

Town of Smithfield, Rhode Island



Comprehensive Community Plan 5 Year Update

**Adopted by the:
Smithfield Town Council
On
April 4, 2006; Amended October 4, 2010**

**Adopted by the:
Smithfield Planning Board
On
April 11, 2006**

**Adopted by the:
Rhode Island Department of Administration
On
January 17, 2007**

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

*Certificate of Approval
Five-Year Update
Comprehensive Community Plan*

SMITHFIELD

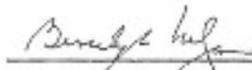
BE IT HEREBY KNOWN that in accordance with Chapter 45-22.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island entitled "Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act", the comprehensive community plan update submitted by the above named community has been approved.

BE IT FUTHER KNOWN that this approval shall be in effect for a five year period ending on

January 16, 2012

HENCEFORTH said plan shall serve to guide all of the municipality's land use decisions and shall be used to conform those decisions to State law, the State Guide Plan and the goals and policies of State agencies.

IN CONFIRMATION OF SAID APPROVAL I HERETO SET MY HAND THIS
17th Day of January 2007



Director Department of Administration

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Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan

Introduction

The Comprehensive Community Plan for Smithfield is a broad-based document which presents historical trends, current and future conditions, goals, policies, and action recommendations and a 5-20 year implementation program for the following functional areas:



- Land Use;
- Housing;
- Economic Development;
- Natural & Cultural Resources;
- Recreation, Conservation and Open Space;
- Community Services/Facilities

- Circulation

The Town of Smithfield received approval of its Comprehensive Community Plan by the state on April 23, 2001. This five year update details where the community is now and outlines a path for the future.

The 2006 Update has been formatted to create a more user-friendly plan incorporating the 2001 Plan by reference. The 2006 Update has been formatted for individual elements to include an overview of current conditions and issues, recent initiatives, updated goals and objectives and a strategic approach to achieving those objectives. Additionally, the 2006 Update contains a status report on the implementation program.

Format of the 2006 Update

In an effort to create more user-friendly document, this 2006 Update has been completely reformatted based upon a survey of regular users of the plan. All reasonable efforts were made to reduce the size of the plan to facilitate reproduction and electronic posting on the Town's website. The Update includes a completely updated Goals, Objectives (replaces the term Policy from the 2001 Plan), and Actions section for each of the plan elements. This includes a revised numbering system that helps readers to clearly understand which actions apply to which objective and goal. The report card lists the nomenclature for both the original plan and the update for easy reference. For the purpose of this update, the Planning Board has chosen to eliminate all completed action items and those items that are no longer valid. Additionally, most redundant actions were eliminated, some were updated (reworded) and others were combined with similar actions where

appropriate. In either case, an explanation is given in the report card for the action's removal.

The 2006 Update was based upon the 2001 Comprehensive Plan. The 2001 Plan will continue to serve as a technical reference document and as such the 2006 Update does not repeal the 2001 plan. The 2001 Plan contains far more detailed information with respect to historical conditions and past development trends that still have value. Where there are clear policy differences between the 2001 plan and this 2006 Update, the 2006 Update supersedes the 2001 Plan. The Goals, Objectives and Actions within each element of this 2006 update replace those found in the 2001 document. It is the intention of the Planning Board and Planning Department Staff to create a completely rewritten background section for the next 5-Year Comprehensive Plan Update so that the 2001 plan can be replaced in its entirety.

The overall direction and vision of the Updated Plan is generally consistent with those stated in the 2001 plan. A great deal of effort and progress has occurred since the original drafting of that document. The Town has made great strides in achieving the stated visions and goals and continues to launch new initiatives. Several new Goals, Objectives, and Actions are present herein as testament to the Town's commitment to creating a community that its residents can continue to be proud of.

A summary description of the public participation component of this plan can be found in the Public Participation Element of this update. This effort included a series of surveys, workshops, public hearings and newspaper articles that have been done over the last 2 – 3 year period, culminating in the Update Plan presented here.

The Implementation section provides a clear timeline, responsible parties and needed resources necessary to complete each action and attain the stated goals of the Plan.



LAND USE

CURRENT CONDITIONS & ISSUES

Over the years, through changes to its zoning ordinances and land development regulations, Smithfield has developed a well defined land use blueprint that will guide development in the future. This blueprint reflects the citizens' vision to maintain the rural character of the Town while encouraging controlled growth that is respectful of its natural resources, compatible with existing development and adds value to the community. The Town has also invested significant resources into the development of a Town-wide Geographic Information System (GIS). This GIS greatly improves the Town's ability to efficiently provide accurate up to date information to the public regarding zoning and provides the necessary data for sound planning decisions. The development of this system was a major goal of the previous version of this Comprehensive Plan.

In order to fully realize the aforementioned vision, it is recognized that additional changes are still needed. Some of those changes have already been developed through comprehensive and participatory processes and adopted by the community. The Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan and the Town's adoption of Conservation Development are two such examples. Other changes are still in the developmental stages and will require more time to be studied and to engage the participation of citizens. The proposed Woodland Conservation Ordinance and Stone Wall Preservation and Protection Ordinance are two examples. Each of these new initiatives illustrates the proactive commitment of the Town to ensure that the Smithfield of 2010 and beyond provides the same high quality of life for its citizens that it does today and more.

Major Challenges

The very fact that the Town has such a high quality of life and is in a desirable location with respect to regional metropolitan centers has created some of the Town's greatest land use challenges. Residential development pressures in particular pose a major threat to the Town's character and ability to provide necessary services to its citizens. These challenges include:

- The ability to expand and maintain infrastructure (sewer, water, and road network) to support projected development.
- The ability to preserve and protect the Town's natural resources (especially surface water quality).
- The ability to provide a balance of housing opportunities to include low and moderate income housing.
- The ability to maintain the Town's ability to provide a high quality primary and secondary education for our children.

Trends and Projections

Smithfield's population has grown steadily over the past half-century, which is typical of most suburban Rhode Island communities. As highway development expanded to provide easy access to undeveloped areas outside of the older urban core communities of Providence and Woonsocket, housing construction blossomed in the previously rural towns. The "Northern RI Market Area" as defined by Statewide Planning is comprised of the five communities of Smithfield, North Smithfield, Woonsocket, Cumberland and Lincoln. This housing market area grew at an overall rate of 31.8 percent between 1950 and 2000; however, the range of growth varies greatly. For example, Smithfield's population grew by 208 percent, while Woonsocket lost 13.9 percent of its population. Lincoln and North Smithfield both grew at about 85 percent, while Cumberland's population increased by 148 percent. By 2000, Smithfield's population had grown by 7.6 percent from its 1990 population of 19,163 - an increase of 1,450 people.

Build-Out Analysis

Over the years, the Town of Smithfield has conducted analyses of future growth potential, or "build-out analyses" to forecast demands on town land resources and public facilities. The 1992 Comprehensive Plan contained a build-out analysis that developed two future growth scenarios based upon two different assumptions regarding physical constraints to development. One study scenario determined that the Town had a buildout capacity of 4,555 additional housing units, which corresponded to a maximum population of just over 30,000 persons.

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan Land Use

In 2001, a second build-out analysis was performed for the Town.¹ This study examined the potential for future residential and commercial development based on then-current zoning. The residential component of the study considered eight zoning districts that permitted residential development of some type. The total buildout added 4,243 housing units to the 7,396 existing units.² Allowing for variability in data sources and dating of this information, the 2001 Analysis indicated that Smithfield has significant residential development potential with the possibility of growing by an additional 57 percent. This latter study also predicts that the Town's population could double in the future.

Housing Units Authorized

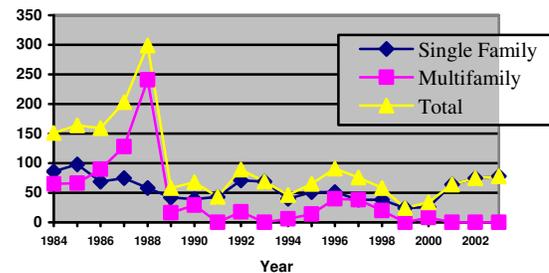
Where and how new growth in Smithfield occurs manifests itself in the Town's growth management challenges. This section looks at recent trends in the issuance of building permits and housing construction activity to get a better sense of the trajectory of the Town's growth. The pace and location of new construction, and its consequent population, has potentially negative impacts on public service. Likewise, the type of housing (*i.e.*, single-family, multi-family, condominiums, etc.) indicates just how many people can live on the remaining developable land in Town (e.g. the density of new development.)

Figure LU-1 contains data on the number of housing units authorized by building permit in Smithfield for the past two decades. The quantity of annual building permits issued ranges from a low of 24 units in 1999 to a high of 299 units in 1988. Over time, the data indicate that the development of new housing has historically proceeded at a moderate pace. The notable exception was in the mid- to late-1980s when a very active economy and regional housing "boom" resulted in high numbers of building permits being issued. On average, 130.3 units per year were authorized for the 10-year period, 1984 to 1993. In comparison, for the last 10-year period, there was an average of 61.1 units per year. The overall 20-year average was 95.7 units.

¹ MassGIS, RIGIS, CRMRPC & Applied Geographics, Buildouts Across Borders, Blackstone River Watershed SuperSummit Resource CD, June 23, 2001.

² U.S. Census 2000

Figure LU-1
Annual Number Authorized Housing Units 1984 - 2003



Source: Smithfield Building/Zoning Department, Building Permits 2003

Affordable Housing

In 2002, the State amended the **Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income Housing Act** so that private developers could override local zoning laws provided that they reserve 20 percent of their housing units for people of low or moderate incomes. The Town experienced an onslaught of residential multifamily development submissions totaling over 1000 units. If allowed, the development of this many units would have overburdened the school system that was already at capacity. The Town opted to challenge the developers in court. In 2 of the 5 cases rulings were recently made in favor of the Town. A third case recently settled at a greatly reduced number of units. The remaining two cases are still in Rhode Island Supreme Court. These remaining two cases represent almost 500 dwelling units. The state has since reworked the language of the Act, requiring developers to seek local zoning approval through a more restrictive comprehensive permit process and that 25% of the proposed units be affordable. It also allows the Town to put a cap of 1% of all housing units/year for comprehensive permit consideration. For 2005, that cap was set at 75 units.

NEW INITIATIVES

In order to successfully and effectively meet the challenges that steady growth and development pose on a community like Smithfield, it has been and remains imperative that the Town continually improve its planning and regulatory capabilities. To that end several major initiatives have been implemented and others are in the developmental stages. A brief description of each follows.

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan

Land Use

Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan

In 2005, the Town amended the Comprehensive Plan to provide for a Low and Moderate Housing Plan. This Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan was prepared to address the provisions of the Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (RI General Laws, 45-53) and is incorporated into the Housing Element as further provided herein. This plan calls for the addition of 414 additional affordable housing units over the next 15 years. The Town has made significant progress in achieving this goal as the Zoning Board has approved 122 additional affordable units in the last year and a half: Cortland Place (31), Valley Housing/Smithfield Housing Authority (45), and Esmond Village (46).

Conservation Development

The Town has continued to explore ways to promote conservation of open space and natural resources, and to preserve its rural character. There is however, a danger that large-lot zoning and cluster development may not be entirely effective in creating and preserving major community-wide open spaces, promoting a network of greenways and implementing key open space goals of the Plan. In particular, the current cluster zoning provisions have not been used effectively as an alternative to conventional development. The use of conservation development subdivision planning techniques was recommended in order to preserve open space and important natural and cultural features on a site proposed for residential development, and to permit reasonable use of the land for residential purposes.



Conservation Subdivision Planning

As a means of implementing the land use, conservation and open space policies contained within this Plan, the Town supports the concept of Conservation Development. This term describes a relatively new type of residential development, in which, exclusive of wetlands and other types of land unsuitable for development, the majority of flat, dry and otherwise buildable land is protected from clearing, grading, and construction by creating open spaces and by reducing lot sizes in order to achieve full-yield density. Conservation design differs from clustering in three important ways:

1. First, it sets much higher standards for the quantity, quality and configuration of the resulting open space. Where the current cluster ordinance requires a fixed amount of the gross area of the subdivision to be set aside as open space, conservation subdivisions require anywhere from 60 to 75 percent or more of the land to be permanent, protected open space. This percentage is linked to the zoning district density and the availability of public water and sewer systems. Unlike most cluster provisions, this percentage is based only on the acreage that is high, dry, flood-free and otherwise buildable.
2. Second, the Town can exercise greater influence on the design of new conservation subdivisions. This flexible approach requires the development plan to be based upon the natural and cultural site features, rather than upon the selection of the best building areas. Conservation design can be strongly encouraged or even required (mandatory) where the Comprehensive Plan has identified the type and location of noteworthy resources.
3. Third, the protected land is also configured so that it will, wherever practical, contribute to creating an interconnected network of open space throughout the community, linking resources areas in adjoining subdivisions and/or providing buffers between new development and preexisting sensitive lands or developed neighborhoods.

This technique is an important tool that should be used to preserve the rural character of the Town, a goal that was expressed very strongly by residents of the Town during the preparation of this Plan. By preserving large areas of open space, and by siting

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan

Land Use

development in compact areas, the Town can create viable neighborhoods while at the same time avoiding sprawling, land-wasting suburban-type subdivisions.

Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance

Based upon the results of the community survey of 2003, the single most important issue according to those surveyed is the protection and preservation of the Town's natural resources. Open Space Acquisition through the recently approved Smithfield Open Space Bond Initiative, the 100-foot wetland buffer requirement and Conservation Development are very important tools to accomplish this goal. The Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance would be another key tool that would apply to all zones, not just residential zones.



The Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance would be modeled after the successful State of Maryland Forest Conservation Act. Key to the act is a requirement that forbids clear-cutting of any development site and retention of a certain percentage of forest cover (dependent upon the parcels zone). Combined with the aforementioned tools, this act will go a long way to protecting the Town's natural resources and preserving its rural character.

Access Management Plan

Access management has been defined as the process that provides or manages access to land development, while simultaneously preserving the flow of traffic on the surrounding road system in terms of safety, capacity, and speed. This process is achieved through managing the design and location of driveways, median openings, signalization, and points of access to the state highway system. The level of highway access control is based on the importance of the highway to regional and statewide travel as determined through a functional classification system. This system has just been updated. Research indicates that effective access management programs have the potential to dramatically increase the safety of streets and highways and also to increase roadway capacity, reduce congestion, reduce air pollution

emissions, and reduce average travel times for motorists, preserving the capacity and functionality of the existing transportation system, enhancing safety, increasing system capacity in a manner that is sensitive to potential community and environmental impacts, and maximizing the return of scarce transportation resources.³

The Town of Smithfield recognizes the importance of access management and will work to create a local Access Management Plan to be incorporated into both the Land Use and Circulation elements of this plan. More information on Access Management can be found in the Circulation element of this plan.

Growth Rate Control

The Town has conducted studies and has followed State planning documents to develop a growth management program as called for in the Comprehensive Community Plan. The study is entitled Needs Assessment and Growth Study, Town of Smithfield⁴, and was adopted as part of the Comprehensive Community Plan by the Town Council and by the Planning Board on April 26, 2005. The Town Council and Planning Board find that this study, together with the footnotes and sources contained therein, establishes the basis for the Town's growth management program, and are incorporated herein by reference.

The Town, working with the consultants that developed the Needs Assessment and Growth study, has developed a draft amendment to the Zoning ordinance for Growth Rate control.

³ Memo to Kevin Flynn from Katherine Trapani and Michael Moan, RI Statewide Planning Dec 23, 2005

⁴ Kleinschmidt Associates and Anthony W. Lachowicz, Needs Assessment and Growth Study, Town of Smithfield, February 2005

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan

Land Use

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The vision statement and goals for this element were developed by the Land Use subcommittee of the Citizens Advisory Committee on the Comprehensive Plan, as amended by the Planning Board and Town Council.

“Allow a planned growth in population with provision for supporting adequate residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and community facilities while providing for open space. Provide residential areas consistent with long-range land use and growth management policies and upon housing need. Land use allocations would be evaluated on the land’s capability for development, present use, impact of present or future use on natural and cultural resources, impact on public services and facilities and compatibility of land uses in and around the area.”

GOAL LU-1

ESTABLISH A BALANCE BETWEEN RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, RECREATIONAL, PUBLIC FACILITY, AGRICULTURAL AND CONSERVATION LAND USES THAT SERVICE THE CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUND LAND USE PRACTICES.

Objective LU-1.1 Strive to achieve equity between the costs and benefits of new development.

Action LU-1.1a

Relate the location of residential developments and neighborhoods to employment and commercial centers, community facilities and services, and transit corridors.

Objective LU-1.2 Develop residential, commercial, industrial and mixed use areas which do not conflict with one another, are compactly grouped, attractive and compatible with the ability of land and water resources to support the development.

Action LU-1.2a

Direct the location of affordable housing developments to 4 areas identified, and according to the guidelines provided for, in the 2005 Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan (LMI Plan).

Action LU-1.2b

Amend the list of potential sites by removing all sites located outside of the 4 areas identified in the LMI plan.

Action LU-1.2c

Promote innovative planning of residential and commercial development. Allow conservation developments in residential zones where appropriate to address new land development, and reduce the minimum lot area requirements by zoning district.

Action LU-1.2d

Conserve and enhance desirable existing industrial areas, shopping areas and concentrations of service activities to maximize the investment and utilization of existing infrastructure.

Action LU-1.2e

Prevent the preemption of commercial and industrial sites and buildings, within commercial and industrial zones, by conversion to uses with less demanding locational requirements, such as residential uses.

Objective LU-1.3 Ensure that residential growth does not outpace the Town’s ability to provide necessary services and safety considerations.

Action LU-1.3a

Adopt Growth Rate Control Ordinance

Action LU-1.3b

Expand Impact Fees to include infrastructure cost for sewer, and road improvements and maintenance.

Action LU-1.3c

Ensure that wetlands and other unbuildable land are excluded from the calculation of buildable lots in a subdivision.

Action LU-1.3d

Relate industrial and commercial development to overall land use by promoting use of development controls and performance standards that mitigate conflicts with other land uses and activities.

GOAL LU-2

PROMOTE THE PRESERVATION, IMPROVEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE POSITIVE AND DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF SMITHFIELD’S ENVIRONMENT AND LAND USE PATTERNS.

Objective LU-2.1 Preserve and support the remaining viable agricultural endeavors.

Objective LU-2.2 Recognize the Town’s scenic rural landscapes, roads and vistas as important cultural and economic resources, and act to preserve them.

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan

Land Use

Action LU-2.2a

Consider the location of planned industrial and commercial districts when planning new or expanded public sewer and water services and highway improvements.

Action LU-2.2b

Identify and maintain a database of sites suitable for commercial and industrial development which are served by, or planned to be served by, public sewer and water, have adequate access to major arterial roadways, and will not intrude upon less intensive land uses.

Action LU-2.2c

Identify vacant or underused buildings suitable for commercial and industrial development/redevelopment which have adequate access to major arterial roadways and will not intrude upon less intensive land uses.

GOAL LU-3

TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE VILLAGE CHARACTER OF THE TOWN.

Objective LU-3.1 Encourage continuation of the village development pattern through zoning.

Action LU-3.1a

Amend zoning regulations to support greater infill development in existing villages and support greater densities in areas designated as within the Urban Services Boundary.⁵

Action LU-3.1b

Develop appropriate design guidelines for all development projects that will ensure the preservation of community and historic character of all neighborhoods. Examine form-based zoning codes as a potential alternative.

Action LU-3.1c

Identify areas suitable for new traditional residential neighborhoods. Amend zoning to support such development to include mixed-use and low to moderate income housing.

Action LU-3.1c

Utilize farmland preservation methods such as purchasing of development rights, transfer of development rights and permitting limited, properly buffered clustered residential development at the edges of large agricultural properties.

GOAL LU-4

MINIMIZE THE IMPACTS OF THE SITING OR EXPANSION OF POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS LAND USES.

Objective LU-4.1 Develop and enforce adequate location and siting criteria within the Town's land use regulations for power lines, pipe-lines and landfills.

Action LU-4.1a

In future applications for open space grant funds, consider for acquisition or other forms of protection, those areas having unique visual qualities as identified in the Natural and Cultural Resources Element.

Objective LU-4.2 Minimize the adverse impacts of power transmission facilities on the environment by careful planning and by capitalizing on potential compatible uses to the greatest extent possible.

GOAL LU-5

CONSIDER THE NATURAL CAPACITY OF THE LAND TO SUPPORT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT, POPULATION AND THE EXISTING QUALITY OF LIFE.

Objective LU-5.1 Promote land development which is sympathetic to the existing landforms.

Action LU-5.1a

Create open space systems and corridors that protect complete ecological units, link to contiguous open space in adjoining communities and provide structure and character to the built environment.

Action LU-5.1b

Adopt conservation development planning techniques as a means of preserving open space and significant natural and cultural features of new subdivision and land development projects.

Action LU-5.1c

Develop Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance that would require the preservation of woodland for all types of development.

Action LU-5.1d

Ensure that development projects consider the capacity of water resources in the area.

⁵ Land Use 2025: RI State Guide Plan Element 121

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan

Land Use

Objective LU-5.2 Recognize the importance of recreation, open space, public access to water bodies, and historic resources to the Town's economy, in tourism development and in attracting and retaining industry.

Action LU-5.2a

Develop site plan guidelines to require that structures be designed to blend with the natural surroundings of a site, and harmonize with the natural features of the area.

Objective LU-5.3 Promote stormwater best management practices targeted land acquisitions to prevent contamination of the Town's surface water resources and ensure maintenance of water quality.

Action LU-5.3a

Retain open spaces large enough to serve as wildlife habitat, store flood waters, abate air and water pollution, provide a sense of openness, and serve as buffers and aesthetic amenities to existing development.

Action LU-5.3b

Amend Town's Land Development and Subdivision Review Regulations to include requirements for Low Impact Design techniques for stormwater and Landscape requirements.

Objective LU-5.4 Preserve, and where necessary restore, rivers, and water bodies and their shorelands for recreational use, wildlife habitat, water supply and open space corridors.

Action LU-5.4a

Continue regional and watershed-wide planning effort begun by the Woonasquatucket Greenspace Protection Strategy to coordinate policy and planning efforts across municipal boundaries. Include watershed organizations in the process where possible.

Objective LU-5.5 Maintain wetlands in their current state to the extent possible as critical elements of groundwater recharge, wildlife habitat, flood storage and for their recreational value.

Action LU-5.5a

Enforce town's 100-foot no-build buffer on all wetlands.

Action LU-5.5b

Digitize the Town's 1988 wetlands inventory into GIS database and create a new database from current photography to identify critical wetland resources.

Objective LU-5.6 Maintain and improve the quality of groundwater in Smithfield.

Action LU-5.6a

Identify critical groundwater recharge areas and seek to protect undeveloped land in these areas from development.

Objective LU-5.7 Focus growth in existing high density (urban services) areas and designated Growth Centers.

Action LU-5.7a

Identify potential growth centers in Town and seek state designation (target areas around existing village centers and Routes 7 and 116 Planned Corporate Zone).

GOAL LU-6

ACCESS TO LAND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IS PLANNED OUT IN ADVANCE THROUGH A COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN.

Objective LU-6

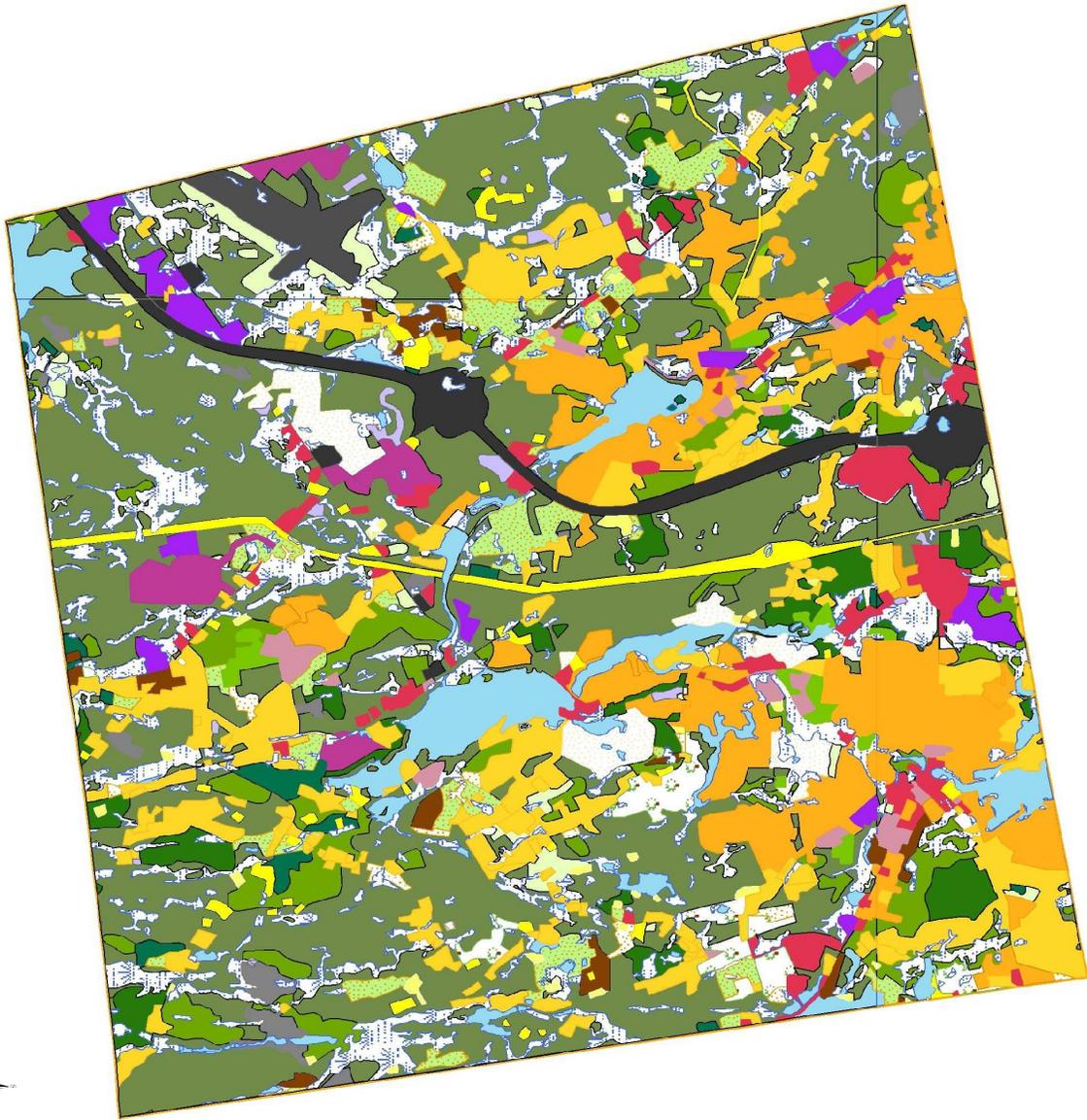
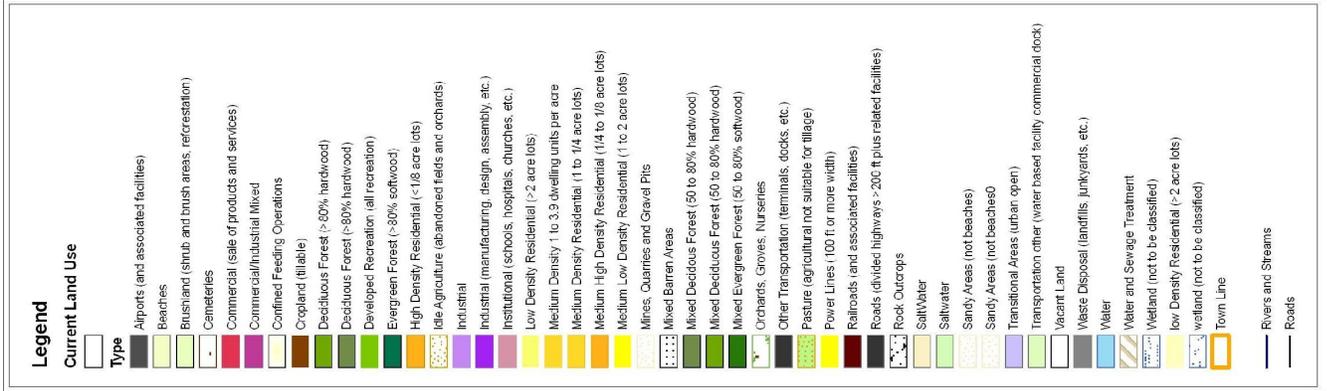
Work cooperatively with state and neighboring local officials to facilitate the development of an Access management Plan.

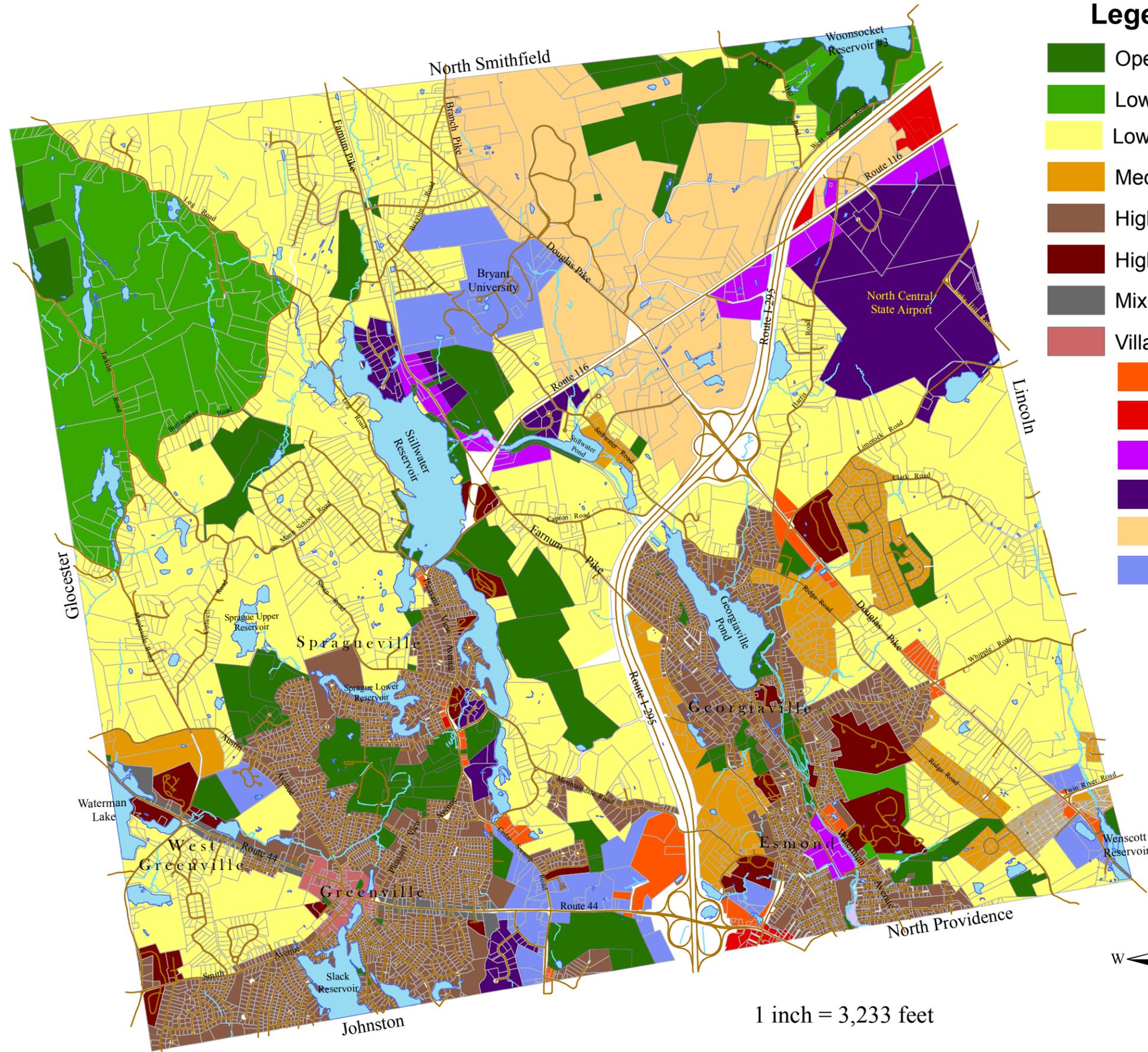
Action LU-6.1A

Develop and adopt an Access Management Plan and incorporate it into existing planning review.

Figure LU-2

Town of Smithfield - Current Land Use



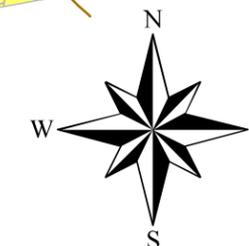


Legend

- Open Space
- Low Density Res. (LDR > or = 80k)
- Low/Medium Density Res. (LMDR = 40k-80k)
- Medium Density Res. (MDR = 10k-40k)
- High Density Res. (HDR = 5k-10k)
- High Density Res Multi-family (HDRM=5k-10k)
- Mixed Use
- Village
- Commercial
- Highway Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Industrial
- Planned Corporate
- Planned Development
- Roads
- Rivers
- Lakes

Smithfield Comprehensive
Community Plan

LU-9 Future Land Use Map



Adopted April 4, 2006
Amended October 4, 2010

1 inch = 3,233 feet

HOUSING

CURRENT CONDITIONS & ISSUES

The comprehensive planning process involves an analysis of existing conditions, projections of future needs based on trends, identification of issues, establishment of goals and policies, and finally development of recommendations and implementation methods. The Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act requires that the Comprehensive Plan reflect its goals, objectives and policies for housing, as well as other elements. Consistent with this Act, the Housing Element must establish goals and policies that will:

- Inventory and analyze existing housing stock, including its age, condition, type, location, occupancy and cost (rent and sales) using the most recently available data;
- Identify, based upon demographic and socio-economic analysis and projections used in the plan, and market conditions and trends, the unmet housing needs of the existing and future population. Attention will be given to all segments of the housing market (renters, homeowners, elderly, low and moderate income, large families, the homeless, and special-needs persons and groups) and must be considered, with particular attention to the relationship of needs to costs (affordability) from the housing stock inventory and analysis. The most recently available data should be utilized. Housing needs should be identified from the local and regional perspective.
- Establish goals and policies that will:
 - Upgrade deteriorating and substandard housing;
 - Provide new housing opportunities geared to the needs of all segments of the population; and
 - Address the documented need for affordable housing opportunities
- Identify resources and actions designed to achieve the housing goals and implement housing policies established by this element, including:
 - Municipal agency responsible for housing;
 - Code and ordinance changes and innovations to encourage achievement of housing goals,

- Public and private resources to be utilized in achievement of housing goals;
- Sites for housing development (locations and types);
- Potential conversion of existing structures to housing use; and
- Financial strategies to be developed for housing.

The implementation program for housing must cover a minimum period of five years, and municipalities are encouraged to project this program to a long-range period of typically twenty years.

In 2005, the Town amended the Comprehensive Plan to provide for a Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan. This Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan was prepared to address the provisions of the Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (RI General Laws, §45-53) and is incorporated into the Housing Element as further provided herein. Specifically, the Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan addresses the requirements for such a plan as described in guidelines provided by the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program in Handbook 16⁶.

The pace and location of new construction, and its consequent population, has potentially negative impacts on public service. Likewise, the type of housing (*i.e.*, single-family, multi-family, condominiums, etc.) indicates just how many people can live on the remaining developable land in Town (e.g. the density of new development.)

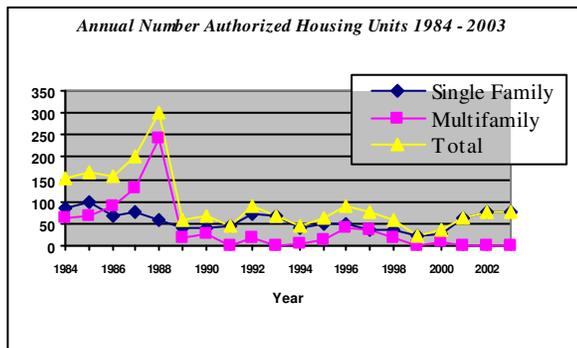
The quantity of annual building permits issued for the past two decades ranges from a low of 24 units in 1999 to a high of 299 units in 1988. Over time, the data indicate that the development of new housing has historically proceeded at a moderate pace. The notable exception was in the mid- to late-1980s when a very active economy and regional housing “boom” resulted in high numbers of building permits being issued. On average, 130.3 units per year were authorized for the 10-year period, 1984 to 1993. In comparison, for the last 10-year period, there was an average of 61.1 units per year. The overall 20-year average was 95.7 units.

⁶ Handbook on the Local Comprehensive Plan, Handbook 16, Statewide Planning Program, June 1989, update 2003.

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan

Housing

The chart below illustrates the trend of authorized housing units between 1984 and 2003. Such excessive increases or “spikes” in the rate of construction, as seen in the mid-to-late 1980s, can place a marked strain on the ability of the Town to provide quality public services and facilities. This situation can be particularly relevant to the public school system. For instance, a large influx of new students within a short period of time may overcrowd classrooms, increase demands on school facilities and resources, and lead to a decline in the overall quality of education.



Recent development patterns in Smithfield suggest that new residential development has occurred in all areas of the Town. A total of 551 housing units have been approved during the period 1992-2003. Although the majority of individual developments are single family residential subdivisions comprising 233 housing units, the condominium form of development has actually constituted the majority of new units (318 units, or 58 percent). Contrary to the Town’s policy of directing new development toward the existing population and village centers of Esmond, Georgiaville and Greenville, a high proportion of new homes are scattered throughout the rural areas of Town.

Smithfield has abundant land supplies. Combining this fact with its continued desirability as an excellent place to live in proximity to the Providence metropolitan area, may suggest that the rate of new housing construction will continue for the foreseeable future. The Town continues to receive applications for new residential land development.

Affordable Housing Action Plan

As part of the 2005 Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan, the Town reviewed the Implementation Actions presented in this Section of the Housing Element. Each of the implementation actions listed herein were reviewed to determine what progress had

been made by the Town in implementing its stated housing policies. As described in Section 3.0 of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan, the Town has completed several actions and accomplished many of its stated goals. There are, however several actions that need to be continued, and new programs that need to be initiated in order to address the need to provide affordable housing in the Town.

As an update to this Housing Element, the Town incorporates the 2005 Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan by reference (see Appendix E). Where inventory data presented in this Comprehensive Plan is superseded by more recent data in the Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan, the more recent data will apply. Implementation Actions that were modified or amended by the Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan have been included in this comprehensive plan update. Section 10.0 of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan entitled Implementing the Strategies provides updated housing policies, strategies, and the actions required in order to implement them. It further identifies an estimated timeframe during which the Town will address each action required, and, where possible, assigns responsibility for implementation to a municipal official, agency or other entity. Table 22 of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan has been amended as part of this update to correct an inconsistency identified in that plan.

GOALS & POLICIES

Amendments have been made in accordance with the adoption of the 2005 Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan (see Appendix E).

GOAL H-1 **TO MAXIMIZE THE QUALITY, ACCESSIBILITY, VARIETY OF RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES AND NEIGHBORHOODS.**

Objective H-1.1 Stimulate development of a variety of housing, in terms of type, cost, size, location and design, to meet the broad range of needs and desires of homeowners and renters, and of all income groups and family sizes.

Action H-1.1a

Increase affordable housing options to households whose incomes fall in the low and moderate range for the community through public investment, subsidy and/or joint public/private efforts.

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Action H-1.1b

Provide incentives to developers willing to construct affordable 2 or 3 bedroom, rental units and units in which Section 8 certificates may be used.

Objective H-1.2 Support the activities of the Town's Housing Authority to increase its ability to serve its residents, with special emphasis upon meeting the needs of families and elderly citizens.

Action H-1.2a

Support the continued operations of the Town's subsidized elderly housing developments

Objective H-1.3 Support the activities of the Gemini Housing Corporation and other area non-profit housing organizations.

Objective H-1.4 Expand the number of subsidized housing units in Smithfield, in order for the Town to meet the housing needs of its present and future population.

Action H-1.4a

Support the Housing Authority's efforts to expand the number of Section 8 certificates through technical or other assistance.

Objective H-1.5 The Town's priority should be to meet the affordable housing needs of its local residents-

Action H-1.5a

Within the extent allowed by law or by the guidelines of specific funding programs, the Town should prioritize the creation of low and moderate income housing for local residents.

Objective H-1.6 Encourage and support optimum location of new housing in terms of its relationships to transportation, pollution control, water supply, education and other public facilities and services; employment opportunities and commercial and community services; adjacent land uses; and the suitability of the specific site for other land uses, including open space.

