

February, 2011

**MASTER PLAN
BROOKFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**



***Approved by the Planning Board,
May 2011***

2011 MASTER PLAN BROOKFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS



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I. Introduction

This plan is an official document, stipulated by the following state law.

M.G.L. Chapter 41, Section 81D.

A planning board, established in any city or town under section eighty-one A, shall make a master plan of such city or town or such part or parts thereof as said board may deem advisable and from time to time may extend or perfect such plan.

Such plan shall be a statement, through text, maps, illustrations or other forms of communication, that is designed to provide a basis for decision-making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality. The comprehensive plan shall be internally consistent in its policies, forecasts and standards, and shall include the following elements:

- (1) Goals and policies statement which identifies the goals and policies of the municipality for its future growth and development. Each community shall conduct an interactive public process, to determine community values, goals and to identify patterns of development that will be consistent with these goals.
- (2) Land use plan element which identifies present land use and designates the proposed distribution, location and inter-relationship of public and private land uses. This element shall relate the proposed standards of population density and building intensity to the capacity of land available or planned facilities and services. A land use plan map illustrating the land use policies of the municipality shall be included.
- (3) Housing element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted housing needs and objectives including programs for the preservation, improvement and development of housing. This element shall identify policies and strategies to provide a balance of local housing opportunities for all citizens.
- (4) Economic development element which identifies policies and strategies for the expansion or stabilization of the local economic base and the promotion of employment opportunities.
- (5) Natural and cultural resources element which provides an inventory of the significant natural, cultural and historic resource areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the protection and management of such areas.
- (6) Open space and recreation element which provides an inventory of recreational and resources and open space areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the management and protection of such resources and areas.
- (7) Services and facilities element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted needs for facilities and services used by the public.
- (8) Circulation element which provides an inventory of existing and proposed circulation and transportation systems.
- (9) Implementation program element which defines and schedules the specific municipal actions necessary to achieve the objectives of each element of the master or study plan. Scheduled expansion or replacement of public facilities or circulation system components and the anticipated costs and revenues associated with

accomplishment of such activities shall be detailed in this element. This element shall specify the process by which the municipality's regulatory structures shall be amended so as to be consistent with the master plan.

Such plan shall be made, and may be added to or changed from time to time, by a majority vote of such planning board and shall be public record. The planning board shall, upon completion of any plan or report, or any change or amendment to a plan or report produced under this section, furnish a copy of such plan or report or amendment thereto, to the department of housing and community development.

A city or town which has an established master or study plan under section eighty-one A and applies for a state grant from the commonwealth shall prepare and keep on file within such city or town an economic development supplement; provided, however, that such city or town shall not be required to prepare such supplement if such city or town has a supplement on file. Such supplement shall be at least one page in length and shall contain the goals of the city or town with respect to industrial or commercial development, affordable housing, and preservation of parks and open space.

Past and Present Members of the Open Space/Master Plan Committee:

Gwen Broz
Greg Burnham (resigned, 2008)
Cheri Carty (Treasurer)
Kris Casucci
Philip Chaffee (resigned, 2009)
Sarah Heller (Secretary)
Cindy Scott (Chair, resigned 2009)
William R. Simpson (Chair)
Sharon Mahoney (resigned 2009)
Philip Pierce (resigned, 2008)
Ronald Starcher
Tim Simon

History of Committee Activities

The Master Plan Committee was created by a vote of the May 2006 Brookfield Town Meeting. The Selectmen appointed members to Master Plan Committee and it began meeting in February 2008. At the May 2008 Town Meeting, the voters approved the merger of the Open Space and Recreation Committee and the Master Plan Committee to ensure cohesion between the two plans.

The new Open Space/Master Plan committee created the slogan "Brookfield 2020, a Perfect Vision for the Future", a mission statement, "To create a long-term plan for the future of Brookfield based on the shared-vision of our citizens," and a vision statement, "The Master Plan Committee is dedicated to working together to hold public meetings, conduct citizen surveys and compile the necessary data to enable us to create a Master Plan for Brookfield that will balance the combined vision of its residents, the state of the environment and the growth of our community."

In June of 2008, the committee hired Central Mass Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) as a consulting partner for Phase I of the project, consisting of The Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP) as well as two chapters of the Master Plan (Economic and Housing). To reduce costs, the committee took on the production of a town-wide survey instead of contracting it out as is usually done. After extensive research and discussion,

a 10 page survey consisting of 7 sections was developed: General, Economic Development, Municipal Services and Infrastructure, Housing, Open Space and Recreation, Roadways and Bridges, and Public Transportation and Commuting. The survey was mailed to all households in the town in July 2008. In addition, several members of the committee have conducted door-to-door canvassing in order to increase the rate of response. Approximately 15% of households returned surveys.

In addition to the survey, the committee held public hearings throughout the process from 2008 through 2010 to explore Brookfield's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) in the various areas of interest: Open Space And Recreation, Economic Development, Housing, Transportation, Zoning and Services.

The town appropriated \$20,000 to fund the Master Plan (\$10,000 at the May 2006 Town Meeting and an additional \$10,000 at the May 2008 Town Meeting). The Town has been most fortunate to have The Open Space and Recreation Plan almost entirely funded through private donations. An anonymous family foundation generously donated \$5,000 which was matched by another generous donation from two residents of Brookfield for a total of \$10,000. The vast majority of the cost was for consulting fees to guide the committee's research, to write the documents so that they comply with state specifications and to create the various land maps required. In addition to the money mentioned above, our consultant, CMRPC, obtained a \$6,000 "District Local Technical Assistance" (DLTA) grant to pay for the Economic Development Chapter.

The Open Space and Recreation Plan was approved by the state in 2010 and has been incorporated in its entirety into the Master Plan report as chapter 5. In addition, the Brookfield Heritage Landscape Inventory Report, completed in the spring of 2008 is incorporated into chapter 5 to fulfill the natural and cultural resources element of the Master Plan.

In order to save money, the committee decided not to contract with CMRPC for the remaining chapters. Different members of the committee took on the job of researching and drafting the remaining chapters. Cheri Carty wrote the Transportation Chapter and William Simpson wrote the Government Services Chapter. The committee contracted with Consultant Bill Scanlan to write the Land Use and Zoning Chapter. Ron Starcher created the matrix for the Implementation Chapter. Several members wrote the chapter summaries. All work was reviewed and revised by the committee as a whole and was completed by January 2011. In February 2011, the committee presented the final draft of the Master Plan to the Planning Board for their review. The Planning Board voted unanimously to approve the February 2011 draft of the Master Plan in May, 2011.

Goals and Policies

According to Massachusetts General Law, the Master Plan will include a "Goals and policies statement which identifies the goals and policies of the municipality for its future growth and development. Each community shall conduct an interactive public process, to determine community values, goals and to identify patterns of development that will be consistent with these goals."

As outlined above in the History of Committee Activities, the committee did conduct an interactive public process consisting of public forums and a town-wide survey. Refer to the Appendices for the documentation of these activities.

Goals and policies statements are included at the end of each chapter. In addition, the chapter summaries (Section II) highlight the goals that the committee identified as meriting particular attention. Finally, the Implementation Chapter is a matrix of all the goals and objectives with the municipal entity responsible for implementation.

II. Chapter Summaries

1. Economic Development Chapter Summary

According to Massachusetts General Law, the Master Plan will include an “economic development element that identifies policies and strategies for the expansion or stabilization of the local economic base and the promotion of employment opportunities”.

Vision

Brookfield has a thriving local economy that provides employment and meets the needs of residents. The Village area is a model for mixed-use development that maintains the town’s historical character. Commercial buildings that were vacant in years past have been re-purposed into attractive residential and retail spaces. Tourism is a growing part of the local economy. Some visitors come to enjoy the network of hiking and biking trails; others are attracted by fishing and boating on the Quaboag River. Still other visitors come to explore the historic walking tours that are available at the town’s historical museum.

There is a wide variety commercial activity in town, including high-end “boutique” manufacturing, professional services and retail shops. There is a passenger rail stop at the location of the old train station on Rte 148. At the rail stop, there is a parking area as well as a small shopping complex with convenience and specialty stores. In addition, there is a bus stop which connects people to areas in town as well as to the extensive network of regional mass transit routes.

Brookfield has implemented a comprehensive “buy local” program that has fostered a local sustainable economy. The local school system purchases over 5% of its budget from local suppliers, much of that is locally grown food. The town’s agricultural sector has experienced a re-birth and is a significant part of the local economy for the first time in over 100 years.

The current reality

There are many small businesses in town but they do not provide a significant amount of employment. The entire commercial sector of the town is less than 5% of the total tax base. With just under 50 employees, Gavitt Wire & Cable is the town’s largest and most prominent employer, located in a large 100 year old building in the center of town. However, Gavitt is currently phasing out its Brookfield location, having acquired a 10 year old building in West Brookfield. The next largest employer is town government, primarily the elementary school. Otherwise, Brookfield has a commuter oriented work force. The average commute is over 30 minutes each way. The vast majority of workers have jobs in Worcester County although some commute to Boston, Springfield and elsewhere. There are a number of vacant commercial properties, giving the town somewhat of a “ghost-town” appearance.

Goals

The goal of Brookfield’s economic strategy is to encourage entrepreneurial activity that promotes a sustainable local economy. Major recommendations include:

(1) Establish a local Economic Development Committee to coordinate and market all the various elements of an economic development strategy for Brookfield. The committee would review such items as zoning, tax policies, permitting process and infrastructure plans as they relate to attracting new business. It would then work with the various municipal boards and departments to develop an economic development strategy for Brookfield.

(2) Have as a town policy to promote a sustainable local economy. All departments will be charged with finding ways to buy local and promote local businesses. The Selectmen will include in their charges to all future town committees this goal.

2. Housing Chapter Summary

According to Massachusetts General Law, the Master Plan will include a “Housing element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted housing needs and objectives including programs for the preservation, improvement and development of housing. This element shall identify policies and strategies to provide a balance of local housing opportunities for all citizens.”

Vision

There is housing for a diversity of income levels and ages, including an assisted living center for the elderly and housing options attractive for young families. The town has fulfilled the state mandated goal for low and moderate income households. There are strict Planning Board procedures for future residential developments so that the town can provide services without hardship and so that new housing developments do not change the town’s rural, small-town character. Houses in Brookfield, both new and old, are models of energy efficiency. Homeowners of older housing units have taken advantage of public and private grant programs for housing rehabilitation. The town has explored the feasibility of improving infrastructure (water, sewer, drainage, etc.) and is implementing a long-range plan which uses the latest green technology. The vibrant local economy has created a number of jobs for residents so that the percentage of the job force that works in the town is comparable to surrounding towns (around 25% as compared to 13% in the year 2000).

The current reality

Using data from the 2000 US Census, Brookfield has 62.3% single-unit homes, 20.9% mobile homes, and the balance in multi-unit housing. Almost half of Brookfield’s housing stock was built before 1960. While this makes for a quaint village atmosphere, it also signals that many homes will require significant rehabilitation.

Brookfield mirrors national trends in smaller household size (The average in 1970 was 3.47 people per household; in 2000 it was 2.53.), and increasing median age (26 in 1970 to 38.9 in 2000). Brookfield has seen a decrease in population in the 20-44 year-old range and in the number of children 5 and under. Meanwhile, those aged 45-64 years increased by 50%.

Brookfield’s per capita income in 2000 was \$20,144, 87% of the Worcester County average. Brookfield had the second highest median sales price of single family homes of surrounding town for the years 2007, 2008 and first quarter of 2009. The 2010 property tax figures (from www.mass.gov), indicate that the average Brookfield tax bill is slightly above the average when compared to like communities in the area.

According to town residents surveyed in 2008, one of the top 3 weaknesses in town is the high tax rate. Lack of a sewer system and limited availability to town water are other concerns that are consistently mentioned both in the survey and public forums. On the other hand, some people feel that the lack of a sewer system has helped the town avoid the uncontrolled growth that has afflicted other towns.

The town has limited availability for housing development due to constraints of the land available. In addition, a large percentage of the town has been permanently protected from development land owned by the state and nonprofits.

Goals

The Housing Chapter identified two goals: (1) Ensuring that the new residential development is created in a controlled, well-planned manner for a variety of income levels and ages; and (2) Assist homeowners of older housing units in utilizing various housing rehabilitation.

3. Land Use and Zoning Chapter Summary

According to Massachusetts General Law, the Master Plan will include a “Land use plan element which identifies present land use and designates the proposed distribution, location and inter-relationship of public and private land uses. This element shall relate the proposed standards of population density and building intensity to the capacity of land available or planned facilities and services. A land use plan map illustrating the land use policies of the municipality shall be included.”

Vision

Brookfield has a Town Center and Common preserved with historic integrity and character. The rural character found throughout Brookfield has been retained and preserved through low density residential development, agriculture, and other compatible uses. The town has placed a great priority on preserving its expansive open spaces.

Limited growth has been directed toward the Town Center and in areas rezoned for small-scale commercial activity including multi-use, office and professional services. A clear and up-to-date zoning by-law administered by professional planning board and zoning board of appeals directs the growth.

Brookfield has developed a Geographic Information System (GIS), providing officials with greater understanding of existing conditions and more information concerning future development options. This system empowers local citizens by providing them with a greater understanding of their community. The town has also developed an energy policy to help reduce consumption of non-renewable energy sources and promote a clean environment.

The Current Reality

Brookfield has established Zoning By-Laws; however, they are somewhat vague and at times contradict each other. The Zoning By-Laws do not encourage commercial or residential growth in the village district. There is no adequate zoning map available for use by various municipal board members and other related professionals.

Brookfield is divided into residential, town center and rural areas. Since the land use pattern has changed little in the past 50 years, in many respects, Brookfield has retained the character of an old New England village. Therefore, the predominant developed land use in Brookfield is residential.

The Town Center is very pedestrian friendly, as a result of multiple street network improvement projects. Brookfield Common is on the National Register of Historic Places. While placement on the Register affords distinction, it does little to protect the area from unwarranted changes.

As you move away from the Town Center, Brookfield’s rural aspect prevails with widespread forests and expansive open spaces. Brookfield attracts families seeking a rural lifestyle. Brookfield does not have a public sewer system, a characteristic lending to Brookfield remaining a predominantly rural town with the continuation of current land use patterns and limited development potential.

Brookfield does not currently have an energy policy to guide actions to reduce non-renewable resource consumption. Also, the Zoning By-law contains limited standards to regulate the appearance and impact of commercial and industrial development throughout the town.

Goals

The goal of Brookfield’s land use and zoning strategy is to preserve the rural quality of the town, retaining its small town character while maintaining open space. Major recommendations include:

(1) Create a local historic district surrounding the town common. This would prevent future development of the common district while preserving the historic and residential aspects of the neighborhood surrounding the town common.

(2) Consider re-zoning certain areas of the town to include additional property within the Business A District. This would allow a stronger concentration of businesses in the center of town and the ability of the town to have some control over the overall appearance of these businesses.

(3) Develop a GIS to include computerized mapping linked with assessors' data. This would bring the on-line database of the Brookfield property records available to all town boards and professionals and eliminate any discrepancies in zoning lines.

(4) Develop an amendment to Zoning By-Laws in order to reduce set back requirements in Village District. This will allow continuation of the current use in the Village District. Current restrictions require larger lot sizes and setback requirements and this should eliminate some of the special permit and variance applications.

(5) Develop standards to regulate the appearance and impact of commercial and industrial development. This will establish guidelines for future commercial and industrial development to improve its function and appearance so as to establish visually pleasant sites, locate parking at rear of commercial lots, limiting curb cuts, lighting requirements, provide pedestrian amenities and implementing a parking table.

4. Transportation Chapter Summary

According to Massachusetts General Law, the Master Plan will include a “Circulation element which provides an inventory of existing and proposed circulation and transportation systems.”

Vision

Travel by car is pleasant. Throughout the year the roads are all clear and well paved, the speed limits are respected, the road signs are clear, and the traffic is minimal. It's easy and pleasurable to walk and bicycle between all areas of town on the well-kept sidewalks and beautiful trails that connect Brookfield. All of the bridges are attractive and in excellent condition. The town works hand in hand with the state to continually maintain and upgrade the quality of the roads and walking/hiking/biking paths. By public transportation we are able to get from Brookfield to almost anywhere in the developed world. The service is friendly, affordable, clean, and on time. Citizen who are unable to drive have access to affordable, friendly, clean, and on time shuttles and small buses.

The current reality

The roads in Brookfield are well maintained by a well equipped and professional highway department. Efforts have been maintained to improve signage throughout the town and for the most part the road signs are clear, although there is some confusion about private roads. The traffic levels in Brookfield are all reasonable for the size of the existing roads.

Traveling by foot or bicycle, however, is a more dangerous proposition. Outside of the village area, especially over the causeway along route 148, there is almost no room for those who choose to walk or bicycle. Also, the hiking trails in town, while they do exist, are poorly marked, mostly unknown, and are poorly maintained.

The boat launch along 148 is in relatively poor condition as is the boat launch at South Pond. Upcoming projects in both areas may improve upon current conditions.

The Worcester Regional Transit Authority provides public Transportation by bus. There is train service from Worcester at Union Station and limited air travel from the Worcester Regional Airport.

Goals

1. Protect the rural and historic character of Brookfield streets.

2. Promote traffic calming and increased safety on neighborhood and residential streets.
3. Establish “Connectivity” for non-motorized streets users.
4. Improve opportunity for Mass Transit: regional and public transportation as well as other alternative means of transportation.
5. Implement strategies that limit negative vehicle and traffic impacts from new development.
6. Communication.
7. Clarify Private Roads.
8. Review and Update Gravel Removal Bylaws.
9. Utility Work Policy.

5. Open Space, Recreation, Natural and Cultural Resources

Chapter Summary

According to Massachusetts General Law, the Master Plan will include an “Open space and recreation element which provides an inventory of recreational and resources and open space areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the management and protection of such resources and areas”. In addition, the Master Plan will include a “Natural and cultural resources element which provides an inventory of the significant natural, cultural and historic resource areas of the municipality, and policies and strategies for the protection and management of such areas.”

Background

Brookfield’s first Open Space and Recreation Plan was approved in March 2010 by the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services. The approval allows Brookfield to participate in DCS grant rounds through December 2016. The Plan has been incorporated into the Master Plan as part of this chapter.

In addition, in 2008, Brookfield was privileged to participate in a project sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). This project, the Brookfield Heritage Landscape Program, inventoried significant natural and cultural resources in the Town. The report that resulted is also incorporated into the Master Plan in its entirety.

Vision

Brookfield has a number of large parcels of permanently protected open space that contribute to its character, provide active and passive recreation and are habitat for a number of wildlife species. Agriculture has experienced a re-birth and is an integral part of the sustainable local economy while also contributing to the traditional rural New England character of the town. Residents and visitors have easy access to canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hunting, hiking, biking, swimming, and playing basketball, soccer, baseball, and any other sport they wish to pursue. Hiking and Mountain Biking trails that explore the town’s impressive open spaces are well maintained, well marked, and safe. There are trails to destinations of historical significance and natural beauty. Ecotourism and Heritage Tourism are thriving in Brookfield, and an important part of a prosperous local economy. There is community support for the preservation, upkeep, and access to natural and historical resources. The local swimming area at South Pond is beautiful, clean, and well loved by the people of Brookfield and the surrounding towns. Boat access to both North and South Pond is well maintained and safe. Lewis Field and the Brookfield Elementary School provide a wide variety of recreational activity for children of all ages, including several ball fields, tennis and basketball courts, and playground equipment. Both recreational areas are safe, easily accessible, well used, and beautifully maintained.

The current reality

Brookfield is fortunate that it already does have large parcels of permanently protected open space. From the results to the town wide survey and public forums, residents value our rural character and place a premium on preservation of open space. Agriculture is just beginning to show signs of recovery, with grass-fed beef and locally grown products being much sought after by consumers. There is access to many outdoor recreational activities. The volunteers recently donated a state-of-the-art playground for the elementary school. Although there are a number of hiking and biking trails, they are not well marked. A pathway from the center of town to Tantasqua is a very popular idea but to date no progress has been made on accomplishing it. Ecotourism and Heritage Tourism are happening on an individual basis. At present the town does not provide any support for these activities.

Goals

There are a large number of goals and objectives for the OSRP, including:

- 1) Maintain Brookfield's Rural, Agricultural, And Historic Character.
- 2) Preserve And Enhance Brookfield's Water Quality And Unique Habitats.
- 3) Work Toward Self Sufficiency And Sustainability.
- 4) Provide Brookfield With Diverse And Well Maintained Open Space as well as Recreational Opportunities And Facilities.
- 5) Educate And Build Awareness About The Treasures That Lie Within Brookfield's Borders.

There is a five-year action plan with detailed action steps, time frames, and responsible parties so Brookfield can move toward its goals. The OSRP draws heavily on the Heritage Landscape Inventory Report that was produced in Spring, 2008 and appears in the OSRP as an appendix. In addition, the Master Plan includes goals taken directly from the Heritage Landscape Inventory Report.

6. Government Services and Facilities Chapter Summary

According to Massachusetts General Law, the Master Plan will include a "Services and facilities element which identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted needs for facilities and services used by the public."

Vision

Note: An extended version of the vision statement is available in the chapter.

Brookfield's government is housed in beautiful and exceptionally functional town buildings that are excellently maintained, accessible, and use minimal energy. Within the walls of these buildings one will find courteous and efficient town employees who can clearly guide a local citizen, business owner, or visitor through any task they need accomplished. The education of the students of all ages in town is second to none, and the recreation opportunities reflect the tremendous natural and developed resources in the town. Roads are well maintained and safely navigated, and the water infrastructure is in top condition. The public well protected and served by a professional police, fire and emergency staff. The burden on the taxpayers is reasonable, and the money is wisely allocated for the best present and future use. All of these aspects of the town government are accessible and linked through the very functional and easily found and searched website, which holds and shares critical resources for all members of the community.

The Current Reality

Brookfield's town hall is in poor condition, the town is renting a residential building for use as a police station, the permitting procedures within the town are often confusing and poorly explained, and the website and computer network for the town are out of date. The library and the fire department facilities are in need of maintenance and upgrades. Many of the volunteers and employees feel overcommitted.

Costs associated with solid waste removal, energy, health care/insurance, and litigation are increasing and property values and state aid are decreasing.

On the brighter side, the fire department and emergency services are well staffed and professionally run. They are appreciated by the community for the work they do. The schools are in good condition and attract students from other towns for school choice. The roads are well maintained and quickly cleared in emergencies. The town operates close to its budget, and the employees and many volunteers are dedicated and hard working.

Goals

1. Upgrade website and integrate into Town Hall processes.
2. Create a regulations manual for obtaining permits.
3. Consider regionalization opportunities.
4. Review by-laws for consistency, overlapping duties and currentness.
5. Consider the possibility of hiring a town manager.
6. Improve the condition of municipal buildings.
7. Develop a volunteer training and support program.

7. Implementation Chapter Summary

According to Massachusetts General Law, the Master Plan will include an “Implementation program element which defines and schedules the specific municipal actions necessary to achieve the objectives of each element of the master or study plan. Scheduled expansion or replacement of public facilities or circulation system components and the anticipated costs and revenues associated with accomplishment of such activities shall be detailed in this element. This element shall specify the process by which the municipality’s regulatory structures shall be amended so as to be consistent with the master plan.”

The Master Plan Committee recommends that the Planning Board, together with the Select Board, establish an Implementation Committee that will follow up on the goals, objectives and action items detailed in this Master Plan. The Implementation Chapter provides an Implementation Matrix that identifies the action items.

1. Economic Development¹

Introduction

Brookfield is a rural community of approximately 3,000 residents, with a commuter-oriented work force. The commercial sector makes up less than 5% of the town's total tax base. Agriculture is a small part of the economy. Businesses are overwhelmingly small, independent firms. As of 2008, there were 26 businesses registered in Brookfield, including a number of service-related businesses: automotive repair shops and dealerships, restaurants, hair stylists, home-based building contractors, landscapers and greenhouses, as well as computer related services. The industrial base is quite limited. Many businesses are located on Route 9, however other prominent locations include Mill Street, Central Street and River Street. The town does not have its own business association, but is part of the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce and the Central Mass South Chamber of Commerce. There is also a private business group, "Browse the Brookfields", which is made up of small retail businesses in the four Brookfields and surrounding towns.

Economic Sector's Contribution to the Local Tax Base

In Fiscal Year 2008, Brookfield levied a total of \$3,925,242 in taxes, based on a local tax rate of \$12.80 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Brookfield homeowners accounted for 94.2% of the total 2008 tax base (\$3,698,305), while the businesses and industries accounted for approximately 4.1% and the personal property tax took up the remaining 1.7%. Tables 1 and 2 show how Brookfield compares to its six adjacent communities on the amount and proportion of commercial and industrial taxes levied.

Table 1
Commercial Tax Base Comparison

<i>Community</i>	<i>FY 2008 Tax Rate</i>	<i>Commercial Taxes Levied</i>	<i>Assessed Valuation</i>	<i>% of Total Tax Levy</i>
Warren	\$12.72	\$155,601	\$12,232,776	3.1%
Brookfield	\$12.80	\$136,438	\$10,659,217	3.5%
North Brookfield	\$9.94	\$155,932	\$15,687,325	3.5%
West Brookfield	\$9.69	\$148,578	\$15,333,121	3.7%
Brimfield	\$11.84	\$298,317	\$25,195,664	5.9%
East Brookfield	\$10.57	\$161,473	\$15,276,505	6.1%
Sturbridge*	\$14.74	\$2,449,691	\$166,193,431	14.3%

*Sturbridge has a split tax rate of \$14.74/\$1,000 for Commercial and Industrial and \$12.66/\$1,000 for Residential. (Source: Massachusetts Dept. of Revenue)

¹ This Economic Development Chapter was written in 2008-early 2009. Due to its timing, figures from the 2010 US Census were not yet available and 2000 census figures had to be used when more recent local, regional or state figures were not available. Unfortunately, because a severe economic downturn began in 2008, the economic picture for Brookfield presented in this report is already out of date. It does provide a benchmark of historical data but it will be important to revise the chapter as part of the work of the proposed Local Economic Development Committee. (See Recommendation #1 at the end of this chapter.)

Table 2
Industrial Tax Base Comparison

<i>Community</i>	<i>FY 2008 Tax Rate</i>	<i>Industrial Taxes Levied</i>	<i>Assessed Valuation</i>	<i>% of Total Tax Levy</i>
Brookfield	\$12.80	\$24,115	\$1,883,977	0.6%
East Brookfield	\$10.57	\$25,613	\$3,810,911	0.9%
Brimfield	\$11.84	\$54,775	\$10,198,350	1.1%
North Brookfield	\$9.94	\$55,474	\$5,580,885	1.3%
West Brookfield	\$9.69	\$63,651	\$6,568,727	1.6%
Sturbridge*	\$14.74	\$453,794	\$47,676,400	2.6%
Warren	\$12.72	\$172,301	\$13,545,700	3.4%

*Sturbridge has a split tax rate of \$14.74/\$1,000 for Commercial and Industrial and \$12.66/\$1,000 for Residential. (Source: Massachusetts Dept. of Revenue)

Brookfield collected the smallest amount of commercial and industrial taxes when compared to its surrounding communities. The proportion of commercial and industrial taxes that Brookfield collects as compared to the entire tax base (3.5% and 0.6% respectively) exceeds only the Town of Warren's commercial taxes collected by 0.4%. It should be noted that at the current tax rate, residential taxes will not necessarily decrease with an increase in commercial and industrial taxes collected.

While the number of businesses in Brookfield increased by 18% between 2001 and 2007 (see Table #5), the economic sector's contribution to the Town's tax base steadily decreased from a high of 6.2% in 2001 to 4.1% in 2008. This is a region-wide phenomenon.

For a summary of regional economic trends, as projected by Central Mass Regional Planning, please see Appendix A.

Brookfield's Labor Force

The number of employed Brookfield residents has increased steadily since the 1980s, however Brookfield's unemployment rate has historically been higher than the state's rate. As shown in Table #3 below, the total number of employed Brookfield residents has fluctuated in small increments over the last 10 years, with the 2008 total number being about 9% higher than the 1999 number. The town's unemployment rate was at 3.6% at the start of the ten years shown, dropped to a low of 2.5 % in 2000, and rose to a high of 6.2% in 2007. It was at 5.7% for the period January-October 2008. For eight of the ten years shown, Brookfield's unemployment rate was higher than the state's average unemployment rate. The table shows employment rates that have not been seasonally adjusted. This means that the effects of seasonal employment patterns have not been removed from the data.

Table 3
Employment Status of Brookfield Residents
Not seasonally adjusted

*2008 is calculated using January to October data
 (Source: Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD))

Year	Total Residents in Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Town rate of Unemployment	State rate of Unemployment
2008*	1,676	1,579	96	5.7%	5.0%
2007	1,698	1,593	105	6.2%	4.5%
2006	1,698	1,594	104	6.1%	4.8%
2005	1,696	1,598	98	5.8%	4.9%
2004	1,709	1,610	99	5.8%	5.2%
2003	1,729	1,620	109	6.3%	5.8%
2002	1,730	1,631	99	5.7%	5.3%
2001	1,698	1,644	54	3.2%	3.7%
2000	1,684	1,642	42	2.5%	2.7%
1999	1,487	1,433	54	3.6%	3.3%

Where Brookfield Residents Work

According to the 2000 U.S. Census Journey to Work data, there were some noticeable changes in commuting patterns between 1990 and 2000. As shown in Table 4, the number of residents working in town decreased from 227 persons to 204 persons, however, the number of Brookfield residents commuting to jobs in Worcester increased from 265 persons to 332 persons. Brookfield residents also commuted to other communities within Southern Worcester County (an increase from 337 persons to 394 persons) and to jobs outside of Southern Worcester County (including out of state) with an increase from 148 persons to 299 persons. Not surprisingly, the average commuting time for Brookfield residents increased 17% during this period, from 27 to 32 minutes. This is close to the 19% increase in the average commuting time experienced by the state's residents for the same period (MassINC).

Table 4
Where Brookfield Residents Work

<i>Place of Work</i>	<i>1990</i>		<i>2000</i>	
Brookfield	227	16%	204	13%
Worcester	265	19%	332	21%
Spencer	150	11%	165	10%
Sturbridge	144	10%	116	7%
Southbridge	70	5%	81	5%
West Brookfield	47	3%	51	3%
Elsewhere Worc. Cty	337	24%	394	24%
Outside of Worc.Cty, includes out of state	148	11%	299	18%
TOTAL	1,388	100%	1,642	100%

(Source: 2000 CENSUS/CMRPC Journey to Work by Residence & Place of Work)

Number & Types of Jobs in Brookfield

Due to the change from SIC (Standard Industrial Classification) to NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) codes, the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Massachusetts Office of Labor and Workforce Development do not have comparable data available prior to 2001. As a result, only the years of 2001 to 2006/2007 were used while analyzing Brookfield's employment data for this report. See Appendix B of this Chapter for an explanation of the jobs included in selected North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) categories

Table 5 below shows the changes that have transpired in the various sectors of Brookfield's local economy between 2001 and 2007 according to the Massachusetts Office of Labor & Workforce Development. While the number of establishments in the town increased by 18% over that period, the number of jobs in town has decreased by 2.5%, an indication that the number of employees per business in Brookfield has decreased.

Three sectors lost jobs during this period -- Trade, Transportation, and Warehousing lost the largest number (20) of total jobs in Brookfield. The Leisure and Hospitality industry was not categorized in 2007, however Education and Health Services was, showing a change in industry categories in town.

Several sectors saw gains, with manufacturing sector increasing its number of jobs by a total of 11, or 12.5%. This was the largest gain of any sector during this period. The Professional Business Services sector gained five jobs for a 29.4% increase and Construction increased by nearly 27%. The sector with the most in-town jobs in 2001 and 2007 was Trade, Transportation and Warehousing, with 34% in 2001 and 33% in 2007 of the town's jobs.

Table 5
Analysis of Resident and Non-Resident
Employment and Wages in Brookfield

<i>Description</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Annual Payroll	\$12,125,146	\$18,092,086	+32%
Avg wkly wages	\$491	\$751	+35%
Total # of businesses	59	71	+18%
# of Workers	475	463	-2.5%
Construction	11	15	+27%
Manufacturing	77	88	+12.5%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	157	137	-12.7%
Professional & Business Services	12	17	+29.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	37	0	-100%
Education & Health Services	0	93	+100%
Other Services	31	23	-26%

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

In-Town Job Projections

Central Mass Regional Planning (CMRPC) provides employment projections (along with population and households) for the 40 communities in its region, which are periodically updated. Originally completed in 2000, and last updated in 2006, using the numbers from the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA -- the precursor to the Massachusetts Division of Employment & Training – Mass. DET), regional forecasts by the Executive Office of Transportation (EOT – precursor to the Executive office of Transportation and Public Works – EOTPW), and reviewing historical trends in employment. Some data is withheld by DUA/Mass. DET to prevent disclosure of confidential information; therefore the Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP) was used by CMRPC to fill in the gaps. Input was also solicited directly from the region's 40 communities to assist in the accuracy of these projections.

In 2000, CMRPC projected 570 jobs in Brookfield for 2005, however the Massachusetts DET counted 463 jobs for 2007 (as shown in Table 3). This may be partly due to this agency withholding some data as explained in the previous paragraph. CMRPC's projections for 2010 is 590 jobs (a 21.5% increase from the actual number for 2007) and 600 by the year 2015 (a 1.6% increase), a more modest increase.

Brookfield's Largest Employers

Note: The majority of the information below was provided by the businesses in question and has not been independently verified by the Master Plan Committee.

The Town of Brookfield, Town Hall 6 Central Street

The largest employer in Brookfield is town government. Within the government, the elementary school makes up the majority of the employees. The Brookfield Elementary School, located at 37 Central Street, employs 46 part-time and full time employees, including teachers, teacher's aides, cafeteria staff, custodians, administrative assistants, a psychologist and a principal. There are approximately 300 students enrolled at Brookfield Elementary School in Pre-Kindergarten to Sixth grades. The 85,000 square foot structure has several specialized features of which we are proud including a computer lab, science lab, gymnasium, and library/media center after a relatively recent renovation.

Other town employees include Police, Fire, Highway, Library, Water and General Government. There are paid elected officials as well as appointed employees. In addition, there are many volunteer workers that serve on town boards, commissions and committees such as Planning, Recreation, Conservation, Cultural and Historical.

Gavitt Wire & Cable Company, Inc., 20 Central Street

Started in 1923, Gavitt Wire and Cable began manufacturing mundane items like shoestrings and buggy whips in a small building in nearby West Brookfield. Mr. Gavitt had the vision to see a new radio industry need for specialty wire and cable which he could make then on his braiding machines. In 1928, Gavitt Wire moved to Brookfield to a much larger building on Central Street where the company is still located. Gavitt Wire has a business niche in the custom coated wire industry where they provide customers with high quality and high reliability electrical wire and cable. Except for a short period of time starting in the 1950's, Gavitt wire has been wholly locally owned and run with the attention that only a dedicated local management can provide. As of 2008, the company employed 49 full time people and was the second largest employer in Brookfield. Gavitt Wire is in the process of moving most of its manufacturing to a building in West Brookfield which is all on one floor and is 10 years old. The manufacturing building in Brookfield is about 100 years old and is on multiple floors.

Carmella's Italian Kitchen, 55 S. Maple Street (Route 9)

Carmella's employs between 25 and 50 people, depending upon the time of year and this number is split between full and part-time employees. Carmella's is a family-owned restaurant that specializes in Italian cuisine and delicacies and has been located on South Maple Street since 1987.

The Clam Box, 53 S. Maple Street (Route 9)

The Clam Box has been serving seafood, burgers, and french fries to residents of Brookfield since 1951 and is especially known for its homemade recipes and award winning chowder. Today, the restaurant has a dining room and a full bar, but still retains the flavor and atmosphere of a drive-in restaurant. Until recently, the Clam Box closed during the winter months. At the time of publication of this document, the restaurant was open year round and employed 2 full-time and 20 part-time employees.

Brookfield Motors, Post Road (Route 9)

Brookfield Motors is the only franchised automobile dealership in Brookfield. They have been a Dodge dealership since 1958 when Alfred DeAngelis bought a small Esso gas station and car dealership on the current site on Route 9. This is a family owned, local business. In 1967, the business expanded with a new building and in early 70's added a body shop. Brookfield Motors sells new and used cars and trucks, has a full service department, parts department and body shop. As of 2008, it employed 15 people.

Custom Pallets Inc., Mill Street

Custom Pallets, located on Mill Street in Brookfield, has been actively in business since 1973. The company focuses on the manufacture of both pallets and boxes. Custom Pallets works with several of the area's large companies and includes a long-term relationship with FlexCon Inc. in Spencer. The company is Brookfield family owned and operated and currently employs approximately 15 people.

Cumberland Farms, Post Road (Route 9)

Cumberland Farms is part of a chain of New England based convenience stores. Cumberland Farms has been in Brookfield for over 30 years and is both a convenience store and gas station. As of 2008, it employed 3 full-time and 5 part-time employees.

TipTop Country Store, 8 Central Street

Opened in 2004, TipTop is a Brookfield family owned and operated natural foods general store. The store actively promotes local products, including local crafts and artisan products. They feature local honey, maple syrup, cheese, eggs, meat and produce. In addition, they offer groceries, natural supplements and personal care items, eco-friendly cleaning supplies and fair-trade gifts. TipTop donates 1% of sales to local non-profits. It employs 5 people, all Brookfield residents.

Dave's Appliance, Post Road (Route 9)

Dave's Appliance is a family owned and operated business serving the central Massachusetts area for over 35 years. They recently opened a brand new building on Route 9. They offer a selection of new and used name brand appliances.

Brookfield Preferences for Economic Development

Master Plan Survey Results

During the summer of 2008, the Brookfield Master Plan and Open Space Committee conducted a survey of all residents in town to ask them what they liked and disliked about Brookfield, what changes (if any) would they make and additional demographic information. Of the 1,642 surveys sent out, 239 surveys were completed and returned. Regarding economic development initiatives in Brookfield, the follow preferences were given by the survey respondents:

1) Would you Support the rezoning of land in Brookfield currently zoned as residential for the following purposes?

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
Preserving Open Space	55%	3%	42%
Office and Professional use	42%	4%	54%
Retail/Commercial	38%	5%	57%
Light Industry	31%	5%	64%
Manufacturing	17%	8%	75%
Would not support any rezoning	17%	6%	77%

2) What kinds of businesses and services do you think Brookfield needs or needs more of?

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
Small-scale Retail	49%	3%	48%
Small Convenience Market	45%	4%	51%
Professional services (Doctors, etc.)	41%	5%	54%
Ecotourism (hiking/boating)	37%	5%	58%
Sit-down restaurants	36%	5%	59%
Restaurants	32%	5%	63%
Full service banking	23%	6%	71%
Services (Dry Cleaners, Printers, etc.)	21%	7%	72%
Movie Theater	20%	8%	72%
Industry/manufacturing	18%	7%	75%
Home-based Businesses	17%	7%	76%
Agriculture/Nursery	16%	7%	77%
Hardware/Home Improvement	16%	6%	77%
Research and Development (high tech)	15%	7%	77%
Office Buildings	15%	8%	78%
Large Grocery Chain	14%	8%	79%
Shopping center/mall	11%	8%	81%
Clothing stores	11%	8%	75%
Fast food establishments	8%	8%	84%
Large-scale Retail	6%	8%	86%

3) Of the choices in the previous question, where do you think the type of businesses should be located?

