Five-Year Update Summary

Goals and Policies

Amendments: (Briefly describe any land use related amendments and indicate date of adoption)
The only Element that was amended since the Plan's adoption by the Council in 1992 was the Housing Element. Specifically, an Affordable Housing Production Plan was adopted in December 2004 as an appendix of the Housing Element and contained a series of new implementation items.

Identify significant changes to the plan's goals and policies based upon past experience and updates of the functional elements

Summary	Text/Map Page
Examine Slatersville Mill for new, consolidated Town Hall and Library locations.	Goal #2 B p.H-2
Two new schools buildings are needed, Jr./Sr. High School needs rehab.	Goal #1B p.H-2
Wastewater Management Districts may be solution to failed ISDS and cost of sewering.	Goal #1B p.G-2 Goal #4B p.H-3
Wastewater Management Plan needs updating.	Goal #3F. p.H-3
New goals, policies and actions included for implementation of Stormwater Mngt.	Goal #4A-J p.G-4, Goal #6 A-C. p.H-3
Require land dedication for all development projects through Conservation Development, easements, etc. or through fee in lieu of dedication	Goal #1E p.D-6 Goal #5B p.G-5 Goal #1E & F. p.I-2
Develop formal trails system along Branch River, railroad rights of way.	Goal #1 C, p.I-2
Improve existing facilities.	Goal #1-#3, p.H-2-H-3
Improve Kelly Complex/Mammoth Mill site.	Goal #1 I-K p.I-3
New road between Pound Hill and Greenville Roads no longer proposed.	-
Extension of (private) Rankin Path by Town no longer proposed.	-
Scenic roads Ordinance needed.	Goal #6 G p.G-6 Goal #3A p.J-2
Traffic calming measures needed	Goal #8A p.J-3
Pedestrian access components to become a part of all land developments.	Goal #2B p.D-7 Goal #7A p. J-3
Goals, policies and actions have been added to implement the Stormwater Management Plan	Goal #4 p. G-4+5
References to "clustering" of homes has been revised to reflect "conservation development"	Goals in D, G, +I
Resource/Site Analysis Maps will be required as part of the Master Plan review stage.	G-2.0 #3 D
Goals, policies and actions have been added to implement the Slatersville Area Plan	D-2.0 #3 D
Subdivision & Land Dev. Regulations will be improved to better protect resources.	G-2.0 #1 D
An Agricultural Business Zone is proposed.	D-3.1.6 p. D-15
An Open Space Zone is proposed.	D-3.1.5 p. D-15
A Mill Rehabilitation Zone is proposed.	D-4.2 #2 p. D-25
A Village Residential Zone is proposed.	D-4.2 #2 p. D-25
A Mixed Use Commercial/Office Zone is proposed.	D-4.2 #2 p. D-25
A Mixed Use Retail Zone is proposed.	D-4.2 #2 p. D-25
A new goal ad several policies and actions attempt to institute "smart growth" techniques.	D-2.0 #2 p. D-7
Several policies and actions relate to techniques intended to improve design.	D, E, F, G, H, I
The goals have been reoriented to focus on the Town's capacity to manage a comprehensive economic development program.	F-2.0 #1 D p. F-2
It is recommended that the NS Industrial Development Commission be given more extensive authority.	F-2.0 #1 C p. F-2

Note: The Housing Element goals, policies and actions have not changed since they appeared in the "Affordable Housing Production Plan" appendix to the Housing Element adopted by the Town Council in December 2004 and were then forwarded to the State for adoption.

Five-Year Update Summary

Land Use Element

Amendments: (Briefly describe any land use related amendments and indicate date of adoption)
There were no amendments to this Element.

Significant Changes: Land Use or Infrastructure
Given that it has been over 10 years since the 1992 Plan was finalized, the Element has been significantly revised. All text and statistics have been updated with 2000 US Census data and many sentences and entire sections were rewritten based on information and reports that have been generated since 1992.

Summary	Text/Map Page
The sewer system has been expanded in conformance with many of the recommendations contained in the 1993 Wastewater Facilities Plan.	H-3.11 H-16-17
Over 600 acres have been acquired and put into protected status since 1992.	Map D-2 & I-3.1.1 I-5
The area behind Landmark Medical proposed in 1992 as a Mixed Use/ District, is in the process of being developed for a mixed use development.	D-3.4.4 D-21
The 1995 Land Use/Land Cover RIGIS data is included.	D-3.0 D-11

Significant Changes: Land Use Demand (e.g. population, employment)

Summary	Text/Map Page
Although Statewide Planning's population projections are low, over 850 new dwelling units were approved since 2000. As such, there is a need for growth management.	D-1.1.2 D-3
The build-out has been revised to take into account the BRVNHCC 2001 build-out, new lots created by zoning (in response to affordable housing needs and economic development needs), and recently approved/permitted development and redevelopment projects.	D-3.1.7 D-16

Significant Changes: Future Land Use Allocations

Summary	Text/Map Page
Several Town and State-owned parcels will be rezoned as Open Space.	D-3.1.5 D-15
Three historic mill complexes will be rezoned to encourage rehabilitation and reuse.	D-3.4.1 D-19
Certain areas will be rezoned to generate economic activity (1991 Industrial Site Survey).	D-3.4.1 D-21
The density of mill villages is to be maintained/encouraged.	D-3.4.2 D-20

Land Use Goals and Policies Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page
An Agricultural Business Zone is proposed.	D-3.1.6 D-15
An Open Space Zone is proposed.	D-3.1.5 D-15
A Mill Rehabilitation Zone is proposed.	D-3.4.1 D-19
A Village Residential Zone is proposed.	D-3.4.2 D-20
A Mixed Use Commercial/Office Zone is proposed.	D-3.4.3 D-21
A Mixed Use Commercial/Office/146A Zone is proposed.	D-3.4.4 D-21
A new goal and several policies and actions attempt to institute "smart growth" techniques.	D-2.0 #2 D-7
Several policies and actions relate to techniques intended to improve design.	D-2.0 #3 D-8

Land Use Implementation Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page
Most 1992 Zoning proposals were adopted; the mixed use proposals were not adopted.	-
The Subdivision Regulations were amended in accordance with the Comp Plan & State law.	-

Five-Year Update Summary

Housing Element

Amendments: (Briefly describe any housing related amendments and indicate date of adoption)
This Element was amended in December 2004 with the Town Council's decision to adopt the "Affordable Housing Production Plan" as an appendix of the existing Element.

Significant Changes: Housing Inventory and Programs

Summary	Text/Map Page
The Affordable Housing Production Plan appendix has been brought into the body of the Element's text. More specifically, the appendix text has replaced most of the 1992 text in the Element. The Element, as revised, incorporates all 2000 US Census data and is in conformance with both the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act of 2004 and the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act.	
The data contained in the new Element has not changed from what had been submitted in December 2004, the Element has simply been reformatted to make it more similar to the format of other Elements in the Plan Update.	

Significant Changes: Housing Demand (by type of unit and household)

Summary	Text/Map Page
The data contained in the new Element has not changed from what had been submitted in December 2004, the Element has simply been reformatted to make it more similar to the format of other Elements in the Plan Update.	

Significant Changes: Housing Affordability (supply and demand)

Summary	Text/Map Page
The data contained in the new Element has not changed from what had been submitted in December 2004, the Element has simply been reformatted to make it more similar to the format of other Elements in the Plan Update.	

Future Housing Demand Impacts on Land Use and Related Elements

Summary	Text/Map Page
The Land Use Element included rezoning as specified in the Housing Element, build-out takes the rezoning proposals into account.	E-3.2.3 & 4.2 E-15 & E-27
The Housing, Land Use and Economic Development Elements have been reconciled such that the people filling the jobs created by rezoning can find housing in North Smithfield.	Elements D – E – F
In response to a revised build-out, more land will need to be acquired to maintain an active recreation standard.	E-3.2.3 E-15 I-3.1.4 I-8
The Services and Facilities Element recognizes the need to secure more public water and proposes the use of Wastewater Mngt. Districts to protect groundwater from failing ISDS.	H-4.6 H-20

Housing Implementation Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page
There is still an insufficient amount of affordable housing available.	E-3.2.3 E-15
Accessory dwelling units are now allowed by right.	Zoning Ord.
A Housing Commission still needs to be created.	E-4.1 E-26

Five-Year Update Summary

Economic Development Element

Amendments: (Briefly describe any economic development related amendments and indicate date of adoption)
There were no amendments to this Element.

Significant Changes: Economic Base
Given that it has been over 10 years since the 1992 Plan was finalized, the Element has been significantly revised. All text and statistics have been updated with 2000 US Census data and many sentences and entire sections were rewritten based on information and reports that have been generated since 1992.

Summary	Text/Map Page
Several historic mills are targeted for rehabilitation with housing as its primary uses – design of units are such that a small percentage of the units will have children may have a positive impact on the tax base.	D-2 #6A D-9 D-3.4.1 D-19+20 F-2.0 #3 B, C F-2
Housing remains the largest tax generator (84%), but also the largest user of services.	F-3.1.3 F-7

Significant Changes: Industrial/Commercial Site and Space Inventory

Summary	Text/Map Page
The 1991 Maguire Industrial Site Survey remains relatively current and certain rezoning proposals are based on Maguire's recommendations.	F-3.1.3 F-7
Areas on Quaker Highway would lend themselves to more intensive uses.	F-3.1.4 F-7
A 137 acre mixed-use development is proposed behind Landmark Medical.	F-4.1 F-8
The Branch River Industrial Park remains a prime site for new industrial development.	F-4.1 F-8

Significant Changes: Gaps between Economic Development Resources and Needs

Summary	Text/Map Page
More land needs to be rezoned for commercial/industrial purposes to help subsidize the tax base, but also to acknowledge that much of the vacant land zoned for comm./industrial uses has significant development constraints.	F-3.1.4 F-7
The rehabilitation of mills for purely industrial uses appears to be impossible. In order to preserve the buildings, proposed residential activities should also include some commercial uses.	F-4.1 F-8

Analysis of Ability to Address Gaps

Summary	Text/Map Page
The goals have been reoriented to focus on the Town's capacity to manage a comprehensive economic development program.	F-2.0 F-2-3
It is recommended that the NS Industrial Development Commission be given more extensive authority.	F-2.0 #1 F-2

Economic Development Implementation Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page
The Mixed Use districts designed to encourage economic activities were incorporated.	F-4.1 F-8
The Town continues to work with the Chamber of Commerce, and NS Advisory Group to retain businesses.	F-4.4 F-10

Five-Year Update Summary

Services and Facilities Element

Amendments: (Briefly describe any services & facilities related amendments and indicate date of adoption)
There were no amendments to this Element.

Significant Changes: Inventory of Services & Facilities
Given that it has been over 10 years since the 1992 Plan was finalized, the Element has been significantly revised. All text and statistics have been updated with 2000 US Census data and many sentences and entire sections were rewritten based on information and reports that have been generated since 1992.

Summary	Text/Map Page
Text incorporates findings from 2004 School Facilities Master Plan.	H-3.1 H-4, H-9
Text incorporates findings from 1993 Wastewater Management Plan.	H-3.11 H-16
Text incorporates findings from 2004 Hazard Mitigation Plan.	H-3.5 H-12
Text incorporates findings from 2004 Stormwater Management Plan.	G-4.1.2 G-42
All text was reviewed/updated by local Departments/organizations.	-

Significant Changes: Current Demand Versus Available Capacity

Summary	Text/Map Page
Schools are currently deficient in size based on NESDEC standards.	H-3.1.3 H-9
Town services are divided between 2 buildings, leading to confusion/inefficiency.	H-3.2.2 H-10
Library is too small, and can not be expanded in its current location.	H-3.6 H-14
The water supply is insufficient based on needs of several, permitted land developments.	H-3.10 H-15

Significant Changes: Project Future Demands and Analyze Capacity Sustainability

Summary	Text/Map Page
Senior population has grown - this group will require new/improved services.	H-3.8 H-14
Population growth rate is accelerating, Town needs growth management plan.	D-1.2 D-5

Services & Facilities Goals and Policies Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page
Examine Slatersville Mill for new, consolidated Town Hall and Library locations.	#2 H-2
Two new schools buildings are needed, Jr./Sr. High School needs rehab.	#1B H-2
Wastewater Management Districts may be solution to failed ISDS and cost of sewering.	#4 H-3
Wastewater Management Plan needs updating.	#3 F H-3
New goals, policies and actions included for implementation of stormwater management	#6 A-C H-3

Services & Facilities Implementation Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page
Water Authority was created in 1993 but was recently disbanded; other new water sources are still being sought.	H-3.10 H-15
Fire Departments were consolidated; municipalization being considered.	H-3.4 H-11
Town Hall overcrowding was temporarily relieved with use of a municipal annex.	H-3.2.1 H-9

Community: North Smithfield, RI Date of Council Adoption of Plan Update: March 20, 2006

Five-Year Update Summary

Open Space & Recreation Element

Amendments: (Briefly describe any open space related amendments and indicate date of adoption)
There were no amendments to this Element.

Significant Changes: Facilities & Programs
Given that it has been over 10 years since the 1992 Plan was finalized, the Element has been significantly revised. All text and statistics have been updated with 2000 US Census data and many sentences and entire sections were rewritten based on information and reports that have been generated since 1992.

Summary	Text/Map Page	
Total acreage for all open space and recreation expanded from 831 in 1990 to 1,494 in 2005.	I-3.1.1	I-5+6
Major acquisitions included the Blackstone Gorge, Pacheco Park and Mammoth Mills.	I-1.0	I-1

Significant Changes: Needs Assessment for Various Populations

Summary	Text/Map Page	
Insufficient playing fields for children, documented in School Facilities Master Plan.	I-3.1.5	I-9
Insufficient linear parks/formal paths for walking or cycling.	I-3.1.5	I-9
Active recreation deficiency of 18 acres based on 2000 US Census population.	I-3.1.4	I-8

Significant Changes: Project Future Needs and Analyze Program & Facility Adequacy

Summary	Text/Map Page	
Conservative build-out suggests need for at least 20 add'l active recreation acres by 2010.	I-3.1.4	I-8
Create bicycle paths, connect to existing bicycle paths.	I-4.3	I-12
Create/improve access to Branch and Blackstone Rivers.	I-4.2	I-11

Open Space & Recreation Goals and Policies Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page	
Require land dedication for all development projects through Conservation Development, easements, etc. or through fee in lieu of dedication.	I-4.1	I-10
Develop formal trails system along Branch River, railroad rights of way.	I-4.3	I-12
Improve existing facilities.	I-4.0	I-9
Improve access to Kelly Complex and develop Mammoth Mill site.	I-4.2	I-11

Open Space & Recreation Implementation Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page	
Land Trust was created and is operating successfully.	I-3.1.1	I-5-6
Soccer fields and toilet facilities added to NSCS Elementary School.	I-4.1	I-10
Pacheco Park expanded and skateboard facility added.	I-3.1.1	I-5
Blackstone Gorge property expanded by 64 acres.	I-3.1.1	I-5
More land surrounding the Woonsocket Reservoir was purchased for water quality protection.	I-4.5	I-15

Five-Year Update Summary

Circulation Element

Amendments: (Briefly describe any circulation related amendments and indicate date of adoption)
There were no amendments to this Element.

Significant Changes: Transportation Facilities and Services
Given that it has been over 10 years since the 1992 Plan was finalized, the Element has been significantly revised. All text and statistics have been updated with 2000 US Census data and many sentences and entire sections were rewritten based on information and reports that have been generated since 1992.

Summary	Text/Map Page	
Route 99 was constructed relieving some congestion on local roads.	J-3.1.4	J-6
Improvements to Route 146 have been initiated by the DOT.	J-4.1	J-10

Significant Changes: Facility Design Standards and Maintenance Programs

Summary	Text/Map Page	
Potential scenic roads included in text.	J-4.8	J-13-14
Current TIP projects included.	J-4.4	J-11-12
2004 traffic volume data included.	J-3.1.4	J-6

Significant Changes: Project Future Demand and Identify Potential Problems Areas

Summary	Text/Map Page	
Traffic will become heavier due to accelerated growth, improved pedestrian facilities needed.	J-4.6	J-12
Improved bus service to Providence and car-pooling areas needed for commuters.	J-4.10	J-15
Route 146/Sayles Hill Road intersection is dangerous and is expected to get worse.	J-3.1.6	J-9

Circulation Goals and Policies Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page	
New road between Pound Hill and Greenville Roads no longer proposed.	-	
Extension of (private) Rankin Path by Town no longer proposed.	-	
Scenic roads Ordinance needed.	#3 A	J-2
Traffic calming measures are needed.	#8 A	J-3
Pedestrian access components to become a part of all land developments.	#7	J-3

Circulation Implementation Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page	
Recommitment to use of TIP and Enhancement funds.	J-2.0	J-2
Warnings regarding electrical transmission lines removed.	-	
Rankin Path extension and new road between Pound Hill and Greenville were removed because of cost considerations.	-	
New traffic light at School St/102 intersection was installed.	-	
DOT reclassification of certain roads removed because of the unlikelihood of DOT accepting responsibility for additional roads.	-	

Five-Year Update Summary

Natural and Cultural Resources Element

Amendments: (Briefly describe any natural & cultural resource related amendments and indicate date of adoption)
There were no amendments to this Element.

Significant Changes: Inventory of Resources
Given that it has been over 10 years since the 1992 Plan was finalized, the Element has been significantly revised. All text and statistics have been updated with 2000 US Census data and many sentences and entire sections were rewritten based on information and reports that have been generated since 1992.

Summary	Text/Map Page
Current list of rare/exemplary species was added from the Natural Heritage Program.	G-3.1.5 G-17
Added a section on Booth Pond –biodiversity and endangered species.	G-3.1.5 G-16
"Historic Areas" and "Historic Landscapes" as identified by the State have been added.	G-3.2.2 G-28
New text from the Rivers Classification Plan has been added.	G-3.1.4 G-14
Findings from the Woonasquatucket Greenspace Mapping Project have been incorporated.	Maps D-3 - D-5
Properties in the Farm, Forest and Open Space Tax Act have increased.	G-3.1.2 G-9
FEMA's 1993 report findings were incorporated.	G-3.1.4 G-15
USGS findings regarding the Tifft Well have been incorporated.	H-3.1.4 H-12

Significant Changes: Threats to Resources

Summary	Text/Map Page
CERLIS site data has been updated, all new text for Superfund sites has been included.	G-3.1.8 G-19-24
Failing septic systems continue to threaten groundwater.	G-4.1.1 G-39
Threats to historic and cultural resources (deterioration, inactivity, etc.) have been updated.	G-3.2.5 G-31-32

Significant Changes: Analysis of Sustainability of Resources

Summary	Text/Map Page
Dept of Health & URI developed drinking water pollution risk assessments for the Slatersville Public Water System and the Woonsocket Water System that includes areas of North Smithfield.	G-3.1.4 G-12
Text has been added describing the Watershed Associations as partners.	G-4.1.2 G-41
Wastewater Mgmt. Districts requiring ISDS inspection is offered as a water quality solution.	G-4.1.1G-39G-41
The BRVNHCC is recognized as an important partner in the protection of the Blackstone River and Watershed – its reauthorization by Congress in 2006 is supported.	G-4.2.2 G-43-G-45
References to the Stormwater Mgmt. Plan and Hazard Mitigation Plan have been added.	G-4.1.1 G-40

Natural & Cultural Resources Goals and Policies Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page
Goals, policies and actions have been added to implement the Stormwater Management Plan.	G-2.0 #4 G-4
References to "clustering" of homes has been revised to reflect "conservation development".	G-2.0 #5 G-5
Resource/Site Analysis Maps will be required as part of the Master Plan review stage.	G-2.0 #3 G-4
Goals, policies and actions have been added to implement the Slatersville Area Plan.	G-2.0 #10 G-7
Subdivision & Land Dev. Regulations will be improved to better protect resources.	G-2.0 #1 G-2

Natural & Cultural Resources Implementation Changes

Summary	Text/Map Page
"The Blunders" has been designated as a local historic district.	G-3.1.5 G-16
The Soil Erosion & Sediment Control Ord. was updated-enforcement remains an issue, Further revision is needed	G-4.1.1 G-39

Five-Year Update Summary

Implementation

Amendments: (Briefly describe any land use related amendments and indicate date of adoption)
The only Element that was amended since the Plan's adoption by the Council in 1992 was the Housing Element. Specifically, an Affordable Housing Production Plan was adopted in December 2004 as an appendix of the Housing Element and contained a series of new implementation items.

Provide a status report of implementation activities by functional element (e.g. Land Use, Housing, etc.)

Implementation Activity
LAND USE: Zoning Ordinance updated in 1994; Subdivision Regulations updated in 1992, last amended 2003; Development Plan Review and design standards still need to be adopted; Slatersville Mill needs rezoning
HOUSING: A Housing Partnership has not yet been created; CDBG funding for housing rehabilitation and code enforcement remain ongoing
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Branch River Industrial Park still needs rezoning; the Town continues to use various means to retain existing industries;
NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES: Monitoring of EPA CERCLIS/Superfund sites continues; The Town will look to DEM for vigilance on Underground Storage Tanks; a private developer has plans for a turf farm near the Trout Pond Study Area; The Watershed Associations are functioning as the called for Regional Watershed protection Committee; a Hazard Mitigation Plan is in place; one add'l structure was added to the National Register
SERVICES & FACILITIES: the Wastewater Facilities Plan was adopted in 1993, but needs updating; Space for a consolidated Town Hall has not yet been found; a Water Authority was created; Wastewater Mngt Districts remain a viable option to sewering.
OPEN SPACE & REC.: The Branch River Greenway Plan needs to be implemented; a Land Trust was created
CIRCULATION: Scenic Roads were not identified, an Ordinance has not been adopted; The Sayles Hill Rd/Route 146 intersection remains hazardous; No pooled parking areas were created; Construction of a new road between Pound Hill and Greenville Roads and the extension of Rankin Path are no longer planned; a traffic light has eased the problems at School St and East Harkness Road; the DPW has not yet initiated a pavement mngt study; It is no longer assumed that DOT will change highway classifications

Identify major implementation accomplishments and shortcomings from original plan. The Plan did not help anticipate the large amount of new dwelling units (850) proposed and permitted since the year 2000. There were actions identified than the Town had resources to fund or implement. Certain tasks weren't accomplished because they were closely linked to the efforts of the private development community, for which the Town has little control of. On the positive side, the preservation/rehabilitation of Slatersville is moving forward, a significant amount of land has been set aside for open space, and the town is working to provide reliable, safe water sources for residential and commercial needs.

Identify significant changes to implementation activities based upon update of functional elements (if addressed within each element, indicate.)
Significant changes to each Element are contained within the text of each Element, are summarized in the Implementation Element (section L-3.0) of the Plan, and are again summarized on the attached Update Summary Sheets for each Element.

TABLE OF TABLES, CHARTS AND MAPS

		Page #
	D – LAND USE ELEMENT	
Chart D-1.1.1	Population Between 1870 and 2000	D-2
Chart D-1.1.2	Statewide Planning's Population Projections 2005 – 2030	D-4
Table D-1.1.2	Build-out by Year of Major Permitted or Proposed Developments (as of 2005)	D-5
Chart D-3.0	Land Use/Land Cover (1995)	D-11
Table D-4.1	Proposed Zone Changes	D-23
Map D-1	Land Use Plan	***
Map D-2	Proposed Zone Changes	***
	E – HOUSING ELEMENT	
Table E – 1.1	HUD FY 2004 Income Limits, Providence MSA	E-2
Table E -3.1	Population and Household Data	E-4
Table E -3.1.a	Income Data	E-5
Table E -3.1.1	Cases & Recipients Receiving Public Assistance	E-7
Table E -3.1.2	Housing Stock	E-7
Table E -3.1.2.a	Age of Housing	E-8
Table E -3.1.2.b	Units in Structure	E-9
Table E –3.1.3	Median Sates Price, Single Family Homes	E-10
Table E –3.1.3.a	Average Cost of Rental Housing	E-11
Table E -3.1.4	North Smithfield's Low-Moderate Income Units	E-12
Table E -3.2.1	North Smithfield, Providence County & Rhode Island CHAS Data	E-13
Table E -3.2.2	Affordability Gap in North Smithfield	E-14
Table E -3.3	North Smithfield Residential Zoning Summary	E-17
Table E -4.0	Affordable Housing Development Schedule	E-25
Table E -4.3	Locations of Affordable Housing Summary Chart	E-32
Table E -4.4	Housing Development Resources	E-34
Table E- 5.0	Site Details	E-37
Map E-1	Existing and Proposed Locations for Affordable Housing	***
	F – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
Table F -3.1.1	Covered Private Employment (2001)	F-5
Table F -3.1.1.a	Change in Covered Private Employment (1990 – 2001)	F-5
Table F – 3.1.3	Summary of Real Estate Tax Assessments (1990)	F-6
Table F - 3.1.3.a	Summary of Real Estate Tax Assessments (2005)	F-7
	G - NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT	
Table G -3.1.5	Rare and Exemplary Natural Communities	G-16
Table G -3.2.4	Historic Archeological Resources	G-30

Table G -3.2.4.a	Prehistoric Archeological Resources	G-30
Map G-1	Soils Suitable for Development	***
Map G-2	Wetlands and Hydric Maps	***
Map G-3	Agricultural Soils	***
Map G-4	Water Resources	***
Map G-5	Cultural and Historic Resources	***
	H - SERVICES AND FACILITIES ELEMENT	
Chart H-3.1.1	School Enrollment (1993 – 2003)	H-5
Table H-3.1.2	Existing/Projected School Enrollment by Grade	H-6
Map H-1	Water Service Areas	***
Map H-2	Existing Conditions and Proposed Improvements	***
Map H-3	Sewer Service Areas	***
Map H-4	Services and Facilities Plan	***
Map H-5	Future Sewer Service Areas	***
	I – OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION	
Table I-3.1.1	Existing Open Space and Recreation Areas and Facilities	I-5
Map I-1	Open Space and Recreation Areas and Facilities	***
	J – CIRCULATION ELEMENT	
Table J-3.1.2	Characteristics of Principal and Minor Arterials	J-5
Map J-1	Circulation Plan	***

*** All Maps are at the end of the individual Elements.

Town of North Smithfield
Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Update

Town Administrator
Robert B. Lowe

Town Council
David Lovett, Chairman
Melissa Flaherty, Vice-Chairman
Edward F. Yazbak
Linda B. Thibault
Paul Zwolenski

Planning Board
Dr. Lucien Benoit
Joseph Cardello, III
Bruce Santa Anna
Edward Magill
Elizabeth Martin
Steven Niedzwiadek
Alfred S. Puccetti
John O'Donnell

Michael Phillips, Town Planner
Katia Ballisiano, Planning Consultant
Miguel DeFaria, GIS Specialist

A. OVERVIEW

A-1.0 Purpose of Comprehensive Plan

The major purposes of the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan are as follows:

The Plan is a guide to the future growth and development of North Smithfield; this is an Update of the Town's 1992 Comprehensive Plan (which replaced the Town's first Plan dated 1969).

The Plan sets forth a vision of what the community wishes to become during the 21st century.

The Plan is a document to be used as a guide by elected and appointed officials in making decisions relating to the use of land and the provision of community facilities.

The Plan is designed to improve the quality of the living, working and recreational environment as well as to promote the health, welfare and safety of all citizens and residents of North Smithfield regardless of age, sex, income or race.

The Plan is to be used as a reference by State and local agencies in developing consistent plans and projects.

A-2.0 Legal Basis of Comprehensive Plan

Pursuant to the provisions of the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act of 1988 as amended, all Rhode Island towns and cities are required to update and/or replace prior Comprehensive Plans. The act prescribes the following:

Nine required plan elements.

Coordination with the planning of neighboring communities.

Participation by the general public in the planning process.

Procedures for adopting and amending the plan.

Procedures for State review and appeals of State decisions.

Consistency with the State Guide Plan

Bringing the zoning ordinance and map into conformance with the Comprehensive Plan within eighteen months of the plan's adoption.

A-3.0 Planning Process

The 1992 Plan, adopted by the State of Rhode Island in 1995, was the result of extensive public participation. Given that the last Comprehensive Plan was dated 1969, the Council saw fit to appoint a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to work with the Planning Department, Planning Board and consultant, Burk Ketcham and Associates, on the Plan. A series of public workshops were used to test the Plan's conclusions and proposals.

The Plan's updating began, as the State required, in the year 2000. However, primarily as a result of wanting to utilize the new Census data, the Update's completion was postponed. Public input on the Update has taken several forms, ranging from a survey to community workshops to the Plan's review by land use consultants. As a result of the delayed submission to the State, the Update has become stronger and better reflects the needs of the citizens and growth pressures that have significantly accelerated over the past five years.

A written survey sent out in early 2001 to approximately 7,900 of the Town's registered voters was a component of the Visioning Study and served as critical input to this Update. An analysis of the respondents indicated that the survey, in fact, reached a representative cross-section of the population. The survey generated a response rate of 13%. Responses to particular questions have been woven through this document.

Another opportunity for citizens to provide input into the Town's planning process was provided on January 20, 2001. Dr. John Mullin of the University of Massachusetts was hired to facilitate a charette designed to help citizens articulate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing North Smithfield. The forum also provided an opportunity to determine preliminary actions as they relate to sustainable development and long-term planning. Findings and recommendations from the charette have also been incorporated into this document.

Also included in this Comprehensive Plan Update are the suggestions from land use planner Randall Arendt pertaining primarily to the protection of North Smithfield's natural and cultural resources. This effort, paid for through the RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM), was geared toward helping the Town identify how more innovative land use mechanisms could be incorporated in the Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. The mechanisms reflect North Smithfield's approach to all land use policies contained within, i.e., how to offer the development community more flexibility while protecting and preserving scenic, historic, and natural characteristics that if lost would adversely impact the quality of life the residents of North Smithfield currently enjoy.

A direct benefit from Mr. Arendt's work and partnering with the DEM are the consolidated natural resource maps contained in this Update. In 2004, the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council hosted a series of meetings and workshops to help citizens in the watershed identify their most critical natural, cultural and recreational resources areas and to consider how to preserve them. The project was funded by the US Department of Agriculture's Forest Service and resulted, in part, in the composite maps contained in this Update.

In addition to those public efforts identified above, the Town's Planning Board and Planning Department have held a series of meetings and workshops during which this Update was discussed/drafted.

A-4.0 Organization of Comprehensive Plan

The North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan has been organized into thirteen (13) sections as follows: Section A introduces the plan and Section B provides an area where amendments may be recorded; Sections C through L are the nine planning elements required by the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act plus a special element for the John H. Chaffee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. The 1992 Plan and its format served as the base document. Text has been updated, as appropriate. The Implementation Element is comprised of two parts to help bridge the old and new proposals. Specifically, there is a 2005 Action Table which lists current goals, policies and actions, their timeframes, costs and who is responsible for their implementation; the second section provides a list of the proposed actions contained in the 1992 document and their status. Incomplete or ongoing proposed actions from 1992 are brought forward and are contained in the 2005 Action Table.

A-5.0 Consistency

In recognition that North Smithfield is one part of a broader regional community, the Comprehensive Plan has been developed to be consistent with the goals and policies of the State Guide Plan and the plans of adjoining communities. Each element of the Plan has a section which validates consistency.

A-6.0 Affirmative Action

This Comprehensive Plan has been developed to consider the needs of all present and future residents and employees of the Town of North Smithfield without regard to their age, race, color religion, sex or national origin.

A-7.0 Adoption

The North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan and its Five-Year Update were adopted as follows:

Following a November 7, 1991 public hearing and receipt of the Comprehensive Plan adopted by the Planning Board, the North Smithfield Town Council, on March 16, 1992, adopted the Comprehensive Plan. A copy of the adopting resolution can be found in the Appendix. The Director of the Rhode Island Department of Administration approved the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan on November 20, 1995. A copy of the approval letter to the Town of North Smithfield may also be found in the Appendix.

Following a November 22, 2005 public hearing and receipt of the Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Update adopted by the Planning Board, the North Smithfield Town Council, on March 20, 2006 adopted the Comprehensive Plan Update. A copy of the adopting resolution can be found in the Appendix. The Director of the Rhode Island Department of Administration approved the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan on_____.

B. AMENDMENTS

B.1.0 Amendment Procedure

Given that the 1992 Comprehensive Plan was amended only once (to include the Affordable Housing Plan) since its adoption, it is not anticipated that there will be many amendments to this 2005 Plan Update. For ease of replication and distribution, this Update is bound. However, any changes (amendments) will be dated, and this page has been made available to help document changes.

Amendments are adopted in the same way as the original Plan was adopted. Following a public hearing, the Planning Board must forward a recommendation to the Town Council who must adopt the amendment and forward same to the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Administration for final approval.

In accordance with the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, the Town may not amend the Comprehensive Plan more than four times in any calendar year.

The Town will update the Comprehensive Plan at least once every five years, as required.

B.2.0 Amendments

Amendments to the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Update have been made as follows:

Amendment #	**Element**	**Section**	**Pages**	**Date Approved**		
				Planning Board	**Town Council**	**State**

C. GOALS AND POLICIES

C-1.0 Goals and Policies Overview

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act requires the inclusion of a Goals and Policies Statement as follows:

> "Identifies the goals and policies of the municipality for its future growth and development. The statement shall enumerate how the Plan is consistent with the overall goals and policies of the chapter, the State Guide Plan and related elements."

The Handbook on the Local Comprehensive Plan, prepared in 1989 by The State Planning Council and the Division of Planning of the Rhode Island Department of Administration, clearly articulates the difference between goals and policies as follows:

> "For the purposes of the local planning process, goals may be treated as ends or results toward which the planning process is directed. Policies may be defined as the courses or methods of action governing municipal decisions designed to reach goals. Both must address issues or problems associated with the development of the city or town."

To facilitate the use of the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Update, all goals, policies and actions are presented within the Element (as Section 2-0) to which they apply rather than as a separate Element. Additionally, each Element includes a Consistency Statement (at the end of each Element in Section 5-0) that relates local planning efforts to the overall goals found in the State Guide Plan.

D. LAND USE

D-1.0 Introduction

The future use of land in North Smithfield is influenced by many considerations. Significant among these are the following:

- The nature of and existing distribution of uses.
- Current zoning controls which were developed as the result of prior comprehensive planning studies.
- Physical constraints imposed by topography and soils.
- The location of aquifers and their recharge areas and existing and potential surface water supply reservoirs and their watersheds.
- Drainage and flooding systems along wetlands, streams and rivers.
- The need to set aside areas for conservation, recreation, open space, schools and public buildings and facilities.
- The present or proposed availability of sewer and water services.

Land use and traffic circulation are inextricably tied to each other; the nature and density of land uses will have an influence on the volumes of traffic which may be anticipated along given sections of the roadway system. The availability of roadways with excess capacity and convenient links to a broader region influences the location of commercial and industrial development.

The Land Use Element becomes a major tool for implementing the goals and policies of other elements of the plan through direct changes of use or as a result of revisions in zoning or other development regulations. Zoning changes, for example, become a major tool for implementing the Housing Element. Economic growth opportunities are furthered by the allocation of land areas for commercial, manufacturing or other job and tax base enhancing development. Water resources in underground aquifers or surface reservoirs can be protected, in part, by land use decisions within recharge and drainage areas. When asked to name the two most important land use and development issues facing the Town over the next decade, respondents to the 2001 Community Survey indicated that management of growth in undeveloped and partially developed areas and the need to promote commercial and industrial activities are the most important. Seventy-nine percent of respondents felt that the town should encourage permanent open space.

North Smithfield's strategic location with respect to the Providence, Worcester and Boston metropolitan areas and the major expressway system which connects them is a significant land use determinant. Adjoining communities, which have better access to I-295, may have some advantages in attracting certain types of economic development; on the other hand, the consequences of excessive traffic-generating activities can detract from the quality of the living environment.

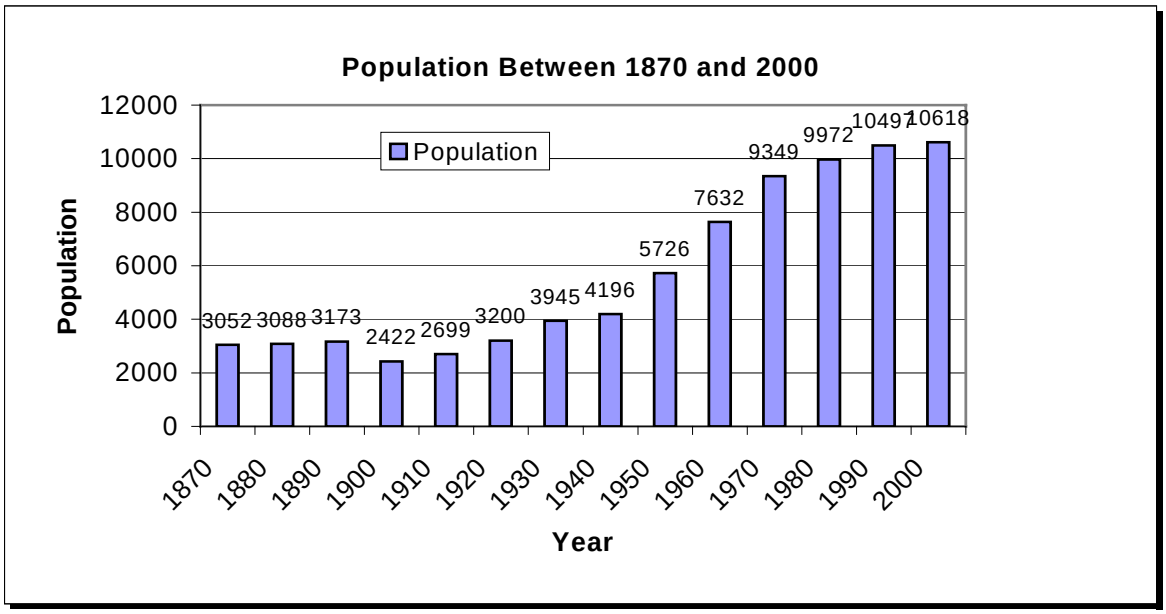
North Smithfield is fortunate to be located near the crowd but not in it. With careful land use planning, the Town can have the best of both worlds -- being a good place to live and a good place to work.

D-1.1 Population

D-1.1.1 Past Trends

Since 1950, North Smithfield's population has climbed from 5,726 to 10,618 (based on final count data from the 2000 U.S. Census). Whereas the numerical growth of the population between 1980 and 1990 was only 525 persons, the number of housing units increased from 3,526 in 1980 to 3,835 in 1990 - a net increase of 309 units and a percentage growth of 8.0 percent. North Smithfield's population has increased 1.15% (121 people) during the most recent census period of 1990-2000, while housing units increased 6.1% (235) town wide for that same time frame. Growth in North Smithfield has historically been occurring at a decreasing rate - from a high of 36.5% in the 1940-1950 decade, to 6.6% between 1970 and 1980, to 5.0% between 1980 and 1990 and 1.15% between 1990 and 2000.

Chart D-1.1.1 Population Between 1870 & 2000



Between 1990 and 2000, average household size continued its decline from 2.7 to approximately 2.6. This compares with 2.9 for 1980 and 3.3 for 1970.

In the last census period North Smithfield was ranked 28th for rate of growth in the State of Rhode Island. North Smithfield's growth rate of 1.15%, translates to an average increase of only 12.1 people per year for the past ten years. In contrast, for this same census period, West Greenwich had a population increase of 45.6%, while Middletown experienced a population decrease of 10.9%. The adjacent communities of Burrillville and Woonsocket both experienced

loses in their population of 2.7% and 1.5% respectively, while Lincoln, Cumberland, Glocester and Smithfield all saw fairly high increases in their populations of 15.8%, 9.6%, 7.8% and 7.6% respectively.

There are several reasons for this increase in population. Census figures show that there were 235 new housing units added to North Smithfield from 1990 through 2000, for a total of 4,070 housing units, while the average household size decreased from 3.05 to 2.61 persons per household. The new housing units (h.u.) figure of 235 coupled with the average of 2.61 persons per household would seem to yield a population increase of 235 h.u. X 2.61 persons/h.u. = 613.3 people. However, this is not the case because of recent shifts in demographics occurring in North Smithfield as well as the rest of Rhode Island and across the nation. This is due, in part, to the increase in single parent households, and divorce, as well as an increase in the median age (from 38.8 to 42. years) with more householders living alone (23.1% increase in North Smithfield). Additionally, households in Town, with a female as head of the household with children under the age of 18, also increased by 22.7% from the previous census period. Vacant housing units for this time-period totaled 116, making up 2.9% of the Town's housing stock. Contributing to this shift in demographics, there was also an overall negative natural increase (decrease) where deaths exceeded births in the community for the decade by an estimated 51 people. (Louis Berger Group, Inc. North Smithfield Growth Management Program, Phase I, Assessment Study, January 2002).

According to US Census Bureau figures, North Smithfield presently ranks 12th in the State of Rhode Island for low population density with approximately 442 people per square mile. Within the Northern Rhode Island Region, only Burrillville and Glocester have lower population densities with approximately 284 and 181 people per square mile respectively. Cumberland and Lincoln both have population densities of just over 1,000 people per square mile, Smithfield has a density of 775, and nearby Woonsocket has a whopping 5,606 people per square mile. More demographic data can be found in the Housing and Services and Facilities Elements of this Update.

D-1.1.2 Population Projections

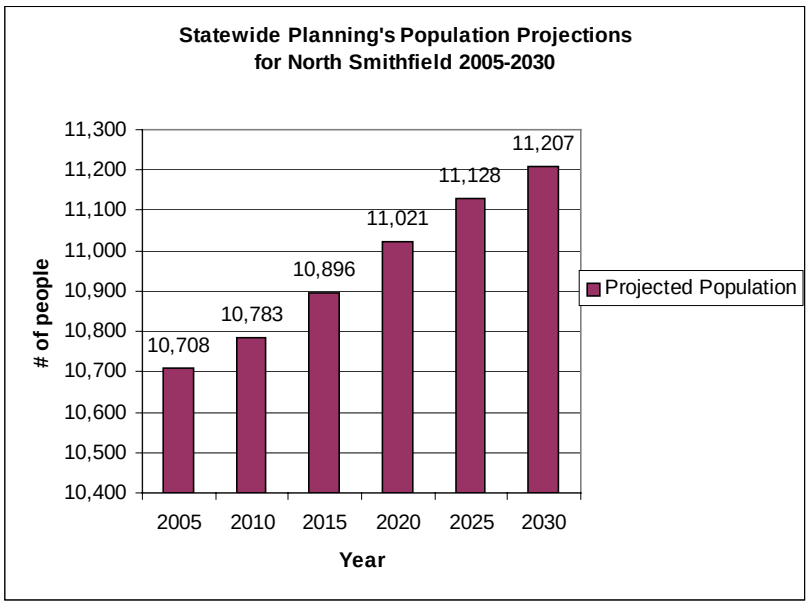
In 1989 the Rhode Island Division of Planning estimated that an average natural increase (births minus deaths) of 15 per year along with an average of 40 new dwelling units per year would produce an average annual population increase of 175. This led to a 1990 estimate of 11,120 which was 623 higher than the actual 1990 U.S. Census figure of 10,497.

The overall negative natural increase during the most recent census period, the shrinking household size and factoring in the actual number of new dwellings built during the 90's resulted in Statewide Planning's overestimating the 2000 population by approximately 900 people. According to the U.S. Census, North Smithfield's population in the year 2000 totaled 10,618.

Preliminary population projections from the Statewide Planning Program show a continued slow growth rate for North Smithfield with a 1.6 percent increase projected between 2000 and 2010. These projections are based entirely on past trends and may prove quite inaccurate if compared with current market trends. Additionally, in light of the need to rezone certain areas to

encourage affordable housing production, there may be land development opportunities that may also result in higher population figures.

Chart D-1.1.2 Statewide Planning's Population Projections 2005-2030



The 1992 Comprehensive Plan suggested that the current and proposed land use regulations, the lack of sewers serving undeveloped residential areas, the constraints imposed by extensive ledge and high groundwater conditions, the declining out-migration from Woonsocket, and other considerations such as a death rate in excess of the birth rate and decreasing family size pointed to a continued slow rate of growth through the 2000's. However, the build-out of 509 approved market rate condominiums, age-restricted units and elderly units is expected by 2007. Another 348 units in three other projects are expected to be constructed by 2011, which will drastically increase the Town's population.

Table D-1.1.2 Build-out by Year of Major Permitted or Proposed Developments, as of 2005

Project Name	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**Total Units**
Rockcliff	12	30	29					71
Dowling Village Condos				40	36			76
Silver Pines	54	35	39					128
Laurelwood	36	43	43	40				162
High Rocks		39	39	42				120
Slatersville Mills			30	38	60	60	40	228
Country Meadows		40	40					80
Total Units by Year	**102**	**187**	**220**	**160**	**96**	**60**	**40**	**865**

Given the amount of vacant land still available in North Smithfield (see the Build-out section of this Element), coupled with the current permitted or proposed projects and the rezoning that will be discussed later in this Element, the Town should expect to become home to another 16,500 people before it is built out. Based on the expected occupation of the permitted and proposed condominium units, the 144 building permits issued between 2000 and 2004, plus an average of 29 additional permits annually between 2005 and 2010 and assuming the average number of people per household remains the same as in the 2000 Census (2.61), by 2010 North Smithfield's population will have increased by approximately 2,962.

D-1.2 Growth Management

Although an analysis of the US Census data would suggest no need for alarm with a relatively modest population increase between 1990 and 2000 of 1.2%, the recent onslaught of proposals (850+ units since 2000) for mill conversions and multi-family housing suggests that the Town should better position itself to manage the services that these new units will require.

In 2002, the Louis Berger Group completed Phase I of a two-phase *Growth Management* study for the Town. While Phase I focused primarily on examining growth trends and the tools the Town has or could put in place, the Town Council's funding of the study signified the Town's recognition of the need to better prepare itself for its future.

Natural Resource Protection
The study recognized that land use controls such as Zoning could be strengthened and tools, such as clustering (or Conservation Development) and Wastewater Management Districts may better protect natural resources. Mapping of resources, and continuous mapping enhancement and use, is of course fundamental to making informed land use decisions. The report also recognized the need for improved partnerships, such as with the Land Trust.

Facilities and Services
Another aspect of managing growth is recognizing the capacity of the Town's infrastructure. The carrying capacity of the land – its ability to support development – is heavily dependent on how water and wastewater issues are addressed. The report strongly suggests the need to better understand the current and future status of the water and wastewater systems and suggests a diversity of tools that may satisfy the needs of the community. Recognizing the need to maintain certain standards in terms of schools and recreational facilities, the report recommends the exploration of impact fees, among other tools, for generating funds that anticipate the needs of the growing population. For other services, such as Police, Fire, roads and the Library – the report suggests further analysis is warranted. Specifically, Berger suggests that a local facility and service standard for each function must be established which will then allow the Town to determine whether there are current deficiencies that must be addressed and how to prepare for meeting the needs of future development.

The Town should proceed with Phase II of this study: the generation of specific regulatory mechanisms and land use strategies based on more rigorous community input.

D-2.0 Goals, Policies and Actions

1. ENSURE THAT THE DENSITY AND DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WILL RESPECT THE EXISTING NATURAL AND MAN-MADE ENVIRONMENT AND THE CAPACITY OF PUBLIC FACILITIES

A. Concentrate urban single-family housing at densities of two dwelling units per acre in areas currently being served by public sewer systems.

B. Concentrate suburban single-family housing at densities of one dwelling unit per acre in areas currently served by public sewer systems.

C. Allow rural single-family housing at densities ranging from one dwelling unit per one and one-half acres to one dwelling unit per three acres which will not be served by sewers.

D. Insist upon Department of Environmental Management (DEM) vigilance in its approval of Individual Sewage Disposal Systems (ISDS) in areas where sewer services will not be extended.

E. Adopt flexible land use controls that encourage creative land planning concepts such as conservation development design,[1] encourage the preservation of open space, significant natural features and resources, rare or endangered species or habitat, historical structures and features and significant cultural features and other sensitive areas not otherwise protected by local, state, and federal law, based on, but not limited to, the priorities as set forth in the Woonasquatucket Greenspace Mapping Project (WGMP)[2], See Map D-3 – D-6.

F. In the review of subdivisions, elements such as streets and lots shall be designed so as to preserve natural features such as prominent trees, stone walls, rock outcroppings, natural land form and topography.

G. Use conservation development design to locate houses and streets on the least productive farmland or on the *least* significant woodland habitat and locate septic sewage systems on soils best suited for that purpose.

H. Amend other development regulations to specifically and effectively protect historic and cultural features, scenic viewsheds and restore degraded landscapes.

---

[1] Conservation Development Design – A development design concept that strives to avoid development in more sensitive areas of a site, provides for the dedication of a large percentage of the site as open space and often results in reduction of roads and other public infrastructure. By relaxing zoning requirements such as lot area and frontage, denser development is allowed in areas best suited to development while maintaining the overall site density which can be established by formula or through layout of a conventional design. In return for employing flexible standards, developers are required to dedicate as much as 65% of the developable site for open space or recreation purposes.

[2] Woonasquatucket Greenspace Mapping Project (WGMP)[2] consists of a series of maps that prioritize natural, cultural and recreational features of the Town.

I. Require expanded Vicinity/Context Map as a checklist item for all subdivision applications.

J. Consider adding a new section to the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development and Subdivision Regulations requiring new subdivision lots to have minimum contiguous buildable areas free of wetlands, steep slopes, utility easements etc.

K. Develop a mixed use ordinance that encourages development in and adjacent to existing villages that recognizes the scale, density and need for affordable housing in primarily residential settings.

L. Institute growth management controls as recommended in the pending update of the 2002 Growth Management Program. Controls such as building permit caps and impact fees should be considered.

2. PROMOTE "SMART DEVELOPMENT" BY DIRECTING MEDIUM TO HIGH DENSITY HOUSING TO AREAS IN OR IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO ESTABLISHED VILLAGES

A. Concentrate urban multifamily housing at densities of up to four dwelling units per acre in areas currently being served by public water and public sewer systems. This could be accomplished by providing a density bonus of two additional units per acre, where one of the additional units is subsidized for low and moderate income residents in accordance with the requirements of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act and the other is dedicated for persons 55 years of age or older.

B. Ensure that adequate delineated pedestrian links to village centers are made between proposed medium and high-density developments and existing commercial, recreational and town facilities.

3. PRESERVE THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL CHARACTER OF THE TOWN'S NEIGHBORHOODS AND VILLAGES

A. In the review of subdivisions, site plans, Special Use Permits and other development applications, Town boards shall give attention to preserving and/or improving the natural, topographic, cultural and historic characteristics which give local neighborhoods and villages their unique identity. This shall apply to projects in one neighborhood which could affect another, or even out-of-town projects which could have an impact on the living amenities of a particular area.

B. Identify and rank key parcels for acquisition or protection based on criteria such as, but not limited to, size, adjacent protected parcels, significant natural resources, rare or endangered species or habitat, significant cultural features, development potential etc, based on, but not limited to, the priorities as set in the WGMP.

C. Relate all Comprehensive Plan proposals for recreation, conservation, public facilities, circulation and historic preservation to the enhancement of the Town's living environment.

D. Establish a Development Plan Review section within the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations that incorporates design review standards for industrial, commercial and multi-family housing based on sound site planning principals and best management practices and that incorporates the principals of village enhancement found in the *Slatersville Area Plan*.

E. Allow for differing road widths based on AASHTO defined road categories and build-out potential of the area.

F. Review all state/municipal infrastructure improvements and projects for compliance with all comprehensive plan goals and policies. Recommend design and material enhancements that best reflect the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, as amended.

G. Require sidewalk design that includes a tree lawn separating sidewalks from roadways and including the planting of shade trees where practical.

H. Adopt a commercial and industrial lighting ordinance as part of the Development Plan Review Regulations.

I. Adopt a noise ordinance.

J. Consider Slatersville and the Branch Village area for designation as “Growth Centers”.

K. Adopt an ordinance that ensures water quality is tested before and after blasting, using groundwater quality standards and preventive action limits as set by DEM or other applicable regulations.

4. PREVENT INCOMPATIBLE NON-RESIDENTIAL USES IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

A. All zone changes hereinafter proposed shall be in accordance with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan as it may be amended from time to time. A residential area change to a non-residential use shall be supported by findings that the use will be compatible with and supportive of the surrounding neighborhood.

5. ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION OF LIGHT INDUSTRY, OFFICE AND RELATED COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT WHICH WILL PROVIDE SKILLED JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPAND THE TAX BASE

A. Manufacturing is to be continued in the following areas: North Smithfield Industrial Drive; Great Road at Branch River; Canal Street; Stamina Mill site in Forestdale.

6. ENCOURAGE CAMPUS-TYPE MIXED USE, LIGHT INDUSTRIAL OR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN AREAS ACCESSIBLE TO MAJOR ROADWAYS AND SERVED BY SEWER AND WATER SERVICES

A. Develop a mixed use ordinance that will allow the conversion of the Slatersville Mill complex, the Blackstone Smithfield Industrial Park (former Tupperware Mill), and the Branch River Industrial complex to mixed use including light industry, offices, housing, public and semi-public and other compatible activities.

B. Consider the development of office, commercial, light industrial and/or research and development activities in the Quaker Highway/Central Street area and on North Smithfield Industrial Highway.

C. Create a mixed-use office/commercial area that could include medical services, research and development activities, office space and limited retail of up to 40% of the built structures on the east side of Eddie Dowling Highway between the Landmark Medical/Fogarty Unit and Booth Pond.

D. The Town should actively promote the reuse of the Slatersville Mill complex.

E. Work with the RIEDC to coordinate and take advantage of regional development needs for such commercial and/or industrial development.

7. ENCOURAGE GROWTH OF APPROPRIATELY SCALED RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT NECESSARY TO SERVE NEIGHBORHOOD AND TOWN NEEDS

A. Develop an ordinance for a "Planned Village District" that would allow for limited expansion of retail and commercial space to serve local neighborhood and Town needs and that forwards the concept of Heritage Economics.

B. Carefully evaluate retail and commercial options which may be available when designs are considered for the improvement of the Sayles Hill Road and Route 146 intersection.

C. Discourage strip-type development along any road in the community - - particularly Route 146A and Victory Highway which will experience growing travel delays during peak hours.

D. Create an Agricultural Business district that encourages the continuation of farming and agricultural operations with limited onsite retail sales of certain farm and farm-related products.

E. Develop size limits for retail structures that discourage “Big Box” retail development.

D-3.0 Plan Description

Over the past twenty-five years, the Town of North Smithfield has received considerable land use planning assistance from State agencies; this has included comprehensive plan studies and technical assistance on special projects.

In 1969, the first Comprehensive Plan for the Town was prepared with the assistance of the Planning Division of the Department of Community Affairs. In the mid 80's a second Comprehensive Plan was initiated by the North Smithfield Planning Board with guidance from the Division of Planning, Rhode Island Department of Administration, as its consultant; this Comprehensive Plan represents a continuation and completion of the earlier studies. Background data and information developed by the Division of Planning has been helpful in this current update of the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan.

The 1969 Comprehensive Plan established the framework upon which present land use regulations in the form of zoning controls and zoning districts were enacted. With some exceptions, the development which has taken place during the past twenty years has followed the general outlines laid down in the 1969 Comprehensive Plan.

History is an important land use determinant. First settled in 1666, what ultimately became the Town of North Smithfield in 1871, has experienced a gradual transition from a farming community to industrial development in the nineteenth century, and from both farming and industry to the present day combination of industry, business and suburban and rural housing.

Union Village initially flourished as a stage coach stop along Great Road (146A). Subsequent small-lot residential growth within and in areas to the north and south of Union Village represented an early outward suburbanization of Woonsocket which spilled into North Smithfield.

Slatersville, which was one of the Nation’s first planned mill villages, was established in conjunction with the Slatersville Mill along the Branch River. Forestdale, Branch Village and Waterford were all Branch River valley communities near water powered mills.

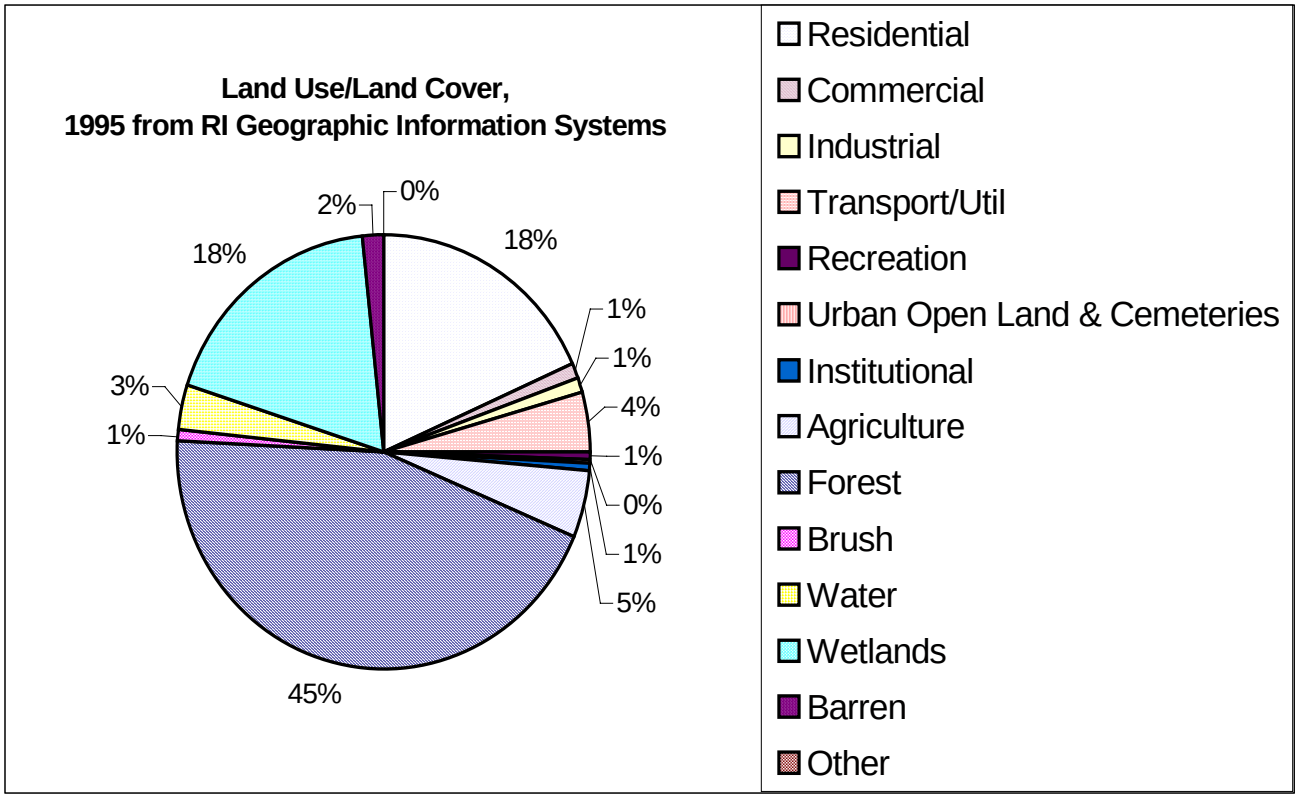
These early influences are very apparent in North Smithfield today. Industry is still clustered along or near the Branch River. Small-lot housing, predominantly single-family with scattered two-family units, tends to be concentrated in and around the old mill villages and adjacent to the Woonsocket line. In contrast, the westerly and southerly sections of Town, which is broadly defined as Primrose, retain a rural and rural-residential character furthered by larger lot zoning requirements. Except for the industrial zone along North Smithfield Industrial Drive and the commercial development along Route 146 in the Sayles Hill Road area, virtually the entire land area to the south of the Providence and Worcester Railroad and to the west of Route 146 is zoned for residential development.

Although the villages had a few stores and shops to serve the mill workers, North Smithfield never developed what might be considered a downtown. Woonsocket served this function and at one time trolley cars extended out to North Smithfield from downtown Woonsocket. Today there are about five clusters of commercial/retail activity in North Smithfield as follows:

highway-oriented businesses along the non-limited access section of Route 146 between the146A merge and the Lincoln Town line; Park Square area of Eddie Dowling Highway (Route 146A) which is a retail district straddling the North Smithfield/Woonsocket municipal lines; Branch Village area along Route 146A near St. Paul Street serving both local residents and transients; Carpenter's Corner (North Main Street and Route 146A) which is the locus of a shopping center anchored by a supermarket; and the Route 102/South Main Street intersection with highway-oriented business activities.

Chart D-3.0 Land Use/Land Cover 1995

As part of the 1992 Comprehensive Plan effort, the existing land use of every parcel of land in



North Smithfield, based on the Tax Assessor's records, was recorded on a set of Assessors Plat Maps. This information was further summarized for study and analytical purposes on a copy of the 1"=1,500 ft. lot line base of the Town. These maps have since been digitized and are available electronically. Maintenance of these electronic files and the Geographic Information System will require ongoing funding.

