

# Master Plan

For the:

**TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN, MA**

Prepared for the:

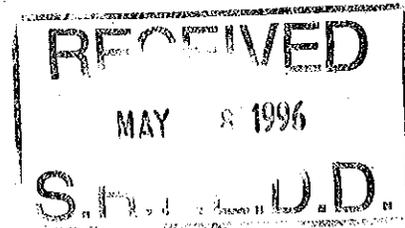
**Fairhaven Planning Board**

By:

**Planners Collaborative Inc.**  
Boston, MA

and

**FXM Associates**  
Mattapoisett, MA



## Acknowledgments

This Plan was prepared over a fourteen month period through a process of extensive public participation and review. Thanks for their special efforts, guidance and cooperation are due to **Jeffrey Osuch**, Planning Board Advisor, and **Wayne Fostin**, Building Commissioner.

Planning Board members who were responsible for conceiving, administering, and monitoring, as well as participating in the public review process and evaluation of consultant work are:

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE FAIRHAVEN MASTER PLAN

Fairhaven's population is expected to continue to grow slowly (8% to 10%) over the next twenty years, on a pace with the slow growth of Southeastern Massachusetts. Employment is expected to continue to grow moderately (12% to 15%), in keeping with the town's role as a sub-regional retailing center, and because of its favorable transportation access, available commercially and industrially zoned land, and sewer and water services. The age structure of Fairhaven's population will change significantly over the next twenty years. By 2010, for example, there are expected to be about 1150 more people over age 50 than there were in 1990, a 21% increase. School age population is not expected to grow as dramatically, a 5% increase to the year 2010, getting public school enrollments back to the level they were in the early 1980s.

These are the basic socio-economic factors that will influence Fairhaven's future. Considering them with the goals townspeople have expressed for the future of Fairhaven yields the following sets of objectives and and recommended actions.

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Action</u>
<b>Economic Development</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep future commercial development in existing comercial areas. Create small enclosed malls rather than shopping plazas.</li> <li>• Expand industrial as needed in existing industrial areas</li> <li>• Maintain Working Waterfront</li> <li>• Emphasize marine oriented industries</li> <li>• Encourage future retailing in existing areas zoned for retailing activities</li> <li>• Detailed commercial area study in North Fairhaven, including traffic improvements</li> <li>• Increase tourism</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: right;">Zoning</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Zoning</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Zoning</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Promotion and Coordination</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Promotion and Coordination</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Seek "ready resource" grant from EOCD, and later PWED improvements grant from EOTC</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Continue the work of the Tourism Committee</p>
<b>Natural Environment</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct Flooding Conditions</li> <li>• Continue to Protect Aquifer Recharge Area</li> <li>• Protect Coastal Resources</li> <li>• Protect Wildlife Habitats</li> <li>• Maintain Existing Farmlands</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: right;">Town Budget and Engineering and adoption of recommended state flood area zoning provisions</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Zoning</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Zoning</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Zoning</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Zoning, Taxation and Acquisition</p>

Objective

Action

**Housing**

- Keep future residential areas in or near existing residential areas (to maintain the village character)
- Encourage housing for older age groups
- Continue working on affordable housing

Zoning  
Cluster Residential Zoning  
Committee Action

**Transportation**

- Extension of David Drown Boulevard
- New access roads to serve commercial areas
- Route 6/Route 240 Intersection Improvements
- New Traffic Light at Route 6/Washington St.
- Signal Timing along Route 6 and on Howland Rd.
- Retain Existing Public Transportation Services

Conduct a detailed study of how best to use Town and State Funds for multi-purpose use of this corridor  
Site Plan Review (Zoning)  
State Funds  
State Funds  
Town and State Funds  
SRTA

**Infrastructure**

- Continue Sewer Line Extensions to Existing Devt.
- Build Third Water Tower in East Fairhaven
- Set Aside Reserve Fund for Sewerage Treatment Plant Improvements
- Renew Contract with New Bedford for Emergency Water Supplies
- Continue Leak Detection Program for Water System
- Continue I&I Program for Sewer System

Pub. Works Capital Budget  
" " " "  
" " " "  
Negotiations  
Pub. Works Annual Budget  
" " " "

**Schools**

- Continue School Modernization and Upgrade Program Including Outdoor Recreation Facilities
- Conduct Long-Term School Needs Study

Town Action on the School Budget with State Aid  
Town Action

**Open Space and Recreation**

- Strategic Land Acquisitions
- Create Multi-Purpose Trail
- Expand Pocket Park System
- Improve Recreational Facilities
- Create Scenic Roads

Town \$ & State Programs  
Town Capital Budget  
" " "  
" " "  
Town Designation

Objective

Action

**Cultural Resources**

- Establish Historic Districts
- Continue Restoration of Town Hall
- Establish a Signage System
- Pass a Demolition Delay Bylaw

Town Designation  
Town Operating Budget  
Town Operating Budget  
Town Meeting Vote

**Management and Administration**

- Re-establish the position of Town Planner including duties of community and economic development coordination

Town Authorization  
and Operating Budget

## 2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Description of the Process of Establishing Goals and Objectives

The process of establishing goals for Fairhaven involved review of goals from earlier studies, such as the 1989 Conservation and Recreation Plan, and 1992 Comprehensive Harbor Plan Study; review of the results of the 1991 Town Resident Survey, which asked 27 questions about attitudes toward growth, and satisfaction with existing conditions; and engaging Town residents in participatory and interactive discussions at four open meetings. Topics for these meetings were: housing and economic development; open space, recreation and natural resources; transportation and historic preservation, and infrastructure and town services. Two interactive exercises were conducted at these meetings to assess 1) how town residents value open space and recreation assets, and 2) how residents would allocate money to town budget items. Finally, discussions with planning board members and other town officials and residents contribute to this statement of goals and objectives.

### Basic Goals

The goals that emerged during the public participation and plan preparation process are as follows:

- Preserve the Town's Character
  - Provide Educational Facilities that Meet State Accreditation Requirements
  - Preserve and Enhance the Town's Working Waterfront
  - Enhance, Improve and Maintain Town's Recreational Facilities
  - Enhance, Improve and Maintain Town's Infrastructure Systems
  - Improve Roadways, Access and Traffic Control
  - Enhance Environmental Awareness and Habitat Protection
  - Increase Tourism in Fairhaven
- 
- The most prominent goal is the desire to preserve Fairhaven's basic character – its open landscape, views, traditional agricultural and fishing activities, and its identity as a series of small seaside villages. It was acknowledged that economic conditions have produced, and will continue to produce, a degrading of Town character. Nevertheless, most participants in master plan meetings felt that the open land and coastal facilities and waters that supported these activities should be preserved wherever possible. Public access to the shore was expressed as an important problem that should be addressed in the master plan and the open space and recreation plan. Historic preservation is another topic important for preserving Town character.
- 
- Meeting state accreditation standards for Fairhaven High School is an important objective for the Town. Because the school, which is a very important architectural feature of the Town, is old and has some outmoded spaces and facilities, it has problems in meeting some current state accreditation standards. The improvement program for meeting such state standards, should

be consistent with other Town objectives, such as those for maintaining and improving park, recreation and open space objectives.

- Preservation and enhancement of the Town's working waterfront would meet several objectives. First, it would help with economic development in the chronically depressed economy of Southeastern Mass. Economic development objectives would also be served by increasing tourism through enhancement of the working waterfront. The overriding objective of preserving the Town's character would also be aided by working waterfront preservation efforts.
- Meeting state accreditation standards for Fairhaven High School is an important objective for the Town. Because the school, which is a very important architectural feature of the Town, is old and has some outmoded spaces and facilities, it has problems in meeting some current state accreditation standards. The improvement program for meeting such state standards, should be consistent with other Town objectives, such as those for maintaining and improving park, recreation and open space objectives.
- The desire to improve recreational facilities is strongly felt in Fairhaven. One supporting and well expressed objective is the desire to provide recreational and other facilities and activities to address the needs of Fairhaven's aging population. Safe and accessible walking routes should be developed perhaps including a specialized low impact exercise station course for the elderly. The development of improved pedestrian access for older and physically challenged people at current recreational sites would go a long way toward meeting this goal. Providing for appropriately sized and located housing for older residents is also an important part of meeting this objective.

Provision of a multi-purpose trail along the abandoned rail right-of-way is another important objective. It was generally agreed that extending the trail to the waterfront on New Bedford Harbor, and eastward to the Mattapoissett town line would be desirable, thereby increasing its value as a local and a regional facility. Linking this east-west trail to north-south intersecting trails, walkways and bike routes was also considered to be an attractive and worthwhile concept.

Provision of additional athletic fields, especially in currently underserved areas, such as East Fairhaven, emerged as an important objective. Additional athletic fields for soccer, softball and baseball would help relieve the extensive overuse of existing facilities, and the potential for conflict between these two sometimes competing uses. There is competition for use of the baseball fields between women's softball and Little League baseball. (Many existing facilities are in need of maintenance and restoration because of overuse.)

Upgrading certain existing Town athletic and recreational facilities, such as the Town Beach on West Island is also considered important. Included under this objective, besides the athletic fields and parks listed above, are the improvement of Town boat launching and mooring facilities.

- Improving and maintaining Town infrastructure systems involve continuing the expansion and upgrading of water and sewer facilities in Fairhaven. These are high priority items for several reasons. First, they help solve some environmental problems, such as water pollution from individual septic systems. Second, they help in controlling the location of new development, by providing adequate system connection possibilities in areas where development is desirable. Third, maintenance of these major infrastructure facilities is important, so they continue to operate as designed. Storm drainage is a major problem in three locations, Livesey Park, Cushman Park and behind Hastings Middle School. In two of these areas, former ponds were filled in. Storm drainage problems sometimes render the recreation facilities at these sites unusable. There are also some smaller storm drainage problems along Route 6 that are being addressed with roadway improvements.
- Traffic is perceived as an important problem, consisting of three parts. First, access to and through some areas needs improvement, most notably in Fairhaven Center and North Fairhaven. Second, congestion at key intersections, mostly along State Route 6, is a problem to be addressed through improved traffic controls. Third, traffic safety is a problem, especially along State Route 6, that should be addressed through improvement at some intersections and signing.
- Protecting environmental features, such as water resources, shellfish beds, and wildlife habitats are considered important objectives for open space and recreation planning and the master plan. It is felt that an important method of addressing those primary open space and recreational goals should include signage and directions for users that would result in a more informed and responsible use of Fairhaven's open space, environmental and recreational resources. This goal potentially overlaps with other Town objectives, such as the desire to increase tourism, and to attract former residents to return to the Town (part of preserving the character of the Town).
- Increasing tourism is another goal mentioned by participants in the master plan development process. It is a goal which contributes to economic development and preservation of town character, provided it is done in a way that features existing points of interest in Town, such as historic districts and structures, the working waterfront, and Fairhaven's outstanding public architecture.

### 3. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

#### Environmental Inventory and Analysis

##### Geology, Soils, Topography, and Climate

###### Geology

Fairhaven is located on a coastal plain which was formed as outwash from the last glacier over 10,000 years ago. The meltwater from the glacier deposited soil, sand, stone and gravel over till from earlier glacial advances and left many small valleys that are now the courses of brooks, small streams, and rivers that flow into Buzzards Bay, such as the Acushnet and Nasketucket Rivers. Low areas between the hills deposited by the glaciers also became wetlands as they filled with sediment and developed the specialized flora that could stand developing in wet soils. Fort Phoenix and Sconticut Neck are two of the few places in Town where the underlying bedrock is near the surface or exposed. At 700+ million years of age, this pre-Cambrian metamorphic rock is among the oldest in New England.

###### Soils

Fairhaven's soils are the result of the geological and glacial history of the area, the under-lying bedrock, surface and subsurface water, and the interaction of these factors with the flora and bacteria that live on or in the soil. These factors result in soils with different characteristics that influence land use and open space character. For example, soils that have high groundwater levels may preclude the development of conventional underground septic systems for the disposal of human wastes. Soils that are extremely stony and have many large boulders can present difficulties for construction and increase the cost of development. Deep, loamy soils are generally good for agriculture.

The accompanying maps (Map 1 and Map 2) delineate broad areas of soil types found in Fairhaven. The following are the predominant soils (also see table of soil types):

**Hinckley (HgB, HgC) and Merrimac (MeB):** These soils are deep, moderately steep or hilly and deep and moderately level. They are excessively-drained and well-drained soils that have formed in deep deposits of sand and gravel. They are moderately to rapidly permeable in the upper part of the soil and rapidly to very rapidly permeable in the lower part. Water tables are generally greater than 6 feet. These soils are generally favorable for development.

**Gloucester (GcB, GhC) and Paxton (Pfb, Pgb, PhB):** These soils are deep, very stony and extremely stony, rolling and hilly. This material is underlain at a shallow depth, 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> to 3 feet, by firm compact material referred to as hardpan. The permeability of these soils is moderate to moderately rapid in the upper part and slow to very slow in the lower part. Water tables are generally at a depth greater than 6 feet in these

soils. These soils are moderately to severely limited for many forms of development.

**Carlton (CtC):** Well-drained soils that have formed in complex area of both deep, stony and bouldery material, and shallow to bedrock with areas of rock outcrop. In areas of thick unconsolidated soil material, the permeability is moderate to moderately rapid throughout. Water tables are generally to depths greater than 6 feet in areas of these soils. These soils are moderately to severely limited for many forms of development.

**Woodbridge (WrB, WsB, WtB, WrA):** Fine sandy and very stony fine sandy loam. This soil is deep, gently sloping and moderately well-drained. Soil is underlain at a shallow depth, 2 to 3 feet by a firm, compact material referred to as hardpan. The permeability of these soils is moderate in the upper part and slow to very slow in the lower part. Water tables in areas of these soils are at a shallow depth, usually 1.5 to 4 feet, during the wet periods of the year. These soils are moderately to severely limited for many forms of development.

**Ridgebury (ReA, ReB, RdA, RdB) and Whitman (WgA, WhA):** Fine sandy loam and extremely stony fine sandy loam. These soils are found in depressions, drainage ways and low areas on the uplands. These are poor and very poorly-drained mineral soils that have formed in materials ranging from sand and gravel to silt and clay. Permeability of these soils vary greatly depending upon what material they have formed over. These soils are wet and have a water table at or near the surface during wet periods of the year. These soils are severely limited for many forms of development.

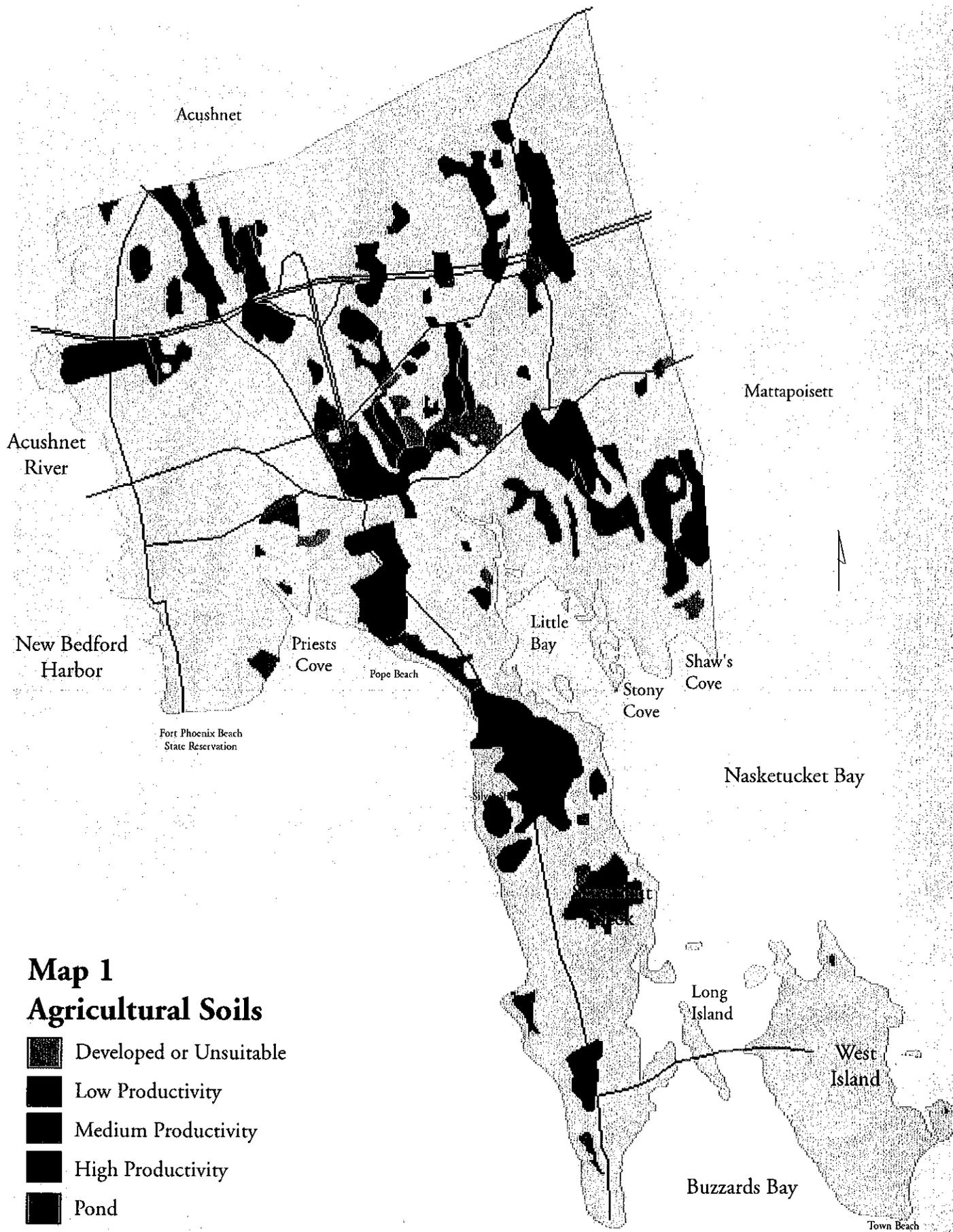
### **Development Limitations and Agricultural Soils**

Many of the soils found in Fairhaven have significant limitations for development such as large stones, wetness, slow perc rates, and frost action (see Map 2). However, it is important to note that many of these generalized soil types occur in very intricate patterns and most land parcels will have areas with few limitations. Many of the limitations can also be overcome by skillful design and added costs for construction. Many of the undeveloped parcels that contribute to the Town's character are potentially available for development.

There are several areas in Town that have soils that are good for agriculture and several other areas with good agricultural soils that have been or are being developed (see Map 1). Some of the agricultural lands also have moderate or moderate to slight limitations for development and as such could be easily lost as open space.

### **Topography**

Fairhaven occupies an area of approximately 12.5 square miles or 8017 acres. Its topography is mostly gently rolling, ranging in elevation from sea level to 90 feet. Its



**Map 1  
Agricultural Soils**

-  Developed or Unsuitable
-  Low Productivity
-  Medium Productivity
-  High Productivity
-  Pond

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open land includes pasture and meadowland, fresh water wetland, low, wooded hills and areas of tide flats, salt marsh and sandy beaches.

The Town has a total shoreline of approximately 29.4 linear miles according to the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Program. The coastline consists of intermittent bays and coves formed by the meltwater from the last ice age.

### **Climate**

Fairhaven's climate is similar to that of its southeastern coastal neighbors. Extremes of heat and cold which are felt in more inland locations, are tempered by the Town's proximity to Buzzards Bay. Winter temperatures average 30 degrees Fahrenheit and range to an average of 70 degrees in summer.

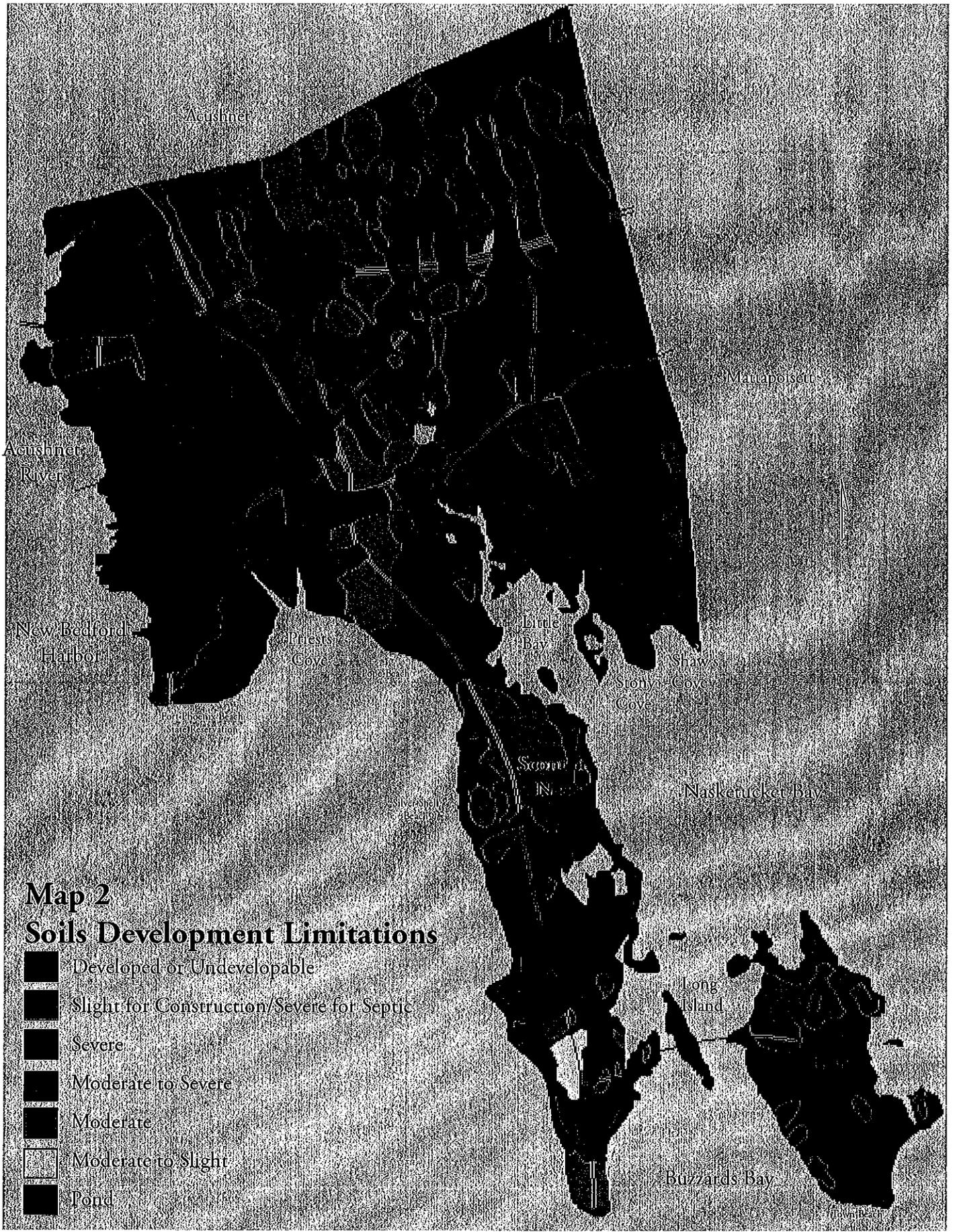
The average annual precipitation is approximately 42 to 45 inches, depending on the location within the Town. Prevailing winds are westerly with more northwesterly winds in the winter and southwesterly winds in the summer. The average growing season in Fairhaven is approximately 200 days per year.

### **Landscape Character and Vegetation**

Fairhaven's mix of land and sea has inspired artists such as William Bradford, Lemuel D. Eldred, and Percy Cowen, who went on to achieve national reputations. Its historic harbor, views of Buzzards Bay, stony shores, salt marshes, and forested rolling hills, interspersed with pastures and agricultural fields create a rich mosaic of visual experience and opportunities to explore that continues to stimulate the imaginations of young and old, resident and visitor.

The Town has a diversity of landscape types. From the historic central area with magnificent nineteenth century public buildings to the waterfront on New Bedford Harbor, the pastoral New England countryside in the northeast corner to the marshes of Little Bay and Priests Cove to the beaches of Sciticut Neck and West Island to the dramatic vistas of the water from the farmlands along Shaw's Road, Fairhaven encompasses a wide range of ecological and cultural experiences.

The central part of Town with the nineteenth century public buildings holds a unique charm. While there is not much open space in this area, many people enjoy walking along the shaded streets lined with many period houses. Once a cove that was filled in to create a Town recreation area, Cushman Park, located in the downtown area, has serious drainage problems as large portions of the park is wet most of the year. Recently, an agreement has been made between the Town and Fairhaven School Department for the potential development of athletic fields at the park. In the past, Fort Phoenix State Park, at the southern end of the central section of Town, acted as a kind of town green in that it was a major outdoor meeting place. Today, it remains a favorite walking area for Town residents. The waterfront, adjacent to the central area of Town, is in a transition process as the commercial fishing industry is waning and other marine industries are being developed to fill the gap. Development in this area will come in the form of renovation and re-use of older structures along the waterfront as there is virtually no undeveloped space within the central Town area.



**Map 2**  
**Soils Development Limitations**

- Developed or Undevelopable
- Slight for Construction/Severe for Septic
- Severe
- Moderate to Severe
- Moderate
- Moderate to Slight
- Pond

The pastoral area in the northeast corner of Fairhaven consists of small farms and some scattered housing along roads lined by old stone walls. The Fairhaven Conservation Commission and the Fairhaven Land Preservation Trust own several parcels of land in this area. The largest being the Town Forest along New Boston Road which has the path of the Old Coach Road to Acushnet within its bounds. The character of the roads, such as New Boston Road, could be somewhat protected by the Town designating it to be a scenic road which would place restrictions on the way a development is constructed. Most of the holdings in this area are private and zoned agricultural and residential, so future development within this area would take the form of new housing subdivisions. However, the soils within this area have not all been acceptable for septic systems which would limit the development.

Priests Cove contains an expanse of marsh which can be viewed from the hurricane barrier built across the head of the cove. This area is protected by the wetlands regulations and is bordered by the railroad right-of-way and proposed path. The Little Bay area is also a beautiful marsh which holds the mouth of the Nasketucket River. In fact, the native American name "Nasketucket" means place of the long grasses. This area is also bordered by the railroad right-of-way which affords views of the marshes and the water of Little Bay out to Nasketucket Bay. There are currently a handful of residences along the mouth of the Nasketucket River. Any further development of this area would have to be done sensitively, while many residents feel it should not occur at all. In this regard, there is a 83-acre developable parcel of upland land on the western side of Little Bay which if developed, could impact the character of this area. The Fairhaven Conservation Commission, in conjunction with the Fairhaven Land Preservation Trust, are currently attempting to purchase this property known as Little Bay Estates to make it conservation land. The most recent Town meeting voted funds for the local share of this purchase. In addition to open space benefits to the Town of preserving this upland property, Little Bay Estates is adjacent to the railroad right-of-way/proposed path and offers enormous potential for creating a multi-use trail into the Little Bay area, thereby making this a key recreation destination for walkers and cyclists.

