



# 1994 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WELLESLEY ○ MASSACHUSETTS



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# Wellesley 1994 Comprehensive Plan

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# I. Introduction

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## *What is The 1994 Comprehensive Plan?*

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A Comprehensive Plan is a tool to be used as a guide in making decisions. *The 1994 Wellesley Comprehensive Plan* provides a framework to shape the quality of our town's future growth and a guide to protecting the integrity of Wellesley's natural, cultural and historic resources. *The Comprehensive Plan* document presents summary overviews, goals, policies, and action recommendations. The *Plan* is intended to be a concise, readily available tool for use by citizens and officials as they perform their daily work on behalf of the Town of Wellesley.

This Comprehensive Plan was developed over several years of discussion and consensus building by citizens as they sought to define goals, policies, and actions for the Town. This process involved the compilation of data about Wellesley and discussion of implications for the present and the future. Options for action were considered, and choices were made through group discussions. This process is recorded in *The 1994 Comprehensive Plan with Background Materials*, the reference document which accompanies the *Comprehensive Plan*. It is a compendium of data and analysis about the Town of Wellesley, and it summarizes the deliberations out of which came the recommended goals, policies, and actions. A lengthy document, the *Plan with Background Materials* is intended to serve the citizen or official who wishes to delve more deeply into a particular aspect of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

*The Comprehensive Plan* and the *Plan with Background Materials* both contain each subject chapter's introduction section; the goals, policies, and actions sections; and key maps. In addition, the *Plan with Background Materials* contains sections on each subject's background, and existing conditions and analysis. Appendices and additional maps are also included in this larger, reference document.

## Acknowledgments

The following members of the Wellesley community have served as members of the Comprehensive Plan Coordination Group:

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## The Central Themes of Wellesley's Comprehensive Plan

The hundreds of townspeople who have participated in Wellesley's comprehensive planning process voiced a clear, consistent message: "We have a great town...let's keep it that way and make it even better." Words such as "preserve", "protect", "enhance", and "retain" permeated townspeople's discussions. At the same time they desire to make improvements and take action in areas where changes are needed.

Residents have a strong sense of pride in Wellesley and the prestige that comes from the town's special attributes and distinctive character. Townspeople value the esthetics of neighborhoods and business areas, and the contribution that open spaces make to the quality of life in Wellesley. In response, the Comprehensive Plan focuses upon the strengths of Wellesley's natural and social environment: for example, the village character of shopping areas, other cultural resources, and natural resources and open spaces.

There is also a clear consensus that residents want to strengthen the sense of community and sense of place that are the bases for feeling at home. As Wellesley responds to changing times, townspeople do not want to lose their sense of belonging. This concern is reflected in such aspects of the Comprehensive Plan as the emphasis upon homes and neighborhoods, facilities and activities that bring people together, and the collaborative approach to meeting new needs.

Maintaining and enhancing what we are proud of, and strengthening our sense of community -- these are central themes of the 1994 Wellesley Comprehensive Plan. The chapters of the Comprehensive Plan piece together a picture of where we are now, and the choices that lie ahead as the community works to maintain, enhance, and strengthen Wellesley.

The Comprehensive Plan is not merely a series of wistful statements that, "It would be nice if. . ." The Plan's Implementation Program is based upon practical collaboration among the many parties who comprise the community of Wellesley. The participatory 1991 - 1994 comprehensive planning process has broadened the working base of planning in Wellesley. This process also coincided with an evolutionary step forward in the community's ideas regarding how the Town can and should conduct its business. Fiscal constraints, increased awareness of the importance of economic vitality and cultural resources, worry about loss of neighborhood cohesion -- these are just a few of the dynamics that have prompted outreach and collaborative efforts, such as growing contacts between Town Hall and the business community. The Comprehensive Plan reflects and expands this collaborative approach. The Implementation Program includes action steps that enlarge the Town's capacities through collaborative efforts.

The Comprehensive Plan and its Implementation Program provide a basis for making good decisions on behalf of Wellesley.

## II. Land Use

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### Introduction

Wellesley is a residential town that is approaching buildout.

Sixty-nine percent of the town's 6336 acre land area is zoned for residential development, and almost 50% of the land area is already in residential use. With large acreages occupied by college campuses, the next most prominent land use is educational; 8.4% of the town's land area is zoned for educational use. Office and commercial areas are concentrated in a series of centers along Route 16 and to a lesser extent along Route 9. Just 2.5% of the town's land area is zoned for business and industrial use, although due to their property value these uses represent 13.2% of the Town's property tax base.

There is relatively little vacant developable land left in Wellesley, and current zoning regulations mean that development of these lands would be residential. It is estimated that at buildout under current zoning a maximum of approximately 800 more single family homes could be built. The great majority of the remaining developable land is contained in large parcels under the ownership of the state, educational institutions, private recreation organizations, and a few individuals. The greatest potential for land use changes lies in the future use or reuse of these remaining large parcels, which Wellesley residents are used to enjoying as open space.

There are very few parcels remaining in Wellesley's commercial centers which could support new construction or additions to existing buildings. Under current zoning regulations, redeveloped village shopping areas would look very different from the current clustered buildings. At present many buildings cover their entire lot area, but to meet the zoning bylaw's current lot coverage and parking requirements, new development could not match the existing pattern. Current zoning regulations require more on-site space for parking and leave less space for the building. Larger on-site parking areas and smaller buildings would contribute a different character to the traditional centers of Wellesley Square, Wellesley Hills, Lower Falls, and the Fells. Most might take on characteristics of the Linden Street shopping area.

The 1994 Comprehensive Plan identifies physical facilities and amenities that would be beneficial to the community, including:

- alternative types of homes to meet the changing needs of residents (especially seniors);
- improvements to parking, sidewalks, and other streetscape elements in village centers;
- bike and pedestrian path systems;
- more recreation and open space facilities and amenities; and
- protection of more land from development.

Due to limited financial resources, however, the Town by itself is unable to buy enough land and develop all these amenities. Thus the future use of significant portions of remaining developable land -- and just what public benefits accrue -- will be determined by the decisions of landowners in the context of regulations.

If Wellesley chooses to maintain its current approach to land use regulations, the development pattern will remain much as it is, but with occasional shifts of large parcels into predominantly single family subdivisions.

Taking a more proactive stance, the Town could adopt the strategy of gaining as many benefits and amenities as possible through a flexible, negotiated review and permitting process for future development or redevelopment. In order to make use of this strategy, however, townspeople would have to accept limited increases in density and variations in the development pattern of site plans in order to gain public benefits through the private development process. Much community education and deliberation will be necessary to achieve such a change in residents' view of development.

Similarly, benefits and amenities could be sought through the reuse of existing structures and parcels that are already developed, rather than through developing parcels that now comprise open space resources. Again, however, in order to make use of this strategy, townspeople would have to accept changes in the traditional development pattern and specific characteristics of buildings and parcels that people have grown used to.

The land use goals of the 1994 Wellesley Comprehensive Plan focus upon protecting and enhancing Wellesley's positive physical and cultural character. At the same time, the 1991-1994 comprehensive planning process initiated deliberations regarding how -- when changes occur -- flexible, mixed use development of key parcels might fit into the community context and meet identified needs of the community. Constructive dialogue and advance consideration of possibilities will continue to be part of the community's comprehensive planning efforts.

On-going dialogue should work from the following assumptions in order to make potential land use scenarios acceptable to different constituencies:

- Single family neighborhoods will be protected.
- The town's tax base will be strengthened and its fiscal stability maintained.
- No segregated areas of low income housing will be created, but the town's affordable housing goal will be met.
- The commercial village areas will be protected and made more vital.
- The long term financial needs of local institutions will be respected, as these organizations provide much to the town's well being.
- Natural systems and open space will be protected, though in some cases development must occur on at least part of the site.
- A carefully designed mix of uses, building types, and densities will be included in scenarios in order to achieve a desirable range of amenities.
- In order to stretch public dollars by leveraging private investment, a scenario must have a private sector incentive. If private development is to pay for public amenities, a project needs to yield enough revenue-generating square footage to offset the costs of the public benefit.
- The purpose of creative and negotiated development scenarios is to create multiple benefits that meet community needs identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

## Goals, Policies, and Actions

### II.1 **Goal: Maintain a continuous and coordinated town planning process to anticipate future needs and plan for their resolution.**

**Policy:** Undertake in-depth master program plans for complex areas of community development which require constant attention, including commercial areas, transportation, diverse housing, town facilities, and critical natural resources.

**Action:**

- Implement the corresponding goals, policies, and actions presented in the following chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy:** Update the town's open space and recreation plan to reflect current and projected needs and other comprehensive plan chapters.

**Action:**

- Assist the Natural Resources and Recreation Commissions to perform the handicapped accessibility inventory needed to complete the 1994 draft Open Space and Recreation Plan.

**Policy:** Study remaining nonresidential sites to determine whether potential tax revenue and other potential economic benefits are consistent with community design and development goals and policies.

**Action:**

- Consider the potential advantages and disadvantages of zoning amendments in the areas of the Massachusetts Highway Depot site, the Natick Gateway, and Dearborn Street as discussed in the Economic Vitality Chapter.

**Policy:** Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology, create and continually update a base of mapped information about Wellesley for use as a shared planning and management tool.

**Actions:**

- Develop the database and execute mapping of physical features such as topology, hydrology, roads, utility systems, and publicly owned facilities. Add "social" features such as parcel boundaries, ownership patterns, land use, potential for additional development, and census data. Incorporate geographic aspects of municipal and other service delivery systems.
- Achieve compatible computer systems for Town departments as necessary to make the GIS system a shared, interactive planning and management tool.

**II.2 Goal: Protect and enhance the aspects of Wellesley's existing image and character that most citizens agree epitomize the positive physical character of the community--including the town's "village" character, attractive and vital town centers, attractive neighborhoods, and open space;**

**II.3 Goal: Keep Wellesley a family-oriented town and a safe and attractive place to raise a family;**

**II.4 Goal: Retain the excellent qualities that the town now has while enhancing and improving its overall image and character;**

**and**

**II.5 Goal: Since Wellesley is primarily a residential town, safeguard residential neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible uses and other potentially damaging environmental influences.**

**Joint Policies for Goals II.2, II.3, II.4, and II.5:**

**Policy:** Address the design details of transition areas between commercial and residential areas.

**Actions:**

- Include consideration of these transition areas in the deliberations and recommendations of the design themes effort to be led by the Design Review Board (see Goal II.3, above).
- Give special attention to transition areas when planning for streetscape improvements, extensions of the sidewalk and path system, and development or redevelopment of parcels in these areas.

**Policy:** Review cluster zoning as a means of retaining open space while keeping development at a desired residential density.

**Action:**

- Incorporate this review into the community workshops regarding development financing and flexible, mixed use site planning which are described under Goal II.7.

**Policy:** Increase the amount of landscaping (trees, shrubs, and flowers) on public lands and streets so as to beautify and soften the image of the town.

**Actions:**

- Consider the installation and maintenance of plant materials to be an essential part of the Town's on-going investment in maintenance of facilities.
- Work with institutions and other landowners to stretch landscaping dollars, for example through bulk purchase of plant materials and cooperative maintenance efforts.

- Continually acknowledge, encourage, and support the beautification efforts of civic groups.

**II.6 Goal: Preserve and strengthen the appearance of the town's neighborhoods, and protect them from adverse influences.**

**Policy:** Seek methods to improve the appearance of neighborhoods, such as increased landscaping of public lands, underground wiring, and litter and weed removal.

**Policy:** Encourage elimination of eyesores in residential areas such as obsolete or dilapidated garages and sheds, unregistered vehicles, and dead trees.

**Action for these two policies:**

- When discussing distinctive neighborhood attributes as part of the design themes project described under Goal II.9, take the opportunity to help neighbors agree on a list of improvements that are needed in their neighborhood. Identify which improvements need Town action, and which could be accomplished as a volunteer neighborhood project. Assign neighborhood representatives to initiate appropriate follow-up actions.

**Policy:** Review the types of businesses and home occupations that can be carried on in homes without adverse impacts on the neighborhood.

**Action:**

- Make this an agenda item of a Planning Board meeting. Publicize the meeting to stimulate attendance by residents who are concerned about this, so they can describe the problems they experience and discuss with the Planning Board how regulations do or do not cover the situation. If there appears to be the need, consider amending relevant regulations.

**Policy:** Use open space and natural features such as hills and streams as natural buffers between neighborhoods of differing densities and between neighborhoods and nonresidential areas.

**Action:**

- Achieve this policy through the site planning of development or other reuse of parcels which currently serve this buffering function.

**II.7 Goal: Strengthen neighborhood planning.**

**Policy:** For key sites, take a pro-active stance and prepare design concept plans, rather than merely reacting to developers' proposals.

**Actions:**

- Support the Natural Resources and Recreation Commissions as they work to secure amenities and benefits on priority parcels identified in the town's Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- Designate and support a local group to lead the community's proactive consideration of how to site, design, and finance housing alternatives that meet the goals and criteria set forth in the Housing Chapter.

**Policy:** Support creative mixed use development where it would improve vitality, sense of community, efficiency, and other community goals and policies.

**Actions:**

- Conduct a series of community workshops to help officials and residents develop a working understanding of the financial aspects of development and redevelopment. With careful attention to these financial aspects, and in cooperation with owners of key sample parcels, conduct design workshops to sketch out alternative scenarios of conservation, creative mixed use, and standard subdivision development.
- Report and discuss the workshops' outcomes as part of an educational outreach effort.

**II.8 Goal: Preserve the town's "village" scale and character by physical design means, where possible, and by other means which will preserve and enhance a sense of village identity.**

**Policy:** Be cautious of the type of growth that will 1) erode the remaining rural characteristics of the town, 2) increase traffic, 3) demand more parking, or 4) change the present population profile dramatically.

**Action:**

- Continue to evaluate development and redevelopment proposals according to their potential positive and negative impacts upon the town. Consider these impacts in light of the attributes, needs, and opportunities identified in relevant chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy:** Seek to create a Town Square in conjunction with uses which attract people and activity.

**Action:**

- Continue to plan and administer programs and regulations so as to maintain and increase the lively mix of services and activities which create vitality in Wellesley Square and other town centers.

**II.9 Goal: Support and strengthen community design and the design review process so that high standards of design excellence are maintained in all development projects.**

**Policy:** Consider giving additional powers to the Design Review Board, within the limitations of enabling legislation, to help maintain the quality and character of the town.

**Actions:**

- Mandate the Design Review Board (DRB) to assume a proactive role and reach out to inform and influence deliberations and decisions.
- Convene a working meeting of the chairmen of Town boards and commissions, heads of departments, DRB members, and interested citizens to identify the full spectrum of Town decisions that impact community design. Consider how to make better use of the resources of the DRB during the Town's daily decision-making. Make recommendations regarding whether and how to formalize interactions between the DRB and other boards, commissions, and departments.

**Policy:** Establish design themes for business districts and for the town as a whole, and implement them.

**Actions:**

- Charge the Design Review Board to initiate an on-going process of reaching out to neighborhood groups, business groups, and others to discuss the positive attributes of their areas of town, and how these sets of attributes might determine design themes.
- When neighborhoods and districts begin to reach consensus on their design themes, discuss with Town boards and departments how these themes can be incorporated into their respective activities that impact each area's character and appearance.

**Policy:** Screen and beautify parking areas through the use of trees, shrubs, grade changes, fencing and other design elements.

**Actions:**

- Continue to incorporate these considerations into the Town's site plan approval and other permitting processes.
- Work with local business associations to sponsor needed "clean up/fix up" activities.

**Policy:** Seek improvements to signage and the elimination of non-conforming signs.

**Action:**

- Include these considerations in the Design Review Board's work relating to design themes throughout town.

**Policy:** Consider non-criminal tickets with civil penalties for enforcement of zoning violations.

**Action:**

- Assemble an inventory of current zoning violations. Analyze whether a program of non-criminal tickets would be commensurate with the scale of the problem, and whether it would be the most efficient and effective way to deal with these violations. Implement findings.

**Policy:** Seek to place utility lines underground, where possible.

**Action:**

- Incorporate the burying of utility lines into roadway and streetscape improvement projects.
- Where financially feasible, include consideration of underground utility lines in Site Plan Review procedures.

**II.10 Goal: Pay special attention to the entrances to the town on major roadways (gateways) since they represent a visitor's first impression of the town.**

**Policy:** Establish design themes at major gateways to the town through architectural features, landscaping, or other methods.

**Actions**

- Consider the gateways as part of the design themes effort which is described under Goal II.9.
- Incorporate the theme(s) into related regulatory provisions, such as site plan and design review criteria.

**Policy:** Develop improvement programs for gateway areas through zoning and other methods.

**Actions:**

- Include this goal in the consideration of potential zoning changes in the Massachusetts Highway Depot site/Dearborn Street area and Route 9 at the Natick line, as discussed in the Economic Vitality Chapter.

**II.11 Goal: Retain Wellesley's unique identity while working cooperatively with cities and towns in the region and subregion to solve common problems.**

**Policy:** Participate in planning for inter-town and regional transportation, housing, open space, education, and public utilities.

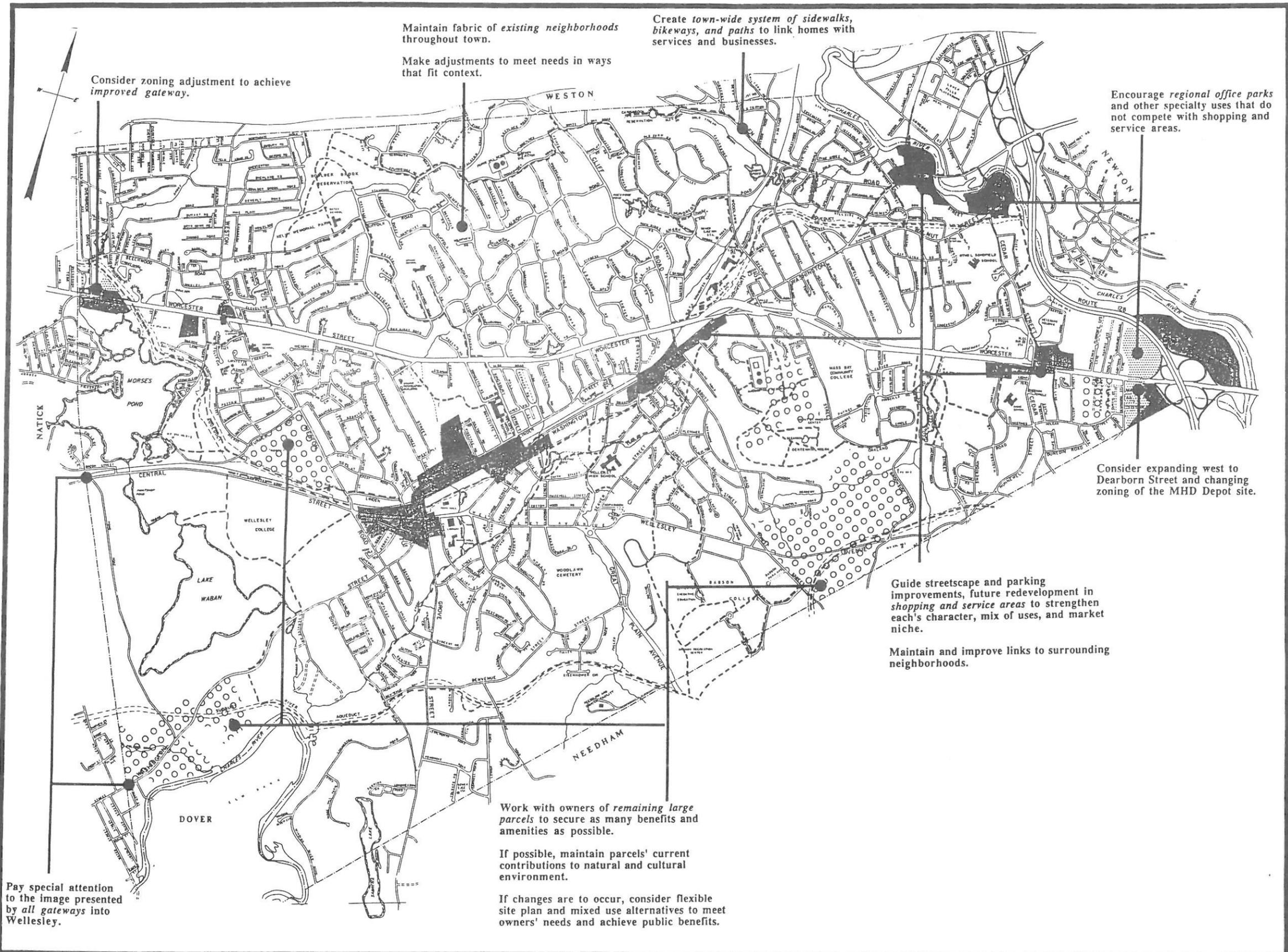
**Action:**

- Implement the corresponding actions discussed in other chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy:** Carefully monitor proposals for the future use of the Elm Bank property.

The *Conceptual Land Use Plan* Map shows Wellesley's desired areas of continuity and areas of planning challenges.

*Conceptual Land Use Plan*



# CONCEPTUAL LAND USE PLAN

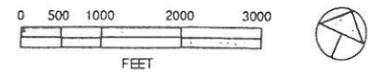
- Planning Challenges:
1. Achieve the most positive future for remaining large parcels
  2. Maintain balance between residential neighborhoods and business areas.
  3. Make adjustments necessary for neighborhood and business vitality in ways that respect and strengthen context.
  4. Secure open space resources.