The Land Use Plan, shown on Map D - 1 is generally true to the land use pattern which has been established by historical development trends and zoning regulations. Where modifications have been proposed, generally they reflect a desire to encourage the development of affordable housing, tax base and employment generating industrial and business development or a need to protect a natural resource of local or state-wide importance. Aerial photographs taken by the

State in 2003/2004 are in the process of being converted into updated RIGIS Land Use maps. Once available, these maps will be incorporated into this Plan.

D-3.1 Residential Land Use

As part of the 1969 Comprehensive Plan, North Smithfield was divided into four (4) residential land use areas of varying density. These were subsequently translated into residential zoning districts which continue to apply today.

In line with contemporary thinking and the overwhelming endorsement of the Citizens Advisory Committee in 1992, the participants of the 2001 survey and charette, other forums for public input, and discussions with the current Planning Board, the Comprehensive Plan recommends greater flexibility in developing residential areas to further the provision of affordable housing and encourages a better relationship between the natural and man-made landscape. Specific proposals for implementation are contained in this and other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

In general, the Land Use Element perpetuates the use and density patterns which have been historically established. The 2001 Community Survey results support maintaining the existing pattern as was evidenced by their response to certain "quality of life" issues. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents thought that protection of the water supply was of greatest importance; 73% thought protection of open space was critical and the third highest group of respondents (69%) thought it was important to maintain the small town character. The basis for proposed additions to or deletions from any of the density areas is discussed below.

D-3.1.1 Urban Residential - Medium High Density

Areas for Urban Residential are currently served by water and/or public sewer services. These areas are now included within the RU-20 zoning district which allows the following types of residential development: single-family homes on lots of 20,000 sq. ft.; two-family homes on lots of 30,000 sq. ft.; and multifamily dwellings by Special Use Permit from the Zoning Board of Review, with a maximum of 100 bedrooms at a density of 4,000 sq. ft. for each bedroom, providing the units are served by municipal sewers and water. Depending on the number of bedrooms per housing unit, the density could be as high as ten units per acre. Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance are suggested that would provide for the creation of a mixed use primarily residential district. Many of the RU-20 areas would be included in this district. Multifamily developments within this district would no longer require a Special Use Permit, rather they would be reviewed by the Planning Board under the Land Development and Subdivisions Regulations and a density bonus would be available for developments with an affordable housing component and an adequate water supply.

The designated areas for Medium High Density use are, in several cases, extensively developed with little space for new growth and therefore expansion of the zone in particular areas is needed. This applies in Slatersville, Forestdale, Union Village and in the Greenville Road area between Routes 146 and 146 A. There is considerable vacant land in the northeast corner

Waterford area; this was subdivided into small lots many years ago and is only recently being developed.

Additions to the RU-20 zoning district should be considered in villages that are served by sewers and in areas that are already substantially developed with lots of approximately one-half acre in size. The purpose of expanding the RU-20 district in these areas is to promote in-fill development and provide opportunities for the development of multi-unit and affordable housing. Expansion of the district boundaries is proposed along the following streets in the Slatersville/Forestdale area: Main St., North Main St., Lester St., McCann St., Homecrest Avenue, Ferrier St., Florence St., Carpenter St., Mechanic St., Highview St., Ethel St., Fillion St., Orchard St., Quaker Highway, School St., Halliwell Drive, Maple St., Wildwood Road, Kirby Lane, Roselawn Avenue, Litzen Street, Lorraine Avenue, Pacheco Drive. Other expansion areas include sewered areas along Mendon Road including Oberline Drive, Cynthia Drive, Deborah Avenue and Sharon Parkway; Branch Village area including Great Road and Branch Avenue.

D-3.1.2 Suburban Residential - Medium Density

Suburban Residential development at a density of one dwelling unit per acre for single or two-family homes is continued for unsewered sections of the Slatersville neighborhood, areas to the south of Slatersville along sections of the Providence Pike, Pound Hill Road and Woonsocket Hill Road. Portions of this area to the north of Victory Highway in Slatersville and to the south of Slatersville along and near Providence Pike have experienced problems with onsite septic systems.

Approximately two-thirds of the Suburban Residential land has been subdivided and developed.

Most of the area proposed for Suburban Residential use is now located within the RS-40 zoning district which allows the following: single-family homes on lots of 40,000 sq. ft.; two family homes on lots of 80,000 sq. ft.; and multifamily dwellings by Special Use Permit, with a maximum of 100 bedrooms at a density of 6,000 sq. ft. for each bedroom, provided the units are served by municipal water. For multifamily, depending on the number of bedrooms per dwelling unit and the adequacy of water supply availability, this could mean a density of up to 7 dwelling units per acre.

As discussed in the sections which follow, there will be deletions from the RS-40 near the intersection of Main Street and Route 102 to accommodate Professional Service. Two areas currently zoned RS-40 along Road Over Sayles Hill Road will be added to the RA-65 zone. A large area along Old Smithfield Road will be added to the REA-120 zone. Large areas in Slatersville currently zoned RS-40 which are served by municipal sewers will be changed to RU-20 to promote in-fill development. On Main Street, a 33 acre area was changed to RU-20 to accommodate the development of a condominium project. Additions to the area zoned RS-40 have been made along Comstock Road and Providence Pike to accommodate an age restricted development.

D-3.1.3 Rural Residential - Medium Low Density

Rural Residential areas were originally designated under the assumption that public sewer and water services would not be provided. The intent was to perpetuate a rural atmosphere in the southern, western and northern sections of the Town. As has been discovered in other communities, large-lot zoning does not necessarily create a rural environment, particularly where new houses are lined up at 200 foot intervals along country roads and the vacant lots between older homes are built upon. As such, the Town should revise the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Regulations to allow for Conservation Development. Although discussed in further detail in the Natural and Cultural Resources Element, basically Conservation Development would encourage the better design of subdivisions and other projects, and thus be suited especially for the lower density zones in Town.

Under the RA-65 zoning district, which corresponds to the Rural Residential use area, single-family homes are allowed with lot sizes of 65,000 sq. ft. and two-family homes may be built providing the lot has a minimum of 130,000 sq. ft. Multi-family is allowed by Special Use Permit with up to 100 bedroom units allowed at a density of 20,000 sq. ft. per bedroom; approval is contingent upon the availability of municipal water services. Depending upon the number of bedrooms per dwelling unit, a multi-family density of up to 2 dwelling units per acre would be allowed.

Although less than one-third of the Rural Residential area is presently developed, substantial sections are not suitable for development due to wetness, ledge or excessive slopes.

The area currently zoned RA-65 will be reduced to place lands behind Landmark Medical Center in the Mixed Use- Office Commercial/146A zone. Two areas, one along Old Smithfield Road and one along Iron Mine Hill Road, currently zoned RA-65 will be rezoned to REA-120 for watershed protection. A 29 acre parcel on Buxton Street in the RA-65 zone will be rezoned to Agricultural Business. Developed areas in the Mendon Road, Harkness Road and Morning Star/Tall Timber neighborhoods will be rezoned to match developed densities.

D-3.1.4 Rural Residential Conservation - Low Density

The Rural Residential Conservation area covers land and water requiring conservation action. It includes major natural areas such as Todd's Pond, Cedar Swamp and Cedar Brook - - all sensitive areas where utilities should not be provided and open space preserved. The designated area also has been established as a buffer district along Trout Brook, Trout Pond, Dawley Brook/Pratt Pond and around the Slatersville Reservoirs. It is proposed that the buffer be increased to include the portions of the Reservoir's drainage area and the Slatersville Aquifer and aquifer recharge area between the Reservoirs and Pound Hill Road. This area encompasses the Landfill & Resource Recovery and Western Sand & Gravel EPA Superfund sites. Less than 10 percent of the Rural Residential Conservation area is currently developed.

A turf farm is proposed in the area generally bounded by Trout Pond and Brook, Pound Hill Road, the Burrillville Town line and the Slatersville Reservoir. Development proposals must take into account the constraints associated with the existence of the EPA Superfund sites and the need to protect the Slatersville Aquifer and Reservoirs.

Rural Residential Conservation currently helps protect and serve as a buffer district for Woonsocket's water supply facilities in the Town of North Smithfield including Reservoirs Number 1 and 3 and Crookfall Brook. Expansion of this district is proposed in the Crookfall Brook area along Old Smithfield Road and in the area around Reservoir #3.

Land on either side of the Blackstone River Gorge and along the Blackstone where property has been acquired by the State and the Town also are designated for Rural Residential Conservation. Consistent with recreational and open space recommendations for the Mammoth Mill site and the Paul S. Kelly Sports Complex, Rural Residential Conservation replaced the Manufacturing (M) District. These and other recreation and conservation areas owned by the State, Town and City of Woonsocket should be considered for inclusion in the proposed Open Space zone discussed in this Element.

The REA-120 District, except for the additions proposed above, is coincident with the Rural Residential Conservation area. Single-family housing is the principal allowed residential use; the minimum lot frontage is 300 feet and the lot size requirement is 120,000 sq. ft.

D-3.1.5 Open Space

The Zoning Enabling Act allows for the designation of an Open Space district. Town and State owned land currently used for recreation or conservation should be considered for inclusion in an Open Space zone. The Blackstone River Gorge and Paul S. Kelly Sports Complex which was rezoned in 1995 to REA-120 should be considered for inclusion in an open space zone given the level of Federal, State and local funding used to secure, develop and protect these sites.

Permitted uses in the Open Space zone would be those agricultural uses allowed in the REA-120 District, certain open recreation and public and semi-public uses. The primary intent of an Open Space zone is to ensure that land reserved as open space or recreation is not developed or used for other purposes. The Planning Board supports the future designation of an Open Space district in the Land Use Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. Further detailed study will be necessary prior to designating areas for inclusion in this type of district.

D-3.1.6 Agricultural Business

The Agricultural Business area is a new district that is intended to allow the continuation of farming and agricultural based business with limited onsite sales of farm and farm-related products. This district includes existing farms such as Wright’s Dairy, Goodwin Brothers Farm Stand, Smith’s Orchard, Trout Brook Equestrian Center, Acres Wild Equestrian Center, Marshall Equestrian/Animal Clinic, Jacques Farm/vineyard and the Wild Wind Farm.
Permitted uses in the Agricultural Business zone would be those agricultural and residential uses allowed in the REA-120 District, and would also include farm stands, retail sale of farm and

related products, greenhouse or nursery, riding academy with accessory retail sales of tack and riding apparel veterinary clinic and farm stay. Provisions should be developed that would prohibit the offsite removal of earth materials beyond that which is necessary to sustain farming operations.

D-3.1.7 Build-Out Analysis

In June 2001, the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission (BRVNHCC) completed a build-out analysis of the 27 communities in the Blackstone River Watershed. A build-out analysis helps reveal a community's future layout if all undeveloped land were developed in accordance with existing zoning. The build-out is a tool for projecting and planning for a community's future population, households, commercial growth and demands for services such as water, garbage pickup and other municipal services and should not be construed to represent a desirable end state for the future. The build-out analysis conducted by the BRVNHCC was based on GIS mapping and community input. The maps illustrated existing zoning, developed areas, and permanently protected and unbuildable lands. Assumptions were made based on the existence of natural constraints and land needed for new infrastructure.

Based on less sophisticated data and techniques for conducting a build-out, the 1992 Plan suggested that another 2,100 dwelling units could be accommodated in Town. The BRVNHCC's 2001 study suggests this number should be much higher. Given current engineering practices and the zoning that was in place in 2001, more land is available for construction than was thought in 1992. The BRVNHCC 2001 found that the Town can accommodate another 5,110 dwelling units, or 4,525 residential lots.

However, it is clear that the 2001 study is also undercounting. The 2001 study took only a small portion of the potential mill conversion projects and other land development projects into account (totaling approximately 865 units as of 2005). Nor does it account for the rezoning proposed in this Updated Plan (which will result in approximately 200 units), or the possible density bonuses that may be granted in order to encourage the creation of additional affordable housing (estimated at 160 units). As such, a more accurate build-out, consistent with the proposed zone changes, the Housing Element, Natural Resources, Economic Development and Services and Facilities Element would result in approximately another 6,320 additional dwelling units. Assuming the average number of people per household holds steady at 2.61, the additional dwelling units could support another 16,495 people in North Smithfield.

Between 1990 and 1999, new housing units were created in North Smithfield at an average annual rate of about 46 units per year including elderly and other multi-family units. Between 2000 and 2004, an average of 29 building permits were issued annually. However, given the large number of approved and soon to be approved proposals and based on the previously discussed population estimates, it is anticipated that the rate could average around 200 new housing units per year over the next five years. New housing construction, at the growth rate estimated for the years 2000 to 2010, could utilize approximately 15% of the buildout potential.

D-3.2 Business and Commercial Land Use

As previously noted, North Smithfield does not have a downtown area; most retail and business uses serving local shopping needs are to be found along Route 146A. The stores and supermarket at Carpenter's Corner (Slatersville Plaza) provides convenience shopping for the Town's northern neighborhoods as well as sections of Burrillville and adjoining communities in Massachusetts.

At Park Square, Job Lot, CVS Pharmacy (located in Woonsocket), Super Stop and Shop across from Eddie Dowling Highway in North Smithfield and other retail stores and restaurants combined provide a strong draw for both North Smithfield and Woonsocket residents.

Most commercial and retail development, other than the shopping centers at Carpenter's Corner and Park Square has been small scale and generally related to local needs and the service of transient traffic. "Dowling Village", a regional shopping center has recently been proposed in the Booth Pond area off of Route 146A. Development of this center would provide residents with a greater array of choices for comparison shopping and reduce the need to travel to nearby communities for larger ticket items.

In the Circulation Element, there is mention of an anticipated decline in traffic levels-of-service and peak-hour congestion along Route 146A in the area between Park Square and School Street. There is scattered retail and commercial development along the aforementioned section of 146A with the major concentration in the vicinity of St. Paul Street.

The Land Use Plan, Map D - 1, illustrates additions and deletions to the land currently zoned for business and commercial land use. A comparison of the economic development and land use proposals suggests that people filling the new jobs that will be generated as a result of rezoning could be accommodated in North Smithfield. There is sufficient vacant land and proposed rehabilitated mill building units to accommodate new employees. However, it is unreasonable to assume that all new jobs will be filled by North Smithfield residents, especially those that would be generated by the proposed Dowling Village development.

D-3.2.1 Neighborhood Business

Neighborhood Business, as currently embodied in the BN zoning district, is designed primarily to serve local needs for convenience shopping, personal services and small business offices. Neighborhood Business use is allowed in the following locations:

- Either side of Ironstone Street adjoining the Uxbridge, Massachusetts Town line.
- At and in the vicinity of the intersection of North Main Street and Victory Highway - Carpenter's Corner/Slatersville Plaza - - Brigido's (Eddy's Market).
- At the intersection of Route 5 and Main Street - - Town Hall to Slatersville Post Office.
- Immediately to the south of the Branch River along the west side of Providence Pike.
- Two locations along School Street; one in the vicinity of the VFW site and the other, a small concentration of businesses including the Forestdale Post Office.
- South side of Route 146A immediately to the east of School Street.
- Between Branch River and Mendon Road along either side of Route 146A.

- At the intersection of Route 104 (Greenville Road) and Route 146 A.
- Along Greenville Road at Cross Street.

Post offices, as in Slatersville and Forestdale, provide both functional and social benefits to neighborhood residents. Efforts to consolidate and relocate postal facilities to an impersonal highway location should be resisted.

D-3.2.2 Business Highway

Business Highway use areas are designed to serve specialized retail and commercial uses requiring high volumes of passing traffic. All except one of the proposed areas are located along four-lane highways (Eddie Dowling Highway and the non-limited access section of Route 146 near Sayles Hill Road) and are within the existing Business Highway (BH) District. On the west side of Eddie Dowling Highway from Park Avenue south, the Neighborhood Business District is proposed to be changed to Business Highway.

At the intersection of Route 102 and Main Street the present sites now located in the Business Highway (BH) District are continued in the Business Highway use area. On either side of Quaker Highway at the State line the Business Neighborhood zone and a portion of the Manufacturing zone is proposed to be changed to Business Highway.

In the Circulation Element, there is a recommendation for a RIDOT evaluation of the intersection at Route 146 and Sayles Hill Road. Feasibility studies should consider the impact of design options on present and/or potential uses along the highway. Such studies may suggest opportunities for additional land use changes at the time any intersection improvements are implemented.

D-3.3 Professional Services

Professional Service uses are currently found on the west side of Eddie Dowling Highway in the vicinity of Hanton Road. This area presently is in the Professional Service (PS) District. Allowed uses should include single-family detached dwellings with professional office space, hospitals and clinics, and office buildings.

A large area on the east side of Eddie Dowling Highway currently located within the PS District has been designated for Mixed Use- Office Commercial/146A in the Comprehensive Plan and will be discussed shortly within the context of a new mixed-use area. The office complex on Great Road near Rhodes Avenue is proposed for rezoning to Professional Service as is an area on 146A north of Old Smithfield Road.

D-3.4 Mixed Use

A number of different types of mixed use districts should be considered in order to facilitate redevelopment of under utilized mill complexes, encourage development in and adjacent to existing villages, take advantage of highway access and infrastructure, and encourage commercial and industrial activities. Other specific objectives of mixed-use districts include:

- To allow for compatible mixed uses on a site, which are ordinarily not permitted together through conventional zoning.
- To coordinate architectural styles, building forms, and structural/visual relationships in an innovative, aesthetic, and functionally efficient manner.
- To provide flexibility of zoning in exchange for creative design and added amenities.
- To encourage land development and redevelopment (such as mixed-use developments) within Village areas that preserve their natural and/or historical features.
- To encourage the redevelopment and rehabilitation of deteriorated and/or underutilized historic or nonconforming structures and areas.
- To promote pedestrian friendly environments which provide both a safe walking atmosphere and a logical connection of destinations within and adjacent to existing village centers.
- To enhance the quality of life for the inhabitants, users, and/or workers who will be utilizing or otherwise benefiting from the provided amenities.

D-3.4.1 Mill Rehabilitation

With the diminishing number of tenants willing to occupy older mill buildings, mill owners are forced to explore mixed-use conversions in order to maintain historic mills. The Slatersville Mill site and Blackstone-Smithfield Industrial Park are both attractive sites for conversion with residential occupancy being the primary use. Other compatible uses such as commercial, recreation, light industry, or municipal uses would be allowed along with a public open space or river access component.

<u>Slatersville Mill Site</u>
The area is underutilized and, as described in the Natural and Cultural Resources Element, is within the Slatersville Historic District. The complex consists of several historic mill structures including a 2-story brick building built in 1894 with a total of 116,000 square feet of useable space, the 4-story granite “Bell Tower” built in 1826 with 48,000 square feet, and a 4-story granite building built in 1843 with 42,000 square feet. Three other buildings totaling 11,000 square feet of space make up the balance of the buildings on the site. Its location at the center of Slatersville along with views of the Branch River and Slatersville Stone Arch Bridge as well as the mill race that bisects the site make this a visually rich site and one that lends itself to residential conversion.

The Polytop Corporation has owned the site since the early 1990s and has leased the main brick mill and one of the smaller buildings and used some of the space for its own warehousing needs. The two granite buildings are vacant and are rapidly deteriorating. Any development should be

consistent with programs for the rehabilitation of the Slatersville Historic District and the adjacent Branch River Park. Present zoning is Manufacturing (M).

Blackstone-Smithfield Industrial Park

The northern Blackstone-Smithfield Industrial Park site, adjacent to Massachusetts, consists primarily of a three-story 1904 historic brick mill building (with a full basement) and a two-story metal building built in 1962 with subsequent additions. The metal building has approximately 110,000 square feet of leaseable space and the brick building has approximately 200,000 square feet of usable space not counting the basement. With the exception of a warehousing operation on the first floor, the 3-story, 1904 building has been vacant for most of the 16 years that the Blackstone-Smithfield Corporation has owned the site. Viable industrial uses occupy the metal building.

Proposed uses include a mix of light manufacturing, warehousing, limited commercial, public uses, residential and other complementary activities. Present zoning is Manufacturing (M).

Issues such as providing separate access for manufacturing and residential uses need to be addressed.

Branch River Industrial Park

The Branch River site includes approximately 100-acres bounded to the west by Route 146 and to the east by Route 146A. A 500,000 square foot industrial building, serviced by public water and sewers, currently occupies the site. Over the past few years, the owner has been expressing interest in further developing the property. Some site and market analyses have already been done. The findings suggest, on a very preliminary basis, that the site may be able to support another 500,000 square feet of new building construction. Already in 1991, this property was rated by The Maguire Group as one of the most attractive for industrial growth. The one drawback is that, like many other industrial sites in North Smithfield, it is located over a groundwater recharge area.

D-3.4.2 Village Residential

A village residential district should be created to accommodate residential development in areas served by public infrastructure. This predominantly residential district may also include limited commercial, public uses, recreational uses, and/or open space. The purpose of the district is to allow housing with limited impacts on Town services in areas in and immediately adjacent to village areas. Mixed residential developments might include age-restricted housing (e.g. retirement communities) with a clubhouse or other recreation facility or other appropriate service, light commercial or retail use and useable open space, assisted living facility with a health clinic and clustered multi-unit housing accompanied by light commercial or retail use.

D-3.4.3 Mixed Use - Office/Commercial

To take advantage of North Smithfield's access to Route 146, a mixed office/commercial district should be established to provide opportunities to develop campus-style executive office complexes. Three sites are identified; two on North Smithfield Industrial Highway/Pound Hill Road and one on Quaker Highway/Central Street that can take advantage of highway access along 146 and the North Smithfield Industrial Highway. These sites are suitable for the development of corporate offices, offices with light manufacturing and/or research and development, health care facilities, banking, restaurants, daycare facilities, and other uses that may be considered amenities to the main employment use.

D-3.4.4 Mixed Use - Office Commerical/146A

An area of approximately 200 acres around Booth Pond located on the Woonsocket/North Smithfield border east of Landmark Medical/Fogarty Unit has been identified for rezoning to Mixed Use Office/Commercial. District uses would include medical offices, research and development activities, office space and limited retail of up to 40% of the built structures.

This area is the site of a proposed retail, office and residential development known as "Dowling Village". This project received Master Plan approval and a Special Use Permit in 2004 and includes retail activities in several detached buildings, restaurants, office space and residential condominiums. The Master Plan is vested pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws, and no action may be taken by any Town board or official in derogation of such approval.

The property abuts Woonsocket and would be connected to Woonsocket's public water system and municipal sewers. Given the project's location in an important drinking water watershed, the presence of significant biodiversity at Booth Pond and the existing traffic pattern and volumes, special attention will need to be given to the project's design. Due to the environmental significance of Booth Pond and its associated wetlands, as other water bodies and wetlands in Town ought to be protected through buffers beyond those required by DEM.

D-3.5 Manufacturing

Manufacturing uses, generally in accordance with the provisions of the present Manufacturing (M) District are proposed in the following areas:

- Existing industrial site at north side of Route 146A and the Branch River.
- Along either side of North Smithfield Industrial Drive. This represents a continuation of present zoning.

The proposed uses are consistent with studies completed by the North Smithfield Industrial Development Commission. Generally, the uses allowed would be similar to those permitted under M District regulations. It is suggested that Design Standards be developed to preclude the construction or reconstruction of commercial or industrial activities which would adversely impact adjacent manufacturing uses or nearby residences.

The southern portion of the Blackstone-Smithfield Industrial Park site is currently occupied by manufacturing uses (primarily Atlantic Thermal Plastics) and is zoned for manufacturing purposes.

The northern portion of the Blackstone-Smithfield Industrial Park is currently used to generate hydroelectric power, and should be encouraged to continue as long as the operations do not cause any diminution of downstream flows. This property was discussed earlier and is proposed to be rezoned to promote the mill's rehabilitation by allowing certain mixed uses. Between Central Street and Quaker Highway land in the Manufacturing zone is proposed to be rezoned to Office/Commercial or Business Highway.

D-3.6 Limited Commercial

Portions of the land between St. Paul Street and the Branch River now located within the Manufacturing (M) District are designated as Limited Commercial. This use change acknowledges the limited industrial use, which has developed; most non-residential development is of a retail or commercial nature. Limited usable sites and nearby housing emphasize the need to preclude most types of heavy manufacturing. Allowed uses include light industry and certain types of retail and commercial development.

D-4.0 Inconsistencies of Existing Zoning

D-4.1 Inconsistencies with Existing Zoning Map

Nearly three quarters of the Town is zoned RA-65. The largest contiguous area is in the southwest, along most of the border with Smithfield and half of the border with Burrillville. The second largest zoning district is the REA-120 zone, which mainly covers areas of particular importance to the water supply quality. Both these zones allow for relatively large lot residential construction. They reflect the fact that North Smithfield is still, primarily, a low density, residential community. Closest to Woonsocket are the most densely zoned residential areas and commercial districts. Mill complexes (housing and industrial buildings) are located along the rivers, mainly in the north of Town and in relative close proximity to Woonsocket.

The proposed Zone Changes described in this section will mainly result in zoning that better reflects the density of existing land uses and the availability of infrastructure to service existing lots. In many instances, the proposed Zone Changes will provide greater flexibility for the existing property owner and will reduce the number of cases that appear before the Zoning Board. Another goal of the proposed zone changes is to create more land for commercial and industrial uses, thus improving the tax base. Finally, some proposed zone changes are designed to help reduce the number of lots with split zones. As described in the Zoning Ordinance, zone lines are intended to follow lot lines. As discussed above and as shown on Map D - 2, Zoning District Changes, the following amendments will be required to bring the Zoning Map into compliance with the Land Use Plan:

Table D-4.1 Proposed Zone Changes

ID	Existing Zone	Proposed Zone	Location	Reasoning
1	BN/M/RS	BH	Quaker Highway	Includes highway garage, Flagg RV and Desper property and vacant residential prop.
2	M	Mixed Use-Office/Comm.	Quaker Highway, Central St	#1 site for Office Commercial per Industrial Site Survey
3	RS-40	Ag Business	North of Buxton Street	Smith Orchard/Christiansens
4	RA-65	Ag Business	South of Buxton Street	Jacques Farms/Vineyard
5	RS	Village Res	Buxton Street	Access to sewers near village, large lot
6	RS-40	RU-20	Slatersville- Victory Hgwy, N. Main, Main, Mechanic & Buxton/ Homestead, Quaker Hgwy	Id'd in hsg. plan for afford. Infill dev., sewered
7	BN	Village Res	North Main Street	Rear portion of Plaza lot- Sewered
8	RS	Village Res	Mechanic Street	Large lot w/single house-Sewered
9	RS	Village Res	Central Street	Large lot w/single house-Sewered
10	REA-120	Village Res	Victory Highway & Mechanic Street	The Legion of Christ, Inc.-Religious Retreat
11	RU-20, REA-120, RS-40	Village Res & RU-20	School Street, Pacheco Drive	Colonial Village expanded to adjoining Halliwell Lot, Pacheco Dr. Builtout
12	RA-65	RU-20	Incl. Willerval, Brian & Patricia bordering Millville	Builtout neighborhood
13	RA-65	RS-40	Off of Martha & Esmond	Builtout neighborhood
14	REA-120	Open Space	Off of Harkness Road	Publicly-owned, Blackstone Gorge
15	M	Mill Rehab	Adj. to Blackstone off of Duncan	Former Tupperware Complex
16	RU-20	Village Res	Off of St. Paul Street	Deerfield Commons
17	RU	Village Res	St Paul Street	St Paul's School
18	REA-120	Open Space	On border with Blackstone, off of Canal/Mill Street	Kelly Sports Complex
19	RA-65	RU-20	Incl Cynthia, Deborah & Sharon Parkway	Builtout, sewered
20	RA-65	Village Res	Mendon Road	Lantern & Gatewood- Elderly
21	RA-65	Village Res	Off of Mendon Rd. & Rhodes Ave.	St. Antoine residence, and adjoining lot potential afford. hsg., adj. to Woonsocket
22	REA-120	Village Res	Adjacent to Woonsocket	Town-owned, Spooner Property
23	RA-65	RS-40	Daniel St & Buckley Dr off of Mendon	Builtout, road access, has sewer, water soon, transition between comm. & less dense res.
24	BN	Prof Serv	Off of Great Road	Existing office complex
25	M	Mill Rehab	Off of Great Road	Branch River Mill
26	RS-40	RU-20	Forest Dale -School St., Halliwell Blvd., Lorraine, Roselawn & Maple	Forestdale neighborhood, has water/sewer, builtout, adj to RU-20
27	M	Mixed Use-Office/ Comm.	Intersection of 146 & NS Industrial Drive	Homestead Farm, adj. to ind. area, good road access
28	RS-40	Village Res VPD	East of Prov. Pike/Comstock Road	162 units -Laurel Wood, age-restricted
29	M	Mill Rehab	Railroad Street	Slatersville Mill mixed use proposal pending before town boards
30	REA-120 & RS-40	Open Space & RS-40	Church Street & Charon Drive	St. John Cemetery, Builtout neighborhood
ID	**Existing Zone**	**Proposed Zone**	**Location**	**Reasoning**

31	REA-120	Open Space & RS-40	Accessed from Chelsea Dr	Town/ private recreation area & split lots in adjoining subdivision
32	REA-120	Ag Business	Off of Tifft Rd	Brookside Equestrian Center
33	RS-40	Open Space	Main St/Park View	Town-owned, Pacheco Park
34	RS-40	Village Res	North of Main St/Victory Hgwy.	128 units- Silver Pines Development
35	RS-20	Open Space	Off of Main St	Publicly-owned, OS Wellhead Protection
36	RA-65	RS-40	Morning Star Dr. & Tall Timber Tr./Greenwood Ln., Victory Hwy.	Adjacent to RU-20, extension of Main St. RU zone, Builtout neighborhood
37	RA-65	REA-120	Either side of Black Plain Rd, Slatersville Estates, Pound Hill Road, Hart Pond Dr.	District cuts thru lots, follow road instead, Woodworth Conservation Trust
38	RA-65	Ag Bus	Intersection of Ind Dr & 146	State to acquire dev. rights
39	REA-120 RS-40	Ag Business	East of 146 Woonsocket Hill, Pound Hill Rd east of 146	Wright's Dairy Farm & Wild Acres Horse Farm
40	REA	Open Space	Smithfield Road	Union Cemetery
41	REA-120	Ag Business	West of Greenville Rd/Birch Hill	Marshall's Veterinary Clinic
42	REA-120	Open Space	Off of Village Way	Land Trust-owned
43	REA-120 RU-20	Village Res	Off of Greenville Road/ Village Way	Country Meadows at Village Way-202 Elderly
44	BN	BH	Eddie Dowling Highway	Reflects land use
45	PS, BH RS, RA	Mixed Use-Office Comm/146A	Eddie Dowling Highway	Development already proposed
46	BH	PS	Eddie Dowling Highway	Office residential mix
47	RA-65, RS-40	REA-120	Off of Old Smithfield Rd	Watershed Protection
48	RA-65	Open Space	Off of Providence Pike	Audubon-owned, OS Protection
49	RA-65	Open Space	Off of Old Oxford Rd	Land Trust, Cedar Swamp
50	RA-65/BN	Ag Business	West of Providence Pike/Primrose	Goodwin Brothers Farm
51	RS-40	RA-65	West of Rd Over Sayles Hill Rd	Poor soils
52	RA-65	REA-120	Ironmine Hill Road/ Old Road Over Sayles Hill Road	Watershed protection, poor soils adjacent to Crookfall Brook
53	RS-40	Open Space	Woonsocket Reservoir	Woonsocket-owned, water supply protection
54	RA-65, REA-120	Ag Business	North of Reservoir Rd & South of Iron Mine Hill Rd	Wild Wind Farm, Westwind Farm
55	REA-120	RS-40	2 parcels off of Pound Hill	Existing affordable Housing
56	REA-120	Open Space	Off of Victory Highway	State boat launch
57	BN	BH	South side of Victory Highway	Consistent with existing use and Town Council zone change
58	RA	Mixed Use-Office/Comm.	Between Old Pond Hill Road and N.S Industrial Highway	Good visibility from 146 and good access to Industrial Highway
59	RA	BN	Great Road @ Mendon Road	Existing Gas Station
60	RA-65	REA-120	Providence Pike	Electric transmission lines in between Audubon parcels
61	BN	PS	Corner of Main St. & Victory Highway	Consistent with zone change conditions
62	REA-120	Open Space	Cedar Swamp Conservation area 146 interchange	State owned conservation area

D-4.2 Zoning Ordinance Regulations

Under the Land Use Element recommendations and those of other Elements of the Comprehensive Plan, it will be necessary to amend the Zoning Ordinance in a number of ways as follows:

1. Revise the Official Zoning Map in accordance with the zone district changes described above and shown on Map D – 2. Periodic reviews of the Official Zoning Map should be conducted and, revisions to the map should be made where necessary to minimize inconsistencies between the map and actual land use and, to reflect changes in the Comprehensive Plan.

2. Create new zoning districts and the regulations and standards for their implementation as follows:

   - Mixed Use Mill Rehabilitation
   - Mixed Use Retail
   - Village Residential
   - Mixed Use Office/Commercial
   - Open Space
   - Agricultural Business

3. Adopt flexible residential development measures such as Conservation Development.

4. Revise the Zoning Ordinance to encourage the creation of more affordable housing and in conformance with the Housing Element.

5. Improve the Development Plan Review regulations and adopt Design Standards as part of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.

6. Where applicable, incorporate development review provisions which require special consideration of cultural and natural resource protection.

7. Establish clear, objective standards for each category of Special Use Permit.

It is recommended that all provisions of the Zoning Ordinance be given a comprehensive review so that the regulations will be more in line with contemporary zoning practices regulating parking and loading, signs, special land uses, encouragement of home occupations, district use regulations, etc.

D-4.3 Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment Process

The Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act requires that "The land use plan should specify the process by which the zoning ordinance and the zoning map shall be amended to conform to the comprehensive plan."

Upon the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town Council, by resolution, will direct the Planning Board and the Planning Division to initiate ordinance changes and a public participation process leading to the adoption of the required amendments within a period of 18 months. The Council's resolution will request the Planning Board to prepare a timetable for the amendment process.

D-4.4 Improved Design

Another issue that will be referred to throughout this Updated Plan pertains to the preservation of the Town's character and raising the bar on matters of design. Consistent with the BRVNHCC's 2003 publication "Design Review Manual", the Town will ultimately be making revisions to its Ordinances and Regulations that govern the design of new subdivisions, land developments (including multi-family structures) new commercial and industrial structures, and redevelopment of existing mill buildings and other historic areas and structures.

D-4.5 Preparation for Future Growth

As John Mullin's 2001 report summarizing the charette's findings concluded,

> "…North Smithfield is a beautiful community that still has the opportunity to protect and enhance its quality of life. It has been fortunate to date that its valued character is still intact. We believe, however, that changing growth patterns will have a tremendous impact on the community over the next decade. This can be positive if it is well planned. It can be catastrophic if it is left simply to market forces. The Town has no choice: it must plan or be planned upon. It is time to begin."

Beyond the updating of this Plan and subsequent revisions to the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, the Town may need to explore other tools to help manage its growth. The 2001 Community Survey and charette demonstrated that many citizens are concerned that the Town is growing too rapidly and that unmanaged growth will adversely impact the community. Zoning that provides flexibility that leads to the preservation of historic structures and commercial development as a way to subsidize the tax base are steps in the right direction, but ultimately, the Town may need to consider more innovative means to preparing for its future. Additionally, the Town may wish to designate certain areas such as Slatersville and the Branch Village area as "Growth Centers", once the State's Land Use Guide Plan Update is completed, in order to provide a better focus for infrastructure investment.

D-5.0 Consistency Statement

The Land Use Element for North Smithfield furthers the goals of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act and is consistent with the overall goals and the 114 specific land use policies for Rhode Island as presented in *State Guide Plan Element No. 121 – State Land Use Policies and Plan 2010*.

We cite the following strengths of the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan with respect to State policies:

General Land Development
Land use proposals relate to historic development patterns, the availability of or lack of public utilities and services and the natural characteristics of the land.

Concentrated urban and suburban development is located in the northern and eastern sections of the community and rural residential densities are recommended for the balance of the Town. Options for flexible, land-compatible residential development are encouraged.

Water Resources
The Land Use Element includes proposals for the protection of major water supply resources in the community including, but not limited to, the Slatersville Aquifer, Slatersville Reservoirs, Woonsocket Water Supply Reservoirs #1 and #3 and Crookfall Brook.

Zoning, subdivision and other development regulations will be revised to reduce point and non-point sources of pollution which could degrade surface and groundwater quality.

Energy
Energy is being generated by a hydropower facility in North Smithfield; the Plan encourages continuation of this efficient form of power generation.

Percentage wise, North Smithfield, devotes more acreage to powerline and pipeline rights-of-way and easements than any other community in Rhode Island. As feasible, these should be utilized to provide pedestrian links between open space and conservation areas.

Housing
As a suburban community, the major emphasis is on single-family residential use.
The Land Use Element recognizes the need to provide a greater diversity of affordable housing opportunities meeting the local needs of individuals and families of all age groups.

Transportation
The Land Use Element proposals have been carefully related to the existing and proposed vehicular circulation system. Sites have been suggested for pooled parking facilities served by public transit facilities.

Recreation and Open Space

Proposals for land use have been related to the need to provide a range of recreational facilities and to protect unique or important open space areas.

The Land Use Element has been integrated with and related to State and interstate and Federal programs/plans such as the Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor and the Branch River Park Plan.

D-5.1 Adjacent Community Land Use Compatibility

North Smithfield shares a common boundary with three towns and one city in Rhode Island and three towns in Massachusetts. Common sense, as well as state mandates, requires compatibility of uses in adjoining communities.

During the course of preparing the Comprehensive Plan Update, the Town Planner has been in contact with all adjoining communities. On February 14, 2005, the North Smithfield Planning Division sent letters to the planning agencies of adjoining communities in Rhode Island and Massachusetts requesting information on comprehensive plan proposals and zoning. The information provided in response to these inquiries was used in preparing this Land Use Element and served as the basis for further contacts through phone conversations or personal meetings.

The following is a discussion of land use compatibility along municipal boundaries:

Burrillville, Rhode Island
With one exception, the land along the municipal borders is zoned for single-family residential development; in the case of North Smithfield, the Land Use Plan continues residential use along the common boundary. The exception is the Western Sand & Gravel site on the Douglas Pike which is zoned M-2 Industrial in Burrillville. Although the site is located in both Towns, the North Smithfield portion is in the RA-65 Residential zone. EPA Superfund actions are discussed in the Natural and Cultural Resources Element.

Although not directly abutting the North Smithfield line, the commercial and industrial zoning and development between Route 102 and the portion of the Slatersville Reservoir in Burrillville could pose a threat to the water quality of the Reservoir. The Burrillville Comprehensive Plan proposes to reduce this concern through the extension of sewer services to the area and the continuation of aquifer protection district zoning. Burrillville is eager to work with North Smithfield on the proposed Northwest Bike Trail, as described elsewhere in this Update, and wished to encourage the Town to acquire rights-of -way as they become available.

Smithfield, Rhode Island
As in the case of Burrillville, there is one exception to the single-family residential zoning along the common boundary. Smithfield has a 2,400 acre industrial zone which abuts the RA-65 Residential zone in North Smithfield for about 2,500 feet immediately to the east of the Providence Pike. This industrial area is partially bordered by Route 7 and I-295 and is bisected in the south by Route 116. Full development of this area could have significant adverse impacts (traffic, noise, fumes, etc.) on North Smithfield. The New Zoning Enabling Act requires contiguous municipalities to coordinate their land use proposals.

There is no basis for zoning adjacent land in North Smithfield for industrial use; consequently the Land Use Element continues residential uses along the common boundary. There is a basis for encouraging the Smithfield Comprehensive Plan to address industrial use and zoning along the border through district changes or appropriate buffering considerations.

Lincoln, Rhode Island

Crookfall Brook forms the common boundary between Lincoln and North Smithfield from Woonsocket Reservoir # 3 to the Blackstone River. There is general compatibility between residential zoning to the east of Route 146. On the east side of Route 146, business zoning in Lincoln abuts the RS-40 Residential district in North Smithfield. This does not appear to be a conflict given the general nature of Route 146 highway business development in both Towns.

The major conflict is Lincoln's ML 0.5 Limited Manufacturing district which abuts North Smithfield's REA-120 district from the Smithfield line to Reservoir Road. From Lincoln's perspective, this is a logical use of land isolated from the balance of the Town by Routes 146 and I-295. It appears that there is limited likelihood of any significant development of the land in Lincoln which could have serious impacts on the residentially zoned land across Crookfall Brook in North Smithfield.

Woonsocket, Rhode Island

Zoning and development along the Woonsocket line is more complex given the intense development which has taken place in the City. Existing and proposed residential, commercial and industrial usage appears, with one exception, to be compatible in the two communities. The one area that for years was incompatible between the two communities is in the process of becoming more compatible. This Plan Update includes a proposal for rezoning in the Park Square Area, near Booth Pond and behind the Landmark Medical Center. Proposed commercial retail development could span the communities of Woonsocket and North Smithfield in this area. Eighteen acres across the border in Woonsocket could be designated as a special economic development district that could eventually see the construction of 220,000 square feet of primarily commercial retail space. Another issue that is discussed in greater detail in the Services and Facilities Element involves the drinking water supplied to North Smithfield by Woonsocket.

Blackstone, Massachusetts

The proposals of the Land Use Element will change the zoning of the Blackstone River Gorge area in North Smithfield to Open Space. This zoning will abut residential zones in Blackstone. Land acquisition by the States of Rhode Island and Massachusetts along with the proposals of the 1992 Comprehensive Plan created a regional open space recreational resource at the Gorge. The proposals of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor call for protecting the Gorge through proper management and communication between the various parties and partners interested in the Park and improving public access to provide for multiple uses of the Park. In the vicinity of the Blackstone-Smithfield Industrial Park, the Manufacturing (M) zone also abuts a fully developed residential neighborhood in Blackstone. There is no real inconsistency here as the residences were developed, in part, to serve as mill housing. In areas other than those mentioned above, the proposed land use and zoning of the two communities is compatible.

Millville, Massachusetts
Residential zoning applies to either side of the Town line except in a small corner west of Route 146. Here, Manufacturing (M) in North Smithfield abuts a small residentially zoned triangular corner of Millville formed by the Uxbridge and North Smithfield boundaries and Route 146. This Millville land is now used for non-residential use with access through the Town of Uxbridge. Consequently, there is no incompatibility.

Uxbridge, Massachusetts
In Uxbridge, the land along the common border is zoned as follows: to the west of Quaker Highway the zoning is Agricultural and to the east, it is Business. Essentially, these uses are compatible with North Smithfield's present and proposed land use and zoning of Neighborhood Business on the east side of Quaker Highway and Rural Agricultural - Medium Density (RA-65 zoning) on the west side.

BJ's Wholesale Club constructed three buildings: a warehouse/crossdock facility (614,626 square foot footprint), a security control center and a guard house with a total of 644 tractor-trailer parking stalls, 382 standard parking spaces, a truck queuing area and various site and utility infrastructure on land formerly owned by the Hood Companies at 869 Quaker Highway. This site was formerly a large sand and gravel operation on the west side of Quaker Highway and north of Cider Mill and Buxton Street. Noise from this 24-hour facility may have an adverse impact on the quality of life of many residents in North Smithfield.

Although there is a rational case for establishing that the uses across a municipal line should be compatible regardless of the existence of a state line, current planning and zoning enabling legislation in Massachusetts gives little guidance here. Rhode Island's Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act is more specific and requires ".... consistency with the comprehensive plans of contiguous municipalities ...". Presumably, considering Rhode Island's more enlightened approach, this includes municipalities in adjoining states.

North Smithfield, through its Town Council and Planning Department, should establish a dialogue with the Uxbridge planners to determine the nature of any future use changes in the area to the west of 146A.

E. HOUSING

E-1.0 Introduction

In accordance with the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act of 2004, the Town of North Smithfield developed an Affordable Housing Plan and submitted it to Statewide Planning as a proposed appendix to the 1995 State-adopted Comprehensive Plan. With the community's assistance and input, the Affordable Housing Plan was drafted by the consulting firm of Barbara Sokoloff Associates, Inc. *This Comprehensive Plan Update brings the "appendix" into the body of the text. More specifically, Sokoloff's Plan has become the basis for the Housing Element. None of the language from the Affordable Housing Plan has been substantially changed (apart from responses to comments received from Statewide Planning and RI Housing in February 2005), rather, material from the 1995 Plan that is still relevant and new data from the 2000 US Census has been added such that the Housing Element responds to affordable housing, as well as other housing issues.*

The Town of North Smithfield recognizes the importance of providing a diverse range of housing so that North Smithfield residents of all income levels have access to safe, decent, and affordable housing. Attentive to the effects of Rhode Island's continued housing market boom on low- and moderate-income households and in compliance with the State's Low-Moderate Income Housing Act, the Town of North Smithfield initiated this Affordable Housing Production Plan to determine the housing needs of the community and to identify and develop goals and strategies for the Town to ensure that the diverse housing needs of residents are met.

North Smithfield has an area of 24 square miles and a population of 10,618. The Town is bounded on the north by Uxbridge, Millville and Blackstone Massachusetts; on the east by Woonsocket and Lincoln; on the south by Smithfield; and on the west by Burrillville.
First settled in 1666, North Smithfield was incorporated in 1871. Over time the Town has experienced a gradual transition from an agricultural based community to an industrially based community in the 19th century, to the present day combination of industry, business, suburban and rural housing. The Town has retained several of its mill and turnpike villages. Union Village initially developed as a stage coach stop along Great Road (Rt. 146A). Slatersville was the nation's first planned mill village. Forestdale, Branch Village and Waterford were all established around mills along the Branch River.

The influences of this early development can be seen in the Town today. The majority of the industrial development is still located along or near the Branch River. Small lot housing, with single family and two family homes is concentrated in and around the mill villages and adjacent to the Woonsocket town line. Conversely, the western and southern sections of Town (generally known as Primrose), retain a rural-residential character.

Although there are no planning rules that say each community must provide cradle to the grave housing opportunities, common sense suggests that it should be possible to live one's life in an area where friendships and affiliations with civic or religious organizations have been

established. For those with sufficient incomes from early adulthood to old age, it is possible that the desired housing could be obtained without leaving North Smithfield. Unfortunately, most households do not have this kind of financial freedom. Housing affordability relates to both families and households. A household is one or more persons occupying an individual housing unit. A family includes two or more persons living together and related by blood, marriage or adoption. Both terms are used in this report. Because the term household includes single persons and the term family means two or more persons, median household income tends to be lower than median family income.

E-1.1 What Is Affordable Housing?

Affordable housing is defined by the State as "residential housing that has a sales price or rental amount that is within the means of a household that is moderate income or less." What does "within the means" actually mean? Generally, the accepted definition of housing affordability is that a household should spend no more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs, including rent and utilities or a mortgage payment and be available to persons earning less than 80% of median income. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development uses this definition in all of its affordable housing programs.

Affordable housing programs target low-income households. Each year the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) calculates Area Family Median Incomes (AFMI) by family size for the Providence-Fall River-Warwick Metropolitan Statistical Area. The FY 2004 income cutoffs for North Smithfield residents to qualify for federal/state subsidized affordable housing are shown in Table E-1.1.

Table E-1.1 HUD FY2004 Income Limits, Providence MSA

	Family Size (persons)				
	2	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
30% AFMI	$16,300	$18,350	$20,350	$22,000	$23,650
50% AFMI	$27,150	$30,550	$33,950	$36,650	$39,400
80% AFMI	$43,450	$48,900	$54,300	$58,650	$63,000

Source: HUD

As this table shows, affordable housing in North Smithfield can target households earning in the $50,000-$60,000 range depending on family size.

E-1.2 Primary Purpose Of the Housing Element

North Smithfield has rewritten this Element to create a framework for reaching the 10% goal set by the State. The Element details the need for affordable housing in North Smithfield, the obstacles to developing affordable housing, the number of units needed to reach the 10% goal and the strategies the Town will use to achieve the 10% goal.

E-1.3 Who Needs Affordable Housing In North Smithfield?

At public meetings, North Smithfield residents stated that affordable housing is most needed for young families and the elderly. Rising housing costs are shutting young families and those who were raised in North Smithfield out of the housing market.

The affordable housing crisis is not limited to North Smithfield; Rhode Island as a whole is struggling with this issue. Statewide, personal income increased 25% between 1998 and 2003, while the median sales price of a single-family home increased 87.6%.[1] The rapid escalation of housing prices has made affordable homeownership and rental housing increasingly difficult to find for many individuals and families. In the first six months of 2004, the median sales price for a single-family home in North Smithfield was $295,450, an 80.6% increase since 2001. At this price, assuming a 5% down payment, these homes are affordable to households earning a minimum of $96,000 per year. The most recent data shows that a two-bedroom apartment in North Smithfield was $1,021 per month. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of North Smithfield renters spend more than 30% of their income on housing and therefore are considered rent burdened.

E-2.0 Goals, Policies and Actions

The Town of North Smithfield has developed the following three housing goals and five strategy areas. These five strategy areas are designed to be realistic, practical, and consistent with the Towns affordable housing goals. The housing strategies are further detailed in Map 1, the Housing Locations Map. The map shows suitable potential locations for affordable housing in North Smithfield.

Note: given the way this particular Element was developed, only the policies (below) and actions (from Section 4.0), as originally submitted to the State, are itemized in the 2005 Action Table in the Implementation Element.

North Smithfield's housing goals and policies are as follows:

1. CREATE A DIVERSITY OF HOUSING TYPES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF NORTH SMITHFIELD'S LOW-MODERATE INCOME RESIDENTS, AND SPECIAL POPULATIONS WHILE MAINTAINING NORTH SMITHFIELD'S MIXTURE OF VILLAGE AND RURAL CHARACTER

A. Strengthen partnerships and build community support for affordable housing development.

B. Revise the zoning ordinance to promote affordable housing.

[1] The Economic Impact of the Housing Crisis on Business in Rhode Island, Fleet Bank, RIPEC, and Ninigret Partners, Inc., 2004, p. 2.

2. ENSURE THE LONG-TERM AFFORDABILITY OF NORTH SMITHFIELD'S HOUSING STOCK

A. Implement programs which ensure the long term affordability of North Smithfield's housing.

In addition to developing new affordable housing, it is important for the Town to preserve and maintain its existing housing stock. The Town will use deed restrictions or the Woonsocket Neighborhood Development Corporation (WNDC) housing land trust to ensure long-term affordability. A housing land trust holds properties for affordable housing, leasing the land for a nominal fee and setting resale restrictions on the houses. The combination of resale restrictions and retaining ownership of the land guarantees long-term affordability. Existing housing is an important source of affordable housing. Given land and construction prices, it is much more cost effective to maintain existing housing than to build new housing. Efforts will be made to improve substandard properties throughout the Town.

3. MEET AND EXCEED THE 10% GOAL FOR LOW-MODERATE HOUSING STOCK

A. Identify programs and potential locations for affordable housing development.

B. Identify existing and new resources for affordable housing development.

E-3.0 Plan Description

E-3.1 Inventory: Housing Profile of North Smithfield

Between 1980 and 1990, the Town's population grew by an estimated 5 percent and grew by only 1.2 percent between 1990 and 2000. As with Rhode Island and the nation in general, household size in North Smithfield is decreasing. In 1980 the average household size was 2.92 persons, this number had dropped to 2.74 in 1990 and further to 2.61 by the year 2000. Consequently, the number of households is rising at a faster rate that the total population.

The discrepancy between population growth and household growth is typical of Rhode Island and national trends. It is due to the creation of additional households from existing ones and from generally smaller households (resulting from divorces, increases in single-parent households, increases in unmarried widow/widowers, people living longer and more independently, etc.).

Table E-3.1 Population and Household Data

	North Smithfield			Providence County			State		
	1990	2000	% ch	1990	2000	% ch	1990	2000	% ch
Population	10,497	10,618	1.2%	87,194	85,433	-2.0%	1,003,464	1,048,319	4.5%
Households	3,727	3,954	6.1%	32,731	35,228	7.6%	377,080	408,412	8.3%
Family		2,956			22,232			265,398	
Non-Family		998			12,996			143,026	
Elderly (65+)		489			8,852			107,335	
Average Household Size		2.61			2.35			2.47	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990, 2000

Between 1980 and 1990, it's estimated that single and two person households grew in North Smithfield, while 3-4 person households remained constant and five and greater person households declined in percentage terms. Similar gains in single and two person households were found between 1990 and 2000 but, unlike the previous decade, 3-4 person households gained as a percentage of total households. Households with five and greater persons remained constant in percentage terms between 1990 and 2000. Median age went from 33.6 years to 35.8 years between 1980 and 1990 and increased further to 38.8 according to the 2000 Census. Many of the smaller households, then, were older singles or couples.

In the last decade there was a shift in the age + groups in North Smithfield, particularly for the so called "baby boomers". In 2000, was estimated that 27 percent of North Smithfield's population was between the ages of 25 and 44. This age group represented nearly 40 percent of North Smithfield's population in 1990. This group represents prime years for home purchases. Many of this age group fall into that half of North Smithfield's households making less than $33,200.

In line with this trend, it is estimated that households earning $50,000 or more in 1990 constitute over one quarter of total North Smithfield households. In 1999 more than 57 percent of households earned $50,000 or more.

Table E-3.1.a Income Data

	North Smithfield			Providence County			State		
	1990	2000	% ch	1990	2000	% ch	1990	2000	% ch
Median Household Income	$47,420	$58,602	23.6%	$36,541	$36,950	1.1%	$32,181	$42,090	30.8%
Median Owner Household Income		$65,564			$53,439			$56,559	
Median Renter Household Income		$25,288			$22,114			$24,361	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990, 2000

This means North Smithfield needs less expensive housing, as well as a greater diversity of housing types than it currently has. For example, not only is it increasingly difficult for moderate income households to make a first time home purchase, but those owning larger homes in town who wish to move to smaller quarters within North Smithfield have very few options.

E-3.1.1 Populations In Need Of Affordable Housing

Families
It is a priority of the Town to provide housing opportunities which will allow families to live in North Smithfield without incurring a cost burden by paying more than they can afford or by living in substandard housing. However, with escalating housing prices, it is becoming increasingly difficult for families in North Smithfield find housing they can afford. The 2000 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy Data Book (CHAS) indicates there are 202 low-income families with housing problems in North Smithfield. With single-family home prices so high, rental housing is the only alternative for many families. Average rents in North Smithfield are beyond what many working families can afford to pay.

Elderly
With fixed incomes and specific housing needs, it can be a challenge to provide appropriate housing for the elderly. North Smithfield's elderly population is growing, which places demands on the housing market. The 2000 CHAS data indicates there are 318 low-income elderly households with housing problems in North Smithfield. For many elderly homeowners, staying in their large homes is no longer an option, for financial and/or maintenance reasons. Rising property values have created property tax burdens that many elderly homeowners cannot afford. These residents could downsize, but there is not enough appropriate housing available.

Special Needs
Special needs housing incorporates a wide range of populations, including persons with physical or mental disabilities, battered women and their families, people recovering from addictions, and people with specialized health needs. Housing incorporating supportive services models have been developed to meet the needs of these populations.

Homelessness
In 2003, the RI Emergency Shelter Program provided shelter services to 1 person who listed North Smithfield as their last place of residence. In 2001 and 2002, 8 people and 2 people, respectively, listed North Smithfield as their last place of residence.

Public Assistance as an Indicator of Need
The number of local individuals and families of very low income is also reflected in information provided by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services regarding the number of cases/individuals currently receiving public assistance. Since 1990, the number of people receiving public assistance increased in actual numbers from 190 in 1990 to 261 in 2000 and as a percentage of total population, as illustrated in Table E-3.1.1 below. As a percentage of total population, the number of people on public assistance increased from 1.8 percent in 1990 to 2.5 percent in 2002.

Table E-3.1.1 Cases and Recipients Receiving Public Assistance

Public Assistance	1990		2000			
Assistance Program	**Cases**	**Recipients**	**Cases**	**Recipients**	**Numeric Change (Recipient)**	**% Change**
Family Independence Program (Formerly AFDC)	26	63	24	52	-11	-17%
General Public Assistance (not eligible for AFDC)	6	6	7	7	1	17%
Food Stamps	41	60	69	77	17	28%
Medical Assistance (primarily to elderly and/or handicapped)	44	61	63	125	64	105%
Totals	**117**	**190**	**163**	**261**	71	37%

E-3.1.2 Housing Stock

In 2000, North Smithfield had 4,058 year round housing units, an 8.8% increase since 1990[2]. Between 2000 and 2004, the Town issued approximately 29 building permits per year. Population increased 1.15% between 1990 and 2000, while the number of households increased 6.09%. New households are spinning off from existing households, and the average household size is getting smaller. Twenty-seven percent of households are headed by a person age 65 or older, indicating the relative demand for elderly housing. At the time of the 2000 Census, 116 housing units (2.9%) were vacant[3] North Smithfield's owner-occupancy rate of 79.2% is significantly higher than that of Providence County (53.2%) and the State (60%), indicating there is relatively less rental housing in North Smithfield. According to the Census, the percentage of North Smithfield's housing units which were rental increased from 18.7 percent in 1990 to 20.8 percent in 2000.

Table E-3.1.2 Housing Stock

	North Smithfield			Providence County			State		
	1990	2000*	%	1990	2000	%	1990	2000	%
Total Housing Units	3,835	4,070	6.1%	243,224	253,214	4.1%	414,572	439,837	6.1%
Vacant Units	106	116	2.9%		13,278	5.2%		31,413	7.1%
Occupied Units	3,729	3,954	97.1%		239,936	94.8%		408,424	92.9%
Renter-Occupied Units	716	823	20.8%		112,352	46.8%		163,274	40.0%
Owner-Occupied Units	3,013	3,131	79.2%		127,584	53.2%		245,150	60.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census
* This housing count includes seasonal units which are not counted by RI Housing

[2] The 4,058 housing units do not include seasonal units and is calculated by Rhode Island Housing based on the 2000 census data.
[3] The Census defines vacant units as housing units in which no one is living on Census Day. Units for sale/rent, newly constructed units not yet occupied, and seasonal/recreation units are all counted vacant, as well as abandoned buildings.

Since 2000 alone, plans for over 850 new housing units have been proposed for development. These units are in varying states of approval, with some still in conceptual design while others have commenced construction. Of the over 850 presented, 295[4] are currently under construction. According to the Planning Department if all of these units are constructed it will represent an almost 50% increase in the rate of development as compared to what was developed between 1980-2000. It is important to note that since not all of these units have received final approval, it is possible that a number of these proposed units will not be constructed. However, consideration must also be paid to the fact that these units have all been proposed between 2000 and 2004, the Town will continue to see development proposals, which will further increase the rate of development within the Town.

Table E-3.1.2, shows that the vast majority of housing units in North Smithfield are in single unit detached structures (i.e. a typical single-family home). Currently, the majority of rental housing is found in small houses, rather than in large apartment buildings. However, the majority of the 850 proposed units discussed above are in large multi-family developments, which is a significant change from the historical development patterns in North Smithfield. North Smithfield's housing stock is relatively old with only 38.5% of the housing units having been built after 1970.

One fifth of the town's housing stock was constructed in 1939 or earlier, that is, it is at least 60 years old. Of those units, a significant number were constructed in the 18th and 19th centuries. Further, some local people have recounted instances of the very old dwellings needing rehabilitation. Therefore, while substandard conditions do not constitute a major problem, they may present an opportunity for improving the overall quality of North Smithfield's housing.

Table E-3.1.2.a Age of Housing

	North Smithfield	
Year Built	**Number**	**%**
Built 1990 to March 2000	465	11
Built 1980 to 1989	519	13
Built 1970 to 1979	587	14
Built 1960 to 1969	590	14
Built 1950 to 1959	660	16
Built 1940 to 1949	470	12
Built 1939 or earlier	853	21
Total	4,070	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

The occurrence of such a high percentage of very old single family residences built for larger and/or extended families suggests, that in this day of smaller families or single-person households, many of these residential structures contain excess living space. In the year 2000, slightly more than one in five of North Smithfield's households represented a single person

[4] Includes: 162 -units Laurelwood, 71- units Rockcliff and 62- units Silver Pines.

household, most often a single person living alone. Many of such households are elderly people living in a single family house. Thus, it appears that a significant number of people are "over-housed"; they are occupying units (most likely as owners) that are larger than needed. Since people tend to "age in place", the situation of excess space probably will increase. Although the Town currently allows for the construction of accessory dwelling units in Residential Districts, the need for additional, smaller units has not decreased.