Route 9 (43%), Town Center (37%), Route 148 (13%), Pleasant and/or Mill Streets (3%), Anywhere in Town (3%), Home-based (1%)

4) *What do you see as the major benefit(s) of encouraging business/industrial development in Brookfield?*

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
Tax Revenues to Maintain Services	69%	3%	28%
More Jobs in Town	52%	3%	45%
More Services	38%	5%	57%
More Retail Stores	23%	6%	71%
No Benefits	9%	7%	84%

5) *What do you see as the major disadvantage(s) of encouraging economic development in Brookfield?*

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
More Automobile Traffic	49%	3%	48%
Changing the character of Brookfield	46%	5%	49%
Loss of Open Space	44%	5%	51%
More Truck Traffic	38%	4%	58%
Damage to environment	29%	6%	65%
Disruption of Neighborhoods	28%	6%	66%
No Disadvantages	18%	7%	75%

Public Forum Summary

An Economic Development Public Forum was held on December 10, 2008 at 6:30 PM at the Brookfield Town Hall. Below is a summary of the feedback received on concerns, opportunities and solutions for improving economic development in Town:

Concerns:

1. Physical appearance of property in town:
 - Downtown area (Lack of sidewalks and walkways, particularly to the Elm Hill Farm, Route 9, the biggest restaurant in town, and/or to the Quaboag River; public parking downtown is difficult ; lack of trees in Downtown area)
 - Bypass and other roads entering Brookfield (particularly Mill Street which is not attractive aesthetically and used by “cut through” traffic)
 - The large yellow sign on Route 9
 - Deteriorating and/or abandoned properties (e.g. chain linked fence properties) discourage businesses and residents to upkeep properties.
 - Lack of way finding signs from Route 9 to direct visitors to the Downtown area
2. Lack of “streamlined” system to set up Business in Town Hall
 - Different answers from different departments
 - Unclear who is in charge of what and who reports to who
 - Businesses need organized packets of information of how to proceed with permits and what the local regulations are.
3. Deteriorating natural resources
 - Contamination of the Quaboag River and local ponds from runoff or wastewater treatment plants
 - Lack of communication between towns about river water quality
 - Swimming area unmaintained
 - Boat ramps?

4. General difficulties w/being a landlord
 - Tenants rights allow for destruction of property w/out accountability
5. Disconnect between different areas of town
 - Lack of community identity (e.g. “North” and “South” Brookfield)
 - Lack of water infrastructure south of Quaboag River
6. No public sewer system
 - Center of town having continual difficulties with private septic systems
7. The tax rate is high.
8. No faith by residents in local boards, particularly the ZBA, regarding allowed businesses

Opportunities:

1. Ecotourism
 - Rivers/Lakes • Boat access • Trails • Farms • Hunting/Fishing
2. Medical Center in Downtown/Housing for Elderly? Or other anchor for other businesses
3. Downtown Improvements
4. Creation of local business association
5. Become a more sustainable community

Solutions:

1. Construction/installation of sidewalks
2. Enforcement of Building Codes and Zoning Regulations
3. Creation of a bike path/trail to Tanstasqua Regional High School
4. Improved parking configurations in the Downtown area
5. Installation of street trees in the Downtown area
6. Creation of a local streamlined permitting guide for Town Hall
7. Creation of a local business association and listing businesses (with a descriptor, location, etc.) on the Town's website.
8. New or innovative Zoning regulations (e.g. Inclusionary Zoning, Open Space Residential Design, etc.)

As for preferences for Retail/Service business locations, the participants clustered their selections along Route 9 at South Maple Street. A few participants expressed preferences for these businesses to be located in Downtown Brookfield.

Opportunities for Economic Development

After reviewing the information gathered by Central Mass Regional Planning, the town-wide survey and the public forum, the following opportunities for economic development have been identified as meriting further study:

1. **Target re-use of existing commercial structures that are currently not being used.** There are a number of vacant buildings in town. It would be beneficial to both the town and the buildings' owners to have the buildings in use. Grants and university programs could be used to encourage this activity.

2. Work on improving the transportation network. At a time when mass transit is gaining favor, Brookfield has the potential to become a passenger transportation hub. The following conditions put Brookfield in a favorable position :

- Brookfield is located at the intersection of two state-numbered highways: Route 9 is a major East-West road and Route 148 is an important North-South road.
- Brookfield is on the Worcester Regional Transit Authority's (WRTA) bus route. It is the last stop on Route 33 which travels Rt. 9 between Brookfield and Worcester. The end of Route 33 in Brookfield is only 10 miles from the first stop of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVRTA) system in Ware. There is potential to connect to the two regions and tie into a bus network that extends to the Amherst and Springfield areas in the West and the Worcester to the East. Worcester, in turn, connects to Boston and the rest of the continent with daily rail service to Boston's South Station.
- Brookfield borders the Town of Sturbridge, which is the intersection to two main arteries: the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90), East-West and I-84, North-South.
- The Worcester Regional Airport is located on the Worcester/Leicester town line and is owned by the City of Worcester. Re-use of the airport is planned, however specific plans have yet to be determined.
- There is an Amtrak/CSX railroad track that runs through the town. While it will be difficult politically to add a stop, there is a great deal of interest among the public to have a passenger rail stop somewhere in Central Massachusetts.

3. Develop Eco and Historical Tourism. Ecotourism is about uniting conservation, communities, and sustainable travel. The Quaboag River is a major river in the region and attracts a number of canoers, birdwatchers, and other naturalists to the area. With Old Sturbridge Village nearby, historical tourism is already an important economic force in the region. Brookfield is one of the oldest towns in the Commonwealth and significant historical events took place here. Combining Eco and Historical Tourism would be good way to preserve the New England small town character of the town with economic development.

4. Look at Vacant, Developable Commercial & Industrial Zoned Land in Brookfield. See Appendix C for a list of programs and organizations that could be used as tools for development.

During the public meeting held in December 2008 on economic development, there was some interest by those in attendance to look at options for new commercial development along Route 148 south of the Quaboag River. There was interest in redeveloping and/or reusing existing commercial structures such as former mills, into new commercial or industrial uses in the Village (V) and Business (BA and BB) districts.

In February 2009, CMRPC updated a Build-Out Analysis² for the town. As shown in Table 6, Brookfield has enough vacant developable land in these three districts to potentially build 1,966,925 square feet of new floor space, yielding a very sizable amount of new jobs and tax revenues. What follows is a closer examination of these three districts and their development potential:

- *Business A (BA):* This district, located along Route 9, has a fair amount of vacant land left within it (63 acres), which could accommodate 241,038 square feet of floor space. The BA district is zoned primarily for retail and service establishments, however certain other uses may be allowed by the Planning Board

² Central Mass Regional Planning completed a buildout analysis for Brookfield in 2001 as part of statewide project through the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA). A build-out analysis is a planning tool that determines the amount of vacant, developable land in town and assesses the potential impacts if this land were fully developed under the town's existing zoning standards. A buildout analysis does not attempt to determine *when* a community will reach full buildout; rather, it simply attempts to determine what the community would look like if it were fully built out according to the town's current zoning policies.

under Special Permit. The BA district is fully served by a public water supply, however municipal sewer does not exist here, nor anywhere else in town.

- *Business B (BB)*: The district is divided into four sections. Three of the sections are located on or near Route 9. The fourth is located along Route 148 just north of the Quaboag River. Combined there are 74 acres of developable land remaining in these sections with section BB_4 having the majority of developable land (see map). All land zoned BB could accommodate 253,245 square feet of floor space and two of the four sections are served by public water supply.
- *Village (V)*: The Village has the largest amount of buildable vacant land (247 acres) which could yield 1,472,642 square feet of commercial or industrial floor space. The district is zoned primarily for residential uses, however a number of commercial, industrial, institutional and municipal uses exist in the district prior to when zoning was enacted. The district lacks municipal sewer, however it is the district with the largest amount of municipal water infrastructure. If the remaining 247 acres are developed for commercial use, the district would change dramatically in character. This, however, is highly unlikely given that the town has prioritized maintaining the village character and would likely balance development with a mix of uses.

In addition to these districts, the Rural Residential (RR) district, which is zoned primarily for residential and agricultural uses, has potential to allow some business development if granted by special permit by the Planning Board.

The Town of Brookfield cannot reasonably expect to accommodate the total amount of new floor space calculated in this analysis. However, the town does have excellent development potential in the Business B (BB) and Village (V) districts as that developable land could accommodate various types of commercial and/or industrial development.

Table 6
CMRPC Commercial Buildout Analysis

<u>District</u>	<u>Size of District</u>	<u>Raw Developable Land</u>	<u>Potential Floor Space*</u>	<u>Potential New Jobs**</u>	<u>Estimated Tax Revenue***</u>
Business A (BA)	187 acres	63 acres	241,038 s.f.	964	\$316,242
Business B (BB)	98 acres	74 acres	253,245 s.f.	506	\$265,806
Village (V)	7,744 acres	247 acres	1,472,642 s.f.	4,418	\$1,545,685

* The Potential Floor Space is based on the number of buildable lots (which is calculated by deducting the acres of land deemed undevelopable due to constraints such as: steep slopes, wetlands and the River Protection Act regulations) multiplied by the building square feet per minimum lot size.

** The new jobs figure is based on 4 employees per 1,000 square feet of commercial floor space and 2 employees per 1,000 square feet of industrial floor space (multiplier supplied as part of the EOEI build-out methodology). For districts that allow both business and industrial uses, the figure is based on 3 employees per 1000 square feet of space.

*** The estimated tax revenue is based on the 2009 tax rate (\$13.12 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation) and the average assessed value of new floor space (\$60/sq. ft. for warehouse/industrial and \$100/sq. ft. for retail/commercial) from the Town Assessor's office.

Impediments to Economic Development

Water/Sewer Issues: Water infrastructure is available in Brookfield within the Downtown Area and along Route 9 north of the Quaboag River. Town water infrastructure is non-existent in Brookfield south of the Quaboag River. This puts the onus on a developer to install a water infrastructure and/or other equipment to meet the water requirements for fire suppression and daily needs. In addition, the lack of sewer infrastructure throughout the entire town hinders commercial development.

Lack of Town-controlled Industrial Land: Brookfield does not have any town-controlled land that is zoned, or provides the necessary infrastructure, to offer new business and industrial opportunities. Many Massachusetts communities create industrial parks on town-owned land to attract the types of businesses/industries they want and offer them a coordinated delivery of municipal services. In Brookfield, it is up to a new business to identify a suitable property and work with the various Town departments to obtain the necessary municipal services as best as it can.

Lack of a Business Association: Brookfield does not have a local business association. Such an association could assist in the coordination of various elements of an economic development strategy as there is currently no municipal entity whose sole purpose is to plan for and act as an advocate for new economic development.

Wayfinding Signs: Business owners who attended the December 2008 public meeting stated that existing businesses in the Town Center are difficult for visitors to find as Route 9 does not pass through it. Signage to businesses in the Town Center is therefore left up to each individual owner to post in order to have its patrons find where it is located.

Non-Streamlined Permitting and Licensing Processes: Business owners who attended the public meeting also stated that it has been difficult to work with Town Boards and Departments due to a lack of communication and process for filing permits and licenses. Creation of streamlined processes for permits and licenses will encourage more entrepreneurs and other businesses to consider Brookfield by providing an upfront, clear and expected process.

Economic Development Goal

The goal of Brookfield's economic strategy is to encourage entrepreneurial activity that maintains a sustainable local economy. There should be a balance between residents' preferences for limited commercial and industrial growth and expanding local opportunities for meeting the needs of Brookfield's residents.

Economic Development Objectives

1. Create a program to market the town's local economy.
2. Encourage the use of facilities, existing structures and vacant properties within Brookfield for the purpose of local entrepreneurial business activity.
3. Review Town zoning to foster economic development in keeping with Brookfield's rural character and where appropriate infrastructure exists.
4. Review and streamline business licensing and permitting processes to foster new economic development.
5. Explore the possibility of establishing a local Tax Increment Financing Program (TIF) (*See Appendix C, item 8*).

Economic Development Recommendations

1. **Establish a local Economic Development Committee:** The Town should establish a local economic development committee to coordinate and market all the various elements of an economic development strategy for Brookfield. Currently, there is no municipal entity whose sole purpose is to plan for and act as an advocate for new economic development. The committee would start by reviewing such items as the Town's zoning scheme, tax policies, road improvement plans and water expansion plans as they relate to the Town's ability to attract new business. The committee would then work with the various municipal boards and departments to develop an economic development strategy for Brookfield. As part of an economic development strategy, the Town should designate a single point of contact person to handle economic development issues. A single point of contact is essential for business development as it gives companies and industries a conduit for direct answers. *Responsible Municipal Entity: Board of Selectmen*
2. **Develop a streamlined permitting process for new business:** In an effort to provide a clearer permitting process for businesses looking to locate in Brookfield and building upon the single point of contact described in the previous recommendation, the Town should develop a "streamlined permitting" process to assist municipal officials and permit applicants through the permit process by offering ways in which applications may be analyzed and considered more efficiently and effectively. Some of these include developing clear submittal requirements, combining public hearings, permitting flow charts and checklists, electronic permit tracking systems and maximization of the municipality's website. Additional recommendations for developing a streamlined permitting process can be found in the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies' "A Best Practices Model for Streamlined Local Permitting" handbook. *Responsible Municipal Entity: Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Building Inspector, Town Assessors and proposed Economic Development Committee*
3. **Increase Economic Development in the Town's Center:** Because the Village Center is the traditional, mixed-use district where economic development occurred in the Town's history, the Town should continue to focus new economic development within the Village zoning district. The edge of the Village Center has some land located along Route 9 (Post Road) that abuts Business A and Business B zoning districts. Promotion of a continued dense mixture of commercial enterprises and new or rehabilitated housing within the Village will continue to maintain the Town's existing character as well as enhance the vitality of the center. *Responsible Municipal Entity: Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and the proposed Economic Development Committee.*
4. **Promote a sustainable economy:** The Town should be active in promoting the local economy. The Selectmen should have as a town policy the promotion of a sustainable local economy. All departments will be charged with finding ways to buy local and promote local businesses. The Selectmen will include in their charges to all future town committees this goal.

There are a number of outside organizations dedicated to this cause. The Economic Development Committee should investigate these groups and join those that are appropriate. For example, the New England Local Business Forum (NELBF) promotes the purchasing of local goods to strengthen the local economy. Another buy local organization is the Western Mass "Local Hero" group. The town should consider passing by-laws promoting local. For example, require the local school and other town departments to purchase 1% of their budget locally. Part of the school's 1% could be designated for purchase of local food. *Responsible Municipal Entity: Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and the proposed Economic Development Committee and town Agricultural Commission.*

5. **Organize an Agricultural Commission**

An Agricultural Commission was established by Town Meeting Vote. The Commission should promote local agriculture and sustainable agricultural practices. The Commission should consider a "right to farm" bylaw and joining the American Farmland Trust. *Responsible Municipal Entity: Board of Selectmen*

6. **Review and Revise the Town's Zoning Bylaws related to Commercial and Industrial Development:** The Master Plan Committee, in cooperation with the Planning Board, should review the Zoning Bylaw provisions for commercial and industrial zoning (Business A and B districts) and revise as necessary. This review and revision effort could include development of design standards for new economic development such as access/egress, lighting, landscaping, signage, building and parking location, building façade appearance, snow removal, fencing and screening. *Responsible Municipal Entity: Planning Board and proposed Economic Development Committee.*
7. **Develop a Computerized Database of Available Commercial Properties:** As part of its streamlined permitting process, the Town should develop a computerized database of its available business zoned properties (both commercial and industrial) as a service for new industries investigating Brookfield as a potential location. The database should be searchable by parcel size, availability of water, proximity to major roadways, easements in place and any other information that a potential developer may find useful. Not only would such a database be very useful to potential developers, it would also show that Brookfield is business-friendly and willing to provide resources in support of new economic development. *Responsible Municipal Entity: Proposed Economic Development Committee and the Board of Assessors.*
8. **Consider Tax Increment Financing:** The Town should investigate the possibility of establishing a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) program to create and retain jobs in Town and stimulate the local economy. A local TIF program should insist that new businesses reserve a certain percentage of jobs for Brookfield residents, local contractors are used for building construction/rehabilitation and that local businesses are used as service providers. Although it would take a few years before Brookfield could reap the tax benefits from any TIF-created projects, the benefits to the local economy would be felt immediately. If Brookfield would like to maintain or lower its tax rate while still providing quality municipal services, then it has to grow its non-residential tax base, even if the tax benefits get pushed ten years into the future. Since the Town cannot offer new businesses much in the way of infrastructure (e.g. municipal sewer), a local TIF program would be a significant draw for new economic development. *Responsible Municipal Entity: Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and Proposed Economic Development Committee.*

See Appendix IV of this Master Plan for Economic Development Resources.

2. Housing

Introduction

Community Master Plans require a Housing Element in order to understand if the existing housing meets the needs of the current residents and those residents the community would like to attract. The research conducted for the Brookfield Housing Element pointed to certain trends in population and housing, such as a decrease in young families/aging population, a lack of housing geared to seniors, and a high volume of older housing stock. Population and housing data collected and analyzed for this chapter included: census data on population growth, age characteristics, average resident income, and educational attainment, as well as a breakdown of existing housing stock and housing costs. This data and analysis is found in the first section of this chapter and it was used, along with the public comments from the October 2008 Public Hearing and the Master Plan's resident survey results, to formulate housing goals, objectives and an action plan for the Town of Brookfield. These are found in the last section of the chapter.

Population & Housing Trends

Population Growth:

The 2000 US Census counted 3051 residents in Brookfield, a small increase from the 1990 Census count of 2,968. With total land area in town measuring 15.52 square miles, (excluding water bodies), this means that the population density is about 196 people per square mile. To provide perspective, it is interesting to note that according to the 2000 Census, the most densely populated community in the state (Somerville) had 18,156 people per square mile and the least densely populated community in the Central Massachusetts region (New Braintree) had 43. The City of Worcester had 4,632, and the state's overall density was 818 people per square mile.

Table H-1 presents Brookfield's population growth since 1930, as well as its projected growth for 2010 and 2020.

Table H-1
Brookfield Population Growth

Year	Population	Numerical Change	% Change
1930	1,352	----	----
1940	1,393	41	3.0%
1950	1,567	174	12.5%
1960	1,751	184	11.7%
1970	2,063	312	17.8%
1980	2,397	334	16.2%
1990	2,968	571	23.8%
2000	3,051	83	2.8%
2010*	3,400	349	11.4%
2020*	3,600	200	5.8%

Sources: 2000 US Census; *projections for 2010 and 2020 provided by CMRPC

As shown in this table, the town's fastest growth occurred between 1960 and 1990, with an average growth rate per decade of 19.2%. This high growth rate slowed down to a trickle between 1990 and 2000, when the population only increased by 2.8%. CMRPC had projected an increase of over 11% between 2000 and 2010 and then 5.8% between 2010 and 2020. These projections were based on the town's historical growth, residential building permit data, the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs build-out analysis and trends in surrounding communities. The 2010 projected population of 3400 may be surpassed, given that the 2007 Town Census showed that the population had grown to 3,336 -- a 9.3% increase from 2000.

Table H-2
Population Growth – Neighboring Communities

Year	Brookfield	E. Brkfld	N. Brkfld	W. Brkfld	Sturbridge	Warren	Brimfield
1980	2,397 (16.2%)	1,955 (8.6%)	4,150 (4.6%)	3,026 (14%)	5,976 (22.5%)	3,777 (3.9%)	2,318 (2.1%)
1990	2,968 (23.8%)	2,033 (3.9%)	4,708 (13.4%)	3,532 (16.7%)	7,775 (30.1%)	4,437 (17.4%)	3,001 (2.9%)
2000	3,051 (2.8%)	2,097 (3.1%)	4,683 (-.5%)	3,804 (7.7%)	7,837 (.8%)	4,776 (7.6%)	3,339 (11.2%)
2010*	3,400 (11.4%)	2,300 (9.6%)	4,800 (2.5%)	3,900 (2.5%)	9,300 (18.6%)	5,200 (8.8%)	----

Sources: 2000 US Census; projections for 2010 provided by CMRPC

Table H-2 compares the recent and projected growth of Brookfield with that of the six surrounding communities. As shown, the population grew at an extremely high rate in four of these communities between 1980 and 1990, ranging from 13.4% in North Brookfield and 30% in Sturbridge. Between 1990 and 2000, the growth rate dropped dramatically for the same four communities, ranging from a decrease of .5% in North Brookfield to a 7.6% increase in Warren.

Housing Growth:

Table H-3 illustrates the growth of Brookfield's housing stock between 1960 and 2000. As shown, there was double-digit growth for three decades with a stunning 47.8% growth rate between 1970 and 1980. This rate was not sustainable however, and it slowed to 7.1% between 1990 and 2000. Of the surrounding communities, only Sturbridge and Brimfield's housing growth rates (50.8% and 51.8%) exceeded Brookfield's rate of 37.6% between 1980 and 2000.

By comparing Tables H-1 and H-3, it is interesting to note that Brookfield's housing stock increased at almost double the rate of its population between 1960 and 2000 (140.2% growth in housing units / 74.2% growth in population). This pattern is shared in all of the surrounding communities as shown in tables H-2 and H-4 and it reflects a national trend of decreasing average household size.

Table H-3
Brookfield Housing Unit Growth

Year	# of Occupied Housing Units	Numerical Change	% Change
1960	501	----	----
1970	592	91	18.1%
1980	875	283	47.8%
1990	1124	249	28.5%
2000	1204	80	7.1%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table H-4
Housing Unit Growth – Neighboring Communities

Year	Brookfield	E. Brkfld	N. Brkfld	W. Brkfld	Sturbridge	Warren	Brimfield
1980	875 (18.1%)	642 (20.2%)	1,415 (19.1%)	1,051	2,032	1,349	823
1990	1,124 (28.5%)	721 (12.3%)	1,733 (22.5%)	1,228 (16.8%)	2,796 (37.5%)	1,694 (25.5%)	1,076 (30.7%)
2000	1,204 (7.1%)	778 (7.9%)	1,811 (4.5%)	1,362 (10.9%)	3,066 (9.6%)	1,889 (11.5%)	1,250 (16.1%)

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Type of Housing Units

Table H-5
Type of Housing Units – Year 2000

Unit Type	# of Units	% of Total	Avg Assessed Value in 2008
One Unit (detached)	796	61.1%	\$250,585 for all one-units
One Unit (attached)*	16	1.2%	
Two Units	110	8.4%	\$231,196
Three or Four Units	74	5.7%	\$265,803
Five or More Units	34	2.6%	\$261,150
Mobile Homes	272	20.9%	Not available
TOTAL:	1302	100%	

* One Unit (attached) definition from Brookfield Zoning Bylaws: A condominium, or spatial unit within a multi-unit project in which units are individually owned and deeded, and in which each unit owner has an undivided interest in the common areas.

Source: 2000 U.S. Census & Brookfield Town Assessor's office

Table H-6
Type of Housing Units in Neighboring Communities – Year 2000

Town	One Unit	Two Units	3-4 Units	5+ Units	Mobile Homes
Brookfield	812	110	74	34	272
E. Brkfld	756	62	16	8	7
N. Brkfld	1,230	256	282	121	13
W. Brkfld	1,205	93	96	95	45
Sturbridge	2,507	147	67	415	199
Warren	1,110	335	249	168	146
Brimfield	1,188	36	29	27	116

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Please note that Tables H-5 and H-6 include all housing units in these towns, including vacant and seasonal units. As shown, Brookfield's one-unit homes account for 62.3 % of its housing stock. Only two of the surrounding communities have a smaller proportion of one-unit homes -- North Brookfield, with one-unit homes accounting for 61.9% of its stock and Warren, with one-unit homes making up 55.2% of its stock.

Brookfield has by far the largest number and highest proportion of mobile homes (20.9%), when compared with the surrounding communities. Sturbridge has the second highest number of mobile homes (199) but that accounts for only 5.9% of its overall housing stock. There are three mobile home parks in town – Wagon Wheel, Brookfield Meadows, and Nanatomqua, however additional mobile homes have been prohibited in the Brookfield Zoning Bylaws since at least 1998.

Brookfield's multi-family housing units represent 26.8% of its overall stock. Similar percentages were found in Sturbridge (23.2%) and West Brookfield (23.5%). Warren and North Brookfield had the highest proportion of multi-family units by far, with 67.75% and 53.6.7% respectively. Brimfield (at 7.7%) and East Brookfield (at 11.4%) had the smallest proportions.

While Brookfield had a relatively low proportion of multi-family housing – often a less expensive alternative to single-family units -- its large number of mobile homes offers lower cost options to its residents.

While multi-family housing units can be considered to qualify as “affordable” under the State’s definition when determining if a community meets the 10% Chapter 40B requirement, mobile homes are currently ineligible under this law. There have been legislative bills filed every year for the last decade to try and change the State’s affordable housing regulations to allow mobile homes (also referred to as manufactured homes) to be considered eligible under Chapter 40B, but none have succeeded.

Age of Housing Stock

Table H-7
Age of Brookfield Housing Stock

Year Structure Was Built	# of Units	% of Housing Stock
1990-2000	16	1.2%
1980-1990	294	22.6%
1970-1980	223	17.1%
1960-1970	65	5.0%
1940-1960	150	11.5%
1939 or earlier	410	31.5%
TOTAL	1,302	100.0%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

As shown in Table H-7, 31.5% of Brookfield's housing was built prior to WWII. Housing from this era accounts for the same percentage in the towns of East and West Brookfield, however it is lower than North Brookfield's percentage of 44%, and far higher than Sturbridge's percentage of 14.8%. When added to the housing that was built between 1940 and 1960, the data shows that 43% of Brookfield's housing units were built 50 years ago or more. This could pose a maintenance problem for future generations. In fact deterioration of the Town’s housing stock was expressed as a concern at the Master Plan Public Forum. Since 1988, approximately two dozen older homes have been renovated under the federal HUD program that is administered by the Massachusetts DHCD. An additional 4 units are currently being renovated. This program provides grants and low-interest loans to income-eligible homeowners.

Housing Occupancy:

Table H-8
Type of Occupancy (Owner/Renter -- 2000)

	# of Units	%
Owner-Occupied Housing	972	80.7%
Renter-Occupied Housing	232	19.3%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table H-9
Type of Occupancy in Neighboring Communities (Owner/Renter -- 2000)

	Brkfld	N. Brkfld	E. Brkfld	W. Brkfld	Sturbridge	Warren	Brimfield
Owner Units	972 (80.7%)	1,246 (69%)	648 (83%)	1,063 (77.3%)	2,380 (77%)	1,272 (67.3%)	1,094 (87.5%)
Renter Units	232 (19.3%)	565 (31%)	130 (17%)	309 (22.7%)	1,712 (37%)	617 (32.7%)	156 (12.5%)

Source: U.S. Census

At almost 81%, Brookfield had the third highest owner-occupancy rate of the communities as shown in Table H-9. Only Brimfield (87.5%) and East Brookfield (83%) were higher. Warren (67.3%) and North Brookfield (69%), had the lowest owner-occupancy rates of the neighboring communities listed. These numbers correlate with the percentage of single-family structures that exist in these communities, which tend to have higher rates of owner-occupancy. As shown in Table H-6, Brimfield and East Brookfield had the highest percentage of single-family units and Warren and North Brookfield had the lowest.

Housing Vacancy Rates

According to the 2000 Census, Brookfield had a 4.2% housing vacancy rate (35 units) when eliminating seasonal units from the count of vacant housing units. Using this vacancy calculation, two of Brookfield's neighbors had higher vacancy rates (West Brookfield with 4.8% and Warren with 5.7%) and three had lower ones. East Brookfield, with the smallest number of housing units of the neighboring communities in 2000, had the same percentage (2.3%) of vacant housing as Sturbridge, the town with the greatest number of housing units. These numbers correlate (for the most part) with the percentage of multi-family housing that exists in these communities (See Table H-6), which tend to have higher vacancy rates.

Households by Type

Table H-10
Brookfield Households by Type (2000)

	# of Households	%
Family Households:	857	71.2%
*Non-Family Households:	347	28.8%

*Persons living alone, or a group of unrelated people sharing the same housing unit

Source: U.S. Census

As shown in Table H-10, 71.2% of the households in Brookfield were family-based in 2000. That is a slight decrease from 1990 when the family households accounted for 74.6% of all households in town. The percentage of households headed by single females has remained essentially the same at 9%. The percentage of householders living alone increased somewhat from 21.2% (239) to 23.8% (287), however, the number of seniors living alone decreased from 119 in 1990 to 106 in 2000. This is almost a 2% decrease, which is also reflected in the decrease in the proportion of residents age 65 and older, as shown in Table H-12.

Table H-11
Households by Type – Neighboring Communities (2000)

Household Type	Brookfield	N. Brkfld	E. Brkfld	W. Brkfld	Sturbridge	Warren	Brimfield
Family	857 (71%)	1,236 (69%)	600 (77%)	965 (70.8%)	2,213 (72%)	1287 (68.1%)	886 (70.9%)
Non-Family	347 (29%)	575 (32%)	178 (23%)	397 (29.2%)	853 (28%)	602 (31.9%)	364 (29.1%)

Source: U.S. Census

Three of the neighboring communities had essentially the same proportion of family households, while East Brookfield had the highest (77%), and Warren had the lowest (68%).

Average Household Size:

By reviewing the data presented in this chapter it is apparent that the population growth in Brookfield has not kept pace with the growth in housing units. Between 1970 and 2000 the population grew by 74%, however the number of housing units increased by 140%. This reflects the state and national trend of shrinking average household size, which has been caused by a number of factors, including an increase in single-parent households and the trend of people getting married later in life and having fewer children. In 1970 the average household size in Brookfield was 3.47 and by 2000 it had decreased to 2.53.

Median Age of Residents:

Another national trend, mirrored in Brookfield, and adding to the decrease in household size, is the increasingly older median age of the population. According to the U.S. Census, the town's median age increased from 26 in 1970 to 38.9 in 2000. The state's median age increased from 29 in 1970 to 36.5 by 2000.

Age Group Distribution:

Table H-12
Brookfield Age Characteristics (2000)

Age Group	Number	% of Total Population	% Change from 1990
Under 5 Years	178	5.8%	-25.2%
5 – 19	679	22.2%	5.4%
20 – 44	1000	32.8%	-10.5%
45 – 64	782	25.6%	50.4%
65 Years or Over	412	13.6%	-8.2%
Total:	3,051	100.0%	

Source: U.S. Census (1990 and 2000)

As shown in Table H-12, 28% of Brookfield's population consists of pre-school and school-aged children (*under 5 years* and the *5-19* categories). This is just slightly less than the percentage for this age group in 1990. However, the number of pre-school aged children (5 and under) that lived in town in 2000 decreased significantly (over 25%) from 1990, changing the percentage of the population from 8% in 1990 to 5.8% in 2000. Related to this is the decrease in the 20-44 year-olds segment, which fell by 10.5% between 1990 and 2000. This may be due in part to the increase in housing costs during this period, which made housing in Brookfield more expensive for young families than most of the surrounding communities (as shown in Table H-16).

With Brookfield's median age increasing by 13 years between 1970 and 2000, it is surprising that the 65 and older group lost 8.2% of its population. It decreased from a total of 449 in 1990 to 412 in 2000. The decrease was only in the 65-74 bracket, however, which went down by 104 between 1990 and 2000. The 75-84 age bracket increased by 61 and the 85 and older group increased by 6 residents. The middle-age group (45-64) saw an astonishing gain in Brookfield of 50.4% between 1990 and 2000. This age group probably got the bulk of its members from the aging 20-44 bracket as well as from an influx of new residents better able to afford the relatively high housing costs.

As this data shows, lower cost housing options are needed in Brookfield in order to attract young families, or this segment of the population will continue to decline. It is also important for the Town to offer housing options that will meet the needs of its growing senior population.

Income Levels

Table H-13
2000 Median Household Income Comparison

Brookfield Median Household (HH) Income:	\$45,655
State Median HH Income	\$50,502
Brookfield as a % of State Average:	90.4%
Worcester County Median HH Income:	\$47,874
Brookfield as a % of Worcester County Average:	95.4%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

As shown in Table H-13, Brookfield's median household income in 2000 at \$45,655, was 10% lower than the state's and almost 5% less than Worcester County's median household income. This is indicative of a rural community where jobs are scarce and the commute to the closest employment centers is long -- 40 minutes to the City of Worcester and 1 hour to the City of Springfield. This is consistent with North Brookfield's median

household income of \$44,286, higher than Warren's of \$34,583, but less than West Brookfield's of \$49,722, which is similarly rural and essentially the same distance from the nearest employment centers.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census Journey to Work statistics, only 202, or 12.9% of the 1564 workers residing in Brookfield were employed in town. This is the lowest of any of the surrounding communities shown in previous tables, with the exception of East Brookfield, where only 9.1% of the job force worked in town. The highest percentage was in Sturbridge (25.5%) and the others ranged from 18.4% in West Brookfield to 22.6% in North Brookfield. The largest employers in Brookfield are a restaurant (with 25-50 employees depending on the season), small manufacturer of electrical wire (currently 49 employees), a metal finishing company and a small car dealership. As of 2007, Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training counted a total of 463 jobs in town.

Table H-14
2000 Per Capita Income Comparison

Brookfield Median Per Capita Income:	\$20,144
State Median Per Capita Income	\$25,952
Brookfield as a % of State Average:	77.6%
Worcester County Per Capita Income:	\$22,983
Brookfield as a % of Worcester County Average:	87.6%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table H-14 shows that the 2000 median per capita income in Brookfield was more than 20% lower than the State's and 12% lower than Worcester County's median per capita income at that time. Again, this may be indicative of the rural nature of the community and its lack of nearby high-paying jobs. The percentage of school-age children and elderly residents does not appear to have greatly influenced the median per capita income.

The relatively low per capita income and median household income of Brookfield's residents points to a need for more affordable housing in Town.

Table H-15
1999 Brookfield Household Income Distribution

Income Categories	# of Households	% of Total
Less than \$15,000	166	13.7
\$15,000 - \$24,999	118	9.7
\$25,000 - \$34,999	167	13.8
\$35,000 - \$49,999	231	19.1
\$50,000 - \$74,999	295	24.3
\$75,000 - \$99,999	115	9.5
\$100,000 - \$149,000	104	8.6
\$150,000 and over	16	1.3

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

As shown in Table H-15, the highest percentage of Brookfield households (24.3%) fell within the \$50,000-\$74,999 income category in 1999. There were 166 households that had income below \$25,000 and 120 households with an income of \$100,000 or more.

Homeownership Costs

Table H-16
Median Sales Price -- Single Family Homes
Brookfield & Neighboring Communities
2007 – 2009

	2007	2008	*2009	Averages
Brookfield	\$257,000	\$215,000	\$205,447	\$225,800
East Brkfield	\$239,000	\$182,000	\$117,000	\$179,000
North Brkfield	\$215,000	\$176,200	\$134,000	\$175,000
West Brkfield	\$240,000	\$174,500	\$140,000	\$185,000
Sturbridge	\$302,500	\$287,500	\$242,250	\$277,400
Warren	\$196,000	\$170,000	\$120,000	\$162,000
Brimfield	\$245,750	\$210,000	not available	not available
Central Mass	\$240,000	\$220,000	\$195,300	\$218,000
State	\$327,000	\$285,000	\$256,000	\$289,000

*First Qtr Figures Source: Warren Group/Massachusetts Association of Realtors

As shown in table H-16, Brookfield had the second highest median sales price of single family homes of the surrounding communities shown for the years 2007, 2008 and first quarter of 2009. While housing prices have declined sharply, Brookfield maintains a higher average than all neighboring communities researched except for Sturbridge. This indicates that for the time period studied, Brookfield was considered a highly desirable place to live. Sturbridge, which had the highest median sales price of the communities shown for all three years, has direct access to three major highways – the Massachusetts Turnpike, Interstate 84, and U.S Route 20. Brookfield's highway access is quite limited, with direct access to only state-numbered Routes 9 and 148. Highway access is an important factor that can greatly influence housing prices. As shown, Brookfield's median sales price was \$17,000 higher than the Central Massachusetts median in 2007, \$5,000 lower in 2008 and \$10,000 higher for the first quarter of 2009. This data does not include condo sales prices.

Table H-17
2010 Property Taxes Statistics
Brookfield & Neighboring Communities

Town	Tax Rate	Average Assessed Value, Single Family	Average Tax Bill
Brookfield	\$14.28	236,930	\$3,383
Warren	\$15.53	193,569	\$3,006
New Braintree	\$13.98	268,794	\$3,758
East Brookfield	\$12.19	242,309	\$2,954
Brimfield	\$11.93	262,139	\$3,127
West Brookfield	\$11.28	234,453	\$2,645
<i>Averages</i>	<i>\$13.19</i>	<i>239,699</i>	<i>\$3,146</i>

Source: 2010 "Towns At A Glance" Documents on www.mass.gov

The towns in Table H-17 above are similar communities in size and economic base (primarily low density residential property). The Brookfield tax rate is considerably above the average, the town's average single family home valuation is approximately average, and the average Brookfield tax bill is slightly above the

average. Reviewing the table, it is interesting to note that the tax rate alone does not tell the whole story with regard to property tax.

Education Levels

Table H-18
Brookfield Educational Attainment

Education Level	Number	%
Less than 9 th grade	88	4.2
9 th to 12 th grade with no diploma	262	12.6
High School graduate	879	42.3
Some college, no degree	364	17.5
Associate degree	138	6.6
Bachelor's degree	222	10.7
Graduate or professional degree	127	6.1

Source: U.S. Census

The data in Table H-16 indicates that of the town's population that was 25 years or older, 83.2% had attained at least a high school education and almost 17% had a bachelor's degree or higher. This is comparable to the adjacent communities, except that Sturbridge had the highest education attainment with 87% of this age bracket having at least a high school diploma and 22.2% having a bachelor's degree or higher. Warren had the lowest percentage of its residents with a bachelor's degree or higher, with 9.9%. Brookfield is in line with the Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (Worcester and 32 surrounding communities) which had 83.6% residents with at least a high school diploma.

Other Housing-Related Conditions in Brookfield

1. Zoning

A. Senior Housing: Brookfield's Zoning Bylaw does not contain any provisions that directly address the need for senior housing alternatives. The Town's 65 and over population has grown modestly yet steadily over the past few decades, while the soon-to-be senior age-group (45-64) has seen the highest rate of increase of all of the age-groups since 1990. Though there are 85 units for residents age 55 and older at the Nanatomqua Mobile Home Park, there is a great need for Brookfield to provide additional housing for the elderly, as it is in most communities across the state and the nation. All of the neighboring communities with local Housing Authorities have extensive waiting lists for senior housing units. The lack of senior Housing (as well as a Senior Center) was identified as a weakness at the first Master Plan Public Forum. As the Town's senior and soon-to-be senior populations continue to grow, the demand for senior housing will become even more pronounced over the next decade. Many communities in Massachusetts have adopted senior housing bylaws within their zoning framework. Such bylaws can take the form of senior residential communities, retirement communities, as well as assisted living and residential care facilities (both are governed by State regulations).

B. Multi-family housing: Two-family housing is allowed by-right in the Rural Residential and Village districts, however multi-family housing is only allowed in these 2 districts by special permit. Conversion of single-family dwellings to two, three, or four-family dwellings is allowed by special permit in all districts other than the Flood Plain district. Dwelling units are also allowed in buildings with retail shops or other permitted uses by special permit in all but the Business B district. These limitations exist mostly because there is no sewer in town and water lines only exist in the Village District, along Route 9, south of Route 9 and in the section close to the East Brookfield line.