-  Residential Neighborhoods
-  Remaining Large Parcels
-  Proposed Path System (details on *Open Space Action Plan Map*)
-  Existing Business Areas\*
-  Areas of Potential Zoning Changes (for discussion)

\* Areas based on zoning boundaries. Mapped areas approximate zoning boundaries.

## WELLESLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS



Consider zoning adjustment to achieve improved gateway.

Maintain fabric of existing neighborhoods throughout town.

Make adjustments to meet needs in ways that fit context.

Create town-wide system of sidewalks, bikeways, and paths to link homes with services and businesses.

Encourage regional office parks and other specialty uses that do not compete with shopping and service areas.

Consider expanding west to Dearborn Street and changing zoning of the MHD Depot site.

Guide streetscape and parking improvements, future redevelopment in shopping and service areas to strengthen each's character, mix of uses, and market niche.

Maintain and improve links to surrounding neighborhoods.

Work with owners of remaining large parcels to secure as many benefits and amenities as possible.

If possible, maintain parcels' current contributions to natural and cultural environment.

If changes are to occur, consider flexible site plan and mixed use alternatives to meet owners' needs and achieve public benefits.

Pay special attention to the image presented by all gateways into Wellesley.

## III. Housing

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### Introduction

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Wellesley has some of the best housing stock in the MetroWest area. While thoughts may immediately go to the high end nature of much of Wellesley's housing market, it is also the case that the town offers a range of housing sizes, some apartments and 4.5% of its housing is subsidized by state programs. This percentage is higher than many similar communities.

Looking down the road, there are no great threats to Wellesley's housing market or housing stock. The town's attractiveness and location will continue to make it appealing and there will continue to be an adequate supply of persons with sufficient incomes to afford the town's higher prices. No market driven forces are likely to dramatically change Wellesley's predominantly single family character. Growth over the next few decades will produce approximately 400 new units of single family housing and total housing growth will halt at approximately 9500 units -- at the most. The major challenge facing the town is how to maximize the usefulness of the remaining land in order to accomplish the town's planning goals and policies. How much should be used for housing? How much for other uses?

The Comprehensive Plan's workshops, analysis, and committee deliberations identified two groups that should be the focus for this Plan: assisting elders and assisting families with children who can no longer afford Wellesley. Other groups' needs were reviewed and it was determined that those needs are best met by the private market or by existing government programs.

There is almost universal support among Wellesley residents for efforts to assist elder citizens and the Plan recommends a variety of strategies to meet their needs. While there is some reluctance among townspeople regarding the idea of integrating elder housing into existing neighborhoods, a well designed, non-subsidized elder housing project is recommended as a first step toward creating new housing options for elders. This could be new construction or the conversion of existing structures. These options may include congregate housing or assisted living. Along with seeking out new types of physical structures, the Plan recommends strengthening local efforts to match elders with home maintenance services, home health care programs, and "reverse equity" loan programs as a supplemental source of income.

The guiding action to implement the above ideas – as well as the family strategy – is the revitalization of the Wellesley Housing Partnership and the preparation of an elder housing strategy that brings together all the key players connected to this issue and identifies the most pressing problems to address first.

The Plan's analysis also documents that the town's housing economy prices out some families and, therefore, if the Town wishes to maintain the diversity of its past, it must consider programs to lower the costs of home ownership for these families. There is, however, mixed support in Wellesley for such programs. The most common reason why communities pursue family housing is the feeling that their community is changing for the worse because of higher housing costs. Many people in Wellesley do not see this to be a problem in town, and therefore it is very difficult politically to move ahead on this issue.

Others, though fewer in number, see this to be an important issue and they will continue to push for expanded affordable family housing.

Given these wishes and political realities among townspeople, the Plan suggests that over the next five years the Town prepare a Housing Development Action Plan to define how the Town can reach a 5% level of subsidized affordable housing and that one or more Habitat for Humanity — or other such non-profit, non-state -- family homes be constructed using volunteer labor and donated land and materials. Beyond that, a focused series of educational programs is recommended.

**III.1 Goal:** Take care to carefully integrate new or expanded housing into existing districts and neighborhoods so that it is not physically or environmentally disruptive to the existing style and scale.

**Policy:** Discourage construction of new large homes on small lots where the resulting home would be out of scale with other homes in the neighborhood or would overcrowd the lot. Carefully manage requests for enlargement of existing homes. Balance the need to give owners of small homes the flexibility to enhance their properties through additions with the need to avoid overcrowded lots and neighborhoods.

**Actions:**

- Continue to periodically test the community's willingness to increase side yard ratios and decrease coverage ratios by presenting Town Meeting zoning amendments that would address this policy.

**Policy:** Recognize the unique scale of each neighborhood.

**Actions:**

In order to prevent new housing from damaging existing neighborhoods, guidelines should be prepared and used to measure whether a proposed housing strategy will be disruptive to neighborhood style or scale. The guidelines should be adopted as rules and regulations by the Housing Partnership Committee, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. Examples of such guidelines are presented below by type of new housing structure and likely location.

1. Single, two or three family homes

- Two and/or three family structures should be built or created only in neighborhoods that already contain such structures. They should not be introduced into single family neighborhoods unless the neighborhood agrees to a zoning change to allow the units.
- Homes placed on pre-existing lots within established neighborhoods should either be on lots that are within a specified percentage of the lot size of the surrounding properties, or the front and side yard depths for the property should replicate within a specified percentage the existing side yards of the surrounding properties so as to replicate the street front appearance of the existing neighborhood.
- Groups of houses built in new subdivisions near existing neighborhoods which do not conform to underlying zoning (e.g. comprehensive permit projects) should be designed to model in structural design, site design or character an existing single family or mixed density neighborhood in Wellesley. Lot sizes should be within a specified percentage of the surrounding properties. The front and side yard depths for the property should replicate within a specified percentage the existing side yards of the surrounding properties so as to replicate the street front appearance of the existing neighborhood.

- Houses built in new subdivisions on tracts that are separated from other neighborhoods and which do not conform to underlying zoning (i.e. comprehensive permit projects) should be developed in a manner that seeks to create a unified neighborhood that blends with the surrounding landscape and replicates the well designed character of other Wellesley neighborhoods.

2. Row or townhouse homes and multi-family, apartment style homes

- These homes should be built only in areas near villages retail and service areas, and in a manner that will integrate the homes into the nearby development fabric.
- New developments of townhouses should replicate proven successful models of such housing types either within Wellesley or in nearby communities. This will allow townspeople to easily evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the models.
- Height, mass and design of the structures and surrounding open spaces should mirror or improve on the character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- New townhouse or apartment style neighborhoods built on tracts that are separated from other neighborhoods and which do not conform to underlying zoning should be developed in a manner that seeks to create a unified neighborhood that blends with the surrounding landscape and replicates the well designed character of other Wellesley neighborhoods.

**III.2 Goal: Seek methods of providing a wider range of housing opportunities for people of diverse income, age and family size;**

**III.3 Goal: Enable citizens of all ages to stay in Wellesley by providing the types of housing that will meet their needs;**

**III.4 Goal: Recognizing the changes in family structure and size in Wellesley, provide more diverse and smaller housing units to meet recognized needs; and**

**III.5 Goal: Consider the concept of allowing slightly higher density of dwelling units in an effort to avoid diminishing the amount of remaining open space.**

**Joint Policies and Actions for Goals III.2, III.3, III.4, and III.5:**

**Policy:** Use a scattered site approach to the location of assisted housing rather than concentrating units in a defined area.

**Policy:** Seek additional units of assisted elderly and family housing in formats and locations acceptable to the town and to potential occupants.

**Policy:** Work to provide opportunities for those residents of publicly assisted housing who seek ownership or other forms of housing independence to achieve their goals.

**Policy:** Encourage the retention of existing smaller homes for use by young couples and older people who do not need and cannot afford larger homes.

**Policy:** Address the need for transitional housing for newly formed households, empty nesters, single person households and those with other special needs.

**Policy:** Encourage local banks to provide mortgage incentives to first-time home buyers, town employees and others and use tools such as reverse equity loans to assist elders.

**Policy:** Determine whether excess town-owned land or buildings are available and suitable for housing purposes.

**Actions:**

- By way of identifying specific needs and educating the public on housing issues, sponsor an initially limited, but potentially expandable, series of neighborhood workshops on neighborhood housing needs. Specifically bring together older and younger homeowners and renters in a neighborhood to explore whether the older residents have unmet housing needs and how the neighborhood might respond to those needs.

Given that allowing elders to stay in their homes is an objective of this plan – both for the welfare of elders and the opportunities it may present for homesharing – and because such a strategy can be performed to some degree through voluntary neighborhood actions, this recommendation is intended to test the waters. These workshops should be held in areas where there are residents who see the need for action on this front (e.g. interested CPCG members).

- Reinvigorate the Wellesley Housing Partnership Committee (HPC) to provide stronger leadership on affordable housing issues. The Board of Selectmen hold this title along with their many other responsibilities. Renewed commitment from the Board on this issue should result in either the appointment of a subcommittee to handle ongoing HPC issues or the assignment of a staff member to address day to day affordable housing issues.
- Consider the creation of a Wellesley Housing Assistance Board to provide a stronger organizational structure from which to coordinate and initiate housing actions.

Wellesley's elder housing activities in the past have been driven by the Wellesley Housing Authority and the Council on Aging. The Housing Partnership has focused on family housing issues. The Housing Authority is limited by statute in the kinds of housing activities it can manage. The Council on Aging is a department with broad responsibilities, of which coordinating housing information is just one of its tasks. Neither group has broad powers to address the range of elder housing needs that exist in today's society. Wellesley's Housing Partnership could be given expanded powers under this type of arrangement and be given a mission to focus on elder housing for a five year period.

An appropriate model for this type of activity is the Lexington Housing Assistance Board. This organization is a non-profit corporation formed in 1983 by the Lexington Town Meeting. Its programs are intended to augment those of the Housing Authority. LexHAB members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen and the organization has the power to buy or lease property, enter into contracts, make agreements with other government agencies, borrow money and execute notes, receive funds from the town or other public or private sources, acquire and operate housing facilities, charge rents and monitor rental, sale and resale restrictions. To date, LexHAB has overseen the conversion of a school to a limited equity condominium project of 71 units for moderate income families. It is also working on another school conversion.

Initial actions that a Wellesley HAB might pursue:

- Communicate and pursue long range strategies with institutions for potential reuse of properties for housing.
- Explore the reuse of the Warren school for assisted living to create the necessary 30 units to bring Wellesley to the 5% subsidized level so as to then obtain some Chapter 774 protection that would be available if a Housing Strategy is prepared.
- Work with West Suburban Elder Services to improve the elder service delivery system in Wellesley and to explore the feasibility of alternative elder housing such as a congregate care facility, a continuing care retirement facility, assisted living arrangements in existing structures, group adult foster day care, or other programs as the needs are identified through the elder housing planning process.
- Explore the need for elder services such as shared living networks, home repair and maintenance networks, home adaptations, home equity reverse mortgages, fuel assistance, weatherization, property tax abatements, financial management assistance, and transportation services.
- Maintain a cooperative and open line of communication with all government and institutional property owners so as to keep open the possibility of converting buildings or land currently in institutional use to some form of housing.
- Work with apartment building owners, federal housing officials and state housing officials to encourage the federal refinancing of the Glen Grove and Ardmore apartment complexes to maintain the subsidized housing.
- Identify specific sites and buildings that should be considered to meet the Town's affordable housing needs.

**Policy:** Review existing zoning and other local codes and bylaws to determine whether they are creating impediments to moderate cost housing.

**Policy:** Consider innovative techniques (cluster zoning, planned unit development, zero lot line zoning) and town houses to create smaller dwelling units similar to detached homes, but which do not require as much land.

### Actions:

- Explore the need to revise elements of the Wellesley Zoning Bylaw in order to lower the barriers to alternative housing types. Elements of the zoning that should be considered for revision are the following:
  1. Definitions will be needed for “congregate care”, “assisted living”, “home sharing”, “adult day care”, and “continuing care residential community”.
  2. Clause II.8.a (page 10) of the bylaw has far-reaching implications. It states that two family (and other uses) may be allowed by special permit in the residential zones only if “the Board of Appeals makes a written finding that the original building can no longer be used or adapted at reasonable expense and with a fair financial return for a use regularly permitted in the district.” This means that conversion of a single family use to a two family use requires a demonstration that economically the house can no longer be used for single family use. While special permit control makes very good sense for this type of conversion, the financial return standard is very difficult to meet for a single family conversion. (The standard is a good one for conversion to larger, clearly different uses.) Neighborhood character (i.e. general compatibility) should be the standard for this provision.
  3. The community group residence use, while presumably intended for special needs children and adults, might be used as a model for adult care/elder housing uses. While most of the provision (II.8.d, page 11) is suitable, the one facility per 1/2 mile radius and 50% open space figures may be unnecessary.
  4. II.8.g (page 12) requires a special permit for all instances of more than three unrelated persons living together. If elder housing options are added to the bylaw, this provision would need to be brought into consistency.
  5. II.11 (page 14) controls the conversion of a school or other public building to housing, but it requires a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting for such action. This standard should be reconsidered as to whether it is too high.
  6. While apartments are allowed by right in General Residential District and other areas, provision XVI.E (Restrictions Affecting All Districts, page 54), requires that all non-single and two family projects of over 10,000 must have special permit. While this is not a poorly conceived threshold, it should be realized that even a small townhouse project would need a special permit.
  7. In order to gain affordable single family units, an inclusionary housing provision should be considered. This would require *either* that some number or percentage of future subdivision units must be affordable *or* that a payment in lieu of a unit must be given to the town for affordable housing efforts.

### III.6 Goal: Determine the level of assisted housing that is appropriate for the town and find means of accomplishing the stated goals.

**Policy:** Work cooperatively with governmental and nonprofit agencies and the private sector to provide the amount and type of assisted housing determined to be needed and compatible with the goals of this Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy:** Seek modifications to Chapter 774 so that the town and neighborhood will have more control over the location, scale and design of low and moderate income housing.

**Policy:** Investigate concepts such as linkage and inclusionary housing zoning bylaws which would gradually provide additional affordable housing units over a period of years.

**Policy:** Develop a plan for the improvement of physical and social conditions within the town's existing assisted housing areas.

#### **Actions:**

- Prepare a Housing Development Action Plan in conformance with Chapter 774 guidelines so as to more clearly define the town's housing strategy and to obtain the limited protection from having 5% of the town's units subsidized and having a housing action plan.

By combining the analysis performed in this Comprehensive Plan and the analysis and strategies from the Elder Housing Plan, Wellesley would be well suited to prepare a Housing Development Action Plan with a minimum of effort. This plan should be submitted to the Community Review Board within the Executive Office of Community and Development.

- Within the framework of protecting the town's single family character, seek ways to meet identified housing needs by placing primary emphasis on building or converting the following types of structures:
  1. small scale multifamily housing developments built near the village retail and service areas;
  2. selective reuse of existing buildings; and
  3. new scattered single family units built within established single family neighborhoods.
- Place secondary emphasis on meeting housing needs through the following mechanisms:
  4. new neighborhoods which are separated from existing single family neighborhoods, and
  5. accessory apartments<sup>2</sup> in existing single family homes.
- Target the following population groups for family housing efforts:

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<sup>2</sup>"Accessory apartments" are small rental units created in a defined small portion of a single family home wherein the homeowner must remain in residence. Towns can control the size, parking and use of these apartments through annual permits.

Low to moderate income families with children. This includes both single and two parent families.

- For the next ten years, target the following types of housing directed at these identified housing needs groups:
  1. Consider, on a site by site basis, detached or townhouse style homes with three to four bedrooms for families with children of school age whose incomes fall below \$40,000 per year. Homes for sale should sell for less than \$100,000 (in 1993 dollars) and apartments for rent should cost between \$1000 and \$1300 per month (also in 1993 dollars). A total of 134 of these units will be needed. These units will require approximately 14 acres, assuming a net density of 10 units per acre.
  2. Consider, on a site by site basis, detached or townhouse style homes with three to four bedrooms for single parents with children whose incomes fall below \$40,000. Homes for sale should sell for less than \$100,000 (in 1993 dollars) and apartments for rent should cost between \$250 and \$1000 per month (also in 1993 dollars). A total of 50 of these units will be needed; 45 for rental and 5 for homeownership. These units will require approximately 5 acres assuming a 10 unit per acre net density.

**III.7 Goal: Provide for more elderly housing and provide more support services that encourage independent living for elders, handicapped and others with special needs.**

**Policies and Actions for Goal 7:**

**Policy:** Locate senior citizen housing in areas convenient to town services, public transportation, commercial services, and community activities.

**Policy:** Encourage additional housing opportunities for moderate-income elders who are not eligible for publicly-assisted elderly housing.

**Policy:** Work cooperatively with the appropriate agencies to accommodate within Wellesley persons with special housing needs who can live in a supervised community setting.

**Policy:** Consider the use of portions of existing dwellings as accessory dwelling units where such use would not adversely affect the neighborhood.

**Actions:**

- Explore the preparation of a comprehensive elder housing strategy that builds on the goals and policies of this plan.

There are so many options for services and housing for elders today that Wellesley must better define its needs. While this Plan has defined several types of housing needs, more discussion is needed on elder housing services that allow elders to stay longer in their homes and to create new forms of elder housing that match the differing needs of the elder population.

Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), under a grant from the Farnsworth Trust, is providing community level elder housing planning and local leader training on elder housing issues. For under \$1000, Wellesley could contract with ABCD to provide ten workshops on elder housing. This effort will focus the strategy and could be the framework for Action #2-Neighborhood Oriented Housing Meetings.

- Kick off much of the above elder housing work with a workshop/public meeting that brings in success stories in elder housing from surrounding communities.

West Suburban Elder Services, ABCD, the Executive Office of Elder Affairs and Council on Aging can all assist in organizing a meeting of successful projects in neighboring towns. These might include the Nonantum Village Congregate project in Newton, the Westonian congregate facility in Weston, the 12 unit John Bertram House in Salem (assisted living), the Gables (120 units of assisted living units in Winchester), and the Vernon Court Elder Housing Project by Cooperative Living of Newton.

- Target the following elder populations for housing assistance:

Low to moderate income elderly persons needing low to moderate levels of living services. At the low service end of this spectrum will be persons seeking less space and occasional maintenance and housekeeping services. At the moderate end of the service spectrum will be those needing daily check-in services (e.g. mail or transportation), live-in help with cooking and cleaning, and light to moderate health care services (e.g. medication, light physicals, or light physical therapy).

- For the next ten years, target the following types of housing directed at the identified housing needs groups:
  1. Support the strengthening of existing services and the development of needed new services to assist elders who wish to stay in their homes. These services should include financial, home repair, home cleaning, shopping, transportation, health and social services.
  2. Explore housing options that allow elders to share their homes with other persons of varying ages. Attempt to create 50 such alternative housing arrangements in the next five years.
  3. Encourage small single family or townhouse homes with one or two bedrooms that provide some form of maintenance services for older residents who seek an alternative to their larger single family homes. Single level structures are preferable. A total of 25 of these units will be needed over ten years. The rental rate for these units should fall between \$500 and \$750 per month. Six acres will be needed for these units, assuming 10,000 square feet of land per dwelling unit.
  4. Consider encouraging the construction or rehabilitation of existing buildings to provide one and two bedroom apartments with a range of potential services for older residents who seek alternatives to their single family homes and who want the sense of community provided by multifamily

housing. A total of 75 of these units will be needed over ten years. The rental rate for these units should fall between \$500 and \$750 per month. If three developments of 25 units each are built at net densities of 10 units per acre, a total of 9 acres will be needed.

5. Consider encouraging the construction or rehabilitation of existing buildings to provide one bedroom per client assisted living facilities with moderate to high service levels for older residents who seek or need living arrangements lying between the above options and a high service facility such as a nursing home. A total of 100 of these units will be needed over ten years. Assuming that larger older homes are used for this purpose and that each home could hold 6 clients, then 17 facilities will be needed. These homes will probably use five acres of land assuming a 15,000 square foot lot, unless some are rehabilitated existing properties.



## IV. Economic Vitality

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### Introduction

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Wellesley's economic base reflects its location in Greater Boston at the intersection of the Route 9 and Route 128 corridors. There are, however, significant differences between the pattern of businesses in Wellesley and those located elsewhere along Routes 9 and 128.

Thirty-seven percent of the town's business parcels contain general office buildings, which range from the "Class A" office parks at the junction of Routes 9 and 128 to the small service buildings located in shopping centers along Route 16. This component of the local economic base reflects the wave of office construction that took place in the Greater Boston area over the past 30 years. Another 28% of business parcels contain small retail and service buildings (smaller than 10,000 square feet). These latter parcels average 1/2 acre in size. In contrast to some other towns along major highway corridors, only 4 parcels in Wellesley are categorized by state land use codes as "shopping centers/malls", and together they total only 4.83 acres. Clearly, Wellesley's retail base is "village" scale rather than regional mall scale. Despite its location along major highway corridors, Wellesley is not dominated by a "highway commercial strip" such as is found in other municipalities along major commuting routes. For example, only 9% (a total of 19 parcels) of all business parcels are developed as gasoline service stations or automobile sales and service. In contrast to the Greater Boston region's historically large industrial base, Wellesley's assessor records list only two parcels (1.94 acres in all) that are in industrial use.<sup>3</sup>

As is true elsewhere in the Greater Boston region, educational institutions are a major sector in Wellesley. They are discussed in the Land Use, and Natural and Cultural Resources Chapters. It should be noted, however, that educational institutions are major employers and purchasers of goods and services, and thus they form an important portion of the economic activity in town.