Another factor in assessing housing need in North Smithfield relates to the balance of tenure types available, that is rental or ownership units. Between 1980 and 1990, it is estimated that single family homes, as a percentage of occupied dwellings in the Town increased from 76 percent to 80.8 percent of occupied dwellings in the Town. This number was down slightly in 2000, to 79.2 percent. There were almost as many new rental units built in the 1990's as there were single family homes, 107 and 118 respectively. This increase in rental units is reflective of the increase in the construction of elderly housing units consisting of independent, congregate and hospice care units.

This trend towards single family owned units dominating North Smithfield's housing composition may be changing. Historically the Town has contained both multi-family units (ten or more units) and two to nine family structures. Today, the latter category comprises about 20 percent of all housing units and multi-family is 11.5 percent. Construction of multi-unit elderly housing during the 90's coupled with several large planned market rate condominium projects are reversing the trend thereby broadening the range of housing choice.

Table E-3.1.2.b Units in Structure[5]

	North Smithfield	
Units in Structure	**Number of Units**	**%**
1	3,256	80.0
2-4	25	0.6
5-9	433	10.6
10+	273	6.7
Mobile home	15	0.4
Total	4,070	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Lead-Based Paint Issues

According to the Department of Health's *2005 Childhood Lead Poisoning in Rhode Island* report, in 2004, .9% of North Smithfield children had elevated levels of lead in their blood. Any rehabilitation project involving pre-1978 buildings must include testing for lead-based paint and abatement where necessary.

[5] This count includes seasonal units, which are not included in the RIH calculations for determining a community's number of Low-Mod units.

E-3.1.3 Cost Of Housing

Housing costs have been escalating rapidly in North Smithfield and throughout Rhode Island. From 2000 to 2003 Rhode Island had the fastest appreciating home prices in the country.[6] The median sales price of a single-family home in North Smithfield through the end of September 2004 was $299,000. Adjusted for inflation, this represents an 81.9% increase since 1997, or an average increase of approximately 13.1% per year. By comparison, median household income in North Smithfield increased 23.5% between 1990 and 2000, or an average of approximately 2.3% per year. Thus, increases in for-sale housing prices have far outstripped increases in income, making it more difficult for residents to afford a home in North Smithfield. Table E-3.1.3 details the increases in the median sale prices of homes in North Smithfield and throughout the state between 1997 and September 2004.

Table E-3.1.3 Median Sales Price, Single Family Homes

	North Smithfield			State	
	Median Price	Annual % Change		Median Price	Annual % Change
1997	$140,000			$118,000	
1998	$157,000	12.1%		$122,600	3.9%
1999	$155,000	-1.3%		$126,000	2.8%
2000	$173,950	12.2%		$135,976	7.9%
2001	$189,900	9.2%		$156,000	14.7%
2002	$240,500	26.6%		$188,150	20.6%
2003	$270,000	12.3%		$220,000	16.9%
2004	$299,000	10.7%		$250,000	13.6%
% Change 1997-2004*		81.9%			80.4%
% Change 2000-2004*		71.0%			73.7%
Sources: Rhode Island Living, Multiple Listing Service					

The available data shows average rents in North Smithfield are slightly lower than the State average. In 2003, the average rent for 2 and 3 bedroom apartments in North Smithfield was over $1,000. It is likely that rent increases have outpaced increases in median income, making it more difficult to afford rental housing. Table E-3.1.3.a details the results of the Rhode Island Housing rent surveys.

[6] Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight's *Housing Price Index Report*, March 1, 2004.

Table E-3.1.3.a Average Cost of Rental Housing

	North Smithfield			State**	
	2BR	3BR		2BR	3BR
1996	N/A	N/A		$590	$676
1998	$675	N/A		$613	$732
2001	$738	N/A		$775	$875
2002	N/A	N/A		$863	$1,017
2003	$1,021	N/A		$1,032	$1,195
% Change 1996-2001*	34.0%	N/A		16.4%	14.7%
% Change 2001-2003*	N/A	N/A		20.7%	23.4%
Source: Rhode Island Housing Rent Surveys.					
** Inflation adjusted to constant 2004 dollars*					
*** State Average rent is an unweighted average, meaning each city/town is counted equally*					
**** 2003 rents include all utilities (heat, hot water, electric, cooking), using to HUD utility allowance*					
if utilities were not included in advertised rent. Pre-2003 rents include heat and hot water only.					

E-3.1.4 Existing Affordable Housing Stock

Previous to the 2004 revisions to the State's Low-Moderate Income Housing Act, only affordable units developed with a state or federal government subsidy containing long-term affordability restrictions counted towards the 10% goal. According to Rhode Island Housing's most recent chart (July 2004), 275 units (6.78%) of housing in North Smithfield are considered low or moderate income. As of 2004, North Smithfield needs an additional 131 low-moderate income units to reach the 10% goal. However, this number will increase over time, as building permits are issued and new market-rate housing is constructed. Table E-3.1.4 presents a list of all North Smithfield housing that currently count towards the 10% goal.

Table E-3.1.4 North Smithfield's Low-Moderate Income Units[7]

Name	Address	# Units	Occupancy	Tenure	Funding Source
Colonial Village Apts. I*	60 School Street	50	Elderly	Rental	RHS 515
Colonial Village Apts. II*	60 School Street	25	Elderly	Rental	RHS 515
Gatewood Apts.	403 Mendon Road	60	Elderly	Rental	RIH Section 8
Deerfield Commons I	190 St. Paul Street	35	Elderly	Rental	LIHTC
Deerfield Commons II	190 St. Paul Street	23	Elderly	Rental	LIHTC
Deerfield Commons III	190 St. Paul Street	22	Elderly	Rental	LIHTC
Slater Homes	Pound Hill Road	14	Family	Ownership	Town CDBG
Group Homes	Scattered	46	Special Needs	Rental	Group Homes
	Total Low-Mod Units	**275**			
	Total Housing Units	**4,058**			
	% Low-Mod	**6.78%**			

Summary	# Units	% of Total	Summary	# Units	% of Total
Family	14	5%	Rental	261	95%
Elderly	215	78%	Homeownership	14	5%
Special Needs	46	17%	TOTAL	275	100%
TOTAL	275	100%			

E-3.2 Analysis of Housing Needs

There are several ways to measure housing needs. Since no one method is all encompassing, several alternate measures of need are presented in this section. Together they paint a detailed picture of those in need of housing assistance in North Smithfield.

E-3.2.1 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy Data

The Department of Housing and Urban Development publishes detailed data on cost burdened households through its Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) data book. CHAS data counts the number of households experiencing housing problems in a community. Housing problems are defined as having a cost burden (spending more than 30% of income on housing), or living in substandard housing.[8] According to 2000 CHAS data, 592 low-moderate income households (45.1%) in North Smithfield experienced housing problems. Regardless of income, more than 77% of those experiencing housing problems in North Smithfield face only cost burdens, indicating that substandard housing is not a major problem.

The data is broken down by household type (family, elderly or other), tenure (renter or owner) and income level (by percent of Area Median Income). This allows for a rather detailed look at who is experiencing housing problems. The analysis here is restricted to North Smithfield's low-income population, defined as those earning less than 80% of the Area Median Income. Table E-3.2.1 details the CHAS data breakdown for the Town, Providence County, and the State.

[7]Both Colonial Village Apts. I and II are nearing the end of their 30 year affordability program. The property owners are currently in discussions with RIH and HUD about renewing their affordability restrictions, however, no final decisions have been made.

[8] Substandard conditions are defined as living in overcrowded quarters (more than 1.01 persons per room) and/or living in a housing unit without complete kitchen and/or plumbing facilities.

Table E-3.2.1 North Smithfield, Providence County, and Rhode Island CHAS Data

North Smithfield		Providence County		Rhode Island	
Total Households	3,898	**Total Households**	239,846	**Total Households**	408,381
Total Low Income Households	1,312	**Total Low Income Households**	130,829	**Total Low Income Households**	197,594
# with Housing Problems	592	**# with Housing Problems**	69,550	**# with Housing Problems**	105,183
% with Housing Problems	45.1%	**% with Housing Problems**	53.2%	**% with Housing Problems**	53.2%

Low Income Households with Housing Problems, by Population

	% with problems	# with problems	% of Total	% with problems	# with problems	% of Total	% with problems	# with problems	% of Total
Elderly	39.4%	318	53.7%	46.7%	21,002	30.2%	46.4%	33,154	31.5%
Small Family	49.4%	154	26.0%	55.9%	23,740	34.1%	56.7%	35,339	33.6%
Large Family	82.8%	48	8.1%	69.7%	7,937	11.4%	67.7%	10,443	9.9%
Other	53.4%	72	12.2%	52.8%	16,872	24.3%	54.2%	26,247	25.0%
Total		592	100.0%		69,550	100.0%		105,183	100.0%

Low Income Households with Housing Problems, by Tenure

	% with problems	# with problems	% of Total	% with problems	# with problems	% of Total	% with problems	# with problems	% of Total
Renters	39.1%	207	35.0%	51.8%	43,963	63.2%	51.5%	60,485	57.5%
Owners	72.8%	385	65.0%	30.2%	25,602	36.8%	38.0%	44,661	42.5%
Total		592	100.0%		69,565	100.0%		105,146	100.0%

Low Income Households with Housing Problems, by Income

	% with problems	# with problems	% of Total	% with problems	# with problems	% of Total	% with problems	# with problems	% of Total
< 30% AMI	59.9%	227	38.4%	70.9%	34,991	50.3%	70.6%	48,139	45.8%
30-50% AMI	36.0%	141	23.8%	56.5%	19,190	27.6%	57.8%	30,011	28.5%
50-80% AMI	41.4%	224	37.8%	32.4%	15,394	22.1%	34.9%	27,043	25.7%
Total		592	100.0%		69,574	100.0%		105,193	100.0%

Low-income defined as earning less than 80% of Area Median Income
Small Family = 2-4 persons, Large Family = 5+ persons
Source: 2000 CHAS Data Book, The Census Bureau uses a special rounding scheme on special tabulation data, such as the CHAS data.
The CHAS tables are created from very disaggregate files. As a result, discrepancys exist
between the reported CHAS data and data reported from the Census summary files.

Analysis of CHAS data reveals the following:

- 592 of North Smithfield's 1,312 low-income households (45.1%) experienced housing problems, whereas 53.2% of both Providence County's and the states low-income households experienced housing problems.
- Even though there are more low-income elderly households than low-income family households, a greater percentage of low-income families experience housing problems.
- In North Smithfield and throughout Providence County and the state low-income homeowners are more likely to experience housing problems than low-income renters. In North Smithfield 385 low-income homeowners experienced housing problems, compared to 207 low-income renters.
- In North Smithfield and throughout the state the lower the income, the more likely it is that a household experiences housing problems. There are 227 extremely low-income households (<30% AMI) experiencing housing problems in North Smithfield

The affordable units proposed by this plan reflect the need demonstrated in the CHAS data.

E-3.2.2 Affordability Gap and Cost Burden

The affordability gap is the difference between what a household can afford to pay, and what it costs to afford the average home. Table E-3.2.2 details the affordability gap in North Smithfield for both homeownership and rental properties.

Table E-3.2.2 Affordability Gap in North Smithfield

Homeownership

$299,000	Median Sales Price, Single Family Home, 2004*
$96,800	Annual Income Needed to Afford
$78,677	Median Homeowner Household Income, 2004 Income Estimate
$18,123	GAP

Rental

$1,021	Average Monthly Rent with Utilities, 2 Bedroom Apartment, 2001
$40,850	Annual Income Needed to Afford
$27,817	Median Renter Household Income, 2004 Income Estimate
$13,033	GAP

Income needed to afford assumes spending 30% of income on housing.
For homeownership, assumes 5% downpayment, includes property taxes, insurance and PMI

Obviously, the increasingly difficulty of purchasing a home in North Smithfield for those of moderate income will, over time if nothing is done to reverse this trend, affect the income levels of those who are able to live in town at all. Further, because many households cannot afford to purchase, they will remain renters thus putting more demand on a limited supply of

rental units and pushing up rents. In a circular manner, higher rents tend to inhibit savings and thus the necessary down payment for home purchase. The gap between the income necessary to purchase and average incomes in North Smithfield affects all those employed by the Town in a particular manner.

The affordability gap poses a particular dilemma for North Smithfield's less well off residents: spend more than 30% of income on housing, or move someplace else in search of lower-cost housing. Many households have no choice but to spend more than 30% of income on housing, incurring a cost burden.

E-3.2.3 Build-out Analysis

A parcel specific build-out analysis was completed as part of the 1992 Comprehensive Plan for the Town. This build-out analysis eliminated from development consideration all land severely constrained by wetlands and hydric soils, and unbuildable due to utility easements. Portions of sites limited by steep slopes, shallow bedrock and high water tables were not included as buildable land. Additionally, major areas proposed for public and recreational facilities and open space conservation were not included. The build-out analysis also did not take into account the conversion of existing structures into housing through adaptive reuse.

The build-out analysis revealed the potential to construct approximately 1,600 additional dwelling units if only single family homes were constructed. It also revealed that this total could increase to 2,100 dwelling units under the assumption that the zoning in place at the time allowed two-family unit development, accessory dwellings, mixed use, and multi-family development.

A buildout analysis was conducted in 2001 by Applied Geographics, Inc. as part of a series of buildouts prepared for Blackstone River Valley communities in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. The initiative was sponsored by the John H. Chaffee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission and Blackstone Valley Tourism Council with assistance from Rhode Island Geographic Information System (RIGIS). Parcel data was not used for the purposes of this buildout analysis but the same types of development constraints were considered in determining buildable area. Essentially the Town was viewed as one large parcel without ownership divisions. The buildout number based on this assumption was approximately 5,110 dwelling units. Given the price of land, its scarcity and new technology that allows for construction where previously construction was not possible, it appears this higher buildout is more accurate and likely.

Conclusion

Regardless of how need is determined, North Smithfield has clearly identified a lack of availability of housing that is priced at a level local families and workers can afford. Furthermore, the number of households in need of affordable housing in North Smithfield is greater than the 10% goal set by the State. Public input suggests that the highest priorities for fostering housing development should be working families and the elderly.

E-3.3 Barriers To Affordable Housing Development

There are a number of barriers to affordable housing development in North Smithfield. An understanding of these barriers and the development process is necessary if the Town hopes to encourage affordable housing.

Infrastructure

Water
Currently, approximately 30% of North Smithfield has access to a public water system. Unlike many communities with a central water authority, North Smithfield is served by two community water systems. Former Slatersville Water Company customers in the Slatersville and Forestdale neighborhoods and in the industrial park now receive their water from the City of Woonsocket Water System. The City of Woonsocket Water System has served the residents in and around Union Village and Mendon Road/Rhodes Avenue areas for years. The Town of Blackstone, Massachusetts Water System serves a limited number of residents in the Waterford section of Town.

Sewer
The Forestdale, Slatersville, Union Village, Mendon Road/Rhodes Ave, and Park Square areas of North Smithfield have access to public sewerage. The areas of the Town which do have sewer service are served by the City of Woonsocket Wastewater Treatment Plant as the Town does not have its own plant. The Woonsocket Wastewater Treatment Plant has 3.9 million gallons of flow per day (mgd) reserved for the Town of North Smithfield. The sewer interceptor that carries flows to the treatment plant is designed for 7.5 mgd. Flows to the treatment plant currently range from .5 mgd to .7 mgd. If all 6,208 units projected for the year 2025 (see Affordable Housing Development Schedule p.17) were connected to sewers approximately 2.43 mgd of capacity would be utilized leaving roughly 1.5 million gallons of surplus capacity.[9]

The portions of North Smithfield which do not have access to public water and sewer are served by on-site wells and individual sewage disposal systems. This limited public infrastructure restricts sustainable densities outside the water and sewered areas to single-family and two family homes on lots ranging from 1.5 acres to 2.75 acres, which makes it difficult to develop affordable housing.

Public Transportation
North Smithfield also lacks significant public transportation. At lower income levels, affordable housing residents often do not own a car. Public transportation enables residents to commute to work, and provides access to shopping, religious institutions, and government services.

[9] Assumes 2.61 persons/unit and 150 gpd/person

Zoning

North Smithfield's Zoning Ordinance establishes four Residential Zoning Districts, ranging from REA-120 to RU-20**.** Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the land in North Smithfield is zoned residential (See Appendix for district area figures). Residential development is not permitted within commercial, business, or manufacturing districts, unless proposed under a land development project. A summary table of the zoning is provided below. The smallest residential zoning classification is RU-20, which requires 20,000s.f. lots and is found primarily in Slatersville, Forestdale, Union Village, and Park Square.

Table E-3.3 North Smithfield Residential Zoning Summary

Name	Uses	Approval Process	Minimum Lot Size (s.f.)	Minimum Developable Area Per Bedroom (s.f.)	Description
Residential Zones					
REA-120	Single-family	P	120,000		Established where limited agricultural pursuits and low density residential uses are compatible with open space objectives.
Rural-Estate Agriculture	Two-family	S	120,000		
16.3% of Total Area	Acc. Family Unit*	P	N/A		
	Multi-family <6 units	N	N/A		
	Multi-family > 6 units	N	N/A		
RA-65	Single-family	P	65,000		Allows limited, orderly growth in areas where facilities for intensive, urban-type development appear unlikely in the near future.
Rural Agricultural	Two-family	S	130,000		
55.8 % of Total Area	Acc. Family Unit	P	N/A		
	Multi-family < 6 units	S	65,000	20,000**	
	Multi-family > 6 units	N	N/A		
RS-40	Single-family	P	40,000		Established to provide areas where medium-low density residential uses now appear feasible because community facilities such as public water or sewers are likely in the forseeable future.
Suburban Residential	Two-family	S	80,000		
11.2% of Total Area	Acc. Family Unit	P	N/A		
	Multi-family < 6 units	S	40,000	6,000***	
	Multi-family > 6 units	S	40,000	6,000***	
RU-20	Single-family	P	20,000		Established to provide for a somewhat broader range of urban housing types and for higher residentail densities.
Urban Residential	Two-family	P	30,000		
3.2% of Total Area	Acc. Family Unit	P	N/A		
	Multi-family< 6 units	S	6,000	4,000****	
	Multi-family > 6 units	S	6,000	4,000****	

P=Permitted use by right, S=Special Use Permit needed from Zoning Board, N=Not allowed
* Accessory Family Units are not permitted in two family dwellings.
**Minimum Lot Area of 65,000sf, plus 20,000sf for each bedroom.
***Minimum Lot area of 40,000sf, plus 6,000sf for each bedroom. Only permitted in areas with municipal water and sewer.
****Minimum Lot area of 6,00sf, plus 4,000sf for each bedroom. Only permitted in areas with municipal water and sewer.

Two new zones are being proposed (see Land Use Element) that will create more affordable housing in the densest areas of Town. The zones are identified as Village Residential and Mill Rehabilitation. While the specific dimensions associated with these

zones have not yet been determined, density bonuses and other incentives associated with the creation of affordable units within these zones have already been discussed.

Environmental Factors
The 1992 Comprehensive Plan documented that 58% of the available land in North Smithfield was classified as having severe development constraints. The remaining 42% was classified as having moderate development constraints. These constraints are caused by high water tables, shallow bedrock (ledge), and wetlands. The Town has a sizable number of large wetland systems, which in many cases, divide large parcels of land, making the access to the buildable portion of the land difficult if not impossible. These environmental constraints limit the amount of buildable land on a parcel. The costs of permitting development around wetlands and the costs associated with ledge removal place many parcels of land outside the reach of affordable housing developers.

Cost Of Housing and Land
The cost of housing and land is a major impediment to affordable housing development. Non-profit affordable housing developers have a difficult time finding a building or lot they can afford to develop affordable housing on.

Community Opposition
When affordable housing is proposed, fears of increased crime, neighborhood decline, and decreased property values often come up. In North Smithfield, several residents have expressed concern about affordable housing affecting the character of the community. Concern has also been expressed about the impact new affordable housing would have on the North Smithfield school system. The term NIMBY – Not In My Back Yard – has been coined to describe community opposition to affordable housing. Many people agree with the concept of affordable housing, but are strongly opposed when affordable housing is proposed in their neighborhood.

E-3.4 Affordable Housing Assets and Resources

Successful development of appropriate affordable housing in North Smithfield depends on identifying and effectively utilizing available resources, supporting and encouraging affordable housing developers, and engaging public support for affordable housing development. North Smithfield possesses or has access to a number of assets and resources that can facilitate affordable housing development.

Villages
North Smithfield's history as an industrial community has left it with a number of villages. Slatersville/Forestdale, Branch Village and Waterford contain traditional mill housing. The mill housing tends to be modest and a number of the homes could be rehabilitated through scattered site affordable housing projects. Union Village, which developed as a turnpike village, also contains modest housing, a number of which could be rehabilitated as affordable housing.

Potential Units In New Developments
North Smithfield is committed to passing an inclusionary zoning ordinance. When passed, this ordinance will require that 10 to 20% of each development be set aside as affordable housing. Upon its passage, the ordinance will become a strong asset in helping North Smithfield reach its affordable housing goals.

Woonsocket Neighborhood Development Corporation
The Woonsocket Neighborhood Development Corporation (WNDC) is currently building an affordable elderly housing development in North Smithfield. When both phases of the development are completed, WNDC will have contributed over 80 affordable units to North Smithfield's affordable housing count. In addition to the elderly housing being developed in North Smithfield, WNDC has developed family housing in Woonsocket. WNDC also has a housing land trust which can be used to provide more affordable homeownership opportunities in North Smithfield. North Smithfield will work with this successful developer of affordable housing to develop additional affordable housing within the Town.

Other Non-Profit Housing Developers
In addition to WNDC, the Women's Development Corporation (WDC) has successfully developed affordable housing in North Smithfield. Beyond community development corporations (CDCs) other non-profit agencies develop affordable housing. Examples include mental health agencies such as NMRI, Inc., community action agencies like East Bay Community Action Program and as well as special population organizations like United Cerebral Palsy Rhode Island, Aids Care Ocean State and Habitat for Humanity. In addition to WNDC and WDC, there are several other CDCs which develop affordable housing operating throughout Rhode Island.

Town Programs
North Smithfield offers a home repair and maintenance program using its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money. Administered through the Town Planning Department in cooperation with the City of Woonsocket Planning Department, the Town offers grants up to $3,500 for home maintenance and low interest loans up to $15,000 for home repair projects to low and moderate income individuals and families. The Town also provides tax exemptions for qualified elderly, veterans, and disabled residents.

The Town is also considering instituting a homestead exemption. If implemented, the homestead exemption would give North Smithfield property owners a discount on their taxes if they reside in property they own.

Potential U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Funding for Affordable Housing Development
HUD funds and administers a number of programs aimed at increasing and preserving the supply of affordable housing for diverse populations.

- *Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities:* The Section 811 program provides opportunities for very low-income adults with disabilities and their families to live independently and receive supportive services. Section 811 tenants pay 30% of their incomes for rent.
- *Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly:* The Section 202 program provides funding to enable very low-income elderly persons to live independently be increasing affordable rental housing with associated supportive services. Section 202 tenants pay 30% of their incomes for rent.
- *Continuum of Care:* HUD funds a number of programs under the *Continuum of Care*, a HUD system that recognizes that homeless people have different needs. *Continuum of Care* programs address the changing needs of homeless persons—from emergency shelter to transitional housing to permanent housing.
- *Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA):* The HOPWA program provides funding to develop and subsidize affordable housing for low-income persons and their families living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.
- *Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Homeownership Programs:* This FHA program supports homeownership by administering mortgage insurance programs to financial institutions issuing mortgages to moderately priced homes. FHA programs also include opportunities for people to live in the communities where they work, and opportunities for non-profits and local governments to purchase homes at discounted rates.
- *Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP):* This program supports State and local housing authorities in supporting fair housing through the enforcement of fair housing laws and ordinances.

Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation

RIH provides financial and program support to create affordable housing for low- and moderate-income Rhode Islanders. The agency offers more than 20 homeownership and rental housing programs, which generally have purchase price and income eligibility restrictions. Some of these programs are outlined below:

- *Home Repair Loans:* Low-interest loans of up to $15,000 for owner-occupied, one- to four-unit homes.
- *Zero Down:* No down payment financing that combines low-interest mortgages with federal loan guarantees.

- *HOME:* Grants and low-interest loans provided by HUD and administered by RIH to encourage the construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing.
- *Next Step:* Nonprofit social service agencies may apply for deferred-payment loans for the development of transitional housing for families and individuals in crisis. The maximum loan is $20,000.

- *Pre-development Loan:* Short-term loans to qualified nonprofit developers to cover pre-closing costs incurred in determining development feasibility and obtaining site control.
- *Preservation:* RIH finances the purchase of or re-finance existing Section 8 housing in exchange for extending the affordability restrictions beyond the term of the original HAP contract. This program can also give Section 8 owners access to a project's residual reserves.
- *Rental Housing Production Program:* This is RIH's primary program for financing the construction and rehabilitation of affordable rental units. Proposed projects must be at least 12 units, and the units must be affordable to households earning no more than 60% of HUD's median family income.
- *Targeted Loans:* Deferred-payment loans to encourage construction and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing. This program is intended to serve as gap financing to ensure long-term affordability in the absence of other subsidies. Generally, Targeted Loans are available only when used with RIH first mortgage financing.
- *Technical Assistance:* RIH provides "how to" help and short-term loans for individuals, municipalities and nonprofit groups to strengthen their capacity and encourage the production and preservation of affordable housing.
- *Thresholds:* RIH provides grants for the development of housing that integrates persons with long-term mental illness into the community. Thresholds funds generally are used to supplement development budgets. In exchange, one of more units in a project are reserved for residents who are referred and assisted by mental health sponsors.
- *First Homes:* RIH offers income-qualified first-time homebuyers low-interest mortgages, and down payment and closing cost assistance.

State and Federal Tax Credits

The *Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program* was created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 as an alternate method of funding housing for low- and moderate-income households, and has been in operation since 1987. These tax credits are used to leverage private capital into new construction or acquisition and rehabilitation of affordable housing. The tax credits are determined by the development costs, and are used by the owner. Most states look more favorably on projects serving a higher percentage of income-eligible households. Rhode Island Housing allocates these tax credits to qualified developers of affordable housing, who then sell them to investors, generating equity for the project.

The *Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program* provides federal income-tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic income-producing properties. Under the provisions of the Tax Reform Act of 1986, a 20% tax credit is available for the substantial rehabilitation of commercial, agricultural, industrial, or rental residential buildings that are certified as historic. The credit may be subtracted directly from federal income taxes owed by the owner. The Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program benefits

the owner, the occupants, and the community by encouraging protection of landmarks through the promotion, recognition, and designation of historic structures; increasing the value of the rehabilitated property and returning underutilized structures to the tax rolls; and upgrading downtowns and neighborhoods and often increasing the amount of available housing within the community.

The *Rhode Island State Historic Preservation Residential Tax Credit* was created to encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of Rhode Island's historic homes by providing an income tax credit to property owners who undertake preservation related work to their historic homes. This means maintenance work from routing painting to complex reconstruction work such as rebuilding chimneys and foundations are both eligible for the tax credit. All interior work, new construction, additions and landscaping are not eligible for this tax credit. To receive a tax credit, owners must spend a minimum of $2000 on the project, and the building must either be listed on, or considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds
CDBG Funds are given to communities who meet criteria based on the income of people residing in specific geographic areas. The primary objective of CDBG Funds is to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income.

Section 108
Section 108 is a loan provision of the CDBG program, providing communities with financing for economic development, housing rehabilitation, public facilities, and large-scale development projects. Up to five times the latest approved CDBG amount may be applied for under Section 108, minus any outstanding Section 108 commitments and/or principal balances on Section 108 leans for which the State has pledged its CDBG Funds as security. The maximum loan repayment period is 20 years.

Neighborhood Opportunities Program
The Neighborhood Opportunities Program (NOP) is administered by The Rhode Island Housing Resources Commission, and the major goal of this program is to "increase the supply of decent, safe, and affordable rental housing for very low-income families and individuals and to revitalize local neighborhoods." NOP has three subprograms: Family Housing Program provides funding for rental housing for families working at or near minimum wage. Permanent Supportive Housing Program provides funding for rental housing for persons with disabilities requiring ongoing supportive services, and is intend prevent homelessness. Building Better Communities supports revitalization efforts throughout the State, and can be used to rehabilitate buildings or provide homeownership housing for families earning up to 120% of the area median income.

Federal Home Loan Bank

The Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston provides low-cost funding, and other credit programs to enhance the financial strength of local lenders, providing then with adequate liquidity at competitive prices so that they can meet the housing finance and credit needs of their communities. The Federal Home Loan Bank advances funds at lower rates than available in the commercial market. Each year since 1989, The Federal Home Loan Bank has contributed 10% of its income to the Affordable Housing Program (AHP). This program subsidizes long-term financing for rental and homeownership housing for very low-, low- and moderate-income families.

Bond Funds
General Obligation Bonds are issued by the local municipality and are paid for by taxpayer. They can be used for physical improvements within municipalities.

Revenue Bonds provide public capital, and are paid for only by the users. There are a number of creative mechanisms for issuing Revenue Bonds.

Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation
The Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC) provides tax incentives and loans for economic development efforts throughout the State.

Foundations
Foundations such as the Champlin Foundation, the Rhode Island Foundation, Annie Casey, and United Way provide funding in the form of grants and loans to specific housing development projects.

Environmental Protection Agency
The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides funding for clean up of contaminated air, soil and water. EPA funding may be available to clean-up proposed affordable housing development sites with contamination issues.

Comprehensive Permitting (R.I.G.L 45-53)
State enabled "comprehensive permitting" is a valuable tool which provides flexibility. It allows the Town to change the use of a property or the density without changing the zone. The Town can offer or other incentives, such as relief from parking or set back requirements, in exchange for affordable housing. Even if a developer is not seeking relief, comprehensive permitting offers an expedited review process that can save a developer time and money in reduced holding costs, interest, and taxes. This cost saving can be passed down to the home sales price.

Conclusion
North Smithfield has access to a number of assets and resources for affordable housing development. The Town provides some programs for affordable housing, and there are a number of state and federal affordable housing production programs. The Comprehensive Permit process provides the flexibility to approve appropriate affordable

housing proposals. These assets and resources provide a base for the Town to achieve its affordable housing goals.

E-4.0 The Plan

According to Rhode Island Housing's July 2004 calculations, 275 (6.78%) of North Smithfield's 4,058 housing units are low-moderate income. ***Today, North Smithfield needs 131 additional low-moderate units to reach its 10% goal of 406 low-moderate units; however, to keep affordable housing creation consistent with North Smithfield's pace, growth, and community character the Town needs to create 150 affordable units in the first six years and 65 affordable units every five years after that in order to reach the 10% goal by 2025.***

Connection with Housing Needs
It is essential that there be a connection between the type and amount of affordable housing proposed by this plan and North Smithfield's affordable housing needs and what the CHAS data states.

- The *Analysis of Housing Needs* section suggests North Smithfield should prioritize affordable housing for families and the elderly.
- Accordingly, the Affordable Housing Development Schedule proposes 275 affordable units for families (both homeownership and rental), 50 affordable units for the elderly, and 25 units for individuals and special needs populations.
- The development schedule details the construction of an average of 88 units every five years until the Town reaches the 10% goal in 2025.

Feasibility
Given limited resources, it is not possible to meet the needs of every household that experiences housing problems. This plan proposes a development schedule that is both feasible and reasonable. Consideration has been given to the availability of financial subsidies, buildable land, buildings suitable for rehabilitation, and committed developers. Methodology used to generate the expected number of low to moderate units include GIS analysis, communications with the development community and understanding of the Town and its history. The *Locations* recommendations speak further to the feasibility of this plan by identifying sites for affordable housing.

Implementation
The Town Planning Department is responsible for the implementation of this plan. The Town Planning Board and Town Council are responsible for changing the appropriate ordinances as recommended in the body of the plan, and approving affordable housing development identified in this report. In order for this plan to succeed as a framework for affordable housing development in North Smithfield, it is essential that the Town actively work with non-profit and for-profit developers to build affordable housing.

Table E-4.0 Affordable Housing Development Schedule

Progress Toward the 10% Goal Over Time* (Based on 86 Building Permits per year)

	2004	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total Housing Units**	4,058	4,918	5,348	5,778	6,208
10 % goal	406	492	535	578	620
Number of Affordable Units (2004 existing + new proposed by plan)	275	425	490	555	625
% Affordability:	6.78%	8.64%	9.16%	9.61%	10.07%
If North Smithfield were to meet the 10% goal in this year, the number of additional affordable units needed would be	131	67	45	23	-5

Type of Housing					**Total**
Individuals and Families (Homeownership and Rental)	125	50	50	50	275
Housing for the Elderly	20	10	10	10	50
Housing for Individuals and Special Needs Populations	5	5	5	10	25
Total New Units:	**150**	**65**	**65**	**70**	**350**

***Census counts of the total number of housing units are updated only once every ten years, therefore the number shown here represents the most recent Census figure (Census 2000)*

2010, 2015, 2020, and 2025 numbers have been formulated based on an estimated 86 building permits per year.

E-4.1 Strengthen Partnerships and Build Community Support for Affordable Housing

To implement this plan, it will be critical for the North Smithfield Planning Department to reach out to those groups that have a major role to play in helping the Town achieve its affordable housing goals.

Recommended Actions

Action Item 1.1: Create a North Smithfield Affordable Housing Committee. A North Smithfield Affordable Housing Committee will serve as an advocate for affordable housing in the town. The Committee will be responsible for the implementation of the Town's Affordable Housing Plan, and will report annually to the Town Council on the Plan's progress. The Committee will also serve as a support network for affordable housing developers and providers, helping these groups share resources and information and strengthen relationships. ***It is essential that the committee be comprised of residents and consumers, representatives from the fields of affordable housing development, banking, real estate, business, local community organizations (churches, charities, etc.) and Town government. This Board, comprised of North Smithfield residents will represent the broader community's support for affordable housing.***

Once established, the committee's tasks would include the following:

- Monitor the implementation of the Affordable Housing Plan: The Committee would monitor the implementation of the Affordable Housing Plan, and report annually to the Town Council on the Plan's progress. The Town Council would be responsible for ensuring the Plan is implemented.
- Identify locations for future affordable housing development: A major role of the Committee should be to identify sites for affordable housing on an ongoing basis. **The committee will advertise for new sites for affordable housing development on an annual basis**. This annual advertising provides a mechanism for replenishing the list of locations included in the plan, and will make the plan a dynamic document. The Planning Department will evaluate the locations recommended by the Committee to determine their suitability for affordable housing development.
- Endorse appropriate affordable housing proposals: The Committee should begin a program of endorsing affordable housing proposals that meet the criteria set by the Town and this plan. An endorsement from the Committee would show community support for affordable housing, and could expedite the approval process. Endorsements would be a source of prestige and developers would actively seek them out. This would encourage affordable housing proposals that are in line with the Town's objectives and priorities.
- Strengthen partnerships and working relationships for affordable housing: The Committee should assist in fostering and maintaining strong, supportive relationships between Town government; non-profit developers such as WNDC; and for-profit affordable housing developers. The Committee should help these groups share resources and information.
- Raise awareness of North Smithfield's affordable housing needs through public education: An educational program should be developed that more accurately

describes the population in need of affordable housing, namely working families, children of current residents, and the elderly. This would help dispel the negative connotations commonly associated with affordable housing and combat NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard). The Town could provide residents with information about affordable homeownership and rental opportunities and could encourage public discussion of these issues with Town officials and local affordable housing developers.

Action Item 1.2: Work with Woonsocket Neighborhood Development Corporation other non-profit organizations and for profit developers to develop affordable housing in North Smithfield. The Town will encourage and work with WNDC and other non-profit organizations to develop affordable housing in North Smithfield. WNDC has a proven track record of successful affordable housing development in North Smithfield and the surrounding communities. Fostering a stronger relationship between the Town and WNDC will provide greater opportunities for the Town and WNDC to provide much needed affordable housing.

Action Item 1.3: Collaborate with Rhode Island Housing to create a Section 8 affordable homeownership program. North Smithfield's Section 8 Vouchers are administered by Rhode Island Housing. The Town will work with Rhode Island Housing to start a Section 8 Homeownership program modeled on the one established by the Coventry Housing Authority.

E-4.2 Revise the Zoning Ordinance to Promote Affordable Housing

Changes to zoning will make it easier to develop affordable housing in North Smithfield.

Recommended Actions

Action Item 2.1: Rezone the areas of RS-40, RA-65, and REA-120 which are currently served by public sewer to R-20. The Town will rezone specific areas of RS-40, RA-65 and REA-120 to RU-20 in order to increase the density of housing in these areas. There are approximately 322 acres of RS-40, RA-65 and REA-120 land which will be rezoned to RU-20, a higher density. While much of this land is already developed, this zoning change allows for a number of subdivisions of existing lots. There are also a number of vacant or underdeveloped parcels within the rezoned areas that will increase the opportunities for multi-family housing development and will also allow for denser development on vacant lots. This zone change, coupled with incentives that will be articulated in the Zoning Ordinance, will result in the potential for approximately 150 new housing units in North Smithfield. **Assuming 20% of these units are deed restricted as affordable; this zoning change will yield at least 30 new affordable units for North Smithfield.**

Action Item 2.2: Mandate Inclusionary Zoning for all proposed developments greater than Six Units. Inclusionary zoning has been proven nationally as an effective

tool for incorporating affordable housing into new developments. A mandatory inclusionary zoning ordinance would require the provision of a minimum percentage of affordable units (20%) in all residential developments (including single family and multi-family) of six or more units, including subdivisions, condominium, and rental developments. The Town will provide a variety of incentives including but not limited to tax breaks and density bonuses as compensation for the affordable unit requirements. In cases where including affordable units is not feasible, the Town will require the developer to make an offsite exaction, such as building the affordable units elsewhere, donating land to a housing trust fund, or paying an in-lieu-of fee to the Town's Affordable Housing Trust Fund. On average, there are between 5 and 7 developments a year with greater than 6 units in North Smithfield per year. **Conservatively, if there are 4 developments with an average of 7 units per year, in 20 years this would create 560 new housing units in North Smithfield, assuming that 20% of these units are affordable, this would yield approximately 112 new affordable housing units in North Smithfield over 20 years or approximately 6 new affordable units per year.**

Action Item 2.3: Mandate inclusionary zoning in the Town's Land Development Project Ordinance. The Town is currently at work on a Land Development Project Ordinance (LDP). This ordinance will create village district to govern the development of a variety of large projects throughout North Smithfield. The Town will include a provision for a minimum of 10% affordable housing in all mill redevelopment LDP's and a minimum of 20% affordable housing in all residential LDP's.

Action Item 2.4: Allow Duplexes by Right in the RS-40 district when deed restricted to ensure long term affordability. The zoning ordinance will be amended to allow duplexes by right in the RS-40 district when one of the units is deed restricted as an affordable unit. **The duplexes will only be allowed by right in the RS-40 district if they are deed restricted as affordable. The Planning Department estimates that this could create an additional 47 affordable units for the Town. This figure is based on the fact that the majority of duplexes in North Smithfield are located in the RU-20 zone where they are currently allowed by right. It is expected that there will be a higher rate of duplex development in the RS-40 zone than occurs town wide (approximately 5%) with the adoption of the by-right provisions.**

Action Item 2.5: Allow multi-family buildings by right in the RU-20 districts where public water and sewer service are available. Currently, multi-family buildings are allowed by special permit in RU-20 and RS-40. This zoning change will allow multi-family buildings by right in the RU-20 districts provided that public water and sewer are available. Based on a general comparison of vacant and underutilized parcels within the expanded RU-20 district to parcels developed for multi-family units in the existing RU-20 zone, it is estimated that approximately 120 units of multi-family housing would be developed. **Assuming 20% of these units are deed restricted as affordable; this zoning change will yield at least 24 new affordable units for North Smithfield.**

Action Item 2.6: Explore the feasibility of creating a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program for affordable housing development. North Smithfield has a number of environmental constraints (wetlands, ledge, high water tables) which remove the development potential from a great deal of its land. A TDR program would allow North Smithfield to protect its environmentally sensitive lands while concentrating housing development in the village areas. The Town will commission a feasibility study on the development of a TDR program with the dual goals of environmental protection and affordable housing development to determine if such a program would be appropriate for the Town.

E-4.3 Identify Programs and Potential Locations for Affordable Housing Development

North Smithfield faces a growing deficit of affordable housing. The Town must work with local non-profits such as the Woonsocket Neighborhood Development Corporation, Women's Development Corporation, and others to actively identify suitable locations for affordable housing development within the town. The Locations Summary Table identifies the sites that have been recognized by North Smithfield as appropriate locations for affordable housing development. Map 1 located in the appendix provides more detailed information on the locations discussed in the Location Summary Table. The Action Items of this section address these locations and others that are not yet identified.

Recommended Actions

Action Item 3.1: Create affordable homeownership opportunities by encouraging non-profit organizations to target housing in North Smithfield's villages (Slatersville/Forestdale, Branch Village, Union Village, and Park Square) for scattered rehabilitation. In North Smithfield the most appropriate locations for affordable housing are the higher density villages. These villages already contain many small, modest priced homes that provide access to existing infrastructure, including public water and sewerage, schools, and transportation. Their higher density standards also make it easier to develop affordable housing. A windshield survey indicated that there were a substantial number of units in the Villages in need of rehabilitation. Union Village, in particular, abuts Woonsocket and units there could be purchased and rehabilitated by a non-profit such as WNDC. The Town will encourage and assist non-profit organizations to purchase substandard dwellings in the villages using HOME, CDBG, and BBC funds. The nonprofits will then rehabilitate the home and sell them to income qualified families. Long term affordability of the rehabilitated homes will be ensured through the use of deed restrictions or a community housing land trust.

Action Item 3.2: Mandate a minimum of 10% affordable housing in proposed Mill Rehabilitation districts. The Town is developing a mill rehab ordinance that will encourage the redevelopment of the Town's underutilized mills. A provision of the proposed ordinance will encourage developers to reserve 20% of the housing units as affordable and will require as a minimum that the developers set aside at least 10% of the

proposed residential units for low-moderate income residents. Communications with the development community may result in more than 10% being set aside as affordable for specific projects, however, no other general incentives are currently contemplated.

Action Item 3.3: Monitor North Smithfield's underutilized mill buildings for redevelopment into affordable housing. Due to its industrial history, North Smithfield has several large mill buildings. Although some of these mill buildings continue to be used for industry the Town will evaluate their feasibility for redevelopment into affordable housing should they change hands or become vacant. The mill buildings are ideal locations for affordable housing development as they are serviced by public water and sewer and are located within village areas.

- **Slatersville Mills**-The Town is currently reviewing a mixed use redevelopment proposal for the Slatersville Mills calling for 228 housing units and will require that a minimum of 10% of the units are affordable with a target of 20%. The Slatersville Mills is served by public water and sewer. If the current redevelopment proposal should not move forward, the Town will continue to seek redevelopment proposals for the Slatersville Mills and will encourage a minimum of 20% affordable housing.

- **Blackstone-Smithfield Office & Industrial Park Complex (formerly Tupperware)** The historic brick mill structure in the former Tupperware Mill complex is currently occupied by a few industrial tenants, but contains a large amount of vacant space. A mixed use redevelopment proposal calling for 130 housing units has been presented to the Town and a minimum of 10% of the units will be required to be affordable with a target of 20%. If the current redevelopment proposal should not move forward, the Town will continue to seek redevelopment proposals for the complex and will encourage a minimum of 20% affordable housing.

- **Branch Mill**-Currently the Branch Mill has a few tenants, however, the majority of the structure is vacant. The mill is served by public water and sewer. To date, no redevelopment proposals have been presented to the Town for the Branch Mill. However, the Town will continue to monitor the site, and should a redevelopment proposal be presented, the town will request that the development include 20% affordable housing.

Action Item 3.4: Encourage affordable housing development as part of the current proposed mixed use development on Eddie Dowling Highway. A new higher density, mixed-use development along Eddie Dowling Highway is currently being reviewed by the Town. Extension of municipal water and sewer is proposed to this location. This land appears to be an appropriate location for a mix of uses, including affordable housing. Any housing development which takes place as part of this mixed use development will incorporate a minimum of 20% affordable housing.

Action Item 3.5: Work with and encourage local religious institutions to develop affordable housing on their properties. A number of properties in North Smithfield, including the St. Antoine's Residence, The Villa at St. Antoine and St. Paul's School would be suitable for affordable housing development. The Town will work with these entities and local non-profit housing developers to facilitate the development of affordable housing on their surplus properties.

Action Item 3.6: Work with WNDC and other affordable housing developers to develop affordable housing on Town owned property. Several small lots located in the Elizabeth Avenue area and a large lot near the North Smithfield/Woonsocket border adjacent to the Borden Boulevard development would be suitable for development of affordable units. The town will enter discussions with WNDC and other non-profit developers as well as for profit developers to facilitate affordable housing development on these parcels.

Table E-4.3 itemizes the locations of potential affordable units. The affordable units identified below are based on a GIS review of ownership, environmental opportunities and constraints, discussions with the development community, and other experiential factors. The numbers are discreet, not duplicated; and the zone changes are illustrated on the Proposed Zone Changes map in the Land Use Element. Table A-5 Site Details provides detail on specific sites identified in the Locations Summary Chart and provides a reference to Map 1. Also illustrated in the Land Use Element is the buildout for certain specific projects, such as Slatersville Mill and Blackstone-Smithfield Mill. Buildout for these two mill projects is based on submissions made to the Town. The total unit figure for the Branch Mill is based on the total square footage of building space available in comparison to the Slatersville Mill and Blackstone-Smithfield Mill that have submitted development proposals. In terms of the buildout of other units, the Town expects that approximately 28 units will be generated by inclusionary zoning every five years; duplexes by right in the RS-40 zone should generate approximately 12 units every five years, rezoning of areas to RU-20 will generate approximately 7 or 8 units every five years, scattered rehabilitation will generate approximately 5 units every five years; and the other identified sites will produce approximately 37 units every five years.

Table E-4.3 Locations Summary Table

Location	Current Zoning	Zoning Needed	Total Units*	Affordable Units
Inclusionary Zoning	Varies	Same	560	112 Family HO
Duplexes by Right in RS-40	RS-40 & RU-20	Same		47 Family Rental
Rezoning to RU-20	RS-40, RA-65, REA-120	RU-20	150	24 Family HO
Multi-family Buildings by Right in RU-20	RS-40, RU-20	RU-20	120	24 Family Rental
Scattered Rehabilitation	Varies	Same		
Slatersville/Forestdale			25	10 Family HO
Union Village			25	10 Family HO
Greenville Road (WND HUD202) (P11) (Buildout '07-'08)			80	80 Elderly Rental
Slatersville Mills (Buildout '08)			228	22 Elderly HO
Blackstone-Smithfield Mill (formerly Tupperware) (Buildout '08)			130	13*
Branch Mill (NTF)			120	12*
Eddie Dowling Highway M.U.D. (P12) (Buildout '09)			76	15*
Silver Pines Phase II & III (P1) (Buildout '08)			80	16*
St. Antoine's Property (P9) (NTF)			40	30*
St. Paul's School (P7) (NTF)			12	10*
Colonial Village Phase III (Comprehensive Permit) (P13) (Buildout '08)			50	13*
Town Owned Lots -Elizabeth Avenue (T1) (Buildout '07)			10	8*
WNDC Project (Comprehensive Permit)-Mechanic Street (P5) (Buildout '09)			20	20
Town Owned Lot Woonsocket Border (T2) (NTF)			20	20*
Various Village Sites (P2,P3,P4,P6, P8,P10) (NTF)			50	10*
	Total Units Identified		**1796**	
			Total Affordable Units Identified	**502**
			Total Affordable Units Required	**345**

"HO= Home Ownership, "NTF" = No Timeframe

* These sites combined will generate 15 rental units for the elderly, 15 home ownership units for the elderly, 57 rental units for families, 20 home ownership units for families, and 40 units for the special needs population.

*Potential units based on preliminary site analysis, buildout of each site will be specific to each development proposal.

E-4.4 Identify Existing and New Resources for Affordable Housing Development

Now and in the future, North Smithfield must be able to identify and utilize the resources available to facilitate the development of affordable housing.

Recommended Actions

Action Item 4.1: Establish a Local Affordable Housing Trust Fund as a Source of Funds for Affordable Housing Development. A local Affordable Housing Trust Fund would receive and manage funds for affordable housing development and preservation in North Smithfield. There are currently no local funding resources for affordable housing development in North Smithfield. An Affordable Housing Trust Fund would address this need.

Potential sources to contribute to an Affordable Housing Trust Fund include:

- Town budget appropriations
- Off-site exactions/in-lieu fees from new rental, condominium, and cluster developments
- Private contributions and charitable donations
- Private Foundations
- Land donations

The Trust Fund could be used for the following:

- Gap financing for rental and homeownership developments
- Subsidies for the development of family homeownership units in new developments via inclusionary zoning or at infill sites
- Purchase of land or property
- Construction of a house on donated property
- Feasibility studies and predevelopment costs born by the Town

The Town will apply to Rhode Island Housing for money to set up the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Action Item 4.2: Evaluate the creation of local historic districts around North Smithfield's eligible mills and mill villages. The creation of local historic districts around the eligible mills and mill villages will place the mills and the villages on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. This listing enables North Smithfield to use State and Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits for the rehabilitation of buildings in these areas for affordable housing. The State Historic Preservation Office is willing to provide guidance to those communities seeking to add properties to the State and National Register. The State and Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit programs are further detailed in the appendix.

Action Item 4.3: Maximize Existing Federal and state Funding Sources for Affordable Housing Development. For- and non-profit developers should make the best possible use of the following affordable housing development resources:

Table E-4.4 Housing Development Resources

Source	Program Name	Source	Program Name	Source	Program Name
HUD	Section 202 (Elderly)	RIH	Low-Interest Mortgages	FHLB	Affordable Housing Program
	Section 811 (Special Needs)		Home Repair Loans	Fed	Low Income Housing Tax Credits
	Continuum of Care (Homeless)		Next Step (transitional housing)	Fed	Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits
	Emergency Shelter Grants (Homeless)		Pre-development loans	State	Rhode Island State Historic Preservation Residential Tax Credit
	Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)		Preservation (Section 8 apartments)	State	Neighborhood Opportunities Program (NOP)
	HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)		Rental Housing Production Program		Family Housing Program Supportive Housing Program Building Better Communities
	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)		Targeted Loans		
	Section 108 (Loan Guarantees)		Technical Assistance		
			Thresholds (Mental Illness)		

RIH = Rhode Island Housing, FHLB = Federal Home Loan Bank (Boston)
HUD = U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development

Action Item 4.4: Continue and Expand the Town's home repair and home maintenance grant and loan programs. In addition to developing new housing, it is important to repair and maintain existing housing. The Town, through its CDBG program, provides grants and low-interest loans for home repair and home maintenance for income eligible residents. Currently, home maintenance grants are designated for code related and other repairs of $3,500 of less. Home repair loans of $15,000 or less fund lead abatement and other property repair and energy conservation projects. The Town will expand these programs by offering up to $30,000 in home repair grants and loans in exchange for a long term affordability restriction on the property.

Action Item 4.5: Create a Homebuyer Education, Closing Costs and Down payment Assistance programs for affordable housing buyers. Several organizations throughout the state administer homebuyer education classes, helping first-time homebuyers become eligible for programs that can save them thousands of dollars. The Town and its agencies will apply to increase its CDBG funds to create and support a down payment assistance program. Through this program, the Town could provide up to $7,500 in assistance to eligible homebuyers who have completed a homebuyer education program.

E-4.5 Implement Programs Which Ensure the Long-Term Affordability of Rental Housing

Without oversight the potential exists for affordable housing to be lost over the passage of time.

Recommended Actions

Action Item 5.1: Use the WNDC Housing Land Trust to Ensure Long Term Affordability. North Smithfield will ensure the long term affordability of affordable housing in the Town through the use of the WNDC housing land trust (or Statewide Land Trust) and deed restrictions modeled after those used by RI Housing. The Land Trust would acquire and hold land and allow affordable homeownership units to be built on this land. These units could be sold to low-income families, but the WNDC land trust would retain ownership of the land, leasing it to the homeowners. If and when the homeowners decide to sell their home, the WNDC land trust would have a right of first refusal. The resale price would be determined by a formula that limits sellers to the price they originally paid plus certain percentage of the appreciated value of the home, as determined by an appraisal. The combination of the WNDC land trust owning the land and the capped resale price ensures the long-term affordability of these homes. By removing land costs from the housing equation, the WNDC land trust can significantly reduce the cost of ownership.

Action Item 5.2: Create a monitoring program for deed restricted affordable rental units. The Town will create a program in which the North Smithfield Affordable Housing Committee will annually monitor the rental of deed restricted affordable units to appropriate income-qualified families. This program will ensure that housing units with long-term affordability deed restrictions on them are not lost over time.

E-4.6 Implement Programs Which Ensure the Preservation of Historic Homes and Minimum Code Compliance

The purposes include upgrading of historic homes which are owner-occupied, providing subsidies for rehabilitation work which is costly because of its individualized nature, providing employment to local crafts people through the use of Federal funds, increasing code compliance, and improving neighborhoods and protecting historic buildings in those neighborhoods.

A specific action would involve encouraging owners of National Register historic homes to apply for grant assistance where rehabilitation or code compliance work is needed. Use of Federal funds (such as CDBG funds) will require rehabilitation work to be done in compliance with Federal guidelines.

The North Smithfield Building Inspector has been designated the Town's Minimum Housing Officer. Responsibilities include enforcement of Rhode Island General Laws Chapter 34-18,

the "Residential Landlord and Tenant Act" and Chapter 45-24.3, the "Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code".

Under the "Residential Landlord and Tenant Act", the Minimum Housing Officer follows up on housing complaints by tenants or landlords in accordance with procedures presented in the *1990-1991 Landlord - Tenant Handbook* prepared by the Rhode Island Department of Administration.

Under the "Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code", the Town has the responsibility to make sure that housing is maintained in a safe and sanitary condition and occupancy does not exceed standards established in the Code". Because of overcrowding and an aging housing inventory, older cites such as Providence and Pawtucket have inspectors to monitor housing conditions. Current conditions do not require an inspection program in North Smithfield.

Both of the Acts cited above are part of the Town's reserve of available tools to prevent the creation of pockets of housing blight in the community.

E-5.0 Consistency Statement

The Housing Element is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act and the goals and polices of applicable State Guide Plan elements.

The following is a summary of the major elements of consistency between local and State housing plans:

State Guide Plan Element 421, *State Housing Plan*
The relevant issues responded to are: deteriorating housing; rise in home prices; shortage of affordable housing for low and moderate income families; inappropriate laws; and housing problems related to demographic changes. The goals of quality, accessibility, variety and opportunities are addressed and strategies were developed to respond to the issues cited above.

State Guide Plan Element 422, *Areawide Housing Plan*
The primary focus of Element 422 is the elimination of practices fostering concentrations of low-income and minority household. The specific issues focused on in the North Smithfield Housing Element are: cost of housing and practices, which limit low cost housing options.

Housing Database, Report No. 106
The data contained in this Element was extracted mainly from the July 2003 Database Update.

Table E-5.0 Site Details

Existing Affordable Sites

Detail Number	Development	Location	Plat/ Lot	Parcel Area	Type	# Of Affordable Units	Comments
1	Deerfield Commons I, II & III	Saint Paul Street	3-243	8.6	Elderly	80	
2	Gatewood Apartments	Mendon Road	6-305	4.5	Elderly	60	
4	Slater Homes	Pound Hill Road	7-65	5.7	Family	14	
3	Colonial Village	School Street	5-4	8.4	Elderly	75	End of Affordability term- may lose as Afford.
	MHRH/ Special Needs	Various			SP	46	
						275	

Potential Affordable Sites

Detail Number	Location	Plat/ Lot	Parcel Area	Owner Contact/ Development Interest	Comments
P 1	Main St. / Victory Hwy.	1-127 & 4-9	12.3	X	Phase II Silver Pines-80 units Master Plan pending winter '05
P 2	Buxton St.	1-44	14.7	X	Access limited marginal soils
P 3	Victory Hwy.	1-310	8.0	X	Possible Mixed Use development commercial zoning
P 4	Central St.	1-236	4.6		Good access and soils
P 5	Mechanic St.	1-69	4.9	X	Existing house, wetlands
P 6	Mechanic St.	1-71	13.0		Part of chuch retreat property, pond/wetlands
P 7	Saint Paul St.	3-22	0.9		Underutilized school building owned by St Paul's Parish
P 8	Mendon Rd.	6-62	8.9	X	Lantern House HUD subsidy found to lack income restrictions
P 9	Mendon Rd. / Rhodes Ave.	6-9 & 6-334	28.6	X	Excess land at Villa @ St Antoine and Hospice St. Antoine
P 10	Mendon Rd.	6-14	25.5		Access thru St Antoine, poor soils
P 11	Village Way	9-874	4.1		80 UnitsHUD 202 Elderly construction by late 2005
P 12	Eddie Dowling Hwy.	13-44	18.2		Units proposed as part of mixed use development, Master Plan approved
P 13	Colonial Village Phase III	5-4	8.4	X	Phase III additional 50 units (Potential Comprehensive Permit

Potential Town Affordable Sites

Detail Number	Location	Plat/ Lot	Parcel Area	# Of Affordable Units	Total Units	Comments
T 1	Graves Ave.	3-75	0.2	2	2	Part of Elizabeth Ave. Phase II- Spring '05
T 1	Elizabeth Ave.	3-85	0.2	2	2	Sewer available Spring '05
T 1	Elizabeth Ave.	3-103	0.4	2	2	Combine w/101, sewer available in Spring '05
T 1	Elizabeth Ave.	3-101	0.1			Sewer will be available Spring '05
T 1	Briden St./Scotia Street	3-127	0.6	2	2	Sewer easement, abutts RR, access via Scotia St-Woon.
T 2	Off Great Rd.	6-19	26.9	30	30	Access thru Borden Boulevard development, steep slopes

Table A-5 Notes :

1. Total Unit figure assumes rezoning to the RU-20 District which requires a lot area of 6,000 sq.ft. and 4,000 sq.ft. for each additional bedroom.
2. Site P6 assumes rezoning to RS-40 District which requires lot area of 40,000 sq.ft. and 6,000 sq.ft. for each additional bedroom.
3. In determining the developable area of each Potential Affordable Site, a development constraint factor was applied based on soils, slopes and access etc.

F. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

F-1.0 Introduction

North Smithfield's industrial heritage has been well documented. Located in the Blackstone Valley, North Smithfield, along with its various villages, played a prominent role in our nation's early industrialization. This history is an important factor to what makes North Smithfield unique. Nevertheless, North Smithfield, like so many other small New England communities is caught between its industrial heritage and a rapidly evolving, global economy. Entire industrial sectors have experienced significant decline or extinction, new industries have emerged demanding better educated and trained employees, and the location patterns and factors for these new industries have negated the importance of water power and access to a low cost immigrant labor force. The economic success of North Smithfield is now influenced not just by local resources and actions but is also dependant upon regional, state and national factors. North Smithfield must define the role it plays in these larger communities.

For decades, the goal of economic development has been the creation and retention of jobs. Historically, labor markets were more local in nature. Therefore, job creating activities primarily benefited local and regional residents. Increasingly, job markets are now regional, stretching north to Boston and Worcester, south and east to Connecticut. This is particularly true in industrial sectors that are technology and information intensive, requiring a better educated labor force. This type of labor force is more mobile and is willing to travel greater distances from home to work. Therefore, the job creating and retention economic development activities in North Smithfield benefit residents in the greater Rhode Island, southeastern Massachusetts and eastern Connecticut region.

Another important goal of economic development activities is the expansion of the nonresidential tax base. The expansion of this tax base is critical to a community's success in stabilizing residential tax rates, controlling the cost of living for its residents, and generating new tax revenues to fund quality municipal services, the most demanding of which is public education. The dependency of local government on property taxes necessitates that all communities include economic development programs as an important element to their overall community development efforts. Competition among and between Rhode Island's communities has the positive effect of promoting innovation in the design of economic development initiatives, investing in critical infrastructure, creating and protecting industrial land and building resources, and managing the local business climate. In other words, the sum of the economic development activities of all Rhode Island communities has a direct, critical impact on the business climate of the State.

Much discussion has occurred regarding suburban sprawl and urban reinvestment. As general concepts, all can agree that unbridled commercial, industrial and residential sprawl and the concurrent loss of open space, traffic congestion and pollution need to be controlled. Efforts to promote reinvestment in existing buildings, reclaim and reinvest in contaminated buildings and land, locate development in close proximity to transportation and utility infrastructure, and better utilize limited land resources are goals that most can agree to. Nevertheless, the

economic health of Rhode Island and North Smithfield necessitates that additional quality land resources be made available for business investment. According to the Rhode Island Division of Planning's State Guide Plan Element 212, Industrial Land Use Plan (May 1990), there is a statewide goal to set aside 20,000 acres of industrially zoned land to meet future employment needs. With a State inventory of about 10,000 acres of occupied industrial land and 2,000 acres of vacant "prime" industrial acreage, 8,000 additional acres must be reserved for future development in industrial areas.

