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Wellesley Comprehensive Plan Update 2007–2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is Wellesley's fourth Comprehensive Plan. Wellesley is a successful community because it has always been willing to invest in planning for the future. As a mature residential suburb that is barely growing, the Town faces challenges that are not the result of population growth but reflect the Town's enviable position as one of the most attractive, successful and sought-after communities in Massachusetts.

Phase One, completed in 2004–2005, focused on the following elements:

- Town goals and priorities for the future
- Housing
- Economic development
- Land use

Phase Two, completed in 2005–2006, focused on:

- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Transportation and Circulation
- Public Facilities and Services
- Implementation

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Town-wide survey
- Seven public meetings, town-wide and by precinct
- One meeting with business and institutional stakeholders
- Steering Committee meetings open to the public
- Committee member visits to Town boards and commissions to review progress and gain additional input
- Comprehensive Plan web site
- Draft Plan review

Housing

PRESERVE

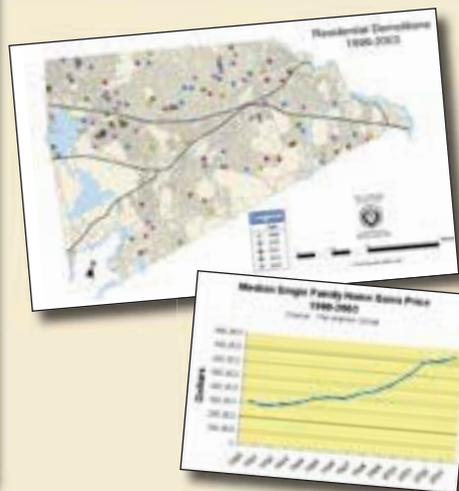
- The Town will continue to have a majority of single-family homes.

CHALLENGES

- How to manage the effect of teardowns and large replacement houses on neighborhood character.
- How and where to provide more variety in housing types and more affordable housing cost for empty-nesters, Town employees, and young adults who grew up in the Town and would like to continue to live here.

HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish site plan review for large replacement houses to provide an opportunity to discuss design impacts on the street and the neighborhood.
- Explore allowing the establishment of Neighborhood Conservation Districts to preserve neighborhood character through review ranging from completely advisory to regulation of selected changes.
- Create advisory design guidelines for neighborhoods.
- Identify opportunities to create townhouses, condo and multi-family housing types in commercial areas.



Economic Development

PRESERVE

- Maintain the character of village commercial districts.
- Maintain a diverse array of independent businesses and businesses that serve the daily needs of residents.

CHALLENGES

- How to effectively incorporate more housing in commercial districts to create a mixed-use environment with residents who will support local businesses.
- Whether to seek more nonresidential tax revenue.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a plan for the Natick Line commercial area and town gateway that incorporates housing opportunities.
- Encourage housing development where feasible in commercial districts.
- Study the pros and cons of allowing more development capacity in office parks or establishing a split tax rate in order to get more nonresidential tax revenue.

Land Use

Reflecting the settled character of Wellesley, changes in land use are likely to take the form of adjustments to prevailing zoning or to prevailing uses rather than full-scale change. However, a recodification of the zoning bylaw is recommended in order to eliminate inconsistencies, improve clarity, and resolve any contradictions that may have crept into the zoning bylaw as it has been amended over the years.

LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recodify the zoning bylaw.
- Consider mandatory cluster development zoning for the few remaining large open space parcels lacking conservation restrictions. Development is not currently considered likely, but mandatory cluster zoning will help ensure preservation of open space character through limited development if these parcels are proposed for development.
- Create mixed use development frameworks for commercial district sites with potential for housing and mixed use development in order to understand the options for appealing design alternatives.



Natural and Cultural Resources

PRESERVE

- Restore and preserve natural areas, water resources, biodiversity, and wildlife habitats.
- Enhance community understanding of the value of cultural resources and promote the preservation of historic buildings, sites, and landscapes.

CHALLENGES

- How to reduce non-point source pollution from private landscaping practices and regional activities in upstream communities.
- How to expand conservation lands in an expensive land market.
- How to increase awareness of the economic and aesthetic value of historic properties.
- How to expand public knowledge about historic preservation.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to minimize non-point source pollution caused by stormwater runoff through public awareness and regulation.
- Continue to restore and manage ponds to avoid eutrophication.
- Continue to enhance the Shade Tree Program.
- Promote public awareness of Wellesley's history and the benefits of historic preservation.
- Maintain the historic integrity of Wellesley's neighborhoods by initiatives, such as Neighborhood Conservation Districts, that will help protect historic properties and landscapes.
- Expand the scope of potential preservation projects by seeking non-local funding and partnerships and private donations.

Open Space and Recreation

PRESERVE

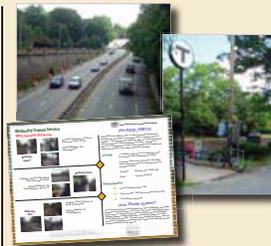
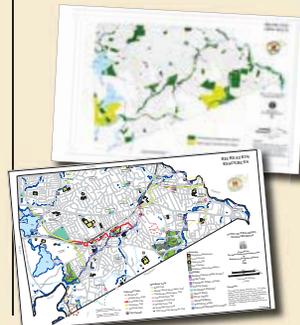
- Provide permanent protection for Town-owned open space and preserve additional passive and active recreation space as needed.

CHALLENGES

- How to provide additional open space for a growing number of users in a built-out market with high land prices.
- How to improve maintenance of current open space and recreational facilities as use increases.
- How to balance competing demands for active and passive recreation space.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to protect and enhance open space in Wellesley, including through agreements with institutional partners.
- Pursue greater connectivity of open spaces on a local and regional level.
- Conduct a recreational needs assessment and seek management options that will allow more productive use of Town-owned and private active recreational space rather than converting passive into active open space.
- Continue to develop recreational programs that will fit the needs of Wellesley's changing population.



Transportation and Circulation

PRESERVE

- Maintain mobility and safety in neighborhoods and on major roads.

CHALLENGES

- How to improve arterial traffic flow and reduce local street traffic cut-throughs and speeding.
- How to provide more alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel.
- How to enhance transit and pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- How to provide adequate parking in commercial areas.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Actively participate in regional transportation planning.
- Continue implementation of new technologies to address traffic growth.
- Improve traffic safety and correct high-hazard locations.
- Explore the possibility of a shared-use shuttle bus system.
- Implement stronger Transportation Demand Management strategies that will reduce overall traffic demand on the Wellesley road system.
- Implement new parking management programs in parking lots.
- Consider developing a Sidewalk Plan.
- Create a Town-wide Bicycle Plan.

Public Facilities and Services

PRESERVE

- Maintain school excellence by providing updated educational facilities and continue to provide high-quality Town services and facilities.

CHALLENGES

- How to fund needed facility improvements on a short- and long-term basis.
- How to finance additional staff when needed.
- How to add additional community meeting space.
- How to track the condition of and systematically manage infrastructure and capital assets.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue improving school facilities.
- Investigate the possibility of using schools as "community centers" to supplement other meeting places and recreation facilities.
- Develop a systematic approach to asset management.
- Consider increasing fire and police staff to address shortfalls.
- Develop a uniform policy for street acceptance and a system for the maintenance of private streets.
- Construct an expanded DPW operations building and a new Municipal Light Plant facility.



Stewardship and Implementation

Effective implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will require a group of leaders to monitor progress and facilitate actions needed to carry out the goals of the plan. The Planning Board has made a special effort to include input from numerous Town boards and commissions, and all of these entities should act as stewards of the plan. Broad community participation as the plan moves forward will ensure that its recommended actions are undertaken and that its goals are achieved.

STEWARDSHIP AND IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATION

- Create a system to review the goals, strategies, and actions of the comprehensive plan update at the five-year mark.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Planning Board Members

Thomas Frisardi
Rose Mary Donahue
James C. Meade
Sue Wright
Edward Chazen
Frank S. DeMasi
Chris Chan

Town Meeting Precinct Representatives

Gerald C. Hume, Precinct A
Richard McGhee, Precinct B
Jacqueline Hatch, Precinct C
Joellen Toussaint, Precinct D
Henry Lysaght, Precinct E
Barbara McMahon, Precinct F
Judith Hull, Precinct G

Introduction:

A Comprehensive Plan for a New Century

Wellesley is a thriving, mature suburban community that owes much of its success over the last century to its commitment to planning. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, as Wellesley became an affluent residential suburb, many attractive planned neighborhoods were created from farms and estates. The Town's leaders took care to direct and shape development in the Town. In 1912 the Town instituted a Town Building Law, which specified the size and location of homes to protect against fire. The Town passed a zoning law in 1925 and was a pioneer in the development of a planning board, a board of survey, and a billboard bylaw. The community's attention to planning for the future is one of the reasons it has remained appealing and attractive for over 100 years. As a journalist commented in the 1920s, the reason Wellesley was such a nice place to live was that they "planned it that way."

The Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan

This is Wellesley's fourth Comprehensive Plan. The first plan was adopted by the Planning Board in 1965 and, like many plans of that era, took a pro-growth approach to future development. The second Comprehensive Plan, prepared by the Planning Board and its staff between 1977 and 1981, emphasized growth management, conservation, and building reuse. The Town's most recent Comprehensive Plan was completed in 1994.

A comprehensive plan is both a process and a framework for future decision making. The planning process provides the opportunity for commu-

nity residents and others to articulate and review their values and goals through public discussion, agree on what they want the Town to be like in the future, and identify the key areas where the Town must act to preserve enduring character and to



seize opportunities to shape change. The framework is a guidance document that sets forth a set of strategies, tools, and specific actions to make the plan a reality. Recommendations can include zoning amendments, design and development standards, management plans, neighborhood plans, and similar initiatives.

Structure of this Plan

In 2004, the Planning Board and the Town agreed to update the Comprehensive Plan and to allocate funding for a two-phase planning process. Phase One was undertaken in 2004-2005 and was presented to the Town in April 2005.

The Planning Board commissioned a resident survey in early 2004 from Davidson-Peterson Associates and in the fall of 2004 contracted with a team led by Goody Clancy & Associates to assist the Board in creating a new plan. Phase One included the following elements:

- An Evaluation of the 1994 Plan
- Public Meetings
- Goals and Policies
- Housing
- Framework for Affordable Housing Planned Production
- Economic Development
- Land Use
- A Scope for Phase Two

Phase II began in the fall of 2005 and included planning for:

- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Transportation and Circulation
- Public Facilities and Services
- Stewardship and Implementation

In Phase II, public meetings were held in the fall of 2005 and the winter of 2006 to discuss natural and cultural resources, open space and recreation, and transportation and facilities. Background materials are available on the Comprehensive Plan website (accessed through www.wellesleyma.gov; click on “Comprehensive Plan” at the bottom of the page).

Accomplishments of the 1994 Plan

Wellesley has implemented a number of the recommendations in the 1994 Plan, particularly in the area of economic development. The 1994 Plan included an extensive public process, a large steering committee and assistance from consultants, and focused on how active the Town should be in shaping three future land use and development issues:

- The future of the few large open parcels remaining in Town.
- Changes in the village commercial districts.

- Accommodation of new needs and circumstances in neighborhoods while protecting neighborhood character.

The 1994 Plan acknowledged that the planning process produced valuable discussions about certain key choices facing Wellesley but ultimately did not result in a full consensus to resolve them. A large number of goals, policies and implementation actions made the plan very comprehensive but also obscured a sense of priorities.

Nonetheless, Wellesley can take satisfaction in having accomplished many of the goals of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan:

HOUSING

Three goals were paramount in the housing section of the Plan: protecting and enhancing the residential character of Wellesley; expanding the diversity of housing types; and expanding housing affordability for senior citizens and families with children. The booming real estate market since the late 1990s has tended to reduce the diversity of housing types and sizes in Wellesley and proposals to further regulate residential redevelopment and growth have not been accepted. It was difficult to reach consensus on affordable housing for families, so the plan focused especially on senior housing because it had more widespread support. However, a senior housing strategy was not created, as recommended.

Accomplishments:

- The Plan set a goal of moving from 4.5 percent affordable housing to 5 percent. The Town was at 4.8 percent in 2004, and that goal was met with the construction of 52 apartments in the Hastings Village 40B project.
- The recommendation to revitalize the Wellesley Housing Partnership was fulfilled through the creation of the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation, which has been leading affordable housing efforts.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Because the 1994 Plan was written when the region was still in a serious economic recession, there was a strong focus on fostering economic vitality in the Town's business districts, on ensuring the continued prosperity of the commercial villages that serve Town residents, on enhancing the Town's commercial gateways, and on planning proactively for redevelopment of commercial sites.

Accomplishments:

- Rezoning of the office park district on Route 9 to Dearborn Street.
- Rezoning to extend the business district at the Natick line to the Cochituate Aqueduct.
- Implementing a successful planning process for the MassHighway Route 9 depot site.
- Completing commercial district plans for Lower Falls, Wellesley Square, Wellesley Hills, and Linden Street, and partially completing a plan for Cedar Street.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section of the 1994 Plan was based on the Town's existing Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Plan recommended developing protection strategies for specific open space parcels and protecting and improving the water quality of both surface water and groundwater. Compared to previous plans, the Plan also added a more detailed consideration of cultural resources.

Accomplishments:

- Improvement and beautification project for Fuller Brook Parkway.
- Sewering of small lots at Morse's Pond to eliminate pollution from septic failure.
- Development of non-point source pollution reduction programs as part of the Town's efforts to comply with the U.S. E.P.A. Phase II Stormwater Regulations.
- Updating of the Open Space and Recreation Plan (currently in progress).

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

The major goals of this section were to preserve open space that is significant because of its size or its location; expand the trail system to link destinations town-wide; and provide recreation facilities to meet town needs.

Accomplishments:

- New Recreation Center.
- Active Trails Committee that has opened and marked new trails and offers guided walks.
- Trails Committee web page with trail maps.
- Natural Resource Commission web page with information on open space accessible to the public.
- Lower Falls Riverway Plan.
- Post Office Square Framework Plan.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

Improvement in traffic and parking management, pedestrian improvements in commercial districts, town-wide pedestrian and bicycle planning, intersection improvements at selected locations, creation of an intra-town public transportation service, and creation of a transportation coordinator position in town government were among the goals of the 1994 Plan.

Accomplishments:

- Improvements to Route 9, which are underway.
- The position of Transportation Program Coordinator, created by the Board of Selectmen.
- Route 16 streetscape improvements.
- Parking studies in commercial districts.
- Traffic calming projects.
- Tailby Lot Committee.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The Plan found that Wellesley has a strong system in place to meet Town needs for maintenance and replacement of physical facilities,

so the Plan focused more on program recommendations for seniors and youth.

Accomplishments:

- New recreation center and a Youth Services Director position.
- Senior bus service.

Combining the Phase One and Phase Two Plans

This new Comprehensive Plan takes a slightly different approach compared to the 1994 Plan. Because Wellesley is a well-run town with a strong professional staff and sophisticated volunteer town officials, the approach is to focus effort on issues that are the most difficult to resolve, particularly (though not exclusively) those with multiple and overlapping board and commission authorities.

Part of the Phase One planning process was to develop goals and policies for all the plan elements, including some that were to be pursued in depth during Phase Two. The initial goals and policies for all plan elements are listed in the chart on pages 12-14. Some of these goals and policies, however, were modified after Phase II discussion. The goals and policies at the beginning of each chapter and summarized on pages 14–17 reflect the outcomes of Phase I and Phase II analysis and issues raised at public meetings and Steering Committee meetings.

This final document represents the full comprehensive plan update for Wellesley.

2 Wellesley's Goals for the Next Ten Years

Because all communities experience change, every update of the comprehensive plan requires a reevaluation of Town goals for the next ten years. In every plan there will be enduring goals that represent critical elements of Wellesley's identity as a town, while other goals will recede in importance because the Town will have worked hard to reach them. Changing circumstances and trends can create the need for new goals. It is therefore essential to engage residents and others in a discussion about what kinds of issues the Town should focus on in the next ten years.

The 1994 Plan included a large number of often overlapping goals and objectives. Although very thorough and comprehensive, the plan did not provide a clear set of priorities across all the elements or categories in the plan. For the current update of the comprehensive plan, the Planning Board wanted to identify a set of priorities for the next ten years. As a result, priority-setting exercises were incorporated into the public participation process.

A. THE COMMUNITY SPEAKS: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Town and consulting team undertook a variety of activities designed to elicit ideas and recommendations from residents, business people, institutional representatives, and property owners. These activities began with a town-wide survey and continued through a series of public meetings, workshops, and one-on-one conversations.

The Survey

The Planning Board commissioned a community survey from Davidson-Peterson Associates. The purpose of the survey was to find out how satisfied Town residents and officials are with Town services, what their perceptions are about the community, and their priority concerns.

In February 2004, a sample of Wellesley households received a letter with a unique code giving them access to an on-line survey. (Those without access to a computer were invited to complete the survey at the library or obtain a paper survey at Town Hall.) The sample included 500 households in each of Wellesley's seven precincts, 240 Town Meeting members, and 84 Town officials. Twenty-nine percent of the precinct sample (1,004 persons) completed the survey and 31 percent of the Town Meeting and Town official sample responded. The consultants weighted the precinct responses to ensure geographical representation, but the response rates were quite similar across precincts, so little weighting was required. As is often the case in surveys of this kind, the respondent group tended to be somewhat older than the population as a whole, but in other respects the survey respondents were representative of Wellesley households. The survey asked respondents to rank or rate a set list of issues. The questions did not offer the option of "other" and there were no "free answer" questions in which respondents could write in their own responses.

WELLESLEY AS A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE

ESSENTIAL/VERY IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS	RESIDENT RESPONDENTS (%)	TOWN OFFICIALS RESPONDENTS (%)
Quality of education	85	85
Neighborhood character	79	79
Neighborhood parks and green spaces	77	72
Easy access to Boston	68	67
Town centers with in-town shopping	60	77
Biking and walking trails for recreation	57	61
Increasing real estate values	54	53
Institutions with interesting cultural activities	50	43
Senior services available	44	40

PROBLEM ISSUES IN WELLESLEY

SERIOUS PROBLEM	RESIDENT RESPONDENTS (%)	TOWN OFFICIALS RESPONDENTS (%)
Traffic on Washington Street	52	50
Availability of parking at stores	40	37
Traffic in my neighborhood	22	25
Availability of public transportation in town	19	19
Availability of diverse types of housing in town	17	36
Parking at train stations	17	18
Mix of stores/services	11	15
No serious problems	26	22

In responding to the question of “What makes Wellesley a nice place to live?” survey respondents ranked a series of characteristics.

Residents and Town officials were in substantial agreement about why Wellesley is a good place to live. The Town’s excellent school system is at the top of the list and three other characteristics that 60 percent or more respondents identified as “essential” or “very important” are central to the Comprehensive Plan: neighborhood character, parks and green spaces, and the village commercial districts. The interplay of these physical characteristics is what gives Wellesley its identity as a place.

Most Wellesley residents expressed satisfaction with Town services. With the exception of cable television service, all Town services were regarded as satisfactory by at least 70 percent of respondents. (Cable TV was thought satisfactory by 66 percent of residents and 50 percent of Town officials.) The same general level of satisfaction is evident in the results of a question asking respondents to rank the importance of seven issues as a serious problem for Wellesley. Town officials were more apt to see the lack of housing diversity as a serious problem, but in general, similar percentages of residents and officials otherwise tended to agree.

Survey respondents were asked to identify priorities for services, transportation, and housing. Residents and Town officials had somewhat different priorities, with Town officials giving more importance to building garages in commercial districts, providing affordable housing, and providing services for seniors to stay in single-family homes.

TOWN PRIORITIES RANKED

	RESIDENT	TOWN OFFICIALS
1	Preserve existing parks and green spaces for passive recreation	Build parking garages as part of retail areas in village centers
2	Enact restrictions on single-family home size to maintain neighborhood character	Preserve existing parks and green spaces for passive recreation
3	Complete bike paths/trails to/through all neighborhoods	Enact restrictions on single-family home size to maintain neighborhood character
4	Build parking garages as part of retail areas in village centers	Promote development of affordable housing choices
5	Improve pedestrian safety and traffic flow on Linden Street	Develop ways for shoppers to get to village centers without cars
6	Open teen center for afternoon/evening use	Provide services for seniors so they can stay in their single-family homes
7	Develop ways for commuters to reach train stations easily without cars	Complete bike paths/trails to/through all neighborhoods
8	Encourage adding public buses through town	Encourage adding public buses through town
9	Develop ways for shoppers to get to village centers without cars	Develop ways for commuters to reach train stations easily without cars
10	Provide services for seniors so they can stay in their single-family homes	Open teen center for afternoon/evening use
11	Provide more services for more seniors at senior centers	Build more sports fields and areas for active recreation
12	Widen Washington Street to four lanes to improve traffic flow	Improve pedestrian safety and traffic flow on Linden Street
13	Build more sidewalks	Promote the development of age-restricted housing for “empty nesters”
14	Promote development of affordable housing choices	Increase the amount of housing within walking distance of the train
15	Build more sports fields and areas for active recreation	Encourage the development of assisted living facilities
16	Encourage the development of assisted living facilities	Build more sidewalks
17	Promote the development of age-restricted housing for “empty nesters”	Widen Washington Street to four lanes to improve traffic flow
18	Increase the amount of housing within walking distance of the train	Provide more services for more seniors at senior centers

When asked to indicate their level of agreement with a series of statements about Wellesley, significant majorities of both residents and officials agreed with statements that implied a desire to “tame” the car within town. A majority also acknowledged that they could not afford to enter the residential market in Wellesley today.

Public Meetings

In mid-October 2004, a series of four Comprehensive Plan public meetings were held in quick succession to create widespread public awareness of the Comprehensive Plan process: one town-wide workshop on a Saturday morning and three workshops aimed at residents of three sets of individual precincts on weekday evenings. A week later, there was an early morning meeting for business and institutional stakeholders. Altogether, these meetings attracted nearly 170 members of the Wellesley community. The meetings were widely publicized through inserts in electric bills, flyers, and *The Wellesley Townsman*.

The primary focus of the workshops for residents was (1) to review and discuss the basic goals of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan in order to confirm, delete, revise, or add new goals; and (2) to identify priorities among the goals. Analytical maps prepared by the Wellesley GIS and Planning Departments were displayed at each meeting. A set of fact sheets on Wellesley was also available. At the sign-in table at each workshop, participants were asked to identify their homes with a star on a large map. The maps that resulted from this exercise demonstrated that the participants in the workshops represented all parts of the town in the case of the town-wide meeting and different parts of the various precincts in the case of the precinct meetings.

STATEMENTS ABOUT LIVING IN WELLESLEY

AGREE COMPLETELY OR SOMEWHAT	RESIDENT RESPONDENTS (%)	TOWN OFFICIALS RESPONDENTS (%)
I would like to have a more pedestrian-friendly commercial area in Wellesley.	71	60
I would love to see more historic buildings preserved in Wellesley.	66	57
I could not afford to move to Wellesley today.	61	64
I would love to leave my car at home if there were a convenient way to shop or commute without a car.	58	69
One of the hobbies I really enjoy is bird watching or walking in natural areas.	60	57
I wish I could bike to the village center or the train station on safe bikeways.	56	52
I/we would like to retire in a smaller home right here in Wellesley.	47	51
I'd do more walking if there were more sidewalks in my area.	35	29
If the sidewalks were safe, I would let my children walk to school more often.	33	34

The results of the survey showed that Wellesley residents are fundamentally satisfied with most aspects of life in the Town. They want to preserve their high quality of life, particularly by preserving neighborhood character, including the town’s network of open space, and they experience the impacts of the automobile as one of the major threats to quality of life and town character.



Each meeting began with a presentation by the consultants that provided an overview of current conditions and trends in Wellesley, a review of the major goals of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan and the Town's accomplishments towards meeting those goals, and a summary of the results from the survey. The purpose of the presentation was to provide participants with a broad context of information about change and continuity over the last decade and about Town activities implementing the last Comprehensive Plan. After the presentation, the participants worked in small groups with a facilitator and a map. In the precinct meetings, the groups were organized by precinct. In addition to reviewing the goals from the 1994 plan, participants also discussed other concerns and precinct-specific issues.

For the purposes of the workshops, the 1994 goals were consolidated as follows:

Housing

- Protect and enhance the residential character of Wellesley
- Expand housing diversity to respond to changing community needs and demographics
- Expand housing affordability for seniors and families with children

Economic Vitality

- Foster community-focused retail and service activities
- Enhance unique role and character of commercial areas

Land Use

- Protect and enhance Wellesley's residential and village character
- Strengthen neighborhood planning
- Maintain high standards of design excellence
- Pay special attention to town gateways – the major entrance corridors
- Retain Wellesley's unique identity while working cooperatively with regional partners to solve common problems.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- Restore, preserve, and enhance open space and sensitive natural resources for habitat protection and enrichment of community character
- Encourage sustainable use of resources
- Maintain and improve architectural image of the community

Open Space and Recreation

- Preserve open space significant for size or location
- Expand the trail system to link destinations town-wide
- Provide recreation facilities to meet Town needs



Circulation and Transportation

- Improve traffic and parking management
- Improve pedestrian circulation in commercial districts
- Implement town-wide pedestrian and bicycle planning
- Improve safety at key intersections
- Create intra-town public transportation services

Public Facilities and Services

- Plan for future Town recreational, educational, infrastructure, safety, and service needs

These goals were provided to each group for discussion and were also printed on poster-size sheets. After the small group sessions, each group reported on the goals that they would like to see retained, modified, or eliminated and which new goals they would like to add. These were written on the poster sheets and at the end of the meeting each person was given three adhesive dots to “vote” on the goals that he or she considered the top three priorities. (The votes could be distributed in any manner, from all on one item to three different items.) The



purpose of this exercise was to determine which goals attracted the most attention from meeting participants.

In many respects the 1994 goals still served as the foundation for the participants’ thinking about Wellesley. But they brought the experience of recent trends to refine the goals and provide examples. The priority-setting exercise reflected the small group discussions and was instructive in refining the focus of the general planning goals. For each general category below, the total number of “votes” is indicated, as well as votes in selected subcategories of the overall issue.

Housing (including character, diversity, affordability, and historic resources as a version of character): 92

- Regulation of bulk/mass to protect neighborhood character—45
- Diversity of housing type—29
- Affordability issues—3

Transportation issues: 71

- Safety and enforcement issues—15
- Promote alternatives to the car—14

Natural Resources and Open Space/ Recreation: 48

- Manage Morses Pond to avoid eutrophication and keep it a swimming pond: 12

Economic Development: 44

- Combination of maintaining non-chain businesses and preserving retail character that serves residents’ daily needs—33

Services and Facilities: 15

- Master plan for Town-owned improvements, including a plan to improve school facilities and other public buildings to allow flexible uses—10

Land Use: 6

What these numbers show is that the residential character of Wellesley, and particularly the threat to that character from “mansionization,” captured the highest proportion of the votes. Although affordability was discussed and in many cases acknowledged as an issue that that Town needed to work on, participants in the workshops did not want to spend their priority votes on affordable housing. In contrast to the concentration of attention on a few issues in the housing category, transportation in general attracted a lot of attention, but participant concerns were spread over a larger number of issues. Similarly, natural resources combined with open space and recreation was clearly important in the aggregate, but there was no one issue that focused the majority of attention. Economic development issues were quite a contrast: workshop participants were emphatic about their desire to see the Town’s commercial districts retain independent stores as well as the kind of retail and services that serve the everyday needs of the population—rather than a majority of chains and boutiques.

Meeting for Businesses and Institutions

Representatives of Wellesley businesses and educational institutions were invited to an early-morning weekday meeting to discuss their concerns. An abbreviated version of the PowerPoint presentation was given and then the participants were invited to give their views on how businesses, institutions, and the Town could work together better on issues of mutual concern. The major goal that emerged from the discussion was the evergreen issue of improving communication. Creating a systematic way to exchange information about upcoming changes or concerns was the most important goal.

Stakeholder Interviews

A series of interviews with precinct representatives on the Plan’s Steering Committee helped to identify the ingredients that make up the

Town’s character as well as—in some cases—the individual precincts themselves. Again, there was consistency among those interviewed that, as a family- and school-oriented, and neighborhood-based community, Wellesley is a “residential village” mixing homes, businesses, and access to public transportation. At the same time, the interviews almost uniformly pointed out the difficulties associated with an increase in the size of homes being built—“mansionization”—and their economic and physical impact on Wellesley’s character and diversity.

B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS

Like many communities, Wellesley is seeking to balance important values embedded in three different arenas: the town as a whole, the neighborhood, and the interests of individual property owners. The Goals, Objectives, and Policies of this plan reflect a balance of those interests that in some ways goes beyond the priorities and preferences expressed by residents.

Two examples illustrate this. Affordable housing received support but was not seen as a priority issue by most respondents to the survey or participants in the public workshops. Nonetheless, affordable housing creation is an important issue for the town as a whole because it has not yet met the state’s 10 percent goal, which may be why Town officials gave it much higher importance than residents in the survey. A successful approach to creating affordable housing will help the Town meet some of its other goals, such as preserving neighborhood character. Another example is the question of how new construction in established neighborhoods changes their character. This has been an issue of intense interest to Wellesley residents for quite some time, but attempts to pass zoning amendments to con-

strain the size of new houses have failed repeatedly in Town Meeting. Many people are still very concerned about it, so the Town may have to try other approaches to balance neighborhood character with individual property rights.

As was reinforced in follow-up interviews, many of these items were couched in the context of maintaining Wellesley’s “character”—whether the issue was housing and the dangers of building out of scale; economic development and the need to maintain community-focused retail; transportation and the

impact of traffic on major town arterials; or open space and the desire to enhance the major natural assets that are already a signature of Wellesley’s character. Housing received particular attention as the focus turned to Wellesley’s desire—and ability—to support housing that is affordable and housing that serves diverse populations, including empty nesters and first-time buyers. The set of goals, objectives, and policy recommendations listed below represent the outcomes of Phase I and Phase II planning activities.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION MAKERS
Phase One		
HOUSING		
Maintain the primarily single-family character of Wellesley’s housing stock.	Preserve the existing character on single-family neighborhood streets.	Focus additional multifamily housing in commercial areas or on arterial roads.
Maintain the physical form of Wellesley’s residential neighborhoods by balancing community standards with individual interests.	Define neighborhood character through a set of neighborhood character studies in collaboration with residents to identify the distinctive physical characteristics of each neighborhood.	Explore new ways to maintain neighborhood character such as Neighborhood Conservation Districts, form-based zoning, advisory design guidelines, zoning changes, and other options ranging from advisory to regulatory.
Promote the creation of housing units other than single-family homes to provide housing options for people across a range of income, age, family size, and needs, while complementing town character.	Work towards creating town house, condominium, and rental units in and near commercial districts and other appropriate locations.	Encourage developers to create mixed-use projects and residential projects that diversify the housing stock in Wellesley and provide residential options for older, empty-nester and young family households.
Promote the creation of housing units that are permanently affordable to households with incomes at 80 percent or below the area median income.	Adopt a plan with numerical targets to meet the Chapter 40B goal of ten percent affordable units.	Support the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation and seek developers who will develop mixed-income housing that meets the Town’s needs and complements town character.

2005 GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION MAKERS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Maintain a diverse array of independent businesses.	Maintain businesses that serve the daily needs of residents.	Promote and support small business development to serve local residents.
Create mixed-use environments in commercial areas.	Leverage development and redevelopment opportunities to support both retailers and Town housing goals.	Promote mixed-use development and redevelopment at key sites in commercial areas.
Fund an economic development specialist to work more closely with business and institutional property owners.	Ensure dedicated attention to commercial areas and other non-residential development.	Provide funding for an economic development half-time position.
Create a system of regular communication among Town government, the business community, and local institutions.	Leverage opportunities for new public-private-institutional partnerships to provide mutual benefits to all stakeholders.	Support use of staff and committee time to create and sustain Town-business-institution communication links and partnership strategies.
Support and enhance the build out potential of non-residential property.	Increase tax revenue from non-residential property.	Consider increasing allowed density in existing non-residential areas based on a study of potential benefits and adverse impacts.
LAND USE		
Strengthen Town zoning regulations and design guidelines, and their enforcement, to ensure continuity of town character and quality of life.	Establish common ground among property owners, builders, and Town government to ensure consensus agreement.	<p>Eliminate zoning provisions that are barriers to creation of mixed use and diversified housing in commercial districts.</p> <p>Create an ongoing design, regulatory, marketing, and information strategy to educate stakeholders on land use issues related to town character.</p>
Improve the appearance of town gateways that need enhancement.	Distinguish Wellesley's identity at the major entrance corridors to town.	Focus on enhancements to the Lower Falls gateway and creating a plan for the Natick Line area.
Promote a mixture of land uses, including diverse types of residences, in commercial areas.	Meet the Town's need for more housing diversity and to increase the market for a mix of shops and services in commercial districts.	Create guidelines for mixed-use land uses and pursue projects appropriate for Wellesley.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION MAKERS
Phase Two		
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES		
<p>Restore, preserve, and enhance open space and sensitive natural resources for protection of water resources, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, and enrichment of community character.</p>	<p>Identify natural resources for protection and preservation.</p> <p>Protect the quantity and quality of surface water and groundwater.</p>	<p>Manage Moses Pond to avoid eutrophication and to maintain its use as an environmental and recreational resource.</p> <p>Continue small pond management based on the Pond Restoration Master Plan.</p> <p>Apply appropriate Best Management Practices to ensure preservation of natural resources.</p> <p>Continue NRC’s Shade Tree Development Program to provide enhanced tree canopies and aesthetics throughout town.</p> <p>Continue NRC’s Pesticide Awareness Campaign to encourage elimination of pesticides to protect the Town’s water resources.</p>
<p>Preserve cultural resources, including cultural landscapes, to maintain and enrich community character.</p>	<p>Identify cultural resources for preservation.</p> <p>Enhance community understanding of Wellesley’s historic resources, including buildings and landscapes.</p>	<p>Create public information programs on historic resources.</p> <p>Support efforts that encourage the preservation of historic properties.</p>
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION		
<p>Preserve and enhance the Town’s open space system.</p>	<p>Identify opportunities to acquire new open space and permanently protect and preserve existing open space.</p>	<p>Permanently protect existing Town-owned open space with appropriate zoning and conservation restrictions.</p>
<p>Ensure continuation of Wellesley’s recreational facilities as major community assets.</p>	<p>Retain Moses Pond as a recreational asset.</p>	<p>Preserve a balance between active and passive recreation.</p>

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION MAKERS
Phase Two		
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION		
Continue expansion of the trail system to link open space to town destinations.	Identify opportunities for new trails and enhancement of existing trails.	Support volunteer trail creation and enhancement.
TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION		
Reduce traffic volume, especially during peak hours.	Reduce the impact of local or through traffic on the local road network.	Pursue opportunities for Transportation Demand Management (TDM), Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), participation in the Suburban Transit Initiative, and smart growth planning and zoning.
Encourage alternative means of transportation both within and outside of town.	<p>Increase the safety of and links in the existing pedestrian network.</p> <p>Create a town-wide bicycle route.</p> <p>Create an intra-town transit system.</p> <p>Provide links to existing and planned suburban transit stations.</p>	<p>Support viable traffic calming programs for areas with a demonstrated need.</p> <p>Explore shared use of shuttles or town-sponsored shuttles for intra-town transit.</p> <p>Include pedestrian and bicycle needs in all traffic and transportation improvement studies and projects.</p> <p>Incorporate the MassHighway Project Development and Design Guidebook (2006) in Town transportation projects and Project of Significant Impact (PSI) and subdivision standards.</p>
Manage parking to support commercial districts.	<p>Enhance customer access and traffic flow.</p> <p>Encourage employees in business areas to park outside of commercial areas in designated employee parking areas.</p>	Identify opportunities for new structured parking and shared parking near commercial areas, as well as better management of available parking.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION MAKERS
Phase Two		
TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION		
Seek improvement of transportation flow on regional routes.	Reduce rate of increase of local traffic congestion.	<p>Work with state and neighboring towns through the MPO to identify truck routes, locate commuter traffic routes away from congested areas, and establish corridor alliances with contiguous communities/subregions.</p> <p>Consider joining the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority.</p>
PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES		
Maintain school excellence.	Ensure that Wellesley’s students have access to needed classroom technology and adequate classroom space.	<p>Upgrade facilities to include state-of-the-art technology and classroom amenities.</p> <p>Renovate or replace aging facilities to meet classroom space needs generated by projected enrollment increases.</p>
Create additional community meeting space.	Investigate utilizing public schools for after-hours community activities and events.	Create a management system to monitor activities and secure restricted areas during after-hours community use.
Provide systematic oversight of Town facilities and infrastructure.	Develop a town asset management system to track infrastructure conditions.	Implement a computerized system to streamline maintenance records and track changes.
Improve public safety response times and operations.	Ensure the provision of adequate numbers of personnel and equipment.	Hire additional public safety staff and purchase new equipment as funds become available.
Enhance DPW and the Municipal Light Plant’s operations.	Provide adequate space and technology for operations.	<p>Construct an expanded DPW operations building and a new MLP facility.</p> <p>Replace or refurbish DPW vehicles and equipment.</p>
Clarify Town policies about the maintenance of private streets.	Implement a private street maintenance system.	Create a betterment system that will allow abutters to petition the Town for private road upgrades/maintenance.
Develop a uniform policy for street acceptance.	Create a street acceptance policy that covers private streets that are not part of new subdivisions.	Implement a process by which abutters can petition the Town for acceptance of private streets.

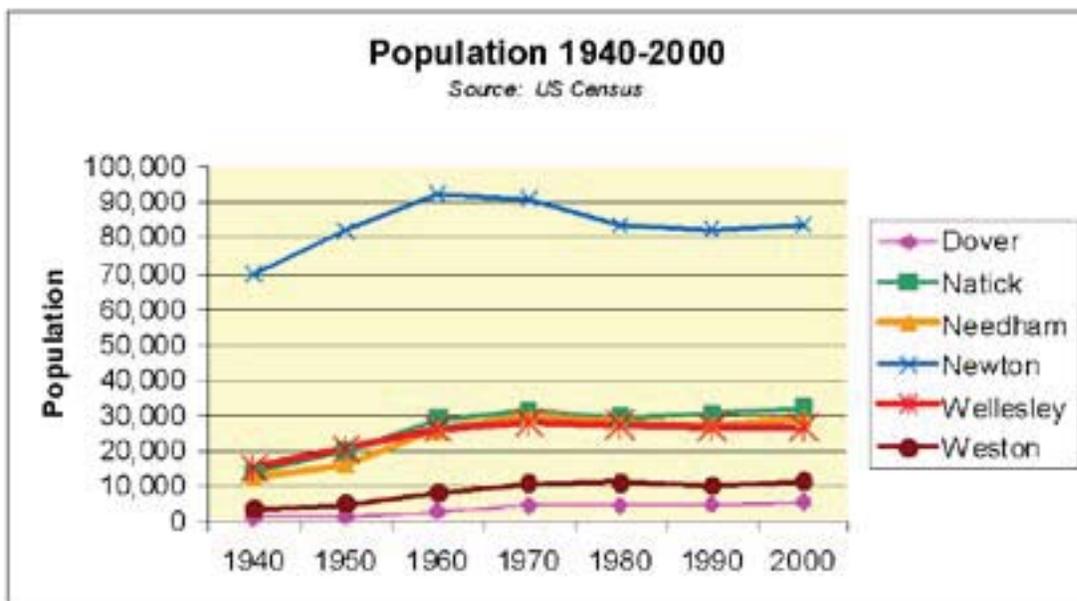
3 Population and Land Use Trends

Wellesley is a stable community that is barely growing. The challenges that the Town faces are not the result of population growth in itself. However, there may be changes in the demographic composition of this generally stable population, such as increases or decreases in the number of school children or elderly persons, that the Town should consider in planning for the future.

Similarly, the fundamental land use decisions about Wellesley were made many decades ago and are not likely to change. It will remain predominantly residential and most of the land will be occupied by single-family homes. Of course, construction continues in various forms, as it does in almost all communities, and residents are often very sensitive to the change that a relatively small amount of construction activity can bring to an established neighborhood.

A. POPULATION

Like many suburban towns, Wellesley grew rapidly during the period after World War II. The Town's population increased by 85 percent between 1940 and 1970. From its peak population in 1970 of 28,051, the Town's population has declined by 5 percent but seems to be stabilizing around 25,000. During the 1990s the Town experienced a net loss of two persons from 26,615 to 26,613. This population trend is not unusual and can also be seen in Wellesley's neighboring towns. At the time of the census, approximately forty percent of Wellesley residents had moved to Town within the last five years. The overall stability of the total population number, therefore, does not mean that people are not moving in and out of Wellesley all the time.



POPULATION—WHO ARE WE?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Wellesley's population has stabilized between 26,000 and 27,000 since 1980.

- Population decreased 5 percent from 1970 (28,051) to 2000 (26,613).
- While Wellesley's population decreased by two persons from 1990 to 2000, Norfolk County's grew by 5.5 percent.

Compared to the population of Norfolk County, Wellesley

- has a larger proportion of residents under 19 years old
- has a slightly smaller proportion of residents 65 and over
- has a smaller proportion of residents between 20 and 34 years old
- has a smaller proportion of non-family and single-person households
- has a slightly younger median age
- has a median household income that is nearly double that of the county.

Total Population (2000): 26,613 (vs. 26,615 in 1990)

Age Composition

- 25.1 percent under 18 years old
- 15.2 percent 20-34 years old
- 30.6 percent 35-54 years old
- 14 percent 65 years and over

Total Number of Households (2000): 8,594 households (vs. 8,472 in 1990)

- 76.1 percent family households (persons related by blood or marriage)
- 39.2 percent of total are families with own children under 18
- 23.9 percent of total are non-family households
- 20.7 percent of total are single-person households
- 40.5 percent of households include people under 18 years old
- 28.3 percent of households include people 65 years and over
- 12.9 percent of the population does not live in households but in group quarters such as educational institutions
- Increase of 122 households from 1990 to 2000 despite no population growth

Racial/Ethnic Composition (race alone or in combination)

- 90 percent white
- 1.6 percent African-American
- 6.4 percent Asian
- 1.4 percent two or more races
- 2.3 percent Hispanic/Latino (of any race)

Language Spoken at Home

- 14.2 percent speak a language other than English
- 3.4 percent speak English less than "very well"

Disability

- 4.6 percent of people 5-20 years old
- 6.4 percent of people 21-64 years old
- 21.8 percent of people 65 years and over

Income (1999)

- \$113,686 median household income
- \$134,769 median family income
- 66 percent of households have incomes of more than \$100,000
- 7 percent of households have incomes below \$35,000
- 2.4 percent of families have incomes below the poverty level

- 3.8 percent of the individuals are in households with incomes below the poverty level

Educational Attainment

- 75.7 percent of the population over 25 years old has a bachelor's or advanced degree

Public School Population

- 87.3 percent white; 6.3 percent Asian; 3.9 percent African-American; 2.2 percent Hispanic
- 3.2 percent eligible for free or reduced-price lunch
- 1.2 percent with limited English proficiency; 14.2 percent enrolled in special education classes

Note: Students living in dormitories are not counted as households.

Sources: US Census 2000; Warren Group; MAPC

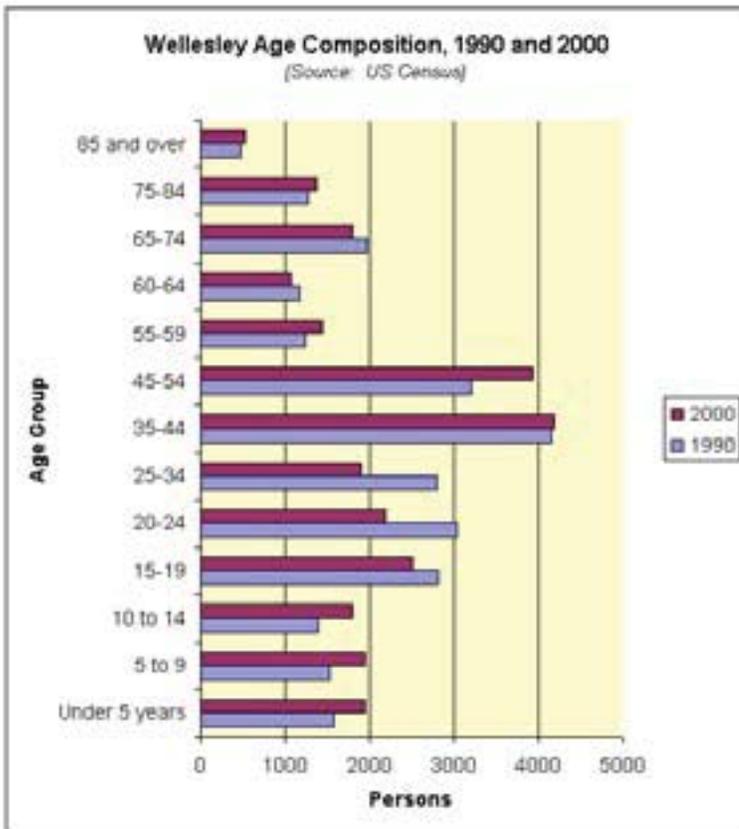
Household and Age Composition

Although Wellesley's total population declined slightly over the course of the 1990s, the number of households increased by 122, or 1 percent, to a total of 8,594. This reflects the long-term national trend towards fewer people in each household. In 2000, 76 percent of the households were family households (related by blood or marriage, but not necessarily with children) and 21 percent were single-person households. The remainder lived in households with nonrelatives or in group quarters such as college dormitories. (Almost 13 percent of the Town's population in 2000 was in group quarters, reflecting the presence of residential schools and colleges.) The average number of people per household was 2.7, while the average size of family households was 3.1.

Although Wellesley continues to be a predominantly family-oriented town, it also has significant numbers of empty-nesters and elderly persons. Households including children under

18 accounted for 41 percent of all households and 89 percent of these households have two parents present (the statewide figure is 76 percent). Twenty-eight percent of households included someone 65 or older—a larger percentage than Norfolk County, the MetroWest Region, or the state as a whole. Wellesley's median age in 2000 was 37.6, slightly younger than that of Norfolk County (38.1).

An examination of the town's age composition in 1990 and 2000 suggests several trends. The age data show the expected shift upwards of the large baby-boom generation. However, they have brought with them the baby boom "echo" which shows up in greater numbers of children to age 14. During the 1990s, the under-five population grew 25 percent and the age 5 to 9 populations grew 27 percent. The number of households with members age 65 and over dropped by one percent but the number of families with children under the age of 18 increased by more than 20 percent. The



smaller number of persons in the older age categories suggests that Wellesley seniors are leaving town. The Town has a much smaller population of 20-34 year olds than the state as a whole, and it has experienced a greater decline in this group since 1990, perhaps reflecting the very high cost of housing in Wellesley.

Racial Composition

Over the course of the 1990s, Wellesley's population became slightly more diverse. From a 94-percent white population in 1990, the town in 2000 had a white population of 90 percent. The difference is primarily due to an increase in the Asian population from 3.9 percent of the total in 1990 to 6.4 percent in 2000. Black or African-American residents represented 1.6 percent in 2000, up slightly from 1.5 percent in 1990.

School Population

Wellesley's public elementary and high-school enrollment totals 4,252 for the school year 2003-2004. Approximately 85 percent of the school-aged children attend the public schools. Since the 1994 enrollment of 3,141, public school enrollment has been increasing approximately 3.5 percent annually. In the 2003-2004 academic year, 3.2 percent of the students were from low-income households.



Income Profile

Wellesley's median household income of \$113,686, as reported in the 2000 census, is 79 percent higher than Norfolk County's median of \$63,432 and 125 percent higher than the statewide median of \$50,502. The Town's median family income of \$134,769 is the fifth highest in the state.

Nearly two-thirds of Wellesley's households have incomes of \$100,000 or more. Median family income was even higher at \$134,769.

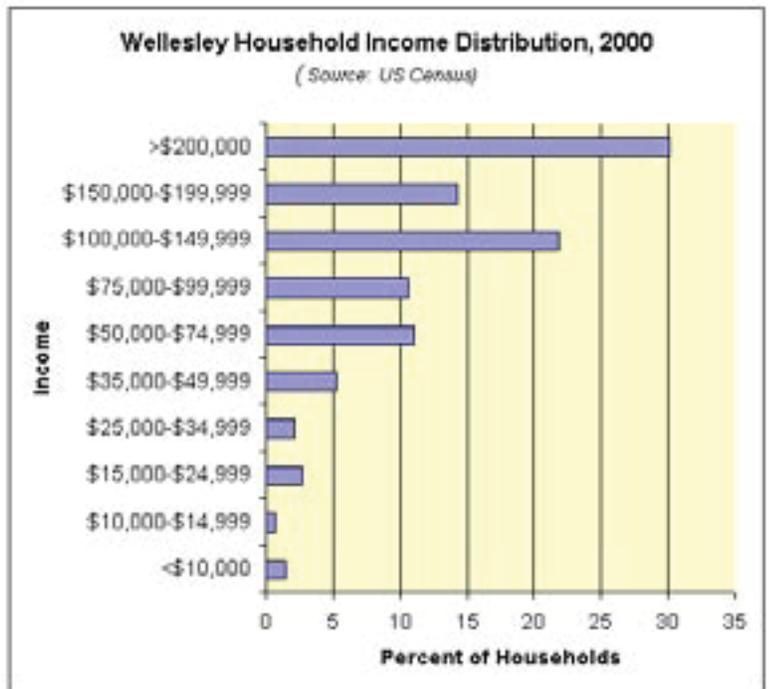
At the same time, 12 percent of the Town's households have incomes under \$50,000. The number of families below the poverty level total 158, or 2.4 percent, compared to 2.9 percent for Norfolk County and 6.4 percent for Massachusetts. The number of individuals in households with incomes below the poverty level total 3.7 percent, compared to 4.6 percent for Norfolk County and 9.3 percent for Massachusetts.

Population Projections

Projections of future population by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and the Massachusetts Institute of Economic and Social Research (MISER), differ significantly. According to MAPC, Wellesley will experience a 2 percent decline between 2000 and 2005, followed by an average annual growth of .6 percent per year over the following 20 years, for a population of 29,466 by 2025. MAPC projects a 10.7 percent increase in population between the 2000 base year and 2025. Most of that increase is expected between 2010 and 2020. The reason for a nearly 9 percent increase between 2010 and 2020 is not self-evident. In stark contrast, the MISER projection for Wellesley up to 2020 foresees a continuing trend of population decline. Perhaps the lesson of these differing projections is that relatively small changes in small populations in nearly built-out communities are very difficult to predict.

**2000 COMPARATIVE INCOME DISTRIBUTION:
WELLESLEY, NORFOLK COUNTY, AND MASSACHUSETTS**

INCOME CATEGORIES	WELLESLEY % OF HOUSEHOLDS	COUNTY % OF HOUSEHOLDS	STATE % OF HOUSEHOLDS
<\$10,000	1.4	5.6	8.8
\$10,000-\$14,999	.7	3.9	5.6
\$15,000-\$24,999	2.7	7.6	10.2
\$25,000-\$34,999	2.1	8.5	10.4
\$35,000-\$49,999	5.2	12.8	14.5
\$50,000-\$74,999	11.0	20.1	20.1
\$75,000-\$99,999	10.6	15.1	12.8
\$100,000-\$149,999	21.8	15.0	10.9
\$150,000-\$199,999	14.3	5.3	3.3
>\$200,000	30.1	6.1	3.5



POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR WELLESLEY

	2000*	2010	2020	2025
MAPC Projection	26,613	26,707	29,094	29,466
MISER Projection	26,613	26,002	24,291	N/A

Source: US Census 2000
 MAPC = Metropolitan Area Planning Commission
 MISER = Massachusetts Institute of Economic and Social Research

B. EXISTING LAND USE

Over half of Wellesley’s land is used for residential purposes. Another 36 percent is in various tax-exempt land use categories, including churches, nonprofits, schools and colleges, and government-owned property. Commercial and

LAND USE DISTRIBUTION, 2004

	ACRES
Residential Buildings	3152.27
• developable or potentially developable residential land	182.55
• undevelopable residential land	92.79
Commercial/industrial with buildings	245.61
• developable or potentially developable comm./indust. land	0.75
• undevelopable comm./indust. land	0.21
Tax-exempt land	2043.56
TOTAL	5717.74

industrial land uses occupy less than 5 percent of the land. A few mixed-use properties are included in these categories, but they represent the fundamental distribution of land uses in Wellesley. Land use is not the same thing as zoning and, like all communities, Wellesley has some properties

whose uses do not conform to zoning. For the most part, however, the overall distribution of land uses throughout the town is not likely to change significantly. Significant new development in Wellesley could occur in specific places, but the likelihood of such change is relatively remote, with few exceptions:

- **Educational land uses.** If the colleges or Dana Hall were ever to sell off large areas of land, they would have to be rezoned for noneducational uses before a private owner could develop them. As a state-owned property, Mass Bay Community College is probably the most likely to be considered for land sales.
- **Wellesley Country Club.** Unlike the educational institutions, the country club is zoned for residential use. While there is no reason to believe that most of the land will not continue as a golf course and country club, it is

never impossible for a club to have financial difficulties. The Town may wish to put some precautionary measures in place in the event of a change in uses. The country club property currently receives a tax abatement as recreational open space under state law Chapter 61B.

- **Mixed Uses.** Another kind of land use change is much more likely to occur. This is the intensification of mixed uses in the commercial districts of Wellesley. Although there are some mixed-use buildings in Wellesley today, many of the community’s goals for change focus attention on promoting residential uses along with retail and services in Wellesley’s commercial districts.

Zoning

Wellesley has a somewhat complex zoning system that reflects its relatively built-out character.

(See Figure 3-1, Zoning Map and Figure 3-2, Existing Land Use.)

Six single-family residential districts account for most of the land area and are differentiated by minimum lot sizes ranging from 10,000 square feet to 40,000 square feet. There are five residential districts that allow town house or multifamily residential use, but, with the exception of the General Residence (GR) district, which allows for two-family and town house buildings, and the Limited Residence district, all the multifamily districts are quite small and give the impression that they were intended to accommodate a few specific and known projects. Four zoning districts allow commercial development (including offices) and two allow industrial uses. Three educational districts include lands owned by Wellesley College, Dana Hall School, Babson College, and Mass Bay Community College. These districts differ in that Educational A requires off-street parking lots in addition to the residential, academic, and dormitory build-

LAND AREA IN ZONING DISTRICTS

ZONES	ACRES
Administrative and Professional	62.07
Business	58.01
Business A	48.99
Conservation	389.74
Educational	549.13
Educational A	44.08
Educational B	27.15
General Residence	78.66
Industrial	21
Industrial A	17.95
Limited Apartment	7.23
Limited Business	10.81
Limited Residential	8.37
Lower Falls Village Commercial District	8.93
Multi-Family	6.05
Single Residence District 10	1551.54
Single Residence District 15	654.32
Single Residence District 20	1517.89
Single Residence District 30	228.32
Single Residence District 40	661.29
Single Residence A	6.01
Town House	4.12
Transportation	58.72
Total	6020.38

Source: Wellesley Planning Department

ings allowed in the Educational District and Educational B allows private, for-profit recreational facilities in addition to the uses allowed in the other educational districts.

Commercial districts include an office park zoning district, which was designed for the office parks on Route 128, and six business districts, including one focused on Lower Falls and one on Wellesley Square.

Industrial districts are located at Linden Street, in the rear parcels behind the Lower Falls frontage on Washington Street, and in the rear parcels behind Walnut Street frontage north of Cedar Street. Despite the “industrial” zoning, the land uses on these parcels are office or commercial. Finally, a Transportation District covers the commuter rail right of way and train platforms.

Several districts protect sensitive resources in Wellesley: Flood Plain and Watershed Protection District; Conservation District; Historic District; and Water Supply Protection District. These districts constrain uses in order to protect specific environmental or cultural resources. In addition, the Residential Incentive Overlay District was intended to promote residential use on the Grossman’s site and adjacent parcels on the Charles River.

Site plan approval is required for projects that meet certain size thresholds, excluding single-family and two-family homes. Major Construction Projects include new construction of over 2,500 square feet gross floor area or an increase by 50 percent or more to result in a gross floor area of at least 2,500 square feet; grading or vegetation removal over 5,000 square feet or more; and activities in flood plain or watershed protection and water supply protection districts. These projects go to Town boards for review, including the Design Review Board. Minor Construction Projects are below the size of Major Projects but involve exterior changes requiring a building permit and/or changes to parking. Minor Projects require only Design Review. A Project of Significant Impact (PSI) is one with at least 10,000 square feet of new construction or, if there is 15,000 square feet or more altered, renovated or replacement floor area for a change of use in a building of at least 15,000 square feet. Projects of Significant Impact require a Special Use Permit, Site Plan Review, and Design Review.

The Zoning Board of Appeals is the Special Permit Granting Authority in Wellesley. Design Review is required for all façade renovations, new construction, and new signs, with the exception of single- and two-family houses.

Development Trends

Single-family residential development in Wellesley is limited to very rare small subdivisions when an estate or institutional property is sold, infill on a few buildable vacant lots, and tear-down and replacement construction, which is by far the most common. Commercial development is also not very common, but there are redevelopment opportunities in a number of the town's commercial districts, particularly those areas that have been built to a more suburban,

car-oriented character. The current development project for the Linden Street commercial district is an example of new development that the Town actively planned for in its 1994 Comprehensive Plan.

In this Comprehensive Plan, the land use issues reflect the development trends. Tear-downs and replacement houses, how to provide more variety of housing types without adversely affecting the character of single-family neighborhoods, how to provide more affordable housing, and how to make the car-oriented commercial districts more appealing and attractive for redevelopment will be discussed in detail in the chapters that follow.

4 Housing and Residential Character

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
<p>Maintain the primarily single-family character of Wellesley's housing stock.</p>	<p>Preserve existing character on single-family neighborhood streets.</p>	<p>Focus any additional multifamily housing in commercial areas or on arterial roads.</p>
<p>Maintain the physical form of Wellesley's residential neighborhoods by balancing community standards with individual interests.</p>	<p>Define neighborhood character through a set of neighborhood character studies in collaboration with residents to identify the distinctive physical characteristics of each neighborhood.</p>	<p>Explore new ways to maintain neighborhood character such as Neighborhood Conservation Districts, form-based zoning, advisory design guidelines, zoning changes, and other options ranging from advisory to regulatory.</p>
<p>Promote the creation of housing units other than single-family homes to provide housing options for people across a range of income, age, family size and needs while complementing town character.</p>	<p>Work towards creating town house, condominium, and rental units in commercial districts and other appropriate locations.</p>	<p>Encourage developers to create mixed-use projects and residential projects that diversify the housing stock in Wellesley and provide residential options for older, empty-nester and young family households.</p>
<p>Promote the creation of housing units permanently affordable to households with incomes at 80 percent or below the area median income.</p>	<p>Adopt a plan with numerical targets to meet the Chapter 40B goal of ten percent affordable units.</p>	<p>Support the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation and seek developers who will develop mixed-income housing that meets the Town's needs and complements town character.</p>



Findings

- Wellesley is a mature residential community with relatively little open land available for development.
- Wellesley has a large number of small households in large homes: 53 percent of households have one or two people and 51 percent of homes have eight or more rooms.
- Most new housing units are created through redevelopment of previously developed sites.
- Replacement houses are 2.5 to 3 times bigger on average than the “teardowns” they replace.
- The median price of a single-family house has increased almost 75 percent in the last five years.

