
TOWN OF SEEKONK 2000 MASTER PLAN UPDATE

ADOPTED DECEMBER 12, 2000

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INTRODUCTION

I. WHAT IS THE SEEKONK MASTER PLAN?

The Seekonk Master Plan is a long range guide to the development and preservation of the Town of Seekonk. This update of the Plan, last completed in 1986, does not realize a radically different Seekonk, but rather provides the tools to build on the assets of the community. It provides a framework and agenda through the goals, policies, and action plan for the town to make decisions to achieve its objectives and realize its vision.

Chapter 41, Section 81-D of the Massachusetts General Laws requires every city and town to prepare a Master Plan and to update the plan periodically. The last two updates to the Seekonk master plan occurred in 1979 and 1986. Due to the fact that a master plan is considered to have a scope of 5 to 10 years, and that Seekonk has continued to develop and mature during the last decade, the current year 2000 necessitates a new master plan.

The Master Plan Update reviews the recommendations of the past two plans and provides the status of those recommendation. Further, the Plan assesses demographics in the community profile, land use, economic development, natural features, open space prepared by the South Eastern Regional Planning and Economic Development (SRPEDD), housing, public facilities, and transportation elements. The Plan then develops Goals and Polices (Chapter B) from which the Action Plan (Chapter K) is generated.

The Master Plan will aid the Town Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board, and the Zoning Board in making informed decisions. To function as such a document, the Master Plan must serve as a concise yet complete compilation of information about the current state of the town. To achieve this, information was gathered from a variety of sources including Town officials themselves, South Eastern Regional Planning and Economic Development (SRPEDD), community members, and myriad research and textual documents. The inventory provided by the Master Plan is a powerful tool that helps the town to understand itself. The elements that will guide the Town's future development are the Goals and Policies and the Action Plan. The Plan's Goals and Policies were derived from, input from Town officials, Community participation, and the inventory of current Seekonk conditions. The Action Plan seeks to make the Plan an implementable document, with suggested specific improvements, identified responsible parties, and a timeframe for action.

II. THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Seekonk Planning Board, made up of a cross section of Seekonk residents, provided oversight and coordination for the Master Plan Update. Public input was received through a survey sent to all residents in their tax bills just prior to the Master Plan Update. A community wide visioning session was held in January 2000 followed by a visioning survey available at the Public Library and the Town Hall. A public hearing was held by the Planning Board on December 12, 2000 before the Master Plan was adopted. The Planning Process involved the following steps:

- Gaining an understanding of the community through review of existing plans and documents, interviews, and field surveys
- Seeking broader involvement through the survey questionnaire distributed throughout the Town, the visioning session, and follow up survey
- Workshops with the Planning Board and interviews to identify community concerns
- The development of plan components, goals and policies, and the action plan reviewed by the Planning Board
- Joint work session with the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen.
- Formal review and Public Hearings of the Master Plan Update by the Planning Board.

III. A VISION FOR SEEKONK

The 2000 Master Plan hopes to capture the identity, and the values of the Seekonk Community, in addition to inventorying and evaluating current physical conditions. The questions how does Seekonk see itself?, and what does the Town of Seekonk envision for itself in the years to come?, are important to the document. Community input at public meetings, and input from elected Town officials has been gathered to create an inclusive picture of the Town's identity, and to mold a vision for the future. Three key elements of Seekonk's vision for the future are outlined below. These themes embody Town values and reverberate in this Master Plan.

An Attractive Suburban/ Rural Community: Seekonk envisions itself as a rural, small town community, with a high quality of residential life.

For residents, the quiet suburban/ rural quality of life defines the Town of Seekonk. Residents consider Seekonk a desirable place to invest time, effort, and resources into a home. Central to the attractiveness of Seekonk as a place to live is the picturesque, rural quality of the Town. Several sections of the plan therefore, suggest not only preservation of rural suburban qualities, but also the bolstering of these qualities. Agricultural lands, scenic roads, and natural vistas are a few of Seekonk's gems.

In accord with the Town's desire to strengthen the quality of residential life, measures for the improvement of current facilities and services are also emphasized in the plan. To

maintain the delivery of quality services, the Town must continue to update its schools, public safety, and recreational facilities to ensure that the community will be an attractive one in the coming years.

Also addressed in this Master Plan is the outward projection of Seekonk's residential character. While apparent to residents, the Town's neighborhood qualities are oftentimes overshadowed by commercial development to outsiders. Visitors to the Route 6 commercial corridor may not encounter the residential Seekonk, and in areas of local business land use, unaesthetic development sometimes obscures nearby attractive neighborhoods. In order to bolster the quality of residential life in Seekonk therefore, the Town will work to allow its quality of life to become more outwardly visible. The development of a town aesthetic is a part of the vision for Seekonk.

A Community that Will Continue To Grow-Smartly: Seekonk envisions managed growth in residential and commercial sectors in the coming years.

Because of available land, an attractive community, and proximity to Providence, Seekonk expects continued growth. SRPEDD's build out analysis for the Town of Seekonk identifies an additional 5,198 acres of developable land, and the potential for 7,734 additional residents at build-out. Rates of population growth have been mild (less than 1% annually since 1996), but steady. The challenge that Seekonk faces is to manage growth so that new development does not threaten community character or environmentally sensitive areas. Seekonk envisions more flexible zoning to allow for new development without increasing overall density, while preserving open space and scenic vistas. This smart-growth technique will also allow Seekonk to provide a wider range of housing options. In commercial areas, growth management entails infill and refill development to contain business to existing commercial corridors. In sum, Seekonk's vision is to allow for growth without changing the highly valued community character or threatening the natural environment.

Continued Success of Regional Commercial Corridor: Seekonk envisions continued success of the Route 6 highway business commercial corridor.

The Route 6 commercial corridor serves regional retail shopping needs, provides employment within Seekonk, and contributes significantly to tax revenue. Seekonk envisions infill and refill development along Route 6, as well as proactive economic development measures that will help ensure continued prosperity for business along Route 6 well into the future.

GOALS AND POLICIES

The Goals and Policies are the foundation of the 2000 Seekonk Master Plan Update. Goals and Policies were derived from: a community visioning session, a community survey, public hearings, guidance from various Town officials, and information gathered during the inventory of current Seekonk conditions. Goals and Policies are listed for each of the Plan's seven elements: Land Use, Economic Development, Natural Features and Resources, Open Space and Recreation, Public Facilities and Services, Housing, and Transportation. Goals are intended to serve as generalized guiding principles for effective Town planning, while policies are more directed strategies for achieving the foundational goals. These Goals and Policies are expanded upon throughout the plan in elements' individual chapters. And in the final chapter, the Goals and Policies inform the Action Plan (Chapter K), wherein each suggested specific action references a particular Goal and Policy.

LAND USE

Goal 1. Aid the creation and maintenance of cohesive neighborhoods.

Policies.

- 1.1 Develop landscape by-laws for residential and commercial developments ensuring the use of good design principles.
- 1.2 Encourage the development of village centers and the preservation of neighborhood centers.
- 1.3 Work with neighborhood residents to develop and implement neighborhood strategic plans.
- 1.4 Encourage urban design that facilitates safe pedestrian travel, plentiful recreation areas, and community interaction.
- 1.5 Ensure the compatibility of adjacent land uses.
- 1.6 Promote land uses that cater to the community's housing needs.

Goal 2. Preserve Seekonk's rural/suburban community character.

Policies:

- 2.1 Regulate the subdivision of open/undeveloped land, and adhere to smart growth principles.

- 2.2 Create attractive gateways to Seekonk that reflect the town's rural suburban image.
- 2.3 Encourage infill and refill development, especially along established commercial corridors.
- 2.4 Limit growth that creates a disproportionate demand on municipal services.
- 2.5 Pursue measures to protect agricultural lands.
- 2.6 Identify and protect Seekonk's rural roadways.

Goal 3. Provide and protect open spaces, scenic vistas, and streetscapes.

Policies:

- 3.1 Implement zoning policies to preserve open space areas and agricultural lands.
- 3.2 Invest in park developments to create top quality park spaces.
- 3.3 Identify scenic roadways and vistas, and implement measures for their protection.
- 3.4 Cooperate with the Seekonk Land Conservation Trust and other interested conservation organizations, and agricultural landowners to purchase conservation easements as a means of reducing the sale and subsequent subdividing of agricultural, open space, and forested lands.
- 3.5 Pursue grants and gifts of undeveloped open land.
- 3.6 Engage in aggressive landscaping and greening efforts along roadways where development is not consistent with community character- especially at Seekonk gateways.

Goal 4. Balance economic development and residential areas.

Policies:

- 4.1 Require business development within residential Seekonk to reflect the qualities of surrounding neighborhoods.
- 4.2 Contain Highway Business development to existing locations along Route 6.
- 4.3 Encourage patterns of development that generate revenue to Seekonk yet require the lowest level of demand on infrastructure and services.
- 4.4 Implement design codes for business developments that preserve street edges, and include landscaping.

Goal 5. Ensure that land uses are consistent with Seekonk's resources and existing economic conditions.

Policies

- 5.1 Make sure that all zoning districts realistically reflect the types of land use that they contain.
- 5.2 Guard against scattered patterns of development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1. Help Seekonk Business maintain and enhance its competitive edge.

Policies:

- 1.1 Cooperate with regional efforts to strengthen the southeastern Massachusetts regional economy- namely with SERPD.
- 1.2 Take a pro-active position on promoting economic development.
- 1.3 Facilitate the collaboration of Seekonk business
- 1.4 Work with Seekonk business to develop a regional marketing campaign for the Route 6 commercial corridor to consumers.
- 1.5 Inventory potential development opportunities in the Town and promote them.
- 1.6 Implement a landscape ordinance as a means of visually rejuvenating commercial developments.

Goal 2. Promote economic development that is consistent with Seekonk's character and resources.

Policies:

- 2.1 Encourage economic growth in areas with adequate infrastructure only.
- 2.2 Guide economic growth to minimize adverse impacts on adjacent residential land uses.
- 2.3 Contain economic growth along existing commercial corridors.
- 2.4 Develop and enforce landscape and design guidelines that require businesses to reflect community character- especially where integrated into residential Seekonk.
- 2.5 Facilitate infill and refill of vacant and underutilized parcels of commercial and industrial zoned land.
- 2.6 Promote the continued presence of working farms in Seekonk to provide economic diversity and to help protect the rural character of the Town.
- 2.7 Encourage businesses to support the community via cultural activities, and historic and environmental preservation programs.
- 2.8 Encourage business development that would lead to the creation of a village center commercial area at Luther's Corners.

NATURAL FEATURES AND RESOURCES

Goal 1. Safeguard Seekonk's natural and cultural resources from adverse impacts to ensure that future generations are able to derive benefit from such resources.

Policies.

- 1.1 Ensure that land uses correspond to the land's natural characteristics and varying suitability for development.
- 1.2 Promote land development that is in harmony with the rural qualities of the Town.
- 1.3 Where development is to occur, require that maximum consideration be given to natural features and resources.
- 1.4 Employ buffering, innovative design, and erosion control to minimize development impact on natural resources.
- 1.5 Infill and refill development should be encouraged in residential and commercial areas to minimize degradation to natural resources.

Goal 2. Protect environmentally sensitive areas and significant natural resources.

Policies.

- 2.1 Preserve (through town acquisition) or facilitate preservation (by cooperating with private groups) of undeveloped areas containing or buffering significant natural features and resources.
- 2.2 Protect the quality of Seekonk's water.
- 2.3 Adopt an integrated approach to groundwater protection through public education about septic system maintenance, pesticide use, and disposal of household hazardous substances.
- 2.4 Continue to enforce the Groundwater Aquifer Protection District to protect, preserve, and maintain the existing and potential groundwater supply and groundwater recharge areas.
- 2.5 Identify sources of potential threats to the quality and quantity of Seekonk's water supply and take action to prevent contamination and depletion.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION (From 1999 SRPEDD Open Space Plan)

Goal 1. Protect the quality of the water resources of the Town of Seekonk

Objectives

- 1.1 Assess the adequacy of existing water quality related regulation, etc., at the local level.
- 1.2 Maintain adequate buffers around public water supply areas
- 1.3 Continue to work toward the restoration of the Runnins River.
- 1.4 Work to maintain the integrity of recreational waterbodies and wetlands.

Goal 2. Prevent the loss of the rural qualities of the town

Objectives

- 2.1 Preserve agricultural area and maintain economically viable open land
- 2.2 Promote the designation of scenic roads and byways.
- 2.3 Preserve history, historic sites and related areas of the town.

Goal 3. Preserve sufficient open space to meet the passive recreation and conservation needs of the town.

Objectives

- 3.1 Assess the viability of the McHale's Pond Development Plan.
- 3.2 Continue to address development plans for Gammino Pond.
- 3.3 Assess potential land acquisitions in order to establish greenbelts.
- 3.4 Promote public awareness to the value of open space.

Goal 4. Address the active recreation needs of the citizens of Seekonk.

Objectives

- 4.1 Address the need for upkeep and further development of existing facilities in order to maximize potential use
- 4.2 Explore recreational development partnerships with public and private organizations.
- 4.3 Explore the potential for on-road, off-road and rail-to-trail conversion for bicycling/multi-use facilities.

Goal 5. Develop a town-supported funding mechanism for land acquisition as well as a means by which to implement the Open Space Plan's Action Plan.

Objectives

- 5.1 Have the means to directly acquire, match fund, hold, grant-match, etc., when desirable properties become available to the town.
- 5.2 Establish a permanent Open Space Committee to oversee the implementation of the Open Space Plan.
- 5.3 Actively pursue state and federal funding to match the town's spending on conservation, open space and recreation.

HOUSING

Goal 1. Ensure a diversity of housing opportunities for Seekonk residents by providing a range of decent, safe, and affordable housing choices.

Policies.

- 1.1 Create more affordable homeownership, and more affordable rental housing opportunities in Seekonk.
- 1.2 Provide more flexibility, and a wider range of housing options in Seekonk.
- 1.3 Explore possible forms of incentives for the construction of affordable housing units in Seekonk.
- 1.4 Work with neighborhood residents to develop and implement neighborhood strategic plans.
- 1.5 Promote more multi-family, rental housing, and accessory apartments in selected areas of Seekonk.

Goal 2. Preserve and enhance the quality of the existing housing stock.

Policies.

- 2.1 Provide home rehabilitation and improvement programs for owner-occupied and rental properties.
- 2.2 Enforce zoning by-law requirements and subdivision regulations to protect the housing stock.
- 2.3 Develop and implement a landscape ordinance for residential developments.

Goal 3. Ensure that the housing stock respects natural resources, and enables the Town to effectively service residential neighborhoods.

Policies.

- 3.1 Ensure that the location and type of housing is closely related to the presence of appropriate public services and facilities.

- 3.2 Link housing initiatives and developments to natural resource and open space preservation goals.
- 3.3 Develop means to assist homeowners in rebuilding failing septic systems.
- 3.4 Explore ways to facilitate infill development in residential areas.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goal 1. Support efforts of the School Department to provide quality education for all school age residents of Seekonk.

Policies.

- 1.1 Work to ensure that all schools and administration buildings are handicapped accessible.
- 1.2 Encourage open lines of communication between the School Department and other Town departments.
- 1.3 Ensure that the condition of all schools is safe and conducive to creating a stimulating learning environment.
- 1.4 Educational programs should continue to reflect the changing needs of the community and student population.

Goal 2. Expand recreational opportunities and ensure that recreational programs are accessible to all citizens.

Policies.

- 2.1 Maintain existing Town owned open space and coordinate recreation activities.
- 2.2 Promote activities and recreation spaces that meet the needs of the Town's older residents.

Goal 3. Ensure that Town administrative departments have adequate resources and facilities to function efficiently and serve the Town's needs.

Policies.

- 3.1 Continue to pursue options for providing additional meeting and office spaces.
- 3.2 Promote the use of public buildings for civic architecture to create an identifiable community identity when executing future projects.

Goal 4. Maintain and improve Seekonk's library, recognizing it as a significant cultural and community resource.

Policies.

- 4.1 Maintain and enhance the quality of the Town's library facilities, to meet the current and projected library needs.
- 4.2 Encourage open lines of communication between the Town's library and Town departments.

Goal 5. Provide police services that effectively meet Seekonk's current and future safety needs.

Policies.

- 5.1 Provide state-of-the-art police facilities that allow the department to function efficiently.
- 5.2 Continue to ensure that the Police Department has adequate vehicles and equipment to operate safely and efficiently.
- 5.3 Encourage open lines of communication between the Police Department, other Town departments, and the public.

Goal 6. Provide fire protection services that meet Seekonk's current and future fire safety needs.

Policies.

- 6.1 Provide state-of-the-art Fire Department facilities that allow the department to function efficiently.
- 6.2 Ensure the Fire Department has adequate staff to meet the needs of residents and businesses.
- 6.3 Encourage open lines of communication between the Fire Department, other Town departments, and the public.

Goal 7. Provide pure, high quality and ample drinking water supply to the Town.

Policies.

- 7.1 Continue to protect the Town's aquifer that supplies drinking water.
- 7.2 Expand and manage the water system as necessary to sustain current water needs and planned development.

TRANSPORTATION

Goal 1. Maximize the efficiency of Seekonk's automobile roadways in terms of flow/congestion and safety.

Policies.

- 1.1 Provide adequate access to new and existing businesses in Seekonk.
- 1.2 Make sure that roads can handle their traffic volumes.
- 1.3 Explore possible adjustments to any road or intersection that is consistently dangerous.
- 1.4 Explore further development of a Seekonk north-south transportation artery.
- 1.5 Provide high quality roadway conditions and roadway surfaces.

Goal 2. Ensure that the transportation network is sensitive to community character.

Policies.

- 3.1 Protect Seekonk's scenic roadways.
- 3.2 Refrain from infringing on the rural characteristics when developing new roads or improving old ones.
- 3.3 Encourage a hierarchy of roads that protects Seekonk's quiet secondary roads.

Goal 4. Develop and improve alternative transportation opportunities.

Policies.

- 4.1 Provide decent Public Transportation Service to and From Seekonk.
- 4.2 Make Seekonk roads more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.

COMMUNITY PROFILE OF SEEKONK

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I. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Originally settled in 1636, the Town of Seekonk is the result of several subdivisions of the area originating with settlement activities of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In 1645, Rehoboth was incorporated as a town, and it included the area known as Seekonk. It wasn't until 1812 that Seekonk established itself as a town. The area covered by the original Town boundaries included East Providence and a part of Pawtucket.

Farming was the principal occupation of the early settlers in the Town. The first Europeans established farms that radiated out from the present day Luther's Corners. After the power of the Seekonk and the Ten Mile Rivers was realized industry developed. Several mills and factories located along the banks of these rivers. The Cove Factory, a cloth manufacturer established a facility in Seekonk in the early 19th century. The Seekonk Central Factory, makers of textiles, was erected in 1810. And Hunt's Mills, built in 1822, included a grist and saw mill, cording machines, clothier's works, and a small cotton factory.

Separation of the Pawtucket portion from Seekonk in 1828, and the transferring of several of Seekonk's factories to future East Providence, Rhode Island in 1862 left Seekonk with little manufacturing within its borders at the turn of the century. Essentially the Town became an agricultural community. Between 1900 and 1950 Seekonk's population grew by only 4,000, a factor that distinguished the community from neighboring towns in the region such as Pawtucket and East Providence. This extremely stable population can be attributed in large-part to the State boundary with Rhode Island. This factor continues

(to a lesser extent) to shelter Seekonk from extensive suburban development. The conceptual boundary of the state border allowed an agricultural economy to dominate Seekonk well into the Twentieth century, and preserved the low density rural land use pattern that persists today.

Seekonk, nevertheless, was not immune to the suburbanization of lifestyles that took place in the Post World War II era. The relatively stable growth condition changed dramatically during the 50 year period between 1950 and 2000. The Town's population has more than doubled from the 1950 level of 6,104 to 13,339 residents in 1998 according to the Census Bureau. Significant portions of Seekonk's agricultural lands were lost to housing and business development as a result. Still the Town did not experience development to the extent of most other communities and townships that surround Providence Rhode Island. The artificial boundary of the state border allowed Seekonk to retain a lower density and more rural land use pattern than many of the Rhode Island suburbs of Providence.

The suburbanization that did take place in Seekonk happened in a very polarized north-south fashion. North Seekonk residential development grew out of the Pawtucket urbanity, while Southern Seekonk was linked to East Providence and Providence. The remnants of this polarization are evidenced in the Town's land use pattern. An array of mature subdivisions cluster in the western half of Town in proximity to Pawtucket and to East Providence. The disjunction between north and south is psychological as well as physical. Northern residents are more likely to identify with Pawtucket and southern residents may feel more a part of the East Providence community.

In central Seekonk the presence of Route 44 has had the most impact on land use development. Commercial development, has proliferated along this arterial road that is the main route from Providence RI, to Taunton.

Environmental constraints have also played a major role in Seekonk by limiting development and preserving natural vistas and open spaces. The Town has a high water table and an abundance of wetlands that have made development in various areas difficult. Presently, protective zoning preserves wetlands and Seekonk's water supply, and serves as a constraint to development. Still, development has encroached upon environmentally sensitive areas, resulting in the pollution of streams, problems with septic system operation and well water quality, as well as the loss of valuable open space. Woodlands and wildlife areas have been preserved in some cases only. Where they have been spared, they make Seekonk an attractive and picturesque suburban location for further residential development.

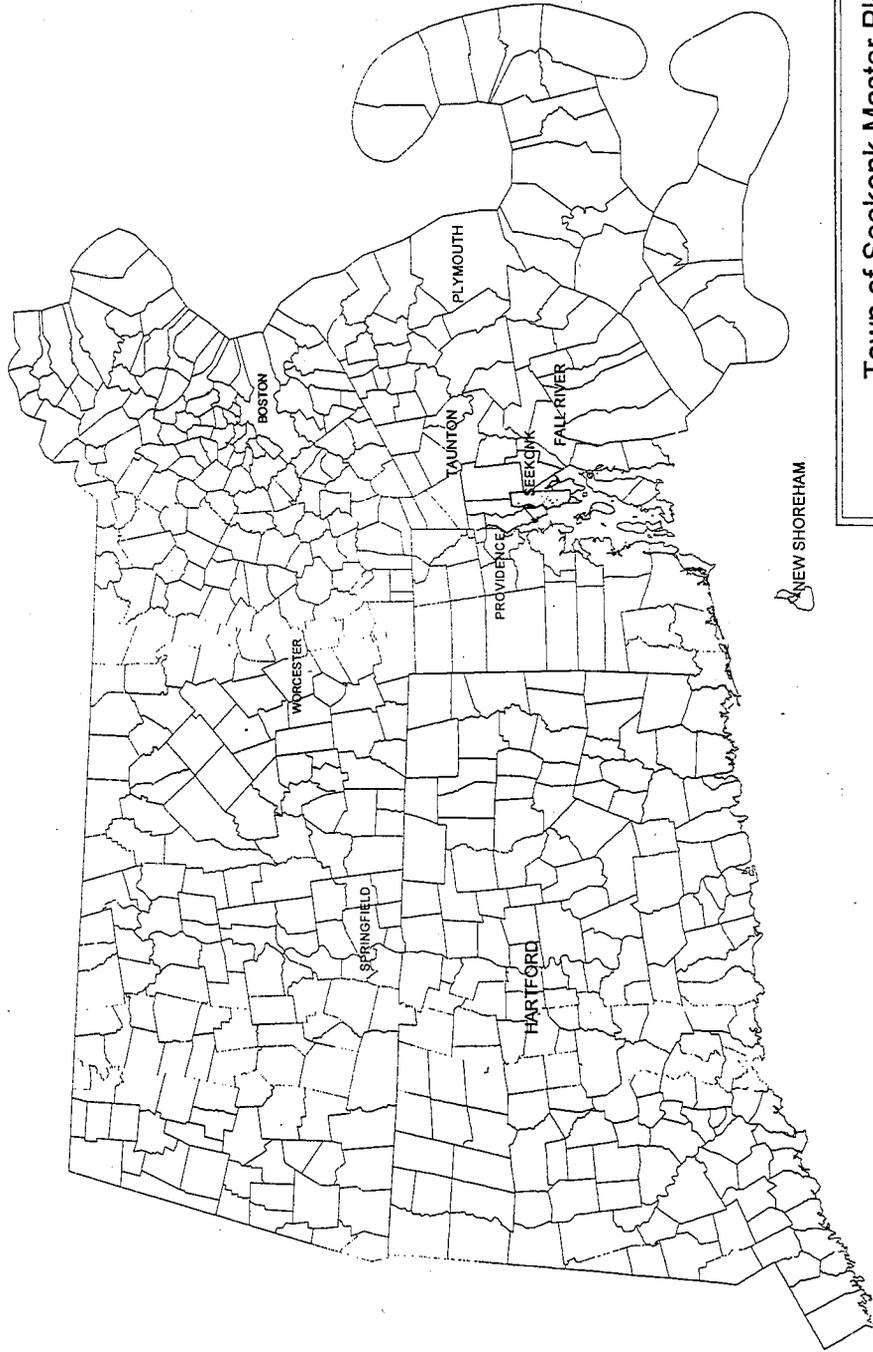
The event that had the most significant impact on Seekonk's economy and character in the twentieth century was the construction of Interstate 195 in the early 1960's. This

expressway immediately transformed Seekonk into a desirable location for large-scale commerce by providing convenient automobile access from the greater Providence area and the South Eastern Massachusetts region. For more than three decades Seekonk has balanced rapid commercial growth with its rural and suburban qualities.

II. REGIONAL SETTING

Seekonk is a town in Bristol County, in the southeastern region of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with a total area of 18.42 square miles. It is bordered on the southwest by East Providence, Rhode Island; northwest by Pawtucket, Rhode Island; north by Attleboro, Massachusetts; east by Rehoboth, Massachusetts; and Swansea, Massachusetts to the south. It is approximately 5 miles east of Providence, Rhode Island; 13 miles northwest of Fall River, Massachusetts; and 45 miles south of Boston. Figure C.1 (following page) displays Seekonk's position within the region.

The construction of roads linking Seekonk to other communities in the area has gradually transformed the Town from an agricultural community to its current identification as an inner-ring suburb of Providence. Good transportation networks, including Interstate 195, Route 6 and Route 44, connect Seekonk to Providence to the west and Fall River, New Bedford and Taunton to the east. Routes 114A and 152 traverse the length of the town and provide access to East Providence, Pawtucket and Attleboro. Seekonk is considered a part of the Providence-Pawtucket-Fall River Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA) by the Census Bureau.



NEW SHOREHAM

Town of Seekonk Master Plan Figure C.1

Regional Setting

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 December 12, 2000



The population estimate for 1998, 13,339, indicates that Seekonk has experienced minimal population growth, while all of the larger cities that surround it have experienced steady population losses. Most significant are the losses experienced by Providence and Pawtucket, which have both lost over five percent of their respective populations since 1990.

Table C.2, Regional Population Change, 1980 to 1990 and 1996

Community	% Change			% Change	
	1980	1990	1980-1990	1996*	1990-1996
Seekonk, MA	12,269	13,046	5.96%	13,269	1.68%
Attleboro, MA	34,196	38,383	10.91%	39,070	1.76%
Fall River, MA	92,574	92,703	0.14%	90,865	-2.02%
Rehoboth, MA	7,570	8,656	12.55%	9,354	7.46%
Swansea, MA	15,461	15,411	-0.32%	15,533	0.79%
Providence, RI	156,804	160,728	2.44%	152,558	-5.36%
East Providence, RI	50,980	50,380	-1.19%	48,389	-4.11%
Pawtucket, RI	71,204	72,664	2.01%	69,068	-5.21%
Barrington, RI	16,174	15,849	-2.05%	15,841	-0.05%

Source: 1980, 1990 U.S. Census of Population

*Massachusetts estimates from the Massachusetts Institute for Social & Economic Research (MISER).

Rhode Island estimates from the Population Estimates Program, Population Division, US Bureau of the Census.

