

Townwide 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,



Residential development should enhance the town's rural character.

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:

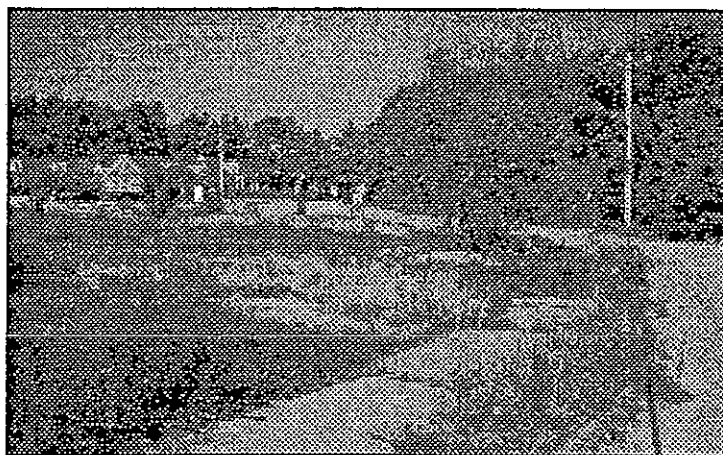
- The maximum amount of open space possible should be set aside for protection in ways that provide usable access for residents, link to existing open spaces and protect plant and wildlife habitat.
- Houses should be screened from view from roadways or other prominent viewing points. Scenic views and 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.



A new land use strategy should be developed for the Industrial Zoned Area near Enterprise Drive.

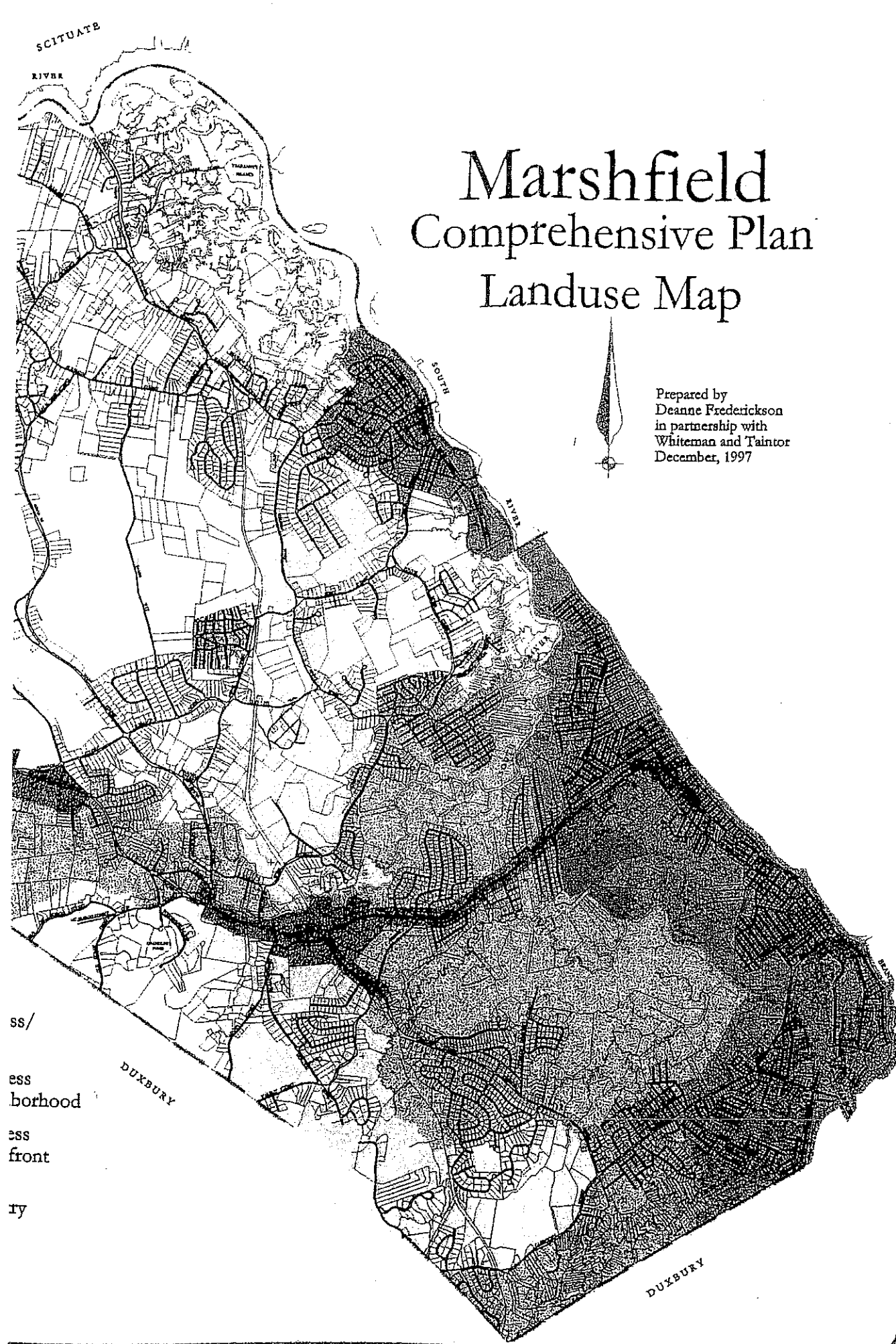
8. Development, redevelopment and/or public projects in Marshfield's villages should seek to protect historic character, maintain economic health, and enhance the attractiveness of the areas.

