

TOWN OF ELLINGTON



PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

APRIL 15, 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

Purpose of the Plan	<i>i</i>
Use and Maintenance of the Plan	<i>iii</i>
Preparation of the Plan	<i>iv</i>

1 CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

Historical Perspective	1-1
Population Growth and Changes	1-2
Housing the Population	1-6
Ellington's Economy	1-9
Land Use in Ellington	1-10
Zoning in Ellington	1-11
Development Potential in Ellington	1-12
Fiscal Overview	1-14

2 CONSERVATION ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

Overview	2-1
Conservation Goals	2-1
Goal: Promote the Preservation of Farmland	2-2
Goal: Preserve and Protect Ellington's Natural Resources	2-7
Goal: Increase the Quality and Quantity of Open Space	2-19
Goal: Enhance Physical Linkages between Open Space Properties	2-22
Goal: Protect Forests in Eastern Highlands	2-25
Goal: Preserve Historic Resources	2-25

3 GUIDING APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT

Overview	3-1
Commercial and Industrial Development	3-1
Residential Development	3-7

4 ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Overview	4-1
Changing Housing Needs	4-2

Community Facility and Service Needs	4-5
Transportation	4-15
Utility Services	4-23

5 ROUTE 83 CORRIDOR

Overview	5-1
Corridor Inventory	5-2
Corridor Issues	5-4
Corridor Strategies and Actions	5-6

6 FUTURE LAND USE

Overview	6-1
Descriptions of Future Land Use Categories	6-2
Plan Consistency	6-5

7 IMPLEMENTATION

Overview	7-1
Tools	7-2
Implementation Schedule	7-4

MAPS

Land Use Map	1-17
Zoning Map	1-19
Agricultural Resources Map	2-5
Water Quality Map	2-9
Natural Resources Plan	2-17
Open Space Resources	2-23
Commercial and Industrial Zones	3-11
Residential Growth Areas	3-13
Community Facilities Plan	4-13
Transportation Plan	4-19
Utility Plan	4-27
Route 83 Corridor Zones	5-5
Route 83 Schematic Circulation Map	5-9
Land Use Map	6-3
Locational Guide Map	6-6

WELCOME



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

On behalf of the Ellington Planning and Zoning Commission, I am pleased to submit to you the adopted 2008 Plan of Conservation and Development for the Town of Ellington.

The formulation of the Plan is the result of eighteen months of hard work and many meetings by the Ad Hoc Plan of Conservation & Development Review Committee. The Committee, working with the town's Planning and Zoning staff and an outside consultant, conducted several public informational meetings to listen and determine prevailing public attitudes among Ellington citizens and business owners concerning future growth, development, conservation and open space, transportation, housing and public facilities. This document is the culmination of that effort. It is intended to be used by the Commission on an on-going basis as a guide for future land use and zoning decisions for the next ten years and beyond.

I wish to thank 1st Selectman Stupinski and the Board of Selectmen for their support of this important planning document and to all the Departments and Boards who assisted in making this Plan a reality.

It is important that this document not be static and unalterable but rather it should be implemented and periodically modified to address the ever changing conditions of the community. Towards this end, the Plan contains an implementation schedule which should be used to monitor progress on making the Plan a reality.

Again, thanks to all who helped in the preparation of this Plan. Our hope is the Plan will be an effective tool in providing balanced growth for future generations in the Town.

Arlo Hoffman, Chairman
Ellington Planning and Zoning Commission

PREFACE



Purpose of the Plan

This Plan of Conservation and Development is a tool for guiding the future of Ellington. It is intended to be both visionary and action-oriented.

One purpose of the Plan is to establish a common vision for the future of the community by identifying positive future outcomes, strategies, and directions for Ellington to go in.

Another purpose is to outline action steps that will help attain that vision when implemented.

If steadily implemented by Ellington residents and officials, this Plan can help protect important resources, guide appropriate development, address community needs, protect community character, and enhance the quality of life of current and future residents.

This Plan has been prepared to help guide Ellington's future conservation and development.

Town Center



**EXCERPTS FROM *CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES*
8-23 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall:

- Prepare, adopt and amend a Plan of Conservation and Development;
- Review the Plan of Conservation and Development at least once every ten years;
- Adopt such amendments to the Plan or parts of the Plan. as the Commission deems necessary to update the Plan.

The Plan shall:

- Be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality;
- Show the Commission's recommendation for the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial and other purposes and for the most desirable density of population in the several parts of the municipality;
- Be designed to promote with the greatest efficiency and economy the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people;
- Be made with reasonable consideration for restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound;
- Make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region;
- Promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households, and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs;
- Take into account the State Plan of Conservation and Development, the regional Plan of Development, and note any inconsistencies it may have with said State Plan;
- Consider the use of cluster development to the extent consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity;
- Consider the use of energy-efficient patterns of development, the use of solar and other renewable forms of energy and energy conservation; and
- Show the Commission's recommendation for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets and other public ways.

The Plan may:

- Show recommendations for airports, parks, playgrounds and other public grounds; for general location, relocation and improvement of public buildings; for the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned for water, sewerage, light, power, transit and other purposes; and for the extent and location of public housing projects;.
- Include recommended programs for the implementation of the Plan;
- Include such other recommendations in the Plan as will be beneficial to the municipality.

Use and Maintenance of the Plan

This Plan is intended to provide a framework for consistent decision-making by Town boards, commissions, and residents with regard to conservation and development activities in Ellington. The Plan should be referred to periodically by land use boards to assure that their decisions are based upon the strategies and directions contained within.

To aid in identifying strategies throughout this Plan, strategy summaries are provided at the end of each chapter subsection as shown below:

Preliminary Agricultural Preservation Strategies

- Continue to support programs that preserve farmland.
- Consider alternatives to purchase of development rights for threatened farmland such as purchase and leaseback.
- Allow more flexible farm use regulations to encourage ecotourism.
- Adopt a “right to farm” policy to protect agricultural activity from nuisance complaints.

Chapter 6 contains the Future Land Use Plan (FLUP), which is a visual guide that the Planning and Zoning Commission will use to guide future zone changes and other land use decisions.

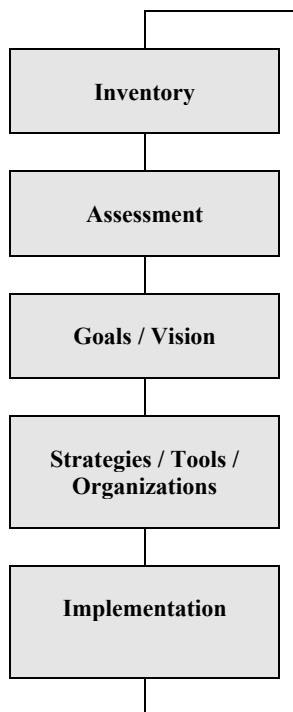
The challenge for the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) will be to keep the Plan up-to-date and keep implementation on course in the face of changing community priorities. Chapter 7 suggests several strategies for keeping implementation on track. It also contains implementation tables identifying each strategy, responsible agencies, and a timeframe for their implementation.

While generally intended to guide conservation and development over the course of a decade, this Plan will lay the foundation for long-term goals, reaching much farther into the future.

This Plan is also meant to be a dynamic document. As strategies are implemented and evaluated, the Plan should be continually revisited to address new issues, adjust courses of action, or refine strategies.

While the primary responsibility for preparing and adopting the Plan belongs to the PZC, it should be the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen to monitor implementation of the various strategies and to aid each board in developing and carrying out the numerous strategies contained herein.

The Planning Process



Preparation of the Plan

An Ad Hoc Plan of Conservation and Development Review Committee (Ad Hoc Review Committee) made up of representatives of Town boards and commissions and other Ellington residents coordinated the preparation of the Plan.

With the assistance of a planning consultant, Planimetrics, LLC of Avon, CT, the Ad Hoc Review Committee conducted a series of Public Information Meetings and Committee Workshops to formulate the Plan. Additionally, the Committee worked with The Center for Research & Public Policy in developing a telephone survey of Ellington residents so as to get a sense of priorities relating to future development of the Town. Interviews with Town agencies were conducted by Planimetrics to determine the issues and needs affecting these agencies.

These interviews, meetings, and workshops, in their opinion, helped the Ad-Hoc Committee develop a vision for the future of Ellington and the best strategies to achieve that vision. These were then used to guide the first draft of this Plan. The draft Plan has been forwarded to the PZC for their review and adoption.

Town Center Green



CONDITIONS & TRENDS

1

Overview

This chapter of the Plan presents a common foundation of information to use during the planning process.

Historical Perspective

Ellington was first inhabited by Native American tribes. One of their ancient settlements was located on the eastern side of present day Crystal Lake. Originally part of Windsor, then East Windsor, Ellington was incorporated in 1786.

The principal element of Ellington's economy in these early days was agriculture. Additional elements of the economy emerged, starting in colonial times, with the advent of water power. Broad Brook and the Hockanum River provided power for a variety of mills, to include saw mills, grist mills, and cotton mills. The industrial revolution and its accompanying use of steam and electrical power allowed the early mills to become more efficient and productive. The importance of the mills declined during the early part of the 20th century. This was due in part to competition from other mills.

Throughout the 19th century and up to the 1940s, Ellington's population growth was relatively flat, hovering around 1,000 inhabitants. Significant population growth occurred in the post World War II years.

Today, Ellington is a community of over 14,000 people. Its school system and governmental services are well regarded, as is the rural character of the Town. Ellington will experience continued growth over the coming decades and it is both timely and appropriate that its Plan of Conservation and Development be updated.

*“If we could first
know where we are,
and whither we are
tending, we could
better judge what to
do, and how to do it.”*

Abraham Lincoln

Ellington Population

Year	People
1790	1,056
1800	1,209
1810	1,344
1820	1,196
1830	1,455
1840	1,356
1850	1,399
1860	1,510
1870	1,452
1880	1,569
1890	1,539
1900	1,829
1910	1,999
1920	2,127
1930	2,253
1940	2,479
1950	3,099
1960	5,580
1970	7,707
1980	9,711
1990	11,197
2000	12,921
2010	14,429
2020	15,637
2030	16,567

1790 to 2000 – US Census

Population Projections

Projecting growth can be difficult due to changing conditions that may affect future migration or natural growth.

The population projections used in this report are based strictly on census data and assume that either the rate of growth or number of people per decade will mimic the growth that occurred between 1990 and 2000. The **rate** of growth was 15% in the 1990s and the **amount** of population growth in the 1990s was 1,724 additional people.

As a comparison to the above projections, projections released by the Connecticut State Data Center in June of 2007 indicate a population of 17,435 by the year 2030.

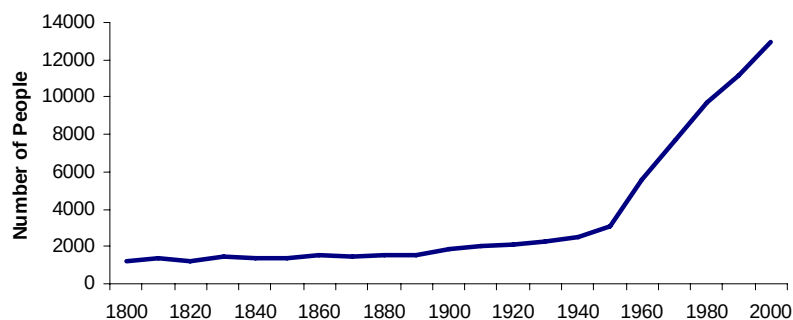
Population Growth and Changes

Ellington is Growing Faster than the State or the County...

As noted in the graph below, population in Ellington was stable for more than 100 years, with no significant change in population until the 1950's. Population growth in the last sixty years has accelerated and projections show that population growth will continue through 2020.

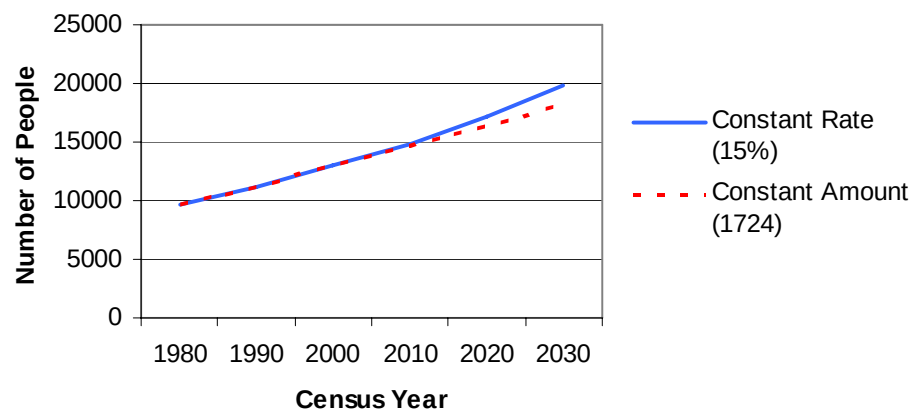
According to the Census Bureau, in 2000, Ellington had a population of 12,921, which represented a 15.4% rate of growth from 1990. This rate of growth was significantly larger than either the rest of Tolland County, which had a rate of growth of approximately 6%, or the State, which had a 4% rate of growth during the same period. US Census estimates for 2004 put Ellington at a population of 14,151.

Historic Population Growth



Projections to the year 2030, based on a constant amount of growth, show a population of 16,567, or an average decade-based growth rate of 9.9%.

Population Projections



Age Composition is Also Changing...

One indicator of the aging of the population is the median age, a statistic provided by the Census. The sidebars at the right provide median age for Ellington since 1970 and compare Ellington's median age with the County and neighboring communities. According to the US Census, the median age in Ellington has increased from 26 in 1970 to 37 in 2000. This trend is seen throughout the country, due to the aging of the "baby boom" generation (people born between 1946 and 1964).

Another factor that affects local populations is the migration patterns of specific age groups. The chart, Migration by Age Group between 1990 and 2000, illustrates the migration patterns in Ellington between 1990 and 2000. This data shows that in the 1990's there was a net out-migration of 572 people in the 20-to-34-year-old age group. The largest net in-migration occurs in the 35 to 55 age group.

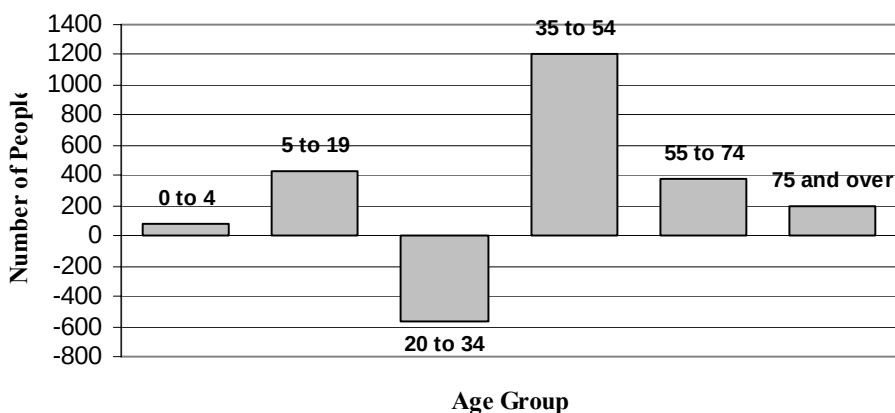
Ellington Median Age 1970 - 2000

1970	26
1980	30
1990	33
2000	37

Regional Median Age 2000

Location	Median Age
East Windsor	39
South Windsor	39
Stafford	38
Vernon	38
Ellington	37
Enfield	37
Somers	37

Migration by Age Group Between 1990 and 2000



Source: US Census

The continued in-migration of mature adults and senior residents is somewhat unusual in that many communities consistently exhibit out-migration patterns beginning around age 45 and continuing in many cases to 85 years of age and beyond. The overall growth in these age groups is attributable, in part, to people living longer and healthier lives.

By the year 2030, adults aged 55 and older will likely comprise approximately 32% of the total population, up from only 15% in 1980.

Tolland County	36
-----------------------	-----------

Source: U.S. Census

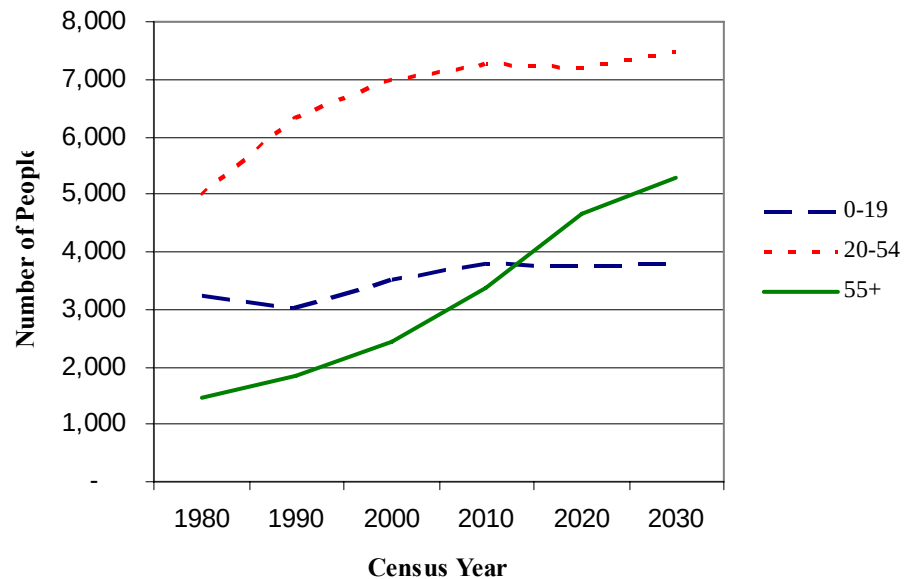
While overall population growth is important, changes in age composition may actually have more far-reaching implications, both in terms of future housing choices and community service demands. Major changes in the demographic make-up of a community can translate into major changes in the needs of the community over time. The table, Age Group by Percent of Population, identifies likely changes in the make-up of the population in Ellington by 2030.

Age Group by Percent of Population

Age Group	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
0 to 4	7%	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%
5 to 19	26%	20%	21%	20%	19%	18%
20 to 34	28%	27%	19%	17%	19%	18%
35 to 54	24%	29%	35%	33%	27%	27%
55 to 74	13%	13%	14%	19%	24%	24%
75 and over	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	8%
Total Pop.	9,711	11,197	12,921	14,429	15,637	16,567

Source: US Census

Changes in Age Composition



Different age groups typically have different specific needs. The chart, Changes in Age Composition, based on census and migration data, shows the fastest growing segment of the population in Ellington is likely to be those adults aged 55 and older. It also shows that the school-aged population is not likely to increase significantly (2,713 in 2000 to 2,982 in 2030).

The following table depicts the various age groups of Ellington residents, each of which will have specific needs during the next twenty years. While the relative size of any group may be greater (or less) of the total population in 2030 than it is today, the actual number of individuals in each group will be greater.

Residents' Needs by Age Group

Age Group	Age Range	Needs	Projection to 2030
Infants	0 to 4	• Child Care • Recreation Program	Higher by 2020
School-Age	5 to 19	• School Facilities • Recreation Facilities • Active Recreation Programs	Grows gradually through 2030
Young Adults	20 to 34	• Rental Housing • Starter Homes • Social Destinations	Higher by 2020
Middle Age	35 to 54	• Family Programs • Trade-Up Homes	Peaks in 2010
Mature Adults	55 to 74	• Smaller Homes • Second Homes • Passive Recreation Programs	Growth through 2030
Retirement Age	75 and over	• Tax Relief • Housing Options • Senior Programs	Much Higher by 2020

Housing the Population

Housing Units

	Total # of Units	Average Annual Growth
1980	3486	
1990	4562	108
2000	5417	86
2005	6210	132

Source: Building Permit Data

Housing Growth is Expected to Continue ...

The number of new housing units has been increasing since 1990 at a much faster rate in Ellington than in the neighboring communities. According to the Census Bureau, Ellington added an average of 86 housing units per year between 1990 and 2000, representing a growth rate of 18%, far exceeding the State housing growth rate of 5% during that same period. Since 2000, the Town has issued 595 building permits for new housing units, representing an annual rate of 99 new housing units per year for the past six years.

Household Size is Shrinking...

The size of the average household in Ellington, as well as in the County and the State, has been decreasing over time. Historical data on declining household size indicates a greater number of single person households as well as societal choices affecting the number of children per family.

Average Household Size

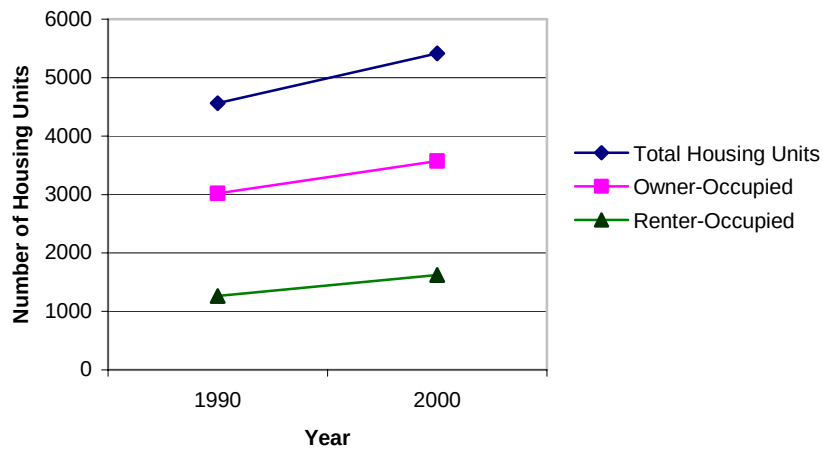
	1980	1990	2000
State	2.76	2.6	2.5
County	2.8	2.7	2.6
Town	2.97	2.6	2.5

Source: US Census

Rental Occupancies are Growing...

Rental units in Ellington account for 30%, or almost 1/3 of all occupied units. Rentals in Ellington have increased significantly since 1990, up almost 29%. However, the percentage of renter-occupied versus total housing units rose from 27.7% to 30% from 1990 to 2000.

Growth in Housing Units



The relatively high percentage of rental units indicates a wider choice in rental housing available to potential Ellington residents.

**Rentals as a Percent of Total Housing
2000**

Source: US Census

Vernon	43%
East Windsor	35%
Willington	34%
State	31%
Ellington	30%
Stafford	25%
Enfield	24%
Somers	13%
South Windsor	11%

The differing demographics of owner versus rental-occupied housing are also of interest. Per the 2000 Census, the average number of persons in an owner-occupied unit is 2.81, whereas the average in a rental unit is 1.76. Approximately 82% of owner-occupied units are family households, i.e., related individuals. In rental-occupied units, 36.1% are occupied by family households.

**Median Home Value of
Owner-Occupied Housing
2000**

Location	Median Value
Enfield	\$123,500
Stafford	\$127,500
East Windsor	\$129,800
Vernon	\$131,100
Willington	\$144,000
Ellington	\$156,300
South Windsor	\$162,700
Somers	\$193,900
Tolland County	\$150,500
State	\$166,900

Ellington's Housing Stock is Relatively Affordable...

While Ellington's housing stock is relatively affordable in comparison with neighboring communities, the County and the State, a relatively affordable mortgage or rent alone does not qualify a housing unit as affordable by the State standards contained in Section 8-30g of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Under the State's affordable housing regulations, codified in CGS 8-30g, until 10% of a community's housing stock is guaranteed as affordable, it is subject to an affordable housing appeals procedure that shifts the burden of proof to the community to show that threats to public health or safety outweigh the need for affordable housing. In order to qualify as an affordable unit under CGS 8-30g, a dwelling must be:

- Assisted housing (funded under a state or federal program);
- CHFA-financed housing (financed under a program for income-qualifying persons or families); or
- Housing that is deed restricted to be affordable to low- or moderate-income persons or families for at least 40 years.

According to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (CDECD), 6.3% of Ellington's housing is affordable under the requirements of CGS 8-30g.

Ellington's housing is relatively affordable. Renters spend approximately 21% of their annual income on rent and home owners spending approximately 20% of their annual income on housing costs, primarily mortgage payments. Ellington's rental housing is slightly more affordable than the State or County averages. Ellington is very similar to the State and County averages for owner-occupied housing costs.

Percent of Income Spent on Housing Costs

	Rental Housing	Owner-Occupied Housing
State	25.4 %	20.1%
Tolland County	24.2%	19.2%
Ellington	21.1%	19.6%

Source: US Census

Ellington's Economy

According to the 2000 Census, there were 7065 workers, aged 16 and older, who lived in Ellington. The Census also showed that there were 2,641 jobs in Ellington. This gave Ellington a 1 to 3 ratio of jobs to workers, characterizing it as a bedroom community in that it is a net exporter of workers.

In 2005, there were 2,621 jobs in Ellington, in 486 firms. With an average of 5 workers per firm, Ellington's businesses are primarily small businesses.

Business Profile (2005)

Sector	Firms	% of Total	Employees	% of Total
Services	164	33.7%	635	24.2%
Trade	91	18.7%	537	20.5%
Construction and Mining	101	20.8%	361	13.8%
Manufacturing	26	5.3%	337	12.9%
Transportation and Utilities	15	3.1%	264	10.1%
Agriculture	36	7.4%	191	7.3%
Government	5	1.0%	190	7.2%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	27	5.6%	105	4.0%
Total	486	100%	2,621	100%

Source: Connecticut Department of Labor

As can be seen from the above data, the service sector is the most significant in terms of number of firms and employees. Other significant employment sectors include Trade, Construction and Mining, and Manufacturing. Four of the top 5 employers are in the manufacturing sector.

Data on *Journey to Work in 2000* (2000 Census) showed that the top 5 commuting destinations for Ellington workers were Hartford, Vernon, Manchester, South Windsor, and East Hartford. The location of these communities along the I-84 corridor helps explain their prominence as commuter destinations. The top 5 locations for commuters coming to Ellington, notable for their proximity to Ellington, include Vernon, Stafford, Somers, Enfield, and South Windsor.

With \$62,405 as median household income, Ellington surpasses both state and county medians, and registers fourth among its neighboring communities. In terms of per capita income, Ellington is slightly less than the state figure and ranks 4th among its neighboring communities.

Top Five Employers

Country Pure Foods

Merrill Packaging

Rice Packaging

Accutime

Board of Education

Source: CDECD

Unemployment Rate (%) September 2007

Willington	2.9
South Windsor	3.2
Ellington	3.2
Stafford	4.0
East Windsor	4.2
Vernon	4.3
State	4.4
Somers	4.7
Enfield	4.9

Source: Connecticut Department of Labor

1999 Median Household Income

Tolland	\$77,388
South Windsor	\$73,990
Somers	\$65,273
Ellington	\$62,405
Tolland County	\$59,044
State	\$53,935
Enfield	\$52,810
Stafford	\$52,699
Willington	\$51,690
East Windsor	\$51,092
Vernon	\$47,816

Source: 2000 Census

Per Capita Income

South Windsor	\$30,966
Tolland	\$29,892
Somers	\$29,128
State	\$28,766
Ellington	\$27,766
Willington	\$27,062
Tolland County	\$25,474
Vernon	\$25,150
East Windsor	\$24,899
Stafford	\$22,017
Enfield	\$21,967

Source: 2000 Census

Definitions

Developed Land - land that has buildings, structures, or improvements used for a particular economic or social purpose (such as residential or institutional).

Committed Land - land that is used for a particular economic or social purpose (including open space).

Vacant Land - land that is not developed or committed.

Dedicated Open Space - land or development rights owned by the Federal government, the State, the Town, land trusts, or conservation organizations intended to remain for open space purposes.

Managed Open Space - land owned by fish and game clubs, cemeteries, recreational clubs, and other organizations which is used for other purposes but provides open space benefits.

*Land Use Implications:
Ellington needs to carefully guide future development of its vacant / undeveloped land that comprises 59% of total land mass.*

Land Use in Ellington

Ellington contains approximately 22,138 acres (34.5 square miles) of area. The land use survey found that 8,843 acres or 39.9% of the land is either developed for residential, commercial, or industrial uses, or is committed to a specific use such as dedicated open space or town facilities.

Residential land (4,230 acres) accounts for 48% of total developed land. The next highest percentage is that of dedicated open space which accounts for 28% of total developed/committed land.

Forty one percent of the town (8,843 acres) is developed or committed to a specific use. Vacant or uncommitted land comprises approximately 59% of the town. Existing land use is shown on the map on page 1-17.