III. POPULATION

At the time of the 2000 Master Plan update, the 2000 census figures were not yet available. 1990 census figures with population estimates from the Census bureau and MISER are used instead. Because Seekonk has not experienced significant population increases in during the 1990's, the population figures used hold adequate validity for the inventory purposes of the Master Plan.

The Town of Seekonk experienced substantial growth between 1940 and 1980, more than doubling the population during that time. This growth can be attributed to a number of factors, including new housing construction, population loss from cities like Providence and Fall River, and a higher birth rate and family size than exists today. The 1990 Census showed that the rate of population growth had slowed, a trend that continues in the present. Poor regional economic conditions, especially during the 1970s, contributed to a slowdown in migration, birth rate, and family size. More recently, other factors have played an increasing role in the slowdown of Seekonk's population growth. Large-lot zoning requirements and little multi-family housing have reduced the housing choices

available to prospective residents. Another constraint is simply that there is very little buildable land left in Seekonk, as most major land parcels have already been developed. Seekonk's natural features, such as wetlands and flood plains, provide further restrictions to growth.

Table C.3, Population Growth, 1940 to 1998

Year	Population	Change	Change
1940	4,912		
1950	6,104	1,192	24.3%
1960	8,399	2,295	37.6%
1970	11,116	2,717	32.3%
1980	12,269	1,153	10.4%
1990	13,046	777	6.3%
1998*	13,339	293	2.2%

Source: U. S. Census of Population, 1940 to 1990

* 1995, 1996, 1998 Population Estimates, U.S. Bureau of the Census

Estimates of the population between national census counts help to provide up-to-date population information for a particular area. The Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER) provides population estimates for Massachusetts cities and towns. The 1998 MISER estimate of the population of Seekonk was 14,061 persons slightly higher than the Census Bureau's estimate. Population projection figures have been prepared by the South Eastern Regional Planning and Economic Development Department (SRPEDD). According to SRPEDD in 2010 Seekonk's population will be approximately 14,110, in 2020 approximately 14,679, and in 2025 approximately 15,886.

A. Age Characteristics

The average age of Seekonk's population continues to increase, due to declining birth rates in the area and increased longevity of the population. The average age of Seekonk residents according to the 1990 census was 36.1 years, slightly higher than the Bristol County average of 33.8 years. While persons between the age of 25 and 44 represent the largest segment of Seekonk's population (31.7 percent), persons 60 or over number 2,253 residents, or 17.3 percent of the population. In percentage terms, this represents an increase from 1980 data, in which residents 60 or over numbered 1,860 persons, or 15.2 percent of Seekonk's total population.

Table C.4, Population of Seekonk by Age, 1990

	Under 5	5 to 17	18 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 59	60 to 64	65 to 74	75 to 84	85+	Total
Number	794	2,445	1,179	4,131	2,244	640	1,003	486	124	13,046
Percent	6.1%	18.7%	9.0%	31.7%	17.2%	4.9%	7.7%	3.7%	1.0%	100.0%

Source: 1990 U.S. Census, General Population Characteristics

B. School Enrollment

Overall school enrollment in Seekonk public schools has fluctuated through the years, generally hovering between 2,100 and 2,250 students since the 1984-1985 school year to the present. Elementary (grades K-6) and intermediate (grades 7-8) school enrollment has been rather stable during this time, though enrollment in the high school (grades 9-12) has declined sharply, from 855 students in 1984-1985 to 598 students during the 1997-1998 school year. This trend appears to be changing, though, as high school enrollment has risen consistently since the 1992-1993 school year and stood at 598 students for the 1997-1998 school year.

Table C.5, School Enrollment in Seekonk ¹

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Elementary grades k-6</u>	<u>Intermediate grades 7-8</u>	<u>High School grades 9-12</u>	<u>Total Enrollment</u>	<u>Enrollment Growth per year</u>	<u>Cumulative Growth all years</u>
1984-1985	1,071	387	855	2,313		
1985-1986	1,039	354	800	2,193	-5.47%	-5.47%
1986-1987	1,053	341	807	2,201	0.36%	-5.09%
1987-1988	1,172	299	728	2,199	-0.09%	-5.18%
1988-1989	1,213	291	666	2,170	-1.34%	-6.59%
1989-1990	1,206	320	601	2,127	-2.02%	-8.74%
1990-1991	1,236	358	554	2,148	0.98%	-7.68%
1991-1992	1,237	377	558	2,172	1.10%	-6.49%
1992-1993	1,214	355	537	2,106	-3.13%	-9.83%
1993-1994	1,256	329	543	2,128	1.03%	-8.69%
1994-1995	1,267	363	578	2,208	3.62%	-4.76%
1995-1996	1,250	389	593	2,232	1.08%	-3.63%
1996-1997	1,259	372	600	2,231	-0.04%	-3.68%
1997-1998	1,220	365	598	2,183	-2.20%	-5.96%

Source: Seekonk Public Schools, 1998.

¹ Excludes out-of-town tuition students and students in private schools.

C. Educational Attainment

Seekonk has a high level of educational attainment in comparison with surrounding communities and Bristol County as a whole. Nearly 82 percent of residents graduated from high school, while over 24 percent of residents have bachelor's degrees or higher. This compares with 65 percent high school attainment and almost 16 percent college or beyond for Bristol County.

Table C.6, Educational Attainment, Persons 25 and Older

	Educational Attainment					With Degrees			Percent	
	Total	< 9th Grade	Some High School	High School Graduate	Some College	Associate	Bachelor's	Graduate or Professional	H.S. Grad or Higher	Bachelor's or Higher
Seekonk	8,614	477	1,101	2,747	1,519	674	1,422	674	81.7	24.3
Attleboro	24,959	2,552	3,616	7,982	3,807	1,949	3,634	1,419	75.3	20.2
Rehoboth	5,569	325	713	1,865	994	464	865	343	81.4	21.7
Bristol County	327,994	63,422	51,515	95,765	44,717	20,432	35,728	16,415	65.0	15.9

Source: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

D. Racial Composition

Seekonk's racial composition is predominantly white. The 1990 U.S. Census identified a total of 328 non-white residents that, though proportionately very small, represents a notable increase in the number of non-white residents between 1980 and 1990. All non-white racial categories experienced an increase in absolute population and percentage of Seekonk's total population. Despite these increases, though, Seekonk remains a predominantly white community, and the composition of Seekonk's overall racial make-up did not change significantly over this time.

Table C.7, Town of Seekonk Racial Composition, 1980 to 1990

	1980	% of Total	1990	% of Total
White	12,079	98.45%	12,754	97.76%
Non-white	190		292	
Black	28	0.23%	72	0.55%
American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut				
Asian, Pacific Islander or other	146	1.19%	184	1.41%
Hispanic origin	16	0.13%	36	0.28%
Total	12,269	100%	13,046	100%

Source: 1980, 1990 U.S. Census of Population

E. Sub-area Population

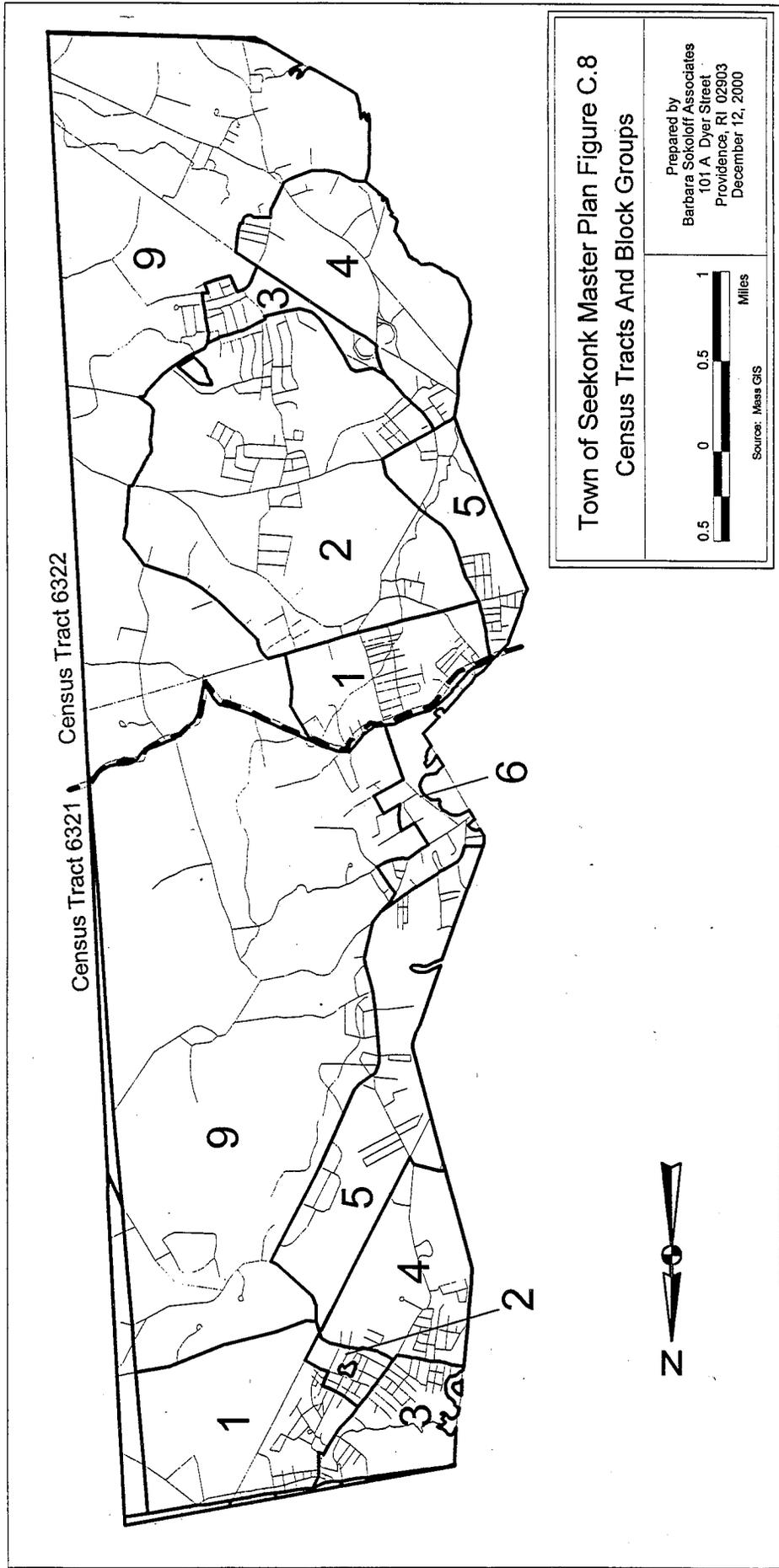
Sub-area population information for Seekonk was derived from U. S. Census block group data. Seekonk has two census tracts, which are divided by Ledge Road and Jacob Street. Tract 6321, to the north, contains seven block groups and tract 6322, to the south, contains six block groups. Figure C.9 (following page) displays Seekonk's block groups.

Though there are a similar number of people in each of Seekonk's two census tracts, the block data show that the population of Seekonk is not evenly distributed within the census tracts and the Town as a whole. As in 1980, a majority of the population lives in either the extreme northern end of the Town or in the area between Route 44 (Taunton Avenue) and Interstate I-195. Approximately 57.5% of the population lived in these areas, according to 1990 Census block data.

Table C.8, Population by Census Tract and Block Group

Subarea	1990 Population	1990 Households	Percent of Town
			Total Population
<i>Census Tract 6321</i>	6,010	2,070	46.07%
Block Group 1	1,041	344	7.98%
Block Group 2	401	164	3.07%
Block Group 3	763	250	5.85%
Block Group 4	728	250	5.58%
Block Group 5	901	313	6.91%
Block Group 6	607	253	4.65%
Block Group 9	1,569	496	12.03%
<i>Census Tract 6322</i>	7,036	2,335	53.93%
Block Group 1	733	218	5.62%
Block Group 2	3,072	1,047	23.55%
Block Group 3	502	160	3.85%
Block Group 4	499	164	3.82%
Block Group 5	606	173	4.65%
Block Group 9	1,624	573	12.45%

Source: 1990 U. S. Census of Population.



IV. COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

A survey was conducted by Seekonk in 1997 that yielded significant results about the overall satisfaction of residents with various aspects of the community. Nearly 60 percent of residents rated the overall quality of life as very good or excellent. Supporting this statistic is the length of time residents have lived in Seekonk. The majority of residents, 63 percent, have resided in Seekonk for over fifteen years. Another 25 percent have lived in Seekonk for five to fifteen years. The survey results show that most people move to Seekonk for common reasons. Housing, schools and family were the most commonly cited reasons for deciding to move to Seekonk. Jobs, native resident and taxes were cited the least.

Among twenty-seven choices concerning what they like most about living in Seekonk, the most popular response was the Town's location (see Table Figure C.10). A close second was the rural character of the community, followed by the quiet nature and the people of the community.

Figure C.10, Seekonk's Top Five Likes, Dislikes, and Issues

Like most about Seekonk	%	Like least about Seekonk	%	Biggest issue facing Seekonk	%
Location	13	Town Gov./administration	18	Sewers	20
Rural character	11	No response	16	Schools and education	14
Quiet community	8	Route 6	7	Residential growth/over development	10
People	8	Schools	7	No response	8
No response	7	Traffic	6	Taxes	8

Many respondents, 13 percent, cited Town government and administration as what they disliked the most about living in Seekonk. Route 6, the schools, and traffic were also cited as being disliked. However, it is worth noting that 11 percent of the returned surveys had no response to this question, which could be interpreted as a general content with the community. Residents felt that sewers and schools were the two biggest issues facing Seekonk. Residential growth and over-development was also identified as an issue, which represents the community's desire to maintain its rural character. Subsequent to the survey, the town voted against a sewer program in a referendum vote.

Level of satisfaction with community services was generally high. Two notable and related exceptions were parks and recreation services. The services receiving the highest level of satisfaction were fire and rescue, library, police, and shopping. Residents were also asked for their opinion about what would make Seekonk a better place to live. The highest percentage of surveys recorded no response to this question, once again indicating

a general satisfaction with the community. Sewers, improved government and administration, improved quality of schools, and parks and recreation facilities were commonly identified as items that would make Seekonk a better place.

Although generally satisfied with the quality of life in Seekonk, the survey results consistently identified the major concerns of residents and issues facing the Town as being sewers, the quality of schools, and a lack of park and recreation facilities and programs. Residents are also concerned about maintaining the Town's rural character and quietness of the neighborhoods, and object to further growth and development that would sacrifice these traits.

LAND USE

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I. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Early land use in Seekonk was primarily agricultural. Agriculture dominated Seekonk's economy well into the 20th century. Large farms and open spaces established a very low density and rural land use pattern before rapid suburbanization took place after World War II.

Early suburban residential, and early commercial development in Seekonk grew out of the neighboring urbanities- Pawtucket, Providence, and East Providence. As a result, most pre-1960 residential development and local businesses were found along the major avenues to Pawtucket, Providence, and East Providence. Namely, these areas are Baker's Corners in North Providence, and Luther's Corner's and the eastern portion of Route 44 in Central Seekonk.

Since 1950 there has been continuous new development in Seekonk. Seekonk became particularly attractive to developers after the introduction of Route I-195, which provided a rapid transportation link to nearby urban centers. New subdivisions extended into the rural and eastern portions of Seekonk. Concurrently, large-scale commerce grew along the Route 6 commercial corridor.

Industry has never been a major factor in Seekonk. In the Town's early days several mill operations located along the ten-mile river, however the bulk of industrial development remained across the river in Pawtucket and East Providence. With no early industrial tradition in place, Seekonk's industry did not grow significantly while the commercial and residential sectors flourished.

The state border with Rhode Island creates a conceptual barrier that has sheltered the Town from intense residential development that many other communities in the region have experienced. As a result broad open spaces, large lots, and wooded rural vistas, persist in Seekonk. The Town highly values this rural character and land use pattern.

II. CURRENT LAND USE

A. North Seekonk

North Seekonk includes older residential development that grew out of the suburban development that relates to the city of Pawtucket. Blocks of mature subdivisions border Central Avenue and Pine Street, north Seekonk's major arteries. North Seekonk also includes patches of light industrial land use. Industrial uses are tucked away from the major arterials in North Seekonk, along the railway line and in the Town's northwestern-most corner adjoining the Attleboro and Pawtucket borders. Commercial uses in North Seekonk are confined to a small number of local business establishments that are located at points along Central Avenue, especially at the intersection of Pine Street and Central Avenue. North Seekonk also includes a wealth of open and green spaces including the Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, the Ledgemont Country Club, the grounds of the Seekonk Public Library, the Seekonk Junior High School, and the Gammino Pond site. Eastern North Seekonk is characterized by newer, low density residential development, scenic local roadways, and agricultural land uses. (Refer to Figure D.1- Current Seekonk Land Use Map.)

B. Central Seekonk:

The dominant influence on the land use in Central Seekonk is Route 44, Taunton Avenue. Route 44 enters Seekonk from East Providence and traverses the Town in a generally east-west direction. Route 44 serves as a major transportation artery connecting Providence Rhode Island, to Rehoboth, Taunton, and points east. The Eastern half of Route 44 is Seekonk's largest area of local business development. At the intersection with Fall River Avenue a former K-Mart building has recently been redeveloped into a 'Town Center' retail complex. Other uses include automotive sales and service establishments, professional offices, gas stations and other retail shops. Automotive business uses along the western portion of Route 44 are an extension of the commerce in East Providence. Mature residential subdivisions are located to the north and south of Route 44 near the border with East Providence.

To the south of Route 44, at the intersection of Fall River Avenue and Arcade Avenue another area of mixed use and local business persists at Luther's Corners. Uses include the Showcase Cinemas and several small local retailers. Luther's Corners is one of Seekonk's few districts that are scaled to the pedestrian. It is also one of the locations of the Town's earliest development. Luther's Corners has the potential to function as an attractive mixed-use village center.

Further to the east along Route 44, beyond the intersection with Arcade Avenue, land uses become more residential, rural and institutional. The Town Hall, (on Peck Street), the Police Station, the YMCA and the Highway Garage are located along this stretch of land in central Seekonk. Many residences are located directly on Route 44 as well as on the streets that branch off from the artery. This is a true mixed use district, with a definitive rural/suburban character. (Refer to Figure D.1- Current Seekonk Land Use Map.)

C. South Seekonk

In South Seekonk the commercial and industrial development that has evolved along the Route 6 corridor is the dominant feature of the land use. The western third of route 6 and the streets that branch from it are home to nearly all of Seekonk's Highway Business establishments. This commercial corridor is a district of high activity and heavy traffic. Highway Business uses include big-box retailers, shopping centers, chain restaurants, and gas stations. Large-scale commercial development has been effectively contained within the swath of land between Route 6 and interstate 195, so that the potential risk to community character and residential neighborhoods has not been overly threatening. Among the most recent additions to the commercial inventory in Seekonk is an expanding

network of auto repair and supply establishments, as well as entertainment establishments such as restaurants and movie theater complexes.

The Eastern third of Route 6 is the largest and most heavily used industrial land use area in Seekonk. Where wetlands do not prohibit development light industrial uses line Route 6. Nonconforming recreational uses are located in this area as well. Most notable among these is the Seekonk Speedway, a major attraction, and a valuable asset to the Town. Approximately 100,000 visitors come to the Speedway yearly during 25 events and patronize other area businesses. The Speedway owner has long term plans for continuing the business, and broadening its operations. A golf driving range is also located on industrially zoned land in southern Seekonk.

Between the industrial uses to the east along Route 6 and the Highway Business uses to the west along Route 6 there is a small stretch of land of mixed use. To the south of Route 6 and to the north of Route I-195 there are expanses of residential land use in South Seekonk. Scenic roadways and a rural community character persist in each of these South Seekonk residential zones, despite the proximity to the highway business commercial corridor.

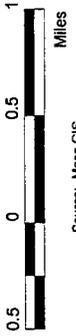
Figure D.1 (following page), illustrates current Land Use in Seekonk.



Town of Seekonk Master Plan Figure D.1

Current Land Use

Prepared by
 Barbara Sokoloff Associates
 101 A Dyer Street
 Providence, RI 02903
 December 12, 2000



Source: Mass GIS

- High Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Agriculture
- Industrial
- Commercial
- Vacant/Other



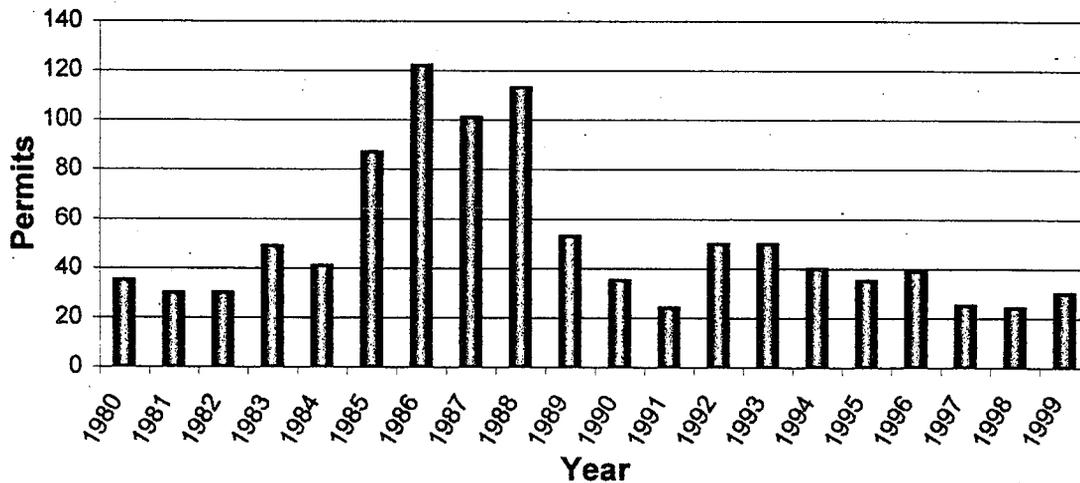
D. Residential Land Use

The predominance of land used for residential development emphasizes the Town's role as a suburban bedroom community. Seekonk's oldest residential subdivisions are found near the primary entranceways from Pawtucket, Providence and East Providence. New residential development is found primarily in the Town's eastern half, and is often characterized by large lots, (minimum 62,500 square feet).

The rate of growth in Seekonk has slowed significantly since the publication of the 1986 Master Plan Update. Accordingly, the pace of residential development has slowed, and the total sizes of and numbers of lots in more recently constructed subdivisions have decreased.

The Town of Seekonk has issued 973 residential building permits since 1980, 701 of which were granted since the publication of the 1986 Master Plan. Residential development did quicken towards the end of the 1980s, though it has slowed significantly since 1988, as noted in Figure D.2 below.

**Figure D.2
Seekonk Residential Building Permits Issued, 1980-1999**



Source: Town of Seekonk Office of the Building Inspector

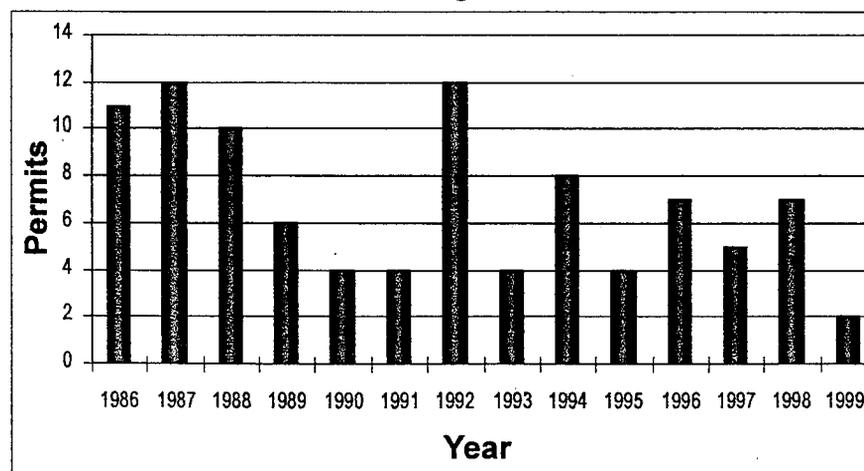
B. Commercial Land Use

Local Business. Small-scale commercial development is sprinkled throughout Seekonk along the major roads; Route 152, and Route 44 east of Arcade, and Route 114A. Common examples of the types of small businesses referred to here are gas stations and body shops, specialty retail shops, and professional offices. The districts where these establishments proliferate are those zoned for local business, or mixed use. In some cases the character of local business development has not been consistent with residential neighborhoods.

Highway Business. At present there appears to be room within the existing Highway Business zone for infill and refill development, as some parcels may still be available for redevelopment. Route 6 has experienced several retail establishments moving westward from points east of Commerce Way, to locations closer to Providence and the I-195 interchange (eg. Target, Lechmere, and Pier One). To the east of Commerce Way, a rural/suburban character returns.

The number of commercial permits issued mirrors, to some extent, residential trends in Seekonk. Active commercial construction between 1986 and 1988 gave way to a slowing trend in the early 1990s. Commercial construction has increased in more recent years, and it was especially active in 1998. While commercial activity along Route 114A and Route 6 remains generally vibrant, many commercial properties have experienced turnover over the years.

Figure D.3
Seekonk Commercial Building Permits Issued, 1986-1999



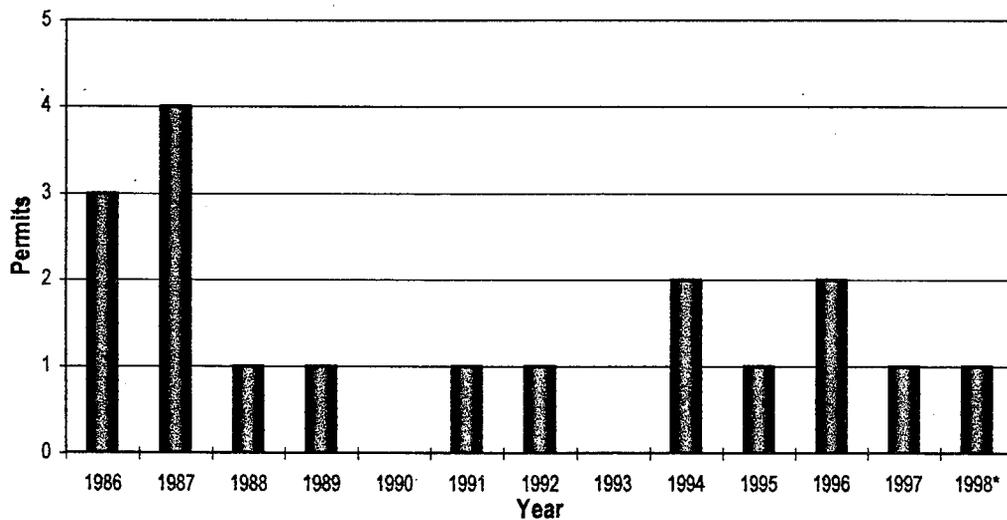
Source: Town of Seekonk Office of the Building Inspector

C. Industrial Land Use

The two principal areas where industrial uses are located are along the eastern end of Route 6 near the border with Swansea and along much of the length of the rail line which traverses the northwestern corner of the Town near Central Avenue. The industrial land along route 6 is more thoroughly developed. Light industrial establishments line the street edge where wetlands have not restricted development. Entertainment/recreational establishments including The Seekonk Speedway, a golf driving range are also located along Route 6. In North Seekonk, industry is less developed, and tucked away from the Town's major arterial roads.

The 1985 land use classification put the amount of industrial land in use in Seekonk at 165 acres, or 1.4 percent of total land area. Since that time, a total of 18 permits for industrial development have been granted from the Town for the construction of industrial facilities and warehouses.

**Figure D.4
Seekonk Industrial Building Permits Issued, 1986-1998**



Source: Town of Seekonk, Office of the Building Inspector.

OPEN SPACE/RECREATIONAL LAND USE

For extensive discussion of Open Space Land Use see Chapter G "Open Space and Recreation".