- A limited number of permanently-affordable housing units have been created since the Town first adopted an affordable housing policy in 1989.
- The Town needs to add approximately 500 deed-restricted affordable housing units in order to meet the state affordable housing goal of ten percent of year-round housing.

Key Challenges

- Efforts to manage the mansionization trend have not been successful and there is resistance to establishing more dimensional constraints on building.
- Achieving more diversified housing types and more affordable housing will require active leadership and commitment from the Town.



HOUSING FACTS—HOW DO WE LIVE?

Total Number of Housing Units (2000): 8,861

- 74.7 percent single-family owner-occupied homes
- 5.1 percent of units in buildings with 2-4 units
- Over 92 percent of residential land is occupied by single-family housing.

Housing Construction Trends

- Annual average of 34 new single-family homes, 1996-2003
- 201 demolitions from 1999 to September 2004 and 189 replacement houses

Age of Housing

- 76.5 percent of the residential buildings were built before 1960
- 15.9 percent were built between 1960 and 1979
- 7.3 percent were built between 1980 and March 2000

Length of Time in Current Residence (2000)

- 59 percent of the population lived in the same house in 1995 as in 2000, the same as in the 1985-2000 period
- 41 percent lived in a different house in 1995 (and a quarter of them lived in Norfolk County - some possibly in Wellesley)

Ownership and Rental Housing (2000)

- 83.1 percent of housing units are owner-occupied
- 16.9 percent of housing units are renter-occupied

Affordability

- 2003 median single-family home sales price: \$750,000
- 2003 maximum home price affordable to a Wellesley median income household: \$593,007
- 2003 maximum home price affordable to first-time homebuyer: \$397,470
- 2000 median gross monthly rent: \$1,063
- 20.9 percent of owners pay more than 30 percent of their monthly income for housing
- 23.6 percent of renters pay more than 30 percent of their monthly income for housing
- As of March 2004, 4.6 percent of housing units are considered affordable by the state for the purposes of Chapter 40B, the Comprehensive Permit Law

Note: Students living in dormitories are not included in data about housing units

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Most Wellesley residents are homeowners and live in single-family houses.
- Fewer than 17 percent are renters.
- Approximately two out of five town residents have moved to Wellesley within the last five years.

Housing is very expensive:

- Median housing sales prices for single-family homes increased 18.3 percent (adjusted for inflation) between 2000 and 2003.

Fewer new housing units are being created than in previous years:

- Annual construction of new housing units has declined from an average of 69 in the 1970s to 36 in 2002.

MEDIAN HOUSING SALES PRICES

YEAR	I-FAMILY \$	CONDO \$
2003	750,000	448,750
2002	721,250	445,000
2001	699,000	507,000
2000	589,000	390,000
1999	517,500	335,000
1998	462,000	375,000
1997	435,000	330,000
1996	390,000	272,500
1995	385,000	300,000
1994	365,000	264,750
1993	327,000	255,000
1992	310,000	210,000
1991	285,000	162,500
1990	311,000	245,000

Source: The Warren Group

Sources: Census 2000; Warren Group; MAPC; Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2004

A. CURRENT CONDITIONS

The fundamentally residential character of Wellesley has been established for many decades and is not anticipated to change. The town’s housing is composed predominantly of single-family homes that are owner-occupied, well-maintained, and expensive. Of Wellesley’s 10.49 square miles, 69 percent is zoned residential, and of that total, over 92 percent of the land is occupied by single-family homes. While the number of housing units grew substantially between 1940 and 1960, the rate of new housing creation has declined in every decade since. By the time of the 2000 census, the town’s 8,861 housing units (of which 72 are seasonal units) represented an increase of only 97, or just over one percent more units than in 1990. Although the town continues to add new housing units even as its population has stabilized, by any measure, Wellesley is a very slow-growing community.

all Wellesley households consist of just one or two people, yet 51 percent of the homes contain eight or more rooms. A similar trend is occurring in many suburban communities—it reflects the aging of the population—but Wellesley’s disparity of small households in large homes is striking. A generational turnover of housing stock appears to have begun in Wellesley.

Number and Type of Housing Units

Data on the number and type of housing units are available from two sources, Census 2000 and the Town Assessor. The census data are estimated from a sample and the assessor does not provide full data on the number of units in multifamily structures because the primary focus of assessment is the property, not the number of units. Together, however, they provide a snapshot of housing in Wellesley. Three quarters of the nearly 8,900 Wellesley housing units enumerated in Census 2000 were single-family owner-occupied homes. A little over five percent, or 466, were in 2-4 unit structures.

Approximately eighty-five percent of Wellesley housing units are single-family homes, the vast majority of which are owner-occupied. There are 166 two- and three-family buildings, accounting for 353 housing units. If each of these buildings were owner-occupied, the two- and three-family buildings would account for 188 rental units. A

WELLESLEY HOUSING UNITS

YEAR	HOUSING UNITS	% CHANGE
1940	3,905	--
1950	5,199	33.1
1960	6,930	33.3
1970	7,785	12.3
1980	8,389	7.8
1990	8,764	4.4
2000	8,861	1.0

Source: US Census

This does not mean that Wellesley has no housing issues. As a community becomes more built out, residents in established neighborhoods often become more sensitive to the impact of new construction on the few remaining open parcels or subdividable parcels and to the impact of the replacement of older houses by new, larger houses. In a climate of very high housing prices, the renovation of the housing stock has had the effect of reducing income diversity because there are fewer smaller houses left and their prices reflect their value as “teardowns” rather than as less-expensive housing.

Changing population dynamics also pose some housing-related questions. Fifty-three percent of

HOUSING STOCK

	STRUCTURES	UNITS
Single-family	7231	7231
Two-family	143	284
Three-family	23	69
4 to 8 unit buildings	18	*78-102
8+ unit buildings	16	455
Condominium units	34	372
		*8489-8513

* insufficient data on number of units in 4-8 unit bldgs

Source: 2004 Assessor’s Data

small number of apartment buildings, including buildings with Housing Authority and subsidized units, contain approximately 450 rental apartments. Finally, there are 372 condominiums.

Housing Tenure

Based on the estimates above, there are fewer than 700 housing units in Wellesley that are consistently managed for rental income. This is less than half the number of renter-occupied units recorded in the 2000 census. Most of the additional units are single-family homes and condominiums whose owners have rented their homes while they are temporarily away.

HOUSING TENURE 2000 (OCCUPIED UNITS)

TENURE	NUMBER	PERCENT
Owner-occupied	7,140	83
Renter-occupied	1,454	17

Source: US Census 2000

Age of Housing

The well-established character of Wellesley's residential neighborhoods is evident in the age of the housing stock. Over three-quarters of Wellesley's residential buildings were built before 1960. Wellesley participated in the post-World War II suburban building boom, as over a third of Wellesley's housing was built in the twenty years between 1940 and 1959. From that peak period of housing construction, the number of new units created in each subsequent 20-year period has declined. About 16 percent of Wellesley's current housing was built between 1960 and 1979 and 7.6 percent between 1980 and March 2000. From an average of 69 new units in the 1970s, annual construction has declined to 36 in 2002, or an average of 34 new single-family homes in the period 1996-2003. More than two-thirds of the new housing units created during the 1990s replaced existing units. As noted earlier, between 1990 and 2000 there was a net increase of only 97 housing units in Wellesley.

AGE OF HOUSING STOCK: WELLESLEY AND NORFOLK COUNTY

YEAR BUILT	WELLESLEY (NUMBER)	WELLESLEY (PERCENT)	NORFOLK COUNTY (PERCENT)
1990-2000	318	3.7%	8.0%
1980-1989	335	3.9%	10.4%
1970-1979	677	7.9%	13.0%
1960-1969	688	8.0%	13.5%
1940-1959	2,989	34.8%	24.6%
1939 or before	3,587	41.7%	30.5%

Source: US Census

Residential Buildout Capacity

In 2000, the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, through the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, prepared a buildout study for Wellesley. A buildout study analyzes the amount of development that would be possible under existing zoning if every developable parcel in the town were to be built out under by-right zoning. The study found that there were 647 acres of developable land in Wellesley with the potential for 2,209 residential units. However, 1,759 of those "housing units" would be academic housing in the Educational zoning districts. The number of non-academic housing units is much smaller, 450 in total, of which only 218 would be single-family homes. The remainder would be apartments permitted in the Central Downtown district.



This exercise illustrates the extent to which Wellesley is nearing residential buildout. Of course, the analysis does not take into account potential Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit projects, which can have more units than permitted by zoning. Communities rarely reach full buildout and there are always opportunities for redevelopment.

Wellesley’s buildout data simply show that, absent significant ownership or zoning changes in the Education zoning district, the Town’s residential construction activity will be focused on redevelopment and small infill projects for single-family homes and, potentially, town house, condo, or rental apartment development in mixed-use projects in commercial areas or locations where unusual redevelopment opportunities become available, such as the closing of St. James’s Parish Church.

The Wellesley Planning Department has also prepared a different kind of buildout exercise which calculated the amount of land on which property owners could expand existing houses to the maximum lot coverage and setbacks allowed in zoning. This buildout was not aimed at estimating the number of housing units that could be built by right under current zoning, but rather at estimating the potential for additional impervious surfaces and change in private open spaces. The analysis showed that a total of 426 additional acres of land could theoretically be covered by buildings if every lot were built out to the maximum allowed coverage.

Residential Taxes

As residential real estate values have risen in recent years, the average real estate tax bill has also been increasing. The Town’s 2004 tax rate of \$8.56 produced an average single-family tax bill of \$7,320, making it the 11th highest in the Commonwealth, higher than most of its neighbors but similar to towns in its general income group such as Wayland and Brookline. Neighboring Weston ranked number one, at \$11,238.

B. TRENDS IN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Rate of Residential Development

CREATION OF NEW HOUSING

Because there is so little unbuilt land in Wellesley, most new housing results from redevelopment of existing lots and occasional, small subdivisions. While building permits for single-

family houses averaged 34 from 1996 to 2003, the number of permits has been rising in recent years. By September 2004, the Building Inspector reported a 15-year high: 95 units permitted, of which 42 were single-family homes (fewer than in 2003) and 52 were multifamily units produced under a Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit. Over the course of the 1990s, there were eight subdivisions in Wellesley

with an average of four units each. With the exception of a four-unit subdivision on 24 acres of estate land that was accompanied by a conservation restriction, none of the subdivisions was on more than three acres of land.

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS

YEAR	SINGLE FAMILY	MULTI-FAMILY (UNITS)
2003	59	0
2002	36	0
2001	48	0
2000	36	0
1999	20	0
1998	21	5
1997	24	0
1996	30	0
Average	34	0.6

Source: US Census Bureau

AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY TAX BILLS FOR WELLESLEY AND ITS NEIGHBORS (FY 2004)

COMMUNITY	AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY TAX BILL
Dover	\$8,412
Natick	\$4,108
Needham	\$5,202
Newton	\$6,831
Wellesley	\$7,320
Weston	\$11,238

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue





Many new housing units created in Wellesley result from redevelopment—more popularly known as “teardowns.” Smaller houses built in earlier decades—sound, but with functional and stylistic obsolescence—have become less valuable than the land they occupy and purchasers often want a bigger house. Both developers and individual purchasers participate in the teardown phenomenon. Between 1999 and September 2004, there were 201 demolitions (including several non-residential structures) with 189 replacement houses in Wellesley. As the map on the next page indicates, the demolitions were scattered throughout the town, with clusters in proximity to Hundreds Road and to Cliff Road. As of November 2004, based on completed permits as well as expected permit applications, the assessor's department expected at least 65 demolitions in 2004.

Replacement Houses and Community Character

Larger replacement houses typically take the place of demolished houses. A comparison of the average size of the old houses with the average size of the new houses in the 1990-2003 period shows that the new houses are two and a half to three times larger, on average, than the houses they replace. Of course, in individual cases, the new house may be many times larger than the old one, for example, a 6,207 square-foot house that replaced a 460 square-foot house in 2001.

INCREASE IN AVERAGE TOTAL LIVING AREA OF REPLACEMENT HOUSES (IN SF)

YEAR OF DEMO	OLD HOUSE	NEW HOUSE	MULTIPLIER
1999	1492	4591	3.1
2000	1887	4614	2.4
2001	1507	4978	3.3
2002	1650	4190	2.5
2003	1751	4253	2.4
2004*	1537	3982	2.6

*Sample of completed demolitions and replacements.

Source: Wellesley Assessors Dept.

DISTRIBUTION OF RESIDENTIAL DEMOLITIONS, 1999-2003

LOT SIZE	NUMBER OF DEMOLITIONS	% OF TOTAL
10,000 sf and under	6	5.1%
over 10,000 to 15,000 sf	39	33.3%
over 15,000 to 20,000 sf	18	15.4%
over 20,000 to 30,000 sf	31	26.5%
over 30,000 to 40,000 sf	11	9.4%
over 40,000 sf	12	10.3%
TOTAL	117	100.0%

Many Wellesley residents are concerned about the impact of teardowns and large replacement houses on the character of streets and neighborhoods.



Unlike communities where the majority of single-family homes are on lots of one acre or more, large houses in Wellesley can have an immediate visual impact in neighborhoods with smaller lot sizes and modest setback requirements. Older capes and ranches are the prime candidates for teardowns, and many are sited on smaller lots. An analysis of 117 residential demolitions in the 1999-2003

period shows that over a third of the demolitions occurred on lots smaller than 15,000 sf, where rear yard setbacks are 10 to 15 feet. All Wellesley lots have side yard setbacks of only 20 feet, regardless of the size of the lot. On larger lots these dimensions are mitigated by the fact that there are limitations on the amount of land that can be covered by buildings. Smaller lots allow proportionately more lot coverage. Smaller, older homes were built well within the setback minimums, so when new houses build up to the setback limits, they can give the appearance of noncompliance with zoning because they seem out of scale with neighboring houses.

This issue is a complex one, because if the process of demolition and replacement continues, it is the smaller, older homes that will increasingly seem out of character. What in one era is called “mansionization” may in another be seen as renovation of the housing stock through infill and redevelopment. Another aspect of this trend is its impact on income diversity in Wellesley. The disappearance of single-family homes of modest size and price means that the Town no longer has “starter houses” or homes for Town employees, craftsmen, and others who historically contributed to the community and could afford to live there. In many communities, condominiums have become entry-level housing, but Wellesley's few condominiums also have high prices.

(See Figure 4-I, Residential Demolitions 1999–2003.)

Cost of Housing

Housing prices in Wellesley, as in all of eastern Massachusetts, began to rise steeply in the late 1990s. Wellesley has been a sought-after, trade-up community for decades, but until about twenty years ago, there was a fairly good match



between family income of local residents and income required to purchase the typical, or median priced, home. Housing prices are continuing to rise in recent years: the price of a single-family home has increased 73 percent between 1999 and the fall of 2004.

Sales and prices of both single-family homes and condominiums are up over 2002 and 2003 levels. Generally, turnover averages a stable five percent per year in Wellesley. There were 114 single-family homes listed with the Municipal Listing Service (MLS) in November 2004, with a median asking price of \$1,345,000; the ten condominiums listed had a median asking price of \$699,900. Fifty percent of the single-family listings fell into the \$720,000–\$1,895,000 price range. Even at these high prices, inventory is moving. The average time to sell for the single-family homes was less than three months, but more than one third of the single-family properties listed with MLS at that time were on the market for six months or more. Several languished for over a year, suggesting that some sellers may be testing the market, but are not highly motivated. The least-expensive listing was a three-bedroom home for \$519,000.

There are relatively few rental properties in Wellesley. A search of www.realtor.com and discussions with real estate brokers identified 28 properties available for rent in December 2004. More than three quarters of these were single-

family homes; the balance was split among apartments, duplexes, and accessory apartments. The units ranged from a small one-bedroom apartment with an asking rent of \$1,000 per month to a six-bedroom home for \$10,000 per month. Fifty percent of the available units had asking rents in the \$2,000–\$3,000 per month range. Most did not include heat, an expense that would boost the effective rent.

AFFORDABILITY IMPLICATIONS

As elsewhere in the region, home prices in Wellesley have recently risen faster than incomes. Median household income in the town was estimated to be a comfortable \$127,000 in 2003.¹ To afford the median priced home sold that year—for \$751,000—would have required an income of nearly \$162,000. An income of more than \$185,000 would be required to afford the \$880,000 price tag on the median home sold through October 2004. Condominiums can hardly be considered an affordable alternative, with a median sales price through October 2004 of \$567,000.

With homes rarely available now for less than \$500,000, affordability is a major problem in Wellesley for teachers, municipal workers, public safety personnel, and others who do not already live in town but would like to. The highest paid municipal employee—the superintendent of schools, with a 2003 salary of nearly \$166,000—would have been able to purchase the median priced home last year (assuming a 20 percent downpayment and normal underwriting criteria), but just barely. No other public official had the income to purchase the median priced home.² Wellesley compensates its school and municipal employees comparatively well. Still, teachers, police, and fire fighters earning between \$50,000

and \$75,000 per year would likely be able to qualify for a mortgage of \$230,000 to \$350,000, well below the least expensive housing offering in town.³ Assuming an 80 percent mortgage at 2004 favorable low rates (5.5 percent), and allowing 33 percent of income for principal, interest, real estate taxes, and homeowners insurance, a homebuyer would have needed an income of nearly \$112,000—and \$120,000 in cash—to purchase the least expensive home available for sale in Wellesley in late 2004.

Housing Affordable to Households with Moderate Incomes

DEFINING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

“Affordable housing” is a term with many meanings. For government purposes, it usually means subsidized housing that is deed-restricted to remain affordable over many years to households earning below a certain income threshold, typically 80 percent of the area median income. To others, it simply means housing with modest costs in the market.

For legal purposes, the definition of housing affordability is based on three statistics: median household income, the percentage of household income spent on housing, and the median cost of housing. Under most subsidy programs, housing produced with government financial assistance is targeted to people whose household income is 80 percent or less of the median for an area. The median income level set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD] for the Boston Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) for FY2004 was \$82,600, and 80 percent of median for a family of four was \$66,150. Housing is considered affordable by HUD if households with incomes at or below 80 percent of the median can

¹ *The Greater Boston Housing Report Card 2003*, Bluestone, Helmrich, Heudorfer. Center for Urban and Regional Policy, Northeastern University, April 2004.

² These municipal employees, and categories of employees, are used only for illustrative purposes. Personal financial information is not available other than salaries published in the Annual Town Report. Affordability was calculated based on those incomes and standard mortgage industry guidelines.

³ Assuming only one salary per household.

obtain it while paying no more than 30 percent of their total income. An affordable home, therefore, could be one that a family of four making no more than \$66,150 a year could buy or rent with 30 percent of its income.

WHAT DOES AFFORDABLE HOUSING LOOK LIKE?

Many people have an image of affordable housing that is based on an outdated image of high-rise, urban, public housing projects built in the 1960s or 70s. In fact, affordable housing today takes many other forms, from single-family homes to garden apartments. It fits in so well with local character that people in many communities pass by affordable housing every day without realizing it. Mixed-income developments, where the affordable units are indistinguishable from the market rate units, and scattered-site affordable housing, in which affordable housing is scattered in small groupings throughout the community, are now the preferred ways of developing and siting affordable housing. In Wellesley, the greatest opportunities for affordable housing creation lie in the Town’s commercial districts where mixed-use projects could be located close to the train stations and to shops.

CHAPTER 40B—THE COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT LAW

For many suburban communities, the face of affordable housing is the state’s Comprehensive Permit Law (Chapter 40B). This law is intended to promote affordable housing creation by allowing developers who agree to include at least 25 percent below-market-rate units in their projects to go through a streamlined permitting process (the comprehensive permit) and override local zoning if the community does not have ten percent of its year-round housing units designated as permanently affordable. If the permit is denied by a municipality, then the developers can appeal the denial to the state’s Housing Appeals Committee.

Housing units created under Chapter 40B must meet four tests in order to be counted toward the ten percent goal:

- The units must be part of a “subsidized” development built or operated by a public agency, non-profit, or limited dividend organization. They must be approved for direct state or federal subsidy: for example, through the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Federal Home



Affordable housing in Massachusetts cities and towns now takes many forms, from adaptive reuse of historic buildings to new construction, as shown in these examples.

Loan Bank of Boston, or the state Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). With the exception of the Local Initiative Program (LIP), the subsidies are financial. In the case of the LIP, towns work directly with developers but receive technical assistance from DHCD and receive standing as Chapter 40B projects. LIP projects allow towns more flexibility in making decisions about the design and site plan of a project. The state merely has to approve the affordability elements of the project: the incomes of the persons to be housed, the minimum quality of the units, fair marketing, and a maximum level of profit.

- At least 25 percent of the units must be restricted to households having incomes at or below 80 percent of the area median income. The units must have rents or sales prices that limit housing costs to no more than 30 percent of the residents' household income. For newly constructed housing, the affordability restrictions must remain in place for at least 30 years.
- The development must be subject to use restrictions and deed restrictions ensuring that the units will remain available only to people who have qualifying incomes, and these requirements must be monitored by a public agency or a non-profit organization.
- The units must be openly marketed according to fair housing laws. However, towns can establish a local preference for their own residents.

In addition, part of Chapter 40B's purpose was to create new permanently affordable housing units by adding to the overall housing inventory. One of the reasons Massachusetts housing costs have skyrocketed in the last decade is that production of new housing for almost all income levels has been lower than the demand, and temporary affordability in existing units does not increase the amount of housing in the state.

CHANGES TO CHAPTER 40B

In 2002 the state issued new regulations for Chapter 40B. These regulations provide for more rapid counting of approved units and of more types of units; more leeway for a town to deny a permit or include conditions if it has an approved affordable housing plan and has made recent progress towards the ten percent affordable units or if the project is very large in relation to the town's population; and consideration by the Housing Appeals Committee of a community's master plan or comprehensive plan and affordable housing creation efforts.

Communities may submit an affordable housing plan for approval by DHCD. An approved plan must be a "planned production" plan; that is, it must have goals, a timeline, and strategies to produce affordable housing units to reach 10 percent of the community's total housing units. If a town demonstrates that it has produced 40B-eligible units in the amount of three-fourths of one percent of total housing units (about 66 units per year for Wellesley), it can ask DHCD for certification of its plan. A certified plan permits a town to deny a comprehensive permit, or grant one with conditions, for one year (two years if it produced 1.5 percent of total housing units). The Housing Appeals Committee is also empowered to take into account a town's master plan or comprehensive plan in any decision on a developer's appeal of a denial or a conditional comprehensive permit.

Chapter 40B may also be subject to change by the legislature or through further administrative changes as a result of the 40B Task Force that met in spring 2003. The Task Force made a series of recommendations that have been incorporated into legislation, but no changes have yet been made as of this writing. Among the recommendations are:

- In 40B homeownership developments, twice the number of affordable units will be counted towards a community's ten percent goal.

- Communities can deny a 40B application if 40B units pending during the prior nine-month period equal at least two percent of total housing units or .5 percent if the community has a state-approved housing plan.
- Communities with an approved housing plan can deny a 40B application if they have permitted qualifying units equaling .5 percent of total housing units during the prior twelve months (this is a reduction from the current regulation of .75 percent).
- The agencies that provide subsidies to proposed Chapter 40B projects must take new criteria into consideration when determining project eligibility: density and size; degree of affordability; principles of sustainable development and smart growth; community impact and consistency with housing need; impact on historical resources; and the impact of other pending applications for housing development.
- The Legislature and the Governor should establish a new "growth aid" fund to provide financial assistance to communities commensurate with the costs of housing growth.

PLANNING FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN WELLESLEY

The high cost of housing in Wellesley and its effect on community diversity has been noticeable for a number of years. During the post-World War II boom in suburban housing, new neighborhoods in Wellesley were constructed for affluent families, and by the 1960s Wellesley was already becoming too expensive for most first time homebuyers. The real estate boom of the 1980s consolidated the escalation of Wellesley housing prices and in 1989 Town Meeting adopted an Affordable Housing Policy. This policy was amended in 1997 and now takes the following form:

Wellesley is an outstandingly attractive residential community, enriched by the diversity of its residents. Wellesley seeks to maintain and enhance its present character by preserving a

mix of housing stock that includes low income, moderate income, and market rate housing. In establishing this Affordable Housing Policy, Wellesley seeks to control its own growth and development.

Affordable Housing is housing which, under the guidelines and regulations promulgated by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40B, is defined as low- or moderate-income housing, or housing which may otherwise be determined by vote of Wellesley Town Meeting to be affordable housing.

Criteria for the Development of Affordable Housing:

1. The predominantly single-family residential character of Wellesley shall be preserved.
2. Urban-scale projects are to be avoided.
3. Preferences shall be given to projects where 100 percent of the units satisfy Town housing goals; however, the Town recognized the potential necessity of including mixed-income housing in order to ensure a development's overall economic viability.
4. Any affordable housing shall, to the maximum extent possible, remain affordable in perpetuity.
5. Insofar as it is legal, Wellesley residents shall be given priority in the marketing of affordable housing units.
 - a. Preservation of open space and protection of natural resources shall be important considerations in the Town's land use planning.
 - b. Development of affordable housing should not overburden existing utility systems or other public facilities that serve the Town, including services, streets, the public water supply and sewers, to a greater extent than would any other development.
 - c. Wellesley's Fair Housing Policy shall be respected.

The 1994 Comprehensive Plan devoted substantial space to affordable housing, focusing particularly on opportunities to create elderly housing. The Plan called for the Town to diversify its affordable housing supply (then at 396 units, or 4.54 percent of the year round housing stock) by 375 units over a 5-10 year period, by adding the following:

- Family units—half to be subsidized :
 - 131 family apartments or small scale condominiums (3 and 4 bedroom) for young families, 100 rental and 31 homeownership
 - 44 family apartments or small-scale condominiums specifically targeted to single parents, 39 rental and 5 homeownership
- Elderly units—three-quarters to be subsidized:
 - 200 rental units in a range of type (independent and assisted living) for seniors/elderly (age 65 and over).

In the fifteen years since Wellesley Town Meeting first adopted its affordable housing policy, numerous Town-appointed and volunteer committees have attempted to expand and diversify the Town's supply of affordable housing, but their efforts have met with limited success. Only seven units have been added since 1994: three ownership units in a recently completed 12-unit town house developed under the comprehensive permit provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 40B and an existing four-unit group home.⁴

In 2005, Town Meeting voted to extend inclusionary zoning to Wellesley's subdivisions. Formerly, the inclusionary zoning only applied to housing in the business district. Although Wellesley has few subdivisions—and those that do exist are very small—this measure will ensure the creation of some new affordable units if any larger parcels of land were to be sold and devel-

oped. Some affordable housing proposals have been stymied by a lack of funding, but for the most part, the Town has not participated in those programs where funding has been available, such as state and federally funded homebuyer assistance and home repair programs.

New resources have been identified for affordable housing in Wellesley with the creation of the Housing Development Corporation, and adoption of the Community Preservation Act. In 1998, the Town established the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation whose mission is “to sponsor and assist in the development of affordable housing opportunities for persons of low and moderate income in the Town of Wellesley, Massachusetts in order to implement the Town's Affordable Housing Policy.” With Town adoption of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2003, Wellesley gained a dedicated revenue source for affordable housing creation because a minimum of ten percent of the funds collected under the CPA must be applied to affordable housing. In its first report to the Town, the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) articulated a set of goals for its affordable housing (which the CPC calls “community housing”) funding program:

- Create new and preserve existing community housing that is consistent with the Town's affordable housing policy adopted under Article 31 of the 1989 Annual Town Meeting and modified under Article 4 of the 1997 Annual Town Meeting.
- Create new and preserve existing community housing that is well designed and maintained, is of high quality and based on sound planning principles.
- Disperse community housing throughout the town by siting new community housing

⁴ Due to a change in regulations, communities are now able to count group homes for special needs populations (e.g., psychologically or cognitively disabled clients of the state's Departments of Mental Health or Mental Retardation).

in neighborhoods that currently have little or no affordable housing.

- Provide and preserve community housing that promotes age and income diversity.
- Ensure the long-term affordability of community housing, and in perpetuity wherever possible.
- Create new and preserve existing community housing that will contribute to the state's mandated target of having ten percent of the Town's housing stock affordable to households with incomes at or below 80 percent of the Boston area's median income.
- Provide a mix of low-income, moderate-income, and market-rate housing.
- Provide community housing opportunities that give priority to local residents, Town employees, and families of students enrolled in the Town's public schools.
- Reuse existing buildings or use previously developed or Town-owned sites for new community housing.
- Acquire and convert market-rate housing into community housing.

EXISTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Currently, 4.7 percent of Wellesley's year-round housing stock (416 units) is certified for inclusion on the state's list of subsidized housing according to the inventory dated January 19, 2005. The Wellesley Housing Authority owns and manages 235 units of housing, 102 of which are for families in two developments and 133 units for elderly and disabled persons. One of the family developments was modernized several years ago.⁵ The town also has 125 units of privately-owned, publicly subsidized elderly housing, making a total of 258 subsidized units available for elderly/disabled persons. In addition, Wellesley has a four-unit group home leased by the Department of

Mental Retardation and the Hastings Village development adds 52 units.

Additional units have been and will be added to Wellesley's inventory. The state mistakenly omitted 36 existing rental units at Ardmore, a privately-owned and publicly-subsidized development. The town houses at Edgemore Circle also contribute three new permanently affordable ownership units. This increased the Town's total to 455 units, or 5.2 percent of its year-round housing inventory. In addition, a 32-unit age-restricted development with eight affordable units has been proposed. If approved, this development would boost the total to 5.3 percent (463 units). The Wellesley Inn project will also add six affordable units: two on site in the Grove Street cottage, a two-family home to be built on a Town-owned lot on Boulevard Road, and two located elsewhere in town on a site or sites approved by the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation.

The Wellesley Housing Development Corporation has issued a Request for Proposals for creation of three market-rate and one affordable condominium unit in the Walnut Street Fire Station building. In addition, the Town's Community Preservation Committee and Town Meeting voted in spring 2004 to transfer \$200,000 to the Housing Development Corporation for the buy-down of an existing home or condo or the construction of one unit of affordable housing.

THE NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN WELLESLEY

Although Wellesley is one of the wealthiest communities in the state, 18 percent of the Town's households are considered extremely low, very low, or low income by federal Department of Housing and Urban Development definitions

⁵ Elderly/disabled properties: 41 River Street (26 units); 315 Weston Road (31 units); 48-513 Washington Street (76 units). Family housing properties: Barton Road (89 units); 50 Linden Street (12 units).

and three percent live below the federal poverty level.⁶ The income of renter households is just 45 percent of what it is for owner occupants, roughly \$56,923 compared to \$127,130 in 1999.⁷ More than 600 low-income homeowners and more than 200 low income renters experience housing problems, mostly affordability problems. The affordability challenge affects all age groups. Fifty-five percent of the low-income, cost-burdened renters are under the age of 65, as are 47 percent of the cost-burdened homeowners. In addition to those already facing cost burdens, more than 100 additional households are deemed at risk of becoming cost burdened because of low incomes.

High housing costs have made housing affordability an issue even for middle- and upper-income households. Five percent of the middle- and upper-income renters and 15 percent of the middle- and upper-income homeowners in Wellesley also face cost burdens. The increases in property taxes and homeowners insurance that have accompanied the rapid rise in home values account for much of the increasing burden for those with little or no mortgage outstanding on their property. The average single-family tax bill increased by more than 55 percent in Wellesley between 1998 and 2004.

Notwithstanding near record-low mortgage interest rates, home prices increasingly outstrip income gains. In 1998, Wellesley’s median household income was sufficient to purchase a home priced at 94 percent of what the typical (median priced) single-family home that year sold for. By 2003, the median family income would have covered only 78 percent of the median price. (In other words, the median home price in 2003 would have to have been

priced \$158,000 less than it was to be affordable to an existing Wellesley family earning the median household income, which was estimated to be \$128,000 in 2003.)

CREATING AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN WELLESLEY

Appendix A to this Comprehensive Plan contains a framework for a planned production approach to affordable housing. If the Town wishes to take an aggressive approach to meeting the state’s ten percent goals for affordable housing, planned production could help Wellesley avoid future unwanted Chapter 40B projects—assuming the Town is able to meet the yearly targets for affordable housing creation. This would be an ambitious goal and require strong support to identify potential sites and attract developers.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Residential Character: Manage Development of New Large Houses in Old Neighborhoods

In both the survey and the public meetings for this Plan, Wellesley residents expressed a strong desire that the Town do something about the impact of new or expanded houses that are out of character with the surrounding neighborhood. Many communities in the greater Boston region have been wrestling with the issue of “mansionization” since the mid-1990s. This is when housing prices began to skyrocket and the value of land in desirable, close-in communities with little open land for development began to exceed the value of the small, older houses that had been built on the land.

⁶ Current HUD income classifications are as follows: extremely low income—household income 30 percent or less of the HUD area median family income; very low income—household income greater than 30 percent but not more than 50 percent of area median family income; low income—household income greater than 50 percent but not more than 80 percent of area median family income; and moderate income—household income greater than 80 percent but not more than 95 percent of area median family income.

⁷ Recent estimates suggest that renter incomes have increased by only 9 percent and homeowner incomes by just 12.5 percent since that time. (*The Greater Boston Housing Report Card*, 2003, Bluestone et al.)

Single-family houses are typically subject to minimum requirements for lot frontage and building setbacks from the lot boundary and often to maximum heights or numbers of stories. In some cases, communities have imposed a maximum percentage of the lot that can be covered by buildings (sometimes including other impervious surfaces such as driveways). Cities and a few larger towns have established Floor Area Ratio (FAR) maximums for residences. Massachusetts prohibits zoning ordinances from regulating the interior area of a single-family building (M.G.L. Chapter 40A, sec. 3). This law was originally intended as an “anti-snob” law that would keep towns from setting a high minimum floor area. (An attempt to change the law to allow towns to establish a maximum floor area has not passed the legislature.) Because of this state law, most communities have focused on dimensional changes in their approach to the “mansionization” question.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO MANAGE "MANSIONIZATION" IN WELLESLEY

Wellesley was one of the first communities to attempt to constrain the size, bulk, and siting of new residential construction by amending the Zoning Bylaw in 1996. By establishing maximum lot coverage percentages for all single-family residential lots, reducing the maximum height to three stories (or 36 feet from 45 feet), and establishing wider frontage and setback regulations for new lots created after January 16, 1997, the Town reduced the number of larger lots that could be subdivided and limited the maximum size of new houses that could be built.

The new regulations did not affect certain siting and design choices, such as “sideways” houses sited with the front door to the side, “snout” houses with prominent garage doors facing the street, and side garages built up to the setback line. Setback regulations for existing lots remained unchanged and despite the

tightening of dimensional constraints, it was still possible to build large replacement houses that many people find to be out of character with neighboring houses.

In 2002, the Wellesley Planning Board proposed a series of additional zoning amendments designed to constrain the impact of large home redevelopment in existing neighborhoods:

- Restrictions on the height of roof soffits and the effect of dormers
- Reduction in the allowed maximum building coverage
- Requirement for a landscape plan for houses with a footprint of 3,000 square feet or more
- Restrictions on placement of HVAC and similar equipment in setbacks as well as visual and acoustical screening if required by the building inspector
- Requirement for a 30-foot minimum setback for garages when the entrance faces the side lot line.

With the exception of the last two, these zoning amendments did not pass. There are a number of considerations that typically result in the defeat of these kinds of initiatives. First, while people often wish they could regulate more closely the activities of other property owners, they think twice because the regulations will also have an impact on their own property. Second, many people do not believe that changing dimensional or site requirements will change the fact that the impact of some new houses on neighborhood character is often really a matter of design rather than simply bulk or size. Attempts to constrain the size of large homes in other communities have also proven to have limited effect or have gone down to defeat. In 1997, Newton reduced the height of single-family and two-family houses from 36 to 30 feet and defined height in such a way to encourage sloped roofs. Newton also introduced the concept of Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to apply to new single-family and two-family houses or additions that require demolition of 50 percent or more of the structure. One of the

main objectives of these changes was to slow the demolition of single-family homes for construction of newer, bulkier duplexes. In 2004, Newton once again considered zoning amendments to address the aesthetic and neighborhood character impacts of “snout houses” and large replacement houses, discussing combining design review and additional FAR restrictions. The Town of Lexington studied this matter for several years in great detail and its Planning Board proposed a site plan review process for large homes according to a set of graduated lot and size thresholds; Town Meeting, however, declined to approve this proposal.

There are four ways to approach the impacts of new large homes in existing neighborhoods:

- **Adjustments to dimensional constraints.** This is the most common way to address the problem and is the easiest to apply. However, even when communities are willing to reduce heights, setbacks, lot coverage, and other easily-measured elements of a building project, residents want to preserve flexibility for their own potential additions. New construction that meets all the zoning requirements still may seem incompatible with neighborhood character to some residents.
- **Site plan review of proposed new construction or additions that meet certain threshold requirements.** Site plan review does not prohibit the construction of large homes that meet certain criteria, but simply brings discussion of new large homes and additions into the public forum of a Planning Board hearing so that impacts on abutting properties and the neighborhood can be understood and mitigated.
- **Historic or neighborhood commission review.** Demolition and exterior changes to houses in local historic districts are subject to review by the Historic District Commission and changes require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). The Cottage Street Historic District is Wellesley's only local historic district. A less-stringent form of neighborhood charac-

ter review can be implemented by creating Neighborhood Conservation Districts. These geographically-defined districts typically have an identifiable architectural character that can be documented. When the conservation district is established, decisions are made on what kinds of exterior changes will be subject to mandatory or advisory review.

- **Design guidelines for voluntary application.** Single-family neighborhoods are generally not subject to the authority of design review committees, which focus on commercial and mixed-use projects. However, design guidelines that explain the valued elements of neighborhood character to potential builders and new residents can be useful in communicating a desired approach to creating new or substantially altered houses. In many cases, concerns expressed about the size and bulk of new large houses are really design issues that cannot be effectively addressed simply by changing dimensional requirements in the zoning. Voluntary design guidelines, which could be made available in a number of ways, including through realtors, will encourage designers and builders to look beyond the building lot in order to fit into the neighborhood while meeting the needs of their clients.

MORE DIMENSIONAL CHANGES FOR WELLESLEY NOT RECOMMENDED

Although Town Meeting passed dimensional changes in 1997 that reduced lot coverage and height for all single-family districts and expanded frontage and setback requirements for newly created lots, in 2002 Town Meeting was not persuaded to establish additional restrictions except for those that affected side garages and placement of HVAC units. It is possible that a combination of more complex zoning rules, including establishing FAR limits for residential areas and setbacks calculated to be proportional to the height of the new construction, could be more effective in regulating the size of new

houses relative to their neighborhood environment. However, more complicated rules would make it harder for homeowners to understand how the proposed changes would affect their own properties and their ability to build additions without getting variances, and the additional complexity would encourage many to oppose such new regulations. It is also the case that although size and location on the lot is part of the problem, sometimes what people really do not like about a particular new house is its design. Dimensional requirements alone do not have significant impact on design.

Below are recommended options for Wellesley to consider as new ways to approach the problem of incorporating replacement houses more harmoniously into existing neighborhoods.

Recommended Option 1: Site Plan Review for Large Houses

The Town of Weston devised a site plan review process that allowed the Town to shape and influence the way that large houses affect their neighbors. The salient elements of the Weston bylaw include:

- **Definition of “Residential Gross Floor Area” (RGFA):** “The sum of the horizontal area(s) of the above-grade floors in the residential building(s) on a lot, excluding unfinished attics but including attached or detached garages. The RGFA shall be measured from the exterior face of the exterior walls.” Including garages in the RGFA is important because large houses often have multiple garages whose location is very important in the relationship of the building to its neighbors.
- **Threshold for single-family home site plan review:** “The Residential Gross Floor Area ‘RGFA’ of any new or replacement single-family dwelling use constructed pursuant to a building permit issued on or after October

29, 1998, may not exceed the greater of 3,500 s.f. or 10 percent of the lot area up to a maximum of 6,000 s.f.”

- **Definition of “Replacement Single-family Dwelling”:** In order to include very large houses that result from substantial renovation and addition under the site plan review, the bylaw includes a definition: “The supplanting of all or a portion of a demolished or substantially demolished single-family dwelling with a substitute single-family dwelling in the same or in a different location on the lot.”

ACTIONS FOR WELLESLEY:

Define “demolition” or “replacement house” to cover substantial additions.

Many large homes that cause concern result from construction that is technically an addition or alteration but is so extensive that the original house is no longer recognizable. The Weston bylaw is intended to include these cases under the definition of “demolition” but does not define what “substantially demolished” means. Wellesley should resolve this problem by creating a definition for demolition that includes criteria such as removal of 50 percent of the building or removal of the roof.

Define “Residential Gross Floor Area” or a similar concept to include garages.

The assessor currently measures Total Living Area, which does not include garage space. Because large houses have multiple garages with significant functional and visual impact, they should be included in measurements that make up the threshold number for the applicability of Large House Site Plan Review.

Establish Large House Site Plan Review for replacement houses three or more times the size of the houses they replace.

Wellesley can establish a new category under Section XVIA in the Zoning Bylaw: Large

Replacement House Projects. Site plan review can then be made applicable to large replacement houses that meet certain threshold criteria. The analysis of demolitions and replacement houses during the 1999–2003 period demonstrated that, on average, Wellesley replacement houses are 2.5 to three times the size in total living area of the houses they replaced. All new construction resulting in a house three times larger than the original structure should be made subject to Large House Site Plan Review. This concept should be tested for the inclusion of garages to see if the proposed multiplier of 3 is sufficient if garages are also included. (The multiplier that should be used as the threshold for this review process may be refined by further study.)

This new site plan review category cannot easily be subsumed under one of the existing categories: Major Construction Project, which requires design review and comment from numerous Town boards and agencies; Minor Construction Project, which requires only Design Review; and Project of Significant Impact, which requires a Special Use Permit in addition to Site Plan Review and Design Review. The review process for large replacement houses should be as streamlined as possible and include requirements similar to the plans required for subdivision approval that show existing conditions and proposed changes for items such as grading, drainage, preservation of vegetation, driveways and other impervious surfaces, and so on. Formal design review by the Design Review Committee would not be appropriate, but attention to design impacts of the new construction should be part of the process. In this case, the emphasis should not be on style but on how the new structure relates to public spaces and surrounding buildings.

One approach would be to create a performance standard checklist that the project proponent would have to respond to in the written application and at a public hearing. This would pro-

vide the project proponent with early notice of the issues that are of concern to the Planning Board. The proponent would then be encouraged to seek design solutions that will meet the performance standards.

In addition, the Planning Board may want consultant advice in reviewing these projects. A fee could be assessed to pay for this assistance. Design performance standards for Large Home Site Plan Review would be easier to develop if the neighborhood character studies suggested in the next recommendation were to be carried out.

Recommended Option 2: Define, Promote, and/or Protect Neighborhood Identity and Character

Many people in Wellesley talk about neighborhood character and they have a general sense of what they mean by that term, but, except for the Cottage Street Historic District, the standards that define Wellesley neighborhoods have not been analyzed.

ACTIONS FOR WELLESLEY:

Explore the potential for additional Local Historic Districts, a Historic Landmarks Bylaw, and Historic Easements.

Other than the Cottage Street area, Wellesley does not have a local historic district or any other means of protecting the exterior integrity of historic buildings that have exceptional historic value to the community. A Historic Landmarks Bylaw offers the opportunity to identify individual buildings and sites for this protection. The Bylaw requires permission of the property owner before designation as a historic landmark and the Historic District Commission must approve specified types of exterior changes that would permanently alter its historic character. (Typically, this kind of regulation does not include temporary changes such as paint colors.) Although some property owners are reluctant to be subject to this kind of regulation, historic

landmark status usually makes the property more valuable and, for business properties, it can be a distinguishing characteristic for a business.

Historic preservation easements are voluntary agreements between property owners and a historic preservation organization recognized by the I.R.S. The easement restricts specified kinds of changes to the property and the donor conveys certain rights over the property to the easement-holding organization, which then has the legal authority to enforce the terms of the easement. The easement can cover changes to the exterior or interior of a building, the façade, additional building, etc., and is tailored to each situation. In return for donating the easement, the donor gets a tax deduction.

An example of effective voluntary efforts is the workbook created by Community First, a citizens' group in Naperville, IL, a Chicago suburb. Like Wellesley, Naperville is seeing \$150,000 tear-downs being turned into \$1.5 million houses. Community First was founded as an educational nonprofit by builders, architects, and citizens and is supported by both the City of Naperville and the Chamber of Commerce. The group prepared an award-winning booklet with simple illustrations that takes builders, property owners, designers, and citizens through the process of understanding the character of a particular neighborhood and street, with special attention to what constitutes more or less harmonious relationships among houses, relationships to the street, and so on. The workbook also provides advice on ways to design additions and renovations to provide the desired space without impinging on the character of the street and neighborhood.

Despite the fact that compliance is entirely voluntary, the booklet has had a significant impact. The City hands out the workbook at all pre-demolition meetings with builders and owners. Community First has influenced some 250 projects in the four years it has been in existence and has begun holding workshops for builders and city staff. The City also collaborates with Community First on an annual design award, with city residents voting on the finalists. The booklet is also being used by other Chicago-area towns.

Explore authorizing the establishment of Neighborhood Conservation Districts.

Neighborhood Conservation Districts provide a mechanism for differing levels of review—from purely advisory to regulatory—for demolition and exterior changes to buildings within a defined area that has recognized design character. The area does not have to meet the criteria for historic districts and can be more eclectic than a historic district. Typically, Conservation Districts result from a study of the area showing an iden-

Commission a series of neighborhood studies to analyze and define neighborhood character and create voluntary guidelines for additions and new construction.

A series of studies done in collaboration with neighborhood residents would identify the physical characteristics of each neighborhood. The results of these studies might vary according to the purpose and the neighborhood. They would inform the design performance standards used by the Planning Board in Large

Home Site Plan Review. Where a distinctive historic or architectural identity was documented for a particular neighborhood or sub-area, the Historical Commission might pursue creation of a local historic district or residents might begin organizing a Neighborhood Conservation District. In other cases, the results could be provided simply to guide and inform new construction in the neighborhood.



tifiable design character (not simply that most houses are approximately the same size), and they define which kinds of changes will be subject to advisory review or to mandatory review (if any). Neighborhood Conservation Districts can be administered by a Historical Commission, Planning Board, Historic District Commission, or a special Neighborhood Conservation District.

Although Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCD) exist in a number of states, the only Massachusetts community that has them is Cambridge. There, each NCD is unique, with its own local commission and differing levels of project review, but they are under the administrative authority of the Historical Commission. NCDs are formed when ten registered voters petition the Historical Commission to create an NCD. If the Commission votes favorably on the petition, a year-long study period begins in which a committee appointed by the City Manager and staffed by the Historical Commission works with neighborhood residents to define a boundary and the regulatory issues. The committee then forwards its report to the Historical Commission, which holds a public hearing, and if the Commission finds the area meets criteria for an NCD, it send the report with a positive recommendation to the City Council for a vote. Cambridge NCDs range in size from as many as 2,000 buildings to as few as 70.

In Wellesley, this system could be adapted to allow citizens to petition the Planning Board or the Historical Commission, which could then appoint a committee to do the neighborhood study. An NCD study could take the place of the neighborhood character studies discussed above. NCDs would not be appropriate for every neighborhood but could serve as a way to protect the design integrity of certain areas without resort to a local historic district. One of their greatest benefits is that they require residents to take the initiative and to persuade their neighbors that an NCD is a good idea.

Explore elements of form-based zoning to conserve neighborhood character.

Innovative approaches to development regulation, known as form-based zoning, identify characteristics of the physical form, as identified by the community, as the key to producing a better built environment. Form-based codes set careful and clear controls on building form in order to shape good streets and neighborhoods that respond to the community's vision. These new regulations support mixed-use neighborhoods with a range of housing types by focusing more on the size, form, and placement of buildings and parking, and less on separation of land uses (residential vs. commercial) and density (housing units per acre). Some dimensional regulations remain, such as minimum and maximum heights of buildings, but land owners, developers, or building owners have more flexibility to meet changing real estate markets by building single-family homes, apartments, offices, or retail based on market demand, as long as the building form conforms to the community's vision as expressed in the form-based codes.

This idea could be transferred to the Wellesley neighborhood context by the creation of standards for placement of new buildings in relation to the prevailing siting along a street or similar kinds of standards that still allow for renovation of the housing stock but—by constraining extreme changes—make the transformation of street character more gradual.

2. Diversify Housing Stock and Increase Affordable Housing

Wellesley will continue to be a community where most housing units are single-family houses. The neighborhoods are near buildout and redevelopment is typically for larger single-family houses. At



the same time, Wellesley offers few alternatives to empty nesters who might want to sell their large homes yet still stay in town, or to Town employees or young people who want to stay in the town where they grew up.

Town houses, condominiums, and apartments have become entry-level housing in many communities, but real estate prices are so high in Wellesley that market rate units of these types are priced for the luxury market—not for the first time homebuyer. In order to meet the needs of a segment of the Town's population and various groups connected to the Town and its residents, as well as to meet the state goal of ten percent affordable housing, Wellesley will have to take an aggressive role in promoting affordable housing production.

Focus efforts to create more diverse housing types and affordable housing by attracting rental developments to identified sites in Wellesley.

In order to create sufficient numbers of affordable units to meet the state ten percent affordable housing goal and to create more diversity of housing in Wellesley, the Town must work to bring rental developments with a substantial number of units to the few identified sites where most residents agree this kind of housing would complement local character. These sites are the Tailby Lot, the Linden Street commercial district, the St. James's Church site, 27 Washington Street (the Grossman's site) and, potentially, other commercial districts.

Seek technical assistance from non-profit groups and explore relationships with non-profit developers and funding sources.

Wellesley does not have to reinvent the wheel in order to create and implement a robust affordable housing strategy. There are many organizations, such as the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) and Citizens Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) that offer

resources and technical assistance. MHP has assisted many communities in creating effective Housing Partnerships and creating affordable housing that is compatible with community character. It also can provide pre-development funding, technical assistance, bridge financing, and assistance to communities in working on Chapter 40B proposals. In addition, the Housing Partnership should reach out to regional non-profit housing groups, religious congregations, and others that may be interested in supporting affordable housing creation, including through possibilities such as land donations.

Consider joining a regional HOME consortium for access to home rehabilitation funding.

Federal funds for rehabilitation of homes owned by low-income persons (known as HOME funds) are available through regional consortia of communities. Many communities use HOME funds for home repair and rehabilitation programs for seniors and others with low incomes. (There is no asset test, so the equity in their homes will not prevent them from qualifying.) The rehabilitation program puts an affordability restriction on the home for 15 years, but if the occupant stays in the home for that period, the rehabilitation funds do not have to be repaid. If the occupant leaves the home before the end of 15 years, the funds must be repaid on a sliding scale over time. During the 15 years that the affordability restrictions are in force on the housing unit, it counts towards the 40B inventory for the municipality.



Inventory and study the feasibility of using additional Town-owned parcels and buildings for affordable housing.

The high cost of land is one of the greatest barriers to affordable housing production. If the Town can contribute or donate land to a project, it makes affordable housing creation, as well as moderately priced market housing creation, much easier. The Town is already following this route in the Walnut Street Fire Station project. An inventory of all Town properties, including tax title properties, may uncover other opportunities. All Town-owned sites, both large and small, should be evaluated for their potential. The Town could combine affordable housing creation with other Town needs.

Explore the possibility of a "friendly 40B" or Local Initiative Program project on Town-owned property or private property.

The Department of Housing and Community Development's Local Initiative Program (LIP) provides technical assistance to local communities that produce affordable units and counts them towards the Chapter 40B inventory, while allowing a greater degree of flexibility than is available for projects with direct financial subsidies.

Modify zoning bylaws to encourage housing diversity in type and in cost.

In order to be successful in diversifying the type and cost of housing in Wellesley, the Town must provide zoning that facilitates development of this kind of housing by avoiding special permit processes and providing incentives where necessary. With by-right zoning, the Town will continue to have oversight in design and function through the site plan review process.

- **Amend zoning to promote affordable accessory units.** Affordable accessory units can be an excellent way to create affordable housing without significant change to neighborhood

or community character. Although the Town is unlikely to gain large numbers of affordable units through accessory units, these units can be valuable on the margin. Wellesley should allow permanently affordable accessory units to be created by right and allow all accessory units to be open to non-relatives. Templates for affordability agreements and simple monitoring protocols have already been established in several Massachusetts communities. The Wellesley Housing Authority can assist with these issues.

- **Allow by-right small-scale affordable single-family homes and duplexes with one affordable unit on substandard, non-conforming lots, subject to site plan review.** Parcels that lack required size or frontage could be made legal lots for building affordable units or duplexes in which one unit is affordable. Housing of modest size can provide scattered-site affordable units that fit easily into neighborhoods.

Offer amnesty for illegal apartments in exchange for making them affordable units.

Converting existing illegal accessory units or apartments will not change the *de facto* number of housing units or residents, but will add to the number of affordable units. In some cases, conversion of these units might require the owners to bring the units up to code. Owners may be able to qualify through regional housing programs for assistance in code improvements if the apartments will become subject to affordability agreements.

Adopt the state law on tax title properties that provides for forgiveness of taxes owed if the properties are to be developed for affordable housing.

Municipalities can adopt a state law that allows them to forgive taxes owed on tax title prop-

erties if a new owner will develop affordable housing. Although there may not be many opportunities of this type in Wellesley, it is worthwhile to have this tool should an opportunity arise.

5 Economic Development

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
Maintain a diverse array of independent businesses.	Maintain businesses that serve the daily needs of residents.	Promote and support small business development to serve local residents.
Create mixed-use environments in commercial areas.	Leverage development and redevelopment opportunities to support both retailers and Town housing goals.	Promote mixed-use development and redevelopment at key sites in commercial areas.
Fund an economic development specialist to work more closely with business and institutional property owners.	Ensure dedicated attention to commercial areas and other non-residential development.	Provide funding for an economic development half-time position.
Create a system of regular communication among Town government, the business community, and local institutions.	Leverage opportunities for new public-private-institutional partnerships to provide mutual benefits to all stakeholders.	Support use of staff and committee time to create and sustain Town-business-institution communication links and partnership strategies.
Support and enhance the build out potential of non-residential property.	Increase tax revenue from non-residential property.	Consider increasing allowed density in existing non-residential areas based on a study of potential benefits and adverse impacts.

Findings

- Wellesley is a job center, with 1.3 jobs for every resident in the labor force.
- Wellesley’s labor force is highly educated and employed in high-paying jobs.
- Wellesley’s commercial districts include a diversity of retail and services catering to town and regional residents.
- Over one-third of Wellesley’s labor force works in Wellesley.
- The Town’s economic strengths reflect the growth opportunities for the region as a whole.
- Town-business relationships are generally good, but communication could be enhanced.

Key Challenges

- Retaining a mix of independent retail and services to meet residents’ everyday needs may become difficult if demand for retail space continues to increase and rents are high.
- The potential for future housing development in commercial districts must be effectively balanced with needed retail and services.
- Creating more effective public-private-institutional partnerships may require more support for staff time devoted to economic development issues.

ECONOMIC PROFILE

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Wellesley has somewhat more jobs (17,676) than it has workers (13,532) in the labor force.
- Wellesley residents typically have a much lower unemployment rate than the state average.
- Many Wellesley jobs are in relatively high-wage sectors.
- Wellesley's tax base and financial management are among the strongest in the state as evidenced by its Aaa bond rating and the Town's experience, compared to other communities, in adjusting the budget to a slow economy and reduced local aid.
- As an affluent, "revenue rich" community, Wellesley can afford high quality services, but the demand for services tends to rise faster than available revenues. Revenue increases are limited by Prop 2 1/2, fixed costs are increasing, and preliminary estimates for FY2005 indicate a decrease of 7.5 percent in local aid.

Employment of Wellesley Residents

- 968 residents (7.9 percent of workers) worked at home in 2000.
- 1,362 (10.9 percent of workers) were self-employed in an unincorporated business in 2000.
- 63 percent of the population over 15 was in the labor force, and two-thirds of them had professional and management jobs in 2000.
- 2003 labor force: 13,532 workers
- 2003 unemployment rate: 2.8 percent
- Highest unemployment rate, 1990-2003: 3.5 percent (1991-2)

Businesses and Employees (2003)

- 1,472 employers in Wellesley
- 17,676 jobs in Wellesley
- 19 percent of jobs in finance and insurance
- 16 percent of jobs in educational services
- 11 percent of jobs in retail trade
- 10 percent of jobs in professional and technical services
- 8 percent of jobs in health care and social assistance
- 36 percent of jobs in other sectors
- 2003 average annual wage for Wellesley jobs: \$58,812

Financial Position

- Wellesley is one of only twelve Massachusetts communities with a Moody's bond rating of Aaa, the highest rating possible.
- The Town Office of General Government Services projects that deficits will grow from \$2.6 M (1.6 percent) in FY2005 to \$7.6M (4.1 percent) in FY2008 due to a slow economy, lower state aid, fixed cost increases, and collective bargaining agreements.
- Only self-funded retirement plan in Massachusetts

General Fund Sources (FY2004 Guide):

- 76.1 percent from property taxes
- 11.5 percent from local fees/receipts
- 6.9 percent from state local aid
- 2.5 percent free cash
- 3.0 percent from other sources

Expenditures:

- In FY2000, education absorbed 54.9 percent of all Town expenditures.

Property Taxes

- 87 percent of property taxes are paid by residential property owners.
- 12th highest total property value (EQV) in the state in total dollars; 9th highest per capita.
- Average single-family tax bill: \$7,320—11th highest in the state.
- Commercial/Industrial/Personal Property (C/I/P) declined from 12.6 percent of Assessed Value in FY94 to 10.9 percent due to faster growth in the value of residential property.
- Within levy limits, property taxes will increase for FY2005 by 2.5 percent; value of new growth will be \$775,000, or \$100,000 less than the \$880,000 average of new growth for the last four years.

Sources: Town of Wellesley, Census 2000, Mass DOR, Mass DET, MAPC

A. CURRENT CONDITIONS

When most Wellesley residents think about economic activities in the Town, they focus on Wellesley's village commercial districts. Residents rightly value these neighborhood-based, small-scale shopping areas that contribute so much to Wellesley's livability and identity. Enhancing the Town's commercial areas and making sure that the mix of stores and services continues to include independent businesses that serve local needs are central concerns of town residents, as they have been in every previous Comprehensive Plan.