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 townwide. 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. Revise the Town's cluster zoning provision to encourage its use for new subdivisions.
5. Rezone the industrial area east of Enterprise Drive to allow a broader range of uses with an emphasis on health related businesses.
6. Expand and further develop the Downtown Revitalization Project as recommended in that project's report.
7. Include within the Enterprise Drive Area proposal recommendations for integrating the south side of Route 139 within that rezoning effort. Retail and related uses should not be considered for this area due to the high resulting traffic generation. Uses that compliment the Enterprise Drive area and its objectives should be considered.

Marshfield Comprehensive Plan Landuse Map

Prepared by
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December, 1997

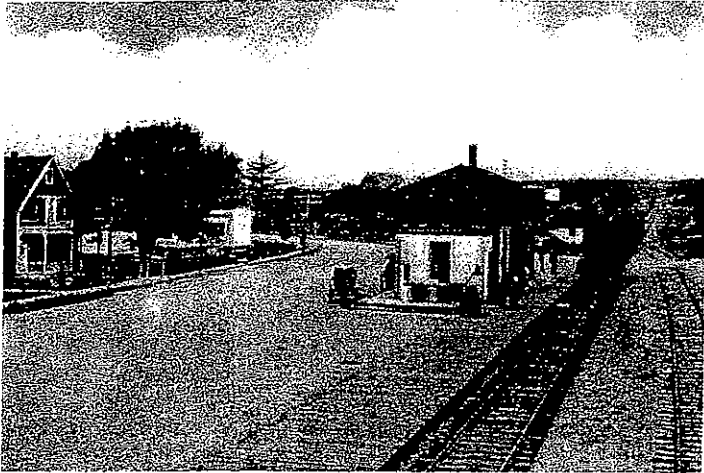


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Circulation



Marshfield Station, c.1900 (looking North)
Webster Street to the left
Photo: courtesy of D. Walsh



Same area now used as a town commuter parking lot, c.2000
(Station site behind van)

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.

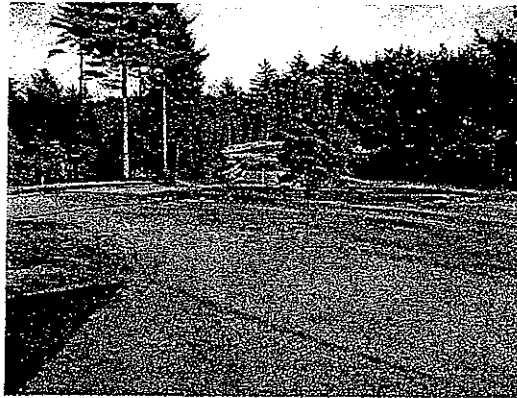


Pedestrian link between plazas (Cohasset, MA)



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 development should not decrease the level of service below "C" on existing streets or intersections.