2005 Ellington Land Use Data

Use	Acres	Percent of Committed Land	Percent of Total Land
Dedicated Agriculture	400	5%	1.8%
Residential	4,230	48%	19%
Single-family	3,698	41%	17%
Multi-Family	342	4%	2%
2 – 4 Family	189	2%	1%
Commercial/Industrial	630	7%	3%
Commercial	339	4%	2%
Airfield	127	1%	1%
Industrial	104	1%	0%
Sand & Gravel	60	1%	0%
Dedicated Open Space	2,473	28%	11%
Institutional	205	2%	1%
Community Facilities	122	2%	1%
Institutional	83	1%	0%
Infrastructure	905	10%	4%
Roads	844	9%	4%
Utilities	61	1%	0%
Total Developed / Committed	8,843	100%	39.9%

Use	Acres	Percent of Uncommitted Land	Percent of Total Land
Agriculture	5,153	39%	23%
Managed Open Space	408	3%	3%
Vacant	7,351	54%	33%
Water	384	3%	2%
Total Vacant/Uncommitted	13,066	100%	59%
Total Land Area	22,139		100%

Source: Ellington Assessor's Office (Totals may not add due to rounding).

Zoning in Ellington

Ellington's zoning regulations encompass 6 residential zones, 4 commercial/industrial zones, and a flood plain district. Over 80% of Ellington is zoned for residential use. Four of the 6 residential zones (AA, A, RA LR) deal primarily with single-family uses and have almost identical lot area and yard requirements. The RA and the A Zones permit two-family dwellings provided that the proposed lot is a lot of record and it contains a minimum of 60,000 square feet. Multi-family dwellings are allowed as a Special Permit use in the MF Zone with a density of up to 5 units per acre. A recent addition to the regulations, the Aged Restricted Cluster Housing Zone (ARCH), allows multiple dwelling units with an overall density of up to 5 units per acre. This zone also has age restrictions (55 or older).

The Industrial and Industrial Park zones differ primarily on the basis of permitted uses, with the IP Zone being more restrictive. The same is true of the Commercial and Planned Commercial Zones, each becoming more restrictive based upon permitted uses.

The Buildout Study completed in 2004 noted the current "One Size Fits All" lot requirement in the A, AA, RA, and LR needs to be modified. Basically, all of these zones require a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet. However, topographical and soil conditions vary greatly throughout the town and minimum lot size should reflect this basic constraint. The Buildout Study recommended that areas that do not have public sewers have a minimum lot size varying between 80,000 and 100,000 square feet. The Plan supports this recommendation and recommends strategies to accomplish this.

The Zoning Map and/or the Zoning regulations need to be updated relative to the Open Space (OS) Zone. This zone is shown on the Zoning Map, but it is not listed as a zone in the regulations. As shown on the Zoning Map, the OS Zone applies only to land owned by the State of Connecticut and the Town of Ellington. It is recommended that the standards incorporated into the text of the Open Space Zone address at least the following:

- o Permitted uses should be restricted to recreation areas, parks and open space.
- o Uses should be subject to site plan approval.
- o Any structures must be in support of, or accessory to, the use of the land as recreation, parks, or open space.

The current Zoning Map is displayed on page 1-19.

Acres by Zone

Zone	Acres
------	-------

Residential Zones

AA	4,586
A	5,198
ARCH	63
RA	7,259
LR	121
MF	395

Commercial Zones

C	337
PC	377

Industrial Zones

I	745
IP	188

Open Space Zones

OS*	1,645
-----	-------

Total 20,914*****

*Not an active zone.

**Total may not add up due to rounding.

*** Total excludes areas of streets and rights of way, as well as water bodies.

Development Potential in Ellington

The buildout population under current zoning would be approximately 37,000.

A build out analysis was conducted by Planimetrics in April of 2004. Using the Town's digital map system, total net buildable areas, by zone, for the entire town were developed. Total net buildable areas take into consideration zoning restrictions, natural resource constraints, and the availability of public water and sewer facilities. The net acreage was then multiplied by a factor (persons per unit) for residential, and a "floor area ratio" for commercial and industrial uses.

Residential Development Findings

Modified zoning standards could result in a buildout population of 30,000 people.

According to the 2000 Census, Ellington had a population of 12,921 and a dwelling unit count of 5,195 with an average household size for owner-occupied units of 2.81. Population estimates prepared by the State (*DECD 2001-2002 Town Profiles*) put the 2002 population at 13,248. An analysis of vacant residentially-zoned land showed that approximately 9,000 acres of net developable land are available. (See the Land Use Map on page 1-17 delineating vacant land.) This acreage would accommodate approximately 8,465 dwelling units resulting in an additional future population of 23,788. Thus the Town's buildout population under the current zoning scheme would be approximately 37,000 people.

The theoretical buildout for commercial and industrial development would be approximately 5.4 million square feet of building.

The buildout analysis also considered how the ultimate population of the Town might change if some of the basic zoning standards were to be modified. For example, the minimum lot size in all residential zones is 40,000 square feet. Modified zoning standards would require larger minimums in certain areas of town that have poor soil conditions or challenging topography. The use of modified zoning standards would result in a buildout population of approximately 30,000 or 7,000 persons less than the buildout population under existing zoning.

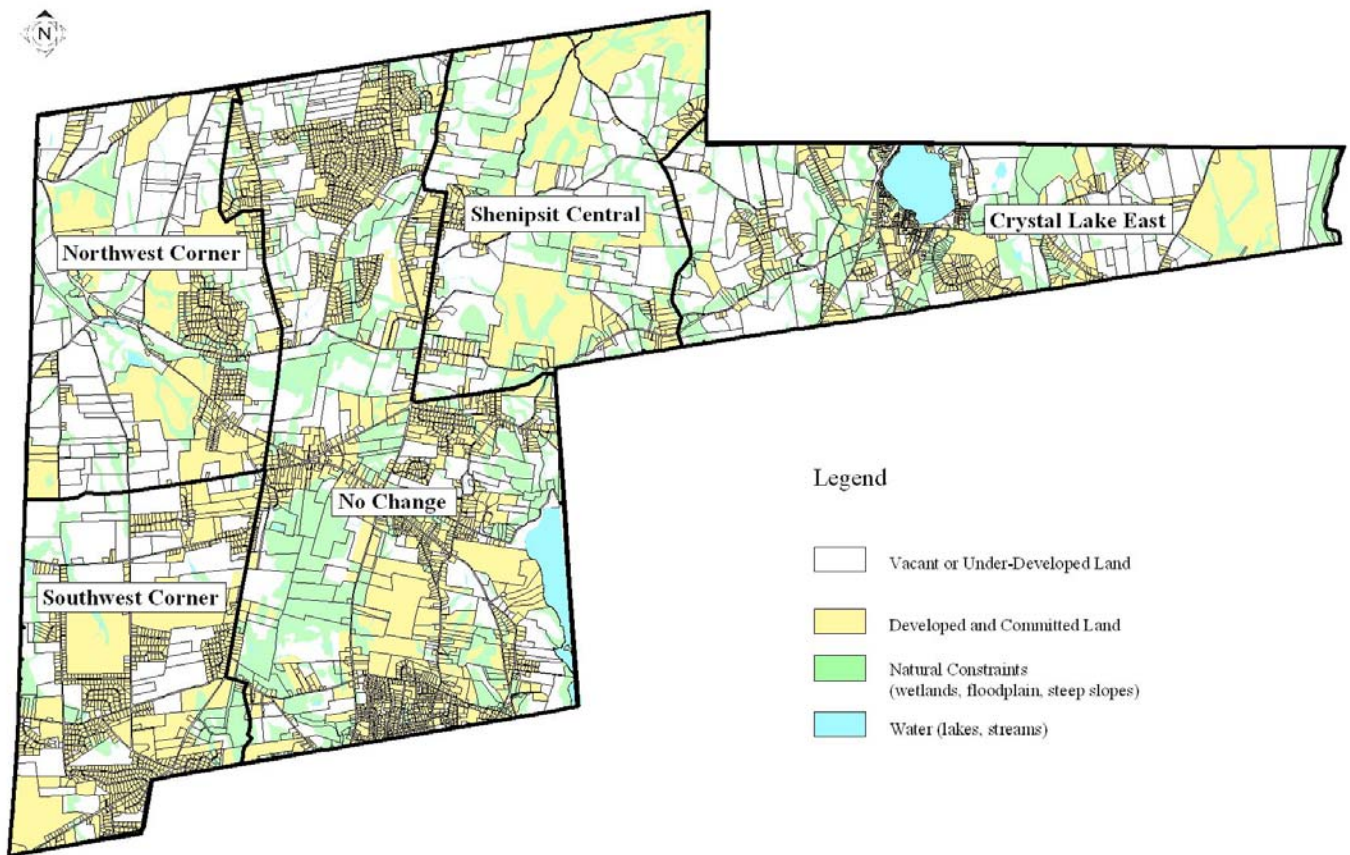
Commercial/Industrial Development Findings

Market considerations, such as location and access, will be greater determinants of actual commercial/industrial buildout than will zoning.

The Assessor's records showed that the total existing building area for commercial and industrial properties was 1.4 million square feet in 2004. This is located almost exclusively within a few areas including the Route 83 corridor, the airport area, the Windermere area, Nutmeg Park, and at Five Corners. Net buildable land available for commercial/industrial development was calculated to be 345 acres. Through the application of floor area ratios it was determined that the 345 acres of net buildable land could accommodate an additional 4 million square feet of commercial/industrial floor area. Thus the theoretical buildout for commercial/industrial development would be approximately 5.4 million square feet of building. Whether or not the long term development of commercial and industrial properties will approach this figure is speculative at best. It should be noted that market considerations, such as location and access, will be greater determinants of actual commercial/industrial buildout than will zoning.

The map on the facing page shows the sub-areas used in the Buildout Study, as well as the locations of vacant or under-developed land.

Buildout Study Map



Fiscal Overview

Ellington's 2002-03 education budget (per capita) was almost identical to the statewide average as to dollar amounts.

Expenditures

The following table shows that in Fiscal Year (FY) 2002-03, Ellington's total per capita expenditures were below average among Connecticut Communities. (2003 data is used because this is the latest year for which there is comparative data for all Connecticut municipalities.) Ellington's 2002-03 education budget was almost identical to the statewide average as to dollar amounts. In both percentage figures and dollar amounts, Ellington spent noticeably less in the general government category as compared to the statewide average.

2002-2003 Per Capita Expenditures Distribution

Ellington spent noticeably less in the general government category as compared to the statewide average

Budgeted Expenditures	Ellington		Connecticut	
Education	\$1,522	65.7%	\$1,521	57.8%
General Government	\$647	27.9%	\$910	34.6%
Debt Service	\$147	6.3%	\$201	7.6%
Total Expenditures	\$2,316	100%	\$2,632	100%

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

Ellington ranks 6th among 9 neighboring communities and 124th out of 169 communities statewide in terms of total expenditures per capita. Among neighboring communities, Ellington ranks 5th in education expenditures, 4th in general government expenditures, and 1st in debt service. High debt service expenditures are attributable in part to recent school facility expansions.

2002-03 Per Capita Expenditures Comparison (ranked by total expenditures)

Compared with neighboring towns, Ellington's per capita expenditures are in the bottom half.

	Education	General Expenditures	Debt Service	Total Expenditures	Rank
South Windsor	\$1,819	\$813	\$178	\$2,811	35
Tolland	\$1,777	\$610	\$188	\$2,577	64
Stafford	\$1,636	\$609	\$217	\$2,462	95
Willington	\$1,465	\$458	\$66	\$1,990	164
East Windsor	\$1,372	\$854	\$154	\$2,386	109
Ellington	\$1,369	\$723	\$323	\$2,415	124
Enfield	\$1,354	\$746	\$82	\$2,184	146
Somers	\$1,343	\$492	\$226	\$2,063	161
Vernon	\$1,322	\$703	\$107	\$2,133	154
State	\$1,521	\$910	\$201	\$2,632	NA

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

Revenues

Revenues are the other half of the budget equation and provide the funding necessary to pay for expenditures. Ellington's per capita property taxes are less than the statewide average in terms of dollar amount and are close to the statewide average as a percentage of total revenues per capita.

2002-2003 Per Capita Revenue

Budgeted Revenues	Ellington		Connecticut	
Property Taxes	\$1,540	66.5%	\$1,792	68.1%
State Aid	\$663	28.6%	\$641	24.3%
Licenses, Charges & Fines	\$45	1.9%	\$85	3.2%
Surplus	\$20	0.9%	\$37	1.4%
Other Revenue	\$47	2.0%	\$78	3.0%
Total Revenues	\$2,315	100%	\$2,633	100%

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

The relatively high ranking (58) of the town in terms of Per Capita State Aid is reflective of the low productivity of the property tax, as expressed by the Per Capita Revenue figures. Ellington ranks 4th among neighboring communities in property taxes per capita, and 3rd in terms of per capita state aid.

2002-03 Per Capita Revenue Comparison (ranked by per capita property taxes)

	Per Capita Property Taxes	State Rank		Per Capita State Aid	Rank
South Windsor	\$2,198	43	Stafford	\$985	18
Tolland	\$1,840	72	Somers	\$771	48
East Windsor	\$1,662	97	Ellington	\$663	58
Ellington	\$1,540	114	Tolland	\$661	59
Enfield	\$1,413	131	Vernon	\$642	64
Vernon	\$1,379	136	Enfield	\$614	70
Stafford	\$1,353	137	Willington	\$609	71
Willington	\$1,291	142	East Windsor	\$588	76
Somers	\$1,167	153	South Windsor	\$485	89
State	\$1,792		State	\$641	

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

Tax Base

The per capita property tax figures used are simply the total grand list divided by the total population. Businesses can comprise a significant portion of the grand list, often paying more in property tax than they require in services, thus reducing the tax burden of the average resident.

The following table shows that Ellington's businesses account for 16.7% of the total tax base, well below the statewide average. After accounting for the property taxes paid by businesses, Ellington's actual per capita tax burden falls to \$1,283.

2002-03 Per Capita Tax Burden

The range of difference in per capita property taxes among Ellington and its neighbors is \$1,031.

Statewide average per capita property taxes are \$2,632 or 70% higher than Ellington's.

	Per Capita Property Taxes	Percent Business Tax Base	Actual Per Capita Tax Burden	Per Capita Income	Taxes as a % of Per Capita Income
Somers	\$1,167	8.9%	\$1,063	\$23,952	4.4%
Willington	\$1,291	25.3%	\$964	\$27,062	3.6%
Stafford	\$1,353	21.0%	\$1,069	\$22,017	4.9%
Vernon	\$1,379	27.8%	\$996	\$25,150	4.0%
Enfield	\$1,413	30.7%	\$979	\$21,967	4.5%
Ellington	\$1,540	16.7%	\$1,283	\$27,766	4.6%
East Windsor	\$1,662	26.7%	\$964	\$24,899	3.9%
Tolland	\$1,840	9.4%	\$1,667	\$29,892	5.6%
South Windsor	\$2,198	23.9%	\$1,673	\$30,966	5.4%
State	\$2,632	24.4%	\$1,990	\$28,766	6.9%

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

To look at property taxes in terms of residents' ability to pay, divide the actual per capita tax burden by per capita income. The results indicate that Ellington's property taxes as a percentage of per capita income is below the statewide average and ranks the 6th among the nine neighboring communities.

To compare tax bases between communities with different revaluation schedules, an Equalized Net Grand List (ENGL) estimates the full market value of all taxable property in a given year based on actual sales. Ellington's 2001 per capita ENGL ranked 4th among the nine neighboring communities and 117th among 169 communities statewide. Ellington's per capita ENGL, as well as all of the neighboring towns, fell below the statewide average.

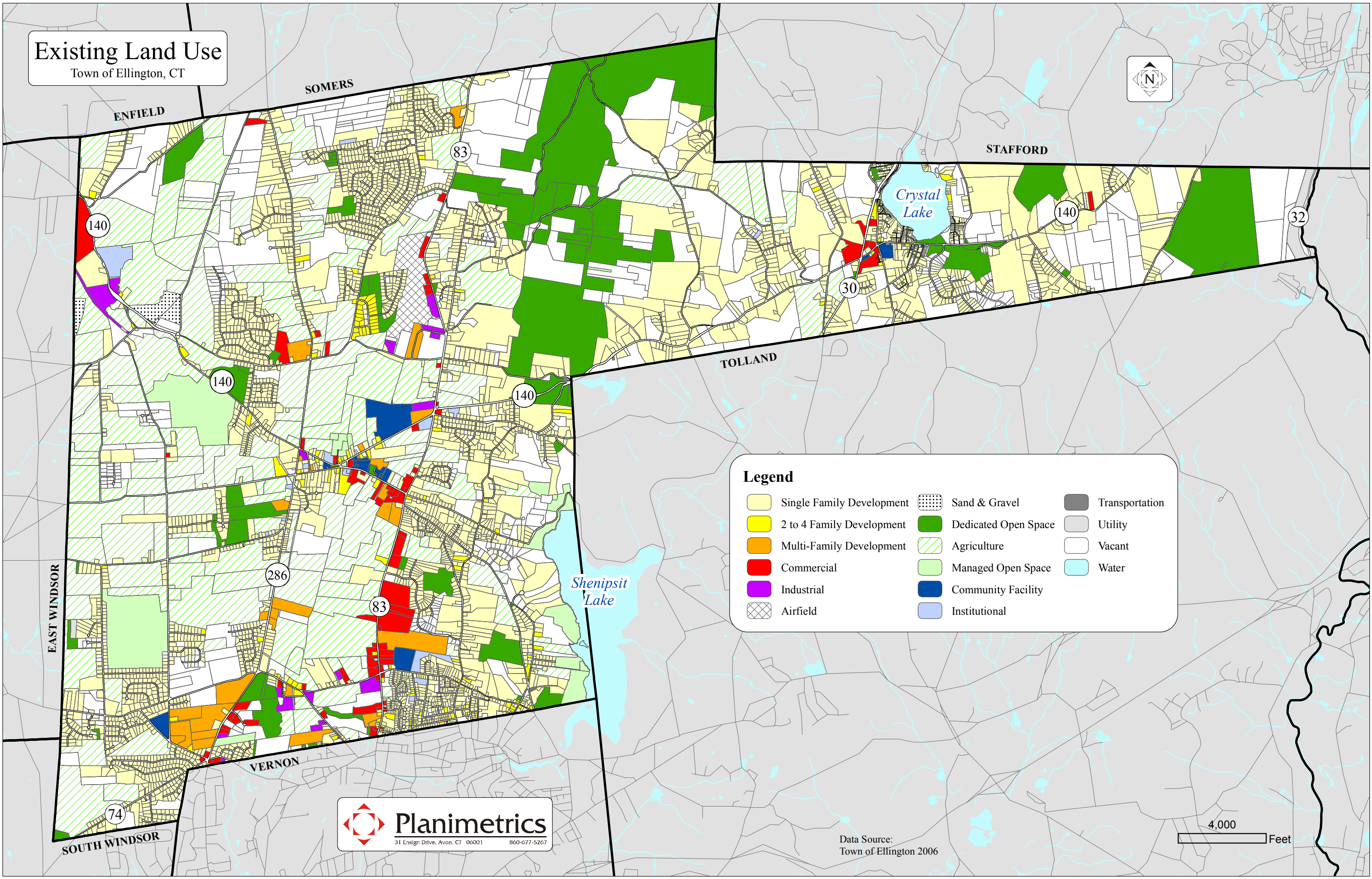
Tax Base Comparison (2001)

	Per Capita ENGL	Statewide Rank
South Windsor	\$109,942	78
East Windsor	\$101,315	91
Tolland	\$93,240	103
Ellington	\$83,782	117
Somers	\$83,113	118
Willington	\$81,660	122
Stafford	\$73,118	138
Vernon	\$69,989	146
Enfield	\$64,115	155
State	\$114,514	NA

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

Existing Land Use

Town of Ellington, CT

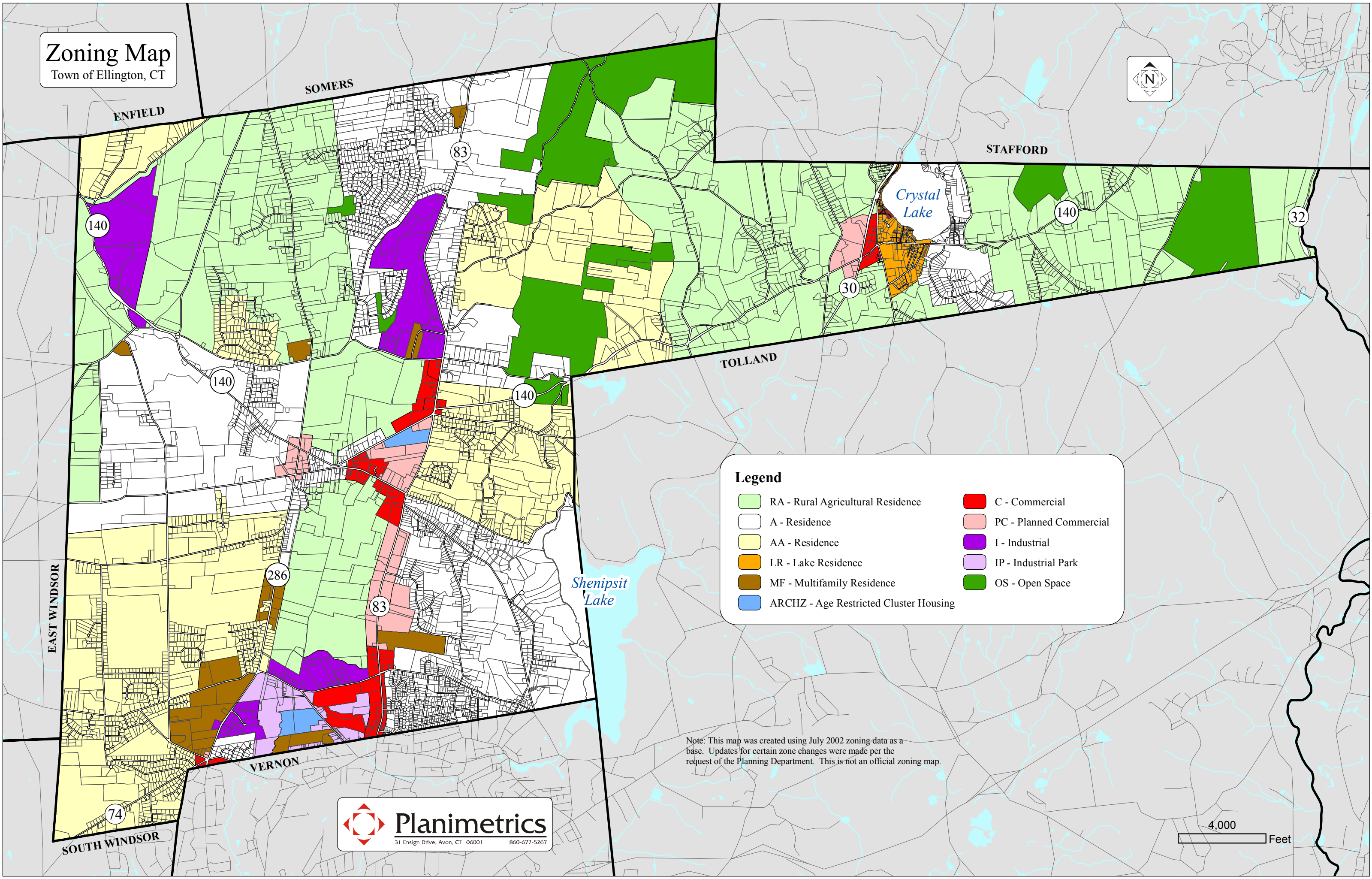


Legend

Single Family Development	Sand & Gravel	Transportation
2 to 4 Family Development	Dedicated Open Space	Utility
Multi-Family Development	Agriculture	Vacant
Commercial	Managed Open Space	Water
Industrial	Community Facility	
Airfield	Institutional	

Zoning Map

Town of Ellington, CT



Legend

RA - Rural Agricultural Residence	C - Commercial
A - Residence	PC - Planned Commercial
AA - Residence	I - Industrial
LR - Lake Residence	IP - Industrial Park
MF - Multifamily Residence	OS - Open Space
ARCHZ - Age Restricted Cluster Housing	

Note: This map was created using July 2002 zoning data as a base. Updates for certain zone changes were made per the request of the Planning Department. This is not an official zoning map.

CONSERVATION ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

2

Overview



Ellington's unique combination of natural, historic, and scenic resources define much of its character and quality of life. These resources are mutually dependent upon one another and negative impacts to one can similarly impact others. Properly protected, these resources will continue to have positive impacts upon the Town's character and its quality of life.

Protecting important resources is a critical element in maintaining community character and ensuring quality of life for current and future generations.

The Ellington Conservation Commission adopted a *Plan of Conservation* in 2006. That plan is considered to be an integral part of this Plan of Conservation and Development. This section of the Plan includes their major recommendations.

The Conservation Commission identified 5 areas of conservation interest, i.e., regions of the town with the highest priority for conservation. These areas are depicted on the Open Space Resources Map on page 2-23 and are noted as the Western Farm Belt, Shenipsit Lake and Forest, Crystal Lake Watershed, Eastern Panhandle, and Hockanum River Linear Park. Specifics on these areas may be found on pages 6 through 9 of the Conservation Commission's *Plan of Conservation*.

Conservation Goals

The overriding goal of the Plan is to help preserve the rural character of the Town. The Plan contains town-wide goals, the more significant of which are:

- Promote the preservation of farmland;
- Preserve and protect Ellington's natural resources;
- Increase the quality and quantity of open space;
- Enhance physical linkages between open space properties;
- Protect forests in the Eastern Highlands; and
- Preserve historic resources.

A discussion of these goals follows.

Goal: Promote the Preservation of Farmland

The community survey found that 93% of the respondents identified preservation of farmland as a top priority for the Town.

One of the more important goals of the Plan is to promote the preservation of farms and farming in Ellington. Ellington is an agricultural community and that character is an important part of the Town's physical, economic, cultural, and social identity. Time and time again, citizens have voiced concerns about farms being converted to subdivisions and other uses. Farm preservation should be done in a manner that is consistent with the needs and desires of farmers, the availability of State and other resources, and with the strong and coordinated "strategic" support the Town's Boards and Commissions.



Agricultural Resources

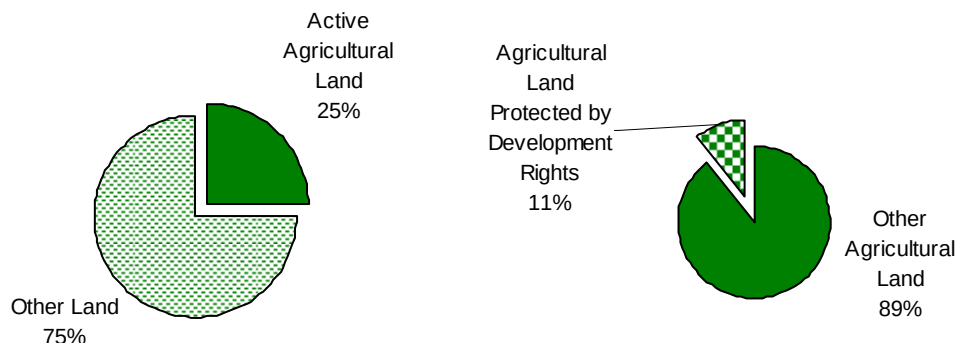
Almost 80% of those responding agreed that they would pay \$100 additional in taxes to preserve more farmland.

Agriculture has played and continues to play a significant role in Ellington. It continues to enhance the quality of life for residents and remains a strong element of Ellington's diverse community character by:

- Providing open space vistas which contribute to scenic character;
- Providing local produce and other agricultural products;
- Providing local employment and diversifying the economy;
- Providing educational/tourist experiences; and
- Preserving Ellington's agricultural heritage.

Preserve Existing Farmland

According to the most recent land use inventory, Ellington contains approximately 5,553 acres of active agricultural land, which accounts for 25% of the total area of the Town.



Out of this total acreage, 668 acres, or roughly 11%, has been protected through the purchase of development rights or other means. The remaining 4,865 acres are protected only by the desire of the current owners to farm or otherwise keep them free of development.

Ellington should continue to support programs that preserve farmland. The Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Farmland Preservation Program purchases the development rights of farms, with a goal of preserving 130,000 acres of farmland statewide. By selling their development rights under this program, farmers receive an infusion of cash to support continued farming and, in return, surrender their ability to develop the property in the future. This



Farmland

program has been used successfully in Ellington with 5 farms participating for a total of 688 acres preserved. It should be noted that the State Program uses very low monetary values for farm acreage – about one-quarter of that offered by residential developers. Lobbying on the part of the town to increase this figure would be worthwhile.

Strategy: Continue to support programs that preserve farmland, e.g., the purchase of development rights.

Strategy: Lobby the State Department of Agriculture to use more realistic and thus higher land values for purchase of development rights on farm land.