The nature and clustered locations of businesses in Wellesley reflect decades of consistent Town policies to concentrate businesses in a few well-defined areas, discouraging their fragmentation or attenuation along arterial streets.

Wellesley's business areas contribute to residents' pride and sense of place in their community. Residents consistently use the terms "village" and "village center" when talking about Wellesley's shopping and service areas. These terms convey townspeople's sense that each area has a distinctive scale, character, and connectedness with nearby neighborhoods. Shopping and service areas -- the "villages" -- have traditionally been an important component in the physical and social pattern of life in Wellesley. Consequently, a number of Wellesley's 1994 goals and policies for business spring from the theme of protecting and enhancing what exists. These goals and policies focus on appearance, design standards, maintenance, and avoiding conflicts between business-related activities and residential areas.

At the same time there is a growing sense among townspeople that perhaps the community cannot take for granted the traditional business pattern in the village centers. Economic and

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Town Assessor's records 1992.

market forces in the 1990s are different from those of the 1980s, when a major concern was containing business growth. The question now arises as to how Wellesley can foster continued economic vitality within the town's traditional development pattern. As a result, a second theme underlies Town goals and policies for business: dealing with economic forces and identifying market niches to support business vitality in ways that are compatible with each business area's distinctive character.

The 1991-1994 planning process represents a logical continuation of the Town's evolving plans and policies relating to business. The Economic Vitality Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan reflects townspeople's heightened understanding of how the village centers contribute to their pride in Wellesley's distinctiveness. Residents are increasingly aware that what happens in business areas contributes to the stability and value of their neighborhoods. The comprehensive planning project's deliberations focused upon the Town's and the business community's respective roles in creating and maintaining economic vitality. The policies and actions represent a shift toward collaborative, joint efforts to foster business and strengthen Wellesley's characteristic pattern of business activity. Components of this broader, more proactive Town role include:

1. Work with the business community to document, analyze, and resolve parking problems.
2. Continue the policy of maintaining business areas at their current densities and sizes, except for considering the following adjustments for the sake of achieving clear advantages for the community:
  - a. Solidify the Routes 128 & 9 area. Negotiate and rezone the Mass. Highway Depot site as appropriate for its reuse. Allow high quality redevelopment that does not lower the value of, or unreasonably impact, nearby homes and does not compete with existing town business areas. Consider extending the office park district on the south side of Route 9 west only as far as Dearborn Street.
  - b. Upgrade the appearance and site plan standards of the Route 9 business district at the Natick line. Consider extending the Natick Line business district north to the Cochituate Aqueduct in a manner that requires high quality site planning and design for future redevelopment of this area. As appropriate, require buffering for the Aqueduct and adjoining neighborhoods.

In each of these possible zoning district adjustments, consider how a carefully planned business or mixed use development or redevelopment scenario should add to the open space system.

3. Take a proactive approach to rezoning -- that is, to setting the stage and/or negotiating for a high quality development or redevelopment that achieves clear advantages for the community. The needs and opinions of nearby residents should carry much weight, and the Town should require clear, detailed information about the advantages and disadvantages of potential zoning changes.
4. Design and implement a Town-wide sidewalk and path system. Place special emphasis on connecting business areas with surrounding neighborhoods, and on improving the safety, comfort, and attractiveness of walking among stores in each area. Increase the use of outlying parking areas.
5. Work jointly with business owners and with landlords to maintain and improve the physical appearance and safety of business areas.

## Goals, Policies, and Actions

### **IV.1 Goal: Enhance the unique role and character of commercial areas within the town including retail, service, office, wholesale and industrial uses.**

**Policy:** Continue to identify Wellesley's commercial centers according to their functions, and reflect these functions in specific zoning regulations for appropriate uses and intensity of uses within each commercial zoning district. Use the tools of zoning and design review to fine-tune the function, scale, character, and compatibility of design within each commercial area.

**Actions:**

- Assess the continued economic viability of each commercial area's role and market niche in light of the findings of the joint Town/business community economic and market trends study (see below). Reconsider regulations and business practices in light of this assessment.
- (Actions relating to design are listed under Goal IV.5, below.)
- (Actions relating to zoning of gateway areas are listed under IV.7, below.)

**Policy:** Encourage additional professional and business office uses in areas where they will not cause traffic problems or adversely impact residential areas.

**Actions:**

- Incorporate this policy into the consideration of zoning amendments described under Goal IV.7, below.

**Policy:** Involve the business people and property owners in planning for the commercial areas.

**Actions:**

- Continue the working dialogue among the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board, and the business community.
- Sponsor a joint Town/business community study of economic and market trends as they relate to the distinguishing characteristics and market niches of Wellesley's business areas. Identify market trends that might be tapped to foster local business vitality and/or that require adjustments to maintain local business vitality. Consider incentives that might encourage the retention of retail and service establishments providing specialty goods and services directed toward specific needs of Wellesley residents.

**IV.2 Goal: Support and strengthen local businesses that are beneficial to the community in terms of providing needed services, products, employment and tax revenue.**

**Policy:** Work jointly with the business community to document, analyze, and resolve parking problems.

**Actions:**

1. Begin by making optimal use of existing parking spaces, both publicly and privately owned. Consider such improved management practices as:

Installing directional signs to parking lots, and clearer signs regarding parking restrictions;

Altering metered time limits to facilitate employees' use of outlying spaces;

Requiring that employees park in outlying lots rather than use on-street spaces;

Advertising the location of available spaces. Implement and aggressively promote a program of free parking on Town-owned lots during low demand periods;

Making the walk from parking lots safer and more enjoyable (actions relating to design and maintenance are listed under Goal IV.5, below);

Conducting a feasibility study for a year-round shuttle system among the Town's business areas. Consider shuttling employees from outlying parking lots, customers among lots and business areas, and residents among neighborhoods and business/service centers.

2. Then evaluate the impact of the above listed improvements to the management of existing spaces. If there is still a documented parking problem, work jointly with the business community to examine the feasibility and potential impacts of major investments to construct more parking spaces.

Consider the parking system in tandem with the pedestrian/ bike system, and secondary traffic circulation within business areas.

Consider dedicating parking lot and parking meter fees to the provision, maintenance, and improvement of parking facilities. Consider private funding assisted by the Town through such strategies as betterment districts and tax increment financing.

Avoid demolishing buildings to create parking spaces.

Consider decking existing lots.

**Policy:** Consider the formation of a public or nonprofit community economic development organization to plan for desired commercial development and establish a program to obtain it. Pursue grants that might assist or initiate the program.

**Actions:**

- Include in the joint study of economic trends described under Goal IV.1 consideration of whether private market forces might still support the private sector's providing certain activities and services desired by Wellesley residents (for example a local theater and activities for teens). In cases where market forces will not support private businesses catering to these needs, consider how a public or nonprofit organization might.
- As townspeople and the business community discuss how the Town might take a more proactive role in constructed improvements to the commercial areas, consider whether a nonprofit semi-public entity might be needed to augment the Town's capacities and resources.

**IV.3 Goal: Encourage personalized retail and service activities which reinforce the sense of family and community in Wellesley.**

**Policy:** Encourage participation by local businesses in the activities of the community.

**Actions:**

- Provide highly visible acknowledgment of local businesses' community activities.

**Policy:** Establish a closer working relationship between town agencies and the business community to address mutual concerns and objectives in commercial areas.

**Actions:**

- Make this a high priority agenda item for the on-going Town/business community dialogue described under Goal IV.1.

**Policy:** Encourage cooperation among business owners, landlords, tenants, residents, and business and government leaders to explore future possibilities for existing business areas.

**Actions:**

- Incorporate and pursue this policy in the follow-up recommendations of the joint study of economic and market trends described under Goal IV.1.

**Policy:** Provide opportunities for sharing community information at retail nodes (kiosks, etc.).

**Actions:**

- Consider the design of such opportunities in the design themes project to be spearheaded by the Design Review Board (described under Goal II.9 of the Land Use Chapter.)

- Incorporate the placement and construction of such opportunities into the sidewalk and path system described under Goal IV.6.

**Policy:** Encourage and foster more activities with a cultural focus in Wellesley's business areas (art exhibits, multi-cultural festivals, etc.).

**Actions:**

- Working cooperatively with the business community, develop ideas and suggestions of ways to implement this policy. Report findings and recommendations to the Board of Selectmen.

**IV.4 Goal: Increase the diversity and vitality in the town's retail areas.**

**Policy:** Enliven commercial areas--especially in the evenings and on weekends--with activities for young people and others, such as movie theaters, bowling alleys, restaurants, and recreation facilities.

**Actions:**

- Pay special attention to these service and entertainment activities in the joint study of economic and market forces described under Goal IV.1.
- In cases where the private sector cannot provide desired services and activities, consider how a non-profit or volunteer effort might.

**Policy:** Work with the business community to maintain a diversity of goods and prices in Wellesley's commercial areas.

**Actions:**

- Survey the range of goods and prices currently available, and compare them with townspeople's perceptions regarding diversity. Compare them also with the findings of the joint study of economic and market trends. Communicate these findings and their implications to the general public.

**IV.5 Goal: Maintain high standards of design and maintenance in existing and new commercial developments.**

**Policy:** Develop specific improvement programs for each commercial district in cooperation with property owners and business organizations. Provide more landscaping in commercial districts to beautify and define areas.

**Actions:**

- Launch and continue a joint effort with business owners and with landlords to maintain and improve the physical appearance and safety of business areas. Clarify responsibilities for maintenance and improvements along roadways, sidewalks, and other areas visible to customers and other visitors.

- As part of the Town's on-going dialogue with the business community described under Goal IV.1, identify and carry out practical, incremental steps to work cooperatively on maintenance, amenities, and physical improvements.

**Policy:** Carry out unified design themes within commercial districts.

**Actions:**

- Include this policy in the design themes project to be spearheaded by the Design Review Board (described under Goal II.9 from the Land Use Chapter).
- Working from the guidance provided by the design themes project, establish design guidelines for the expansion or renovation of commercial areas, storefronts, signs, parking and other facilities in commercial areas.

**Policy:** Provide buffers between commercial areas and adjoining residential areas.

**Actions:**

- Enforce this policy through zoning regulations and site plan review criteria for redevelopment of commercial parcels and also for changes of commercial district boundaries.

**Policy:** Retain the historic characteristics of existing commercial buildings and sites while accommodating them to current needs.

**Actions:**

- Consider how zoning and other regulations might provide incentives to achieve this policy.
- Include this policy in the design themes project to be spearheaded by the Design Review Board (described under Goal II.9 from the Land Use Chapter).

**IV.6 Goal: Coordinate vehicular traffic, pedestrian traffic and parking in commercial areas so that they function in an optimal manner.**

**Policy:** Orient retail business areas more to pedestrians than to automobiles.

**Actions:**

- (Action relating to a Town-wide sidewalk and path system is described below.)
- Incorporate this policy into the sidewalk/path system, and also into the planning and management of parking facilities (see Goal IV.2).

**Policy:** Enhance surface parking through landscaping, and encourage well designed structured parking (preferably underground) where feasible.

**Actions:**

- (Actions relating to parking are described under Goal IV.2.)

**Policy:** Encourage year-round public transportation between key points in town and commercial centers and mass transit so as to reduce the dependence upon the private automobile.

**Actions:**

- (Actions are detailed under Goal VIII.1 in the Circulation and Transportation Chapter.)

**Policy:** Increase ways for pedestrians and vehicles to circulate in and around business areas without having to join (or conflict with) the stream of through traffic.

**Actions:**

- Design and implement a Town-wide sidewalk and path system. Place special emphases on:
  - connecting business areas with surrounding neighborhoods;
  - improving the safety, comfort, and attractiveness of walking among stores in each area; and
  - increasing the use of outlying parking areas.

**IV.7 Goal: Improve the commercial areas at entrances to the town along major roadways (gateways).**

**Policy:** Encourage the dual cooperation of Wellesley and neighboring towns to improve the appearance and function of gateway commercial areas--especially on Route 9 at the Natick line and Route 16 in Lower Falls.

**Actions:**

- Invite the planning boards of neighboring municipalities to a joint meeting with the Wellesley Planning Board. Compare the goals and policies of each city's or town's comprehensive plan as they relate to the shared gateways. Identify commonalities and brainstorm ways that joint or coordinated actions might achieve mutual goals and policies. Schedule follow-up meetings and actions as appropriate.
- Maintain working contacts with neighboring town officials and business communities. For example, include them when the design themes project is discussing commercial districts at gateways such as Lower Falls.

**Policy:** Consider zoning amendments, including adjustments to district boundaries, to allow and encourage quality development or redevelopment with high standards for site planning and design.

**Actions:**

- Solidify the Routes 128 & 9 area. Negotiate and rezone as appropriate for reuse of the Mass. Highway Depot site. Allow high quality redevelopment that does not lower the value of, or unreasonably impact, nearby homes and does not

compete with existing town business. Consider extending the business district west only as far as Dearborn Street.

- Upgrade the appearance and site plan standards of the Route 9 business district at the Natick line. Consider extending the Natick Line business district north to the Cochituate Aqueduct in a manner that requires high quality site planning and design for future redevelopment of this area. As appropriate, require buffering for the Aqueduct and adjoining neighborhoods.
- In all zoning district adjustments, consider how a carefully planned business or mixed use development or redevelopment scenario should add to the open space system, and how additional housing choices might be included.
- Take a proactive approach to rezoning -- that is, set the stage and/or negotiate for a high quality development or redevelopment that achieves clear advantages for the community. Require clear, detailed information about the advantages and disadvantages of potential zoning changes. Pay careful attention to the needs and opinions of nearby residents.



## V. Natural and Cultural Resources

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### Introduction to the Natural Resources Component

Wellesley is a suburban community with little undeveloped land that is not already protected from further development in some way, with the exception of land owned by major institutions such as the colleges and the Country Club, or land in large family estates near the community's southwestern boundary.

Thus, the primary natural resource issues facing the Town as it looks to the future are rather specific. First, some specific parcels of open land should be preserved, either because of their size or because of their significance as potential links in the existing network of open spaces. In addition to the benefits for passive and active recreation, which are addressed in the Open Space and Recreation Chapter, open space preservation can help protect groundwater and surface water quality, minimize erosion and runoff, and preserve wildlife habitat.

The second major natural resources issue is the protection and improvement of surface water and groundwater resources. Of particular concern is Moses Pond because of its multiple uses for recreation and water supply and the pressures of urbanization in its watershed, including unsewered residential development in the several towns within its watershed, and salt use along Route 9 and the Massachusetts Turnpike. Continuation of the existing watershed and in-lake management efforts of the Wellesley Department of Public Works is therefore a priority.

More generally, the Town should continue and work to expand its efforts to protect all groundwater and surface water resources, through public environmental education and awareness programs, enactment of appropriate regulations and zoning bylaws, and pesticide and fertilizer management programs.

The Natural Resources actions recommended in the Comprehensive Plan emphasize:

- preserving open space and trees;
- continuing the Town's ongoing efforts to protect surface water and groundwater resources, floodplains and wetlands;
- assisting residents to manage and dispose of hazardous materials;
- promoting sustainable resource use, including conservation, recycling, reuse, composting and waste reduction;
- maintaining up-to-date information about Wellesley's natural resources, to assist in resource management; and
- expanding environmental education and volunteer efforts to protect natural resources.

Rather than pointing to new town policies, the actions in the Natural Resources Component refine and update well-established policies and practices.

## Introduction to the Cultural Resources Component

Wellesley's cultural resources have long been integral to the community's attractiveness, quality of life, residential values, and strong tax base. Previous Comprehensive Plans did not include specific discussion about cultural resources. The Town has taken an assertive approach to considering design quality as part of the development review process in commercial areas. There are one Local Historic District, one National Register Historic District (and portions of four others), and four structures on the National Register of Historic Places..

Community input into the 1994 Comprehensive Plan has articulated a vision of Wellesley's cultural resources that extends beyond the physical structures that embody the community's heritage and quality of life. The vision also encompasses the institutions, programs, and interactions that play such a central role in community life. In order to respond to these community concerns the 1991 - 1994 comprehensive planning process began to address preserving and enhancing the town's culture as embodied in physical, institutional, and social resources. Deliberations began the process of understanding and reaching agreement on a fundamental question: How assertive a role can and should the Town take in relation to the built environment and the social environment?

The 1994 Comprehensive Plan broadens the Town's definition of cultural resources to include institutions and programs, and also both the physical and the social aspects of Wellesley's cultural environment. Recommended actions include:

1. Formally communicate to local cultural institutions how important they are to the community and how much the Town wants to maintain a cooperative relationship with them. Send a mailing to all local institutions that includes an abstract of this component of the Comprehensive Plan. Have representatives of the Town follow up to arrange an informal visit to open and maintain channels of communication. Try to identify ways that the Town might assist the institutions, and follow through as much as possible.
2. Take a proactive stance regarding the Town's role in conserving and enhancing the physical aspects of Wellesley's cultural environment. Components of this Town effort should include:
  - When evaluating design alternatives, do not be a slave to style, but be very respectful of and attentive to the context, fabric, and pattern of the setting.
  - Work to influence the design of Wellesley's cultural environment through education and consensus, rather than through increased regulation.
  - Lead by example, because the Town is a major property owner.
  - Make better use of the resources offered by the Design Review Board by calling upon that Board to compare viewpoints and options when another Town board is making plans and decisions that relate to buildings, outdoor improvements, maintenance techniques, and signs.
  - Lead by education and discussion.
  - Work for cultural resource conservation, and design improvements to Wellesley's gateway avenues into town, which announce and draw attention to Wellesley's distinguishing character.

## Goals, Policies, and Actions for Natural and Cultural Resources

The overriding goal of the Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter is:

**To protect and enhance Wellesley's natural and cultural resources for the benefit of the town's existing and future citizens.**

This central ideal underpins all other goals and policies, and the actions that are designed to achieve them.

### **V.1 Goal: Preserve open space for habitat protection and enhancement of community character.**

**Policy:** Maintain sufficient natural areas so that important plant and wildlife species can be sustained.

**Policy:** Preserve scenic, historic, geologic and ecological features of the town.

#### **Action:**

- Continue to maintain park and conservation lands, guided by clearly defined basic maintenance standards and site-specific planting and maintenance policies and plans.

**Policy:** Maintain and improve the quality of the trees in Wellesley.

#### **Actions:**

- Promote the planting of public shade trees on both public and private property to replace losses, improve aesthetics, and provide buffers.
- Maintain and replace public shade trees as necessary, in accordance with clearly defined policies.

### **V.2 Goal: Protect Wellesley's sensitive land, water and wetlands resources, and restore those resources that have been degraded or impaired.**

**Policy:** Minimize the impact of fertilizers, pesticides and other chemical lawn and landscape treatments on the Town's groundwater and surface water bodies.

#### **Actions:**

- Develop policies and procedures to manage the commercial, municipal and residential use of fertilizers, pesticides and other chemical lawn and landscape treatments in Wellesley.
- Implement registration and reporting procedures for landscape and lawn care companies and other non-residential pesticide users, in order to assist in evaluating the potential impacts of these practices.

- Establish fertilizer/pesticide education and management programs in order to reduce the flow of nutrients and toxins into the town's ponds and streams.

**Policy:** Minimize the impact of salt on the Town's groundwater and surface water bodies.

**Actions:**

- Minimize Wellesley's use of road salt.
- Continue to work with the State Department of Environmental Protection, the Massachusetts Highway Department and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority to reduce salt use on Route 9 and the Massachusetts Turnpike and to seek alternatives that will address both safety and environmental protection.

**Policy:** Minimize the impact of wastewater disposal on the Town's groundwater and surface water bodies.

**Actions:**

- Consider appropriate financing mechanisms to address problems of septic system maintenance and failure in the Morses Pond watershed.
- Complete sewer connections to all Wellesley properties within water supply protection districts.
- Work with the MetroWest Growth Management Committee to encourage towns to provide sewer connections to properties upstream of Wellesley's water supply protection districts.

**Policy:** Carefully manage floodplain development to protect and maintain water quality and to prevent flooding.

**Actions:**

- Review for accuracy the 100-year floodplains for Wellesley's brooks, and periodically amend the federal flood insurance map to reflect updated flood elevation data.
- Designate Dearborn Street tax title lands below the 100-year flood elevation as conservation land or Conservation District under Town zoning.

**Policy:** Enforce laws, bylaws and regulations to protect groundwater, wetlands and surface water bodies, and enact new bylaws and regulations where necessary.

**Actions:**

- Continue to enforce the Wetlands Protection Act, the Inland Restricted Wetlands law, underground fuel storage regulations, and local zoning bylaws with particular attention on Water Supply Protection, Floodplain and Watershed Protection requirements.

- Establish limits on the percentage of impervious surfaces in new developments, in order to maintain groundwater recharge, minimize off-site runoff and prevent downstream flooding.
- Adopt zoning bylaw regulations that relate the intensity of new development to the steepness of the terrain, in order to minimize erosion and siltation.
- Develop, fund and implement a protocol for testing water quality in brooks.