III. ZONING

The town of Seekonk currently enforces a zoning code to regulate the type of land use permitted within a described zone. The existing set of Zoning By-Laws were originally approved in 1958, and incorporate subsequent revisions through 1997. The Town of Seekonk employs seven zoning districts and 5 special zoning districts all of which are described below. Figure D.6, the Seekonk Zoning Map provides an illustration of the Town's zoning districts.

A. Residential Zones

R-1: R-1 residential zones allow for the smallest lot sizes of any of Seekonk's residential zones. 1,434 acres comprising 12% of Seekonk's total land area is zoned R-1.

R-2: R-2 residential zones cover 2,889 acres and 24.2% of Seekonk's land area. A broad expanse of R-2 zoned land covers the central interior portion of Seekonk.

R-3: R-3 residential zones cover 1,261 acres and 10.6% of Seekonk's land area. With minimum lot sizes of 40,000 square feet, R-3 zoning ensures low-density residential development. All of the Town's R-3 zones are located in South Seekonk.

R-4: R-4 residential zones cover 4,639 acres, and a substantial 38.9% of Seekonk's land area. R-4 zoning requires large lots of 62,500 square feet or greater. The abundance of R-4 zoning in Seekonk is intended to preserve the rural quality of the Town. R-4 zones dominate the western half of the Town, stretching out along most of the border with Rehoboth.

B. Commercial Zones

LB-Local Business zoning encompasses 189 acres and 1.6% of Seekonk's land area. Local business zones are located primarily along the western part of Route 44, and along parts of Route 152 and Route 114A.

HB-Highway Business zones cover 494 acres and 4.1% of Seekonk's land area.

Seekonk has one primary Highway business zone, which contains the bulk of the Town's large-scale commerce. It extends along Route 6 (Fall River Avenue) from the East Providence Border to commerce way and is bound at the North by I-95.

C. Industrial Zone

I-Industry The amount of industrially zoned land in Seekonk is 1,011 acres or 8.5 % of the total land area.

D. Special Zoning Districts

Planned Unit Development Districts are non-residential developments where a mixture of commercial and industrial uses are determined to be sufficiently advantageous for the grant of special permission to depart from the normal requirements of the district. Site-plan approval by the Seekonk planning board is required.

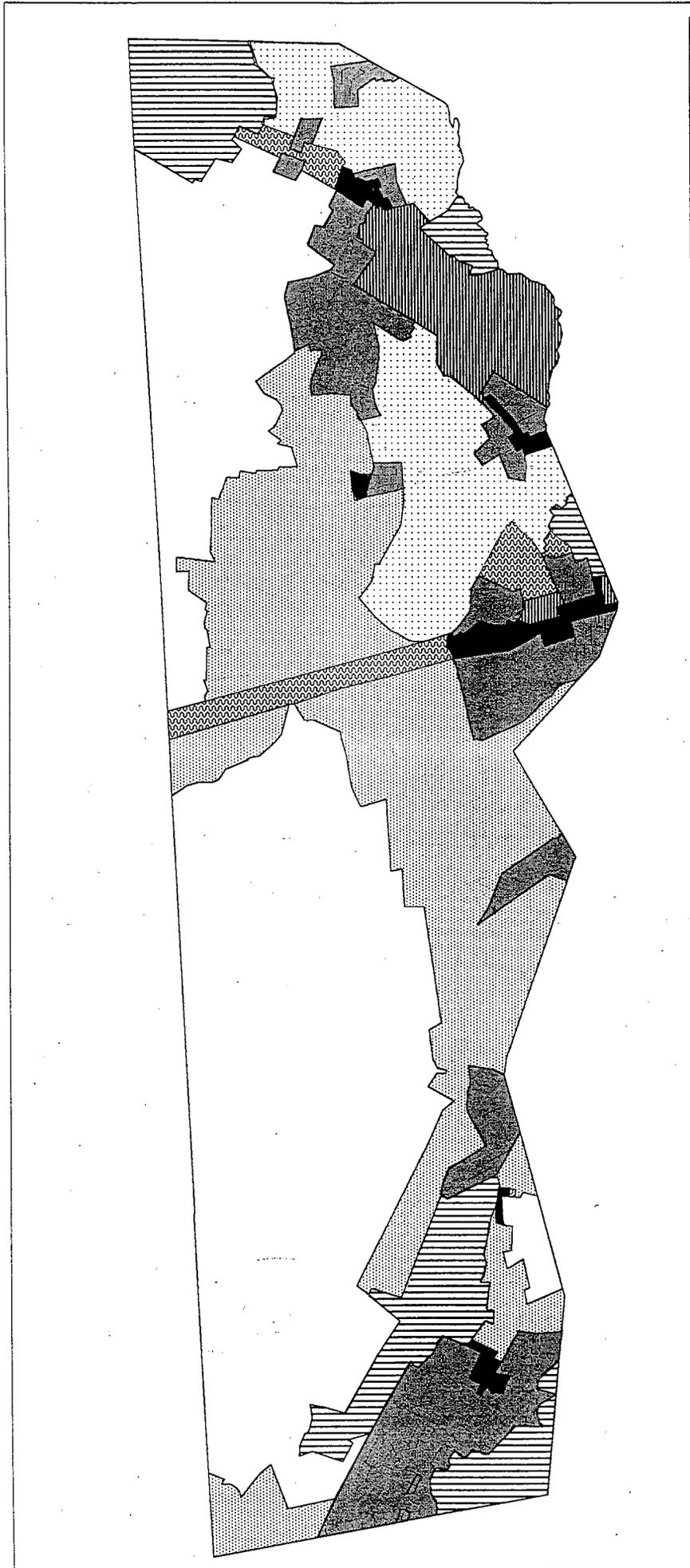
Wetlands and Floodplain Protection District insure that wetlands are not used in such a manner as to endanger health safety or welfare of the public, to protect and preserve the water table and water recharge areas, and to assure the natural flow pattern of the water course.

Mixed Use Zones are overlay districts with the purpose of preserving the rural character along Seekonk's major roadways by preventing strip commercial development and its associated problems. The major mixed use zone in Seekonk is along Route 44 west of Arcade Avenue. Other mixed use zones are located along Fall River Avenue between the Route 6 commercial district and Industrial court, and at Luther's corners.

Refer to figure D.5 for the specifications of each of Seekonk's zoning districts, and Figure D.6 for a Town zoning map-following pages.

Figure D.5 Existing Zoning

Zone	Description	Dimensional Requirements
<i>Residential Districts</i>		
R1	Single Family	Minimum Lot Size 14,400 (sq. ft.)
R2	Single Family	Minimum Lot Size 22,500 (sq. ft.)
R3	Single Family	Minimum Lot Size 40,000 (sq. ft.)
R4	Single Family	Minimum Lot Size 62,500 (sq. ft.)
<i>Commercial Districts</i>		
HB-Local Business	Retail stores and service establishments, hotels/motels, fast food, Gas Stations	Minimum lot coverage 30%, Minimum front yard depth-70 ft., Minimum frontage-50 ft.
LB-Local Business	Retail stores and service establishments, offices, restaurants	Minimum lot coverage 40%, Minimum front yard depth-50ft., Minimum frontage-50 ft.
<i>Industrial Districts</i>		
I-Industrial	Administration, research, manufacturing	Minimum Lot Size 20,000 (sq. ft.), Maximum building coverage-50%
<i>Special Districts</i>		
Planned Unit Development	Non-residential only	
Wetland and Floodplain Protection	Overlay: protects wetlands	
Mixed Use	Overlay: Prevents strip commercial development	
Adult Entertainment	Overlay	



Town of Seekonk Master Plan Figure D.6 Zoning Map

Prepared by
Barbara Sokoloff Associates
101 A. Dyer Street
Providence, RI 02903
December 12, 2000

0.5 0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Mass GIS

	R-1 Residential		Local Business
	R-2 Residential		Highway Business
	R-3 Residential		Industrial
	R-4 Residential		Mixed Use Overlay

IV. BUILD OUT ANALYSIS

The following build out analysis was prepared by SRPEDD. The build out analysis identifies the amount of additional developable land area in each zone by square footage. Build out projections are then drawn for population, waste production, water consumption, etc. based on standardized formulas. Resulting figures allow for a prediction of the growth that Seekonk can expect to experience under the current regulations until build-out. The Town has 5,198 acres of additional developable land. Other selected build out figures are included in Figure D.7 below.

Figure D.7 Build Out Projections

Developable Land Area Excluding Wetlands (Acres)	5,198
Total Additional Dwelling Units	3,019
Commercial/Industrial Buildable Floor Area (Square Feet)	7,277,534
Additional Residential Water Use (GPD)	578,001
Commercial /Industrial Water Use (GPD)	545,815
Additional Municipal Solid Waste (Tons/Year)	3,968
Additional Non-Recyclable Solid Waste (Tons/Year)	2,822
Additional Students	1,504
Additional Population	7,735
New Roads (Miles)	53

Source: SRPEDD

Population Growth Seekonk can expect 1,019 additional households and 7,734 additional residents at full build out.

Additional Students The Town can expect 1,504 additional students at build out. Enrollment is increasing at approximately 2% per year over the last three years according to the Superintendent of Schools.

Impact on Public Services The Town of Seekonk can expect an increased water consumption of 1,123,816 gallons/day, and an additional 2,822 tons of non-recyclable solid waste per year at build out. Currently, Seekonk's public services are making improvements to handle this increase. (See public facilities/services chapter H.)

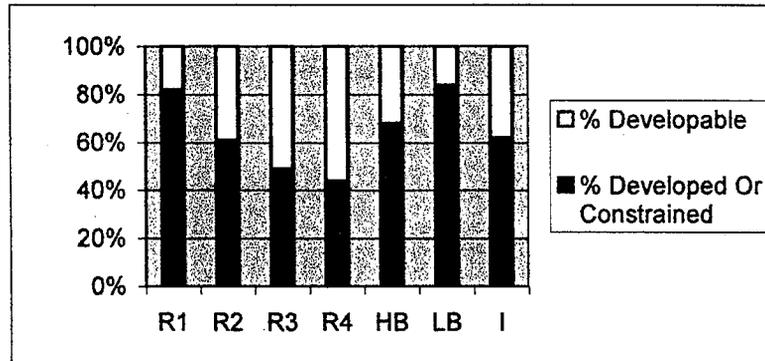
Development Constraints: A significant portion of the Town's remaining open space is subject to development constraints. Approximately 407 acres are within the buffer zone of the Rivers Protection Act, additional land is within wetland areas, and a large swath of land in North Seekonk is subject to Ground Aquifer Protection overlay regulations (See Figure D.8). SRPEDD's build-out analysis does account for development constraints.

SRPEDD's reported amount of *additional developable land* does not include land with absolute constraints, such as wetland areas, and areas within the River Protection Act buffer zone. However, the *additional developable land* figure does include land with partial constraints, such as land within the Ground Aquifer Protection overlay zone. Figure D.8 on the following page displays the location of areas with development constraints in Seekonk.

There is room for additional development in each of Seekonk's seven primary zoning districts. Figure D.9 below, displays the percentage of additional land available within each of Seekonk's primary zoning designations.

Figure D.9 Percent Developable Land, By Zoning District

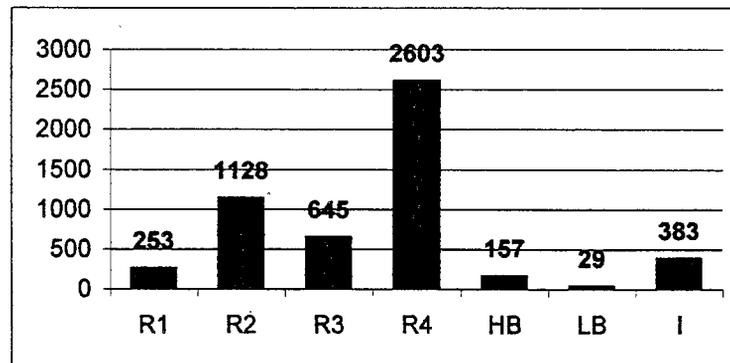
*Source: SRPEDD Build Out



Of the remaining 5,198 acres of developable land 2,603 are within R4-residential zoning districts, and other residential zoning districts contain significant developable acreages. Figure D.10 below illustrates that the bulk of Seekonk's remaining developable land area is within residential zones.

Figure D.10 Amount Developable Land, By Zoning District (Acres)

*Source: SRPEDD Build Out



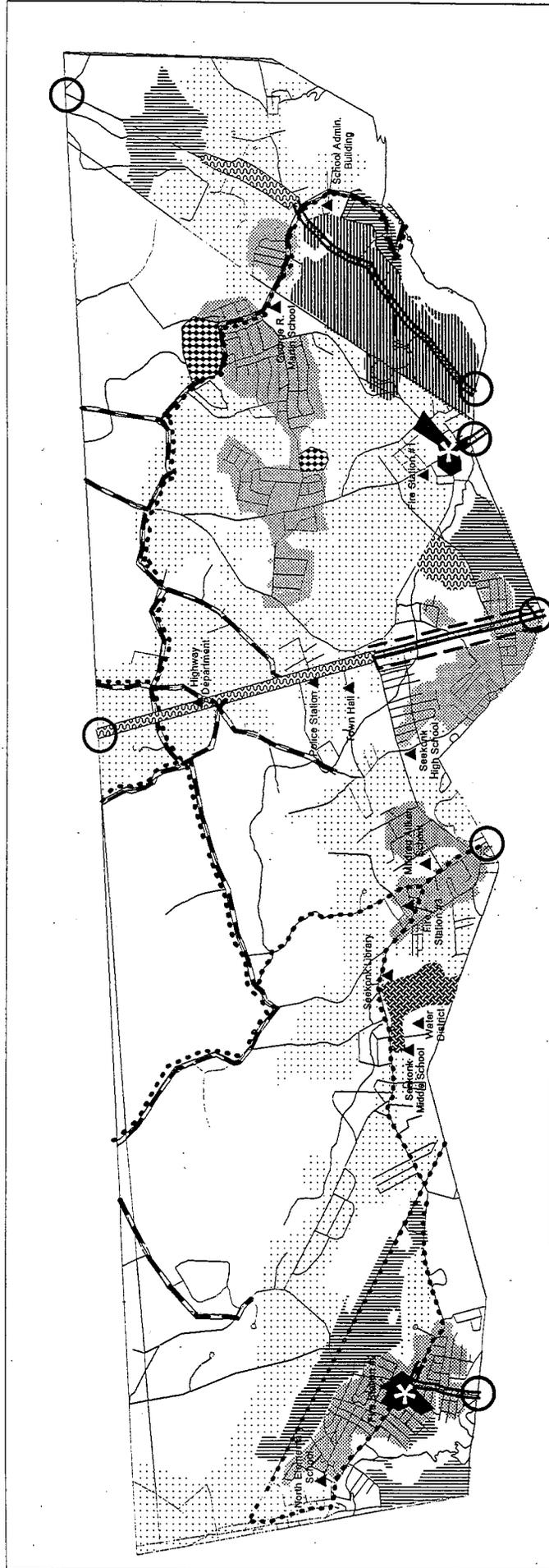
Financing Additional Development The Town of Seekonk recognizes that the burden of the financing for the improvements necessary to accommodate these additional impacts will be borne primarily by the Town government. The estimated annual funding for community preservation based on these figures is \$477,822 yearly assuming a 3% surcharge of real property tax levy according to SRPEDD's build out analysis.

V. FUTURE LAND USE

As stated in the introduction of this master plan, at present no major changes to the existing land use pattern are appropriate for Seekonk. Rather Seekonk should refine and build upon the strengths of its existing land use. The land use Recommendations in the 2000 Master Plan Update reflect the need to maintain and build on existing land uses. The major future land use issues are listed below and further elaborated in the following Land Use Issues section. Specific recommendations that respond to these future land use issues are described in the Land Use Action Plan.

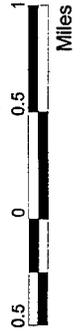
- Contain Commercial Development on Route 6 to its current locations, and promote infill and refill development rather than altering the existing commercial land use pattern.
- More Flexible zoning for planned unit residential development and cluster development should be explored.
- The development of more housing types, (in particular apartment/townhouse style development, and rental housing), should be pursued in existing areas of moderate and high-density residential land use. Introduction of new housing types in R1 zones will compliment the existing land use pattern.
- Aid Village Center Development in areas with appropriate characteristics, such as Luther's Corners, and Baker's Corners. Village plans, a village center overlay district, and physical streetscape improvements are vehicles for developing village centers.
- Preserve Existing Open Spaces and Natural Resources. Several recommendations are made in the 2000 Master Plan that advocate the preservation of the Town's valuable Open Spaces including, land acquisition, clustered development, agricultural preservation, and scenic roadway preservation.

Each of these Land Use issues is focused on preserving and enhancing the existing Town Land Use pattern, which functions efficiently, and is an asset to the Town. Figure D.9, on the following page, the Future Land Use Action Map highlights future land use actions.



Town of Seekonk Master Plan Figure D.9 Generalized Future Land Use Action Map

Prepared by
Barbara Sokoloff Associates
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December 12, 2000



- Proposed Bike Network
- Roadway for landscaping/tree-planting
- Scenic Roadway for preservation
- Important gateway, area for improvements
- Local Business, infill in current locations
- Mixed Use
- Highway Business, infill and retail in current locations
- Open Space, recreational area
- Town Center Complex, Library/Gammino Pond/Junior High School
- Industrial, infill and retail in current locations
- High Density Residential
- Village center development/local business
- Medium Density Residential
- Low Density Residential/Agricultural
- Welland Area, development restrictions
- Area to Rezone to R-1
- Village Center
- Public Facility



VI. ISSUES

- **Non-conforming uses:** There are two residential areas in Seekonk with inappropriate zoning. The Heritage Heights and Brookside Court subdivisions are presently zoned R4, but were originally built under a smaller lot designation so that they are now composed of non-conforming lots.
- **Lack of zoning flexibility:** Residential zoning in Seekonk allows only conventional subdivisions. The trend in land use is to provide flexible zoning that results in preserving open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas by reducing lot size but maintaining the same overall density.
- **Development Patterns Inconsistent With Neighborhood Quality:** Seekonk's local business commercial areas have been characterized by suburban type development without regard for site design, landscaping, or general aesthetics. The result is that they have exerted a negative impact on Seekonk's community character. Typical to these areas is a lack of separation between parking lots and sidewalks, a lack of trees along commercial streets, and a lack of a street edge that gives definition to an area. These older commercial areas are not consistent with the quality of the residential neighborhoods and scenic roads that characterize Seekonk and therefore provide a negative image of the community.
- **Commercial Overlay of Industrial Zone:** Since the 1986 Master Plan there has been extensive discussion of adjusting the industrial zoning along Fall River Avenue (Route 6), in the southwestern-most corner of the Town to include commercial uses by applying a Highway Business overlay zone to this area. The desired effect of introducing more large-scale commercial development to this area of Seekonk would be to raise the tax base. Although industry brings limited tax revenue to Seekonk, many valuable industrial establishments do exist in the Fall River Avenue industrial zone, and commercial zoning might result in industries selling to realize commercial land profits. Among these is the Seekonk Speedway, a major attraction. New commercial development would also increase traffic volume in Seekonk, as well as in the neighboring towns of Rehoboth and Swansea.
- **Lack of Sewer System:** The principal obstacle to industrial development in Seekonk is the lack of a sewer system. As a result the only light industrial uses, such as trucking and warehouse operations can locate in Seekonk's industrial zones.
- **Loss of Agricultural Land:** The benefits of local farming operations in Seekonk are easily overlooked. Local farming operations contribute to the Town's stock of locally

owned and operated businesses, and Agricultural lands also contribute to community character and aesthetics by creating scenic vistas and breaking up the monotony of subdivisions. Such value is often not recognized until the land has been carved up for new subdivisions, thereby irreversibly changing the land use and scenic nature of the community. Also, when small local farms are sold and subsequently subdivided the cumulative result is that the town takes on numerous scattered small developments that often are not consistent with the character of older neighborhoods.

- **Lack of Village Areas:** Historically, North Seekonk's development grew out of the Pawtucket town center, while South Seekonk was linked to East Providence, and Providence. With each of these communities deferring to town centers outside of Seekonk borders, no distinctive town centers developed in Seekonk. Town centers have the potential to provide civic presence, build community, and enhance identity. There are several opportunistic locations for effective town centers in Seekonk.

VII. Recommendations

- **Promote The Development of Village Centers:** In South Seekonk the most appropriate location for a town center is Luther's Corners at the intersection of Route 114A (Fall River Ave.) and Arcade Ave. Luther's Corners is one of few areas in Seekonk with the potential for pedestrian scale village development. There are several potential vehicles to aid village center development. A village center overlay district with specific design guidelines for storefronts and parking areas should be explored. Village center plans that result in physical streetscape improvements are a second vehicle. A combination of historical lighting, tree-planting and sidewalk improvement are potential elements of a village center plan.
- **Adjust Zoning Where Non-Conforming Uses Are Common:** In order to more realistically reflect existing conditions in the subdivisions of Heritage Heights and Brookside court, Seekonk should proceed to change the zoning of these locations back to R1. With the proper zoning in place the complications of non-conforming uses can be avoided.
- **Contain Highway Business Land Uses to Current Locations:** Seekonk should refrain from introducing the commercial overlay zone to the industrially zoned land along Fall River Avenue. There appears to be sufficient room along the commercial corridor of Route 6 for infill and refill development. Some older small scale business persists, and there are several vacant retail buildings, indicating that demand for commercial space along Route 6 is not overwhelming. Also commercial development to the east of Commerce Way is declining. Any extension of the HB zone to the western portion of Route 6 would only serve to create 'hodge-podge' development.
- **Provide Diversity of Housing Types:** It is possible to provide zoning for higher density residential development that is compatible with the community character of Seekonk. The creation of a Residential Planned Unit Development District would allow for cluster development in multiunit subdivisions. The zoning ordinance of the Town presently includes planned unit districts for industrial and commercial areas. Residential planned unit districts should be added for cluster development, and multi-family development.

Residential Planned Unit Development zoning would have two components. (1) Cluster developments of single family dwellings that would allow for smaller lot sizes but maintain the same overall density for the subdivision by preserving open space as well as fragile areas. (2) Townhouse/apartment development that would allow for smaller

units, and an increased number of units per acre, and would require approval by special permit.

- **Design Review Board:** A design review board should be established to ensure that development in all parts of Seekonk upholds the Town's attractive residential quality. The Design Review Board would enforce standards for local business, and highway business development. Preserving street edges, buffer strips and architectural treatments that are respectful to residential Seekonk would be the task of the designs review board. The review board should also enforce the preservation of scenic roadways that are essential to Seekonk's attractive rural/suburban character.
- **Create Attractive Gateways:** Several of Seekonk's major roadway gateways do not reflect the Town's attractive rural/suburban quality. Seekonk should institute roadway improvements in gateway areas that may include, tree-planting, landscaping and signage.
- **Protect Seekonk Speedway:** The Seekonk Speedway operates on the eastern portion of Route 6 on industrially zoned land. The Speedway is a valuable attraction, and an asset to the town that should be protected.
- **Conservation Easements:** Conservation easements involve transferring development rights from the property owner to a third party, such as the Seekonk Land Conservation Trust. The landowner retains title to the undivided tract and can continue to use it for resource purposes. Because the land value is reduced to its inherent value as a resource, property taxes will often not escalate at the same rate as other land uses. Another benefit is that since the easement is a gift to a charitable organization, the difference between the land's market value and its inherent resource value becomes a deduction against taxable income. The Town of Seekonk can facilitate the acquisition of conservation easements by putting third parties in contact with resource landowners that may be receptive to selling development rights.

VIII. PREVIOUS MASTER PLANS: MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. 1979: Shaded recommendations remain valid in 2000, and are included in the 2000 Master Plan action plan.

Recommendation	Status	Remains Valid/Invalid
Protect existing residential development though greenspace preservation.	Ongoing	Remains Valid
Promote bike and pedestrian connectivity	Unexecuted	Remains Valid.
Develop a transitional office park zone on the north side of Rt. 6 between Route 114A and Anthony Street.	Unexecuted	No Longer Valid.
Contain major retail-commercial growth along Route 6 west of School Street.	Ongoing	Remains Valid
Coordinate development along Route 6 to prevent random strip developments.	Development has been somewhat coordinated. Efforts for coordination should continue.	Remains Valid
Designate southeastern Seekonk for transportation related trucking and terminal use.	Executed: southeastern Seekonk contains industrial uses.	Remains Valid
Conserve the wetlands adjacent to the Runnins River.	Executed	Remains Valid
Promote town center growth and limit strip development along Route 44	Partially Executed	Remains Valid
Develop a greenbelt along the western edge of Seekonk.	Unexecuted	Now Invalid
Consider the 47 acres on Gammino Pond for park and recreation uses.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Preserve the functioning of Bakers Corner as a North Seekonk village center.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Buffer industrial development from residential uses.	Ongoing	Remains Valid

- B. 1986: Shaded Recommendations remain valid in 2000, and are included in the 2000 Master Plan action plan.

Recommendation	Status	Remains Valid/ Invalid
Provide buffers between commercial and residential uses	Partially executed	Remains Valid

Contain commercial development along Route 6 to the west of Anthony Street.	Executed	Remains Valid
Limit commercial growth and maintain the institutional character of Central Seekonk.	Ongoing	Remains Valid
Preserve neighborhood identity and natural character of North Seekonk.	Partially executed. The character of local business development should be examined.	Remains Valid
Support low-density single-family homes throughout town.	Executed	Valid: but diversification is needed.
Advisory group supports multi-family housing in three locations and cluster zoning on large lots.	Unexecuted	Partially Valid.
Adopt mixed use along eastern Route 44, and local business along western Route 44.	Executed	Remains Valid
Maintain the industrial zones in north Seekonk by the railroad tracks and in south Seekonk on the Rehoboth line.	Executed	Remains Valid
Promote office use in South Seekonk instead of commercial use to lessen traffic burden.	Ongoing	Remains Valid

C. 2000: Below are the recommendations that are new in the 2000 Master Plan.

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
Change the zoning of the Heritage Heights and Brookside court subdivisions to R-1 to more accurately fit existing land uses.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting	2001
Allow for Residential Planned Unit Development for clustered subdivisions of single-family residences with smaller individual lot sizes and preserved open space, while maintaining overall density.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting	2001
Permit Residential Planned Unit Development for townhouse/apartment development by special permit. Allow for an increase in the number of units per acre, while maintaining the same overall floor area coverage.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting	2002

Contain commercial development along Route 6 to current locations.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
Preserve community character in areas of local business development by maintaining a street edge, requiring buffer strips, and implementing landscaping improvements along sections of Route 44 west of Arcade Avenue, Route 152 in north Seekonk, the Luther's Corners areas, and parts of Route 6.	Planning Board, Town Meeting	2001-2004
Create attractive gateways to Seekonk with greening, landscaping and signage at the major roadway entrances to the Town: Rt. 44, Rt. 6, Central Avenue, and Armistice Street.	Public Works, Planning Board,	2001-2004
Encourage purchase of conservation easements as a means of reducing the sale and subsequent subdividing of agricultural, open space, and forested lands.	Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen	2001-Ongoing
Aid village center development at Luther's Corners with historical lighting, greening and landscaping.	Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen	2002-2005
Establish a Design Review Board to enforce design standards in business areas, and along scenic roadways.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission	2001-Ongoing
Develop and implement a management plan to maintain scenic roadways and vistas	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Public Works	2001-Ongoing
Investigate the feasibility of a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and/or a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program as a conservation tool in Seekonk.	Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen,	2002
Protect the Seekonk Speedway, a valuable attraction.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
Work with neighborhood residents to develop and implement neighborhood strategic plans.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission	2001-Ongoing
Digitize tax maps into a coordinated geographic information system (GIS) for use of all municipal departments to assist planning efforts.	Planning Board, With SRPEDD	2002

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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I. INTRODUCTION

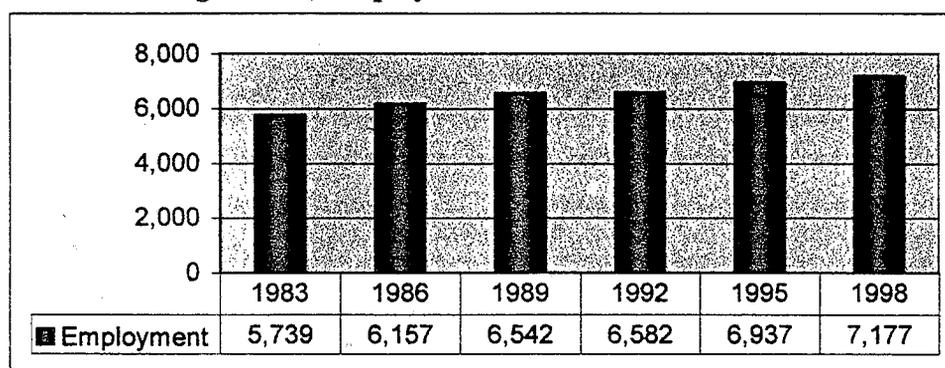
The economy of Seekonk has grown since the 1986 Master Plan update. Seekonk continues to be primarily a suburban/rural commuter community in which the majority of employed residents work at locations outside the Town. The bulk of the jobs within Seekonk borders are in the retail sector, while the industrial sector has grown slowly. The Town of Seekonk has emerged as a significant regional shopping center within the Providence metropolitan area. Future economic growth in Seekonk will continue to be linked to trends within the larger region.