In addition to purchasing development rights, options that can protect threatened farmland and ensure its continued agricultural use include the following:

- Purchase farmland outright and lease back to the owner or another tenant farmer;
- Purchase farmland outright and resell the land to another farmer without development rights; and
- Purchase farmland at a bargain sale price in return for federal tax deductions and/or continued lifetime use of the property for farming.

Strategy: Consider alternatives to the purchase of development rights, such as purchase and leaseback, for threatened farmland.

Encourage and Support Current Farming Activity

There are many programs and policies that can be used to assist farmers as they continue farming in the face of increasing taxes, costs, and competition. Ellington is a farm-friendly community and encourages farming through several programs.

Public Act 490 (PA 490) is a Connecticut law passed many decades ago that enables eligible farmland to be assessed based on its agricultural use and not the fair-market value for its potential “highest and best use,” which is considerably higher for residential or commercial development. Farmland in Ellington is currently enrolled in this program. PA 490 should not be confused with a preservation program, since there is no prohibition against developing farmland enrolled in the program other than a nominal penalty for withdrawal of land from the program during the first ten years. What PA 490 does accomplish is it makes farming more economically viable so that there is less pressure to sell farm land for development. Even with reduced assessments, farmland can be more fiscally sound than most residential development. This is due to its low demand for community services per tax dollar.

Strategy: Continue the farm assessment program (PA 490) in order to assist farmers with maintenance of agricultural uses.

Strategy: Allow more flexible farm use regulations to encourage ecotourism.

Ellington’s Zoning Regulations are relatively farm-friendly in that they allow farming activity in most zoning districts. Consideration should be given to allowing, as of right, farm stands in all zones that permit farming. The PZC should also consider adding more flexibility for farm-related uses. Examples include wineries where patrons can taste and purchase wines, bakeries selling baked goods made with farm produce, restaurants featuring farm produce or wines, as well as other forms of ecotourism. These activities can all add to the continued viability of agricultural uses and attract visitors to Ellington who may patronize other businesses during their visit.

Strategy: Adopt a “right to farm” policy to protect agricultural activity from nuisance complaints.

As residential development continues to encroach on farming activity, complaints regarding manure odor, pesticide application, escaped livestock, noise, dust and other nuisances are bound to increase. Ellington can adopt a “right to farm” policy that:

- Recognizes the importance of agriculture to the community;
- Recognizes that the farms existed before the residential development; and
- Protects farmers from nuisance claims arising out of the normal operation of their farms.

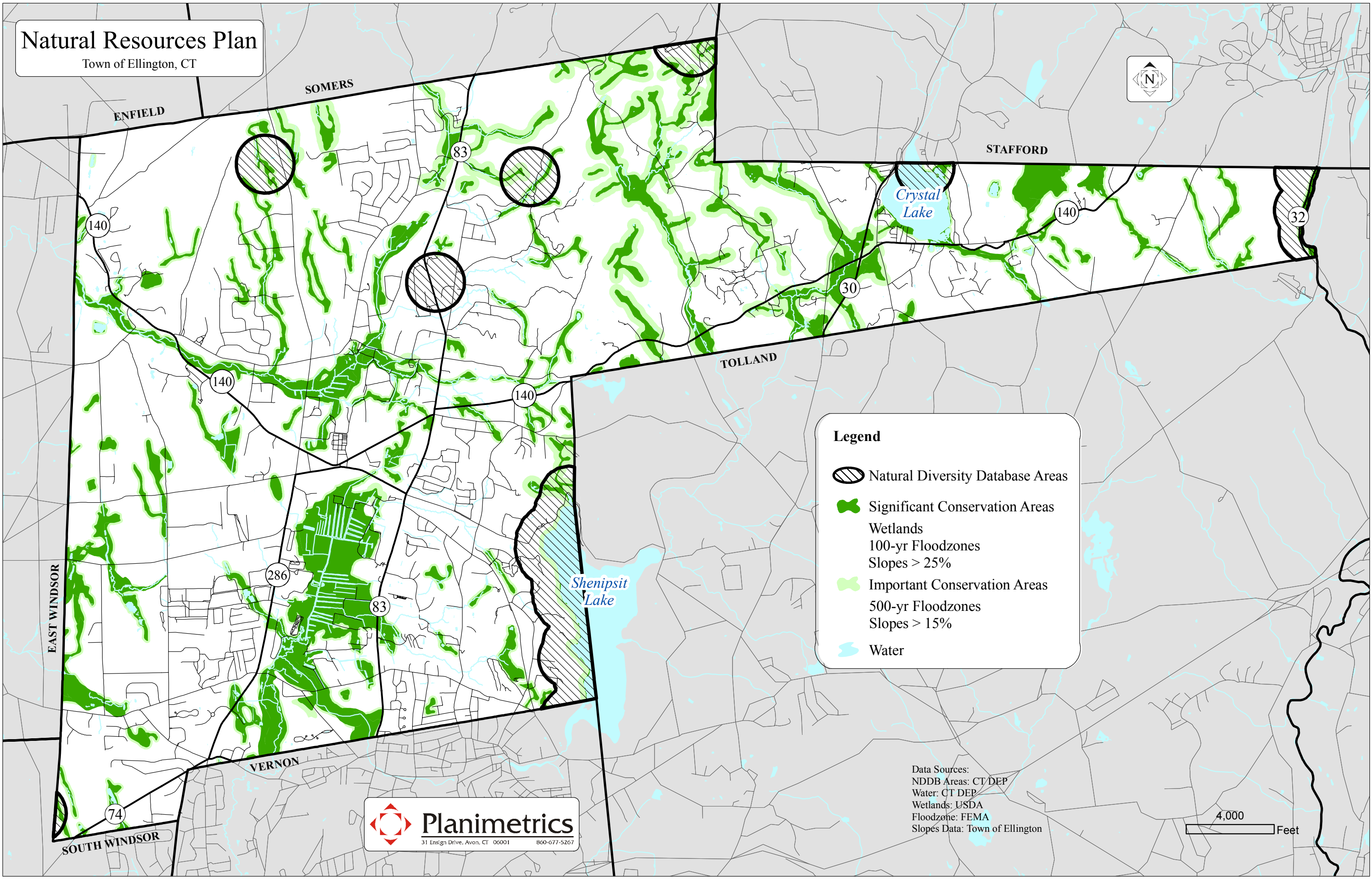
Existing farms should also be offered the protection of buffer areas. That is, when new residential subdivisions are proposed adjacent to a working farm, that subdivision should provide a vegetated buffer to ease the transition from the farm to the newly-constructed homes.

Agricultural Preservation Strategies

1. Continue to support programs that preserve farmland.
2. Consider alternatives to the purchase of development rights for threatened farmland such as purchase and leaseback.
3. Lobby the State Department of Agriculture to use more realistic and thus higher land values for purchase of development rights on farm land.
4. Continue the farm assessment program (PA 490) in order to assist farmers with maintenance of agricultural uses.
5. Allow more flexible farm use regulations to encourage ecotourism.
6. Adopt a “right to farm” policy to protect agricultural activity from nuisance complaints.

Natural Resources Plan

Town of Ellington, CT



Legend

- Natural Diversity Database Areas
- Significant Conservation Areas
 - Wetlands
 - 100-yr Floodzones
 - Slopes > 25%
- Important Conservation Areas
 - 500-yr Floodzones
 - Slopes > 15%
- Water

Data Sources:
NDDB Areas: CT DEP
Water: CT DEP
Wetlands: USDA
Floodzone: FEMA
Slopes Data: Town of Ellington



4,000 Feet

Goal: Preserve and Protect Ellington's Natural Resources

One of the primary goals of the Plan is to preserve Ellington's natural resources. This not only includes inland wetlands, watercourses, watersheds and other natural attributes, but also those attributes that make Ellington unique, such as the broad vistas, extensive ridgelines, and unique geologic features. Lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands can be important sources of drinking water, as well as areas for recreation and wildlife habitat. Expanded protection is needed to preserve and improve the water quality of these resources. Picturesque forests contribute to improved air and water quality. The visual appeal of ridgelines, fields of corn, and rolling meadows contributes to the rural character of the community.

Conservation of natural resources is important in terms of preserving environmental functions, preventing damage to the environment, and maintaining biodiversity. Major natural resource protection issues facing Ellington include:

- Potential contamination of surface and groundwater resources;
- Development of environmentally sensitive areas;
- Fragmentation and loss of wildlife habitat; and
- Spread of invasive and/or non-native species.

Protect Water Quality

Protecting water quality should be the top priority for natural resource protection. Ellington's surface and groundwater resources provide potable water, contribute to biological diversity, and add to the overall quality of life for residents.

Drinking Water Supplies

Surface and groundwater resources are particularly fragile in that once they become contaminated, they can be lost forever as a source of potable water. This could lead to serious economic consequences for the community, the region, and their residents. Ellington contains a public water well field operated by the Connecticut Water Company, a public water well field operated by the Ellington Acres Water Company, a number of private community well fields serving residential developments, and the Shenipsit Lake reservoir owned and operated by Connecticut Water Company.

There have been a number of groundwater pollution incidents to date resulting in monitoring, and where possible, remediation. However, as noted on the Water Quality Map on page 2-9, overall surface and ground water quality is very good in Ellington. Specific strategies to maintain and enhance this quality are discussed on the following pages.

Resources for Preservation

Resources that are so important to environmental quality or community character that alterations to these areas should be avoided. These include:

- watercourses
- water bodies
- inland wetlands
- steep slopes
- 100-year floodplain areas

Resources for Protection

Resources that can and should be protected, if development occurs, in an environmentally sensitive way. These include:

- water quality
- public water supply watershed areas
- stream-belt corridors
- 500-year floodplain areas
- unique or special habitat areas,
- unfragmented wildlife habitat areas

Protection of water quality should be the top natural resource priority.

Public Water Well Fields and Surface Reservoirs

Ellington does not contain the specific type of aquifer (groundwater supply) which is required under state regulations to receive special consideration and regulatory protection.

Strategy: Explore the need for Water Quality Protection Overlay Zones for public water well fields and surface reservoirs.

Nevertheless, the town needs to be vigilant in offering protection to its drinking water resources. An overlay zone detailing and controlling uses relative to their potential impairment of water quality should be considered.

The table on page 2-11 ranks land uses from lowest to highest risk for polluting water resources and makes recommendations for their use in the water resource protection areas. This information could be used as a starting point in the development of Water Quality Protection Overlay Zones.

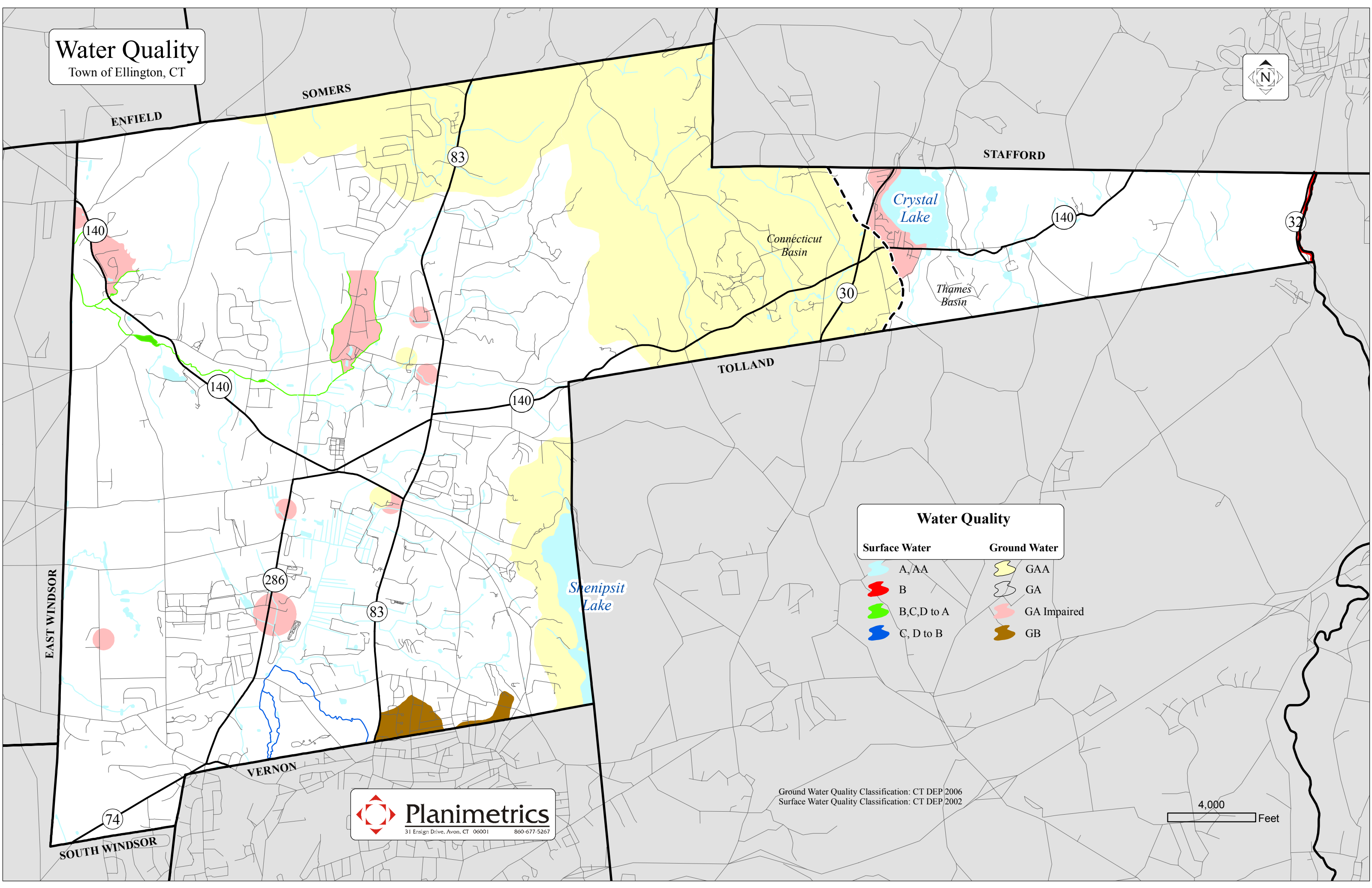
Ellington Acres Well Field



Shenipsit Reservoir



Water Quality
Town of Ellington, CT

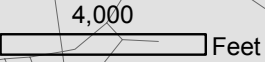


Water Quality

Surface Water	Ground Water
A, AA	GAA
B	GA
B, C, D to A	GA Impaired
C, D to B	GB

Ground Water Quality Classification: CT DEP 2006
Surface Water Quality Classification: CT DEP 2002

 **Planimetrics**
31 Ensign Drive, Avon, CT 06001 860-677-5267



Recommendations for Uses in Water Resource Protection Areas

Lowest Risk	
Use	Recommendation
1. Water company owned land 2. Passive recreation and open space 3. Parks and forests 4. Private land managed for forest products 5. Developed recreational use, public parks	Should be permitted anywhere
1. Field crops or permanent pasture 2. Low density residential (≥ 0.5 units/acre) 3. Churches, municipal offices	Should be permitted anywhere
1. Agricultural production - dairy, live-stock, poultry, nursery, orchards 2. Golf course 3. Medium density residential (1 unit/acre)	Generally preexisting uses, best management practices recommended Conditionally permitted in all water resource protection areas upon adherence to best management practices and connection to public sewers where applicable
1. Institutional uses - schools, hospitals, nursing homes, prisons 2. High density housing (<2 units/acre) 3. Commercial - with nothing more than domestic sewage discharges 4. Assembly, storage, research - with nothing more than domestic sewage discharges	Conditionally permitted in public water supply watersheds and designated high groundwater availability areas upon adherence to best management practices and connection to public sewer
1. Retail commercial - gas and auto service stations, dry cleaners, photo processors, medical arts, furniture strippers, beauty shops, junk yards, machine shops, radiator repair shops, print shops 2. Manufacturing, processing, research 3. Waste disposal lagoons, bulky waste landfills 4. Cemeteries	Generally prohibited in public water supply watersheds and designated high groundwater availability areas
Highest Risk	

Use risk factor information from Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

Underground Storage Tanks

***Strategy:** Evaluate the threat of underground storage tanks to groundwater resources and, if warranted, adopt a regulating ordinance.*

Underground storage tanks (UST) for residential fuel oil, common for many years, can be a significant threat to groundwater resources. Estimates are that one in every five residential USTs in Connecticut has leaked in the past. For many residents, a UST is out of sight, out of mind, and they never give them any thought until something goes noticeably wrong. Many lending institutions and insurance companies will not lend money or issue policies on residences with USTs and will require their removal and replacement with indoor, aboveground tanks before closing or issuing policies. While helpful, this process does not always address longtime residents who have owned their homes for decades. The median length of tenure for single-family homeowners in Connecticut is 15 years, meaning that half of the homeowners have lived in the same home for more than 15 years. The average life expectancy of a steel-walled UST is 15 to 20 years.

Underground Storage Tank Removal



Hazardous Materials Pose a Threat



The average cost of removing an intact residential UST is \$2,000 plus the cost of a new above-ground tank. The average cost of cleanup of a leaking residential UST in Connecticut is \$8,000. The owner of a leaking UST may also be responsible for nearby contaminated wells.

To address this issue, many communities have adopted Underground Storage Tank Ordinances that regulate USTs to varying degrees. As of 1999, 36 communities in Connecticut adopted some form of UST regulations. Such an ordinance can require any combination of the following:

- Registration and monitoring of all USTs;
- The immediate removal of USTs of undocumented age;
- The removal of all USTs that have reached their expected life; and
- Amortization of all USTs over time before requiring their removal.

Ellington should evaluate the threat of USTs to groundwater resources and, if warranted, adopt a UST ordinance.

Septic Systems

Septic systems pose a similar threat to both groundwater and surface water resources in that they are also out of sight and out of mind until something goes wrong. Septic system failures can lead to the contamination of stormwater runoff with such organisms as E. Coli and Cryptosporidium, which can then migrate and contaminate surface and groundwater drinking supplies. Septic systems generally require regular maintenance to function properly and reach their useful life.

Many communities create Septic Management Programs that encourage or require residents to monitor and regularly maintain their septic systems. These programs can range from a simple system of reminders to perform regular maintenance, to requiring mandatory inspection and maintenance, with contractors providing proof to the local Sanitarian.

Ellington, through its Water Pollution Control Authority, should, in concert with the North Central District Health Department, create a Septic Management Program.

Strategy: *Adopt a Septic Management Program to minimize the threat of septic system failures on surface and ground drinking water supplies.*

Stormwater Management

Impervious surfaces, i.e., buildings, structures, and paved surfaces that do not allow stormwater to soak into the ground, can increase the volume and velocity of stormwater flowing off a developed site, causing erosion as well as collecting and concentrating non-point source pollutants such as:

- road sand and salt,
- automotive fuel, oil and grease, and
- fertilizers and pesticides.

Under the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) new National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II guidelines, Ellington and any commercial properties tying into its stormwater system will be responsible for reducing the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practical through the implementation of a series of minimum control measures and best management practices.

Strategy: *Adopt effective impervious coverage requirements to encourage reductions in stormwater runoff.*

Reducing impervious surfaces can directly reduce the amount of surface runoff that must be collected and treated. Runoff from building roofs is generally considered clean water. By discharging it onto lawns or impervious surfaces, it can become contaminated with non-point source pollutants and add to the volume of stormwater that must be managed. Roof runoff can be safely disposed directly into the ground by connecting roof leaders into special catch basins that temporarily store and allow water to infiltrate into the ground at a high rate, effectively removing building roofs as impervious surfaces on a site.

Strategy: *Require natural and/or mechanical treatment of stormwater before its release.*

Lot coverage, parking, and road standards can all be examined for possible reductions. Effective Impervious Lot Coverage standards could be developed to encourage the infiltration of clean runoff, reductions in paved surfaces, and the use of pervious pavement that would allow infiltration of stormwater. Pervious paved surfaces such as grass pavers, open grid block pavers, and permeable bituminous pavement can be used to effectively reduce lot coverage from a stormwater management perspective. While not acceptable in all situations, due to the tendency of motor vehicles to leach oil and grease onto paved surfaces, these materials can be used in limited applications such as remote fire lanes, or parking areas that are used infrequently or seasonally. Examples include overflow church parking that is used seasonally or at least only once a week, and seasonal commercial parking that is only used for periods of seasonal high demand but remain unused for ten months out of the year. By reducing the amount of lot coverage and allowing higher, effective impervious surface coverage that takes into account roof runoff infiltration, permeable pavement, and similar measures, stormwater runoff can be reduced.

Excess Pavement Increases Runoff



Runoff from many paved surfaces should be treated before being discharged into the ground or nearby surface waters. This can be accomplished by a combination of mechanical and natural means. Oil and grit separators, if properly maintained, can be very effective in removing pollutants, sand, and silt from pavement runoff before it is discharged. Certain natural wetlands vegetation is also capable of filtering sand and silt and even absorbing some pollutants. Used in combination, these measures can significantly improve the quality of stormwater being released into the waterways of Ellington.

Sensitive Soil Resources

Strategy: *Limit the extent to which watercourses, wetlands, and steep slopes may be counted towards the number of lots that a property may yield.*

Ellington's Zoning Regulations are conventional in that they prescribe residential lot sizes according to general conditions such as historic development patterns and the availability of public water and sewer. The local conditions within these districts can vary considerably from one parcel to the next due to the existence of wetlands, steep slopes, and other soil conditions that impact development.

To ensure that development does not overwhelm natural resource elements, Ellington should consider a buildable land regulation that limits the extent to which watercourses, wetlands, and steep slopes (>25%) may be counted towards the number of lots that a property may yield. (This provision is a current requirement in the ARCH Zone.)

Additionally, as discussed in the Buildout Study, consideration should be given to applying a density factor to regulate the lot yield of residential subdivisions taking into account the minimum lot size, open space set-aside, and the road right-of-way. This density factor would vary with such elements as the availability of sewers and public water supply, and the area's topography and soil conditions. The use of a density factor could enable a more flexible approach to lot sizes and a means of preserving additional open space.

Strategy: Apply a density factor to regulate lot yield of residential subdivisions.

Wildlife and Habitats

As Ellington continues to develop, pressure on wildlife will increase as habitat is lost to development. The DEP maintains a Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) that identifies areas where species of concern that are threatened or endangered may exist within Ellington. When development proposals occur in these areas, applicants should be required to work closely with Town, and DEP staff if necessary, to mitigate any impacts on the species of concern and their habitat.

Strategy: Amend the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations to require applicants to work with Staff and/or the DEP to avoid or mitigate impacts on species of concern identified in the DEP Natural Diversity Database.

Another simple measure of added protection for preserving the natural ecosystem is to prohibit the deliberate introduction of non-native or invasive species during the site development or subdivision process. Invasive plant and animal species with no predators can aggressively multiply, replacing or depleting native wildlife food sources, leading to erosion, costly property damage and even threatening human health and safety when species are toxic such as the giant hogweed shown below.

Strategy: Amend the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations to require applicants to consider wildlife and their habitat in their designs.

Conflicts Between Man and Nature



Invasive Plant Species (Giant Hogweed)



Strategy: Prohibit the use of invasive species as landscaping for site plans and subdivisions.

Ridgeline Areas

There are extensive ridgelines east of Route 83 and their presence provides a significant natural background that contributes strongly to the character of the town. Additionally, maintenance of natural vegetation in these areas contributes to the protection of water quality through not exposing unprotected soil to the erosive forces of rainfall. Many towns have adopted ridgeline protection regulations and Ellington should consider doing so.

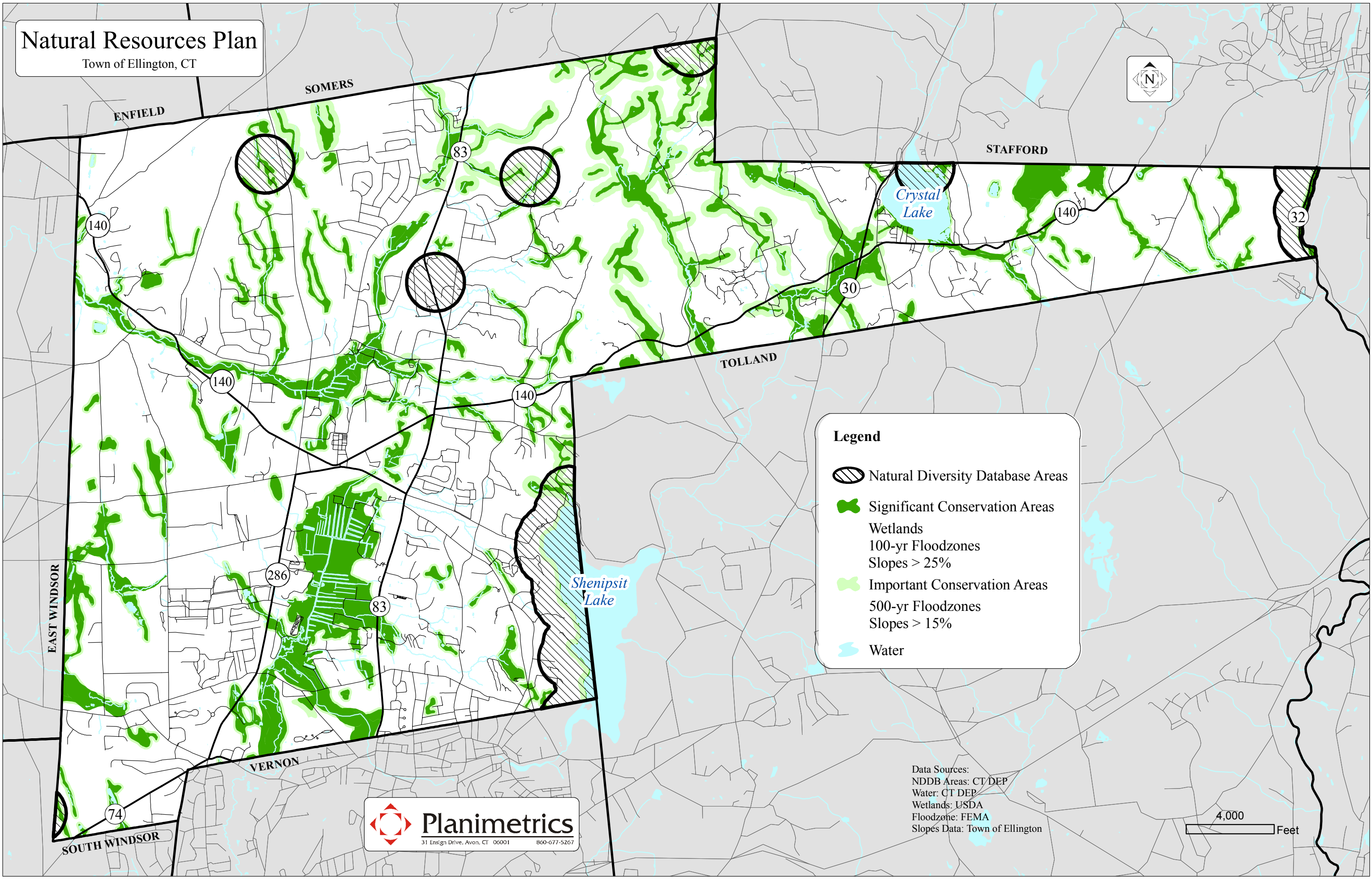
Strategy: Revise Zoning Regulations to protect ridgeline areas.

Natural Resource Preservation and Protection Strategies

1. Explore the need for Water Quality Protection Overlay Zones for public water well fields and surface reservoirs.
2. Evaluate the threat of underground storage tanks to groundwater resources and adopt a regulating ordinance if necessary.
3. Adopt a Septic Management Program.
4. Adopt effective impervious coverage requirements to encourage reductions in stormwater runoff.
5. Require natural and/or mechanical treatment of stormwater before its release.
6. Limit the extent to which watercourses, wetlands, and steep slopes may be counted towards the number of lots that a property may yield.
7. Apply a density factor to regulate lot yield of residential subdivisions.
8. Amend the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations to require applicants to work with Staff and/or the DEP to avoid or mitigate impacts on species of concern identified in the DEP Natural Diversity Database.
9. Amend the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations to require applicants to consider wildlife and their habitat in their designs.
10. Prohibit the use of invasive species as landscaping for site plans and subdivisions.
11. Revise Zoning Regulations to protect ridgeline areas.