F-2.0 Goals, Policies and Actions

1. ESTABLISH THE LOCAL CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY DEFINE AND MANAGE A COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

A. Undertake a local economic development strategic planning initiative to define a community economic vision and strategies to achieve this vision.

B. Develop ongoing working partnerships with various regional and state economic development entities including the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce, New England Economic Development Services and the Economic Development Foundation of Rhode Island and all other regional and statewide entities with human and financial resources to assist the Town.

C. Establish appropriate means to communicate periodically with community stakeholders regarding internal and external economic development threats and opportunities, as well as, progress with respect to the implementation of the economic development strategic plan.

D. Reconstitute the North Smithfield Industrial Development Commission as the North Smithfield Economic Development Commission and empower the Commission to coordinate and oversee the implementation of the economic development strategic plan.

2. FOSTER REINVESTMENT/INVESTMENT IN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREAS TO OFFER A DIVERSITY OF QUALITY LOCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION.

A. Develop a strategic infrastructure investment program targeted to high priority business development opportunity areas.

B. Develop quality land-use and design policies and standards as a basis for communicating and negotiating with prospective investors.

C. The Town should consider developing a good business practices program to encourage the significant redevelopment and/or development of industrial, commercial and mixed-use properties that reflect high quality land use and design policies and standards.

D. Aggressively pursue State and/or Federal grant funds for economic development.

E. Initiate a business retention strategy involving periodic contact between the North Smithfield Economic Development Commission members and Town employers to determine nature of any Town-related problems or needs.

F. Prepare development/redevelopment visions for the Town's existing commercial areas. Based on these visions, prepare strategies to enhance the visual and economic quality of these areas.

G. Revise zoning regulations and districts as proposed in the Land Use Element; consider special provisions for adaptive reuse of older mill structures.

H. Review the Zoning Ordinance as it pertains to industrial and commercial zoned areas and investigate the feasibility of implementing greater use flexibility in these zones along with design standards.

I. Based on access, proximity to infrastructure, topographical and environmental constraints, assess the realistic development potential of existing industrial zoned parcels and those parcels previously identified in the North Smithfield Industrial Site Survey (Maguire Group Inc., 1991). Based on the results of this assessment, amend the zoning map to accurately reflect appropriate use for those parcels.

3. ENCOURAGE OTHER FORMS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WHICH WILL PROVIDE JOB OPPORTUNITIES, TAX BASE SUPPORT AND INCREASED REVENUES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

A. Provide opportunities for mixed-use development including compatible office parks, light industry and multifamily housing.

B. Encourage historic area rehabilitation programs which will generate revenues for local tradesmen.

C. Utilize the concept of Heritage Economics when considering an economic development strategy for revitalization of the villages.[1]

D. Support the community's agricultural based businesses by providing technical assistance for available grants for purchase of development rights and investigate tax incentives for landowners who maintain active agricultural pursuits.

E. Establish a Development Plan Review section within the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations that incorporates design review standards based on sound site planning principals and best management practices and that incorporates the principals of village enhancement found in the Slatersville Area Plan.

[1] Heritage Economics is a phrase used in the Slatersville Area Plan to describe how the town could capitalize on the Town's heritage and historic features to promote economic development and tourism.

F. As part of the Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor and the related Regional Comprehensive Tourism Planning Component prepared by the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council Inc., support historic preservation and regional recreational development activities which will enhance the area as a tourist destination.

G. Limit retail and commercial expansion to areas where traffic congestion, noise and light will not impact unfavorably on local businesses or residences.

F-3.0 Plan Description

F-3.1 Economic Profile of North Smithfield

F-3.1.1 Current Employment

In Rhode Island, employment data is available for each municipality for business establishments subject to the Rhode Island unemployment insurance tax. The most recent data, as provided in Table F-3.1.1, is for those employed in North Smithfield regardless of their place of residence.

Table F-3.1.1 Covered Private Employment – North Smithfield, RI 2001

Industry Group	# of Establishments	Average Employment
Agriculture/Forestry	12	79
Construction	51	247
Manufacturing	27	675
Transportation/Commun./Electric/Gas/ Sanitation	15	201
Wholesale Trade	35	191
Retail Trade	57	1095
Financial, Insurance and Real Estate	22	78
Services	109	1101
Government	11	486
TOTAL	339	4113

Source: RI Department of Employment and Training
Not included in the table are those who are self employed workers.

Table F-3.1.1.a Change in Covered Private Employment – North Smithfield, RI 1990-2001

Industry Group	Percent Change
Agriculture/Forestry	14%
Construction	15%
Manufacturing	(60%)
Transportation/Commun./Electric/Gas/ Sanitation	112%
Wholesale Trade	(32%)
Retail Trade	66%
Financial, Insurance and Real Estate	63%
Services	(5%)

Similar to national and state trends, for the 10 year period of 1990 to 2000, North Smithfield witnessed a significant loss in manufacturing employment. Similarly, over the same period, North Smithfield experienced significant increases in non-manufacturing employment. The one exception was the loss of employment in wholesale trade. This loss of employment more than likely reflected the loss of jobs at the Holsom Burnes Company.

As stated earlier, being located in an increasingly larger, regional labor market area reduces the linkage between locally created job opportunities and jobs filled by community residents. Based on US 2000 Census data, 77.7% of people who live in North Smithfield work in Rhode Island, 21.4% work in Massachusetts, .6% work in Connecticut, and .3% work elsewhere and abroad. Of the 77% of people who work in Rhode Island, over 44% work in either Woonsocket, North Smithfield or Providence.

F-3.1.2 Employment Projections

In Technical Paper 127, *Rhode Island Employment Forecasts, Year 2010-The State, Cities and Towns, and Analysis Zones* (August 1987), the Rhode Island Division of Planning projected total local employment (both covered and uncovered for unemployment insurance) for the cities and towns of the State. For North Smithfield, the projections showed virtually no change between 4,556 in 1990 and 4,505 in 2010.

Considering the proposals of the Land Use Plan Element and those of this Element to aggressively attract new industry and business to the community, the State's projections appear to be too conservative and may have been influenced by the significant drop from 1980 employment levels due to the departure of Tupperware Corporation. As discussed in the Land Use Element, population projections based on the 2001 BRVNHCC analysis, and updated with current housing projections, also appear to suggest a more aggressive growth rate in housing unit production. Nevertheless, based on current employment levels and the lack of readily developable, prime industrial acreage, these employment projections may be accurate. If the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan are implemented, there will be steady growth employment over the next 5 to 10 years.

F-3.1.3 Real Estate Tax Base

Table F-3.1.3 and Table F-3.1.4 summarize real property tax assessments in North Smithfield for the periods of 1990 and 2005 respectively. These tables exclude assessments on tangible property and real property assessments on non-tax paying uses such as government owned properties, churches and hospitals.

Table F-3.1.3 - Summary Of Real Estate Tax Assessments*
North Smithfield, RI Dec. 31, 1990

USE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Single Family	$145,882,010.	68.
Multi-Family	4,354,960.	2.
Commercial	16,472,880.	8.
Industrial	17,579,600.	8.
Farm	641,840.	0.**
Utility/Railroad	11,769,760.	5
Miscellaneous	304,320.	0.**
Vacant Land	6,164,080.	3.
Total	$216,281,690.*	100.0

Source: Tax Assessor, Town of North Smithfield - Totals as of 12/31/90
* Does not include personal property or motor vehicle assessments.
** Farms and Miscellaneous add up to less than one-half of one percent.

TABLE F-3.1.3.a - SUMMARY OF REAL ESTATE TAX ASSESSMENTS*
NORTH SMITHFIELD, RI - DEC. 31, 2004

USE	TOTAL	PERCENT
Single Family	$840,592,608.	77.
Multi-Family	78,290,233.	7.
Commercial	61,989,510.	6.
Industrial	43,915,600.	4.
Farm	502,010.	0.**
Utility/Railroad	32,818,660.	3
Miscellaneous	415,600.	0.**
Vacant Land	30,878,228.	3.
Total	$1,089,402,449.*	100.0

Source: Tax Assessor, Town of North Smithfield - Totals as of 12/31/04
* Does not include personal property or motor vehicle assessments. Also excludes "Other Improved Land".
** Farms and Miscellaneous add up to less than one-half of one percent.

In 1990, residential real property assessments in North Smithfield comprised 70% of total real property assessments. In 2005, this percentage increased to 84%. This fact is particularly troubling given that the 2005 assessments did not include the Silver Pines and Rock Cliff residential developments. Therefore, the lack of diversification in the North Smithfield property tax base portends future difficulties in controlling property tax rates and underwriting important investments in "public goods" such as schools, roads, recreation facilities and open space.

The North Smithfield Industrial Development Commission commissioned an Industrial Site Survey in 1991 (Maguire Group Inc., 1991). The North Smithfield Planning Board accepted most of the study recommendations and incorporated same in the Economic Development and Land Use Elements in the 1992 Comprehensive Plan. One of the sites identified in the Industrial Site Survey has recently been identified for a large scale commercial development. The Town is also taking proactive steps to rezone several other sites for more flexible, mixed-uses. These zoning steps are more responsive to market realities and should expedite the industrial and/or commercial development of these sites.

F-3.1.4 Existing Industrial and Commercial Zoning

North Smithfield's Zoning Ordinance provides for one Manufacturing (M) District which allows a variety of industrial and heavy commercial uses by right or by Special Use Permit from the Zoning Board of Review. A review of the zoned areas reveals most of the land is developed, excessively steep or located within the floodplains or wetlands along the Branch and Blackstone Rivers. Two usable parcels totaling about 60 acres are found between North Smithfield Industrial Drive and the Providence and Worcester Railroad tracks. A 1974 RI Department of Community Affairs study recommended that this area be developed to take advantage of the availability of rail service~~s~~. Approximately 30 acres of these 60 acres will be rezoned for office/commercial land development projects. This change in zoning will eliminate the use of these 30 acres for heavy industry and will encourage more compatible mixed office and commercial uses. Additional land currently in the Manufacturing District on Quaker Highway and Central Street will be rezoned for mixed office and commercial uses.

The Town has two business zones. The Highway Business (BH) zone is located along the non-limited access portion of Route 146 and at the intersection of Main Street and Route 102. Most of the land in the zone is developed; interestingly, there are still numerous single family homes within the highway strip along Route 146.

The Neighborhood Business (BN) zone is found throughout the community. Substantial portions of the zoned areas adjacent to Route 146A and Victory Highway have been developed with retail, service or office uses. Several zoned sites in outlying areas are undeveloped or only partially used for business purposes. An area on the west side of Eddie Dowling Highway currently in the BN district will be rezoned to the BH zone to more accurately reflect the types of businesses that have developed over the years and the general character of the roadway.

A Professional Service (PS) zone and Limited Commercial (LC) zone are located along portions of Eddie Dowling Highway. Uses such as office space for persons in professional and related

fields are allowed in the PS zone. Commercial establishments, light industry and office uses are allowed in the LC zone.

F-4.0 The Plan

The Economic Development Element calls for an aggressive program to attract new, quality industrial and commercial development to North Smithfield. In addition, it suggests measures to assure the retention of existing business and industry. This Economic Development Element encourages a type, scope and scale of industrial and commercial development that will result in the creation of quality job opportunities and expansion of North Smithfield's tax base while at the same time preserving North Smithfield's unique character and environment.

F-4.1 Land Use Proposals

The Land Use Element supports new economic development in North Smithfield. Major proposals are as follows:

Establish a Mill Rehab District at and between the Branch River Industrial Park and Premisy Hill, and at the Blackstone Smithfield Industrial Park (former Tupperware facility) to allow mixed uses and to facilitate the rehabilitation of these underutilized historic mills. This mixed-use zone will allow for a greater variety of uses including light industry, service, commercial uses and residential.

Continuation of the existing Manufacturing (M) District on an approximately 30 acre site located along North Smithfield Industrial Drive and the establishment of an office/commercial zone along North Smithfield Industrial Drive at the exit ramp to Rte. 146 and along Quaker Highway and Central Street.

Support of the planned historic rehabilitation of the Slatersville Mill site as a Mixed-Use development including housing, live/work space, municipal library and public space.

Rezoning of a section of Quaker Highway as it borders Massachusetts to recognize the existing and likely business highway uses.

Make use of the proximity of one of North Smithfield's largest industrial areas, by rezoning the Homestead Farm area to a Mixed Office/Commercial use.

Rezone a 200 acre area between the Landmark Medical/Fogarty Unit and Booth Pond to Mixed Use-Office Commercial/146A that could include medical offices, research and development activities, office space and limited retail of up to 40% of the built structures.

Facilitate the economic viability of North Smithfield's remaining farms by creating an Agricultural Business District.

Although the Land Use Plan eliminates some areas currently located within the Manufacturing (M) District, virtually all of the land so removed has serious constraints for industrial purposes such as heavy manufacturing. Furthermore, the Land Use Plan designates various key business opportunity areas for mixed-use development; a more flexible and market sensitive designation that affords the Planning Board the ability to work with prospective developers/investors to optimize the economic, fiscal and aesthetic value of projects.

F-4.2 Infrastructure

The Services and Facilities Element calls for the implementation of the Water System Plan completed in 1992 by the Maguire Group and the updating of the long-range Wastewater Facilities Plan for sewer services. Priority is assigned to extensions of sewer and water services to the economic development sites described above. All new developments should be required to install the wiring necessary for access to communications technology.

Experience elsewhere has shown that new industry generally is looking for sites which are ready for development without long delays for the necessary infrastructure.

F-4.3 Zoning Changes

The Land Use plan Element call for a series of zoning changes to be carried out within the 18 months following the States approval of the Comprehensive Plan. Those major changes directly relating to the Economic Development Element include:

Revisions of the Zoning Map as described in the Land Use Element of this Plan Update.

Adoption of new Zoning Ordinance use districts and related regulations that encourage the reuse of mill buildings, the development of additional land for commercial and industrial purposes, the maintenance of the mixed use character of mill villages, and improved economic viability of working farms.

Review of the District Use Table for Manufacturing (M) and possibly other districts in regards to uses that generate unacceptable noise, odors, dust, lighting and other waste products of industry. Design standards should also be implemented. This combined approach recognizes that many industries formerly considered to be obnoxious can be compatible neighbors with the use of modern environmental control technology.

Continuation of existing Neighborhood Business (BN). Highway Business (BH), and Professional Service (PS) Districts. A modest expansion of the Highway Business District is proposed.

Improvement of Development Plan Review (site plan review) procedures and standards as part of the Zoning Ordinance.

F-4.4 Public-Private Partnerships

North Smithfield has limited internal human resources to effectively manage economic development issues and initiatives. It is critically important that North Smithfield forge and maintain working relationships with the various regional and statewide economic development entities including the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce, New England Economic Development Services ("NEEDS") and NEEDS' parent company, The Economic Development Foundation of Rhode Island. Each of these organizations has niche strengths that could be invaluable in North Smithfield's various proposed economic development initiatives. Other organizations such as the John H. Chaffee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission and Grow Smart Rhode Island can also serve as important sources for technical support and even funding support in North Smithfield's efforts to manage and nurture growth that reinforces North Smithfield's sense of place and community while strengthening the community's fiscal base and contribution to the regional and state job base.

F-4.5 Blackstone River Natural Heritage Corridor

The Town of North Smithfield, through various proposals in this Comprehensive Plan, will be implementing elements of State Guide Plan Element 131, *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor* and the related *Regional Comprehensive Tourism Planning Component.* Element K of this Comprehensive Plan, Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, gives special attention to coordinating local programs with those of the surrounding region. Activities such as historic district and structure rehabilitation and conservation, adaptive reuse of historic mill structures and creation of the Branch River Park will have economic benefits for North Smithfield. The benefits include:

North Smithfield will be enhanced as a good place to live -- an important consideration in attracting new industry.

Work will be generated for local tradesmen participating in rehabilitation programs.

Increased tourist interest will generate revenue for local business such as restaurants, motels, movies, gas stations and convenience stores.

F-4.6 Retention of Existing Industry

Often overlooked in the zeal to attract new industry is the need to be continuously in touch with the major businesses and industries already in Town. All too often, communities are not aware of issues which may cause a business to leave town.

One solution is to have a Town official maintain contact with the management of key industries on an annual or more frequent basis. A brief meeting at the company's offices will let local businesses know they are important. If there are problems the Town or State can address,

prompt attention may not only be good public relations, but also may help to make local businesses more profitable and keep industry in Rhode Island.

The various public and private economic development organizations identified above are also valuable sources of information regarding company and industry specific problems and opportunities. By forging partnerships with these organizations, North Smithfield enhances its capacity to get early warning of emerging problems and opportunities and respond accordingly. A quality economic development program begins with a heightened awareness of North Smithfield's existing business community and strategies to retain and grow these businesses.

F-5.0 Consistency Statement

The Economic Development Element of the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan supports the goals of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act and is consistent with the overall goals and policies as included in applicable State Guide Plan elements.

The following sections summarize the relationship of the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan to state policies.

State Guide Plan Element 212, *Economic Development*
Land being set aside for new industrial and related economic development is designed to be attractive to industries which will have a steady employment pattern.

Through a careful analysis of available sites, North Smithfield proposes to encourage public and private investment in "prime" areas with a reasonable expectation of being developed.

Initiatives for strengthening and extending sewer and water facilities to "prime" business opportunity sites are presently underway.

The adaptive reuse of historic mill structures is encouraged; such facilities often can serve as "incubator" space for start-up businesses and industries requiring more flexible space and affordable rents. These historic mill structures can also serve as ideal locations for flexible, mixed-uses that are congruent with market realities and contemporary growth management strategies.

Commercial and retail development is encouraged within the limits of suitable sites, current land use constraints, community planning objectives and a need to serve local residents.

North Smithfield supports quality, well planned economic development. The North Smithfield Industrial Development Commission has coordinated the preparation of industrial land studies and the design and adoption of local property tax incentives that have been important to the Town's success in facilitating the development of limited, prime land resources. A reconstituted North Smithfield Economic Development Commission will coordinate the Town's next phase in economic development by developing a more strategic economic development vision.

State Guide Plan Element 131, *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley, National Heritage Corridor*

Rehabilitation and conservation programs are proposed for historic districts, individual historic structures and historic mill sites.

North Smithfield is participating with neighboring municipalities and the state in furthering Corridor goals.

Business generated from tourism is recognized as an important part of the economic development equation. "Quality of life" enhancement through the Corridor's revitalization is considered to be a significant benefit to North Smithfield's economic growth and attractiveness to the next generation of businesses and workers/residents. The Comprehensive Plan includes a special Element entitled Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.

G. NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

G-1.0 Introduction

The residents of North Smithfield are the caretakers of 15,600 acres or about 2% of the land and inland water area of Rhode Island. As will be pointed out in this element of the Comprehensive Plan, North Smithfield has a rich variety of both natural and cultural resources worthy of protection.

When states such as Rhode Island become more urbanized, all citizens become increasingly aware of the interrelated nature of our living environment. The breach of a dam on the Branch River might have a significant impact on Narragansett Bay through the release of contaminated sediments trapped behind the dam. Excessive paving, as in Park Square, may contribute to downstream flooding of residential areas near Cherry Brook. Closed landfills over the Slatersville Aquifer cast doubts on the long-range viability of that aquifer. It has become time for North Smithfield to analyze the nature of existing development practices and to determine the extent to which the Town wishes to continue or discontinue selected practices.

North Smithfield's environment is complex and sometimes difficult to manage. Although 42% of the soils have only moderate limitations for development, 58% have severe constraints due to high water tables, steep slopes, shallow bedrock or wetland conditions. Increasingly, new development is encountering more demanding sites. Over 3,000 acres have agricultural soils rated as prime or of statewide importance. In actual use for agriculture are only approximately 500 acres. The sections which follow explain the derivation of the above-cited statistics.

Both surface and groundwater resources are abundant in North Smithfield. The Slatersville Aquifer to the south of the Slatersville Reservoir has a potential safe yield of 5.5 million gallons per day and is one of 22 major aquifers in the State. The portions of the Branch and Blackstone Rivers in North Smithfield are Class B waters but remain unsuitable for public water supply because of upstream wastewater treatment plants. The City of Woonsocket draws the bulk of its water supply from two reservoirs located in North Smithfield.

The Town's rolling and forested terrain, interspersed with streams, ponds and wetlands, creates habitats for a variety of plant and animal species, both common and rare. These same features help to break up the development pattern and provide varied living environments for man as well. Unique natural areas such as the Blackstone River Gorge or the Blunders and Booth Pond are of statewide importance.

Culturally, North Smithfield has a rich history. Several areas are on or have been nominated for the National Register of Historic Places. The Town has a major role to play in the implementation of the plans for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.

G-2.0 Goals, Policies and Actions

1. PROTECT PRIME GROUNDWATER AQUIFERS AND RECHARGE AREAS FROM POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE

A. Strengthen existing groundwater overlay protection regulations and revise the overlay district map to include all the protection zones listed including surface water supply basins.

B. Establish Wastewater Management districts to preclude potential environmental degradation from failing septic systems in areas over principal groundwater reservoirs and recharge areas.

C. Extend sewers as specified in the Wastewater Facilities Plan and investigate alternatives such as packaged wastewater treatment facilities to those developed areas impacting groundwater resources.

D. Amend the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations to strengthen non-point source pollution standards with emphasis on protection of areas over principal groundwater reservoirs or recharge areas or within reservoir drainage areas, in accordance with the Town's Phase II Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP).

E. Strengthen the Town's Soil and Earth Removal Ordinance to protect ground and surface water resources from sand and gravel removal operations.

F. Insist that the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) to adopt more stringent regulations for underground storage tank installation, maintenance and testing in critical aquifer and watershed protection areas

G. Encourage the use of properly designed and maintained ISDS especially in areas with highly permeable soils (generally associated with groundwater reservoirs); encourage DEM to remain vigilant in making sure that necessary ISDS maintenance contracts remain in place.

H. Request quarterly reports from RIDEM to the Town's Environmental Advocate regarding the monitoring program and remedial action being taken with respect to the Landfill & Resource Recovery and Western Sand & Gravel EPA Superfund sites in the vicinity of the Slatersville Aquifer.

I. Develop an ordinance that requires all new lots approved by the Planning Board to have a well water test for volatile organic compounds (VOC's).

2. PROTECT THE TOWN'S SURFACE WATER RESOURCES WITH EMPHASIS ON THE WATERSHEDS OF THE SLATERSVILLE AND WOONSOCKET RESERVOIRS

A. Maintain strong enforcement of various development regulations within reservoir drainage areas under the presumption that the Slatersville Reservoir is being preserved as an alternate source of potable water for the Town of North Smithfield and surrounding regional needs.

B. Adopt a stormwater management ordinance in accordance with the Phase II Stormwater Management Plan to protect against flooding, encourage groundwater recharge and protect water quality of all surface waters through employment of Best Management Practices.

C. Consider adopting flexible zoning measures such as conservation development design, which could allow the retention of natural vegetation, buffer areas adjacent to streams, wetlands and provide for opportunities to preserve large tracts of open space.

D. Encourage the Town of Burrillville to consider land use and development impacts relating to downstream areas such as the Slatersville Reservoir.

E. Implement a revised Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.

F. Work cooperatively with the City of Woonsocket as part of a Regional Watershed Protection Committee concerned about Reservoirs # 1 and # 3 and Crookfall Brook; as applicable, strengthen zoning, subdivision and related development regulations and alter municipal operating procedures which adversely impact the watershed.

G. Establish Wastewater Management Districts to preclude pollution from individual sewage disposal systems; incorporate household hazardous waste education and control as part of the program.

H. Coordinate the Town's open space and conservation planning efforts, with program priority given to increasing land holdings in the Woonsocket Reservoir system watershed in North Smithfield.

I. Develop regulations that prevent the clear cutting of properties that are in the formal process of being reviewed as a Subdivision or Land Development; clearing should occur only as identified on a Planning Board approved Plan.

3. ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT ACTION PROGRAMS TO PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION AREAS THROUGH ACQUISITION, CONSERVATION EASEMENTS AND OTHER MEASURES

A. Maintain strong enforcement of existing and, when adopted, proposed regulations such as zoning, subdivision and land development, erosion and sediment control, soil and earth removal, stormwater management, conservation development design and Development Plan Review (site plan review).

B. Development regulations shall provide appropriate controls and review procedures in relationship to critical conservation and natural resource considerations such as wetland

protection, woodland preservation, scenic area enhancement, Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program habitat preservation and agricultural land preservation.

C. Identify and rank key parcels for acquisition or protection based on criteria such as but not limited to: size, adjacent protected parcels, significant natural resources, rare or endangered species or habitat, significant cultural features, development potential etc. as prioritized in the Woonasquatucket Greenspace Mapping Project (WGMP).

D. Require the submission of an "Existing Resources/Site Analysis Map" as part of the Master Plan review stage.

E. Acquire and otherwise protect key parcels that meet criteria for protection.

F. Ensure that the timing of peak flows from new development is handled to minimize down stream flooding especially in flood prone watersheds such as Cherry Brook.

G. Work with the Conservation District and RIDEM to identify solutions to minimize seasonal flooding along Cherry Brook.

4. ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT THE PHASE II STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH RHODE ISLAND'S POLLUTION DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (RIPDES) GENERAL PERMIT

A. Develop a litter and pet waste clean-up program that may utilize ordinances, fines, pamphlets, signage and newspaper articles to inform the public about the impacts of improper litter and pet waste disposal.

B. Continue to promote Earthday cleanup and consider adding a fall cleanup.

C. Adopt an ordinance that prohibits illicit discharge to wetlands and waterbodies.

D. Develop a plan to detect illicit discharges.

E. Continue practice of cleaning and inspecting catch basins at least twice a year and detention and retention basins once a year. Consider provisions that would require landowners to conduct periodic inspection and cleaning of catch basins and other stormwater structures installed as part of land development projects outside of the right-of-way.

F. Amend Land Development and Subdivision Regulations to include implementation of pre and post construction erosion, sediment and waste controls in accordance with the Rhode Phase II Stormwater Regulations.

G. Adopt Development Plan Review (site plan review) regulations that include a site inspection procedure for sites with greater than one (1) acre of disturbance.

H. Continue training municipal employees about spill prevention and reduction of stormwater pollution.

I. Hold an annual meeting to inform the public about existing and proposed stormwater pollution prevention programs and consider other means of informing the public regarding this issue.

J. Continue the practice of sweeping streets a minimum of once a year.

5. PROTECT PRIME FARMLAND AND FARMLANDS OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE WITH EMPHASIS IN THOSE AREAS ACTIVELY USED FOR FARMING

A. Encourage active farms to take advantage of the reduced property assessments when participating in the Farm, Forest and Open Space Act.

B. Use “conservation development design” regulations to preserve prime farmland as part of the open space requirement.

C. Encourage the State to continue the purchase of farm development rights and encourage owners to apply to the program.

D. Where possible, coordinate the conservation programs of the Open Space and Recreation Element with agricultural land preservation.

E. Support the community’s agricultural based businesses by providing technical assistance for available grants and investigate tax incentives for landowners that maintain active agricultural pursuits.

6. INCREASE THE AWARENESS AMONG NORTH SMITHFIELD RESIDENTS OF THE VALUE OF THEIR OWN NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

A. Broaden the range of values attributed to North Smithfield's cultural resources so as to include not only historic and aesthetic values but also values relating to housing, recreation and economic opportunity.

B. Create a public information campaign to increase awareness, which involves a series of efforts over several years.

C. Link educational activities to other local and regional programs such as those of local schools, the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council and the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, Inc.

D. Utilize the mapping resources generated from the Woonasquatucket Greenspace Project and make them accessible to the public.

E. Make copies of the following documents available to the public at various locations and on the town's website: *Images of America -North Smithfield*, North Smithfield Heritage Society and the *Historic and Architectural Resources of North Smithfield, Rhode Island: A Preliminary Report*, Rhode Island Historic Preservation Commission.

F. Make the Comprehensive Plan accessible through the Town's web site.

G. Prepare an inventory of scenic roads and consider adoption of a scenic road ordinance.

7. PROTECT THE CULTURAL RESOURCES FROM PHYSICAL CHANGE INAPPROPRIATE TO THEIR CHARACTER

A. Analyze the elements of North Smithfield's landscapes and built environment which comprise its cultural/natural resource legacy.

B. Protect archaeological resources as part of the development application review process and work in collaboration with groups of Native American heritage who are interested in the preservation of their Tribal cultural resources.

C. Reach consensus, among local people, as to what aspects of local landscapes and built environments are most significant.

D. Emphasize a flexible strategy aimed at protecting a range of cultural assets, including, but not limited to, historic structures.

E. Adopt a range of land use controls in the Zoning Ordinance to supplement the Historic Area Zoning where necessary.

F. Emphasize the protection of corridors rather than individual properties and sites.

8. ENCOURAGE APPROPRIATE REHABILITATION OR ADAPTIVE REUSE FOR BUILDINGS AND AREAS AS A PROTECTIVE MEASURE

A. Be pro-active relative to the reuse of underutilized, significant privately owned buildings.

B. Target rehabilitation efforts to home improvement programs in efforts to protect existing affordable housing.

9. INTEGRATE OVERALL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT WITH PROGRAMS FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF THE BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

A. Link, wherever possible, cultural resource protective actions to other compatible improvement efforts in the Town and Blackstone Valley Region.

B. Use Federal funds for targeted areas where historic home rehabilitation coincides with other community development activities.

C. Utilize RIDOT Enhancement funds to develop an interpretive/recreation park at the Mammoth Mill site.

10. PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE HISTORIC VILLAGE OF SLATERSVILLE

A. Preserve Slatersville historic components.

B. Ensure the mill's economic viability and reintegration into the Village by allowing mixed uses and innovative ways that combine thoughtful, modern redevelopment with the sensitive preservation of the area's historic elements.

C. Use Slatersville as a model for future historic preservation activities in Town.

G-3.0 Plan Description

G-3.1 Inventory of Significant Natural Resources

This inventory was developed using a variety of data and map sources including the standard package of map reproductions and hard copy printouts provided to the Town under agreement with the Rhode Island Geographic Information System (RIGIS) and the maps generated through the Woonasquatucket Greenspace Mapping Project.

G-3.1.1 Soils Suitability

The United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service in collaboration with the Rhode Island Division of Planning, has classified Rhode Island soils into five general groupings in terms of their suitability for residential development. As shown on Map G - 1, Soils Suitability for Development, identifies the general location of Groups A through E. Although the soils have been rated in terms of suitability for residential development, the applicable constraints generally apply to the common types of public, commercial and industrial uses which might be developed in North Smithfield. Consequently, they serve as a good community-wide planning guide.

- **Group A - Moderate Constraints**

•Soils in this group generally have few or moderate development constraints. The moderate constraints include: very permeable soils with a potential for groundwater pollution; slowly permeable soils with potential for septic system failures; and stony soils which are expensive to excavate and grade. The Soil Conservation Service cautions that development in soils with moderate constraints needs to be evaluated on a case by case basis. Approximately 6,600 acres or about 42% of North Smithfield is covered by Group A.

- **Group B - High Water Table Constraints**

This group includes soils with a seasonally high water table located within 1.5 to 3.5 feet from the surface for significant periods of the year. In most cases, the soils are characterized by very slow permeability. RIDEM's regulations for individual sewage disposal systems (ISDS) generally require a minimum of 3 feet between the bottom of the leaching field and the seasonally high water table. Where the seasonally high groundwater is located between 2 feet and 4 feet from the natural surface of the land, mounding to elevate the bottom of the leaching field is allowed when certain additional state requirements are met. In general, development in Group B soils would be better served by sewers than septic systems. Comprehensive Plan studies show that 1,100 acres or about 7% of the Town's land area is in Group B.

- **Group C - Slopes Over 15% and/or Shallow Bedrock**

The steep slopes in Group C render these soils difficult for on-site septic systems and are easily eroded during construction. Shallow bedrock increases road construction costs and often precludes the underground installation of utilities or septic systems. Portions of the Rolling Acres subdivision in North Smithfield were constructed in Group C soils; extensive removal of ledge was required. RIDEM's regulations for individual septic systems generally require a minimum of 5 feet between the bottom of the leaching field and ledge (impervious formations). Systems may be permitted to be mounded where ledge is encountered between 4 to 6 below the original ground surface when certain additional State requirements are met. There are about 5,800 acres in Group C; this is approximately 37% of the land area of North Smithfield. The hilly nature of much of the Town accounts for this rather high percentage.

- **Group D - Hydric Soils**

Hydric soils have water at or near the surface for significant periods of the year. A hydric soil is saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper layers. Many areas with hydric soils are classified as wetlands. Development in areas with hydric soils usually is not feasible nor allowed by local, State or Federal wetland regulations (e.g. RIDEM, Division of Groundwater and Freshwater Wetlands, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers) without a specific permit granted by RIDEM based on engineered plans. Hydric soils cover about 2,250 acres or approximately 14% of North Smithfield.

Map G - 2 delineates areas of freshwater wetlands and hydric soils. Wetlands, as defined by the Army Corps of Engineers, are lands where saturation with water is the main factor determining the nature of soil development (hydric soils) and vegetation types (hydrophytes). It should be noted that not all areas of hydric soils are wetlands, such as the case of drained hydric soils not capable of supporting hydrophytes without restoration of favorable conditions. Wetlands serve a variety of valuable functions of value to man and the natural ecology of the area. Alteration of wetlands and their associated buffers are strictly regulated by RIDEM. Also, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulates activities within federal wetlands.

Cedar Swamp is by far the largest wetland in North Smithfield. It was severely altered to construct Route 146 and is increasingly impacted as upstream paving, construction and siltation increases direct flow into the basin it occupies.

The wetlands/hydric soils map is suitable for community planning purposes only; the National Wetlands Inventory, the basis for identifying the wetlands, is derived from the interpretation of high altitude aerial photographs. The maps may be only accurate to areas of 10 acres or greater.

Wetlands are considered a severe constraint to land development. Virtually all significant wetland areas should be considered as prime candidates for conservation and preservation.

- **Group E - Landfill**

The Landfill & Resource Recovery landfill covering about 28 acres is the only site in Group E.

G-3.1.2 Agricultural Soils and Farmland

In its report, *Rhode Island - Important Farmlands*, the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has identified soils which are classified as prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance; all prime farmland is also classified as farmland of statewide importance. Map G-3 shows soils classified as prime farmland and those of statewide importance.

The total acreage of prime and statewide importance soils in North Smithfield is approximately 3,160 acres of which 1,170 acres are prime and 1,990 acres are of statewide importance. This total includes acreage which is now used for various types of suburban and urban uses.

Approximately 500 acres are actually used as farmland in North Smithfield. According to Statewide Planning's Tax Division, there were 22 parcels owned by 14 different entities registered as "State Code 33 – Farm, Forest and Open Space" at the end of December 2003. Based on the Town's records, in 2004 there were five properties classified as "Farms" and another eight that were classified as "Farm/Forest". The Act requires that Farms wishing to have their land taxed as a Farm, file appropriate management plans with the Town and State. For example, the 94-acre Goodwin Brothers Farm and 36-acre Wright's Farm are both in this particular tax program. Additionally, the state has purchased the development rights of Christiansen's Farm (42 acres) and West Wind Farm (86 acres).

Farmlands present both constraints and opportunities. The constraints relate to desires to keep productive farmland from being forever lost to urban and suburban uses. The opportunities are there for conserving valuable farmland, maintaining agricultural business and contributing to an open and rural environment.

Prime Farmland

Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops and ought to be used for agricultural purposes such that North Smithfield may maintain its link to its agricultural history, maintain a viable agricultural industry and preserve scenic landscapes. The following is a listing of prime farmland soils according to the soils groupings used in evaluating soils suitability for development in G-3.1.1 above:

Group A

AfA Agawam fine sandy loam, 0 to 3% slopes
AfB Agawam fine sandy loam, 3 to 8% slopes
MmA Merrimack sandy loam, 0 to 3% slopes
MmB Merrimack sandy loam, 3 to 8% slopes
PaA Paxton fine sandy loam, 0 to 3% slopes
PaB Paxton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8% slopes

Group B

Pp Podunk fine sandy loam
Ss Sudbury sandy loam
StA Sutton fine sandy loam, 0 to 3% slopes
StB Sutton fine sandy loam, 3 to 8% slopes
Tb Tisbury silt loam
WhA Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 0 to 3% slopes
WhB Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 3 to 8% slopes

Farmland of Statewide Importance

Generally, farmlands of statewide importance include those lands that are nearly prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to modern farming methods.

The following is a listing of farmland soils of statewide importance:

Group A

CdC Canton and Charlton fine sandy loams, 8 to 15%
HkA Hinckley gravelly sandy loam, 0 to 3% slopes
HkC Hinckley gravelly sandy loam, rolling
WgA Windsor loamy sand, 0 to 3% slopes
WgB Windsor loamy sand, 3 to 8% slopes

Group D

Ru Rumney fine sandy loam
Wa Walpole sandy loam

G-3.1.3 Mineral Resources

The primary resource extracted from the natural geology of North Smithfield are the sands and gravels found in ice age fluviolglacial deposits throughout the Town. The major sand and gravel operators and the acreages under their jurisdiction, as provided by the North Smithfield Tax Assessor, are as follows: Holliston Sand & Gravel - 95 acres; Pawtucket Redi Mix (batch plant) - 3 acres; and Material Sand & Gravel - 114 acres. At one time, both granite and whetstones were commercially quarried in North Smithfield. A rock excavation operation has been under way for a number of years in a former gravel pit located west of Pine Hill road. The parcel in North Smithfield consists of approximately 82 acres. Expansion of the operation onto adjoining lots is the subject of pending litigation.

Gravel extraction has been allowed pursuant to the Right to Farm Act, R.I.G.L. Chapter 23 on a portion of the Trout Brook Farm adjacent to the Holliston Sand & Gravel. Once extraction is completed, the area will be reclaimed as pasture for the Brookside Equestrian Center. Plans on file in the Building Department show a proposed turf farm adjacent to Holliston Sand & Gravel on six lots with a combined acreage of 284 acres; approximately 150 acres is to be cleared and leveled for sod production. The amount of material to be removed and processed to achieve the proposed grades for the turf farm operation is enormous and will likely take years to complete.

Soil and earth removal operations are governed by Chapter 11, Article IV of the Code of Ordinances of the Town of North Smithfield first adopted in 1979. The article requires the issuance of a license, subject to the granting of a Special Exception by the Zoning Board of Review, which governs operating conditions, ground and surface water protection and site restoration including recontouring and the restoration of ground cover to control wind and water erosion. The article excluded from control any sand and gravel operations which were in existence at the time the regulations were adopted. All of the previously-cited sand and gravel removal operations were pre-existent in 1979.

Article IV does provide in Section 11-41 (f) that "Upon the sale of any real property being used for earth removal activities, the nonconforming status of the section will no longer be considered in effect and any subsequent earth removal activities must be licensed and conform to the regulations of this article." The Ordinance language should be revised if the property is sold for other than sand and gravel operations there ought to be a requirement that there be land reclamation in the form of recontouring and the restoration of vegetation. Additionally the Ordinance should have a stronger mechanism to deal with blasting and the monitoring and enforcement of earth removal operations. Apart from earth removal as a business, it must also be noted that, historically, earth removal operations have taken place as a precursor to subdivision or land development. The Town values its natural topography and would like to maintain it by limiting earth removal associated with subdivisions and land developments.

G-3.1.4 Surface and Groundwater Water Resources

Map G - 4 shows surface and groundwater resources and identifies several threats to water quality.

Groundwater Reservoirs/Recharge Areas
Studies conducted by RIDEM have identified the major groundwater aquifers in Rhode Island. Of the 22 in the state, two, the Slatersville and Lower Branch, are located in North Smithfield. These stratified drift aquifers are divided into two parts. One part is the groundwater reservoir -- that part where there is the greatest potential for water supply development. The balance of the aquifer is the surrounding principal recharge area.

RIDEM has classified North Smithfield's aquifers as Class GAA aquifers; this means the aquifer is presumed to be suitable for drinking water without treatment. Water currently being withdrawn from the aquifer for public water supplies is not treated. It has been estimated that there is a potential safe yield of approximately 5 million gallons per day from the Slatersville Aquifer (*May 1990 Report on Water System Master Plan for North Smithfield* prepared by Weston and Sampson).

As shown on Map G - 4, the groundwater reservoir generally parallels the Branch River to and then along the Blackstone River near Waterford. The surrounding recharge area substantially covers the northern sections of North Smithfield. Accepted practice calls for no development within a specified radius of a wellhead and overlay zoning prohibiting groundwater pollutant-generating uses over the groundwater reservoir and the recharge area. North Smithfield's Zoning Ordinance has a section covering the regulation of groundwater aquifer zones. Much of the Town's more intense residential, commercial and industrial development has historically been located over aquifers. Although some of this area is sewered, most of it is not.

The Department of Health along with URI Cooperative Extension developed drinking water pollution risk assessments for the Slatersville Public Water System and the Woonsocket Water System that includes areas of North Smithfield. The risk assessment for both systems indicated an overall “Moderate” susceptibility to contamination. Identified sources in the Slatersville system included roadways and gravel operations located in close proximity to well sites. Contamination sources in the Woonsocket system included commercial, industrial and dense residential development as well as several high capacity roadways. A number of protection opportunities were identified as part of the assessments and many have been included as policies and implementation actions in this Plan Update.

In collaboration with the U. S. EPA and RIDEM, the Town completed a Wellhead Protection Program to delineate wellhead protection areas and establish programs to protect water quality. Public community supply wells are shown on Map G-4**.** Studies similar to the 2004 USGS delineation of the Tifft Road public-supply well recharge area would be very useful in understanding the water supply capacity at a particular site and how nearby land uses may affect the water supply depending on a pumping rate. While there is much data available on the Town’s

surficial aquifers, there is insufficient data and attention given to its bedrock aquifers which may also serve as potential community water supplies.

Water Supply Basin

As shown on Map G - 4, major portions of the watersheds serving Reservoir #3 and Reservoir #1 of the Woonsocket water supply system are located in North Smithfield. The watershed is divided into two sections. The westerly portion drains to Reservoir #3 which straddles the North Smithfield/Smithfield Town line. The easterly section drains directly into Crookfall Brook and Reservoir 1; Reservoir #1 is bisected by the North Smithfield/Lincoln Town line. Risk assessments of the watersheds were undertaken in 2004 by the Department of Health and URI Cooperative Extension. Based on an analysis of existing uses and zoning, the Woonsocket water supplies are "moderately susceptible to contamination".

The City of Woonsocket owns about 30% of Reservoir #3 watershed, primarily around the reservoir's perimeter. All of the Reservoir #3 watershed in North Smithfield is zoned for single family homes; only a small percentage of potential watershed development has taken place to date.

Woonsocket purchased 100 acres of riparian land along Crookfall Brook in the watershed of Reservoir # 1, as part of the emergency pipeline project. With this purchase, Woonsocket's land holdings represent about 7% of the watershed area. This watershed is crossed by the following: Route 146 and its associated residential, commercial and light industrial development in North Smithfield; the new Route 99 Industrial Highway in Lincoln; and Route I-295 in Lincoln and Smithfield. Approximately one-third of the proposed mixed-use development east of 146A is located in the watershed of Reservoir #1. Because of existing and potential development, the Reservoir #1 watershed is the most critical in terms of hydrologic importance.

In the mid 1990s, the Crookfall Brook emergency pipeline was constructed to move water in a more regulated and hygienic manner from Crookfall Brook to Reservoir #3 and then on to Reservoir #1. From Reservoir #1, the water is piped to a water treatment facility.

Pursuant to the Rhode Island Water Quality Protection Act of 1987, the City of Woonsocket recently completed a Water Quality Protection Plan for the watershed areas. A 21-point program is incorporated in the Plan. Priority actions of importance to North Smithfield included the following: land acquisition with first attention to land around Reservoir #1 and along Crookfall Brook; construction of a pipeline between the two reservoirs; water quality monitoring; and formation of a Regional Watershed Protection Committee. Most of these actions have been implemented or are ongoing activities like water quality monitoring.

Development activities in the watershed will be constrained to the extent that special measures or restrictions may apply to this important watershed.

Rivers and Streams

North Smithfield is located within the drainage system of three major Rhode Island rivers. The northern portions of the Town drain into the Branch River which in turn joins the Blackstone River in the northeastern section of Town. In the southwest corner several streams, including those flowing through Primrose Pond, combine to form the headwaters of the Woonasquatucket River. In the eastern section of the community both the Cherry Brook and Crookfall Brook systems flow to the east and into the Blackstone River in Woonsocket.

State Guide Element 162 classifies the various river segments in North Smithfield as follows:

- The Branch River from its confluence with the Clear and Chepachet Rivers to the Slatersville Reservoir is suitable for swimming or fishing. It has recreational open space value, and mill villages are located along its corridor. (Classified as "Recreational Open Space")

- Slatersville Reservoir (both upper and lower) has recreational value and is designated as swimmable and fishable. It has a state boat ramp and fishing club access. Its current condition with respect to contact recreation is, however, marginal due to coliform and metals levels that exceed state standards. The Land Resource and Recovery landfill Superfund site is located near the Reservoir. (Classified as "Recreational Open Space")[1]

- The Branch River, from the Slatersville Reservoir to its confluence with the Blackstone River at the Blackstone Gorge in the Town of North Smithfield, has scenic and open space value with mill villages located along the river corridor. It is suitable for non-contact recreation. (Classified as "Recreational Multiple Use")

- The Blackstone River from the Blackstone Gorge to the Rhode Island state line is suitable for non-contact recreation. White-water rafting is occasionally possible in this segment. (Classified as "Recreational Open Space")

- The Blackstone River from the Rhode Island state line to Thundermist Falls in Woonsocket is suitable for non-contact recreational activities. Mills with historical value are located along the river corridor. (Classified as "Recreational Multiple Use")

- The Woonsocket Reservoirs and Crookfall Brook and its tributaries are components of a public drinking water supply. The main reservoir, identified as Reservoir No. 3, is located in Smithfield and North Smithfield. Crookfall Brook conveys water from Reservoir No. 3 through Reservoir No. 2 to Reservoir No. 1, the terminal reservoir and the water treatment facility. Mill sites, historical resources, and archeological remains can be found along the Crookfall Brook corridor. (Classified as "Water Supply")

All of the rivers and streams serve the obvious function of carrying off drainage from the adjoining lands. As a greater percentages of the drainage area is developed and covered by

[1] While the State classified this segment as "Recreational Open Space", the Town would have applied a more conservative classification due to the acknowledged current contaminants in the Reservoir.

impervious surfaces (e.g. buildings, roadways and parking lots), the streams and rivers are challenged to handle increasing flows and stormwater following major storms. A good example is the considerable paving which is located in and around Park Square. This commercial area drains into the Cherry Brook system where there are present examples of downstream residential area flooding.

There are four major dams in North Smithfield. Three, located along the Branch River, were developed to provide water power for the mills. The fourth dams Crookfall Brook to create Woonsocket Reservoir #3. The maintenance of existing dams is important for water quality purposes. The dams, particularly those along the Branch River, have served to trap contaminated sediments; a breach could have adverse environmental consequences of statewide significance. RIDEM's Dam Division is concerned with dam safety issues in Rhode Island.

Rivers and streams which were the basis for the mills which attracted people to North Smithfield are no longer looked upon as workhorses. They are being rediscovered as educational and recreational resources in our own back yard. Other sections of this Plan Update discuss programs to bring the rivers and brooks of North Smithfield back into the "mainstream" of community life.

Flood Plains

Map G - 4 shows the limits of the 100 year flood plain adjacent to major streams and rivers in North Smithfield as delineated by the *Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Study of 1993*. Generally, these flood plains coincide with the wetland and hydric soils areas delineated on Map G - 2. Flooding in North Smithfield is primarily the result of heavy rainfall from spring storms.

The Branch River, with steep side slopes, has a minimal flood plain. Cherry Brook, with headwaters formed by the confluence of two small streams near Follett Street and Greenville Road, has a more extensive flood plain as it passes along Todd's Pond and Cedar Swamp and ultimately into Woonsocket. Several subdivision streets close to Cherry Brook in the Union Village area are subjected to frequent flooding. An undersized culvert under the nearby railroad contributes to this problem. Other flood plains tend to be in more rural and less developed sections of the community.

North Smithfield has adopted zoning regulations applying to development in Flood Hazard Areas. The 1993 FEMA report warns that “Encroachment on floodplains, such as structures and fill, reduces flood-carrying capacities, increases flood heights and velocities, and increases flood hazards in areas beyond the encroachment itself.” Generally, the regulations prohibit any land alteration which will result in the decrease in the flood storage capacity of the watercourse. It should be noted that FEMA is currently updating its floodplain and floodway boundaries and maps. Once updated, these maps should be included in this Comprehensive Plan.

G-3.1.5 Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program

The Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program (RINHP), an agency of RIDEM, is the State's repository of data on rare and vulnerable plants, animals and ecologically significant natural communities. RINHP has provided the North Smithfield Planning Department with a list of rare plant and animal species and exemplary natural communities occurring, either presently or historically in North Smithfield, and a list of animal species of special concern in Rhode Island. Additionally, through the RIGIS data base maps available in the Planning Department office (which are continually updated), information on rare species is available for use when development proposals are being reviewed.

Three areas have been cited for special attention by RINHP as follows:

- The Blunders area between the Douglas and Farnum Pikes. This is a diverse area of woodlands, streams and wetlands supporting at least six rare plants. A portion of the Blunders, containing man-made drainage structures and a historic road, is designated as a Town Historic District. A 17-lot subdivision proposed for this 76.5 acre site received Master Plan approval in 2004. The Master Plan includes a proposed dedication of 30 acres of open space. The historic district and sensitive habitat area are included in the open space areas.
- The northeastern flank of Woonsocket Hill where an ecotone between forest and fen supports a rare sedge. The present owner has agreed to protect the area. According to RINHP "Protection of the site would also involve the preservation of areas upslope of the site, as the fen is largely dependent on groundwater flow".
- A wetland area adjacent to the point where Tarkiln Brook joins the Slatersville Reservoir near the North Smithfield/Burrillville Town line. This is immediately downstream of the EPA Western Sand and Gravel Superfund site. The site, according to RINHP, is "a wetland surrounded by a pine-dominated woodland and supports the climbing fern, a state-listed rare plant".

- Booth Pond is located on the Woonsocket/North Smithfield border east of Landmark Medical/Fogarty Unit. This is a diverse area of woodlands, ponds, streams and wetlands within an urbanized area. The northern portion of the pond is in Woonsocket and is part of the 92 acre Booth Pond Conservation Area purchased by the City in 1977 using a combination of City and Federal funds. A recently completed study conducted by Virginia Brown, a recognized odonate (dragonflies and damselflies) specialist found that 51 species of odonates exist at Booth Pond, a number that was exceeded by only one of the other 400 sites surveyed in the state. Among the odonates found at Booth Pond, two were listed by the RINHP as species of State Concern and one was listed as Endangered. Preliminary survey of plants and birds also indicate that Booth Pond and surrounding upland forests represent a significant biodiversity resource within an otherwise highly developed portion of the state. A major retail development proposing significant disturbance of the area around Booth Pond received Master Plan and Special Use Permit approval from the Town of North Smithfield in 2004.

The following list of rare and exemplary natural communities in North Smithfield was provided by the RI Natural Heritage Program for inclusion in this Update:

Table G-3.1.5 Rare and Exemplary Natural Communities

Variable Sedge	Early Coralroot
Purple Needlegrass	Featherfoil
Long-bracted Green Orchis	Climbing Fern
Large Yellow Lady's Slipper	Green Pyrola
Swamp Saxifrage	Eastern Hognose Snake
Wild Coffee	Swamp Pink
Daiseyleaf Grape-fern	Maidenhair Spleenwort
Level Fern	Wild Lupine
Large Coralroot	Southern New England Acidic

G-3.1.6 Forest Resources and Trees

Visual observation of aerial photographs indicates that somewhere in excess of 50% of the land area in North Smithfield is wooded. With one acre and larger housing sites being used for new development in large portions of the community, a considerable amount of woodland is now located on individual house lots.

Current Subdivision and Land Development Regulations call for the submission of landscaping plans, which presumably will all include the preservation or installation of street trees, although the requirement of street tree installation is not currently specified. Proposed Land Development Design Standards, however, are very specific regarding plantings and street trees.

Woodlands serve major ecological, hydrological, climatological and aesthetic functions in North Smithfield. They also provide a local source of firewood for those with small woodlots. Where there has been unsympathetic clear-cutting, the community bears the scar for many years. A good example of this is located to the immediate north of Todd's Pond; here all vegetative cover was stripped to remove fill for the construction of Route 146 through Cedar Swamp.

The Town's Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance requires a permit for any clearing or construction involving an area of over 1,000 square feet or more or when the slope is greater than 10%. Excluded from permit requirements, however, are accepted management practices and harvest activities associated with property utilized for private and/or commercial silviculture (forestry) purposes.

Clustering housing using Conservation Development techniques is one method being used in other areas of the State to combine housing and common forested areas.

As of December 2004, three property owners had their land certified as "Forest" land for tax assessment purposes under the Farm, Forest and Open Space Act, and another eight were certified as "Farm/Forest" (meaning there were large tracts of both farm and forest on the property). The certification applies to properties covered by a forest management plan approved by state agencies.

Under the Rhode Island Intent to Cut regulations, state permits are required for the cutting of 5 acres or more, 35 cords or in excess of 8,000 board feet. The RI Division of Forest Environment confirms that North Smithfield is not an active area for forestry but rather is an area for non-managed timber cutting. Agriculture and woodlands contribute to the quality of life in the community and should not be treated lightly; in that sense they add to the common value of the properties in Town.

G-3.1.7 Scenic Resources and Historic Landscapes

A 1989 RIDEM report, *The Rhode Island Landscape Inventory*, identifies the State's significant scenic resources. Only one site in North Smithfield, out of 127 statewide, was listed as "highly scenic". Grange Road was cited as having - "excellent views; distinct forest and land pattern". The Grange Road area has also been nominated for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Because Grange Road is so significant, the Planning Board, for example, is working with the Estate of the Phillips family to preserve stone walls and viewsheds along Grange Road as part of a subdivision of key parcels. Grange Road, and similar roads in North Smithfield should be considered for protection under the Scenic Roads Inventory Ordinance as proposed in the Circulation Element. Development proposals for key parcels on Grange Road are currently before the Planning Board and attempts are being made to preserve the historic landscape features. Possible roads for “Scenic Roadway” designation are listed in the Circulation Element of this Plan.

In addition to Grange Road, the RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission’s 2001 report on *Historic Landscapes* suggests Christiansen Orchards and Wright’s Dairy are worthy of protection and preservation as classic examples of certain types of Rhode Island’s landscapes. Christiansen Orchards continues to produce large quantities of apples and contains several historic buildings, while Wright’s Dairy is one of the very few remaining active dairy farms in the State. The Town wishes to recognize the importance of both of these sites by rezoning them for specifically agricultural purposes. This will encourage their continued use, but will also provide the flexibility these properties need to remain commercially viable.

Although North Smithfield's scenic resources do not run to the unusual and dramatic, there are many man-made and natural landscapes which add to the attractiveness of the community. Many of the natural resources such as Todd's Pond or the Blackstone River Gorge are obscured from public view due to private ownership or limited access. Others are not; the view of the farms and barns on Woonsocket Hill Road as one travels north on Route 146 is both dramatic and memorable. Walks through the Audubon Property off the Providence Pike take one into a seemingly virgin area of slow streams, ponds, fields and woods that could pass for an isolated section of northern New England. These are but a few of North Smithfield's "highly scenic" resources.

Fortunately, as is being pointed out through the efforts of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission and Scenic Rhode Island, Rhode Islanders are learning that there are untapped scenic resources readily at hand to be enjoyed.

G-3.1.8 Threats to North Smithfield's Natural Resources: EPA CERCLIS & Superfund

EPA CERCLIS Sites

Pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) a Comprehensive Environmental Response and Liability Information System list (CERCLIS) has been developed by the US EPA for each state. The CERCLIS list is an inventory of potential hazardous waste sites. This listing means that there is evidence indicating there may have been a release, disposal and/or storage of hazardous materials on this site presently or in the past. Once investigated, locations not found to be a public hazard are not removed from the list. This is done to prevent reinvestigation of areas previously investigated.

Following preliminary assessments and site inspections, those locations deemed to represent an immediate threat to public health and safety are elevated to the National Priority List (NPL) and are commonly referred to as Superfund sites.

Map G - 4 shows the location of the CERCLIS Non-Superfund and the three CERCLIS Superfund sites in North Smithfield. The Non-Superfund sites generally are confined to the active industrial areas in North Smithfield; EPA, in collaboration with RIDEM has, or will be ordering remedial action, if required, to remove any pollutant threats at these sites.

The Non-Superfund sites are identified as follows: Amperex/Philips Electronic Corp.; Apple Acquisition, LLC; ATP Manufacturing (former Tupperware), LLC; Branch Metals; Branch River Industrial Park; Chomerics, Inc. property; Clausen property; Comtorgage; CVS Distribution Facility; Dart Industries; DB Mart; Department of Defense F/Air - RI National Guard Nike Control; Department of Defense F/Army - North Smithfield NIKE Launch; Elizabeth Polak Residence (Williams Street); Glasskraft/SRP; Gouin Supply Company; GTECH; Halliwell Boulevard property; Homestead; Industrial Machine Corp., Property #1 & #2; Liberty Fabrics (former enterprise coatings); Liquid Carbonic; Polytop Corp.; Narragansett Electric (Woonsocket Hill Road); Narragansett Electric (Farnum Substation); Narragansett Electric (Woonsocket Substation); Naylor Property (Ferrier Street); NEC (West Farnum Substation); North Smithfield Auto Salvage; Polytop Corporation; R & L Car Care; Rocky Hill Road Site and Quinn Transmission.

Each of these sites requires special attention. Site-specific data should be collected for each of them. For example, site-specific information for two of these sites is as follows:

- Groundwater contamination has been found in private wells of homes surrounding Black Plain Hill. Contaminant levels exceeded recommended drinking water standards for Trichloroethane and Dichloroethene in some wells tested by RIDEM in 2000. The Rhode Island Air National Guard (RI ANG) facility on Old Oxford Road formerly the Nike Control Site is the suspected source. The RI ANG began on site testing to determine if the source of the contaminants is on their site.
- Methyl tertiary-butyl ether, or MTBE as it is commonly known, has been found in private drinking water wells of homes on Black Plain Road in the vicinity of an auto salvage yard. The contaminant level in some homes exceeded the EPA's lifetime health advisory (HA)

concentration of 20 ug/L. The owner of the salvage yard has taken steps to prevent further releases in accordance with DEM regulations for facilities of this type.

EPA Superfund Sites

The following is a summary of conditions at the three EPA Superfund sites in North Smithfield. Unfortunately, information developed to date does not provide definitive answers on the sites' long-term impacts to surface and groundwater resources. Monitoring continues at all these sites, and monitoring results will dictate whether further EPA action is warranted.

Stamina Mills

Stamina Mills, which is on a 5-acre parcel of land, began operating as a textile mill in the early 1900's. It was closed for an undetermined period of time during the Depression, and changed ownership in the 1940's. In 1969, a solvent scouring system which used trichloroethylene (TCE) for removing oil and dirt from newly woven fabric was installed. Sometime during that same year, an unknown quantity of TCE was spilled at the site. In 1975, the mill was closed. In 1977, a fire destroyed the manufacturing complex; the site has been vacant and unused since then. In 1981, in response to the discovery of private well contamination, the Rhode Island Water Resources Board and the Town of North Smithfield installed a public water line to area residences; however, not all residences were connected to the service. Subsequently, the EPA provided resources to extend the water system and complete connections to those residences. By 1987, all residences impacted by the spill were connected to the public water supply. The Village of Forestdale, with a population of approximately 1,000, is located within one-half mile of the site. A school and private residences with nearly 300 people are located within one-quarter mile of the site. Industrial and commercial facilities with about 1,200 people are within one-half mile of the site. The site is bordered by wetlands and the Branch River to the south.

Groundwater is contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs), primarily TCE and some of its by-products. Sediments are contaminated with TCE, dieldrin, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). The soil is contaminated with TCE, dieldrin, and heavy metals (including lead, arsenic, and cadmium), as well as PAHs. Surface water is contaminated primarily with VOCs. People who trespass on the site potentially are at risk from direct contact with contaminated soils, surface water, or groundwater. In 1986, a security fence was erected to prevent unauthorized entry into the site.