II. EMPLOYMENT & INCOME

A. Employment

The 1980's in Seekonk were marked by substantial employment growth that outpaced both labor force and general population growth. In 1990, 2,494 additional persons were employed in Seekonk, marking a 64.9 percent jump in employment from 1980. Since the 1986 Master Plan update employment has increased steadily, paralleling the Town's labor force and population increases. Between 1986 and 1998 the number of employed Seekonk residents has increased by 20%. Figure E.1, below, illustrates recent employment growth.

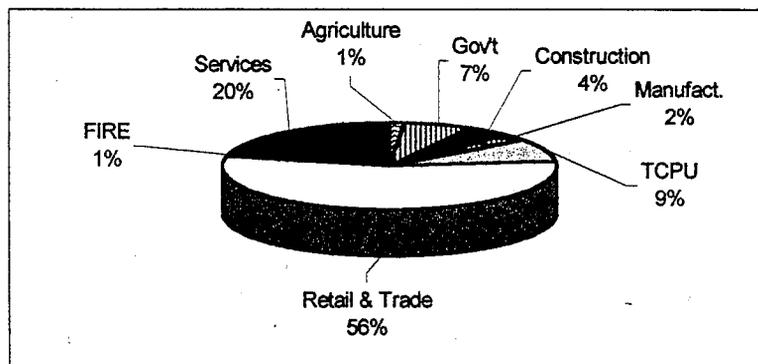
Figure E.1, Employment in Seekonk 1983-1998



Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training.

Seekonk's employment is dominated by the Retail and Trade Sector. In 1997, 56% of Seekonk's employees worked in Retail & Trade. The Services sector also employs a large percentage of Seekonk residents. In 1997 20% of employed Seekonk residents worked in Services.

Figure E.2, 1997 Seekonk Employment by Sector



Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training.

Economic data from 1990 to 1996 indicate that the rate of growth of several employment sectors in Seekonk is slowing, though a few sectors, including services and construction, continue to grow at a fast rate. One employment sector that has experienced fluctuating levels of employment is manufacturing. The number of jobs in the manufacturing sector declined 17 percent from 1980 to 1990, then slightly rebounded in the early 90's, and has since declined again. Figure E.3 below shows recent employment growth by sector.

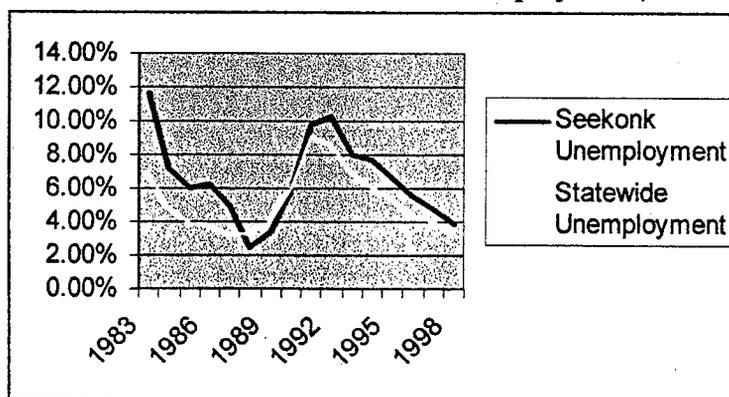
Table E.3, Recent Employment Growth by Sector

	1992	1997	Percentage Change
Agriculture	113	108	-4.4%
Government	490	567	15.7%
Construction	212	327	54.2%
Manufacturing	218	201	-7.8%
TCPU	675	727	7.7%
Retail & Trade	3615	4545	25.7%
FIRE	114	94	-17.5%
Services	933	1671	79.1%

Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training

B. Unemployment

Figure E.4 Seekonk and Statewide Unemployment, 1983-1998



Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training

Seekonk's unemployment rate is slightly higher than that of the entire state of Massachusetts, but lower than other communities in the region. The state trend is a reverse from the 1970s and early 1980s, which saw Seekonk maintain an unemployment rate well below the state average. Seekonk's unemployment levels generally mirror those of the state. These statistics suggest that Seekonk is not immune to the broader region's

economic climate, and it is highly dependent on the economic well being of the surrounding municipalities for employment of town residents. Seekonk's unemployment characteristics compare favorably to the larger municipalities of Fall River, Providence and Pawtucket. (See Table E.5 below.)

Table E.5
Unemployment Rates in Seekonk and Surrounding Communities

Year	Seekonk	Attleboro	Fall River	Providence	Pawtucket	East Providence	State of Massachusetts
1990	6.0%	7.3%	12.3%	7.6%	8.0%	6.8%	6.0%
1991	9.8%	11.8%	17.5%	9.5%	9.5%	9.2%	9.1%
1992	10.2%	10.6%	15.1%	9.9%	10.0%	9.7%	8.6%
1993	8.0%	7.9%	14.2%	8.9%	9.1%	7.7%	6.9%
1994	7.7%	7.2%	11.3%	8.3%	7.9%	7.4%	6.0%
1995	6.6%	6.8%	10.8%	8.6%	8.3%	7.1%	5.4%
1996	5.6%	5.5%	9.9%	6.6%	6.2%	4.3%	4.3%
1997	4.7%	5.2%	8.6%	6.7%	6.3%	5.5%	4.0%

Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Division of Employment and Training, 1998
Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, 1998.

C. Income

Between 1980 and 1990, the median family income in Seekonk increased by 112 percent, outpacing both the Providence-Pawtucket-Fall River Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA) and Bristol County as a whole. Median family income continued to place among the highest in the county, ranking fourth among Bristol County's 20 cities and towns in 1990. Seekonk's income figures suggest that the Town remains an attractive location of residence for higher income families.

Table E.6 Income Characteristics Seekonk and Surrounding Communities

	Median Family Income		Percent of County Median		Per Capita Income
	1980	1990	1990	1980	1990
Seekonk	\$23,615	\$50,095	128.8%	131.8%	\$17,345
Rehoboh	\$22,418	\$47,748	122.3%	125.6%	\$17,642
Attleboro	\$20,459	\$43,248	111.6%	113.8%	\$14,970
Bristol County	\$18,334	\$38,003	100.0%	100.0%	\$13,853
Providence	\$14,948	\$28,342	N/A	N/A	\$11,838
Providence CMSA*	\$19,456	\$38,865	N/A	N/A	\$14,665

* Providence-Pawtucket-Fall River, RI-MA Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area, which includes Seekonk
 Source: 1980 U.S. Census, General Social and Economic Characteristics,
 1990 U.S. Census, General Social and Economic Characteristics

D. Place of Employment

The majority of Seekonk residents work in other communities. Data from the 1990 Census indicate that 20.7 percent of Seekonk's employed labor force works in Seekonk. The majority of Seekonk's labor force works in Rhode Island, though residents are commuting in increasing numbers to places such as Attleboro and metropolitan Boston, as indicated by Table E.7 below.

Table E.7
Place of Employment, Seekonk Residents

	1980	1990	% Change
Rhode Island	3,153	3,433	9%
Seekonk	995	1,314	32%
Attleboro	432	593	37%
Massachusetts NEC*	214	226	6%
Fall River	111	191	72%
North Attleboro	92	184	100%
Metro Boston	10	151	1410%
Swansea	37	58	57%
Dighton	7	56	700%

* NEC: Not Elsewhere Classified

Source: 1980, 1990 U.S. Census, Urban Transportation Planning Package

Seekonk residents overwhelmingly commute to their place of employment in private vehicles. According to the 1990 census, approximately 88 percent of Seekonk's employed labor force drives alone to work.

III. COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

A. Route 6

The commercial/industrial corridor extending the length of Route 6 along the southern portion of Town is Seekonk's largest business district in terms of land area and jobs provided. The western portion of Route 6 has developed as a regional retail shopping center attracting business from consumers throughout the Providence metropolitan area. As discussed in the 1979 Master Plan, this strong retail sector is an asset to the Town by providing: a convenient shopping area for residents, employment opportunities, and tax revenues.

Activity along the commercial portion of Route 6 remains vibrant, and lucrative for big-box and smaller retailers, shopping centers, and movie theatres. There are more than 40 business commercial establishments located along Fall River and Highland Avenues (Route 6). The commercial corridor is subject to a high turnover rate, which is characteristic of the chain retail industry. Despite the area's success, at present there appears to be room within the existing Highway Business zone for infill and refill development, as some store facilities are vacant. It is also notable that several businesses that were located to the East of Commerce Way (eg. Pier One Imports) have opted to move their locations closer to the I-195 interchange, indicating a limit to the attractiveness of Route 6 as a location for large-scale businesses.

The eastern section of Route 6, which is zoned for industrial uses, is also home to many business operations. The Seekonk Speedway attracts approximately 100,000 visitors per year over the course of 25 events. Other recreational establishments in this area include a golf driving range. East of the Speedway, light industrial establishments line the street-edge where wetlands have not prohibited development. (Refer to figure E.8- the Economic Development Plan Map- for a visual illustration of Seekonk's areas of commercial and industrial activity.)

B. Route 44 (Taunton Avenue)

The majority of commercial uses on Taunton Avenue extend from the East Providence line to the intersection at Arcade Avenue. East of Arcade Avenue is a mixed-use district that largely consists of residential uses, and has a generally rural character. The western half of Route 44 is a commercial district that primarily serves Seekonk residents and persons passing through Town. Many automotive supply and service establishments on the western stretch of Route 44 relate to the commerce in East Providence. Other examples of Taunton Avenue businesses are professional offices, and the planned 'Town

Center' shopping center at the intersection of Route 44 and Fall River Avenue, The scale of the development on Taunton Avenue is significantly smaller than that of Route 6, and has an entirely different character. Commercial development along Route 44 is older, pre-dating the commercial success of Route 6, and has evolved without extensive management. (Refer to figure E.8- the Economic Development Plan Map- for a visual illustration of Seekonk's areas of commercial and industrial activity.)

C. Neighborhood Commercial Centers

Neighborhood commercial centers are small in number and scale, and mainly serve nearby community residents. Such areas include Luther's Corners in Central Seekonk, and Baker's Corners in North Seekonk. These neighborhood centers are important in contributing to the pool of locally owned and operated businesses and providing goods and services to local area residents.

Industrial development in Seekonk may also be considered neighborhood commerce. Seekonk's industries are generally small in scale. Industry is limited to types of operations that do not require sewer systems such as trucking and warehouse operations. In addition to the aforementioned industrial establishments along route 6, pockets of industry are found in either of two swaths of industrially zoned land in northern Seekonk. One is located along the railway line, and the other occupies the Town's northeast corner near the Attleboro and Pawtucket borders. A higher percentage of this industrial land remains undeveloped (compared to industrially zoned land along route 6). In North Seekonk, industrial establishments are removed from the major arterial roads. (Refer to figure E.8- the Economic Development Plan Map- for a visual illustration of Seekonk's areas of commercial and industrial development.)



Town of Seekonk Master Plan Figure E.8 Economic Development Plan

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 Providence, RI 02903
 December 12, 2000



- Industrial Infill and Refill Development
- Neighborhood Commercial Center
- Highway Business
- Mixed Use/Residential District
- Suitable Location for Institutional or Governmental Uses
- Corridors to Target for Landscaping/Streetscaping
- Indicates Uses to Contain, and Promote Infill and Refill Development

IV. ISSUES

- **Retaining the Competitive Edge of Route 6.** There is a strong need to ensure the future vitality of Route 6 as a commercial center by maintaining its competitive edge. The Town relies on the corridor's vitality for services and tax revenues. With the opening of the Providence Place Mall and various big box retail developments throughout the region, it is becoming increasingly important to actively attract businesses and consumers to Seekonk's commercial corridor.
- **No Chamber of Commerce.** Currently, there is not an active economic development board or Chamber of Commerce in Seekonk despite the intense commercial economic activity within Town borders. With no guiding body, the economic development efforts in Seekonk are individual and piecemeal.
- **Lack of Sewer System.** Residents of the Town of Seekonk have voted against the development of a sewer system for fear that it will encourage rapid development and erode community character. The side effect of this choice is that the lack of a sewer system present problems for the construction of new retail, office, and especially industrial buildings.
- **Commercial Development Inconsistent With Community Character.** Some of Seekonk's commercial strips have developed in a manner that is inconsistent with community character. Street edges have not been maintained, and buffer strips not utilized on portions of Route 44, Central Avenue, Route 6, and Route 114A. Unattractive development along some of Seekonk's most visible thoroughfares prevents the projection of a positive image for the community and for businesses.
- **Environmental Constraints.** There is an abundance of wetlands in Seekonk. Partial restrictions including the Rivers Protection Act, and Ground Aquifer Protection overlay zoning are placed on much of Seekonk's developable land. The remaining open industrial land along route 6 is one of several areas where future economic development will be limited by environmental sensitivity.
- **Barrier of State Border.** The state border with Rhode Island creates an intangible obstacle to further economic development. Marketing and economic development efforts are sometimes impeded by virtue of the inconsistency of agencies across the border. The border may also be a conceptual boundary in the minds of Rhode Island consumers.

- **Extending Highway Business Zones.** There has been extensive discussion of allowing highway businesses to operate in the currently industrially zoned section of Route 6. This shift in zoning would threaten established industrial establishments, and may foster hodge-podge development. This portion of route 6 also contains wetlands that pose environmental constraints to development. Higher tax revenues drive the consideration of such a zoning adjustment.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Establish a Chamber of Commerce.** One recommendation that emerged from the 1986 Master Plan update was to establish a Seekonk Chamber of Commerce. This recommendation remains valid and could be crucial in capitalizing on the strengths of Seekonk businesses to enhance their competitive edge within the region. The Chamber of Commerce would strive to coordinate the efforts of Seekonk's businesses. A Chamber of Commerce could define Seekonk's competitive edge, market to consumers, collaborate on improvements to the commercial corridor, advertise available parcels of land, and take advantage of the internet by developing a web site.
- **Develop a Seekonk Economic Advisory Committee.** The Town should also create an economic advisory committee that will expressly address the Town's future economic development. Among the tasks of the economic advisory committee will be the cataloging and marketing of commercial and industrial parcels available for future development.
- **Market Seekonk Businesses.** Facing tougher regional competition, it is in the best interest of Seekonk and Town businesses to cooperate in developing an aggressive marketing campaign aimed at attracting both consumers and more businesses to Seekonk. Marketing strategies intended to enhance Seekonk's competitive edge include: advertising via traditional media, making commercial strips physically more attractive, and developing a Seekonk web-site. A Chamber of Commerce would be an effective vehicle for the execution of these initiatives. A marketing campaign should seek to distinguish Seekonk from other regional commercial corridors.
- **Facilitate Infill and Refill Development.** To continue to broaden the tax base and provide more job opportunities, the Town should facilitate infill and refill development of vacant and underutilized parcels of commercial and industrial zoned land, and work cooperatively with landowners of vacant or underutilized parcels to encourage such development.

- **Develop a Comprehensive Inventory of Potential Industrial and Commercial Development Sites.** The inventory could be produced either as a database or, preferably, as a database linked to a geographic information system (GIS). The inventory would serve as a resource in promoting new economic development projects and would provide the information necessary for a web site. The inventory should identify all sites zoned for commercial, office, and industry, and identify the size, accessibility, infrastructure, environmental conditions, current ownership, surrounding land uses, and assessed value and estimated market value of each. The inventory would also document characteristics of existing facilities available for sale or lease.
- **Develop and Implement a Landscape Ordinance.** The Town should develop and implement a landscape ordinance as a means of visually rejuvenating commercial strips that have developed out of community character. Street trees, unique street lighting fixtures, and various forms of street-side landscaping, as well as improved landscape design of commercial sites, can significantly contribute to and improve the overall ambiance of commercial strips. Particularly important are the entranceways to Seekonk along Route 44, Central Avenue, Route 114A, and Route 6.
- **Develop, Implement, and Enforce Strict Design Guidelines for New and Rehabilitated Structures.** “Big Box” retail developers do not generally build attractive structures unless local governments create design regulations that require developers to conform to specified standards. Although many big box retail establishments already exist in Seekonk, by placing design standards on new projects and the renovation of old structures (such as the Lechmere building) the aesthetic transformation of Route 6 could begin. The intent of such guidelines is to consider and plan for the future economic and aesthetic well being of this valuable commercial corridor.
- **Establish a Local Business Outreach Program.** Town government along with a Chamber of Commerce should develop an outreach to local businesses. The program would maintain communication with the local business community in terms of explaining ordinances and regulations, providing information on future public works and community development projects, and on available business assistance programs. The effort of this program might be targeted at specific local business zones in order to promote the development of village commercial centers. The strongest candidate for economic development as a village center is Luther’s Corners.
- **Protect Seekonk Industry.** Existing industrial zones in Seekonk should be maintained so that the balance of the economic base is preserved.

VI. MASTER PLAN SUMMARIES

- A. **1979:** Shaded Recommendations remain valid in 2000, and are included in the 2000 Master Plan, action plan.

Recommendation	Status	Still Valid/Invalid
Direct regional scale development to Highland Avenue.	Executed	N/A
Rezone Route 44 east of Arcade Avenue to mixed use.	Executed	N/A
Protect the neighborhood convenience shopping function of Luther's Corners and Bakers' Corners.	Executed	Remains Valid
Convert the Newman Avenue highway business zone to local business.	Executed	N/A
Convert the local business zones on Newman Avenue to residential.	Not Fully Executed	No Longer Valid.
Do not permit industrial development that is not compatible with the physical or man-made environment.	Ongoing	Remains Valid
Research and office park use should be located adjacent to major regional roadway facilities to minimize the impact of generated traffic on the Seekonk street system.	Research and Office park economic activities have not developed significantly in Seekonk.	Remains Valid

- B. **1986:** Shaded recommendations remain valid in 2000, and are included in the 2000 Master Plan, action plan.

Recommendation	Status	Still Valid/Invalid
Undertake an economic development plan to control commercial and industrial development.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Establish a design review board and a chamber of commerce.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Rezone for PUD/Industrial on the south end to control aesthetics and types of businesses.	Adopted, but not implemented	Remains Valid

- C. **2000**

Action	Responsible Party	Implementation Year
Establish a Seekonk Chamber of Commerce.	Town Administrator, Board of Selectmen	2001

Actively Market the Seekonk commercial corridor to enhance the area's competitive edge.	Seekonk Chamber of Commerce, with business participation.	2002-2004
Develop a Seekonk Economic Development Advisory Committee	Board of Selectmen	2002
Develop comprehensive inventory of potential commercial and industrial sites for development, focusing especially on infill and refill development.	Seekonk Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Advisory Committee	2002-2004
Develop a landscape ordinance for areas of local business development to visually rejuvenate, and preserve community character.	Planning Board, Conservation Commission	2001
Develop and enforce design guidelines for new and rehabilitated highway business structures and grounds.	Planning Board	2001-Ongoing
Create a local business outreach program.	Seekonk Chamber of Commerce, Town Administrator	2002-2004
Protect Seekonk Industry, by maintaining the current industrial zoning ordinance.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing

NATURAL FEATURES AND RESOURCES

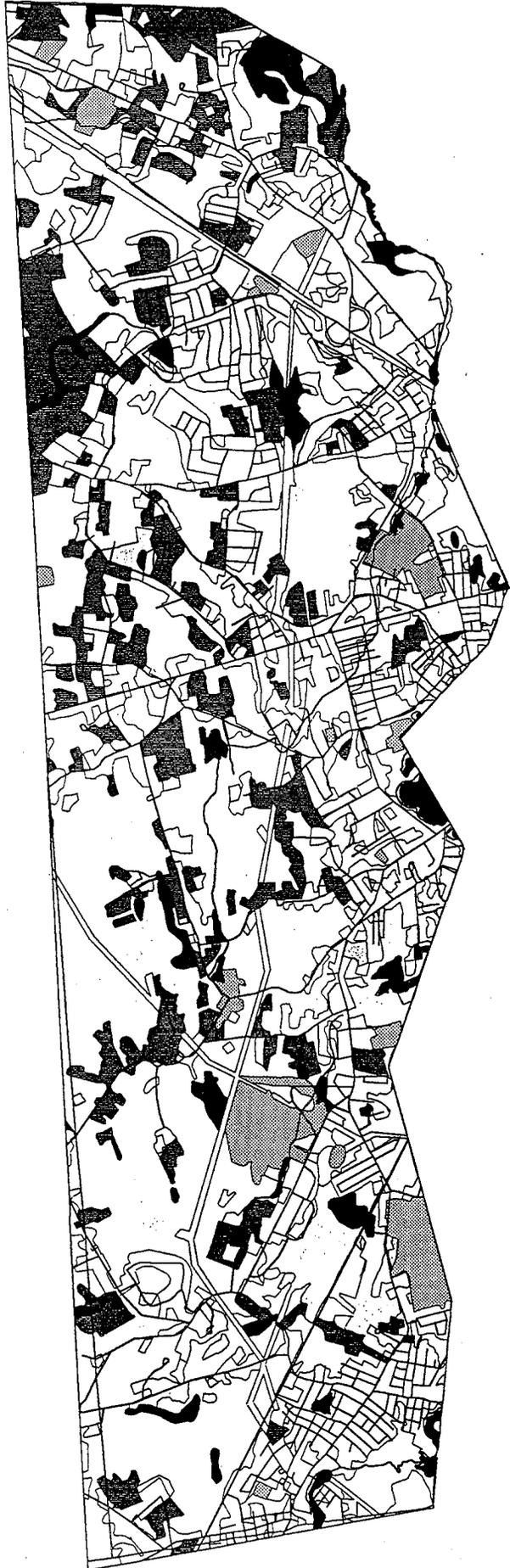
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I. INTRODUCTION

Planning issues concerning the Natural Features and Resources element have not significantly changed since the 1986 Seekonk Master Plan, and closely coincide with the goals stated in the 1999 Open Space Plan. In 1986 it was found that residential, commercial, and industrial development had impinged on Seekonk's natural resources and caused a decline in their total acreage. Further development will continue this effect, and also strains surface and groundwater resources.

The policies identified in the 1986 Master Plan were developed during a time when Seekonk was experiencing a period of rapid growth. Although development pressures have eased, the policies that the community adopted remain crucial to protecting the Town's natural features and resources, and are therefore included in the updated plan.

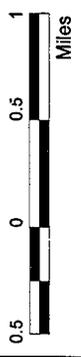
Seekonk is rich in natural resources and open spaces, as illustrated in the Natural Features Map (Figure F.1 following page). The abundance of forest, conservation, and vacant lands are a defining characteristic of the Town, and are highly valued by the community.



-  Agricultural Land
-  Forest, Conservation and Vacant Land
-  Water and Wetlands
-  Recreation Land
-  Developed Land

Town of Seekonk Master Plan Figure F.1
Natural Features And Resources

Prepared by
 Barbara Sokoloff Associates
 101 A Dyer Street
 Providence, RI 02903
 December 12, 2000



II. SOILS

Knowledge of soil characteristics is critical to making community planning decisions. Understanding soils and their properties can aid individuals and the Town in making land use decisions that will minimize future maintenance problems and environmental deterioration. Soil surveys assist a community in site selection for specific uses by indicating the kind of problems soil conditions can present.

In the USDA Soil Conservation Service soil report for the Town of Seekonk, soils are grouped into general soil associations. These groupings, consisting of named soils that occur in similar patterns throughout the area, are composed of dominant soils along with several others of lesser extent. Each soil association has a characteristic overall suitability for particular land uses.

The soil associations located in Seekonk are as follows:

1. **Hinckley-Windsor-Deerfield** association: Droughty and moderately well drained sandy and gravelly soils on nearly level to gentle slopes. Occupies 36 percent of the Town, mostly in a broad band extending the entire length of the western part of Town.
2. **Millis-Scituate-Whitman** association: Well drained, moderately well drained and very poorly drained, non-stony, very stony and extremely stony soils formed in glacial till on nearly level to moderately sloping terrain. Comprises 25 percent of the Town, mostly in the east-central parts.
3. **Scarboro-Whitman-Muck** association: Very poorly drained, non-stony to extremely stony, mineral and organic soils on nearly level or depressional terrain. Occupies 24 percent of the Town, and includes swamps and low-lying land along streams and drainageways.
4. **Gravel Pits – Made Land – Stripped Land** association: Areas excavated for sand and gravel, and areas so altered by cutting and filling that the soils cannot be classified. Occupies 9 percent of the Town.
5. **Canton-Whitman-Scituate** association: Well drained, moderately well drained, and very poorly drained, non-stony, very stony, and extremely stony soils formed in glacial till on nearly level to moderately sloping terrain. Comprises 5 percent of the Town.

Areas with suitability limitations are areas where soils have a limited ability to provide effective septic tank absorption fields, and support building foundations. Table F.2 indicates the depth to water table and the permeability of the soil series located in Seekonk. Soils, such as Whitman and Scarboro, with a high water table and slow permeability are problematic to development considerations. The sanitary and structural integrity of the soils are key considerations in determining which areas are suitable for development.

Table F.2 - Soil Drainage Characteristics

	Depth to Water Table	Permeability
	Ft	In/hr
Canton	>6.0	2.0-6.0
Deerfield	1.0-3.0	6.0-20
Hinckley	>6.0	6.0-20
Millis		
Scarboro	0-1.0	>6.0
Scituate		
Whitman	0.0-0.5	0.6-6.0
Windsor	>6.0	6.0-20

Several generalizations can be made about the soil character in Seekonk from Figure F.2. The major limitation appears to be a seasonally high water table. Approximately 3,636 acres, or 31 percent of the Town's total, have a water table at or near the surface for at least seven to nine months of the year. Out of 6,471 acres with severe limitations for septic tank sewage disposal, 4,283 acres exhibit severe conditions of wetness. Another 1,793 acres show the presence of a shallow hardpan that prevents surface water from penetrating into groundwater tables. Shallow depth to bedrock is less of a limitation, with 328 acres showing such conditions. Only 67 acres in the Town are on steep slopes.

III. FLOODPLAIN AND WETLANDS

Drainage patterns in Seekonk are characteristic of those areas in the downstream portions of a watershed. Topography is subdued and streams have meandering channels with broad floodplains. There are also numerous areas with poorly defined drainageways that results in an accumulation of surface water during periods of high precipitation and runoff.

The largest of the three watersheds is that of the Runnins River, which occupies approximately 4,775 acres in the western part of the Town. Two impounded ponds, Burrs Pond and Grist Mill Pond, are located within the watershed. The Runnins River forms the Town boundary south of County Street and there has been little or no development along this stretch of the river. Between County Street and Ledge Road the stream channel passes through several residential areas and one golf course. North of Ledge Road the watershed is largely undeveloped.