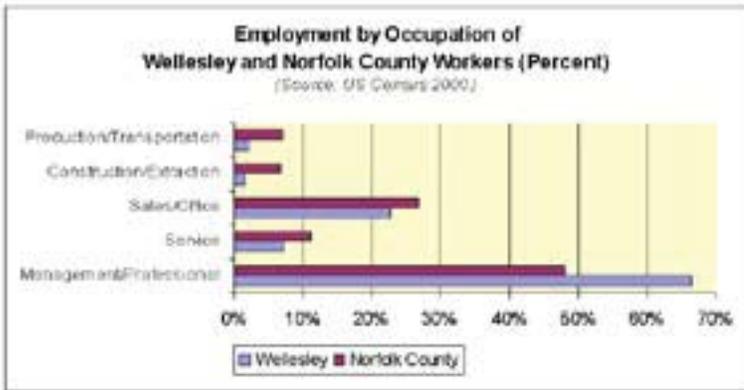
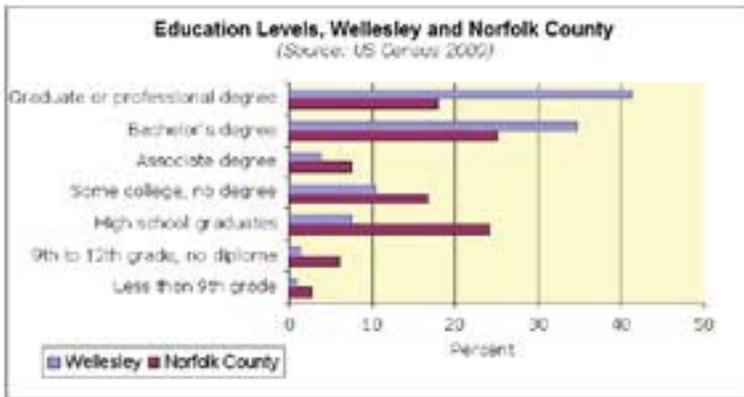
For a primarily residential community, Wellesley is also lucky to have an unusually strong office sector and job base. In addition to the colleges and schools that contribute to a strong local economy, Wellesley's financial services, medical, and technology businesses represent some of the strongest industry clusters in the Boston region. Except for a few isolated office buildings on Route 9, most of the large office buildings in

Wellesley are concentrated in two locations near I-95/Route 128 and have minor impacts on the rest of the town. Although Wellesley residents are not primarily concerned about job creation or increasing the non-residential tax base, these businesses and educational institutions are an important asset to the town.

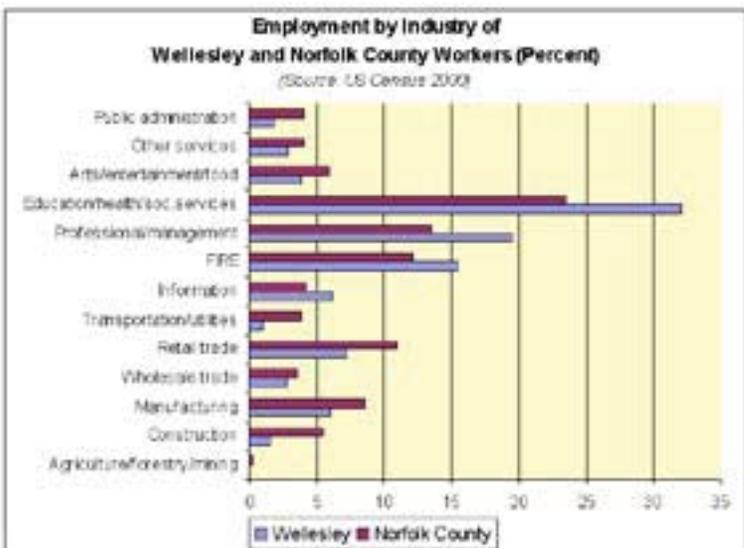
In order to maintain consistency with the 1994 Comprehensive Plan, more recent economic development data are often presented here in comparison with data from Norfolk County, as well as, in some cases, adjacent communities or the state as a whole.

**Wellesley's Labor Force:
Education and Employment**

Wellesley's labor force is highly educated. Nearly 76 percent of residents over age 25 are college graduates, and of those, over 40 percent have graduate degrees. As might be expected, the Town's labor force is overwhelmingly employed in management and professional jobs.



The industry sectors in which most Wellesley workers are employed mirror the kinds of jobs they hold. Sixty-seven percent of the labor force is employed in three sectors: education, health, and social services; professional, scientific, and management services; or finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE). Those same categories employ 49 percent of Norfolk County's workforce.



UNEMPLOYMENT: WELLESLEY AND MASSACHUSETTS, 1995-2003

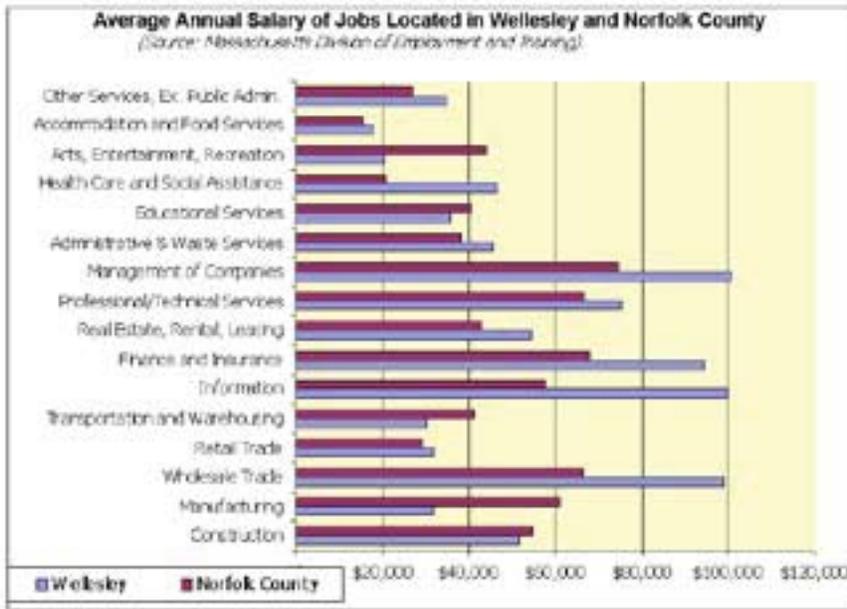
YEAR	LABOR FORCE	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	TOWN RATE (%)	STATE RATE (%)
2003	13,532	13,158	374	2.8	5.8
2002	13,948	13,515	433	3.1	5.3
2001	13,820	13,545	275	2.0	3.7
2000	13,627	13,470	157	1.2	2.6
1999	14,255	14,038	187	1.3	3.2
1998	14,250	14,054	196	1.4	3.3
1997	14,149	13,948	201	1.4	4.0
1996	13,721	13,515	206	1.5	4.3
1995	13,618	13,299	319	2.3	5.4

Source: MA DET

High education levels and high incomes typically correlate with high employment, and Wellesley residents, along with those in its neighboring communities, generally have significantly lower unemployment rates than the state as a whole. However, the drop in the number of people in the labor force from a recent peak in 1999, as well as a doubling of the low unemployment rate, shows that Wellesley workers are not immune to business cycles.

Jobs in Wellesley

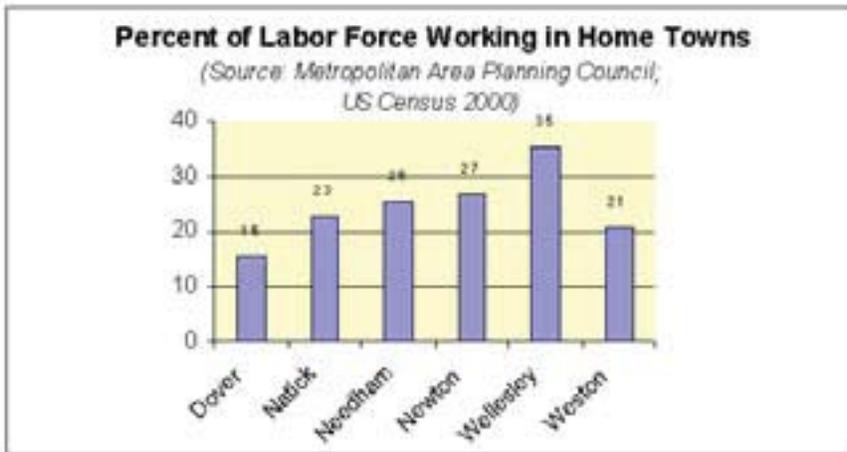
Despite Wellesley's residential identity and character, it is an employment center, with more jobs than there are people in the local labor force. Moreover, unlike many affluent suburbs, where jobs are concentrated in low-wage retail sectors, Wellesley has many well-paying jobs. According to state data, the annual average salary for Wellesley jobs in 2003 was \$58,812, compared to \$46,436 in Norfolk County as a whole. In the same year, over 66 percent of those working in Wellesley were employed in management or professional positions at an average salary of \$100,000.



residence and employment at the colleges, but cannot be ascribed only to these institutions.

Economic Activity in Wellesley

The U.S. Census Bureau does an Economic Census every five years. Data from 2002 are not yet available at the municipal level, but the 1997 Economic Census for Wellesley shows the Town's economic strength. Per capita sales of professional, scientific, and technical services exceeded those in Norfolk County by a better than four to one margin. In fact, with the exception of arts, entertainment, and recreation and other services, the Town performed well against the County in



The relatively large number of professional jobs in Wellesley has made it possible for significant numbers of Wellesley residents to work in town: a surprisingly high 35 percent of Wellesley's labor force also works in Wellesley. This rate exceeds that found in every one of the adjacent communities, even though some neighbors like Natick and Needham have higher amounts of commercial and industrial space. Of Wellesley's labor force 16 years and over, 7.9 percent reported to the 2000 Census that they worked at home, while 11.8 percent reported walking to work. These numbers are undoubtedly influenced by patterns of

all other categories. The Town's retail per capita sales closely approximated the county-wide number, a significant fact when considering the substantial shopping areas in other county communities like Quincy, Wrentham, Walpole, and Canton. This speaks to the contribution that retail has made and continues to make to the Town's economic well-being. Noteworthy as well—and hardly surprising, given the array of educational institutions and programs located in Wellesley—is that the Town's per-capita sales of educational services are more than six times greater than the County's.

1997 PER CAPITA SALES: WELLESLEY AND NORFOLK COUNTY

	WELLESLEY		NORFOLK COUNTY	
	SALES IN 1997 (X 1000)	PER CAPITA SALES	SALES IN 1997 (X 1000)	PER CAPITA SALES
Wholesale trade	\$893,617	\$33,388	\$21,949,384	\$34,312
Retail trade	\$330,259	\$12,33	\$7,332,919	\$11,463
Real estate & rental & leasing	\$52,144	\$1,948	\$981,599	\$1,534
Professional, scientific, & technical services	\$365,990	\$13,674	\$1,983,823	\$3,101
Administrative & support & waste management	\$109,167	\$4,079	\$1,047,216	\$1,637
Educational services	\$13,200	\$493	\$47,741	\$75
Health care & social assistance	\$97,728	\$3,651	\$1,542,860	\$2,412
Arts, entertainment, & recreation	\$7,575	\$283	\$217,787	\$340
Accommodation & food services	\$36,799	\$1,375	\$804,120	\$1,257
Other services (except public administration)	\$13,902	\$519	\$501,000	\$783

Source: U.S. Economic Census 1997

Wellesley’s educational institutions play an important role in the town—including its economy. There is currently no single source of data available on the economic role in the town of private schools, colleges, and executive education programs. Payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTs), institutional expenditures, and “trickle-down” spending contribute to the local economy in many ways. Demand from Wellesley College students and their parents helps support Wellesley’s Square’s lively mix of shops and restaurants and students from other institutions play similar roles.

Dana Hall School and Babson College have provided data that suggest some of the ways that these institutions benefit Wellesley’s economy:

- Dana Hall has an annual operating budget of \$14 million, and spends \$800,000 on contracted services within Wellesley.
- In 2002-2003 Babson College spent nearly \$5 million in Wellesley, including a \$75,000 PILOT. The school employs 64 Wellesley residents and its 665 full-and part-time employees also patronize local businesses.
- Babson’s Center for Executive Education purchased approximately \$113,000 worth of goods and services from Needham and Wellesley businesses.
- Babson’s 3,300+ students (undergraduate and graduate) spend approximately \$1,420 each on personal expenses, of which half—or \$2.3 million—is estimated to be spent on campus or in town.

Non-Residential Land Uses

Approximately 175 acres in Wellesley are zoned for non-residential land uses, but assessor’s data indicate that 245 acres are in commercial uses, 2.3 acres in industrial uses, and 8.5 acres are in mixed uses. Office buildings account for slightly more than 50 percent of the acreage in non-residential land uses, while retail and eating and drinking establishments account for 17 percent.





With the exception of an increase in the number of office parcels resulting from redevelopment of the MassHighway Depot site, the number of parcels used for different business types has remained stable since 1994. The data also show a reduction in the intervening ten years of the amount of non-residential land considered developable—down from 3.41 acres to .46 acres.

Although small retail and service land uses do not account for a majority of the non-residential area, their contribution to Wellesley’s sense of place is critical. For both residents and visitors, retailing is the most visible sector of the local economy. For residents in particular, maintaining a diverse array of independent retail and service businesses lies at the heart of their understanding of “economic development” in Wellesley.

Business Property and Taxes

Between 2000 and 2004, non-residential property has dropped almost three percentage points as a proportion of the total value of all property in Wellesley. This is not because commercial/ industrial/personal (CIP) property has declined in value. In fact, the total value has increased 19 percent. However, in the same period the assessed value of all residential property rose 59 percent. With the exception of Dover, all of

BUSINESS LAND USES - 2004

BUSINESS LAND USES	NO. OF PARCELS	NO. OF ACRES
Transient Group Quarters (hotels, motels)	4	3.27
Nursing Homes	2	2.82
Storage Warehouses, Distribution	1	0.41
Retail: Building Materials	2	0.74
Retail: Shopping Centers	3	4.53
Retail: Small Department Stores	1	0.50
Retail: Supermarkets (over 10,000 sf)	1	1.45
Retail: Small Retail/Services (under 10,000 sf)	64	35.20
Eating and Drinking Establishments (stand-alone)	3	1.16
Auto Sales and Service	7	11.64
Auto Supplies and Service	1	0.22
Auto Repair	2	1.33
Gasoline Stations	9	3.32
Fuel Service	1	1.32
Parking Lots	5	2.49
General Office	92	131.68
Bank Office	6	3.98
Medical Office	4	1.59
Public Service Properties	8	6.16
Indoor Recreational Facilities	1	28.45
Developable Land	3	0.46
Potentially Developable Land	1	0.29
Undevelopable Land	1	0.21
Industrial Warehouse	1	0.42
Electric Substation	1	1.52
Telephone Exchange	1	0.41
TOTAL		245.57
Mixed-Use	12	8.46

Source: Wellesley Assessor’s Data 2004

WELLESLEY TOTAL ASSESSED VALUE, 2000-2004

FY	RESIDENTIAL	COMMERCIAL	INDUSTRIAL	PERSONAL PROPERTY	CIP%	TOTAL
2000	\$4,198,292,000	\$588,887,000	\$5,011,000	\$39,364,300	13.1	\$4,831,554,300
2001	4,757,723,000	691,400,000	5,421,000	43,969,500	13.5	5,498,513,500
2002	5,776,391,000	832,118,000	6,096,000	54,259,100	13.4	6,668,864,100
2003	6,406,545,000	721,380,000	5,297,000	56,051,200	10.9	7,189,273,200
2004	6,687,379,000	688,831,000	5,428,000	62,123,900	10.2	7,443,761,900

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue

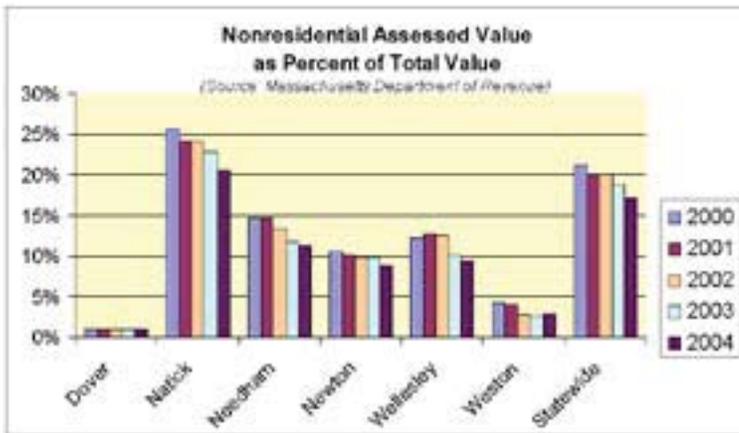
Wellesley’s neighboring towns show evidence of the same dynamic, with a proportional drop in the value of CIP as a percent of the total.

On average, over the last five years business property has paid about 12.2 percent of the Wellesley tax levy, compared to 1.9 percent for Dover; 25.3 percent for Natick; 14.7 percent for Needham; 11.1 percent for Newton; and four percent for Dover. All of these communities have seen the same declining proportion of non-residential values because of skyrocketing residential values.

State law permits municipalities to shift some of the residential tax burden onto business, creating a split tax rate. Few communities with less than a 20 percent non-residential tax base choose to avail themselves of this option. Among the five towns bordering Wellesley, only Needham and Newton have opted for a split rate.

B. BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL AREAS

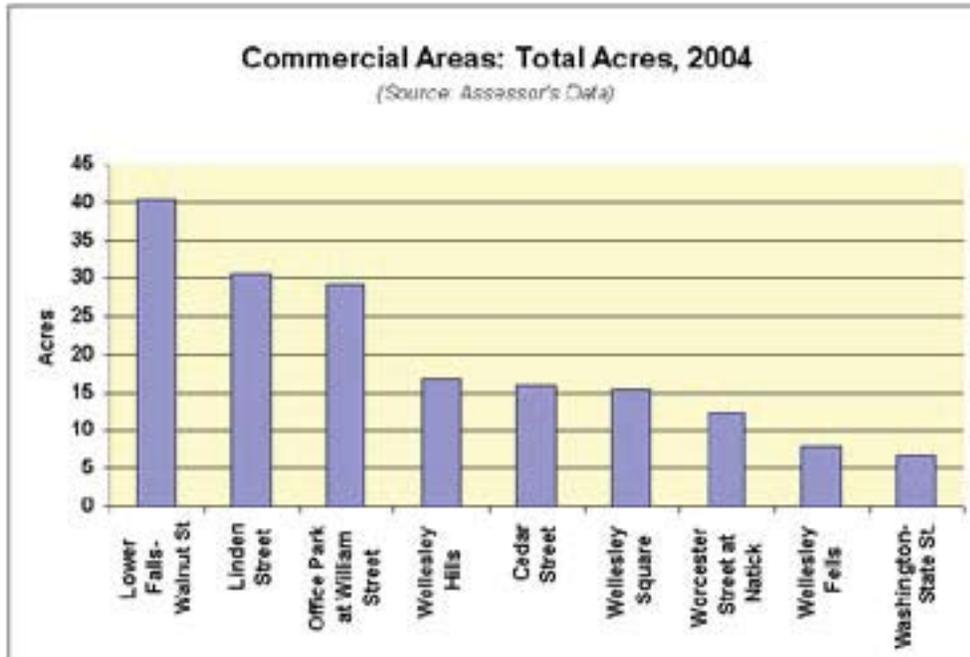
Wellesley’s non-residential areas are primarily located along or near the town’s two major east-west arterial roads, Washington Street (Route 16) and Worcester Street (Route 9). There are three village-style shopping areas: Lower Falls, Wellesley Hills, and Wellesley Square. These are characterized by pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, a preponderance of shops and service businesses with relatively small footprints (ground floor square footage), and a mix of independent and chain stores as well as small offices. Now slated for redevelopment, the Linden Street shopping area is expected to become more pedestrian-friendly in design but will still be somewhat auto-oriented because it will continue to be the site of the town’s largest supermarket. Three other commercial areas—Cedar Street, the Fells, and Washington Street at State Street—are small clusters of disparate retail, service and auto-oriented uses, mostly in older buildings with minimal landscaping or other enhancements.



2004 PROPERTY TAX RATES – WELLESLEY AND ITS NEIGHBORS

	RESIDENTIAL	CIP
Dover	9.0	9.0
Natick	10.2	10.2
Needham	9.5	18.5
Newton	10.2	19.4
Wellesley	8.6	8.6
Weston	9.6	9.6

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue



The shopping area on Route 9 at the western town boundary is an extension of the strip commercial development over the line in Natick. Finally, there are office parks on Walnut Street and on Williams Street.

In the 1994 Plan, there was a strong focus on fostering economic vitality in the town's business districts, ensuring the continued prosperity of the commercial villages that serve town residents, enhancing the town's commercial gateways, and planning proactively for the development of commercial sites. One of the 1994 Plan's chief action items called for "a joint Town/Business community study of economic and market trends as they relate to the distinguishing characteristics and market niches of Wellesley's business areas." Then, as now, residents focused on ensuring a continued contribution by the town's business base to Wellesley's overall quality of life.

Since completion of the 1994 Plan, the Planning Board has been implementing the Plan's recommendation to do detailed plans of the town's commercial districts. Five plans have been prepared: Lower Falls/Walnut Street, Wellesley Square,

Wellesley Hills, Linden Street, and Cedar Street. Each of the plans developed a vision, analyzed a broad range of issues including the physical and economic character of each area, management, parking, physical improvements, zoning and permitting and set forth recommended actions. Implementation of the recommendations for three of the plans—Wellesley Square, Lower Falls, and Linden Street—are underway. The recommendations of the Wellesley Hills plan have yet to be taken up and the Cedar Street study remains unfinished because of scheduling conflicts. In addition, Town Meeting allocated funds to conduct a study of the area along Route 9 from Weston Road to the Natick line. This study will begin in the fall of 2006.

Below is a set of summaries on issues and opportunities in each of the major commercial areas in Wellesley, including a brief review of major recommendations from the 1994 Plan and any steps taken toward implementation. The map includes building footprints in orange and zoning districts as follows: red for Business; pink for Business A; and blue for Industrial.

Wellesley Square—15.4 acres, 28 parcels

Wellesley Square offers a successful mix of independent and chain stores in a pedestrian-friendly environment, attracting shoppers from other towns as well as local residents. Although there are some stores that serve the everyday

needs of residents, such as the CVS Pharmacy and some of the clothing stores, many of the stores and restaurants are more upscale. The redevelopment potential of Wellesley Square is constrained by the fact that parcels tend to be rather small and there are many different

property owners, with the exception of three contiguous parcels on the north side of Central Street. More mixed-use development and higher densities would depend on allowing higher heights and creating structured parking. The new owners of the Wellesley Inn propose luxury condos, two affordable units, and retail on the site, which will bring new residents right into the town center.



CHARACTERISTICS	ISSUES	1994 RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION
Center of town’s commercial, cultural, and civic activity Mature, built-up business district	Manage change to ensure quality of shopping, mix of uses, pedestrian scale of activity. Maintain presence of independently-owned businesses.	Design review and historic preservation to improve appearance Re-knit commercial uses in the three sub-districts of Lower and Upper Wellesley Square and Church Street Enhance profitability, mix, market, and vitality emphasizing upscale independent specialty stores and personalized service Review public/private real estate development projects to maximize functioning of Square Formalize role of the Wellesley Square Partnership Make zoning/permitting more user-friendly	Vision Plan and Action Plan FARs greater than .3 as of 3/22/04 allowed if site is redeveloped (including demolition) Inclusionary zoning applicable if Project of Significant Impact is under consideration Planning initiated for Post Office Square

Wellesley Hills—16.9 acres, 32 parcels

For the most part, Wellesley Hills has relatively small parcels and many small shops that continue to be occupied by independent businesses providing services and a variety of goods to town residents. Compared to Wellesley Square, it is more of a neighborhood shopping area with fewer boutique-style businesses. Like Wellesley Square, the opportunities for redevelopment would be at a relatively small scale, even with allowances for additional height, shared parking, and structured or underground parking. Zoning amendments recommended in the Vision and Action Plans have not been implemented. The changes should be pursued because current zoning permits parking lots at the street edge and other kinds of development that are antithetical to the pedestrian-friendly village character of Wellesley Hills.



CHARACTERISTICS	ISSUES	1994 RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION
Convenience shopping	Traffic congestion and effect on circulation, walkability, and safety	Decked parking over Route 9	Vision Plan and Action Plan created
High value placed on number and variety of independent businesses	Parking constraints	Urban design improvements	Park improvements
Pedestrian-friendly village character	Lack of coherent visual identity	Rezone as mixed-use Village Commercial District	No zoning changes
Compact and human-scaled storefronts	Lack of streetscape greenery	Organize business association	
Important landmarks (Elm Park; Clock Tower)			

Linden Street—30.5 acres, 19 parcels

Eastern Development has purchased the Diehl’s hardware properties and is pursuing redevelopment based on the Linden Street Action Plan. The current proposal is for 280,000 square feet of development, of which 30,000 square feet would be office and the remainder retail, including the relocation of Roche Brothers’ supermarket to the north side of Linden Street. A more pedestrian-friendly character will be created by bringing buildings to the street edge, incorpo-

rating traffic calming elements at the entrance, and improving the pedestrian environment within the development. The closing of Diehl’s Hardware made many residents worry whether Wellesley was losing too many of the locally-owned retail and service businesses oriented to local needs. On the other hand, the aesthetic and functional improvements that will come with redevelopment are welcome.

From the point of view of this Comprehensive Plan, however, the proposed project has an unfortunate flaw—the lack of a significant housing element. (Only seven units—four in new duplex buildings on site and three converted/renovated units—are included in the proposed project.) Residents in Comprehensive Plan public meetings repeatedly identified Linden Street as one of the best places in Town to create more diverse types of housing and more affordable housing. This was evidently less of an issue when the Linden Street Action Plan was created. The original eastern development project proposal included four units. The Town discussed the potential for more housing with the developer, and successfully negotiated the inclusion of three more units.



CHARACTERISTICS	ISSUES	1994 RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION
Mix of neighborhood-friendly and regional businesses (especially supermarket) and residences	Maintain balance among businesses and residences Enhance appearance of the street; improve pedestrian experience and safety Provide more long-term parking Enhance the street’s residential areas Tie Linden Street to Wellesley Square	Revitalization of commercial area Improved pedestrian environment Greater variety of commercial uses	Vision Plan and Action Plan process consolidated into two phases (rather than three as in other studies) in order to accommodate planned street reconfiguration Eastern Development aiming to follow 2002 Master Plan via retail and office mixed-use project

Lower Falls and Walnut Street—40.3 acres total, 41 parcels

In response to the 1996 “Wellesley Lower Falls Zoning, Urban Design and Landscape Guidelines,” the Town created a set of zoning incentives for the area that were intended to attract redevelopment that would enhance Lower Falls’ role as a major gateway to Wellesley. With permitting underway for the first such project, new development has nevertheless been occurring at a slow pace. Twenty-seven Washington Street (the Grossman’s site) has been in litigation for years. The Town would like housing to be included in any redevelopment of the site, even if a supermarket is ultimately part of the project.

Although it is generally discussed with Lower Falls as if the two areas were closely linked, Walnut Street is a district of office buildings, which, with adjacent River Street buildings, occupies 18.9 acres.

This office park character is quite distinct from the pedestrian-friendly, village mixed-use district that is the goal for Lower Falls.

A significant number of the parcels in Lower Falls/Walnut Street are owned by a single property owner. This is one condition that provides the potential for easier redevelopment in the future.



CHARACTERISTICS	ISSUES	1994 RECOMMENDATIONS	IMPLEMENTATION
Regional location struggling to maintain functions and small-scale character of a village center	Difficult to redevelop because of zoning and off-street parking constraints	Maintain village character	Plan with Design Guidelines
Mix of religious and civic gathering places	High traffic volumes	Improve appearance with attractive storefronts and landscaping	Creation of Lower Falls Village Commercial District (and Residential Incentive Overlay District)
Architectural variety worth preserving in redevelopment	Pedestrian-unfriendly	Improve traffic and parking conditions	FAR above .3, but not to exceed 1.0, subject to special permit
	Underserved with parking	Enhance access to Charles River	Design and development guidelines
		Strengthen Lower Falls as eastern gateway	

Natick Line—Western Gateway—12.3 acres, 17 parcels

Wellesley’s western gateway on Route 9 is a continuation of the strip commercial development over the town boundary in Natick. If it were not for the sign at the town boundary, there would be no distinction between the two areas. Car dealerships and other businesses typical of commercial strips are located here. Despite these conditions, there are some underutilized properties that could be redeveloped to include housing as well as retail. An overlay district to promote better design of street frontage could help transform the aesthetic character of this area over time as properties redevelop. Ten years ago, the towns of Framingham and Natick jointly established a highway overlay district for Route 9 that has been very successful in promoting improvements in landscaping, building design, reduction of curb cuts and improvements in circulation, and other benefits.

The Fells—8.0 acres, 7 parcels

The Fells commercial area is very small and at two different elevations. On the south side of Route 9, a gas station and a commercial building with several retail businesses and parking in front are located at a much higher elevations than the remainder of the district, which is composed of several one-story concrete buildings with a variety of small businesses.



Cedar Street—15.9 acres, 16 parcels

The Cedar Street commercial area on Route 9 consists of a variety of land uses, including office buildings, car dealerships, gas stations, day care facilities, and a restaurant. The buildings are older; the building designs bear little relationship to one another; there is relatively little landscaping; and the area is not pedestrian-oriented. Although this constitutes a node of business uses, the changes of elevation in the district combined with the traffic-intensive barriers of Route 9 and Cedar Street create three small commercial clusters rather than a cohesive district.

**Route 128 (I-95) and Route 9 Interchange—Office Park—29.2 acres, 8 parcels**

A successful office park is located here, where there are virtually no traffic or other impacts on the Town's residential neighborhoods.

C. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Wellesley's village commercial districts are a critical element of its livability and identity, but all the retail areas serve important functions. Residents are concerned that too many chain stores may replace the Town's independent retailers and they want to retain merchants that serve residents' daily needs, such as supermarkets.

Continue the commercial district planning and implementation process begun in the 1990s to encompass all the commercial areas.

Wellesley implemented the recommendation of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan to prepare district plans for the Town's commercial villages. These plans have proven their value to the Town. For example, the new development proposal for the Linden Street commercial area was strongly influenced by the plan, which helped the new owners understand what the Wellesley community wanted to see at that site. Some of the older plans should be reviewed to see if zoning incentives or other aspects need adjustment, and plans for the districts as yet unstudied should be undertaken.

ACTIONS

Review the Lower Falls Village Commercial District guidelines and zoning for a possible increase in incentives for mixed-use redevelopment—housing as well as retail—and for enhancements, including the Grossman's site and access to the River.

Amend zoning in Wellesley Hills Square to ensure that any redevelopment proposals will conform to the principles of the Wellesley Hills Square plan.

Create a plan for the Natick Line commercial area. The strip commercial character of the area is unlike most other Wellesley commercial districts: of the 17 parcels in the commercial area, three remain unbuilt; of the remainder, approximately 100,000 square feet of commercial space has been built on 535,00 square feet of land. There are opportunities to shape development over time by creating an overlay district that would provide incentives for redevelopment that meet town goals. As the Town's western "anchor," the Natick Line offers the opportunity for new development in support of Wellesley's economic mix.

Complete or create plans for the small commercial areas of Wellesley, such as Cedar Street and the Fells, so that their function and appearance improve over time. Planning for the commercial cluster at State Street and Washington Street is also needed because this older development may become attractive for redevelopment.

Encourage housing development as part of a mixed-use strategy for commercial districts in order to support demand for a diverse mix of retail and services.

A robust mix of retail and services provided by independent businesses, regional chains, and national chains presupposes a strong consumer market. Some of Wellesley's commercial districts attract shoppers from neighboring towns. One of the best ways to support a market for pedestrian-friendly commercial areas is to provide a mix of denser housing—town houses, condominiums or apartments—within walking distance of retail areas. Residential development supports retail areas far better than office development. The sales volume potential of residents is three times that of office workers.

ACTIONS

Plan and take the initiative to attract housing development in commercial districts where development potential exists. Chapter 6 includes conceptual drawings and a more detailed discussion of this potential at several sites.

Provide Town funding to support staff time for economic development activities.

Active support of Wellesley's business community and to attract desired businesses takes considerable time and effort. Wellesley's excellent planning staff already has many responsibilities.

ACTION

Consider creating a half-time Economic Development Specialist position in the Planning Department. An economic development specialist can work closely with merchants and other businesses so that the Town can take action, if desired, to retain or attract businesses that meet the Town's goals.

Create a system of regular communication among Town government, the business community, and local institutions in support of the Town's economic goals.

Although relationships between the business community and the Town and the institutions and the Town are generally quite good, a more systematic communication process can provide a framework to make sure that each group is kept informed of the future plans of others. These discussions might benefit the Town in other ways: for example, in laying the groundwork for potential collaboration with the colleges on transportation issues.

ACTIONS

Enhance Town-business contacts for public-private partnerships. Institutionalize communications to ensure a high degree of responsiveness to changes in the local and regional economic



environments, both retail and corporate, and to local issues affecting Town's economic health (*e.g.*, parking). The Town could convene joint meetings in the way most useful for the parties involved: quarterly or semi-annually on a staff basis; an annual meeting between the Planning Board and business and institutional interests; or an annual meeting with the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board and those interests. Among the groups that should be consulted about their views on how best to promote better communications are the Wellesley Square Partnership, the Wellesley Chamber of Commerce, the Wellesley Square Merchants Association, educational institutions, and other key stakeholders in commercial areas. The agenda and activities of Town-business partnerships and Town-institutional partnerships would derive from the action items included in the commercial district plans and the Comprehensive Plan.



Consider developing a Wellesley Retail Action Plan (WRAP) to create/coordinate implementation of retail strategy. This would require additional Town staff time. Elements of the strategy for each commercial district might include:

- Identification of major themes
- Development of marketing positioning statements
- Monitoring of lease expirations
- Design guidelines and retail attraction/development strategies
- Work with property owners on mixed-use strategies for redevelopment, where appropriate
- Identification of any regulatory changes that might be needed to meet Town goals for the districts.

Support and enhance the buildout potential of non-residential property for the purpose of increasing the Town’s tax revenue.

Wellesley has a substantial number of office buildings that contribute to the Town’s tax base without significant impacts on residential neigh-

borhoods. It may be possible to increase Town tax revenue somewhat through allowing more development capacity in office areas or through a split tax rate. Wellesley would not gain large amounts of new tax revenue, but the difference could potentially be significant enough to avoid override votes from time to time.

ACTIONS

Study the potential impact of allowing additional development capacity in Wellesley’s office parks.

The Town should study the potential for enhancing the development capacity of office properties (for example, additional height) where more development would not have a detrimental effect on neighborhoods. In those cases, allowing more development could encourage redevelopment over the long term.

Study the benefits and costs of establishing a split tax rate.

State law permits shifting the tax burden from residential to nonresidential land uses, subject to certain requirements. A split tax rate is more common among cities and towns that receive a greater percent of their revenue from non-residential land than Wellesley. The way the system works is as follows:

- A split rate does not change the total amount of taxes levied; it just determines the share to be paid by the different property classes.
- The non-residential share can be increased only up to 50 percent more than what it would be under a single tax rate.
- The residential share must be at least 65 percent of the single tax level share.

6

Managing Land Use for the Future

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICIES
Strengthen Town zoning regulations and design guidelines, and their enforcement, to ensure continuity of town character and quality of life.	Establish common ground among property owners, builders, and Town government to ensure consensus agreement.	Eliminate zoning provisions that are barriers to creation of mixed-use and diversified housing in commercial districts. Create an ongoing design, regulatory, marketing, and information strategy to educate stakeholders on land use issues related to town character.
Improve the appearance of town gateways that need enhancement.	Distinguish Wellesley's identity at the major entrance corridors to town.	Focus on enhancements to the Lower Falls gateway and creating a plan for the Natick Line area.
Promote a mixture of land uses, including diverse types of residences, in commercial areas.	Meet the Town's need for more housing diversity and to increase the market for a mix of shops and services in commercial districts.	Create guidelines for mixed-use land uses and pursue projects appropriate for Wellesley.

A. LAND USE ISSUES

This chapter focuses on the land use management and regulation challenges that face Wellesley as identified in the planning elements in the other chapters of this Comprehensive Plan document. Although housing and economic development are perhaps the most important of the land use policies in any community and are likely to have the most impact on land use, transportation, open space, natural resources, cultural resources and public facilities also influence the land use plan.

Reflecting the settled character of Wellesley, changes in land use are likely to take the form of adjustments to prevailing zoning or to prevailing uses rather than full-scale change. Like many older communities in which most of the land has been developed, over time Wellesley has established a number of small and specialized zoning districts, as well as overlay districts. The Comprehensive Plan process identified several goals related to land use:

- Mitigating the effect of teardowns and mansionization on community character.

- Fostering more diversity in housing types, especially housing that would be attractive to empty-nesters who want to downsize but stay in Wellesley.
- Creating more permanently affordable housing for moderate-income households.
- Improving commercial districts, especially those at Wellesley’s entrance corridors— Lower Falls and Natick Line.
- Preserving independent retail and services in the commercial districts that meet everyday needs.

Most of the land use recommendations on man- sionization in the housing chapter of this plan focus on how the Town can gain more influence over the design of replacement houses, rather than on more regulation. The exception is the recommendation to create a residential site plan review process for replacement homes or addi- tions that result in the new structure being three or more times larger than the old structure. This recommendation does not affect the fundamen- tally residential use of the land in question.

All the other issues focus attention on a rather small part of Wellesley’s land—the commercial and industrial zoning districts or a few potential sites with specific characteristics. In the com- munity meetings, these were always the loca- tions that people talked about when asked where to locate housing of different types and higher densities. The closing of Diehl’s and impending changes to Linden Street have also heightened concern about the character of Wellesley’s com- mercial districts and how they serve residents.

Adjustments to Wellesley’s Zoning Bylaw

Wellesley has “cumulative” zoning, with single residence zones as the most restrictive in terms of land uses. As the allowed residential density increases in other residential zones and then as commercial and industrial uses are allowed in

ZONES ALLOWING MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

ZONE	MINIMUM LOT AREA/ DWELLING UNIT (S.F.)	TOTAL LAND AREA (ACRES)
Town House	4000	4
General Residence	7000	73
Multi-family	3000	6
Limited Apartment	1800	7
Lower Falls	2500	9
Village Commercial		
Wellesley Square	2500	16
Commercial District		
Business	2500	42
Business A	2500	41
Industrial	2500	19
Industrial A	2500	16
Total Units		

Source: Wellesley Planning Department

their respective zoning districts, the uses per- mitted in more restrictive districts continue to be allowed. In general, the Zoning Bylaw func- tions quite well and allows the Town consider- able oversight of projects other than single-fam- ily home construction.

All the commercial districts allow multifamily residential uses and there are four residen- tial zones that allow more than single-family houses. Three of those zones cover relatively small areas and were tailored for specific projects that are not expected to change. The General Residence zone, however, covers 73 acres but allows only two-family buildings and town houses in addition to single-family houses. Opportunities to meet the Town’s goals for more diverse and affordable housing types may emerge in the General Residence zone. In order to accommodate this possibility the Town might consider allowing higher densities if the project proponents could demonstrate through a special

permit process that the project would meet a set of design and development standards.

Achieving Multiple Goals in Commercial Districts

Participants in the Comprehensive Plan public meetings saw the commercial districts as the most acceptable locations to construct new housing that is not single-family housing. A mixed-use approach, combining housing with retail stores, was often mentioned. There are a small number of large, developable sites that could accommodate mixed-use projects or housing, and there are a number of sites with older buildings that could be ripe for redevelopment, particularly in the smaller commercial areas. Linden Street is already the subject of a very significant proposal. The Planning Board has negotiated the inclusion of more housing in the project, in addition to the predominantly retail and commercial mix originally proposed.

In order to illustrate the wide potential of some of these sites and the importance of design principles and decisions, the Comprehensive Plan consultant prepared a set of mixed-use development scenarios for several sites. Appearing in the pages that follow are schemes for the Grossman's site in Lower Falls (27 Washington Street) and two sites in the Natick Line area, the Wellesley Motor Inn and the St. James's Church sites. These scenarios show just some of the variety of ways that these sites could be redeveloped to provide more or less housing, commercial, and office space. All three sites are also linked to water and offer the potential for accessible open space. Some of the scenarios show a suburban model of relatively low numbers of housing units and surface parking. However, the housing market is so strong in Wellesley that new development of sufficient scale (such as 100 units) could easily support underground or structured parking to share with commercial uses. With underground or a parking garage

(surrounded by retail shops, so the garage would not be visible), it becomes possible simultaneously to have more housing units and more green open space. At the same time, the additional population living in these commercial areas would help support retail stores and services. It is important to keep in mind that these development scenarios do not represent actual development proposals. They are simply concepts that could be used to discuss preferred outcomes with property owners.

Unfortunately, none of the sites used for the illustrative examples is adjacent to one of Wellesley's commuter rail stations. However, residential uses generate less traffic than commercial uses, so in these scenarios, housing would be expected to have moderate traffic impacts. Opportunities also exist near the stations. The Tailby Lot is already the subject of a feasibility study and adjacent parcels could also accommodate additional development while benefiting from improved design.

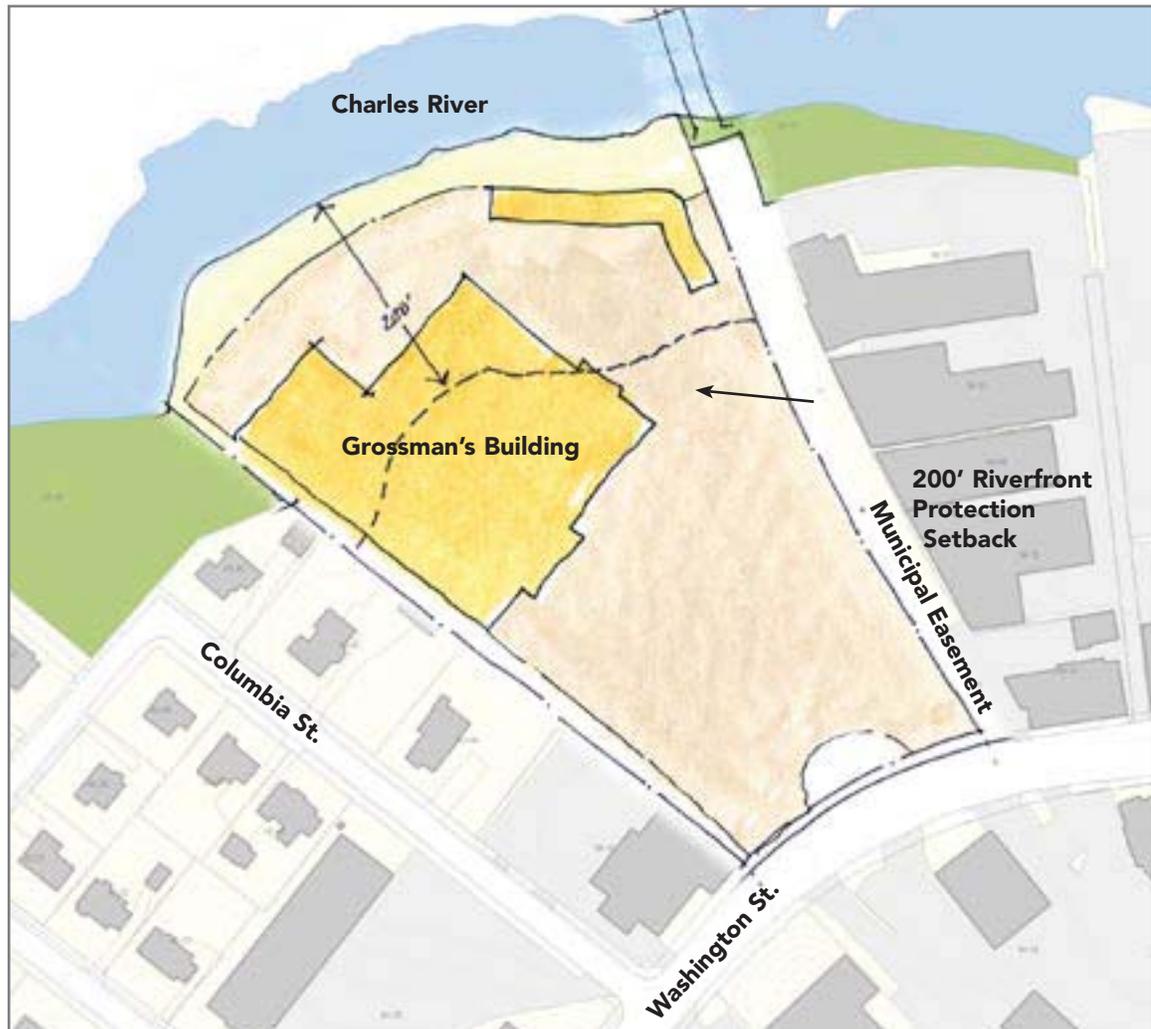
MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

Meeting multiple goals through redevelopment in commercial districts:

- diverse housing types
- improved town gateways
- more affordable housing
- additional open space



Grossman's Site—Lower Falls





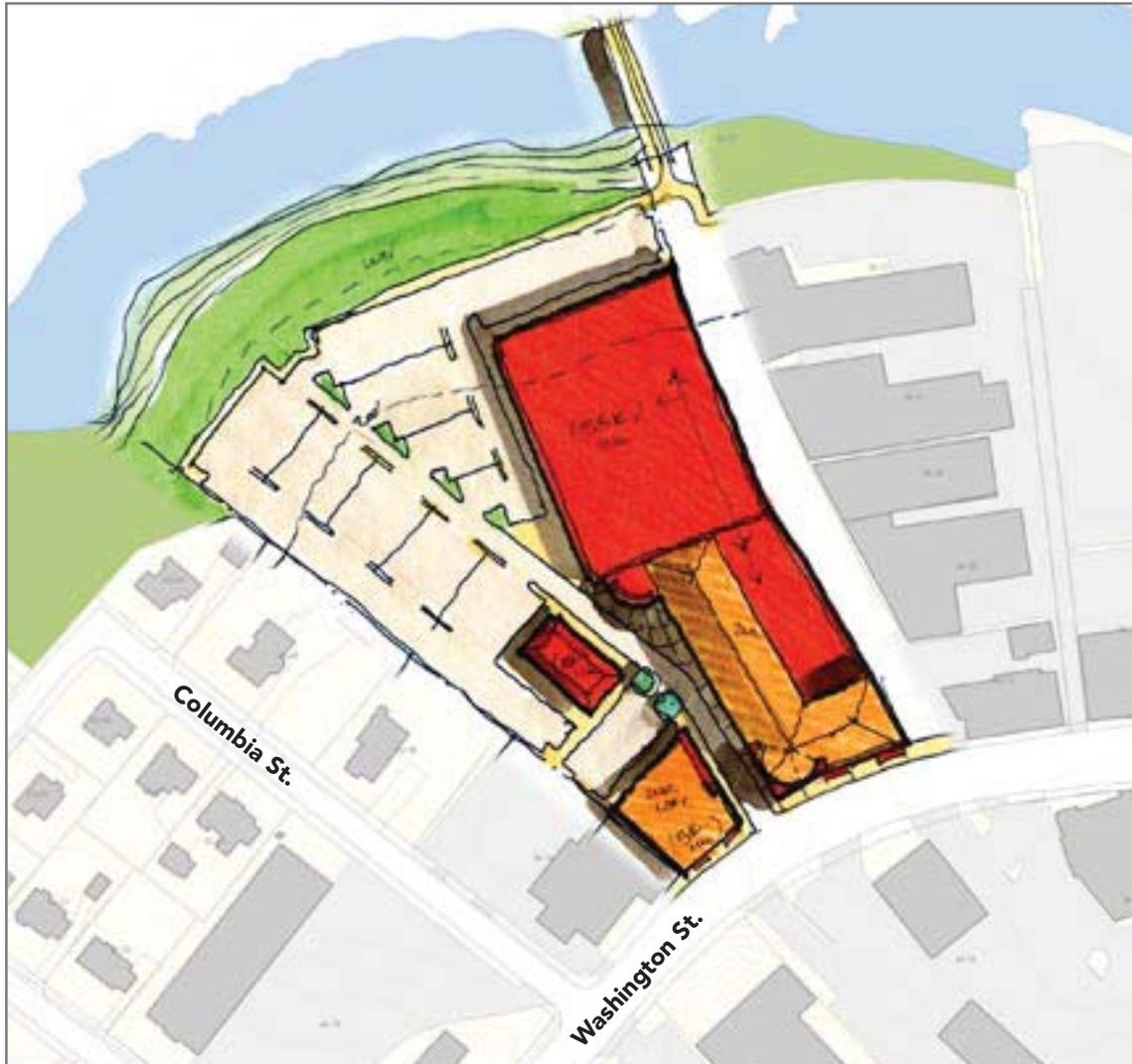
GROSSMAN'S SITE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

1. Conserve the river's edge: create a continuous, publicly accessible green ribbon along the river
2. Establish connections and linkages to the river and site amenities
3. Extend "Main Street" character along the Washington Street face of the site
4. Respect front-to-front and back-to-back relationships of buildings so that building fronts face other building fronts
5. Locate residential uses adjacent to existing neighboring residential area



SCENARIO A: Housing/Supermarket/Retail—5 Housing Units

■ Retail	67,000sf	 *Parking Generated	273 spaces
■ Office	0sf	 Parking Provided	275 spaces
■ Loft (live/work)	5 units	 Structured	0
■ Apartment	0 units	 Deck	0
■ Duplex	0 units	 Surface	275
■ Town House	0 units	 Garage	0
■ Single-Family	0 units	 Net Commercial	67,000sf
■ Open Space	yes	 Net Dwelling Unts	5 units
		 Max Height	3LVL
		 Project Density (gross)	1.5DU/acres



SCENARIO B: Supermarket/Retail—31 Housing Units

■ Retail	64,000sf	■ *Parking Generated	251 spaces
■ Office	0sf	■ Parking Provided	258 spaces
■ Loft (live/work)	6 units	■ Structured	0
■ Apartment	25 units	■ Deck	44
■ Duplex	0 units	■ Surface	214
■ Town House	0 units	■ Garage	0
■ Single-Family	0 units	■ Net Commercial	64,000sf
■ Open Space	yes	■ Net Dwelling Unts	31 units
		■ Max Height	3LVL
		■ Project Density (gross)	6DU/acres



SCENARIO C: Supermarket/Office/Retail—100 Housing Units

■ Retail	66,000sf	■ *Parking Generated	363 spaces
■ Office	8,000sf	■ Parking Provided	370 spaces
■ Loft (live/work)	20 units	Structured	250
■ Apartment	80 units	Deck	85
■ Duplex	0 units	Surface	35
■ Town House	0 units	Garage	0
■ Single-Family	0 units	Net Commercial	74,000sf
■ Open Space	yes	Net Dwelling Unts	100 units
		Max Height	3LVL
		Project Density (gross)	19DU/acres



SCENARIO D: Small Supermarket/Roof Gardens—54 Housing Units

■ Retail	36,000sf	■ *Parking Generated	196 spaces
■ Office	0sf	■ Parking Provided	185 spaces
■ Loft (live/work)	2 units	■ Structured	0
■ Apartment	52 units	■ Deck	80
■ Duplex	0 units	■ Surface	105
■ Town House	0 units	■ Garage	0
■ Single-Family	0 units	■ Net Commercial	36,000sf
■ Open Space	yes	■ Net Dwelling Unts	54 units
		■ Max Height	3LVL
		■ Project Density (gross)	10.5DU/acres



SCENARIO E: Small Supermarket—104 Housing Units

■ Retail	36,000sf	■ *Parking Generated	271 spaces
■ Office	0sf	■ Parking Provided	256 spaces
■ Loft (live/work)	4 units	Structured	170
■ Apartment	100 units	Deck	70
■ Duplex	0 units	Surface	16
■ Town House	0 units	Garage	0
■ Single-Family	0 units	Net Commercial	36,000sf
■ Open Space	yes	Net Dwelling Unts	104 units
		Max Height	3LVL
		Project Density (gross)	20DU/acres

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

Meeting multiple goals through redevelopment in commercial districts:

- diverse housing types
- improved town gateways
- more affordable housing
- additional open space



Motor Inn/St. James's Sites—Natick Line





ST. JAMES'S DIVERSE HOUSING SCENARIO

■ Retail	0sf	Adaptive Use of Church Building	
■ Office	0sf	Net Commercial	0sf
■ Loft (live/work)	0 units	Net Dwelling Unts	133 units
■ Apartment	100 units	Max Height	3LVL
■ Duplex	6 units	Project Density (gross)	18DU/acres
■ Town House	20 units		
■ Single-Family	7 units		
■ Open Space	yes		



NATICK LINE/ST. JAMES'S SITE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

1. Extend network of streets and paths
2. Re-establish linkages to the water and open spaces
3. Create appropriate development parcels
4. Define placement and physical guidelines for building
5. Create a gateway element at the Natick line
6. Strategically locate parking



SCENARIO A: Retail/Office—50 Apartments

■ Retail	9,500sf	■ *Parking Generated	135 spaces
■ Office	9,500sf	Parking Provided	128 spaces
■ Loft (live/work)	0 units	Structured	0
■ Apartment	50 units	Deck	70
■ Duplex	0 units	Surface	32
■ Town House	0 units	Garage	0
■ Single-Family	0 units	Net Commercial	19,000sf
■ Open Space	yes	Net Dwelling Unts	50 units
		Max Height	2.5LVL
		Project Density (gross)	21DU/acres



SCENARIO B: Retail/Office—20 Town Houses/Duplex/Lofts

■ Retail	10,500sf	■ *Parking Generated	100 spaces
■ Office	10,500sf	■ Parking Provided	106 spaces
■ Loft (live/work)	8 units	■ Structured	0
■ Apartment	0 units	■ Deck	0
■ Duplex	6 units	■ Surface	84
■ Town House	6 units	■ Garage	22
■ Single-Family	0 units	Net Commercial	21,000sf
■ Open Space	yes	Net Dwelling Unts	20 units
		Max Height	2.5LVL
		Project Density (gross)	8.7DU/acres



SCENARIO C: Retail/Office—55 Diverse Housing Units

■ Retail	11,000sf	 *Parking Generated	118 spaces
■ Office	0sf	 Parking Provided	102 spaces
■ Loft (live/work)	9 units	Structured	0
■ Apartment	36 units	Deck	70
■ Duplex	0 units	Surface	32
■ Town House	10 units	Garage	0
■ Single-Family	0 units	Net Commercial	11,000sf
■ Open Space	yes	Net Dwelling Unts	55 units
		Max Height	3LVL
		Project Density (gross)	24DU/acres

Wellesley, like other communities that are close to full buildout, needs to be highly strategic in its planning, seeking to achieve a number of different objectives by identifying development opportunities that solve more than one challenge at a time. In moving forward with a set of interrelated development strategies—residential, commercial, open space, and transportation—and using them as a collective guide to decision-making, Wellesley will be in a position to reduce, if not eliminate, the unintended consequences of managing change as a series of independent activities rather than as an interrelated system.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

Make adjustments to zoning to clarify language and provide flexibility.

ACTIONS:

Review the General Residence district to allow a special permit option for projects with higher densities that meet Town design standards and other requirements. Of the four residential districts that allow more than single-family housing, the General Residence district is the one that covers the largest area (73 acres). The current minimum lot area per dwelling unit is 7,000 square feet. Residents are sensitive to the possibility that an across-the-board increase in the permitted density in this zoning district might create adverse impacts on neighbors. However, well-designed housing at somewhat higher densities could be desirable in some locations. A special permit option tied to findings on design and impacts would provide flexibility while ensuring that the town would be able to control any increases over the base density.

Review the language allowing mixed-use buildings in commercial districts to clarify

the requirements for setbacks and similar standards. Current language is ambiguous because there are different standards for commercial uses and for residential uses, making it unclear which standard prevails in a mixed-use project. The zoning could be amended to provide for specific requirements, or an amendment could provide that certain design and performance standards have to be met in the site plan review process.

Amend zoning in commercial districts, where needed, to ensure redevelopment would retain desired village commercial character. In some commercial districts—for example, Wellesley Hills Square—the potential outcome of existing zoning is inconsistent with the current village character of the commercial district and with the goals for the district as expressed in the Vision Plan. Current zoning in Wellesley Hills allows parking in the front and similar suburban-strip style development. Zoning in commercial districts should be modified to promote pedestrian-friendly design while accommodating cars and parking.

Create an overlay district with design standards for multifamily, nonresidential and mixed uses from Natick Line to Russell Road. The Natick Line commercial district and the southern part of Route 9 that includes the St. James’s site and the adjacent office building should be included in an overlay district that encourages improved site design and function as properties are redeveloped in this area. Ten years ago, the towns of Natick and Framingham developed and adopted a common overlay district for their sections of Route 9, which had become increasingly dysfunctional and unattractive after decades of sprawling corridor growth. Over the last ten years, as properties have been redeveloped, these sections of Route 9 have improved and the towns found that the property owners often did not even require the density or other incentives

offered to encourage them to make improvements. An overlay for a commercial district like this one can be surprisingly effective in a relatively short time because, unlike residential areas, retailers need to refresh and redevelop more often in order to stay competitive and attract customers.

Make a plan to recodify the Zoning Bylaw in the next ten years. The current Zoning Bylaw is the result of an accretion of amendments and has become increasingly complex over the years. As a result, redundancies, inconsistencies and conflicts have inevitably been introduced. During the next ten years, the Planning Board should request funding for assistance to recodify the Zoning Bylaw.

Raise public awareness about and understanding of land use issues in Wellesley.

Residents and other property owners often lack good information about the land use system, the technical vocabulary of land use regulation, and the authority of regulatory boards—including the limits on their authority.

ACTIONS:

Adapt or develop brochures, guidebooks, and presentations to educate Wellesley residents and other property owners about the land use system. A succinct guide to the land use system and to land use regulation helps property owners when they want to make changes to their property and informs potential developers. Materials developed by others could be adapted to fit Wellesley’s circumstances. High-school students could be involved in creating these materials through classes or clubs.

Make these materials available through multiple means in town. Any materials should be made available on the web site, in Town Hall, the Library, the recreation center, the community center, and the Council on Aging, but they could

also be offered to organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, parent organizations, congregations, service organizations, and so on. Flyers publicizing the existence of these materials on the Town web site could be included in electric bills or posted in supermarkets and other places frequented by many residents. Members of the Planning Board could also offer to give presentations to community groups. It is usually more effective to go where the people are rather than ask them to come to you. Finally, in some communities Planning Department staff or Planning Board members visit school classes to talk about the physical character of the town and how development occurs.