Sconticut Neck and West Island have historically been and look like summer resort communities. The beautiful marshes and beaches here are some of the most attractive in southern New England. With the spectacular Town Beach and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management property covering a third of the island, West Island is partially protected from future development.

Two main open space issues facing West Island will be the manner in which the Town further develops its recreational facilities at Town Beach, as well as the state management plan that is to be developed for DEM's property. While there is a desire on the part of some residents to improve the facilities at Town Beach by adding running water to the beach to provide rest rooms, showers, and drinking fountains, others believe the area should remain a more passive recreation facility and that this type of development would bring more people to the beach and possibly detract from its quiet, natural atmosphere.

A number of Fairhaven residents are concerned that the passive open space character of West Island could change if the island was ever connected to the Town's sewer system. With a sewer line, the housing stock would probably shift from small summer cottages to more year-round residents. The sewer issue is an important one for many parts of the Town particularly with the new Title V regulations requiring Title V approved on-site wastewater disposal systems for all properties that are sold or transferred.

The character of the southern section of Scoticut Neck as a mixture of small farms and seaside houses could be significantly altered if the farms were replaced with housing subdivisions. The wide, open vistas over the flat farmland to the water would be interrupted and the spacious character of this end of the Neck negatively affected. The upper section of Scoticut Neck has been fairly densely settled, so further development in this area largely would take the form of renovation and re-use.

White's Farm, partially in the Nasketucket Basin, and the farms east along Shaw Road are large, upland parcels with subdivision development potential. White's Farm is near the Austin Pond conservation area and the Nasketucket Watershed area. The pastoral character of the area, which was identified as a high priority preservation area at the public workshop on open space, would be altered if a traditional subdivision was permitted here.

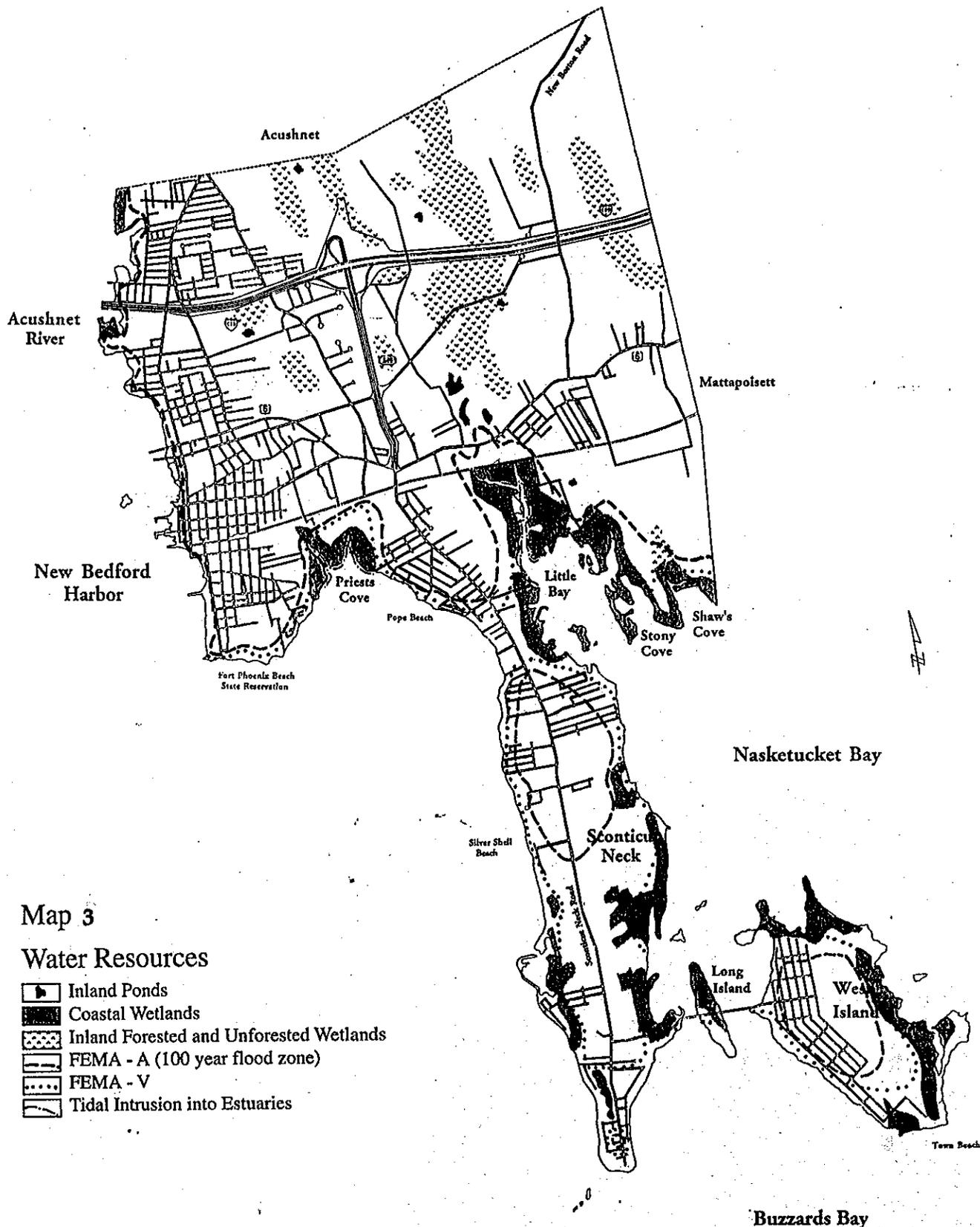
Similarly, the wide, expansive views through the farm silos to the water beyond Shaw's Cove are some of the most loved views in the Town. There are already several new housing subdivisions in this area and the visual impact on the character of the area is significant. These new "agriculturally zoned" residential subdivisions are on 50,000 acre lots, and while this type of zoning is an attempt at preserving open space, it effectively creates typical suburban settings. They are neither in keeping with the agricultural character of the area, nor are they in keeping with the traditional "village-like" scale and density of the housing found in the western portion of Town and identified by many Fairhaven residents in the public workshop on open space as their preferred housing type.

## Water Resources

### **Surface Waters**

The most notable water resource in Fairhaven is its 29.4 miles of coast on Buzzards Bay, New Bedford Harbor and the Acushnet River. Most of this coast is formed by Scoticut Neck and West Island which jut 4.5 miles from the mainland into Buzzards Bay. Localized water bodies have been formed by the interplay of land and water. These are Shaw's Cove, Stony Cove, Little Bay, Nasketucket Bay, and Priests Cove. (See Map 3)

Freshwater resources consist of the Nasketucket River, which rises in northeast Fairhaven and flows south through several small ponds into an estuary in Little Bay. Its watershed is important as a reserve source of groundwater for drinking. A water resource protection overlay zoning district has been established in the watershed. The Swift Brook watershed, which lies east of New Boston Road, feeding southeastward



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into the Mattapoisett River Estuary in Mattapoisett is important as a drainage feature. Neither its flow nor aquifer contribute to public drinking water resources. Fairhaven's coastal area consists of the following land form types, according to a 1985 report issued by the Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies and the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management.

<u>Land form Type</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Salt Marsh	607.5
Tidal Flats	582.1
Marine Flats	442.0
Estuarine Flats	140.1
Barrier Beach	<u>86.3</u>
Total	1,858.0

Storms and natural beach building activities have resulted in several more barrier beaches being created since 1985. Coastal lands are quite extensive, accounting for about 22% of total acreage in Fairhaven. These coastal lands serve a number of important functions including recreation, shell fishing, provision of habitats for wildlife, storm impact abatement, filtering of contaminants, nutrient storage, supplying beach building materials and erosion control. Salt marshes provide wildlife habitat and filter and store nutrients. Tidal and marine flats are habitats for shellfish, abate the impact of storm waves, and provide sediments for down-current beaches. Estuarine flats provide a unique brackish water habitat for plants and animals that are salt tolerant. Barrier beaches, of which there are about 25 segments in Fairhaven, abate storm waves, lessen flooding, ease erosion of other coastal areas, provide materials for beach-building, and provide feeding and breeding grounds for coastal and migratory birds.

Shellfishing is a long established activity in Fairhaven. Its waters have historically produced an abundant harvest of scallops, quahogs, soft-shelled clams and oysters. Industrial and domestic pollution have caused a number of shellfish beds to be closed. Closed areas include the Acushnet River, New Bedford Harbor and waters of Buzzards Bay and Priests Cove west of Sciticut Neck to the southern tip of Rickerson's Point in Dartmouth. Sewage outfalls and PCB discharges have been the cause of these shellfish beds closures. In 1988 the loss of shellfish in the closed area west of Sciticut Neck (not including New Bedford Harbor) was estimated by the Conservation Law Foundation to be 186,784 bushels.

Despite Fairhaven's extensive coastline, only small segments of it are accessible to the public. Fort Phoenix State Beach is a small, public beach, located at the southern end of Fairhaven Center. There are two small paved parking areas there, with spaces for about 200 cars, and a daily fee (in season) of \$3.00. The Town Beach on West Island is also open to the general public, for a daily fee (in season) of \$5.00. Town property owners pay a seasonal fee of \$25.00 for a parking sticker at this beach. There are about 200 parking spaces in an unpaved lot.

The eastern half of West Island is state owned, under the control of the Department of Environmental Management. It is kept in its natural state and there are no public access facilities such as parking or walking trails there. There are two Town-owned boat

ramps, one at Pease Park in Fairhaven Center, on New Bedford Harbor (with 25 parking spaces) and one on Sconticut Neck at the end of Seaview Avenue, on Nasketucket Bay, with about 55 parking spaces. There are some semi-publicly owned coastal areas. The Audubon Society owns a nature reserve at Shaw's Cove and there is a South Shore Marshes Wildlife Management Area on Stony Cove, but access to both areas is over private, unpaved roads.

### **Drainage**

Fairhaven has three drainage areas; coastal, estuarine and inland. The coastal area includes Shaw's Cove, Little Bay, Sconticut Neck, West Island, and the area from Sconticut Neck to Fort Phoenix. Runoff in this area flows into small coastal streams or directly into the coastal waters. The estuarine area includes lands draining westward into New Bedford Harbor and the Acushnet River. The river begins north of the Route 6 (Huttleston Avenue) Bridge. Most of the natural drainage of this area has been altered by development over a 300 year period. Several small ponds and streams in the area have been filled and captured in drainage pipes that flow into New Bedford Harbor or the Acushnet River.

The inland areas of Fairhaven, including East Fairhaven and the interior wetland areas are drained primarily by the Nasketucket River system, which flows into Little Bay. A small portion of the northeast section of Fairhaven is drained by Swift Brook flowing into Mattapoissett and the Mattapoissett River Estuary. Floodplain development, where it has occurred in Fairhaven, is primarily residential and recreational.

### **Flooding**

The major flooding threat in Fairhaven occurs on low-lying coastal lands. (See Map 3.) These are subject to periodic flooding and wave damage resulting from coastal storms. Most storms cause damage only to boats, low coastal roads, beaches and seawalls. The northern portion of Sconticut Neck Road (between Norton Street and Grape Street), a part of the Southern portion of Sconticut Neck Road (south of Camel Street) and the causeway to West Island are all about 15 feet above mean sea level. These road segments and surrounding residential areas have been flooded by high storm waters. Storms that pushed water levels to between 12 and 13 feet above mean sea level were recorded in 1938 and 1954. Waters pushed by high winds, large waves and tidal action can regularly exceed the 15 foot level, resulting in coastal flooding of these areas.

A hurricane barrier has been constructed across the mouth of the New Bedford Harbor. Another barrier has been extended in the form of a dike across the tidal marshes at the head of Priest's Cove. These structures provide protection from coastal storms to development in Fairhaven Center. Other protective structures exist that have been built by the Town and by private parties, but they are smaller and result in only localized protection.

Some flooding can occur along New Bedford Harbor and the Acushnet River when run-off is high and storm surge activity is strong at the gate of the hurricane barrier.

## **Wetlands**

Fairhaven's coastal wetlands have been noted above. (See Map 3.) There are three small areas of inland shrub covered swamps. Two of these areas, of less than 10 acres, are along the course of the Nasketucket River near the small ponds that occur there. The most northerly of these has residential development adjacent to it. The other is in a farm. A larger area of shrub swamp, adjacent to a forested swamp, is located just north of the interchange of I-195 and State Route 240. It generally follows the right-of-way of a major power line, lying just east of it. The wetland may have been created or enlarged by the highway interchange and power line, when land was disturbed, interfering with existing drainage patterns.

There are extensive areas of inland forested swamp in Fairhaven. They are in the eastern half of the Town and follow fingers of lowlands that resulted from glacial melting. The development limitations map reflects these wetlands. (See Map 2.) The residential and agricultural development that has occurred in these areas is on the slightly raised uplands between the fingers of lower swampy forested land. Wetlands follow the drainage channels out of the area, the Nasketucket River and Swift Brook, but are not confined to them. Wetlands also occur in other lowland areas. There are not large differences in elevation in the area; the highest points being 70 to 80 feet above sea level, with the wetlands occurring in the areas between 30 to 50 feet in elevation.

## **Aquifer Recharge Areas**

The aquifer recharge area is located in the Nasketucket River Basin in the northeast quadrant of Fairhaven. The zoning overlay district that protects it runs from U.S. Route 6 (or just 200 feet north of it) for part of the southern boundary, to the Acushnet Town Line. As noted, this area is largely undeveloped and contains large areas of forested swamp land. This aquifer provides water for a Town well that is currently unused (See Map 12). It is an emergency water supply, and was the Town water supply until wells were developed in the Mattapoissett River watershed in Mattapoissett.

The Swift Brook area of Fairhaven is not protected by an overlay water protection zoning district because it does not provide any public drinking water. It is zoned for rural residence, with a 50,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size. There is a very small area at the intersection of New Boston Road and Charity Stevens Lane zoned for business. The entire area is composed primarily of forested wetlands. The only developments in this area are a few homes on large lots along New Boston Road.

## **Fisheries and Wildlife**

### **Wildlife**

Fairhaven's forests, inland and coastal wetlands, tide flats and off-shore areas of Buzzard's Bay provide habitat for a diversity of wildlife, including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, finfish and shell fish. Common terrestrial wildlife include:

Mammals

fox	raccoon	cottontail rabbit
coyote	red squirrel	gray squirrel
opossum	weasel	mice (sp)
deer		

Reptiles and Amphibians

bullfrog	wood frog	spring peeper
wood turtle	garter snake	snapping turtle
American toad	milk snake	spotted salamander

Birds

grouse	sparrow (sp)	woodpecker (sp)
cardinal	crow	robin
owls (sp)	heron (sp)	wood duck
bobwhite	quail	pheasant
hawk (sp)	osprey	morning dove
starling	Canada goose	

Common marine wildlife include:

Shellfish

quahog	oyster	soft-shell clam
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Finfish

scup	sea bass	tautog
butterfish	shad	winter flounder
alewife	bluefish	striped bass
weakfish		

Mammals

harbor seals	gray seals
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Marine Turtles

leatherback turtle
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These lists are partial, many more species of birds are known to spend part of the year in Fairhaven and there are probably other species of animals as well. Each of these animals require habitat with food, water, cover, and the freedom to move from one suitable habitat area to another.

**Species of Special Concern**

There are several species of shorebirds found in Fairhaven that are considered threatened, endangered or listed as "species of special concern." These classifications specify native species which have been determined to be suffering a decline in numbers and are subject to different levels of special efforts to assure that their numbers are maintained, these include:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Status</u>
Roseate Tern	Federally endangered
Common Tern	special concern
Piping Plover	threatened
Least Tern	special concern

### Environmental Problems

Fairhaven's environmental problems fall under the following categories.

#### **Hazardous Waste Sites**

The Atlas Tack site on the southeastern edge of Fairhaven Center presents the primary hazardous waste site clean-up problem in Town. The Environmental Protection Agency has declared it a 'superfund' site. As yet, cleanup activities have not been scheduled. The site is important to open space and recreational planning because it is located on the route of the proposed multi-use recreational trail.

#### **Chronic Flooding**

Chronic flooding occurs both at Cushman Park in Fairhaven Center and at Livesey Park in North Fairhaven. Drainage engineering solutions to both problems are being explored by the Town. Funding is expected to come from state and local sources. Chronic flooding also occurs in the extensive coastal areas of Town. Some residential development and roads on West Island and Sconticut Neck are in the FEMA A and V Zones. There is a hurricane barrier that protects New Bedford Harbor and Fairhaven Center. There is a dike that protects the southern part of Fairhaven Center. Numerous public and private rock and concrete jetties offer some local protection against storm waves and erosion as do the approximately 25 barrier beach segments in Fairhaven. Some of the barrier beaches need protection under open space actions.

## 4. POPULATION, INCOME, AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

### Population

#### Trends

Population forecasts by age group show a very marked trend in the growth of the upper age groups. The Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research (MISER) has recently prepared and released projections for all cities and towns which show forty-six percent of Fairhaven's population in the year 2010 being age 45 or older. This compares with a figure of thirty-nine percent in 1990 and in 1980. Clearly, housing, recreational and social service needs will change over the next fifteen years, with more facilities required for older people. (See Table 6 in the Housing Chapter.)

Fairhaven had 16,132 residents in 1990, according to the U.S. Census of Population, and has not experienced rapid residential growth in recent times. The Town has grown slowly in past years, (with a slight dip in the 1970s), from 14,300 in 1960 to 16,300 in 1970, to 15,800 in 1980. The 1970s dip is attributable to thinning out of households, as baby-boom generation children were leaving home, a common nation-wide occurrence in the 1970s. And, as stated above, the population has been aging, another common characteristic of slow-growing areas. Between 1980 and 1990 population over age 64 grew by 25%, while population under age 25 declined by 13%. Population in the age 25 to 64 group grew by 7% between 1980 and 1990.

Table 1  
Population Projections for Fairhaven

<u>Date of Projection</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Projection Year</u>					
		<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2020</u>
	U.S. Census	16,332	15,579	16,132			
1993	SRPEDD*				16,575	17,019	17,461
1995	MISER**				16,675	16,838	
1995	Planners Collaborative				16,842	17,323	17,803

\* SRPEDD = Southeast (Mass.) Regional Planning and Economic Development District

\*\* MISER = Mass. Institute for Social and Economic Research

#### Notes:

17,803 Total Population - 16,132 1990 Population = 1671 New Population in 2020  
 1671 New Population / 2.49 Pop. per Household = 671 New Households  
 1671 / 25 Years = 26.8 (rounded to 27) new dwelling units per year.

## Income

Median household income almost doubled between 1979 and 1989 in current dollars, from \$15,200 to \$30,100. Fairhaven's median household income was below both the Bristol County figure and the state figure in both 1979 and 1989. Respectively, these figures are \$15,500 and \$32,300 for Bristol County, and \$17,600 and \$37,000 for Massachusetts. In 1979, 6.7% of Fairhaven's population was below the federal poverty threshold. By 1989 this figure remained essentially unchanged at 6.5%.

In 1989, according to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 72% of Fairhaven households earned wage and salary income averaging about \$35,000 per household. Nine percent of households earned self-employment income averaging about \$16,000 in that year. Social security payments were received by 37% of Fairhaven's households, averaging about \$7,400, while retirement income was received by 20% of households, averaging about \$6,300 for that year. Public assistance was received by 7% of Fairhaven's households in 1989, averaging about \$3,700. Fairhaven is a middle income community with most of its income derived from wages at moderate pay scales.

## Economic Activities

### Employment

Fairhaven is a moderate sized employment center on Buzzard's Bay. In 1993 there were more employed residents (7,500) than jobs (5,000) in town. Most of the employed residents of Fairhaven work out of town (5,340). Employment has in recent years increased at a much faster rate than population. In 1981 there were approximately 3,800 jobs in Fairhaven. That figure grew to about 5,600 by 1990 (a 47% increase), but had declined to 4,822 by 1994, owing to the major recession experienced by the area, the state and the nation. Table 2 shows employment by major category in Fairhaven from 1981 to 1993, as reported by the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training.

Table 2  
Fairhaven Employment by Major Category; 1981 - 1993

<u>Year</u>	<u>Gov't</u>	<u>Ag.For.</u>	<u>Fish</u>	<u>Const.</u>	<u>Manuf.</u>	<u>Tr.Co.Ut.</u>	<u>Trade</u>	<u>FIRE</u>	<u>Services</u>	<u>Total</u>
1981	524	413	80	436	176	1425	187	514	3773	
1982	461	462	80	419	250	1445	183	562	3863	
1983	446	484	100	434	289	1475	200	578	4006	
1984	448	573	123	437	243	1670	191	654	4341	
1985	460	569	138	318	526	1673	181	692	4559	
1986	508	534	166	160	616	1686	216	726	4612	
1987	554	584	186	134	412	1738	244	1080	4953	
1988	551	585	209	142	408	1863	281	1224	5263	
1989	537	618	229	164	414	1895	276	1420	5553	
1990	502	579	186	183	362	1940	268	1543	5563	
1991	451	558	188	135	236	1926	240	1320	5064	
1992	456	533	158	142	148	2055	203	1287	4982	
1993	445	412	222	167	143	2026	181	1432	5028	

Employment is expected to continue to rise, perhaps to its 1990 level and beyond, as retail and service activities grow. However, the manufacturing and the fishing industries are expected to continue their decline. Fairhaven has an important working waterfront, including ship repair and outfitting, and fish processing. These activities are currently declining because of limitations on fishing imposed by the federal government. Whether they will rebound to former levels depends on the long-term degree of success of the recent limitations on fishing, whether temporary replacement activities can be found (such as servicing recreational boating) and whether other sources of fish can be found to replace those currently depleted.

While the fishing industry accounts only for 500 to 800 jobs, the traditional importance of those jobs, together with a wage level much higher than retail or service jobs, makes a revival of fishing and its support activities very attractive to local residents. By the same reasoning, the effort to save and rebuild the working waterfront on New Bedford Harbor is an equally important objective in planning for Fairhaven's economic future. Working waterfronts are very hard to permit and build in today's economic and regulatory conditions. It is important to preserve and protect those that currently exist.

The only other employment center that exists in Fairhaven, besides the Route 6/Route 240/Alden Road area, and the waterfront in Fairhaven Center, is in North Fairhaven along North Main Street and Howland Road. This is a mixed retail/wholesale and small industrial area which is related to New Bedford via the Howland Street Bridge and access to I-195 just across the Acushnet River.

### **Industries**

There are no major industries in Fairhaven, and most employment in the Town is in retailing activities. The Acushnet Company, manufacturer of golf balls and related equipment, including the well known "Titleist" golf ball, has its corporate headquarters in Fairhaven. The New Bedford Standard Times has a major printing facility in Fairhaven for its daily newspaper. American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) built a facility in Fairhaven, but it is currently unused. Atlas Tack Company is now out of business, but left a major building and site in Town, which has been declared a superfund cleanup site. The U.S. Route 6 area, especially adjacent to its intersections with State Route 240 and Alden Road, has become a major shopping area for Fairhaven residents, and for residents of surrounding towns. This area has the advantage of direct access from high speed limited access roads. It is also characterized by flat, well drained, commercially and industrially zoned land.

### **Retailing**

Fairhaven has become the site of some "big-box" retailing. There is both a K-Mart and Wal-Mart in town. Both Shaws and Edwards (formerly A&P) have sub-regional scale "super" supermarkets in town. There are other chain and local retailers in the Route 6/Route 240/Alden Road area. The area has become a sub-regional shopping center, with several plazas and groups of stores. Getting between the shopping areas is done by vehicle travel over roadways, interfering with through traffic. An important

planning issue for the future is how these areas might be connected by roadways and pedestrian and bicycle ways that do not use Route 6/Route 240/Alden Road. A related design issue is how the retail structures and parking for them can be better coordinated in appearance and landscaping and streetscaping. This area is and will remain the functional retail core of Fairhaven. Through planning and design controls, it can become a more attractive and better functioning retail core. An illustration of this is shown on Map 4. It shows two new roads to complete circulation loops around the Wal-Mart and K-Mart plazas, in connection with new parking along these roads to allow for new buildings in existing parking areas. The new buildings would house shops and offices which would create pedestrian malls between them and the existing buildings. The malls could be enclosed and furnished with pedestrian amenities such as fountains, food courts, benches, plantings and sculptures. The whole area would become much more desirable as a shopping destination than the existing rather barren plazas. This plan also has the virtue of keeping future retail expansion confined to the existing commercial area.

The plan also proposed that the existing mixed commercial/residential area serviced by Lincoln Drive, and bounded by Route 240, Alden Road and Route 6, be converted to all commercial uses in the future. It would be very desirable to require a detailed development plan for the area for approval by the Planning Board. This would help insure that development in keeping with the character of the other areas, would be created.

Another transportation proposal that is important for commercial development is the extension of David Drown Boulevard into Fairhaven Center. This road will provide a bypass for commercial traffic that now comes in over Washington Street. The proposed extension will also provide more direct roadway access for traffic from Sciticut Neck and West Island to Fairhaven Center. In addition to improving access to the working Fairhaven Waterfront, the roadway extension will better enable mixed (commercial and other uses) reuse of the Atlas Tack site. This roadway extension proposal is covered in more detail in the transportation chapter of the plan. The roadway proposal is also important for the open space and recreational development of the Town, in that a multi-purpose path or trail is proposed along the extension of David Drown Boulevard.

### **Retail Employment Opportunities**

In 1993, retailing supplied about 1900 jobs, or 40% of all jobs in Fairhaven. The services sector supplied about 30% of Fairhaven's jobs. While the figure for services is about the same as the U.S. figure for the same year, retailing is far more dominant in Fairhaven (as a percent) than for the U.S. economy as a whole (18%). For more than a decade, Fairhaven's leading employment opportunity has been retail trade, with an expansion of its relative importance in the local economy.