The second largest watershed is that of the Ten Mile River, with approximately 4,000 acres located within Seekonk. While much of the watershed is rural, development near the channel itself is intensive. Wastewater discharge into the river comes from three sources: two manufacturing firms and a sewage treatment plant. Because of poor water quality and frequent lowland flooding, the watershed has been the scene of much concern and study. One major tributary of the Ten Mile River, Coles Brook, has a watershed of 1,450 acres. Coles Brook arises north of the Ledgesmont Country Club and drains into Central Pond. The Turner Reservoir, Gammino Pond and Brown's Pond are also located within the watershed.

The eastern part of Seekonk lies within the Palmer River Watershed, which has 3,080 acres within the Town boundary. Two named streams, Clear Run Brook and Torrey Creek, flow through the watershed. Clear Run has a drainage area of approximately 900 acres, while Torrey has one of 950 acres. Miller Street Pond, a man-made impoundment, is located within the watershed.

The protection of wetland and floodplain areas in the Town is a key planning consideration. Functions of wetlands include:

- Enhance the quality of water by filtering nutrients, contaminants and sediment from upland runoff.
- Alleviate flood and storm damage and control erosion by retaining floodwater surges.
- Preserve the ecological balance of the natural environment by providing wildlife habitat, appropriate food sources, breeding area and cover.

The Massachusetts Executive office of Environmental Affairs Division of Conservation Services defines wetlands as "habitats where the influence of surface water or groundwater has resulted in the development of plant and animal communities adapted to aquatic or intermittently wet conditions. Wetlands include salt marshes, wooded swamps, freshwater marshes, bogs, shallow sub-tidal areas and similar areas. Protection of and work within wetlands is regulated by the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act which is administered locally by the Conservation Commission." Wetland areas in Seekonk were last delineated in a 1975 engineering study in conjunction with survey efforts by the Soil Conservation Service's Natural Resource Planning Program.

Development of floodplains raises flood heights, increases flood damage, and endangers life and property. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) prepared a floodplain map for the Town. The goal of the HUD program is to reduce, through preferential insurance rates, the amount of property subject to flood damage without unduly penalizing current property owners. The floodplain map is available at the Conservation Office in the Seekonk Town Hall and illustrates the designated floodplain areas in the Town.

Refer to the Natural Features Map (Figure F.1) for the locations of Water and Wetland areas in Seekonk.

IV. TOPOGRAPHY

Topography pertains to the degree of slope on the land, which in turn influences such factors as erosion, lateral stability of the soil and susceptibility to frost heaves and slumps. After determining the local topography, one can obtain an initial indication of appropriate sites for buildings, access location and activity areas.

There are six major considerations in regard to topography and slope; these are summarized in the following list:

1. level areas;
2. high elevations – crests, ridges and hilltops;
3. low elevations – valleys, swales, depressions, wetlands and floodplains;
4. rocky areas – exposed ledge and rock outcroppings;
5. steep slopes; and
6. good views and vistas.

Seekonk's topography is characterized by gently rolling countryside with elevations ranging from sea level in the tidal area of the Runnins River to 210+ feet along a portion

of the eastern boundary with Rehoboth. Much of the Town is relatively flat, although there are some significant changes in elevation along the eastern portion of Town that provide visual and aesthetic variety; Jacobs Hill and Chestnut Hill are prime examples. Also of significance is the high land, overlooking the tidal portion of the Runnins River along the southwestern boundary line.

V. WATER RESOURCES

Water resources are predominant natural features in Seekonk. Along the western edge of the Town, Central Pond and Turners Reservoir form a natural buffer between Seekonk and Pawtucket/East Providence to the west. Both the Ten Mile River and the Runnins River form key waterways in the Town. Scattered throughout the community are natural and man-made ponds that help to reinforce the rural open space image valued by Town residents.

The quality of the Town's water resources is a continuing concern. Contaminated surface runoff, especially from Route 6, poses a potential threat to water resources. The Water District monitors groundwater wells used for drinking water to ensure the water is safe. In 1998 the Coles Brook well was closed temporarily due to contamination. Because all its drinking water comes from groundwater sources, the Town should continue to make the protection of water resources a priority in order to ensure the safety and welfare of community residents.

VI. SIGNIFICANT NATURAL SITES

Caratunk Wildlife Refuge. The most notable significant natural site in Seekonk is the Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, a sanctuary established in 1971 and owned by the Audubon Society of Rhode Island and dedicated to the protection and preservation of wildlife. The refuge encompasses 195 acres in the northern part of the Town, off Brown Avenue. It contains numerous trails of varying difficulty that traverse through and near diverse habitats, including hay fields, old fields, woodlands, streams, ponds and bogs. This diversity of habitat supports an equally diverse plant and animal population, including grouse, mink, woodcock (the symbol of the refuge), orchids, and carnivorous plants. These natural resources provide an important field study area for environmental education programs. Caratunk is also open to the public and offers programs throughout the year, including nature and bird walks, cross-country ski lessons, night hikes, star parties, and various other programs.

VII. WILDLIFE RESOURCES

The information included at the end of this chapter was obtained from the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. It is a listing of rare, threatened and endangered species and significant natural communities found to exist in Seekonk. Also included are copies of quadrangle maps covering Seekonk that show *Priority Sites of Rare Species Habitats and Exemplary Natural Communities* and *Estimated Habitats of Rare, State-listed Wetlands Wildlife and Certified Vernal Pools*. The State urges that efforts be made to preserve and protect the Priority Habitat areas shown on the maps through such techniques as conservation easements, special zoning regulations and districts, or acquisition.

The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program has identified one Natural Heritage Priority area in Seekonk that incorporates the Caratunk Wildlife Refuge and areas around it. This area is ecologically valuable and important to the preservation of a variety of species. To maintain these areas as ecologically significant contiguous wetland habitat should be protected, which includes maintenance of the natural water regime and controlling invasive non-native species.

VIII. DEVELOPMENT THREATS TO NATURAL RESOURCES

The Town of Seekonk is rich in natural resources as shown in Figure F.1 (Natural Features Map). The natural resource areas of Seekonk play an integral role in maintaining the ecological system diversity and stability, and contribute to the open space character of the Town.

Although the physical characteristics of Seekonk's natural resources remain unchanged, the 1986 Seekonk Master Plan reported that the number of acres of woodlands, wetlands, and other types of open land decreased as a result of residential, commercial and industrial development. Population and development pressures have strained other natural resources of Seekonk. Surface and groundwater resources are threatened by the development of aquifer recharge areas, runoff from roads, parking lots and agriculture, poor septic system maintenance and increasing demand for drinking water.

IX. PREVIOUS MASTER PLANS: MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1979: Shaded recommendations remain valid in 2000, and are included in the 2000 Master Plan, action plan.

Recommendation	Status	Remains Valid/Invalid
Protect designated floodplain and wetland areas through restrictive zoning.	Executed	Remains Valid
Develop a passive open space area in North Seekonk on the former gravel operation site to serve as a buffer between industrial and residential development.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Coordinate with East Providence and Pawtucket to preserve a green space nature trail along Central Pond and Turners Reservoir to protect the natural attributes of these two scenic water bodies and to contain growth pressures.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Use easements across the Seekonk Water District owned lands to interconnect publicly owned lands.	Partially Executed	Remains Valid
Obtain easements and/or acquire open space areas along the Runnins River starting in the Grist Mill area and extending into South Seekonk to be used for hiking/nature trails and fishing.		Remains Valid
Provide a system of bike trails to connect open space and recreation areas. Bike paths could also be made in conjunction with street and sidewalk construction when land is subdivided for development.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Reuse the existing sanitary landfill as an arboretum when the operation is completed.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Acquire the Gammino Pond site off of Newman Avenue for park and recreation use.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid

1986: Shaded recommendations remain valid in 2000, and are included in the 2000 Master Plan, action plan.

Recommendation	Status	Still Valid/Invalid
Work to preserve as much as possible of the land abutting the Audubon sanctuary.	Partially Executed	Remains Valid
Revise by laws to allow cluster zoning and performance zoning.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Begin public education programs on septic systems, pesticide use, etc;	Ongoing	Remains Valid
Adopt a town septic maintenance ordinance.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Rezone several areas for aquifer protection.	Executed	N/A
Complete an Open Space and Recreation Plan so that Seekonk will be eligible for Self Help grants.	Executed	N/A
Form a Parks and Recreation Department to maintain existing parks.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Establish a land bank and/or a comparable fund for future open space acquisition.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Create a trail along the north/south power line through town.	Unexecuted	

C. 2000

Recommendation	Responsible Party	Implementation Year
Ensure that new development does not adversely affect nearby natural and cultural resources through such means as buffering, innovative design, and erosion control (during construction and by landscape design of parking lots).	Conservation Commission, Planning Board	Ongoing
Infill and refill development should be encouraged in residential and commercial areas to minimize degradation to natural resources.	Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission	2001-Ongoing

<p>Preserve (through Town acquisition) or facilitate preservation (by cooperating with private groups) of undeveloped areas containing or buffering significant natural features and resources.</p>	<p>Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen</p>	<p>2001-Ongoing</p>
<p>Adopt an integrated approach to groundwater protection through public education about septic system maintenance, pesticide use, and disposal of household hazardous substances.</p>	<p>Board of Health</p>	<p>2001-Ongoing</p>
<p>Identify sources of potential threats to the quality and quantity of Seekonk's water supply and take action to prevent contamination and depletion.</p>	<p>Water Supply District</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

(From 1999 Open Space and Recreation Plan Prepared by SRPEDD)

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I. INTRODUCTION

The goals, objectives and "Action Plan" items in this Open Space and Recreation Plan were derived from a number of sources. The Open Space Committee utilized public meetings, surveys, media releases and other means to collect data, conduct assessments and gauge public opinion on conservation and recreation related matters.

SRPEDD, while providing technical assistance to the Committee, exercised a "plan with" rather than "plan at" approach to guide the development of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. SRPEDD conducted research; contacted state, local and regional organizations involved in open space and recreation in Seekonk; met with representatives from the local land trust, the Water District and recreation leagues, and conducted interviews with local, state and federal agencies, boards and personnel, as appropriate.

Prior to the development of the (1999) Open Space Plan, the 1988 Open Space Plan served as the master plan for conservation and recreation related issues in the Town of Seekonk. Of the ten (10) priority measures listed in the Action Plan section of the 1988 Open Space Plan, the Town has made progress on addressing the following:

- Completed the acquisition of the Gammino Pond Property;
- Completed a partial purchase of the Monroe Conservation Area (Burr's Pond.);

- Begun coordination with the cities of East Providence and Pawtucket, Rhode Island, on the use of Central Pond and proposed interconnecting trails around the pond in the area of the Ten Mile River;
- Begun planning/design of a bikeway system;
- Begun a movement towards the creation of a formal Parks and Recreation Department.

While some of the above listed items from the 1988 Open Space "Action Plan" still remain priorities, several are still in a transitional state and need to be completed (particularly Gammino Pond and formalization of the Parks and Recreation Department.) The effort to complete these "Action Plan" items as well as to address the 1999 Open Space "Action Plan" will be bolstered by the town's commitment to appointing a standing Open Space Committee to oversee the implementation of the Open Space Plan.

II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- GOAL 1: Protect the quality of the water resources of the Town of Seekonk
 GOAL 2: Prevent the loss of the rural qualities of the town
 GOAL 3: Preserve sufficient open space to meet the passive recreation and conservation needs of the town
 GOAL 4: Address the active recreation needs of the citizens of Seekonk
 GOAL 5: Develop a town-supported funding mechanism for land acquisition

OBJECTIVES

- GOAL 1: Protect the quality of the water resources of the Town of Seekonk
- Objectives
1. Assess the adequacy of existing water quality relate regulations, etc. at the local level.
 2. Maintain adequate buffers around public water supply areas
 3. Continue to work toward the restoration of the Runnins River
 4. Work to maintain the integrity of recreational waterbodies and wetlands
- GOAL 2: Prevent the loss of the rural qualities of the town
- Objective
1. Preserve agricultural areas and maintain economically viable open land
 2. Promote the designation of scenic roads and byways
 3. Preserve the history, historic sites and related areas of the town

GOAL 3: Preserve sufficient open space to meet the passive recreation and Conservation needs of the town

- Objective
1. Assess the viability of the McHale's Pond Development Plan
 2. Continue to address development plans for Gammino Pond
 3. Assess potential land acquisitions in order to establish greenbelts.
 4. Promote public awareness to the value of open space

GOAL 4: Address the active recreation needs of the citizens of Seekonk

- Objective
1. Address the need for upkeep and further development of existing facilities in order to maximize potential use.
 2. Explore recreational development partnerships with public and Private organizations.
 3. Explore the potential for on-road, off-road and rail-to-trail conversion for bicycling/multi-use facilities

GOAL 5: Develop a town-supported funding mechanism for land acquisition as well as a means by which to implement the Open Space Plan's Action Plan.

- Objective
1. Have the means to directly acquire, match fund, hold, grant-match etc. when desirable properties become available to the town.
 2. Establish a permanent Open Space Committee to oversee the implementation of the Open Space Plan
 3. Actively pursue state and federal funding to match the town's spending on conservation, open space and recreation.

III. ACTION PLAN

GOAL 1: Protect the quality of the water resources of the Town of Seekonk.

Objective 1: Assess the adequacy of existing water quality regulations, etc., at the local level.

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
1.a. Work with the Water District to address necessary protection for public water supplies	Planning Board, Board of Health, Conservation Commission, DPW, Board of Selectmen	1999-2004
1.b. Work with the appropriate parties to assess and determine threats to water resources other than public supplies	All town boards and departments; EOEAs Ten Mile River Basin Team; Runnins River Task Force	1999-2004

Objective 2: Maintain adequate buffers around public water supplies

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
2.a. Assess the amount and availability of open land, public land, private non-profit land, etc., around water supplies in order to create areas of contiguous greenspace/buffers (via purchase, conveyance, partnership or other means).	Conservation Commission, Planning Board, DPW, Water District, Seekonk Land Trust, EOEAs Basin Team	1999-2004

Objective 3: Continue to work toward the restoration of the Runnins River

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
3.a. Continue participation in the EPA-led Runnins River Task Force	Board of Health, Conservation Commission, Planning Board	1999-2004
3.b. Continue to address stormwater infiltration basin upgrade project on streets along the Runnins River	Board of Health, DPW, SRPEDD, MHD, CZM	1999-2002

Objective 4: Maintain the integrity of recreational waterbodies and wetlands

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
4.a. Develop monitoring and maintenance procedures for town-owned areas	Board of Health, Conservation Commission, EOEa Basin Team	1999-2000
4.b. Work with other public and private non-profit groups and organizations seeking to improve water quality within the town via monitoring, education and remediation	Board of Health, Conservation Commission, Pokanoket Watershed Alliance, Ten River Watershed Alliance, EOEa Basin Team	1999-2004
4.c. Establish the position of full time conservation agent	Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee	1999-2000
4.d. Pursue vernal pool certifications	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
4.e. Undertake new surveys in order to identify rail and endangered species	Conservation Commission, naturalists, conservation organizations, DFWELE	Ongoing
4.f. Certification of stream flows for the purpose of registration under the River Protection Act	Conservation Commission, EOEa Basin Team, DEP, DEM	Ongoing

GOAL 2: Prevent the loss of the rural qualities of the town**Objective 1:** Preserve agricultural areas and preserve economically viable open land

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
1.a. Promote/educate landowners on Ch. 61 and APR programs and other local, state and federal incentives for conservation and open space preservation; develop prioritization/acquisition strategy	Assessor, Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, w/assistance from USDA, DFA, DFWELE, etc.	Ongoing

Objective 2: Promote the designation of scenic roads byways

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
2.a. Seek local endorsement/ designation of Prospect St., Miller St. (near County St.) And County St. (near Rehoboth) as scenic roads in order to maintain their rural/scenic integrity	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen	1999-2001

Objective 3: Preserve the history/historic sites and related areas of the town

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
3.a. Form a local Historic Commission	Board of Selectmen, local cultural/historical groups, Mass. Historical	1999
3.b. Update the local historical sites survey	Local and state historical groups (Mass. Archaeological, Mass. Historical, etc.)	1999-2004
3.c. Develop educational materials for public, libraries, schools, etc.	Local and state historical groups	1999-2004
3.d. Seek state and federal register designations where applicable	Local historical groups, Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, with state and federal commissions	Ongoing

GOAL 3: Preserve open spaces appropriate to meet conservation and passive recreation needs of the town.

Objective 1: Assess the feasibility /viability of the McHale's Pond Development Plan

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
1.a. Work with the Water District to develop a trail plan component and lease options or management agreements	Board of Selectmen, Water District, Recreation Commission	1999-2002
1.b. Pursue access rights to rail-bed at McHale's Pond in order to develop preferred site access point	Board of Selectmen, Water District, Recreation Commission, DPW, local and federal legislators, etc.	1999-2002

Objective 2: Continue to address plans for Gammino Pond

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
2.a. Develop plans for walking trails and a wildlife sanctuary	Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Board of Library Commission	1999-2004
2.b. Explore the feasibility of constructing an amphitheater on the Gammino Pond site	Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Board of Library Commission	1999-2004
2.c. Work with the town library to develop an access drive and educational signage for the Gammino Pond site	Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Board of Library Commission, DPW	1999-2004
2.d. Seek funding to implement the Gammino Pond plans	Board of Selectmen, Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Board of Library Commission	1999 - Ongoing

Objective 3: Assess potential land acquisitions and easements, etc., in order to establish town greenbelts

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
3.a. Establish a priority area(s) land acquisition list and map	Town boards and commissions, Seekonk Land Trust, Trustees of Reservation, Wildlands Trust of S.E.Mass. Audubon, etc.	1999-2004
3.b. Establish partnerships with other open space landholders in order to establish tracts of contiguous greenspace	Same as above	1999-Ongoing
3.c. Develop funding strategies and networks/alliances with potential landholding and funding sources	Same as above	1999-Ongoing

Objective 4: Promote public awareness to the value of open space (economically viable open land)

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
4.a. Hold workshops and seminars focusing on open space and land use management issues bringing in guest speakers where/when necessary (i.e. Stephen Small, Southern N.E. Forest Consortium, Seekonk Land Trust, SRPEDD, DFWELE, DEM, EOEa Basin Team, etc.	All town boards and commissions	1999-2004

GOAL 4: Meet the active recreation needs of the citizens of Seekonk**Objective 1:** Assess the need for maintenance of existing recreational facilities in order to maximize their potential use

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
1.a. Work with the School Department and Recreation Commission to develop a capitol improvement plan encompassing operation and management projections for existing recreational facilities	Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, School Department, Recreation Commission	1999-2001

Objective 2: Explore recreational development partnerships with the Water District, Seekonk YMCA, etc.

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
2.a. Develop a lease/management plan with the Water District for the purpose of recreational development at McHale's Pond wellfield (i.e. long-term lease at minimal cost per year)	Board of Selectmen, Water District, Recreation Commission	1999-2001
2.b. Work with the YMCA to import "Y" programs to town facilities to promote greater amounts of year-round activities (where the "Y" has numerous programs, but limited space; these types of partnerships have worked well in Cranston and Barrington, R.I.)	Board of Selectmen, Seekonk YMCA, Recreation Commission, Town Counsel	1999-2004
2.c. Explore a potential partnership/ change of management of the Cole Street field behind the Martin School	Recreation Commission, School Department, Board of Selectmen, DPW	1999-2001
2.d. In the context of all of the above (2.a.-c.), address the need for increased older youth and teen programs	Recreation Commission, partnering organizations, groups and agencies, Board of Selectmen, DPW	Ongoing

Objective 3: Assess the potential for on-road, off-road, and rail-to-trail conversion for bicycling/multi-use facilities

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year
3.a. Develop a greenway/multi-use trail assessment for the town with potential regional tie-ins	Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Planning Board, Land Trust, DPW, other partners, etc.	1999-2002
3.b. Seek funding to facilitate assessments, planning and implementation (i.e. DEM Trails/ Greenways Program; Enhancements Funds/ISTEA)	Recreation Commission, DPW, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, through Board of Selectmen	1999-2004 and Ongoing

HOUSING

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I. INTRODUCTION

Meeting the housing needs of all residents of a community is a challenging task. The Town of Seekonk faces the difficulties of meeting the high demand for affordable housing, and accommodating new residential development while preserving the rural/suburban quality of life and natural resources. Housing market fluctuations, which are outside of the Town's control complicate the housing issue. Also challenging Seekonk's housing effort is the perception of the Town as a regional shopping corridor- often overshadowing the attractive rural bedroom community qualities.

II. INVENTORY

A. Housing Stock

Housing in the Town of Seekonk is comprised primarily of single-family units. This is a product of the current zoning by-laws that permit only single-family dwellings, except in the case of conversions into two-family dwellings by special permit. 90 percent of all occupied units in Seekonk are single-family structures. Only 9 percent of occupied residences house two to four families, and there are no housing structures in Seekonk with 10 or more units. (See table H.1 below.)

**Table H .1
Structure by Number of Units**

	Units	Percent	State Percent
1 Detached	4,154	89.8%	49.8%
1 Attached	34	0.7%	3.6%
2 to 4	417	9.0%	24.3%
5 to 9	14	0.3%	6.5%
10 or more	0	-	13.8%
Mobile home/trailer	7	0.2%	2.0%
Total	4,626	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Housing quality appears to be very good, with only seven units lacking complete plumbing and 23 units lacking a complete kitchen at the time of the 1990 Census. The median age of housing units in Seekonk is 36 years, 11 years newer than the average age of the housing stock of Bristol County as a whole. Seekonk enjoys very high owner occupancy and family household rates. 88.1 percent of residents own their homes, and 82.8 percent of the Town's dwellings are occupied by families. (See Table H.2 below)

Table H .2
Housing Characteristics
of Seekonk and Neighboring Towns 1980-1990

	<u>Seekonk</u>		<u>Rehoboth</u>		<u>Attleboro</u>		<u>E. Providence</u>		<u>Bristol County</u>	
	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980	1990
Percent single family	86.90%	90.01%	87.70%	90.82%	56.50%	52.15%	63.80%	53.68%	53.20%	51.02%
Percent owner occupied	84.70%	88.13%	86.20%	88.64%	62.00%	83.80%	62.50%	55.98%	57.60%	59.10%
Vacancy rate for sale	0.13%	0.70%	0.80%	0.78%	0.40%	0.79%	0.50%	4.10%	0.80%	1.63%
Percent lacking complete plumbing	0.80%	0.15%	0.91%	0.91%	2.20%	0.54%	1.40%	0.34%	2.20%	0.50%
Median value of owner-occupied units	\$50,200	\$152,900	\$52,300	\$171,000	\$42,600	\$143,200	\$43,800	\$121,700	\$40,600	\$141,700
Median year built		1962		1963		1961		1955		1951

Source: 1980 and 1990 U. S. Census of Population and Housing

The number of housing units in Seekonk continues to grow. The total year-round housing stock numbered 4,626 units in 1990, up from 4,143 units in 1980. The rate of growth however, has slowed significantly between 1980 and 1990 to 10.4 percent from 25.1 percent. Additional data supports this stabilizing trend. While the number of renter-occupied housing units and vacancies had increased between 1970 and 1980, the number of renter occupied units available was reduced and vacancies stayed quite stable between 1980 and 1990. (See Table H.3 below.)

Table H .3
Seekonk Housing Stock, 1970 to 1990

	1970	1980	1990	Change	
				1980-1990	% Change
Year-round housing units	3,313	4,143	4,626	483	10.4%
Single family	2,913	3,602	4,164	562	13.5%
Multi family	400	541	462	-79	-17.1%
Vacant	77	141	144	3	2.1%
All Occupied	3,236	4,002	4,482	480	10.7%
Owner occupied	2,748	3,388	3,950	562	14.2%
Renter occupied	488	614	532	-82	-15.4%
Persons per occupied unit	3.35	3.06	2.91	-0.15	-5.2%

Source: U. S. Census of Population and Housing, 1970, 1980 and 1990.

Seekonk's housing stock presently consists of about 4,977 housing units. This estimated figure is derived from adding the number of new residential building permits issued in the Town of Seekonk since 1990 (303) to the 1990 U.S. Census figure of 4,626 housing units. Based on this number, the estimated growth in the number of residential units for the years of 1990-1998 is 7 percent. When we compare this figure to the 10 percent decrease in the number of housing developments for the previous decade we see that the rate of new housing development continues to decrease in the present.

B. Housing Market

The median value of owner-occupied housing in Seekonk in 1990 was \$152,900, compared to \$141,700 for Bristol County as a whole. Owner-occupied housing in Seekonk holds a median value that is about 8 percent above that of Bristol County as a whole. However, the median value of housing in Bristol County is heavily influenced by New Bedford and Fall River, two large communities that command significantly lower housing values due to population loss and lack of housing demand. (See Figure H.4 below.)

Figure H.4
Median Housing Value and Contract Rent

Community	Median Value	Percent of County Median	Median Rent	Percent of County Median	Average Assessed Value of New Homes (1998)*
Seekonk	\$152,900	107.9%	\$400	115.9%	\$149,627
N. Attleboro	\$156,000	110.1%	\$509	147.5%	\$129,261
Rehoboth	\$171,000	120.7%	\$471	136.5%	\$135,457
Swansea	\$134,500	94.9%	\$415	120.3%	NA
Bristol County	\$141,700	-	\$345	-	\$123,835

Source: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

*Source: MISER

Though the median value of housing in Seekonk is slightly less than the Towns of Rehoboth and North Attleboro, more recent housing trends in Seekonk reveal that housing values are on the rise. One indicator is the new housing that has been built in Seekonk in the past few years. Records from the Massachusetts State Data Center show that new homes constructed in Seekonk between 1995 and 1998 are assessed at a median price of \$168,277. Town officials have observed that many of the new homes recently constructed or presently under construction are larger and contain more amenities than the existing housing stock. These trends will have the effect of raising the median value of housing throughout Seekonk, assuming no drastic changes in the area housing market. Table H.5 below shows assessed valuation of recent home construction.

Table H.5
Assessed Value of New Housing Construction, 1995 to 1997

Year	Single-Family Units	Single-Family Valuation	Average Valuation Per Unit
1995	35	\$5,884,189	\$168,120
1996	39	\$6,755,400	\$173,215
1997	25	\$4,467,550	\$178,702
1998	24	\$3,591,050	\$149,627
Totals	123	\$20,698,189	\$168,277

Source: Massachusetts State Data Center

Housing vacancy rates in Seekonk indicate that there is a shortage of available units for both purchase and for rent to create a fluid housing market. The desirable minimum vacancy at any one time to create a fluid housing market, in which there is neither a shortfall nor an overabundance of available housing, is 2.5 percent for all homeowner units and 5 percent for all rental units. While rental unit vacancies in Seekonk indicate a fairly fluid rental market in Seekonk, there is a substantial shortfall of available housing units for purchase. Housing data show that vacant homes for sale are very scarce in Seekonk, with only 0.7 percent of homes available at any one time. The neighboring Towns of Rehoboth and Swansea also have less than one percent of the housing stock for sale. This further suggests that the housing market throughout the wider area is 'tight' as well. (See Table H.6 below.)

Table H.6 Housing Vacancy Rates

Community	Owner Occupied	Vacant Homes for Sale	Combined Vacant & Occupied	Percent for Sale	Target * Number for Sale	Shortfall of Homes for Sale
Seekonk	3,950	28	3,978	0.7%	99	71
N. Attleboro	6,121	169	6,290	2.7%	157	(12)
Rehoboth	2,544	20	2564	0.8%	64	44
Swansea	4,611	37	4648	0.8%	116	79

	Renter Occupied	Vacant Homes for Rent	Combined Vacant & Occupied	Percent for Rent	Target ** Number for Rent	Shortfall of Rental Units
Seekonk	532	27	559	4.8%	28	1
N. Attleboro	3,114	299	3,413	8.8%	171	(128)
Rehoboth	326	4	330	1.2%	17	13
Swansea	641	40	681	5.9%	34	(6)

* Target number of houses for sale = 2.5% existing homeowner units

** Target number of rental units available = 5% existing rental units

Source: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Rental housing does not comprise a large segment of overall housing in Seekonk. Only 11.8 percent of housing in Seekonk is made up of rental units. This is very low compared to the average for all of Bristol County, which stands at 40.9 percent of all units occupied by renters. Again, the Bristol County figure is heavily influenced by the cities of Fall River and New Bedford, which have a high rate of renter occupancy. The low rate of tenure by renters in Seekonk is attributable to the predominance of larger single-unit homes, few existing multiple unit structures, and higher than average housing values in the Town.