Natural Resources Plan

Town of Ellington, CT



Legend

- Natural Diversity Database Areas
- Significant Conservation Areas
 - Wetlands
 - 100-yr Floodzones
 - Slopes > 25%
- Important Conservation Areas
 - 500-yr Floodzones
 - Slopes > 15%
- Water

Data Sources:
NDDB Areas: CT DEP
Water: CT DEP
Wetlands: USDA
Floodzone: FEMA
Slopes Data: Town of Ellington



4,000 Feet

Goal: Increase the Quality and Quantity of Open Space

Open spaces are more meaningful when they contribute to an overall open space system, enhance existing open space, or protect important natural or scenic resources. There are numerous methods available to Ellington to increase the quantity and quality of preserved open space.

From an open space planning perspective, experience has shown that open space generally falls into four categories that are not always mutually exclusive.

Dedicated Open Space



Dedicated Open Space is land preserved in perpetuity as open space, often with public use. Dedicated open space will remain undeveloped forever.

Managed Open Space is land set aside for some other purpose, such as a golf course or public watershed land, that provides some open space value. Public use may not always be allowed. Managed open space can often be developed at any time.

Managed Open Space



Protected Open Space is land protected from development by such means as a conservation easement, but public use may not be allowed.

Perceived Open Space is land that looks or feels open, such as a farm or private woodlands, but is not preserved as open space.

A community survey conducted in May of 2007 found that 86% of those surveyed felt that the town should work toward preserving more open space.

Nearly 40% of those surveyed said they would be willing to pay an additional \$100 in taxes to acquire more open space. Although this figure appears low, it should be noted that it is really a substantial base on which to build support in the long run.

Strategy: Increase open space set-asides from 10% to 20%.

Open Space Set-Asides

Ellington currently requires a mandatory open space "set-aside" of 10% as part of every subdivision application. (Payments in lieu of open space are also authorized.) Given the important role that open space plays in defining the rural character of Ellington, consideration should be given to increasing open space set asides in new subdivision development. Set-aside requirements of 15% to 20 % are not uncommon in Connecticut and increases in this range should be considered.

Strategy: Initiate a fund for open space acquisition.

Funding Open Space Acquisition

Several studies have shown that purchasing open space can be fiscally responsible over time when compared to the perpetual costs and benefits of residential development that might otherwise occur. With education costs accounting for over 70% of the annual Town budget, the cost of educating children resulting from new residential development can often exceed new tax revenues and, over time, the cumulative net costs could exceed the bonding cost of purchasing the land for open space.

For this reason, the Town should consider establishment of an Open Space Acquisition Fund. This fund could be financed by annual allocations, bonding, or a combination of both. Such an established fund could be very effective, in time-sensitive situations, for the strategic purchase of open space. Additionally, it could be doubly effective when combined with 50% state matching grants.

Strategy: Continue to accept fees in lieu of open space where appropriate.

Fees in Lieu of Open Space

When there is no appropriate open space within a subdivision, the PZC can accept a fee in lieu of open space equal to 10% of the pre-development value of the parcel being subdivided. Such funds are used to purchase more appropriate open space elsewhere in the community. It should be noted that State Statute limits the fee in lieu to 10%, and that this percentage may not be increased by the Commission.

Strategy: Continue off-site dedication of open space.

Off- Site Dedication of Open Space

The Subdivision Regulations allow for the off-site dedication of open space when appropriate. This option should be pursued in those instances where superior open space areas could result.

Open Space Equivalency Factor

Currently, the Subdivision Regulations contain a provision that open space shall be reasonably and impartially representative of the land type under active development. To improve the quality of open space required to be set aside in residential subdivisions, the Planning Commission should consider being more definitive in this matter by adopting in the subdivision regulations an “equivalency factor”. This would require the combined percentage of wetlands, floodplain, and steep slopes in the mandatory open space set-aside to be no greater than that of the overall parcel. This prevents developers from consuming a disproportionate share of the buildable land and donating the unbuildable land as open space. In many cases, unbuildable land is self-preserving and does not require the benefit of open space protection.

Strategy: *Revise the open space equivalency factor to improve the quality of open space required to be set aside in residential subdivisions.*

Open Space Residential Developments

Ellington’s Zoning Regulations contain a provision for Open Space Residential Developments (OSRD). These developments allow a reduction of up to 25% in lot sizes in return for preserving more open space. Currently, the OSRD regulations require a minimum of 10 acres of open space.

There has yet to be a development completed under the OSRD provisions. For whatever reason, the regulations do not offer the development community any advantage over a standard subdivision layout. It may be that the lot reduction requirement is too narrow in that it applies only to lot size and no other requirements. The OSRD regulations should be reviewed and re-written with adequate incentives to enable the provision of more open space. That is, consideration should also be given to allowing the 25% reduction to apply to lot width and yard requirements to provide needed flexibility in the siting of lots and the configuration of open space.

Strategy: *Revise regulations to provide adequate incentives to encourage Open Space Residential Developments.*

Acquisition Strategies

Due to their vital nature to the success of the open space program for the community, critical parcels should continue to be targeted for purchase or other means of preservation, rather than wait for acquisition by mandatory set-asides resulting from future development. The Town should encourage other open space organizations to allow public access and secure easements over private property when necessary to complete trail corridors within the greenways.

Goal: Enhance Physical Linkages between Open Space Properties

Strategy: Utilize greenway systems to interconnect open space areas.

Too often, development occurs in a piecemeal fashion, wherein one parcel of land is evaluated outside its relationship to other adjacent and proximal lands. Where possible, physical and functional linkages between lands should be created so that the natural benefits of these connections can be protected and enhanced. Linkage provides potential wildlife corridors, opportunities for passive recreation, and can be used to provide buffers within developed areas.

Interconnecting open spaces with greenways is an effective way for Ellington to establish a meaningful open space system that provides benefits for both passive recreation and wildlife. A system of greenways can function as wildlife corridors, allowing wildlife to migrate between larger open space habitats. Connecting activity centers with a trail/greenway system can provide passive recreation and also reduce dependency on automobiles.

The Hockanum River and the Willimantic River present opportunities to establish greenways, i.e., a linear park, if you will. Other opportunities for establishing greenways are noted on the Open Space Plan map. These include:

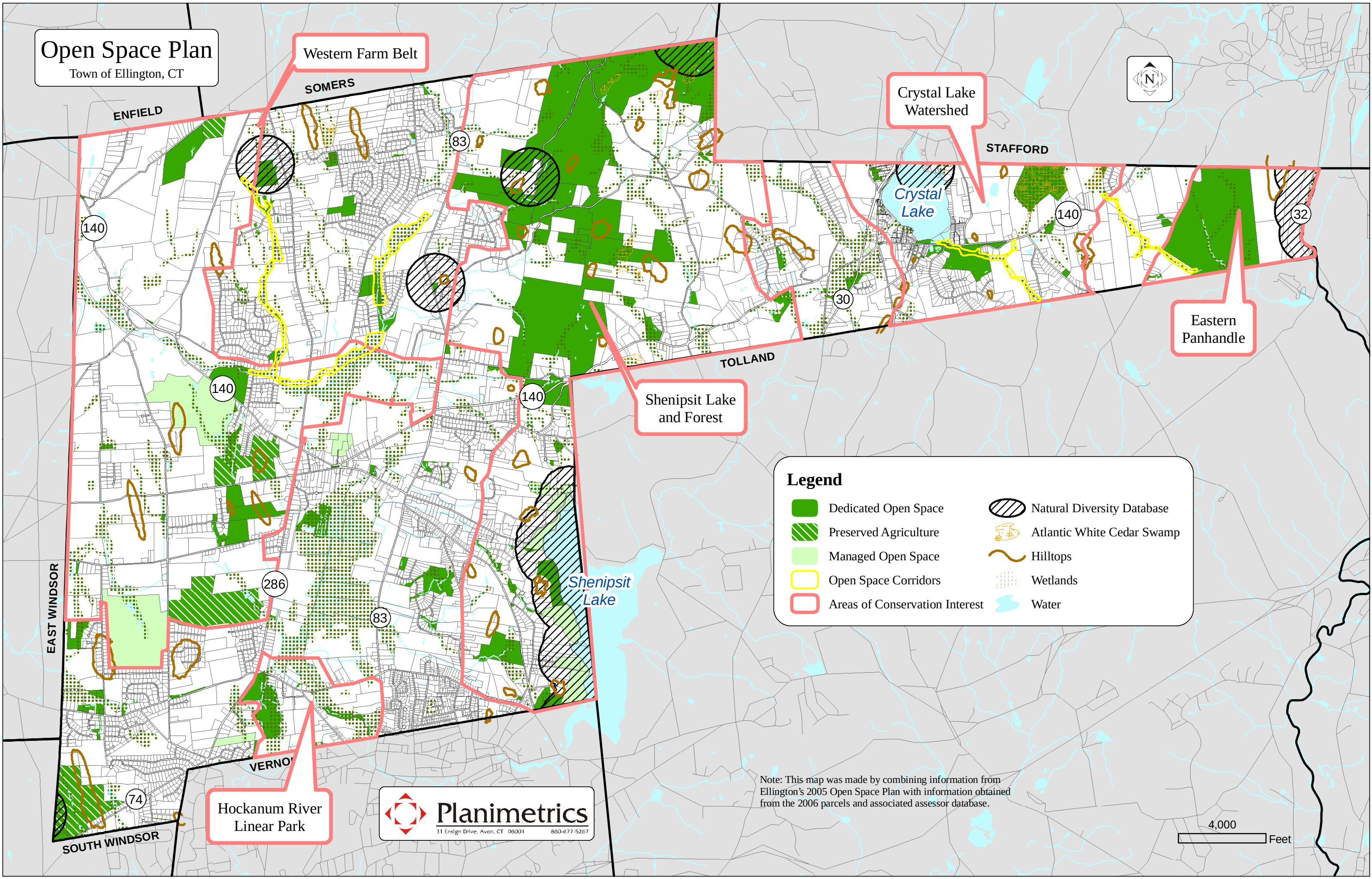
- Brook and wetland systems north of Brookside to the Shenipsit State Forest area, as well as to the dedicated open space area in the vicinity of Birch View Drive;
- The brook and wetlands system connecting the Crystal Ridge Open Space with the White Cedar Swamp in the pan handle; and
- The brook and wetlands system extending north from the Nye Holman State Forest to the large wetlands area east of the White Cedar Swamp.

Open Space Strategies

1. Increase open space set-asides to 20%.
2. Initiate a fund for open space acquisition.
3. Adopt an open space equivalency factor.
4. Encourage Open Space Residential Developments through revised regulations.
5. Continue to accept fees in lieu of open space when appropriate to the land being subdivided.
6. Continue off-site dedication of open space.
7. Utilize greenway systems to interconnect open space areas.

Open Space Plan

Town of Ellington, CT



Legend

Dedicated Open Space	Natural Diversity Database
Preserved Agriculture	Atlantic White Cedar Swamp
Managed Open Space	Hilltops
Open Space Corridors	Wetlands
Areas of Conservation Interest	Water

Note: This map was made by combining information from Ellington's 2005 Open Space Plan with information obtained from the 2006 parcels and associated assessor database.



Planimetrics
31 Ensign Drive, Avon, CT 06001 860-677-5267

Goal: Protect Forests in Eastern Highlands

The Eastern Highlands contain extensive areas of woodlands. These picturesque forests contribute to improved air and water quality and contain important watersheds, wildlife corridors, ridgelines, and passive recreation trails for hiking, biking and walking. Preservation of this area is an important goal. Strategies to achieve this goal include:

- Utilize the open space dedication requirements of the Subdivision Regulations to preserve identified forest resources;
- Lobby the state to purchase key parcels in the highlands areas;
- Use town funds when possible to purchase open space in the highlands; and
- Apply ridgeline protection regulations where appropriate.

Goal: Preserve Historic Resources

Ellington, like many New England communities, has a long and rich history. Yet there is little official documentation of historic buildings and sites within the town. Some historic resources which are readily identifiable include:

- The McKinstry House (1730), thought to be the oldest house in town;
- The Pinney House, currently being nominated for the National Register;
- The Ellington Center Historic District, listed as a National Register District;
- Knesseth Israel Synagogue, listed on the National Register; and
- The Nellie McKnight Museum, operated by the Ellington Historical Society.

Preserving historic resources can protect community character and preserve Ellington's historic legacy.

Nellie McKnight Museum



A professional inventory of Ellington's historic resources is badly needed. The Commission on Culture and Tourism, Historical Preservation and Museum Division, currently provides grants for the full cost of an inventory of historic buildings and sites. Once the full extent of historical resources is known, the Town can decide on the scope and scale of preservation efforts.

Strategy: *Secure State funds and conduct a town- wide historic resource inventory.*

Potential Preservation Programs

There are numerous approaches to historic preservation including, to name but a few:

- The establishment of historic districts;
- Incentives in zoning regulations to preserve buildings; and
- Demolition delay ordinances.

Historic Resources



No one program is right for all communities. The various programs that can be employed are discussed below.

Historic Districts

In order to exercise regulatory control over the architectural integrity of historic resources, property owners within historic areas would need to vote to establish a local historic district. A Historic District Commission, appointed by the Board of Selectmen, would then adopt and administer regulations requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness for certain exterior architectural improvements within a district that are visible from a public street. While the scope of regulations may vary from one district to another, the intent should be to ensure that improvements do not harm the architectural character of individual properties or the surrounding district. Property owners within local historic districts often appreciate the protection of their investment in maintaining and rehabilitating their properties offered by the assurance of continued historic and architectural integrity of neighboring properties.

Strategy: Explore the appropriateness of establishing Local Historic Districts.

Historic District Myths

Local Historic District Commissions can prohibit the installation of handicapped access ramps or fire escapes.

- ❌ Commissions cannot prohibit the permitted installation of features required to protect health and safety.

Historic District Designation will lower the value of homes.

- ❌ Studies have shown that both national and local historic district designations can stabilize or increase property values relative to similar properties outside of historic districts.

Local Historic District Commissions can regulate changes to the interior of buildings.

- ❌ Commissions can only regulate the exterior appearance of elements that are visible from the street. Interior changes or exterior alterations and additions that are not visible from the street are not regulated.

Local Historic District Commissions can control the color of your house.

- ❌ Painting your house is routine maintenance and is not a regulated activity. A Commission, if requested, might offer advice to a property owner on historic paint schemes.

Local Historic District Commissions can prevent the demolition of a historic structure.

- ❌ Historic District Designation cannot ultimately prevent the demolition of an historic structure. A separately enacted Demolition Delay Ordinance can delay the demolition of an historic structure for up to 90 days in order to explore alternatives to demolition such as purchasing the property or relocating the structure.

Village Districts

Another tool for protecting the aesthetic character of historic properties is the “village district.” Adopted by Planning & Zoning Commissions (PZC), a village district is a zoning district that allows for a high degree of architectural and site design control. A village district typically applies to commercial and multi-family developments, ensuring that as properties are redeveloped, or infill development occurs, the development will be in character with the surrounding area. Unlike a local historic district, village districts may be adopted unilaterally by the PZC after an application and public hearing in accordance with their established zoning procedures.



Historic Green Area

Strategy: Explore the use of Village Districts to regulate historic commercial areas.

Adaptive Re-Use

To encourage, rather than mandate, historic preservation, regulatory incentives such as adaptive re-use provisions can be adopted by the PZC. This would give owners of historic properties flexibility in re-tenanting their properties in return for making repairs that ensure the continued architectural and historic integrity of the property.

Strategy: Amend the zoning regulations to provide adaptive reuse provisions for historic properties.

Tax Abatements

The Board of Selectmen can provide economic incentives such as tax abatements for the restoration or improvement of historic resources, provided such improvements do not compromise the architectural or historic integrity of the property. CGS Section 12-127a authorizes communities to abate taxes for buildings of historic or architectural merit. The statute reads in part as follows: “Such tax abatement shall be available to the owners of real property which is so classified if it can be shown to the satisfaction of the municipality that the current

Strategy: Allow tax abatements for restoration or improvements to historic properties, provided they do not compromise architectural or historic integrity.

Strategy: Adopt a demolition delay ordinance that requires up to a 90-day waiting period before the demolition of a historic structure.

Strategy: Encourage sensitive stewardship to preserve historic resources.

level of taxation is a material factor which threatens the continued existence of the structure, necessitating either its demolition or remodeling in a manner which destroys the historical or architectural value.” CGS Section 12-65e authorizes communities to fix assessments during rehabilitation and/or phase in increased assessments resulting from the rehabilitation of properties within a designated rehabilitation area.

Such abatements are a “win-win” situation for both the Town and property owner. By deferring or phasing in the tax increase on the improved value of a historic property, property owners are not immediately saddled with higher property taxes while paying for renovations, which would otherwise be a disincentive to improving their property. The Town ultimately benefits from both the aesthetic improvement to properties as well as the eventual increase in property taxes when the properties are later assessed at their new full value.

Demolition Delay Ordinance

While not ultimately offering protection, the Board of Selectmen can adopt a demolition delay ordinance that requires as much as a 90-day waiting period before a historic building can be demolished. This waiting period allows the opportunity to seek alternatives to demolition such as purchasing the property, relocating the structure(s), or at a minimum, salvaging architectural components before a building is destroyed.

“Sensitive Stewardship”

Owners who are committed emotionally and financially to maintaining historic resources can be the most effective means of preserving them. “Sensitive stewardship” is the notion that owners of historic properties are temporary stewards of a historic community resource and have a responsibility to maintain their architectural and historic integrity and pass that responsibility on to future owners. Without pride and sensitivity in ownership, no regulatory or incentive program can prevent the loss of historic resources due to neglect and ultimate demolition. One way to encourage sensitive stewardship is through such recognition programs as the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Ellington already has several designations on both historic registers but there are clearly additional properties worthy of designation.



Historic Residence

National or State Historic Register designation is an honorary program with no regulatory impacts on owners. However, it does offer limited protection from federally funded programs such as Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funded highway projects, requiring such projects to mitigate impacts on National Register designated properties. Designation can also benefit owners of historic commercial properties by making renovations thereof eligible for federal tax credits if the renovations comply with appropriate standards.

Strategy: Encourage applications for National and State Historic Register designation.

Ellington can also establish an honorary local register of historic places to acknowledge properties of local historic significance without the formality of an application for federal or state designation. Such a program might be administered by the Ellington Historical Society and could include a voluntarily historic placard program to indicate the original owner and/or date of construction of local historic buildings. While adding no protection to a property, it can instill pride in ownership and encourage preservation efforts.



Historic Placard

Strategy: Consider establishing a local register of historic places and providing historic placards to instill pride in ownership.

Education Programs

Education programs are another critical component of any historic preservation program. Many owners of historic properties are unfamiliar with historic preservation techniques and have been known to rebel against historic register designation, local historic district designation, and village district designation for fear that they will lose control of their property or be financially harmed. Historic register programs are honorary and offer positive benefits without any regulation whatsoever. The purview of local historic districts is limited to the architectural appearance of historic properties from the street and does not reach beyond to the rear or interior of structures. Once property owners understand that the benefits of historic preservation outweigh any limitations that it may create, they will be more likely to support historic preservation initiatives in the future.

Strategy: Seek ways to provide educational programs and technical assistance to owners of historic resources.

Historic Preservation Strategies

1. Secure State funds and conduct a Town-wide historic resource inventory.
2. Explore the appropriateness of establishing Local Historic Districts.
3. Explore the use of Village Districts to regulate historic commercial areas.
4. Amend the zoning regulations to provide adaptive reuse provisions for historic properties.
5. Allow tax abatements for restoration or improvements to historic properties that do not compromise their architectural or historic integrity.
6. Adopt a demolition delay ordinance that requires up to a 90-day waiting period before the demolition of a historic structure.
7. Encourage “sensitive stewardship” or pride in ownership as the most effective means of preserving historic resources.
8. Encourage applications for National and State Historic Register designation.
9. Consider establishing a local register of historic places and providing historic placards to instill pride in ownership.
10. Seek ways to provide educational programs and technical assistance to owners of historic resources.

GUIDING APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT

3

Overview

This chapter is directed at recommending strategies for guiding commercial, industrial, and residential development. Overall economic development strategies are also considered. Such strategies are important when one considers that Ellington's residential and commercial/industrial development can expand substantially. The Buildout Analysis noted that at full development, Ellington's population will increase 250% over current figures, and commercial/industrial development could increase by 300%. How this anticipated growth is managed will have a significant impact on future community character and quality of life in Ellington.

Visual and environmental impacts resulting from development can be positive or negative. Ellington should manage development so that these impacts are primarily positive and thus reinforce Ellington's character and quality of life.

Commercial and Industrial Development

Commercial and industrial development is important because it is the basis for the local economy and it typically contributes tax revenue in excess of the cost of municipal services provided. Census figures show that the various businesses in Ellington provide for a total of 2,261 jobs and constitute 16.7% of the tax base.

Commercial/Industrial Areas

The principal areas of commercial and industrial development, displayed on the map on page 3-11, include the following:

- Route 83 corridor from Vernon town line to north of the airport;
- Town Center Triangle between Main and Maple Streets and west to Tomoka Avenue;
- Five Corners area;
- Industrial Park/Windermere area;
- Crystal Lake area; and
- Route 140 West, South of Reeves Road.

A large majority of community survey respondents, 93%, suggested their quality of life was good to very good.

A discussion of these areas follows.

Route 83 Corridor

Economic development is an important issue in Ellington, not only in terms of providing a diversified tax base, jobs and shopping opportunities, but from the standpoint of community character as well.

A majority of survey respondents, 64%, felt that the airport could be a significant transportation asset and the town should encourage its continued operation.

The size and location of this area make it the most significant economic development area in the town. The corridor stretches a distance of approximately six miles from the Vernon border. Virtually the entire west side of the corridor is commercially/industrially zoned. Approximately 2.6 miles on the east side of the corridor are commercially zoned. The corridor encompasses approximately 550 acres of commercially/industrially zoned land, of which 340 acres are developed.

Public water and sewers are available for the majority of the corridor area. Sidewalks are not present in the corridor and there is noticeable pedestrian traffic.

There are areas south of the Route 83/Main Street intersection that might accommodate limited expansion of the commercial zones to the west. (Existing flood plains and wetland areas would be a limitation to such expansion.) Residential development on the east side of Route 83 limits any possible commercial zone expansion to the east.

Special attention needs to be given to the airport property located in the northern area of Route 83. The airport encompasses 125 acres and, as such, is the largest parcel of industrially-zoned land in Ellington. Sewers were recently extended to the airport area. Should the airport cease operations, a substantial amount of land would be available for industrial development. The property is large enough to warrant an integrated master plan that would guide building uses, locations, and an overall circulation plan. It could also present an opportunity to integrate existing buildings into an overall circulation plan such that some of the existing driveway cuts onto Route 83 might be discontinued.

The principal challenges of future growth in this area will be:

- Dealing with increased traffic;
- Fostering appropriate designs for commercial buildings; and
- Implementing appropriate land use transitions and buffering to residential uses on the east side of the corridor.

Route 83 Retail Development



Town Center Triangle

This area of the town is perceived as the town center. The majority of this area is



Town Center

served by public water and sewers. This area has a wide variety of land uses, i.e., the Town Hall, Public Works facility, High School, Center School, Elderly Housing Complex, Library, retail, office, and other commercial uses. The area also contains many historic residential structures. Within the area, approximately 236 acres are zoned commercial, of which 82 acres are under or un-developed.

There are 20 properties west of Berr Avenue zoned Planned Commercial. Seventeen of these properties are in residential use, 1 in commercial use, 1 in industrial use, and 1 in institutional use. The extent and need for the Planned Commercial Zone in this specific area should be reviewed.

Another strong attribute of the village area is the extent of sidewalks which allow the area to be pedestrian- friendly. Improvements to the sidewalk system are recommended, including extensions where necessary to have a continuous system of sidewalks along the village triangle – Tomoka, Maple, Route 83 and Main. Additionally, a north-south “cross country” extension from Maple to Main in the general vicinity of the High School is desirable.

As noted in Chapter 2, a variety of approaches to preserve the character of the Town Center are available, including Village District Zoning and Historic Districts, as well as educational programs. The detailed recommendations in Chapter 2 should be considered in guiding the future growth of the town center area.

Five Corners

The Five Corners area contains 11 developed properties zoned commercial. A relatively small area, it is nonetheless important because of its location and the configuration of the five-street intersection.

Traffic movement and congestion at this location is an on-going problem. The Town should continue to work with the Connecticut Department of Transportation to improve the intersection.

A majority of respondents to the community survey felt that the number of small retail stores, large retail stores, and small business offices existing in town was “about right”.

A majority felt that the number of restaurants was too few.

The need for the Planned Commercial Zone in the Town Center Triangle area should be reviewed.

Strategy: *Use Village District Regulations or focused design review standards for Town Center to foster “in-character” development.*

Strategy: *In the Five Corners Area, update zoning regulations to assist in addressing access and circulation issues.*

Zoning regulations need updating to improve site development and building appearance in the Industrial Park/Windermere Area.

Strategy: *Rezone excess PC-zoned areas in Crystal Lake to Residential.*

Consideration should be given to rezoning the vacant properties in the Route 140 West Area to Industrial Park.

Industrial Park/Windermere Area

This area has good access and is served by public water and sewers. It contains approximately 106 properties zoned Industrial or Industrial Park. Approximately 195 of the 303 zoned acres are under or un-developed.

Developed sites within the industrially-zoned areas are somewhat stark, both in landscaping details and building design. Zoning regulations need updating to improve site development and building appearance.

Crystal Lake Area

Commercial and Planned Commercial Zones encompass 103 acres within the Crystal Lake area. Approximately 55 acres of this zoned area is undeveloped or under developed. Public sewers are available for the majority of areas zoned commercial. There are properties west of Route 30 in residential use that are currently zoned Planned Commercial. These properties should be rezoned to Residential.



Crystal Lake

Route 140 West

This area has 10 properties (206 acres) zoned industrial. The majority of this area is in agricultural use. One property, owned by the Town, is the site of the transfer station. Another property recycles materials to produce mulch. Neither public sewers nor public water is available to this area.

The existing industrial uses in this area would be considered “heavy industrial” uses because of the nature of their operations. Given the remoteness of the areas, such uses have not been a problem for the surrounding neighborhood. In order to provide a transition to residentially-zoned properties east of the area, consideration should be given to rezoning the vacant properties to Industrial Park. This would limit industrial uses and allow more control over site development.

Another land use consideration for this area would be to permit a retail convenience store. The rationale for this would be to provide this service for this remote area of town so that homeowners and commuters would not have to rely on longer trips to Route 83 for convenience-type purchases. This would require a zone change to commercial and should be considered if and when initiated by a property owner.

Strategies and Actions for Guiding Commercial and Industrial Development

The following revisions to both the zoning regulations and the zoning map are recommended:

- Rezone Commercial to Planned Commercial where appropriate.
- Provide specific landscaping standards.
- Provide more specific lighting standards.
- Update and upgrade signage standards.
- Provide design guidelines for larger buildings.
- Institute a Design Overlay Zone for Route 83.
- Institute Access Management for Route 83.
- Use Village District Regulations or focused design review standards for Town Center to foster “in-character” development.
- Review and rezone as necessary properties west of Berr Avenue currently zoned Planned Commercial.
- Rezone excess PC-zoned areas in Crystal Lake to Residential.
- Enact a new Planned Commercial Zone for the Rockville area, Route 83:
 - Incorporate appropriate use and lot standards for the area;
 - Provide for transitional uses relative to interior residential properties; and
 - Emphasize protection of interior residential properties.
- Upgrade use and design standards for Industrial and Planned Industrial Zones.
- In the Five Corners Area, update zoning regulations to assist in addressing access and circulation issues.
- Require a master plan for the airport property should it cease operations. This plan would guide building locations, uses, and a circulation plan.

Additional strategies for commercial and industrial development include the following:

- Formalize a Design Review Committee and Process.
- Develop a Design Review Manual.
- Work with the Connecticut Department of Transportation to improve circulation in Five Corners area.
- Consider providing tax incentives for improvements to older commercial properties in Rockville area.
- Monitor sewer allocation as development occurs and consider purchasing additional capacity from Vernon as necessary.
- Work with civic groups to establish attractive gateways to the Town.

The Economic Development Commission (EDC) plans for, and promotes, business development within the community in order to increase the grand list and provide for a balanced tax burden. Their perspective on commercial and industrial growth is an important element of the Plan, and their recommended strategies are as follows:

- Promote the tax abatement program to attract new businesses and retain existing businesses.
- Encourage expansion of utilities as necessary for economic development and not for further residential development;
- Explore the viability of the future of the airport as a multi-modal transportation option for the town and, if found that it is not economically viable, utilize that site and the surrounding area for commercial and light industrial uses.
- Review the zoning map to ensure that all commercial and industrial zones are in the appropriate location and rezone as necessary.
- Create neighborhood business zones in the Crystal Lake area, the Five Corners area, and the Northwest Corner.
- Support the PZC in their review and revision of the zoning regulations to include design standards.
- Support Access Management regulations for the Route 83 corridor.
- Support reduction of regulatory requirements where appropriate and feasible.