Promote redevelopment in the commercial districts that meets the Town’s goals for mixed-use development and diversification of the housing stock.

In many cases, the changes in land use that the Town would prefer cannot be achieved through a regulatory strategy. Although the zoning frameworks must be in place to allow the Town’s preferred development types, in many cases the Town will have to take an active role to work with property owners and even recruit suitable developers.

ACTIONS:

Discuss the potential for mixed-use projects that meet Town goals with owners of suitable sites and with possible developers. The development scenarios provided earlier in this chapter illustrate the fact that even in a town that is largely built out and where there are a limited number of suitable sites for mixed-use development and higher density housing, it is still possible to envision a variety of well-designed options. Similar scenarios could be created for other sites. By sharing these ideas with property owners, the Town can communicate the kind of development it is seeking. However, the market at any one time may not be completely aligned

with Town objectives. For example, at the time of writing, condominiums and not rental housing are the most desirable housing product for the commercial districts from the market point of view. However, the Town would benefit from creation of rental housing with an affordable component through a “friendly 40B.” In such a case, it would be worthwhile for the Town to identify potential developers who produce the kind of rental housing with affordable units that would be suitable to Wellesley’s character and begin working with them to bring a development to the town.

Consider adopting mandatory cluster development zoning for the remaining large open space parcels in Wellesley.

The Wellesley Country Club, Mass Bay Community College, and other educational institutions own the remaining large parcels of open space in Wellesley. Should any of that land be offered for sale, the most likely outcome would be large, single-family houses. Mandatory cluster development zoning would ensure that significant open space would remain even if there were some limited residential development on these lands.

7 Natural and Cultural Resources

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION MAKERS
<p>Restore, preserve, and enhance open space and sensitive natural resources for protection of water resources, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, and enrichment of community character.</p>	<p>Identify natural resources for protection and preservation.</p> <p>Protect the quantity and quality of surface water and groundwater.</p>	<p>Manage Moses Pond to avoid eutrophication and to maintain its use as an environmental and recreational resource.</p> <p>Continue small pond management based on the Pond Restoration Master Plan.</p> <p>Apply appropriate Best Management Practices to ensure preservation of natural resources.</p> <p>Continue NRC’s Shade Tree Development Program to provide enhanced tree canopies and aesthetics throughout town.</p> <p>Continue NRC’s Pesticide Awareness Campaign to encourage elimination of pesticides to protect the Town’s water resources.</p>
<p>Preserve cultural resources, including cultural landscapes, to maintain and enrich community character.</p>	<p>Identify cultural resources for preservation.</p> <p>Enhance community understanding of Wellesley’s historic resources, including buildings and landscapes.</p>	<p>Create public information programs on historic resources.</p> <p>Support efforts that encourage the preservation of historic properties.</p>

NATURAL RESOURCES

Findings

- Wellesley’s 2,267 acres of undeveloped land (protected and unprotected) provide significant environmental resources for plant and animal habitats and help the Town maintain its water quality.
- Non-point source pollution from stormwater runoff is the greatest threat to water quality in Wellesley.



- Wellesley ponds need management to avoid eutrophication (conversion to wetlands through filling in).
- The Town’s protected stream corridors and trail system provide significant linked habitat for wildlife.
- Citizen groups, such as the Friends of Moses Pond Association and the Wellesley Conservation Council, support Town efforts to protect natural resources.

Key Challenges

- Reducing non-point source pollution resulting from private landscape management practices.
- Managing the impact of non-point source pollution from regional activities in upstream communities.
- Expanding conservation land through private easements and other methods in a very expensive land market.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Findings

- Wellesley has three National Register-listed historic districts, five individual National Register properties, and one local historic district.
- Potential National Register listings for residential neighborhoods have not been pursued.
- National Register listing of historic and cultural landscapes has not been pursued.
- Historic preservation activities have been relatively limited since 1990, when an inventory of historically-significant properties built between 1882 and 1940 was completed.
- Identification of pre-1882 properties is limited to a voluntary plaque program.
- An increasing number of additions and “tear-downs” affects Wellesley’s historic and aesthetic character.
- Historic preservation activities receive limited support from Town government and Town Meeting has twice declined to approve a demolition-delay bylaw.

Key Challenges

- Promoting more public awareness of the value of cultural resources in order to combat the loss of historic properties.
- Promoting public understanding of the range of historic preservation activities and designations at differing levels of regulation.
- Promoting more understanding of the economic benefits of historic preservation.



NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Natural Resources

Water Resources

- 6 streams
- 14 wetlands systems that cover 15% of Wellesley's land area
- 1 Great Pond (Lake Waban) and Morses Pond
- Over 10 small ponds
- 2 major aquifers
- 13 certified vernal pools
- 70-80 potential vernal pools

Water Quantity and Quality

- Ponds have excessive vegetation and plant growth due to stormwater runoff and require regular management
- Pond Restoration Master Plan and Morses Pond Management Program underway to restore ponds
- 7 local wells provide 84% of Wellesley's drinking water, with the remainder purchased from MWRA
- Excessive lawn irrigation in the summer may eventually result in constrained water supply
- Non-point source pollution from stormwater runoff containing oil, grease, pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals is the major threat to water quality in ponds and streams

Habitat and Wildlife

- Streams, wetlands, and ponds provide substantial wildlife habitat
- The Rosemary Brook corridor of conservation land is the biggest wildlife corridor within Wellesley

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Pollution from stormwater runoff is the greatest threat to water quality in Wellesley.
- Wellesley's ponds need regular dredging and management to avoid filling in and becoming wetlands over time as a result of stormwater runoff.
- Except for buildings in the Cottage Street Local Historic District, Wellesley's historic properties are not protected in any way from alterations or demolition.
- Town Meeting has been reluctant to support additional regulation to preserve historic properties or districts.

Sources: Town of Wellesley Open Space and Recreation Plan; Community Preservation Plan

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural Resources

- Listed on the National Register of Historic Places:
 - > Cochituate Linear Aqueduct District
 - > Sudbury Linear Aqueduct District
 - > Hunnewell Estates Historic District
 - > Eaton-Moulton Mill
 - > Wellesley Farms Railroad Station
 - > Wellesley Town Hall
 - > Intermediate Building
 - > Elm Bank
- Fuller Brook Park and Wellesley Hills Library National Register nominations funded in 2005
- 8 residential neighborhoods suggested for listing in 1990 but not pursued; 8 others identified for investigation
- One local historic district: Cottage Street Historic District (61 properties)
- 564 historically-significant structures dating from 1882 to 1940 have been inventoried
- 1,191 structures of potential historical significance have been identified in the Massachusetts Historical Commission database
- Demolition delay bylaw to seek adaptive reuse before demolition proceeds has been twice rejected by Town Meeting

A. NATURAL RESOURCES CURRENT CONDITIONS

This chapter and its recommendations are informed by Wellesley's 1994 *Open Space and Recreation Plan*, prepared by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC), and the 2003 *Town of Wellesley Community Preservation Plan*, prepared by the Community Preservation Committee. Other sources include interviews with Janet Bowser, Natural Resources Commission (NRC) Department Head; Meghan Conlon, Town Planner; and Linda Buffum, member of the Wellesley Historical Commission. In addition, a public meeting held on 29 September 2005 provided input from community members on natural and cultural resource issues.

In 1978, the Town established the Natural Resources Commission (NRC), an elected five-member board with a three-year term for each member, to consolidate the functions of the Conservation Commission, Park Commission, Tree Warden, Town Forest Committee, and Pest Control Officer. It plans for and manages Town conservation land, parks, and recreational areas; sponsors awareness campaigns designed to educate Wellesley residents about environmental issues, such as the impacts of household and lawn care chemicals on the Town's natural resources; and oversees the actions of two subcommittees, the Wetlands Protection Committee and the Trails Committee. The Wetlands Protection Committee provides local enforcement of the state Wetlands Protection Act and the local Wetlands Bylaw and the Trails Committee manages and improves Town trails.

Topography and Landscape Character

Wellesley's landscape is marked by rolling hills, drumlins, and stream corridors. To the north of the MBTA commuter rail line, rolling hills vary in elevation between 150 and 300 feet. The highest

point in this portion of Wellesley is Peirce Hill (337 feet), which lies near the Weston line. To the south, however, the landscape is defined by a series of landscape features created by glaciation. The southern portion of Wellesley contains six drumlins, or tapered hills of gravel created by the grinding process of moving ice. Elevations of the drumlins range from 50 to 336 feet, and the largest drumlin is Maugus Hill, which is located to the northwest of Centennial Park and Massachusetts Bay Community College. In addition, long sand banks called eskers wind around many of Wellesley's southern bodies of water, such as Longfellow Pond and Lake Waban. This southern landscape presents a contrast of steep hills and valleys around Wellesley's ponds and the Charles River. Rock outcroppings, such as Elephant Rock in the Boulder Brook Reservation and "Problem Rock" at Dover and Grove Streets, are known as "glacial erratics" and result from the same movement of retreating glaciers as the drumlins and eskers.



Steep slopes (slopes that are greater than 15%) create significant constraints for building. Wellesley has three major clusters of slopes that range from 15% to 25%:

- The Waban Brook corridor from the Natick town boundary to the Charles River;
- Hills between Temple Hill, the Dana Hall School, Tenacre Country Day School, and Babson College; and
- The area between Forest Street, the railroad, the Needham town boundary, and the Charles River.

Many of the slopes in these areas are protected from development by conservation restrictions and Town ownership, providing passive recreation opportunities and wildlife habitats, and contributing to the aesthetic quality of Wellesley.

(See Figure 7-1, Contours.)

Water Bodies, Waterways and Wetlands

STREAMS, LAKES, AND PONDS

Wellesley’s surface water consists of six stream systems that flow into the Charles River on the eastern and southwestern borders of town and approximately 13 large and small ponds.

Wellesley’s watersheds are shown in Figure 7-2: Watershed Drainage Basins. The three eastern stream systems are:

- The Cold Stream Brook watershed, which includes most of the land east of Peirce Hill and north of Maugus Hill and contains Cold Stream Brook, Rockridge Pond, Indian Springs Brook, and the Brookway/Waterway;
- The Rosemary Brook watershed, which runs from east of the Wellesley Country Club northeasterly to the Charles River and includes Rosemary Brook and Academy Brook; and
- The Hurd Brook watershed, which covers less than one square mile in the southeastern corner of Wellesley but includes significant wetlands around Dearborn Street and the Charles River.

The three southwestern stream systems are:

- The Fuller Brook watershed, which begins west of Great Plain Avenue and continues north to Wellesley High School and southwest to Waban Brook and the Charles River. This watershed covers most of the central portion of the Town and includes Fuller Brook, Waban Brook, Abbott Brook, Caroline Brook, and part of Cold Spring Brook;

- The Waban Brook watershed, which runs between Peirce Hill and Elm Bank and includes Morses Pond, Lake Waban, Boulder Brook, Jennings Brook, and Bogle Brook; and
- The Pollock Brook watershed, which runs north of Washington Street and connects with the Charles River.

Wellesley’s ponds and lakes range from the 103-acre Morses Pond and Lake Waban to small ponds scattered throughout Town. Lake Waban is a “Great Pond” because it is over ten acres in its natural state. This Massachusetts State designation makes it subject to state environmental regulations. Morses Pond is not a Great Pond because it was originally the much smaller Broad Pond and the present extent was created by dams. Among the medium-sized ponds are Longfellow Pond, Rockridge Pond, and Abbott Pond.

Many of Wellesley’s ponds have algal blooms caused by fertilizer pollutants and high amounts of sedimentation. In 1998, the NRC began implementing a Pond Restoration Master Plan, which set priorities for improving and restoring the Town’s smaller ponds. The plan has resulted in the dredging and restoration of Rockridge Pond through removal of 6,000 yards of sediment and replacement of the pond outlet structure and drain; restoration of Bezanson Pond and Reeds Pond; and a feasibility study of the Town Hall Duck Pond. Additional ponds scheduled to be restored under the plan include State Street Pond, Abbotts Pond, and Longfellow Pond.



The Morses Pond Comprehensive Management Program, a joint effort of the NRC, Public Works, and Recreation Commission, will improve the condition of Wellesley's largest pond and the adjacent area that contains three wells for drinking water. Like many ponds with former summer cottages along the shore, Morses Pond has experienced a host of problems, including eutrophication, excessive weed growth, and water pollution caused by the runoff of pesticides, road salt, gasoline, and fertilizers from both Wellesley and neighboring towns. Under the new management program, the Town will help reduce pollution at Morses Pond by dredging, limits on development in the Morses Pond watershed, a phosphorus inactivation system, and encouraging the construction of detention ponds and the reduction of residential pollution in the watershed area. Pending funding, the plan should enter the implementation phase in the summer of 2006.

AQUIFERS

Aquifers are subsurface geological formations that contain significant amounts of groundwater. Water drawn out of an aquifer through wells can be replaced by surface water that filters downward through permeable surface soils and "recharges" the aquifer. Aquifers are vital natural resources for drinking water supply, and their "recharge areas" must be protected from contamination or actions that would prevent the downward movement of water into the aquifer.

Wellesley has two major aquifers:

- Waban Brook aquifer underlies the 7,069-acre Waban Brook Basin that includes Wellesley, Weston, Natick, and Wayland. Wellesley, Natick, and Wellesley College all have water supply wells in this aquifer. One-third of this aquifer falls in Wellesley. Because Wellesley shares this aquifer with other municipalities, land uses and environmental actions in other towns can affect the water quality in the aquifer.

- Rosemary Brook aquifer, which stretches from Needham into Wellesley. Forty percent (982 acres) of this aquifer is in Wellesley.

(See Figure 7-3, Groundwater Resources.)

WETLANDS AND VERNAL POOLS

Wetlands comprise 15% of Wellesley's land area. Wetlands are river and stream banks, wet meadows, marshes, bogs, and swamps that serve as important areas for water retention and filtration and wildlife and plant habitat. Wellesley's wetlands include properties along the Charles River, Rosemary Brook, Fuller Brook, Cold Stream Brook, Boulder Brook, Caroline Brook, Bogle Brook, Morses Pond, Lake Waban, Longfellow Pond, and Sabrina Lake. In addition, smaller wetlands are scattered throughout Wellesley, mostly south of Route 9.



Wellesley also has 13 certified vernal pools. Vernal pools are wet depressions in the land that, by definition, are flooded only part of the year. Many rare and valuable species depend on vernal pools. Lacking fish populations and common wetlands vegetation, the pools support unique wildlife communities that have adapted to wet and dry cycles. Like wetlands in general, protection of vernal pools must extend beyond the boundary of the pool itself because the amphibians that breed in the pools may move well away from the pond during the course of their life cycle. The Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) will certify vernal pools after submission of documentation. (The forms are available on the NHESP web site.¹) By analyzing aerial photographs, state environmental scientists have identified 32 additional potential vernal pools in Wellesley. Although found

¹ <<http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfiv/nhesp/nhesp.htm>>.

throughout Wellesley, these potential pools are mostly located near bodies of water, such as the Charles River, Lake Waban, Morses Pond, Rosemary Brook, and Boulder Brook. In addition, it is likely that another 40-50 vernal pools exist in Wellesley, based on an assessment by the NRC.

(See Figure 7-4, Wetlands Protection.)

REGULATION TO PROTECT WATER RESOURCES

Wellesley's Zoning Bylaw protects the Town's water supply through Water Supply Protection Districts and Watershed Protection Districts. A Water Supply Protection District is an overlay that prohibits or limits certain land uses in watershed areas that contribute to the Town's drinking water supply. This zoning overlay applies to the recharge areas for the Waban Brook Aquifer and the Rosemary Brook Aquifer. The overlay prohibits solid waste facilities; the storage of road salt, petroleum, and hazardous wastes; the production of hazardous wastes; and the disposal of hazardous wastes within the districts. Special use permits may be obtained for commercial mining, businesses that produce small amounts of chemical wastes, parking lots, major construction projects, or any alterations that result in impervious surfaces over 10,000 square feet in area.

Watershed Protection Districts, also a zoning overlay, protect Wellesley's surface water from pollution. These districts are found adjacent to Wellesley's brooks and streams and the Charles River. Dumping, filling, and excavating are prohibited in a Watershed Protection District, and new construction is not allowed without a special use permit. Permits may be granted for dam and bridge operation and maintenance, parks, non-commercial recreational uses, and driveways and walkways associated with permitted uses.

(See Figure 7-5, Water Supply Protection District.)

Wetlands and vernal pools are protected from development and other alterations under the state Wetlands Protection Act and the Inland Restricted Wetlands Act, which establish requirements for permits for any alterations within a buffer zone. River and stream banks are protected by the state Rivers Protection Act, which provides that no development can occur within a zone of 25 feet along riverbanks in urban areas and 200 feet in non-urban areas without a permit from a local conservation commission (the NRC Wetlands Protection Committee in the case of Wellesley). Development existing in 1996 is exempted from this act.

In September 2002, the Town enacted the Wellesley Wetlands Protection Bylaw to provide additional protection for wetland resources, such as uncertified vernal pools. Wetlands Protection Regulations were drafted under the bylaw, and the first full year of enforcement of this local bylaw was 2004. The Committee's regulations establish a 25-foot no-disturbance zone from the border of all wetland resources and a presumption of no disturbance within the 100-foot vernal pool buffer unless no detrimental impact on the habitat can be demonstrated. Most projects that come before the Committee for an Order of Conditions involve expansion or replacement of houses.

Habitats and Biodiversity

Wellesley has a range of habitats for fish and wildlife: wetlands, forests, protected open spaces, and developed lots. Many animals typical of suburban environments have been observed in town, such as deer, coyotes, red and grey squirrels, raccoons, foxes, woodchucks, weasels, turtles, non-poisonous snakes, frogs, toads, wild turkeys, salamanders, butterflies, moths, crickets, grasshoppers, mosquitoes, eels, bass, carp, and perch. A wide variety of bird species can be found in Wellesley, including red-tailed hawks, blue birds, great blue herons, and several duck species.



Water resources are rich habitat areas and waterways and their adjacent areas function as wildlife corridors. Wellesley’s conservation lands along Rosemary Brook constitute the most significant wildlife corridor in town because they are connected to the Charles River in the north, to Academy Brook on Wellesley Country Club lands

to the west (and through them to Centennial Park), and link to conservation lands in Needham to the south. The Town’s linked trails, particularly Brook Path and the Cochituate and Sudbury River Aqueducts, though providing much narrower corridors, are also valuable connections for local wildlife. Road crossings that exist in these corridors are dangerous to wildlife, but they are still significant in a suburban context.

RARE SPECIES

The Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) keeps lists of documented sightings of rare species. These lists are based on documentation submitted to the state by citizens. Although the most recent documented observation of some species may be many years ago, this does not mean that the species no longer exists in Wellesley.

Taxonomic Group	Scientific Name	Common Name	State Rank*	Most Recent Observation
Amphibian	<i>Hemidactylium scutatum</i>	Four-Toed Salamander	SC	1907
Amphibian	<i>Scaphiopus holbrookii</i>	Eastern Spadefoot	T	1924
Bird	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	Northern Harrier	T	1878
Bird	<i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i>	Golden-Winged Warbler	E	1897
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Enallagma laterale</i>	New England Bluets	SC	1895
Dragonfly/Damselfly	<i>Ophiogomphus aspersus</i>	Brook Snaketail	SC	1894
Beetle	<i>Cicindela purpurea</i>	Purple Tiger Beetle	SC	1906
Beetle	<i>Cicindela rufiventris hentzii</i>	Hentz’s Redbelly Tiger Beetle	T	1971
Butterfly/Moth	<i>Erynnis persius persius</i>	Persius Duskywing	E	1942
Vascular Plant	<i>Aristida purpurascens</i>	Purple Needlegrass	T	1908
Vascular Plant	<i>Asclepias purpurascens</i>	Purple Milkweed	E	1896
Vascular Plant	<i>Asclepias verticillata</i>	Linear-Leaved Milkweed	T	1909
Vascular Plant	<i>Claytonia virginica</i>	Narrow-Leaved Spring Beauty	E	1981
Vascular Plant	<i>Eupatorium aromaticum</i>	Lesser Snakeroot	E	1891
Vascular Plant	<i>Liatris borealis</i>	New England Blazing Star	SC	1915
Vascular Plant	<i>Prenanthes serpentaria</i>	Lion’s Foot	E	1915
Vascular Plant	<i>Rotala ramosior</i>	Toothcup	E	1908
Vascular Plant	<i>Sphenopholis nitida</i>	Shining Wedgegrass	T	1908
Vascular Plant	<i>Verbena simplex</i>	Narrow-Leaved Vervain	E	1890

* Categories: **SC** = Species of Special Concern **T** = Threatened **E** = Endangered

However, only those rare species records that are less than 25 years old—in Wellesley’s case, the plant *claytonia virginica*—are used in Natural Heritage project review associated with the state Wetlands Protection Act and the state Endangered Species Act.

PRIORITY HABITAT

Wellesley has two small areas designated on state GIS maps as Priority Habitat: along the northern shore of the Charles River at Elm Bank and a small area in the Cochituate Aqueduct between Forest Street and Laurel Avenue. Priority Habitat Areas indicate where the NHESP estimates the existence of habitat for state-listed rare species. These estimates are made on the basis of species population records, habitat requirements, and landscape information. Priority habitats are not protected by law, but the rare species that may use these habitats are protected.

BIOMAP CORE HABITAT AND SUPPORTING NATURAL LANDSCAPE

The NHESP developed the state BioMap to identify areas in Massachusetts where the biodiversity of the state is most in need of protection. The map focuses especially on state-listed rare species and on natural communities of plants and animals that exemplify the biodiversity of the state. The BioMap is divided into two categories: Core Habitat and Supporting Natural Landscape. Core Habitat is made up of areas where rare species habitat and natural communities are most viable and likely to persist. These are the largest areas with a minimum of human intrusion and impact. Supporting Natural Landscape consists of buffers for Core Habitat, corridors and connections between Core Habitat areas, and undeveloped areas that provide habitat for common Massachusetts species.

The Supporting Natural Landscape area in Wellesley is the large wetlands area surround-

ing the Recycling Center. This area is connected to wetlands and Ridge Hill Reservation in Needham, making it part of a significant habitat area.

(See Figure 7-6, Habitat Resources.)

Environmental Issues

HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES

According to data from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, four significant hazardous waste sites have required remediation in Wellesley: the old paint shop site adjacent to Paint Shop Pond (identified in 1986); Alumnae Valley west of College Road (identified in 2001); the Rt. 9/Rt. 128 former Mass. Highway Site (now Harvard Pilgrim); and the Rosemary Meadow/Needham site. The Paint Shop site was remediated by Wellesley College in 2002 and athletic fields now occupy the site. The other three sites have been remediated and are currently being monitored.

LANDFILLS

Wellesley currently sends its solid waste to western Massachusetts and Canada. Sites formerly used as solid waste dumps include:

- An area east of the Morses Pond pumping station, which was used briefly as a dumping ground by the railroad and was closed by order of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection;
- A portion of the Wellesley College “North 40” site, which was used as a landfill for household waste;
- Wellesley College athletic fields located on the old paint shop site next to Paint Shop Pond, which contained hazardous wastes such as arsenic, chromium, lead, nickel, and zinc prior to remediation by the College;
- The Nehoiden Golf Course, a former ash dump;

- The playing fields between the middle school on Linden Street and the Sprague Recreation Building, which are on top of a closed landfill; and
- The Department of Public Works facility on Woodlawn Avenue, which is also a closed landfill.

Little testing for pollutants has been performed at sites other than the Morses Pond and old paint shop sites.

CHRONIC FLOODING

Wellesley has few flooding problems due to its rolling hills, which limit the area of floodplains along rivers and streams. There are, however, five places which experience chronic flooding due to water backup at bridge crossings and dams: water crossings along Lexington Road, Cedar Brook Road, River Street (S. Natick), Washington Street, and Windsor Road.

STORMWATER AND WATER QUALITY

In communities like Wellesley, the greatest threat to water quality is non-point source pollution. This type of pollution does not come from a specific “point” like a factory; instead, it enters the water system at many locations through stormwater runoff. This runoff contains oil, grease, fertilizers, pesticides, and other pollutants.

As houses become larger, with bigger footprints and more paved surfaces, these impervious surfaces result in more non-point source runoff and correspondingly less infiltration of rainwater. Because more impervious surfaces and more lawn, rather than shrubs and trees, result in increased runoff during storms, there is greater danger of flooding, erosion, and sedimentation. Fertilizers and other chemicals increase the nutrients in water bodies that result in excessive plant growth. Wellesley is affected not only by the non-point source pollution originating in the Town, but also that from upstream communities.

As noted earlier, the increasing eutrophication of Morses Pond is partially attributable to the Pond’s location at the end of a regional watershed that has experienced increasing urbanization in the past two decades.

WELLESLEY PESTICIDE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN.

The NRC’s Pesticide Awareness Campaign, in operation since 2000, educates residents on reducing pesticide use. Funding for this effort has come through Town funds and from grants from the state Department of Environmental Protection and the Toxics Use Reduction Network. In 2002, the Town, including the NRC, School Committee and Board of Health, adopted a policy of non-toxic management of Town and school lands through an Integrated Pest Management program. The NRC has created a demonstration garden guide and a number of educational brochures for residents: *Healthy Lawns and Landscapes*; *Beautiful Lawns Naturally!*; *Pesticide Reduction Resource Guide for Citizens and Municipalities of MA*; *A Guide to the Demo Garden*; *Buffers are Beautiful—Protecting Water and Wildlife*; and *Plants for Landscaping Ponds, Banks, Buffer Areas and Wet Areas While Encouraging Wildlife*.

STORMWATER REGULATIONS

The Town has begun to address the need to control discharges into stormwater drains by passing the Municipal Stormwater Drainage System Rules and Regulations in 2005, which regulate the type and amount of discharges entering the stormwater system. Through these rules Wellesley complies with the Environmental Protection Agency’s Phase II Stormwater Regulations.

Urban Forestry

Wellesley’s “urban forest” includes both the Town Forest and the canopy of trees along Town streets and on public land. Town Forest lies

along Rosemary Brook and Longfellow Pond near Centennial Reservation and Massachusetts Bay State College. This 200-acre preserve is comprised of woodlands, marshes, and fields and serves as a passive recreation area and wildlife habitat. A formal forest management plan has not yet been completed or implemented. Wellesley's Public Shade Tree Replacement Program ensures the maintenance of the Town's 3,150 shade trees by an annual appropriation of approximately \$25,000 a year from Town Meeting. Trees can be lost to disease, age, storms, and road construction. Each year, 60 to 100 new or replacement trees are planted on public land. The Town is the first and oldest Massachusetts community in the Tree City USA Program, which is now in its 22nd year.

B. NATURAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to promote awareness of the environmental damage caused by stormwater runoff and increased impervious surfaces and regulate development in order to minimize pollution impacts.

Wellesley's experiences with redevelopment and its location in regional watersheds make it important for the Town to regulate stormwater issues. As new residential properties increase impervious surface areas on lots, the Town will see an increase in runoff and pollutants. The Town must provide regulations that place adequate restrictions on non-point source pollution and on-site and off-site run-off and erosion. For example, in some communities, the local wetlands bylaw stipulates the use of native vegetation and elimination of lawns on the shores of water bodies and near wetlands. In addition, Wellesley must also consider how regional development creates greater water quality issues. Current laws must be re-evaluated frequently to ensure that

their provisions promote acceptable levels for both local and regional water quality levels.

ACTIONS

- **As residential and commercial redevelopment occurs in Wellesley, revisit the 2005 Stormwater Bylaw** to ensure that acceptable runoff levels conform to conditions created by this development.
- **Ensure that controls are provided in the Town's zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations that will minimize erosion and pollution created from development.** Although Wellesley has a group of bylaws that protect watershed and wetland areas, these regulations may need to be updated as regional growth continues. In addition, bylaws can be amended to more finely regulate tree and vegetation removal, drainage, erosion, run-off, and grading of development lots.
- **Examine the Watershed Protection District zoning overlay, the Water Supply District zoning overlay, and the Wetlands Protection Bylaw to reduce overlapping jurisdiction.** As Wellesley's bylaws have grown over time, overlap has developed between its three major water protection laws. These laws should be reviewed to eliminate needless intersections between permitting processes.
- **Continue to require the use of Best Management Practices to mitigate the impacts of local development through Zoning, Stormwater, and Wetlands Bylaws.** Best Management Practices (BMPs) are methods used to reduce the amount of non-point source pollution that enters surface or ground waters. As new development goes through the permitting process, the Town should require developers to incorporate pollution-reducing devices such as detention ponds, filtration strips, and porous pavement in their site plans. The Town should also encourage use of Best Management Practices on the regional level.

- **Continue public awareness campaigns to alert Wellesley residents to the harmful effects of non-point source pollution.** The Natural Resources Commission should continue to produce educational materials and sponsor campaigns that provide facts about the local and regional impacts of overuse of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers.

Continue to restore and manage ponds to avoid eutrophication.

Wellesley has already embarked on a program of pond restoration and management under the responsibility of the NRC. Several smaller ponds have already been restored, but they will require ongoing monitoring and management. Morses Pond is the most important pond because of the multiple functions it performs for the Town as a source of recreation, wildlife habitat, and drinking water (through adjacent wells). Despite removal of contaminated soil and sediment in 2002 and phosphorus inactivation treatment in 1997, it continues to experience eutrophication.

ACTIONS

- **Implement the 2005 Comprehensive Management Plan prepared for Morses Pond** in order to halt the pond's eutrophication and increase its water clarity.
- **Continue to implement the Pond Restoration Program.**
- **Monitor and manage restored ponds in collaboration with the DPW.**

Continue to protect and enhance the Town's Shade Tree Program by providing adequate funding to plant new trees throughout town.

ACTIONS

- **Develop a Public Shade Tree Inventory to identify all shade trees by size and species.**

C. CULTURAL RESOURCES CURRENT CONDITIONS

Scenic Landscapes

Wellesley has a number of scenic landscapes. These areas include open spaces and views that help define the aesthetic character of Wellesley. Key open space vistas include views across Lake Waban and Morses Pond, views from Pond Street to Wellesley College, the view southward from Rocky Ledges in Boulder Brook Reservation, southeast views from the top of Maugus Hill, and views along the Charles River from the Mary Hunnewell Fyffe Footbridge at Cordingly Falls.



Scenic Roads

Under M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 15C, Wellesley has designated six scenic roads that represent the rural side of town life:

- Benvenue Street
- The Brookway
- Cartwright Road
- Cheney Drive
- Pond Road
- Squirrel Road

The state law requires that any request for repair or maintenance within the right-of-way of a scenic road that would damage existing trees or stone walls must go through a public hearing before the Planning Board and cannot be undertaken without written permission of the board.

Historic Resources

The town that became Wellesley in 1881 began as part of Dedham and then Needham. It was a modest farming town in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and, as a result, lacks the imposing colonial and Federal-era build-

ings found in the colonial town centers of other communities. With the arrival of the railroad in the mid-nineteenth century, the town began to attract notice as a summer community for Boston residents. A few wealthy businessmen began building estates, Wellesley College was founded in 1875, and within a few decades, the town was on its way to becoming an attractive and affluent commuter suburb of Boston. Because of this history, Wellesley residents have tended to think of only the pre-1881 properties in town as “historic.” However, structures and designed landscapes more than 50 years old are eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places and the criteria developed for listing on these registers provides a suitably rigorous method to identify and evaluate properties for historic significance.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS

Wellesley has three major organizations devoted to historic preservation: the Historic District Commission, the Historical Commission, and the Wellesley Historical Society. The Historic District Commission is the municipal board authorized to review external changes to properties located within the Cottage Street Historic District for historical appropriateness. It also has the power to recommend a group of properties for historic district designation. The Wellesley Historical Commission, also a municipal board authorized under M.G.L. c. 40, has the power to conduct historic research, prepare educational material, and recommend designation of local historical and archaeological landmarks. This group advocates for historic properties, identifies properties eligible for listing on the National Register, and provides educational materials on local historic preservation. Commission members write regular columns in *The Wellesley Townsman* to inform the public about current preservation issues. The Wellesley Historical Society, a private organization founded in 1925, has a mission of serving as a historic resource center, conducting educa-

tional programs, inspiring public appreciation of Wellesley’s heritage, and advocating for the preservation of Wellesley’s cultural resources.

LIMITED RESOURCES FOR PRESERVATION

ACTIVITIES

Although the Community Preservation Act mandates that preservation activities receive at least ten percent of funds received under this act, Wellesley has not been able to leverage these funds to conduct significant preservation projects. The Town provides very limited funding to the Historical Commission, which must sponsor these nominations. In 2005, the Town allocated only \$250 to the Historical Commission, and there currently is no staff support for the Commission. This minimal funding hampers the Historical Commission’s ability to provide advocacy and preservation education. In addition, the limitation of the state historic tax credit to income-producing properties provides no incentives for residential rehabilitation.

HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS

A historic property may be recognized through two programs: listing on the National Register of Historic Places, a registry of significant cultural buildings and landscapes maintained by the National Park Service, and/or local designation by town government.

On the national level, a property may receive historic designation as an individual landmark or as a property

within a historic district. This is also true on the local level if the municipality has local legislation authorizing the designation of landmarks and historic districts.



National Register listing confers historical status on a property, as properties on the National Register are deemed to be of greater-than-local importance. The National Register listing requires sophisticated documentation, usually prepared by a trained consultant, but the listing itself provides little protection for the historic property unless it may be affected by a federally funded project, in which case a review is required. National Register designation does not prevent an owner from altering or tearing down his or her property. In the event of an alteration that removes significant historic features, the only thing that the National Park Service is empowered to do is to remove the National Register designation. No design review or penalties are associated with National Register listing.

Designation as a local historic district, however, does provide protection for a property against demolition or historically inappropriate alterations. Properties deemed of local importance may be designated by Town Meeting and thus brought under the purview of the Wellesley Historic District Commission. This group performs design review of exterior alterations, such as additions and replacement of historic materials, and issues permits called Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs) that allow work to proceed. Without a COA, an owner will not be allowed to make changes to the exterior of his or her locally designated property. This kind of regulation typically does not include temporary changes such as paint colors and the Historic District Commission has no authority over the interiors of local historic properties.

Communities can also designate individual properties as historic landmarks, which is the equivalent of a local historic district with one property. The Town of Barnstable has a model that might be appropriate for Wellesley. The bylaw requires permission of the property owner before designation as a historic landmark

and the Historical Commission must approve specified types of exterior changes that would permanently alter its historic character.

Listing on the National Register of Historic Places or a local designation will place a property on the State Register of Historic Places. Like the National Register listing, a State Register listing only requires that a review for impacts be conducted if a state-funded project will affect the property. It does not otherwise affect an owner's ability to change or demolish the property. Listing on the State Register, however, makes the property eligible for some historic preservation grants administered by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Historic preservation easements are another preservation option. They are voluntary agreements between property owners and a historic preservation organization recognized by the IRS. The easement restricts specified kinds of changes to the property and the donor conveys certain rights over the property to the easement-holding organization, which then has the legal authority to enforce the terms of the easement. The easement can cover changes to the exterior or interior of a building, the façade, additional building(s), and so on, and is tailored to each situation. In return for donating the easement, the donor gets a tax deduction.



DEMOLITION DELAY

Many Massachusetts communities have established “demolition delay” for structures of historic significance. This means that when a property owner files for a demolition permit on a structure deemed historically significant as defined in the bylaw, there is a delay period of six months or a year while an effort is made to find a use for the property that will not require demolition of the structure. In some bylaws, anything over 50 years old is deemed historically significant, while in others significance is limited to older structures, those listed on the State or National Registers, or those deemed significant by the Historical Commission. Demolition delay does not keep a property from being demolished if there is no adaptive use that can be found for the structure. The impact of the law on property owners is to alert them to the historic significance of the property, encourage them to find a use or a buyer willing to use the property, and make them wait a few months for a demolition permit. Town Meeting has twice declined to enact a demolition delay bylaw in Wellesley.

Historic Sites in Wellesley

In past years, Wellesley’s Historical Commission conducted a historic survey that documented the significance of many historic residential, religious, municipal, and commercial properties that were constructed after Wellesley’s incorporation in 1881. Over many years, the survey grew to 564 listings of structures built between 1882 and 1940, but no new updates have been conducted since 1990. Wellesley’s historic properties built prior to 1881 are recognized through a program sponsored by the Historical Commission that provides date plaques for each structure. Participation in the plaque program is voluntary.



NATIONAL AND STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES SITES

Wellesley has seven historic sites that have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These include three historic districts:

- Cochituate Aqueduct Linear District
- Sudbury Aqueduct Linear District
- Hunnewell Estates Historic District

The aqueduct districts are significant for their late nineteenth-century waterworks engineering, and the Hunnewell Estates district is significant for the quality of its residential buildings and associated landscapes.

In addition, there are five individual properties on the National Register:

- Eaton-Moulton Mill
- Wellesley Farms Railroad Station
- Wellesley Town Hall
- Intermediate Building
- Elm Bank



Each of the above properties is significant as a public or commercial building from the late nineteenth century, with the exception of Elm Bank, which is a large estate with a formal garden designed by the Olmsted firm in the early twentieth century.

The Wellesley Historical Commission is recommending the nomination of Fuller Brook Park, built in 1899, and the Wellesley Hills Branch Library to the National Register. The Historical Commission has received funds from the Community Preservation Committee to hire consultants to prepare National Register nominations for each of these properties. The 23-acre Fuller Brook Park’s Restoration Master Plan

is scheduled to be completed in 2006. Lack of maintenance over the years has caused the park's infrastructure to deteriorate significantly. The NRC's Restoration Master Plan, funded in 2003 by Town Meeting, will propose to improve the park's paths, and landscaping and remove invasive species. This restoration endeavor will qualify for a National Register listing, consequently making the park eligible for federal and state funds for landscape restoration and improvements.

The 1990 historic buildings survey conducted by the Wellesley Historical Commission also recommended National Register nominations for eight residential areas:

- Belvedere Estates
- Albion Clapp's Cliff Road/The Old Cliff Estates
- College Heights/Curve Street area
- Dana Hall area/Elmdale Park
- Glen Road area/Riverdale
- Cedar Street and River Ridge
- Cliff Estates
- Wellesley Gardens and Sunny Acres

These properties are seen to have historical significance as residential districts from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, but no formal action has been taken to pursue National Register designation. Files with the Massachusetts Historical Commission (the State Historic Preservation Office) suggest additional National Register nominations for the Weston Road Bridge, the Kingsbury Street Bridge, and the Wellesley College campus. In addition, the Massachusetts Historical Commission database identifies 1,191 properties of potential historical significance in Wellesley.

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Wellesley has one locally designated historic district, the Cottage Street Historic District. This district contains 61 properties. Wellesley does



not have a landmark bylaw and thus does not have any individual properties designated as local landmarks. Wellesley's history as an early suburb along a commuter rail line with a series of planned subdivisions suggests that there may be neighborhoods that meet criteria for historic significance. Eight neighborhoods were identified as potentially eligible for listing on the National Register during the last period of substantial historic preservation activity in the 1990s and an additional eight were identified for further investigation.

POTENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

The trend towards larger houses and replacement houses since the 1990s may have reduced the number of neighborhoods whose ensemble of residential buildings could meet the criteria for historic listing. In recent years, over 25 properties on the 1990 Wellesley Historic Buildings Survey have been demolished. Town Meeting has been reluctant to accept a demolition delay bylaw and no new historic districts have been proposed. At the same time, many residents have become much more concerned about the impact of this trend on the character of Wellesley. In the extended discussion on this issue in Chapter 4, it was recommended that one approach to these concerns could be the establishment of Neighborhood Conservation Districts. Town Meeting could pass a Town Bylaw that enables

creation of such districts, but neighborhood residents seeking district designation would have to petition for a study and negotiate the level of advisory and mandatory regulation that they would be willing to accept. A resource for potential Neighborhood Conservation District studies is the recent publication from the National Park Service, *Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation for the National Register of Historic Places*.

(See Figure 7-7, Historic Resources.)

Legal Protections for Historic Properties and Incentives for Rehabilitation

Massachusetts law (M.G.L. c. 40C) provides that a municipality may designate a local historic district and apply design review to most exterior alterations to a district property. Wellesley's historic district bylaw follows these state provisions. As noted earlier, the Town does not have a demolition delay bylaw.

State and federal law provide incentives for rehabilitation of historically-significant properties through preservation easements and historic tax credits. State and federal tax credits (20% of qualified rehabilitation expenditures on each level) may be obtained for rehabilitation of income-producing properties that are listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Thus, owners of historic income-producing properties in Wellesley, such as commercial structures or residential rental units, may obtain state and federal tax credits for rehabilitation projects that meet the criteria defined by the IRS and the Massachusetts legislature. Unlike many states, Massachusetts does not have state tax credits for non-income producing properties that encourage the rehabilitation of owner-occupied residential properties.

Other Cultural Resources

Cultural institutions in Wellesley provide residents with many opportunities for concerts, plays, and cultural programs on their campuses. Wellesley College's Davis Museum and Cultural Center offers a permanent art collection, along with exhibits, films, and academic discussions. In addition, the college has a theatre program that offers year-round productions, along with a summer theatre camp for local youth. Massachusetts Bay Community College serves as home to an adult theatre group, a children's theatre group, an art gallery, the MetroWest Youth Symphony Orchestra, and the Wellesley Symphony Orchestra. Babson College's Sorenson Center for the Arts also provides cultural opportunities in theatre, dance, film, music, and visual art for Wellesley residents. Most notably, it is home to the Wellesley Players, one of the oldest community theatre groups in New England.

D. CULTURAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS

Explore combining the existing Historical Commission and Historic District Commission into one Historical Commission with the powers of both existing boards.

In a town of Wellesley's size, where there is only one local historic district, it is somewhat unusual to have two town boards focused on historic preservation. Under M.G.L. Chapter 40C, Section 14, a town may enable its historic district commission to have the powers and title of a historical commission. It may be more efficient to consolidate the Historic District Commission and the Historical Commission into one group that will provide design review, advocacy, and preservation education. If Wellesley establishes an option for Neighborhood Conservation Districts, the single Historical Commission would oversee the process for establishment of these districts. This reorganization should be combined with staff support

and funding for activities that will raise preservation awareness in Wellesley. Money could also be used for preservation education for commission members or programs that would allow them to forge ties with other local preservation groups and the Massachusetts Historical Commission. In addition, the Town should ensure that the new commission gives advisory opinions on major redevelopment projects.

Promote public awareness of Wellesley's history and the benefits of historic preservation.

The loss of older buildings appears to have stimulated interest in the preservation of community character. The Planning Board's February 2004 survey found that 79% of resident and government respondents believed that "neighborhood character" was an "essential/very important" characteristic of Wellesley and 67% of resident respondents agreed with the statement "I would love to see more historic buildings preserved in Wellesley." These responses suggest that Wellesley residents are growing increasingly concerned about the destruction of cultural resources that define the Town's character and enhance its quality of life. However, historic preservation advocates in Wellesley face the challenge of lack of public awareness about what makes a property historic and the impact of historic designations. Preservation activities have also been hindered by owner resistance to creation of new historic districts or designation of individual properties.

ACTIONS

- **Encourage preservation through education and publicity about historic properties and preservation easements.** The Historical Commission, Historic District Commission, and the Wellesley Historical Society should work together to promote a greater awareness of the benefits of historic preservation. The community needs a higher level of understanding of the historic character of many

local properties and a better grasp of the potential forms of designation and tax benefits. This could come in the form of newsletters and brochures, newspaper articles, and historic walks or historic tours that allow the public to experience private historic properties. In addition, these local preservation groups should encourage the donation of preservation easements to the Town or a non-profit entity. This educational process needs to be ongoing, as approximately 40% of Wellesley's population moves every five years (in some cases to other Wellesley residences).

- **Revive and complete the existing historic property inventory from the 1990s.** The property inventory that has lain dormant for the past decade should be revisited and updated to include documentation of properties that are at least 50 years old and any properties dating from before the Town's incorporation in 1881. This inventory should be used as an active document that guides the education and advocacy efforts of the Historical Commission.
- **Expand the plaque program to include properties that are at least 50 years old.** The Historical Commission or the Historical Society should offer plaques and brief histories for a fee to any local properties that are at least fifty years old and have not had their historical integrity seriously compromised by unsympathetic alterations. The Historical Commission is currently planning to focus special efforts on owners of properties built before 1900 through mailings and other targeted efforts. However, more general publicity through the Commission's articles in the newspaper or posting on the Town web site about the availability of plaques to properties at least 50 years old could attract interest from others. This can stimulate broader interest in and understanding of community character in various parts of town that were developed in different eras. Publication of the names of plaque recipients and individual property his-

stories can generate greater public awareness about Wellesley’s history and the value of historic preservation. This kind of program has been very successful in other communities as a way of raising community consciousness about historic values.

Maintain the historic integrity of Wellesley’s neighborhoods by initiatives, such as Neighborhood Conservation Districts, that will help protect historic properties and landscapes.

The growing trend of “teardowns” and “mansionization” has caused the loss of some of Wellesley’s historic residential properties. In addition to the loss of some individually significant buildings, the historic integrity of some neighborhoods has been diminished by the construction of additions and new homes that prove incongruous in scale and design. Residents and non-residents alike value the Town’s aesthetic character, which draws heavily on well-designed late nineteenth- and twentieth-century neighborhoods. Currently, Wellesley has no historic preservation regulation beyond one historic district. Few standards exist to shape design and redevelopment in Wellesley’s other neighborhoods. More detailed discussion of Neighborhood Conservation Districts and how they might be established can be found in Chapter 4, Housing and Residential Character.

ACTIONS

- **Evaluate the potential to protect individual properties by adopting a Historic Landmark Bylaw** that would allow the Town to designate a specific property as having local historic significance. Once historic designation has occurred, owners would be prevented from making exterior changes that would alter the historic character of a particular property. Under a Historic Landmark Bylaw, the Town would have to obtain the permission of the property owner before designation and the owner would have to get a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the Historic District Commission prior to any major exterior work on the property. Although many owners might object to the restrictions imposed by the landmark designation, others could find that the designation increases their property values. The bylaw would also provide a flexible preservation tool, as only single properties could be designated. Thus, owners of an individual property in a historic area could have protections placed on their property without the entire historic area having to be designated as a historic district.
- **Advocate to protect historic properties by passing a Demolition Delay Bylaw.** As Wellesley loses more of its historic properties to “teardowns” and “mansionization,” the Town could pass a bylaw that would provide temporary protection from demolition. Under this bylaw, a property owner would be prevented from destroying his or her historic property for six months or a year. During this time, the Town and the Historical Commission could search for a sympathetic buyer for this property. Although a demolition delay bylaw has failed to pass Town Meeting on two previous occasions, the increasing number of teardowns may create support for this as a neighborhood-preserving measure. Local preservation advocacy groups can aid in this effort by preparing educational materials on the efficacy of demolition delay in other communities in the Greater Boston area.
- **Protect groups of related historic properties by designating more local historic districts or by passing a Neighborhood Conservation District Bylaw.** Historically significant groups of properties related to each other by context should be designated as local districts. The creation of a new historic district would mean that all contributing properties within the district would be subject to the Certificate of Appropriateness process before any major

alterations could be performed on exteriors. The Historical Commission and the Historic District Commission should work together to determine how past surveys can be used to provide information for new designations.

Wellesley property owners have proved reluctant to establish any more local historic districts, with their accompanying regulations. As discussed in Chapter 4 and earlier in this chapter, Neighborhood Conservation Districts could be a solution because designation provides the benefit of owner and public education on historic appropriateness with much greater flexibility about regulation. Properties included in a conservation district do not have to carry historical significance, and review of proposed alterations may be strictly advisory. Establishing a neighborhood conservation district involves performing a design study that identifies a particular design type that controls the neighborhood and determining what changes will be subject to design review. The Historical Commission, Planning Board, Historic District Commission, or a Neighborhood Conservation District Commission may administer either advisory or mandatory design review. These districts may be preferable to historic districts, since the level of review generally is lower and the reviewing commission can be made a purely advisory body.

Expand the scope of potential preservation projects by seeking non-local funding and partnerships and private donations.

ACTIONS

- **Apply for different sources of funding for preservation projects.** Although the Community Preservation Act provides a guaranteed source of funding for historic preservation projects, the Historical Commission should seek out other sources of funding. The

Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund could be a funding source, along with small survey and planning grants partially funded by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). The Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund awards money to three types of projects: pre-development, development, and acquisition projects. Each project must involve a property that is listed on the State Register of Historic Places. Applicants can ask for up to \$30,000 for pre-development activities such as surveys and \$100,000 for projects that will involve stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, or historic land acquisition. The smaller survey and planning grant program awards funds for survey, preservation plans, National Register nominations, and educational programs. Each type of funding through the MHC requires a 50% match from local sources.

- **Look for new sources of support from state government and non-profit organizations.** The Historical Commission should cultivate relationships with the Massachusetts Historical Commission, Preservation MASS, and the Northeast Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Each of these entities can provide valuable opportunities for preservation education and assistance on technical issues.
- **Pursue private support for historic preservation activities as part of public education efforts.** Wellesley citizens have shown their willingness to contribute private funds to Town projects that they consider important, such as the library and improvements to parks, ponds, and conservation lands. The Historical Society and the Historical Commission should seek private donations for high-priority historic preservation projects.

8

Open Space and Recreation

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
Preserve and enhance the Town’s open space system.	Identify opportunities to acquire new open space and permanently protect and preserve existing open space.	Permanently protect existing Town-owned open space with appropriate zoning and conservation restrictions.
Ensure continuation of Wellesley’s recreational facilities as major community assets.	Retain Morses Pond as a recreational asset.	Preserve a balance between active and passive recreation.
Continue expansion of the trail system to link open space to town destinations.	Identify opportunities for new trails and enhancement of existing trails.	Support volunteer trail creation and enhancement.

Findings

- Wellesley has seen growth in its youth population over the past fifteen years, with the number of households with children under age 18 increasing from 34% in 1990 to 41% in 2000. Between 1994 and 2004, the school population increased 3.5% a year.
- The use of Wellesley’s active and passive recreational areas continues to increase as the Recreation Department and the Natural Resources Commission expand their programs to meet the needs of the current population.
- The Town has made significant strides in the preservation of open space by promoting conservation restrictions and by expanding its trail system.
- Respondents to the Comprehensive Plan survey ranked preservation of existing parks and green spaces for passive recreation as their

highest priority, completion of bike paths and trails to or through all neighborhoods as their third-highest priority, and provision of additional sports fields for active recreation much lower at priority #15.

Key Challenges

- The increased use of Wellesley’s passive and active recreation land exerts significant pressure on the Town to maximize usage and improve maintenance of the Town’s existing recreational land.
- Wellesley’s built-out condition and high property values impede the acquisition of significant amounts of open space.
- Significant open space areas are either held by institutions or are in tax abatement programs that provide limited protection against development.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FACTS

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Wellesley residents value the visual and other benefits they get from privately-held open space.
- There is relatively little open land that is not either owned by institutions or protected in some way.
- Almost 80% of the unprotected open space is under institutional ownership.
- The majority of Town-owned land used for open space or recreational purposes is permanently protected from development under Article 97 of the state constitution, which requires a vote of the legislature and replacement of any protected land used for other purposes. A higher level of protection is available through conservation restrictions.

Protected Open Space (Including Article 97 lands)

- Municipal: 553.9 acres
- State: 123.6 acres
- Wellesley Conservation Council: 36.4 acres
- Private property with conservation restrictions: 48.2 acres

Temporarily Protected Open Space

- Lands in tax abatement programs for forestry (Chapter 61), agriculture (Chapter 61A), or recreation (Chapter 61B): 203.96 acres

Unprotected Government and Institutional Open Space

- Town-owned open space such as school playgrounds: 154.1 acres
- State: 42 acres
- Private institutions (including cemeteries): 213.2

Passive Recreational Opportunities

- 240 acres of passive-use park and conservation land
- 24 miles of marked trails

Active Recreational Facilities and Programs

- 16 neighborhood parks/playgrounds (1-5 acres): 46.5 acres
- 10 playfields (5-15 acres): 100.06 acres
- Swimming beach at Morses Pond (over 20,000 users in 2004)
- Annie F. Warren Recreation Center
- Programs serving over 6,000 people in 2004

Source: Town of Wellesley 1994 Open Space and Recreation Plan; Assessor's Data

A. CURRENT CONDITIONS

Wellesley's 1999 *Open Space and Recreation Plan*, prepared by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC), the 2003 *Town of Wellesley Community Preservation Plan*, prepared by the Community Preservation Committee (CPC), and maps prepared in 2004 for an update to the Open Space and Recreation Plan, provide the basis for the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations for open space and recreation. Additional sources include interviews with Janet Bowser, Natural Resources Commission (NRC) Department Head; Jan Kasetta, director of the Recreation Department; Bob White, member of the Trails Committee; and Meghan Conlon, Town Planner. A public meeting on September 29, 2005 with the participation of members of the NRC and the Recreation Commission as well as members of the public, provided community feedback on challenges and recommendations.

In addition to the environmental protection activities described in the previous chapter, the Natural Resources Commission (NRC), a five-member elected board, sets open space policy and pursues additional preservation of open space through acquisition by the Town or non-profit partners or through conservation restrictions on private land. The NRC also has management responsibility for parks, playgrounds, athletic fields and recreation spaces, acting as the Parks Commission, and it oversees trail management through the Trails Committee, which is a ten-member group that monitors conditions on existing trails and advises the NRC on the potential to expand Town-maintained trails. The Department of Public Works implements parkland and other open space management at the direction of the NRC.

The Wellesley Recreation Commission, a five-member board, sets policy for the Recreation

Department, which organizes programs and classes that take place at the Warren Recreation Center and on Town-owned fields. The Playing Fields Task Force is an advisory group that identifies improvement needs for athletic fields. Because the demand for playing fields creates pressures for the development of expanded athletic fields, the Town and the youth sports organizations work together to ensure maximum usage of playing fields.



The Wellesley Conservation Council (WCC) is a local non-profit organization devoted to acquiring and protecting open space and providing environmental education to Wellesley's citizens. The WCC owns 14 land parcels and holds three conservation restrictions. Some of these environmentally-significant properties are publicly accessible, such as the Guernsey Sanctuary, Pickle Point, the Susan Lee Memorial Sanctuary, Coveside Bank Sanctuary, Cold Spring Brook Sanctuary, and Cronk's Rocky Woodlands. The WCC also works with the Trails Committee to maintain the Guernsey Sanctuary Trail.

Open Space in Wellesley

One-third of Wellesley's total area, 2,267 acres of land and water, has been identified as green open space land, both publicly and privately owned by institutions and large landowners. This number does not include green yards and gardens around residences or landscaped areas around commercial properties. Some of this green open space is permanently protected from development, some is temporarily protected, and some has no protection and could be developed by public or private owners if they wish.



WELLESLEY OPEN SPACE

	OWNERSHIP	ACRES
Permanently Protected	State	123.6
	Municipal	553.9
	Non-Profit	36.4
	Private (conservation restrictions)	48.2
Total Permanent Protection		762.1
Temporarily Protected	Private land under Chapter 61, 61A, or 61B	203.96
Total Limited Protection		203.96
Unprotected	Local Government	154.1
	State Government	42.0
	Private Institutions (including cemeteries)	213.2
Total Unprotected Government and Institutional Open Space		409.3

Source: Wellesley Assessor's Data (2004); Town of Wellesley Community Preservation Plan (2003)

For the purposes of this comprehensive plan update, open space is assigned to protection categories following criteria commonly used throughout Massachusetts for open space planning. Permanently protected land includes land that is restricted by deed from development, including by permanent conservation restriction and by terms of donation to the Town. In addition, lands that fall under Article 97 of the state constitution are also assigned to the category of permanent protection. The NRC takes the more restrictive view that only lands with deed restrictions can be considered permanently protected. Protected open space can be public conservation and parkland, water supply protection land (around wellheads and surface water supplies), conservation land owned by non-profit organizations, and conservation easements placed upon land by private owners. Temporarily protected land restricts development under the state tax abatement programs known as Chapter 61 (Forestry), Chapter 61A (Agriculture), and Chapter 61B (Recreation). Lands enrolled in these programs must meet minimal criteria showing they are used for the specified purposes and receive a tax abatement as long as they are in the program. Large, significant parcels of open space that remain unprotected are primarily in the hands of private institutions. Cemeteries also play a role as open space and are sometimes treated as effectively permanently protected. Although existing grave sites are unlikely to be disturbed, land not yet used for graves may be sold, so the cemeteries are listed in this chapter as unprotected institutional open space.

Appendix B lists the land parcels under various protection categories as well as known private conservation restrictions. An up-to-date listing of all lands of conservation and recreation interest, with more precise details on their protection status, should be prepared as part of the Town's next Open Space and Recreation Plan update.

Protected Open Space

Article 97 of the Amendments to the State Constitution requires that any lands acquired by government for natural resources purposes (including conservation, parks, and water supply protection lands) require a two-thirds roll call vote of the state legislature before they can be disposed of or converted to other uses. The cases in which conversion under Article 97 has been permitted in recent years often involve petition by very built-out communities for use of the land to build or expand schools. School building mandates helped create this problem by creating one-size-fits-all design requirements for sprawling one-story schools with large parking areas. These building mandates were recently revised to allow for more flexibility in designing for local conditions. Article 97 conversions also sometimes occur for roads and other public infrastructure. The vast majority of Article 97 land has remained protected and the constitutional amendment is a very significant obstacle to change of land status.

The legislature will not vote to permit disposition or conversion of municipal lands under Article 97 protection unless petitioned by a municipality. Because Wellesley's existing parks, conservation lands, and water protection lands do not seem to be threatened by a town-wide consensus to attempt to use them for other purposes, they will be treated here as permanently protected lands.



As noted earlier, the NRC takes the position that no Town-owned park and conservation lands are fully protected and believes that

conservation restrictions should be placed on all park land. However, deed research could find, as is true in a number of communities, that some park lands may have been donated to the Town with restrictions in their deeds limiting the land to park uses. The legal work necessary to place conservation restrictions on all these lands may not be needed. Another way to strengthen the status of all park and conservation land is to ensure that it is zoned "Conservation." Although zoning can be changed by Town Meeting vote, placing all these lands in the Conservation district would create a significant barrier to any attempts to use park lands for other purposes. The NRC can prepare a zoning petition for all these lands.

Town-owned open space falls into two categories: conservation and passive use park land (240 acres) and land covered by water (312 acres). Of the latter category, 186 acres are used as water supply land for the Town.

In addition to the Town, the state Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), owns and manages Charles River Reservation lands in Wellesley and the Town of Needham holds two conservation parcels. The Wellesley Conservation Council, a land protection non-profit, also owns open space. Conservation restrictions on private land are mostly on properties in the Hunnewell Estates Historic District area.