Action H-1.6a

Maintain a list and map of properties and/or locations for new low and moderate income housing that would meet acceptable criteria. Amend the Land Use Map and add descriptive policy statements in the Land Use Element of the Plan.

Objective H-1.7 Support the activities of the Smithfield Housing Authority toward achieving a mix of affordable rental units which meet the different needs of local families and individuals.

Action H-1.7a

Support the creation of 45 new housing units on land currently owned by the Smithfield Housing Authority.

GOAL H-2

TO PROMOTE A SAFE, SANITARY AND WELL-CONSTRUCTED HOUSING STOCK THROUGH NEW CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION OF EXISTING STRUCTURES.

Objective H – 2.1 Encourage and support the optimum use of existing housing stock, existing neighborhoods and existing structures suitable for residential use, in meeting housing needs, including rehabilitation of historic buildings for housing.

Action H-2.1a

Work with the Housing Authority to ensure that existing units are maintained and modernized as necessary.

Action H-2.1b

Ensure that the Residential Landlord and Tenant Act is followed and that the Minimum Housing Official reviews housing complaints by tenants or landlords in accordance with the 1990-1991 Landlord-Tenant Handbook.

Action H-2.1c

Ensure that the Town enforces the Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code which sets standards for safe and sanitary housing as well as for occupancy.

Objective H – 2.2 Fully utilize governmental assistance programs and other available tools to ensure that the quality of the housing stock is maintained.

Objective H-2.3 Provide access to information regarding Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHMFC) programs for home ownership.

Action H-2.3a

Encourage continuation of programs such as loans to developers for the creation of multifamily rental units (new and rehab) depending on composition and tenancy. The loans may come from available RIHMFC programs and other similar sources.

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Objective H-2.4 Encourage and support more efficient use of the State's natural, energy, fiscal and other resources, and public services and facilities in residential structures and in residential development patterns.

GOAL H-3 **TO ENCOURAGE A SAFE AND DESIRABLE NEIGHBORHOOD ATMOSPHERE.**

Objective H-3.1 Encourage and support the protection and improvement of stable neighborhoods and areas.

Objective H-3.2 Support activities which seek to improve the quality of life and shelter opportunities for all local citizens.

Objective H-3.3 Integrate new affordable housing development into existing neighborhoods in a manner that will protect the character and value of these neighborhoods.

Objective H-3.4 Distribute new affordable housing developments throughout the Town on scattered sites, in scale with existing neighborhoods, and, except for small single family developments, where public water and sewer service is available.

GOAL H-4 **TO RELATE THE LOCATION, DENSITY AND NATURE OF NEW HOUSING TO THE TOWN'S LONG-RANGE LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICIES.**

Objective H - 4.1 Apply new zoning provisions to promote development of low and moderate income housing units.

Action H-4.1a

Town Council will approve amendments to its zoning and land use regulations to create a new process for the approval of higher density, low and moderate income housing developments in locations with appropriate site conditions.

Action H-4.1b

The Town will require residential development with the inclusion of a minimum of 25% LMI units of the mill sites listed in Table 20. It will work with the developer to change the zoning of these sites to multi-family zoning with densities allowing a minimum of 1,000 sq. ft. for 1-Bedroom apartments and 1,300 sq. ft. for 2-Bedroom apartments.

Action H-4.1c

Revise zoning ordinance to allow greater densities for infill housing.

Action H-4.1d

Allow and encourage the development or redevelopment of compatible small-scale affordable housing structures within existing neighborhoods.

Action H-4.1e

Explore the feasibility of rezoning additional Village Districts at appropriate areas in the Town.

Objective H - 4.2 Draft and adopt a mandatory inclusionary zoning provision in the Zoning Ordinance.

Action H-4.2a

Town adopts new inclusionary zoning ordinance.

Objective H-4.3 Work with non-profit and for-profit developers to rehabilitate existing housing and adaptive re-use of nonresidential properties.

Action H-4.3a

The Building and Zoning Department should create a database of housing units that have experienced code violations, sought rehabilitation loans or have changed from single to multi-family housing.

Action H-4.3b

Allocate operating budget funds to housing code inspection and enforcement.

Action H-4.3c

Explore ways to utilize the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program for qualified properties.

Objective H-4.4 Fund rehabilitation and improvements to the existing housing stock.

Objective H-4.5 Explore the feasibility of creating a local historic district to protect existing housing units from demolition or inappropriate re-use.

GOAL H-5:

CREATE PROGRAMS THAT ACTIVELY SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES IN SMITHFIELD.

Objective H - 5.1 Form an Affordable Housing Advisory Board.

Objective H-5.2 Create an Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

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GOAL H-6:

SEEK ALTERNATIVES TO THE STATE'S LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING ACT AS A WAY OF PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

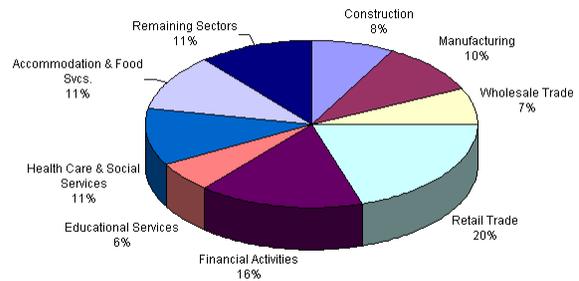
Objective H- 6.1 Encourage the State to revise the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act as follows:

- Amend the definition of “low and moderate income housing” to include a wider range of housing types.
- Protections to ensure that municipalities are not overwhelmed by multiple comprehensive permit applications in a short period of time.
- Require developments that file for comprehensive permit applications to locate only in areas identified for such development in a community’s comprehensive plan.
- Require all housing units filed as comprehensive permits to be subject to local impact fees and building permit quota systems, if enacted locally.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Figure ED-1
Private Sector Employment, 2004



CURRENT CONDITIONS & ISSUES

Smithfield has changed greatly since its days as an agriculture and textile center. Although still known for its abundance of apple orchards, Smithfield has expanded its economic interests into the Financial Activities, Retail Trade, Health Care, and Accommodation & Food Services sectors. The community is also home to Bryant University, a nationally recognized private business school.

The community's population increased by 7.6 percent during the 1990's. In 1990, 19,163 people made Smithfield their home. By 2000, this number had increased to over 20,600 -- a gain of 1,450 people.

Of the local population 25 years and older, 14.6 percent did not have a high school diploma in 2000, down from 19.2 percent in 1990. During this period, the number of people with an advanced degree increased to 11.6 percent in 2000, while the share of residents with a bachelor degree edged up to 17.2 percent.

In 1999, Smithfield's median household income was \$55,621, well above the statewide median of \$42,090. This also represented a 30.8 percent increase over the community's 1989 median of \$42,523 - a growth rate in household income on par with Rhode Island as a whole.

Smithfield increased its private sector workforce by 9.0 percent, adding 952 jobs between 2002 and 2004. The reported job growth was the fourth largest employment growth in Rhode Island during this period. Significant employment gains were noted in Retail Trade (+449), as well as in the Accommodation & Food Services (+172) and Health Care & Social Assistance (+110) sectors. Manufacturing reported a decrease of 107 jobs between 2002 and 2004.

Of the 11,677 Smithfield residents in the labor force in 2004, an average of 4.5 percent were unemployed.⁷

The Town of Smithfield plays a significant role in the Rhode Island economy. Home to several large employers – Fidelity Investments (1,500+ employees), Bryant College (approx. 650) and Uvex, Inc. (250+) – Smithfield is a commonly used example of recent successes in attracting new investment to the State. It also welcomed a new mall, Smithfield Crossings, that has attracted over a dozen retail chains. Continued presence and expansion of local businesses is expected to bring additional jobs to the community and region.

In 2002, the Smithfield Economic Development Commission



published the results of a survey it conducted of all businesses in the Town. Over 790 businesses were surveyed to better understand their opinions of local

services, quality of business and life issues and concerns for expansion. Forty percent (40%) of the 90 respondents said that they had plans to expand their businesses in Smithfield. Most of these businesses fall into the manufacturing and retail employment categories.

In 2003, the Smithfield Department of Planning and Economic Development completed the Smithfield Economic Development Strategy Report. This report found that based on employment growth and unemployment figures, Smithfield has had a strong economy, even through economic downturns. It appears that Smithfield is less dependent on highly cyclical industries than the state. Smithfield also has either retained or expanded jobs more successfully than the state through the various stages of the most recent business cycles.

⁷ 2005, State of the State, Statistical Profiles of Rhode Island Cities and Towns, RI Department of Labor and Training

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The industrial structure shows signs of changing with significant increases in the Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (FIRE) sector. The data does suggest similar patterns of decline and industry performance between the state and the local economy. The manufacturing sector is declining and is consistent with the state economy, but, Smithfield has a number of strong manufacturers that are local specializations. Smithfield also has a number of emerging manufacturers, such as Electrical Machinery.

Non-basic industries that produce goods and services for outside consumption are from a variety of economic sectors, including the emerging Finance, Insurance and Real Estate industry and the “strong performers” in manufacturing. Non-Manufacturing Industry Specializations relative to R.I. include Food and Kindred Products, Durable Goods and Special Trade Contractors. Other probable components of the economic base include Services and Commodity Sales (SIC 62) of the FIRE industry sector.

Wage levels for the FIRE sector are relatively high, as are those for the manufacturing sector. The Town’s increase in service oriented businesses, mostly along Route 44, suggests not only continuing buildout along this major corridor but a shift in employment opportunities and thus wages.

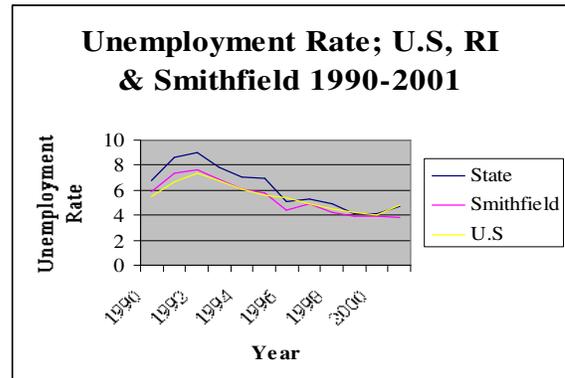
Employment increases in the FIRE sector may be attributable to a few large employers. This may provide opportunities for some of the labor force, but entry level and mid skill level job opportunities continue to stagnate and in some instances decline.

Employment

Figure ED-2 presents employment for the period 1990–2000 for the United States, Rhode Island and Smithfield. Over this entire period Smithfield continuously gained employment, while Rhode Island’s total employment dropped significantly during the 1990-92 period and increased only minimally through the 92-00 period. The United States employment grew at a robust 15.2% during this period. Similar to the nation Smithfield’s economy was growing at a healthy pace. However, the data suggests that Smithfield’s economy was much more resilient to the downturn of the 1990-1992 period than the State. Rhode Island’s economy, on the other hand, shows signs of vulnerability to structural changes within the economy. Rhode Island employment dropped 10.2% during the four-year downturn. Although the state’s economy eventually recovered during the 1992-2000 period, employment levels were only 8.2% higher than 1990

levels. One explanation for Smithfield’s employment growth may be lower levels of dependence on highly cyclical industries. Recent growth in certain segments of the economy may also contribute to the Town being more insulated from downturns within the business cycle.

Figure ED-2



NEW INITIATIVES

The State of Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC) has been a strong partner in attracting new jobs and businesses to Smithfield. To facilitate that relationship, the Town has created new zoning to better accommodate the types of businesses they and the Town want to attract. A description of these new zones follows.

Planned Corporate District (PCD)

The Planned Corporate District was established “to provide an area for planned employment uses, including planned office, as well as research and development parks, light industrial development, corporate headquarters, hotel/conference facilities, and related accessory uses to create a coordinated development approach along major corridors designated for non-residential growth in the Comprehensive Plan (*Smithfield Zoning Ordinance 1998 as amended*).”

Some of the zoning uses permitted by right within the Planned Corporate District include the following:

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Economic Development

Permitted Zoning Uses	Zoning District
Restaurant and Entertainment	Planned Corporate
Retail Business and Service	P
Bank - With or Without Drive-Thru	P
Bank- Without Window Service	P
Bank - With Window Service	P
Industrial Uses	
Research and Development	P
Transportation Uses	
Parking, Storage...Vehicles related to authorized use as accessory use	P
Parking, Storage, Residential Non-Passenger or Recreation Equipment	P
Planned Corporate District Uses	
Office Uses - permitted by right	P
Public and Semi Public Uses - permitted by right	P
Restaurant and Entertainment Uses- permitted by right	P
Industrial Uses by right	P

As can be seen, the Planned Corporate District is intended to facilitate the development of professional office buildings as a principle use. For example, Office Uses as described in Article 4, Section L of the Smithfield Zoning Ordinance identify such uses as office buildings for government, businesses, or professional purposes as permitted uses. Restaurants permitted by right include those “without drive-thru facilities, with or without alcohol, as an accessory use...” There may also be a number of restrictions for permitted uses. For example, even though some restaurants may be permitted by right, the building must contain a minimum of 125,000 square feet of gross floor area, shall only be accessible from within the principle use or building; and direct entrances to restaurants shall not be allowed. The PC district also allows for a Planned Park for permitted uses.

In addition, the PC District accommodates more intense office uses through a special use permit. Office Uses allowed under a special use permit include medical or dental offices and offices for health, medical organizations and the “ancillary offices where patients receive medical, dental, surgical, psychiatric, and/or other health related services and care on an out-patient basis only.”

The Town rezoned approximately 1900 acres, located around the Route 7/Route 116 intersection, as PCD. Currently, the Fidelity Investments Campus, Credit Union Central Falls Headquarters and the main facility of the former Dow Chemical site are located in this zone. Fidelity is planning a 500,000 ft² expansion over the next few years. This leaves a significant area for new growth and the Town is continuing to work with its partners at the State and in private industry to help develop an Economic Development Marketing Strategy for this area.

The Zoning Ordinance was further amended to include a Planned Corporate District – B (PCDB). This district was established to permit by right the manufacture of drugs and pharmaceuticals limited to those permitted in Biological Safety Levels 1 and 2.

As of yet, no parcels have been rezoned as PCD-B though it is expected that parcels formerly occupied by Dow Chemical will be rezoned as PCD-B in the near future.

More to Be Done

The quality of life of any town is the product of the health of its environmental resources (air, water, and open space), the strength and stability of the community (services, planning and government) and the presence of a strong, diversified and sustainable economy. The Town of Smithfield is fortunate to have all three of these elements; the key to the high quality of life that its citizens enjoy. The purpose of the following Goals and Objectives and their associated actions is to ensure that Economic Development in the Town is synergistic with the goals of the other elements of this plan.



One need that has been expressed by the local business community is the need for commercial/light industrial building space, on the order of 10,000 – 25,000 ft². Companies looking to expand in Town have had trouble identifying appropriately sized buildings to accommodate their growth. The Town is working with the State and private development community to address these needs.

The Smithfield Economic Development Commission together with its partners in the Smithfield Advisory Group (SAG) recognize that in order to ensure continued and sustainable economic growth, it is necessary to both support and promote the health of existing businesses while planning for future growth. The Town must endeavor to fully understand its assets

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan

Economic Development

and capabilities as they apply to the local, regional and the expanding global economy. To accomplish this, the implementation of the following goals and objectives is needed.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL ED-1 **ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CONTINUED INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Objective ED-1.1 Facilitate the development of strong and emerging industries.

Action ED-1.1a

Consider promoting tourism and recreation-related activities as an integral part of the economic development program, in conjunction with the efforts of the Economic Development Commission and the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council.

Objective ED-1.2 Support and promote the economic development of appropriately zoned parcels.

Action ED-1.2a

Develop and regularly update an inventory of available commercial/ industrial land.

Action ED-1.2b

Assist owners of industrial land in promoting appropriate sites for development in the business and industrial parks and throughout the Town.

Action ED-1.2c

Work with the RI Economic Development Corporation on developing 'Pad-Ready' sites within the Planned Corporate and Industrial zones to promote Economic Development.

GOAL ED-2 **DIVERSIFIED ECONOMIC BASE**

Objective ED-2.1 Lessen dependence on a particular type of industry or a few major employers. Capitalize on the wide range of the Town's resources to build an economic base capable of withstanding fluctuations in the world/national/state economy or in particular industries.

Action ED-2.1a

Develop a clear Economic Development Marketing Strategy that looks at attracting diverse industries at the local, state, regional and global scale.

Objective ED-2.2 Support emerging basic Industry performers, and work comprehensively to assist lagging basic and non-basic industry performers.

Objective ED-2.3 Support the creation and development of new, organic small business in Town.

Action ED-2.3a

Create a local enterprise facilitation group to encourage and nurture entrepreneurial growth.

GOAL ED-3 **"DESIRABLE" GROWTH INDUSTRIES**

Seek to attract industries characterized as low energy consuming, high technology, and low- or non-polluting, which, based on past performance and foreseeable trends, are likely to grow at a faster rate than the general economy.

Objective ED-3.1 Establish and maintain industry clusters.

GOAL ED-4 **MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING FIRMS**

Provide technical and monetary support to existing businesses.

Objective ED-4.1 Increase technical assistance outreach efforts and the availability of business development resources.

Action ED-4.1a

Continue to utilize Bryant University resources, to further help focus the Town on appropriate development avenues and business development assistance.

Objective ED-4.2 Provide assistance for connecting businesses with loan and grant funding sources and/or offer appropriate incentives.

Action ED-4.2a

Evaluate the use of incentives to attract and encourage economic development, including, but not limited to, tax incentives, sewer extensions, job training, loans, grants, and permitting assistance.

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan

Economic Development

Action ED-4.2b

Work with state and development community to provide for the building space and expansion needs of existing companies.

GOAL ED-5

INTEGRATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITH APPROPRIATE LAND USE POLICIES

Relate economic development to overall land use, including revitalizing old industrial/employment centers, planning business/industrial parks, minimizing commuting distances, and developing industry in accord with sound land use policy.

Objective ED-5.1 Evaluate location of potential “Growth Centers” and facilitate development through the application of advanced planning strategies.

Action ED-5.1a

Continue to guide industrial and office development toward the Routes 7/116 industrial/planned corporate areas in the northeast quadrant of the Town, and ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is available. Continue to support the buildout PCD and evaluate the cost/benefit of expanding this zoning designation.

Action ED-5.1b

Work with RIPTA and major employers to offer reasonable alternatives to commuters.

Objective ED-5.2 Ensure that commercial, industrial and Planned Corporate developments are designed with consideration of adjacent land uses.

GOAL ED-6

MAXIMIZE EFFICIENCY AND IMPROVE HUMAN SERVICE DELIVERY

Coordinate planning for business service delivery as well as coordination of social services with economic development programs.

Objective ED-6.1 Establish links between existing service delivery agencies with the business community to facilitate both business growth objectives and social service agency goals.

Action ED-6.1a

Study the potential product/supply links to recruit businesses that will support existing businesses in the region. Work with Bryant University experts.

Action ED-6.1b

Evaluate current zoning of economic development districts to identify gaps in goods and services as they relate to exporting based industries and a comprehensive approach to economic development.

GOAL ED-7

IMPROVED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Create diverse employment opportunities and provide appropriate training programs to upgrade the quality and diversity of jobs available.

Objective ED-7.1 Build the capacity of Town departments for stimulating economic growth, and implementing strategies for economic development, by establishing partnerships with service delivery organizations, both business oriented and social service oriented.

GOAL ED-8

INCREASED INCOMES

Increase the opportunities of local workers to earn higher, family-wage incomes.

Objective ED-8.1 Continuously engage local businesses to identify needs for human and capital investments.

GOAL ED-9

OPTIMAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES

Address both tangible needs, such as transportation, utilities, goods, water, energy, and waste processing, and intangible needs – the “business climate” of the locality.

Objective ED-9.1 Take advantage of infrastructure assets and improve the business climate

Action ED-9.1a

Work with the owners of industrial and employment district land to ensure that infrastructure needs are met.

Objective ED-9.2 Develop and maintain business/industrial park and roadway infrastructure maintenance program to include landscaping and roadway improvements.

Action ED-9.2a Study the RIDOT plans for expanding Route 44 through Greenville carefully - work with RIDOT to ensure that the village character will not be adversely affected.

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Action ED-9.2b

Maintain and improve Greenville's village character through streetscape, landscaping and signage improvements. Establish village bounds through a system of identifying signs.

Objective ED-9.3 Explore ways to ensure clean, abundant and affordable energy sources for the businesses and citizens of Smithfield.

Action ED-9.3a

Develop incentives for businesses that incorporate Green Development Techniques and/or utilize alternative energy.

Objective ED-9.4 Ensure adequate water supply assuming maximum buildout.

Action ED-9.4a

Develop a detailed water use/availability plan for the Routes 7 and 116 corridor. Include quantity and delivery issues and estimate costs and timeline necessary to achieve needed capacity at buildout.

GOAL ED-10 **IMPROVED LINKAGES AMONG TOWN, STATE & REGIONAL PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

Objective ED-10.1 Make explicit, in all planning documents, the need for a coordinated approach towards economic development in order to maximize economic development goals and objectives.

Action 10-1a

Work with neighboring communities to develop a regional economic development plan that takes advantage of each community's unique assets and capabilities.



COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

During the Winter/Spring 2003-2004, interviews were conducted with Smithfield municipal departments that provide services and facilities that will likely be affected by new growth. The following facility impacts were noted:

Library Facilities

Greenville Library

The Greenville Public Library has recently completed an assessment of its physical plant needs⁸. This study conducted an examination of the present facility located at the junction of Route 44 and Route 116. This library has about 9,600 square feet for all library services on the main level, with basement meeting space totaling an additional 5,376 square feet, for a total of about 15,000 gross square feet. The study concluded with this evaluation:

To put it another way, the Greenville Public Library is increasingly more stressed to serve a community of more than 20,000 people. It is operating beyond capacity and is accommodating all its operations (including over 154,000 circulations) and public services and housing all of its resources in the space of less than 10,000 square feet, or a bit less than six modern school classrooms, plus corridors.

The study identified severe space deficiencies for present holdings and services as compared with standards promulgated by the Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services. In response to the deficiencies noted in the study, the Trustees of the Library have proposed that a new facility be constructed in the Town to not only address the lack of space in the current library, but also to address the anticipated future needs that can be expected in the Town over the next twenty years. A new facility in the range of 38,000 gross sq. ft. and costing approximately \$9.7 million is being planned. It is clear that the new facility is being planned to accommodate both existing deficiencies as well as anticipated new growth. The study noted that

⁸ Jackson, Patricia Kenney, Library Building Consultant, The Greenville Public Library of Smithfield, Rhode Island Physical Plant Needs: An Assessment and Building Program, May 2003.

approximately 16,207 sq. ft. of gross floor area would be needed simply to provide adequate space for the present level of services, a 2002 deficiency of about 1,207 gross square feet.

At this point, the distinction between gross and net floor area must be made. At the programming stage, the specific interior design and space allocation of the proposed new library is very fluid. The “efficiency” of the new building may be reduced in the range of 25% - 30% or even 35% to account for loss of actual library use space due to allowances for lobbies, vestibule and entrance space, public staircases, emergency exits, corridors, rest rooms, closets, storage, mechanical, “circulation (moving around) space, and the thickness of both exterior and interior walls. The May 2003 assessment of the Greenville Public Library found that, to meet current standards, a building having 12,467 net usable sq. ft. of floor area is needed, a net deficiency of 2,867 sq. ft. (12,467 – 9,600).

Assuming a reduction in building efficiency of 30 percent, the new building would actually provide about 26,600 sq. ft. of net floor area for library services. This is compared to the 12,467 sq. ft. of net usable floor area currently needed at the Greenville Public Library. The remaining building space is attributable to new growth.

New building size	Current space needs	= Future needs
26,600 sq. ft.	12,467 sq. ft.	= 14,133 sq. ft.

The costs associated with the construction of a new library that are attributed to new growth can be used as a basis for adoption of an impact fee for this facility.

East Smithfield Library

The East Smithfield Public Library has approximately 5,100 square feet of floor space on the first floor and an additional 5,000 +/- square feet on the second floor that is handicapped accessible via an elevator. Its space includes shelving for adult and children’s fiction and nonfiction collections, reference, videos, DVDs,

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan Community Services & Facilities

CDs, periodicals and other materials, administrative offices, circulation space, a conference room, children's room, young adult area, laminating room, 2 staff rooms, public bathrooms, periodical room, 2 media rooms (1 for storage), silent study room, genealogy room, reading area, and computers for public use. Municipal funding comprises 78 percent of the East Smithfield Library budget.

The two libraries recently agreed to a plan to begin to combine resources and share expenses in an effort to maximize public benefit and reduce costs.

Educational Facilities

Smithfield currently has six school buildings: four elementary, one middle school and one high school. According to the Superintendent of Schools,⁹ the school system is currently operating below maximum capacity only at the high school, but is nearing capacity at the Vincent J. Gallagher Middle School and at the four elementary schools. Recent enrollment statistics are presented in the table below.

Table CF-1

Current Public School Enrollments				
School	Classrooms	Present Enrollment 4/22/04	Maximum Enrollment	Surplus
Old County	16	288	290	2
Winsor	16	274	290	16
McCabe	21	340	380	40
LaPerche	16	232	290	58
Middle School	41 ½	715	868	153
High School	62	842	1,400	558
TOTAL	172 ½	2,691	3,518	827

Source: Smithfield School Department, April 22, 2004

Enrollment Trends

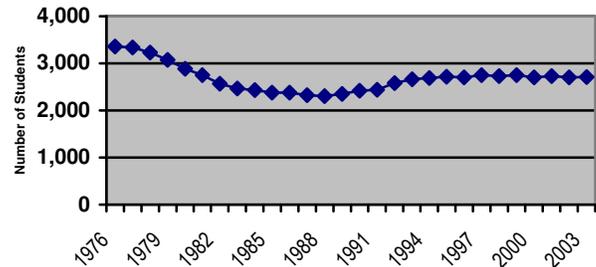
Total enrollment in Smithfield public school system ranges from a high of 3357 students in 1976 to a low of 2307 in 1988. The average enrollment during the 18-year period between 1976 and 2003 is 2684 pupils. Figure CF-1 tracks the total annual enrollment of students in the

⁹ Robert O'Brien, Superintendent of Schools, personal communication, December 2003.

Smithfield Public School System between 1976 and 2003.

Figure CF-1

Total Annual Enrollment of Smithfield Public Schools



The Superintendent of Schools prepares annual projections of future enrollment for the school system. The School Superintendent noted that capacity issues are more critical at the elementary and middle levels. He has indicated that both Old County School and Winsor School, both K-5 schools, are approaching maximum capacity. More critically, the Gallagher Middle School is expected to reach design capacity within the next year. A new addition to the High School was constructed during 2003-2004 and opened in December of 2004. This addition includes 9 new classrooms and internal renovations, and is included in the maximum enrollment figures presented above in Table CF-1. The Superintendent anticipates that continued residential growth will generate an additional 500 students, particularly if the housing units proposed under the comprehensive permit process are built.

Analysis of Future Needs

In 2003, the Town began investigating the feasibility of constructing a new school designed to address the deficiencies in the present system-wide building capacity. As of March 2006, the School Department had not completed detailed studies of the capacity and costs of such a construction program, but has identified the need to construct a new middle school. Construction of a new middle school will alleviate the capacity issues in the elementary schools by reassigning some elementary students to different locations. Preliminary estimates indicate that a 1,000-pupil middle school would cost \$33-39 million and could be ready for occupancy in the year 2009.

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In 2004, the Smithfield School Department retained an architectural firm to prepare cost estimates and preliminary designs for a new middle school. The need for construction of a new school is closely related to the development of new housing in the Town. The table below shows “demand units” for the Town’s school system. A demand unit is that which is associated with a new development that will require improvements in public facilities. For a single family home, the demand unit is the number of school age public school students. The analysis in the preceding section provided information regarding the number of these pupils by housing type. The proposed middle school building is estimated to cost the Town \$27.6 million, net of state aid, or \$27,626 per student. When the pupil generation rates for the different housing types are figured in, the total cost to the Town for each new housing unit can be derived. The results of this analysis are shown in Table CF-2.

Table CF-2

School Capital Needs and Costs by Housing Type		
<i>Demand Units</i>	Single Family	0.44 pupils/unit
	2 & 3 Family	0.27. pupils/unit
	Multifamily	0.15 pupils/unit
	Condominium	0.04 pupils/unit
<i>Space Standard</i>	140 Sq. Ft. per Student	
<i>Date of Initial Occupancy</i>	2009	
<i>Number of New Seats by Grade</i>	Grade 6	334
	Grade 7	334
	Grade 8	334
<i>Needed Improvements</i>	140,000 +/- Gross Sq. Ft	
	87,000 +/- Net Sq. Ft.	
<i>Capital Cost for New School</i>	Building construction	\$33,000,000
	Architectural	0
	Engineering	1,600,000
	Equipment & furnishings	1,200,000
	Contingency	265,000
	Land (incl. utilities)	2,400,000
	Total Cost	1,000,000
<i>State Aid to Construction</i>	\$11,839,500 (30 %)	
<i>Net Cost to Town</i>	27,625,500	

<i>Cost per Square Foot</i>	\$236 / Sq. Ft.	
<i>Cost per Student</i>	\$27,626	
<i>Total Cost per Housing Unit</i>	Single Family	\$12,155
	2 & 3 Family	7,459
	Multifamily	4,143
	Condominium	1,105
<i>Source: Smithfield Superintendent of Schools and The Robinson Green Beretta Corporation, May 2004</i>		

While the estimated cost of building the new school ranges from \$1,105 to \$12,155 per housing unit, depending upon the type of housing unit, a credit for payment of future taxes by homeowners must be applied in order to avoid double payment (the impact fee plus property tax payments used to retire the school bond). In assessing impact fees for future developments, the Rhode Island Development Impact Fee Act requires that all such fees must be expended or encumbered for the construction of the school within eight (8) years of the date of collection.

Fire Department

The Smithfield Fire Department currently has 44 personnel servicing three districts. Three stations house the Smithfield Fire Department: Farnum Pike, Log Road and Putnam Pike. The Putnam Pike station in Greenville serves as the Department’s Headquarters.

In the Town’s 2003–2008 Capital Improvement Plan, the Fire Department requested a total of \$5,545,125. These expenses cover a wide range of new equipment and upgrades to existing items owned by the Department. Table CF-3 below contains detailed information regarding this request. Many of these expenses cover the replacement of fire equipment and apparatuses. According to the Smithfield Fire Chief, rescue vehicles are routinely replaced on an average of five (5) to seven (7) years and fire engines every ten (10) years depending on their level of service activity.¹⁰

The Fire Department presently seeks upgrades to its existing stations and needs to construct a new

¹⁰ *Written communication* dated June 1, 2004. Fire Chief Joseph P. Mollo III, Smithfield Fire Department Headquarters, Station No. 1, 607 Putnam Pike, Smithfield, RI 02828.

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station/headquarters. All stations require retrofits for handicap accessibility and additional space for modern equipment, office space and personnel is direly needed.¹¹ Included in the Fire Department’s capital improvement plans, a total of \$3,560,000 was requested for the acquisition of land for and the construction of a new fire station to be located at a site to be determined along the Route 7 corridor. This appropriation was included in a “bundle bond” that included proposed projects from other Town departments. It was approved by the Smithfield taxpayers in 2001. Of these proposed expenses, only the cost of the new station/headquarters in this needs assessment because it is presumed that this improvement planned to meet demand on fire protection facilities of new population and development over time. Whereas, equipment replacement and maintenance is considered a regular operation and maintenance cost.

Table CF-3

Summary of the 2003–2008 Smithfield Fire Department Capital Improvement Plan Funding Request.		
PROJECT NAME	TOTAL CAPITAL COSTS	FUNDING SOURCE
Advanced Life Supports and Fire Com. Systems Lease Payments	189,000	Rescue Billing Fund
Thermal Imagers 99FD 08	60,000	General Fund
Cardiac Monitor/Defibrillator	25,000	General Fund
Administrative Vehicle Replacement 99FD01	210,820	Rescue Billing Fund
Advanced Life Support Unit Replacement 99FD 04	276,020	Rescue Billing Fund
Fire Apparatus Upgrade 99FD 02	1,012,785	General/Rescue Billing Fund
Repairs to Stations #2 & #3	100,000	General Fund
Boat & Motor Replacement 99FD 04	16,500	General Fund
Fire Safety House-05	30,000	Fire Revenue Account
Station #3 Training Center Paving	65,000	Sandtrace Project Development
Fire Station Construction/Land Acquisition	3,560,000	General Obligation Bond
FIRE DEPARTMENT CIP 2003-2008 TOTAL	5,545,125	

The proposed fire station constitutes a significant capital improvement for the Smithfield Fire Department. It would serve as the Department’s headquarters and would enhance service for the northeast section of Town, which includes the areas of Albion, Jenckes Hill Road, West Reservoir Road and Rocky Hill Road. Currently, these areas are served from Station #2 located on Farnum Pike. Response times from Station #2 to these areas are typically 8 to 12 minutes. These areas are provided secondary support by the Limerock Fire District located in Lincoln, Rhode Island, through an ‘automatic response agreement’ Smithfield has made with this District. This backup support, albeit temporary, shortens emergency response times for the Albion and Jenckes Hill Road areas.¹²

Several major concerns underscore the Department’s stated needs for this proposed station and headquarters. Extended response times, crowded fire houses, inadequate administrative offices and lack of ADA-compliant buildings are the principal reasons, cited by the Smithfield Fire Department.¹³ These concerns were discussed at length and quantified by the Fire Chief at the Town’s budget hearing in 2004 in order to justify the “bundle bond” that was approved by the Town.

The current study presents the Department’s analysis of the effect on the demand on fire and emergency services by changes in the Town’s residential population over time. The Town of Smithfield’s population has grown steadily over the past several decades. Between 1999 and 2003, the Town added approximately 1,000 new residents or, 200 people per year. This recent residential growth in Smithfield has occurred throughout the Town. However, the greater proportion of new residential growth is occurring in the northern half of the Town outside of its established population centers.

The data suggest that this population growth increases the demand on the Fire Department. Over the past 5

¹² *Written communication* dated November 16, 2004. Fire Chief Joseph P. Mollo III, Smithfield Fire Department Headquarters, Station No. 1, 607 Putnam Pike, Smithfield, RI 02828. In 2003, the Fire Department’s request was openly supported by both the Town Manager and the Town Council but was ultimately cut from the operating budget due to budget restraints on both the state and local level.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

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years, the Smithfield Fire Department has responded to an increasing number of calls. Table CF-4 below summarizes the annual number of response or “runs” made by the Smithfield Fire Department from 1999 to 2003. District 1 produced the greatest number runs for the Department. Districts 2 and 3 produced a comparable number of calls. Meanwhile ‘Out of District’ calls constitute roughly 5% of the annual runs made by the Department. Typically these runs are made to assist fire departments of other jurisdictions.

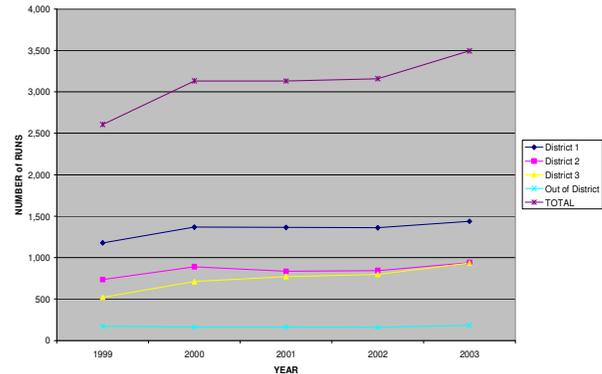
Table CF-4

Summary of Smithfield Fire Department Annual Response Activity from 1999 to 2003					
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
District 1	1,177	1,367	1,364	1,359	1,437
District 2	736	891	835	843	940
District 3	521	712	771	797	933
Out of District	171	163	161	159	183
TOTAL	2,605	3,133	3,131	3,158	3,493

Between 1999 and 2003, the annual number of fire department runs has increased by 888 runs – a 34% increase. The greatest number of runs occurred in 2003, followed in quantity by 1999, which saw 2,605 runs produced. Year to year, the trend in annual number of responses was not dramatic, although 2001 was relatively low compared to other years. Figure CF-2 illustrates the fluctuation of annual calls over the 5-year study period.

Figure CF-2

Figure 4 - Smithfield Fire Department Response Activity 1999 to 2003



Within a similar timeframe, the Smithfield Fire Department also experienced a considerable increase in the rate of simultaneous alarms. Simultaneous alarms are alarm calls that happen at the same time, *i.e.*, additional alarms are sounded after one alarm/response has been initiated. These data serve as another indicator for the overall activity (*e.g.*, demand) of the Department. Table CF-5 below summarizes the alarm data for the Smithfield Fire Department from 1999 through October 2004.

Table CF-5

Annual Number of Alarms and Simultaneous Alarms Smithfield Fire Department, 1999 - 2004			
Year	Annual Total Alarms	Total Simultaneous Alarms	% of Total Alarms
1999	2,619	599	22.8%
2000	2,972	705	23.7%
2001	3,127	831	26.5%
2002	3,157	804	25.4%
2003	3,494	905	25.9%
2004*	3,011	762	25.3%

* Data covers activity through the month of October.

The data suggest that the Smithfield Fire Department is experiencing greater service demands than previous years based on the number of calls and simultaneous alarms. Furthermore, the Department has documented that certain areas of the Town are serviced by response times longer than the 4-minute standard.¹⁴ These indicators support a problem predicted in the ‘Community Services and Facilities Element’ of the

¹⁴ Written communication dated November 16, 2004. Fire Chief Joseph P. Mollo III, Smithfield Fire Department Headquarters, Station No. 1, 607 Putnam Pike, Smithfield, RI 02828.

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Town's Comprehensive Plan, as updated in 2001, and a 1990 Fire Prevention Facilities Report conducted by Keyes Associates: The Smithfield Fire Department's current facilities are not adequate to serve the growing population of the Town. In fact, the Town's Comprehensive Plan calls for a new station to meet growing demands, especially in the northeast quadrant of the Town.¹⁵

More detailed information specific to the area of the proposed building and the number of staff it will house is critical to calculating an impact fee for fire and rescue services. The Town of Smithfield is going to pursue an impact fee for fire and rescue services, then the recommendation of this report to update the 1990 Facilities Plan (Keyes Associates Report) with actual projections of area and staff. Specifically, the Town must establish in terms of nationally-recognized service standards (*i.e.*, National Fire Prevention Association) that the additional space and personnel will achieve a service standard (*e.g.*, 3 Full Time Equivalents per 1,000 people) for the *new* population it will serve.

Police Department

The 2001 Phase II Impact Fee Study noted that the Police Department has no formal standards for facilities under which they operate. According to the most recent Capital Improvement Program, no major capital improvements are planned for the Town's public safety /police facilities. Until a facilities assessment is performed and service standards adopted, no assessment of the impacts of growth on this department can be made. Similarly, an impact fee is not warranted at this time.

Wastewater

The Town of Smithfield has an existing municipal sewer system that services approximately sixty percent (60%) of the homes and businesses in the community. Most of the sewered areas are located in the southern and central sections of Town. Wastewater is conveyed to a secondary treatment facility located in the Village of Esmond. Effluent from the facility discharges into the Woonasquatucket River. The treatment facility, which was constructed in 1978, has an average daily design capacity of 3.5 million gallons per day (mgd) and a peak hourly design capacity of 9.5 mgd. The existing average

daily wastewater flow into the plant is approximately 2.0 mgd.¹⁶

The Town has prepared a Wastewater Facilities Plan which is a long-range planning document that is used to evaluate and manage the wastewater collection system and treatment plant, and is required to maintain a discharge permit from the Department of Environmental Management. This Facilities Plan was prepared in 2002 and recommends that the Town invest \$9.6 million to upgrade the treatment facility, and consider extending sewers into nine existing residential areas at an additional cost of \$9.9 million. Of particular need is the upgrading of the system's pumping stations and the installation of a remote monitoring system.¹⁷

Only sewer users pay debt service on low interest loans used to finance improvements such as those described above. It costs \$40.00 to tie into the system. The Town of Smithfield has not funded treatment facility and major collection system construction projects with any contribution from the general tax base.

The wastewater treatment facility (WWTF), originally constructed in 1978, remains functional, but many of the major equipment items are nearing the end of their useful lives. Improvements are also being proposed to allow the Town to meet new nutrient limits that have been established by RIDEM. The Facilities Plan describes the proposed upgrade to the treatment facility as a major upgrade, but is not being expanded to accommodate new growth.

The Plan examined the potential for new growth and its impact on the sewer system. It considered several different future wastewater flows into the treatment facility as follows:

¹⁵ Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan, adopted June 1192, amended February 24, 2004. Pages VI-44 to VI-46.