7. Maintain the character of Marshfield's residential streets.

8. 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.

9. Do not support the use of breakdown lanes as a temporary capacity fix to congestion on state routes.

10. 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 a 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. Ensure that any future re-zoning of Route 139 parcels in the Enterprise Drive area is designed to encourage low trip generating land uses.

3. Maintain strict application of zoning by-law requirements for traffic impact studies and associated mitigation. Where Town resources are not available to evaluate such studies, use revolving funds to charge applicants fees for necessary technical review support.

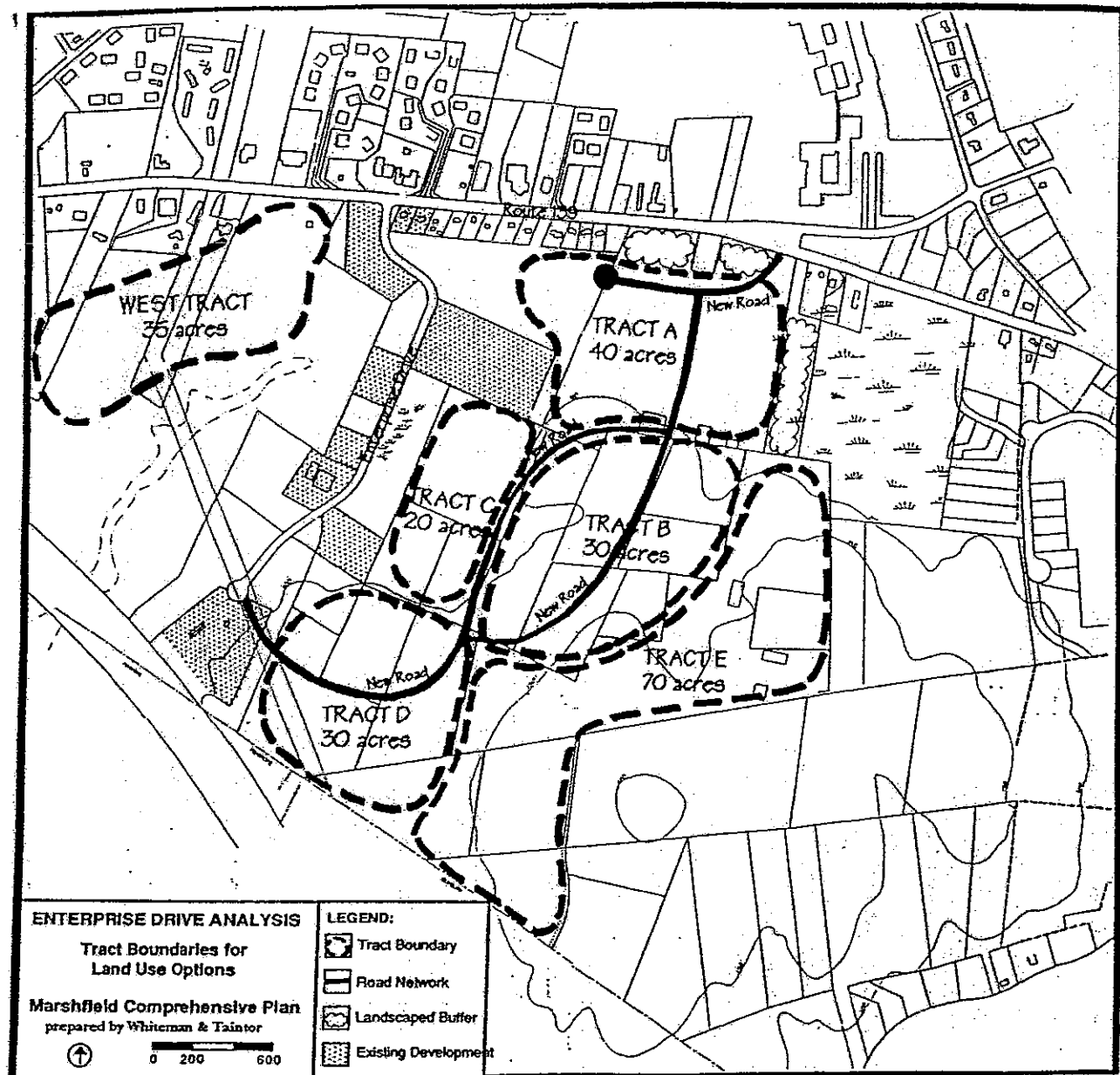