Temporarily Protected Open Space

Two hundred and three privately-owned acres are temporarily protected as open space used for forestry, agriculture, and recreation under the Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B tax abatement programs. Under these programs, owners receive a lower property tax rate as an incentive to maintain the land as open space. Participation is voluntary, and if the land is removed from the program and put on the market, the Town has

the right of first refusal. Although the abated taxes must be paid after a sale, in practice this has proved not to deter marketability in areas with low supply and high land prices. Thus, the Town cannot rely upon statutory tax abatement programs for permanent open space protection.

Unprotected Open Space

The town's unprotected open space includes school recreation areas, undeveloped open space owned by educational institutions, and large private parcels. Wellesley is unusual among suburban Boston communities in the large amount of privately-owned open space in proportion to its population and any change in use of this open space will have a major impact since it contributes greatly to the character of the town. Major unprotected parcels include 43 acres adjacent to Centennial Reservation that are owned by Massachusetts Bay Community College and the "North 40" acreage owned by Wellesley College along Weston Road. According to the build-out study prepared in 2001 by MAPC, existing zoning regulations potentially allow 851 acres of privately-owned open space to be developed into more than 2,200 dwelling units for both academic and single-family residences.

(See Figure 8-I, Protected Open Space; Figure.)

Open Space Funding

Wellesley relies upon Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, general revenues, and resident contributions to fund open space acquisitions and park improvements. Under the CPA, Wellesley voted to impose a 1% surcharge on property taxes for acquisition or preservation of open space, protection of historic properties, and creation of community housing (permanently affordable housing). The amounts raised through the CPA by the Town are then matched by the state. The Town is required to allocate at least ten percent of the Community Preservation Fund to open space, affordable housing, and his-

toric preservation each fiscal year, but can spend the remaining 70% on any of the three plus recreation. In FY 2003 and 2004, Wellesley generated \$1,071,000, which was matched by the state. Several recent park improvement projects also benefited from substantial private fundraising and donations: Warren Park Playground, Phillips Park Playground, Ouellet Park Playing Fields and Playground, and the Hunnewell Field Tot Lot. In addition, the Town purchased a one-acre parcel adjacent to Rockridge Pond Park with substantial private funding.

Passive Open Space Areas

Centennial Park or Reservation, with 42 acres, is considered the pre-eminent park in Wellesley, as it provides scenic views of Wellesley and neighboring Needham, open meadows, and hiking and nature trails. Fuller Brook Park was the first park in Wellesley, created by land donations starting in 1899. Other publicly-owned passive recreation land includes a 24-mile system of trails, nature conservancies, and ponds. Residents also have access to institutionally-owned open space at local colleges.

TRAILS

Wellesley has an extensive system of trails and paths. The trails provide woodland hiking routes in conservation and park areas.



WELLESLEY TRAIL SYSTEM

TRAIL NAME	LOCATION OF TRAILHEAD	LENGTH OF TRAIL IN MILES
Beard Trail	Beard Way off of Grove Street	1.1
Boulder Brook Reservation Trail	Parking lot on Elmwood Road at Kelly Memorial Park	1.6
Brook Path	Maugus Avenue	2.3
Carisbrooke Reservation Trail	End of Glen Brook Road	0.5
Centennial Reservation Trail	Centennial Park parking lot off of Oakland Street	1.6
Charles River Path	Washington Street at Charles River crossing	2.4
Crosstown Trail	Cochituate Aqueduct on Route 9	5.3
Guernsey Path	Parking area on Winding River Road	2.1
Longfellow Pond Trail	Longfellow Pond parking lot off Oakland Street	0.8
Morses Pond Trail	Turner Road intersection of Crosstown Trail	0.7
Rockridge Pond Trail	Parking area off Hundreds Circle	0.4
WCC Guernsey Sanctuary Trail	Entrance to Guernsey Sanctuary near Winding River Road parking area	0.6
Sudbury Aqueduct Trail	Waban Arches	4.5
TOTAL		23.9

These paths link different parts of Wellesley through open space and, in some segments, on-street routes. The Fuller Brook Path is the most heavily-used trail due to its location near schools and some municipal buildings, and the Crosstown Trail connects the Morses Pond area to the Charles River. The Sudbury Trail runs through the southern part of Wellesley. The Trails Committee would like to use trails to create more water access in Wellesley and to forge more connections with neighboring towns, especially through the Charles River Link, a 15.6-mile regional trail that would ultimately link Wellesley's trails to the Bay Circuit Path and the Charles River Riverwalk. The Trails Committee maintains over 17 map houses along the trails and a web site with trail information, sponsors eight walks in the spring and fall that usually attract 50-80 walkers, and provides volunteer opportunities each year for Boy Scout and Girl Scout projects that improve the trails.

In Chapter 4, Housing and Residential Character, the housing development scenarios for the Grossman's site, the St. James's site, and the Wellesley Motor Inn site suggested the potential for trail connections that could be obtained through development agreements.

(See Figure 8-2, Wellesley Trails.)

Active Open Space and Recreation Facilities

Wellesley has numerous recreational programs for all age groups, and participation in recreational sports has been increasing among children and adults during the past ten years. Many programs are located at the Warren Recreation Building. Wellesley's recreational programs include sports and activities such as summer day camp, cooking, language classes, and hobbies. Between 1996 and 2004, the number of people participating in Recreation Department programs grew from 5,000 to



6,000. In addition, Morses Pond Beach has about 20,000 users per year. Local sports leagues, such as youth soccer, lacrosse, and baseball, also use Wellesley's fields and contribute \$10 per person for field maintenance costs per year.

Private Recreation

Private recreation opportunities in Wellesley include memberships at local gyms and clubs. Users may purchase athletic memberships at businesses such as Boston Sports Club, which offers tennis courts, a skating rink, and indoor and outdoor pools. Memberships are also available at the Wellesley Country Club, which features an 18-hole golf course, a swimming pool, and tennis and platform tennis courts. In addition, it is possible in the near future that the new sports complex at Dana Hall School will open to the public on a fee-per-use basis. User fees for these private facilities generally are expensive. No low-cost private recreational facility exists for family recreation in Wellesley.

(See Figure 8-3, Recreation Resources.)

Management of Park and Recreation Facilities

In addition to the pond restoration program described in the chapter on Natural and Cultural Resources, the NRC is developing the Fuller Brook Park Restoration Master Plan to provide improvements for Wellesley's oldest park. First started in 1899, the 23-acre Fuller Brook Park

contains Wellesley's heaviest-used trail, the Fuller Brook Path. Lack of maintenance over the years has caused the park's infrastructure to deteriorate significantly. The Restoration Master Plan, funded in 2003 by Town Meeting, outlines needed park improvements, including new paths, trees, and landscaping and removing invasive plants. In addition, the restoration plan involves a partnership with the Historical Commission to have the park listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In 2005, the Community Preservation Committee recommended \$4,700 in funding for filing the application. The Restoration Master Plan, which includes the required Cultural Landscape Report, anticipates that National Register listing will make the park eligible for federal and state funds for landscape restoration and improvements. The plan for the Fuller Brook Park restoration is expected to be approved by the NRC in 2006.

Open space used for active recreational programs totals approximately 225 acres of Town-owned land. Some of this land is attached to schools and includes school playgrounds and playing fields. As is the case in many communities, demand for athletic fields is growing as sports programs increase resulting in the need for expanded fields year-round. The Town has a limited number of fields and good turf management requires that they be "rested" to keep them from being overused.

The Playing Fields Task Force (PFTF) was created as an advisory body to the NRC to identify urgently needed improvements and develop a long-range field improvement program. The Task Force has representatives from the NRC, Department of Public Works, Recreation Department, School Department, Wellesley Little League, Wellesley Lacrosse, and Wellesley Soccer Club. Recent playing field improvements have been made at Ouellet Park and Schofield School.

The NRC is implementing an extensive Playground Improvement Master Plan with funding from the Community Preservation Fund, resident groups and individuals, and Town sources. Recent improvements were made to Warren Park, Phillips Park, Ouellet Park, and Hunnewell Field Playground. As improvements are made to Town recreational facilities of all types, they are upgraded to meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements and modern safety standards.

Demand for More Open Space, Parkland, and Programs

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of Wellesley families with children under age 18 increased 20% from 2,910 to 3,480. In 2000, 41% of all Wellesley households had children under age 18, compared to only 34% in 1990. During the 1990s, the under-5 population grew 5% from 1,565 individuals in 1990 to 1,954 in 2000; the 5-9 population grew 27% from 1,534 in 1990 to 1,953 in 2000; and the 10-14 group increased 30% from 1,387 in 1990 to 1,800 in 2000.

The 1990s also saw a rise in the number of older adults in Wellesley. This can be attributed to the aging of the baby boom generation. The 45-54 category rose from 3,241 residents in 1990 to 3,938 in 2000, a 20% increase. In addition, by 2000, 28% of all households had one member that was 65 or older, and 14% of the population was at least 65. Although the total number of over-65 residents declined from 3,720 in 1990 to 3,710 in 2000, the relative stability of this number suggests that senior citizens wish to remain in Wellesley.

Youth and seniors generally comprise the largest class of park users. Wellesley's growing youth population generates a need for additional playing fields, playground areas, and rec-

reational programs. Similarly, the aging population needs more adult recreational programs and passive park amenities, such as walking trails. One of the challenges created by these demographic trends is that of balancing the range of needs by park users.



WELLESLEY YOUTH AND OLDER ADULT POPULATION GROWTH, 1990-2000

POPULATION GROUP	1990 TOTAL	2000 TOTAL
Under 5	1,565	1,954
5-9	1,534	1,953
10-14	1,387	1,800
15-19	1,586	2,505
Total Children Age 19 and Under	6,072	8,212
45-54	3,241	3,938
55-59	1,242	1,437
60-64	1,167	1,070
65 and over	3,720	3,710
Total Adults Age 45 and Older	9,370	10,155

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

TRENDS IN RECREATIONAL TASTES AND PARTICIPATION

The past decade has seen a change in the recreational and open space tastes of Americans. Sports activities have expanded from traditional American sports like baseball and football to include other games, such as soccer. In addition, many more children are participating in athletic activities at early ages and several sports

have become multi-seasonal. The demand for passive recreational activities has also grown and the Town Comprehensive Plan survey confirms that residents place a very high priority on the protection of the Town's existing passive open space, and a lower priority on expanding active recreational areas. Moreover, bikeways, trails, and greenways not only provide natural open spaces, but can provide alternative forms of transportation that reduce auto-dependence. All of these trends have affected Wellesley's recreational programs, and the NRC and the Recreation Department anticipate more demand both for active playing fields in all sports seasons and for passive recreation areas.

Balancing Passive and Active Open Space

Wellesley faces the challenge of preserving, expanding, and maintaining open space for passive uses, water quality, and wildlife habitat while meeting increasing requests for active recreational space. Although demand for park facilities and programs may grow, the Town will have to weigh this demand against the environmental benefits that passive open space provides, such as filtration of pollutants, protection of wildlife, environmental education, wetlands and water supply protection, including a very large watershed area, and aesthetic enhancement of the community.

UNPROTECTED LAND

The amount of unprotected open space and its potential for development poses a challenge to Wellesley's future open space plans. Although most of the privately-owned open space is in institutional hands, the possibility exists that this land could be developed as part of college expansion plans. The landscaped grounds of Wellesley College, Massachusetts Bay Community College, and Babson College currently contribute to the green infrastructure of the Town, but nothing guarantees that this open space will be preserved. In addition, the

forest, recreational, and agricultural lands that fall under the Chapter 61 programs have no preservation guarantee. If an owner chooses to discontinue participation in the tax abatement program, his or her acreage will no longer be protected from development. Although the Town has the right of first refusal on these properties when they emerge from tax abatement programs, land costs are very high and it may be difficult for the Town to act quickly enough when the land goes on the market.

The NRC has had some success in encouraging private owners to place conservation restrictions on part of their property. Wellesley College and Babson College, although they may need to build new or expanded buildings in the future, will also wish to preserve the green character of their campuses. The Town needs to continue to be in regular communication with the colleges to make sure that that green character is also preserved at the campus edges with the Town. Massachusetts Bay Community College, as a public college, is in a somewhat different position because the state could decide to sell some college lands. The NRC is talking to Massachusetts Bay Community College officials about protecting this open space, which abuts the Town-owned Centennial Reservation.

NEED FOR LINKAGES

The Town also needs to continue to create linkages between its open space areas and significant town destinations. Linkages promote



safe use of Wellesley’s open space, discourage car usage, and may also serve as animal movement corridors between habitats. Although several natural corridors exist, such as the Fuller Brook Path, and the Cochituate and Sudbury Aqueducts, the Trails Committee continues to look for opportunities to link open space throughout the Town and eventually to the region.

HIGH COST OF OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION AND MAINTENANCE

The rising cost of real estate in Wellesley makes acquisition of new open space difficult. As land values rise, the ability of the Town to purchase more open space decreases. In addition, proximity to existing park areas increases land values and may make expansion of current parks more difficult. For example, the NRC acquired a one-acre parcel of land adjacent to Town-owned parkland on Rockridge Pond for \$700,000 in 2002 with substantial private contributions. Also, Wellesley’s character as a mature suburban community that is substantially built out suggests that few large parcels in single ownership will be available for future purchase. Thus, the real estate market works against expanding the Town’s park system through acquiring new properties for open space.

Open space funding is available under the terms of the Community Preservation Act, and money from the Community Preservation Fund can cover the costs of significant land acquisition or program expansion. Wellesley faces increased maintenance costs associated with heavy use of its playing fields and the Town has recently increased youth sports fees to help cover these costs. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts help the Trails Committee in maintaining and improving trails. Existing “friends” groups have also raised money for open space and playground improvements.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to protect and enhance open space in Wellesley.

ACTIONS

- **Ensure that all park and conservation land is placed in the “Conservation” zoning district.** The NRC should identify the lands that need zoning protection and prepare a petition to rezone the lands to Conservation or provide the Planning Board with this information so that the Planning Board can initiate a zoning petition.
- **Continue to seek to expand the trails system through conservation restrictions granted by property owners.** The Trails Committee should continue to determine whether trails are appropriate for land acquired by the NRC through donations or purchase. Paths across small parcels may link with the greater trail system and provide residents with new passive open space opportunities. (A detailed list of Trails Committee priorities can be found in Appendix C.)
- **Continue to identify important open space properties and work with property owners to obtain conservation restrictions.** The NRC should continue to seek donations of conservation easements and restrictions from owners of undeveloped land, particularly where this land lies adjacent to existing protected land. Although easements on some properties may be readily obtained through bequests or gifts, it is important to identify key open space properties and pursue the donation of conservation easements and restrictions on those properties, especially where parcels could provide strategic links for the trails system.
- **Enact mandatory cluster zoning to maximize open space preservation and allow limited development if these properties cannot fully be protected.** Cluster zoning would ensure that a significant portion of the developed

parcel will remain as private open space. This type of zoning would prevent a project from occupying the entire lot; instead, structures and paved areas would be grouped together at a higher density on one portion of the property, thus leaving part of the property as open space. In addition, the Planning Board should require that the Town's open space goals are taken into account when reviewing site plans and should encourage developers to use low-impact design strategies on these parcels.

- **Develop a strategy for placing conservation restrictions on Town-owned park and conservation land.** Because of the time and expense involved in placing conservation restrictions, the NRC should develop a strategy focused on lands that might be most vulnerable. Much of the Town-owned open space is protected under Article 97 and is highly unlikely to be threatened with conversion to other uses.
- **Prepare a detailed inventory of open space resources.** Information on the parcels and protection levels of all open space resources in Wellesley should be prepared and regularly updated to make sure that the Town has a clear understanding of the resources and their status.

Conduct a recreational needs assessment that will reflect collaboration between the Natural Resources Commission and the Recreation Commission/Department.

Wellesley's growing youth and aging populations are placing greater demands on programs and facilities, and Town departments sometimes face competing requests for use of active and passive recreational lands. The NRC and the Recreation Commission should coordinate an inventory and needs assessment that will provide information from which to make decisions regarding active and passive recreational uses.

ACTIONS

- **Coordinate a recreation needs assessment between the Natural Resources Commission, the Recreation Commission, and the Board of Public Works and use the results of this assessment to inform future decisions made by Town departments and commissions.**

Conduct an assessment of existing recreation facilities (active and passive), the impacts of these facilities, and a determination of future recreation needs based on population projections and current demands. The results of the assessment should be used by Town departments as issues arise regarding the need for active and passive recreation space. A current inventory can inform management and use decisions and can aid the NRC, Recreation Commission, Planning Board, and Board of Selectmen in understanding Wellesley's short- and long-term open space and recreation needs.

- **Keep the Open Space and Recreation Plan updated every five years.** Continued collaboration between the NRC and the Recreation Commission should keep the recreation needs/inventory updated, and this relationship should allow the two groups to communicate explicitly about Wellesley's recreation issues and challenges. Ongoing recordkeeping and dialogue will enable the Town to stay current with the Open Space and Recreation Plan and keep Wellesley eligible for grant funding from the State.

Work with institutional partners to protect open space and provide additional recreational facilities.

Three large institutions own most of the remaining unprotected open space in Wellesley. Babson College and Wellesley College, the two private institutions, may build in their open spaces as part of college expansions. Massachusetts Bay Community College, a state-owned entity, may be more likely to sell its open space to a developer. Good communication is

needed with these entities in order to learn development plans early or to negotiate options to protect or purchase institutional open space, and share the college’s recreational facilities.

ACTIONS

- **Establish and maintain relationships with key figures at Massachusetts Bay Community College, Babson College, and Wellesley College** that will provide the NRC and the Trails Committee with information about changes in use of each institution’s current open space properties.
- **Ensure that Town committees and boards communicate with each other regarding potential open space losses.** The NRC and the Trails Committee should ensure that any information received regarding the loss of unprotected open space is shared quickly with the Planning Board.
- **Include the Board of Health in open space and recreation planning discussions.** Since the Board of Health’s mission is to improve the quality of life of the Town’s residents and workers, it should be involved in plans that affect health and the environment.
- **Explore sharing institutional recreational facilities in order to relieve the pressures to overuse the Town’s playing fields.**

Pursue greater connectivity of open spaces on a local and regional level.

Wellesley’s trail system provides excellent links among some of the Town’s open spaces. As the Trails Committee contemplates new projects, it should look to create new connections within town that will provide citizens with more recreational opportunities and alternatives to car travel. In addition, the Trails Committee and the NRC should seek to create regional connections for its open space system.

ACTIONS

- **Continue to refine the trails system by looking at ways to connect major open space areas.** The Trails Committee continues to update its system to maximize connectivity opportunities. This includes not only the activation of new trails (such as the Sudbury Aqueduct), but also the relocation of existing trails (such as the Crosstown Trail) and trail connections to town destinations, train stations, schools, and office areas.
- **Work with other towns and recreation groups to form links to regional trails and open spaces.** Strengthen relationships with neighboring towns and regional recreation groups to work on creating links between Wellesley’s open space system and that of other open space systems in the region. Trails could link to reservations or to existing trails that will provide access to recreation or transportation opportunities in other towns, such as the Riverside T station in Newton or the Massachusetts Bay Circuit Trail.

Seek management options that will allow more productive use of Town-owned and private active recreational space rather than converting passive into active open space.

Wellesley is experiencing some pressure to find more active recreation land to support local private organizational sports. Playing fields are overused, and maintenance of these fields is difficult. In addition, high property values prevent the Town from acquiring new land for recreational facilities. Many residents have asked the Town to convert some of its passive open space into playing fields, but the passive spaces are also used and valued by other residents. Without the prospect of acquisition of new recreational space, the Town must find new management options for its existing active open space.

ACTIONS

- **Evaluate the contribution of fees to maintenance and increase fees assessed to local sports leagues for use of the Town's playing fields if appropriate.** Many sports leagues use Wellesley's playing fields each season, including youth soccer, baseball, and lacrosse. Each of these organizations pays a fee per player per year to the Recreation Department for field maintenance. Since heavy field use increases maintenance costs, the Town should evaluate whether it is appropriate to fund these higher costs by assessing a higher fee per person to these sports leagues.
- **Explore the pros and cons of installing an artificial turf athletic field.** Artificial turf fields are more expensive to install but are less expensive to maintain and can be used almost continually, unlike natural fields that need to be rested.
- **Add lighting to recreational facilities in order to extend the hours of use where appropriate.** The Recreation Department can provide greater opportunities for field use by installing lights where practical. The impact on abutting residents, however, can be a problem. Lights should be installed in areas that will have low-to-moderate impacts on surrounding properties.
- **Continue to investigate the possibility of using local institutional facilities for Town programs with leadership from the Board of Selectmen.** Although the Recreation Department has determined in the past that agreements with local colleges for large-scale facility use would prove too costly, the need for additional recreation space suggests that this alternative be revisited. The Recreation Department currently rents the pool at Wellesley College for water safety classes and Teen Center programs. Good relationships

with the three colleges and Dana Hall School could lead to the Recreation Department being allowed to use institutional facilities for expansion of Town recreation programs. This may be particularly important for swimming programs and access to playing fields. The Board of Selectmen and the Recreation Department should assume a leadership role in negotiating with local institutions to allow the public to use their recreational facilities for a fee. This will involve working with the understanding that users in Town programs will not prevent students and staff of those institutions from using their own facilities. An agreement of this kind may involve higher user fees and a willingness on the Town's part to provide a service in return for this recreational access.

Develop a plan to construct an aquatic facility that will be funded through a public-private partnership.

One of the top recreation needs identified by the Recreation Department is a public aquatic facility that could host competitive swimming and family water activities. It is unrealistic to expect that the Town will be able to acquire a parcel of land that is large enough to accommodate an aquatic center; therefore, a center will have to be placed on current public or private property. An opportunity exists as the Town considers a new high school.

ACTIONS

- **Work with the School Committee to incorporate plans for an aquatic center into the design for a new high-school complex.** The Town should work closely with the School Committee to design an aquatic center that will fit into the school complex and function both as a school athletic facility and as a community recreation center. The design should be sensitive to the needs of school programs, and the Recreation Department should agree

that any programs it will conduct at the new facility will not impede school use.

- **Investigate the potential for a public-private partnership that will drive construction of an aquatic center.** Concord’s new aquatic center may provide a model for Wellesley to follow. The Concord Community Swim and Health Center is located on school property and funded through private donations to a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity formed to construct the facility. This facility will include a pool for competitive swimming, a therapy pool, a children’s pool, and a diving well, along with a fitness center and community gathering rooms. Concord’s aquatic center will be built entirely through private funding (\$9.5 million), and user fees will be set high enough to ensure that the facility will be self-supporting in the future.
- **Locate a dedicated source of revenue for ongoing maintenance and operation.** If Wellesley follows the Concord model, the Town must ensure that it determines how the aquatic center will be operated and how it will secure an ongoing source of funding for operations and maintenance. A large facility such as an aquatic center cannot be funded entirely through tax revenues each year. In order to make sure that it is a community center and not just a school pool, the School Committee should not be responsible for funding operations. A combination of user fees and an endowment may be necessary to provide a stable, continuous funding stream that will not require reduction or elimination of other Recreation Department programs.

Continue to develop recreational programs that will fit the needs of Wellesley’s changing population.

As more families with children move to Wellesley, the Recreation Department will experience greater demand for youth programs. These programs include sports and other activi-

ties such as painting, dancing, and cooking. The growth in programs over the last decade also suggests that more programs will be needed for adults and seniors. Although these programs are all fee programs, the Town must make certain that they remain affordable for any lower-income residents.

ACTIONS

- **Continue to offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities that suit the interests of Wellesley residents.** The Recreation Department must ensure that it continues to offer a variety of sports programs as Wellesley’s youth population grows. Programs should follow user desires, such as more soccer leagues and swimming opportunities. In addition, the Recreation Department should continue to offer a variety of classes, such as cooking, language classes, and painting, to both children and adults. The Council on Aging must also provide recreation opportunities for seniors. Needs and desires for recreational programs can be measured through yearly user surveys.
- **Seek additional funding for recreation programs from higher user fees and private sources.** The Recreation Department will need to find increased funds for additional programs. One way in which to do this is to charge higher user fees. Youth sports leagues may be assessed higher fees to cover increased costs of field maintenance, and recreation classes offered to children and adults may need to increase registration fees. In addition, non-Wellesley residents who use Town programs should continue to be assessed fees at a higher rate than Wellesley residents. Non-resident fees, though, may need to rise from their current rate of \$5 more than Wellesley residents (\$15 more at Morses Pond Beach). Donations could also be pursued from private businesses and institutions in Wellesley.

- **Ensure that lower-income residents have access to recreational programs by building the current scholarship fund.** The Recreation Department's scholarship fund helps defray the costs of programs for lower-income residents. In 2004, the Recreation Department had approximately \$20,000 in requests for scholarships, particularly for day camp participation. The department asked Wellesley residents for donations to this fund, but only received \$35. As a result, the department appealed to private industry for more funds. This practice should be continued in order to raise money for summer day camp and other program fees. When asking for donations, the Recreation Department should be sure to identify income levels that would qualify a resident to receive a scholarship, along with information on the number of people in Wellesley who could be helped by the program, so that potential donors become more aware of the need in Wellesley.

9 Transportation and Circulation

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
Reduce traffic volume, especially during peak hours.	Reduce the impact of local or through traffic on the local road network.	Pursue opportunities for Transportation Demand Management (TDM), Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), participation in the Suburban Transit Initiative, and smart growth planning and zoning.
Encourage alternative means of transportation both within and outside of town.	<p>Increase the safety of and links in the existing pedestrian network.</p> <p>Create a town-wide bicycle route.</p> <p>Create an intra-town transit system.</p> <p>Provide links to existing and planned suburban transit stations.</p>	<p>Support viable traffic calming programs for areas with a demonstrated need.</p> <p>Explore shared use of shuttles or town-sponsored shuttles for intra-town transit.</p> <p>Include pedestrian and bicycle needs in all traffic and transportation improvement studies and projects.</p> <p>Incorporate the <u>MassHighway Project Development and Design Guidebook</u> (2006) in Town transportation projects and Project of Significant Impact (PSI) and subdivision standards.</p>
Manage parking to support commercial districts.	<p>Enhance customer access and traffic flow.</p> <p>Encourage employees in business areas to park outside of commercial areas in designated employee parking areas.</p>	Identify opportunities for new structured parking and shared parking near commercial areas, as well as better management of available parking.
Seek improvement of transportation flow on regional routes.	Reduce rate of increase of local traffic congestion.	<p>Work with state and neighboring towns through the MPO to identify truck routes, locate commuter traffic routes away from congested areas, and establish corridor alliances with contiguous communities/subregions.</p> <p>Consider joining the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority.</p>



Findings

- Wellesley lies along the Route 128 loop and experiences significant weekday peak hour congestion.
- Wellesley's daytime population increases by 30% due to an influx of workers.
- Most workers drive alone to places of employment.
- Increasing traffic congestion on the arterial network brings cut-through traffic and speeding to local streets as commuters seek alternate routes.
- Traffic growth continues at a steady pace of 2% per year.
- Many non-residents drive through Wellesley

and use its commuter rail lots to reach employment and retail centers.

- School traffic also generates congestion in the mornings and afternoons.
- Wellesley does not have representation in groups that determine regional transportation policies and projects.

Key Challenges

- Improving arterial traffic flow along Route 9, Route 16, and Route 135.
- Reducing local street cut-through traffic issues and speeding.
- Reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips.
- Improving high-crash locations in town to address local safety concerns.
- Ensuring adequate parking for the downtown business district.
- Creating continuous, linked pedestrian and bicycle facilities including sidewalks, bicycle paths, and new connections to regional greenways and trails.
- Providing intra-town transit services.
- Ensuring safe routes to school for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles.
- Improving commuter rail service and facilities.
- Keeping bridges well-maintained.

TRANSPORTATION: GETTING AROUND

Journey to Work (2000)

- 65.9% of workers drive alone (67.3% in 1990)
- 4% carpool (6.3% in 1990)
- 9.6% take public transportation (8.9% in 1990)
- 12.3% walk or bike (11.8% in 1990)
- 7.9% work at home (5% in 1990)
- Average travel time to work is 24 minutes

Work Destination (2000)

- 35% work in Wellesley
- 24% work in Boston
- 5% work in Newton
- 36% work elsewhere

Vehicle Ownership (2000)

- 3.7% of households do not have access to a vehicle (5.4% in 1990)
- 26.1% have one vehicle (27% in 1990)
- 54.5% have two vehicles (48.8% in 1990)
- 15.8% have three or more vehicles (18.7% in 1990)

Traffic Counts

- Route 9 west of Ottaway Circle in 1998: 53,000 vehicles per day total (both directions)
- Route 16 east of Forest Street in 1999: 24,300 vehicles per day
- Route 16 east of Route 135 in 2000: 17,000 vehicles per day
- Route 16 east of Walnut Street in 2000: 20,100 vehicles per day
- Route 16 east of Dover Road in 2003: 13,100 vehicles per day

Peak Hour Traffic

- 100,000 vehicles enter Wellesley on all routes during the evening peak hour (including I-95/Route 128)
- At least half of these vehicles are traveling through Wellesley to other destinations

Public Transportation

- 3 commuter rail stations: Wellesley Farms, Wellesley Hills, Wellesley Square

Off-Street Parking

- Most parking is in surface lots
- Parking decks and garages for office buildings
- Public off-street lots in Wellesley Square (622 spaces); Linden Street (236 spaces); Wellesley Hills (126 spaces); and Lower Falls (73 spaces)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

More workers in Wellesley take public transportation, walk, or bike to work than in the state as a whole—and more work at home.

- Nearly ten percent of Wellesley workers take public transportation to work.
- Over ten percent walk or bike to work.
- Nearly eight percent work at home.

Sources: Town of Wellesley, Census 2000, MassHighway

A. CURRENT CONDITIONS

The Town of Wellesley has an intricate network of roads and transportation services, including commuter rail, that serves town traffic and inter-city commuter traffic (see Figure 9-1.) As a nearly built-out suburban town with a significant employment base, Wellesley has a transportation system that experiences considerable strains. The town’s three MBTA commuter rail stations attract commuters from nearby communities as well as Wellesley, generating substantial peak hour traffic congestion. Another major source of congestion in Wellesley is the morning and afternoon student arrival and departure times. This school-related traffic is difficult because many school children do not ride the school bus.

Other transportation issues include the impact of a growing daytime population of employees, continued background traffic growth within the region as a whole, cut-through traffic on local streets, speeding on local streets, effective management of parking in commercial areas, and the potential for implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM).

Roadway Types (Functional Classification)

The functional classification of a roadway indicates how it serves the community and regional highway network (see Figure 9-2).

There are four major categories of roadways:

- Limited access highway: I-95/I28
- Arterial (Principal/Minor): Route 9, Route 16, Route 135
- Collector (Major/Minor): Cedar Street, Weston Road, Forest Street, Oakland Street, Linden Street, and Cliff Road, for example
- Local Streets: Abbott Road, Pleasant Street, Benvenue Street, for example

These roadway types are designed to carry different levels of traffic volumes and to serve different trip purposes. In Wellesley an extensive local road system feeds into the collector road system and serves major residential neighborhoods and subdivisions.

Traffic Volume

Wellesley is located in MassHighway District (MHD) 4, which includes 81 towns. Recent data show increasing traffic volumes in the region as a whole. Between 2003 and 2004, traffic volume in the District 4 region increased 2%. This increase in traffic affects Wellesley because of its position along regional arterials Route 9 and Route 16, which bring traffic through Wellesley that does not have an origin or destination in the town. This causes additional traffic congestion and delay. Municipal traffic volumes collected from Town and MHD records indicate that traffic volumes on the regional arterial network in Wellesley are high, as shown in the table below and Figure 9-3.

In many communities, increasing traffic volumes can also be traced to a growing number of cars per household in the last ten to twenty years. Census data suggest that this is not, in itself, a major source of traffic congestion in Wellesley. The number of households with two or more cars increased marginally from 1990,

WELLESLEY TRAFFIC VOLUMES

YEAR	LOCATION	VEHICLES PER DAY
1997	Route 9, west of Route 16	53,000
1999	Interstate 95 (128), north of Route 9	165,000
2003	Route 135, Central St., west of Grove St.	14,700
2003	Route 135, Central St., at Natick town line	10,600
2004	Route 16, north of Kingsbury St.	18,224
2004	Linden St., east of Kingsbury St.	10,369
2004	Kingsbury St., north of Linden St.	6,740

Source: MassHighway



when 68.4% of households had two or more cars, to 2000, when the corresponding number was 70%. However, changes in the timing and location of local trips combined with increases in regional traffic can create perceptible new congestion.

School traffic provides an example of this traffic change. It has been estimated that school-related traffic constitutes one-third of the traffic on Wellesley roads during the morning peak hours and also causes congestion in the afternoons. Because of the high cost of school transportation, only K-6 students who live two or more miles from their schools are eligible for free school bus service. The school system charges \$404 per student, with a maximum assessment of \$908 dollars per family to K-6 students who live within two miles of the school. Students in Grades 7-12 are assessed a fee of \$404 per student. A small percentage of students (5%) are income-eligible for a reduced fee of \$25 per student. Of 4,679 eligible students, 1,058 students (23%) take the school bus. Of these 1,058 riders, 238 K-6 students living at least two miles from school receive free service and the remaining 820 pay the fees.

Traffic Safety

Crash data from the Wellesley Police Department database for 2002-2004 reveal that Route 9 and Route 16 have the highest number of crashes in town, as might be expected on these high-volume roads containing busy intersections with significant conflict points. Overall, according to the Wellesley Police Department database, there were 2,872 crashes recorded in Wellesley for 2002-2004.

Figure 9-4 and the tables below provide site-specific crash location data from the Wellesley Police Department.

WELLESLEY POLICE CORRIDOR CRASH DATA (2002-2004)

LOCATION (STREET)	CRASHES
Route 9 (Worcester Street)	883
Route 16 (Washington Street)	614
Route 135 (Central Street)	169
Linden Street	148
Weston Road	118
Wellesley Avenue	101
Great Plain Avenue	60
Oakland Street	60
Cedar Street	47
Walnut Street	45

Source: Wellesley Police Department

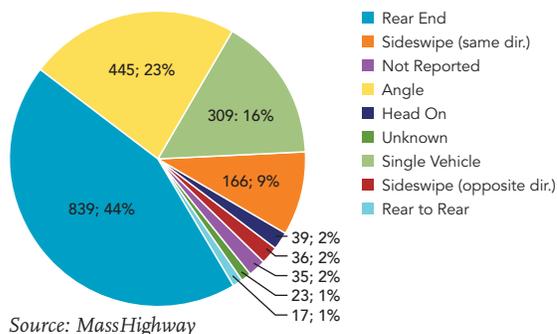
WELLESLEY POLICE CRASH DATA (2002-2004)

LOCATION (STREET)	2002	2003	2004	TOTAL
457 Worcester Street	16	26	17	59
370 Worcester Street	15	22	17	54
100 Worcester Street	5	22	24	51
165 Linden Street	20	11	17	48
642 Worcester Street	15	14	19	48
443 Worcester Street	16	19	12	47
987 Worcester Street	11	11	15	37
106 Central Street	11	13	11	35
93 Worcester Street	0	8	24	32
50 Oakland Street	17	9	4	30
871 Worcester Street	15	7	8	30
96 Wellesley Avenue	12	8	2	22
453 Washington Street	5	2	11	18

Source: Wellesley Police Department

According to MHD data for 2002-2003, 76% of all crashes resulted only in property damage. Two fatal crashes were recorded in Wellesley: one at the intersection of Dover Road and Grove Street and one at 530 Washington Street. While 44% of all crashes were rear-end collisions, 23% were angle crashes, 9% were sideswipes of cars going in the same direction, and 16% involved a single vehicle.

TOWN OF WELLESLEY CRASH CONFIGURATION TOTALS (2002-2003)



Source: MassHighway

The remaining percentage includes head-on, sideswipe opposite direction, and not reported.

Transit Service

Transit service in Wellesley is limited to commuter rail and bus service for senior residents and handicapped persons. There are no MBTA bus routes in Wellesley. The three colleges in Wellesley provide limited shuttle bus service targeted to their student populations.



COMMUTER RAIL

Wellesley has MBTA commuter rail service at three different rail stations on the Worcester/Framingham Line. The stations, which serve commuters from Wellesley and surrounding communities, are located at Wellesley Square (downtown), Wellesley Hills, and Wellesley Farms in the north end of town. The existing train platforms are antiquated and will eventually need upgrading to improve visibility, safety features, and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.



Parking is provided at each commuter rail station. The most constrained supply exists at the Wellesley Hills station.

MBTA COMMUTER PARKING

TRAIN STATION	PARKING SPACES
Wellesley Hills	51
Wellesley Farms	199
Wellesley Square (Tailby Lot)	224
TOTAL	474

Source: MBTA

Additional commuter parking can be found on downtown streets near Wellesley Square and on the rail bridge on Cliff Road.

Each weekday, 17 inbound and 16 outbound trains stop in Wellesley between 6:00 a.m. and 12:30 a.m. More frequent service on the Framingham/Worcester Line could benefit Wellesley by attracting residents from towns to the west who currently commute through Wellesley, as well as Wellesley residents.

SHUTTLE SERVICES

Wellesley is served by THE RIDE, an on-demand shuttle operated by the MBTA that provides transportation for disabled persons. During FY 2005, 7,000 trips were provided to Wellesley residents.

The Wellesley Council of Aging (COA) provides additional transportation service to the elderly through a shuttle bus. The bus operates on weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Rides must be scheduled in advance due to limited space on the bus. This door-to-door shuttle takes riders to key destinations in town and limited locations outside of town including Newton–Wellesley Hospital, Deaconess Hospital in Needham, Metro-West Medical Center in Natick, and the Woodland MBTA Green Line stop in Newton. Every Tuesday a free ride is provided to

Roche Brothers Supermarket and Star Market in Wellesley. The last Thursday of the month a trip is scheduled to the Natick Mall. The shuttle bus has a 24-person capacity and operates on a daily basis, averaging approximately 500 riders per month. Estimated annual trips for FY 2005 are 5,248 trips, up from 4,985 trips in FY 2004.

Massachusetts Bay Community College, Wellesley College, and Babson College all have shuttle services to a limited number of destinations:

- Massachusetts Bay Community College provides a shuttle to the Riverside T Station (MBTA Green Line) and to the Framingham Campus.
- Wellesley College provides an internal shuttle service throughout campus during evening hours to transport students between dorms, halls, and parking lots. In addition, the College provides a Saturday Natick Mall Movie Shuttle that departs every two hours from the Founders Lot to the AMC Theater and several retail stores in Natick. The final shuttle back to Wellesley leaves the theater at 11:30 p.m. Wellesley College also operates an "Exchange Bus" that serves Wellesley College and MIT students, faculty, and staff. The shuttle travels between the two campuses from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. each weekday.
- Babson College provides a Saturday shuttle service for Babson students. Guest riders can ride for \$2. The shuttle operates from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. and connects to the Riverside T Station, downtown Wellesley, Natick Mall, Quincy Market, and the Super Stop and Shop in Natick.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

“Transportation Demand Management (TDM)” is a general term for a variety of strategies used to increase the efficiency of the transportation

system. An example of a TDM strategy would be programs and incentives that encourage people to car pool, rather than increasing the



capacity of the transportation system by building more traffic lanes or transit infrastructure. One of the most important goals of TDM is to reduce overall dependence on single-occupant vehicle (SOV) trips. TDM is implemented through businesses and

other high trip-generating uses, which facilitate and provide significant incentives to commuters to travel by transit, carpool, rideshare, or bicycle or use other alternatives to SOV travel.

Keys to the success of such programs may include:

- designating preferential parking spaces for employees that carpool
- establishing a financial incentive program to encourage ridesharing
- designating an on-site transportation coordinator to oversee a ridesharing program
- accommodating work shifts
- creating joint ridesharing programs with other area businesses
- encouraging bicycle commuting by providing secure on-site bicycle storage racks
- providing on-site services, such as food services, ATMs, and mailboxes, in large employment complexes so that employees will not have to leave the site to conduct personal business during the day
- working with local businesses to establish delivery services.

Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) are nonprofit organizations that organize and manage TDM strategies for member groups in a designated geographical area. Wellesley is located within the 128

Business Council Transportation Management Association's (TMA) service area. Options offered by the 128 Business Council to reduce dependence on the SOV include:

- Carpool and vanpool matching
- Shuttle bus lines connecting members with mass transit centers
- Local commuting website
- Guaranteed Ride Home Program
- Commute planning and commuter information
- Storm Traffic Control Center
- Highway construction project information
- Rideshare regulation consulting
- Transportation Awareness Days at work sites
- Quarterly newsletter.

Municipal Parking

Town-owned parking consists of six off-street public parking lots dispersed throughout the community. These parking lots are intended to serve businesses in village commercial districts and include Wellesley Square, Cameron Street, Waban Street, Weston Road, Eaton Court, and River Street (see Figure 9-5). In addition, on-street metered parking is available:

- Wellesley Square – 289 metered spaces
- Wellesley Hills – 179 metered spaces
- Lower Falls – 18 metered spaces

As indicated previously, the three MBTA commuter rail stations provide a total of 474 parking spaces ranging from 51 at Wellesley Hills to 224 spaces at Wellesley Square (Tailby Lot).

There is a strong perception among many residents and business owners that there is a shortage of parking in Wellesley's commercial districts. In October 2002, BETA Group, Inc. completed a parking study that indicated no shortage of parking exists in the commuter rail lots or in the business district lots, with the exceptions of the Waban Street lot, River Street

lot, four-hour parking in the Wellesley Square lot, and long-term spaces in the Cameron Street lot. The study also found an adequate supply of handicapped spaces in all lots. Improved management of the existing parking spaces to serve customers, business employees, and others could reduce the perception of inadequate parking. Drivers typically look for a parking space immediately in front of their destination and employees often park on the street and feed the meters all day. For both customers and employees, the walk from parking lots to their destinations must be attractive and feel safe and there must be both incentives and enforcement in an effective parking management program.

The 2002 study found that use of the three commuter rail lots (Tailby, Wellesley Hills, and Wellesley Farms), the Weston Road lot, and the Cameron Street lot was dominated by non-residents at the time. However, use of all of the commuter lots has decreased since 2002 because new train stations and parking facilities have opened in nearby Ashland, Westborough, and Southborough; the parking fees have increased; and, possibly, because of regional economic stagnation.

Neighborhood Traffic Calming

Traffic calming involves roadway design techniques that slow traffic in residential areas. These design techniques generally cause traffic to shift vertically (as in raised intersections) or



horizontally (as in curb extensions) to reduce speed and or volume. Traffic calming strategies include speed humps, speed cushions, chicanes, curb extensions, raised intersections, traffic circles, roundabouts, and so on. Other forms of traffic calming include road narrowing, road striping, and visual speed radar sites (see Appendix D).

The Town has already placed traffic calming devices in different locations:

- Curb extension/neckdown on Central Street within Wellesley Square;
- Speed humps and raised crosswalk on Overbrook Drive;
- Raised crosswalk on the Town Hall access roadway; and
- Raised intersection on Oak Street at School Street.

Although traffic calming is sometimes controversial because some residents find the slowing of traffic hard to get used to, it is likely that other locations in Wellesley can benefit from traffic calming approaches, such as routes used by pedestrians to walk to town destinations.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

Wellesley has made many improvements to facilitate pedestrian travel within the town. The 23.9-mile long trail system provides on- and off-road connections between town destinations. In addition, Wellesley has a significant number of high-visibility crosswalks and wide sidewalks

throughout the downtown. Many of these crossings are designed with brick pavers to emphasize the crosswalks for motorists. Several pedestrian crosswalks are signalized in Wellesley and include high-visibility fluorescent signage to



indicate the crosswalk locations.

Wellesley does not have continuous sidewalks on all streets, which means that pedestrians in some areas are forced to walk in the road. All new developments

in Wellesley are required to install sidewalks and the Town has revised sidewalk requirements in the Zoning Bylaw's Projects of Significant Impact (PSI) review process to require sidewalks to extend 600 feet from each project. Residents in some locations have resisted the installation of sidewalks because they feel they detract from the semi-rural character that they prefer. Alternatives could include pathways of stone dust or another soft surface that could provide a safe walking area for pedestrians.

Bicycle paths in town are off-road gravel paths. Off-road paths include Fuller Brook Path, Sudbury Aqueduct, and the Crosstown Trail. These trails connect and cross a signalized intersection at Washington Street. The town lacks a formal bicycle plan but intends to develop a plan for on- and off-street bike routes.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide more focused attention to transportation issues in town government.

ACTIONS

- *Create a full-time Transportation Coordinator staff position for a qualified transportation planner.* Although the Town retains a consul-

tant to assist in transportation studies and engineering, the Town needs a dedicated staff person to coordinate multiple transportation-related issues within Wellesley, to represent town interests in regional transportation planning, and to write grant proposals to support transportation improvements. This staff person should have policy expertise and grant-writing skills. Major tasks would include working with the schools on traffic issues, creating shuttle services for the Town and coordinating them with the colleges, TDM implementation, parking management in the commercial districts, and working with a transportation advisory committee.

- *Create a Transportation Task Force or Advisory Committee.* Since traffic, pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit issues have become more complex, the Town must balance a variety of transportation needs. The Transportation Advisory Committee would be staffed by the Transportation Coordinator and could have subcommittees appointed by the Selectmen or other means of providing guidance on issues such as neighborhood traffic calming, pedestrian and bicycle planning, parking, and Wellesley's role in regional transportation planning. The committee can develop and execute a strategy for joining a TMA or regional transit authority, including linkage to economic development within Wellesley to contribute support for these initiatives. The committee could also spearhead a traffic and transportation safety campaign to educate the public through mailings, web postings and other methods about driving, bicycle, and pedestrian safety issues.
- *Incorporate the Mass Highway Project Development and Design Guidebook (2006) recommendations into Town development standards.* Guidebook principles focus on encouraging context-sensitive design and projects that include multi-modal components for

pedestrians and cyclists. The Transportation Coordinator and the Transportation Advisory Committee would play key roles in establishing this as transportation policy. Guidebook recommendations could be made to apply to Town transportation projects, Projects of Significant Impact (PSIs), and new subdivisions.

Renew participation in regional transportation planning.

ACTIONS

Wellesley's position on Route 9 and Route 16 means that significant regional traffic traverses the town. Greater participation in regional transportation planning is the only way the Town can influence these regional traffic flows and help craft regional solutions to transportation problems.

- *Actively participate in MAPC.* Wellesley is a member of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), the Boston area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which is the federally-designated entity for regional transportation planning. The MAPC conducts regional transportation planning and programs capital improvement projects. The Town should actively participate in MAPC and MPO planning in order to protect and promote Wellesley's capital improvement projects.
- *Actively participate in the MetroWest Growth Management Committee.* The committee has a Transportation Task Force that meets monthly and considers regional impacts of development projects, reduction of regional traffic congestion, and the viability of regional transportation alternatives and policies.
- *Work closely with MassHighway on regional transportation issues.* Wellesley has a direct interest in MassHighway projects such as the Route 9 study and should ensure that it is at the table in discussions with

MassHighway on projects that affect the Town.

- *Consider joining the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority.* In 2006, the state legislature authorized the creation of a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) for the MetroWest area. Wellesley has an opportunity to join this RTA, which would provide regional public transportation in addition to the commuter rail services already provided by the MBTA.
- *Participate in MBTA capital program planning.* Work with the MBTA to provide station and program improvements, budget maintenance, and ADA upgrades at Wellesley's commuter rail stations.

Continue implementation of new technologies to address traffic growth.

ACTIONS

- *Update intersection traffic signal hardware with the latest traffic-responsive equipment* to optimize traffic flow throughout Wellesley. The town recently has upgraded several intersections in town with new traffic signal equipment, and continues to study and upgrade poorly-operating intersections.

Improve traffic safety and correct high-hazard locations.

ACTIONS

- *Review high-accident locations and develop mitigation plans to improve safety along corridors and at specific intersections.* Route 9, Route 16, and Route 135 are critical high-volume/high-hazard corridors that should be critiqued for improvements. As funding becomes available, these locations should be prioritized and placed on Wellesley's Capital Improvement Program. These projects should include consideration of separating pedestrian and bicycle traffic from peak hour traffic congestion.

Explore the possibility of an intra-town shuttle bus system.

ACTIONS

- *Study the options for increasing resident access to shuttles that serve town destinations and the Riverside T Station.* Existing limited shuttle service exists in three forms: at the three local colleges, the Council on Aging, and The RIDE. The Town could initiate a new shuttle system or combine Town and local college resources to provide a townwide shuttle system that serves the Riverside T Station (MBTA Green Line), Route 128 employment sites, the MBTA commuter rail stations, the local colleges, and the Natick and Newton local bus systems. A coordination meeting with all stakeholders would gauge community interest in this service. This system would be operated by the Town alone or with others, with contributions by the major colleges, the local business community, and other groups that would benefit from shuttle bus service.

Explore traffic mitigation options at the public schools.

ACTIONS

- *Explore expanding “walking school bus” programs.* Several schools have implemented this traffic mitigation strategy in which students who live in the immediate area of elementary schools are provided with a chaperoned walk to and from school. Encouraging students to walk to school will reduce morning and afternoon traffic congestion at the schools.
- *Include consideration of traffic congestion impacts in discussions about school bus policies and evaluate options to decrease congestion.* Policies on school bus services are complex and sometimes contentious. When the policies are being re-evaluated and priced, however, the Town should explicitly include an assessment of overall traffic congestion

impacts that affect residents as a whole and evaluate options that could reduce congestion. Potential options could include:

- *A public shuttle bus service with the schools.* Each shuttle bus would have a student monitor and would help alleviate the traffic demands at the elementary schools.
- *Consider reduction in free service radius to increase school bus ridership.* The Town could increase school bus ridership by reducing the free service radius to 1 or 1.5 miles. This would allow more bus-eligible children to ride on school buses free of charge.
- *Encourage use of an intra-town shuttle by older students.* If Wellesley established a townwide shuttle service, this could provide a low-cost alternative to riding the school bus.

Implement stronger Transportation Demand Management strategies that will reduce overall traffic demand on the Wellesley road system.

ACTIONS

- *Implement stricter TDM requirements, including revising guidelines for Projects of Significant Impact (PSI), to better enforce TDM measures in new major development projects and in existing major office parks.* For instance, information should be distributed to new businesses that explains the benefit of carpooling and implementation of preferred parking for carpoolers. This TDM coordination with local businesses and the TMA would be best handled by a Town transportation coordinator.
- *Explore shuttle services and work with the regional TMA.* A new shuttle service in Wellesley could provide a connection between the downtown business district, Newton-Wellesley Hospital, commuter rail, colleges, and other preferred destinations. Additional opportunities exist to reduce or consolidate vehicle trips through public and private part-

nerships via the TMA. Local colleges should be included in this planning.

- *Reduce the traffic impact of school-related trips.* TDM can also be implemented by combining trips to school and reducing the dependence on SOV by increasing student usage of available school busing. The school busing program in Wellesley could be expanded to include many more students.
- *Promote ridesharing by Town employees.* The Town can implement a TDM strategy by providing carpools and a vanpool service for its employees. Information about ridesharing and its benefits would be distributed to employees, and a listing of interested carpoolers could be published in a newsletter.

Implement new parking management programs in parking lots.

ACTIONS

- *Redistribute short-term and long-term parking spaces within the business district lots.* The Cameron Street and Eaton Court lots appear to require the conversion of some short-term spaces to long-term spaces in order to maximize overall parking occupancy. The Town should continue to monitor the situation during the fall and/or winter months for parking variations, particularly within the commuter rail lots. The merchant placards should be reassigned from the Waban Street, Wellesley Square, and Cameron Street lots to the Tailby lot to relieve the long-term parking shortage and to offset the parking availability in the Tailby lot. Incentives can be offered to merchants who encourage their employees to park in a lot and walk to their workplaces in the commercial areas. Shuttle services from employee lots could be provided if necessary.
- *Ensure the safety of employees who must walk to relocated employee parking spaces.* Work with the Wellesley Chamber of Commerce to establish a safe escort system for employees

who must walk to their cars late at night. In addition, improve lighting along pedestrian routes to parking lots so that employees and patrons will feel less apprehensive about parking a greater distance away from their destinations in the commercial areas.

- *Provide additional parking in Wellesley Square by including a parking deck in mixed-use redevelopment plans for the area.* The Tailby lot could be the site of a new parking structure that would serve new development and the existing commercial area.

Consider developing a Sidewalk Plan.

ACTIONS

- *Investigate the possibility of preparing a sidewalk plan that will inventory existing sidewalks and determine locations that need sidewalks or pathways for pedestrian connectivity.* The plan should consider how existing and proposed sidewalks can link to Wellesley's open space and trail system, along with providing easier pedestrian access to the commuter rail stations.

Create a Townwide Bicycle Plan.

ACTIONS

- *Create a bicycle plan for on-street and off-street marked bicycle routes to connect town destinations and link to regional bicycle routes.* Consider conducting the study in house or creating an RFP to be advertised for consultant services as funding becomes available.

10 Public Facilities and Services

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
Maintain school excellence.	Ensure that Wellesley’s students have access to needed classroom technology and adequate classroom space.	Upgrade facilities to include state-of-the-art technology and classroom amenities. Renovate or replace aging facilities to meet classroom space needs generated by projected enrollment increases.
Create additional community meeting space.	Investigate utilizing public schools for after-hours community activities and events.	Create a management system to monitor activities and secure restricted areas during after-hours community use.
Provide systematic oversight of Town facilities and infrastructure.	Develop a town asset management system to track infrastructure conditions.	Implement a computerized system to streamline maintenance records and track changes.
Improve public safety response times and operations.	Ensure the provision of adequate numbers of personnel and equipment.	Hire additional public safety staff and purchase new equipment as funds become available.
Enhance DPW and the Municipal Light Plant’s operations.	Provide adequate space and technology for operations.	Construct an expanded DPW operations building and a new MLP facility. Replace or refurbish DPW vehicles and equipment.
Clarify Town policies about the maintenance of private streets.	Implement a private street maintenance system.	Create a betterment system that will allow abutters to petition the Town for private road upgrades/maintenance.
Develop a uniform policy for street acceptance.	Create a street acceptance policy that covers private streets that are not part of new subdivisions.	Implement a process by which abutters can petition the Town for acceptance of private streets.

Findings

- The Wellesley School System is undergoing major improvements to address lack of space and antiquated facilities.
- Budget issues are making future improvements to the school system difficult to implement.
- Wellesley does a good job of maintaining existing Town facilities. Those that are old or inadequate are being studied or already have plans for improvement.
- Wellesley has an active recycling program and one of the highest municipal recycling rates in Massachusetts.
- When measured against national standards, Wellesley's police and fire departments are short-staffed.
- The Town lacks a cohesive asset management system to address aging infrastructure and road conditions.
- There is no formal street acceptance policy or system in place. Maintenance of unaccepted streets is done on a provisional basis.

Key Challenges

- Providing the school system with adequate funds to replace or renovate the antiquated high school and make other needed improvements.
- Finding new locations for community meeting space.
- Providing additional police and fire staff to address operational limitations.
- Creating an asset management program that is updated on an annual basis to aid in developing the Capital Improvement Program.

A. CURRENT CONDITIONS

The Town of Wellesley provides excellent facilities for the different departments and continues upgrades for those facilities in need. Relatively new construction or upgrades have been completed for many facilities, including the police headquarters, fire stations, the library system, Bates and Sprague Elementary Schools, and Wellesley Middle School (currently undergoing renovation). Other studies are underway to possibly construct a joint Public Works/ Municipal Light facility and renovate or replace the high school.

Wellesley Public School System

The Town of Wellesley Public School System maintains and improves the school system as required to meet enrollment demands. The schools include Wellesley High School, Wellesley Middle School, and seven elementary schools. The Bates and Sprague Elementary Schools underwent major renovations in 2004.

WELLESLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STATISTICS

- Grades: Pre-K–5
- 2005–2006 Enrollment: 2212
- Faculty & Staff: 252



PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (2005–2006)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	ENROLLMENT (K-5)
Bates	349
Fiske	319
Hardy	276
Hunnewell	305
Sprague	355
Upham	255
Schofield	353
TOTAL	2212

Source: Wellesley Public Schools

In addition to these schools, the Town operates a pre-school (PAWS – Pre-School at Wellesley) program for children to prepare them for kindergarten. The program is located at 63 Hastings Street, adjacent to the Fiske School. The PAWS program serves

typically developing children as well as children with special needs.

Wellesley Middle School is undergoing a major renovation that will be completed in January 2007. The \$27 million project will include increased space for students, administration,

WELLESLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL STATISTICS

- Grades: 6–8
- 2005–2006 Enrollment: 980
- Faculty & Staff: 90

and staff. The renovation will provide six additional classrooms and one new science laboratory. In addition, administra-

tion will be relocated to improved space and more support space will be provided for staff. A new roof will be placed on the main building, and hall lighting improvements will be provided throughout the school.



Wellesley High School was built in 1938 and basic improvements are needed, including a new roof and insulation, repairs to plumbing and electrical systems, new carpeting, replacing 30% of the windows, and providing third-floor air-conditioning. A planning study is underway to determine

whether the facility should be upgraded or replaced to provide

WELLESLEY HIGH SCHOOL STATISTICS

- Grades: 9–12
- 2005–2006 Enrollment: 1140
- Faculty & Staff: 138
- 2005 graduating class: 242

increased classroom space. Enrollment projections indicate that school population will increase, and the existing space is inadequate to meet future enrollment levels.

The school operating budget has been in deficit situations in recent years. All schools were asked to make cuts to reduce the projected FY 2007 shortfall; however, the need for additional classroom space, the rising cost of educational programs, high energy prices, and increased costs of health insurance and benefits for school employees led to a budget override referendum. In May 2006, voters approved a \$3.16 million budget override that will provide funding for educational programs and facility improvements.

Wellesley Private Schools

The Town of Wellesley contains four private schools that supplement the public school system: Dana Hall School, Tenacre Country Day School, St. Paul School, and St. John the Evangelist School.

Dana Hall is a boarding and day school for girls in grades 6-12. In 2004–2005, 453 students were enrolled at Dana Hall School. Ten-Acre Country Day School is a Pre-K through Grade 6 elementary school for boys and girls.

Roman Catholic-affiliated schools include two elementary schools: St. John the Evangelist School, which had a 2004–2005 enrollment of 210 students for Grades Pre-K through 6, and St. Paul School, which had a 2004–2005 enrollment of 220 students in Grades Pre-K through 6.

Department of Public Works

The Board of Public Works directs the Department of Public Works (DPW), which oversees engineering, parks and recreation services, highways, recycling & disposal, management services, water and sewer, and street lighting maintenance. All of these programs are funded from general tax revenues, except for the Water Program and the Sewer Program, which are funded exclusively by residential user fees.

Current DPW operations are located in a constrained facility at 455 Worcester Street. Additional space is needed and plans are underway to expand the DPW building by approximately 34,900 square feet at the existing site. This will also allow the Municipal Light Plant (MLP) to construct a new MLP building on the DPW site.