C. *Cluster Zoning* -- Cluster developments were allowed by special permit as of the September 6, 1998 bylaws. A special regulation for Open Space Residential Developments replaced the cluster development regulation in November 2008. It allows the Planning Board to grant a special permit for a development “on one or more parcels of land in common ownership having an area of no less than ten acres in the Rural Residential District and seven acres in the Village district”. The minimum lot size is reduced from 70,000 square feet to 50,000 (single family) or 60,000 (2-family) in the RR District, and from 35,000 square feet to 25,000 (single family) or 30,000 (2-family) in the Village District. This new regulation allows the Planning Board to award density bonuses (greater densities than normally allowed in the Town’s zoning bylaws) to developers that provide senior and affordable housing units.

D. *Accessory apartments* are explicitly allowed in the Zoning Bylaws in the Rural Residential and Village districts and they are restricted to a maximum of 600 square feet. The Town could allow affordability restrictions to be placed on these rental units which would make them eligible to be counted toward the Town’s 40-B affordable housing stock.

2. Affordable Housing

Subsidized/Affordable Housing -- At the present time, there are 41 housing units in Brookfield (or 3.3% of the Town’s total housing stock) that qualify as affordable housing under Chapter 40B of Massachusetts General Laws. A list of these can be found in Appendix D. Table H-17 shows how Brookfield compares to its neighboring communities in regards to its Chapter 40B affordable housing, both in the total number of units and the percentage of the total housing stock. Except for East Brookfield, which has no units that can be counted toward the 40-B goal, Brookfield has the smallest number of 40-B units (37) and the lowest percentage – only 3.3%. Brookfield would need to oversee the creation of 89 affordable housing units in order to reach the State’s goal of having 10% of its housing stock affordable to low and moderate income households.

Table H-19
Low/Moderate Income Housing – Neighboring Communities

	Brkfld	E. Brkfld	N. Brkfld	W.Brkfld	Sturbridge	Warren	Brimfield
# Affordable Units	41	0	142	63	206	110	90
% Affordable	3.3%	0%	7.5%	4.4%	6.6%	5.5%	7%

Source: MA Dept of Housing & Community Development – Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory, as of 9/9/08

To qualify for Chapter 40B, a development proposal must first be approved under a state or federal housing program, such as MassHousing, MassDevelopment, the Department of Housing and Community Development, or the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. At least 25% of the units must be affordable to lower income households who earn no more than 80% of the area median income. Alternatively, for rental housing, the project can provide 20% of the units to households below 50% of median income. Towns are allowed to establish a local preference for residents (currently, up to 70% of the units can be for local preference). Developers (whether for-profit or nonprofit) must also agree to restrict their profit to a maximum of 20% in for-sale developments and 10% per year for rental developments (unless indicated otherwise in the subsidy program or the comprehensive permit). The development must be subject to a regulatory agreement and monitored by a public agency and owners must meet affirmative marketing requirements.

The median family income for a family of four for the Worcester Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) as determined by the federal Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) for the most recent year (2008) is \$76,900. Therefore, the low income household would make less than 50% of this figure (or \$38,450), and a moderate income household would make 80% of this figure (or \$61,500).

The application process for a developer acting under Chapter 40B involves a single submission to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The zoning board may approve the application as submitted, approve the project with conditions or changes, or deny the application altogether. If the board denies the application or imposes “uneconomic” conditions, the developer may appeal the decision to the State Housing Appeals Committee (HAC). The developer must still obtain various permits required by state statutes, such as wetlands protection, state highway access permits, and a local building permit. The HAC can overrule the local decision unless the proposed development presents serious health or safety concerns that cannot be mitigated. The developer only has this right of appeal in communities where less than 10% of the year-round housing meets the statute’s definition of low and moderate income housing or where low and moderate income housing exists on sites comprising less than 1.5% of the municipality’s total land area zoned for residential, commercial, or industrial use.

Source: Citizen’s Housing and Planning Association <http://www.chapa.org/pdf/40BFactSheetUpdateApril2009.pdf>

Currently, there are 55 municipalities in Massachusetts that have achieved the 10% threshold, with Worcester and Northborough the only communities to qualify in the 40-town CMRPC region. The towns of Westborough and Webster are close, with 9.8% and 9.6% respectively.

3. Older Housing Stock

As indicated in Table H-7, 31.5% of Brookfield’s housing stock was built prior to World War II. Although no comprehensive inventory has been compiled, it is possible that many of these older residences are in need of rehabilitation. The federal government offers numerous grant opportunities for building rehabilitation projects, especially when they benefit low and moderate-income families. A brief description of these grant programs is provided in the Action Plan at the end of this chapter.

4. Lack of Infrastructure

Town water is available only in the Town Center and along Route 9 north of the Quaboag River. There is no Town water infrastructure south of the Quaboag River and there is no sewer infrastructure anywhere in town. According to the October, 2008 Master Plan Public Meeting, the need to expand the town's infrastructure was listed as one of the Town's top 3 opportunities.

5. Environmental Constraints

Housing development in the Village and Rural Residential districts (where housing is allowed), is greatly constrained by steep slopes, with several north/south ridges in the south part of town, swampy soils, and ledge in the southwest section of town. In addition, there are several large areas of town that are permanently protected from development, including four state wildlife management areas, a Department of Fisheries & Wildlife tract (formerly known as Hamilton Forest), and a large Massachusetts Audubon property in the northeastern section of town. In addition, development rights for over 100 acres were donated to the Opacum Land Trust in 2008.

Total acres of land constrained from development in the Village and Rural Residential Districts:

- Surface water: 30 acres
- Wetlands: 423 acres
- River Protection Act buffer: 269 acres
- Steep slopes (greater than 25%): 133 acres
- Protected lands: 37,210 acres

Goals & Objectives

Goal 1:

Provide energy efficient housing opportunities for a diversity of income levels and ages, while ensuring that the new residential development is created in a controlled, well-planned manner that is consistent with the Town's ability to provide municipal services and the Town's desire to preserve its rural, small-town character, as well as its historic places and open space.

Objectives

- A. Develop and implement a Housing Production Plan to meet the state-mandated 10% quota for certified affordable housing units.
- B. Utilize the appropriate available tools and means to enable the Town to produce housing that will accommodate and be accessible to seniors, and young families/first-time homebuyers.
- C. Encourage the use of renewable and sustainable energy systems in the design and siting of new homes and in the retrofitting of existing homes.
- D. Coordinate new housing development with Brookfield's municipal service providers.
- E. Explore the feasibility of improving infrastructure (water, sewer, drainage, etc.) in order to increase the diversity of housing opportunities.

Goal 2:

Assist homeowners of older housing units in utilizing various housing rehabilitation.

Objective:

Promote energy efficiency and environmental soundness

Recommendations/Action Plan

(Goal 1, Objective # A & B)

1. Establish a local housing partnership to address/manage affordable housing issues in town. Brookfield's town government, as currently constituted, may not have the administrative capacity to handle the wide variety of affordable housing issues the Town may wish to initiate under this plan. Usually it is the Select Board that appoints such a partnership or committee. The Selectmen do not need Town Meeting authority to establish such an entity, but can do so if they believe that Town Meeting action will help lend legitimacy to the committee. Dealing with affordable housing issues is a fairly broad mandate, but there are specific tasks that a local housing partnership can undertake, such as:

- Prepare a Housing Production Plan.
- Provide a housing strategy and other housing-related information for the next update of the Town's Master Plan.
- Inventory all publicly-owned buildings that may be suitable for affordable housing adaptive reuse, as well as publicly-owned properties that may have excess land that could be developed for affordable housing.
- Issue an RFP for privately-owned properties suitable for redevelopment to affordable housing.
- Evaluate tax title properties that may be suitable for affordable housing and make recommendations to the Select Board regarding potential purchase by the Town or the Partnership.
- Apply for the various State and federal affordable housing grant opportunities.
- Monitor on an annual basis those accessory apartments that agree to affordability use restriction as part of their approval.
- Manage the lottery system for those affordable housing units created through the Local Initiative Program (LIP) or through a Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit. A housing consultant is typically hired on private projects, although the local housing partnership may host the lottery.

- Provide outreach and education to the community regarding affordable housing.

There are several entities that could assist Brookfield in developing a local housing partnership and get them started, including the [Massachusetts Housing Partnership](#) and the [Department of Housing and Community Development](#).

Responsible Municipal Entity: Select Board.

(Goal 1, Objective A)

2. Establish a local Affordable Housing Trust Fund: Chapter 44 MGL enables municipalities to establish a trust fund for the creation and preservation of affordable housing. Such a fund would need to be established locally through Town Meeting action. The law allows towns to collect funds for housing, segregate them out of the general budget into an affordable housing trust fund, and use these funds without having to go back to Town Meeting for approval. The law also allows the trust to own and manage real estate. Such a fund would need to be governed by a five-member board of trustees, most typically appointed by a Town Manager or Select Board. Investigating the feasibility of such a trust fund for Brookfield would be an ideal project for a local housing partnership.

Responsible Municipal Entity: Select Board.

(Goal 1, Objective A)

3. Create New Affordable Housing Through the Local Initiative Program: The Local Initiative Program (LIP), administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), was established to create a method for communities to provide low and moderate-income housing without the need for direct state or federal financial subsidies. Affordable housing units created by a LIP project will be counted towards the municipality's 10% low and moderate-income housing threshold. Under this program DHCD provides technical assistance (which qualifies as a subsidy) to communities and developers seeking to develop housing for households earning below 80% of the area median household income. The program limits the State's review to: incomes of the people served, fair marketing, profit limitation, and establishing long term affordability. Both municipalities and private developers can initiate a LIP project and the two approaches are:

- Local Initiative Units, which are developed through a municipality's conventional zoning
- Unit developments through a Comprehensive Permit as authorized by M.G.L., c. 40B

LIP projects can include new construction, building conversion, adaptive re-use and building rehabilitation. They are usually administered at the local level by a local housing partnership or, in the absence of a housing partnership, the Select Board.

Responsible Municipal Entity: Local Housing Partnership, Select Board.

(Goal 1, Objective A)

4. Ensure that the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is trained to deal effectively with Comprehensive Permits. Regulations governing the 40B process are periodically modified, and the ZBA should keep abreast of these changes. The University of Massachusetts Extension's Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) offers classes on this subject on an annual basis and will even provide customized training sessions to individual communities. In addition, DHCD has prepared a procedural "how to" booklet for local communities.

Responsible Municipal Entity: The Zoning Board of Appeals, Select Board.

(Goal 1, Objective A)

5. Adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and utilize a portion of the funds raised for the purpose of providing affordable housing. The Act requires that a community spend or set aside for later spending at least 10% of the revenues collected annually for the creation, preservation, or support of community housing. Community housing is defined as housing for households earning up to 100% of a community's

area median income (which was \$76,900 in the applicable area for 2008). Of course, to count toward the state's 40B affordable housing inventory, the housing would have to be affordable to those households earning less than 80% of the area median income.

Responsible Municipal Entity: Select Board, Planning Board

(Goal 1, Objective B)

6. Expand Senior Housing options within the Zoning Bylaw by amending the Uses Allowed. Options to consider are: congregate care facilities (shared living environments where elders can maintain their independence and receive supportive services), independent living facilities, restorative care/skilled nursing facilities, or senior housing communities.

Responsible Municipal Entity: The Planning Board in conjunction with the Select Board. Exploring additional senior housing opportunities could also be another project for a local housing partnership group.

(Goal 1, Objective B)

7. Use Non-Regulatory Means to Promote Homeownership: There are three non-regulatory means that Brookfield could utilize to promote homeownership – homebuyer counseling & education, a soft second mortgage program, and self-help housing initiatives.

Responsible Municipal Entity: Local Housing Partnership

- Homebuyer Counseling, Education. Homebuyer counseling and education are valuable marketing and outreach tools that can help Brookfield residents bridge the information gap and prepare them for a successful homeownership experience. The Town could either plan a first-time homeownership initiative by partnering with an agency or institution that provides homebuyer counseling or simply make it known to Brookfield residents that such educational organizations exist. There are many nonprofit agencies that offer this service and most have informational brochures that could be displayed at the Town Hall. These agencies are well trained, monitored and certified by the Massachusetts Homeownership Collaborative, which is coordinated by the Citizens Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA). They provide “soup to nuts” information about the home-buying process, from how to budget or repair damaged credit, to the many types of mortgage products and down payment assistance programs. Many also sponsor, or participate in, homebuyer fairs. The CHAPA website (www.chapa.org) maintains a list of counseling agencies and their current and planned activities. Many conventional lenders offer similar programs.
- Soft Second Loan Program. With a low down payment, a subsidized second mortgage, and no required mortgage insurance or points, many low and moderate-income families qualify for Soft Second loans. Massachusetts Housing Partnership's Community Housing Initiatives team (CHI) can provide more information and technical assistance regarding this program.
Website: http://www.mhp.net/community_initiatives/
- Self-Help Housing. The Town could explore Self-Help Housing programs. Self-Help programs involve sweat-equity by the homebuyer and volunteer labor of others to reduce construction costs. For example, some communities have donated building lots to Habitat for Humanity to construct affordable single housing units. Under the Habitat for Humanity program, homebuyers contribute between 300 and 500 hours of sweat equity while working with volunteers from the community to construct the home. The homeowner finances the home with a 20-year loan at 0% interest. As funds are paid back to Habitat for Humanity, they are used to fund future projects.

(Goal 1, Objective # C)

8. Consider adoption of the [Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code \(780 CMR 120.00\)](#) scheduled to be finalized by May 2009). Its purpose is to provide flexibility to enable innovative methods and practices that create a more energy efficient alternative to the base energy code that applies to appropriate building code sections for both new construction and existing buildings. A community may mandate this level of energy

efficiency for building design and construction beyond the requirements of 780 CMR. This appendix may be adopted by any community in the State through a decision by town meeting, city council, or board of aldermen, but only after the community's existing public notice requirements are met. If mandated, this code shall replace 780 CMR 13, 34, 61, or 93, as applicable. This code shall regulate the design and construction of buildings for the effective use of energy. It is not intended to reduce safety, health or environmental requirements found in other applicable codes or ordinances.

Actual Website: http://www.mass.gov/Eeops/docs/dps/inf/120_aa_stretch_code_rev_a.pdf

Responsible Municipal Entity: Select Board, Building Inspector

(Goal 1, Objective # C)

9. Provide information to residents on federal and state tax incentives, financing options, and energy savings associated with installing renewable and sustainable energy systems in new homes and retrofitting existing homes. Helpful resources include: the [Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources \(DOER\)](#), National Grid, Massachusetts Electric, and the [Massachusetts Technology Collaborative \(MTC\)](#).

Responsible Municipal Entity: Select Board, Building Inspector

(Goal 1, Objective # D)

10. Consider adoption of a zoning bylaw that allows for the municipal review of major residential development proposals that involve multiple lots (perhaps five or more). Currently, the creation of multiple lots may receive no municipal review if they are created under the Approval Not Required (ANR) process. Having a major residential development review provision in the Town's Zoning Bylaw would allow for the municipal review of issues such as the cumulative impacts of the proposed development in regards to drainage, stormwater management, erosion control, environmental impact and neighborhood impact, typically through a Special Permit process.

Responsible Municipal Entity: Select Board, Planning Board

(Goal 1, Objective E)

11. Create a special task force to assess the possibility of installing town sewer infrastructure, and expanding town water infrastructure to increase the diversity of housing opportunities. This assessment should include the identification of potential funding sources. Improving water and sewer infrastructure in Town was selected as one of the top 3 opportunities by the participants of the SWOT exercise conducted at the October, 2008 Master Plan Public Meeting. This SWOT exercise was a group analysis whereby the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the Town of Brookfield were identified.

(Goal 2)

12. Establish a task force to examine the Town's older housing stock and work with property owners to identify needed improvements. Following this, investigate the various federal and State grant opportunities for housing rehabilitation projects and determine the most appropriate programs for Brookfield and its homeowners. A brief description of many of these programs is listed below.

Responsible Municipal Entity: A special task force, in conjunction with the Select Board, the Building Inspector, and possibly the Historical District and Commission.

- *Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG):* This is a federal program under the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which is implemented at the State level by Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The Community Development Fund (CDF) is a major component of the Massachusetts CDBG Program and it supports revitalization efforts and addresses the needs of low and moderate-income residents by funding housing, community and economic development activities in communities throughout the Commonwealth. The Community Development Fund is comprised of two main components: CDF I (for communities with high needs indicators) and CDF II (for communities that would not be eligible for CDF I due to lower needs indicators). Though the Town of Brookfield is technically a CDF I community, its needs score of 26 is considered borderline. As such, it is relatively difficult for the Town to obtain funding under

the competitive CDF I grant program. In Fiscal Year 2009, DHCD allowed communities with a borderline needs score such as Brookfield to apply for funds under either one of these grant programs (not both). Eligible activities under both CDF I and CDF II include economic development projects that create and/or retain local/regional jobs, housing rehabilitation, and infrastructure improvements. A CDF project must either benefit low and moderate-income people, aid in the prevention and/or elimination of slums and/or blight, or meet an urgent condition posing a serious threat to the health and welfare of the community.

- *The Massachusetts Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF)* was established by an act of the State Legislature and is codified under Chapter 121-D of the Massachusetts General Laws. The AHTF operates out of DHCD and is administered by the Massachusetts Housing Finance Authority (MHFA) with guidance provided by an Advisory Committee of housing advocates. The purpose of the fund is to support the creation/preservation of housing that is affordable to people with incomes that do not exceed 110% of the area median income. The AHTF can be used to support the acquisition, development and/or preservation of affordable housing units. AHTF assistance can include:
 - Deferred payment loans, low/no-interest amortizing loans.
 - Down payment and closing cost assistance for first-time homebuyers.
 - Credit enhancements and mortgage insurance guarantees.
 - Matching funds for municipalities that sponsor affordable housing projects.
 - Matching funds for employer-based housing and capital grants for public housing.

Housing developments financed by the AHTF can include market-rate units, but the Trust Fund cannot be used to support such units. The level of assistance provided by the AHTF to a specific project must be the minimum amount necessary to achieve the desired degree of affordability. Housing units created through the AHTF can be counted towards the Town's 10% threshold for affordable housing under Chapter 40-B.

- *The HOME Program and the Housing Stabilization Fund:* These programs are offered by HUD (managed by DHCD) and are designed to support the acquisition and/or rehabilitation of existing structures. Acquisition funds are only available to low-income families. Eligible projects include: property acquisition; housing construction and/or rehabilitation; connecting to public utilities; and making essential improvements such as structural improvements, plumbing improvements and energy-related improvements. These programs are offered every two years. Once again, interested communities need to do a substantial amount of advance work prior to submitting a grant application.
- *The 'Get the Lead Out' Program* is sponsored by HUD and managed at the State level by the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MHFA). This is a lead abatement program available to single family homes and 2-4 family properties if high levels of lead are present in the home. The Town of Southbridge has used this program to great effect. Offered on an annual basis, these funds are generally easier to apply for than the above referenced CDBG funds.
- *Home Improvement Loan Program:* Another HUD program managed by the MHFA, this program offers loans to eligible owners of one-to-four unit residential properties so that they can make necessary improvements to their residential structures. Eligible improvements include: sewage disposal systems and plumbing needs, safety-related alterations and renovations, energy-related improvements and repairs designed to bring the structure up to local building codes. Offered on an annual basis, these funds generally have an easier application process than the above referenced CDBG funds.
- *Community Septic Management Program:* This program is administered at the State level by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The program makes available to homeowners loan money for repairing failing septic systems.
- *Weatherization Assistance:* DHCD provides funding assistance to regional non-profit organizations for fuel assistance and weatherization programs. The Worcester Community Action Council, Inc. is

the regional agency that provides such services for Worcester County communities. In order to be eligible for the weatherization program, the applicant must receive some form of federal fuel assistance benefits.

- *National Grid Energy Audit Program:* An audit will determine a home's energy use and provide recommended measures to improve efficiency and save money. National Grid natural gas customers can request a **FREE** in-home energy audit by calling 1-800-860-0815. They also provide a complete online energy audit using a free, simple home analyzer tool.
<http://thinksmarthinkgreen.com/service/nhgas.html>

See Appendix IV of this Master Plan for additional information on housing.

Chapter 3 - Land Use and Zoning

Current Land Use Pattern

Brookfield's land use pattern has changed little in the past 50 years. While many communities adjacent to metropolitan areas experienced explosive growth from the construction of the interstate highway system and from post-war baby-boom families seeking a less urban lifestyle, Brookfield's location at the fringe of the Worcester metropolitan area left it relatively unchanged by the outward spread of suburbanization. In many respects, Brookfield still retains the character of an old New England village.

Brookfield Center contains the Town's principal concentration of population and services. Within the triangle formed by Route 9, Central Street, and the Town Common are many of the Town's institutions and commercial services. Rt. 9 serves as a bypass around the Town Center for thru-traffic, and it allows the village to remain free of the nuisance effects of heavy congestion. Central Street is the location of the Town Hall, Library, Elementary School, TipTop Country Store, and Fire Department. Within the village are a number of businesses that provide general commercial services for residents. Land use is decidedly mixed, with high density single family homes, duplexes, and multi-family units. In several instances, commercial and residential uses occupy the same building. The Town has worked continuously to improve the street network in the area, including improving older sidewalks and providing new walks on some streets. As a result, the Town Center is very pedestrian friendly, and residents can easily walk to church, become involved with Library programs, patronize local establishments, or participate in local government at the Town Hall. This compact, village style of development is supported by the presence of a public water system. Edges of the village are well defined; where water service is not present, a low intensity pattern of development predominates.

Brookfield Common is on the National Register of Historic Places. This designation provides well-deserved recognition of the notable historic structures of a 19th century New England Town Common. There are few businesses on the Common to intrude on the tranquil residential neighborhood or diminish the cohesiveness of the Common's appeal. The outdoor spaces of the Common and Mall provide a congenial venue for local fairs and cultural activities, helping to foster an active community spirit. While placement on the Register affords distinction, it does little to protect the area from unwarranted changes. Brookfield should consider the creation of a "Local Historic District" to protect the Common's historic assets. Upon adoption of a town by-law, a local historic district commission has authority to approve exterior alterations. The Commission may work with property owners to prevent inappropriate changes to buildings and insure the continuation of the historic integrity of the Common for future generations of Brookfield citizens.

Route 9 contains many highway-oriented services that provide residents with essential goods. These include a Cumberland Farms convenience store and gas station, the Post Office, an auto dealership, several restaurants, a liquor store, and other general retail stores. There are no strip shopping centers, big-box retail, or home improvement centers in Brookfield. Given the low population here and in neighboring towns, most businesses have limited floor space and tend to offer discount merchandise to cater to the modest income of most of the population. Residents desiring upscale goods must travel to Sturbridge, Worcester, or one of the region's suburban malls. Most of Brookfield businesses occur on small lots and have little room



For Sale: The Gables, Route 9 and Central Street

for expansion. With few design standards to govern commercial development, many of these businesses have an auto-dominated appearance and few amenities to break up the expanse of pavement and utilities.



Northern High Farm

Away from Brookfield Center, a rural aspect prevails. There are a few remaining farms and fields, and widespread forests lend an open space quality to most of the Town. Large expanses of open space provide unfragmented habitat for wildlife. Most new homes arise along rural roads as frontage lots. Few subdivisions have occurred in recent years. Brookfield has a great deal of land in public ownership, and the widespread presence of wetlands and steep slopes will naturally restrict development. It is unlikely that Brookfield will witness significant housing growth in the coming decades given its location, limited amount of available land, lack of major employers to stimulate demand, and difficult topographic constraints. Brookfield will continue to attract families seeking a rural lifestyle and lack of commercial services; newcomers must be willing to

commute to distant job locations or have the ability to make a living in a rural environment by providing a service that is not dependent upon a large near-by population. In addition, as telecommuting becomes commonplace, proximity to a work location will become less important and could allow more office professionals to live in Brookfield.

Master Plan Survey Results Pertaining to Land Use

Results from the 2008 Master Plan Survey give a clear sense of the future residents hope for Brookfield. By and large, respondents like the Town the way it is and desire to retain many of the defining characteristics that make Brookfield a desirable place to live. Some of the key findings from the survey related to land use include:

- When asked what they like about the Town, the greatest responses were Brookfield's "small town character" and "open spaces." Thus, the unifying land use strategy of this Plan is to retain the rural character and open space of outlying areas and direct growth to the Town Center.
- 69% of respondents indicated that preserving historic landscapes was a high priority.
- When asked preferences for rezoning, the responses confirmed the priority for open space. Many respondents also seem to feel that Brookfield should provide more areas for small scale commercial activity and office and professional services.

Table 1
Preference for Re-Zoning

Land Use	Rank
Open Space	1
Retail / Commercial	2
Office and Professional	3
Light Industry	4
Do not support rezoning	5
Manufacturing	6

- When asked which commercial services they desire, respondents selected small retail stores, convenience services, professional services, restaurants, and banking. Residents did not want to encourage large retail stores, shopping centers, or fast food restaurants. In light of this response, residents might support rezoning more land to Business A in the Town Center to provide additional sites for small-scale commercial services.
- Providing for elderly housing was the top choice among housing needs. Brookfield does not have an elderly housing bylaw. In general, respondents did not see a need for more multi-family housing. Residents also prefer single family homes and in-law apartments, dwelling types that are already authorized by zoning.
- Respondents favored slow residential growth, but a zoning bylaw for limiting new building permits is not needed. Brookfield has experienced slow growth for many years, a trend that is not likely to change. When asked about the pace of building, 60.5% of those responding felt the issuance of building permits was “about right.”

Furthermore, Brookfield already ties residential lot requirements to the presence of the public water system. The minimum lot size of 70,000 sq. ft. in the Rural Residential district is reasonable given health regulations for on-site wells and septic systems to serve new homes.

2005 Interpreted Land Use

MassGIS prepared a land use layer from digital orthophotographs¹ in April 2005. The minimum mapping area was approximately one acre, which means small, isolated land uses or wetlands may not be captured. The interpretation was performed automatically by classifying bands in the ortho imagery; analysts then spot-checked the result to attain a greater degree of accuracy. Open water and wetlands data were transferred from DEP wetlands coverages. Map 1 displays the location of the land use categories, and Table 2 quantifies the results. One can draw some interesting observations from this data:

- ◆ Over 26% of Brookfield is unbuildable due to water constraints. 10.5% of Brookfield is open water, 11.1% is non-forested wetlands, and 4.2% is forested wetlands.
- ◆ Forest remains the largest land use category, with 5,659.1 acres (53.3%) of the Town in forest cover.
- ◆ Only 6.9% of Brookfield is in an agricultural use: 5.2% is in cropland, 2.1% is in pasture, and .4% is an orchard or a nursery.
- ◆ Little land is devoted to commercial and industrial uses; only .4% is commercial and .1% is industrial.
- ◆ Land in residential use amounts to 1,035.1 acres, or 9.8% of the Town.
 - ◆ Most residential land use consists of low density², or very low density housing, comprising 891.2 acres, or 8.4% of the Town.
 - ◆ Medium density, high density, and multi-family residential uses comprise 143.8 acres, or 1.4%.
 - ◆ Mobile home parks (Wagon Wheel, Nanatomqua, Brookfield Meadows) comprise approximately 60 acres of the high density residential category.

¹ An **orthophotograph** is an aerial photograph geometrically corrected ("orthorectified") such that the scale is uniform: the photo has the same lack of distortion as a map; it is an accurate representation of the earth's surface, having been adjusted for topographic relief, lens distortion, and camera tilt. (Source: Wikipedia)

² Very low density consists of house lots greater than 1 acre; low density consists of house lots between .5 and 1 acres; medium density consists of house lots between .25 and .5 acres; high density consists of house lots less than .25 acres.

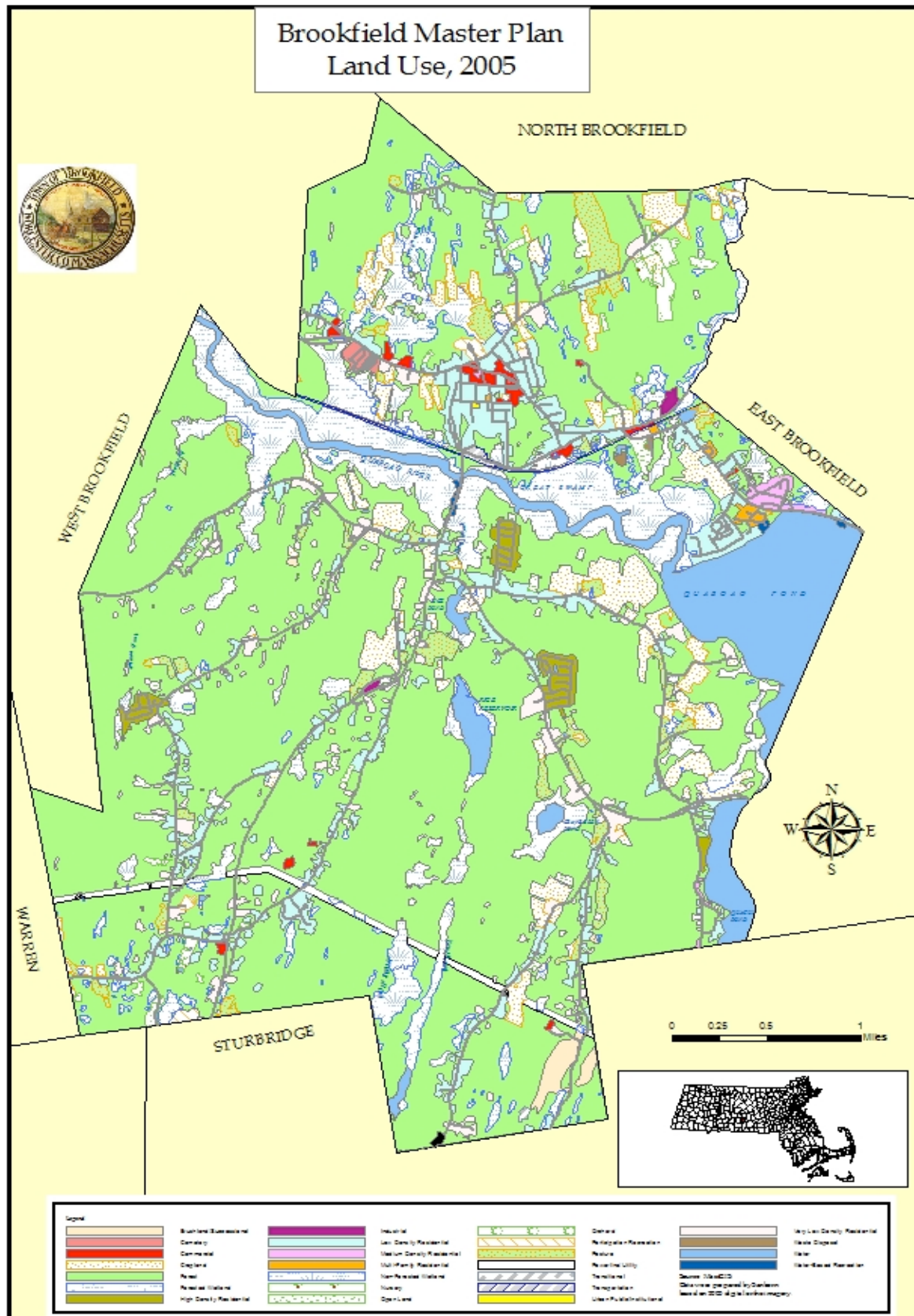


Table 2
2005 Land Use

Land Use	Acres	Percent	Land Use	Acres	Percent
Cropland	511.9	4.8%	Industrial	14.2	0.1%
Pasture	218.6	2.1%	Transitional	7.3	0.1%
Forest	5,659.1	53.3%	Transportation	37.7	0.4%
Non-Forested Wetland	1,182.6	11.1%	Waste Disposal	4.2	0.0%
Open Land	91.7	0.9%	Water	1,111.6	10.5%
Participation Recreation	40.8	0.4%	Powerline/Utility	65.1	0.6%
Water-Based Recreation	7.9	0.1%	Public/Institutional	27.9	0.3%
Multi-Family Residential	15.2	0.1%	Cemetery	15.5	0.1%
High Density Residential	83.0	0.8%	Orchard	33.2	0.3%
Med. Density Residential	45.6	0.4%	Nursery	7.0	0.1%
Low Density Residential	664.5	6.3%	Forested Wetland	450.3	4.2%
V. Low Density Residential	226.8	2.1%	Brush/Successional	44.2	0.4%
Commercial	45.5	0.4%	Total	10,611.2	100.0%

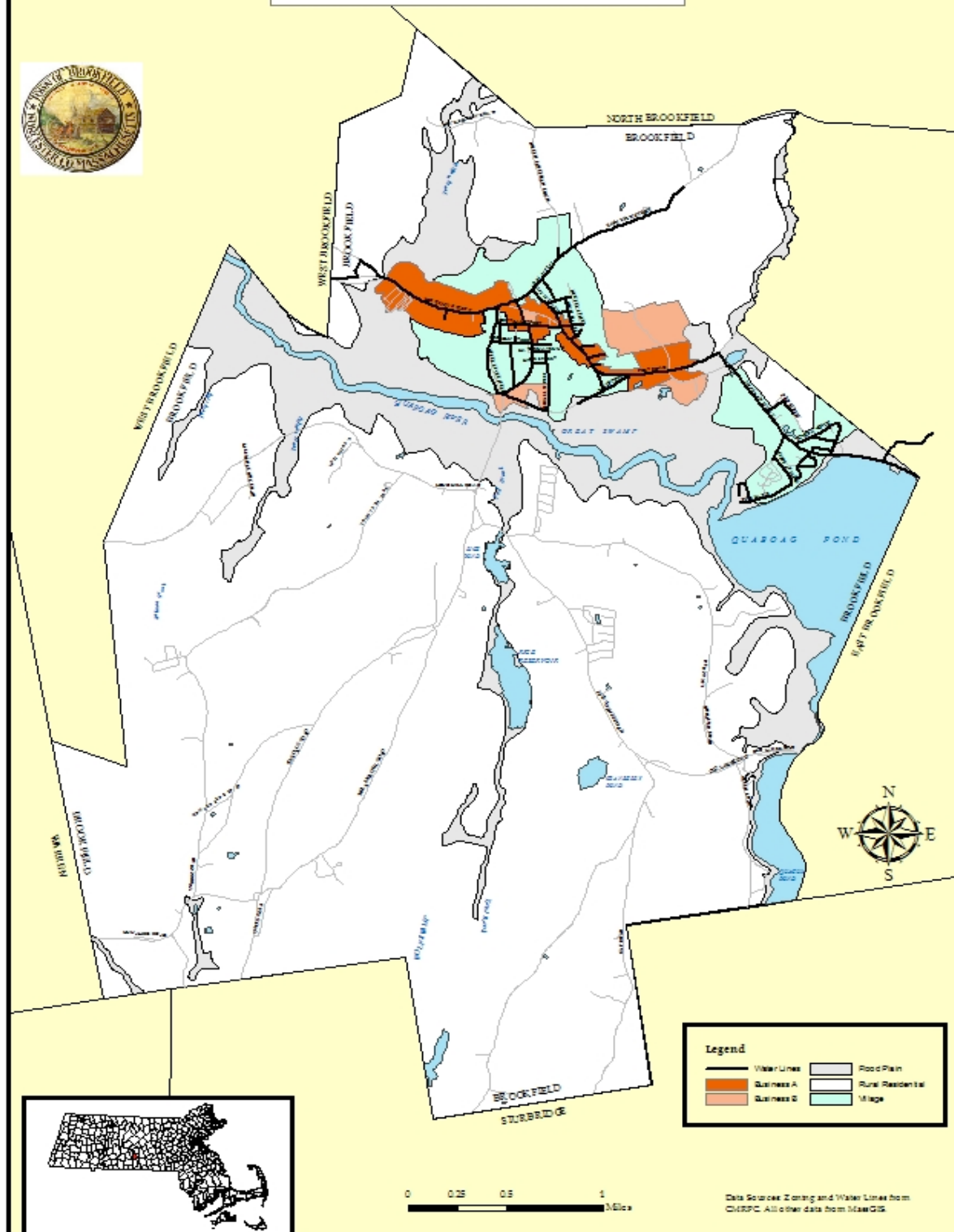
Source: MassGIS 2005 Land Use Datalayer

Water and Sewer Systems

Brookfield does not have a public sewer system. The high costs of constructing sewers lines and a treatment plant make it unlikely the Town will ever develop a municipal sewer system. Landowners will continue to build new homes where soils comply with state requirements to properly treat domestic effluent. Absent innovations in septic technology that would permit housing on land that cannot pass today's tests, Brookfield will remain a predominantly rural town.

If health considerations in the Town Center dictate the need to build a small treatment plant, sewers would primarily benefit the existing land uses that have problematic septic systems. Alternatively, it may be possible to extend a sewer line from an adjacent municipality to the Town Center, but the cost would impose heavy financial burdens on landowners who would benefit. Such an action would have the effect of spurring growth along the new sewer main, and would have the potential to open up portions of the Town to large-scale commercial or industrial development. Therefore, the Master Plan calls for reliance upon existing septic system technologies for sewage disposal for the foreseeable future. This will result in continuation of current land use patterns and limited development potential.

Brookfield's municipal water system serves the Town Center, Route 9, and neighborhoods by Quaboag Pond, but it does not yet extend south of the Quaboag River. Map 2 displays the extent of the public water system in Brookfield. The Water Department has been actively replacing old, cast iron water mains from the late 19th century with new ductile iron pipes in Map 2, Water Lines and Zoning



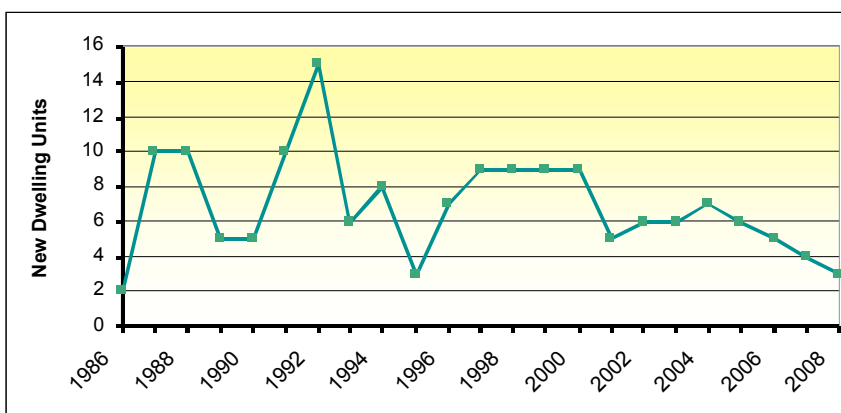
the Town Center. The Town's water supply is located in East Brookfield. With a danger of ground water contamination from tight soils in the densely developed Center, the public water system helps to provide clean water for residents. The availability of the system allows for smaller lot sizes, although many homes in the area exist on lots that do not meet minimum area requirements.

The Department is searching for a new groundwater source and may decide to extend the water system south of the Quaboag River to serve the southern part of town. This might benefit existing mobile home parks, but with low intensity development for the most part, the cost per homeowner might be higher than many can afford. If the Town does extend water across the River, large lots will not be needed to provide adequate separation for on-site wells and septic systems. Open Space Subdivisions (see discussion below) would provide a means to allow smaller lots while protecting open space and maintaining the rural character of this area.

Residential Building Trends

Brookfield has experienced slow residential growth for over two decades. As shown in Figure 1, Brookfield has averaged ten or fewer building permits for new dwelling units in 22 out of the past 23 years. 1992 was the high point, when new permits totaled 15. The average for the 23-year period was 6.9 permits per year. There is no indication that this trend will reverse in the years ahead.