An indicator of the housing affordability of Seekonk's housing market is provided by a comparison of the price of housing to household income. Table H.7 depicts median housing values and median household income in Seekonk and Bristol County for 1980 and 1990.

Table H.7
Median Value of Housing and Median Income

	Median value of owner-occupied units		Percent of County Average		Value Increase	Median Household Income		Percent of County Average		Income Increase
	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980-1990	1980	1990	1980	1990	1980-1990
Seekonk	\$50,200	\$152,900	123.6%	107.9%	305%	\$23,615	\$50,095	128.8%	131.8%	212%
Bristol County	\$40,600	\$141,700	-	-	349%	\$18,334	\$38,003	-	-	207%

Source: 1980 U.S. Census, General Social and Economic Characteristics

1990 U.S. Census, General Social and Economic Characteristics

1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

As the table indicates, the median value of housing in Seekonk is higher than that of Bristol County as a whole. Between 1980 and 1990 the median value of housing did not rise as fast as the county median, though it is still close to 108 percent of the county average. The median value of housing in Seekonk tripled (about 300 percent) between

1980 and 1990, though the value of housing in Seekonk has not increased as much as the countywide average, which experienced an increase of close to 350 percent during that time. Median household income levels, meanwhile, rose by 212 percent in Seekonk and by 207 percent countywide. Though housing is more expensive in Seekonk than in Bristol County as a whole, median incomes in Seekonk are also higher. Data from 1980 to 1990 indicate that median housing values are not rising as fast as the county as a whole, while median income in Seekonk continues to rise faster relative to the county. In this sense the data indicate that housing is becoming slightly more affordable in Seekonk, as the median value of housing has declined relative to Bristol County, while incomes have risen slightly relative to Bristol County.

Another measure of affordability is the percentage of total household income used for housing costs. A standard tool for measurement is to determine how many homeowners and renters spend more than 30 percent of total household income on housing. Those who do pay more than 30 percent are considered to be bearing an "excess cost burden" for housing.

Table H.8
Housing Costs as Percentage of Income

Community	Housing Costs		
	Total Households Computed*	30%+ Household income to housing	% of Total
Seekonk	4,049	917	22.6%
Homeowner	3,569	775	21.7%
Renter	480	142	29.6%
N. Attleboro	7,898	2,033	25.7%
Homeowner	4,882	1,159	23.7%
Renter	3,016	874	29.0%
Rehoboth	2,223	431	19.4%
Homeowner	1,984	340	17.1%
Renter	239	91	38.1%
Swansea	4,637	875	18.9%
Homeowner	4,056	666	16.4%
Renter	581	209	36.0%

* Total households computed does not include all households

Source: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

As the table shows, 22.6 percent of households in Seekonk exceed the 30 percent threshold, which is slightly higher than the indicators for Swansea and Rehoboth and

slightly less than North Attleboro. Persons in rental housing more commonly exceed the 30 percent threshold, though fewer renters experience an excess cost burden in Seekonk than in Rehoboth or Swansea. The group most affected by the excess cost burden is the elderly (age 65+), in particular elderly renters. In Seekonk, 37.4 percent of renters age 65 and older spend more than 30 percent of household income on housing. However, Seekonk fares much better in this regard than Swansea and Rehoboth, which are at 53.2 percent and 82.1 percent respectively.

C. Sub-Area Housing

The housing market in Seekonk reveals new information when it is broken down by area of Town. The Town is divided into two census tracts (6321 in the northern half and 6322 in the southern half) which follow a line along Ledge Road, Jacob Street and Broad Street, just to the North of Taunton Avenue. Each census tract is further broken down into block groups, which contain from between 150 and 1,000 or so housing units. (A map showing the locations of Seekonk's block groups is found in the Community Profile Chapter-Figure C.8)

Table H.9
Seekonk Subarea Housing

Subarea	Housing Units		Occupancy			Homeowner Units			Rental Units			
	Units	% of Total	Occupied	%	Vacant	%	Units	%	Mean Value	Units	%	Mean Rent
Block Group 1	368	8.0%	350	95%	18	5%	332	17%	\$163,300	18	9%	\$491
Block Group 2	152	3.3%	152	100%	0	-	123	6%	\$128,600	29	15%	\$534
Block Group 3	270	5.8%	270	100%	0	-	245	13%	\$123,000	25	13%	\$554
Block Group 4	286	6.2%	267	93%	19	7%	231	12%	\$139,200	36	18%	\$556
Block Group 5	348	7.5%	323	93%	25	7%	288	15%	\$161,300	35	18%	\$579
Block Group 6	230	5.0%	230	100%	0	-	215	11%	\$139,400	15	8%	\$438
Block Group 9	513	11.1%	511	100%	2	-	474	25%	\$188,600	37	19%	\$675
Tract 6321 Total	2,167	46.8%	2,103	97%	64	3%	1,908	100%	\$156,261	195	100%	\$564
Block Group 1	249	5.4%	249	100%	0	-	223	11%	\$138,500	26	8%	\$346
Block Group 2	1,038	22.4%	1,016	98%	22	2%	888	43%	\$165,100	128	38%	\$197
Block Group 3	161	3.5%	161	100%	0	-	152	7%	\$152,200	9	3%	\$1,001
Block Group 4	175	3.8%	165	94%	10	6%	106	5%	\$127,600	59	18%	\$635
Block Group 5	257	5.6%	233	91%	24	9%	163	8%	\$128,900	70	21%	\$444
Block Group 9	579	12.5%	555	96%	24	4%	510	25%	\$161,200	45	13%	\$729
Tract 6322 Total	2,459	53.2%	2,379	97%	80	3%	2,042	100%	\$155,425	337	100%	\$429

Source: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

The sub-area data in the table above help to confirm much of what is already known about Seekonk. Occupancy of the available housing stock is high throughout the town, the notable exception being block group 5 in census tract 6322, bordered roughly by Fall River Avenue to the east and north, County Street to the South, and the border with East Providence to the west. Housing occupancy rates and values are also quite even between the two census tracts.

The most significant disparity between sub-areas regards rental units. Rental units are more prevalent in the Town's southern half. Block group 2 of census tract 6322 is where the greatest concentration of rental units is found. Rents in this area are also very low compared to the rest of the Town. This is due to the influence of 80 subsidized housing units in this area that affect the average rental cost. Overall, rental costs are less expensive in the southern half of Seekonk than the north. This, again, is due in part to the location of the subsidized housing units, which affects the average rental cost.

D. Affordable Housing

Subsidized and Assisted Housing Units: The Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development has set a standard for all communities to make 10 percent of the total housing stock of the community available for lower income residents. Table 10 shows that neither Seekonk, nor the neighboring communities reach this goal at the present. North Attleboro, with 402 public and assisted housing units, comes closest to meeting this standard at just over four percent of total housing units. Seekonk has 80 total subsidized units, collectively called the Seekonk Commons, which is managed by the Seekonk Housing Authority. The Seekonk Commons consists of 72 state-funded individual units for the elderly and handicapped and eight state-funded family units that are scattered throughout the Town. Seekonk Commons comprises fewer than two percent of total housing units in Seekonk.

The Seekonk Housing Authority currently has an extensive waiting list which has been closed for three years because of the high demand for housing and the inability to house most applicants in a timely manner. At the time of this writing, the elderly and handicapped housing units have a waiting list of 20 Seekonk residents and 39 non-local persons. The average yearly turnover is about twelve per year and people on this list can expect to wait at least six months to one year. The current waiting list for family units is 4 Seekonk residents and 38 non-local persons. The turnover for family units is less than one per year. The housing authority receives letters daily from women in shelters throughout the state asking to be placed on the list.

**Table H.10
Public Subsidized Housing Units & Rental Assistance**

Community	Units	% Total		Rental Assistance	
		Housing Stock	Housing Units	State	Federal
Seekonk	80	1.74	80	0	2
N. Attleboro	402	4.09	296	11	154
Rehoboth	0	0	0	0	0
Swansea	64	1.18	64	0	0

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Communities & Development, 1995

Low-income Households: Low-income households make up a small percentage of total housing in Seekonk and its surrounding Massachusetts communities. Seekonk is notable in this case in that the majority of householders below the poverty level are residents ages 65 and older. This contrasts directly with the data for North Attleboro, Swansea and Rehoboth, in which the majority of households below poverty level are comprised of persons under the age of 65. This is significant because the elderly (persons 65 and older) comprise 22 percent of total households in Seekonk, but almost 60 percent of the total number of households below poverty level.

**Table H.11
Households Below Poverty Level: Number and Age of Householder**

Community	Households Below Poverty Level			Age of Householder		
	Households	Number	Percent	15-64	65-74	75+
Seekonk	4,482	201	4.5%	81	63	57
N. Attleboro	9,235	291	3.2%	239	29	23
Rehoboth	2,870	64	2.2%	34	19	11
Swansea	5,252	250	4.8%	139	73	38

Source: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

Seekonk's difficulty providing viable housing options for elderly and low-income persons is in large part a result of the lack of multi-unit housing developments. Multi-unit and higher density developments provide more manageable rents. The current zoning, which forbids multi-unit development except in cases of subdivision of existing units is the obstacle to multi-unit development

III. ISSUES

- **“Tight” Housing Market:** In recent years less than one percent of homeowner units have been available for sale at any one time. This is well short of the accepted value for what constitutes a fluid housing market- 2.5% of homeowner units for sale at any one time. The tight housing market is shared by the neighboring towns of Rehoboth and Swansea.
- **Shortage of Affordable Housing:** Seekonk falls well short of the state’s goal of 10 percent of the total housing stock being accessible to those with low incomes. Seekonk contains only 8 subsidized family housing units, and few private low or moderate income rental opportunities. Waiting lists for affordable housing in Seekonk evidence that there is demand.
- **Lack of Diversity in Housing Options/Types:** Because of a lack of rental housing, and the current zoning that allows for only single-family developments, there is a lack of diversity of housing types in Seekonk. This lack of diversity in housing types leads to an insufficient supply of affordable housing, because townhouse/apartment and higher density residential housing types typically are more accessible to those with moderate and lower incomes. Seekonk needs to address the narrowness of the Town’s housing options in order to address its lack of affordable housing.
- **Shortage of Elderly and Assisted Living Housing:** Seekonk Commons is the Town’s only subsidized assisted living housing complex. The 72 units it provides do not meet the demand for elderly and assisted living housing in the Town. Waiting lists include Seekonk residents as well as those not living in the community.
- **Residential Seekonk Overshadowed by Route 6:** Within the larger Providence metropolitan region Seekonk is generally perceived of as a commercial retail center. When shopping on Route 6 visitors do not see the attractive residential neighborhoods nestled behind the shopping areas and to the northern end of town. The image of Seekonk therefore throughout the region is of a strip commercial development only. A commercial-only image has potential negative impacts on the Town. If Seekonk is overlooked as a nice place to live, residential growth may slow or stop.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Create a Wider Range of Housing Options:** To fulfill the goal of providing more housing options, especially for low income and elderly persons, Seekonk should adopt a Planned Unit Development District by-law. This zoning ordinance would allow for special residential developments within existing zoning districts upon approval from the Seekonk Planning Board. The Town already has Planned Unit Development options for commercial and industrial uses. Residential Planned Unit Development zoning would have two components: (1) cluster developments, which allow for smaller lots, but do not increase overall neighborhood density, and would preserve open spaces. (2) Townhouse/apartment development, which would allow for lower square footage per unit, and more units per acre, but would maintain overall floor area coverage. Townhouse/apartment development would allow for multi-unit housing options. Residential Planned Unit Developments can be an effective vehicle for the provision of more housing options in Seekonk.
- **Provide More Affordable Housing:** The Seekonk Housing Authority should take more responsibility in providing affordable housing options, especially for families. The Town should collaborate with State, Federal and Private organizations to create more affordable housing development in Seekonk. Seekonk should create an affordable housing task force to specifically address the issue. Rent to own programs, allowing for duplex units By Right, incentives for developers to create affordable housing units should all be explored.
- **Market Residential Seekonk:** To address the problem of Seekonk's image as a commercial district only, the Town should develop a marketing campaign that highlights the positive characteristics of Seekonk's neighborhoods, quality of life, and facilities. The first step of this marketing campaign should be the creation of attractive and recognizable gateways to Seekonk. Signage, landscaping and an aggressive tree-planting program could advertise Seekonk's positive qualities at its entranceways, and along its major roads. (See also Land-Use.) Secondly, the development of a bike network along Seekonk's picturesque country roads could advertise the Town's charming rural quality to visitors. The Bike path itself could be marketed, inviting out of towners to come and "Bike The Other Seekonk". (See also Transportation.)

V. Master Plan Summaries

- A. 1979: Shaded recommendations remain valid in 2000, and are included in the 2000 Master Plan, action plan.

Recommendation	Status	Remains Valid/Invalid
Four specific areas of town were recommended for rezoning to lower the density of potential residential development.	Executed	N/A
Lot size requirements should be used to control the scale and density of residential development to protect the natural environment and minimize future public expenditures.	Ongoing	Remains Valid
Residential streets should be designed to fit in with the natural landscape and intersections with major arterial roadways should be carefully designed to minimize accident potential and through traffic disruption.	Ongoing	Remains Valid
The densest residential concentrations should be directed towards areas where relatively compact development already exists.	Ongoing	Remains Valid
Lower density development should be maintained in areas where soils are poor or wetlands are present.	Executed	Remains Valid

- B. 1986: Shaded recommendations remain valid in 2000, and are included in the 2000 Master Plan, action plan.

Recommendation	Status	Still Valid/Invalid
Plan for suitable and adequate housing that meets quality standards and is balanced as to price, type and location.	Ongoing	Remains Valid
In order to meet the housing needs of all of Seekonk's residents, the construction of greater variety of housing types should be permitted.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Multi family, clustering, phased growth, and infill accessory units should be encouraged	Unexecuted	Remains Valid

C. 2000

Action	Responsible Party	Implementation Year
Coordinate with the Seekonk Housing Authority, and federal, state, and regional agencies to create more affordable housing opportunities.	Seekonk Housing Authority, Mass. Housing and Community Development, SRPEDD	Ongoing
Create a Seekonk Affordable Housing Task Force.	Housing Authority, Planning Board, Town Manager	2001
Adopt a Residential Planned Unit Development District to allow for (1) Cluster development, and (2) Townhouse/apartment development by special permit.	Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Town Manager	2001
Develop a rent-to-own program for families in need of affordable housing.	Affordable Housing Task Force, Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Town Manager,	2001-2004
Promote infill development by allowing for the division of lots that are larger than the minimum for one unit but too small to be divided into two lots under current bylaws.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Town Manager	2001-2003
Allow for duplex housing development and conversion to duplexes By Right.	Affordable Housing Task Force, Housing Authority, Planning Board,	2002
Provide home rehabilitation and improvement programs for rental and homeowner properties.	Housing Authority, Affordable Housing Task Force	2002-2003
Link housing initiative developments to natural resource and open space preservation goals with cluster and planned unit development.	Seekonk Housing Authority	2001-Ongoing
Market residential Seekonk with attractive gateways to Seekonk, a Seekonk bicycle network, and a possible web-site to combat the overpowering image of commercial (Route 6) Seekonk.	Planning Board	2001-2005
Work to achieve "Housing Certification" under Massachusetts state executive order 418.	Chamber of Commerce, Board of Selectmen	2000

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

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I. INTRODUCTION

As the Town of Seekonk continues to change, the Town's public facilities and services must be evaluated to determine their present adequacy and to forecast future needs. The efficient and effective provision of public services to the community is key to improving the overall quality of life for residents of the community and achieving an enhanced community profile for prospective residents and businesses.

The Community Facilities Map (Figure I.5, page I.12) displays the locations of Seekonk's major public facilities.

II. INVENTORY

A. Schools

Seekonk has a total of five public schools, including three elementary schools, one intermediate school, and one senior high school. The three elementary schools, North, Mildred Aitken, and George R. Martin, are dispersed throughout the length of the Town. North School resides on North Street, off of Central Avenue in the Perrins Crossing area, just south of the Attleboro line. The Mildred Aitken School is in the central section of the Town, along Newman Avenue and close to the James V. Turner reservoir on the East Providence border. The George R. Martin School is Seekonk's largest elementary school in terms of land area and school enrollment. It is located at the intersection of Cole Avenue and Anthony Avenue, just to the north of Interstate 195. The Seekonk Intermediate School is also on Newman Avenue, roughly one and one-half miles north of Aitken Elementary. Seekonk High School is located on Arcade Avenue roughly one-half mile south of Aitken Elementary.

The schools are organized in a logical geographic manner. The three elementary schools serve each of Seekonk's three geographic sections (south, central and north) and they are all centrally located within each section on easily accessible thoroughfares. The intermediate and high schools are also well located to serve the entire school community. Both schools reside in the central section of the Town, thereby providing convenient access for students from both the north and south sections. Both the intermediate and high schools are located along Seekonk's major north-south thoroughfares, Arcade Avenue and Newman Avenue (Route 152). Of all the school facilities, only the school administration building, on School Street off of Fall River Avenue at the southern extreme of the Town, poses an inconvenience for residents of Seekonk's more northern areas.

Three schools, North Elementary School, the Mildred Aitken School and Seekonk Intermediate School, have undergone significant rehabilitation in recent years. An expansion and renovation project was completed at North Elementary in 1993. Both the Aitken School and the Intermediate School completed their rehabilitation projects in 1998. Costs for the renovations were \$9 million for the Aitken School and \$5.8 million for the Intermediate School. Renovations and additions included a new library for the Aitken School, a new gymnasium for the Intermediate School, and significant repairs to the physical plant of both facilities.

Renovations have recently been approved for Seekonk's other two public schools as well. A bond of \$18.5 million will fund partial renovation of the Seekonk High School and the George R. Martin Elementary School. Issues that will be addressed include the

deteriorating condition of facilities due to age, and handicapped accessibility. Other key issues at the Martin School, are the need for central air conditioning and the deteriorating exterior and roof of the facility. Two separate building committees have been assembled to guide the development of renovation plans for these schools. With these rehabilitations in place the Town of Seekonk will have renovated all five of its public schools by the year 2005.

B. Recreational Facilities

A number of facilities (public, quasi-public, and private) provide opportunities for recreation in Seekonk. Foremost among these facilities is the Caratunk Wildlife Sanctuary, a 165-acre parcel of land in the northern part of the Town off of Brown Avenue that is owned by the Rhode Island Audubon Society. Seekonk is also home to three golf courses, though only the Firefly Golf Course is open to the general public. Other facilities include the grounds of the Seekonk Town Hall and the playing fields of the five Seekonk district schools, including the playing fields at Seekonk High School and the playground at the George R. Martin School. A listing of the major recreational facilities in the Town of Seekonk appears below.

Figure I.1 Open Spaces

<u>Name</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Activities</u>
Caratunk Wildlife Sanctuary	195 acres	hiking, nature trails
Ledgemont Country Club	143 acres	golf, pool, tennis
Firefly Golf Course	73 acres	golf
Pawtucket Country Club	55 acres	golf
Town Hall Property	40 acres	walking, jogging
Seekonk Speedway	30 acres	organized events
Seekonk High School	28 acres	playing fields

The Town of Seekonk is presently served by a recreation committee to provide for the recreational needs of the community. However, the absence of a formal parks and/or recreation department means that there is no true community-wide decision-making authority for parks and recreational services. The 1986 Master Plan Update recommended the creation of a formal Town department for parks and recreation, a recommendation that is still valid. This issue is explored more fully in the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

C. Government Operations

The Town of Seekonk's central governmental facility is the Town Hall, located on Peck Street directly off of Taunton Avenue. The Town Hall is situated on a plot of land that is approximately 14 acres in area, and the building itself has 9,500 square feet of floor space. The Town Hall houses most of Seekonk's administrative services and departments, including the Town Administrator, Town Clerk, Tax Assessor, Tax Collector, Building Inspector, Town Planner, and Public Health Department. At the present about 20 employees work at the Town Hall. The building is also the meeting place for the Town's elected and appointed bodies, including the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board. A separate structure on the same campus houses the animal control facility. There are no current plans to renovate or improve the Town Hall Facility.

D. Seekonk Public Library

The Town of Seekonk's main cultural resource is its Public Library, which is located on Newman Avenue in the central part of Seekonk, between the Aitken School and the Intermediate School. Since the publication of the Master Plan Update in 1986, the Seekonk Public Library closed down its two branch facilities (the Calland Library on Central Avenue, across from the North School, and the Smart Library, on Fall River Avenue at Luther's Corners) and consolidated its operations in an expanded facility on Newman Avenue. A six-member Board of Trustees guides the Public Library. This board has also organized the Seekonk Cultural Committee, which arranges cultural events in the Town. Major funding for the Library comes from the Seekonk Library Trust and the Friends of the Seekonk Library.

The Public Library commands an important location and role in Seekonk. Not only is it Seekonk's major cultural resource, its location on Newman Avenue at Division Street places it squarely in the center of the Town along its primary north-south thoroughfare. Furthermore, the Public Library is one of the few facilities in the Town with the capacity to host public meetings.

Steps have been taken to carry out the 1998 Master Plan for the expansion of the Seekonk Public Library. The planned addition to the Library would approximately double the square footage of the Newman Avenue facility. The project is currently in the secondary stage of development. In 2000 monies were appropriated for the design of the Library's addition.

E. Public Safety

The Seekonk Police Department conducts its operations out of a central station on Taunton Avenue, just to the east of the Town Hall. For the year ending 1997, the Police Department had a staff of 32 full-time officers, with 50 special officers serving part time. The Seekonk Police Department also has an inventory of 23 vehicles, 14 of which are marked police vehicles, and the remainder of which are unmarked cars, undercover cars, and vans. The Department makes an average of 600 to 700 arrests per year. Chief Beal says that the arrests are mostly related to shoplifting and other forms of theft along the Route 6 commercial corridor.

When the Police Department moved to its current location in 1978 it was intended to be for only ten years. There are numerous shortcomings to the current building. Several problems with the current building as cited in the Police/Fire study committee report of 1988 are as follows. The present building is 100+ years old, there is inadequate space and no possibility for expansion, a shortage of cells, and security problems.

Attempts to move to a new location have not been successful and the department has yet to be housed in a building that was designed and constructed specifically for Police Department needs. Plans for a new facility that combined the police and fire headquarters in one building at the corner of Pleasant Street and Arcade Avenue were developed with \$250,000 of public money. However, complaints from neighborhood residents have been an obstacle to development of a police station at that site. While the Pleasant Street site continues to be debated in appeals court, the review committee has begun to consider other possible locations for new police and fire departments. The study committee has been split into two entities so that new Police and Fire Department Facilities may be considered separately.

F. Fire Protection

The Seekonk Fire Department operates out of three facilities stationed throughout the Town. Station #1 is located on County Street, and serves the section of the Town south of Taunton Avenue, including the commercial area along Route 6. Not surprisingly, station #1 is the busiest of the three, responding to 1051 calls in 1997, close to three times as many calls as each of Seekonk's other two stations. Station # 2 is located on Pine Street, just off of Central Avenue, and services the Town north of Brown Avenue. It is the least busy of the three handling 331 calls in 1997. Station #3 is located on Newman Avenue just north of the Mildred Aitken School. Serving primarily the central section of Town, Station #3 responded to 377 calls in 1997. Station #3 also serves as the administrative headquarters of the Seekonk Fire Department.

The condition of Fire Station #3 necessitates a new facility. Station #3 was constructed in the 1930's and has undergone 2 additions. Currently, there are no possible additions, the bays are undersized, and the second floor administrative offices lack adequate space.

Citing a need for improved emergency response and service to the southern end of the Town, the 1986 Master Plan Update recommended the construction of a new fire station within a one-half mile of the Commerce Way shopping center off of Route 6. An alternate proposal from the 1986 plan called for a public safety complex that would combine the functions of the police force and the fire service under one roof. A proposal for a combined Police and Fire station on Pleasant Street was developed, but met opposition from a resident group concerned with the location of the new facility.

In 1999 the review committee considered the relocation of the fire station of greatest priority. As of 2000, the review committee will again be split into two bodies to consider new police and fire stations as separate issues. One or two new fire stations at various sites, including a parcel on Newman Avenue (near Brook Street) and another on Cole Street behind the Showcase Cinemas are being discussed. However, no commitment has been made to purchase any land or to construct any of the proposed facilities.

In 1997 the fire department changed its staffing hours, moving four staff members from the 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. shift to a 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. shift at Station #3 on Newman Avenue. Presently the Town has full-time staffing between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. The change was made in response to a study conducted by the fire department that revealed that most fire calls are received between 2:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. This should help the Seekonk Fire Department respond more effectively to calls during busier periods. Fire services between 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. are only covered by on-call (volunteer) firefighters.

G. Public Works

The Department of Public Works is housed in a facility at the eastern end of Taunton Avenue. Administrative services and operations are conducted out of the facility. The Department of Public Works is responsible for road maintenance, street sweeping, roadside brush cutting, drainage, snow and ice removal, and drainage. It is also responsible for the buildings and grounds maintenance of public facilities, excluding the Seekonk Public Schools.

The Seekonk Department of Public Works repaired, resurfaced and sealed almost 11.5 miles of roads in 1997. It anticipates that at the current pace of repair work, all of the roads in Seekonk will be classified in good to excellent condition by the year 2002.

H. Waste Disposal

The Town of Seekonk has no public sewage collection or treatment system. Waste issues are currently addressed through on-site disposal systems, including septic systems and cesspools. Septage pumped from individual septic systems currently is disposed of at one of three locations: The City of Attleboro wastewater treatment plant (which is located in the northwestern corner of Seekonk), the Upper Blackstone wastewater treatment plant and the Town of North Attleboro wastewater treatment plant. Regulation of the on-site disposal systems is the responsibility of the Board of Health.

The Town of Seekonk is served by two drainage basins, the Ten Mile River basin in the Town's northern side and the Runnins River basin in Seekonk's southern side. The Ten Mile River serves as a discharge point for other municipalities to the north of the Town, including Plainville, North Attleboro, and the Attleboro treatment plant. The Runnins River has no point discharges, and future surface discharges into the Runnins River are prohibited. Given the fact that poor soils and a high water table predominate in parts of Town, concerns have been raised as to the impact of on-site disposal systems on Seekonk's aquifer, from which its drinking water is largely derived.

In July of 1996 a wastewater facilities plan was submitted to the Town of Seekonk. It concluded that a majority of the Town would be best served by a wastewater system to collect and convey waste to the Attleboro Wastewater Treatment Plant (AWWTP) at the northern edge of Seekonk. The wastewater facilities plan report examined issues of population density, soil suitability, groundwater levels, wetlands, zoning, and potential impacts on the environment and Town's drinking water supply. It also examined the adequacy of current on-site disposal systems, finding many systems not in compliance with Massachusetts Title 5 subsurface wastewater disposal regulations, which sets higher standards for septic system capacity and performance. A listing of the wastewater recommendations for six defined areas of Seekonk appears below:

Table I.2 Wastewater Facilities Plan Recommendations

<u>Area</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Issues</u>
1	Collection and conveyance to Attleboro	Densely populated; influence area of drinking water supply; disposal system problems; surface and groundwater degradation
2	West of Conrail tracks	Collection and conveyance to Attleboro
	East of Conrail tracks	Continued on-site disposal
3	Continued on-site disposal	Low density; most cost-effective to repair on-site systems
4	Collection and conveyance to Attleboro	Densely populated; disposal system problems; high water table; poor drainage; frequent pumping necessary
5	Collection and conveyance to Attleboro	Densely populated; disposal system problems; surface and groundwater degradation; high groundwater
6	Route 6	Collection and conveyance to Attleboro
	Benson Avenue Area	Collection and conveyance to Attleboro
	Remaining Area	Continued on-site disposal

Source: Camp Dresser & McKee Inc. Town of Seekonk, Massachusetts Wastewater Facilities Plan, July 1996.