Retailing has grown faster in Fairhaven than in the region (the New Bedford Labor Market Area), the state, and more recently, the U.S. Between 1984 and 1990, Fairhaven's retail trade sector showed an employment growth rate of 17.7% which, while slightly below the national rate of 18.7, easily outpaced that of the region and

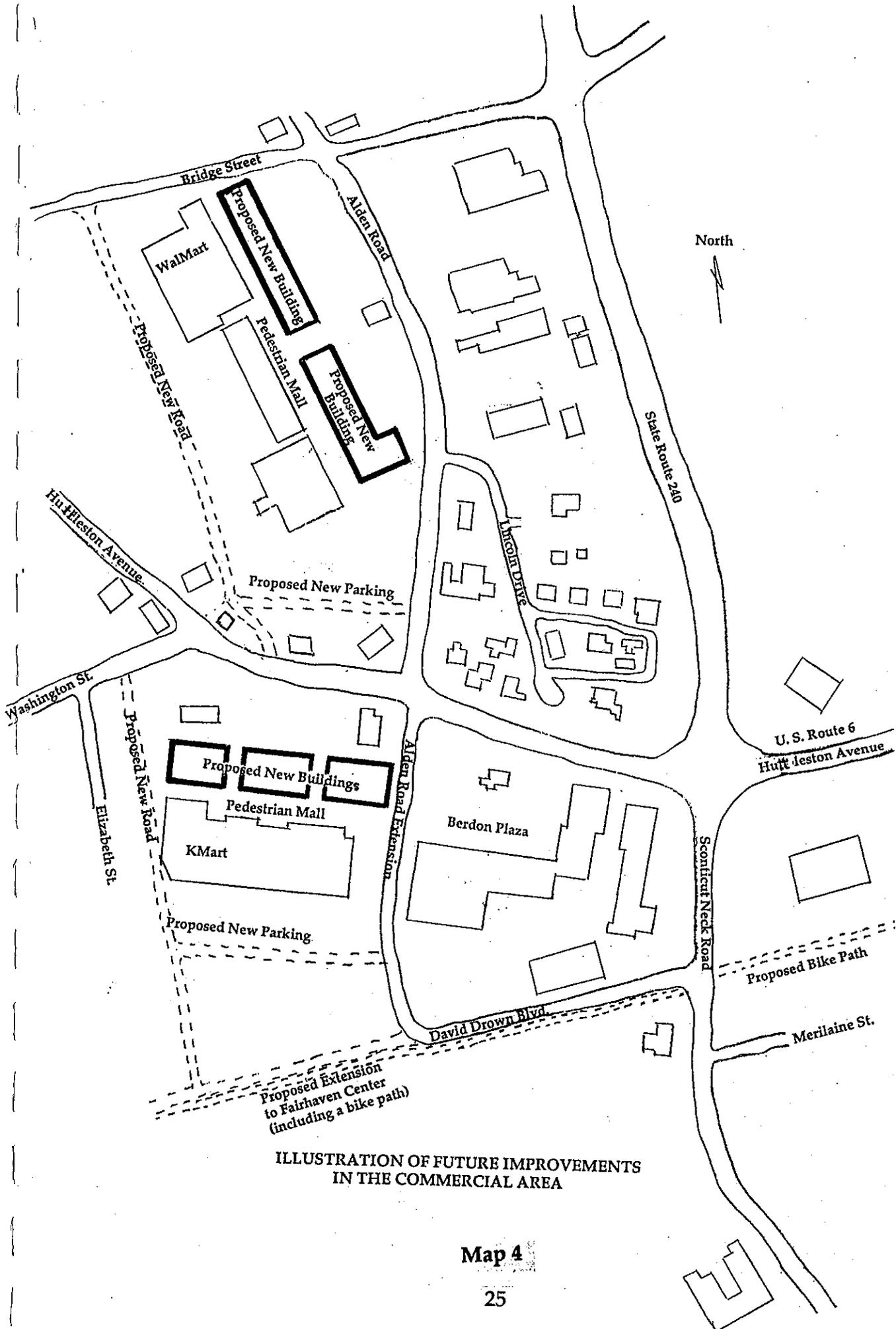


ILLUSTRATION OF FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS  
IN THE COMMERCIAL AREA

Map 4

the state. During the recent recession, Fairhaven's retail trade employment showed a growth of 6%, even as employment in the region and the state declined, and nationwide retail employment increased only 0.6%.

Retailing in Fairhaven attracts workers from other towns. Only 23% of Fairhaven's residents are employed in retailing. This clearly represents an opportunity for employment of more of Fairhaven's labor force. With the aging of Fairhaven's population, the part-time job opportunities afforded by the town's substantial sub-regional retailing base will become increasingly important in future years. Non-management retail jobs have historically been viewed as low-end, dead-end employment prospects by many communities. But the opportunity to work varied times and numbers of hours is advantageous to Fairhaven's retired and semi-retired residents, who will substantially increase in numbers over the next twenty years. Careful expansion of the existing retail malls (excluding additional strip development along Route 6) may serve desirable economic/job development purposes. By contrast, pure distributive activities (trucking/warehousing) do not provide the density of direct employment opportunities (per land area utilized) afforded by retail stores.

#### **Wholesale Employment Opportunities**

In 1993, wholesalers (involved in trucking and warehousing) accounted for only 2.6% of Fairhaven's employment. The equivalent figures are higher for the region (4%), the state (5.5%), and the U.S. (5.4%). The growth of wholesale employment in the region has been somewhat uneven, increasing 28.2% between 1984 and 1990, and declining in the early 1990s. Growth of the sector within Fairhaven has been much more modest but equally uneven. From 1984 to 1990, Fairhaven wholesale employment grew only 1.9%, and declined 19.3% from 1990 to 1993.

Wholesaling has become slightly more important as an employer of Fairhaven residents, probably owing to the earlier job growth other towns in the region, where a majority of Fairhaven residents work. In 1980, 3.6% of the town's residents worked in wholesale trade, while in 1990 this figure had increased to 5%.

#### **Service Employment Opportunities**

Following statewide and national trends, the regional service sector in southeastern Massachusetts is growing steadily. Growth of Fairhaven service employment is particularly notable. In 1984, Fairhaven service firms employed 654 people, while by 1990 that number reached 1,543, but dropped slightly to 1,432 in 1993 in the wake of the recession. In 1993, the service sector accounted for 28.5% of Fairhaven's employment, a highly significant increase from its 1984 level of 15.1%. As a part of the town's employment opportunities, it is second in importance to retail trade.

The growth of service jobs is reflected in the employment patterns of the town's residents. In 1980, the various branches of the service industry employed 25.2% of Fairhaven's residents. In 1990 service jobs employed 28.7% of working residents. Because of its projected national, state, and regional growth, service employment is expected to remain an important source of new jobs for Fairhaven residents.

## **Future Economic Development**

A Strategy for Fairhaven's Economic Future, a report for the Fairhaven Local (economic development) Partnership has been recently prepared by Mt. Auburn Associates. The potentials for Fairhaven's economic development are identified in that report. Local strengths that can be built on are identified as:

- **A strong location for industrial development**, drawing on its favorable highway access, land availability, and water and sewer capacity situations.
- **A vital waterfront that continues to define much of the local economy as well as culture.** Many of Fairhaven's waterfront businesses are finding new markets, and are successfully transitioning from dependence on the local fishing industry.
- **Quality of life**, including small town life and devotion to local history, architectural heritage and rural and marine traditions.
- **A hard working and dedicated labor force**, including the willingness to acquire new skills as needed in today's changing economic situation.
- **Technology resources:** a regional situation that surrounds Fairhaven, and which can be used for economic development purposes.

The report recommends the following four broad strategies for economic development.

- **Develop a strategic approach to business development**
- **Promote the development of tourism-related activities appropriate to the Town.**
- **Focus attention on community infrastructure issues**
- **Strengthen the marine-related economy**

Specific employment opportunities analyzed in more depth in the report are:

- **Harbor-related activities**
- **Marine science and technology**
- **Aquaculture**
- **Tourism**

The marine and waterfront base of these activities is striking. Clearly, future economic development in Fairhaven is tied to its waterfront, water access and

shoreline, as it has been in the past. Mt. Auburn Associates do not recommend, at least in the near term, any major dependence on distributive (e.g., warehousing) activities, even though retailing, an activity that supports warehousing, has grown rapidly in the past and is expected to continue to grow. One reason given for not depending on distributive activities in the short-term is that major improvements in infrastructure are needed, such as dredging New Bedford Harbor, improving New Bedford Airport and enhancing railroad access. These will not be accomplished in the short-term, according to Mount Auburn Associates. Another reason not to emphasize warehousing activities is that they consume relatively large amounts of land per employee.

Various recommendations of the Master Plan support the basic thrust of water-oriented economic development. These are:

- **Preserve the working waterfront.** Do not intrude into it with non-industrial activities. Keep tourism and recreation activities, that are related to the working waterfront, adjacent to, on the edge of, but not in, the working waterfront. This includes pocket parks, restaurants and shops. Other measures to enhance and protect the working waterfront include providing it with better access via an extension of David Drown Boulevard, and for the most part, keeping it out of proposed historic districts.
- **Provide for new modern industrial and office space as required by marine sciences industries.** By designating the area along Route 240 between I-195 and Route 6 for industrial and office park development, Fairhaven is providing a stock of serviced land appropriate for industrial and office space. This area is appropriate for marine science industries that do not require direct waterfront access. There are a few waterfront sites on New Bedford Harbor and the Acushnet River that are suitable for industrial and office development as well. They are appropriately zoned for industry and serviced with water and sewer and roadways.
- **Provide shoreline protection for aquaculture.** Many of the environmental protection recommendations of the Master Plan support the preservation and enhancement of marine conditions needed for aquaculture. These include acquisition of lands for open space, flood control and reduction of non-point pollution sources.
- **Historic preservation where appropriate to encourage tourism.** Three historic districts are recommended to better preserve Fairhaven's rich historical architectural heritage. While tourism is not the only objective of establishing historic districts, it certainly will add substantial interest to Fairhaven for tourism activities.

• **Recommendations about retaining the open, rural and village character of Fairhaven.** Many of the Master Plan's recommendations about environmental protection, residential zoning and open space preservation are intended to keep the Town as a very desirable place to live and work. In the sense that jobs are retained, and new ones created because of the desire to live and work in Fairhaven, the Master Plan's general purposes will help to continue economic development.

## 5. HOUSING

Fairhaven's housing stock consists of about 7000 housing units. Of this, 74% is in single-family units. Seventy percent are detached units, 2% are attached units and 2% are mobile homes or other units. The second most common type of housing structure contain 2 to 4 units and account for 16% of all units. Only 8% of Fairhaven's housing stock is in structures containing 5 or more units. Fifty-one percent of all housing units in town have more than 2 bedrooms. Eighty-one percent all all housing units in Fairhaven were built before 1970. Seventy percent of housing in Fairhaven is owner-occupied. These summary data show Fairhaven as an older stable community where single-family homes predominate.

Owner-occupied housing has a median value that is about 75% of the statewide average, and is below that of other nearby communities, excepting New Bedford. Contract rents for housing in Fairhaven are slightly higher than surrounding communities, reflecting the extremely tight rental housing market in town. Data are shown on Table 3.

Table 3  
Value of Owner Occupied Housing, 1990

	<u>Lower Quartile</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>Upper Quartile</u>
State	\$126,800	\$162,800	\$216,000
Bristol County	113,100	141,700	173,500
<b>Fairhaven</b>	<b>96,800</b>	<b>121,900</b>	<b>148,800</b>
Acushnet	104,800	129,700	160,200
Dartmouth	114,700	149,100	196,400
New Bedford	90,900	115,900	141,800
	<u>Contract</u>	<u>Rents</u>	<u>1990</u>
Bristol County	\$208	\$345	\$484
<b>Fairhaven</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>506</b>
Acushnet	219	378	459
Dartmouth	182	320	521
New Bedford	191	313	422

Data in Table 4 show the average sales prices of single family homes in 1994 in Fairhaven, and in other housing market area communities. Comparative prices in 1994 are consistent with historical and anticipated trends, according to local real estate brokers, who also report that Fairhaven has a distinctive niche in the area housing market. This niche includes serving current and past (people who move back into town) Fairhaven residents, and other local area residents, particularly from New Bedford. Fairhaven appears to draw fewer buyers and renters from outside the local area on the lower cost end than New Bedford and Wareham, and on the higher cost end, compared to Mattapoisett, Marion and Rochester.

Table 4  
Average Sales Prices of Single Family Homes in the Local Housing Market Area, 1994

<u>Community</u>	<u>Sales Price</u>	<u>Compared to Fairhaven</u>
Marion	\$172,500	161%
Mattapoissett	166,000	155
South Dartmouth	160,700	150
Rochester	157,700	146
North Dartmouth	141,200	132
Acushnet	117,700	110
<b>Fairhaven</b>	<b>107,000</b>	<b>100</b>
Wareham	81,300	76
All (Including New Bedford)	\$123,200	115%

Future population change has important implications for housing in Fairhaven. Table 5 shows a comparison of population by 10 year age cohorts. There will be substantial aging of the population. For example, by 2010 there are expected to be about 1150 more people over age 50 in town, than there were in 1990. In the young age groups there are expected to be about 130 fewer people under age 30 by 2010. In the group between age 30 and 50 there are expected to be about 140 more people in 2010 than in 1990. The major implication is that there will be a significant increase in demand for housing to suit the needs of people nearing and past retirement age, while the demand for housing for people under age 50 will remain about the same. One conclusion is that Fairhaven already has the housing stock in place to accommodate the demand for people under 50 years of age in 2010. These are primarily single-family detached homes with three or more bedrooms.

However, Fairhaven will need more housing with 1 or 2 bedrooms to accommodate the aging population. Because these people have less mobility than younger age groups, and very elderly people need more care, it would be wise to plan for new housing in areas where people can walk to shops and services, and to plan smaller 1 and 2 bedroom units. The "cluster" approach to housing development has, in our opinion, the best potential to address these requirements.

Table 5  
Forecast Population Change by Age Cohort, 1990 - 2010

<u>Age Cohort</u>	<u>Population in Cohort in 2010</u> <u>Compared to 1990</u>
80+	+462
70 - 79	- 293
60 - 69	+ 23
50 - 59	+965
40 - 49	+226
30 - 39	- 82
20 - 29	- 331
10 - 19	+183
Under 10	+ 21

The implications of forecast population change by age cohort on future demand for housing in Fairhaven are shown on Table 6. Assumptions about average household size, which help determine actual number of housing units, are typical of households in the age groups shown. The implications are clear. There will be less demand in 2010 than there is now for the traditional single family home with more than 2 bedrooms. There is likely to be significant increase in demand for smaller, more affordable housing units by persons in the 50 - 64 age group, whose children have grown beyond school age ("empty nesters"). There may be less demand for traditional "elderly housing," which targets early retirees (age 65 to 79). And there is likely to be increased demand for managed "lifecare" residential facilities for Fairhaven residents over age 80.

Table 6  
Long-Term Housing Demand Implications - 2010

<u>Ages</u>	<u>Change in No. of Persons</u>	<u>Average Household Size</u>	<u>Required No. of Units</u>	<u>Required Housing Type</u>
Under Age 50	- 451	3.0	- 150	2+ BR Family
50 - 64	+1,152	2.0	+576	1 - 2 BR Mixed
65 - 79	- 457	1.5	- 305	1 BR Elderly
Over Age 80	- 462	1.5	+308	1 BR Care Units
ALL AGES	+ 706	--	+429	

According to the 1991 Fairhaven Resident Survey single family homes are favored by a majority of people. A majority also opposed apartments and condominium units for new residential construction. A majority of residents also supported duplex units, with less than 1/3 of residents opposing them. (Two family housing structures were eliminated from the Fairhaven Zoning Bylaw several years ago.) Forecasts of population by age groups (cohorts) strongly indicates that duplex, townhouse and apartment units will be needed in the future, and that Fairhaven already has all the detached single family housing stock it will need in the future. Clearly, land use controls needs to be changed again to recognize new circumstances.

Smaller units (fewer bedrooms) on smaller lots, or otherwise more densely developed housing, increasing accessibility to shops and services, and increasing opportunities for social interaction, are what will be needed over the next 10 to 15 years. Given the relatively dense character of Fairhaven's older villages and neighborhoods (which residents want to preserve), construction of smaller dwelling units, infilling the existing residential area, or expanding them at their edges, preferably in clustered developments, would seem to be the most appropriate policy for future residential growth.

In the 1991 survey, Fairhaven residents also favored affordable housing for the elderly, including so-called in-law (accessory) apartments. Creation of these units, especially affordable housing for the elderly, can also be accomplished through the cluster approach to residential development.

### **Existing Affordable Housing**

In 1993, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Communities and Development (EOCD) certified 454 housing units in Fairhaven as qualified for the Subsidized Housing Inventory of all cities and towns in the state. This number represents 6.84 percent of the 6,639 year-round housing units in Fairhaven (1990 Census). Under M.G.L. 40B, developers of subsidized housing for low and moderate income persons may appeal local zoning decisions where communities have not achieved a target of 10 percent of qualified year-round units, notwithstanding other limiting conditions. Based on EOCD's certification, an additional 210 units of subsidized housing could be developed in Fairhaven to achieve Chapter 40B compliance. A number of communities, working through housing partnerships, have found that cluster zoning allows control of these projects in a way that satisfies state, local, and developer interests. With the aging of Fairhaven's current population, affordable housing for older persons will be a priority in coming years. This segment of the population, which prefers and needs smaller units and lot sizes, and locations as close as possible to existing or planned activity centers, should be targeted for subsidized housing to achieve the 10 percent Chapter 40B goals.

Cluster zoning also provides smaller, easier to care for, units of housing appealing to an aging population, who, as mentioned, will make up an increasing share of Fairhaven's population in the future. Smaller cluster units are generally less expensive than the units created under conventional zoning, providing more opportunities also for first-time home buyers. Graphic examples of cluster zoning are shown at the end of this chapter, illustrating how smaller, easier to care for units could be created, which also save open space for conservation and recreation. Many communities have adopted cluster zoning in recent years and now have successful examples of housing that meets the objectives of good land planning. Mattapoissett has a cluster housing section in its zoning bylaws, although no development has been completed under its provisions.

Towns may be proactive in achieving the intent of Chapter 40B, through EOCD's Local Initiative Program. In some instances, technical assistance provided to the community by EOCD may qualify as a "subsidy" within the meaning of Chapter 40B. The following Local Action Requirements are quoted from EOCD's Local Initiative Program Guidelines for Communities, dated January, 1992.

"Local Initiative Units must result from city or town action or approval and must be a condition of new construction, building conversion, adaptive re-use, substantial rehabilitation, or other regulatory or inclusionary zoning provisions. In addition, the units may not be developed with a comprehensive permit (for such projects see "Comprehensive Permit Projects").

"The following will generally be sufficient to satisfy this requirement provided that the municipal actions or approvals are conditioned, as a matter of record, upon the provision of low or moderate income housing:

- (1) Zoning-based approval including rezoning, special permits, density bonuses, site plan review or subdivision approval.
- (2) Financial assistance from funds raised, appropriated or administered by the community.
- (3) Provision of land or buildings that are owned or acquired by the community and conveyed at a below-market cost."

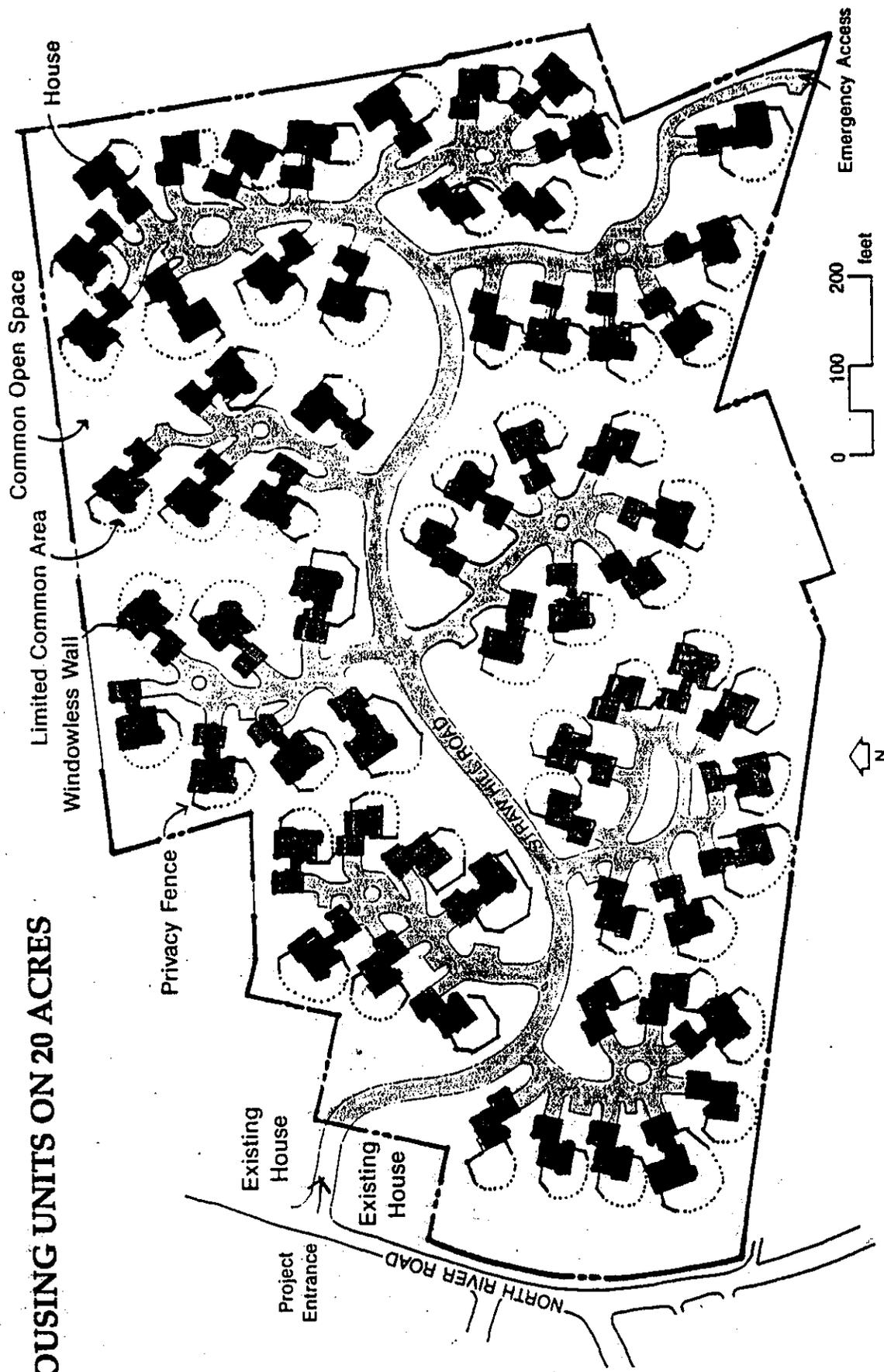
"Even if housing units happen to be occupied by low or moderate income persons, they may not qualify as Local Initiative Units unless there are income restrictions that resulted directly from municipal action. Local Initiative Units must have been created or converted to affordable housing for the explicit purpose of serving low or moderate income persons."

Cluster zoning, such as that recommended in the Master Plan, with density bonuses, applied to facilitate the development of housing units for low and moderate income elderly or other households, would be considered part of qualified local actions under EOCD's Local Initiative Program.



# CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

## 65 HOUSING UNITS ON 20 ACRES



Source: Urban Land Institute, Washington, D.C.

## 6. LAND USE

### Residential Densities

Compared to other towns in Massachusetts, overall residential densities in Fairhaven are considered low to moderate. Development in the past 30 years has tended to be low density, on lots of between 15,000 and 40,000 square feet. Older development tends to be on smaller lots, between 10,000 and 15,000 square feet, and is concentrated in Fairhaven Center, Oxford, North Fairhaven, and close to New Bedford Harbor and the Acushnet River. Development on Scotcut Neck consists of modest homes on lots of 15,000 square feet or larger. On West Island development has been denser, occurring on lots sometimes as small as 5,000 sq. ft., but averaging around 10,000 sq. ft. There are no extensive areas of very large lot sizes (over 60,000 square feet) in Fairhaven, although certain of the more recent development on scattered single lots in the northwest, more rural part of Town, occupies lots larger than 60,000 square feet.

There are no extensive areas of high residential density. There are a few apartment and attached single family (row house) developments in Town, but these tend to be scattered in areas of lower density. Several of the apartment developments serve a growing need for housing for the elderly. Residential density patterns are shown on the land use map (Map 5).