**Figure 1
Building Permit Trends**



Source: U.S. Census

There have been two residential subdivisions approved by the Planning Board in recent years: Molasses Hill Village containing 17 lots, and Clear Creek Estates containing 6 lots. As a rural community, Brookfield does not attract home-owners seeking a suburban lifestyle in well-manicured subdivisions. Rather, most new homes arise in rural areas on large lots with frontage on existing roads. It is not uncommon for landowners to split off a lot from a larger tract for a son or daughter. Most approved lots outside of Brookfield Center are well in excess of the minimum lot size. Brookfield seems to attract residents who desire a large wooded lot with privacy and ready access to open spaces.



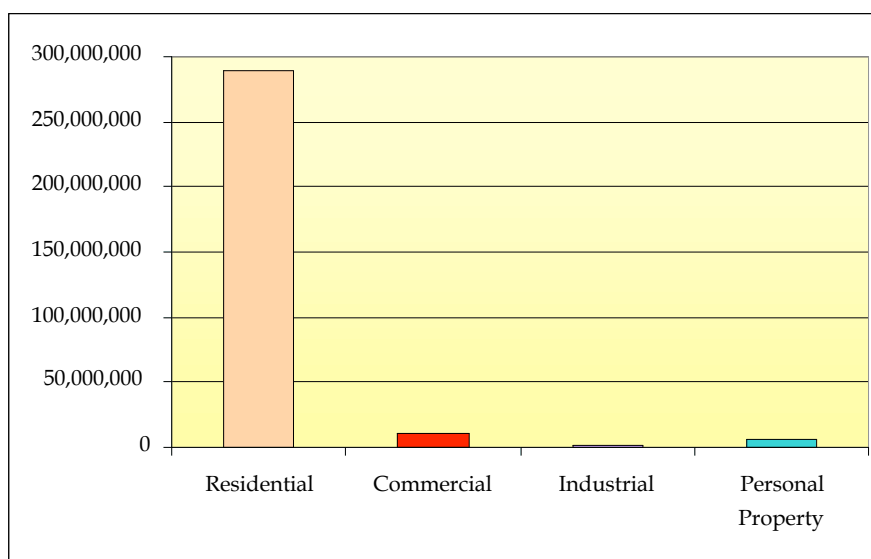
Clear Creek Estates

Examining these trends, it appears that Brookfield will not experience significant residential growth for at least another decade. Sufficient frontage remains on rural roads that can meet the Town's needs for new family housing. Backland is not likely to develop for well into the future since most residents are content to retain large lots for personal use. As noted above, over 26% of the Town is open water or wetland, and approximately 3,261 acres of Brookfield is permanently protected open space.

Assessors' Data

Examining Assessors' data provides another way to understand local land use patterns. The predominant developed land use in Brookfield is residential. Residential property is valued at \$290 million and comprises 93.7% of the tax base. Commercial and industrial property combined is valued at about \$13 million and makes up just 4.3% of the tax base.

Figure 2
Assessed Values, 2009



Source: Department of Revenue

Each parcel has a land use code to denote its current use for assessing purposes. Table 3 provides a summary of privately owned land by both parcel count and acreage.

- There are over 1,100 parcels developed for residential purposes, accounting for over 3,000 acres of land, and averaging 2.8 acres per parcel.
- Almost 1,900 acres of undeveloped land remain for residential purposes in 272 parcels, at an average of 6.9 acres per parcel.
- For commercial and industrial land, only 4 undeveloped parcels remain, comprising 14.4 acres. There are just 40 developed commercial or industrial parcels in Brookfield.
- The Assessors classify 28 parcels as forest, agriculture, or recreation under Chapters 61, 61A, and 61B, respectively. These laws allow land to be assessed at its actual use rather than for its development value. By providing lower assessed values, the programs lower property taxes, thereby enabling landowners to keep the land in an open or natural state.

Table 3
Assessors' Private Land Use Data, 2009

Category	Parcels	Acres
Residential Land		
Developed Residential Land	1,106	3,082.2
Undeveloped Residential Land	272	1,878.9
Total Residential Land	1,378	4,961.1
Commercial and Industrial Land		
Developed Commercial and Industrial Land	40	179.7
Undeveloped Commercial/Industrial Land	4	14.4
Total Commercial and Industrial Land	44	194.1
Chapter Land		
Chapter 61 Forestry	7	349.4
Chapter 61A, Agriculture	5	264.4
Chapter 61B, Recreational	11	159.4
Other	5	186.5
Total Chapter Land	28	959.7

Source: Brookfield Assessors Data

Brookfield should develop a Geographic Information System (GIS) to include computerized mapping of existing parcels. Linking Assessors' data with parcels will provide a powerful tool to understand existing conditions and to make informed choices concerning future development. A GIS will provide local officials with the ability to overlay aerial photographs, zoning districts, environmental factors (e.g. soils, wetlands, rare species habitats, steep slopes), and infrastructure systems (public water, drainage, roads). A GIS can identify potential impacts of development proposals before they occur. Finally, a GIS can empower local citizens to understand their own neighborhood and larger community and make informed decisions based upon accurate geographic information.

Zoning Districts

Map 2 displays Brookfield's zoning scheme. Table 4 displays the extent of the various districts, and Table 5 shows the dimensional requirements that lots must possess for new development to occur on legally conforming lots. Brookfield has five zoning districts with minimum lot sizes ranging from 35,000 sq. ft. (.8 ac.) to 70,000 sq. ft. (1.6 ac.).

Table 4
Extent of Zoning Districts

District	Acres	Percent
Business A	187.5	1.8%
Business B	97.6	0.9%
Flood Plain	2,077.5	19.6%
Rural Residential	7,743.7	73.0%
Village	504.9	4.8%
Total	10,611.2	100.0%

Table 5
Dimensional Requirements

District	Minimum Lot Size	Minimum Frontage	Front Yard	Side and Rear Yards	Maximum Height
BA	35,000	175'	75' (1)	15'	35'
BB	60,000	175'	75' (1)	25'	35'
FP	70,000	200'	75' (1)	25'	35'
RR	70,000	200'	50' (1)	25'	35'
V	35,000	150'	25' (1)	10'	35'

1. Or aligned with the front face of an existing building on an adjacent property

The Flood Plain District corresponds to the 100-year flood plain established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and comprises over 2,000 acres, or about $\frac{1}{5}$ of the Town. In order to provide subsidized flood insurance for properties in flood plains, communities must adopt land use regulations to prohibit structures that might be damaged during a flood, and to prevent loss of flood storage capacity downstream.

Most communities adopt the flood plain boundaries as an overlay district, which adds special development regulations to property in the district. In Brookfield, the flood plain district is an underlying, or conventional, district. Residential development is prohibited. The district permits uses that will not increase flooding downstream or result in substantial new buildings that may be damaged during a flood. Thus, agriculture, recreation, forestry, greenhouses, conservation areas, and boat sales are allowed uses. Uses that are exempt

under zoning, such as educational and religious uses, are permitted. In addition, commercial uses, including warehouses and contractors' yards, may be permitted by special permit. Any proposal in a flood plain must contain evidence from a professional engineer that the use will not cause an increase in flood levels. Provisions of the Building Code dictate construction requirements within flood plains.

Nearly three-fourths of Brookfield's land area falls within the Rural Residential (RR) District. New lots must contain 70,000 sq. ft. of land and have 200' of frontage. The intent of the district is to permit low density residential development, agriculture, and other compatible uses to preserve Brookfield's rural character. The district permits single and two-family homes by-right and multi-family development by special permit. A wide range of commercial uses are allowed by-right or special permit, including retail sales, offices and wholesale sales containing up to 2,000 sq. ft. of floor area, farm equipment sales, restaurants, funeral homes, nursing homes, repair shops, trades businesses, kennels, veterinarians, galleries, and craft shops. These uses allow homeowners to have low-impact businesses on their property, enabling them to live in a rural area that has few prospects for large-employee companies. Some industrial uses are allowed by special permit, including, warehouses, lumber yards, truck terminals, fuel storage, contractors yards, and research labs.

Manufacturing, assembly, processing, and recycling facilities are prohibited. The RR district will likely retain its low density character for decades. Much of the district is permanently protected open space, and development constraints, especially wetlands and steep slopes, will limit potential home sites.

The three remaining districts apply to Brookfield Center. Because the area has access to the municipal water system, regulations here permit smaller lot sizes than in outlying areas. These districts occur north of the Quaboag River and are generally framed by the 100-year flood plain.

Tight, slowly percolating soils are a fact of life in the Center. Development depends upon finding a site that can comply with Title 5 standards for

septic system approval. The area developed before the advent of modern septic regulations, and many systems would probably not comply with today's standards. When systems fail, landowners must often go to great lengths to design a system that will conform to modern requirements. The presence of public water removes health concerns about individual well contamination from poorly functioning septic systems.

The zoning scheme in the Town Center reflects the development pattern that existed prior to adoption of zoning. Many single family, two-family, and multi-family dwellings exist on small lots, interspersed with a variety of commercial, institutional, and industrial uses. Many lots are non-conforming in relation to area and frontage, but new development on vacant land must conform to current minimums. The Use Table encourages a wide mix of residential and commercial uses to provide services to the local population. As a result, Brookfield Center has a pedestrian-scale, with residents able to easily access shops, restaurants, offices, churches, and public institutions.

The Village (V) district makes up the largest portion of the Center, about 500 acres, and comprises 4.8% of the Town. The minimum lot size is 35,000 sq. ft., and a lot must have 150' of frontage. The Buildout Study performed by CMRPC in 2001 indicated that there was sufficient vacant land to accommodate 227 new lots. The actual number will probably be less given the difficulty of finding soils that will satisfy Title 5 requirements. However, it is sound land use policy to direct new development into areas with available infrastructure, in this case, a good road network and high quality public water system.



Rural Residential Business

The Village district is primarily residential in nature, but it does permit a mix of land uses typically found in a village setting. Uses permitted by special permit include multi-family dwellings, residential and commercial uses in the same building, business, medical and professional offices of any size, restaurants, retail sales, galleries, craft shops, contractors' yards, lumber yards, and research laboratories.

Because the Center developed prior to adoption of zoning, many single and two-family homes do not comply with current dimensional requirements. Homeowners seeking to alter or expand their property must first receive a special permit from the Board of Appeals. The Board must find that the proposed alteration or extension is not "substantially more detrimental than the existing nonconforming use or structure to the neighborhood." State law enables communities to adopt a provision that allows some alterations of nonconforming single and two family homes without a special permit. Brookfield should consider an amendment that gives the Building Inspector authority to issue a building permit if he determines that the proposed extension or alteration meets certain guidelines and does not increase the nonconforming nature of the structure.



Business A and B District, Route 9

Business A and Business B districts cover the remainder of the Town Center and combined amount to 2.7% of the Town. Both districts allow a variety of business uses by right, but residential uses, even single family homes, require a special permit. The principal difference between the two districts is that the BB district allows most industrial uses by-right, while such uses require a special permit in the BA district. The BB district requires a larger minimum lot size than the BA district perhaps to accommodate industrial uses that should have greater separation from surrounding residences. The BA district covers much of Route 9 between East and West Brookfield.

There are several approved parcels for commercial development within these districts; however, a small

population and lack of demand have slowed commercial development. Survey results revealed that residents desire more small-scale services and would support re-zoning to encourage such growth. The buildout study from 2001 indicated that within BA and BB districts there was enough land to support nearly 500,000 sq. ft. of floor area. While this number would be difficult to achieve without a public sewer system, there appears to be an ample supply of commercial land for Brookfield's needs. The largest tract of available land is on the north side of Route 9 opposite Quaboag Street. Road frontage has BA zoning, and the rear of the parcel has BB zoning. If the tract ultimately proves to be undevelopable, Town Meeting could consider re-zoning property south of Route 9 and east of Brookfield Cemetery to Business A. Land proposed for re-zoning should have access to the municipal water system.

The survey indicated that residents support business expansion to provide more commercial services locally. However, the Zoning Bylaw requires a special permit from the Board of Appeals to allow more than one principal use on a lot. While intended to protect the character of the Town from uncontrolled commercialism, the provision places a roadblock in the path of small-scale commercial development that would benefit the Town. For example, homeowners in BA and BB may wish to convert a portion of their residence to business uses, but if done properly, would not have a negative impact on near-by homes or other businesses. Brookfield should consider relaxing this provision, perhaps with a site plan approval process, and specifying controls that will minimize unwanted impacts.

Development Regulations

While Brookfield has had few subdivisions, the Planning Board's Subdivision Regulations are up-to-date and include reasonable provisions to govern the construction of new roads and utilities to serve the development. Minor streets and lanes require a width of 24' and 20' respectively. These provide ample room for travel while minimizing unnecessary paving during construction and lower the Town's long-term maintenance costs. Dead-end streets may contain 10 lots but may not exceed 500' in length. With a 200-foot frontage requirement in the RR district, a 500-foot road can only accommodate five homes in a conventional subdivision. Rather than specifying a maximum length, the Planning Board may wish to modify the Regulations to simply retain the maximum number of lots (10).

Lot size and frontage requirements are sound given the limited availability of public water, no public sewer system, and soils that have limitations for on-site treatment of wastewater. One change to consider to the dimensional requirements is to lower the minimum front yard setback. While footnote 1 allows for a reduction of the front setback to match that of buildings on adjacent properties, where no such buildings exist, large front setbacks consume a large portion of a lot and hinder good site planning. The 75-foot front setback in BA and BB requires buildings to be placed a long distance from the street, which discourages pedestrian activity. Parking will likely be placed in the front yard, creating an impression that automobiles dominate the site, with architecture and visual quality taking a back seat. Front setbacks should allow buildings to be placed closer to the street in the Town Center in keeping with past practices where buildings have a close relationship to the street. In the RR district, the 50-foot front setback should be retained as the large lot size allows the structure to be well off the street, which softens the impact of new homes on rural character.

As noted previously, it is likely that most residential development for quite some time will take place as single lots along the Town's rural roadways. State law makes it easy for landowners to carve out a lot without local oversight if the lot simply has the minimum frontage required by zoning and there is adequate access to the buildable portion of the lot. Fortunately, an alternative exists to prevent pervasive frontage development and preserve rural character, retain scenic views along rural roads, and prevent loss of agricultural land. Brookfield adopted an Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) Bylaw to provide an alternative to conventional subdivision development.

By special permit of the Planning Board, an OSRD allows smaller lot sizes and frontages than are otherwise required by clustering buildings closely together. In return, at least 30% of the tract will be retained as open space, which may be used for agriculture, recreation, or conservation. Builders use the more suitable portions of the tract for homes, thereby preventing less disruption to the environment. OSRD provides an important tool for preserving the Town's historic landscapes³, which citizens rated a high priority on the Master Plan Survey. Developers gain a distinct savings by building shorter roads and utility systems. The Bylaw stipulates that the number of lots in an OSRD shall not exceed that otherwise permitted in a conventional subdivision unless the Planning Board grants a special permit for a density bonus. This insures that developers cannot take advantage of the provision to build more lots than zoning allows. Developers that provide affordable housing units that meet Chapter 40B requirements may receive a density bonus of one additional market rate unit for each four affordable units provided.

Some minor tweaking of the OSRD bylaw may make it more useful to potential subdividers. Since it offers more advantages than conventional subdivisions, encouraging greater use will help the Town to realize more benefits. These changes could include:

- Eliminating the special permit requirement to put OSRD on an equal footing with conventional subdivisions.

³ Brookfield's historic landscapes are thoroughly documented in the Brookfield Reconnaissance Report, of the Mass. Heritage Landscape Inventory Program, prepared by Dodson Associates, 2008.

- Eliminating the minimum tract size of 10 acres in RR and 7 acres in Village. There is no reason why small parcels should not be able to take advantage of the provision. In Brookfield, most subdivisions are likely to consist of a small number of lots.
- Reducing the frontage requirement in an OSRD in the RR district. Since the principal advantage to subdividers is shorter street lengths, placing units closer together will reduce road construction costs and create a more neighborhood-scale development.
- Reduce the minimum lot size in RR from 50,000 sq. ft. to 35,000 sq. ft. The proposed lot area still provides sufficient room for a septic system and on-site well if good soils are present, and the less area required for individual lots means more land can be set aside for open space purposes. In addition, developers could build a common water supply or septic system with costs for maintenance shared by a homeowners association.
- Reduce the front setback provision in the RR district from 50' to 25'. Since homes in OSRDs will be on new streets, placing homes closer to their access street will not affect views from adjacent streets. Shallower front yards will yield larger rear yards, which provide more back yard space for recreation, and it provides greater separation of homes from abutting property owners.
- The affordable housing bonus of providing four affordable units to allow one additional market rate unit appears excessive and is unlikely to generate any affordable units. The density bonus may be more effective if each affordable unit will allow one additional market rate unit up to the maximum increase of 25%.

Planning for Renewable Energy Sources

The dramatic spike in the prices of gasoline and heating oil in 2008 hammered home the dependence of the United States on foreign energy supplies. Reducing reliance on these sources suddenly became a cornerstone of domestic policy. State and federal agencies have enacted new programs to lessen dependence on fossil fuels. Development of alternative energy sources, including wind, solar, hydro, and geo-thermal, is an essential component of the strategy. Increasing fuel efficiency, retrofitting older buildings, adopting new energy standards for appliances, and revising building construction techniques are important steps that will help to lower foreign imports.

Brookfield should incorporate energy planning in its budgeting decisions to manage its energy costs. The Town should develop an energy policy to guide actions that reduce consumption of non-renewable energy sources and promote renewable sources. Such actions can include:

- ◆ Retrofit existing buildings to maximize energy conservation savings.
- ◆ Explore the use of alternative, renewable sources of energy and develop zoning provisions to authorize such uses.
- ◆ Conduct energy audits of municipal buildings and work with electricity providers to implement cost effective strategies for reducing energy use.
- ◆ Seek state and federal grants for energy conservation measures and renewable energy sources.
- ◆

Parking Regulations and Commercial Design Standards

The Zoning Bylaw contains few standards to regulate the appearance and impact of commercial and industrial development. It is important to set guidelines for desirable development practices in order to promote more beneficial projects for the community. Brookfield should consider adopting standards to improve the appearance and function of new commercial development.

❖ The Bylaw contains no standards for parking and access.

- The Bylaw should contain a parking table that specifies the number of spaces developers must provide for various activities.
- Parking should occur on the sides or behind buildings. Allowing parking in the front creates an impression that automobiles take priority over people.
- There should be a limit on the number of curb cuts to control traffic circulation within the site and for safe entry to and from the access roads.
- To reduce turning movements onto the access roads, the Bylaw should allow inter-connections between lots, with rear locations preferred.
- Parking lot lighting should be the minimum necessary for safety. Light fixtures should have cutoffs to prevent light trespass and maintain clear night skies.



Business A District, Route 9

❖ Landscaping can improve the visual appearance of commercial projects.

- There should be a requirement for a percentage of a lot to be open space to provide some visual relief from buildings and pavement.
- Landscaping along property lines can buffer incompatible land uses.
- Green belts in the front setbacks can provide room for shade trees and attractive shrubbery.
- Parking lot landscaping can reduce the heating effects of large areas of pavement.

❖ Providing pedestrian amenities in the Village district can benefit local residents.

- Developments should provide new sidewalks or improve existing walks along their frontage.
- Buildings should be placed close to the street to lessen the walking distance from the road. A maximum front setback would require buildings to begin within a specified distance of the street, for example, 10' or 15'. This prevents parking in the front of buildings and helps to maintain the prevailing pattern of buildings and streets.

❖ Site development standards can improve visual appearance from public ways.

- Dumpsters, machinery, utility structures, etc. should be placed behind buildings and screened with landscaping or fencing.
- Outdoor storage of materials should be allowed with site plan review in order to consider measures that can minimize visual impacts.
- Commercial buildings should have features such as awnings, plazas, pitched roofs, balconies, and public seating to encourage visual interest for pedestrians.
- In the Town Center, overhead wires should be placed underground when public or private investment occurs.

Land Use Goals

The following land use goals will guide Town actions in fostering a clean environment and creating a sustainable pattern of development so that future generations of Brookfield residents may enjoy the Town's outstanding resources and rural way of life.

1. Preserve the Town's rural character, farms, scenic landscapes, and natural resources by promoting a low-density pattern of development outside of the Town Center.

2. Direct higher density residential and commercial development to the Town Center where water service and municipal facilities reduce the costs of serving new growth.
3. Develop appropriate safeguards to allow expansion of commercial growth in the Town Center while retaining the characteristics of a traditional New England town.
4. Promote a country lifestyle by allowing residents to engage in low impact economic activities in the rural areas of Brookfield.

Land Use Recommendations

Town Center -- Village, Business A, and Business B Districts

1. Adopt a Local Historic District to protect the historic qualities of the Town Common. (Note: The Reconnaissance Report also recommends adopting a local historic district for the Elm Hill Farm National Register District.)
2. Modify front setback requirements in the Town Center to allow the same building-to-street relationship that exists for older properties.
3. Identify land suitable for Business A zoning to allow small-scale commercial services.
4. Enact off-street parking requirements and design standards to shape the quality of commercial development.
5. Since many homes in the Town Center are non-conforming, adopt an expedited procedure for owners to obtain permission to alter or expand their dwelling without requiring a special permit.
6. Remove the requirement for a special permit for single family homes in BA.
7. Revise the requirement for a special permit for more than one principal use on a lot in BA and BB districts, and specify regulations that will provide safeguards for near-by residences.
8. Adopt a maximum size limit on commercial buildings to exclude shopping plazas and big box retail stores that are out of scale with a rural community.
9. Expand the sidewalk network to encourage walking to local shops and institutions.

Rural District

10. Revise the OSRD Bylaw by making it a by-right use and modifying standards that may discourage developers from using the provision.
11. Exclude industrial uses from the RR district, such as warehouses, lumberyards, fuel storage yards, truck terminals, research labs, and computer software manufacturing.
12. Develop design standards to soften the impacts of business uses in residential areas.
13. Support farmland preservation through purchase of development rights, especially the state's Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program.

General Land Use Recommendations

14. Seek state funds to implement energy conservation measures and evaluate the potential for renewable energy sources to meet the Town's energy needs.
15. Remove any zoning impediments to the use of alternative energy sources, and develop a wind energy zoning bylaw to regulate the construction of new wind turbines.

16. Prepare a senior housing bylaw to allow development of age-restricted housing for local seniors who wish to remain in town after selling their residence.
17. Adopt a Right-to-Farm bylaw to protect farmers from nuisance complaints of adjacent residents, and establish an Agricultural Commission to promote the interests of farmers vis-à-vis local government.
18. Complete computerized mapping of land ownership parcels and develop a functional GIS to provide local officials and the public with an accurate depiction of physical, environmental, and socio-economic conditions in the community.
19. Prepare a new Official Zoning Map to display zoning district boundaries on a parcel base map.
20. Prepare a development guidebook that provides clear direction to developers and residents for navigating through local permitting procedures. Enhance coordination among local officials and land use boards to streamline the development review process and avoid conflicting decisions or conditions.
21. Revise the Flood Plain District regulations to remove ambiguity concerning permitted uses and activities.

Master Plan Recommendations - Matrix of Recommendations								
		Planning Board	Board of Selectmen	Agricultural Commission	Board of Assessors	Economic Development Committee	Conservation Commission	Common and Mall Committee
	Land Use and Zoning							
	Town Center -- Village, Business A, and Business B Districts							
1	Adopt a Local Historic District to protect the historic qualities of the Town Common.							
2	Modify front setback requirements in the Town Center to allow the same building-to-street relationship that exists for older properties.							
3	Identify land suitable for Business A zoning to allow small-scale commercial services.							
4	Enact off-street parking requirements and design standards to shape the quality of commercial development.							
5	Adopt an expedited procedure for owners to obtain permission to alter or expand their dwelling without requiring a special permit.							
6	Remove the requirement for a special permit for single family homes in BA.							
7	Revise the requirement for a special permit for more than one principal use on a lot in BA and BB districts, and specify regulations that will provide safeguards for near-by residences.							
8	Adopt a maximum size limit on commercial buildings to exclude shopping plazas and big box retail stores that are out of scale with a rural community.							
9	Expand the sidewalk network to encourage walking to local shops and institutions.							
	Rural District							
10	Revise the OSRD Bylaw by making it a by-right use and modifying standards that may discourage developers from using the provision.							
11	Exclude industrial uses from the RR district, such as warehouses, lumberyards, fuel storage yards, truck terminals, research labs, and computer software manufacturing.							
12	Develop design standards to soften the impacts of business uses in residential areas							

Master Plan Recommendations - Matrix of Recommendations								
	Land Use and Zoning	Planning Board	Board of Selectmen	Agricultural Commission	Board of Assessors	Economic Development Committee	Conservation Commission	Common and Mall Committee
13	Support farmland preservation through purchase of development rights, especially the state’s Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program.							
	General Land Use Recommendations							
14	Seek state funds to implement energy conservation measures and evaluate the potential for renewable energy sources to meet the Town’s energy needs.							
15	Remove any zoning impediments to the use of alternative energy sources, and develop a wind energy zoning bylaw to regulate the construction of new wind turbines.							
16	Prepare a senior housing bylaw to allow development of age-restricted housing for local seniors who wish to remain in town after selling their residence.							
17	Adopt a Right-to-Farm bylaw to protect farmers from nuisance complaints of adjacent residents, and establish an Agricultural Commission to promote the interests of farmers vis-à-vis local government.							
18	Complete computerized mapping of land ownership parcels and develop a GIS to provide local officials and the public with an accurate depiction of physical, environmental, and socio-economic conditions in the community.							
19	Prepare a new Official Zoning Map to display zoning district boundaries on a parcel base map.							
20	Prepare a development guidebook that provides clear direction to developers and residents for navigating through local permitting procedures. Enhance coordination among local officials and land use boards to streamline the development review process and avoid conflicting decisions or conditions.							
21	Revise the Flood Plain District regulations to remove ambiguity concerning permitted uses and activities.							

4. BROOKFIELD TRANSPORTATION CHAPTER

Introduction

This section discusses the town's transportation network, including existing road conditions, alternative forms of transportation and an analysis of the transportation issues associated with new development. The Transportation Chapter includes recommendations for transportation policies and infrastructure improvements to create a more efficient transportation system and mitigate the impacts of new development.

Much of the information within this section comes from the 2008 Brookfield Open Space/Master Plan Survey, the Mass Department of Transportation, as well as the U.S. Census Bureau 2000.

Roadways – Maintenance Responsibilities

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation is responsible for maintaining the entirety of Route 9 through Brookfield, as well as Route 148. All other roads in Town (roughly 39 miles) are considered "local" and the Brookfield Highway Department is responsible for their maintenance. The town also has a number of private roads, many of them being dirt roads in the rural areas of Brookfield. It is the responsibility of the residents living on private roads to maintain them.

State Roads/Bridges – Planning for Improvements:

In most cases, major transportation projects are planned at the regional level. The Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO) is the decision-making body responsible for planning, programming and funding for the federal-aid transportation projects in this region. The 10-member CMMPO is made up of representatives from three organizations; Mass. Dept of Transportation, the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC), the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA). The CMMPO membership also includes six locally elected officials, one from each of CMRPC's six sub regions. CMRPC's transportation staff does planning for the CMMPO.

The CMMPO prepares an annual update to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the region. Each annual TIP lists projects at least four years into the future. The highway-related improvements included in the TIP are paid for through federal-aid funds provided to Mass. Dept. of Transportation by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Projects slated for non federal-aid or State funding are also included in the TIP listing.

The most recent version of the CMMPO-endorsed Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) covers a four year period (FY 2011 – FY 2014) and lists the following Federally-Funded programmed project in Brookfield in the FY 2014 element:

Project 603486

Brookfield – Reconstruction of Route 148 (Fiskdale Road) from Molasses Hill Road to the Sturbridge Town Line including Webber Road.

- Programmed for \$2,800,000 in Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds

Part C of the CMPO-endorsed TIP is a Supplementary Bridge Listing for "unprogrammed" projects recognized by the CMMPO. This list is informational only and is subject to funding availability and is disclosed as "potential for state funded accelerated bridge program (ABP) project".

A: Brookfield- Bridge Replacement, B-26-002, State Road 148 (FISKDALE ROAD) over the Quaboag River

- This project is in the preliminary design phase and has an estimated construction cost of: \$1.4 million

- The existing two-span bridge is to be replaced with a single span superstructure of approximately 105 feet span.
- MassDOT is moving forward with this project and the Selectmen are working with them on the design phase. The Selectmen have requested that provisions be made for bringing town water over the river as well as allowing for pedestrian travel over the bridge.



B: A project, also known as the CSX Bridge Bundle #3 with an initial construction estimate of \$25.4 million began in the spring 2010. No “TIP” data is available for the project.

- The project is located in multiple cities and towns, within the boundaries of Districts 2 and 3 [Brookfield is in District 3]. The scope of work contains, but is not limited to, the design and replacement / reconstruction of the following bridges in order to elevate the highway vertical clearance over CSX rail tracks to allow for double stack freight trains: Brookfield, Route 148 (B-26-003), Charlton, Jones Road (C-06-013), Charlton, Route 31/Spencer Road (C-06-14), Spencer, Route 49/Podunk Blvd (S-23-024), West Brookfield, Route 67/Warren Road (W-19-015), Westborough, Route 135/Milk Street (W-24-007) and Worcester, James Street (W-44-022).

State Aid for Local Roads:

The Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation (MassDOT) distributes funds for local roadway repair and maintenance to municipalities in Massachusetts on an annual basis through Chapter 90 of the Massachusetts General Laws (MGL). For the 2009 Fiscal Year, Brookfield received \$127,949 in Chapter 90 funds. For the 2010 Fiscal Year, Brookfield has been apportioned \$127,147 in Chapter 90 funds.

Road Classifications and Federal-Aid Eligibility:

MassDOT maintains an inventory of local roadways as reported by municipalities in Massachusetts, and the inventory is updated annually (see appendix A-E for road classifications and aid eligibility).

MassDOT also maintains an inventory of State-maintained roads that are considered to be part of the federal-aid system. The federal-aid system has a three-tier functional classification system for roads:

- ✓ Arterial Roads: Roads that provide the fastest method of travel and are usually designed with long-distance travel in mind. Arterial roads in the Brookfield area include Route 9 and U.S. Route 20 in Sturbridge.
- ✓ Collector Roads: Roads that link local roads to arterial roads. These roads provide a less highly developed level of service at a lower speed for shorter distances by collecting traffic from local roads and connecting them with arterial roads. Collectors are heavily traveled local roads and those roads associated with the State highway network (Route 148).
- ✓ Local Roads: Roads used primarily to access a community’s housing stock.

Interstate highways are their own classification of roadways and are not included within the functional classification rating system.

MassDOT classifies Brookfield’s roadways in the following manner:

- ✓ Principal Arterial Roads: Route 9 (West Main Street, Post Road). These roads are all eligible for federal-aid.
- ✓ Rural Major Collector Roads: Route 148 (Fiskdale Road, River Street, Main Street, North Brookfield Road), Webber Road, School House Road, Quaboag Street. These roads are all eligible for federal-aid.

- ✓ Rural Minor Collector Roads: Mill Street, Rice Corner Road (including parts of Lake Road, South Pond Road and West Sturbridge Road). These roads are not eligible for federal-aid.
- ✓ Local Roads: All other roads in Brookfield. These roads are not eligible for federal-aid.

Brookfield can compete for limited federal-aid funding to repair their eligible roads listed above through the annual TIP process. Roads classified as “rural minor collector roads” and “local roads” are not eligible for federal-aid; however, these roads are eligible for funds under the Chapter 90 program.

Regional Highway System and Commuting Patterns

The regional highway system is one of the most important infrastructure elements influencing a community’s development pattern. The accessibility provided by a regional highway not only stimulates new development, but allows residents greater flexibility in making decisions that are affected by locational factors such as, where to work, where to live, or where to shop.

Regional transportation access to Brookfield is provided primarily by Route 9 (classified as a Principal Arterial Road), which runs east-west through the center of town. Route 9 connects to Route 148 (in Brookfield’s Center) and Routes 49 and 31 (in Spencer) and Route 67 in West Brookfield. Route 148 (classified as a Rural Major Collector Road) carries commuters north-south through Brookfield. Both Route 49 and Route 148 connect directly to U.S. Route 20 in Sturbridge. U.S. Route 20 has direct access to I-90 (the main thoroughfare to Boston and Springfield), as well as I-84 (the main thoroughfare to Hartford and Connecticut).

Chart 1



Chart 1 identifies the place of residence of those working in Brookfield in 2000. Individuals employed in Brookfield come primarily from Brookfield (27.8%) or from other neighboring Massachusetts municipalities (70.4%).

Chart 2

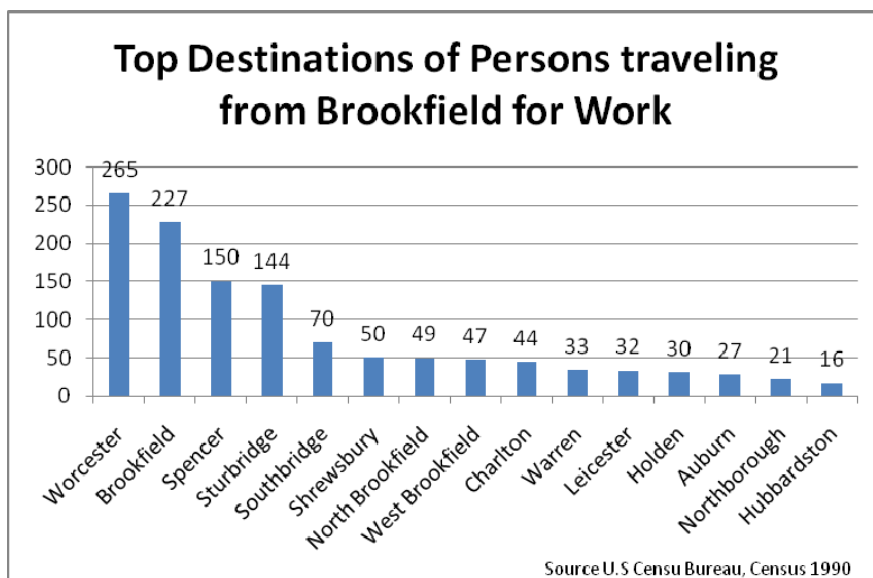
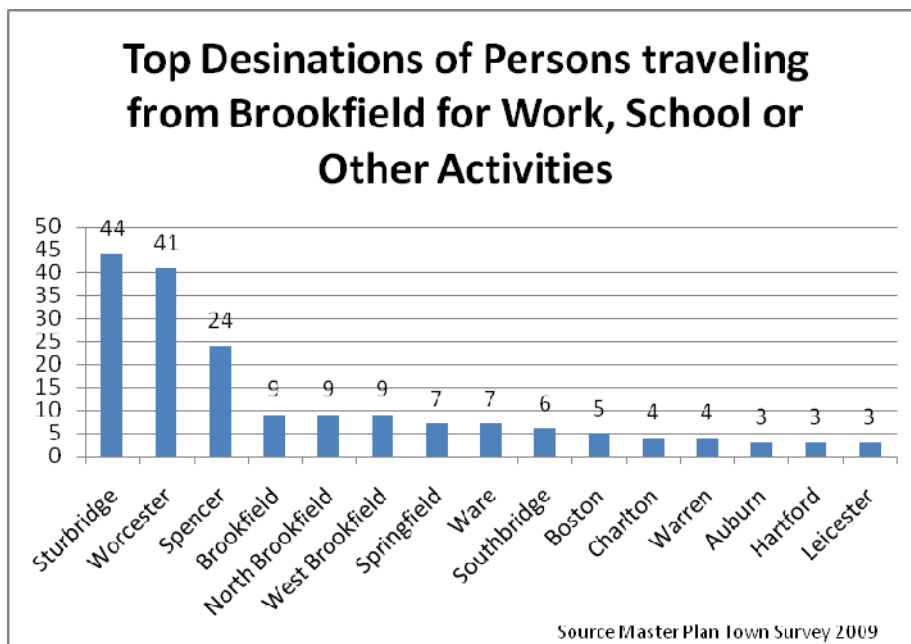


Chart 2 identifies the top places Brookfield residents traveled to for work in 1990. The primary destination is Worcester (19.1%), closely followed by Brookfield (16.4%). The percentage of Brookfield Residents traveling to Brookfield for Work increase from 16.4% in 1990 to 27.8% in 2000 (see Chart 1).

Chart 3



In 2009, the Master Plan Committee conducted a Brookfield Resident survey asking “What City/Town do you travel to on a regular basis for work, school or other activity”. Chart 3 identifies the primary destination as Sturbridge (19.0%) followed by Worcester (17.7%).

Given the wide range of residents’ workplaces, it is not surprising that Brookfield residents and workers rely heavily upon their autos to reach their jobs. The 2000 U.S. Census reported 85.5% of all Brookfield residents traveled alone to their workplace, while for Worcester County this figure was 82.6%. Although

the 2009 Town survey indicated a slight decrease to 78.4% for residents using their autos to get to work, 17.4% of respondents chose not to answer the survey question.

In addition to those residents that drove alone in 2000, 7.5% carpooled and 0.3% took public transportation; while for Worcester County's figures were 9.3% and 1.7% respectively. The percentage of those that carpool dropped to 2.1% in 2009, whereas the percentage of those that take public transportation had a slight increase to 0.4%.

Overall, Brookfield falls behind the county in the use of travel modes in carpooling, use of public transportation and walking; whereas Brookfield pulls ahead of the county in driving alone and working at home (Brookfield: 4%, County: 2.7%).

Commuting times for Brookfield residents in 2000 were split between those that worked close to home (35.1% of residents commuting less than 20 minutes) and those that traveled greater distances (29.3% of residents commuting greater than 45 minutes).

Existing Street System in Brookfield

A town's character is not only affected by its proximity to the regional highway system; it is also very much influenced by the pattern and condition of its local street network. Nearly 40 miles of local road



exist throughout Brookfield. The street network in Brookfield is dominated by various local roads connected directly or indirectly with Route 9, Route 148, Route 20, I-90 and I-84. Since travel in Brookfield is heavily oriented toward private automobile transportation, it is essential that the road capacity be able to accommodate existing and future volumes of traffic efficiently and safely. Conversely, if the town's position is to refrain from widening the local, rural streets that contribute to Brookfield's rural character, it is critical that the town plan future land uses so as not to overburden the existing street network.

Route 9

The jurisdictional and functional classification of Brookfield's streets is important to understanding how the streets relate to one another, how they are used, and who exercises control over them. **Chart 4** lists the agencies that have jurisdiction over the use and maintenance of the streets in Brookfield. Brookfield's roads are generally town-owned with the exception of one numbered state highway and some privately owned roadways. There is a second numbered road (Rt 148) that is owned and maintained by the town. In addition, unlike many other Massachusetts communities, the length of roadways owned by state agencies is relatively small.

Chart 4

Jurisdiction Classification of Brookfield Streets

Controlling Agency	Location	Mileage
MassDOT	Route 9	2.65
Town of Brookfield	Through Out Town	35.74
Unaccepted But Open to Public Travel	Through Out Town	1.11
Total Road Mileage		39.5

Source: Executive Office of Transportation
Road Inventory 2008

Traffic Volume:

CMRPC conducts traffic counts throughout the region on an ongoing basis. Automatic Traffic Recorder (ATR) machines are placed along a roadway to record the number of vehicles travelling in each direction over a 48-hour period. The Daily Traffic Volume Counts total number of vehicles (i.e., both directions) travelling on Brookfield's primary roadways during a 48-hour period. The volumes were taken from a series of traffic counts conducted during a ten year period (1998 – 2008) [See Appendix H]. While most of Brookfield's local roads handle less than 1,000 cars a day, the more heavily traveled roads have the following ranges of daily traffic volume:

1,000 - 2,000 Vehicles Per Day: Webber Roads and Route 148 (at the North Brookfield Town Line) handles in excess of 500 vehicles per day traveling in each direction.