A 1997 referendum on a bond issue to initiate a wastewater collection program was soundly defeated by resident voters despite the adoption of the wastewater facilities plan as the official Wastewater Facilities Master Plan for the Town of Seekonk. Presently, the only program the Town of Seekonk has undertaken to address its wastewater issues is participation in a revolving loan program in association with the Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust and the Department of Environmental Protection to help residents repair, upgrade or replace problematic on-site septic systems. In 1997 the Board of Health issued 141 repair permits for on-site septic system repairs, an average of just under 12 per month. For 1998, septic system failures have been reported by the Town of Seekonk at a rate of 16 per month, and in September 1998 the Board of Health requested additional funds be appropriated from the Town to bolster its septic system repair loan reserves. Septic system repairs have averaged between \$6,000 and \$7,000, though the costs of some have exceeded \$20,000.

The Seekonk landfill has been closed since the 1986 Master Plan Update in accord with that plan's recommendation. Solid waste services are contracted out to a private firm. Solid waste generated in Seekonk is transported to a landfill in Rochester, Massachusetts.

I. Water Supply

Water services for the Town of Seekonk are provided by the Seekonk Water District, which was formed in 1945. The Water District is an independent authority that mirrors Town Government. As such, it can independently issue revenue bonds, and must follow the operating laws for municipal entities. The Water District finances all of its operations with revenues from the sale of water.

Since the 1986 Master Plan update, the Seekonk Water District has continually added to the number of hydrants, miles of water mains, and service connections in Seekonk. For the year ending December 31, 1999, the water district had 4,631 water service connections, an increase of 31 service connections from the previous year. At year-end 1999 there were 100.89 total miles of water mains in Seekonk, an increase of 11.2 miles from 1990. And the number of total hydrants at year-end 1999 was 755, an increase of 141 hydrants from 1990.

Water consumption in Seekonk has also steadily increased since the previous Master Plan update. During 1999, 612,285,550 gallons of water were pumped, compared to 419,827,700 gallons in 1990. The maximum water usage day in 1999 was June 27, when 3,676,730 gallons were pumped, compared to the maximum water usage day in 1990, July 21, when 2,341,900 gallons of water were pumped. It should be noted, that 1999 was a drought year that led to particularly high levels of water consumption. However, water consumption figures for 1998, a damper year, (590,681,350 total gallons pumped, maximum day 3,210,660 gallons) support the trend that water consumption in Seekonk has increased due to factors other than dry weather.

According to the Superintendent of the Water District, increases in water consumption can be attributed to the increased mileage of water mains in Seekonk, and changes in water consumption that accompany change of occupancy of Seekonk housing. Figures also suggest that high levels of water consumption in warmer and dryer months are driven by the hydration of residents' lawns and gardens. To regulate the use of water for lawn-care the district has implemented a water management plan, which limits outdoor watering to every other day during morning and evening hours.

The water district is supplied entirely by groundwater and served by three well fields. They are as follows:

Table I.3 Seekonk Well-Fields

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Description</u>
Brown Wellfield (currently off line)	Brown Avenue	1 tubular vacuum well system
Newman Wellfield	Water Lane	4 active gravel-packed wells
McHale's Pond Wellfield	Tower Road	1 gravel-packed well

In 1998 the Brown Wellfield was taken off-line due to contamination.

Additionally, the water district has three water storage tanks, the largest of which is the Pine Street Reservoir, completed in 1994 as part of the water district's capital improvements program.

Table I.4 Seekonk Water Storage Tanks

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Capacity</u>	<u>Year Built</u>
Newman Ave. Standpipe	Newman Avenue	635,000 gallons	1947
Taunton Ave. Elevated Tank	Taunton Avenue	1,000,000 gallons	1962
Pine St. Reservoir	Pine Street	2,400,000 gallons	1994
	Total Capacity	4,035,000 gallons	

The water district also has emergency water connections with the City of Pawtucket, RI and two connections with the Attleboro water department. In 1994, the district installed a 2 million gallon booster pump into the connection with Pawtucket.

Projections of future water usage in Seekonk conducted by Amory Engineers show that the Town can expect to deliver approximately 1,780,200 gallons of water per day on average in the year 2020, and the maximum day consumption in 2020 will be approximately 3,920,000 gallons. (Estimates are based on population projections from SRPEDD). This amounts to a 31% increase in average daily water consumption from 1999.

The Seekonk Water District expects to be able to handle this projected increase in water usage. The water district is currently implementing a number of capital improvements that were initiated in 1992 and are expected to be ongoing. In 1992, \$3.8 million was appropriated for phase I, and in 1997 another \$8.55 million was appropriated for phase II of the capital improvements program. The overriding goal of these capital improvements is to improve the reach and efficiency of the service area through expansion and rehabilitation of existing water mains and well fields.

During phase I projects completed included, the installation of 8.19 miles of new water mains since 1992, the installation of the 2 million gallon booster pump on Brook Street, the purchase of the McHale property and construction of a new supply, and the construction of the Pine Street standpipe. Currently Phase II is underway. A new water treatment plant is under construction on Water Lane adjacent to the Water District Offices. This \$5 million plant is scheduled for completion by year-end 2000 and will enable the water district to distribute 4.46 million gallons of water per day. (This exceeds maximum day water usage projections for 2020.) The new plant employs state of the art technology that will eliminate high levels of iron and manganese in the Town's drinking water. Also in progress is the rehabilitation of the Newman Avenue well-field, scheduled for completion by year-end 2000, and a new operational and control vault and system on Newman Avenue. Water main replacements have continued during Phase II, namely on Woodward Avenue where 3,300 feet of 3 inch pipe has been replaced. Future projects to improve Seekonk's water supply include the replacement of approximately 4 miles of 2 inch water main pipe that remains in the Town.

After the completion of the new Water Lane facility, Seekonk's water will meet all of the EPA's water standards. At present, the only standard not upheld by Seekonk's water supply is the EPA's 'copper rule'.

III. ISSUES

Governmental Operations

There is a shortage of meeting space at the Town Hall. There are no current plans to update the Town Hall Facility. A suggestion to convert a vacant K-Mart building on Taunton Avenue into a full-service municipal government complex was explored but has since been abandoned. Additional meeting space may be provided by the development of a senior center that is planned for the lot adjacent to the Town Hall. Funding for the Senior Center may be provided by a bond, and a possible CDBG grant.

Recreational Facilities

The Town of Seekonk does not have a parks and recreation department to administer recreational grounds and programs. Presently, a recreation committee serves the recreational needs of the community. A central recreation center is lacking, though the Gamino Pond area has been identified as a potential site for park development.

Public Safety

The current police station is patently substandard. The 1986 Master Plan recommended a new police station facility, but efforts to improve the facility have languished. At the present time, a distinct Police Station Review Committee is considering new sites for the relocation of the Seekonk Police station. The need for improved police facilities remains.

Fire Protection

Fire station # 3, located on Newman Street is an inadequate facility. The most pressing problems are small bays, a shortage of administrative space for the Town Fire Department Headquarters, and the difficulties that accompany an aging building (#3 is circa 1930). The 1986 Master Plan recommended a new fire station facility, citing #3's problems, and a need for improved response time to the route 6 commercial corridor. At the time of the 2000 Master Plan Update no fire station improvements have been made, and there are no firm plans for improvement. The needs for (1)-a replacement for fire station #3 and (2)-improved fire protection service to the southern end of Town remain issues. The Pine Street #2 Station servicing most of South Seekonk handles the heavy burden of approximately 60% of the Town's calls. The geographic distribution of Seekonk's fire stations needs to be improved to better fit the distribution of demand on fire services.

Wastewater

How the Town of Seekonk chooses to address the issues of wastewater treatment will have a fundamental impact on public health, the environment and quality of life issues. The upward trend in septic system failures should be a cause for concern over the protection of

Seekonk's aquifer and the environmental characteristics of the Town in general. Presently, wastewater issues are the responsibility of the Board of Health.

Water Supply

In June 1998 the Town of Seekonk water supply was contaminated with the E. coli bacteria, forcing the water district to flush the 100 miles of pipe in its system. While tests were conducted, residents had to boil water or buy bottled water. The water contamination is thought to have occurred as the result of animal waste transported by heavy rains that flooded the Brown Avenue well field. The E. coli contamination in Seekonk was one of a number of such problems throughout southeastern Massachusetts; heavy rains and flooding also contributed to the discovery of E. coli in ponds in Attleboro and North Attleboro that were subsequently closed to swimmers. This indicates that the problem did not have to do with the quality of the water service in Seekonk, but to environmental events not under the control of the Seekonk Water District.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

First Class School Facilities

When renovating the Seekonk Public schools, the Town should aim for the highest quality in order to create attractive facilities and a stimulating learning environment. Seekonk needs to provide a first class school system, starting with its facilities, to make sure that the school is an attractive educational option for all the Town's residents.

Continue with Library Renovation

The Town should proceed with design and development of the Public Library addition, referring to the 1998 Seekonk Library Action Plan for Guidance and vision. Seekonk should also recognize the Library's potential to serve as cultural center. (See below.)

Develop A Cultural/Recreational Center: Gammino Pond/Library Area

The Public Library's proximity to the Seekonk Junior High School (recently renovated), several adjoining ball-fields, and the Gammino pond site all add to the area's civic potential. Development of a park-like trail system and an amphitheater at the Gammino Pond site are recommended in the Seekonk Open Space Plan (See chapter F). The Library, school, and Gammino Pond site could be effectively linked to create a cultural 'campus' in the heart of Seekonk. As the Town proceeds with the Library's renovation, and development of the Gammino Pond site, it should strive towards the creation of an integrated Cultural Center.

New Police Station

The Town should continue to research and develop an acceptable plan for a new Police Station. The \$4.5 million that was issued for development of the combined Police and Fire station on Pleasant street should be re-appropriated to the now separate police and fire protection building committees. When exploring new options for the site of the Police station Town officials should insure that the community is fully informed and involved in all stages of planning so that potential conflicts are avoided in the future.

New Fire Protection Facilities

The Town should continue to research and develop an acceptable plan for new Fire Protection facilities. The \$4.5 million bond that was issued for the development of the combined Police and Fire station on Pleasant Street should be re-appropriated to the now separate police and fire protection building committees. Recent discussions have suggested a plan including two new fire stations, one in the Cole Street/Route 6 area and a second on Route 152 in the vicinity of Brook Street. When moving forward with plans to develop new Fire Protection facilities Town officials should insure that the community is fully informed and involved in all stages of planning so that potential conflicts are avoided in the future.

Support Septic System Maintenance

In the absence of a Town-wide program for waste disposal, it is extremely important that the Town make every effort to educate residents in the proper maintenance of their septic systems and assist residents should their septic system fail.

Develop Parks/Recreation Department

The 1986 Master Plan update recommended the creation of a formal Parks and Recreation Department to better manage the provision of parks and recreation spaces and opportunities in Seekonk. This recommendation has not been realized, and it remains valid in 2000.

Continue to Update Water Supply Facilities

The Town Water Supply Authority has done a good job of updating its water supply facilities. Residential development will continue to increase the amount of water the Town consumes. Seekonk should continue to update its water facilities so that the Town can comfortably provide the additional 1,123,826 Gallons of Water per day that can be expected at build out.

Governmental Operations

Include a meeting space in the new senior center to help alleviate the shortage of meeting space at the Town Hall. And, the Town should consider having the tax maps digitized into a coordinated geographic information system (GIS) for use of all municipal departments to assist planning efforts.

V. PREVIOUS MASTER PLANS: MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. 1979:** Shaded recommendations remain valid in 2000 and are included in the 2000 Master Plan, Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION	STATUS	STILL VALID/INVALID
Fire: Install additional hydrants, and ensure reliable water supply at all points in the system.	Executed	N/A
Schools: Make all schools handicapped accessible. Only Martin and Aiken schools were accessible at time of report.	With scheduled renovations, all Schools will be handicapped accessible by 2005.	N/A

- B. 1986:** Shaded recommendations have already been executed, or are no longer valid.

RECOMMENDATION	STATUS	STILL VALID/INVALID
Police Fire: Replace Newman Avenue fire station, and improve response times (Police and Fire) to Route 6.	Unexecuted	Remains Valid
Water System: Adopt zoning to protect aquifer recharge areas.	Executed	N/A
Waste Disposal: Town should negotiate with East Providence for sewage treatment contract. Also, Seekonk should explore other subsurface sewage disposal options.	Unexecuted	Exploring subsurface sewage disposal options is still valid.
Solid waste: Close local landfills and participate in regional landfill facility in Rhode Island or Massachusetts.	Executed	N/A

C. **2000:** Below are the new recommendations in the 2000 Master Plan Update.

Action	Responsible Party	Implementation Year
Continue current school renovations at the Seekonk High School and the Martin School so all of the Town's schools will have been renovated by 2005.	School Commission	Ongoing
Continue with the public library expansion.	Board of Library Trustees	Ongoing
Develop the Gammino Pond site/public library/Seekonk Junior High School area into a linked cultural/recreational campus in the heart of Seekonk.	Planning Board, Board of Library Trustees, School Commission, Recreation Commission	2001-2005
Continue to develop plans for new fire protection facilities, that will improve service to Route 6 and South Seekonk.	Fire Department, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
Continue to explore options for a new police station facility.	Police Department, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
Provide residents with information on septic system maintenance and provide assistance in cases of septic system failure.	Board of Health	Ongoing
Develop a formal parks and recreation department.	Board of Selectmen	2001-2003
Include a large meeting space in the senior center that is planned for the lot adjacent to the Town Hall.	Board of Selectmen	2003-2006

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I. INTRODUCTION

Motor vehicle travel allows Seekonk to thrive as a suburban bedroom community and a regional shopping center. All types of development in Seekonk, (residential, business, industrial, schools and recreation) are dependent on the automobile. The layout and fabric of much of the Town of Seekonk is a product of automobile travel. Therefore, an adequate vehicular circulation system of streets and related parking and loading facilities is the most critical part of a circulation plan, and will comprise the bulk of this chapter. However, in response to recent concerns for environmentalism, and efficient transportation networks, alternative modes of transportation are also considered.

II. INVENTORY OF ROADS

The major components of the street system in Seekonk are almost completely fixed, due to the spatial distribution of existing land use activity and the environmental sensitivities of the large tracts of open space. Planning for the improvement of the Town's street circulation system is largely concerned with the improvement or completion of existing facilities. The development of any new streets is reserved primarily for subdivisions of land.

Seekonk is served by over 100 miles of roadway with a number of major roadway facilities. While affording the Town a level of accessibility that contributes to its attractiveness as a place of residence, these same roadways are also a source of many of the traffic problems experienced because of the presence of through traffic and geometric deficiencies in facility design.

A Functional classification of roads and highways by the character of service they provide aids in transportation planning. In order to optimize roadway efficiency and best serve adjacent land uses, the street system in Seekonk should function according to the following classifications of roadways. This table also provides for clear descriptions of Seekonk's major roadways for the purposes of this master plan.

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Operational Definition</u>
Expressway	This type of roadway is devoted entirely to the task of traffic movement, performing little or no land service function. It is characterized by some degree of access control.
Major Arterial	This type of facility accommodates major movements of traffic. Major arterials are designed mainly for through traffic, but also normally perform a secondary land service function.
Collector Street	This type of street serves internal traffic movement within a part of the Town and connects the area with the major arterial system. It does not handle long through trips, but performs the same land service function as a local street.
Local Street	This type of a roadway has the sole function of providing access to immediately adjacent land.

A. Expressways

I-195 Expressway I-195 is the only limited access freeway in Seekonk. It provides a direct connection with Providence to the west and Fall River and beyond to the east. The interchange at Route 114A, in South Seekonk provides direct access from the region to

the retail-commercial and highway-oriented service activities of Fall River Avenue and Highland Avenue.

B. Major Arterials

Route 6 (Highland Avenue and Fall River Avenue) is a four-lane major arterial that provides an alternate to the east-west movement of I-195. It provides similar directional orientation for sub-regional travel and traffic desiring access to the highway-oriented business activity on both Highland Avenue and Fall River Avenue.

The roadway has two distinct characters. From the Rehoboth line to Warren Avenue, the posted speed limit is 50 m.p.h. There are numerous curb openings along this section. The predominant adjacent land uses along this stretch of Route 6 are primarily low turnover service-oriented commercial and industrial establishments. The main traffic generator along this section is the Seekonk Speedway.

From Warren Avenue to the East Providence line, the nature of the roadway intensifies. The posted speed limit in this section is 40 m.p.h. This section of roadway is 1.7 miles long with nine (9) signalized intersections located within a distance of 1.4 miles. Intersections are expansive since Route 6 is a major 4-lane roadway. Approximately 0.8 mile from the Warren Avenue intersection is the major intersection of Route 6 and Route 114A. There are two signals that control this intersection.

Route 44 (Taunton Avenue), is a two-lane major arterial serving east-west traffic between Providence and East Providence in Rhode Island, and Rehoboth and Taunton in Massachusetts. Route 44 also provides local access to intersecting residential streets and highway strip commercial activity in Seekonk. The zoning along Route 44 changes from local business to mixed use shortly after Arcade Avenue (traveling west). The western portion of Route 44 retains a scenic rural character.

Route 152 (Newman Avenue and Central Avenue) is a two-lane major arterial serving north-south travel between Providence, Pawtucket and East Providence in Rhode Island, and the Attleboros in Massachusetts. Route 152 in conjunction with Route 114A and Arcade Avenue, serve as the only significant north-south roadway facility that meets proper arterial design standards and does not traverse areas of densely developed residential land use.

Route 114A is a major arterial which runs in a generally north-south direction along the westerly portion of Seekonk connecting at both termini with the East Providence City Line. The section of Route 114A from the southern Rhode Island line intersection to the Arcade Avenue intersection contains numerous curb-cuts. Many high turnover business establishments are located along 114A, especially near the intersection with Route 6.

However, from Luther's Corner to the north, the character of the roadway begins to transition from commercial to residential.

Arcade Avenue is a major arterial running in a north-south direction. Arcade Avenue connects Seekonk's two other major north south arterials, Route 152 at the north and Route 114A at the south. The General character of Arcade Avenue is rural. Significant portions of the road's edge are lined with trees and wooded areas.

C. Collector Streets

These roads serve as feeders and collectors bridging the major arterial roads and local streets. These roadways include Central Avenue and Brook Street in North Seekonk, and County Street and Warren Avenue in South Seekonk.

D. Local Streets

Most of the roads in Seekonk's western half can be considered local roads. Many of these roads also retain a very picturesque rural character. Old stone walls, broad vistas, and majestic trees are common along Seekonk's local streets. Notable examples of picturesque rural roads are Prospect St., Lincoln St., County St., Miller St., the western portion of Route 44, Jacob St., Elm St., and others.

III. TRAFFIC DEMAND

To define the daily traffic demand being placed on the Seekonk street system, count information was obtained from SRPEDD (Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District) and is displayed in Figure J.1 as well as on the Transportation Map, Figure J.2.

From a traffic operations perspective, the range of traffic flows for a suburban community like Seekonk can be characterized as follows:

Daily Traffic Volume of 10,000 vehicles or greater: A traffic flow of this magnitude is quite large for a suburban community. The demand is of generally sufficient magnitude so traffic flow activity on the facility is at a relatively high level through the hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Traffic is a mix of through and local-destined vehicles. Roadways in this category include:

- Newman Avenue (Route 152)
- Taunton Avenue (Route 44)
- Fall River Avenue (Route 114A and Route 6)

Daily Traffic Volume of 5,000 to 10,000: Traffic flow usually is peaked around the morning and afternoon peak travel periods. Vehicle flow during off-peak hours is sufficiently great to be an operational concern, but does not approach the demand placed by major arterials. Roadways in this category include the following.

- School Street
- Warren Avenue

Daily Traffic Volume of 1,000 to 5,000: Traffic flow characteristic of a collector-distributor facility that serves local travel. Roads in this category include the following.

- Woodland Avenue
- Oak Hill Avenue
- Olney Street
- Ledge Road
- Lincoln Street

In a residential community like Seekonk, the severity of traffic flow is most pronounced in intersection areas. Generally, the streets have sufficient capacity between intersection areas to handle the traffic. It is in the intersecting areas with other major facilities where capacity problems arise.

Traffic counts are not made for the same roads in each year, so it is difficult to describe trends in traffic volume accurately. However some general conclusions can be drawn.

- **Route 6 commercial corridor:** Traffic volumes have fluctuated, since the 1986 Master Plan. Since 1996, the eastern portion of Route 6 has seen an increase in traffic volume, after steady declines during the early 90's. (+29% Traffic Volume on Route 6 at the East Providence line between 1991 and 1995)
- **Route 6 eastern section:** The section of Route 6 east of the Highway Business area has seen a significant traffic volume decline. (-19% Traffic Volume on Route 6 east of Warren Avenue between 1985 and 1997)
- **Seekonk Local Roads:** Most of Seekonk's rural local roads show slight traffic volume increases corresponding to residential growth. (Eg. +10% County Street at the Rehoboth line 1991-1995, and +20% on Oak Hill Ave. 1992-1996)
- **North Seekonk:** North Seekonk roads have shown steady increases in traffic volume. (Eg. +10% Central Avenue at the R.I. Line 1993-1997)

With no dramatic changes in Seekonk's roadway system, and prolonged growth in the Town, traffic volumes have increased at corresponding rates since the 1986 Master Plan report. For detailed traffic volume numbers refer Figure J.1 (following page).

FIGURE J.1, TRAFFIC COUNT DATA

Roadway	Location	ID No.	Year	Count	Year	Count	% Change									
Anthony Street	at Route 1-195	1	1989	4,870	1997	6,401	31%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1973	6,000	1978	9,370	56%	1986	14,450	54%	1993	14,300	-1%	1997	13,375	-6%
			1978	10,700	1982	11,200	5%	1996	10,900	-3%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1997	13,177	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arcade Avenue	South of Route 44	5	1997	13,845	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1987	10,850	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1987	13,350	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	11,539	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brook Street	West of Newman Avenue	9	1990	7,330	1993	7,400	1%	1998	7,725	4%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1973	16,000	1978	15,030	-6%	1986	15,400	2%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1990	15,400	1993	16,000	4%	1997	17,575	10%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1990	11,600	1993	12,000	3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Central Avenue	at Rhode Island Line	11	1994	3,100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1989	1,930	1990	2,100	9%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1989	3,880	1990	4,360	12%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1978	11,500	1984	10,100	-12%	1990	11,890	18%	1991	11,000	-7%	1995	12,631	15%
County Street	at Rehoboth Line	17	1988	3,030	1991	3,600	19%	1993	3,500	-3%	1995	4,000	14%	1996	4,400	10%
			1973	16,000	1978	25,550	60%	1985	21,300	-17%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1985	22,350	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1985	20,450	1987	28,500	39%	1988	24,150	-15%	1991	22,825	-5%	1995	25,000	10%
Fall River Avenue (Route 114A)	South of Route 44	21	1987	11,050	1990	11,920	8%	1993	14,000	17%	1996	12,000	-14%	-	-	-
			1985	21,250	1988	22,600	6%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1985	22,650	1996	11,500	-49%	1998	11,959	4%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1996	20,300	1998	20,707	2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fall River Avenue (Route 6)	North of County Street	25	1973	17,000	1978	19,500	15%	1984	22,100	13%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1979	19,230	1985	31,600	64%	1986	28,000	-11%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	27,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	16,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Highland Avenue (Route 6)	East of Mink Street	31	1987	27,150	1988	34,050	25%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1985	22,150	1997	17,864	-19%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1973	8,000	1978	17,000	113%	1985	26,400	55%	1986	25,450	-4%	1988	23,100	-13%
			1988	19,400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lake Street	West of Lincoln Street	35	1988	850	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	725	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1987	1,300	1990	840	-35%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	2,632	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ledge Road	Southwest of Greenwood Avenue	37	1987	1,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1994	2,400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	1,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1996	1,514	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lincoln Street	North of County Street	38	1988	2,632	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1994	2,400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	1,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1996	1,514	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mill Street	East of Arcade Avenue	41	1985	11,150	1987	11,450	3%	1988	13,200	15%	1990	10,790	-18%	1993	9,500	-12%
			1990	9,260	1993	9,100	-2%	1998	10,405	14%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1973	12,000	1978	11,400	-5%	1986	13,500	18%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	2,200	1992	2,200	0%	1996	2,633	20%	1992	4,000	32%	-	-	-
Mink St. (Rte 114A)	at Rhode Island Line	42	1992	4,420	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	4,400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1994	2,100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	5,550	1992	5,200	-6%	1996	5,943	14%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Newman Avenue (Route 152)	South of Central Avenue	43	1990	12,000	1978	11,400	-5%	1986	18,600	64%	1990	13,570	-27%	1993	13,000	-4%
			1986	11,700	1994	12,000	3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1990	15,775	1993	16,000	1%	1997	18,359	15%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1985	3,650	1987	6,950	90%	1990	4,990	-28%	1993	5,000	37%	-	-	-
Oak Hill Avenue	at Rehoboth Line	53	1986	11,700	1994	12,000	3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1990	15,775	1993	16,000	1%	1997	18,359	15%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1985	3,650	1987	6,950	90%	1990	4,990	-28%	1993	5,000	37%	-	-	-
			1973	5,000	1978	10,420	108%	1985	6,300	-40%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oliny Street	South of Cole Street	46	1988	3,250	1989	3,040	-6%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1992	4,420	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	4,400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1994	2,100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pine Street	East of Brown Avenue	49	1988	5,550	1992	5,200	-6%	1996	5,943	14%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1973	12,000	1978	11,400	-5%	1986	18,600	64%	1990	13,570	-27%	1993	13,000	-4%
			1986	11,700	1994	12,000	3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1990	15,775	1993	16,000	1%	1997	18,359	15%	-	-	-	-	-	-
School Street	South of County Street	50	1988	5,550	1992	5,200	-6%	1996	5,943	14%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1973	12,000	1978	11,400	-5%	1986	18,600	64%	1990	13,570	-27%	1993	13,000	-4%
			1986	11,700	1994	12,000	3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1990	15,775	1993	16,000	1%	1997	18,359	15%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Taunton Avenue (Route 44)	at Rehoboth Line	52	1978	18,000	1982	11,900	-34%	1987	18,600	56%	1990	13,570	-27%	1993	13,000	-4%
			1986	11,700	1994	12,000	3%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1990	15,775	1993	16,000	1%	1997	18,359	15%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1985	3,650	1987	6,950	90%	1990	4,990	-28%	1993	5,000	37%	-	-	-
Warren Avenue	at Swansea Line	54	1985	3,650	1987	6,950	90%	1990	4,990	-28%	1993	5,000	37%	-	-	-
			1973	5,000	1978	10,420	108%	1985	6,300	-40%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	2,400	1991	2,350	-2%	1993	2,400	2%	1995	2,500	4%	1996	2,683	7%
			1994	2,100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Woodland Avenue	at Rehoboth Line	57	1988	2,400	1991	2,350	-2%	1993	2,400	2%	1995	2,500	4%	1996	2,683	7%
			1994	2,100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1988	5,550	1992	5,200	-6%	1996	5,943	14%	-	-	-	-	-	-
			1973	12,000	1978	11,400	-5%	1986	18,600	64%	1990	13,570	-27%	1993	13,000	-4%

IV. SAFETY

An analysis of the safety of Seekonk's roads is based on the Regional Traffic Accidents report (1996-1998), provided by SRPEDD. The data is broken down into two categories: (1) Intersections and (2) Roads. The intersections and roads that appear on SRPEDD's list of the 100 Most Dangerous Roads in Southeastern Massachusetts are profiled below. The intersections and roads are ranked from most to least dangerous based on Accidents per Million Vehicle Miles or ACC/MEV, which takes into account accident severity as well as traffic volume, in addition to accident frequency.