Access Management

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 signaling 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 (see sketch below). 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 downtown, should be considered when traffic volumes deem it necessary. In practice, the capacity of the roadway is limited by its intersections, and providing additional 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.
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.

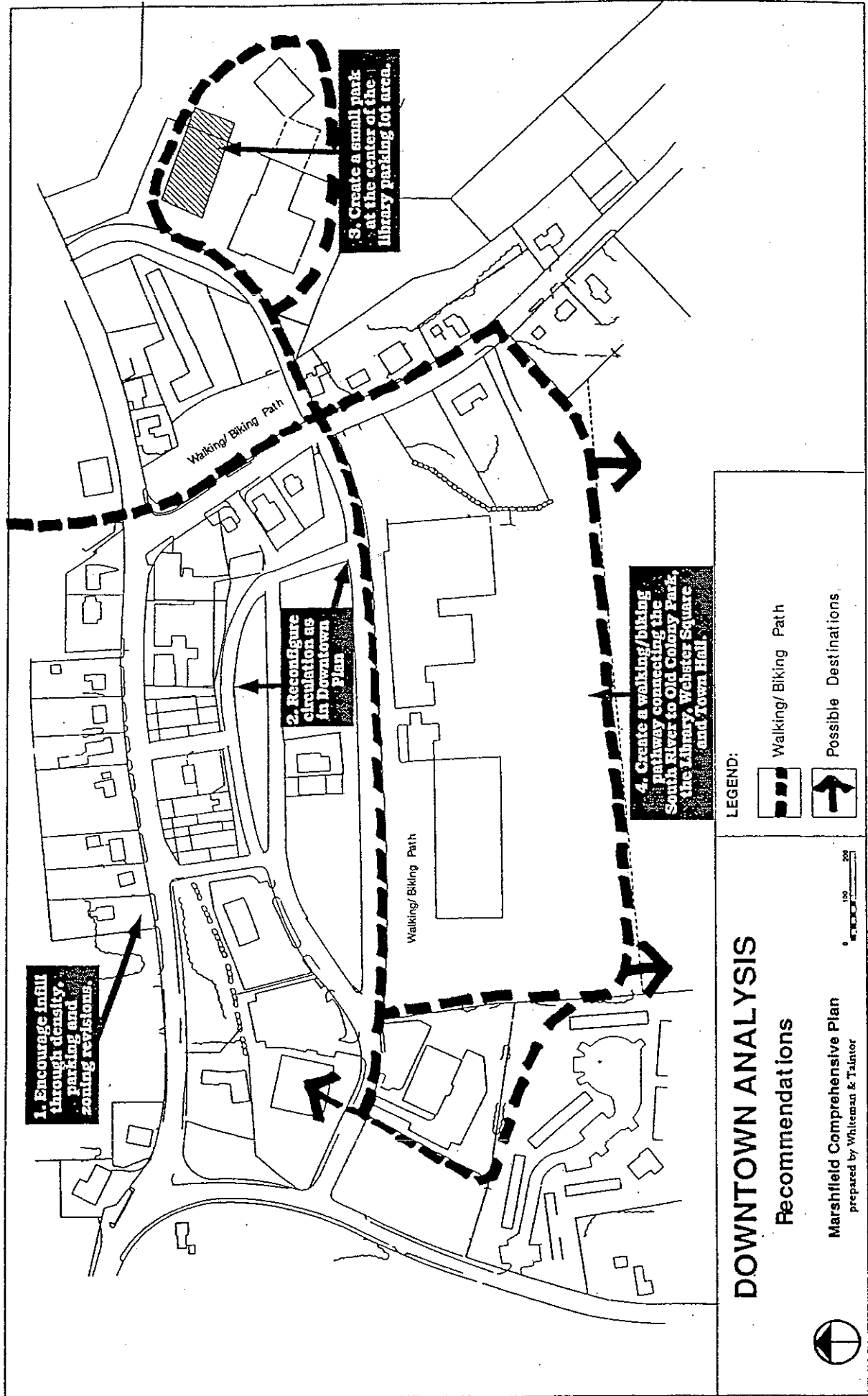
8. A Roadway Maintenance/ Improvement Program should be established to prioritize specific local improvements. This program should address a range of needs, including necessary maintenance/ repair, capacity/safety improvements, or measures to address specific problems.