2,000 – 5,000 Vehicles Per Day: Mill Street and Quabog Street fall into this category with an excess of 1,000 vehicles per day traveling in each direction. In addition, the following specific counts conducted along Route 148 fell into this category: Upper River Street-South of Rt9/Main St (800-northbound/1500-southbound), North Brookfield Road-North of Webber Road (1,400 each direction) and North Brookfield Road-At Sturbridge Town Line (1,800 each direction)

Over 5,000 Vehicles Per Day: Route 148 (Fiskdale St-South of Mill Street) and Route 9 are the only roadways that falls within this category, with Peak hours were between 7:00am-8:00am and 4:30pm-5:30pm. Approximately 3,000 vehicles per day travel in each direction along Route 148 (Fiskdale St-South of Mill Street). While approximately 4,000 vehicles were counted traveling in each direction at both the East Brookfield and West Brookfield town lines.

Scenic Roads:

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 15C authorizes municipalities to designate certain roads as "Scenic Roads". Any local road owned and maintained by the Town, other than a state numbered route, can be designated as a Scenic Road.

Adopted as part of the local zoning bylaws, the scenic roads ordinance requires a public hearing by the planning board before any work is undertaken in a public right-of-way that would involve the cutting of trees or the destruction of stone walls. This bylaw only applies to trees and stone walls within the town owned right-of-way and to local roads and not state routes. The question that should be considered is how to change from reacting defensively to violations to one that is pro-active. The answer will require an investment in time and money for monitoring and enforcement.



Scenic Lake Road - Richardson Farm and Quaboag River (left of image)

It has been 25 years since the Town of Brookfield voted in a scenic road. A possible route the Town may look to pursue for retaining the rural and historic character is to review existing roadways for scenic road eligibility. The following are town designated scenic roads:

1985, May 6, Town Meeting:

1. East Main Street commencing at the junction of East Main and North Brookfield Rd (Route 148) to the end of East Main Street (North Brookfield-East Brookfield boundary)
2. Lake Road from Route 148 to the Four Corners at South Pond
3. Long Hill Road from Route 148 to the West Brookfield town line.

1986, May 5, Town Meeting

1. Molasses Hill Road from beginning to end (Route 148 to Route 148)
2. Webber Road from Route 148 to the Warren town line.
3. Rice Corner Road from Rice Corner Cross Road to Sturbridge town line.

Mass Transit Alternatives:

Mass transit can be loosely defined as a public transportation service designed to move groups of people from one place to another. Such services include buses, trains and, for some areas of our nation, boats. Typically in the Central Massachusetts region, mass transit serves persons who would find it difficult to make their trip by private transportation. Such persons include the elderly, people with disabilities, young people, and people living on limited incomes.

Bus Service:

Brookfield has been a longstanding member of the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA). The WRTA service area includes over half a million in population and is the second largest regional transit authority in Massachusetts, serving 35 communities. The WRTA maintains a fleet of 46 buses and 10 minibuses for 23 fixed routes in Worcester and 10 of the surrounding communities. The WRTA also provides paratransit service for the elderly and disabled in the region, in addition to a variety of special services for elderly and disabled residents in the entire service area.



Planes, Trains and Buses

Overall, the WRTA serves approximately 1.0% of all person travel trips in the region. The WRTA estimates that on any given business day, there are 1,345,000 person travel trips in the region by all modes of transportation, with the WRTA bus service providing 12,800 of those trips, or slightly less than 1% of the total person travel trips per day.

The WRTA's #33 bus route travels Brookfield-Worcester along Route 9 four times a day. Outside of the City of Worcester, all routes operate under a "flag down" system, meaning there are no fixed stops and bus patrons need to flag down the bus as it approaches. However, most of Brookfield's pickups occur at the beginning of the route, at the Town Common in the Brookfield Center area. The latest WRTA statistics indicate there are, on average, between 4 and 7 bus boardings/alightings in Brookfield on any given weekday. See Appendix F for the Bus Schedule as of September 4, 2010.

The WRTA contracts with South Central Massachusetts (SCM) Elderbus Inc. to provide paratransit services for elderly and disabled people into Worcester for medical appointments, education services, employment and social activities. SCM Elderbus also provides transportation to local services as well.

The Worcester Intercity Bus Station is located at the Union Station Intermodal Center. Interstate bus service is provided via two carriers: Peter Pan and Greyhound. These carriers provide service to Boston, Springfield, and various other points outside of Massachusetts.

Passenger Rail Service:

Worcester is the western terminus of the Framingham/Worcester commuter rail line run by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). Worcester's historic Union Station serves as the region's primary hub for commuter railway traffic. Built in 1911, Union Station has been restored to its original grace and splendor, reopening to full operation in 2000 as the regional intermodal center. In

October 2008, the MBTA added five new trains to the Framingham/Worcester line as part of a plan to add 20 or more trains from Worcester to Boston and also to buy the track from CSX Transportation.

Union Station also serves as an Amtrak stop. Amtrak is a national passenger railroad that provides service through Central Massachusetts from Boston to Chicago via the *Lakeshore Limited* using MBTA and CSX-owned rail rights-of-way. Union Station is the only stop in the region along the *Lakeshore Limited* route before it reaches Springfield, however Brookfield lies between Worcester and Springfield. In Springfield, train passengers may also connect to additional Amtrak services such as the Vermonter line and other Amtrak trains to Hartford, New Haven and New York.

Freight Rail Service:

The CSX rail line runs east to west from Boston to Springfield via Worcester and carries a significant volume of freight. This rail line passes through Charlton Depot and South Spencer before passing through Brookfield south of Route 9 and the Town Center area. Further, the East Brookfield & Spencer Railroad (EBSR) provides railcar switching service for the New England Automotive Gateway (NEAG) located between Route 49 and South Spencer Road in East Brookfield with CSX. The NEAG is ranked at the top of intermodal automotive facilities utilized by CSX.

Air Travel:

The Worcester Regional Airport (ORH) is the only interstate air travel provider located in Central Massachusetts. The Worcester Airport is owned and operated by Massport and lies at the top of Tatnuck Hill, Worcester's highest. The airport consists of one 7,000 ft runway and a \$15.7 million dollar terminal built to attract airlines and passengers. Direct Air is currently the only commercial airline serving Worcester Airport and providing limited service to Orlando and Punta Gorda, Florida, as well as Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. In addition to commercial airline service, Worcester Airport also provides fixed base operator (FBO) services through Swissport Executive Aviation, which provides upscale ground handling services to the international community of operators and executives who rely on corporate or private jets.

Since commercial service is limited at the Worcester Airport, area residents are more likely to utilize Bradley International Airport (in Windsor Locks, CT), Logan International Airport (in Boston) and the T.F. Green Airport (in Providence, RI) for their cross-country and international travel needs.

There are five local airports that are designed to accommodate smaller, lighter, general aviation aircraft. These local airports include the Spencer Airport (small paved runway for small planes; 2 miles NE of Spencer center), the Oxford Airport (located in east Oxford near the Millbury town line), the Southbridge Municipal Airport (located in the northwest corner of town; 2 miles N of Southbridge center), the Hopedale Industrial Park Airport (3 miles SE of Hopedale center), and the Tanner-Hiller Airport in New Braintree (4 miles SW of central business district of the associated city).

The closest municipal airport to Brookfield is located in Southbridge (14 miles), and the closest multi-carrier commercial airport is Bradley International Airport (61.3 miles).

Water Travel

The Quaboag River heads at Quaboag Pond (south of East Brookfield) at an elevation of 594 feet. It flows through the towns of Brookfield, West Brookfield (where Lake Wickaboag drains into it), and Warren before joining the Ware River and Swift River in Three Rivers at an elevation of 290 feet, to form the Chicopee River. This river is part of the Chicopee River Watershed.



Quaboag River at White's Landing

Whitewater kayakers and canoeists paddle the Quaboag from a put-in at Lucy Stone Park in Warren, downstream to a take-out along Route 67. The river is Class III and features several named rapids, Mousehole and Trestle Rapid above the dam, and, downstream, Angel's Field and Devil's Gorge, which contains an abrupt four-foot waterfall called Quaboag Drop. The river has a large watershed, holds its water well (is well formed), and is runnable at levels above four feet on the Brimfield USGS gauge. It contains one mandatory portage around an unrunnable dam next to a factory.

The Quaboag River has long been a recreational resource from walking trails and bird watching along its banks to access and travel along its winding route through the town. White's Landing is located on the banks of Quaboag River (off route 148), just south of Brookfield's Town Center area. Easy access to the River, as well as a beautiful picnic spot which blends with the natural landscape, make this one of the Town's most valuable attractions and a popular meeting place for Kayakers and Canoeists alike. In addition to boat rental, White's Landing sells bait and tackle and offers an indoor and outdoor music series in the Quaboag Café.

With the help of Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, a Quaboag Water Trail is being developed from East Brookfield into Warren. Several access points have been identified as well as scenic and natural features that can be experienced along the way. White's Landing will serve as the access point for the Town of Brookfield.

Walking and Bicycling

Prior to the 1920's, walking and bicycling were primary means of transportation in Brookfield. With the widespread use of the automobile, these forms of travel were largely relegated to recreation. However, with the rise in the cost of gasoline and a growing concern in the public health community over obesity rates, there has been renewed interest in both walking and bicycling as a primary transportation mode. The village area of Brookfield has sidewalks on almost all streets. However, outside of the center of town, there are no sidewalks and roads have not been designed with walkers or bicyclists in mind.

It is the intention of the Master Plan to provide a vision for a Walkable and Bikeable Brookfield. Brookfield should be a place where walking and bicycling is safe, accessible, and convenient.

Off-Road Trails

The Quabog Historical Society has created a network of hiking trails. These roughly follow the original Military Highway that was established in Colonial Days. These trails provide a route east-west that runs parallel to Route 9, approximately ½ mile north.

Park-and-Ride Facility

The MassDOT and the MBTA operate park-and-ride lots throughout the commonwealth. Many of these lots are conveniently located along major highways; all-day parking is often free.

The closest Park-and-Ride Lot to Brookfield is at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Sturbridge (11.3 miles) on Route 131 near Mass Turnpike exit 9. There are 50 spaces and has an average occupancy of 23%. For details on the lot (including site map and location) see Exhibit G.

Transportation Goals

It is Brookfield's goal to continue to provide an efficient, safe and well-maintained transportation system in keeping with Brookfield's rural character, one that reduces negative impacts on residential areas while encouraging non-motorized modes of transportation.

The following set of recommendations should be investigated:

1: Protect the rural and historic character of Brookfield streets.

Specific Objectives:

- Create street design guidelines to direct future road construction, reconstruction, and maintenance as well as Scenic Bylaw adherence.

A scenic by-law limits the cutting of trees, avoids the destruction of stone walls, and monitors road and driveway construction.

Brookfield currently has a Scenic Bylaw. However, it is imperative that the town proactively work to ensure adherence to the bylaw to protect the rural and historic character of Brookfield. This can be accomplished by developing a system for monitoring scenic roads and by establishing a procedure for reporting and enforcing violations.

There are several roadways in Brookfield already designated as a "Scenic Road". However, identifying other roads with these qualities and monitoring development along them will contribute to the town's goal of preserving its rural character. In addition, any existing and future land use policies in areas of scenic roadways should be created with the intention to protect the very features and resources it designated as "scenic".

Although many roads in Brookfield have retained their narrow alignment and rural character, the potential for growth along the Route 9 and Route 148 corridors should be a consideration.

The Mass. Dept. of Transportation, the private sector and even the town will continue to redesign intersections and 'improve' roadways; these improvements could have drastic impacts in terms of traffic capacity, automobile speed and overall character of the town. To ensure the rural character of Brookfield's roads, it is imperative that the town create street guidelines that outline the desired character and characteristics of future roads and intersections.

It is also imperative that the town proactively work with the Mass. Dept. of Transportation as plans are developed for any projects involving Route 9. Route 9 passes directly through the town and runs alongside the Elementary School. The priorities and concerns of Brookfield residents – safety, lower speeds and preserving/rebuilding the character of our town center – are almost certainly not the priorities and goals of the Mass. Dept. of Transportation. The proactive intervention by town officials and residents is crucial to address the needs and desires of Brookfield.

By preserving the scenic and aesthetic value of the roads, and providing a level of oversight for future work on scenic roads (paving, widening, etc), the town can work to maintain the important characteristics of historic Brookfield.

Responsible Municipal Entity: The Planning Board, the Highway Department with the assistance of the Mass Dept. of Transportation.

2: Promote traffic calming and increased safety on neighborhood and residential streets.

Specific Objectives:

- Reduce traffic speeds through neighborhoods and residential streets by using traffic calming techniques.
- Increase pedestrian safety in the town center, residential neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- Identify and address dangerous intersections

Traffic calming can be used to decrease the possibility that drivers will find a faster route on side streets than on the major roads. Policies and procedures should be created to ensure traffic calming techniques are used to reduce the damaging effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users (i.e. pedestrians, cyclists etc).

Examples of possible traffic calming methods are

- ✓ Speed humps
- ✓ Raised pedestrian crossing islands
- ✓ Narrowed intersections
- ✓ Deliberate curves to slow traffic
- ✓ Partial road closures to divert traffic off certain streets
- ✓ Landscaped medians to slow traffic while also improving the aesthetics

The town can also work with CMRPC and the Mass Dept. of Transportation to identify and address dangerous intersections such as:

- a. Mill Street with Upper River Street/148 and Pleasant Streets
- b. Mill Street with Rte. 9
- c. Quaboag Street and Rte. 9
- d. Upper River, Common Streets and Rte. 9
- e. Rice Corner Road and Lake Road

Responsible Municipal Entity: The Planning Board, the Highway Department with the assistance of the Mass Dept. of Transportation and CMRPC.

3. Establish “Connectivity” for non-motorized streets users.

Specific Objectives:

- Connect local business and neighborhoods to surrounding towns via walkways and multi-use pathways by designing and constructing new and multi-use pathways through town.
- Improve and encourage increased use of existing bicycle and hiking paths.
- Develop safe roadways with lanes intended for multi-use non-motorized street users
- Identify pedestrian pathways in heavy traffic areas (i.e. Post Office, Town Beach areas etc.)
- Build additional sidewalks and ensure proper maintenance of the existing stock.

The Town should work to “connect” to the surrounding towns for business and recreational purposes. This can be done by designing a network of pathways for non-motorized street users; which can include pedestrians, cyclists, boats etc.

This strategy should include safety mechanisms such as crosswalk locations, sidewalk upgrades for connectivity and handicapped accessibility, centralized parking, bicycle racks, and street lighting, among other considerations. When developing a plan, the town should consider the safety and accessibility of walkways in municipal and recreational areas. [Particular concern was raised for the dangerous areas around the police barracks and Post Office.]

As part of the Town's strategy for connectivity, the Town can work to create a "walkable" town to encourage pedestrian foot traffic for local businesses, scenic areas, schools and shops by improving and expanding the construction of sidewalks connected to safe intersections and parking lots.

The area also has a significant bicycling community that would benefit from bicycle-related amenities. However, Brookfield does not have designated bicycle lanes along roadways. The Town can design roadways with wider shoulders to accommodate bicyclists. In addition to unsafe road conditions for bicycles, further use is inhibited by a lack of storage and other amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Town also has a few hiking trails. However, to create "connectivity", hiking trails should be expanded and connected to other trails in adjoining towns as well as others within Brookfield.

The town should further require new development to provide bicycle facilities, provide sidewalks and open onto trails where possible. Bylaws can be created to require new construction to consider "connectivity".

As with any town projects funding is always a concern. As plans are developed the town should keep in mind any Federal Fund and Block Grants that would aid in financing projects. In addition, the town could look at prioritizing some of the highway funds to improve sidewalks and bikeways. A committee should be created specifically to work on ensuring progress and fund development.

Responsible Municipal Entity: The Planning Board, the Highway Department with the assistance of the Mass Dept. of Transportation.

4: Improve opportunity for Mass Transit: regional and public transportation as well as other alternative means of transportation.

Specific Objectives:

- Create opportunities for Brookfield Residents to use Mass Transit
- Consider a Train Station

Use of public transportation reduces environmental and congestion impacts of single-user automobiles through Brookfield. Therefore, with Brookfield's population and local roadway traffic volumes projected to increase, it would be beneficial for the Town to promote and improve regional public transportation networks.

There are multiple modes of Mass Transit Brookfield should consider including:

- ❖ **WRTA Bus Service:** Brookfield has been a member of the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) for over 2 decades. The Town should continue its membership in the WRTA and support its efforts to provide public transportation alternatives on a regional scale since Mass Transit keeps cars off the roads thereby helping to reduce traffic congestion. Also, the WRTA often provides the only method of transportation for the elderly and disabled.
 - The Board of Selectmen can work to promote bus service and consider options that would encourage residents to use Mass Transit such as constructing bus shelters and park and ride facilities.
- ❖ **Park & Ride Facilities:** Brookfield should research options for a permanent Park & Ride facility in or around the town center so more area residents can either utilize the WRTA's bus service or create a carpool system. Should such a facility be considered, the WRTA should be consulted in the early stages of planning.

- o Given that the automobile is the dominant mode in Brookfield, the town should be proactive in controlling future parking placement in town or parking relative to subdivision control/Site Plan Review.
- ❖ **Connect the WRTA to the PVTA**
The WRTA bus service currently goes as far west as Brookfield and the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) comes as far East as Palmer and Ware. This leaves a 10 mile section of Route 9 without any public transportation. The motto for the Mass Dept. of Transportation is “*Moving Massachusetts Forward*”. Well how can we move forward if we can’t get there. The Town should work with CMRPC, the WRTA and PVTA to develop a plan to connect both Transit Authorities. Should this happen you could travel from Boston to Springfield on public transportation.
- ❖ **Train Station in the Brookfield Region**
Brookfield currently does not have a train station. The Town should consider working with MassDOT, the MBTA and surrounding towns to build a Train station. Brookfield is centrally located and sits amid several State owned roadways, as well as an Interstate (I-90). Access to the train could promote business growth and ecotourism.

Responsible Municipal Entity: The Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board and the Highway Dept. with the assistance of the WRTA, the CMRPC and the Mass Dept. of Transportation.

5: Implement strategies that limit negative vehicle and traffic impacts from new development.

Specific Objectives:

- Require detailed traffic impact statements and mitigation measures for new development regardless of State MEPA requirements.
- Carefully manage uses that generate traffic issues such as big box retail, strip malls, drive throughs and large residential developments.

As residential and business development in Brookfield expands, the Town should expect congestion to increase and should require detailed impact analyses and traffic demand management measures from new construction.

Traffic generated by the numerous retail uses along Route 9 could result in longer travel times during the midday and evening peak hour. In addition to Route 9, traffic along on Route 148 and Rice Corner Road will increase with the expanding business and residential areas.

Impact analyses and reports should be submitted as part of Site Plan Review and should contain specific written submittal requirements and review criteria. Design guidelines for parking lots and site access should strive to further minimize the impacts of new development to maintain the rural and historic character of Brookfield.

Responsible Municipal Entity: The Planning Board and the Highway Dept.

6. Communication

Specific Objectives:

- Improve communication among all Municipal Employees, Volunteers and Resources.
- Improve communication with Town Residents by upgrading and updating the Town Website

Communication is vital to all areas of the Municipality. This becomes critical with the multiple Departments, Committees and Boards that work independent of each other, with the same end goal: the

betterment of the Town of Brookfield and its residents. The Town should analyze its current communication processes both internally and externally.

- ✓ Internally: Departments, Committees and Boards should work to keeping communication open and ongoing ensuring harmony, timely workflow and cohesion with projects and goals.
- ✓ Externally: the Town's representatives to the WRTA and the CMRPC should continue to brief the Board of Selectmen on the regional transportation projects and issues that may have relevance to Brookfield.

Another form of communication is through the Town Website: The Information Highway. Both the Master Plan survey results and comments made during public forums indicated the consensus was the existing website is not user friendly and in need of upgrading. An efficient user friendly website would allow residents and visitors to locate area pathways, walkways and transportation alternatives which would increase Brookfield's "connectivity"; thereby improving local business and ecotourism.

Responsible Municipal Entity: The Board of Selectmen

7. Clarify Private Roads

Specific Objectives:

- Clarify "Private Roads" to ensure proper maintenance and safety of roadways.

Clarify conditions that define a "Private" road to ensure the roadways are updated and maintained. Identify and label existing private roads with signs. Review and evaluate existing policies on private roads.

Responsible Municipal Entity: The Highway Dept.

8. Review and Update Gravel Removal Bylaws

Specific Objectives:

- Update bylaws to add language for Gravel Removal restrictions and responsibilities.

Roads in Brookfield can be damaged by the weight of gravel removal trucks. The Towns bylaws should be reviewed to ensure they are updated to add language to either avoid the damage or have those responsible contribute to the repairs of the roads. Optional restrictions and responsibilities the Town could explore could include bond, load tariffs, seasonal weight limits or the power to designate which roads can be used for gravel trucking.

Responsible Municipal Entity: The Highway Dept.

9. Utility Work Policy

Specific Objectives:

- Create/Update policy for Utility Work responsibilities.

The Town should make certain a formal policy is in place to ensure utility companies who dig up town-maintained roads for the placement of their utility lines incur the full cost of repairing the roadway to its previous conditions.

As the Town looks at new projects and/or developments they should consider underground utilities.

Responsible Municipal Entity: The Highway Dept.

Appendix

- A: MAP: CMRPC – Brookfield Federal Aid Eligible Road System
- B: MAP: MassDOT – Brookfield Road Inventory By Jurisdiction
- C: MAP: MassDOT – Brookfield Road Inventory By Functional Classification
- D: MAP: MassDOT – Brookfield Road Inventory By Federal Functional Classification
- E: MAP: MassDOT – Brookfield Road Inventory By National Highway System
- F: WRTA Bus Schedule (as of September 4, 2010)
- G: Park-and-Ride Facility: Sturbridge, MA
- H: CMRPC Traffic Counts 1998 - 2008

Bibliography:

- 2008 Brookfield Open Space/Master Plan Survey
- Brookfield Reconnaissance Report
- CMMPO: 2006 Regional Pavement Management System Annual Report
- CMMPO: 2007-2010 Transportation Improvement Program Report
- Executive Office of Transportation: 2008 Road Inventory Year End Report
- Town of Brookfield Annual Report

Websites:

- Central Mass Regional Planning Commission: <http://www.cmrpc.org/>
- Mass Executive Office of Transportation: <http://www.eot.state.ma.us/default.asp>
- Mass Highway Dept: <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/>
- Town of Brookfield: <http://www.brookfieldma.us/>
- U.S. Census: <http://www.census.gov/>

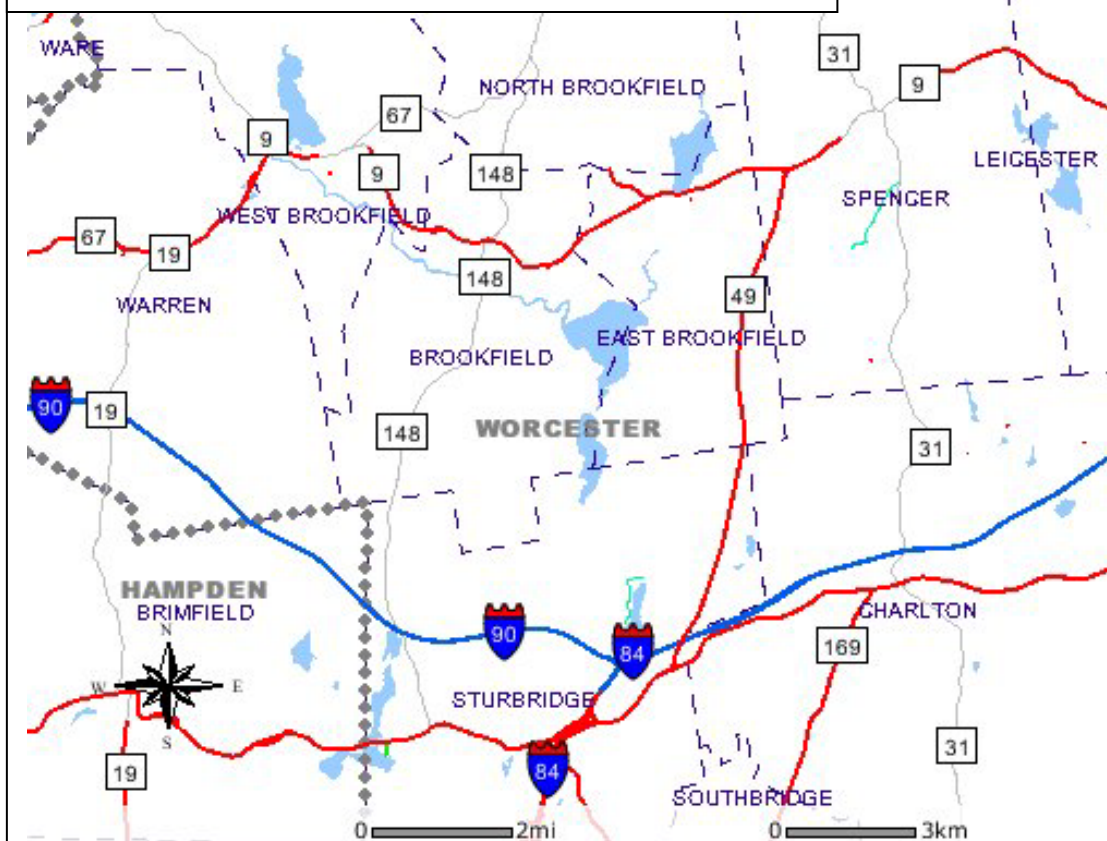
APPENDIX A: FEDERAL AID ELIGIBILITY MAP

SEE SEPARATE FILE

ROAD INVENTORY BY JURISDICTION

(Source: Executive Office of Transportation-Road Inventory Map)

Appendix B

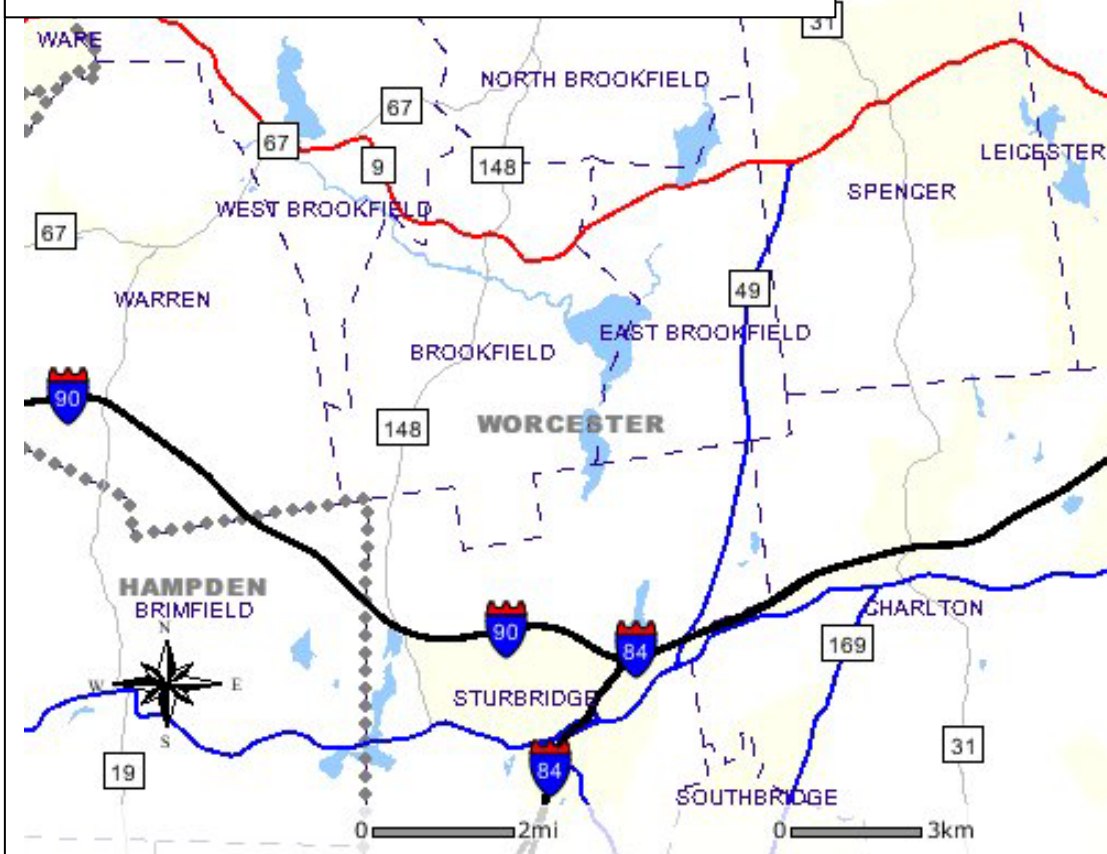


- Massachusetts Highway Department
- Department of Conservation and Recreation
- Massachusetts Turnpike Authority
- Massachusetts Port Authority
- State Park or Forest
- State Institutional
- Federal Park or Forest
- County Institutional
- State College or University
- U.S. Army Corps Engineers
- Federal Institutional
- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Neighboring State
- Water

ROAD INVENTORY BY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

(Source: Executive Office of Transportation-Road Inventory Map)

Appendix C

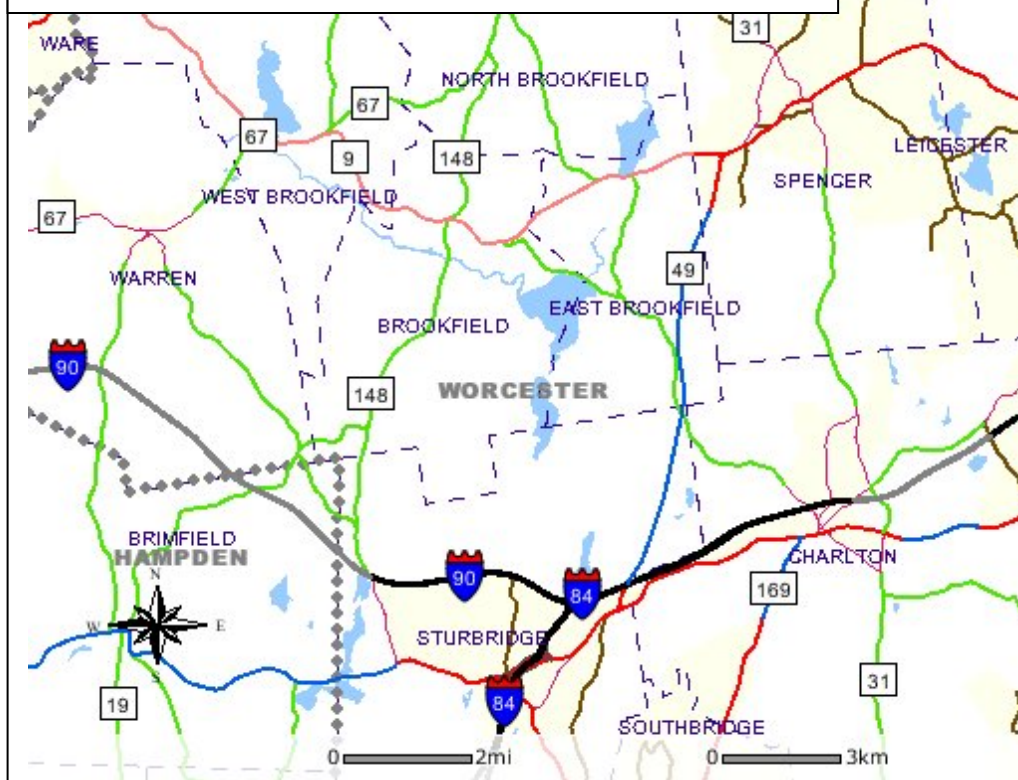


- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Rural Minor Arterial or Urban Principal Arterial
- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Boundary
- Neighboring State
- Water

ROAD INVENTORY BY FEDERAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

(Source: Executive Office of Transportation-Road Inventory Map)

Appendix D

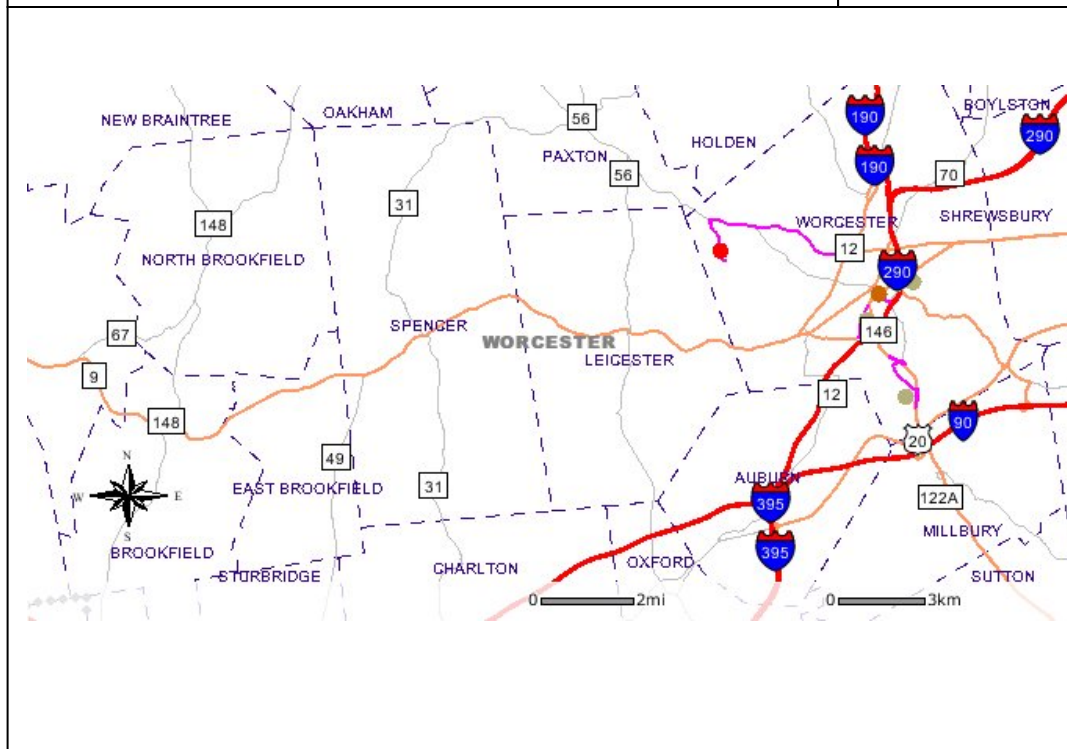


- Rural Interstate (01)
- Rural Other Principal Arterial (02)
- Rural Minor Arterial (06)
- Rural Major Collector (07)
- Urban Interstate (11)
- Urban Other Freeway & Xway (12)
- Urban Other Principal Arterial (14)
- Urban Minor Arterial (16)
- Urban Collector (17)
- Numbered Route
- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Boundary
- Neighboring State
- Water

ROAD INVENTORY BY NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM

(Source: Executive Office of Transportation-Road Inventory Map)

Appendix E



Intermodal Terminals

- Airport
- Bus Terminal
- Ferry Terminal
- Seaport
- Public Transit Station
- Intermodal Rail
- Amtrak Station
- NHS-Interstate
- NHS-Terminal Connector
- NHS-STRAHNET Connector
- NHS-Other Route
- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Neighboring State
- Water

Welcome aboard the **WRTA!**

This route timetable shows the times of departure at major stops along the route and contains route maps and other important information. Additional information be can obtained by calling the WRTA Information Line at **(508) 791-WRTA (9782)**, or visit our website at www.TheRTA.com.

WRTA FARE INFORMATION
Effective January 1, 2009

Full Cash Fare (Adults age 14 and up)\$1.50
Elderly/Disable Cash Fare\$0.75
Children 5-13 years of age accompanied by an adult\$0.75
Children under 5 with adultFREE

One Day Pass\$3.50
Elderly/Disabled One Day Pass.....\$1.75

31 Day Pass\$48.00
Elderly/Disabled 31 Day Pass\$24.00

Ten (10) Ride Pass\$13.00
Elderly/Disabled (10) Ride Pass\$6.50

Please have exact fare ready when boarding the bus.

Route schedules and the purchase of passes, and tickets are available at the WRTA General Office, 287 Grove Street, Worcester and at the Customer Service Center, 317 Main Street, Worcester.

ACCESSIBILITY: All WRTA buses are wheelchair accessible and feature bicycle racks for two bicycles. For TTY service call Massachusetts Relay TTY (800) 439-2370.

PROPER IDENTIFICATION: One of the following valid identification cards must be shown to the driver each time you board:

ELDERLY..... WRTA Senior I.D. card

DISABLED..... Statewide Access Pass / WRTA ADA Photo I.D. / MCB I.D.

MEDICARE..... Medicare card with Photo I.D.

HOLIDAY SERVICE: Saturday* Service is provided on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Patriots' Day, Columbus Day and the day after Thanksgiving.

Weekday Service is provided on Veterans' Day.

** Routes 22, 33 and 42 operate on a weekday schedule on these holidays.*

NO SERVICE ON: New Years Day; Memorial Day;

Please...NO Smoking, Eating, Drinking or Radios

ADVERTISE HERE

For further information call
Penta Communications at 508-616-9900

* Trip begins at Spencer DPW Garage.

NO WEEKEND SERVICE

	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	1	1
AM	BUS STARTS Brookfield Center	BUS Leaves East Brookfield	BUS STARTS Spencer DPW Garage	BUS Leaves Spencer Center	BUS Leaves Leicester Wal-Mart	BUS Leaves Leicester Center	BUS Leaves Webster Square Plaza	BUS Leaves City Hall (Main St.)	BUS ENDS Union Station
	5:55	6:02	—	6:09	6:16	6:20	6:30	6:40	6:45
	—	—	7:00 *	—	7:10	7:15	7:30	7:45	7:50
	7:42	7:49	—	7:57	8:07	8:13	8:29	8:47	8:52
	—	—	8:47 *	8:50	9:00	9:05	9:15	9:40	9:45
PM	—	—	10:38 *	10:41	10:50	10:56	11:05	11:30	11:35
	—	—	12:28 *	12:31	12:40	12:45	12:55	1:20	1:25
	—	—	2:45 *	—	2:58	3:03	3:18	3:26	3:33
	4:45	4:48	—	4:52	4:58	5:03	5:18	5:33	5:40
	—	—	5:57 *	—	6:10	6:15	6:30	6:45	6:50
	6:45	6:55	—	7:00	7:10	7:15	7:30	7:45	7:50
	—	—	7:43 *	—	7:55	8:00	8:15	8:30	—
	—	—	8:30 *	—	8:42	8:46	8:58	9:06	—

INBOUND WEEKDAYS



* Trip ends at Spencer DPW Garage.

The Union Station bus stop is located on Foster Street, outside the Peter Pan bus terminal.