In 1990, the EPA selected the following remedies to clean up the site: in-place vacuum extraction of soil contaminated with TCE in the spill area, which involves installation of a number of shallow wells to withdraw air containing TCE and other VOCs for carbon treatment; excavation of approximately 550 cubic yards of landfill waste and sediments in the 100-year flood plain and placement of excavated landfill waste under a new multi-layer cap; and the extraction of contaminated groundwater and treatment using ultraviolet light (UV) and hydrogen peroxide, an innovative technology to remove VOCs. The mill raceways were to be sealed, and on-site buildings demolished. Deed restrictions were to be used at the site to regulate land use and preserve the integrity of the remedy's components. The septic tank location was to be confirmed and its contents tested and removed. A monitoring program for the groundwater, soil, surface water, and sediments was to be implemented to ensure the effectiveness of the selected

remedies.
Demolition activities were completed in the summer of 1992. At that time, partially standing structures were demolished, debris and building rubble were sorted and disposed of, voids were collapsed and filled in, the two mill raceways were sealed, the septic tank was located and its contents tested, and a majority of the site was graded and covered with clean fill. Quarterly groundwater sampling activities were initiated at the site in November 1992 and were used to establish a baseline of information prior to the design and construction of the groundwater extraction and treatment system. Pre-design field work including the operation of a pilot-scale soil vapor extraction and groundwater UV/Hydrogen Peroxide System was completed during the summer and fall of 1994. The construction of the soil vapor extraction system was completed in December of 1997. The system became operational in May 1998. The landfill capping design was completed and approved by EPA in March 1998. Construction activities were initiated in August 1998 and shortly thereafter technical problems arose which required a modification of the landfill remedy. Rather than being capped in place, landfill wastes were excavated and transported off-site for disposal. Upon completion, approximately 25,000 tons of landfill wastes, soil, and sediment were excavated and disposed of off-site. Excavation and final grading of the former landfill area was completed in October 1999. The groundwater extraction and treatment system design and construction was completed in the spring of 2000, and the system became operational in May of 2000. The groundwater treatment system was modified to consist of air stripping of the groundwater and the use of activated carbon for treatment of the vapor phase. The changes made to the landfill remedy and method of treatment of the groundwater were accounted for by EPA in the Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD) signed on June 27, 2000. A preliminary close-out report (PCOR) was completed by EPA in August of 2000. The PCOR documents that the cleanup remedy has been constructed in accordance with the remedial design plans and specifications. Treatment of the groundwater and contaminated soils will continue until required cleanup levels are achieved or a decision is made by EPA and RIDEM to modify existing cleanup levels.

Landfill & Resource Recovery (L&RR) Site
The Landfill and Resource Recovery, Inc. (L&RR) site is a 28-acre landfill on a 36-acre parcel of land. The site originally was a sand and gravel pit and was used for small-scale refuse disposal from 1927 to 1974. In 1974, the site was sold and developed into a large-scale disposal facility accepting commercial, municipal, and industrial wastes. Until 1979, an estimated 1 million gallons of hazardous wastes were accepted and disposed of with other wastes in the central portion of the landfill. The hazardous wastes included many types of bulk and drummed organic and inorganic materials in liquid, sludge, and solid forms. In 1979, the operator placed a polyvinyl chloride cover over the area containing hazardous waste to prevent rainwater from entering. Landfilling of commercial and residential wastes continued until 1985, when the owners closed the landfill and placed another synthetic cover over most of the landfill. Soil was placed over the synthetic cover and it was partially planted with vegetation.

The cap was designed and built with gas vents to prevent the build-up of gases under the cap. The selected long-term remedy for this site includes: installation of more substantial fencing; stabilization of the steep side slopes of the landfill and installation of a synthetic cap over the uncapped area of the landfill, with establishment of a vegetative cover over the entire landfill;

collection and thermal destruction of underlying gases in an enclosed flare; and groundwater and air monitoring. In 1994 and 1995, under EPA supervision, the parties potentially responsible for site contamination completed the design and construction of these cleanup actions. Long-term operation and maintenance activities are currently underway and will continue until established cleanup goals are met.

Although the area is still rural, there are approximately 10,000 residents in a 25-square-mile area; the area appears to be undergoing a substantial growth in residential development. Within a 1/2-mile radius of the site, there are fewer than 50 residences and no multi-residential housing developments. More than 3,000 people live within 3 miles of the site. An industrial park is located approximately 3,000 feet to the north, and Air National Guard installations are located approximately 1,000 feet to the east and 3,000 feet to the south of the site. Most, if not all, residences in the site's vicinity obtain their drinking water from individual wells. Trout Brook, adjacent to the site, and the Slatersville Reservoir, into which it discharges, are used for fishing and other recreation, but are not public water supply sources.

The air at the landfill was contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including carbon tetrachloride, chloroform, and benzene. The on-site groundwater is contaminated with arsenic, lead, and VOCs from waste liquids disposed of on site and from rainwater entering the landfilled wastes, causing contamination to seep into the groundwater. The surface water on the site is contaminated with lead. The immediate health threat at the site was from gaseous emissions from the landfill. The landfill closure in 1994 and 1995 minimized threats of contamination in air, groundwater and surface water. The landfill is enclosed by a chain link fence. The only significant environmental threat was to the wetlands surrounding the site. The cleanup action minimized soil erosion from the landfill and the resultant filling in of the nearby wetlands.

EPA signed a Record of Decision (ROD) in September 1988, requiring construction of a landfill cap and an enclosed flare to thermally treat the landfill gases. After unsuccessful negotiations with the potentially responsible parties (PRPs), EPA ordered the parties to construct the remedy. The remedy was eventually completed in the summer of 1995. Since that time, the PRPs have been operating and maintaining the remedy as well as conducting monitoring to ensure the protectiveness of the remedy. EPA and Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) have been reviewing and overseeing the site monitoring and have found that the remedy is functioning as designed and constructed. EPA completed the first 5-year review in 1999 and the second 5-year review in September 2004. This most recent 5-year review concluded that the remedy implemented in 1995 remains protective of human health and the environment; however, several recommendations were noted that need to be addressed to ensure that the remedy is protective over the long-term. Those recommendations included:

- Determining the extent of the plume between the landfill and discharge area,
- Testing for manganese and cadmium,
- Determining if unsealed gap exists between liner and gas extraction wells (and sealing them, if necessary),
- Finalizing the site survey and updating the institutional controls.

Western Sand & Gravel

The Western Sand & Gravel site consists of about 25 acres of land, and is located in a rural area on the boundary of Burrillville and North Smithfield, Rhode Island. The site was a sand and gravel quarry operation from 1953 until 1975. From 1975 to 1979, approximately 12 acres of the 20-acre site were used for the disposal of liquid wastes, including chemicals and septic waste. Over time, the wastes penetrated into the permeable soil and contaminated the groundwater. Contents of tank trucks were also emptied directly into 12 open lagoons and pits, none of which were lined with protective materials. The pits were concentrated on a hill that slopes towards Tarkiln Brook, which is used for recreational purposes and drains into the Slatersville Reservoir. The State closed the disposal operation because nearby residents complained of odors. Approximately 600 people within a 1-mile radius of the site depend on groundwater. Eight homes were historically found to have contaminated wells.

Groundwater is contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) including toluene, trichloroethylene (TCE), trichloroethane, benzene, chlorobenzene, and dichloroethane. The soil also was contaminated with VOCs. Prior to the capping of the soil and sludge and the provision of an alternate water supply, potential exposure to VOCs may have occurred by ingestion or direct contact with contaminated soil or groundwater.

The site has been addressed in four stages: initial actions and three cleanup plans selected in three Record of Decisions (RODs).

In early 1980, the State began to pump one lagoon dry to halt leachate movement. Approximately 60,000 gallons of liquid chemical and septic waste were removed for off-site disposal. A groundwater recirculation system was installed. In 1982, the EPA built a permanent alternate water supply to service approximately 56 parcels of land. The potentially responsible parties installed carbon canister filters as a temporary protective measure in all the homes in the affected area until the permanent water supply was functional. In 1988, the parties potentially responsible for contamination installed a 2-acre cap over the areas of contaminated soil and sludge and graded the site to promote run-off and drainage. The site was also fenced and the potentially responsible parties agreed to maintain the fence, cap, and site. All construction is complete.

The potentially responsible parties conducted an investigation to determine the extent of contamination and to evaluate alternatives for cleanup of the off-site groundwater. The investigation was completed in early 1991. Based on this investigation, the EPA selected a remedy of cleanup of groundwater through natural attenuation. The progress of natural attenuation is evaluated by EPA every three years. If natural attenuation is not progressing at the expected rate, EPA may require the installation of a groundwater pump and treat system. At the present time, the site groundwater continues to be cleaned up through natural attenuation processes.

In October 2001, a Prospective Purchaser Agreement between EPA-New England and Supreme Mid-Atlantic, Inc. (Supreme) was signed. The Prospective Purchaser Agreement grants a

covenant not to sue to Supreme with respect to existing contamination at the Site. Supreme purchased the 25-acre site in 2001. Supreme constructed a truck body assembly plant on the site in 2003-2004. The development consists primarily of a 20,000 square feet assembly building and open space for truck parking. The truck body assembly plant is currently in operation and employs about 30 people.

G-3.2 Inventory of Historic Resources

North Smithfield's significant historic resources consist of districts, structures and archaeological resources that represent patterns of community settlement and growth from pre-European settlement through twentieth centuries. Most of these resources are fully documented and described in *Historic and Architectural Resources of North Smithfield: A Preliminary Report*, prepared by the RIHPC in 1980. One subsequent inventory of historic resources has been taken by the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission for their 1989 *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan.* However, this document was based on the earlier 1980 inventory, which remains the most comprehensive record of North Smithfield's historic resources prepared to date. Due to the presence of these documents, this section is not intended to provide a detailed history but rather to give an overview for resource protection.

G-3.2.1 History of the Town

North Smithfield's cultural history is evident today in the Town's pattern of development and architecture, much of which dates to the 18th and 19th centuries. Agriculture, once the basis of the region's economy, is now a minor occupation. Nevertheless, the legacy of the Town's agricultural past is still apparent in the historic farmhouses, the stone walls, and the open fields once devoted to agriculture. In a similar way, the manufacturing settlements which sprang up in the latter part of the 18th century have left a rich legacy in the mill villages, characterized by an urban design and architecture of another age.

In 1666, what is now North Smithfield was settled by European colonists from Providence. Prior to that time, the area was inhabited by Native Americans. North Smithfield remained largely agrarian during the early years of the 18th century. During the latter part of the 18th century, small, decentralized milling operations sprang up wherever waterpower was available. The simplicity of 18th century life is reflected in the buildings that survive. Along Farnum Pike, Iron Mine Hill Road and Louisquisset Pike are several surviving 18th century houses. They are also to be found in the Grange Road District, in Union Village, on Grange Road, and Pound Hill Road.

A major route in the pre-Revolutionary period is today's Smithfield Road (146A), (see Map G - 5), formerly the Great Road and today marked by milestones indicating the distance from Providence. Several mills, serving the farmers, were located at various waterpower sites in North Smithfield. These most likely included a gristmill, sawmills initially and a mill manufacturing iron farm tools by the end of the century.

During the 19th century, what had been small settlements began to expand. In Union Village, several large houses, a tavern, bank (the first in northern R.I.), and academy were built shortly after 1800. Later, several substantial dwellings were constructed. After 1851, Union Village was bypassed by the completion of the Providence and Worcester Railroad through Woonsocket. Whereas Union Village grew as a result of its highway location, the other villages grew as mill villages dependent on the waterpower of the Branch and Blackstone

Rivers. The industrial transformation of the area contributed to the decline of agriculture as the basis for the Town's economy.

Of the several textile mill villages that developed during the 19th century, Slatersville was the first. In 1806, Samuel Slater, who had earlier set up America's first successful textile mill in Pawtucket, formed a partnership which was the basis for "Slatersville" which began operations a year later, as one of the first factory villages in the U.S. The present mill was erected in 1826. The village was designed to be self-contained -- and included additional factories, mill houses, a Congregational Church and a pair of commercial blocks. Much of the village remains today, including not only the buildings cited, but later 19th century additions, such as St. John's Roman Catholic Church (1872) built for the French-Canadian millworkers.

Other extant mill villages include: Forestdale, inaugurated in 1825 with a scythe factory along the Branch River. By the end of the century, the Forestdale settlement included a commercial block, a cotton mill, a row of Greek Revival houses, and a one-room schoolhouse.

Waterford developed as a village in the early 1800's to serve several mills including Mammoth Mill along Canal Street. The mill's name was derived from its size as the largest mill building in the United States at the time. The mill's ruins are still in evidence.

Transportation improvements during the 19th century stimulated industrial development of that time. These included highways, a canal and rail and streetcar service. By 1875, agriculture had experienced a gradual decline at which time the census recorded 191 farms, with farmland beginning to revert to forest. By 1900 the Town's population had dipped to 2,400 from its 19th century peak of 3,200 in 1875.

During the first half of the 20th century, the textile industry of New England underwent a serious decline which adversely affected North Smithfield firms. Tupperware's purchase of two North Smithfield factories helped stabilize the local economy in the 1950's. During the same decade, Slatersville village properties, once owned by one company, were sold piecemeal.

The advent of car ownership facilitated North Smithfield's gradual conversion from a self-contained group of settlements to a community functioning increasingly as a suburb. As a result, the villages declined and the countryside became dotted with homes. North Smithfield's access to employment stimulated residential development. This development continued along public ways, as it had historically. However, with the advent of zoning, the development was sited on uniform-sized lots rather than in conjunction with farms. A significant departure from the traditional settlement patterns is represented by the subdivision of tracts of land into lots of like area and dimensions, also introduced by the Town's Zoning Ordinance. These recent land development patterns represented a significant departure from the traditional dispersed agricultural pattern on one hand and the compact mill village settlement, on the other. In terms of "change-factors" affecting cultural resources, subdivision and zoning are among the most important.

G-3.2.2 Historic Districts and Areas

North Smithfield contains several concentrations of historic structures, industrial systems and other historic resources which represent a cohesive development pattern and which retain many of their original qualities of design and environment. Several of these areas, recorded on the local inventory, are protected by entry on the National Register of Historic Places and one has been designated as a local historic district. These historic districts are shown on Map G-5, Historic Resources, within this Plan Update.

Placement on the National Register - the official inventory of the nation's cultural and historic resources which are worthy of preservation - affords limited protection from potentially intrusive federally funded or licensed projects through review procedures. Under certain circumstances, it also may provide tax benefits for rehabilitated income-producing properties, and more limited funds for matching grants for restoration of key properties.

The establishment of local historic districts provides, through enactment of historic district zoning, more stringent controls on the exterior appearances of structures located within district boundaries. A local Historic District Commission rules on the appropriateness of alterations and new construction within districts. The following listings are current as of February 2005.

National Register Districts

Slatersville Historic District: The district includes the Slatersville reservoir, dams and water-power systems, and 19th century mill, commercial blocks, mill houses, churches, and other buildings along Main Street, Green Street, School Street, Railroad Street and several side streets.

Forestdale Historic District: Lies at the intersection of Main Street and Maple Avenue, near the Branch River/Mill Pond dam and mill. The mill housing runs along both streets.

As with other mill villages, the value of Slatersville and Forestdale lies not only in individual structures but also in its historic street plan and development pattern, which evolved to service a self-contained community.

Old Smithfield Road Historic District: This historic area consists of a seven-tenths mile section of Smithfield Road (originally Great Road) north of the Manville Road. There are six noteworthy houses, two cemeteries, stone walls, an apple orchard, fields, woods and two brooks. Laid out in the 17th century, the original Great Road joined Providence to Worcester. In this part of North Smithfield, the highway's course was altered in about 1741 to follow what is now Smithfield Road. Except for an 18th century tavern, the district's features are 19th century. Smithfield Road itself is important as it retains the narrow, winding roadway, lined by stone walls and passing through open fields, woods, and houses.

Union Village Historic District: This district is a half-mile long section of Great Road (Route 146A), from Woonsocket Hill Road to a point just beyond Westwood Road. Union Village

includes fifteen 18th and early 19th century structures as well as twelve late 19th and 20th century buildings.

National Register Eligible Districts
The following districts in North Smithfield have been determined eligible but are not yet listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

St. Paul Street (Waterford) Historic District: Includes a series of structures built from 1845 to 1927, located on the street and dominated by the 1852 Gothic Revival - St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church possibly designed by Richard Upjohn. Also includes the Mammoth Mill and Saranac Mill sites which will be the subject of an archeological study funded by a RIDOT Enhancement Grant. Funds will also be used to design and develop interpretive features at site.

Grange Road Historic District: Includes a section of Grange Road (approximately seven tenths of a mile long) lying north of Providence Pike, and a short section of Rocky Hill Road where the two roads meet. This is a very good 18th century example of Rhode Island's rural agrarian landscape. The district contains four 18th century farm complexes, and other historic structures including: a schoolhouse, grange hall, 4 cemeteries, fields bounded by stone walls; and 2 narrow early roadways.

Another potentially eligible district is on Great Road at the Branch River in the north-central part of Town. This district could contain two industrial areas, several mill houses, a fire station and a variety of commercial establishments. It is well known as the location of the Tupperware complex.

Also recommended for further study and possible nomination to the National Register is Wright's Dairy on Woonsocket Hill Road. This working farm complex contains several historic buildings and is listed in the RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission's 2001 publication titled *Historic Landscapes of Rhode Island*.

Local Historic Districts
To date, Union Village and the Blunders are the only Town designated historic districts, and only Union Village is listed simultaneously on the National Register.

Other Historic Areas
Other areas worthy of protection are the following "Historic Areas" that were included in the 1980 report on *Historic and Architectural Resources in North Smithfield*:

- Blackstone River/High Rocks Natural and Historic Area: Located along the northern border of Town where the Blackstone River enters Rhode Island is a rugged, and mainly undeveloped section of the River. This area includes High Rocks and continues south to just below Branch River.

- Cedar Swamp Natural and Historic Area: This is a relatively large swamp of historic importance for trapping of animals and hunting along Cherry Brook in the north-central part of Town.

- Mattity or Mattetokomitt Meadow Natural and Historic Area: An extensive swamp in the southwestern part of Town at the headwaters of the Woonasquatucket River used initially for animal grazing but is now of greater botanical importance.

- Nipsachuck Natural and Historic Area: Located in the extreme southwestern corner of North Smithfield, south of lake Belair and west of Nipsachuck Hill, this area was of historic importance during the King Phillip's War in the late 1600s, but is still of geologic interest due to its swamp, irregular "kame and kettle" topography and esker (a long, narrow and steep ridge).

- Woonsocket Reservoir No. 3 Natural and Historic Area: Of critical importance as a modern watershed, this area north of Rocky Hill Road and west of Woonsocket Reservoir No. 3 in the southeastern corner of North Smithfield, contains a rich mixture of cultural features and was of historic importance for its farmsteads.

G-3.2.3 Historic Structures

Structures - consisting of buildings, roadways, cemeteries, and engineering structures - both within and located independently of districts, are recorded in the local inventory, *Historic and Architectural Resources of North Smithfield: A Preliminary Report*. Those that have been individually listed on the National Register are given below. (Numbers refer to Local Inventory Number.) These structures are shown on the Map G-5, Historic Resources, within this Plan. A longer list of structures that are potentially eligible for listing is also excerpted from the inventory. Since this list was compiled over two decades ago, it would be necessary to update determination of eligibility for these resources, to assure that the qualities that made them Register-eligible have not been lost. However, this 1980 *Report* is still the most comprehensive inventory as of February 2005.

Individual Structures on the National Register
Peleg Arnold Tavern, 4 Woonsocket Hill Road (1690, c. 1790)
Smith-Andrews-Taft-Todd Farm, 670 Farnum Pike (c. 1740 et seq.)
William Mowry House, Farnum Pike (c. 1802-1805)
Tyler Mowry House, 112 Sayles Hill Road (c. 1825)

Individual Structures Potentially Eligible for National Register Listing
Aldrich Farm, Comstock Road (#20) (1775, 1815, 1825)
Mowry-Connolly House, Iron Mine Hill Road (#44) (c. 1800)
A. Aldrich Farm, Iron Mine Hill Road (#45)
Ananias Mowry II House, Iron Mine Hill Road (#47) (c. 1764)
West Acres, Louisquisset Pike (#55) (c. 1730 et seq.)
Metcalf Marsh House, Mechanic Street (#62) (c. 1820)

Andrews Tavern, Old Great Road (#72) (1825)
Old Sayles Hill Historic Roadway (#73) (17th century)
#485 Pound Hill Road (#79) (c. 1810)
Nathan Staples Farm (#88) (Late 18th century and 1810)
Blackmar Wing Farm, 2338 Providence Pike (#91) (c. 1690 et seq.)
Cyrus Arnold Farm, Woonsocket Hill Road (#109) (1815, c. 1890)

G-3.2.4 Archaeological Resources

Mapped information provided to the Town under the RIGIS program shows 17 areas in North Smithfield where the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission has identified prehistoric and historic archaeological resources. The RIGIS map showing these archaeological resources is on file at the North Smithfield Planning Department offices.

One location, the Three Dog Site (Blunders), near Route 5 and 104 on the Smithfield Town Line, is the only prehistoric archaeological site presently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A 17-lot subdivision proposed for this 76.5 acre site received Master Plan approval in 2004. The Master Plan includes a proposed dedication of 30 acres of open space. The historic district and sensitive habitat area are included in the open space areas.

The following tables summarize archaeological resources presently on file at the RIHPC, status of documentation/protection, and potential threats:

Table G-3.2.4 North Smithfield Historic Archaeological Resources

SITE	GENERAL LOCATION	STATUS	THREATS
Cider Mill Foundation	Route 104, near Todd's Pond	Potentially National Register eligible	Road improvements; scattered housing
Whetstone Quarry	Near Todd's Pond	Potentially National Register eligible	Road improvements; scattered housing, logging, potential gravel
Saw Mill, Dam, Ice House	Route 104, Southern end of Primrose Pond	Potentially National Register eligible	Private development
Schoolhouse Foundation	Near intersection of Routes 104 and 7	Potentially National Register eligible	Housing development; gas pipeline maintenance
Abandoned Farnum Pike	Route 7, between Route 104 and 5/104	Potentially National Register eligible	Road improvements; scattered housing
Electric Street Car Line	Near Route 146 on Lincoln Town Line	Potentially National Register eligible	Road improvements; water pipeline construction
Morris Mill	Near Route 146 on Lincoln Town Line	Potentially National Register eligible	Road improvements
Crookfall Dam	Near Route 146 on Lincoln Town Line	Potentially National Register eligible	Road improvements

In addition to these sites, there are several others considered "low priority" including sections of dirt roads, a railroad station foundation, and stone walls where little information is available.

Table G-3.2.4.a North Smithfield Prehistoric Archaeological Resources

SITE	GENERAL LOCATION	STATUS	THREATS
Three Dog Site/Blunders	Route 5 and 104, near Smithfield Town Line	National Register	Road improvements; construction
Twin Indian Cemetery	Route 5 near High School	Further Study Recommended	Active farm; encroaching gravel operation
Vegetable Garden Site	Woonsocket Hill Road, Union Village	Further Study Recommended	High tension powerline maintenance; housing development
Crookfall Brook Rock Shelter	Crookfall Brook near Route 146 and Lincoln Town Line	Further Study Recommended	City of Woonsocket in ownership of large "undevelopable" tract - (Reasonably well protected)

There are five other mapped prehistoric sites which contain single artifacts and are therefore considered as "low priority."

G-3.2.5 Threats to North Smithfield's Historic and Cultural Resources

Inappropriate Change, Redevelopment

There is an ongoing need to educate local residents and property owners about the value of their historic resources and advise them of the direct relationship of the elements that comprise historic character to this value. Choice of unsuitable architectural materials, out-of-scale additions, styles that bear little relation to surrounding New England architecture, and poorly executed craftsmanship can cheapen and degrade structures, often negatively affecting their market value. In addition to the direct economic benefits of well maintained historic properties (such as those evidenced in Union Village and Slatersville) there is the less tangible but equally important value of community identity and particular character - qualities by which the Town is identified and recognized by residents and by outsiders. Education relies on ready sources of information on local periods and styles of architecture, where to find architects and contractors skilled in restoration practice, and where to get financing assistance for appropriate materials and technical help.

Deterioration/Inactivity

While the majority of North Smithfield's historic resources are not threatened by disrepair, a portion of one asset, the granite buildings of the Slatersville mill site, are in imminent danger of being lost due to deterioration. Despite its listing on the National Register, it is vacant and is not be adequately protected. The Master Plan for a mixed-use project that includes the renovation of all the structures on the site to National Park Service standards has been approved by the Planning Board. An application for Special Use Permit for this project is pending before the Zoning Board with a recommendation for approval from the Planning Board. The developer of the project has indicated a willingness to work with the Town on the nomination papers for National Historic Landmark status.

Related to the threat of deterioration is that of inactivity, the "threat of doing nothing". Without education about local resources and their value, and the benefits of saving them, there is likely to be little motivation to pursue a preservation program. North Smithfield has demonstrated the advantages of historic districting and of National Register listing for a portion of its resources. Building a prioritized program for extending these protections, educating local people and encouraging related activities is a critical goal.

Incremental Development

North Smithfield's historic and cultural resources are also threatened by the development that occurs incrementally over time. Loss of historic character typically occurs in areas that have no growth management plan or where weak land use controls permit haphazard construction. Development or redevelopment which introduces uses without regard for neighborhood character, or is otherwise uncoordinated with actual community needs cannot best take advantage of timing and locational benefits or maximize potential economic advantages of a market area, or provide a climate where ancillary uses will thrive. This type of development can separate historic buildings from the environmental context in which they are best appreciated, creating visual intrusions or conflicting uses that devalue historic properties and negatively affect quality of life. Typical sprawl development including strip malls, cookie-cutter suburban subdivisions with large lots and uniform setbacks lead to a sameness which eliminates open spaces, destroys scenic vistas and detracts from the sense of place. North Smithfield has clearly recognized the need for coordinated development in creating a Comprehensive Plan to guide the future it wishes to see.

Threats to Archaeological Sites

As noted in *Historic and Architectural Resources of North Smithfield*, there is limited professional archaeological knowledge of the earliest inhabitants of what is now North Smithfield. The Narragansett Indian Tribe has advised the Town of an interest in protecting its Tribal and historic and cultural resources located in North Smithfield. There may be other similarly valuable periods of resources not yet recorded. Lack of knowledge of other existing sites is a threat that can be counteracted by continued surveying and use of predictive land use models in areas deemed archaeologically sensitive.

Further study is also recommended for those sites which have been identified by the State survey and which may potentially be eligible for National Register listing. Since any land development project - gravel excavation, road construction, public works projects or building development - can potentially disrupt these sites, coordination of mapped data with state and local agencies (DOT and local planning board, for example) can help pinpoint archaeological resources before they are disturbed.

G-3.2.6. Regulatory Organizations Available to Protect Historic and Cultural Resources

Within Town government, there are several officers and boards which, while not charged with the protection of cultural resources, nevertheless have the potential to be highly influential in that regard. The North Smithfield Historic District Commission (HDC) and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission (BRVNHCC), because of their unique mandates, will be discussed in greater detail.

For regulation of all land uses, the Planning Board and Zoning Board have the primary authority. Thus the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Regulations are their primary responsibility. The Ordinance and Regulations have a strong impact on cultural resources, an impact which is often unrecognized.

The Town Administrator and Town Planner are often charged with the conception and application for non-local funding for a variety of activities which may explicitly include or indirectly influence the protection of cultural resources. For example, such funding can be obtained for educational purposes, promotion of the arts, redevelopment or adaptive use activities, or programs for the improvement of public spaces and parks or housing rehabilitation.

The schools in North Smithfield have a powerful potential role in educating local children about local history including the architecture, urban design and other types of ancient structures in the community.

North Smithfield Historic District Commission

The North Smithfield Historic District Commission was established to administer Historic District Zoning for the preservation of structures of historic or architectural value in North Smithfield. The Commission administers historical area zoning to preserve districts and specific buildings of North Smithfield which have been designated by Town Ordinance as historic districts.

The Commission is appointed by the Town Council. Within a Historic District, a property owner (including the Town itself) proposing an alteration affecting the exterior appearance of a structure and requiring a building permit, must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission.

Currently, the only two areas subject to the regulation of the Commission are properties within Union Village Historic District and Blunders Historic District.

The current regulatory function of the Commission is limited to exterior changes within Historic Districts which would require a building permit. Thus, the Commission does not regulate much of the change associated with development or redevelopment.

Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor

The John H. Chaffee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor was established along the Blackstone River Valley in Rhode Island and Massachusetts by Congress to recognize the historic and cultural significance of the Valley. The Corridor covers 23 municipalities, including North Smithfield.

The Corridor Commission was also established to develop and implement a plan with a primary purpose being to protect the Valley's historic, cultural and natural resources. At this time, the Commission functions as an agency in partnership with other government bodies, such as North Smithfield and the National Park Service, rather than exercising regulatory or other powers.

Although for its existence and funding, the Corridor Commission is currently dependent on Congress, the Corridor Commission continues to play a vital role in broadening an awareness of North Smithfield as part of a region of rich cultural heritage. The agency has worked cooperatively with the North Smithfield Historic District Commission in educational programs on the significance of Slatersville. The Local Historic District Commission has approached the BRVNHCC on numerous occasions, such as, for example, for inclusion on cooperative efforts such as a signage program for historic resources in the Blackstone Valley. The Town supports the reauthorization of the Corridor in 2006 and expects the organization, regardless of Congress's decision, to continue to thrive because of the relationships it has established over the years and the valley-wide beneficial work it has done.

G-3.2.7 Tools Available to Protect Historic and Cultural Resources

Tools available for the protection of North Smithfield's cultural resources include the following:

Regulation

Historic District Zoning: Under Title 45-24.1 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, the Town Council is empowered to designate mapped districts for historic district zoning which empowers the local Historic District Commission to grant or deny permissions for exterior alterations within the district.

North Smithfield has designated two such districts, the Union Village Historic District and Blunders Historic District. This designation is the primary, but not the only, regulatory tool available to the Town for the protection of cultural resources. Its advantages are the extent of protection afforded to the exterior of significant structures (both public and private) within a district.

Zoning and Subdivision Regulations: Whereas Historic District Zoning is quite limited in its scope, land use zoning covers a broad array of subjects codified in North Smithfield in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. It is possible to include cultural resource protection in zoning and subdivision regulations. Common examples of doing so include requiring a Special Use Permit prior to significant alteration of mapped cultural resources or including impacts on cultural resources in site or design review procedures, as North Smithfield is considering doing with the proposed Conservation Development Ordinance.

Overlay Districts: According to the State's Zoning Enabling Act of 1991, municipalities may create overlay districts. Such districts are superimposed on one or more underlying zones and involve a set of additional requirements applicable to the properties within the Overlay District. North Smithfield already uses this tool to protect its aquifers and is considering another overlay zone to preserve and facilitate reuse of several of its mill villages.

National Register of Historic Places Nomination

The National Register, maintained by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior, is a permanent record of structures, sites, areas and objects that have contributed importantly to American history and culture.

As previously described, tax benefits are available to owners of income producing National Register listed or eligible properties for rehabilitation work performed in accordance with the standards of the U.S. Department of the Interior. Furthermore, when Federal funds are used for a project which may affect a National Register property (for example, a highway improvement), the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) requires environmental assessments and related mitigation measures to minimize damage to such properties. In addition, Register listing confers benefits to eligible properties under specific circumstances. For example, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) may be used for historic rehabilitation for privately owned individual structures.

Grant Monies for a Variety of Activities

For Improvements: The CDBG monies may be used for a wide variety of development related activities which involve cultural resource protection. Such activities include, but are not limited to, rehabilitation of privately owned properties if the household beneficiaries are at least 51% low and moderate income. It is possible to create a residential rehabilitation program combining the protection of historic homes with building code compliance rehabilitation. CDBG funds may be applied to adaptive reuse projects, again if there are significant benefits to low/moderate income households involved. These Federal funds may also be used for streetscape and public spaces and park improvements, including the acquisition and placing of period benches, lampposts, paving and other amenities.

The National Park Service provides limited funding, administered through the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission and from partnerships formed by the Commission, for a range of activities that interpret, educate, protect, manage, and stimulate public and private investment in the cultural and natural assets of the Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor.

The RI Historical Preservation Commission also helps owners meet the costs of maintaining their historic properties with tax incentives, preservation easements and low interest loans.

For Education of Local People: There are grants available from the Rhode Island Historic Preservation Commission for educational activities (slide shows, video, talks, books, etc.) relating to increasing awareness of cultural resources among local people.

Education is important for two reasons: 1) people typically resist efforts which personally affect their properties if the value and consequences associated with the effort is not clearly understood, and 2) whereas those involved in cultural resources protection tend to appreciate both the historic and aesthetic merits of resources in question, many others do not, unless they are personally drawn into the question of the resources' value. This personal involvement is best achieved through education actively involving the person or people whose appreciation is sought.

For Planning and Inventory Work: The RI Historical Preservation Commission grants may be used for inventorying cultural resources which have yet to be sufficiently documented in North Smithfield and also for planning activities for protecting cultural resources.

Economic Development and Tourism

One aspect of economic development particularly appropriate to cultural resource protection is tourism. The primary focus, initially, should be on increasing local awareness of the value of the Town's cultural resources (both aesthetically and economically). Local awareness then turns into regional and statewide awareness and ultimately potential improvements to the tourist economy.

Both the *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor* and *Draft Regional Comprehensive Tourism Planning Component*, prepared by the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, Inc., are rich in ideas. Local efforts involving culturally related economic development should be coordinated with these two regional organizations.

G-3.2.8 Evaluation of Existing Preservation Activity and Needs

Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Resources

Prepared in 1980, *Historic and Architectural Resources of North Smithfield: A Preliminary Report*, provides a well-documented source for the community's historic assets which is still adequate as a baseline for decision making on the majority of local historic resources. The inventory should be updated. Needed is information on changes to structures that have occurred since its original publication–alterations, deletions, and discoveries of new resources, uncovered by subsequent research.

Archaeological Resources Documentation

Previous discussion of archaeological inventory work has noted that some information on historic and prehistoric resources is mapped and on file on the RIGIS and with the RIHPC. There is a need to further document Indian campgrounds and possibly other historic and prehistoric sites in North Smithfield. Locations and potential threats as previously listed should be integrated into local land use planning and surveying procedures. Another important goal is to assess levels of significance for archaeological resources, in particular, which of the mapped sites may be eligible for the National Register.

National Register Documentation

To date, four areas in North Smithfield have been designated as districts on the National Register, two other districts have been determined eligible, another may be eligible, and four individual structures enjoy National Register Protection.

In order to meet the broad goal of increasing awareness of cultural resources, the comprehensive level of documentation on local, state and federal levels afforded by National Register status is vital to local educational efforts and perspective. Clearly, more districts, properties, and archaeological sites in North Smithfield belong on the Register, and the 1980 list of potentially eligible resources deserves evaluation in light of present conditions. A revised priority list should be reviewed by the North Smithfield Historic District Commission in conjunction with other local boards and the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. As a Certified Local Government, North Smithfield would be eligible to apply for funds from RIHPC for listing of districts, individual properties, and archaeological resources cited in the inventory.

Because of its national and regional prominence and level of deterioration, Slatersville deserves a high priority in preservation planning and a deeper level of protection than its present National Register status provides.

Local Historic Districts

While it should be pursued as a basic preservation tool, National Register listing alone may not be entirely effective in guiding change, especially where privately funded actions are concerned. Historic districts created and enforced through local enabling legislation have been very effective as a means of managing development in historic areas in many communities. Union Village has provided the impetus for preservation-conscious rehabilitation and maintenance. This in turn has translated into relatively stable market values and a spirit of "keeping up appearances" vital to the well being of historic areas.

North Smithfield Historic District Commission

The Commission has a strong history of activity, in efforts to regulate changes within the Union Village Historic District, pursue funding for preservation activities, enact educational programming, and cooperate with other local planning and administrative activities involving preservation in historic areas. The Commission continues to pursue a brisk educational and informational program to designate Slatersville as a local Historic District.

Despite the interest and dedication of its members, and an impressive list of accomplishments undertaken with volunteer labor, the local Historical Commission has much more work to do than it has manpower or resources. Many of the preservation activities it hopes to see realized will require funding and expertise from outside sources.

Town Planning and Preservation

As evidenced by the preparation of this document, the Town of North Smithfield has been pro-active in including a historic preservation element in its local Comprehensive Plan. More specific recommendations pertaining to strengthening historic area and structure planning and regulations are contained in the 1994 *Slatersville Area Plan* prepared by Everett Associates, Inc.

The *Slatersville Plan* serves not only as a vision for future improvements to Slatersville and Forestdale but helped forge partnerships between the Town, RIDOT and Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission who helped fund the Plan's preparation.

G-4.0 The Plan

G-4.1 The Natural Resources Plan

The Natural Resources Plan is focused on protecting the significant water and land resources which occur naturally in North Smithfield. Respondents to the 2001 Community Survey consistently recognized natural resource protection as the most critical task ahead. When asked to rate their levels of concern for certain environmental issues, groundwater and surface water received the highest scores. The respondents linked resource protection with open space acquisition. Beyond supporting efforts that "encourage permanent open space" (79% of respondents), 55% of respondents felt providing additional land for open space was the highest priority and 82% of these respondents indicated their willingness to finance the costs of acquisition/protection. Recognizing the diversity of these natural resources, a variety of approaches and techniques are recommended.

It is suggested that the Town particularly avail itself of the resources of the EPA and RIDEM (e.g. Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program) whose major concerns are nonpoint source pollutants (stormwater, runoff, eroded sediment, excess fertilizers and pesticides, septic tank leachates and road salt).

G-4.1.1 Aquifer Protection

The following approaches are suggested for the protection of the Slatersville and Branch River Aquifers and other lesser groundwater reservoirs and recharge areas which have potentials for public water supply.

Groundwater Overlay Zoning
The Town responded to the 1992 Comprehensive Plan's call for groundwater protection by adopting Section 6-19 of the Zoning Ordinance titled "Regulation of Groundwater Aquifer Zones, Groundwater Recharge Areas, Wellhead Protection Areas and Water Supply Basin". As recommended by the Comprehensive Plan, the regulations dictating uses over these particular resources are more stringent than in the underlying districts. The current Overlay language ought to be reviewed for possible expansion of the list of prohibited uses and the Overlay map should be revised to clearly show all protection zones including surface water supply basins. More specifically, it ought to prohibit excessive water drawdown for non-municipal uses. More resources ought to be spent on enforcement of the Ordinance and property owner education. The bedrock aquifers and especially those areas sensitive to brittle fracture zones ought to be mapped and baseline data collected for the purpose of monitoring ground water quality.

Wastewater Management Districts

Individual sewage disposal systems in Rhode Island fail at a rate of 13% per year. North Smithfield is not immune to this problem which could have a sever impact on the Town's water resources. As noted in the Services and Facilities Element, there are a number of places within areas contributing to the recharge of aquifers and with direct drainage to surface water reservoirs which have experienced problems with failing onsite septic systems. Sewering may be the solution in some critical areas, but sewers generally are not recommended where growth at higher densities over aquifers or within watersheds could be induced. Also, sewering large areas of large lot development is very expensive.

The Wastewater Facilities Plan Update, which is recommended in the Services and Facilities Element, should reconfirm where sewers are essential and where Wastewater Management Districts are a viable water resource protection device.

Wastewater Management Districts, based on legislation passed in the 1987 General Assembly, may be established by individual municipalities. Essentially, they would provide a system for inspections, pumping and maintenance of individual sewage disposal systems in designated areas. The Rhode Island Division of Planning, in collaboration with RIDEM, is developing a regional management approach to assisting individual towns and cities with the administration of Wastewater Management Districts.

In 2003, the Town received a RIDEM grant to prepare an Onsite Wastewater Management Plan. A consultant will be hired to prepare the plan that will provide the basis for enactment of wastewater management districts.

Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance

North Smithfield's Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance requiring proper provisions for water disposal and the protection of soil surfaces during and after construction is in conformance with State law. However, the Ordinance needs some adjustment in light of the recently adopted Stormwater Management Plan. A major objective is the prevention of water pollution. Enforcement remains a challenge due to competing and limited resources.

Subdivision and Land Development Regulations

The present Subdivision and Land Development Regulations do require consideration of drainage and the suitability of lots for the individual sewage disposal systems. However, as written, the Regulations appear to favor the piping of stormwater rather than the use of natural drainage courses.

The Regulations should be reexamined to consider best management practices (BMP) such as natural drainage, retention and detention basins and related measures being advanced by the Land Management Project and generally included in contemporary subdivision regulations. Requirements that drainage flow from the site shall not exceed that experienced prior to development already exist in some communities, as do stormwater standards for Land Development projects and definitions and standards dictating minimum contiguous buildable lot sizes. The Town should also consider adopting regulations more rigorous than DEM's current regulations pertaining to the buffering of wetlands and waterbodies.

In recognition of limited Town staff time and expertise to review complex development proposals, all development proposals are reviewed by a professional engineer at the expense of the developer. The Town will also begin to collect construction inspection fees as part of the development review process. These fees will be used to hire an independent professional engineering consultant to inspect construction projects to ensure compliance with approved plans and BMPs.

Soil and Earth Removal Ordinance
As previously noted, the Soil and Earth Removal Ordinance does not apply to several sand and gravel operation which were in operation prior to the enactment of the Ordinance. One, for example, is located between the Slatersville Reservoir and the Slatersville groundwater reservoir.

Since critical resources of the Town and State may be at risk, the Town should reexamine present regulations with particular regard to the underlying water resources and adjacent wetland and surface waters and the restoration of the land in a manner which will provide long-term protection. The Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance will be amended in accordance with Phase II Stormwater regulations and will include pre and post construction provisions.

Underground Storage Tanks
State regulations on the installation, management and testing of underground storage tanks are administered by RIDEM. Failed tanks can impact individual wells, large aquifers, streams and waterbodies. The Town should insist on strong enforcement of these regulations in critical water resource areas.

Hazardous and Emergency Spill Response
Through its Emergency Management Agency, the Town continues to participate with nine other Northern Rhode Island communities in a regional compact covering hazardous and emergency spill responses.

As a result of the effort associated with the production of the October 2004 *Multi-Hazard Mitigation Strategy*, there is now better coordination amongst the various public safety organizations in and around North Smithfield and a comprehensive inventory of the equipment that may be used to deal with hazards and emergency spills. Additionally, the March 2004 *Stormwater Management Program Plan*, in response to RIPDES Stormwater Phase II Regulations illustrates all outfalls such that, in an emergency, the Town's rivers and streams can be better protected by the targeting of critical outfall locations.

Individual Sewage Disposal Systems
A critical area generally associated with groundwater reservoirs is the highly permeable soils which transmit wastewater too quickly, allowing little time for waste constituents to be attenuated. This condition may apply over the Slatersville Aquifer. While the Town does have slightly more stringent regulations than the RIDEM (in terms of ISDS setbacks to waterbodies), more must be done to protect aquifers and groundwater recharge areas.

Two solutions may be possible. The most effective would be to have RIDEM make an amendment to the December 1989 "Rules and Regulations Establishing Minimum Standards Relating to Location, Design, Construction and Maintenance of Individual Sewage Disposal Systems "to include designated aquifer and recharge areas as "Critical Resource Areas" as in the "Scituate Reservoir Critical Resource Area" to protect the quality of water supplies. Secondly, as previously discussed, the Town is working with the RIDEM to establish a Wastewater Management District. Properties in this District will be subject to regular inspections of their ISDS as well as requirements to address deficiencies found during inspections.

EPA Superfund Sites
The three EPA Superfund sites in North Smithfield all have the potential to degrade the Town's water resources. RIDEM and the EPA should continue to submit regular reports of site monitoring and other remedial actions to the Town.

G-4.1.2 Watershed Protection

Two watersheds are of prime importance. They include those relating to the Slatersville Reservoirs and Woonsocket Water Supply Reservoirs #1 and #3. The Town should use the resources of the EPA and RIDEM as well as the Northern Rhode Island Conservation District to help protect these areas. Other key organizations are the Watershed Councils. The Woonasquatucket and Blackstone River Watershed Associations are non-profit organizations, empowered by the Rhode Island Rivers Council, to restore and improve the communities within their respective watersheds. North Smithfield has worked extensively with the Woonasquatucket Council in 2004 on its mapping project, however, both Councils should be recognized as important partners that could assist with future land acquisition activities, river and resource area cleanups, and water quality monitoring.

Reservoir Protection
Various development regulations should be strongly enforced where there is the potential to degrade the Slatersville and Woonsocket Reservoirs. In some cases, such as the Town's water supply well near the Slatersville Reservoirs, the aquifer is being recharged, in part, by surface water from the Reservoir.

The Town should work cooperatively with the City of Woonsocket as part of a regional protection strategy. Where possible, North Smithfield's program for conservation area protection, as presented in the Open Space and Recreation Plan Element, should be coordinated with the land holdings, both existing and proposed, of the City of Woonsocket.

North Smithfield should also encourage strong upstream protection of both surface and groundwater resources by the Town of Burrillville.

Development Regulations
North Smithfield should consider adopting flexible residential development regulations allowing the clustering of housing through “Conservation Development” and the protection of open space

and fragile resources. This approach could open up opportunities for natural buffers and a reduction of impervious surfaces. Clustering, or its modern successor: Conservation Design or Development, can be a major tool for protecting interconnected networks of open space and implementing key goals of this Comprehensive Plan.

The adoption of best management practices, as previously discussed, will also bring significant surface water benefits.

Stormwater Management
The March 2004 *Five-Year Municipal Stormwater Management Program Plan* prepared with the assistance of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. is also an important tool to help protect watersheds. The actions identified in that document should be implemented as prescribed.

Wastewater Management Districts
Wastewater Management Districts, when implemented, should be applied to the water supply drainage areas for the Woonsocket Reservoirs shown on Map G - 4.

G-4.1.3 Protect Farms, Forests and Special Areas

Proposals for the conservation of significant natural areas are contained in the Open Space and Recreation Element.

The array of regulatory controls discussed in this Natural Resource Plan should be applied with equal vigor to the protection of significant natural resources.

Of special importance is the inclusion in Town regulations of provisions for the review of development applications by all concerned Town boards. The regulations should be amended, as necessary, to protect special areas (e.g. Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program sites).

Protect Farmlands
North Smithfield's areas of prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance are significantly in excess of the lands used for agricultural purposes. Unfortunately, not enough of these lands are used for farming.

Protection of remaining farmland can be accomplished through the following:

- Encouraging applications for reduced property assessments under the Farm, Forest and Open Space Act.
- Consider adopting Conservation Development regulations to set aside farmland in perpetuity.
- Additional State acquisition of development rights.
- Considering farm preservation as part of open space and conservation planning.

- Adoption of an Agricultural Business Zoning District that encourages the continuation of farming and agricultural operations with limited onsite retail sales.

Forest Resource Protection
Conservation Development options (currently being considered) and strict enforcement of Town and State wood cutting regulations will, in part, insure a continuation of the woodlands in the Town.

Many of the areas proposed for conservation in the Open Space and Recreation Element represent relatively large tracts of forested land.

G-4.2 The Historic and Cultural Resources Plan

The focus of this section is on crafting an approach to better protecting North Smithfield's cultural resources. While various efforts have begun, the Town must continue implementing its cohesive Cultural Resources Plan as described in the 1992 Comprehensive Plan. (Please also see Comprehensive Plan Element K, Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, which supplements and supports the proposals of the Cultural Resources Plan.) The residents of North Smithfield continue to regard the preservation of historic and cultural components as necessary, as is illustrated by the 2001 Community Survey. When asked "How important is maintaining the historic appearance/character of Town Villages?", 68% of respondents to the 2001 Community Survey indicated that it was "very important" or "important".

By cultural resources is meant any physical object or design which provides significant evidence of a culture which has been, or continues to be, influential in North Smithfield. Such a definition includes a wide variety of objects and designs ranging from known places of Wampanoag and Narragansett activity dating prior to the 17th century to early 20th century domestic architecture to the urban design of the mill villages.

The Historic and Cultural Resources Plan will present a strategy and action program that, when taken together, supports and satisfies the broad preservation goals, which are:

- Increase Awareness of Cultural Resources
- Protect Cultural Resources from Change
- Encourage Rehabilitation/Adaptive Use
- Integrate Planning and Development with BRVNHCC Programs
- Preserve and Protect the Historic Village of Slatersville

Clearly, the 1980 inventory of historic areas and structures must be updated and further study of archaeological resources to create a contemporary framework for historic resource evaluation is appropriate. Because local resources are limited and the work to be accomplished town-wide is extensive, Slatersville will remain the focus of preservation efforts, but could also serve as a model for future preservation efforts in other parts of Town. People are persuaded by seeing tangible results. Adaptive reuse for underutilized areas should be considered and facilitated with

routine town activities such as zoning, pubic works activities, maintenance and code enforcement, and with other town initiated improvements including protecting existing affordable housing and upgrading pedestrian amenities. A variety of protection tools should be used rather than relying on one or two tools to prevent haphazard development and guide growth comprehensively. The findings of ongoing preservation activities and research should serve as a basis for a community wide education program involving a broad set of "players" and people to build a constituency critical for effective implementation.

G-4.2.1. Preservation Documentation and Investigation

Continue investigatory work to develop an accurate local and regional context for preservation planning.

Update the 1980 list of National Register eligible properties in the light of changes that may have occurred. Prepare nomination forms on currently eligible properties. Historic Landmark nomination forms should be prepared for the Slatersville Historic District.

Study further mapped archaeological sites to determine National Register eligibility. Obtain information from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation to locate potential threats to archaeological resources from state road improvements. Integrate archaeological data into Town site planning procedures.

Continue to apply for grants that may be used to augment the existing inventory to include important North Smithfield cultural resources, such as the cemeteries, Indian campgrounds, and archaeological resources which are insufficiently documented and recognized, to place additional eligible properties, districts and archaeological resources on the National Register, and/or for educational efforts increasing local awareness of these resources.

G-4.2.2 Preservation Action

Continue to pursue a preservation and redevelopment plan for Slatersville that coordinates many of the regulatory bodies, tools and actions previously described in this Element.

Secure additional municipal office space near the Town Hall (see related discussion in Services and Facilities Element). The prime candidate for such expansion is the Slatersville Mill.

Continue working with the BRVNHCC on the installation of heritage signage.

Support rehabilitation efforts of the Slatersville Mill owners as to their future plans for the mill buildings and property. Advance the idea of mixed uses of the property. Determine the possibility of utilizing the buildings for some combination of these uses: housing (private and subsidized); retail goods or services/commercial; offices (government or private); incubator for new or small businesses; education (for example: daycare); tourism/interpretation use in conjunction with a regional tourism (historic interpretation) effort with the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.

Reevaluate the adoption of Historic District Zoning with all affected property owners, both resident and non-resident.

Support the application for inclusion of the Slatersville Mill as a series of individual structures on the National Register.

Continue the program of upgrading of streets and public owned lands to include amenities such as streetlights, benches etc. for the Slatersville streets around the Town Hall area and for Centennial Park. Interpretative signage designed by the BRVNHCC should also be installed and maintained by the BRVNHCC.

Housing rehabilitation monies for older homes in the area should be identified. A grant application should combine historic rehabilitation and housing rehabilitation in one proposed housing program.

Conservation Development (an option currently being considered) and Development Plan Review (site plan review) as discussed elsewhere in this Update could require that cultural, historic, and archeological resources be illustrated on any plan for development. The Planning Board should continue to seek guidance as to how such resources should be protected and handled during the course of a parcel's development or redevelopment.

G-4.2.3 Preservation Education

Harness resources for ongoing preservation activities and findings of new research and documentation in town-wide educational efforts.

Education can occur in several forms and be for several purposes. The North Smithfield Historic District Commission has a slide presentation program for residents of Slatersville to increase awareness of the Village's historic assets. This should serve as a prelude to other activities.

Another type of educational effort which is recommended is signing. Signs erected by the BRVNHCC can alert residents and visitors to the existence of a National Register District. If a walking tour is created for specific sub-areas, such as around the Slatersville Mill and Centennial Park, then signing is essential for self-guided tours.

Apply for grants that may be used for educational purposes. North Smithfield should consider creating a specific educational program on the Town's mill villages, their history and their value, broadly interpreted. Such an effort should relate to the Corridor and Tourism Council activities. For example, recommend both informational brochures and tours be developed to promote tourism.

G-5.0 Consistency Statement

The Natural and Cultural Resources element supports the goals of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act and is consistent with relevant State Guide Plan Elements.

This Element is also consistent with, and supportive of, the programs and polices of the Rhode Island Department Environmental Management, the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission.

The following sections summarize the relationship of the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan to state natural and cultural resource policies.

State Guide Plan Element 152, *Ocean State Outdoors: RI's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*
The North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan recommends action programs for the protection of open space and natural ecosystems, surface and groundwater systems, wetlands and natural drainage courses and agricultural operations.

State Guide Plan Element 121, *State Land Use Policies and Plan 2010*
See the Land Use Element of this Update for a summary consistency statement.

State Guide Plan Element 161, *Forest Resources Management Plan*
Forest lands will be protected and properly managed as part of open space and conservation programs.

State Guide Plan Element 711, *Blackstone Region Water Resources Management Plan*
Growth and Land Use: Land use proposals and related zoning, subdivision and development regulations have and will be related to the availability of sewer services and the potential for non-point source water pollution of all types. Conservation Development Design is being considered.

Individual Subsurface Disposal Systems: North Smithfield has a short-range program for extending sewers to areas with failing onsite septic systems. The Comprehensive Plan recommends the updating of the long-range Wastewater Management Plan. Wastewater management districts have been suggested as a method to prevent pollution from failing septic systems.

Urban Runoff: Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development Regulations and amended soil erosion and sedimentation controls will be used to help in the abatement and prevention of runoff pollution.

Landfills: There are no active landfills in Town. Please see the section titled "Threats to North Smithfield's Natural Resources" for a discussion of cleanup and monitoring of former landfills under EPA's Superfund program.

Road Salt: The North Smithfield Department of Public Works has an adequate water resource related program for the storage and application of road salt.

Erosion and Sedimentation: North Smithfield will amend its Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance to comply with Phase II Stormwater Regulations.

State Guide Plan Element 721, *Water Supply Policies for Rhode Island*

Demand Management: The North Smithfield Water Department continues to evaluate and project long-term water demands.

Supply Management: The Town Council appointed a subcommittee from its membership to coordinate programs for the local management of and/or the purchase of water supplies from regional sources. The Comprehensive Plan includes proposals directed towards the protection of the City of Woonsocket's reservoir resources in the Town of North Smithfield.

Planning and Institutional: The Comprehensive Plan encourages coordination between planning goals and the extension of water services for both domestic and economic development purposes.

State Guide Plan Element 140, *State Historical Preservation Plan*

The Natural and Cultural Resources Element is consistent with the surveys, plans, policies and register listings of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission with respect to historic places and archaeological resources.

Inventory of Resources: The existing resources are summarized with references to the completed inventories.

Preservation Activities: Completed activities such as National Register and Landmark nomination and Historic District Zoning as well as ongoing educational efforts are described.

Gaps in the Protection of Resources: These gaps are noted with recommendations made for their remedy.

Influences Threatening the Resources: The chief changes in North Smithfield affecting the resources are noted.

Goals, Policies, Actions: A list of goals, policies, actions, and funding sources are fully described for local implementation.

The Town supports the efforts of the local Historic District Commission to designate other areas, especially those on the National Register, as local historic districts. The Town encourages the rehabilitation of historic structures through the CDBG Housing Rehabilitation program.

State Guide Plan Element 131, *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor*

The North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan is designed to:

- Protect the Valley's resources in an integrated manner.
- Educate and interpret the Corridor's importance to the people.
- Establish greenways.
- Encourage public and private investment.

Stimulate research necessary to understand the Valley's historical role.
Coordinate and encourage appropriate partnerships for the realization of the above goals.

State Guide Plan Element 155, *A Greener Path … Greenspace and Greenways for Rhode Islands Future*

Greenways along the Branch and Blackstone Rivers are encouraged.

Conservation Development, currently being considered, for new subdivisions could encourage the preservation of natural areas, while a new Village Residential District or mixed use district(s) will support infill and reuse in village centered rural growth.

A diverse array of land protection techniques will be sought in cooperation with local and regional partners such as the BRVNHCC, Land Trust and Audubon Society.

State Guide Plan Element 156, *Urban and Community Forest Plan*

Vacant, publicly-owned rights-of-way should be maintained by the Town as part of a trail system.

The Subdivision Regulations will protect tree resources and will require the planting of street trees in the right-of-way. Conservation Development Design is being considered as another means by which resources will be protected. Tree resources were mapped through the Woonasquatucket mapping project and were identified as a critical resource worthy of protection.

The Plan calls for strengthening partnerships with organizations such as the Land Trust to protect contiguous tracts of forest.

State Guide Plan Element 162, *Rivers Policy and Classification Plan*

The Town will work with the Woonasquatucket and Blackstone River Watershed Councils to clean up and preserve the quality of major rivers in Town.

State Guide Plan Element 722, *Water Supply Plan for Rhode Island*

The Town recognizes the need to plan for its future water needs and has already consolidated several systems, created a Water Authority, and is continuing discussions with the neighboring community of Woonsocket to ensure supply adequacy. A more extensive regional solution of interconnections is being explored from feasibility and cost benefit perspectives.

H. SERVICES AND FACILITIES

H-1.0 Introduction

The Services and Facilities Element covers some of the basic necessities of life - water to drink; the safe and sanitary disposal of human, domestic and industrial waste; the protection of life and property; and intellectual enlightenment through books and education. These are services which, in most cases, are more efficiently and advantageously provided collectively rather than individually.

As everyone knows, teachers, librarians, police officers, fire fighters, sewer pipes and water mains all cost money; in the aggregate, they account for a majority of the expenditures which communities such as North Smithfield must cover through the imposition of ad valorem taxes on real estate. Although State and Federal dictates and standards often determine the minimum acceptable levels for providing municipal services, in the final analysis each community must determine the quality desired. Essentially, the Town's elected officials and the electorate are charged with deciding the whats, hows, whens and costs of providing the staff and facilities to serve the common good.

In this Element, we start out with an inventory of public facilities which have evolved over a period of years to serve a growing community. The Town must deal now with some problems which had their beginnings many years ago, for example: portions of the Town are inadequately served by fragmented water sources and there are problem areas where poor soils, small lots, and combined onsite wells and septic systems may produce unhealthy conditions. Several school buildings are overcrowded and/or are in disrepair. Additionally, state regulatory requirements such as for stormwater and water treatment are more stringent and costly than ever before. In some areas, the work of volunteers helps to reduce costs which, in many communities, are provided by paid staff. Such is the case for the two contractual fire fighting service companies and assistance in maintaining the Animal Shelter.

If we were to start with a clean slate today, it is unlikely that Town administrative functions would be split between the Town Hall and a Municipal Annex three miles away, nor would one place the Public Works Garage at the northernmost point in Town. In spite of these conditions, the Town has managed well for many years and services are provided in a relatively efficient manner.

It is the intent of the Services and Facilities Element to evaluate existing conditions, determine short and long range needs, and establish an implementable and cost-effective plan and program for the future. Where possible, the Town should investigate opportunities for the regionalization of municipal functions.

Map H-4, Services and Facilities Plan, shows the location of existing public buildings in North Smithfield.

H-2.0 Goals, Policies and Actions

1. PROVIDE FACILITIES NECESSARY TO EDUCATE STUDENTS WHO WILL BE COMPETITIVE IN THE STATE, NATIONAL AND WORLD ECONOMY

A. Maintain existing schools to serve educational needs.

B. Consider additional school facilities.

C. Continue to monitor building permit and other conditions impacting school enrollment trends.

D. Coordinate use and improvement of school playground and sports facilities with the Town's recreational plans and programs.

2. ORGANIZE PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN A MANNER WHICH WILL ALLOW THE MOST EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

A. Conduct detailed needs assessment of municipal administration space needs.

B. Evaluate options for a new Town Hall that will house all the administrative functions, meeting hall space and possibly the library at one facility. Options should include the adaptive reuse of the Slatersville Mill and Kendall Dean School.

C. Continue operating the Public Works Garage at the present location, with expansion as necessary.

D. Investigate a possible relocation of the Police and Emergency Operations Center to a more central location.

E. Continue to pursue the municipalization of the North Smithfield Fire and Rescue Service.

F. Evaluate options to provide better fire protection to the southeast section of Town.

3. EXPAND SEWER AND WATER SERVICES AS NECESSARY TO MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS, PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES AND TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

A. Ensure that there is dialogue between the Town Council, organization that oversees the Town’s water resources, Sewer Commission and the Planning Board regarding land use impacts of expanding infrastructure into new service areas.