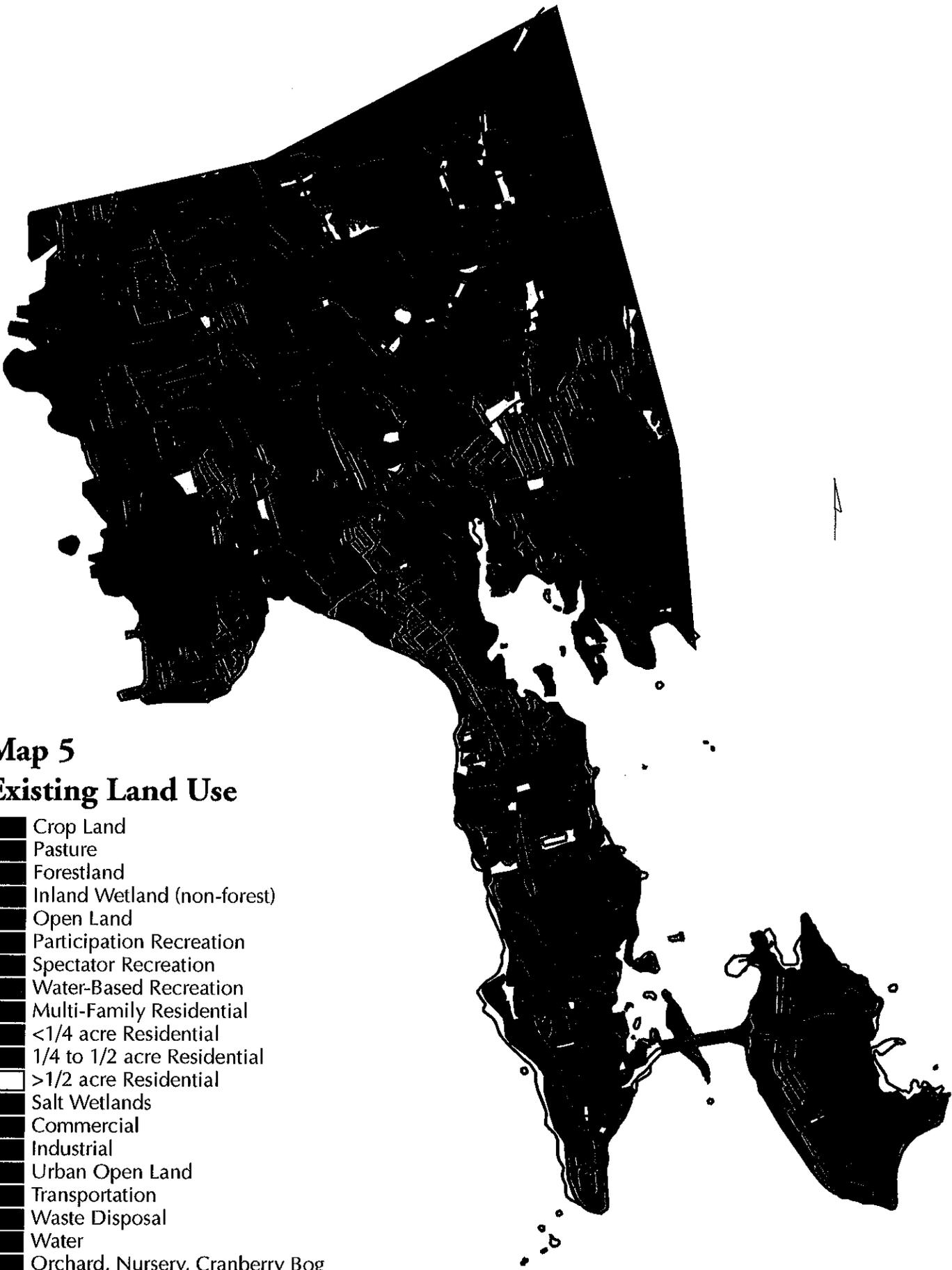
### Growth and Development Patterns

#### Land Use

Fairhaven is dominated by an "open" landscape. About 2/3 of its 8017 acres are forest and orchard (36%), farm and open land (21%), or wetland and salt marsh (9%). The 1/3 that is developed consists mainly of residential land (26%) with commercial and industrial accounting for 3%, and transportation and utilities accounting for 3%. Recreational and Waste Disposal make up the bulk of the remainder. Statistics in these categories for 1971 and 1985 are given in Table 7.

As noted earlier, growth since 1985 has continued to be slow, as shown by examining the record of building permits for the last five years for single-family and commercial uses (see Table 8. Between 1971 and 1995, it has been estimated that 3 to 4 acres of commercial and industrial land were converted from open and residential uses each year. For residential uses, the corresponding figure is 8 to 10 acres of land converted from open uses each year. Based on analysis of total open space loss shown over this period in Table 7, this leaves about 6 to 8 acres of undeveloped open land lost annually to other uses (transportation, active recreation, etc.).

Most of Fairhaven's residential development is located within one mile of New Bedford Harbor, in the western part of Town. The remaining residential development is on the northern one-half of Scotcut Neck, the western one-third of West Island, and along U.S. Route 6 (Huttleston Avenue) toward Mattapoisett. There are small scattered residential areas on the southern one-half of Scotcut Neck and in the rural northeast quadrant of Town.



## Map 5 Existing Land Use

- Crop Land
- Pasture
- Forestland
- Inland Wetland (non-forest)
- Open Land
- Participation Recreation
- Spectator Recreation
- Water-Based Recreation
- Multi-Family Residential
- <1/4 acre Residential
- 1/4 to 1/2 acre Residential
- >1/2 acre Residential
- Salt Wetlands
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Urban Open Land
- Transportation
- Waste Disposal
- Water
- Orchard, Nursery, Cranberry Bog

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The information depicted on this map is intended for planning purposes only and should not be considered appropriate for legal boundary definitions or regulatory interpretation.

Table 7  
Fairhaven Land Use in Acres

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
•Residential				
•Low and Medium Density	1,405	17.5	1,348	16.8
•High Density	660	8.2	649	8.1
•Commercial	170	2.1	138	1.7
•Industrial	69	0.9	56	0.7
•Transportation & Utils.	244	3.0	74	0.9
•Waste Disposal	59	0.7	41	0.5
•Recreation incl. Marina	78	1.0	80	1.0
•Recreational Beach	40	0.5	40	0.5
•Farm and Open Land	1,692	21.1	1,820	22.7
•Forest and Orchard	2,872	35.9	3,043	38.0
•Wetland & Salt Marsh	710	8.9	710	8.9
•Water (Inland)	18	0.2	18	0.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,017</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,017</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 8  
Building Permits Issued in the Last Five Years in Fairhaven

<u>Year</u>	<u>Single Family</u>	<u>Commercial</u>
1991	21	6
1992	23	9
1993	53	3
1994	46	3
1995	<u>17</u>	<u>6</u>
Totals	160	27

Most of Fairhaven's commercial and industrial development is located along U.S. Route 6, east of its intersection with State Route 240, or in Fairhaven Center, along the waterfront. There are small commercial and industrial areas in North Fairhaven, centered on Howland Road (industrial) and Main Street (commercial). As noted, a small industrial area abuts the Atlas Tack site in the southeast part of Fairhaven Center.

Because of the location of infrastructure and other factors, most proposed new development will be adjacent to existing, currently-developed areas. It is likely that this pattern will persist over the next 5 years, but that in the mid- and long-term future some of the more desirable sites with excellent views will be developed on agricultural land. This includes land in the northeast quadrant, along New Boston Road, and Bridge Street, and land off of Shaw and Gillette Roads, just north of Shaw's Cove, with excellent water views. Appropriate zoning has the potential to attract new industry, and as noted, such new industry would be well located along State Route 240. Fairhaven has a favorable location and access situation, being traversed east-west by Interstate Route 195, with an intersecting north-south express highway, State Route 240. As noted, both the AT&T and Acushnet/Titleist/Footjoy facilities are located along Route 240, where much of the area is zoned for industry.

South and west of David Drown Boulevard extending to Priests Cove on Buzzards Bay, lies a large area that is also currently zoned industrial. It contains the Atlas Tack Site, a boat yard, and some metal working shops nearby. Because of extensive tidal wetlands, and the existence of a hurricane barrier just south of an abandoned rail right-of-way that traverses the area from east to west, most of the industrially zoned area to the south of the rail line will never be developed.

Also zoned for industry is the working waterfront in Fairhaven Center, as is a waterfront area in North Fairhaven on either side of the Howland Road Bridge leading to New Bedford. There are also small scattered industrial and commercial activities in the area, which are not especially waterfront-related uses. Nevertheless, there is some potential for more industrial or commercial development in this area because of good access to Interstate 195 via the Howland Road Bridge through a portion of New Bedford. Mitigating against this potential, however, is a local traffic capacity problem in

the area which might tend to limit the area's appeal to smaller firms, especially since there is some industry across the river in New Bedford.

On balance, it is unlikely that Fairhaven will be the recipient of more large employment developments on the scale of Acushnet/Titleist/Footjoy and AT&T. The economy of the New Bedford region has been more or less depressed for the last thirty years, and other nearby towns including New Bedford compete vigorously within the region for new employment with modern, fully-serviced, industrial parks.

### **Long-Term Development Patterns**

Current zoning favors more residential development, with about 90% of the Town being zoned for residential uses. Minimum lot size in the single-family residential zone is 15,000 square feet. This zoning predominates in most of the Town west of State Route 240, the most northerly portion of Sciticut Neck and the area in East Fairhaven along U.S. Route 6. Most of Sciticut Neck, all of West Island and the northeast quadrant of Town are zoned rural residential, which requires a minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet. In the single family residential zone, 100 foot lot frontage is required, with this figure increasing to 140 feet in the rural residential zone. Both zones require that no more than twenty-five percent of lots be covered by buildings. However, there is no requirement for maximum coverage of impervious (e.g., paved) surfaces on residential lots.

An agricultural zone with a 50,000 square foot minimum lot size exists in the southeast part of the mainland (the agricultural area north of Shaw's Cove). It requires 200 feet of lot frontage. There is also a water protection overlay district in the vicinity of the Nasketucket River from U.S. Route 6 north to the Acushnet town line, bounded on the east by New Boston Road and on the west by the industrial area lining State Route 240. The overlay district regulates uses to prevent any penetration of pollutants into the watershed. The agricultural district, rural residential districts and the area contained in the watershed protection district are largely undeveloped.

### **New Subdivisions**

Eight subdivisions containing 100 lots were approved in the last several years and are nearly filled with single family homes. An additional three subdivisions, containing forty-three lots, have been recently approved. For the most part, they tend to be located adjacent to existing residential development and do not represent intrusions into undeveloped areas.

### **Effects on Existing Open Space**

There are no subdivisions that represent intrusions into heretofore undeveloped areas. The new subdivisions and proposed sewer system expansion projects will tend to constrain any new development to extensions of current development. Of the eleven new subdivisions, nine, containing a total of seventy-nine lots, are located in already-developed areas. Four of these subdivisions, containing a total of sixty-four lots, represent an expansion toward the open farmland north of Shaw's Cove, although these are adjacent to existing development in East Fairhaven, south of U. S. Route 6.

Fairhaven has been successful in maintaining some control over the geographical distribution of new development by allowing small lots (less than one acre) that need to be serviced by sewer lines. This practice has helped to ensure that residential expansion remains concentrated around the margins of already-developed areas.

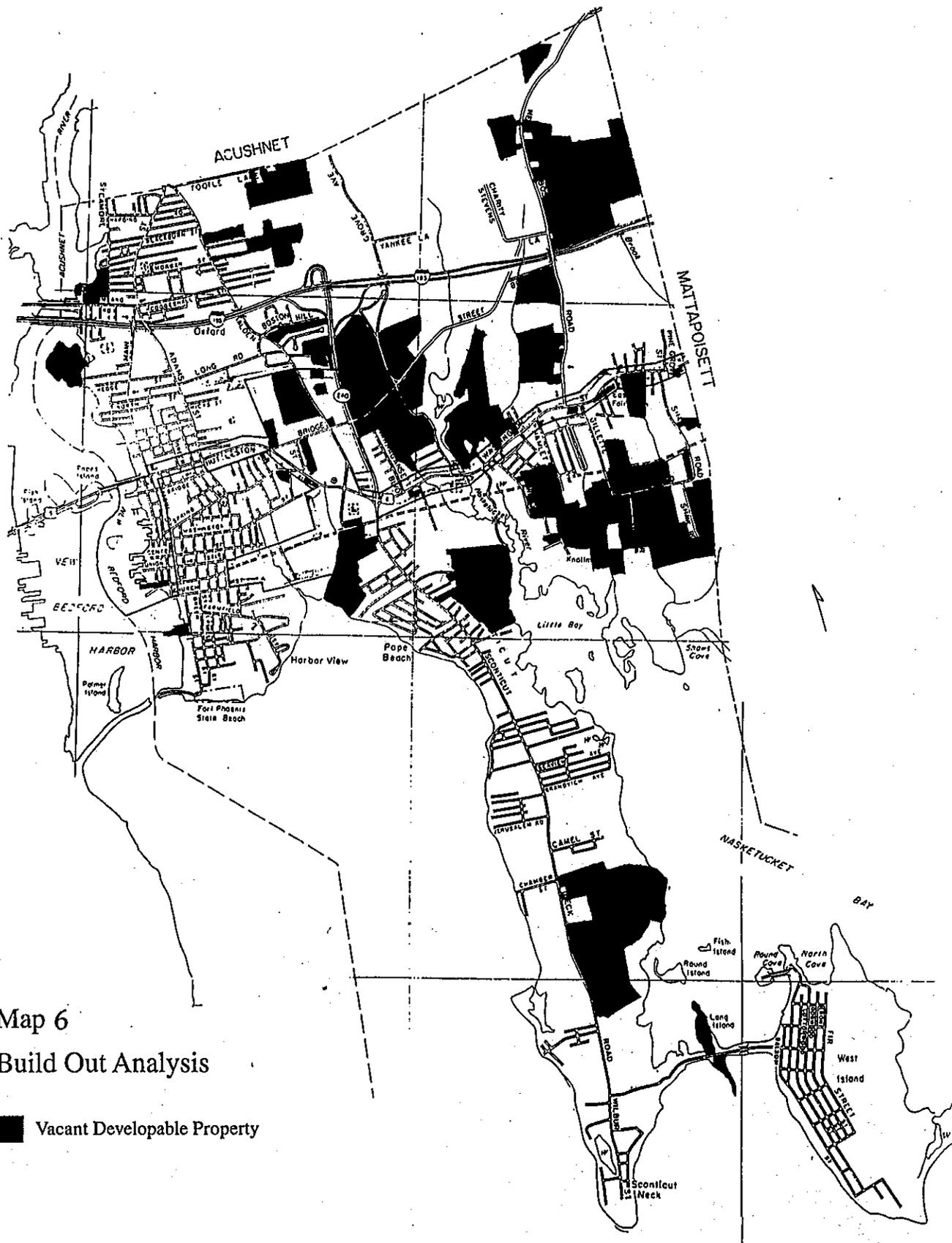
### **Residential Build-out Analysis**

A residential build-out analysis was completed by PCI to determine whether sufficient land remains to accommodate the development projected over the 25-year planning period (to the year 2020). Results of this analysis are shown in Table 9 and Map 6. The build-out analysis shows that 1400 new dwelling units could be accommodated, allowing for about 15% of new residential land for streets to provide access to the house lots; and, using the 1990 figure of 2.49 people per household, this level of growth corresponds to an additional population of about 3400 persons, for a total of 19,500. This is well below the projected figures of about 1700 new persons and 700 new dwelling units, given current and past growth rates. The figures for vacant available developable land were those areas currently zoned RA (single family) RR (rural residential), or A (agricultural). No residential development was assumed on land zoned B (business) or I (industrial) for the reason that such development is currently not permitted under the Town's zoning bylaw.

The residential build-out analysis reflects an average number of dwelling units per acre to be 1.63, with a corresponding average lot size of 26,700 sq. ft. These are computed from the currently allowed minimum lot sizes in the Town's zoning bylaw.

Fairhaven is likely to continue to experience the kind of slow growth that has prevailed over the last 25 years. This view has been confirmed by three population projections prepared since 1993, shown in Table 1. The projection prepared by Planners Collaborative, based on a qualitative extrapolation of past growth, shows 1671 new people in Fairhaven by 2020. Using the 1990 population per household figure of 2.49, this translates into some 671 households. Over the 25 year projection period, this averages out to 27 new housing units per year, which falls within the range shown on Table 8 for single family building permits for the years 1991 to 1994. With reasonable assumptions about the distribution of lot sizes, it is expected that the 671 new housing units will consume about 370 acres of land, a figure well within Fairhaven's stock of about 980 acres of vacant developable land zoned for residential use.

The figures for vacant developable land by zoning category are shown on Table 9. They are calculated from records compiled by the Town's Selectmen's Office in a report entitled "Town of Fairhaven Developable Land Survey, 1992." This report contains a parcel-by-parcel status report on land considered available and developable. For purposes of this survey, developability was defined in terms of wetlands located on each parcel in such a way as to prohibit development. (See Map 2.) In the Fairhaven Developable Land Survey, acreage of wetlands are identified on each parcel record, as are zoning categories. Where more than one category exists on a parcel, the Town zoning district map was consulted to determine how many acres of each parcel falls in each zoning district. Most parcels identified are vacant, although some "redevelopable"



Map 6  
Build Out Analysis

■ Vacant Developable Property

The information depicted on this map is intended for planning purposes only and should not be considered appropriate for legal boundary definitions or regulatory interpretation.

property is included; that is, those with structures capable of being altered or torn down. Redevelopable property was not considered vacant in our analysis.

If commercial and industrial activities continue to consume 3 to 4 acres of land each year, by the year 2020 they will fill up the 98 vacant acres of land currently zoned for those uses. However, it is expected that some new commercial and industrial activities will occupy land currently developed for those uses, through a process of expanding existing structures, as allowed under zoning.

### **Implications**

Fairhaven clearly has sufficient land to accommodate residential growth anticipated over the next 15 to 25 years. However, it is apparent from work carried out in the preliminary preparation of this Master Plan that the Town wishes new development to occur through a process of in-fill and small additions adjacent to existing development. This pattern would continue a trend apparent over the last five years. Demographic analysis shows a shift in the demand in relation to unit size distribution, however, smaller one- and two-bedroom housing units will be needed to accommodate the needs of the aging population. As already noted, Fairhaven probably has all the three bedroom and larger housing units needed to accommodate future growth. Also, as the population ages, walking accessibility to shopping and services will become more important. There is adequate land interspersed and adjacent to existing development in the west of Fairhaven. Town policy favors development of this land, in areas where sewer and water services exist, over development of relatively isolated land in eastern Fairhaven.

It is also clear from the statement of goals and objectives, that the Town wishes to preserve the existing open land it has, including the few remaining operating farms. This goal derives from a desire to preserve important views, landscape character, and traditional activities, as well as an intent to contain new development in a way that minimizes infrastructure costs and maximizes accessibility. It is therefore very clear that the systematic protection of open space will be a central component of Fairhaven's growth management strategy.

In light of growth trends, Town goals and the character of the land, it is clear that the areas along the coast of Buzzard's Bay are those requiring highest priority in open space protection. The area around Little Bay is probably of highest priority because it lies in the path of immediate growth and expansion, and the waters of Little Bay are subject to "Conditional Closure" for shellfishing following three days of rainfall. These water quality problems are caused by local on-site wastewater septic systems, and stormwater runoff conditions. The area north of Shaw's Cove is also in the path of advancing development, and should receive the next highest priority. Southern Sciticut Neck should be protected to preserve some beach access and traditional salt marsh areas, and to reduce the incidence of flooding from ocean storms. The area between Route 6 and I-195 in East Fairhaven should also be protected for the sake of fresh water resources in the area (the Nasketucket River Watershed). Finally, in order to promote the survival of operating farms, the area north of I-195 in the eastern part of Town should also be the focus of protective measures.

Table 9  
Fairhaven Residential Build-Out Analysis

Acres of Vacant Developable Land by Zoning District*					Allowed Dwelling Units/ Acre**	Total Allowed D. U.s (- 15% for <u>Streets</u> )
RA (S. Fam.)	RR (Rural Res.)	A (Agriclt.)	B (Business)	I (Industrial)		
283.83					2.90	700
	434.14				1.45	535
		164.72			0.87	122
			18.16		0	0
				<u>79.51</u>	0	<u>0</u>
Total Developable Vacant Acres					980.36	
Total Allowed Dwelling Units						1357
Average Dwelling Units per Acre = 1.63					Average Lot Size = 26,723 sq. ft.	

\* As shown in the Town of Fairhaven Developable Land Survey, 1992.

\*\* Computed from the allowed Minimum Lot Sizes: RA = 15,000 sq. ft.  
 RR = 30,000 sq. ft.  
 A = 50,000 sq. ft.

1357 Dwelling Units x 2.49 (1990 level) people/household = 3379 new people  
 + 16132 1990 population  
 = 19511 Build-Out Population  
 = 21.0% increase

1357 new dwelling units  
 + 7093 1990 dwelling units  
 = 8450 Build-Out Dwel. Units  
 = 19.1% increase

The highest population projection shows a year 2020 level of 17,800.\*\*\* This is 1700 people less than the build-out population of about 19,500.

\*\*\* Population projection based on extrapolating the growth trend from 1960 to 1990. MISER (State of Massachusetts) and SRPEDD (the regional planning agency) show lower future population estimates. MISER = 16,800 for the year 2010  
 SRPEDD = 16,600 for the year 2000

### **Development Impact**

Residential development is beginning to impinge on traditional farm land in Fairhaven, in the Shaw's Cove area and in the northeast quadrant of Town. This is regarded as a very important issue by town residents, as indicated by open space plan meetings and discussions. Although these areas are zoned Agricultural and Rural Residential respectively, large lot (over 30,000 sq. ft.) development has recently occurred there. There continues to be developer interest in creating more residences in these areas. Several farm owners are approaching retirement age and have shown some interest in selling their property. Some property owners are using the 61A Program to receive tax abatements, but some owners have dropped out of this program. Clearly the farms need more attention and protection than they have had in the past.

## 7. TRANSPORTATION

### Roadways

Fairhaven has a well-developed roadway system (shown on Map 7) that is capable of supporting projected future development. Access to the regional transportation system is quite good via Routes I-195, I-95, I-495, State Route 240, and U.S. Route 6. The approximately 100 miles of Town roads are well maintained. The major improvements needed are traffic control changes in commercial locations experiencing significant traffic growth in recent years. Map 8 shows average daily traffic flow in Fairhaven on its most important roads. Most congestion occurs in the Fairhaven Center area bounded by Route 6, South Street and Pleasant Street. Route 6 itself in this area carries about 20,000 vehicles per day. Map 9 shows 12 hour traffic flows on the streets in Fairhaven Center.

There have been several proposals to improve traffic conditions. They have been documented by various studies, most notably the 1994 Berdon Plaza Traffic Impact Study for the area at the intersection of Route 6 and 240. A number of private on-site traffic improvements are proposed for the Plaza. Proposed public improvements consist of installing a traffic light at the intersection of Washington Street and Route 6, and upgrading the traffic light at the intersection of State Route 240 and Route 6 to allow for north-south left turn arrows in the light cycle. Left turn storage lanes should also be installed for the north-south roadways here. This is an intersection with traffic safety problems (53 accidents between 1991 and 1993), and some congestion during peak hours. Traffic improvements at this intersection are merited, not only by the Berdon Plaza expansion, but also by other commercial expansion that will occur in the immediate area. This is the area where future commercial expansion should be located, and market conditions show that such expansion is very likely to occur.

The following tables show levels of service estimated for four intersections in the Route 6 commercial area, under Berdon Plaza build and no-build conditions.

Table 10

### Unsignalized Intersection's Level of Service During the Afternoon Peak Hour

<u>Location of Intersection</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>No-Build in 1999</u>	<u>Build in 1999</u>
Route 6 at Washington Street (With a new traffic light)	F	F B	F B
Sconticut Neck Road at Drown Blvd.	D	D	D

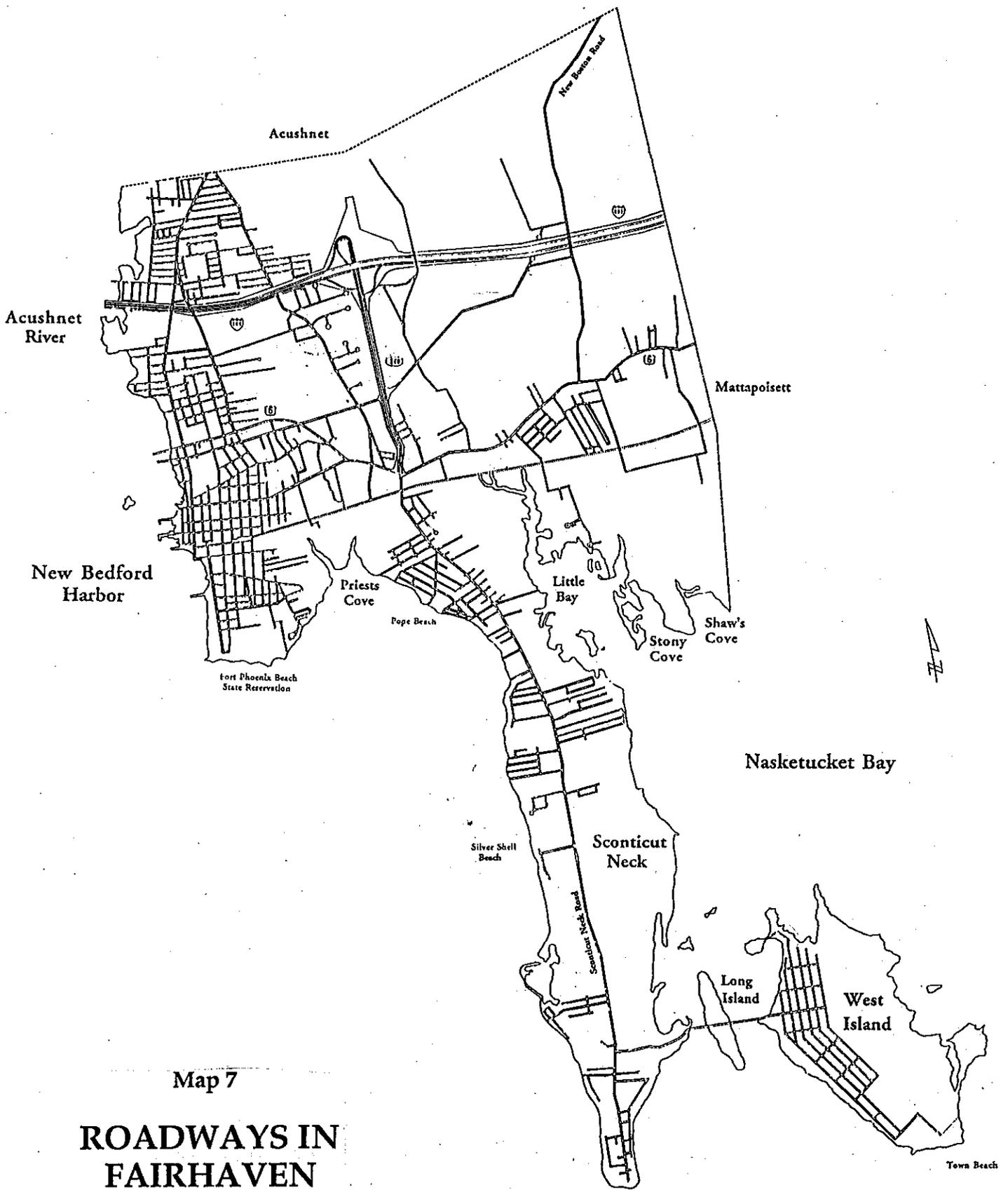


Table 11

**Signalized Intersection's Level of Service During the Afternoon Peak Hour**

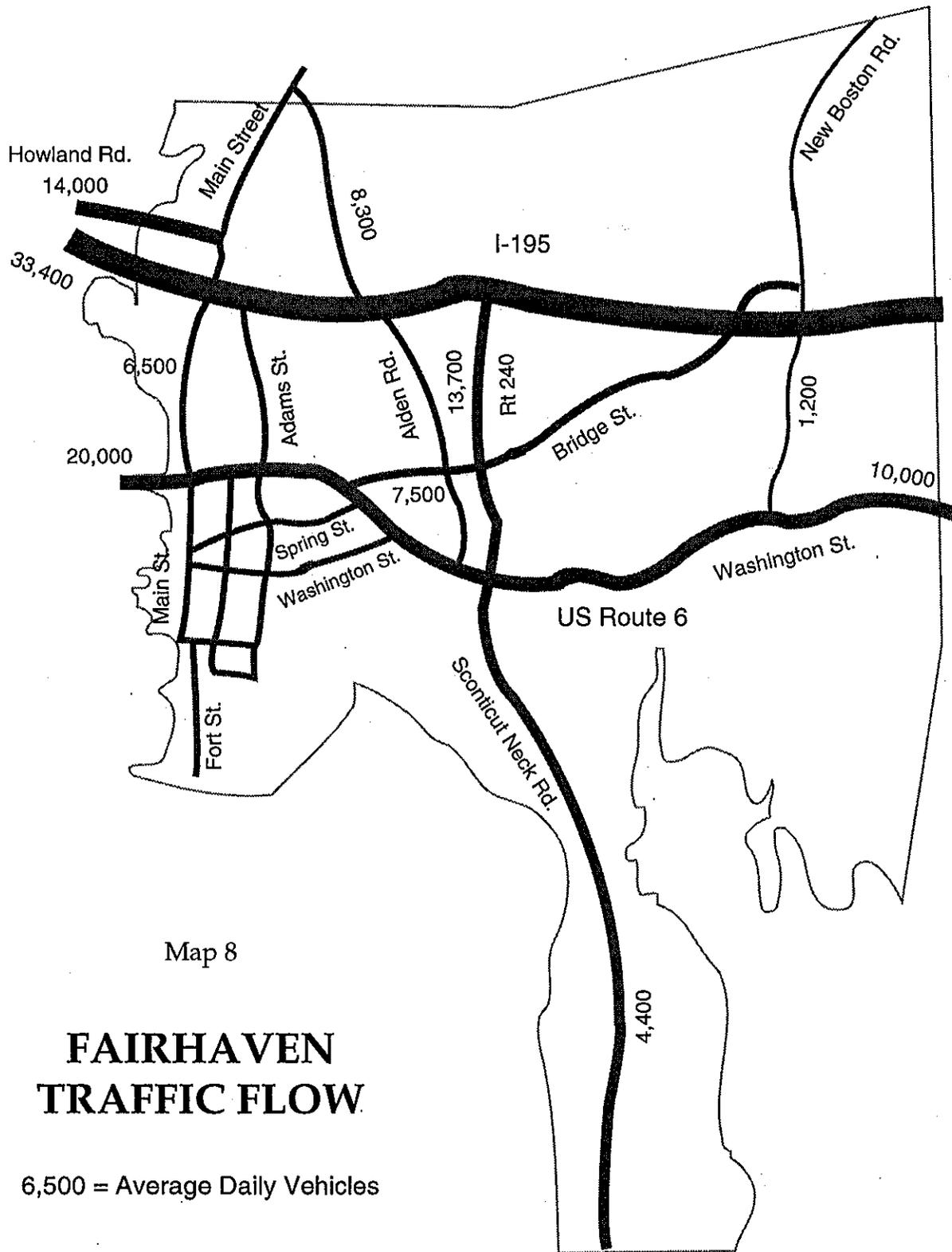
<u>Location of Intersection</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>No-Build in 1999</u>	<u>Build in 1999</u>
Route 6 at Alden Road Extension	C	C	C
Route 6 at Route 240	B	B	B

Level of service (LOS) is a standard used for traffic engineering. LOS expresses the amount of delay to motorists caused by congestion. A is the best, being defined as the least delayed or congested condition. Levels down to D are considered acceptable. The analysis shown in Table 10 shows a dramatic improvement (from LOS F to B) from installation of a traffic light at the intersection of Washington Street and Route 6. Other levels of service are expected to remain the same with the Berdon Plaza development. The reasons for recommending left turn lanes and arrows on the traffic light at the Route 6/Route 240 intersection are for traffic safety, and to allow for more traffic that will occur with more commercial development, beyond the Berdon Plaza expansion.