9. Maintain the character of the town's scenic residential roads by excluding trucks over 2½ tons, where viable alternate routes exist.



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

- Definition of the Library Plaza access road.
- 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.



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. 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.
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.

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 to Greenbush
- Expansion of commuter boat service to Hingham and Scituate
- 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.

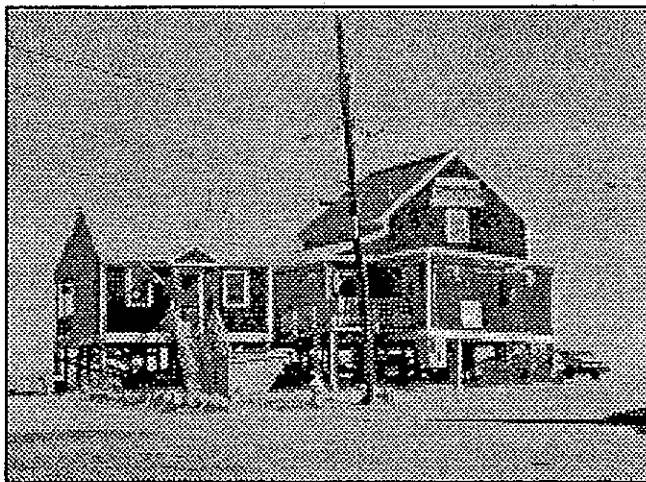
Policies

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 a long 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. Find an environmentally sound and cost effective way to address solid waste issues following the closure of the landfill.
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.



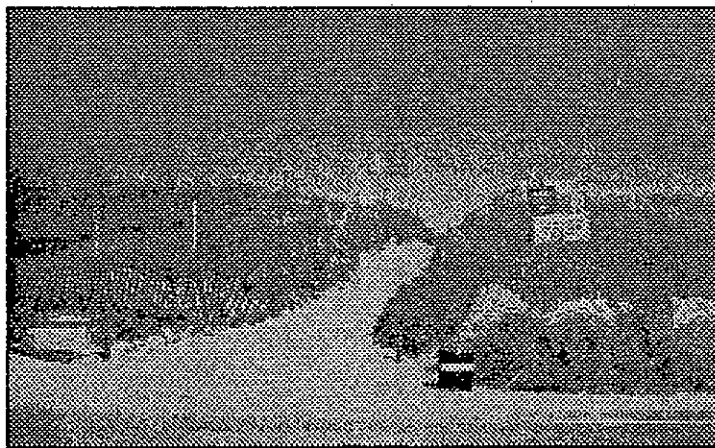
Businesses and homes along the waterfront must use storm damage mitigation measures to reduce repetitive storm loss.

