's major rural thoroughfares	<p>Conduct comprehensive roadway safety study to determine locations, causes and frequency of traffic accidents (on rural arterials, rural collectors and urban minor arterials) and corrective actions.</p> <p>Complete North Main Street lane departure crash study and implement findings.</p>
	Create additional off street parking in the Village of Acushnet	<p>Prepare downtown parking plan to determine desired locations of on/off-street parking locations. Involve MHD and SRPEDD.</p>
	Formalize and implement South Main Street parking policy	<p>Resolve long standing South Main Street on-street parking issue with Mass Highway. Specifically, identify if and where on-street parking is to be allowed, proper signage, and protocol for enforcement.</p> <p>Properly sign and stripe South Main Street per Town/MHD resolution and enforce parking laws.</p>
	Vigilantly monitor traffic conditions on South Main Street to determine necessity for traffic light at Slocum Street	<p>Conduct biannual traffic volume study/turning movement study to determine if South Main Street/Slocum Street intersection warrants a traffic light.</p>
	Mitigate truck and "through" traffic on South Main Street. Investigate potential for a Downtown Bypass road.	<p>Conduct feasibility study of Downtown Bypass road (Slocum Street Bridge - South Main Street) to quantify expected safety improvements, and other benefits.</p>

PEDESTRIAN and BICYCLE ACCESS		OBJECTIVE	TASKS
	Pursue linkage to neighboring community bike paths		Coordinate with the City of New Bedford to determine where and how a bike path extension (spur) into Acushnet could be incorporated into the City's North End Bike Path Extension Project.
			Coordinate with City of Fairhaven to determine the long term opportunity to connect these communities via bike path.
	Pursue bike/pedestrian path opportunities within the village area.		Create a designated pedestrian "walking trail" connecting between River View Park - River Street - Slocum - South Main. Implement sidewalk improvements along this route.
			Conduct feasibility study of Downtown Bypass road (Slocum Street Bridge - South Main Street). Ensure bike/pedestrian opportunities are examined

	OBJECTIVE	TASKS
ROADS and BRIDGES	Institutionalize a Five-Year DPW Road and Bridge Plan	DPW 5 Year Plan should be developed and presented annually (to DPW and FINCOM) and used as a tool for demonstrating a need for additional funding.
		Co-developed with the Planning Department to ensure coordination of mutual goals, funding opportunities, etc.
		Incorporate bridges into the DPW 5 Year Plan.
TRANSIT	Restore Public Transportation (i.e., SRTA bus service) to Acushnet	Aggressively pursue funding for State/Federal funding for bridge repairs.
		Appropriate funding for outsourcing of local bridge inspections (which are not inspected by the State)
	Proactively address the potential impacts of expanded MBTA commuter rail service to New Bedford	Conduct feasibility study of Downtown Bypass road (Slocum Street Bridge - South Main Street).
		Prepare study/proposal which determines the location of potential stop(s), anticipated volumes, etc. to justify restoration of SRTA service to Acushnet.
		Lobby SRTA and SRPEDD for restoration of Acushnet service (short loop).
		Continue participation on MBTA Growth Management Task Force which addresses regional/local impact of projected MBTA service from the New Bedford - Fall River Commuter Rail Extension Project.

SCENIC ROADS and AESTHETICS	OBJECTIVE	TASKS
	Preserve the historic character (i.e., lane widths, abutting stone walls, etc.) of Acushnet's rural roads	Create awareness of Scenic Road Status (source of local pride). Ensure abutters, DPW, etc. are aware of restrictions associated with construction on/hear a Scenic Road.
		Adopt the MHD construction specification/policy for road construction which specifically addresses protection of scenic elements of existing roads (i.e., stone walls, road widths, historic landscapes, etc.).
PARKING	Create additional off street parking in the Village of Acushnet	Prepare downtown parking plan to determine desired locations of on/off-street parking locations.
		Resolve long standing South Main Street on-street parking issue with Mass Highway. Specifically, identify if and where on-street parking is to be allowed, proper signage
		Properly sign and stripe South Main Street per Town/MHD resolution
		Encourage private businesses to create their own parking lots to minimize the reliance of on-street parking.