**Policy:** Protect Morses Pond, Lake Waban, and Longfellow Pond as primary water supply areas and as recreational resources.

**Actions:**

- Monitor quality of water flowing into the ponds.
- Develop techniques to improve water quality and clarity.
- Monitor the impacts of remaining underground fuel tanks, and take appropriate action to remedy any identified problems.

**Policy:** Support and promote regional efforts to protect water resources.

**Action:**

- Work with the MetroWest Growth Management Committee to address water resource protection at a regional level.

**V.3 Goal: Prevent damage to natural resources and human health from hazardous materials and elements.**

**Policy:** Assist residents to manage household hazardous materials in environmentally responsible ways.

**Actions:**

- Continue regular (at least annual) household hazardous wastes collection days.
- Find ways to deal with potential environmental problems such as lead paint, radon and asbestos, particularly in older homes.

**V.4 Goal: Encourage the sustainable use of resources.**

**Policy:** Continue existing town efforts to conserve water resources.

**Action:**

- Continue to encourage water conservation through public education efforts, the odd/even watering program, incentive peak demand rate structure, low flow shower heads and sink fixtures, water saving appliances and fixtures, replacement of leaking fixtures, reduced lawn areas, xeriscape (dry gardening), and other appropriate means.

**Policy:** Continue and expand existing town efforts to reduce the waste stream and expand materials reuse and recycling (including composting).

**Actions:**

- Encourage reduction, reuse and recycling of household and commercial waste products.
- Encourage mulching and composting of grass, leaves and vegetation.
- Promote recycling, reuse, proper disposal, and reduction of waste materials through public education.

**V.5 Goal: Improve cultural resources and opportunities for both adults and young people.**

**Policy:** Provide, through the town's libraries, schools and colleges, curriculum and exposures which will develop an abiding appreciation for a broad spectrum of cultural activities by people in all walks of life.

**Action:**

- Formally communicate to local cultural institutions how important they are to the community, and how much the Town wants to maintain a cooperative relationship with them. Send a mailing to all local institutions that includes an abstract of this component of the Comprehensive Plan. Have representatives of the Town follow up to arrange an informal visit to open and maintain channels of communication. Try to identify ways that the Town might assist the institutions, and follow through as much as possible.

**Policy:** Plan for a wide range of cultural offerings to satisfy a variety of tastes through cable TV, public assemblies, and other methods.

**Action:**

- Inventory the range of cultural offerings available to townspeople and to identify types and media of cultural offerings that are in short supply. Communicate these findings to the community, and discuss ways to increase the desired range of cultural offerings.

**Policy:** Increase the sense of community within the town and neighborhoods through sharing cultural experiences.

**Action:**

- Publicize and stimulate community discussion regarding the inventory of cultural offerings that are available to townspeople. Consider how these offerings might be adjusted to increase townspeople's interest in and ability to partake of these offerings.

**Policy:** Enrich public buildings, public spaces, schools and parks with works of art.

**Actions:**

- Sponsor a local contest to identify the public places that townspeople most feel should be the location for works of art. Discuss the possibility of siting works of art there with the owners or agencies responsible for these locations. With their permission and within their stated guidelines, invite local institutions' art classes and other local artists to submit conceptual drawings of suggested works of art.
- Widely communicate the availability and guidelines of locations for works of art; also describe the concepts that have been suggested. Seek sponsorship from civic organizations, local institutions and companies, and private individuals.

**Policy:** Encourage the revival of the town's adult education programs.

**Action:**

- Monitor the success of the Recreation Commission and the School Department's joint provision of adult education programs. Expand and adjust these programs as appropriate. Coordinate with the Town Library's programs as appropriate.

**V.6 Goal: Be sensitive to the preservation of historic districts, buildings, and landmarks. Maintain and improve the architectural image of the community.**

**Policy:** Expand awareness of the town's historic assets.

**Action:**

- Publicize the inventory of cultural resources in local news media, and invite townspeople to add to the listing.
- Ask the School Department to review the 1994 Comprehensive Plan's inventory of cultural resources and other materials about local historic assets to see how they might be incorporated into social studies curricula.

**Policy:** Maintain and preserve the town's historic assets and the quality of preservation through design review and/or enactment of additional historic districts.

**Actions:**

- Work to influence the design of Wellesley's cultural environment through education and consensus, rather than just through increased regulation. Judgment, taste, and cooperative efforts are needed rather than more detailed regulations. Consensus regarding preservation and conservation are needed prior to asking Town Meeting to adopt a regulatory tool. The Cottage Street Historic District was supported by the property owners who would be affected, and they supported the proposed the District at Town Meeting. This is a good model for how Wellesley should proceed with similar regulatory tools to accomplish what groups of townspeople want.

- When evaluating design alternatives, do not be a slave to style, but be very respectful of and attentive to the context, fabric, and pattern of the setting. Aesthetics are not wed to any one historic period. Wellesley is open to new, vibrant development that is not frozen in a limited time period. Key design concerns of the community are the scale and pattern of new construction, and how it links with its surroundings.
- Lead by example, because the Town is a major property owner. Institute an on-going interaction between the Design Review Board (DRB) and other boards and departments. Encourage all boards and departments to recognize how important their operating decisions are to Wellesley's cultural resources and environment; and to call upon the DRB to compare viewpoints and evaluate options when making plans and decisions regarding buildings, outdoor improvements, maintenance techniques, and signs.
- Work for cultural resource conservation, and design improvements to Wellesley's gateway avenues into town, which announce and draw attention to Wellesley's distinguishing character.

**Policy:** Enact a demolition delay bylaw to provide a waiting period in order to evaluate the potential demolition of irreplaceable historic buildings.

**Actions:**

- Convene a working meeting of proponents and opponents of the previously submitted demolition delay bylaw to discuss what it is seeking to accomplish. Consider whether and how it might be amended to become more acceptable to opponents. Also consider whether and how its purposes could be accomplished through other means. Report findings and suggestions to appropriate Town boards for their consideration and action.

**V.7 Goal: Support and strengthen community design and the design review process so that high standards of design excellence are maintained in all development projects.**

**Policies and Actions:** See the policies and actions listed under Goal II.9 in the Land Use Chapter, which is a reiteration of Goal V.9.

**V.8 Goal: Continue and expand existing environmental education and awareness programs.**

**Policy:** Cooperate with local and regional conservation groups to provide educational programs to the public.

**Policy:** Assist the schools and other organizations with environmental science and conservation education.

**Actions:**

- Include the use of Community Days and Community Cablevision programming in public education program development.
- Develop, print and distribute handouts that guide land owners in environmentally sound practices and that highlight their responsibilities to the regional environment.
- Provide copies of the Natural Resources Component to schools, colleges, churches, other institutions and local businesses, and discuss the policy and action recommendations with these organizations.

**Policy:** Encourage community volunteer efforts to protect natural resources.

**Actions:**

- Establish seasonal cleanup days at neighborhood and town-wide levels.
- Assist groups that clean up public lands.
- Encourage community volunteer efforts to protect and maintain sensitive environmental areas.
- Encourage businesses, developers, clubs, and organizations to assist in the implementation of the Plan's recommendations.

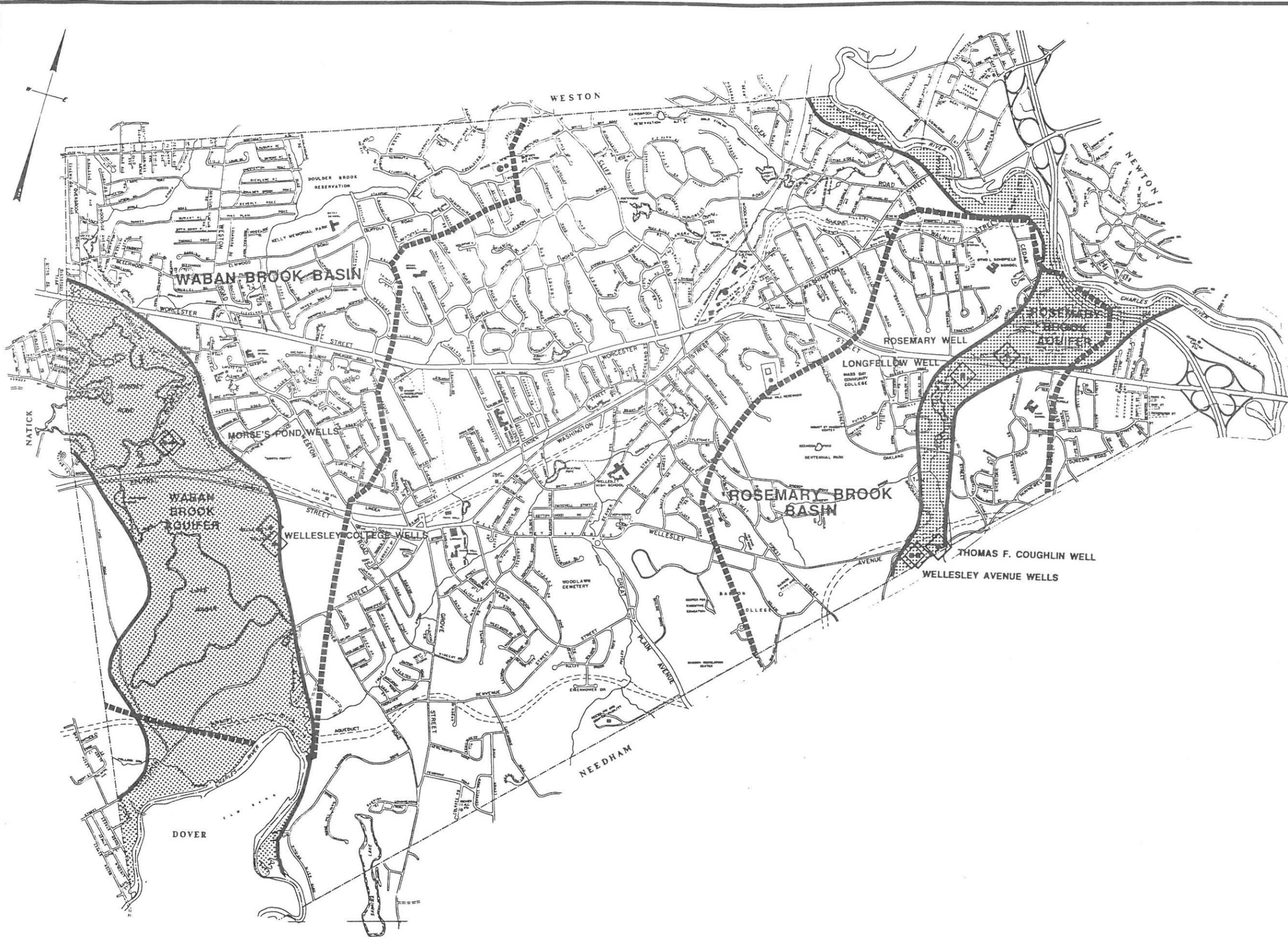
**V.9 Goal: Maintain up-to-date information about Wellesley's natural resources, to assist in resource management.**

**Policy:** Maintain and update inventories of land and other resources in Wellesley.

**Actions:**

- Develop a computerized inventory of Town-owned land and facilities. Incorporate this into the Geographic Information Systems database and mapping recommended under Goal II.1 in the Land Use Chapter.
- Maintain and update tree inventories.

*Groundwater Resources Map*  
*Cultural Resources Map*



# GROUNDWATER RESOURCES

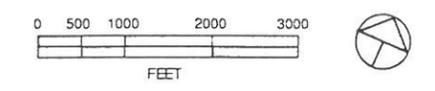
-  Aquifers - Areas of Highest Estimated Yield (Greater than 250 Gallons Per Minute)
-  Water Supply Well
-  Watershed Boundary

Sources: Metropolitan Area Planning Council  
 Groundwater Protection Study, Town of Wellesley  
 September 1982

Wellesley Natural Resources Commission  
 Open Space Plan for Conservation and Recreation,  
 1987-1991, July 1987

# WELLESLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS



# CULTURAL RESOURCES

## HISTORIC RESOURCES

-  Cottage Street Local Historic District
-  National Register of Historic Places Districts

-  Buildings
-  Linear Districts

## SCENIC RESOURCES

-  Urban Gateways
-  Designated Scenic Roads
-  Scenic Vistas

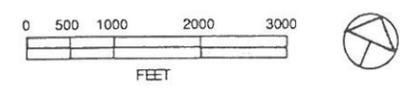
## MAJOR INSTITUTIONS

-  College/School Campuses



# WELLESLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS



## VI. Services and Facilities<sup>4</sup>

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### Introduction

Wellesley's town services have consistently been viewed as central to community life. Townspeople and their officials have worked to achieve high quality services in a prudent, efficient, forward-looking fashion. This has contributed to Wellesley's attractiveness to potential residents and thus to sustained residential market values. The 1965 Comprehensive Plan made numerous specific recommendations directed toward providing high quality services and striving for efficiency and reasonable cost without compromising quality. At the time 1981 Plan was written the Town had moved ahead on many of these recommendations, and the community was very conscious of the financial aspects of providing services to the increased population. Despite the boom and recession trends of the past decade, Wellesley has managed to maintain an enviable level of services thanks to: (1) a continued strong tax base, (2) voters' continued support for services, and (3) careful planning and management. Department heads report, however, that making ends meet did involve diminished maintenance expenditures for some lands and buildings.

Now in the 1990s Wellesley finds itself approaching buildout, with a population that is fairly stable in numbers but somewhat different in its age profile and household characteristics. The Services and Facilities Chapters of previous Comprehensive Plans concentrated primarily on constructing or reusing buildings in response to changes in demand resulting from changing numbers in different population groups. The present Plan gives increased attention to adjusting programs and training staff to meet residents' needs in a time of changing household characteristics and technological advances.

The 1994 comprehensive planning process found that, with voters' support, Town departments have done remarkably well in planning and carrying out phased improvements to the Town's physical facilities. With continued financial support of currently planned capital improvements, Wellesley will enjoy sufficient water, sewer, electrical, and drainage services to meet demand from foreseeable development under current zoning well past the Year 2000. Continuation of the Town's replacement cycles will also maintain proper levels of equipment.

The Town is already acting upon the most pressing short range investments needed to achieve adequate building space, which are renovations/expansions of five elementary schools, and reconstruction of the Police Building. Medium range investments that the Town should anticipate are: renovations relating to barrier-free access in order to bring facilities and programs into compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act; expansion of the Central Library; changes in water treatment in response to future regulations relating to the Safe Drinking Water Act; renovation of the Recycling and Disposal Facility's (RDF's) transfer building and layout; and improvements relating to the Town's Pond Restoration Program. Longer range capital costs that are likely to confront the Town will relate to resolving solid waste disposal problems resulting from the changing regulatory environment. (Note that this may become a medium range need, depending upon how regulations change.) In the even longer range, it is logical that the Town may need to consider renovations to the Middle School, because by the year 2000 it will be approaching 50 years of age and may need adjustments to accommodate the changing educational

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<sup>4</sup> Facilities that pertain to enjoyment of outdoor spaces and other recreational activities are addressed in the Open Space and Recreation Chapter. Services and facilities that pertain to the protection of natural resources are addressed in the Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter.

environment. Renovation or replacement of Fire Station One will also need to be considered.

There are opportunities to take Town services to a higher level through investing in staff time for community outreach, staff training and professional development, and new technologies. Examples of levels of service that could be raised include: fire prevention outreach and education; broader social services from Police Department (e.g. anti-drug, anti-abuse campaigns); learning and information services through telecommunication technologies.

Consideration also needs to be given to meeting the needs of two special groups: seniors and young people. Wellesley's older residents will be able to remain in town longer and continue to be actively involved in the community through the presence of public transportation, varied housing options, and services that allow seniors to remain in their homes. The community's young people would benefit from a social and recreational place or places which offer opportunities to gather informally and enjoy a theater, swimming pool, gymnasium, snack bar, and similar facilities.

Well conceived plans for facilities and programs to add to the community's quality of life will continue to be generated by the Town's tradition of carefully examining each need and the potential options to meet that need. It is anticipated that the greatest problem will be how to pay for these needed services and amenities.

The Comprehensive Plan recommends formally establishing a hierarchy of funding mechanisms:

*For each investment in public facilities and services, consider first how non-Town resources might be leveraged through:*

- collaborative programs with community groups and institutions,
- volunteer efforts,
- grants and other philanthropic support,
- regional approaches,
- State moneys,
- Federal moneys, and/or
- use of private facilities.

*Next, consider how to gain the most benefits from existing or new public facilities and programs.* How might each Town facility and program be adjusted or expanded to gain the most benefits possible for the greatest number or widest range of townspeople? Possible examples include achieving more flexibility and openness of school buildings to community use, and meeting multiple needs when investing in any facilities or capacities.

*Roll over and reuse Town resources whenever possible.* Schedule capital improvements to coincide with the retiring of bonds for previous investments. Reuse surplus buildings and sites.

*Seek additional Town tax dollars as the last option.*

This funding hierarchy outlines the practical approach that Wellesley will have to take in order to reconcile townspeople's desires for improvements with the Town's financial constraints. It makes clear the planning that must be done for each facility and alerts each working committee to the questions that will need to be answered when they bring their recommendations before Town Meeting.

## Goals, Policies, and Actions

**VI.1 Goal:** Perform long-range planning to anticipate future needs for schools, parks, play fields, libraries, government facilities, water supply, sewage disposal, drainage, power and gas supplies, fire and police protection and other vital town facilities and services.

**Policy:** Evaluate and, where possible, reserve sites for future town facilities well in advance of actual need.

**Actions:**

- Assemble an updated, consolidated, computerized base of information about the physical attributes of all Town-owned properties.
- Examine the physical capacities of each Town-owned parcel and assess whether it could accommodate any needed additional facility or service.
- Assess alternatives for the renovation or replacement of Fire Station One, which is now located at the intersection of Central Street and Weston Road.

**Policy:** Wherever possible plan for multiple uses to maximize benefits from Town services and facilities.

**Actions:**

- Examine the feasibility of combining a senior and/or teen center and/or a swimming pool with improvements to or expansion of a school building.
- (See also policies and actions relating to Goal VI.4, below.)

**Policy:** Review the cost-effectiveness of all town facilities and programs.

**Actions:**

- Compare the costs and limitations of current swimming facilities and programs with the potential costs and benefits of constructing the Town's own indoor swimming pool.
- Analyze the costs of revisions to the of the Recycling and Disposal Facility's (RDF's) site layout and renovation of the transfer building in terms of potential increases in efficiency.
- Review the costs of the Town's library system so that townspeople can understand the financial implications of choices relating to the central and branch libraries. (See also Goal VI.3, below.)
- Whenever reviewing cost-effectiveness of facilities, include consideration of costs and benefits relating to staffing and productivity.

**Policy:** Establish a hierarchy of funding mechanisms, and plan for meeting service needs in conjunction with that hierarchy.

**Actions:**

- For each investment in public facilities and services, consider first how non-Town resources might be leveraged through:
  - collaborative programs with community groups and institutions,
  - volunteer efforts,
  - grants and other philanthropic support,
  - regional approaches,
  - State moneys,
  - Federal moneys, and/or
  - use of private facilities.
- Next, consider how to gain the most benefits from existing or new public facilities and programs.
- Roll over and reuse Town resources whenever possible.
- Consider privatization of specific town services where appropriate.
- Seek additional Town tax dollars as the last option.

**Policy:** Cooperate with neighboring cities and towns to provide facilities and services on a regional basis, where appropriate and cost-effective.

**Actions:**

- Examine whether cooperative efforts would increase the Fire Department's ability to provide fire prevention outreach and education.
- Examine whether cooperative efforts would increase the Police Department's ability to provide broader social services such as drug and abuse prevention.
- Convene a set of working meetings with seniors and their advocates in neighboring towns to inventory difficult tasks that confront seniors living in their own homes, such as leaf raking, snow shoveling, and minor repairs. Consider how cooperative civic and neighborly efforts might help seniors with these tasks so that they can stay in their homes longer.
- Establish an on-going, collaborative effort with nearby schools and libraries to monitor advances and opportunities for telecommunication learning and information technologies. As appropriate, plan to take advantage of economies and efficiencies that may be achieved through regional purchase and installation programs.

**Policy:** Continue to use multi-year capital improvements budgeting to schedule costly capital improvements.

**Actions:**

- Institute a phased approach to achieving barrier-free access to Town facilities and programs in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Continue monitoring capital-related regulations, for example those related to the Safe Water Drinking Act and disposal of solid wastes. Schedule capital improvements as necessary to maintain the Town's compliance.

**VI.2 Goal: Maintain existing town buildings, facilities, and sites at a high standard of excellence.**

**Policy:** Continue to support adequate budgets for maintenance activities since such efforts enhance property values and increase the life of town facilities.

**Actions:**

- Continue the replacement cycle for capital equipment.
- Continue the Pond Restoration Program.

**Policy:** Inform town residents about the availability of the wide array of town facilities and services (e.g. through a re-welcome wagon).

**Actions:**

- Combine this information with information relating to open space and recreation resources.
- Incorporate this information with outreach efforts to neighborhood groups.

**VI.3 Goal: Invest in town facilities and programs to improve the quality of life of town residents and to protect residents' investments in their homes.**

**Policy:** Continue to support the top quality educational system that currently exists.

**Actions:**

- Continue planning for educational excellence, and facilitate the community's informed deliberations regarding the costs and benefits of Wellesley's educational system.
- Continue to monitor demographic trend projections and their implications for school facilities and programs.
- Plan to take advantage of technological advances that will open long-distance learning opportunities for Wellesley's residents of all ages. (See also the policy above relating to regional efforts in this regard.)