	1A	2A	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
AM	BUS STARTS Opposite City Hall	BUS Leaves Clark University	BUS Leaves Webster Square Plaza	BUS Leaves Leicester Center	BUS Leaves Leicester Wal-Mart	BUS Leaves Spencer Center	BUS ENDS Spencer DPW Garage	BUS Leaves East Brookfield	BUS ENDS Brookfield Center
	5:10	5:15	5:25	5:32	—	5:38	—	5:45	5:55
	6:15	6:20	6:30	6:40	6:45	—	7:00 *	—	—
	6:50	6:59	7:03	7:14	7:19	7:29	—	7:37	7:42
	7:55	8:06	8:16	8:26	8:31	8:41	8:47 *	—	—
	9:50	9:57	10:07	10:17	10:22	10:32	10:38 *	—	—
	11:40	11:47	11:57	12:07	12:12	12:22	12:28 *	—	—
PM	2:00	2:10	2:18	2:28	2:33	—	2:45 *	—	—
	3:45	3:50	4:00	4:10	4:15	4:25	—	4:30	4:45
	5:10	5:20	5:25	5:40	5:45	—	5:57	—	—
	5:45	5:59	6:05	6:10	6:15	6:35	—	6:40	6:45
	6:55	7:09	7:15	7:30	7:35	—	7:43 *	—	—
	7:53	8:00	8:05	8:15	8:19	—	8:30 *	—	—

OUTBOUND WEEKDAYS



APPENDIX F

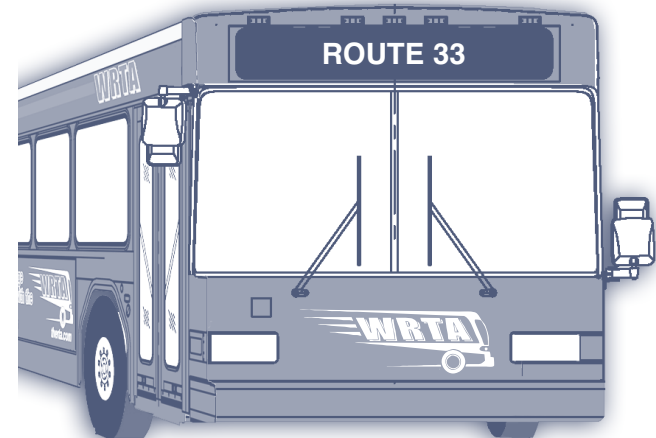
Route 33

**DOWNTOWN WORCESTER –
SPENCER – BROOKFIELD**
via MAIN ST. & ROUTE 9

Effective Date: September 4TH 2010

Serving:

- Union Station
- St. Vincent Hospital/Worcester Medical Center
- DCU Center
- Federal Building / U.S. Courthouse
- YMCA Central Branch
- Clark University
- Webster Square
- Webster Square Plaza
- Becker College (Leicester campus)
- Leicester Housing Authority
- Leicester Wal-Mart
- Western Worcester District Court



Worcester Regional Transit Authority

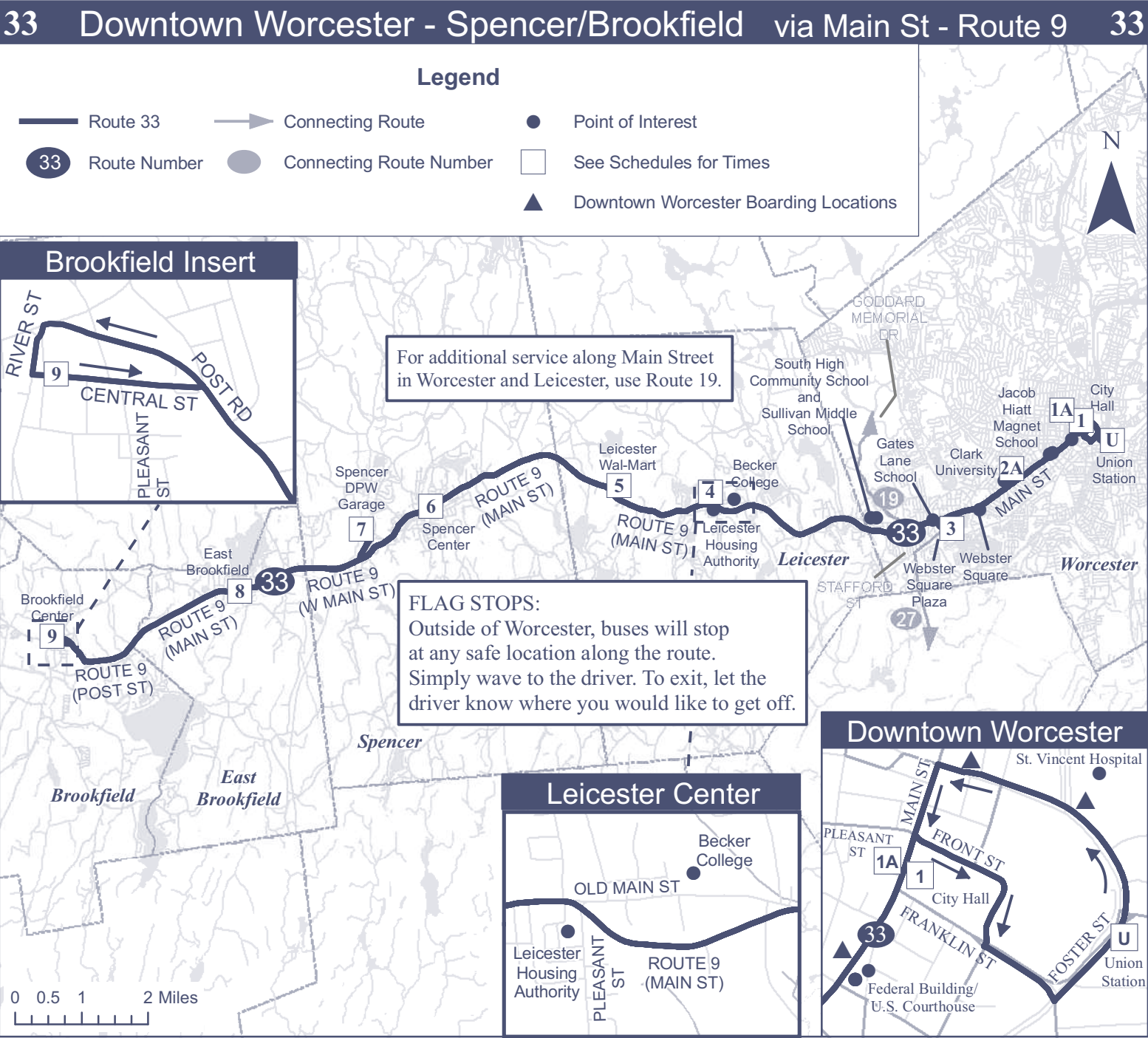
For Transit Information Call
508-791-9782 or visit
www.therta.com



- Route 33 Serving:**
- ~ Union Station
 - ~ Worcester City Hall
 - ~ St. Vincent Hospital/ Worcester Medical Center
 - ~ DCU Center
 - ~ Federal Building/ U.S. Courthouse
 - ~ YMCA Central Branch
 - ~ Jacob Hiatt Magnet School
 - ~ Clark University
 - ~ Webster Square
 - ~ Webster Square Plaza
 - ~ Gates Lane School
 - ~ Leicester Center
 - ~ Leicester Wal-Mart
 - ~ Spencer Center
 - ~ Western Worcester District Court
 - ~ East Brookfield Elementary School
 - ~ Lake Lashaway
 - ~ East Brookfield Center
 - ~ Brookfield Center

- Connecting Routes:**
- Route 19 Serving:**
- ~ Worcester Airport
 - ~ Leicester Center

- Route 27 Serving:**
- ~ Auburn Mall



Thank You for riding the

Sturbridge Park-and-Ride Lot

Route 131, near Mass Turnpike exit 9, Bethlehem Lutheran Church

APPENDIX G

Spaces: 50 **Average Occupancy:** 23% **Contact:** 888.4.COMMUTE

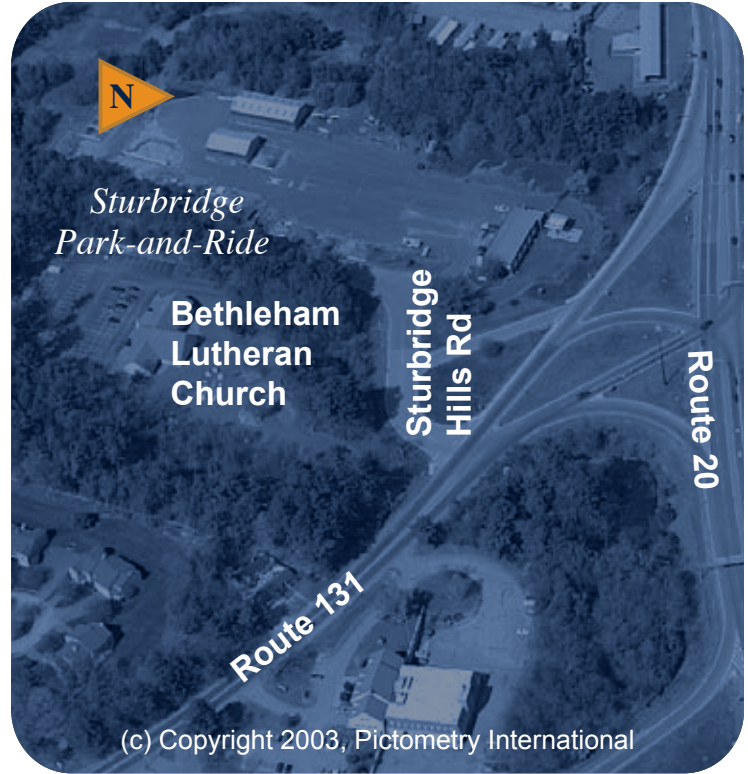
Commuting Options: Carpool, Vanpool

Lighted: No **Bus Shelter:** No **Bike Rack:** No **Public Telephone:** No

LOCATION MAP



SITE MAP



Driving Directions

From the East and West (Springfield, Worcester)

- Take I-90 to **Exit 9** for I-84 South
- After the toll plaza, take **Exit 3** onto Route 20 West
- Merge onto **Route 20 West**
- Turn **LEFT** at the first traffic signal onto **Route 131**
- Take an immediate **RIGHT** onto **Sturbridge Hills Road**
- Follow signs for the Bethlehem Lutheran Church
- The park-and-ride lot is located in the church parking lot

From the South (Connecticut)

- Take I-84 to **Exit 3** for Route 20 West
- Merge onto **Route 20 West**
- Turn **LEFT** at the first traffic signal onto **Route 131**
- Take an immediate **RIGHT** onto **Sturbridge Hills Road**
- Follow signs for Bethlehem Lutheran Church
- The park-and-ride lot is located in the church parking lot

					Volume		APPENDIX H		
				Traffic	NB/EB	SB/WB	Reference		
Date	Municipality	Street/Highway	Location	Flow	or ON	or OFF	Total	ID	Source
9/18/2007	Brookfield	Prouty St	N of Route 9 (Post Rd)	NB	143	136	279	2007036	CMRPC
9/18/2007	Brookfield	Prouty St	S of Route 9 (Post Rd)	NB	182	169	351	2007037	CMRPC
		Prouty St	S of Route 9 (Post Rd)			avg:	315		
9/18/2007	Brookfield	Town Farm Rd	N of Deer Run Rd	NB	179	187	366	2007045	CMRPC
9/18/2007	Brookfield	Town Farm Rd	S of Deer Run Rd	NB	181	175	356	2007046	CMRPC
		Town Farm Rd				avg:	361		
6/14/2004	Brookfield	Pleasant St	N of Lincoln St	NB	397	431	828	2004041	CMRPC
6/14/2004	Brookfield	Pleasant St	S of Lincoln St	NB	341	330	671	2004042	CMRPC
		Pleasant St	S of Lincoln St			avg:	750		
9/20/2007	Brookfield	Rice Corner Rd	N of Gay Rd	NB	401	382	783	2007039	CMRPC
		Rice Corner Rd	N of Gay Rd			avg:	783		
10/21/2008	Brookfield	Webber Rd	At Warren TL	EB	622	630	1252	2008213	CMRPC
		Webber Rd	At Warren TL			avg:	1252		
7/23/1998	Brookfield	Mill St	S of Route 9 (S Maple St)	NB	977	945	1922	1998018	CMRPC
7/12/2001	Brookfield	Mill St	S of Route 9 (S Maple St)	NB	1003	1090	2093	2001037	CMRPC
6/14/2004	Brookfield	Mill St	S of Route 9 (S Maple St)	NB	1105	1085	2190	2004040	CMRPC
		Mill St	S of Route 9 (S Maple St)			avg:	2068		
7/23/1998	Brookfield	Quaboag St	S of Route 9 (S Maple St)	NB	1230	1209	2439	1998019	CMRPC
7/17/2001	Brookfield	Quaboag St	S of Route 9 (S Maple St)	NB	934	1240	2174	2001038	CMRPC
6/14/2004	Brookfield	Quaboag St	S of Route 9 (S Maple St)	NB	1357	1376	2733	2004043	CMRPC
9/18/2007	Brookfield	Quaboag St	S of Route 9 (S Maple St)	NB	1281	1273	2554	2007038	CMRPC
		Quaboag St	S of Route 9 (S Maple St)			avg:	2475		
8/27/1998	Brookfield	Route 148 (North Brookfield Rd)	At North Brookfield TL	NB	721	9	730	1998062	CMRPC
7/12/2001	Brookfield	Route 148 (North Brookfield Rd)	At North Brookfield TL	NB	774	730	1504	2001039	CMRPC
9/18/2007	Brookfield	Route 148 (North Brookfield Rd)	At North Brookfield TL	NB	638	665	1303	2007040	CMRPC
		Route 148 (North Brookfield Rd)	At North Brookfield TL			avg:	1179		
7/23/1998	Brookfield	Route 148 (Upper River St)	S of Route 9 (Main St)	NB	831	1556	2387	1998022	CMRPC
		Route 148 (Upper River St)	S of Route 9 (Main St)			avg:	2387		
7/17/2001	Brookfield	Route 148 (North Brookfield Rd)	N of Webber Rd	NB	1433	1443	2876	2001041	CMRPC
		Route 148 (North Brookfield Rd)	N of Webber Rd			avg:	2876		
7/17/2001	Brookfield	Route 148 (North Brookfield Rd)	At Sturbridge TL	NB	1519	1533	3052	2001040	CMRPC
6/14/2004	Brookfield	Route 148 (North Brookfield Rd)	At Sturbridge TL	NB	1920	1004	2924	2004045	CMRPC
9/20/2007	Brookfield	Route 148 (North Brookfield Rd)	At Sturbridge TL	NB	1776	1842	3618	2007041	CMRPC
		Route 148 (North Brookfield Rd)	At Sturbridge TL			avg:	3198		
7/17/2001	Brookfield	Route 148 (Fiskdale St)	S of Mill St	NB	2687	2624	5311	2001042	CMRPC
6/14/2004	Brookfield	Route 148 (Fiskdale St)	S of Mill St	NB	3190	3131	6321	2004046	CMRPC
9/20/2007	Brookfield	Route 148 (Fiskdale St)	S of Mill St	NB	2985	3116	6101	2007042	CMRPC
		Route 148 (Fiskdale St)	S of Mill St			avg:	5911		

9/15/1998	Brookfield	Route 9 (S Maple St)	At East Brookfield TL	EB	3511	3790	7301	1998023	CMRPC
7/17/2001	Brookfield	Route 9 (S Maple St)	At East Brookfield TL	EB	3849	4014	7863	2001043	CMRPC
9/13/2007	Brookfield	Route 9 (S Maple St)	At East Brookfield TL	EB	4085	4050	8135	2007043	CMRPC
		Route 9 (S Maple St)	At East Brookfield TL			avg:	7766		
7/23/1998	Brookfield	Route 9 (West Main St)	At West Brookfield TL	EB	3909	3452	7361	1998185	CMRPC
5/30/2001	Brookfield	Route 9 (West Main St)	At West Brookfield TL	EB	3953	3656	7609	2001217	CMRPC
6/21/2004	Brookfield	Route 9 (West Main St)	At West Brookfield TL	EB	4162	4426	8588	2004200	CMRPC
9/20/2007	Brookfield	Route 9 (West Main St)	At West Brookfield TL	EB	4081	3921	8002	2007044	CMRPC
		Route 9 (West Main St)	At West Brookfield TL			avg:	7890		

5. Open Space, Recreation, Natural and Cultural Resources

Open Space and Recreation Plan

Brookfield's first Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) was approved in March 2010 by the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services. The approval allows Brookfield to participate in DCS grant rounds through December 2016. The OSRP Plan is incorporated into the Master Plan in its entirety. In the interest of conservation, it is not reprinted here. Please find a copy included with this report. Copies are also available at the Selectmen's office and the Merrick Public Library, as well as at www.brookfieldma.us.

The many recommendations of the OSRP are too numerous to mention here. A list of all the action items with the entity in town responsible for implementation appears in Chapter 7, Implementation Plan.

Brookfield Heritage Landscape Inventory

In 2008, Brookfield was privileged to participate in a project sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). As a result of this project, the Brookfield Heritage Landscape Inventory Report, inventoried significant natural and cultural resources in the Town. This report is incorporated into the Master Plan in its entirety. In the interest of conservation, it is not reprinted here. Please find a copy included with this report. Copies are also available at the Selectmen's office and the Merrick Public Library, as well as at www.brookfieldma.us

The project team suggested that the following recommendations be the top three priorities for the Town of Brookfield as it works to protect the heritage landscape character of the community:

1. Adopt the Community Preservation Act
2. Establish Local Historic Districts for the Elm Hill Farm and Town Common National Register Historic Districts
3. Conduct an Archaeological Survey for the Quaboag River corridor and the shore of Quaboag Pond.

In addition, the project team recommended:

4. The town adopt a Demolition Delay Policy and a Chapter 61 Policy.
5. The town should work with local land conservation organizations for assistance with Conservation and Preservation Restrictions for key landscapes including the Richardson and Overlook Farms, and the old Boston Post Road.
6. The town should initiate public outreach to educate the local population regarding the community's heritage landscape resources, using the Heritage Landscape Report as an important first document.

6. Government Services and Facilities

Introduction

This chapter discusses the town of Brookfield's government services and facilities and its goal is threefold: to develop—using information gathered from surveys, public forums, and interviews with town employees, Selectboard, and department heads—a vision of the ideal functioning and condition of the town's government services and facilities; to examine the town's current government services; and to make recommendations on how to move from the current condition to the vision.

Vision

Public Forum

The public forum was conducted on February 4th, 2010 at the Brookfield Elementary School library to create a vision for the town services and facilities, to describe the current condition, and finally to make suggestions on transitioning from the reality to the vision.

In the vision portion of the exercise, the participants in the forum were asked, "What is your ideal vision for Brookfield's town government?" The statement below combines the answers from this exercise into one statement.

A Vision of Brookfield's Services and Facilities

Brookfield's government is housed in beautiful and exceptionally functional town buildings that are excellently maintained, accessible, and use minimal energy. Within the walls of these buildings one will find courteous and efficient town employees who can clearly guide a local citizen, business owner, or visitor through any task they need accomplished. All permitting, licensing, and oversight procedures are quickly completed with logical and easily understood procedures. Aside from the paid employees, the town buildings bustle with capable, coordinated, and well-trained volunteers who work seamlessly with the paid employees and elected officials. Outside of the immediate town government the expanded library and intergenerational community spaces act as vibrant gathering places for all members of the community. The town's transfer station is efficient and environmentally sustainable, and the town grounds, especially the common, Lewis field, and the cemetery are exceptionally well kept. The education of the students of all ages in town is second to none, and the recreation opportunities reflect the tremendous natural and developed resources in the town. Roads are well maintained and safely navigated, and the water infrastructure is in top condition. The public well protected and served by a professional police, fire and emergency staff. The burden on the taxpayers is reasonable, and the money is wisely allocated for the best present and future use. All of these aspects of the town government are accessible and linked through the very functional and easily found and searched website, which holds and shares critical resources for all members of the community.

Current Condition of Government Services

In this section this paper will show the results of the public forum S.W.O.T (strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat) analysis, the master plan survey from winter of 2008, survey's given to department heads regarding the current issues they face, and a brief overview of the towns current financial resources and expenditures.

Public Forum S.W.O.T Analysis

The public forum, which took place on February 4th, 2010, surveyed the attending citizens regarding the four categories listed below. The results below were recorded at the public meeting. They are in no particular order other than the order that they were spoken of at the forum.

<u>Strengths</u> Fire Department and EMS Library and staff Open space Common Natural recreational opportunities Hard-working town employees Schools Police Mutual aid Community pride Community activities Number of churches Water Assistance to needy	<u>Opportunities</u> Online communication Commercial development Possible Railroad access Volunteerism Town Hall renovation Ecotourism Green Energy Regionalization Artisans
<u>Weaknesses</u> Website Too few people doing too many things Negative vibes Police/Community Patronage Short-term planning Lack of volunteers Town Hall and other buildings Deferred maintenance of facilities Lack of adequate paid staff Enforcement of by-laws Outdated zoning by-laws Computer network in Town Hall Poor accessibility to town committees and boards Over extended boards and committees	<u>Threats</u> Budget cuts Community discord Apathy Bedroom community Negative development Distressed property Rt. 9 blight Small size of town Lack of affordability Solid waste costs Increasing energy costs Rising health costs Litigation costs Tax delinquency Falling property value

Intern discussions with Town Staff and Elected Officials

As part of the research for this chapter, the Master Planning Committee was able to recruit the services of an intern from Tantasqua Senior High School. Alison Kane, a senior in the “Dynamics and Democracy” class, interviewed the majority of the town employees in hopes of developing a broad view of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that the government was facing. Ms. Kane’s interviews and report were completed during the spring semester of 2009. See Appendix A for her full report.

To summarize her research, Ms. Kane determined that Brookfield’s strengths according to the town employees were primarily its employees and volunteers. The weaknesses she uncovered were the accessibility of the Selectboard and the functionality of the Town Hall building. Each of these weaknesses contributes to problems with communication, efficiency, and morale. As far as opportunities for the town, Ms. Kane revealed that the majority of town employees thought that state grants were crucial. The two most present threats observed were the risk of unchecked residential development, and the limited number of volunteers.

Public Survey

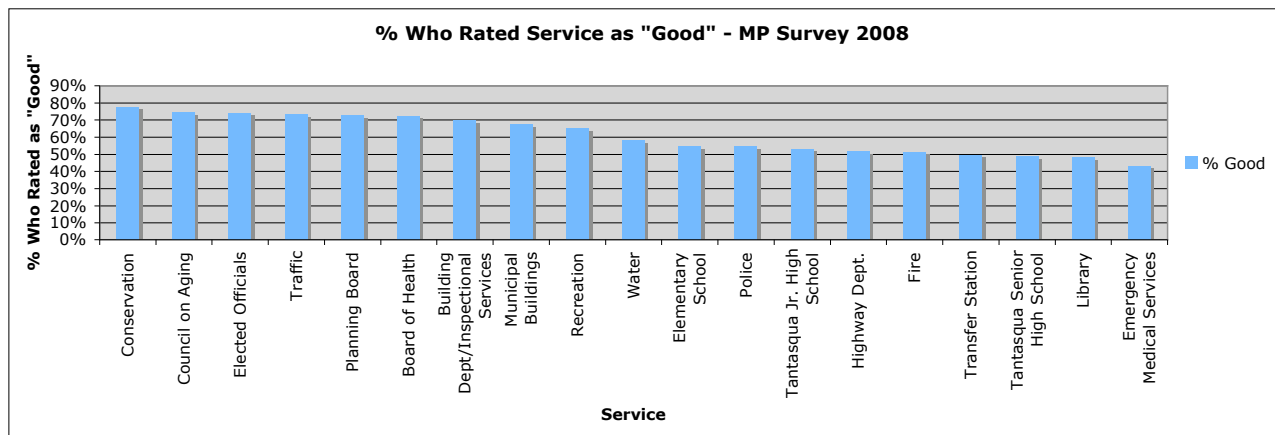
Below is a ranking of public opinion on 19 of the town departments/services. This information was collected from the master plan survey taken during the winter of 2008, with approximately 250 residents responding. The survey participants were asked to rate the town services listed below as poor, good, or excellent. A point system was built for each response and the results were tallied up to build the table below. The highest-ranking services received the most positive responses.

Rank	Department
1	Emergency Medical Services
2	Fire
3	Tantasqua Senior High School
4	Transfer Station
5	Library
6	Tantasqua Jr. High School
7	Elementary School
8	Water
9	Highway Dept.
10	Board of Health
11	Recreation
12	Police
13	Conservation
14	Traffic
15	Council on Aging
16	Building Dept/Inspectional Services
17	Planning Board
18	Municipal Buildings
19	Elected Officials

From this ranking it is clear that the Emergency Service (Fire and EMS) are the most highly regarded services in town. The schools, library, and transfer station are also strongly appreciated.

The most poorly regarded departments in town are those staffed with elected officials, and the Planning Board and the Inspectional Services are also poorly viewed. The municipal buildings also ranked poorly relative to the other government services.

At first this ranking may lead one to believe that the elected officials, Planning, Inspectional Services and municipal buildings are in poor condition. However, with a closer look at the data we can see that even the elected officials (who ranked last) were generally regarded as “good” on a scale of “poor,” “good,” or “excellent.”



The chart above lists the percentage of survey takers who chose “good” for the services listed along the bottom of the chart. We can see that elected officials were generally considered “good” by more than 70% of the respondents. Therefore, we can conclude that even though the elected officials and municipal buildings ranked as the worst amongst the town departments, the majority of the survey takers considered even the “worst” parts of town to be “good.” In short, there is room for improvement, especially in the lower-ranked departments in town, but the improvements will be designed to make something “good” even better.

Brookfield’s Services and Facilities

During the spring of 2010 a questionnaire was given to the major departments and committees in the town’s government. The most important information gathered from these surveys was the issues that each department or committee is either currently facing or will be facing in the future. Below are the issues facing each department gathered from these questionnaires. Not every committee and department is included in this section due to the abundance of departments and committees.

Public Safety: Police

The lack of a permanent and adequate police station. The second major issue is the lack of a police chief. There is currently a search committee in place to find the next police chief, but no solution has been determined after several studies on where to house the department. Currently, the department is renting a facility from a neighbor to the town hall.

Public Safety: Fire

The department always is faced with upcoming capital needs. In the relatively near future these needs will include ongoing vehicle replacement, air bottle replacements, protective clothing, heating systems (for fire station), and roof (for fire station). Additionally, due to the nature of an almost all-volunteer fire department, member acquisition and retention is an ongoing challenge.

Public Safety: EMS

Similar to the fire department, the EMS is on a cycle of ongoing capital needs. However, the recent purchase of a 2009 Horton ambulance on a GMC chassis puts the department in a presently good condition for capital needs. The department also maintains a cardiac monitor and a stretcher. Operating costs are currently offset by revenue from billing for ambulance transports. However, the future of such an operation is uncertain. Factors such as lowered insurance reimbursements, increased costs, and services that cannot be billed may eventually lead to a change in this situation.

Highway Department

There is a shortage of staff - A second licensed operator would make it possible to maintain the roads in a more timely fashion and would help to eliminate the safety hazards now experienced. Many jobs are not safe to do when there is only one person present (maintaining equipment, working in a trench).

Upcoming capital needs include the replacement of the sidewalk plow and the 1980 & 1981 Mack trucks need to be replaced in the next 2-3 years.

Community Services: Recreation Committee

Residents have expressed a desire for improved maintenance and water quality testing at the town beach. The Recreation Committee is constantly cleaning and repairing playground equipment from being vandalized and defaced and on several occasions there have been break-ins. Also, the committee is looking to install underground drainage where there is currently an open, and therefore dangerous, trench.

Community Services: Conservation Commission

Continuing education for the members of the Conservation Commission is needed concerning the complex Massachusetts wetlands regulations. The commission needs to attract and develop members with a diverse set of life experiences and qualifications to adequately staff the commission. The commission would like a small office for wetlands materials display and storage. Currently, the Conservation Commission is staffed only by volunteers and receives enough money from permit fees to fund its activities.

Community Services: Tourism Commission

The commission is inactive.

Community Services: Local Access Department

The department is in the process of updating the website, upgrading the video recording and transfer system, and increasing the content on the public access channel.

Community Services: Cultural Council

The committee has been frustrated by the lack of access to the Town Hall ballroom for indoor cultural and community events. The committee is looking for new volunteers to help run the Memorial Day Parade, the

Concerts on the Common, the awarding of Massachusetts Cultural Council grants, and other activities promoted by the council.

Library

Merrick Public Library, Banister Memorial Hall was opened in 1884. In order to maintain the historic integrity of this National Historic Register building we need to address major physical building repairs on an annual and priority based assessment. Technology upgrades and electrical improvements; including wireless conversions also need to be addressed over the next ten years. The stand-alone library circulating system is currently outdated with an immediate need for upgrade to regional system.

Elementary School

Student and teachers are being trained in methods and strategies to promote a positive social climate. The school has adopted a new bullying policy, and has worked with the towns in the Tantasqua/Union 61 School District to develop a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The plan has been submitted to the state of Massachusetts for approval, and the curriculum selected is in direct support of that plan. The school has been provided with a MSBA Green Repair Program grant that, in collaboration with school choice funds, will replace all of the windows throughout the entire facility. The hope is that we will be able to further increase our building's efficiency, while reducing the cost for heating the building both day and night. This is especially important now that the school is used for town and community meetings after school hours.

Facilities: Town Hall

The Town Hall is currently in poor condition. Most of the building is unusable due to ADA compliance concerns or, in the case of the basement, because it needs a remodeling. The current office set-up lacks privacy and the meeting space is limited. Also, the Town Hall is very inefficient in its energy use.

Facilities: High School & Jr. High

The high school is also housed in a new building. It is in very good condition. The Jr. high School is an older building that may need upcoming repairs.

Facilities: Highway Barn

The highway barn is new and in excellent condition.

Facilities: Fire Dept/EMS buildings

The Fire Department is housed in an older building that will need a new heating system and roof in the next 5 years.

Facilities: Police Station

Currently, the police station, as mentioned above, is housed in a rental property near the Town Hall. The town has expressed a desire for a town-owned, permanent facility.

Facilities: Lewis Field Recreation Area

Lewis Field is steadily improving under the watch of the Recreation Committee. The committee is pursuing drainage improvements and possibly an adult-size baseball diamond.

Facilities: South Pond Recreation Area

This area has not been maintained for the last several years, but the recreation committee is pursuing the reopening of the swimming area.

Facilities: Town Common

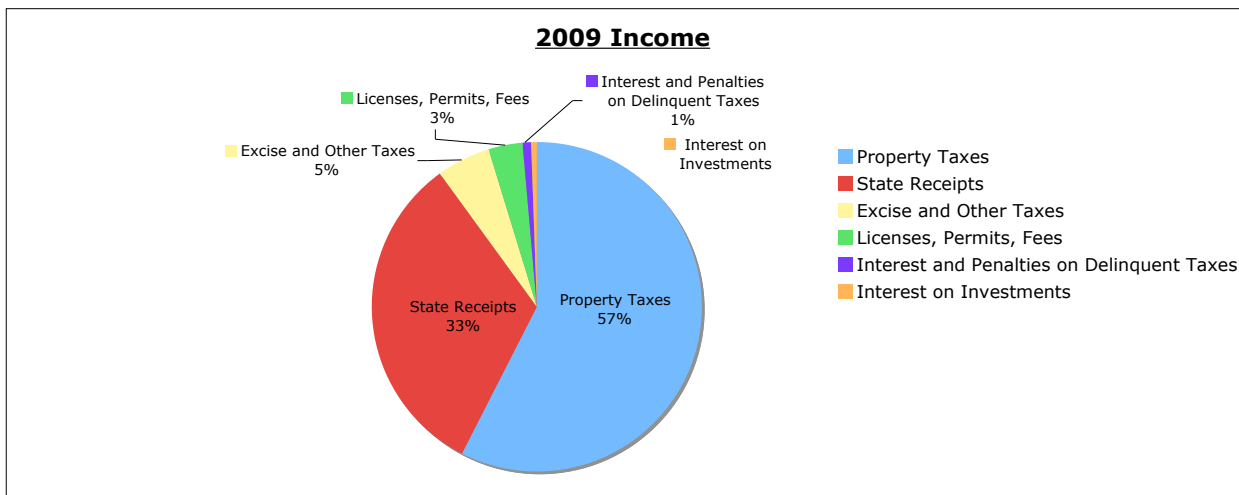
There is currently a town common committee that is building a plan for the future of the town common.

Town Financial Overview

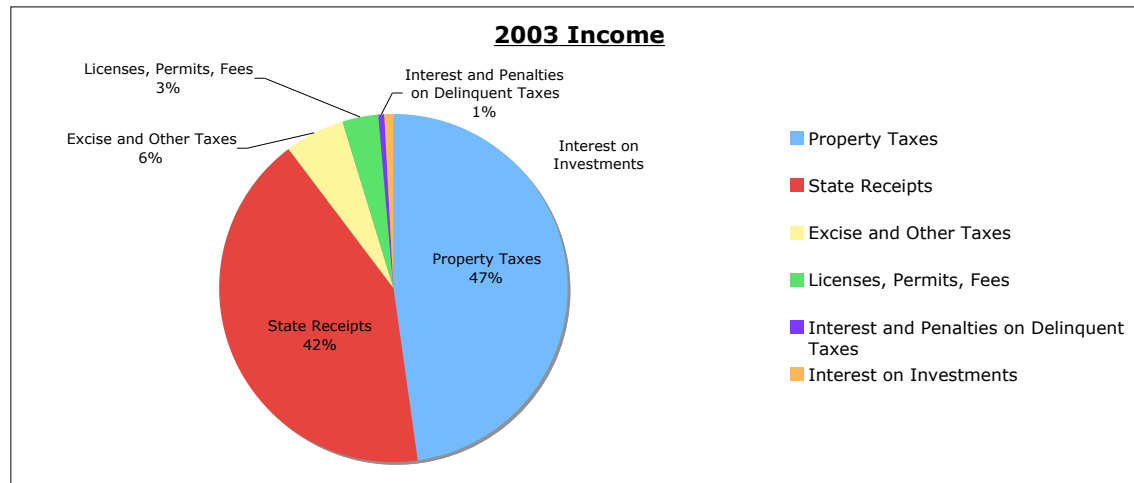
This section will briefly illustrate the income and expenditures for the town of Brookfield to give perspective on how the town collects and distributes its financial resources.

Income

Below is a pie chart of the income sources for the Brookfield town budget in 2009. The majority of the town's income comes from property taxes, and the second largest portion is from state receipts.



Below is a similar pie chart for the year 2003 for comparison. Please note the dramatic difference between state receipts and property taxes in 2003 versus 2009 (shown above). In 2003 the state receipts made up 42% of the towns income whereas in 2009 the state receipts represent only 33% of the towns income.



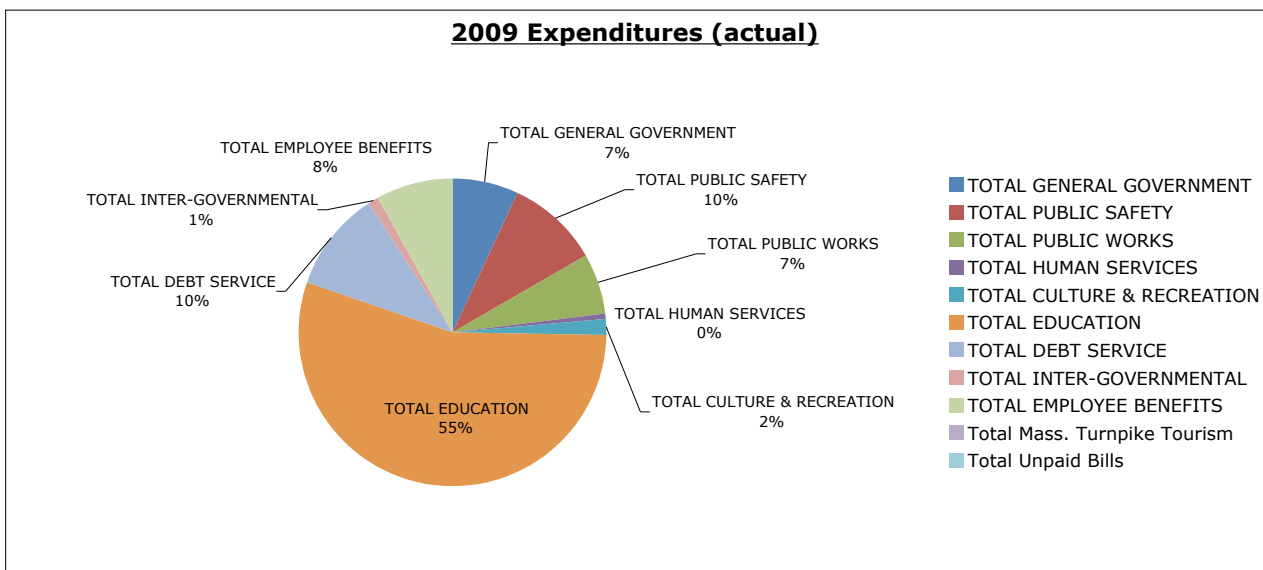
Below is a table showing the actual income from 2003 to 2009. The property taxes during this period increased 31.43%. This increase is partially due to the level or negative funding from the state receipts, which make up the second largest portion of Brookfield's income. The increase in income from property taxes is also due to the growth that Brookfield experienced across this period.

Actual Town Income from 2003 - 2009

	2003(Actual)	2004(Actual)	2005(Actual)	2006(Actual)	2007(Actual)	2008(Actual)	2009(Actual)	% Change Since 2003	% Change since 2004
Revenues:									
Property Taxes	\$ 3,007,034	\$ 3,027,163	\$ 3,227,726	\$ 3,406,423	\$ 3,501,795	\$ 3,874,288	\$ 3,952,271	31.43%	30.56%
State Receipts	\$ 2,654,676	\$ 2,225,287	\$ 2,149,876	\$ 2,180,221	\$ 2,376,796	\$ 2,417,686	\$ 2,231,797	-15.93%	0.29%
Excise and Other Taxes	\$ 351,318	\$ 373,031	\$ 384,509	\$ 436,910	\$ 365,797	\$ 416,100	\$ 350,991	-0.09%	-5.91%
Licenses, Permits, Fees	\$ 210,216	\$ 299,358	\$ 346,071	\$ 279,914	\$ 216,634	\$ 237,955	\$ 233,899	11.27%	-21.87%
Interest and Penalties on Delinquent Taxes	\$ 36,976	\$ 70,104	\$ 38,150	\$ 55,285	\$ 41,080	\$ 63,687	\$ 47,986	29.78%	-31.55%
Interest on Investments	\$ 43,900	\$ 20,094	\$ 44,714	\$ 83,479	\$ 101,614	\$ 97,018	\$ 47,334	7.82%	135.56%
Total Revenues	\$ 6,304,120	\$ 6,015,037	\$ 6,191,046	\$ 6,442,232	\$ 6,603,716	\$ 7,106,734	\$ 6,864,278	8.89%	14.12%
Total Expenditures	\$ 6,554,949	\$ 6,391,365	\$ 6,355,543	\$ 6,357,662	\$ 6,792,040	\$ 7,173,471	\$ 7,228,943		13.10%
Sum of Taxes + State Receipts	\$ 5,661,710	\$ 5,252,450	\$ 5,377,602	\$ 5,586,644	\$ 5,878,591	\$ 6,291,974	\$ 6,184,068	9.23%	17.74%

Expenditures

This section examines the expenditures that the town has made during the period from 2003 to 2009. The following pie chart shows how the expenditures are allocated. The majority of the town's budget goes to education (55%), followed by Public Safety (10%), Debt Service (10%), Employee Benefits (8%), Public Works (7%), and General Government (7%).



