

TOWNSCAPE

POLICIES & STRATEGIES

Our community is nearing the end of its basic building and development period. Soon, the majority of the unprotected open land will house more families and businesses. As we approach this next phase in our growth as a community, now is the time to anticipate what we want our town to look and feel like in twenty years. What will be Marshfield's townscape in the year 2020?

The discussion that follows presents a summary of the work performed in the course of preparing the Comprehensive Plan. These critical issues lay the foundation for the vision statement and subsequent goals, policies and recommendations that follow. Finally, the most essential actions we must take as a Town are woven into an integrated strategy that is Marshfield's core work program for the life of the Plan. Together, these various pieces answer three central questions:

- What type of community can we be in the future?
- Can the Plan lay out a path to take us toward our preferred future?
- What work must be done to reach that future?

Summary of Critical Issues

The Landscape

Marshfield's character is based on two fundamental landscape features: the coast and the forested, formerly agricultural inland. The former is largely built out; the latter is where the majority of change will occur in the next two decades.

The feature in Marshfield's landscape most sensitive to change from future development will be the few remaining fields and woodlands. As farming is no longer highly economically viable, housing will be the use that will bring owners the greatest financial return. While some owners may hold fields open due to a commitment to farming and the preservation of the landscape, many will not.

The rural roadscape is of great importance, but of somewhat less sensitivity than the open fields. The high level of dense vegetation and the tendency of builders to place homes away from the road mean that the vegetated road edge will likely remain in most areas. Thus, the visual experience along most inland roads will also be maintained despite the presence of more houses.

Of greater threat to the roadscape than more homes will be road modifications performed to improve safety and/or increase road capacity. Such changes must be handled with great care so as to not lose the rural, tree-lined qualities of many of the Town's roads.

The coast has largely been developed, but there is the potential in some areas for infill construction which might obscure views of the ocean and coastal marshes or create a sense of inappropriately high densities.

The historic built landscape of the old villages is largely intact. The same is true for most of the outlying historic structures - homes, barns, civic

buildings and churches. Marshfield has done well in preserving these structures. Generally speaking, lot size limitations, zoning requirements and an apparent high level of respect for local history all are working together to protect the Town's historic landscape. Despite previous good efforts, continued attention must be paid to this issue in the future.

ample vacant land and a variety of potential uses. Change will occur here.

The rate of residential growth is steady but not overwhelming. Build-out will be reached within a few decades.

Route 139 traffic congestion is the major factor that will control land use policy along the Route 139 corridor. Residents feel strongly that further congestion must be avoided. This objective will strongly influence the choice of land uses in the Enterprise Drive area. Residents are very concerned with improving the aesthetics of current commercial areas.

This includes the Downtown, the Route 139 corridor and Brant Rock. While there has not been dramatic change in the other villages, there are concerns that the Town manage redevelopment carefully in these

Managing Land Uses

The Town's land use pattern will remain stable into the future. This is due to a combination of factors.

- First, there is no desire on the part of residents to see dramatic change.
- Second, the majority of remaining vacant land lies within areas that are both zoned for housing and are most suitable for housing versus other uses.
- Third, the limited number of east-west routes and north-south routes shapes the town's land use pattern to a dramatic degree and this road system will not change.

The one exception to this condition is the Enterprise Drive area. There is

areas as well so as to protect and

enhance their character.

The major land use choices facing the Town will be shaping Enterprise Drive, reinforcing the Downtown and carefully controlling the aesthetics of future development and redevelopment, particularly commercial and industrial development.

Circulation

While there are many local and area-specific circulation problems in Marshfield, it is clear that the predominant concerns for a comprehensive plan are those relating to town-wide issues which have a direct impact on all residents and visitors.

A major focus of these concerns is Route 139. As previously noted, this route is subject to significant traffic congestion, mainly as a result of the absence of alternative east-west routes, and the concentration of present and future commercial and industrial development. Similarly, there is concern about increasing demand on the limited north-south routes, and the impact of the planned Greenbush commuter rail service.

The absence of alternate east-west routes places pressure and capacity demands on Route 139. The congestion on Route 139 is exacerbated by seasonal variations, with high summer peaks, particularly at weekends. There are design and operational problems on Route 139, in particular difficulties associated with turning traffic and multiple curb cuts, and the variations in the roadway cross-section/number of travel lanes.

Pressure on Route 3A as the only continuous north-south route will increase, particularly in light of the planned Greenbush commuter rail service to Scituate. Although Route 3A appears to have adequate capacity to meet these needs, problems are associated with traffic turning to and from side streets.

The potential impact of build out in the Enterprise Drive area, both in terms of traffic generation and the need to provide for adequate access, is serious. As strengthening/expansion of development in this area is generally supported, it is essential to limit traffic generation to acceptable levels, and manage access accordingly. Implications of re-zoning for non-industrial uses along Route 139 in the Enterprise Drive area, specifically the impact to traffic congestion and access management must be carefully considered.

There is the potential for serious negative impacts to the rural character of many roadways if capacity, operational or safety improvements are called for and full highway design standards applied. This also applies to intersections, in particular those with triangular, grass islands. Poor vehicular circulation and a poor pedestrian network in the Downtown/Webster Square area continues to be a problem. There are deficiencies in pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including missing linkages, absence of crosswalks and discontinuities in sidewalks.

The Economy

Marshfield's employment opportunities and the tax base appear sufficient to meet the needs of the community. However, modest continued growth is expected and desired.

Most residents would like to see the Downtown more attractive and more appealing as a place to gather and linger. The Downtown Revitalization Plan is a strong concept which the Town will be pursuing in the years ahead.

The smaller village centers are stable and no major regulatory actions or investments are needed. Interest in attracting year round businesses has been expressed and the zoning and buildings are present to make this possible in most areas. Opportunities to encourage more business development in Brant Rock should be explored.

The future land use policy and a circulation plan for the Enterprise Drive area must be defined. This includes the properties abutting Route 139 and those lying within the interior portions of the industrial zone.

Services and Facilities

Major investments are currently planned and underway for water and storm drain improvements. The 50 year old age of this system is a liability and must be addressed. The need for sewer extension to the Downtown is under debate and appears necessary, but Town Meeting voters have, to date, been unwilling to fund the extension. Seawalls will continue to decay unless the Town develops consistent policy and management goals. Shoreline protection structures are costing the Town significant amounts of money in continuing maintenance. Higher levels of attention must be paid to this issue in the future.

Inter-town ground water protection efforts are non-existent, but are nonetheless important. Marshfield needs to develop specific mechanisms aimed at protection of

the Town's recharge areas in conjunction with the towns of Pembroke and Duxbury.

There will be an increased need for elderly services. The fire, library and building departments are all seeing increasing demands from the aging population. This trend will continue and must be anticipated. Expansion of the library to the existing town owned store fronts next door should be considered essential to the overall health of the downtown. If a new library is needed all efforts should be given to locating it within the Downtown.

Housing

Marshfield housing stock is and will continue to be primarily single-family homes. There is no desire on the part of residents to dramatically change this quality of the Town.

There are also some residents who would like to see a greater variety of housing options available in Marshfield. Apartments built in the 1960's set a negative standard for multifamily housing in the community that may be difficult to overcome.

There is some interest within the community of seeing new developments set aside land as open space as well as meeting the town's affordable housing requirements under Chapter 40B.

Open Space and Recreation

Funding must be sought to continue with open space acquisition efforts. The Town's Conservation Fund needs more cash available for acquisition efforts and maintenance of existing properties.

The Town has done poorly in providing neighborhood parks and open space in association with new subdivisions. A more assertive approach, backed up by a commitment to purchase designated open space, should become the norm.