**Policy:** Maintain and expand the excellent library facilities of the town.

**Actions:**

- Continue planning for expansion of the library system. Incorporate considerations and findings relating to the funding mechanism hierarchy and cost-effectiveness analyses under Goal VI.1, above.
- Facilitate informed public deliberations regarding the financial, service, and neighborhood implications and trade-offs relating to each option for improving library facilities and services.

**Policy:** Retain the town's branch libraries and keep them open longer.

**Action:**

- Incorporate the costs and benefits of this policy in the analyses and deliberations outlined for the preceding policy.

**VI.4 Goal: Provide a greater range of activities and facilities for children, teens, adults, and senior citizens.**

**Policy:** Increase the range of activities and facilities available to serve the needs of specific client groups such as children, teens and elders.

**Actions:**

- Include this policy as a priority in the assessment of facilities and programs outlined under Goal VI.1, above.
- Authorize a committee to analyze options for achieving a senior center and/or teen center and to report their findings and preliminary recommendations. Continue plans accordingly. (See also references to these facilities under Goal VI.1, above.)
- Have the Cultural Council consider this policy as they inventory and assess cultural offerings available to townspeople according to Goal IV.3 in the Economic Vitality Chapter and Goal V.5 in the Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter.

**Policy:** Provide indoor and outdoor spaces for neighborhood and community gatherings.

**Actions:**

- Pursue this policy through the Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- Include information relating to this policy in the inventory of the working group on cultural offerings (see above policy).

**Policy:** Provide more benches and shelters at passive recreation sites.

**Action:**

- Pursue this policy through the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

**Policy:** Increase community use of school facilities during evenings, weekends, holidays and summers.

**Action:**

- Pursue this policy through joint plans and efforts by the School Department and Recreation Commission.

**VI.5 Goal: Improve cultural resources and opportunities for both adults and young people.**

**Policies:** See Policies for Goal V.5 from the Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter, which is a reiteration of this Goal.

**VI.6 Goal: Site town facilities such as schools, libraries, play fields, and community centers so as to increase the sense of neighborhood solidarity and cohesion.**

**Policy:** Preserve and maintain neighborhood-level town buildings and facilities.

**Actions:**

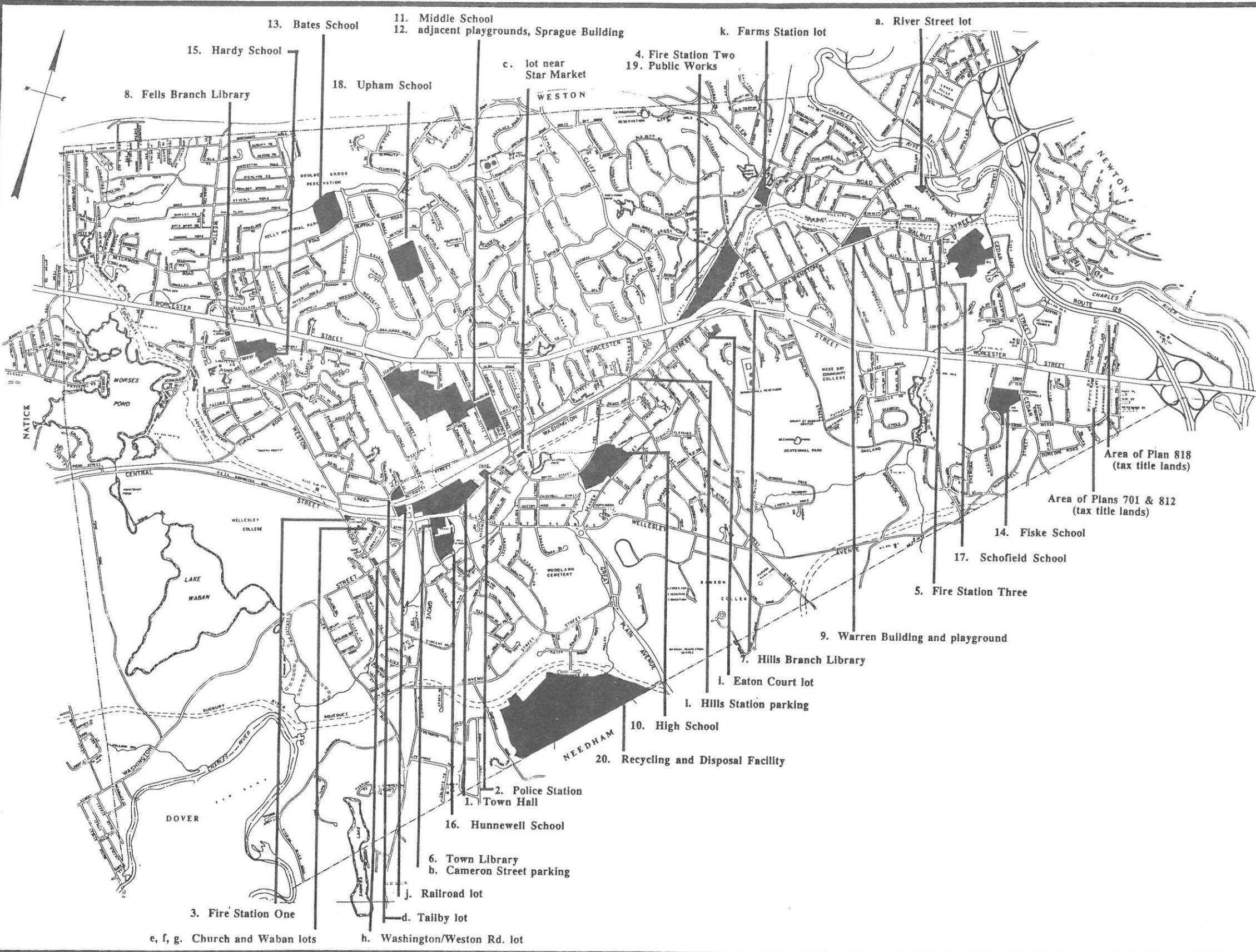
- Include this policy in the assessment of each Town-owned facility outlined under Goal VI.1, above.
- Facilitate informed public deliberations regarding the financial, service, and neighborhood implications and trade-offs relating to each option to preserve and maintain neighborhood-level town buildings and facilities for neighborhood use.

*Existing Town Owned Facilities Map*

# EXISTING TOWN-OWNED FACILITIES

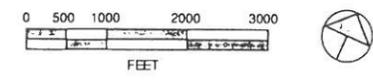
Notes:

1. For conservation, open space, and recreation areas, see maps and inventory in the Open Space and Recreation Chapter.
2. For annotated listing, see the Services and Facilities Chapter's Appendix.
3. Key numbers and letters refer to the annotated listing in the Services and Facilities Chapter's Appendix.
4. Key letters represent parking lots.



# WELLESLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS



## VII. Open Space and Recreation

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### Introduction

Wellesley has an extensive network of public open spaces that include some of the town's most scenic areas and unique features. In addition, the Town benefits from the presence of extensive privately owned open space resources, including the campuses of its educational institutions as well as large family estates. Thanks to the good stewardship of the private owners of these lands, Wellesley's residents enjoy graceful campuses and scenic views that augment the town-owned resources.

As it faces the future, Wellesley needs to focus on three aspects of open space and recreation planning: preservation of those open space parcels that are significant because of their size or location; expansion and enhancement of the trail and path system to provide linkages among open space and recreation facilities throughout the town; and continued provision of the types and amounts of recreational facilities that will meet the needs of the town's residents.

In preparing its 1987 Open Space Plan the Town identified a number of small parcels that were priorities for preservation through acquisition or other means. This list has been updated to reflect progress and changes in the past seven years. In addition, the Natural Resources Commission has targeted four key areas where development of large tracts would have significant impacts on neighborhood and town character. Three of these are in public or institutional ownership: the Massachusetts Bay Community College land adjacent to Centennial Park; the Wellesley Country Club; and Wellesley College's "North 40" on Weston Road. The fourth area comprises the large private estates along Washington Street and the Charles River at the westerly end of town. The plan recommends taking a proactive approach to preservation of these areas, including establishing a continuing dialogue with the private owners, so that the Town may play a cooperative role in planning for their future use.

The Bike Trails and Walkways Study Committee has prepared a plan to expand the linear connections among various parks, recreational areas, neighborhoods and commercial areas, building on the framework of the two aqueducts and Fuller Brook Park. Ideas include linking bike trails to the train stations; using existing sidewalks, augmented by signage and painted lanes, to provide better north-south connections within the Town; and including schools as nodes in a sidewalk/off-road trail system. This plan is incorporated into the Open Space Master Plan.

In addition to open space protection and the expansion of trail and path linkages throughout town, the Open Space and Recreation Chapter recommends continuing action on meeting several specific facility needs that have been identified by townspeople and town boards. A clear priority in terms of recreational facilities is to develop additional playing fields, both to meet existing demands and to compensate for the impending temporary loss of access to the Elm Bank facilities. Upgrading of the swimming area at Morses Pond is also a priority. Finally, a number of potential new town-wide facilities have been proposed by various groups in recent years, including an indoor swimming pool, recreation center, teen center, senior center and/or community center. The Town should evaluate the range of options that have been suggested and decide on a strategy that will best meet the needs of Wellesley's residents.

## Goals, Policies, and Actions

### **VII.1 Goal: Protect open space and environmental resources.**

**Policy:** Classify public and private open spaces according to availability for use, appropriate intensity of use, and need for protection of sensitive or endangered resources.

**Actions:**

- Continue to work toward acquisition and other appropriate means of protection of priority small open space parcels based on the matrix of priorities updated from the 1987 Open Space Plan and incorporated in the “Priorities and Strategies” section of the background materials for the Open Space and Recreation Chapter.
- Evaluate open space protection priorities for large institutional and private estate lands based on an analysis of current and projected needs for active and passive open space, sensitivity of natural resources, and impact of alternative uses on community character, natural resources, and municipal finances.

**Policy:** Expand recreational opportunities and protect sensitive environmental resources through land acquisition and other approaches.

**Actions:**

- Use a variety of means to preserve identified important open space areas (i.e., large institutional and private estate lands, and identified small parcels), including direct purchase, easements, purchase or transfer of development rights, tax deferrals and other appropriate methods.
- Establish a formal, ongoing open space acquisition program.
- Actively promote the continued preservation, and if necessary acquisition by the Town, of private parcels currently benefiting from differential property tax assessment programs (i.e., Chapters 61, 61A and 61B).
- Encourage neighborhood groups to come up with ideas for preserving open space in or near their neighborhoods.

### **VII.2 Goal: Maintain and enhance Wellesley’s public open space areas and recreation facilities.**

**Policy:** Enhance management of open space and recreation facilities through improved systems, records and communication.

**Actions:**

- Maintain the computerized inventory of town-owned open space.
- Maintain management plans for town-owned open space compatible with the goals of this plan and the policies of the Natural Resources Commission as set forth in the NRC Policy Handbook.
- Promote communication and cooperation among town boards regarding use of open space.
- Encourage volunteerism and private sector participation in the planning, maintenance and enhancement of public areas and facilities.

**Policy:** Preserve and enhance the quality of existing recreational facilities through careful maintenance practices.

**Actions:**

- Maintain, protect and improve Morses Pond as a town swimming area [see related actions in the Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter].
- Maintain the Town's playing fields and playgrounds in good condition through careful management and maintenance practices, including adherence to the Natural Resource Commission's "Policy on Organizational Use" of park and conservation lands as set forth in the NRC's Policy Manual.

**VII.3 Goal: Ensure that recreation facilities and programs continue to meet the needs of the Town.**

**Policy:** Increase active and passive recreation opportunities within the Town by providing needed facilities, staff, equipment, and maintenance.

**Actions:**

- Plan for and provide new town-wide facilities.
- Improve and expand soccer and Little League fields and basketball courts as necessary.
- Facilitate access for the handicapped in Wellesley's recreational lands.
- Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a community environmental center, community farm, and/or educational boardwalk.

**VII.4 Goal: Provide opportunities for safe and enjoyable walking and bicycle access throughout the Town.**

**Policy:** Promote the development of open space trail networks for bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the Town.

**Actions:**

- Connect parks, playfields and other public and publicly-accessible lands with walkways and bikeways to create a network of parks and open space within Wellesley and neighboring towns.
- Promote the development of bicycle routes through the Town, as part of the regional transportation system.
- Cooperate with neighboring towns on the development and maintenance of intertown and regional trail systems.
- Encourage town departments to cooperate in the creation of open space networks.
- Publicize and promote the use of open space and trail networks.

**VII.5 Goal: Promote the awareness and use of Wellesley's parks, recreation facilities and open space resources.**

**Policy:** Publicize the Town's open space resources and recreation facilities.

**Actions:**

- Develop, print and distribute brochures and handouts for the major parks and other public lands, describing each property, showing trails and special features, and indicating pedestrian, vehicle, and handicapped access points.
- Coordinate with the Wellesley Conservation Council, Inc., in its ongoing education and outreach efforts.
- Use a variety of media, including local cable television programming, to inform the public about environmental and recreational opportunities and issues.

**Policy:** Encourage expanded use of natural open space areas and recreation facilities, consistent with their carrying capacity and intended functions.

**Actions:**

- Implement the identity system for trails and public lands.

*Open Space Action Plan*

# OPEN SPACE ACTION PLAN

PRIORITIES FOR OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION / PRESERVATION:



Large Tracts



Small Parcels

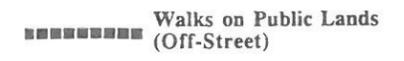


Open Space Links

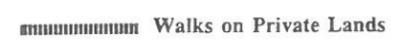
PROPOSED TRAIL/PATH SYSTEM:



Street Sidewalk Links



Walks on Public Lands (Off-Street)



Walks on Private Lands

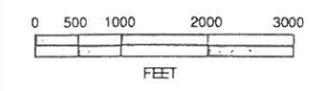


Potential Links



## WELLESLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS



## VIII. Circulation and Transportation

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### Introduction

Preservation of Wellesley's existing image and the "village" character of retail and service centers is a strongly articulated goal of its residents. There is perhaps no feature of the town's environment that affects the perception of that image and character as much as vehicular traffic. If residents associate Wellesley's main thoroughfares with long queues of stop-and-go movement, difficulty in locating a parking space, and a sense of inadequate protection when crossing the street as pedestrians, the quality of life that is symbolized by the town's image will suffer dramatically and with potentially irreversible consequences.

The historic development of roadway and public transit corridors in the metropolitan area has been on radial spokes with a concentration in downtown Boston. The development of State Route 128 and Interstate 495 in the 1960s and 1970s has been the principal regional response to serving circumferential demand not oriented to downtown Boston.

The geographic expansion of the metropolitan area during the past 20 years has placed towns like Wellesley, located approximately 11 miles from downtown Boston, in the path of strong travel desire lines connecting more suburban bedroom communities with built-up in-town employment locations. Adding to this condition is the increasing attractiveness of many of these suburbs for commercial development as well, thereby generating travel demand simultaneously in both directions through the town.

The overall transportation challenge for Wellesley has been to achieve an efficient and safe quality of travel environment for its major street corridors, while not enhancing the relative attraction for higher town-generated or through traffic volumes. The accomplishment of this goal has been sought through a set of coordinated policies and actions aimed at capturing a larger share of existing and new trips by means other than single occupant automobiles. It will further be achieved by better management of the remaining private vehicle access components.

The Town's previous response to its understanding of this problem has been to focus attention on the primary traffic corridors, Route 16 (Washington Street) and Route 135 (Central Street), where the negative impacts are the most evident. The Master Design Plan for Washington Street and Central Street, developed in 1993, serves as an important benchmark for the town's transportation planning efforts. Recommendations in this plan have been designed to delicately balance improvements for access efficiency and pedestrian safety without creating a more intrusive travelway infrastructure or attracting more through traffic.

The approach of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan Circulation and Transportation Chapter adopts a much broader perspective. Its premise is that roadway design solutions alone will not satisfy the bonafide requirements of through travel and local access. What is needed instead is a comprehensive perspective that examines on a townwide basis the functional relationships among all of the town's transportation components: highways and streets, on-street and off-street parking, public trains and buses, private for-hire transit, bicycles and pedestrian ways. The Circulation and Transportation Chapter is intended to offer a long term blueprint for transportation actions to achieve the town's transportation visions and mutually support other chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

Wellesley's historic development as an incorporation of small villages serving the predominant needs of its surrounding residential neighborhoods is highly compatible with reduced reliance on trip-making by private automobile. Nevertheless, as village commercial densities have intensified and residential boundaries have expanded, automobile dependence has grown (exacerbated by an overlay of through traffic demand), eventually creating in places traffic volumes that exceed the desired ease of movement that is felt to be characteristic of the village environment.

Wellesley's transportation system provides reasonable service for its residents and businesses, but has numerous inadequacies and deficiencies. These may be outlined as follows:

- Excessive travel delays during frequent periods of the day in the Washington Street corridor within Lower Falls and between Route 135 in Wellesley Square and Route 9 in Wellesley Hills.
- Inadequate or inefficient parking in Wellesley Square, Wellesley Hills, Lower Falls, and the Fells.
- Inadequate information and directional signage to parking lots.
- Absence of public transit service within the town.
- Discontinuities in the pedestrian sidewalk and bikeway systems.
- Inadequate protection of pedestrians at street crossings.

The Comprehensive Plan recommends policies to achieve a circulation and transportation system that supports Town policies and actions relating to other aspects of town life. A dual approach is recommended:

1. Making improvements to the roadway system in order to resolve specific problem areas,  
and
2. Achieving alternative ways for townspeople to travel around town and around the region, ways that decrease their current reliance on private automobiles.

A balanced, coordinated, on-going program will be essential. It is strongly suggested that the Town will need a Transportation Program Coordinator to accomplish this.

## Goals, Policies, and Actions

**VIII.1 Goal:** Encourage the expansion of public transportation to reduce the dependence on the private automobile and the resulting heavy traffic.

**Policy:** Provide a year round intratown bus or trolley<sup>5</sup> route to connect neighborhoods, schools, business areas and other key points.

**Policy:** Provide incentives for the use and support of public transportation.

**Policy:** Review the potential for using existing public and private bus fleets to establish an integrated intratown bus system.

**Policy:** Seek renewal and restoration of MBTA bus and/or rail service between Wellesley and Riverside, Back Bay, downtown Boston, and other locations, including improved evening, weekend, and holiday service.

**Policy:** Consider the reintroduction of concepts such as dial-a-ride, minivan fleets, and other innovative approaches that were utilized during the energy crisis of the 1970s to reduce the dependence on the private automobile.

### **Actions:**

- **MBTA Framingham Line.** The MBTA rail line through Wellesley is utilized almost entirely as a commuter service to and from Boston. Considerable reserve capacity is available during off-peak midday, evening, and weekend periods. Moreover, the MBTA does not currently provide bus service in Wellesley. The Town should submit a proposal and recommendation to the MBTA to provide for a discounted fare (equivalent to local MBTA rapid transit fare) as a means to promote local use of the system for trip purposes between Wellesley Square, Wellesley Hills and the Wellesley Farms Station.
- **Local Bus Service.** There is a significant need in town to establish a local bus service. The first steps in this process should encompass an inventory of existing shuttle bus services provided by local schools (Babson College, Wellesley College and Mass Bay Community College) and determination of service need, locations, and times. This inventory should also include services offered during higher demand holiday periods, such as the Holly Trolley. A proposed route should be determined based on service locations and available routing. It is proposed that service initially consist of one route and two buses (35-37 passenger capacity) with a service frequency of 30 minutes.

The MBTA has a program to assist and contribute funding to local communities for the establishment of bus service in suburban communities. Available funding covers 65 percent of all costs of the service up to a maximum of \$80,000 annually. Technical assistance is available from the MBTA Services Planning Department. It is understood that Wellesley has an

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<sup>5</sup> Similar to the "Holly Trolley".

application on file with the MBTA for such bus service. This application, submitted in the late 1980s, should be reviewed and updated to incorporate current community needs.

**VIII.2 Goal: Prepare a logical and balanced transportation plan for the Town incorporating public transportation, commuter rail, special needs facilities, private automobiles, parking facilities, and bike paths.**

**Policy:** Provide coordinated transportation services for those with special needs including the elderly, handicapped and infirm.

**Policy:** Encourage bus and train schedules which will provide opportunities for youth and others in the evening, on holidays and on weekends.

**Policy:** Provide pleasant, safe and attractive pedestrian walkways or sidewalks along major roadways.

**Policy:** Improve and connect the system of bike paths so that they can supplement the transportation system and provide opportunities for exercise.

**Policy:** Integrate and coordinate the planning for improvements to Washington Street with the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy:** Preserve the rural or semi-rural character of Wellesley's remaining scenic roads such as the westerly portion of Washington Street.

**Policy:** Encourage carpools and ride sharing so as to reduce traffic volumes and reduce the need for additional commuter parking.

**Policy:** Review the potential for increasing delivery service as a means to reduce local traffic and reduce parking needs.

**Policy:** Investigate the potential transportation uses of the excess railroad rights-of-way and the aqueduct rights-of-way in town.

**Policy:** Consider a multi-level parking facility, including an underground level or levels, for dual commuter and commercial use in or near Wellesley Square and Wellesley Hills Square.