The table below was created to answer the question of how these expenses have changed over time. This shows that since 2003 the expenses that have increased the most rapidly are the general government expenses and the public safety expenses.

Actual Expenditures from 2003 - 2009

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	% Change from 2003	% Change from 2006
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$ 375,113.73	\$ 373,254.91	\$ 443,841.04	\$ 426,175.09	\$ 489,948.74	\$ 500,628.79	\$ 505,685.40	34.81%	18.66%
TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY	\$ 506,968.08	\$ 459,792.96	\$ 482,619.16	\$ 495,698.47	\$ 594,028.84	\$ 579,236.14	\$ 692,668.24	36.63%	39.74%
TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS	\$ 376,783.57	\$ 422,823.18	\$ 411,614.72	\$ 450,597.82	\$ 423,584.60	\$ 528,809.58	\$ 477,555.72	26.75%	5.98%
TOTAL HUMAN SERVICES	\$ 25,468.04	\$ 34,647.95	\$ 42,820.56	\$ 27,873.05	\$ 27,757.40	\$ 32,151.28	\$ 29,472.75	15.72%	5.74%
TOTAL CULTURE & RECREATION	\$ 150,544.97	\$ 95,712.93	\$ 112,892.15	\$ 104,282.92	\$ 109,191.89	\$ 126,372.07	\$ 127,361.92	-15.40%	22.13%
TOTAL EDUCATION	\$ 4,269,218.13	\$ 3,616,156.00	\$ 3,445,364.00	\$ 3,417,124.23	\$ 3,876,545.10	\$ 3,983,411.68	\$ 3,968,992.64	-7.03%	16.15%
TOTAL DEBT SERVICE	\$ 473,281.26	\$ 924,038.26	\$ 877,172.76	\$ 811,015.26	\$ 600,381.76	\$ 761,866.29	\$ 754,521.55	59.42%	-6.97%
TOTAL INTER-GOVERNMENTAL	\$ 34,308.00	\$ 64,534.00	\$ 92,257.00	\$ 103,250.00	\$ 148,520.00	\$ 119,404.00	\$ 99,824.00	190.96%	-3.32%
TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$ 341,691.44	\$ 389,773.93	\$ 446,145.95	\$ 521,645.12	\$ 522,082.04	\$ 541,591.12	\$ 572,860.60	67.65%	9.82%
Total Mass. Turnpike Tourism	\$ 1,200.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
Total Unpaid Bills	\$ 371.33	\$ 10,630.55	\$ 815.18	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
Total Expenditures	\$ 6,554,948.55	\$ 6,391,364.67	\$ 6,355,542.52	\$ 6,357,661.96	\$ 6,792,040.37	\$ 7,173,470.95	\$ 7,228,942.82	10.28%	13.70%

Conclusions from Financial Overview

Brookfield's income has been consistently rising over the past seven years due to growth and inflation. This increase overall has been less than the inflation (approximately 3% per year) for this period. The reduction or flat funding of state receipts is the major factor in explaining the disproportionate increase in property taxes relative to other sources of income. The increase in expenses has been driven by inflation and growth, which resulted in increases in the general government, public works, public safety, and employee benefits.

How to Move Toward the Vision

Public Forum Suggestions

The solutions offered at the public forum to move Brookfield from the SWOT to the vision statement are broadly described as creating a "structure for the future". Considerations for the future include the possibility of a town administrator, a framework for increased volunteerism, and the possibility of hiring grant writers, community planners, and volunteer coordinators. An upgrade of the website is crucial, as well as a thorough review and updating of the general and zoning by-laws. Regional cooperation, coordinating information systems, and an economic development committee are all parts of improving the system. Following are the objectives and strategies that the Master Planning Committee recommends to create the "structure for the future" that was discussed at the Public Forum.

Objectives and Strategies

These objectives are not in order of preference or importance.

1. Upgrade website and integrate use into Town Hall processes. Build an integrated electronic communication system for Town employees and for the public to access public information.
 - 1.1. This project could be funded and facilitated by the Public Access Committee.
 - 1.2. This will require the town, preferably in conjunction with the elementary school, to hire a technology/network coordinator and to make a significant initial capital investment, perhaps as part of a Town Hall renovation, and to budget for ongoing system maintenance and equipment replacement.
 - 1.3. Gather quotes and information about the possibility of creating a secure online bill payment system for the Town Hall so residents can pay their bills to the town online.
2. Create a regulations manual for obtaining permits.
 - 2.1. Create a Permit Process committee to spearhead the creation of a manual empowered to propose and implement changes to the process itself.
3. Review the possibility of regionalizing overlapping town services. This will be an ongoing process spearheaded by the Selectboard.
4. Establish a Community Development Advisory Committee supported by a grant-funded, part-time community development planner/grant writer, either as a staff member or as consultant on retainer.
 - 4.1. This committee will seek out and pursue grant opportunities.
5. Review town by-laws for consistency, overlapping duties, and currentness.
 - 5.1. Create a by-law review committee.
6. Consider the possibility of hiring a town manager.

7. Improve the condition of municipal buildings.
 - 7.1. A solution needs to be adopted to repair and improve the Town Hall and police station. This committee recommends revisiting the proposal put forth by the Town Hall Barrier Removal Committee.
 - 7.2. The Library is also in need of several repairs and upgrades to its facility.
8. Improve energy efficiency of government facilities in Brookfield.
 - 8.1. The Selectboard should create an energy committee to develop and implement recommendations to this effect.
9. Compare the financial ratios of Brookfield with the ratios for similar towns and towns Brookfield would wish to emulate. Develop recommendations accordingly.
 - 9.1. The Selectboard should establish a committee to study this subject and report back with recommendations.
10. Update the Capital Improvements Plan for the town.
 - 10.1. The three largest capital projects for the near future include the Town Hall, the police station, and possibly a library expansion. Smaller projects include the roof and heating system for the fire station, replacement vehicles for the Highway Department, and drainage improvements for Lewis Field. The full list of projects would need to be gathered by a committee dedicated to that purpose.
11. Develop a workgroup to work with the town employees to update the human resources protocol with a goal of creating the Town Hall environment described in the vision statement of this chapter.
12. Develop a volunteer training and support program.
 - 12.1. Write a short manual for volunteers covering the basics of the open meeting law, the town organizational chart, a list of important contacts with phone numbers and email addresses (such as committee and department chairs).
 - 12.2. Develop a mentoring program. Have a paid employee be the prime contact for each new volunteer. This would be a person who is familiar with town processes who can be easily reached for questions.
 - 12.3. Hire one or multiple committee clerks to act as a clerk for several of the town's volunteer boards. This person would be knowledgeable in the proper procedures and would ensure that the meetings are run properly, minutes are kept, meetings are posted, and minutes are passed along to the town clerk and Select board.
13. Pursue the free state financial audit.
 - 13.1 The free state financial audit will give a more comprehensive review of the town's financial situation along with recommendations for improvements.
14. Build a comprehensive model of the current organizational chart with responsibilities of each position clearly delineated.

See Appendix IV for the Report on Town Governance done by a Tantasqua Intern.

7. Implementation Plan

Introduction

This chapter outlines the proposed Master Plan Implementation Plan. An Implementation program is one of the elements stipulated in the Massachusetts law governing master plans. The Implementation plan should define and schedule the specific municipal actions necessary to achieve the objectives of each element of the master or study plan. Scheduled expansion or replacement of public facilities or circulation system components and the anticipated costs and revenues associated with accomplishment of such activities shall be detailed in this element. This element shall specify the process by which the municipality's regulatory structures shall be amended so as to be consistent with the master plan.

The Master Plan Committee recommends that the Planning Board, together with the Select Board, establish an Implementation Committee that will follow up on the goals, objectives and action items detailed in this Master Plan.

The remaining pages of this chapter provide an Implementation Matrix that identifies the action items from the chapters of the Master Plan. A key to the abbreviations used in the Matrix appears below.

Abbreviation	Entity
BA	Board of Assessors
AC	Brookfield Agricultural Commission
BI	Building Inspector
BoS	Board of Selectmen
CC	Conservation Commission
ED	Economic Development Committee
HC	Historical Commission
HD	Highway Department
LHP	Local Housing Partnership
MPC	Master Plan Implementation Committee
PB	Planning Board
RC	Recreation Committee
WD	Water Department
ZBA	Zoning Board of Appeals

Town of Brookfield Master Plan Implementation Matrix

Action			Responsibility													
Chapter	Item	Description	BoS	MPC	PB	BI	BA	ED	LHP	ZBA	HD	HC	CC	WD	RC	AC
1																
Econ Dev	1	Establish Economic Development Committee	X	X												
Econ Dev	2	Develop streamlined permitting process	X	X	X	X	X									
Econ Dev	3	Increase economic development in town center	X		X			X								
Econ Dev	4	Revise town bylaws/zoning for commercial/industrial development			X			X								
Econ Dev	5	Develop a database of available commercial properties					X	X								
Econ Dev	6	Implement Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	X		X			X								
Econ Dev	7	Join New England Local Business Forum (NELBF)	X													
Econ Dev	8	Require the local school to purchase 1% of the budget locally	X													
Econ Dev	9	Implement a Right to Farm bylaw														X
Econ Dev	10	Organize an Agricultural Commission														
2																
Housing	1	Establish a local housing partnership	X													
Housing	2	Establish a local Affordable Housing Trust Fund	X													
Housing	3	Create New Affordable Housing Through the Local Initiative Program:	X	X												
Housing	4	Ensure that the Zoning Board of Appeals is trained for Comprehensive Permits	X							X						
Housing	5	Adopt the Community Preservation Act	X		X											
Housing	6	Expand Senior Housing options	X		X				X							
Housing	7	Use Non-Regulatory Means to Promote Homeownership														
Housing	8	Consider adoption of the Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code (780 CMR 120.AA)	X			X										
Housing	9	Provide information to residents on federal and state tax incentives, etc	X			X										
Housing	10	Adopt a zoning bylaw for the municipal review of major residential development proposals	X		X											

Town of Brookfield

Master Plan Implementation Matrix

Chapter	Action		Description	Responsibility													
	Item			BoS	MPC	PB	BI	BA	ED	LHP	ZBA	HD	HC	CC	WD	RC	AC
Housing	11		Create a task force for town sewer and water infrastructure	X													
Housing	12		Establish a task force to examine the Town's older housing stock	X													
3																	
Zoning	1		Adopt a Local Historic District										X				
Zoning	2		Modify front setback requirements in the Town Center			X											
Zoning	3		Identify land suitable for Business A zoning to allow small-scale commercial services.			X											
Zoning	4		Enact off-street parking requirements and design standards			X											
Zoning	5		Adopt an expedited procedure for in-town owners to their dwellings without a special permit.			X											
Zoning	6		Remove the requirement for a special permit for single family homes in BA.			X											
Zoning	7		Revise the requirement for a special permit for more than one use in BA and BB districts			X											
Zoning	8		Adopt a maximum size limit on commercial buildings			X											
Zoning	9		Expand the sidewalk network	X													
Zoning	10		Revise the OSRD Bylaw by making it a by-right use and modifying standards			X											
Zoning	11		Exclude industrial uses from the RR district.			X											
Zoning	12		Develop design standards to soften the impacts of business uses in residential areas.			X											
Zoning	13		Support farmland preservation through purchase of development rights											X			
Zoning	14		Seek state funds to implement energy conservation measures	X													
Zoning	15		Remove zoning impediments to alt energy sources and develop wind energy zoning bylaw			X											
Zoning	16		Prepare a senior housing bylaw to allow development of age-restricted housing			X											
Zoning	17		Adopt a Right-to-Farm bylaw														X

Town of Brookfield

Master Plan Implementation Matrix

Chapter	Action		Description	Responsibility													
	Item			BoS	MPC	PB	BI	BA	ED	LHP	ZBA	HD	HC	CC	WD	RC	AC
Zoning	18		Complete computerized mapping of land ownership parcels and develop a functional GIS					X									
Zoning	19		Prepare a new Official Zoning Map			X											
Zoning	20		Prepare a development guidebook	X													
Zoning	21		Revise the Flood Plain District regulations			X											
4																	
Trans	1		Create street design guidelines to direct road work as well as Scenic Bylaw adherence			X						X					
Trans	2		Reduce traffic speeds through residential streets by using traffic calming techniques.			X						X					
Trans	3		Increase pedestrian safety in the town center, neighborhoods and commercial areas.			X						X					
Trans	4		Connect local business and neighborhoods to other towns via walkways and pathways			X						X					
Trans	5		Improve and encourage increased use of existing bicycle and hiking paths.			X						X					
Trans	6		Develop safe roadways with lanes intended for multi-use non-motorized street users			X						X					
Trans	7		Identify pedestrian pathways in heavy traffic areas (i.e. Post Office, Town Beach areas etc.)			X						X					
Trans	8		Build additional sidewalks and ensure proper maintenance of the existing stock.			X						X					
Trans	9		Create opportunities for Brookfield Residents to use Mass Transit			X						X					
Trans	10		Consider a Train Station			X						X					
Trans	11		Require detailed traffic impact statements and mitigation measures for new development			X						X					
Trans	12		Carefully manage uses that generate traffic issues			X						X					
Trans	13		Improve communication among all Municipal Employees, Volunteers and Resources.	X													
Trans	14		Improve communication with Town Residents by upgrading and updating the Town Website									X					

Town of Brookfield

Master Plan Implementation Matrix

Action			Responsibility														
Chapter	Item	Description	BoS	MPC	PB	BI	BA	ED	LHP	ZBA	HD	HC	CC	WD	RC	AC	
Trans	15	Clarify “Private Roads” to ensure proper maintenance and safety of roadways.									X						
Trans	16	Update bylaws to add language for Gravel Removal restrictions and responsibilities.									X						
Trans	17	Create/Update policy for Utility Work responsibilities.									X						
5																	
OSRP	1A1	Inventoried archaeological sites should be permanently protected	X		X							X					
OSRP	1A2	The fields on the Richardson/Plante and Overlook Farms should be permanently protected	X										X				
OSRP	1A3	The views on the Richardson/Plante and Overlook Farms should be permanently protected	X		X												
OSRP	1A4	Develop a strategy for acquisition of Chap 61 parcels along the river	X										X				
OSRP	1A5	Pursue additional recreational access to the river corridor	X		X												
OSRP	1B1	Propose Scenic Road designation for West Brookfield Road	X		X												
OSRP	1B2	The unpaved section of roadway on Elm Hill should be protected	X									X					
OSRP	1B3	The Benjamin Franklin mile markers should be permanently protected	X								X	X					
OSRP	1B4	The BHC and HD should learn to identify and protect scenic roads									X	X					
OSRP	1C1	Establish a LHD Study Comm to establish Elm Hill as LHD										X					
OSRP	1C2	Explore opportunities for adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of historic buildings	X									X					
OSRP	1C3	Establish and maintain relationships with agencies and non=profits for add'l funding	X										X				
OSRP	1C4	Pursue a Reconnaissance-level archaeological survey										X					
OSRP	1D1	Establish a LHD Study Comm to establish Brookfield Common as LHD										X					
OSRP	1D2	Preservation Master Plan for the Common Area	X								X	X					

Town of Brookfield

Master Plan Implementation Matrix

Chapter	Action		Responsibility													
	Item	Description	BoS	MPC	PB	BI	BA	ED	LHP	ZBA	HD	HC	CC	WD	RC	AC
OSRP	1E1	Encourage appropriate development siting and design to enhance town character	X		X					X						
OSRP	1E2	Devise regulations, guidelines and zoning controls to reduce neg impact of development	X		X					X						
OSRP	1E3	Work to reduce impact of business on open space and environment	X		X					X						
OSRP	1F1	Establish an agriculture commission and approve a Right-To-Farm bylaw	X										X			
OSRP	1F2	Enforce provisions of scenic road bylaw	X								X	X				
OSRP	1F3	Facilitate the establishment of conservation easements or restrictions	X										X			
OSRP	1G1	Facilitate community information sessions regarding CPA	X									X	X			
OSRP	1G2	Research information regarding available funding sources	X									X	X			
OSRP	1G3	Complete the Commonwealth Capital Application each year	X													
OSRP	2A1	Review development of land abutting Wolf Swamp	X		X											
OSRP	2B1	Work with E. Brookfield to protect Water Supply Zones	X											X		
OSRP	2B2	Acquire funds for land purchase and other strategies using the BSWPP												X		
OSRP	2B3	Continue to negotiate buying and protecting priority parcels in Zone II	X										X	X		
OSRP	2B4	Obtain Low Spray and Low Salt Agreements with CSX											X	X		
OSRP	2B5	Obtain Low-Salt and Low Spray signs and agreements with Mass Highway											X	X		
OSRP	2B6	Conduct educational for businesses and residents in Zone II re contamination												X		
OSRP	2B7	Conduct educational for businesses and residents in Zone II re septic												X		
OSRP	2B8	Inform septic users on how to obtain group rates for pumping septic systems												X		
OSRP	2C1	Establish stream teams and do active water quality monitoring											X			
OSRP	2C2	Encourage up gradient towns to do active water quality monitoring											X			

Town of Brookfield

Master Plan Implementation Matrix

Chapter	Action		Responsibility													
	Item	Description	BoS	MPC	PB	BI	BA	ED	LHP	ZBA	HD	HC	CC	WD	RC	AC
OSRP	2C3	Become active in the Chicopee River Watershed Council											X			
OSRP	2C4	Promote greater awareness of water resource protection practices											X	X		
OSRP	2C5	Promote low impact development guidelines for new development			X								X			
OSRP	2D1	Identify and prioritize areas for acquisition and protection	X										X			
OSRP	2D2	Develop resources and partnerships to act if Chapter land becomes available	X										X			
OSRP	2D3	Develop communication system that alerts BCC when chapter land is available	X										X			
OSRP	2D4	Connect with Chapter land owners.	X										X			
OSRP	2E1	Approve the Community Preservation Act	X													
OSRP	2F1	Minimize use of toxic and hazardous substances	X										X			
OSRP	2F2	Improve related beaches, boat ramps and surface water access areas														
OSRP	2F3	Identify and seek certification of Town's vernal pools											X			
OSRP	2F4	Coordinate Town volunteer cleanup efforts.											X			
OSRP	3A1	Establish an agriculture commission and approve aright-to-farm bylaw	X										X			
OSRP	3A2	Connect with local agricultural operations with regarding benefits of an APR											X			
OSRP	3A3	Research information to provide assistance to local agricultural operations														X
OSRP	3A4	Encourage schools, organizations, and business to by loccally grown produce														X
OSRP	3A5	Support local businesses. Explore "Buy local" campaign models														X
OSRP	3B1	Activate the Brookfield Tourism Board	X									X	X			
OSRP	3B2	Enhance the community's knowledge about and access to open space	X									X	X			
OSRP	3B3	Create an informational packet, including a map, about Brookfield open spaces	X									X	X			

Town of Brookfield

Master Plan Implementation Matrix

Chapter	Action		Responsibility													
	Item	Description	BoS	MPC	PB	BI	BA	ED	LHP	ZBA	HD	HC	CC	WD	RC	AC
OSRP	3B4	Compile a collection of educational materials	X									X	X			
OSRP	3B5	Compile trail and amenity information on all public lands										X	X			
OSRP	3B6	Explore inter-municipal connectivity with existing and potential trails, etc										X	X			
OSRP	3C1	Place recycle bins in municipal buildings and other public places	X													
OSRP	3C2	Encourage community activities at the Town transfer station	X													
OSRP	3C3	Develop education and awareness campaigns to reduce waste	X													
OSRP	3D1	Establish an agriculture commission and approve a right-to-farm bylaw	X													
OSRP	3D2	Promote maintenance of scenic roads									X	X				
OSRP	3D3	Consider allowing greater density bonuses to protect larger open spaces	X		X					X		X	X			
OSRP	3D4	Promote deed restrictions to grant permanent protection to acquired land	X		X					X		X	X			
OSRP	3D5	Explore land clearing bylaws	X		X								X			
OSRP	3D6	Explore bylaws that promote sustainable design	X		X								X			
OSRP	3D7	Promote development of and improvements to sidewalks and paths			X						X					
OSRP	3D8	Educate community including town boards about conservation bylaws	X										X			
OSRP	4A1	Prepare an up-to-date ADA self evaluation and transition plan	X			X										
OSRP	4A2	Improve signage and facilities for Americans with Disabilities at trailheads	X								X				X	
OSRP	4A3	Explore the development of a community space for multi-generational activities	X			X					X					
OSRP	4A4	Maintain trails systems and prepare maps with level of difficulty and facilities									X		X		X	
OSRP	4B1	Inventory all open space and recreation facilities and areas													X	
OSRP	4B2	Maintain bathrooms, parking, signage													X	
OSRP	4B3	Explore need for and development of an adult													X	
OSRP	4B4	Expand opportunities for passive outdoor recreation	X										X			

Town of Brookfield

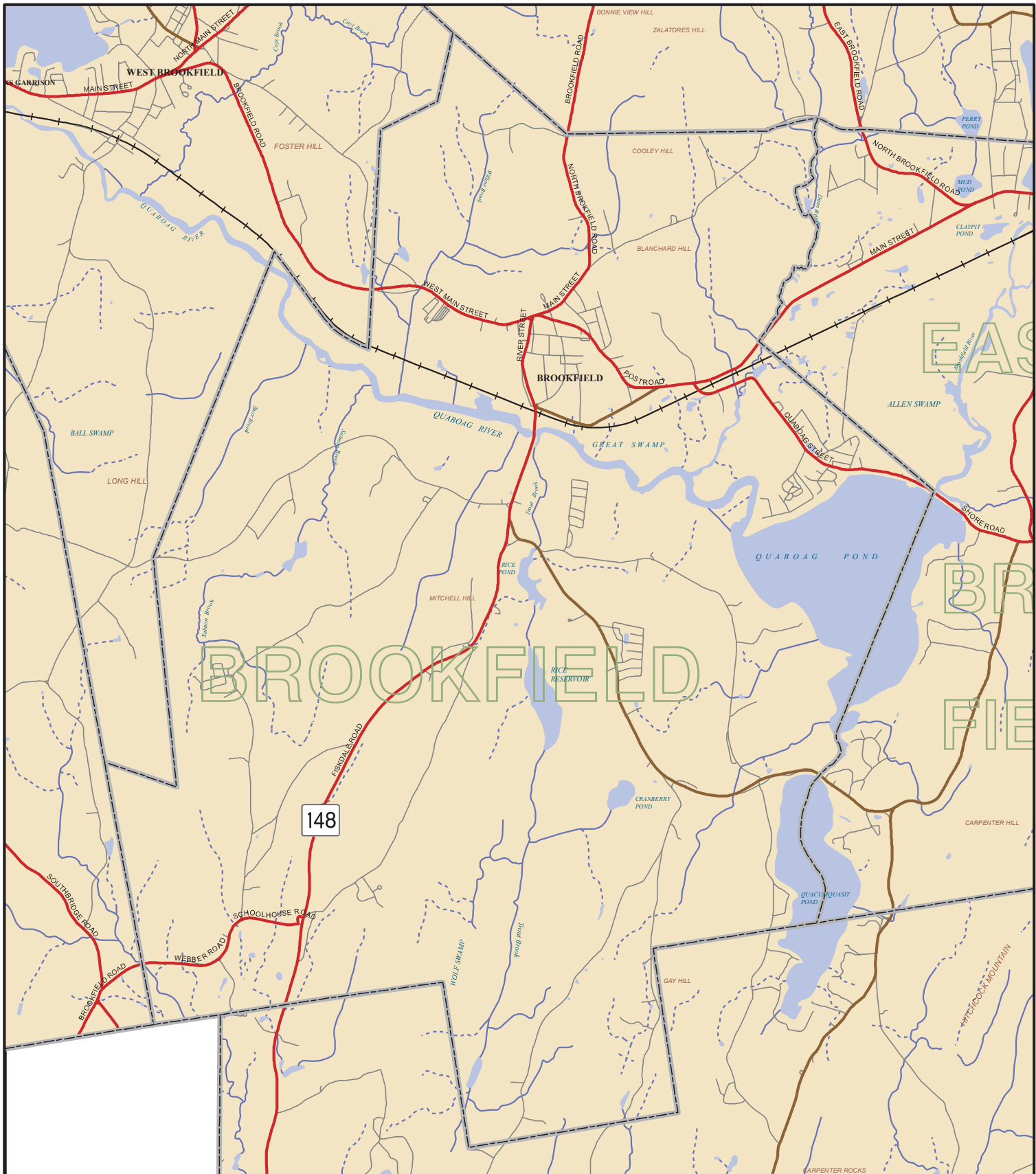
Master Plan Implementation Matrix

Chapter	Action		Responsibility													
	Item	Description	BoS	MPC	PB	BI	BA	ED	LHP	ZBA	HD	HC	CC	WD	RC	AC
OSRP	4C1	Connect existing trails within Brookfield to neighboring towns									X		X		X	
OSRP	4D1	Approve the Community Preservation Act (CPA)														
OSRP	5A1	Develop and promote a town history tour/trail										X			X	
OSRP	5A2	Compile trail and amenity information on all public lands											X		X	
OSRP	5A3	Create a website or a page on the Town website dedicated to open space	X									X	X		X	
OSRP	5A4	Develop promotional materials and create an informational packet	X									X	X		X	
OSRP	5A5	Develop distribution strategy and distribute	X									X	X		X	
OSRP	5B1	Develop a calendar of activities and distribute broadly													X	
OSRP	5C1	Planning Board will designate an Implementation Committee	X	X	X							X	X		X	
OSRP	5C2	Support and strengthen connection between town commissions	X	X	X							X	X		X	
OSRP	5C3	Present public forums on implementation progress	X	X												
Heritage	1	Adopt the Community Preservation Act	X	X	X											
Heritage	2	Establish Local Historic Districts for Elm Hill Farm and Town Common National Register Historic Districts	X	X								X				
Heritage	3	Conduct an archaeological survey for the Quaboag River corridor and the shore of Quaboag Pond	X									X				
Heritage	4	Adopt a Demolition Delay Policy and a Chapter 61 Policy	X		X							X				X
Heritage	5	Look into Conservation and Preservation Restrictions for key landscapes in town such as historic farms and the Old Boston Post Road	X	X	X							X	X			X
Heritage	6	Conduct Public Outreach to educate the local population regarding the community's heritage lanscape resources	X	X	X							X	X			X
6																
Gov't Serv	1	Upgrade website and integrate into town hall processes	X													
Gov't Serv	2	Create a regulations manual for those who are doing business in town or with the town.	X													
Gov't Serv	3	Review the possibility of regionalizing overlapping town services	X													

Town of Brookfield

Master Plan Implementation Matrix

Action		Description	Responsibility													
Chapter	Item		BoS	MPC	PB	BI	BA	ED	LHP	ZBA	HD	HC	CC	WD	RC	AC
Gov't Serv	4	Establish a Community Development Advisory Committee	X													
Gov't Serv	5	Review of town by-laws for consistency, overlapping duties, and currentness	X													
Gov't Serv	6	Consider the possibility of hiring a town manager	X													
Gov't Serv	7	Improve the condition of municipal buildings	X													
Gov't Serv	8	Improve energy efficiency of government services and buildings in Brookfield	X													
Gov't Serv	9	Compare the financial ratios of Brookfield with the ratios for similar towns	X													
Gov't Serv	10	Update Capital Improvements Plan for Brookfield	X													
Gov't Serv	11	Update HR protocol	X													
Gov't Serv	12	Develop a volunteer training and support program	X													
Gov't Serv	13	Pursue the free state financial audit	X													
Gov't Serv	14	Build organizational chart of town	X													



Legend

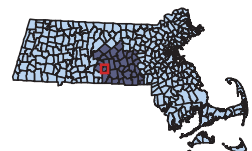
- CMRPC Region Municipality
- Federal Aid Eligible Road
- Interstate
- Rural Minor Collector
- Other Road
- Active Rail
- Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Water Body

CMRPC
Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission

FEDERAL AID ELIGIBLE ROAD SYSTEM



0 0.2 0.4 0.8
Miles



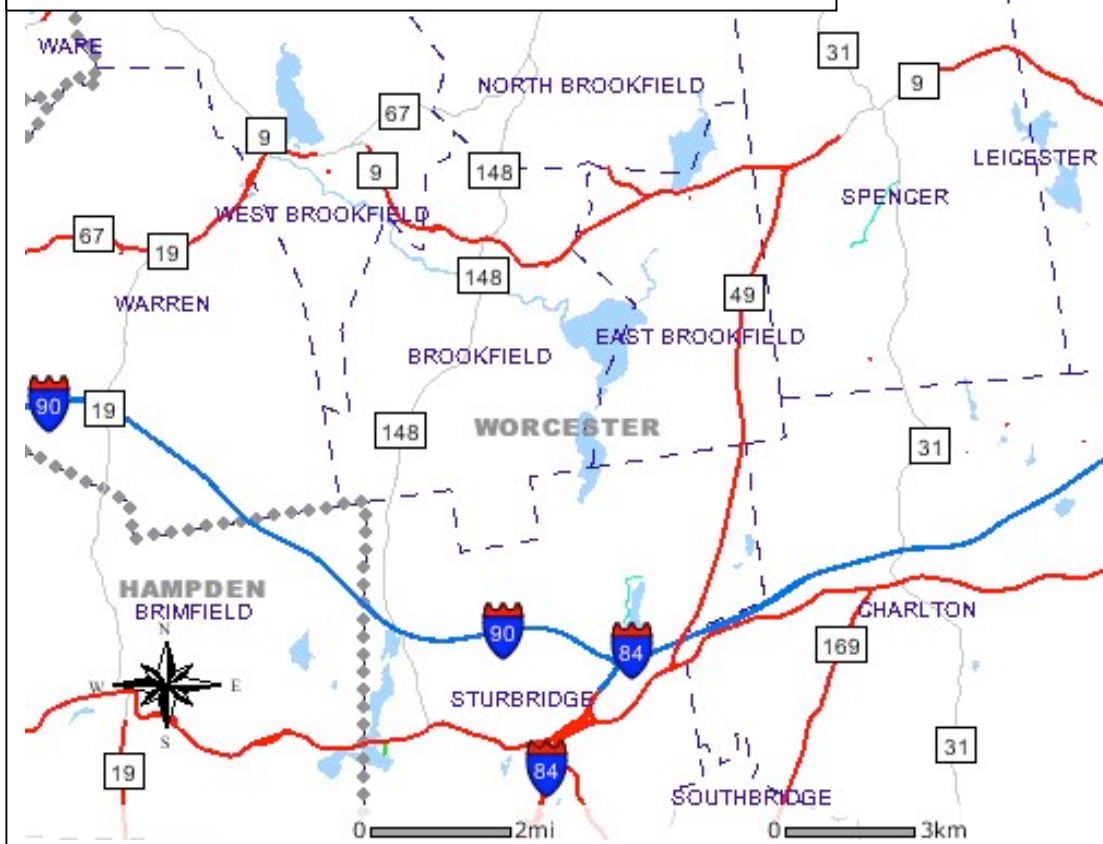
3/2006

Information depicted on this map is for planning purposes only. This information is not adequate for legal boundary definition, regulatory interpretation, or parcel-level analysis. Use caution interpreting positional accuracy.

ROAD INVENTORY BY JURISDICTION

(Source: Executive Office of Transportation-Road Inventory Map)

Appendix B

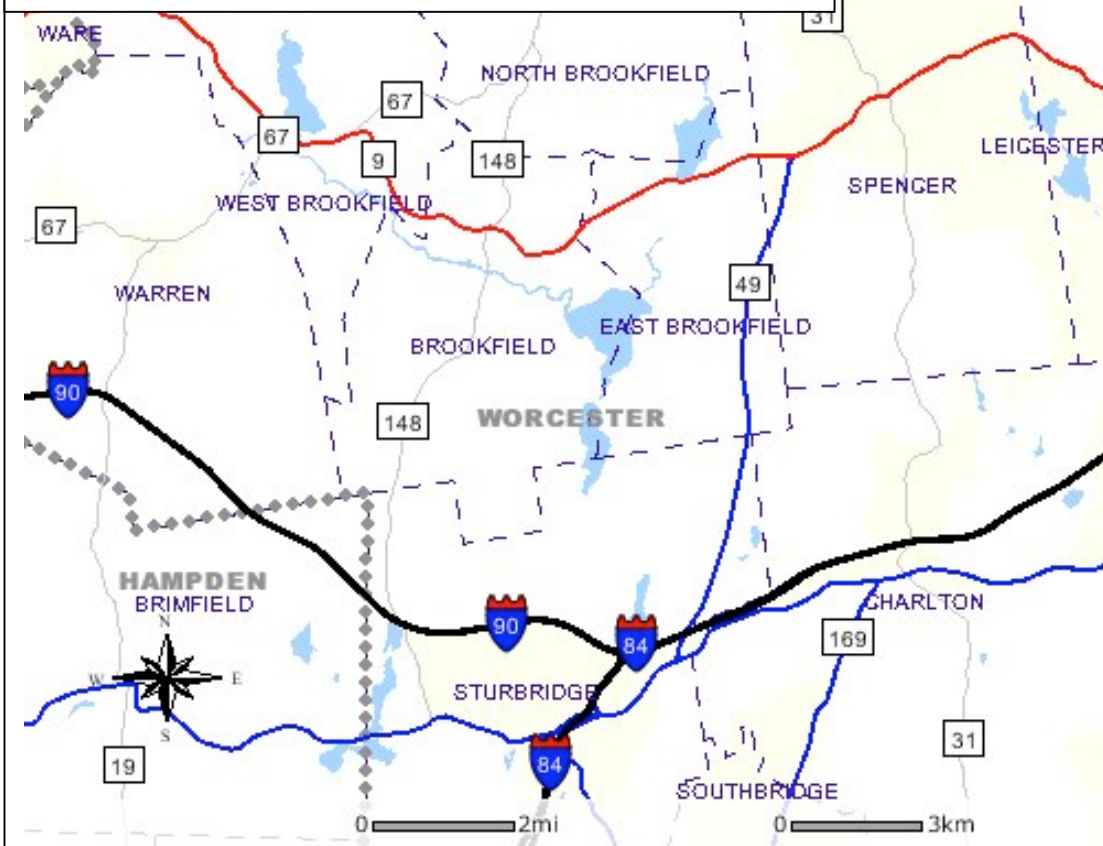


- Massachusetts Highway Department
- Department of Conservation and Recreation
- Massachusetts Turnpike Authority
- Massachusetts Port Authority
- State Park or Forest
- State Institutional
- Federal Park or Forest
- County Institutional
- State College or University
- U.S. Army Corps Engineers
- Federal Institutional
- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Neighboring State
- Water

ROAD INVENTORY BY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

(Source: Executive Office of Transportation-Road Inventory Map)

Appendix C

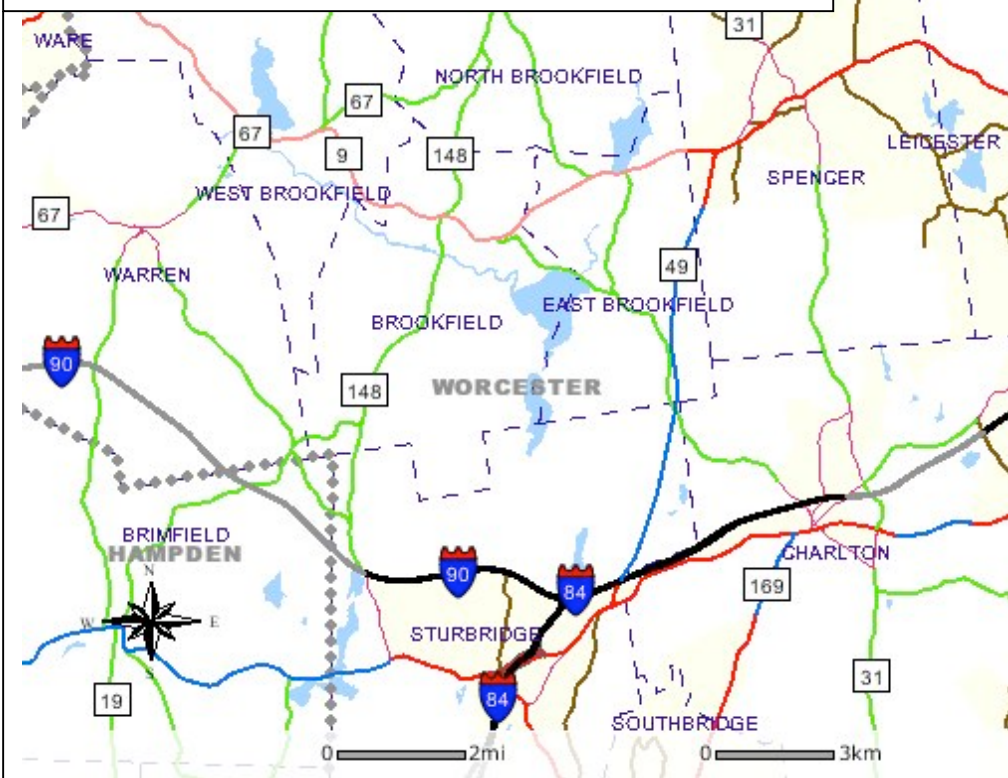


- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Rural Minor Arterial or Urban Principal Arterial
- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Boundary
- Neighboring State
- Water

ROAD INVENTORY BY FEDERAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

(Source: Executive Office of Transportation-Road Inventory Map)

Appendix D

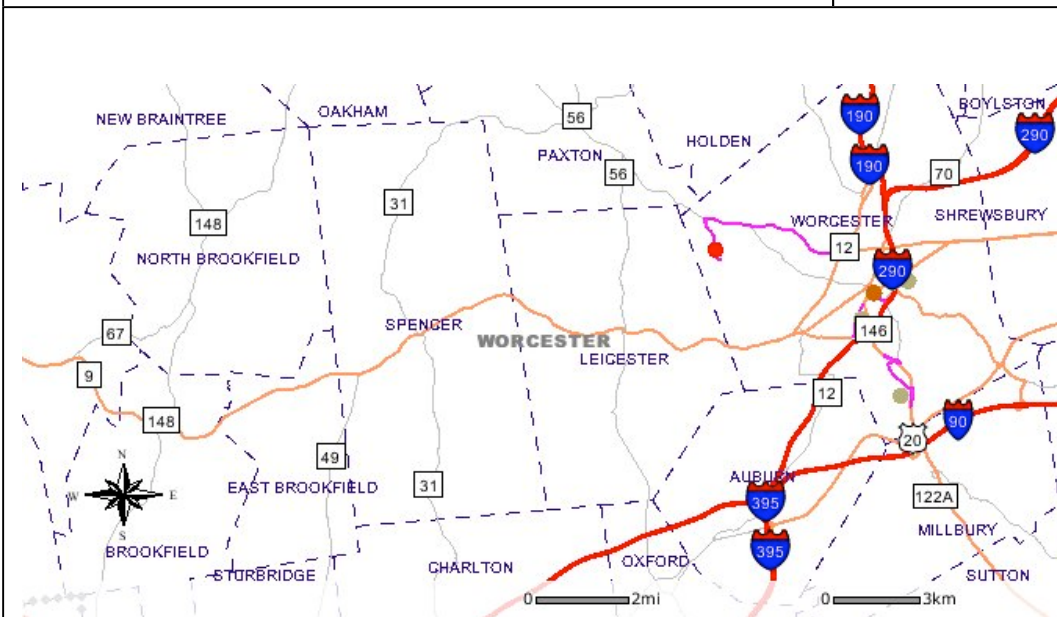


- Rural Interstate (01)
- Rural Other Principal Arterial (02)
- Rural Minor Arterial (06)
- Rural Major Collector (07)
- Urban Interstate (11)
- Urban Other Freeway & Xway (12)
- Urban Other Principal Arterial (14)
- Urban Minor Arterial (16)
- Urban Collector (17)
- Numbered Route
- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Boundary
- Neighboring State
- Water

ROAD INVENTORY BY NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM

(Source: Executive Office of Transportation-Road Inventory Map)

Appendix E



Intermodal Terminals

- Airport
- Bus Terminal
- Ferry Terminal
- Seaport
- Public Transit Station
- Intermodal Rail
- Amtrak Station
- NHS-Interstate
- NHS-Terminal Connector
- NHS-STRAHNET Connector
- NHS-Other Route
- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Neighboring State
- Water

IV. Appendices F - J

1. Economic Development

Appendix F - Regional Economic Trends

There have been two recent economic development profiles prepared for Central Massachusetts. The first was prepared in 2004 by the Center for Economic Development, University of Massachusetts – Amherst, which evaluated the employment characteristics of 2,486 companies in Central Massachusetts. The second was prepared in March 2006 by the Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development, which evaluated 14,930 companies in Central Massachusetts; a much larger sample than the University of Massachusetts study. The key findings of both studies are outlined below.