B. Connect the Waterford/Mendon Road area to the City of Woonsocket's water distribution system.

C. Coordinate with neighboring communities to achieve the mandated emergency water system interconnect.

D. Continue discussions with neighboring communities regarding the development of a regional water system to ensure existing and future customers have a safe, reliable supply of water.

E. Carry out phased program to enhance system redundancy including development of additional water supply wells, pump stations, water storage facilities and fire hydrants in community water system areas and expand system with emphasis on economic development priorities residential areas with the greatest needs.

F. Update the long range Wastewater Facilities Plan for extending sewer services with emphasis on economic development priorities, areas with onsite system failures, and meeting local affordable housing needs.

4. FORMULATE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR AREAS SERVED BY INDIVIDUAL WASTEWATER DISPOSAL SYSTEMS

A. Establish Wastewater Management Districts in appropriate locations to prevent water pollution and to preclude the need for more expensive sewer services.

5. CONSIDER REGIONALIZATION OPTIONS FOR PUBLIC SERVICES

A. As a policy, consider the benefits of regional versus local programs where there are cost reduction and service delivery benefits to be gained by the Town of North Smithfield.

6. IMPLEMENT MEASURES OF THE PHASE II STORMWATER PROGRAM PERTAINING TO DRAINAGE FACILITIES AND ROADS

A. Continue practice of cleaning and inspecting catch basins at least twice a year.

B. Continue the practice of sweeping streets a minimum of once a year.

C. Implement the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan at the Public Works Garage and provide necessary data for monitoring reports.

H-3.0 Plan Description

H-3.1 Inventory of School Facilities

In January of 2004, the North Smithfield Town Council established the School Facilities Planning Task Force Committee (SFPTF), and charged it with developing a Comprehensive Master Plan that would address the long term needs and educational program requirements of the entire district. The SFPTF developed the following Mission Statement:

> *To develop a true and objective comprehensive study of our school educational and support needs leading to prioritized recommendations on how to meet our educational needs along with long range help and advice to support a successful bond referendum.*

The Town hired the team of Gilbane Building Company and The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation (Gilbane/RGB) to develop the Master Plan and work with the SFPTF. Much of the following is excerpted from an August 2004 draft of the *Comprehensive Master Plan for the North Smithfield School Department* prepared by Gilbane/RGB.

The North Smithfield School District comprises approximately 258,000 SF of buildings. For the most part, they are being well maintained. The exception is the Halliwell Memorial School, that due to its wood frame, wood sided construction and campus arrangement, is nearly impossible to maintain effectively. The last expansion and renovation program was completed in 2001 with renovations and additions to North Smithfield Elementary School (NSES). During that program, a 15,000 s.f. addition to NSES was the only project completed, representing approximately 5% of the total existing school space. The remaining 243,000 s.f. of facility space breaks down as follows: The newest school facility, NSES, with a total of 71,130 s.f. of space was constructed in 1989, and requires very minimal updating. The 173,400 s.f. Junior / Senior High School constructed in 1967 has been well maintained, but suffers from typical facility shortfalls to be expected of a facility of this age. The space constraints imposed on the facility by running the dual mission of a middle school and high school educational curriculum are its major issue. The 33,346 s.f. Halliwell Memorial School, consisting of a campus of 11 wood framed structures constructed in 1957, as indicated above suffers from a myriad of physical facility issues. The oldest school, the tiny 16,200 s.f. Kendall-Dean school, occupying a minimal 3.4 acre site in the heart of Slatersville, was constructed in the 1930's and was used by students until January 2002 when the addition to NSES was completed. The school is currently housing the District Administration Offices.

All schools receive very hard use and are being used for longer periods during the day and year, leaving less time for maintenance and repair. With the exception of NSES, some of major issues identified in the school district include:

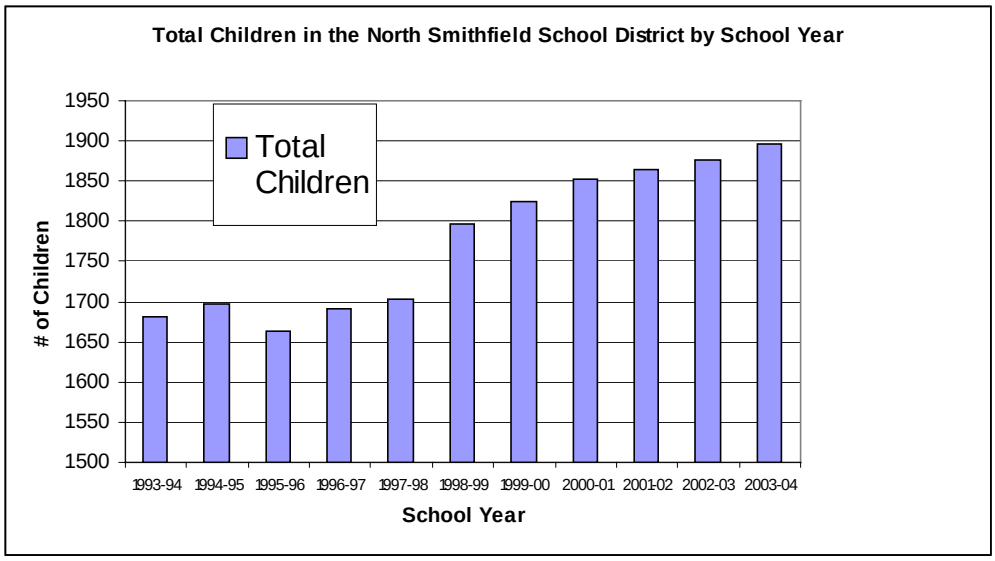
- Sites that are at or near their capacity and not capable of expansion without property acquisition;
- Aging and failing septic / ISDS systems;
- Roofs of varying vintage with Halliwell School needing immediate attention;

- Aged, damaged and worn interior finishes, doors, hardware, etc.;
- Aged heat distribution systems;
- Lack of make-up fresh air ventilation;
- Pneumatic, aged, HV AC control. No energy management systems in place;
- Isolated storm water drainage issues;
- Uninsulated masonry exterior walls with localized masonry deterioration;
- Uninsulated, drafty original wood windows;
- Energy inefficient lighting remains in many areas;
- Outdated electrical equipment and services;
- Non-water conserving plumbing fixtures;
- Spaces that are not ADA compliant for accessibility;
- Asbestos containing finish materials (in their present state non hazardous, but should be removed and replaced);
- In general, lack of current technology in the classroom.

H-3.1.1 Current School Enrollment

School enrollment for grades K-12 has increased steadily over the past 10 years beginning with 1,681 children in 1993/94.

Chart H-3.1.1 School Enrollment 1993 - 2003



As of the beginning of the 2003/04 school year, **1,912** students were enrolled in North Smithfield Public Schools. Of these, **183** students are enrolled in a half day Pre-K program, and a full day Kindergarten program located at North Smithfield Elementary School (NSES). An additional **884** students comprising Grade 1-6 are split between NSES and the Halliwell Memorial School with the remaining **845** Grade 7-12 students attending North Smithfield Jr. / Sr. High School.

H-3.1.2 Projected School Enrollment

School enrollments are established by, but not limited to, birth rates, housing construction trends, grade retention rates and competition from private and parochial schools. These and other considerations are used by the New England School Development Council (NESDC) in providing annual projections of school enrollments for North Smithfield.

Table H-3.1.2 Existing/Projected Enrollment by Grade

	Existing Enrollment 2003/04 (Actual)	Projected Enrollment 2003/04 (NESDEC)	Projected Enrollment 2004/05 (NESDEC)	Projected Enrollment 2008/09 (5 year)
Pre-K (2-Half day Sessions)	52	49	60	60
Kindergarten (Full Day)	131	130	150	126
Grade 1	147	148	136	138
Grade 2	126	125	154	126
Grade 3	152	147	130	147
Grade 4	143	146	150	173
Grade 5	152	150	153	157
Grade 6	164	163	153	173
Grade 7	178	173	163	142
Grade 8	131	129	175	162
Grade 9	144	140	134	164
Grade 10	136	139	132	150
Grade 11	132	134	132	153
Grade 12	124	123	135	163
Total Enrollment/ Projections	1912	1896	1957	2034

Demographics indicate that enrollments at all levels will continue to increase, with the addition of an estimated **138** students within the school system by the 2008/09 school year (7.3% growth). Long term (ten year) NESDEC projections indicate continued growth within the school system based on historical data, indicating that additional growth should be expected and planned for.

Projections indicate an additional **20** students entering the Kindergarten program and **11** students entering the Pre-K program in the upcoming 2004/05 school year. This spike will require the addition of one possible pre-K room and three full time Kindergarten rooms in order to maintain optimal class size of 18 students per class. The existing five kindergarten classrooms are currently over capacity at 26 students per classroom, and will require the addition of Kindergarten teachers to meet contract requirements, teaching in less than optimal conditions. As indicated in five year projections, this Kindergarten spike will level off back to current conditions by 2005/06, however, Pre-K is predicted to remain at 60 students, making the Pre-K program function at full capacity.

Five year NESDEC projections indicate that Grade 1 – 6 enrollment will increase by an additional **35** students by the 2008/09 school year or approximately 4% growth. Five year trends also show continued growth within the 7 – 12 grade grouping, adding approximately **96** students by the 2008/09 school year with a long term predicted increase of **130** students attending the facility by the 2012/13 school year. This places five year growth within the secondary grades at close to 11%, with long term (10 year) projections placing the rate of enrollment increase at over 15%.

In 2003/04, North Smithfield students attending private or parochial schools or vocational technical schools totaled 155. (This number may be expected to decrease as improvements to North Smithfield's public school system are made.)

H-3.1.3 Existing Capacity and Adequacy Analysis

In its simplest form, the capacity of a school can be calculated by multiplying the number of classrooms or teaching spaces by a number of pupils to be accommodated in each classroom. Capacity is a variable however, not a fixed number. An elementary school constructed years ago can no longer accommodate as many pupils as it once did. New statutory and code requirements, changes in programs, increased need for special education, demands for specialized facilities and teacher contract limits are among the factors that affect the capacity of a school building. Class size policies alone can increase or decrease a school's capacity by 20% or more.

Although a detailed capacity analysis was performed on each facility using varying criterion, Gilbane/RGB determined, for the purpose of developing a realistic master plan, that the school system would be analyzed using the proposed NESDEC "optimal capacity" or "preferred capacity" utilizing the education policy and program criteria established by the North Smithfield School Department. The established class size goals as recommended by the NESDEC report are 18 students to each Kindergarten and First Grade classroom, 22 students to each elementary and secondary classroom, and 24 for each high school classroom, as a target for current optimal educational program delivery. These class sizes correspond with current national educational trends, and although slightly higher than "No Child Left Behind" guidelines (at 18 students for each Kindergarten through Third Grade classroom, and 20 students per classroom in grades Four through Six), they still strive for much more manageable class sizes than currently exist. The capacity and adequacy analysis also examines each of the following space types and addresses current educational program deficiencies and facility shortfalls.

- Classrooms
- Allied and Unified Arts
- Physical Education and Assembly
- Student Support and Administration.

North Smithfield is served by three schools and a School Administration Building. The schools operate on a K-6 elementary and 7-12 junior-senior high school program. The two elementary schools have a combined present capacity (enrollment) of 1,067 students. The Junior-Senior

High School has a capacity (enrollment) of 845. The following is a summary of existing school facilities:

Kendall-Dean School - Greene Street

Built:	1936
Site:	3.5 acres
Grades:	not applicable
Classrooms:	not applicable
2003 Enrollment:	not applicable
Capacity:	not applicable

** Has been decommissioned as a school facility and currently houses the school districts administrative function.

Halliwell School - Great Road (Route 146A)

Built:	1957/1961 addition
Site:	38acres
Grades:	Part of grades 4 and all of grades 5 and 6.
Classrooms:	18
2003 Enrollment:	407
Capacity:	17 @ 25 = 425

North Smithfield Elementary School - Providence Pike

Built:	1989/2001 addition
Site:	40 acres (18 School Dept and 22 retained by Town)
Grades:	Grades 1-3, some 4, Kindergarten & Pre-K
Classrooms:	22 regular
2003 Enrollment:	660
Capacity:	713 (based on original design, not current standards)

North Smithfield Junior-Senior High School - Greenville Road

Built:	1966
Site:	36 acres
Grades:	7 through 12
Classrooms:	25 (includes 2 computer labs and Special Ed office)
2003 Enrollment	845
Capacity:	686 (based on original design, not current standards)

The 2004 Gilbane/RGB *Comprehensive School Facilities Master Plan* describes each of these buildings/complexes in great detail.

Using an optimal reduced class size (preferred capacity) of 18 students per classroom in First Grade, and 22 students per classroom in Grades 2-8, as recommended in the NESDEC report, based on a current Grade 1-6 enrollment of 884, establishes that both existing elementary schools are currently over capacity by approximately 36 students. North Smithfield Elementary would be able to accommodate 528 elementary students based on “old” RIDE minimum area

regulations, or 456 students based on NESDEC reduced class size standards. Halliwell's current capacity is established at 392 students using the "old" minimum area regulations, or at 396 students, using 22 students per classroom. (It should be noted that the NESDEC report set the preferred capacity at only 330 students, accounting for current facility shortfalls and educational program deficiencies.)

Using the preferred capacity at each school gives a total elementary capacity of 848 students (456 + 392) grades 1 – 6. Five year NESDEC projections indicate that Grade 1 – 6 enrollment will increase by approximately 35 students by the 2008/09 school year. This increase would put both schools approximately 71 students over capacity, and would require the addition of a minimum of three additional elementary classrooms to strive for the NESDEC recommended reduced average class sizes indicated above.

The Jr./Sr. High School currently houses grades 7 – 12 consisting of a current total enrollment of 845 students. The capacity of the facility has been established at 690 students, making the facility currently 155 students over capacity. Five year trends show continued growth within the 7 – 12 grade grouping, adding approximately 96 students by the 2008/09 school year and increasing to a predicted enrollment of 130 students attending the facility by the 2012/13.

H-3.2 Inventory of Town Administration

Three buildings provide space for the administration of town services. They are the Town Hall, the Municipal Annex, and the Public Works Garage.

H-3.2.1 Town Hall

Located at the intersection of North Main and Main Streets in Slatersville, the Town Hall has an elevated site overlooking the Branch River. The fairly recent removal of the Clerks Office, Tax Assessor's Office, Tax Collector and Recreation Department to the Municipal Annex has relieved some of the pressure on the building but has not solved some of the basic problems of office space limitations, limited parking and lack of handicapped access.

Current usage by floor is as follows: second floor (has ground level access at rear of building) - Planning, Building and Zoning; and third floor Town Administrator, Finance Director and staff.

Over the years, various proposals for creating a new municipal center have been considered and rejected, however there may be an opportunity to revisit this issue with the proposed redevelopment of the Slatersville Mill or the decommissioning of the Kendall Dean School.

The Town Hall is located within the Slatersville Historic District listed in the State and Federal Registers of Historic Places.

H-3.2.2 Municipal Annex

The Municipal Annex is located in the former Bushee School on Route 146A near Park Square approximately three miles south of the Town Hall. Originally constructed in 1926, with an addition in 1935, the early 90's conversion to municipal use has provided a modernized facility with parking in the rear and side for municipal users and parking in the front for police purposes. The site covers 2 acres.

Present occupants include the Police Department, Clerks Office, Tax Assessor's Office, Tax Collector and Recreation Department and the Town's Emergency Operations Center. There is a large meeting room on the lower level used for meetings of the Town Council and other boards and agencies. This meeting room needs HVAC improvements and parking is tight during well attended public meetings.

Other than record storage space, all present users have very adequate space allocations. The expected conversion of the Clerks Office to a paperless recording system will help alleviate the shortage of storage space. The Emergency Management Agency's facilities on the lower level include a communications center, kitchen, office, storage room, showers, and a shelter hall (the large meeting room referred to in the preceding paragraph).

The main drawback to the present facility is the split nature of municipal management; there are some inefficiencies in traveling between the Town Hall and Municipal Annex for matters that cannot be handled by a phone call or e-mail. The public is often inconvenienced by mistakenly going to the wrong facility.

H-3.2.3 Public Works Garage

The Public Works Garage is located on a 3.5 acre site at 281 Quaker Highway adjoining the Uxbridge, Massachusetts Town and State line. Although situated far from a convenient central location, this is a good area in terms of the facility's not being an adverse influence on properties either in North Smithfield or Uxbridge.

The Public Works Department's responsibilities cover highway maintenance and construction, inspections, and parks and recreation. The garage has six bays used for the storage of Public Works vehicles and equipment and repair of police and other Town vehicles. There is a partially enclosed salt storage shed on the site. A recent addition to the facility included office space and a record storage area. The site also functions as a limited recycling center where Town residents can bring their waste oil to the Waste Oil Igloo and yard waste to a dumpster that is periodically shipped to Smithfield Peat for composting.

The Water and Sewer Department is housed in a 40' x 60' two bay building on Main Street. This building provides storage for the Department's vehicles, equipment and has a small office for the Superintendent.

The North Smithfield Animal Shelter and an animal crematorium are located behind the garage.

H-3.3 Police Department

The North Smithfield Police Department is located in an efficiently designed space at the Municipal Annex. Two lock-up cells are sufficient for normal conditions. The staff includes the Chief, 20 officers and 4 civilian employees. There are twelve vehicles, and one van assigned to the Animal Control Officer. The cars are fueled and maintained at the Public Works Garage. Fine tuning is done by a private garage as the Town does not have a computer diagnostic facility. For police protection purposes, the Town has been divided into three districts. There is ample onsite parking; all is uncovered.

The Police Department received National Accreditation in Spring 2005 following 2 years of review. The application process is evidence of the Department's pursuit of excellence and willingness to subject itself to standards that will help measure performance and effectiveness. Accountability to itself and the community is at the heart of the accreditation process as administered by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). Accreditation requires compliance with existing and new requirements as well as is the submission of annual reports to CALEA.

H-3.4 Fire Protection and Rescue Services

After years of discussion and study about the need for a municipal fire department, consensus was reached that a municipal department would best serve the Town and preparations for that conversion are nearly complete. The first step which was recently completed, was the merger of the North Smithfield Volunteer Fire Department, Primrose Fire Department and the North Smithfield Ambulance and Rescue Association to form North Smithfield Fire and Rescue Services, Inc. (NSFRS) which provides fire and rescue services to the entire Town.

Until the municipalization is complete, the NSFRS will operate as a non-profit organization receiving the bulk of its income through annual contracts with the Town. Supplemental financing is provided through periodic fund raisers and third party billing. Most of the major equipment has been purchased by the Town and is leased to the NSFRS. The fire stations are independently owned by the NSFRS.

NSFRS has two stations. Station #1 is located on St. Paul Street at the intersection with Route 146A is convenient to the more urbanized sections of Town and Station #2 is located on Providence Pike to the north of Greenville Road, is situated to serve the more rural areas. Dispatching is handled at the North Smithfield Fire and Rescue Station #1. NSFRS has 21 full-time employees and 15 volunteers. The amount and expense of training required for certification of volunteer fire fighters and Emergency Medical Technicians has resulted in a reduction in the number of volunteers.

Some current deficiencies include long runs to reach the southeast sections of Town near the Sayles Hill Road/146 intersection and new development off of Log Road that can only be approached by a circuitous route passing through sections of Burrillville. The Sayles Hill Road

section is serviced, in part, under a mutual aid agreement with the Manville Fire Department in Lincoln.

The facilities at each fire station are as follows: (Town-owned unless otherwise indicated.)

Station #1 St. Paul Street

Built:	1937
Site:	3.7 acres - portion leased to restaurant
Building:	5,700 sq. ft.
Vehicles:	2000 HME Pumper
	1982 Continental Tanker
	14’ Rescue Boat & Trailer (Dept. Owned)
	1990 Brush Truck
	1994 Horton/International Rescue
Ford Blue Star Rescue (Spare)	

Station #2 Providence Pike

Built:	1960
Site:	0.75 acres
Building:	7,100 sq. ft.
Vehicles:	1996 Smeal/International Ladder
	1990 Pumper
	1963 White Tanker (Dept. Owned)
	2002 International Pumper
	2006 Road Rescue/ International/Osage
	1997 Ford Explorer (Dept. Owned)
	2004 GMC Envoy (Dept. Owned)
	14’ Rescue Boat & Trailer (Dept. Owned)

Another deficiency is the lack of a comprehensive fire suppression system stemming from the limited coverage of municipal water. Although only about 30 percent of the Town is served by community water systems, many of the areas, with the exception of the Industrial Park service area, have inadequate flows in terms of standards set by the Insurance Services Office (ISO) which tested the system in 1983. New developments above a certain size that are located outside of a municipal water district are required to provide fire suppression cisterns.

The Town of Smithfield's Hazardous and Emergency Spill Response Team is available to North Smithfield through a mutual aid agreement as well as a regional compact with nine other Northern Rhode Island communities covering hazardous and emergency spill responses.

H-3.5 Hazard Mitigation and Emergency Management

The North Smithfield Office of Emergency Management operates from the Emergency Operating Center located in the Public Safety Center at the Municipal Annex (575 Smithfield

Road). The Department consists of a Director, Deputy Director and 20 sworn Emergency Management Officers all who are volunteers. The Department is responsible by ordinance for the coordination and planning for both natural and man made disasters. Volunteers under the Community Emergency Response Team are trained in many different areas of emergency services work and in the techniques of disaster recovery and search and rescue. Members include amateur radio, citizens band radio, licensed general mobile radio service GMRS and Landmobile radio operators. A special REACTION team aids local authorities in traffic and crowd control.

Many recommended land management techniques, capital improvements, "hazard proofing" and other aspects of emergency mitigation have been incorporated into the other elements of this plan. These elements are discussed in greater detail in the *Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan*. The *Hazard Mitigation Plan* was adopted by North Smithfield's Council on November 8, 2004 and is included, as the Plan requires, in the Appendix of this Updated Comprehensive Plan.

The Town presently has seven local warning system sirens. As new development takes place the system should be upgraded, especially in high density population areas and more remote sections of the community. Plans for any multifamily housing, especially elderly housing development, should include operable emergency power equipment. Additionally, operable emergency power equipment may be a necessary capital improvement to the Slatersville-Forestdale Water System and may be required as part of any development review process, especially if the development proposal involves multi-family housing, including elderly housing. Regular inspection of the many dams, bridges and culverts is also recommended.

H-3.6 Library Service

The North Smithfield Public Library, a 501c Non-Profit Corporation, operates under a fifteen member Board of Trustees. The operating budget is funded by an annual appropriation from the Town of North Smithfield, matched by 25% state grant-in-aid, when minimum state standards are met.

The Library is located at the intersection of Main Street and Providence Pike in a renovated stone mill structure, the John Slater building, situated on a 2.2 acre sloping site overlooking the Branch River and Centennial Park. Parking is provided for 31 vehicles. Planned in 1985 for twenty years of service, the current 6,985 square foot facility expansion project was completed in 1989 before the computer revolution.

Although not located near the geographical center of Town, the Library is convenient to some of the more urbanized neighborhoods. In conjunction with the adjacent Slatersville Post Office and the nearby Town Hall and Pacheco Park, it helps to define a civic center for North Smithfield. The building has been sensitively designed to reflect the historic character of the surrounding Slatersville Historic District.

With the current Library at capacity, library officials anticipate a new energy efficient facility of sufficient size and layout to accommodate the growing demands of the library community.

Identified needs include larger assembly space, study carrels, computer lab, young adult area, expanded storage for media collections, materials and supplies, office space, and staff lunch room and lockers. There have been preliminary discussions with the developer of the Slater Mill about possible conversion of the power house building with an addition to a library facility.

The building's 40,000 volume initial capacity has been enhanced by electronic compact shelving, which relieves storage in the stacks on the western end of the library. Shelving in media, juvenile and primary departments are cramped. The collection currently stands at 52,165 items. Circulation in FY03 was 68,521 plus interlibrary loan traffic of 20,223.

H-3.7 Animal Shelter

The North Smithfield Animal Shelter, along with an animal crematorium, is located behind the Public Works Garage. Renovation of the Shelter in 1997 included a 28' x 28' addition with a reception area, office space, separate cat room, quarantine room, and food storage areas. The well has been contaminated by salt; bottled water must be brought in.

On weekdays, the dogs are cared for by the Town's Animal Control Officer. Volunteer Services for Animals cares for the cats throughout the week and the dogs on weekends at no cost to the Town. This volunteer organization also runs the Lost and Found, Pet Adoption and Return-to-Owners programs.

H-3.8 Senior Center

The Town of North Smithfield does not have a facility dedicated to senior citizens. There is an active seniors organization which holds weekly meetings at St. John's Church Hall. Periodic day and overnight trips also are organized.

According to the US Census, in the year 2000, 18% of North Smithfield's population was over the age of 65. Only three other municipalities in Rhode Island have a larger percentage of seniors. Given that the senior population has grown by 47% between 1990 and 2000, seniors are living longer and enjoy more active and independent lifestyles, and that many of the proposed and permitted new multi-family units will be age-restricted to people over 55, it must be anticipated that requests for services to seniors will be increasing.

H-3.9 Solid Waste Disposal

Solid waste collection and disposal is handled under annual contracts with private operators who remove the waste to disposal sites outside of North Smithfield.

Under the direction of a part-time Recycling Coordinator, a Town-wide recycling program was initiated in October 1990. Currently, glass, aluminum, paper and newspapers are being collected for recycling. Weekly large item pick-up and seasonal yard waste disposal are services provided under the current contract.

H-3.10 Water Supply

Water is supplied to the Town's residences and businesses by a combination of individual wells and community systems. Currently, about 70 percent of the population is served by individual onsite wells and 30 percent are tied into a community water system.

There are three community water systems. These were evaluated in a 1990 *Report on Water System Master Plan* prepared by Weston and Sampson Engineers and a 1992 *Water Supply Study* prepared by Maguire Group, Inc. Recent efforts by the Department of Health, in conjunction with the University of Rhode Island, have also resulted in analyses and production of handouts that help summarize the various systems providing water and how residents of the community can participate in their protection.

The systems are as follows: the municipally-owned Slatersville Water Company operated by the Town and which uses three wells to serve about 266 services in the Slatersville and Forestdale neighborhoods[1]; the City of Woonsocket water system providing service to 560 services in Union Village and adjoining development and in the Mendon Road/Rhodes Avenue area; and the Town of Blackstone Water System serving 42 services in the Waterford neighborhood. The approximate limits of the service areas are shown on Map H - 1, Water Service Areas. As previously noted in the discussion of fire protection, there are serious fire flow deficiencies in all but the former Industrial Park service area.

As stated in the 2004 USGS report that delineates areas contributing recharge to selected public water supply wells, "Accurate delineation of areas contributing recharge to public-supply wells is an essential component of State, local and Federal strategies for the protection of drinking-water supplies from contamination." Delineation of the current recharge area of the Tifft well, pumping at 200 gallons per minute and the proposed 500 gallons per minute suggest contamination from the nearby landfill will not be drawn into the water supply. However, installation of other wells in the vicinity may affect USGS's modeling efforts and therefore such studies continue to be necessary to better understand the capabilities of existing and future wells and how best to protect them.

The Town recognizes that it has a fragmented water supply system that is having difficulty meeting the needs of its current users. The system will not be able to meet the needs of future development without improving its existing partnerships, investment in its infrastructure and better internal management of the system. Several options for a phased program to consolidate the systems into a North Smithfield water system were recommended by Weston and Sampson and Maguire plans. The estimated 1990 costs prepared by Weston and Sampson by phase are as follows: Phase I (1990 - 1995) $2,350,000; Phase II (1996-2000) $3,700,000; and Phase III (2001-2010) $2,700,000. The first three phases essentially would consolidate and make improvements to serve properties within and adjacent to the existing service areas. Approximately 10 million in capital costs were projected by Maguire for a similar three phase upgrade and consolidation of the systems (see Map H-2.) Portions of this phased program of

[1] The Slatersville water company obtained the assets of the Industrial Park Water Company, Inc.

improvements have already been implemented including extension of the 12 inch water main from School Street along Great Road just short of Mendon Road. Final engineering and a municipal agreement for the Mendon Road water interconnect are nearly complete. Completion of the interconnect is anticipated in the summer of 2005.

The North Smithfield Water Authority (NSWA) was formed in 1993 by the Rhode Island Legislature. Although recently disbanded, the NSWA had the powers of condemnation, rate setting and authority to issue bonds and notes. While it was structured as an advisory board to the Town Council with the intention of transferring the Slatersville Water Company to the Water Authority, the Council wished to play a greater role in decision-making and improve the organization's accountability. The NSWA adopted a Strategic Business Plan in 2001 that utilizes the Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (S.W.O.T.) analysis to assess the system and develop goals and strategies for the system. The overall vision of the plan is that the Town will own and operate a system that, with planned improvements, will have ample sources of water and an integrated distribution system supported by a reasonable water rate structure.

H-3.11 Wastewater Management

Wastewater generated by the Town is serviced by the Woonsocket Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility. The Town of North Smithfield entered into an agreement with Woonsocket in 1997 for the treatment and disposal of wastewater generated by the Town. The agreement indicates that the cost disbursement for capital expenses are proportioned based on percentages of total design flow. Operating costs including maintenance, repairs, supplies and administration are based upon the actual metered flow from the Alice Avenue Metering Station and water usage records for units that do not pass through the metering station, and are then proportioned based on the total flow treated by the Facility.

Map H - 3 shows the limits of sewer service in North Smithfield including the several streets to be added as a result of the $2,500,000 bond issue for sewer improvements approved in November 1990. Proposed sewer extensions as described in detail in the 1993 *Facilities Plan for Wastewater Management in the Town of North Smithfield* are as follows:

Victory Highway #2	Lamoureux Blvd
Ironstone	Waterford
Great Road	Providence Pike Area 1
St. Paul Street	Willerval & Tanglewood
NS Industrial Park	Providence Pike Area 2
Great Road (Dawley Brook)	Park View
Sayles Area	Main Street
Victory Highway #1	

The Town has commenced with identification of priority projects ranked by RIDEM's Division of Water Resources. Utilization of the State Revolving Fund (SRF) program via the Rhode

Island Water Protection Finance Agency is planned for additional projects targeted by the Sewer Commission. These prioritized projects continue to be assessed and updated annually.

Through a system of collector sewers and several pumping stations, wastewater flows to the Cherry Brook Interceptor and the Woonsocket Wastewater Treatment Facility. North Smithfield may send up to 3.9 million gallons per day (mgd) to Woonsocket for treatment. Present flows are about 0.5 mgd. The relatively low flow in the system has created a number of operating problems; the interceptor is designed to carry 7.5 mgd.

The 1993 long-range plan, prepared by Travassos-Geremia and Associates, for expanding sewer services is shown on Map H-5 from the *Facilities Plan for Wastewater Management*. The study assumed that by 2010, a population of 8,883 would receive sewer services. The increased flow from areas to be sewered by 2010, at buildout, is estimated to increase North Smithfield's average daily flow into the Woonsocket facility to 1.71 mgd or, slightly more than half of its design flow capacity.

Discussions with local and State (RIDEM) officials and engineers familiar with North Smithfield have identified additional areas having problems with onsite septic systems; these too are shown on Map H - 3. However, this should not be considered a comprehensive evaluation of sewer needs and problem areas. That must be the subject of a separate engineering study. According to Save the Bay, individual septic systems in Rhode Island fail at a rate of approximately 13 percent per year.

While the existing sewer system is not extensive, and can be considered a constraint, there is the treatment capacity in Woonsocket to handle additional flows from North Smithfield. Such flows could serve existing needs areas as well as sites proposed to attract tax base-beneficial development to North Smithfield. The completion of the upgrade of the Woonsocket Wastewater Treatment facility may increase its capacity from 16 to 20 mgd and could open up an opportunity for North Smithfield to increase its flow reservation.

Areas not on sewers have onsite individual sewage disposal systems for wastewater disposal. Although there are guidelines for property owner maintenance of these systems, most are serviced only when there are problems. Private septage haulers must be engaged to pump out the septic tank; the resulting septage is emptied into sludge disposal facilities at the Woonsocket Wastewater Treatment Facility or other similar facilities in the region. A Wastewater Management District involving the regular inspection and maintenance of septic systems is discussed elsewhere in this Update.

H-4.0 The Plan

Map H - 4, Services and Facilities Plan, shows the location of existing and proposed public facilities as described in the sections which follow. This Plan does not cover equipment needs which are addressed on an annual basis as part of the Town' Capital Budget Program.

H-4.1 School Facilities

In light of the data presented, the seven main options are identified below. Six are simply listed and the seventh, preferred option, is discussed in some detail. All options are described in great detail within the body of the Gilbane/RGB report.

- Option 1: Renovate Existing Elementary Schools (reconfigure NSES and Halliwell), Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School
- Option 2: Renovate Existing Elementary Schools (reconfigure only Halliwell), Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School
- Option 3: Build New Elementary School, Build "Jr. High" Addition on High School
- Option 4: Expand Kendall-Dean Elementary School, Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School
- Option 5: Expand Kendall-Dean Elementary School *and* NSES (to serve some additional Kindergarten children), Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School
- Option 6: Expand Kendall-Dean Elementary School *and* NSES (to serve all Pre-K and Kindergarten children), Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School

Option 7: Build New Elementary School, Build New Middle School, and Renovate High School

Taking the advantages and disadvantages of each of the previous six schemes into consideration, the resulting favored option, Option 7 of the RGB/Gilbane report received unanimous agreement of the Task Force and Town Council, has resulted in proposing a multi-year phased master plan that will address all of the current space and educational program shortfalls, and provides a "roadmap" for the district to follow to bring its educational facilities back into compliance with current educational standards. The first proposed phase involves the construction of a new middle school.

A new 550 student Middle School would provide grade appropriate grouping of students for Grades 6-8, and would free up space at the elementary school level, by removing grade six from the elementary school mix. The construction of a new middle school would have an impact to the existing Jr. / Sr. High School, by removing Grades 7 and 8 from the High School. Consisting of approximately 310 students, the existing High School would come back within capacity, with ample room for growth. While the master plan recommends renovations and additions to the existing high school facility to meet long-term educational program and facility improvement goals, the proposed work would be the last piece of the plan. As indicated previously, the construction of a new 550 student middle school resolves capacity issues as well as long-term growth at both the middle school and high school levels providing for approximately 60 additional students at the middle school level and 60 additional students at the high school level.

The second proposed phase of the master plan calls for the construction of a new 400 student elementary school on the existing Halliwell site to resolve existing capacity issues at the elementary grades, as well as providing for future long term growth at the elementary level.

Based on the detailed analysis contained in the Planning Options section of the RGB/Gilbane report, the proposed new elementary school would be designed initially for 15 general classrooms, three kindergarten classrooms and one additional Pre K classroom to meet any long-term Kindergarten and Pre K growth needs. Since the District has been analyzed using worst case five year capacity trends, there is an additional capacity between 18 and 30 students at the Pre K / Kindergarten level (one additional pre-K room being used by two ½ day sessions or a swing kindergarten room used to keep class sized down and allow for fluctuating enrollment), and approximately an additional 40 total students at the Grade 1-5 level to allow for some short term grade fluctuations and future long-term growth between the two elementary schools. The proposed elementary school would be designed as a two level structure to minimize initial site development footprint and to more easily allow for any future expansion of the facility on the Halliwell site.

H-4.2 Other Public Buildings and Services

Town Hall
The Town Hall requires structural, functional and utilities modernization. Equally important is the need to eliminate overcrowding. A feasibility and needs assessment should be conducted in conjunction with the proposals of the Natural and Cultural Resources Element to evaluate the adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings in the Slatersville Historic District and especially within the mill complex itself.

Public Works Garage
This facility should be continued and expanded as necessary. A space needs and engineering study, as approved, should be conducted.

Municipal Annex
The most cost-effective options for repairs, handicapped accessibility and more efficient use of space should be implemented as soon as possible.

Police Department
A long-range need is the addition of an enclosed garage which will allow a more secure and safer transfer of prisoners from a police car to detention facilities in the building. Future consolidation of municipal functions to a new building will enable the police department to fully occupy the Annex and eliminate security concerns.

Emergency Management Agency
Expansion and upgrading of emergency warning systems as well as computerization of civil defense records are priorities for the Agency. Further integration with other Town emergency services also is targeted.

H-4.3 Fire Protection and Rescue Services

Continue efforts to form a municipal fire and rescue department.

Major expense items are the replacement of fire protection and rescue service vehicles as they age and become obsolete. Continue to require fire protection cisterns in new subdivisions outside of municipal water service areas.

There is no recommendation for a new fire station in the southeast section of North Smithfield which is at some distance from the Town's fire services. Efforts should be directed at improving the mutual-aid agreement with the Manville Fire Department in Lincoln. As noted in the Goals, Policies and Actions section of this Element, regional solutions, because of their potential for reducing municipal costs, should be pursued whenever possible. Interestingly, while respondents of the 2001 Community Survey indicated their satisfaction with Fire Services, of the many services provided by the Town, respondents suggested that only improvements to fire protection and water supply should be financed

H-4.4 Library

While the existing library is in a beautiful and well-located building, it is simply too small and can not be further expanded as is necessary in its present location. A new library is needed.

H-4.5 Animal Shelter

The Animal Shelter was upgraded in 1997 and is currently sufficiently sized.

H-4.6 Water Supply

The recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan are premised upon water and sewer services being supportive of Element D, Land Use Plan. Extensions of water utilities inconsistent with the Land Use Plan should not be allowed except where public health and safety concerns need to be addressed. Respondents to the 2001 Community Survey were most dissatisfied with the water and sewer systems in Town. However, when asked whether they would support the financing of improvements, the majority (52%) indicated that only improvements to the water system should be funded.

The current recommendations include:

- Develop a new high yield Tifft Road Well on the Tifft Road site in order to provide public water to newly permitted/approved development and to better address fire protection needs.
- Finalize negotiations with the City of Woonsocket as a means of supplementing North Smithfield's water supply.
- Implement the "Mendon Road Water Interconnection Project", under discussion, in order to serve residents in the Waterford area currently served by the Town of Blackstone, MA.
- Improve relationships between partners.
- Improve the metering and billing system.

H-4.7 Wastewater Management/Watershed Protection

The recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan are premised upon water and sewer services being supportive of Element D, Land Use. Extensions of sewers inconsistent with the Land Use should not be allowed except where public health and safety concerns need to be addressed.

Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1992, North Smithfield prepared (May 1993) a *Facilities Plan for Wastewater Management*. Map H-5 in this Comprehensive Plan shows the areas to be served by sewers to support the Land Use Element and address public health issues.

The *Wastewater Facilities Plan*:

- Identifies those areas where sewers are needed to prevent pollution, serve economic development and can accommodate affordable housing development.
- Relates sewering to the other Elements of the Comprehensive Plan with special consideration to the Land Use Plan Element, the Housing Element, the Economic Development and the Natural and Cultural Resources Element.
- Identifies areas where the establishment of Wastewater Management Districts would be the most cost-effective and environmentally sound for problem locations and those areas with aquifer recharge and surface drainage to public water supply resources.
- Discusses whether North Smithfield should, or needs to, increase its flow reservation at the Woonsocket Wastewater Treatment Facility, if additional capacity become available.

The *Wastewater Facilities Plan* needs to be updated.

H-4.8 Senior Center

As part of suggested adaptive reuse studies for the Slatersville Mill complex, evaluate the desirability of establishing a Senior Center.

Seniors should be considered as a special resource to use as major participants in and organizers of North Smithfield's efforts to implement the *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor*.

H-4.9 Regionalization of Public Services

Increasingly, communities are exploring regional options for the most efficient and cost-effective delivery of public services. As discussed in the preceding sections, many services such as sewers, water supply and fire protection are dependent wholly or in part on cooperation with other municipalities.

Many aspects of regionalization can also apply to municipal management. For example, throughout the United States many smaller towns have developed joint purchasing arrangements.

The Town's Capital Budget Program should require investigation of regional options for certain categories of municipal expenditures.

H-5.0 Consistency Statement

The Services and Facilities Element supports the goals of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act and is consistent with relevant State Guide Plan Elements.

The following is a summary of the relationship of the Services and Facilities Element to State Goals and Policies:

State Guide Plan Element 131, *State Land Use Policies and Plan 2010*
The management and development of water resources in a coordinated and efficient manner is proposed. The level of development is related to the level of services.

State Guide Plan Element 110, *Goals and Policies*
Expansion of sewer services and the use of Wastewater Management Districts are proposed to eliminate water pollution.

Continued improvement of educational facilities will support a contemporary educational program in North Smithfield schools.

Regional solutions are proposed for all public facilities wherever possible.

State Guide Plan Element 711, *Blackstone Region Water Resources Management Plan*
Sewer services will be limited to areas of higher densities. Generally, lots of 1 1/2 acres or larger will be served by private wells and individual subsurface disposal systems.

State Guide Plan Element 721, *Water Supply Policies of Rhode Island*
Access to surface water reservoirs is prohibited in accordance with the State Guide Plan.

The Town has partnered with the local Watershed Councils (as is discussed in greater detail in the Natural and Cultural Resources Element of this Comprehensive Plan) to help protect the water supply.

The Town continues to improve its water supply systems and infrastructure and search for regional solutions towards meeting water needs.

Some large lot zoning remains, and is proposed, to specifically protect individual wells and reservoirs.

State Guide Plan Element 722, *Water Supply Plan for Rhode Island*
North Smithfield is pursuing its water resource needs through regional and interstate cooperation.

I. OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

I-1.0 Introduction

The Open Space and Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Plan addresses North Smithfield's need to provide a variety of recreational opportunities for all segments of the population and addresses open space and conservation needs and opportunities.

In-town open space and recreational facilities owned outright and managed by the State is limited to 4.2 acres at the Slatersville Reservoir Fishing Access area, 7.5 acres at the North Smithfield Wildlife Marsh, and the 117 acres at the Blackstone Gorge. Compared to other communities in northern Rhode Island, North Smithfield has a very small amount of State-owned land.

The Blackstone Gorge purchase was one of the first steps taken towards the implementation of the *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor* and the *Blackstone River Park Master Plan*. In addition to the Blackstone Gorge preservation, these plans propose a greenway along the Branch River from the Slatersville Reservoirs to the confluence with the Blackstone. Various forms of active and passive recreation and a system of trails and bikeway links to those along the Blackstone Corridor are proposed. The Branch River Greenway will be complemented by rehabilitation and historic preservation programs in Slatersville and other heritage sites in North Smithfield.

The designation of the Woonasquatucket and Blackstone Rivers as American Heritage Rivers has provided opportunities for recreational activities including the development of bikeways from Providence. The RI Rivers Council has designated two groups to serve as Watershed Councils in North Smithfield, and both, the Woonasquatucket and Blackstone River Watershed Councils have already begun assisting the Town with protecting and preserving the watersheds in which these rivers are located.

Through the generosity of several donors, approximately 230 acres along the Providence Pike have been turned over to the Audubon Society of Rhode Island for use as a wildlife preserve. This is a unique resource providing a quiet refuge for the contemplative needs of man and the cycles of nature.

Several issues are of importance to recreational planning in North Smithfield. One is the lack of sidewalks along the narrow minor arterial and collector roads which link the different neighborhoods, particularly in the more rural sections of Town. In many cases, adult-provided transportation has and will continue to be necessary to allow children a safe trip between the playing field and home. Under this condition, families with children participating in organized sports at various age levels may be better served by clustering activities than by scattering them throughout the community. Some of the traditional standards which assume a child will be able to walk or ride a bike to the playground or playfield do not always apply to communities, such as North Smithfield, where new development is geographically dispersed by large lot size

requirements. Children living in the more rural areas of Town are favored, however, with a rich variety of unstructured recreational opportunities.

A second issue is the growing cost of maintaining active recreational areas; any program to acquire new recreational facilities must be matched by a long-term capability of maintaining and managing the same.

This element draws upon and complements the proposals contained in the *Recreation, Conservation, Open Space Plan and Recreation Plan, North Smithfield* (January 1986), prepared by the North Smithfield Planning Board. This plan was last updated in 1991.

I-2.0 Goals, Policies and Actions

1. PROVIDE A VARIETY OF ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES SERVING TOWN RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

A. Increase land area of active recreation areas to meet present and future deficiencies.

B. Implement Phase I and II of the proposed Pacheco Park expansion including construction of a Little League field, multi-purpose field and three (3) tennis courts, walking trail, parking and new access road.

C. Continue to seek funding for acquisition of key parcels of land and for the development of a walking trail in Slatersville linking Pacheco Park, Slatersville Reservoir and Library Island Park and explore the possibility of linking this trail to the Blackstone River Bikeway.

D. Consider acquiring the Stamina Mills site and other parcels along the Branch River for development of a riverside park, bikeway and or walking trail.

E. As part of subdivision or land development approval, continue the option of requiring dedication of land for recreational and open space purposes as appropriate and establish the necessary formulas to institute a fee in-lieu of dedication option.

F. Consider adopting flexible zoning such as Conservation Development Design to add to recreational and conservation resources.

G. Work in collaboration with Federal and State authorities in implementing the Woonasquatucket Bikeway and completing the Blackstone River Bikeway.

H. Coordinate local historic rehabilitation efforts with recreational planning as a component of the Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor.

I. Work with the Town of Blackstone, Massachusetts to improve the visual appearance of the entrance to the Paul S. Kelly Recreation Complex.

J. Work with the Heritage Corridor, the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, the RI & MA Department's of Transportation and the other partners to develop the river access facility at the Paul S. Kelly Recreation Complex.

K. Utilize a DOT Enhancement grant to develop an interpretive park at the recently acquired Mammoth Mill site.

L. Develop Trails/Greenway Plan connecting conservation and recreation areas.

M. Coordinate Town and school recreational facilities planning.

N. Require open space and recreational planning as part of proposed new Mixed Use zoning districts.

O. Develop a definition to clarify uses which are appropriate for lands designated for open space, recreation or conservation.

2. ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT ACTION PROGRAMS NECESSARY TO PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCE AND CONSERVATION AREAS

A. Identify and rank key parcels for acquisition or protection based on criteria such as but not limited to: size, adjacent protected parcels, significant natural resources, rare or endangered species or habitat, significant cultural features, development potential etc. and based on the priorities as set forth in the Woonasquatucket Greenspace Project maps D-3 – D-5.

B. Continue to work with the Land Trust and other organizations for the purpose of acquiring conservation areas and conservation easements and/or receiving same as donations.

C. Utilize State and/or Federal funds and expertise in the conservation of open space and natural resources.

D. Create overlay zoning district requiring special review considerations in critical areas such as the Branch River Valley.

E. Cooperate with the City of Woonsocket in the implementation of its *Water Quality Protection Plan* for the City's watershed and reservoir properties in North Smithfield.

F. Utilize a variety of techniques to preserve open space and conservation areas with an emphasis on viable alternatives to fee simple acquisition without State and Federal aid.

G. Introduce a local open space acquisition bond question for voter approval.

I-3.0 Plan Description

I-3.1 Inventory

I-3.1.1 Existing Open Space and Recreational Areas and Facilities

Table I-3.1.1 provides an inventory of existing open space and recreation areas and facilities in North Smithfield. Map I - 1, Open Space and Recreation Plan, shows their location.

The major Town-owned facilities include the playfields at Pacheco Park and the Junior-Senior High School; playfields at the "Paul S. Kelly Recreation Complex"; playfields at North Smithfield Elementary School; 8 playgrounds; two small parks; and the Mowry Fire Tower property.

State facilities include the Slatersville Fishing Access and the North Smithfield Wildlife Marsh. Also listed is the Blackstone River Gorge, where RIDEM acquired the land on the west and east banks of the River. Additionally, the State purchased the development rights of Christiansen's Orchard (23 acres) and West Wind Farm (86 acres).

Private and semi-public areas accessible to the public include the Centennial Memorial Park (owned by the North Smithfield Public Library) and the Audubon Society of Rhode Island's nature preserve. Although not listed in Table I-3.1.1, the privately-owned Slatersville Reservoirs are available for public use.

Open space properties not accessible to the public for protection of water supply purposes are the reservoirs and city-owned watershed properties of the City of Woonsocket Water Supply; their combined area is 596.3 acres. There were another 32 parcels in 2004 that were privately owned and certified as “Open Space”, i.e., a certification that allows for a reduction of taxes meant to encourage the preservation of large, undeveloped parcels of land.

The total area of all facilities, not including the Slatersville Reservoirs, is 1,494 acres.

I-3.1.2 Recreation Standards

Area standards originally developed by the Statewide Planning Program call for 3.75 acres/1,000 population for playgrounds and minor parks and 6.25 acres/1,000 population for playfields and major parks. These are consistent with the original National Recreation and Park Association's standards calling for a range of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population. Although both organizations have retreated from those numbers and are currently advocating that municipalities develop more specific local standards, North Smithfield continues to base its standards on the guidance initially provided by Statewide Planning and the National Parks Association.

The North Smithfield Open Space and Recreation Element has been prepared using the standard of 10.0 active acres/1,000 population.

Table I-3.1.1 Existing Open Space And Recreation Areas And Facilities, 2005

ID	Name	Acreage	Facility Type	Service Area	Uses/Facilities
State of Rhode Island					

S-1	Slatersville Fishing Access	4.2	SP	S	Fishing/boat launch
S-2	N. Smithfield Wildlife Marsh	7.5	CS	S	Conservation
S-3	Blackstone River Gorge	117	SP	S	Walking Trail
S-4	Christiansen Orchard	22.7	DR	T	Farm Fields/Orchard
S-5	West Wind Farm	85.9	DR	T	Farm Fields
	TOTAL	237.3			
Town of North Smithfield: Active Recreation Areas					
T-1	Carroll Park	.2	SP	T	Heritage Park, walking trail potential
T-2	Pacheco Park	23.8	PF	T	Baseball, tennis, BB, playground equip., skateboard park
T-3	Halliwell Sch Plygrnd	4.0	PG	N	BB, playground equip.
T-4	Kendall-Dean School Playground	1.0	PG	N	Baseball
T-5	School St Playground	2.0	PG	N	
T-6	Waterford Playground	0.7	PG	N	Playground equipment
T-7	Kelly Park/Mammoth Mill	14.8	PF	T	Soccer, baseball, future bikepath, heritage park
T-8	Branch Village Park	7.5	SP	N	Open space
T-10	Bushee School Playground	0.5	PG	N	Playground Equipment
T-11	Union Village Playgrnd	0.5	PG	N	Playground Equipment
T-12	Primrose Playground	0.7	PG	N	Playground Equipment
T-13	Jr./Sr. High School	24.0	PF	T	Baseball, tennis/volley, BB
T-14	NS Elementary School	9.7	PG	N	Soccer, Playground Equipment
T-18	Blackstone Gorge	65.5	SP	R	Walking Trail
T-22	Main Street	8.9	SP/LP	T	Walking Trail/Wellhead Protection
	TOTAL	163.8			
Subdivisions					
T-9	Oakwood Estates Sub.	1.5	PG	N	Meadow
T-15	Slatersville 88 Sub.	4.5	SP	N	Pond, Proposed Equip to be Installed
T-16	Rolling Acres Subdiv.	1.7	PG	N	Proposed Equip to be Installed
T-17	Nipsachuck Estates Subdivision	1.5	PG	N	Playfield, Proposed Equip to be Installed
T-19	Trout Brook Pond Sub.	17.2	SP	T	Cross Country Trail
T-20	Brookside Estates Sub.	.3	SP	N	Equestrian/Pedestrian Easement
T-21	Sunnycrest Subdivision	1.3	PG	N	Wooded lot
	TOTAL	28.0			

ID	Name	Acreage	Facility Type	Service Area	Uses/Facilities
Conservation Areas					
TC-1	Halliwell School	15.0	CS	N	Wellhead Protection
TC-2	NS Elementary School	17.0	CS	T	Nature Trail
TC-3	Secluded Pines	2.7	CS	N	Wooded grove, detention pond
TC-4	Stone Ridge Subdiv.	9.7	CS	N	Conserv. Ease./no public access
TC-5	Scott Farm Subdivision	1.6	CS	N	Conservation Easement
TC-6	Rustic View Subdiv.	1.7	CS	N	Wooded grove, detention pond
TC-7	Christy Court Subdiv.	22.0	CS	N	Conservation Easement
TC-8	Tifft Road Well	4.9	SP	N	Wellhead Protection
TC-9	Old Oxford Rd. Subdiv.	6.3	CS	N	Wooded lot, wetland
TC-10	Spooner Property	26.9	CS	T	Conservation-No access – Proposed rezone to Village Residential
TC-11	Valley View Estates Subdivision	8.2	CS	N	Watershed Protection/no public access
TC-12	Gold Prop. Mattity Rd	11.5	CS	N	Conservation Easement/no access
TC-13	Nipsachuck Hill	5.7	CS	N	No access
TC-14	Pine Estates Subdiv.	3.8	CS	N	Conserv. Ease./no public access
TC-15	Mowry Fire Tower	7.0	SP	T	No public access
	TOTAL	144.0			
Private and Semi-Public					
P-1	Centennial Memorial Park	1.2	SP	T	Heritage Park, benches
P-2	Audubon and/or Private	230.5	SP	R	Nature Trails
P-3	R/Goal Park	20.1	XC	T	Cross-counrty Trail
P-4	Land Trust/Mattity Swamp	17.3	CS	T	Conservation
P-5	Land Trust/Village Wy	42.5	CS	T	Conservation
P-6	Iron Woods Driving Range	17.0	SP	T	Golf
P-7	RI Sports Center, Ice Rink		SP	R	Ice skating
	TOTAL	328.6			
City of Woonsocket					
W-1	Reservoir #3 Water	156.3	SP	R	No Access, Water supply
W-2	Reservoir #3 Watershed	287.4	SP	R	No Access, Water supply
W-3	Reservoir #1 Water	7.1	SP	R	No Access, Water supply
W-4	Reservoir #1 Watershed	145.5	SP	R	No Access, Water supply
	TOTAL	596.3			
	TOTAL All Facilities	**1,494.0**			

* Facility Type: PG=Playground; PF=Playfield; SP=Special; XC=Cross Country Trail; DR=Development Rights and CS=Conservation
** Service Area: N=Neighborhood; T=Town; R=Region; and S=State

I-3.1.3 Recreation and Open Space Facility Types

Playgrounds / Minor Parks
Minor Parks are generally small in area and have a specialized purpose. Some, as in the case of Carroll Park and Centennial Memorial Park, may serve a community-wide purpose. Others, such as Branch Village Park, are oriented towards a local neighborhood.

Playgrounds are active recreational areas for children between the ages of 5-15 but may include tot lots for the 1-5 age group and have sections set aside for the passive activities of all age groups. Frequently, they are located next to an elementary school. Site standards range from 3 to 15 acres. In North Smithfield, playgrounds, such as the one-half acre Union Village and Bushee School Playgrounds, are equipped to serve younger children but are not large enough for field sports.

Playfields / Major Parks
Playfields typically range in size from 12 to 20 acres and are equipped with facilities for active sports such as tennis, baseball, softball, soccer and basketball. Those served are generally ages 13 and older.

Major Parks serve more passive activity needs such as boating, swimming, skating, walking, picnicking, day camps and the like. Facilities such as the Slatersville Fishing Access and adjoining reservoirs, the Blackstone River Gorge, Trout Brook Recreation area and the Audubon area allow for some of these activities.

Linear Parks
Typically, these relate to some form of recreational travel such as biking, canoeing, horseback riding and hiking. The proposed Branch River Park, which is discussed in a later section, would fit the definition. Such facilities often serve as a regional resource and may be related to unique natural features or an available corridor such as those provided by utility rights-of-way. A bike path would be a form of linear park. There are no standards for linear parks.

Special Use
These encompass recreational facilities which may be publicly or privately owned such as golf courses, golf driving ranges, hockey rinks, ski slopes and swimming pools. According to the National Recreation and Park Association, a population of 20,000 or more is required to support any of the above-identified activities.

Conservancy
These areas primarily protect a natural or cultural resource with recreational use as a second objective. The only standard is that the site should be large enough to protect the resource.

I-3.1.4 Recreation Area Deficiencies and Needs

The standards cited above have been used to establish a guide to the magnitude of present deficiencies in North Smithfield.

Although the Town owns approximately 163.8 acres for active recreation, not all of it is accessible. Removing the Blackstone Gorge property and another 10% for properties with wetlands and steep slopes, that may be scenic but are difficult to access, provides for a more realistic total of 88.5 acres. Given North Smithfield's 2000 Census population of 10,618 and the standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people, North Smithfield should have approximately 106 acres for recreational purposes. The year 2000 deficit of 17.5 acres will grow to 19.5 acres by 2010 based on the very conservative Statewide Planning population projections that suggest 10,783 people will reside in North Smithfield by 2010. Given the Town's build-out projections contained in the Land Use Element, much more land will be needed to maintain the standard North Smithfield residents have grown used to.

1.3.1.5 Recreation Programs Deficiencies and Needs

Although accepted land area requirements for some types of recreation is limited, this has not precluded the operation of successful recreation programs.

Through the Parks and Recreation Division, the Town runs a number of recreational programs. They presently include:

> Summer park program (age 6 through 12) with a playground administrator at each of the following locations: Pacheco Park; School Street Playground; Bushee School Playground; Union Village Playground; Waterford Playground; and Primrose Playground.
>
> Tennis, including instruction, at Pacheco Park and Junior-Senior High School.
>
> Youth winter basketball at several of the schools.
>
> Gymnastics at the Junior-Senior High School.

Annual events include: an Easter egg hunt at the North Smithfield Junior-Senior High School and Christmas Tree lighting ceremonies at the Municipal Annex and Slatersville Church Commons.

Little League baseball and softball are independent organizations that use Town ball fields as follows: 1 at Kendall-Dean School; 3 at Pacheco Park; 2 at Junior-Senior High School; 1 at the Kelly Complex.

There is an independent Youth Soccer Program that approximately 650 children participate in. A recreation complex completed in the late 1990's at the North Smithfield Elementary School provides field space for the Youth Soccer Program.

The RI Sports Center (indoor ice rink) opened in September 1991.

There are no swimming programs as there are no public swimming areas in North Smithfield.

The major facilities shortages are an inadequate number of baseball fields and soccer fields. This deficiency should be eliminated with the construction of one and possibly two new baseball fields at Pacheco Park and with the fields that are to accompany the new school facilities proposed as part of the 2004 *School Facilities Master Plan*.

Additionally, all of the facilities require improvements of a nature which are accomplished under maintenance programs or the annual capital budgeting process and are not encompassed in a Comprehensive Plan.

I-3.1.6 Open Space / Conservancy Deficiencies and Needs

As stated above, there are no standards which can be applied to conservancy requirements in a community. As a general guideline, the State of Rhode Island encourages rural and suburban communities such as North Smithfield to protect large percentages of land and water to compensate for the lack of same in more urbanized areas.

In North Smithfield, open space and conservancy actions should be focused on the preservation of critical natural resources supporting a healthy environment for man and all forms of nature. These include, but are not limited to the following: rivers, ponds, reservoirs, streams, flood plains, freshwater marshes and wetlands, groundwater aquifers and their recharge zones, unique geography and geology, special habitats and vegetation such as those identified by the RI Natural Heritage Program, farmlands, trees (remaining tracts of forest and street trees) and natural vegetation.

Areas falling within the above categories previously were identified in the *North Smithfield Conservation, Open Space and Recreation Plan*, and are discussed in the planning proposals that follow.

I-4.0 The Plan

Proposals are shown on Map I - 1, Open Space and Recreation Plan.

For recreation, the plan emphasizes the improvement of existing playgrounds and playfields. To satisfy acreage deficiencies, first priority should go to additions to existing facilities, if feasible, before creating new playgrounds and playfields.

Major park projects such as the Branch River Park and formal river access to the Rivers through the construction of a canoe/kayak launch will add major areas for passive recreation. In combination with existing open areas such as the Audubon Society lands and those to be protected under open space conservancy proposals, North Smithfield will have recreational resources enhancing the living environment for all its citizens.

The open space and conservancy proposals offer a number of techniques to protect natural and cultural resources which, once destroyed, are not easily replicated. North Smithfield has a number of areas worthy of this effort.

I-4.1 Playgrounds and Parks

As previously discussed, North Smithfield will conservatively need approximately 19.5 additional acres of playgrounds, fields and park facilities by the year 2010.

It is proposed that this deficiency be removed as follows:

Land in the vicinity of Booth Pond should be acquired and ultimately developed for a combination of active and passive recreational uses. Require a playground/minor park as part of any development between Landmark Medical Center and Booth Pond. Desirably, the recreational area might be located near the Pond. The facility could serve residents as well as those employed in the development area.

Revise Land Development and Subdivision Regulations section on dedication of land for public purposes to allow for the continued dedication of land for open space and recreation purposes.