**Policy:** Provide landscaping and screening at parking lots for beautification and compatibility with neighboring residential areas.

**Policy:** Improve the function and appearance of traffic and parking signs.

**Actions:**

- **Parking and Traffic Management Plans.** Parking demand is focused in Wellesley's ten business areas. In only two of these areas (Wellesley Square and Lower Falls) is there a significant perception of space deficit, although demand is perceived to be near or at practical capacity in Wellesley Hills. The Town should offer to provide transportation services and participate with the Chamber of Commerce or Merchants Association

representing the ten business areas to identify problems and needs for management, coordination and control of parking, traffic and pedestrian activity.. This planning effort can be provided by the Town's traffic consultant. Action items could encompass merchant surveys to determine problem areas and magnitude, preparation of directional signing plans for parking access, review of policies regarding parking time limits and fees, and inventory of sidewalk conditions and provisions for new pedestrian links between parking areas and stores. Interest in this assistance should be solicited from the ten business areas. The Town would then determine a priority for assistance, with the Town's consultant or in-house staff participating for an approximate three-month effort to develop a parking and traffic management plan. The Town should determine whether a monetary contribution from the merchant association should be required to defray all or part of the consultant's fee.

- **Business Areas.** Deficiencies noted for pedestrian access relate to availability and safety of intersections and street crossings as part of a larger trip (i.e., between parking lots and stores), as well as for walking trips between residential areas and schools, shops, offices, MBTA stations, and recreational and cultural destinations. The principal needs for pedestrian and bicycle access are to identify demand corridors, complete system discontinuities and provide for safe operation at hazardous vehicle conflict points. Pedestrian needs within Wellesley's business areas should be addressed as part of the parking and traffic management plans discussed above. The Economic Vitality Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan lists a number of potential improvements within the business areas to add sidewalks and eliminate street crossing hazards. As part of this effort, pedestrian counts should be performed to determine the justification for additional street crossing signals, principally along Washington Street. Based on field reconnaissance, review of available data and discussions with CPCG members, pedestrian signals will likely be warranted on Washington Street in Lower Falls, at the Central Street/Crest Road intersection in Wellesley Square, and potentially on Linden Street. Existing signalization at the Washington Street/State Street intersection should be evaluated in terms of its efficiency and safety in serving pedestrian crossing demand.
- **Townwide Pedestrian and Bikeway Planning.** Within the town, pedestrian and bikeway planning has been performed by the Bike Trails and Walkways Committee. Pedestrian planning by this committee should focus on local areas connecting between residential areas and nearby commercial/cultural destinations. These primary destinations should be mapped, together with available walkway connections and their condition. The Massachusetts Highway Department's Chapter 90 moneys can be used to fund sidewalk replacement/additions projects, after a justification report has been prepared.

Recreational planning for bikeways and walkways should focus on a townwide (and regional) approach to create a continuous system throughout the town. Presently the bike path system is incomplete with critical links missing. Recreational pathways should link with natural features (such as aqueducts) to the extent possible. Connections between these spine routes and adjoining residential neighborhoods should ensure adequate safety, but the connections themselves need not be part of the bikeway system designation and design.

Bikeway planning for commuters should ideally coincide with a recreational route plan. However, if these routes are too circuitous, incorporate inefficient alignments (sharp curves and steep grade changes), or are not continuous with routes connecting into adjacent communities, they will be inadequate for commuter needs and these cyclists will travel on-street using the through roadways instead.

Bicycle planning efforts must realistically evaluate commuter needs and, if necessary, incorporate safe on-street provision by means of exclusive bicycle lanes and signs/pavement markings.

**VIII.3 Goal: Work with regional and subregional planning and transportation agencies to develop a plan to meet regional transportation needs.**

**Policy:** Seek means of reducing through traffic on town roads other than Route 9. Pursue improvements to Route 9 to make it an effective alternative to town roads.

**Policy:** Encourage new commuter rail stations and parking lots in other communities so as to reduce commuter traffic volumes in Wellesley.

**Actions:**

- **Route 9 Improvements.** The *Route 9 Corridor Plan* prepared by the Central Transportation Planning Staff for the Massachusetts Highway Department identifies 8 projects in Wellesley. The Town should pursue implementation of as many of these projects as possible as the best strategy to offer an effective alternative to through traffic using town roads.

Improvements to Route 9 should to the extent possible improve capacity for the flow of through traffic so as to avoid bottlenecks. At the same time, however, it must be kept in mind that there is a significant amount of traffic on Route 9 whose origin and/or destination is in Wellesley. Therefore some local access on and off of Route 9 is necessary to avoid this "Wellesley traffic" from being diverted onto Washington Street. The Town should work to balance these needs to serve both through and local traffic along Route 9 by eliminating medians at minor streets (so as to facilitate through flow) and focusing median improvements for local access at key arterial and collector streets, including Kingsbury Street, Weston Road, and Overbrook Drive. It is important that the design focus be on upgrading the Route 9 corridor to better serve all travel design patterns, rather than prohibiting certain movements. For every traffic movement which is restricted, spillover impacts will occur on town arterial and collector streets.

With regard to implementation priority, emphasis should be given to the intersection of Route 9 and Kingsbury Street. This intersection operates as an unsignalized rotary. While such design is appropriate for the interchange of low demand volumes, the increase in traffic makes vehicle weaving maneuvers hazardous, and left turn lane backups extend into the high speed through lanes of Route 9. The Town should undertake a feasibility and project justification study to determine whether warrants exist for

improvement (including full intersection signalization) at this location. The local cost for this study is approximately \$7,000. (Such studies are typically conducted by the municipality, and subsequent recommendations for improvements are more likely to get funding priority if Town funds have been used.) If a project is warranted, construction funding can be obtained by application through the Massachusetts Highway Department for moneys under the Hazard Elimination Program.

Planning and construction activity by the State for Interstate 95 will principally impact north-south through traffic and will not generally affect local traffic demand in Wellesley. Nevertheless, Wellesley should keep apprised of anticipated projects by the State on the facilities which they control in Wellesley and adjacent towns in order to evaluate potential changes in travel patterns which could result. The Transportation Program Coordinator (see below) would be appropriate to monitor this activity.

- **Linden Street and Crest Road.** This multi-legged intersection contains skewed approaches and inadequate control. Improvements should include providing channelization to reduce the amount of pavement and better define traffic movements, and assessment of installing a traffic signal at that intersection.
- **Cedar Street, Walnut Street and River Street.** The operation of this multi-legged intersection is complicated by the skewed street approach angles, making it a consistently high accident location. It is recommended that the intersection be improved with channelization, pavement marking and overhead flashing red/yellow warning lights. This locally funded project would have a construction cost of approximately \$20,000. [The Town plans to improve this intersection in 1995.]
- **Transportation Program Coordinator.** The myriad of regional and subregional planning efforts as well as local issues affecting Wellesley's transportation system warrant the establishment of a formal role to coordinate transportation-related activities. This function, which can be initially performed by the town's traffic consultant, will provide liaison between the Town (Planning Board and other municipal community groups) and state/regional agencies, and keep abreast of transportation project grant opportunities. The Transportation Program Coordinator's work with a multitude of transportation issues facing the town will offer a comprehensive and perspective viewpoint necessary for effective long-term planning, reconciliation of policy conflicts, and prioritization of action plan projects. Of immediate importance are the Route 9 corridor improvements, traffic planning related to the redevelopment of the MHD Depot, and MBTA planning for new and extended bus routes. If it is determined in the future that an in-house staff position is warranted, a part-time person could be hired on a "circuit rider" basis with one or more adjoining towns (e.g., Natick or Needham).

**VIII.4 Goal: Improve safety for automobiles, pedestrians, and bicycles through roadway and walkway design, signage, speed limits, and other appropriate means.**

**Policy:** Increase enforcement of traffic and parking regulations to improve function and safety.

**Policy:** Improve and coordinate traffic and parking signs among various levels of jurisdiction for the sake of clarity, safety, appearance, and function.

**Policy:** Limit truck traffic on local streets to local deliveries.

**Policy:** Provide more marked crosswalks with pedestrian signals and mid-crossing safety alerts in business areas.

**Policy:** Reduce the speed limit on Route 9 to 45 miles per hour (as in neighboring towns).

**Policy:** Increase maintenance, repair and replacement of substandard bridges within the town.

**Action:**

- **Speed Enforcement.** Traffic speeding on through streets has been identified as a significant problem in the town. It is recommended that the Wellesley Police Department review and enhance existing policy and programs for selective speed monitoring and ticketing. Furthermore, the Massachusetts State Police should be requested to conduct selective speed enforcement along Route 9. Particular areas of concern include the following:
  - Route 9 at Weston Road,
  - Wellesley Avenue at Clifford Street,
  - Central Street, entering Wellesley from the west and at Wellesley College,
  - Grove Street,
  - Linden Street,
  - Great Plain Avenue, and
  - Hundreds Road,

***Roadway Functional Classification Map***



- Legend**
- Limited Access Highway
  - Primary Arterial
  - Secondary Arterial
  - Collector:
    - - - Residential
    - ..... Commercial



Wellesley Comprehensive Plan, 1994  
Wellesley, Massachusetts

**Roadway Functional Classification**

RIZZO ASSOCIATES, INC.

Base Map: Town of Wellesley, MA Assessor's Map

## IX. Implementation Program

### Introduction

Wellesley has the tradition of planning ahead, evaluating strategies, choosing the most acceptable option, and taking the actions necessary to implement it. Now as the town approaches build-out, townspeople have the choice of continuing on their present course, or assertively taking a more proactive stance toward shaping the use of remaining undeveloped land, and reinvigorating cultural and social institutions. In order to take such a proactive stance, the community must resolve three crucial planning issues:

1. What future does the Town desire for the few large open parcels that remain in Wellesley, and how assertively should the Town guide any future development or reuse of these parcels?
2. What about future changes in the built-up village retail and service centers? What sort of changes should be allowed or sought over time?
3. Can the character of neighborhoods be protected but still leave room for the adjustments needed to maintain vitality and meet changing needs and circumstances?

The deliberations which generated the 1994 Comprehensive Plan initiated discussions about -- but did not resolve -- these fundamental issues. Many of the Plan's implementation actions are based on the approach of generating and digesting a shared base of information and understanding about the implications, costs, and trade-offs involved in making practical choices about what the community should do next (see Figure IX.4). As advocates on different sides of difficult issues begin to understand and respect the same realities, the community will move incrementally toward consensus. Then the community will empower the Town to shift from a reactive to a proactive stance in regard to the future of large open parcels, village retail and service centers, and neighborhoods.

The participatory 1991-1994 comprehensive planning process has broadened the working base of planning in Wellesley. The planning process also coincided with an evolutionary step forward in the community's ideas regarding how the Town can and should conduct its business. Fiscal constraints, increased awareness of the importance of economic vitality and cultural resources, worry about loss of neighborhood cohesion -- these are just a few of the dynamics that have prompted outreach and collaborative efforts, such as growing contacts between Town Hall and the business community. The Comprehensive Plan reflects and expands this collaborative approach. The Implementation Program includes action steps that enlarge the Town's capacities through collaborative efforts spearheaded by joint Town/business community efforts, the Design Review Board, a reinvigorated Housing Partnership or new Housing Assistance Board, a Transportation Coordinator.

Consistent with these collaborative and participatory themes, Town boards and departments are urged to lead by example, education, and consensus. As a major landowner, the Town will work to see that boards and departments understand the impact of their daily decisions

upon the community's environment and quality of life. Where needed, new regulations will grow out of working sessions in which the parties who will be affected understand and support the intent, and help to draft the details of the regulations.

These underlying themes for implementing the Comprehensive Plan were laid out by Wellesley's citizens at the 1991 and 1992 Wellesley Forums. They are codified in the Goals and Policies for the Implementation Program which are presented below.

The Implementation Program is a compilation of the actions that are recommended in each of the Comprehensive Plan's Chapters. They are presented in Figures IX.1 -- IX.4, which cluster the actions according to the following categories:

- Town regulations and their administration,
- Town services and management,
- Capital improvements, and
- Generating a shared base of information for action: workshops, reports, and studies.

Each action is listed according to the chapter and goal under which more detailed information and recommendations may be found. For each action one or more groups is suggested to spearhead and monitor progress. Key support groups are also indicated.

To help efforts proceed in an orderly fashion, a target date is identified for each action. Short range steps are targeted for 1995 - 1998. Medium range actions are targeted for 1997 - 2000. Actions with a longer term time horizon are targeted for 2000 and beyond. These target dates are not intended to be rigid. Changing needs and opportunities will alter them.

To help Boards and Departments integrate the Comprehensive Plan into their respective work plans, Figure IX.5 restates the implementation actions, listing them according to the group or groups who will spearhead each action. Figure IX.5 also arranges each group's tasks according to the sequence of target dates.

Planning for Wellesley will never be over. Over coming years local citizens and officials will continue to work on implementing the recommendations for which agreement has been reached. There will also be continued gathering of information, analysis of options, and deliberations to achieve consensus on decisions that have not yet been made. Opportunities for action will arise unexpectedly. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a basis for making good decisions on behalf of Wellesley -- and to stimulate continued planning.

## Goals and Policies

### **IX.1 Goal: Achieve coordinated implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.**

**Policy:** Encourage all Town officials to refer to the Comprehensive Plan and use it as a basis for making decisions.

**Policy:** View each policy and management decision in the context of Wellesley's Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy:** In the annual Town Reports, have each Board add a paragraph regarding the points from the Comprehensive Plan that they are addressing.

**Policy:** Hold periodic joint meetings of Town officials to discuss the Plan and its implications for boards' and departments' activities and responsibilities.

### **IX.2 Goal: Continue reaching out for community-wide input, and incorporate that input into the Town's decisions and efforts.**

**Policy:** Continue the meetings between members of the Board of Selectmen and representatives of the business community. As appropriate, incorporate representatives of other boards into these meetings to expand the scope of dialogues and joint actions.

**Policy:** Encourage, assist, and participate in neighborhood-based information and planning meetings.

**Policy:** Continue Wellesley's tradition of appointing broadly representative committees of residents and officials to develop options for Town actions on major projects, to inform the community at large about those options, and to spearhead efforts to gain support for the most promising alternatives.

### **IX.3 Goal: Keep Wellesley's Comprehensive Plan a dynamic, useful tool.**

**Policy:** At least every five years hold a community-wide meeting of residents and officials to review progress on the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy:** Periodically update the Comprehensive Plan in light of changing conditions, and new needs and opportunities

**Policy:** Update the Open Space and Recreation Plan every five years.

**Figure IX.1  
Implementation Actions Relating to Town Regulations and Their Administration**

Goal	What	Who Spearheads	Notes	Target Date
II.2-5 & II.8	Evaluate potential positive and negative impacts in light of Comprehensive Plan	Planning Board		on-going
II.2-5 & II.8	Special attention to transition areas during reviews	Planning Board	Input from DRB's design themes project	on-going
II.2-5 & II.8	Review cluster zoning	Planning Board	Include in workshops relating to development costs. Input from Business Community	1995- 1998
II.6	Review regulations regarding businesses in residential areas.	Planning Board		1995 - 1998
II.6	Open space & natural features as buffers	Planning Board	Through site planning requirements & criteria. Input from NRC	on-going
II.7, 10 & IV.7	Zoning amendment of Office Park Zone west to Dearborn Street	Planning Board	Input from DRB's design themes project	1997-2000
II.7, 10 & IV.7	Zoning amendment of MHD Depot Site	Planning Board	Input from DRB's design themes project	1995 - 1998
II.7, 10 & IV.7	Zoning amendment to Natick Line business district	Planning Board	Input from DRB's design themes project	1995 - 1998
II.9	Improvements to signs	Planning Board	Input from DRB's design themes project	1997 - 2000
II.9	Inventory and analysis of current zoning violations	Building Inspector's Office	Input from Planning Board	1995 - 1998
II.10 & IV.5	Incorporate design themes into site plan and other design review criteria	Planning Board DRB	Special attention to gateways and business areas	1997 - 2000
III.1	Monitor community's flexibility regarding sideyards & coverage ratios	Planning Board		Periodic Town Meeting vote

Goal	What	Who Spearheads	Notes	Target Date
III.1	Guidelines for alternative housing in neighborhoods	Housing Partnership Committee Planning Board Zoning Board of Appeals		1997 - 2000
III.2 - III.5	Explore need to revise Zoning to lower barriers to alternative housing types	Planning Board	Jointly with HPC or HAP Start with working list in Housing Chapter	1997 - 2000
IV.1	Reconsider regulations relating to businesses in light of joint economic and market study	Planning Board	See notation under "Studies and Reports", Fig. IX.4	1997 - 2000
IV.5	Buffers between business and residential	Planning Board	Site plan review criteria, and as part of changes in zoning district boundaries	1995 - 1998
IV.5	Incentives for historic preservation	Planning Board Historical Commission	Include in DRB's design themes effort	1997 - 2000
V.2	Registration and reporting for non-residential pesticide users	Board of Health	Input from NRC	on-going
V.2	Designate floodplain tax title land for conservation	NRC	Input from Planning Board, Board of Selectmen. Town Meeting vote	on-going
V.2	Limit impervious surface percentage	Planning Board	Input from NRC	1997-2000
V.2	Limit development on steep slopes	Planning Board	Input from NRC	1995-1998
V.6	Incorporate design sensitivity into design review regulations as need and consensus indicate	Planning Board DRB	Input from Historical Commission's and DRB's design education and consensus efforts	on-going

**Figure IX.2  
Implementation Actions Relating to Services and Management**

Goal	What	Who Spearheads	Notes	Target Date
II.1	Develop and update GIS data network	Planning Board DPW	Collaboration among all Departments	1995 on
II.2-5 & II.8	Installation and maintenance of plant materials as essential part of maintenance program	Each department through budget process		on-going
II.2-5 & II.8	Collaborative efforts to stretch landscaping dollars	Selectmen	Input and support from DPW	on-going
II.2-5 & II.8	Beautification efforts of civic groups	Selectmen Civic Groups	Input from NRC	on-going
II.9	Expanded mandate and possible increase in powers for DRB	Planning Board	input from DRB	1995 - 1998
II.9	Working meeting of boards and departments regarding design implications of their responsibilities and making better use of DRB	Planning Board	input from DRB and Board of Selectmen	1997 - 2000
II.9	"Clean up/fix up" efforts in business areas	Collaboration between business associations and DPW		on-going
III.2 - III.5	Reinvigorate Wellesley Housing Partnership Committee (HPC)	Selectmen	See also relative merits of creating Housing Assistance Board	1995 - 1998
III.2 - III.5	Consider creating Housing Assistance Board (HAB)	Selectmen		1995 - 1998
III.2 - III.5	Communication with institutions for potential reuse strategies for housing	HPC or HAB		on-going
III.2 - III.5	Improve elder services delivery system	Council on Aging HPC or HAB	Work with West Suburban Elder Services	on-going
IV.1, 3	Continue working dialogue with business community	Selectmen Business community Planning Board	Aim for closer working relationship	on-going
IV.2	Maximize use of existing parking lots	Selectmen Business community	Evaluate impact of improved management	on-going
IV.3	Highly visible acknowledgment of local businesses' community activities	Selectmen Business & civic groups		on-going

Goal	What	Who Spearheads	Notes	Target Date
IV.5	Joint efforts on maintenance, appearance, improvements in business areas	Selectmen DPW Business community		on-going
V.1	Continue to maintain parks and conservation lands	NRC and DPW	Clearly define standards, policies, plans	on-going
V.1	Promote tree planting	NRC and DPW	Collaboration with civic groups	on-going
V.1	Tree maintenance and replacement	NRC and DPW	Collaboration with civic groups	on-going
V.2	Policies to manage use of fertilizers, pesticides	NRC and DPW	Input from Board of Health	1995 - 1998
V.2	Education and management to reduce flow of nutrients into ponds	NRC, DPW, and Board of Health		1995 - 1998
V.2	Minimize road salt	DPW	Work also with Mass. Highway and Turnpike Authority	on-going
V.2	Financing mechanisms for Morses Pond watershed septic systems	Selectmen	Input from DPW, NRC, Health Department	1997 - 2000
V.2	Work for sewer connections upstream	Board of Health DPW	Work with MetroWest Growth Management Committee	on-going
V.2	Update 100 year floodplains map	DPW		1995-1998
V.2	Continue to enforce Wetlands Protection	NRC		on-going
V.2	Protocol for testing water quality	DPW	Input from NRC Health Department	1995-1998
V.2	Monitor water quality flow into ponds	DPW Health Department	Input from NRC	on-going
V.2	Techniques to improve water quality and clarity	DPW Health Department	Input from NRC	on-going
V.2	Monitor underground fuel tank impacts	DPW, Board of Health, Fire Chief	Remedy identified problems	on-going
V.2	Address water protection at regional level	NRC	Work with MetroWest Growth Management Comm	on-going
V.3	Continue regular household hazardous wastes collection days	DPW	Assistance from Board of Health. Potentially part of RDF site plan	1995-1998
V.3	Find ways to deal with environmental hazards in homes	Board of Health		1997-2000