It is recommended that new roadways be created on the sites of the existing Wal-Mart and K-Mart plazas. These roadways should be created when there is a market for creating more commercial space on these sites. The roadways should pass to the west of the existing buildings and provide connections for complete circulation around the buildings, with connections to existing public roadways. The purpose of the new roadways is to provide for more commercial expansion on these sites, reducing the need to develop other commercial areas in town. This proposal is discussed further in the commercial chapter of this plan.

Another recommended improvement is building an extension of David Drown Boulevard to South Street in Fairhaven Center, along the existing rail right-of-way. This roadway would include an adjacent multi-purpose bike and walking path, and an alternate route water line to serve Sciticut Neck and West Island. The multi-purpose path would continue to the east of Sciticut Neck Road along the rail right-of-way. The proposed roadway to Fairhaven Center would allow traffic to get to the center more easily from Sciticut Neck, West Island and Route 240. It would reduce truck traffic that now filters south along Main Street and parallel streets in Fairhaven Center (which are narrow) to get to the waterfront. Such a new roadway would also increase the desirability of the Atlas Tack site for development. The water line would provide Sciticut Neck and West Island with service in case of a problem with the existing line running south from Route 6.

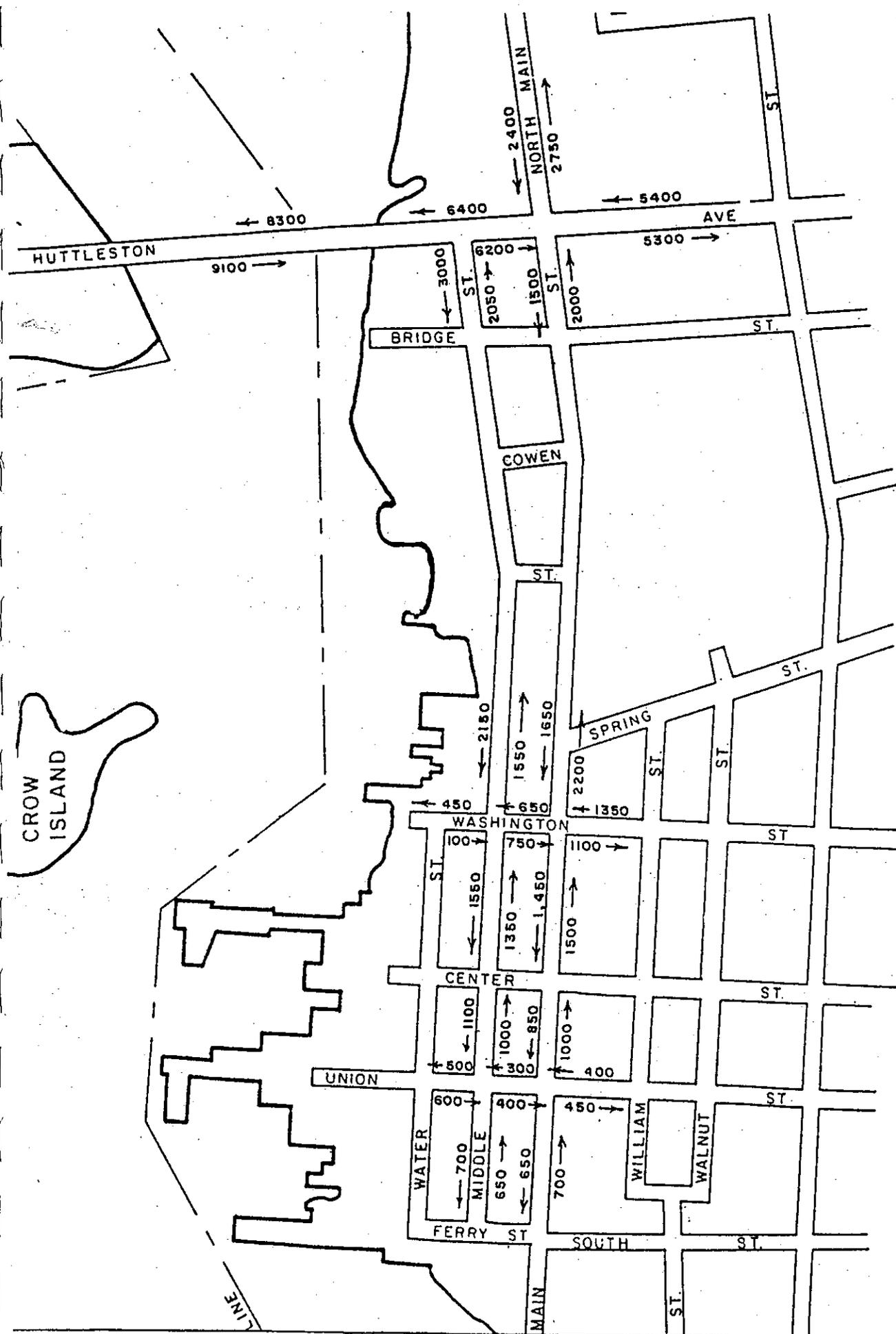
There is general support for the proposed roadway. It has been proposed before, but was shelved because of questions raised by people concerned with the impact of increased traffic on Rogers School. Traffic control and design measures could be implemented that would minimize these impacts. Stop signs, speed limits,



Map 8

# FAIRHAVEN TRAFFIC FLOW

6,500 = Average Daily Vehicles



Map 9

landscaping and noise baffles would help with this situation. There is also general support for the multi-purpose path to be extended from South Street to the Mattapoissett town line. It will provide a main recreational corridor leading to other paths and recreational sites. It is discussed further in the chapter on open space and recreation.

It would also be desirable to change the timing on the lights controlling the intersection of Adams Street and Route 6. More green time is needed for Adams Street. There is a school crossing guard at this location who does a very good job and helps general access onto Route 6, in addition to protecting walking school children. Two other situations need improvement. These are the intersections of Main Street and Route 6, which is the second worst accident location in Fairhaven, and the intersections of Main Street, Adams Road, Howland Road and Coggeshall Street in North Fairhaven. Some increased signage and signal timing improvements are needed at these intersections to improve safety and traffic flow conditions.

It would also be desirable to create some off-street parking for commercial activities at the intersections of Adams Road and Coggeshall Street, Howland Road and Main Street, and Adams Road and Main Street. Howland Road crossing over to New Bedford carries 14,000 vehicles each day. Main Street in North Fairhaven carries about 7,000 vehicles each day. On-street parking in the area interferes with traffic flow. However, given the relatively high density of development in the area, off-street parking may only be possible by demolishing or moving a building or two. This should be considered in a more detailed study of the future of this commercial area.

Table 12 on the next page shows the high accident intersections in Fairhaven in 1994. The most prominent of these locations is the Route 6/Route 240 intersection. This location is followed in severity by Route 6/Alden Road and Route 6/Adams Street. Route 6 figures prominently in all but 4 of the 11 locations shown on Table 12.

Table 12  
1994 High Accident Intersections in Fairhaven

<u>Intersection</u>	<u>Property Damage Only</u>	<u>Injury</u>	<u>Fatality</u>	<u>Total</u>
Rte 6/Rte. 240/Sconticut Rd.	11	4	0	15
Route 6 @ Alden Road	8	3	0	11
Route 6 @ Adams Street	6	4	0	10
Route 6 @ Main Street	6	3	0	9
Route 6 @ Bridge Street	6	3	0	9
Route 6 @ Middle Street	3	5	0	8
Route 240 @ Bridge Street	4	3	0	7
Washington St. @ Middle St.	6	1	0	7
Bridge St. @ Alden Road	7	0	0	7
Route 6 @ Green St.	4	2	0	6
Main St. @ Howland Road	2	3	0	5

Between 1991 and 1993 there were 4 fatalities along Route 6 in Fairhaven. Excessive speed and numerous turning movements were reported by the police in these accidents. Excessive speed occurs more often on Route 6 in East Fairhaven where there is only one traffic light (at New Boston Road). Sight distances on this stretch of highway are not good because the road has five curves in its alignment. More rigorous law enforcement is one way of maintaining speeds within the posted limit.

There has been an increased level of truck traffic on Pleasant Street recently. Exclusion of trucks on Pleasant Street and possibly other streets should be studied and recommended if feasible. Truck exclusions could be done for only certain hours of the day, if desirable. Building the proposed westward extension of David Drown Boulevard on the rail right-of-way would help, diverting some truck traffic to it.

A multi-purpose bicycle trail built in the rail right-of-way (separate from the proposed roadway), and continuing in the rail right-of-way east to the Mattapoissett town line, would be a transportation as well as a recreational facility. It would serve transportation purposes because it would be used for shopping and work trips destined for the commercial area along and north of David Drown Boulevard. People from Fairhaven Center and East Fairhaven would use the multi-purpose bicycle trail to get to the shops and offices in this important commercial area.

There is a need to inform motorists when the Route 6 Bridge across New Bedford Harbor is raised. Some signal warning approaching motorists that the bridge was up or about to go up would be helpful.

Parking in Fairhaven Center will probably always be a problem because it has smaller streets and closer buildings than in other parts of town. However, there is not much retail or office activity in Fairhaven Center, and maintaining the historic character of

the area is more important than providing more parking. There is no space to provide off-street parking in sufficient size to alleviate on-street parking. Demolishing or moving buildings to provide parking should not be considered because of the historic nature of the structures in the area.

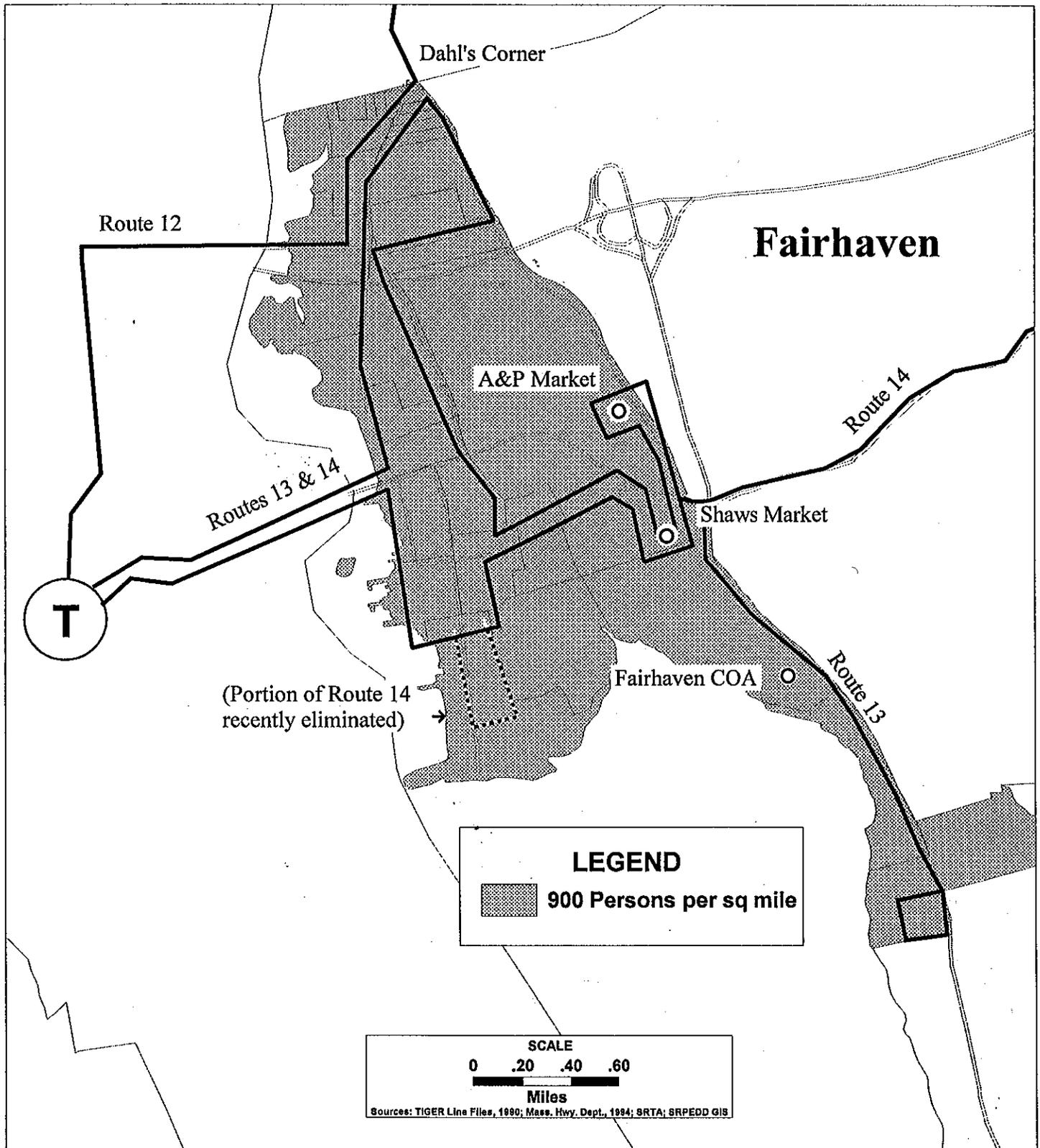
### **Public Transportation**

Fairhaven is served by The Southeast Regional Transit Authority (SRTA) bus routes numbers 12, 13 and 14. All three routes run to downtown New Bedford. Route 12 crosses the Howland Road Bridge, serving North Fairhaven and Acushnet. Routes 13 and 14 cross the Route 6 Bridge and serve North Fairhaven, Oxford, Fairhaven Center and the shopping plazas around Route 240. Route 13 serves the northern part of Sconticut Neck, while Route 14 serves East Fairhaven and Mattapoisett. These routes are shown on Map 10. Route 12 has 2 hour service (6 runs per day), while Routes 13 and 14 have 3 hour service (3 runs per day with four on Saturday). The fare is \$0.75 per zone. Ridership on these routes is low, and they are currently being studied. Existing population and commercial centers are currently being served by these routes. Because it is desirable for future development to occur in these areas, it will also be desirable to maintain the existing routes and schedules. With more population and commercial activities in these areas, it may be possible to increase the frequency of bus services in the future. The Fairhaven Master Plan recommends that future population and commercial growth be concentrated in areas served by public transportation.

SRTA operates a demand responsive curb-to-curb public transportation service for disabled persons. It operates on an appointment basis, once eligibility of each applicant has been established. This service is system-wide and includes the towns of Fairhaven, Acushnet, Dartmouth, Mattapoisett, Somerset, Swansea and Westport, and the cities of New Bedford and Fall River. The fare for this service is \$1.00 per zone.

All traffic improvements proposed are shown on Map 11.

# SRTA Routes 12, 13 and 14





## 8. INFRASTRUCTURE (Non-Transportation)

This section addresses all non-transportation-related infrastructure. Transportation infrastructure is discussed in the previous Transportation Chapter.

### Existing Conditions

#### Wastewater Treatment:

The town's wastewater treatment plant was substantially rehabilitated and upgraded six years ago (1990) and now has an excess, or unused, capacity estimated at .5 MGD. It has the capability to accommodate growth well in excess of that expected to be experienced by Fairhaven over the remainder of its useful life. (The plant has a life of 20 years, which means it will need replacement or substantial rehabilitation in about 14 years, or around the year 2010.) It will be important to plan enterprise fund reserves in anticipation of rehabilitation and/or expansion, although it is difficult to predict the presence of governmental assistance programs to aid in the capital costs of construction.

In 1994, the wastewater treatment plant received for processing an average to 2.17 million gallons of wastewater each day (2.17 MGD), 15 MGD of which originated in Mattapoissett. Assuming that the Fairhaven-only influent contribution is therefore approximately 2.02 MGD, and given the estimated 1995 population of 16,500, the daily wastewater load per person for 1995 can be calculated at  $2.02\text{M}/16,500$ , or 122 gallons/day. At this rate, the excess capacity of .5 MGD can provide wastewater treatment for an additional population of  $.5\text{MGD}/122\text{gallons} = 4098$  people, or for a total population of nearly 21,000. This puts the forecast year 2010 Fairhaven population of approximately 18,000 — an additional 1500 people over the 1995 level — easily within the service capacity of the current facility. In fact, if it were not for the need to consider rehabilitation of the plant by approximately 2010 — for wear and tear reasons — the excess capacity of the plant would probably *meet the needs of Fairhaven alone* for twenty to thirty years beyond 2010, given the growth prospects and real estate market in the area.

However, we may not be dealing with Fairhaven alone. Probably the most significant challenge to the treatment plant's capacity over the next 20 years is the prospect for residential growth in adjacent Mattapoissett (some of which is already planned), and the potential for sewer expansion in Mattapoissett to serve such growth by establishing new linkages with the sewer system in East Fairhaven. The wastewater plant currently has a reserve capacity for Mattapoissett of .25 MGD, which would, under the assumptions made above, meet the needs of approximately 2,000 additional Mattapoissett residents. Obviously, the acceptance of additional flows to the Fairhaven plant from Mattapoissett will have to be the subject of negotiations between the towns. For now, it will be enough to track growth trends in the western portion of Mattapoissett in order to anticipate the potential for the absorption of the excess capacity, with an eye toward incorporating a capacity increase into future rehabilitation planning activities for the wastewater treatment plant.

### Sewers:

As of spring 1995, there were 4,271 sewer connections in Fairhaven, with an average annual sewer bill of about \$230 per account. The sewer system is considered to be in a good overall condition, with some problems involving stormwater drainage. Stormwater runoff has presented problems in two locations: (1) the Cushman Park area in Fairhaven Center, and (2) the Livesy Park area of North Fairhaven. A study of the North Fairhaven problem was recently completed by Tibbets Engineering, with recommendations to upgrade the drainage in the area. Sewer improvements currently involve repair work to address inflow and infiltration problems that have been identified, drawing on the sewer enterprise funds.

### Water:

In mid-1995, Fairhaven's water system had 5,396 connections, with users paying an average annual bill of \$170. The town is nearly fully-covered by water service, and the percent of households without town water service is extremely small. The Town shares a well field with the Towns of Marion and Mattapoisett, each of which holds title to its own wells (see Map 13), located in Mattapoisett. An additional Town well, providing a potential additional drinking water source, is located in the Nasketucket River Watershed near two small ponds on the Nasketucket River located just north of U. S. Route 6 (see Map 12). Having once provided all of Fairhaven's drinking water, this well was deactivated due to water quality and drawdown problems.

Fairhaven drew about 1.5 million gallons of water (MGD) per day in 1994 from its five wells. This level represented a significant increase over the 1991 level of 1.35, via stepwise increases producing withdrawal levels in the intervening years of 1.37, 1.44 and 1.50. The source of these increases are unclear; they are, however, too great to be accounted for by residential growth alone.

Regarding the capacity for accommodating new growth, it is important to recognize that the rated yield for the town's wells is about 1.5 MGD, putting its current use rate at or near "capacity." Since "true" capacity for groundwater sources is subject to variation depending on definitions concerning the sustainability of a yield figure, this does not mean that Fairhaven is in danger of a water supply shortfall. Due to the nature of groundwater hydrology, one may withdraw different levels of yields that may be viewed as "safe," according to the length of time such yield levels may be safely sustained. Entering into such judgments are supply factors (lateral recharge and drawdown levels), environmental factors (wetland and fish habitat preservation), and water quality factors (potential of undesirable leachates penetrating a well's Zone of Influence). However, it does suggest that it will be important to resolve the matter of the town's request for Zone 2 approval from DEP, due to potential drawdown limits on the main wells.

Although Fairhaven has an agreement with the City of New Bedford to purchase water if required, the Town has not used any New Bedford-supplied water in the past nine

years and does not anticipate using any in the future. However, it is anticipated that this emergency arrangement will be maintained via a continuation — and possible renegotiation — of the agreement with New Bedford, after the current contract expires in 1998.

The town is currently in the process of updating the water system mapping on a CAD base, with the University of Massachusetts.

Water system improvements are concentrated on the identification of leaks and overall system rehabilitation, involving pipe replacement, repair, and the cleaning and relining of water pipes. Currently 11 to 12 % of water pumped is classified as "unaccounted for" in metering at delivery points. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management has mandated a leak detection program for the Town of Fairhaven, to identify water losses, which are valued at about \$100,000 each year. The town is considering a meter conversion program, to standardize and systematize the metering function for the purpose of reducing unaccounted-for water. The ongoing rehabilitation program has involved the replacement of 4" pipes with larger diameter pipes, along with general repair work. The town currently spends \$250,000 to \$350,000 per year on the cleaning and relining program. Water and sewer improvements are paid for from separate "enterprise funds" established with user fees derived on the basis of use levels.

The Town owns and operates two water towers that maintain adequate residential use pressure in high service areas. A third water tower is planned for the East Fairhaven area in the next several years, to improve water pressures needed for fire-fighting purposes in that area.