Residential Development

Residential development is important primarily because of its existing and potential magnitude. Eighty percent of the Town is zoned residential. Almost 50% of developed or committed land is residential. Under current zoning, the ultimate population of Ellington could be 37,000 people. The scale and pattern of residential development will influence and shape the future character of the Town.



Typical Residential Development

Basic Zoning Considerations

The Buildout Analysis noted that Ellington's residential zoning standards employ a "one size fits all" approach. That is, although there are 5 different residential zones for single-family development, all use the same minimum lot size (40,000 square feet) and minimum lot width (150 feet) requirements. The variety of landforms, soils, and topography in Ellington suggests that there needs to be a greater variety of zoning standards attuned to the variety of natural conditions. This section of the Plan incorporates the Buildout Analysis recommendations relating to minimum lot sizes for different neighborhoods.

The Buildout Analysis of 2004 considered residential development in the context of the following 5 neighborhoods:

- Northwest Corner,
- Southwest Corner,
- Central Core,
- Shenipsit Central, and
- Crystal Lake.

These neighborhoods are shown on the Residential Growth Area Map, page 3-13.

Residential Neighborhoods – Northwest Corner

- Approximately 15% of this neighborhood is developed.
- It has very limited areas that are serviced by public water, and public sewers are not available.
- Development constraints, including wetland areas and steep slopes, are moderate.
- The minimum lot size recommended in the Buildout Analysis is 80,000 square feet.

Residential Neighborhoods – Southwest Corner

- Approximately 45% of this neighborhood is developed.
- Public water and public sewers serve about 25% of this neighborhood.
- Development constraints, including wetland areas and steep slopes, are moderate.
- The minimum lot size recommended in the Buildout Analysis is 60,000 square feet.

Residential Neighborhoods – Central Core

- Approximately 50% of this neighborhood is developed.
- Public water and public sewers serve a majority of this neighborhood.
- Development constraints, including wetland areas and steep slopes, are moderate to severe.
- The minimum lot size recommended in the Buildout Analysis is 40,000 square feet.
- It should be noted that the upper, northern reaches of this neighborhood lack public water and sewers. Accordingly, minimum lot size in these areas should be 60,000 square feet.

Residential Neighborhoods – Shenipsit Central

- Approximately 10% of this neighborhood is developed.
- Public water and public sewers are not available in this neighborhood.
- Development constraints, including wetland areas and steep slopes, are severe.
- The minimum lot size recommended in the Buildout Analysis is 60,000 square feet.

Residential Neighborhoods – Crystal Lake

- Approximately 20% of this neighborhood is developed.
- Public water is not available and public sewers serve limited areas in this neighborhood.
- Development constraints, including wetland areas and steep slopes, are moderate.
- The minimum lot size recommended in the Buildout Analysis is 80,000 square feet.

Strategies for Residential Development

The majority of strategies for guiding future residential development relate to revisions to the zoning regulations and to the subdivision regulations as discussed below.

- Modify the minimum lot area and frontage requirements, consistent with constraints, as recommended in the Buildout Analysis.
- Utilize density standards to ensure that residential development works harmoniously with natural resource constraints. (See sidebar)
- Update Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) regulations. These regulations have been in effect since the early 1970's and have yet to be used. The high requirement for open space areas (10 acres) and the minimal change allowed for lot requirements are chief reasons for non-use of the OSRD regulations. Flexible yard and building separation requirements, coupled with density standards, could transform the OSRD regulations into a functional regulatory tool.
- Update Subdivision Design Standards to increase open space set-asides. Currently, residential subdivisions are required to preserve 10% of the subdivided tract as open space. The Buildout Analysis recommends 20%.
- Review and update, as appropriate, subdivision design standards for road widths and cul-de-sacs.
- Consider requiring open space in conjunction with approval of multifamily developments.
- Reduce maximum density allowed in zoning regulations for multifamily developments from 5 units/acre to 4 units/acre

Residential Development



Density Standards

Residential density is simply another way of looking at “development yield”. For example, 8 lots on a 10-acre parcel translates to a density of 0.80 units per acre.

Similar to a minimum lot size regulation, a maximum density regulation can be used to regulate development yield from a piece of property.

Density standards are based upon:

- Minimum lot area requirements;
- Lot width requirements;
- Right of way requirements;
- Open space requirements; and
- Lot configuration efficiency.

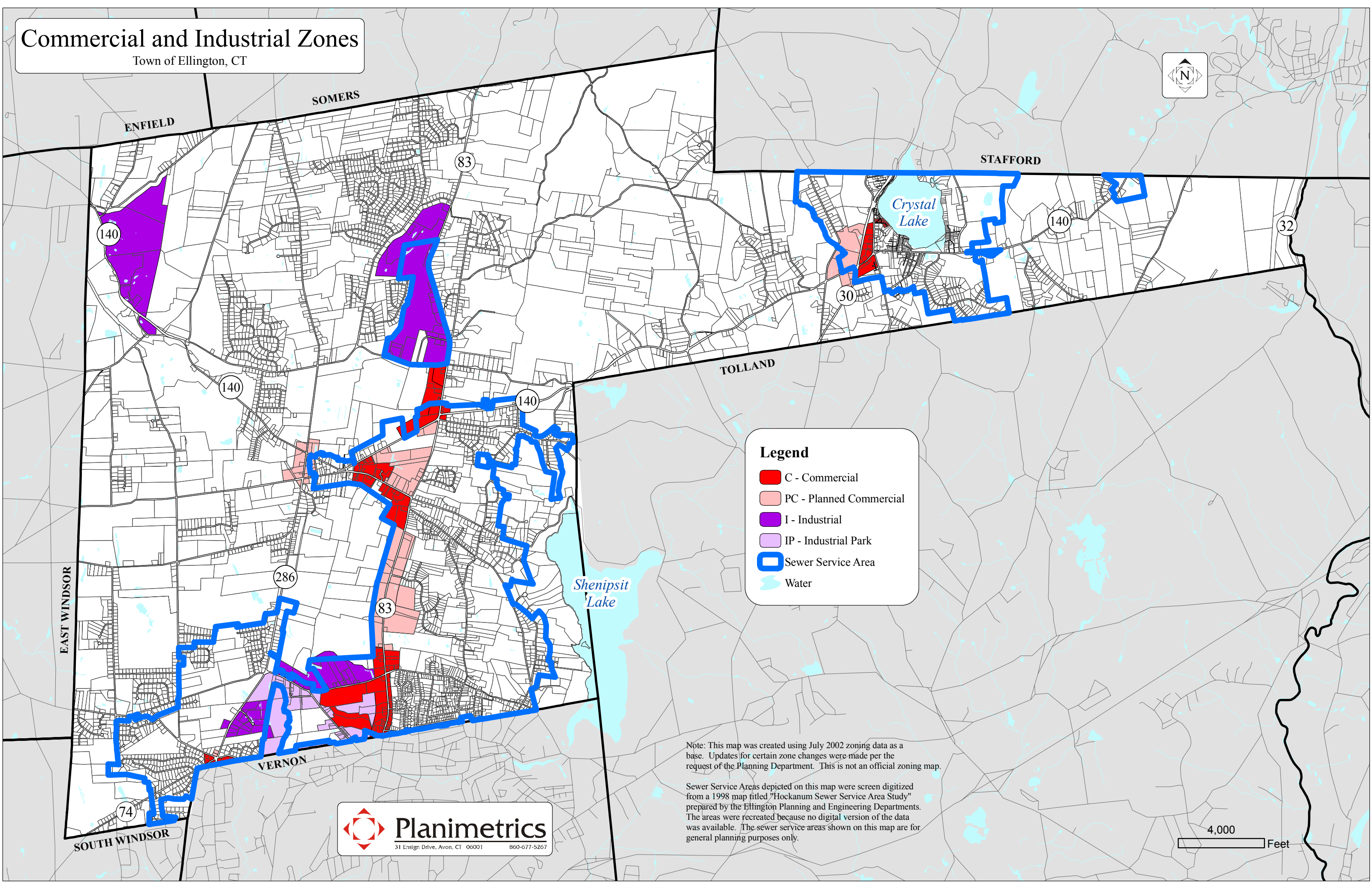
A 40,000 square foot minimum lot requirement, a 150 minimum lot width requirement, a 50 foot right of way requirement, and an open space requirement of 10% will typically result in a density factor of 0.80 units per acre.

Typically, density standards are used in conjunction with “buildable area” standards. That is, density standards are applied to a property after deducting unbuildable areas such as wetlands or flood plains. For instance, in the example noted above, suppose that 1 of the 10 acres were flood plain land and the density standard was .80. Actual yield on the property would be .80 times 9 or 7 lots.

This Page Intentionally Blank

Commercial and Industrial Zones

Town of Ellington, CT



Legend

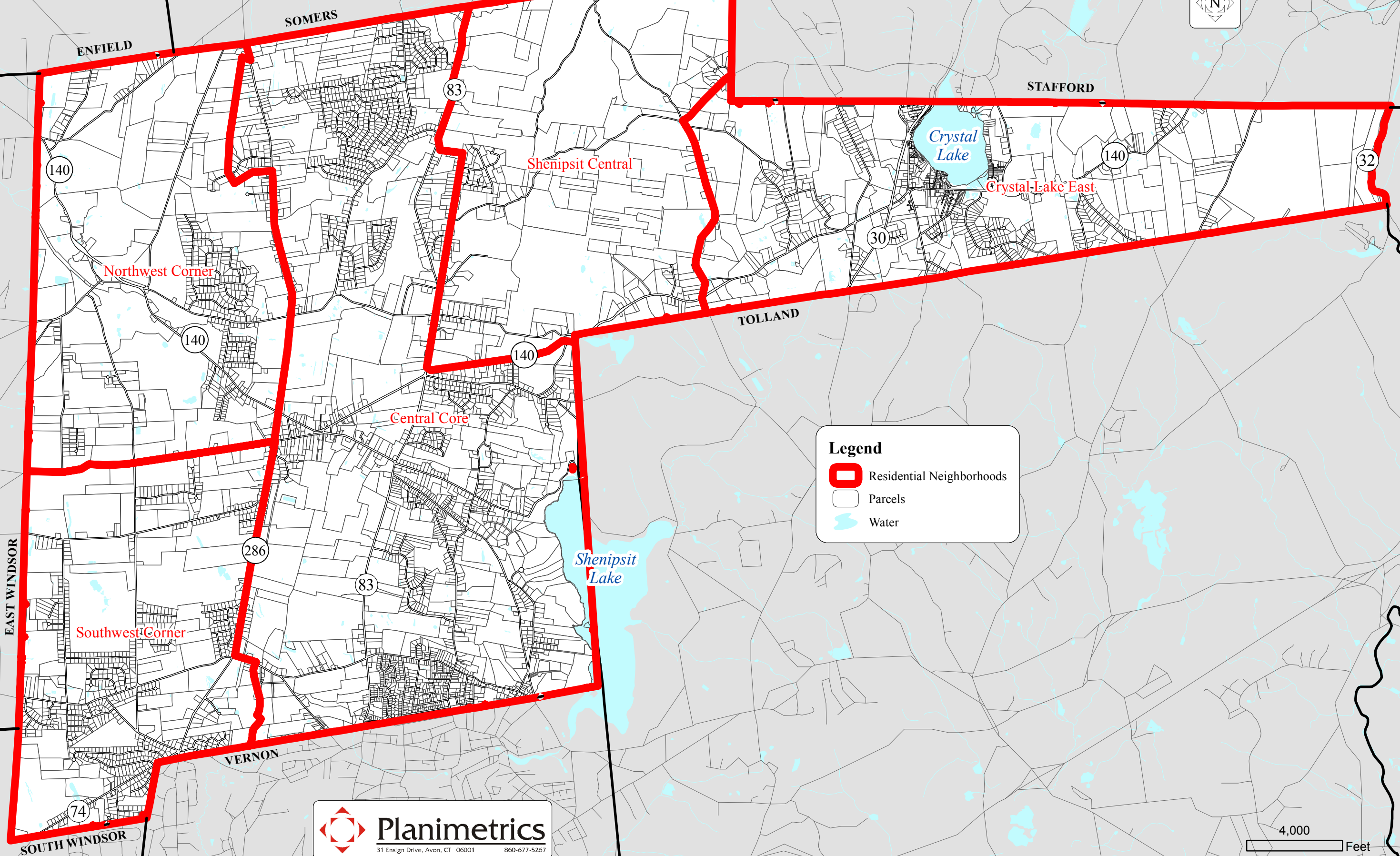
- C - Commercial
- PC - Planned Commercial
- I - Industrial
- IP - Industrial Park
- Sewer Service Area
- Water

Note: This map was created using July 2002 zoning data as a base. Updates for certain zone changes were made per the request of the Planning Department. This is not an official zoning map.

Sewer Service Areas depicted on this map were screen digitized from a 1998 map titled "Hockanum Sewer Service Area Study" prepared by the Ellington Planning and Engineering Departments. The areas were recreated because no digital version of the data was available. The sewer service areas shown on this map are for general planning purposes only.

Residential Neighborhoods

Town of Ellington, CT



Legend

-  Residential Neighborhoods
-  Parcels
-  Water

ADDRESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS

4

Overview

Infrastructure and governmental services are significant elements in supporting and shaping the overall development of the Town. Transportation facilities and utilities, together with community facilities and services, can also have significant impacts on residents' quality of life depending on how well they meet their everyday needs.

This chapter of the Plan assesses the community needs that are likely to emerge as the Town develops. Consideration is given to:

- Housing, including affordable and age-related housing;
- Administrative space needed for everyday government operations;
- Recreational facilities;
- Educational buildings and facilities;
- Public safety facilities;
- Utilities; and
- Overall road networks.

Ellington's infrastructure can maintain and even enhance residents' quality of life.

Community Facilities



Public Works



Housing Needs



Public Safety



Changing Housing Needs

A majority of community survey respondents, 62%, felt that there was not enough housing stock for elderly persons.

Two areas of housing warrant special attention over the planning period - affordable housing and senior housing. Demographic trends indicate that the population segment aged 55 and over will almost double over the next 25 years, going from 18% to 30% of the total population. Trends experienced throughout Connecticut, and applicable to Ellington in the area of affordable housing, substantiate needed attention in this area. That is, housing costs have been escalating much faster than income gains. Statewide, between 2000 and 2005, housing costs rose by 63.6% while wages have risen 18.5%. A discussion of specific strategies to address senior and affordable housing needs follows.

Senior Housing Options

Specialized housing options for the population aged 55 and older include:

- Active Adult Housing typically has restrictions on the age of occupants, provides for exterior maintenance of buildings and grounds, and provides for relatively compact layouts with one-level living space.
- Subsidized Housing typically involves multi-family units with below-market rents subsidized by various state and federal programs.
- Congregate Housing Facilities typically are multi-family units with a common dining facility. The emphasis of this type of housing is to provide for an on-going social experience for residents. Limited housekeeping tasks may be provided.
- Assisted Living Facilities are multi-family units that combine housing, support services, and limited health care.
- Life Care Facilities combine housing, support services, and a full range of medical care.

Strategy: Monitor the needs for various types of senior housing and insure timely review of zoning regulations allowing for same.

Current zoning regulations provide for active adult and subsidized housing, as well as for convalescent/nursing homes. Amendments to the regulations to permit the additional specialized housing types may or may not be necessary as these specialized needs are likely to be addressed at the regional (multi-town) level. When and if it becomes evident that there is a local need for specialized housing, the necessary amendments to the zoning regulations should be undertaken. Input from the provider of specialized housing is necessary to fashion appropriate regulations, and such input should be sought at the time of amending the zoning regulations. Given the usual density of these facilities, public water and sewers should be required.

Strategy: Seek state and federal grants to expand assisted elderly housing.

Housing for a Diversity of Resident Incomes

As noted in Chapter 1, Ellington has a wide variety of housing choices, including a substantial inventory of rental apartments, together with condominiums and single-family homes. Sales statistics for homes sold during 2005 and 2006 are as follows:

Type of Unit	2005		2006	
	# of Units	Median Price	# of Units	Median Price
Single-Family	152	\$233,750	140	\$249,900
Condo	48	\$110,500	46	\$128,000

According to the *Connecticut General Statutes*, affordable housing means housing that is:

- Subsidized;
- Financed by CHFA or other mortgage assistance programs; or
- Deed-restricted to affordable prices.

Sales price for affordable housing is dictated by State Statute 8-30g which states that an affordable price is that which a person or family earning 80% of the regional median income can afford without spending more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs. Such a unit must be also be guaranteed to remain affordable for 40 years. Two levels of affordability are established – affordable to moderate-income families, and affordable to low-income families. When the various factors required in SS 8-30g are considered, affordable sales prices translate to between \$120,000 and \$170,000.

As can be seen in the above Housing Sales Data table, the median price of a single-family home in 2006 was between 1.7 and 2 times that of an affordable unit. Given land values and the market concentration on single-family home construction, it is not surprising that there is a substantial gap between what is considered as affordable housing and market-rate housing. It should also be noted that condominiums, insofar as they appear to approach affordable values, have met a significant housing need in Ellington.

Close to 7% of Ellington's housing stock meets the criteria for affordable housing. Forty units of subsidized elderly housing at Snipsic Village, a Town project, is included in this figure, together with 8 single-family units that qualify as affordable through mortgage financing. The largest segment of affordable housing is the 231 rental units at the Cornfield Apartments, again made affordable through State of Connecticut financing. Thus substantial progress towards the State goal of 10% affordable housing units in a community has been made.

Nevertheless, Ellington continues to be subject to the State Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure, which allows developers of affordable housing developments considerable regulatory flexibility during the approval process.

In the community survey, 62% felt that the stock of single family homes was about right, while 44% felt that there were too many apartments.

In the community survey, 47% of the respondents felt that there were too few housing units for first-time home buyers.

Strategy: *Actively encourage active-adult, elderly housing, and subsidized rental housing where appropriate.*

The challenge for Ellington is to continue to allow for the provision of a variety of housing costs.

Strategy: *Consider allowing density bonuses or design flexibility in exchange for providing affordable units.*

The challenge for Ellington is to continue to allow for the provision of a variety of housing costs. Affordable housing is often equated to low-income, high-density, government-assisted housing “projects”, when in fact there is a broad range of affordable housing options. The town’s experience with Snipsic Village and Cornfield Apartments attests to this. These developments can serve as models for ways to increase affordable housing within the Town, especially in terms of overall design, density, and locational characteristics.

Other approaches to generating affordable housing include efforts by non-profit and charitable organizations. Habitat for Humanity, churches and other organizations are able to construct small-scale projects, often as small as one or two homes on existing lots.

Section 8-2(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that zoning regulations “promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households”. This enables communities to adopt inclusionary zoning regulations that encourage housing for low and moderate-income persons. Such regulations may include but are not limited to:

- Setting aside affordable housing units through long-term deed restrictions or other means;
- Allowing density bonuses for providing affordable housing units; and
- Allowing a fee-in-lieu-of an affordable housing unit.

To encourage affordable housing on a similar scale, Ellington could allow development flexibility in return for providing affordable units within a proposed development.

Housing Strategies

1. Monitor needs for various types of senior housing and insure timely review of zoning regulations allowing for same.
2. Actively encourage active-adult, elderly housing, and subsidized rental housing where appropriate.
3. Seek state and federal grants to expand assisted elderly housing.
4. Consider allowing density bonuses or design flexibility in exchange for providing affordable units.

Community Facility and Service Needs

Community facilities support important community functions such as public safety, education, government administration, and recreation. Guidance on the timely upgrading and/or expansion of facilities is an important element of the Plan.

Facility needs over the next 10 years appear to be warranted in the following areas:

- Administrative space in the Town Hall and Town Hall Annex complex;
- Fire protection services;
- Community Center/Senior Center Facility;
- Recreational facilities; and
- Educational facilities.

Community facilities and services are major contributing factors in determining the overall quality of life in Ellington.



Town Center



Town Hall

Town Hall Complex

The Town Hall and the Town Hall Annex, located at 55-57 Main Street, provide administrative space for the following governmental functions:

<u>Town Hall</u>		<u>Town Hall Annex</u>
Assessor	Selectman's Office	Building Department
Finance Officer	Tax Collector	Emergency Management Department
Registrar of Voters	Town Clerk	Fire Marshall
		Planning Department

Strategy: Provide for timely expansion of the Town Hall and/or the Annex to meet anticipated needs.

Strategy: Provide generator back-up for Town Hall

Strategy: Re-locate Emergency Management to Town Hall.

Strategy: Provide additional land at Public Works complex to allow for expanded storage areas and canine facility.

A majority of community survey respondents, 54%, felt there was a need for a community center for all ages.

The Town Hall contains approximately 10,000 square feet, and the Annex 3,700 square feet. Principal functional shortcomings include the following:

- Assessor's & Tax Collector's offices are crowded and will need more room as the Town grows.
- There are likely to be new staff positions created over the next 10 years and the current complex will not accommodate this growth.
- The emergency management office requires generator back up.
- The Emergency Manager and Deputy share office space with the Fire Marshall. Eventually this department should have its own office.

The following should be considered to address administrative space needs at the Town Hall Complex:

- Modest expansion to the Town Hall and/or the Annex should accommodate space needs for the planning period; and
- Emergency Management should be relocated to the Town Hall coincident with providing generator back-up to that building.

Public Works Complex

The Public Works department, located at 21 Main Street, contains a complex of buildings, including administrative facilities, garages for the storage of trucks and other equipment, a salt storage structure, and an animal control facility. Among its more important functions are the maintenance and repair of public streets, parks, town buildings, storm and sanitary sewers, as well as various construction projects. Over the coming planning period, the following improvements will be needed:

- The Public Works Facility needs additional equipment storage space and there is not room for any expansions on the existing site. Additional property adjacent to site needs to be acquired during planning period.
- The Canine Facility is under-sized and needs upgrading. As above, site constraints will not allow expansion; additional land needs to be acquired.

Senior Center

The Senior Center, located at 16 Church Street, administers programs and activities designed to meet the social and health well-being of individuals age 60 years and older. The space at 16 Church Street is leased and has limitations both in size and functionality. For instance, the center does not have a full kitchen facility. There is a desire among the Senior Center Staff, as well as among the seniors themselves, to have a town-owned facility. A new community center could meet multiple needs, including that of the seniors.

Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

Fire protection and emergency medical services (EMS) are provided by a combined force of approximately 125 personnel in 3 facilities: Ellington Volunteer Ambulance Corps at 41 Maple Street, Crystal Lake Volunteer Fire Department at 316 Sandy Beach Road, and Ellington Volunteer Fire Department at 29 Main Street.

A comprehensive Emergency Services Evaluation was prepared for the Town in 2003. The major findings of that evaluation appropriate to include in the Plan are as follows:

- The Ellington Volunteer Fire Department station was built in 1946 and had several major additions over the years. It is an 8500 square foot facility with 8 apparatus bays. Office and storage space were judged to be inadequate. Limited size and cramped facilities result in some apparatus not being stored appropriately.
- The Crystal Lake Volunteer Fire Department station is a 9,500 square foot facility. It was built in 1950 and underwent a major expansion in 1989. It has reasonably good space utilization, considering multiple renovations.
- The Ellington Volunteer Ambulance Corps station contains 5,000 square feet and was constructed in 1979. It was judged to be a well-designed building for its intended purpose.
- An analysis based upon response times of existing fire stations revealed that, with future residential growth, new stations would be warranted north and south of the Main Street Village Center. Because of developmental pressures, the southern location is of immediate concern. The need for this additional station is well documented in the Evaluation Report and the new station should be implemented in the early stages of this Planning period.
- The recommendation for a new station north of the Village Center is related to future residential growth. The report recommends that a facility be located in the vicinity of an extension of Dogwood Lane to Jobs Hill Road. Tied in with this location would be the extension of Brook Crossing to Brookfield Dr. This would permit the new station to efficiently serve residences north of Muddy Brook Road. Development in this northern area needs to be monitored to determine at what point the new station might be needed. It is probable that it will not be needed during the current planning period.

Fire hydrants are an important ingredient in dealing with life safety issues. Ideal spacing of hydrants is 1,000 feet. Early extensions of water lines in the Geraldine, Hillside/Viewside subdivisions did not observe this spacing. As time and funds permit, new hydrants are being added.

Strategy: Establish a new fire station in the south-west quadrant of town.

Strategy: Monitor the need for a new fire station to better serve northern Ellington.

With its sizable and unique natural assets, Ellington should preserve and enhance its recreational assets in order to accommodate the needs of its growing population.

Over 45% of survey respondents felt that an indoor recreation center/pool was a priority.

Strategy: Provide additional sports fields, preferably in close proximity to existing fields.

Recreation

For families in Ellington, life has always included an appreciation for recreation, whether hunting, fishing, hiking or more organized activities such as youth sports. The recreation department provides indoor and outdoor activities on a year-round basis. Principal venues for these activities include Brookside Park on Route 140, Sandy Beach at Crystal Lake, and indoor and outdoor facilities at the public schools.

Brookside Park is the largest (41 acres) active recreational facility in town. Multiple facilities exist on the site including the following:

4 Soccer Fields (Small)	1 Football Field
1 Practice Soccer Field	2 Tennis Courts
1 Soccer Field (Full Size)	1 Playground
2 Softball Fields	2 Basketball Courts
1 Lacrosse Field	Picnicking Facilities
4 Little League Fields	

Based upon interviews with department staff, needed improvements to Brookside Park over the current planning period include the following:

- Expand parking. The current capacity is approximately 220 and at least 60 additional spaces are needed.
- Add facilities as desired by public, e.g., tennis courts, shuffleboard courts.

Field Sports



Brookside Park



Between Brookside Park, Ellington High School Complex, and other smaller facilities, residents have access to a wide variety of traditional outdoor recreation facilities. The growing popularity of sports such as soccer, field hockey and lacrosse have produced playing schedules that often do not allow for the proper grooming and maintenance of the playing fields. Additional land for playing fields and other recreational uses should be acquired during the planning period, preferably in the area of the high school as well as in the south-west quadrant of the town.

The need for a teen or youth center has been brought up by staff. An ideal venue for such a facility would be a community center. The center could provide facilities for the seniors, for various indoor recreational and educational pursuits, and for a teen/youth center. The town of Mansfield recently completed such a facility and it has become a real asset to the community. Property on Maple Street was recently given to the town for use as a senior center. It is recommended that the feasibility of a community center at that location be considered as a means of meeting multiple community needs in an efficient fashion.

Strategy: Consider establishing a Community Center as a venue for meeting multiple community needs.

Education Facilities

Ellington's educational facilities consist of the following:

- Ellington High School, located at 37 Maple Street, was recently expanded and renovated to the tune of almost 20 million dollars. It has a designed capacity of 800, and its 2006 enrollment was 721 or 90% of capacity. Projections show that from 2010 through 2016 the school will experience enrollments exceeding 95% of capacity – a condition considered overcrowding. There are numerous parcels of land in the area of the high school, so expansion is possible.
- Ellington Middle School, at 46 Middle Butcher Road, serves grades 7 and 8. It has a designed capacity of 400 and a current enrollment of 383, or 96% of capacity. Projections show that overcrowding will continue throughout the planning period, reaching a peak of 117% of capacity in 2012-2013.
- Center School, at 49 Main Street, serves grades K-4 with a capacity of 486. Enrollment for 2006 was 436 or 90% of capacity. Site constraints and surrounding land use do not offer opportunities to expand.
- Windermere School, located at 2 Abbot Road, contains grades K – 6, with a 2006 enrollment of 772. State space allowances suggest that this school has a capacity of 610 students. Site constraints and surrounding land use do not offer opportunities for expansion.
- Crystal Lake School, located at 284 Sandy Beach Road, contains grades K-4, with a 2006 enrollment of 182. Rated capacity is 204. On-site expansion is feasible.

System-wide, the PK-6 grades are projected to experience overcrowded conditions for almost all of the planning period.

High School



Center School



School overcrowding is a real issue for the town.