Goal	What	Who Spearheads	Notes	Target Date
V.4	Reduction, recycling of wastes	DPW All Town Boards	Input from NRC, Health Department	on-going
V.5	Communicate with local cultural institutions	Selectmen	Identify ways Town might be helpful, and follow through	1995 on
V.5	Monitor and expand adult education program	Recreation Commission and School Department		on-going
V.6	Review cultural inventory and incorporate into school curricula as appropriate	School Department	Inventory from Cultural Council	1995-1998
V.6	Influence design through education and consensus	Historical Commission DRB		on-going
V.6	Lead by example as major landowner whose decisions impact the natural and cultural environment	Selectmen DPW NRC	All boards and departments according to their responsibilities and daily decisions	1995 on
V.8	Local and regional cooperation on environmental educational programs	NRC Health Department	Include Community Days and Community Cablevision programming	on-going
V.8	Assist schools, others with environmental science, conservation education	NRC Health Department		on-going
V.8	Develop, distribute handouts for land owners	NRC		on-going
V.8	Neighborhood clean up days	DPW, NRC, neighborhood groups		1995 on
V.8	Assist groups that clean up public lands	NRC		on-going
V.8	Encourage volunteer efforts to protect and maintain sensitive environmental areas	NRC and neighborhood groups		on-going
V.8	Distribute and discuss Natural Resource Component	NRC		1995

Goal	What	Who Spearheads	Notes	Target Date
V.8	Encourage groups to assist in implementing recommendations	NRC and neighborhood groups		on-going
V.9	Tree inventory	DPW		on-going
V.9, VI.1, & VII.2	Develop shared computerized inventory of Town-owned parcels and facilities	DPW	Input from Planning Board, NRC, Assessor, Health Department Update over time	1995 on
VI.1	Consider staffing costs and benefits whenever reviewing cost-effectiveness of facilities	All boards and committees involved in facilities planning.		on-going
VI.1	Establish hierarchy of funding mechanisms	Selectmen		1995 on
VI.1	Cooperative regional efforts for expanded services	Fire & Police Depts. Council on Aging Schools, Library		1995 on
VI.1	Continue monitoring environmental regulations with capital spending implications	DPW, NRC, Health Department	Incorporate into capital budget as necessary to remain in compliance	on-going
VI.2	Continuously inform residents about available facilities and services	Selectmen	Incorporate into all outreach & and education efforts	on-going
VI.3	Inform townspeople about the cost & service implications of the branch libraries.	Library Trustees	Enable townspeople to make informed choices	on-going
VI.3	Continue planning for educational excellence	School Department		on-going
VI.3	Plan for technological advances in long distance learning and information	School Department Library Trustees		on-going
VI.4	Increased use of school facilities	Recreation Commission and School Department		on-going
VI.6	Informed public deliberations regarding implications of neighborhood-based service delivery	Selectmen	Require of each board or committee involved in planning for capital improvements and service delivery	on-going
VII.1	Evaluate protection priorities for large parcels	NRC	Input from Planning Board, Selectmen, landowners	on-going

Goal	What	Who Spearheads	Notes	Target Date
VII.1	Preserve important open spaces	NRC	Input from Planning Board, Selectmen, landowners	on-going
VII.1	Continued preservation lands under Chapters 61, 61A and 61B	NRC	Input from Planning Board, Selectmen, landowners	on-going
VII.1	Neighborhood participation in open space preservation	NRC Neighborhood groups		1995 on
VII.2	Management plans for Town-owned open space	NRC		on-going
VII.2	Communications and cooperation among all boards regarding use of open space	NRC	Input and assistance from Selectmen and DPW	on-going
VII.2	Encourage volunteerism	NRC	Assistance from DPW, civic organizations	on-going
VII.2	Maintain playing fields	DPW & School Department	Input from Recreation Comm.	on-going
VII.4 & VIII.2	Bike and pedestrian routes throughout town	NRC Bike Trails and Walkways Committee	Input from DPW, Planning Board. Cooperation from all town departments	on-going
VII.4 & VIII.2	Regional bike routes	NRC Bike Trails and Walkways Committee	Input from DPW, Planning Board, neighboring communities	1997-2000
VII.4	Publicize, encourage use of open space trail networks	NRC, Bike Trails and Walkways Committee		on-going
VII.5	Brochures on parks and public lands	NRC	Input from DPW and Recreation Comm.	on-going
VII.5	Coordination with Wellesley Conservation Council, INC.	NRC		on-going
VII.5	Variety of media to inform public about environmental and recreational opportunities and issues	NRC, Recreation Commission		on-going
VII.5	Implement identity system for trails and public lands	NRC, Recreation Commission		1995-1998
VIII.1	Discounted fares on MBTA Framingham Line	Selectmen or Transportation Coordinator		1995-1998

VIII.1	Local bus service	Selectmen or Transportation Coordinator		1995-1998
VIII.2	Parking and Traffic Management Plans	Selectmen or Transportation Coordinator		on-going
VIII.4	Traffic regulations and enforcement	Police Department		on-going

**Figure IX.3  
Implementation Actions Relating to Capital Improvements**

Goal	What	Who Spearheads	Notes	Target Date
II.7 & VII.1	Amenities and benefits on priority parcels	NRC	Input from Planning Board and Selectmen	on-going
IV.2	Consider investing in more parking spaces	Selectmen Planning Board	As need is documented. Input and collaboration from business community	1997-2000
IV.3, 6 & VIII.2	Design and implement a Town-wide sidewalk and path system	Planning Board NRC DPW	Include opportunities for sharing community information	1995 on
V.2	Complete sewer connections	DPW		1997-2000
VI.1	Assess alternatives for renovation or replacement of Fire Station #1	Selectmen	Proceed with plans and financing for selected alternative	2000 on
VI.1 & VII.3	Barrier-free access to all Town facilities & programs	Selectmen	Input from all boards and departments with responsibility for affected facilities and programs.	on-going
VI.2	Continue equipment replacement cycle	Departments with capital equipment		on-going
VI.2	Continue Pond Restoration Program	DPW	Input from NRC	on-going
VI.3	Continue planning for Library system	Library Trustees	Incorporate funding mechanism hierarchy and findings from cost effectiveness studies.	on-going
VII.1	Formal, on-going open space acquisition program	NRC	Input from Board of Selectmen	on-going
VII.2	Morses Pond improvements	DPW NRC	Input from Recreation Commission	on-going

VII.3	Improve, expand fields and courts as needed	Recreation Commission and DPW		1995-1998
VII.4	Connect open space network	NRC, Bike Trails and Walkways Study Committee	Input from DPW	2000 on
VIII.2	Traffic-related improvements in business areas	Selectmen or Transportation Coordinator	Input & assistance from DPW, Planning Board	1997-2000
VIII.3	Regional transportation improvements	Selectmen or Transportation Coordinator		on-going
VIII.3	Kingsbury/Rte. 9 feasibility/justification study	Selectmen	Raises priority on State funding list	1997-1999

**Figure IX.4**  
**Implementation Actions Relating to Generating**  
**a Shared Base of Information for Action: Workshops, Studies, and Reports**

Goal	What	Who Spearheads	Notes	Target Date
II.2-5 & II.8	Include in Design Themes Project special attention to transition areas	DRB		1995-1998
II.7	Handicapped accessibility survey to complete Open Space and Recreation Plan	NRC Recreation Commission		1995-1996
II.7 & III.1	How to site, design, and finance housing alternatives that fit	HPC or HAB	Selectmen designate, authorize, lead support of this group	1995 on
II.9	Workshops on financial aspects of development and redevelopment	Planning Board Business Community	Input from Advisory Committee, Financial Services, HPC or HAB	1995-1998
II.9	Followup design workshops to sketch out alternative scenarios with finances in mind	Planning Board Business Community	Input from Design Review Board	1997-2000
II.9	Design Themes Project	DRB	Outreach effort to village centers, followed by dialogue with officials.	1995-1998
II.10	Include in Design Themes Project consideration of gateways	DRB		1995-1998

Goal	What	Who Spearheads	Notes	Target Date
III.2 - III.5	Neighborhood workshops on neighborhood housing needs	HPC or HAB		1995-1998
III.2 - III.5	Explore Reuse of Warren School for assisted living	HPC or HAB	30 units would bring Wellesley to 5% subsidized level	1995-1998
III.6	Prepare Housing Development Action Plan	HPC or HAB	Build from Elder Housing Plan (see below) Input from Planning Board	1995-1998
III.7 & III.8	Prepare comprehensive Elder Housing Plan	HPC or HAB	Input from Planning Board, Council on Aging	1995-1998
III.7 & III.8	Workshop on successful elder housing	HPC or HAB	Launch Elder Housing Plan process	1995-1998
IV.1, 4	Joint Town/Business study of economic and market trends	Planning Board Business community	Consider vitality and diversity	1995-1998
IV.2, 4	Consider public or nonprofit organization to provide desired commercial development	Selectmen	Consider findings of joint study of economic and market trends	1997-2000
IV.3 & V.5	Expanded range of cultural activities	Cultural Council	Inventory cultural activities, publicize, stimulate discussion regarding ways to expand the range	1995-1998
IV.4	Survey range and diversity of goods	Business community		1995-1998
IV.7	Joint gateway efforts with neighboring towns	Planning Board Business community		1995-1998
V.5	Sponsor contest to i.d. public places that should be location for works of art. Follow up	Cultural Council Business community	Assistance from local arts groups and cultural institutions	1995-1998

Goal	What	Who Spearheads	Notes	Target Date
VI.1	Assessment of each Town-owned parcel and facility regarding capacity to accommodate additional needed facilities	Planning Board DPW, NRC	Integrate into GIS system and computerized inventory of Town-owned parcels and facilities.	1995-1996
VI.1	Examine feasibility of combining senior, teen center with a school expansion	Committee appointed by Moderator	Incorporate findings into capital improvements planning as appropriate	1995-1998
VI.1 VII.3	Compare costs and benefits of current swimming facilities and building indoor Town pool	Aquatic Facilities Committee	Incorporate findings into capital improvements planning as appropriate	1995-1998
VI.1	Analyze costs and potential increased efficiency of renovation of RDF	DPW	Incorporate findings into capital improvements planning as appropriate	on-going
VI.1	Review costs of the library system, consider implications for choices	Library Trustees	Incorporate findings into public discussions relating to Library and services expansion	on-going
VII.3	Plan for new town-wide recreation facilities	Recreation Commission	Input from DPW, Aquatic Facilities Committee	1997-2000
VII.3	Feasibility of community environmental center	NRC	Input from Health Department	1997-2000
IX.1	Annual brief on implementation progress	Each board in a paragraph in annual report		1995 on
IX.3	Periodically review progress on Implementation Program	Planning Board		Every 5 years
IX.3	Periodic update of Open Space and Recreation Plan	NRC Recreation Commission		Every 5 years
IX.3	Community-wide meetings to review progress on Comprehensive Plan.	Planning Board		At least every 5 years
IX.3	Periodically update Comprehensive Plan	Planning Board		When needed

**Figure IX.5  
Implementation Actions Listed According to Spearheading Group  
and Sequence of Target Dates**

**All Boards and  
Departments**

II.2-5 & II.8	Installation and maintenance of plant materials as essential part of maintenance program	Each department through budget process		on-going
V.8	Reduction, recycling of wastes	All Town Boards (with DPW)	Input from NRC, Health Department	on-going
VI.1	Consider staffing costs and benefits whenever reviewing cost-effectiveness of facilities	All boards and committees involved in facilities planning.		on-going
IX.1	Annual brief on implementation progress	Each board in a paragraph in annual report		1995 on

**Planning Board**

II.2-5 & II.8	Evaluate potential positive and negative impacts in light of Comprehensive Plan	Planning Board		on-going
II.2-5 & II.8	Special attention to transition areas during reviews	Planning Board	Input from DRB's design themes project	on-going
II.6	Open space & natural features as buffers	Planning Board	Through site planning requirements & criteria. Input from NRC	on-going
IV.1, 3	Continue working dialogue with business community	Planning Board (with Selectmen and Business organizations)	Aim for closer working relationship	on-going
V.6	Incorporate design sensitivity into design review regulations as need and consensus indicate	Planning Board (with DRB)	Input from Historical Commission's and DRB's design education and consensus efforts	on-going
II.1	Develop and update GIS data system	Planning Board (with DPW)	Collaboration among all Departments	1995 on
IV.3,6 & VIII.2	Design and implement a Town-wide sidewalk and path system	Planning Board (with NRC and DPW)	Include opportunities for sharing community information	1995 on

III.1	Monitor community's flexibility regarding sideyards & coverage ratios	Planning Board		Periodic Town Meeting vote
VI.1	Assessment of each Town-owned parcel and facility regarding capacity to accommodate additional needed facilities	Planning Board DPW	Integrate into computerized inventory of Town-owned parcels and facilities.	1995-1996
II.2-5 & II.8	Review cluster zoning	Planning Board	Include in workshops relating to development costs. Input from Business Community	1995- 1998
II.6	Review regulations regarding businesses in residential areas.	Planning Board		1995 - 1998
II.7, 10 & IV.7	Zoning amendment of MHD Depot Site	Planning Board	Input from DRB's design themes project	1995 - 1998
II.7, 10 & IV.7	Zoning amendment to Natick Line business district	Planning Board	Input from DRB's design themes project	1995 - 1998
II.9	Expanded mandate and possible increase in powers for DRB	Planning Board	Input from DRB	1995 - 1998
II.9	Workshops on financial aspects of development and redevelopment	Planning Board Business Community	Input from Advisory Committee, Financial Services, HPC or HAB	1995-1998
IV.1, 4	Joint Town/Business study of economic and market trends	Planning Board (with Business community)	Consider vitality and diversity	1995-1998
IV.5	Buffers between business and residential	Planning Board	Site plan review criteria, and as part of changes in zoning district boundaries	1995 - 1998
IV.7	Joint gateway efforts with neighboring towns	Planning Board (with Business community)		1995-1998
V.2	Limit development on steep slopes	Planning Board	Input from NRC	1995-1998
IX.3	Periodically review progress on Implementation Program	Planning Board		Every 5 years
II.7, 10 & IV.7	Zoning amendment of Office Park Zone west to Dearborn Street	Planning Board	Input from DRB's design themes project	1997-2000
II.9	Improvements to signs	Planning Board	Input from DRB's design themes project	1997 - 2000

II.9	Design workshops to sketch out alternative scenarios with finances in mind	Planning Board (with Business community)	Input from Design Review Board	1997-2000
II.9	Working meeting of boards and departments regarding design implications of their responsibilities and making better use of DRB	Planning Board	Input from DRB and Board of Selectmen	1997 - 2000
II.10 & IV.5	Incorporate design themes into site plan and other design review criteria	Planning Board DRB	Special attention to gateways and business areas	1997 - 2000
III.1	Guidelines for alternative housing in neighborhoods	Planning Board (with Housing Partnership Committee and Zoning Board of Appeals)		1997 - 2000
III.2 - III.5	Explore need to revise Zoning to lower barriers to alternative housing types	Planning Board	Jointly with HPC or HAP Start with working list in Housing Chapter	1997 - 2000
IV.1	Reconsider regulations relating to businesses in light of joint economic and market study	Planning Board		1997 - 2000
IV.2	Consider investing in more parking spaces	Planning Board (with Selectmen)	As need is documented. Input and collaboration from business community	1997-2000
IV.5	Incentives for historic preservation	Planning Board (with Historical Commission)	Include in DRB's design themes effort	1997 - 2000
V.2	Limit impervious surface percentage	Planning Board	Input from NRC	1997-2000
IX.3	Community-wide meetings to review progress on Comprehensive Plan.	Planning Board		At least every 5 years
IX.3	Periodically update Comprehensive Plan	Planning Board		When needed

**Board of Selectmen**

II.2-5, II.8	Collaborative efforts to stretch landscaping dollars	Selectmen	Input and support from DPW	on-going
II.2-5, II.8	Beautification efforts of civic groups	Selectmen (with Civic Groups)	Input from NRC	on-going

IV.1, 3	Continue working dialogue with business community	Selectmen (with Business organizations and Planning Board)	Aim for closer working relationship	on-going
IV.2	Maximize use of existing parking lots	Selectmen (with Business community)	Evaluate impact of improved management	on-going
IV.3	Highly visible acknowledgment of local businesses' community activities	Selectmen (with Business and civic groups)		on-going
IV.5	Joint efforts on maintenance, appearance, improvements in business areas	Selectmen (with DPW and Business community)		on-going
VI.1 & VII.3	Barrier-free access to all Town facilities & programs	Selectmen	Input from all boards and departments with responsibility for affected facilities and programs.	on-going
VI.2	Continuously inform residents about available facilities and services	Selectmen	Incorporate into all outreach & and education efforts	on-going
VI.6	Informed public deliberations regarding implications of neighborhood-based service delivery	Selectmen	Require of each board or committee involved in planning for capital improvements and service delivery	on-going
VIII.2	Parking and Traffic Management Plans	Selectmen (or Transportation Coordinator)		on-going
VIII.3	Regional transportation improvements	Selectmen (or Transportation Coordinator)		on-going
V.5	Communicate with local cultural institutions	Selectmen	Identify ways Town might be helpful, and follow through	1995 on
V.6	Lead by example as major landowner whose decisions impact the natural and cultural environment	Selectmen (with DPW and NRC)	All boards and departments according to their responsibilities and daily decisions	1995 on
VI.1	Establish hierarchy of funding mechanisms	Selectmen (with Advisory Committee)		1995 on
III.2 - III.5	Reinvigorate Wellesley Housing Partnership Committee (HPC)	Selectmen	See also relative merits of creating Housing Assistance Board	1995 - 1998
III.2 - III.5	Consider creating Housing Assistance Board (HAB)	Selectmen		1995 - 1998

VIII.1	Discounted fares on MBTA Framingham Line	Selectmen (or Transportation Coordinator)		1995-1998
VIII.1	Local bus service	Selectmen (or Transportation Coordinator)		1995-1998
IV.2	Consider investing in more parking spaces	Selectmen (with Planning Board)	As need is documented. Input and collaboration from business community	1997-2000
IV.2,4	Consider public or nonprofit organization to provide desired commercial development	Selectmen	Consider findings of joint study of economic and market trends	1997-2000
V.2	Financing mechanisms for Moses Pond watershed septic systems	Selectmen	Input from DPW, NRC, Health Department	1997 - 2000
VIII.3	Kingsbury/Rte. 9 feasibility/justification study	Selectmen	Raises priority on State funding list	1997-2000
VIII.2	Traffic-related improvements in business areas	Selectmen (or Transportation Coordinator)	Input & assistance from DPW, Planning Board	1997-2000
VI.1	Assess alternatives for renovation or replacement of Fire Station #1	Selectmen	Proceed with plans and financing for selected alternative	2000 on

### Natural Resources Commission

II.7 & VII.1	Amenities and benefits on priority parcels	NRC	Input from Planning Board and Selectmen	on-going
V.1	Continue to maintain parks and conservation lands	NRC (with DPW)	Clearly define standards, policies, plans	on-going
V.1	Promote tree planting	NRC (with DPW)	Collaboration with civic groups	on-going
V.1	Tree maintenance and replacement	NRC (with DPW)	Collaboration with civic groups	on-going
V.2	Designate floodplain tax title land for conservation	NRC	Input from Planning Board, Board of Selectmen. Town Meeting vote	on-going
V.2	Continue to enforce Wetlands Protection	NRC		on-going
V.2	Address water protection at regional level	NRC	Work with MetroWest Growth Management Comm	on-going

V.8	Local and regional cooperation on environmental educational programs	NRC	Include Community Days and Community Cablevision programming	on-going
V.8	Assist schools, others with environmental science, conservation education	NRC		on-going
V.8	Develop, distribute handouts for land owners	NRC		on-going
V.8	Assist groups that clean up public lands	NRC		on-going
V.8	Encourage volunteer efforts to protect and maintain sensitive environmental areas	NRC (with neighborhood groups)		on-going
V.8	Encourage groups to assist in implementing recommendations	NRC (with neighborhood groups)		on-going
VI.1	Continue monitoring environmental regulations with capital spending implications	NRC, (with DPW, Health Department)	Incorporate into capital budget as necessary to remain in compliance	on-going
VII.1	Evaluate protection priorities for large parcels	NRC	Input from Planning Board, Selectmen, landowners	on-going
VII.1	Preserve important open spaces	NRC	Input from Planning Board, Selectmen, landowners	on-going
VII.1	Continued preservation lands under Chapters 61, 61A and 61B	NRC	Input from Planning Board, Selectmen, landowners	on-going
VII.1	Formal, on-going open space acquisition program	NRC	Input from Board of Selectmen	on-going
VII.2	Morses Pond improvements	NRC (with DPW)	Input from Recreation Commission	on-going
VII.2	Management plans for Town-owned open space	NRC		on-going
VII.2	Communications and cooperation among all boards regarding use of open space	NRC	Input and assistance from Selectmen and DPW	on-going
VII.2	Encourage volunteerism	NRC	Assistance from DPW, civic organizations	on-going
VII.4 & VIII.2	Bike routes throughout town	NRC (with Bike Trails and Walkways Committee)	Input from DPW, Planning Board. Cooperation from all town departments	on-going