#### Solid Waste:

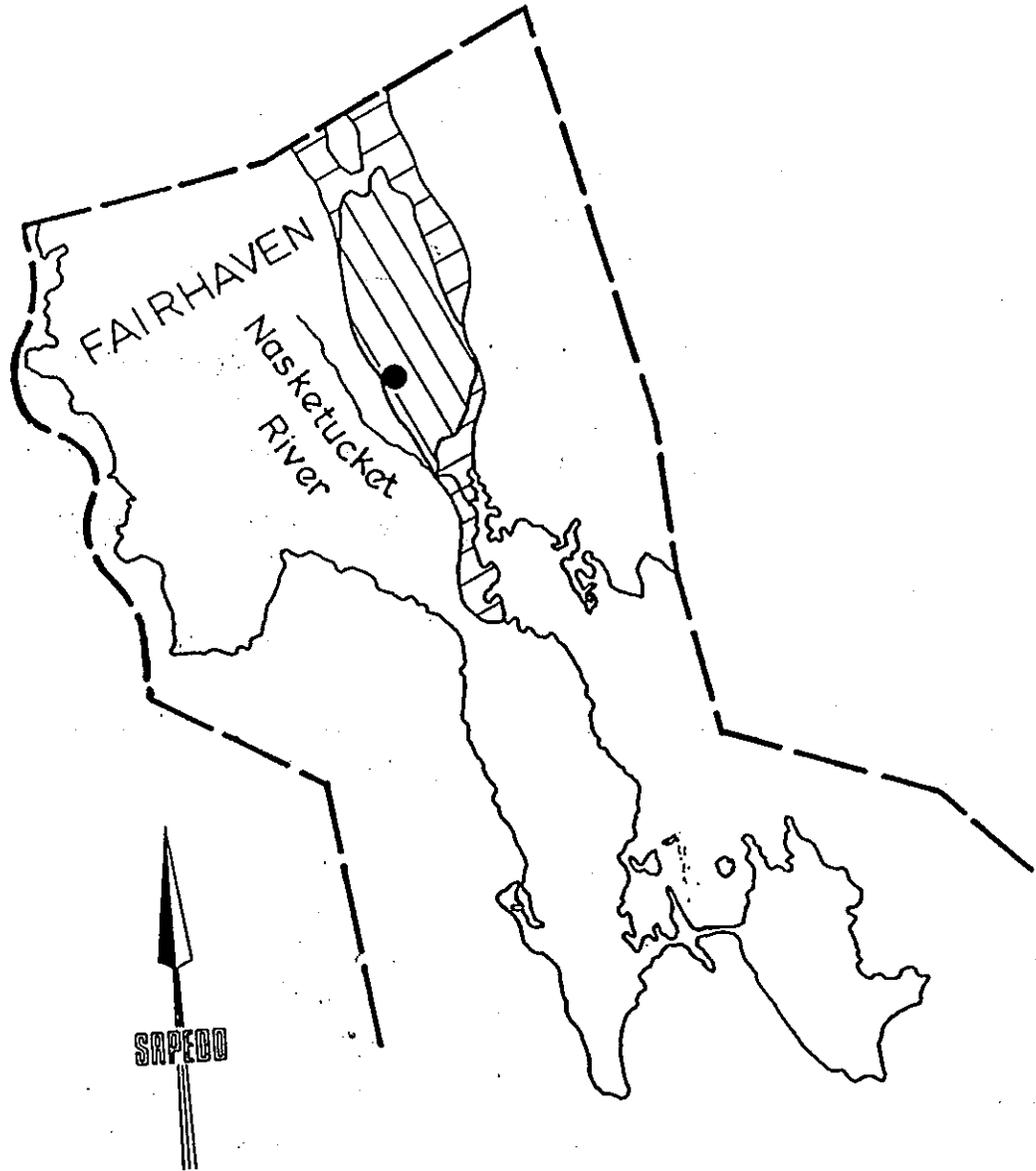
Fairhaven's solid combustible wastes are collected by a contractor and disposed of at the SEMASS waste-to-energy plant in Rochester. Fairhaven continues to operate a landfill just west of Alden Road on Bridge Street, where metals are recycled and waste water sludge is disposed. A landfill mining operation is now underway at the landfill. It is being done by a contractor and will be evaluated by both local and state officials to determine whether it should continue and be done in other communities. The Town is currently seeking a contractor who will reprocess wastewater sludge for sale as fertilizer, producing some revenues for the Town. There is a recycling center at the landfill that handles yard and garden wastes as well as oil, batteries and cardboard. Loam is being produced from the leaf and grass composting, and is available for public use.

#### **Infrastructure Expansion**

The sewerage of West Island is the principal infrastructure expansion or capital improvement project to which the Town is currently committed. The project includes a small waste water treatment plant to be built on West Island, and sewer lines that would provide the option of sewer service to all homes on the island. This facility is only to serve the currently-existing residences on the Island, and would not be designed

to accommodate any new development. Town Meeting in 1995 voted funds to provide the local share needed to carry out this project. The Town has applied for Federal funds from the Farmers Home Administration, which will be necessary in order for the project to be built. The location of the wastewater treatment plant is shown on Map 18.

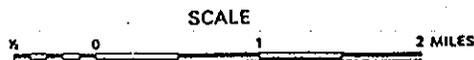
Toward the end of the planning horizon for the current master plan, the Town should consider replacement or substantial rehabilitation of the wastewater treatment plant. Necessary reserves to accomplish this should be set aside over the next 14 years. The planning and engineering studies for this should begin in 8 to 10 years.



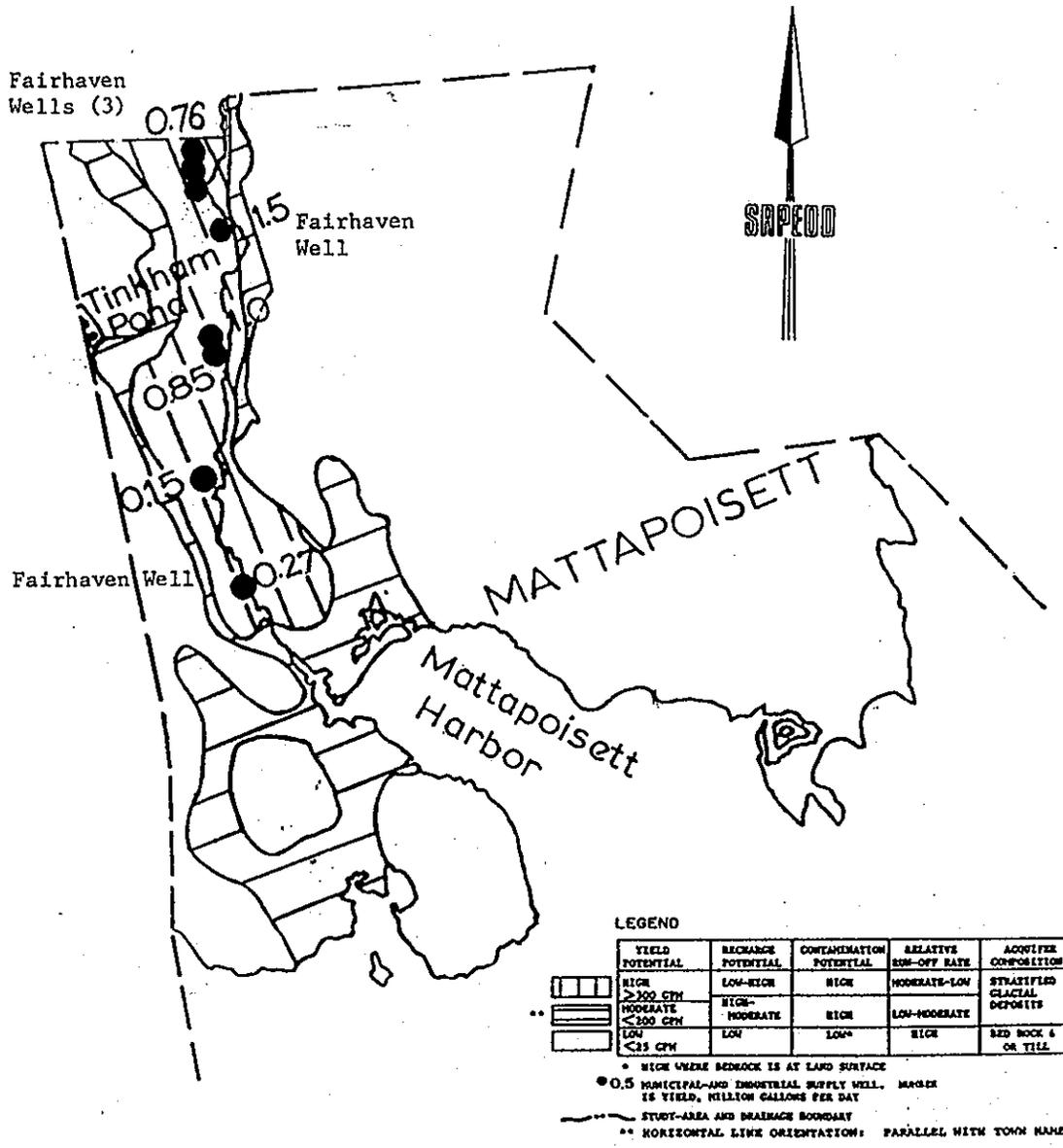
LEGEND

	YIELD POTENTIAL	RECHARGE POTENTIAL	CONTAMINATION POTENTIAL	RELATIVE RUN-OFF RATE	ACQUIFER COMPOSITION
	HIGH > 300 GPM	LOW-HIGH	HIGH	MODERATE-LOW	STRATIFIED GLACIAL DEPOSITS
	MODERATE < 300 GPM	HIGH-MODERATE	HIGH	LOW-MODERATE	
	LOW < 25 GPM	LOW	LOW*	HIGH	BED ROCK & OR TILL

- \* HIGH WHERE BEDROCK IS AT LAND SURFACE
- 0.5 MUNICIPAL AND INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY WELL. NUMBER IS YIELD, MILLION GALLONS PER DAY
- STUDY-AREA AND DRAINAGE BOUNDARY
- \*\* HORIZONTAL LINE ORIENTATION: PARALLEL WITH TOWN NAME



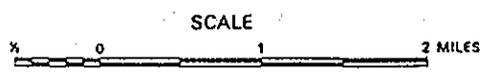
Map 12  
GROUNDWATER  
RESOURCES  
TOWN OF  
FAIRHAVEN



LEGEND

YIELD POTENTIAL	RECHARGE POTENTIAL	CONTAMINATION POTENTIAL	RELATIVE RUN-OFF RATE	AQUIFER COMPOSITION
HIGH > 300 GPM	LOW-HIGH	HIGH	MODERATE-LOW	STRATIFIED GLACIAL DEPOSITS
MODERATE < 300 GPM	HIGH-MODERATE	HIGH	LOW-MODERATE	
LOW < 25 GPM	LOW	LOW**	HIGH	BED ROCK & OR TILL

- \* HIGH WHERE BEDROCK IS AT LAND SURFACE
- 0.5 MUNICIPAL-AND INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY WELL. MAGNITUDE IS YIELD, MILLION GALLONS PER DAY
- STUDY-AREA AND DRAINAGE BOUNDARY
- \*\* HORIZONTAL LINE ORIENTATION: PARALLEL WITH TOWN NAME



Map 13  
**GROUNDWATER RESOURCES**  
 TOWN OF  
**MATTAPOISETT**

## 9. SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### Schools

Fairhaven has one high school, one middle school and 4 elementary schools. Total enrollment in all schools in 1994 was 2236, Table 13 shows enrollment from 1983 to 1994 by type of school.

Table 13  
School Enrollment by Year and Type of School

<u>Year</u>	<u>Kindergarten</u>	<u>Elementary</u>	<u>Middle Sch.</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>Total</u>
1983	152	1057	590	609	2408
1984	148	1062	538	569	2317
1985	160	874	564	735	2333
1986	144	848	560	670	2222
1987	172	811	584	620	2187
1988	175	834	576	634	2219
1989	162	897	548	646	2253
1990	136	883	527	636	2182
1991	164	878	541	643	2226
1992	134	922	549	611	2216
1993	151	885	574	594	2204
1994	180	913	574	569	2236

Total enrollment has declined slightly (7%) over this 12 year period. It is expected to increase slightly, given the population forecasts by age groups for Fairhaven of the Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Massachusetts. Those forecasts for the years 2000 and 2010 show a 6% increase in the age group 5 to 19 for the year 2000, and a further increase in that age group from the year 2000 to 2010 of 2%. By then enrollments might be back to the levels they were in the early 1980s.

These figures do not require the construction of entirely new schools in new locations. However, a school modernization program will be required, given the ages and conditions of some of the schools, and new requirements for school accreditation. School accreditation is a sensitive issue in Fairhaven, with most voters willing to put up the money required to meet current standards. \$18.4 million was voted in 1994 for school remodeling and construction. The current estimate is that \$18.6 million will be spent on the High School improvements in the next two years. Over the next 15 to 20 years additional funds will be needed to modernize and upgrade all school facilities. Athletic facilities at the schools will be expanded and upgraded during this period to meet town recreational objectives, in addition to the educational objectives of the School Board.

The following is a list of public schools in Fairhaven, with their original construction dates and the dates of additions made to them.

Table 14

Schools and Their Construction and Additions Dates

<u>Name of School</u>	<u>Date Built</u>	<u>Additions Dates</u>
East Fairhaven Elementary	1931	1931 and 1951
Oxford Elementary	1896 - 4 Rooms	1914 and 1951
Rogers Elementary	1884-85	1958 - 1960
Leroy L. Wood Elementary	1965	
Kindergarten Portables (6)	1973	
Hastings Middle School	1958	1964 and 1974
Fairhaven High School	1907	1931

The schools are quite old, and the most recent additions occurred over 20 years ago. It is anticipated that a school needs study will be undertaken by the School Department in two years, to determine the scope and extent of facility upgrading, including the possibility of relocating, and building anew, some of the facilities. When that study is finished, the capital needs for schools will be assessed.

**Community Facilities**

Fairhaven's community facilities consist of the Town Hall, Millicent Library, the Police and Fire Station and Senior Center. Park and recreation facilities are covered in the open space and recreation chapter, and sewer and water facilities are covered in the infrastructure chapter. The Police and Fire Station and Senior Center are relatively new facilities. Capital funding for them is not anticipated. Normal maintenance expenditures and efforts should work to keep them in good repair for the next 20 years. Normal maintenance expenditures for the Town Hall and Millicent Library should keep them in good repair also. Work on restoring the auditorium on the top floor of the Town Hall is being done under the operating and maintenance budget. It is going slowly, but efforts are underway to allow for some use of the auditorium. At some point an elevator will be required to comply with the American with Disabilities Act, if full public use of the auditorium is to be accomplished. This is a capital expenditure that will need to be budgeted in the next several years.

## 10. OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

The Open Space and Recreation Plan for the Town of Fairhaven was updated in July, 1995. Selected information from that plan is included in this chapter on open space and recreation in the master plan for the Town.

Town residents very strongly feel the pressures of development on open space, particularly as an aging generation of farmers and large landholders are currently deciding the fate of their property in Fairhaven. A list of goals and objective prepared for the updated open space and recreation plan reflects a number of considerations, including the expression of goals emerging from the public participation process, the study team's interviews, data analysis and field investigations, and our knowledge and experience from other planning assignments. These recommended goals and objectives are as follows:

**Goal 1: Preserve and protect Fairhaven's open space resources.**

Specific Objectives:

- A. Acquire specific critically located parcels of land to prevent development in inappropriate (e.g., coastal) areas in Fairhaven. A priority parcel for acquisition is the 70 acre site on Little Bay where the Little Bay Estates subdivision was proposed. Two other high priority areas for acquisition are the Silva Farm on Sconticut Neck and the Lopes and Carvalho Farms north of Shaw's Cove, along Shaw Road.
- B. Encourage continued participation and enrollment in farmland and forestry preservation programs under MGL 61, 61A and 61B, and in the state Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) program managed by the state Department of Food and Agriculture.
- C. Protect inland and coastal wetlands and wildlife habitats through enforcement of regulations on wetlands, floodplains, and areas subject to coastal flooding.

**Goal 2: Promote environmental awareness and appropriate conservation oriented use of Fairhaven's natural resources.**

Specific Objectives:

- A. Develop multi-purpose trail and paths, where appropriate on Town-owned and private property (using conservation easements).

B. Prepare information, including directional and on-site narrative and graphic signage and brochures, highlighting conservation and recreation areas, and encouraging appropriate use.

C. Designate selected roads as 'Scenic Roads' to preserve their character and the views from them.

**Goal 3:** Protect Fairhaven's water supply and marine resource areas, including the Nasketucket well field, Mattapoissett River aquifer, Shaw's Cove and Little Bay area.

Specific Objectives:

A. Continue to work with officials in Mattapoissett, Marion, Acushnet and Rochester in protecting the Mattapoissett River aquifer.

B. Continue appropriate administration of the provisions of the Water Protection Overlay Zoning District in the Nasketucket River Watershed. Direct land and development rights acquisition programs on this area as well, to better protect water resources.

C. Encourage responsible and continuous land use management and planning within all water and marine related resource areas.

**Goal 4:** Provide properly located, sized and equipped recreational and athletic facilities, accessible to all citizens of Fairhaven, including elderly, younger and physically challenged residents.

Specific Objectives:

A. Develop Town recreational and athletic areas including multi-purpose fields play areas, particularly in East Fairhaven.

B. Meet ADA required accessibility standards for access to all Town recreational and athletic facilities.

C. Improve access and facilities at the Town Beach on West Island.

D. Build a multi-purpose trail from Fairhaven Center to the Mattapoissett town line along the existing Town-owned rail right-of-way.

E. Upgrade Town boat launching and mooring facilities, including the Sconticut Neck area.

F. Identify and develop small pocket parks in Fairhaven Center, Oxford and North Fairhaven to allow for recreation opportunities in these currently underserved areas.

G. Request earlier cleanup action by EPA for the Atlas Tack site in its current superfund status. This site will be important as a link along the multi-purpose trail and as a possible community gathering area.

**Goal 5: Provide for adequate management of recreational and open space facilities and areas, allowing for Town recreational programs, appropriate safety standards, and upgrading and care of equipment and lands.**

Specific Objectives:

A. Schedule facility use to allow adequate time for grass, shrubs and trees to be cared for at appropriate seasons of the year. Especially allow a few weeks in the spring and fall for reseeding, fertilizing, mulching and pruning.

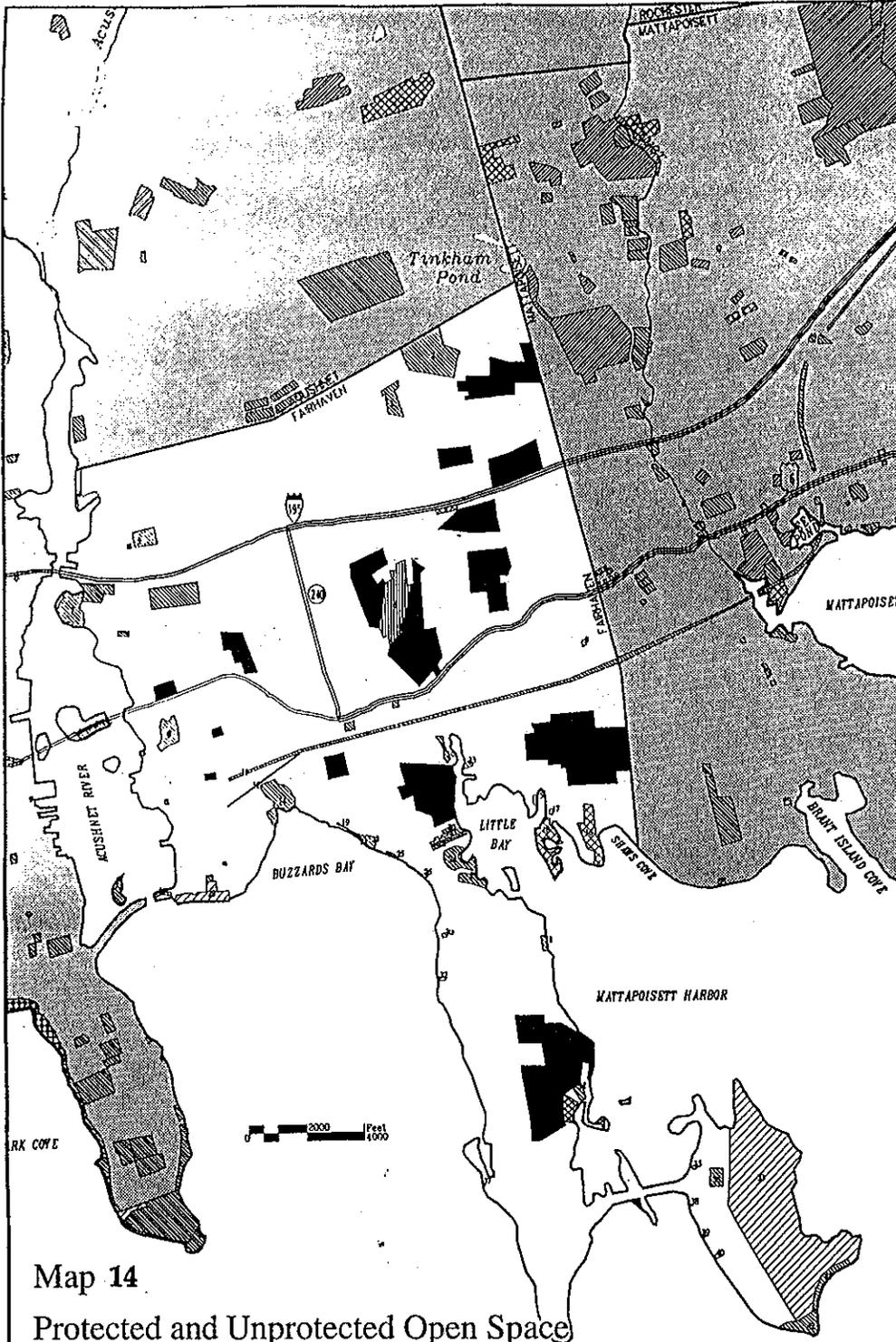
B. Prepare an overall management plan for equipment and facility maintenance and replacement.

C. Require that all organized users of facilities have adequate supervision of activities to insure safety and prevent over- or inappropriate use and activities.

### **Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest**

The following tables (15 and 16) represent an inventory of Town of Fairhaven "Protected" lands and "Unprotected" parcels of valuable open space properties which should be protected. The designation "Parcel" on the table refers to the MassGIS Parcel number for that parcel. When a parcel does not have a "Purpose" description, the purpose can be found by referring to the column "Property Name."

The Town's Conservation Commission, using the tool of wetland protection regulations, works with land owners to assure that these ecologically important areas are protected. Map 3, Water Resources, shows the Town's coastal and inland wetlands. These wetlands, combined with the existing protected and unprotected open space, provide an inter-connected network of both upland and wetland open spaces that provide protection for much of the Town's character. This network also provides habitat and movement corridors for much of the wildlife enjoyed by Town residents.



- 1) Fairhaven  
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 39) X  
 40) X  
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 42) FAIRHAVEN  
 43) FAIRHAVEN

**Map 14**  
**Protected and Unprotected Open Space**

-  Protected/Municipality
-  Protected/County
-  Protected/State
-  Protected/Non-Profit
-  Protected/Private
-  Unprotected Open Space

Map Source: MassGIS and Town Maps

**PLANNERS COLLABORATIVE INC.**

273 Summer Street Boston, Massachusetts 02210  
 Tel#617.338.0018 Fax#617.695.1614

The information depicted on this map is intended for planning purposes only and should not be considered appropriate for legal boundary definitions or regulatory interpretation.

PROTECTED LANDS

TABLE 15

940070	Town Forest Land	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Unofficial	50.33
940075	South Shore Marshes	DFWELE	Conservation	No	1.01
940076	Shaw's Cove/Wards Rock	Mass. Audubon	Conservation	No	19.99
940077	South Shore Marshes	DFWELE	Conservation	No	0.51
940078	Mirey Neck/S Shore Marshes	Mass. Audubon	Conservation	No	20.87
940079	Ft. Phoenix Beach St. Res.	DEM	Recreation	Yes	16.52
940152	Sea View Ave. Boat Ramp	Fairhaven	Recreation	Yes	2.18
940153	Deacon's Cove	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Unofficial	3.24
940154	West Island	DEM	Recreation	Unofficial	350.05
940155	West Island Beach	Fairhaven	Recreation	Yes	14.28
940157	Samoset Circle	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Unofficial	1.33
940158	Edgewater/Rockland St. Beach	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Yes	4.45
940159	Little Bay Marsh	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Unofficial	13.18
940160	Indian Cemetery	Fairhaven	Historical	Unofficial	6.71
940161	Austria Ave. Landing	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Yes	0.44
940162	Cove St. Scenic Vista	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Yes	0.55
940163	Pope's Beach	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Unofficial	3.49
940164	Pope's Beach	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Unofficial	2.24
940165	Girls Creek/Boys Creek	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Unofficial	21.08
940166	Fort Phoenix Beach	Fairhaven	Recreation	Yes	1.37
940254	Briercliff Rd. Landing	Fairhaven		Yes	0.75
940255	Winsegansett Ave. Scenic Vista	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Yes	0.19
940256	Gulf Island RD. Landing	Fairhaven		Yes	0.68
940257	Fishermans' Road Landing	Fairhaven		Yes	0.75
940258	Little Neck Road Landing	Fairhaven		Yes	0.21
940259	Blue Point Road Landing	Fairhaven		Yes	0.4
940260	Edgewater/Rockland St. Beach	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Yes	1.55
940261	Edgewater/Rockland St. Beach	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Yes	2.66
940390	Cushman Park	Fairhaven	Recreation	Yes	13.61
940391	Railroad Bed	Fairhaven	Recreation	Unofficial	5.97
940392	Dike	Fairhaven		Unofficial	3.1
940393	Nasketucket Creek	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Unofficial	3.01
940394	Macomber Pimental Park	Fairhaven DPW	Recreation	Yes	0.62
940395	Sycamore St. Marshland	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Unofficial	10.16
940396	Livesey Park	Fairhaven DPW	Recreation	Yes	9.99
940397	Taber St. Marshland	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Yes	19.2
940398	Town Conservation Land	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Yes	10.76
940399	Town Watershed	Bristol Co.	Conservation	Unofficial	42.85
940400	Little League Land	Non-profit	Recreation	Unofficial	0.74
940401	Cottonwood Dogwood Ebony	Fvn. Cons. Comm.	Conservation	Yes	6.25
940546	West Island Beach	Fairhaven	Recreation	Yes	10.16
94033	Wood School	Fairhaven	Recreation	Yes	19.5
94046	US Coast Guard	US Coast Guard	Recreation	Limited	0.1
94026	St. Joseph School	Fairhaven	Recreation	Yes	3.5
94015	Skipper Motor Inn	Private	Recreation	Limited	0.5
94035	Rogers School	Fairhaven	Recreation	Yes	3
94029	Oxford School	Fairhaven	Recreation	Yes	1
	Grimshaw Property	Fairhaven	Recreation	Unofficial	1.5
	Pease Park Landing	Fairhaven DPW		Yes	1
	Dana Pond Retention Basin	Fairhaven DPW		Unofficial	40
	Austin Pond	Fvn. Water Dept.		Unofficial	15
	Anthony School Field	Fairhaven DPW	Recreation	Yes	2.2
	Willow Park	Fairhaven	Recreation	Yes	1
	T.A. Lot # 12 - Deacon's Cove	Fvn. Land Pres. Tr.	Conservation	Unofficial	10
	T.A. Lot # 20/Round Island	Fvn. Land Pres. Tr.	Conservation	Unofficial	1
	T.A. Lot #22/Round Island	Fvn. Land Pres. Tr.	Conservation	Unofficial	1
	T.A. Map #1, Lots 51&52	Fvn. Land Pres. Tr.	Conservation	Unofficial	0.06
	T.A. Lot #5A	Fvn. Land Pres. Tr.	Conservation	Unofficial	3
	T.A. Map #37, Lots 16-18 & 20, Pine Grove	Fvn. Land Pres. Tr.	Conservation	Unofficial	16
	Bowling Alley field	Fairhaven	Recreation	Yes	3.8
	Riverside Cemetery	Fairhaven		Unofficial	24
	Nasketucket Cemetery	Fairhaven		Unofficial	2.4

Parcel #	Property Name	Ownership	Purpose	Access	Acreage
	Carvalho Farm	Antonia & Lena Carvalho	Farm	Private	50
	Lopes Farm	Paul & Gertrude Lopes	Farm	Private	108
	Costa Farm	Richard & Donna Costa	Farm	Private	84
	White's Farm	White's Farm Inc.	Farm	Private	74
	Paquette Property	Reginald & Dorothy Paquette	Farm	Private	23
	Lopes Farm	Antonio & Inez Lopes	Farm	Private	59
	Winterbottom Property	Albert & Doris Winterbottom	Farm	Private	11
	Di Pierre Property	Michael Di Pierre	Farm	Private	32
	Mendonca Property	Maurice & Betty Ann Mendonca	Farm	Private	7
	Piela Property	Olivia & Stephen Piela	Farm	Private	21
	Robechaud Property	Alfred Robechaud	Farm	Private	99
	Kisla Property	Thomas & Andrea Kisla	Farm	Private	31
	Silva Property	Helen Silva	Residence	Private	73.5
	Viveiros Property	Ernie & Germaine Viveiros	Residence	Private	113
	Little Bay Estates	Private		Unofficial	70
	Oxford School	Fvn. School Dept.	Recreation	Yes	1
	Fairhaven High School	Fvn. School Dept.	Recreation	Yes	8.5
	Hastings Middle School	Fvn. School Dept.	Recreation	Yes	34
	East Fairhaven School	Fvn. School Dept.	Recreation	Yes	11.5
	Rogers School	Fvn. School Dept.	Recreation	Yes	3
	Wood School	Fvn. School Dept.	Recreation	Yes	19.5
	St. Joseph School	Private	Recreation	Yes	3.5
	U.S. Coast Guard	US Coast Guard	Recreation	Limited	0.1
	Skipper Motor Inn	Private	Recreation	Limited	0.5
	D. N. Kelley & Sons	Private	Marina	Yes	0.1
	Earls Marina	Private	Marina	Yes	2
	Hillcrest Riding Stables	Private	Recreation	Yes	51.5
	Fairhaven Shipyard, Inc.	Private	Marina	Yes	0.1
<b>Total Unprotected Acreage</b>					<b>990.8</b>

## Analysis of Needs

### Summary of Resource Protection Needs

On the northern portion of Sconticut Neck in the Little Bay area, just southwest of the Nasketucket River Estuary there are approximately 70 acres of open land that was being considered for a subdivision, Little Bay Estates. The Fairhaven Conservation Commission, with support from the Fairhaven Land Preservation Trust, is actively seeking an assistance grant to maintain this parcel as open space. The Town of Fairhaven has voted the matching funds needed for this project.