The Engineering Division of DPW provides the Town with engineering, architectural, and technical services required to construct, operate, and maintain Town facilities and infrastructure. This includes water and sewer planning and stormwater management. The Engineering Division has three responsibilities:

- Planning and Design – Develops and reviews studies and plans;
- Survey and Inspection – Performs town land surveys and ensures compliance with Massachusetts General Laws;
- Town Plans and Records – Maintains maps, drawings, and construction and street acceptance plans.

Water and Sewer

The Water and Sewer Division is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Town's water and sanitary sewer systems. It is organized into two programs, which are funded entirely by water and sewer ratepayers.

- Water system storage capacity is 6.3 million gallons in two facilities.
- Wellesley maintains 149 miles of water distribution main.
- 85% of water is from 7 local wells and 15% is from the MWRA system.
- Three treatment facilities in town treat water for iron and manganese and also chlorinate and aerate.
- The sewer system includes 134 miles of collection lines and 22 pump stations.
- Sewage is treated at the MWRA system on Deer Island.

Municipal Light Plant

Wellesley has its own electric company that provides and manages power to the town. The Wellesley Municipal Light Plant was established to provide reliable and efficient electric power at fair, reasonable, and competitive rates to its ratepayers and to provide benefits to its owner, the Town of Wellesley.

The Municipal Light Plant operations are currently operated out of a facility shared with DPW. This facility is not ideal, due to space limitations that constrain operations. Plans are underway to construct a new MLP building on the DPW site off Route 9. The new building will be a separate 24,700 square foot building that will serve as the main office for the MLP.

Recycling and Disposal

The Town seeks to operate and maintain recycling, disposal, and refuse collection systems in an effective and efficient manner in order to protect the public health, prevent pollution, and to conserve energy and natural resources.



Completed in 1997, the Recycling and Disposal Facility (RDF) is located at 169 Great Plain Avenue (Route 135) across from the Wellesley Center. The 88-acre facility is open six days a week for use by Wellesley residents.

Wellesley has one of the highest municipal recycling rates in the state. Since 1998, the Town has consistently had recycling rates above 55%. Most Massachusetts municipalities have recycling rates of 30–35%.

- Recycling and disposal system benefits include cost savings, revenue increases, and elimination of long traffic lines.
- A Town survey indicates residents are pleased with the RDF (92%) and visit the site frequently (47% at least once a week).
- 3R system in place to "reduce, reuse, or recycle" material otherwise shipped to state transfer stations.

Park and Tree Maintenance

The Park and Highway Division is responsible for the care and upkeep of all of the Town's parkland, conservation land and other open spaces. It maintains all of the Town's athletic fields and active and passive recreation areas. It also maintains all Town-owned trees.

- The Park and Highway Division maintains storm drains, catch basins, and streams.
- DPW maintains 255 acres of active recreation land, including school fields, the Moses Pond area, and tennis courts.
- The town preserves and maintains 3,150 trees. These trees are trimmed to preserve sight distance and safety on town roads.

Street Acceptance and Private Road Maintenance

Wellesley currently accepts streets constructed as part of a subdivision under its subdivision regulations. Approval must be obtained from

the Planning Board and Town Meeting. Street acceptance means that the Town assumes responsibility for maintenance of the road and also accepts liability associated with it. The Town, however, does not have a system in place for other street acceptance cases.

Under its bylaws, the Town is authorized to perform temporary road repairs on private roads that have been accessible to the public for at least two years. These repairs, however, are confined only to filling in potholes. This bylaw has led to situations in which the Town has performed maintenance on private roads under provisional agreements with property owners. The Town lacks a private road maintenance system that outlines a uniform procedure and identifies who will assume the cost of all improvements.

Fire Department

The Wellesley Fire Department operates out of two fire stations. Headquarters (Station No. 2), located at 457 Worcester Street, houses Engines 2 and 3, which are both 1,250-gallon pumper trucks. The other station (Station No. 1) is located at 100 Central Street and houses Engine 1, a 1,250-gallon pumper truck, and a spare 100' ladder truck. One engine responds to medical emergencies with the ambulance. The engines are normally manned by four firefighters and the tower/ladder truck is usually manned by three. Equipment upgrades are needed, such as a new pumper truck to replace Engine #1.

The fire department manages a fire prevention program and performs inspections of all schools and businesses; issues permits for



FIRE DEPARTMENT STATISTICS

- Responded to 4,200 calls in 2003-2004
- Personnel: 36 firefighters

VEHICLES

- Four 1,250 gallon pumper trucks
- 100-foot ladder truck
- Haz-Mat response vehicle

blasting and permits for petroleum and other hazardous material storage; investigates fires; and develops student safety programs. The department also provides support for automobile accidents, medical emergencies, water problems, lockouts, downed wires, emergency lighting during severe weather, and drowning accidents.

With only 36 fire fighters, the Wellesley Fire Department is currently understaffed based on the national standard of 15 firefighters per shift.

Police Department

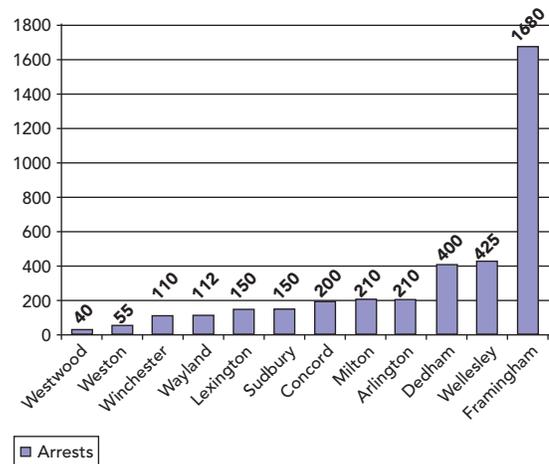
Wellesley's Police Department's headquarters are located in a newer facility at 485 Washington Street. The police force includes 42 officers and a chief. The department provides a bike patrol for the downtown that works both day and night. Police dispatch service also dispatches for fire and EMS service.

A recent study completed by the Wellesley police and surveys completed by area police departments show that Wellesley's police department is somewhat understaffed relative to other area police departments. Wellesley has 1.62 officers per 1,000 residents, whereas other area departments average 1.88 officers per thousand residents. The study also indicated that the Wellesley Police Department responds to more incidents annually than other nearby communities. Wellesley, however, has fewer personnel available than these communities on a shift-by-shift basis.



As indicated in the figure below, in 2004 Wellesley had more arrests than other area communities with the exception of Framingham. The number of officers responding to these incidents may take away from patrols in other areas of town. Additional staff could meet this shortfall. A police force of 50 officers – up from 43 officers – would provide 1.9 officers per thousand residents and bring the Wellesley Police Department up to a standard closer to that of similar-sized communities.

AREA POLICE DEPARTMENT ARRESTS (2004)



Wellesley Public Library System

Wellesley has three libraries: the Wellesley Free Library, the Fells Branch Library, and the Hills Branch Library. The Wellesley Library System has been an integral part of the community since its inception. Throughout their history, the libraries served as meeting places where social events took place, and continue to attract visitors today. The Wellesley Free Library opened in 2003 and is considered the main town library. The library is located at 530 Washington Street, across the street from Town Hall. The library has ample parking that is located to its rear and also in an underground garage.

Built in 1858 as a one-room schoolhouse, the Fells Branch Library is the oldest building in the

LIBRARY STATISTICS

- Holdings:
 - 205,000 books
 - 8,375 tapes/CDs
 - 5,635 VHS/DVD
- 18,988 people have library cards
- Nearly 1/2 million items were borrowed in 2005

system. The library underwent a full renovation between 1997 and 1999.

The Hills Branch Library was constructed in 1927-1928 as a fieldstone library that was voted as one of the five most beautiful build-

ings located around Boston. Hills Branch renovations were completed in 1999. The Wellesley Historical Commission has recommended the nomination of the Hills Branch Library to the National Register of Historic Places.

Recent financial constraints left the Town unable to afford to maintain the two branch libraries with its FY 2007 operating budget. In the 2006 Annual Town Meeting, the Library Trustees presented a plan in which Town funding for the branch libraries would decrease across five years. At the same time, the Library Trustees would work to develop an endowment that would allow the two branches to operate after 2011 without the expenditure of Town funds. In May 2006, this issue was included as part of a budget override referendum. The question failed to pass, and the two branch libraries closed on June 30, 2006. The branches still

remain in the Wellesley Free Library system and are owned by the Town. Library Trustees are considering soliciting private funds in order to re-open the branches in the future.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide the school system with additional classroom space via modular classrooms and by replacement of antiquated facilities with new or expanded facilities.

ACTIONS

- Upgrade facilities to include state-of-the-art technology and classroom amenities. This includes replacing modular classrooms with other conventional space as funding becomes available.
- Continue with renovations at Wellesley Middle School and choose an alternative to renovate or replace the high school from the recent study completed by SMMA. This study includes options for renovations and replacement at the existing site or a new site.
- Consider a school budget override to address funding shortfalls in the school system. This may include additional fees assessed to residents to maintain and enhance school facilities.

Investigate the possibility of using schools as “community centers” to supplement other meeting places and recreation facilities.

ACTION

- Converting the schools to meeting places after hours requires that a management system be created to monitor after-hours school activities. Security issues at facilities must be resolved to prevent unwanted access to restricted areas in the schools during after-school community use.



Develop a systematic approach to asset management.

ACTION

- System management of townwide infrastructure is needed to address the increasing age of infrastructure and reduce costs by maintaining existing equipment and roadways. Computerization should be used to track infrastructure conditions and to prolong the life of the Town's assets.

Consider increasing fire and police staff to address shortfalls and maintain current operations and services to the community.

ACTION

- Review the public safety budget for opportunities to phase in the hiring of additional staff to address shortfalls. Increasing staff for public safety requires additional funding mechanisms, as budgets are currently limited.

Develop a uniform policy for street acceptance.

ACTION

- Create a street acceptance policy that covers private streets that are not part of new subdivisions. This should include a process by which a majority of abutters on a private road can petition the Planning Board for acceptance. If Planning Board members, the Board of Selectmen, and Town Meeting determine that the road merits public maintenance and enough funds are available to bring it up to Town standards, it can be accepted into the Town's street system.

Implement a system for the maintenance of private streets.

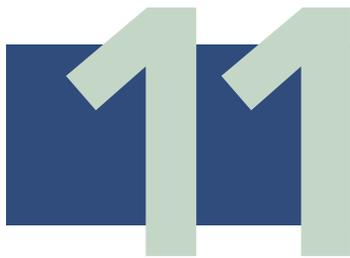
ACTION

- A betterment system would allow abutters and developers to petition the Town to make upgrades to private roads. Betterments ensure that those who receive the benefits of private road improvements must pay some or all of the costs of these improvements. The Town could establish a formula for private funding of costs. Possible methods include establishing a fixed rate based on the average cost of the work and the length of road frontage; a rate based on the area of abutting land a fixed depth from the road; or a rate based on recent tax valuations of abutting properties. Approval for maintenance petitions would have to be obtained from the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen.

Construct an expanded DPW operations building and a new Municipal Light Plant facility.

ACTION

- Continue planning and design for upgraded facilities. A recent traffic study was completed for the project to check for impacts. Minimal issues are projected due to low new trip generation and the relocation of 15 employees from Town Hall.



Stewardship and Implementation

This chapter includes a recommendation for stewardship of the comprehensive plan update until the next ten-year update and an implementation plan that identifies plan goals, recommendations and actions with responsible parties, a time frame for action, high priority actions, and, where possible, estimated costs. The implementation plan also integrates elements from the Town's existing capital plan document that are related to recommended actions under the plan.

STEWARDSHIP OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Effective implementation of a comprehensive plan requires stewardship – someone has to feel responsible for monitoring progress and bringing changes to the attention of the community. The everyday demands of town government and turnover in town officials and staff sometimes can make it difficult to seek guidance from a comprehensive plan in daily decision making. In addition, because comprehensive plans focus especially on land use issues, they are typically sponsored by planning boards while the recommendations encompass many other municipal actors.

Wellesley's Planning Board has been regularly sponsoring comprehensive plan updates at intervals of approximately ten years. The Board has a history of using the comprehensive plan update to guide its work plan, as can be seen in the series of planning projects for the Town's commercial villages, but it has no control over the use of the comprehensive plan by other Town boards and commissions or departments. In this comprehensive planning process, the

Planning Board has made a special effort to reach out to other boards and commissions and solicit their comments on the recommendations of this comprehensive plan update, so that the plan can realistically integrate the experience and views of Town officials and staff, as well as residents who participated in public meetings. However, there is no system in place to review the plan's goals and monitor implementation of the plan's recommendations between the decennial updates. The Planning Board could continue its leadership in comprehensive planning by sponsoring a workshop for the public and members of boards and commissions at the five-year mark, in order to review the goals of the plan and review the status of actions recommended in the plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Create a system to review the goals, strategies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan Update at the five-year mark.

A workshop, survey, or other activity would provide an opportunity to see if circumstances require a change in goals, to celebrate accomplishments, to identify actions that are no longer appropriate because of changed circumstances, and to identify any unexpected barriers to actions that are still deemed important. A five-year comprehensive plan workshop would also provide a structured opportunity for the volunteer members of boards and commissions, who typically do not have the time to confer with other boards, to discuss how their work can be better integrated for the benefit of the Town. The Planning Board could also commission a survey

at the five-year mark to gauge public opinion about the goals and strategies that the Town is pursuing under the comprehensive plan.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation plan is in the form of a series of matrices corresponding to the comprehensive plan update chapters. Each section contains recommended actions, responsible parties, time lines, and estimated costs, as well as an indication of whether the action should be considered a high priority item.

In addition, the matrices include items from the Town's most recent capital plan that are especially relevant to comprehensive plan issues (routine items such as road resurfacing are not included). As Town boards and commissions prepare their yearly capital proposals, working with staff and others, it would be valuable to encourage a review of comprehensive plan goals and action items to see if and how capital improvement proposals relate to the plan.

HOUSING

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
Maintain the primarily single-family character of Wellesley's housing stock.	Focus additional multi-family housing in commercial areas or on arterial roads.	Explore the potential for multi-family housing in locations such as the Route 9/Natick Line area and the Grossman's site in Lower Falls.	Wellesley Housing Development Corp (WHDC)	S	yes	
Maintain the physical form of Wellesley's residential neighborhoods by balancing community standards with individual interests.	Consider Site Plan Review for large houses.	Define "demolition" or "replacement house" to cover substantial additions.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	S	yes	
		Define "Residential Gross Floor Area" or a similar concept to include garages.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	S	yes	
		Establish Large House Site Plan Review for replacement houses three or more times the size of the houses they replace.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	S	yes	
	Define, promote, and/or protect neighborhood identity and character.	Explore the potential for additional local historic districts, a Historic Landmarks Bylaw, and historic easements.	Historical Commission	S		
		Commission a series of neighborhood studies to analyze and define neighborhood character and create voluntary guidelines for additions and new construction.	Planning Board	M		\$20K per study with public meetings
		Explore authorizing the establishment of Neighborhood Conservation Districts.	Planning Board; Historical Commission	M		
		Explore elements of form-based zoning to conserve neighborhood character.	Planning Board	L		

HOUSING

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
Promote the creation of housing units other than single-family homes to provide housing options for people across a range of income, age, family size, and needs while complementing town character and meeting the state goal of 10% affordable housing.		Focus efforts to create more diverse housing types and affordable housing by attracting developments with rental elements to identified sites in Wellesley, such as the Tailby Lot, the Linden Street commercial district, the St. James's Church site, the Grossman's site, and, potentially, other commercial districts.	Planning Department	S-M	yes	
	Encourage development of town house, condominium, and rental units in or near commercial districts to provide options for older, empty-nester, and young family households.	Seek technical assistance from nonprofit groups and explore relationships with non-profit developers and funding sources.	WHDC	M		
		Consider joining a regional HOME consortium for access to federal funds to assist home rehabilitation by low-income owners (including seniors).	Board of Selectmen	S-M	yes	
		Inventory and study the feasibility of using additional Town-owned parcels and buildings for affordable housing.	WHDC; Planning Board	S	yes	

HOUSING

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
		Explore the potential for a "friendly 40B" or Local Initiative Program project on Town-owned property or private property.	WHDC; Planning Board	S-M		
	Modify zoning bylaws to encourage housing diversity in type and in cost.	Amend zoning to promote affordable accessory units.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	M	yes	
		Allow by-right small-scale affordable single-family homes and duplexes with one affordable unit on nonconforming lots, subject to site plan review.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	M		
		Offer amnesty to illegal apartments in return for making them affordable units.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	M		
		Adopt the state law on tax title properties that provides for forgiveness of taxes owed if the properties are to be developed for affordable housing.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	S		

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
Maintain a diverse array of independent businesses.	Continue the commercial district planning and implementation process begun in the 1990s to encompass all commercial areas.	Review the Lower Falls Village Commercial District guidelines and zoning for a possible increase in incentives for mixed-use redevelopment.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	M	yes	
		Amend zoning in Wellesley Hills Square to conform with the principles of the plan for that area.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	H	yes	
		Complete or create plans for the Natick Line commercial area and small commercial areas, such as Cedar Street and the Fells.	Planning Board	M	yes	\$20-50K per plan
Create mixed-use environments in commercial areas.	Encourage housing development as part of a mixed-use strategy for commercial districts in order to support demand for a diverse mix of retail and services.	Plan and take the initiative to attract housing development in commercial districts where development potential exists.	Planning Board	M	yes	
Fund an economic development specialist to work more closely with business and institutional property owners.		Provide Town funding to support staff time for economic development activities.	Board of Selectmen; Town Meeting	M		\$20K
		Consider creating a half-time Economic Development Specialist position in the Planning Department.	Board of Selectmen; Town Meeting	M		\$35K annually

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2.5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
Create a system of regular communication among Town government, the business community, and local institutions in support of the Town's economic goals.		Enhance Town-business contacts for public-private partnerships by institutionalizing joint meetings and consultations.	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen	S	yes	
Support and enhance the buildout potential of non-residential property for the purpose of increasing the Town's tax revenue.		Study the potential impact of allowing additional development capacity in Wellesley's office parks (such as additional height).	Planning Board	M		\$20K study
		Study the benefits and costs of establishing a split tax rate.	Board of Selectmen	M		\$15K study

LAND USE

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
Strengthen Town zoning regulations and design guidelines and their enforcement to ensure continuity of town character and quality of life.	Make adjustments to zoning to clarify language and provide flexibility.	Review the General Residence district to allow a special permit option for projects with higher densities that meet Town design standards and other requirements.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	M		
		Review the language allowing mixed-use buildings in commercial districts to clarify the requirements for setbacks and similar standards.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	S	yes	
		Amend zoning in commercial districts, where needed, to ensure redevelopment would retain desired commercial character (e.g., Wellesley Hills Square).	Planning Board; Town Meeting	S	yes	
		Create an overlay district with design standards for multifamily, nonresidential, and mixed uses from Natick Line to Russell Road.	Planning Board; Design Review Board; Town Meeting	M	yes	
		Recodify the Zoning Bylaw within the next ten years.	Planning Board; Town Meeting	L	yes	\$50K
	Raise public awareness about and understanding of land use issues in Wellesley.	Adapt or develop brochures, guidebooks, and presentations to educate residents and other property owners about the land use system.	Planning Board; Design Review Board	M		
		Make informational materials available through multiple means in town, such as the web site, Town buildings, membership organizations, Planning Board presentations to groups, etc.	Planning Board	M		

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
Restore, preserve, and enhance open space and sensitive natural resources for protection of water resources, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, and enrichment of community character.	Continue to promote awareness of the environmental damage caused by stormwater runoff and increased impervious surfaces and regulate development in order to minimize pollution impacts.	As residential and commercial redevelopment occurs in Wellesley, revisit the 2005 Stormwater Bylaw to ensure that acceptable runoff levels conform to conditions created by this development.	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen	M-L		
		Ensure that controls are provided in the Town's zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations that will minimize erosion and pollution created from development.	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen	S	yes	
		Examine the Watershed Protection District zoning overlay, the Water Supply District zoning overlay, and the Wetlands Protection Bylaw to reduce overlapping jurisdiction.	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen	M		
		Implement the Stormwater Management Program, including Phase II Stormwater Regulations.	DPW	S-M (FY07-FY10)	yes	\$1.33 M
		Continue the use of Best Management Practices to mitigate the impacts of local and regional development through Zoning, Stormwater, and Wetlands Bylaw Revisions.		ongoing		
		Continue public awareness campaigns to alert Wellesley residents to the harmful effects of non-point source pollution.	NRC	ongoing		
	Continue to restore and manage ponds to avoid eutrophication.	Continue to implement the Pond Restoration Program.	NRC	ongoing	yes	

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
		Complete and implement the Morses Pond Management Study with final design and permitting.	NRC	ongoing	yes	
		Monitor and manage restored ponds in collaboration with the DPW.	NRC	S	yes	\$500,000
	Continue to protect and enhance the Town's Shade Tree Program by providing adequate funding.	Develop a Public Shade Tree Inventory to identify all shade trees by size and species.	NRC	M		
		Fund the tree planting program in 5-year increments.	NRC	ongoing		\$50,000 over 10 years
Preserve cultural resources, including cultural landscapes, to maintain and enrich community character.	Explore combining the existing Historical Commission and Historic District Commission into one Historical Commission with the powers of both existing boards.		Board of Selectmen	M		
	Promote public awareness of Wellesley's history and the benefits of historic preservation.	Encourage preservation through education and publicity about historic properties and preservation easements.	Historical Commission	S		
		Revive and complete the existing historic property inventory from the 1990s.	Historical Commission	M	yes	
		Expand the plaque program to include properties that are at least 50 years old.	Historical Commission	S		

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
	Maintain the historic integrity of Wellesley's neighborhoods by initiatives, such as Neighborhood Conservation Districts, that will help protect historic properties and landscapes.	Evaluate the potential to protect individual properties by adopting a Historic Landmark Bylaw that would allow the Town to designate a specific property as having local historic significance.	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen	M		
		Advocate to protect historic properties by passing a Demolition Delay Bylaw.	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen	M	yes	
		Protect groups of related historic properties by designating more local historic districts or by passing a Neighborhood Conservation District Bylaw.	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen	M		
	Expand the scope of potential preservation projects by seeking non-local funding and partnerships and private donations.	Apply for different sources of funding for preservation projects.	Historical Commission	M		
		Look for new sources of support from state government and non-profit organizations.	Historical Commission	M-L		
		Pursue private support for historic preservation activities as part of public education efforts.	Historical Commission	M-L		

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
Preserve and enhance the Town's open space system.	Continue to protect and enhance open space in Wellesley.	Continue to seek to expand the trails system through conservation restrictions granted by property owners.	NRC	ongoing		
		Continue to identify important open space properties and work with property owners to obtain conservation restrictions.	NRC	ongoing		
		Seek to permanently protect all park and conservation land by placing conservation restrictions on this land.	NRC	M-L		
		Enact mandatory cluster zoning to maximize open space preservation and allow limited development if these properties cannot fully be protected.	Planning Board	M	yes	
		Where needed, change zoning to "Conservation" on park and conservation land.	NRC; Planning Board	S	yes	
		Proceed with the Fuller Brook Park Restoration Master Plan.	NRC	S-M (FY07-FY10)	yes	\$500,000
		Continue implementing the playing field and playground improvements capital plan.	DPW and NRC	S-M (FY06-FY10)	yes	\$579,500
		Implement Sprague Athletic Fields improvements.	DPW and NRC	S-M (FY06-FY10)		\$550,000
		Implement the Hunnewell Field Improvements in conjunction with capital plans for the high school.	DPW and NRC	M (FY09-FY10)		\$412,500

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
	Conduct a recreational needs assessment that will reflect collaboration between the Natural Resources Commission and the Recreation Commission/ Department.	Coordinate a recreation needs assessment between the Natural Resources Commission, the Recreation Commission, and the Board of Public Works.	NRC; Recreation Commission; Board of Selectmen	M	yes	
		Use the results of this assessment to inform future decisions made by Town departments and commissions.	NRC; Recreation Commission	M		
		Keep the Open Space and Recreation Plan updated every five years.	NRC; Recreation Commission	S	yes	
	Work with institutional partners to protect open space and provide additional recreational facilities.	Establish and maintain relationships with key figures at Massachusetts Bay Community College, Babson College, and Wellesley College.	NRC; Board of Selectmen	S		
		Ensure that Town committees and boards communicate with each other regarding potential open space losses.	NRC; Recreation Commission; Trails Committee; Planning Board; Board of Selectmen	S	yes	
		Include the Board of Health in open space and recreation planning discussions.	NRC; Recreation Department	S	yes	
		Explore sharing the colleges' recreational facilities in order to relieve the pressures to overuse the Town's playing fields.	Board of Selectmen	S		

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
	Pursue greater connectivity of open spaces on a local and regional level.	Continue to refine the trails system by looking at ways to connect major open space areas.	NRC; Trails Committee	ongoing		
		Work with other towns and recreation groups to form links to regional trails and open spaces.	NRC; Trails Committee; Board of Selectmen	ongoing		
	Seek management options that will allow more productive use of Town-owned and private active recreational space rather than converting passive into active open space.	Evaluate the contribution of fees to maintenance and increase fees assessed to local sports leagues for use of the Town's playing fields if appropriate.	Recreation Commission/ Department	S		
		Explore the pros and cons of installing an artificial turf athletic field.	Recreation Commission/ Department; DPW	S		
		Add lighting to recreational facilities in order to extend the hours of use where appropriate.	Recreation Commission/ Department; DPW	M		
		Continue to investigate the possibility of using local institutional facilities for Town programs with leadership from the Board of Selectmen.	Board of Selectmen	S		
	Develop a plan to construct an aquatic facility (doesn't necessarily need to be on Town land; could be private as a school) that will be funded through a public-private partnership.	Work with the School Committee to incorporate plans for an aquatic center into the design for a new high-school complex.	Board of Selectmen; Recreation Commission; School Committee	S		

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
		Investigate the potential for a public-private partnership that will drive construction of an aquatic center.	Recreation Commission	S		
		Locate a dedicated source of revenue for ongoing maintenance and operation.	Recreation Commission; Board of Selectmen	S		
	Continue to develop recreational programs that will fit the needs of Wellesley's changing population.	Continue to offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities that suit the interests of Wellesley residents.	Recreation Commission/ Department	ongoing		
		Seek additional funding for recreation programs from higher user fees and private sources.	Recreation Commission/ Department	S-M		
		Ensure that lower-income residents have access to recreational programs by building the current scholarship fund.	Recreation Commission/ Department	S-M		

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
Reduce traffic volume, especially during peak hours.	Provide more focused attention to transportation issues in Town government.	Create a full-time Transportation Coordinator staff position for an experienced transportation planner.	Board of Selectmen	M	yes	\$75K
		Create a Transportation Advisory Committee.	Board of Selectmen	S	yes	
		Incorporate the MassHighway Project Development and Design Guidebook (2006) in Town transportation projects and Project of Significant Impact (PSI), and subdivision standards.	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen; Transportation Advisory Committee	S		
	Continue implementation of new technologies to address traffic growth.	Update intersection traffic signal hardware with the latest traffic-responsive equipment to optimize traffic flow.	DPW	M-L		
	Improve traffic safety and correct high-hazard locations.	Review high-accident locations and develop mitigation plans to improve safety along corridors and at specific intersections.	DPW	M	yes	On-call transportation consultant and work plan
	Create an intra-town transit system.	Study the options for increasing resident access to shuttles that serve town destinations and the Riverside T Station.	Transportation Advisory Committee; Planning Board	M		Time; possible consultant
	Explore traffic mitigation options at the public schools.	Explore expanding the "walking school bus" programs.	School Committee	M		
		Include discussion of traffic congestion impacts in assessment of school bus policies and evaluate options to decrease congestion.	School Committee	S-M-L		

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
	Implement stronger Transportation Demand Management Strategies that will reduce overall traffic demand on the Wellesley road system.	Implement stricter TDM requirements, including in the PSI review process.	Planning Board	S	yes	
		Explore shuttle services and work with the regional TMA.	Transportation Advisory Committee; Planning Board	M		
		Reduce the impact of school-related trips.	Transportation Advisory Committee; Planning Board	M		
		Promote ridesharing by Town employees.	Transportation Advisory Committee; Board of Selectmen	S		
Seek improvement of traffic flow on regional routes.	Renew participation in regional transportation planning.	Actively participate in MAPC.	Board of Selectmen	S	yes	
		Work closely with MassHighway on regional transportation issues.	Board of Selectmen	S-M-L	yes	
		Actively participate in the MetroWest Growth Management Committee	Board of Selectmen	S	yes	
		Consider joining the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority	Board of Selectmen	S	yes	
		Participate in MBTA capital program planning.	Board of Selectmen	S		
Manage parking to support commercial districts.	Implement new parking management programs in parking lots.	Redistribute short-term and long-term parking spaces within the business district lots.	DPW	S	yes	
		Ensure the safety of employees/patrons by improving lighting in parking lots and implementing a late-night escort system.	DPW	S		

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
		Provide additional parking in Wellesley Square by including a parking deck in mixed-use redevelopment plans for the area.	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen			
Encourage alternative means of transportation.	Create a Townwide Bicycle Plan.	Create a bicycle plan for on-street and off-street marked bicycle routes to connect town destinations and link to regional bicycle routes.	Transportation Advisory Committee; Planning Board	L		Volunteer time or consultant/work plan or separate at \$30,000
	Consider developing a Sidewalk Plan.	Investigate creating a plan that will inventory existing sidewalks and consider how new sidewalks can enhance connectivity for pedestrians and provide new linkages to open space, trails, and commuter rail stations.	Transportation Advisory Committee; Planning Board	L		
	Maintain and improve conditions for pedestrian safety, amenity, and continuous access.	Continue sidewalk maintenance and restoration programs throughout town.	DPW	S-M (FY06-FY10)	yes	\$477,500

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
Maintain school excellence.	Ensure that Wellesley's students have access to needed classroom technology.	Upgrade facilities to include state-of-the-art technology and classroom amenities.	Board of Selectmen; School Committee; Wellesley Public Schools	S	yes	\$2.9 million
	Provide additional classroom space to meet projected enrollment increases.	Add modular classrooms to accommodate an increased student population and keep class sizes low.	Board of Selectmen; School Committee; Wellesley Public Schools	S	yes	
		Replace modular classrooms with conventional space as funding becomes available.	Board of Selectmen; School Committee; Wellesley Public Schools	L		
		Renovate Wellesley's oldest elementary schools (Schofield, Hardy, Hunnewell, Upham, and Fiske) in order to extend their useful lives by 10 years.	Board of Selectmen; School Committee; Wellesley Public Schools	L	yes	\$5.9 million
		Continue with renovations at Wellesley Middle School.	Board of Selectmen; School Committee; Wellesley Public Schools	S	yes	
		Renovate the existing Wellesley High School or construct a new high-school facility.	Board of Selectmen; School Committee; Wellesley Public Schools	M	yes	\$69 million
		Consider a school budget override to address funding shortfalls in the school system.	Board of Selectmen; School Committee; Wellesley Public Schools	S	yes	
Provide additional community meeting space.	Consider after-hours use of the schools for community center or meeting space.	Create a management system to monitor activities and secure restricted areas during after-hours community use.	Board of Selectmen; School Committee; Wellesley Public Schools	S		
Create systematic oversight of Town facilities and infrastructure.	Develop a town asset management system to track infrastructure conditions.	Implement a computerized system to streamline maintenance records and track changes.	Board of Selectmen; Department of Public Works	S	yes	

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

GOAL	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME: S=2 YEARS; M=2-5 YEARS; L=5-10 YEARS	HIGH PRIORITY?	ESTIMATED COST
Improve public safety response times and operations.	Ensure that Wellesley's police and fire departments meet national standards for number of personnel per shift.	Phase in additional public safety staff as budget limitations are reduced.	Board of Selectmen; Wellesley Police Department; Wellesley Fire Department	M		
		Seek additional funding mechanisms, such as grants, to help pay for new staff.	Board of Selectmen; Wellesley Police Department; Wellesley Fire Department	M		
	Provide equipment upgrades for operations improvements.	Purchase a new pumper truck for the fire department.	Board of Selectmen; Wellesley Fire Department	M		\$375,000
Enhance DPW and the Municipal Light Plant's operations.	Provide adequate space and technology for operations.	Construct an expanded DPW operations building and a new Municipal Light Plant facility.	Board of Selectmen; Department of Public Works; Municipal Light Plant	S	yes	\$8 million
	Provide equipment upgrades for operations improvements.	Replace or refurbish DPW vehicles and equipment.	Board of Selectmen; Department of Public Works	M		\$2.4 million
		Continue rehabilitation of Wellesley's sewer mains.	Board of Selectmen; Department of Public Works	L		\$1.7 million
		Rehabilitate or replace the Town's sewer lift stations.	Board of Selectmen; Department of Public Works	M		\$545,300
Clarify Town policies regarding private street maintenance.	Implement a system for the maintenance of private streets.	Create a betterment system that would allow abutters to petition the Town for private road upgrades/maintenance. The system should provide a formula by which the abutters and the Town share in the maintenance costs.	Board of Selectmen; Planning Board	S		
Develop a uniform policy for street acceptance.	Create a street acceptance policy that covers private streets that are not part of new subdivisions.	Implement a process by which abutters can petition the Town for acceptance.	Board of Selectmen; Planning Board	S		

Appendices:

APPENDIX A: A FRAMEWORK FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLANNED PRODUCTION

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

PURPOSE

This framework for planned production of affordable housing in Wellesley is designed to provide the Town with a recommended approach for the creation of a state-approved plan, should the Town elect to do so. The purpose of the Planned Production Plan is to guide the expansion of affordable housing opportunities in the Town according to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD's) Planned Production Regulation, MGL 760 CMR 31.07(1)(i).¹ Approval of an affordable housing plan under this regulation and certification of the plan upon meeting specific affordable housing production targets would allow the Town to preempt adversarial 40B Comprehensive Permit applications that are inconsistent with the plan for one or more years, depending on the number of housing units produced.

The Plan is a management tool for ensuring that timely progress is made toward meeting the Town's affordable housing goals. It describes the mix of housing units required to address the identified needs and a time frame for their production. It also identifies the constraints that have limited affordable housing production in Wellesley, and the Town's efforts to mitigate them. It identifies regulatory reforms and preservation strategies as well as new production initiatives and funding sources, and anticipates a role for both private and town initiated development.

The Planned Production Plan complements the housing component of the Town's Master Plan and is more detailed than that document on the specifics of how Wellesley will achieve the goal of having 10 percent of its year-round housing stock qualify for inclusion on the state subsidized housing inventory (SHI). It should be read in conjunction with the Master Plan, as that document includes a more comprehensive discussion of the town's population, housing market, residential character, trends in housing development, and the history of affordable housing development in Wellesley. The Master Plan also includes a primer on affordable housing in general and Massachusetts-specific definitions and guidelines.

¹ A housing component of a Master Plan may qualify under the Planned Production regulations if it includes a comprehensive needs assessment, a statement of the community's affordable housing goals, its affordable housing strategy, and a description of the use restrictions it will employ to ensure long term affordability of the units that are created.

This Plan follows the structure outlined in the Planned Production Guidelines, with the addition of an Executive Summary and an Introduction:

- Section 1 Introduction
- Section 2 Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- Section 3 Affordable Housing Goals
- Section 4 Affordable Housing Strategy
- Section 5 Description of Use Restrictions

PROCESS

The development and implementation of the affordable housing production strategy involves three steps:

1. An assessment of where you are, how you got there, where you are heading, and what that means for various subpopulations. This is the *housing needs assessment*.
2. The *action plan*, which spells out what you are going to do about it, when, and how. This becomes the Town's road map for meeting its housing needs and the state's 10 percent affordable housing goal. It typically includes immediate, mid-range and long-term strategies; timetables; and estimated sources and uses of funds. It is program-specific and site-specific. As important as it is to analyze the information about a community's affordable housing needs, it is equally important to gauge the level of support for *particular* actions in order to marshal a broad base of support: Where is there consensus? Where is there dissension? And where is there a lack of interest altogether?
3. The final step, of course, is *implementation*.

HOUSING PROFILE AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The housing chapter of the 2005-2015 Wellesley Comprehensive Plan Update contains important background information on Wellesley's housing stock and residential development trends. That document will be submitted to DHCD as part of the Planned Production Plan.

Currently 4.7 percent of Wellesley's year-round housing stock (416 units) is certified for inclusion on the State Subsidized Housing Inventory (dated 1/19/05), including the Wellesley Housing Authority's 235-unit inventory of public housing; 102 family units in two developments, one of which received a \$14 million modernization in 2003-2004; and 133 elderly/disabled units. In addition to these Housing Authority units, there are 161 units of privately-owned subsidized rental units (125 restricted to elderly occupancy), four housing units for persons with special needs, Department of Mental Health group homes for 16 residents, and three affordable ownership units. A recently permitted Chapter 40B project will produce 13 income-restricted units in a multifamily project of 52 rental units, all of which will count towards the Town's Chapter 40B inventory. An over-55 homeownership project will produce eight affordable units, and a group home for four mentally-retarded adults is also in process. The Wellesley Housing Development Corporation has issued a Request for Proposals for creation of three market rate and one affordable condominium unit in the Walnut Street Fire Station building and the Town's Community Preservation Committee and Town Meeting voted in Spring 2004 to transfer \$200,000 to the Housing Development Corporation for the buy-down of an existing home or condo or the construction of one unit of affordable housing.

When all of these are added in, Wellesley will have approximately 5.5 percent of its year-round housing units qualify for the State Subsidized Housing Inventory.

2. Housing Needs Assessment

By virtually any economic indicator – household income, home values, educational attainment, occupation, and equalized valuation per capita – Wellesley ranks among the most affluent communities in the state. Family income increased by 50 percent between 1989 and 1999, and Wellesley’s 1999 median family income of \$134,769 ranks fifth highest in the state; median household income, \$113,686, ranks sixth. Still, 18 percent of the Town’s households are considered extremely low, very low, or low income² by federal Department of Housing and Urban Development definitions and three percent live below the federal poverty level. The income of renter households is just 45 percent of what it is for owner occupants, roughly \$56,923 compared to \$127,130 in 1999.³ More than 600 low-income homeowners and more than 200 low-income renters experience housing problems, mostly affordability problems.

POPULATIONS IN NEED OF HOUSING ASSISTANCE

The housing needs and priorities identified in this plan follow commonly used federal and state standards for classifying income, affordability and housing problems. Housing is affordable if gross rent (including the cost of utilities borne by the tenant) or homeowner costs (including mortgage payment, real estate taxes and homeowners insurance) do not exceed 30 percent of household income. Households paying in excess of 30 percent are considered *cost burdened*; those paying in excess of 50 percent are considered *severely cost burdened*. Table 1 illustrates the targeted income levels for most affordable housing programs in the Boston metropolitan area, which includes Wellesley.

Table 1
2004 Income Eligibility Guidelines for Various Programs
(AMI = Area Median Income)

Household Size	150% AMI	110% AMI	Boston Area Median Income (AMI)	95% AMI Moderate Income	80% AMI Low Income	50% AMI Very Low Income	30% AMI Extremely Low Income	Federal Poverty Level
1	\$86,850	\$63,663		\$54,981	\$46,300	\$28,950	\$17,350	\$9,310
2	\$99,300	\$72,806		\$62,878	\$52,950	\$33,100	\$19,850	\$12,490
3	\$111,600	\$81,881		\$70,716	\$59,550	\$37,200	\$22,350	\$15,670
4	\$124,050	\$90,956	\$82,600	\$78,553	\$66,150	\$41,350	\$24,800	\$18,850
5	\$133,950	\$98,244		\$84,847	\$71,450	\$44,650	\$26,800	\$22,030
6	\$143,850	\$105,531		\$91,141	\$76,750	\$47,950	\$28,800	\$25,210

² Current HUD income classifications are as follows: extremely low income—household income 30 percent or less of the HUD area median family income (HAMFI, or AMI); very low income—household income greater than 30 percent but not more than 50 percent of HAMFI; low income—household income greater than 50 percent but not more than 80 percent of HAMFI; and moderate income—household income greater than 80 percent but not more than 95 percent of HAMFI.

³ Recent estimates suggest that renter incomes have increased by only 9 percent and homeowner incomes by just 12.5 percent since that time. (*The Greater Boston Housing Report Card*, 2003, Bluestone et al.)

Low and Moderate Income Cost Burdened Households.⁴ Even though its economic profile places Wellesley in the top two percent of communities statewide, many residents are not faring so well. As previously noted, 18 percent of the Town’s households are considered extremely low, very low, or low income by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, and 3 percent live below the federal poverty level. Another 5 percent are considered moderate income. Many of these households face excessive cost burdens.

(See Table 2.)

Table 2
Summary of Housing Problems in Wellesley by Income Classification

Income Classification	RENTERS				HOMEOWNERS				ALL HOUSEHOLDS			
	Total	With Housing of Afford Problems	No Housing or Afford Problems	% with Problems	Total	With Housing of Afford Problems	No Housing or Afford Problems	% with Problems	Total	With Housing of Afford Problems	No Housing or Afford Problems	% with Problems
Total	1,463	319	1,144	21.8%	7,129	1,480	5,649	20.8%	8,592	1,799	6,793	20.9%
<= 30% of AMI	275	125	150	45.5%	270	235	35	87.0%	545	360	185	66.1%
>30%, but <=50%	185	70	115	37.8%	325	225	100	69.2%	510	295	215	57.8%
>50%, but <=80%	174	40	134	23.0%	329	165	164	50.2%	503	205	298	40.8%
>80%, but <=95%	55	15	40	27.3%	375	140	235	37.3%	430	155	275	36.0%
>95%, but <=100%	30	15	15	50.0%	75	30	45	40.0%	105	45	60	42.9%
>100%, but <=115%	70	25	45	35.7%	320	95	225	29.7%	390	120	270	30.8%
>115%, but <=120%	14	4	10	28.6%	85	20	65	23.5%	99	24	75	24.2%
>120%, but <=140%	105	10	95	9.5%	485	120	365	24.7%	590	130	460	22.0%
>140%	555	15	540	2.7%	4,865	450	4,415	9.5%	5,420	465	4,955	8.6%

Source: HUD–Census Special Tabulation data, Tables MA A6Ao6or and MA A6Bo6or

Overall, 40 percent of all low income households are renters. Fifty percent of those with extremely low incomes rent, as do 36 percent of those with *very low incomes* and 35 percent of those in the *low income* (50–80 percent of area median income) category. Thirty-seven percent of the low income renters (235 households) experience affordability problems, as do 55 percent of low income homeowners (860 households). The affordability challenge affects all age groups. Fifty-five percent of the low income, cost burdened renters are under the age of 65, as are 47 percent of the cost burdened homeowners. In addition to those *already* facing cost burdens, more than 100 additional households are deemed at *risk* of becoming cost burdened because of low incomes.

Other (Non-Low Income) Cost Burdened Households. High housing costs have made housing affordability an issue even for middle and upper income households. Five percent of the middle and upper income renters and 15 percent of the middle and upper income homeowners in Wellesley also face cost burdens. The more detailed Table 3 documents the breadth of the affordability problem, based on the 1999 housing costs and household incomes reported in the 2000 Decennial Census. This table illustrates that affordability is an issue for renters in every income category below \$75,000. In

⁴ HUD has prepared a series of needs tables based on special tabulations of data collected from the decennial census, which enable communities to prioritize their housing needs. Two of these tables are included at the end of this Appendix. The first estimates the number of Wellesley households by tenure (owner or renter), by type of household – elderly, small family (2-4 members), large family (five or more members), or other – and by income. The second estimates the needs specifically for those households that have one or more members with a mobility or self-care limitation.

general, it becomes a greater problem the lower the income. The exception – those earning between \$10,000-\$19,000 – probably reflects the high concentration of renters in that bracket who are already renting a subsidized unit. Not surprisingly, the burden is greatest for the oldest householders and the youngest.

Table 3
Cost of Burdened Households by Age, Tenure, and Income

Income Bracket	% of HOs Paying > 35% of Income for Housing	% of Renters paying > 35% of Income for Housing
Less than \$10,000	100.0%	51.2%
\$10,000 to \$19,999	84.8%	22.3%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	42.0%	45.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	28.5%	25.2%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	27.0%	20.1%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	18.6%	0.0%
\$100,000 to \$149,000	12.6%	0.0%
\$150,000 or more	1.3%	0.0%
Age Bracket		
Householder 15–24 years	NA	35.9%
Householder 25–34 years	14.4%	23.1%
Householder 35–44 years	14.1%	18.6%
Householder 45–54 years	16.0%	0.0%
Householder 55–64 years	16.0%	8.2%
Householder 65–74 years	16.1%	31.9%
Householder 75 years and over	22.2%	38.3%

Source: U.S. Census 2000 SF3, Tables H71, 73, 96, and 97

Similarly, with homeowners, the lower the income, the higher the likelihood of affordability problems. The problem is more pronounced among elderly homeowners, many of whom have great wealth tied up in their homes but relatively low incomes. The rises in property taxes and homeowner's insurance that have accompanied the rapid rise in home values account for much of the increasing burden for those with little or no mortgage outstanding on their property. The average single-family tax bill increased by more than 55 percent in Wellesley between 1998-2004.

Citizens' Housing and Planning Association and Northeastern University's Center for Urban and Regional Policy both publish "affordability gap" analyses, assessing whether residents of a particular community, earning the median income for that town, could afford to buy the median price home there at current prices and financing assumptions. Wellesley has been "unaffordable" to its existing residents at least since 1998 (the first year for which data are available), but the analysis indicates that the affordability problem has grown worse in recent years – notwithstanding near record low mortgage interest rates – as increasing home prices outstrip income gains. In 1998, Wellesley's median household income was sufficient to purchase a home priced at 94 percent of what the typical (median priced) single-family home that year sold for. By 2003, the median family income would have covered only 78 percent of the median price. (In other words, the median home price in 2003 would have to have been priced \$158,000 less than it was to be affordable to an existing Wellesley family earning the median household income.⁵)

⁵ Estimated to be \$128,000 in 2003.

Housing Conditions. While only a handful of homes in Wellesley are deemed to be substandard (lacking kitchen facilities or plumbing or having serious code violations), upgrading such units is considered a high priority. The number of low income homeowners, including those with rental units, who may need financial help to maintain their units; remove lead paint, asbestos, or other toxins; or comply with housing codes, is likely to be much greater given the age of the stock and the high level of long-term ownership, particularly among the elderly. Low income elderly homeowners may wish to get out of “high maintenance” housing situations entirely and convert some of their home’s equity to cash for other basic needs.

Special Needs. Some residents have more specialized needs. The Census enumerated nearly 700 households (about eight percent of the total) in which one or more member reported some type of physical, mental, or sensory disability (or disabilities) that presented mobility or self-care limitations. Fifty-four percent of these households are elderly. There are also a small number of residents, or former residents, whose health and/or other issues require specialized housing services.⁶ The numbers are small, and their needs may be temporary or episodic. Not all such needs can be met locally, but it is important to recognize that Wellesley residents contribute to a regional demand for group homes, transitional housing, shelter beds, etc., and the Town may have opportunities for addressing such needs.

Lack of Housing Choice. While some households need help with affordability, home repairs, or have special needs, many others – across a range of incomes – simply need greater housing choice: alternatives to large, high-maintenance single-family homes. Thirteen percent of Wellesley households rent, but the number of renters and the number of multifamily units available for rent has declined in recent years. Much of the multifamily inventory (nearly 19 percent) was built during the 1970s; no new units have been added since 1990.

Regional Needs. The regional needs are greater and more complex. None of the towns abutting Wellesley, or the communities abutting them, is at the 10 percent “affordable” threshold. While some offer greater housing choice in terms of size, type, tenure, and cost than Wellesley, rental *and* ownership options for low and moderate income households are limited throughout the region.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Wellesley’s lack of affordable housing options has impacted some groups more than others:

- Low income renter households
- Lower income homeowners, including the elderly and others on fixed incomes
- Young adults and families locked out of homeownership

The greatest demand is for smaller, moderately-priced ownership units and rentals in a range of price levels. The demand for both comes primarily from the same two groups: 1) young people – individuals and small families, mostly – who work in the area but cannot afford to buy, and 2) older homeowners wishing to downsize, but with no alternatives available locally, either for rent or purchase. Often the latter are seeking lower maintenance properties, single-floor living and, in a smaller num-

⁶ Examp
ful offenders, and pregnant and parenting teens.

ber of cases, supportive services. Demand also comes from school and municipal employees; families with children in Wellesley schools under the METCO program; parents, children or siblings of current residents; current residents facing financial setbacks; and households that have split up due to divorce. Finally, there is a demand for alternative housing types (e.g., townhouses), both rental and ownership, among those who can afford to pay market, or near market prices.

Wellesley is more fortunate than most Massachusetts communities. Its housing needs are manageable. *Less than 500 units of “qualified” affordable housing would bring the Town up to, or near, the state’s ten percent goal*, which is approximately what the Town itself identified as its needs in the 1994 Master Plan; *a modest annual increase thereafter would maintain that level given the Town’s historic growth trends*. The Metropolitan Area Planning Council’s buildout analysis for Wellesley suggested that the Town had the potential for 2,209 additional residential units. However, 1,724 of these “housing units” would be academic housing in the Educational zoning districts. The potential number of new, non-academic housing units was estimated at fewer than 400. (Also, the analysis did not take into account potential Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit projects, which could produce more units than permitted by zoning.) If the Town increases its year-round housing stock by 400 units between now and 2010, the ten percent requirement would increase by a modest 40 units, and the annual maintenance requirement – set by DHCD at .75% to preempt adversarial 40Bs – would rise from the current 66 units to 69. Given Wellesley’s low level of new production, even this relatively modest level of production will present a daunting challenge.

IMPEDIMENTS TO EXPANDING THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Factors that impede the development of affordable housing in Wellesley include high production costs, high cost and scarcity of developable land, zoning and regulatory restrictions, and community concerns, particularly over increasing density.

Cost to Produce. Housing prices in Wellesley are among the highest in the state, and the rate of new production is among the lowest. Land costs drive development costs, and in built-up Wellesley the lack of sites available for development has been a major factor. The increase in housing starts in 2004, a 15 year high, is the result of a 52-unit cluster development approved after a protracted comprehensive permitting process (13 of the 52 rental units will be affordable to households earning below 80 percent of the median income.)

Local Zoning and Regulatory Restrictions. Most of Wellesley is zoned for single-family housing; however, townhouses and multifamily housing are allowed in a few of the residential districts and almost all of the commercial districts. The Zoning Bylaw also includes a Residential Incentive Overlay district available in almost any non-residential zoning district that is intended to encourage multifamily and elderly housing with higher permitted densities. The existence of this zoning, however, has not resulted in the creation of significant new affordable housing for a number of years.

The Town recently enacted an inclusionary zoning bylaw that applies to all Projects of Significant Impact, that is, projects in commercial or industrial zoning districts with new floor area of 10,000 square feet or more or with 15,000 square feet of renovated, altered, and/or replacement floor area and meeting certain other criteria. The inclusionary zoning bylaw provides that affordable housing be provided in the

ratio of 0.02 units per 1,000 square feet of floor area and 0.2 units for each dwelling unit in a project. Alternatively, the project proponent can make a payment to the Affordable Housing Trust in lieu of constructing units. Because the inclusionary zoning bylaw is quite new, it has not yet produced any units. However, the expected conversion of the former Wellesley Inn into condominiums will have to comply with this law and provide affordable units or a payment in lieu of the units. It is expected that the Spring 2005 Town Meeting will be asked to vote to extend inclusionary zoning to subdivisions.

Scarcity of Land. Wellesley is near build-out and much of the activity in new housing construction is made up of the replacement of smaller, older houses with larger replacement houses (commonly called “mansionization”). Only occasionally do parcels over three acres suitable for subdivision become available, and the typical subdivision in the last fifteen years has been small, averaging four units. The Hastings Village Chapter 40B project took advantage of an unusually large parcel of land in the Wellesley context. The opportunity for creating any significant number of affordable units will occur through creation of higher-density multi-family, condominium, or town house development in commercial districts or suitable locations that become available through unusual circumstances, such as the closing of St. James’s Church.

Other. The Town has been reluctant to collaborate with other communities on affordable housing programs. For example, the Board of Selectmen declined to join a HOME consortium with Newton that could have provided housing rehab assistance to income-eligible Wellesley homeowners who might be “house poor” and without resources to make needed repairs.

The Town did, however, create a Housing Development Corporation to seek opportunities to create affordable housing in Wellesley. This group is in charge of redeveloping a small Town-owned fire-house that will have four units, one of which will be affordable. Now that Wellesley has adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA), affordable housing will have a dedicated source of funding for the first time. CPA funds have been voted for the Housing Development Corporation to use to create affordable housing.

In general, although many residents acknowledge and support the need for additional affordable housing in Wellesley, it has been difficult for the town to reach consensus on more specific affordable housing efforts. Given the context of housing development in Wellesley, it is unlikely that significant affordable housing will be created unless town residents direct their leadership and staff to actively pursue affordable housing or mixed-income rental projects.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The Master Plan will establish the framework for overcoming some of these barriers through zoning amendments and other initiatives.

The Comprehensive Plan also provides illustrations of how mixed-income housing at relatively high densities, including town houses and apartments, could be attractively sited in several key locations in the town. The purpose of these illustrations is to help the Planning Board and other town leaders communicate how Wellesley could effectively meet its goals for more housing diversity and affordability in ways that would not be detrimental to existing neighborhood character.

3. Affordable Housing Goals

In addition to the units of housing that currently qualify, there are two additional projects in various stages of pre-development. Table 4 identifies Wellesley's existing and planned affordable housing inventory. (See the end of this Appendix for a regional Affordable Housing Report Card comparing the progress of Wellesley, its abutters, and the communities that abut them.)

Table 4
Affordable Housing Goals for Wellesley Master Plan

Base Year-Round Housing 8797 Units		Overall Goal 10% "Affordable" 879 Units			Annual Target (.75% of year-round stock) 66 Units		
Existing Units (1/19/05 Inventory)	Tot Dev Units	Count for 40B	Low Income	Type	Comp Permit	Use Restriction	% Subsidized
Barton Road	90	90	90	WHA–Fam Rent		Perp	
Dean House/List House	57	57	57	WHA–Eld		Perp	
Kilmain House	40	40	40	WHA–Eld		Perp	
Morton Circle	36	36	36	WHA–Eld		Perp	
Linden Street	12	12	12	WHA–Fam Rent		Perp	
Jubilee House	4	4	4	Spec Needs		Perp	
Ardmore at Wellesley	36	36	9	Pvt Rent	Y	?	
Glen Grove	125	125	125	Pvt Rent–Eld	Y	2009	
Edgemore Circle Townhouses	12	3	3	Homeownership	Y		
DMR Group Homes	13	13	13				
Cumulative Total	425	416	389				4.7%
In Progress/Proposed							
Hastings Village	52	52	13	Pvt Rent	Y		
Wellesley Manor Estates	32	8	8	Homeownership 55+	Y		
4 Marshall Road Charles River ARC	4	4	4	DMR Group Home			
Wellesley HDC Buy-Down*	2	2	2	Homeownership			
Walnut Street Firehouse	1	1	1	Homeownership			
Cumulative Total	516	483	417				5.5%

LOCAL RESOURCES

Wellesley has several important resources that should help it move its affordable housing agenda forward. It has an experienced and well-managed local housing authority, a Town-established non-profit housing organization, a capable and professional Town planning office, and a dedicated income stream as the result of Wellesley's having adopted the Community Preservation Act in 2003.

The Wellesley Housing Authority (WHA), established under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 121B, operates the town's 235-unit public housing inventory. By law, local housing authorities are governed by five-member boards, with five-year staggered terms. One member is appointed by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD); the other four are elected. Housing authorities are authorized to acquire, construct and manage housing, issue bonds, or contract with private, non-profit corporations for development and management services. There has not been any public fund-

ing for new production in more than a decade, however. And because housing authorities are subject to a number of cumbersome rules and regulations – many of which apply even if no state or federal subsidies resources are being used – it has been difficult for them to participate in the development process using the resources and practices that are available to private developers.

The non-profit Wellesley Housing Development Corporation (WHDC), with a broader mission and more flexible operating rules, was established by the Town in 1998 to complement the efforts of the housing authority. It has been actively engaged in education and advocacy, and has solicited proposals for the redevelopment of a former firehouse into four units of mixed-income housing. It is expected to become a more prominent player in the future.

By being one of the first communities to adopt the provisions of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2002, Wellesley has availed itself of an important financial resource to further its affordable housing agenda. The Town's Community Preservation Plan identifies at least three possible housing-related uses for its CPA funds: 1) the purchase of existing market rate units for resale to qualified low and moderate income families, 2) as gap financing in the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of deteriorating or under-utilized structures, and 3) to support scattered-site development of small, affordable developments, on public, or tax title, land.

Finally, because it does have a professional and well-run planning department, the Town can consider implementing housing rehabilitation and repair programs. It can also seek grant funding to foster larger, well-designed developments that are consistent with the state's sustainable development agenda. Wellesley's strong market, cohesive town center, proximity to public transportation and major highways suggest that proposals from the Town would be highly competitive.

4. Affordable Housing Planned Production Strategy

PROGRAM SCALE

Wellesley's affordable housing plan, or planned production strategy, is designed to increase the Town's qualified affordable housing inventory to ten percent over ten years. Based on the 2000 Census, this would require 879 units.⁷ Factoring in new housing starts since that time, and expected production between now and 2010, the target is likely to rise to 925-950 by 2010. Currently, 416 (4.6 percent) of the town's housing units – nine developments and some group homes – qualify as affordable on the State's Subsidized Housing Inventory, leaving a shortfall of 463 units. An additional 67 qualifying units have been proposed. If they proceed, the shortfall would be reduced to 396 units.

SUMMARY OF STRATEGY

The Town intends to make up this shortfall by expanding its affordable housing through a variety of mechanisms. These include new construction of small developments on scattered sites, including Town-owned land; rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of existing property; development of mixed-

⁷ The ten percent "affordable" threshold is a moving target. A community is expected to maintain this threshold as new market-rate housing is added to the inventory. While the new affordable units get added to the inventory as they are created, and the inventory itself is updated every two years, the year-round housing base off which the ten percent is calculated is only updated every ten years, based on the decennial census. It is the Town's intent to achieve and *maintain* the ten percent threshold.

income housing on larger sites identified in the Master Plan as feasible and desirable for more intense, compact development; and qualifying existing units as affordable through rehabilitation and/or buydowns, with appropriate occupancy restrictions. Wellesley will attempt to “grow” its affordable housing inventory, consistent with this plan, by adding 66 units annually (representing three-quarters of one percent of the Town’s year round housing units).