There is concern that access to the coast will be privatized. The Town needs a clear policy and set of decision making criteria to ensure that all historic access routes to the beaches remain open to the public.

Open space protection will be one of the fundamental tools that the Town can use to protect its rural character in the coming decades. A continued emphasis on this challenge must be placed throughout Town government. The benefits will accrue not

only to the Town's character, but also to groundwater protection, surface water quality improvements, recreational needs and ecosystem protection.

Open space and recreation needs vary in different parts of Town (e.g., some areas favor preservation while other areas would like more recreation.)

A town-wide bike and pedestrian network needs to be established in the Town's Open Space plan. The backbone of this network should be the former Old Colony Railroad right of way. A sidewalk along Webster Street would serve to connect the southern to northern portions of Route 139 with the downtown. A combination of public/private actions should be used to implement the network.

Cultural Resources

Marshfield has rich historic resources and an active Historical Commission. Funds will be needed to expand and continue the National Register of Historic Places inventorying effort.

Supporters of historic preservation are also supportive of Design Review standards for multifamily and commercial properties. History should continue to be given serious support both in the above efforts as well as in public projects and in funding targeted efforts to identify and protect archeological resources.

Overall, Marshfield is a well managed residential town with a moderate business base and an exceptional natural setting. Moderate growth will continue with the result being an end to most residential development within 20 to 30 years. How do the solutions to these many specific challenges fit together to make a cohesive picture for the future? What will Marshfield be like for coming generations?

A Vision Statement for Marshfield

Marshfield currently lacks an overarching purpose to drive and shape its community development and planning work. The Town does well managing specific problems that arise or considering the issues of a particular area such as the Downtown. It has done less well in planning for how the various villages and aspects of the landscape fit together to form a whole community. The following statement is intended to lay out a direction for what it is that we want our town to be. With this statement, we try to answer the question, What will be Marshfield's townscape?

Marshfield is and will continue to be a residential community, that is, our primary

purpose as a community within the broader context of our region, is to provide a wonderful place for people to grow up, to go to school, to raise families, to recreate and to retire. While we have many businesses and we will continue to encourage their health, those businesses will be primarily oriented toward meeting the needs of the residents of Marshfield, rather than the needs of the broader region. We are not and shall not become a regional shopping, office or manufacturing destination. We are a community of homes.

There are several qualities that distinguish us from other residential communities. These qualities must be protected if we are to maintain and enhance our community character. Those qualities are the coast, our historic structures, our rural roads, our villages and our open lands. If any of these qualities are compromised, essential ingredients of Marshfield's character will be lost. Each must be given attention and stewardship.

Town-wide Goals, Policies and Actions

Our vision statement defines the type of community that Marshfield should be in the coming years, as well as specifying the essential aspects of our community's physical character. Goals define the general ways that we will manage our planning efforts and policies define how we will move toward our goals. For the purposes of this Plan, the terms goals, policies, actions and strategies should be used as follows:

- **Goal:** A statement that defines the broad direction the Town of Marshfield wishes to pursue for a given topic. Goals will be used in public and private development review and investment decisions to ensure that the noted project will move the Town toward its preferred long-term vision.
- **Policy:** A measurable statement defining the Town's position and general course of action on specific issues. A policy statement should be used to set clear requirements for public and private projects.
- **Action:** A step for Town government and/or residents to take to implement policies and move the Town toward its goals.
- **Strategy:** A set of actions woven together into a sequential series of tasks.

This section presents the goals, policies and actions for each element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Land Use and Landscape Management

Goals

1. In all aspects of public and private actions, seek to permanently protect as many acres of open land as possible.
2. In all aspects of public and private actions, take steps to enhance the appearance of the Town.
3. Maintain the current geographic pattern of the Town's residential zoning.
4. Ensure that future residential development is designed in a manner that enhances, rather than erodes, the Town's rural character.

5. Encourage commercial development to concentrate in village centers.
6. Consider options for development and possible appropriate rezoning of the town's industrial land to best meet long-term needs.

Policies

1. Integrate open space protection as an essential element within the public and private land use planning and development review processes.
2. Consider design and appearance issues in all public and private development, redevelopment and site management decisions. That is, restore historic character in sites and buildings, increase landscaping, provide substantial vegetative buffers between uses and express in all buildings a relationship to the historic architecture of Marshfield.
3. Decisions to change the current zoning pattern of the Town should be guided by the following criteria:
 - Is the proposed change in conformance with this Plan's future land map?
 - Is the proposed change beneficial to existing businesses and residences?
 - Will the zoning change strengthen the Town's open space efforts?
 - Will the zoning change enhance the Town's aesthetics?
 - Will the change strengthen the following factors: healthy neighborhoods, town's fiscal condition, provide needed services to residents, create local jobs or provide a land use best suited for the particularities of the site?
 - Is the local road network sufficient to meet the demand created by the zoning change without capacity, congestion or safety problems?
4. New residential development should seek to meet the following objectives:
 - The maximum amount of open space possible should be set aside for protection in ways that provide usable access for residents, link to existing

open spaces and protect plant and wildlife habitat.

- Houses should be screened from view from roadways or other prominent viewing points. Scenic views and open fields should be maintained.
- Neighborhoods should provide recreational amenities that take into account the full range of potential neighborhood residents.
- Homes should be designed and sited in ways that enhance rather than detract from the Town's rural and historic character.
- New development should be integrated with the local road network. Dead end streets should be avoided wherever possible.

5. A new land use strategy for the Enterprise Drive area should balance the following issues:

- uses should generate relatively low amounts of traffic. Specifically, the level of service on Route 139 should not decrease below a Level of Service "D" as a result of existing and new development that occurs in the area,
- encourage a mixture of fiscally attractive uses,
- create a built environment that integrates open space activities and access to open space,
- encourage uses that provides spaces for people to gather and participate in community wide activities.
- maintain an adequate supply of industrial land to meet future needs.

6. Development, redevelopment and/or public projects in Downtown Marshfield should seek to enhance the area's appearance, traffic flow efficiency, the amount of open space, the quality of the pedestrian system and the economic health of the area.

7. Development, redevelopment and/or public projects along Route 139 should seek to improve the appearance of buildings and sites, reduce traffic problems, decrease the number of curb cuts, provide needed local (rather than regional) goods and services,

and improve pedestrian systems.

8. Development, redevelopment and/or public projects in Marshfield's villages should seek to protect historic character, maintain economic health, and enhance the attractiveness of the areas.

Actions

1. Adopt provisions within the Town bylaws and regulations that require consistency with the Marshfield Comprehensive Plan as a condition of review and as a condition for special permit decisions.
2. Establish a target figure for the amount of open lands that should be protected town-wide. Translate this figure into a set of open space protection criteria that can be applied to individual developments. Apply Comprehensive Plan policies regarding open space to all development proposals.
3. Revise the site plan review process and incorporate design review guidelines for new commercial projects.
4. Rezone the industrial area east of Enterprise Drive to allow a broader range of uses with an emphasis on a mixed-use development built in a campus-like setting around a public green.
5. Expand and further develop the Downtown Revitalization Project as recommended in that project's report.
6. Retail and related uses should not be considered for the remainder of the Enterprise Drive Area and Industrial district due to the high resulting traffic generation.