As evident from the preceding, school overcrowding is a real issue for the town. The Board of Education and Committees thereof have come up with a number of strategies to ease overcrowding during the current planning period. Principal among the strategies are the following:

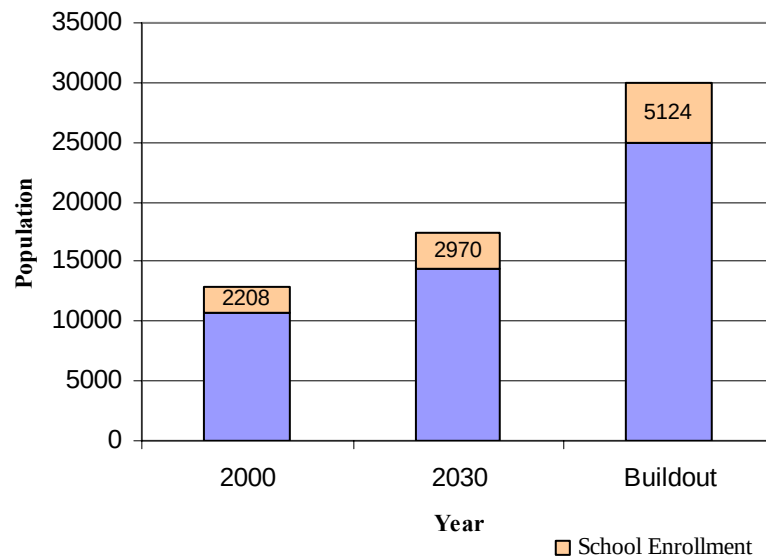
- Move grade 6 to the Middle School and add 18 classrooms to that facility.
- Add 8 new classrooms to the high school.

High School improvements are projected to be on-line during the 2010-2011 period, with Middle School improvement following in the 2011-2012 period.

A sense of the long-range needs of the Ellington School System can be garnered by reviewing some comparative statistics. In 2000, the census showed Ellington's population to be 12,921. School enrollment in that year was 2208, or 17% of total population. Projections noted in Chapter 1 state that town population in 2030 could be 17,400. Were the relationship between total population and school enrollment to stay as experienced in 2000, total school population would be in the neighborhood of 2970. At a buildout population of 30,000, school enrollment could be 5,124 students.

With the exception of the High School, none of the existing school sites have significant adjacent areas for expansion.

Projected School Population Growth



Strategy: Implement additions to High School and Middle School.

These figures suggest that it's never too soon to plan. With the exception of the High School, none of the existing school sites have significant adjacent areas for expansion. There is plentiful land available in the general area of the High School. Maple Street provides good access and is centrally located. It is recommended that possible educational expansion sites be explored during this planning period.

Community Facility and Service Strategies

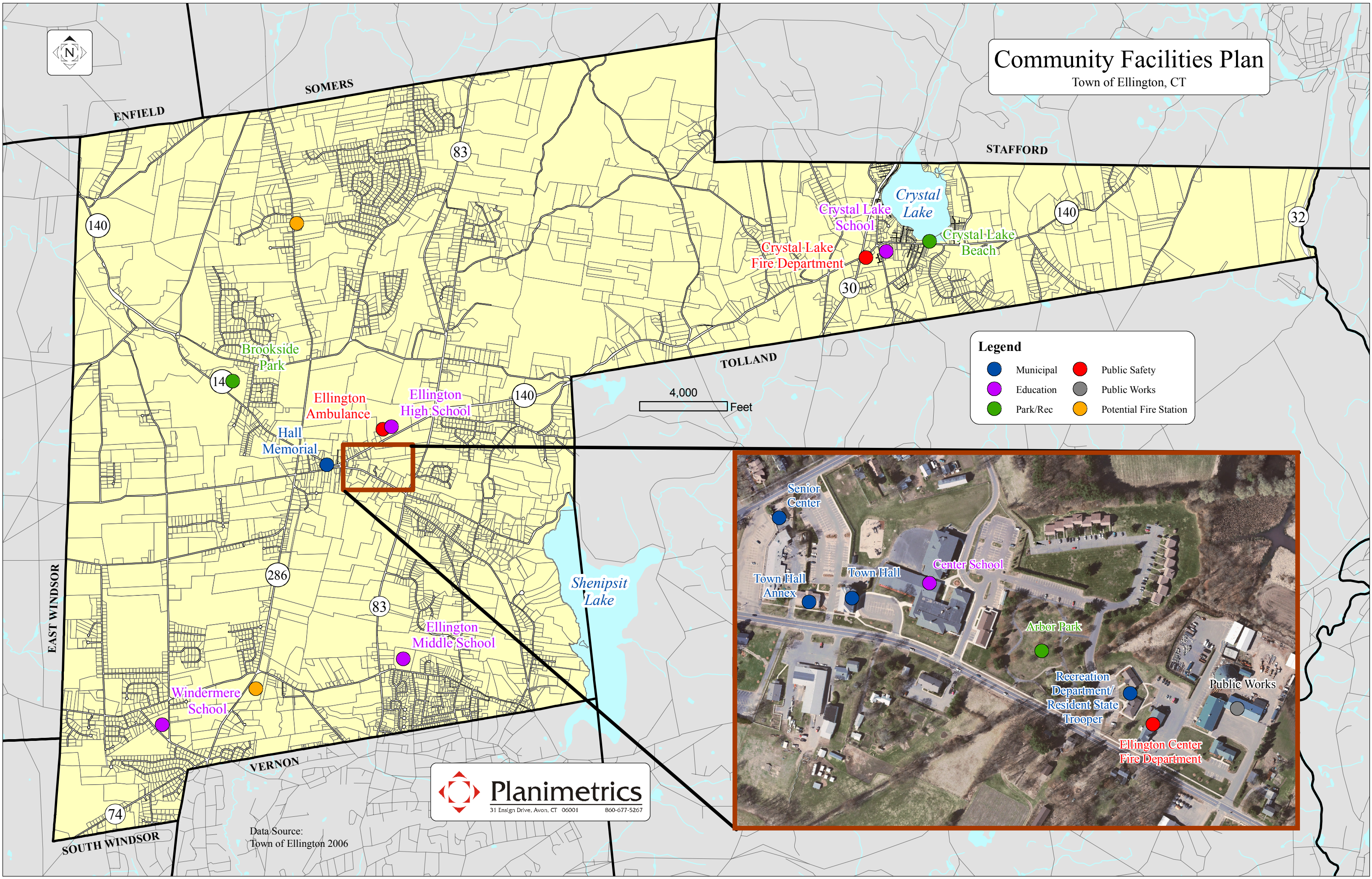
1. Monitor the growing senior population to anticipate staff and space needs at the Senior Center.
2. Provide for timely expansion of the Town Hall and/or the Annex to meet anticipated needs.
3. Provide generator back-up for Town Hall
4. Re-locate Emergency Management to Town Hall.
5. Provide additional land at the Public Works complex to allow for expanded storage areas and canine facility.
6. Consider establishing a Community Center as a venue for meeting multiple community needs.
7. Establish a new fire station in the south-west quadrant of town.
8. Monitor the need for a new fire station to better serve northern Ellington.
9. Provide additional sports fields, preferably in close proximity to existing fields.
10. Implement additions to the High School and Middle School.

This Page Intentionally Left Blank



Community Facilities Plan

Town of Ellington, CT



4,000 Feet

Legend

	Municipal		Public Safety
	Education		Public Works
	Park/Rec		Potential Fire Station



Planimetrics

31 Ensign Drive, Avon, CT 06001 860-677-5267

Data Source:
Town of Ellington 2006

Transportation

Ellington has a relatively well-connected road network in the context of it being a rural, suburban town. Where travel is circuitous, topography or other natural resource constraints are dominant elements. For instance, in the central core of town, south of Main Street, the “Great Swamp” prohibits east/west road extensions. Similarly, in the north-east quadrant, in the vicinity of the State Forests, severe topography is a deterrent to east/west road extensions.

Road network issues facing Ellington include:

- Timely road extensions to efficiently distribute traffic and provide for good emergency access;
- Access management strategies on Route 83 to enhance safety and preserve road capacity; and
- Modifications in road design and parking standards to reduce stormwater runoff and enhance community character.

Road Design to Desired Land Use

Road classifications are important for matching the design of roads to their location, adjacent land uses, and function. Roads are typically classified based on their:

- Function (through traffic versus access);
- Major land use (business or residential);
- Traffic volumes; and
- Overall location.

An **Arterial Road** is a road primarily intended to carry regional traffic and serve major activity centers. The following are arterial roads:

Route 83	Route 32
Route 30	Route 74
Route 286	Route 140

Direct access to arterials should be restricted, requiring shared driveways, interconnected parking lots, and similar measures to reduce curb cuts and maximize the movement of through traffic. Acceleration/deceleration lanes could also be required at access points to facilitate the efficient flow of traffic.

An efficient transportation system strives to safely combine private automobiles, pedestrians, bicycles, and other forms of transit.

Survey results showed that 57% of respondents felt that bicycle and walking trails should be a priority for Ellington.

Road classifications are important in order to match the design of roads to their location, adjacent land uses, and function.

A **Collector Road** is a road intended to serve business areas and/or distribute traffic between arterial roads and neighborhoods. Collector roads can provide both direct and indirect access to adjacent land but access management measures should be encouraged in commercial and industrial areas. The following are collector roads:

Abbott Road	Broad Brook Road
Burbank Road	Buff Cap Road
Frog Hollow Road	Egypt Road
Lower Butcher Road	Hopkins Road
Mountain Street	Middle Road
Pinney Road	Muddy Brook Road
Jobs Hill Road	Hoffman Road
Broad Brook Road	Snipsic Street
Meadowbrook Road	

Matching the width, surface, geometry, and alignment of the road to anticipated traffic needs (access, volume, and speed) creates an efficient circulation system.

A **Local Road** is a road primarily intended to provide direct access to abutting properties and not serve major through traffic. All roads that are not arterial or collector roads are local roads.

Matching the width, surface, geometry, and alignment of the road to anticipated traffic needs (access, volume, and speed) creates an efficient circulation system.

Collector Road



Local Road



Roads that are generally straight, flat, and overly wide encourage speeding, require excessive clearing and grading, and can potentially detract from community character.

Roads are also a significant source of stormwater and non-point source pollution that must be dealt with under the new National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II guidelines. By reducing pavement widths on collector and local streets, the volume of stormwater runoff generated by new development can be reduced. Ellington also needs to adopt storm drainage standards for existing streets adjacent to new developments to ensure that stormwater from new development does not overwhelm the Town's drainage system and lead to costly improvements in the future.

Wider Pavement is Appropriate for Roads Carrying High Volumes of Traffic



Narrower Pavement in Residential Areas Reduces Speeding



Recommended road classifications are shown on the Transportation Plan on page 4-19.

Road Extensions

As noted on the Transportation Plan, road extensions are recommended in the northwest quadrant of Town. Specifically, Dogwood Lane is to be extended to Jobs Hill, Brook Crossing to Brookfield, and a new road will extend from Brook Crossing to Green Road, and then to Reeves Road. These extensions will provide for a more efficient circulation system in this area of town.

The Planning Commission has traditionally required that, where feasible, residential subdivision streets extend to abutting properties so that the networks of local roads are interconnected to distribute traffic smoothly. It is important that local residential streets continue to be extended and thus contribute to a reasonably efficient and safe circulation pattern.

Inter-connecting local streets helps disperse traffic and can provide multiple access points for emergency vehicles.

Strategy: *Provide for road extensions to enhance the overall road network.*

Strategy: *Reevaluate the parking requirements by use and make adjustments as necessary to ensure adequate yet efficient numbers of parking spaces.*

Parking Standards

Communities use parking standards to ensure that each use has sufficient parking to meet its own needs without impairing traffic, public safety, or the use of adjacent land. Excessive parking requirements can waste valuable land, create additional stormwater runoff, and detract from community character.

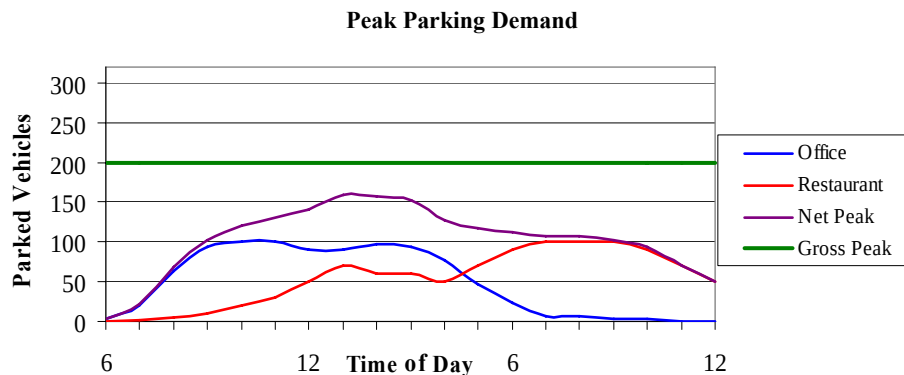
The Zoning Commission should examine the parking ratios for each use and make modifications where necessary to ensure the most efficient provision of parking. Since parking demand can vary significantly within major use classes such as retail stores, restaurants and offices, the Zoning Commission should allow a percentage of the required parking spaces shown on a site plan to be deferred until increased demands warrant their installation.



Parking Lot Design

Strategy: *Reduce impervious surfaces through the use of porous pavement systems, deferred parking and shared parking requirements where appropriate.*

As the following chart illustrates, shared parking standards can further reduce required parking by recognizing that different uses within a development have variable parking needs and that the net peak parking demand for all uses can be considerably less than the gross required parking for individual uses.



Allowing consolidated parcels can also have a number of traffic and parking benefits. With proper cross-easements and modified yard and buffer requirements between consolidated parcels, curb cuts can be reduced and shared parking requirements can be implemented where they might otherwise not be possible.

Transportation Plan

Town of Ellington, CT



Legend

- Arterial
- Collector
- Local
- Possible Road Extension

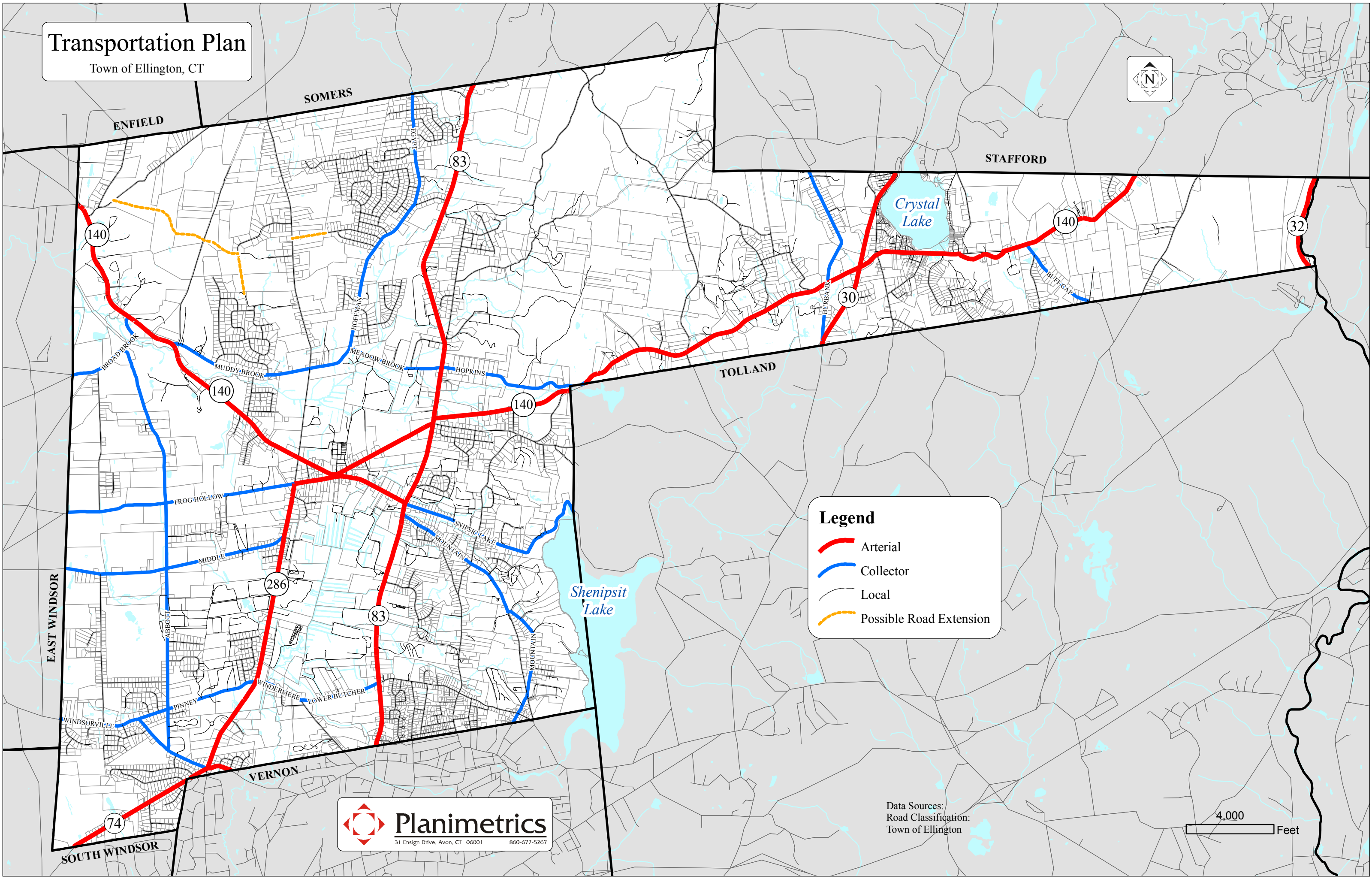
Data Sources:
Road Classification:
Town of Ellington



Planimetrics

31 Ensign Drive, Avon, CT 06001 860-677-5267

4,000 Feet



Access Management

Access management is an important tool for promoting safe movement of vehicles and orderly movement of traffic. Regulation of vehicular access is necessary to maintain the efficient and smooth flow of traffic and to maximize the traffic capacity of streets. An access management plan functions by:

1. Limiting the number of driveways;
2. Choosing driveway locations to reduce conflicts;
3. Designing driveways to reduce conflicts and the severity of conflicts; and
4. Requiring roadway improvements that reduce or control conflicts.

Access management is most effectively used in commercial corridors and is implemented by the zoning regulations through the site plan review process. Route 83 from the Vernon town line to the Main Street intersection should be subject to access management regulations and it is recommended that the zoning regulations be modified to implement this.

One of the more challenging transportation issues in town is the configuration and vehicular flow in the Five Corners area. Traffic movement and safety at this location is an on-going problem. As noted in Chapter 3, the State of Connecticut has plans to improve this area and support on the Town's behalf should continue.

Alternative Transportation Modes

Ellington, because of its suburban nature, is heavily dependent on private motor vehicles for meeting most of its transportation needs. Sidewalks and bike trails/bike lanes would be the most feasible transportation alternatives under limited conditions.

The subdivision regulations require that in new subdivisions sidewalks be installed on at least one side of the street. This requirement has not been consistently applied. It is understandable that under certain conditions sidewalks may be neither needed nor desired. However, the general rule should be that sidewalks be installed. In order to have a consistent policy on sidewalk installation, the Subdivision Regulations should be modified to provide specific standards applicable to any sidewalk waiver. Considerations such as drainage, overall size of the subdivision, and connectivity to other existing or future sidewalks would be appropriate criteria within which to consider a waiver.

Extensive sidewalks exist in the center of town along Main Street and Maple Street. In some areas the walks are too narrow and should be upgraded.

The need for sidewalks in existing residential areas should be reviewed and sidewalks installed if appropriate. This would be especially advantageous if new sidewalks could provide pedestrian access to existing schools, parks, or commercial areas.

New commercial development should be reviewed relative to the need for sidewalk access to nearby residential areas. Pedestrian traffic does exist within

Strategy: Amend the zoning regulations to implement access management strategies for Route 83.

Strategy: Work with the State to resolve congestion and safety concerns at the Five Corners intersection.

Strategy: Use the recommendations of the Route 83 Corridor Study to maintain functionality of the corridor, to promote development that is attractive, and to protect interior residential areas.

Alternative modes of transportation can reduce dependency on private motor vehicles, promote a healthier lifestyle and reduce pollution.

Strategy: Expand the sidewalk network.

the Route 83 corridor and there are virtually no sidewalks in the area. It is recommended that sidewalks be provided on Route 83 from Main Street south to the Meadowview Plaza. New development along Route 83 should be required to provide sidewalks.

Strategy: Undertake a comprehensive study for locating bike lanes and trails.

As to bike lanes and trails, a comprehensive study of locating and installing bike facilities should be undertaken. Major destinations such as schools, parks, and commercial areas would be an important consideration in laying out a bike access system, as would be the ability of the Connecticut Department of Transportation in making and signing state roads for bike lanes.

Transportation Strategies

1. Work with the State to resolve congestion and safety concerns at the Five Corners intersection.
2. Reevaluate the parking requirements by use and make adjustments as necessary to ensure adequate yet efficient numbers of parking spaces.
3. Reduce impervious surfaces through the use of porous pavement systems, deferred parking and shared parking requirements where appropriate.
4. Provide for road extensions to enhance the overall road network.
5. Amend zoning regulations to implement access management strategies for Route 83. Consider other locations as traffic increases.
6. Expand sidewalk network.
7. Undertake comprehensive study for locating bike lanes and trails.
8. Use Recommendations of the Route 83 Corridor Study to maintain functionality of the corridor, to promote development that is attractive, and to protect interior residential areas.

Pedestrian Circulation



Bicycle Accommodations



On-Demand Ride Service



Multi-Use Trails



Utility Services

Ellington has limited areas served by public water and sewer lines as shown on the Utilities Plan on page 4-27.

Sewers are provided by the Ellington Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA), and are maintained by the Ellington Public Works Department.

Two water companies, The Connecticut Water Company (CWC) and the Ellington Acres Water Company (EAWC) provide public water.

Other utilities such as natural gas, digital subscriber line service (DSL) and wireless communications services are provided by a number of different companies and are comparable to similar services available in surrounding towns.

Domestic Water and Fire Supply

The EAWC serves 710 customers in Ellington within the franchise area north of Route 140 to the Somers line, bracketed by Jobs Hill and Route 83. The EAWC system has adequate capacity and margin of safety to meet demand over the next decade and beyond. As noted earlier, hydrants need to be added to water lines in the Geraldine/Hillside/Viewside areas. EAWC reports that volumes and pressures are at or near industry guidelines for fire protection.

The Connecticut Water Company operates the water system serving the southern half of the town. (The company uses a combination of ground water wells and the Shenipsit Reservoir to provide water.) Their system complies with the Department of Health regulations regarding safe yields and margin of safety.



Public Sewer Service

History

The Ellington WPCA adopted a wastewater facilities plan in 1998 with a 20-year flow rate need identified as 819,200 gallons per day. This figure was calculated by assigning a flow figure to each developable property within the sewer service area based upon the permitted uses in the zone at that time.

In 2003, a settlement was reached between the town of Ellington and Vernon over a dispute of the payment of Ellington's share of the mid-1990s upgrade of the Vernon wastewater plant. As part of this settlement, Ellington negotiated an additional 200,000 gallons per day (gpd) for a total capacity of 1,019,200 gallons per day. The additional capacity (200,000 gpd) is above the amount established in the 1998 wastewater facilities plan allocation procedure.

Along with the capacity needs demonstrated in the wastewater facilities plan was the development of a sewer service area, within which connections to the sewer may be anticipated, and a non-sewer service area, where development can occur to the extent it can be supported by subsurface sewage disposal systems.

Sewer Service Area and Capacity

Sewer access and capacity is necessary to achieve the recommendations of the Plan of Conservation and Development as it relates to the Route 83 corridor, planned commercial development, and senior or age-restricted housing alternatives. However, capacity is not endless and must be utilized for the greatest good of the community.

Strategy: Establish improved lines of communication between the PZC and the WPCA, including coordination meetings between the two entities.

Strategy: Adopt by reference the WPCA sewer service area and allocation process.

Better communications regarding sewer service

Communications and cooperation between the WPCA and the PZC is critical for the town to be successful and a formal means of insuring this communication should be implemented. Quarterly planning meetings between the two boards should be held, or ad hoc members from each board should sit in on the other board's meetings to relay concerns and provide advice.

Allocation of Sewer System Capacity

Under Connecticut Statutes, it is the WPCA that has the sole authority to determine where sewers are to be provided and where they are not to be provided. In addition, the WPCA is authorized to negotiate contracts with Vernon for wastewater services for the town. No other board or commission has this authority to negotiate nor can an individual negotiate individual capacity with Vernon. The WPCA must prudently allocate sewer system capacity for the best long-term position of the town. Specifically, public sewers should be utilized to support:

- Commercial and industrial growth to help balance the tax base; and
- Diverse housing base such as senior or age-restricted. Single-family housing or additional general-use apartments should not receive additional capacity beyond that allocated in the facility plan.

The WPCA has a current allocation procedure within the wastewater facilities plan which preserves capacity for all properties within the sewer service area.

- The WPCA should consider a capacity trading program that would allow properties to give up the rights to the sewer and pass the allocated capacity of that property along to other properties for higher density development. All trading would be private but would be recorded on the land records such that all future land owners would know that a sewer connection was not possible and the land would need to be developed with septic systems if developed.
- Prior to any site plan application being deemed complete by the PZC, the WPCA must indicate that adequate capacity for the development exists under the allocation procedure of the WPCA. Insufficient capacity would result in denial of the application. The PZC and the WPCA should work in concert with one another and be united in positions expressed to applicants. The two boards should resolve any differences prior to taking any final action on any application.
- The WPCA should undertake a new Sewer Service Study that focuses on the existing sewer service area and determines future capacity needs to the year 2030. The WPCA should seek support from the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance to initiate funding for the updated plan. Input from all other land use boards is critical; therefore each of the other land use boards should appoint one of its members to work with the WPCA in an ad hoc capacity during the development of the updated wastewater facilities plan.
- The WPCA should approach the Vernon WPCA and the Tolland WPCA to discuss the possibility of purchasing additional capacity for the town's use or to discuss the possibility of an expansion of the Vernon treatment plant. Whereas the Vernon treatment plant already provides advanced wastewater treatment and discharges to a relatively small stream, all town boards must realize that future capacity additions are likely to be limited and must utilize the town's existing capacity wisely for the greatest good of the town.
- The purchase of additional capacity will come at a cost which should not be borne by current users. Any purchase cost should be initially financed by the town but reimbursed by future development as a connection charge sufficient to recover all town expenses including interest costs.

Strategy: Institute a policy for sewers that would permit trading of assigned capacity.

Strategy: Require a capacity analysis report for developments requiring sewers

Strategy: Institute an administrative policy to require reports from the WPCA prior to any zoning approvals involving sewers.

Strategy: Update the sewer facilities plan.

Strategy: Explore the possibility of acquiring additional sewerage capacity from Vernon.

Utility Strategies

1. Require capacity analysis report for developments requiring sewers.
2. Explore possibility of acquiring additional sewerage capacity from Vernon.
3. Replace sewers in area of Longview Street.
4. Establish improved lines of communication between the PZC and the WPCA, to include coordination meetings between the two entities.
5. Adopt by reference WPCA sewer service area and allocation process.
6. Institute policy for sewers that would permit trading of assigned capacity.
7. Institute administrative policy to require reports from WPCA prior to any zoning approvals involving sewers.
8. Update sewer facilities plan.