¹⁶ BETA Engineers, Town of Smithfield Wastewater Facilities Plan, September 2002, p. 3-15.

¹⁷ Richard Geldard, Town Engineer. *Personal Communication*. July 28, 2004.

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- Existing flow to the WWTF
- Future flow from non-connected homes within existing sewer areas
- Future flow from sewer expansion into un-sewered areas
- Flow from increases in population or development (build-out)
- Future commercial/industrial flow
- Future flows from the adjacent Town of Glocester

The Plan concluded with the finding that "...the current WWTF design hydraulic capacity of 3.5 mgd is adequate¹⁸". This assumes that an additional future flow of 3.30 mgd will be accommodated from a variety of residential and nonresidential sources. While the findings of the Facilities Plan are reasonable from the standpoint of the next twenty years based on current zoning and anticipated growth patterns, it should be noted that unanticipated growth may affect this assumption at any time. The introduction of over 1000 new housing units under the provisions of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act are one example of growth spikes that may affect the findings in the Plan regarding capacity of the treatment facility. It is noted that all of those housing units were proposed with connections to municipal sewers. The Town must carefully consider any major changes in zoning in the future that significantly increase wastewater flows to the treatment facility.

The Town was advised, in the Needs Assessment Report to consider the adoption of policies that will control the rate of future tie-ins to the sewer system. The introduction of a large number of residential tie-ins over a short period of time may affect the planned capital expenditures for upgrades to the treatment facility. The Town may also wish to consider adopting a sewer service district to control the expansion of sewers into the rural and undeveloped portions of Town. Under this concept, a sewer district is adopted as a part of the Comprehensive Plan which establishes a district where sewer service already exists as well as where sewer service may be extended without significant impacts. In this way, sewers are not extended into areas where growth is not encouraged. Any application to extend sewer service into areas outside the sewer service district would require an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. This technique has been adopted in many jurisdictions, including the Town of South Kingstown, RI.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5-5.

Additionally some provision to create a more equitable process for sewer extensions should be considered. Currently, anyone wishing to extend sewer lines for a development project must incorporate the appropriate tie-in connectors for all non-sewered properties it passes, at the developers expense. This creates a disincentive to extend sewer lines particularly in areas zoned for commercial, industrial and planned corporate use. The Town should investigate ways to share the expense of main line extension with all that will benefit from the extension. The current wastewater facility is financed through a system of hook-up fees and user fees, and not through property taxes. It may be prudent for the Town to consider impact fees to help to finance system improvements and expansions.

On-Site Wastewater Management

In addition to the Wastewater Facilities Plan, the Town had an On-site Wastewater Management Plan completed in 2003¹⁹. The purpose of the plan was to establish goals and direction for the proper management of on-site wastewater disposal systems throughout Town. The plan presents cost-effective alternatives to meet water quality and public health objectives, while recognizing environmental and other non-monetary factors.

The Plan makes the following recommendations:

- The creation of a Wastewater Management District, to include promulgation of Rules and Regulations;
- Extension of Sewer Service to most 9 most problematic areas;
- Development of a financial assistance program for homeowners; and
- Development of an educational program for homeowners

The Town is currently in the process of implementing this plan.

¹⁹ On-site Sewage Disposal Wastewater Management Plan, Smithfield, RI by: BETA, 2003

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Water

There is one public water distribution system operated by the Smithfield Water Supply Board (SWSB), which exists as an Enterprise Fund Agency within the Town of Smithfield. A Board of Water Commissioners – the Smithfield Town Council – oversees the SWSB. Meanwhile, the day-to-day operations reside with the Water Commissioner and Director of Public Works. Additional (private) water providers that serve Smithfield residents include the East Smithfield Water District and the Greenville Water District.

Smithfield Water Supply Board

The SWSB purchases water wholesale from the Providence Water Supply Board – the authority tasked with the management of the Scituate Reservoir. According to the SWSB’s Website, “the system’s 1,200 residential and industrial metered accounts serve approximately 9,200 persons. Of these, an estimated one-third reside in the Town of North Providence. The system capacity is approximately 1.8 million gallons per day. Approximately 250,000 to 300,000 gallons per day are delivered to North Providence users. Also, the system delivers about 65,000 gallons per day to users in the East Smithfield Water District.”

Based on the most recent Water Supply Management Plan (1998) for the SWSB, water use and demand for 5-Year and 20-Year planning periods were predicted to increase to approximately 345 million gallons per annum in 5 years and to 467 million gallons per annum in 20 years.²⁰ The plan anticipated that all new population and development within the SWSB service area could be served by tapping into the existing infrastructure and no new water sources or mains would be necessary to expand for service to new residents or residential development. However, in its most current Capital Improvement Plan (2003 – 2008), the Town lists two major water line extensions for Calvary Drive and Washington Highway at a cost of \$40,000 and \$500,000, respectively.

East Smithfield Water District

The East Smithfield Water District was established by an Act of the State of Rhode Island General Assembly in 1934. The District receives 94 percent of its supply

²⁰ Pare Engineering Corporation, 1998. *Water Supply Management Plan for Smithfield Water Supply Board, Volume 1*. Lincoln, RI. pp. 66.

directly from the Providence Water Supply Board via a 12-inch main in Waterman Avenue, an 8-inch main in Dean Avenue and a 16-inch main that supplies the Village of Summerfield from Providence Water’s storage tank on Ridge Road. The remaining 6 percent of the District’s supply is purchased from the Town of Smithfield via a 4-inch interconnection at Ridge Road.

The District has no storage facilities. It operates two pump stations, one located on Farnum Pike in Smithfield and a second on North Elmore Street in North Providence.

The District is managed by a seven member Executive Board, five elected residents of the District and two ex-officio members, the Treasurer and District Moderator. There are currently three full time employees, including two operations personnel.

The District serves 2,361 residential accounts and 57 commercial or industrial accounts. Of these, 776 residential and 16 commercial or industrial accounts are located in North Providence. The District’s largest industrial account is located in North Providence. Two former textile mills, which at one time were among the District’s largest users, have been, or are in the process of being converted to apartment/condominium developments and when fully operational, are expected to remain among the District’s largest water users. Total demand in 2005 was 263 million gallons. Average daily demand was .721 MGD.

The District has no debt. Capital improvements are funded through user rates and various fees, with approximately 10 percent of its annual budget designated for improving or replacing the system’s aging infrastructure. Current plans include replacing a 6-inch asbestos-cement main on Second Street with an 8-inch ductile iron main and replacing an aging wholesale meter at the Ridge Road, Smithfield interconnection. An updated hydraulic model of the system is also in the process of being completed.

Greenville Water District

The Greenville Water District is an independent water district providing water to a specific service area in the Greenville section of Smithfield. Water is also supplied to a small section of the Town of Johnston that abuts the service area and Smithfield.

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The District is established under state law with full authority to manage its business, as approved by qualified voters of the district. The Greenville Water District was incorporated as a quasi-municipal corporation in accordance with the Rhode Island Public Laws, 1955, Page 684, as amended. The Act was amended in 1982 and 1998 to adjust the service area.

System Overview

The Greenville Water District's water system has a shape that is like a large tree. The roots of the system are the connection point to the Providence Water Supply Board system, located near the intersection of Route 44 and George Waterman Road in the Town of Johnston. From the connection, the trunk of the system (major transmission line) proceeds westerly in Route 44 to a major pumping station on Route 44 (Putnam Pike) just east of the Route 44 intersection with Interstate 295. After passing under I295, the transmission proceeds westerly on Putnam Pike to eventually branch out to the various streets and roads consisting of the village of Greenville. Near the westerly extremis of the system and at a significantly higher elevation, a tall water storage tank is installed to allow for supply during peak demands, emergency situations, and as a hydraulic head for the fire protection system in the service area. Water is delivered to the storage facility from two pumping stations, one located adjacent to the storage tank, and one located on Putnam Pike at the Waterman Lakes housing facility. Generally the system water volume and pressure is provided from continuous pumping at the primary pumping station just east of I295 with the storage facility providing flow and pressure during high demand periods. Appendix C of the updated plan includes a map describing the service area and a schematic representation of the water system.

Water Supply Sources

The Greenville Water District continues to obtain all of its water supply by direct wholesale purchase from the Providence Water Supply Board through one connection with Providence Water.

Treatment Facilities

The District does not provide any treatment to its water beyond that treatment provided to the wholesale water by Providence Water.

Transmission, Storage, and Pumping Facilities

The transmission systems include piping, one primary pumping station and two pressure boosting pumping stations that essentially are integrated into one distribution system. Pumping and finished water storage remains the same as the approved plan. The transmission system has recently been strengthened by the addition of the Colwell Road loop.

Interconnections

The Greenville Water District does not currently have interconnections with any water system besides the primary supplier, the Providence Water Supply Board; however, the District has been negotiating with the Town of Smithfield to install an emergency connection. Currently the installation is awaiting Town approval.

Service Area

The District's service boundaries were established by the 1955 Act as amended in 1982 and the Conner's Farm area was added by 98-H 8494A enacted 7/7/98. The boundaries of the District include approximately 7.8 square miles of area with a perimeter of approximately 13 miles located in the south-western portion of the Town of Smithfield (Greenville) and a small section of the portion of the Town of Johnston which is adjacent to the District.

Population Served

The population served by the District was obtained from the 2000 Census Block information as well as information on economic levels and other demographics. In coordination with the US Census information the Rhode Island Statewide Planning information and projections were used to identify the population served.

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The 2005 population in the area of the District's distribution system is estimated to be 8417 from the blocks as adjusted. Population projections for the 5 and 20 year projections were developed from the Statewide Planning projections for the entire town, prorated for the Greenville service area as compared to the entire town and using the local knowledge of the District Superintendent.

Water Conservation Programs

The Greenville Water District makes available free water device conservation kits and promotes these kits through advertisements in the local newspaper and through information include with the water bills. In addition the Superintendent provides a presentation to the schools as requested by school administrators. This presentation is well received by the students and teachers.

System Needed Improvements

The Greenville Water District has completed the development of a hydraulic model (developed by Pare Engineering) to assist the District in the identification of hydraulic weaknesses in the system as well as to assist in the decision making process regarding system improvements and extensions. As a result of the hydraulic evaluation the District has identified major projects to strengthen the hydraulic capabilities, including the improvement of fire flows, of the distribution system including:

- Development of an Emergency Connection with the Town of Smithfield in the area of Routes 116 and Route 5 on the northern portion of the system;
- Complete the Cedar Swamp Road loop;
- Install an additional distribution storage tank on Burlingame Road; and
- Development of a separate high pressure zone to serve higher elevation sections of the system that are currently unserviceable; and
- Rehabilitate/replace sections of the system based on hydraulic and maintenance considerations.

The Emergency Connection project was developed recognizing the extreme vulnerability of the system to any failure of the single interconnection to Providence and/or the associated transmission line and primary pump station on Putnam Pike. Currently this project has been placed in limbo because the Town of Smithfield has not approved the connection.

Completion of the Cedar Swamp Road loop is on hold pending coordination with planned road rehabilitation.

The additional storage and the high-pressure zone are under consideration for development within the next five years.

The rehabilitation/replacement project is ongoing.

Coordination of Districts

Each of the water districts in Smithfield, works with each other to ensure adequate supply and coverage. Any development proposals must first receive approval from the respective water supplier prior to receiving preliminary plan approval. This approval must address not only quantity but pressure concerns. This is in conformance with State Guide Plan element 721: Water Supply Policies for Rhode Island. Where service can not be provided by the designated water supplier, the applicant must either provide an alternate supplier or the project will not be able to move forward. Ultimately, it is the Town's intent to balance new development with the available and projected water supply.

In addition, the Public Works Department is currently planning interconnection between the systems and opportunities for shared storage tanks, to better serve the residents of Smithfield.

Water Emergency Response Plan and Drought Management Planning

Each of the Town's water suppliers has a current Water Supply Management which includes Emergency and Drought Management Plans. These plans provide for a clear process in dealing with the myriad of potential water related emergencies that could occur, including drought. The districts will continue to update these plans regularly and improve cooperation between districts to ensure service is provided.

The Town is also pursuing opportunities to establish emergency connections to neighboring water suppliers like the Town of Lincoln. Such a connection could provide emergency back-up to Smithfield residents in the event of a catastrophic incident to the Scituate Reservoir (which services all three Smithfield Water Districts.

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With respect to areas not served by public water, Smithfield is working on a water supply plan with the Town's Emergency Management Agency. The plan's goal will be to service all residents in the event of a major drought. This effort is in compliance with State Guide Plan Element 723: Water Emergency Response Plan. In addition, the Town is investigating the potential for establishing a groundwater well system to serve as a back-up supply to the three districts and for emergency supply for residences served by private wells. The Town will also implement strategies to promote water efficiencies and drought mitigation in accordance with State Guide Plan Element 724: Rhode Island Drought Management Plan.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL CF-1

TO PROVIDE BASIC POLICE SERVICES WHICH EFFICIENTLY MAINTAIN OR IMPROVE EXISTING QUALITY TO MEET SMITHFIELD'S EXISTING AND FUTURE SAFETY NEEDS.

Objective CF-1.1 Provide police facilities which allow the department to carry out its functions in an efficient and safe manner.

Action CF-1.1a

Maintain the structural integrity of police headquarters through regular maintenance and upkeep.

Action CF-1.1b

Prepare a needs assessment and spatial analysis of the need for additional office space as the department grows and as more specialties are added.

Objective CF-1.2 Ensure that the police department has adequate vehicles and equipment to operate in an efficient and safe manner.

Action CF-1.2a

Continue program of replacing police vehicles at approximately 100,000-125,000 miles, and recycling vehicles for other municipal purposes as appropriate.

Action CF-1.2b

Continue to regularly upgrade communications equipment.

Action CF-1.2c

Continue police department participation in detailed, long term capital improvements programming for vehicles, equipment and physical plant.

Objective CF-1.3 Promote good communications between the police department, other municipal offices and the public.

Action CF-1.3a

Continue departmental participation in school and community educational programs.

GOAL CF-2

TO PROVIDE BASIC FIRE PREVENTION SERVICES WHICH MAINTAIN OR IMPROVE EXISTING QUALITY TO MEET SMITHFIELD'S EXISTING AND FUTURE FIRE SAFETY NEEDS.

Objective CF-2.1 Ensure that fire department facilities are safe and functional and up-to-date in terms of meeting population growth and density.

Action CF-2.1a

Restructure existing fire stations with regard to use, manpower requirements, apparatus types and code compliance, considering the following:

- Use Fire Stations Nos. 1 and 2 as substations with major apparatus support from another source. Relocate the headquarters function to another site.
- Continue to address structural problems in Stations Nos. 1 and 2 that may have been caused by increased floor loading, provide adequate ventilation and fire separation as outlined by National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) 1500 and address any code requirements that have been enacted by the State which are not in compliance.
- Station No. 3 should be demolished, and a new facility of adequate size be built on the same site.

Action CF-2.1b

Construct a fourth fire station in the northeast quadrant of the Town which would also house the

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headquarters function. The suggested location for a new facility would be on a major arterial, removed from major intersections, for ease of accessibility.

Objective CF-2.2 Ensure that firefighting and emergency services staff is adequate to meet the needs of the Town's residents and businesses.

Action CF-2.2a

Maintain a level of fire department staffing which is commensurate with the Town's population, land use and density patterns.

Objective CF-2.3 Promote good communications between the Fire Department, other municipal offices and the public.

Objective CF-2.4 Ensure that the water supply for firefighting is adequate in all areas of the community.

Objective CF-2.5 Ensure that firefighting and emergency services equipment is up-to-date, well-maintained, meets necessary accreditation requirements and adequate to perform basic emergency service functions.

Action CF-2.5a

Continue fire department participation in detailed, long term capital improvements programming for fire fighting and emergency service apparatus.

Action CF-2.5b

Consider establishing a centralized municipal vehicle maintenance facility.

GOAL CF-3

TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE USE OF THE TOWN'S LIBRARY SYSTEM AS AN IMPORTANT CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY RESOURCE.

Objective CF-3.1 Maintain and strive to improve the existing quality of the Town's library facilities.

Action CF-3.1a

Continue regular preventive maintenance programs at both library facilities.

Objective CF-3.2 Encourage efficient use of space and other resources in providing library services.

Action CF-3.2a

Consider options to increase library service efficiency, including, but not limited to, consolidating the two libraries into one town-wide library system, merging the two library's Boards of Trustees, and having one director oversee operations at both facilities.

Objective CF-3.3 Promote good communications between the libraries, other municipal offices and the public

GOAL CF-4

TO SUPPORT THE CONTINUOUS EFFORTS OF THE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE THE BEST EDUCATION FOR ALL SCHOOL AGE RESIDENTS OF SMITHFIELD.

Objective CF-4.1 Provide adequate school facilities to accommodate increasing school enrollments and space for mandatory programs.

Action CF-4.1a

Continue encouraging the School Department/Committee to complete its detailed study of facilities needs at the elementary school level and evaluate middle school needs for the next 5 to 10 years.

Action CF-4.1b

In addition to providing for specific classroom space needs as required by enrollment increases, study the options to expand space for art, music, physical education and special areas at all elementary schools.

Action CF-4.1c

Continue participation in the State's Basic Education Program (BEP), and by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

Objective CF-4.2 Explore options to increase the cost-efficiency of providing educational services while maintaining the high quality of the Town's school system.

Action CF-4.2a

Cooperate with State and other districts exploring alternatives to financing education.

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Objective CF-4.3 Encourage good communications between the School Department and other municipal departments.

Action CF-4.3a

The School Department and School Committee should continue to define the capital needs of the school system on a short and long term basis and develop a capital improvement program based upon the conditions of existing school facilities and projected enrollment trends.

Action CF-4.3b

Schedule regular meetings between the Superintendent's office and the Planning Department to exchange data regarding population projections, school bus routes, computer data bases, planned and potential residential development and other pertinent information.

GOAL CF-5

TO ENSURE THAT THE RESIDENTS OF SMITHFIELD ARE PROVIDED WITH HUMAN SERVICE RESOURCES SUFFICIENT TO MEET THEIR DIVERSE NEEDS.

Objective CF-5.1 Provide adequate municipal services to resident senior citizens.

Objective CF-5.2 Improve coordination of and information regarding available human services.

Action CF-5.2a

Within an overall study of municipal personnel activities and needs, identify senior services which are currently provided, and unmet needs.

Action CF-5.2b

Working with the various human services providers of Smithfield, develop a list of services, who provides the services and other pertinent information and make available as a pamphlet distributed at Town Hall, and/or through water bills etc.

GOAL CF-6

TO ENSURE THAT TOWN BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES ARE HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE, UP-TO-DATE AND WELL-MAINTAINED.

Objective CF-6.1 Provide adequate additional space for efficient operation of municipal administrative and departmental functions.

GOAL CF-7

TO ENSURE THAT TOWN ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS HAVE ADEQUATE RESOURCES AND EFFICIENT PROCEDURES TO CARRY OUT THEIR FUNCTIONS.

Objective CF-7.1 Maintain and improve the Town government's ability to provide municipal administrative services.

Action CF-7.1a

Conduct a study of departmental and individual duties and responsibilities. Such study should evaluate job descriptions, responsibilities, pay scales and other employee-related information.

GOAL CF - 8

PROVIDE EFFICIENT AND PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT OF MUNICIPAL FINANCES.

Objective CF-8.1 Continue to update the Town's financial management procedures.

Action CF-8.1a

Establish a centralized purchasing system for all Town departments.

Action CF-8.1b

Study the feasibility of establishing a centralized municipal equipment and vehicle maintenance system.

Action CF-8.1c

Consider revising the Town's method of budget preparation from the Town Financial Meeting to an alternative format.

Objective CF-8.2 Work toward reducing the Town's reliance on residential property as the primary source of tax revenue.

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Action CF-8.2a

Working with the Planning Board, Town Council, Economic Development Commission and others, make necessary zoning amendments, and provide technical and other assistance where necessary to encourage expansion of the industrial tax base.

Action CF-8.2b

Study the feasibility of options such as regionalization of services such as schools, fire, police, public works.

GOAL CF - 9

SMITHFIELD HAS A TIMELY AND EFFICIENT SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM THAT MEETS THE COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY WHILE ADVANCING LOCAL AND STATEWIDE ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL.

Objective CF-9.1 Periodically review the Town's solid waste collection and disposal options to maximize system efficiency as the statewide solid waste disposal system evolves.

Action CF-9.1a

Continue the municipal practice of weekly curbside residential solid waste and recyclables collection while requiring commercial and industrial establishments to contract privately with waste disposal companies.

Action CF-9.1b

Reduce the volume and weight of the solid waste stream that must be disposed at the Central Landfill by designing and implementing a recycling public education campaign consisting of outreach to grade schools, direct mail to residents and collaboration with local businesses.

GOAL CF - 10

SMITHFIELD HAS AN APPROPRIATELY BALANCED SYSTEM OF ON-SITE SEWAGE DISPOSAL AND MUNICIPAL SEWERS SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE TOWN'S DEVELOPMENT NEEDS, TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY, AND TO PROTECT THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF ALL CITIZENS.

Objective CF-10.1 To direct the extension of the municipal sewer system in eastern sections of Town to

foster the development of industrial facilities that will enhance the Town's tax base and will provide employment opportunities for Smithfield residents.

Action CF-10.1a

In order to support the buildout of the Planned Corporate Development zoned land, the Town should create a sewer extension policy whereby one developer is not asked to fund the bulk of an extension that will benefit many other developers.

Objective CF-10.2 To prevent groundwater and surface water pollution by directing the responsible party to site design and install new systems; manage existing systems; and to promptly correct failed systems.

Action CF-10.2a

Implement sewer extensions into those neighborhoods as identified as failure risks by the Sewer Facilities Plan.

Action CF-10.2b

Establish wastewater management districts per recommendation of the Town's On-site Wastewater Management Plan to manage on-site sewage disposal to protect water quality and the health safety and welfare of all citizens.

GOAL CF-11

ASSURE SMITHFIELD HAS SUFFICIENT WATER SUPPLY WITH PRESSURE ADEQUATE TO MEET FIRE FLOW REQUIREMENTS TO MEET THE RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND INDUSTRIAL NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

Objective CF-11.1 To coordinate system planning, development, improvements and extensions with users and suppliers through the Municipal Planning Office.

Action CF-11.1a

Consider unifying the Greenville Water District, the East Smithfield Water District, and the Smithfield Water.

Action CF-11.1b

While considering supplier capacity, future availability, and safe yields, work with the three water systems to prepare service area extension

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guidelines, incorporating the philosophy of providing service to areas relying on individual wells that are insufficient for user needs and to industrial areas needed for the expansion of the community tax base.

Action CF-11.1c

Consider a water system interconnection between Smithfield and North Providence in the Twin Rivers section and/or a connection to the Town of Lincoln water system via Route 116.

Objective CF-11.2 Develop a coordinated town-wide Drought and Water Emergency Plan.

Action CF-11.2a

Coordinate drought management plans between the 3 water districts and town EMA to include private well residences. Develop a comprehensive drought management plan for the entire town.

GOAL CF-12

TO MANAGE STORMWATER RUNOFF TO PREVENT FLOODING, PROTECT LIVES AND PROPERTY AND TO MINIMIZE ADVERSE WATER QUALITY IMPACTS.

Objective CF-12.1 All new development, new and improved State and local roads and highways, and redevelopment shall incorporate in design and construction Best Management Practices for stormwater runoff.

Action CF-12.1a

Consider retrofitting Best Management Practices in existing neighborhoods where older drainage systems discharge directly to receiving water without benefit of water quality impact mitigation.

Action CF-12.1b

Continue to utilize the pavement management system as a means of updating and maintaining the town-wide database on drainage systems, and utilize the system to prioritize system improvements for the annual budget and capital facilities programs.

Action CF-12.1c

Require Low Impact Design techniques for stormwater treatments on all developments where site conditions allow.

Action CF-12.1d

Continue to implement the Town's Phase II Stormwater Management Plan as required by RI DEM.

GOAL CF-13:

TO PROVIDE LAND DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS FOR LOW/MODERATE INCOME SUBSIDIZED HOUSING SUBMITTED AS COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT APPLICATIONS, IN A MANNER AND AT DENSITIES THAT WILL NOT ADVERSELY IMPACT MUNICIPAL SERVICES, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE.

Action CF-13.1a

Adopt planning and zoning policies that discourage low/moderate income subsidized housing from being submitted as comprehensive permit applications at densities that place burdens on the Town's ability to provide public services, facilities and infrastructure.

Action CF-13.1b

Locate low/moderate income subsidized housing in areas of the Town that are provided with public water, sewers, transportation and other municipal services, facilities and infrastructure essential to serve the needs of future residents.



NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

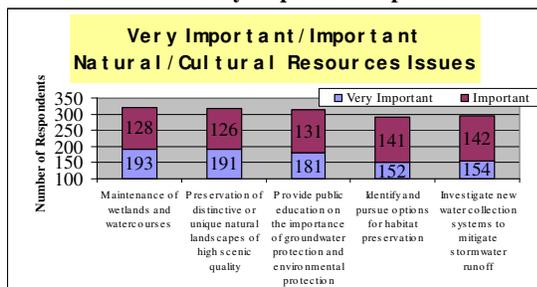
CURRENT CONDITIONS & ISSUES

Smithfield is about 26.7 square miles in total area. About 43% of that area is covered by forest (see current Land Use Map Figure LU-2). Another 11% is mapped as wetland and about 20% is residential. These figures are very close to the figures provided in the 1988 Wetland Inventory study completed by The Environmental Scientific Corporation which stated that 48.8% was forested, 11.4 % was wetland and about 14 % residential.

The increase in residential area occurred mostly at the expense of forested lands and some agricultural sites. This is the opposite of the trend seen in the previous 10 years when the majority of residential developments took place by the conversion of agricultural properties.

Smithfield citizens care deeply about the Town’s natural and cultural resources. This is evident in the results of a 2003 Community Survey conducted by the Planning Department. Each of the five questions concerning natural and cultural resources were responded to with 82% or higher rating these issues “Very Important/Important”. The highest rating of importance went to “Maintenance of Wetlands and Watercourses” (89%).

**Figure NR-1
Numbers of Respondents Ranking Natural/Cultural Resources Very Important/Important**



The Goals, Objectives and Actions of this Comprehensive Plan, further reflect the importance that the citizens of Smithfield put on the Natural and Cultural Resources.

Natural Resources

The value the citizens of Smithfield place on natural resources is also evident in the Town government’s actions. In 2004, the Town voters approved a \$5 million dollar bond to protect farm, forest and open space. The Town adopted a buffer policy in its zoning ordinances that places a 100 foot buffer on all wetlands. No primary structures are allowed within this buffer. As of this writing in early 2006, the Town is in the final stages of the process of adopting a Conservation Development Ordinance. The Town is also developing a Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance that will provide additional environmental protections.

As stated previously in this plan, a healthy environment is one of the key elements in providing a high quality of life. Smithfield citizens and government officials have engaged in several key projects and initiatives in recent years to ensure that its resources are protected.

Restoration and Identification Projects

1988: Wetland Inventory Study, Smithfield, RI; The Environmental Scientific Corporation

This project was an in-depth resource inventory for the Town of Smithfield to gather baseline data concerning the location, quantity and quality of the Town’s natural resources.

2001: Woonasquatucket River Riparian Buffer Restoration Project; RIDEM, Kleinschmidt Associates

This project identified potential restoration opportunities along rivers and streams in the watershed. 11 sites were identified in Smithfield.

2002: Wetland Restoration Plan for the Woonasquatucket River Watershed, RI; RIDEM, Golet et. al.

This project identified potential wetland restoration sites throughout the watershed. 31 sites were identified in Smithfield.

2004: Woonasquatucket Greenspace Protection Strategy; RIDEM, Dodson Associates

This project mapped the Town’s natural and cultural resources and laid out a plan to preserve and protect those areas. This plan includes the digitization into the

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GIS of all of the 212 sites identified in the 1992 “Historic and Architectural Resources of Smithfield, RI. Preliminary Survey Report”, by Rhode Island Historical Preservation.

The products of these projects provide a wealth of information and recommendations towards the Town achieving its preservation, protection and restoration goals.

Protected Lands

The 2001 Comprehensive Plan noted that there were approximately 354.8 acres of Town-owned conservation land, in addition to approximately 400 acres of State and 434 acres of privately-held conservation land. In 2004, the Smithfield Land Trust prepared an inventory of open space in the Town, which found a total of approximately 1,538 acres. Based on a current population estimate of 21,000, this represents an existing standard of approximately .073 acres of open space land per person. This figure represents approximately 9 percent of the Town’s total land area of 16,910 acres (excluding wetlands). See the Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Table RC-1 which lists conservation properties in Smithfield.

The 2005 Needs Assessment²¹ suggested using the recommended standard / goal to conserve a minimum of 15% of the Town’s total land area for open space and conservation purposes, the Town would need to protect an additional 999 acres of land. This updated plan therefore sets the target date for achieving the goal of 1000 more acres protected by December 31, 2015. That would mean that approximately 100 acres/year of land would need to be permanently protected. The adoption of Conservation Development combined with the recent open space bond should put the Town well on its way to achieving this goal.

Seven Scenic Walks In Smithfield

Several of the Town’s Conservation areas offer public access for the purpose of low impact recreation (walking, jogging, fishing). These include:

1. **Mowry Conservation Area** – a 44 acre retreat featuring a lively trout stream, towering hemlocks and pines, a scenic footbridge, picnic tables, a walking trail and the remains of a stone dam.
2. **Cascade Brook Conservation Area** – a 27 acre property featuring a seasonal brook and small

waterfall, immense boulders and rock outcroppings, a walking trail, tall trees and a fireplace chimney from another era.

3. **Esmond Park** – a 4 acre park featuring an arching bridge, small waterfall, picnic tables, benches, river, cattail marsh, walking path and World War I monuments.
4. **Stillwater Scenic Trail** – a former railroad bed featuring excellent river and pond views, forest views, rocky slopes and open fields, fishing spots, water birds and songbirds, two dams, and the remains of the old Stillwater Mill.
5. **Connors Farm Conservation Area** – a 66 acres featuring a walking trail, pond, brook, dams, an old stone bridge, beech groves and rugged glacial ledges.
6. **Georgiaville Town Beach, Dam & Gorge** – a 92 acre pond surrounded by beach area, boat ramp, fishing, walking trail along a high earthen dam that ends at a spillway and a scenic gorge.
7. **Mercer Lookout** – a 24 acre property featuring quiet woodland trails, second growth forest, blueberry bushes and a panoramic view of the Providence skyline.

Historic Preservation

The Town Code establishes a Historic District Commission to be formed for the purpose of developing a mapped inventory of historic sites and proposed districts in the Town. The commission was not populated until 1993 and even then accomplished little and soon disbanded. The mapping of the Town’s historic sites (including all known historic cemeteries) was completed in 2003-2004 as part of the Woonasquatucket Greenspace Protection Strategy. This project combined that information with a public participation process to delineate “Cultural Priority Areas” (see Figure NR-2).

As stated in the previous Plan, preservation activities in Smithfield have primarily been directed by individuals, the State Historic Preservation Commission and the Smithfield Historical Society. There is no municipal body or regulation charged with overseeing the historical heritage of the community.

The Historical Society was established in the 1930’s and has a membership of 120+/. Its primary activities revolve around the upkeep of the Smith-Appleby Homestead, as well as educational programs developed around the homestead.

The effectiveness of preservation activities may be gauged by the inclusiveness of the resource inventory, and the extent to which historic districts, buildings and

²¹ Needs Assessment and Growth Study, 2005
Kleinschmidt Associates and Anthony W. Lachowisz.

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sites are protected from deterioration, demolition and unsympathetic renovation. These measures indicate that Smithfield's preservation activities to date have been less than fully effective. The 2004 inventory provides a solid base for these activities. However, those resources identified within the inventory are currently afforded no real protection from decay, demolition and indifferent renovation, and will continue to be lost as long as this protection is not available.

Perhaps the main weakness of preservation planning in Smithfield is the absence of a local board or ordinance designed specifically to preserve important historical resources in the Town. Properties, even those on the National Register, can be demolished or significantly altered. Past attempts to create such a commission have been largely unsuccessful. If the community's goal is to preserve those structures and areas which were important contributors to its heritage, then the Town should establish stronger preservation mechanisms through zoning and explore ways to protect historic properties, historic structures, historic landscapes, as well as potential archaeological sites, and cemeteries and graveyards which may be impacted by such development.

NEW INITIATIVES

GIS

As stated elsewhere in this plan, the Town has invested a great deal in the development of its GIS. This data includes all parcels, buildings and structures, roads (incl. edge of pavement), storm drains, manholes, stone walls, 2' topography and historic cemeteries. The availability of this level of data ensures that Town decision makers will have accurate and dependable information with which to base key land use decisions. Moving forward, the Town will seek to add to and improve upon the available data. Some of the proposed additions include:

- An updated Land Use/Land Cover data set based upon 2004 aerial photography.
- Digital Conversion of the 1988 Wetlands Inventory data into the Town GIS.
- Update of the 1988 database to show changes in landscape.
- Buildable Lands data set (development constraints)
- Headwater Streams mapping and verification
- Archaeological Sites
- Provide GIS online for the Town board members and public use.

These new or updated datasets will provide the information necessary to guide development and accomplish future planning efforts.

Stone Walls

The Smithfield Conservation Commission has proposed (January 2006) a Stone Wall Preservation and Protection Ordinance to protect the historic stone walls of Smithfield. For the purpose of the ordinance the definition of "Historic Stone Wall" is derived from R.I.G.L. §44-3-43.

Conservation Development

As stated in the Land Use Element, the Town, as of the Town Council's approval of this Plan update, has adopted Conservation Development as part of its Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Land Development and Subdivision regulations. Conservation Development will greatly improve Town's ability to guide development away from critical natural and cultural resources while increasing the stock of conservation properties.

Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance

The Town proposes the development of a Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance. This ordinance would require all developments to preserve a certain percentage of forest/woodland on each lot. The percentage would be based upon the property's zoning designation. This ordinance will be developed in cooperation with the RI Department of Environmental Management and be modeled after the successful Forest Conservation Act of the State of Maryland.

GOALS & POLICIES

Vision

Our vision for the Town of Smithfield is that the same high quality of life that Smithfield residents enjoy today is preserved for future generations; by protecting the natural environment, preserving historic and archaeological sites, maintaining and improving recreation facilities and open space resources, preserving land to be kept in its natural state and by ensuring that future development is sensitive to the Town's natural and cultural resources.

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GOAL NR-1

PROTECT, PRESERVE AND RESTORE NATURAL RESOURCES.

Objective NR - 1.1 Developers shall be required to provide additional information on the potential environmental impacts of large scale residential and nonresidential projects for both on and off-site resources. Developers shall be required to provide land development controls for low/moderate income subsidized housing submitted as comprehensive permit applications, in a manner and at densities that do not adversely affect natural or cultural resources of the area.

Objective NR-1.2 Work with federal, state and local watershed and environmental organizations to maintain and improve the quality of all water bodies in Town.

Action NR-1.2a

Promote a community service activity to clean up river banks.

Objective NR-1.3 Implement the actions identified in the Town Phase II Stormwater Management Plan.

Objective NR-1.4 Work with the City of Woonsocket and Town of Lincoln to protect the water quality of Woonsocket Reservoir.

Objective NR-1.5 Protect and Restore wetlands and riparian buffers as critical elements of groundwater recharge, wildlife habitat, flood storage and for their recreational value.

Objective NR-1.6 Maintain and improve the quality of groundwater in Smithfield.

Objective NR-1.7 Protect Flood Zones from intensive development for the safety and protection of residents and the environment.

Objective NR-1.8 Work with RIDEM and EPA to ensure clean-up of existing contaminated sites.

Action NR-1.8a

Identify options for reclamation and cleanup of Superfund sites in the Town. Coordinate with RIDEM and USEPA.

GOAL NR-2:

EDUCATE THE CITIZENS OF SMITHFIELD ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES.

Objective NR-2.1 Create educational opportunities for Town citizens on natural and cultural issues affecting the Town.

Action NR-2.1a

Provide support through the Historical Society for public education on historic and cultural resources, including, but not limited to, activities such as workshops, forums, historic house tours etc., and information packets.

Action NR-2.1b

Expand educational efforts and resources committed to teaching about local history in the Town's schools, such as establishing a special curricula and teacher training.

GOAL NR-3:

NEW LAND DEVELOPMENTS ARE DESIGNED TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT, AESTHETICS AND CHARACTER OF THEIR SURROUNDINGS.

Objective NR-3.1 Promoting land development which is sympathetic to the existing landforms.

Action NR-3.1a

Amend the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations site plan guidelines to require that all new construction be sited to work with the existing landforms with consideration given to the aesthetic impact of structures from the surrounding area.

Action NR-3.1b

In the development review process, work closely with the developer to properly site the structures, parking areas and landscaping to minimize the visual impacts, and to maximize the coordination of the development with the adjacent landscape.

Action NR-3.1c

Adopt planning and zoning policies that discourage low and moderate income subsidized housing to be submitted as comprehensive permit applications at densities that are incompatible with the natural capacity of the surrounding environment.

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Action NR-3.1d

Adopt a Stone Wall Preservation and Protection Ordinance.

Objective NR-3.2 Amend local ordinances and regulations to ensure that development designs are sensitive to environmental, aesthetic and surrounding character (cultural/historical), i.e., by adopting conservation development.

GOAL NR-4

AIR QUALITY IN SMITHFIELD IS ABOVE NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS.

Objective NR-4.1 Maintain and improve the existing high level of air quality within the Town's boundaries.

Objective NR-4.2 Maintain an awareness of potential air quality problems in adjacent communities which could impact Smithfield's air quality.

GOAL NR-5

PRESERVE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Objective NR-5.1 Preserve large contiguous tracts of open space for wildlife habitat. Acquisitions, Easements and Conservation Development Techniques shall be used.

Action NR-5.1a

The Conservation Commission should continue to identify and pursue options for habitat preservation, preferably larger parcels, and those adjacent to other publicly-owned land.

Objective NR-5.2 Ensure that unique natural areas are afforded some form of protection from future development.

Objective NR-5.3 Protect and manage State and Federally listed rare species habitat areas and ecologically significant natural communities.

Action NR-5.3a

The Municipal Planner shall coordinate with the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program on a regular basis to determine sensitive habitat locations.

Action NR-5.3b

The Conservation Commission should develop a series of protection and management recommendations for each identified habitat location

in coordination with the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.

Action NR-5.3c

The Planning Board shall include the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program staff in consultation on development proposals which may potentially impact an identified site.

Objective NR-5.4 Preserve existing active farmland, particularly the orchards, and forestland, as important contributors to the maintenance of the overall quality of life in Smithfield.

Action NR-5.4a

Encourage continued farm participation in the Farm, Forest and Open Space Act use value assessment program. (Property assessment is based on current undeveloped value of the land rather than the highest and best use).

Action NR-5.4b

The Town should educate property owners eligible for the Farm, Forest and Open Space Act use value assessment program about the programs availability, and the existence of others as appropriate.

Action NR-5.4c

Continue to pursue other options for farmland and forestland preservation as appropriate, including, but not limited to: conservation developments on farmland; farmland preservation fund (land trust); purchase of farmland in fee simple (purchase and leaseback to farmer, purchase and resale with covenants); purchase of development rights or conservation easements (Town purchases development rights to a parcel, difference between agricultural value and appraised commercial value); donation of farmland.

Objective NR-5.5 Protect unique/unusual scenic views and vistas as critical elements of the Town's visual character.

Action NR-5.5a

Consider the purchase or other acquisition of land as appropriate to preserve unique/unusual scenic views and vistas.

Action NR-5.5b

Consider revising zoning and subdivision regulations to include scenic criteria and design guidelines.

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GOAL NR-6

THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF SMITHFIELD'S HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES, STRUCTURES, DOCUMENTS AND ARTIFACTS.

Objective NR-6.1 To identify and preserve Smithfield's historic sites, structures, documents and artifacts as representations of the Town's cultural heritage.

Action NR-6.1a

Identify known archaeological sites on a Town base map in a generalized manner, i.e., twenty-acre radius around one or more sites so as not to pinpoint a particular site. Maintain this map as a resource in the Planning Department to let property owners know locations which may have archaeological sensitivity.

Objective NR-6.2 Establish the necessary land use regulations to provide protection for the Town's historic sites, structures and artifacts.

Action NR-6.2a

Review historic site and district protection regulations of other communities, designate those areas of the community which should be targeted for such preservation efforts and implement historic protection zoning and regulations.

Objective NR-6.3 Expand the Town's knowledge and documentation of historical and archaeological sites and structures.