Circulation



Marshfield Station, c.1900 Photo: courtesy of D. Walsh Same area c.2002

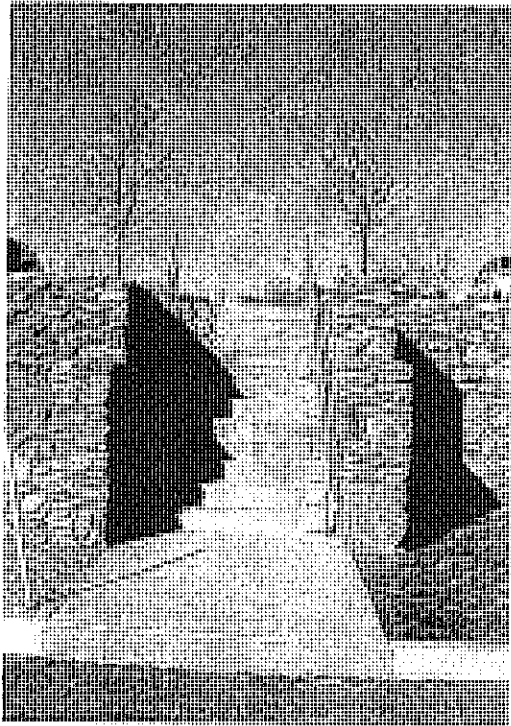
Goals

1. Provide a transportation system that allows for convenient auto movement while encouraging the growth of non-auto transportation modes that will reduce congestion, reduce negative environmental impacts and provide convenient transportation options.
2. Protect the character of Marshfield's rural roads and enhance the visual appeal of non-rural roads.
3. Plan for and accommodate local transportation strategies that will maximize the benefit local residents will gain from the rail service improvements to the South Shore.

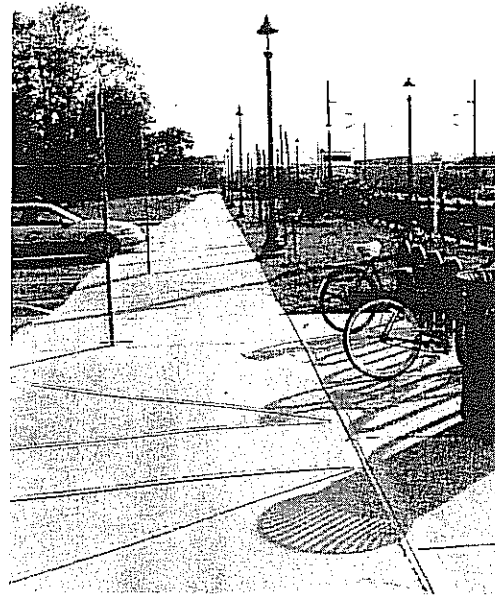
Policies

1. Avoid developments that seriously or collectively worsen local congestion. This shall be an important criteria in the site plan review for all future projects.
2. Clear and thorough information on traffic impacts should be submitted by all project applicants and reviewed for compliance with zoning bylaws.
3. All public and private projects should seek to decrease the number of curb cuts and turning movements on Marshfield roads. Joint driveways, and traffic control measures should be encouraged.

4. For all public and private developments, investigate design approaches that protect rural character, advance pedestrian and bicycle transportation and reduce the number of automobile trips.

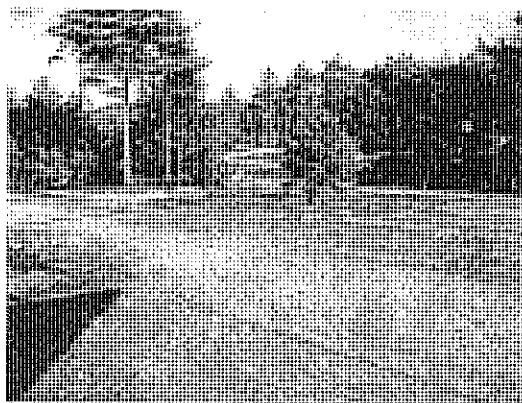


Pedestrian link between plazas (Cohasset, MA)



Bike path and rack at Railroad Station (Kingston, RI)

5. Marshfield should continue to develop an integrated road network.



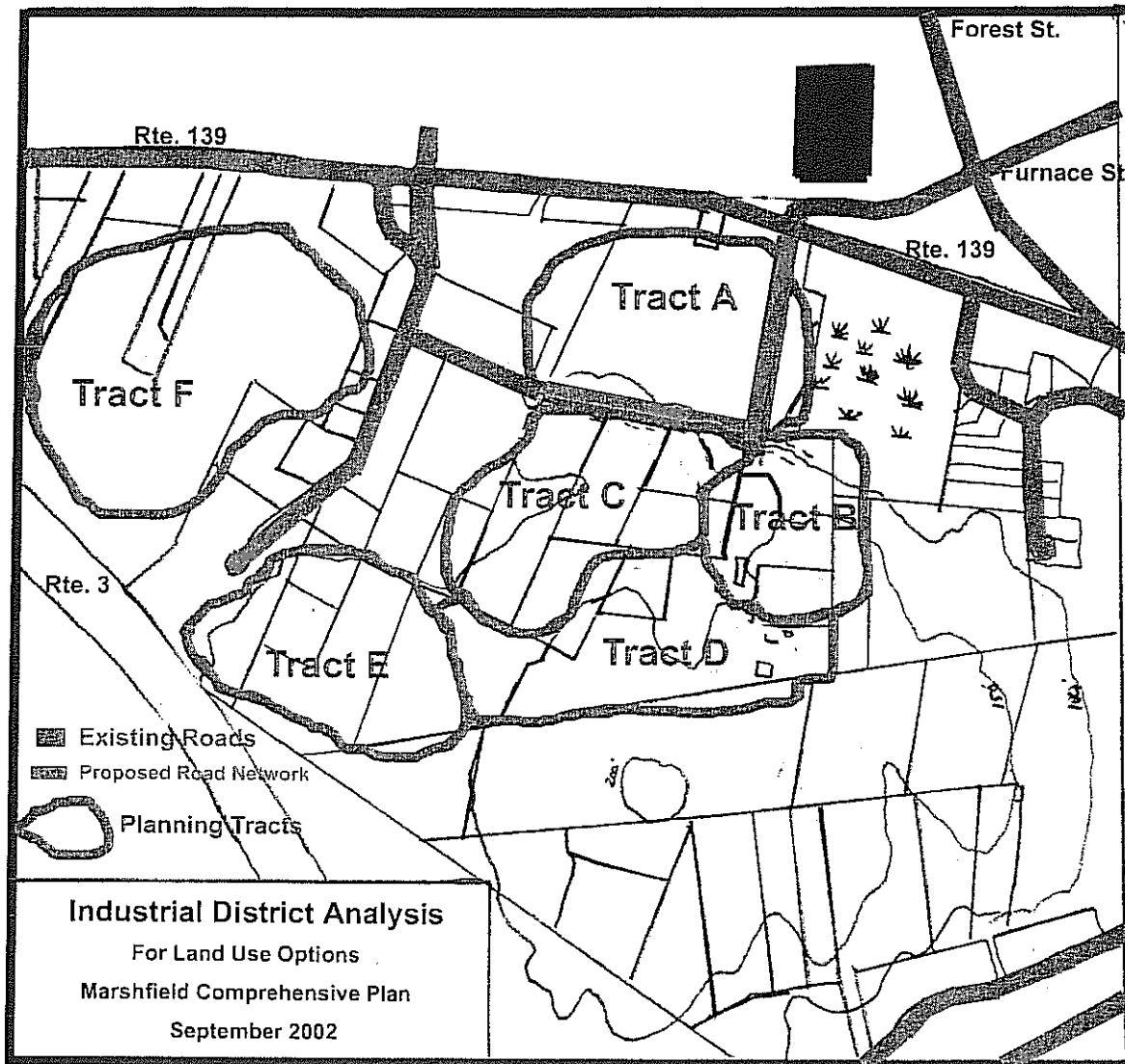
6. Give priority to through traffic on arterial roads. New residential development should not decrease the level of service below "C" on existing residential streets or intersections. New Commercial or Industrial development should not decrease the level of service below "D" on existing streets or intersections.
7. Maintain the character of Marshfield's residential streets.
8. Improve the safety and visual character of Route 139.
9. Do not support the widening of Route 3. This widening will destroy the critical balance existing on the South Shore between highway capacity and the consumption of remaining open land.
10. Do not support the use of breakdown lanes as a temporary capacity fix to congestion on state routes.
- * 11. Support improvements to interchanges along Route 3, the Route 3/93/128 split, and the completion of Route 44 from Route 3 to Route 495 and the increased availability public transit services as preferable alternatives to the widening of Route 3.