Utility Plan

Town of Ellington, CT



Legend

-  Sewer Service Area
-  Water Service Area
-  Water

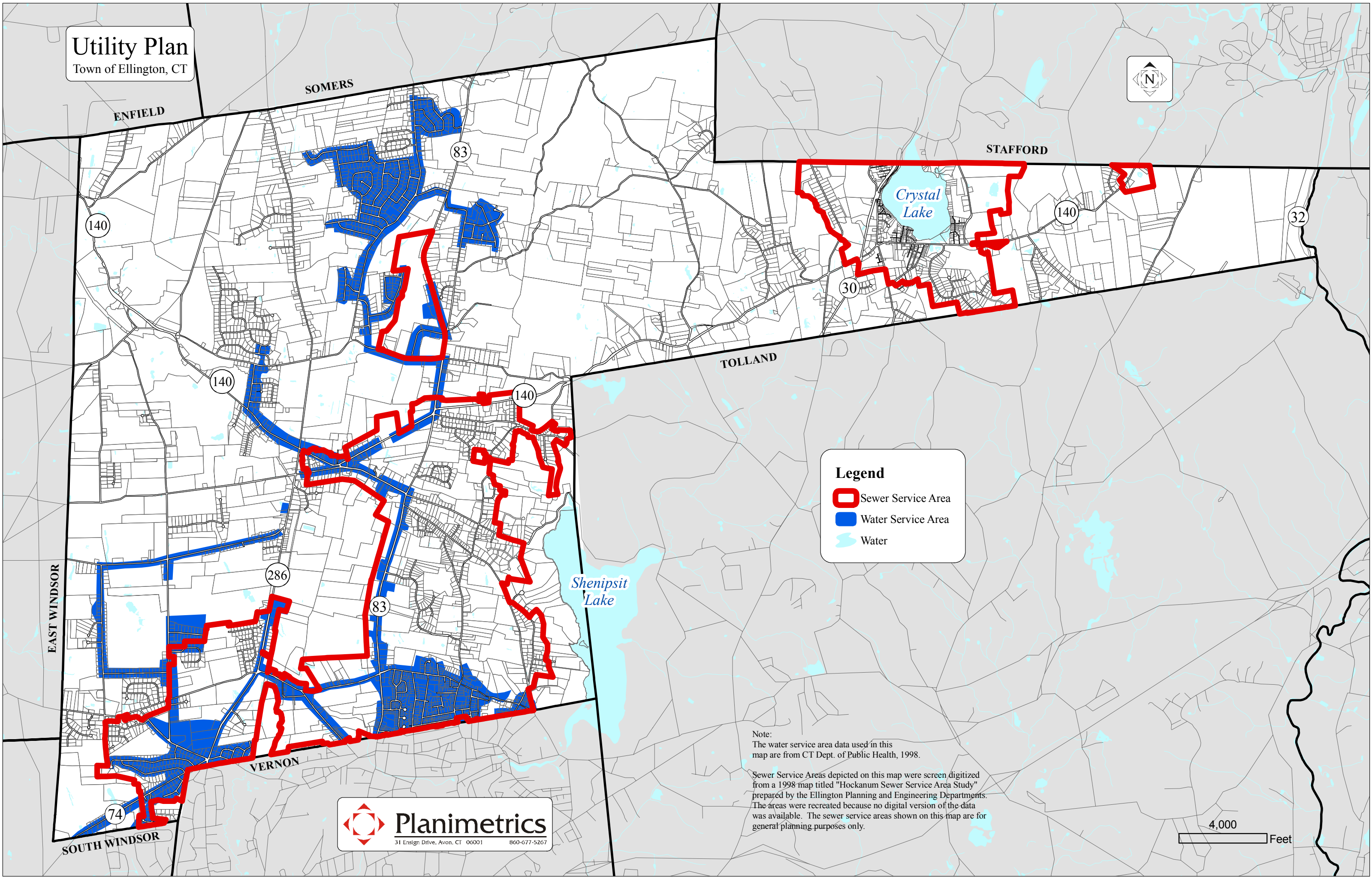
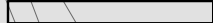
Note:
The water service area data used in this map are from CT Dept. of Public Health, 1998.

Sewer Service Areas depicted on this map were screen digitized from a 1998 map titled "Hockanum Sewer Service Area Study" prepared by the Ellington Planning and Engineering Departments. The areas were recreated because no digital version of the data was available. The sewer service areas shown on this map are for general planning purposes only.



Planimetrics
31 Ensign Drive, Avon, CT 06001 860-677-5267

4,000 Feet



ROUTE 83 CORRIDOR

5

Overview

There are a number of reasons for paying particular attention to the Route 83 corridor, chief of which are the following:

- The corridor has the highest traffic count of all roads in town and from this perspective is functionally the most important road in town.
- The corridor has over 100 properties with frontage on Route 83 that are zoned for commercial or industrial use. Safe and convenient access to these properties, as well as the economic benefits from a property tax perspective, warrant long-term policies that benefit the traveling public.
- There are large tracts of vacant land in the corridor and many existing properties can be further developed. The corridor will continue to develop.
- The corridor is the front door of town. That is, as the principal access way to the community, aesthetics are important.

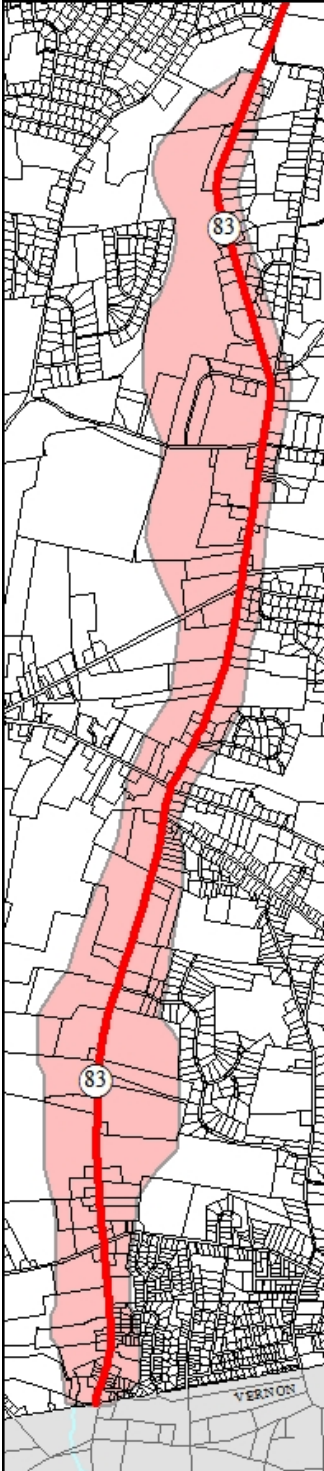
The purpose of this chapter is to recommend strategies for the on-going development of the Route 83 corridor with an emphasis on the following:

- The Route 83 corridor is a substantial economic asset to the town; the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians within and through the area is needed to maintain this asset.
- In many cases the corridor abuts well-established residential neighborhoods. Transition from the commercial frontage properties to these residential areas must be accomplished in a manner that protects the residences and does not unduly restrict the commercial properties.
- Significant natural areas are located on the western side of Route 83. There needs to be a balance between the expansion of commercial areas and the protection of these areas.
- The overall appearance of the corridor is an important public concern. This sentiment was expressed time and again during the Buildout Study. The public recognizes that there will be additional commercial growth within the corridor and it is their preference that sites be developed in an attractive manner.

The Route 83 corridor has additional development capacity. The question is not whether the area will grow. Rather, it is how the corridor will function and how it will appear as it develops in the future.

A majority of respondents to the community survey, 75%, agreed that the corridor is the most appropriate location for commercial development.

Route 83 Corridor Area



Corridor Inventory

As noted on the map to the left, the study area of the corridor stretches from the town line of Vernon to just north of Ellington airport – a distance of approximately 4.6 miles. A total of 162 properties front on Route 83, the majority of which, 106, are zoned commercial or industrial.

Route 83 has the highest traffic counts in Ellington. The most current figures for average daily traffic at selected points in the corridor are as follows:

Average Daily Traffic

Location	Average Daily Traffic
Vernon Town Line	12,500
Butcher – Mountain Road	14,200
Mountain – Main Street	15,600
Crystal Lake Road	10,900
Industrial Dr.	6,200

Data compiled by the Connecticut Department of Transportation indicate that accident experience at the Kibbe Road intersection, and in the area between Mountain Road and Main Street, exceed standard parameters. Sidewalks are non-existent in the corridor.

Zoning

Properties fronting on Route 83 within the confines of the study area are zoned as follows:

Properties by Zone

Zone	Number of Properties
Commercial	62
Planned Commercial	29
Industrial	15
Multi-family	1
Single-family	59

The map on page 5-5 shows the distribution of these zones, as well as the zones of parcels abutting the corridor. For the most part, the depth of the commercial zones in the corridor is 500 feet.

The principal differences between the commercial zones and the industrial zones are in the type and variety of uses permitted. The Commercial and Planned Commercial zones have some minor differences in uses permitted, and the minimum lot size for the Planned Commercial is 3 acres, versus the 1 acre requirement for the Commercial Zone.

Natural Resources

The most significant natural resource constraints exist to the west of the corridor and consist of extensive wetlands and flood plain associated with the “Great Swamp”. The town’s official wetlands map also shows wetlands extending from the east side of the highway in the vicinity of the Autumn Chase apartments

westerly to the swamp area. The exact limits of wetlands in this area will have to be determined if and when development is proposed for the area.

Existing Land Use

Compatibility between land uses is an important consideration for the corridor area. Existing land use for the corridor area is shown on the map on Page 5-5. A review of the corridor's existing land use relationships follows.

Typical Corridor Land Uses



Big Y Shopping Center



Auto Sales

Land Use – Vicinity of Vernon Town Line

This area of the corridor is characterized by a mixture of uses, including retail, single and multi-family residential, industrial, and office. The majority of properties on the east side of Route 83 are undersized parcels originally used for residential purposes. Interior abutting land uses on the east side of the corridor consist primarily of single-family homes in long-established neighborhoods.



Vernon Town Line

The west side is similar in nature except that it does have some larger properties and the depth of the Commercial Zone is 500 feet.

Land Use – Butcher Road to Main Street

The west side of the corridor is zoned for commercial use to a depth of 500 feet. The area is characterized by large parcels with significant frontage on Route 83. Primary land use is agriculture. Interior properties are in agricultural use. Potential expansion of the commercial zones to the west is possible in selected locations where there are not constraints from wetlands or flood plain.

The east side of the corridor has a variety of uses including residential, retail, office, auto sales, and restaurants. The depth of the commercial zone varies from 500 feet to 1,500 feet. The majority of commercial frontage properties abut single-family residential to the east. The most northerly 2,000 feet in this section of the corridor is single-family residential.

Land Use – Main Street to Airport

On the west side of the corridor, there are a variety of uses including residential, retail, office, industrial, and airport. The commercial/industrial zone depth varies from 500 feet to 2,500 feet. The airport backs up to single-family developments in the vicinity of Bridge Street.

On the east side of the corridor the majority of land is in single-family development. There are a number of vacant parcels as well as parcels in agricultural use.



Airport

Corridor Issues

A majority of respondents to the survey, 69%, agreed that the appearance of a building is more important than the overall size of a building.

Furthermore, 59% felt that the appearance of commercial areas needs to be improved.

Three-quarters of survey respondents felt that big box stores were not appropriate for the corridor.

Given the importance of Route 83 as the principal arterial road within the town, issues relating to traffic and circulation are paramount. Additional significant issues include aesthetics of development and protection of existing residential neighborhoods.

Traffic and Circulation

Vehicular left turns are among the more significant contributors to congestion and accidents. Lessening the need and/or opportunities for left turns within the corridor can help to preserve the capacity of the highway, as well as increase overall safety. Alternate forms of transportation, including sidewalks, can also positively contribute to congestion reduction and safety, although it must be recognized that heavy reliance on the automobile lessens the effectiveness of these strategies.

Aesthetics of Development

As noted previously, the overall appearance of the corridor is an important public concern. Appearance in this context relates to almost all elements of a site's development, including building materials, light fixtures, signage, landscaping, building form, building orientation, building scale and rooflines. Informed decisions on these elements can do much to reinforce the character of the community.

Protecting Existing Residential Neighborhoods

The vast majority of commercial properties on the east side of the corridor abut residential neighborhoods. As businesses expand or as new businesses are established, buffers and sensitive site design will be important considerations in assuring compatibility between residential and commercial uses.

Route 83 Corridor

Airport

Route 83 & Main Street

Legend

- 1 Residential Neighborhoods
- 2 Undersized Commercial Properties
- 3 Primarily Agricultural Use
- 4 Large Properties with Significant Frontage
- 5 Potential Westerly Expansion of PC Zone

Land Use Relationships

- Single Family Development
- 2 to 4 Family Development
- Multi-Family Development
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Airfield
- Open Space
- Agriculture
- Institutional
- Vacant
- Water

2,000 Feet

Corridor Strategies and Actions

Zoning is one of the major tools for guiding growth of the Route 83 corridor. Changes to the regulations and the zoning map should be considered as follows:

- The Planned Commercial (PC) zone allows somewhat stricter controls on development through the use of the Special Permit process. Additionally, it requires a minimum lot size of 3 acres. Properties within the corridor that exceed 3 acres should be considered for re-zoning to PC.
- The map on page 5-5 shows 2 areas on the west side of the corridor where it is possible to expand an existing commercial zone. These areas should be considered for expansion only if it can be demonstrated that there will not be unacceptable adverse impacts upon the wetlands and watercourses area of the Great Swamp.
- It is not recommended that any properties east of Route 83 be re-zoned to a commercial category. Conversely, where warranted by natural resource constraints, commercial zone boundaries may have to be reduced.
- The airport encompasses 125 acres and, as such, is the largest parcel of industrially-zoned land in Ellington. Sewers were recently extended to the airport area. Should the airport cease operations, the property is large enough to warrant an integrated master plan that would guide building uses and locations, and an overall circulation plan. The master plan would also serve as the basis for upgrading the zoning requirements for this area. The development of a master plan for the area can be best accomplished through a joint venture with the town and the property owners.
- The current lighting standards in the zoning regulations are not specific enough, especially with regard to controlling light spillage onto adjacent properties. Specific standards, including limits on the height of lighting poles and types of fixtures, are needed.
- Signage standards should be upgraded. As an example, for free standing signs, encourage low-level, monument-type signs within a landscaped setting.
- Parking lot and site landscaping requirements should be upgraded. Because many of the properties have been devoted to agriculture, mature trees are very scarce within the corridor. Street trees should be required with preferred species noted in the regulations. (Civic group efforts to “green up” the corridor would also be appropriate.)

“Quality design is a study of relationships – connections among individual structures in the built environment, the natural landscape, the historical context, and the people who experience it.”
Guidelines for Community Design – Simsbury

Properties within the corridor that exceed 3 acres should be considered for re-zoning for PC.

A majority, 61%, of survey respondents agreed that the town boards and commissions should increase their regulatory oversight of community character.

Parking lot and site landscaping requirements should be upgraded.

Specific lighting standards, including limits on the height of lighting poles and types of fixtures, are needed.

Signage standards should be upgraded.

- A design overlay zone should be incorporated into the zoning regulations for the corridor. These regulations would provide design guidelines for commercial buildings above a threshold size.
- More specific controls for large retail buildings need to be included in the zoning regulations. Currently, regulations require that no retail building be larger than 60,000 square feet and that any building larger than 40,000 square feet requires a special permit and may only be permitted if it is superior in design. It is recommended that the Commission adopt a process allowing “planned development districts” in order to deal with large retail buildings. This process allows detailed site plans to be reviewed and approved through a zone change type process. Since the Planning and Zoning Commission has its greatest authority when acting in a legislative capacity (such as a zone change), it can ensure that the specific details of the application are appropriate for the area.
- Any development west of Route 83 should utilize low-impact development techniques to protect the “Great Swamp”.
- Access management requirements should be adopted for the corridor. These regulations would control the location and number of access drives to properties fronting on Route 83. These regulations could also provide for formal (public or private road) or informal (connections between parking lots) interior circulation layouts. A schematic representation of such a circulation layout is presented on page 5-9. It depicts parcel-to-parcel off-road connection starting at a proposed traffic light at the former Ellington Super Market site, and continuing southerly on both sides of Route 83 to the signal at the Big Y site.
- A new Planned Commercial Zone should be enacted for the Rockville area. This zone should recognize the limitations presented by undersized lots and should encourage and provide incentives for combining properties and reducing the number of driveway cuts. Additionally, the yard requirements of the “new” zone need to be more realistic than those of the Commercial (C) zone. For instance, the front yard set back in the C Zone is 100 feet, and lot coverage is 60%. Allowing mixed office and residential use in this area of the corridor would be appropriate.
- Flexible buffer standards should be incorporated as a means of offering greater protection to established residential areas abutting the commercial corridor. Basically, this approach allows the width of a buffer area to vary depending upon the use of berms, intensity of plantings, and fences.

Institute a design overlay zone for the Route 83 corridor.

Provide design guidelines for larger buildings while maintaining limitations on building size per occupant.

Access management requirements should be enacted for the corridor

Flexible buffer standards should be incorporated as a means of offering greater protection to established residential areas.

Other strategies and actions appropriate for guiding development of the corridor include the following:

Federal and State Highway Departments have an evolving design philosophy of “thinking outside the pavement”. This involves the concept of Context Sensitive Solutions. Ideally, these solutions take into consideration a variety of community values instead of just engineering standards.

- Formalize a Design Review Committee and process. The Design Review Committee is an ad hoc committee that has been operating for approximately 2 years. Establishment of the Committee as a permanent board would be a clear signal to the development community that the town is serious about the aesthetics of development. A manual with design review guidelines should also be developed and made available to the development community so that they may know what the town expects in the way of building and site design.
- Through the 1st Selectmen’s Office, establish a working relationship with the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CONNDOT). Route 83 is “their” highway and ultimately they will have to sign off on traffic control devices, access points, and other road improvements. Aiding in the establishment of a working relationship with CONNDOT is their willingness to use Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS). Although there are numerous principles which define this approach, the more significant one from the town’s perspective is as follows: *The [transportation] project is in harmony with the community, and it preserves environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, and natural resource values of the area, i.e., exhibits context sensitive design.* CONNDOT started the process of CSS in 1999 and it continues to evolve.
- Work with civic groups to establish attractive gateways to the town, as well as to provide for additional tree plantings adjacent to the Route 83 right-of-way. The sparseness of mature trees was previously noted and investments in new tree plantings will greatly enhance the character of the corridor in the future.
- Require sidewalks in connection with new development.

Route 83 Schematic Circulation Map

Route 83 & Main Street

AA

RA

A

Legend

- Indicates formal or informal interior circulation patterns
- ★ Controlled Intersection

PC

RA

MF

Route 83 & Butcher Road

A

I

500

Feet



Planimetrics

11 Bridge Street, Suite 200, CT 06103 860.662.7562

FUTURE LAND USE

6

Overview

The recommendations of each of the preceding chapters have been combined to present an overall Future Land Use Plan for Ellington. The Future Land Use Plan is a graphic representation of the stated goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Plan, as well as an integration of the preceding elements of the Plan.

In essence, the Future Land Use Plan is a statement of what the Ellington of tomorrow should look like.

While the Future Land Use Plan looks very similar in appearance to a zoning map, it should not be construed as such. The coded areas on the map represent desired future land uses which, in many cases, do not necessarily correspond to zoning classifications. The Future Land Use Plan serves as a strong guide to the Planning and Zoning Commission as it considers changes to the Zoning Map.

The Future Land Use Plan is a graphic representation of the Plan's recommendations for the future conservation and development of Ellington.

Conservation



Development



Descriptions of Future Land Use Categories

Residential Uses

Very Low Density	Areas where typical density is expected to be equal to or less than ½ unit per acre.
Low Density	Areas where residential density is expected to occur at less than 1 unit per acre. (Some existing residential development has occurred at higher densities.)
Moderate Density	Area where residential density is expected to occur at between 1 and 2 units per acre.
High Density	Areas where residential development is expected to occur at a density greater than 2 units per acre.

Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed Uses

Commercial Areas	Areas that have developed, or are intended to develop, with commercial facilities such as retail, office, and service uses.
Industrial Areas	Areas that have developed, or are intended to develop, with industrial facilities.
Mixed Use/Renewal	Areas on major traffic corridors that would benefit from small-scale mixed use redevelopment.

Open Space Uses

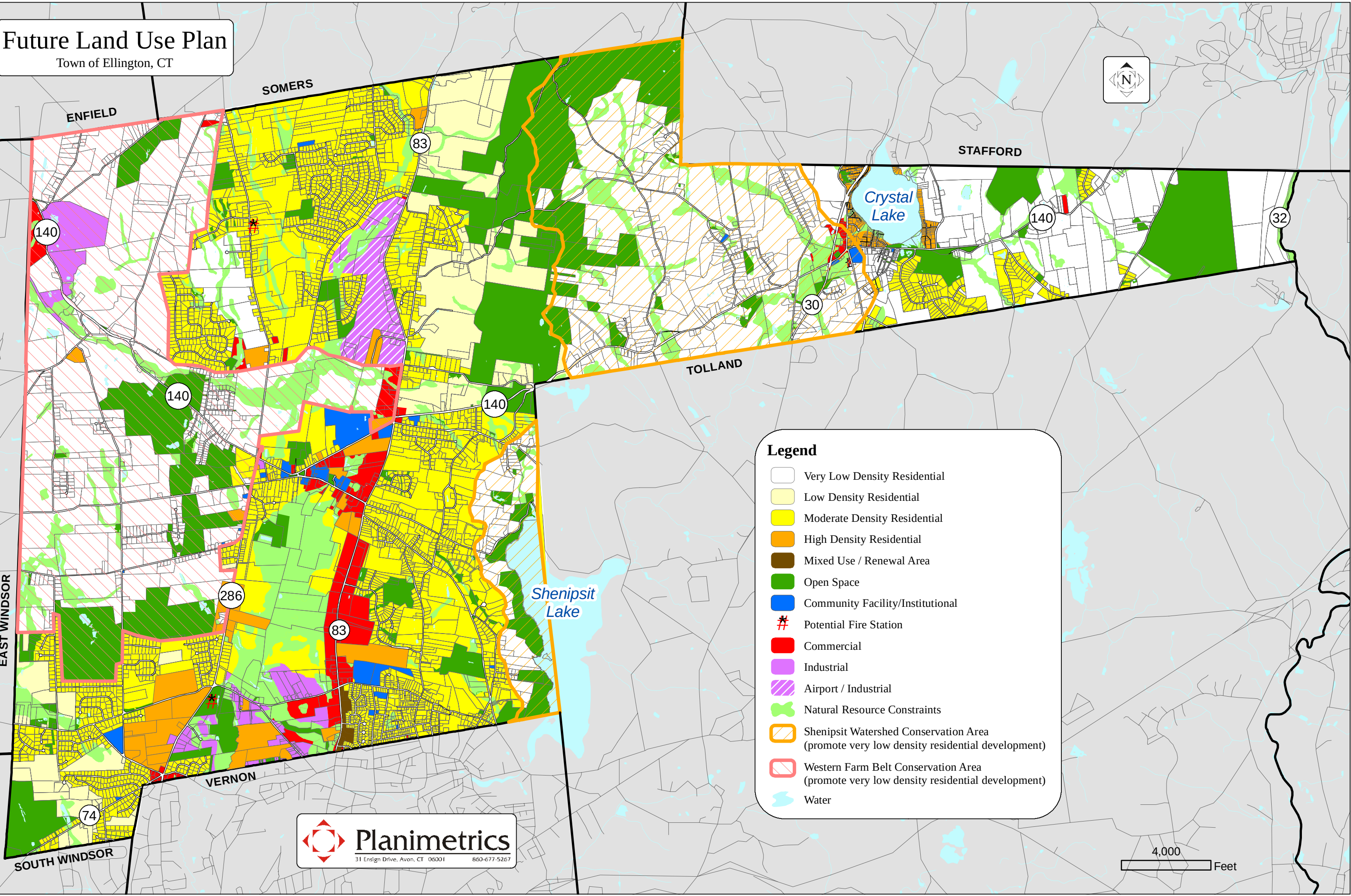
Open Space	Areas that are currently preserved (dedicated open space) or used (managed open space) as open space, including recreation uses.
Conservation Areas	Areas with significant conservation character, i.e., ridgelines, wetlands, and water resources.

Other Uses

Institutional Facilities	Areas containing existing government, institutional, and community facilities.
---------------------------------	--

Future Land Use Plan

Town of Ellington, CT



Legend

- Very Low Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Moderate Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use / Renewal Area
- Open Space
- Community Facility/Institutional
- Potential Fire Station
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Airport / Industrial
- Natural Resource Constraints
- Shenipsit Watershed Conservation Area (promote very low density residential development)
- Western Farm Belt Conservation Area (promote very low density residential development)
- Water

Plan Consistency

The Plan was compared with the Locational Guide Map in the *2005-2010 State Plan of Conservation & Development* with the following observations:

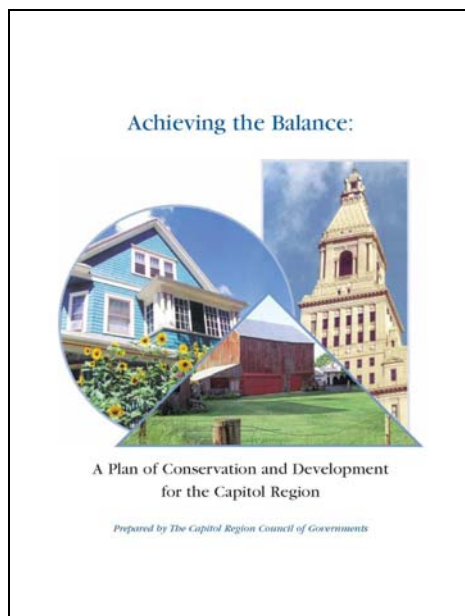
- There is a high degree of consistency between the Plans from the perspective of Conservation Areas. Ellington's Areas of Conservation Interest complement Conservation Areas as depicted in the State Plan.
- Ellington's Plan is more protective of the Crystal Lake Area in that it recommends less intensive growth west of the lake.
- Both Plans recognize Route 83 as a growth area.
- Growth areas in the State Plan are consistent with the sewer service areas in Ellington.
- The State Plan does not recognize established commercial and industrial uses along Route 140 in the northwest area of the town.
- The Locational Guide Map from the State Plan pertaining to Ellington is shown on page 6-6.

Consistency with the State Plan is important since any development inconsistent with the Plan would not be eligible for state aid.

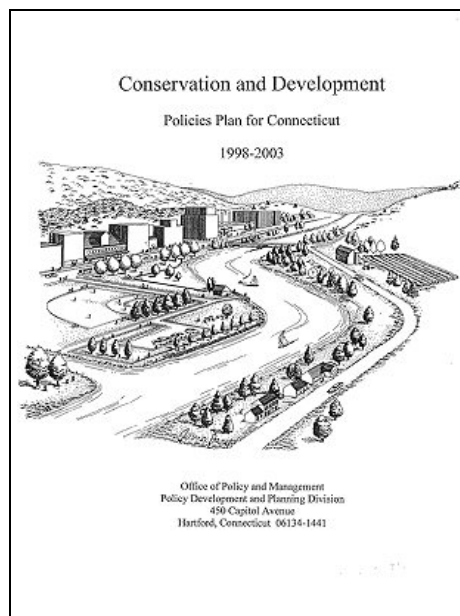
The Plan was also compared to the Regional Plan and found to be very consistent as noted by the following observations:

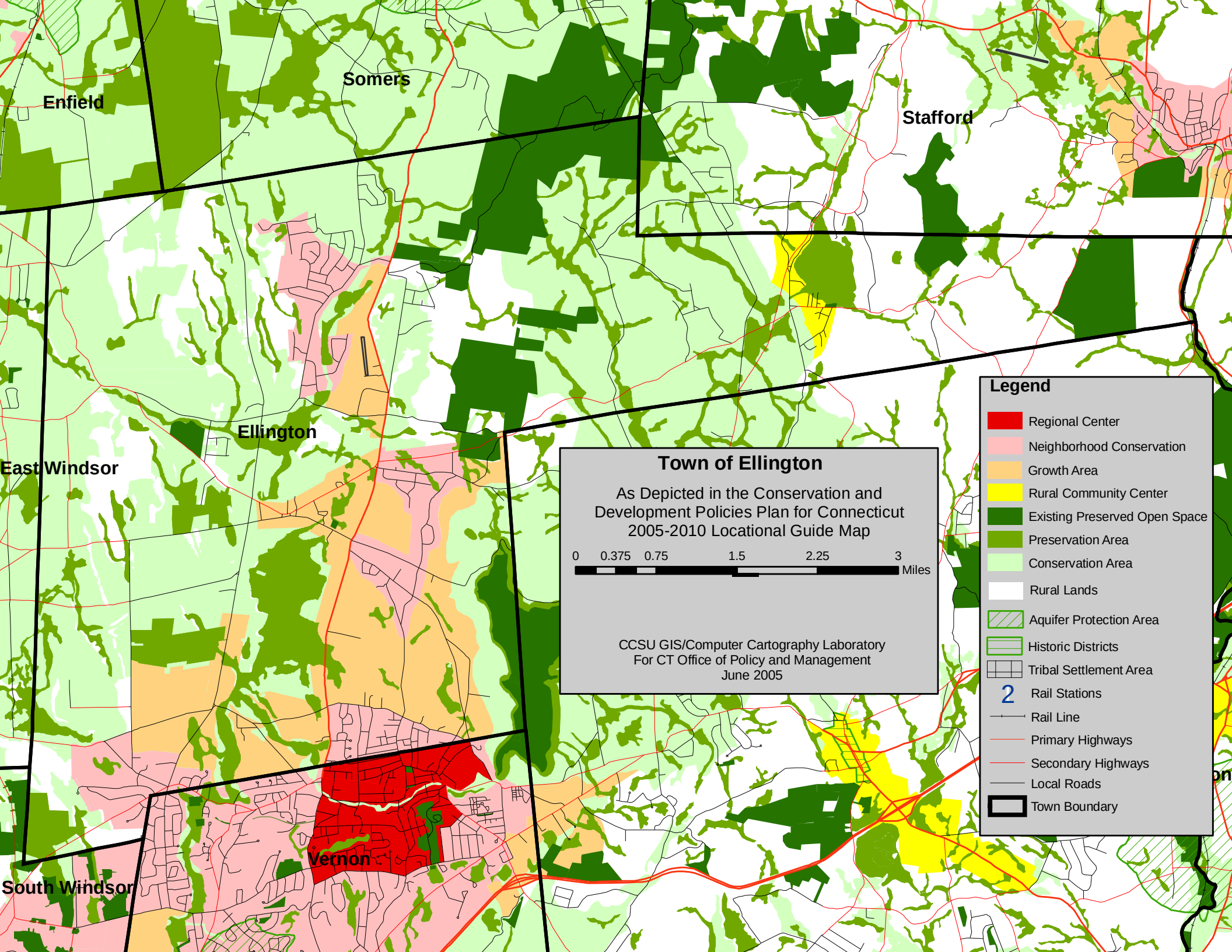
- The *Capitol Regional Plan* recognizes established growth patterns in the Town including the airport area, the Route 83 corridor, the Town Center, the industrial and industrial park areas, and the commercial and industrial uses in the northwest quadrant of town.
- Both Plans recognize environmentally sensitive areas.