VII.4	Publicize, encourage use of open space trail networks	NRC (with Bike Trails and Walkways Committee)		on-going
VII.5	Brochures on parks and public lands	NRC	Input from DPW and Recreation Comm.	on-going
VII.5	Coordination with Wellesley Conservation Council, Inc.	NRC		on-going
VII.5	Variety of media to inform public about environmental and recreational opportunities and issues	NRC, (with Recreation Commission)		on-going
V.8	Distribute and discuss Natural Resource Component	NRC		1995
II.7	Handicapped accessibility survey to complete Open Space and Recreation Plan	NRC (with Recreation Commission)		1995-1996
VI.1	Assessment of each Town-owned parcel and facility regarding capacity to accommodate additional needed facilities	NRC (with Planning Board and DPW)	Integrate into GIS system and computerized inventory of Town-owned parcels and facilities.	1995-1996
IV.3, 6 & VIII.2	Design and implement a Town-wide sidewalk and path system	NRC (with Planning Board and DPW)	Include opportunities for sharing community information	1995 on
V.6	Lead by example as major landowner whose decisions impact the natural and cultural environment	NRC (with Selectmen and DPW)	All boards and departments according to their responsibilities and daily decisions	1995 on
V.8	Neighborhood clean up days	NRC (with DPW and neighborhood groups)		1995 on
VII.1	Neighborhood participation in open space preservation	NRC (with Neighborhood groups)		1995 on
V.2	Policies to manage use of fertilizers, pesticides	NRC (with DPW)	Input from Board of Health	1995 - 1998
V.2	Education and management to reduce flow of nutrients into ponds	NRC (with DPW)		1995 - 1998
VII.3	Implement identity system for trails and public lands	NRC (with Recreation Commission)		1995-1998
VII.3	Feasibility of community environmental center	NRC	Input from Health Department	1997-2000

VII.4 & VIII.2	Regional bike routes	NRC (with Bike Trails and Walkways Comm.)	Input from DPW, Planning Board, neighboring communities	1997-2000
VII.4	Connect open space network	NRC (with Bike Trails and Walkways Comm.)	Input from DPW	2000 on
IX.3	Periodic update of Open Space and Recreation Plan	NRC (with Recreation Commission)		Every 5 years

### Department of Public Works

II.9	"Clean up/fix up" efforts in business areas	DPW (with business associations)		on-going
IV.5	Joint efforts on maintenance, appearance, improvements in business areas	DPW (with Selectmen and Business community)		on-going
V.1	Continue to maintain parks and conservation lands	DPW (with NRC)	Clearly define standards, policies, plans	on-going
V.1	Promote tree planting	DPW (with NRC)	Collaboration with civic groups	on-going
V.1	Tree maintenance and replacement	DPW (with NRC)	Collaboration with civic groups	on-going
V.2	Minimize road salt	DPW	Work also with Mass. Highway and Turnpike Authority	on-going
V.2	Work for sewer connections upstream	DPW (with Board of Health)	Work with MetroWest Growth Management Committee	on-going
V.2	Monitor water quality flow into ponds	DPW	Input from NRC	on-going
V.2	Techniques to improve water quality and clarity	DPW	Input from NRC	on-going
V.2	Monitor underground fuel tank impacts	DPW	Remedy identified problems	on-going
V.8	Reduction, recycling of wastes	DPW	Input from NRC	on-going
V.9	Tree inventory	DPW		on-going
VI.1	Continue monitoring environmental regulations with capital spending implications	DPW	Incorporate into capital budget as necessary to remain in compliance	on-going
V1.1	Analyze costs and potential increased efficiency of renovation of RDF	DPW (with Advisory Committee)	Incorporate findings into capital improvements planning as appropriate	on-going

VI.2	Continue Pond Restoration Program	DPW	Input from NRC	on-going
VII.2	Maintain playing fields	DPW (with School Department)	Input from Recreation Comm.	on-going
VII.2	Morses Pond improvements	DPW (with NRC)	Input from Recreation Commission	on-going
II.1	Develop and update shared GIS data system	DPW (with Planning Board)	Collaboration among all Departments	1995 on
IV.2, 5 & VIII.2	Design and implement a Town-wide sidewalk and path system	DPW (with NRC and Planning Board)	Include opportunities for sharing community information	1995 on
V.6	Lead by example as major landowner whose decisions impact the natural and cultural environment	DPW (with Selectmen and NRC)	All boards and departments according to their responsibilities and daily decisions	1995 on
V.8	Neighborhood clean up days	DPW (with NRC and neighborhood groups)		1995 on
V.9, VI.1, & VII.2	Develop shared, computerized inventory of Town-owned parcels and facilities	DPW	Input from Planning Board, NRC, Health Department, Assessor. Update over time	1995 on
VI.1	Assessment of each Town-owned parcel and facility regarding capacity to accommodate additional needed facilities	DPW (with Planning Board)	Integrate into computerized inventory of Town-owned parcels and facilities.	1995-1996
V.2	Policies to manage use of fertilizers, pesticides	DPW (with NRC)	Input from Board of Health	1995 - 1998
V.2	Education and management to reduce flow of nutrients into ponds	DPW (with NRC)		1995 - 1998
V.2	Update 100 year floodplains map	DPW		1995-1998
V.2	Protocol for testing water quality	DPW	Input from NRC, Health Department	1995-1998
V.3	Continue regular household hazardous wastes collection days	DPW	Assistance from Board of Health. Potentially part of RDF site plan.	1995-1998
VII.3	Improve, expand fields and courts as needed	DPW (with Recreation Commission)		1995-1998
V.2	Complete sewer connections	DPW		1997-2000

### Recreation Commission

V.5	Monitor and expand adult education program	Recreation Commission (with School Department)		on-going
VI.4	Increased use of school facilities	Recreation Commission (with School Department)		on-going
VII.5	Variety of media to inform public about environmental and recreational opportunities and issues	Recreation Commission (with NRC)		on-going
II.7	Handicapped accessibility survey to complete Open Space and Recreation Plan	Recreation Commission (with NRC)		1995-1996
VII.3	Improve, expand fields and courts as needed	Recreation Commission (with DPW)		1995-1998
VII.5	Implement identity system for trails and public lands	Recreation Commission (with NRC)		1995-1998
VII.3	Plan for new town-wide recreation facilities	Recreation Commission	Input from DPW, Aquatic Facilities Committee	1997-2000
IX.3	Periodic update of Open Space and Recreation Plan	NRC (with Recreation Commission)		Every 5 years

### Design Review Board

V.6	Incorporate design sensitivity into design review regulations as need and consensus indicate	DRB (with Planning Board)	Input from Historical Commission's and DRB's design education and consensus efforts	on-going
V.6	Influence design through education and consensus	DRB (with Historical Commission)		on-going
II.2-5 & II.8	Include in Design Themes Project special attention to transition areas	DRB		1995-1998
II.9	Design Themes Project	DRB	Outreach effort to village centers, followed by dialogue with officials.	1995-1998

II.10	Include in Design Themes Project consideration of gateways	DRB		1995-1998
II.10 & IV.5	Incorporate design themes into site plan and other design review criteria	DRB (with Planning Board)	Special attention to gateways and business areas	1997 - 2000

**Housing Partnership Committee or  
Housing Assistance Board**

III.2 - III.5	Communication with institutions for potential reuse strategies for housing	HPC or HAB		on-going
III.2 - III.5	Improve elder services delivery system	HPC or HAB (with Council on Aging)	Work with West Suburban Elder Services	on-going
II.7 & III.1	How to site, design, and finance housing alternatives that fit	HPC or HAB	Selectmen designate, authorize, lead support of this group	1995 on
III.2 - III.5	Neighborhood workshops on neighborhood housing needs	HPC or HAB		1995-1998
III.2 - III.5	Explore Reuse of Warren School for assisted living	HPC or HAB	30 units would bring Wellesley to 5% subsidized level	1995-1998
III.6	Prepare Housing Development Action Plan	HPC or HAB	Build from Elder Housing Plan (see below) Input from Planning Board	1995-1998
III.7 & III.8	Prepare comprehensive Elder Housing Plan	HPC or HAB	Input from Planning Board, Council on Aging	1995-1998
III.7 & III.8	Workshop on successful elder housing	HPC or HAB	Launch Elder Housing Plan process	1995-1998
III.1	Guidelines for alternative housing in neighborhoods	HPC (with Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals)		1997 - 2000

**Board of Health and  
Health Department**

V.2	Registration and reporting for non-residential pesticide users	Board of Health	Input from NRC	on-going
V.2	Work for sewer connections upstream	Board of Health (with DPW)	Work with MetroWest Growth Management Committee	on-going

V.2	Monitor water quality flow into ponds	Health Department (with DPW)	Input from NRC	on-going
V.2	Techniques to improve water quality and clarity	Health Department (with DPW)	Input from NRC	on-going
V.2	Monitor underground fuel tank impacts	Board of Health (with DPW, Fire Chief)	Remedy identified problems	on-going
V.8	Local and regional cooperation on environmental educational programs	Health Department (with NRC)	Include Community Days and Community Cablevision programming	on-going
V.8	Assist schools, others with environmental science, conservation education	Health Department (with NRC)		on-going
VI.1	Continue monitoring environmental regulations with capital spending implications	Health Department (with DPW, NRC)	Incorporate into capital budget as necessary to remain in compliance	on-going
V.2	Education and management to reduce flow of nutrients into ponds	Board of Health (with NRC, DPW)		1995 - 1998
V.3	Find ways to deal with environmental hazards in homes	Board of Health		1997-2000

### School Department

V.5	Monitor and expand adult education program	School Department (with Recreation Commission)		on-going
VI.3	Continue planning for educational excellence	School Department		on-going
VI.3	Plan for technological advances in long distance learning and information	School Department (with Library Trustees)		on-going
VI.4	Increased use of school facilities	School Department (with Recreation Commission)		on-going
VII.2	Maintain playing fields	School Department (with DPW)	Input from Recreation Comm.	on-going
VI.1	Cooperative regional efforts for expanded services	School Department		1995 on
V.6	Review cultural inventory and incorporate into school curricula as appropriate	School Department	Inventory from Cultural Council	1995-1998

### Library Trustees

VI.1	Review costs of the library system, consider implications for choices	Library Trustees	Incorporate findings into public discussions relating to Library and services expansion	on-going
VI.3	Continue planning for Library system	Library Trustees	Incorporate funding mechanism hierarchy and findings from cost effectiveness studies.	on-going
VI.3	Inform townspeople about the cost & service implications of the branch libraries.	Library Trustees	Enable townspeople to make informed choices	on-going
VI.3	Plan for technological advances in long distance learning and information	Library Trustees (with School Department )		on-going
VI.1	Cooperative regional efforts for expanded services	Library Trustees		1995 on

### Police Department

VIII.4	Traffic regulations and enforcement	Police Department		on-going
VI.1	Cooperative regional efforts for expanded services	Police Department		1995 on

### Fire Department

VI.1	Cooperative regional efforts for expanded services	Fire Department		1995 on
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### Historical Commission

V.6	Influence design through education and consensus	Historical Commission (with DRB)		on-going
IV.5	Incentives for historic preservation	Historical Commission (with Planning Board)	Include in DRB's design themes effort	1997 - 2000

### Cultural Council

IV.3 & V.5	Expanded range of cultural activities	Cultural Council	Inventory cultural activities, publicize, stimulate discussion regarding ways to expand the range	1995-1998
V.5	Sponsor contest to i.d. public places that should be location for works of art. Follow up	Cultural Council (with Business community)	Assistance from local arts groups and cultural institutions	1995-1998

### Building Inspector's Office

II.9	Inventory and analysis of current zoning violations	Building Inspector's Office	Input from Planning Board	1995 - 1998
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### Zoning Board of Appeals

III.1	Guidelines for alternative housing in neighborhoods	Zoning Board of Appeals (with HPC and Planning Board)		1997 - 2000
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### Council on Aging

III.2 - III.5	Improve elder services delivery system	Council on Aging (with HPC or HAB)	Work with West Suburban Elder Services	on-going
VI.1	Cooperative regional efforts for expanded services	Council on Aging		1995 on

### Aquatic Facilities Committee

VI.1 VII.4	Compare costs and benefits of current swimming facilities and building indoor Town pool	Aquatic Facilities Committee	Incorporate findings into capital improvements planning as appropriate	1995-1998
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### Moderator-Appointed Committee

VI.1	Examine feasibility of combining senior, teen center with a school expansion	Committee appointed by Moderator	Incorporate findings into capital improvements planning as appropriate	1995-1998
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## Business Community

II.9	"Clean up/fix up" efforts in business areas	Business associations (with DPW)		on-going
IV.1, 3	Continue working dialogue with Town	Business community (with Selectmen and Planning Board)	Aim for closer working relationship	on-going
IV.2	Maximize use of existing parking lots	Business community (with Selectmen)	Evaluate impact of improved management	on-going
IV.5	Joint efforts on maintenance, appearance, improvements in business areas	Business community (with Selectmen and DPW)		on-going
II.9	Workshops on financial aspects of development and redevelopment	Business Community (with Planning Board)	Input from Advisory Committee, Financial Services, HPC or HAB	1995-1998
IV.1, 4	Joint Town/Business study of economic and market trends	Business associations (with Planning Board)	Consider vitality and diversity	1995-1998
IV.4	Survey range and diversity of goods	Business community		1995-1998
IV.7	Joint gateway efforts with neighboring towns	Business Community (with Planning Board)		1995-1998
V.5	Sponsor contest to i.d. public places that should be location for works of art. Follow up	Business community (with Cultural Council)	Assistance from local arts groups and cultural institutions	1995-1998
II.9	Followup design workshops to sketch out alternative scenarios with finances in mind	Business Community (with Planning Board)	Input from Design Review Board	1997-2000



## A Chronicle of the 1991 - 1994 Comprehensive Planning Process

The Planning Board initiated the comprehensive planning process in November of 1990 by designing an innovative multi-year project and submitting this proposal to the Advisory Committee for review. An initial \$10,000 appropriation was subsequently approved by Town Meeting in April of 1991. The approval of this appropriation encouraged the Planning Board to move forward and organize a Steering Committee composed of the five members of the Planning Board, the Planning Director, and a representative from the Board of Selectmen, the Natural Resources Commission, the Board of Public Works, the League of Women Voters and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. It was agreed upon from the inception of this project that the comprehensive planning process would be carried out by a diverse group of citizens, not simply the members of the Planning Board. The driving force of this project from the beginning has been a desire for a community-wide planning process. This has remained the focus of the process throughout its history of four years and is evident in the 1994 Wellesley Comprehensive Plan.

The Steering Committee prepared a Request for Proposals (RFP) that was answered by 15 planning consultant teams. The Steering Committee, based on a selection process and interviews, hired the planning consultant team of John Brown Associates in December of 1991. This team consisted of John Brown, David Dixon and Mitch Fishman. The Steering Committee met often with the consulting team and together accomplished four tasks which comprised Phase I of the Comprehensive Plan effort. The tasks were: 1) a detailed schedule of activities to be accomplished in three phases organized with graphics and charts showing the interrelationship between all activities; 2) a detailed line-item and program-activity budget for the entire project including graphics and charts showing the relationship between program activity and budget allocations for each phase of the planning process with all work to be completed by December 31, 1994; 3) a model of an interactive public participation process; and, 4) the first town-wide planning forum designed to elicit public opinion and formulate preliminary goals for the town. All these tasks were to be completed by June 30, 1992.

The first order of business in Phase I was the model for effective interactive public participation. The Steering Committee determined that it was vital for the credibility of the process that there should be a large and diverse Comprehensive Plan Coordination Group (CPCG) and this group would have three responsibilities: 1) to be a cross-section of the community as a whole through its members acting as representatives of the various governmental boards and committees, the business and educational communities, as well as citizens at large; 2) to discuss and oversee the writing of the Comprehensive Plan; and, 3) to facilitate and organize large townwide planning forums in order to actively solicit public opinion and discussion on town goals and related planning issues. It was determined from the beginning that the CPCG would include representatives of all boards, committees, groups and others that wished to participate in this process. For purposes of manageability and budget constraints, it was determined that the CPCG should have 50 members, although quite a few more than that were part of this process from the beginning. There was always a determined effort to include as many citizens as possible, with many divergent opinions. The focus of this process was one of consensus, not majority rule.

The Steering Committee chose John McConchie to be the Chairman of the CPCG and to lead this large and diverse group from its inception in the winter of 1991 all the way through to the final meeting in the winter of 1994. John McConchie was chosen for his known ability to lead by consensus building, his notable integrity in Wellesley's public affairs and his outstanding dedication to the community. John has been a steadfast source of inspiration in devising ways of involving as many citizens as possible in this planning process. This particular comprehensive planning process had more public input and scrutiny than any other Wellesley planning project.

The CPCG assembled for its first meeting in February of 1992. Discussion centered around the best possible way to involve as many citizens as possible in the planning process and how to structure a large townwide planning event. It was decided that this could best be accomplished through a townwide forum. The first Wellesley Forum was set for May 7, 1992 with the Wellesley Community Center as the site for the day-long event. Each member of the CPCG took on various responsibilities, including personally inviting neighbors; obtaining meeting materials from Babson College, the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses; designing and negotiating an all-out press and media publicity campaign with the Wellesley TAB, the TOWNSMAN, and Continental Cablevision to promote Wellesley Forum I; making arrangements for a box lunch donated by Wellesley College for all participants; agreeing to be discussion leaders, recorders and reporters; setting up and conducting both floors of the Community Center; registering participants throughout the day; making up several hundred meeting packets; and, assigning discussion groups in advance. Members of the CPCG papered the Town with posters, flyers at the RDF, and a townwide mailing, courtesy of Sun Life of Canada. The attendance at Wellesley Forum I was over 300 Wellesley residents, business people, property owners, and citizens from other towns who were eager to see how this process was being conducted. The results of this townwide planning event, 54 pages of transcribed notes, were then synthesized by the consultants and further refined by the CPCG into a preliminary Vision Statement for the Town of Wellesley.

While Phase I was winding down, the Steering Committee was already writing and distributing the RFP for Phase II. The 1992 Annual Town Meeting appropriated \$30,000 for Phase II of this process. The Steering Committee selected LandUse, Incorporated, in September of 1992 as the planning consultant team for Phase II. Jeanne Armstrong, Rick Taintor and John Whiteman make up the consulting team of LandUse, Inc. The tasks for the consulting team and the CPCG in Phase II were to produce: 1) a draft Table of Contents and Introduction for the complete Comprehensive Plan; 2) the inventory and analysis portions of the Land Use Chapter; 3) the Housing Chapter's research, analysis and interim recommendations; 4) the Economic Vitality Chapter; 5) the Natural and Cultural Resources inventory; 6) maps showing Soil Limitations, Floodplains, Groundwater Resources; Land Use in Wellesley as of 1985; Land Use in Wellesley and Surrounding Communities as of 1985; and, 7) to facilitate and convene Wellesley Forum II. Work on this phase of the project was to be completed by June 30, 1993.

Throughout the Fall of 1992 and the Spring of 1993, the members of the CPCG and the consultants met in meetings open to the public at Town Hall. Also during this time, the consulting team met with the professional staff of the various departments of the Town in order to gather needed background data. Wellesley Forum II was convened by the CPCG in May of 1993, again accepting the gracious offer of the Wellesley Community Center for this second townwide planning event. The focus of Wellesley Forum II was to confirm the preliminary goals and policies that were formulated in Phase I, and to discuss key choices and policy questions that were raised by Phase II's analysis of Wellesley's situation. Wellesley Forum II attracted over 200 participants. Members of the CPCG again took on all the varied responsibilities of managing a large townwide planning event, from doing publicity, including a townwide mailing courtesy of the Department of Public Works; putting together the pre-meeting packets of information which were printed and mailed in advance to all participants, courtesy of Babson-United Investment Advisors; delivering and arranging the generous cookie and fruit platters from Wellesley College; making up the registration packets, courtesy of Babson College and the Chamber of Commerce; and, working all day as discussion leaders, recorders and reporters for their fellow Wellesley citizens.

The Annual Town Meeting in March of 1993 appropriated \$70,000 for the final 18-month phase of this planning project. As Phase II finished, the Steering Committee was producing the RFP for Phase III. LandUse, Incorporated, was selected for the final 18 months of work and were joined by Barry Pell of Rizzo Associates to assist with the transportation planning component. Working together with the Steering Committee over the summer of 1993, the consulting team began Phase

III by convening an Interdepartmental Meeting at Town Hall in September of 1993. Following the schedule as determined two years previously, it was now time to start moving from public input and discussion into implementation strategies. An important focus was to discuss the goals, policies and preliminary recommendations with the Town Government officials who would be responsible for implementing many of the action steps necessary to reach the goals that citizens had articulated.

The September interdepartmental meeting was attended by 51 elected or appointed Town officials and was cablecast live from Town Hall. This meeting was designed to encourage discussion and thought on townwide planning concerns and set the stage for a Municipal Officials' Workshop that was already scheduled for May of 1994. The CPCG and the consulting team held meetings open to the public throughout the Fall of 1993 and the Spring of 1994. The consulting team continued to meet with the professional staff of the Town, gathering and analyzing background data. The Workshop for Municipal Officials was held on May 19, 1994 with the focus on further discussion to determine those areas for which there was general consensus. There were representatives from all boards and committees at this Workshop. All present were encouraged to attend the following CPCG meeting in June of 1994 which was scheduled to discuss those issues for which consensus had not been obtained. Members of the Steering Committee met several times with the consulting team over the Summer of 1994, working on the format of the final version of the Comprehensive Plan.

The last two meetings of the CPCG were held in the Fall of 1994 to edit the draft of the final plan and its background materials for accuracy and consistency of content. The final draft of the 1994 Wellesley Comprehensive Plan and its accompanying background materials were presented to the Wellesley Planning Board in December of 1994.