University of Massachusetts 2004 Study:

Approximately 77% of all companies in the Central Massachusetts region employ less than 50 people. At the opposite end of the spectrum, only 4% of the companies employ more than 500 people.

Just over half (51%) of the companies surveyed reported sales volumes between \$1 million and \$5 million, with another 17% reporting sales volumes between \$5 million and \$10 million. The remaining 32% reported sales volumes either below \$1 million or above \$10 million.

Of the companies surveyed, 46% were service-oriented, 15% were manufacturing operations and 10% were of the finance/insurance/real estate category.

Almost half (47%) of the new companies established during the last five years fall within the service sector.

Department of Workforce Development 2006 Study:

Just under half (46%) of all Central Massachusetts unemployment claimants in 2005 came from the four largest economic sectors in the state: manufacturing (13%), construction (12%) administrative support services (11%) and retail trade (10%).

Slow labor force growth continues to characterize both Massachusetts and the Central Massachusetts region.

During 2005 the State's labor force increased by less than 1% and the Central Massachusetts labor force actually declined by 18 potential workers.

Small employers dominate the Central Massachusetts workforce. Among the 14,930 establishments surveyed, approximately 86% had fewer than 20 employees (remember: this is based on a much larger sample size than the 2004 University of Massachusetts study). These firms, however, accounted for just 23% (55,000) of the total number of jobs (238,648) in Central Massachusetts.

By contrast, there were 407 establishments (or roughly 3% of all establishments) that reported having at least 100 employees. These firms were responsible for almost half (117,953) of all jobs in Central Massachusetts. For 2005, the major industry groups suffering the most serious job losses were manufacturing (-399), information services (-320), educational services (-291), and leisure and hospitality (-239).

The major source of industry growth was in the health care and social services sector, which gained 715 jobs in 2005. More than half of the growth in this sector occurred in hospitals. The retail trade sector also added nearly 500 jobs. The professional and technical service sector also added 200 jobs.

In Central Massachusetts, the three largest employment sectors in 2005 were health and social services (roughly 35,000 jobs), retail establishments (roughly 28,000 jobs) and manufacturing (roughly 27,500 jobs). Between 2003 and 2004 the annual average wage in Central Massachusetts increased by \$1,286 or 3.2%, while the State annual average increased by \$2,601 or 5.6%. The 2004 annual average wage for Central Massachusetts was \$41,548, well below the State's annual average wage of \$48,934.

In Massachusetts, the professions earning the highest annual average statewide wage for 2004 included management (\$96,880), legal services (\$89,280) and computer and mathematics (\$76,550). Conversely, the

professions earning the lowest annual wage in 2004 included food preparation/serving (\$21,420), farming/fishing/forestry (\$24,930), and personal care services (\$26,020).

Greater Worcester Area Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS):

The Greater Worcester Area Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee is the regional entity charged with forging an economic strategy for Central Massachusetts. The Committee is staffed by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, the Worcester City Manager's Office of Economic Development, and the Greater Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce. The Committee is comprised of representatives from the 40-community region, including Brookfield. The Committee prepares an annual report that outlines its regional economic development strategy, notes trends in the regional economy and includes a comprehensive, updated list of the region's economic development projects.

The 2008 CEDS identifies the following factors that have had and will continue to have a significant impact on this regional economy. These factors include the supply of affordable housing; the transportation network as it relates to roadways, the regional airport, and public transit; production and/or use of renewable energy; marketing/branding of the region to attract businesses and tourists; and workforce retention/attraction. Based on these factors, the CEDS Vision for Greater Worcester is to build upon the region's economic strengths to sustain the positive economic momentum of today and help the region withstand inevitable economic downturns.

Appendix G - Explanation of the NAICS jobs categories

The following explains the types of jobs included in selected North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) categories:

Construction

The construction sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in the construction of buildings or engineering projects (e.g., highways and utility systems). Establishments primarily engaged in the preparation of sites for new construction and establishments primarily engaged in subdividing land for sale as building sites also are included in this sector.

Manufacturing

The Manufacturing sector comprises establishments engaged in the mechanical, physical, or chemical transformation of materials, substances, or components into new products. Establishments in the Manufacturing sector are often described as plants, factories, or mills and characteristically use power-driven machines and materials-handling equipment. However, establishments that transform materials or substances into new products by hand or in the worker's home and those engaged in selling to the general public products made on the same premises from which they are sold, such as bakeries, candy stores, and custom tailors, may also be included in this sector. Manufacturing establishments may process materials or may contract with other establishments to process their materials for them. Both types of establishments are included in manufacturing.

Trade, Transportation & Utilities

Includes retail & wholesale trade* and all types of transportation (includes air travel).

*Retail trade includes establishments organized to sell merchandise in small quantities to the general public. Wholesale trade includes establishments organized in wholesaling merchandise and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise.

Professional & Business Services

Includes lawyers, accountants, engineering, bldg inspections, computer programming, graphic design, marketing, computer-related, architectural, advertising, public relations, photography, veterinary, landfills, travel agencies.

Leisure & Hospitality

Includes recreation, theaters, dance companies, zoos, museums, amusement parks, golf courses, ski areas, fitness centers, bowling, hotels/motels, restaurants, bars.

Education and Health Services

The Educational Services sector comprises establishments that provide instruction and training in a wide variety of subjects. This instruction and training is provided by specialized establishments, such as schools, colleges, universities, and training centers. These establishments may be privately owned and operated for profit or not for profit, or they may be publicly owned and operated. They may also offer food and accommodation services to their students. The Health Care and Social Assistance sector comprises establishments providing health care and social assistance for individuals. The industries in this sector are arranged on a continuum starting with those establishments providing medical care exclusively, continuing with those providing health care and social assistance, and finally finishing with those providing only social assistance. The services provided by establishments in this sector are delivered by trained professionals.

The *Other Services* (except Public Administration) sector comprises establishments engaged in providing services not specifically provided for elsewhere in the classification system – such as equipment and machinery repairing, promoting or administering religious activities, grant making, advocacy, and dry cleaning and laundry services, personal care services, death care services, pet care services, photofinishing services, temporary parking services, and dating services.

Appendix H - Resources for Economic Development

Local Resources

- *Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) Program:* In an effort to lure new economic development and retain existing businesses, Brookfield has the option of establishing a local Tax Increment Financing (TIF) program. A local TIF program usually operates in the following manner: a new or existing business wishing to expand would need to demonstrate that it will hire people from Brookfield and the immediate area and that it will utilize local businesses and construction firms for its new/expanded building. In return, the Town would forgive a percentage of the taxes assessed on the new/expanded building over a period of several years. The percentage of forgiven assessed taxes would get smaller over a designated period of time. The establishment of a TIF project would require Town meeting approval.

Local TIF programs have been the subjects of criticism lately due to concerns over lost tax revenue. However, local TIF programs help to keep local jobs within the community, promote the use of local businesses for the building/expansion effort and help to attract new businesses that otherwise may not come to their community. A TIF program in Brookfield would be a valuable tool for this purpose, especially when the Town cannot offer much in the way of infrastructure without a municipal sewer service or publicly controlled industrial land.

- *The Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation (QV CDC): The Quaboag*

Valley CDC is a private non-profit corporation that promotes economic development and workforce training within its 15-community service area, which includes Belchertown, Brimfield, Brookfield, East Brookfield, Hardwick, Holland, Monson, New Braintree, North Brookfield, Palmer, Spencer, Wales, Warren, and West Brookfield. Managed by a board of directors, the CDC's objectives include:

Redevelopment of blighted commercial areas

Coordination of public and private resources on regional economic development projects, and

Job creation for unemployed/underemployed persons through specialized training programs

The CDC offers training programs for job hunting, computer skills, workforce training, business planning, as well as financial literacy. Many of these programs have been offered at area locations. A subset of the CDC is the Quaboag Valley Business Assistance Corporation (BAC) that serves as the CDC's lending agency. The BAC offers small business loans of up to \$100,000 and micro-enterprise loans of up to \$25,000. The BAC's revolving loan fund has been capitalized by grants from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Several area banks provide a line of credit to the BAC, including Country Bank for Savings, Fleet Bank, Monson Savings Bank, North Brookfield Savings Bank, Spencer Savings Bank, and Ware Cooperative Bank. Since 1995, the BAC has issued over \$2.5 million in loans and has provided business planning assistance to over 200 companies. The CDC and the BAC are valuable resources that Brookfield businesses and local entrepreneurs have yet to fully utilize.

State Resources

1. *The Massachusetts Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP)*: Created by the Legislature in 1993, the EDIP is designed to stimulate job creation in distressed areas, attract new businesses, encourage existing businesses to expand and increase overall economic readiness among Massachusetts towns and cities. The Massachusetts Office of Business Development (MOBD) administers the EDIP. The Economic Assistance Coordinating Council (EACC) oversees the EDIP and is charged with three responsibilities:

- Designating Economic Target Areas (ETAs)
- Designating Economic Opportunity Areas (EOAs) within an ETA
- Designating Certified Projects within an EOA

There are two benefits that the State confers on Certified Projects within designated EOAs: a 5% State Investment Tax Credit for qualifying tangible, depreciable investments and a 10% Abandoned Building Tax Deduction for costs associated with renovating an abandoned building. The Town of Brookfield is not currently part of an ETA, but could join one of the adjacent ETAs (Worcester, Spencer, Charlton, or Oxford). It is possible for only one of the census tracts in town to be designated as an ETA. An EOA could be designated within an ETA as a project is identified. For more information on this program, contact the MOBD Worcester Regional Director, Claire O'Neill at 508.792.7506.

2. *MassDevelopment*: MassDevelopment acts as the State's industrial financing authority. It works primarily with industries and non-profit organizations; however, it does offer several programs that provide technical assistance to municipalities. MassDevelopment administers the Predevelopment Assistance Program that can help municipalities fund projects that will result in economic benefits to the community and the region. MassDevelopment can help with site-specific projects and can assist with appraisals, financing, site planning and architectural services. Under its Economic Development Lending program, MassDevelopment can also assist with the planning and financing of industrial parks. MassDevelopment offers interest-free financing up to \$100,000 for Brownfields environmental site assessments and low interest two-year loans up to \$500,000 for Brownfields remediations that are part of a redevelopment effort. MassDevelopment has a regional office in Worcester.

3. *EPA Brownfields Grants*: Includes grants for assessments and clean-up of brownfield properties. Redeveloping brownfields uses existing infrastructure, helps to preserve town centers/mill neighborhoods, increases property values, and ultimately increases local tax revenues. The Town of Brookfield can apply for an EPA assessment grant on behalf of a property owner, but must own the property when applying for a clean-up grant. Assessment funding may also be available through CMRPC if the agency is awarded assessment grants that were applied for in November 2008. The award will be announced in Spring 2009.

4. *Massachusetts Office of Business Development (MOBD)*: This agency is under the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development and it coordinates the Business Resource Team (BRT). The BRT is a one-stop shop which aggregates government and other economic development programs and services, making them easier to access and providing a higher level of service to businesses. Claire O'Neill, the Worcester Regional Director, can be reached at 508.792.7506.

5. *Massachusetts Alliance for Economic Development (MAED)*: This is a non-partisan, professionally staffed organization that serves as the Commonwealth's central source of available property information for expanding and relocating companies. Its overriding objective is to encourage the expansion and retention of business within the State. It provides a Site Finder Service, along with a Research and Information Service, and an Ambassadors program, which includes a network of executives throughout Massachusetts who serve as peer contacts for companies evaluating Massachusetts as an expansion location. This Alliance also includes firms that specialize in law, architecture, construction, and finance.

6. *The Massachusetts Business Development Corporation (MBDC)*: Located in Boston, this private, for-profit entity provides supplemental financing to promising small and medium sized companies throughout Massachusetts. The MBDC also serves as a contractor to the State in the administration of its recycling, Brownfields redevelopment and capital access programs.

7. *The Industrial Services Program (ISP)*: Operating out of Boston, the ISP provides financial and management assistance to companies and re-employment training to workers with the goal of ensuring the competitiveness of Massachusetts manufacturing companies.

8. *The Massachusetts Capital Resource Company (MCRC)*: The MCRC is a limited partnership, privately-owned by seven Massachusetts based life insurance companies. The MCRC is a source of risk capital for Massachusetts businesses.

National Resource

The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE): SCORE is a division of the Small Business Administration and they maintain an office with the Greater Worcester Area Chamber of Commerce. Consisting of retired business executives that volunteer their time, SCORE councilors are available for free consultations directly to businesses.

2. Housing

Appendix I – Existing Affordable Housing Units

At the present time, there are 41 housing units in Brookfield (or 3.3% of the Town's total housing stock) that qualify as affordable housing under Chapter 40B of Massachusetts General Laws. The following is a list of these units, current as of 2010

Get List from CMRPC

6. Government Services and Facilities

Appendix J – Report by Tantasqua Intern

SWOT Analysis & Town Governance Tree

*Written and Researched by:
Alison L. Kane*

*Submitted to the Brookfield Master Plan Committee
May 6, 2000*

Background

“Dynamics of Democracy” is a social studies elective offered to seniors at Tantasqua Regional High School. A major component of the course is Community Service Learning, in which students choose a project to take on for the semester that involves their community. In order to learn more about the planning and decision-making of a town similar to my own, I decided to volunteer to help with the Brookfield Master Plan Committee.

Under the supervision of Bill Simpson and Rudy Heller, I worked from February to April to create a governance tree and perform a SWOT (strength, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis of the town. To achieve this, I setup interviews, made telephone calls, and wrote letters to many of the town employees and volunteers. In these interviews, we discussed each individual’s role within the town (Appendix B), but also their opinions of the town in regards to the SWOT.

After talking with many people of various authority within the town (Appendix C), I compiled all of the information into one document (Appendix A). Based on the conversations I have had over the past few weeks, I have created my own recommendations for the Master Plan Committee to take into consideration.

Strengths

One of the most important strengths in Brookfield is its employees and volunteers. All of the people involved in the various town functions that I interviewed appeared to be extremely dedicated, knowledgeable, and experienced in their roles. Town volunteers work extremely hard despite the fact that they have daytime jobs, as well as personal commitments. It is apparent that everyone is devoted to their jobs on each committee and works to not only better the community by fixing problems, but also by improving upon what is already working.

Complaints are usually dealt with efficiently and quickly. The town is aimed at working for the residents, with their offices easily accessible to anyone with any concerns or questions.

All departments work well together and there is strong communication between the people who work at the Town Hall. Information is passed quickly because there is not an overwhelming number of people to go through to get just one message passed. Improvement is easy to see in the small Brookfield community (ex: Town Common project).

Weaknesses

Two of the most resounding concerns were the accessibility of the Selectmen and the functionality of the Town Hall building. Many Town Hall workers felt that because the Selectmen are not always in their office, the fact that there is no onsite, full-time supervisor threatens the workplace dynamics. Disciplinary issues cannot be directly addressed because the Selectmen are so removed from the Town Hall setting itself. Other members of the community felt similarly because there is no clear line of communication.

Amongst the town workers, there was a feeling that improvement is needed on the morale. One contributing factor to this, in addition to there being no “boss,” was that there is no regular job review or critique. Some employees begin to lose their enthusiasm and energy for their jobs, becoming disinterested or cut off from their coworkers. While communication was noted as a strength, there is still need for improvement. Departments felt that they didn’t fully understand what other departments were doing or what issues they were facing.

Among the Town Hall employees, there was also much call for an improved workplace. While the historic building has withstood the test of time, it is not used efficiently. The upper floors are used seldom, there is not adequate workspace, and departments are cut off from each other, leaving for very little interaction. Community members also felt that upon entering the Town Hall, they were confused as to where to go or where to direct their concern. In addition, the building lacks signage, handicapped access, and shows signs of neglect.

Because of the small community, many people overlap on the committees on which they volunteer. Because the same people make many decisions, the policies that get passed tend to reflect that small number of citizens. The consensus was that more people need to be involved in the town to add variety and contribute new ideas to the town, as well as take the burden off of those people who are so involved.

Opportunities

Grants seem to be the biggest opportunities that the town should take advantage of to receive additional funding for improvements. While there has been some grants applied for, there is need for more. It was suggested that someone be given the responsibility of researching and writing grants, so that the process goes smoothly and there is one person in charge of all the work involved.

Many people agreed the small community atmosphere was an important part of Brookfield’s character, but it should try to attract more small businesses. Businesses contribute significantly to the tax base of the town. Also, businesses will move the town out of its somewhat stagnant state.

Brookfield needs a long range plan, so that employees and committees have a clear common goal to work towards. The Master Plan will hopefully provide this for the town.

Threats

Because there is a lot of open space in the town, uncontrolled residential development is a great threat that would result in major crises for the town. With large numbers of houses being added to the town, that influx of people would over populate the schools, become a financial burden, as well as change the small, tight-knit personality of the town.

Though 27% of residents turned out for the May 4th local elections, a number much higher than the turnout for neighboring town, there was still concern about the complacency of many of the residents of Brookfield. With too few people caring about what goes on in the town, the goals become futile. The apathy of the community threatens the entire personality of the town. Those feelings have and will continue to trickle into the Town Hall, which will become unproductive if such notions continue to spread. There seems to be a fear to engage in debate, to challenge the policies that are already part of the town. If something isn’t working or is outdated, people stray away from doing something about it. Change is seldom and never drastic, even if there is need for it. This fear threatens the towns relevancy as the years pass and the world modernizes.

Personal Recommendations

Town Administrator/Manager

With the Selectmen having their own full-time jobs and town employees without a leadership figure, a “boss” is needed. I feel that the addition of a Town Administrator or Manager would be incredibly productive for the entire town. A full-time Town Administrator would always be present at the Town Hall. Issues could be dealt with quickly and efficiently rather than waiting for the Selectmen to meet and deliberate. A Town Administrator would be employed full-time, so they would have adequate time to fully dedicate themselves to handling day to day issues and provide guidance on major issues.

Within the Town Hall, many employees felt that there needed to be a boss figure to deal with the workplace dynamics. With this sort of authority figure, accountability increases.

Other town workers agree that a Town Administrator would make the line of communication clearer. As of now, a lot of the information gets submitted to the omnipresent Selectmen, but it is questionable how much time the Selectmen have to look over everything in depth. With a Town Administrator, the work is sent straight to someone who has the time to consider and research all the things that pass over his desk.

I would recommend that a focus group be created to further investigate this possibility. The group should go to other towns, similar in size and/or character to Brookfield to see what setup works in other communities. Perhaps further evaluation of the current system would be needed as well to see how the addition of the Town Administrator may alter the duties of other positions. As of now, many people are balancing several duties and perhaps their loads would be lightened or shifted as some of those duties get redistributed.

Town Hall

There was an overwhelming consensus that the Town Hall must be made more accessible and efficient. In almost every interview, the issue of the Town Hall was brought up in one way or another.

First, the people who work in the Town Hall need more appropriate space to work. Right now, workers agree that the current office arrangement does not allow the work to flow easily. As of now, many departments are cut off from the main section of the Town Hall, such as the Assessors, Water Department, and Accountant. Their offices are not visibly marked and they are secluded from everybody else. On the other hand, the Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk, Administrative Clerk for the Treasurer, and Tax Collector share one large room, separated by only one divider, providing little privacy. Concerns arise when townspeople have business with any of these people as the room can become loud and disruptive to important conversation.

People unfamiliar with the Town Hall enter into a large, dark, empty lobby with no signs or person to direct them. Either signs of a listing of personnel and their office numbers would be of help to visitors. Also, there needs to be a better office layout so townspeople can get business done and employees can do their work with adequate space and privacy.

There is also concern that the Town Hall is not handicapped accessible. There is already a committee serving to address this issue, but it is a concern because many events are held in the Town Hall that wheelchairs cannot access.

The Town Hall building as a whole is not used in totality. The upper floors go unused, though are heated throughout the winter. This is not only a waste of fuel and money, but a waste of space (see next item).

Much needs to be done to make the Town Hall a more useful building. It is a beautiful building, but its age hinders the actual functions of it. Something needs to be done to make the building more user and worker friendly. It is a central building that holds all of the people who make the town function. With a more functional workplace, the employees will be able to get their jobs done more efficiently. Also, townspeople will be able to have a more pleasant experience when doing business within its doors.

Police Station

Many people are concerned with the current police force. Presently, the force is only made up of a handful of officers, not nearly enough to serve the community as it should. There is also concern about the

station itself. It is not realistic for the police to be stationed in a leased house and needs a more permanent and prominent establishment.

In one interview, it was suggested the police move into the Town Hall. First, this brings the force closer to the center of town where the fire/emergency department is housed. This also gives a use to all of the unused space in the Town Hall. I believe this possibility should be seriously considered.

It is important that there be enough police officers to respond to any situations that arise within the town. It is also important that the station itself be visible and accessible to the townspeople. Currently, the station's location is not suitable. The building does not look like a police station and it is tucked away from the main road. People trying to find the police station could easily overlook it. The police station should be easy to find and there should be more full-time personnel to address all of the responsibilities of the police force.

Attracting New Businesses

Another common theme in my interviews was the need for more businesses in town. Most people agreed that the town needed to work on being more attractive to businesses.

First, businesses provide tax money that would lessen the burden on the residents. However, it also increases the revenue of the town so that budget can be expanded.

Also, businesses add to the character of the town. With more businesses, more townspeople will be out in their own community to do their shopping and personal business. This adds to the sense of community of the town. This idea would address a feeling that many people expressed in their interviews. There was a strong urging to get more people involved in the town. New businesses will bring new energy to the town and bring the community as a whole forward.

In general, people agreed that Brookfield should aim to attract small businesses so as not to change the town's personality too drastically. Small businesses keep with the small town feeling of Brookfield. However, right now this small town feeling has made the town stagnant and expansion is avoided in fear that the town will change too much.

Keeping all these things in mind, I see small businesses as a much needed entity to the town. Not only will it help the town economically, but I feel that it will also push the town forward without changing its entire character.

Conclusion

After talking with so many people within the functions of Brookfield, I have gotten a much better picture of what the town is about. At first glance, the town has very little going on. There are not a lot of businesses in the town and the town buildings are not in prominent locations. I think this is something that has gotten to the heart of many of the townspeople, causing the town to lose the sense of community and become stagnant.

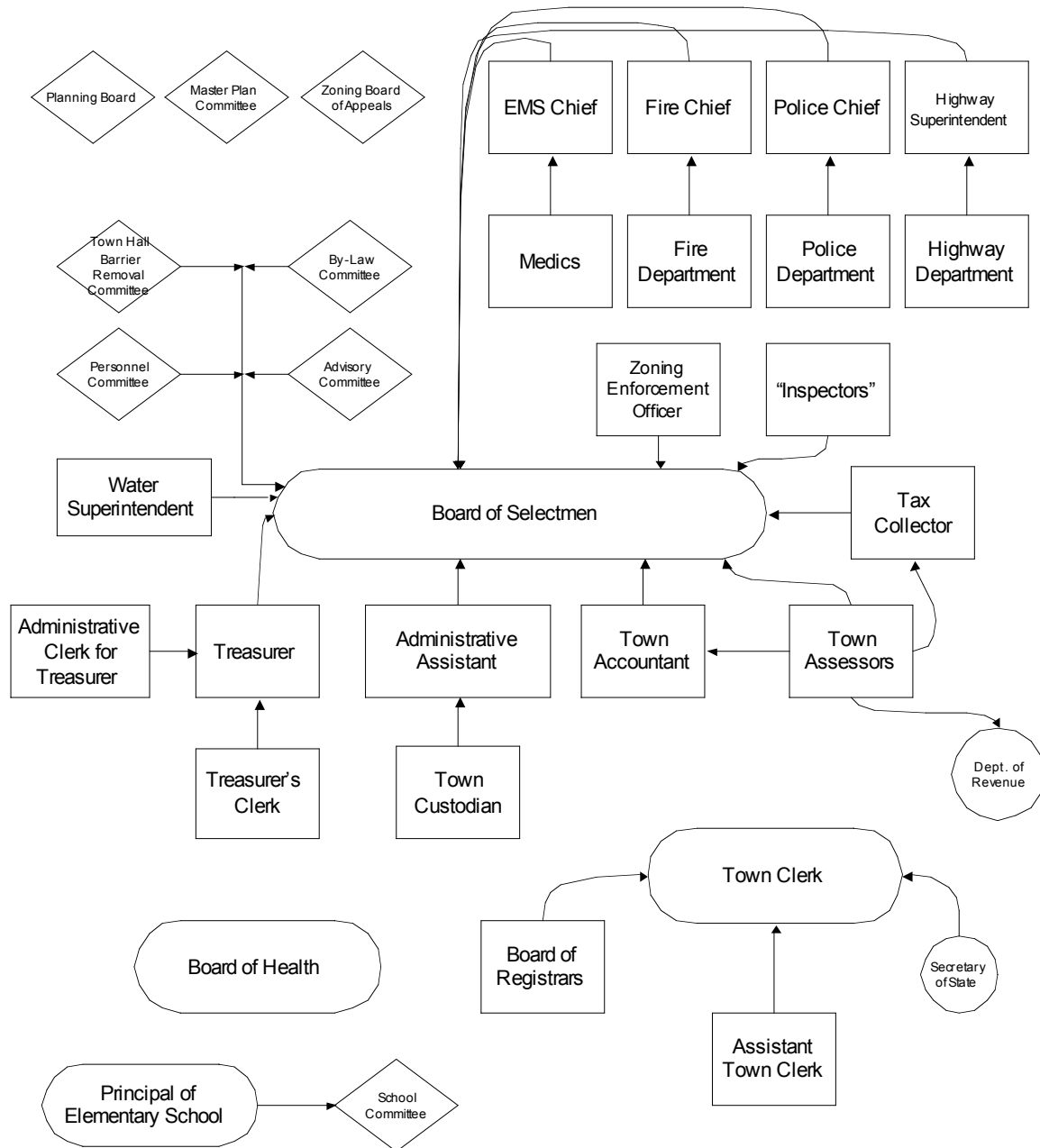
With a closer look, I have discovered that there are many people devoted to changing this attitude. The people behind the scenes at the Town Hall are friendly, committed, and interested in what they do. Volunteers on committees put in an overwhelming number of hours and effort into the town. They are dedicated to improving Brookfield and modernizing it. I feel that more townspeople need to become aware of this fact and become involved.

Many communities are facing the fact that people have begun not to care about their towns. Not enough people volunteer or vote or attend town meetings. Some of this is due to busy schedules and disinterest, but in Brookfield I think it has more to do with taking the small town personality too far. Townspeople don't get involved because they feel that the town is resistant to change. However, the true reason there is little change is because there are too few people involved in the first place.

Brookfield has the potential to become a town with great energy. I believe the Master Plan will give the town the direction it needs to head into the future and become more relevant to its residents.

Town Governance Tree

May 2009



Cumulative SWOT Replies

Strengths:

- *aimed at helping residents*
- *complaints acted on immediately*
- *building is accessible*
- *help townspeople find loans/grants for personal use*
- *active in applying for grants (ex: Community Development Block Grants - \$800,000 to fix sidewalks, drainage, water tower, etc)*
- *volunteerism and “unsung heroes”*
- *people and their experience working in the town*
- *improved communication*
- *Town Hall works together well*
- *people have a good knowledge on the town, which impacts their jobs*
- *sound financial team*
- *always improving*
- *teamwork among committees, thinking together to “get it right”*
- *people are dedicated to their work*
- *small community*
- *quick communication because the town is so small*
- *easy to see progress in a small community*
- *small town makes all employees involved, even those who don’t “have to”*

Weaknesses:

- *no one person in charge to “be the boss”*
- *questions and problems within the (Town Hall) workplace are hard for Selectmen to discipline*
- *hierarchy of communication*
- *people work independently of each other*
- *low morale*
- *no regular job review*
- *room for improvement in working together*
- *need more volunteers to be involved in the town so a variety of personalities are working together*
- *limited resources, funding*
- *part-time workers and the lapse in their work*
- *no one person to report to results in slacking off*
- *bedroom community needs more businesses to pay taxes*
- *some positions of authority are manipulated by other people*
- *weak tax base*
- *employees who have lost the initiative to be involved in town activities*
- *avoid fixing broken policies*
- *subjective management by selectmen*
- *people with “blinders on”*
- *poorly attended department head meetings*

Opportunities:

- *need to take advantage of more grant opportunities*
- *have someone devoted to researching grants*
- *financial research and opportunities*
- *role of extensive archives*
- *regional approach -> better process on salt/sand, combine positions, health care, etc*
- *Community Preservation Act*
- *utilize the aging Town Hall*
- *industry*
- *small shopping area to take a burden off the taxpayers*
- *maintain a small community*
- *small business growth*
- *networking and using other towns as example of how to fix our problems*
- *longer range vision of town*
- *grant money for infrastructure and open space*
- *long range plans for municipal buildings*

Threats:

- *Chapter 40B Growth (developers)*
- *lots of available land for developers to take advantage of*
- *developments would change personality of town, be a financial burden on the town, overpopulate the schools, etc*
- *low morale and the image of the town*
- *positions not adequately employed (police and fire)*
- *not enough town support*
- *decreasing state aid*
- *economic conditions (local revenue, trouble paying off loans, layoffs within the town employees, etc)*
- *security (ex: break-in several years ago)*
- *complacency, “not doing anything any more”*
- *the “sign guy” on Main Street, everyone can see it everyday and it lowers people’s expectations of the town*
- *too much growth threatens the character of the town*
- *increased tax rates beyond what people can afford*
- *personalities*
- *fear to engage in debate*
- *lack of fiscal plan*
- *apathy towards being involved*

Priorities:

- *Master Plan*
- *Town Hall to be wheelchair accessible*
- *Police Station*
- *more affordable housing*
- *stronger support system for employees*
- *youth facilities*
- *focus on education despite the decreased budget*
- *manage growth of the town (preventing developments)*
- *keep businesses in town and attract new businesses*
- *maintaining infrastructure*
- *maintaining a steady tax rate*
- *keep school budget under control*
- *getting more people involved*
- *Town Hall renovations for more privacy and adequate space for workers*
- *town sewer*
- *GIS (like GoogleEarth)*
- *better communication among departments*
- *more professionalism*
- *consider hiring a Town Manager/Administrator*
- *technology within schools and town-wide*
- *more communication between governing bodies on town*
- *restore sense of “by the people, of the people, for the people” so citizens feel welcome to discuss change in their town government*
- *land use plan*
- *financial planning*
- *more involvement of citizens*

Job Descriptions of Interviewees

(alphabetically by title)

Administrative Assistant to Selectmen (appointed)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *buffer between townspeople and selectmen*
- *create agenda for Selectmen's meetings*
- *take totes and minutes*
- *thank-you notes, phone calls, anything the selectmen ask*
- *select part-time workers*
- *take care of people's concerns when selectmen aren't in the building*
- *keep track of what needs to be done*
- *be aware of deadlines*
- *pay bills (heat and telephone) for Town Hall, Highway Department, Fire Department and Library*
- *in charge of any construction or maintenance projects at the Town Hall, Highway Department, Fire Department, and Library*
- *pay insurance*

Reports to: Selectman

Reported to: Town Custodian

Administrative Clerk for Treasurer

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *reconciliation (monthly)*
- *check bank statements*
- *write letters*
- *money for life insurance and disability coverage*

Reports to: Treasurer

Assistant Town Clerk (appointed)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *dog licensing and software*
- *census information (printing report, input information, correspondents, genealogy)*
- *swear people into positions*
- *filing*
- *birth, death, marriage certificates, state correspondents*
- *veteran affairs*
- *voter registration*
- *election set-up*
- *research past town approvals, events, etc*
- *stay up to date on laws, ethics, etc.*
- *fishing and hunting licensing*
- *business certificates*
- *collect parking tickets*
- *miscellaneous permits*

Reports to: Town Clerk

Board of Health

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *oversee budget*
- *issue permits for food license*

- *inspect restaurants*
- *compliance with Title 5 regulations*
- *oversee transfer stations*

Cable Access Chairman (appointed)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *billing*
- *acquiring equipment*
- *oversee work of volunteers who tape Town Meeting and other functions*

Elementary School Principal (hired)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *fiscal responsibility (planning and decision-making for budget)*
- *staff management (evaluations, staff meetings, manage staff concerns and conflicts)*
- *verify curriculum against state frameworks*
- *disciplinary issues and protocol for disciplinary action*
- *family interactions between students, parents, and teachers*
- *write School Improvement Plan with School Advisory Council*
- *reports to School Committee with progress of school*
- *participate in community activities*
- *building maintenance*
- *compile information for state documents (ex: MCAS results)*

Reports to: Annual Town Meeting, School Committee

Financial Clerk

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *take money*
- *write letters to those who have not paid*

Reports to: Tax Collector

Fire Chief (appointed)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *management and operation of fire department*
- *respond to fire calls*
- *clean and maintain equipment and vehicles*
- *paperwork, payables, payroll*

Reports to: Selectmen

Reported to: fire department

Planning Board (elected)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *land use*
- *division of land into lots*
- *approve divisions of land*
- *new roads*
- *special permits for apartments, businesses, etc*
- *review zoning bylaws*
- *create zoning districts (residential vs. businesses)*

Reports to: Selectmen and voters

Registrars

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *supply and receive nomination papers for town candidates*
- *take Town Meeting attendance*
- *oversee elections*
- *count votes*

School Committee (elected)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *policies for school*
- *review practices*
- *approve needs and expenses*
- *follow new trends in education*
- *teacher contract negotiating*

Reports to: Selectmen

Tax Collector (appointed)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *print and mail out tax bills*
- *check that commitments from assessors agree*
- *process payments*
- *process abatements*
- *process refunds*
- *send out demands*
- *property tax titles*

Reports to: Selectmen

Reported to: Financial Clerk

Town Accountant (appointed)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *maintain financial records of the town*
- *all expenditures, revenue*
- *process warrants*
- *keep track of receivables*
- *accuracy of town meeting -> correct reports*
- *assist departments in general funds and capital projects to see that they are spending properly*

Reports to: Selectman, Advisory Board, Department of Revenue

Reported to: oversee all departments, tax collection reports

Town Assessors (elected)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *evaluation of property (house and land)*
- *value of town*
- *applying to new budget*

Reports to: Townspeople, Selectmen, Accountant, Advisory Committee, Department of Revenue

Town Clerk (elected)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *Chief Election Official*
 - ☐ *oversees elections*
 - ☐ *directs preparation of ballots, polling pace, voting equipment, voting lists*

- ☐ *administers campaign rules*
- ☐ *certifies nomination papers*
- ☐ *supervises voter registration*
- ☐ *reports results to Secretary of State*
- **Recording Officer**
 - ☐ *records and certifies all official actions of town (Town Meeting legislation, Planning and Zoning Board decisions)*
 - ☐ *keeps town seal*
- **Vital Statistics & Public Records**
 - ☐ *registers all vital events within community*
 - ☐ *records and preserves birth, marriage, and death certificates*
 - ☐ *administers Oath of Office to elected and appointed members*
 - ☐ *provides access to public records for genealogical research*
 - ☐ *maintains records of municipal codes, bylaws, resignations and appointments, petitions, budgets, meeting minutes, and financial statements*
 - ☐ *submit bylaws to Attorney General for approval*
- **Licensing Officer**
 - ☐ *marriage, hunting, fishing and trapping licenses*
 - ☐ *raffle and bazaar permits*
 - ☐ *burial, building, business certificates*
 - ☐ *animal licenses*

Reports to: Secretary of State, Department of Revenue

Reported to: Assistant Town Clerk, Board of Registrars

Town Hall Barrier Removal Committee (volunteers)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *evaluate whether the building serves the needs of the community and individuals*
- *preserve historical building*
- *handicapped access*

Reports to: Selectmen

Town Treasurer (hired)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- **Payroll**
 - ☐ *biweekly*
 - ☐ *departments submit time sheets*
 - ☐ *check math*
 - ☐ *vouchers*
 - ☐ *enter into system*
 - ☐ *accountant double checks work*
 - ☐ *submit to payroll service that prints checks*
 - ☐ *health & life insurance, disability coverage*
 - ☐ *municipal equivalent of 401k*
 - ☐ *proper tax amounts withheld*
- **Cash Management**
 - ☐ *meet payroll*
 - ☐ *funds for bills*
 - ☐ *equipment for fire and police*
 - ☐ *maintain bank accounts*
 - ☐ *money from state tax payers, excise taxes, dog license, building permits, etc*
- **Tax Title Property**
 - ☐ *property that has not received tax is responsibility of town*

- ☐ *begin foreclosure process*
- ☐ *unemployment claims*
- ☐ *borrow money as needed*

Reports to: Selectman

Reported to: Financial Clerk

Treasurer's Clerk (hired)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *assist in payroll*
- *accept vouchers*
- *clerk timesheets*
- *work with financial clerk -> accept turnovers*
- *1099 vendors*
- *vendor warrants*
- *clerical work as needed (bonds, loans)*
- *research*
- *annual report*

Reports to: Treasurer

Water Superintendent (hired)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *evaluate scope, estimate project costs, determine materials to be used, planning and schedules of projects*
- *public inquiries of laws, regulations, and policies*
- *monitors progress of work*
- *maintains records and files*
- *department budget*
- *checks wells for pollution and reports to DEP*
- *cooperates with neighboring towns in emergency situations*
- *continues education*
- *on-call 24/7*

Reports to: Department of Environmental Protect, Water Commissioner

Zoning Board of Appeals (appointed)

Roles/Responsibilities:

- *grant special permits for people seeking relief from zoning bylaws*

Persons Interviewed

Bruce Clarke – Water Superintendent

Donna Neylon - Administrative Assistant to Selectmen

Donna Wentzell – Town Assessor

Jim Dunbar – Town Treasurer

Kathleen Hosterman – Elementary School Principal

Linda Lincoln – Town Clerk

Lois Moores – Tax Collector

Louise “Betty” Benoit – Town Accountant

Mike Seery - Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Health, Cable Access Chairman

Nancy “Lee” Finney - Administrative Clerk for Treasurer, Financial Clerk

Peter Martell – Fire Chief

Phil Peirce – Town Assessor

*Shelia Frangiamore – Treasurer’s Clerk, School Committee Representative, Assistant Town Clerk, Town
Hall Barrier Removal Representative*

Trudy O’Connell – Planning Board

Additional Appendices to come:

Results of the Master Plan Survey

Reports from the Master Plan Public Hearings

Copies of the Maps from Economic Development Chapter and OSRP