Intersections:

Table J.3 Intersection Accidents 1996-1998

Intersection	Accidents 1996-98
Fall River Ave. @ Highland Avenue	74
Newmann Ave./Central/ Pine 'Baker's Corners	47
Fall River Ave. @ Mink St. (Rte. 114A)	57
Taunton Ave. (Rte. 44)	39
Fall River Ave. @ Commerce Way	40
Fall River Ave. @ Cole St.	28

Roads:

Table J.4 Road Accidents 1996-1998

Road	Accidents 1996-1998
Fall River Ave. (Rte.6/114A)	924
Taunton Ave. (Rte. 44)	254
Highland Ave. (Rte. 6)	226
Arcade Ave.	171
Central Ave. (.98 Miles is Rte. 152)	143
Newmann Ave. (Rte.152)	133

The most dangerous intersections and roads loosely correspond to the most heavily traveled intersections and roads. The commercial section of Route 6, especially near Highland Ave. repeatedly shows up as a very dangerous stretch. With the numerous signals and the heavy traffic volumes (20,000+/day according to most recent counts), it is not surprising that the level of service is poor, particularly during peak times.

V. ROADWAY CONDITIONS

The Town of Seekonk maintains all of the collector streets and local streets in Seekonk, as well as the state numbered Route 152, and Route 15. An inventory of recent road repairs in Seekonk has been updated in 1996, 1997 and 1998 by the Town Highway Department. Table H.5 below displays the amount of rehabilitation and reconstruction that took place in Seekonk during each year.

Table J.5 Roadway Repairs 1998, 1997, 1996

	1998	1997	1996
Reconstruction	8.44	12.06	15.54
Rehabilitation	15.00	18.61	19.60
Preventative	4.89	5.94	7.56
Routine Maintenance	35.36	39.86	44.26
None Required	41.14	28.98	19.37
Total	104.83	105.45	106.32

Efforts to repair and reconstruct roads in recent years have resulted in an increase in the amount of roads not needing repairs. (See Table J.5) The roads assigned 'routine maintenance' or 'none required' are roads in excellent condition and require inexpensive surface treatments to maintain that condition. The continued maintenance of these roads with preventative maintenance strategies will maintain them in excellent condition for years to come while other roads in town are improved simultaneously.

VI. ALTERNATE FORMS OF TRANSPORTATION

A. Public Transportation

Public transportation in Seekonk is provided primarily by GATRA (Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional transportation Authority). GATRA offers fixed route bus service, paratransit (Dial-A-Ride) service for people with disabilities and senior citizens, and Medicaid and Human Service transportation to Seekonk residents. Two GATRA fixed bus service lines serve Seekonk directly. These are described below, and displayed on the Alternate Transportation Map, Figure J.6.

- **Route #16: Seekonk/Attleboro/Plainville.** This line runs along Route 152 from Plainville Crossing in Plainville through Attleboro to Central Plaza (on Central Avenue) in Seekonk.

- **Route #19: Providence R.I., Taunton.** This line runs from Kennedy Plaza in downtown Providence through Seekonk via Route 44 to the Bloom Bus Terminal in Taunton.

Connections to other GATRA lines as well as to the "T" commuter rail can be made from the two direct service lines. Route #19 also provides for a connection with the RIPTA bus system that serves all of Rhode Island. The connection to Providence and RIPTA has been implemented since the 1986 Master Plan.

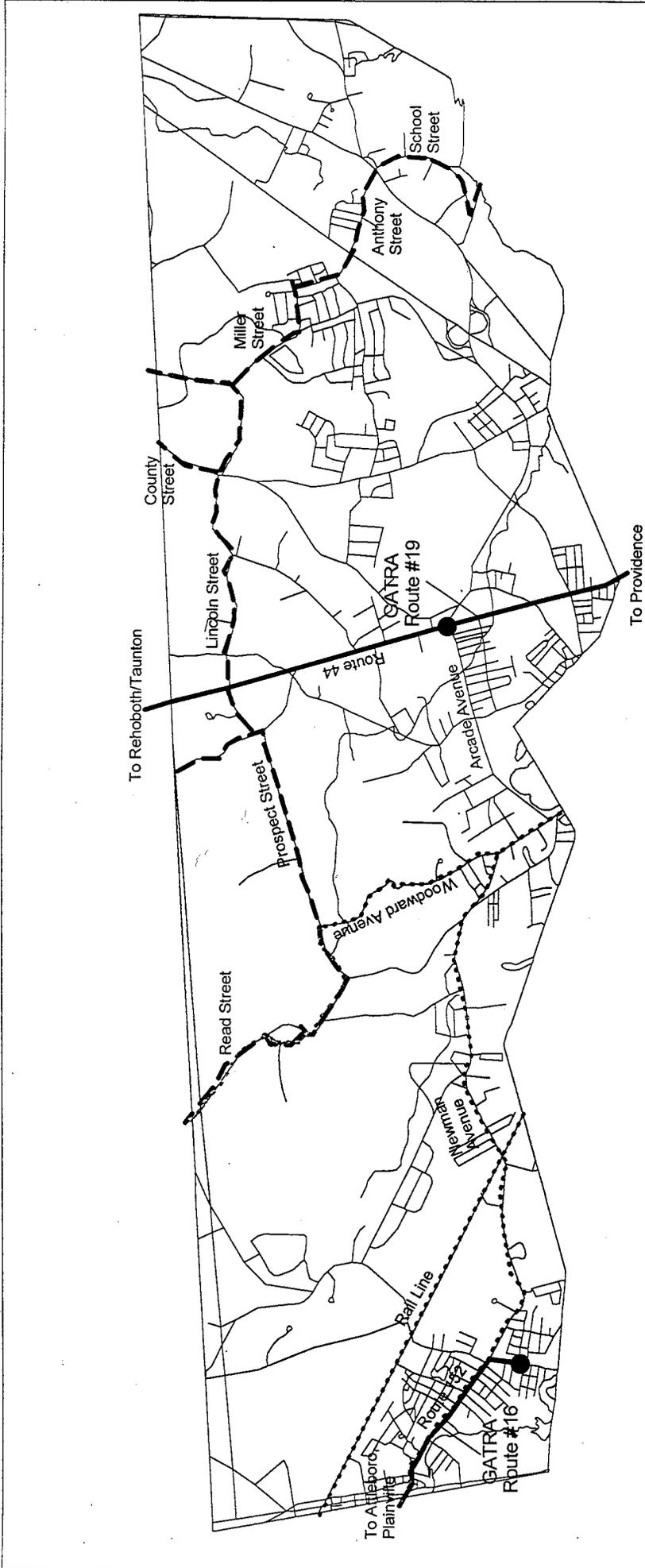
B. Bicycle Transportation

Currently there are no bicycle routes or share the road designations in Seekonk. In 1997, the department of public works explored the idea of developing a bike network that would utilize the rail bed running adjacent to the McHale Pond well-field and link the Newman Avenue area with East Providence, but access to the rail bed was not granted. The Town should continue to pursue the creation of a bicycle network and explore the option of an on-road bike route on the Town's scenic rural roads.

An on road bicycle network would compliment the plans for a mixed use path that are currently being developed by SRPEDD as a part of the Town's open space plan. The on-road route could be developed independent of the multi-use path in order to alleviate the complication of access to the railbed.

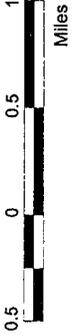
One possible route for an on-road network moves south to north using streets such as School Street, Anthony Street, Miller Street, Bradley Street, Lincoln Street and Prospect Street. Multiple variations are possible, some of which may enter Rehoboth, on Seekonk's picturesque roads in the Town's eastern half. A bike network could also connect to other regional bike routes, such as the East Bay Bike Path that passes through neighboring East Providence, for a connection to the Rhode Island system. A Seekonk bike path would function as a recreational facility in addition to providing a means for alternative transportation. A Seekonk bike-path could also help to make the Town's rural residential quality more apparent to visitors. By attracting out of town cyclists a bike path could market Seekonk's residential qualities, which are often overshadowed by the Town's business development.

The Alternate Transportation Map, Figure J.6 (following page) displays a potential Seekonk on-road bicycle network.



**Town of Seekonk Master Plan Figure J.6
Alternate Transportation Map**

Prepared by
Barbara Sokoloff Associates
101 A Dyer Street
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December 12, 2000



- GATRA Bus Route
- GATRA Bus Stop
- - - Proposed On Road Bicycle Network
- · · Proposed Multi-Use Bicycle Network (1999 Open Space Action Plan)

VII. ISSUES

- **Route 6 Congestion.** Route 6 is currently experiencing daily traffic volume totals of more than 20,000 vehicles. This amount of traffic combined with a high frequency of traffic signals along the commercial corridor makes for high congestion, especially at peak hours.
- **Roadway Safety.** Several of Seekonk's roadways and intersections rank high on SRPEDD's 100 Most Dangerous Roads in Southern New England (see above). Particularly dangerous are Fall River Avenue and Highland Avenue.
- **Limited Public Transportation.** Despite a wide range of connections, Seekonk remains a peripheral destination on the GATRA transportation network. There is no public transportation connection from North Seekonk to South Seekonk, and there is no service to the Route 6 commercial corridor.
- **Scenic Roads.** Many neighborhoods throughout Seekonk contain scenic roads. The combination of scattered old stonewalls, fully matured trees close to the street edge, and other factors contribute to neighborhood character and generate an inviting village ambiance. New subdivisions and further residential and commercial development can destroy the character of these scenic roads if not executed carefully.
- **Bicycle/Pedestrian Travel.** Bicycle and pedestrian travel are both very limited in Seekonk. Currently there are no bicycle networks or share the road designations. Roads are not 'friendly' for bicyclists or pedestrians. The trend in transportation planning is to offer alternatives to the automobile by accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **Gateways to Seekonk.** Several of the major roadways into Seekonk have developed in a strip commercial fashion that is inconsistent with the Town's character. Examples are the western portion of Route 44, Armistice Avenue, and Newman Avenue. These 'Gateways' to Seekonk do not project a positive image for the town.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Promote Efficient Traffic Circulation on Route 6.** The Town of Seekonk has done a good job limiting the number of curb cuts along the Route 6 corridor. Seekonk should continue to promote the development of circulation spaces within business parking lots rather than on the main thoroughfare for all new business along Route 6.

- **Provide More Public Transportation Opportunities.** The Town of Seekonk should work with GATRA to provide more public transportation opportunities. A line that runs in a north south direction is lacking, so the southern half of the town has no direct access to public transportation. Seekonk should also explore ways to service the Route 6 commercial corridor. The 1986 Master Plan included a recommendation for a shuttle bus that would allow consumers to park at one location and then ride to different businesses along the corridor. This recommendation remains valid and could be combined with the development of fixed line service to Commercial Route 6. Area businesses should be involved in the effort to introduce public transportation.
- **Develop A Seekonk Bicycle Network.** The Town of Seekonk should develop an on-road bicycle network that compliments the plan for a multi-use path Bicycle network. A Seekonk Bike network would serve several purposes. Firstly, the Bike Network would help to make Seekonk's roads more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. Also, a Bike Network could advertise the Town's attractive rural community character, which is often overshadowed by the regional commercial corridor of Route 6. Promotion of the bikeway would be a media campaign of sorts, marketing "the other Seekonk" to the region. Connections to other regional bike networks should be explored, (Eg. The East Bay Bike Path). In addition, the bike network would serve as a recreational facility for Seekonk residents.
- **Create Gateways to Seekonk.** In order to build identity and to augment the community character of Seekonk, the Town should develop attractive Gateways to Seekonk at major entranceways. Signage, landscaping and an aggressive tree-planting program could be employed to announce arrival into Seekonk, and to improve the community's image. Several roadways that are candidates for gateways and greening are Central Avenue near the border with Pawtucket, Route 44 near East Providence, and Route 6 at the Rehoboth border.
- **Preserve Scenic Roads.** In order to protect the Town's scenic roads and to preserve community character, Seekonk should institute a scenic roads designation. The designation of roads as scenic would require that significant alterations, such as widening, paving, removal of trees or stone walls, are subject to review usually in the form of a hearing to determine if the proposed actions are really necessary and whether any modifications to lessen the impact of the changes would be feasible. Features of roads that should be considered for preservation in Seekonk include roadside trees and plants, stonewalls and traditional fences, topography, scenic views, and wildlife areas. Designating scenic roads does not prohibit routine maintenance or removal of trees or wall sections as necessary to accommodate new development. However, maintenance guidelines could be established and zoning and subdivision

regulations should be amended as necessary to prevent development along scenic roads that would be a detriment to their character.

IX. PREVIOUS MASTER PLANS: MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1979: Shaded recommendations remain valid in 2000 and are included in the 2000 Master Plan, Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION	STATUS	STILL VALID/INVALID
Concentrate through traffic on freeways and arterials to establish a functional hierarchy of streets.	Ongoing	Remains Valid
15-20 recommendations for road repavement and intersection reconstruction mostly along the route 6 corridor.	Executed.	N/A
Provide vehicular accessibility to areas of new business activity.	Ongoing	Remains Valid

1986: Shaded recommendations remain valid in 2000 and are included in the 2000 Master Plan, Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION	STATUS	STILL VALID/INVALID
Maintain and improve arterial streets where necessary.	Executed.	Remains Valid
Ensure that new residential subdivisions do not allow for shortcuts	Executed.	Remains Valid
Do not allow high traffic uses along Route 44, so through traffic can pass freely.	Executed.	Remains Valid
Either GATRA or RIPTA should extend a line to create a connection, so that additional regional access can be facilitated.	Executed.	N/A
Facilitate bike and pedestrian circulation.	Not executed.	Remains Valid

C. 2000

Action	Responsible Party	Implementation Year
Promote efficient circulation on Route 6 by continuing to limit curb cuts, and encourage interior circulation in	Planning Board	Ongoing

parking areas.		
Explore ways to provide public transportation service to Route 6, and ways to establish a full north-south public transportation line in Seekonk.	GATRA, Board of Selectmen	2001-2004
Develop a scenic on-road Seekonk bicycle network that compliments the planned multi-use path bicycle network.	Recreation Commission, Public Works, Planning Board	2001-2003
Create attractive gateways to Seekonk with greening, landscaping and signage at the major roadway entrances to the Town: Rt. 44, Rt. 6, Central Avenue, and Brook Street.	Public Works, Planning Board	2001-2005
Preserve Seekonk's scenic roadways by establishing a scenic roadways designation. Candidates for scenic roadway status are Lincoln St., Prospect St., County St., School St. among others.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission	2001-2003
Continue to repair and resurface Seekonk's roadways as needed.	Department of Public Works	Ongoing

ACTION PLAN

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Action Plan is perhaps the most important element of the 2000 Seekonk Master Plan. It provides a blue-print for action which will guide the Town to implement the recommendations of the 2000 Seekonk Master Plan Update. The Action Plan includes all of the 2000 Master Plan's recommended actions, as well as actions that were recommended in the 1979, and 1986 Plans that have not yet been implemented. Responsible parties are identified for actions, and an implementation year is suggested. Also, each action is linked to a Goal and Policy from chapter B. The action plan is derived from community input from a visioning session, a resident survey, public hearings, guidance from various Town officials, and responds to information gathered during the inventory of current Seekonk conditions. Actions are discussed in greater detail in elements' individual chapters.

II. LAND USE

Action	Responsible Department	Implementation Year	Policy #
Change the zoning of the Heritage Heights and Brookside court subdivisions to R-1 to more accurately fit existing land uses.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting	2001	LU 5.1
Allow for Residential Planned Unit Development for clustered subdivisions of single-family residences with smaller individual lot sizes and preserved open space, while maintaining overall density.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting	2001	LU 1.6, 2.1
Permit Residential Planned Unit Development for townhouse/apartment development by special permit. Townhouse/apartment development would allow for an increase in the number of units per acre.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting	2002	LU 1.6, 2.1
Preserve community character in areas of local business development by maintaining a street edge, requiring buffer strips, and implementing landscaping improvements along sections of Route 44 west of Arcade Avenue, Route 152 in north Seekonk, the Luther's Corners areas, and parts of Route 6.	Planning Board, Town Meeting	2001-2004	LU 4.1
Create attractive gateways to Seekonk with greening, landscaping and signage at the major roadway entrances to the Town: Rt. 44, Rt. 6, Central Avenue, and Armistice Street.	Public Works, Planning Board,	2001-2004	LU 2.2
Encourage purchase of conservation easements as a means of reducing the sale and subsequent subdividing of agricultural, open space, and forested lands.	Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen	2001-Ongoing	LU 2.1, 2.5

Aid village center development at Luther's Corners with historical lighting, greening and landscaping.	Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen	2002-2005	LU 2.2, 4.1, 4.4
Establish a Design Review Board to enforce design standards for business development, and along scenic roadways.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Public Works	2001-Ongoing	LU 2.6
Investigate the feasibility of a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and/or a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program as a conservation tool in Seekonk.	Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen,	2002	LU 2.5
Protect the Seekonk Speedway, a valuable attraction.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing	LU 4.3
Work with neighborhood residents to develop and implement neighborhood strategic plans.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission	2001-Ongoing	LU 1.3
Digitize tax maps into a coordinated geographic information system (GIS) for use of all municipal departments to assist planning efforts.	Planning Board, With SRPEDD	2002	LU 1.5
Protect existing residential development through greenspace preservation.	Planning Board, Conservation Commission	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Promote bike and pedestrian connectivity	Planning Board, Public Works,	2001-ongoing.	1979 Master Plan
Contain major retail-commercial growth along Route 6 west of School Street.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen,	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Coordinate development along Route 6 to prevent random strip developments.	Planning Board, Board of selectmen	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Designate southeastern Seekonk for transportation related trucking and terminal use.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Conserve the wetlands adjacent to the Runnins River.	Conservation Commission, Planning Board	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Promote town center growth and limit strip development along Route 44	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen,	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Consider the 47 acres on Gammino Pond for park and recreation uses.	Planning Board,	2002	1979 Master Plan

Preserve the functioning of Bakers Corner as a North Seekonk village center.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Buffer industrial development from residential uses.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Limit commercial growth and maintain the institutional character of Central Seekonk.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing	1986 Master Plan
Preserve neighborhood identity and natural character of North Seekonk.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen,	Ongoing	1986 Master Plan
Promote office use in South Seekonk instead of commercial use to lessen traffic burden.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Chamber of Commerce,	Ongoing	1986 Master Plan

III. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Action	Responsible Party	Implementation Year	Policy #
Establish a Seekonk Chamber of Commerce.	Town Administrator, Board of Selectmen	2001	ED 1.2, 1.3, 1.4
Actively Market the Seekonk commercial corridor to enhance the area's competitive edge.	Seekonk Chamber of Commerce, with business participation.	2002-2004	ED 1.2
Develop a Seekonk Economic Development Advisory Committee	Seekonk Chamber of Commerce	2002	ED 1.2
Develop comprehensive inventory of potential commercial and industrial sites for development, focusing especially on infill and refill development.	Seekonk Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Advisory Committee	2002-2004	ED 1.5
Develop a landscape ordinance for areas of local business development to visually rejuvenate, and preserve community character.	Planning Board, Conservation Commission	2001	ED 2.4
Develop and enforce design guidelines for new and rehabilitated highway business structures and grounds.	Planning Board	2001-Ongoing	ED 2.4
Create a local business outreach program.	Seekonk Chamber of Commerce, Town Administrator	2002-2004	ED 1.2
Protect Seekonk Industry, by maintaining the current industrial zoning ordinance.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing	ED 2.3
Protect the neighborhood convenience shopping function of Luther's Corners and Bakers' Corners.	Planning Board,	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Do not permit industrial development that is not compatible with the physical or man-made environment.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan

<p>Research and office park use should be located adjacent to major regional roadway facilities to minimize the impact of generated traffic on the Seekonk street system.</p>	<p>Planning Board, Board of Selectmen</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>1979 Master Plan</p>
<p>Undertake an economic development plan to control commercial and industrial development.</p>	<p>Economic Development Advisory Committee</p>	<p>2003-2006</p>	<p>1986 Master Plan</p>
<p>Rezone for PUD/Industrial on the south end to control aesthetics and types of businesses.</p>	<p>Planning Board</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>1986 Master Plan</p>

IV. NATURAL FEATURES AND RESOURCES

Recommendation	Responsible Party	Implementation Year	Policy #
Ensure that new development does not adversely affect nearby natural and cultural resources through such means as buffering, innovative design, and erosion control (during construction and by landscape design of parking lots).	Conservation Commission, Planning Board	Ongoing	NF 1.4
Infill and refill development should be encouraged in residential and commercial areas to minimize degradation to natural resources.	Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission	2001-ongoing	NF 1.3, 1.5
Preserve (through Town acquisition) or facilitate preservation (by cooperating with private groups) of undeveloped areas containing or buffering significant natural features and resources.	Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen	2001-ongoing	NF 2.1
Adopt an integrated approach to groundwater protection through public education about septic system maintenance, pesticide use, and disposal of household hazardous substances.	Board of Health	2001-ongoing	NF 2.3
Identify sources of potential threats to the quality and quantity of Seekonk's water supply and take action to prevent contamination and depletion.	Water Supply District	Ongoing	NF 2.4
Protect designated floodplain and wetland areas through restrictive zoning.	Planning Board	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Develop a passive open space area in North Seekonk on the former gravel operation site to serve as a buffer between industrial and residential development.	Planning Board, Recreation Commission	2001-2004	1979 Master Plan

Coordinate with East Providence and Pawtucket to preserve a green space nature trail along Central Pond and Turners Reservoir to protect the natural attributes of these two scenic water bodies and to contain growth pressures.	Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission	2002-2005	1979 Master Plan
Use easements across the Seekonk Water District owned lands to interconnect publicly owned lands.	Planning Board, Water Supply Board	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Obtain easements and/or acquire open space areas along the Runnins River starting in the Grist Mill area and extending into South Seekonk to be used for hiking/nature trails and fishing.	Conservation Commission	2001-2004	1979 Master Plan
Provide a system of bike trails to connect open space and recreation areas. Bike paths could also be made in conjunction with street and sidewalk construction when land is subdivided for development.	Planning Board, Department of Public Works	2002-ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Reuse the existing sanitary landfill as an arboretum when the operation is completed.	Planning Board	2002-2004	1979 Master Plan
Acquire the Gammino Pond site off of Newman Avenue for park and recreation use.	Town Administrator, Planning Board, Conservation Commission	2001-2005	1979 Master Plan
Work to preserve as much as possible of the land abutting the Audubon sanctuary.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	1986 Master Plan
Revise by laws to allow cluster zoning and performance zoning.	Planning Board	2001-2003	1986 Master Plan
Adopt a town septic maintenance ordinance.	Department of Health	2001	1986 Master Plan
Establish a land bank and/or a comparable fund for future open space acquisition.	Conservation Commission	2002	1986 Master Plan
Create a trail along the north/south power line through town.	Planning Board, Conservation Commission	2002-2005	1986 Master Plan

V. OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION:

See Chapter F, the Goals and Objectives from the 1999 Open Space and Recreation Plan prepared by SRPEDD.

VI. HOUSING

Action	Responsible Party	Implementation Year	Policy #
Coordinate with the Seekonk Housing Authority, and federal, state, and regional agencies to create more affordable housing opportunities.	Seekonk Housing Authority, Mass. Housing and Community Development, SRPEDD	Ongoing	H 1.1
Create a Seekonk Affordable Housing Task Force.	Housing Authority, Planning Board, Town Manager	2001	H 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4
Adopt a Residential Planned Unit Development District to allow for (1)Cluster development, and (2)Townhouse/apartment development by special permit.	Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Town Manager	2001	H 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5
Promote infill development by allowing for the division of lots that are larger than the minimum for one unit but too small to be divided into two lots under current bylaws.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Town Manager	2001-2003	H 3.4
Develop a rent-to-own program for families in need of affordable housing.	Housing Authority, Affordable Housing Task Force	2002-2003	H 1.1, 1.5
Allow for Duplex Housing development and conversion By Right.	Affordable Housing Task Force, Housing Authority, Planning Board,	2002	H 1.1
Provide home rehabilitation and improvement programs for rental and homeowner properties.	Housing Authority, Affordable Housing Task Force	2001-2003	H 2.1
Link housing initiative developments to natural resource and open space preservation goals via cluster and planned unit development.	Planning Board	2001-Ongoing	H 3.2
Market residential Seekonk with attractive gateways to Seekonk, a Seekonk bicycle network, and other media.	Chamber of Commerce, Board of Selectmen	2001-2005	H 1.2, 1.3
Work to achieve "Housing Certification" under Massachusetts state executive order 418.	Planning Board	2000	H 1.1

Lot size requirements should be used to control the scale and density of residential development to protect the natural environment and minimize future public expenditures.	Planning Board	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Residential streets should be designed to fit in with the natural landscape and intersections with major arterial roadways should be carefully designed to minimize accident potential and through traffic disruption.	Planning Board, Department of Public Works	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
The densest residential concentrations should be directed towards areas where relatively compact development already exists.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Lower density development should be maintained in areas where soils are poor or wetlands are present.	Planning Board, Conservation Commission	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan

VII. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Action	Responsible Party	Implementation Year	Policy #
Continue current school renovations at the Seekonk High School and the Martin School so all of the Town's schools will have been renovated by 2005.	School Commission	Ongoing	PF 1.1, 1.3
Continue with the public library expansion.	Board of Library Trustees	Ongoing	PF 4.1
Develop the Gammino Pond site/public library/Seekonk Junior High School area into a linked cultural/recreational campus in the heart of Seekonk.	Planning Board, Public Library, School Commission, Recreation Commission	2001-2005	PF 2.1, 2.2, 4.1
Continue to develop plans for new fire protection facilities, that will improve service to Route 6 and South Seekonk.	Fire Department, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing	PF 6.1
Continue to explore options for a new police station facility.	Police Department, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing	PF 5.1
Provide residents with information on septic system maintenance and provide assistance in cases of septic system failure.	Board of Health	Ongoing	PF 7.1
Develop a formal parks and recreation department.	Board of Selectmen	2002-2003	PF 2.1
Include a large meeting space in the senior center that is planned for the lot adjacent to the Town Hall.	Board of Selectmen	2003-2006	PF 3.1
Waste Disposal: Seekonk should explore subsurface sewage disposal options.	Board of Selectmen, Board of Health	Ongoing	1986 Master Plan

VIII. TRANSPORTATION

Action	Responsible Party	Implementation Year	Policy #
Promote efficient circulation on Route 6 by continuing to limit curb cuts, and encourage interior circulation in parking areas.	Planning Board	Ongoing	T 1.1, 1.2, 3.3
Explore ways to provide public transportation service to Route 6, and ways to establish a full north-south public transportation line in Seekonk.	GATRA, Board of Selectmen	2001-2004	T 1.4, 4.1
Develop a scenic on-road Seekonk bicycle network that compliments the planned multi-use path bicycle network.	Recreation Commission	2001-2003	T 4.2
Create attractive gateways to Seekonk with greening, landscaping and signage at the major roadway entrances to the Town: Rt. 44, Rt. 6, Central Avenue, and Armistice Street.	Public Works, Planning Board	2001-2005	T 3.2
Preserve Seekonk's scenic roadways by establishing a scenic roadways designation. Candidates for scenic roadway status are Lincoln St., Prospect St., County St., School St. among others.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission	2001-2003	T 3.1
Continue to repair and resurface Seekonk's roadways as needed.	Department of Public Works	Ongoing	T 1.5
Concentrate through traffic on freeways and arterials	Planning Board	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Provide vehicular accessibility to areas of new business activity.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen	Ongoing	1979 Master Plan
Ensure that new residential subdivisions do not allow for shortcuts	Planning Board	Ongoing	1986 Master Plan
Do not allow high traffic uses along Route 44, so through traffic can pass freely.	Planning Board	Ongoing	1986 Master Plan
Facilitate bike and pedestrian circulation.	Planning Board, Recreation Commission	2001-Ongoing	1986 Master Plan