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

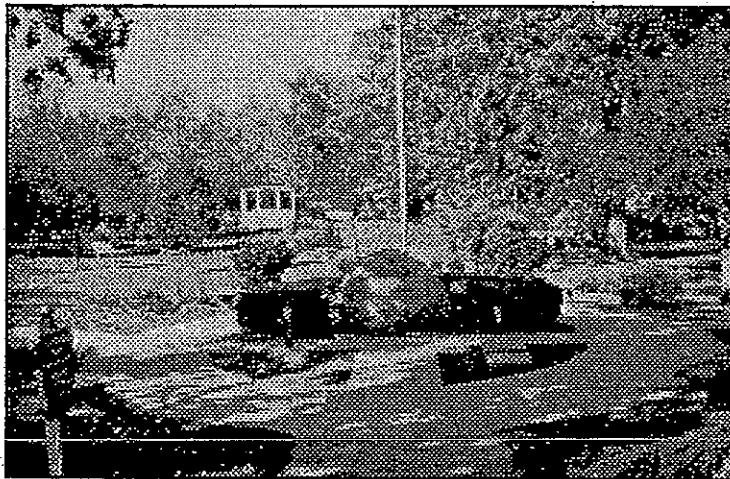
1. Preserve land with a wilderness and/or historic quality, and open it to the public as a place to get away from it all, and enjoy the solitude and quiet of a natural protected area.
2. Conserve and protect land in order to protect natural resources critical to either humans or plant and animal species identified as being rare and/or endangered.
3. Conserve and protect additional land in order to maintain a sense of openness and ruralness. 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.



Public access to Rexhame Beach is one example of recreational opportunities for Marshfield residents.

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.

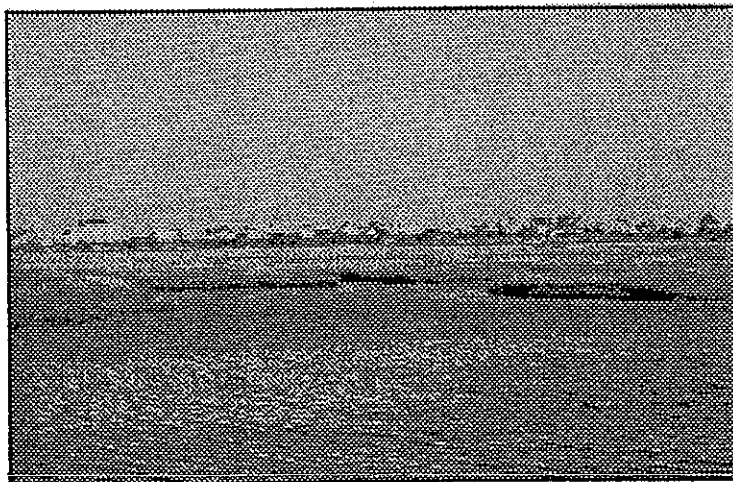


Veterans' Park provides passive recreational opportunities in downtown Marshfield

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
 - o Carolina Hill/Furnace Brook Watershed
 - o Northwest Green Area/North River Corridor
 - o Aquifer lands
 - o Marshlands
 - o Green Harbor Reclamation District lands
 - b) Current and future water supply areas
 - c) Priorities identified by the Comprehensive Plan
 - o Additional ballfield lands
 - o Strategic lands in Pembroke
 - o Open fields
 - o Chapter 61 lands
 - o land in the South River watershed along the South River Trail
 - o Old railroad bed
 - o The Coast Guard Station
 - o Blackman's Point
 - o A Green Harbor neighborhood park
 - o 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 update the town's cluster development bylaw and actively promote its use where this alternative would allow protection of open space and recreation lands, environmentally sensitive areas and/or provide for needed trail corridors.



Green Harbor salt marsh

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 which 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 Ballfields Revitalization Committee should work together to insure that duplication of effort does not exist between the two committees and that any new ballfields are planned to meet the needs of both committees.
16. The Town should actively seek to encourage the construction of neighborhood playgrounds and ballfields on tax title and reserved lots in new subdivision submissions.
17. The Town should promote and encourage public access to the ocean front.