If this plan is accepted by the state’s Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and the Town achieves these annual production goals, it may deny comprehensive permit requests that are incompatible with the plan. Production of 1.5 percent (132 units) can provide a two-year reprieve. Because Wellesley is a built-up, slow-growth community – adding on average 34 new units per year over the past decade – this will be an extraordinary challenge. Three quarters of one percent is more than double the Town’s historic production *of any type*. As important as it will be to pursue development opportunities on those sites that are appropriate for more intense development, the Town will need to identify opportunities within its existing inventory to preserve and promote greater affordability.

In addition to adding units that are affordable by, and restricted to, households earning not more than 80 percent of the area median income (*i.e.*, those that qualify for inclusion on the state’s Subsidized Housing Inventory), the Town should strive to ensure that an additional ten percent of the units in publicly-supported developments serve moderate and middle income households (those earning between 80-150 percent of the area median income). It will work with private developers to promote a diversity of housing types appropriate to the needs of different population groups, including families, seniors, individuals, and those with special needs.

MEASURING SUCCESS

A successful conclusion of this plan will be the creation of approximately 500 well-designed, sustainable, affordable housing units – both rental and ownership – over a ten-year period, *plus* sufficient additional units to maintain the ten percent threshold when market rate production from 2000-2010 is factored into Wellesley’s year-round housing base. Units may be created through the qualification of existing properties (*i.e.*, by removing units from the open market and restricting their occupancy to low income households for a minimum of 15 years).⁸ In addition, the Town will need to have implemented adequate provisions to ensure that this level of affordability is maintained in the future. All of the units in mixed-income rental properties count toward the 500-unit goal, including units renting at market rates. In homeownership developments, only the low income units count.

A secondary measure of success will be the extent to which the Town has diversified its housing stock to allow current residents to remain in Wellesley despite changing housing needs (*e.g.*, the creation of accessory dwelling units; the conversion of existing large structures to smaller dwelling units; improved housing conditions and accessibility for residents through home repairs and modifications; senior residential developments, or supportive housing alternatives).

⁸ 30 years for new construction

Guiding Principles

The Town will employ a variety of tools and mechanisms to achieve its goals, and it will be guided by the following principles as it implements its affordable housing strategy:

1. Create new and preserve existing community housing that is well designed and maintained, is of high quality, and is based on sound planning principles. New affordable housing should be well-designed, context-sensitive, and harmonious with its surroundings. To the extent practical, design, construction and environmental standards for the new affordable development should be consistent with those for other types of development.
2. Distribute affordable housing equitably throughout the town. Residential growth in general, however, should be channeled to those areas that can sustain higher densities.
3. Provide a variety of types of affordable housing, appropriate to the needs of Wellesley residents and the region. The mix should include both rental and ownership; detached single-family homes and compact development options (duplex, quads, town house, etc.); housing for families and individuals of all ages and units tailored specifically to the needs of senior citizens and those with special needs.
4. Ensure the long-term affordability of the units created, preserving their affordability in perpetuity wherever possible.
5. Provide community housing opportunities that give priority to the extent allowed by law, to Wellesley residents, Town employees, and families of students enrolled in the Town's public schools.
6. Reuse existing buildings or use previously-developed or Town-owned sites for new community housing.
7. Acquire and convert market-rate housing into community housing where feasible.
8. Encourage a range of incomes in multifamily developments (5+ units), unless restricted by funding source. Smaller projects (1-4 unit structures) may, as appropriate, serve entirely income-eligible households.
9. Negotiate assertively with developers seeking special or comprehensive permits for appropriate public benefits, with the highest priority assigned to maximizing affordability.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN

The proposed set of strategies is based on recommendations included in the 1994 Master Plan, the Town of Wellesley Community Preservation Plan, and other studies. As the Town assembled an appropriate complement of tools and resources, we drew on the experiences of comparable communities in the region and elsewhere in the state. Achieving the goals set forth in the previous section will require appropriate tools and regulations (or regulatory relief), financial resources, development capacity, and political will.

The strategies are organized into the following categories: planning and regulatory reform, production initiatives, building local development and management capacity, preservation strategies, and funding. An estimated timetable for implementation is provided. This timetable is a key component of the strategy.

PLANNING AND REGULATORY REFORM

By-law changes

- Revise the Accessory Dwelling Unit Bylaw and procedures for conversion of existing single-family homes to two or more units. Affordable accessory units can be an excellent way to create affordable housing without significant change to neighborhood or community character. Although the Town is unlikely to gain large numbers of affordable units through accessory units, these units can be valuable on the margin. Often they have a double impact, providing an affordable unit rental unit and generating income for a low or moderate income homeowner. Wellesley should allow permanently affordable accessory units to be created by right and allow all accessory units to be open to non-relatives. Templates for affordability agreements and simple monitoring protocols have already been established in several Massachusetts communities. The Wellesley Housing Authority can assist with these issues.
- Converting existing illegal accessory units or apartments is another way to add to the number of affordable units without changing the *de facto* number of housing units or residents. In some cases, conversion of these units might require the owners to bring the units up to code. Owners may be able to qualify through regional housing programs for assistance in code improvements if the apartments will become subject to affordability agreements.
- Allow limited development of non-conforming lots for affordable housing. Parcels that lack required size or frontage could be made legal lots for building affordable units or duplexes in which one unit is affordable. Housing of modest size can provide scattered-site affordable units that fit easily into neighborhoods. Site plan review can ensure that the units are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
- Extend inclusionary zoning to residential subdivisions. Wellesley's inclusionary zoning bylaw only applies to housing in the business districts. Although there are few subdivisions in Wellesley and they are generally very small, it is still worthwhile to make them subject to inclusionary zoning. If some larger parcels of open land were to come on the market and be developed, this tool to guarantee some affordable units would be extremely useful.

BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY

Funding

- Dedicate a fair share of Community Preservation Act funds for community housing (roughly 1/3 of funds raised over time).
- Secure funding through multiple sources to complement CPA funds. The Town has already adopted an inclusionary zoning by-law. Another possibility is the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, which is allocated by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Municipalities like Wellesley are eligible to apply under the

Community Development Fund (CDF), a component of the CDBG program. CDBG is a HUD program that provides annual block grants to states and large cities for any of several eligible uses, including housing; as long as a majority of the beneficiaries are low and moderate income, the activity removes slums or blight, and/or it fills an urgent community need.

Massachusetts allocates about \$40 million in CDBG funding annually, about 40% of which is used to support the creation or preservation of affordable housing through rental development and rehabilitation, first-time homebuyer, and homeowner rehabilitation loan and grant programs.⁹ Application is by a competitive process, which favors poorer communities. Nonetheless, a Wellesley housing rehabilitation program might be very attractive to lower income Wellesley homeowners.

- Consider joining a HOME consortium. Seventy-nine Massachusetts communities, including many that would not be eligible to on their own to receive HOME funds directly from HUD, have joined one of the state's eight HOME consortia. Neighboring Newton is the lead entity for a multi-town consortium that Wellesley might join. Massachusetts receives some \$50 million in funds under this federal program each year. DHCD awards approximately \$17 million on a competitive basis; the balance is allocated on a formula basis to entitlement communities and consortia. HOME funds can be used for rental housing production and rehabilitation, first-time homebuyer assistance, tenant-based rental assistance, and rehabilitation assistance for homeowners. To access funds, a non-entitlement community like Wellesley can join a HOME consortium, and thereby become entitled to annual funding in the future. Alternatively, it may apply on its own; partner with an eligible nonprofit – a CHDO, or community housing development organization – which could apply for the funds and administer a program on the Town's behalf; or partner with a developer who wishes to build affordable housing in the community.

The advantage to joining a consortium is that it gives a community access to a predictable source of funds that enables it to plan ahead in a way that it cannot when it must compete annually for funds. The process of joining a HOME consortium is a protracted one, and membership imposes a number of requirements that some communities may be unwilling or unable to meet. A staff person or consultant should be available, at least on a part-time basis, to coordinate the application, planning, implementation, and monitoring of ongoing HOME participation. Bedford, Belmont, Brookline, Lincoln, Needham, Waltham, and Watertown are already members of the Newton-led MetroWest HOME Consortium.

- Establish a municipal affordable housing trust fund to hold and disburse funds generated from these other sources. On January 7, 2005, Governor Romney signed into law the Municipal Housing Trust Fund Bill, allowing local governments to create a municipal entity that is able to receive and expend funds and participate in real estate transactions relating to affordable housing. Previously, municipalities had to have special legislation approved to set up a local trust within the structure of local government (as Wellesley did in establishing its Housing Development Corporation). The opportunity to more easily create a housing trust is one more tool for local communities to proactively meet affordable housing needs, and those that have adopted the

⁹ This is in addition to the \$90 million that is allocated directly to the state's larger cities, or "entitlement" communities.

Community Preservation Act may establish such an entity for using CPA funds to create affordable housing in a flexible and effective manner. It is also an appropriate mechanism through which to receive funds.

- Form strategic alliances with local schools and colleges. Given the amount of land under the control of the town's prominent educational institutions, Wellesley should engage these institutions in a collaborative process to identify ways they might be able to assist in addressing the housing needs of the larger community. Many of their faculty and staff are faced with the same affordability challenges as other town residents.
- Seek technical assistance from the state or shared with neighboring communities for local initiatives

HOUSING PRODUCTION

- Work with private developers who propose to create housing that meets community needs under Chapter 40B, the state's comprehensive permit statute.

Over time, the Town may identify, and put out to bid, publicly-owned parcels that are suitable for affordable housing development. Similarly, the WHDC or the WHA may acquire the resources to address the Town's housing needs directly. In the short term, however, "friendly comprehensive permits" and "local initiative projects" undertaken cooperatively with private developers will continue to represent a substantial portion of the Town's affordable housing production. (Even locally-initiated projects are likely to require the zoning, density, and other regulatory relief afforded by the comprehensive permit, and 40B can be an important tool.)

- In order to create sufficient numbers of affordable units to meet the state ten percent affordable housing goal and to create more diversity of housing in Wellesley, the Town must work to bring rental developments with a substantial number of units to the few identified sites where most residents agree this kind of housing would complement local character. These sites are the Tailby Lot, the Linden Street commercial district, the St. James's Church site, the Grossman's site and, potentially, other commercial districts.
- Higher-density mixed-use development projects in locations with existing infrastructure and access to transit – transit-oriented development or TOD – have been prioritized by Governor Romney. Communities like Wellesley are well-positioned to take advantage of funding formulas that reward such "smart, and balanced growth."
- Inventory and study the feasibility of using additional Town-owned parcels and buildings for affordable housing as a way of reducing the cost of affordable housing production. The Town has already taken this approach in the Walnut Street Fire Station project. An inventory of all Town properties, including tax title properties, may uncover other opportunities. All Town-owned sites, both large and small, should be evaluated for their potential. The town could combine affordable housing creation with other town needs.

HOUSING PRESERVATION

There are several preservation strategies that the Town can pursue to preserve its existing affordable units. Some pertain to privately-owned, unsubsidized stock; others are specifically tailored to the existing subsidized inventory.

- **Ensure no loss of existing 40B units.** Because Wellesley’s only existing privately-owned subsidized housing units (Ardmore, Glen Grove and the new Hastings Village) were built under the comprehensive permit provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 40B, the Town has leverage to ensure that they remain affordable over the long term. In fact, the Town’s Zoning Board of Appeals filed suit in 2000 to ensure the continued affordability of units in the Ardmore at Wellesley complex when its owner sought to convert nine low-income units to market-rate units. Ruling in Wellesley’s favor, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court affirmed that “where a comprehensive permit itself does not specify for how long housing units must remain below market, the [Comprehensive Permit Law] requires an owner to maintain the units as affordable for as long as the housing is not in compliance with local zoning requirements, regardless of the terms of any attendant construction subsidy agreements.”¹⁰
- **Preserve existing stock.** The Town should adopt a program to preserve and maintain existing rental and home ownership units that currently serve low and moderate income residents. Often housing units owned by lower-income residents are prone to deferred maintenance or deterioration. The Town should seek opportunities for funding rehabilitation and basic maintenance on such structures. The use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), or HOME funding, coupled with affordability restrictions, allows towns to add to their qualified affordable housing inventory and at the same time assist existing homeowners. Such units are not presently part of the Town’s affordable housing stock, even if the owner/tenant is income eligible.

**Table 6
Example of Potential Wellesley Affordable Housing Production Goals, 2004–2014**

	Housing Production, Description	# Units	Local Capacity Building	Planning and Regulatory Action
2005	Hastings Village	52	Begin discussions with Newton re: joining MetroWest HOME consortium	
	Qualification of existing group home	4	Inventory Town-owned and other publicly-owned land	
	Edgemore Circle Townhouses	3		
	Walnut Street Firehouse	1		
	Wellesley HDC buy-down no cars with these	2		
	Accessory/in-law apartment	4		
	2005 PROJECTED TOTAL		66	
2006	Wellesley Manor Estates	8	Adopt Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund	Expand Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) to subdivisions
	4 Marshall Road Charles River ARC Group Home	4	Expand IZ to subdivisions	Create and pass amendments to In-Law Apartment (accessory dwelling unit) section of bylaw

	Wellesley Inn inclusionary zoning			
	CDBG qualified homeowner rehab (under competitively-awarded CDFII funding)	4		
	Accessory/in-law apartment	4		
	2006 PROJECTED TOTAL	20		
2007	Major development site, mixed income rental (120 units)	120	Join MetroWest HOME consortium	
	Additional group home, Charles River ARC	4		
	HOME/CDBG qualified homeowner rehab	8		
	Accessory/in-law apartments	4		
	2007 PROJECTED TOTAL	136		
	HOME/CDBG qualified homeowner rehab	8		
2008	Accessory/in-law apartments	4		
	2008 PROJECTED TOTAL	17; Town would be credited with 68 units from prior year's production		
2009	Development on Town-owned land @ 50% affordable and 25-50% moderate income	12		
	HOME/CDBG qualified homeowner rehab	8		
	Scattered site development and/or conversion	2		Allow affordable units on nonconforming lots with site plan review
	Accessory/in-law apartments	2		
	2009 PROJECTED TOTAL	16		
2010	HOME/CDBG qualified homeowner rehab	7		
	Accessory/in-law apartment	2		
	Inclusionary zoning	6		
	2010 PROJECTED TOTAL	16		
2011	Support 40B private development	12		
2010	HOME/CDBG qualified homeowner rehab	7		
	Accessory/in-law apartments	2		
	CPC-funded buy-down			
	Promote development of mixed-use buildings with affordable units in commercial districts	4		
	2011 PROJECTED TOTAL	18		
2012	Promote cluster project with affordable units			
	Accessory/in-law apartments			
	Conversion to multifamily home(s)			
	Promote development of mixed-use buildings with affordable units, including rental in commercial districts			

	2012 PROJECTED TOTAL	16		
2013	Promote development on Town-owned land @ 50% affordable and 25-50% moderate income	6		
	Promote private development of mixed-use buildings with affordable rental units in commercial districts	6		
	Promote scattered site development/conversion	2		
	Accessory/in-law apartments	2		
	2013 PROJECTED TOTAL	16		
2014	Promote 40B private development	10		
	Accessory/in-law apartments	2		
	2014 PROJECTED TOTAL	16		

5. Description of Use Restrictions

ENSURING LONG-TERM AFFORDABILITY

EXISTING USE RESTRICTIONS

The existing affordable housing projects in Wellesley are either public housing or deed restricted to ensure that long-term affordability is maintained. As described above, the privately-owned subsidized rental properties, Ardmore, Glen Grove and Hastings Village, were developed under M.G.L. Chapter 40B. The Townhouses at Edgemoor Circle, a 40B homeownership project, will also include resale provisions, which ensure that units will remain affordable to the targeted income group and be resold to households within the eligible income limits.

PROPOSED USE RESTRICTIONS

There are different mechanisms a town can use to ensure that ownership housing built to serve households earning less than 80 percent of the area median income continues to be affordable for future generations of homebuyers, while at the same time allowing the original purchaser to enjoy some (limited) appreciation. The preferred technique would be one that limits the price an owner of an affordable unit can charge a subsequent purchaser to that which can be supported by a borrower with the same income characteristics as the original buyer (e.g., earning 70-80 percent of the area median income). This approach avoids the problems that can occur when the resale price is set at the same discount (percent of the value of the market rate units) as the first purchaser enjoyed.

Housing Problems, All Households | Wellesley, Massachusetts

Household by Type, Income, & Housing Problem	RENTERS					OWNERS					
	Eldery	Small Re-related	Large Re-related	All Other	Total Renters	Eldery	Small Re-related	Large Re-related	All Other	Total Owners	Total HHs
Household income <= 50% MFI	214	50	25	131	420	351	175	35	39	600	1,020
Household Income <= 30% MFI	118	26	0	113	257	113	120	15	29	277	534
% with any housing problems	58.5	61.5	NA	24.8	44	96.5	91.7	100	13.8	85.9	65.7
# with any housing problems	69	16	NA	28	113	109	110	15	4	238	351
% Cost Burden >30	58.5	46.2	NA	24.8	42.4	96.5	91.7	100	13.8	85.9	65
# with CB	69	12	NA	28	109	109	110	15	4	238	347
% Cost Burden >50	28.8	15.4	NA	21.2	24.1	84.1	79.2	100	13.8	75.5	50.7
# with SCB	34	4	NA	24	62	95	95	15	4	209	271
Household Income >30% to <=50% MFI	96	24	25	18	163	238	55	20	10	323	486
% with any housing problems	16.7	41.7	100	22.2	33.7	66.4	72.7	50	100	67.5	56.2
# with any housing problems	16	10	25	4	55	158	40	10	10	218	273
% Cost Burden >30	16.7	41.7	100	22.2	33.7	66.4	72.7	50	100	67.5	56.2
# with CB	16	10	25	4	55	158	40	10	10	218	273
% Cost Burden >50	12.5	41.7	60	0	22.7	22.7	72.7	50	100	35.3	31.1
# with SCB	12	10	15	0	37	54	40	10	10	114	151
Household Income >50% to <=80% MFI	48	34	10	74	166	212	84	10	29	335	501
% with any housing problems	8.3	11.8	0	32.4	19.3	32.1	70.2	100	100	49.6	39.5
# with any housing problems	4	4	0	24	32	68	59	10	29	166	198
% Cost Burden >30	8.3	11.8	0	32.4	19.3	27.4	70.2	100	100	46.6	37.5
# with CB	4	4	0	24	32	58	59	10	29	156	188
% Cost Burden >50	0	0	0	13.5	6	6.6	53.6	0	56.2	25.1	18.8
# with SCB	0	0	0	10	10	14	45	0	25	84	94
Household Income 80% MFI	120	399	34	269	822	1,359	3,629	785	420	6,193	7,015
% with any housing problems	20.8	6	11.8	10.8	10	6.9	14.6	14.6	27.4	13.8	13.3
# with any housing problems	25	24	4	29	82	94	530	115	115	855	933
% Cost Burden >30	20.8	5	11.8	10.8	9.5	6.6	14.5	14.6	27.4	13.6	13.2
# with CB	25	20	4	29	78	90	526	115	115	842	926
% Cost Burden >50	0	0	0	1.5	0.5	1.5	2.9	3.8	13.1	3.4	3.1
# with SCB	0	0	0	4	4	20	105	30	55	211	217
Total Households	382	483	69	474	1,408	1,922	3,888	830	488	7,128	8,536
% with any housing problems	29.8	11.2	42	17.9	20	22.3	19	18.1	32.4	20.7	20.6
# with any housing problems	114	54	29	85	282	429	739	150	158	1475	1758
% Cost Burden >30	29.8	9.5	42	17.9	19.5	21.6	18.9	18.1	32.4	20.4	20.3
# with CB	114	46	29	85	275	415	735	150	158	1454	1733
% Cost Burden >50	12	2.9	21.7	8	8	9.5	7.3	6.6	19.3	8.7	8.6
# with SCB	46	14	15	38	113	183	284	55	94	620	734

DEFINITIONS:

Any housing problems: Cost burden greater than 30% of income and/or overcrowding and/or without complete kitchen or plumbing facilities.

Other housing problems: Overcrowding (1.01 or more persons per room) and/or without complete kitchen or plumbing facilities.

Elderly households: 1 or 2 person household; either person 62 years or older.

Renter: Data do not include renters living on boats, RVs, or vans. This excludes approximately 25,000 households nationwide.

Cost Burden: The fraction of a household's total gross income spent on housing costs. For renters, housing costs include rent paid by the tenant plus utilities. For owners, housing costs include mortgage payment, taxes, insurance, and utilities.

Regional Affordable Housing Report Card

City/ Town	Total Yr Rnd Housing Units	40B Units (1/19/05 Inventory)	% Subsidized	10% State Goal	Deficit
Dedham	8,893	478	5.4%	889	411
Dover	1,874	17	0.9%	187	170
Framingham	26,588	2,676	10.1%	2,659	-17
Lincoln	2,076	181	8.7%	208	27
Medfield	4,038	185	4.6%	404	219
Natick	13,337	685	5.1%	1,334	649
Needham	10,793	425	3.9%	1,079	654
Newton	31,857	2,095	6.6%	3,186	1,091
Sherborn	1,449	34	2.3%	145	111
Watertown	14,959	893	6.0%	1,496	603
Wayland	4,703	150	3.2%	470	320
Wellesley	8,789	416	4.7%	879	463
Weston	3,796	126	3.3%	380	254
Westwood	5,218	384	7.4%	522	138
TOTAL	138,370	8,745	6.3%	13,837	5,092

APPENDIX B – OPEN SPACE PARCELS

Wellesley Open Space					
Map/Lot	Owner	Manager	Address	Lot Size (Acres)	Comments
Permanently-Protected Open Space (Article 97 and deed restrictions)					
Government Ownership					
27-10	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	River Street	3.2	Bunker Wildlife Sanctuary
27-11	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	River Street	1.9	Bunker Wildlife Sanctuary
204-56	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Overbrook Drive	0.7	Cochituate Aqueduct
199-89	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Overbrook Drive	4	Cochituate Aqueduct
2-2	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Worcester Street	2.5	Hemlock Gorge
6-9	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Worcester Street	37.1	Charles River Reservation
20-17	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Cedar Street	3.4	Benjamin Mills Park
21-36	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	River Ridge	9.3	Hemlock Gorge Reservation
177-14	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Schaller Street	3.1	Park land at Boulevard Road and the Charles River
42-43	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Columbia Street	11.8	Charles River Reservation
32-6	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Wellesley Avenue and Brookside Road	4.2	Sudbury Aqueduct
17-41	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Hunnewell Street	0.5	Sudbury Aqueduct
17-43	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Comeau Street	0.4	Sudbury Aqueduct
24-70	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Comeau Street	4.6	Sudbury Aqueduct
40-2	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Wellesley Avenue	2.8	Sudbury Aqueduct
40-3	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Forest Street	0.7	Sudbury Aqueduct
69-7	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Wildon Road	4.6	Sudbury Aqueduct
90-60	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Wildon Road and Cartwright Road	4.6	Sudbury Aqueduct
102-38	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Benvenue Street	2.7	Sudbury Aqueduct and Scenic Road
114-43	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Benvenue Street	0.8	Sudbury Aqueduct and Scenic Road

Wellesley Open Space					
Map/Lot	Owner	Manager	Address	Lot Size (Acres)	Comments
<i>Permanently-Protected Open Space (Article 97 and deed restrictions)</i>					
<i>Government Ownership</i>					
114-44	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Benvenue Street	1	Sudbury Aqueduct and Scenic Road
114-45	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Benvenue Street	1.5	Sudbury Aqueduct and Scenic Road
27-23	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Walnut Street	1	Charles River Reservation
6-10	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	William Street	2.4	Conservation land
34-27	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Washington Street	1.2	Charles River Reservation
166-10	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Lincoln Street	1	Charles River Reservation
140-1	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	DEP	Winding River Road	12.6	Charles River
Total State-Owned Protected Open Space				123.6	
46-2	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Oakland Street	41.9	Centennial Reservation
74-58	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Washington Street	1.3	Elm Park clock tower
28-80	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Walnut Street	0.7	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
63-42	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Woodlawn Avenue	2.8	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
27-26	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Walnut Street	0.3	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
52-66	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Hillside Road	4.7	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
20-16	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Cedar Street	1.8	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
35-120	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Walnut Street	1.7	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
35-121	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Walnut Street	1.2	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
62-34	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Croton Street	2.1	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
75-85	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Laurel Avenue	0.4	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
75-86	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Forest Street	0.5	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
75-87	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Forest Street	1.2	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
75-91	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Abbott Road	0.4	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
87-22	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Washington Street	2.4	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
111-10-A	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Washington Street	2.5	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
160-38	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Weston Road	6.3	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
182-76	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Russell Road	7.5	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail

Wellesley Open Space					
Map/Lot	Owner	Manager	Address	Lot Size (Acres)	Comments
<i>Permanently-Protected Open Space (Article 97 and deed restrictions)</i>					
172-78	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Weston Road	12.8	Cochituate Aqueduct Trail
115-34	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Grove Street	0.1	Pudding Rock--conservation land
156-11	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Yarmouth Road	15.5	Rocky Ledges
181-106	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Weston Road	10.3	Overbrook Reservation
62-33	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Croton Street	1.7	Indian Springs Park
62-6	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Glen Road	1.6	Wellesley Farms Station pond
63-40	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Woodlawn Avenue	0.05	Conservation land adjacent to Cochituate Aqueduct
203-85	Town of Wellesley	NRC	High Ledge Avenue	0.7	Conservation land
184-1	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Turner Road	5	Morses Pond Beach
113-37	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Cottage Street	5.4	Fuller Brook Park
85-41	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Greenwood Road	0.3	Devil's Slide
78-17	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Brook Street	5.5	Conservation land
52-40	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Hillside Road	3.8	Indian Springs Park
169-72	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Elmwood Road	19	Kelly Memorial Park
193-10	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Worcester Street	63.7	Morses Pond
95-33	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Cliff Road	0.8	Rockridge Pond
73-51	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Woodlawn Avenue	6.1	Colburn Road Reservation
88-61	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Great Plain Avenue	0.7	Hardy land
93-17	Town of Wellesley	NRC	White Oak Road	10.5	Carisbrooke Reservation
65-61	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Caroline Street	3.2	Caroline Brook
65-62	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Abbott Road	0.8	Caroline Brook
30-41	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Worcester Street	5.7	Rosemary Town Forest/Turner Park
52-65	Town of Wellesley	NRC	The Waterway	1.5	Scenic Road
76-16	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Seaver Street	1.3	Caroline Brook
190-108	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Mayo Road	7.3	Bogle Brook
190-109	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Mayo Road	0.2	Bogle Brook
64-70	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Maugus Avenue	2	Caroline Brook/Phillips Park
65-60	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Abbott Road	0.3	Peabody Park
65-63	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Abbott Road	0.6	Caroline Brook
99-111	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Wellesley Avenue	3.5	Fuller Brook Park
112-39	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Grove Street	1.5	Fuller Brook Park
112-40	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Grove Street	6.2	Fuller Brook Park
28-81	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Cedar Street	1	Park land adjacent to Schofield School
23-3	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Madison Road	0.1	Town Forest access
74-53	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Worcester Street	0.1	Cochituate Aqueduct
75-37	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Laurel Avenue	0.5	Park land--Shaw Common
76-75	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Seaver Street	3.2	Caroline Brook
88-33	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Wellesley Avenue	0.8	Fuller Brook Park

Wellesley Open Space					
Map/Lot	Owner	Manager	Address	Lot Size (Acres)	Comments
<i>Permanently-Protected Open Space (Article 97 and deed restrictions)</i>					
111-10	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Washington Street	2.1	Morton Park
124-84	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Washington Street	0.2	Flag Pole Park
124-98	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Grove Street	0.4	Central Park
56-27	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Abbott Road	0.4	Peabody Park
83-13	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Hundreds Circle	4.4	Rockridge Pond
48-5	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Forest Street	1.6	Sawyer Park
111-26	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Brook Street	3.8	Simmons Park
111-9	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Washington Street	12.7	Town Hall/Hunnewell Park
63-39	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Washington Street	0.2	Ware Park
43-71	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Washington Street	3.8	Warren Park
54-53	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Wareland Road	4.8	Maugus Hill Reservoir
118-2	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Monadnock Road	4.1	Peirce Hill Reservoir
14-9	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Barton Road	0.6	Rosemary Town Forest
31-19	Town of Wellesley	Water Department	Wellesley Avenue	27.4	Water Department-- Pump Station #2
25-4	Town of Wellesley	Water Department	Wellesley Avenue	5.5	Water Department-- Pump Station #1
22-39	Town of Wellesley	NRC/Water Department	Washington Street	29.6	Town Forest
23-15	Town of Wellesley	NRC/Water Department	Worcester Street	68.3	Longfellow Pond
14-8	Town of Wellesley	NRC/Water Department	Worcester Street	12.8	Water Department-- Pump Station #6
62-4	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Croton Street	1.4	Indian Springs Park
77-38	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Great Plain Avenue	0.2	Fuller Brook
192-19	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Worcester Street	5.3	Conservation land
198-6	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Upson Road	0.2	Capse Memorial
204-18	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Overbrook Drive	0.4	Vacant land
171-12	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Fisher Avenue	3.9	McKinnon Playground
200-18-F	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Ottaway Circle	0.4	Retention pond
25-5	Town of Wellesley	NRC/Water Department	Wellesley Avenue	5.1	Rosemary Town Forest
64-5	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Maugus Avenue	0.4	Phillips Park
88-63	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Rice Street	5	Park land
112-38	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Brook Street	2.1	Fuller Brook Park
190-111	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Brookdale Avenue	0.4	Sinoff gift
192-14	Town of Wellesley	Water Department	Dale Street	0.5	Water Department-- Pumping Station #3
97-39	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Worcester Street	4	Abbott Pond
62-7	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Croton Street	3.2	Conservation land
156-21	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Westgate	21	Boulder Brook Reservation
199-27	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Woodside Avenue	3.3	Overbrook Reservation
52-26	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Hillside Road	1.3	Indian Springs Park
170-84	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Elmwood Road	0.2	Conservation land
192-27	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Worcester Street	1	Bird Island Sanctuary

Wellesley Open Space					
Map/Lot	Owner	Manager	Address	Lot Size (Acres)	Comments
<i>Permanently-Protected Open Space (Article 97 and deed restrictions)</i>					
76-74	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Seaver Street	0.1	Fuller Brook
76-73	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Seaver Street	0.8	Caroline Brook
191-76	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Thomas Road	5.7	Perrin Park
21-65	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Charles Street	0.8	Ouellet Playground
73-52	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Colburn Road	3	Brown Park
98-1	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Washington Street	9.2	Hunnewell Field
123-62	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Grove Street	1.14	Central Park--Station Oak
63-40	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Woodlawn Avenue	0.05	Land adjacent to Cochituate Aqueduct
88-63	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Rice Street	5	Fuller Brook Park
92-19	Town of Needham		Cartwright Road	0.1	Scenic Road
142-4	Town of Needham		Winding River Road	3	Near Charles River
Total Local Government-Owned Protected Open Space				553.9	
<i>Non-Profit Ownership</i>					
192-30	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Russell Road	0.8	Conservation land
71-9	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Glen Road	0.9	A Patch of Woods
90-4	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Fuller Brook Road	1.4	Walker Woods
96-60	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Greenwood Road	0.2	Conservation land
116-6	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Grove Street	3	Guernsey Sanctuary
116-7	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Grove Street	2.2	Grove Street Bird Sanctuary
127-2	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Livingston Road	1.4	Heyl Sanctuary
128-23	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Livingston Road	4.4	Susan Lee Memorial Sanctuary
128-6	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Grove Street	13	Guernsey Sanctuary
134-65	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Worcester Street	1.8	Cold Springs Brook Sanctuary
136-60-A	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Crown Ridge Road	0.6	Cronk's Rocky Woodland
183-24	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Stonecleve Road	0.05	Conservation land at Morses Pond
192-28	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Russell Road	3.3	Pickle Point Sanctuary
141-9	Wellesley Conservation Council	WCC	Livingston Road	3.3	Susan Lee Memorial Sanctuary
Total Non-Profit Owned Protected Open Space				36.4	
<i>Private Conservation Easements</i>					
103-16	Haffenreffer		Pembroke Road	2.8	
103-32-A	Heffernan		Pembroke Road	0.5	
78-18	Teplow		Fuller Brook Road	0.5	

Wellesley Open Space					
Map/Lot	Owner	Manager	Address	Lot Size (Acres)	Comments
<i>Permanently-Protected Open Space (Article 97 and deed restrictions)</i>					
164-8	Williams		Washington Street	5.3	
164-9	Williams		Washington Street	2.9	
176-2	Greene		Pond Road	11.2	
186-1	Stevens		Pond Road	10	
195-1-A	Pond Road Trust		Pond Road	2.1	
62-26	Carisbrooke-Wight Pond Trust		The Waterway	5.5	
11-81	Nix		Burnett Lane	0.9	
	Williams		Washington Street	5	
			Glen Street	0.3	
			Livingston Road	1.2	
Total Private Conservation Easements				48.2	
Total Protected Open Space				766	
<i>Temporarily-Protected Open Space</i>					
32-2-A	Wellesley Country Club		Wellesley Avenue	105	61B
40-1	Wellesley Country Club		Wellesley Avenue	31.9	61B
163-5	Hunnewell		Washington Street	32.1	61A
153-2	Hunnewell		Washington Street	0.9	61A
164-7-Z	Hunnewell		Washington Street	6.1	61A
153-1	Hunnewell		Washington Street	0.06	61A
164-10	Bushueff		Washington Street	1	61A
165-11	Bushueff		Washington Street	7	61A
165-12	Hunnewell Land Trust		Washington Street	5.4	61A
177-13	Hunnewell		Washington Street	0.5	61A
176-4	Hunnewell		Washington Street	6.6	61A
164-2	Hunnewell		Washington Street	1	61A
164-11	Hunnewell		Washington Street	2.9	61A
164-1	Hunnewell Land Trust		Washington Street	0.6	61A
187-1	Hunnewell		Von Clemm Estate	2.4	61
186-3	Hunnewell		Von Clemm Estate	0.5	61
Total Chapter 61 program lands				203.96	
<i>Unprotected Government and Institutional Open Space</i>					
<i>Town-Owned</i>					
169-72	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Bates School	19	Bates School grounds/Kelly Memorial Park
157-34	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Bates School	9	Bates School grounds
16-50	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Fiske School	8.5	Fiske School grounds
133-2	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Upham School	12	Upham School grounds
87-25	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Wellesley High School	1.5	Wellesley High School grounds
171-59	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Hardy School	7.6	Hardy School grounds
21-25	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Schofield School	13.3	Schofield School grounds

Wellesley Open Space					
Map/Lot	Owner	Manager	Address	Lot Size (Acres)	Comments
135-74	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Sprague School	4	Sprague School grounds
76-11	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Wellesley High School	12	Wellesley High School grounds
112-14	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Hunnewell School	5.6	Hunnewell School grounds
122-40	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Sprague School	25.7	Sprague School grounds
110-62	Town of Wellesley	WPS/School Committee	Wellesley Middle School	5.7	Wellesley Middle School grounds
191-91	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Thomas Road	0.2	Perrin Park
87-21	Town of Wellesley	NRC	Washington Street	30	Hunnewell Field
Total Town-Owned Unprotected Open Space				154.1	
State-Owned					
45-2	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	Massachusetts Bay Community College	Oakland Street	39	Massachusetts Bay Community College campus
34-27	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	Metropolitan District Commission	Washington Street	1.2	Land along Charles River
166-10	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	Metropolitan District Commission	Lincoln Street	1	
192-26	Commonwealth of Massachusetts	Metropolitan District Commission	Worcester Street	0.8	Cochituate Aqueduct
15-41	Commonwealth of Massachusetts		Worcester Street	0.02	
Total State-Owned Unprotected Open Space				42	
Private Institution-Owned					
194-23	Wellesley College		Central Street	22.5	
186-2	Wellesley College		Pond Road	80.9	
149-5	Wellesley College		Weston Road	46.1	"North 40" botanical gardens
124-85	Wellesley Congregational Church		Central Street	2.3	Cemetery
17-56	Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston		Cedar Street	14	St. Mary's Cemetery
78-16	Town of Wellesley		Washington Street	47.4	Woodlawn Cemetery
Total Institutionally-Owned Unprotected Open Space				213.2	
Total Unprotected Open Space				409.3	

APPENDIX C – WELLESLEY TRAILS COMMITTEE FUTURE TRAILS DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Project locations are shown on the attached map by project number. In setting our priorities, the Trails Committee compared key issues and cost. The projects are rated according to the following criteria:

- Benefits to trails network: High, Medium, Low
- Trail access issues*: Difficult, Moderate, Easy, None
- Town capital cost: High (greater than \$10,000), Moderate (between \$1,000 and \$10,000), Low (less than \$1,000), None
- Town ongoing expense: High (greater than \$1,000/year), Moderate (between \$100 and \$1,000/year), Low (less than \$100/year).

The projects, in rank order of priority starting with highest priority, are:

1. Brook Path Improvements at High School: Part of the Fuller Brook Restoration Master Plan. Provide a continuous, well-defined path between the State St. parking lot and the trail off Paine St.
2. Weston Road Trail Parking: Parking and a safe pedestrian crossing at Weston Rd. and Linden St.
3. Charles River Path Extension in Lower Falls: Part of the Wellesley Lower Falls Riverway Project. Trail extension from Washington St. to the Charles River will provide the Wellesley link for the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) plan to develop a foot and bike path along the old railroad right-of-way to the MBTA Riverside station. Our proposal includes a picturesque bridge of flowers over the Charles.
4. Charles River Path Extension to Boulevard Rd: A continuation of the Lower Falls Charles River Path Extension in Lower Falls. Trail will run along the Charles River, beginning in back of the former Grossman's site and proceeding along DCR land to the end of Boulevard Rd.
5. Elm Bank Trail: A new trail along the Charles River from the Waban Arches to Cheney Dr.
6. Rosemary Brook Trail: New woodland trail through the Town Forest north of Rt. 9.
7. Overbrook Trail: New woodland trail through the Overbrook Reservation.
8. Charles River Footbridge to Elm Bank: Proposed footbridge across the Charles River that will connect open space near the Waban Arches to Elm Bank. The bridge is inspired by the Blue Heron Bridge recently built by DCR across the Charles connecting Newton to Watertown.

* Access issues include permission from landowners, safety concerns, terrain conditions, parking availability, and trail route compromises

** It is assumed that the footbridge will be built and funded by DCR.

COMPARISON OF TRAILS PROJECTS

PROJECT	BENEFITS TO TRAILS NETWORK	ACCESS ISSUES*	CAPITAL COST	ONGOING EXPENSE
1. Brook Path Improvements at High School	High	Moderate	Moderate	None
2. Weston Road Trail Parking	High	Moderate	High	Moderate
	High	Difficult	Moderate	None
3. Charles River Path Extension in Lower Falls	High	Easy	Moderate	Moderate
4. Charles River Path Extension to Boulevard Rd	High	Moderate	None	None
5. Elm Bank Trail	Medium	Difficult	Low	None
6. Rosemary Brook Trail	Low	Moderate	None	None
7. Overbrook Trail	Low	Difficult	Low	None
8. Charles River Footbridge to Elm Bank	Medium	Moderate	None**	None

Detailed Project Information**1. BROOK PATH IMPROVEMENTS AT HIGH SCHOOL**

Purpose:

- Reduce walkers' confusion navigating this section of Brook Path.
- Provide well-defined path through high school playing fields and past high school.

Route:

- Trail section is from the State St. parking lot to the wood-chipped trail off Paine St.

Access Issues:

- Proximity to active sports.
- Wet areas need to be avoided.

Dependence on Other Projects:

- Fuller Brook Restoration Master Plan.

Betterments:

- Construct new path.
- Move State St parking lot about 4-ft to the south to allow for safer pedestrian access along Fuller Brook.
- Costs to be included under the NRC's Fuller Brook Restoration Master Plan.

Ongoing Expenses:

- None.

2. WESTON ROAD TRAIL PARKING

Purpose:

- Provide crosswalk across Weston Rd. at Linden St. to improve pedestrian safety.
- Provide parking for Crosstown Trail and Cochituate Path at Weston Rd. and Linden St.

Route:

- N/A.

Access Issues:

- A temporary parking lot adjacent to the electric substation was used during renovation of the Wellesley Congregational Church and could be made into a permanent parking lot.
- Note that there are access issues for cars entering and exiting the driveway to the parking lot.

Dependence on Other Projects:

- None.

Betterments:

- Install blinking-light pedestrian crossing at driveway to electric substation.
- Pave public parking area in front of electric substation.

Ongoing Expenses:

- Maintenance of parking lot and blinking-light pedestrian crossing.

3. CHARLES RIVER PATH EXTENSION IN LOWER FALLS

Purpose:

- Provide a foot and bike path, which will link with a DCR project to provide access to Riverside MBTA station along old railroad right-of-way in Lower Falls.
- Create a picturesque crossing over the Charles River with a bridge of flowers.

Route:

- Washington St. to railroad bridge across Charles River.

Access Issues:

- Provide access from right-of-way strip to railroad bridge. Currently there is a fence there.
- Note that DCR is planning to refurbish the railroad bridge and develop the trail from the Newton side of the bridge to Riverside.

Dependence on Other Projects:

- DCR refurbishing of railroad bridge across the Charles and developing the trail from the Newton side of the bridge to Riverside.
- Lower Falls Riverway Project.

Betterments:

- Trail access from Washington St. to railroad bridge.
- Bridge of flowers on railroad bridge.
- Costs to be included under the Planning Board's Lower Falls Riverway Project.

Ongoing Expenses

- Planting and maintenance of flowers and flowerboxes (Wellesley garden clubs?).

4. CHARLES RIVER PATH EXTENSION TO BOULEVARD RD.

Purpose:

- Provide a trail along the Charles in Lower Falls behind the former Grossman's site.
- Provide a trail along the river from Lower Falls to proposed canoe landing at end of Boulevard Rd.

Route:

- Follow Charles River from the railroad bridge crossing to the end of Boulevard Rd.

Access Issues:

- Include as a condition for development of former Grossman's site the development of a trail along the river.
- Permission from DCR for developing a trail along Charles from former Grossman's site to end of Boulevard Rd.

Dependence on Other Projects:

- Development of the former Grossman's site.

Betterments:

- None for trail behind former Grossman's site. Provided by the developer.
- Extend existing trail through DCR land along Charles River. There is already a footbridge across Indian Springs Brook built by DCR.

Ongoing Expenses

- None.

5. ELM BANK TRAIL

Purpose:

- Provide a trail along the Charles River from the Waban Arches to Elm Bank.

Route:

- Waban Arches along Charles River to Cheney Dr.
- Connection from Sudbury Path to Elm Bank Trail.

Access Issues:

- Permission from Wellesley College for trail access from Waban Arches to Hunnewell private property along the river.
- Obtain access agreements or renegotiate CRs with private-property landowners for permission for public trail along river.

Dependence on Other Projects:

- None.

Betterments:

- Develop a footpath along wooded sections of river.
- Construct a footbridge over Pollock Brook, which flows into the Charles.

Ongoing Expenses:

- None.

6. ROSEMARY BROOK TRAIL

Purpose:

- Provide a woodland trail through the Town Forest north of Rt. 9.

Route:

- Start trail off Rt. 9 west-bound ramp at Electric Substation building and follow Rosemary Brook west to Water Department building on Rt. 9.
- Connection to the Charles River Path on Cedar St.

Access Issues:

- Parking not available on either end of the trail (restricted to Water and Electric Departments' vehicles).

Dependence on Other Projects:

- None.

Betterments:

- Trail needs to be cleared through the pine grove woods adjacent to Rosemary Brook.

Ongoing Expenses:

- None.

7. OVERBROOK TRAIL

Purpose:

- Provide a neighborhood woodland trail through the Overbrook Reservation in the Fells part of Town.

Route:

- Start at Overbrook Reservation sign on Weston Rd. and loop around land on the north side of Boulder Brook.
- No connection to other trails.

Access Issues:

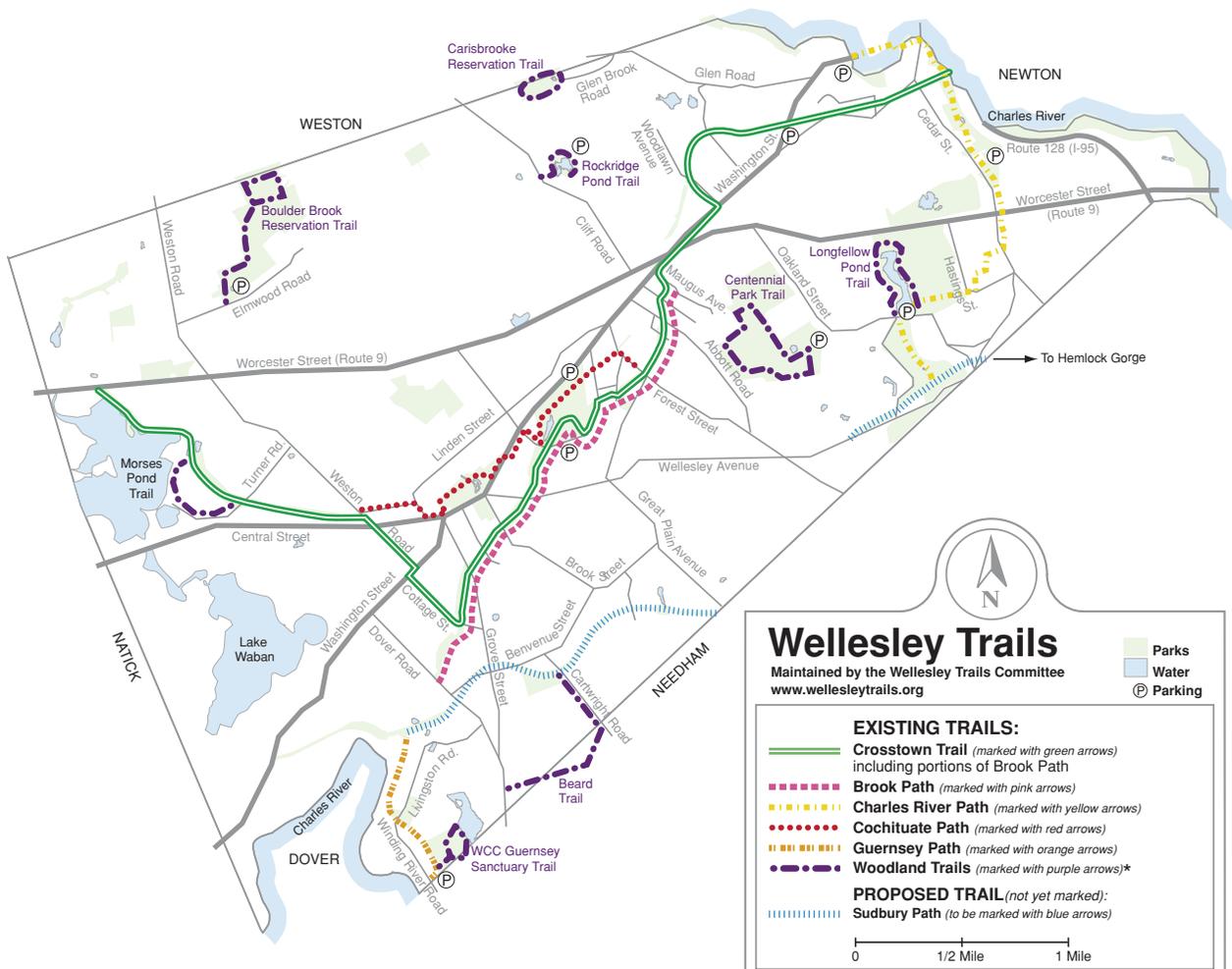
- Only access to this open space is along a short section of Weston Rd., the ramp up to Rt. 9, and along Rt. 9.
- To improve neighborhood access, obtain trail easement from resident on Shirley or Lexington Rd. This may be difficult to obtain.

Dependence on Other Projects:

- None.
- Betterments:
 - Construct steps down from Weston Rd. sidewalk.
 - Construct a 15-ft footbridge across Boulder Bk.
 - Construct some bog bridges to get over wet spots between Weston Rd. and footbridge.
 - Develop loop trail on high ground north of brook.

Ongoing Expenses:

- None.



* For further information on Woodland Trails see *Walks in Wellesley* published by the Wellesley Conservation Council.

Wellesley Transit Service

MBTA Commuter Rail Service



Wellesley Square



Location: Downtown off Grove Street and Route 16/135

Parking Spaces: 224, Handicapped 2

Location: South of Glen Road, West of Riverglen Road.

Parking Spaces: 199, Handicapped 4, Bicycle 12.



Wellesley Farms



Location: West of Route 16, South of Cliff Road.

Parking Spaces: 51, Handicapped 0.



Wellesley Hills



Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

The RIDE (MBTA)

THE RIDE is the MBTA's door- to- door paratransit program for persons who are unable to use buses, trains, or trolleys due to a disability. The program was initiated in April 1977 and is compliant with the American's With Disabilities Act (ADA). The MBTA's Office for Transportation Access (OTA) manages the Program and determines eligibility via a written application process*.

Overview

1. Initiated in April 1977 for compliance under the American With Disabilities Act (ADA).
2. Service Area covers 729 miles in the Metro Boston area and which are currently served by the MBTA system.

Schedule: 365 days year / 6AM-1AM

Fares: 1-way \$1.50-\$3.00

General Statistics

- Current Wellesley Rides: 334
- Trips provided: 7,000 trips provided during FY'05
- Cost: \$28 per passenger

Joint Shuttle System?

A joint transit shuttle service between the Town of Wellesley and higher education may have merit in the Town. This service would be provided by the Town in conjunction with area university's including Wellesley College, Babson College, Mass Bay Community College and other higher education facilities. The town could operate the system, and the university's contribute to operating costs. Federal and state grants may provide subsidizes for the service.



Neighborhood Traffic Calming is the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users*.

Neighborhood Issues:

1. High speeds in residential areas
2. Cut Through Traffic
3. Truck Traffic
4. Traffic Safety
5. High Traffic Volumes

Possible Strategies:

Horizontal Deflection

- Traffic Circles
- Roundabouts
- Chicanes
- Traffic Islands
- Reduce curb radius

Possible Strategies:

Vertical Deflection

- Raised Crosswalks
- Speed Humps
- Raised Crosswalks
- Raised Intersections

Questions to ask?