Actions

Land Use / Trip Generation

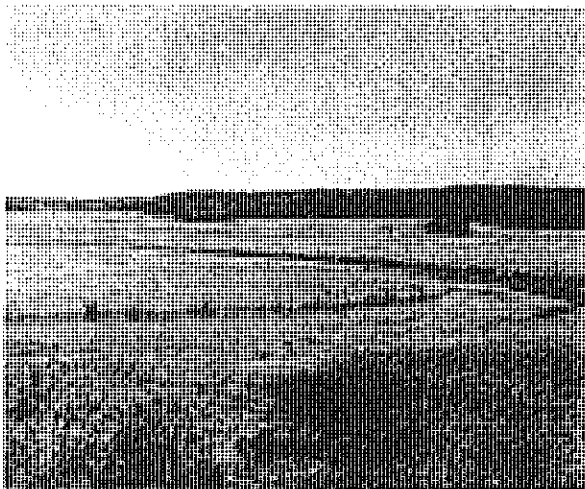
1. Develop an overall land use build out scenario for the Enterprise Drive area that will achieve moderate trip generation, particularly during peak periods, and minimize impacts to Route 139 through appropriate access management.
2. Develop a mixed-use overlay district for tracts A and B within the industrial district that will achieve moderate trip generation and minimize impacts to Route 139 through limited access by way of signalized intersections and other appropriate traffic measures.
3. Ensure that any future re-zoning of tracts D, E and F within the industrial district designed to encourage low trip generating land uses.
4. Maintain strict application of zoning by-law requirements for traffic impact studies and associated mitigation. New curb cuts along Route 139 should not be allowed.

Traffic from new developments should be directed to signalized intersections. New development shall be expected to provide a fair share of roadway improvement costs in relation to its impact to the road network.

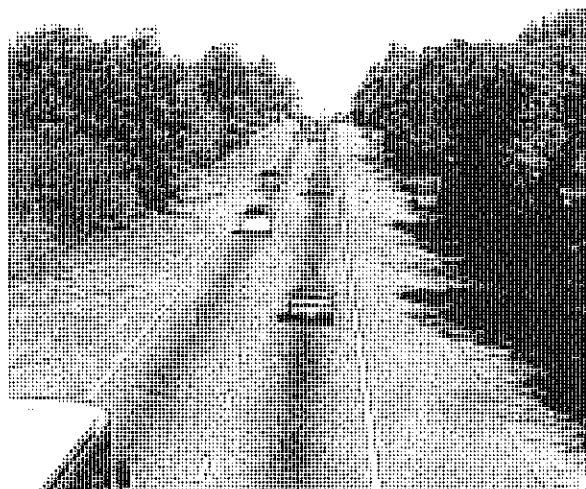


Access Management

1. Continue to encourage the implementation of collective driveways / curb cuts, possibly by offering enhanced incentives such as increased lot coverage or decreased parking standards.
2. Require site plans to accommodate the potential for future collective access when adjacent parcels are developed or redeveloped. This may call for changes (for example in floor area ratios or site plan requirements) to the zoning by-laws to provide incentives to developers to achieve transportation and land use objectives.
3. Amend the zoning bylaw to encourage collective access points and driveways to assist turning movements on and off arterial roadways and signalize if necessary. This is primarily applicable to Route 139. While collective access points are desirable, they can result in longer delays for "side street" traffic, compared to individual curb cuts. Often this situation can be addressed by signalizing collective points, if warranted.
4. Depending on the selected build-out scenario for the Enterprise Drive area, pursue the need for at least one additional access connection to Route 139. The recently realigned intersection at Furnace Street presents one such opportunity. The possibility of a loop road system should be further investigated, unless the land use scenario finally endorsed by the Town suggests the need to separate different types of traffic. If commercial and industrial traffic is proposed to go through residential areas, residential frontage lots should be prohibited and larger buffer areas should screen said use from traffic. Refer also to discussion in the "Trip Generation Analysis" section.



North River from Route 3 Bridge



Route 3 Northbound Duxbury/Marshfield

Roadway Design, Capacity and Safety

1. Do not support the widening of Route 3 south of the Hanover exit (#13).
2. Do not support the use of the breakdown lane south of the Hanover Exit on Route 3 as a temporary fix to capacity of the highway.
3. Improvements to interchanges along Route 3, the Route 3/93/128 split and the completion of Route 44 as a limited access grade separated highway from Route 3 to Route 495 should be given the highest priority for the region's highway network.
4. The possibility of up-grading Route 139 to a continuous 4 - lane cross-section, between Route 3 and the Furnace Street Intersection, should be considered when traffic volumes deem it necessary. In practice, the capacity of the roadway is limited by its intersections, and providing additional travel lanes between intersections would not significantly increase the overall carrying capacity of the route and it would make turning movements more difficult for driveways, commercial curb cuts and non-signalized intersections. Therefore, it is recommended that a center turning lane be created within the existing right of way (between School and Furnace streets) as new development is proposed.
5. Maintain the character of predominantly rural roadways, as long as safety considerations are not compromised. Significant increases in carrying capacity on such roadways is likely to require substantial up-grading, such as widening to provide additional travel lanes and intersection reconstruction. Such capacity enhancements are unlikely due to land takings and other issues.
6. The possibility of safety and operational improvements at the side street intersections on Route 3A and other roadways should be investigated. In addition, conditions should be monitored to ensure that roadway safety conditions do not decline if traffic volumes increase. Speed restrictions, backed up by enforcement, might also be desirable on rural roadways.
7. In light of the perception of safety issues at many intersections with two-way traffic on all sides of triangular islands (e.g. Webster Street/ Careswell Street), conversion to more conventional T- intersection layouts should be considered.
8. A Roadway Maintenance/ Improvement Program should be established to prioritize specific local improvements. This program should address a range of needs, including

necessary maintenance/ repair, capacity/safety improvements, or measures to address specific problems.

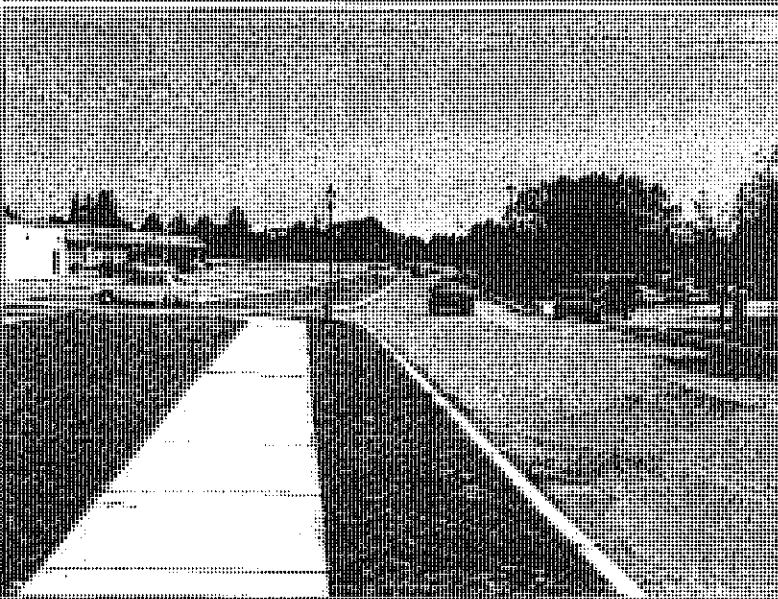
9. Maintain the character of the town's scenic residential roads by excluding trucks over $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons, where viable alternate routes exist.