Residents agree that the preservation of farm land is a high priority item for open space and conservation planning in Fairhaven. Specific farms to protect were identified as the Cavalho and Lopes Farms, near Shaw's Cove, and the Silva and Vivieros properties on Sconticut Neck, both of which are currently experiencing development pressures. The Silva property was identified as high priority for conservation land because it currently provides buffering against coastal flooding by Silver Shell Beach, and could be used to maintain shell fishing. White's Farm in the Nasketucket Watershed area was identified as prime developable upland adjacent to soccer fields which attract users from outside Fairhaven. There is concern about access and development at this property because of its proximity to the Nasketucket River.

On Nuland Neck, just west of Shaw's Cove there is open land to which access is currently restricted, owing to the lack of a public road into the area (it is accessible by water). Some interest has been expressed in extending the adjacent open land owned by the Massachusetts Audubon Society and in providing road access to this property.

West Island now contains approximately 300 acres of forest and wetlands owned by Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management. DEM has indicated in the past its intent to prepare a management plan for the property. There is pressure to install some improvements (more toilets, food vending and drinking facilities) at West Island Beach (the Town Beach). Some workshop attendees felt these were needed, while some felt the improvements would draw more beach users than desirable, and consequently contribute to environmental degradation of the area. There is an unused observation tower on West Island; it is currently an eyesore and attracts vandalism. The Town intended to demolish it, but the proposal was defeated because the tower has some navigational value by boaters. Clearly, this property would benefit greatly from a resource management plan to set priorities and reconcile conflicting interests.

The AT&T and Acushnet Titleist/Footjoy facilities in Fairhaven own unused wooded or open pasture areas on their large sites that are set aside for future expansion. It is appropriate that future office park type development occur there. However, these areas should be protected from over-development, and should have open space buffers and internal circulation ways build into them. The AT&T facility financed a sewer line extension to its site. The developers of Berdon Plaza, where a Shaw's Supermarket is currently being built, will pay for some traffic improvements around that site. It is

becoming increasingly common for developers to contribute to needed town facilities, especially those directly affected by their development projects. With this in mind, contributions for well-designed open spaces, integrated into office park development are possible. It is recommended that the Town identifies open space dedications and finished landscaping in these commercial areas as required items in site plan review and granting of special permits.

### **Summary of Community Needs**

There is a need for better access to all of the Town's recreational facilities and open space, particularly for elder, younger and physically challenged residents. In all cases, it will be important that an appropriate level of use be determined and access be designed accordingly.

There is a need for more athletic fields in Fairhaven. Existing soccer fields behind the Hastings Middle School are quite unusable in wet weather because of drainage problems. Because the newer Little League and soccer fields which have been built in Town are private facilities, there is no assurance of continued availability or of Town priority to their use. This is especially a problem because surrounding towns do not have as many facilities as Fairhaven, and consequently the various inter-town soccer and softball leagues schedule more games in Fairhaven than in other towns. There is a scarcity of regulation school-use track and soccer fields, and additional baseball fields would be desirable as well. All of the existing athletic facilities are overused. East Fairhaven, in particular, needs additional public or school-related recreational and athletic facilities.

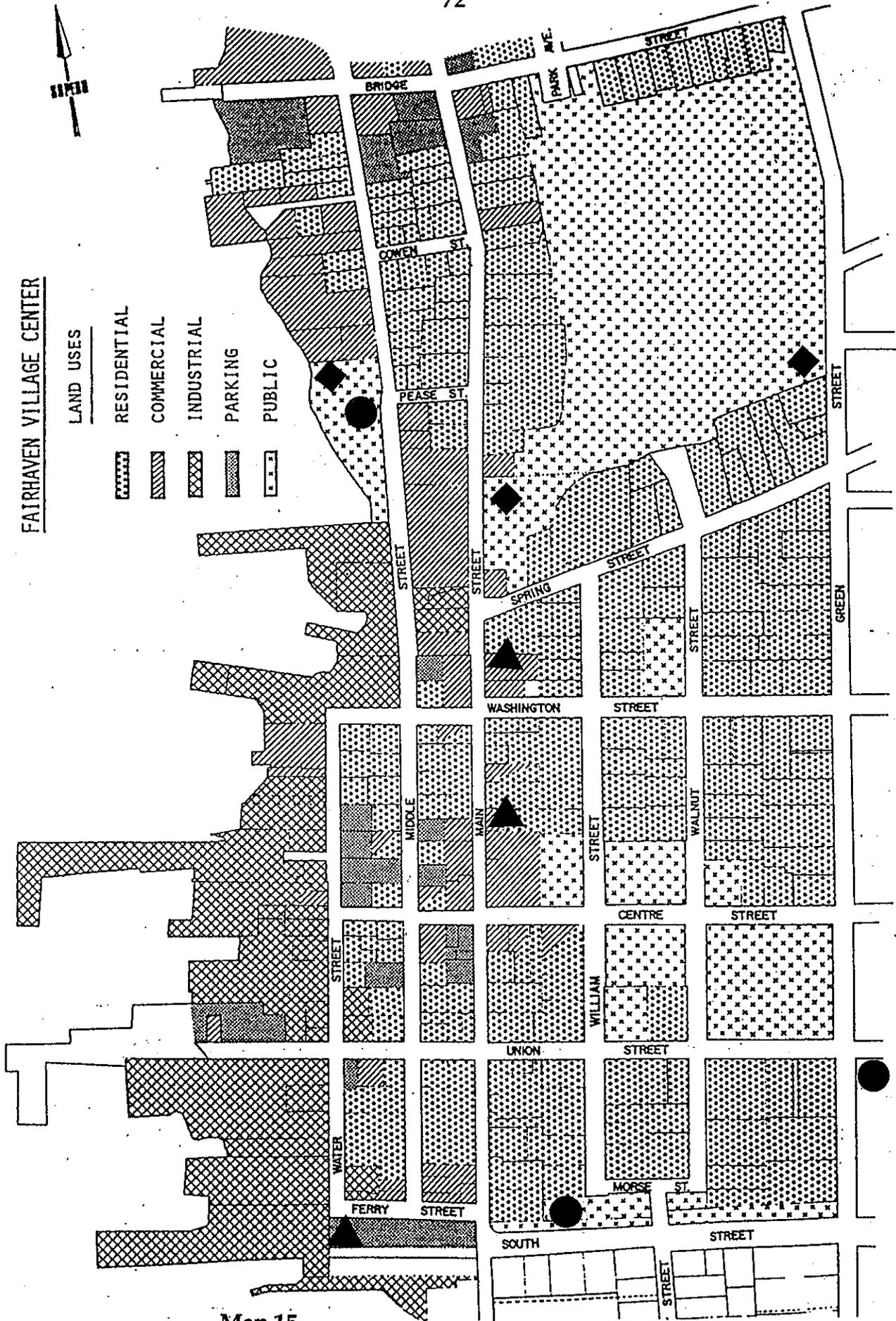
Other recreational needs for the general public include an accessible, multi-use trail for walking and biking connecting different parts of Town which includes rest areas along the route and directional signage. There is some sentiment in Town toward enlarging Fort Phoenix State Park with land owned by Commonwealth Electric which would support the potential rejuvenation of that area into the active community gathering place it once was. At this writing, there is some indication that this transfer of land to the state may occur quite soon.

There is also a need for small pocket parks along popular walking routes in the Town which would provide resting places along the walks. Specifically, pocket parks along Main Street, Middle Street, Green Street, Ferry Street, Fort Street and Pleasant Street in the Center, and Adams Street in the Oxford area and North Fairhaven would help meet this objective. There are four pocket parks in the Center now, including the strip of open landscaped land along South Street. Map 15 shows where the proposed pocket parks would be located in Fairhaven Center. Three of the parks are located on public land. Five of them are located on private commercially used land, where property owners would be asked to put out benches and planters to create small sitting areas for passive recreation. At least one merchant has done this already. Creating a better walking environment is in the best interests of merchants, as well as residents.

**FAIRHAVEN VILLAGE CENTER**

**LAND USES**

- RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- PARKING
- PUBLIC



Map 15

Existing Pocket Park ●

Proposed Public Pocket Park ◆  
Proposed Private Pocket Park ▲

### **Management Needs and Potential Changes of Use**

Specific management needs include the development of a management plan for DEM-owned property on West Island. Another management need is the resolution of future use and improvements to Cushman Park, the only open space of any size in Fairhaven Center. For the park to be a vibrant resource to the community, renovations need to occur which correct the drainage problem and resolves the existing conflict of uses between active and passive recreation at the Park. For example, outdoor park concerts have proven not to be a compatible use in Cushman Park with softball games due to conflicts with sound and noise levels and parking congestion. Concentrating passive recreational uses on the edges of the park, as proposed locations of two pocket parks, may help resolve the conflict. Creating new ball fields in other parts of town, and scheduling town-wide or regional games at other facilities, will also help in removing non-neighborhood recreational activities. This should also help with the parking situation.

Improving and assuring access to relatively inaccessible sites like Shaw's Cove and Nuland Neck will require that the Town acquire some private roads and rights-of-way. Perhaps this can be done with transportation funds available under the federal ISTEA program. If funds are sought for a trail and bike path improvement, perhaps access spurs could be developed to such locations as Shaw's Cove. Such improvements require coordination with SRPEDD and the Mass. Highway Department.

Coordination with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is necessary to allow site mitigation actions at the Atlas Tack site to occur in a safe and timely manner. The site is currently classified as a "superfund" site with a low priority for federal action, since there are many more sites ahead of it on EPA's priority list. This issue of getting a higher priority should be resolved as quickly as possible to allow for redevelopment of the currently unused site. The specific action needed is for EPA to conduct necessary surveys to determine appropriate "superfund" mitigation actions." There is some developer interest by Great Northern Industries, Inc., the current site owner.

### **Action Plan**

This summary of the Action Plan is made up of two major sections: (1) a statement of progress accomplished to date on the Action Plan of the 1989 Conservation and Recreation Plan and (2) the 5-year Action Plan for the 1995 Open Space and Recreation Plan. More details of the Action Plan are contained in the master plan chapter on implementation.

### **Progress Report from 1989 Open Space Plan**

Progress made thus far on 1989 Action Items include:

- Well fields in Mattapoisett are now considered to be adequately protected. Currently, there exists a safe yield of 2 million gallons per day from Fairhaven's wells that do not require chlorination and that are not threatened.

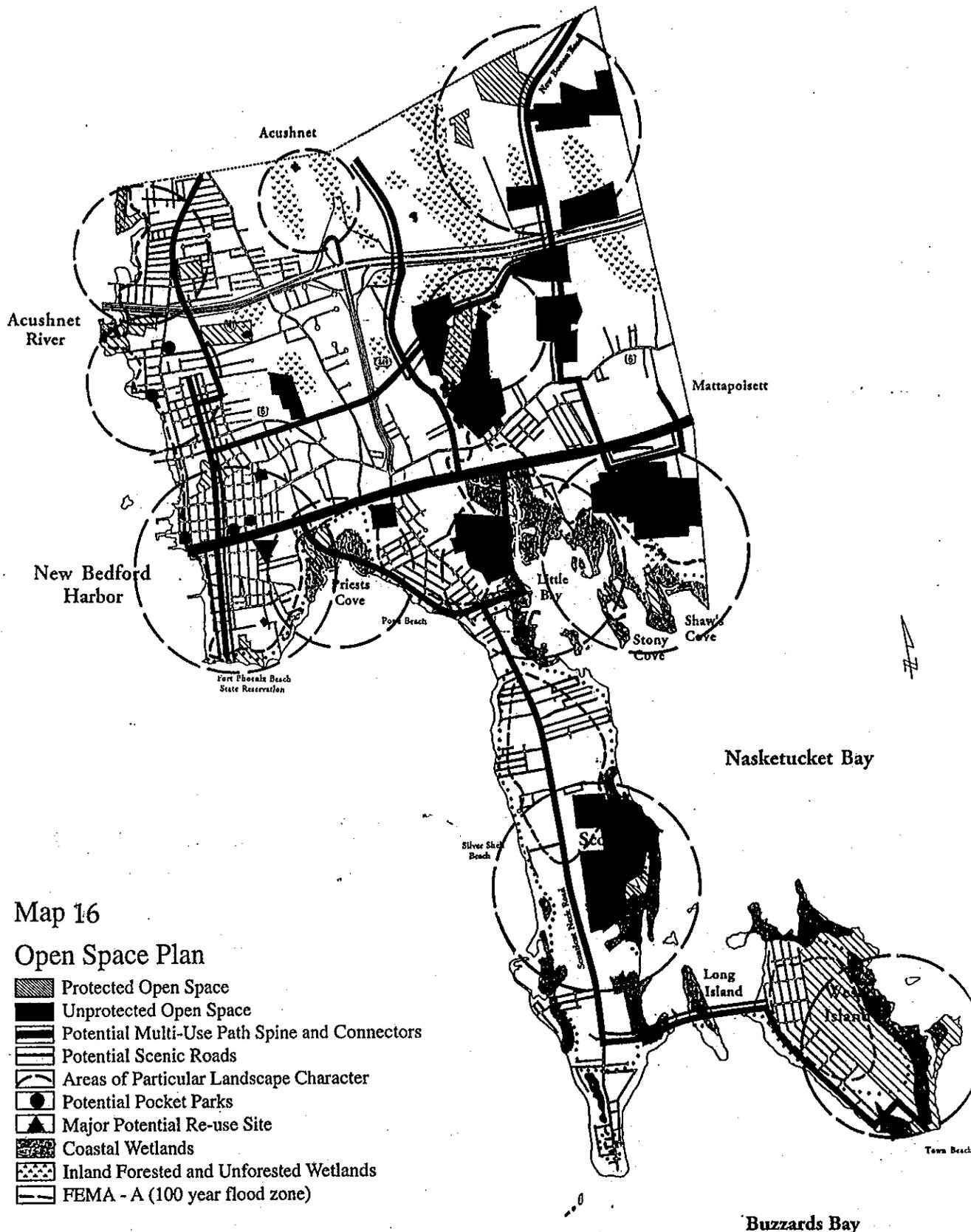
- A non-profit Little League Association has developed baseball fields on Shaw Road in East Fairhaven and a regional soccer organization, Mariner Youth Soccer, has a five-year lease of the White Farm to develop a series of soccer fields. These facilities are informally open to the public one day a week while formally serving many children in Fairhaven through the little league and soccer programs.
- The Town publicized the Chapter 61, 61A and 61B tax assessment programs and participation in these programs subsequently increased.
- The Fairhaven Land Preservation Trust, a non-profit land trust, was formed in 1992 and has acquired land in the area around New Boston Road, Scotcut Neck, Fort Phoenix and Pine Grove east of Alden Road in North Fairhaven. It currently has a successful application in to the State for a Self-Help Land Acquisition Grant for Little Bay Estates, and it has a pending application before the New Bedford Harbor Trust Council for funds to acquire the Silva Farm on Scotcut Neck.

#### Recommended 1995 Action Plan

The recommended 1995 Open Space Plan and Recreation Plan is shown in Map 16. The Fairhaven Open Space System is based largely on the development of the abandoned railroad right-of-way into a multi-use trail which serves as the main spine of the system. This trail would be accessible in most parts with a smooth surface and many points of access, some of which would have small parking areas for residents arriving by car to walk on the trail. The trail would provide rest areas along the route for views of the marshes. There are currently no areas offering views of the marshes which are accessible to elder, younger and physically challenged residents.

The Plan shows the multi-use trail connections running north and south off the length of the trail from the New Boston Road and Poverty Point areas to Fort Phoenix and West Island. Potential 'Scenic Roads' of New Boston Road, Bridge Street, Oak Grove Road, Green Street, Fort Street, and Causeway Road are shown on the map as roads which the Town could designate as 'scenic' in order to protect their special character. Potential "pocket parks" are shown as small resting areas along popular walking routes such as Willow Park off Fort Street, and Green Street and Union Street opposite the Unitarian Church. These kinds of places will become particularly important as the majority of the Town's residents become older. Other pocket parks should be developed along Middle Street, Ferry Street, Green Street and Main Street in Fairhaven Center and Main Street in the Oxford Area and North Fairhaven, and along Adams Street north and south of Huddleston Ave.

The Open Space Plan illustrates areas of particular landscape character. The protection of these areas is considered essential in realizing the goal of maintaining the existing character of the Town. Fairhaven east of the Scotcut Neck, Route 240/Alden Road axis is still lightly settled (excepting the Route 6 Corridor). There are areas with



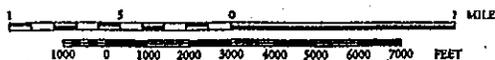
Map 16

Open Space Plan

-  Protected Open Space
-  Unprotected Open Space
-  Potential Multi-Use Path Spine and Connectors
-  Potential Scenic Roads
-  Areas of Particular Landscape Character
-  Potential Pocket Parks
-  Major Potential Re-use Site
-  Coastal Wetlands
-  Inland Forested and Unforested Wetlands
-  FEMA - A (100 year flood zone)

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The information depicted on this map is intended for planning purposes only, and should not be considered appropriate for legal boundary definitions or regulatory interpretation.

splendid views and traditional agricultural activities, which townspeople want preserved. Through a combination of tax abatements, selective land and development rights acquisition and large lot and cluster zoning, it should be possible to maintain the visual quality and character of these areas.

Finally, the Atlas Tack Manufacturing site is shown as a major reuse site. This site has great potential should it be developed as a combination of uses such as elderly housing, small scale retail and meeting and recreational facilities. Its location at the 'in Town' end of the multi-use trail, its view of the marshes, and being connected to the old rail right-of-way leading to the wharf sets the stage for this site to be a vibrant community asset for Fairhaven. Some proposals for this site have already been prepared, and other are expected to be forthcoming, especially when a clean-up approach and date are set.

## 11. CULTURAL RESOURCES

### Historic Preservation

Settlement in Fairhaven has a long history, going back to the Mayflower Pilgrims of Plymouth, one of whom, John Cooke, in 1653 settled near the area where Oxford Village would later be built. Early settlers were farmers on isolated farmsteads. For protection, later settlers formed Oxford Village.

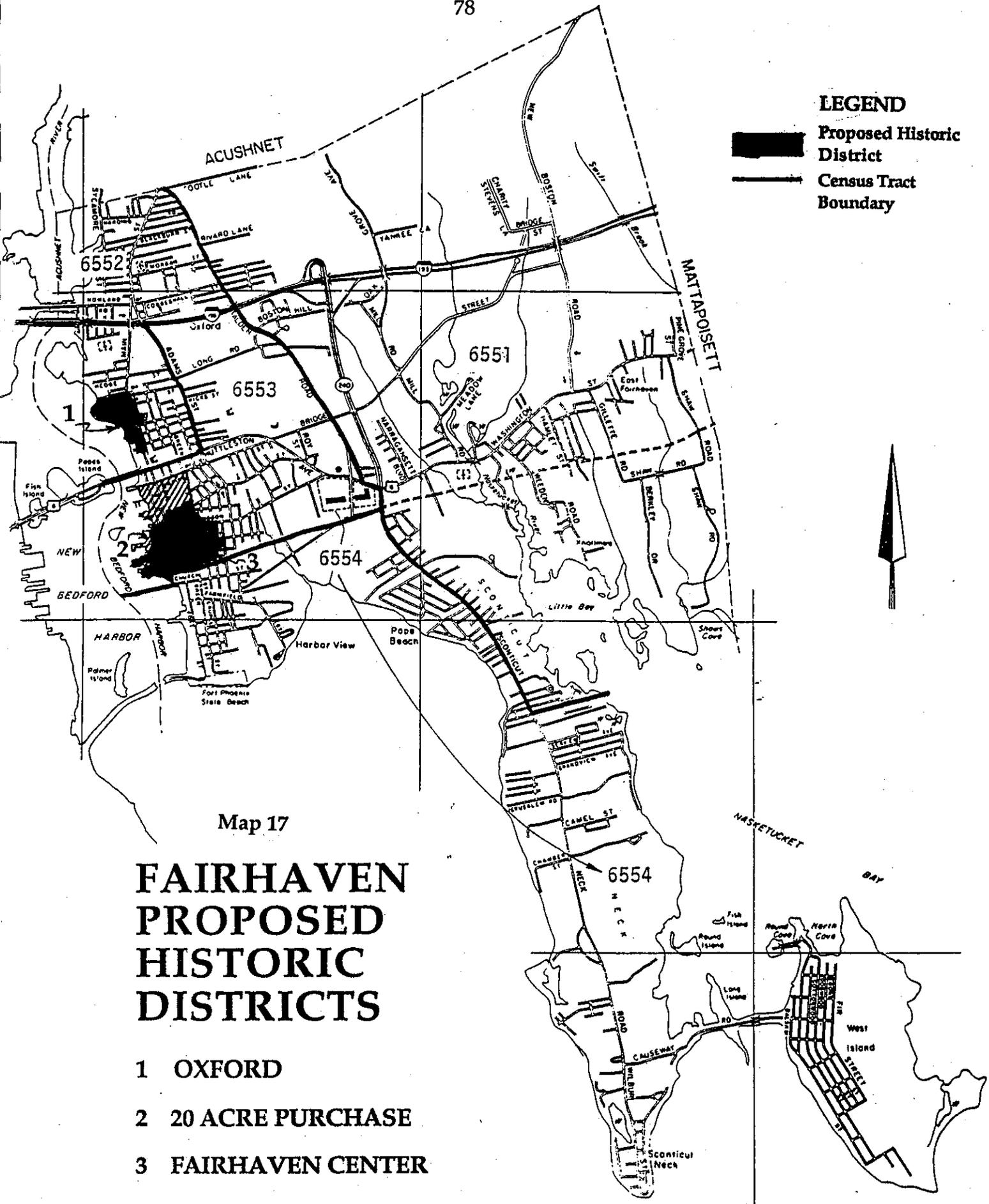
The historic building assets of Fairhaven were built up over a long period of colonial development, then whaling industry based prosperity in the early nineteenth century, and were considerably enhanced by the philanthropy of Henry Huddleston Rogers at the turn of the century. He was born and raised in Fairhaven; made a very large fortune in the Standard Oil Companies; then returned to Fairhaven and commissioned important public and semi-public buildings which remain as outstanding examples of the architecture of their period. They include the Town Hall, the Millicent Library, the Unitarian Church and Parish House, the High School and Tabitha Inn.

There are three historic areas in Fairhaven. One is in the Oxford area and two are in Fairhaven Center (See Map 17). Oxford is the original colonial settlement in Town and was the center of activities until a bridge was built south of it in 1802 to connect with New Bedford. The center of activities gradually shifted south to Fairhaven Center in an area called the 20 Acre Purchase. Because of a land ownership situation development was confined to this waterfront area for almost 70 years, before spilling over in 1832 to the east. The result was that there are two distinct historical building periods in Fairhaven Center, thus the definition of 2 historic areas in that part of Town, the 20 Acre Purchase District and the Fairhaven Center District. The former is characterized by Georgian and early Federalist buildings, the latter by late Federalist and Victorian buildings. A complete inventory of the buildings is contained in the Preliminary Report of the Historic District Study Committee of Fairhaven, prepared in 1981. Detailed records used to compile the report are kept in the Millicent Library in Fairhaven. 132 properties were included in Historic District Study Committee Preliminary Report.

Fairhaven certainly has an extensive inventory of historic properties, representing several important eras in history. There is no doubt that important historic properties exist in town, and that preserving them is an important objective for the Town, as it has been in other towns with extensive areas of historic buildings. Creation of historic districts is an important means of protecting the buildings and the character of the districts in which they are located. Articles to create 3 separate historic districts were presented to Town Meeting in 1985 and failed. Questions were raised about whether the districts took in too many non-historic properties, and the degree of control the proposed Historic District Commission would have over actions of property owners.