Objective NR-6.4 Ensure the appropriate maintenance of historic cemeteries in the Town.

Action NR-6.4a

Establish an historic cemetery maintenance program.

Objective NR-6.5 Promote inter-office and inter-agency coordination and cooperation in historical preservation activities.

Action NR-6.5a

Through the Smithfield Historical Society, gain Certified Local Government (CLG) status to permit the Town to secure preservation grants and loans to carry out preservation activities needed to protect historical resources.

Action NR-6.5b

Advise and coordinate with the Smithfield Historical Society on potential archaeological sites.

Action NR-6.5c

Work with the Smithfield Historical Society to review and document those sites considered potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Action NR-6.5d

Form a coalition of local preservation interests to promote a public/private partnership in preservation.

GOAL NR-7

TOWN HAS STRONG REGULATIONS IN PLACE TO PRESERVE NATURAL RESOURCES THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC.

Objective NR-7.1 Utilize the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to protect environmentally sensitive land and conserve community forest resources within developments and to provide recreational land where needed.

Action NR-7.1a

Develop Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance

Action NR-7.1b

Acquire/protect lands which protect wetlands' biological and hydrological integrity, provide opportunities for public access and usage, and enhance the proper management of wetland systems.

Action NR-7.1c

Make judicious use of the special provisions of the Town's Land Development Regulations enabling the Town to reserve suitable open space for recreation and conservation opportunities in larger subdivisions.

Action NR-7.1d

Refine provisions within the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations to encourage conservation development and to protect woodlands and other natural resources.

Objective NR-7.2 Use the Town's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to improve the overall visual quality of the community.

Action NR-7.2a

Effectively use the Zoning Ordinance to preserve and enhance historical and cultural places by incorporating scenic and conservation controls.

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Objective NR-7.3 To provide land development controls for low / moderate income subsidized housing submitted as comprehensive permit applications, in a manner and at densities that do not place burdens on recreation resources, destroy natural and scenic landscapes, or contribute to significant loss of open space.

Action NR-7.3a

Determine the accessibility to handicapped persons of municipal parks, beaches, and other recreational facilities. Take appropriate action to ensure that such facilities are handicapped accessible.



RECREATION, CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

CURRENT CONDITIONS & ISSUES

Conservation Lands

The Town's Conservation Commission and Land Trust are both active in acquiring easements and/or title to conservation/open space lands. As the section on Build Out in the Land Use Element of this Plan suggests, significant growth pressure exists in Smithfield and has for some time. For the Town to reach the stated goal of a minimum of 15% of its total area as conservation lands, it must work diligently with state, federal and non-profit groups to ensure we are leveraging our resources to ensure success.

The citizens of Smithfield took a major step in this direction with the approval of the two recent open space bond referenda. These two bonds will provide \$5 million towards the permanent protection of Farm, Forest and Open Space properties throughout the Town. Moving forward, the Conservation Commission and the Land Trust will work with the Planning Department to refine the plans for prioritization of acquisitions and develop grant proposals to leverage the Town bond fund with state, federal, and foundation dollars. This, when combined with the adoption of Conservation Development and the future development and adoption of the Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance, will create the platform necessary for the Town to achieve its conservation goals.

Table RC-1

In 2004, the Smithfield Land Trust prepared	Area (acres)	Type of Property	Ownership
Mowry Conservation Area	46	Active Conservation	Town
Cascade Brook	27.28	Active Conservation	Town
Esmond Park	4.85	Active Conservation	Town
Stillwater Scenic Trail	12.96	Active Conservation	Lease by Town
Connors Farm Conservation Area	56.8	Active Conservation	Town
Mercer Lookout	24	Active Conservation	Town
Georgiaville Dam & Gorge	10	Active Conservation	Town
Leo Bouchard Conservation Center	2	Active Conservation	Town
Georgiaville Pond Islands	2.2	Unimproved Conservation	Town
Wenscott Con Area	5.68	Unimproved Conservation	Town
Hanson Property	17.4	Unimproved Conservation	Town
the Summerfield Donation	28.55	Unimproved Conservation	Town
unnamed	4.5	Unimproved Conservation	Town
unnamed	4.2	Unimproved Conservation	Town
unnamed	21.26	Unimproved Conservation	Town
unnamed	1.76	Unimproved Conservation	Town
Sprague Village	41.2	Donations in Process	Town
Greenville Terrace	24	Donations in Process	Town
Harris Pond	7	Donations in Process	Town
Wolf Hill Forest Preserve	244.52	Smithfield Land Trust	Smithfield Land Trust
Shipman Purchase	40	Smithfield Land Trust	Smithfield Land Trust
Powder Mill Ledges	87	Audubon Property	Audubon Property
<i>unnamed</i>	13	Audubon Property	Audubon Property
<i>unnamed</i>	6.2	Audubon Property	Audubon Property
<i>unnamed</i>	55	Audubon Property	Audubon Property
<i>unnamed</i>	121	Audubon Property	Audubon Property
<i>unnamed</i>	76	Audubon Property	Audubon Property
Connors Farm Assoc.	10	Other Private Open Space	Homeowners
Deerhill Homeowners Assoc.	24.4	Other Private Open Space	Homeowners
Greenville Terrace	5	Other Private Open Space	Homeowners
Woonsocket Reservoir	107.76	Other Private Open Space	
Mowry Fly Fishing Area	3.01	State Conservation Property	State of RI

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan Recreation, Conservation and Open Space

Stillwater Park/Geo Washington	100	State Conservation Property	State of RI
Stillwater – Fishermen’s Access	11.5	State Conservation Property	State of RI
Stillwater Reservoir Dam	16	State Conservation Property	State of RI
Stillwater Reservoir	270	State Conservation Property	State of RI
<i>unnamed</i>	5.95	State Conservation Property	State of RI
TOTAL	1537.98		

Source: Data compiled by Smithfield Land Trust, June 2004.

Recreational Facilities

From the 2004 Needs Assessment: The Town of Smithfield provides a wide range of recreational activities and facilities for its citizens. As its population has grown, the Town has expanded facilities to meet increasing demand. In September 2001 the Town Council adopted an ordinance providing for Development Impact Fees²². These fees are allocated toward “Recreation and Conservation Facilities,” and have been used since their adoption as shown in Table RC-2.

The 2001 Impact Fee ordinance was based upon the methodology contained in a consultant report completed in that same year.²³ The discussion with regard to the purposes and limitations of impact fees, and the general enabling act authorizing the use of these fees, is still valid. The methodology used for calculating the impact fee for recreation facilities was based on a 1992 general obligation bond that was used for the purpose of acquiring land at Deerfield Park. This bond is scheduled to be retired in 2007. Since the adoption of the ordinance, the Town issued an \$8.6 million bond in 2002, a portion of which was targeted for improvements to Deerfield Park. The Town intends to combine \$120,000 in impact fees collected to date with the \$300,000 from the 2002 bond and a \$300,000 from the General Fund to complete the Phase II improvements.

The fee calculation uses a value of \$50,000 per acre for land acquisition. This value was at the high end of the range of land prices but, it is reasonable in light of the need to acquire park land free of environmental constraints, located in areas that are easily accessible and in closer proximity to population centers. This fee should be updated to reflect differences in the number of occupants per housing unit. Data from the 2000 Census indicates a lower occupancy for rental-occupied units (e.g. multi-family apartments) as opposed to owner-occupied units such as, single family homes and condominiums.

²² Smithfield Code of Ordinances, Chapter 16, Article XI.

²³ The Louis Berger Group, Inc., Town of Smithfield, Phase II Impact Fee Study, Final Report, June 2001.

The Town should note that the formula used to calculate the parks and recreation impact fee is based on data that reflects construction of active recreation facilities. It is recommended that the Town use these fees only for acquisition and development of parks and recreation facilities. A separate impact fee for the purchase of open space and conservation land is recommended.

A list of recreational facilities (including conservation areas with recreational elements) follows:

Table RC-2

Summary of Impact Fee Account, April 2004		
Revenue		
Received to Date	176 Units	\$451,792
Outstanding	6 Units	15,402
<i>Total to Date</i>		<i>467,194</i>
Allocated to Date		
Whipple Field Reconstruction (FY04)		25,000
Whipple Field Irrigation (FY 04)		53,763
Senior Center (FY04)		50,000
Waterman Tavern Renov. Fund (FY04)		25,000
Total Allocated to Date:		153,763
<i>Balance Remaining</i>		<i>313,431</i>
FY 2005 Proposed Use		
Reconstruction of Whipple Field		50,000
Add'l Town Field Reconstruction		100,000
Projected Balance		\$163,431

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

The Town has continually supported the maintenance and expansion of recreational opportunities. The latest Capital Improvement Program Plan for FY 2007-2012 includes \$410,000 for the Recreation Department in 2007 and a 6 year total of \$1,300,000.

NEW INITIATIVES

Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan Recreation, Conservation and Open Space

The Town's Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan was created in 1988 as part of the Comprehensive Planning process. To date, this document has not been updated. One of the major initiatives of this element of the Comprehensive Plan Update is to ensure that an updated Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan will be completed over the next two years.

Land Use Regulatory Changes

As stated in the Land Use section of this plan, several new initiatives are proposed that would greatly increase the amount of conservation lands in Town. These include the adoption of Conservation Development and the Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Vision

Improve the quality of life for Smithfield residents by protecting the environment, preserving the historic and archaeological sites, maintaining, expanding, and improving recreation facilities and open space resources, preserving land to be kept in its natural state and by managing growth in the community as related to the Town's natural resources.

GOAL RC -1

OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND CONSERVATION NEEDS ARE WELL MET AND MANAGED.

Objective RC – 1.1 All Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Planning Documents and Inventories are up to date and reflect the current and future needs of the community.

Action RC-1.1a

Coordinate the Town's Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan with the state Land Use Policies and Plan, Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley, Greenspace and Greenways Plan, Urban and Community Forest Plan, and other applicable State Guide Plan Elements to ensure consistency, avoid duplication of services, efforts and costs and take full advantage of those programs designed to aid the community.

Action RC-1.1b

Update the Town's Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan of 1988 to reflect ecological, sociological, demographic and economic changes, technological progress and current development trends.

Objective RC-1.2 Preserve and enhance the natural and scenic landscapes in areas conducive to residential, commercial and industrial activities.

Objective RC-1.3 Establish a proper balance between outdoor and indoor recreational facilities for all residents of all age groups.

Action RC-1.3a

Locate low / moderate income subsidized housing in areas of the Town that are served by public recreational facilities.

Action RC-1.3b

Require developers to provide sufficient open space and passive recreation facilities on the site of the proposed housing development that are suitable for the needs of all residents.

Objective RC-1.4 Continuously assess the Town's recreation inventory of both active and passive recreation opportunities to effectively plan for future development, identify issues of recreation capacity, and manage existing recreation facilities for future demand.

Action RC-1.4a

Annually review Smithfield growth management tools and assess the elements of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and community facilities capacity, including expected costs of expansion and improvements, for the community to effectively plan and manage for its future.

Action RC-1.4b

Expand the Recreation Department's Capital Improvement Program to include short and long term recommendations for recreational facilities, land protection and recreational programming.

Objective RC 1.5 Ensure proper maintenance of Town recreation and open space facilities.

Action RC-1.5a

Pursue an appropriately staffed Department of Parks and Recreation which could oversee the maintenance of all public recreation areas, active

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan Recreation, Conservation and Open Space

and passive, and further the goals and implementation of this Plan.

Action RC-1.5b

Develop a maintenance manual scheduling and defining ongoing maintenance activities for all facilities year-round.

Action 1.5c

Design facilities which are conducive to maintenance scheduling and develop operational procedures such as single-purpose fields where off-season minimal use would give the fields a chance to regenerate.

GOAL RC-2

FULL COOPERATION BETWEEN ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES INVOLVED IN PROVIDING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE PROTECTION.

Objective RC 2.1 Coordinate the development of the school system with the Town's recreation plan so as to encourage maximum opportunity for indoor and outdoor recreation activity and the provision of sufficient land to meet additional recreational needs.

Objective RC-2.2 Support the Recreation Department, the Conservation Commission, Land Trust, the School Department and the Planning Board and encourage them in their conservation programs and public information/education efforts.

Action RC-2.2a

Seek further assistance of the Smithfield Police Department and the Smithfield Public Schools in mounting a campaign aimed at prevention of vandalism and littering and educating the youth of the Town to the value of public facilities.

Objective RC-2.3 Encourage the continued volunteer activities which have traditionally been the backbone of Smithfield recreation activities while providing strong support in the form of full time administrative and maintenance personnel.

Action RC-2.3a

Continue to encourage the generous spirit of volunteerism, which is the foundation of many of the successful youth programs in the Town today. Volunteers should be recognized for their contribution to the quality of life in Smithfield.

Objective RC 2.4 Cooperate with neighboring communities and State agencies in the identification and joint investigation of recreation and open space

opportunities and, where appropriate, provide for the utilization of the resources as joint ventures.

Action RC-2.4a

Continue the development of sewer easements and the old rail grade from Esmond to North Smithfield as hiking facilities, and evaluate the potential for expanding the network of hiking trails where feasible.

Objective RC-2.5 Include public input into the decisions to locate and design new facilities.

Action RC-2.5a

Involve local citizens who would be most affected by development of recreational facilities in their neighborhood in the planning and design of parks and public facilities.

GOAL RC-3

MAINTAIN A FULL RANGE OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL RESIDENTS.

Objective RC 3.1 Encourage the use of the various legal land protection tools available to communities; including full development rights acquisition, partial development rights acquisition, regulatory protection, assessment and tax policies.

Action RC-3.1a

Investigate the use of easements where full rights to the land are not necessary to protect, appreciate or make use of the desired recreation or conservation opportunity, e.g., scenic easements or access easements for hiking or fishing, conservation easements to protect wetlands, and easements along sewer and water lines.

Action RC-3.1b

Land acquisition should follow, as much as possible, the pattern established in this Plan and should anticipate future needs rather than react to unmet needs as deficiencies develop.

Objective RC-3.2 Coordinate legal land protection tools, along with outright land acquisition, to supplement outdoor recreation and other desirable open space patterns.

Objective RC-3.3 Stimulate desirable gifts of land and money from private individuals and groups for outdoor recreation purposes.

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan Recreation, Conservation and Open Space

Objective RC 3.4 Encourage private, non-profit organizations in their work of supplying and enhancing recreation opportunities and conservation and preservation of open space resources.

Objective RC-3.5 Encourage private investments, through the various Federal, State and local legislative devices and services, to develop and provide quality recreational facilities and services to the public.

Objective RC-3.6 Encourage public use of private lands by working out such arrangements as leases for fishing, scenic easements, and providing protection for landowners who allow the public to use their lands.

GOAL RC-4

PROTECT SENSITIVE AND UNIQUE AREAS OF THE TOWN FROM THE IMPACT OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

Objective RC-4.1 Protect and conserve a minimum of .073 acres of open space land per capita towards the Town goal of a minimum 15% of the Town's total land area for open space and conservation purposes.

Objective RC-4.2 Utilize the Town-wide standard of 10 acres of active recreation facilities per 1,000 population to plan for future recreation facility acquisition and or development.

Objective RC-4.4 Establish a progressive policy toward open space as a positive element in improving the Town's economic vitality.

Action RC-4.4a

Establish/expand growth management tools, such as Impact Fees, as a positive and logical program of open space acquisition, and development of land and water areas for parks, ballfields, beaches, picnicking, fishing and other recreational pursuits of passive and active natures.

Objective RC-4.5 Incorporate the protection of forests, riparian corridors, and wooded parks into the Town-wide greenways network, and maintain contiguous forested tracks of land and tree resources as part of the Town's open space and conservation efforts.

Objective RC-4.6 Preserve open space as "greenbelts" to protect residential areas from undesirable uses and practices and identify contiguous forested parcels and tree resources for inclusion into the Town-wide Greenways Plan.

Objective RC-4.7 Encourage, where possible, bicycle/pedestrian linkages and/or "greenbelts" between existing open spaces and recreation areas, particularly along rivers, streams, abandoned railroad beds, etc.

Action RC-4.5c

Coordinate the continued maintenance of the Woonasquatucket Watershed Greenspace Protection & Implementation Strategy with neighboring communities as well as with DEM, EPA, and other State and Federal agencies.

GOAL RC-5

STRENGTHEN REGULATIONS TO PRESERVE NATURAL RESOURCES THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC.

Objective RC-5.1 Utilize the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to protect environmentally sensitive land and conserve community forest resources within developments and to provide recreational land where needed.

Action RC-5.1a

Develop Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance

Action RC-5.1b

Acquire/protect lands which protect wetlands' biological and hydrological integrity, provide opportunities for public access and usage, and enhance the proper management of wetland systems.

Action RC-5.1c

Make judicious use of the special provisions of the Town's Land Development Regulations enabling the Town to reserve suitable open space for recreation and conservation opportunities in larger subdivisions.

Action RC-5.1d

Refine provisions within the Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations to encourage conservation development and to protect woodlands and other natural resources.

Objective RC-5.2 Use the Town's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to improve the overall visual quality of the community.

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan ***Recreation, Conservation and Open Space***

Action RC-5.2a

Effectively use the Zoning Ordinance to preserve and enhance historical and cultural places by incorporating scenic and conservation controls.

Objective RC-5.3 To provide land development controls for low / moderate income subsidized housing submitted as comprehensive permit applications, in a manner and at densities that do not place burdens on recreation resources, destroy natural and scenic landscapes, or contribute to significant loss of open space.

Action RC-5.3a

Determine the accessibility to handicapped persons of municipal parks, beaches, and other recreational facilities. Take appropriate action to ensure that such facilities are handicapped accessible.

CIRCULATION

Smithfield enjoys excellent regional transportation access with the Route 44, I-295, Route 7 and Route 116 interchanges, RIPTA stops at key locations, and the North Central State Airport all within the Town's boundaries. Route 146 is only a few minutes to the northwest and Route 6 and I-95 can be reached within a short 5-10 minute drive. The Town also has a reasonably well maintained arterial road system.



With close proximity to Providence, Worcester and Boston, the excellent regional access is one of the main reasons why Smithfield has become such a popular place to live, work, shop and play. This popularity brings with it new challenges. Traffic congestion has become a very real issue in Town. The areas around the Intersections of Routes 5 and 44, Route 44 and I-295, and Routes 7 and 116, increasingly experience congestion problems. Development pressures have put a strain on the undersized older town roads that were not built to accommodate the increased traffic flows introduced by large new subdivisions. The road networks of the older industrial and business parks are also not to standard and are in poor shape as a result of the heavy loads put on them. Increasing development pressures for residential, commercial and light industrial projects require that circulation planning be given increased priority. Several efforts are underway to address the circulation issues in Town.

US Route 44 (Greenville): RIDOT is in the design stage of reworking traffic flow through Greenville via Routes 44 and 116. The increase in commercial traffic, due in part to recent major commercial developments in the area, have caused both congestion and safety concerns.

US Route 44/Route 5: RIDOT is working with the Town officials to develop plans to control traffic flow from the commercial establishments at the northern part of the intersection of Route 5 (Cedar Swamp Road) and

US Route 44 (Putnam Pike). Island barriers are being proposed to provide for right turn only access and egress to the establishments in this area. Increasing numbers of traffic accidents in this area has necessitated this change.

A Connector Road between Apple Valley Mall and The Crossings: Efforts are underway by the Town to negotiate for the development of a connector road between the two largest commercial developments along US Route 44. The purpose of the connector road is to provide for traffic flow between the two developments bypassing Route 44. This would likely result in reduced traffic congestion on Route 44 and create a much needed additional point of access to the Crossings.

Each of these potential solutions will likely provide relief to traffic congestion but could also encourage greater development in the area. It is important that the Town anticipate such growth and plan for other ways to improve traffic flow through these areas.

NEW INITIATIVES

Access Management

The Town is proposing to develop an Access Management Program that will be based upon proposed Land Use and Road Functional Classification. A comprehensive Access Management Program has the potential to dramatically increase the safety of Town streets and highways by increasing roadway capacity, reducing congestion, air pollution, and average travel times while preserving or restoring functionality of the existing transportation system in a manner that is sensitive to potential community and environmental impacts.

Public Works Future Needs

Findings from the Needs Assessment and Growth Study conducted in 2004 – 2005 stated that in order for the Town to effectively manage its road system, it must address the capital costs required to revitalize the aging transportation system to service its current and future populations. The Town of Smithfield has approximately 105 miles of locally-owned and maintained roads. The majority of these roadways were built decades ago when the Town's population was much less and the traffic volumes were lower. Maintenance responsibility for these roads rests with the Smithfield Department of Public Works (DPW).

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan Circulation

Throughout the country, many highway impact fee assessments are levied to account for the construction of new roads or the major upgrading of existing roads. In many states, local expenditures on road maintenance and reconstruction to mitigate the impacts of new development and increased traffic volumes have also been successfully implemented. In Smithfield, and throughout Rhode Island, there are very few new local roads being built other than in new subdivisions or other private developments. It is common that the costs of constructing these roads are borne by the developer. However, road maintenance and reconstruction are major issues and these costs may be recouped by a jurisdiction if a link between new growth and the need for road improvements is established.

Traffic volumes have steadily increased on roadways in Smithfield over the past several decades, according to State traffic data. The Town does not keep records of traffic volumes on its public roads. The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) provides specific traffic volume data for six (6) State highways and 11 local roads. The State's information indicates a steady growth in traffic over the past 10-15 years on five State and local roads in Smithfield. On the Town's busiest highway, Interstate Route 295, traffic increases occurred on all nine (9) monitored segments, averaging between 11 to 12 percent annually. This increasing volume parallels the Town's annual population and housing growth, providing a link to overall growth and the need for growth-related spending on infrastructure improvements.

In 1997, the Town commissioned a study of local road conditions.²⁴ This pavement management survey was performed using Road Surface Management System (RSMS) software, recognized as being applicable to small to mid-sized communities such as Smithfield. The data gathered during this survey included a description, road length, road width, maintenance division, traffic rating and the prioritization of each potential road project. This information was used to assess the extent and severity of distress for individual roadway surfaces. Approximately 20% of the roads analyzed were considered to be in need of reconstruction or replacement. These projects require total pavement reconstruction using a variety of methods.

In order to address the costs associated with these roadway improvements, the Town has appropriated \$200,000 per year for the six-year capital improvement period from FY 2005 to FY 2010. Road improvement impact fees are warranted as residential development

continues to impact the capacity of Smithfield's roadways. The methodology used to calculate this fee is detailed in the Needs Assessment Study and is based upon several variables. The formula used in the study was based upon a nationally-recognized model road impact fee formula set forth in *Development Impact Fees*, Arthur C. Nelson, (1988).

In order to levy an impact fee for roadway improvements, a level of service standard must be set.²⁵ The Needs Assessment Study recommended that the Town adopt the standard of "Level of Service." Level of Service (LOS) is a qualitative measure of traffic flow efficiency based on anticipated vehicle delays. For example, LOS "A" represents the best conditions with little or no delay, while LOS "F" indicates that roadway/intersection is at full capacity, resulting in extensive vehicle delays. The formula used in calculating a road improvement impact fee assumed a level of service "D". Although many of the Town's roadways operate at levels of service much higher than "D", communities typically plan for roadway capacities of LOS D. Planning for a higher standard would require capital outlays for road improvements several times that which Smithfield has identified in its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), and may result in overcharging new development for improvements that will never take place.



For the purposes of calculating this fee, it was assumed that all dwelling unit types will generate the same number of trips per day. According to

the Institute of Transportation Engineers²⁶, the actual number of trips will vary by housing type, but the resulting change in the calculation of fee amount is insignificant.

²⁴ Crossman Engineering, Pavement Management Analysis, June 1997.

²⁵ R.I.G.L., Title 45-22.4-4

²⁶ Institute of Transportation Engineers, Trip Generation, 7th ed., 2003.

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan

Circulation

VISION, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The vision for future transportation in Smithfield is a system that meets the transportation needs of the residents and businesses of the Town while minimizing congestion and impacts to the environment, while improving upon safety and offering alternative methods for inter-town travel.

GOAL C - 1

A NETWORK OF NEW AND EXISTING LOCAL AND STATE ROADS AND HIGHWAYS, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, PARA TRANSIT, BIKEWAYS AND PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS, THAT WILL MINIMIZE CONGESTION, IMPROVE SAFETY AND OFFER VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL MODES.

Objective C-1.1 Promote public participation in the planning, design, operation and maintenance of the State transportation and local circulation systems.

Action C-1.1a

Study the need for and feasibility of improving east-west roadway circulation in the Town.

Objective C-1.2 Develop the transportation system in response to the desired and planned patterns of future land use.

Action C-1.2a

Continue the extension and interconnection of existing roads in new street development associated with subdivisions of land.

Action C-1.2b

Maintain close coordination with the Rhode Island Airport Corporation to receive early communication concerning airport operations and capital facilities planning.

Action C-1.2c

Work with the Rhode Island Department of Transportation and the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority to maintain and develop a network of park-n-ride parking lots that will facilitate carpools, Express Bus service and other forms of intermodal transfer.

Action C-1.2d

Encourage low/moderate income subsidized housing to be located in areas of the Town that are served by public transportation. Design these developments to provide principal access on major streets and highways and discourage traffic from adjacent neighborhoods and residential streets.

Objective C-1.3 Maintain and integrate the local circulation system of roads, walkways, bikeways, bus transit, and para transit with the statewide and regional systems.

Action C-1.3a

Continue to use the pavement management program for the inventory and analysis of local road conditions to assist in the budgeting of annual repairs and programming of the five year Capital Improvement Plan.

Action C-1.3b

Continue to provide park-n-ride facilities in the Apple Valley - Greenville region and establish facilities elsewhere in Town to promote energy conservation and to reduce overall traffic congestion on the principal arterials.

Action C-1.3c

Develop a Sidewalk Installation and Improvement Plan, utilizing the data collected from the pavement management program identifying areas of the Town, neighborhoods and specific roads and highways where sidewalks should be repaired and where they should be installed.

Action C-1.3d

Based upon recommendations from the Sidewalk Installation and Improvement Plan, require sidewalk installation in site development.

Action C-1.3e

Work with the State Department of Transportation to include sidewalks in State highway improvement projects, especially along heavily traveled roadways in the vicinity of schools, residential sections, commercial areas and industrial centers.

Action C-1.3f

At major intersections and along roadways where heavy traffic volumes impede pedestrian movement to commercial and other activities, consider various techniques to help facilitate pedestrian access/crossings.

Action C-1.3g

Preserve the existing rail right-of-way and expand the local and regional recreational opportunities. Evaluate the feasibility of developing a bike path along the old rail grade from Esmond to North Smithfield.

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan Circulation

Action C-1.3h

Work with adjacent municipalities and the Rhode Island Department of Transportation to evaluate the feasibility of developing a regional bikeway system in Central and Northwestern Rhode Island to connect Smithfield to the Blackstone Valley Bikeway.

Action C-1.3i

Prepare a town-wide bicycle path plan linking recreational and commercial activity centers, institutional facilities, and residential areas.

Action C-1.3j

Implement a Road Improvement Impact Fee as suggested in the Needs Assessment Study of 2004-2005.

Objective C-1.4 Continue to foster elements of the transportation system that provide practical effective and efficient alternatives to the automobile, recognizing that these alternatives have a niche in the overall transportation system but should not be considered as competitors with the automobile.

Action C-1.4a

Maintain and where possible expand the level of fixed route bus transportation to and in the Town of Smithfield by conducting periodic ridership surveys demand analysis and route evaluation.

Action C-1.4b

Evaluate the feasibility of instituting a public transit shuttle loop from Esmond to Greenville to Douglas Pike to Whipple Road and back to Esmond.

Objective C-1.5 Consider environmental and aesthetic impacts when planning, designing, and maintaining transportation system elements.

Action C-1.5a

Continue to implement the application and enforcement of the Municipal Landscape Ordinance as it applies to streets and roadways.

Action C-1.5b

Work with the Rhode Island Department of Transportation and the State Division of Planning to update and implement the Transportation Improvement Program, maintaining the village streetscapes and rural landscapes of the Town of Smithfield.

Action C-1.5c

Continue to require in new subdivisions locating utilities underground when constructing new or improved roadways to promote the health, safety and welfare of Smithfield's citizens.

Action C-1.5d

Improve roadway lighting to increase safety, reduce glare and minimize environmental and aesthetic impacts on surrounding areas by using "full cut-off" fixtures when replacing or erecting new lighting.

GOAL C-2

DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Objective C-2.1 Maintain and enhance the road system in the Town of Smithfield with an Access Management Plan based on land use and or the road functional class.

Action C-2.1a

Develop an Access Management Plan that includes the corridors of US Route 44, I-295, RI Routes 5, 7, 104 and 116 in cooperation with RI DOT and Statewide Planning.

Action C-2.1b

Amend the Town's Zoning Ordinance and Land Development and Subdivision Review Regulations to reflect and carry out the Access Management Plan.

**Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan
Implementation Program**

		Responsibility	Timing	Cost
<u>LAND USE</u>				
LU-1.1a	Relate the location of residential developments and neighborhoods to employment and commercial centers, community facilities and services, and transit corridors.	Planning Board	Ongoing	NA
LU-1.2a	Direct the location of affordable housing developments to those areas, and according to the guidelines provided, in the 2005 Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan.	Planning Dept.	Ongoing	NA
LU-1.2b	Amend the list of potential sites by removing all sites located outside of the 4 areas identified in the LMI Plan.	Planning Board	Immediate	NA
LU-1.2c	Promote innovative planning of residential and commercial development. Allow conservation developments in residential zones where appropriate to address new land development, and reduce the minimum lot area requirements by zoning district.	Planning Board/Planning Department	Ongoing	NA
LU-1.2d	Conserve and enhance desirable existing industrial areas, shopping areas and concentrations of service activities to maximize the investment and utilization of existing infrastructure.	Planning Board	Ongoing	NA
LU-1.3a	Adopt a Growth Rate Control Ordinance.	Planning Board	1 year	NA
LU-1.3b	Expand Impact Fees to include infrastructure cost for sewer, water and road maintenance.	Town Council	1 year	TBD
LU-1.3c	Ensure that wetlands and other unbuildable land are excluded from the calculation of buildable lots in a subdivision.	Planning Board/Town Council	Immediate	NA
LU-1.3d	Relate industrial and commercial development to overall land use by promoting use of development controls and performance standards that mitigate conflicts with other land uses and activities.	Planning Board	Ongoing	NA
LU-2.2a	Consider the location of planned industrial and commercial districts when planning new or expanded public sewer and water services and highway improvements.	Planning Board	Ongoing	TBD
LU-2.2b	Identify and maintain a database of sites suitable for commercial and industrial development which are served by, or planned to be served by, public sewer and water, have adequate access to major arterial roadways, and will not intrude upon less intensive land uses.	Planning Board	Ongoing	TBD
LU-2.2c	Identify vacant or underused buildings suitable for commercial and industrial development which, have adequate access to major arterial roadways, and will not intrude upon less intensive land uses.	Planning Board	Ongoing	TBD

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan
Implementation Program

LU-3.1a	Utilize farmland preservation methods such as purchase of development rights, and permitting limited, properly buffered clustered residential development at the edges of large agricultural properties.	Planning Board	Long Term	TBD
LU-4.1a	In future applications for open space grant funds, consider for acquisition or other forms of protection, those areas having unique visual qualities as identified in the Natural and Cultural Resources Element.	Recreation Department	Ongoing	TBD
LU-5.1a	Create open space systems and corridors that protect complete ecologic units and provide structure and character to the built environment.	Planning Board	Ongoing	TBD
LU-5.1b	Adopt Conservation Development planning techniques as a means of preserving open space and significant natural and cultural features of new subdivision and land development projects.	Planning Board/Town Council	Immediate	NA
LU-5.1c	Develop Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance that would require the preservation of woodland for all development.	Planning Dept./Planning Board/Town Council	2 years	NA
LU-5.2a	Develop site plan guidelines to require that structures be designed to blend with the natural surroundings of site, and harmonize with the natural features of the area.	Planning Board	Intermediate	TBD
LU-5.3a	Retain open spaces large enough to serve as wildlife habitat, store flood waters, abate air and water pollution, provide a sense of openness, and serve as buffers and aesthetic amenities to existing development.	Planning Board	Ongoing	TBD
LU-5.4a	Prevent the preemption of commercial and industrial sites and buildings within commercial and industrial zones by conversion to uses with less demanding locational requirements, such as residential uses.	Planning Board	Ongoing	TBD

HOUSING

H-1.1a	Increase housing options affordable to households whose incomes are less than 50 percent, whose incomes are between 50 and 100 percent of the local median income through public investment, subsidy and/or joint public/private efforts.	Planning Board	Ongoing	NA
H-1.1b	Provide incentives to developers willing to construct affordable 2 or 3 bedroom, rental units and units in which Section 8 certificates may be used.	Planning Board	Intermediate	TBD
H-1.2a	Support the continued operations of the Town's subsidized elderly housing developments.	Town Council	Ongoing	NA
H-1.4a	Support the Housing Authority's efforts to expand the number of Section 8 certificates through technical or other assistance.	Town Council	Ongoing	TBD
H-1.5a	Within the extent allowed by the law or by the guidelines or specific funding programs, the Town should prioritize the creation of low and moderate income housing for local residents	Planning Board/Zoning Board/Town Council	Ongoing	NA

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H-1.6a	Maintain a list and map of properties and/or locations for new low and moderate income housing that would meet acceptable criteria. Amend the Land Use Map and add descriptive policy statements in the Land Use element of the Plan.	Planning Board/Planning Dept.	Ongoing	
H-1.7a	Support the creation of 45 new housing units on land currently owned by the Smithfield Housing Authority.	Planning Board/Town Council	Immediate	NA
H-2.1a	Work with the Housing Authority to ensure that existing units are maintained and modernized as necessary.	Town Council	Ongoing	TBD
H-2.1b	Ensure that the Residential Landlord and Tenant Act is followed and that the Minimum Housing Official reviews housing complaints by tenants or landlords in accordance with the 1990 - 1991 Landlord - Tenant Handbook.	Minimum Housing Officer	Ongoing	TBD
H-2.1c	Ensure that the Town enforces the Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code which sets standards for safe and sanitary housing as well as for occupancy.	Minimum Housing Officer	Ongoing	TBD
H-2.3a	Encourage continuation of programs such as loans to developers for the creation of multifamily rental units (new and rehab) depending on composition and tenancy. The loans may come from available Rhode Island Housing & Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHMFC) programs and other similar sources.	Town Council	Ongoing	NA
H-4.1a	Town Council will approve amendments to its zoning and land use regulations to create a new process for the approval of higher density, low and moderate income housing developments in locations with appropriate site conditions.	Planning Dept./Planning Board/Town Council	Adopted October 2010	NA
H-4.1b	The Town will require residential development with the inclusion of a minimum of 25% LMI units of the mill sites listed in Table 20. It will work with the developer to change the zoning of these sites to multi-family zoning with densities allowing a minimum of 1,000 sq.ft. for 1 bedroom apartments and 1,300 sq.ft. for 2 bedroom apartments.	Planning Board/Town Council	6 months	NA
H-4.1c	Revise Zoning Ordinance to allow greater densities for infill housing.			
H-4.1d	Allow and encourage the development or redevelopment of compatible small-scale affordable housing structures within existing neighborhoods.	Planning Board	Ongoing	TBD
H-4.1e	Explore the possibility of rezoning additional Village Districts at appropriate nodes in the Town.	Planning Board	Long Term	TBD
H-4.3a	Town adopts a new inclusionary zoning ordinance.	Planning Dept./Planning Board/Town Council	Adopted May 2009	NA

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H-4.4a	The Building and Zoning Department should create a database of housing units that have experienced code violations, sought rehabilitation loans or have changed from single to multi-family.	Planning Board/Town Council	6 months	NA
H-4.4b	Allocate operating budget funds to housing code inspection and enforcement.	Building/Zoning	2 years	NA
H-4.4c	Explore ways to utilize the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program for qualified properties.	Town Council	Ongoing	TBD
<u>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</u>				
ED-1.1a	Consider promoting tourism and recreation-related activities as an integral part of the economic development program, in conjunction with the efforts of the Economic Development Commission and the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council.	Economic Development Commission	Long Term	TBD
ED-1.2a	Develop and regularly update an inventory of available industrial land.	Town Planner	Ongoing	TBD
ED-1.2b	Assist owners of industrial land in promoting appropriate sites for development in the business industrial parks and throughout the Town.	Economic Development Commission	Ongoing	TBD
ED-1.2c	Work with the RI Economic Development Corporation on developing 'Pad-Ready' sites within the Planned Corporate and Industrial zones.	EDC/Planning Dept.	Ongoing	TBD
ED-2.1a	Develop a clear Economic Development Marketing Strategy that looks at attracting diverse industries at the local, state, regional and global scale.	EDC/Planning Dept.	1 year	TBD
ED-2.3a	Create a local enterprise facilitation group to encourage and nurture entrepreneurial growth.	Planning Dept.	1 year	TBD
ED-4.1a	Continue to utilize Bryant University resources, perhaps including staff members on the Economic Development Commission to further help focus the Town on appropriate development avenues.	Economic Development Commission	Long Term	TBD
ED-4.2a	Evaluate the use of incentives to attract and encourage economic development, including, but not limited to, tax incentives, sewer extensions, job training, loans, grants, and permitting assistance.	Economic Development Commission	Long Term	TBD
ED-4.2b	Work with the state and development community to provide for the building space and expansion needs of existing companies.	Planning Dept./ED C	Ongoing	TBD
ED-5.1a	Continue to guide industrial and office development toward the Route 116 industrial areas in the northeast quadrant of the Town, and ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is available. Continue to support the buildout PCD and evaluate the cost/benefit of expanding this zoning designation.	Planning Board	Ongoing	TBD
ED-5.1b	Work with RIPTA and major employers to offer reasonable alternatives to commuters.	Planning Dept./Town Council	Ongoing	TBD
ED-6.1a	Study the potential product/supply linkages to recruit businesses that will support existing businesses in the region.	Economic Development	Long Term	TBD

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		Commission		
ED-6.1b	Evaluate current zoning of economic development districts to identify gaps in goods and services as they relate to exporting based industries and a comprehensive approach to economic development.	Town Council	Ongoing	TBD
ED-9.1a	Work with the owners of industrial land to ensure that infrastructure needs are met.	Economic Development Commission	Ongoing	TBD
ED-9.2a	Study the RIDOT plans for expanding Route 44 through Greenville carefully - work with RIDOT to ensure that the village character will not be adversely affected.	Town Manager	Priority	TBD
ED-9.2b	Maintain and improve Greenville's village character through streetscape/landscaping/signage improvements.	Town Council	Ongoing	TBD
ED-9.3a	Develop incentives for businesses that incorporate Green Development Techniques and/or utilize alternative energy.	Planning Dept./Planning Board/Town Council	2 Years	
ED-9.4a	Develop a detailed water use/availability plan for the Route 7/116 corridor. Include quantity and delivery issues and estimate costs and timeline necessary to achieve needed capacity at buildout.	Dept. Public Works/Planning Dept.	1 Year	\$40,000
ED-10.1a	Work with neighboring communities to develop a regional economic development plan that takes advantage of each community's unique assets and capabilities.	Planning Dept./EDC	2 Years	TBD

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

NR-1.2a	Promote a community service activity to clean up the Woonasquatucket River Banks.	Conservation Commission	Intermediate/ Ongoing	TBD
NR-1.8a	Identify options for reclamation and cleanup on Superfund sites in the Town. Coordinate with RI DEM and US EPA.	Conservation Commission	Priority	NA
NR-2.1a	Provide support through the Historical Society for public education on historic and cultural resources, including, but not limited to, activities such as workshops, forums, information packets, and historic house tours.	Town Planner	Long Term	TBD
NR-2.1b	Expand educational efforts and resources committed to teaching about local history in the Town's schools, such as establishing a special curricula and teacher training.	School Department	Ongoing	TBD
NR-3.1a	Amend the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations site plan guidelines to require that all new construction be sympathetic to existing landforms and the aesthetic impact to the area.	Planning Dept./Planning Board	Ongoing	