10. The Circulation improvements identified in the Downtown Business Revitalization Plan should continue, including:

- Alignment of the access points on Webster Street serving Webster Square and the Library Plaza.
- Possible realignment of Snow Road if further development of the shopping center is contemplated.
- Review the possible impacts of changing the traffic patterns on Stratton Avenue and Chapel Road.



Library Plaza fall of 2000



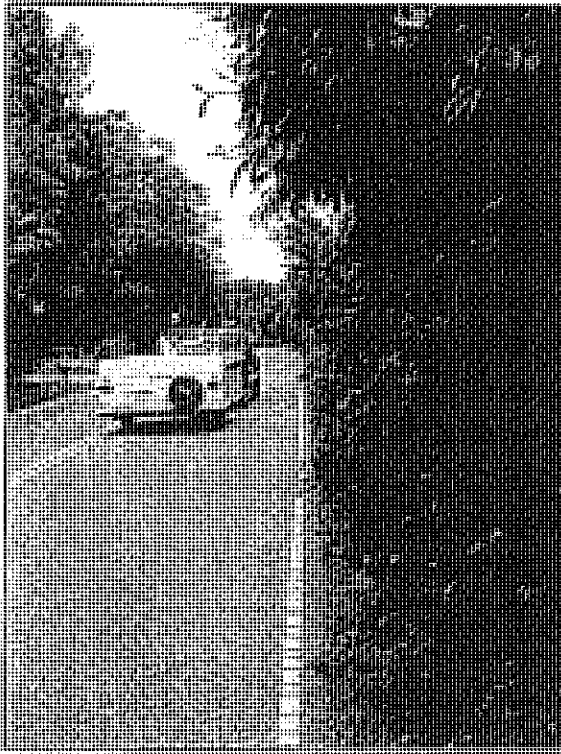
Library Plaza summer of 2002

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

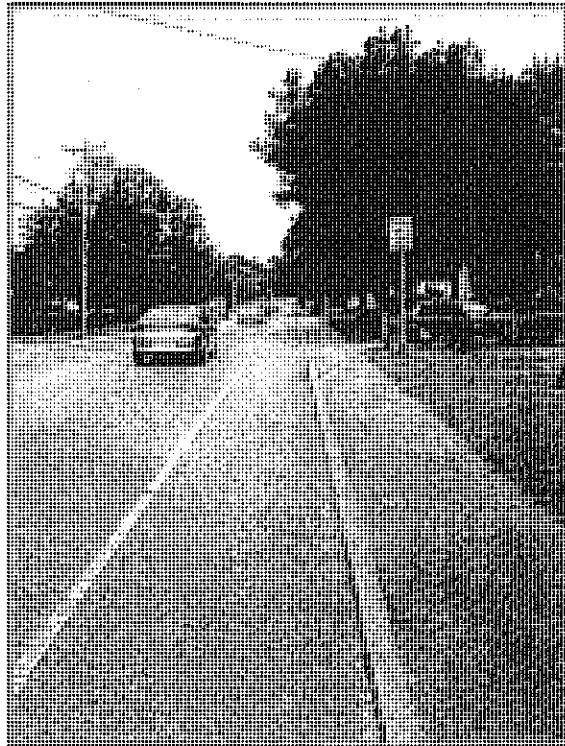
1. Develop a program to complete or replace missing sidewalk or footpath links, and provide sidewalks on at least one side of all arterial and collector roadways. (Winslow Street, Webster Street, Town Pier Road, Dyke Road and near the schools have been identified specifically). Consider the provision of additional crosswalks where pedestrian activity is focused. (Ocean Bluff has been identified specifically).
2. The pedestrian improvements identified in the Downtown Business Revitalization Plan should be pursued, including the striping of crosswalks, the installation of handicapped curb cuts, and the provision of new sidewalks in and around the Webster Square area. To the extent possible, pedestrian links to the commercial areas between South River Street and Moraine Street should be strengthened also. A crosswalk might also be considered on a stronger link between businesses on the north side of Route 139 and the Webster Square area. The planned traffic signal at the Ocean Street/Webster Street intersection should include a pedestrian facility.
3. Develop a town-wide bicycle network for both destination-oriented and recreational users. This might be combined in part with a pedestrian system where new linkages are provided, for example on off-highway trails. The basis of this network should be formed for the existing of trails and bridle paths, predominantly along the Old Colony railroad right-of-way.
4. Acquire the southern portion of the Old Colony railroad right-of-way (from Steamboat Drive to Route 139 to provide a linkage to the downtown.



5. The possibility of a bicycle/pedestrian path has been identified along the east side of the South River connecting to Ocean Street. The feasibility of this facility should be investigated, as it would provide a solution to the absence of such facilities on Winslow Street/Standish Street, the main link to the beach at Rexhame.