**LEGEND**

-  Proposed Historic District
-  Census Tract Boundary



Map 17

# FAIRHAVEN PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICTS

- 1 OXFORD
- 2 20 ACRE PURCHASE
- 3 FAIRHAVEN CENTER

SCALE

1/2 0 1

2 MILES

TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN

Only a few matters relating to the actual building facade would be controlled by the Historic District provision. Details such as windows, landscaping and air conditioners would not be controlled. Nor would color of buildings be controlled. The proposed controls are rather liberal (allowing a great deal of flexibility for property owners) especially when compared to some historic districts in other towns.

There are now smaller financial incentives than there were for property owners to agree to historic district controls on their property. The U.S. tax code amendments in the 1980's removed most of the direct financial incentives. The one remaining incentive is the probable increase in property value that would result from historic district designation. Such designation better insures that surrounding properties will not deteriorate, and it confers a degree of prestige which translates into increased property value.

There is some question whether these incentives are strong enough to induce a favorable vote on the part of property owners included in proposed historic districts. It is likely that local pride would serve as a strong factor in helping to convince property owners that an historic district would be good for them. An educational campaign would also help property owners understand the benefits of historic districts. Efforts to promote passage of historic district legislation should concentrate on education of people who live in, or own property in the affected areas of town. These efforts should include mailings of informative material, newspaper articles and some local access Cable TV programs. It would be helpful also to enlist the support of the Fairhaven Tourism Committee in the overall effort as historic preservation is often an effective approach to increasing tourism.

#### **Other Cultural Activities/Facilities**

Many of Fairhaven's cultural activities are based on its history. There is a Museum of Fairhaven History, located adjacent to the high school. "Fairhaven on Foot," a program run by the Fairhaven Tourism Committee is a series of walking tours featuring the architecture, points of interest and history of Oxford Village, Fairhaven Center and Fort Phoenix. There are two "trails" or series of sites to visit associated with historically important people. They are the Henry Huttleston Rogers Trail and the John Manjiro Trail. The Town periodically celebrates well known people and events in its history, such as the 1995 Captain Joshua Slocum Centennial. The Millicent Library has a series of programs and a bookmobile. Events such as fishing tournaments, fairs, theatrical performances and concerts are held annually, under a variety of sponsorships, using a variety of public and private facilities.

One action that will aid in getting people around is to provide better signage for people on foot, on bicycles and in automobiles. Such signs should provide directions and information about points of interest and natural features. They should be parts of walkways, streets and bikeways. It is important that signs be visually coordinated, that is, that there be a common logo and design theme for the signs.

Signs that mark the edges of Fairhaven's historic areas should be erected in appropriate places. Also a demolition delay bylaw should be passed.

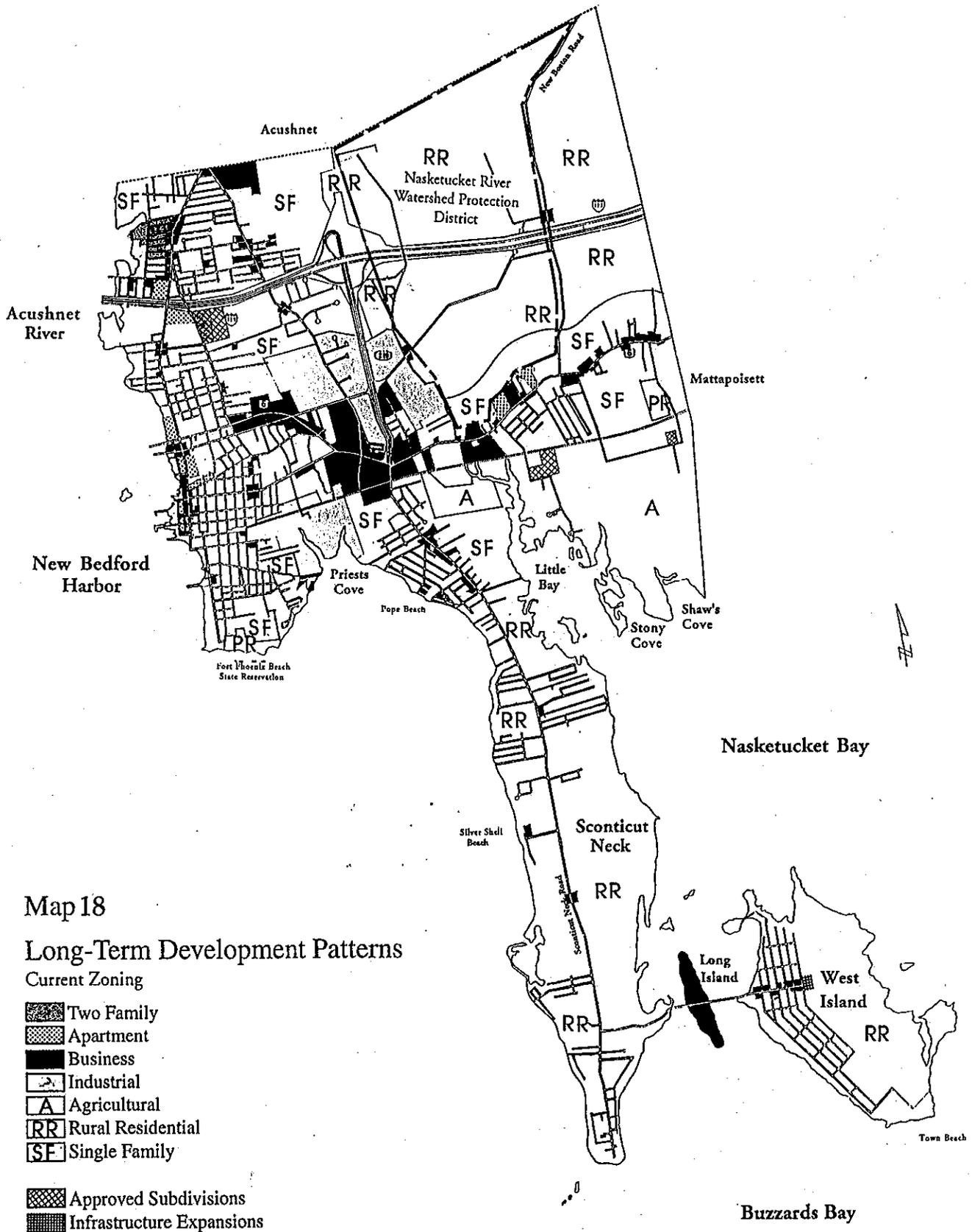
## 12. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### Land Use and Zoning Actions

- Current zoning and recently approved subdivisions are shown on Map 18. Land use and zoning implementation actions are intended to preserve as much open land as possible, by encouraging future commercial, industrial, and residential growth in existing areas designated for them.
- Rezone the Lincoln Drive area (between Route 240 and Alden Road along Route 6) from industrial to commercial with appropriate site plan review provisions to create a unified commercial area.
- Introduce appropriate site plan review provisions in all commercial zones to encourage higher quality commercial development (with pedestrian amenities).
- Rezone much of the land just north and south of the hurricane barrier and north of Priests Cove from industrial to residential, with appropriate safeguards to insure good quality residential development, including buffer areas between industrial and residential uses.
- Introduce cluster zoning as a way to allow for infill development in existing areas, allow for open space to be retained in future residential development in currently undeveloped areas, and better control where future affordable housing might be located. This is especially important in view of Fairhaven's aging population. Older people want and need more convenient locations, as well as better levels of affordability in housing. Proposed language for residential cluster zoning is included later in this chapter.
- Adjust current zoning to allow for grouping of residential development in order to protect the Town's character and maximize the amount of open space retained. This would be most appropriate in the agricultural zoning district north of Shaws Cove, Sconticut Neck and the area along Bridge Street and New Boston Road in the northeast part of town.

### Economic Development Actions

Preserve the working waterfront. Do not intrude into it with non-industrial activities. Keep tourism and recreation activities, that are related to the working waterfront, adjacent to, on the edge of, but not in, the working waterfront. This includes pocket parks, restaurants and shops. Other measures to enhance and protect the working waterfront include providing it with better access via an extension of David Drown Boulevard, and for the most part, keeping it out of proposed historic districts.



- Provide for new modern industrial and office space as required by marine sciences industries. By designating the area along Route 240 between I-195 and Route 6 for industrial and office park development, Fairhaven is providing a stock of serviced land appropriate for industrial and office space. This area is appropriate for marine science industries that do not require direct waterfront access. There are a few waterfront sites on New Bedford Harbor and the Acushnet River that are suitable for industrial and office development as well. They are appropriately zoned for industry and serviced with water and sewer and roadways.
- Provide shoreline protection for aquaculture. Many of the environmental protection recommendations of the Master Plan support the preservation and enhancement of marine conditions needed for aquaculture. These include acquisition of lands for open space, flood control and reduction of non-point pollution sources.
- Historic preservation where appropriate to encourage tourism. Three historic districts are recommended to better preserve Fairhaven's rich historical architectural heritage. While tourism is not the only objective of establishing historic districts, it certainly will add substantial interest to Fairhaven for tourism activities.
- Form a partnership of the businesses in North Fairhaven to become eligible for state business assistance funds. Seek funding under the "Ready Resource" program of EOCD for a commercial revitalization study of the business area of North Fairhaven, including considerations of traffic, pedestrian circulation and parking.
- Recommendations about retaining the open, rural and village character of Fairhaven. Many of the Master Plan's recommendations about environmental protection, residential zoning and open space preservation are intended to keep the Town's essential village character and maintain it as a very desirable place to live and work. In the sense that jobs are retained, and new ones created because of the desire to live and work in Fairhaven, the Master Plan's general purposes will help to continue economic development.

#### **Environmental Protection Actions**

- Introduce storm water run-off retention provisions into the subdivision regulations, to substitute for detention practices where appropriate.
- Strengthen coastal development regulation and enforcement.
- Continue protection of ground water resources in the Nasketucket River area.

## 1995 Open Space and Recreation Action Plan Items

### Years 1-5 On-going Long Range Projects:

- Request the EPA to review the Atlas Tack Manufacturing site within the next year, with the intent of moving it up on the priority list for action.
- Development of railroad right-of-way into an accessible multi-use path with many points of access and rest areas along the route. This path would form the central spine for a Fairhaven Open Space System.
- Development of multi-use path connections to central path by a combination of sidewalks, designating bike lanes and pedestrian routes.
- Development of more small pocket parks along main walking routes in Town such as Willow Park, developed by the Fairhaven Improvement Association, and the small memorial site southeast of the Unitarian Church on Green Street.
- Protect by acquisition, conservation restrictions or other means parcels in the Nasketucket Watershed District.
- Protect by acquisition, conservation restrictions or other means large parcels of unprotected land such as the Silva, White and Vivieros Properties.
- Continue to protect wildlife areas and greenway corridors that facilitate the movement of plants and animals, especially in the northeast part of town where there are forested wetlands that support plant and animal populations.
- Protect the pastoral character of the Shaw's Road area by acquisition, conservation restrictions or other means of the agricultural properties in that area.
- Develop accessible trails, interpretive nature exhibits and programs, including educational programs for the schools, and passive recreational facilities for many of the municipal conservation properties, particularly West Island Town Beach, Town Forest, Little Bay Estates, and along the proposed multi-use trail on the railroad right-of-way.
- Bring open space and recreational facilities to compliance with ADA standards as specified in the Section 504 Survey included in this plan.
- Develop signage placed in various locations around the Town which would include information on the ecology of brooks, wetlands and rivers, mark historic buildings and places, and identify the Fairhaven Open Space System showing lengths of walks and the locations of gathering areas. Signs would be small and coordinated in design, similar to those placed at state parks and dedicated wildlife areas. Signs on historic buildings would be similar to those in the Oxford Area on historic homes.

### **Years 1-3 Mid-Range Projects:**

- Construct curb-cuts in compliance with ADA standards and repair sidewalks with priority improvements schedule for streets on residents' major walking routes through Town.
- Develop the Grimshaw Property into an accessible park which is easily connected to Fort Phoenix Park and re-establish that area as a main Town gathering area with the ultimate goal of purchasing the utility property and developing the entire area.
- Continue to increase the land holdings of the Town Forest Property and develop an accessible trail along the Old Coach Road to Acushnet as well as interpretive nature exhibits and educational programs.

### **Years 1-2 Short Range Projects:**

- Support the acquisition process of the Little Bay Estates property, and its development into a passive recreational area.
- Support the reconstruction including drainage repairs, of athletic fields at the Hastings Middle School.
- Work with the Town School Building Committee to find an appropriate site for a high school athletic facility.
- Continue the efforts of the Fairhaven Improvement Society to mark the town limits with signs. Entrances to town on Route 6 and Howland Road, and at the intersection of Main and Alden Street in North Fairhaven would be most appropriate.
- Designation of selected roads as 'Scenic Roads' which through Town legislation would protect the existing scenic character of these roads. Some roads to be considered for this designation are New Boston Road, Bridge Street, and Green Street.

### **Traffic and Transportation Actions**

- Include a new roadway and accompanying multi-purpose trail in the regional Transportation Improvement Program (prepared by SRPEDD), from David Drown Boulevard to South Street in Fairhaven Center. (Continue the multi-purpose bicycle trail east along the railroad right-of-way as outlined in the open space and recreation actions stated above.) Fund (at a level of \$50,000) and initiate a project development study incorporating all the relevant issues and features involved in the David Drown Boulevard extension. These include site clean-up at the Atlas Tack property, markets and development plans for that property, maintaining and creating good environmental and visual qualities in the area, completing a town water line loop which would improve service to

Sconticut Neck and West Island, in addition to the roadway and bicycle path facilities planned for the extension.

- Include new roadways behind the Wal Mart Plaza and K-Mart Plaza in the long range transportation plan of SRPEDD for future inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) when arrangements with owners and developers have been worked out for future plaza to mall conversions and expansions in these two areas. (This assumes that such roadways will qualify for some sort of state or federal aid. If they do not then inclusion in the TIP will not be necessary.)
- Install a south-bound left-turn lane in Route 240, at its intersection with Route 6. Install a similar left-turn lane at this intersection for north-bound traffic on Sconticut Neck Road. Upgrade the traffic signals at this intersection to allow separate cycles for the north and south bound left-turn movements. This will equalize this intersection in the sense that current left-turn lanes and signals already exist for east-west movements on Route 6.
- Install a traffic light with appropriate cycles at the intersection of Washington Street and Route 6.
- Adjust traffic light timing at Adams Street and Main Street intersections with Route 6 to allow more green time for north-south movements.
- Synchronize the traffic lights at the intersections of Howland Road with Adams and Main Streets in North Fairhaven, to allow for smoother traffic flow.
- Install more traffic signs along Route 6 in East Fairhaven informing drivers of hazardous conditions due to curves, especially under bad weather conditions.
- Continue road maintenance and improvement programs, including drainage improvements where needed.

#### **Infrastructure Actions**

- Continue to build financial reserves for the end of the planning period when the main waste water treatment plant will need substantial upgrading.
- Continue to extend sewer lines to areas which are adjacent to existing development. Critically review any proposals to extend sewer lines to areas that are currently undeveloped and not adjacent to existing development.
- Continue maintenance and upgrading of existing sewer and water lines.

## School and Community Facilities Actions

- Continue school building upgrading and expansion program to meet state accreditation needs. Include recreation and athletic facilities in these plans, especially ball fields and soccer fields, to help meet overall town recreation needs.
- Continue renovation activities in the Town Hall, especially restoring the second floor theater for civic and cultural functions.

## Cultural Improvement Actions

- Encourage passage of three historic districts for the Town. Work with the Historic District Commission thus created and the existing Tourism Committee to encourage property improvements and events that feature the architecture, history and heritage of Fairhaven.
- Erect signs at appropriate places that indicate the edges of historic areas. The signs should say "Now Entering Historic Oxford or Twenty Acre Purchase or Fairhaven Center." Erect appropriate signs along Routes 6, 240 and I-195 which direct visitors to the historic parts of Fairhaven.
- Enact a demolition delay bylaw to give extra time for consideration and additional action when buildings or structures are threatened with demolition. This will provide some protection to culturally and historically important buildings and landmarks.

## Staff Services

- Fairhaven definitely needs the staff services of a town planner. Most towns of Fairhaven's size have one, as do many smaller size towns. Fairhaven had a town planner until the most recent one retired in 1990. Because town planning includes both community and economic development, it will be important for a new town planner to have these skills. They are part of normal educational preparation for town planning. It is anticipated that fully one-half of a town planner's time will be spent on economic and community development issues, given the importance of these issues for Fairhaven's future.

It is recommended that the Planning Board work with the Board of Selectmen on a comprehensive job description for the position of Town Planner/Community Development Coordinator. The individual hired should be selected by a Panel made up of one representative from both Boards, and the Executive Secretary of the Board of Selectmen. The position should ultimately answer to this Panel with day-to-day supervision and coordination being exercised by the Executive Secretary to the Board of Selectmen. The Town Planner/Community Development Coordinator should serve as staff to the Planning Board in its duties, the Board of Selectmen in its economic and

community development activities, and should aid other boards such as the Conservation Commission and Board of Health dealing with town development issues, on a case-by-case basis, as determined by the Executive Secretary to the Board of Selectmen.

An article should be submitted to Town Meeting for approval and funding for the position. An appropriation of \$60,000 should be made which includes salary, benefits, and office support for the position. Requirements for the position should include a Master's Degree in City/Town Planning (or its equivalent in experience) and a minimum of three years of professional experience (six years without a Master's Degree). Standard Town of Fairhaven employee responsibility language should be added to the following specific listing of duties, to become a job description for the position.

Town Planner/Community Development Coordinator is a full-time 40 hour per week salaried job, appointed by and answering to a Panel consisting of one member of the Board of Selectmen, one member of the Planning Board, and the Executive Secretary to the Board of Selectmen. The Town Planner/Community Development Coordinator is responsible for carrying out the administrative functions, and long range planning and growth management responsibilities of the Planning Board; and for carrying out the community and economic development responsibilities of the Board of Selectmen.

Specific duties consist of:

- Maintaining all records and files including correspondence of the Planning Board,
- Preparing agendas for Planning Board and other community development related meetings, including public hearings,
- Process for review all plans submitted to the Planning Board,
- Prepare Annual Report of the Planning Board,
- Attend all meetings of the Planning Board and other board and committee meetings, as required by assigned duties and projects,
- Maintain Planning Board office and supplies,
- Supervise any assistants and volunteers assigned to planning and community and economic development projects,
- Maintain any computer software programs, including geographic information systems, the town may obtain and install for the purposes of town planning, and community and economic development,
- Coordinate with the general media, including cable television, to represent the town's best planning, and community and economic development interests, and
- Serve on any committees, as assigned, to protect the town's best interests, and to provide expert advise on general and project planning, environmental issues, and community and economic development.

- Prepare grant application materials, as assigned, for the purpose of obtaining funding for planning, community and economic development activities, and specific development, town infrastructure, and environmental projects.

The planning and community development coordination functions of the position will be to administer the operation of the Planning Board, and to be responsible for the development and analysis of town community and economic development programs, and the evaluation of their impact on the physical, environmental, economic and social conditions of the town. The town planner/community development coordinator will also provide technical assistance to citizens and other interested persons seeking advice on planning, community and economic development, zoning, subdivision of land, commercial site plans, and industrial development in town. These duties include providing assistance on procedural matters such as applications to the town for permits on any of the above matters. Specific duties will include administration of the town's subdivision regulations, zoning bylaws and other relevant statutes and regulations, related to community and economic development.

The town planner/community development coordinator will also be expected to establish and maintain effective working relationships with other town employees, town board and committee members, town, regional, state and federal officials, and the general public.

### Specific Zoning Language

Residential cluster zoning is recommended for existing zone RA, which currently permits single family detached, semi-attached and two family dwellings on minimum lots of 15,000 square feet. For semi-attached and two family dwellings the minimum lot size is increased to 5,000 sq. ft. per dwelling unit and 500 sq. ft. per bedroom. Cluster zoning is a way of requiring that open space be created and preserved in residential developments of over 4 acres, that choose to take advantage of the provisions. Cluster zoning in the RA zone would also be subject to site plan review via an application for a special permit. This would aid in assuring better quality site planning and visual qualities in such developments. Residential cluster zoning is not recommended for RR (rural residential) and A (agricultural) zones. The present 50,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size is recommended for agricultural zones, while the 30,000 sq. ft. lot size in RR zones should be increased to 40,000 sq. ft. to better provide for ground water protection and protection from storm water

Residential Cluster Zoning: Proposed new section 3.13 in the Fairhaven Zoning Bylaws, subject also to section 3.9 to be retitled "Special Permits for Certain Intensive Residential, Non-Residential and MultiFamily Site Developments."

### 3.13 RESIDENTIAL CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.13.1 Objectives

The objective of Residential Cluster Development is to allow relatively intensive use of land, while at the same time maintaining existing character; to preserve open space for conservation and recreation; to introduce variety and choice into residential development; to meet housing needs; and to facilitate economical and efficient provisions of public services. Residential Cluster Development shall be permitted only in the zoning district designated RA. A Residential Cluster Development may include a plan to subdivide land, providing each dwelling unit with its own lot, or such a plan may choose to place all dwelling units on common land, owned in a condominium agreement by all property owners.

#### 3.13.2 Procedures

3.13.2.1 Pre-Application Review - To promote better communication and avoid misunderstanding, applicants are encouraged to submit preliminary material for informal review by the Planning Board prior to formal application. Preliminary subdivision plans, if any, should be submitted to the Planning Board prior to application for a Special Permit also. The Planning Board, may at its discretion, and the agreement of the applicant, choose to consider any review of the application and plan material and subdivision material, for the purpose of required subdivision review, together in one process, with the time table required for Residential Cluster Development.

3.13.2.2 Application and Plans - Applicants for a special permit for a Residential Cluster Development shall submit applications and plans as required by Section 3.9.2 (Submittal) for a special permit. The Residential Cluster Development Plan shall indicate the location of all structures and common open space, as well as other items enumerated in Section 3.9.2. The application materials shall indicate each landowner's interest in the land to be developed, the form of organization proposed to own and maintain the common open space, the substance of covenants and grants of easement to be imposed upon the use of land and structures, and a development schedule. If the plan involves more than one ownership, each owner of land included in the plan shall be a party to the application and, upon plan approval, subject to its provisions.

3.13.2.3 Review and Reports - The Planning Board shall transmit copies of the application and required plans to the Board of Health, the Fire Department, and the Department of Public Works, who shall act in conformance with the provisions of Section 3.9.2.1.

3.13.2.4 Criteria - Approval of a Residential Cluster Development shall be granted upon Planning Board Determination that the plan complies with the requirements of 3.13.3, and that the plan is superior to a conventional one in

preserving open space for conservation or recreation, in utilizing natural features of the land, in allowing more efficient provision of streets, utilities and other public services and that the plan is at least equal to a conventional plan in other respects, and the use will be in harmony with the surrounding neighborhood and the general purpose and intent of this bylaw.

### 3.13.3 Requirements

3.13.3.1 Minimum Area - A Residential Cluster Development shall encompass at least four (4) acres of land which is contiguous, although not necessarily in one ownership.

3.13.3.2 Number of Dwelling Units - The number of dwelling units permitted in a Residential Cluster Development shall not exceed the number permitted on the "applicable land area" of the proposed development plus an extra dwelling unit for every four dwelling units permitted under conventional development in zoning district RA. Parts or fractions of dwelling units so calculated shall be truncated down to a whole number.

3.13.3.3 "Applicable Land Area" shall be determined by a registered land surveyor, and equals the total area encompassed by the Residential Cluster Development Plan minus land subject to inland and coastal wetland regulations (Sec. 40 and 40A, Ch. 131, G.L.); minus land otherwise prohibited from development by local bylaw or regulation, minus land designated on the plan for uses not primarily servicing residents of the development.

3.13.3.4 Allowable Uses - Only residential uses are permitted in Residential Cluster Developments. Home occupations are prohibited, excepting that residents may use one room in a dwelling for an income producing activity that requires no additional parking, no storage of non-household materials, and no sound generation or transmission beyond 60 decibels on the A scale. No external visual or audible identification of an income producing activity is permitted on any dwelling unit.

3.13.3.5 Intensity Regulations - In a Residential Cluster Development the requirements of Section 2.5 shall be applicable only to the minimum front and side yards, maximum height and lot coverage. Other intensity regulations applicable to a Residential Cluster Development shall be the following:

Minimum Lot Area	9,000 square feet
Minimum Lot Width	60 feet
Minimum lot Frontage	60 feet
Minimum Rear Yard	20 feet

3.13.3.6 Improvements - Internal access, drainage, utilities, and grading shall be functionally equivalent to that required for separate lots in the Planning Board's adopted subdivision regulations. Prior to the issuance of building permits

within a Residential Cluster Development, the Building Inspector shall determine that a detailed site plan has been submitted to the Planning Board, which meets those standards, and before use permits for any structure are issued, the Building Inspector shall determine that improvement to meet such standards have either been completed to serve such structure, or financial security for the completion of required improvements has been received.

3.13.3.7 Open Space - All land not designated for roads, dwellings, parking, private use, or other development within the Residential Cluster Development shall be held for common use of the residents of the development. Common open space shall be preserved for recreation or conservation, and shall comprise no less than thirty percent (30%) of the "applicable land area" within the Development Plan. Ownership of common open space areas shall be arranged, and maintenance permanently assured through an incorporated home owner's association, condominium deeds , or other recorded land agreement through which each lot owner or dwelling unit owner in the development is automatically a member and each lot or dwelling unit is subject to a charge for a share of the maintenance expenses, or through comparable arrangement, satisfactory to the Planning Board. Preservation of designated open space shall be guaranteed through dedication, by covenant, or comparable legal instrument, to the common use and enjoyment of residents of the Residential Cluster Development, for recreational purposes serving those residents and their non-paying guests only, or for conservation. In addition the town shall be granted an easement over such land sufficient to ensure its perpetual maintenance as conservation or recreation land. Building coverage shall not exceed five percent (5%) in such conservation or recreation areas.

3.13.3.8 Long-Term Compliance - Subsequent to approval of such Residential Cluster Development, no land therein shall be sold and no lot line or designated structure altered from that shown on the Development Plan, so as to increase the degree or extent of non-conformity with the intensity regulations of this bylaw. Prior to sale of any lot or dwelling unit within a Residential Cluster Development, or issuance of a building permit for construction thereon, such lots and/or dwelling units shall be shown on a plan recorded in the Registry of Deeds, or registered with the Massachusetts Land Court, which plan shall make reference to the recorded land agreements referred to in Section 3.13.3.7. Such plan shall show all lots, or the locations of all dwelling units to be included in the development.