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NR-3.1b	In the development review process, work closely with the developer to properly site the structures, parking areas and landscaping to minimize the visual impacts, and to maximize the coordination of the development with the adjacent landscape.	Planning Board	Ongoing	TBD
NR-3.1c	Adopt planning and zoning policies that discourage low / moderate income subsidized housing to be submitted as comprehensive permit applications at densities that are incompatible with the natural capacity of the surrounding environment.	Town Council		
NR-3.1d	Adopt a Stone Wall Preservation and Protection Ordinance.	Conservation Commission	Priority	
NR-5.1a	The Conservation Commission should continue to identify and pursue options for habitat preservation, preferably larger parcels, and those adjacent to other publicly-owned land.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	TBD
NR-5.3a	The Municipal Planner should coordinate with the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program on a regular basis to determine sensitive habitat locations.	Town Planner	Ongoing	TBD
NR-5.3b	The Conservation Commission should develop a series of protection and management recommendations for each identified habitat location (rare/endangered species) in coordination with the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	TBD
NR-5.3c	The Planning Board should include the Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program staff in consultation on development proposals which may potentially impact an identified site.	Town Planner	Ongoing	TBD
NR-5.4a	Encourage continued farm participation in the Farm, Forest and Open Space Act use value assessment program.	Town Manager	Ongoing	TBD
NR-5.4b	The Town should educate property owners eligible for the Farm, Forest and Open Space Act use value assessment program about the programs availability, and the existence of others as appropriate.	Town Manager	Ongoing	TBD
NR-5.4c	Continue to pursue other options for farmland and forestland preservation as appropriate, including, but not limited to: Conservation Developments on farmland; farmland preservation fund (land trust); purchase of farmland in fee simple (purchase and leaseback to farmer, purchase and resale with covenants); purchase of development rights or conservation easements (Town purchases development rights to a parcel, difference between agricultural value and appraised commercial value); donation of farmland.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	TBD
NR-5.5a	Consider the purchase or other acquisition of land as appropriate to preserve unique/unusual scenic views and vistas.	Conservation Commission	Long Term	TBD
NR-5.5b	Consider revising zoning and subdivision regulations to include scenic criteria and design guidelines.	Planning Board	Long Term	TBD

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NR-6.1a	Identify known archaeological sites on a Town base map in a generalized manner, i.e., twenty-acre radius around one or more sites so as not to pinpoint a particular site. Maintain this map as a resource in the Planning Department to let property owners know locations which may have archaeological sensitivity.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	TBD
NR-6.2a	Review historic site and district protection regulations of other communities, designate those areas of the community which should be targeted for such preservation efforts and implement historic protection and zoning regulations.	Historic District Commission	Long Term	TBD
NR-6.4a	Establish an historic cemetery maintenance program.	Town Council	Long Term	TBD
NR-6.5a	Through the Smithfield Historical Society gain Certified Local Government (CLG) status to permit the Town to carry out preservation activities needed to protect historical resources.	Historic District Commission	Long Term	TBD
NR-6.5b	Advise and coordinate with the Smithfield Historical Society on potential archaeological sites.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	TBD
NR-6.5c	Work with the Smithfield Historical Society to review and document those sites considered potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.	Historic District Commission	Ongoing	TBD
NR-6.5d	Form a coalition of local preservation interests, with the HDC as the core, to promote a public/private partnership in preservation.	Historic District Commission	Long Term	TBD

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

CF-1.1a	Maintain the structural integrity of police headquarters through regular maintenance and upkeep.	Police Department	Ongoing	TBD
CF-1.1b	Prepare a needs assessment and spatial analysis of the need for additional office space as the department grows and as more specialties are added.	Town Manager	Ongoing	TBD
CF-1.2a	Continue program of replacing police vehicles at approximately 100,000 - 125,000 miles, and recycling vehicles for other municipal purposes as appropriate.	Town Manager	Ongoing	TBD
CF-1.2b	Continue to regularly upgrade communications equipment.	Town Manager	Ongoing	TBD
CF-1.2c	Continue police department participation in detailed, long term capital improvements programming for vehicles, equipment and physical plant.	Town Manager	Long Term	TBD
CF-1.3a	Continue departmental participation in school and community educational programs.	Town Manager	Ongoing	TBD
CF-2.1a	Restructure existing fire stations with regard to use, manpower requirements, apparatus types and code compliance, considering the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Fire Stations Nos. 1 and 2 as sub-stations with major apparatus support from another source. Relocate the headquarters function to another site. • Continue to address structural problems in Stations Nos. 1 and 2 that may have been caused by increased floor loading, provide adequate ventilation 	Town Council	Long Term	TBD

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	and fire separation as outlined by National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) 1500 and address any code requirements that have been enacted by the State which are not in compliance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station No. 3 should be demolished, and a new facility of adequate size be built on the same site. 			
CF-2.1b	Construct a fourth fire station in the northeast quadrant of the Town which would also house the headquarters function. The suggested location for a new facility would be on a major arterial, removed from major intersections, for ease of accessibility.	Town Council	Long Term	TBD
CF-2.2a	Maintain a level of fire department staffing which is commensurate with the Town’s population, land use and density patterns.	Town Council	Ongoing	TBD
CF-2.5a	Continue fire department participation in detailed, long term capital improvements programming for fire fighting and emergency service apparatus.	Town Council	Long Term	TBD
CF-2.5b	Consider establishing a centralized municipal vehicle maintenance facility.	Town Manager	Long Term	TBD
CF-3.1a	Continue regular preventive maintenance programs at both library facilities.	Library Boards of Trustees	Ongoing	TBD
CF-3.2b	Consider options to increase library service efficiency, including, but not limited to, consolidating the two libraries into one town-wide library system, merging the two library’s Boards of Trustees, and having one director oversee operations at both facilities.	Library Boards of Trustees	Long Term	TBD
CF-4.1a	Continue encouraging the School Department/Committee to complete its detailed study of facilities needs at the elementary school level and evaluate junior high school needs for the next 5 to 10 years.	Town Manager	Ongoing	TBD
CF-4.1b	In addition to providing for specific classroom space needs as required by enrollment increases, study the options to expand space for art, music, physical education and special areas at all elementary schools.	School Department	Ongoing	TBD
CF-4.1c	Continue participation in the State’s Basic Education Program (BEP), as well as by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).	School Department	Ongoing	TBD
CF-4.2a	Cooperate with State and other districts exploring alternatives to financing education.	School Department	Ongoing	TBD
CF-4.3a	The School Department and School Committee should continue to define the capital needs of the school system on a short and long term basis and develop a Capital Improvement Program based upon the conditions of existing school facilities and projected enrollment trends.	School Department	Ongoing	TBD
CF-4.3b	Schedule regular meetings between the Superintendent’s office and the Planning Department to exchange data regarding population projections, school bus routes, computer data bases, planned and potential residential development and other pertinent information.	School Department	Priority	TBD

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CF-5.2a	Within an overall study of municipal personnel activities and needs, identify senior services which are currently provided, and unmet needs.	Town Manager	Long Term	TBD
CF-5.2b	Working with the various human services providers of Smithfield, develop a list of services, who provides the services and other pertinent information and make available as a pamphlet distributed at Town Hall, and/or through water bills etc.	Town Manager	Long Term	TBD
CF-7.1a	Conduct a study of departmental and individual duties and responsibilities. Such study should evaluate job descriptions, responsibilities, pay scales and other employee-related information.	Town Manager	Long Term	TBD
CF-8.1a	Establish a centralized purchasing system for all Town departments.	Town Manager	Long Term	TBD
CF-8.1b	Study the feasibility of establishing a centralized municipal equipment and vehicle maintenance system	Town Manager	Long Term	TBD
CF-8.1c	Consider revising the Town's method of budget preparation from the Town Financial Meeting to an alternative format.	Town Manager	Long Term	TBD
CF-8.2a	Working with the Planning Board, Town Council, Economic Development Commission and others, make necessary zoning amendments, and provide technical and other assistance where necessary to encourage expansion of the industrial tax base.	Town Manager	Ongoing	TBD
CF-8.2b	Study the feasibility of options such as regionalization of services such as schools, fire, police, public works.	Town Manager	Long Term	TBD
CF-9.1a	Continue the municipal practice of weekly curbside residential solid waste and recyclables collection while requiring commercial and industrial establishments to contract privately with waste disposal companies.	Town Manager	Ongoing	
CF-9.1b	Reduce the volume and weight of the solid waste stream that must be disposed at the Central Landfill by designing and implementing a recycling public education campaign consisting of outreach to grade schools, direct mail to residents and collaboration with local businesses.	Dept. of Public Works	Ongoing	TBD
CF-10.1a	In order to support the buildout of the Planned Corporate Development zoned land, the Town should create a sewer extension policy whereby one developer is not asked to fund the bulk of an extension that will benefit many other developers.	Planning Dept./Engineering /Sewer Authority	1-2 Years	
CF-10.2a	Implement sewer extensions into those neighborhoods as identified as failure risks by the Sewer Facilities Plan.	Planning Dept./Engineering /Sewer Authority	Ongoing	
CF-11.1a	Consider unifying the Greenville Water District, the East Smithfield Water District, and the Smithfield Water Department.	Town Manager	Long Term	TBD
CF-11.1b	While considering supplier capacity, future availability, and safe yields, work with the three water systems to prepare service area extension guidelines, incorporating the philosophy of providing service to areas relying on individual wells that are insufficient for user needs and to industrial areas needed for the expansion of the community tax base.	Town Planner	Priority	TBD

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CF-11.1c	Consider a water system interconnection between Smithfield and North Providence in the Twin Rivers section and/or a connection to the Town of Lincoln water system via Route 116.	Smithfield Water Department	Intermediate	TBD
CF-12.1a	Consider retrofitting Best Management Practices in existing neighborhoods where older drainage systems discharge directly to receiving water without benefit of water quality impact mitigation.	Town Planner	Ongoing	TBD
CF-12.1b	Continue to utilize the pavement management system as a means of updating and maintaining the town-wide database on drainage systems, and utilize the system to prioritize system improvements for the annual budget and capital facilities programs.	Town Planner	Ongoing	TBD
CF-12.1c	Require low impact design techniques for stormwater treatments on all developments where site conditions allow.	Planning Board/Engineering	Ongoing	
CF-12.1d	Continue to implement the town's Phase II Stormwater as required by RI DEM.	Engineering	Ongoing	TBD
CF-13.1a	Adopt planning and zoning policies that discourage low/moderate income subsidized housing from being submitted as comprehensive permit applications at densities that place burdens on the Town's ability to provide public services, facilities and infrastructure.	Planning Board/ZBR/Town Council	1-2 Years	TBD
CF-13.1b	Locate low / moderate income subsidized housing in areas of the Town that are provided with public water, sewers, transportation and other municipal services, facilities and infrastructure essential to serve the needs of future residents.	Planning Board/Town Council	Ongoing	TBD
<u>RECREATION, CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE</u>				
RC-1.1a	Coordinate the Town's Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan with the state Land Use Policies and Plan, Cultural Heritage and Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley, Greenspace and Greenways Plan, Urban and Community Forest Plan, and other applicable State Guide Plan Elements to ensure consistency, avoid duplication of services, efforts and costs and take full advantage of those programs designed to aid the community.			
RC-1.1b	Update the Town's Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan of 1988 to reflect ecological, sociological, demographic and economic changes, technological progress and current development trends.			
RC-1.3a	Locate low / moderate income subsidized housing in areas of the Town that are served by public recreational facilities.	Planning Board/Town Council	Ongoing	TBD
RC-1.3b	Require developers of low / moderate income subsidized housing to provide sufficient open space and passive recreation facilities on the site of the proposed housing development that are suitable for the needs of the future residents.	Planning Board/Town Council	Ongoing	TBD

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RC-1.4b	Expand the Recreation Department's Capital Improvement Program to include short and long term recommendations for recreational facilities, land protection and recreational programming.	Recreation Department	Ongoing	TBD
RC-1.5a	Pursue an appropriately staffed Department of Parks and Recreation which could oversee the maintenance of all public recreation areas, active and passive, and further the goals and implementation of this Plan.	Town Council	Ongoing	TBD
RC-1.5b	Develop a maintenance manual scheduling and defining ongoing maintenance activities for all facilities year-round.	Recreation Department	Priority	TBD
RC-1.5c	Design facilities which are sensitive to maintenance scheduling and operational procedures such as single-purpose fields where off-season minimal use would give the fields a change to regenerate.	Recreation Department	Ongoing	TBD
RC-2.2a	Should seek further assistance of the Smithfield Police Department, and the Smithfield Public Schools in mounting a campaign aimed at prevention of vandalism and littering and educating the youth of the Town to the value of public facilities. The continued participation of the Town in the OSCAR program is crucial to this effort.	Police Department	Ongoing	TBD
RC-2.3a	Continue to encourage the generous spirit of volunteerism which is the foundation of many of the successful youth programs in the Town today. Volunteers should be recognized for their contribution to the quality of life in Smithfield.	Town Council	Ongoing	NA
RC-2.4a	Continue the development of sewer easements and the old rail grade from Esmond to North Smithfield as hiking facilities, and evaluate the potential for expanding the network of hiking trails where feasible.	Town Planner	Ongoing	TBD
RC-2.5a	Involve local citizens who would be most affected by development of recreational facilities in their neighborhood in the planning and design of parks and public facilities.	Recreation Department	Ongoing	None
RC-3.1a	Investigate the use of easements where full rights to the land are not necessary to protect, appreciate or make use of the desired recreation or conservation opportunity, e.g., scenic easements or access easements for hiking or fishing, conservation easements to protect wetlands.	Planning Board	Ongoing	NA
RC-3.1b	Land acquisition should follow, as much as possible, the pattern established in this Plan and should anticipate future needs rather than react to unmet needs as deficiencies develop.	Recreation Department	Ongoing	TBD
RC-4.4a	Establish/expand growth management tools, such as Impact Fees, as a positive and logical program of open space acquisition, and development of land and water areas for parks, ballfields, beaches, picnicking, fishing and other recreational pursuits of passive and active natures.	Planning and Recreation Departments	Ongoing	

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RC-4.5c	Coordinate the development continued maintenance of the Woonasquatucket Watershed Greenspace Protection & Implementation Strategy with neighboring communities as well as with DEM, EPA, and other State and Federal agencies.	Conservation Commission		
RC-5.1a	Develop Forest/Woodland Conservation Ordinance	Planning Dept./Planning Board/Town Council	1-2 Years	TBD
RC-5.1b	Acquire/protect lands which protect wetlands' biological and hydrological integrity, provide opportunities for public access and usage, and enhance the proper management of wetland systems.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	TBD
RC-5.1c	Make judicious use of the special provisions of the Town's Subdivision Regulations enabling the Town to reserve suitable open space for recreation and conservation opportunities in larger subdivisions.	Planning Board	Ongoing	NA
RC-5.1d	Refine provisions within the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to encourage Cluster Development where appropriate.	Planning Board	Intermediate	NA
RC-5.2a	Effectively use the Zoning Ordinance to preserve and enhance historical and cultural places by incorporating scenic, conservation and aesthetic controls.	Planning Board	Ongoing	NA
RC-5.3a	Determine the accessibility to handicapped persons of municipal parks, beaches, and other recreational facilities. Take appropriate actions to ensure that such facilities are handicapped accessible.	Recreation Department	Ongoing	TBD
<u>CIRCULATION</u>				
C-1.1a	Study the need for and feasibility of improving east-west roadway circulation in the Town.	Town Engineer	Intermediate	TBD
C-1.2a	Continue the extension and interconnection of existing roads in new street development associated with subdivisions of land.	Town Engineer	Ongoing	NA
C-1.2b	Maintain close coordination with the RI Airport Corporation to receive early communication concerning airport operations and capital facilities planning.	Town Planner	Ongoing	TBD
C-1.2c	Work with the Department of Transportation and the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority to maintain and develop a network of park-n-ride parking lots that will facilitate carpools, Express Bus service and other forms of intermodal transfer.	Town Engineer	Ongoing	NA
C-1.2d	Encourage low / moderate income subsidized housing to be located in areas of the Town that are served by public transportation. Design these developments to provide principal access on major streets and highways and discourage traffic from adjacent neighborhoods and residential streets.	Planning Board/Town Council	Ongoing	--
C-1.3a	Continue to institute a pavement management program for the inventory and analysis of local road conditions and to assist in the budgeting of annual	Town Engineer	Priority	\$25,000

Smithfield Comprehensive Community Plan
Implementation Program

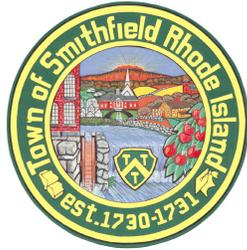
	repairs and programming of the five year Capital Improvement Plan.			
C-1.3b	Continue to provide park-n-ride facilities in the Apple Valley-Greenville region and establish facilities elsewhere in Town to promote energy conservation and to reduce overall traffic congestion on the principal arterials.	Town Planner	Intermediate to Long Term	TBD
C-1.3c	Develop a Sidewalk Installation and Improvement plan, utilizing the data collected from the pavement management program identifying areas of the Town, neighborhoods and specific roads and highways where sidewalks should be repaired and where they should be installed.	Town Engineer	Priority	TBD
C-1.3d	Based upon recommendations from the Sidewalk Installation and Improvement Plan, require sidewalk installation in site development.	Town Engineer	Ongoing	NA
C-1.3e	Work with the State Department of Transportation to include sidewalks in State highway improvement projects, especially along heavily traveled roadways in the vicinity of schools, colleges, residential sections, commercial areas and industrial centers.	Town Engineer	Ongoing	TBD
C-1.3f	At major intersections and along roadways where heavy traffic volumes impede pedestrian movement to commercial and other activities, consider the use of self activated crossing signals, pedestrian overpasses or tunnels, and require the striping and signing of the roadway to help facilitate pedestrian access.	Town Engineer	Priority	TBD
C-1.3g	Preserve the existing rail right-of-way and to expand the local and regional recreational opportunities, evaluate the feasibility of developing a bike path along the old rail grade from Esmond to North Smithfield.	Town Planner	Intermediate	TBD
C-1.3h	Work with adjacent municipalities and the State Department of Transportation to evaluate the feasibility of developing a regional bikeway system in Central and Northwestern Rhode Island to connect Smithfield to the Blackstone Valley Bikeway.	Town Planner	Intermediate/ Long Term	TBD
C-1.3i	Prepare a town-wide bicycle path plan linking recreational and commercial activity centers, institutional facilities, and residential areas.	Planning Board	Intermediate	TBD
C-1.3j	Implement a Road Improvement Impact Fee as suggested in the Needs Assessment Study of 2004-2005.	Town Council	1 Year	TBD
-1.4a	Maintain and where possible expand the level of fixed route bus C transportation to and in the Town of Smithfield by conducting periodic ridership surveys demand analysis and route evaluation.			
C-1.4b	Evaluate the feasibility of instituting a public transit shuttle loop from Esmond to Greenville to Douglas Pike to Whipple Road and back to Esmond.	Town Planner	Intermediate	TBD

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C-1.5a	Continue to implement the application and enforcement of the municipal landscape ordinance as it applies to streets and roadways.	Town Engineer	Ongoing	NA
C-1.5b	Work with the Department of Transportation and the State Division of Planning to update and implement the Transportation Improvement Program, maintaining the village streetscapes and rural landscapes of the Town of Smithfield.	Planning Dept./Engineering	Ongoing	TBD
C-1.5c	Continue to require in new subdivisions locating or relocating utilities underground when constructing new or improved roadways to promote the health, safety and welfare of Smithfield's citizens.	Planning Board/Engineering	Ongoing	TBD
C-1.5d	Improve roadway lighting to increase safety, reduce glare and minimize environmental and aesthetic impacts on surrounding areas by using "full cut-off" fixtures when replacing or erecting new lighting.	Engineering/Planning Board	Ongoing	TBD
C-2.1a	Develop an Access Management Plan that includes the corridors of US Route 44, I-295, RI Routes 5, 7, 104 and 116 in cooperation with RI DOT and Statewide Planning.	Planning Board	Intermediate	TBD
C-2.1b	Amend the Town's Zoning Ordinance and Land Development and Subdivision Review Regulations to reflect and carry out the Access Management Plan.	Town Planner	Intermediate	NA

APPENDIX A

LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING PLAN



TOWN OF SMITHFIELD RHODE ISLAND

ADOPTED
APRIL 26, 2005

APPROVED
MAY 2, 2005

Prepared by:

Kleinschmidt
*Energy & Water Resource Consultants
and*

*Anthony W. Lachowicz
Planning and Zoning Consultant*

**LOW AND MODERATE
INCOME HOUSING PLAN**

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**LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING PLAN
TOWN OF SMITHFIELD, RHODE ISLAND**

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1.0 PURPOSE OF THE LOW AND MODERATE HOUSING PLAN

In June 1992, the Town adopted a new Comprehensive Plan as required by the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act (RI General Laws, Title 45, Chapter 22.2). As required by the Act, a Housing Element was incorporated into the Plan that addressed existing and forecasted housing needs in the Town. The 1992 Plan contained the following Vision and three principal goals:

The vision for housing in the future of Smithfield is to plan for future development to provide that housing can be afforded by the median income family of Smithfield spending not more than 30 percent of their annual income for housing. The Town should cultivate an understanding of the direction the Town should go in the future, recognizing the availability of utilities, Town facilities and transportation.

Goal H-1: To maximize the quality, accessibility, variety of residential structures and neighborhoods.

Goal H-2: To promote a safe, sanitary and well-constructed housing stock through new construction and renovation of existing structures.

Goal H-3: To encourage a safe and desirable neighborhood atmosphere.

The vision statement and goals listed above emphasized the Town's commitment to providing low and moderate housing in a balanced manner that was compatible with the long-range growth policies set forth in other elements of the Plan.

Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by the Town Council in 1992, Smithfield has undergone significant changes. According to the US Census, the population of the Town grew from 19,163 in 1990, to 20,613 in 2000, an increase of 7.6 percent. In July 2004, the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation ("Rhode Island Housing") reported that the Town had 7,354 year-round housing units²⁷ for a population now estimated to be at 21,138.²⁸ In its July 2004 tabulation of housing stock, RI Housing reported that 321 units—or 4.36 percent—are subsidized and therefore can be classified as "low and moderate" under the statutory definition.²⁹

Most importantly, the characteristics of the Town's housing stock have changed so as to make it more difficult for residents to afford to purchase or rent housing in the Town. The purpose of this Plan is to examine the Town's housing policies, to determine how housing affordability has changed over the past decade, and to identify and develop strategies that the Town can follow to meet the housing needs of the future. Toward this end, this Plan identifies specific steps that the Town can take to increase the supply of Low and Moderate Housing and identify resources to be used in this regard.

²⁷ Low and Moderate Income Housing by Community, Rhode Island Housing, July 2004.

²⁸ Housing Data Base, Report No. 106, Statewide Planning Program, July 2003.

On February 24, 2004, the Smithfield Town Council amended this Comprehensive Plan to adopt this Low and Moderate Housing Plan dated January 2004. The Planning Board also adopted these amendments on January 26, 2004. As provided by the RI Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, the Statewide Planning Program undertook a review of this plan and returned it to the Town on June 10, 2004 with recommendations for further amendments. This revised plan was adopted as amended by the Town Council on August 10, 2004 and *also* by the Planning Board on August 10, 2004. In September of 2004, Statewide Planning again reviewed the Town of Smithfield's proposed amendments and returned it on September 10, 2004 with recommendations for further revisions. Thereafter, the Town of Smithfield collaborated with the State to revise the Plan. This revised version, adopted by the Town on April 19, 2005, includes these most recent recommendations.

²⁹ Rhode Island Housing, December 2003.

2.0 ***THE PLANNING CONTEXT FOR LOW AND MODERATE HOUSING***

As stated above, the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Town Council in June 1992 and was approved by Statewide Planning on April 24, 2001. Certification of the Plan is effective for a five-year period ending on April 23, 2006. The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act (RI General Laws, Title 45, Chapter 22.2) establishes a series of goals to provide overall direction and consistency for state and municipal agencies in the comprehensive planning process established in the Act. With regard to housing, the Act provides the following goal:

“To promote a balance of housing choices, for all income levels and age groups, and which recognizes the affordability of housing as the responsibility of each municipality and the state.”

2.1 Consistency with the State Guide Plan

A major objective of the Act and one of the principal areas of state review and acceptance is the achievement of consistency with the State Guide Plan. The Act states that local comprehensive plans must be consistent with the State Guide Plan. By maintaining state approval of its comprehensive Plan, the Town strengthens the validity of its zoning ordinance, its subdivision and land development regulations, and its land use decisions. Not only must local zoning and land use decisions be consistent with the comprehensive plan, the actions of state agencies are required to take the local plan into consideration. The Act further states: “Once a municipality’s comprehensive plan is approved [by the state], programs and projects of state agencies, excluding the State Guide Plan...shall conform to that plan.”³⁰

The State Guide Plan is composed of several sections, or elements. The State Housing Plan (Element 421) makes recommendation for housing in Rhode Island, which the Smithfield plan must take into consideration. One of the principal goals of the State Housing plan is to encourage the production of low and moderate housing.

2.1.1 Goal 1-1-5 Affordability

Goal 1-1-5 encourages every municipality to provide an adequate number of low and moderate housing units for low-income citizens, those with severe cost burdens and those with special needs.

As described in the State Guide Plan Overview³¹, the housing policies of the State of Rhode Island are:

³⁰ Rhode Island General Laws, 45-22.2-10(e)

³¹ State Guide Plan Overview, Statewide Planning Program, p. 421.2.

Section 2.0 – The Planning Context for Affordable Housing

1. **Population and Diversity:** to use the most reliable population and housing statistics available to periodically establish and update state housing proposals; promote diversity of housing types and affordability; and help different racial, ethnic, and special population groups find suitable housing.
2. **Housing Code Enforcement:** promote the updating and enforcement of the various housing codes and ordinances within the state.
3. **Stabilizing and Protecting Existing Areas:** help protect historic as well as other essential aspects of neighborhoods that provide identity and character; help residents from being displaced; and promote ground water protection, watershed management, and flooding abatement.
4. **Improved Usage of Existing Structures:** support the best use and maintenance of existing housing stock.
5. **Optimum Locations for New Housing Units:** encourage new housing construction as warranted, in proximity to planned or existing infrastructure; and support the expansion of neighborhoods relative to a closer relationship with local and regional needs.
6. **Affordable Housing and New Housing Concepts:** study, develop, and support improved methods, techniques, legal remedies, and institutional structures for producing low/moderate income affordable housing; and encourage improved planning of neighborhood development, growth management, affordable housing financing, and housing maintenance programs.

The State Housing Plan³² does not contain a list of specific actions to which local communities are required to conform. The Plan instead provides several Strategies and Recommendations that both state agencies and local communities are urged to consider in their activities and plans that affect the provision of housing. The recommendations on housing affordability are provided below:

³² State Housing Plan, State Guide Plan Element 421, RI Statewide Planning Program, March 2000, p. 5.10.

**Summary of Strategies and Recommendations for Housing Affordability
State Housing Plan 2000**

1. The State should provide monetary incentives and/or technical support for courses and training for elected local community officials, and planning and zoning administrators regarding affordable housing and responsibilities in meeting mandated state housing objectives. Such training can demonstrate that affordable housing can be attractive and serve as an asset to the host community.
2. The Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation should encourage the establishment of non-profit housing cooperatives (either single or multi-family housing units) for low and moderate-income households. Housing cooperatives impart a sense of ownership and can serve households that would otherwise lack the means to purchase housing.
3. Communities should consider appropriate zoning changes to allow smaller residential lot sizes as infill for “built-up” areas where there are adequate public utilities and services.
4. Communities should encourage increased residential construction and conversion of existing units for cooperatives, condominiums, and attached housing, when such units will serve low-income households.
5. Communities should make wider use of planned unit and cluster developments to increase affordability where appropriate.
6. Entitlement communities under the Community Development Block Grant Program should make vacant “building” and “lot” homesteading programs an affordable housing initiative.
7. The RI Housing Resources Commission should sponsor periodic statewide housing conferences and workshops to promote information sharing on such topics as state housing program policies, and innovative ways to lower housing costs to stimulate action to resolve housing need issues. Such conferences should target the financial community, providers, developers and key public officials.
8. Communities should be encouraged to earmark an adequate amount of land for the construction of multi-family housing; especially those towns and cities that do not currently meet the 10 percent low-moderate income housing goal as established by the RI Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (RIGL 45-53).

Source: State Housing Plan, State Guide Plan Element 421, March 2000

2.1.2 The Low and Moderate Income Housing Act

Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (R.I. General Laws, 45-53) was enacted in 1991 to address the need for cities and towns in the state to provide opportunities for the establishment of low and moderate income housing which is subsidized by the federal or state government. The Act establishes a ten percent minimum threshold for such subsidized housing in each city and town, including Smithfield³³. As of the July 2004, Rhode Island Housing reported that 4.36 percent of the housing units in Smithfield were subsidized and could be considered “affordable” to persons of low and moderate income. At that time, there were 29 communities (out of a total of 39 municipalities) in the state that did not meet the minimum ten percent requirement.

The Act, along with several companion statutes, were substantially amended in 2004 to provide for the provision of safe and affordable housing in accordance with a 5-year strategic plan for housing, to be prepared by a newly-created Rhode Island Housing Resources Commission. This Plan must be prepared by

³³ The Act also provides that urban municipalities having at least 5,000 occupied rental units and where those units comprise 25 percent or more of all housing units, the requirement is that at least 15 percent of the rental units must be

July 1, 2006. Until that time, communities must prepare the housing element of their Comprehensive Plans in accordance with current guidelines adopted by the State Planning Council (see below).

Communities such as Smithfield that do not meet the ten percent requirement are subject to what is described in the Act as the “Comprehensive Permit Procedure.” A comprehensive permit is defined as “...a single application for a comprehensive permit to build that [low and moderate] housing in lieu of separate applications to the applicable local boards...”³⁴ This procedure allows a developer of such housing to apply to the local Zoning Board of Review for a permit to build affordable housing under a “streamlined” procedure designed to greatly reduce the time normally required to obtain development permits. The Act also allows a development to request exceptions to local requirements and regulations normally applied to similar developments. These “exceptions” might greatly increase the density and intensity of a proposed project. During 2003-2004, for example, five separate applications were submitted to the Smithfield Zoning Board for comprehensive permits to construct a total of 1,006 housing units (of which 219 were affordable) at a net density of nearly 12 units per developable acre. The zoning regulations in effect at that time permitted a maximum density of two units per acre in the Town’s principal multifamily zoning district (R-20M).³⁵

In February 2004, the General Assembly enacted a moratorium on for-profit developers using the Comprehensive Permit Procedures contained in the Act.³⁶ All current applications on file with a local community are subject to review and appeal procedures specified in the new 2004 general revisions. The moratorium also provided that local communities must prepare by December 31, 2004 a comprehensive plan housing element for low and moderate income housing as specified by the Act. If the plan is submitted and approved, new or pending comprehensive permit applications must conform to the community’s approved housing plan.

The Act prescribes standards and procedures for the Zoning Board to follow in its review of comprehensive permit applications. Where an application is denied, or is granted with conditions and requirements that make the project infeasible, the applicant may appeal to the State Housing Appeals Board (SHAB), which has the authority to overturn a denial or otherwise unfavorable decision made by the local Zoning Board.

affordable to persons of low and moderate income. As of January 2004, the following communities fell into this category: Cranston, North Providence, Pawtucket, Warwick and West Warwick.

³⁴ R.I.G.L. 45-53-4.

³⁵ The Zoning Board has yet to rule on any of these applicants.

³⁶ R.I.G.L. 45-53-4, as amended February 13, 2004.

The Act also allows the SHAB to promulgate its own rules and regulations in hearing petitions filed for review. Under the regulations, the minimum percentage of such units required in order to be eligible to file for a comprehensive permit from the town is twenty (20) percent of the total number of units. The intent of this provision in the regulations apparently was to encourage a mixture of housing types and occupants. It may also permit developers of low and moderate income units to be created via cross subsidization from market rate units. Finally, under an amendment to the Act made by the General Assembly in 2002, private developers were granted expanded authority to file applications. Previously, applications under the Act could only be filed by public agencies, nonprofit organizations, limited equity housing cooperatives and private developers of *rental* projects. As stated previously, in the case of Smithfield, these recent amendments resulted in applications being filed for 787 market-rate housing units out of a total of 1,006 units in 2003 - 2004. Under these circumstances, the Town must address the impacts generated from not only the affordable units, but the *non-affordable* units as well.

2.1.3 Affordable Housing Plans

In order to address the requirements of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, communities have the option of adopting an “affordable housing plan, “, which is also referred to as a “low and moderate income housing plan.” Such a plan addresses the specific requirements of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act with respect to affordability issues, but does not necessarily require the updating of the entire comprehensive plan, or its housing element. Such an low and moderate income housing plan must, however be consistent with other provisions of the housing element and with other elements of the comprehensive plan which affect housing. Local communities which prepare and adopt low and moderate income housing plans must submit them to the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program for review and approval in the same manner as prescribed for review and approval of local comprehensive plans. The Act also contains a provision that allows a community to apply local zoning and land use regulations where it has adopted a plan to achieve the ten percent low and moderate income housing required by the Act.

(ii) The city or town has promulgated zoning or land use ordinances, requirements, and regulations to implement a comprehensive plan which has been adopted and approved pursuant to chapters 22.2 and 22.3 of this title, and the housing element of the comprehensive plan provides for low and moderate income housing in excess of either ten percent (10%) of the housing units or fifteen percent (15%) of the occupied rental housing units as provided in subdivision (2) (i). (emphasis added)³⁷

³⁷ R.I.G.L. 45-53-3 (ii)

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Low and moderate income housing plans must, however, identify specific steps that the municipality will take to increase the supply of low and moderate income housing and identify resources to be used in this regard.

The Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, in conjunction with Rhode Island Housing, has issued guidelines that identify these specific steps as follows:

- Identifies the number of affordable units needed to achieve the applicable threshold requirement for low and moderate housing as quantified in the most recent “Low and Moderate Income Housing by Community” tabulation published by RIHMFC by type and tenure consistent with the consolidated plan.
- Identifies specific strategies to attain the threshold over a reasonable period of time, taking into consideration anticipated residential growth based on building permit activity and build-out estimates. The number and type of low and moderate income units (e.g. family, elderly, special needs) produced by these strategies must be in proportion to the unmet local and state housing needs identified in the housing element and consistent with the consolidated plan.
- Provide quantitative estimates of how each strategy will contribute to attainment of the threshold and the timeframe for implementation of each. This implementation schedule must demonstrate commitment to short-term actions (six months to a year) and project out to the initial minimum five-year implementation program for the element and any subsequent implementation programs of the housing element and comprehensive plan.
- Identifies responsible parties and partners for each implementation strategy and identifies resources that will be tapped to achieve them.
- For land management density strategies such as inclusionary zoning and/or density bonuses, demonstrates that the number of low and moderate income units projected to be produced are consistent with build-out estimates, geographic building constraints (e.g. wetlands, ledge, flood plains), and infrastructure and services planned for targeted areas.

Section 2.0 – The Planning Context for Affordable Housing

- For redevelopment and/or reuse of existing buildings, identifies specific buildings and/or areas and estimate the number of low and moderate income units projected for each.³⁸

This Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan for the Town of Smithfield is prepared in conformity with the applicable requirements provided by state law and with the applicable rules, regulations and guidelines adopted pursuant thereto, as provided above. This Plan outlines the future actions that will be taken by the Town to address the need for affordability of housing for present and future generations.

³⁸Handbook on the Local Comprehensive Plan (Handbook 16), Statewide Planning Program, June 1989, update 2003.

3.0 REVIEW OF TOWN HOUSING POLICY

The 1992 Comprehensive Community Plan provided a detailed examination of the affordability of housing in the Town. At that time, it was found that while an affordability gap existed, it was one of the smallest among the 39 communities in the State. In 1989, Smithfield's median single family house price was approximately \$135,050. In that year, the income needed to purchase the average priced home was \$53,270, or 25.2% above the median household income of \$42,543.

Over the following decade, the housing affordability gap in Smithfield decreased as household income increases out-paced increases in housing prices. In 2000, the average sale price of a single family house was \$190,628.³⁹ According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the Town of Smithfield's median household income was \$55,621 - a 22.7% increase from the 1990. The income needed to purchase a house at the average sale price of \$190,628, assuming a mortgage and utilities, was \$57,188, or 2.8 percent above the 2000 median income.

The Town's housing policy, as expressed in the 1992 Plan, very strongly supports the concept of low and moderate housing through a variety of approaches. Three principal housing goals emphasize the provision of a variety of housing options for all user needs and types. The overall Vision Statement and three principal housing goals (listed on page 1) have been implemented to varying degrees since 1992. In order to achieve these goals, the Plan lists 29 specific implementation actions that the Town should take in order to carry out the goals and policies of the Plan, and are listed in the spreadsheet following this section.

The 1992 Plan was very general in scope, and lacked concrete, specific actions to be undertaken in order to address low and moderate housing, and the impact that those actions would have had on the State-mandated 10 percent affordability goal. For example, Action H-11 states the intention of the Town to work with its local housing authority but it does nothing to say how, when and with what tools: *"The Town should work with the Housing Authority to devise a comprehensive strategy for achieving 10 percent low/moderate housing availability."*

The Town needs to reassess the 1992 goals, policies and actions in light of the requirements of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act. Specific actions must be identified to ensure that a plan is in place, to be implemented over a reasonable period of time that will enable the Town to meet and maintain the goal of providing the legislative goal of ten percent. Section 9.0 of this Low and Moderate housing Plan makes specific recommendations for meeting this goal.

³⁹ Housing Data Base, Report No. 106, Statewide Planning Program, July 2003.

Table 1 - Review Of Affordable Housing Implementation Actions / Recommendations 1992 Comprehensive Community Plan

Action	Description	Status
H-1	Establish a Smithfield Non-Profit Housing Corporation as an offshoot of the Smithfield Housing Authority with the mission of providing affordable housing opportunities. The non-profit organization will have more flexibility in seeking funding for new housing development and should attempt to provide employment for those low income people in the production of affordable housing.	In 2003, the Smithfield Housing Authority established the Gemini Housing Corporation as a 501(c)(3) non-profit agency with the mission of developing additional affordable family and elderly housing in the Town. In 2004, the Corporation prepared a Section 202 application for funding the construction of <u>46 additional 1-bedroom apartments</u> for the elderly, on property adjacent to Greenville Manor.
H-2	Increase housing options affordable to households whose incomes are less than 50 percent, whose incomes are between 50 and 100 percent of the local median income through public investment, subsidy and/or joint public/private efforts.	Not Yet Accomplished. The establishment of the Gemini Housing Corporation in 2003 creates a new partner the Town can support and cooperate with to increase local affordable housing needs.
H-3	Evaluate affordable housing proposals according to the number of units which can be owned or rented at a cost of no more than 30 percent of the monthly income of the households to be served.	The Smithfield Housing Authority currently administers 53 Section 8 vouchers all of which were being used at the time of this study. The Authority’s Executive Director says that there are not enough apartments in the Town at Section 8 rental levels. Several tenants with vouchers from SHA have had to find apartments out of town.
H-4	Hold an encounter group in which Smithfield residents tell of their housing needs. Publicize these meetings utilizing local cable networks. Have guest speakers address groups and provide information on the latest housing programs and legislation.	The Town held a “Town Summit” in April 2003 to encourage public participation in the 5-year update of the Comprehensive Community Plan. Housing priorities that were identified included creating a “variety of housing.” See discussion in Section 7.0.
H-5	Amend zoning regulations to allow as special exceptions accessory apartments of a certain size at affordable rents for the elderly, persons with special needs, and persons who are below certain income levels. One additional unit would be allowed per lot provided the necessary infrastructure is in place and site planning and environmental concerns are properly addressed.	The zoning ordinance was amended to authorize Accessory Family Dwelling Units which are permitted by special use permit in six residential zones. The size is restricted to a maximum of 40 percent of the gross floor area of the principal structure, but not less than 400 sq. ft. The Smithfield Building Official estimates that there are presently approximately 28 Accessory Family Dwelling Units in the Town.
H-6	Incorporate provisions of Zoning Ordinance as amended in 1987 pertaining to cluster.	Residential clusters are permitted by right in R-200, R-80, R-Med, and R-20 zoning districts
H-7	Amend Section 5.15 (Planned Development District) of the Zoning Ordinance in accordance with recommendations of Zoning Review & Assessment, 1990, as follows:	Planned Development (PD) Districts have been incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance. They are multi-use districts that permit both offices and certain residential uses.
H-8	Work with the Housing Authority to ensure that existing units are maintained and modernized as necessary.	The Town has developed a Smithfield Housing Rehabilitation Program to provide grants for repair and rehabilitation of low and moderate income housing, including both single and multi-family structures.
H-9	Incorporate provisions of Zoning Ordinance as amended in 1987 pertaining to cluster.	See Goal H-6, above
H-10	Support the Housing Authority’s efforts to expand the number of Section 8 certificates through technical or other assistance.	The Housing Authority has only been able to offer 53 housing vouchers for the past three decades. The Authority’s Executive Director says that there is always a lengthy waiting list of over 100 persons.
H-11	The Town should work with the Housing Authority to devise a	Not Yet Accomplished

comprehensive strategy for achieving 10 percent low/moderate housing availability.