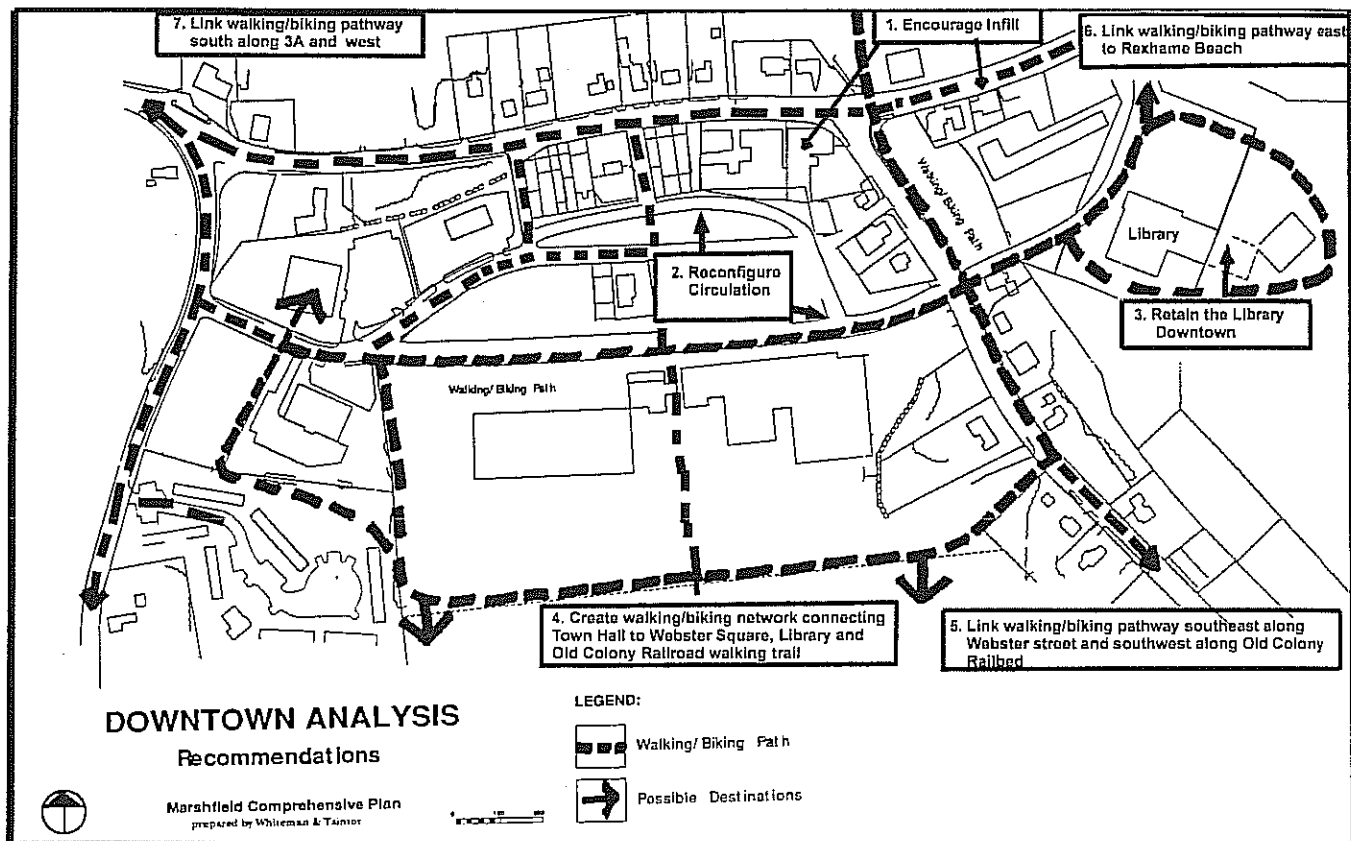


Route 139 west of Webster St.



Route 139 east of Webster St.

5. Seek opportunities to provide bicycle lanes within or adjacent to roadway layouts, and incorporate the needs of bicycles in all future roadway improvements. While paved shoulders, such as provided on significant sections of Route 139, afford some provision for bicycles, design standards for "on-road" bicycle lanes demand more generous geometry.
6. Consideration should be given to requiring the provision of bicycle parking facilities at new non-residential developments.
7. Pursue the design and construction of a sidewalk along Webster Street.



Transit and Alternative Transportation

1. In light of the extremely limited transit service available in Marshfield, the town should support all planned and un-programmed projects which will improve service, including:

- Old Colony commuter rail service from Greenbush to Boston
- Continued support of commuter boat service from Hingham to Boston
- Expansion of the park-and-ride program in the Route 3 corridor

2. The possibility of shuttle service to the Kingston rail station should be evaluated, in addition to the shuttle service to Greenbush when that station is operational.

3. While various other shuttle bus systems have been suggested, for example to serve retail establishments or the beaches, it is unlikely that they would prove to be viable or result in significant traffic reduction. Indeed it is understood that a beach shuttle has been tried unsuccessfully in the past. The commercial viability of such services is a problem. Notwithstanding this, the Town should encourage any initiatives that might provide shuttle service, even though the real relief to traffic might not be significant. Further development in the Webster Square area might present the opportunity to encourage retailers to consider the provision of shuttle

service.

4. Opportunities for park-and-ride facilities within or close to Marshfield itself should be sought, to encourage additional commuter bus service or van-pooling. The Town should also consider establishing a ride-matching program to encourage ride-sharing for commuters to Boston and the south shore.

Services and Facilities

Goals

1. Maintain all Town services and facilities in a state of high quality. Invest in Town infrastructure in order to address present deficiencies and provide high quality facilities for the future. Provide maintenance funds to provide for services and routine upkeep.
2. Protect, enhance and conserve all natural resources that support the Town's services and facilities.
3. Clarify the distinction between general public and private interests relative to municipal services and facilities. Invest adequately in those issues of importance to the general public's interest.

Policies

1. Marshfield shall maintain a high quality municipal water system that serves the majority of Marshfield residents. The groundwater supply, well recharge areas, pumping, treatment and distribution systems will all be protected and/or maintained in a high quality manner.
2. Develop a comprehensive wastewater treatment program for the entire town, which identifies areas to be sewerred and alternatives for other areas.
3. Public investments in services and facilities must meet a test that confirms that the general public's interest is addressed to an adequate degree to justify the public investment. The investment in services or facilities must:
 - protect the natural environment or allow a degraded environmental system to regain its health,

- provide a service or facility from which all Marshfield residents can potentially benefit,
- provide a service or facility that benefits future as well as current generations of residents,
- provide a service or facility that benefits the general public and cannot be operated as cost effectively or as efficiently by the private sector,
- meet the above criteria and not be eligible for assistance or programs from some other level of government, and
- be placed within the Town's long term capital improvement program and demonstrate that it is of sufficient importance to compete with other demands on Town funds.

4. Maintain a high quality school system as this will be one of the consistent factors that will ensure the fiscal, economic and cultural health of the community.

Actions

1. Continue to maintain all existing water, sewer and storm drainage systems.
2. Apply clear policies and decision making criteria to all demands on public funds in order to ensure that the demands merit Town funding and provide clear public benefit.
3. Research and consider storm damage mitigation and reduction technology and investigate municipal purchase of repetitive storm loss areas. Develop and fund along term cost effective approach to manage the problem that also meets the criteria for appropriate publicly funded investments that benefit the general public interest (see policy 3).
4. Continue to research and consider environmentally sound and cost effective ways to address solid waste issues.

5. Continue to follow a long term capital planning program that identifies needed projects, sets priorities against objective standards, references funding sources and bases project approval on both priority and funding availability.
6. Coordinate zoning for groundwater protection with Duxbury and Pembroke.
7. Begin to shift more attention to how public services and facilities will address the needs of an increasing population of older residents.
8. Continually work to upgrade the technology used in Town services and facilities in order to provide more cost effective and better quality service to citizens.

Natural Resources, Open Space and Recreation

Goals

1. Preserve land with a wilderness and/or historic quality, and open it to the public as a place to get away from it all, and enjoy the solitude and quiet of a natural protected area.
2. Conserve and protect land in order to protect natural resources critical to either humans or plant and animal species identified as being rare and/or endangered.
3. Conserve and protect additional land in order to maintain a sense of openness and rural character. This will be increasingly important as the Town develops further.
4. Plan, organize, promote, and provide worthwhile leisure programs and facilities that serve the physical, emotional, and social needs of the residents of our community, regardless of one's ability.

Policies

1. Provide continued active use of recreation, school, and other facilities to meet the growing demands placed on recreational services. Seek to meet current demand and, at the same time, prevent the over use of existing facilities.
2. The Town should foster passive recreation, such as hiking or bird watching, which does not adversely affect the natural value of conservation land.

3. Marshfield shall use clear criteria to identify the types of land that are most important to protect.
4. Marshfield shall commit local funds to protect open lands and will pursue other sources of funding to leverage the maximum impact from the use of local funds.
5. Marshfield shall clearly state the varying recreation needs of its various groups of citizens and fairly provide recreation services to all types of citizens.
6. Private developers shall address within their projects the recreation needs of all potential types of residents.

Actions

1. The town should develop a more broad-based open space protection program in order to meet future open space and recreation needs, protect community character, reduce growth pressures, and maintain community fiscal health. This program should include continued town acquisitions, conservation restrictions, subdivision set-asides, protection of tax-title lands and other methods of open space protection. Priority should be given to the following areas:

a) Lands identified in the 1995 Marshfield Open Space Plan

- Carolina Hill/Furnace Brook Watershed
- Northwest Green Area/North River Corridor
- Aquifer lands
- Marshlands
- Green Harbor Reclamation District lands

b) Current and future water supply areas

c) Priorities identified by the Comprehensive Plan

- Additional ball-field lands
- Strategic lands in Pembroke
- Open fields
- Chapter 61 lands
- land in the South River watershed along the South River Trail
- Old railroad bed
- The Coast Guard Station

- Blackman's Point
- A Green Harbor neighborhood park
- Dwyer's Farm/Webster's Wilderness to Duxbury corridor.

d) Vacant residentially-zoned lands in order to reduce build-out

e) Rare species and other sensitive habitat areas

2. The Town should continue to update its Open Space and Recreation Plan every five years and submit it to the State to maintain its eligibility for Open Space funding under federal and state grant programs.