Capitol Regional Plan



State Plan





Enfield

Somers

Stafford

Ellington

East Windsor

South Windsor

Vernon

Town of Ellington

As Depicted in the Conservation and
Development Policies Plan for Connecticut
2005-2010 Locational Guide Map

0 0.375 0.75 1.5 2.25 3 Miles

CCSU GIS/Computer Cartography Laboratory
For CT Office of Policy and Management
June 2005

Legend

- Regional Center
- Neighborhood Conservation
- Growth Area
- Rural Community Center
- Existing Preserved Open Space
- Preservation Area
- Conservation Area
- Rural Lands
- Aquifer Protection Area
- Historic Districts
- Tribal Settlement Area
- 2 Rail Stations
- Rail Line
- Primary Highways
- Secondary Highways
- Local Roads
- Town Boundary

IMPLEMENTATION

7

Overview

The main purpose of the planning process that encompasses a Plan of Conservation and Development is to implement the strategies and recommendations of the Plan. Implementation of a Plan typically occurs in two main phases:

- Some major recommendations can (and will) be carried out in a relatively short period of time since they are critical to the implementation of the Plan.
- Other recommendations will be implemented over time because they may require additional study, coordination with (or implementation by) others, or involve the commitment of financial resources.

The Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) can (through regulation amendments, application reviews, and other means) implement many of the recommendations of the Plan of Conservation and Development. The PZC has the primary responsibility of implementing many of the Plan's recommendations. Other recommendations may require cooperation of and action by, other local boards and commissions such as the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, and similar agencies.

However, if the Plan is to be realized, it must serve as a guide to all residents, businesses, builders, developers, applicants, owners, agencies, and individuals interested in the orderly conservation and development of Ellington.

If the Plan is to be realized, it must serve as a guide to all residents, businesses, builders, developers, applicants, owners, agencies, and individuals interested in the orderly conservation and development of Ellington.

Tools

Using the Plan of Conservation and Development

Using the Plan of Conservation and Development as a basis for land use decisions by the PZC will help accomplish the goals and objectives of the Plan. All land use proposals should be measured and evaluated in terms of the Plan and its various elements. Deviations from the Plan by the PZC should not be done without careful consideration of long-term impacts and how the deviation would be in the best interest of the Town.

Annual Update Process

An appropriate way to regularly update the Plan is to update major sections of the Plan every year by:

- Holding a public informational meeting to summarize the Plan recommendations and receive feedback from the community;
- Holding a workshop session for local boards and other interested persons to discuss Plan strategies and suggest alternative language;
- Revising Plan sections, as appropriate; and
- Re-adopting the Plan (even if there are no text or map changes).

Plan Implementation Committee

In order to facilitate implementation, a Plan Implementation Committee (PIC) should be established. The principal function of the PIC would be to monitor implementation of the Plan's recommendations. Such a committee could be appointed by the Board of Selectmen as either an ad hoc committee or a permanent committee. Ellington's PIC could use the implementation schedules starting on page 7-5 to develop an annual implementation program of issues to be addressed by boards and commissions. The PIC should be comprised of representatives of various boards, commissions, and/or citizens to help to prioritize, coordinate, and refine implementation of the Plan. The PIC could meet 2 to 4 times a year to establish priorities and guide implementation of the Plan's recommendations. In addition, the Committee could assess the status of specific recommendations, establish new priorities, and suggest new implementation techniques. It is also possible that the Planning & Zoning Commission, or a subset thereof, could assume the responsibility for coordinating implementation of the Plan's recommendations, but this is not recommended.

Annual Update Program

A Plan that is updated only once every 10 years can be silent on emerging issues, trends and current policy objectives. This could lead to conflicts in land use decisions or missed opportunities. When a Plan is considered strictly a reference document rather than a working document, its effectiveness in guiding the community can diminish over time. Ellington should consider keeping this Plan current and not waiting 10 years to update it. A preliminary schedule might be as follows:

Conservation Themes	Development Themes	Community Needs
2009	2010	2011
2012	2013	2014
2015	2016	2017

Each review and update would extend the Plan's 10-year life until the community felt that a comprehensive update was required. A work program for annual updates of the Plan is discussed in the sidebar. A Plan Implementation Committee should be established to assist in this effort.

Updating Zoning and Subdivision Regulations

Many of the recommendations in the Plan of Conservation and Development can be implemented by the Planning & Zoning Commission through regulation amendments, application reviews, and other means. The Zoning Regulations and the Subdivision Regulations provide specific criteria for land development at the time of applications. As a result, these regulations are important tools to implement the recommendations of the Plan. However, this is only true if the regulations reflect the recommendations of the Plan. In the near future, the Planning & Zoning Commission should undertake a comprehensive review of the zoning regulations, zoning map, and subdivision regulations and make whatever revisions are necessary to:

- Make the regulations more user-friendly;
- Implement Plan recommendations; and
- Promote consistency between the Plan and the regulations.

The importance of updating local regulations in a timely manner cannot be over-emphasized.

Capital Improvement Program

The Capital Improvement Program or CIP is a tool for planning major capital expenditures of a municipality so that local needs can be identified and prioritized within local fiscal constraints that may exist.

The Plan contains several proposals (such as acquisition of open space) whose implementation may require the expenditure of Town funds. The Plan recommends that these and other items be included in the Town's CIP and that funding for them be included as part of the Capital Budget.

Referral of Municipal Improvements

Section 8-24 of the *Connecticut General Statutes* requires that municipal improvements (defined in the statute) be referred to the Planning & Zoning Commission for a report before any local action is taken. A proposal disapproved by the Commission can only be implemented after a two-thirds vote by Town Meeting. This referral process is an opportunity for the PZC to check that proposed improvements are connected with recommendations of the Plan.

Staff Support

The various boards and commissions that are responsible for carrying out the many policies and tasks contained in this Plan cannot do so effectively without adequate support from Town Staff. Sufficient Town staffing levels are critical to the success of this plan.

Sample Legend

BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
LUO	Land Use Office

Priorities

T	Task
1	High Priority
2	Moderate Priority
3	Lower Priority
P	Policy
A	High Priority
B	Moderate Priority
C	Lower Priority

The entities listed are considered lead agencies and would not preclude other agencies from participating in the implementation of particular strategies.

Implementation Schedule

Implementation of the Plan is an ongoing process. While some recommendations can be carried out in a relatively short period of time, others may only be realized by the end of the planning period or beyond. Since some recommendations may involve additional study or a commitment of fiscal resources, their implementation may take place over several years or occur in stages.

As illustrated below, implementation tables assign primary responsibilities and preliminary schedules to the Plan's recommendations. In many instances, the responsibilities are shared by a number of entities (see sidebar).

Preserve More Meaningful Open Space

T	1. Establish an open space acquisition fund and maintain it through annual contributions in the budget.	BOF BOS	1
----------	---	------------	----------

In addition, the tables identify both policies and tasks. Policies are long-term guidelines that do not readily lend themselves to a specific schedule or measurement. Tasks on the other hand, are specific actions that can typically be scheduled, completed, and evaluated.

Priorities are identified in the tables and are ranked according to a three-step scale. High priorities are items that are either critical to the success of a planning strategy or are relatively easy to implement and can be handled immediately. Moderate priorities are policies and tasks that are not as time sensitive as high priorities and may be more difficult to implement due to funding constraints or complexity. Moderate priorities should be addressed by the middle of the 10-year planning period. Lower priorities are typically longer-range items that might require a "wait and see" approach or are preceded by higher funding priorities. Lower priorities may be addressed towards the end of the planning period and beyond. For tasks identified as number 2 or number 3 priorities, suggested completion dates have also been included.

Highest Priorities

The implementation tables which follow on pages 7-5 through 7-13 use 3 levels of priority. These tables are followed by a list of implementation actions that have been deemed to be of the most immediate importance.

CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

Preserve Agricultural Resources

Preserve Existing Farms		Who	Priority
P	1. Continue to support programs that preserve farming.	CC LUO BOS	A
P	2. Continue the farm assessment program (PA 490) in order to assist farmers with maintenance of agricultural uses.	BOF BOS	A
P	3. Consider alternatives to the purchase of development rights for threatened farmland, such as purchase and leaseback.	CC BOF BOS	B
P	4. Lobby the State Department of Agriculture to use more realistic, and thus higher, land values for purchase of development rights on farm land.	CC BOS	B
T	5. Adopt a “right to farm” policy to protect agricultural uses.	BOS	1
T	6. Amend Zoning Regulations to allow a wider variety of farm-based uses. Allow more flexible regulations to encourage ecotourism.	PZC	1

Legend

BOE	Board of Education
BOF	Board of Finance
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
DEP	Dept of Environmental Protection
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRC	Design Review Committee
EDC	Economic Development Com.
PW	Public Works Department
FD	Fire Department
HD	Health Dept.
HS	Historical Society
IW	Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency
LUO	Land Use Office
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
RD	Parks & Recreation
WC	Water Companies
WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority

Priorities

T	Task
1	High Priority
2	Moderate Priority
3	Lower Priority
P	Policy
A	High Priority
B	Moderate Priority
C	Lower Priority

Legend

BOE	Board of Education
BOF	Board of Finance
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
DEP	Dept of Environmental Protection
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRC	Design Review Committee
EDC	Economic Development Com.
PW	Public Works Department
FD	Fire Department
HD	Health Dept.
HS	Historical Society
IW	Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency
LUO	Land Use Office
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
RD	Parks & Recreation
WC	Water Companies
WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority

Priorities

T	Task
1	High Priority
2	Moderate Priority
3	Lower Priority
P	Policy
A	High Priority
B	Moderate Priority
C	Lower Priority

Natural Resource Protection

Protect Water Quality

		Who	Priority
P	1. Explore the need for Water Quality Overlay Protection Zones for public water well fields and surface reservoirs.	WC PZC CC	B
P	2. Evaluate the threat of residential underground storage tanks on ground and surface water resources and adopt a regulating ordinance of such facilities if necessary.	HD BOS LUO	A
P	3. Adopt a Septic Management Program to minimize the threat of septic system failures on surface and ground drinking water supplies.	WPCA HD BOS	B

Address Stormwater Management

		Who	Priority
T	4. Adopt effective impervious coverage standards to encourage reductions in stormwater runoff.	PZC	2(10)
P	5. Require natural and/or mechanical treatment of stormwater before its release.	PZC LUO	B

Preserve Natural Diversity

		Who	Priority
T	6. Amend the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations to require applicants to work with Staff and/or the DEP to avoid or mitigate impacts on species of concern.	DEP PZC	2 (10)
T	7. Amend the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations to require applicants to consider wildlife and their habitat in their designs.	DEP PZC	2 (10)
P	8. Prohibit the introduction of non-native or invasive species during the site development or subdivision process.	DEP PZC	B

Protect Sensitive Soil Resources

		Who	Priority
P	9. Limit the extent to which watercourses, wetlands, and steep slopes (>25%) may be counted towards the number of lots that a property may yield.	PZC LUO	A
T	10. Apply a density factor to regulate lot yield of residential subdivisions.	PZC	1

Protect Ridgeline Areas

		Who	Priority
T	11. Adopt Ridgeline Overlay districts to protect these natural resources.	PZC LUO	2 (10)

Open Space

Preserve More Open Space

		Who	Priority
T	1. Increase the mandatory open space "set-aside" to 20% as part of every residential development application.	PZC	1
T	2. Establish an open space acquisition fund and maintain it as a line item in the annual budget.	BOF BOS	1
P	3. Continue to accept fees in lieu of open space when appropriate to the land being subdivided.	PZC	A
P	4. Continue off-site dedication of open space.	PZC	A
T	5. Amend the Open Space Development regulations by adding standards that will encourage their use.	PZC	1

Improve Quality of Open Space

		Who	Priority
T	6. Amend Subdivision Regulations to require an equivalence factor to improve the overall quality of open space.	PZC	2(09)
P	7. Interconnect open spaces into a system of greenways.	All	B

Legend

BOE	Board of Education
BOF	Board of Finance
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
DEP	Dept of Environmental Protection
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRC	Design Review Committee
EDC	Economic Development Com.
PW	Public Works Department
FD	Fire Department
HD	Health Dept.
HS	Historical Society
IW	Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency
LUO	Land Use Office
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
RD	Parks & Recreation
WC	Water Companies
WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority

Priorities

T	Task
1	High Priority
2	Moderate Priority
3	Lower Priority
P	Policy
A	High Priority
B	Moderate Priority
C	Lower Priority

Preserve Historic Resources

Legend

BOE	Board of Education
BOF	Board of Finance
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
DEP	Dept of Environmental Protection
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRC	Design Review Committee
EDC	Economic Development Com.
PW	Public Works Department
FD	Fire Department
HD	Health Dept.
HS	Historical Society
IW	Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency
LUO	Land Use Office
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
RD	Parks & Recreation
WC	Water Companies
WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority

Priorities

T	Task
1	High Priority
2	Moderate Priority
3	Lower Priority
P	Policy
A	High Priority
B	Moderate Priority
C	Lower Priority

Encourage “Sensitive Stewardship”

		Who	Priority
P	1. Encourage “sensitive stewardship” or pride in ownership as the most effective means of preserving historic resources.	HS LUO	B

Recognize Significant Historic Resources

		Who	Priority
T	2. Take advantage of state grants for conducting historic surveys.	HS LUO	1
T	3. Establish a local register of historic places.	HS	2 (10)
P	4. Encourage applications for National and State Historic Register designation.	HS LUO	C

Establish Preservation Programs

		Who	Priority
T	5. Investigate establishing Local Historic Districts that require Certificates of Appropriateness for exterior renovations.	BOS HS	2 (10)
T	6. Explore the use of Village Districts to regulate historic commercial areas.	PZC	2 (11)
T	7. Provide economic incentives such as tax abatements for restoration of historic resources.	BOF BOS	2 (10)
T	8. Adopt regulatory incentives such as adaptive re-use provisions in zoning regulations.	PZC	2 (10)
T	9. Adopt a Demolition Delay Ordinance requiring up to a 90-day waiting period before historic buildings can be demolished.	BOS HS	2 (10)
P	10. Provide educational programs and technical assistance to historic property owners.	HS LUO	B

GUIDE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT

Industrial and Commercial Development

Update Zoning Standards - General		Who	Priority
T	1. Rezone Commercial to Planned Commercial where appropriate.	PZC	2 (10)
T	2. Review and rezone as necessary properties west of Berr Avenue currently zoned Planned Commercial.	PZC	1
P	3. Institute Access Management for Route 83.	LUO PZC DOT	A
P	4. Use Village District Regulations or focused design review standards for Town Center to foster “in-character” development.	PZC	B
T	5. Rezone excess PC-zoned areas in Crystal Lake to Residential.	PZC LUO	2 (10)
T	6. Enact a new Planned Commercial Zone for the Rockville area, Route 83.	PZC LUO	3 (12)
T	7. In the Five Corners area, update zoning regulations to assist in addressing access and circulation issues.	PZC LUO	2 (10)
T	8. Upgrade use and design standards for Industrial and Planned Industrial Zones.	PZC LUO	2 (10)

Improve Appearance of Commercial/Industrial Development		Who	Priority
T	8. Update zoning standards for signage.	PZC DRC	1
T	9. Update zoning standards for lighting.	PZC DRC	1
T	10. Update zoning standards for landscaping.	PZC DRC	1
T	11. Provide design guidelines for larger buildings while maintaining limitations on building size per occupant.	PZC DRC	B
T	12. Institute a Design Overlay Zone for Route 83.	PZC DRC	2 (10)
T	13. Formalize the Design Review Committee and process.	BOS DRC LUO	1
T	14. Develop a Design Review Manual.	DRC LUO	2 (10)
P	15. Work with the Connecticut Department of Transportation to improve circulation in the Five Corners area.	BOS LUO	B
P	16. Consider providing tax incentives for improvements to older commercial properties in the Rockville area.	BOF BOS	B
P	17. Work with civic groups to establish attractive gateways to the Town.	BOS LUO	B
T	18. Monitor sewer allocation use as development occurs. Consider purchasing additional capacity from Vernon.	WPCA LUO	1

Legend

BOE	Board of Education
BOF	Board of Finance
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
DEP	Dept of Environmental Protection
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRC	Design Review Committee
EDC	Economic Development Com.
PW	Public Works Department
FD	Fire Department
HD	Health Dept.
HS	Historical Society
IW	Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency
LUO	Land Use Office
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
RD	Parks & Recreation
WC	Water Companies
WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority

Priorities

T	Task
1	High Priority
2	Moderate Priority
3	Lower Priority
P	Policy
A	High Priority
B	Moderate Priority
C	Lower Priority

Legend

BOE	Board of Education
BOF	Board of Finance
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
DEP	Dept of Environmental Protection
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRC	Design Review Committee
EDC	Economic Development Com.
PW	Public Works Department
FD	Fire Department
HD	Health Dept.
HS	Historical Society
IW	Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency
LUO	Land Use Office
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
RD	Parks & Recreation
WC	Water Companies
WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority

Priorities

T	Task
1	High Priority
2	Moderate Priority
3	Lower Priority
P	Policy
A	High Priority
B	Moderate Priority
C	Lower Priority

Encourage Appropriate Economic Development

		Who	Priority
T	1. Utilize tax abatement programs to attract new businesses and retain existing businesses.	EDC BOS BOF	1
T	2. Provide for access to utilities as necessary for economic development.	PZC WPCA	1
T	3. Explore the viability of the future of the airport as a multi-modal transportation option.	PZC LUO EDC	2
T	4. Streamline and/or reduce regulatory requirements where appropriate and feasible.	PZC IW LUO	1 (09)
T	5. Update the Zoning Map.	PZC LUO	1 (08)
T	6. Review the zoning map to ensure that all commercial and industrial zones are in the appropriate location and rezone as necessary.	PZC LUO	1
T	7. Create neighborhood business zones in the Crystal Lake area, the Five Corners area, and the Northwest Corner.	PZC LUO	2 (11)
T	8. Have the PZC review and amend the zoning regulations to include design standards.	PZC	1
T	9. Institute Access Management regulations for the Route 83 corridor.	BOS PZC	1

Encourage Appropriate Residential Development

		Who	Priority
T	1. Modify minimum lot area and frontage requirements consistent with constraints, as recommended in the Buildout Analysis.	PZC	1
T	2. Utilize density standards to ensure that residential development works harmoniously with natural resource constraints.	PZC	1
T	3. Update Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) regulations.	PZC	2 (10)
T	4. Update Subdivision Design Standards to increase open space set-asides.	PZC	2 (10)
T	5. Review and update, as appropriate, subdivision design standards for road widths and cul-de-sacs.	PZC LUO	2 (10)

ADDRESS COMMUNITY NEEDS

Address Changing Housing Needs

Address Special Housing Needs			Who	Priority
P	1.	Monitor needs for various types of senior housing and insure timely review of zoning regulations allowing for same.	LUO PZC	A
P	2.	Actively encourage active-adult and elderly housing where appropriate.	LUO PZC	A
T	3.	Consider allowing density bonuses or design flexibility in exchange for providing affordable units.	PZC	2 (10)
T	4.	Seek state and federal grants and local funding to purchase land for income-assisted elderly housing.	BOF BOS	2 (10)

Address Community Facility Needs

Address Town Hall Needs			Who	Priority
T	1.	Provide for modest expansion to town hall complex to accommodate increased staff.	BOF BOS	3 (12)
T	2.	Provide generator back-up for the Town Hall.	BOF BOS	1
T	3.	Relocate Emergency Management to the Town Hall	BOS	1

Address Public Works Complex Needs			Who	Priority
T	4.	Acquire additional land to allow for additional equipment storage space.	BOS BOF PW	2 (10)
T	5.	Acquire additional land to allow for an expanded Canine Facility.	BOS BOF PW	2 (10)

Address Senior Center Needs			Who	Priority
T	6.	Monitor growth of the senior population to anticipate staff and space needs.	BOS	2 (10)
P	7.	Investigate the establishment of a Community Center to meet senior needs, as well as those of other groups.	BOS RD BOF	B

Legend

BOE	Board of Education
BOF	Board of Finance
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
DEP	Dept of Environmental Protection
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRC	Design Review Committee
EDC	Economic Development Com.
PW	Public Works Department
FD	Fire Department
HD	Health Dept.
HS	Historical Society
IW	Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency
LUO	Land Use Office
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
RD	Parks & Recreation
WC	Water Companies
WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority

Priorities

T	Task
1	High Priority
2	Moderate Priority
3	Lower Priority
P	Policy
A	High Priority
B	Moderate Priority
C	Lower Priority

Legend

BOE	Board of Education
BOF	Board of Finance
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
DEP	Dept of Environmental Protection
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRC	Design Review Committee
EDC	Economic Development Com.
PW	Public Works Department
FD	Fire Department
HD	Health Dept.
HS	Historical Society
IW	Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency
LUO	Land Use Office
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
RD	Parks & Recreation
WC	Water Companies
WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority

Address Community Facility Needs

Address Fire Protection Needs

		Who	Priority
T	8. Establish a new fire station in the southwest quadrant of town.	BOF BOS FD	2(10)
P	9. Monitor the need for an additional station in the northwest quadrant of town.	FD	C

Address Recreational Needs

		Who	Priority
P	10. Investigate the establishment of a Community Center to meet a variety of recreational, educational, and social program needs, including seniors.	BOF RD BOS	B
P	11. Provide for additional sports field, preferably in vicinity of existing fields.	BOF BOS RD	B

Address School Facility Needs

		Who	Priority
T	12. Provide school facilities to accommodate increasing student enrollments. Implement additions to the High School and Middle School.	BOE BOF BOS	1

Priorities

T	Task
1	High Priority
2	Moderate Priority
3	Lower Priority
P	Policy
A	High Priority
B	Moderate Priority
C	Lower Priority

Address Transportation Needs

		Who	Priority
P	1. Work with the State to resolve congestion and safety concerns at the Five Corner intersection.	DOT BOS	A
P	2. Amend zoning regulations to implement access management strategies for Route 83. Consider other locations as traffic increases.	DOT BOS PZC	A
P	3. Provide for road extensions to enhance the overall road network.	PZC	B
T	4. Reevaluate the parking requirements by use and make adjustments as necessary to ensure adequate yet efficient numbers of parking spaces.	PZC	1
T	5. Reduce impervious surfaces through the use of porous pavement systems, deferred parking and shared parking requirements where appropriate.	PZC	2 (10)
P	6. Expand the sidewalk network.	BOS	A
T	7. Undertake a comprehensive study for locating bike lanes and trails.	LUO	2 (10)
P	8. Use recommendations of the Route 83 Corridor Study to maintain functionality of the corridor, to promote development that is attractive, and to protect interior residential areas.	ALL	A

Address Utility Needs

		Who	Priority
P	1. Require a capacity analysis report for developments requiring sewers	PZC WPCA	A
P	2. Explore the possibility of acquiring additional sewerage capacity from Vernon.	BOS WPCA	B
T	3. Replace sewers in area of Longview Street.	WPCA PW	2 (10)
P	4. Establish improved lines of communication between the PZC and the WPCA, including coordination meetings between the two entities.	PZC WPCA BOS	A
T	5. Adopt by reference the WPCA sewer service area and allocation process.	PZC	1
T	6. Institute a policy for sewers that would permit trading of assigned capacity.	WPCA	2 (10)
P	7. Institute an administrative policy to require reports from WPCA prior to any zoning approvals involving sewers.	PZC WPCA	1
T	8. Update the sewer facilities plan.	WPCA	1
T	9. Restrict sewer access to new housing stock that meets the goal of increasing senior housing options.	PZC WPCA	1

Legend

BOE	Board of Education
BOF	Board of Finance
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
DEP	Dept of Environmental Protection
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRC	Design Review Committee
EDC	Economic Development Com.
PW	Public Works Department
FD	Fire Department
HD	Health Dept.
HS	Historical Society
IW	Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency
LUO	Land Use Office
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
RD	Parks & Recreation
WC	Water Companies
WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority

Priorities

T	Task
1	High Priority
2	Moderate Priority
3	Lower Priority
P	Policy
A	High Priority
B	Moderate Priority
C	Lower Priority

Legend

BOE	Board of Education
BOF	Board of Finance
BOS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
DEP	Dept of Environmental Protection
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRC	Design Review Committee
EDC	Economic Development Com.
PW	Public Works Department
FD	Fire Department
HD	Health Dept.
HS	Historical Society
IW	Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency
LUO	Land Use Office
PZC	Planning & Zoning Commission
RD	Parks & Recreation
WC	Water Companies
WPCA	Water Pollution Control Authority

Priorities

T	Task
----------	------

1	High Priority
----------	---------------

2	Moderate Priority
----------	-------------------

3	Lower Priority
----------	----------------

P	Policy
----------	--------

A	High Priority
----------	---------------

B	Moderate Priority
----------	-------------------

C	Lower Priority
----------	----------------

Highest Priorities

This section of the Plan culls from the preceding implementation tables 15 specific recommendations for items of the highest priority, together with projected initiation/completion dates. These priorities are as follows:

Action	Schedule	Action Agencies
1. Complete a comprehensive update of the Zoning Regulations.	2008-2009	PZC
2. Institute, through zoning regulations, access management and design standards for Route 83.	2007-2008	PZC DRB
3. Develop a Design Review Manual and formalize the Design Review Committee and process.	2007-2008	BOS DRC
4. Include a wider variety of farm uses in the Zoning Regulations.	2008	PZC
5. Increase the open space set aside in subdivisions to 20%.	2007-2008	PZC
6. Establish an open space acquisition fund supported in the annual budget.	2008	CC BOS BOF
7. Regulate residential underground storage tanks as a potential pollution source.	2007-2008	CC BOS
8. Secure a state grant for surveying historic buildings and properties.	2008-2009	Staff
9. Modify the area and lot standards in the Zoning Regulations to be consistent with the Plan's recommendations.	2008-2009	PZC
10. Monitor the need for senior housing and the need for zoning revisions to meet the same.	Ongoing	Staff
11. Work with the State to resolve congestion and safety issues at the Five Corners area.	2007-2009	PW Staff
12. Undertake a study for locating bike lanes and pedestrian paths; expand the sidewalk system.	2008-2009	Staff BOS PW
13. Explore the possibility of acquiring additional sewerage capacity from Vernon.	2008-2009	WPCA
14. Establish coordination meetings between the PZC and the WPCA.	2007-2008	BOS PZC WPCA
15. Institute a policy for sewers that would permit trading of assigned capacity.	2007-2009	WPCA Staff

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Ad Hoc Plan of Conservation & Development Review Committee

William Hogan	Chairman
Laura Sherman	Economic Development Commission
Ken Braga	Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency
Carol Strom	Planning & Zoning Commission
Joe Wehr	Planning & Zoning Commission
Lori Spielman	Planning & Zoning Commission
Jim Gage	Conservation Commission

Planning and Zoning Commission

Arlo Hoffman	Chairman (after 12/06/07)
Emery L. Zahner	Chairman (until 12/06/07)
William Hogan	
Carol Strom	
Lori Spielman	
Robert G. Hoffman	
Geraldine R. Kupecky	
Cliff Aucter	
Joe Wehr	Alternate
James Prichard	Alternate

Staff

Robert A. Phillips, AICP	Town Planner
Reanna Goodreau	Land Use Assistant
Lisa M. Houlihan	Zoning Enforcement Officer
Kristin Michaud	Administrative Secretary

Technical Assistance Provided by:



Planimetrics

31 Ensign Drive, Avon, CT 06001

860-677-5267