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| H-12 | Adopt the Housing Authority’s policy of preferential treatment of Smithfield residents and employees of the Town with regard to access to affordable units. | The Housing Authority has established priorities for the waiting list at Greenville Manor. Following only disabled veterans, priority is given to local residents or persons who are working in the Town. |
| H-13 | Rezone additional Village Districts at appropriate areas in the Town | The Town has created a Village (V) zoning district which is primarily intended for office, public & semi-public, restaurant and retail business & service uses. Multifamily dwellings are not permitted. |
| H-14 | Provide incentives to developers willing to construct affordable 2 or 3 bedroom, rental units and units in which Section 8 certificates may be used. | Not Yet Accomplished |
| H-15 | Establish a preventive maintenance program for the Town’s housing stock, particularly the multifamily units. Initiate through a public education program. | Not Yet Accomplished |
| H-16 | Emphasize and preserve the identity of historic neighborhoods through historic district zoning. | Not Yet Accomplished |
| H-17 | Amend and administer the Zoning Ordinance in support of the reuse and rehabilitation of mill buildings within residential zones, for housing use as appropriate. | Not Yet Accomplished |
| H-18 | Prime the Housing Authority or the newly created Non-profit Housing Corporation to take advantage of Rhode Island Housing and Conservation Trust Fund Act. While the Act is currently unfunded it may, in the future, provide funds to government bodies and non-profit conservation and housing groups for the acquisition and protection of open space, and for affordable housing opportunities. | See Action H-1 |
| H-19 | Ensure that the Residential Landlord and Tenant Act is followed and that the Minimum Housing Official reviews housing complaints by tenants or landlords in accordance with the 1990-1991 Landlord-Tenant Handbook. | The Town employs a part-time Minimum Housing Inspector to enforce all state and local housing regulations. In addition, the Smithfield Housing Authority employs an independent inspector to ensure code compliance in Greenville Manor and all units in which Section 8 vouchers are used. |
| H-20 | Ensure that the Town enforces the Housing Maintenance and Occupancy Code which sets standards for safe and sanitary housing as well as for occupancy. | See Action H-19 |
| H-21 | Encourage continuation of programs such as loans to developers for the creation of multifamily rental units (new and rehab) depending on composition and tenancy. The loans may come from available Rhode Island Housing & Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHMFC) programs and other similar sources. | The Town has two privately owned elderly housing developments totaling 194 units. These were funded by Rhode Island Housing through the Section 8 program. The Town does not provide any funds for housing programs other than the Housing Rehabilitation Program described in Action H-8. |

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| H-22 | Encourage non-profit housing organizations to utilize the free plans and specs from the RIHMFC affordable housing design contest, “Design Rhode Island”, and provide informational packets to other private developers who may wish to purchase plans and specs from the participants. | This is an ongoing program administered directly by Rhode Island Housing. |
| H-23 | Support continued local participation in Federal and State housing rehabilitation programs. | See Action H-8. |
| H-24 | Provide incentives for combining open space preservation efforts with new housing construction. | Residential cluster provisions have been adopted, which require at least 30 percent of the gross land area of the development to be permanent open space. A density bonus of up to one additional lot for every ten lots may be granted by the Planning Board. No zoning incentives are currently offered specifically for the provision of affordable housing. |
| H-25 | Allow and encourage the development or redevelopment of compatible small-scale affordable housing structures within existing neighborhoods. | Not Yet Accomplished |
| H-26 | Revise Site Plan of the Zoning Ordinance. This Section should be revised so that all large residential projects are subject to review in addition to nonresidential and those requiring Special Exceptions. | Development plan review is required for all special permit uses, and all uses permitted in non-residential zones. All large residential projects, including subdivisions are subject to review by the Planning Board. |
| H-27 | When reviewing applications for mixed market-rate and affordable-rate developments, require that exterior architectural treatment and site design be similar in nature for both types of homes. | Not Yet Accomplished |
| H-28 | When considering special needs housing, the Town should encourage the developer to hold neighborhood meetings for public information purposes, advocate location of projects throughout the community rather than centered in certain areas, work with the developer to successfully market their project to local residents and to use and improve existing housing stock where possible. | Not Yet Accomplished |
| H-29 | Support the continued operations of the Town’s subsidized elderly housing developments. | No new subsidized elderly housing has been constructed in the Town since the construction of Greenville Manor (1970) Esmond Village (1980) and Georgiaville Manor (1984) |

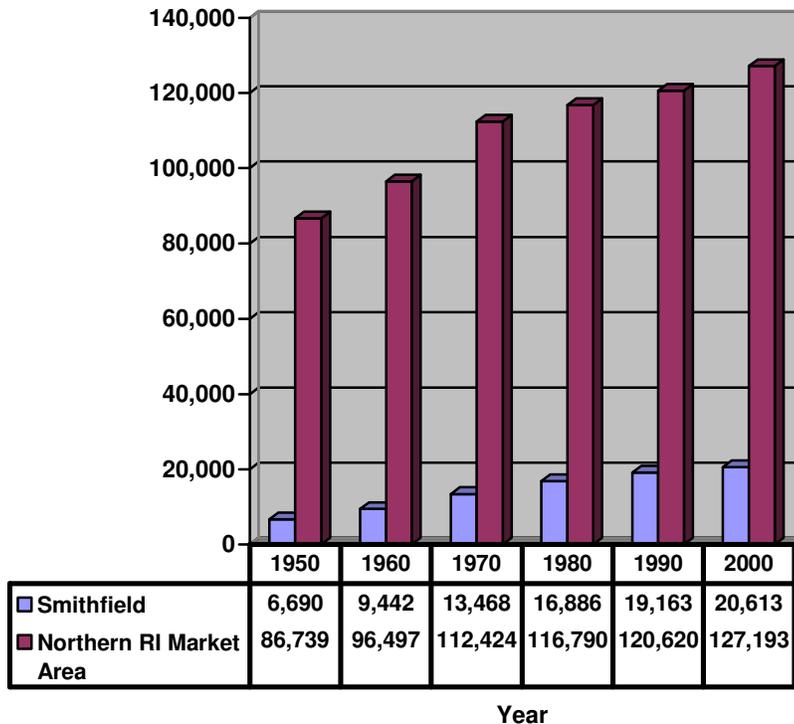
4.0 CENSUS AND HOUSING DATA INVENTORY

This section provides an inventory of demographic, economic and housing data for the Town of Smithfield, Rhode Island. Local, state and federal sources were used to compile this data with the greater proportion of statistics coming from the 1990 and 2000 decennial Census. State compilations of the Census data were cited where applicable. Each sub-section summarizes particular datasets and provides interpretations that will lead to further analysis and planning later in this Plan.

4.1 Population Growth and Characteristics

Smithfield’s population has grown steadily over the past half-century, typical of most Rhode Island’s suburban communities. As highway development provides easier access to undeveloped areas outside of the older urban core communities of Providence and Woonsocket, housing construction steadily proceeds in the suburban areas. Figure 1 compares population growth in the Northern Market Area to that of Smithfield.

Figure 1: Population Growth from 1950 to 2000 in Smithfield, RI and the Northern RI Market Area.



□

The Northern RI Market Area as defined by Statewide Planning is comprised of five communities: Smithfield, North Smithfield, Woonsocket, Cumberland and Lincoln. This market area grew at an overall rate of 31.8 percent between 1950 and 2000, but the range of growth varies greatly. For example, Smithfield’s population grew by 208 percent, while Woonsocket lost 13.9 percent of its population. Lincoln and North Smithfield both grew at about 85 percent, while Cumberland’s population increased by 148 percent.

4.2 Age of Residents

An examination of the population characteristics of Smithfield indicates that 19.5 percent of the population is aged 18 years or younger, while 16.6 percent of the population is aged 65 years and older. In this regard, Smithfield’s population is slightly older than the statewide average of 14.5% elderly. Of 39 Rhode Island municipalities, Smithfield ranked 13th for the proportion of elderly residents in its population. The five communities with the largest percentage of elderly in the population were North Providence (19.7%); East Providence (18.9%); Johnston (18.9%); North Smithfield (18.0%) and Warren (17.9%).

4.3 Racial and Ethnic Composition

Table 2 summarizes the Town of Smithfield’s racial and ethnic composition as captured by the 2000 U.S. Census. The data shows a relatively homogenous local population in terms of race and ethnicity. As with the entire state, Smithfield is expected to see increases in its Hispanic and other new immigrant populations.

Table 2 - Racial and Ethnic Composition for the Town of Smithfield

<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of Households	<input type="checkbox"/> % of Total Population
White	7,096	98.6
Black / Afro American	30	0.40
Asian	32	0.40
Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0
Some Other Race	1	0.0
American Indian / Alaskan Native	7	0.10
Two or More Races	28	0.40
Hispanic	30	0.40
TOTAL	7,194	100

Source: U.S. Census 2000

4.4 Smithfield’s Households

A *household* is defined as a person or group of people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. The number of households equals the number of occupied housing units in a census unit. In Smithfield, the number of households increased 17.6% from 1990 to 2000 – greater than twice the increase in households statewide for the same period.

Table 3 - Smithfield and Rhode Island Households, 1990-2000

	1990 Smithfield	2000 Smithfield	% Change	1990 Rhode Island	2000 Rhode Island	% Change
Total Population	19,163	20,589	+7.6%	1,003,464	1,048,319	+4.5%
Total Households	6,134	7,212	+17.6%	377,977	408,424	+8.1%
Average Number of Persons/ Household	2.7	2.5		2.6	2.5	

Source: U.S. Census 2000

4.5 Homeless and Special Needs Populations

4.5.1 Homelessness in Rhode Island and Smithfield

The Rhode Island Emergency Shelter Information Project, a consortium of the RI Emergency Food and Shelter Board, United Way of Southeastern New England and the RI Department of Human Services, defines a homeless person, "...as anyone who received emergency shelter, for whatever reason or whatever length of time." The Emergency Shelter Information Project tracks the usage of shelters, nights stayed in shelters and the overall statewide homeless rate to assess the homeless situation in the state. Considered a crisis, homelessness is a growing statewide problem.⁴⁰

In the Project's Report, recent trends show a continued upswing in the number of unduplicated shelter clients and total shelter nights in Rhode Island shelters. In the reporting year of 2002 - 2003, 5,686 clients utilized shelters compared to 1999-2000, when 4,466 were recorded. Similarly, Over 192,000 nights of shelter were provided by Rhode Island's shelter system in 2002-2003.⁴¹ In the 1999-2000 reporting year, 134,540 shelter nights were provided. The 2002 – 2003 year marked all time highs for both indicators.

In addition to trends in the usage of shelters, the Information Project calculates the overall homeless rate for the State of Rhode Island. Based on 2000 U.S. Census and 2002 American Community Survey data, the chance that a RI resident would enter a homeless shelter was determined. For last year,

⁴⁰ RI Emergency Shelter Annual Report, July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003. RI Emergency Food and Shelter Board. 2003.

⁴¹ Ibid, Page 2.

5.4 Rhode Islanders per 1,000 were likely to enter a homeless shelter. This figure is up 20% from the previous year.⁴²

Multiple circumstances inherent to the nature of the homelessness problem renders gathering accurate information relatively difficult. The RI Emergency Food and Shelter Board does attempt to survey shelter clients to determine the last place of residence for each individual. These numbers provide some indication of the homeless need in the area. Eleven (11) clients reported the Town of Smithfield as their last place of residence. One hundred and six (106) individual clients claimed to originate from towns in the Northern Market Area, the region designated for this analysis. Of the Northern Market towns, Woonsocket has a disproportionate number of clients that claimed that city has a last place of residence – 351 clients – compared to 1 for North Smithfield, 12 for Lincoln and 26 from Cumberland. The total number statewide for 2002 -2003 was 5,686 with Providence reporting the most clients at 2,303.

There is no homeless shelter, permanent or emergency, in the Town of Smithfield although homeless persons originate from the Town of Smithfield. Regionally, the Woonsocket Shelter, operated by Family Resources Community Action, is closest shelter available to area homeless people. Also, Smithfield is geographically located near (e.g. within 30 miles) two known population centers with relatively high numbers of homeless people like, Providence and Woonsocket. Homelessness is a statewide crisis with potentially severe localized impact for certain municipalities. These factors suggest that Smithfield has a potentially significant role in managing the regional and state homelessness crisis.

4.5.2 Special Needs Populations

Special need populations in Rhode Island consist of the frail elderly, veterans, persons with physical, mental or developmental disabilities, substance abuse problems and HIV/AIDS persons.⁴³ These individuals have unique treatment and housing needs particular to their situation. In addition, many require specialized medical and/or psychiatric care as well as permanent housing. Others require transitional housing and treatment facilities to assist them in adapting to life outside of the institutional environment.

The 2000 – 2005 Consolidated Plan discusses special needs populations from a statewide perspective. The State's frail elderly population is expected to increase as the 75 years and older population grows, which will increase the demand for assisting living facilities and beds. This statement reinforces observations of a more recent study by Blue Cross/Blue Shield, the SHAPE Study, which points

⁴² Ibid, Page 6.

⁴³ Rhode Island Consolidated Plan 2000 – 2005. Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation, January 15, 2000.

to the aging “baby boom” generation as increasing the demand for nursing homes and assisted living facilities.⁴⁴ Currently, Smithfield ranks 13th in the state for its elderly (i.e. 65 or older) population, that reported some 2,246 disabilities for the 2000 U.S. Census.⁴⁵ As discussed later in this report, Smithfield has heavily invested in caring for its elderly population and has current needs and plans to increase its offering in this regard.

Other disabled people, people living with HIV/AIDS, and persons transitioning from prison, psychiatric and/or substance abuse treatment program represent a growing population of special needs individuals. Statewide, there has been a rise in the number of people living with AIDS from 808 in 1998 to 1,019 in 2002.⁴⁶ No AIDS cases were reported for Smithfield based on 2002 data; however, many of the metropolitan areas of Providence County reported the greater proportion of the State’s cases overall.⁴⁷

Generally, individuals leaving prison, a treatment center for substance abuse, or mental health care facility require assistance entering the community they intend to live in. These populations are particular important to consider in light of the fact that they are “at risk” of succumbing to homelessness without support. At the time of this study, there were no data available estimating the population of these special needs populations in the Town of Smithfield. However, it is a well-documented fact that statewide these populations are increasing rather than decreasing.⁴⁸

4.6 Housing Availability

This section presents data to provide a detailed look at the total number of housing units, the number of owner-occupied units, the number of renter-occupied units, the number of vacant year-round units and the number of vacant seasonal units for Smithfield and its surrounding area for 1990 and 2000. Table 4 provides an overview of this data.

The data suggests that there has been a change in owner-occupancy of local housing stock over the past decade. The percentage of units occupied by renters rose from 19.5% in 1990 to 21.6% in 2000. In addition, an increase in seasonal units since 1990 (up to 20.8% in 2000 from 9.2%) was experienced. A possible trend may be suggested by these numbers; more households own a second home and choose to vacate and/or rent their Smithfield home on a seasonal or annual basis.

⁴⁴ The Economic Impact of the Housing Crisis on Businesses in Rhode Island. RIPEC, 2003.

⁴⁵ Housing Data Base, Report No. 106, Statewide Planning Program, July 2003.

⁴⁶ AIDS ACTION State Facts – HIV/AIDS in Rhode Island.
(http://www.aidsaction.org/communications/publications/statefactsheets/pdfs/rhodeisland_2003.pdf)

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ RI Consolidated Plan 2000 – 2005, op. cit.

Table 4 – Housing Tenure and Ownerships						
	Smithfield	%	Northern Market Area	%	Rhode Island	%
Total Units						
1990	6,308		47,380		414,572	
2000	7,396		51,303		439,837	
% Increase						
1990-2000	14.7%		7.6%		6.1%	
Occupied Units						
1990	6,134	97.2%	45,237	95.5%	377,977	91.2%
2000	7,194	97.3%	49,339	96.2%	408,424	92.9%
Owner-Occupied						
1990	4,936	80.5%	26,851	56.7%	224,792	59.5%
2000	5,639	78.4%	29,797	58.1%	245,156	60.0%
Renter Occupied						
1990	1,198	19.5%	18,386	38.8%	153,185	40.5%
2000	1,555	21.6%	19,542	38.1%	163,268	40.0%
Vacant Units						
1990	174	2.7%	2,143	4.5%	36,595	8.8%
2000	202	2.7%	1,964	3.8%	31,413	7.1%
Seasonal Units						
1990	16	0.3%	64	0.1%	12,037	2.9%
2000	42	0.6%	157	0.3%	12,988	3.0%
<i>Source: U.S. Census 1990, U.S. Census 2000</i>						

The rate of increase in housing units in Smithfield since 1990 has generally exceeded population increases (*see* Table 5). These numbers may reflect the national trend toward smaller household sizes, especially in rural and suburban communities. According to the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, "...between 1970 and 1995, the state added two units of housing for every *one* new addition to the population. Reasons for this are complicated. Factors include demographic trends such as smaller households, more elderly persons living independently, and economic trends such as the building boom of the mid-1980's"⁴⁹ Between 1990 and 2000, the average household size in Smithfield was the same, or 2.6 persons, and the average family size decreased slightly, from 3.1 to 3.0. The number of vacant year-round units remained virtually unchanged.

⁴⁹ State Housing Plan, op. cit., p. 2.5.

Table 5 - Percent Increases in Population and Housing 1980-2000

	Smithfield		Rhode Island	
	% Increase 1980-1990	% Increase 1990-2000	% Increase 1980-1990	% Increase 1990-2000
Population	+13.5	+7.6	+5.9	+4.5
Total Housing Units	+23.3	+17.2	+11.2	+6.1

Source: RI Housing Database 2003; U.S. Census 1990; U.S. Census 2000

4.7 Unit Distribution

The most common housing type in Smithfield is a single family detached home. As shown below in *Table 6 - Town of Smithfield Housing Stock Distribution*, from 1990 to 2000 the proportion of single family homes in town slightly decreased to just over two-thirds of the entire housing inventory. This decrease can be directly correlated to a marked 84 percent increase over the same time period of the number of houses with 10 or more units.

	1990	% of 1990	2000	% of 2000
Total # Units	6,308	100%	7,403	100%
Single Family Home	4,517	71.6%	5,034	68.0%
1 Unit Attached (e.g. Condo)	313	5.0%	440	6.0%
2-4 Units	666	10.6%	598	8.0%
5-9 Units	268	4.2%	406	5.5%
10 or more units	495	7.8%	911	12.3%
Mobile home	49	0.7%	14	<0.1%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

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

4.8 Age of Housing

Data on “Year Structure Built” was obtained for both occupied and vacant housing units (Table 7). ‘Year Structure Built’ refers to when the building was first constructed, not when it was remodeled, added to, or converted. The data relate to the number of units built during the specified periods that were still in existence at the time of enumeration of the 2000 Census. Since 1940, the number of new units per decade has regularly exceeded 1,000; an indication of a fairly steady rate of newly constructed dwelling units.

Table 7 - Year Housing Structures were Built in Smithfield

	Number of Units	% of Total Units
1999 to March 2000	38	0.5

1995-1998	380	5.1
1990-1994	627	8.5
1980-1989	1,318	17.8
1970-1979	1,270	17.2
1960-1969	1,186	16.0
1940-1959	1,455	19.7
1939 or earlier	1,129	15.3
Total Housing Units	7,403	100

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

Table 8 below contains data supplied by the Smithfield Building Inspector on the number of housing units authorized by building permit in Smithfield for the past two decades. The quantity of annual building permits issued ranges from a low of 24 units in 1999 to a high of 299 units in 1988. The data indicate trends that the development of new housing has historically proceeded at a moderate pace. The notable exception was in the mid-to late-1980s when a very active economy and regional housing “boom” resulted in high numbers of building permits being issued. On average, 130.3 units per year were authorized for the 10-year period, 1984 to 1993. In comparison, for the last 10-year period, there was an average of 61.1 units per year. The overall 20-year average was 95.7 units.

YEAR	SINGLE FAMILY¹	MULTI-FAMILY²	TOTAL UNITS
1984	86	65	151
1985	98	66	164
1986	69	90	159
1987	75	128	203
1988	58	241	299
1989	42	16	58
1990	39	29	68
1991	43	0	43
1992	71	18	89
1993	69	0	69
1994	40	6	46
1995	51	14	65
1996	51	40	91
1997	38	38	76
1998	38	20	58
1999	24	0	24
2000	26	8	34
2001	64	0	64
2002	75	0	75
2003	78	0	78

TOTALS	1,135	779	1,914
¹ Single Family includes detached condominium units			
² Multi-Family includes total number of attached condominium units			
* Average over 20-Year Record Period: 95.7 permits per year.			
Source: Town of Smithfield Building / Zoning Office, May 2004.			

These records of building permits issued by the Town show that three-fifths or 60% of the new housing stock consists of single family homes (1,135 new units) and 779 new multi-family units. Since January 2000, the Building Official in the Town of Smithfield reported that a total of 251 additional housing units have been constructed. If added to the 7,369 units enumerated in the 2000 Census, it is estimated that there were approximately 7,620 housing units constructed or authorized to start construction in the Town at the end of 2003.

4.9 Recent Housing Development

Recent development patterns in Smithfield suggest that new residential development has occurred in all areas of the Town. A total of 680 housing units have been approved during the period 1992-2003. Although the majority of individual developments are single family residential subdivisions comprising 554 housing units, the condominium form of development has actually constituted a significant proportion of the new developed units. Contrary to the Town’s policy of directing new development toward the existing population and village centers of Esmond, Georgiaville and Greenville, a high proportion of new homes are scattered throughout the rural areas of Town. Additionally, as of the time of this report 1,006 units were proposed under the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act permit process. Two hundred and nineteen of these units are considered “affordable” while the rest would be sold at market rates. Proposed densities for these new applications average 12 units per acre and would be located at scattered sites throughout the town.

Appendix F presents data demonstrating the size and location of new and pending subdivisions in the Town of Smithfield since 1992. Map 1 (attached) entitled New and Pending Subdivisions illustrates the location of recent housing development in the Town.

4.10 Zoning

The Town of Smithfield is divided into 15 zoning districts, of which 8 districts allow for some type of residential use (see Table 9 below).

Table 9 – Town of Smithfield, RI - Residential Zoning Districts

Zoning District	Single Family Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Two Family Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Multifamily Density / Min. Lot Area
Residential Conservation R-200	200,000 (P)	N	N
Low Density Residential R-80	80,000 (P)	N	N

Medium Density Residential <i>R-Med</i>	65,000 - no Public water/sewer(P) 40,000 – Public water/sewer (P)	N	N
High Density Residential <i>R-20</i>	20,000 (P)	N	N
Multifamily Residential <i>R-20M</i>	20,000 (P)	40,000 (S)	2 units/acre 1 acre min. lot area (P) Multi (S) Elderly
Mixed-Use <i>MU</i>	20,000 (S)	N	N
Village <i>V</i>	20,000 (S)	20,000 (S)	N
Planned Development <i>PD</i>	20,000 (P)	40,000 (P)	2 units/acre 1 acre min. lot area (P)

N= Use not permitted; S= Use permitted by Special Use Permit; P= Permitted by Right

Notes

1. All Multifamily dwellings must be serviced by public water and public sewer. There is a maximum of 4 dwellings per structure, except for housing for the elderly which may have a maximum of 8 units per structure.
2. The Town of Smithfield prohibits Manufactured Home, Mobile Home and Mobile Home Parks.
3. Accessory Family Dwelling Units are allowed by special use permit in R-200, R-80, R-Med, R-20, R-20M and MU any zoning districts, upon a lot which has only one principal residential structure. The size may be 40 percent of the gross floor area of the principal structure, but not less than 400 square feet.
4. In Residential Cluster Developments, minimum lot areas may be reduced. In addition, a density bonus of up to one lot for every ten lots may be approved by the Planning Board.

4.11 Developable Land / Build-Out Analysis

A Build-Out Analysis is a technique used to estimate the resulting development in a community if it were to be entirely developed under the provisions of existing zoning. It is a planning exercise that shows future land uses that result from existing regulations and policies. There are two major reasons for performing a build-out analysis. First, basic knowledge regarding the ability of the land to accommodate additional development under present zoning can be understood. Second, it can help to identify critical issues (e.g., land shortage or surplus) which may need to be considered in the formulation of planning policies and implementation strategies designed to address them.

The 1992 Comprehensive Plan contained a build-out analysis that developed two future growth scenarios based upon two different assumptions regarding physical constraints to development. At that time, it was determined that the Town had a build-out capacity of 2,345 additional units under Scenario 1, and 4,555 units in Scenario 2. From this build-out analysis, it was also determined that there were zero acres of land available for multi-family housing under the zoning at the time of the analysis.

In 2001, a second build-out analysis was performed for the Town by Beta Group, Incorporated.⁵⁰ This study examined the potential for future residential and commercial development based on then-current zoning (2001). The residential portion of the study looked at eight zoning districts that permit residential development of

⁵⁰ Buildouts Across Borders, Blackstone River Watershed SuperSummit Resource CD, MassGIS, RIGIS, CRMRPC & Applied Geographics, June 23, 2001.

some type. The total residential build-out was determined to be 4,243 additional housing units, in addition to the 7,396 units found to be in the Town at the time of the 2000 U.S. Census. Allowing for differences in data sources and dating of this information, the Build-out Analysis indicated that in general terms, Smithfield still has significant residential development potential, by an additional 57 percent. This residential development potential did not include any housing units that may be included in a *Mixed-Use, Planned Development* or *Village* development that was not calculated by the 2000 Build-out Analysis.

As indicated in 1991, the Town did not have any significant capacity for the construction of multifamily housing. The Town has created the R-20M zoning district, which permits a density of two dwelling units per acre. It is the Town's policy to require any new multifamily development to apply for a zone change to be granted by the Town Council. In 2001, it was estimated that there were only 34 acres of vacant developable land in this zoning district. The development potential of this land in the R-20M is constrained not only by the small amount of acreage involved, but also by the limits and conditions imposed as a result of previous zone changes.

ZONE	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER OF PARCELS	AREA IN ACRES	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
C	COMMERCIAL	86	197.07	1.3%
HC	HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL	26	88.19	0.6%
I	INDUSTRIAL	98	431.62	2.8%
LI	LIGHT INDUSTRIAL	43	206.38	1.3%
MU	MIXED USE	77	86.22	0.5%
PC	PLANNED CORPORATE	154	1,651.55	10.5%
PD	PLANNED DEVELOPMENT	91	492.56	3.1%
R20	RESIDENTIAL 20,000 S.F.	4008	2,271.33	14.5%
R200	RESIDENTIAL 200,000 S.F.	93	1,333.09	8.5%
R20M	RESIDENTIAL 20,000 S.F. MULTI-FAMILY	40	440.35	2.8%
R80	RESIDENTIAL 80,000 S.F.	2067	7,769.61	49.5%
RMED	RESIDENTIAL 40,000 S.F.	419	661.01	4.2%
V	VILLAGE	73	64.23	0.4%
TOTALS		7,275	15,693.19	100.0%

*Notes: Areas calculated from mapped polygons. Does not include, roads, rivers, etc.
Source: Town of Smithfield, RI 2004*

Most of this residential growth will occur in the Town's five (5) residential zoning districts, which collectively make up about 72% of its land area (see Table 10 above). Based on current zoning, however, about 88 percent of the future residential construction in these five zones will be single-family detached housing. The only residential zoning district which permits two-family or multifamily dwellings is the R-20M Multifamily Residential zone. As stated above, this district was found to have limited potential for expansion of future housing.

4.12 Housing Prices – Ownership and Rental

The current trend in rising housing costs in Smithfield is similar to the trend occurring throughout the region and the State. Data provided by the RI Office of Municipal Affairs, Tax Equalization Section provides a look at the cost of housing in the study area. This section will first present an examination of the cost of buying a home, followed by the cost of renting an apartment or other residence types.

Of the several different types of housing available in the town, single family detached homes on individual lots are by far the most common (68% of the total housing stock). Single family attached units, such as condominium townhouses, represent an additional 5.9 percent of all the housing in the town. The price of single family housing in Smithfield has grown in proportion with the area economy. In 2001, the median sales price for a single family home was \$179,450 and the average sale price was \$190,628 based on 168 sales (*see* Table 11).⁵¹ The median sale price continued to increase to \$220,000 in 2002, by year end of 2003 it had jumped 18.2% to \$259,950, and by the end of September 2004 the median price reached an all-time high of \$299,950..⁵²

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1990	1980
	Jan - Sep	Year End					
Median Sales Price	\$299,950	\$259,950	\$220,000	\$179,450	\$150,000	\$135,050	\$53,000
% Increase	19.2%	18.2%	18.4%	16.4%	10.0%	60.8%	
	<i>from 2003</i>	from 2002	from 2001	from 2000	from 1990	from 1980	

Source: RI Association of Realtors 2004

At 2003 sales prices, a household would have to pay \$2,298.69 per month to afford a medium-priced home in Smithfield.⁵³ These monthly payments would be affordable to a household making roughly 150% of the median household income, or \$93,941 annually, in Smithfield. Less than 30% of the households in Smithfield could afford to purchase a home at this price. In comparison, a home with monthly payments no greater than \$1,879, which equates to an approximate sales price of \$205,000, would be considered affordable to those households making as much as 120% of the median household income or \$75,152 annually.

⁵¹ Housing Data Base, Report No. 106, Statewide Planning Program, July 2003.

⁵² Statewide Multiple Listing Service. Rhode Island Association of Realtors, 2004 (www.riliving.com)

⁵³ Assumes a sale price of \$259,950 with 5% down with a 30 year mortgage at 7% interest, 1.5% annual property tax, \$86.65 per month insurance fee and \$135.82 private mortgage insurance.

For a household earning the median income of \$55,621, it is estimated that in September 2003, they could afford to purchase a single family home valued at \$159,010.⁵⁴ These estimates are useful as a general guide in determining affordability of housing available for sale in the local market at a specific period in time, and will change periodically with local economic conditions. As illustrated above, the median income household would have a very difficult time finding a single family home in Smithfield in 2003 or 2004. The 2003 and 2004 median sales prices are over 75 percent higher than the home that the median earner could afford.

Similar to the cost issues facing potential home owners, renters are faced with monthly costs that are less and less affordable. The state’s Consolidated Plan for 2000 – 2005 summarizes the primary dilemma of current housing trends when it states, “The incomes of Rhode Island’s lower income households are failing to keep pace with rising housing costs.”⁵⁵ The rental housing market in Smithfield has become more expensive over the past decade. In 2000, monthly gross rent was \$608, which is more expensive than the region and state as a whole (Table 12). In 2003, based on a RI Housing survey for January to June 2003, rents in Smithfield for a 2-Bedroom apartment climbed to \$715 a month, while the State’s average rent for a 2-Bedroom apartment climbed to \$989 a month.

Table 12 – Median Monthly Gross Rental Rates 2000 in Smithfield, Northern RI Market Area, Rhode Island			
	Median Monthly Gross Rent		
	Smithfield	Northern RI Market	Rhode Island
2000	\$608	\$547	\$553
<i>Source: Housing Data Base, Report No. 106, Statewide Planning Program, July 2003. Gross rent is monthly contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities and fuels, if these are paid by the renter.</i>			
<i>Source: U.S. Census 1990, U.S. Census 2000</i>			

Another way to examine the affordability of local rents is to look at the trend in HUD’s Fair Market Rents. Table 13 summarizes Fair Market Rents for the Metropolitan Statistical Areas that pertain to Smithfield and the State of Rhode Island as published by HUD from 2000 to 2004. FMRs in this general region have shown a steady increase since 2000, illustrating a 2% jump overall. The data for all households in Smithfield, the Northern Market Area and the State indicate that the majority of households could afford these FMRs (see Table 14 above). Whereas, inspection of renter-occupied household income reveals that current renters are in a much more challenging financial situation. Roughly half of the renter-occupied households in Smithfield and the region are priced out of the FMRs for the area.

⁵⁴ Note: Assumes a 30-year fixed rate mortgage of 5 percent, annual property taxes of \$4,000 and a down payment of 5 percent.

⁵⁵ RI Consolidated Plan, op. cit.

FMR Region	FY 2000	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	% Change 2000 -2004
New London-Norwich, CT-RI	\$729	\$764	\$784	\$797	9%
Providence-Fall River-Warwick MSA	\$667	\$650	\$667	\$678	2%

Source: HUD, 2004. www.huduser.gov

As will be addressed in the next section, the greatest housing needs in Smithfield, like those of the region and the State, come from several subsets within the population. First of all, a principal demand for affordable houses emanates from low and very low income households (2,247 in 2000) and families that cannot afford current home ownership and rental prices, even those considered ‘fair market’ by federal standards. A portion of these ‘in need’ population are those families that have participated in the Family Independence Program and are transitioning to workforce and in need of affordable housing.⁵⁶ These would-be renters seem to be worse off than other households; these households are more likely to be at or below the poverty line than owner-occupied households.⁵⁷ In this regard, housing in Smithfield for working class families relying on minimum-wage jobs will be a considerable challenge for the immediate future.

Homeless and special needs populations and the increasing demand for housing and services for them, continue to be of concern for the state and local communities, like Smithfield. Some homeless shelter clients claim Smithfield to be their last place of residence and nearby cities like, Providence and Woonsocket, have significant homeless populations. Similarly, population trends showing increases in the number of disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, and transitioning from medical and psychiatric facilities to the community, mean that more demands for facilities and housing to serve these people will be needed.

4.13 Income Data

As reported by the 2000 U.S. Census, the median household income in Smithfield was \$55,621 and the per capita income was \$23,224. These data compare favorably with the income figures for the State of Rhode Island as a whole, which were \$42,090 and \$21,688 respectively. In terms of median household income, Smithfield ranked 14th of the 39 communities in the state. Within the Northern Rhode Island Market area, only North Smithfield’s median household income exceeds Smithfield, by 5.3 percent. With the exception of the City of Woonsocket, all of the Northern RI and Western RI housing market area communities exceeded the state median household income in 2000.

⁵⁶ Family Independence Program, RI Annual Report 2004 (http://www.dhs.state.ri.us/dhs/reports/fip_2004.pdf)

⁵⁷ Housing Data Base, Report No. 106, Statewide Planning Program, July 2003.

Since 1980, the median household income in Smithfield has increased steadily and on pace with the increases experienced by the region and the State on the whole. Table 14 below summarizes household income data for 1980, 1990 and 2000 for Smithfield, the Northern Market Area and the State of Rhode Island. These data are based on 1979, 1989 and 1999 data, respectively, and are not adjusted for inflation. Therefore, the percent changes given in Table 14 reflect the increases in actual values for the reported years.

Table 14 - Median Household Income for Smithfield, Northern Market Area and Rhode Island, 1980-2000.

Year	Smithfield	Northern RI Housing Market Area	Rhode Island
1980	\$21,336	\$18,529	\$16,097
1990	\$42,523	\$37,420	\$32,181
2000	\$55,621	\$54,656	\$42,090
Percent Change 1980-1990	99.3%	100%	100%
Percent Change 1990-2000	30.8%	32.3%	30.8%
80% of Median	\$44,497	\$39,602	\$33,672
50% of Median	\$27,811	\$23,987	\$21,045
30% of Median	\$16,686	\$14,392	\$12,627

Source: U.S. Census 1980; U.S. Census 1990; U.S. Census 2000 (Based on 1979, 1989 and 1999 economic data.)

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development sets income limits to qualify for certain housing programs. These figures provide a context for the income figures for Smithfield in terms of the household income levels that qualify for federal and state subsidies. Table 15 below summarizes the HUD income limits for the Metropolitan Statistical Area in which Smithfield is located.

Table 15 – Income Limits for Federal Housing Programs established by HUD for the Providence--Fall River--Warwick, RI--MA Metro Statistical Area
FY 2004 Median Family Income: \$60,000

	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person
30% Of Median	\$14,250	\$16,300	\$18,350	\$20,350
Very Low Income	\$23,750	\$27,150	\$30,550	\$33,950
Low-Income	\$38,000	\$43,450	\$48,900	\$54,300

Source: HUD, 2004. http://www.huduser.org/datasets/il/IL04/Section8_IncomeLimits_2004.doc

According to 2000 U.S. Census and HUD data prepared and analyzed by the RI Statewide Planning Program, Smithfield’s household populations consists of a full range of income levels. Table 16 summarizes the distribution of income in Smithfield and provides estimations for the number of households falling into the “very low” (Below 30% of Median Household Income (MHI)), “low” (30% to 49% of MHI) and “moderate” (50% to 80% of MHI). These data begin the demonstration of how many households, locally and regionally, could potentially be financially ‘at risk’ and susceptible to living in problematic housing conditions or homelessness.

	Smithfield	Smithfield %	Northern RI Market Area	Northern RI Market %	Rhode Island	Rhode Island %
Number of Households	7,212	100.0%	49,382	100.0%	408,424	100.0%
Less than \$10,000	393	5.4%	4,948	10.0%	43,800	10.7%
\$10,000-\$14,999	330	4.6%	3,261	6.6%	28,604	7.0%
\$15,000-\$24,999	825	11.4%	6,104	12.4%	50,524	12.4%
\$25,000-\$34,999	567	7.9%	5,456	11.0%	48,428	11.9%
\$35,000-\$49,999	1,080	15.0%	7,930	16.1%	64,068	15.7%
\$50,000-\$74,999	1,646	22.8%	9,925	20.1%	82,350	20.2%
\$75,000-\$99,999	1,069	14.8%	5,475	11.1%	43,623	10.7%
\$100,000-\$149,999	964	13.4%	4,442	9.0%	31,162	7.6%
\$150,000-\$199,999	232	3.2%	963	2.0%	7,914	1.9%
\$200,000 or more	106	1.5%	878	1.8%	7,939	1.9%

The gap between housing costs and income levels is as large, or even greater, for renters than it is homeowners. Table 17—below presents household income data for owner-occupied and renter-occupied households for Smithfield, Northern Market Area and Rhode Island, including the calculations for “moderate income household.” The data reveal a marked difference in incomes between owner-occupied and rental-occupied households. In 2000, the median owner-occupied household income was \$62,627, which is almost three times the \$23,277 for renter-occupied households. Similarly, for the region and the state as a whole, owner-occupied household incomes were greater than twice renter-occupied households. The RI Statewide Planning Program reported that approximately 2.8 percent, or 160, of the Smithfield households living in owner-occupied housing units in 2000 were living below the poverty level.⁵⁸ For renter-occupied households, this figure was 17.1 percent, or 259 households. These percentages were still well below the state averages of 4.1 percent and 25.0 percent, respectively.

	Smithfield		Northern RI Market Area		Rhode Island	
	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied

⁵⁸ The ‘weighted average threshold’ or “poverty line” for one individual in 2000 was \$8,794 and for a 2-person family unit with no children was \$11,239. U.S. Census 2000 (<http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld/thresh00.html>).

120% of Median Income	\$75,152	\$27,932	\$75,152	\$30,346	\$67,871	\$29,557
Median Income	\$62,627	\$23,277	\$62,627	\$25,288	\$56,559	\$24,631
80% of Median Income	\$50,102	\$18,622	\$50,102	\$20,230	\$45,247	\$19,705
Source: <u>Housing Data Base</u> , Report No. 106, Statewide Planning Program, July 2003. U.S. Census 2000						

4.14 Local and Regional Job Growth

The Town of Smithfield plays a significant role in the Rhode Island economy. Home to several large employers – Fidelity Investments (1,500+ employees), Dow Chemical (500+), Bryant College (approx. 650) and Uvex Inc. (250+) – Smithfield is a commonly used example of recent successes in attracting new investment to the State. It also welcomed a new mall, Smithfield Crossings, that has attracted over a dozen retail chains. Currently, 11,059 Smithfield residents are in the labor force – over half of the Town’s population – according to the 2000 U.S. Census. Continued presence and expansion of local businesses is expected to bring additional jobs to the community and region.

In September 2002, the Smithfield Economic Development Commission published the results of a survey it conduct of all businesses in the town. Over 790 businesses were surveyed to better understand their opinions of local services, quality of business and life issues and concerns for expansion. Forty percent (40%) of the 90 respondents said that they had plans to expand their businesses in Smithfield. Most of these businesses fall into the manufacturing and retail employment categories.⁵⁹

Recent economic growth and optimistic plans from local business owners would suggest that more jobs (and people) are coming to Smithfield. The majority of these jobs are thought to be in the manufacturing and retail sectors, while some will go to the financial and educational institutions in town. With these new employees will come a demand for new housing for younger employees just entering the workforce and for working families. Given the employment sectors these new people will occupy, income could be estimated to be at or slightly above the State’s minimum wage or, \$6.75 per hour, which amounts to roughly \$13,500 per year. Therefore, future affordable rental and ownership opportunities in Smithfield must consider the financial limitations that these new local employees will have.