Consider adoption of alternatives other than donating land for recreational purposes with provisions for public improvements. Develop a fee in-lieu of dedication formula within the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations that would allow the Town to accumulate funds to purchase a larger property than what might otherwise be dedicated as part of a subdivision approval. Development of a formula, however, is a complex undertaking requiring considerable planning and research to make it legally supportable. An alternative to this fee is an Impact Fee as described in Louis Berger's 2002 *Growth Management Report* and may be instituted in accordance with RIGL Title 45, Chapter 22.4.

Consider adopting flexible development standards such as Conservation Development Design. While the overall density would not exceed that which would be permitted under normal subdivision of the land, this technique would raise the density in one part of the development to achieve open space or recreational usage in the other. The principle permits greater flexibility of design and encourages the preservation of more open space. Where possible, such open space should link up with similar spaces in other developments or major conservation areas. Generally, Conservation Development regulations give the Town the option of receiving the open space land as a dedication or requiring its maintenance by a Homeowners Association. The Land Use Element and the Natural and Cultural Resources Element also suggest that the Town consider this concept.

Development of the soccer fields at North Smithfield Elementary School and the proposed Phase I improvements at Pacheco Park should help reduce the shortfall in the playfields category. The addition of the Blackstone River Gorge property and the Trout Brook Pond/ R-Goal property supplement the inventory of places in the major park category. However, as noted in the Corridor Commission's 1997 *Natural Resources Inventory*, funds will be needed not only to manage and maintain these lands, but also to help improve access and interpretation.

As noted in the Introduction to the Open Space and Recreation Element, there are advantages to concentrating the playing fields in several locations. To accomplish this goal, proposed playfields are in two concentrations; one in the northern and the other in the southern end of Town.

Northern Part of Town
Implement Phase I improvements to Pacheco Park including development of a baseball field, multi-purpose fields, walking trails, parking and access road. Phase II of the Pacheco Park expansion may include development of several additional tennis courts.

Southern End of Town
Existing playfield facilities are located at the Junior-Senior High School. The existing playfields could be expanded only by the acquisition of land across a street.

Close by is the North Smithfield Elementary School which has a small playground and four soccer fields.. The Town owns an additional 17 acre portion of the 40 acre site that because of wetlands and other constraints is not suited for active recreation. Acquisition of an adjacent 45 acre parcel could aid in future expansion of facilities in the area.

An alternative perspective is offered by the RGB/Gilbane 2004 *Comprehensive School Facilities Master Plan*. Citing a town wide lack of athletic space and field space, the Plan calls for a new Middle School and new Elementary School. Both schools would be located on land that would be sufficiently sized to accommodate, among other school-related buildings and functions, one baseball field and two soccer fields (multi-purpose fields) each.

I-4.2 Branch River Greenway and Blackstone River Park

The Blackstone River Greenway is an essential component of the overall plan for the Blackstone River Park which extends from North Smithfield to Providence and northward into Massachusetts. Both are important components of the *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor*. Now that the most critical lands are owned by the State and Town, issues of ongoing maintenance, improving access and heritage programming must be attended to.

The Branch River Greenway starts at Pacheco Park near the Slatersville Reservoir and follows the River through Slatersville, Forestdale and Branch Village to the confluence with the Blackstone River below the Blackstone Gorge. According to recently funded conceptual designs, pedestrian and/or equestrian paths would follow the rivers. Areas such a the Library Island Park have already been set aside for picnicking and the open water areas will be available for boating and fishing. Access to the Branch River (a canoe/kayak put-in and take out, informational signage and parking) is proposed as Phase III of the BRVNHCC 1999 *Blackstone River Access Plan*. This access point at Route 146A across from the former Tupperware headquarters in North Smithfield will provide access to the Blackstone River (and Blackstone Gorge area) via the Branch River.

Major points of interest in North Smithfield which are tied into the two parks include the following: the dam at Slatersville Reservoir; Centennial Park; the Slatersville Historic District with its proposed rehabilitation of residences and adaptive reuse of the Slatersville Mill complex; the Blackstone Gorge recently acquired by the State and the Town; the Mammoth Mill ruins recently acquired by the Town along Canal Street in Waterford; sections of the Blackstone Canal; and the playing fields at the "Paul S. Kelly Recreation Complex" site adjoining Mammoth Mills. Details of the overall plans are to be found in the *Blackstone River Master Plan,* prepared by RIDEM in 1986.

I-4.3 Blackstone River Bikeway

The Blackstone River Bikeway, paralleling the Blackstone River, ultimately will provide a connection through Providence to the East Bay Bike Path. Sections of the Blackstone River Bikeway will pass through North Smithfield in two locations as follows: between Manville Road and the Blackstone River in the eastern corner of Town and along Canal Street in the Waterford neighborhood. Plans for a bikeway in Massachusetts connecting the Blackstone River Bikeway with the Worcester area are underway. Plans call for riverboat/ canoe docking facilities to be established at Kelly Park. Funding for design and construction have been secured through a RIDOT Enhancement grant.

An extension of the Bikeway from Waterford to Slatersville follows St. Paul Street, Route 146A and School Street.

As discussed in the Circulation Element, an alternative route to Slatersville would be along the right-of-way of P&W's Slatersville Spur in the event rail service is discontinued.

It should also be noted that a major new bikeway, the “Northwest Bike Trail/Woonasquatucket River Bikeway”, had originally included portions of North Smithfield. However, the *Planning/Design Feasibility Study* (February 1999) excluded sections of the proposed bikeway in North Smithfield and Burrillville. Apparently, as a result of data collection efforts and initial meetings with the Project Area Committee, it was determined that it was not practical or feasible to include North Smithfield or Burrillville because much of the former railroad right-of-way in these two Towns was under private ownership and therefore would be too difficult or expensive to acquire, particularly because many of those sections were being actively utilized for other purposes. However, it should also be noted that preliminary discussions of those sections included the segments between Black Plain Road and Farnum Pike (Route 104) and Farnum Pike and Douglas Pike (Route 7) were kept in the Final 1999 Report. As the Report states on page 4-2, “While these portions of the study area have been eliminated from consideration at this time, various segments could be reconsidered at a future date.” And, as will be discussed below, the potential of a bikeway in North Smithfield is again a possibility.

I-4.4 Trails / Greenways

Map I - 1 conceptually shows a system of trails connecting major conservation and recreation areas in the Town. Where possible, the trails follow utility line rights-of-way. It is

recommended that a Trails / Greenways Plan be developed so that appropriate links can be retained as subdivision occurs in the larger undeveloped sections of the community. The Trails Plan would be developed in cooperation with the utilities and would identify the means by which the trail system would be reserved for public use. 53% of the respondents to the 2001 Community Survey felt developing bike and walking trail systems was of great importance

Creation of trail links from Pacheco Park to the planned Library Island Park should be considered when reviewing development proposals of parcels west of Pacheco Park along Main Street.

Also, as illustrated and discussed in the BRVNHCC's 2003 *Trail/Greenway Vision Report*, there are two potential trail locations in North Smithfield. One parallels the Woonasquatucket River and continues west to Burrillville and South through Smithfield. This proposal suggests that the Northwest Bicycle Project in combination with a Woonasquatucket River Bikeway still has potential in North Smithfield, not only for the recreational opportunities it will provide, but also because it will serve as a catalyst for the continued renewal efforts of the River. The second potential trail location is identified as the Louisquisset Trolley Line Trail. RIDOT owns the right-of-way to a two-mile segment between Landmark Hospital and the RI Sports Complex along Route 146. The circa 1900 15-mile trolley line originally connected Burrillville to Providence, however, only a few segments, like the one in North Smithfield are still publicly-owned. The State believes this two-mile segment has the potential to serve as a linear recreational facility.

I-4.5 Open Space and Conservancy Areas to be Protected/Enhanced

In addition to the protection of lands that contain critical natural resources and features as previously identified, conservation action is proposed in the following locations:

Branch River and Tributaries
This conservation area includes the Branch River, the Slatersville Reservoirs, Trout Pond and two major tributaries, Tarklin and Trout Brooks. Actions to create a linear Branch River Greenway are discussed above in the Recreation Facilities proposals. Permanent protection of the tributaries is proposed. In the case of Tarkiln Brook, which is fed in small part by Tarkiln Pond, the cooperation of the Town of Burrillville will be essential.

Blackstone River, Watershed and Gorge
Protection of the Blackstone Gorge has been initiated by RIDEM and is part and parcel of the companion plans for the Blackstone River Park and Branch River Greenway. Part of the Gorge and the Rolling Dam is located across the State line; conservation programs will have to be coordinated with the Town of Blackstone and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding between the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the State of Rhode Island and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, Massachusetts purchased 22 acres on both sides of the Blackstone River to provide access to the land recently acquired by the State of Rhode Island. The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission must remain committed to supporting improvements at the park,

including parking areas, a trail system and signage. As described in the 1986 *Blackstone River Park Master Plan*, some of the State's best white water canoeing can be found on the stretch of river from the Tupperware dam to the confluence with the Branch River.

In addition to the Corridor Commission, the Blackstone River Watershed Council, as designated by the RI River's Council, is collaborating with the Blackstone River Coalition to generate a bi-state, cooperative action plan for the River and Watershed. This Plan will include specific tasks resulting in the protection and enhancement of the watershed and its unique features that should be supported by North Smithfield.

Screech Hole Bog

Screech Hole Bog is located primarily in Burrillville near the point where the Town lines of North Smithfield, Burrillville and Uxbridge meet, and extends into Massachusetts. The Bog has been identified for protection by the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program. Subject to further study, part of the buffer area for its protection may extend into North Smithfield. Included in the State's 1983 inventory of significant sites, this Bog has the physical and biological characteristics of a fen – a unique wetland in Rhode Island. The area serves as a habitat for unique flora, is a good example of a glacial esker and is of critical importance as a groundwater resource because it contributes to the Ironstone Reservoir in Massachusetts. Its neighboring areas should be closely monitored to ensure that infill or run-off from development does not harm the Bog.

Cherry Brook / Cedar Swamp

Cedar Swamp is the largest wetland in North Smithfield; further encroachments should be limited. As proposed in the Circulation Element, wetland replication for any wetland filling should be required.

Cherry Brook flows through Cedar Swamp and drains some of the most urbanized sections of Town. The brook and its flood plain must be protected. Drainage, flood and water quality impacts of new development within the brook's watershed require careful scrutiny when development proposals are reviewed.

Crookfall Brook/Woonsocket Water Supply

The Crookfall Brook watershed is located primarily in North Smithfield but does extend into Smithfield and Lincoln. A tributary brook, which forms near Rocky Hill Road, feeds Woonsocket Reservoir No. 3 through one subdrainage area. The second subdrainage area is focused on another tributary brook which starts near Smithfield Road to the east of the Route 146/146A merge. This brook enters Crookfall Brook above Woonsocket Reservoir No 1.

Woonsocket has prepared a *Water Quality Protection Plan* which calls for additional land acquisition within North Smithfield by the City to protect the watershed. See the Natural and Cultural Resources Element of this plan for further discussion of watershed protection.

Crookfall Brook was originally the means for moving water from Woonsocket Reservoir No. 3 to No. 1. To replace this pollution-prone method, Woonsocket constructed a 24-inch pipeline parallel to and connecting the reservoirs.

Todd's Pond
In the 1990 Weston and Sampson water supply study and again later in the 1992 Maguire study (see Services and Facilities Element), the Todd's Pond area was identified as a potential aquifer for public water supply purposes. Although the Slatersville Aquifer is considered to be a more productive aquifer, the long range consequences of its being impacted by two EPA Superfund sites is impossible to determine at this time. Accordingly, high priority should be given to protecting Todd's Pond, its tributaries and their combined watershed.

Woonasquatucket River Watershed
The headwaters of the Woonasquatucket River are formed in North Smithfield from wetlands and small streams. Among these are the brook passing through the Audubon Society's property, the stream and wetlands associated with Primrose Pond, a small brook starting to the east of Grange Road, and Nipsachuck Swamp. The Woonasquatucket River was designated a National Heritage River in 1998. This designation, the formation of the Woonasquatucket Watershed Council and the implementation of the Watershed Action Plan are crucial steps toward protecting the watershed. Similar to the authority given to the Blackstone River Watershed Council, the RI Rivers Council designated the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council as a player in the Watershed's protection. A recent regional effort led by the Watershed Council resulted in several maps contained this Plan which were prepared under the auspices of the Woonasquatucket Greenspace Project.

The Blunders
This unique area combines interesting geological formations with historical artifacts and an ecology supporting rare botanical species selected for protection by the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program. A 17-lot subdivision is proposed on the property, however the historic district area and the large area containing the rare species is proposed to be dedicated as open space.

Audubon Property
The Audubon Society of Rhode Island developed a plan for its 250 acre property along Providence Pike. A nature education center, along with continued passive use is contemplated. Hunting and the use of motorized vehicles is prohibited.

Booth Pond
This is a diverse area of woodlands, ponds, streams and wetlands within an urbanized area. A recently completed study conducted by Virginian Brown, a recognized odonate (dragonflies and damselflies) specialist found that 51 species of odonates exist at Booth Pond, a number that was exceeded by only one of the other 400 sites surveyed in the state. Among the odonates found at Booth Pond, two were listed by the RINHP as species of State Concern and one was listed as Endangered. Preliminary survey of plants and birds also indicate the Booth Pond and

surrounding upland forest represent a significant biodiversity resource within an otherwise highly developed portion of the state. A major retail development proposing significant disturbance of the area around Booth Pond received Master Plan and Special Use Permit approval from the Town of North Smithfield in 2004.

I-4.6 Techniques for Conservation

In recognition of growing constraints on the availability of State and Federal grant funds for the acquisition and development of recreation and conservation areas, there must be greater emphasis on viable alternatives to fee simple acquisition. Several, which may be applicable to North Smithfield, are described below.

Land Trust
A Land Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of open space, conservation areas, and significant cultural amenities. It can acquire property, receive donations of same, and manage the land in accordance with the appropriate conservation goals. Although many of its functions are similar to those of a public agency, the Land Trust has the advantage of being able to move quickly when a critical property becomes available. The Audubon Society of Rhode Island assisted the North Smithfield Conservation Commission with the establishment of a Land Trust. North Smithfield's Land Trust has, in fact, been very effective since its inception, in acquiring rights to certain parcels worthy of protection.

Conservation Easement
According to *The Conservation Easement Handbook*, prepared by the Trust for Public Land, "A conservation easement is a legal agreement a property owner makes to restrict the type and amount of development that takes place on his or her property. Each easement's restrictions are tailored to the particular property and the interests of the individual owner."

Easements have the advantage of being less costly than fee simple acquisition. If public access is allowed, a donation of an easement to the Land Trust or public agency will allow the donor to take an income tax deduction. The IRS has special criteria applying to such donations.

Zoning Enabling Act
The 1992 Rhode Island Zoning Enabling Act, through its statement of General Purposes, allows communities to use a broader range of techniques to advance conservation, open space and recreation purposes. Several of those applicable to this discussion are stated below:

> Provide for the protection of the natural, historic, cultural, and scenic character of the city or town or areas therein.
>
> Provide for the preservation of agricultural and forest land.
>
> Provide for the preservation of open space for wildlife protection, flood water storage, air and water pollution abatement, and to shape and balance urban and rural development.

Provide for the preservation and enhancement of the recreational resources of the city or town.

The above-stated purposes permit municipalities such as North Smithfield to develop special regulations in the form of overlay districts with special review requirements relating to the resources that are being protected. All land development proposals, for example, can be subject to consideration of conservation issues.

I-4.7 Capital Improvements, Maintenance and Upgrading

The *North Smithfield Conservation, Open Space and Recreation Plan* (NSCORP) includes a Six-Year Program for capital improvements and the upgrading and maintenance of facilities. The Recreation Committee and the Conservation Commission were updating the NSCORP annually as part of the Town's annual capital budgeting process. Submission of a NSCORP is no longer required by the State because Open Space and Recreation Elements of Comprehensive Plans have taken their place. While many items in the Town's NSCORP have been implemented, a few tasks remain relevant.

I-5.0 Consistency Statement

The Open Space and Recreation Element is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act and is consistent with relevant State Guide Plan Elements as follows:

State Guide Plan Element 152*, Ocean State Outdoors: Rhode Island's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*
The proposals of this Element as well as those of the Land Use Plan Element and the Natural and Cultural Resources Element deal with open space preservation on a comprehensive basis.

Local plans were coordinated with the State's efforts to acquire the Blackstone Gorge.

Wildlife habitat enhancement is encouraged by proposed conservation areas and the use of various regulatory techniques to enhance open space preservation. The extensive utility rights-of-way in North Smithfield provide an extensive supply of ecotone environments.

Many open space areas have been linked by a system of overland and river corridor trails.

Water resources, both surface and groundwater, are to be protected through land or easement acquisition and regulatory techniques.

The protection of agricultural and forested land, the preservation of historic resources, and the conservation of archaeological resources are encouraged.

A diversity of recreational facilities are continued and expanded to serve those of all age and income groups in the Town.

State Guide Plan Element 155, *A Greener Path … Greenspace and Greenways for Rhode Island's Future*
Formal pedestrian paths and bikeways are encouraged along greenways coinciding with the Blackstone and Branch Rivers.

Abandonment of any railroad rights-of-way should be considered for the Rails-to-Trails program and donation to the Town of North Smithfield.

State Guide Plan Element 156, *Urban and Community Forest Plan*
North Smithfield recognizes its small remaining tracts of forest and street trees as having environmental, cultural and economic values. Trees are recognized throughout the Update as significant natural resources. Contiguous forest cover is illustrated on the consolidated resource maps.

State Guide Plan Element 161, *Forest Resource Management Plan*
Property owners are encouraged to participate in the Farm, Forest and Open Space Tax program.

Forest lands are illustrated in the maps contained in this Update to promote understanding and protection of these natural resources.

State Guide Plan Element 156, *Rivers Policy and Classification Plan*
The classification of segments of rivers in North Smithfield is contained in this Update. There are a series of goals and policies included that speak to the clean up and preservation of the quality of rivers such that they can be used more extensively as recreational resources.

J. CIRCULATION

J-1.0 Introduction

The North Smithfield circulation system has evolved over the past 300 years to serve the needs of local residents and a larger regional population in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

Initially, the regional system provided stagecoach links between Providence and Worcester and other important Massachusetts destinations. Great Road (Route 146A), Douglas Pike (Route 7) and Providence Pike (Route 5) all relate to historic north-south through traffic movements.

The more recent construction of Route 146, as a predominantly limited access highway between Providence and Worcester, provides a facility which now accommodates a large share of the interstate traffic. Within Rhode Island, Route 146 is a limited access roadway except for a one and one-half mile non-limited access section in North Smithfield between the Route 146A cutoff and the new Route 99 interchange in Lincoln immediately to the south of the Town line.

East-west traffic circulation in North Smithfield generally radiates from, and relates to, the urban concentration in Woonsocket; for many years, until the advent of highway shopping centers, downtown Woonsocket was the commercial and retail hub of North Smithfield. Main Street-School Street, St. Paul Street, Pound Hill Road, Sayles Hill Road and Greenville Road (Route 104/Farnum Pike) are the principal east-west roadways. Although Victory Highway (Route 102) serves east-west flows in North Smithfield, essentially it is a north-south road passing through the more rural sections of northern Rhode Island.

In times past the Town was served by several trolley and railroad lines; now all are gone save one. A freight-only spur line of the Providence and Worcester Railroad extends from the main line in Woonsocket and terminates at the Providence Pike.

Lacking a downtown area, North Smithfield does not have numerous off-street parking problems. Pursuant to the Town's Zoning Ordinance, off-street parking is provided by individual property owners. However, as a result of increased residential development, there are many more cars on the street and a greater need for sidewalks and traffic calming measures.

There is only one bus passing through the Town and linking Woonsocket and Providence; this services and stops in Park Square and areas to the south along Routes 146A and 146.

The Circulation Element addresses the need to improve and add to the present transportation system and to serve well the needs of local residents and business and the overall circulation system of Rhode Island.

J-2.0 Goals, Policies and Actions

1. CONTINUE IMPROVEMENT OF STREET SYSTEM THROUGH SELECTIVE ROADWAY ALIGNMENTS, WIDENINGS AND INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

A. Use combinations of local, State and Federal funds to make intersection improvements, undertake a pavement management program and implement the State's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

B. Seek RIDOT Enhancement funds to conduct highway beautification projects, increase pedestrian access, village revitalization and intermodal transportation projects.

C. Revise Subdivision and Land Development Regulations standards as they apply to local street widths.

D. Enforce Zoning Ordinance regulations applying to visibility at intersections.

E. Develop, prioritize and implement a Sidewalk Plan.

F. Adopt and implement a Mapped Street Ordinance or alternative policy.

G. Work with RIDOT on the proposed widening of the Slatersville Stone Arch Bridge and ensure that the historic character of the bridge is maintained.

H. Develop and implement a road improvement program that includes assessment and prioritization of Town road projects.

I. Encourage the development and implementation of access management plans to minimize access points to existing roadways in order to increase capacity and reduce delays, with special attention given to Industrial Drive and 146A through Park Square.

2. ELIMINATE TRAFFIC CONGESTION ON NON-LIMITED ACCESS SECTION OF ROUTE 146

A. Encourage RIDOT to reestablish the Route 146/Sayles Hill Road interchange on the TIP and to begin discussions regarding feasible alternatives.

3. ENCOURAGE PRESERVATION OF RURAL CHARACTER OF COUNTRY ROADS

A. Adopt and implement a Scenic Roads Inventory and develop a Scenic Road Ordinance.

4. ALLOW ONLY THAT DEVELOPMENT WHICH WILL NOT OVERBURDEN THE STREET SYSTEM

A. Carefully evaluate traffic impacts and stipulate mitigation measures as part of development plan review for major development projects.

B. Limit curbcuts.

5. PROVIDE FACILITIES TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF THE TRANSIT SYSTEM

A. Increase public transportation opportunities.

B. Work with RIDOT and/or RIPTA in developing local park-n-ride facilities for transit users and car poolers.

C. Continue transportation services for the elderly and handicapped.

6. FACILITATE FREIGHT RAILROAD SERVICE TO MANUFACTURING AREAS

A. Continue zoning allowing manufacturing uses which may require deliveries or shipments by railroad.

7. INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ACCESS PARTICULARLY TO VILLAGE AREAS, NEAR PUBLIC FACILITIES, AND IN DENSELY SETTLED NEIGHBORHOODS

A. The Planning Board should require all development proposals to include a pedestrian access component.

8. PROMOTE TRAFFIC SAFETY ON NEW AND EXISTING ROADWAYS

A. Amend Subdivision and Land Development Regulations to include provisions for traffic calming measures such as reduced curve radii, reduced roadway width, street tree plantings, etc.

B. Improve safety at West Acres interchange on Rt 146 (south to north U-turn).

C. Implement a lanestripping program as a speed control measure on existing roadways and include a stripping provision in the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.

J-3.0 Plan Description

J-3.1 Inventory

J-3.1.1 Functional Classification

Except for Route 146 (the North Smithfield Expressway) and sections of Route 146A between Park Square and Route 146, virtually the entire street system in North Smithfield is comprised of two-lane roadways of varying pavement widths. Although improved over the years, most of the local streets, other than in subdivided areas, originally were laid out to serve the needs of those who used a horse and buggy.

The Rhode Island Division of Planning, in cooperation with Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT), has developed a functional classification system for roadways. Essentially there are three major classes as follows:

- **Arterials** - high mobility roadways, generally serving regional as well as local circulation needs.

- **Collectors** - providing in-town links between local and arterial roadways.

- **Local Streets** - primarily providing access to homes and businesses.

The 1995-2005 Highway Functional Classifications for North Smithfield are shown on Map J - 1 and are described as follows:

Principal Arterials - (9.8 miles) - Route 146 from Lincoln to the Massachusetts line; Victory Highway (Route 102) from the Route 146A to the Burrillville town line; and Route 146A from Route 146 to Park Square. Route 146 is a limited access highway except for the section between the 146A turnoff and the Lincoln Town line; according to the Department of Transportation, the one and one half mile section providing access to local businesses in North Smithfield remains the only non-limited access stretch of 146 between Providence and Massachusetts.

Route 146 has grade separated interchanges with the North Smithfield street system as follows: Victory Highway, Pound Hill Road and Greenville Road/Farnum Pike (Route 104). For the non-limited access sections there are at grade intersections with Eddie Dowling Highway (Route 146A) and Sayles Hill Road. A stop light at Sayles Hill Road creates a significant traffic hazard and traffic backups during peak travel periods.

Minor Arterials - (10.6 miles) - Route 146A from Park Square to Victory Highway; Sayles Hill Road from Route 146 to Lincoln Town line; Greenville Road/Farnum Pike (Route 104) from Route 146 interchange to 146 A (Smithfield Road); Saint Paul Street; Douglas Pike (Route 7) from Burrillville line to Smithfield line; North Main Street/Quaker Highway (Ironstone Street) from Main Street to Massachusetts line; and Manville Road from Lincoln to Woonsocket municipal lines.

Collectors - (23.8 miles) - Mendon Road; Rhodes Avenue; Canal Street; Central Street; Green Street; Pound Hill Road; North Smithfield Industrial Drive; Main Street/School Street; Providence Pike (Route 5) between Main Street and Smithfield town line; Woonsocket Hill

Road/Follett Street between Providence Pike and Farnum Pike; Iron Mine Hill Road; and Greenville Road/Farnum Pike (Route 104) between Route 146 interchange and Smithfield town line. With the exception of the Providence Pike, many of the identified collector streets are relatively narrow two-lane roadways.

Local Streets - All streets not identified as collectors are local streets. These include many older roadways which served the former rural and farming communities as well as newer subdivision streets. The new subdivisions present a sharp contrast between the older roadways which are narrow (often 22 to 24 feet of paving) and have a soft edge, i.e. no curbs. The new streets are curbed and have a 30 foot wide pavement.

J-3.1.2 Roadway Characteristics

The following is a summary of the characteristics of the principal and minor arterials:

Table I-3.1.2 Characteristics of Principal and Minor Arterials

	Shoulder(s)	Lanes	Center Offset
Route 146A at Landmark Medical	2 @ 8’ each	4 @ 12’ each	2’
Route 102 (Victory Highway)	2 @10’ each	2 @13’ each	None
Sayles Hill Rd (east of Rt 146)	2 @6’ each	2 @ 13’ each	None
Route 146	2 @8’ each	4 @ 12’ each	2’
St. Paul Street	2 @ 1.5’ each	2 @ 13’ each	None
Route 7	2 @ 2’ each	2 @ 12’ each	None
Route 146 A at Maple St	2 @ 10’ each	4 @ 12’ each	None
Route 5	2 @ 1’ to 4’ each	2 @ 12 ‘ each	None
Ironstone St (Quaker Highway)	2 @ 10’ each	2 @14’ each	None
Route 146A at Pound Hill Rd	2 @ 5’ each	2 @ 13’ each	None
Route 104	2 @ 1 to 2’ each	2 @ 12’ each	None

J-3.1.3 Traffic Generators

The major traffic generators in North Smithfield include the following: 1) the industrial areas along and near North Smithfield Industrial Drive and at the Branch River Industrial Park complex; 2) retail development at the intersection of Route 5 and Victory Highway; 3) retail, commercial and office development along Route 146A, particularly at Park Square; and 4) the commercial activities along the non-limited access portions of Route 146.

Regionally, major out of town destinations include businesses and industries in the City of Woonsocket, the mall and office parks in Lincoln and the interchange of I-295 and Route 146. Route 146 provides direct access to areas to the north and south and I-295, which passes within one half mile of the southern boundary of the Town, facilitates movement to points to the east, west and south. Route 99, an Industrial Highway which connects with Route 146 immediately to

the south of the town line funnels off considerable amounts of regional traffic which used to pass through North Smithfield on its way to destinations in Woonsocket; approximately two-thirds of the traffic traveling north to the industrial areas of Woonsocket uses Route 146 and 146A.

J-3.1.4 Traffic Volumes

Volumes and Projections

The Department of Transportation compiles annual 24 hour average daily traffic (AADT) for the major streets and highways throughout the State. In 2004, the most heavily traveled highway was Route 146 between the Lincoln line and the 146 A turnoff; AADT was 31,000. This was followed by the section of Eddie Dowling Highway (Route 146A) between the Route 146 and Park Square where AADT was 18,400 and Route 146 north of the Route 146A turnoff where AADT was 16,400. Victory Highway from the Route 146 interchange to the Burrillville line, with an AADT of up to 14,300, was also one of the most heavily traveled local roads. The traffic counts are generally lower than those recorded in the 1992 Comprehensive Plan because Route 99 was constructed since the previous Plan was adopted.

When contacted in 2005, both Statewide Planning and the DOT stated that traffic projections are generated for particular sites based on particular projects, but not randomly or for all roads statewide. As such, the Town does not have current traffic projections other than what it receives as part of local development applications which are on file in the Planning Department.

J-3.1.5 Problem Areas

The Town of North Smithfield, through its Department of Public Works, has a continuing 5-year program for the repair and resurfacing of the local street system. Where necessary, crowns are being added to the streets to facilitate drainage.

At the State level the Rhode Island Department of Administration, Division of Planning, in cooperation with local towns and cities and the Department of Transportation, prepares a six year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP sets priority schedules for state and federal-aid roadways.

The North Smithfield Police Department has identified the following intersections as being prone to accidents: Douglas Pike at the northerly and southerly points where Route 5 joins the roadway at an angle; Victory Highway at North Main and Main Streets; Route 146 at Sayles Hill Road; Route 146A at Landmark Medical Center light, South Main Street (Woonsocket), Lapre Road, Mendon Road, St. Paul Street, and Great Road/East Harkness Road. A review of a 1961 traffic study for North Smithfield showed Victory Highway and Route 146A were then, as now, the most accident prone streets in the community.

Because of the rolling terrain, there are a number of intersections with poor sight distances. These are reviewed below. This is most apparent along Route 146A, but also is evident in other

parts of Town. At many points vegetation blocks views as a car approaches an arterial or collector roadway from a local street.

Due to the lack of sidewalks and the narrow pavement widths in outlying neighborhoods, many areas in Town are not conducive to safe bicycling or walking by children. As a consequence, many families must operate a taxi system to get their children to non-school activities.

J-3.1.6 Intersection Analysis

There are 9 traffic signals in North Smithfield located as follows: Route 146/Sayles Hill Road; Route 146A intersections at Fogarty Hospital, Park Avenue, Greenville Road, South Main Street and St. Paul Street; Victory Highway at the Halliwell School and North Main Street; and on the Providence Pike at the Primrose Fire Station. The school and fire station signals are activated only as necessary for traffic safety at these facilities.

The following is a traffic engineering analysis of some of the key intersections in North Smithfield:

Route 7/Route 104 and 5 - South End
This is a large and inadequately defined intersection. An attempt has been made to "T-up" the intersection by curving the centerline on Route 5 to be perpendicular to Route 7. The stop bar, however, has been placed well back from Route 7, making it impossible to look south. Tree trimming and the proper stop-bar placement would solve the sight distance problem. As a temporary measure, striped islands will help to channelize the traffic. A more detailed design with raised islands has been proposed in the state Resurfacing, Restoration and Rehabilitation (RRR) design study of Route 104.

Route 102/Main Street and Mount Pleasant Road
This is a well-defined four leg intersection. There is good sight distance on most of the approaches. The sight line looking south from Mount Pleasant Road is slightly inhibited by a stone wall. Driver error is the most likely cause of accidents here.

Route 102/Route 146A and North Main Street
This is a large four leg signalized intersection. The signal appears to be semi-actuated and operates relatively well under present conditions. A study of the signal and its timing is currently underway in order to confirm that it is functioning at its maximum level of effectiveness. The sight distance is adequate in all directions and the approach speeds are reasonable.

Route 5/Main Street
This intersection has two parts. Both parts have three legs and have been repaved as part of the Route 5 Resurfacing, Restoration and Rehabilitation (RRR) project. The western most part has Route 5 approaching Main Street at a sharp skew. A right turn from Route 5 to Main Street is

next to impossible for a truck due to the sharp angle and steep slope. The Route 5 approach is stop sign controlled. Intersection ahead and a flashing light may help here.

The second part is approximately 303 feet east of the first part. It is a perfect "T" intersection. It is controlled by a three-way flashing beacon. It appears to operate safely primarily because of the low volumes that pass through the area.

The ideal situation would be to bring the two parts together. The terrain and the historical nature of the area, however, will not allow for any major changes. Improvements to the Slatersville Stone Arch Bridge (No. 273) and its approaches have been designed. Construction, delayed due to concerns about the affects of the project on the bridge's historic components as well as the need to coordinate improvements with the proposed changes to the adjacent historic Slatersville Mill Complex, is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2006.

Route 146A/Great Road (East Harkness Road)
Great Road intersects Route 146A at a moderate skew. The sight distance to the west is poor due to a slope and overhanging foliage. The ideal solution is to relocate Great Road to exit opposite School Street on Route 146A. This would require land-takings and possibly doing some major earthwork.

Route 146A/St. Paul Street.
This intersection is a signalized "T" configuration. There have been a substantial number of accidents at the intersection. Proper channelization will probably help to reduce accidents. Widening each approach would also help, but it appears that the right-of-way is narrow through this area. The sight distance is adequate on all of the approaches. A left-turn arrow at the easterly approach on 146A should be explored.

Route 146A/Mendon Road
This is a skewed "T" intersection. Mendon Road enters Route 146A at a moderate downslope. Vehicles either exiting Mendon Road to the right or vehicles entering from the west have to negotiate an initial sharp rise on the western side of Mendon Road. Longer cars actually are creating divots in the pavement because their frames are striking the ground. The obvious solution is to have Mendon Road intersect Route 146A at a right angle; considerable land taking and earth work would be necessary.

Route 146A/Lapre Road
Lapre Road at Route 146A is a "T' intersection. Lapre Road is wide for a minor subdivision road. It also intersects a railroad bridge that passes under Route 146A. The railroad bridge severely inhibits the westerly sight lines. There is only one small opening behind the parapet through which to see west. The area appears to be well lit. Possible mitigating measures could be to provide "Intersection Ahead" signs and/or flashing beacons.

Route 146 A/South Main Street
This is a five leg signalized intersection. It primarily acts as a three leg intersection because the cemetery entrance and Park Drive carry negligible amounts of traffic. The signal is designed to handle those entrances anyway. The westbound Route 146A corner radii should be increased to

better accommodate truck turning movements. The right-of-way is very narrow in this area and there is a historic monument on the same corner so any improvements will be difficult. The signal appears to run well. Sight distances also are good. A left-turn arrow at the easterly approach on 146A should be explored.

Route 146A/Central Street

This is a five-leg stop sign controlled intersection which is large and undefined. Traffic volumes could grow in this area with the development of nearby sites for industry. Initial improvements could be striping to define vehicle movements. At some future date, raised channelization or realignment may be desirable.

Route 146A/Landmark Medical Center

This is a four leg signalized intersection. Route 146A has four lanes in this area. The intersection has an unconventional alignment, but operates well. Old Louisquisset Pike enters the intersection at a skew between the Landmark Medical Center entrance and Route 146A northbound. There are traffic detectors on every approach so that even the small volumes from Old Louisquissett Pike are accounted for. A major redesign of the intersection is proposed to accommodate a proposed mixed-use project in this area – this proposal and future proposals associated with the area behind Landmark Medical will require careful analysis.

Route 146/Sayles Hill Road

This is a four leg signalized intersection. The area is heavily traveled and commercialized. The signal is unexpected, particularly for traffic traveling south on Route 146. The combination of down slopes leading to the intersection and the large volumes of traffic which has been "velocitized" traveling in the expressway section north of the intersection, create very dangerous situations. RIDOT maintains a list of the 250 non-interstate intersections that generate the most traffic accidents. In 2001, the Route 146/Sayles Hill Road intersection was the only one that made this list in North Smithfield. Various designs for the intersection have been reviewed over the years including a grade separated interchange. The most recent design RIDOT is considering includes the elimination of the signal, limited widening and addition of acceleration lanes

Route 104/Route 5

This is a four leg signalized intersection. There is excellent sight distance from each approach. The intersection was modified as part of the Route 5 RRR project. Current traffic volumes and accident data do not warrant a traffic signal at this intersection at this time.

J-4.0 The Plan

The Circulation Element has been prepared in concert with the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan and is supportive of the Land Use Plan. The major proposals are shown on Map J - 1, Circulation Plan.

J-4.1 Proposed Roadways/ Roadway Improvements

The basic framework for the North Smithfield Roadway system has been established. Existing land development as well as the constraints imposed by North Smithfield's rolling terrain and drainage system limit the options for any significant improvements. For example, there are only three bridges over the Branch River and all are on State numbered routes. The following are the major roadway recommendations:

Route 146/Sayles Hill Road Intersection
Elimination of the present hazardous traffic signal and conversion to a grade-separated intersection was recommended in the 1992 Plan. However, in 2005, it may be more realistic from a cost perspective to recommend the reconfiguration of this intersection. This will require a combined traffic and land use study by RIDOT, in collaboration with the Town, to determine both the constraints and opportunities posed by this improvement. Various options, including those retaining some form of access to existing businesses and/or homes, should be considered.

Although there are several viable businesses benefitting from direct access to Route 146, there also are a number of business property vacancies and marginal businesses, along with numerous homes, which suggest this is not necessarily a prime commercial area under present conditions.

Pound Hill Road
Pound Hill Road is the Town's only east-west through-street in the large area south of the Branch River and north of Greenville Road/Route 104. Although the roadway has several sharp turns and traverses some steep terrain, it is the only collector road in the central portions of North Smithfield. Steps should be taken to improve the roadway to collector road standards.

School Street Extension / East Harkness Road Extension
Of those intersections along Route 146A, one of the most hazardous is at Old Great Road. With the recent purchase of the nearby Blackstone River Gorge area by the State as a recreational and scenic resource, it is anticipated that traffic at the intersection will increase. Additionally, East Harkness Road (the northerly extension of Old Great Road) will ultimately be extended to Harkness Road at the Rhode Island-Massachusetts line. This extension will provide an alternative entrance and exit route for the several subdivisions using access from Harkness Road in both North Smithfield and Millville, Massachusetts.

The recommended solution is to close off the intersection to all but several adjoining homes. School Street would then be extended at Route 146A to connect with Old Grange Road. Since State action to increase the accessibility of the Gorge may be a major cause of increased traffic,

the Town should request that any planning for the Gorge area be coupled with an evaluation of the School Street and East Harkness Road extensions.

Access Road Behind Landmark Medical

As part of the Land Use Plan, a large area to the south of Landmark Medical Center and extending to the Woonsocket line has been proposed for Mixed Use development, in conjunction with compatible activity in Woonsocket. Traffic-wise, it is suggested that planning for the area should focus on providing one major access road and a new or redesigned intersection with Eddie Dowling Highway. This would not only enhance the value and character of the area but also eliminate the problems associated with numerous curb cuts on a divided highway. As recommended in the Economic Development Element, RIDOT should be approached for assistance in the traffic planning of the area.

J-4.2 Intersection Improvements

Though local street improvement programs and the State's Resurfacing, Restoration and Rehabilitation (RRR) and design program efforts should be directed towards improving safety at the key intersections cited above.

The Town should continue to enforce the Section of the Zoning Ordinance titled "Visibility at Intersections". Under this regulation, a visibility triangle free of walls, fences, or plantings which would obscure intersection visibility, is to be maintained between the heights of 2- 1/2 and 10 feet on all corner lots.

The Development Plan Review Ordinance (Site Plan Review) has allowed the Planning Board to consider proposed new and enlarged non-residential development with respect to its impacts on any adjoining streets and intersections. Where the anticipated impacts are significant, the Planning Board may require the submission of a Traffic Impact Assessment. If there are serious traffic intersection problems, as a condition of approval, the Planning Board may require provisions to undertake or fund mitigating improvements.

J-4.3 Pavement Management

The Town of North Smithfield should bring its repaving program into conformance with the requirements of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation's Pavement Management Program. The program calls for a systematic inventory of roadway conditions and the establishment of priorities for improvement based on these conditions. The lack of State funding to municipalities has delayed implementation.

J-4.4 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The six-year TIP is a biennial document developed by the Transportation Advisory Committee in cooperation with the RIDOT and the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority and adopted by the State Planning Council. It programs federal transportation dollars to individual projects and programs that are implemented primarily by the RIDOT and RIPTA.

The local municipalities participate in the process as it relates to state and federally aided projects impacting the community. While North Smithfield did not submit an application for inclusion in the 2005 TIP, in 2003 the Town applied for the extension and reconstruction of sidewalks in Slatersville and design of the northwest bicycle route/trail. Actually included in the 2003 – 2008 TIP are the following projects:

- Bridge Program: Slatersville Stone Arch Bridge #273 (2003, $1.5 million)
- Enhancement Program: Blackstone River Navigational System (2006, $.06 million)
- Enhancement Program: Kelly Park/Mammoth Mills Feasibility Study and Design (2005, $.30 million)
- Study & Development: Rt 99 to Rt 146A (no timeframe or funds identified for any projects in S&D category)

North Smithfield should consider the recommendations contained in this Circulation Element as the priorities for submission to the RIDOT and inclusion in the TIP. A prime example is the study of the Sayles Hill Road/Route 146 intersection.

J-4.5 Subdivision Standards

Currently, North Smithfield's Subdivision and Land Development Regulations require a minimum curb-to-curb pavement width of 30 feet. As previously noted, this is an excessive width for local streets and exceeds the width standards of most comparable communities. By comparison, the recently improved sections of the Providence Pike, a collector street, have a pavement width of about 30 feet.

An alternative subdivision roadway standard should be considered by the Planning Board for incorporation into the revised the Subdivision Regulations.

J-4.6 Sidewalks

Sidewalks are found on residential streets in many parts of Town but there are many areas, particularly along collector and minor arterial streets completely lacking in any sidewalks. In the Union Village area, for example, it is common to see many walkers on Route 146A where there are no sidewalks. Undoubtedly, there are other popular walking streets which would benefit from the installation of sidewalks.

It is recommended that a Sidewalks Plan be developed, prioritized and implemented as part of the annual Capital Improvements Program. Nationwide, walking is the country's most popular recreational activity and one with health benefits for all age groups. This would be a joint effort of the Planning Division and the Department of Public Works possibly with the advice of a specially appointed committee.

Under the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, a sidewalk is required on at least one side of the street in all subdivisions; where there are safety concerns, the Planning Board may

require them on both sides. As part of its review of commercial and industrial area site plans, the Planning Board may require the installation of sidewalks where pedestrian traffic may be generated. Based on the 2001 Community Survey, 46% of respondents felt new sidewalks or sidewalk repair was important. 53% of respondents felt all subdivisions should have sidewalks. Linked to this matter of sidewalks is handicapped accessibility; 62% of survey respondents felt infrastructure improvements should incorporate accessibility measures.

The Slatersville Stone Arch Bridge project includes the construction of sidewalks along Main Street in front of the commercial buildings. Reconstruction of the sidewalks along Main Street and Smithfield Road was proposed in a 2005 RIDOT Enhancement Grant application. The Town plans to complete a sidewalk reconstruction project in the Smithfield Road neighborhood in 2005.

J-4.7 Mapped Streets

North Smithfield has had a continuing problem dealing with several streets which are in known private ownership. Additionally, there are many older streets where the title is not clear due to the absence of deeds. These issues surface when building permits, subdivision applications are filed on "private streets" or unimproved streets not meeting local standards.

As far back as 1971, the Planning and Development Division of the Rhode Island Department of Community Affairs in a *Mapped Street Ordinance Study - North Smithfield, RI* recommended that the Town adopt a Mapped Street Ordinance and an Official Map. The Official Map would identify all streets in the Town. Subsequent to its adoption, no building permit, except in rare cases, could be issued until a street on the Official Map had been improved to the Planning Board's standards.

The Mapped Streets Ordinance would also establish a procedure for making additions to the Official Map. Establishing an ordinance and map and determining public ownership, private ownership and the process by which the town will accept street dedications or acquire privately owned roads is a complex process. Although the current Subdivision and Land Development Regulations allow the Planning Board to authorize offsite improvements and only allow the creation of new lots with access to public streets, an update of the 1971 inventory of streets and Town Council determination of public and private streets would greatly facilitate the dialogue between the Zoning and Planning Boards and the development community.

The adoption of a Mapped Streets Ordinance and an Official Map is recommended.

J-4.8 Scenic Roads

On the State level, a 1985 act established the Scenic Highway Board and authorizes RIDOT or any town council to apply to the Board for designation of a road as a scenic highway. The Scenic Roadways Board generated a list of roadways that possess scenic characteristics in 1996. This list includes the following in North Smithfield:

- Main Street, including alongside the Reservoirs in the Slatersville area

- Railroad Street
- Greene Street
- School Street
- Grange Road
- Providence Pike

Although their identification in the 1996 list does not automatically qualify them for Scenic Roadway designation, it will certainly help facilitate the designation process. Old Smithfield Road and the limited access sections of Route 146, particularly in the vicinity of Woonsocket Hill, may also be appropriate for designation as scenic roads.

As noted in the Natural and Cultural Resources element, there are several areas in North Smithfield which are listed or nominated for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Additionally, Union Village is also a local historic district where the North Smithfield Historic District Commission administers historic area zoning controls on the exterior appearance of structures in the district.

Currently, scenic and historical resources in North Smithfield other than structures are afforded some protection if state or federally funded projects impact a designated historic district. A good example is the historic Slatersville Stone Arch Bridge over the Branch River, which is located within the Slatersville Historic District.

Many changes in the scenic character of areas outside of the few designated historic areas may come about as the result of changes within the public right-of-way where trees or old walls are removed for street improvements or new subdivision streets. Gradually, if there is no reason to do otherwise, the soft rural edges are demolished to the scenic detriment of the community.

The recommended solution is for the Town to prepare and adopt a Scenic Roads Inventory which would require any public or private agency to obtain special review by a designated local Scenic Road Board (or an existing town board) before modifying a street in a way which would alter its scenic characteristics. Obviously, there must be a careful balancing of traffic safety and scenic conservation concerns. Although the Scenic Road Board's function would be advisory, it would provide a basis for considering alternatives protecting the Town's heritage.

One of the strong recommendations of the Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor is the preservation of the country roads which, along with the more densely developed mill villages, give the region its unique character.

J-4.9 Pedestrian Trails and Bicycle Paths

Because they are related more to recreational pursuits, pedestrian trails and bicycle paths are discussed within the Open Space and Recreation Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

J-4.10 Mass Transit Facilities

RIPTA'S Bus Route 54 between Woonsocket and Providence, is the only intercity transit facility serving North Smithfield. The routing from Providence follows Route 146 north to Route 146A and then turns into Woonsocket at Park Avenue. The trip from Woonsocket south reenters North Smithfield at Providence Street (Route 104) and then follows Route 146A and 146 to Lincoln and Providence. There are no park-n-ride facilities; the Stop & Shop parking lot in Park square has been used informally for this purpose. While RIPTA funding is constantly in jeopardy, it is critical that bus service from Providence and Woonsocket remains available to the residents of North Smithfield.

At some time during the next twenty years, the United States and the individual states will have to face realities and formulate an energy policy which reduces the number of single-occupancy car trips to major business centers such as downtown Providence. Given the spread-out nature of communities such as North Smithfield, it will continue to be necessary for commuters to converge at one point where there can be a transfer to a car pool or express bus service. RIDOT has developed park-n-ride facilities serving transit riders, car poolers and van poolers in other sections of the Providence metropolitan area.

This plan suggests several possible locations, subject to further investigation, for pooled parking facilities in North Smithfield as follows: utilization of space under the power lines near the School Street/Route 146A intersection and the southwest quadrant of the Pound Hill Road/Route 146 interchange in an area designated for Light Industrial/Research & Development in the Land Use Plan. Both sites are adjacent to State Highways. Coordination of possible locations should be done through the Planning Division of RIDOT.

The North Smithfield Mini Bus Service Inc. is a non-profit organization which is 100 percent financed by the Town. It provides on-call, free bus service to senior citizens and the handicapped. Two buses are now in operation. A third bus may be needed to respond to the growing senior citizen population. These buses are essential for those who cannot drive. The second bus was added in 2004. Another bus should only be added to the system when the need has been thoroughly documented. (RIARC also has available transportation services.)

J-4.11 Railroads Plan

The Providence and Worcester Railroad (P&W) provides railroad service to the Town of North Smithfield. P&W's main line crosses the Town in two places as follows: in the eastern corner of Town between Manville Road and the Blackstone River; and in the Waterford area parallel to Canal Street. Because of the constraints of slope and adjacent canal or river, the main line can not be accessed for rail service.

Manufacturing, industrial and distributor firms along the north side of North Smithfield Industrial Drive and at the Branch River Industrial Park have access to P&W's Slatersville Secondary track which extends from P&W's main line in Woonsocket and terminates at the Providence Pike. Freight service only is available six days a week on an "as needed" basis. State Guide Plan Element 661, *Rhode Island Rail Plan* (August 1990), proposes the continuation and rehabilitation of the spur track.

The Land Use Element of this Comprehensive Plan continues and to a limited extent expands the Manufacturing use area adjoining the tracks. Industries requiring bulk shipments or deliveries by rail would be an allowed use.

If abandonment of the line is considered at any future date, the right-of-way should be maintained with the Town of North Smithfield as the owner. It would provide a desirable route for a bikeway extending from the Blackstone River Bikeway to the Branch River Park and Slatersville. Such a proposal would support RIDOT's statewide rails-to-trails plan.

Although RIDOT also is investigating the use of rail lines for commuter rail transit, it does not appear there would be the density of development in North Smithfield to justify use of the spur line for commuter transit purposes.

J-4.12 Transmission Lines and Pipelines

A network of electrical transmission lines and a major pipeline circulate energy and energy resources through North Smithfield. In effect, these are in the nature of major arterials rather than the typical power lines found along a street.

As shown on Map J - 1, there is an extensive network of high voltage (115,000 volts to 340,000 volts) electrical transmission lines focused on substations in the vicinity of Todd's Pond and off Greenville Road northeast of the Route 146 interchange. Power line rights-of-way cover approximately 560 acres in North Smithfield. Percentagewise, North Smithfield has more land devoted to power line easements than any other Rhode Island community.

Recently, concerns have been raised as to the ill-health effects to nearby residents, schools, etc., from prolonged exposure to electromagnetic fields radiating from high voltage power lines. Fortunately, most of the power lines are somewhat removed from any concentrations of housing in North Smithfield. Ideally, all power lines should be buried underground. Any proposed extensions should be buried. Decisions involving major improvements to high voltage lines should also consider that the Town would prefer to see these lines buried.

The Mobil Oil Pipeline is a 6" pipe which is used to pump petroleum products at a pressure of 1,400 PSI between East Providence and the Worcester area. The pipeline enters North Smithfield near the point where Sayles Hill Road crosses Crookfall Brook and exits where Central Street passes into Massachusetts. Located within the electrical power line easements, the Mobil Oil Pipeline generally is located to the east and parallel to Route 146 (See Map J-1).

A gas pipeline known as the Rhode Island Extension of the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company supplies Providence Gas Company with natural gas from Canada and a mainline transmission pipe in Worcester County. The route through the western section of Town generally follows power line rights-of-way and abandoned rail rights-of-way but does cross both private and public lands including the grounds of the North Smithfield Elementary School.

J-5.0 Consistency Statement

The Circulation Element supports the goals of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act and is consistent with relevant State Guide Plan elements. There are no traffic circulation proposals which adversely affect the arterial and collector roads passing into adjoining municipalities.

The significant consistencies between the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan and State Guide Plan elements are as follows:

State Guide Plan Element 110, *Goals and Policies*
The Comprehensive Plan has related transportation proposals to the spatial distribution of land uses and proposes measures to improve traffic safety.

State Guide Plan Element 121, *State Land Use Policies and Plan 2010*
The various goals are furthered through the efficient use of the existing street system with selective improvements to relieve congestion or improve emergency vehicle access to isolated areas in town.

Mass transit usage is encouraged through suggested locations for park-n-ride facilities.

Development Plan Review (site plan review) and approval procedures will allow a better consideration of project impacts on the transportation system.

State Guide Plan Element 611, *Transportation 2020: Ground Transportation Plan*
A strong commitment to careful coordination with State transportation agencies is to be continued by the Town of North Smithfield.

The roadway plans of the Circulation Element encourage safe, convenient and dependable passenger travel.

State Guide Plan Element 610, *Transportation System Management Plan*
The Circulation Element makes maximum use of the existing roadway system and encourages measures such as intra town para transit bus service for the elderly and handicapped.

State Guide Plan Element 621, *Policy Statement: Proposals for New or Restructured Public Transit Facilities or Service*
The limited transit proposals of the Circulation Element assume cooperation with public transit services but do not discourage the role of private enterprise in meeting the need. For example,

the North Smithfield Mini Bus Service Inc. is a non-profit, private organization which the Town has engaged to provide para transit services for the elderly and handicapped.

State Guide Plan Element 691, *Transportation Element of the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality*
Reduced air emissions are encouraged by proposals for park-n-ride facilities which will encourage the use of bus services and car-pooling.

State Guide Plan Element 661, *Rhode Island State Rail Plan*
Areas along the Slatersville Secondary Track are proposed for manufacturing uses which may require rail freight service.

K. BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

K-1.0 Introduction

The Heritage Corridor Element consists of a set of goals which seek to both protect and enhance the significant historic, cultural and physical resources of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor within the Town of North Smithfield. The goals of the Heritage Corridor Element are an expression of the local community, the State of Rhode Island and the Blackstone River Valley Heritage Corridor Commission.

The John H. Chaffee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (BRVNHC) was established by the United States Congress in 1986 for the purpose of "preserving and interpreting for the educational and inspirational benefit of the present and future generations the unique and significant contributions to our national heritage of certain historic and cultural lands, waterways and structures" within this area. Although reauthorization of the Corridor by Congress in 2006 is not certain, the Town has benefited greatly from the Corridor Commissions leadership, guidance and funding of projects. Given the strength of the partnerships the Commission has forged with all communities in the Corridor, the Town of North Smithfield expects the Commission will continue to exist and thrive in one form or another into the foreseeable future

K-2.0 Goals, Policies and Actions

1. CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ESTABLISHED, LOCAL EFFORTS TO PROTECT HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES

A. Pursue technical assistance and funding to continue to update and evaluate the Statewide Historical Preservation Report.

B. Encourage the Historic District Commission and the RI Historic Preservation Commission to take a more proactive role in protection through co-sponsored workshops and grants assistance to historic property owners.

C. Collaborate with the Historic District Commission to gather public support for preservation and identify/establish local historic districts.

D. Seek assistance from the Corridor Commission for support of National Register nominations and local historic zoning proposals.

E. Identify properties that are threatened by development pressures, deterioration or inadequate resources to include the Slatersville Mill, Tupperware Mill 1851 Scythe Works, the Forestdale Post Office, Stamina Mill Office and the Primrose Grange.

F. Target potential users and appropriate uses for key historic features compatible with preservation concerns.

G. Identify key parcels for land protection around Slatersville Reservoir and work with the Conservation Commission in developing a management plan.

H. Promote land conservation and historic park restoration through the Conservation Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission.

I. Collaborate and support the Corridor Commission in the establishment of a Greenway along the Blackstone and Branch Rivers.

2. EDUCATE THE ENTIRE PUBLIC AND BUILD SUPPORT FOR THE PROTECTION OF LOCAL HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES

A. Target individuals and professional groups which deal with local properties (i.e. realtors, etc.) for preservation education.

B. Disseminate the Corridor's Design Guidelines and Standards report to interested property owners.

C. Encourage the Historic District Commission to hold workshops for maintenance education for both non- and historic district property owners.

D. Incorporate interpretive features or historic information into public projects, when appropriate.

3. PROTECT KEY HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES UTILIZING ZONING AND INCENTIVES AS TOOLS

A. Create a requirement through the subdivision process to require the development of conservation development design when important historic or natural features are present on-site as identified in the cultural and natural resources inventory.

B. Revise the Planned Development Zoning District to be more responsive to land conservation and resource protection.

C. Continue to apply for funding through the Corridor’s Heritage Partnership Program which provides funding for heritage projects that develop heritage infrastructure or recreation, provide heritage programming, strategic design, preservation & enhancement or implement river recovery.

4. DEVELOP AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY THAT ASSISTS OWNERS OF HISTORIC MILLS TO MAINTAIN VIABLE USES INCLUDING ENVIRONMENTALLY-SENSITIVE INDUSTRY, BUSINESS AND RESIDENTIAL

A. Help local manufacturers to become aware of and participate in state programs to keep mature industries in business and utilizing old structures.

B. Establish a mixed-use zone for the former Tupperware site that will include residential, light industrial and commercial uses.

5. SUPPORT THE BIKEWAY AS AN ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION ROUTE AND RECREATIONAL/EDUCATIONAL FEATURE

A. Examine zoning along the proposed bikeway path for compatibility and economic opportunities.

B. Examine access to the bikeway from key areas off-site and compatibility with existing street traffic with DEM as design development begins.

6. TAKE PRO-ACTIVE ROLE IN LOCAL TRANSPORTATION AND DOT PROJECTS TO HAVE HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND NATURAL FEATURES CONSIDERED IN DESIGN

A. Collaborate with the Corridor Commission in the review of Federally funded projects using the Corridor's Historic Resources Inventory and the local Cultural and Natural Resources Inventory as a basis for discussion.

B. Involve the Historic District Commission, the Conservation Commission, Scenic Rhode Island, and other interested parties in the review of local, state and federal projects.

7. CONTINUE TO CREATE CONSERVATION AREAS AND DEVELOP PARKLAND ALONG THE BLACKSTONE AND ITS TRIBUTARIES CONSISTENT WITH CORRIDOR GOALS

A. Form alliances with local businesses, landowners, regional foundations and groups such as the Trust for Public Land and the Nature Conservancy to insure that key properties are protected.

B. Establish a "Task Force" approach in parks development for soliciting input and generating public support, particularly with the Meadows site.

C. Explore access possibilities to the Blackstone Gorge via Harkness Roads.

D. Continue to work with Blackstone, MA officials and other partners to achieve the vision that would make Kelly/Mammoth Mill a bi-state gateway park.

8. DEVELOP A REALISTIC, SHORT TERM TOURISM PLAN THAT WILL BE MEANINGFUL TO A VALLEY-WIDE STRATEGY

A. Identify the key features with tourism potential that could be tied into a large series of tourism activities.

B. Coordinate a North Smithfield tourism map with identified tourism sites valley-wide and regionally.

C. Collaborate with the Corridor Commission to develop theme brochures linking sites valley-wide with North Smithfield.

D. Collaborate with the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council for special events promotion.

E. Utilize the Council's tourism plan as a basis for developing strategies and programs.

9. FORM A NETWORK FOR INFORMATION SHARING WITH THE FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

A. Utilize the Corridor Commission, DEM, the League of Cities and Towns and others for providing technical assistance on conservation easements, liability and other land acquisition and management issues.

B. Encourage local board and commission members to participate in workshops sponsored by organizations such as Grow Smart RI and Statewide Planning that promote understanding of regulatory jurisdiction and procedures.

10. EDUCATE THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY REGARDING WATER QUALITY AND HAZARDOUS WASTE

A. Produce an environmental home safety brochure for the general public in conjunction with the Corridor Commission.

B. Establish an annual Environmental Awareness Week with school and community educational programs.

C. Continue the annual Earth Day cleanup.

11. ENCOURAGE LAND USE NEAR RIVERS, STREAMS, WETLAND, AND RESTRICTIVE SOIL AREAS TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS

A. Identify areas of the Development Plan Review (site plan) Ordinance for inclusion of site standards for improving environmental impacts.

12. PROVIDE DISINCENTIVES FOR INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND OTHER POLLUTERS

A. Establish heavy local fines for toxic dumping, wetland violations, water pollution, etc. and violation of terms of permits and support DEM's efforts to enforce statewide pollution prevention programs.

B. Withhold permit approvals/renewals from polluters until the situation is mitigated.

K-3.0 Plan Description

The BRVNHC encompasses 23 municipalities within the Blackstone River Valley and watershed from Worcester, Massachusetts to Providence, Rhode Island. It is a "unified, working landscape" tied together by the Blackstone River, Blackstone Canal and Providence & Worcester Railroad which serve as a focus and initiator for the historic forces that have shaped the Valley.

The Valley is historically significant for many reasons. It is the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution, influencing the rest of the country through industrial use of water power and the development of the Rhode Island System of Manufacturing. In addition, it is an area filled with ethnic and religious diversity. Moreover, the Valley's remarkable history is revealed by the concentration of historic, cultural and natural resources that have survived the past two centuries. Today, it remains unique as efforts are undertaken to preserve and protect these special resources "right where people live and work." The context of a "working valley of mill villages, farms, cities and towns, transportation systems, river and canal...makes the individual elements of the Blackstone River Valley significant."