1. Maintain emergency vehicle access.
2. Allow for maintenance (snow plows).
3. Reduce traffic flow for motorists.

Horizontal Deflection Types



Vertical Deflection Types



* As defined by Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Lockwood, Ian. *ITE Traffic Calming Definition*. ITE Journal, July 1997, pg. 22

FIGURE 3-1, ZONING MAP

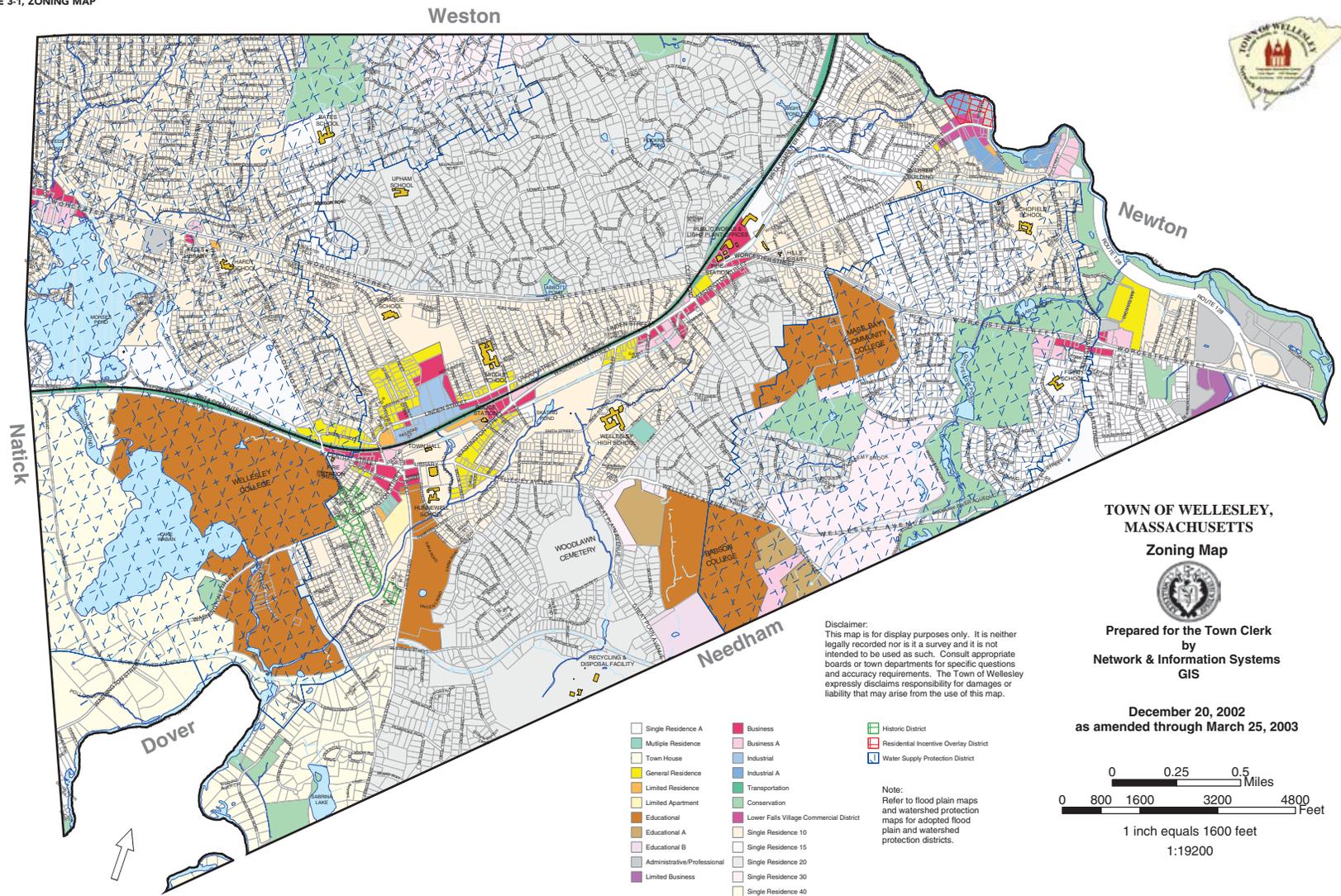


FIGURE 3-2, EXISTING LAND USE

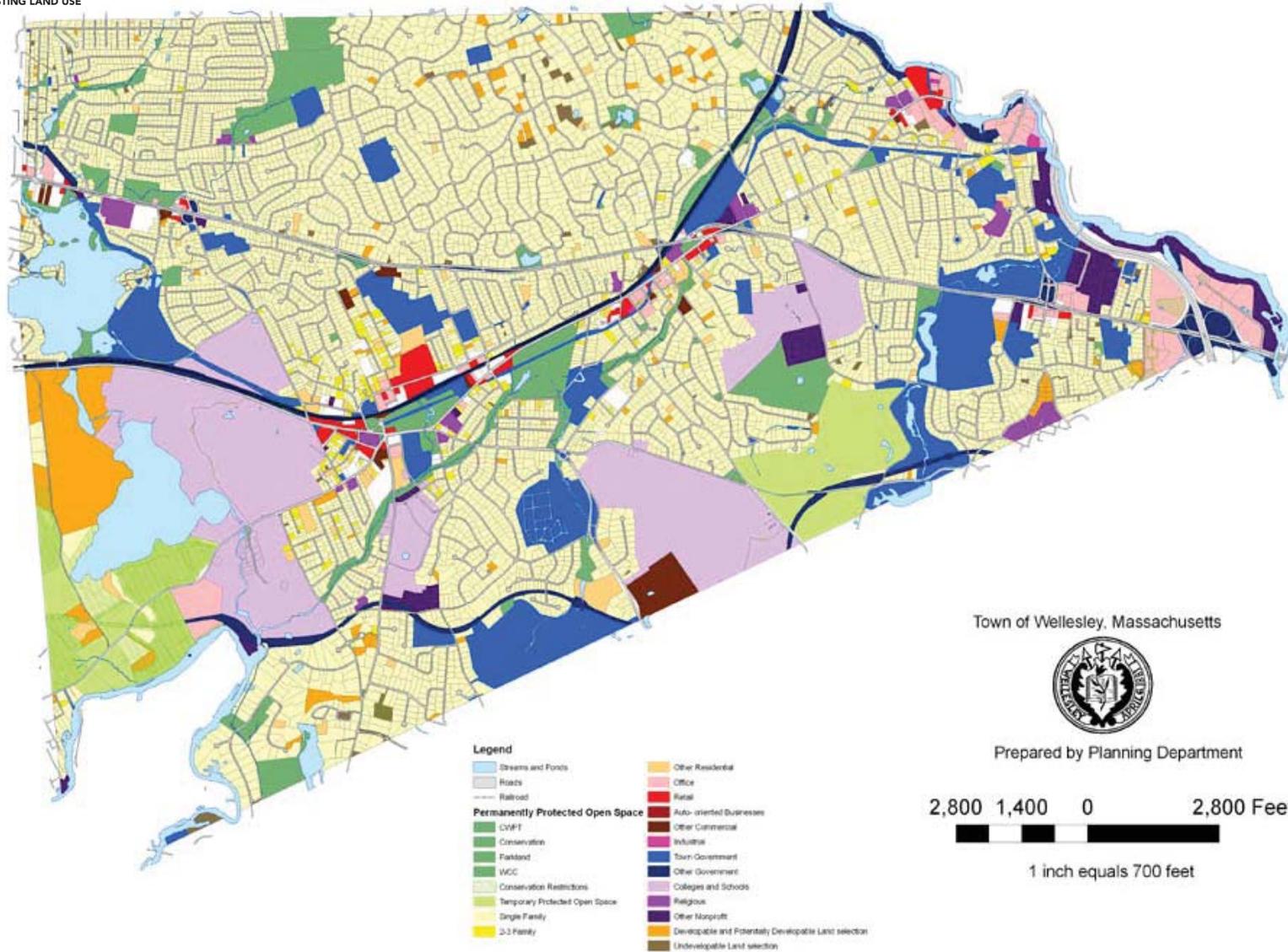


FIGURE 4-1, RESIDENTIAL DEMOLITIONS 1999-2003

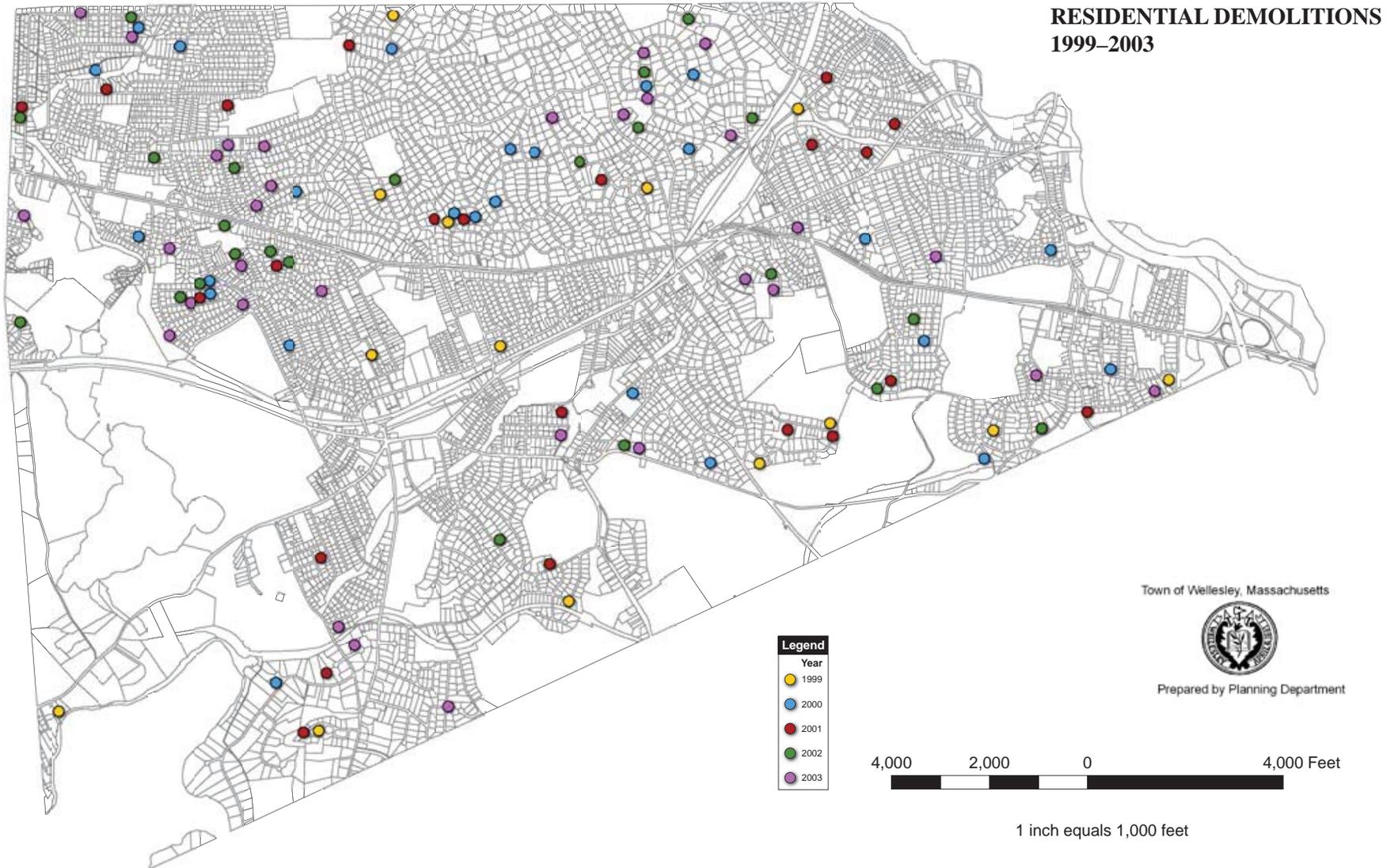


FIGURE 6-1, PHASE ONE—LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

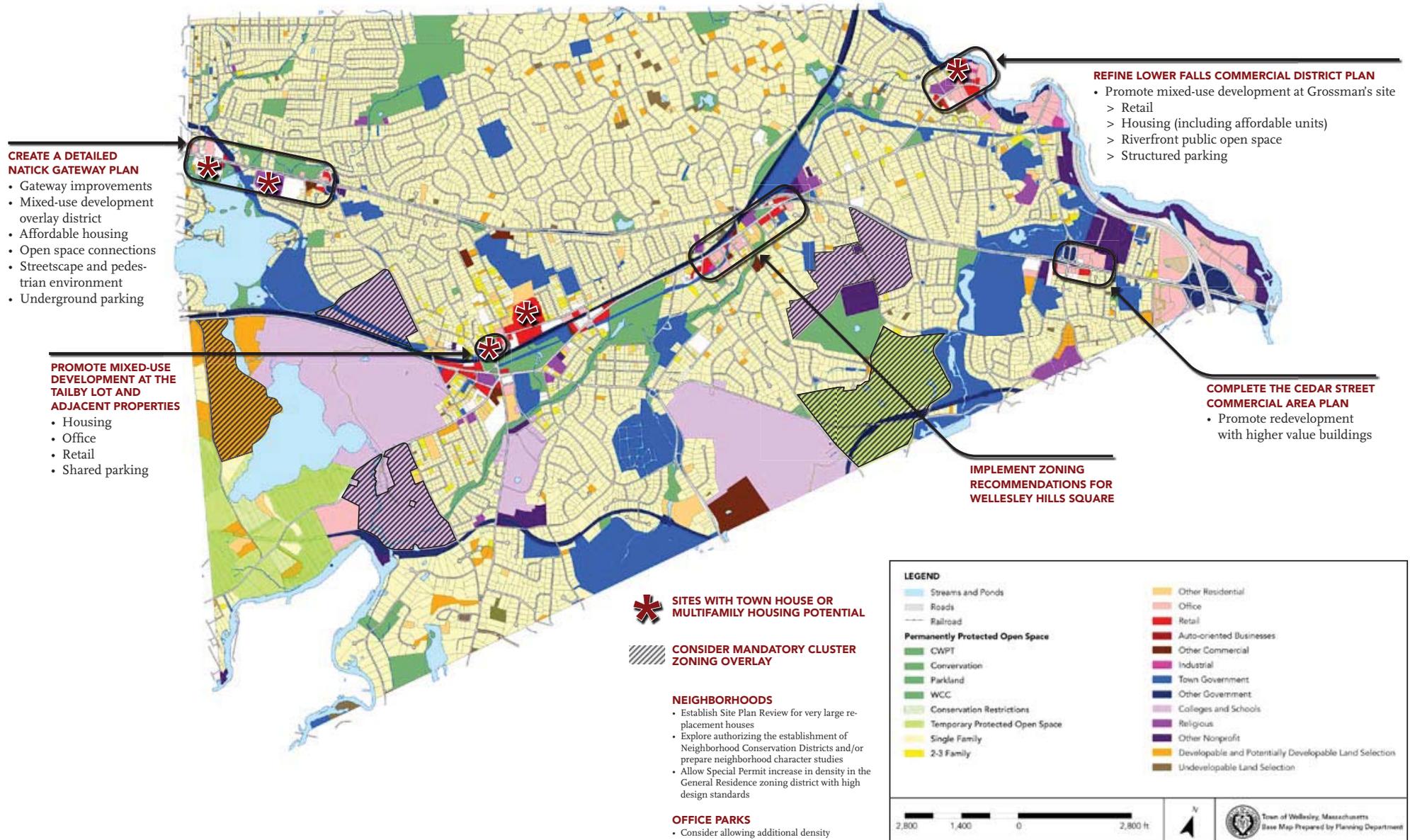


FIGURE 7-1, CONTOURS

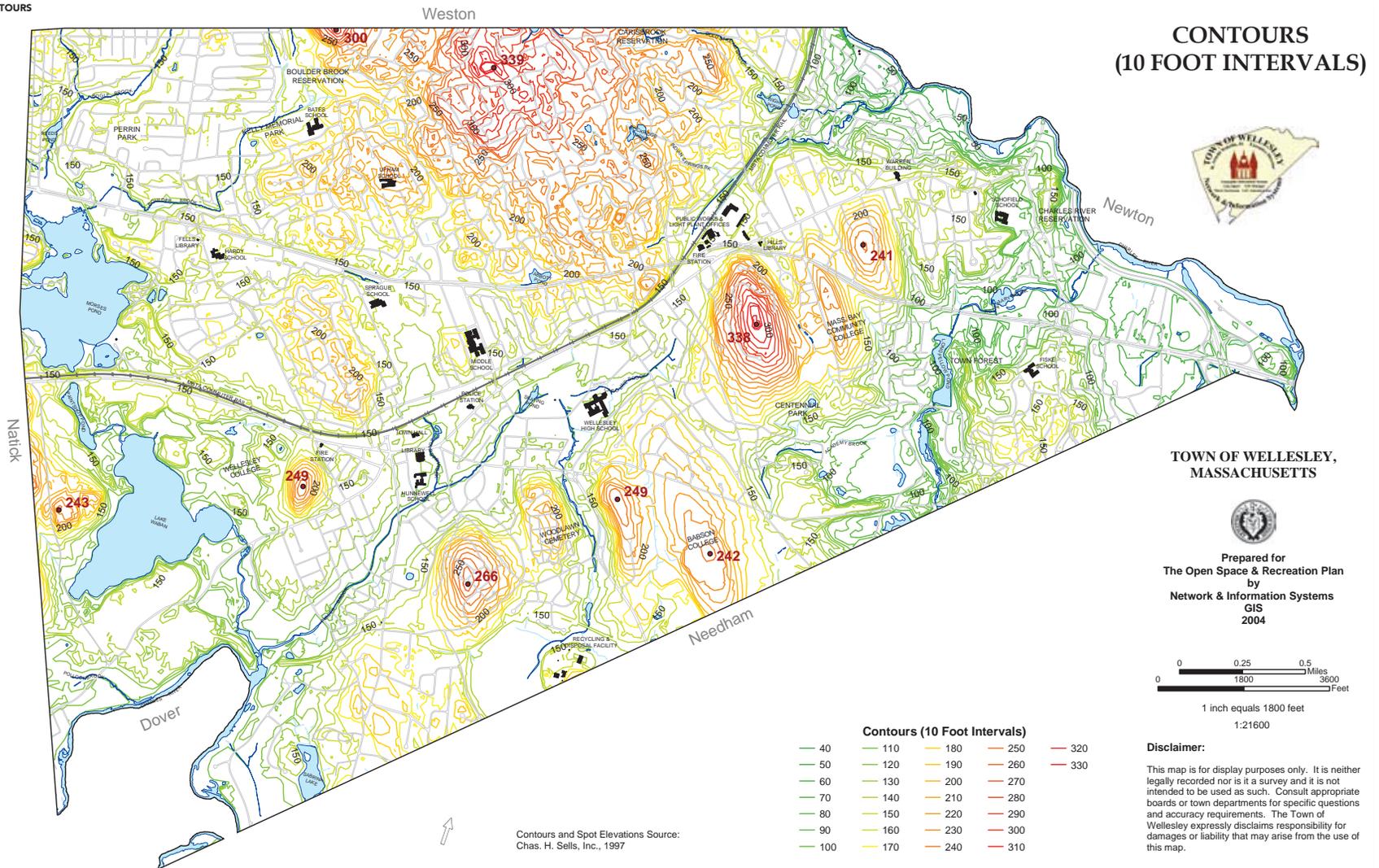


FIGURE 7-2, WATERSHED DRAINAGE BASINS

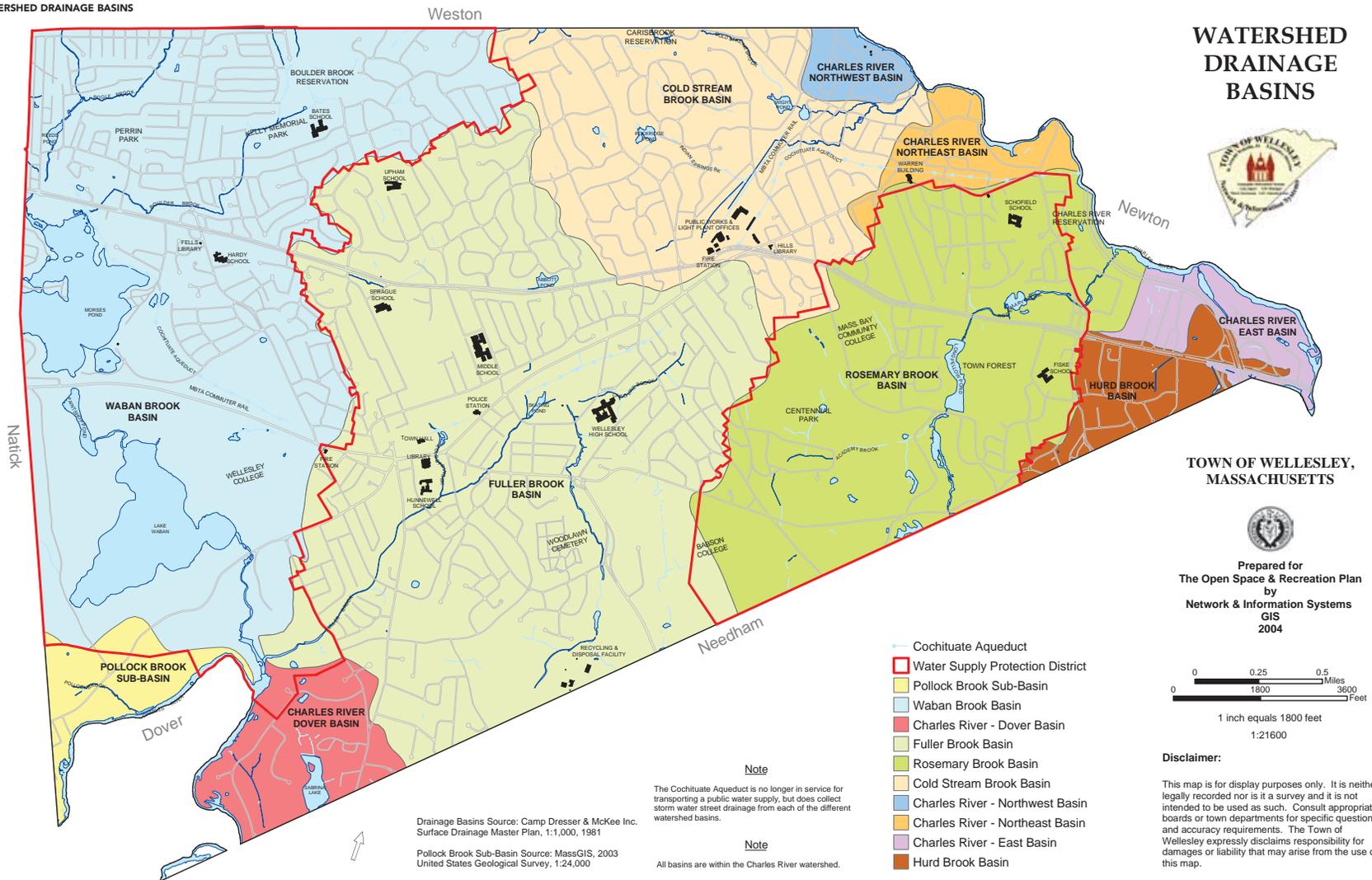


FIGURE 7-3, GROUNDWATER RESOURCES

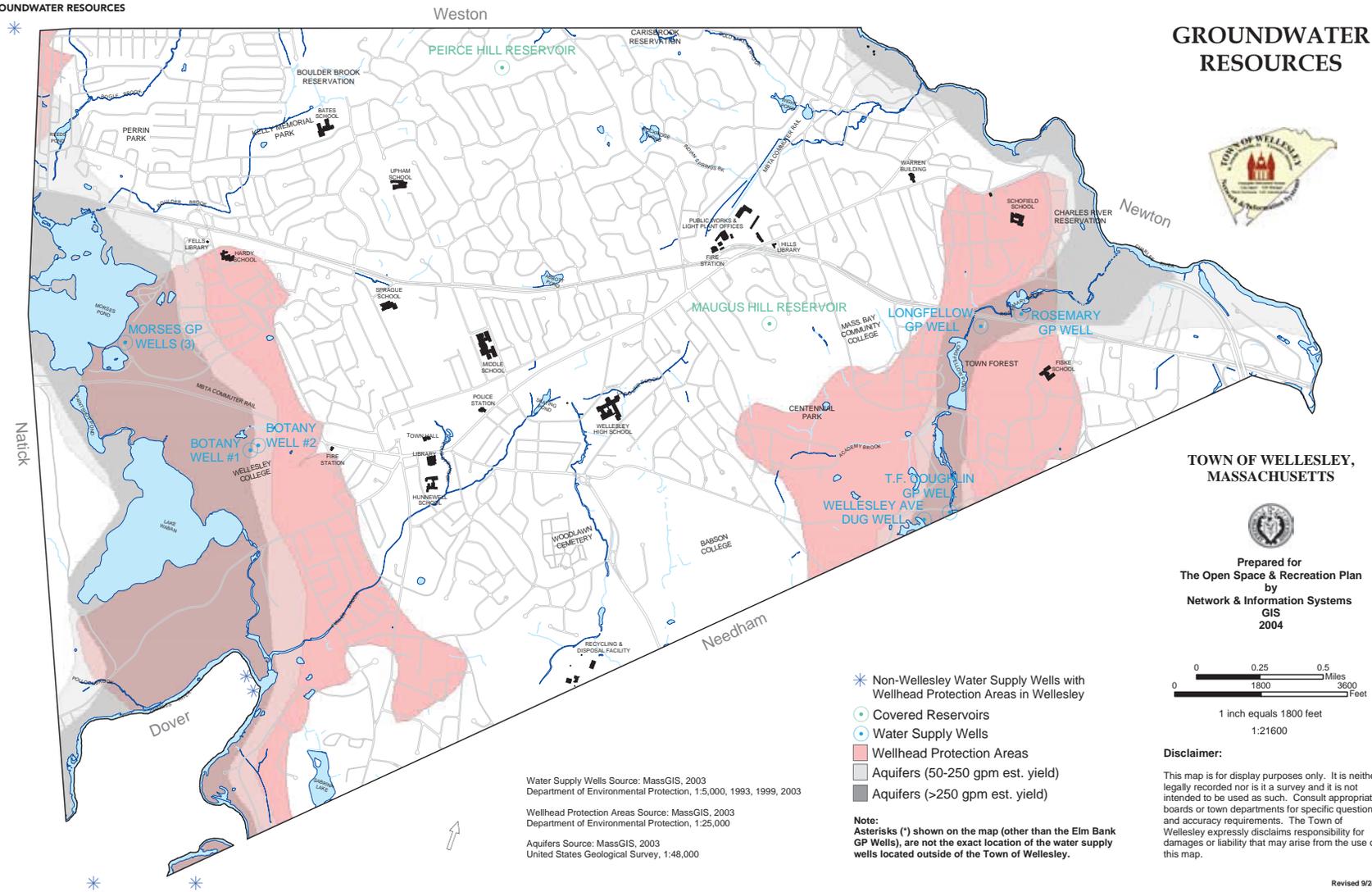


FIGURE 7-4, WETLANDS PROTECTION

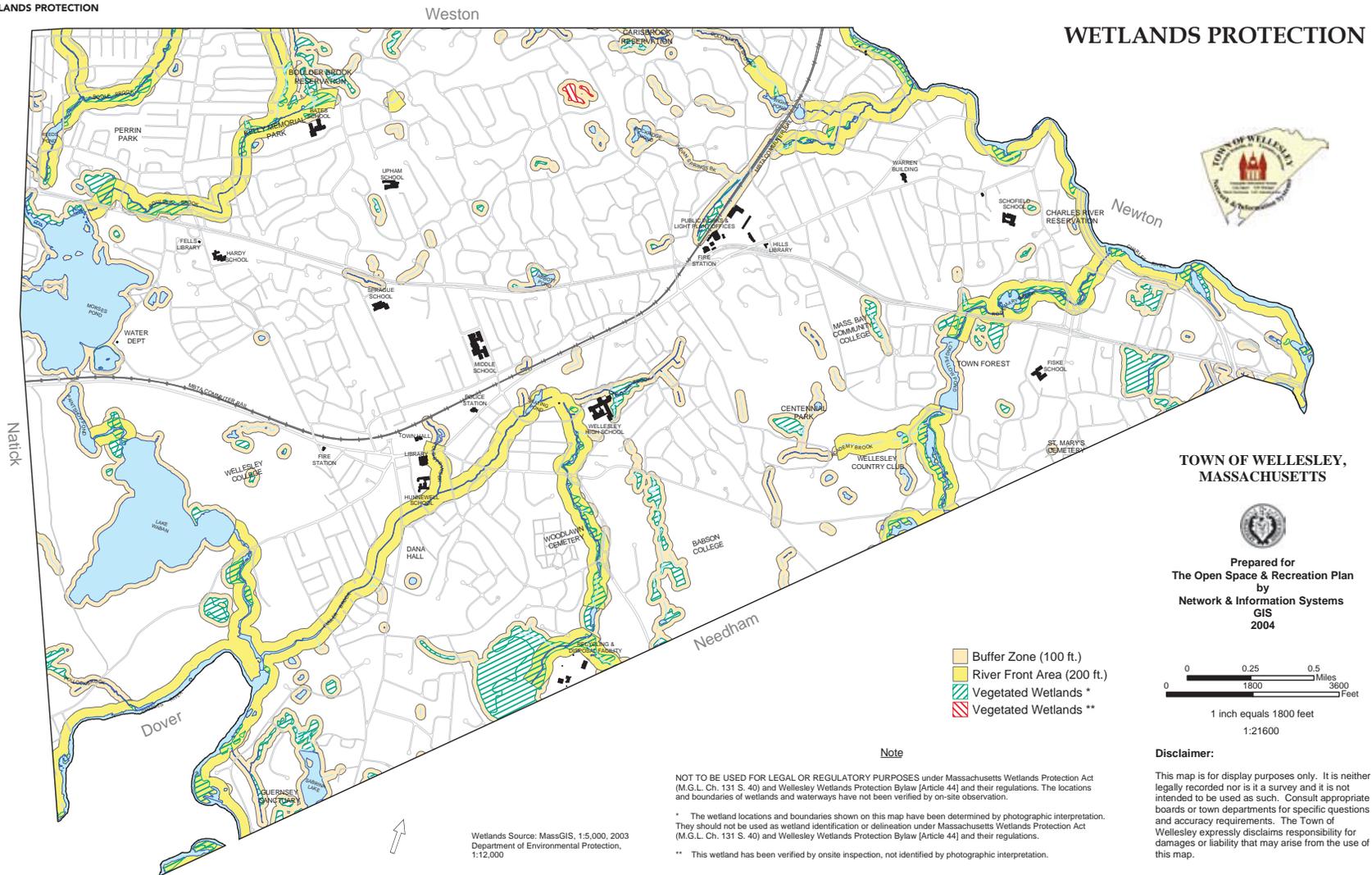


FIGURE 7-5, WATER SUPPLY PROTECTION DISTRICTS

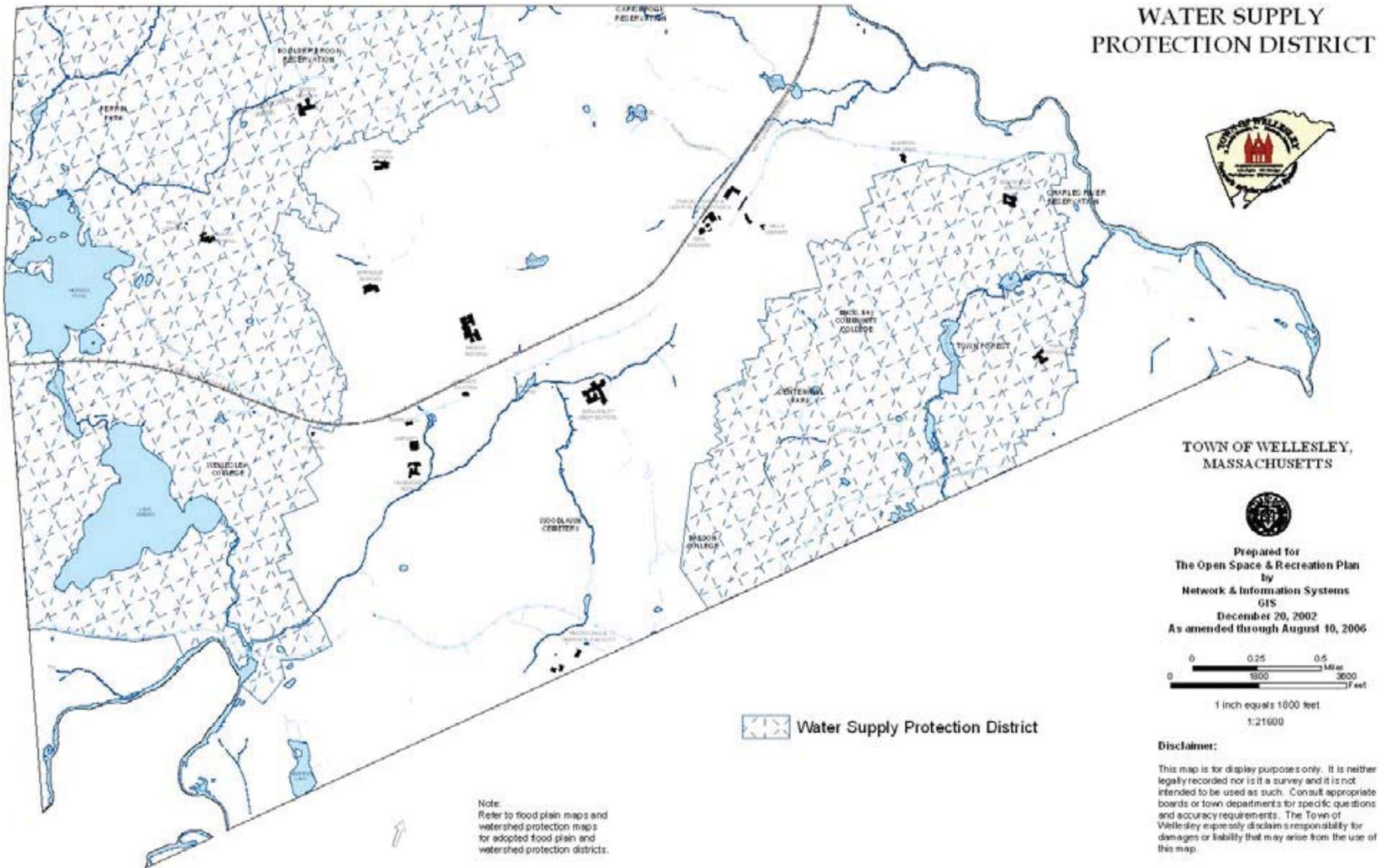


FIGURE 7-6, HABITAT RESOURCES

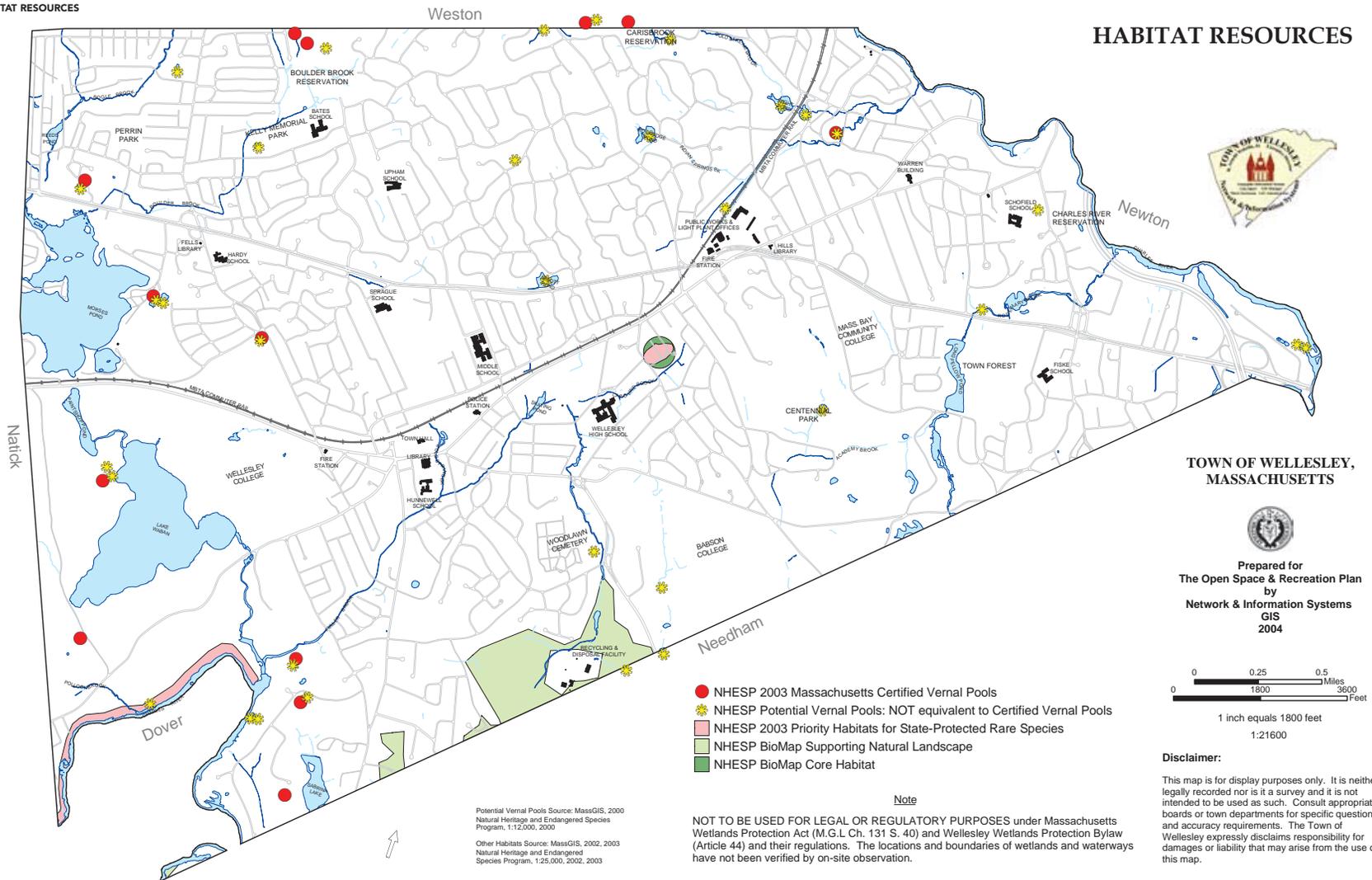


FIGURE 7-7. HISTORIC RESOURCES

HISTORIC RESOURCES AND DEMOLITION OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES 1999-2005

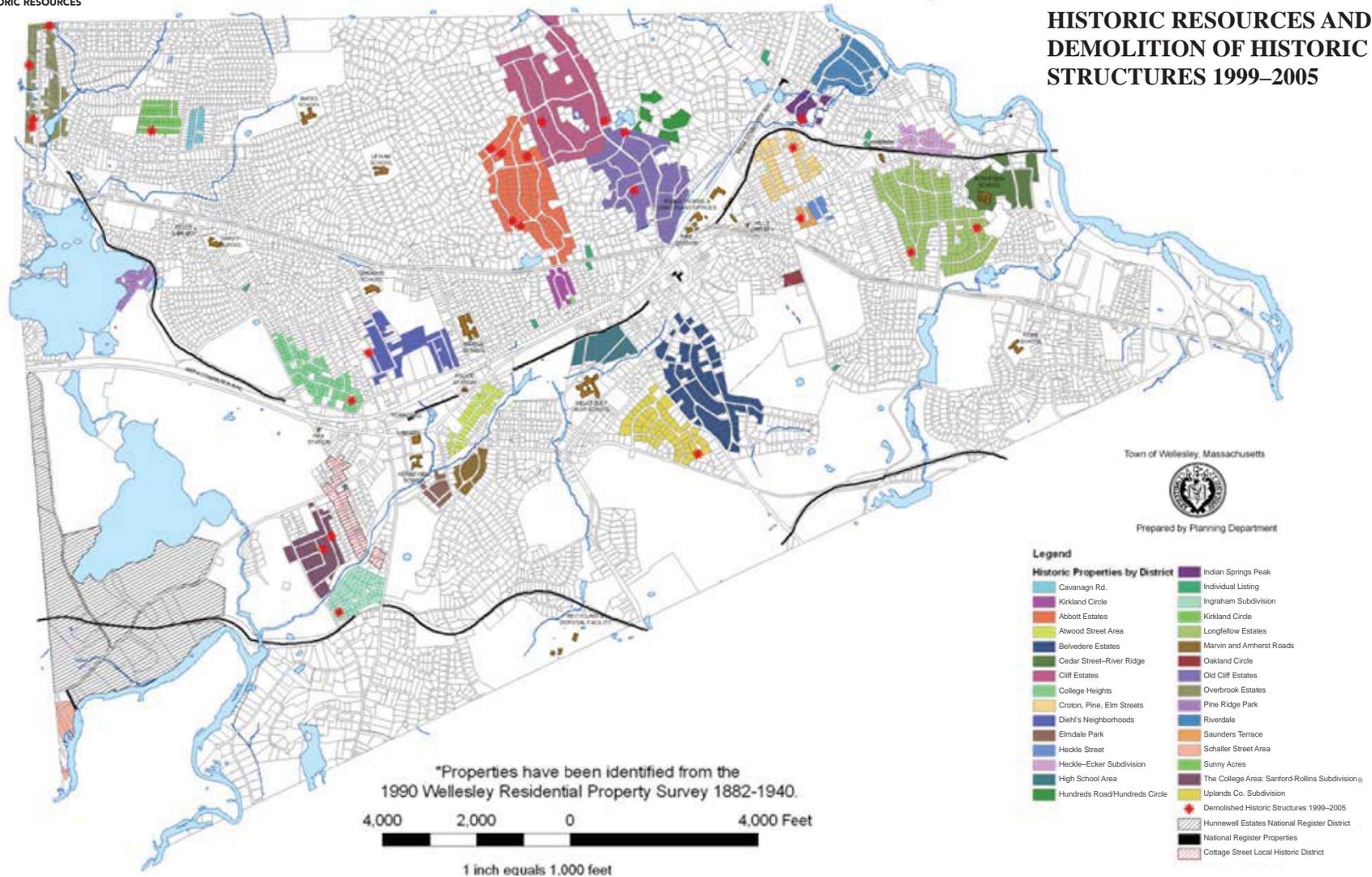


FIGURE 8-1, PROTECTED OPEN SPACE

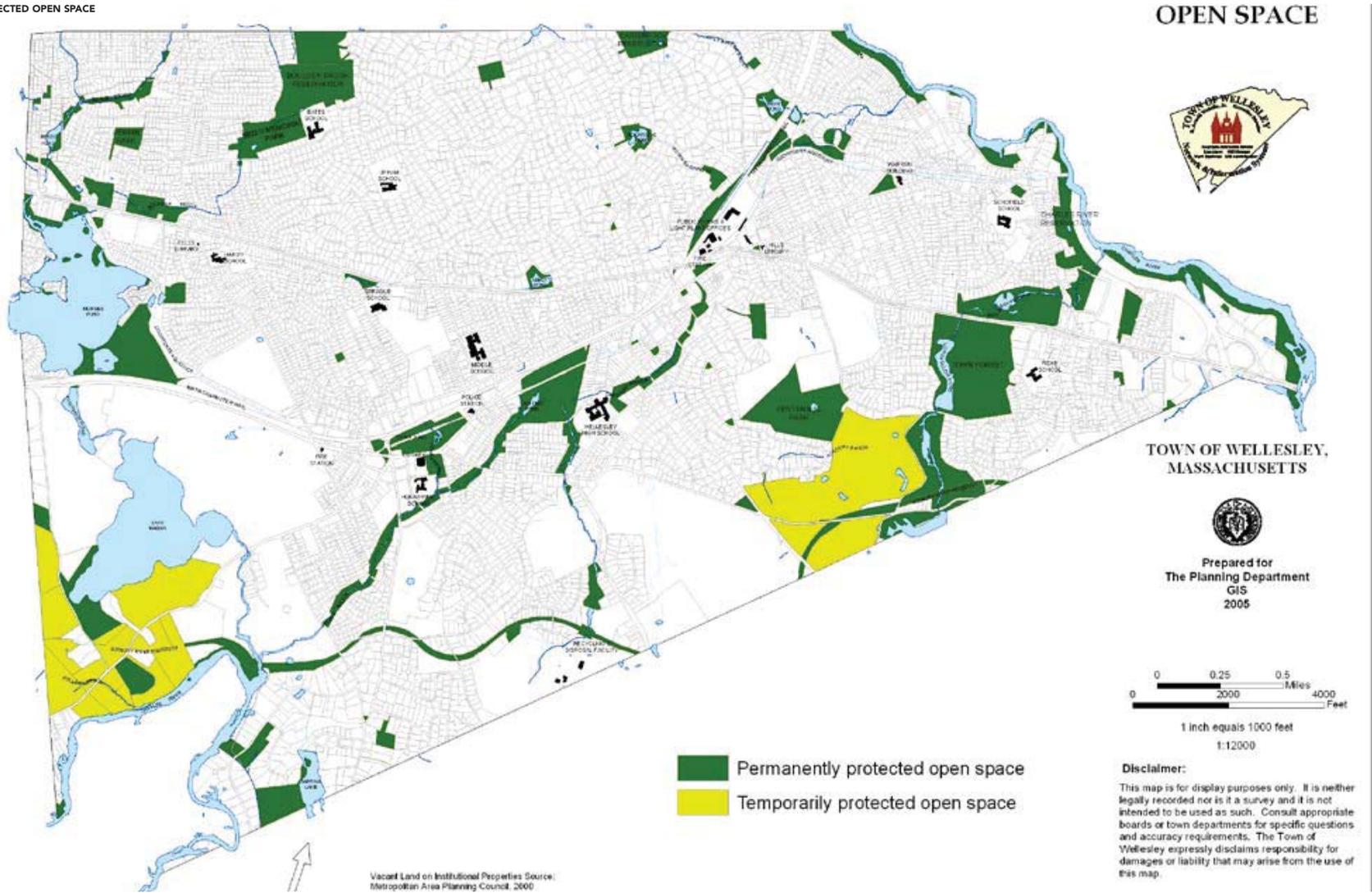
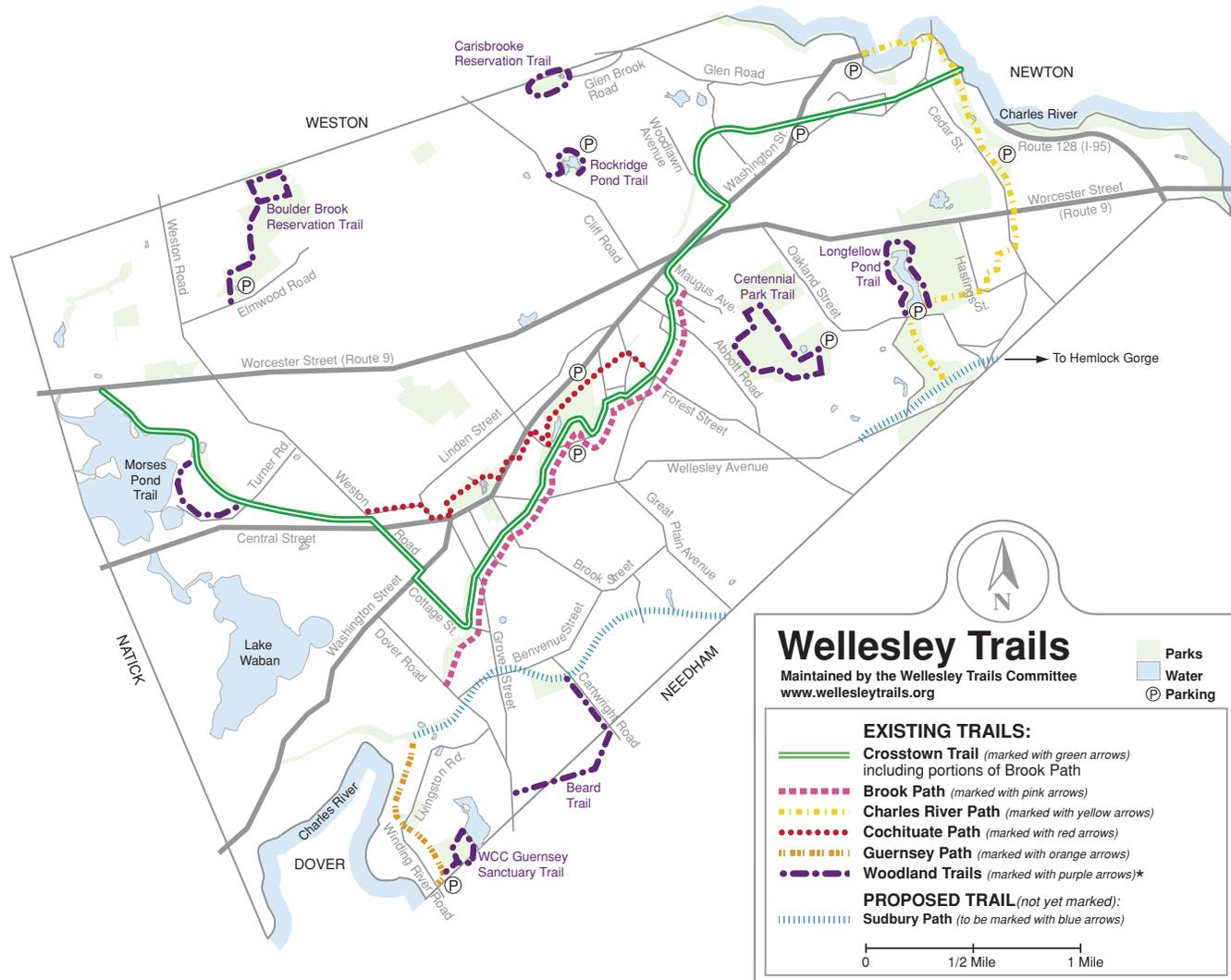


FIGURE 8-2, WELLESLEY TRAILS



* For further information on Woodland Trails see *Walks in Wellesley* published by the Wellesley Conservation Council.

FIGURE 8-3, RECREATION RESOURCES

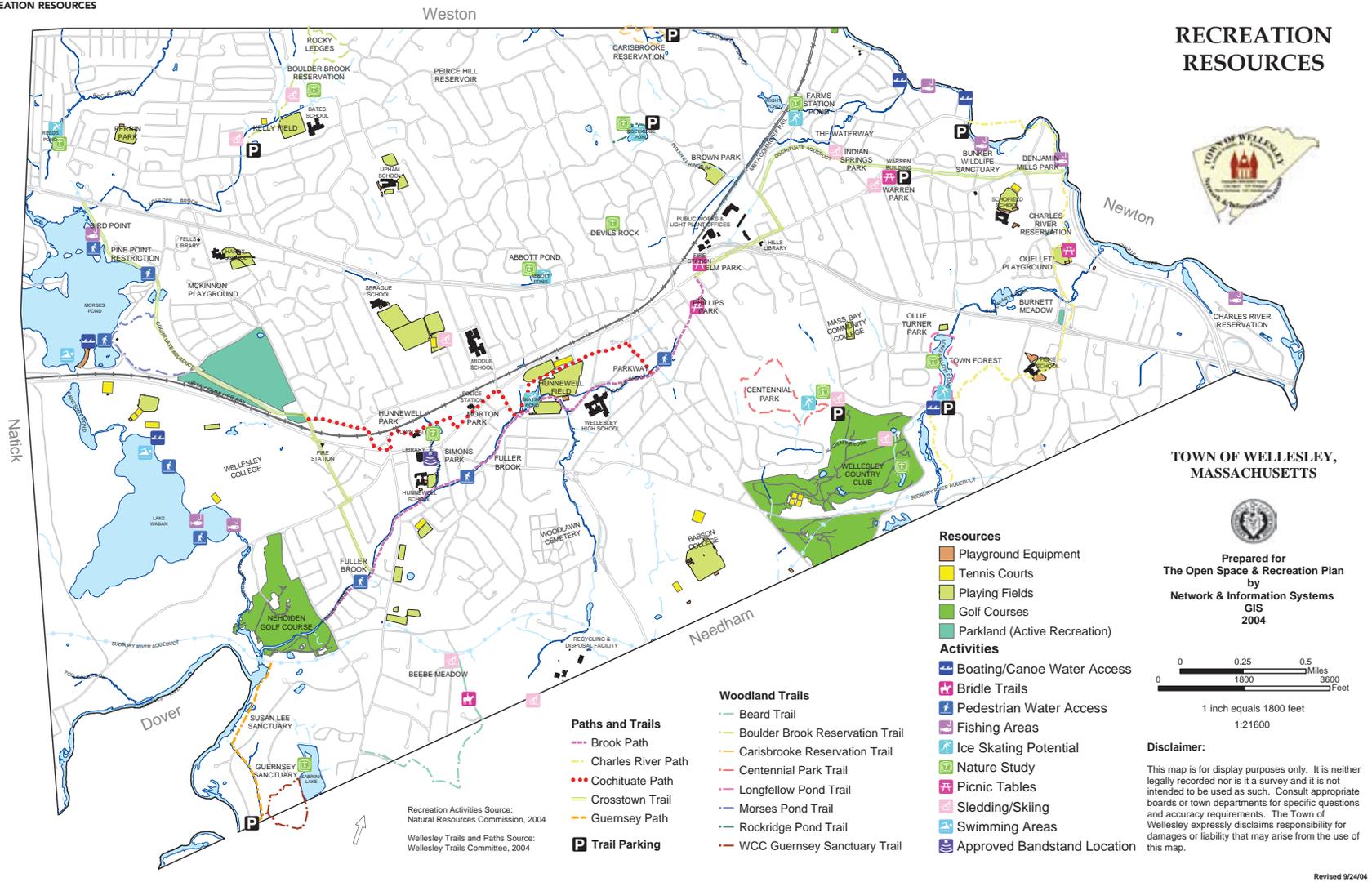


FIGURE 9-3



FIGURE 9-4

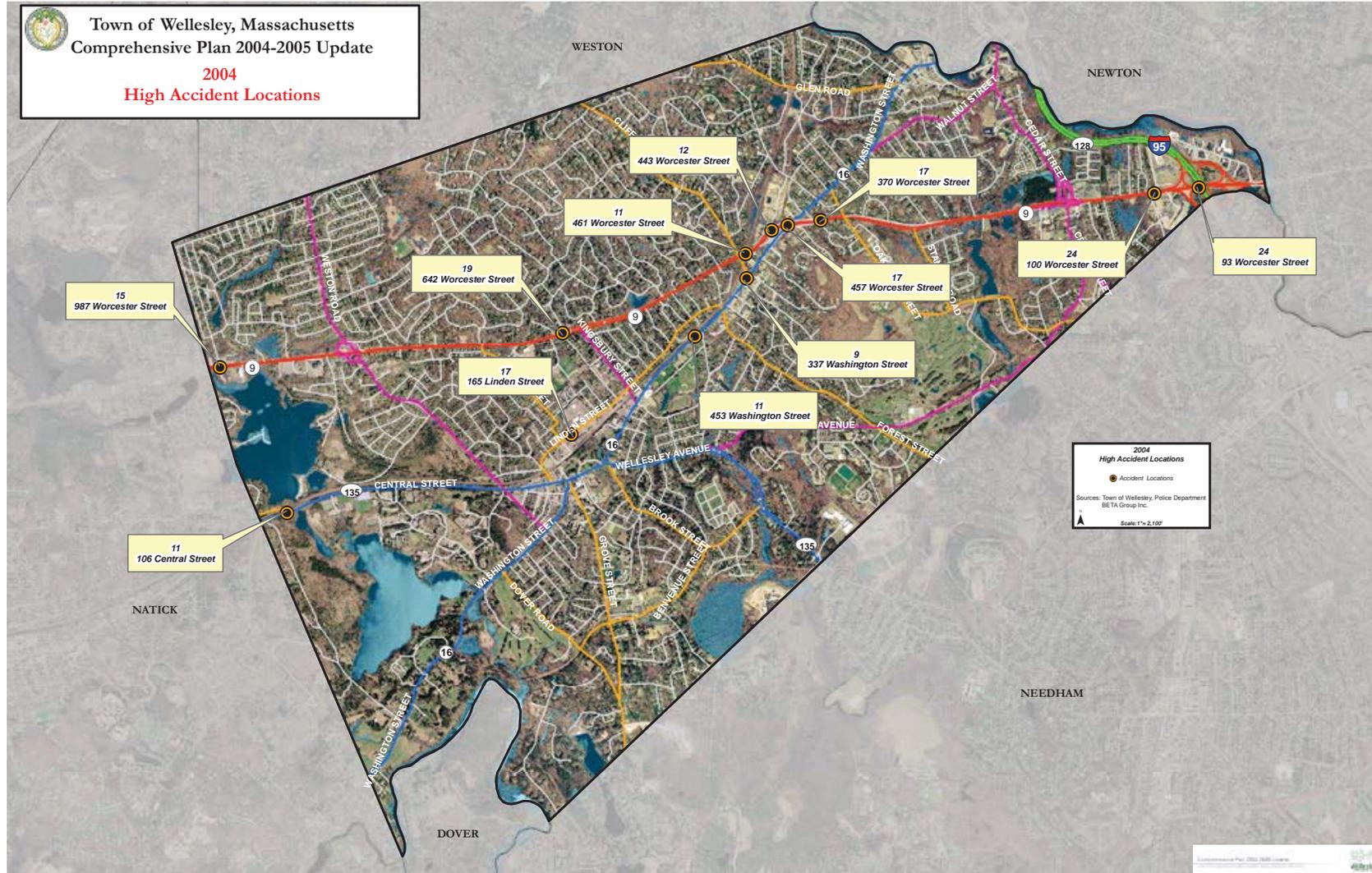
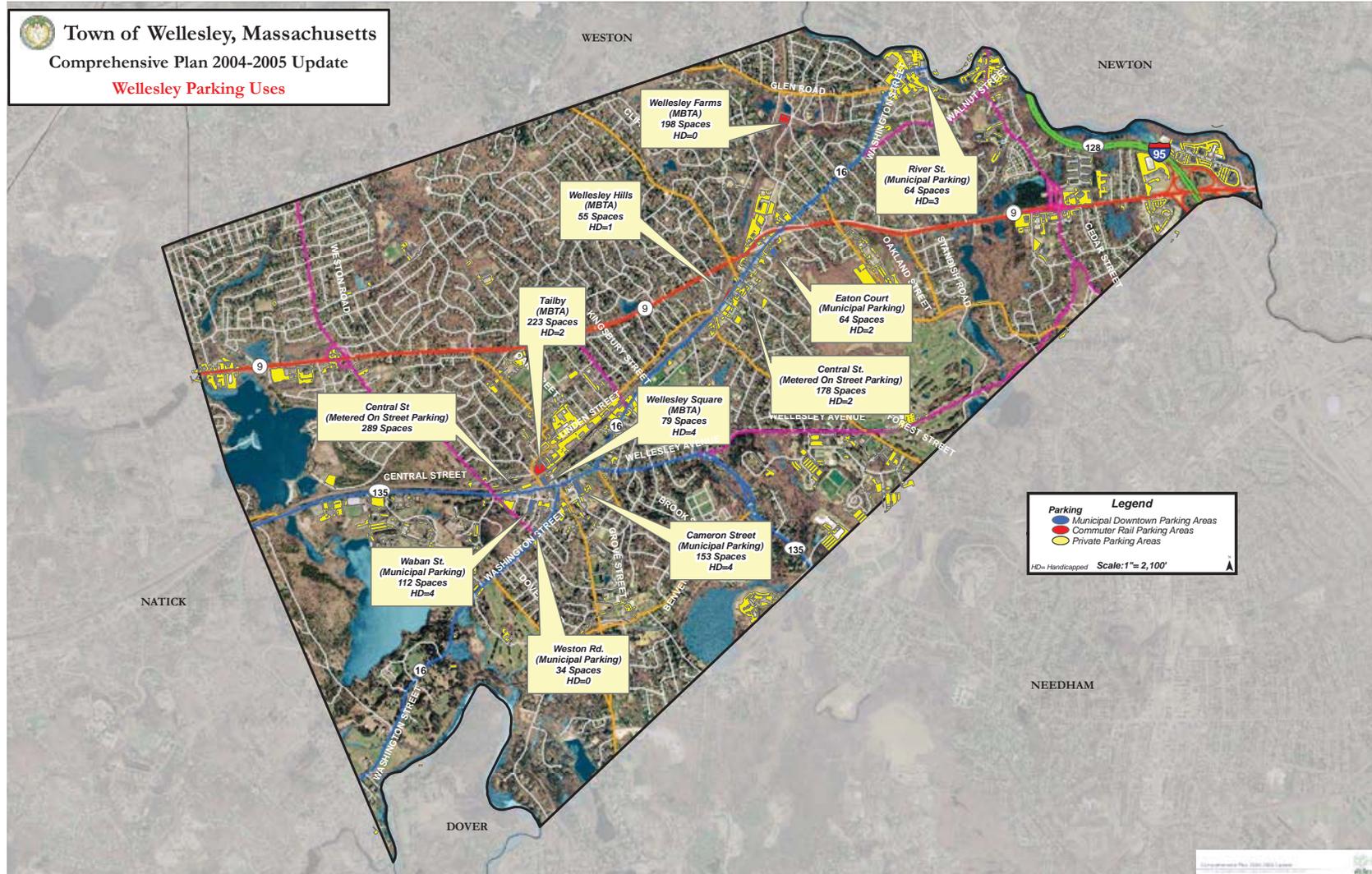
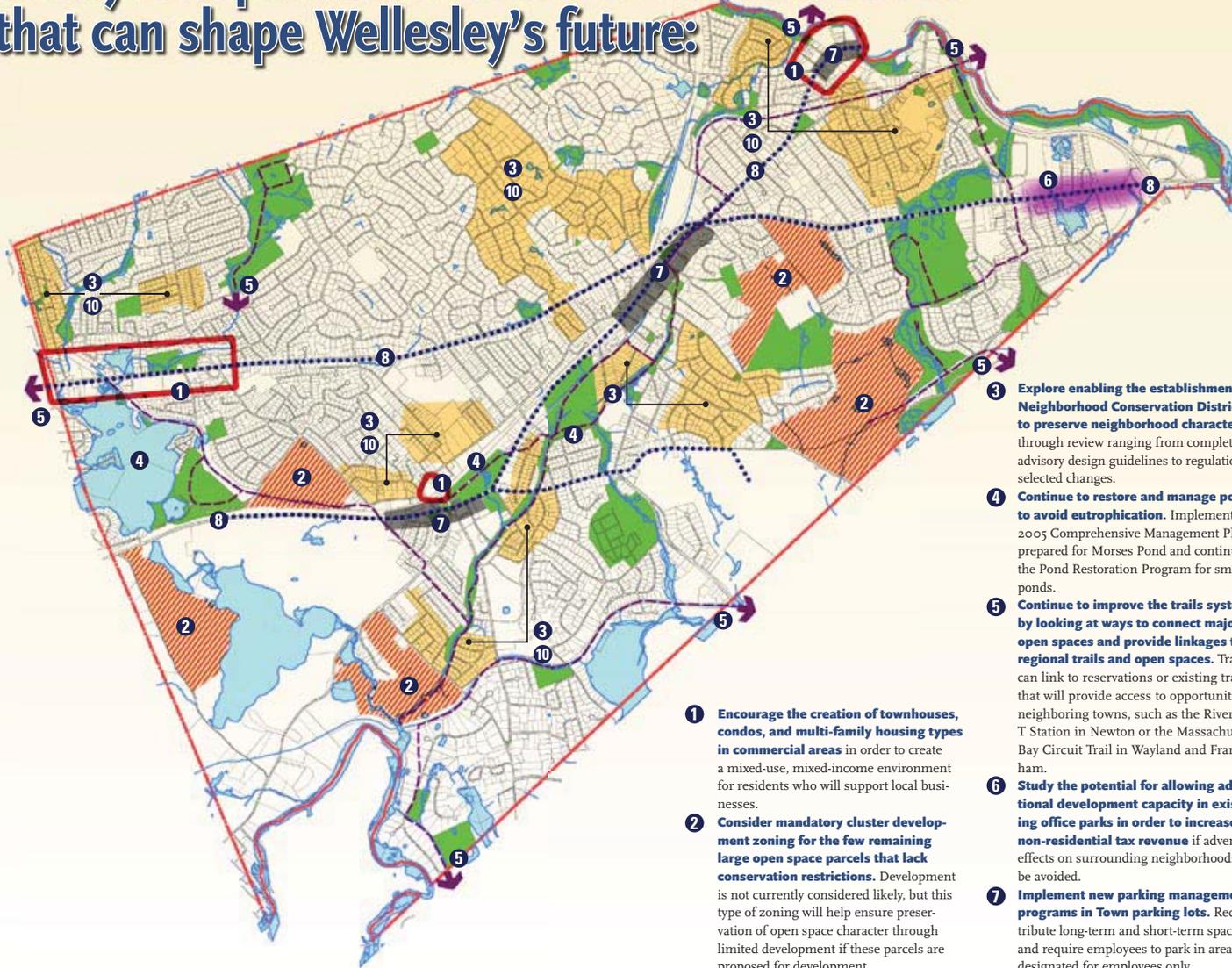


FIGURE 9-5



10 key Comprehensive Plan recommendations that can shape Wellesley's future:



-  Potential mixed-use development area
-  Potential mandatory cluster zoning overlay
-  Parking management areas
-  Major existing trails
-  Existing open space
-  Potential shuttle route
-  Area with potential historic resources
-  Office park area with potential for increasing development capacity
-  Potential trail linkages

- 1 Encourage the creation of townhouses, condos, and multi-family housing types in commercial areas** in order to create a mixed-use, mixed-income environment for residents who will support local businesses.
- 2 Consider mandatory cluster development zoning for the few remaining large open space parcels that lack conservation restrictions.** Development is not currently considered likely, but this type of zoning will help ensure preservation of open space character through limited development if these parcels are proposed for development.

- 3 Explore enabling the establishment of Neighborhood Conservation Districts to preserve neighborhood character** through review ranging from completely advisory design guidelines to regulation of selected changes.
- 4 Continue to restore and manage ponds to avoid eutrophication.** Implement the 2005 Comprehensive Management Plan prepared for Morses Pond and continue the Pond Restoration Program for smaller ponds.
- 5 Continue to improve the trails system by looking at ways to connect major open spaces and provide linkages to regional trails and open spaces.** Trails can link to reservations or existing trails that will provide access to opportunities in neighboring towns, such as the Riverside T Station in Newton or the Massachusetts Bay Circuit Trail in Wayland and Framingham.
- 6 Study the potential for allowing additional development capacity in existing office parks in order to increase non-residential tax revenue** if adverse effects on surrounding neighborhoods can be avoided.
- 7 Implement new parking management programs in Town parking lots.** Redistribute long-term and short-term spaces and require employees to park in areas designated for employees only.

- 8 Explore creating a new shuttle service between preferred destinations in order to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips in Wellesley.** This service could connect the downtown business district, Newton-Wellesley Hospital, commuter rail stations, colleges, office park areas, and new mixed-use areas.
- 9 Establish site plan review for large replacement houses to provide an opportunity to discuss design impacts on a street or neighborhood.** Site plan review will not prevent large homes that meet certain criteria from being constructed, but the process will allow impacts to be understood and mitigated.
- 10 Protect historic properties by enacting a Landmark Bylaw and designating individual properties as local landmarks.** Designation would occur only with the permission of the property owner, and regulation would be of exteriors only.