⁵⁹ Smithfield Business Survey, September 2002. Town of Smithfield Economic Development Commission.

5.0 LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING IN SMITHFIELD

As defined in the Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (R.I. General Laws, 45-53), the term "Low or moderate income housing" means any housing subsidized by the federal or state government under any program to assist the construction or rehabilitation of low or moderate income housing, as defined in the applicable federal or state statute, whether built or operated by any public agency or any nonprofit organization, or by any limited equity housing cooperative or any private developer."

As stated earlier, the Act requires all Rhode Island municipalities to provide that a certain minimum percentage of the total housing units in the Town qualify as subsidized low and moderate income housing. In Smithfield, this percentage is 10 percent, and as of July 2004, 4.36 percent of the total housing units in Smithfield met this definition. Although this is below the 10 percent standard set by the Act, the Town's Comprehensive Plan establishes a goal of meeting this threshold. In addition, the Smithfield Housing Authority has fifty-three (53) Section 8 vouchers, but these vouchers do not count toward the 10 percent standard.

5.1 Existing Low and Moderate Income Housing Units in the Town

According to the State definition of low and moderate income housing which requires that the units be subsidized, there were a total of 321 low and moderate income housing units in Smithfield as of July 2004. These are listed as follows:

Table 18 - Low and Moderate Income Housing, Smithfield, RI

Name	Type	Rent/Own	Street Name	# Units
<i>Elderly</i>				
Greenville Manor	Public Housing	Rental	7 Church Street	50
Esmond Village	RIH Section 8	Rental	6 Village Drive	140
Georgiaville Manor	RIH Section 8	Rental	20 Higgins Street	54
<i>Family</i>				
6-8 Oak Street	RIH Tax Credit	Rental	6 Oak Street	4
<i>Special Needs</i>				
	Group Home Beds	N/A	Various	73
TOTAL				321

Source: RI Housing, July 2004.

Greenville Manor is a 50-unit development located at 7 Church Street and constructed in 1970 under the (*program*). This development is operated by the Smithfield Housing Authority and provides 42, 1-bedroom and 8 efficiency apartments for low-income elderly and handicapped residents. The Executive Director indicates that turnover is slow, usually no more than 6 apartments per year and the demand for units is high. In September 2003 the Authority had a waiting list of some 165 people. Tenants pay no more than 30 percent of their annual income for rents, which range from \$76 to \$610 per month. Preference in the availability of units is first given to disabled veterans and secondly to local residents, or applicants who are working in the Town of Smithfield. Plans for a 48-unit expansion have been submitted to the Town for approval.

Figure 2 – Photographs of Greenville Manor, Smithfield, RI



Esmond Village is a 140-unit development located at 6 Village Drive and constructed in 1980 under Rhode Island Housing's Section 8 program. This development is privately owned and managed by Manhattan Housing. It provides 122, 1-bedroom and 18, 2-bedroom apartments for low-income elderly and handicapped residents. Tenants are required to pay rents that are no more than 30 percent of their income. Income guidelines (for 1-bedroom units) for 2003 range from a maximum of \$19,650 for very low income applicants to \$31,450 for low income applicants. Applicants for 2-bedroom units can earn no more than \$22,500 (very low) or \$35,950 (low). Monthly rents range from \$120 per month to \$676 per month, including utilities. In September 2003 the waiting list for Esmond Village was 147 applicants. Under the Section 8 program, preference for housing availability cannot be given to local residents. Unless extended, the restriction that units in this development remain as low or moderate income housing expires in January 2005.

Figure 3 – Photographs of Esmond Village, Smithfield, RI



Georgiaville Manor is a 54-unit development located at 20 Higgins Street which was constructed in 1984. It was developed and is managed by the same entity as Esmond Village (above). Georgiaville Manor offers 50 one-bedroom and four (4), two-bedroom apartments guided by the same income restrictions governing admission to Esmond Village. The 2003 waiting list at this development was 75 applicants. Unless extended, the restriction that units in this development remain as low or moderate income housing expires in December 2005.

Figure 4 – Photographs for Georgiaville Manor, Smithfield, RI



6-8 Oak Street is a small, 4-unit former mill house that was renovated for low and moderate housing in 1988 under Rhode Island Housing’s Tax Credit program. There are 2, 1-br units and 2, 2-br units. Tenants are selected from the Smithfield Housing Authority’s Section 8 waiting list.

Special Needs housing includes Group Home Beds, Transitional Units, and HUD 811 housing units. Group Home Beds are residential facilities licensed by the RI Department of Children, Youth and Family and the

RI Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals agencies.⁶⁰ HUD 811 is a funding program for the disabled. At present, the Town of Smithfield has only Group Home Beds as mentioned above.

5.2 Affordable Housing Agencies in Smithfield

1. The non-profit **Smithfield Housing Authority** manages 50 units of subsidized public housing for elderly and handicapped residents at Greenville Manor. The Authority also administers the Town's Section 8 voucher program, which issues 53 vouchers (September 2003).

2. **The Gemini Housing Corporation** is a nonprofit corporation, which consists of a 9-member board. The Corporation was formed in March 2001 by the Smithfield Housing Authority. They received 501c3 nonprofit status on June 1, 2003. The purposes of the corporation are:

- a. To provide safe, decent and affordable housing through specific programs to construct, rehabilitate housing units for rent to families of moderate and low income as defined by the US Department of Housing & Urban Development.
- b. To accept grants, loans, or entitlements from federal, state, and or local governments, private foundations and private sources to further the purpose of the corporation; and
- c. To administer, on behalf of government or other corporations, programs that are similar to the purpose of the corporation.

The Gemini Housing Corporation will help to promote the design and implementation of selected social, physical, housing, and economic growth programs to benefit persons and families of moderate and lower income in the State of Rhode Island in cooperation with private enterprise, community organizations, public housing authorities, planning commissions, and governmental agencies, with specific emphasis upon moderate and low income housing; and to participate and cooperate with the public authorities in the State of Rhode Island, and to assist the Authorities in the accomplishments of their purpose by promoting relief of the poor, distressed, and underprivileged; lessening the burdens of governments; eliminating prejudice, and discrimination, and combating community deterioration.

The Gemini Housing Corporation will work to implement special purpose programs for which separate funding may be solicited and which may be undertaken on a joint venture basis with other private and public organizations; and to test the feasibility, cost, procedural and financial aspects of programs to construct, rehabilitate, manage and finance housing of high durability and lower cost for occupancy by lower income

⁶⁰ Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation, 2003.

persons and families. They are currently pursuing two projects. The first project is a 45 unit expansion of Greenville Manor in partnership with the Smithfield Public Housing Authority.

Gemini Housing Corporation is certified by the US Department of Agriculture for the purpose of managing rural development properties.

3. The **Town of Smithfield** offers several tax exemptions for qualifying residents. Senior citizens, veterans, disabled veterans and legally blind residents may qualify for tax exemption status based on several program criteria. A summary of these tax exemptions are provided below.

The **Senior Citizen Exemption** is set at \$8,000 annually. Qualified seniors must be 65 years of age by December 31st for the subsequent tax roll; must own and occupy Smithfield real estate (three dwelling units, or less) for five (5) years; and, must apply on or after birthday, but before December 31st. Seniors may also qualify for a ‘tax freeze’ on their property only if they meet the requirements of the Senior Citizen Exemption and if they own a single-family dwelling. After application is made, the subsequent property tax rate is frozen.

Veterans may qualify for a \$4,000 tax exemption if they have served during particular qualifying Veteran Exemption Service Dates.⁶¹ Unmarried widows or widowers of eligible veterans are also eligible for the **Veteran Exemption**. National Guard does not qualify unless they were activated. Smithfield also offers a ‘**Veterans Disability Exemption**’ for any Veteran who is 100% disabled service-connected and unable to work as of December 31, 2002, owns real estate [in Smithfield] and resides therein as of December 31, 2002. A signed statement from the Veteran’s Administration stating that the person is 100% disable service-connected, unable to work and the reason for the disability must accompany the application.

Lastly, the Town of Smithfield offers a ‘**Blind Exemption**’ to anyone that is legally blind so certified by an attending eye physician, owns real estate and resides therein.

5.3 Smithfield Housing Rehabilitation Program

The Town currently provides funding for homeowners through the Smithfield Housing Rehabilitation Program. This program is funded through the Town’s annual Community Development Block Grant appropriation. It provides income-eligible home owners with funds to complete a variety of home upgrading and improvements, such as renovations, electrical and plumbing upgrading, and improvements to heating systems, etc.

⁶¹ World War I (4/6/17 to 11/11/18), World War II (12/7/41 to 12/31/46), Korean Campaign (6/27/50 to 1/31/55), Viet Nam (02/28/61 to 5/7/75), actual service and/or campaign ribbon/expeditionary medal in Grenada or Lebanon Conflicts (1983-1984), active service and SW Asia Service Medal awarded during Persian Gulf Conflict (8/2/90 to 5/1/94), Haitian Conflict (8/2/90 to 5/1/94), Somalian Conflict (8/2/90 to 5/1/94), or Bosnian Conflict (8/2/90 to 5/1/94).

Activities for the past three years are shown in Table 19 below. The Town should continue this program and expand it if possible.

The Town’s Building Department does not currently keep an accurate record of housing code violations, inspections or other enforcement actions. The scope of work funded through the Rehabilitation Program could be greatly expanded if an accurate data base were developed to document the extent of housing deficiencies in the Town, and increased funding for rehabilitation efforts were identified.

Table 19 - Town of Smithfield Housing Rehabilitation Program Expenditures FY 2000 – 2003

Fiscal Year	Amount	General Description	Beneficiaries
2000-2001	\$50,620	- Renovations to single family homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elderly • Single homeowner
2001-2002	\$34,391.93	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renovations and rehabilitation to single family homes (e.g. carpentry, roofing, garage doors). - Replacement of windows and electrical system to a two-family home. - Boiler replacement to elderly, one-family home. - Updates of electrical, plumbing and heating to multi-family home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elderly singles and couples • Single mother • Landlord of multi-family
2002-2003	\$44,742.64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well drilling - Electrical upgrades - General repairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>*No information provided for this time period</i>
TOTAL	\$129,754.57		

Source: Town of Smithfield Planning Department, September 12, 2003

5.4 Rehabilitation of Existing Housing Stock

The Town of Smithfield has a rich history of historic buildings and properties. Over 15 percent of the Town’s housing stock was constructed in 1939 or earlier. These buildings are located in the Town’s historic villages, especially Esmond, Georgiaville, Greenville and Greystone. Any housing strategy must recognize the importance of the Town’s historic resources and integrate them into future plans for housing rehabilitation and reuse. Commercial and manufacturing buildings in particular can offer excellent opportunities for conversion to low and moderate housing. Mill complexes in Smithfield are currently in some type of manufacturing, residential or commercial use, such as the Esmond Mill Complex and the Homestead Mill. The Natural and Cultural Resources element of the Comprehensive Plan provides detailed description of these properties.

An inventory of the Town’s mill sites was conducted for this planning effort to estimate the potential build-out of several mills with potential for adaptive re-use as residential properties. Table 20 below lists these

sites and the estimated number of one and two bedroom units for each property. For these structures, both mixed-use redevelopment as well as all-residential strategies should be encouraged by the Town. At the present time (2005) no specific development proposals have been made. Future zoning amendments will be adopted to permit residential uses on these properties. The permitted density should be based on net usable floor area as opposed to density based on land area. Zoning incentives will be created to stimulate the production of LMI units in these structures.

Property Name (Plat/Lot)	Status	Floor Area (square feet)	Potential Number of 1-Bedroom Units¹	Potential Number of 2- Bedroom Units²
Esmond Mills (AP 25/43,45 and AP 26/35,35A, 35B)	Occupied – Commercial Uses	642,187	513.7	395.2
Mill Falls, Putnam Pike (AP 4/14)	Occupied - Commercial and Light	105,300	84.2	64.8
Lister Mills, Stillwater (AP 20/2)	Partially demolished	3,040	2.4	1.9
	TOTALS	Gross 750,527		
		Net 600,422	600	462
Estimated Build-out (50% 1-Bdr, 50% 2-Bdr)			300	231
Projected # of LMI Units³			75	58
<i>1 Build-out of mill sites assumes that future zoning of the converted mills will allow a density that will accommodate 1-bedroom dwelling units at 1,000 square feet each. A twenty percent (20%) reduction from the gross floor area was taken to determine usable (net) floor area, prior to calculating the residential build-out of each mill structure, to account for utility and other inhabitable spaces.</i>				
<i>2 Assumes that future zoning of the converted mills will allow a density that will accommodate 2-Bedroom Unit per 1,300 square feet</i>				
<i>3 LMI Projection assumes that a minimum of 25% of the net usable floor area in all mill structures identified in this plan will be devoted to LMI Units. Fifty percent will be one-bedroom units, and 50 percent will be two-bedroom units.</i>				

For the purposes of this study, the potential number of units is determined by first assuming that 50% of the residential units constructed will be one-bedroom units and the other 50% will be two-bedroom units. Secondly, it is assumed that a minimum of 25% of the total net floor area in these mill buildings will be devoted to LMI units. Therefore, a total of 133 new LMI units are projected for the build-out of these selected mill sites; 75 of these units will have one-bedroom and 58 of these units will have two-bedrooms.

The Town will proactively guide low and moderate income housing rehabilitation efforts to certain areas that can best accommodate higher densities due to existing public utilities, services and facilities. The Town should work with public, private and non-profit developers to purchase and rehabilitate historic structures and older buildings and convert them to low and moderate income housing. New zoning must be developed to accommodate reasonable densities needed to convert single family units to multiple family units, and still protect neighborhood character, and provide for on-site landscaping and buffering, off-street parking, etc.

Due to the fact that these sites are currently utilized for their commercial and industrial value, it is difficult to say when these economically important properties will become available. However, each building offers the possibility for the creation of future affordable housing developments. And, furthermore, the Smithfield Planning Department, Smithfield Public Housing Authority and the Smithfield Historic Society are committed to working with developers interested in these locations in order to preserve their historic integrity as well as to encourage their use for LMI housing. The Town is also interested in pursuing Low Income Housing Tax Credits for these properties.

6.0 PROJECTION OF LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING NEED

6.1 Quantitative Estimates of Future Housing

This section examines the number of low and moderate income housing units needed to achieve the applicable threshold requirement for low and moderate income housing in Smithfield. The Act, as amended in 2004, requires ten percent (10%) of the Town's year-round housing units to qualify as low or moderate income housing. At the present time, the Town has 321 such units. Ten percent (10%) of the Town's 7,354 year-round housing units (2000 U.S. Census) requires a total of 735 units, or a deficit of 414 units. In order to encourage the construction of enough affordable units to reach the ten percent (10%) goal "within a reasonable period of time,"⁶² the Housing Plan must adopt policies and identify strategies that will, if successfully implemented, put the Town in compliance with the requirements of the Act.

Rhode Island Housing has prepared an estimate of the status of Low & Moderate Income Housing in the Town.⁶³ This worksheet provides an estimate of the number of housing units required over time to reach the ten percent (10%) requirement, and is shown in Appendix A. The document assumes four growth scenarios: (1) most recent building rate; (2) slow growth; (3) moderate growth; and (4) high growth. In each of these scenarios, an estimate is made of the number of low/mod units that would be required to be constructed annually to reach the goal. These estimates range from 27 to 37 units per year over an estimated 20 years. If any one of these estimates is used, the Town would have to restrict anywhere from 23 to 46 percent of the annual number of housing units built in the Town to qualified low and moderate income housing.

If these units are constructed in addition to the estimated annual average of new housing starts of 61 units per year for the last 10 years, this will put a severe strain on the ability of the Town to manage the impacts created by the influx of new housing. -The most critical capacity issue currently facing the Town is its public schools, which is nearing maximum enrollment at the middle school level. If constructed over a short period of time, these housing units—both market rate and low/moderate income, may add hundreds of new students into the public school system, before the Town can address the construction of new school facilities to increase overall capacity. Additional impacts will be felt in the Town's recreation, library, public works, utilities and public safety services. The Town must address the impacts of additional new low and moderate income housing as part of its overall growth management program. *See discussion under Goal H-4.*

As noted above, two of the three subsidized housing projects in the Town (Esmond Village and Georgiaville Manor) are restricted to providing affordable units only until January 2005 and December 2005,

⁶² Handbook 16, op. cit., p. IV-19.

respectively. Unless extended, these sunset dates will result in a **net loss of 194 housing units** from the total number that counts towards the 10 percent low/moderate income housing goal set by the Act.

6.2 The Consolidated Plan

Demand for low and moderate income housing must also be examined in terms of meeting local low and moderate income housing needs. The Town must plan its low and moderate income housing strategies so as to encourage production of the types of housing that are most needed in the community. These strategies must also bear a direct relationship with the State's five-year Consolidated Plan. This five-year plan is based on a review of the State's housing market and housing, homeless and community development needs.

The State of Rhode Island Consolidated Plan 2000-2005⁶⁴ examined housing conditions in the state based on the 1990 census. Some of the major findings of this study are:

- Rhode Island's homeownership rate continues to be lower than the national average
- Rhode Island has an insufficient number of large rental units
- Rhode Island has an inadequate supply of affordable housing
- The cost of rental housing continues to be a problem for Rhode Island renters
- Homelessness continues to be a statewide problem, not restricted only to cities
- There is a need for more permanent supportive housing for Rhode Island's diverse special needs population

The Plan assigned a high priority to several groups for which housing is needed on a statewide basis. Local communities are required to develop local housing strategies that are in proportion to the unmet local and state housing needs identified in this Housing Element and in the Consolidated Plan. The Consolidated Plan identifies unmet regional and statewide housing needs as follows:

A. Rental Housing

- Extremely Low-Income Households (0-30% MFI)
- Families for both small and large related households
- Elderly, especially frail elderly and extremely low income elderly

B. Home Owners

- Moderate Income (51-80% MFI)

C. Homeless

D. Special Needs

⁶³ Low and Moderate-Income Housing Status Worksheet, Town of Smithfield, July 2004.

⁶⁴ RI Consolidated Plan 2000-2005, op. cit.

- Frail Elderly
- Disabled Persons
- People Living with HIV/AIDS
- People transitioning from institutional care

6.3 Local Housing Needs

In order to measure the nature of local housing demand in Smithfield, the information contained in the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) was reviewed. CHAS is required as part of the National Affordability Housing Act of 1991, and is a requirement of agencies such as Rhode Island Housing to receive federal monies to support their programs. The CHAS is now a component of the Consolidated Plan. This information is published by HUD after every Census and provides information on the type of housing problems in a given community. The 2000 CHAS data for the Town of Smithfield is presented in its entirety in Appendix B.

The 2000 CHAS data reveals that of Smithfield’s 6,959 households studied, 2,363 households reported moderate incomes or less (i.e. less than or equal to 80% of the Area Median Income). Of the 2,363 households, 1,319 households (55.8%) reported some type of housing problem. The term “housing problem” is defined as households forced to spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing and/or living in substandard conditions.⁶⁵ Table 21 below summarizes the CHAS data for Smithfield.

This summary of the CHAS data illustrates the proportional need for affordable housing across household types (i.e. elderly, family and other/special needs). The data differentiates between renters and owners. The ‘Family’ category includes small related (2 to 4 members) and large related (5 or more members) families. The proportional CHAS need for each category is based on the projected number of LMI units needed to meet the 10% threshold for Smithfield in the Year 2020 (N = 1,319 units).

Household Type	2000 Number of Households with Any Housing Problem	Proportional CHAS Need¹ (<= 80% AMI)	# of LMI Units Needed by 2020²	Existing Supply	Future Need³	Proportion of Future Need
Elderly Renter	329	24.9%	229	244	-15	-2.5%
Elderly Owner	287	21.8%	201	0	201	33.5%
Family Renter	141	10.7%	98	4	94	15.8%
Family Owner	369	28.0%	258	0	258	43.0%
Other Renter	58	4.4%	40	73	-33	-5.4%
Other Owner	135	10.2%	94	0	94	15.7%
Total LMI Units	1,319	100%	920	321	599	100%

*1 Projected by 2000 CHAS for households with less than or equal to 80% Area Median Income (AMI).
 2 Value equals Proportional CHAS Need multiplied by the number of LMI units needed by 2020 (N = 920) which is based on the*

⁶⁵ Substandard conditions are defined as facilities without complete kitchen or bathroom facilities.

*20-year building permit average of 95.7 permits per year.
 3 Future need equal CHAS need minus existing LMI supply.
 4 For the purposes of this analysis and planning effort, 'Other' signifies special needs populations in the community.*

Table 21 also details the projected need for housing within the planning period (i.e. by the Year 2020). These data consider existing and future LMI housing in the context of the three household types. By 2020, a total of 920 LMI units must be available assuming the Town grows at a moderate rate and 10% of the year-round housing stock will be affordable to LMI households. Of this 2020 target, elderly households constitute the greatest proportional need (46.7%) compared to family households (38.67%) and other households (14.63%) without consideration of existing LMI units.

The current LMI housing supply in Smithfield amounts to 321 units. There are 244 existing units of elderly household compared to 4 LMI family units and 73 special needs units. All current LMI units are rental units. Subtracting the existing LMI figure from the 2020 need of 920, the deficit, or need, equals 599 units. Broken down by household type, the future need for LMI housing by 2020 is greatest for families in Smithfield (352 units or 58.8% of the future need) versus the elderly (186 units or 31%) and special needs (61 units or 10.2%). Today's supply of elderly rental and special needs rental housing meets current and estimated future supply of LMI units.

Over 90% of the future need for LMI housing in Smithfield is derived from the need for ownership opportunities, according to the CHAS. The CHAS data suggests that almost half of these new LMI units should be targeted for owner-occupied family housing. Circumstances in the community may offer two explanations for these data: 1) home ownership raises greater [financial] challenges than renting because of greater maintenance costs overall, and therefore, homeowners are more likely to experience housing problems than renters⁶⁶ and 2) the market generates more demand for rental housing and supply has tried to keep pace with the demand.

The following sections describe the goals, policies, strategies and actions the Town has considered in light of the low and moderate income housing crisis. These statements summarize the community's policies on how it can respond to local, regional and state needs within a reasonable timeframe. Moreover, these statements represent the Town's dedication to providing for its citizens while maintaining its quality of life and community character.

⁶⁶ The CHAS data in Appendix B suggests that LMI homeowners are more likely to experience housing problems than LMI renters.

7.0 ***POLICIES, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES***

Goals and objectives of this Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan are based on a series of public work sessions with the Smithfield Town Council, Planning Board and other Town officials that were held in 2003⁶⁷. See Appendices C, D and E for minutes of these work sessions. Additionally, meetings with Town officials, the Smithfield Housing Authority and interviews with state and local housing officials contributed to the development of this Plan. These discussions, along with a review of the 1992 Housing Element and an analysis of existing conditions and trends have helped to shape this Plan.

7.1 2002 Community Survey Report

In April 2002, the Town mailed out a questionnaire to 7,600 residents asking for their response on a variety of community services and topics, including housing. The results of the 2002 Community Survey Report⁶⁸ indicate the opinions and attitudes of Town residents toward a number of issues facing the community. As part of this survey, 'Functional Issues' in accordance with the Comprehensive Community Plan were examined.

Six issues regarding housing in the Town were rated by respondents to the survey. The highest response as "Very Important/Important" was to the issue "Emphasize and preserve the identity of historic neighborhoods through historic district zoning" (73%). In fact, the highest percentage of "Unimportant/Very Unimportant" ratings were allocated to "Allowing and Encouraging the Development of Redevelopment of Small-Scale Affordable Housing Structure within Existing Neighborhoods" (35%). Approximately half of the respondents, however felt that affordable housing was an important issue facing the Town.

7.2 The Smithfield Summit Report

In addition, in April 2003 the Town conducted an outreach and public participation process that identified significant topics of concern and priority issues related to planning and growth in the Town. This exercise was initiated as part of the Town's five year update of its Comprehensive Plan. The results of this process was the Smithfield Summit Report⁶⁹ a document that was used in part as a basis for the housing policies developed in this Housing Plan. The Summit Report looked at the seven different elements of the Comprehensive Plan and identified priority issues therefore. With regard to housing, the Report identified the following:

Priority Issues:

1. *Variety of Housing*
2. *Safe Neighborhoods*
3. *Re-assess and re-evaluate Historical Priorities*

⁶⁷ Meeting dates were September 23, 2003; October 27, 2003 and December 10, 2003.

⁶⁸ Smithfield Department of Planning and Economic Development, 2002 Community Survey Report, August 2002.

⁶⁹ Smithfield Summit Report, Smithfield Department of Planning and Economic Development, April 12, 2003.

Action Steps:

- *Inventory existing housing stock*
- *Inventory land and zoning potential*
- *Update build-out analysis*
- *Land Management*
- *More intermodal transportation*
- *Implement Public Safety Watch*

The process included a visioning exercise that attempted to create the image of Smithfield in the Year 2023. Most residents stated that they see open space, country living, and environmental protection as very important for the future. When asked to identify what they would not like to see in Smithfield, “apartment buildings/high rises” were mentioned. With regard to low and moderate income housing, there was very little definitive response, except for the need to offer a “variety of housing” throughout the town. The Summit Report indicates that the participants in this exercise wish to see Smithfield retain its character, and that the Town’s growth policies should require future growth to respect this character.

7.3 The Basis for Housing Policy

The Town of Smithfield, like many communities its size, is grappling with a multitude of growth-related issues all at once. The proximity of Smithfield to the Providence metropolitan area, the presence of Interstate 295, and the expansion of major employment centers in the Town during the past decade have made Smithfield a very desirable place to live. The need to provide a housing stock to meet the housing needs of the entire resident population is just one of the issues that face Town officials. The Town has developed its housing policies in concert with overall growth management policies that are contained in the 1992 Comprehensive Plan, but also in light of the need for more effective growth management measures that are being developed during 2003-2004. In particular, the Town will be developing a formal Needs Assessment and Growth Study to address the demand for new and additional services from Town government resulting from new development. It is anticipated that the Town will consider updating its Impact Fee Ordinance and imposing limitations on the number of building permits or other land use approvals to be issued at any time in accordance with the provisions of State law.

The opinions and attitudes of the Town’s citizens as reflected in the 2002 Community Survey Report and the 2003 Summit Report must also be used as a basis for the Town’s housing policy. Without effective citizen participation on the planning process, the acceptance and support of the public for the Town’s efforts to provide low and moderate income housing will be lost.

After a review of the affordable housing implementation actions and recommendations that were contained in the 1992 Plan, and in anticipation of future growth management measures, the following statement of Goals and Objectives is presented. These will be incorporated into the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan as required. Other elements of the Plan have also been reviewed and modified as necessary to be consistent with these housing policies.

8.0 VISION AND GOALS

The Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan contains the following Vision Statement:

“The vision for housing in the future of Smithfield is to plan for future development to provide for housing that can be afforded by the median income family of Smithfield spending not more than 30 percent of their annual income for housing. The Town should cultivate an understanding of the direction the Town should go in the future, recognizing the availability of utilities, Town facilities and transportation.”

This Vision Statement remains as a valid statement of the Town’s commitment to affordable and low and moderate income housing. The Housing Element also contains 3 Goals (H-1 through H-3) and 15 related policies that are intended to implement this Vision. It is recommended that the Town revise these Goals and Objectives in order to more clearly state those specific actions that will:

- Upgrade deteriorating and substandard housing
- Provide new housing opportunities geared to the needs of all segments of the population; and,
- Address the documented need for low and moderate income housing opportunities.

The goals and policies below include the existing policies (H-1 through H-3) found in the Housing Element of Town’s Comprehensive Plan. The new goals and policies recommended for inclusion in the Housing Element are H-4 through H-6.

Goal H-1: *To maximize the quality, accessibility, variety of residential structures and neighborhoods.*

Policy H - 1a

Stimulate development of a variety of housing, in terms of type, cost, size, location and design, to meet the broad range of needs and desires of homeowners and renters, and of all income groups and family sizes.

Policy H - 1b

Support the activities of the Town’s Housing Authority to increase its ability to serve its residents, with special emphasis upon meeting the needs of families and elderly citizens.

Policy H – 1c

Support the activities of the Gemini Housing Corporation and other area non-profit housing organizations.

Policy H – 1d

Expand the number of subsidized housing units in Smithfield, in order for the Town to meet the housing needs of its present and future population.

Policy H – 1e

The Town’s priority should be to meet the low and moderate income housing needs of its local residents.

Policy H – 1f

Encourage and support optimum location of new housing in terms of its relationships to transportation, pollution control, water supply, education and other public facilities and services; employment opportunities and commercial and community services; adjacent land uses; and the suitability of the specific site for other land uses, including open space.

Policy H – 1g

Support the activities of the Smithfield Housing Authority toward achieving a mix of affordable rental units which meet the different needs of local families and individuals.

Goal H-2: *To promote a safe, sanitary and well-constructed housing stock through new construction and renovation of existing structures.*

Policy H - 2a

Encourage and support the optimum use of existing housing stock, existing neighborhoods and existing structures suitable for residential use, in meeting housing needs, including rehabilitation of historic buildings for housing.

Policy H - 2b

Fully utilize governmental assistance programs and other available tools to ensure that the quality of the housing stock is maintained.

Policy H - 2c

Provide access to information regarding RIHMFC programs for home ownership.

Policy H - 2d

Encourage and support more efficient use of the State’s natural, energy, fiscal and other resources, and public services and facilities in residential structures and in residential development patterns.

Policy H – 2e

Encourage and support the continued long-term availability of housing units at Esmond Village and Georgiaville Manor to low and moderate income tenants.

Goal H – 3: *To encourage a safe and desirable neighborhood atmosphere.*

Policy H - 3a

Encourage and support the protection and improvement of stable neighborhoods and areas.

Policy H - 3b

Support activities which seek to improve the quality of life and shelter opportunities for all local citizens.

Policy H – 3c

Integrate new affordable housing development into existing neighborhoods in a manner that will protect the character and value of these neighborhoods.

Policy H – 3d

Distribute new low and moderate income housing developments throughout the Town on scattered sites, in scale with existing neighborhoods, and, except for small single family developments, where public water and sewer service is available.

Recommended Goals

Goal H-4: *To relate the location, density and nature of new housing to the Town’s long-range land use and growth management policies.*

Policy H - 4a

Apply new zoning provisions (Policies H- 4b and H – 4c) to promote low and moderate income housing units to the properties listed in the Plan (Table 22).

Policy H – 4b

Develop a review process for the approval of LMI Housing projects with special density provisions.

Policy H – 4c

Draft and adopt a mandatory inclusionary zoning provision in the Zoning Ordinance.

Policy H – 4d

Based on the comprehensive permit procedures provided in the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, the Town will adopt specific methods and procedures for the review of low and moderate income housing applications.

Policy H-4e

Work with non-profit and for-profit developers to rehabilitate existing housing and adaptively re-use nonresidential properties.

Policy H-4f

Fund rehabilitation and improvements to the existing housing stock utilizing the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program.

Policy H-4g

Explore the feasibility of creating a local historic district to protect existing housing units from demolition or inappropriate re-use.

Goal H-5: *Create programs that actively support low and moderate income housing opportunities in Smithfield.*

Policy H – 5a

Form an Affordable Housing Advisory Board

Policy H – 5b

Create an Affordable Housing Trust Fund

Goal H-6: *Seek alternatives to the State’s Low and Moderate Income Housing Act as a way of providing low and moderate income housing.*

Policy H- 6a

Encourage the State to revise the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act as follows:

- Amend the definition of “low and moderate income housing” to include a wider range of housing types
- Amend the minimum percentage of low and moderate income units required in order to be eligible to file for a comprehensive permit from the current twenty (20) percent of the total number of units.
- Protections to ensure that municipalities are not overwhelmed by multiple comprehensive permit application in a short period of time.

- Require developments that file for comprehensive permit applications to locate only in areas identified for such development in a community's comprehensive plan.
- Require all housing units filed as comprehensive permits to be subject to local impact fees and building permit quota systems, if enacted locally.

9.0 LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING STRATEGIES

9.1 Recommended Strategies

As required by Handbook 16, the Town must identify specific strategies to attain the ten percent threshold requirement for low and moderate income housing. This section presents a detailed explanation of strategies specifically recommended for low and moderate income housing. More general housing policies and strategies are provided in the Housing Element.

These strategies are based on the Town's stated Vision and Goals, and the Objectives designed to achieve these Goals as stated in the preceding section. Section 10.0 presents an Implementation Schedule which identifies quantitative estimates of the number of low and moderate income housing units expected to be generated by each strategy; the parties responsible for implementing each strategy; the timeframe for implementation; and the resources required to achieve them.

The strategies listed below provide detail to the Goals and Policies listed in Section 8.0. Goals H-1 through H-3 are already included in the Housing Element. Goals H-4 through H-6 are recommended to be added to the Housing Element, and are explained as follows:

9.1.1 Land Management Density Strategies

The following recommended policies and strategies are derived from **Goal H-4: To relate the location, density and nature of new housing to the Town's long-range land use and growth management policies.** Housing development in the Town must be coordinated with the Town's overall growth plans. This is particularly important where the development of low and moderate income/affordable housing is concerned. Currently, the provisions of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act enable a developer to obtain a comprehensive permit for a development on sites that are unsuited for this type of development; at densities that exceed the capacity of the land and infrastructure; and at scales that overwhelm their surrounding areas and neighborhoods. The Act also permits up to 75 percent of the housing units in any single application to be non-affordable (i.e., market rate) units. The cumulative impacts of both market-rate and low/mod income housing units must be considered as part of a long-range growth management strategy of the Town. The efficient production of low and moderate income housing should be integrated into these growth policies so that the Town's goal of reaching a level of ten percent low/moderate income housing by the year 2020 is not delayed. See Policy H-4d, below.

Policy H-4a:

Apply new zoning provisions (Policies H- 4b and H – 4c) to promote low and moderate income housing units to the properties list in the Plan (Table 22).

Several areas of town are better suited for the promotion of low and moderate income housing development. These areas were selected because they meet several conditions based on location:

- Associated with an existing population or growth centers of the community
- Accessible by/to the transportation system
- Within the existing service area of a public water supply and wastewater treatment system or easily connected to a system via minor extension
- Proximal to community services and amenities

For the sake of this planning effort, four areas were targeted for further consideration; the existing villages of Esmond, Greenville and Greystone, and the region of town due south of the intersection between Interstate 295 and Douglas Pike.

Within these areas, the Town has identified potential sites for the location of new low and moderate income housing development projects. These are shown on Map 2 and described in Table 22. These sites include approximately 530.38 gross acres of land for new housing development. In 2005, the Town conducted a development feasibility analysis of each of these sites, taking into account the presence of wetlands and other land unsuitable for development. See discussion in Section 10.0. As further described in Table 22, these sites have the potential to provide land for between 835 and 3,772 additional housing units. When these units are added to the potential number of inclusionary zoning units in new subdivisions, the potential number of new affordable housing units ranges from 910 to 3,847. The sites shown on this list should be considered as locations within the community where the Town would encourage the development of LMI housing. The greater proportion of these sites are on public water and sewer. The sites that are not connected to the system are considered to be easily accessible by a water and/or sewer line extension.

In order to calculate build-out estimates for these sites, the following assumptions were made:

1. The actual area of buildable land for each site was calculated to exclude areas unsuitable for development, such as wetlands, steep slopes, etc.
2. All development would be multifamily
3. Public water and sewer service will be provided

Development density was estimated to be between 7 units per acre and 30 units per acre based on housing type. See discussion under Policy H-4b, below.

Policy H – 4b:

Develop a review process for the approval of LMI Housing projects with special density provisions.

The Town will amend its zoning and other land use regulations to create opportunities for development of affordable housing at densities greater than those currently allowed in the zoning ordinance. The current (2003) zoning ordinance allows multifamily development in two zoning districts: R-20M and Planned Development (PD). The maximum permitted density in both of these zones is 2 units per acre. Development of multifamily housing at these densities may be difficult, especially at current land values. In an effort to encourage the development of quality low and moderate income housing at reasonable densities, the Town will provide zoning standards for LMI projects and identify properties that are capable of supporting greater density. The allowable density of affordable housing projects will vary based on the percentage of LMI units proposed and the type of housing proposed as follows:

- A maximum density of seven (7) units per developable acre may be permitted for any development proposal having at least twenty-five percent (25%), but less than one hundred percent (100%) low or moderate income housing. The number of affordable housing units in LMI projects shall be established by the Zoning Board based on the most recent building rate as detailed in Appendix A hereto so that the Town may attain the 10% affordability goal by 2020 as outlined in Appendix A.
- For development proposals in which 100 percent (100%) of the total units would be low or moderate income housing, a maximum density of twelve (12) units per developable acre may be permitted. This will include all housing types (i.e., family, elderly and special needs).
- For elderly housing developments in which one hundred percent (100%) of the units are low or moderate income housing, a maximum density of thirty (30) units per developable acre may be permitted.
- Property which has been identified in the Comprehensive Plan on Table 22 as suitable for low and moderate income housing will be required to file an application with the Zoning Board seeking approval for an affordable housing project. If granted, the Planning Board will review the development plans in the same manner as for land development projects.
- Property not identified in the Comprehensive Plan as suitable for low and moderate income housing is not recommended for such development at this time. Development proposals for properties not included in Table 22 may be considered for low and moderate income housing provided the project conforms with the zoning regulations of the district in which the property is located. If granted, the Planning Board will review the development plans in the same manner as for land development projects.

- Housing types other than multifamily, such as mixed use, duplex, or single family housing, may be permitted by the Zoning Board if they contribute to the overall goal of providing low and moderate income housing.
- For redevelopment strategies, such as conversion of existing mill structures, see Policy H-4e.

The Town will develop and adopt these zoning standards as part of its growth management implementation program. See Section 10.2 –Implementation Plan—for the required actions and timetable for adopting this zoning. The Town may also, at its discretion, add additional suitable properties not currently listed in Table 22 for development of low and moderate income housing after an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

Architectural standards that reflect the Town’s vision of community character should be included for LMI projects. These guidelines will give control of the aesthetic quality of new low and moderate income housing to the Town.

Policy H – 4c:

Draft and adopt a mandatory inclusionary zoning provision in the Zoning Ordinance.

Inclusionary zoning is a term that describes a zoning technique that provides incentives or requirements that a certain percentage of the housing constructed in new subdivisions or other land development projects is guaranteed to be affordable. It is a technique that has been applied in other areas of the country, but is relatively new to Rhode Island. The first such ordinances appeared in the early 1970s in California, Maryland and Virginia. However in recent years, inclusionary zoning techniques have spread into many jurisdictions throughout the nation.

The Town of Smithfield has experienced a steady stream of applications for new subdivisions during the past decade. Records provided by the Planning Department indicate that a total of 551 new lots/units were recorded since January 1992. Another 1,236 lots/units are currently under review or construction, prior to recording⁷⁰. These developments are listed in Appendix F and are shown on Map 1. This latter figure (1,236) includes five pending low/moderate income housing developments submitted in 2003-2004 as comprehensive permit applications. The total number of units in these three applications is 1,006. If these are subtracted from the total number of pending lots/units, there are some 230 lots/units which could be expected to be approved within the next 18 months. This results in a total of 781 approved lots/units over a span of 13 years, or approximately 60 lots/units per year.

⁷⁰ Smithfield Planning Department, 2003.

As applied in other jurisdictions, inclusionary zoning techniques most often require a certain percentage of the number of lots or dwelling units in a subdivision be restricted to sale to low and moderate income buyers. The courts have been reluctant to approve schemes that require this percentage to be taken out of the number of units that could be built under current zoning densities. This would, in effect require private developers to assume the burden of providing the public benefit of low and moderate income housing, at their expense. In order to offset this burden, the most successful inclusionary zoning techniques combine the requirement of providing low and moderate income housing with a density incentive, or bonus. For example, a twenty percent incentive in a 10-lot subdivision would yield 12 units, two of which would be required to be affordable. There are many variations on this technique, including the option of allowing the developer to pay into an affordable housing trust fund *in lieu-of* constructing the actual units in a particular subdivision.

For the purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that 20 percent of all units in new subdivisions will be affordable, and that these units will be bonus units provided in addition to the maximum number permitted under current zoning density. This number will vary depending on the rate of growth. A portion of these units may pay a fee in-lieu-of construction toward the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. For the purposes of this Plan, only 5 units per year are included in the projections. See discussion in Table 25.

Again, architectural standards that reflect the Town’s vision of community character should be included in the new zoning district language. These guidelines will give control of the aesthetic quality of new low and moderate income housing to the Town. When reviewing applications for mixed market-rate and affordable-rate developments, the Town should require that the exterior architectural treatment and the site design to be similar in nature for both types of homes.