3. The Town should actively seek out sources of funding for local open space protection and recreation programs including Open Space Bond funds and Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act (ISTEA) funds.

4. The Town should continue to supplement funds available in the Conservation Fund by an annual appropriation for open space acquisition to be placed in the Conservation Fund. This amount should be included in the Town's capital budget.

5. The Town should work with The Wildlands Trust, Massachusetts Audubon Society, and other private nonprofit conservation organizations to identify, acquire and manage open space and conservation restrictions. Priority should be given to the areas identified above.

6. The Town should work with landowners participating in the Chapter 61 programs to acquire conservation restrictions on those lands, or identify when they are likely to be withdrawn from these programs so that the town can plan ahead for their acquisition where appropriate.

7. The Planning Board should review subdivision plans for the development of links to the bike/pedestrian network.

8. The Planning Board should amend its subdivision regulations to take advantage of Section 81U of the Subdivision Control Law which permits towns to require open space set-asides within subdivisions for future purchase within three years.

9. The Planning Board and Conservation Commission should seek to maintain or

provide access to protected open space areas when reviewing and approving new subdivision proposals.

10. The Planning Board, Conservation Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals should seek to maintain or enhance the Pilgrim Trail and South River Walking Trail initiatives when reviewing and approving new/expanded residential or commercial development proposals.

11. The Board of Selectmen should consider selling tax-title properties that have little or no conservation values and placing the proceeds of such sales into the Conservation Fund so that they may be used to acquire high priority lands. Tax-title lands with high conservation values should be placed under the care, custody and control of the Conservation Commission. Tax title lands should also be considered as neighborhood parks where appropriate.

12. The Town should work with the Marshfield Rod and Gun Club to ensure that its land holdings are protected by Chapter 184 Conservation Restrictions.

13. The Town should continue its efforts to develop and complete the South River Walking Trail. The Planning Board, Conservation Commission and, where appropriate, the Zoning Board of Appeals should actively seek easements from property owners along the trail when applications come before them. This would help expedite the completion of the trail.

14. The Historical Commission should publish a guide to the Pilgrim Trail, showing the length and location of the trail, as well as noting particularly historical locations along the trail.

15. The Community Center Study Committee and the Ball-field Revitalization Committee should work together to insure that duplication of effort does not exist between the two committees and that any new ball-fields are planned to meet the needs of both committees.

16. The Town should actively seek to encourage the construction of neighborhood playgrounds and ball-fields on tax title and reserved lots in new subdivision submittals.

17. The Town should promote and encourage public access to the ocean front.

Economic Development

Goals

1. Maintain Marshfield's economy at scale that it contributes to the local tax base, provides needed local goods and services, but does not overburden Town roads or service systems.
2. Seek excellence in design and aesthetics on all existing and future business sites.
3. Strengthen the Downtown as place for commerce and as the community's center.
4. Carefully shape development in the Industrial zoned land east of Enterprise Drive Area by providing the opportunity for mixed-use development in a campus-like setting around public green.

Policies

1. Hold business development to the areas currently zoned for business uses or otherwise legally allowed in existing structures.
2. Regulate the type and scale of businesses in all business zones so that the resulting impacts are manageable within the current road and infrastructure system.
3. Assess environmental capacity, aesthetics and infrastructure capacity when determining the allowed size and types of new development.
4. Encourage all business structures and sites to be well designed, to reflect a connection to historic architecture and design, and to be well landscaped.
5. The Town's investments in the Downtown should focus on improving the auto circulation flow, pedestrian systems, open public spaces and overall landscaping within the area.
6. The Town's objectives for the industrial zoned land east of Enterprise Drive Area will be to ensure proposed developments provide adequate mitigation for traffic impacts, to balance additional traffic impacts with positive fiscal impact for the community, the maximization of the public benefit that accrues from the use of land currently under Town ownership and an overall development strategy that protects groundwater and other environmental resources.

Actions

1. Downtown Actions:

- Pursue a public policy toward the Downtown wherein all public investments are not reliant on the presence of sewer service for the investment's success. Make the improvements recommended in the Revitalization Plan and set the stage for changing land uses that may result from an eventual solution to the wastewater problem.
- Maintain the current boundaries of the B-1 District and work to improve that area allowing expansion only with a corresponding reduction in the B-2 areas.
- Modify the B-1 zoning to allow mixed uses - apartments above commercial uses - in order to provide flexibility to property owners.
- Do not increase densities in the B-1 Zoning district. The minimum lot size is adequate given that the majority of the area is pre-existing lots.
- Revise the B-1 parking requirements to make them more tailor made to the Downtown area and to encourage infill and new business development. Specifically, upgrade the language concerning bringing existing uses into conformance during expansions, reduce the number of required onsite spaces and make greater allowances for off-site parking.
- Consideration should be given to extending paths to the businesses lying along Webster Street, to the proposed pedestrian system within Webster Square.
- Investigate opportunities in term of land suitability and funding sources to create a pedestrian/bike path through the downtown.

Amend Downtown zoning—parking standards and mixed use development; possible design review process.

2. Enterprise Drive Actions - See specific recommendations in the Integrated Strategy section.

3. Continue to support private efforts in Brant Rock to continue its revitalization.

4. Support the current land use patterns in the other villages.

Cultural and Historic Resources

Goals

1. Marshfield will protect and preserve the remaining structures, sites and landscapes that represent the Town's past.
2. Marshfield will work to enrich its cultural environment by providing adequate public and private indoor and outdoor space to hold and encourage cultural activities.

Policies

1. The Town will provide steady financial support for historic resource preservation activities.
2. The Town encourages public and private property owners to invest in mechanisms to restore and protect historic resources.
3. All public and private development, redevelopment and site work will seek to restore and protect historic resources.

Actions

1. The only district recommended for Local Historic District designation is Marshfield Hills. This is the most intact and cohesive of all the potential districts. Others in Town have a greater number of noncontributing properties and probably do not warrant the requirements involved with a local historic district.
2. The Town, via the Historical Commission, should look into starting a date boarding program. The purpose of this program is to identify historically significant homes, their first owner, and the approximate date of construction, and then place a small white clapboard on the home identifying this information.
3. The Town should appropriate funds to allow the Historical Commission to continue inventorying districts for potential inclusion on the National Register of Historical Places.
4. The Historical Commission should begin the process to include the individual homesteads listed above on the National Register of Historical Places.
5. A Design Review process should be created for multi- family and commercial

projects to preserve the historic character of designated areas.

6. The Town should appropriate funds to conduct archeological reviews of any property with archeology potential as identified by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

7. The Town should continue to include historical elements in the revitalization of Marshfield.

8. The Town should appropriate funds so the survey of historic properties can be updated every ten years.

9. The Town should appropriate funds for the continual placement of granite markers identifying important historical sites.

10. Permitting agencies should encourage the retention of historical buildings when new development or redevelopment is proposed.