The Blackstone River Valley is this country's second designated "National Heritage Corridor" and the first bi-state National Heritage Corridor. To be successful, coordination and consistency is to be promoted between the Federal government, the States of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, the Corridor Commission, other interested private parties, and the 23 municipalities of Worcester, Leicester, Millbury, Sutton, Grafton, Northbridge, Upton, Douglas, Uxbridge, Millville, Blackstone, Mendon, and Hopedale, Massachusetts and Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Cumberland, Lincoln, Burrillville, Glocester, Smithfield Central Falls, Pawtucket, and Providence/East Providence, Rhode Island. A valley-wide commission - The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission - was established by Congress and consists of local and state members nominated by the Rhode Island and Massachusetts governors, and appointed by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. The early mission of the Commission was to "assist in the plan" for the National Heritage Corridor. This resulted in the creation of the *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan* for the Corridor officially adopted in 1990. *The Next Ten Years* is a supplement to the Commission's *Land Management Plan*. The document reaffirms the Corridor's basic goals and commitments and calls attention to important work which remains to be done.

The Corridor Commission has identified seven action areas which encompass the goals of the Commission, state and local governments, private groups and individuals: coordination and consistency, historic preservation, environmental conservation, land use management, recreation, and economic development & tourism.

The Town of North Smithfield supports and readopts the goals contained in the *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan*, and its various revisions/updates. North Smithfield plans to work within the framework established by the Corridor Commission and to develop and implement integrated cultural, historical and land resource management programs for the purpose of retaining, enhancing and interpreting the significant values of the lands, waters and structures of the Corridor. For these purposes, the following items serve as a framework for the future.

- Protect the Town's historical, cultural and natural resources in an integrated manner.
- Achieve an integrated land use management approach to maintain the Valley character.
- Protect the Blackstone River and its tributaries as the primary natural resource in the Valley.
- Encourage cooperation and consistency with other local communities in planning effort.
- Interpret the Valley's importance and sponsor activities which lead to public education and use of resources.
- Participate in Valley-wide planning efforts which link the Valley's resources and communities together.
- Support economic development which compliments the goals of the National Heritage Corridor.
- Actively engage in partnership projects which are consistent with the goals of the National Heritage Corridor.
- Encourage recreation development and programs which emphasize Valley resources provide links to other communities.

K-4.0 The Plan

K-4.1 Land Use and the Built Environment

One of the characteristics that makes the Blackstone River Valley nationally significant is the sheer amount of historic elements and landscapes that remain intact from the time of the industrial revolution and even prior to that. While these elements are truly resources of North Smithfield, their presence can pose dilemmas to current growth and land use pressures. In North Smithfield, within the historic industrial mill villages like Forestdale and Slatersville, industrial era building stock predominates and is not always easily adapted to modern day spatial and function needs or even values. There is a conflict, sometimes real, at times perceived, that the old patterns of development do not meet current needs.

This pattern of land use in fact has changed since the early time of industrialism in both populated areas (the built environment) and in relatively unpopulated areas (farmland and open

space). Settlements along the Blackstone River and its tributaries, once devoted almost solely to manufacturing, now represents opportunities to meet different needs, such as light industry, retail and housing. Urban areas and compact commercial/residential settlements require space for parking. Conversely, the need for housing and the desire for economic growth (giving way to office and industrial parks) pose threats to valuable open space, natural resources and farmland. The build-out analysis contained in the Land Use Element of this Plan is based on the findings of the BRVNHCC's 2001 Super Summit.

Transportation systems once comprised the old patterns of land use and greatly influenced their evolution. Growth necessitates the expansion or even creation of new networks to accommodate more people and newly developed areas. A sensitive relationship exists between increasing and improving transportation systems and preserving the historic, cultural and natural landscapes which contribute to the history and quality of life in the valley.

K-4.2 Regional Planning and Cooperation

For the first time since the Blackstone River Valley was a leader in textile manufacturing, the valley communities have begun to see themselves as a regional entity with a common heritage and a common resource: the River. With a number of valley-wide projects underway, there is a sense among communities that the whole valley is greater than the sum of its parts. Local parks and planned green spaces along the river have gained more significance by being part of plans for a linear park along the length of the Blackstone. The park will also include interpretive exhibits which will give more meaning to local efforts trying to raise public awareness of their heritage and significant local resources. The development of key recreational and interpretive features like Centennial Park along the Branch River and the public protection of Blackstone Gorge provide a focus for regional activity. The report prepared by the BRVNHCC describing the Blackstone Gorge *Bi-State Park Development Concept Plan* is a good example of regional planning.

The potential for tourism as a positive, albeit limited, economic component further enhances the regional focus of local plans, and stresses the need for coordinated promotion efforts and consistency of interpretation of resources. Therefore, regional planning and cooperation are paramount toward realizing these opportunities.

K-4.3 Partnerships

Prior to the establishment of the National Heritage Corridor, inspiration and action had been taking place in North Smithfield around preservation issues and even the notion of establishing a linear park along the length of the Blackstone. There was a deep sense of pride in the heritage of the valley yet no driving force to link and support the many local efforts and ideas.

The creation of the Heritage Corridor in 1986 and a series of R.I. open space and recreation bond issues from the mid to late 1980's focused attention and resources on the Blackstone Valley communities. The momentum generated by these events had a tremendous effect in involving municipalities in the development of recreational features, purchase of open space and other Corridor-related projects. Although this initial wave of financial assistance and institutional

credibility helped catalyze so many local efforts, other kinds of assistance are needed to complete on-going projects, plans and protection efforts.

Municipalities are not used to being in the role of the "developer", and so lack the experience and some of the resources necessary for a smooth completion process. There is a sense that opportunities will be lost, and resources including financial aid will unnecessarily diminish without some kind of coordination strategy and partnership commitment from all levels of government with the Blackstone Valley communities.

K-4.4 Conservation and Environmental Protection

While the rich industrial heritage has left many valuable resources behind throughout the landscape of the Valley, the nature of manufacturing industry has also left behind a legacy of environmental woes. Properties particularly along riverways often contain toxic wastes and other hazardous materials which pose serious deterrents to reuse and development. The result is that North Smithfield has a significant inventory of lands and buildings which are underutilized or unusable due to this problem. Particularly, a number of EPA/DEM-identified hazardous waste sites (CERCLIS) are prevalent along the Branch River.

Wetlands and waterways also contain concentrations of metals embedded in silt and other toxins which seriously affect water quality, wildlife habitat and the appearance of the landscape. The sheer magnitude of the problem, the lack of expertise in handling it and the incredible cost in mitigating it, make any solution seem almost impossible. Because there are so many instances of this level of pollution throughout Rhode Island, there is often a lack of movement or poor follow up on the part of DEM and/or the EPA. As North Smithfield focuses its attention on future development and providing recreational/interpretive opportunities along the Branch River and the Blackstone Gorge, a comprehensive approach must be taken in reclaiming these important lands and waters. In addition to the Gorge, the Commission's 1997 *Natural Resources Inventory and Assessment* specifically identified Woonsocket Hill and the Blunders worthy of particular protection.

K-5.0 Consistency Statement

The Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor Element supports the goals of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act and is consistent with relevant State Guide Plan elements.

The Element is also consistent with and supportive of programs and policies of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission, the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, and the Blackstone River Watershed Association.

The following is a summary of the major elements of consistency between local and state and regional management plans for the Blackstone River Valley:

State Guide Plan Element 131, *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor*
This Element was developed cooperatively by planning staff from the National Heritage Corridor and the Town of North Smithfield. The relevant issues responded to are: Land Use and the Built Environment; Regional Planning and Cooperation; Partnerships; and Conservation and Environmental Protection.

The goals of the Corridor Management Plan are endorsed by this and other elements of the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan. Strategies were developed to respond to the regional as well as local issues cited above.

The Next Ten Years: An Amendment to the Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan
Developed by the Corridor Commission, this document supplements the Commission's original plan and in doing so also affirms the Commission's original goals and commitments. This Element and Plan support the creation and now improvements of heritage infrastructure and programming.

State Guide Plan Element 151, *Plan for Recreation, Conservation and Open Space (SCORP)*
This Element is consistent with this State Guide Plan Element and its current update. Other Elements of the North Smithfield Comprehensive Plan such as the Natural and Cultural Resources Element also express this consistency with the goals of the SCORP.

L-3.0 Implementation Program

L-3.1 2005 Action Table

The following Action Table serves as an implementation tool for the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update's recommendations. The Action Table outlines the responsible party, cost, funding source, and timeframe for each recommendation. Implementation timeframes are slated to begin upon the Plan's adoption, unless otherwise noted.

Following the current Action Table, is a section that lists those items that were included in the 1992 Plan but have since the Plan's adoption been completed, or for various reasons are no longer relevant. Tasks that were not completed, or are ongoing are included in the current Action Table.

The following acronyms are used in the Action Table:

AHC	Affordable Housing Committee
BRV	Blackstone River Valley Nat'l Heritage Corridor Comm.
BD	Building Department
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
CoC	Chamber of Commerce
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CC	Conservation Commission
DEM	Department of Environmental Management
DPW	Department of Public Works
DOT	Department of Transportation
FD	Fire Department
FP	For-Profit Developers
HDC	Historic District Commission
HPC	Historical Preservation Commission
HOME	HOME funds administered by RI Housing
HUD	Housing and Urban Development (US Dept)
ISDS	Individual Septic Disposal Systems
IDC	Industrial Development Commission
	Also: "TBD" refers to "To Be Determined"
LIHTC	Low Income Housing Tax Credits
NOP	Neighborhood Opportunities Program
NP	Non-Profit Developers
NRICD	Northern RI Conservation District
PB	Planning Board
PD	Planning Department
RD	Recreation Department
RIH	Rhode Island Housing
RIPTA	RI Public Transportation Authority
SD	School Department
SC	Sewer Commission
TA	Town Administrator
TC	Town Council
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TF	Trust Fund (a local affordable housing fund)
W&S	Water and Sewer Division of DPW
WA	Water Authority
WSA	Watershed Association (RI Rivers Council designated)
WGMP	Woonasquatucket Greenspace Mapping Project

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
D - LAND USE ELEMENT				
1. Ensure That The Density And Design Of Residential Development Will Respect The Existing Natural And Man-Made Environment And The Capacity Of Public Facilities				
Concentrate urban single family housing at densities of two dwelling units per acre in areas currently being served by public sewer systems.	TC, PB	No Direct Cost	N/A	In place, ongoing
Concentrate suburban single family housing at densities of one dwelling unit per acre in areas currently served by public sewer systems.	TC, PB	No Direct Cost	N/A	In place, ongoing
Allow rural single family housing at densities ranging from one dwelling unit per one and one-half acres to one dwelling unit per three acres which will not be served by sewers.	TC, PB	No Direct Cost	N/A	In place, ongoing
Insist upon DEM vigilance in its approval of ISDS in areas where sewer services will not be extended.	PB, BO	No Direct Cost	N/A	Ongoing
Adopt flexible land use controls that encourage creative land planning concepts such as conservation development design, encourage the preservation of open space, significant natural features and resources, rare or endangered species or habitat, historical structures and features and significant cultural features and other sensitive areas not otherwise protected by local, state, and federal law, based on but not limited to the priorities as set forth in the WGMP.	TC, PB, PD	$10,000	DEM	Initiated with DEM – Cons. Dev.
In the review of subdivisions, elements such as streets and lots shall be designed so as to preserve natural features such as prominent trees, rock outcroppings, natural land form and topography.	PB, PD	No Direct Cost	N/A	Ongoing
Use conservation development design to locate houses and streets on the least productive farmland or on the *least* significant woodland habitat and locate septic sewage systems on soils best suited for that purpose.	PB, developers	No Direct Cost	N/A	Ongoing
Amend other development regulations to specifically and effectively protect historic and cultural features, scenic viewsheds and restore degraded landscapes.	PB, PD	$1,000	CIP	Year 1
Require an expanded Vicinity/Context Map as a checklist item for all subdivision and land development applications.	PB, PD	Project dependent	FP, NP	Ongoing
Consider adding a new section to the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development and Subdivision Regulations requiring new subdivision lots to have minimum contiguous buildable areas free of wetlands, steep slopes, utility easements etc.	PB, PD	$1,000	CIP	Year 1

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Institute growth management controls as recommended in the pending update of the 2002 Growth Management Program. Controls such as building permit caps and impact fees should be considered.	TC, PB, PD	$20,000	CIP	Initiated
2. Promote "Smart Development" By Directing Medium To High Density Housing To Areas In Or Immediately Adjacent To Established Villages				
Concentrate urban multifamily housing at densities of up to four dwelling units per acre in areas currently being served by public water and public sewer systems. This could be accomplished by providing a density bonus of two additional units per acre, where one of the additional units is subsidized for low and moderate income residents in accordance with the requirements of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act and the other is dedicated for persons 55 years of age or older.	TC, PB	No Direct Cost	N/A	In place, ongoing
Ensure that adequate delineated pedestrian links to village centers are made between proposed medium and high-density developments and existing commercial, recreational and town facilities.	PB	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
3. Preserve The Natural And Cultural Character Of The Town's Neighborhoods And Villages				
In the review of subdivisions, site plans, Special Use Permits and other development applications, Town boards shall give attention to preserving and/or improving the natural, topographic, cultural and historic characteristics which give local neighborhoods and villages their unique identity. This shall apply to projects in one neighborhood which could affect another, or even out-of-town projects which could have an impact on the living amenities of a particular area.	PB, ZB, HDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Identify and rank key parcels for acquisition or protection based on criteria such as but not limited to: size, adjacent protected parcels, significant natural resources, rare or endangered species or habitat, significant cultural features, development potential etc, based on but not limited to the priorities as set in the WGMP.	CC, PB	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1-2
Relate all Comprehensive Plan proposals for recreation, conservation, public facilities, circulation and historic preservation to the enhancement of the Town's living environment.	TC, PB	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Establish a Development Plan Review section within the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations that incorporates design review *standards for industrial, commercial and multi-family housing* based on sound site planning principals and best management practices and that incorporates the principals of village enhancement found in the *Slatersville Area Plan.*	PB, PD	No Add'l Costs	N/A	Initiated

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Allow for differing road widths based on AASHTO defined road categories and build-out potential of the area.	PD, PB Rescue/ Fire, DPW	$3,000	CIP	Year 2-3
Review all state/municipal infrastructure improvements and projects for compliance with all comprehensive plan goals and policies. Recommend design and material enhancements that best reflect the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, as amended.	PD	No Direct Cost	N/A	Ongoing
Require sidewalk design that includes a tree lawn separating sidewalks from roadways and including the planting of shade trees where practical.	PD, PB	$1,000	CIP	Year 1
Adopt a commercial and industrial lighting ordinance as part of the Development Plan Review Regulations.	Consultant to review	$3,000	CIP	Initiated
Adopt a noise ordinance.	TC, BD, PD, CC Solicitor	$3,000	CIP	Year 2-3
Consider Slatersville and the Branch Village area for designation as "Growth Centers".	PB, PD	No Direct Cost	N/A	Year 2-3
Adopt an ordinance that ensures water quality is tested before and after blasting, using groundwater quality standards and preventive action limits as set by DEM or other applicable regulations.	TC, CC, PB, PD	No Direct Cost	N/A	Year 2-3
4. Prevent Incompatible Non-Residential Uses In Residential Neighborhoods				
All zone changes hereinafter proposed shall be in accordance with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan as it may be amended from time to time. A residential area change to a non-residential use shall be supported by findings that the use will be compatible with and supportive of the surrounding neighborhood.	TC	No Direct Cost	N/A	Ongoing
5. Encourage The Development And Retention Of Light Industry, Office And Related Commercial Development Which Will Provide Skilled Job Opportunities And Expand The Tax Base				
Manufacturing is to be continued in the following areas: North Smithfield Industrial Drive; Great Road at Branch River; Canal Street; Stamina Mill site in Forestdale.	TC, PB	No Direct Cost	N/A	In place, ongoing
6. Encourage Campus-Type Mixed Use, Light Industrial Or Research And Development Activities In Areas Accessible To Major Roadways And Served By Sewer And Water Services				

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Develop a mixed use ordinance that will allow the conversion of the Slatersville Mill complex, the Blackstone Smithfield Industrial Park (former Tupperware Mill), and the Branch River Industrial complex to mixed use including light industry, offices, housing, public and semi-public and other compatible activities.	TC, PB, PD	No Add'l Costs	N/A	Initiated
Consider the development of office, commercial, light industrial and/or research and development activities in the Quaker Highway/Central Street area and on North Smithfield Industrial Highway.	TC, PB	No Add'l Costs	CIP	Year 1
Develop size limits for retail structures that discourage "Big Box" retail development.				
Create a mixed-use office/commercial area that could include medical services, research and development activities, office space and limited retail of up to 40% of the built structures on the east side of Eddie Dowling Highway between the Landmark Medical/Fogarty Unit and Booth Pond.	TC, PB	No Add'l Costs	N/A	Initiated
The Town should *actively promote* the reuse of the Slatersville Mill complex.	TA, PB	No Direct Cost	N/A	In place, ongoing
Work with the RIEDC to coordinate and take advantage of regional development needs for such commercial and/or industrial development.	IDC, TC, PD	No Direct Cost	N/A	Year 1
7. Encourage Growth Of Appropriately Scaled Retail And Commercial Development Necessary To Serve Neighborhood And Town Needs				
Develop an ordinance for a "Planned Village District" that would allow for limited expansion of retail and commercial space to serve local neighborhood and Town needs and that forwards the concept of Heritage Economics.	TC, PB	$2,000	CIP	Year 1
Carefully evaluate retail and commercial options which may be available when designs are considered for the intersection at Sayles Hill Road and Route 146.	PB	No Direct Cost	N/A	Depends on DOT timing
Discourage strip-type development along any road in the community - - particularly Route 146A and Victory Highway/ Route 102 which will experience growing travel delays during peak hours.	TC, PB	No Direct Cost	N/A	Ongoing
Create an Agricultural Business district that encourages the continuation of farming and agricultural operations with limited onsite retail sales of certain farm and farm-related products.	TC, PB	$3,000	CIP	Year 1-2
Develop size limits for retail structures that discourage "Big Box" retail development.	TC, PB, PD	No Direct Cost	N/A	Year 1

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
E - HOUSING ELEMENT				
1. Strengthen Partnerships and Build Community Support for Affordable Housing				
Create a North Smithfield Affordable Housing Committee.	TC, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Within 6 months
Work with WNDC and other non-profit organizations and for profit developers to develop affordable housing in North Smithfield.	AHC, NP, FP	$50,000-100,000 per unit	State & Federal funds	Ongoing
Collaborate with RIH to create a Section 8 Affordable Homeownership Program.	RIH, PD, TC, AHC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1
2. Revise the Zoning Ordinance to Promote Affordable Housing				
Rezone the areas of RS-40 which are served by public water and sewer.	TC, PB, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1
Mandate Inclusionary Zoning for all proposed developments greater than six units.	TC, PB, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1
Mandate Inclusionary Zoning in the Town's Land Development Project ordinance.	TC, PB, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1
Allow duplexes by right in the RS-40 and RU-20 districts when deed restricted to ensure long term affordability.	TC, PB, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1
Allow multi-family buildings by right in the RU-20 districts where pubic water and sewer service are available.	TC, PB, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1
Explore the feasibility of creating a Transfer of Development rights program for affordable housing development.	PD, PB, AHC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
3. Identify Programs and Potential Locations for Affordable Housing Development				
Target housing in North Smithfield's villages for scattered rehabilitation into affordable housing.	PD, AHC, TC,FP,NP	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Mandate a minimum of 10% affordable housing in proposed Mill Rehabilitation projects.	PD, AHC, TC,FP,NP	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Monitor North Smithfield's underutilized mill buildings for redevelopment into affordable housing.	PD, AHC, FP,NP,TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Encourage affordable housing development as part of the current proposed mixed use development on Eddie Dowling Highway.	PD,AHC, FP,NP,TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Work with and encourage local religious institutions to develop affordable housing on their properties.	PD, AHC, NP	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Work with WNDC and other affordable housing developers to develop affordable housing on Town owned property	AHC, PD, PB, TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
4. Identify Existing and New Resources for Affordable Housing Development				
Establish an Affordable Housing Trust Fund.	TC	No Direct Cost	HOME, RIH, CDBG, other	Year 1
Actively pursue the creation of local historic districts around North Smithfield's mills and mill villages.	AHC, PB, PB, TA	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Maximize Existing Federal and State Funding Resources for Affordable Housing Development.	NP,FP	No Direct Costs	All	Ongoing

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Continue and expand the Town's home repair and home maintenance grant and loan programs.	PD, CDBG Admin.	Up to $30,000 per unit	CDBG	Ongoing
Create homebuyer education, closing costs, and downpayment assistance programs.	AHC, CDBG	$0 - $7,500 per unit	CDBG	Ongoing
5. Implement Programs Which Ensure the Long Term Affordability of North Smithfield's Rental Housing				
Use the WNDC land trust to ensure long term affordability of homeownership units.	AHC, WNDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Create a monitoring program for deed restricted affordable rental units.	AHC, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1
Implement programs which ensure the preservation of historic homes and minimum code compliance.	PD, HDC, BD	No Direct Costs	CDBG	Ongoing

F - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT				
1. Establish The Local Capacity To Effectively Define And Manage A Comprehensive Economic Development Program				
Undertake a local economic development strategic planning initiative to define a community economic vision and strategies to achieve this vision.	TA, TA, IDC	$15,000	CoC	Year 1-2
Develop ongoing working partnerships with various regional and state economic development entities including the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, CoC, New England Economic Development Services and the Economic Development Foundation of Rhode Island and all other regional and statewide entities with human and financial resources to assist the Town.	TA, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Establish appropriate means to communicate periodically with community stakeholders regarding internal and external economic development threats and opportunities, as well as, progress in respect to the	TA, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing

implementation of the economic development strategic plan.				
Reconstitute the North Smithfield IDC as the North Smithfield Economic Development Commission and empower the Commission to coordinate and oversee the implementation of the economic development strategic plan.	TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 2

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
2. Foster Reinvestment/Investment In Business Development Opportunity Areas To Offer A Diversity Of Quality Location Opportunities For Business Retention And Expansion.				
Develop a strategic infrastructure investment program targeted to high priority business development opportunity areas.	TA, CoC	Part of Strategic Plan	N/A	Year 1-2
Develop local quality land-use and design policies and standards as a basis for communicating and negotiating with prospective investors.	TA, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
The Town should consider developing a good business practices program to encourage the significant redevelopment and/or development of industrial, commercial and mixed-use properties that reflect high quality land use and design policies and standards.	TC, Solicitor	$3,000	CIP	Year 3
Aggressively pursue State and/or Federal grant funds for economic development.	PD, IDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Initiate a business retention strategy involving periodic contact between the NS EDC members and Town employers to determine nature of any Town-related problems or needs.	IDC, TA	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Prepare development/redevelopment visions for the Town's existing commercial areas. Based on these visions, prepare strategies to enhance the visual and economic quality of these areas.	PD	TBD – per area	CoC, BRV	Ongoing
Revise zoning regulations and districts as proposed in the Land Use Plan Element; consider special provisions for adaptive reuse of older mill structures.	See similar task in Land Use Element			
Review the Zoning Ordinance as it pertains to industrial and commercial zoned areas and investigate the feasibility of implementing greater use flexibility in these zones along with design standards.	See similar task in Land Use Element			
Based on access, proximity to infrastructure, topographical and environmental constraints, assess the realistic development potential of existing industrial zoned parcels and those parcels previously identified in the North Smithfield Industrial Site Survey. Based on the results of this assessment, amend zoning map to accurately reflect appropriate use for those parcels.	PD, CoC, IDC	$10,000	IDC, CoC	Year 3

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
3. Encourage Other Forms Of Economic Development Which Will Provide Job Opportunities, Tax Base Support And Increased Revenues For Local Businesses				
Provide opportunities for mixed use development including compatible office parks, light industry and multifamily housing.	See similar task in Land Use Element			
Encourage historic area rehabilitation programs which will generate revenues for local tradesmen.	HDC	TBD	HPC, BRV	Ongoing
Utilize the concept of Heritage Economics when considering an economic development strategy for revitalization of the villages.	TC, CoC	Part of Strategic Plan	N/A	Ongoing
Support the community's agricultural based businesses by providing technical assistance for available grants for purchase of development rights and investigate tax incentives for landowners who maintain active agricultural pursuits.	PD, CC	TBD	CoC	Ongoing
Establish a Development Plan Review section within the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations that incorporates design review standards based on sound site planning principals and best management practices and that incorporates the principals of village enhancement found in the *Slatersville Area Plan.*	See similar task in Land Use Element			
As part of the *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor* and the related *Regional Comprehensive Tourism Planning Component* prepared by the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council Inc. support historic preservation and regional recreational development activities which will enhance the area as a tourist destination.	HDC, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Limit retail and commercial expansion to areas where traffic congestion, noise and light will not impact unfavorably on local businesses or residences.	PB	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
G - NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT				
1. Protect Prime Groundwater Aquifers And Recharge Areas From Potential Environmental Damage				
Strengthen existing groundwater overlay protection regulations and revise the overlay district map to include all the protection zones listed including surface water supply basins.	PD, PB, TC	$5,000	DEM	Year 1
Establish Wastewater Management districts to preclude potential environmental degradation from failing septic systems in areas over principal groundwater reservoirs and recharge areas.	PD, PB, TC	TBD by DEM	DEM/ user charges	Year 3
Extend sewers as specified in the Wastewater Facilities Plan and investigate alternatives such as packaged wastewater treatment facilities to those developed areas impacting groundwater resources.	W&S, DPW	Depends on Segment	User charge	Years 1-5
Amend the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations to strengthen non-point source pollution standards with emphasis on protection of areas over principal groundwater reservoirs or recharge areas or within reservoir drainage areas, in accordance with the Town's Phase II Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP).	PD, PB	$6,000	DEM	Begin Year 1
Strengthen the Town's Soil and Earth Removal Ordinance to protect ground and surface water resources from sand and gravel removal operations.	PD, TC,PB	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 2
Insist that the DEM to adopt more stringent regulations for underground storage tank installation, maintenance and testing in critical aquifer and watershed protection areas.	TA,PB	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Encourage the use of properly designed and maintained ISDS especially in areas with highly permeable soils (generally associated with groundwater reservoirs); encourage DEM to remain vigilant in making sure that necessary ISDS maintenance contracts remain in place.	BD,PB	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Request quarterly reports from RIDEM to the Town's Environmental Advocate regarding the monitoring program and remedial action being taken with respect to the EPA Superfund sites in the vicinity of the Slatersville Aquifer.	PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Develop an ordinance requiring testing for volatile organic compounds (VOC's) prior to issuance of certificates of occupancy.	CC, PB, BD, PD, TC	No Direct Cost	N/A	Year 2-3

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Ensure that the timing of peak flows from new development is handled to minimize down stream flooding especially in flood prone watersheds such as Cherry Brook.	PB, PD, CC,	No Direct Cost	N/A	Ongoing
Work with the Conservation District and RIDEM to identify solutions to minimize seasonal flooding along Cherry Brook.	PD, CC, TA	No Direct Cost	N/A	Initiated
2. Protect The Town's Surface Water Resources With Emphasis On The Watersheds Of The Slatersville And Woonsocket Reservoirs				
Maintain strong enforcement of various regulations within reservoir drainage areas under the presumption that the Slatersville Reservoir is being preserved as an alternate source of potable water.	TA	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Adopt a stormwater management ordinance in accordance with the Phase II SWMP to protect against flooding, encourage groundwater recharge and protect water quality of all surface waters through employment of Best Management Practices.	PD, TC	$3,000	CIP	Year 1
Adopt flexible zoning measures such as conservation development design, which will allow the retention of natural vegetation, buffer areas adjacent to streams, wetlands and provide for opportunities to preserve large tracts of open space.	PD, PB, TC	$3,000	CIP	Year 2
Encourage the Town of Burrillville to consider land use and development impacts relating to downstream areas such as the Slatersville Reservoir.	TC, TA,PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Implement a revised Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.	BD,PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 2
Work cooperatively with the City of Woonsocket as part of a Regional Watershed Protection Committee concerned about Reservoirs # 1 and # 3 and Crookfall Brook; as applicable, strengthen zoning, subdivision and related development regulations and alter municipal operating procedures which adversely impact the watershed.	TC, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Establish Wastewater Management Districts to preclude pollution from individual sewage disposal systems; incorporate household hazardous waste education and control as part of the program.	TC, W&S, DPW	TBD by DEM	DEM/ user charges	Year 3
Rezone watershed and recharge areas of Woonsocket Reservoir #1 & #3 to REA 120 to protect water quality.	TC, PB, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Coordinate the Town's open space and conservation planning efforts, with program priority given to increasing land holdings in the Woonsocket Reservoir system watershed in North Smithfield.	Land Trust, TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Develop regulations that prevent the clear cutting of properties that are in the formal process of being reviewed as a Subdivision or Land Development; clearing should occur only as identified on a Planning Board approved Plan	PB,PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1
3. Adopt And Implement Action Programs To Protect Natural Resources And Conservation Areas Through Acquisition, Conservation Easements And Other Measures				
Maintain strong enforcement of existing and, when adopted, proposed regulations such as zoning, subdivision and land development, erosion and sediment control, soil and earth removal, stormwater management , conservation development design and Development Plan Review (site plan review).	BD, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Development regulations shall provide appropriate controls and review procedures in relationship to critical conservation and natural resource considerations such as wetland protection, woodland preservation, scenic area enhancement, Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program habitat preservation and agricultural land preservation.	PD, PB	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Identify and rank key parcels for acquisition or protection based on criteria such as but not limited to: size, adjacent protected parcels, significant natural resources, rare or endangered species or habitat, significant cultural features, development potential etc. as prioritized in the WGMP .	Land Trust, CC, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1-3
Require the submission of an “Existing Resources/Site Analysis Map” as part of the Master Plan review stage.	PB, PD	DEM grant	DEM-funded	Year 1 – in process
Acquire and otherwise protect key parcels that meet criteria for protection.	TC	Parcel-dependent	DEM/CIP match	Ongoing
Ensure that the timing of peak flows from new development is handled to minimize down stream flooding especially in flood prone watersheds such as Cherry Brook.	PD, PB,	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1 – in process
Work with the Conservation District and RIDEM to identify solutions to minimize seasonal flooding along Cherry Brook.	PD, DPW, CC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1 – in process

4. Adopt and Implement the Phase II Stormwater Management Plan In Accordance With Rhode Island's Pollution Discharge Elimination System (RIPDES) General Permit				
Develop a litter and pet waste clean-up program that may utilize ordinances, fines, pamphlets, signage and newspaper articles to inform the public about the impacts of improper litter and pet waste disposal.	PD, DPW	$1,000	NRICD grant	Year 1
Continue to promote Earthday cleanup and consider adding a fall cleanup.	CC, DPW	No Direct Costs	N/A	Annually
Adopt an ordinance that prohibits illicit discharge to wetlands and waterbodies.	PD, TC/ Solicitor	WSA Grant	WSA	Year 2
Develop a plan to detect illicit discharges.	PD/ DPW	$1,500	WSA	Year 2
Continue practice of cleaning and inspecting catch basins at least twice a year and detention and retention basins once a year. Consider provisions that would require private landowners to conduct periodic inspection and cleaning of catch basins and other stormwater structures.	DPW	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Amend Land Development and Subdivision Regulations to include implementation of erosion, sediment and waste controls in accordance with the Rhode Island Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook and local Ordinance.	PD, PB, Solicitor	$1,500	CIP	Year 2
Adopt Development Plan Review (site plan review) regulations that include a site inspection procedure for sites with greater than one acre of disturbance.	PD, PB	$1,500	CIP	Year 1
Continue training municipal employees about spill prevention and reduction of stormwater pollution.	DPW	No Direct Costs	N/A	Annually
Hold an annual meeting to inform the public about existing and proposed stormwater pollution prevention programs and consider other means of informing the public regarding this issue.	DPW, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Annually
Continue the practice of sweeping streets a minimum of once a year.	DPW	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
5. Protect Prime Farmland And Farmlands Of Statewide Importance With Emphasis In Those Areas Actively Used For Farming				
Encourage active farms to take advantage of the reduced property assessments when participating in the Farm, Forest and Open Space Act.	Tax Assessor	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Use "conservation development design" regulations to preserve prime farmland as part of the open space requirement.	PD, PB	No Direct Costs, once	N/A	Ongoing, once

		initiated		initiated
Encourage the State to continue the purchase of farm development rights and encourage owners to apply to the program.	PD, TA	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Where possible, coordinate the conservation programs of the Open Space and Recreation Element with agricultural land preservation.	TC, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Support the community's agricultural based businesses by providing technical assistance for available grants and investigate tax incentives for landowners that maintain active agricultural pursuits.	Tax Assessor, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
6. Increase The Awareness Among North Smithfield Residents Of The Value Of Their Own Natural And Cultural Resources				
Broaden the range of values attributed to North Smithfield's cultural resources so as to include not only historic and aesthetic values but also values relating to housing, recreation and economic opportunity.	HDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Create a public information campaign to increase awareness, which involves a series of efforts over several years.	HDC	$5,000	BRV Grant	Year 2-3
Link educational activities to other local and regional programs such as those of local schools, the BRV, the WSA and the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, Inc.	HDC, BRV	$2,000	BRV grant	Ongoing
Utilize the mapping resources generated from the WGP and make them accessible to the public.	PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Make copies of the following documents available to the public at various locations and on the Town's website: *Images of America –North Smithfield*, North Smithfield Heritage Society and the *Historic and Architectural Resources of North Smithfield, Rhode Island: A Preliminary Report*, Rhode Island Historic Preservation Commission.	PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 2
Make the Comprehensive Plan accessible through the Town's web site.	PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 2
Prepare an inventory of scenic roads and consider adoption of a scenic road ordinance.	CC	$3,000	NRICD grant	Year 2
7. Protect The Cultural Resources From Physical Change Inappropriate To Their Character				
Analyze the elements of North Smithfield's landscapes and built environment which comprise its cultural/natural resource legacy.	HDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Protect archaeological resources as part of the development application review process and work in collaboration with groups of Native American heritage who are interested in the preservation of their Tribal cultural resources.	HDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Reach consensus, among local people, as to what aspects of local landscapes and built environments are most significant.	HDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Emphasize a flexible strategy aimed at protecting a range of cultural assets, including, but not limited to, historic structures.	HDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Adopt a range of land use controls in the Zoning Ordinance to supplement the Historic Area Zoning where necessary.	PD, TC	Part of ZO Revisions	CIP	Year 2
Emphasize the protection of corridors rather than individual properties and sites.	PD, CC, PB, TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
8. Encourage Appropriate Rehabilitation Or Adaptive Reuse For Buildings And Areas As A Protective Measure				
Be pro-active relative to the reuse of underutilized, significant privately owned buildings.	PD, BD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Target rehabilitation efforts to home improvement programs in efforts to protect existing affordable housing.	PD, BD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
9. Integrate Overall Planning And Development With Programs For The Revitalization Of The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor				
Link, wherever possible, cultural resource protective actions to other compatible improvement efforts in the Town and Blackstone Valley Region.	PD, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Use Federal funds for targeted areas where historic home rehabilitation coincides with other community development activities.	PD, BD	$15,000 annually	CDBG	Ongoing
Utilize DOT Enhancement funds to develop an interpretive/recreation park at the Mammoth Mill site.	BRV	$20,000 design	DOT	Year 2
10. Preserve And Protect The Historic Village Of Slatersville				
Preserve Slatersville historic components	PD, TA	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Ensure the mill's economic viability and reintegration into the Village by allowing mixed uses and innovative ways that combine thoughtful, modern redevelopment with the sensitive preservation of the area's historic elements.	PD, TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	ZO Revision process in progress
Use Slatersville as a model for future historic preservation activities in Town.	HDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
H – SERVICES AND FACILITIES ELEMENT				
1. Provide Facilities Necessary To Educate Students Who Will Be Competitive In The State, National And World Economy				
Maintain existing schools to serve educational needs.	SD	Between $150 and $200K annually	CIP	Annual
Consider additional school facilities.	TC	Phase I $30 million	Bond	Year 1-3
Continue to monitor building permit and other conditions impacting school enrollment trends.	SD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Coordinate use and improvement of school playground and sports facilities with the Town's recreational plans and programs.	SD, RD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
2. Organize Public Buildings In A Manner Which Will Allow The Most Efficient Delivery Of Public Services				
Conduct detailed needs assessment of municipal administration space needs.	TA	$3,000	CIP	Year 1
Evaluate options for a new Town Hall that will house all the administrative functions, Meeting hall space and possibly the library at one facility.	TA	$15,000	CIP	Year 1

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Continue operating the Public Works Garage at the present location with expansion as necessary.	DPW	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Investigate a possible relocation of the Police and Emergency Operations Center to a more central location.	TA	$3,000	CIP	Ongoing
Continue to pursue the municipalization of the North Smithfield Fire and Rescue Service.	TC, FD	Under discussion	CIP/ Fire Tax Revenue	Initiated
Evaluate options to provide better fire protection to the southeast section of Town.	FD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
3. Expand Sewer And Water Services As Necessary To Meet Community Needs, Protect Natural Resources And To Support Economic Development Activities				
Ensure that there is dialogue between the Town Council, Sewer Commission and the Planning Board regarding land use impacts of expanding infrastructure into new service areas.	TC,WA, SC, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Coordinate with neighboring communities to achieve the mandated emergency water system interconnect.	TA	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Continue discussions with neighboring communities regarding the development of a regional water system to ensure existing and future customers have a safe, reliable supply of water.	WA, TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Carry out phased program to enhance system redundancy including development of additional water supply wells, pump stations, water storage facilities and fire hydrants in community water system areas and expand system with emphasis on economic development priorities residential areas with the greatest needs.	WA	$2.7 M	Bond Funds	Ongoing
Update the long range Wastewater Facilities Plan for extending sewer services with emphasis on economic development priorities, areas with onsite system failures, and meeting local affordable housing needs.	TC, SC	$85,000	Bond Funds, SRF	Year 2-3
4. Formulate Wastewater Management Program For Areas Served By Individual Wastewater Disposal Systems				
Establish Wastewater Management Districts in appropriate locations to prevent water pollution and to preclude the need for more expensive sewer services.	W&S, SC	TBD by DEM	DEM/ user charges	Year 3

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
5. Consider Regionalization Options For Public Services				
Consider the benefits of regional versus local programs where there are cost reduction and service delivery benefits to be gained by the Town of North Smithfield.	TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
6. Implement Measures Of The Phase II Stormwater Program Pertaining To Drainage Facilities And Roads				
Continue practice of cleaning and inspecting catch basins at least twice a year.	DPW	No Add'l Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Continue the practice of sweeping streets a minimum of once a year.	DPW	No Add'l Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Implement the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan at the Public Works Garage and provide necessary data for monitoring reports.	DPW	Dept budget	Dept budget	Ongoing

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
I - OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ELEMENT				
1. Provide A Variety Of Active And Passive Recreational Facilities Serving Town Residents And Visitors				
Increase land area of active recreation areas to meet present and future deficiencies.	TC	Parcel-dependent	DEM grant/CIP match	Ongoing
Implement Phase I and II of the proposed Pacheco Park expansion including construction of a Little League field, multi-purpose field and one Tee-ball field, three tennis courts, walking trail, parking and new access road.	RD	$300K	DEM grant (match)	Year 1-3
Continue to seek funding for acquisition of key parcels of land and for the development of a walking trail in Slatersville linking Pacheco Park, Slatersville Reservoir and Library Island Park and explore the possibility of linking this trail to the Blackstone River Bikeway.	RD	Parcel-dependent	DEM grant/CIP match	Ongoing

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Consider acquiring the Stamina Mills site and other parcels along the Branch River for development of a riverside park, bikeway and or walking trail.	TC	Appraised Value	DEM, CIP, BRV	Year 1
As part of subdivision and land development approval, continue the option of requiring dedication of land for recreational and open space purposes as appropriate and establish the necessary formulas to institute a fee in-lieu of dedication option.	PD, PB	$1,500	CIP	Year 1
Adopt flexible zoning such as Conservation Development Design to add to recreational and conservation resources.	PD, PB	DEM-funded	DEM-grant	initiated
Work in collaboration with Federal and State authorities in implementing the Woonasquatucket Bikeway, and completing the Blackstone River Bikeway.	PD, RD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Coordinate local historic rehabilitation efforts with recreational planning as a component of the *Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan* for the Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor.	HDC, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Work with the Town of Blackstone, Massachusetts to improve the visual appearance of the entrance to the Paul S. Kelly Recreation Complex.	PD, RD, BRV	$10,000	BRV grant	Year 2
Work with the Heritage Corridor, the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, the RI & MA Department's of Transportation and the other partners to develop the river access facility at the Paul S. Kelly Recreation Complex.	PD, RD, BRV	$300,000	DOT TIP funded	Year 1-2
Utilize a DOT Enhancement grant to develop an interpretive park at the recently acquired Mammoth Mill site.	PD, RD, BRV	$300,000 construct	DOT TIP funded	Year 1-2
Develop Trails/Greenway Plan connecting conservation and recreation areas.	RD, BRV	$5,000	BRV/CIP match	Year 4-5
Coordinate Town and school recreational facilities planning.	RD, SD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Require open space and recreational planning as part of proposed Mixed Use zoning districts.	PD, TC	See PD Dept budget	CIP	Initiated
Develop a definition to clarify uses which are appropriate for lands designated for open space, recreation or conservation.	PD, PB,TA	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
2. Adopt And Implement Action Programs Necessary To Protect Natural Resource And Conservation Areas				
Identify and rank key parcels for acquisition or protection based on criteria such as but not limited to: size, adjacent protected parcels, significant natural resources, rare or endangered species or habitat, significant cultural features, development potential and based on the priorities as set forth in the Woonsaquatucket Greenspace Project maps D-3-D-5.	PD, , PB, CC, Land Trust	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1-2
Continue to work with the Land Trust and other organizations for the purpose of acquiring conservation areas and conservation easements and/or receiving same as donations.	TC, Land Trust	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Utilize State and/or Federal funds and expertise in the conservation of open space and natural resources.	PD, RD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Create overlay zoning district requiring special review considerations in critical areas such as the Branch River Valley.	PD, PB	$5,000	WSA grant/CIP	Year 5
Cooperate with the City of Woonsocket in the implementation of its *Water Quality Protection Plan* for the City's watershed and reservoir properties in North Smithfield.	W&S, DPW	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Utilize a variety of techniques to preserve open space and conservation areas with an emphasis on viable alternatives to fee simple acquisition without State and Federal aid.	PD, PB, TA	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Introduce a local open space acquisition bond question for voter approval.	TA, PD, CC, RC, TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1-2

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
J - CIRCULATION ELEMENT				
1. Continue Improvement Of Street System Through Selective Roadway Alignments, Widenings And Intersection Improvements				
Use combinations of local, State and Federal funds to make intersection improvements, undertake a pavement management program and implement the State's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).	DPW	$25,000	DOT	Year 4

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Seek DOT Enhancement funds to conduct highway beautification projects, increase pedestrian access, village revitalization and intermodal transportation projects.	DPW, PD	Project-specific	DOT	Year 1-5
Revise Subdivision and Land Development Regulations standards as they apply to local street widths.	PD,PB	$2,000	CIP	Year 1
Enforce Zoning Ordinance regulations applying to visibility at intersections.	BD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Work with RIDOT on the proposed widening of the Slatersville Stone Arch Bridge and ensure that the historic character of the bridge is maintained.	TA, PD, TC, DPW	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Develop and implement a road improvement program that includes assessment and prioritization of town road projects.	DPW	$15,000	CIP	Year 1
Develop, prioritize and implement a Sidewalk Plan.	DPW,PD	$5,000	DOT,CIP	Year 2-3
Adopt and implement a Mapped Street Ordinance or alternative policy.	Solicitor	TBD	CIP	Ongoing
Work with RIDOT on the proposed widening of the Slatersville Stone Arch Bridge and ensure that the historic character of the bridge is maintained.	DPW, HDC	TIP-funded	DOT	Year 1
Encourage the development and implementation of access management plans to minimize access points to existing roadways in order to increase capacity and reduce delays, with special attention given to Industrial Drive and 146A through Park Square.	DPW, TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1
2. Eliminate Traffic Congestion On Non-Limited Access Section Of Route 146				
Encourage DOT to fund the Route 146/Sayles Hill Road intersection construction improvements.	DPW, TA	Study is TIP funded	DOT	In 2003-2008 TIP
3. Encourage Preservation Of Rural Character Of Country Roads				
Adopt and implement a Scenic Roads Inventory and develop a Scenic Road Ordinance.	CC	$5,000	CIP	Year 2-3

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
4. Allow Only That Development Which Will Not Overburden The Street System				
Carefully evaluate traffic impacts and stipulate mitigation measures as part of development plan review for major development projects.	PB, PD, Police	$1,500	CIP	Year 1
Limit curbcuts.	PD, Developer	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
5. Provide Facilities To Encourage The Use Of The Transit System				
Increase public transportation opportunities.	RIPTA	TBD	RIPTA	Ongoing
Work with DOT and/or RIPTA in developing local park-n-ride facilities for transit users and car poolers.	RIDOT, RIPTA	DOT in-house analyses	RIPTA, DOT	Ongoing
Continue transportation services for the elderly and handicapped.	RD, TC	TBD	CIP	Year 4-5
6. Facilitate Freight Railroad Service To Manufacturing Areas				
Continue zoning allowing manufacturing uses which may require deliveries or shipments by railroad.	TC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
7. Increase Opportunities For Pedestrian And Bicycle Access Particularly To Village Areas, Near Public Facilities, And In Densely Settled Neighborhoods				
The Planning Board should require all development proposals to include a pedestrian access component.	PB	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
8. Promote Traffic Safety On New And Existing Roadways				
Amend Subdivision and Land Development Regulations to include provisions for traffic calming measures such as reduced curve radii, reduced roadway width, street tree plantings, etc.	PB, PD	$1,500	PD Budget	Year 1

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Improve safety at West Acres interchange on Rt 146 (south to north U-turn).				
Implement a lane stripping program as a speed control measure on existing roadways and include a stripping provision in the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.	PB, PD, DPW	Length of Roadway-specific	DPW Budget	Year 2

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
K – BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR ELEMENT				
1. Continue To Support Established, Local Efforts To Protect Historic, Cultural And Natural Resources				
Pursue technical assistance and funding to continue to update and evaluate the Statewide Historical Preservation Report.	HDC, BRV	TBD	BRV grant	Ongoing
Encourage the HDC and the RI Historic Preservation Commission to take a more proactive role in protection through co-sponsored workshops and grants assistance to historic property owners.	HDC, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Collaborate with the HDC to gather public support for preservation and identify/establish local historic districts.	HDC, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Seek assistance from the Corridor Commission for support of National Register nominations and local historic zoning proposals.	HDC, BRV	$5,000/per application	BRV Institute	Years 1-5
Identify properties that are threatened by development pressures, deterioration or inadequate resources to include the Slatersville Mill, Tupperware Mill 1851 Scythe Works, the Forestdale Post Office, Stamina Mill Office and the Primrose Grange.	HDC, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Target potential users and appropriate uses for key historic features compatible with preservation concerns.	HDC, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Identify key parcels for land protection around Slatersville Reservoir and work with the Conservation Commission in developing a management plan.	CC, BRV	$5,000	CIP	Years 1-5

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Promote land conservation and historic park restoration through the Conservation Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission.	CC,RD, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Collaborate and support the Corridor Commission in the establishment of a Greenway along the Blackstone and Branch Rivers.	TA, BRV	$35,000	BRV funded	Partially complete, Ongoing
2. Educate The Entire Public And Build Support For The Protection Of Local Historic, Cultural And Natural Resources				
Target individuals and professional groups which deal with local properties (i.e. realtors, etc.) for preservation education.	HDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Disseminate the Corridor's Design Guidelines and Standards report to interested property owners.	PD, HDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Encourage the HDC to hold workshops for maintenance education for both non- and historic district property owners.	HDC, BRV	$3,000	CIP	Year 2-3
Incorporate interpretive features or historic information into public projects, when appropriate.	HDC, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
3. Protect Key Historic, Cultural And Natural Resources Utilizing Zoning And Incentives As Tools				
Create a requirement through the subdivision process to require the development of conservation development design when important historic or natural features are present on-site as identified in the cultural and natural resources inventory.	PD, PB	No Add'l Costs	DEM	Initiated
Revise the Planned Development Zoning District to be more responsive to land conservation and resource protection.	PD, PB	$3,000	CIP	Year 4-5
Continue to apply for funding through the Corridor's Heritage Partnership Program which provides funding for heritage projects that develop heritage infrastructure or recreation, provide heritage programming, strategic design, preservation & enhancement or implement river recovery.	HDC, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
4. Develop An Economic Development Strategy That Assists Owners Of Historic Mills To Maintain Viable Uses Including Environmentally-Sensitive Industry, Business And Residential				
Help local manufacturers to become aware of and participate in state programs to keep mature industries in business and utilizing old structures.	IDC, CoC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Establish a mixed-use zone for the former Tupperware site that will include residential, light industrial and commercial uses.	PD, PB	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ordinance drafted
5. Support The Blackstone River Bikeway As An Alternative Transportation Route And Recreational/Educational Feature				
Examine zoning along the proposed bikeway path for compatibility and economic opportunities.	PD, PB	$3,000	CIP	Year 3-4
Examine access to the bikeway from key areas off-site and compatibility with existing street traffic with DEM as design development begins.	PD, Police	$3,000	CIP	Year 3-4
6. Take Pro-Active Role In Local Transportation And Dot Projects To Have Historic, Cultural And Natural Features Considered In Design				
Collaborate with the Corridor Commission in the review of Federally-funded projects using the Corridor's Historic Resources Inventory and the local Cultural and Natural Resources Inventory as a basis for discussion.	HDC, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Involve the Historic District Commission, the Conservation Commission, Scenic Rhode Island, and other interested parties in the review of local, state and federal projects.	HDC, CC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
7. Continue To Create Conservation Areas And Develop Parkland Along The Blackstone And Its Tributaries Consistent With Corridor Goals				
Form alliances with local businesses, landowners, regional foundations and groups such as the Trust for Public Land and the Nature Conservancy to insure that key properties are protected.	HDC	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Establish a "Task Force" approach in parks development for soliciting input and generating public support, particularly with the Kelly Park site.	RD, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1
Explore access possibilities to the Blackstone Gorge via Harkness Roads.	RD, DPW, PD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 1
Continue to work with Blackstone, MA officials and other partners to achieve the vision that would make Kelly/Mammoth Mill a bi-state gateway park.	RD, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
8. Develop A Realistic, Short Term Tourism Plan That Will Be Meaningful To A Valley-Wide Strategy				

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Identify the key features with tourism potential that could be tied into a large series of tourism activities.	RD, HDC, BRV	No Direct Costs	N/A	Year 2-4
Coordinate a North Smithfield tourism map with identified tourism sites valley-wide and regionally.	BRV	$5,000	BRV funded	Year 5
Collaborate with the Corridor Commission to develop theme brochures linking sites valley-wide with North Smithfield.	BRV	$5,000	BRV funded	Initiated, ongoing
Collaborate with the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council for special events promotion.	BRV, RD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Utilize the Council's tourism plan as a basis for developing strategies and programs.	RD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
9. Form A Network For Information Sharing With The Federal, State And Local Representatives				
Utilize the Corridor Commission, DEM, the League of Cities and Towns and others for providing technical assistance on conservation easements, liability and other land acquisition and management issues.	BRV, TA	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
Encourage local board and commission members to participate in workshops sponsored by organizations such as Grow Smart RI and Statewide Planning that promote understanding of regulatory jurisdiction and procedures.	TA	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing
10. Educate The Entire Community Regarding Water Quality And Hazardous Waste				
Produce an environmental home safety brochure for the general public in conjunction with the Corridor Commission.	WA, BRV	$5,000	WSA funded	Annually
Establish an annual Environmental Awareness Week with school and community educational programs.	BRV	TBD	BRV funded	Annually
Continue the annual Earth Day cleanup with emphasis on cleaning the Canal Street area.	CC, BRV, DPW	No Direct Costs	N/A	Annually
11. Encourage Land Use Near Rivers, Streams, Wetland, And Restrictive Soil Areas To Be Compatible With Environmental Goals				

POLICIES AND ACTIONS	Responsible Party	Cost	Source	Time Frame
Identify areas of the Development Plan Review (site plan) Ordinance for inclusion of site standards for improving environmental impacts.	PD, PB	See PD Budget	PD Budget	Initiated
12. Provide Disincentives For Industrial, Commercial And Other Polluters				
Establish heavy local fines for toxic dumping, wetland violations, water pollution, etc. and violation of terms of permits and support DEM's efforts to enforce statewide pollution prevention programs.	TC, Solicitor	$10,000	CIP	Year 2
Withhold permit approvals/renewals from polluters until situation is mitigated.	TC, BD	No Direct Costs	N/A	Ongoing

L-3.2 Status of Actions Contained in the 1992 Plan

The 1992 Comprehensive Plan (adopted by the State in 1995) had the implementation program organized by "major municipal actions" and then assigned priority ratings, i.e., timeframes for implementation of "highest", "high", and "medium". This section serves to provide the status of those 1992 proposed actions. The section titles and their sequence are the same as appeared in the 1992 Plan, however, for the sake of brevity, the "Responsible Agencies", Adopting Agencies", "Comments", and "Costs" were removed, leaving only a description of the progress made to date. Those tasks that remain ongoing have also been included in the 2005 Action Table.

Codes and Ordinances - Highest Priority

Zoning Ordinance and Map
Progress: The Zoning Ordinance and map were updated in 1994. The Zoning Map is in substantial conformance with the Land Use Plan. The exceptions where the Zoning Map has not caught up to the Land Use Plan include the following:

Mixed Use – A – Slatersville Mill Site. Rezoning of this site is likely within the short term as the current owners are negotiating the sale of the property. All potential buyers have expressed interest in developing the site as described in the 1992 Land Use Plan and again in the 2005 Update.

Mixed Use – B – North Smithfield/ Woonsocket Town Line. Rezoning of this site is likely in the short-term. Some small scale mixed use development has already occurred in this proposed district. The Planning Board has recommended that the residential component of this proposed district be eliminated.

Lot sizes in the vicinity of the aquifer were increased. An Aquifer and Groundwater Overlay Ordinance has been adopted.

A number of zone changes have been implemented since the plan was adopted and while none of them were specifically envisioned by the land use plan they were such that existing zoning districts were expanded as infrastructure was extended to accommodate new development.

Subdivision Regulations
Progress**:** Initial update based on 1992 recommendations complete. Last amended September 2003.

Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance
Progress: Ordinance adopted in 1992 will need to be amended to incorporate Phase II Stormwater Management Plan provisions.

Regulations Enforced by RIDEM

Progress: Use of alternative septic treatment technology has allowed development in areas previously presumed to be unbuildable. DEM has amended regulations for ISDS with respect to setbacks from drinking water supply reservoirs and contributing streams and wetlands. Sand filters are required where there is a hydrologic link to a drinking water supply.

EPA/RIDEM CERCLIS Review
Progress: Monitoring reports continue to be periodically forwarded to the Planning Department.

Codes and Ordinances - High Priority

Subdivision Regulations
Progress: Completed (see earlier description above).

Soil and Earth Removal Ordinance
Progress: Completed in 1994, need revisions to address expansion of operations onto merged lots.

Scenic Roads Inventory
Progress: Woonasquatucket River Greenspace Project and the Scenic Roadways Board identified roads that have scenic qualities. The Town still needs to develop specific criteria to rank roads, establish the critical features for preservation, and develop a Scenic Road Ordinance.

Site Plan Review/Subdivision Amendments
Progress: Site Plan Review ordinance will become Development Plan Review in Land Development Regulations. Design standards still need to be adopted.

Codes and Ordinances - Medium Priority

Underground Storage Tank Regulations
Progress: Task removed because State should provide sufficient Regulations.

Stormwater Management Ordinance
Progress: Task to be revisited now that the Storm Water Management Plan is complete.

Special Studies - Highest Priority

Branch River Industrial Park Area Feasibility Study
Progress: Task to be reconsidered because private studies are underway.

Wastewater Facilities Plan

Progress: Plan was completed in May 1993, an update is needed. See 2005 Action Table.

Special Studies - High Priority

North Smithfield/ Woonsocket Townline Mixed Use B Area
Progress: A residential component is being considered for this Mixed Use district.

Slatersville Feasibility Study
Progress: Sale of property to a private concern is pending. Master plan for a mixed-use development including one and two bedroom units, live-work space, health club, and possible municipal space was approved by the Planning Board and is pending before Zoning Board.

Branch River Greenway Plan
Progress: Slatersville Area Plan covers part of this area. Work continues to implement this task with the Blackstone River Valley Heritage Corridor. See 2005 Action Table.

Sayles Hill Road / Route 146 Intersection
Progress: Submitted to DOT for inclusion in the TIP. The project was initially ranked positively, but was then removed from the TIP. See 2005 Action Table.

Pooled Parking Site Feasibility Studies
Progress: Included in the 2005 Action Table

Special Studies - Medium Priority

Trout Brook Pond Area Study
Progress: Private development plans propose construction of a turf-farm on 250 acres – groundwater study recently completed by U.S.G.S.

Town Hall Study
Progress: No action taken to date. See 2005 Action Table.

Study New Road - Pound Hill Road to Greenville Road
Progress: No action to date. Task removed – the slim likelihood of funding, coupled with the geography of the area, suggests this project will not be realized.

Rankin Path Extension Study
Progress: Design work/feasibility study completed.

School Street Extension / East Harkness Road Study
Progress: A traffic light was installed at School Street and the Route 102 intersection.

Pavement Management Study

Progress: No action – DPW will be developing a five-year improvement list for roads. See 2005 Action Table.

Mapped Streets Study
Progress: Research on streets initiated. See 2005 Action Table.

Sidewalks Plan
Progress: No action- DPW will look at sidewalks when developing the five-year road improvement list. See 2005 Action Table.

Administrative Action - Highest Priority

Retention of Existing Industries
Progress: North Smithfield Advisory Group represents many of the businesses in Town and receives periodic updates from the Town. Retention of existing businesses is an ongoing effort, see 2005 Action Table.

Water Commission
Progress: A Water Authority was established in 1994 and was recently disbanded. Various water systems have been consolidated.

Housing Partnership
Progress: An affordable Housing Plan was developed (and submitted to the State as an appendix of the Comprehensive Plan). The Plan calls for the establishment of a Housing Commission to implement the Plan. See 2005 Action Table.

Regional Watershed Protection Committee
Progress: The Department of Health in cooperation with the URI Cooperative Extension have developed Source Water Assessments for Woonsocket and North Smithfield surface and ground water watersheds. These assessments look as contamination risks and suggest ways of minimizing exposure. The Blackstone River and Woonasquatucket River Watershed Councils have been established to look at issues in and out of their respective watersheds. See 2005 Action Table.

Hazardous and Emergency Spill Response
Progress: Fire Department is responsible for first response- DEM is called in once containment is achieved. Environmental Advocate, acts as liaison between DEM, Town offices and the public. The North Smithfield component of the regional plan has been completed.

Land Trust

Progress: A Land Trust was created. Its efforts should be supported and municipal funding for operating expenses, like insurance need to be explored. See 2005 Action Table.

Change Highway Functional Classification
Progress: Task removed because the State continues to shift more responsibilities to municipalities, and the likelihood of the Town shifting some responsibility to the State is slim.

Administrative Action - High Priority

Rehabilitation/Code Enforcement
Progress: CDBG Housing Rehabilitation program in place and ongoing. See 2005 Action Table.

National Register Listing
Progress: No action to date, see 2005 Action Table.

Wastewater Management Districts
Progress: Wastewater Management Plan identified areas where wastewater districts should be established. See 2005 Action Table.

Other tasks completed but not previously included in this section, but included in the 1992 body of the Plan that deserve mentioning are:

- The various Fire Departments and Rescue Services have been consolidated into one town wide organization.
- While the library was expanded just prior to the 1992 Plan's completion, the Town's growth rate has accelerated and current space deficiencies exist. As such, a new library is being called for. The Animal Shelter was expanded and remains sufficiently sized, to date.
- North Smithfield supported the establishment of the Woonsocket Visitor Center and Museum, as well as the historic Slater Mill site in Pawtucket.
- Centennial Park has been upgraded.
- Improved pedestrian accessibility in Slatersville is well underway.
- Use of CDBG funds for the Slatersville area was explored. However, CDBG funds can not be used because Slatersville is not blighted or comprised mainly of low to moderate-income citizens.
- Pacheco Park's size was expanded.