Policy H-4d:

Based on the comprehensive permit procedures provided in the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, the Town will adopt specific methods and procedures for the review of low and moderate income housing applications.

The Town proposes to modify its existing ordinance that deals with comprehensive permit applications for low and moderate income housing to reflect changes made in the new Low and Moderate Income Housing Act and associated legislation.

9.1.2 Redevelopment Strategies

Policy H-4e:

Work with non-profit and for-profit developers to rehabilitate existing housing and adaptive re-use of nonresidential properties.

Low and moderate income housing development should also take place in those areas of Town where older housing is prevalent, and opportunities for infill development are available. Rehabilitation of existing units adds to the supply of low and moderate income housing without significantly increasing the total number of units in the Town. Rehabilitation in the Town's developed areas could include small apartments, duplexes or single family units to provide a larger range of housing options. To begin, the Town should create a data base of housing that has experienced code violations, sought rehabilitation loans, or has been changed from single to multi-family use. These units should be evaluated for their potential for acquisition and conversion to low and moderate income housing by nonprofit housing agencies.

As part of its strategy to encourage infill of low and moderate income housing in areas that have adequate infrastructure, the Town will revise its zoning codes to permit increases in density necessary for development of new housing, while protecting neighborhood character and retaining adequate landscaping, buffering and off-street parking.

The Town has also identified several mill sites that have the potential for residential development over time (Table 20). Adaptive re-use of these properties could yield as many as 300 one bedroom and 231 two bedroom residential units, if these properties are utilized for residential purposes by 2020. A reasonable proportion of these units (25%) dedicated to low and moderate housing development would yield as many as 133 new LMI units in this timeframe, taking rounding in to consideration. The Town's Planning Department will promote adaptive re-use of these mill sites by offering developers a zone change (i.e., from commercial or industrial to PD and/or multi-family residential) to promote these uses at economically feasible densities in order to maximize the production of residential units at these sites. The Town will mandate that at least 25% of the total number of residential units within the converted mills will be low and moderate income housing, especially for rental opportunities for elderly and special needs households.

Policy H-4f:

Fund rehabilitation and improvements to the existing housing stock.

The Town has developed a Smithfield Housing Rehabilitation Program to provide grants for repair and rehabilitation of low and moderate income housing, including both single and multi-family structures. Funded through CDBG appropriations, this program is typically under funded, and many worthwhile projects are neglected. The Town should increase the level of funding from its CDBG appropriation, and consider allocating funding through its operating budget for improved code enforcement and inspections.

Policy H-4g:

Explore the feasibility of creating a local historic district to protect existing housing units from demolition or inappropriate re-use.

Many of the Town’s older homes are located in the traditional historic villages of Esmond, Greenville and Georgiaville. Scattered historic sites and properties are identified in the Comprehensive Plan, including seven sites/districts included on the National Register of Historic Places. Creation of a municipal body and regulation charged with reviewing changes to historic structures might preserve older housing which often serves as low and moderate income housing. The Town will investigate opportunities for using the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program to rehabilitate eligible properties in these areas. As many as ten rehabilitated properties within these historic villages in the next 20 years is the Town’s objective for this strategy.

The following recommended policies and strategies support the attainment of **Goal H-5 Create programs that actively support affordable housing opportunities in Smithfield.**

Policy H – 5a:

Form an Affordable Housing Advisory Board

An Affordable Housing Advisory Board should be created to act as a catalyst for affordable housing and low and moderate income housing initiatives within the Town. It would also assist the Town, the State, and private and nonprofit developers to provide low and moderate income housing in a manner that is consistent with the Comprehensive Community Plan. The Board would initially be appointed by the Town Council and consist of citizens who represent the housing community, banking, real estate, business, local community organizations and others who have a direct interest in low and moderate income housing in the Town. It would be advisory in nature, and would not replace or duplicate the duties of the Town Council, Planning Board, Zoning Board or Planning Department.

The general duties and purposes of an Affordable Housing Advisory Board are to:

- Establish short-term and long-term housing goals for the town that include those in this Plan;
- Support and expand the role of non-profit organizations in providing permanent low and moderate income housing in the Town;
- Research properties in the Town that may be sites for low and moderate income housing projects;
- Develop a site inventory of potentially suitable sites for rehabilitation of existing housing and adaptive re-use of nonresidential properties;
- Conduct educational programs regarding low and moderate income housing issues within the community;
- Assist the Town in developing zoning amendments contained in this Plan to encourage low and moderate income housing;
- Research the need and methods of establishing and administering an Affordable Housing Trust Fund;
- Identify funding sources for the production of low and moderate income housing within the Town.

Policy H – 5b:

Create an Affordable Housing Trust Fund

An Affordable Housing Trust Fund would act as the treasury for funds generated specifically for creation of low and moderate income housing. The Trust Fund would be administered by the Town, acting as the fiduciary agent for all funds generated through impact fees, assessments, grants, state or federal funding programs, private donations, land acquisitions or other sources of funding for low and moderate income housing. The Affordable Housing Advisory Board should advise the Town on the operation of the Trust Fund to ensure that the Fund is accountable to local needs. The Town Council shall approve all disbursements from the fund.

There are several local and national models of ‘housing trusts’ or ‘community trusts’ that Smithfield could emulate. In fact, this year, Grow Smart Rhode Island will be convening a group of experts to examine the possibility of using the structure and mechanisms of traditional land trusts to adopt for the acquisition and development of land and other property for low and moderate income housing.⁷¹ Depending on the so-called, ‘Housing and Conservation Trust Study Commission’, Smithfield may choose to lead the way by implementing its recommendations. Otherwise, the State of New Jersey has pioneered successful programs that blend inclusionary housing and transfer of housing development credits between metropolitan and non-metro areas.⁷² Such a system has not been tried in Rhode Island but the legislative environment does not prohibit it at present.

⁷¹ R.I.G.L. 42-113-11

The following recommended policies and strategies support the attainment of **Goal H-6: Seek alternatives to the State’s Low and Moderate Income Housing Act as a way of providing affordable housing.**

Policy H- 6a:

Encourage the State to revise the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, as follows:

- Amend the definition of “low and moderate income housing” to include a wider range of housing types.
- Amend the minimum percentage of low and moderate income units required in order to be eligible to file for a comprehensive permit from the current twenty (20) percent of the total number of units.
- Protections to ensure that municipalities are not overwhelmed by multiple comprehensive permit application in a short period of time.
- Require developments that file for comprehensive permit applications to locate only in areas identified for such development in a community’s comprehensive plan.
- Require all housing units filed as comprehensive permits to be subject to local impact fees and building permit quota systems, if enacted locally.

⁷² Buchsbaum, Peter A., Esq. April 26, 2004. Implementing an Inclusionary Housing Program. Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith, Ravin, Davis and Himmel LLP. New Jersey.

10.0 IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIES

Reaching the 10 Percent Low and Moderate Income Housing Level

The policies, strategies and actions laid forth in the previous sections enable Smithfield to provide ten percent of its housing stock for low/moderate income households and to maintain that percentage level as the community grows in the future. As stated previously, this would immediately require an additional 414 housing units, or would require that a substantial percentage (23-46%) of the future housing constructed in Smithfield be affordable for the next fifteen years. The Town would prefer that the Act be amended to permit local low and moderate income housing initiatives to achieve a moderate rate of increase in the levels of affordable units. To reach the ten percent goal within 15 years, Smithfield will have to add housing as detailed in the tables provided below.

The Town of Smithfield has chosen to identify sites in the community where LMI housing development shall be promoted (Policy H-4a). Nineteen sites were selected (Table 22) and analyzed for the presence of development constraints and available infrastructure. The Smithfield Planning Department and the Town Surveyor completed a site-by-site analysis using GIS to determine the build-out potential of each site. LMI housing development projections were conducted based on several assumed zoning densities according to the Town's elected strategies (Policies H-4b & H-4c). Additional assumptions regarding the proportion of the selected parcels that would be developed for a particular household type were also made to generate estimations of the number of units. These assumptions are noted in Table 22.

The number of units projected in Table 22 provide a range of possibilities for the Town to meet its LMI production goals. Given the reality that not every one of the selected parcels will be developed for LMI housing, the Town will have several opportunities to work the owners of the selected properties and apply its LMI production policies while achieving the community's LMI needs.

Table 22– Selected Properties for the Construction of Low and Moderate Income Housing										Projected Number of Units at Lot Buildout		
Map ID#	Plat	Lot	Location/Owner	Date of Ownership	Zoning	Gross Land Area	Buildable Area	Public Water ¹	Public Sewer	7 units/acre ²	12 units/acre	30 units/acre
1	51,46	125,14 6	Next to Post Office on Farnum Pike	May-02, Nov-96	R-MED	4.23	4.0	ESW w/Ext.	Yes w/Ext.	28	48	120
2	32	8	Carlos Mendes Property; Old County Road	Aug-03	R-MED	23.15	23.2	ESW	Yes	162	278	696
3	42	185	Whipple Estates	Mar-97	R-80	42	41.9	ESW	No	293	503	1257
4	23 & 42	61,67 A 125,12 5A,12 6	High Ridge Estates	12/02, 04/02, 12/02, 07/00, 04/02	R-MED	74.4	2.3	ESW	Yes	16	28	69
5	41 & 42	1 - 450	Tea Lots	Unknown	R-MED	57.1	55.8	Yes	No	391	670	1674
6	44	72	Behind St. Phillips School- Putnam Pike	Feb-85	R-80	55.7	51.4	GW	Yes	360	617	1542
7	4	14,16	Sal Salamon Mills – W. Greenville Road	May-03, Aug-03	R-20M	21.0	5.0	GW	Yes	35	60	150
8	20	2	Stillwater Road/Lister Mills/Belvoir Estates	Nov-98	R-MED	9.5	7.9	SW	Yes	55	95	237
9	44	4	Putnam Pike	May-03	MU	13.7	1.5	ESW	Yes	11	18	45
10	23	71	Foundry	Apr-61	R-20	6.4	6.0	SW	Yes	42	72	180
11	42	130A	Town Greenspace	Feb-95	R-20	21	20.2	ESW	Yes w/Ext.	141	242	606
12	28	66	Dionne's property	Apr-92	R-20	10.4	10.4	ESW	Yes	73	125	312
13	23	19	Interchange Realty	Unknown	PD	5.4	5.4	GW w/Ext.	Yes w/Ext.	38	65	162
14	43	21C	A.J. Matteo property	Oct-97	R80	65.6	65.6	GW	Yes	459	787	1968
15	44	82	Robert Knight et al, Edwin Knight, Jr.	Feb-93	R-80	43	34.6	GW	No	242	415	1,038
16	25	45	Anthony Lisi et al/Kenneth Caito	Jun-98	LI	3.8	3.8	ESW	Yes	27	46	114
17	46	10A	Lucy Corp	Dec-64	R80	36.6	32.0	GW w/Ext.	Yes w/Ext.	224	384	960
18	46	9	Sand Trace LLC	Apr-99	R80	25	22.8	GW w/Ext.	Yes w/Ext.	160	274	684
19	46	10	Lucy Corp	Dec-64	R80	12.4	11.8	GW w/Ext.	Yes w/Ext.	83	142	354

Total Acreage and Potential New Multifamily Units	530.38	405.6			2,840	4,869	12,168
<i>Proportional CHAS Need³</i>					29.4%	39.7%	31.0%
<i>Projected Number of LMI Units from Selected Properties</i>					835	1,933	3,772
<i>Potential Inclusionary Zoning Units in Subdivisions</i>					75	75	75
Total Potential Low/Mod Housing Units					910	2,008	3,847 ⁴

Source: Town of Smithfield, RI, 2004.

1 Codes for Public Water Supply Systems: ESW = East Smithfield Water; GW = Greenville Water; SM = Smithfield Water

2 Calculations assume that 25% of the lot/build-out will result in LMI Units. (See Policy H-4b in Section 9.0)

3 It is not feasible to predict at this time which of the 24 lots will be developed for elderly, family and other households, nor is it feasible to determine which density will apply. This review will be conducted by the Town Council and Planning Board at the time of review of a zoning application. The Town will monitor the applications to ensure consistency with the needs stated in this Plan in Table 25. Therefore, a range of potential housing units is calculated based on assumptions drawn from the CHAS data presented in Table 21. The CHAS future need for elderly, family and other households are used to approximate the projected number of LMI units by multiplying the estimated build-out for each lot by the proportionate future LMI need as follows: 1) Half of the total future need (58.8%) for family (renters & owners), or 29.4%, was used to apportion the number of LMI units at 7 units/acre. 2) For developments at 12 units/acre, or those with 100% LMI, half of the future need for family households (29.4%) and other households (10.7%), a total of 39.7%, was used to apportion the build-out. 3) All developments at 30 units/acre were assumed to be for the elderly, which is 31% of the CHAS future need.

4 The Town's need for elderly units is only a fraction of this projected amount. This density is based on densities allowed by the Town for two pending developments at Cortland Place and Gemini Housing.

The new housing described in Table 23 below will require the development of approximately 283 to 316 additional units of low and moderate income housing every eight to ten years to reach the ten percent standard by the year 2020. These units will be distributed among several different housing types as prescribed by the State’s Consolidated Plan, 2000 CHAS and summarized in Table 21 on Page 40.

Table 23 -Required Number of Housing Units required to Obtain the 10% Low and Moderate Income Housing Standard

Year	Total Year-Round Housing Units	Low and Moderate Housing Units	Additional Low and Moderate Units (From 2003)	Percentage Low and Moderate
2000	7,354	321	0	4.36
2003	7,573 ¹	321	0	4.24
2010	8,243	637	316	7.54
2020	9,200	920	599	10.0
At Build-Out	11,639 ³	1,164	843	10.0

Notes:

1. Additional housing units estimated from Building Official’s record of new housing permits
2. Building rate calculated from most recent Smithfield Building Official data (refer to Table *) or, a 20-Year Average of 95.7 permits/year.
3. A build-out estimate of 4,243 additional units is based upon 2001 Build-Out Analysis.

Table 24 below illustrates how new LMI units will be strategically targeted over time to meet these goals. This projection reflects the Town’s dedication to the promotion of housing by promoting LMI housing unit creation through new developments (Policies H-4a – H4c). By the 2020 benchmark, it is predicted that the Town will surpass the 10% LMI Goal.

Table 24 - Projection of Low and Moderate Income Housing Development in Smithfield, RI 2003 - 2020

	5-year Goal 12/31/2008 ⁴	Goal 2010 ⁴	Goal 2020	Percentage of New 20-year LMI Units
Inclusionary Zoning ¹	31	75	106	13.9%
Residential Multifamily applied to Target Areas ²	60	250	480	62.8%
Collaboration with Local Non-Profit Developers ³		45	45	5.9%
Rehabilitation Strategies		30	133	17.4%
Mill Sites				
TOTAL NEW LMI UNITS (cumulative)	91	400	764	100%
2020 Total LMI Units (%LMI)	412 (5.1%)	721 (8.7%)	1,085 (11.8%)	

Notes:

1. On October 27, 2004 the Smithfield Zoning Board of Review resolved to grant a special use permit to Norman Realty Corporation for a 60-unit addition to the Cortland Place assisted living center and nursing home in Greenville. The Zoning Board made it a condition of approval that at least 31 of the new units is to qualify as low and moderate income housing and to serve elderly with special needs. Construction is expected to commence in 2005. It is assumed that an inclusionary zoning ordinance will be developed that will require 20 percent of all units in new subdivision and land development projects larger than 10 units to be constructed as low and moderate income housing. New subdivisions may take up to three years to be planned, reviewed, approved and constructed, and new housing to be built. The average number of new housing starts per year is 95.7, rounded to 96. Assuming that 50 percent of those units will be in subdivisions greater than 10 units each, a theoretical maximum of 4.8 (rounded to 5) inclusionary units per year will be constructed (95.7 x 0.50 x 0.10). A portion of these units may pay a fee in-lieu-of construction toward the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. For the purposes of this Plan, 5 units per year are included in the projections

starting in 2006 until 2010. Appendix F of this document indicates that of a total of 75 recent subdivisions approved by the Town, 13 of them were 10 or more units each. The total number of units in these subdivisions was 267 or 48.5% of the total of 551. Appendix F goes on to indicate that the number of lots/units in pending subdivisions 2000-2003 was 230, of which 69% were in subdivisions >10 lots (exclusive of comprehensive permit applications). The “assumed” 50% is considered to be conservative.

2. The 480 units estimated constitute a reasonable estimation from within the range, 294 – 5,318 units, of new LMI units projected in Table 22.
 3. Non-profit developers may include the Gemini Housing Corporation, Valley Affordable Housing, and Woonsocket Neighborhood Development Corporation. Gemini Housing Corporation working with Smithfield Public Housing Authority is expanding Greenville Manor with an additional 45 units that will serve the elderly and frail elderly populations through HUD 202 funding.
 4. Total year round housing units in 2008, 2010, and 2020 is assumed to be 8,052, 8,243 and 9,200 respectively, based on the 20-year building permit average.
-

Elderly, family and special needs LMI housing will be added to the Town’s housing stock according to Table 25 below. Several of the projections are actual number of proposed units while others represent plan implementation targets. For example, the actual number of units currently proposed as a housing project are given (e.g., Greenville Manor Expansion and Cortland Place) and other estimates represent targets or goals the Town will pursue as it implements the plan, i.e. encouraging family ownership housing opportunities through its inclusionary zoning ordinance. How these targets meet the CHAS need is summarized at the bottom of the table under the section ‘Totals by Household & Tenure Type’.

This plan promotes a balanced and practical approach for the promotion of new LMI housing in Smithfield to meet the CHAS goals. The chosen strategies will generate both owner- and renter- occupied housing units for all household types but will result in a ‘surplus’ of LMI units, mainly for renters. Rental opportunities for elderly and special needs households are emphasized instead of ownership opportunities out of consideration for the burden of homeownership and the potential risks and challenges associated with it.. The rental unit surplus is also a direct result of the additional units currently proposed in Town and the probably that converted mills will result in rental, rather than ownership, opportunities. Otherwise, the Town will rely considerably on working with the private, for-profit and not-for-profit, development community to build LMI units on the lots it has selected in its plan. By utilizing the proposed multifamily floating zone, the Town maintains enough flexibility over time to achieve the 2020 LMI Goal.

The timeframe and milestones for this plan’s implementation is laid forth in Table 26. This schedule also identifies the responsible parties for each strategy. Key Actions are also included in the table.

Table 25 – Projected Number of LMI Units by Household and Tenure Type

Development Strategy	LMI Unit Totals by Strategy	Elderly		Family		Special Needs	
		Rental	Home Ownership	Rental	Home Ownership	Rental	Home Ownership
Residential Multifamily applied to Target Areas See Table 22 ⁷³	480	190	10	185	10	75	10
Collaboration with Local Non-Profit Developers							
Greenville Manor Expansion – HUD202	45	35	0	0	0	10	0
Inclusionary Zoning							
All new subdivisions, 2005-2020	75	0	0	0	65	0	10
Cortland Place – <i>Norman Realty</i>	31	0	0	0	0	31	0
Rehabilitation Strategies							
Mill Sites ⁷⁴	133	28	0	95	0	10	0
Totals by Household & Tenure Type							
Projected New LMI Units	764	253	10	280	75	126	20
Current LMI Housing Units	321	244	0	4	0	73	0
Total Current + New LMI Units	1,085	497	10	284	75	199	20
2020 Need Goal by CHAS Data	920	229	201	98	258	40	94
Excess (Deficit)	165	268	(191)	186	(183)	159	(74)

⁷³ The 480 units estimated constitute a reasonable estimation from within the range, 294 – 5,318 units, of new LMI units projected in Table 22.

⁷⁴ An estimated 133 LMI units shall be developed as a result of the conversion of several mills in town with a minimum of 25% of the total units set aside for LMI housing units.

10.1 Implementation Plan

Table 26– Policies, Strategies and Actions for the Implementation of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Plan

Goal H-1: To maximize the quality accessibility, variety of residential structures and neighborhoods.

Policies & Strategies	Actions Required	Timeframe/ Benchmarks /Responsible Parties
H - 1a: Stimulate development of a variety of housing, in terms of type, cost, size, location and design, to meet the broad range of needs and desires of homeowners and renters, and of all income groups and family sizes.	<i>See</i> Action Goals H-4 thru H-6	<i>See</i> Action Goals H-4 thru H-6
H - 1b: Support the activities of the Town’s Housing Authority to increase its ability to serve its residents, with special emphasis upon meeting the needs of families and elderly citizens.	Support the creation of 45 new housing units on land currently owned by SHA. See Tables 25 and 26.	Create Affordable Housing Advisory Board and Trust Fund.
H – 1c: Support the activities of the Gemini Housing Corporation and other area non-profit housing organizations.	Create an Affordable Housing Advisory Board and Trust Fund to work with local non-profits.	<i>See</i> Goal H-5.
H – 1d: Expand the number of subsidized housing units in Smithfield, in order for the Town to meet the housing needs of its present and future population.	<u>Recommendation:</u> Maintenance of the Town’s current subsidized housing stock will not achieve the goals of this Plan. Subsidized housing units must be expanded, but only in accordance with the land use, density and locations recommended herein. Replace Policy H1-f with (new) Policy H1-d.	<i>See</i> Tables 22.
H – 1e: The Town’s priority should be to meet the low and moderate income housing needs of its local residents.	Within the extent allowed by law or by the guidelines of specific funding programs, the Town should prioritize the creation of low and moderate income housing for local residents.	Adopt policy statements by Affordable Housing Advisory Board

Policies & Strategies	Actions Required	Timeframe/ Benchmarks /Responsible Parties
<p>H – 1f: Encourage and support optimum location of new housing in terms of its relationships to transportation, pollution control, water supply, education and other public facilities and services; employment opportunities and commercial and community services; adjacent land uses; and the suitability of the specific site for other land uses, including open space.</p>	<p>Create a list and map of properties and/or locations for new low and moderate income housing that would meet acceptable criteria. Amend the Land Use Plan Map and add descriptive policy statements in the Land Use Element of the Plan.</p>	<p>Amendments drafted as part of this Low and moderate income housing Plan.</p> <p>Adopt Comp Plan amendments.</p>
<p>H – 1g: Support the activities of the Smithfield Housing Authority toward achieving a mix of affordable rental units which meet the different needs of local families and individuals.</p>	<p>Same as Policy H-1b.</p>	
<p>Goal H-2: To promote a safe, sanitary and well-constructed housing stock through new construction and renovation of existing structures.</p>		
<p>H - 2a: Encourage and support the optimum use of existing housing stock, existing neighborhoods and existing structures suitable for residential use, in meeting housing needs, including rehabilitation of historic buildings for housing.</p>	<p>See specific Policies H-4e, 4f, 4g, and related discussion.</p>	<p>See discussion of related policies, below.</p>
<p>H - 2b: Fully utilize governmental assistance programs and other available tools to ensure that the quality of the housing stock is maintained.</p>	<p>See specific Policies H-4f and H-4g, and related discussion.</p>	
<p>H - 2c: Provide access to information regarding RIHMFC programs for home ownership.</p>	<p>See specific Policy H-5a, and related discussion.</p>	
<p>H - 2d: Encourage and support more efficient use of the State’s natural, energy, fiscal and other resources, and public services and facilities in residential structures and in residential development patterns.</p>	<p>See specific Policy H-5a, and related discussion.</p>	
<p>H – 2e: Encourage and support the continued long-term availability of housing units at Esmond Village and Georgiaville Manor to low and moderate income tenants.</p>	<p>Work with Rhode Island Housing and the current owners to fund the continued subsidy for these two developments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate discussions with RIH. Housing. • Affordable Housing Advisory Board to investigate.

Goal H – 3: To encourage a safe and desirable neighborhood atmosphere.

Policies & Strategies	Actions Required	Timeframe/ Benchmarks /Responsible Parties
H - 3a: Encourage and support the protection and improvement of stable neighborhoods and areas.		N/A
H - 3b: Support activities which seek to improve the quality of life and shelter opportunities for all local citizens.	These are general policy statements, with no specific action required. It is recommended that these current policy statements be retained to support the proposed land use and growth management policies regarding low and moderate income housing.	N/A
H – 3c: Integrate new low and moderate income housing development into existing neighborhoods in a manner that will protect the character and value of these neighborhoods.		N/A
H – 3d: Distribute new low and moderate income housing developments throughout the Town on scattered sites, in scale with existing neighborhoods, and, except for small single family developments, where public water and sewer service is available.	See specific Policies H-4a thru 4d and related discussion.	See specific Policies H-4a thru 4d and related discussion.

Goal H-4: To relate the location, density and nature of new housing to the Town’s long-range land use and growth management policies.

□ Policies & Strategies	□ Actions Required	□ Timeframe/ Benchmarks /Responsible Parties*
H - 4a: Apply new zoning provisions (Policies H- 4b and H – 4c) to promote low and moderate income housing units to the properties list in the Plan (Table 22)	Adopt Table 22 and Map 2 into the Comprehensive Plan and direct developers towards the site-specific information herein.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Application of new floating and inclusionary zones.

H – 4b: Develop a review process for the approval of LMI housing projects with special density provisions.

- Responsible Parties: PD, ZO, TC, PB
 - Timeline: Implementation begins after the zoning is adopted (see Policies H-4b & H-4c).
 - Zoning amendments
 - Growth management standards
 - Sites identified for low and moderate income housing
 - Responsible Parties: TC, PB, PD, TS, outside consultants
 - Timeline: Adopted review process for the approval of LMI projects - October 4, 2010
 - Draft Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance
 - Public Hearing
 - Adopted Ordinance
 - Responsible Parties: TC, PB, PD, TS, outside consultants
 - Timeline: Adopted Inclusionary Housing ordinance May 5, 2009
- Town Council will approve amendments to its zoning and land use regulations to create a new review process for the approval of higher density, low and moderate income housing developments in locations with appropriate site conditions.
 - Adopt these standards as part of a growth management program.
 - Identify additional suitable locations for development of low and moderate income housing in the Town.
- Planning Department and Town Solicitor work together to draft a mandatory inclusionary zoning ordinance that awards new developments a density bonus for the construction of low and moderate income housing units or payment in-lieu-of their construction.
 - Town adopts new inclusionary zoning ordinance.

H – 4c: Draft and adopt a mandatory inclusionary zoning provision in the Zoning Ordinance.

H – 4d: Based on the comprehensive permit procedures provided in the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, the Town will adopt specific methods and procedures for the review of low and moderate income housing applications.

- Amend zoning ordinance to reflect changes in the new Low and Moderate Income Housing Act.
 - Amended review process for low and moderate housing
 - Responsible Parties: PD, PB, ZBR, TS
 - Timeline: Years 1 – 2
 - Zone change application of multifamily zone to identified mill sites.
 - Adaptive re-use of mill sites
 - List of sites for housing rehabilitation
 - Responsible Parties: PD, ZO
 - Timeline: As mill site properties change ownership or development occurs at these sites 6 months to 5 years
 - Timeline: Create database: 6 months
 - Timeline: Revise zoning: Year 1
 - Increased annual appropriation of rehab funds that assist low and moderate income housing units
 - Responsible Parties: TC, TM, Gemini, Valley
 - Timeline: Years 1-2
- The Town will require residential development with the inclusion of a minimum of 25% LMI units of the mill sites listed in Table 20. It will work with the developer to change the zoning of these sites to multi-family zoning with densities allowing a minimum of 1,000 sq. ft. for 1-Bedroom apartments and 1,300 sq. ft. for 2-Bedroom apartments.
 - The Zoning and Building Department should create a database of housing units that have experienced code violations, sought rehabilitation loans or have change from single to multi-family housing to conduct this evaluation.
 - Revise zoning ordinance to allow greater densities for infill housing
- Allocate more CDBG funds to the Smithfield Housing Rehabilitation Program.
 - Allocate operating budget funds to housing code inspection and enforcement.
 - Explore ways to utilize the LIHTC program for qualified properties.

H – 4e: Work with non-profit and for-profit developers to rehabilitate existing housing and adaptive re-use of nonresidential properties.

H-4f: Fund rehabilitation and improvements to the existing housing stock.

- H-4g: Create a local historic district to protect existing housing units from demolition or inappropriate re-use.
- Planning Department will initiate the drafting of a historic district to be adopted into the local zoning ordinances that will provide for low and moderate income housing development in historic housing stock.
 - Smithfield Historical Society policies and procedures
 - Responsible Parties: TC, PB, PD, SHS
 - Timeline: Years 1-2

Goal H-5: Create programs that actively support low and moderate income housing opportunities in Smithfield.

Policies & Strategies	Actions Required	Timeframe/ Benchmarks /Responsible Parties
H – 5a: Form an Affordable Housing Advisory Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare Statement of Purposes, Duties and Scope of Advisory Services. • Town Council should create and appoint this advisory board consisting of representatives from the housing, banking, real estate, business and local communities. • The Board would fulfill general duties and purposes outlined in this Plan. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation and initial meeting of the Board • Responsible Parties: TC, PB, PD, SHA • Timeline: 6-12 months
H – 5b: Create an Affordable Housing Trust Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt local enabling laws to establish the Housing Trust Fund. • Identify potential sources of funding. • Apply for start-up funding from Rhode Island Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund establishment • Start-up grant application submitted • Responsible Parties: TC, PB, PD, SHA • Timeline: 12 months

Goal H-6: Seek alternatives to the State’s Low and Moderate Income Housing Act as a way of providing low and moderate income housing.

Policies & Strategies	Actions Required	Timeframe/ Benchmarks /Responsible Parties
<p>Policy H- 6a: Encourage the State to revise the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (§45-53) as follows:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the definition of “low and moderate income housing” to include a wider range of housing types. • Amend the minimum percentage of low and moderate income units required in order to be eligible to file for a comprehensive permit from the current twenty (20) percent of the total number of units. • Protections to ensure that municipalities are not overwhelmed by multiple comprehensive permit application in a short period of time. • Require developments that file for comprehensive permit applications to locate only in areas identified for such development in a community’s comprehensive plan. • Require all housing units filed as comprehensive permits to be subject to local impact fees and building permit quota systems, if enacted locally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of legislation in January 2004. • Town Council resolution requesting amendments to §45-53 • Support legislative amendments • Continue to monitor amendments to §45-53 that support Town housing policy. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible Parties: TC, TS, General Assembly delegation <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline: January 2004 • 6-12 months

Note: TC=Town Council; PB=Planning Board; PD=Planning Department; TS=Town Solicitor; SHA=Smithfield Housing Authority; TM=Town Manager; ZO=Zoning Officer; ZBR=Zoning Board of Review; SHS=Smithfield Historical Society

APPENDIX A

**APPENDIX A – ANALYSIS OF 10% LOW/MOD
HOUSING ATTAINMENT FOR SMITHFIELD, RI**

Source: Rhode Island Housing, July 2004.

Low & Moderate-Income Housing Status

Total Year-Round Housing Stock as of Census 2000	<u>7,354</u>
Required 10% LMI units	<u>735</u>
Total LMI Units (December 2003)	<u>321</u>
Current LMI %	<u>4.36%</u>
Additional LMI Units Needed to Reach 10%	<u>414</u>

Building Permit History

	1980 - 1989	1990 – 1999	1980 - 1999
Single Family	1,056	481	1,537
Multifamily	542	97	639
Total Units	1,598	578	2,176
Average per yr.	160	58	109

2000-2003

Single Family	243
Multifamily	8
Total Units	251
Average per yr.	63

Most Recent Building Rate

If Smithfield builds new housing at a rate equal to the LAST 4 YEARS, the town's total housing stock in the year

2020

will be

8,609

Ten percent (10%) of that number equals

861

To reach that number of LMI units,

27

new LMI units would have to be built in Smithfield each year.

Those LMI units would represent

43%

of all housing units permitted in Smithfield during each of the next

20

years.

Slow Growth

If Smithfield builds new housing at a rate equal to the 1990s, the town's total housing stock in the year

2020

will be

8,510

Ten percent (10%) of that number equals

851

To reach that number of LMI units,

27

new LMI units would have to be built in Smithfield each year.

Those LMI units would represent

46%

of all housing units permitted in Smithfield during each of the next

20

years.

Moderate Growth

If Smithfield builds new housing at a rate equal to the 1980-1999 average, the town's total housing stock in the year

2020

will be

9,530

Ten percent (10%) of that number equals

953

To reach that number of LMI units,

32

new LMI units would have to be built in Smithfield each year.

Those LMI units would represent

29%

of all housing units permitted in Smithfield during each of the next

20

years.

High Growth

If Smithfield builds new housing at a rate equal to the 1980s, the town's total housing stock in the year

2020

will be

10,550

Ten percent (10%) of that number equals

1,055

To reach that number of LMI units,

37

new LMI units would have to be built in Smithfield each year.

Those LMI units would represent

23%

of all housing units permitted in Smithfield during each of the next

20

years.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B - SOCDs CHAS DATA: HOUSING PROBLEMS OUTPUT FOR ALL HOUSEHOLDS

Name of Jurisdiction: Smithfield town, Rhode Island		Source of Data: CHAS Data Book				Data Current as of: 2000					
Household by Type, Income, & Housing Problem	Renters					Owners					Total Households
	Elderly 1 & 2 member households	Small Related (2 to 4)	Large Related (5 or more)	All Other Households	Total Renters	Elderly 1 & 2 member households	Small Related (2 to 4)	Large Related (5 or more)	All Other Households	Total Owners	
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	(H)	(I)	(J)	
1. Very Low Income (Household Income <= 50% MFI)	471	122	4	90	687	413	144	8	109	674	1,361
2. Household Income <=30% MFI	232	68	0	42	342	151	53	0	62	266	608
% with any housing problems	57.8	100.0	N/A	57.1	66.1	72.2	100.0	N/A	93.5	82.7	73.4
% Cost Burden >50% and other housing problems	4.3	0.0	N/A	0.0	2.9	0.0	7.5	N/A	0.0	1.5	2.3
% Cost Burden >30% to <=50% and other housing problems	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Cost Burden <=30% and other housing problems	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Cost Burden >50% only	44.8	100.0	N/A	47.6	56.1	53.6	73.6	N/A	71.0	61.7	58.6
% Cost Burden >30% to <=50% only	8.6	0.0	N/A	9.5	7.0	18.5	18.9	N/A	22.6	19.5	12.5
3. Household Income >30 to <=50% MFI	239	54	4	48	345	262	91	8	47	408	753
% with any housing problems	57.3	63.0	0.0	70.8	59.4	36.3	79.1	100.0	70.2	51.0	54.8
% Cost Burden >50% and other	12.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0

housing problems											
% Cost Burden >30% to <=50% and other housing problems	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5
% Cost Burden <=30% and other housing problems	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Cost Burden >50% only	26.8	0.0	0.0	29.2	22.6	16.0	59.3	50.0	40.4	29.2	26.2
% Cost Burden >30% to <=50% only	16.3	63.0	0.0	41.7	27.0	20.2	19.8	50.0	29.8	21.8	24.2
4. Household Income >50 to <=80% MFI	86	123	19	43	271	287	281	54	109	731	1,002
% with any housing problems	67.4	31.7	0.0	0.0	35.8	28.9	70.5	70.4	40.4	49.7	45.9
% Cost Burden >50% and other housing problems	23.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
% Cost Burden >30% to <=50% and other housing problems	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	3.7	1.1	0.8
% Cost Burden <=30% and other housing problems	4.7	8.1	0.0	0.0	5.2	0.0	3.6	0.0	0.0	1.4	2.4
% Cost Burden >50% only	39.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	7.7	13.9	18.5	13.8	11.8	12.0
% Cost Burden >30% to <=50% only	0.0	23.6	0.0	0.0	10.7	21.3	51.6	51.9	22.9	35.4	28.7
5. Household Income >80% MFI	74	137	4	247	462	594	2,629	443	468	4,134	4,596
% with any housing problems	50.0	7.3	0.0	0.0	10.2	7.7	9.5	9.7	20.1	10.4	10.4
% Cost Burden >50% and other housing problems	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Cost Burden >30% to <=50% and other housing problems	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Cost Burden <=30% and other housing problems	5.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.7	0.2	2.3	0.0	0.4	0.5

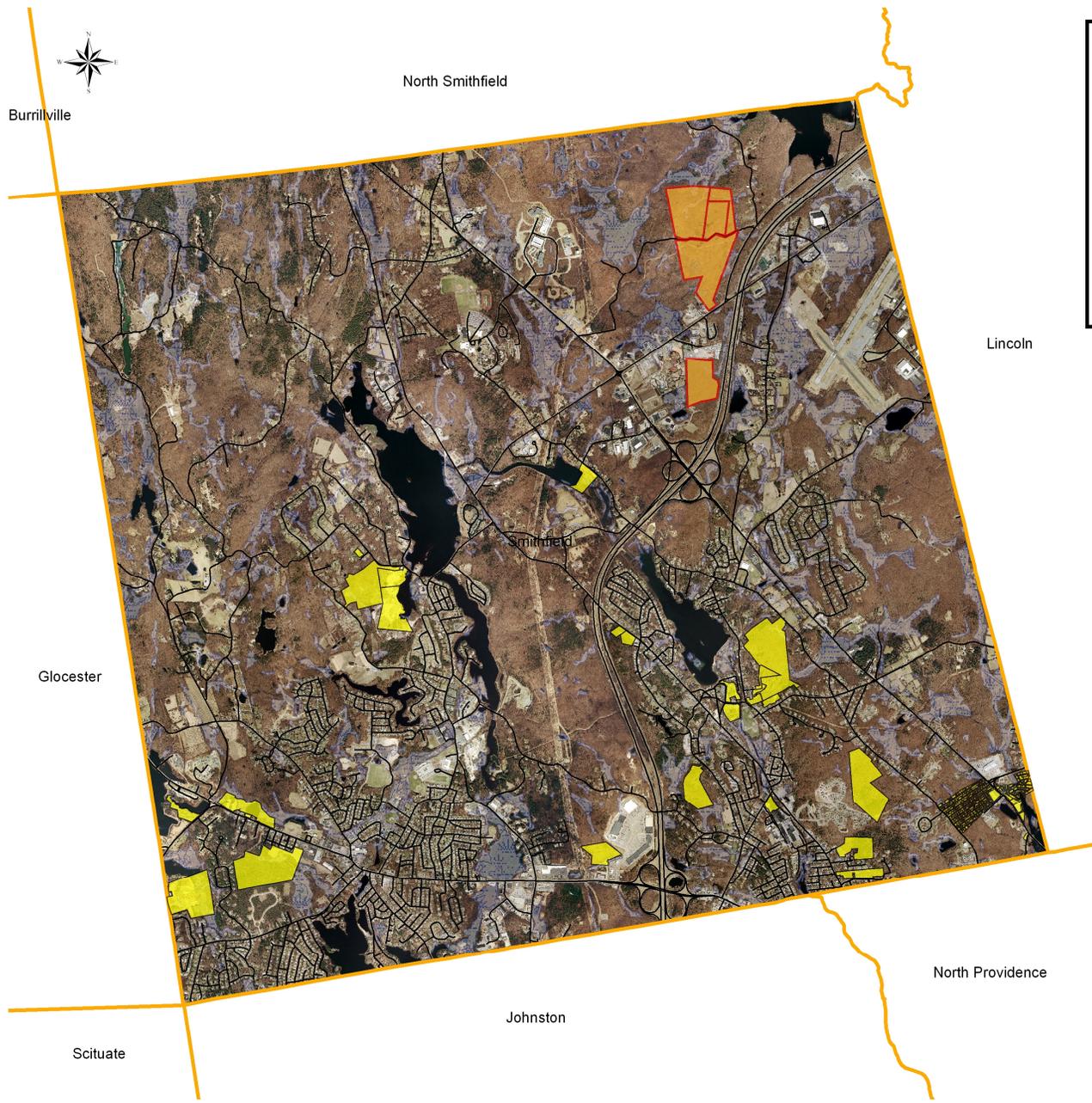
% Cost Burden >50% only	25.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.1	0.0	0.4	0.0	2.1	0.5	0.8
% Cost Burden >30% to <=50% only	18.9	7.3	0.0	0.0	5.2	7.1	8.9	7.4	17.9	9.5	9.1
6. Total Households	631	382	27	380	1,420	1,294	3,054	505	686	5,539	6,959
% with any housing problems	58.0	39.5	0.0	15.3	40.5	25.7	18.7	17.6	33.4	22.1	25.8

Source: State of the Cities Data Systems: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data (<http://socds.huduser.org/chas/index.htm?>)

Definitions:

Any housing problems: cost burden greater than 30% of income and/or overcrowding and/or without complete kitchen or plumbing facilities.

Other housing problems: overcrowding and/or without complete kitchen or plumbing facilities.



Legend

Selected Sites for LMI Housing

<all other values>

LMI Sites

From Original Plan-To Be Removed

From Original Plan-To Remain

Town Line

Roads

wetland

Map 2