THE INTEGRATED STRATEGY

This final section weaves the most important policies and action recommendations discussed above into a strategy that sets priorities and integrates overlapping and related policies. The Integrated Strategy does not include all the recommendations for action from above. Instead, it highlights the most important steps that should be taken to move the Town forward. While all goals and policies are equally important and should be handled equally in public decision making, actions must be prioritized. The Integrated Strategy contains the most critical planning actions that the Town should take. Other actions are important, but they should be addressed either after the core strategy is complete or in tandem, but with less emphasis relative to where public dollars are spent.

Marshfield's Integrated Planning Strategy

There are five components to the Strategy:

- A. Acquire more open space in order to protect town character,
- B. Clearly guide the future development of the Enterprise Drive area,
- C. Prepare a town-wide wastewater management plan,
- D. Adopt a landscape management program with a focus on Route 139,
- E. Continue planning and reinvestment in the downtown,

F. Address site plan review issues for permitted uses along Route 139.

A. Strengthen Open Space Acquisition and Open Space Management

Marshfield and other public entities own substantial amounts of open land in the community but other areas important to the Town's character are left unprotected. Additionally, the Town has invested few dollars to make the Town's open space available, accessible and relevant to residents.

1. Allocate annual amounts to the Conservation Fund and/or pass a bond that will finance the Fund with a substantial amount of money so that it can then begin a more assertive acquisition program.
2. Pass a bylaw that gives one or more town entities the authority to spend funds and purchase land or land rights without requiring a Town Meeting vote. This will address the Town's current weakness of being unable to act quickly to purchase key parcels.
3. Using the work of the Town Landscape Committee, define preferred parcels and acquisition criteria.

B. Encourage and Guide the Development of the Enterprise Drive Area

1. Adopt the general policy position that the preferred use of the Enterprise Drive Area will be a combination of industrial development to the west of Enterprise Drive and a mixed use recreation/non-single family housing/limited retail/civic use project to the east of Enterprise Drive.
2. Adopt a policy position that the Town will entertain proposals from developers for joint public/private funding of a self contain sewer system for the Industrial/ mixed use area and school properties. Adopt a policy position that the Town will not finance the extension using solely public funds.
3. Adopt a policy regarding the south side of Route 139 which is now zoned as Industrial 1: future use of this area shall not be B-2 or similar retail/office zoning due to the traffic impacts. If zoning is changed in this area, it must conform with a larger proposal for the interior lands, be mixed-use, designed into an overall campus-like development around public greens and/or it must address traffic mitigation within the character of the town by way of a combination of roadway improvements and additional open space acquisitions. The overall goal for the development of the

industrial zoned land is to generate the same or less traffic than the uses currently allowed.

4. As described in the Land Use Element, prepare a proposal for rezoning this Area to allow a wider range of uses. Hold workshops to obtain public input.

5. Using the findings from the public workshops and developer survey, prepare a rezoning package for Town Meeting vote. Obtain public input prior to the Town Meeting.

This strategy is shaped around the concept that a combination of public and private development in the area will be needed finance a self-contained sewer system for the area.

C. Prepare a Town-wide Wastewater Management Plan

Marshfield faces an important, but somewhat difficult challenge relative to wastewater treatment planning. This Plan strongly encourages the Town to invest in a thorough, objective study to determine whether sewer service will be needed in more areas of the Town or not.

1. Determine the appropriate scope for a town-wide wastewater study. Obtain recent wastewater studies from other similar towns, interview several engineering firms and determine the types of analyses that are needed for Marshfield to determine its short and long term wastewater service needs.

2. Prepare a concise summary of recommended scope, potential costs and the pros and cons of pursuing the study.

3. Present the findings to the Board of Selectmen.

Encourage the Board to form a study committee to prepare a recommendation for Town Meeting.

D. Adopt a Town-wide Landscape Management Program

A town-wide landscape management program is needed to put in place a series of tools to improve the appearance of key areas that strongly impact community character and to elevate the idea of managing the aesthetics of the community to a new level. Better landscape management tools and an increased public awareness of the importance of community aesthetics will put Marshfield on a ten year path to

ensure that the Town's rural and coastal charm is a permanent part of the Town's character.

Several key steps are recommended.

1. The Planning Board should form a Town Landscape Working Committee as a subcommittee of the Planning Board. The Committee should have representation from citizens, the Planning Board, the Board of Selectmen, the Conservation Commission, the Historical Society and other interested parties. This six month to one year long group should work on the following tasks.
2. The Planning Board and Selectmen should organize a Landscape Management Congress consisting of several representatives from each of the planning areas defined in this Plan. The purpose of this group will be to provide a non-regulatory body to do planning work at the local level, to advocate for public investments in landscape management and to act as a locally based group who can work with landowners and influence their development and land use decisions. Representatives should include local land trusts, large tract property owners, owners of historic properties, small business people, local residents and Town representatives.
3. The Planning Board should work with the Congress to identify sensitive landscapes that require monitoring or management. These might include key corridors along country roads, fields visible from local roads, viewing points from higher elevations, view sheds along the coast or along the rivers, and key historic neighborhoods or business areas.
4. The Planning Board should direct the Landscape Committee to identify areas in need of aesthetic improvement. These areas might include commercial corridors or the Downtown, public lands and buildings, or unappealing roadscaapes.
5. The Planning Board and Landscape Committee should define a set of landscape management and development guidelines that will minimize visual deterioration as time passes. These guidelines should not prohibit development or public improvements, but they should provide a path for property owners to maximize the visual and/or natural appeal of their land or buildings. Guidelines should cover issues such as road right of way management (e.g., lane width, shoulder width, shoulder material, general storm drainage strategies, signage and vegetative buffer management.) The space along the road that acts as an

interface between public and private property should be considered (e.g., vegetative buffers, fencing, view-shed maintenance, and curb cuts.)

6. Generally, investigate mechanisms to implement the protection strategy. Review the actions proposed above in each of the elements. Explore the formation of a Design Review Board that would act in an advisory capacity to the Planning Board. Consider a publication on advisory Design Manual to be distributed to all persons interested in building or development (e.g., with building permit information.)

7. Integrate the Landscape Management Program with the Open Space Acquisition Program (see above).

E. Continue Planning and Reinvestment Efforts in the Downtown

Marshfield must continually monitor and move ahead with efforts to improve the Downtown. Several steps are needed.

1. Begin the improvements recommended in the Revitalization Plan. These improvements will include circulation, sidewalk and landscaping changes.

2. Make zoning amendments (e.g., change use and parking requirements) as detailed in this Plan's action recommendations.

These zoning changes will not guarantee short-term change in the Downtown, but they will remove some barriers within the zoning that are deterring new investment.

3. Continually work to expand and improve public open space and trails in and around the Downtown. The pedestrian bridge over the South River connecting to nearby neighborhoods is an example of the type of actions needed.

This Townscape Plan is designed to identify the most important aspects of Marshfield that must be managed in order to protect and enhance community character, and to lay out a set of actions to create that future.

As noted in the Vision Statement, Marshfield is and will continue to be a residential community—a suburb of sorts—for the job centers of Boston and the South Shore. But Marshfield is a special community; its coastal, wooded and historic character is exceptional and deserves special attention and stewardship. Marshfield residents

have a tendency to think of the Town as a collection of villages. This Plan argues, however, that important actions and investments of a town-wide concern are needed to involve the public, manage the details of future development and take advantage of character protection opportunities while they still exist. Thus the emphasis on a landscape congress, open land acquisition, aesthetics, the Downtown and Enterprise Drive.

Assertively pursuing a protection and management plan for these qualities will ensure that Marshfield's townscape - its character, its views, its natural qualities and the ways that those elements influence daily life for residents — will be exceptional forever. Without these actions, Marshfield will remain an appealing community, but a community that never achieved its full potential and which missed important opportunities in this final phase of its development as a town.